

GASPING | AT | ALTERNATIVE | CHROME | DELIGHTS!

UNDERGROUND

APRIL 1988 ISSUE 13

metal beat

£1

hardcore

death dis

quiphobi

free tape

psyche-surf

punk electro

BLOODY UNLUCKY SPECIAL

★ **ALIEN SEX FIEND**
Supermarket make-up merchants

★ **THE SUGARCUBES**
Colder than your average cats

★ **PETER MURPHY**
Ex-Bauhaus boy sets up stall

★ **MICRODISNEY**
Taking pop to Newcastle (and Glasgow)

★ **THE MEKONS**
New LP, it's abso-brill!

and the secret life of internationalist **ANDY KERSHAW!**

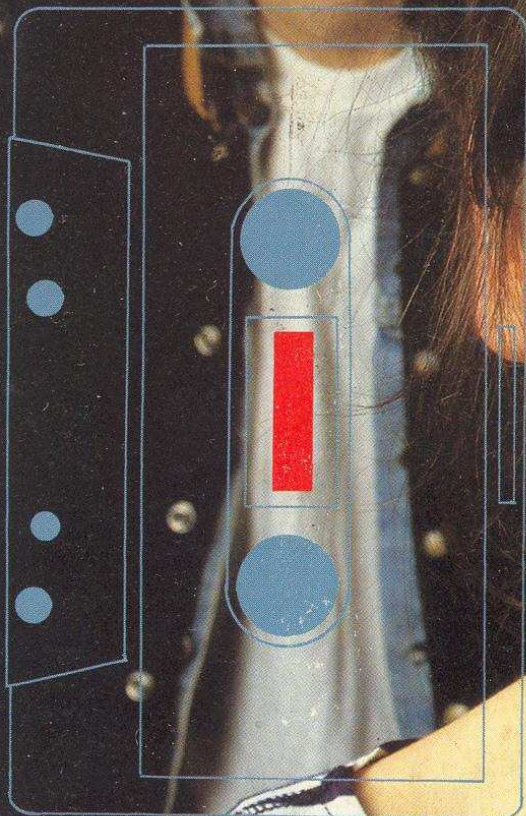
+

CREATION RECORDS,
BIG DIPPER, UT,
DARLING BUDS,
POOH STICKS,
ROTTEN SWINES,
JASMINE MINKS,
and more...

+ the first token for the
UNDERGROUND/ROUSKA RECORDS
EXCLUSIVE COMPILATION!

THE FLATMATES

Sexy bed-tales of raunchy rock chicks (almost!)





throwing muses : house tornado

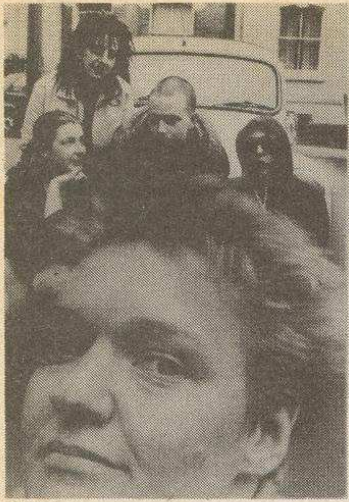
L.P. CAD 802/CASSETTE CAD C 802
COMPACT DISC (INCLUDES 'THE FAT SKIER' MINI-L.P.) CAD 802 CD



Pixies SURFER ROSA

L.P. CAD 803/CASSETTE CAD C 803
COMPACT DISC (INCLUDES FIRST ALBUM 'COME ON PILGRIM') CAD 803 CD



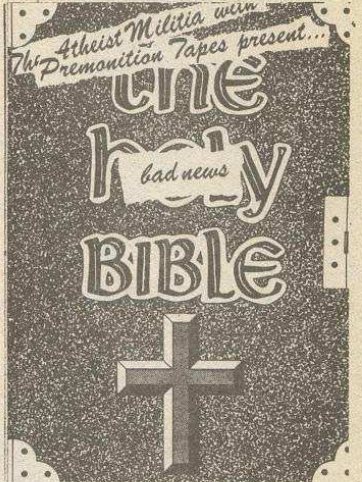


Cherubs from Hell

THE KRAY CHERUBS are six terminal "noise bastards" who, after two years of artistic endeavour and beating shit out of their instruments, are creating the most gloriously untamed din ever to grace western culture. ● This particular bunch of discordant deviants include in their line-up one **Edwin Pouncey**, aka **Savage Pencil**, and it's him that's unfairly getting all the credit/blame for the Cherubs monster. ● "I don't want people to think of The Kray Cherubs as Savage Pencil's band. All the members contribute equally," says Edwin. ● It's his reluctance to take all the Cherubs-related infamy for himself that's the reason behind their debut single, No, on Fierce Records, not having a Savage Pencil illustration as a cover. ● Instead, it's **Pat Cherub's** handiwork that's on display. She, along with Savage Cherub (as Mr Pouncey styles himself), **Liz, Alison, Debbie** and **Eddie**, also helped to write their repertoire of some 300 songs. ● On hearing their beautifully shapeless cacophonous masterpieces some have wondered if it's all just a joke. Edwin gets a **bit miffed** at this. ● "We're not just pissing about. We all do things outside The Kray Cherubs but that doesn't mean we don't take it all very seriously." ● But the single is on Fierce Records, a label notorious for telling fibs. They don't usually bother asking people for their permission to release material, so is No an official release? ● "It's semi-official. They were watching us rehearse and unknown to us they bootlegged it. Then they approached us later about putting out part of the tape as a single and we agreed." ● The band plan to stick with Fierce for their next single. Apparently they're going to the Swansea label's commune to record a version of their pop classic **Rot In Hell (Mom)**. Also, Fierce executives are quite keen for them to 'lay down' their cover of **The Runaways'** Cherry Bomb which has been acclaimed as "perfect". ● But all this 'musical' activity might leave the Cherubs with very little time to indulge the darker side of the group. According to sources close to them, the band are part of a witches' coven in Barking which meets every Tuesday that there's a full moon, where each member ceremoniously makes love to a life-size image of **Jimi Hendrix**. None of the members are willing to comment on this but, by all accounts, this is why they sound so demoniac. ● So, with **black magic** and songs like Rot In Hell (Mom) on their side, the Kray Cherubs will surely be the "real bona fide no shit **EVENT**" that Fierce promise. After all, the Devil looks after his own. **Anthony Farthing**

SUB culture

Life and how to abuse it!



HOLY HORRORS

The latest release from Premonition Tapes (Freepost, Sheffield S11 8TE) is a weird booklet and cassette called **Bad News Bible** — with the catalogue number PREM 23 (oooooh, psychic!). Featured acts include **The Bland, Venus Fly Trap, Con Dom, Icons Of Noise, Toffee Apple Forest** and more. Weeeeyud!



BEAT IT!

Can't Be Beat magaroon reaches issue two after a sharp intake of breath, and it looks quite grand with it. A free flexi featuring **The Wait** plus features on **The Psylons, Bourbonese Qualk, Breathless, Absolute Grey** and a bundle more make it well worth investing in. Try it from **Ian H, 69 Springwood Road, Lordswood, Southampton SO1 6HY.**



PRETENTIOUS, MOI?

USUK release a video single complete with a free Sloane Riot T-shirt and, yes, it's straight out of **Sigue Sigue Sputnik's** bottom drawer — with none of the humour. Rap theatrics that crunch to a grinding halt cos these dudes have no personality. Rent it from selected vid shops (or don't bother).

3 UNDERGROUND

JUST GIVE ME **13** GOOD REASONS!!!

FACT & FICTION	<small>gossip, feedback and more</small>	_____	5
SUB-CULTURE	<small>associated garb, radio, gushing praise plus</small>	_____	8
FULL-SCAM	<small>grinding news on DARING BUDS, UT, JASMINE MINKS</small>	_____	9
REVOLUTION	<small>albums</small> 12	<small>re-issues</small> _____	20
THE FLATMATES	<small>sexy undercover stuff</small>	_____	22
THE MEKONS	<small>so drunk it hurts</small>	_____	27
SHARP PLASTIC	<small>Creation recalled</small>	_____	28
PETER MURPHY	<small>solo, it hurts</small>	_____	29
MICRODISNEY	<small>road-weary tales</small>	_____	31
TOTAL NAMEDROP	<small>scanning the hot plates with PLAYGROUND, THE ROTTEN SWINES, HOUSE OF LOVE, THRILLED SKINNY</small>	_____	32
ALIEN SEX FIEND	<small>bonkers combo's backpages</small>	_____	35
ANDY KERSHAW	<small>travel and the single man</small>	_____	37
TIP SHEET	<small>demo tapes reviewed by Medium Cool's Andy Wake</small>	_____	38
EYEBALL ON THE WORLD	<small>America brings us PERE UBU, BIG DIPPER, SUGAR CUBES and...</small>	_____	40

UNDERGROUND: flatsharing chrome heads
ISSUE 13: spoolishly lucky
EDITOR David Henderson
DESIGNER Rod Clark
CREATIVE SCRIBBLERS
 Alex Bastedo, Nick Brody, Vachel Booth, Robert K Cohen, Johnny Dee, Julian Henry, Daz Igymeth, Alex Kadis, Carole Linfield, Christopher Mellor, Dick Mescal, Mick Middles, Peter Perturbed, Ripley, Ronnie Randall, Shend, Holly Wood
INTERNATIONAL TERRORISTS
 Vittore Baroni (Italy), Jan Cux (West Germany), Tony Fletcher (USA), Anthony Fragos (Greece), Mats Lundgren (Sweden), Brad Manson (Neptune), Gerard Nguyen (France), Ken Roseman (USA), TC Wall (Canada)
ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER Jon Newey
ADVERTISEMENT REPRESENTATIVES
 Paul Basford, Harry Hellyer
CLASSIFIED
ADVERTISEMENT SALES
 Andrina Mackee
ADVERTISEMENT ASSISTANT Margaret Curle
ADVERTISEMENT PRODUCTION MANAGER
 Kathy Ball
CIRCULATION MANAGER
 Peter Shaw
PUBLISHER Eric Fuller
MANAGING DIRECTOR Mike Sharman
Published by Spotlight Publications Ltd
 Greater London House
 Hampstead Road
 London NW1 7QZ
Telephone 01-387 6611
Telex 299485 Music G
Fax 01-388 5010
Distribution
 Spotlight Magazine Distribution,
 1 Benwell Road, London N7 7AX
Telephone 01-700 4600
Typeset by Offshoot Graphics Co,
 17-18 Great Sutton Street,
 London EC1
Printed by
 Chesham Press, 16-18 Germaine St,
 Chesham, Bucks
ISSN 0951-502X
 © Spotlight Publications 1988

4 UNDERGROUND

Part three of *Underground's* Educational Entertainment Program starts here. . .
 as we
 (hand on heart)
 proudly announce. . .

THE UNDERGROUND/ROUSKA RECORDS

EXCLUSIVE COMPILATION LP

Wahooooo!

Yes, collect token one from the subscription insert in the centre pages and add it to the tokens in the next two issues, and you'll be able to get this fabbo black plastic disc for a piffling £2.50.

The album features. . .

- 1 track × THIRD CIRCLE
- 2 tracks × WMTID
- 2 tracks × DUSTDEVILS
- 2 tracks × SON OF SAM
- 2 tracks × THE GOOD SHEPHERDS
- 2 tracks × LITTLE BROTHER
- 1 track × CASSANDRA COMPLEX

... in a flurry of spesh mixes, rare tracks and suchlike. And yes, it'll look fine and dandy propping up our other special offer albums, namely UNDERGROUND/WIRE's Tapped and UNDERGROUND/RED FLAME/INK's Ashes And Diamonds. If you've missed those earlier platters, check page 30 for "while stocks last" blurb! More details to follow. . . dit, dit, dit!



The legendary Rouska's: Son Of Sam

Over the hill to country freedom

Summerhill and the re-education of music. . .

Summerhill: chic and westie!



I WAS NEARLY A SUEDEHEAD!

Ivor Perry and Cradle tales



The Cradle (with Ivor extreme right)

"I don't speak to our kid, you know?" **Ivor Perry**, mainman of the revitalised **Cradle**, draws on his fag and recalls the split up of **Easterhouse**. After a punch up with brother **Andy** there was no talk of musical differences, just starting something new.

- "He's doing all dance stuff now. He's spent a year doing three tracks. Weird ain't it?"
- Yeah. Suppose.
- Ivor, however, *has* been busy. After **Easterhouse** there was **The Cradle** and *It's Too High on Rough Trade*. A bulky 45 that promised much but did little. Better things, bigger things were wanted, then **The Smiths** split.
- "I'd known **Morrissey** for ages and he asked me to do some stuff with him and **Andy Rourke** and **Mike Joyce**, but it was never going to work out. It was like they wanted another **Johnny Marr**. . . or if they didn't it would have just been those kind of comparisons from people hearing it. It was a strange time and it ended up with **Morrissey** running out of the studio, he couldn't handle it. The tracks were never finished."
- One of those tracks, **Bengali In Platforms**, was set to be the flipside of the withdrawn **Stop Me If You've Heard This One Before**, but, well, that's history now. Instead Ivor opted to resurrect **The Cradle** with a new line-up. Demos were done, new vocalist **Craig Davies** came and went, going solo on *Rough Trade* — which resulted in **The Cradle's** departure from the label. But the demo's are strong, and *different* too.
- "We got a new vocalist and have plenty of strong material that's drifting into a much more commercial area. Still rock, mind, but more attuned to accessibility. It's stuff that needs money spent on it, which could really do well."
- Sure enough, that's true, and the group have already impressed producer **Gil Norton** with their potential. . .
- "He wants to produce us, so all we need now is some label support to get us out to the public."
- Current interest suggests that this won't be long in coming, but for now he'll have to make do with half a Guinness and another smoke (I left my cheque book in my pin-stripe pocket). **Dave Henderson**

Neil Scott's spent the last few years hawking himself around as 'rent-a-guitarist', he's played with **Everything But The Girl**, **Felt**, **The Wishing Stones** and others too numerous (or embarrassing) to mention. Last year he linked up with **Snakes Of Shake** just as they were shedding their final skin. **Seori**, lead snake and writer, was disappointed with what the group had become but found in Neil a kindred spirit. Neil, constantly frustrated by the limitations all these groups had placed on his creative input, was happy when **Seori** decided to break up the group and start again with himself and Neil as the nucleus. It was time to settle in, so, naming themselves after **AS Neill's** extraordinary 'open' school, **Summerhill** were born.

- Now **Rocket 5**, a new Scottish indie label, have released **Summerhill's** first single, *I Want You*, backed with three other tunes. *I Want You* (not the Bob Dylan song) is based on a twisted off-kilter **Byrds**-y riff that could have been cultered from their **Mr Tambourine Man** period. It's not typical of **Summerhill's** output, and if asked to name their favourite **Byrds** records **Seori** and **Neil** both plump for the later countrified stuff. This is where their heart lies.
- Neil: "We're really crafting the songs now. Of the last couple of songs we've written, one's an out and out country ballad, and the audience assumes it's a cover and I take that as a compliment. It's like with **The Byrds' Sweetheart Of The Rodeo** LP, it's hard to tell the standards from the **Gram Parsons** songs."
- **Seori**: "**Sweetheart Of The Rodeo's** fundamentally different from what we do though. That set out as a specific country album but we're not setting out to do country music. It'd be preposterous anyway, you could never be 100 per cent country being from this country. If you look at stuff like **Brinsley Schwartz**, when you play that alongside the **Burritos** it's just rubbish, country pub rock."
- Do **Summerhill** shy away from the country themes then?
- **Seori**: "No. Country's talked about as though the themes of country music are abstracted from our experience whereas they're not. What's the difference between going to a honkytonk and getting cheated by your woman, or going down the disco, getting drunk and losing your bird? It's the same thing. Heartache isn't an American theme. Losing isn't either. Losing, loneliness, heartache, those are the main country themes (occasionally animals, small children), those kinda things happen everywhere."
- As yet **Summerhill's** recordings are a little too tastefully executed, too respectful, evoking the country giants, seamlessly incorporating the odd **Creedence** reference, but it's on stage that they've found their identity. Live they produce a bone-crunching country sound that's as far from redneck boogie as from soporific pub rock. When **Seori's** guitar drops down around his knees, school's out.
- And what do you know? Even before the great mass of public enthusiasm has taken to **Summerhill's** brand of whatever, **Virgin** seem to have picked the group up by the scruff of their checked shirts. Instant hits? Tasteful pop in the charts again? It could very well be. . . **Vachel Booth**

fiction

SO, WE have it on good authority that **The Soup Dragons** have signed to **WEA**, but wonder why **Melissa** from **Voice Of The Beehive** was sitting in such a hippy-esque pose on **Going Live** last week. The **BBC** cameramen didn't know where to put their bi-focals and **Gordon The Gopher** almost blushed.

Former **Tip Sheet** and **T Namedrop** types **The Miracle Mile** have signed a publishing deal and are currently negotiating a contract with a US label who'll handle their **Miracle** single **Bless This Ship**. Nice pop in the **Orange Juice** pattern.

More comic factions explode onto the scene as **Caged In** issue six scrawls into the office. For a miserly 50 pence, you can almost check what they're going on about. get it from 14 Woodlands Drive, Hawarden, Deeside, Clwyd. And, in the north east the artoonists do **Ginchy Gazette**, an A4 set of 'toons that are well scribbled but maybe need a few storylines. Get it at **Baggy Studios**, 61 Musgrave Gardens, Glesgate, Durham.

New release from **ROIR**, the NY tape label, is **The End Of Music As We Know It**, a concept compilation with sleeve notes by **Steve Albini**. The tracks were recorded in two hours (each) and are **Bobby Weird!** Groups giving their strangeness in vats include **Honey-moon Killers**, **Prong**, **Of Cabbages And Kings** (featuring members of **SWANS**), **Thurston Moore**, **Bank Of Sodom** (**Jello Biafra** and a **Shockabilly** or two), **Royal Trux** (including a **Pussy Galore**) and **Needle Nose** (featuring various **Live Skulls** bods). Coming soon through **Red Rhino**.

Channel 4's new music prog will be **Wired**, a duo-capital (London and New York) blast featuring new bands and old faithfuls in a news and performance scenario (man!). It'll start in May.

Heavy vibes and psyche lay-outs appear in **Freakbeat** (£1.50 from **Ivor Trueman**, 23 Parkside Road, Hounslow, Middlesex) and there's a flexi featuring **The Steppes** and **The Bevis Frond Museum** too. Selected mind-blowing features include **The Smoke**, **Plasticland**, **Jefferison Airplane** and more.

Rumour has it that **John Carpenter** — producer of **Escape From New York**, **Dark Star** etc — has four new pictures released real soon. the first of these is **Prince Of Darkness** starring **Donald Pleasance** which will open on Friday May 13 (der.da.du.da).

Homestead's plans for the spring include a limited edition 12 inch of **All Going Out Together** by **Big Dipper**, taken from their **Heavens** LP, which

fiction

will be followed by seven inches from new signings **Honor Role**, **Happy Flowers**, **GG Allin** and **Nice Strong Arm**. This rabid activity will be followed by new LPs from GG and Happy Flowers and an album from new signings **My Dad Is Dead**.

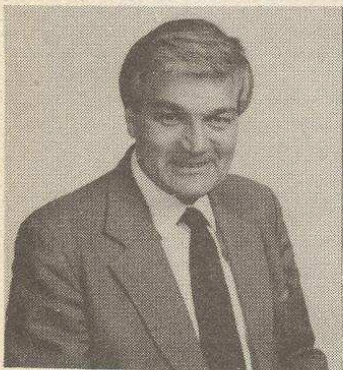
Another former tip for the top (as **Cathy McGowan** might have said before she started on **Daytime Live**), **Jass** have a 12 inch ready to roll on both sides of the Atlantic on the groovy Wax Trax label.

The Central Slate label is touting **The Lungs** — recommended for art and grand calendars — who are currently on tour with **Fflaps**. They also tell us that they'll soon be releasing a tape compilation with tracks from great Welsh people of our time including **Fflaps**, **Datblygu**, **Cut Tunes**, **Crisialav Plastig**, **The Lungs** and **Another Perfect Vegetable**. No mention of **Neil Kinnock** here!

Exciting and totally no information on new things coming fast from SST. Bulletins bleat about albums from **Steve Fisk**, **Sister Double Happiness**, **Pell Mell**, **Semantics**, **Carbon**, **Run Westy Run** and more.

T Minus 10 called to tell us that following our brilliant review of their demo in **Tip Sheet** some old lady in Cleethorpes has been festooned with calls because we printed the wrong contact number. What we should have printed was 01-530 6568. So, budding A&R people, catch them there... and sign them!

Abstract have picked up one of the **Tip Sheet**ers too. **The Jeremiahs** — who we raved over — have signed to the label and a single is imminent.



BUILD ME UP BUTTER-CUP!

Did you know that there's a mag called **Underground** that deals with buildings and tunnels? You probably meant to pick that one up instead. Well, in our mail bag this week we received a missive telling us that **Noel Wrighton** (above) has been appointed chairman of **Pipe Jacking Association**. With the growth of house music, we just thought you might like to have that pointed out.



Dave Gedge: Present and correct

after the fact

Robert K Cohen's **Big Comment**

I don't suppose that **Stock, Aitken** And **Waterman**'s main career aim has been to get into both the official *and* the independent charts. However, that's what they did, courtesy of **Kylie Minogue**'s *I Should Be So Lucky*. Further puncturing the artificial barriers between 'independent' and 'mainstream' music were Top Ten invaders **Coldcut** and **Bomb The Bass**. **The Sugarcubes** made the Top 30 despite shunning the attentions of many drooling majors, while **The Primitives** made the Top 20 by *not* shunning them. Crash is now available as a limited edition gatefold ten inch.

The Wedding Present haven't been doing too badly either, despite hauling around the predictable cross of being hailed as successors to **The Smiths**. • Such comparisons must be a royal pain in the band's collective bum, but the inheritance of some of **Morrissey**'s pen-pals is an ambiguous problem for **David Gedge**.

"I get people writing to me with their problems," he told *NME*, "the letters say things like 'Then she left me and I was stranded at the station and I only had 10p so I couldn't get home so I had to sleep on a park bench and I didn't even have a match'. I just rip off their ideas for our next song."

Whether Morrissey ever did this is not known (as yet, but who can tell what fresh law-suits might bring?). What is known is his obsession with **James Dean**. The man who don't dig vids went to Indiana for his *Suedehead* promo, in which he visits JD's grave. This was probably some kind of research project, Morrissey being the author of the best-seller, *James Dean Is Not Dead. We await the tome's appearance in a new edition as James Dean IS Dead, At Least According To This Remarkably Authentic-Looking Headstone*.

As Moz worships Jimmy Dean, so *Melody Maker* worships **The Alarm** — at least, that's the impression you might get from the widespread coverage they afford them. A few weeks back, the "Live!" pages contained yet another Alarm review, penned by **Push**, one of the many *MM*-ers who lack the confidence to take responsibility for their own rantings. ★ The review, naturally, takes the form of a fanatically negative mini-essay on The Alarm, which could have been written without attending the gig (not that I'm suggesting it was attended. God forbid). ★ Push describes their songs as "vapid vacuums, invertebrate, invalid appeals to human optimism". ★ We know it all by heart, and we hope Push enjoyed itself. Meanwhile, dozens — perhaps hundreds — of more deserving acts were playing across the country, ignored by *MM* — eternal champions of the innovative and the new.



Morrissey: "Look, no vest!"

Talking of which, **Madness** are back. **Sorry** — THE **Madness** (to give them their new super-group title) are back. **Carl Smith** and **Suggs** told *NME* that they'd "never really split up as such". **Mark** and **Woody** probably thought all that farewell-gigging had something to do with splitting up, but it seems it had more to do with dumping them from the band. Well, that's how history is now written, and *NME* takes it pretty much at face-value: *no way* have they reformed for the money. But **Madness** never could do any wrong in their eyes.



Suggs: split ends

According to **David Quantick**, conductor of the interview, "We need them". That remains to be seen. Right now, I need them about as much as I need The Who: at least they managed to keep **Rick Astley** off the TV for five minutes. Now all we need is for The Rolling Stones to get back together — oh, they haven't split yet (or have they?).

arrogant Feedback

UN-KNATURAL GIRLS?

"I was repulsed by your feature on **The Shamen** in *Underground* (ish 12) where the group condoned pornography unchallenged. I also had the misfortune to see the group and was disgusted by their film shows which abused females, featuring oral sex excerpts. I don't think *Underground* should be party to this kind of exposure." — Andrew

The feature itself didn't actually condone the use of pornography, or glorify it, it was more concerned with **Colin Angus**'s desire to use that material and juxtapose it with other circumstances, making a mockery of it. Unfortunately, with anything that is crossing barriers of acceptance like that, the end result is prone to be confused and can either put people off pornography, or the perpetrators of the juxtaposition — in this case **The Shamen**. The choice is of course yours, so if you don't want to buy their records or see them live then they have failed to attract. And if they are using such a volatile weapon as pornography that's being construed as dangerous,

then maybe it's time for them to think again in their presentation.

JOY AND DEATH!

"I read **Mick Middles**' article on the resurrection of **Joy Division** with some interest, but I must say that, having made the band a part of my life, I don't want them to be abused by commercialism. **Joy Division** are best left in the dark solemn caves from which they emerged." — Barry

Surely, it's up to each individual to enjoy **Joy Division** how they like. **Mick**'s piece was exploding a few myths about what the group were really like, rather than the image that they created. Rank commercialism is a bad thing, but **Joy Division** are far superior to a lot of today's music and deserve to be placed in their rightful position. If you want to leave them in solemn caves, that's fine, but let others keep their memories differently.

BANG, YOU'RE DEAD!

"While your magazine covers music press darlings, unknowns and whip-

ping boys alike, it's missed out on **The Crazy Pink Revolvers**, who seem to have been neglected by everyone. A full blown feature in *Underground* must be just around the corner." — Shaun

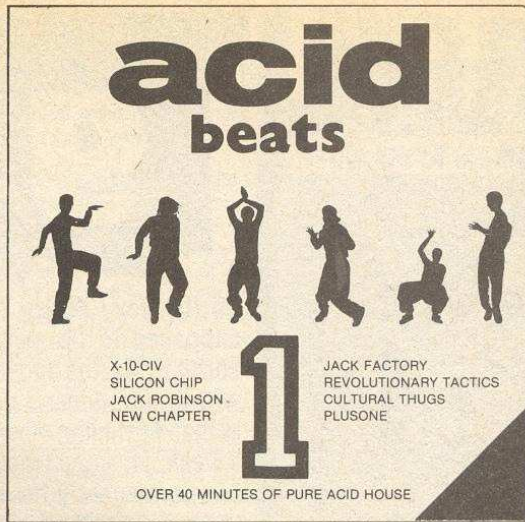
Well, don't hold your breath, Shaun. You might have been bitten by the Pink bug, but, apart from a brace of press releases telling *Ug* what the Pink Revolvers are going to do, we've heard little else to suggest that they're as good as you say. We're waiting with our ears open, though.

OI! YER MAD!

"Where can I find out more about **Infa Riot**, **Betrayed**, **4 Skins**, **Attila The Stockbroker** and groups like them? And where can I get their records?" — Michaela

Are you sure about this, Michaela? Well, if you must, try the Link label through **PRT** who do the majority of Oi stuff. Link are at PO Box 164, London SE13 5QN.

NEW ALBUM
 by
 CAST OF THOUSANDS
 'PASSION'
 (AFTER 6)
 OUT NOW
 on
 FUN AFTER ALL
 THRU' PINNACLE



acid beats - VARIOUS
 (WRLPO03)
 WARRIOR RECORDS THROUGH PINNACLE

7 UNDERGROUND

**Strange Fruit
THE PEEL SESSIONS**

SYD BARRETT

TERRAPIN
GIGOLO AUNT
BABY LEMONADE
EFFERVESCING ELEPHANT
TWO OF A KIND

BUZZCOCKS

FAST CARS
PULSE BEAT
WHAT DO I GET

Cud

MIND THE CAP
YOU'RE THE BOSS
DON'T BANK ON IT
YOU SEXY THING

The Very Things

MESSAGE FROM DISNEY TIME
DOWN THE FINAL FLIGHT
PHILLIP'S WORLD SERVICE
WALL OF FIR

Nighttracks
The Janice Long Sessions

Danielle Dax

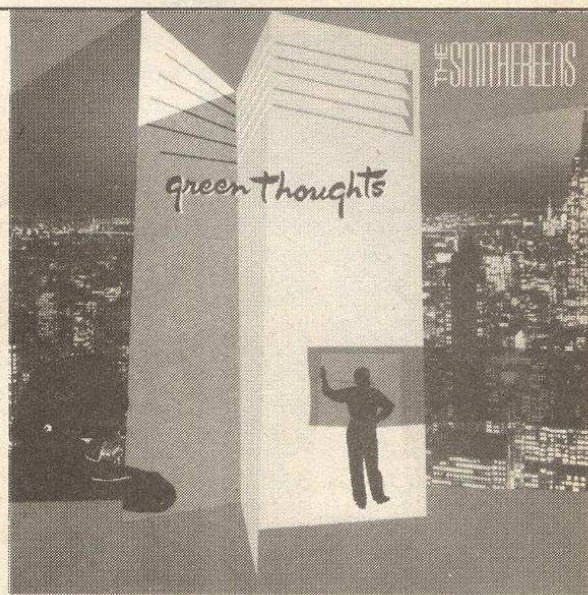
FIZZING HUMAN BOMB
PARIAH
OSTRICH
NUMB COMPANIONS

**The
Flowerpot Men**

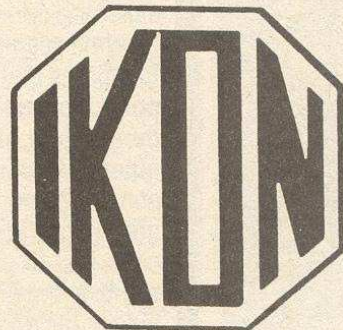
SHARPEN MY HEART
ALLIGATOR BAIT
BEAT CITY
DJANGO

12" EPs of historic Radio 1 Sessions
for collectors

THE SMITHEREENS



'GREEN THOUGHTS' available
 on LP-(8375-1) CASSETTE (8375-4) CD (8375-2)
 ENIGMA THROUGH PINNACLE - 0689 73144



V I D E O

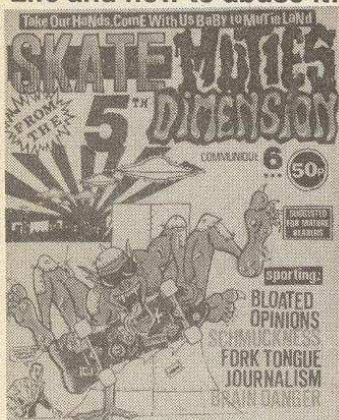
A Certain Ratio • A Witness • Antony Balch • Big Flame • The Birthday Party • Biting Tongues • William S. Burroughs
 Cabaret Voltaire • Peter Care • Chevalier Bros. • Crispy Ambulance • C.T.I. • Danielle Dax • John Dowie
 Durutti Column • Einstürzende Neubauten • Mark Elliott • The Ex • The Fall • 52nd St. • John Giorno • Brion Gysin
 Kevin Hewick • Hunters and Collectors • James • Derek Jarman • Jazz Defektors • Joy Division • Kalima
 Daniel Landin and Richard Heslop • Latte • Liaisons Dangereuses • The Mackenzies • The Moodists • The Names
 New Order • Brian Nicholson • Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark • The Residents • The Royal Family and the Poor
 Section 25 • Severed Heads • The Shrubs • Stockholm Monsters • S.R.L. • Swamp Children • Throbbing Gristle
 Tools You Can Trust • Nick Turvey • Tuxedo Moon • 23 Skidoo • Ivan Unwin • Virgin Prunes • Malcolm Whitehead

IKON, 120 MANCHESTER ROAD, ALTRINCHAM, CHESHIRE WA14 4PY TEL 061-928 7387

ALL THROUGH PINNACLE - 0689 73144

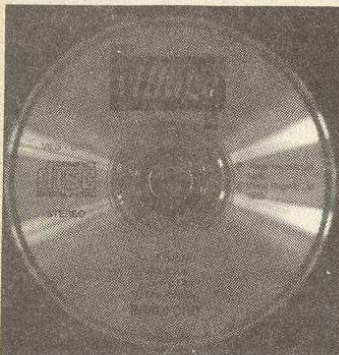
SUB culture

Life and how to abuse it!



STILL MUTIE!

Skate Muties In The 5th Dimension just keeps on keeping on with a new spanking communique (number six) out now from all nice places like the Rough Trade Shop. It takes three years to read!



BRADFORD CALLING!

Village Records have gone into promoting the debut single by ex-Tip Sheeters Bradford in a big way. They now offer a three track CD of Skin Storm and are muscling into the press with some intimate letters of introduction. More power to their boots.



STRANGER STILL!

The Bam Caruso co-op have put together their own mag, *Strange Things* focusing on left-field subversives and psyche supremos. They plan to unleash ten issues per year through Revolver and the Cartel and the first lavishly packaged read boasts features on Syd Barrett, The Kinks, Psychic TV, Robyn Hitchcock, beach movies, The Dukes Of Stratospher and more.

gush

... an enthusiastic tirade from Prince Muso

So the poxy **Roxy** has finally bitten the dust, eh? And we're supposed to be surprised? Funny how a programme, set up solely to ape the nauseating **Top Of The Pops**, should wonder why it, too, doesn't get 11 million viewers, when the whole point is that 11 million viewers can only stomach the programme once a week, let alone twice. (Besides which, most viewers these days are permanently hovering between BBC1 and Channel 4, since the most exciting thing on ITV's horizon is a repeat showing of **Auf Wiedersehen, Pet**, and even that's now looking doubtful. I mean, can they really only find it in themselves to churn out poor copies of other programmes? I mean, **Sporting Triangles**, I ask you...

What else? Well, we know the charts have been blinking awful for centuries past, but have they ever been so, well, forgettable? Can you remember how that new **Voice Of The Beehive** single goes? Go on then, whistle it. See? Y'can't. And their last one, too. Instant disposable pop taken to its logical extreme. . . you can't even remember it, let alone loathe it.

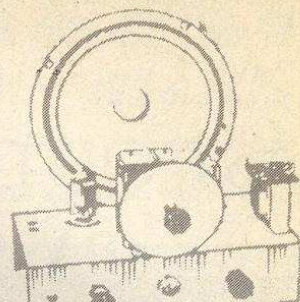
OK, so it's a bit tuff trying to recall the hookline of the latest **Culturcide** outpouring, but after all, that's not been force-fed to you by intra-aural drip feed for weeks on end at great expense to the pluggers ("...what colour would you like your Porsche Mr DJ sir pink yes pink that's possible first thing tomorrow oh yes of course matching leopardskin covered cellular phone and in-car CD. . .").

What's more, can you remember what some of these lumps look like? No, I know that's often a blessing, but despite the teenie mags plastering the acne-ridden mugs of **Wet Wet Wet** and **Hue And Cry** all over their not very glossy pages (now printed on sort of semi-matt toilet paper because revenues are slim since no-one wants to advertise in any other pop rag but *S Hits* any more) you would still have trouble recognising their whitehead-speckled faces if you found them leering over the reduced calorie baked bean counter in your local **Tesco's**.

And why the sudden eruption of not very nubile, sexually totally unexciting female singers, eh? **Tiffany** is hardly the most smouldering looker since **Madonna**, and her songs are about as appetising as Stavros' donner kebabs, yet the sight of her clutching an inflatable artichoke in some suburban shopping precinct seems to be the best thing the youth of today can muster to inflame their loins. Of course, she doesn't, which is the whole point. Her and **Kylie** ("*Naaaybers, ev'rybody needs good naaaybers, wiv a little understanding. . .*" etc) **Minogue** and that other one whose name I can't even remember (you know, she's about 12 and all sanctimonious and writes her own songs and goes to bed at eight after doing her homework and probably some extra just to please teach) are so squeaky clean that they don't stand a snowflake in hell's chance of sending male adolescent pulses racing or hormone levels peaking.

Sadly, that's the whole point, since it all boils down to the reality of the scared and helpless post-AIDS society. I mean, sex (only with a condom and preferably with someone you've found out a bit about and who hasn't had any strange bisexual or other dodgy relationships or used any manky needles or been to Africa lately) and drugs (only with clean works or otherwise not intravenously administered) and rock 'n' roll (just so long as it doesn't get you aurally intoxicated enough to throw caution to the wind or lyrically exploit or encourage the foregoing of the points mentioned above) doesn't quite have the same ring to it, does it?

What's happening on local radio?



MASTERBLAST

THE TEAM: EVERY SUNDAY EVENING 7-8PM. BBC RADIO NORTHAMPTON: 103.6/104.5 FM OR 1107m MEDIUM WAVE

It's the same old story — another local radio station with too much boring talking, too many bland records. Until... a year and a half ago, in downtown Northampton, a new show called **The Team** started playing indies, hip-hop, reggae, and all of the things that never normally get any airtime.

As you might imagine it's put together by a team of interested young people from the local area, who had a desire to be involved in radio, but not necessarily any experience. The show is organised by **Denise Brown** who co-presents with one of the team each week. Going out on a Sunday night, from 7 to 8, after the Top 40, it features, as well as the usual gig guide and band interviews, a 'soapbox' slot where a local band is given a chance to talk about themselves, without being pulled apart by critical presenters, and a new feature where local groups are recorded as live in the "very basic" studio.

Denise: "There's no fancy mixers so it has to be a real live band, but it's still another chance for new groups to get some airtime."

And the best groups around? "**The Plastic Infidel**, like **New Order** meets hip-hop. They're very good, well, to be honest I'm their manager so I would say that. The gothy **Venus Fly Trap** are very popular, and there's another good new indie-style group called **The Adelaides**."

It goes without saying that the music is the most important part of the show, with a typical current playlist running like this. . .

- 1 Northside **Demon Boyz** Music Of Life 12 inch
- 2 Frenz Experiment **The Fall** Beggars Banquet LP
- 3 Bus I **Skull Junior Delgado** Fashion 12 inch
- 4 You Sexy Thing **CUD** Peel Sessions EP
- 5 Nobody's **Twisting Your Arm** **The Wedding Present** Reception 7 inch

So, if you're in the Northamptonshire area, anywhere between Leicester and Milton Keynes, Sunday's a day to give your ears the varied diet they deserve. **Christopher Mellor**

8 UNDERGROUND

FULL SCAM



My tape's gone!

LAST TIME The Darling Buds came to London, King's Cross Station burnt down. This time they got up long before their breakfasts to van it to Camden to cut their great new single, Shame On You.

music from tape to disc for the first time. So obviously you've got to start with your tapes. . .

- "Guess what, this fool's forgotten to bring the tapes!"
- When The Darling Buds signed to Doncaster's Native Records, they thought

• Cutting is the process which transfers

COUNTDOWN TO BLAST OFF



Calculating the odds of success with I Start Counting

Daniel Miller and Mute Records have certainly cornered the market when it comes to promoting British electronic pop. Depeche Mode and Erasure are the two most quintessential and successful exponents of the genre. Of course, success to some is to the detriment of others and stablemates I Start Counting could be a point in case.

- Simon Leonard and David Baker, have, in four years, produced countless excellent singles and a mini-LP, but they're still relatively unknown. Why?
- Simon: "Well, we're not pretty, we haven't got a massive image, and the gear we use makes it hard for us to play live. Also, people have said we came a bit too late, which to a certain extent is true. It took us ages to get a deal, though we were making music of this form for a long time earlier."
- David: "Our records seemed to come out at the wrong time and we missed the rewards."
- The current single, Lose Him, seems to have fared better in terms of chart action, which sets them up nicely for the release of their forthcoming LP, Fused.
- The Fused LP should prove to be something special, considering the chaps have spent a lot of time and energy on it (usually in the studio till three in the morning) thus, they haven't had time to catch up on their favourite pastime, watching *Prisoner Cell Block H* on TV.
- David: "It's such a good programme, I try and catch it as much as I can."
- Simon: "Like all the Australian programmes, it's very unpretentious, unlike their British counterparts. The soaps here seem to raise issue after issue, just out of necessity. Whereas the Aussies don't try to be anything they're not."
- David: "They're like I Start Counting in a way." Peter Mash

they were signing to a together organisation.

- "But who'd come all the way down to London to cut a single and forget to bring the bloody tapes? Never mind, we'll just have to go down the pub instead."
- While the record label mogul's wife is busy putting the tapes on the first train to London, the record label mogul (Kevin) finds himself buying round after round of drinks to atone. The cut was booked for 11 am, he thinks he may be able to get back into the studio at 3 pm (actually they were eventually under-way at 7.30 pm!) but God knows what state the band'll be in by then!
- Out of Caerleon near Newport near Cardiff near England, The Darling Buds have been acclaimed as probably the best band to emerge from the fuzzy pop mayhem of the past couple of years. Certainly John Peel's said as much and fanzines like *Sowing Seeds* and *So Naive* have had no doubts.
- These DBs will be compared with The Shop Assistants and The Primitives. It's inevitable. Because they play a simple silver pop. Because they've got a personable blonde singer. And because lots of heartless jealous bastards love to desecrate this church of innocent pop.
- But there's an invigorating freshness about The Darling Buds that raises their short, sharp shocks of sound high above the usual carping criticisms. A one-string bass, a two-up, two-down drum kit, a barrage of sharpened teenage kicks guitar and a voice of genuine melodic beauty. These are the things that dreams are made of.
- So meet the band of your dreams. . .
- On drums, Bloss, frustrated Elvis impersonator.
- On bass, Chris, successful Dave Gedge impersonator, and the quietest man I've ever met.
- Bloss: "Chris is studying to be an enigma."
- On guitar, Harley. The musical genius and Jonah of the band.
- "I'm the one with the bad luck. Nothing's ever gone right for me. This business with the tapes is just typical. I'm only 22 right, but a while ago I had problems with ulcers. Ulcers! Most people have to have a barium meal so the hospital can get a good look at your insides. I had to have a barium *enema*."
- Tough luck indeed.
- And on helium-honey vocals, Andrea.
- "I'm not exactly lucky either. I lived in London once for about two months, sharing a bedsit above a restaurant with a girlfriend. One night we woke up to find the whole building on fire, and the only way was up on to the roof. So we got up there, two little girls in our nighties in the freezing cold, just screaming for help.
- "Eventually the fire brigade came, and they put up a chute for us to slide down. Now we only had our nighties on, no knickers or anything, and they wanted us to slide down this chute with hundreds of people down below watching us! I thought oh sod it, and went down the shoot, but my friend insisted she wasn't going down dressed like that. So a fireman had to take her up this huge pair of fire resistant trousers before she'd come down.
- "We were all over the papers next day, but luckily they didn't, or *couldn't*, publish any photos of my great escape. My, but it was windy though!"
- Harley: "She always sleeps in her knickers now."
- They might not be the luckiest band in the world. But The Darling Buds are the most infectious pop thrill around. Holly Wood

SUB culture

Life and how to abuse it!



BATZ ON THE RUN!

Guana Batz are captured Live Over London on a new Jettisoundz vid that runs in at 40 minutes worth of sweaty TV for around 16 quid. Also from Jettisoundz there's 45 minutes of *Frenzy* on Just Passing Through, same price and both through Pinnacle.



COMPETITION TIME!

What's In The Bag is a wild 'zine that's a snip for 25p and a largish sae from Ian at 2 Gorse Close, Droitwich, Worcs. Wackhead graphics rub off on your fingers as you try to read about *The Wedding Present*, *CUD*, *Brilliant Corners*, *Big Black* and stuff. Bit like *Ug*, really.



FREAKSHOW FAVES

Mean photo of new Sheffield partners in crime *Richard Kirk* and *Peter Hope* (well, we think it is), to celebrate their *Hoodoo Talk* album that's finally been released on Native. Yowza!!



MURPHY'S OD

Not content with being in last month's issue, having a feature in this issue and having a new album out, *Murph* breaks into *Sub-Culture* by releasing the first CD pic disc. "This is it," he says.

continued over

SUB culture

Life and how to abuse it!



BLACKMAIL CORNER ONE!

This stylishly-attired combo are **B Troop** and we'll be printing more embarrassing pictures of them next month unless they send us some money.



BLACKMAIL CORNER TWO

This lady was in *Indians in Moscow* and now works for a well known record label. Can you write a suitably witty caption for this picture? Do you know which label she works for? Answers on a postcard to...

includes
10,000 Maniacs
McCarthy
The Originals
The Waltoners
The Caretaker Race
 ♥ **Rare Breed Flexi** ♥

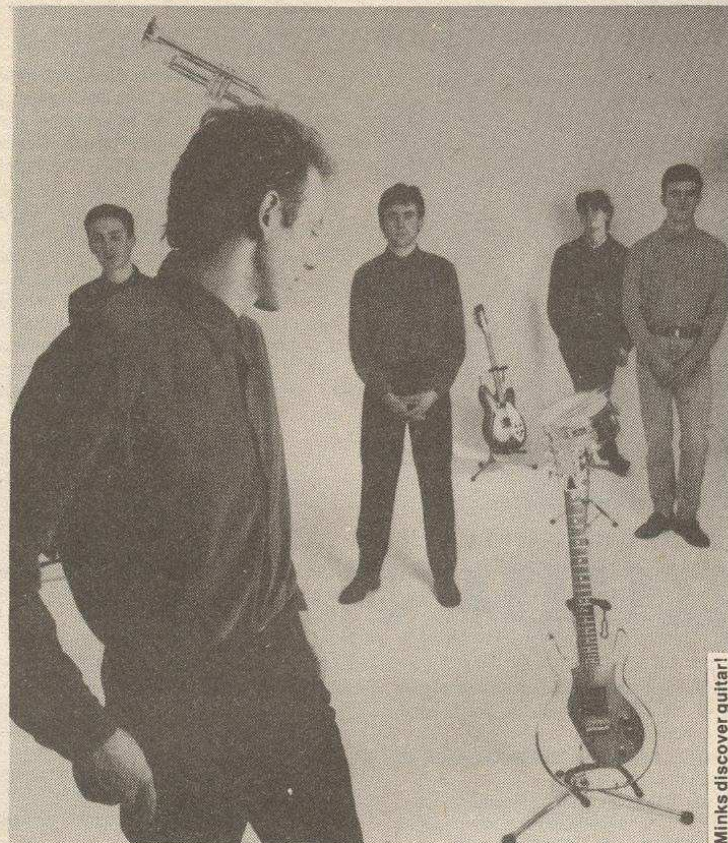
I LOVE YOU, SAMANTHA!

Issue four of *Samantha* is a riot of fax on **10,000 Maniacs**, **McCarthy**, **The Waltoners** and **Caretaker Race** and it also comes with a flexi by **Rare Breed**. All for a skimpy 60p from **Charlie**, 73 High Street, Irchester, Northants NN9 7AA.

LEGENDARY ROCKIN' DATES: APRIL

- 1 Underground launched
- 4 Arthur Negus' deathday
- 11 American civil war began
- 22 Polydor pull out of signing **Sex Pistols**
- 24 Chocolate derationing day

FULL SCAM



Minks discover guitar!

MAKE MINE MINK!

Jasmine Minks are kings of heavy metal

The Jasmine Minks don't stuff toilet rolls down their trousers, they don't have laser light shows or dry ice at their sell out concerts. The Jasmine Minks play guitars. The Jasmine Minks wear vee-neck jumpers and Harrington jackets. The Jasmine Minks have been described as wishy-washy, appalling and derivative — they have also been described as pure, exciting and fresh. They have not, as far as I know, been compared to Status Quo or Van Halen.

■ Jim is the lead singer of the Jasmine Minks, and he's sitting beside me in a cafe just outside Victoria Station, blowing on his cappacino, telling me about his band. The band, that are... the Dire Straits of indie-pop.

BAT OUT OF HELL

Jim bears no resemblance to Meat Loaf whatsoever. But there was a time when he thought that The Jasmine Minks would be bigger.

■ "When we released *Where The Traffic Goes*, we knew it was a great record, we thought we were going to be the new Beatles. One massive leap from the Living Room to Shea Stadium."

■ It didn't happen — but rock 'n' roll guru, Peter Powell, did play one of their first singles.

■ "He called it a jingle."

■ It was. Under two minutes of sheer joy — entitled *What's Happening?* — one

of the finest pop records ever, and I mean that with the sincerity usually only found on a Marillion record.

■ "We'd work out what was expected of us in the press and then we'd do the opposite. When everyone was softening up we went total punk rock."

■ This obsession with running in the opposite direction to everyone else has lead them to loathe "technology", "synthesisers" and "computers". Their new LP, *Another Age*, although brilliant in every aspect, sounds totally out of date.

■ "We're a modern band."

■ And my name's Jon Bon Jovi.

■ "These studio effects that people use, they're just gimmicks. We want to create a sound that's ours, we don't want to create a sound from £20,000 and a box."

SCREAM UNTIL YOU LIKE IT!

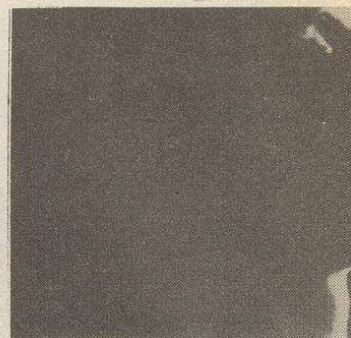
"There's only one sound you can get out of a synthesiser, but there's so many sounds you can get out of a guitar — each person gets a different sound."

■ Is your attitude nostalgic?

■ "We're an electric band. I've got no sentiments for the past. I want to get on with doing something for now. Most chart bands are just using sentimental nostalgia. They are trying to create an atmosphere yuo can just relax into. Music which basically isn't music —

WE ARE

Ut scrape back the



Ut emerged out of the New York no wave movement in 1978. This was a small community of artists and musicians stretching the limits of noise, people like DNA, Teenage Jesus And The Jerks, and Mars. Sonic Youth appeared out of the same guitar-induced mayhem about two years later.

■ And now Ut have joined Sonic Youth on *Blast First* and their latest release is an uncompromising double 12 inch package called *In Guts House*, made up of strange songs and guitar noises ranging from the indecipherable *Hotel* to the acid beauty of *Evangelist*.

■ "We did two 12 inchers because it goes in deeper that way, it made sense in terms of the songs and the order."

■ True it would be hard to take the whole thing in as two sides of an LP. It's not exactly easy listening.

■ "There's more to it than sound, we're playing *feeling*. The things that can be done with a guitar, emotionally, are endless. Basically, we are attracted to things that are deeper than surface comprehension. We don't write formula subject songs, there are many layers,

just cushions coming out of the speakers. Which is the opposite, I hope, of what the Jasmine Minks are all about."

THOSE CRAZY, CRAZY, CRAZY NIGHTS?

1987 saw no vinyl releases from the Minks, but the rock 'n' roll lifestyle didn't completely die. The band played more gigs than ever before, discovering new faith and reason at every turn. Live they definitely come into their own and there is absolutely no way you could call them wishy washy.

■ "We played a gig in France last year. We had to stretch a 35 minute set into an hour and a half. We ended up making things up as we went along. We did that one, er, *'Rubber balls keep on bouncing back to me'*."

■ Of all the songs you could have done...

■ "Yeah, but it had a lot more sexual connotations than the original."

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

Jim has never met Freddie Mercury, but I have and I thought he was a fabulous showbiz personality. Anyway, this is beside the point. The Jasmine Minks are a band with balls. If I was going to be thick I'd call them a mod band, if I was going to be clever I'd call them a soul band.

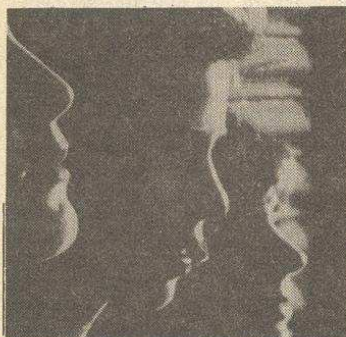
■ "Soul is a word that should be used sparingly. Soul has become a type of music, not the feeling put into it. Most so called 'soul' bands are 'soul-less'. But I'd like to think we were a soul band. Yes."

■ Describe your LP in one word.

■ "Feeling. That's what went into it. Not money — that's for sure!" **Johnny Dee**

FAMILY

sound of no wave!



Ut: in the dark?

an element of mystery. That way the music grows on you more and lasts much longer. Bob Dylan and Jim Morrison were just as obscure; we're attacking the language, we love double meanings."

- You make it sound really arty, more poetry than pop.
- "No, basically we're a rock band, three people working together as a unit. And *don't* mention feminism! Just because we're girls everybody brings it up. We just want to be considered as a band."
- In a way Ut are the *perfect* rock group. Not afraid to swap roles, each playing different instruments on different songs to get the sound they want. But they can't afford to be full time musicians. So have they ever thought of doing some more commercial tracks to try and make some money?
- "We did think of doing something under a different name but then we heard a Bangles single and changed our minds. The group is not just a hobby, but we can't tailor our music just to make money. We hate groups like Bananarama. They're so dumb, it's not much better than being a Playboy bunny."
- Part of the problem for groups like Ut is the support system in Britain.
- "The UK is in the middle ages in terms of funding the arts. Europe is much better. People are more open, they treat you well, and pay better. We don't sell more records in Europe but the live scene is certainly much healthier, especially in Eastern Europe. We've played in Poland and Hungary and they don't have a hang-up about mixing rock and art, they're not jaded. The Poles are very passionate people and they appreciate anything passionate."
- Whether you like the noise that Ut make or not, you have to admit that they are dedicated to their form of extreme art-rock.
- "We're always experimenting, we're intuitive rather than conceptual."
- What?
- "We just do things, we don't work it out first."
- Oh, I see.
- "Being in a band is like marriage. There is a very strong bond between us, and three is a very compelling number. There's no room for anybody to hide, we all have to work, there's no fat."
- Do you get on outside the group?
- "We're together all the time. I suppose it's more like sisters than being married."
- Ut are important because they believe in themselves and their music. They stretch the boundaries of sense and sound. They are a modern group making a modern noise, together. The perfect family. **Christopher Mellor**

SLUM CHUMS!

King Of The Slums on the fiddle

A song explodes. After which, we find an intriguing kind of chaos. A wayward violin flies all over the place, the vicious, jagged edges of its tone remain aggressive and, frankly, callous. The rhythm section attempts, and fails, to batten down the hatches while the vocalist pours out an endless stream of neurotic lyrical imagery, which is either downbeat surrealism or sneering cynicism, depending on your point of view.

■ As you may have gathered, King Of The Slums sound like nothing else on earth. They are not even a noise band, for within their overall cacophony lies a bewildering maze of melodic twists. What's more, and this can be most irritating, these twists tend to lodge in your mind and draw you back to the sound of King Of The Slums, again, again and again. You will find this sound sprawled ungainly across a recent EP on *Debris* magazine's Dave Haslam's Play Hard label, entitled, somewhat conceitedly, England's Finest Hopes. The song titles, as I never tire of stating, say it all. The Pennine Spitter, Venerate Me Utterly, Bedevilment's Favourite Son.... Regular Radio 2 listeners need not be alarmed. King Of The Slums will not be hogging your airtime.



Slumming it in Lancs

- I meet the nucleus of this strange unit, Charley Keigher and Sarah Curtis (Charley is responsible for the street poetry, the songwriting and the odd passing guitar, Sarah for that bloody violin) within the hyper-trendy surroundings of Manchester's Cornerhouse arts centre. The pair are profoundly uncomfortable in this environment and, I can tell, are yearning for some austere tap room in Gorton. King Of The Slums are *not* yuppies. Sarah studied violin (to Grade Eight) at the prestigious Royal Northern College Of Music before dropping out (now, there's a phrase I'd like to see brought back into vogue) at the final furlong. The only question I want to ask upon hearing this is, why?
- Sarah: "Why? Oh, it was because Charley hit someone from the College and they said that, after that, I wouldn't stand a chance of getting my diploma. I didn't mind. I really want it to be known that I hated that place and everything it stands for."
- This is an unexpected outburst, as it happens, despite the violence of her violin. Sarah Curtis is of a reserved, if intense nature. Charley, on the other hand, is a slightly louder, but curious character. He's a Mancunian, through and through. He dislikes practically all modern music and professes to "hate students". He doesn't really mean it, though.
- "I'm obsessed with lamposts," he states, quite seriously. "They seem to indicate the past. I really love those old gas ones, they are so evocative."
- I enquire, rather tentatively, just how this lampost-loving Charley manages to write such strange songs...with such strange lyrics?
- "I write all the time, really. I have written over 400 songs and, yes, it is really frustrating to be writing songs so far in advance of what is being released. I started years ago, I was so naive in those days. I remember going down to CBS with my guitar and nothing else, no lyrics. I just played them these really dodgy songs and expected a contract."
- So, he is human after all, this Charley. Perhaps he doesn't know that everyone who has been involved with a band has, at some time in the past, similarly made a fool of themselves in that CBS office.
- I first heard King Of The Slums some two years ago, when they were called Slum Cathedral User. A Fallish name if ever I heard one, although Charley will hate me for saying that. I stumbled across their demo tape among a pile of over 200, for I was a judge in some dreadful local band competition. (Believe me, listening intently to 200 demo tapes, 199 of which all sounded like The Smiths, was a truly harrowing experience.) Slum Cathedral User leapt aggressively from the pack. They won the competition. In a sense, King Of The Slums are still leaping from the pack today, albeit on a larger scale. But it hasn't been easy.
- Charley: "We've played some weird gigs, all on a shoestring. One of them was at this club in Manchester. We had no idea what kind of club it was but we just walked in and asked for a gig. To our amazement we were given six weekly spots. We thought, that was it, the big breakthrough. But people just stared in disbelief. We were fired after a couple of gigs."
- And people, I suppose, are still staring in disbelief. Sarah, though, wants to have another moan. This time it's not at the expense of the Royal Northern College of Music, it's at people like me, who flinch at that vicious violin.
- "It really annoys me when people say the violin is noise, because it isn't. We think it sounds really good, really melodic."
- Err....
- Charley: "That's right. I think we are really accessible, very tuneful."
- There's no answer to that. Just this once, I will admit defeat. I'm flummoxed. **Mick Middles**

SUB culture

Life and how to abuse it!

VAGUE



20: TELEVISIONAIRES: £2.50

VAGUENESS AND STUFF!

Vague issue numero 20 surfaces for £2.50 from good book shops and Rough Trade and features the usual over-printed m  ll  . This time it focuses on unrest in all points east of Stoke Newington, loosely catching the drift and title of Televisionaires. Recommended and intense reading, indeed!



MYSTERIOUS FISH!

So, who are **The Fish Hildas**, and where did their record come from? This mysterious seven inch, *How I Itch To Stitch My Pitch*, sounds like a wide-eyed **Kerouac** crooning over a **Spike Jones** jazz track. It's strange and no mistake and if seen should be grabbed and cherished.



PSYCHOANALYSIS COSTS CASH!

Psychoanalysis II is a new **Jesus And Mary Chain** fanzine that runs to nearly 100 pages and will cost a staggering £4.65. Not officially endorsed by the **Reids** or **WEA**, it can be obtained from **A Moir**, 23 Fairbank Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8JY or from **Rough Trade's** groovy shopette.

continued over

SUB culture

Life and how to abuse it!



PRESIDENTIAL CERTS

This multi-national team are **Person To Person**, who received due attention in a recent issue for their fabbo single Red!. We at *Underground* would just like to give them our seal of approval and say that, er, well... we saw them first.



LIMITED EDITION SCANDAL!

Exotic, existential process noise merchants, **The Plate Programme**, release the second of six cassettes in a limited edition of 20. Titled **Bond In The Shade**, it reels through **Spycatcher** and retails at a spritely £5 from Magic Mixture Records, Balham Indoor Market, Bedford Hill, London SW12. Obscure, or what?



BLACK MARKET ROCK!

This is a replica of a **Wedding Present Town And Country** ticket from last month. They changed hands for £20 a throw outside. This one arrived in our office three days after the gig. **Bastards.**



THAT'S A PRINT

Mute Film is launched with a **Depeche Mode** short entitled **Strange**. Comprising Super 8 and 16mm footage shot and directed by photographer **Anton Corbijn**, it's strong on black and white thoughtful illusion if lacking a little in storyline. Still, it's good fun to watch which is the main thing.

ADITO

AO Records (rue Albert de Latour, 30, 1030 Bruxelles, Belgium)

● 1/2 Understated new rock that's given an airy closet space by the male/female vocal exchanges. **ADITO** obviously stands for something, but the foreign tongue gives little away — other than that this four-piece have an aural view much wider than pompous pop. There isn't a lot of hope for acceptance on the cynical western front, but this is a nice, balanced album, a textured wheel rather than an industrious cog. **Ripley**

THE ANIMAL CRACKERS

So Paint A Map On My Face

Wild Orange WO 002 (Herzogstrasse 88, 8000 Munchen 40, West Germany) ●● A six track mini-LP from this German four-piece who briefly tickled the fancies of *Underground* with their **Small Loud Song 45**. That, in all its pop finery, is featured here, and as the guitars chime and the momentum picks up, the Crackers' distinctive new rock style cushions the proceedings like a comfy jumper that's just the right side of beatnik. Not colossal yet, but on the right autobahn. **Johnny Eager**

BIFF BANG POW!

Love Is Forever

Creation CRE 029

●● 1/4 Undoubtedly **Biff Bang Pow!**'s most outstanding platter to date, **Love Is Forever** is one of those contemporary pop sets that's underwritten with just enough body motions from the past to give it that all important staying power. There's a guitar line that could have come straight from the soundtrack to **The Graduate**, a string quartet-ambience that's oh-so Neil Young, a time change that's pure Love — but, best of all, **Love Is Forever** boasts a good ten tunes that're strong enough to become heartbreak tearjerkers for a new generation of swooning lonely hearts. **Biff Bang Pow!** may not be the most enigmatic of leather trouser wearers but they're pure Alan Bleasdale in a sea of **Catchphrase** game shows. **Dave Henderson**

BIOTA

Tinct

Recommended Records RRC31

●● American experiments in sound conducted by Americans with a reputation for their art. **Biota** is one of those names that lurks in the racks at your local megastore and looks a little too difficult to try — like a pizza topped with fruit as well as savouries. There's no particular noticeboard to pin them down on either, neither the musicians collective or the school of absurdists seem quite right, instead **Biota** have a place all their own, challenging, offering alternatives, breaking new ground. **Tinct** is a fine work, five tracks of seemingly seamless construction, an epic soundtrack — no less! **Dave Henderson**

THE BLUE HIPPOS

Forty Forty

Twin-Tone TTR 87124

●● 1/2 There's an edgy selection

and change-of-direction running through this **Blue Hippos LP**. These US tinklers have had some good press as they've risen to the level of auspicious left fielders, but where does one go from there? Well, these mud-wallowers have opted to get intense as they fuse strains of jazz, beat, rock, new wave, country (you name it!). Best of all, the resultant gumbo is something more than cheese on toast. A fine musical album that boasts a melody or three of style and a collection of tunes of unquenchable quality. **Dave Henderson**

BREAKING CIRCUS

Smokers' Paradise

Homestead HMS 092

●● 2/3 A hard guitar band with swatches of six string noise in abundance. The **Husks, JAMC** and **Big Black** tip a nod at **Breaking Circus** and utter a word of encouragement into their ravaged earholes. A six track pack, it kicks off with style and an instrumental theme of 'epic rock' proportions, ending with a muscular pulsator that shakes a fist under your nose and berates some "son of a bitch" who would be well advised to avoid that razor-edged geetar. You, on the other hand, should check out the 'angle' they're coming in from. **Daz Igmeth**

THE BRILLIANT CORNERS

Somebody Up There likes Me

McQueen

● 1/2 The name seems to have been floating around the subconscious forever; so, too, does the music. Which is to say that this LP is consistent in its summery, undemanding pop, but never really grasps the awareness enough to fully impress.

Two problems spring to mind, the lack of variation and depth in the vocal, and the uninspired nature of the lyrics. Good points are that they can actually write a good tune, sort of **Haircut 100** meets **The Smiths**, albeit in a very undramatic vein, making them sound just a little too subdued and laid back. With a kick up the bum and some good production, there's certainly something there to be milked, with nice touches like the sax sound and overall cleanliness of it. Just put a bit of fire in yer loins, lads! This is supposed to be fun! **Carole Linfield**

CARMAIG DE FOREST

Six Live Cuts

New Rose ROSE 143

● 2/3 There's a little bit of embarrassing drivell riding high between tracks as **Carmaig** seems intent on reproducing the ambience of the **Velvets** at **Max's Kansas City**. The six tracks were recorded in late October and reveal the good bar-room rockin' sound that **America** excels at — whereas the UK's attempts invariably sink into pub rock self-abuse. **Six Live Cuts** was probably better on the night, would be great as a bootleg cassette but lacks a little finish on vinyl. **Johnny Eager**

CCCP

Socialismo E Barbarie

Virgin Italy CCCP 005

●● 1/2 Rumours are rife that **Virgin UK** are set to release this Italian megablast in the UK, so a little hounding might prove to be to the

world's advantage with regards to securing that possibility. **CCCP** have grown from radical punk roots into something of an extreme theatre cop, but it's the music here that makes their outspoken prose — albeit in Italian — really bite. This is an album that blends the bloodrush of punk noise with the tempered folk roots of **CCCP's** environment, and the end result is a reactionary chemistry that has an incredibly unique sound. What they're on about isn't easy to understand, but you just know they're a little pissed off about something. **Dave Henderson**

THE CHAINSAW ZOMBIES

Obsession

Accelerating Blue Fish ACCLP 05

●● First glance and listen might say **Bauhaus**, but subsequent plays reveal that **The Chainsaw Zombies** are into... **Bauhaus**. To their credit they've developed the slim **Murph** moan to a new, more gritty level, but that bare chested consumptive torso could be just behind the speaker. A cult record that'll go down well in Euro leather circles — from where they hail — but will do little in **Blighty**. Enjoyable but still a little undefined. **Nick Brody**

BILLY CHILDISH AND SEXTON MING

Plump Prizes And Little Gems

Hangman HANG 10 UP

●● Either the emperor's new clothes or **Gillingham** pulling off a dramatic clinching goal in the sixth round of the **FA Cup** away to **Liverpool**... either way, this new fusion of the talents and tribulations of **Billy and Sexy** is oddball. An album that revolves around a **Bonzo Dog/Zappa** freakiness that's played on tuba and tambourine (well, almost) is a real alternative! This is wildly different, challenging and never boring. More power to their elbow, more variation and more style in the charts, please! We can but hope. **Dave Henderson**

CHILDISH AND MING

Ypres 1917 Overture

Hangman HANG12UP

● The **Holmes and Baker** of modern day rock produce a minimal set of overtures for piano and harmonium that tell the tragedy of war.

Unfortunately the master tapes weren't destroyed at **Flanders**. **Brenda Collins**

CHRIST ON PARADE

A Mind Is A Terrible Thing

Mind Matter THOUGHT 9

● Monosyllabic punky thrash from **California**. **Christ On Parade** exude angst but only a few chords, they also have little imagination in terms of song structure and delivery. A live band worth gobbing at, but a household listen that's less inspiring than a new can opener. **TC Wall**

CINDYTALK

In This World

Midnight Music CHIME 00.27S/

CHIME 00.28S ● 1/2 This is a coherent though unexciting blend of esoteric background music and aggressive attack. Whereas some will find the juxtaposition challenging, I only find it grating, and the filmic quality of the music is not beauti-

EVOLUTIONS

Distribution initials are as follows:

- B** Backs | **C** Cartel | **Ch** Charly | **FF** Fast Forward | **Je** Jetstar
- J** Jungle | **NM** Nine Mile | **P** Pinnacle | **PR** Probe | **Re** Revolver
- RR** Red Rhino | **RT** Rough Trade | **Sh** Shigaku | **SP** Spartan
- SRD** Southern

Each album title is followed by label/catalogue number and UK distributors in black bars (if there is no UK distributor, an address is included.)

- **MEGA** A godhead uprising
- **HOTSY** Tasteful and tenacious

ful enough to sustain interest. Film soundtracks are difficult enough, but when they lack all idea of the visual they have to be truly exceptional to work. This LP then, which uses cut ups, histrionics and sometimes doomy atmospherics, lacks direction. Some nice noises in there, though, and a few lilting melodies, but I found the violent attacks too self-conscious and ultimately unnecessary. **Carole Linfield**

COMEBUCKLEY

To Tim Buckley

Because Of You Boy 001 **Rec**

C ●●● A six track homage to Tim that allows this septet to dissect and re-assemble some of Buckley's songs so that a new generation, and perhaps a new set of musicologists, can sample the writing and performance style of a unique talent. That Buckley has reached legendary status and spawned many a deep-rooted depresso to create something quite moving and emotional themselves is a good thing in itself, and that Comebuckley can perform and present it so well is even better. Beyond art-rock lies a new form of beauty. Well, this old hippy thinks that might be true. . . **Dave Henderson**

COPERNICUS

Deeper

Nevermore 2087 (Box 170150, NY 11217, USA) ●●½ If Nick Cave had been brought up on jazz and beer then he would sound like this. Copernicus is a far out beat poet backed by a whole host of musicians and noise makers. There are little symbols printed on the sleeve to tell you if the music and lyrics were improvised, and most of it was. My favourite tracks are Oh God, 52 glorious seconds of the man screaming just that, and Disco Days Are Over, totally spontaneous with three vocalists and 17 musicians. Very strange. **Christopher Mellor**

PETER COYLE

A Slap In The Face Of Public Taste

Edietsa CALCLP037 **RR C**

●● But, Alice, this adventure is just too bizarre. OK, picture the scene. . . Peter Coyle used to be in The Lotus Eaters. Imagine he takes loads of

drugs and develops some intense scribble. He's really into Aubrey Beardsley, he knows his onions when it comes to pre-War outcasts and their versions of popular literature. He then makes an album. . . no, a double album, a semi-commercial soiree, a mixed up, tense and terse onslaught. Mr Coyle doesn't make it easy. . . he makes it hard, but *that's* good. This double set is intoxicating, an experience worth inhaling that smells much sweeter than Sinex and lasts a whole lot longer. Challenging but good. **Dave Henderson**

CUDU

Delivery

Materiali Sonori maso 33039

RR C ●●½ Through the disharmonic ambience of Cudu, one might expect a cover of Velvet Underground's Sweet Jane to stick out like a sore thumb, but, to their credit, that piece, plus the seven self-penned tracks, have a unique quality which straddles an obscurist bent in instrumental terms, while relying on accessible — almost filmic — phrases to reel in the listener. Delivery is a complete package which defies description, while climbing new musical heights. **Dave Henderson**

TOUMANI DIABATE

Kaira

Hannibal HNBL 1338

●¾ Hailed as one of Mali's top exponents of the Kora, Toumani is one of the younger virtuosos of this plinky stringed thing. The five pieces included display his rolling style while throbbing and humming of while almost looped, near-ambient mood floats on underneath. Hardly the beginning of an ultra-vibing new movement, but a cog in today's development for sure. **Nick Brody**

DIE SACHE

The Girl Who Stole The Eiffel Tower

Fab Records FAB-ML10 **B C**

●½ A great title for an album, but this German group's light pop songs, with squeaky-clean verse/chorus construction, does little or nothing as it treads a few too many well-worn themes. A modernist view of life, it struggles with the English language, making the end product a little less than polished. The story

- **TACKY PLUS** Lacking in finish
- DRAB** No bullets, means no hope

gets even more fuzzy with the inclusion of a Stock Aitken Waterman-penned song, leading to the conclusion that Die Sache need to be a little more selective in who they choose as bed partners. **Johnny Eager**

THE DONNER PARTY

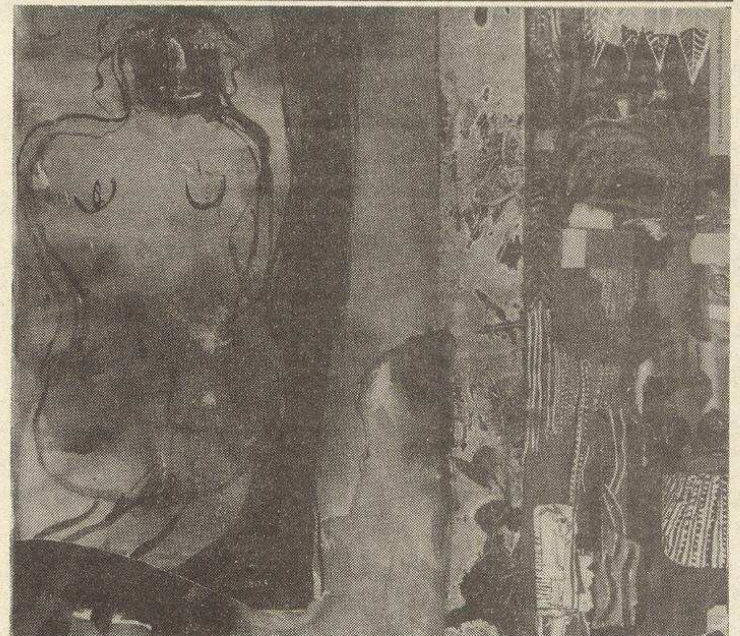
The Donner Party

Cryptovision CRL 1400 **Sh**

●●¾ This has been out a while, maybe three months, but it sure deserves your time, money, love and affection. The Donner Party aren't in

fact some strange Turkish dish that's hailed in north London, they're from the States and will, undoubtedly, be dropped in a REM-style pool for comparison. That's a shame really as, even though they write strong commercial songs in that vein, they have a lyrical and instrumental style all of their own. This debut is rich with visions of countrylands, tinged with the heat of the sun and the desert swirl, a parching hum in the ears that's well worth consulting a doctor about. **Dave Henderson**

ALBUM OF THE MONTH



THROWING MUSES

House Tornado

4AD cad802 **RT C** ●●● This is one we'll all have to live with for years to come. Throwing Muses have reached another stage in their development, making all comers redundant in the process. House Tornado is an important LP that's tense, emotional and evocative. Immersed in the Muses' minds is a sensitive but accessible vision that revolves around Kristen's intense vocals and the intertwined strands of each individual's instrumental contributions.

Throwing Muses have transcended their highly acclaimed back catalogue, moving majestically into a more vibrant, more readily available, more hooked sound — which manages to retain their haunting melodic structures. The frightening thing is this album is so good. Constant plays don't show any flaws and the projections for future tangents are so exciting that you can't help but feel that this is going to be another mighty successful year for the band and their label. **Dave Henderson**

86

Provocation

Fundamental SAVE 047 **RR C**

●¾ These chaps have a rather nifty guitarist thrusting and gesticulating like crazy beneath their inbred, unkempt rhythms. Provocation is the name of the game, for sure, and 86 explode in a rocky vein with that damn distinctive phased guitar at every opportunity. Now, that may be no bad thing in this time, when rock is suffering from post-biker blister, but is it enough? Well, frankly, it almost, nearly is. The lyrics struggle to cut through, but 86's overall power wins the day. **Johnny Eager**

ELECTRO HIPPIES

The Only Good Punk... **RR C**

Peaceville VILE2 **RR C**

●●½ Angry young men with 20 tracks — all with short, no nonsense titles — explode onto the scene with the demand that this album is a mere four quid to anyone interested. At four quid, that's, er, 20 pence per track, which is undoubtedly sound financial sense, because this blood-rush guitar barrage is great! Electro Hippies wander into the taboo subjects, shake an irate fist or two at the trends that be and disappear in a cloud of smoke up their own fretboard. It's an exhilarating experience. **Nick Brody**



Roky: ies peeking in

ROKY ERICKSON

Openers

Five Hours Back TOCK 010 **Re**

C ●● Well, this month's Roky LP acutally has something for everyone. Witness seven new, acoustic tracks which suggest that the man had combed his hair, so could actually see his guitar, plus four live cuts from '79 — including versions of Bermuda and Two Headed Dog. Undoubtedly purists and Roky-ophiles will grab this one, but there's

something for the less than converted too. **Nick Erickson**

TAV FALCO PANTHER BURNS

Red Devil

New Rose ROSE 140 **P**

●● Neatly packaged as a dinky ten inch, this features the eight tracks previously only available on their limited edition LP, which came packaged as four seven inch singles, plus two bonus tracks. It's all classic

Panther Burns stuff; wacky rock 'n' roll served with tongue in cheek, hand on heart and a finger on the trigger. The beat's always there, no matter how much the music squirms away from the mainstream, and the vocal looms predatorially over mysterious melodies like Ode To Shetar. There's even stuff you could jig along to, goddammit, like Dutch Digging, featuring a neat brass riff. A must for fans, and more constrained than many, so it's not so much of an effort for non-believers. **Carole Linfield**

KAREN FINLEY

The Truth Is Hard To Swallow

Pow Wow Art International PWAI

069 ●½ Karen Finley — oh yeah, that controversial performance artist — is back, stripped to the waist, covered in God knows what and squawking for her supper. Following the disco 45 of Belgian Waffles, this album exposes her poetic bent on a brace of dance numbers, backed with three pieces taken from a live bash. To feature the text would lead to an asterisk OD, the scam is basically that the extreme explicit nature and the forced innuendo is rammed home to get the maximum repulsion/enjoyment possible. You can admire the theory but most of the dance side is unconsidered in its mix of music and words. Perhaps the one-off ideas of the earlier single were just too hard to live up to. **Dave Henderson**

14 UNDERGROUND



NEW MODEL ARMY
RADIO SESSIONS '83-'85
 A 12 track Mid Price album featuring classic tracks from Radio One sessions with John Peel, Janice Long and David Jensen, including two unreleased tracks "I Wish" and "The Cause"
 Pay no more than £4.99
 ABT 017

SONG AND LEGEND
 A Double Compilation LP featuring 29 bands from 7 countries. Retailing for the price of a single LP
Featuring: NEW MODEL ARMY/THE LEATHER NUN/THE BATFISH BOYS/THE THREE JOHNS/THE QUIREBOYS/VOODOO CHILD/AUSGANG/BLYTHE POWER/THE BAND OF HOLY JOY/MASK FOR/DANCE ON GLASS/SORTSOL/STRANGE COLOURS/VOODOO DOLLS/THE GUNSLINGERS/THE BALLS/SOME GIRLS/THE LONDON GYPSIES/WOMEN'S NEUROSE/VIRGIL'S KISSES/THEVYLIES/THE BOYCOTTS/ABWARDS/SABELLA WALK/HELIOS CREED/THE GEITSTERFAHRER/LEGACY OF LIES/MISSING FOUNDATION/N.U.UNRUH
 Released 28th March
 AABT 700

THE THREE JOHNS CD
 A Double Album CD from the three
 The Three Johns containing the albums "ATOM DRUM BOP" and "THE WORLD BY STORM"
 Seventy-two minutes of pure "Rock-n-Roll"
 Pay no more than £10.99
 ABT 010/012 CD



FRENZY

Live At The 100 Club

Nervous Records NERD 033

● Which comes with a free colour poster of possibly the worst collage I've ever seen, featuring the band, assorted boarding passes, various 'lads' and enough tattooed skin to make several pairs of fashionable boots with. Oh, and the customary toilet shot. So now you know.

The punkabilly rivvums of this lot are actually reasonably accomplished, even if I am put off by the overriding laddishness of it all, and they certainly give value for money, cramming eleven tracks into the set, including a version of Roxy Music's Love Is The Drug which features a ludicrous drum beat. Musically, they sound something like a punkabilly version of The Ruts, but at least seem to give the audience a good time. Whether you will enjoy it or not is doubtful; this really is one for the hardcore fans only.

Frenzy are, alas, no more, and I suspect 'musical differences' were brought to bear on the band. It was fun, though, wasn't it, lads? Something to tell the grandchildren about, anyway. **Carole Linfield**

FRED FRITH

The Technology Of Tears

Rec Rec Music Rec20 **Rec C**

●● A double set, featuring the work of Frith for dance and theatre, that may surprise a few passing spectators. Fred's weirder, more unorthodox material seems to have been laid

to rest on sides one and two where turntables are played along with structured pieces, while on side three the fare could almost be classical. The best is side four, though, a flurry of sound sketches under the banner heading of propaganda, with 14 snippets of music in loop, percussive, ambient mode that somehow flow together — remembering that they're all intensely diverse. Why, there's even a slice of supermarket music in there. Just like everyday life, isn't it? **Dave Henderson**

GUANA BATZ

Rough Edges

ID NOSE20 **Rec C** ● 1/2 There's no denying that Guana Batz are perfect at what they do. They're superb exponents of rockabilly, but were born just a little too late. Later releases have suggested that they might be moving into more challenging, less obvious areas, but in Rough Edges they've opted to return wholeheartedly to what they're best at — grade A rockabilly. Now, if that's your bag, this full colour monster can be yours on both album, cassette and CD. How it matches up to the old masters of the genre is something each punter alone will have to wrestle with, but if you want your 'billy without the clicks, then this is for you. **Johnny Eager**

HANGMAN'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS

Trash Mantra

Dreamworld **RT C** ● 3/4 A mini-LP from the realms of Dan Treacy,

with warbling girle vocal and lots going on behind to the point of being messy. Things get straightened out in time for the more illiting Cats Got Nine, in which the vocal gets echoed and overdubbed to a pleasing degree, but the male-sung Something About Today sounds distorted, particularly the backing vocal, despite the fact that it has the bones of a good tune. Pared down, this could be interesting, but as it is, there's too many ideas being thrown in, and the result doesn't yet gel. **Carole Linfield**

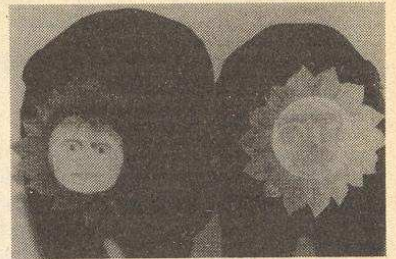
HAREM SCAREM

Pilgrim's Progress

Au-go-go ANDA 55 **Sh** ● More from the Australian onslaught, this time ensconced in rock and heady guitars. Harem Scarem, it seems, have their feet planted in the '60s, with their heads well and truly in the '80s, producing a heavy, adult music that's a little too male and muscular for my liking.

What they do, though, they do wel, with a gruff vocal by Christopher Marshall that gives the proceedings a certain heavyweight authority, while the guitars, by (presumably his brother) Charles Marshall and Barry Palmer, jangle on in the background. Nicest touch is the occasionally echoing harmonica, which gives a Dylan-esque feel to the proceedings.

Harem Scarem are at their best when they're being dramatic and heartseeking (like on Lowdown) and at their lowest when being pure rockers (like on Cold Change). If they listen a little less to Bad Company, they could progress. **Carole Linfield**



HONOLULU MOUNTAIN DAFFODILS

Tequila Dementia

Zinger Records ZINLP4 **P**

●● 3/4 As their name suggests, the HMD's gather together a selection of seemingly irrelevant ideas and mulch them into one entertaining whole. There's no info with the package, and I can only grope in the dark as to their identity thanks to their no publicity stance, but although the address is London, the sound is, to my ears, more American than British. What do we have? Well, if I said Alice Cooper meets the Walker Brothers, would you have me locked up? Yeah, it's all here, from gravel vocals to pleasant instrumentals to some excellent esoteric stuff, two most notables being (I Feel Like A) Francis Bacon Painting and Collector Of Souls.

Nice touch is the sub-HM Mule Brain (Brain Of Mule), which displays a deft sense of humour. Only Disturbo Charger sounds too raw, presenting an overly grating attack.

Lots to commend it, then... so who are you? **Carole Linfield**

The first 2,000 12inch singles for the price of a 7inch single

LOOK OUT FOR THE STICKER!!!

INTO A CIRCLE

"Evergreen"

A 3 track 12" single

12 ABS 050

THE JANITORS

"Moonshine"

A 3 track 12" single

12 ABS 047

INCREDIBLE ZOMBIE ROCKERS

"Negative"

A 3 track 12" single

Lookout for THE JERIMIAHS debut single out in April -"HONEYSUCKLE ROSE"

***** ABSTRACT SOUNDS DISTRIBUTION THROUGH PINNACLE *****

THE HUNTERS CLUB

Too Far Gone Too Turn Around

Trashcan Records THC LP 1 **C**

NM ● A six track mini LP from more trashsters from Leicester way — is it something they put in the water? Suffice it to say that people who have seen this band live think them the bee's elbows, particularly since they're four mean, leather clad honchos. Six tracks here include a truly uninspired cover of Bachman Turner Overdrive's 'Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet' which is weaker than gnat's piss, though the remainder at least begins to kick the dust a bit with steady, early '70s type rockin'. They're probably more serious about it than they even give themselves credit for, but I must admit I don't find enough freshness in here for my liking. Any genre, no matter how purposely clichéd, needs something new added, and this lot have been out of the fridge just too long to come out smelling sweet. But then, that's the point, I guess. **Carole Linfield**

LIVE SKULL

Dusted

Homestead HMS090-1 **C**

●● Live Skull's monstrous grating sounds from their early days were a savage, enmeshed mass. A wall of noise that spiralled in, casting jagged talons and ripping at the thin



mesh covering the speaker. That was the guitar battles that were... and now, this latest album sees them just as intense, but throwing in a few more standardised chord songs to enable their music to veer closer to a point of greater access. For reference, Dusted could be seen as Patti Smith Group/Television-type new

wave played in overdrive, with a welded guitar head battering at the door. Live Skull add a modern, Soniclife arching motion, which gives it that vital thrusting propulsion that's necessary to blast through the lacklustre opposition, burning holes as they go. **Wow! Brad Manson**

THE LONESOME STRANGERS

Lonesome Pine

Special Delivery SPD 1012

NM C ●● Americans with a message! The Lonesome Strangers sound like deadringers for the contemporary descendants of The Dillards. Fleetingly twangy and ever-embracing, they electrify the standard bluegrass style and bring it up to a more moderne tempo. If such a thing disgusts you, just take a listen to their cover of 'Here Comes The Night' and you'll soon realise that it was actually Jason And The Scorchers and their wave who were the bastardisation of the genre. The Lonesome Strangers are a formidable outfit with a song worth hearing. **Dave Henderson**

LUL

Inside Little Orphan Annie

Eksakt 036 (5038 BC, Tilburg, Holland) ●● Lul have the knack of the noise. They steam into gear with their heads reeling through a sea of SST records, banging their feet on their guitars like Minutemen used to, breaking their strings as they shift time pattern, stop and start, change their minds. Inside Little Orphan Annie is uncomfortable enough to be interesting, annoying enough to be listenable, and creative enough to let Lul into a few more hearts. **Not** heavy metal, but heavy handed (and handsome). **Ripley**

THE MAGIC BASTARDS

The Magic Bastards

Crook Cassettes BAST 2 **C**

●¾ A strange pot pourri of noises and atmospheres, with mostly unstructured yet coherent songs battling their way to your ears. The backbone is very post punk, with the vocal alternately grating and tuneful, but the feel is very '80s, as if the influences of the past decade have been absorbed carefully and then brought to bear here. There's an evident sense of humour here, too, with lines like "my inside is trying to get out..." all sung in a bouncy rhythm.

Not instant, by any means, but insistent, and interesting. **Carole Linfield**

MASTER/SLAVE RELATIONSHIP

This Lubricious Love

RRRecords RRR-MSR (151 Paige Street, Lowell, Ma 01852, USA)

●¾ Master/Slave Relationship aren't an everyday team. The leather and whips guys would make this LP the anthem of Skin Two if they could get their clammy hands on it, but let's talk discipline... and remember, I'm a lady! MSR are from America and side one of this industri-romp is a post-TG noise, gas taps turning, thrusting synths and sexual titles, but they're just teasing. Side two takes the bullwhip by the teeth and gets to grips with full-scale sexual encounter, from gruesome twosome talk through to wheezing and grunting... the backing is minimal, the magic is the mood, and **Debbie Jaffe**



— the cog of this rampant re-evolution — makes the plastic melt. This Lubricious Love is a sex game more erotic than Twister. **Ripley**

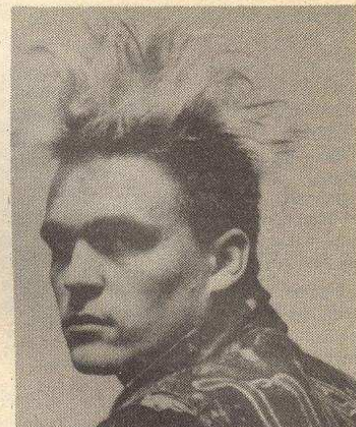
THE MEKONS

So Good It Hurts

Cooking Vinyl SIN 008 **RR C**

●●● Since the dawn of time (and before), The Mekons have been soundly, and resolutely, giving vent to their emotions on political and personal terms. Did you know they were once on Virgin? Well, apart from that they've learnt to play their guitars over the years and, more recently, have become a byword for the better parts of the country/folk revival. On this new LP they've mounted a new peak that's immediately accessible, then outrageously engaging. The musical styles vary, the production never falters — allowing all manner of moods to float on by — and the realisation that this is a group who're set to be-

come rather huge cannot be ignored. An exceptional record. **Nick Brody**



THE MEMBRANES

Kiss Ass Godhead

Glass GLALP 028 **NM C**

●●¼ Irreverent Gooniechaps, The Membranes seem to have been there or thereabouts since the year dot — creating neanderthal rock 'n' roll, overheating their toast, fusing their amplifiers and being generally ludicrous in their approach. What's more they're also very English, very humorous in a *Coronation Street* style, laughing at catchphrases, pulling faces behind the surrealists' backs. On *Kick Ass Godhead*, they start with an inbuilt self-destruct, a Steve Albini production credit and a wall of sound that's pretty damn difficult to penetrate. The Membranes will never make easy listening music and it's difficult to gauge whether they'll attract new fans with this album, but it is one of the most phenomenal rackets you're likely to get your head pummelled by. **Dave Henderson**

MAN KLAN

Flesh Machine

Wire Records WRLP007 ●● Lots of ideas and an underlying feeling of menace gives Man Klan their appeal, with a fine female vocal providing the focal point. The direction is one of understated psychopathy and barely hinted at sexuality, with a montage of guitars adding a frayed lunacy and driving beat. Each track could stand admirably on its own, all of which does, conversely, mean that as an album this is all rather overwhelming. There is variety, sure, but perhaps Carita Palmroos should occasionally step back and give her artist a little more room. Like on

inspirational

SAVAGE INTERNATIONAL

a friendly team... present

PORTION CONTROL Live In Europe 10 inch LP

HEADS ON STICKS Second Feed 12 inch LP

SMEGMA Nattering Naybobs Of Negativity 12 inch LP

THE SILOS About Her Steps 12 inch LP

THE HOLLOW MEN Tales Of The Riverbank 12 inch LP

CORPSES Venus Handcuffs 12 inch LP

romantic, soothing rock muzak, through Red Rhino or at Box 244, York YO1 1ZQ



PORNOSECT PKLPO053

...of Vibrations, Resonances and Divine Things.

AN ALBUM.

Available through Red Rhino and The Cartel.

THE PRODUKT KORPS P.O.Box 798 London W14 9NT.

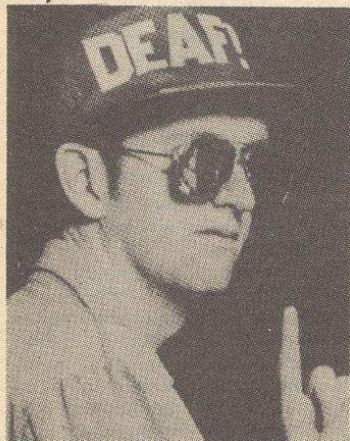
Love Child, which is good, but would have been excellent but for a few more dramatic pauses. Still, all the signals are that this combo has a good ear for a tune and a nice line in delivery. With a little more self control, this lot could wield a nicely jagged edge. **Carole Linfield**

MIGHTY MIGHTY

Sharks

Chapter 22 CHAPLP 24 **NM C**

● 1/2 A game of two halves, *Brend*, in which Mighty Mighty cast several personality crises to the wind and ask... can we be pop stars? Well, on this display, there's a definite chance. *Sharks* sucks in places. It gets twee, self-emulsifying, grottyly over-romantic and yeuchy, but then there are four or so neat tunes that whittle away at the whistling buds and just about make it all worthwhile.



If The Housemartins can make embarrassing jumpers and soccer trendy again, then there's hope for the pop of Mighty Mighty — providing that they can admit to themselves that they're good songwriters who'll never wear leather trousers with pride. Mighty Mighty play boy-next-door tunes for boys next door. Yum. **Brenda Collins**

MINIMAL MAN

Hunger Is All She Has Ever Known

Play It Again Sam BIAS 71

1/2 Mainly atmospheric and rather dreary, self-centred stuff which doesn't live up to the promise of the esotericism of the title. This is neither intensive listening or background music, with the likes of *A Little Surrender* really just being the jottings of a song not yet fully realised, and *I Heard* being more like a confusion of unhinged sounds. With work, more depth and structure, they could harvest more, like on the opener, *Interviews*, which is much livelier and more amenable all round. The rest just ain't my bag. **Carole Linfield**

MOVE

Move

A&D A&D1 **EE C** ● 1/4 Move's Euro posturing sees them struggle through a series of tongues and styles to create an emanately listenable/intriguing LP. In their native land, Italy I think, they're probably seen as being reasonably inventive and forward looking, but in the context of world affairs they're in non-league status. Move seem to have been caught while still in the first throes of puberty; they need time, and a release schedule that allows them to develop. **Nick Brody**

PETER MURPHY

Love Hysteria

Beggars Banquet BEGA 92

● 3/4 Well, this isn't the unstructured, ambling ambience you might have expected from the ex-Bauhaus cheekbones. Instead, this is a coherent, tuneful package with tracks which are, on the whole, pretty listenable. The increase in self-discipline means there's a lot less of that po-faced droning, although the easternised tones of *Socrates The Python* comes close (and isn't, as I'd hoped, a song about a snake glove puppet made out of a sock). Instead, there's some nice, deft touches, like the prime track, the romantic *Indigo Eyes*, which includes a sharp hook and wouldn't sound out of place covered by The Bangles. Sure, a lot of the tracks here also need living with before becoming permanent fixtures, but ultimately it's worth the investment, especially if it also gets the feet moving, like the Bowie-esque tones lurking out of *Blind Sublime*. And speaking of the thin white one, there's also a jolly fine version of the Bowie/Pop Fun Time, which lends a suitably climactic ending to the proceedings. **Carole Linfield**

PANIC IN SLUMBERLAND

Solitaire Forever

Ja! Music Ja! 0018 (Ja! Music, Dombergstr. 4, D-5800 Hagen 1)

● 1/4 "We live at night/We die at dawn/Making fools out of ourselves/Cold — bored/Nocturnal brigades" (Nocturnal Brigades).

Presumably a lyric inspired after having spent an evening observing the pose, drink, puke routine constantly in progress at the Limelight's VIP bar! *Panic In Slumberland* deal in atmospherics, which work most effectively on this track and *Dream-dancing* (In Front Of The Gates Of Hell). There's an insistent quality here which induces that emotional paradox we experience in our most vivid nightmares — compulsive fear. Other redeeming features are its ability to communicate on vinyl, its potent live energy and those charmingly pronounced words spoken in English with just a tinge of Teutonic! **Alex Kadis**



PERE UBU

The Tenement Year

Mercury/Phonogram ●●● The revived, revitalised and revisited *Pere Ubu* sound even more like a haunting soundtrack to David Lynch's quirky *Eraserhead* flick on this 11 track set, which sees them forget about their mature years, instead returning wholeheartedly to their more formative near-childlike period. *Bozo's* might blurt, 'Oh yeah, I went off them after *Modern Dance*', and to a certain

STRUM

That lump on the cover is a cassette! Yes, an absolutely free 30 minute spool-out that's come to you courtesy of our wages, the goodness of several record companies and the nice people who make chrome tape. But, what are these bands up to now and what do they look like? Well, I'll let you into a secret...

THE RAW HERBS *She's A Nurse*

A brill track from this four-piece. It was their first 45 for Medium Cool, next up they have two tracks on a MC LP comp and their latest single, *Don't Bury Me Yet*, is brill.



THE WEDDING PRESENT *Give My Love To Kevin*

A reworked version of this track from their excellent *George Best* LP, produced by Chris Allison and suggesting that they've got a lot more character up their sleeve. This lot are gonna be BIG! Their new single, *Nobody's Twisting Your Arm*, is super-doooper.



MIAOW! *Belle Vue*

A very old cut from before they joined Factory and did two marvy singles for them. *Belle Vue* was on their own label, *Venus*. They've since reshaped their line up and leading smile, *Cath Carroll*, looks set to be the new *Sandie Shaw*. Hooray!



THE VANDALS *Ladykiller*

These lot are an obscure Aussie crew who turned up on *Hybrid* three or so years ago. This track was on their first LP, *When In Rome Do As The Vandals*, and on a *Hybrid* comp which also featured *Guadalcanal Diary* and *Spikes* among others. It is their finest three mins and 42 secs.



THE HOUSEMARTINS *You Better Be Doubtful*

A strumling smirk from their *The People Who Grinned Themselves To Death* LP — a parting shot from a band who knew when to call it a day. *PD Fenton* intends to do something and, er, well I suppose the others do too.



THE GO-BETWEENS *Karen*

A classic Reed-esque cut from their seminal *Able* label down-under period. Check the nearby pic for their pre-flares flare-wearing exploits and marvel at their other fine LPs and 45s on *Beggars Banquet*.



STUPIDS *Leave Your Mark*

An alternate mix from the *Van Stupid* LP — with a different geeeeeetar break and different words — sees these skating East Anglian honchos break fingernails. They'll be doing 70 LPs this year and touring with *The Hard-Ons*.



ALEX CHILTON *No Sex*

An AIDS-aware message from the man who sang *The Letter* and wrote *September Gurls*. *No Sex* creaped out last year on *New Rose*; Alex currently has a single out called *Dalai Lama*.



listomania

EURO DANCE FIVE

- 1 **PERFECT CIRCLE** *The Invincible Spirit* Zyx
- 2 **POUPEE MECANIQUE** *Die Form* New Rose
- 3 **EVERYBODY'S CRAZY (EXCEPT US)** *Greater Than One* K=K
- 4 **THE MAN IN YOUR LIFE** *English Boy On The Love Ranch* New Rose
- 5 **I Von Magnet** Sculptured

Compiled by Mickey at 101, Holland

KSPC 3000 WATTS FIVE

- 1 **MISSION OF BURMA** *Taang EP*
- 2 **KILLDOZER** *Touch And Go LP*
- 3 **THE CREEPERS** *Fundamental LP*
- 4 **SWANS** *Caroline double LP*
- 5 **THE WEDDING PRESENT** *Reception*

Compiled by Holly Kindel, KSPC, Pomona College, CA

NO COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL FIVE

- 1 **JACKAMO** *Annie Anxiety Bandez* One Little Indian
- 2 **THE BIG INDUSTRY** *Roger Miller* Ace Of Hearts
- 3 **LUCIANO** *The Hafler Trio* Touch
- 4 **DECORATIONS OF DUMA** *Pump* Final Image
- 5 **THE WORLD IS MY WOMB** *Nocturnal Emissions* Earthly Delights

Compiled by Liz O'Mara, WZBC, Boston

BOSTON BIG FIVE SEVEN INCHERS

- 1 **VANILLA BLUE** *Naked Raygun* Bulkhead
- 2 **7,000 TIMES** *Hunting Sleeve* Bulkhead
- 3 **STUFF THE TURKEY** *Alien Sex Fiend* Scarecrow
- 4 **JIM MORRISON** *Fly Ashtray* Sob Story
- 5 **DANDY** *When People Think* Tree

Compiled by WZBC, Boston

MODERN ROCK FIVE

- 1 **IMMOBILIZE** *Mkultra* Mute
- 2 **FORCE OF HABIT** *Leather Nun* IRS
- 3 **PLAY MESENKO COMBO** *C-Cat Trance* Ink
- 4 **I WILL REFUSE** *Pailhead* Wax Trax
- 5 **A GOOD NIGHT OUT** *Test Dept* Some Bizzare

Compiled from most played records on WZBC, Boston

UG STORE GUIDE

Not only can *Underground* be purchased from your local newsagent, but the following discerning record shops can also supply you with a copy. No browsing thru now...

BEAT ROUTE, 5A High Street, Congleton, Cheshire
 CAPTURED RECORDS, 130 St Stephen Street, Edinburgh
 EAR 'ERE RECORDS, 14 Market Entrance, Lancaster
 THE EUROPEAN SON, Unit F1, Kensington Market, 49-53 Kensington High Street, London W8
 GRIP RECORDS, Savoy Centre, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow
 HENDERSON'S THE VINYL WORLD, Fore Street Centre, Fore Street, Exeter
 JUMBO RECORDS, 402 Merrion Centre, Leeds
 THE LEFT LEGGED PINEAPPLE, 24 Churchgate, Loughborough
 MAGIC MIXTURE RECORDS, 31 Bedford Hill, Balham, London SW12
 MOVEMENT, Unit 7, Banbury Trading Post, Banbury, Oxon
 1 UP, 4 Diamond Street, Aberdeen
 THE OOZE, 2190 W. Burnside Street, Portland, Oregon 97210, USA
 PICCADILLY RECORDS, 9 Parker Street, Piccadilly Plaza, Manchester
 RAINBOW RECORDS, 80 Wyle Cop, Shrewsbury, Shropshire
 ROCK-A-BOOM RECORDS, 17 Malcolim Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FT
 ROCK SHOP, Strandem 1, Oslo, Norway
 ROUGH TRADE, 130 Talbot Road, London W11
 SELECTA DISC, 21 Market Street, Nottingham
 SIGNALS RECORDS AND TAPES, Shop Unit One, Cornhill Exch. Bldg, Cornhill, Lincoln
 SOUNDS AROUND, Rue Ecole De Medecine 6, 1205 Geneva, Switzerland
 SOUND WAVES, 18 Church Street, Monmouth, Gwent
 VIRGIN MEGASTORE, 14 Oxford Street, London W1
 VIRGIN RECORDS, 527 Oxford Street, London W1
 ZIPPO MUSIC, 39 Clapham Park Road, London SW4

And if you're an *extremely* badhead record emporium and you're not on this list • Get wise! • Word out (and up). Telephone Eric Fuller on 01-387 6611 and we'll make it easy for you (and make you some cash).

degree I did... mainly because I never got round to hearing those albums till much later... then they seemed to lack the clout. But The Tenement Year is classic Ubu, with that annoyingly groovy synth, David Thomas's bizarre visionary outbursts and those unkempt rhythm changes making it all flounder, haphazardly, together. Superb! Dave Henderson



PIXIES

Surfer Rosa

4AD CAD803 **C** ●● $\frac{2}{3}$ It must have been a daunting prospect, following the tremendous Come On Pilgrim mini-album, but Pixies, a group still in their tender years, more than justify the early acclaim with Surfer Rosa, while skilfully opening a hall full of diverse doors to shuffle into. The mood is embracing, welcoming, but the playing remains loose and twisting, able to create heady atmospherics. The songs are well crafted, well delivered sketches which embrace commercial ideals as well as bizarre left-field out of control moments. Pixies play with massed venom, and with the volume on full, Surfer Rosa snags at your heels, grasping for attention. The penultimate track on side one sums it all up, it is a Godhead experience, it blurts "Gigantic". These Americans soon will be. Love it to death! Dave Henderson

PLAYHOUSE

Gazebo Princes

Twin Tone TTR 87131 **RTS**

● $\frac{2}{3}$ Guitars eventually switch to overload as Playhouse rev it on out the window on Wake Up. As proceedings have developed the story runs the gamut of popular rock 'n' roll — throwing a hat in the air for everything from country swing to thrash — the end result sounding neither near nor far from either. Playhouse have a tatty notebook of sideswipes that looks good on paper, sounds great over a beer, but never attains religious brutality on vinyl. They're knocking at the door, but at the moment there's no-one home. TC Wall

POORS OF REIGN

Plenty

Lo Type L05 **PTC** ● Poors Of Reign are in the suburbs of a new renaissance in pop songwriting. They also fancy themselves as spokespeople for their bank balance/social standing and, eventually no doubt, as potential new wave/rock icons. Perhaps in isolation these things might not seem bad at all, but Poors Of Reign certainly prove that such diverse motivations don't gel, and trying to create colossal new rock music on a limited budget, while still besotted with their

contemporaries' success, is a near impossible goal. For that, Poors Of Reign languish in no-man's land, with ideas and a certain amount of presence and political clout, but unfortunately, it seems the bus to town has been temporarily delayed. Dave Henderson

RIFLE SPORT

White

Ruthless Records RS016 **Sh**

● $\frac{1}{4}$ Oh, this is just an *awkward* album. Rifle Sport have a knack of wobbling off the shelf, smashing their grinding rhythms and moody melodies into a million pieces every time you think that you might just be getting hooked. White's the kind of post Joy Division LP that might catch cross-references, but in truth it bears nothing of that ilk, just a spoiling potential which isn't always desirable. White is like putting salt into a mouth ulcer, a tequila and lime too far... Dave Henderson

SHOCK THERAPY

My Unshakeable Belief

Fundamental SAVE 45 **RR C**

● $\frac{1}{3}$ Shock Therapy's debut album follows last year's mini-set in further developing the dark visionary shroud of vocalist Gregory John McCormick. A strange mix of chunky guitars and chubby electronic plinky bits, the album never really reaches a climactic noise level, which inevitably sees the collected Shockists juggling to keep control. On this showing, Shock Therapy are one of those new wave US combos who seem destined to disappear rapidly after a brief flurry of Stateside popularity. Dave Henderson

SIGLO XX

Fear And Desire

Play It Again Sam BIAS 87

RR C ● More Europeans infatuated with the legacy of Joy Division. Siglo XX begin quite well but soon shuffle down the slippery pole of doom and gloom. These guys live for downers and make music to turn down the most uplifted brow. But, whereas someone like The Wolfgang Press can create a tense, hesitant, vibed-up sound that wallows in its own desperation, Siglo XX seem to only be capable of puncturing their vacuous void. There's nothing more than an inward-looking repetition here, which might be fine for some people, but it's not enough for me. Nick Brody

SMEGMA

Nattering Naybobs Of Negativity

Dead Man's Curve DMC 012

RR C ● $\frac{3}{5}$ Yes, erm, aah, very odd. Distorted horns, looped bubbling, babies through an acid kaleidoscope, snatches of this and pinches of that plus only Smegma know what. Easy listening? Listen, forget it. Listen again and it's still bloody strange.

This band have discovered that an electric blender and some recordings make an hallucinogenic milkshake that's full of lumps and bits that stick in the throat. Full of peaks and troughs like some dreamy layer cake-type experience. Phew!

Close your eyes, relax your muscles and try not to imagine things

alternately interesting then horrible. Let the Dire Straits generation eat Smegma! Yeeuch. **Daz Igy meth**

SONOKO

La Debutante

Crammed CRAM 056 **NM C**

●● Sonoko is sultry and Japanese, presenting her salty tales of love and life stretched, in nursery rhyme-style, over simplistic sounds — a music box, a tiny beat — and a sympathetically lush production. La Debutante boasts tender moments, mini-operettas and covers of diverse anthems, like In Heaven from David Lynch's Eraserhead and the rock 'n' roll standard I Love How You Love Me... the end result is an arresting sideways look at affairs of the heart, a bracingly personal release. Delicate and disturbingly grasping. **TC Wall**

SPAZZTIC BLURR

Before And After

Earache MOSH 5 **Re C**

●●1/3 A big, brash album from this Oregon crew who have a strange sense of humour that liberally shows its face through the holocaustic guitar barrage. A laugh, a smile, a touch of toilet humour and some frantically explosive rhythms make the songs on this record really stand out. Compared to Stupids/Hard-Ons et al, Spazztic Blurr are a little further removed, like a cross between The Goons and Black Flag at 78. Either way, this is a side-splitter of high quality, not to be missed. **Johnny Eager**

STEAMING COILS

Never Creak

Rotary Totem RTRLP06 (36131/2

West 4th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90020, USA) ●●● Everything

from the sleeve to the run out groove of this album smells of self-indulgent art taking self-pity on itself by making self-centred records. It's not Residents-friendly, it's not ambient and different, it's just a total mismatch of ideas, musical cultures and styles. After 11 or 12 plays I still can't think of anything to say other than this is something that everyone should experience if only to toss it across the room and frame the sleeve. **Dave Henderson**

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS

Live And Loud

Link Records LINKLP026 **PRT**

●1/2 The revived and revitalised Stiffies who toured at the tail end of last year, caught live on a good night. Now slicker and more succinct than their former days, they can still cut a rug when it comes to candid political observations, and in Jake Burns they always had a forceable frontman. The edgy hesitancy is long gone, which is a shame in a way, and some of the tracks are, dare I say, a little comfortable at times. Plucky all the same. **Brenda Collins**

27 DEVILS JOKING

Actual Toons

Fundamental SAVE 048 **RR C**

● The Devils feature Chip Holz, a current Roky Erickson band drummer, and do a tastefully respectful version of the man's Two Headed Dog, but you can't help but feel that the rest of this geetar acid-test is less

well conceived. Brian Curley's heads-down guitar make this trio a jagged dog-eared throb that's hurried and exposed — with just too many rock-out phrases for comfort. **TC Wall**



VARIOUS

Great Moments Of Vinyl History

Special Delivery SPM 1009

NM C ●●● A torrid tale of the intrepid A Kershaw — philosopher, traveller and stuff — as is explained more fully on page 37. A sultry 12 track collection showing the rootsy soul of natives from places as far apart as Sierra Leone and Barking, Essex, with a few others thrown in for good measure. On show are styles and talents that might have otherwise gone unheeded, and names that've been dropped but probably never scooped up and caressed by most people as yet. SE Rogie, Barrence Whitfield, Dwight Yoakham, Orchestra Baobab, the list is endless, the enjoyment is extreme. **Dave Henderson**

VARIOUS

Narodna

Touch T33.7 **RT C** ●2/3 A collection of music from Albania, Croatia, Macedonia and Siberia might sound a little daunting, but this tastefully packaged cassette-only release is remarkably intoxicating once you unspool into it. Folk and ethnic sketches are brazenly thrown against each other as stringed things go plink and rhythms scatter. Undoubtedly not one for those with weak earlobes. **Nick Brody**



VARIOUS

QED

NL Centrum NLC 001 **RR C**

●●● A double LP set with a bonus single that features a whole conglomeration of lefty talents, whose prime motivation is viewed from the other side of the glass. These are people who skate on the other side of the ice.

On show are recordings of the highest individuality from a string of names as strange as their approach to music. Sample and dissolve into Laibach, Die Form, Z'ev, SPK, Der Pla, Chris And Cosey, Het Zweet, The Hafler Trio, P16 D4, Neubauten and a whole lorryload more. Get the drift? See the glint of the jewelled crowbar? Enjoy! **Brad Manson**

VARIOUS

Second Belgian 6T's Boom!

Waterloo Sunset/007 Records **P**

●● What a strange and un-uniformed album this is! Dealing with the Belgian bands of Flemish rather than French extraction, when it's good it damn near knocks the socks clean off your feet but, oh my, when it's bad... Opening track by The Sandmen should fall into the latter category with its horribly predictable handclaps and limp three chord thrash but it saves itself from a fate only less marginally worse than death through sheer enthusiasm and relentless opus!

Some Kinda Weird borrow those handclaps and appear to do little else to recommend themselves. But they're not the only borrowers; the three chord thrash rears its limiting little head on The Voner's Lawrence too. Moments of exceptional glory come frequently, however, and most noticeably with The Martian's brand of joyous R&B, complete with rasping harmonica. The truly brilliant Your Loving by The Office demands multi-play, as do both offerings from The Rockforts who seem to have an endless reserve of energy and musical wisdom. We have The Spanks to thank ultimately for their variation on the theme with the hard-hitting Low-Down, which is straight from reverb city and as potent as hell! **Alex Kadis**

VARIOUS

Song And Legend

Abstract AABT 700 **P**

●●2/3 There's a story of independent endeavour on show with this double LP set. About a year ago the German label Gap started to compile a comprehensive set of tracks by bands from all over the world — a kind of tome of the times, with music of all angst-ridden kinds featured. This end result features 29 acts, spans four extremely creative sides and now gets a domestic UK release through Abstract.

The quality is high throughout and inevitably some of the lesser-spotted combos provide the most spectacular cuts. From the 29, obvious highlights come from New Model Army, The Leather Nun, Sort Sol, The Vylies, Band Of Holy Joy, Abwärts, Helios Creed and a whole bundle more... so take some time to envelop yourself in Song And Legend, it'll be an educational experience, to say the least. **Dave Henderson**

VARIOUS

Songs I Like To Sing

RRRecords STATAP 08 (151

Paige Street, Lowell, Ma 01852, USA) ●●● This 60 minute cassette will get you out and singing! Some of America's strangest sons tackle the hits of the monster generation, and boy, are there industrial corpses lying all over this one! Culturcide provide We're An Industrial Band from their Tacky Souvenirs LP, while Brian Ladd butchers Mahogany Rush's I'm Going Away, Blitzoids dissect I Called The Witchdoctor, Doc Wor Mirran gets unspeakable over Heart Of Gold, Shut Up clammer to the grave of Hey Joe and a cast of thousands convince that splatter music is the thang. Eat your heart out Bananarama, this is where the ball game starts! **Brad Manson**

VARIOUS

Used And Recommended By

White Label L-38822 **RTS** ● A strange hybrid from festival-frenzied Australia, featuring a riot of strumming bronzed chaps and Nick Cave — whose sore thumb is not being sucked. A celebration of The Hollow Men (no, not the Brits or the Americans), Harem Scarem, Not Drowning, But Waving, Hunters And Collectors, Chris Bailey and more, which has no cohesion and only shines with the name Shower Scene From Psycho — unfortunately their contribution is a pale cover of Jefferson Airplane's White Rabbit. Huh, nothing much to celebrate here. **Nick Brody**

THE WILD SWANS

The Wild Swans

WEA ●3/4 More sweet tasting pop tones, melted together successfully into a palatable whole, if not a unique one. The Wild Swans like hook lines and use them with great effectiveness, making all the songs easy bedfellows. They like empathetic subject matter, like undying love (the very good Archangel) and the plight of the running down of the top half of the country (the rather more bland Northern England). But the name that springs to mind is OMD, although in that band's less bland moments, which means there are times where that does make them sound, well, a bit dated. They're definitely, though, a singles band; certainly stuff like Mythical Beast could crawl into the charts. A useful sampler of their goods, then. **Carole Linfield**

X RAY POP

Psychedelik Dolls

RRRecords RRR018 (151 Paige Street, Lowell, Ma 01852, USA)

●● This quartet of French eccentrics play quirky pop with electronic buttons and bows. Ten songs create a sleazy attic sound that's spiced by some clever arrangements and effects, and created by the vocals of Zouka and Pam Pam. Not a Pepsi And Shirlie, hardly a Strawberry Switchblade, but haunting nonetheless. **Dave Henderson**

JOHN ZORN

Spillane

Nonesuch/Elektra 979 172-1

●● A much talked about dude is John Zorn... and rightly so. Here he takes chances and throws down a few musical styles in the eclectic search for sound montage, and ends up with three distinctive pieces. Spillane is hard on the heels of soundtrack music — take Angel Heart for instance — with all styles thrown in; Two-Lane Highway adopts the same ideas but uses Albert Collins' guitar to lead it through, while Forbidden Fruit trades the Kronos Quartet string sound with scratching. On paper it sounds great, but it doesn't all come off. There's been a lot of people fondling the same ideas for a good dozen years and this is nothing new, merely a different variation. Enjoyable nonetheless. **Dave Henderson**

RRRR

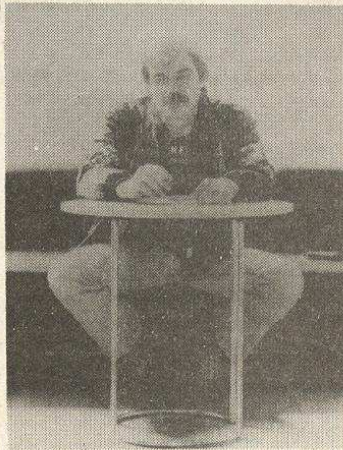
RRRECORDS
 151 PAIGE STREET
 LOWELL, MA 01852 USA

BOY DIRT CAR MERZBOW BLACKHOUSE
 MASTER/SLAVE RELATIONSHIP SMERSH
 SLEEP CHAMBER WOMEN OF THE SS
 P16.D4 ESPLENDOR GEOMETRICO PGR
 VIVENZA ETANT DONNES CURRENT 93
 NURSE WITH WOUND HAFNER TRIO
 UN DRAME MUSICAL INSTANTANE HNAS
 AMOR FATI BORBETOMAGUS HATERS
 MOSLANG/GUHL SMEGMA MUSLIMGAUZE
 JOHN WIGGINS CONTROLLED BLEEDING
 PSYCLONES/SCHLAFENGARTEN P231
 DUE PROCESS BRUITISTE TESTAMENT

WRITE FOR FREE CATALOG

RE-REWIND

Back on the racks, dusted off from the vaults, this month's selection of re-issues and repackages boasts some real gems. . .



TERRY ALLEN

Lubbock (On Everything)

Special Delivery SPT1007/8 **RM**

C Licensed from Fate Records in the States, this double first saw the light of day in 1978. Trailing through America, talking about bars, football stars and local town DJs, Allen's country drawl and lazy guitar-picking style relaxes the parts of the rubbery forehead that might otherwise have gone solid. This is a taste of driving America, a flatland farmer gets a namecheck, Allen stops in at the PTA, and life become everyday, but never mundane. This is a closely knit, inward-looking, self-exposing collection of tunes which bares Terry Allen's soul and offers a view of another world that most Europeans have only ever seen on the movie screen. **Johnny Eager**

EDDIE BO

Check Mr Popeye

Edsel ED 259 **P** Piano balladeering with a upbeat punch, Eddie Bo launches a string of projects resulting from Edsel research into the old American Ric label with this album of exceptionally tasteful New Orleans rhythm and blues. A man with a rather prolific track record, Bo's enclosed contributions cover '50 to '62 and illustrate his narrative style of delivery — like on the title track where tales of Popeye and Olive Oyl fill the grooves. Eddie Bo's legacy is more in the bar-room bravado and sad tales zones, but it's compulsive listening nonetheless. **Dave Henderson**

JOHN'S CHILDREN

A Midnight's Scene

Bam Caruso KIRI 095 **Re**

C John's Children has achieved a certain notoriety as being one of the spawning grounds for the talent of one Marc Bolan; however in reality the star-spangled pixie only appeared on four tracks in the group's whole career, namely (the important and rather good) Desdemona, Sarah Crazy Child, Go-Go Girl

and the title track. The rest is a motley collection of psychedelia-influenced, late '60s nostalgia from the Children, whose life history reads a little like a Comic Strip pastiche. Bolan's contributions, though small overall, are distinctly noticeable, while the confused direction of the sex 'n' drugs vs love and peace mentality of the band convolutes itself around the remainder of the relatively undated tracks.

Their manager, Simon Napier Bell, later to discover Wham!, of course, may not have made John's Children megastars, but their legacy still makes for interesting listening, particularly since some of the band's members went on to appear in Sparks and others in Radio Stars (Make A Man From A Rabbit, anyone?). **Carole Linfield**

JOHN LEE HOOKER

The Cream

Charly R&B CDX22 **Ch** Deep rootsy John Lee, taken from a live show in California back in '77. Swaggering, heavily-salted blues and moody R&B are let loose over a heavyweight backing band, leaving John Lee to croon, swoon, pluck and please. The evening is slowly built into a fat-bellied, whisky-soaked chortle, with some tempered performances and some extrovert touches — the best example of which is the play off of minimal backing against vocals, and noisy guitar intro, on TB Sheets. A fine collection from the hands of a legendary figure. **Dave Henderson**

TOMMY JARREL

Rainbow Sign

Fundamental SAVE 38 **RR C** A recording from '84, taken from the Rebel catalogue and featuring the silver-haired Tommy Jarrel. An untrained fiddle-player, he finds his way around the resin and fretboard with ease and hollers up a storm in the kind of style us palid Europeans haven't heard since listening to out-takes from *Southern Comfort*. Cajun, bluegrass, call it what you will. . . Tommy Jarrel's music, accompanied by mandolin, guitar and banjo, is something from a region most of us are unlikely to frequent. A salty dog who'd give Jack Bennie a run for his ceeeeegar! **Dave Henderson**

KANDA BONGO MAN

Amor Fou

Hannibal HNBL 1337 After his recent UK jaunt, plus the featured track on Virgin's Earthworks compilation Heartbeat Soukous, Hannibal have put together a six track set of some of Kanda Bongo Man's finest music. Those still stuck in the tentative Post-Paul Simon-Bhundu Boys-are-alright-but-which-other-African-unds-can-I-dig-mode can rest assured that Amor Fou, with its con-

LOVE OUT THERE
 WIKA 69
 (Gatefold Sleeve)

Big Deal
 40-50 STEELE RD LONDON NW10 7AS

THE LITTER
 WIKI 68


EMERGE THE LITTER
 WIKI 68

NEW ALBUMS OUT ON

stantly rolling rhythms, tickling vocals and exquisite guitar, is the next station on the line. **Dave Henderson**

MAGMA

Udu Wudu

Decak LIK 18  Hmmmmm. Classic (?) rock operettas that omm along in eastern style, with plenty of pre-Hawkwind moans for good measure, doing little to explain why snooker supremo Steve Davis digs them so much. This space monster hails from '77, a time when the rest of the world was cocooned in Pistols tomfoolery... given the choice one can only hope that a Pistols revival broods again this time, too. **Nick Brody**




STEVE REICH

Early Works

Nonesuch/Elektra 979 169-1 Four pieces of classic Reich, ranging from the offbeat tape loop manipulation of It's Gonna Rain and Come Out, to the clattering interplay of two men clapping on Clapping Music and the looped beginnings of Piano Phase. The recordings stem from '65 to '72 and show the kind of experimental genius — in classic style and delivery — that would much later sound innovative and original when used by everyone from Hawkwind to Cabaret Voltaire and Chaka Khan, and in technique and end result, the more recent scratchers. Intriguing stuff that still stands up well — even though it now has many more contemporary bedfellows. **Dave Henderson**


TOMMY RIDGLEY

New Orleans King Of The Stroll

Edsel ED260  Taken from the Ric label, this 15 track set features early '60s material by Tommy Ridgley, who'd joined the label after serving time on Atlantic in the '50s. Seen as possibly his most fruitful time, the string of singles recounted here sees him live up to the monster title of king of stroll, laying down classic cut after classic up till late '62. The final two tracks are the A and B sides of a '64 Johen release which was, till now, incredibly difficult to get, so this is a valuable package for enthusiasts and music lovers alike. **Dave Henderson**

THE THIRTEENTH FLOOR ELEVATORS


The Psychedelic Sounds Of...

Decal LIK 19  Phase one of the Elevators' acidic nightmare gets a timely re-release again — it made it out through Radar in the late '70s but disappeared after that label went bust — and it sounds quite contemporary, taking into account current

psychedelic sidesteps, some 22 years after it first saw the light of day. While Bobby Moore was drooling over the World Cup, The Thirteenth Floor Elevators were drugged out and mellow, producing short sharp bursts of tongue-tingling pop combusting like exploding gum against the roof of rock 'n' roll's grazed mouth. (Yeah, whatever you say... Ed.) **Brad Mason**


THIS HEAT


This Heat

These Records HEAT 1 

THIS HEAT


Deceit

These Records HEAT 2 

 Classics without a doubt. Formative sounds from the sub-industrial 'new music' days in which This Heat re-designed drum kits and developed a unique English-sounding industrial folk music — that had as much to do with TG and Can as it did with the cloth-capped gurning vocalists of the old school of traditional folk. The debut album features their live set of the time, which they perfected through numerous shows. This must be the finest version of it, with the studio cleanliness giving the proceedings more edge, while Deceit followed a more awkward, more blurred direction. It turned up, originally on Rough Trade, when This Heat looked to be a flavour to savour as we turned into the '80s. Sadly, funk in its many forms overtook the listening tendencies and the band seemed to disappear. As I say, these are timely reminders, and classics indeed. **Dave Henderson**


IKE AND TINA TURNER

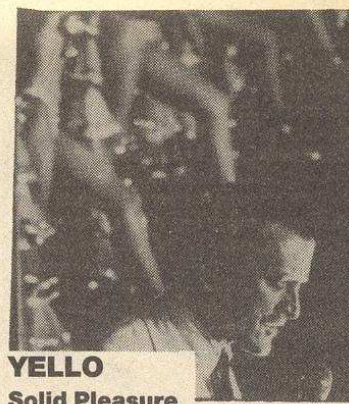
Fingerpoppin'

Edsel ED243  A rollicking compilation of tracks from Ike and Tina's years at Warner Brothers, which cover several interesting areas, catching the duo — with teamsters — in live, basic studio and orchestrated situations. A fine soulful set of sounds, it particularly displays the raunchier excesses of the group in a live context — especially bringing out Tina's throaty vocals and Ike's strolling guitar style — where the whooping of the crowd enhances an already pulsing performance style. Finest cut, Tell Her I'm Not Home, also features a ragged talkover intro with a mock rhythm breakdown. Fine stuff indeed. **Dave Henderson**

VARIOUS

If It Ain't A Hit, I'll Eat My...

Zu-Zazz Z2009  A strange, sexually frustrated plastic passion, featuring 11 tales of explicit drug and sex references from the blues, R&B, cajun and soul backwaters. How odd it is to hear The Clovers' doo-wop vocals on The Rotten C***suckers Ball, and to catch Jackie Wilson and Lavern Baker getting down on Think Twice with its references to kissin' ass, cocaine, reefer and the occasional buzz word. The going gets more left-field with Boozoo Chavis, Snatch And The Poontangs (probably the best track here), The Blenders' Don't F*** Around With Love and Bullmose Jackson's Big Ten Inch. Not for feminists in places, but mostly tongue-in-cheek (or thereabouts). **Johnny Eager**



YELLO

Solid Pleasure

Claro Que Si!

You Gotta Say Yes To Another

Excess

Stella

Phonogram re-issues Since the turn of the decade and the advent of the electronic boom, Swiss playboys Yello have consistently proved to be one of the most entertaining of the synthesiser groups.

While often the purveyors of the perfect beat, they have never particularly been about 'songs' as such, hence one major reason for their lack of UK Top 40 success, but they have always been about creating the perfect mood. Rarely does a Yello track last more than four minutes, thereby avoiding the trap of self-indulgence, and every so far LP has contained enough variation to satisfy most.

Their tasteful mixture of vocalist/self-publicist Dieter Meier's madcap humour, coupled with Boris Blank's technical expertise and vast array of gorgeous sounds in the studio, is envied by many of the electronic generation, and I doubt if another synth band has been sampled more often in recent years.

Phonogram have now, in their infinite wisdom, decided to bombard us with these low price re-issues of the first four full length Yello albums, and although a lot of the material here has been remixed and re-issued to dazzling effect on the double LP 1980-85 The New Mix In One Go, all of these records are well worth buying in their own right.

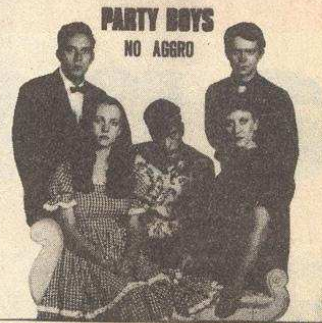
Only the first two are really currently difficult to obtain, re-introducing the early Yello at their most charming and low budget on such classics tracks as Night Flanger, from Solid Pleasure, and Daily Disco, from Claro Que Si!. But there is little point in singling out key tracks, as each record has a great feel to it and works well as a complete entity.

For the third and fourth albums they had the benefit of new toys and big record company backing, and it shows. Stiff Records originally gave You Gotta Say Yes To Another Excess a big push in 1983 and I Love You and Lost Again were almost hits. Stella followed the marvellous Vicious Games 12 inch (the LP version is sadly tame in comparison) and includes the luscious Desire and Stalaktidrama among its many treasures.

If you've heard a lot about Yello but don't really know where to start, or if last year's supreme The Rhythm Divine (with Shirley Bassey) whetted your appetite for more, then your best bet is to plump for Stella and work your way backwards. It's well worth the effort. If you're at all interested in '80s electronic music, then it's totally essential. **Alex Bastedo**

RE-PLAY

Antiques, curios and gems unearthed...



BOYS AND GIRLS SAY...

The French label, L'Invitation Au Suicide, has been responsible for picking up on some suitably bizarre and left-field outfits in its time, none more strange than Party Boys, a Los Angeles five piece consisting of two girls and three guys. Their album for the label, No Aggro, appeared through New Rose and was met by universal ignorance, but if you can find a copy around then this is something worth checking.

With a sleeve by Savage Republic's Bruce Licher and a sound a few steps more wired than the Sav's droney percussive daze, Party Boys play Talking Heads music through muffled speakers. If you can't find this masterwork then look out for a soon to arrive double of the group's finest moments which should sneak out on Nate Starkman in the States and on Fundamental (through Red Rhino) over here.



HELP ME, I'M FALLING...

With The Fall destined to be the spit on everyone's lip this year, there's a tasteful package currently available through Factory's video arm, Ikon, which catches them in semi-seminal mode, at around the time that Brix joined the group. Caught live and in some hilarious staged antics, they look like the sort of groovy group that you'd beg to have living next door to you. Featured tracks, through the E Smith mirth and Brix barrage, include the happily-superb Totally Wired. Grab this gem through Pinnacle.

Sex Sex Sex and pop

The Flatmates get stimulated.

22 UNDERGROUND

Trees, fields, church spires, football grounds and terraced houses blur past the window. I'm on my way to visit The Flatmates, Bristol's premier pop band (according to some sources). I'm worried, what should I ask them? Should I ask Martin (guitar) why he wears glasses that Deidre Barlow wouldn't be seen dead in? Shall I ask their new drummer, Joel, if he's modelled himself on 'Snap' from the Rice Crispies cereal packet? Maybe I could ask Sarah (bass) where she gets her hair highlighted. Luckily, Debbie (vocals) won't be there, so I don't have to ask her how many journalists she's beaten up.

The Flatmates are not my favourite band, so it was with nervous trepidation that I stood on the doormat that proclaimed 'Subway House' and rang the doorbell. I needn't have worried, the bell chimed the opening bars of The Undertones' Teenage Kicks and Martin whisked open the door with a briefcase in his hand — straight to business! No messing!

Martin: "I don't think people hate The Flatmates, they hate the genre of music that we're in."

Sarah: "When people see us live, they have to admit they like us."

Why?

Martin: "We actually do a show live, we don't just look at our feet and act coy. We put a bit of rock 'n' roll spirit into it, a bit of energy — a bit of vitamin C."

"Now The Smiths have split up I think there's a desperate need for bands who sing about death."

These Flatmates have just released their fourth and finest single, Shimmer. A four track 12-inch EP with a real killer pop song entitled If Not For You hidden away on the B side — this song could have been written for Debbie Harry — it's a Festive 50 candidate for sure. The EP is a definite attempt to jettison the shambling associations of the last two years — a real production jobby.

Sarah: "Shimmer is epic, loud and exciting."

Martin: "It's about the destructive side of love. It progresses from being a love song in the first verse to a hate song in the second, to a suicide song in the last verse."

Sounds very morose.

Martin: "Now The Smiths have split up I think there's a desperate need for bands who sing about death."

So is this a huge leap forward for The Flatmates?

Martin: "A small step maybe, we have progressed. We've always wanted to be a pop band — a band to enjoy and dance to. One day, I hope we'll be making classic pop records. I think we have already, we just haven't sold that many."

So will Shimmer change all that, will it be up there with Mel And Kim? Will it be a hit?

Martin: "It'll be a hit with the kids."

Joel: "That's what counts, after all."

Sarah: "It'll be a hit with the mums."

A hit with grandmothers?

Sarah: "My Gran's got all our records. She hasn't got a record player so she just puts them on the sideboard and looks at the covers now and then."

Will it be a hit with dead people?

Martin: "It will be massive with dead people. I think it's important that people can relate to your lyrics. Dead people can really identify with our records."

Joel: "Necrophilia, now there's a dead interesting pastime."



The Flatmates — an indie Bucks Fizz...?

"We'd rather be out in the middle of nowhere, pouring drugs and alcohol down our throats."

Since the C-86 disaster of bands being enthused over, signed to major labels and then flopping terribly, indie bands have had to carry a lot of heavy baggage with them. How do you feel about being labelled "twee", "wimps", "trainspotters", "amateurs", "limp"?

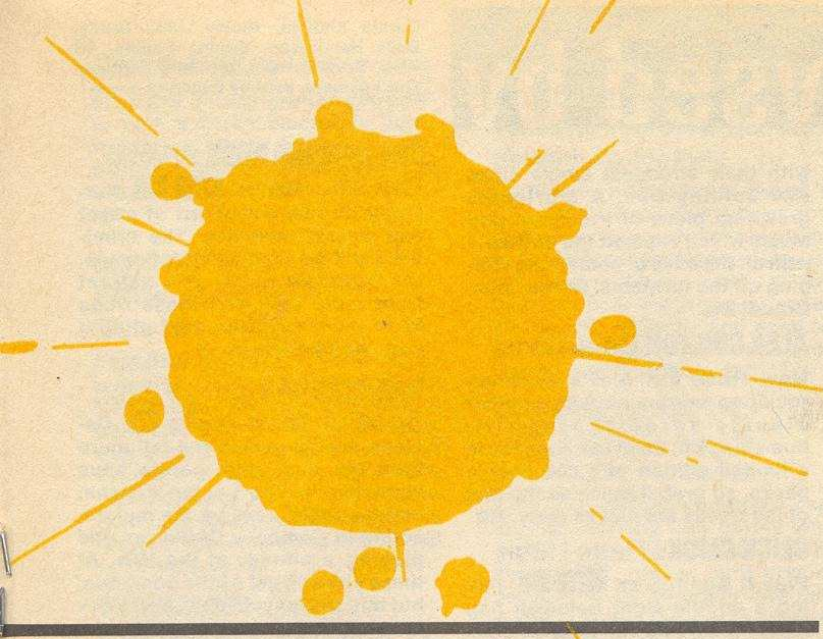
Martin: "We're quite an aggressive band."

Sarah: "No-one's ever called us wimps."

Martin: "There's a lot of things people say about indie bands that are true. Like they're badly produced and no-one in them can play. Most indie labels haven't got any money for 'good' production and most indie bands are new bands, so they're still learning to play their instruments."

Sarah: "Hopefully with Shimmer we'll lose that indie tag."

Martin: "People forget that there's loads of crappy jangly bands on majors too"



— Aztec Camera, Deacon Blue.”

Sarah: “Deacon Blue are good.”
And Aztec Camera.

Martin: “Oh, erm, alright.”

What do you hate most about the music biz?

Sarah: “I hate it when a band that’s doing nothing new gets chased by loads of record companies and signed up just because there’s a market already there for them. I also really hate hip-hop.”

Joel: “I hate the way people think that the indie chart is full of one kind of music. There’s dance music in the indie charts, avant garde, hip-hop, garage, Radio 2 disc jockeys singing about jogging. So why do you get called an ‘indie band’? That could mean anything, Cookie Crew are an ‘indie band’!”

The name Flatmates conjures up images of a friendly group of mates, mucking in with household chores, doing the washing-up on a rota basis, going to cafés and watching TV together. Not so. Martin owns his own house, Sarah is his tenant. Joel and Debbie live elsewhere. As for being friendly...?

Martin: “We’re quite an anti-social band. We don’t really like hanging out in ice cream parlours, sucking milkshakes with the kids. We’d rather be out in the middle of nowhere pouring drugs and alcohol down our throats. I’d like to live in a big farmhouse in the country. The sort of place where you can walk around the garden with no clothes on and writhe about on the lawn with a partner of your choice.”

The Flatmates see their progress so far as a kind of apprenticeship. They have yet to blossom forth with their full force. That will come with their debut album — no plans at the moment, but Martin has already decided its title.

Martin: “It’s going to be called G-Spot, sub-titled ‘... A Multiple Orgasm’. It’s going to be *that* good.”

That good?

Martin: “We’re not the sort of band who’ve been locked away in a studio for two years and will then come out in a blaze of publicity. We’re a band that started in the bedroom, got some songs together and eventually played them to our friends. That’s a basic rock ‘n’ roll tradition that’s lasted for 30 years. We’re basically a standard pop band. We’ve got no career strategy or anything.”

What’s The Flatmates’ greatest strength?

Martin: “We don’t write fillers. All of the songs on the Shimmer EP could be an A side, it’s the same with everything we’ve done.”

What’s the worst thing about being in The Flatmates?

Joel: “The other members of The Flatmates.”

Martin: “Not being able to find a decent toilet when we’re on tour.”

Sarah: “Martin sulking after he’s written a song, when Debbie laughs at it.”

“We’re beautiful people, we’re intelligent people, we’re sexy people. What more do you want?”

The Flatmates appear to have a very high regard for themselves — no bad thing in pop, since you have to sell yourselves. But some people get a bit carried away.

What’s the best thing about The Flatmates?

Martin: “It’s hard to pick one thing out of so many.”

Give us a list then.

Martin: “Such excellent tune-smiths, such ferocious guitar forté, consistently wonderful records, great live band, great studio band. . .”

So modest.

Sarah: “Great dress sense.”

I think that might be slightly sarcastic. Martin wasn’t exactly dashing in leather trousers.

Martin: “We’re beautiful people, we’re intelligent people, we’re sexy people. What more do you want?”

Sexy!?

Martin: “We’re the sexiest band in rock ‘n’ roll.”

You’ve got the biggest bottoms in rock ‘n’ roll.

Sarah: “Charming!”

Martin: “You don’t think we’re sexy then?”

No.

Martin: “I can think of thousands of bands who are less sexy than us.”

What’s your sex appeal then?

Martin: “Two gorgeous chicks and two hunky guys. We’re like Bucks Fizz — the sexy one, the thoughtful one, the raunchy one and the demure one.”

Martin obviously sees himself as the thoughtful one.

Martin: “We know about willies.”

Willies! Is this what you want to hear about in an *Underground* in-depth interview, readers?

Martin: “And we know what to do with them.”

Congratulations!

Martin: “We’re not a bunch of asexual anorak kids. There’s so many of these indie bands who are totally sexless. Rock ‘n’ roll is the musical side of teenage raunchiness — we satisfy that need. No-one can thrust and throb like us.”

Ho, hum.

“Morrissey would like to be spanked by George Formby with a ukulele.”

Honestly, I tried to get them on to other subjects like gardening, football, quadrophonics and tropical fish. But. . .

Martin: “If you dream of fish it means an imminent sexual encounter.”

I give up. Who do you fancy in pop music?

Joel: “I’m stumped, mate.”

Sarah: “John Cougar Mellancamp is quite nice, a bit chubby, though. Martin will say Belinda Carlisle.”

Martin: “No, it’s Tiffany this week. I think she’s great, everything pop music should be.”

What? Crap?

Martin: “She’s what the kids need.”

If you went on a date with Tiffany, where would you take her?

Martin: “Well she’s quite worldly, isn’t she? I think I’d take her on a jet somewhere, Paris or something — to a shopping mall, then a five star hotel.”

What’s your latest sexual fantasy?

Martin: “I’d like to shag to Shimmer.”

Joel: “I used to have loads of sexual fantasies.”

Martin: “But as he’s grown older the lust has worn out. Nowadays he’s happy with a pint of Tetley’s and a packet of crisps.”

What do you think is Morrissey’s fantasy?

Martin: “Oh, he’d probably like to be spanked by George Formby with a ukulele.”

It can’t all be sex. Is there any romance in The Flatmates’ lives?

Sarah: “We’re all very romantic. Martin’s just got engaged, isn’t that sweet?”

Martin: “Sssh, I’m a sex machine.”

That’s The Flatmates. Before I left, Martin took me to Bristol Museum for a cup of tea in their restaurant. For a moment he stared at a cabinet of toy steam trains and muttered something like “choo-choo” — draw your own conclusions. **Johnny Dee**



Flatmates l to r: Joel, Sarah, Martin and Debbie

45 REVOLUTIONS analysed by

Carole Linfield, Ripley, Nick Brody, Dave Henderson, Brenda Collins, TC Wall, Brad Manson, Anthony Farthing, Daz Lgymeth, Johnny Eager.

AGE OF CHANCE Take It! (Unlimited Credit Mix) Virgin Although it's got credentials, namely being a fusion of live DJ (Delirium's DJ Powercut), live group, backing group (Kings Of Pressure) and the mixed in cuts of My Uzi Weighs A Ton (no, I don't either), it still sounds drab and tired. And though it may be the first non-US act to be remixed by Hank Socklee and Chuck D, it still lacks vibrancy. **CL**

ALL BECAUSE THE LADY LOVES...



ALL BECAUSE THE LADY LOVES... If You Risk Nothing Sweet Release

RA C Songs of rebellion? Two girls singing up a storm, a guitar gets minimal in the background, and the rebounding prose slaps in the face of oncoming traffic. Lyrically precise and lovingly coupled. **R**

SYD BARRETT The Peel Sessions Strange Fruit

P Neolithic hippy pap that'll be lapped up by purists and/or freaks. Syd laughs behind his corduroy loons, he knows this sucks. Effervescing Elephants! Wow, cosmic. **NB**

BEAT HAPPENING Crashing Through 53rd & 3rd

EE C Offbeat singalong stuff that revolves around the eccentric Beats. Not a fully-fledged hi-time statement, more an inward-looking slice of Richman-esque self-appraisal. Psycho-analysis is a must. **NB**

BEAT ROUTE

- 5A High St. Congleton CW12 2HF Tel: 0260-280778
- Brilliant Corners Teenage 7" £1.75 12" £3.29
- Biff Bang Pow Oblivion LP £5.99
- Depeche Mode Strange Mix (On-U prod) imp 12" £5.99
- Fall Frenz (inc 7")/Palace of Swords LP/cass each £5.99 CD £10.99
- Flametes Shimmer 7" £1.75 12" £3.49
- Guana Batz Streetwise/Live/Loan LP's each £5.99
- House of Love LP £6.49
- Jazz Butcher Fishcoque LP £5.99 Sex & Travel £4.50
- Luxuria LP/cass each £5.99
- Mekons So Good LP/cass £6.29 N.Y. cass only £5.99
- Negativland Escape from Noise LP £6.99
- Pixies Surfer Rosa LP/cass £5.99 CD £10.99
- Primitives Stop Killing me 7" £1.89
- Q.E.D. Network comp Dib. LP + 7" £11.99 (p&p £1.25)
- Razorcuts Storyteller LP £5.99
- Skinny Puppy Cleanse, Fold Manipulate LP/cass £6.49
- Stupids Peruvian/Retard LP £3.99 Jesus meets LP £6.49
- Sugarcubes Cold Sweat Ltd 12" £3.49 CD £3.99
- Tape Delay Book (250pp) inc Cabs/N. Order/Swags £8.95 (p&p £1.25)
- Throwing Muses House Tornado/T. Muses LP/cass each £5.99 CD £10.99
- UT Guts House LP £5.49
- The Vaselines Dying for it 7" £1.79 12" £3.29

POSTAGE & PACKING-U.K. 1st Class Post 1 item - £0.90 2 items £1.35 3 items £1.80 4 items - £2.25 5 items or more £2.70. To order above items please send cheques or postal orders to:

BEAT ROUTE LIMITED
P.O. Box 42 CONGLETON CW12 1HL
Or send large sae + 26p stamp (or 3 IRCS overseas)
for our 46 page catalogue.
Catalogue automatically included with orders.
Please allow 14 days if paying by cheque.

BLIND MICE It's Not Heaven Rodent (£1.75 from 6 Brookhampton Street, Ickleton, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10

1SP There's a glorious hook in this understated single... and there's a fine guitar line too. Best of all though is the majestically bananas drumming which constantly breaks through. Like The Chesterfields with Animal on skins. Fine stuff. **DH**

BLUBBERHOUSE Perfumed Paperback HT Records

PR C Floating in on a sea of lethargy, Blubberhouse relax the parts that other records intend to stimulate. This isn't twitchy rock blips, just lazy saxophone patterns that disappear into deep nothingness. **NB**

B MOVIE Nowhere Girl Wax Records **B C** A rave from the electronic grave on mandarin vinyl! This limited edition 12 inch features a shaky early version of this latterday classic, as a kind of precursor to an early retro LP. Oh how those keyboards grate. **R**

BRADFORD Skin Storm Village Records **RR C** For some reason I had Bradford down as being more akin to The Redskins, but this bitter tale of emotion, with all the room it's given, doesn't agree with that at all. The flipside's more uptempo drive suggests that Bradford might, in fact, have fallen foul of studio techniques a little. Either way, this is a promising start. **R**

THE BRILLIANT CORNERS Teenage McQueen **RA C** Twee pop with a George Chisholm brass break and some of the most kitsch arranging techniques since Simon Turner was a Jonathan King child prodigy. **DH**

BUZZCOCKS The Peel Sessions Strange Fruit **P** A three track session from September 1977 when the Buzzcocks' sound was at its most influential and buzzsaw-like. Fast Cars and What Do I Get? retain the inevitable Pete Shelley seal of perfect guitar pop, while Pulse Beat displays their early will to experiment. Ten years old and still as fresh as they come. **DH**

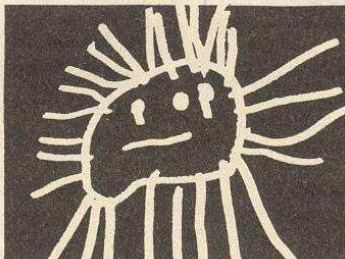
THE CHESTERFIELDS Goodbye Goodbye Household **RA C** The Chesterfields launch their own label

with their strongest single since Ask Johnny Dee. A gloriously grown-up piece of irreverent pop music which slips off the turntable with all the ease of something slipping off the turntable. Grand, lads. Grand! **BC**

ALEX CHILTON Dalai Lama New Rose **P** Alex's visionary rock/pop continues with another classic verse/chorus/riff/humalong bit. Dalai Lama comes in a limited edition of 5,000 double packs, so grab it quick as the rest of the tracks are just as tasty. **NB**

CLICK CLICK I Rage I Melt Play It Again Sam **RR C** Filling a middle-eight between pop and primadonna electronics, Click Click's sawn-off rhythms and flowery lyrical borders are unconvincing and undefined. Not raging, just melting. **TC W**

CHRISTINE COLLISTER & CLIVE GREGSON I Wouldn't Treat A Dog Special Delivery **NM C** The best track from Collister and Gregson's recent Mischief album, with the 12 inch replete with three previously unreleased tracks on the flipside. Powerfully orchestrated pop music that's raised to new heights through Christine Collister's luscious vocals. **DH**



THE CORN DOLLIES Forever Steven Medium Cool **RR C** A re-issue of their first single, now on 12 inch with three added flipside faves. As a prelude to their sure-to-be-brill debut album, this is a timely reminder of just how good The Corn Dollies can be. Ah, so young, so creative, so strummy and scrummy. **DH**

CUD The Peel Sessions Strange Fruit **P** Without being derogatory, this really sounds like a Peel session. Frenetic guitar battles, rushed vocal tracks, a cover for laughs (of The Equals' You Sexy Thing) and two of the band's best cuts which turned up on their 12 inch for Reception. Raucous and ragged, spirited and spitting, but just what you'd expect from a talented group given one day in the studio. **NB**

THE DARLING BUDS Shame On You Native **RR C** Perfectly thrown pot pourri of sweet and sweaty melodies. The Primitives will be cited as an influence, the buzzsaw guitar will detract from radio play, but these Buds have more to offer than piffing pop. Watch them go. **R**

DANIELLE DAX Janice Long Session Night Tracks **P** Danielle seems to rise and fall more than the sun. High points have seen her in The Lemon Kittens, being sought after by the majors, acting in *Company Of Wolves* and playing a blinder at the ICA. At times she can get a little pompous, but this sub-psychedelic four track session is well on her good side. From '86 with upbeat power, then downbeat ambience. **NB**



THE DESERT WOLVES Speak To Me Rochelle Ugly Man **RR C** Just their second 45 and already the Wolves seem destined to make it through the middle distance into some kind of pop acceptance. To their advantage they are exceedingly good songwriters and have the sleek veneer of a band who can arrange their notes in just about the right order. With a little bit of radio help, this could be the shape of sounds to come. **DH**

EASTER AND THE TOTEM Co-Conspirator Ideological **P** Probing new wave with a poppy sheen, spiced by politically-aware lyricism. There's something cumbersome about this group's name, sound and delivery, but they have some cred ideas along the way. **DH**

EDEN Form Follows Function Den **C** Desperados from Norfolk in begging plea to be on 4AD. This slushy string-soaked cry is almost the right side of twee nothingness to come in with creds intact, but just at the last minute a heavy-handed guitar flurry shatters the tasteful whine and cheesiness of it all. Tempting all the same. **DH**

VALUE ADDED THRASH!

• The new singles from **Into A Circle** and **The Janitors** launch Abstract Records' spring bargain scoop with initial quantities (the first 2,000 copies) of each 12 inch selling for the price of a seven inch. Hooray! The Janitors' Moonshine and Into A Circle's Evergreen (neither of the groups are very good at stringing sentences together) launch the idea and they'll be followed by 45s from **The Jeremiahs** and **The Incredible Zombie Rockers**. (All this through Pinnacle.)



24 UNDERGROUND

EIRIN PERYGLUS Methyr OFN

RR C Finely-grafted pop power with a tricky electronic pulse triggering all the best moments. Sung in Welsh in an essential breathtaking rapture. Excellent. **NB**

ROKY ERICKSON AND EVILHOOK WILDLIFE You Don't Love Me Yet

Fundamental RR C A re-issue (it originally came out on New Rose) with Roky providing a perfecto, weepy rockabeat vocal that's more in the Bobby Vee/Gene Pitney line of business. A rock onslaught with the inevitable guitar rub holding close court, this is one of those classics that'll keep on turning up. **DH**

THE ESSENCE A Mirage

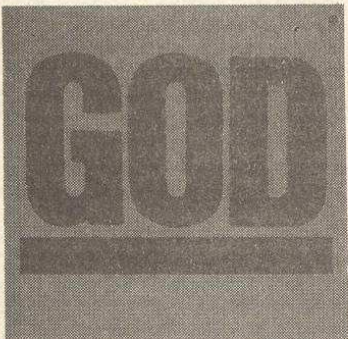
Midnight Music RT C The string break half way through, and a keen flamenco section, manages to lift the proceedings to mega-whooping proportions, but that doesn't quite give The Essence the right to crib early Cure so carefully. The Essence have the finishing which suggests they might one day adorn the same billboards as their idols, but a semester without Robert is a must at this point. **TC W**

FENTON WELLS Picture On The Wall Pastell

RIS A tastefully glancing guitar-pop tune from this German outfit who did a fine LP last year. The flipside sees them smother The Beatles' Ticket To Ride with due affection, suggesting that yet more fine fodder is set to wander from Germany's unpredictable music scene. **DH**

THE FLOWERPOT MEN Janice Long Session Night Tracks

P Sleazy backwater music from Adam Peters and Ben Watkins, culled from their session at the end of '86. Peters' electric cello and Ben Watkins' guitar and vocals make creepy voodoo sounds, aided by some reeling backing vocal lines from Margo Buchanan and Sam Brown. **DH**



GOD My Pal Au Go Go

SN Australian rock 'n' roll with the riffs turned up and the pointy shoes protruding. God have a lead *thang* called Joel Rock 'n' Rollo and he sings like he's face down in a car park. He also unleashes the meanest-most-minimal guitar solo halfway through My Pal. It makes God go deaf. It is good, God! **DH**

THE GREEN HORNETS Come

And Love Me Nobber And Tubbit (£2 from Green Hornets, Seaforth, Barton Field, Lyminge, Folkestone, Kent) A four track showdown from this tacky four piece who're slap bang in the Milkshakes mode, vibing up the Cavern-esque rock 'n' roll groove, with no hope of mass adoration. Authentic and austere, with an affectionate look back in angst into the bargain. **BC**

JOHN HEGLEY AND THE POPTICIANS I Saw My Dinner On TV Glass Fish

RT C Madcap pop that's capable of straying into quirky Wire ground, then reels under a Tarby belly laugh. Hegley isn't precise enough to be Monochrome Set-worship and worldly, nor is he tuneful enough to be novel. His point is blunt... but his jokes are funny. **BM**



HOUSE GRINDER Rapdown

Prods In The Dark RT C Last poets in the whitey house, with a slice of The Bodhi Beat Poets, House Grinder have a mighty three tracker here, and loop it close enough to chart acceptance that you can believe Bruno Brooks might even dig this. Fine stuff! **R**

HOUSE OF LOVE Christine

Creation RT C This third single from Creation's finest begins life crawling but ends up soaring. A despairing core is continually shrouded by some sinister guitar noise, giving the song a powerful emotive edge. There are moments when Christine's undercurrent of frustration threatens to explode into an unholy mess, but somehow it manages to stay beautifully restrained. **AF**

INTO A CIRCLE Evergreen

Abstract P Into A Circle seem to have been hovering for ages but, if you asked, I couldn't have begun to describe how they sounded until this shiny poptone came bustling past me on the escalator. A fine tune that's got its hooks in the right places — and its melodies not far behind. **DH**

THE INVISIBLE RAY Ronnie

Rocket Saturn (Angelo Plate Gaefestr 3, D-1000 Berlin 61, West Germany) An anti-Reaganite song and dance that's more like Billy Joel with a metal guitarist along for the ride. The flip reveals an Iggy Pop mentality and a guitarist set loose and seeking to destroy. **DH**

THE JANITORS Moonshine

Abstract P A new single from The Janitors is always an event. Moonshine, of course, is no excep-

tion. Beneath the freeway, that chunky guitar is slipped from its sheath, and Denton's husky debonair throat-wobbling does the rest. Yes, you can almost smell the leather. **DH**

THE JUSTICE LEAGUE OF

AMERICA Blackout Plastic Head RT C Wow! Loud, arrogant and angry stuff from the League — who first struck out in *Underground* some moons back in Tip Sheet. Now the sound is more abrasive, more upfront and, justifiably, more attention grabbing. Blackout is the kind of sound that grabs you by the ear and hurls you onto a bed of hot coals. **DH**

THE MAN FROM DELMONTE

Will Nobody Save Louise? **Ugly Man RR C** A question worth pondering, plus a thumping ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba brass break from this Mancunian tribe who have their hearts set on *Smash Hits* acceptance. A notch above the jangle and Mike Smith's approval, no doubt. **DH**

MCDONALD FLAK AND THE

ACK-ACK PACK Jack Me Some Crack Soho Girl

SP Hybrid house music with an English curl and a Kraftwerk wave. Tetchy and home-made but ultimately moving in the foot department. Swinging. **DH**

THE METEORS Somebody

Put Something In My Drink **Anagram P** The Meteors' rendition of da Ramone bruddas toon and the weakest moment from the recent *Pure Psychobilly elpee*. Much better are *Fire Fire* and *Bad Moon Rising* on the flip; worth having if you don't possess already. Tha's all. **DI**

MILLION MILES The Heart

Exile P Dedicated to a db, The Heart has all the resonant pop touches that such a "veteran" tunesmith would demand of his compadres. Million Miles are German, they struggle with the phrasing a little but have a fine line in pert pop. **DH**

THE MOSS POLES

Underground Idea P Not a homage to your fave mag, but a churning buzzsaw grind that's damp-squibbish and unsatisfying. The Moss Poles sound like Buzzcocks playing Tremeloes without the charisma of either. **NB**

PETER MURPHY All Night

Long Beggars Banquet A lolloping popper from Peter. Now, having metamorphosed through the Roxy/Bowie/Japan machine, he seems intent on developing his own persona, which is craggy, culty and commercially viable too. Recommended ear food. **TC W**

THE MYSTERY GIRLS Swing

And Slide **MGS RT C** Flamboyant rock from former glam bods. A clicking beat that you know someone like Dave Lee Travis will like. A decent enough song and some reeling brass and female chorus lines. Nothing new here, officer! **BC**

THE OUTLINES Crimson

Baby Zap Zap (BP 36, 78160

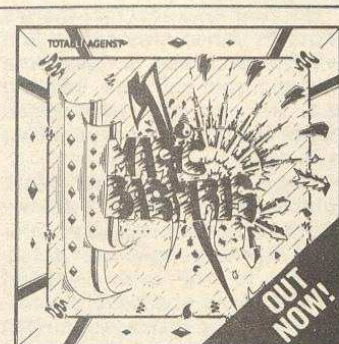
Marley-le-roi, France) Leatherette homage to Bolan with a sprig of Ig thrown over the shoulder to keep the evil rockers at bay. **NB**

CARLOS PERON Talks To The Nations LD

RR C Bland electronic pap from one third of Yello. **R**

CLIVE PRODUCT, ARMS AND LEGS Everyone Sees What

I See Big Untidy (16 Grayburn Close, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks HP8 4NZ) This is an ace, self-continued over



Vinyl Solution

The shop

BEST SELECTION—
NEW-WAVE—
HARDCORE-BEAT
SOUL-U.S. 60'S—
ROCK'N'ROLL—
70'S PROGRESSIVE

The label

OUT NOW!
Grimm Death (hip-hop)
Space Maggots
Birdhouse 12"
Hard-Ons LP
Stupids LP
Les Thugs

OUT SOON ABS 12"
The Ceteran LP
Milk Monitors 12"

The mail order

WRITE FOR OUR
CATALOGUE OF NEW
AUSTRALIAN-UK-US
SWEDISH-FRENCH
GERMAN ROCK &
HARDCORE BAND

Vinyl Solution.

tel 229 8010
39, hereford rd. london w2.

Thought and Cut

Christopher Mellor sees the smoke signals...

There's a revolution going on in the indie world. As sales of the traditional shambling indie single continue to decrease, the dance 12-inch is taking over. If you've got the groove you can get the sales. Not just crossover hits like **Bomb The Bass** and **Coldcut**, but other stuff by the **JAMs**, **Groove**, **T-Coy** and a growing number of other new groups.

So, now we know that there's more to dance music than just wimpy disco and songs about sex and gold and cars, let's dig out the def-est, hard-edged dance beats and start the tables turning.

Begin with **Gimme More (Much More)** from **Pankow** (Contempo, through Red Rhino). These people are Italy's answer to **DAF**, with plenty of macho sighs and sexy electronic beats. The B side, **Touch (I'm Your Bastard)**, is slower and more danceable, and both tracks are mixed by **Adrian Sherwood**.

The **McKenzies** have an industrial-electro-garage-pop 12 inch called **Mealy Mouth** out on **Ron Johnson**, with a B side scratched up, using all the familiar grooves, by **Graeme Park**. Graeme is the man behind **Submission Records** who recently released the fantastic **Submit (To The Beat)** by **Groove**.



The **JAMs** have been busy too. Their **Burn The Beat** revamp dub version of **Dance To The Music** by **Sly And The Family Stone** uses bits of **Michael Jackson** and **Acid Tracks** by **Phuture**.

And if you want to investigate acid house, because it really is some of the hardest, most uncompromising experimental electronic music around, get spaced out to these five:

- 1 GIVE IT TO ME **BAM BAM UK** SERIOUS
- 2 SO LET IT BE **HOUE! MIKE DUNN US WESTBROOK**
- 3 THE POKE **ADONIS UK WESTSIDE**
- 4 ACID TRACKS **PHUTURE US TRAX**
- 5 NUDE PHOTO 88 **DEREK MAY UK KOOLCAT**

Or try some new acid compilations — US stuff on **Acid Tracks (Westside)**, and UK material on **Acid Beats 1 (Warrior Records)**, which includes an acid washing machine remix of **Jackin' James** by **Jack Factory**. Also featuring UK house music is the compilation **Housemasters Vol 2** on **Koolcat**.

45 REVOLUTIONS

from previous page

financed and distributed single, that sparkles and shakes with a poppy originality that's been sadly lacking in the world recently. With guitars and a manic fiddle holding court, Mr Prod whoops up a storm and triggers the 'play it again' mechanism. **DH**

PAUL ROLAND Alice's

House Bam Caruso RR C More irreverent classicism from Paul, as Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee get a namecheck and thoughts of performance art psychedelia and Syd Barrett's bastard sons come to mind. Nothing new but some entertainingly glib lyrics here. **JE**

ROYAL FAMILY AND THE POOR Restrained In A Moment

Gaia RR C A warmingly emotive single from Mike Keane's **Royal Family**. Flowing into a sea of drum patterns, a wilting vocal makes this atmospheric ballad into an accessible and desirable item. Bracing. **DH**

RUBY BLUE Because... Red

Flame NM C Ruby Blue make T'Pau look like the arthritic mountebanks that they are. This girl can sing, this band can write good, intelligent tunes, and they don't lean heavily on existing formulas to do it. The bad side of which is that it may take a while for their blend of folkie pop melody to carve a track for itself, but surely, it's only a matter of time. **CL**

SAREAN QUARTER Precious

Contempo RR C Faceless, floating rock music with a touch of psyche-lyricism and inspirational, but less-than-inspired, posturing from this four piece. Sarean Quartet play '70s mood that's not shining too brightly in early '88. **NB**

SCHWEFEL Metropolis

Amigo (Weiner Strasse 21, D-1000 Berlin 36, West Germany)

The second single from Schwefel sees the group heading down a chunky, churning passage with a hand raised in horror. Numan with electric guitars and a modernist and distant vocal delivery, Schwefel are something different again to emerge from Berlin. **DH**

THE SEERS Lightning Strikes Rough Trade

RR C Glorification or condemnation of gun-toting hysterics, **Lightning Strikes** is powered by a histrionic rock facade which makes this plump guitar noise ideally clad for radical(?) radio and a touch of scandal. A good song in the latterday Clash, pre-big band U2 mould that's effortlessly commercial. **BC**

THE SHAMEN Knature Of A

Girl Moksha NM C Phased sounds from the ever-inspiring **Shamen**. Members of the church of sub-genius are floating through the ether with a translucent vision that isn't easy at all, but The Sha-

men do it all with so much style that you can't help but dig them to the ground. **R**

SON OF SAM Hallelujah!

Geronimo! Explay Rouska

RR C After their phenom album, **Son Of Sam** show us their teeth on this hardcore dance slab that slaps the face of public taste and bites chunks from its cheek. **Son Of Sam's 21st Century Bible**, topside cut, tempts the devil and peppers the middle east with clattering percussion. A warning on every packet! **TC W**



SOUND GARDEN Screamin'

Life EP Sub Up RTS More near metallic mayhem from long-haired America. Ten years ago this would have been cited as a backward looking Sabs rip-off, now it stands head and shoulders above a glut of metal clones. Punk in second gear, a nice noise, but it's all a little too controlled. **NB**

THE STICKLEBACKS All You Get Dub House (01-597 1468)

What should have been a glorious country-influenced tunelet dissolves twice when someone unleashes a dire rubber band solo. Otherwise this is well crafted and well intentioned pop... but snap that band, please! **DH**

THE THINGS Calling To The Shadows Orange Bowl (0684

299065) Spirited pop with a lyrical stamp and some guitars that chime like a man cleaning a piano. The Things seem to have been hailed as everything but something that's new... which is a shame, since their finite doodle suggests that they have something rather special lurking. **DH**

3 MUSTAPHAS 3 Linda

Linda Globestyle P The Mustaphas continue to enthuse over the rhythms of the far east, moving ever sideways into a plucky romanticism that's more at home in **Hope And Crosby Road**. . . films than on your neighbourhood Walkman. An entertaining blast, but where next? **DH**

THE VERY THINGS The Peel Sessions Strange Fruit

P Four from the floor, circa '83/'84, and a pre-pubescent, undeveloped quartet it is, too. The Very

Things sound fine enough, but they've come such a way since then, culminating in last year's gorgeous **Let's Go Out**, that this all sounds a bit badly thought out. A couple of the songs survive, but wait for their LP this spring if you want to hear the Things at their best. **DH**

THE WILD FLOWERS Broken Chains Chapter 22

NM C The second coming of Peter Perrett is pre-empted by the press legend that this is 'The song that Peter Perrett of The Only Ones didn't write'. Well, it sure as hell sounds like he sang it! The **Wild Flowers** could well be the druggy edge for a new degeneration and we can mark how times have changed by the potential radio play that this deserves. **DH**

WORLD DOMINATION ENTERPRISES I Can't Live Without My Radio Product

Inc RT C What the hell is going on? **WDE** cover **LL Cool J** and get **Robert Krush Groove** Gordon to produce, the end result being second rate rap. The flip is the tackier original which has more character and originality, but no commercial potential, no doubt. Hey, pump up the feedback! **TC W**

YARGO Help Bodybeat

RR C Succinctly mixed dance gem which seems to transcend the inadequacies of dance-rock, hip-hop and house with the greatest of ease. The throbbing bass line is pimple-pricked by spikey horn sounds and topped with Yargo's distinctive vocal sounds. Sleazier and sneakier than most... and sexy too. **R**

EAR-FOOD!

Ug contribs' fave tracks for April

JOHNNY DEE

SUEDEHEAD Morrissey His Master's Voice

DAVE HENDERSON GIGANTIC Pixies 4AD

JULIAN HENRY I DON'T LOVE LUCY ANY- MORE Habit Virgin

DAZ IGYMETH IGNORE THE MACHINE Alien Sex Fiend Anagram

ALEX KADIS ALL NIGHT LONG Peter Mur- phy Beggars Banquet

CAROLE LINFIELD MULE BRAIN (BRAIN OF MULE) Honolulu Mountain Daf- odils Zinger

CHRIS MELLOR DOCTORIN' THE HOUSE Col- dcut Ahead Of Our Time

RONNIE RANDALL AMBULANCE FOR ONE Micro- disney Virgin

RIPLEY WE'RE AN INDUSTRIAL BAND Culturcide RRRRecords

The Mekons' life & times... and a new LP

Hit me where it hurts

What is a Mekon?

"We're a sort of rest home for tired musicians!" There goes 'Bonny' Jon Langford, long time Mekon, some time John (one of Three), producer, human fly and general wit and raconteur. "Is there a pre-requisite for being a Mekon? No, people usually fulfil a need. Various people wander through every now and then but I think the old story about there being a vast number of people in the band is a bit of a myth."

"Yeah," Tom agrees. Like his friend, Jon, Tom is a veteran Mekon of the finger-in-every-pie variety, and the three of us are being very fashionable sitting in the Virgin Café sipping wine when we should be drinking black coffee, bemoaning the after effects of a rough night — just like *real* rock 'n' roll.

"I think," continues Tom, "we've been fairly consistent for the last four LPs. It's always been Jon, Kevin and I, so we maintain a nucleus."

Maintaining themselves as a loose dozen for some while now, The Mekons are notorious for their almost eleven years of wild pop antics, featuring a raucous genesis and a gradual move to the C&W/folk style which characterises their music today. They've now released their fourth *proper* album, *So Good It Hurts*, on their own SIN label in conjunction with *Cooking Vinyl*.

Jon and Tom are a likeable pair of so and so's, courteous and friendly, chatting easily about their latest vinyl venture, but, they insist, it wasn't always this way...

Jon: "We couldn't put a record out for two years! No-one would give us any money, our reputation was that we were these wreckers who were very hard to deal with so record companies wouldn't touch us!"

How did that reputation come about?

Jon: "Emm, 'cause we were wreckers who were very difficult to deal with!"

And, it is reported, The Mekons fared little better with the press.

Tom: "There was a time when we were a dirty word. I've walked into the *NME* and people wouldn't speak to me — people we *knew*!"

Jon: "Yes, people in Parka's used to hitch rides home in our van from gigs and then decide that we were the lowest form of human life. We won't mention any names... Adrian Thrills!"

Tom: "He still won't talk to us now."

But, with their chequered past safely behind them — well almost — it seems that the winds of change are blowing down in Mekon City. Quite suddenly it has become hip to like The Mekons — ideologically *sound* even. Although both Tom and Jon are genuinely surprised by this revelation, they think it might not be totally disconnected with their relative success in the land of Uncle Sam.

Tom: "Funnily enough, while we were touring America last year a few American journalists picked up on The Mekon's Story (old Mekons LP which received critical acclaim in the papers but was regarded as a demon thing by the prominent and the powerful in the record industry, including Peel). Greil Marcus, in particular, gave us a lot of press."

Jon: "Yes, and a few others who were like the deans of rock writers!"

Tom: "Maybe that's why some British journalists changed their attitude towards us, because these Americans are like heavyweight, serious writers. For some reason anyway they picked up on us and started to write about us when no one else would. The tide is turning!"

Jon: "Yes. Only to rush back again with greater ferocity! Actually, we *did* start to behave in a way that people could understand. I think the time of the miners' strike made us want to play live again. We always say that we're not politicians, we're musicians, so it's very difficult to do things to make anything better. But we saw that playing benefit gigs for the miners was a very clear way, politically, of doing something."

The Mekons sing of love, sexuality, equality, social issues and, of course, politics, but have refrained, thankfully, from becoming the Holy Joe armchair politicians their social consciences might afford.

Jon: "Well, we've always avoided party politics. I remember way back when we were sharing a rehearsal room with The Gang Of Four. We were covering aspects of Marxism and other issues but we were always aware of the personal response."

Tom: "You can't draw a line between your politics and the rest of what you do."

Jon: "That's why we insist that we're not politicians in that sense. We couldn't write a sort of Redskins lyric — write a song that saves the world from all its ills, make it into a record and that's it! Everything's alright!"

Tom: "Anyway, it's always been a collective thing for us and you can't be too precious, you can't afford to take yourself too seriously."

Jon: "I've never felt myself getting pompous but I don't think any of us have got it in us. Basically 'cause we hate everything political, ha, ha, ha! In fact none of us have ever belonged to a party any longer than it took us to leave it!"

But, alas, the world is changing. A word to those in their mid-20s/early 30s: Do you ever get the feeling that we are the tail end of a dying hippy generation? Nowadays it seems that if you aren't up to aspiring then you're a loser. There's a super breed emerging, the townhouse teenager born and bred a member of the Tory populous. What will they think of The Mekons and their alternatives? What will they think of the new LP?

As anyone who is familiar with The Mekons will know, they are quite capable of getting very heavy and depressed, but that mood is significantly absent on *So Good It Hurts*. It has a surprisingly *lighter* tone than its sometimes doom-ridden predecessors. Rather than waste its energy on gloom it aims at the enemy and scores a direct hit.

Jon: "It's more angry I think. It's no good writing optimistic lyrics if you're not, because then you end up writing escapist rubbish. But we've tried not to wallow in self pity."

Tom: "With this new album, we've deliberately tried to write in a different way. We've been very critical of ourselves and cut out the elements of despair or repetition. We really tried to force a new way of writing."

And jolly nice it is too, readers. The Mekons celebrate their achievement with a tour this month, and there's some real surprises on the bill — so catch them if you can.

Jon: "I'm really looking forward to touring again and getting drunk and being silly! Alcoholic? I most certainly am not... But I do like a pint! Yes, I think

it would have been a very horrible boring life if I hadn't had a few drinks occasionally!"

Tom: "It's funny, I was having this conversation the other day. They go on about why people turn to alcohol and become drug addicts, but they should be asking how people managed not to drink and take drugs and still deal with life!"

Jon: "I sometimes get really puritanical and say I'm not going to drink, but although it's very easy to do I'm really much happier going out and having a drink with me mates. I don't get much time for it these days though, that's why I'm looking forward to this tour. It's like having a social life — especially with The Mekons — there's a lot of us and we have a really good time. Being in The Mekons is like being in a funny little gang which you can't really do at 30! It's like being in a model railway club!" **Alex Kadis**

Mekons top 5

C&W singers

- 1 Merle Haggard
- 2 Hank Williams
- 3 George Jones
- 4 Johnny Cash
- 5 Loretta Lynn
- 6 Patsy Cline
- 7 Randy Travis
- 8 Jon Anderson
- 9 Dwight Yoakham

(...and they continue in this vein for several hours)



THE MEKONS ... they should never have gone on that Cambridge diet

IT'S DIFFERENT FOR
DOMEHEADSAlan McGee recalls the most memorable
Creation creations

Can you believe this? Alan McGee, who once had a reputation for being the biggest bastard in the music business, the person who made bands wear leather trousers, the red-headed monster, no less, is sipping Tizer and telling me he started Creation Records to make friends! What's more, he is currently living in a flat with '70s decor — ghastly pink wallpaper, MFI tat. This man is humble!

Pass the fizzy stuff, Mr McGee, and tell us how it all began.

"About mid '84 I got a bank loan of £1,000 and put out *The Legend!* single, at the same time I started a club called *The Living Room* (in London's Tottenham Court Road). I didn't do the club to make money. I just didn't know anyone in London at the time and I thought I'd meet people if I started a club putting on bands I liked, like *The TV Personalities*, *The Membranes*, *Jasmine Minks*, *The 3 Johns* and stuff. For some reason *The Living Room* became really popular and it was packed out every week.

"I began to meet people like Peter Astor and laughing Larry (Lawrence Felt) and we became pals, you know what I mean?"

"Then *Rough Trade* started to take notice of Creation and started letting us make records. We were making about £100 to £150 a gig at the club — so after a couple of good weeks we were making enough money to put out records and that's how it started."

THE LEGEND! 73 In 83

"I used to be in this band called *The Laughing Apple* and there used to be this guy who'd stand at the front at all the gigs and dance disjointedly — there would only ever be three people who came to see *The Laughing Apple* and he was one of them. So we became friends; then I started a club called *Communication Blur* and we needed a compère.

"At that time, this guy, Jerry Thackary, was the most un-enigmatic, boring, kindest, shyest person you could ever meet — and it just appealed to my sense of humour to make him a compère. We used to put on the posters: 'the legendary Jerry Thackery', which eventually became shortened to *The Legend*. We took it one stage further and put out the 72 In 83 record — then he started to actually believe he was *The Legend!* and started acting like a star.

"He used to be this bloke that no-one talked to — then I made him this *Legend* character and people started taking him seriously, and he became a cult star."

This wasn't the last 'joke' record. Press reaction to *Upside Down* by *The Jesus And Mary Chain* meant everyone was eagerly awaiting the next label release. However, the next release was a string thing by *Le Zarjazz* — a total load of crap.

"It throws people off the scent."

The joke last year was, of course...

BABY AMPHETAMINE Chernobyl Baby

People actually took them seriously?

"It was a f***ing joke. It got to number four in the indie charts. I just thought I'd get these three girls from the *Virgin Megastore*, write a song and get a hip-hop producer. I knew the *NME* would like it just cos it was a hip-hop record. The girls took it seriously too though, cos they were on front pages and on TV — they thought they were fantastic, they believed it. That was probably the most successful joke."

THE WEATHER PROPHETS Almost Prayed

The Weather Prophets

Another joke record (ho ho)...

"*Almost Prayed* was written at a Janice Long session, the band had only just formed and they wrote it in 20 minutes. Why do I like it? It's just got a brilliant feel to it. It's a brilliant rock 'n' roll record."

The *Weather Prophets* have got this image of being boring and sending people to sleep.

"I think a lot of that comes from the fanzines who are hung up, cos they think *The Loft* were a better band than *The Weather Prophets*. I can understand what they mean — half of it is boring, but half of it's brilliant. Some of it's utter genius."

Last year, Creation suffered a crisis — the dreaded backlash happened.

"From '84 through to '86 Creation was quite a trendy label, but in 1987 it wasn't — everything got slagged. In a way it was good because it cleared the air and now the band's music matters and not the label. I think it's good that we lost the hip tag because now people don't buy the records just 'cos it's on Creation but because they like them.

"We still have a collectors market — we can sell 2,000 of anything on 12 inch. The bands now have got different followings — people who like *Biff Bang Pow!* don't necessarily like *Momus*.

"We've got a much wider spectrum now, from *Heidi Berry* to *Blow Up* — the only thing they've got in common is that I like them."

CLIVE LANGER Even Though

"He was producing *Imperial* for *Primal Scream*, I went into the studio at about ten o'clock one night and he was sitting

on the floor, on his own, crying. I went up to him and asked him what was wrong. He looked up at me and said 'The Beatles, Alan, The Beatles... I f***ing love them'. So I just thought what a brilliant guy. This single should have been a hit, but it only sold 429 copies."

PRIMAL SCREAM All Fall Down

"The vocals for this were done in one take. Now, Bobby takes too long over them, he's totally paranoid and redoes everything about a thousand times — a total perfectionist. Their LP didn't work because they just spent too long on it, Warners gave them £127,000 and they spent it all."

Elevation, the label McGee set up at WEA after the majors began to take notice of *Primal Scream* and the *Weather Prophets*, recently fell apart. It was, he admits, his biggest mistake. WEA didn't seem willing to put time into the label. They believed the wave of optimism generated by C86, and wanted hits immediately.

"The major music industry is based too much on the short term thing — major record companies want hits NOW. But *Primal Scream* will be around for the next ten years. If bands keep on getting better they will, if they keep on repeating themselves they won't."

So what's happened to *Primal Scream*?

"They're back on Creation with a single due out soon."

BILL DRUMMOND The Man

"Bill's my pal, but I thought his record would be crap. He gave a cassette to me and I didn't play it for ages. Then I put it on when I was in the bath one night — I nearly drowned. I laughed for about half an hour. It's the work of a complete nutter — I remember once he came into the Creation office and he played the *Baby Amphetamine* record and he was just dancing on the table going 'eh, it's f***in' great mon! Hip hop, f***in' fantastic'."

So you're responsible for inspiring the JAMS too.

"Well, there's more political motivation behind it than just the hip hop thing."

THE JESUS AND MARY CHAIN Upside Down

I can remember the day I bought this record — it changed my life. No, don't titter. It really is *THE* record.

"It cost £172 to do."

How did it come about?

"For years they'd been sending demos to everyone, I put them on and I just knew they'd be brilliant. If it wasn't for me they'd still be watching TV and videoing the adverts, back home in East Kilbride. The riots thing wasn't intentional, it just sort of snowballed and got out of hand — it was just a joke, another joke that people believed in."

Whether you consider Creation Records just to be a series of jokes, wind-ups, bullshit or whatever, there's no denying the effect it's had on independent labels. In 1984, when everything seemed



Jazz Butcher

to have gone stale, Creation started to release pop records. Although they didn't change the world, they certainly cheered it up a little. From a thousand quid overdraft to a worldwide company turning over somewhere in the region of three quarters of a million pounds, Creation is now here to stay.

As for McGee, well, I used to think he was a bit of a div, but now I think he's quite a nice bloke, really.

"More Tizer, Johnny?"

Why, thank you Mr Magoo. Johnny Dee

McGEE'S FAVES 45's

1 BALLAD OF THE BAND FELT



Felt

- 2 COLD HEART JASMINE MINKS
- 3 MURDERERS, THE HOPE OF WOMEN MOMUS
- 4 EVEN THOUGH CLIVE LANGER
- 5 ALMOST PRAYED THE WEATHER PROPHETS
- 6 THERE MUST BE A BETTER LIFE BIFF BANG POW!
- 7 IRONY EP EMILY
- 8 ALL FALL DOWN PRIMAL SCREAM
- 9 UPSIDE DOWN THE JESUS AND MARY CHAIN
- 10 SHINE ON THE HOUSE OF LOVE

LPs

- 1 FOREVER BREATHES... FELT
- 2 POISON BOYFRIEND MOMUS
- 3 ANOTHER AGE JASMINE MINKS
- 4 BEAT HOTEL BIFF BANG POW!



Biff, Bang, Pow!

5 THE MAN BILL DRUMMOND

Peter Murphy is a ganglingiggler!

A slight hitch in the proceedings... Peter Murphy is momentarily incapacitated by a fit of the giggles. In fact, he's curled up in the executive swivel job opposite me making no attempt to regain his composure whatsoever. It must have been something I said...

Granted, Peter has every reason to be in high spirits; he's gained considerable status both here and across the pond as a solo performer, he's just released a pretty special LP on Beggars Banquet and become a first time father to an eight pound 12 ounce daughter. Things, as they say, are shaping up nicely in the Murphy camp these days. Well, this *is* a turn up for the books! It's a far cry from the tortured young artist of yesteryear, that well-documented time when interviewers would meet their subject expecting something... *unusual*.

So just how did that evasive young man with a reputation for austerity come to be the accommodating charmer sniggering on the other side of the table?

"Yes, I know what you're saying. People *do* arrive with an expectation, don't they? They think, 'Who the *hell* does this guy think he is?' or, 'Peter Murphy! He thinks he's *amazing!*'. They usually start by commenting on how I am or how I speak or by saying that I'm totally opposite to what they expected."

Well, for the record then, he's very well thank you, he does speak with a very occasional stammer and, had I actually believed any of the press cuttings, I should have met with an irritable schizophrenic with a tendency to burst into spontaneous Sufi recitations.

"That's partly my fault. Back in my youth I made a lot of mistakes. I'd become very exhausted and frustrated with certain situations. The expectancy from the record company, the press and the audience was for me to be a voice box for this band and I'd just lash out. I should never have been made into that. It was wrong. It was generally a tired state and when I'd turn up for interviews I'd be so annoyed anyway thinking, 'Here we go again, this is so boring', and you'd get one cute remark and it would set me off! Like, I'd want to kick hell out of the guy but I'd hack him up verbally instead and what he could then write was a response.

"It was the same when we played live. I'd be so angry with the audience for being so exhausted that I'd think something wasn't going right and just lash out at them."

So when did the new perspective develop? Peter has a theory...

"I have this theory. Back when it was Bauhaus, I would be almost dead after a show, physically and emotionally. Now I do just as much but I'm there, I've got energy. When I realised this I thought, 'Well, what's all this about then? *Why?*'. And I think it's just about being in control, being aware that you don't have to be a voice box for other people's ideas and, therefore, not being comfortable with it. The battle went — it disappeared with the band. Love And Rockets, you know, the rest of Bauhaus, they have those problems, I know they do, it's obvious. It's bound to come up. It sounds a bit selfish, the way I'm putting it, but the tension went because I wasn't worried about what I was doing, so I was prepared to be told that I was wrong without getting too neurotic about it. I could *understand* it. Criticism has got to come, you can't expect everyone to love you, we all need...em..."

Yardsticks?

"Yeah, man! My wife *murders* me sometimes, she *kills* me! She just sees exactly what I'm doing wrong."

Professionally or personally?

"Both. Everything! She knows exactly what's going through my brain, she knows when I'm bullshitting and why. It's really good to have that. What I don't like is people who aren't very perceptive, they have their own motives and the criticism isn't healthy. It's like an act of violence towards you, it's just them being downright bloody horrible to you and that's upsetting."

Whatever your opinion of Mr Murphy, it can't be denied that he has a certain charismatic pull, a flamboyancy that will provoke extreme reaction of one sort or another. I knew at least a handful of people who modelled their youth on a concept that they considered to be the sacrosanct Peter Murphy idealogue. I wondered if that knowledge ever worried him.

"Well sure! I know it's there and it's a potentially dangerous thing. It constantly moves you to self-analysis and you could end up being totally egocentric, mis-using your power to manipulate people at a really dangerous level. 'Cause if you're angry you can zap people very easily, I suppose. Yes, I do feel a great sense of responsibility. You can see by the way that I'm talking that it troubles me a lot, it's my biggest problem."

Reflectors down...

Our reflections are interrupted by the arrival of coffee and lunch, an Eastern concoction of rice with lots of fiddly bits in it. "Try some," urges Peter. I decline and instead, propose that we discuss the subject of enigmas. Enigmas tend to develop, they manifest themselves gradually, but to the outside world it seemed that Peter Murphy had arrived as a pre-packaged, all inclusive deal — complete with idiosyncracies.

Take note: avoid provoking another outburst of laughter when your companion has his mouth full of rice!

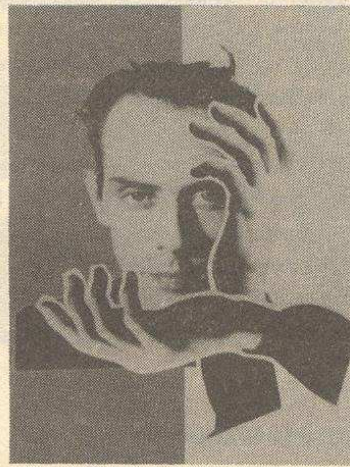
"Excuse me!"

He apologises before lapsing into a bit of a cheeky grin...

"I know I did, and I knew that I would, arrive as an enigma."

And since Peter Murphy knows when his frankness may be misconstrued as a flirtation with audacity, he's quick to clarify.

"Mainly because I've always been like an enigma to my friends, which doesn't mean they held me in high esteem, but they saw me as something intangible. I've always been attracted to the enigmatic. Not necessarily the strange but the...*mysterious*. My speech patterns and my ideas,



Murphy: man, myth and montage



mellow!

even my English essay portfolio at school, was very abstract — my teacher liked that a lot — and I've always...er, I guess, I just think that way, I am that way now. I suppose my lyrics are quite enigmatic too. They can be taken on different levels and I must reflect that. I hold their secret."

Fortunately, he isn't covetous with his secret, and insists that his words are written to be heard. "I call my lyrics stories, fairy stories. I love it when children listen to them because they react so openly. They ask, 'What are the dragons doing?' or 'Why did the Gin Men smash the ark? Who are the Gin Men?'. They're stories to wonder about and to listen to, so, yeah, I just like writing stories!"

Why, then, has it taken Peter Murphy so long to own up and write his stories alone? There have been a succession of conspirators; the infamous and much maligned Bauhaus, the Dali's Car project and his collusion with Howard Hughes. In 1986 there was the first Murphy venture into solo land with the restrained *Should The World Fail To Fall Apart* EP.

"I know what you're saying. I can actually do anything alone, performing has never been a problem. From the first moment I walked onto a stage I was in control, but when it actually came down to recording, I had always recorded with other people and it was a very hard habit to break. I think I was working with other people for safety's sake really. Looking back I realise that I wasted a lot of time and potential. Although it was all a part of the experience and all that I suppose."

Which brings us up to the Peter Murphy of the present. Now, with a hard-edged confidence and an optimism previously unseen, he unleashes his second solo album, *Love Hysteria*, this month.

"Previously I had very small ideas, they were very fragile. This time I knew exactly what I wanted. I had all the songs demoed and knew exactly the type of producer I wanted to work with."

Ex-Fall member Simon Rodgers was selected for the job and the rest is vinyl history. *Love Hysteria* is consummate Peter Murphy.

"It is, isn't it? It's solid, less ethereal and experimental."

And less fettered. But this is where it's at, where it *should* be, as Peter will tell you himself. Bauhaus, Dali's Car, Peter or just plain old Pete — whatever he chooses to call himself — it really doesn't matter these days. The proof, as always, must come with the eating, so I suggest you claim your portion and relish it. **Alex Kadis**

UNDERGROUND reading between the lines

Sample our well-thumbed back pages (still limited amounts available)...

- ISSUE ONE**★April '87 with features on **Slab, Skin, Big Black and Coil**
- ISSUE TWO**★May '87 with features on **Wire, Pulp, Renegade Soundwave and Laibach**
- ISSUE THREE**★June '87 with features on **Eraseur, McCarthy, Wolfhounds and The Weather Prophets**
- ISSUE FOUR**★July '87 with features on **Echo & The Bunnymen, The Shamen, Band Of Holy Joy and Lowlife**
- ISSUE FIVE**★August '87 with features on **Depeche Mode, Tatuah Gosh, Great Leap Forward and ROIR**
- ISSUE SIX**★September '87 with features on **Throwing Muses, Bad Dress Sense, AC Temple and Dead Can Dance**
- ISSUE SEVEN**★October '87 with features on **The Wedding Present, Gene Loves Jezebel, Psychic TV**
- ISSUE EIGHT**★November '87 with features on **The Fall, Leather Nun, Love & Rockets and The Three Johns**
- ISSUE NINE**★December '87 with features on **Miaow, Swans, Meat Puppets and The Chesterfields**
- ISSUE TEN**★January '88 with features on **Gary Bykers On Acid, Stupids, The Mighty Lemon Drops and The Triffids**
- ISSUE ELEVEN**★February '88 with features on **Luxuria, The Woodentops, Durutti Column and Tuxedomoon**
- ISSUE TWELVE**★March '88 with features on **Joy Division, The Primitives, Stump and The Janitors**

Issues are available at **£1.25** each from **Underground Single Copies Department, Royal Sovereign House, 40 Beresford Street, London SE18 6BQ.**



Ug ish seven: with free chrome blast featuring Sonic Youth, Cabaret Voltaire, The Normal, Depeche Mode, The Shamen, Throwing Muses and more

UNDERGROUND spiraling the plastic shards

Behold the Underground Educational Entertainment Program, presenting two classic albums... Sure, you'll have to pay the staggering price of £3 a throw, but these are classics (no kidding)...

Albums are £3 each including postage (make cheques to Spotlight Publications) and are available from **Underground, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ.**

VOLUME ONE

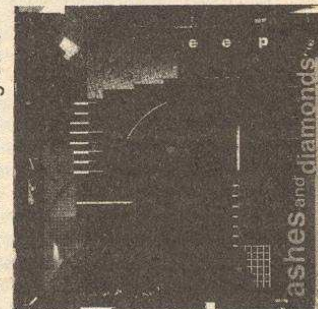
Wire: Tapped
Wire/Underground



with tracks from **The Leather Nun, Thirteen Moons, Man Klan, Sing Sing And The Crime, Master Twins, Dirty Work Work, All That Jazz, Tony Curtis and Houses And Gardens**

VOLUME TWO

Ashes And Diamonds
Ink/Red Flame/Underground



with tracks from **The Room, Phillip Boa And The Voodoo Club, The Moodists, Tactics, Ruby Blue, Patrik Fitzgerald, Slabl, C-Cat Trance, Charles Hayward, Pinkie MacLure, Severed Heads and Anne Clark**

VINYL SOLUTION PRESENTS...



LP — SOL 7
...JESUS CARES

Still available:
"Van Stupid" MLP (SOL 2)
"Frankfurter" 12" EP (FART 4)

ALCOHOL-FREE ROCK 'N' ROLL



BACK IN THE SADDLE

VINYL SOLUTION RECORDS
DISTRIBUTED BY PINNACLE

HARD-ONS



LP — SOL 8

Coming Soon:
Hard-Ons New LP
"Dickcheese" (SOL 10)

THE HARD-ONS BACK IN THE SADDLE TOUR APRIL '88

April 3rd Sunday: London — Sir George Robey, 4th Monday: Newport — T.J.'s Disco, 5th Tuesday: Brighton — Richmond

All following dates with

6th: Hemel Hempstead — Loughton Centre, 7th: Portsmouth — Basins, 8th: London — Electric Ballroom, 9th: Manchester — Boardwalk, 10th: Birmingham: Hummingbird, 11th: Leeds — Rock City, 12th: Poole — Mr C's

Send S.A.E. to Vinyl Solution for free set of Hard-Ons Stickers

Vinyl Solution: 39 Hereford Road, London W2. Tel: 01-229 8010

FIVE get UNDEREXCITED

Microdisney

and the secret lives of tours

Clout, that's the main difference between life on a major minor label like Rough Trade and a minor major such as Virgin. It's a simple fact that numbers matter, be they in terms of manpower or finance. Oh! There are disadvantages of course, compromises, manipulations and exploitations. But in the end, money helps to smooth the rocky road to, er... success! This is true, particularly in the tour situation where the basics are provided with a little more style than usual, posh hotels, good equipment, slick organisation and teamwork. The band have only one job... to play, and to be seen to play. The boring bits, like lugging equipment on and off stages at unearthly hours, and going up and down the country at the crack of dawn, are the less glamorous preserve of the *roadie*, a thankless and overrated occupation for sure.

We all have an idea of what is supposed to go on behind the scenes of these tour extravaganzas — through the romanticised and highly coloured observations of starstruck journalists attempting to bask in the reflected glory of a phoney *instant friendship* with pop stars. The *television out of the hotel window* scenario only ever occurs when a man from the tabloid press is close at hand these days. The *bad* publicity generated will always guarantee the funds necessary to stage such an *event*.

And so here I am, in just such a potentially *explosive* situation. *Observing* a bunch of strangers for a *Rock On The Road* type exposé. I play the gatecrasher, the party pooper, the sore thumb stuck up the agitated bottom of a band on the runs. Stop the fun, I want to get on.

The Mountbatten Empire Room Bar at Newcastle's Royal Station Hotel is grand by any standards. Twelve males surround me and their names are bounced back and forth in polite introductions. By the end I am sure of two things, that five of them *must* be Microdisney, and that *my* name is Ronnie.

Settling back I wait for some typically manic, outrageous, rabid rocker type anti-social behaviour. But instead I find long, witty bouts of subtle, quickfire conversation. The most risqué event taking place at the hotel is a lingerie convention in the Windsor room. It seems that music to Microdisney is a career, the idea isn't to PARTY, PAARTY, PAAARTY.

The whole point is to play, pleasure is an added bonus. Newcastle's Riverside is the opening night of the '88 campaign to boost sales of a new single, Gale Force Wind, and preview the forthcoming album, *39 Minutes*. The Micro's faithfully reproduce the new material and inject enough power and passion to stir the audience into demanding a few encores. There are no pyrotechnics, no disco lights, no nonsense.

A tenuous Prefab Sproutish feel seeps out of the new Microdisney, and it seems no coincidence that a Kane Ganger and Mr Kitchenware himself turn up for a night with their old mates. What say you Cathal Coughlan, singer and lyricist?

"The idea of projecting your personality strongly through songs, as Paddy McAloon does, is appealing. He really goes for it. I don't object to that connection."

A potential groupie girl backstage suggests that Cathal, in performance, looks like a psychopath, a thought that obviously excites her. Passion and integrity might be a more apt description of the way Cathal's sweaty, physical display causes such a deep furrow in his brow that you half expect his skull to crack open. Does he have to fake such actions, being such a calm, thoughtful figure off stage?



"Not at all, I'm naturally that way. On stage I feel really loopy, it's a gigantic release of pressure after the boring normality of a day on the road which is like nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing... Besides, I'm out to entertain and be

looked at. Obviously, at times you feel a bit of a phoney, but you can harness that feeling and convert it into positive reaction. I don't believe that it has to always be a satisfying experience for me personally, as long as the audience enjoy it!" Back in the hotel bar, Drak, the sound engineer, talks about Lords

Of The New Church, Culture, Sly And Robbie and other mega tours. He recalls how

boring Scandinavia is and how alive and vital he finds Madrid in winter. He's been doing the job forever, and he's no spring chicken. Drak describes himself as a *nouveau gypsy*. Hey! Drak, was touring *ever* as wayward and rebellious as they say?

"You bet. It's dead now, these days all the bands are ex-Poly students, so what chance mayhem? Five years ago it was wild, ten years ago it was crazy, and 15 years ago it was so good I can't even remember what happened. Let's face it, there's only room for rebellion under a socialist government."

On the van trip to Glasgow we try to tune in to Radio Obscure, as the band like to refer to the dreaded local radio stations. They have a fixation about this subject. Cathal tells me that their album cover will be a piss-take of tenth rate local DJs. Another bugbear is the two-faced cub music journalist who smiles to your face then stabs you in the back in print. This has caused the birth of the Microdisney Are Shit T-shirts that are now on sale at performances.

Then again, isn't it the kettle calling the pot black? After all, Cathal has never refrained from bitchy personal attacks on personalities in the past. The last single, Singer's Hampstead Home, was surely a wafer-thin dig at label-mate Boy George?

"It wasn't really about him, more a caricature of a sort of moron. It's not a direct reference."

Microdisney also take a strong stance where politics and ethics are concerned. The most notable occasion was their refusal to appear on Sky Channel to promote the last album because Rupert Murdoch owns the station. And then there was the rather self-explanatory titled mini-album, *We Hate You South African Bastards*. The new single, *Gale Force Wind*, incidentally, was even recorded on the night of the hurricane. Seems they react quickly to current events, so are they an impulsive band?

"Sometimes. You have to stand by your principles, though I'm sure that if we'd been on Virgin at the time of *South African Bastards* they'd have buried it under a rock. They'd probably be happier if we did Sky Channel too."

Microdisney's principles didn't include sticking with an independent label though. What's the advantage? After all, freedom suffers to some extent on a major, right?

"Basically, if they ask you to do something, they'll give you the facilities to do it, there are no airy, fairy promises. I've never subscribed to the theory that a starving artiste creates important and challenging work. When you're broke most of your energy goes into thinking about money, it's an obsession. When you're more comfortable you have the time, opportunity and mental energy to be *really* constructive and innovative."

"I'm not really that sure that the independent record scene has been such a good system. Too many bands are releasing material before they're ready and making their mistakes in public, they get crucified and blow their chances."

On a major, success isn't something you hope for, it's something that *has* to be delivered sooner or late, preferably sooner. The money poured in is an investment, accountants wait in the wings. Is this pressure a burden?

"We're aware that at some point we need to make a breakthrough. It's bizarre though, our music didn't change much but when we joined Virgin many of our indie fans seemed to desert us, it's been like starting afresh."

Microdisney hate the English is a popular misconception. Four of them are English. Ireland seems to receive more of Cathal's venom these days...

"Ireland never formulated an effective political system after the British left. All politicians quake before the Catholic church, so any decisions have to be ratified by God first, there's no *class* opposition. Religion was forced down my throat as a kid but the only thing it's shaped is my sense of humour. The act of confession is the biggest joke of all, admit to a sin and it's forgiven, can you believe it? The concept of any God is bullshit to me. I regard the French and Spanish Catholics as responsible for more of Ireland's problems than the British ever were, though not as many as the Irish ourselves."

In Glasgow, the evening passes with long waits at the city's seemingly eternally red traffic lights. The performance takes place at a disco club called *Fury Murry's* in the wee small hours. It's cramped and the sound is poor. I meet someone who'd travelled 100 miles from Oban to see "my favourite band" and was considering following them on to Edinburgh to hear them in a better situation. Afterwards, in a toilet-sized dressing room, the band are too downhearted to even drink the complimentary *Red Stripe*. Exhaustion has spread like a disease. There's no chance of getting any positive reactions out of the boys in this mood, tour fatigue and doubts abound. Fortunately spirits are lifted at the idea of hitting Edinburgh, their favourite destination, and most continental of British cities. By morning all is well again, there's rumour of *Gale Force Wind* creeping up the charts. Suddenly all seems well with the world.

This tour lark must be worth it, huh? **Ronnie Randall**



Cathal: career orientated



Microdisney-on-sea

Life on the road: one neverending party, eh lads?

a glossary of glib

agog

LAURIE ANDERSON: New York performance artist introduced to the UK by *The South Bank Show*, after O, Superman had become a chart hit. Deep and meaningful, but rewarding with it too•

ANGST: Popular press word around the time of punk (as in angst-ridden)•

ANNIE ANXIETY: Former *Crass* associate who's developed a neat lyrical style through her releases on One Little Indian•

Fletcher live (stage centre)



APOCALYPSE Sarf London combo featuring former *Jamming* ed **Tony Fletcher** (now *Ug*'s US correspondent). Signed to EMI, once shared a dressing room with *Madonna*•

APOCALYPSE NOW: Powerful Vietnam film with **Martin Sheen** going up river to terminate **Marlon Brando**. Sparked *23 Skidoo*'s Coup 12 inch and *Last Few Days*' very existence•

JANET ARMSTRONG: South London singer, part of *The Normil Hawaiians*, one single as a solo artist on Stiff, sister of **Kevin Armstrong**, ended up singing on *Bowie's Absolute Beginners*•

WILLIAM ASHER: Director of the legendary beach films, which teamed up **Annette Funicello** and **Frankie Avalon**. Most recently involved in making a slasher flick•

ASSEMBLY: Mid period **Vince Clark** persona with the dreaded **Feargal Sharkey** and **Eric Radcliffe**•

ASTROTURF: The curse of Luton Town... Fact: **Stevie Nicks** of *Some Bizzare* once attempted to carpet his office in this plastic greenery•

ATHLETICO SPIZZ 80: **Spizz** guise (one of many)•

ATTILA THE STOCKBROKER: Ranting Brighton supporter with Albanian connection. Overtalkative•

ATTRITION: Electronic oddities from Coventry with a glut of LPs and a sporadic history•

AU PAIRS: Led by pro-feminist **Lesley Woods** who once shaved her head. Tipped for greater things, they sadly disappeared•

AVANT GARDE: Weirdness of all kinds... from **John Cage** and **Stockhausen** to **Throbbing Gristle** and **Nurse With Wound**•

THE AVENGERS: Cult TV with kung fu femmes and English gent solving spy problems. Avoid *New Avengers* version•

AZTEC CAMERA: Scottish Postcard band who moved to Rough Trade, then WEA. Lyrical offbeat style of **Roddy Frame** turned a few people off, but you can't ignore the beauty of the seminal *Pillar To Post*•

TOTAL

namedrop' | | | |

THE RHYTHMAIRES

Way back in '84, there was a band in Manchester called **THE RHYTHMAIRES**; they played a mixture of rock 'n' roll, swing and jazz — they were verging on novelty status.

"We were so 'cabaret', we could have played the Titanic."

I've got their *Breakfast In Bed* EP to prove it. In 1988, *The Rhythmaires* still exist, but now they are a different proposition altogether. Their music is harder, still '50s-based, but very R&B. I've got their new LP, *Losin' Out*, to prove it.

Vocalist **Stuart Warburton** and drummer **Dave Machin**, the surviving founder members, are wondering how they can get themselves a little more exposure. "The obvious thing to do is to get a better deal that'll grab more attention," says Stu. It seems strange that there is an LP (on *Nervous Records*), yet there isn't a single. "Well, our biggest market is the European market and they tend to buy LPs rather than singles."

What about this country?

"We still have problems getting gigs. It seems that people are scared of anything that can be loosely termed rock 'n' roll revivalist — I suppose that we're scared too," says Dave, before turning to the music itself. "It's our own sound; it's got more balls than the stuff we used to do."

I'm not convinced that they can call it their 'own' sound as such; according to Stuart, people have compared it to early *Rolling Stones* — I'm not so sure



than I'd tell that to too many people. However, the LP *is* good, my only criticism being that it sounds exclusively, and inevitably, American. "But that's no more money than a Bradford hip-hop band." True.

The Rhythmaires are in a strange position. They have a (good) product, they are playing gigs abroad, but they don't seem to be getting very far in this country.

"Places like Manchester cater for both 'name' bands and new 'bedroom' bands, but in the middle there's a no-man's land and that's where we are."

The Rhythmaires are something of an oddity in the present musical environment — call them rock 'n' roll, call them revivalist, but whatever you do, don't call them rockabilly. *Craig Ferguson*

FFLAPS

"You can't really be in a Welsh band and *not* be political," explains *Fflaps*' vocalist and arch-conversationalist, **Anne**. And she should know.

For the majority of *Underground* voyeurs, the fact that *Fflaps*' current EP boasts tracks such as *Efgob Mawr* and *Cariad And Rhamant* is enough to throw us into confusion simply because we haven't a clue what it means! **Anne Fflaps**, **Johnny Paraletic** and **Alan Lungs** (as they are known to their friends) are a part of the new breed of Welsh bands who are writing and recording in their native tongue. According to **Anne**, communication has *never* been a problem.

"We've never had any trouble at all. The lyrics are quite important, but it's the music that people will get into at first. If someone really likes it and wants to

find out about the lyrics, I'll be only too pleased to translate. They only have to write."

Those confused or up in arms may yet be pacified; having just been offered a *Peel* session, *Fflaps* promise to do the whole thing in Welsh. After all, says the diplomatic **Anne**, "Singing in English may make us more accessible in England but in Wales it may be the death of us." Who said that music was the great unifier? Answers on a postcard please... *Alex Kadis*

CRED NEW ACTS



THE ROTTEN SWINES

Birmingham, a town famous for Jasper Carrott, ELO and Duran Duran, is also responsible for the unfamous Applejacks, Richard Broadbent and **THE ROTTEN SWINES**, the latter of which were previously The

Capitols, purveyors of one luscious record some ten months ago, which was followed by a critically acclaimed Peel session. These days The Rotten Swines regularly attract capacity audiences when they play around

THE LAST PARTY

I started my minimal conversation with Middlesex popsters **THE LAST PARTY** by apologising for a dreadfully strained live review I wrote about them last year.

"Yeah, it was crap," said the manically talkative Simon, boosting my confidence. Swiftly changing the subject I asked Neil (drums) for the complete and utter life history of Last Party. This should get the conversation going.

"We formed three years ago, had an album out in June '86,

and there's been two singles since then."

Simon: "No-one."

Bloody hell. What makes you so different then?

"Nothing really."

I give up, I really do. Never mind though, everyone comes up with a witty answer to this last question. What are your plans for the future?

Neil: "Who knows?"

Crap talkers, brilliant band. At last, the perfect antidote to Pop Will Eat Itself, Richard Osman

these parts. Since that session they've undergone line-up changes, choosing to delight their audiences with an irresistible hybrid of rock, folk, punk (sort of), pop and country. I dare you to listen to their Pig In A Poke track without clicking the odd finger, or slapping the odd thigh.

Don't get the wrong impression though!

"It's not specifically folk," guitarist Tank assures me. "I want loads of styles to entwine into one massive thing."

Unlike Tank and singer Maria Smith's previous band, The Nightingales, the duo maintain on intentional commercialism of the songs, claiming that: "The Nightingales had loads of different influences but they were never that commercial."

Maria: "We're getting too old to be doing this as a hobby. I mean, Roddy Frame had his own studio by the time he was 19, and that was how I set my sights!"

But are you really rotten swines?

Maria: "We'd like to do something rotten. This is the year of No More Mr Nice Guy."

A good contender for the first single from The Rotten Swines is Grimness, one of those classic cases of miserable lyrics, juxtaposed against an uplifting tune, that's easy to fall madly in love with.

Tank elaborates. "I wrote that when I was driving Fuzzbox back from a gig in Norwich, and I'd just killed this owl; I didn't mean to do it, but it just sat there in the middle of the road, being dopey; perhaps it was writing a song. I love owls. I got all miserable and wrote Grimness."

The Rotten Swines are fully aware of their potential without being arrogant about it, but in the knowledge that quality isn't always enough, they all assure me that if Prince asked them to join his backing band, they *would*, at the drop of a hat. So until then, enjoy them while you can... Peter Perturbed

THRILLED SKINNY



It's only taken ten months since formation for **THRILLED SKINNY** to set up their own Hunchback Records and put out their excellent Piece Of Plastic 12 inch. Released last October, it wrapped up their own thrashy brand of sawmill pop perfectly.

"It was recorded in two days at a London studio and it turned out that the engineer/producer was The Stupid's ex-guitarist, Marty Tuff. He knew the guitar sound we were looking for. Loud!"

Will Hunchback develop further?

"The label's been set up to release our records when and how we want them. Our money's been put into it and we handle everything ourselves, but it can be hard work when there's so much against you."

With both the record and a steady run of gigs already behind them, it's not surprising that their hard-working enthusiasm is already being channelled into an album.

"That will be out in the spring and it'll be a must for every fan of the two minute pop song!"

Coupled with such praiseworthy energy, Thrilled Skinny share an admirable contempt for the feather-dusted dross that clogs the indie network. They *know* that they're better but realise that *determination* is the first move towards proving it.

While you wait for the "thrust of raw energy" that is to be the album, try to catch them live and shell out for Piece Of Plastic before it's too late. Available through the Cartel, or for £2.50 from Hunchback Records, 22 Claydown Way, Slip End, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 4DU. Cheques to S Bishop, please!

Brothers Grim

continued over



Jeanette Prefab in the Sun

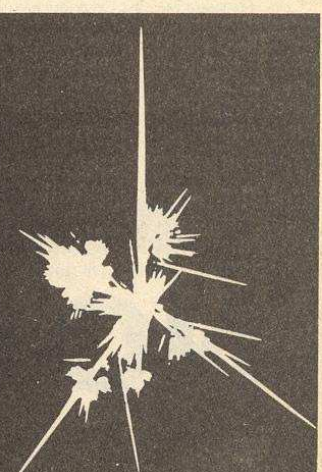
"Jeanette's voice has all the slithering qualities of a crawling king snake, sneering, croaking and whimpering". Sounds

"Her breathy voice mysteriously combines innocence with a sly knowingness - bewitching". Melody Maker

"She can squeeze her voice down into a gritty rasp or let it flow as smoothly as cream". Music Week

SUR LP 011
SUR C 011

**SURVIVAL
RECORDS**



TOTAL

namedrop! ! ! !

The hottest new names fit to burst

HOUSE OF LOVE

Quite why **HOUSE OF LOVE** aren't well on their way to being the most phenomenally successful band in the history of independent music is unfathomable. They've produced two remarkable singles on Creation — *Shine On* and *Real Animal* — got themselves critical acclaim from almost all quarters, and proved that they possess astonishing prowess in live performances. In a true and just world this would turn them into near legends. But it hasn't.

The London based four-piece — formerly a five-piece until guitarist Andrea returned to her native Germany — is led by singer/songwriter Guy Chadwick and he is justifiably disappointed that the band has yet to make the impact he'd hoped for.

But this could all change. Their new single, *Christine*, which is undoubtedly their finest work to date, is surely destined for great things. Backed up by the band's first venture into the world of video, it's time for a 'big sell' which will hopefully make way for their debut album in May.

"We're in the position where



we're looking for a larger audience so we need exposure. When people have written about us it's been really positive. We get really good reviews but we just can't seem to get anyone to take a *big* interest in the band."

Not being able to explain them away as '60s revivalists makes them hard work for the average hack. And House Of Love are unique in that they appear to be suffering from it.

"What we do isn't really in line with the rest of the bands on Creation. We've found we don't have much in common with their musical attitudes. They're much more purist. I think we're as close to a rock band as Creation would allow."

Rock? Maybe. But there's definitely no clumsy bluster. House Of Love are forceful, but they still manage to keep an evocative elegance. The future is theirs, and it's nothing more than they deserve. Anthony Farthing.

PLAYGROUND

Lock up your daughters! Here come **PLAYGROUND**, East Kent's infamous quartet! They make *Head Of David* sound and look like Spandau Ballet.

Through writing about their favourite bands — many of whom are of the Blast First variety — in their excellent *Grim Humour* fanzine, it seemed an obvious step to pursue their own musical project in earnest.

Now, a year or so later, comes their debut seven inch offering, a three-track EP headed by the *Seeking The Truth* track. On their own Fourth Dimension label, it's about as subtle as a Uruguayan sliding tackle but, if you like your guitars brash and your rhythms heavy, then it's sure to appeal.

And the band themselves see it as only the tip of the iceberg.

"Considering financial limitations, we're quite happy. The production is more competent and the songs less derivative than past demos... a bit more money next time and we'll be much better again." Alex Bastedo



THE LILAC TIME

Last month, every time I spoke to an A&R man, the thing they most wanted was a contact number for **THE LILAC TIME** who were getting loads of TV, radio and good reviews for their single *Return To Yesterday*. This is something that Stephen Duffy (yes, Stephen 'Tin Tin' Duffy!) finds bemusedly ironic, since he'd played it to several companies before and nobody found it particularly interesting.

"Now it seems to be the 12 inch EP of the century! But what I don't want to happen is what happened to me before. For someone to sign us up, hype two singles and forget us."

With the banjo instrumental *Trumpets Of Montparnasse*, Duffy also sees the band as something akin to the English country version of the Penguin Café Orchestra. He also says that through songs like *Rockland* it's the most political of his albums, ever.

"The first album was very suburban and the second was more metropolitan in a way. But for this I wanted to write about wider things than relationships. It's something that has to be said. If you have a voice and if you can sing and if you can be on the radio then you've got to say these things. If you don't then you're supporting what's happening." Mike Davies

LOVE AND ROCKET S!



A NEW SINGLE FROM THE ACCLAIMED ALBUM
EARTH • SUN • MOON

NO NEW TALE TO TELL

THE TWELVE INCH INCLUDES TWO ADDITIONAL LIVE RECORDINGS

173 UNDERGROUND

Making Up With Alien Sex Fiend

A luxurious gatefold sleeve, in black and white, adorns the latest Alien Sex Fiend vinyl monstrosity. All Our Yesterdays is a collection of the first nine mega singles and they're all skull-throbbingly wonderful. This presents the perfect opportunity for a look into the wriggling things that inhabit the head of Nik Fiend, the band's vocalist and front/mad man.

It was, back in 1982, a 90 minute tape of Alien Sex Fiend produced by Killing Joke's bassman Youth that scored interest from the music press. A gig at ghoulish spot the Batcave and, eventually, a single on Anagram Records through Cherry Red continued the legend. Ignore The Machine blew circuits and shattered gristle on the dancefloor where a (de)generation was doing its gothic thing. The rest, as they say, is history, right Nik?

"It all seemed to happen by accident," he muses, "I moved upstairs to Yaxi (guitars, cleavers and beatbox annihilator) when the band had just started. I kept hearing all this weird music blaring out so I gave him a call and asked what he was playing... he said 'that's me — wanna come in?'. So I went in, added a few bits and pieces, and that it. This was about six years ago."

"It's a story that keeps on continuing; we didn't figure on making a record, we were gonna make the cassette, and that was obviously the first of a whole batch of nightmares we were due to have. I find if the stuff gets stopped up in my head too long, it drives me round the twist, anyway."

And Nik's ambition?

"To be the first band to play Mars... or Uranus, hee hee! Bubbling under in Uranus!"

Nik was expelled from school when aged 14½.

"School finished abruptly and I just got more and more into music; I met Mrs Fiend (squelchy keyboards, head-bending synths and bubbly bits) and Yaxi when I was looking for something different."

Mr and Mrs Fiend have been together for nine years and are actually in wedlock, but...

"It's not a regular sort of marriage — when I do make it down to Tesco's it's a bit like Herman (Munster) going round the bank, you know, mass hysteria!"

You wear your make-up when you go out, then?

"No, I actually go for the natural look during the day — that's my face, unfortunately!"

Why an alien image, though?

"We turned on to all these films that most people regarded as shit."

Wild Women Of Wongo and Eraserhead had serious brain swivelling effects!

"I thought that I wanted to be *that* kind of band, *not* to be mainstream. There was room for an idiot or two, which ain't putting myself down. All I'm saying is, we do what we want, no thought for commercialism — if a record charts or we end up going to Japan or something, it's obviously the icing on the cake. I mean, I don't fancy the idea of going round shaking hands all day and smiling — lurvely!"

So you opted for the sex and drugs of rock 'n' roll!

"Mmmmm... I was put on Librium at 21 'cos I was depressed in them days, like most people. Then I had a look round at things... y'know mushrooms and things. Not really now though 'cos I find that I'm detached now. I get more of a kick out of a steak and kidney pie when I get back off tour."

"Drugs are naughty! I got prescribed some horrendous sort of elephant tranquilisers after I got hijacked."

Derr! Let me explain. Nik, while in charge of a van full of televisions and videos, was held up,

hijacked for six hours, tied up and gagged. Then he was interrogated by the police and ended up being medicated. A rock 'n' roll casualty?

"I was so detached when we started the band, it's probably why there's that funny drawing element everywhere. You know, the little spaceships, floating bones, skulls and that. I was getting a bit Salvador Dali, thanks to the doctor."

"I'm addicted to tea now. I get withdrawal symptoms when we go to Spain and have to drink coffee. The tea out there is all milky coloured and putrid. Tastes like... camel cum."

So, what about the gothic tendencies? Is it trendy? Faddy? Fashion?

"Not really, I've done it for years. Even when Mr Rotten, Vicious and company were chortling away at their swindle, I was into Highgate Cemetery and that — I don't know why. My sister got killed, unfortunately, and Razzle (ex-Hanoi Rocks and one time partner with Nik in the Demons/Demon Preacher) died just a year after that, so I don't really laugh at death."

"All I'm saying is, it's not very long that we're here, is it? That's all. Anyway, I was always into Alice Cooper which I've made no bones about."

Groan.

"I'm a regular chap, just like Herman. I like to escape."

Is it a schizophrenic split?

"It's gotta be, innit? I can sit here talking rationally to you and then go on stage and be mouth almighty. Feel that I've got the strength to pick up the stage and eat it."

But how does your appearance affect people?

"I meet loads of people and get on fine with most, then there's the odd c***. I find, it's like being at school. Life, that is."

The Fiends have always operated outside of accepted music traditions. They don't have any management, only an agent that books gigs. They're pretty self-sufficient.

"We have to do everything else — the music, the press, the promotion — as much as we can do. We don't f*** ourselves up over business but we do have to do a lot to keep the whole thing running."

As an added bonus there's also another part of the Alien Sex Fiend service to fans and supporters, namely the Fiendzine — a fanzine made by the band (mostly Nik) full of news, pictures, clippings, drawings, pen pals and the legendary Dr F***face's problem page. All lovingly stapled together and hot from the twilight zone.

On German soil, the band recently outsold Echo And The Bunnymen. In fact, they're big all over the place; Spain, Belgium, Japan. It seems it's just in their native land, the UK, that they've been grossly overlooked.

"Just 'cos a band's on Top Of The Pops, it doesn't mean f*** all when you go abroad," reckons Nik. And he's right!

If you like your music mad, bad and danceable, if you like the guitars to cut a swathe, chainsaw-like, across your forehead, the keyboards to come from some science fiction mind-zone where aliens gibber while the beats get battered by the mouth of an animated corpse swinging around the vocal lines, like something really quite strange, then this could be the band you've been looking for. Sense of humour intact and shooting from the crutch — Alien Sex Fiend, take a bow. **Daz Igmeth**

the Alien



The Fiends: dedicated followers of fashion

Singles

IGNORE THE MACHINE (ANA 11) *Anagram Records (through Cherry Red)*

LIPS CAN'T GO (ANA 15) *Anagram*

R.I.P. (ANA 18) *Anagram*

DEAD AND BURIED (ANA 23) *Anagram*

E.S.T. (TRIP TO THE MOON) (ANA 25) *Anagram*

IGNORE THE MACHINE (ELECTRODE MIX) (S ANA 11) *Anagram*

I'M DOING TIME IN A MAXIMUM SECURITY TWILIGHT HOME (ANA 30) *Anagram*

I WALK THE LINE (FLEP 106) *Flickknife Records*

SMELLS LIKE... (ANA 32) *Plague Records (through Cherry Red)*

HURRICANE FIGHTER PLANE (ANA 33) *Plague*

THE IMPOSSIBLE MISSION (ANA 34) *Plagiarism Records (through Cherry Red)*

HERE CUM GERMS (ANA 38) *Plague Records (through Cherry Red)*

STUFF THE TURKEY (ANA 40) *Plague*

Albums

WHO'S BEEN SLEEPING IN MY BRAIN? (GRAM 10) *Anagram Records (through Cherry Red)*

ACID BATH (GRAM 18) *Anagram*

LIQUID HEAD IN TOKYO (LIVE) (GRAM 22) *Anagram*

MAXIMUM SECURITY (GRAM 24) *Anagram*

THE FIRST A.S.F. COMPACT DISC (MAXIMUM SECURITY plus extra four tracks) (CS GRAM 25) *Anagram*

IT — THE ALBUM (GRAM 26) *Plague Records (through Cherry Red)*

THE IMPOSSIBLE MISSION (Mini LP — American release only) (FVC 6917) *PVC (through Jem Records)*

HERE CUM GERMS (GRAM 31) *Plague Records (through Cherry Red)*

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS (GRAM 34) *Plague (Also available as CD)*

Fiends' Five Fave TV Progs

1 Batman 2 Beverley Hillbillies 3 The Munsters 4 Twilight Zone 5 Outer Limits

CLASSIFIEDS

RECORDS FOR SALE

A BARGAIN Pot Luck Assortment (our selection) — send £35 for 500 used 7" singles or £12 for 100 used LP's and 12" singles. (Postage included). Music & Video Exchange, 28 Pembridge Rd., London W11 (01-727 3538) **U15**

PUNK/NEW-WAVE Record finding service & auction. SAE/IRC: Elista Records, (U) 157 Common Rise, Hitchin, Herts. **U142**

ALL INDEPENDENT label releases, imports, Punk & New Wave rarities. SAE or 2 IRC's for latest catalogue. 'Rhythm' 172 Gwydir Street, Cambridge (0223) 60981 **U58**

POSTCARD/SCOTTISH rarities SAE P.O. Box 1055 London NW5 6NW **U137**

HASH 'N' THRASH totally awesome debut album "The Chillum Mix" £3.50 + 50p p&p. 15 Buccleuch Street, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria **U138**

MAGIC MUSHROOM BAND. New album 'Bomshakar' £6 inc. p&p. Aftermath Records, 119 Metrostore, London W3 7QS **U140**

USE UNDERGROUND Classifieds, the ultimate way to advertise your records for sale.

FOR SALE

UNDERGROUND SHOES Alternative Footwear. Over 100 styles available. Send 30p Stamp for free catalogue. Unit D2 Conway House, 10 Little Lever Street, Manchester M1 1EF **U19**

BALAAAM, FALL, Fields, G.B.O.A., J.A.M.C., Mission, N. Order, P.W.E.I., Smiths, Zodiac rarities for sale, Hundreds more, Large SAE 37 Emerald Street, Cardiff, CF2 1QA. **U113**

THE PENTANGLE, 126 Sheffield Road, Barnsley, S. Yorks S70 1JB. Alternative and original clothing, afghan skirts and tops, shoes and boots, studded belts, baseball and bomber jackets, printed trousers, concert t-shirts and lots more. Shop open 10am-5pm, Mon-Sat. For extensive catalogue send 3 first class stamps plus full address. **U123**

USE UNDERGROUND Classifieds, absolutely the best way to sell your goods.

WANTED

RAW UNTUTORED Vocalist with ideas for band into: Can, Beefheart, Elevators, James Brown. Improvisation a must. Aylesbury (0296) 26298 (Stuart) **U134**

NEW INDIE LABEL Requires demos for potential release. Box No. 23 **U135**

PRETTY BOY vocalist sought by this band of dilettantes. Photo London Box No. 24 **U138**

MUTANT SOUNDS

LAKELAND RECORDS: Alternative music catalogue. Send SAE 69 Leamington Rd, Southend, Essex. DAISY HILL PUPPY FARM debut EP only £1 ('Heart of Glass' and three others) **U144**

SPECIAL NOTICES

NEW LABEL Animation Records would like to hear your demos. Send to 18 George Street, Redcar, Cleveland, TS10 2BN. Orders taken now for first release by Basczax **U126**

THOUSANDS OF NAMES and addresses in the music business are contained in the 1988 edition of the Music Week Directory, including record companies, music publishers, recording studios, record producers and concert promoters. Price £15.00 from: Mary Taylor (Dept S), Morgan-Grampian PLC, Royal Sovereign House, 40 Beresford Street, London SE18 6BO.

USE UNDERGROUND Classifieds, the obvious way to reach subterraneans.

WANTED ALL your USED STAMPS to help disabled ex-servicemen buy Guide Dogs for Blind People. Please send all stamps to 24 Spring Bank Drive, Poleglass, Belfast BT17, N. Ireland.

RECORD FAIRS

"UK'S BIGGEST & BEST" BRIGHTON RECORD FAIR Brighton Centre, Kings Road, Brighton.

SUN APRIL 17TH & MAY 29TH

Admission 50p, 12.30pm-5pm.

(Preview £1, 10.30am-12.30pm)

Over 100 Stalls Buy & Sell

Bargains, rarities & new

releases, Records, Tapes, CDs,

Tour Merchandise & Music

Memorabilia.

Stalls/Info (0273) 608806. **U143**

MUSICAL SERVICES

BENT PROMOTIONS Independent Record Pluggers. Cheaper and better. 01-326 1595 **U122**

INDIE PRESSING SERVICE THE CHEAPEST, BEST QUALITY 7" + 12" DISCS. Picture, Shaped, & Coloured Discs. Flexi Discs, B/W and Full Colour Sleeves and labels. Free help in Artwork and Distribution. We are the cheapest for sure!!!!



500 7" Singles from £250

500 12" Singles/Albums from £412

VAT & ORIENTATION

COSTS INCLUDED

IPS SPECIAL

One track on 500 7" EPs

Your own designed sleeve & printed label. Only £250 inc VAT

CALL FOR FREE QUOTE

01-670 2642

VIDEO SERVICES

MEGLAMEDIA PRODUCTIONS provide storyboards, filming, post production and copying services. PAL, SECAM, NTSC. Promo Video or gig recording from £60 SFX available. No job too small. Ring Paul 01 870 7730 **U131**

BANDS WANTED

AB PROMOTIONS for demo tape duplication and promotion; Special deals available for bands on a low finance. Get your material listened to by the right people; Contact the experts for details. AB Promotions, The Studio, Elbrook House, Ashwell, Herts. **U141**

FANZINES

"PIP PIP POP" Alternative Brum Mag. Run, Beasties, Husker Dü, LKJ, Sid Vicious, Edward Bond. 70p (inc. postage) 100 City Road, Edgbaston B16 0HQ **U139**

All Box Number replies should be addressed:

**Box No. XXX
Underground,
Spotlight
Publications,
Greater London
House,
Hampstead Road,
London NW1**

RECORDS WANTED

ABSOLUTELY ALL your records, tapes, CD's, videos and books bought/sold/exchanged — also ALL Hi-Fi, musical instruments, computers and cameras — NONE REFUSED!! Bring ANY quantity in ANY condition to Record Tape and Video Exchange, 38 Notting Hill Gate, London W11 (open 7 days 10am-8pm Tel 01-243 8573). Or send them by post with SAE for cash (none returned — we decide price) Quantities collected ANYWHERE **U16**

CLASSIFIEDS

HEADINGS AVAILABLE:
PERSONAL
RECORDS FOR SALE
RECORDS WANTED
FOR SALE
WANTED
FANZINES
FAN CLUBS
VIDEO
MUSICAL SERVICES
SPECIAL NOTICES
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)
ALL HEADINGS INCLUSIVE OF VAT
20p per word
ALL WORDS IN BOLD FACE AFTER
FIRST TWO 30p PER WORD
PLEASE NOTE: IT IS ILLEGAL TO
ADVERTISE BOOTLEG RECORDINGS
FOR SALE.

CLASSIFIED
ADVERTISEMENTS MUST
ARRIVE AT THIS OFFICE BY
THE 4TH OF EACH MONTH
FOR THE FOLLOWING
MONTHS ISSUE.

THE PUBLISHERS RESERVE THE
RIGHT TO RESERVE OR WITHDRAW
ADVERTISEMENTS AT THEIR
DISCRETION.

To: CLASSIFIED AD DEPT
UNDERGROUND, Spotlight
Publications, Greater
London House, Hampstead
Road, London NW1 7QZ.
Tel: 01 387 6611

**SIMPLY SNIP FORM AND SEND TO ADDRESS BELOW
ENCLOSING CHEQUE/P.O. MADE PAYABLE TO
SPOTLIGHT PUBLICATIONS:**

HEADING NO. OF ISSUES FIRST ISSUE COVER DATED

I enclose Postal Order/Cheque value £ for (no of words) at p
made payable to Spotlight Publications. All classified ads must be prepaid by PO or cheque. CASH WILL NOT BE
ACCEPTED.

NAME

ADDRESS

Box Nos. £1.50 extra per month

Name and address, when included in advert, must be paid for

Kershaw's progress

- "I'm the luckiest person I know! I was on the dole in Leeds wondering what on *earth* I was ever going to do with myself and 18 months later I was presenting *The Whistle Test* — after having gone all round Europe with Billy Bragg." Andy Kershaw reminisces with real affection, frequently darting off to rummage through his archives for a photograph, book, record or poster by way of demonstration. He's the curator of his own rapidly expanding enthusiast's museum — there's something to commemorate everything!
- As he navigates the vast piles of records and magazines neatly stacked across the floor he admits he *might just* need a bigger place to house the Kershaw way of life. "The thing is, I really don't want to move. I couldn't believe it when I found this flat, but I'm really happy here. I'll just have to build more shelves! I'm no architect but I've worked out that any space above eye-level is space wasted so I'll start building around the ceiling next."
- He muses, shifting a couple of guitars to one side. "Do I play? Naaah... well... I dabble! I'd never have the guts to get up on stage and do it. Those who *can*, do, and those who *can't* become DJs!" And it's as simple as that, eh? Well, it almost was.
- When opportunity came knocking on Andy K's door he was well and truly at home. Finding himself at a loose end after a particularly acrimonious affair with a local radio station in Leeds, it came as no small surprise when his mate Billy phoned one day and invited the boy Kershaw to become road manager and driver for the band. It was during one such errand to *The Whistle Test* that Andy was 'discovered'. After that, providence undertook to manage events, and safely delivered the cheeky chappie who invades your national Radio 1 airwaves to this very day!
- While mapping previously uncharted territory, Andy has also become reknowned for giving exposure to lost or forgotten gems, including a wide selection of roots/folk music. When *Underground* discovered that the choicest cuts were about to be released on Topic Records as Andy Kershaw's Great Moments Of Vinyl History Volume 1, we whizzed round to the Kershaw abode, courtesy of the local lose-your-lunch taxi service, to get the full scam on the man and his album.
- Andy will be the first to admit that he was an unwitting participant in the rags to riches type racket. Have you managed to reconcile that weird series of events yet?
- "What's weird is suddenly getting recognised. I noticed it particularly after Live Aid. It's a bit odd. I know you're supposed to say, 'Oh no, it doesn't affect me at all' but it's great when you go into a shop or the bank and someone says, 'Hey I really liked your show the other night' or 'I liked that record you played by so and so'." Recognition is par for the course these days, what with Live Aid, the memorable *Whistle Test* and those infamous zit ads. Andy Kershaw is as much a face as he is a voice.
- But what could possibly have persuaded a modest and sensible lad like Andy to appear in a TV ad for acne treatment? (You know the one: "Go on then, show 'em your spots.")
- "I'll tell you..." He leans forward conspiratorially. "Money! Huge wads of money! Enormous amounts of cash! On the money from Clearasil I went all the way across America last year, I had a new bathroom, I've just been to Zimbabwe for two weeks, I've bought over 2,000 pounds worth of records and I've *still* got enough to go to Mali in West Africa later on in the year! *You'd* have done them too." He's right there, maties. How do you feel about being seen as the natural successor to the Peel Throne? "I don't see myself that way at all. We overlap in some areas but we're complimentary rather than in competition. I think at first there was that kind of idea, 'We'll get that cheeky young gun slinger in from *The Whistle Test* and we can put old fatty out to grass!', but I think it became obvious within a few months that we've different styles of programme altogether."
- What the gun slinger does have in common with dear old fatty, however, is a reputation as an independent music expert/exponent. Paradoxically, his opinion of the indie medium isn't quite so cut and dried.
- "There seems to be this lingering post-punk attitude that says if a band is indie then it must be good. It's complete bollocks! There's as much bad indie music as there is bad music on major labels."
- Point taken. But is there *anything* you consider to be positive/good that's independent right now?
- "I don't know. What *is* independent music? This LP is independent, most folk music is independent. I don't actually like the word

Radio 1, DJ and music enthusiast, Andy Kershaw travels the world in search of soul!



Eat yer heart out David Attenborough — Andy Kershaw (right) and Phil Korbet (BBC freelancer, centre) go mush mush in the bush, driven by Elvis Chimine (Lenny Henry impersonator, left).

independent being used to categorise a certain style of music because the term independent means it's released on a label that isn't allied to a major. It doesn't tell me anything about it *musically*, it tells me something about it *economically*. It's a redundant phrase. There shouldn't be those kinds of barriers, it's confusing, it just ghettoises music. Music should be more open. There should be more glasnost in music — you know, Gorbachov's word!"

- So what's the beef with Andy Kershaw's Great Moments Of Vinyl History (which, by this time is blaring out of the AK sound system)?
- "It's been a nightmare for the people at Topic, it's taken a year to get permission to release some of the tracks. We still don't have permission for one featuring Jim Ford. We couldn't trace him — he's probably a pig farmer somewhere in the south these days. So, Jim, if you're out there get in touch, you could be in for a few quid mate!
- "Some of the tracks were existing recordings but quite a few of them are my own recordings that I've taken on my travels abroad. Field recordings, I call 'em, which is basically just me and me Walkman and a really good microphone."
- Yes, it's out with the photo album again, while Andy tells stories of his various stints as the Englishman abroad! (All of which, incidentally, are recounted in brief on the album sleeve). Perhaps the story he tells with most relish today is his journey across America which resulted in him tracking down his long time hero, Palm Wine guitarist S E Rogie. "We went there to follow the trail of The Promised Land by Chuck Berry, from north of Virginia to California. Me, my sister and Chris Heath (*S Hits*) arrived at this little house in a suburb of San Francisco, knocked on the door and there was my hero!"
- Needless to say, S E Rogie makes an appearance on Kershaw's LP along with Dwight Yoakham singing Mystery Train, Billy Bragg and Ted Hawkins recorded live at Leeds University, Pa Jiobarte, a ten year old Gambian kora player, singing Messaneh Cessay, pre-war style blues guitarist Steve Phillips recorded in Andy's sister's kitchen singing Broke Down And Hungry and a host of other mentionables from across the globe.
- "I'm fortunate that I can afford to buy this stuff and to go to parts of the world to find it. Now, I'm just making it more widely available."
- Its pan-cultural scope and disregard for fashionable technique and presentation means that Andy Kershaw's Great Moments Of Vinyl History Volume 1 is probably one of the most charming and endearing albums you're likely to hear — and possibly the most exciting to boot!
- So what then, Andy, would you say brought them all together? What was the qualifying quality?
- "Soul. That's the word. But it comes down to those categories I was talking about earlier. Soul, these days, seems to mean any dance record made by a black person. But it isn't. It's Tammy Wynette singing I Don't Want To Play House, it's Otis Redding singing Respect, it's Billy Bragg and Ted Hawkins at Leeds University. It's the emotion, it's got nothing to do with geography or colour, and I suppose that's what it comes down to in the end for me. Soul." Alex Kadis

TIP SHEET

NEW TAPE DEMOS

● This month's *Tip Sheet* is compered by gold lamé suit-wearing Julian Henry, and he's talking to Andy Wake, from the pretty cool Medium Cool label. Andy signed The Raw Herbs (who're on our free tape), The Rain, The Corn Dollies, The Waltones and various other sporadic geetar pluckers. . . now, he's besieged by tapes from Ug cupboard one.

The numbered system after each review refer to marks out of ten for content (of tape), delivery (in performance terms), presentation (of the overall package) and potential (as to whether they'll bend a cheque book or two). Any outfits wishing to have their tapes decimated, send them to *Underground Tip Sheet*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ.

TAKE THAT (75-04 25th Street, Glen Oaks, NY 11004) kindly sent us a very plush and well-designed package all the way from America. Andy peered at their picture. "Well, I like the way that they don't look too good, but I think the music is a bit disappointing. They list their influences as being The Who, King Crimson and ELP, but they just sound like a second-rate mod band to me. Still, on the positive side they can play alright and their music isn't offensive."



4 4 4 2

BEAUTIFUL (32a Warple Road Mews, Wimbledon, London SW19 4DB) seemed to make a favourable im-

pression with Andy. "Good, a bit of psychedelia," he commented as the band's heavy chiming guitars churned into gear. "Sounds like they listen to the Stooges and Love," he added. "Although I like it, this is not something that I would seriously consider signing to Medium Cool because I believe that there's such a limited market for it. They'll never make the charts, but they re-create the sound quite well."

6 5 5 3

GEEKIAS (10 Stafford Avenue, Shifnal, Shropshire TF11 9AL) made us smile with their vocal efforts. "It's funny how a band can sound American coming from Shropshire," commented Andy. "This isn't really my cup of tea, it's wide-boy funk and is more like one of the 20 bands who Virgin sign up and then drop the next year. Dance music has changed so much over the last couple of years I feel like they've missed the boat. Anyway, I don't think any DJ would dare touch a band with a name like this out of embarrassment."

4 4 1 3

THE GOVERNMENT (42a Breaks-pears Road, Brockley, London SE4) prompted the following suggestions from Andy: "If these people were wearing flares and Afros, I think the *NME* would be right into it. I suppose people must dance to this sort of thing in clubs, but the sympathy I have for the group is because I actually used to live in the same road as them. I remember it's miles from the tube station, but there's a really nice park nearby called Hilley Field. In fact, I think I remember The Government sunbathing in their shorts and Hawaiian shirts. Seriously though, awful name. Mediocre music."

5 4 2 6

ROCK ROCK FIRE (86 Torriano Avenue, London NW5) look like people with an artistic bent. "Nice Jason Pollock design on the tape box here," said Andy. "In fact the best so far, this reminds me of Patti Smith, Television and the Velvets, though it is quite a standard variation on the old theme. The two guitars on this are very nice, and the presentation is good. You can see that they've put some work in. Definitely sound interesting."

6 6 7 4

CONSPIRACY (95 Elizabeth Drive, Lefield, Tamworth, Staffs) enclosed lots of rave press write-ups with their tape, all mysteriously written by the same bloke who works for the local paper. "I don't like the violent imagery on their press releases," said Andy pointing to the band's logo, which is made up of a large dagger. "Not my sort of music either, as they sound like they want to be a rock band. The girl is screeching away like the singer in Fuzzbox and I can't really see them getting much further than being big in Tamworth."



1 1 3 1

THE MURMUR TROOP (77 Churchill Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR3 4DX) "Good clean rock 'n' roll," said Andy. "In other words a pile of shit. I think they should go away and listen to The Farmers Boys. The voice sounds like he's trying to join The Psychedelic

Furs. Give me an anorak band any day of the week!"

3 2 2 1

THE DEFINITE ARTICLE (88 Wellfield Road, London SW16 2BP) were familiar to our man from Medium Cool. "I know this lot. They've sent me a tape before. I didn't like it much then and I don't like it much now. I must admit, though, I've still got their old tape. I never throw tapes out or tape over them." So why don't you like The Definite Article? "The trouble is that there are no hooks and no choruses, it's all just set at one even pace and I can't get excited about it. I suppose it does veer towards being my sort of thing, but it's just too nondescript."

4 2 4 3

LEE SCOTT DAVIES (18 Swaledale, Bracknell, Berks) forgot to send us his address, so Andy, being the forward-thinking young gentleman he is, telephoned him up. Of course Lee was out, down the pub or somewhere I expect, so we got the facts off a friend of his. "Good songs," commented Andy. "Although it's very simply done with basically just a guitar and voice, it has a lot of punch. Sadly I've a feeling that it won't get much further than his bedroom though, purely due to the fact that the independent scene is so geared towards groups. Good though."

7 6 4 4

JAMES VARDA (Telephone 01-543 1537) also forgot to send us his address. Tut tut. "I like this cassette, just as I liked Lee Scott Davies. It's very folksy, very early Joni Mitchell — the depressing ones — and very Bob Dylan. His voice is quite unusual and affected, which I like."

7 6 2 4

IN THE ETHER (79 Green Glade, Theydon Bois, Essex CM16 7JZ) prompted Andy to fall deep into philosophical thought. "I really like Eno and Bowie's stuff, as they seem to be able to add interesting textures to other people's songs, but when you hear music like this on its own I don't really see the point. It's just a dull noise in the background and the last thing you'd expect someone to go out and sign up."

2 2 3 1

LOVE AND ROCKETS!
SORTED SAMPLE

UNIQUE COMPILATION
COMPACT DISC
AT A SPECIAL OFFER PRICE OF
£4.99
(Incl. p&p)
EXCLUSIVE
TO READERS OF THE APRIL
ISSUE OF
WHICH COMPACT DISC?
YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE ON CD, CDV & DV
On Sale
March 18

NO NEW TALE TO TELL
MIRROR PEOPLE REMIX
WAITING FOR THE FLOOD
LAZY
ALL IN MY MIND
BALL OF CONFESSION
HAUNTED WHEN THE MINUTES DRAG
KINDALINE EXPRESS

These are tapes that have been spooled and de-chromed — or bagged and passed on — from *Ug!* HQ. Dave Henderson, the invisible editor, presides over this incisive report on the cassettes that live “in the cupboard”...

SOME OTHER DAY (call Suzy after six on 0279-419736) have titled their four track selection *Inside Leg Measurement* which is odd enough. But they're not quirky electronic Euros, instead they sound like Feargal Sharkey spotty pop, wrapped in squirly keyboards and classic verse/chorus construction. Teething.

ROVER GIRLS (01-998 8553) seem to have a line-up of 22. They play flamboyant brass-driven rock-a-soul with an abundance of screaming and the occasional wink at schlock TV themes. Lo-fi gruesomeness.

JUST TYPICAL (0702 353150) pose the question, where do you draw the line in dippy hippy balladeering in terms of post-Donovan? Ring them to find out!

GUY SOMERVILLE (0462 816906) is a wild man of pop. A synthesised pre-natal Cabs voice, a fuzz guitar and throbalong lyrics make for a laugh or two. . . let's hope he's not serious. Best number is the blues one.

ROLLING HEAD (Plymouth 263571) prove that there's life after Cornwall, with a four-track selection of doomy Black Celebration-period Depeche. These perps don't see much of the sun, but that's good because this tape suggests that they've something to offer the bedsided owner brigade.

THE WASP FACTORY's tape (01-346 8911) comes with a hand-written note from author Iain Banks who wrote the book of that name. He claims the tape has “energy and attack”. He's not wrong. This is angry post-posi-punk with flagelating guitar feedback close to Rema Rema. Mad hat-rack rock from the dark side!

THE GIANT POLAR BEARS (Huntingdon 890431) claim they're from Iceland! Together since March last year they sound rough-hewn and have members capable of rockin' out. The songs are OK but nothing new, they need to frug out and grow into long pants. Home-spun fun with a melodic nerve.



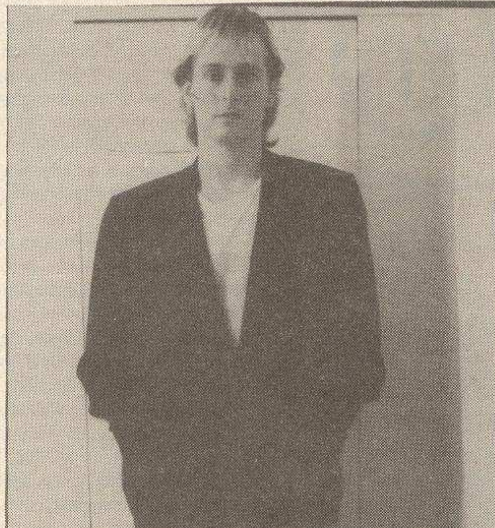
EMERALD RAIN (0405 5735) ply sweetly neat pop with a floating tinny guitar that doesn't get over being totally romantic with itself. Blurry tunesmiths in search of practice and a big production.

THE HAPPY EVER AFTER (0304 831188) claim to be metal funk, but really they're tinny electronica-pop. There is a good idea here but it's drowning in some tainted tunes and uninspiring delivery. Not happy.

HASH 'N THRASH (0229 31503) have a rotten name but some good ideas. Removed from the world, in Barrow, they're also removed from their metal roots and have created a strange sound that's at once classic rock, then also quite new and offbeat. Namechange nightmares.

MASONS (18 Willowbank Street, 2FR, Glasgow G3 6LZ) sent us the worst recorded demo in history. However, through the hiss, some decent songs and a brash performance — in a purely guitar-driven pop style — can easily be detected. Next time don't wear gloves!

THIS OR THAT THING (Steve, 214 Neath Road, Briton Ferry, Neath SA11 2AJ) have a crap name too. Let's face it, let's get it out in the open. Their tape is weird and wonderful, the kind of thing that would sound brilliant with two grand's worth of production, and even better after a couple of ciders. Cult status beckons.



THE SEVENTY GWEN PARTY continue this month's bizarre name pattern and then reveal that they're but one person, Simon (01-577 3668). He's unsure, has tried pop and now opts for a stranger angle. Well, I liked it, yes, it's damn different, instrumentally challenging. . . but it sounds like it could develop. Not so much a demo, more a stepping stone.

SOMEONE RAN (0623 843060) play confident uppy-pop in the ‘I want to be as big as a Blue Mercedes, but keep my integrity like The Police’ kind of stable. They write quite nice songs and, dare we dread, if they look quite nice, might be on *Top Of The Pops* next week. They opt for some interesting instrumentation too. Yes, there's potential-amundo here!

CELESTIAL ORGY (Dennings, Wallingford Road, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 1NF) giggled wildly when Pat Nevin reviewed their last demo, so much so that they've recorded a new one. “Pretty damn strange and badly recorded but lots of reverb,” sez Denis Law.

THE PRAYERS (5 Bank Street, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow) make it plain that bad recording must be part and parcel of being Scottish. Like the Masons' tape, this three tracker suffers from the lo-fi disease. Beneath, it's tetchy, keyboard-driven and has its feet in the '60s, with charm and Subway written through its heart. Nice.



VIOLET CIRCUIT (01-691 8174) certainly deserve our time. With a reputation for percussing up a storm, they're a tight four-piece line-up ready to roll. This compact debut tape is filled with jerky pop, spruced up with a sliver of silver-tongued presence that's reminiscent of all the good things from Manicured Noise to Wire, and all the nice sun-drenched industrial parks in between. Flowers couldn't smell sweeter.

**SHEND
ON THE
RUN**



CONFESSIONS OF A POP ICON: NO.9: BIG BLOODY DEAL!

Last month's column, with its usual flowing mastery, covered the gooey pitfalls of releasing a record yourself. Whereas in this issue we will be studying pitfalls so deep and treacherous, you may never see your pit again.

Yes, releasing your happy tunes through a record company can be more hazardous than opening a packet of dry-roasted peanuts in a crowded room. So let's start at the beginning.

FACT 1: Major record labels only sell records as a cover for their true trade of buying and selling small third world countries.

FACT 2: Independent record labels only sell records so they can get up late, buy a CD player as a tax-deductible necessity and don't, after all, have to take that community programme job of counting the leaves outside pensioners' houses.

Indie labels are more likely to listen to the tape you have sent them, but if they don't like it, they are more likely to not reply, or send you a witty retort like: ‘Become a lathe operator, you worthless cretin. Your tape is under the back wheel of my Renault 4’.

This is *not* constructive criticism, and anyway your tape, quickly recycled as the latest Timberdicks LP, will actually never leave their tax-deductible tape deck. Disillusionment sets in, the HP payments on your Amstrad ‘FlashKey’ synth begin to lapse. Then it happens. Dingle Discs send a missive requesting a chat about your commercially viable demo tape. Hoorah! you shout. Tell the dog. Tell the postman and order the Amstrad ‘FlashKey’ synth clip-on disco lights.

Suddenly the world is yours and no-one will ever push you around again. But wait. Control those feelings of euphoria.

FACT 3: If you fump the gun, you may lose your genitals. Whereas most folk who work for major labels can be attributed with few brain cells and Meat Loaf tour jackets, indie people often have a smidgen of music knowledge as well as more interesting offices. A major's office will be full of garish red carpets and garish Acker Bilk gold discs and a desk that cost more than your parents house. The chair you sit in will also be a good four inches lower than the chair of the blow-dried clod into whose presence your combo has been summoned. Everything has been designed to perpetuate the myth of wealth and to make you feel damn inferior.

So, always try to leave muddy scuff marks on the carpet when you go, and remember to fill your pockets with as many small knick-knacks as you can. Because this will most likely be all you ever get from Mr Huge (and Acker Bilk gold discs make superb paper weights).

The office of Ian Independent, on the other hand, will probably be a spare room next to the toilet in a relative's home. You can occupy yourself by admiring the interesting souvenirs from holidays in Torremolinos while waiting for the person you came to see to finish mending the puncture on his bicycle and search his K-Tel cassette dispenser for the tape you sent in.

You will, no doubt, have a pretty good idea of what you want from the people you go and see. But don't forget that most indies have very few resources, if any, so the timeshare flat in Portugal, the Harley-Davidson and the unlimited, account at the Amstrad ‘FlashKey’ shop may not appear on the final contract.

FACT 4: Contracts consist of big words joined together in order to make as little sense as possible.

With Mr Huge, a contract will be designed by them to screw you until you're nothing but a withered artistic husk. This, at first glance, may not seem to be a good thing, but a vast quantity of cash can put a rosy glow around any dodgy prospect, ask Gareth Hunt from those bloody atrocious coffee ads (and check Andy Kershaw's response about those pimplin this ish).

The rule of life is that record deals are like meals at a restaurant. Everybody else seems more appetising than yours.

Vibrations in Ubu-land

Pere Ubu: past, present and future

Pere Ubu are currently receiving tons of acclaim for their excellent January ICA shows, and for the timely reissue of the classic 1978 debut album *The Modern Dance*, so it seems we're going to be hearing a lot more from big David Thomas and his revitalised group over the coming months.

With a brand new LP, *The Tenement Year*, available imminently on Fontana/Phonogram and a two month European tour to promote it, it's certainly not just one for the nostalgia buffs either. Having said that, Rough Trade are just putting the finishing touches to their plan for CD and record re-issues of the rest of the group's bulky, and largely hard to find, Ubu back catalogue, including other acclaimed (but rarely listened to?) blasts from the past such as *Dub Housing* and *New Picnic Time*.

But what does David Thomas feel like with his band of not-quite-spring-chickens becoming instantly fashionable with a ten year old album?

"We've always been in and out of fashion, so we don't really pay any attention to it. When we started out in 1975 everybody hated us, nobody ever thought we could be successful, so our attitude was virtually set then. No amount of favourable press or general audience reaction since has particularly affected us. We just got on with making the music."

For a bunch of no-hopers from Cleveland, Ohio who did to The Beach Boys what Beefheart did to the blues, they haven't done too badly. Formed originally out of a love of the strange sounds emanating from the UK and Europe — Soft Machine, early Roxy Music, Eno, Can — coupled with previous outings in MC5 and Stooges type bands, their art was certainly in the right place. And 13 years later, bless me if *The Tenement Year* doesn't sound as fresh and exciting as ever. Two drummers too, but there the comparison to Adam And The Ants ends...

"We would describe the new LP as more from the Ubu 'pop music' phase, which was some time around '77, but before *The Modern Dance*, allied with more of a 'rock' approach. It's a path we didn't really walk the first time around."

Your old albums always tempered a slightly unconventional rock approach with a couple of bizarre experimental workouts.

"The new LP is all structured. We did record two experimental tracks but we decided to hold on to them for B sides and not scare everybody!"

How did the group get back together in the first place?

"The truth is we never really split up. After 1982's *Song Of The Bailing Man* album, which had been hard work, nobody had the will or the ideas to get the band back on the tracks. What happened was that nobody in the band talked to each other for a couple of weeks after those sessions, and a couple of weeks has a habit of becoming a couple of months and a couple of years! By this time I was heavily involved in my solo career," (as David Thomas And The Pedestrians and later *The Wooden Birds*) "but as I began incorporating more Ubu members into what I was doing it just became inevitable that we would eventually become Pere Ubu again."

Backtracking, your *Datapanik In The Year Zero* 12 inch EP from 1978, which actually contained songs from much earlier such as *30 Seconds Over Tokyo* and *Heart Of Darkness*, is pretty much acknowledged to be a classic of the genre, as are other old chestnuts such as *Final Solution*. But what do you think now of your old albums, starting with *The Modern Dance*?

"From that album, *Humor Me* is brilliant and I always thought that should have been a single. There are weaknesses on it, largely in that we didn't get the humorous side of the band over to people properly, such as on *Sentimental Journey*. That record is embarrassing at points, but then again, what isn't?"

Sure. Having released *The Modern Dance* on Blank Records through Phonogram/Mercury, the group flitted over to Chrysalis, where *Dub Housing* was released in the same year.

Heavens was one of 1987's finest debuts, but it is still slightly unfocused; indeed, Goffrier admits that there was a strong backlash from the group's original fans, who preferred the harsher, more primeval noise of *Boo Boo*. (The 17 song CD, incidentally, contains both records.) Live, however, Big Dipper have it honed down almost to perfection, riding over all and sundry with a steamroller of caustic guitars, topped off with the near-obsessed dual vocals of Goffrier and Waleik. The result is a potent, off-centred pop, and in the interests of understanding what lies at the centre of great pop music, Big Dipper are prepared to challenge expectations with a cover of Wings' *Jet* or Fleetwood Mac's *Little Lies*.

"Finding the balance is the real trick," admits Goffrier of the thin area Big Dipper are attempting to occupy, the one that lies between pure power and pure pop. There are few easy reference points to this group, though even on its own, Bill's voice is unusual enough to attract comparisons with truly unique singers like David Byrne or Robert Smith. And like those vocalist's groups, Big Dipper have a subtle charm that may take years to be commercially recognised. That it won't be is very unlikely.

Goffrier himself is aware that dissecting a group for examination can, instead of telling us what makes it click, simply ruin the magic. "I often wonder whether people like the things that we deliberately put there or the ones that are there by default," he muses.

The opening song on *Heavens* is, we assume, written about a flowering young woman unaware of her potential beauty. It could very easily have been written about Big Dipper themselves.

"She's fetching, she may not know it now,
Look out if she finds out..." Tony Fletcher

Music from the de-cultural centres of the globe...

Going down the Dip

Big Dipper breaking with embarrassment

If Bill Goffrier had it his way, he wouldn't be in Big Dipper. As a spirited youth and leader of the influential (though little heard in Britain) mid-western punk band *The Embarrassment*, Goffrier instead harboured dreams of playing rhythm guitar with *The Fall*. One day Mark E. Smith and co came to town and *The Embarrassment* got to open for them. "Every time they came to town after that I'd talk to Craig Scanlon and I thought 'That's the guy. He's my role model'."

But a phone call from Manchester never came his way and in 1983, physically exhausted from years of touring and feeling that *The Embarrassment* had served their purpose, the slightly built songster packed his bags and headed to Beantown. "Boston had always been one of *The Embarrassment*'s favourite places," he explains. "Just because of the look of the city and the vitality of the music scene, and the fact that it was on an ocean, and we were landlocked."

Not that Goffrier moved to Boston to form a new group. Instead he went to study painting and "spend two years avoiding the music scene". This being rather akin to moving to the West Bank to get some peace and quiet, it is not surprising that sooner, rather than later, Goffrier's path crossed with those of Gary Waleik, Steve Michener and Jeff Oliphant.

No musical virgins themselves, Michener and Waleik had formed the *Volcano Suns* alongside ex-Mission Of Burma drummer Peter Prescott, and the former had also served a longer-than-average innings as bass player with *Dumptruck*. Drummer Oliphant had only a past with hardcore mechants XS to his credit, but like the others, he had no desire to go through all of that again.

"When we got together as exiles from other bands," relates Gary, "we had some negative experiences and mixed feelings about being in a band again. We didn't have big ambitions and all we were looking to do, at one point, was record a few songs and have a radio tape and some airplay so that we could see if our friends liked what we were doing."

So the newly incarcerated Big Dipper recorded a six-song demo and, with the help of Waleik's numerous contacts, the tape in general, and the song *Faith Healer* in particular, found its way onto the playlist of almost all the local college radio stations. Their associations with Homestead Records from *Volcano Suns* days still strong, the prime American indie seized on the group's flying start and released a six-song EP — including the original demo of *Faith Healer* — under the title *Boo Boo*.

Big Dipper suddenly found themselves on a rollercoaster that saw them shoot past many longer-serving local bands, at a speed they harboured some guilt over. "A lot of doors opened up for us that we didn't feel we'd worked very hard to get," explains Gary. "Other bands kept asking us 'What does it take? We keep playing on Tuesday nights and you're playing the weekend — and we've been doing this for a couple of years'. We didn't know what to say except that we'd been in other bands and we'd had to pay a lot of dues then. And we didn't want to do all that again. So the only way were willing to consider making this a real band would be to take a couple of jumps ahead."

Such isolation from the scene and its rulebooks partially explains Big Dipper's individuality, hinted at on *Faith Healer* but much more greatly displayed on their debut album proper, *Heavens*. With a front sleeve of one of Goffrier's paintings (a UFO obscured in the woods) and a back sleeve picturing the four Dippers running blurred across a field, it is not surprising that the music should have a similarly undefined, just-out-of-reach texture. The group's original four-square, almost hardcore approach has been usurped by a more pop approach, and when the two collide — as on *She's Fetching* and *All Going Out Together* — the result is almost frightening in its potential. Elsewhere there are hints of Beatle psychedelia on *Lunar Module*, touches of old-fashioned punk anger on *Easter Eve*, and even a song by another Boston band, Christmas' *When Men Were Trains* (including the glorious line "I remember when men were men, and women were dreams"). Big Dipper are far from proud.



Pere Ubu revitalised (with David Thomas bottom left in Bogie ttftr)

"I would consider that to be a near masterpiece. It's a far more mature work than The Modern Dance, and for that period, around late '78, we were at our peak. It was also a very satisfactory album to record, because although we had the ideas worked out, most of it was written in the studio, the first time we realised that things could be done that way!"

Then there was New Picnic Time, followed by The Art Of Walking LP in 1980. Ubu had found a new and sympathetic home at Rough Trade. But all was not well within the group. Ubu had just one more LP in them for that period, 1982's Songs Of The Bailing Man...

"That was an opposite record to its predecessor in that it was very direct and structured. It's a good record, but a lot of band members don't like to listen to it because of all the problems within the group at that point."

The Pedestrians then became Thomas' full time concern. They had already released Sound Of The Sand in 1981, and Variations On A Theme and More Places Forever appeared in successive years following the demise of Ubu, the latter hinting at the first steps towards a reunion.

Rough Trade's release in 1985 of The Terminal Tower, an early Ubu singles compilation, added to the myth of the band, and by 1986 with The Wooden Birds a full reformation was just around the corner.

"The Wooden Birds jammed through a bunch of old Ubu songs during an encore in Cleveland with our original drummer Scott Krauss and it sounded really good, using two drummers. Everything fitted together again, and the more we talked in subsequent months, the more a complete reunion became the only logical conclusion."

Accept no substitutes — Pere Ubu are back and as good as ever. Believe me when I tell you! **Alex Bastedo**



Big Dipper go for car care award



130 Talbot Road LONDON W11 1JA.01 229 8541

SUMMERHOUSE

New releases available now

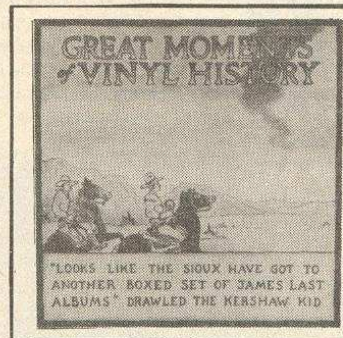
RUMBLEFISH	Medicine (12" single)	SUMS5
4,000,000 TELEPHONES	The Most Careful (LP)	SUML1
QUINN THE ESKIMO	The Mountain Is A Dandy (LP)	SUML2

Distributed by Red Rhino through the Cartel

Summerhouse Records Ltd., P.O. Box 13,
Stockton-on-Tees,
Cleveland TS18 1RX.



YOUR WORLD MUSIC DICTIONARY STARTS HERE... ANDY KER-SHAW picks rare records, radio sessions and field recordings from BARRENCE WHITFIELD & THE SAVAGES 'Walkin' With Barrence', S.E. ROGIE 'Twist With The Morningstars', PHIL CUNNINGHAM & GARY PETERSON 'Jean's Reel'/'The Moving Cloud', TED HAWKINGS & BILLY BRAGG 'Cold And Bitter Tears' KATHRYN TICKELL 'A B Hornpipe'/'Mrs Bolowski's', ORCHESTRA BAOBAB 'Utru Horas', JIM FORD 'Harlan County', MAKGONA TSOHLE BAND 'Duba Duba', PA JOBARTEH 'Masane Siise', DWIGHT YOAKAM 'Mystery Train', JONAH MOYO & DEVERA NGWENA 'Solo Na Mutsa', STEVE PHILLIPS 'Broke Down And Hungry'...



GREAT MOMENTS of VINYL HISTORY
SPM 1009 (LP)
SPMC 1009 (cassette)

Release date: April 11th

Special Delivery

50 Stroud Green Rd, London N4 3EF. Tel: 01-263 6403/1240

Fax: 01-281 5671

THE World

↑ BALL
↓

2 E
Y E

Music from the de-cultural centres of the globe...

NOISE-CRYPTS OF PIZZALAND

explored by **Vittore Baroni**

■ When, in the late '70s/early '80s, *noise* became *the* big underground thing — thanks to the pioneering work of **Throbbing Gristle** — in Italy the so-called industrial school of hardcore electronics immediately found a strong nucleus of followers and practitioners. The movement here never produced a first class star or a record hit, remaining till today much of a home-made-cassette-in-50-copies affair, with the occasional self-produced disc. Nevertheless, some of the works surfaced and submerged in the past ten years (time flies, yes!) remain among the more intriguing and excessive produced in this field, a real challenge to the auditory apparatus of truly radical fans. Do not forget that the first to theorise *l'arte dei rumori* (the art of noise) was the Italian futurist **Luigi Russolo**, though somebody else capitalised on that idea...

■ **Maurizio Bianchi (MB)** is the grandfather of the whole scene, but he disappeared into reclusive silence in 1984, repudiating his entire opus. That amounts to a dozen albums, self-produced in very limited editions, plus LPs on various labels (Sterile, Come Organisation, Broken Flag, DYS) and literally hundreds of cassettes and compilation appearances.

Maurizio's symphony of pure noise patterns reach the dead-end of the genre, after which you cannot *add* any more to the sound but have to *subtract*. Many of the cassette-makers still active (**Lyke Wake**, **Nun**, **Bruno Cossano**, **Laxative Souls**, **Negative Person**, **Mauthausen Orchestra**, etc) sound shy and amateurish compared to the intense and extreme early works of MB. Some original personalities emerge however from the endless cacophony of loops, radio cut-ups and cheap electronics.

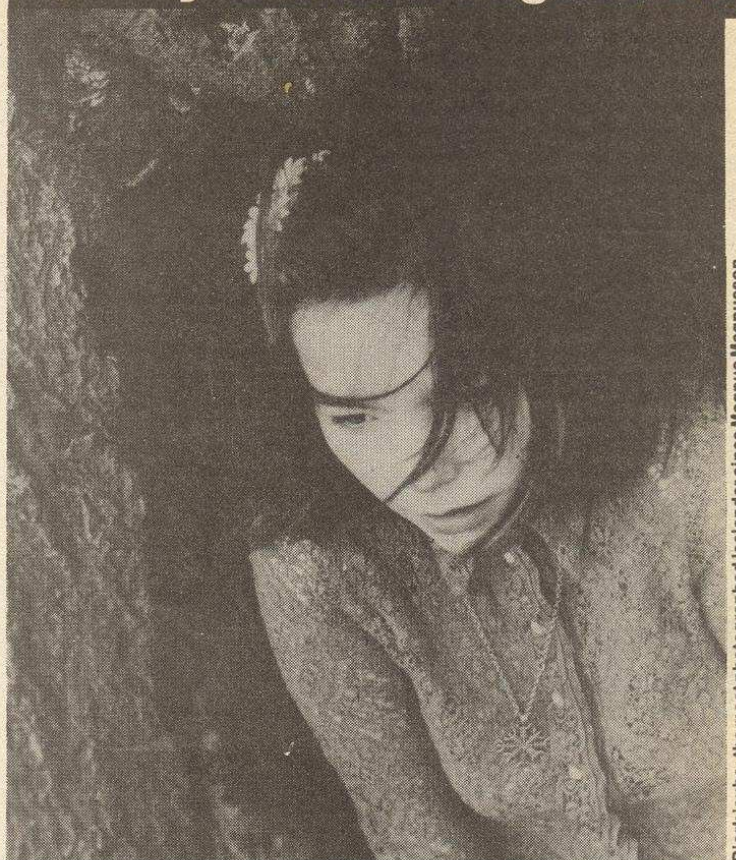
■ In the past few years, the general trend in noise circles has switched from cruel images and synthetic assaults to more relaxed and moody ritual-esoteric atmospheres, interspersed by sampled monk prayers, human bone percussions and the usual dose of loops 'n' cut-ups (PTV were obviously a major influence on this sharp turn). The best groups working in this direction are **Lashtal** (c/o Andrea Da Costa Freire, Via G D'Andrea 20, Firenze), who have a cassette on the Austrian label **Nekrophile**; **Sigillum S** (c/o Paolo Bandera, Vio Pontirolo 25, 24047 Treviglio, BG); and **Ain Soph** (c/o Toni Pettini, Via Enrico Fermi 15, 00146 Roma), all with a debut album due out soon and many cassettes already in circulation. To be remembered here also are **Rosemary's Baby**, a really promising band in the PTV vein, that after an enjoyable LP of satanic rock 'n' noise and a disclaimer album with a 20 minute cover of **Morrisson's The End**, disbanded to follow more "positive" mystical inclinations.

■ Instead of confusing you with a long list of obscure names that you'll probably never hear again, let's select just three of the more interesting projects in the avant garde/noise territory. The first name to be pointed out is **ADN** (Piazza Segrino 6/A, 20159 Milano), the only Italian label covering different aspects of contemporary experimental music with professionalism and continuity. I've already written in UG about **FAR** and **Tasaday**, but two other bands to pick out from the ADN catalogue are **LA 1919** (the LP *Ar sArA* features as special guests the mad improvisers **Henry Kaiser** and **John Oswald**) and **Kino Glaz** (sort of classic orchestral ensemble playing abstract rock songs, debut album is due out any day now).

■ **Officine Schwartz** utilises the images of rusty factories and tough workers, so dear to bands like **Laibach** and **EN**, but the music comes out surprisingly as a mixture of old Italian folk songs, romantic French melodies and the noises of the blast-furnace. **Remanium Dentaureum**, their first album (distribution Supporti Fonografici, Viale Coni Zugna 63, 20144 Milan), is the soundtrack of their current live show, more a multi-media happening than a real concert, with four hours of projections, videos, dance numbers and audience participation. **Oswaldo Schwartz**, leader and composer of all the music, is a real hardened factory worker, so he doesn't sound silly at all when he intones solemnly the *Hymn Of Workers And Workshops*.

■ Finally, **Tomografia Assiale Computerizzata (TAC)** are a very unstable group, with continuous changes of members and musical direction, yet they have completed three rich and mature albums on their own **Azteco Records** (Via Verdi 6, 43100 Parma). The last one is called *Il Teatro Della Crudeltà* and succeeds in marrying acoustic instruments (violin, viola, flute, clarinet) and technological devices, in a varied collage of cut-up nightmares, church-like dirges, percussive marathons and electronic anthems. TAC are the most original of the Italian bands utilising generous amounts of noise, but they recently split in two different factions, so the future will surely bring more changes in style. Azteco also produced the debut single, and soon the LP, of **Kind Of Cthulhu**, a mysterious combo mixing horror themes with soft psycho-rock, plus three different compilations of experimental bands from around the world.

Infinity Within a Sugarcube



Bjork cube: the most photographed Icelander since Magnus Magnusson

Triggered by the creation of *that* single, **Birthday**, Iceland's **The Sugarcubes'** forthcoming LP, *Life's Too Good*, has advance sales of 130,000. A recent British tour and TV appearance confirmed cold wave's popularity, and the current single, *Cold Sweat* (that's well worth carressing for the B side, with the contrasting harshness of **Einar Cube's** Icelandic thrust complementing tiny **Bjork's** candidness) made it obvious that many little Sugarcubed notes will surely melt upon the tongue this year.

Figtryggur Baldurson (the group's drummer) is definitely not, as I first feared, a robot. He warmly assures me that in the 'phone directory he is listed as "Siggi" since, in a country with less inhabitants than the borough of Hackney (about 250,000) most people go by their first name — even the Prime Minister (unlike Russia, where it is the last name that counts...and Popv is the equivalent of Brown — or should I say red?).

Iceland is a very (c)old country, also it's an island, yet it seems to have had more time and thought spent on its development than the UK. Inhabited since the Teutonic groups battled on the Viking seas, sojourning with the Danes while others strayed into Goth and Franck-dom, the Icelanders' mythology bears testimony to their deep frozen wit; the same dry irony that gleams within the 'Cubes' lyrics, written by old Icelandic poet **Johannar Por** who also plays guitar and grins.

"I wonder if people would ban us if they *really* understood the lyrics?"

He then assures me there is no dark, sleazy underground in Iceland (ie: heroin, crack, overdosing musicians).

These Icelanders are obviously a lot less perverted than we are led to believe.

Por: "There is, of course, some pills and drinking going on — but really the only people into drugs, in Iceland, are old women and children, and maybe a few high school students..."

And females in general? How are they seen?

Por: "I think we treat women with much more respect. When we play in this country, it's weird — they watch **Bjork** (the female singer) as though they are waiting for her skirt to fall off, or for her to lift up like an angel... why don't they dance?"

Bjork: "It's so strange here, seeing eleven and 12 year olds coming out of school dressed in stockings and high heels, crippling and back-breaking heels. I have the theory that women are only abused if they want to be abused, by and large; I think many people find this hard to understand."

Bjork and **Einar** (who also sings and plays the trumpet) were previously in a band with **Siggi** called **Kukl** — anyone who was lucky enough to see **Einsturzende Neubauten** (a band the 'Cubes have great respect for) play London back in '85 may remember them as the excellent support group. Going back even further, to '82, **Bragi**, the bassist, reminds me that he was in the nifty jazz influenced punk band **Purkkur Pillnikk** with whom he learnt his English on the Fall tour. (And who could beat **Mark E** for a fish in the ear?!) He then tells me he likes the height of the English ceilings and the old architecture (not yet collapsed but strategically being knocked down) and at the same time cannot believe how dirty this city is.

Siggi: "Well, I don't think it's the Queen that makes this country tick, that's for sure! In some ways they still feel, over here, like they're an empire; even the interviewers from the papers!"

Por: "There are so many different types!"

Bragi: "...and send my love to **Mare Navarro Suarez**...pleeease!" From seven to five... the Sugarcubes. Pin their gemstones through your noses and wear them with pride! **Beata A Burnska**

letter from america

You can only live in America for so long and hope to avoid TV. I tried, but then someone installed a 24 inch, 25-channel set, and recently entire mornings, evenings, or worst of all nights when I could have been doing something constructive with my life, have been lost as slave to the most sacred American culture of them all.

First off, let's establish the facts: American TV is dreadful. The pits. In spite of — no, *because of* — the immense viewing choice, every single programme, on every single channel (with the most minor exceptions), is aimed at the lowest common denominator. Nowhere is this more evident than on TV commercials, which assume...

- That everyone watching is a complete moron who will only understand one-syllable words;
- That said moron is also deaf and will only understand one-syllable words if they are shouted;
- That said deaf moron will only buy the product if either a typically moronic American family is seen enjoying it, or, in the cases where the product can not be physically 'enjoyed', such as medical insurance, or the Presidency of the United States, it is being sold by a man with a shifty smile and a three-piece suit.

In fact, that America still has a President proves conclusively that TV advertising works.

Television commercials seem to take up more time than the programmes themselves, and usually involve far more finance. A minute slot on the recent Super Bowl cost a mere \$1m; it is thus no surprise that match plays are stalled while the network fits in another advert or two. When the play can't be halted, such as in the Winter Olympics ice hockey, they take a break anyway, even if this means missing the States' only goals of the game.

At least the commercials are rarely as violent as the programmes they interrupt — *especially* ice hockey and American football. It is all too common for even basketball matches to erupt into the sort of all-out aggro normally associated with **Graeme Souness**, and players get away with light fines and suspensions because everyone knows it increases interest in the games. The much-touted notion that British football players seen brawling only encourages the hooligan element is palpably wrong; it should in fact be argued that on-pitch fighting discourages off-pitch violence, as American sports are among the most peaceful to be a spectator at in the world.

Violence also crops up on almost every programme that isn't sports-orientated, which must be either a thriller, a TV detective or the news. Blood and fury are so common on peak viewing TV that it all becomes one hazy orgy of death and destruction; it is slightly unnerving to be informed that **Miami Vice** finished 20 minutes ago and we are currently running through the lists of today's casualties in the drug wars of New York, Philadelphia and Washington.

The current doyen of the chat show idiom is the appallingly over-rated **David Letterman**, whose **Late Night** show only scores so well because it is possibly the only major show on TV that is prepared to laugh at itself and come close to admitting that this is in fact a waste of time, that even listening to **Samantha Fox** records would be more fulfilling.

Which I suppose brings us onto music, but seeing as how most videos are little more than commercials anyway these days, we can pretty much write that subject off. On networked television there is in fact very little music, bar the wonderful new US-UK **Top Of The Pops**. Fortunately, our house has not yet got round to installing cable TV, and so I do not suffer from the dreaded **MTV** disease, which basically consists of everyone watching saying, "Maybe the *next* video will be worth watching", while remaining glued to the TV for at least an hour before admitting defeat.

Cable TV is also the domain of the sex channels and the religious stations. Although both sets of people are after stripping you of every penny, they used to be easy to tell apart: the religious merchants wore clothes. These days, as TV preachers are exposed almost weekly for adultery, quasi-rape or being closet pornography freaks all these years, the distinction is far finer.

The recent public disgrace of **Jimmy Swaggart**, the same TV preacher who brought down **Jim Bakker** only a year ago, has brought the whole business of TV religion to the borders of black comedy. That is until one suddenly remembers with a cold sweat that a former TV evangelist, **Pat Robertson**, is running for President. The candidate is attempting to distance himself from his past in search of wider appeal, but the TV news and current affairs programmes, making the most of American TV's greatest asset — irreverency — have a pleasant habit of digging up clips of him "healing" the blind and the crippled. Robertson's greatest link with **God** was when he succeeded in 'praying off-course' a hurricane from ravaging the Atlantic coast; questioned about this recently, he explained that "I could hardly be expected to move a nation if I couldn't move a hurricane". And you must admit he has a point.

In fact, The Race For President is the one TV series that crosses all boundaries, featuring as it does high finance (a serious candidate needs \$5 million to compete with the others), drama (the candidates hurling serious insults at the competitors in their own party while ignoring the opposition), sexual intrigue (**Gary Hart**), violence (well some of the rhetoric is pretty painful), comedy (well, just look at them), sport (remember, it's a *race*) and, of course, the enormous jackpot for whoever wins. There's precious little politics talked of course, but then, this is only TV, not the real world. **TONY FLETCHER**

NEXT MONTH



NEW ORDER



BUTTHOLE SURFERS

LYDIA LUNCH

THE MEMBRANES

RAZORCUTS



and the rise of independent dance music

a million/trillion reviews, token two for the UNDERGROUND/ROUSKA compilation, lies, misquotes and much more! **UNDERGROUND** ★ **ISSUE 14** ★

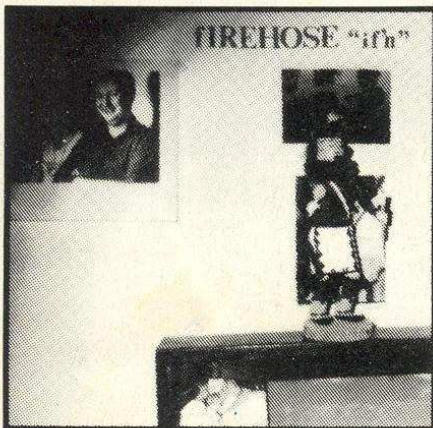
ON SALE APRIL 22

43 UNDERGROUND

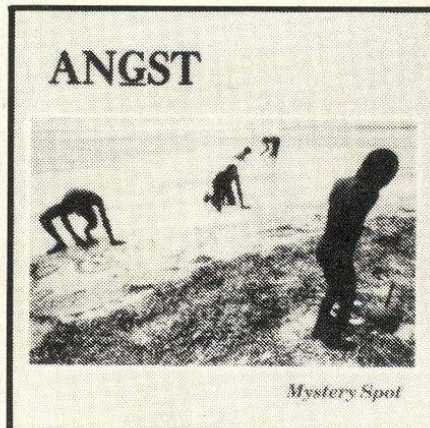
NEW FROM

SST

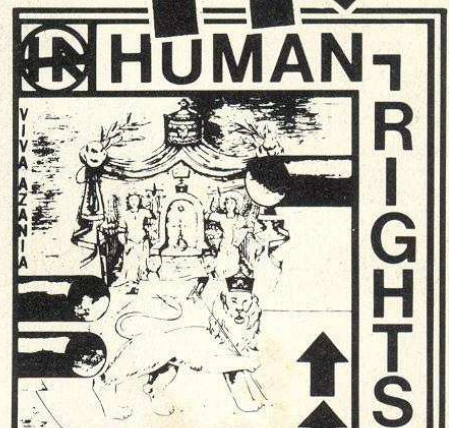
FIREHOSE ANGST



If n'. The second wailer. eD, Mike and George enter the sophomore sweepstakes and ditch the beanies on the second FIREHOSE album "If n'". Fourteen tunes recorded in eighty-five hours, that go way beyond anything three dudes should be able to do. Includes Sometimes, Honey Please, Anger and For The Singer Of REM. SST 115 (LP/CA \$7.50 CD \$15.00)

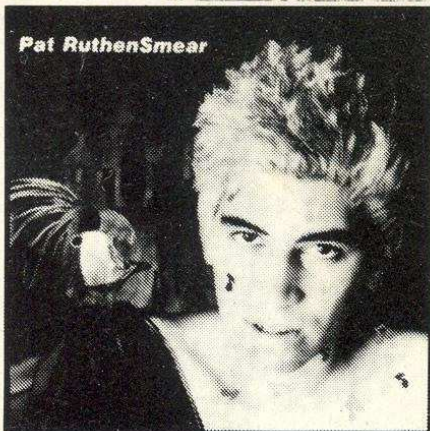


Mystery Spot. Like never before, the songs of Angst are suffused with a shimmering glow. On Mystery Spot, the remarkable interplay between brothers Joe and Jon is fully realized with their best-sounding record ever. With a bow to country and folk, Angst take off on a hell bent for leather electric train ride on Outside My Window, Colors Of The Day, Mind Average and nine more songs. SST 111 (LP/CA \$7.50)

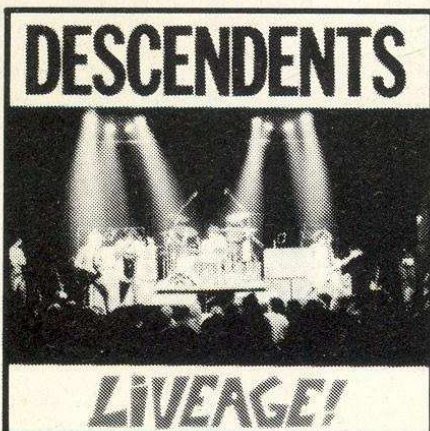


Human Rights. The firebrand vocalist of the world-renowned Bad Brains steps out with his own record. With a lush background and a unifying spiritual message, this record shows H.R. in the role of healer and teacher. From the world beat hip hop of the title track to the soft love vibe of Acting So Bad, this record cuts across all boundaries in its quest for one-love. SST 117 (LP/CA \$7.50 CD \$15.00)

Pat RuthenSmear DESCENDENTS BLACK FLAG



PAT RUTHENSMEAR: RuthenSmear. As a founding father of punk, Pat Smear should need no introduction. From his patented guitar grungework with the Germs, right up to now, Pat Smear is the severed edge of modern guitar playing. Pat RuthenSmear however, is a whole new kettle of fish. Glam, slam, blammo, a whole new way of life. SST 154 (LP/CA \$7.50)



DESCENDENTS: Liveage. The last blast in the saga of the "Dents" comes in the form of this incredibly bonus live record! Feel the bone-crushing power of the Descendents. If you want it "ALL", this is the first step you will need to make. SST 163 (LP/CA \$7.50 CD \$15.00)



BLACK FLAG: Wasted Again. Imagine if your favorite Flag party tunes of all time were put together in a room. Then, the room was filled with hundreds of your best friends. Before the cops come, you better slap on Wasted Again, a collection of all the songs that make you want to party. Six Pack, T.V. Party, Wasted, Rise Above and twelve more festive Flag tunes. SST 166 (LP/CA \$7.50 CD \$15.00)

Distributed by Pinnacle

P.O. BOX 1, LAWDALE, CA 90260

