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Trouser Press

D E V O: Future of Rock or Total Crock?

JOHN WETTON

History of BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD

GREATEST GUITARISTS part two



Nothing can stop the shape of things to Clash, despite promises of Les Mou[illegible]nes publicists. Instead, Ruby, a drag queen from the S&M disco *The Alvin*, read birthday greetings sent by **President and Mrs. Jimmy Cart[illegible]** Sally jumped out of a birthday [illegible] nes[illegible] crov[illegible]

Perha[illegible] Studio [illegible] **Couri H[illegible]** paid gos[illegible] have a re[illegible] umn in t[illegible] own wo[illegible] three sep[illegible] paid for [illegible] bouncers [illegible] **Donald S[illegible]** never happ[illegible] as a jour[illegible] criminal a[illegible] police rep[illegible] Couri's wee[illegible] dows on Th[illegible] was exclude[illegible] did not wan[illegible] drink on H[illegible] blocked a[illegible] England's [illegible] further wo[illegible] [illegible] handwasned the shirt and it s[illegible]ank.

Well, Couri, I was also denied admittance th[illegible] of this w[illegible] **C[illegible]men**, *sti*[illegible] why I was [illegible] mitt[illegible] here [illegible] **M[illegible]** banned becau[illegible] **Monique Van Vooren**'s complaint about bouncing checks that she received from The Cra[illegible] Finale's management. Curious that I was allowed to view **Cmta Rivera** a

Well, these rich folk who paid up to $200 per ticket were so drunk they didn't know they were having a bad time. **[illegible]ester Lann** played waltzes whil[illegible]iving out clam-digger hats inscrib[illegible]his name, and [illegible]y sprayed [illegible]ter from [illegible]uffering [illegible]bou[illegible]e event [illegible] to each guest. [illegible]00 each), were [illegible] cologne (men [illegible]elections) and [illegible] 25 pounds **[illegible]ell** and I exit-*[illegible]ost* columnist [illegible] fort to carry [illegible]g both?" I [illegible] you expect [illegible] BW (Earl's

[illegible]670,000. It [illegible]s: Andrew [illegible] on to pre-[illegible]n to Neil [illegible]preview of [illegible]ances; [illegible]but the **Steele's** [illegible]e. *Rolling* [illegible]'s **Dave Marsh** said: "It's the height of hypocrisy to have the Director of the Narcotics Enforcement Bureau on the same dais with Studio 54's **Steve Rubell**" [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] presidential [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the audience which [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] her limp [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Jimmy Carter could make medical history [illegible] to him [illegible] is a [illegible] disease. [illegible]hen I asked **John J. Bonzi**, the executive director of [illegible] Narcotic Enforcement Officers Association, how he felt about being on the dais with Rubell and Schrager, his wife Celeste said: "Can you get us into the Studio?"

Bob Weiner, "Soho Weekly News."

THE CLASH
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All The Young Punks (New Boots And Contracts)
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Trouser Press 35

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HELLO IT'S ME

Letters to Trouser Press may be sent to 147 W. 42 St., New York, NY 10036, or Dept. 32L, 56 Standard Rd., London NW10, England.

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?

TP's coverage is a nice blend of big names and lesser known but still talented performers (and TP 32 had everything about all the people we wanted to know about!). The departments offer a choice variety of aspects of the music scene, but it might be even better to add more humor occasionally and not restrict it to the format of "rock therapy."

Douglas Heller
Ann Arbor, MI

I'm exceptionally pleased that the garbage most American rock mags have to offer is not present in your publication. As a dedicated rocker/audiophile/Anglophile, I can only say that hopefully your magazine will continue its quality coverage of important musical news.

Pamela McCleave
Richmond, VA

As a longstanding TP reader, I feel compelled to write after seeing your latest issue. Of late I notice you have dropped the banner of "America's only British rock magazine," and well you should. With articles about the Ramones, Talking Heads, Michael Stanley and the Cars, there is very little of the British scene in your mag anymore. Your fixation with hyping Cheap Trick has become a bore, and the overall quality of your articles has also gone downhill. You used to cover the "underdog" quite a bit, but now you're giving space to record company big-bucks artists. If you're going to cover Americans, why not interesting ones like R. Stevie Moore, the Residents and the Random Radar groups? Or get back to Britons like Van der Graaf/Hammill, French artists like Magma—artists that are worth the attention.

Rick Howell
Poughkeepsie, NY

WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

Ira Robbins has me puzzled. In TP 33's memoriam (?) to Keith Moon, he calls Keith "the best drummer I've ever seen or heard"; yet the rest of the article puts down Keith and the Who. Robbins also repeatedly refers to the Who in the past tense. Apparently he doesn't know the band as well as he might have us believe.

Jimmy McNamara
Richmond, VA

Dave Schulps' **Who Are You** review (TP 32) is exactly how I feel. Having been a Who freak for four years it's so damn infuriating to hear this album. Then Moonie up and dies and, shit, the only rock'n'roll band we're left with is Cheap Trick (Rainbow excluded). What is going to happen? The Who were the best, are the best and always will be the best band even though Moon is gone. What a shit year for rock'n'roll.

Steve McMillan
Cleveland Hts., OH

D-I-V-O-R-C-E

The steady decline in the quality of your magazine has pointed to our inevitable parting of company. I would have bowed out quietly but I must respond to your grossly unjust review of Anthony Phillips's **Wise After the Event** (TP 32).

Certainly, musical preferences are a matter of personal taste. But a review is of little value when the writer immediately dismisses a record simply because of preconceptions and narrow-minded categorizing. The new Anthony Phillips album is a stunningly beautiful collection of songs. The music is great, and after a number of listenings I have found his singing not only enjoyable but perfectly suited to his compositions. It is regrettable that some people will miss out on hearing this remarkable record due to your sloppy reviewing practices. It is you, and not Phillips, who should review their musical direction.

D.A. Riley
Chicago, IL

OUR PERCEPTIVE READERS

I don't know who put together that awful cover on your November issue but let's just say that hanging's too good for 'em. Have a little pride in yourselves and respect for your readers. I haven't seen a cover like that in years, nor do I want to. I was actually embarrassed to buy the thing and, judging from his expression, the bookstore clerk was probably wondering what kind of rocker I was.

Larry Shadgett
San Diego, CA

I was going to blast you about the cover, but I realize now that it is a parody of 16 magazine, so I finally got the joke.

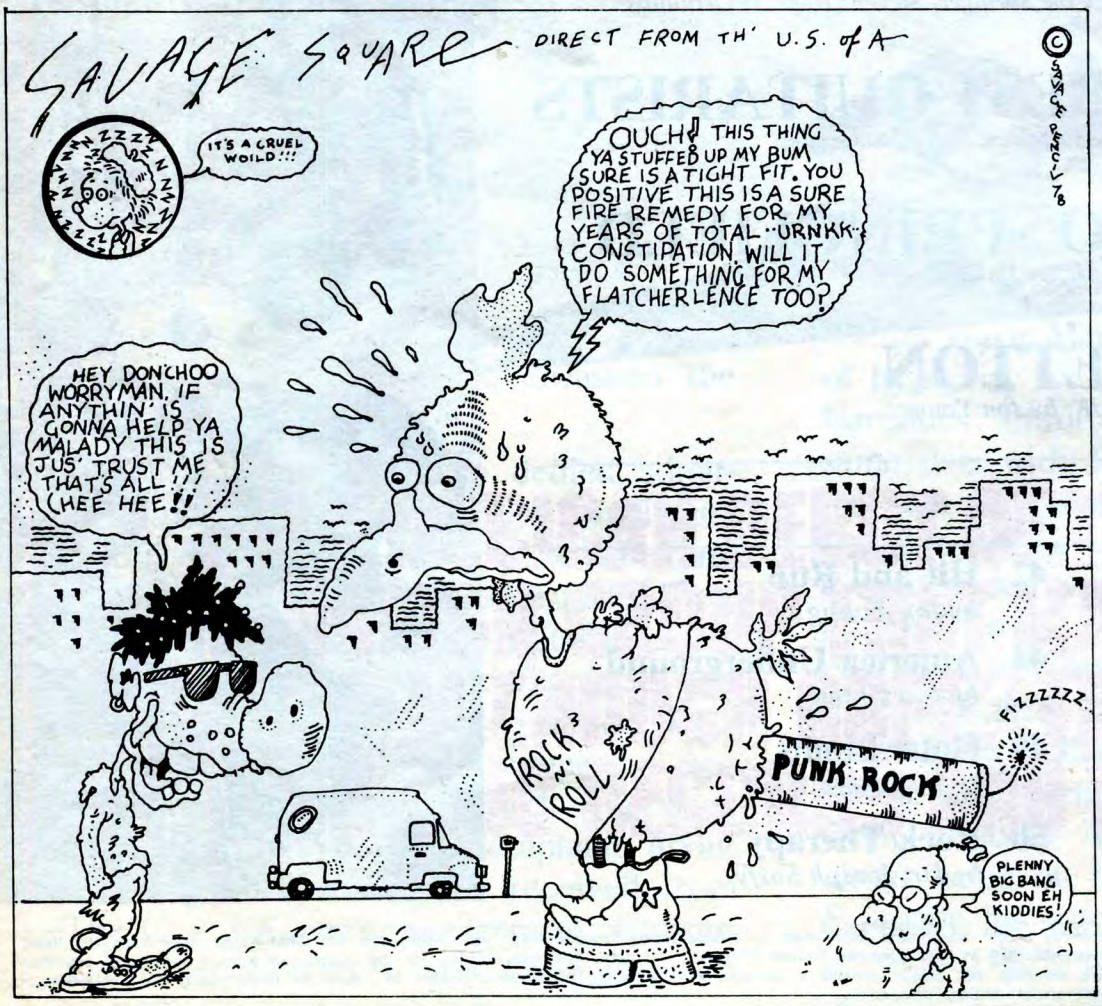
Michael Valencourt
McCord AFB, WA

PROGS GO GONK

Trouser Press doesn't spend enough time on the truly artistic bands in Europe. We've seen enough articles on the Kinks, Cheap Trick, Rundgren and the punk bands. This stuff is boring to us import freaks. If you consider yourself an intelligently produced magazine, you'll cover Van der Graaf, ELP, Genesis, Solution, Heldon, Spring, Faust and Europe's more esoteric bands. Let's progress, please!

Mark Lundgren
Portland, OR

Say no more. See our new column, "Outer Limits," on page 49. —Ed.



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1) *Let us know as soon as you can*—if you let us know the week after you move, it's likely an issue may already be in the mail to your old address.

2) *Make sure you send us your old address* (the label from the envelope would be just about perfect) along with the new one.

QUADROFREEBIA



The hits just keep on coming! If you're a new subscriber to **TP** this month, you are entitled to pick one of these four albums as a freebie. Here's the choice:

DAVID BOWIE—Stage: A great live double album from the incomparable Mr. Bowie which contains new versions of many of his best songs. (Available with 2-year subscription **only**.)

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DUCKS DELUXE—Don't Mind Rockin' Tonight is a selection of the best tracks recorded by this seminal outfit that contained later members of the Rumour, Motors and Tyla Gang.

If you subscribe for one year, choose any of the single albums (Hall & Oates, Werewolves or Ducks).

If you subscribe for two years, you can have either the double Bowie, or any two single LPs. Use the coupon below in either case.

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CURRENTLY AVAILABLE (Don't order unless listed):

TP 9: Stones on Film; Gong; Quo; Sparks; Entwistle; Brinsley Schwarz.

TP 14: Keith Moon; Genesis; Free; Lou Reed; SB&Q; Michael Brown.

TP 15: Dr. Feelgood; Boxer; Roy Harper; Russ Ballard; Nazareth.

TP 16: Queen; Kevin Ayers; Graham Parker; Steve Hillage; Peter Bardens.

TP 17: ELO; Grimms; Be-Bop Deluxe; Easybeats; Tommy James; A. Bender.

TP 18: Bowie 1; Entwistle; Eddie Jobson; UK New Nave; Little River Band.

TP 19: Thin Lizzy; Bowie 2; Spedding; Gentle Giant; Dave Stewart; Australia.

TP 20: Peter Gabriel; Genesis; Brian Eno; Bowie 3; Rick Wakeman; Damned.

TP 21: Jimmy Page 1; Heavy Metal; Kevin Ayers; Hammill; Dave Edmunds.

TP 22: Sex Pistols; New Wave R.I.P.; Page 2; Small Faces; Nick Lowe.

TP 23: Bryan Ferry; Page 3; Gentle Giant; Rare Stones; Blondie; Twilley.

TP 24: Elvis Costello; Boomtown Rats; Be-Bop Deluxe; Man; John Martyn.

TP 25: Winwood/Traffic; Graham Parker; Jam; Rods; Horslips; Nick Drake.

TP 26: McCartney; Clash; Cheap Trick; Syd Barrett; Tom Robinson.

TP 27: Pete Townshend; Power Pop Primer; Hot Rods; Rich Kids; Devo.

TP 28: Pink Floyd; Townshend 2; ELP; Television; Pere Ubu; Peter Hammill.

TP 29: Oldham/Stones; Dave Davies; TRB; Dictators; Elvis Costello.

TP 30: Todd Rundgren; Blackmore; Ian Dury; Buddy Holly; Bowie; Groovies.

TP 31: Cheap Trick; Lowe/Edmunds; Bill Bruford; Be-Bop; Generation X.

TP 32: Ray Davies; Peter Gabriel; Robert Fripp; Brian Eno; Troggs; Blondie.

TP 33: Entwistle; Ramones; Joe Perry; T. Heads; Cars; Stranglers; Sweet.

TP 34: Guitarists Pt. 1; Thin Lizzy; Kiss; Petty; Greg Kihn; Wazmo; Luna.

TPP 2: Definitive Who Discography—12 pages of 45s/LPs/films/foreign/etc.

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RAVING FAVES

RF #11: First Rock Song Ever Heard

No heavy sociological analysis here, we were just interested in primal musical impressions. Not surprisingly, the Beatles were most readers' introduction to rock; seven different titles were submitted, almost all from **Meet the Beatles**. Chubby Checker's relatively strong showing reflects poor reader response more than aesthetic revaluation (no revisionist rock histories, please!).

There were an unexpected number of 1950s songs, but Elvis Presley didn't carry the proportionate clout the Beatles did for the 1960s. Earliest song mentioned was Rosemary Clooney's "Come on-a My House" from 1951 (thanks, mother). Earliest memory recalled had to be from the Raving Faver who nominated "'Rock a Bye Baby' by my musical bunny"—admitted on a technicality. Other music-related memories included listening to WMCA in the morning before going to school, eating Malt-O-Meal and listening to records on a friend's parents' Magnavox. The average age for the first rock recollection—attention, psychologists—appears to be seven. Ah youth!

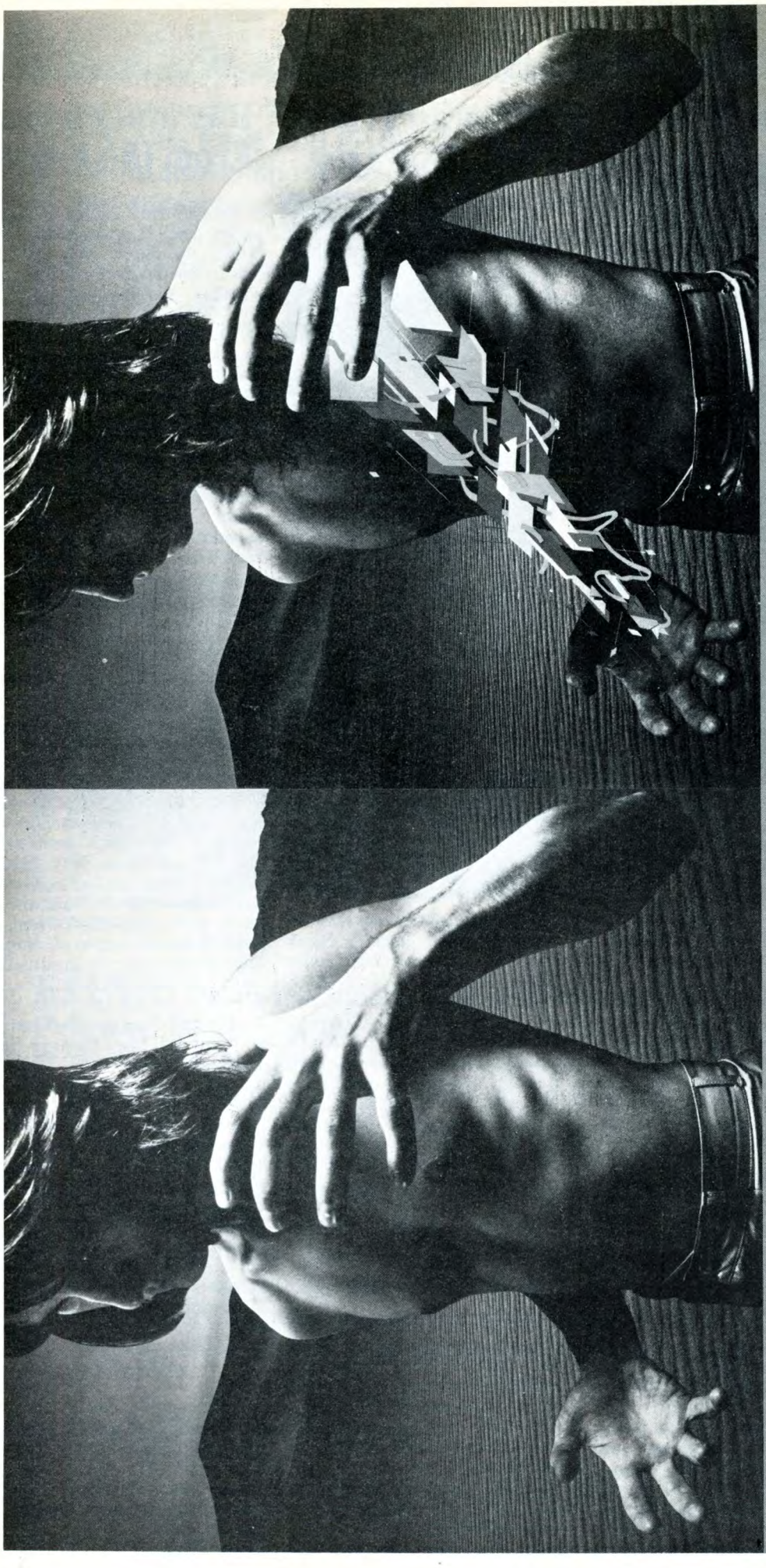
1. Beatles, "I Want to Hold Your Hand"
2. Beatles, "She Loves You"
   Chubby Checker, "The Twist"

Other Precious Memories

Buchanan & Goodman, "The Flying Saucer" (1956)
Lou Christie, "The Gypsy Cried" (1963)
Dave Edmunds, "I Hear You Knockin'" (1970)
Bill Haley, "Rock Around the Clock" (1955)
Little Richard, "Long Tall Sally" (1956)
Monkees, "Monkees Theme" (1966)
Tony Orlando, "Knock Three Times" (1967)
Peter, Paul and Mary, "Puff the Magic Dragon" (1963)
Elvis Presley, "Hound Dog" (1956)
Rolling Stones, "Satisfaction" (1965)

Question #14

Favorite Rock Critics: Besides names, explain your preferences and mention (where possible) an outstanding example of the writer's craft. Trouser Press writers *not* excluded. Up to two writers only, please; deadline is January 31, 1979.



Todd Rundgren.
Back To The Bars.

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Love Of The Common Man

The Verb "To Love"

Love In Action

A Dream Goes On Forever

Sometimes I Don't Know What To Feel

The Range War

Black And White

The Last Ride

Cliché

Don't You Ever Learn?

Never Never Land

Black Maria

Zen Archer

Medley:

- I'm So Proud
- Ooh Baby Baby
- La La Means I Love You
- I Saw The Light

It Wouldn't Have Made Any Difference

Eastern Intrigue

Initiation

Couldn't I Just Tell You

Hello It's Me

On Bearsville records and tapes.
Produced by Todd Rundgren.

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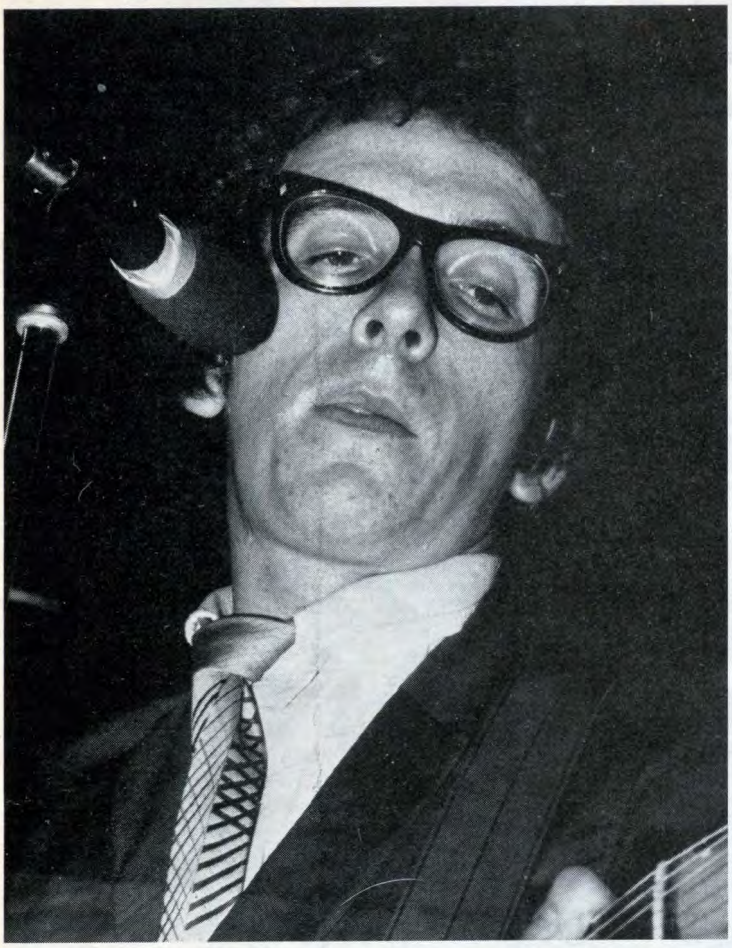
FAX 'N' RUMOURS

Keeping Up With Mr. C.



Marie Scuderi

Elvis Costello, preparing for his third recorded assault on the American music scene, has finished his latest album, **Armed Forces**, produced by Nick Lowe. Schedules call for an early January release, with a US tour following. Just before embarking on a brief series of Canadian gigs in early November, Elvis showed up at CBGBs one night during a benefit concert and played a few songs with Richard Hell (all carefully prearranged, of course). In recent months, Elvis has been seen in the company of Todd Rundgren's wife, Bebe, and reports suggest that Mrs. Costello and children have been given the royal heave by four-eyes. This Year's Model, indeed!

Microgrooveness

New albums just out from: Status Quo—**If You Can't Stand the Heat**; Sham 69—**That's Life**; XTC—**Go 2**; Hawklords—**25 Years On**; Ian Gomm—**Summer Holiday**; John Cooper Clarke—**Disguise in Love**; Jam—**All Mod Cons**; X-Ray Spex—**Germ Free Adolescence**; Bethnal—**Crash Landing**; Judas Priest—**Killing Machine**; AC/DC—**Bloody Live**; Queen—**Jazz**; Siouxsie and the Banshees—**The Scream**; 999—**Separates**; The Angels—**Face to Face**; The Pork Dukes—**Pink Vinyl**; and the Fabulous Poodles—**Unsuitable.**

The Present-Day Be-Bop Refuses To Die!

Red Noise, the new band formed by Bill Nelson, ex-Be-Bop Deluxe leader, has announced its line-up—Andy Clark (also from Be-Bop) on keyboards; Ian Nelson (Bill's brother) on sax; Rick Ford on bass; and no permanent drummer. The group is expected to debut before the end of the year, and have already recorded enough material for several albums. American plans have not yet been announced.

Blondie Tries New Guitarist



The night before we went to press, Blondie played a headline date in New York, with **Johnny Thunder(s)** and **Mitch Ryder** as (extremely weak) support. After a long set, Blondie returned to encore with **Robert Fripp** sitting in, and jolted through interesting renditions of Iggy's "Sister Midnight" and Bowie's "Heroes." Fripp was met with standing applause as he left Blondie on stage to finish with "Bang A Gong." It is not known whether **Sid Vicious**, seen roaming backstage, enjoyed the show.

Rock Against Racism

Rock Against Racism, the British organization promoted by Tom Robinson, has opened an American branch which will devote itself to political and social issues affecting rock'n'roll people. The address to write for information is 152 West 42 St., Rm. 418, New York, NY 10036. A newsletter is available if you send an SASE.

Bits and Pieces From the Front

Second **Tom Robinson Band** album will be produced by **Todd Rundgren**...**Roy Wood** has finished work on the second **Rezillos** LP...**Dictators** dropped by Elektra after only two quietly promoted offerings...Stiff tour package (**Wreckless Eric, Rachel Sweet, Lene Lovich, Mickey Jupp** and **Jona Lewie**) headed for American stops in December...**Crawdaddy** magazine has changed their name to **Feature**...**Sid Vicious** has retained F. Lee Bailey as counsel, with pre-trial hearing scheduled for late November—report of a confession last issue apparently unfounded...New **Generation X** LP produced by **Ian Hunter** due shortly...**Who Quadrophenia** film currently being shot in England, with unknown band called Cross Section chosen to play a mod band not unlike the Who...The **Saints** have broken up after three albums...The **Motors** have gone into temporary retirement after losing Bram Tchaikovsky and Ricky Slaughter, but promise to be back soon with a new line-up...**Van Morrison** NYC date cut short when the Belfast Cowboy slithered off the stage after doing part of a lifeless set... **Keith Richards** helped off stage after overstaying his guest guitarist welcome at Rockpile date in New York one day after his "sentence" was handed down in Canada...The **Doctors of Madness** have finally broken up after abortive enlistment of Dave Vanian as fourth member...Personnel changes in **Slits, Vibrators, Nazareth**...Punk folksinger Patrik Fitzgerald signed to Polydor UK...**Clash** manager Bernard Rhodes given the boot by the band; lawsuits to follow... **Diodes**' drummer John Hamilton has been replaced by Mike Lengyell, and the band's second LP is due in January (Canada only).

Addenda

Last month's cover, as we failed to note at the time, owes a grateful thanks to New York's Rousers—Jeff, Bill, Jerry, Johnny and Tommy—for the loan of the guitars featured. Thanks, guys.

ANTHONY PHILLIPS: A collection of guitar and piano solos, duets and ensembles by Anthony Phillips, "Private Parts And Pieces" is yet another fine example of the artistry and fertile imagination Phillips inserts in all his endeavors. Recorded between 1972 and 1976 "Private Parts And Pieces" has the lightness and intensity that is Phillips' own unique trademark and will delight as well as stimulate the listener. All titles were penned and produced by Anthony Phillips except for the "Field of Eternity" and "Tibetan Yak Music". This PVC recording has been dedicated by Anthony to Peter Cross, the artist responsible for the beautiful and elegant cover art of "Private Parts And Pieces", as well as his previous recordings "The Geese And The Ghost" and "Wise After the Event". A pretty package . . . "Private Parts And Pieces"!



"PRIVATE PARTS & PIECES"
PVC 7905*



"BLACK VINYL SHOES"
PVC 7904

SHOES: Ira Robbins, Trouser Press editor and rock'n roll authority has this to say about Shoes and their album, "These guys have put together a spunky pop album that obliterates the competition on every level". The long awaited album, "Black Vinyl Shoes" by the four young boys from Zion, Illinois is available at last. Fifteen fun tunes that'll keep you singing, swaying and smiling. "Black Vinyl Shoes" crushes the competition underfoot.

KHAN: From the annals of progressive rock, JEM's PVC label brings you the initial U.S. release of Khan, a most influential combo on the development of intellectual ingenuity in music. For Khan was the brainchild of a then 22 year old Steve Hillage ("Space Shanty" was recorded in 1972), with his glissando guitar and earthly vocals. His counterpoint on this record was Dave Stewart, of Egg, who offered friendly advice along with his array of conditioned keyboards. Khan was completed by bassist/vocalist Nick Greenwood, and drummer Eric Peachy (he of the long beard). Available over the years intermittently as an import, PVC makes it readily and consistently obtainable.



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PVC



An old pic: Phil Mogg, Pete Way, Danny Peyronel, Andy Parker and Michael Schenker.

By Michael Ameen

"There is nothing, and I mean nothing, preconceived about UFO...not even our name," says lead singer Phil Mogg innocently. UFO's reason for being lies much deeper than the superficiality of being a structured rock outfit. Indeed, this motley crew of British rockers has no plan or strategies for success. As their fifth album, **Obsession**, moves into the high reaches of the British and American charts, the group couldn't seem to lack more direction or be less concerned about publicity.

"It is more likely to our disadvantage to be so carefree, but UFO is trying to bring the human element back into rock," says Mogg, even though the group should be more worried about selling albums and establishing themselves at such a crucial stage in their career. Surely, success is always subjective with artists, but now is the time for UFO to really take care of business or perhaps find themselves floundering for years in the anonymous barrage of heavy metal clone bands. However, do not count them out...for UFO's plan is no plan.

Simply because UFO isn't playing the game doesn't mean they aren't holding the right cards. Mogg wants "audience excitement and response to be an intuitive reaction to the band, not because of an elaborate stage show or a few explosions." This is the human element he speaks of. And the more he impresses this attitude, the more it makes sense in a time of revolving Yes stages and clumsy ELO saucers. UFO don't want to start what they don't even want to consider—getting caught up in the predictable and complex world of technomania that plagues so many groups today where music alone is no longer the means for survival.

When Mogg speaks of human elements in UFO's music, acoustic guitars are not what he has in mind. With their walls of Marshall amps, UFO seem to be doing a good job of turning audiences into android replicas.

Yet Mogg has known all along that sound, and lots of it, can motivate listeners, ever since their first album (never released here) kicked its way into the hearts and pocketbooks of decibel lovers in Japan and Germany. UFO *do* want to be heard—there is no mistaking that—but only on their terms.

"We only need to satisfy ourselves," admits Phil. "We're one band who wants no regrets. There'll be no saying later that 'we shouldn't have done this or done that'." For as Phil sings on "Only You Can Rock Me" from **Obsession**, "We're the boys and we've got nothing to lose...If you're not with us then it's just bad news." This somewhat cocky "us-for-us" stance is an integral part of the "bad boy" vengeance that has served as the foundation for UFO's popularity. Limits do exist however: During UFO's recent Detroit concert, Phil began the set by announcing his dislike for the city. Needless to say, the hometown crowd was somewhat put off and made their disfavor towards UFO apparent. Perhaps UFO's bad boy portrayal has been overworked a bit. "But I don't know what our image *is*," insists Mogg indecisively, "nor do I have any idea what I want it to be." Once again, an important part of UFO's design which involves no forethought or planning: left to fate circling in uncertainty. In fact, it begins to look at times like UFO is working against itself.

This non-conforming group is not from another green world, they have no fronts, their lyrics sing nothing new, and you've probably heard most of the music all before. But UFO must be admired. They are a band of eccentrics living in the extreme present tense, solely for the moment. In today's orderly business of rock, UFO are a rare exception. They are heavily preoccupied with Now. Day to day, UFO happen right along with whatever is happening to them. More aptly put by Ultravox, "If tomorrow's not here, then at least today's alright."

"That's why we're a looser organization than many," says Mogg. "We go through a series of sagas every day," he adds half exasperated. "You know, half out of it, missing planes, checking into wrong hotels." Then in a serious moment he says, "It's tremendously aggressive for us being on stage. We don't want to carry that aggressiveness around with us all day." Mogg and company are essentially burden-free funlovers who can't afford to be, but still buck the standard...and sometimes forget about it altogether.

Last year, on the eve of the group's extensive US tour to support **Lights Out**, lead guitarist Michael Schenker mysteriously disappeared. Despite intensive searching, the group was unsuccessful in locating Schenker and his disappearance was met with many rumors. Several months later, he returned as quietly as he had vanished. Phil now admits that "I'm no longer surprised with anything about UFO," in respect to the strange happenings that surround the group's daily undertakings and lifestyles.

Meanwhile, the road has kept UFO both guessing and going. With the return of Schenker, the group has been concentrating their efforts more on live shows than in the studio, and a live album is being culled from the **Obsession** tour. "There came a point when we felt we weren't progressing at the rate we should have been," says Phil of the period following their earlier albums **Phenomenon**, **Force It**, and **No Heavy Petting**.

Due to Phil's sense of suspension in UFO's studioworks, the group dropped producer Leo Lyons and personally recruited a new producer, Ron Nevison, who had worked with the Who and Led Zeppelin. "Right from the start," says Phil, "we learned a lot." The past two Nevison-produced albums, **Lights Out** and **Obsession**, have been UFO's most successful to date.

On **Obsession**, the songwriting of Mogg and Schenker is honed down for pure utility and is more "tasteful" than nearly any heavy metal album you can name—almost a contradiction in terms, but it works. The album is laced with soothing string arrangements that quickly leap into stinging guitar lines. With Nevison at the boards, the selections are so effectively paced that the more melodic ballads complement the rockers rather than serving to make the album seem disjointed and uneven.

Presently, the band has yet to adapt any of the slower tunes into their stage show. "As an opening act," says Mogg, "we've got 50 minutes to gig. We've got to come out and hit them, and hit them hard!" Oddly enough, Phil asserts that UFO has no real influences musically, though it would still be effortless for even a third-generation rock fan to pick out the best moments of Deep Purple and early Queen in their music. "Well, maybe you'll find some Van Morrison," he jests.

Still, having borrowed something from everyone else's closet, UFO now stand fully clothed in front of the masses, indifferent to their reception. It is somewhat of a feat considering they have won such widespread approval built so much on a cosmetic facade and so little substance. More amazing is that people are buying what UFO (sans Chrysalis) is making no effort to sell. In addition, people are identifying with a band that isn't quite sure of its own identity. Perhaps Mogg's notions abouta resurrecting the human element have revived people's instinctive drive to move to music. For the rock society *wants* to dance now also, blank generation or not.

The casual attitude UFO take towards their music and lives has allowed this spontaneity to salvage an otherwise stale rock style. Their urgency is convincing on **Obsession** because this is one of the few groups left that means what it plays—their spirit has yet to become jaded. And no one should have to tell you that conviction and spontaneity are what rock has always been about. ■

"K-SCOPE" POP INTO THE FUTURE



Phil Manzanera is the guitarist / songwriter who brought the future of rock and roll to the here and now with "801" and Roxy Music. His musical talents as producer and player have been sought out by Eno, Nico, John Cale and Bryan Ferry.

Now, with "K-Scope," Phil Manzanera takes you the next step. Featuring "Hot Spot," "Remote Control" and "Gone Flying," his new album melds rock, pop and South American rhythms with sci-fi electronics for an up-to-date musical creation.

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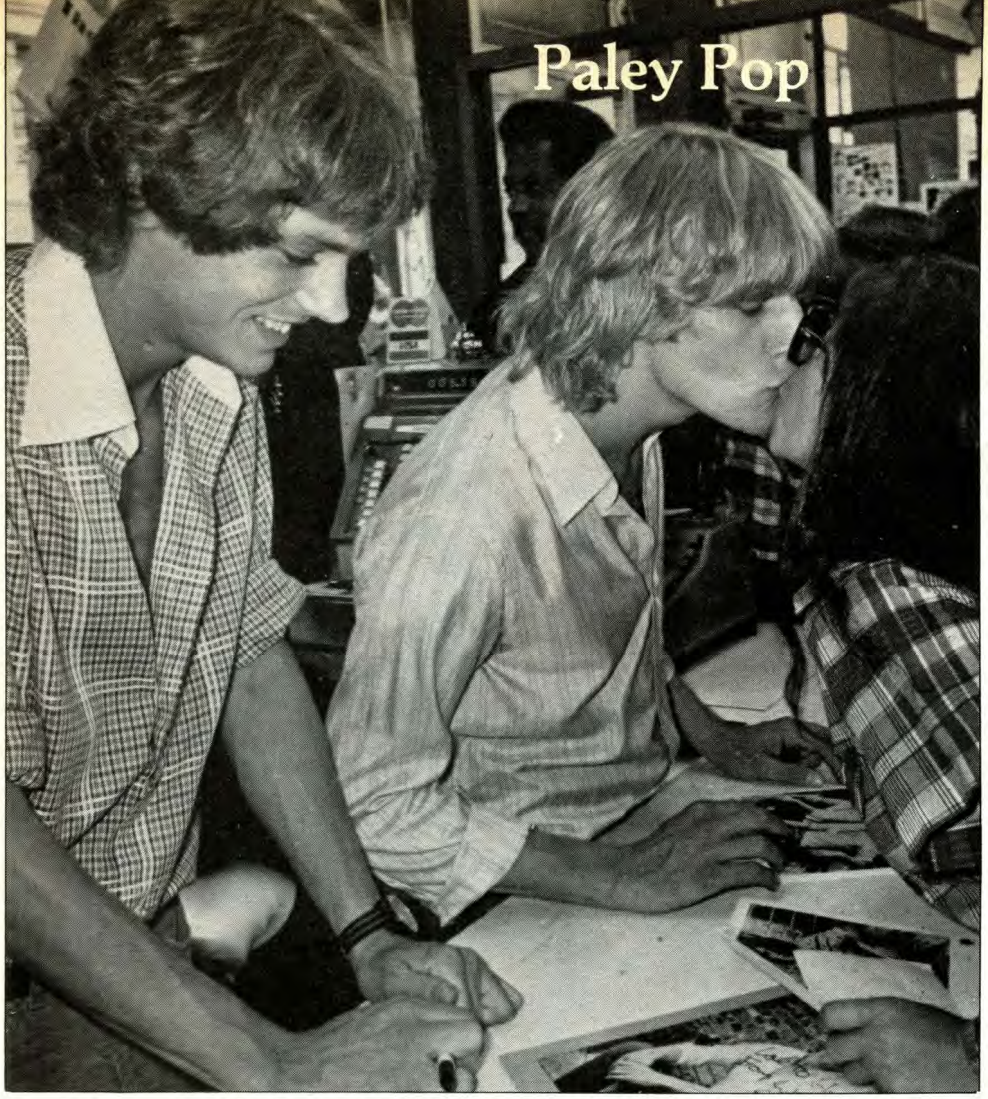


Jonathan and Andy Paley meet and greet their fan.

By Steven Grant

So you thought that Nick Lowe and Cheap Trick and the Jam were all you needed to know about pop music, right? Wrong.

It's time to learn about the Paley Brothers.

Yes, I know that the Paleys have made a big smash with the 16/Teen Beat/Tiger Beat crowd. Yes, I know that their first tour was second-billing for Shaun Cassidy. And yes, the material on their album draws unabashedly from Phil Spector, the Beach Boys and the Everly Brothers.

But did you know that the Paley Brothers have affiliations with the Patti Smith Group, the Talking Heads, and the Ramones (who play on "Come On, Let's Go" on the British version of the Paleys' debut album)? Did you know that Andy was leader of the infamous Sidewinders, a seminal turn-of-the-decade Boston rock group? Or that he's planning to produce the comeback album of the Shangri-Las?

"I hope they still want me to," Andy said. "We were working together, rehearsing in the studio for a long time, then suddenly I was out in California recording *our* album. So that messed things up a little. I still want to do it—they're better now than they ever were."

Brother Jonathan then gave some background on the origin of the Paley Brothers: "We decided about 1974 that we should start playing together. We made some tapes together and sent them out to a lot of record companies. We got signed to Sire. That's basically how it happened. Before that, Andy was doing stuff on his own, and I had a band—we played at Max's and CBGBs. We were really terrible, a joke. It was fun. Andy and I decided to get together. Finally somebody liked us, and we got signed.

"Originally, we weren't going to call ourselves the Paley Brothers. But everybody wrote about us *as* the Paley Brothers. Lisa Robinson has a couple of rock magazines, and she started calling us the Paley Brothers. Big headlines: The Paley Brothers. And we thought, if Robinson wants to call us that, that's a good enough name."

They refused to reveal their other choices. "Every group goes through tons of names. The Heartbeats, then we found out there was already a group called the Heartbeats. We'll save the rest, 'cause we might use them again some day."

The Paleys don't mind their heavy exposure in the teen market. "They seem to be the people who react to us the best," Andy said. "The average age we played to on tour was about 14. The oldest girl we met was 19. I hope that people of all ages like us, but it seems that's our strongest audience."

"When we were in Boston, we played a smaller place, an older audience. We tailored our set a bit. That's one thing about the Paley Brothers, we can tailor our set. Any booking agents reading this, remember that. We can play to old kids, young kids.

"Let's say we play the Paradise Club. There's a song on our album, 'Down the Line.' We didn't do that song when we were playing to the Shaun Cassidy crowd, just because we didn't feel like it. Then we realized the reason we didn't feel like it was because these kids probably wouldn't have liked it. We did 'Sweet Little Sheila' for them, but not at the Paradise Club, because those people don't really want to hear it. Just certain things that certain people seem to like. That's what I mean by tailoring sets."

Unfortunately, it's unlikely that many of us will hear the Paley Brothers doing their more sophisticated material—unless you happen to live in their home town of Boston and catch them at a place like the Paradise Club—because the cost of going on the road prohibits them from playing the smaller venues. To support and pay their 10-piece band, the Paley Brothers are pretty much restricted to major concerts such as those they played with Shaun Cassidy.

It's a pity. Much of their material is a sweet, succinct blending of the girl group/Spector and the surf music sounds ("Rendezvous," "Turn the Tide," and "Ecstacy" are prime examples) and others ("Come On, Let's Go," "Tell Me Tonight") are real rockers. Few of them have the cloying smarm common to the teen market.

"It's not a concept album," Jonathan said, discussing the differences between their songs. "We could have done a big band song, or a folk song...there's a lot of different stuff on there. 'You're the Best' is a lot different from 'Down the Line.' I think you can have all the variety you want on an album. It's good to have variety.

"Basically, we didn't want songs in the same key next to each other, because that gets a little boring. If someone was listening, and thought that one song led to another song, it wouldn't make any sense to them. We didn't exactly pick the songs out of a hat, but we did just put down what sounded good to us at the time."

In addition to the above-named influences, the Paleys draw their musical inspiration from numerous other sources. Jonathan cites Abba, the Miracles, the Shadows, lots of Motown. Andy listens to Supertramp, Player, Eddie Money, Bonnie Tyler, the Stylistics, the Moments, Dionne Warwick—and Bach, harpsichord, recorders, Bruno Hauptmann's glass harmonica (which he wants to incorporate into their music, if he can find or build one)—and Spector and Motown. "We listen to everything," Andy revealed. "Whatever gets us excited influences us. You never know when something's going to hit you; you can be walking down the street and hear the sound of squealing bus brakes, and that'll set you off. People seem to relate pretty well to the Paley Brothers' music, and I don't think that has to do with our influences. They sing along with the songs, even if they never heard them before."

And what do the Paley Brothers really want from stardom?

"T-shirts. High school physical education T-shirts," said Andy. "I don't care what color, as long as they say Phys Ed and the name of the school, in large or extra-large. Doesn't matter. I like them baggy." ■

Jules Bears All



Ebet Roberts

By Alec Ross

"We started rehearsing the band, and we started throwing around names. The one that stuck for awhile was the Dinosaurs. We wanted something that didn't make us sound real serious, like we were going to be true 'artistes.' The Dinosaurs seemed like a good name, but it also made it seem like we were wiped out before we even began. So Steve came up with the Polar Bears, which I thought was a cool name. They're friendly looking when you see them, and kind of hapless. They don't bother anybody. So we went with the Polar Bears.

"Columbia thought it was all right. They would have loved it if we had been called the Jules Shear Band, I think. But I didn't want that, so they said, 'How about Jules Shear and the Polar Bears?' Once again, I wanted to go for the friendliness aspect of it. I thought Jules and the Polar Bears sounded more informal. We're a friendly band. We're not particularly angry types, even when we're pissed off."

Who, you ask, are Jules and Polar Bears?

Jules is Jules Shear, possibly the only wunderkind to come out of Pittsburgh (or, as he said on stage at New York's Bottom Line, "You know, what can you do about it?"). The Polar Bears are Stephen Hague (who played with Jules in a group called Southpaw) on keyboards, Richard Bredice on guitar, David White on bass, and David Beebe on drums.

Unlike most bands, Jules and the Polar Bears were signed to Columbia prior to any live experience. Almost. "We played a little bit. Peter Philbin, the Columbia A&R man who signed us, originally wanted to sign me on the basis of demos that I'd made, and I wanted a band, so I asked him to leave me alone for awhile to put together the band I wanted. When we were ready, we'd play live for him somewhere, and then he could make the decision. We played twice for him, and he liked us.

"That all began about two years ago, after I'd done a bunch of demos for Chappell Music. I'd been hired by Chappell as a staff writer, and they let me make all the demos I wanted in the hopes that I'd come up with something they could get recorded. Then Peter started getting ahold of the demos as I did them. I was turning out a lot of songs, and every month I'd do some more and send them off to Peter. He became interested and that's when we had the discussion.

"The luxury that doing that many demos afforded me was that I got to play with a lot of different guys. I could pretty much ask anyone I wanted who would play on demos to come, and Chappell paid for it. Usually I ended up using my friends, and soon I got to know which ones were compatible. So I had my favorite guys, and I'd do the band if I could get those various guys. My drummer, David, had moved to New York from LA, because he got tired of it there, but between Richard, Steve and I, we got him to move back. Now we all live in Los Angeles."

Jules and the Polar Bears, however, are not your typical laid-back Los Angeles rock-tail music band. Beginning with Southpaw (which also featured Walter Egan), Shear became involved with a group called the Funky Kings (who recorded a less-than-wonderful album for Arista a couple of years back), and the experience directed him toward rock'n'roll.

"Our present sound developed because when I was in the Funky Kings, I was always encouraging them to do a real rock album. It was difficult, because I was one of three songwriters in the band, and you can only do so much when you have three leaders as far as giving any direction to things. So I decided there was going to be a band based around *my* songs—I write a lot of different stuff, I'm always writing—and I was going to make the *rock* album. Not that that was going to keep me from writing other kinds of stuff. But I knew that this was going to be a rock album. I knew what Steve was into—Steve and I had known each other for years—and I knew what that would do to the sound. And then you pick idiosyncratic players, who have certain characteristics that make them unique, and from there it's not hard to figure the kind of synergy that happens. I knew what the album would sound like and I knew what the band would sound like. But it's still real open to change."

On the album, **Got No Breeding**, the Polar Bears run through a variety of rock styles, from basic boogie to slower ballad material to hard, fast rockers. The songs are less pop than most rock songs being released today, and the sound attracts comparisons, especially to Dylan and the Band circa **Highway 61** and the Kinks. "It'd be really impossible for me to have grown up and not be influenced by Dylan. Those things get into your blood really early, and then there's nothing you can do about it. People sometimes mention Springsteen. When I was young enough to be influenced by Springsteen, Springsteen was only a couple of years older than me. Maybe we were both influenced by the same people, but as far as my hearing Springsteen and saying, 'I'll have a sound like his,' that's just ridiculous." And while his guitar style bears an incredible resemblance to the open-tuned, thumb-across-the-neck method of Richie Havens, Jules denies any influence there. "I learned to play guitar long before I ever saw Richie Havens. Maybe we both learned to play the same way. It amazes me what people compare us to—stuff I never even thought about while we were in the studio."

Presently on the road supporting Peter Gabriel (and, on occasion, Rockpile), Jules and the Polar Bears are just beginning to make their names known. "The road's okay. We were out real early, because everybody said you shouldn't tour before four to six weeks after the album is out. But Peter (Gabriel) really liked the album, and asked us to tour with him. So far it's a little early. There've been a few cities where we're on the radio. It's too early for reviews, except in local papers. We're still fighting that when people hear our name. People still think that we might be a puppet show. We might be something unexpected.

"I hope we're something unexpected." ■

YES!

By Cole Springer

Devo is reflecting American society today. They are not attempting to create futuristic art, as many people mistakenly believe. One of their mottos is "Duty now for the future"; the accent is on the "now." They are very concerned with rejecting and destroying all the false values and propoganda foisted upon us during the '60s. They strongly feel that the last decade was a 10-year wrong turn in our nation's history. That is why they chose to open their first album with a mutation of the introductory riff of "I Want To Hold Your Hand," not coincidentally the Beatles' first American hit. It's Devo's way of dismissing everything that occurred between then and now as if it never really happened. Of course, we all know that it did, hence "Duty now for the future."

The men who make the music:

Jerry Casale: souped-up Gibson spud bass axe.

Mark Mothersbaugh: Mini-Moog, Arp Odyssey and Sequential Circuits Prophet, five synthesizers, well-oiled; Fender Telecaster with Frequency Analyzer appendage; principal vocals.

Bob Casale: Gibson molester guitar.

Bob Mothersbaugh: Gibson baby X; 2 by 4 guitar.

Alan Myers: limpo supreme drumkit.

However, Devo is more than just the sum of its parts, more than just a band playing music. Devo is a philosophy, a technique, a way of living and creating, both for themselves and anyone else who is interested.



Janet Macoska

Jerry Casale, chief theorist of Devo and its co-founder with Mark Mothersbaugh, put it all into words when I reached him by phone in Cincinnati (not far from their home town of Akron), during the group's first major US tour. What Jerry terms the "electronic indifference" of the telephone is our brief warm-up topic of conversation. I then mention Kent State U., where Jerry and Mark met while studying Fine Arts in the early '70s. Even then, they had a penchant for the unorthodox, as Jerry explains: "We were doing graphics, photo silkscreening, but never using it right, always getting in trouble about content. A lot of scatological stuff, a lot of viscera, medical stuff. Stuff that's starting to go on now, actually."

I wondered why he and Mark had chosen to make their statement primarily through rock music.

"It was the area we were most inclined toward, just on a process level. Everyone in the group kind of looked at it as the most intricate arena because it's the most connected to business, to mass dissemination, to theatre, to film, to every aspect of media that has to be taken into account, balanced and combined. It's the most evil, in a way, and yet it has the most possibilities."

I suggest that they seem to approach their instruments and songwriting in a non-linear fashion, almost as non-musicians.

"Yeah. I mean, Mark had classical training, but he had to de-program himself from

NO!

By Steven Grant

Ever had the feeling you'd been conned? In late 1977, I heard Devo on record for the first time. Lyrically, I was unimpressed—"Mongoloid" seemed like an updated "Well Respected Man," while "Jocko Homo," Devo's badge song, smacked of the "Monkees Theme"—and, musically, the crudities stood out. Not that there's anything wrong with crudity—many groups have made good use of it—but here it seemed purposeless, an unnecessary accident. I had wanted to hear Devo because David Bowie had been talking about them, but Bowie had been wrong in the past, most notably when he attempted to introduce Carmen and flamenco-rock.

Switch to mid-1978. Suddenly, every magazine around has a feature on Devo. "Mongoloid" is a cult classic while Devo's second release, "Satisfaction," is being lauded as "audacious" by those who have never heard the Residents' infinitely more demanding version. Eno is scheduled to produce the album. Stiff, those merry pranksters of the record industry, sign Devo for a one-shot single while Warners in the US and Virgin in the UK scoop them up for an album.

Devo (or Devo, Inc.; they've actually incorporated) become press darlings. All manner of things are written about them:

"...a possible cure for the post-natal depression brought on by the Sex Pistols' demise..." (**New York Rocker**)

"Devo...has its collective finger on the pulse of American society..." (**Trouser Press**)

"...pleasant, well-adjusted Children of the Damned..." (**Soho Weekly News**)

"Despite a bizarre stage persona and seemingly eccentric lyrics, Devo convey a sense of both sincerity and urgency in their art—something that's been missing from rock for a long time. Devo, in fact, did not spring from a calculated, cynical exhibitionism but are rooted in the political idealism of the '60s." (**New Times**)

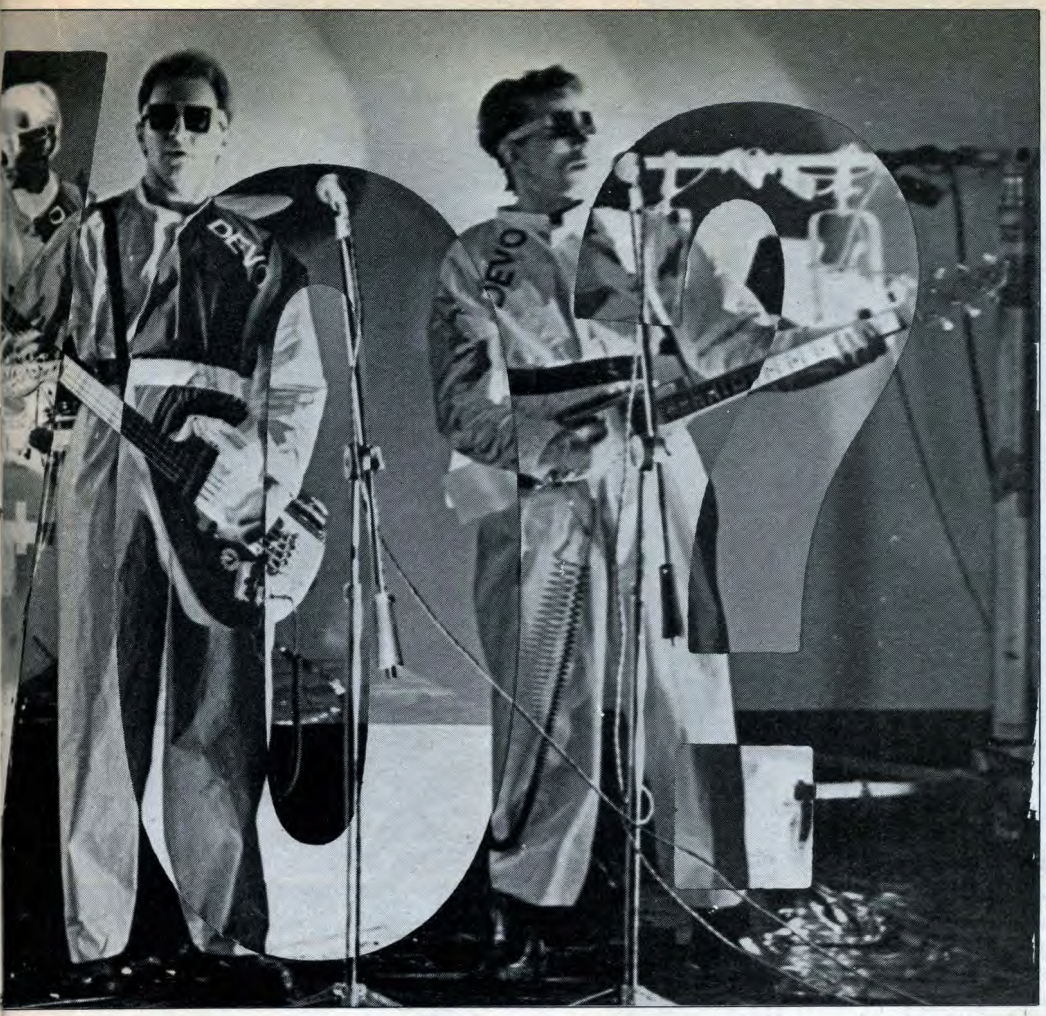
As Elvis Costello once said, sometimes I wonder if we're living in the same land.

Shortly before the album is released (on various colored vinyls in the UK) Stiff releases their third single, "Be Stiff" b/w "Social Fools," Devo come to New York to play two nights at the Bottom Line, while another club throws a party for them on the third night. In the meantime, they receive the band of the week berth on the ultra-chic **Saturday Night Live**, a spot usually reserved for industry pillars like the Kinks and Frank Zappa, and the next day various creatures, the sort who used to think themselves different and original for quoting Firesign Theatre jokes, wander about muttering, "Are we not men? We are DE-vo..."

"Spuds," Jerry Casale would call them.

The con game traditionally works like

I won't ask you to forgive me



playing a lot of notes. It becomes an exercise in, like, masturbation, congratulating yourself for being able to play a lot of notes. That's what it comes down to. Music for music's sake, but not even on any kind of relevant level. We wanted to avoid all that. We just do things that we want to do, rather than things you're supposed to do, which separates us from musicians.

"Actually, it's real limiting to have to use guitars and basses to get at new ideas because the instruments themselves determine musical form. That's what most people have fallen into more than us. At least we're fighting the limitations, and in time we'll probably get rid of guitars. We'll get rid of guitar sounds, even though we may still be triggering the sound with a stringed instrument, long before we actually get rid of guitars."

If you've heard Devo's album, you know that the guitarists are already obtaining some pretty unusual sounds. But even *more* experimental and audacious are the group's early self-produced tapes, recorded in Akron and Cleveland. Four tracks from these sessions have surfaced on a British bootleg EP; according to Bob Mothersbaugh, "Clockout" and "Blockhead" were recorded around the time they did their first single, "Jocko Homo" (1971), while "Auto Mowdown/Space Girl" and "Mechanical Man" were done two years earlier. These songs are far more radical and electronic than the material on the album. Is this what future Devo records will resemble, I ask Casale, inasmuch as the first LP probably had to be a bit more accessible?

"Yeah, in other words, go full circle so that when you actually go there again, you do it *right*. I mean, you *can't* open with up with that stuff."

Does he anticipate trouble with Warner Brothers when, in two or three albums' time, Devo delivers a master tape of totally whacked-out electronic sounds?

"I think if you develop a solid base and go through valid changes, so that each one is as Devo as the one before it, you can do it. Since Devo's a technique or a process, I think you can do it. In kind of a fashionable way, Bowie was able to, for a long time, go through complete transformations, within the scope of what he was dealing with, and take mass audiences with it. You can't detract in any way from what he was able to do when you realize how difficult it is for anybody to do anything once they're a product on a corporate label."

The ability to change and grow is the mark of a true...

"*That's* an artist!" Jerry exclaims, completing my rather pedestrian observation. "That becomes the art! The art becomes extending yourself after you've been reamed out by doing what you have to do to get what you want. It's not separate; music is synonymous with business."

This is one of the great things about Devo: the fact that they don't try to pretend that they aren't part of a corporate society and system; they take it into account and use it in what they do. To deny it is "an outmoded

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this: take something (or in some cases, nothing) and dress it up to look like something it isn't, and then manipulate people into believing they need it when they don't. Or, better yet, manipulate the people into dressing it up themselves, and then the needing takes care of itself.

Devo has several outstanding characteristics that have nothing to do with its music:

a) The theory of de-evolution. This pop philosophy combines social development with an absurd proto-Lamarckian evolutionary dogma.

b) A sense of theater. Coming from visual arts backgrounds, Devo has glossed up their act with identifiable costuming and multi-media usage of filmstrips, lights, and prepared tape.

c) A self-developed language. This allows them to be erudite while utilizing such terms as "spud" and "the Poot." It also allows for an arty obscurity, because the language must be deciphered before anyone can "truly" understand Devo.

d) Weirdness. Devo has managed to be peculiar without being dangerous, and, let's face it, Americans love weirdness. If you believe the papers, because Devo come from the Midwest (as nebulous a term as America has ever invented), their weirdness is supposed to be uncalculated and charming.

All this serves to make Devo good copy and distract from their music.

It's funny. When Devo released their long-awaited album, the general reaction was discomfort. Most reviewers gave the impression of wanting very much to like it. Most kicked Eno around for tampering with the sound. Yet they also ignored "Be Stiff," especially in America, and it was this single, with the latest release, "Come Back Jonee," that pointed towward Devo's new direction. The B-side of "Be Stiff," "Social Fools," also proved something else: Eno may not have been solely responsible for the Devo album being a stone bore.

What is behind the masks and the films and the language and the philosophy? The music is interesting, in its way, but it doesn't, nor does it seem to want to, demand any response. The riffs are standard heavy metal tricks, toned down and iced with talk about pinheads and uncontrollable urges. There is some use of synthesizer—another of Devo's supposed points of innovation—but the only interesting use is in "Jocko Homo," which, we will recall, is one of their original tunes. The other material on the album suffers from purposeless lyrics and repetitive music; saying that neither of these is important to appreciation of the band (and I *have* had people propose that defense) would be placing Devo on the level of, say, Kiss.

Kiss makes a better analogy than you might suspect. Neither group really displays any affinity for the music they present; the play's the thing, not the playing. Both Kiss and Devo are

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MAYBE!

By Ira Robbins

As Billy Martin once put it, "I feel very strongly both ways." Although Devo's cosmic significance may truly compare with that of yesterday's toast, they seem to be the only group to emerge from the debris of the new wave with any sort of connection to Roxy Music, possibly the most forward-looking group of the early '70s. With what sounds suspiciously like an overabundance of intelligence, Devo is using their creativity in various areas, not all of them musical. Their business acumen and ability to present a unified, albeit fraudulent, persona-cum-theory make them a dangerous outfit to mess with, as compared with your run-of-the-mill idealistic dumbos playing in bars, praying for their big break. Also, their album proves Devo to be the first group to successfully utilize the somewhat questionable production abilities of Brian Eno (ask Tom Verlaine and Phil Rambow, among other unsatisfied customers).

Not unlike the Kasenetz-Katz bubblegum bands of the '60s, Devo is providing crassly commercial insubstantial pap for the teen generation; fortunately they possess the same ability to please that made songs like "1-2-3 Red Light" so unavoidably charming. While walking a fine line between conventional chromatics and unlistenable anarcho garbage, Devo uses both subtle and blatant means to produce music and both stimulates and satisfies. [*Inject offensive simile here—Ed.*] Songs like "Space Junk" and "Mongoloid" have quite a bit in common with outpourings from more "ordinary" bands, but when performed with Devo's mechanical precision and Ferry-esque squawked vocals, everyone gets all worked up. Who need theories about de-evolution and recording studios in Germany when you can make records that are as enjoyable as Devo's is?

There are quite a number of ways to look at Devo. You can be turned off totally by the alienating b.s. the group spews, or by the pretentiousness of the lyrics and costumes, or by their obvious nth degree crassness. Or you can go along for the ride, not believing what they way so much as accepting it while enjoying the utter ludicrousness of the idea of five grown men (Bob 1 and Bob 2?) dressing up like extras from a low-budget, sci-fi flick. Or you can deeply ponder the philosophical ramifications of the de-evolutionary concept and its obvious (?) relationship with recording music, seriously considering the meaning of Devo. Or you can ignore them completely. Perhaps the only logical suggestion is to listen to the record with an open mind, ignore everything printed on the subject, and make up your own mind. Or keep reading.

We've all been following this rock'n'roll long enough to learn at least two things—one: that there's nothing new and there never will be, and two: everybody's in this game to make a living, at least. Which leads to a few logical conclusions about Devo—they didn't casually form a band to carry their creative philosophy into new arenas, nor are they unaware of the value of having a gimmick. Which merely suggests that while Devo's rap may be entertaining, that's all it is—something to attract your attention, and, hopefully, hold it long enough to separate you from the $4.98 it takes to barter a copy of their album from your local Devo retailer. That action is the most authentic Devo moment—The Purchase Of The Album. If you choose to believe anything else about Devo, that's the bottom line for them, their record company, and their big-time manager. That goes for almost every other band around as well—regardless of the nature and quality of their gimmick, that's what gets them signed, and that's what sells their records. Tough.

Fortunately, Devo has proven that they can make records that live up to the hype, at least inasmuch as their songs are pretty much what you'd want to hear on an album that has been touted (not by the band necessarily) as avant garde. Devo also have the live angle covered with a stage attitude that mixes pointless costume changes with precision spastic robotics that are as much fun to watch as Little Anthony and the Imperials were, back in the days when they wore flourescent gloves and ties in the dark. (Now *that* was cool...)

So, Devo seem to have a bright future ahead of them. Their cool demeanor and over-abundant intelligence will probably allow them to expand their horizons as all good rock empires do—films, videos, spinoffs, self-production, etc. Maybe they'll pull it off in the long run if they don't choke on their own nonsense. (Can you imagine a college course titled "De-Evolution in the Second Half of the 20th Century"?) But it should prove fun to watch and to listen to. Go Devo! ■



Bob Messineo

DEVO SI!/Continued from page 15

'60s idea," says Jerry. "You can't think that way and be effective anymore."

Is subversion also an outmoded idea then, I wonder? Does Devo have any wish to subvert the system?

"I think 'subversive' is probably not an accurate word any longer, but let's say this: if big corporate society is interested in keeping things going, they assimilate and digest information that's *potentially* dangerous, because the only reason it remains dangerous is if people fight and remain static; then the new information builds up to a point where people have to go through some big trauma to get it out. It's the difference between normal bowel movements and getting constipated. If a system gets constipated, when it finally happens it's a big deal. Benevolent corporate society can osmosize and contain the very things which could be dangerous to it...which isn't a *bad* idea. What we've got is a totally, consistently devolving system that's never in one place."

It's a real paradox. On the one hand, you have a system that is geared toward keeping itself going, yet at the same time it is devolving.

"It undoes itself, it winds down. It *is* entropic, and it is, you had it there [in your review of the album—TP #33] it's going down the drain. But again, so what? If it goes down the drain, it goes somewhere else. It *should* go down the drain. Anybody that's uptight about it is *really* dumb."

Yeah, I add, just like all the people who think Devo is negative. I don't see what Devo is doing as negative at all.

"I noticed you didn't and we don't see it that way either. We're just musical reporters."

At this point in the conversation, Jerry's



Ebet Roberts

disembodied voice breaks down into a strange guttural sound. He excuses himself, and explains, "The road's getting to me...I've got a cold. Things get stuck in my throat." To give himself a rest, he puts Bob M. on the line, who proves to be no less friendly or intriguing a conversationalist. We talk mostly about equipment and guitar sounds, and also about the Devo bootlegs. I ask him about the live **Workforce on Site** LP, culled from the band's shows at San Francisco's Mabuhay Gardens and recently seen selling in New York for $25. When I tell Bob the price he laughs and says, "It was a horrible sounding tape, and I think anybody that bought it got ripped off."

When Jerry returns, I ask him to comment on Brian Eno's production of the album.

"Well, we felt a *bit* ambivalent about it. I think whenever you do your first album the whole thing is a bit experimental procedure, just in how it goes, how much time you have. It was our first time in a big studio, trying to learn to work with a lot of concerns outside ourselves and co-operate. And with Brian, it was probably the best thing we could have done at the time because he respected what we were trying to do, and was seriously interested in the venture. We had similar sensibilities, so that aesthetically we weren't fighting. However, a lot of his techniques and oblique strategies, I think are a little foreign to Devo, because we tend to be more direct than he. So, in a lot of cases, essences were removed from songs, almost in favor of replacing them with something that was a little more esoteric. And I'm not sure that was the best way to go in many cases."

Would this, I wonder, have anything to do with why the amazing Ohio riddle section of "Jocko Homo" was left off the album version of that song? (There's a part on the original 45 where Mark sings, "I've got a rhyme that comes in a riddle. What's round on the ends and high in the middle?" while the rest of the band calls out "O-hi-o!")

"There was no real definite, big decision made. That had been done on the first single, and this was an album that was going to go out to two-thirds of the world, and we questioned whether it was necessary to put something so geographically parochial on it. That was maybe the only actual realization for doing that.

"And another thing, too, especially with a band like Devo, with anything that comes out, like an original version, it becomes psychologically the definite version. We get two stories, and yours is a common one for anybody who was aware of Devo before Devo became something somewhat acceptable. Then we get the people who never heard of Devo whatsoever and heard the album first, and, predictably, those people like the album versions of the singles better than the original singles. And the people who heard the singles first wonder why we recorded them on the album that way. It's very interesting because it's a matter of familiarity and what you psychologically come to terms with. You heard the early stuff, and you heard the two self-produced singles, well, when I was speaking about Eno, I think to make it a little more concrete, what I'm saying is some of the essence, some of the quality on those self-produced things I think you'd agree is missing on the album. And we would like to get to *that* stuff. We are happy with, and somewhat aesthetically into where the album went, but not 100%. We would like to, on the next one, get to what was left out of the first one."

Will they produce the second LP themselves?

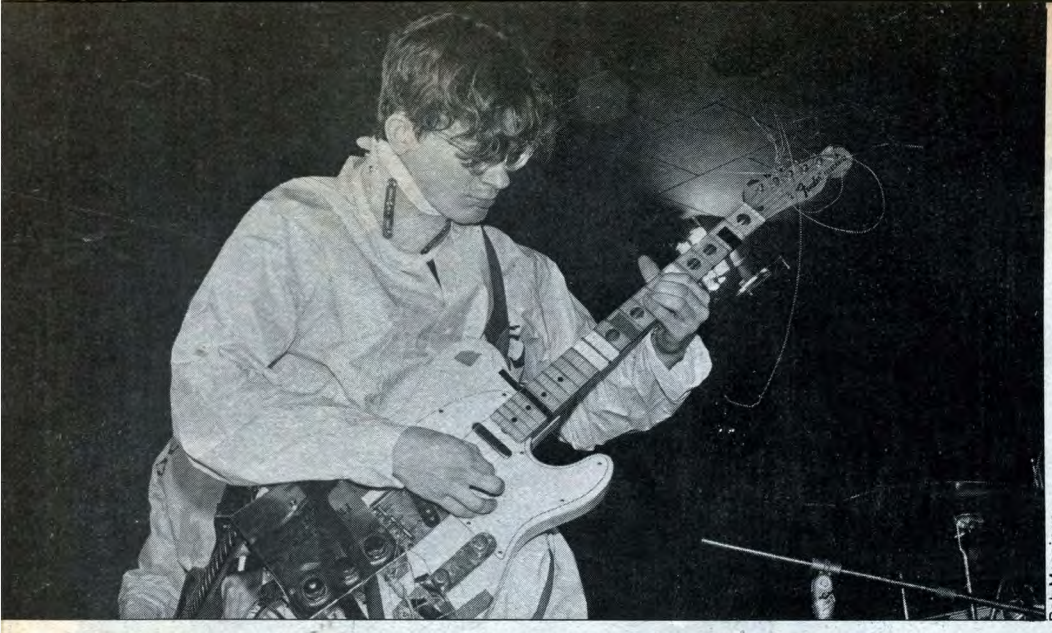
"That would be ideal, to tell you the truth. If we produced it ourselves it would be that much more totally Devo. And, again, I can see both sides of that one. If we do it ourselves, it just could be that people wouldn't like it as well, but *we* would. So it's a matter of, are you doing it for you or are you doing it for everyone? But we just feel that there's no conflict between what we like and what people would like on that level, because I think there's a certain kind of discrete sound and a certain kind of guts on our self-produced stuff that we prefer over that esoteric and somewhat homogenized sound of the first album."

Two tracks on the album, "Come Back Jonee" and "Shrivel Up," were recorded at Patrick Gleeson's studio in San Francisco, and I ask Jerry to confirm my impression that Gleeson merely engineered or supervised the sessions, since he is given no production credit.

"That would even get into a question of what production is. Just because somebody is in a studio, and it's theirs, and they're there..."

But Eno definitely wasn't present, I stick in edgewise.

"Exactly. Gleeson might *call* himself a producer, I don't know...It's irresponsible to call



Bob Messineo

it production, it really is, because...Let's put it this way: it was not a covert activity. We didn't go in there with the idea of Patrick Gleeson producing anything. He saw our show at Mabuhay Gardens, he said, 'Oh, you're gonna be in town a couple of days, I'd really love it if you guys would come and record some stuff at my studio,' and he actually kept it on that kind of hippie, 'Hey whatever happens' level. And you can imagine how hungry Devo was for studio, and rather than looking at the motivation behind the carrot dangled, Mark decided let's go for the *carrot*. Well, we did, and suddenly Patrick was calling himself a producer. That wasn't the case. The tracks were recorded there, they were mixed in Conny Planck's studio with Eno."

Now I decide to go for the big one and ask Jerry just how he and Devo hope to affect their audience. I know they are responsible and serious about what they are doing, but what exactly are they hoping to bring about through Devo? Surely, I muse, more than just a mini-musical revolution like the one the Sex Pistols sparked in England.

"Yeah, we would hate to see groups put on yellow suits and play Devo songs, but what we'd like to see is people understand that Devo is a technique for looking at things, that Devo is interested in process, that Devo probably consciously avoids solutions and messages in the music but rather just investigates, reports and leaves matrices, just leaves systems. That's what I feel our responsibility is. I think that searching for solutions, and coming up with one-dimensional and linear approaches is as irresponsible as all the irrelevant glitter bands of the middle-'70s who were just plowing the one-dimensional rut of music where it had been going. We would like to inspire people to *do* things, not to be passive receptacles.

"It's like understanding equations and principles, and applying them. What we've done is allow things to come through our bodies, and we, rather than ignore them, or judge them *a priori*, we use them, let them intermingle with our own subjectivity, and spit 'em back out. And that's a creative principle that I think is something that everybody should do, not just people in music. Devo could be in anything, you could be behind a desk and be Devo."

Finally, I ask about future plans. Jerry reveals that after they finish touring the band plans to start recording the second album, hopefully by the middle of January. "We only had 3½ weeks to do the first one. We're hoping for six weeks this time, so the album will have a little more variety, explore more Devo sounds."

I mention the short films they have made (**The Truth About De-Evolution**, **Satisfaction** and **Come Back Jonee**) and wonder if, now that they're connected with Warner Brothers, a big-budget full-length feature can be expected.

"Can't wait! We have the script. We have now three minor works, certainly nothing major. They're good for what they are, but we would like to do something more far-reaching and serious."

And I've heard that someday they hope to publish a magazine for musicians.

"That's an idea I've had for a long time. By and for people in music, where they're allowed to give their own information, their own raps, if they're visually oriented their own kind of writing and visuals."

So there you have it. As their career progresses, Devo will continue to work within the artistic fields of music, film and graphics, and beyond them.

"That's the kind of stuff we'd like to do with our time and money if we become successful rather than buy a lot of cocaine and limos."

Entropy was never like this. ■

DEVO NO!/Continued from page 15

essentially theater groups, using rock and roll to grab their potential audiences. The only real difference is that Kiss sells a lot of records, and that Devo, thus far, hasn't. Still, the 50,000 or so they've pushed out in the first few weeks after their debut release is a figure Kiss didn't begin to match until several albums later.

The most interesting comment made about Devo so far is that their music seems to substantially improve when they strip out of their industrial wet suits and just play. But, if that's the case, why bother to dress up in the first place? The purpose seems to be cleverness and distraction...like they haven't actually got anything to say but want to make usre your attention is attracted to it.

All this emphasis on "de-evolution" is a con. I dare either Jerry Casale or Mark Mothersbaugh to explain it so that it actually makes sense. Devo does not have its finger on the pulse of American society, and it collects the castoff artifacts of American life (pop science, pop psychology, cultural products like dummies and Three Stooges movies) and blandly presents them with an implied connection between them. Devo's background is not in music, but in visual arts. Their show is fairly good theater because of it, but it's still dull musically.

Despite the crudeness, Devo climaxed with their first single; in other words, before they had begun. There has been no musical statement about de-evolution since, and the material presented on the album is uninspired by comparison. (Or, perhaps more to the point, "Mongoloid" is inspired compared to the album.) So far, Devo has proven themselves to be a one-joke band; pity that people are taking so long to get the joke.

It's hard to tell if Devo cunningly manipulated this whole thing or if it just happened that they climbed to pretentious heights so suddenly. They seem geared toward striking a "wow" response, and have the benefit of an implied knowledge hidden from common men, which is always fashionable. But sooner or later, the novelty of the whole thing is going to wear off, and Devo will have to prove themselves through their music or join the ranks of either Tiny Tim and Napoleon XIV or Kiss.

As Andy Warhol once said, everyone will be famous for at least 15 minutes. I suspect that Devo's time is just about up. ■



Bob Messineo

TP'S GUITAR PICKS
100 Best Rock Guitarists Part 2

Written and compiled by Ira Robbins, Dave Schulps, Jim Green, David Fricke, Kurt Loder, Jon Young and Scott Isler.

BILL NELSON

b. 12/13/48, Wakefield, ENGLAND

From the moment Be-Bop Deluxe first appeared in 1974 until their recent disbandment, Bill Nelson's guitar playing has been widely acclaimed. With the velocity of Alvin Lee and the expressive abilities of Hendrix, Nelson mixes technical virtuosity and creative sensitivity into a unique, and heady, blend. His main shortcoming manifested itself towards the end of Be-Bop, when repetition of solos began piling up; until then, his best recorded work stood as a magnificent document of fluid soloing. Nelson's ability to both blaze and simmer proves his versatility, and his songwriting strength makes him an important figure in '70s guitar playing.

- GLOBAL VILLAGE/SOLO/BE-BOP DELUXE/RED NOISE
- SESSION: JOHN COOPER CLARKE LP
- SOLOS: ADVENTURES IN A YORKSHIRE LANDSCAPE, CRYING TO THE SKY, AXE VICTIM, SWAN SONG (BE-BOP)
- YAMAHA, GIBSON SEMI-HOLLOW, STRATOCASTER

RICK NIELSEN

b. 12/22/4?, Rockford, IL

A man with a strange attitude about lead guitar playing, Nielsen is no technical slouch, yet he often plays throwaway riffs onstage, making "god-this-is-shit" faces at himself all the while. His recorded work is a bit more straight-forward, punctuated by wildly wiggled vibrato bar work. A self-described "garbage-can guitarist," Nielsen is basically a hard rocker with a sense of humor about his playing who finds throwing picks and pulling faces more exciting than practicing Carlos Montoya riffs.

- GRIM REAPERS/FUSE/SICK MAN OF EUROPE/CHEAP TRICK
- SESSIONS: GENE SIMMONS SOLO LP, RED LEDGE LP (HALL & OATES)
- SOLOS: BIG EYES, YOU'RE ALL TALK, CALIFORNIA MAN, HIGH ROLLER (ALL CT)
- STRATS, LES PAULS, FLYING VEE, HAMER EXPLORERS, GRECOS, ET AL...

TED NUGENT

b. 12/13/48, Detroit, MI

Once (hell, still) an object of derision among the hip, Ted Nugent is today the lunatic-king of aural assault-and-battery—and screw the critics. Although he's been at it for more than a dozen years now (starting out in 1965 with the Amboy Dukes, with whom he cut the epochal "Baby Please Don't Go), the Nuge was pretty much of a joke to the world at large until a few years ago. But what he couldn't invent, he endlessly refined, until he got it down to a seething sonic buzz—pure electro-blast.

- AMBOY DUKES/SOLO
- SESSIONS: VARIOUS MIKE QUATRO LPS
- BEST WORK: JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF YOUR MIND, SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST LPS (AMBOY DUKES); CAT SCRATCH FEVER (SOLO)
- GIBSON BIRDLANDS

JIMMY PAGE

b. 1/9/44, Heston, Middlesex, ENGLAND

Jimmy Page is the Phil Spector of heavy-metal rock. Eclipsed as a guitarist by the arresting emotional vision of Jimi Hendrix, the sleek harmonic facility of Jeff Beck, the jangly, thrashing exuberance of Pete Townshend, and the orotund lyricism of Eric Clapton (in his prime), Page has nonetheless defined the sound of guitar-based British hard rock for most of the past decade. On the seven Led Zeppelin albums, he has utilized the studio almost as a fifth member of the group, inflating the bass-and-drums bottom to quasi-epic proportions, and packing the massively echoed sound with dense layers of guitar overdubs. Thanks to Page's disciplined respect for form, his consistent affinity for dynamic balance (especially in the imaginative use of acoustic folk elements), and his genuine commitment to blues-fueled rock'n'roll, Zeppelin is seldom awash in the sea of studio technology which is their true medium. Despite Pages's frankly premeditated method of production, the group maintains a cutting sonic edge and a kind of explosive brilliance that their legions of heavy-metal spawn for the most part lack. At its best, Led Zeppelin is the best—and by every measure of indispensability, Jimmy Page is Led Zeppelin.



Mitch Kearney

- NEIL CHRISTIAN'S CRUSADERS/YARDBIRDS/LED ZEPPELIN
- SESSIONS: THEM, KINKS, JEFF BECK GROUP, DUSTY SPRINGFIELD, JOE COCKER
- BEST WORK: LED ZEPPELIN, LED ZEPPELIN II (PARTICULARLY WHOLE LOTTA LOVE), LED ZEPPELIN IV (STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN)
- GIBSON LES PAULS

CARL PERKINS

b. 4/9/32, Tiptonville, TN

"The Rockin' Guitar Man" went the furthest of all rockabilly musicians in crossbreeding country with blues guitar. Besides the usual finger-picking, his early solos are filled with stuttering phrases, repeated one-note punctuation and silent gaps for emphasis. A well-timed visit to England in 1964 found him recording with the Beatles (George Harrison even adopted Perkins' given name for a tour). As a performer, Perkins has been dealt more than one cruel blow by fate, and his career has been a rocky one. His songwriting ("Blue Suede Shoes," "Honey Don't," "Glad All Over," "Bopping the Blues," etc., etc.), though, is a cornerstone of rock'n'roll. Currently being recycled as an oldies/nostalgic artist, Perkins deserves better. His guitar playing is as fine as it ever was.

- SOLO/JOHNNY CASH
- SESSIONS: NASHVILLE TEENS, BEATLES (UNRELEASED), NRBQ, JOHNNY CASH, JERRY LEE LEWIS, BILLY SWAN
- SOLOS: ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN, SWEETHEARTS OR STRANGERS, WHERE THE RIO DE ROSA FLOWS, BIG BAD BLUES
- GIBSON LES PAUL (IN THE '50S), FENDER STRATOCASTER AND TELECASTER, EPIPHONE, IBANEZ, GUILD, SABRE

JOE PERRY

b, 10/10/50, Hopedale, MA

There's not much to be said about Perry-as-guitar hero; he himself was justifiably modest about his accomplishments on his axe in a recent **TP** interview. His significance is mainly as a vulgarizer (and, considering Aerosmith's sales, popularizer) of bits of the styles of Clapton, Page, and especially Beck. Live, he plays what he termed "noise," in emulation of the Yardbirds at their headiest rave-up moments, no doubt; in the studio he has been erratic, at his worst disjointed and at his best fairly competent at regurgitating the usual cliches. His most personal touch is his reliance on catchy blues patterns, and often picking arpeggiated chords.

- AEROSMITH
- SESSIONS: GENE SIMMONS SOLO LP, DAVID JOHANSEN
- BEST SOLOS: SOS, TRAIN KEPT A-ROLLIN', SAME OLD SONG AND DANCE, WALK THIS WAY, LAST CHILD, BACK IN THE SADDLE
- LES PAULS, AND OTHERS

EDDIE PHILLIPS

b. London, ENGLAND

Perhaps the least renowned of all these 100 guitarists, with Creation Phillips nonetheless played some of the most innovative and exciting guitar of the pre-Hendrix era. He is best remembered for having pioneered the use of a violin bow on guitar strings—used to best effect on Creation's biggest hit, "Painter Man"—later picked up on by Jimmy Page. Musically, the Creation, who recorded for Shel Talmy's Planet label, fell somewhere between the Who and Yardbirds, with Phillips' guitar work mining territory somewhere between Townshend and Beck, using to great effect techniques like string scraping, toggle-switching and feedback which they were also employing. The only thing that kept him from getting his due recognition was his (and Creation's) lack of staying power. By early '67 he'd left them (replaced by Ron Wood until they folded altogether a short time after), and nothing was heard from Phillips until a decade later. Last year he released an unpublicized solo single on Casablanca which featured an unusual guitar tone, but little of the old firepower.

- MARK IV/CREATION/SOLO
- NO KNOWN SESSIONS
- SOLOS: MAKING TIME, HEY JOE, PAINTER MAN, HOW DOES IT FEEL, TOM TOM, NIGHTMARES (CREATION); CITY WOMAN (SOLO)
- GIBSON ES 335

MICK RALPHS

b. 5/31/44, Herefordshire, ENGLAND

Over the course of his tenure with Mott the Hoople, Ralphs developed from a wild guitar basher to a thoughtful virtuoso capable of beautiful phrasing and exquisitely restrained solos. At his best, Ralphs was as effective a rock soloist as anybody, mostly by using talent in the place of

overpowering technique. A great all-around player, Ralphs could bash away at a simple rocker just as well as a quiet acoustic number. One of the truly great rock guitarists with Mott in the early '70s, upon forming Bad Co. he abandoned tasteful flash for minimal blandness, and became a faceless hacker. Even then, he set a guitar style that has been imitated by many successful hardrock players in the mid-'70s.

•Silence/Mott the Hoople/Bad Company
•Sessions: Tommy soundtrack, Puttin' On the Style (Lonnie Donnegan)
•Solos: Sweet Jane, R&R Queen, Jerkin' Crocus, Walking with a Mountain, Sweet Angeline, I'm a Cadillac (Mott); Can't Get Enough (Bad Company)
•Les Paul, Stratocaster

JOHNNY RAMONE

b. 10/8/51, New York, NY

Calling attention to Johnny Ramone's guitar style might seem pointlessly academic, but he stands (with the rest of the Ramones) as an American original. The fastest right hand in rock strummed 4/4 power chords straight through entire LPs without even thinking of soloing (punk sacrilege!). Visually, Johnny influenced the new wave through band-shared characteristics—leather jacket, tight ripped jeans, T-shirt—and his own contributions, such as violently abrupt movements and playing with legs spread a yard apart. Lately there have been chips in the Ramones' monolithic attitude, and Johnny has taken a solo or two. However, he has earned his fame as the apotheosis of the "three-chord" rhythm guitarist.

•Ramones
•Sessions: Are you kidding?
•Solos [sic]: Any cut or side from the first three Ramones lps
•Mosrite, Stratocaster, Rickenbacker

LOU REED

b. 3/22/44, New York, NY

Us? Kid you? Never. Sure Capt. Naughty was no technical virtuoso, but in terms of doing things completely different with his instrument, Lou was a *bona fide* pioneer. Maybe it was 'cause he couldn't figure out the correct way to approach the thing or maybe it was all as well calculated as everything else he's done, but his use of guitar on the first two VU albums to create an anarchic drone (in tandem with John Cale's droning viola) took the instrument where it hadn't been previously. His solos were clipped, feedback-riddled excursions which Lou once compared to Ornette Coleman. Then again, Lou also once claimed he taught Hendrix everything he (Hendrix) knew on guitar. Lou rarely plays the guitar (or anything else) seriously these days, but some impromptu jamming with John Cale in New York last year proved he can still do it...well—approaching the instrument with a frenzied fervor reminiscent of Neil Young. Take that, Lou.

•Primitives/Beechnuts/Velvet Underground/Solo
•Solos: Run Run Run, Heroin, White Light/White Heat lp (Velvet Underground)
•Epiphone, and others

TIM RENWICK

b. 9/7/49, ENGLAND

More highly respected by fellow musicians than well known by the general public, Renwick has managed to pursue careers as both full-time band member and moderately active session musician simultaneously, a factor which has enabled him to develop a unique recognizable sound not often present among full-time sessioneers. He plays clean, brittle precise Stratocaster lines with lots of string bending but few special effects, which recalls Steve Cropper at his most tasteful. When his leads start getting hot, though, he can squeak, squeal and shriek with the best of them ("Rock and Roll Show"), but he does it with taste—always with taste.

•Wages of Sin/Little Women/Junior's Eyes/Quiver/Sutherland Bros. & Quiver
•Sessions: w. David Bowie, Ian Matthews, Al Stewart, Vigrass & Osborne, Kai Olsson, Dean Ford, Elton John
•Best solos: Killer Man, Gone by the Morning (Quiver); Have You Had a Vision, Rock and Roll Show, Maker, Savior in the Rain, Laid Back in Anger, Annie, Last Boy Over the Moon, When the Train Comes (SB&Q); Modern Times (Al Stewart)
•Stratocaster

KEITH RICHARDS

b. 12/18/43, Dartford, Kent, ENGLAND

As the Rolling Stones' guitarist, Keith Richards would seem to be important not for what he plays but for what he represents. But that punkish exoticism characterizing his lifestyle has everything to do with his guitar playing. He reworks, rediscovers, and relives classic rock'n'roll phrases with a determined but devil-make-care intensity that, even more than Jagger's singing, marks the Stones' best records. Because, as the playing half of the Glimmer Twins, Richards sparks the Stones—he's the bandleader and when he's on, the rest of them are on. Although he rarely takes long solos, he knows how to make each note count.

•Little Boy Blue and the Blue Boys/Rolling Stones
•Notable sessions: I've Got My Own Album to Do, Now Look lps (Ron Wood); Get Off of My Cloud lp (Alexis Korner)
•Best work: Brown Sugar, Gimme Shelter, Satisfaction, 19th Nervous Breakdown, Going Home, Get Off Of My Cloud, Time is on My Side, Get Your Ya-Yas Out lp, Miss Amanda Jones, Sympathy for the Devil, All Down the Line, Midnight Rambler, Some Girls lp
•Les Paul, Dan Armstrong clear

JAIME ROBBIE ROBERTSON

b. 7/5/43, CANADA

Robertson's subtle mastery of the R&B guitar idiom can be traced to his early days with the Hawks, who toured behind Arkansas rockabilly belter Ronnie Hawkins during his early-'60s Canadian residency. Eventually, the group struck out on its own. John Hammond Jr. caught their act in Toronto in 1963 and invited them to New York, where they played on the sizzling **I Can Tell** LP. At this point they came to the attention of Dylan, who characterized Robertson as a "mathematical guitar genius."

A spare, R&B-based stylist who generally eschews guitar gadgets and flashy licks, Robertson has always tended to bury himself in the Band's remarkably evocative ensemble sound, in which respect he resembles the equally laid-back Steve Cropper. More notes as the Band's composer, his effortlessly effective chording and brief, pointed string-popping leads and use of overtones are nonetheless indispensable components of the group's unique musical texture.

•Levon and the Hawks/The Band
•Sessions: I Can Tell lp (J. Hammond Jr.); w. Bob Dylan, Levon Helm, John Hammond Jr., Ronnie Hawkins, Joni Mitchell
•Best work: Can You Please Crawl Out Your Window (Dylan); I Can Tell lp, I Want You To Love Me, Can't Judge a Book...(J.H. Jr.); Kingdom Come, This Wheel's on Fire, King Harvest, Just Another Whistle Stop (Band)
•Telecasters and Stratocasters

MICK RONSON

b. Hull, ENGLAND

Ronson was the perfect riff-crazy foil for Bowie in the days of the Spiders. The problems inherent in playing under those circumstances (costumes, lights, theatrics like Bowie fellating Ronno's guitar) would seem a major niusance, but Ronson often managed to get those long, sweeping riffs off with occasional precision. A much revered soloist, Ronson set a style for many young guitarists eager to follow his lead, but after leaving Bowie's band he trailed off into has-been heaven. Although he's become a celebrity/producer/session guitarist of reknown, working with such luminaries as Dylan and the Rich Kids, his guitar playing hasn't shown a spark of life in years. With Dylan, he renounced rock'n'roll, but changed his mind shortly thereafter. A definite whatever-happenedto, though a renewed collaboration with Ian Hunter could change things in the near future.

•Rats/Ronno/Bowie/solo/Mott the Hoople/Hunter-Ronson/Dylan/etc.
•Sessions: w. Lou Reed, Benny Mardones, Dana Gillespie, Dylan, Roger McGuinn, Topaz, Lulu, Michael Chapman, others
•Solos: Hang on to Yourself, Moonage Daydream, Running Gun Blues, Round and Round (Bowie); White Light/White Heat (solo)
•Les Paul

FRANK ROSSI

b. 5/29/49, London, ENGLAND

Status Quo were a psychedelic pop band which, in 1968, after three years and five misses, suddenly notched a pair of hits—"Pictures of Matchstick Men" and "Ice in the Sun"—and plunged back into obscurity. But years later, after latching onto what they believed was a more genuine sound, they re-emerged, and by '73 were scoring Top Tenners in the UK and building the following that just about puts them in the superstar class in Britain, Europe and Australia. That style is boogie, and whether it's to a blues or pop tune, at a canter, trot or full gallop, Quo equals headbasher chunka-chunka deluxe. In the '70s, the classic psychedelic guitar sound used on the two early hits gave way to brittle-toned blues licks, and Rossi's performance kept improving. Standard, if spirited, blues riffing is Rossi's forte, sometimes mixed with rather unorthodox excursions that, er, push at the limits of soloing in a blues scale while staying on key, but when he's hot he's hot, and in tandem with rhythm guitarist Rick Parfitt has done more to preserve that good-time boogie-shuffle in rock'n'roll than anyone else.

•Spectres/Status Quo
•Sessions: Intergalactic Touring Band lp
•Solos: Matchstick Men, Ice in the Sun, Someone's Learning, In My Chair, Hold You Back, Let's Ride, Just Take Me, Don't Think It Matters, Live lp (Quo)
•Telecaster

TODD RUNDGREN

b. 6/22/48, Philadelphia, PA

Rundgren is one of those guitar stars who's sought to minimize his importance as axe idol in favor of his talents as songster/producer. He has taken, from his view, a utilitarian position on the function of his playing, using it (mostly sparingly) as the song requires for his solo efforts and fitting it into the context of Utopia, of which he claims he is but one member equivalent in function to the others. His halycon guitar days were those he spent in Nazz, having mastered early on many of the licks and techniques of his primary influences, Clapton, Beck, Hendrix, Townshend and Roy Wood. Thus **Nazz Nazz** is a showcase not only for his songs and production but also for his use of guitar in varied contexts—and some white hot soloing, largely in the Yardbird tradition. His early work outside a group context bore tasteful and exciting evidence of his talents, whether in the straightforward rave-up of "Parole," the gorgeous textures of "'Couldn't I Just Tell You," or the heavy metal pastiche of "Black Maria" and "Little Red Lights" (a la Roy Wood's "Don't Make My Baby Blue"), but his evocations of others' guitar styles on the later **Black and White** LP left many people cold. His fans go gaga over Utopia's spoutings of, er, cosmic fire—but in his often long-winded pieces he gives vent to doodlings far less moving than those in Nazz's "Beautiful Song" or his "Birthday Carol" (from **Runt**). He's still good live, though, and in recent outings has shown some of the descernment, class and wild rock'n'roll abandon in his

playing that he once made abundant.

- •Money/Woody's Truck Stop/Nazz/solo/Utopia/solo
- •Sessions: w. James Cotton, Hall & Oates, Moogy Klingman, Flint
- •Best work: Nazz Nazz lp, Open My Eyes, Wildwood Blues (Nazz); Parole, Black Maria, Little Red Lights, Birthday Carol (solo); Heavy Metal Kids (live); Gangrene, Trapped (Utopia)
- •Gibson SG, Stratocaster

CARLOS SANTANA

b. 7/20/47, Autlan, MEXICO

Despite the hybrid musical style forged by Santana's bands over the years, his guitar playing has always been recognizable by the cleanness and precision of his solos. From the early days playing in the Fillmore through all the religious/mystical business, Santana has always been an outstanding player, using techniques that lead many of his contemporaries by years.

- •Santana
- •Sessions: lps w. John McLaughlin, Buddy Miles
- •Solos: Black Magic Woman, Soul Sacrifice
- •Les Paul, Gibson SG, ES 6, Yamaha

TOM SCHOLZ

b. 3/10/47, Toledo, OH

Unlike most of his obvious influences (Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck, and other obvious '60s guitar heros), Tom Scholz seems to be more concerned with how a guitar *sounds* but how it's played. Not the strongest soloist on the planet, Scholz is heard best on record, where his guitar(s) is (are) piled one atop the other in a Spectorian wall of fuzz-toned sound that always threatens to drown out the rest of his band of heavy-metal millionaires, Boston. Given a few years, there will, no doubt, spring up a score of Scholz imitators, but it still remains to be seen just how far Scholz's "sound" will get him before the formula wears thin. It is therefore notable that, along with the first Boston album, some of Scholz's best axework is actually on the original Boston demos heard on the bootlet **We Found It in the Trashcan, Honest.** Honest.

- •Boston
- •No notable sessions
- •Best work: More Than a Feeling, Long Time, Peace of Mind, A Man I'll Never Be
- •Les Paul

ANDY SCOTT

b. 6/30/49, Rexham, WALES

Andy Scott is a chameleon among guitar players. Over the years with Sweet, he has played many varied styles within the hard rock genre. Scott admits to being a Pete Townshend fan, and the role he fulfills in the Sweet allows him to be both lead and rhythm guitarist. In the studio, the use of tape tricks makes Scott a powerful guitar whiz. Although he hasn't recorded many solos, his playing appears all over Sweet albums (until recently, that is). From a little lick here, to some power chords there, Andy Scott has built up a recorded library of hard rock guitar as impressive as any. Maybe he's no creative genius, but as a consistent performer, Andy Scott ranks high in the excitement department.

- •Elastic Band/Mayfield's Mule/Sweet
- •No known sessions
- •Solos: Done Me Wrong Alright, Sweet FA, Set Me Free (Sweet)
- •Gibson ES 335

CHRIS SPEDDING

b. 6/17/44, Sheffield, ENGLAND

There isn't much Chris Spedding, ubiquitous sessioneer and solo artiste extraordinaire, *can't* do with a guitar when he wants to. The problem is one of motivation. Chris' own taste runs toward simplicity, a taste reflected on his solo LPs. But, poor Chris, the public expects him to be a guitar hero so every once in a while he's got to trot out a hot solo and give 'em what they want—hence, the incredible "Guitar Jamboree" in which Chris mimics the styles of Albert King, Chuck Berry, Jimi Hendrix, Jack Bruce, Pete Townshend, Keith Richards, George Harrison, Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck, Paul Kossoff, Leslie West and David Gilmour in rapid succession. How good is he? Ask Roy Harper, on whose "The Game" Chris recorded one of his best solos. Sez Roy: "Such a bloody poseur! Here I'd written this guitarists's nightmare with this very strange key change, and he comes in with a white vest and waistcoat, his hair greased back, a Gibson in one hand, a Fender in the other. He wanders into the center of this enormous studio and does it in one take. The Bugger!" 'Nuff said.

- •Bill Jordan & the Country Boys/Smile/Battered Ornaments/Jack Bruce Band/Sharks/Roy Harper & Trigger/John Cale Band/solo/Robert Gordon & the Wildcats
- •Sessions: w. Paul Jones, Elton John, Harry Nilsson, Leslie Duncan, the Wombles, Gilbert O'Sullivan, David Essex, Richard Sarstedt, Matthew Ellis, Bryan Ferry, Michael Mantler, Donovan, Eno
- •Best solos: To Isengard (Jack Bruce); The Game (Roy Harper); Guitar Jamboree (solo)
- •Gibson Flying V, SG Juniors, Les Paul Deluxe

JEREMY SPENCER

b. 7/4/48, West Hartlepool, ENGLAND

Rock'n'roll's loss was god's gain when Jeremy Spencer suddenly walked out on Fleetwood Mac in L.A. back in 1971 to join the Children of God religious sect and never to return to the band. A brilliant slide guitarist, he joined Fleetwood shortly after its inception at a time when Peter Green and co. were blues purists, and proceeded to make his Elmore James-style slide playing a big part of the band's sound. When Fleetwood Mac recorded in Chess Studios in Chicago, Spencer did four of James' songs in a row—just one example of the obsessive nature of his personality...and guitar playing. With the addition of Danny Kirwan to Mac, Spencer became part of what was perhaps rock's greatest guitar line-up ever, still working out mostly on open-tuned slide guitar while Green and Kirwan played in regular tuning. His obsession with James began to wane, however, around the time Green left the band, only to be replaced by a new hero, Elvis Presley. The result was **Kiln House**, perhaps *the* great British rockabilly LP and Spencer's recorded swan song with Mac. After leaving the band, he recorded one religious-rock LP with his aptly-named band, The Children of God, but it was as dire as could be expected. From time to time, comeback rumors persist, but none have proven true.

- •Boilermakers/Fleetwood Mac/J.S. & the Children of God
- •No notable sessions
- •Solos: Shake Your Moneymaker, Albatross, Rockin' Boogie, Fighting for Madge, This is the Rock
- •Telecaster, Stratocaster, Gibson Birdland

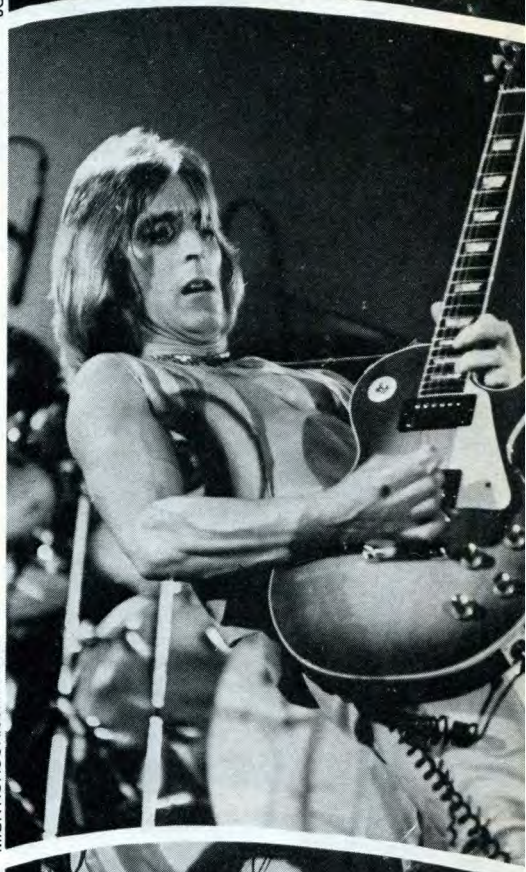
LEIGH STEPHENS

b. USA

Few bands epitomized the kind of acid rock sneered at to this day by so-called "real musicians" than Blue Cheer—loud, wild stuff that some characterized, as Lillian Roxon noted in her **Rock Encyclopedia**, as resembling the effects of "a bad STP trip." Leigh Stephens was the original musical focus of the trio, and none of his replacements embodied what Blue Cheer was about better than he. Both his subsequent solo LPs were less frantic, introspectively over-indulgent affairs, and neither of his subsequent bands gained prominence. Though periodically, rumors of the original Cheer line-up reforming circulate, it matters not—Stephens has already left his mark: the fuzz-toned notes, sustained into feedback or wiggled with the tremolo bar, and his stuttery trills and triplets told many an aspiring guitar hero that it didn't take the speed of a Clapton or bravado of a Hendrix to be able to terrorize the neighbors, just the spirit and the volume.



JOE PERRY/John Bellissimo



MICK RONSON/John Bellissimo



CHRIS SPEDDING/Ebet Roberts

•Blue Cheer/Solo/Silver Metre/Pilot (on RCA)
•No notable sessions
•Best work: Summertime Blues, Out of Focus, Satisfaction, Sun Cycle (Blue Cheer)
•Gibson SG

STEPHEN STILLS

b. 1/30/45, Dallas, TX

A fairly obvious example of degenerated talent, Stills showed himself to be a tough and canny guitarist in his Buffalo Springfield days, getting some gorgeous tones and reeling off fiery, even menacing, solos, proving an excellent complement to the rougher, more jagged work of Neil Young. On the **Croby, Stills and Nash** LP much of his best work is in textural and harmonic coloration rather than in solos, yet when CSN added Y to the firm, it resulted in a duet on "Almost Cut My Hair" so powerful that it only served to point up the insipidness of Crosby's fabulous furry freakdom lyrics. Stills's first solo album showed some spunk, although he was not up to matching the guest appearances of Clapton and Hendrix. From there it's been all downhill; how ironic that the macho blusterer lost his edge while Young, the more sensitive character, retained his.

•Au Go Go Singers/Buffalo Springfield/CSN/CSNY/Solo/Stills-Young Band/Solo
•Sessions: Super Session, Neil Young, Judy Collins
•Solos: Rock'n'Roll Woman/Bluebird/Special Care, Questions, Uno Mundo, Hung Upside Down (BS); Wooden Ships (CSN); Carry On, Almost Cut My Hair (CSNY); Pretty Polly (Judy Collins)
•Gretsch, Gibson Firebird

MICK TAYLOR

b. 1/17/48, Welwyn Garden City, ENGLAND

Taylor and fellow former Artwoods member Keef Hartley joined John Mayall's Bluesbreakers just in time for their 1967 **Crusade** album. Taylor remained with the group through their next three LPs, then left to join the Stones on June 13, 1969 (four days after Brian Jones left the band), making his debut at the celebrated Hyde Park free festival before 250,000 people. Over the next six Stones albums—until he left in December 1974, after **It's Only Rock and Roll**—Taylor proved himself a cooly remote blues technician, slick and sometimes stunning, but emotionally barren. Rumors of a continuing drug problem have followed him ever since, and a long-promised solo album has yet to be delivered. At this writing, he's still missing in action.

•Artwoods/Gods/Bluesbreakers/Rolling Stones/Jack Bruce Band/Solo
•Sessions: w. Carla Bley, Nicky Hopkins, Herbie Mann, B.B. Blunder, Gong
•Best Work: Bare Wires (John Mayall); Let It Bleed, Sticky Fingers LPs (Stones)
•Gibson Les Pauls

RICHARD THOMPSON

b. 1949, London, ENGLAND

When Richard Thompson founded Fairport Convention in 1967 they were one of the first British bands to be influenced heavily by West Coast American sources, a fact borne out especially in Thompson's guitar style, a cross between Byrds-ish folk-rock picking and the more unrestrained flights of the Airplane's Jorma Kaukonen. As Fairport evolved, they (and he) turned more toward the uniquely British folk-rock style in which, as an electric guitarist, Thompson has no peer. In a medium which is too often placid and stodgy, Thompson burns with white-hot intensity and at his best (check out "Calvary Cross" on **Richard Thompson Live**) can do more interesting things with a Stratocaster than just about anyone short of Hendrix.

•Ethnic Shuffle Orchestra/Fairport Convention/Solo/Richard & Linda Thompson
•Sessions: w. Sandy Denny, Shelagh McDonald, Ian Matthews, Marc Ellington, Nick Drake, John Martyn, Mike Heron, the Waterstons, John Cale, John Kirkpatrick, the Bunch, Gary Farr, Shirley Collins
•Solos: Time Will Show the Wise, Meet on the Ledge, Sloth, Leigh & Leif, Tam Lin (FC); The Angels Took My Racehorse Away (solo); When I Get to the Border, Calvary Cross-Live (Richard & Linda Thompson)
•Stratocaster, Les Paul Martin 00018 acoustic

JOHNNY THUNDERS

b. 7/15/51, Queens, NY

As a Doll, Thunders' main riff consisted of wildly bent notes sliding up and down the neck during verses. As a result, Johnny has few recorded "solos"; almost all his lead playing was done during vocal sections. It takes a bit of listening to be able to focus on his guitar work, but the Dolls' sound owes as much to Johnny as to Johansen's nasal vocals.

Thunders was a great live player, making faces with the best of them. His inability in recent years to maintain a career over a period of time longer than an evening made his work with the Heartbreakers less than inspired, but the two Dolls LPs stand as testament to one of the original punk guitarists.

•New York Dolls/Heartbreakers/Solo
•Sessions: David Johansen solo LP
•Solos: Puss'n'Boots, Babylon, Bad Girl, Vietnamese Baby (Dolls)
•Les Paul Special

PETE TOWNSHEND

b. 5/19/45, London, ENGLAND

One of the world's unchallenged first-rate electric guitar players, Townshend stands as an innovator, creator, much-imitated pacesetter, and all-around total master of the instrument. Not primarily known as a soloist, Townshend's primary accomplishments lie in his Mick Green-influenced rhythm sytle and his early use of feedback. All of his vast recorded work is excellent, the solos chosen here are representative of different styles and techniques he has utilitzed.

It would take a book to fully explore the importance of Pete Townshend as a guitarist. Suffice it to say that he has done as much to influence the course of electric guitar playing as any other individual in the past 20 years.

•Detours/High Numbers/Who
•Sessions: w. Eric Clapton/Rainbow LP, Yvonne Elliman, Mike Heron, Mahoney's Last Stand Soundtrack
•Solos: Anyway Anyhow Anywhere, Heaven & Hell, Dogs Pt. 2, Armenia, Run Run Run, Underture, The Rock, I Can See For Miles (all Who)
•SGs, Les Pauls, Stratocasters, Telecasters, Rickenbackers by the hundreds

ROBIN TROWER

b. 3/9/45, London, ENGLAND

If Robin Trower got overlooked in the '60s, it was only because there were so many vain guitar heavies strutting around. His playing with Procol Harum was often the saving grace of the group; Trower repeatedly kept the band from sliding totally into keyboard melancholia, with precise bluesy fills that always seemed too brief. Organist Matthew Fisher's departure opened up new vistas for Trower on **Home**, but he soon proved incapable of handling the freedom. Catching Hendrix fever, he struck out on his own, and has spent the '70s as a mediocre guitar hero.

•Paramounts/Procol Harum/Jude/Solo
•No notable sessions
•Best work: Repent Walpurgis, The Devil Came From Kansas, Whisky Train and Whaling Stories, Song for a Dreamer, Power Failure (Procol Harum); Daydream, Day of the Eagle (Solo)
•White Stratocaster

TOM VERLAINE

b. 12/49, Wilmington, DE

Verlaine's herky-jerky, stop-and-go lead guitar is one of the most individual sounds around in the dull late '70s. As as avid listener to a wide range of musical styles, his own playing draws on sources as varied as Scotty Moore, Dave Davies, Albert Ayler, Keith Richards, Ornette Coleman, 13th Floor Elevators and music from the **Twilight Zone**, with much of his guitar inspiration coming from non-guitarists. He is a great player to watch live, as he is one of the few rock players who still improvises his solos—which, of course, sometimes makes his soloing a hit or miss proposition. Still, it keeps things interesting, challenging and, often, exhilarating. His tremolo style, which sees him moving his whole hand in an effort to waver the pitch of individual notes, is distinct and easily recognizable.

•Neon Boys/Television
•Sessions: Break It Up (Patti Smith)
•Solos: Little Johnny Jewel, Friction, Marquee Moon, The Fire, The Dream's Dream (Television); Break It Up (Patti Smith)
•Fender Jazzmaster

HENRY VESTINE

b. 12/25/44, Washington, D.C.

"Sunflower," as he was known, was one-half of an amazing guitar line-up that made Canned Heat the best West Coast blues band in America back in the late '60s. Using heavily distorted flashy licks in contrast to Alan Wilson's sweet bottleneck sounds, Vestine gave the band the rock edge it needed to stand apart from the more traditional outfits like Butterfield's. Henry's playing was frenetic and wild, prone to repetition and wandering, but he never fell into that trap of pointless riffing for the sake of hearing himself play—his ideas were strong and creative.

•Mothers of Invention/Canned Heat/Sun
•No known sessions
•Solos: Bullfrog Blues (live), World in a Jug, Amphetamine Annie, An Owl Song, Time Was (Canned Heat); Boogie Chillun #2 (Hooker'n'Heat)
•Les Paul

DICK WAGNER/STEVE HUNTER

(Hunter) b. 1949

You can hire one without the other, but Lou Reed and Alice Cooper know better—that Wagner and Hunter are two of a kind. More so than Stooge James Williamson or the anarchic team of "Sonic" Smith and Wayne Kramer, Wagner and Hunter are the archeptyal Motor City guitarists, grafting classic '60s styles a la Clapton/Beck/Page to a heavyhanded Detroit attitude. Their volcanic duets on Lou Reed's **Rock and Roll Animal** are all the proof they need to dethrone the more bombastic Ted Nugent. Wagner and Hunter pull no punches, but they also show a cool gambler's class—playing each riff like a trump card but slamming it down so there's no mistaking it. In a way, the two six-strings-for-hire reflect far more influences than they're likely to leave themselves. Their individual styles comprise an encyclopedia of lead guitar tricks, but anybody who can pull Lou Reed out of a hat and Alice Cooper out of a slump rates a mention here.

•Bands/Sessions: Wagner—The Frost, Ursa Major, Lou Reed, Alice Cooper, Tim Curry, Hall & Oates
Hunter—Detroit, Jack Bruce, Lou Reed, Alice Cooper, Peter Gabriel
•Best work: Rock and Roll Animal LP (Reed); Rock'n'Roll Music LP (Frost)—Wagner only; Rock'n'Roll (Detroit)—Hunter only
•Various guitars

JOE WALSH

b. New York, NY

A smoothie, that's how Joe Walsh is best characterized—he makes everything look so easy. With **Yer Album**, Walsh and the James Gang burst on the scene and proved that there was indeed rock'n'roll life in Ohio. It featured good songs

Oh, you sit and wonder whether

and among the last decent extended jams on record, Walsh paying tribute to Clapton, Beck and perhaps his greatest single influence, Townshend. Having exorcised his soloing demons on that first LP, Walsh seldom subsequently bent his talents toward lightning-lick overkill, and concentrated more on the songs and textures, using multi-tracking, phasing, lots of sustain, etc., to get rich, full sounds, going for the relatively simple melodic leads. He developed a fluid style of slide playing as well. Regretably, on "Rocky Mountain Way" he combined the latter with one of the first recorded uses of that vile voice bag which Frampton later made so popular. Lately he's mellowed out to an alarming degree—he even joined the Eagles—and it shows in recent solo LPs too.

•James Gang/Solo/Eagles
•Sessions: w. Rick Derringer, Jay Ferguson, Keith Moon, Ray Manzarek, Bill Wyman
•Best work: Yer Album lp, Funk 49, Walk Away (James Gang); The Smoker You Drink lp, County Fair (Solo)
•Les Paul, Gretsch

LESLIE WEST

b. 10/22/45, Queens, NY

The Great Fatsby may not have been much to look at, but when Leslie West was in Mountain, his fat hands wrenched notes out of a guitar that earned him a guaranteed spot in the guitarists' hall of fame. With overpowering strength, he pulled squeals and harmonics as easily as straight notes, and the width of his bass-string vibrato gave him an instantly recognizable sound. As a rhythm guitarist, West was loud, thick and luxurious, making Mountain (and WB&L a bit) one of the best post-Cream jamming bands.

•Vagrants/Mountain/West, Bruce & Laing/Leslie West's Wild West Show/Mountain/Solo
•No known sessions
•Solos: Mississippi Queen, Nantucket Sleighride, Theme for an Imaginary Western (Mountain)
•Melody Maker, Les Paul Jr., Flying Vee

CLARENCE WHITE

6/7/44—7/14/73, b. Lewiston, ME

Originally a country musician, Clarence White was an extremely successful session man before joining the Byrds, with whom he gained public notice. A graceful and highly capable technician, he was instrumental in developing a device that allowed him to make a regular Telecaster sound like a pedal steel. His influence in the Byrds helped steer them towards Nashville, but White was still a rock guitarist when necessary. His death in an auto accident robbed the world of a really important guitar innovator.

•Country Boys/Kentucky Colonels/Nashville West/Byrds/Ken. Colonels
•Sessions: w. Ricky Nelson, Pat Boone, Monkees, Arlo Guthrie, Linda Ronstadt, Everly Bros., Joe Cocker, Randy Newman, Byrds (before joining)
•Solos: Tulsa County Blue, Nashville West (live), Hungry Planet, B.B. Class Road, Lazy Waters (all Byrds)
•Modified Telecaster

CHARLIE WHITNEY

b. 6/24/44, Yorkshire, ENGLAND

John "Charlie" Whitney is not a big-name, flashy lead guitarist, but represents here an unsung, yet ofttimes brilliant rhythm and slide player whose creative chording and textured shadings on 6- and 12-string guitar have added an extra dimension to his bands' sounds. Usually working in tandem with a lead guitarist (John Weider, Jim Cregan, Bobby Tench), Whitney's best playing is subtly phrased around the lead work and is often ultimately more interesting. As a slide player, he's developed a style very much his own; blues-based, but nothing like the standard Elmore James licks most slide players pattern their playing after.

•Farinas/Family/Streetwalkers
•No notable sessions
•Best work: Systematic Stealth, Raingame (Streetwalkers)
•Gibson double-neck

JAMES WILLIAMSON

b. USA

James Williamson blazed briefly but brightly during the Stooges' last stand in 1973. Using Mick Ronson (musically) and Keith Richards (visually) as jumping-off points, Williamson spun out stinging, diamond-hard licks while the Stooges (and Iggy) collapsed all around him. Recorded evidence is slim but impressive; he wrote the music for Iggy's **Raw Power** LP. Although he's long since retreated to terra firma (studio engineering and computer music), history has turned James Williamson into a cult hero for new wave guitar enthusiasts.

•Stooges
•No notable sessions
•Solos: Shake Appeal, Death Trip (Raw Power lp); I Got a Right (studio 45)
•Black Les Paul

ALAN WILSON

7/4/43—9/3/70, B. Boston, MA

An awesomely talented musician, "Blind Owl" Wilson was an ace harmonica player, slide guitarist, vocalist, songwriter and blues archivist. The importance of his role in Canned Heat (a much maligned band of great quality) was proven by their inability to create anything of quality after Wilson's death. The hits notched up by the band were all largely due to Wilson's contribution.

Al Wilson played slide guitar the traditional way, and was an expressive proponent of the style. Mixed with his plaintive voice, he presented a fragile charm that remains unique to this day.

•Canned Heat
•No significant sessions
•Solos: Dust My Broom (live), Sandy's Blues, Let's Work Together (live)
•Les Paul

JOHNNY WINTER

b. 2/23/44, Leland, MS

Ten years after his "discovery" by **Rolling Stone** in Texas, Johnny Winter seems to be a victim of his own reputation, not to mention the passing of the white blues fad. His playing is muscular, weaving sinewy, speedy riffs around the standard blues progression with confidence and rock'n'roll flash. The R&B element in his playing (which comes from his Texas upbringing) enhances the celebratory exuberance of his best work, but even Johnny Winter would have to admit that he played the same blues riffs as both blacks and white and before him. He just played them better.

•The Black Plague (with Edgar Winter)/Johnny Winter And/Solo
•Sessions: w. Muddy Waters, James Cotton, Edgar Winter
•Best work: The Progressive Blues Experiment lp, I'm Yours and I'm Hers, Johnny B. Goode, Highway 61 Revisited, Fast Life Rider, Johnny Winter And Live lp (solo); Hard Again lp (Muddy Waters)
•National Standard steel, Gibson Firebird

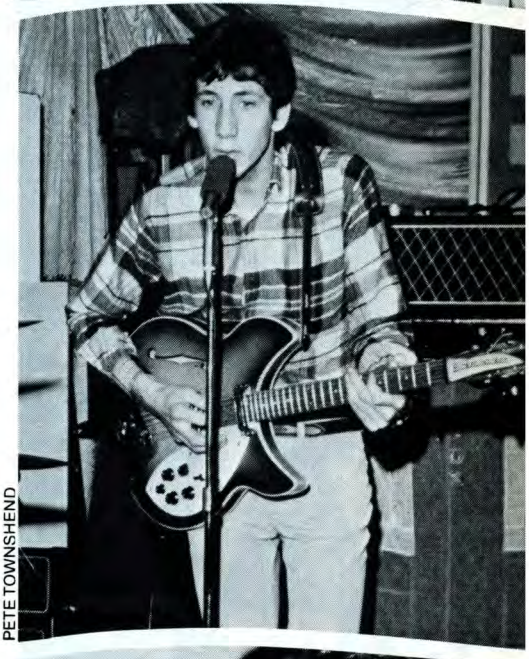
STEVE WINWOOD

b. 5/12/48, Birmingham, ENGLAND

Winwood's uncanny prowess as an organ and piano player (and preference for those instruments) has generally overshadowed his abilities as a guitarist, but don't let that fool you—he's up there with the best of them. As a teenage wunderkind with the Spencer Davis Group, Winwood was one of the best blues players in the whole "British blues boom" as evidenced by his succinct solos on all those SDG LPs.

After forming Traffic, Winwood's guitar-playing expanded to fit in with the eclectic direction the group was following, though his brilliant solo on "Dear Mr. Fantasy" still flowed directly


JOHNNY THUNDERS/Ebet Roberts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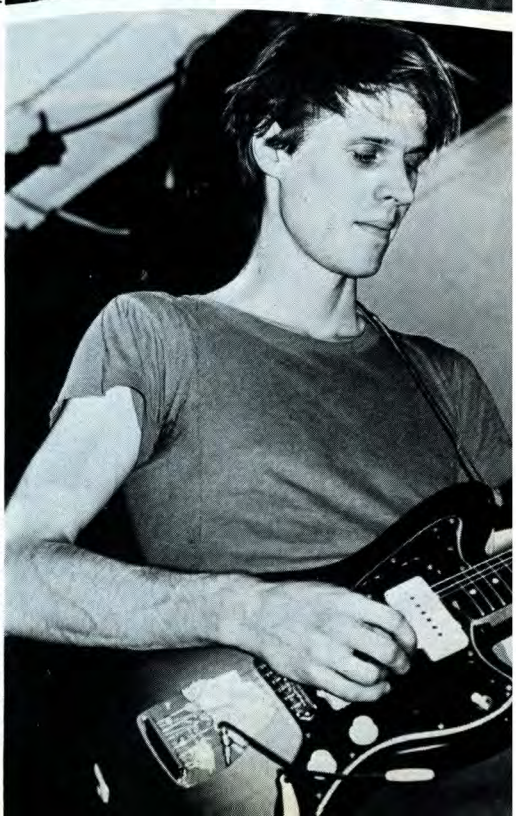
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DICK WAGNER/Ebet Roberts



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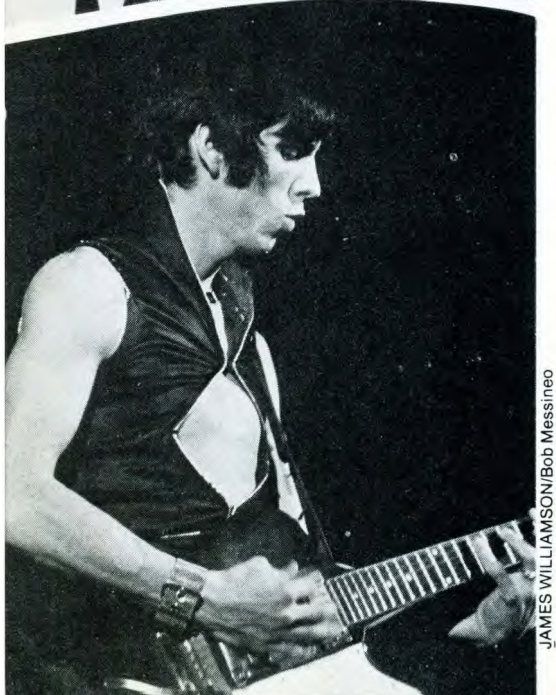

JAMES WILLIAMSON/Bob Messineo

from the blues. Along with Dave Mason (though they rarely both played guitar on the same songs), Winwood gave Traffic a well-varied one-two punch in the axe department. Later, he lent his guitar support to Eric Clapton in Blind Faith. When Traffic reformed minus Mason, his guitar was featured on some of the band's best songs.

- •Spencer Davis Group/Traffic/Blind Faith/Air Force/Traffic/Solo
- •No notable guitar sessions
- •Best Solos: Stevie's Blues, Goodbye Stevie, On the Green Light, Watch Your Step (Spencer Davis Group); Coloured Rain, Dear Mr. Fantasy, You Can All Join In (Traffic)
- •Stratocaster

RON WOOD

b. 6/1/47, Hillingdon, ENGLAND

Joining the Rolling Stones was the only thing left for Woody to do. He'd already gone through Beck, the Faces, the solo Stewart, and left a couple of enjoyable solo records of his own. But Ron Wood has rarely been appreciated as a guitarist—only as a guitar-playing foil for whatever singer he happens to be supporting. In fact, some of his best playing is on Rod Stewart's albums, where he lets out short but emphatic bursts of riffing off of which Rodney rebounds for a renewed vocal attack. Not widely regarded as one of guitardom's technical aces, Woody characterizes that distinctly English playing style rooted in blues, late-night jams, and a celebratory drinking round with friends. His raucous recorded work with the Faces is far closer to pub-rock than most of the bands who called themselves same and that's probably the Woodman's real talent. He knows how to have a good time playing and makes sure everybody has one with him.

- •Birds/Creation/Santa Barbara Machine Head/Jeff Beck Group (bass)/Small Faces/Faces/Rolling Stones
- •Sessions: w. Clapton (Rainbow LP); Band (Last Waltz LP); Tommy Soundtrack, Bill Wyman, Rod Stewart, Ashton, Gardner & Dyke, Lonnie Donnegan
- •Best work: Stay With Me, Around the Plynth (Faces); Street Fighting Man, I Know I'm Losing You, It's All Over Now (Rod Stewart); I Can Feel the Fire (solo)
- •Les Paul, Stratocaster, Zemaitis custom

ROY WOOD

b. 11/8/46, Birmingham, ENGLAND

Most people focus on Roy Wood's attainments as writer and producer (not to mention singer and bass player!), to the exclusion of Wood-as-guitarist. Of course, his bands didn't tour much and weren't "get down and boogie" outfits in the first place. Yet the marvelously produced sounds he got out of his guitar in solos, signature riffs and rhythm playing on Move records, and the panache he brought to varied styles of playing mark a guitarist of much accomplishment. His soloing combines imaginative uses of melody, tone and texture, and developed a weird but mellifluous slide guitar sound, too. Lately he has demonstrated adeptness at jazz stylings as well. At the very least, Roy Wood's guitar-playing flair and uses of the guitar as part of the production have significantly influenced people like Todd Rundgren and Rick Nielsen.

- •Mike Sheridan & the Night Riders/Move/Electric Light Orchestra/Roy Wood's Wizzard/Solo/Roy Wood's Wizzo Band/Solo
- •Sessions: w. Annie Haslam
- •Best work: Shazam LP, Looking On, Brontosaurus, Ella James (Move)
- •Les Paul, Flying Vee

LINK WRAY

b. 5/2/29, Dunn, NC

Link was among the first to realize that the importance of rock'n'roll guitar lay in making as much noise as possible (a creed he still follows, sometimes to the dismay of fellow band members). A pioneer in the use of fuzz, distortion and wah-wah, Link (backed by his Ray Men) cut instrumentals almost exclusively in the late '50s and early '60s. His hoody demeanor and suggestive song titles ("Rumble," "Jack the Ripper") placed him in the vanguard of rock image-makers. Disgusted with the music industry, Wray didn't record from 1963 to 1969; his recent stint with Robert Gordon revealed an amazingly youthful guitarist combining '50s violence with heavy metal technique. Unique among first-generation rockers in escaping the deadly nostalgia tag, Link can still come up with distinctively twisted solos.

- •Link Wray and the Ray Men/Solo/Robert Gordon/Solo
- •Sessions: w. Ray Vernon
- •Solos: Rawhide, Alone (Ray Men); I'm So Glad (solo); Is This the Way (Robert Gordon)
- •(currently) 1962 Gibson SG

ZAL YANOVSKY

b. 12/19/44, Toronto, CANADA

No one remembers Zally much anymore, what with Sebastian's new found fame as a TV jingle-writer, but the Spoonful owed as much to his extraordinary lead guitar as to Sebastian's songs. From country twang on "Nashville Cats" to hard rocking on "Summer in the City," Yanovsky provided a bit of electricity among the good time jug band feel of the Spoonful. He made them different from groups like the Mamas and Papas by rooting their music firmly in rock'n'roll. God knows where he is these days...

- •Halifax 3/Mugwumps/Lovin' Spoonful/solo
- •No known sessions
- •Solos: You Didn't Have to Be So Nice, Nashville Cats, Do You Believe in Magic, Night Owl Blues (Spoonful)
- •Guilds

NEIL YOUNG

b. 11/12/45, Toronto, CANADA

How many other old-timers play with as much fire today as they did a decade ago? Neil Young's distinctive guitar playing, like the rest of his career, has been a testimony to the pursuit of emotional expression. Though he's never been guilty of sophistication, his staccato, machine-gun style has set a primitive standard most slicker players can't hope to attain. He's also adept at lilting acoustic sounds, and on his first solo LP, Young dabbled with a gorgeous sweet electric approach. Perhaps what's most impressive is that Neil doesn't even seem to think his playing is that important, having at times dispensed with guitar altogether or given the job to someone else.

- •Buffalo Springfield/Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young/Stills-Young Band/solo
- •Sessions: w. Joni Mitchell
- •Best work: Mr. Soul (BS); Waiting for You, Cinammon Girl, Cowgirl in the Sand, Losing End, Cortez the Killer, Like a Hurricane
- •Gretsch electrics, Martin acoustics

FRANK ZAPPA

b. 12/21/40, Baltimore, MD

With the exception of a few solos and the whole of **Hot Rats**, Zappa's guitar work has always been supportive of or supplemental to his composing, arranging, and bandleading. When he does take one of his lengthy guitar breaks, Zappa does so with a manic intensity that fortifies this repertoire of hard rock and jazz rock licks. When his guitars plays a supportive role (**Absolutely Free**, the original **Ruben and the Jets**—great '50s axework, the **Fillmore East** album), it does so with a combination of serious technical obedience to the piece and off-the-octave cynical hippie humor. And God knows, we could use more of that, no?

- •The Blackouts/Soots/Mothers of Invention/Mothers/Solo/variations thereof
- •Sessions: Grand Funk, Flint, John & Yoko
- •Best work: Hot Rats LP, Ritual Dance of the Young Pumpkin, My Guitar Wants to Kill Your Mama, King Kong
- •Gibson SG, Les Paul, Hagstrom, Stratocaster

You sit with your knees together



Richie Furay Collection

BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD

A Trouser Press retrospective

By David Koepp

The lights turned on and the curtain fell down
And when it was over it felt like a dream
They stood at the stage door and begged for a scream
The agents had paid for the black limousine
That waited outside in the rain. *

The dream that Neil Young sang about in "Broken Arrow" on **Buffalo Springfield Again** was in reality closer to a nightmare. Ten years ago last spring Buffalo Springfield pulled out their electric umbilical cords from their amps, took a last look at their cheering, crying, adoring fans and walked off stage. It was to be their last concert. A concert they didn't even headline. The audience begged for a scream, they begged for the band to return for an encore. They did not return, they could not return. The promoters acted like villians and refused the band re-entry to the stage. Instead they quickly pushed out the sickly day-glo green music of Iron Butterfly onto the sobbing fans. The final night of their last concert personified a frustrating, heartbreaking career. It had to be the final twist of the knife.

Time passes and the changes that occur are blindly accepted by some, even though the need to be retrospective is necessary. For others time is frozen; they are still living in the past, and constantly changing the past to suit their present fantasy. This has been the fate of the Buffalo Springfield and their intimates. Some have coped, some have not. The white heat intensity of artistic creation has left scores of individuals burnt badly by its flames. The Buffalo Springfield left more than its share.

Clichés are too easily tossed around in an effort to explain or justify the existence or importance of the Buffalo Springfield. The usual line is that the Springfield was an apprenticeship, the fertile breeding ground for Poco, Loggins and Messina, Souther-Hillman-Furay Band, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, plus all the solo careers, and related and interrelated bands. But to take such a narrow viewpoint would sell the Springfield short.

The Buffalo Springfield, along with the Byrds, are important because they represent the first attack upon the strangle-hold on the charts by the Beatles, Stones, and other British Invasion bands. Before both bands arrived on the scene, America's contribution to its own charts was nearly limited to Motown and the Beach Boys, and, with those exceptions, all the major influences of the time came from Britain. Ultimately, the Byrds and the Springfield would turn the tables and influence music coming out of both the British Isles and America.

From the very beginning the Springfield felt that their only rivals were the Beatles, the Stones, and to some extent the Byrds. Overflowing with arrogance and confidence, as well as naiveté, they had eyes for the top and nothing else. The Springfield wanted hit singles, they wanted sold-out tours, they wanted fame and all its riches. Most of all they wanted respect for their music. The same respect the Stones and the Beatles were receiving. They burned for those goals.

Compromise was a word alien to the Springfield. Refusing to compromise, they had complete control over the quality of their recorded music. Both the Springfield and their rivals were bringing about a revolution in the quality of music. Ultimately though, the refusal to compromise so deeply rooted in the Springfield would destroy them.

Their total belief in themselves made the Buffalo Springfield pioneers. They could not find honor, self-respect, or pleasure in imitating others. Thus they avoided falling into popular temporary trends by creating their own. The Springfield avoided the pitfalls of copying the sunburned bleached-blonde sound of the Beach Boys, or the post-Anglo punk dumbness of the Seeds, Leaves, and their ilk. Nor did they bother attempting to mimic their imagined rivals. Nor did they try to cash in on the psychedelic era. Ironically, no matter how much they desired a hit single they would only do it their way.

Canadian Neil Young was 10 when he fell in love with rock'n'roll, watching Elvis Presley gyrate on the television screen. Shortly thereafter he picked up his

*"Broken Arrow," © 1967, Springalo/Cotillion Music.

(Top) Neil Young, Bruce Palmer (seated); Richie Furay, Steve Stills, Dewey Martin.

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GERRY RAFFERTY (circa 1969)



What else can one say about Gerry Rafferty that has not been already noted over the last several months? That he was a member of Steeler's Wheel? (Previously noted!) That he was also a member of the duo known as the Humblebums? (Again already noted!) The other Humblebum with Gerry was Billy Connolly, and together they recorded 2 LP's for the Transatlantic label titled "The New Humblebums" (1969) and "Open Up the Door" (1970). Recording as a duo, Connolly and Rafferty oddly enough functioned separately and independant of each other in the studio.

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first instrument, a plastic ukelele. "I learned three chords on it," Young once said. "Really, I went wild and learned 'Blueberry Hill,' and 'On Top of Old Smokey'—all those neat songs!" At 15 Young gave up the ukelele for good, and traded his banjo for a guitar. Within a year he was writing songs.

"I wasn't in a group right away...yes I was...oh yeah...but I can't remember...it was the Sultans...I think...no...no it was the Jades. The Jades do you believe that? And we did a song called 'The Sultan'!"

When Young was 17 he joined the Squires and then dropped out of high school. "Neil Young and the Squires was my first group, really, not counting the Jades." Two years later, near the end of his stint with the Squires, Young met Stephen Stills. Steve was touring Canada with a group called the Company. We were both in Fort William, Ontario (at the Fourth Dimension Club). We kinda liked each other, but he went ahead with his tour and I split for Toronto where I tried to make it as a solo."

The future leader of the Springfield, Stephen Stills led a gypsy childhood and spent little time in his home state of Texas. This rootless life sent him through numerous southern cities and Central America. Early in his teens Stills took up the drums as his first instrument. Talking to **Teen Set**'s Judith Sims, Stills discussed his early days. "I was really digging the country, but I was hung up on being a city boy and hanging out in Tampa...I was in a group called the Radars. Then I went back to Gainesville to finish the school year and joined a band called the Continentals. I had a big blonde guitar and played rhythm, mostly blues and folk stuff; we played fraternity parties around the campus."

From there it was back to Latin America and then onto New Orleans, where he sung in the Bayou Room with Chris Farns (later a Springfield road manager) until he was tossed out for singing drunk. This expulsion lead to Stills following Farns to New York City.

"I started working the basket houses. That's when I met Peter Tork. There were so many really creative people in the Village then: The Spoonful were just starting, Paul Butterfield's band was really good, and people like the Terriers and the MFQ who never made it. I was learning so much music and I couldn't stop to sort it out. I met Richie then, and really liked his guitar and I really liked Richie."

Richie Furay grew up in Ohio, and got into music at the age of eight. "I'd begged and hollered for a guitar ever since I was a kid and finally my parents bought me a guitar for Christmas. It was one of those full-sized ones but it was cardboard. I picked it up on Christmas morning and said 'I don't want it! It's not the real thing!' So of course that broke everybody's heart so after convincing them that I would practice and practice, I finally got a real guitar."

During his brief stay in college Furay became a local hero in the hootenanny scene with both a folk group and the *a capella* choir. Through some conniving both the choir and the folk act made a trip to New York.

"We went to New York and played for the first time in a place called the Four Winds. We finished school and in the summer we went back to the Four Winds. We played there for about two weeks. That's how I met Steve for the first time. All of us got together and formed this big thing called the Au Go Go Singers (they recorded one LP for Roulette). That went on for about six months and after it broke up Stephen and the Bay Singers (now the Company) went through Canada, where Stephen met Neil. Then Stephen came back to New York and broke up that group. Stephen called me up, so I came down to see what he was doing, and told him 'no, it wasn't time.' He got discouraged and went to California."

Soon after Stills ventured west, Neil Young appeared in New York City. Furay, who was living on Thompson Street, met him in the Village: "I was living with some friends from the old Au Go Go's when one day Neil Young came visiting. He was down to audition his tunes for someone. That was my first acquaintance with him and he seemed very sure of himself, of where he was going. I couldn't get a word in edgewise, so I just listened a lot. He taught me 'Nowadays Clancy Can't Even Sing' at the time. Back then Neil was just as intense as he is now."

Meanwhile, Stills was floating around California looking for some action. "(I) went back and forth between L.A. and San Francisco," Stills told Judith Sims. "Then I met Barry Friedman, who just said, 'Hey, get a group together.' So I called Richie and said I had a band and I needed him. I lied. I didn't have a band at all, but it was only half a lie because I needed him."

"I got a call from Steve hyping me about his new group," recalls Furay, "telling me that all he needed was me to sing." (Furay was later misled by Stills who said he was to be the Springfield's lead singer.) "Well, he talked me into coming out, but when I got there, there was no group but Steve and myself. And I went 'Oboy! Stephen's done it to me again!' But I stuck around making the best of it and started to learn songs."

Back in Canada, Young was living in Toronto getting nowhere—until he met Bruce Palmer. "There were a few people who liked me very much and a great many people who didn't know what I was doing. I joined the Mynah Birds so I could eat. It was the first band I wasn't leader (of). Bruce Palmer was in the group and that's how I met him."

Actually Palmer met Young before Neil joined the Mynah Birds. "I met Neil walking down the street, carrying his guitar in Yorkville. You didn't see many people carrying guitars around back then. Neil would play with anyone back then, so I asked him to join my group." (The Mynah Birds later signed with Motown and recorded several singles.)

Bruce Palmer would later become the bass player for the Springfield. Very little is known about him and to this day he chooses not to discuss himself very much. It is known he was born and grew up in Canada, and that he began playing guitar at 10.

The Mynah Birds dissolved in Detroit when the band's singer was busted for going AWOL. "We didn't even know he was AWOL. We all thought he was Canadian, too. Turned out he wasn't. They busted him right in the studio."

Without a band, Palmer and Young first headed back up to Canada. Then, on a whim, they headed out to the American West Coast. They traveled in an old black hearse which was alternately called "Mort" and "Clancy." While driving through Albuquerque, New Mexico, they had an accident and Young ended up in the hospital due to shock and exhaustion.

In March 1968, Palmer and a weary Young finally made it to L.A. and spent a week searching in vain for Stills. Furay recalls the way he and Stills finally met up with Young: "For about a month or so we rehearsed and looked for musicians. Just when all was looking dim, we ran into Neil driving down Sunset Boulevard on his way to San Francisco. We were driving in a white van and I saw a black hearse with Canadian license plates going the other way. I remembered that Stills had told me that Neil drove a black hearse. So we chased him down. We persuaded him to at least come and listen to our arrangement of 'Clancy.' He listened and liked it so he and this bass player decided to form the group." According to Palmer the group was formed the night they met.

In Spring 1966 Young wrote his mother and related the good news: "We have formed a group in which we'll do our own material. The group is called the Buffalo Springfield for no particular reason."

The band began rehearsing at Barry Friedman's place. Billy Mundi was the original drummer, but he left to join Maston and Brewer, because Furay recalls, "Our manager at the time felt they were more ready than we were and he was managing us both." Fortunately, the Dillards were rehearsing next door and had just foresaken rock to go back to folk. So their drummer, Dewey Martin, dropped in, sat behind the trap kit, and fit right in.

Dewey Martin is also a Canadian, from Chesterfield, Ontario. He drifted south to Nashville in the early '60s to try his hand as a studio musician, and before he left there for California in 1964, Martin had played and recorded with Patsy Cline, Carl Perkins and Roy Orbison.

* * *

The Springfield had a checkered career to say the least, but their early days were apparently pure bliss, and the memory of happiness would cause problems when the times got rough.

"The early days were great," Palmer remembers. "We all had such regard for each other, we were all so delighted to be making music together. No one was critical of each other, that would come later. Everyone was helpful, constructive and creative."

Furay wholeheartedly agrees. "The very beginning was the best. The original five of us, as far as I am concerned, had the magic. The original five of us were as tight musically as we ever could've been. Our record was exciting, very exciting."

Furay doesn't pretend to be nostalgic, but he can still hear those early cheers ringing in his ears. "When we first played the Whiskey you could just watch it grow and build. At

Hand in hand!

first when we played there it was a normal crowd. Then, all of a sudden they were lined up around the corner and alongside the building. First it was normal people, then all kinds of people. The people we felt were important began coming down to see us: The Byrds, the Mamas & the Papas, Johnny Rivers (they would later open for Rivers at the Hollywood Bowl), Barry McGuire. The Hollies hung out with us when we were in town. They all gave us support, they all felt we had a unique sound, and they all said, 'Go for it!' "

The Springfield's first formal tour came early in 1966, opening for the Byrds on a seven-day tour of one-nighters across California. They were paid $125 per show. Furay remembers that tour: "David Crosby and Chris Hillman liked us a lot and got us on one of their tours. It was really exciting. Like 'Hey man, these kids are really going crazy!' They were crawling through windows to get in. The Byrds were real popular then—it was real exciting—it was rock'n'roll mania!"

Shortly after that tour the Springfield found themselves opening for the Rolling Stones at the Hollywood Bowl. Palmer remembers the show as being "wild," and an event that now seems mythical must have given the group an upward thrust of momentum to keep going. Sometime after that gig they were signed to a recording contract by Atco Records. Although no one at Atco seems to know exactly when they were signed (nor anyone else, for that matter), it *is* known than three days after they headlined the Hollywood Bowl (July 25, 1966) the Springfield released their first single, "Nowadays Clancy Can't Even Sing." The local reaction was that of wild support, but nationwide it was banned because the song contained the word "damn."


Richie Furay Collection

While the Springfield could reach more people nationally with their records, their concerts helped to create their large, loyal following. Judith Sims recalled the early days this way: "I loved them right away. They just knocked me out. Richie was most impressive. He'd move across the front of the stage while he played on the tips of his toes. Not in a hopping manner, more like a scooting movement. It was obvious they loved playing with each other, and respected each other's musicianship. They were a joy to behold."

"I used to go down to the Whiskey every night," Nancy Furay remembers, "and just stare at Richie. I even brought my mother with me to stare at him, too. We couldn't take our eyes off him."

Perhaps their shows were so good because they had no "purist" pretensions, they didn't mind exploring the gap between rock'n'roll and folk music. They enjoyed making original good-timey music, and their audiences got caught up in the infectious energy. Dewey pounded out a hard foundation, Bruce would stand with his back to the audience pumping out amazing bass lines, Richie just bounced all over, Neil stalked the stage while churning out devilishly evil guitar, and all the while, Stephen tried to smooth all the hard edges with guitar and voice. It was the competitiveness, the musical tug-of-war, that drove the band to their greatest heights.

Once the initial feelings wore off and the band became a formal organization, the problems set it. June Nelson, who worked for Stone and Greene (their managers and music publishers) became involved with the Springfield after she had met Palmer: "I met Bruce at Mama Cass's the morning after a party. Bruce was asleep on a couch. He looked real hip, a real beautiful looking cat. It turned out he was in a band. Not long after that Neil sang me "Clancy." We were in this sleazy roominghouse where Neil was staying. There was a guy in the next bed in the same room with hepatitis. After Neil sang that song I knew that he was a major songwriting talent. I also knew I had to get him out of that roominghouse. The next day I had the guys come down and sign them up." Nelson would become the group's secretary, nurse, mother, best friend and, in many ways, their most dedicated supporter. Judith Sims was another. Every issue of **Teen Set**, which she edited, would always include an article of some sort on Buffalo Springfield. Furay says that Sims once told him that she felt the Springfield was the "jinx" of **Teen Set** because, ironically, around the same time the band broke up the magazine stopped printing.

"They were up in my office and they didn't know anything about contracts or publishing. So I said, 'Listen, somebody's got to be the leader, because this thing has to be legal.' Everybody went, 'Well...ah...' and just sort of looked at each other. So Stills said, 'Okay, I'll be leader,' and Neil looked over at Stills and said, 'Okay, you be leader!'

"Then the major conflicts began over whose material would be done. Stills knew the more songs he had on an album, the more money he would get. Then everyone realized the significance of the thing in terms of money. So Neil began to say, 'Let's get some of my songs done too, Steve.' "

Sims and Furay agree that Stills and Young were both overly impatient for success. "They both seemed to know where they were going, and anything that appeared to be a stumbling block they naturally tried to kick away," says Furay. Sims adds, "They were both frustrated because they realized they had no real competition except the Beatles, Stones and Byrds. They knew they were great and the lack of recognition was hard to accept. Neil and Stephen wanted it all, and they wanted it as fast as they could get it."

On **Buffalo Springfield**, their first album, Stills and Young were in control. No material other than theirs was even considered for inclusion. Stills had seven songs, five on the first side, while Young placed five tunes on the LP. Stills' songs were polished and commercial and seemed aimed at a pop audience. With the exception of "For What It's Worth" and "Everybody's Wrong," they were simple, direct love songs which seemed perfect vehicles for his smooth, warm voice. When he dipped into protest on the aforementioned pair, his feelings were still vague and seemingly neutral. "Everybody's Wrong" is explained by its title, and the classic "For What It's Worth" is in the same vein, more or less a protest against protest (at least dumb protest) with observations like: "People carrying signs/That mostly say 'Hooray for our side.' "

Young's outlook and approach was entirely different. He was totally self-absorbed at the time the album was recorded, his lyrics cryptic and double-edged. And, while a commercial hit was his desire, his songs weren't radio fodder. "Flying On the Ground is Wrong" and "Burned" were both dark and pessimistic, while "Do I Have to Come Right Out and Say It" was a wonderfully sweet and innocent love song. If any one song represented Young, though, it was "Out of My Mind," for while the rest of the band lived for the screams and adulation of their audience, those things frightened Young and created within him an intense paranoia: "All I hear are screams/From outside the limousines/That are taking me out of my mind."

"For What It's Worth" wasn't included on the album in its initial release, but when it was apparent that it was becoming a hit single, Atco deleted another Stills song,



Richie Furay Collection

"Baby Don't Scold Me," and replaced it with "...Worth" (copies of the original pressing are now collectors' items). The song became a national hit and went as high as #7 on the charts. The band was hot, appearing on TV frequently—Hollywood Palace, Mannix and other shows. They seemed to be on their way to stardom until they ran into a brick wall of problems.

A follow-up to "For What It's Worth" was hard to find, and the band was upset that "...Worth" wasn't bigger. "It would get big in one region, but would go down in another," recalls Furay. "It was really a regional hit."

Meanwhile, the band was getting good critical response. In **Crawdaddy**, Paul Williams called the album, "A lovely, moving experience," though he warned that, "You have to be into it. All the songs seem to sound alike, but what the Springfield seem to do is rise above these samenesses, employing beautiful changes and continually fresh approaches within their particular framework." Williams also predicted that the group probably could not go beyond three albums without major changes in their structure.

The changes came sooner than he predicted. Shortly after the album's release, the band dismissed their so-called producers and managers, Greene and Stone. "They didn't know any more about a recording studio than we did," recalls Palmer.

As they started recording their second album, the problems continued. Halfway through the recording, Palmer was busted for drugs and deported to Canada, and a succession of bassists were called in to finish the LP: first ex-Squire Kenny Koblun came down from Canada, then Bobby West and Jim Fielder filled in, Fielder actually joining the band for a short time. Jim Messina, who would become their final bassist later on, was the engineer of the sessions, but did not play on them.

Palmer's personality raised many problems. He was eccentric, and supposedly lived in a tree house. He dressed the freakiest, had the longest hair, and always had his back or head bowed to the audience. Eccentric or not, no one doubted his musicianship. According to Judith Sims, "Stills and Young had profound respect for Palmer's ability." Furay once told **Teen Set**, "We found that we couldn't play without Bruce—tried three bass players and Bruce was the only one we could play with." Palmer also was a good buffer between Stills and Young.

But he became a liability aftaer his drug bust and subsequent deportation. He wasn't around when he was needed, and finally, he just couldn't play with the Springfield because his musical interest turned exclusively to Indian raga, after which he decided that song lyrics were unimportant, an opinion no one else in the band shared. **Buffalo Springfield Again** came out in Fall 1967 to good reviews and sold 250,000 copies straight off the bat, but the expectations of the public based on the first album **Again** was different enough to disappoint many people. So while Albert Bouchard (later of the Blue Oyster Cult) said in **Crawdaddy**: "The album is filled with so many kinds of beautiful music and/or sounds that you'll really love if you aren't hung up on originality," apparently the diversity of the record ended up confusing the public.

Don Paulsen of **Hit Parader** interviewed Young and Stills about **Again**." 'Expecting to Fly' took a long time to write," Young said. "It came from two or three songs that I molded together and changed around and fit together. We spent three weeks recording and mixing it. Some people have said that you can't hear the lyrics too well. I like to hear the lyrics and I can hear the words to it. They are are buried in spots, but the general mood of the song is there. That's what matters in that particular song. It's not like a modern recording, it's based on an old theory. The new style is to try to hear every instrument clearly, the old one is the Phil Spector idea of blending them all so they all sound like a wall of sound."

Young considered "Broken Arrow" one of his better songs and one verse ("He saw that his brother had sworn on the wall, he hung up his eyelids and ran down the hall, his mother told him the trip was a fall, and don't mention babies at all ") the best he'd ever written.

"It's just an image of being very scared and mixed up," he said at the time. "The broken arrow is the Indian sign of peace, usually after losing a war. A broken arrow usually means that somebody has lost a lot."

Furay finally got the chance to express himself on **Again**, but only through his own assertiveness. "In the early days I just couldn't get a tune recorded," he said. "They knew royalties would be coming in and the more songs they had on a record the better off it'd be for them.

"I think I sat around the studio the one night waiting for them to come in. And I sat one whole session doing nothing, just sitting there. And when the second session started I just went in and did "Sad Memory," I was pretty much determined that that was going to be the start of it. I was all by myself, sitting in a chair with an acoustic guitar. And I played it for them and got their approval. (Furay's "A Child's Claim to Fame" and "Good Time Boy" were also included on the record.)

Young and Stills both desperately wanted a follow-up hit single to "For What It's Worth" while immediately denying the need. Before the single was chosen, Young told Paulsen, "You can never tell, it could be the biggest record we've ever had. We felt the same way about 'For What It's Worth,' we thought it would be a local record in L.A. And it hung on the charts for four-and-a-half months. Now I don't know...anything could happen...'Expecting To Fly' and 'Everydays' are both capable of being hit records. There's nothing wrong with them, they're good songs, they're put together well...

"So whatever is right will happen...We've stopped worrying about it. We know it's gonna definitely happen. It's gotta happen. When it does happen, it's gonna be a real big one. We've got an underground following now, and we've got a lot of people who dig us. We've only had one big record and I didn't think it would be a number one record. Everybody heard it and it was a hit."

A year later when the group was on its last legs Young was still feeding the same lines to **Teen Set** and it's difficult to tell whether he really believed it. "All we need is what we always tried to get...a smash hit record. If we have just one that we think is a success, then we'll know that we have actually communicated. If we can survive that without going through changes, then there's no telling what will occur."

For all his show of optimism, and hope for the Springfield's future, inside he was very insecure and afraid. Young himself was becoming torn about what he wanted to do. He loved the band, but he also wanted to be on his own. So every couple of months he would just disappear. Usually it would be either Palmer (before he left) or June Nelson who was elected to go find Neil. They would talk him out of whatever dark closet he was hiding in at the time and he would rejoin the band. Furay analyzed Neil this way: "I just knew Neil always wanted a solo career and the Buffalo Springfield were his security. It seemed like every two months he'd be gone, I mean we'd go off to gigs and he wouldn't show up. In Boston, in some club there we played a gig one night and the guy said 'Don't come back,' because we weren't a whole band without Neil.

"Shortly after that, Monterey happened and he kinda wanted back in—he didn't get

I won't ask you to forgive me.

in right then, but shortly thereafter. We got a lot of publicity after Monterey you see..."

Problems, conflicts and complications fed upon the group all along. If Young and Stills weren't fighting, then the others were bickering, especially Martin, who wanted more of the action. He wanted to get a song on the third album and no one was listening to him. He didn't get along with Stills, their personalities were just too abrasive. Also, to some degree the group was unhappy with his drumming. And had the group survived he probably would have been replaced.

There were other struggles and one in particular was probably most destructive to the band. In January 1968, after a continuing series of legal battles, Bruce Palmer was permanently replaced by Jim Messina.

Messina came aboard just in time to join a sinking ship. But he didn't make waves, nor did he have Palmer's ability to balance out Stills and Young. In fact, most people who were close to the band don't think of Messina as being a "real" member. Sims says that "Messina worked pretty well. He wasn't involved with the egos, he wasn't trying to get his songs recorded. And he got along well with Furay." Messina's working relationship with Furay was important, bringing out a smoother, more country side in Furay.

The major reason, though, that Messina isn't considered to be a real member of the band is that by the time he joined there was no *real* band. When they began recording **Last Time Around**, the band members were going into the studio separately to cut their tunes. Neither Stills nor Young could stand each other's presence. Messina, then, became important at this stage because he was able to take all the individually recorded pieces and make an album out of it.

For both Stills and Young, the Springfield era was a constant battle that created and left many scars. Their relationship was based upon competitiveness, distrust, envy, jealousy, love and hatred. Stills, because he refused to give in to anyone or anything, won the battle of egos, but in doing so, both Young *and* Stills lost the war and destroyed the band.

On May 5, 1968, the Buffalo Springfield gave up for good. They had lasted as a group a little over two years. Incredibly, in that short period of time they had been able to produce an amazing amount of good music, especially taking into account the time wasted on drug busts, personnel changes, inter-group struggles and countless other distractions. "We all started wondering exactly what was going on and a certain lack of interest developed," Furay says of the end.

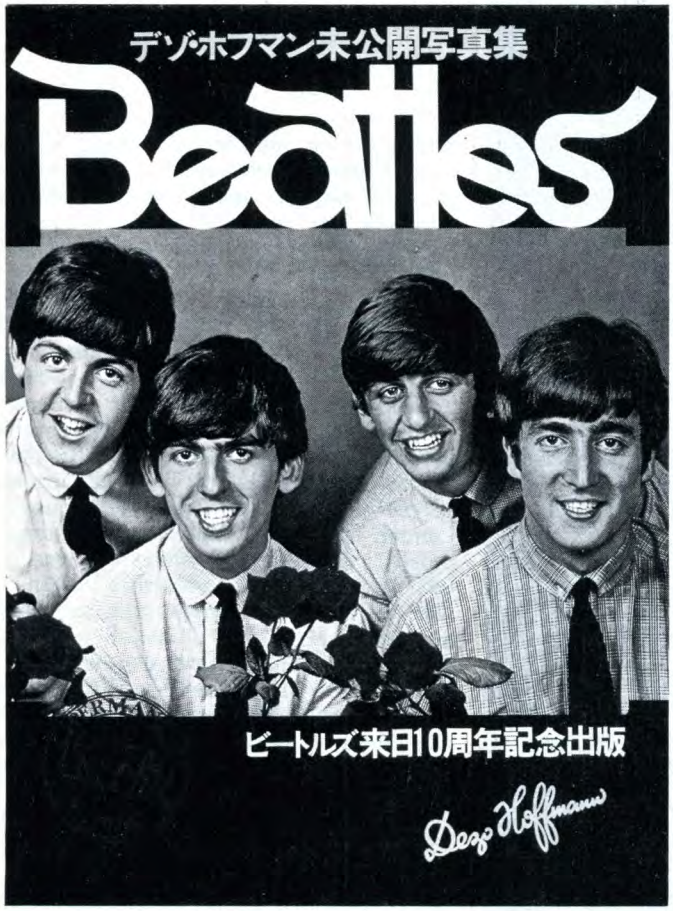
Last Time Around was released posthumously in August 1968. Its cover explained the whole sad story: Steve Stills, looking somber and crestfallen, leading Messina, Furay and Martin forward; Neil Young bringing up the rear, looking backward in a different direction.

On **Last Time Around** the composing was more evenly spread than on any other LP. Young, because he was no longer "into it," and also probably was considering his future solo career, held some songs back, contributing two and one collaboration with Furay. Stills was still dominant with five songs. "Carefree Country Day," the one Messina song, is inferior, and even with Furay and Stills helping out with the vocals it doesn't sound like Springfield material. Furay wrote three songs (and one with Young) and all were excellent.

Stills was, of course, still pursuing the most commercial direction—yet "Pretty Girl Why," "Four Days Gone," and "Questions" are some of the best tunes he's ever written. Young's "On the Way Back Home" could be read as both a love song for a person and a band—and how he must leave both. He keeps the music simple, almost anticipating his future style.

Furay was also at the height of his writing prowess at the time. "The Hour of Not Quite Rain," "It's So Hard to Wait" (with Young), and "Kind Woman" all show him at his best. His vocals are always smooth but not sugar-coated. His restrained verses would suddenly unfold into choruses of guitars and soaring harmonies. There was always something peaceful about his songs, a contentment would just ease out of them as he sang.

The myth of the Springfield's greatness has grown considerably since that time, as has the misconception that the Springfield were a cohesive unit who had control over their own direction. But Furay refutes that theory: "I think what happened was that there was no direction from the very beginning. No one knew what quite to do with us. They knew that we probably had a product but they didn't know quite how to sell it. Everybody was telling us we were ahead of our time. It was hard to swallow because we were right in the middle of it. We really didn't know exactly what we were." ■



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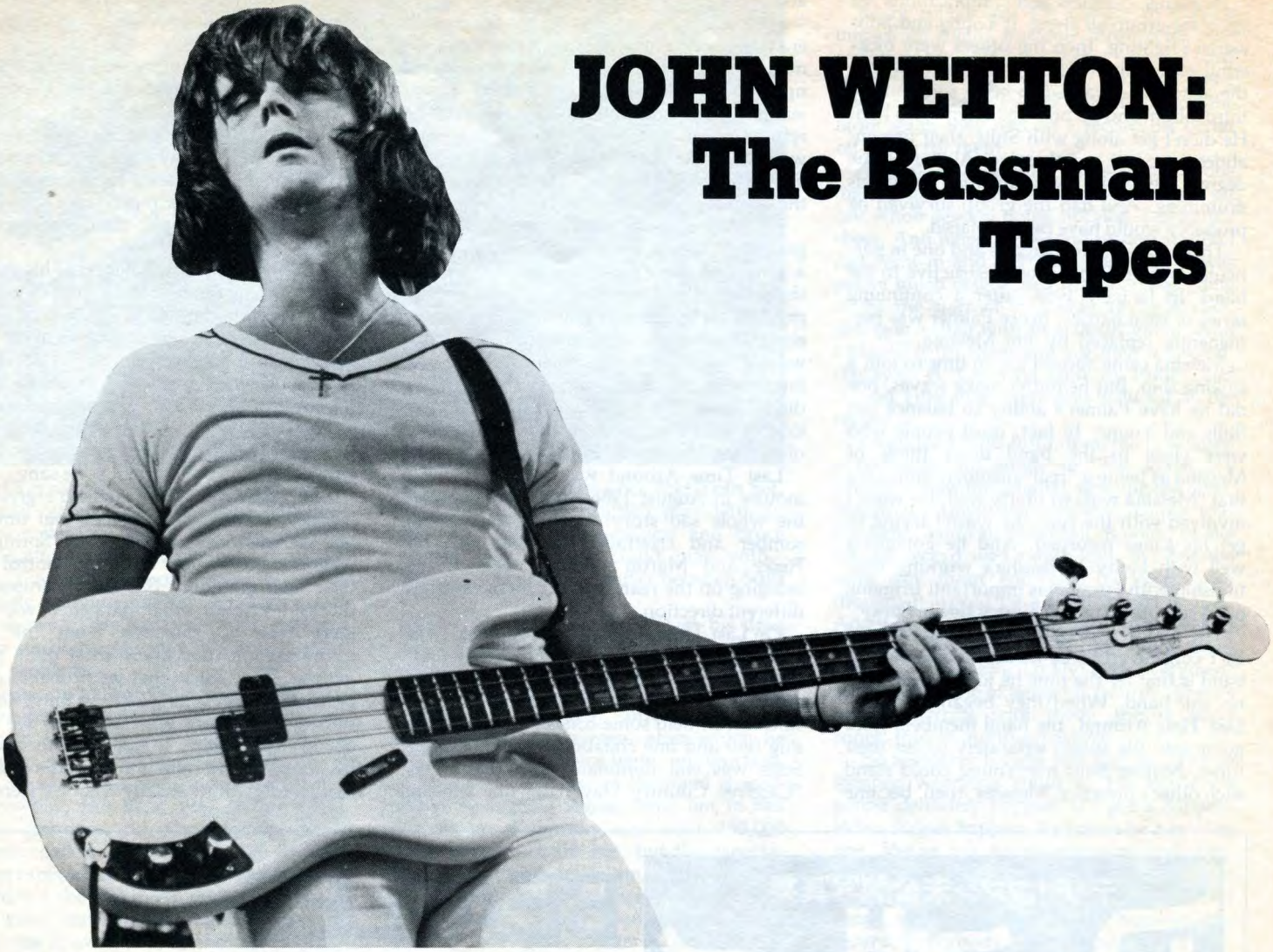
JOHN WETTON: The Bassman Tapes



John Bellissimo

By Jon Young

"It's not insecurity, but I always like to work with other people in groups. I think that's the strongest thing. When you take a guy away from a group and put him on his own he's always got to play with inferior musicians because the best musicians always want to work for themselves anyway."

John Wetton has been affiliated with some of the most forward-looking elements of the modern British rock scene: Family, King Crimson, Bryan Ferry, Eno, Phil Manzanera, Roxy Music, Uriah Heep (nobody's perfect!). Along with mates Alan Holdsworth, Eddie Jobson and Bill Bruford, he's currently enjoying the success of UK, one of the few successful emissaries of what was once labeled "progressive" music. While most of this dying breed has become little more than futuristic easy listening, UK have proven that there is still a place for a rock-oriented instrumental band that takes chances.

"Take the guys in this band," he continues. "They've come to the conclusion over the years that working for other people is not the best way. So now they're only prepared to work for themselves, that is, in a cooperative unit. If you take Eddie Jobson out of UK, if you take John Wetton out of UK, the only logical progression for us is to do our own albums. Therefore, we'd have to employ four other musicians to work with us. Now who could we get? Four guys who are not quite as good and are just prepared to play a gig. So the best groups are always combinations of individuals, I think.

"You get a guy on his own and he gets so isolated that he disappears up his own aperture. You can go back through history and see that."

Wetton feels like a free man these days, doing what he wants in a band he likes, and his enthusiasm is evident. When we sat down to talk, I asked John if he would mind going over his past. No sooner requested than done; the agreeable singing bassist began recollecting like mad.

"I kept myself in college basically by being in a band in Bournemouth. At that time [1967] there was a healthy local circuit of bands playing mostly Beatles material and R&B. Everybody from the original King Crimson came from Bournemouth, and a couple of guys in Gentle Giant.

"I was in college for about two years; the day I left a guy called me up and said 'How would you like to go to Roumania on Friday?' I looked at a map, said OK, and did a month in Roumania, touring vampire hangouts. We were backing some terrible British singers—out and out pop, "Green Green Grass of Home" and that kind of nonsense. At one gig, just before the main act came on, we burst into 'Lady Madonna' and the place were berserk. We all got sent home for that.

"After I got back I'd earned enough money to buy my Fender bass, the one I have now and cherish, for 35 pounds. It was the best investment I ever made. I also got hooked on traveling.

"Eventually I moved up to London and lived on the usual rat sandwiches for the obligatory six months, starving, sleeping on people's floors. I did various auditions for London bands, Atomic Rooster among others. I passed the audition for them and then failed because I couldn't play the flute. I was in numerous organ trios traveling around Germany and Britain. It was very second-rate Nice stuff, trying to be progressive. All of a sudden instrumentalists were dominant parts of groups where before it was the singer, so I started singing. All this came to nothing and after about a year I was back where I started again."

Guitarist James Litherland had left Colosseum to start his own group, and Wetton landed the job as bass player.

"We were called Brotherhood at that time. We had a brass section with jazz overtones

You're gonna come with me.

and the rhythm section was very definitely rock."

Like Colosseum?

"Much more funk, much more aggressive. That lasted for roughly one year. We did some disastrous tours of Europe. The band broke up because we signed a really bum deal with a production company. We were all incredibly green, obviously. I don't know one person who hasn't signed a contract that completely bums them out after a while."

Under the name Mogul Thrash, the group recorded one album and a single, which John laughingly said was a minor hit in Belgium. The horn section eventually became part of the Average White Band.

"I did quite a bit of session work with George Martin. He was doing pop acts like Cilla Black. Also, he did TV jingles and a couple of good rock albums, an album called **Edwards Hand**. A guy called Edwards and a guy called Hand. Over here it was called **Stranded**.

"I did enough session work to get a plane ticket to California where I thought maybe the grass was greener. After six weeks in California I decided it was definitely not greener, it was as barren as the Mojave Desert. So I went back to London very disillusioned and the day I got back there was a message that I'd been recommended to Family through a friend, Jim Cregan, who now plays with Rod Stewart."

Family were no small potatoes in Britain in those days, being on their second hit single and getting loads of press. Wetton was chosen to replace John Weider.

"Weider's specific role was to play the violin, so I learned to play it as well. I played it on a couple of tracks on the album and on stage— (laughing) very shaky. It's not something you can learn overnight. There was a lot of bluffing with wah wah pedals.

"Mainly my role was to be the second singer in the group. (Roger) Chapman felt he was getting isolated because nobody else sang, so he wanted somebody as a foil to him. A lot of the tracks we did on the two albums I was on (**Fearless**, **Bandstand**) had dual lead vocals. It was a very productive era for me in terms of confidence building. All of a sudden I was out in front of capacity audiences, on television.

"But the thing was, I wasn't getting anywhere with the writing at all. They had a very set format, Chapman-Whitney, who wrote the songs. With a group there is a hierarchy, a pecking order. Having been in Family for about a year-and-a-half and two albums, I thought it was time to move on."

Since his college days Wetton had kept in occasional touch with Robert Fripp, who by this time [1972] personified King Crimson to the group's following. In fact, John had already turned down one invitation to join the band.

"I'd been approached by Fripp when Mel Collins, Ian Wallace and Boz were in King Crimson and Fripp basically wanted someone on his side. He called me up in the middle of a tour and asked me to play bass. He was totally in a corner; he had three guys who just wanted to play rock'n'roll, funk. They used to do a blues version of 'In the Court of the Crimson King.' I thought, 'No, I'm not gonna take sides,' I just carried on and did the second Family album."

But that was not the end of it, of course. Wetton talked with Fripp after the Crimson tour that produced the wretchedly unlistenable **Earthbound** LP and his discontent with Family made him much more amenable to a switch. Also interested was Bill Bruford, of the newly gigantic Yes. Plans were laid.

"Bill and I had to tell our respective groups at exactly the same time because the whole group scene in London is very small. We all lived on each other's doorsteps. If one group had known 10 minutes ahead of the other a phone call could have been made and one of us would have looked like a complete bastard. So we said at two o'clock this afternoon we'll tell our bands, and we started about two weeks later.

"We just went into this dingy basement in Covent Gardens and improvised for ages. Towards the end of that the mellotrons arrived, a few more amplifiers came in and we started to formalize."

Which meant some improvisation, but more importantly to Wetton, group writing. Then the trio was augmented by David Cross, violin, and Jamie Muir, percussion.

"They were Fripp protegés whom he'd seen in London clubs and had decided were outsiders who could become viable members in a working band. It was a carrot in front of Bill's nose to work with Jamie Muir, because Bill does have and always has had aspirations toward the more obscure percussion.

"Jamie was just a little too left field to survive the rigors of the rock world. When he did our British tour, he used to do incredible things. Like slinging chains at lumps of miked-up aluminum on stage. Wham! Crash! Staggering explosions through the PA. He used to spit blood all over the audience, long before Kiss.

"One day he broke his foot at a gig at the Marquee. We had to do another gig the next day and Jamie was obviously out of the question. So we took the plunge as a four-piece and never looked back. It became a lot more condensed and concentrated on stage. The whole thing sounded a lot cleaner and it seemed that everybody was working a lot harder.

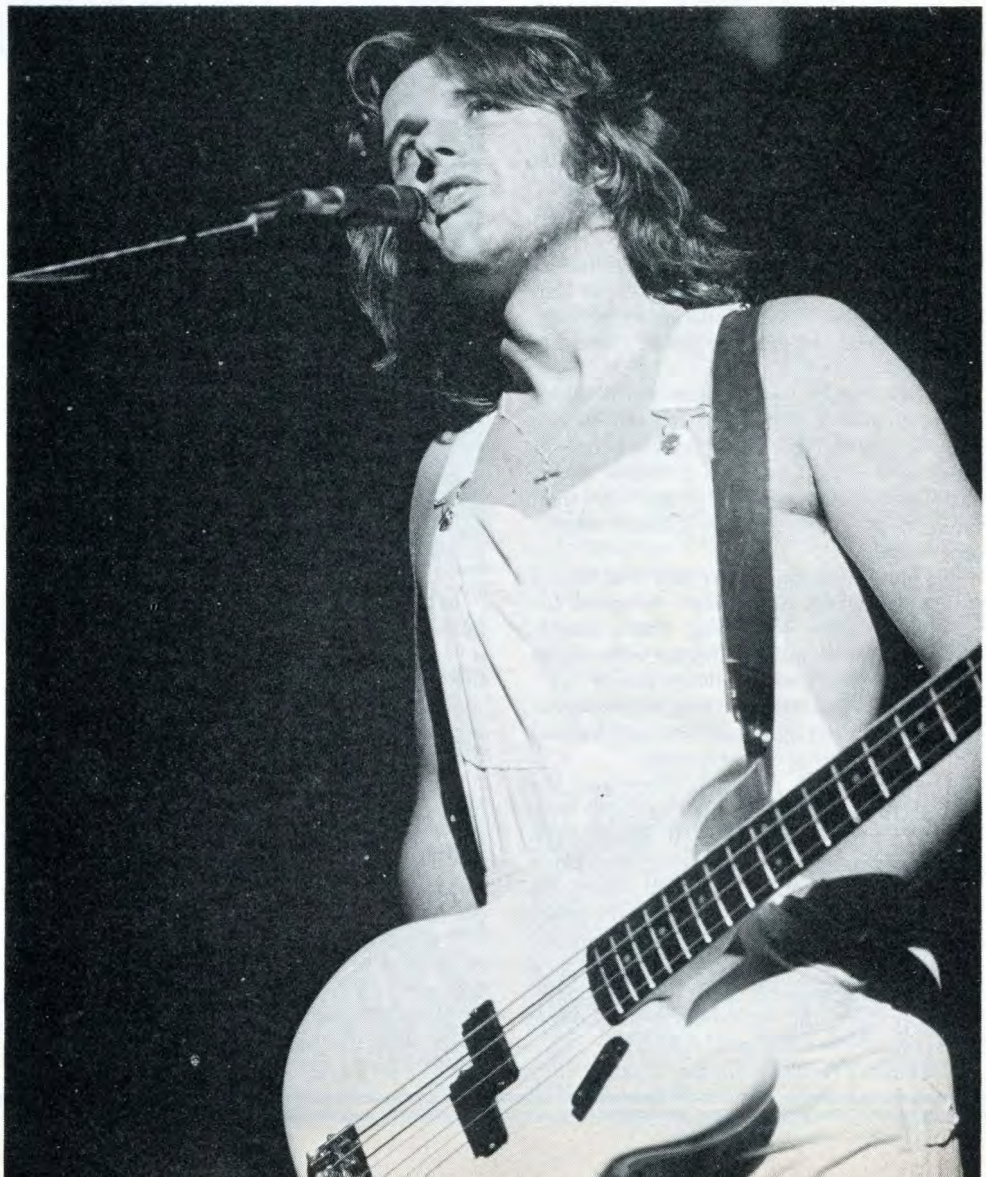
"The next casualty was David Cross, after two years touring in the United States. It wasn't his cup of tea, actually. I think he just liked the idea of being in a quite happening rock band. He used to get very depressed being on the road all the time."

John added that Cross has become a tax exile of sorts from record royalties, and now lives in Ireland, "playing village hops."

"We had a tour planned for late '74. We'd enticed Ian McDonald to replace David Cross and he came down and did a couple of sessions on the **Red** album. Crimson were really poised to break at that time."

The tour was a major assault on America, and also included such exotic spots as Brazil. The dates were set, the album ready, and...

"I got this phone call from Robert. He said, 'I can't do it anymore. I wanna take



Ebet Roberts

Don't you know I got the bullet boys out

a year off.' Robert was never happy on the road; he never liked the food in motels. His personality didn't suit that of a rock musician where you've got a certain timetable to keep to. There's not a lot of resting time.

"He said, 'I know the world's going to change and I want to be ready for it.' I was put out, to say the least.

"However, I'd been hobnobbing a bit with Bryan Ferry; I'd played on **Another Time, Another Place**. They [E.G. Management] were looking for a bass player for Roxy Music for the upcoming autumn tour of Britain in 1974 and they wanted me to come along to the auditions to vet the bass players. I saw all these bass players come in and I couldn't really see one that was good for them. So I said that I would do the first half of the tour and then I would go to the States to join Crimson.

"It was about a week into the tour when Fripp dropped the brick. It didn't faze me that much at the time because I had a gig to go to that night."

Fripp made some comment at the time that Bruford was upset but you didn't seem to care.

"Bruford was mortified. I'm not the sort of person who gets absolutely killed. Even if I hadn't been into Roxy Music I wouldn't've broken down crying or anything because you have to overreact to things that hit you that hard by saying they're not that important.

"I was halfway through a British tour with Roxy Music and it all was good fun so I just carried on. It wasn't meant to be a serious move on my part. Then the European dates came up and then the American tour '75."

And then his one uncool move.

"I felt that after Crimson I had lost what got me into the business in the first place, which was the pure excitement of gut rock'n'roll."

So an invitation from some old friends in Uriah Heep "seemed like a good idea, to find out if I really liked rock'n'roll again, because basically Uriah Heep is pure headbashing rock'n'roll.

"In Britain the rock fraternity is a lot smaller than it is over here; it's not such a jump. Family to King Crimson was a jump. I could be criticized because Crimson was a much more viable band financially than Family was. Sure, money comes into it somewhere.

"It's not dissimilar from Ian McDonald joining Foreigner. Sometimes it's good for the soul to play something that's simple before a lot of people and regain your confidence. It must be therapeutic for Ian.

"I didn't intend to stay. Long before a year was up, I decided that wasn't what I wanted to do. It was getting embarrassing...

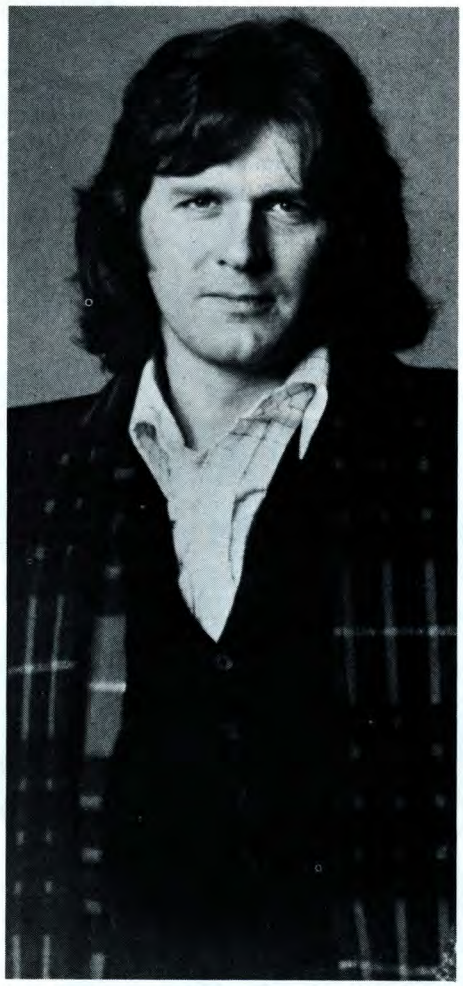
"The intermezzo of Uriah Heep and the Bryan Ferry world tour was this thing with Rick Wakeman and Bill (Bruford). We rehearsed together and the music that came out was pretty good; Rick had taken his cloak off. It was about halfway between what UK is now and Rick's solo albums. I'd been treading water for two years trying to get something together and when I finally think I'm there, the record companies move in and the whole thing gets buried."

Wakeman's record company thought they should get the LP, since Rick was the biggest star. John's and Bill's record company thought they should get the LP, since they had two-thirds of the group.

"Eventually Rick got scared and we just didn't see each other for a few days. By the time we turned around Rick had rejoined Yes."

However, Wetton wasted no time in forming a group with Eddie Jobson and Bruford after they had finished their respective commitments with Frank Zappa and Genesis.

"I thought I might as well go on the road with Bryan and do a little pre-publicity for the band. It was pretty much set up. During that time I quizzed the press and people I met on the road about how viable a new band of that sort would be."



In case you've been puzzling over how guitarist Alan Holdworth fits into the UK scheme, don't worry, because Wetton has the same problem. Although John probably wouldn't say a negative word about anyone, he did flounder a bit when I said that Holdsworth seemed like the odd man out.

"Alan does the typical guitarist's bit, at least of all the guitarists I've played with. As soon as the spotlight hits him, he steps two feet back and stands by his amplifier. He doesn't project an awful lot to the front of the stage. One criticism was—and we knew this when we got him in the band—that he's been used in the past primarily as a soloist and not as a group member. We tried to get Alan more into the band, playing unison parts with the bass, unison parts with the violin, but I guess you've gotta have one in every group. He's still the guy that hangs back and isn't very demonstrative.

"I don't know where Bill heard about him...When we were rehearsing as a three-piece and going down a list of guitarists, Bill said, 'Get him, he's great!' "

In the course of our conversation, Wetton dropped some interesting comments about the far-on-the-horizon solo album he's planning.

"All the songs I've written that aren't suitable for groups, that is, me sitting down at a piano or with an acoustic guitar, I've put on tape so they could be rerecorded and released. When I get a few spare moments, say six weeks, I'll put that out as a solo effort."

He seemed stumped when I asked him what the songs were like, but finally responded that "strong electric folk is the nearest I can get to it." Of course, it's UK that's uppermost in Wetton's mind at the moment.

"My every day is taken up thinking about the next album. It'll be more direct. When we were rehearsing the first album we knew we weren't doing the material on the road before we recorded it. Therefore you can allow for a lot more subtleties in the studio. You can overdub and make the weaker parts stronger. The whole of the album was a monument to overdubbing. No two musicians played simultaneously in the studio.

"What you gain from that is that there are no mistakes; it's a completely flawless album. But what you lose is any spark that might generate among the musicians. We were a bit hindered by the fact that it was a tiny studio, and we had a room about twice as big as this one. [A small hotel room.] You couldn't get any separation whatsoever.

"But the next album we're doing at AIR London in Studio 1, which is enormous. We can set up the gear virtually as we do on stage and get a more ambient sound. The melody lines on the new stuff are a lot stronger than the last one because we're writing for instantaneous effect."

Much of the LP is being done on tour already, being tested by trial and error. Wetton adds that there'll be far less overdubbing as a result. They've performed the same task on the songs from the first LP, completely discarding two and radically editing another ("In the Dead of Night").

UK's honest democracy speaks well for the group's future.

"What we do we all have to agree on. That means you don't get any dross and there are no embarrassing moments."

And no solo material.

"That was a strong policy from the word go. We could have gone on and done 'Starless,' it's 99% Bill's and my tune, but where do you draw the line then?

"It's very satisfying. Because when you don't have any responsibility towards the music—when somebody else writes the whole damn show and tells you what to do—you come off stage having played to 10,000 ecstatic people and it doesn't mean a damn. When it's something you're actively involved in from A to Z, then you feel incredible satisfaction coming off stage having played really well—or badly, accordingly. What it boils down to for me is responsibility." ■

Changing someone's facial design.

GREEN CIRCLE

By Jim Green

Single of the Month

XTC: "Are You Receiving Me" b/w "Instant Tunes"—Virgin (UK) VS 231. After their "This Is Pop?" single I was wondering what they could do for an encore. At first hearing this 45 I thought, oh well, back to the drawing board, but before it ended I thought "Oblique pop strategies. Maybe I was a little hasty." By midway through the second listening I was saying, "Hmph, it's growing on me," as I tapped along with it. By the third play I was positively ricocheting off the walls. By Jove, they've done it again! (Those catchy choruses do it every time.)



Jam of the Month

The Jam: "Down in the Tube Station at Midnight" b/w "So Sad About Us" and "The Night"—Polydor (UK) POSP8/205968. Seems they put 'em out faster 'n I can review 'em. This is a nice change of pace from them, a sparsely produced narrative of Paul's nocturnal ramblings resulting in his getting beaten up by a gang, a sort of miniature film soundtrack. Not riveting, but intriguing anyway. Then of course there's the Jam's farewell-to-Keith cover version on the flip, an oddly restrained but pretty rendition, and bassist Bruce Foxton's "The Night." On both Weller experiments with varied guitar tones and overdubs (including a harmony with himself). Not Class A Jam, but worthy still.

Sham of the Month

Sham 69: "Hurry Up Harry" b/w "No Entry"—Polydor (UK) POSP7/20590675. Last single, "If the Kids Are United," was a typical embodiment of Sham's new wave political football cheers; this one's Jimmy Pursey gargling away at a pub song with a distinctly Ramones-y backing. Lots o' larfs, one of their best yet. The flip's some sour grapes about how they weren't allowed into this country but didn't wanna come over anyway.

Old Faces

Roy Wood: "Keep Your Hands on the Wheel" b/w "Giant Footsteps"—Warner Bros. (UK) K17248. Good to see Roy back at work after having laid low all these months, but this is hardly his top form—sounds like an old Wizzard outtake that shoulda stayed taken out. (The B-side's from the Wizzo Band LP.) Maybe producing the Rezillos will put some of his old zip back into making records.

Flash & the Pan: "And the Band Played On" b/w "The Man Who Knew the Answer"—Ensign (UK) ENY 15. Movie music in search of a movie, preferably one about the Titanic (according to the recited story line). Pretend all those sounds came from a Gizmo, and this could've been from **Consequences**. Better yet, pass this by altogether. (And these guys used to be the Easybeats?)

Bob Segarini: "When the Lights Are Out" b/w "Dressed in the Dark"—Bomb (Can.) 5015. Remember Roxy? The Wackers? The Dudes? No surprise then to find that once more Segarini has come forth with a pleasant but ineffecutal version of what other people have done far better. This go-round he covers a Slade tune and does a mildly amusing parody of Elvis the C.'s "Mystery Dance." Both will appear on his upcoming **Gotta Have Pop** LP. As usual with Bob, you've heard worse, but you've also heard lots better.

Snips: "Waiting for Tonight" b/w "Smash Your TV"—Jet (UK) 118. Our journeyman vocalist friend from the Sharks and Baker-Gurvitz Army (among others) has resurfaced, sounding nothing like he ever did before, renouncing his gruff growl for a lighter pop voice. The rhythm section kicks like Free, but the tune is overall vintage Anglo-pop. He sounds tougher on the flip, a good rocker about rebellion against commodity culture or somesuch. The only drawback to these sides is that vocally and production-wise it all semms a bit limp, there's a spark missing. But his **Video King** album sounds promising on the basis of the A-side (the flip's not on it). Collectors—green vinyl. (Kinda like saying "Alpo!" to a dog.)

We're All Bozos on this Turntable

Legs Larry Smith: "Springtime for Hitler" b/w "I've Got a Braun New Girl (In God Wet Rust)"—Arista (UK) ARIST 194....or Bonzos. Yes, chums, it's our old pal Legs doing the Mel Brooks aria from "The Producers," a full-blown production number that even goes disco for a few bars. Tasteless but tasteful, bad, but good, weird, but, uh...weird. The flip is a sprightly chune penned by Lawrence himself. Why he's on this "Reich-edelic trip" (his words) is beyond me, but then it's very probably beyond him too.

Alberto y Lost Trios Paranoias: Heads Down, No Nonsense, Mindless Boogie + 3 (set of 2 45s)—Logo &UK) GO (D) 323. Hilarious parody once again from these lovely chaps. The title track is Pistols shooting it out with Quo in a battle to the death (or is if deaf?), "Thank You" is the Boomtown Rats commenting on the sad state of the new wave, "Fuck You" is "Thank You" in a different frame of mind, and "Dead Meat (Part 2)" is an outrageous simulation of Bob Harris interviewing Roddy Llewellyn (Princess Maggie's geezer) who's just embarked on a recording career. Smashing, I say.

Public Image Ltd.: "Public Image" b/w "The Cowboy Song"—Virgin (UK) VS228. Johnny is Rotten no more—that was part his public image in the Pistols, on which he discourses here at length. "Two sides to every story, somebody has to doubt me," sings John Lydon; and from the English press he's received, many *do* seem to doubt him. But this 45 works wonders for the musical credibility of Public Image Ltd., as the chiming guitars of Keith Levine, one-time Clashman, surround the familiar Lydon vocal sound.

• • •

Quickies: Julie ("Rock Follies") Covington tries out Richard Thompson's song, "(I Want to See the) Bright Lights," and his old producer, Joe Boyd (with John Wood); the only problem is her lifeless vocals—she could as well be singing "I want to go to the grocery store tonight" (UK Virgin VS 225)... United Artists UK has re-released Brinsley Schwarz's "Peace Love and Understanding" (the Brinsleys at their Britrock peak, UP36446) with an offensive unavailable R&B B-side ("I Cried My Last Time"). ■

RECORDS



THE CLASH
Give 'Em Enough Rope
Epic JE 35543

The Clash have been through a lot since they last released an album, almost 19 months ago, and so has the scene that they emerged from in early '77. The Pistols have broken up; the new wave has died; America has gotten its chance to choose and has turned thumbs down. Meanwhile, the Clash have released a brace of tremendous singles, been busted a few times, traveled to Jamaica and the US, fired their manager, and finally recorded their second album, with American producer Sandy Pearlman.

Among people who love the Clash, there have been two major fears about this album. First, could they still cut it as a band after all this time; and second, would Pearlman turn them into the Cockney Cult? Those fears can be laid aside with one listen to **Give 'Em Enough Rope**—there's nothing wrong here. What Pearlman has done is, as the title says, allow them enough studio freedom through expertise to make an album the way they see fit. While their first record was produced by an engineer with limited creative abilities, Pearlman has done enough records to know how to get a sound when needed. In no way has he forced an approach on them—from firsthand observation, I can attest as to who was listening to whom in the studio.

Give 'Em Enough Rope is Americanized only to the point of bringing the vocals up, recording and mixing the instruments to a clean combination, and pacing the songs so that any sense of repetition inherent in the band's writing is minimized. Enough of the technical—this album succeeds just as much as the first, but for somewhat different reasons. While **The Clash** burned with the band's political rage primarily through screamed lyrics, **Give 'Em Enough Rope** amounts to a great rock album first, with the lyrics second. The approach is vastly more melodic and creative (although the first album has a lot more musicality than casual listeners gave it credit for) this time 'round, and the results are that much more thrilling. Of 10 songs (all new), a couple are out and out spectacular ("Safe European Home" and "Stay Free"), a half dozen are merely great, and a pair are dispensable ("Julie's in the Drug Squad" and "Drug Stabbing Time"). The sound is amazing—cascading guitars layered on top of each other for a thick cutting edge that clearly displays Mick Jones' unheralded abilities as a rock guitarist in the Ronson tradition. Strummer's voice has more range and variety than ever before; in spots it's hard to tell his throaty lisp from Jones' whiny plaint.

To further describe **Give 'Em Enough Rope** would be futile. It would be easy to point out the "Can't Explain" riff on "Guns on the Roof," or the use of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" on "English Civil War," but I'll leave that for the less perceptive writers who have nothing else to cling to. This album will not change any of your precepts about rock'n'roll—it sure ain't Bruce Springsteen—but the Clash do what few bands can do—make music that explodes with both fury and venom.

—Ira Robbins

LOU REED
Live—Take No Prisoners
Arista AL 8502

"I do Lou Reed better than anybody else, so I thought I'd get in on it."

Poor Lou. He's like the smart little kid who's already taught himself how to read, but gets infinitely more attention when he farts in front of company. Who cared about **Berlin**, or "Kicks," or "Rock and Roll Heart"? Compare that with the commercial success of obvious gestures like "Walk on the Wild Side" or **Rock n Roll Animal**, and it's tempting to draw a conclusion about what sells records.

That may be why **Lou Reed Live—Take No Prisoners** is baited with some of the most simplistic lures to grace a Lou Reed album yet, which is saying something. That is, the ultra-sleazo garbage cover, the inner-spread collage of newspaper clippings, with these two headlines prominent: "Reed rock's last genius!" and "Lou Reed, Godfather of punk." Now you may find this funny (I do, but I liked **Sally Can't Dance**); **Newsweek**, NBC, and your parents are probably going to miss the profound subtlety.

The carnival atmosphere extends into side one, where Lou makes a strong claim to being rock's first stand-up comedian and manages to caricature himself mercilessly at the same time. Amongst the geniune giggles are (more or less): "Fuck Radio Ethiopia man, I'm Radio Brooklyn. I ain't no star, man," and "So what's wrong with cheap dirty jokes, man. Fuck off. I never said I was tasteful." The straightforward rendition of "Satellite of Love" that follows seems to lack conviction, somehow.

Still listening? Good. At his best, Lou's perspective lies somewhere inbetween the tourist attitude of the audience and the chilling drabness of his subjects. And that's what you get (his best, that is) on the next two sides; "Pale Blue Eyes," "Berlin," and "Coney Island Baby" are pained beauty, seemingly heartfelt playlets that get a little too close to be fun. (Bring back the jokes?) On "I'm Waiting For My Man" and "Street Hassle" Lou does his classic version of Our Town, producing such precise documentaries that self-parody is out of the question.

Side four (three on the jacket) is where Lou puts the flash and guts together to please fans of junk and art alike. "Walk on the Wild Side" launches one killer barb after another, most effectively at prestigious rock critics, who get the ultimate dismissal: "I don't need you to tell me I'm good." Closing out the set on an appropriately hostile note is "Leave Me Alone," the only purely musical success of the LP. Evil, nasty guitars hit like a fist in the face.

"Misrepresentation's not my game," he says at one point; although there *may* be a bait-and-switch going on here, it's nothing to complain about. Who else but wacky old Lou would deliver more than he promises?

—Jon Young

Polishing my precious china.



Bob Messineo

DAVID BOWIE
Stage
RCA CPL2-2913

There's no mystery to this Bowie. Here is a performer who has made a very nice living out of being ubiquitous, but the man presented here on **Stage** is all too predictable.

Stage is your basic double-live greatest hits set; and double-live greatest hits sets aren't really my forte, though I suppose it all depends on how you feel about the artist (now that's a cop-out). Beyond that, **Stage** hasn't much value. The little that works here works because it's basically good material, not because the live versions are terribly distinguished. The consistent over-arrangement of the tunes, the pretentiousness of the "David Bowie orchestra," and the distance of the actual recording all emphasize the particular faults in the weaker songs, which makes Bowie's increasingly present disco-cretinism and pseudo-rock become all the more obvious and annoying.

Better use of synthesizers could have made this live set a bit more lively. Christ, Fripp and Eno turn up everywhere now, how come you can never find them when you need 'em?

Stage's best side is its third, on which Bowie stops sounding like Chicago, and starts sounding like the Studio Albums Played Live. The versions here really don't seem significantly altered, at least not enough to dignify them. And when there is a noticeable difference, it's consistently for the worse. Side three would certainly be a lot nicer if it wasn't for the circumstances surrounding it, particularly that of We've Heard it Before. But still, it's the only real "different" side on the album; practically everything else on the other three sides sound like it could have been the follow-up single to "Macho Man." You get the idea.

This is one of the duller and more irritating live multi-LP sets to come along in a while. (Wait a second—Tull just released some embarrasing Double Live, didn't they?) Who knows, it might even rival **Wings Over America**. Even the Bowie freak (which I'm not) probably will admit that after a relative vivaciousness of **Heroes** (I said *relative*) **Stage** may be a concession to BOF-ness/MOR/AOR. That about covers it, doesn't it? Don't call it **Stage**. Call it **No More Enigmas**. Whatever happened to the heros?

—Tim Sommer

BIG STAR
Third
PVC 7903

At last, the third chapter of the Big Star story comes to light. In fact, it comes in two editions, US and UK, but for once having the English import is a distinct disadvantage. **The Third Album** (Aura AUL 703) lacks four of the best tracks on the US release, substituting "Downs" (an exercise in weirdness) and a fair take of "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On" on which Alex is backed by members of the Killer's band. In addition, the American LP is programmed far more sensitively, and packaged with more care.

That said, down to the business at hand, which is one of the 10 best albums of 1978, even though it was cut over three years ago. This isn't high-powered rock'n'roll filled with anthems galore and loads of nifty riffing, but rather a set of moving songs, fine fresh melodies and performances that do them justice. The difference between these and the rest of the Big Star canon is that by the time they were recorded Big Star was falling apart, and Ardent, the band's label, was being lost amid the corporate quicksand into which its distributor, Stax, had dived. The lyrics mainly reflect a sense of despair, of innocence lost, unlike the joyful exuberance of the first two albums.

Jim Dickinson's mostly perceptive production (there are moments of orchestral heavy-handedness) frames standout conventional numbers like "Stroke It Noel," the frenzied "Kizza Me," the Byrdsy white gospel of "Jesus Christ" and the Left Bankesih "For You," written and sung by Big Star drummer Jody Stephens, who doesn't appear on most of the record. In fact, the latter track is mainly a reminder that there was once a group, since this LP could otherwise have been called an Alex Chilton solo album. His is the desolation that colors the album's sombre side, that shouts "you can't have me, not for free," warns "take care not to hurt yourself," asks "get me out of here, I hate it here" in quiet desperation, and intones "you're a holocaust" with a mixture of distate, pity and resignation to someone who's gone past listening.

Perhaps there's room for this record on the shelves of a larger audience than Big Star reached before folding, but perhaps since it's not on Columbia or Warners we'll never know. But it's a brilliantly introspective, if often disturbing, work which, for all its lack of bombast, has more to say than most of the records put out since it was recorded.

—Jim Green

ELTON JOHN
A Single Man
MCA 3065

Elton John's nowhere, right? Well, consider the following artists, all of whom had Number One records either immediately preceeding or succeeding Elton: Stevie Wonder, Roberta Flack, Blue Swede, MFSB, Helen

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Well, it's that time of year again. Records are coming out so rapidly, it's impossible to keep up with them. If you're a regular Trouser Press reader, you know that a lot of the bands you read about here over the last couple of years now have several records out. The Jam and Ultravox (now minus their exclamation point) have recently released their third LPs, while XTC, 999, the Clash, the Buzzcocks, Wire and Radio Stars have their seconds out. Recent debut albums include those of the Flys, Siouxsie and the Banshees, the Rich Kids and the stunning solo debut by Ian Gomm, formerly of Brinsley Schwarz, by whom there are two reissues available. Send SASE for prices of these and other recent albums.

Reddy, Barry Manilow, Minnie Riperton, BJ Thomas, Neil Sedaka, and KC. Though it may not seem like much of a choice to snobs, it's true nevertheless that Elton has been one of the few '70s hitmakers who's actually played rock'n'roll. And on occasion some real *good* rock'n'roll. Thanks, kid.

A Single Man is Elton's return to action after the mopey **Blue Moves** and a long vacation. At first listen, not much has changed; his elegant piano dominates the sound, Paul Buckmaster's strings embellish now and then, and Elton warbles in his earnest yowl. If that's all you want, good enough. Enjoy.

However, some spark has clearly gone out. Feisty may seem like a condescending term, but that's what Elton's hits and standout LP tracks usually were. With the assistance of Bernie Taupin's pretentious lyrics, and electric guitars that cut like a knife, he was a punky little twerp who did spiffy stuff, rather than the wimp he might have been. But while his recent sabbatical may have been good for Elton's nerves, it's deadened his music. The edge is gone from the melodies; where are those hooks? He sings everything as if it were an upbeat love ballad, even the potentially tougher songs. It probably didn't help that Elton traded in Bernie for Gary Osborne, a much more conventional and less abrasive lyricist. Only with the pompous kitsch of "Madness," which also just happens to feature the record's only striking guitar, does he approach the tacky class of his earlier work.

The faceless charms of **A Single Man** tend to support the overworked tenet that artists are better when they're driven and unhappy. And as much as I would welcome even a song from this LP at the top of the charts, don't place any bets. If the delightful "Ego," from a few months back, couldn't make it, it's unlikely any of this will. Maybe Elton John is just out of style (and shape) and maybe we'll just have to wait until he gets annoyed enough to do something about it.

—Jon Young

NEIL YOUNG
Comes a Time
Reprise MSK 2266

On **Comes a Time** Neil Young goes all the way back to his folkie roots, reaching for an acoustic simplicity that he's never really attempted on record before. Unlike the sugary **Harvest**, with which this LP shares certain superficial traits, **Time** is (in this "sophisticated" era) almost an avant-garde statement, essentially just a boy and his guitar trying to sort out that perplexing Human Condition. Yet there's none of the drippy blahs about Neil's latest that many rockers (me, for one) associate with what is usually considered folk music. If rock'n'roll means directness and honesty of expression, then Neil's voice is pure rock'n'roll, regardless of the trappings; listen to him sing "There's a weight on you/But you can't feel it," and try to say he's fooling.

Nor does such a spare sound have to be thin. It's not one acoustic, it's six (?), creating towers of vibrant chords. Neil's harmony foil is Nicolette Larson, who functions much the way Emmylou did with Gram Parsons. Her strident tones—conventional harmonies are obviously out!—amplify the urgency of his already dramatic material, and as with country duets, there's an added element of down-home melodrama in having a man and woman square off on romantic tunes.

Neil Young may be to the '70s what Dylan (remember him?) was to the '60s; the main arena has become the individual rather than the whole of society. If he were just another glib doctor feelgood offering a lobotomy, Neil would be James Taylor. But Young doesn't provide answers, only questions. And like all the greatest, he lets off a lot of steam in the process and invites you to do the same.

—Jon (no relation) Young

AEROSMITH
Live Bootleg
Columbia PC2 35564

The only thing that matters with live albums is: 1) Do the versions of the studio songs match or exceed the originals?; 2) Are there new songs or unrecorded cover versions; if so, how are they; and 3) Does the live vinyl hold together as a worthwhile showcase?

1) Fluctual. None of the versions really exceed the power and *groove* of the studio versions, with "Back in the Saddle," opening the two-record set, as an absolute low point. Things get better with "Mama Kin," "S.O.S.," and "Sight for Sore Eyes" and peak with real hot versions of "Walk This Way" and "Sick as a Dog."

2) Sure, and not bad. "Come Together" is infinitely preferable to the **Sgt. Pepper's** soundtrack (providing one more good



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But don't you know I can't stand up steady.

reason, as if we need any more, not to buy it). "I Ain't Got You" is from 1973, a loving tribute but not much more. Aerosmith has got a lot of nerve to cover "Mother Popcorn" and it is hilarious, enough to satisy any James Brown fan with a sense of humor (yeah, it's good enough to testify, signify and qualify).

3) All said, you could spend your bucks on worse. Some of the mixes drown out the rhythm section, but that's almost immaterial unless this is "Pick on Jack Douglas" month. The closing one-two punch of "Draw the Line" (oddly not listed on the liner notes) and "Train Kept A Rollin' " does more than enough to prove the staying power of this devoted guitar band.

Aerosmith Live is a fun record. Of course, you can't see Steve Tyler's gymnastics, Joe Perry's sleek cool stance and space restricts me from elaborating on Brad Whitford's powerful rhythm playing, Tom Hamilton's dependable bass work and Joey "Hulk" Kramer's time-and-a-half solid drumming. However, this set vindicates Ira Robbins' falling-all-over-himself apologies for the justification of Aerosmith stories in Trouser Press. Aerosmith have all the reason in the world to continue to make great records (despite the disappointing **Draw the Line**), the talent to do so, and it'll be interesting to see if the band moves into new territory now this LP closes a major phase in their career.

A definite platinum record, and this is a group that works hard enough to deserve it. Isn't that refreshing? Merry Aeroxmas.

—Gary Sperrazza!

FM
Black Noise
Visa 7007

The number of great, even good, bands to emerge from Canada this decade is only understandable when you consider the relative population of the country. When BTO is your best export, one need hardly consider the lower rungs of the ladder. In recent years, the nation to the north has delivered Klaatu, the Diodes, and a few lesser known bands with quite a bit more to offer than your typical Rush metal. Now comes FM, the good band with the stinky name, to bring some modicum of respectability back to Canadian music, especially Canadian progressive music.

With a tip of the hat to everyone from the Moody Blues to Pink Floyd to the Beatles to Emerson, Lake and Palmer, FM offers synthesizers and a mild space tint to those not quite ready for Henry Cow or Magma. Their songs are catchy, effective, and to the point (which means short). The performances by the trio (thank god for overdubbing) are quite good, utilizing a wide variety of instruments that includes violin, glockenspiel, mandolin in contrast to the more conventional tools of the trade—guitar, bass, drums and synthesizer.

The best tune of the eight presented here is "Journey," a rousing bit of Nektarish pop that uses synthesizer as an effective lead instrument against a strong melodic hook. While the LP drags a bit towards the closer, the 10-minute title opus, most of the **Black Noise** album forges a neat blend between pop and electronics. Could this be the start of something big on the progressive front? Stay tuned to FM and see.

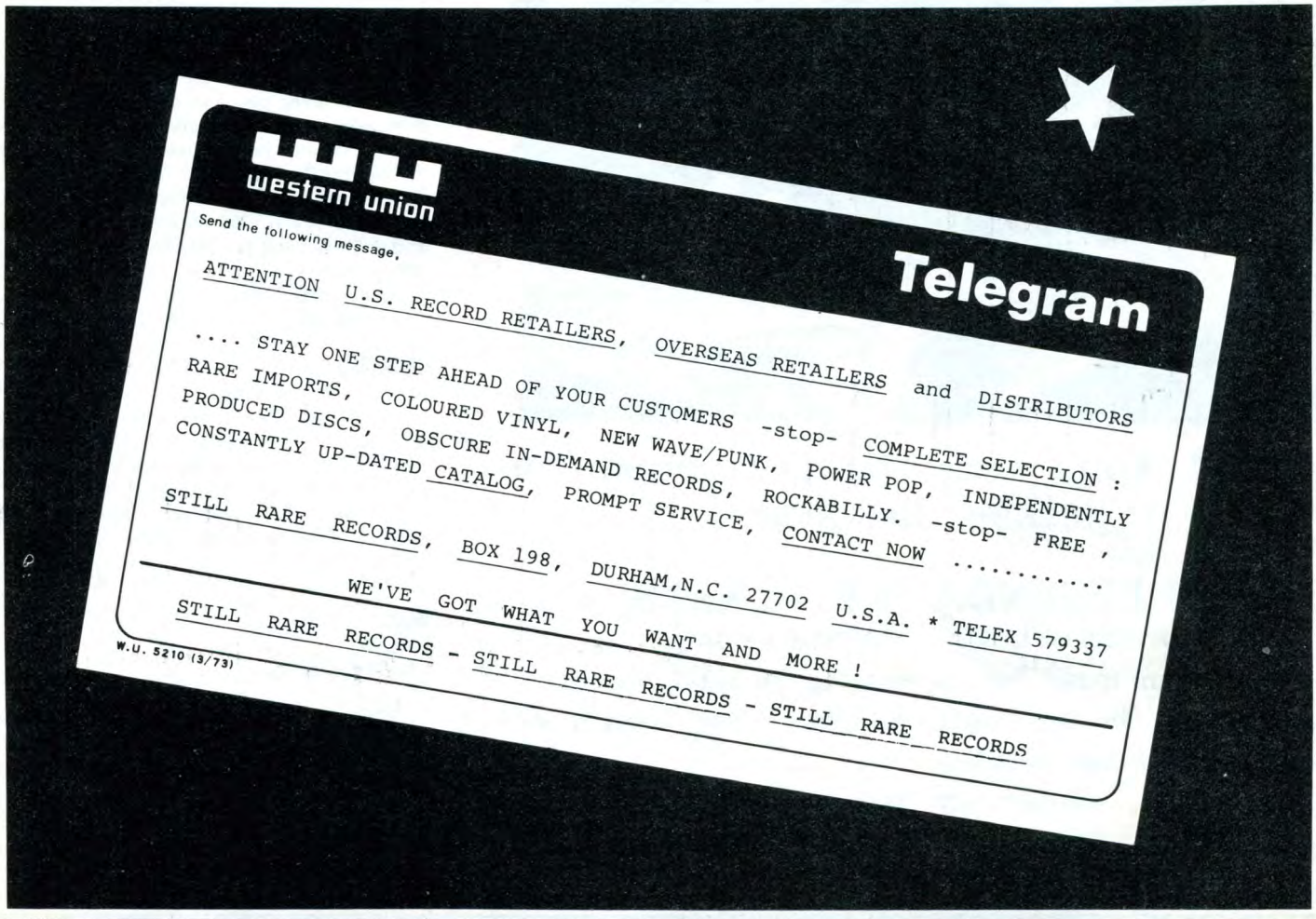
—Mick Keith

THE DODGERS
Love on the Rebound
Polydor PD-1-6174

Badfinger spent years living down the Beatle stigma and seeking to be recognized on their own terms. Along comes a surrogate Badfinger with the keyboardist from the band's farewell tour and aborted 1975 Warner Brothers LP, and blows it all to hell, sounding, on this long-delayed album, like Badfinger at their most devastatingly Beatlish. Most of **Love on the Rebound** is in fact solid, sonic Anglo-pop in the "No Matter What"/"Baby Blue" tradition. Interestingly, the rhythmically oriented use of guitar that was a staple of the Badfinger sound, is largely given over to soloing and decoration in the Dodgers. Instead, piano, bass and drums carry the bulk of the melodic load.

Mostly, **Love on the Rebound** is lotsa fun. Still, the same criticism could apply to the Dodgers as to the Pezband—I love what they do but can't help but feel they could do it with a little less calculation. Perhaps that's why the Dodgers, for all their taste, somehow miss the sting of Badfinger's best. They've got a lot of smarts, but not quite enough feeling. However, for a band that claims they don't know what they're doing, they do it pretty damn well.

—Peter Olafsen



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IMPORTS

PENETRATION
Moving Targets
Virgin V 2109

It's only slightly difficult to take a record pressed on glow-in-the-dark plastic seriously, but such is the level of total foolishness that the British record industry has slipped to. In the wake of pioneering efforts in colored vinyl and record packaging begun by the early new wave mavens, the business of colored limited edition bullshit has totally gotten out of hand, and rather than entice buyers and reviewers towards the music (remember the music?), it's begun to repel. Had I not been interested in hearing Penetration's album, all of the stupidity in design and pressing would have more than likely dissuaded me from bothering. (On top of which, I haven't heard a record with pressing sound quality this bad since the days of Buddah Records—face it, black is better!)

Fortunately, **Moving Targets** musically transcends its presentation, and shows the band, a five-piece from up North England somewhere, to be a primitivist Blondie of sorts, although that comparison is primarily relevant to lead singer Pauline Murray. Not as strong a voice perhaps, but definitely a better dancer and possibly a more interesting stylist than Ms. Debby. (In no way is Pauline an imitator of anyone's singing style, but it is worth noting that the album ends with Patti Smith's "Free Money" sung in a somewhat derivative manner.)

As a band, Penetration are onto something, but it may take a while to fully discover what that is. The songs vary between clever popdom and wailing punkdom; some are better than others, but there's enough quality here to bear admiration for this unhyped young band. The musicians are better than average, and avoid falling into the stereotypical new wave drone with tact and aplomb. The production by Mike Howlett (former Gong bassist—you figure it) is skillful without being too flashy. He has obviously added quite a bit to their sound, but never seems to overpower their identity the way some producers have done to young new wavers in the past.

Out of the recent crop of new wave latecomers who've been putting out first albums, Penetration is the only one I'd really like to hear more from. Maybe a US tour can be arranged—I saw them in England, and think they might go down quite well.

—Ira Robbins

BUZZCOCKS
Love Bites
UA UAG 30197

When a group has made a single as amazing as "What Do I Get?," they ought to be able to deliver an album better than this. I'd been skeptical about the Buzzcocks from the beginning—their home brew EP, first single, and first album all left something to be desired; namely the individuality to distinguish them from all the other struggling

that I don't know already.

post-Pistols outfits. Then they released "What Do I Get?" and the light bulb over the forehead lit brightly. An ultimate 45 with everything necessary to earn the Buzzcocks a place in the Great Singles of All Time record book. Unfortunately, the singles following "WDIG?" failed to duplicate its concise perfection, but I held out hope for a second album to consolidate their accomplishments and perhaps take the logical route towards further exploitation of their successful formula.

No such luck. **Love Bites** isn't a bad record; actually it's quite good, but not good enough. While the performances consistently raise the group above the sameyness of their debut album, **Another Music in a Different Kitchen**, Pete Shelley's songs just aren't strong enough to make a lasting impression this time out. Some of the tunes on the first side are quite good, most notably "Ever Fallen in Love" and "Sixteen Again," but neither exposes his true abilities as a pop craftsman. Side two is especially disappointing, with a pair of instrumentals and three other unexciting tunes in a row. Somehow the Buzzcocks don't seem to be the sort of band that ought to go in for non-vocal recording. Perhaps they have an ego problem with the sophisticated instrumentation of former singer Howard Devoto's band, Magazine, or maybe they're just sick of reading reviews dissecting Shelley's obsession with writing love songs (of a somewhat perverse nature), but I don't think instrumentals are the answer. I've not lost faith in the Buzzcocks yet, and they certainly have a lot to recommend them and this album, but for awhile I'm going to keep hoping for another ultimate single.

—Ira Robbins

WIRE
Chairs Missing
Harvest SHSP 4093

Wire are disconcerting, laconic yet eloquent in fragmented visions, jarring even at their most accessible. They disdain cliche, pushing out the limits of rock; the easy way is too boring.

They haven't been playing long, and are far from virtuosi, yet on **Chairs Missing** they sound tight as a watchspring, with all the precision and tension that implies. The new album has "only" 15 songs (reduced from the 21 on **Pink Flag**) and the sound has been fleshed out, largely due to their collaboration with producer Mike Thorne, who has adeptly aligned layers of sound, and contributed his own keyboard work. Their stripped-down rhythms take on the quality of being familiar yet somehow alien, just as their bleak lyrics lift the everyday from its context and illumine its ironies.

They aren't simply an eccentric pop band, and they aren't a bunch of studied oddballs with a cute line in de-evolutionary jokes, nor angry young new wavers stumping for pogo power. I suppose I could go on about how "Marooned" has an eerie Pink Floyd-ish tinge to it, that "Outdoor Miner" has a lilting melody, that "Too Late" is a furious rocker, after which you could say you know what these guys are about. But you wouldn't. You have to listen for yourself.

—Jim Green

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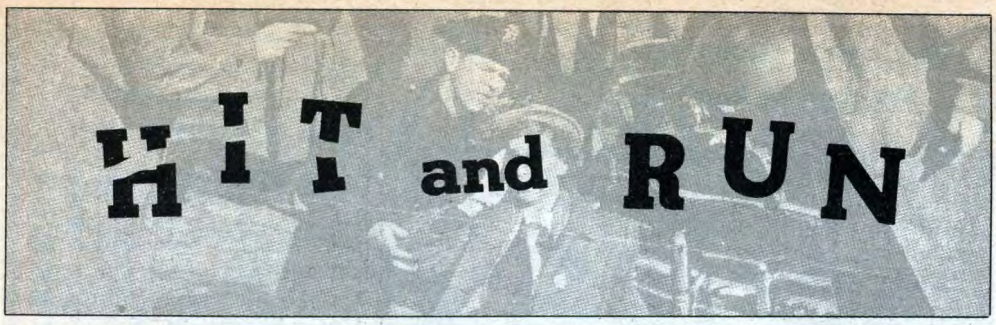


By Jon Young

DAVID COVERDALE'S WHITESNAKE/ Snakebite
(United Artists UA-LA915-H)

One side is a stiff tough-guy attempt from early '77. The '78 stuff is a different story; it spits real fire. As a vocalist, Coverdale slots in neatly between Frankie Miller and Paul Rodgers, and his hot group has the sense to hold back and let him go. Since neither Frankie nor Paul has been himself lately, this makes a more than adequate substitute.

BABY GRAND/Ancient Medicine
(Arista AB 4200)

Although they like Springsteen and Steely Dan a lot, that doesn't stop Baby Grand from serving up their own dynamic brand of urban grits. And if you groove on this sort of nervous drama, you're probably willing to overlook the lack of humor. BG may be too "mature" or modern to rock'n'roll, but they manage to rock quite classily.



TANYA TUCKER/TNT
(MCA 3066)

You'd never know Tanya Tucker did country pap from the way she rocks out on this LP. Stop waiting for Linda or Emmylou to get rockin', 'cause her versions of "Not Fade Away" and "Heartbreak Hotel" are the real hot thing. Even the inevitable maudlin numbers aren't as cloying as before; "It's Nice to Be With You" could be vintage Connie Francis, so accomplished is its pop puffery. Crossover potential aplenty.

DAVE MASON/Very Best Of
(ABC BA-6032)
JOE WALSH/The Best Of
(ABC AA-1083)

Early solo Mason, repackaged for the umpteenth time; still, it's hard to condemn any set with a large chunk of **Alone Together**. The Walsh collection demonstrates that Joe's eccentric vocals and lurching guitars have more kick than his fellow Eagles could ever hope to muster. And he's a lot more fun, too.

THE CRYERS
(Mercury SRM-1-3734)

The Cryers' healthy respect for old-time Top 40 conventions generally serves them well: Beatle/Twilley harmonies, tight brisk guitars, and finger-poppin' tunes. There is the occasional drippy ballad, but never mind. This nifty debut keeps the faith just like Badfinger useta.

PLANET EARTH!
(Pye import NSPL 18556)

A busman's holiday for art rockers, featuring Softies Mike Ratledge and Karl Jenkins, plus a host of others. But don't be misled, because this is light-hearted silliness. The uptempo tunes are as danceable as disco (practically *are* disco) and the slow ones are spaced-out muzak. Imbecilic entertainment that should be shunned by sensitive purists.

STEELEYE SPAN/Live at Last
(Chrysalis CHR 1199)

Steeleye's swansong is a good token LP for clods like me who find extensive immersion in traditional music just too fruity. That funky accordion is enough to make a believer out of anyone, even those put off by the usually stilted vocals. Definitely don't miss their version of the Four Seasons' "Rag Doll," a bizarre synthesis if there ever was one.

AL STEWART/Time Passages
(Arista AB 4190)

There's more to Al Stewart than first impressions would suggest. His voice is thin, but has character; his songs, while conventional, have intelligent lyrical twists and the music turns agreeably, if not sensationally. Although **Time Passages** can be taken as the musical quaalude we've come to expect from singer-songwriters, its low-key (perhaps *too* low-key) workings offer much to someone who wants more.

• • •

JETHRO TULL/Live Bursting Out
(Chrysalis CH2 1201)

Jethro Tull epitomizes the super-popular band whose appeal is difficult to accept or to dismiss. On the one hand, they're hardly incompetent or talentless. On the other, they're pedestrian and emotionally sterile.

This two-record live set (surprise!) is for fans only, and would have benefitted enormously from the excision of Ian Anderson's between-song patter. And the label says "Bursting," the spine "Busting." Which?

BECKER/FAGEN/DIAZ/You Gotta Walk It Like You Talk It (Or You'll Lose That Beat)
(Visa IMP 7005)

The Steely Dan sound is already evident on this prehistoric artifact, albeit in a less sophisticated (i.e., pretentious) and more innocent form. On the title tune Donald Fagen sings like he's holding his nose, which is amusing.

TED NUGENT/Weekend Warriors
(Epic FE 35551)

Since Ted Nugent really is superior to most junk guitarists, why doesn't he push himself a little? (Like he does on "Venom Soup.") You can tell exactly what he's going to do next, which some people might consider a bit too predictable. For the less particular, though, Nugent still cuts loose with more raw power than 10 of the competition. If you care.

CRAWLER/Snake, Rattle and Roll
(Epic JE 35482)

A little rattling and a lot of rolling. Crawler have dropped the fiery gusto of the Kossoff days in favor of that smooth sound that often sells in the millions, and they do it well. Methinks they need a more distinctive voice to grab the multitudes, however.

SMALL FACES/78 in the Shade
(Atlantic SD 19171)

They sound too polite, or indifferent, to get involved; while these may not be the world's greatest songs, more spirited performances would help quite a bit. Regardless, Kenney Jones is still an ace basher.

CARL PERKINS/Ol' Blue Suede's Back
(Jet JZ 35604)

Now I wouldn't knock Carl Perkins for a million dollars, but how much would you



expect from a genius that hasn't been one for 20 years? Although the echo provided by Presley producer Felton Jarvis is a pleasing touch, Carl's decision to do oldies makes it impossible for this LP to be the contemporary rockabilly manifesto it might have been. Not that Perkins partisans should pass this by; the old boy's still got rhythm and he ain't triflin'.

RUSH/Hemispheres
(Mercury SRM-1-3743)

Throw away the record and keep the cover. It's a genuine trash classic.

SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY AND THE ASBURY JUKES/Hearts of Stone
(Epic JE 35488)

Plenty of friendly help: Springsteen wrote two, co-authored another, and Miami Steve wrote a bunch and produced. Why doesn't it jell? Southside's vocals lack that vital commitment of Solomon Burke, Otis Redding, and even Bruce (at his best). Great soul singers don't act cool, they emote. He

No don't ask me to apologize

does connect occasionally, so it's hardly a lost cause; if Johnny's serious about this, he's got to loosen up a great deal.

URIAH HEEP/Fallen Angel
(Chrysalis CHR 1204)

Heep sound pretty spirited for a band whose old fans now regard them as lepers. But there's something missing; this isn't obnoxious, or too heavy, or excessive in any way. I mean, what's da point? Any number of less infamous bands could have pulled off these even-tempered rockers. So it goes.

TRIUMPH/Rock & Roll Machine
(RCA AFL 1-2982)

Smoke bombs! Life on the road! Power chords and aimless solos! Sedate me!

AXIS/It's A Circus World
(RCA AFL 1-2950)

Former Derringer cohorts Danny Johnson and Vinny Appice present their own version of metal death and destruction. Andy Johns' sludgy production emphasizes the repetitive nature of Axis' music, and that's the one thing this power trio does *not* need. Otherwise, OK. Dig these lyrics from "Soldier of Love": "Cannonballs and war calls don't phase [sic] me/You see I'm a one-man army."

LUCIFER'S FRIEND/Good Time Warrior
(Elektra 6E-159)

More agreeable FM "rock," with sunny harmonies, springy beats, and just the slightest trace of aggression. Not bad, not good, just another slice of now-generation muzak. Thank Queen.

RORY GALLAGHER/Photo-Finish
(Chrysalis CHR 1170)

Rave-up time yet again, as Rory dutifully carries the banner once shared with Johnny Winter and Ten Years After. Although you can't fault his guitar playing within its narrow limits, I wonder if he wouldn't like to speak to someone other than his pre-sold cult for a change.

JEBEDIAH/Rock 'N' Soul
(Epic JE 35592)

No kiddin', disco versions of Stones tunes. So tasteless it's funny. Buy it and offend your friends!

FLINT
(Columbia JC 35574)

Farnerless Funk, and not half dreadful. Don Brewer's plaintive white-boy wails have a klutzy kind of soul, y'all. And Flint must be nice guys, 'cause former GFR producers Todd Rundgren and Frank Zappa play here and there. Grunt and say yeah!

• • •

STEPHEN STILLS/Thoroughfare Gap
(Columbia JC 35380)

Even those who've stuck with Steve through the worst are gonna be disappointed with this. The quasi-disco beats, extensive strings and horns, and vocal help from Dave Mason and Andy Gibb all suggest he's trying to renovate his sound for today's scene. Too bad the enthusiasm didn't spill over into his writing, which remains monotonous. Only the title song, all of six years old, has the folksy funk that once made him worthwhile.

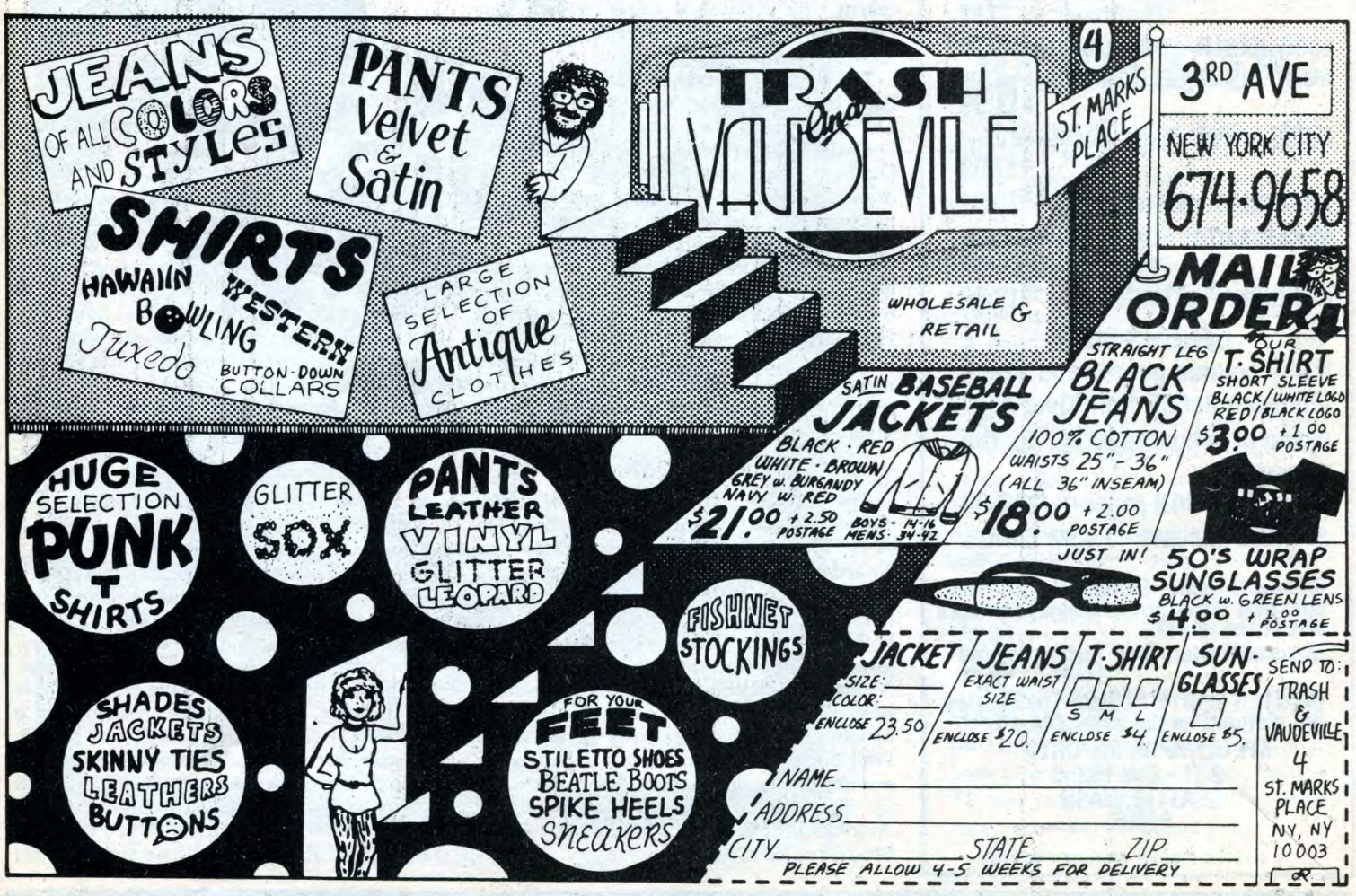
JIM CAPALDI/Daughter of the Night
(RSO RS-1-3037)

Can this be the same JC I remember? At the best parts he sounds like he wants to be Hall & Oates; the rest is just boogie oogie oogie, and not even good at that. Brief contributions from Steve Winwood and Paul Kossoff are all that's happening. What gives?



ERIC CARMEN/Change of Heart
(Arista AB 4184)

Eric Carmen used to be a corny guy who could rock out, and that's what made it possible for me to enjoy even sap like "All By Myself." Like McCartney, he seemed to have a lively r'n'r soul that survived his very worst excesses. No longer. Eric's gone legit and thrown out the reference points that implied he had soul. Now agreeable froth like "Hey Deanie" and "Someday" is merely an aberration from his Vegas-schmaltz formula. Listen to Barry Manilow instead; it's less depressing.



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AMERICA UNDERGROUND

By Jim Green

Nutters of the Month

The Beatles Costello: Washing the Defectives (EP)—Pious JP 310. It's happened! The Reunion! Two of the Fab Five!! The Sidewinders, that is—Eric "Slowhand" Rosenfeld has, for this here piece o' PVC, linked up with Andy Paley (backing vo, rhythm g). "Soldier of Love"—roll over Neil Innes and tell the Rutles the news! (Vocal by Jim "Paul is Dead But I'm Not" Skinner.) Plus "Slowhand" giving his fingers a workout on exciting instrumentals: "I Feel Fine," "Theme from a Summer Place" (!?) and "Outer Limits" (don't touch your TV!)! Great picture sleeve! And, as the BCs note, "Collectors—Rare **Black** Vinyl!!" ($1.50 from Pious Recs., 102 Charles St., #630, Boston, MA 02114.) !!!???!!!

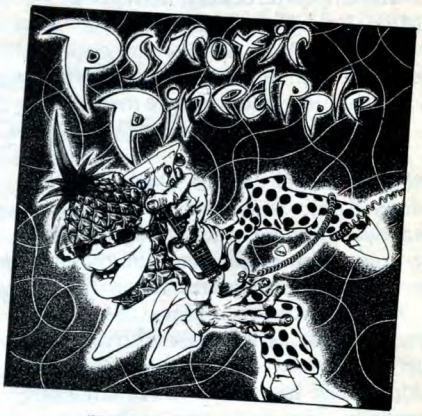
Guitars of the Month

The Pack: "Get Off My Hog" b/w "Rawhide"—Slash 5859. Yep, these were formerly Link Wray's Raymen, so you know they ain't tellin' ya to climb onta that chicken there instead, they talkin' 'bout 'cycles! Excellent Link Wray-style guitar by Jack Van Horn, especially on the cover of Wray's hit, "Rawhide." Smokin'!

The Psycotic Pineapple: "I Want Her So Bad" b/w "Say That You Will"—Pynotic. On the A-side the, uh, PPs cover the Spitballs song written by the Rubinoos' TV Dunbar, who assisted with the fab sleeve drawing, in proto-American punk style—tres psychotic and definitely pineappley. But the flip's even better, a spiff melody enhanced, despite the intended "ineptness," by squirts of squealy organ and ginchy syke-o-delic guitar (courtesy one Henricus Holtman). The spelling on the sleeve is variable (base guitar, psychotic, Holtman's name spelled two different ways), but no matter, it's a grate record. (No address given.)

Pop It To Me

The Tweeds: "Underwater Girl" b/w "Memories" & "Poscard"—Autobahn TDS A-21. The accompanying note said that the Tweeds had gotten better since the last single a year ago. I hoped so, 'cuz they showed potential but their execution was kinda doofy, both playing and engineering. Now the flip sides are better (tho' no great shakes), but the A-side is MARVELOUS. Nothing new, but fresh sounding just the same, a fine, fine melody and slick guitar work (gutsy, too). Well done all around! Now if ya can learn not to pose for sleeve shots like ya just woke up, fellas...(Send your $2 immediately to Autobahn Recs., 1440 Beacon St., #414, Brookline, MA 02146.)





Gary Charlson: "Real Life Saver" b/w "Not the Way It Seems"—Titan 8914. Kansas City has more to offer than a couple of ballclubs and a good steak, as testified to on this well-crafted single by Gary, and records like this only make you wonder that record companies don't try scouring the hinterlands for talent, since it's there waiting to make enjoyable, commercial-sounding records (pardon me, "saleable product") like this, with good vocals—heck, good everything. If the kind of money and guidance spent on tripe on labels like RCA and ABC (among many others) were put behind records like this one and the Tweeds, we might be able to start enjoying listening to top 40 radio again. End of (old) complaint. ($2 from Titan Rec., PO Box 5443, Kansas City, MO 64131.)

Prix: "Love You Tonight (Saturday's Gone)" b/w "Every Time I Close My Eyes"—Miracle MR-22222. Rec-biz minimagnate Jon Tiven steps out once more, supplying some "Here Comes the Sun" guitar behind the dulcet McCartneyesque tones of Tommy Hoehn on the A-side, and a quickie (1:43) of the same sort on the reverse. Written by Tiven and Hoehn, "directed" by Tiven, and sounding as good as or better than everything Hoehn's cut elsewhere (including his London LP). Howzat for a plug, Jon? Now where's my fiver? ($2

If I'm gonna go down

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•Please make an effort to do a nice-looking ad. If it looks like shit, we probably won't run it—we'll just send it back to you. We work too hard making TP look nice to have it messed up by a hasty, scribbled ad. Thank you.

Cheap Trick Contest

As a special to 10 lucky **TP** readers, we're giving away copies of **Cheap Trick From Tokyo to You** which includes seven live tracks from their first Japanese tour. All you have to do to enter is finish one of these two sentences in 50 words or less:

"I *love* Cheap Trick because..."
***or* "I *hate* Cheap Trick because..."**

Judging will be by Trouser Press and/or Cheap Trick themselves, and will be based on wit and poise, regardless of which sentence you choose to complete (although why anyone would enter a contest about a band they hate is beyond us...)

Gentle Giant Contest

We've got 10 sets of the new LP, **Giant for a Day**, plus accompanying promo stuff for 10 lucky winners of this contest. Just answer the five questions correctly, and let us pick 10 correct winners at random:

1. What was the Shulmans' band before G.G.?
2. Who produced Giant's first two LPs?
3. What's the name of their ode to punk?
4. Who drummed in Giant before John Weathers?
5. How many Shulmans have been in Giant, and what are their names?

Deadline for both contests is January 31, 1979; only winners will be notified. Send all entries to Trouser Press Contests, 147 West 42nd St., New York, NY 10036. Enter as often as you like.

from Miracle Recs., 175 Thompson St., Box 520, New York, NY 10012.)

Punk It To Me

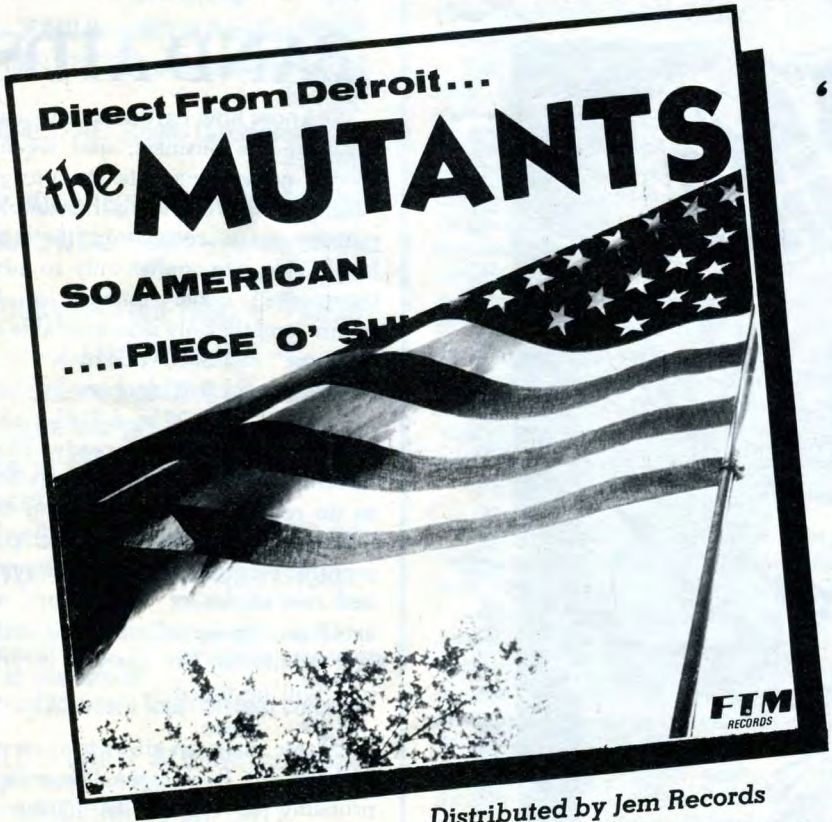
The Pagans: "Street Where Nobody Lives" b/w "What's This Shit Called Love?"—Drome DR 1. This is some wild 'n' woolly wailing from the Cleveland area, sorta in the tradition of the Dead Boys, but with a sense o' humor (a Cle-band rarity, it seems). And when was the last time you heard a guitar *growl*? With better songs these guys could be famous, he said in a musical murmur. ($2 from Drone Recs., 11800 Detroit, Lakewood, OH 44107.)

The Last: "She Don't Know Why I'm Here" b/w "Bombing of London"—Bomp 119; The Last: "Every Summer Day" b/w "Hitler's Brother"—Backlash BS-002. When I was in L.A. a while back, people on the scene and in the know told me the Last were a good band that hadn't matured quite enough yet, particularly pointing to guitarist/writer Joe Nolte as one to watch. On the strength of these two singles I'd agree, although I find it hard to recommend either; in both cases, the production and especially the engineering is fuzzy and muffled. But underneath it all I think I hear two good songs (the A-sides), the first buried under factory sounds chugging with an organ piping like the lunch whistle, the second a tuneful summer song concealed beneath the energy overload and bad sound. Every so often some biting guitar licks emerge, too. Put it so's we can hear it, Joe! (The first is available in some stores, or write Bomp, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510, the second is $2.88 from Rhino Recs., 1716 Westwood Blvd., L.A., CA 90024.)

Arthur's Dilemma: "Up To You" b/w "Kicks"—C.U.N.T. I recently met this English fellow who claimed to have been with Starry Eyed and Laughing towards its end. Now, Arthur May has surfaced in this band. When I heard this 45, I thought it was amusing new wave cum music hall (A-side) and silly punk parody ("Kicks"). Yet when I saw 'em live I was knocked out—a powerful and hilarious band, far better than this indicates. ($2 from C.U.N.T. Recs., 43 West 29th, New York, NY 10001.)

Quick Pitches

No Akron Sound art rock for **Teacher's Pet**, nossir; "Hooked On You" b/w "To Kill You" (Clone 008) are hallmarked by hard-rocking guitar gracing well-performed, if kind of mediocre, material (Clone Recs., PO Box 6014, Akron, OH 44312)...**The News**, from the evidence of their self-made 45, "She's So Square" b/w "The Kids Are Dancing," are about where the Tweeds were a year ago—this is barely the level of a practice demo (and the drumming is clumsy). But the singing's good and the songs show promise; may be in a few months...(Distributed by Bomp, but just to be sure the band gets the bread, send to Eddy Delbridge, 822 Rhode Island, Rock Springs, WY 82901.)...**The Zeros**' "Beat Your Heart Out" b/w "Wild Weekend" (Bomp 118) shows the so-called Mexican Ramones to far better advantage than their first 45; better material and guitar sound, especially the wild axe ending on "Weekend."



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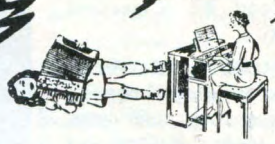

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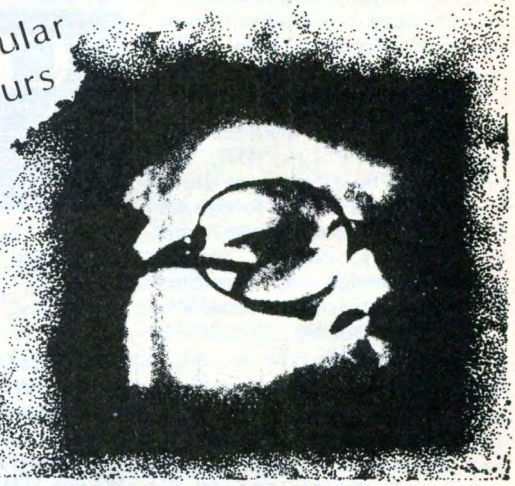



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OUTER LIMITS

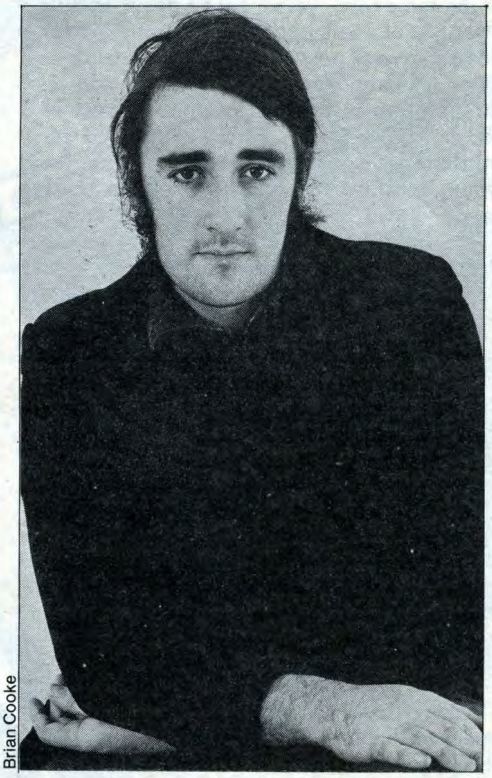
Gong Show Comes to New York

By John Paige

The night before the Zu Nu Music Manifestival took place, Giorgio Gomelski's Chelsea townhouse was brimming with activity. Listeners jammed the rather small basement as Gong founder Daevid Allen exhaustively rehearsed "New York Gong" in the intricacies of the Gong trilogy they were to perform. Various alternative music/media people had taken over the first floor: writers and progressive radio programmers exchanged information on their situations and discussed formulative plans for a US new music network, proposed at a conference earlier in the day. The second floor, a bit more sparsely populated due to an overripe catbox therein, served as a meeting place for traveling and lodging arrangements. On the top floor, Gomelski was twisting the cap back on a flask of scotch and attempting to explain the next day's concert scheduling to guitarist Fred Frith. His descriptions of the groups grew progressively more outlandish until Frith broke out laughing, "Giorgio, I'm afraid you've done it this time! This concert will be the end of your reputation as an international promoter!"

Admittedly, things looked a bit shaky as some 20 bands were scheduled to play in a 12-hour period. The sound man had walked out that afternoon and several groups had cancelled, leaving numerous artists to be rescheduled and reassured. But Gomelski, the former manager of the Stones and Yardbirds who later worked with the Soft Machine, Magma, and Gong, bulldozed right through, alternately invoking his inspiring-reassuring or gruff-insistent personas as the situation required.

Consequently, around 2 p.m. on Sunday, October 8th, the doors of the Entermedia Theatre opened to reveal an impressive-looking painted backdrop combining urban and intergalactic motifs, and a stage still swarming with staff and crew members putting the finishing touches on the set and equipment. The concert started about an hour-and-a-half later with Jayne Bliss-Nodland, who read electronically-treated poetry accompanied by two members of the Public Access Synthesizer Studios. The duo then took over and created some initially interesting electronic music which ultimately wilted over the course of a too-long set. This proved to be the story of the afternoon portion of the concert as the New York conceptual punks commandeered the stage. Most of these, such as Blinding Headache, "The Girls," Arsenal, and Theoretical Girls, had the appearance of groups who had never played in public before—though in all fairness, most of these groups had a few interesting ideas. Their lack of musical competence and their aggressive posturing and long sets soon wore out their welcome with the audience. While not unduly hostile, the audience began to pelt the groups with jibes like "Leave town!," "In-a-Gadda-Da-Vida!," and—to a guitarist tuning up—"Why bother?" When a musician tripped over a cord, knocking a pile of equipment to the floor, the audience cheered.



Brian Cooke

FRED FRITH
Noise and songs

Armed with a computer-triggered synthesizer which looked like a silver-plated bong, Dr. Space put the musical portion of the program back on track with his imaginative and colorful electronics. At this point, feeling somewhat cooped-up and hungry, I stepped out for some foodage, returning in time to witness the audience's enthusiasm for Robal, a competent fusion ensemble.

Now warmed up to the event, the crowd parried cries of "Fripp!" with those for Frith. An enthusiastic welcome greeted Washington, D.C.'s Muffins and their stop-start sound geometrics which ranged from Beefheartian/Magmaesque saxophone stomps to quieter interludes of the Canterbury persuasion. Daevid Allen thought they provided the high point of the concert. For me, however, the highlight occurred around midnight, after ex-Magma saxophonist Yochk'o Seffer's group Neffesh Music had played an intense, soulful set, when Fred Frith took the stage to "make a lot of noise for a bit and then play a few songs." The "noise" was produced by two guitars laid alongside each other, head to tail, which Frith played simultaneously using strings, bows and mallets, coaxing out sounds akin to what an orchestra of tuned singing saws and a free improvisational electric string section might be able to produce. Frith was then joined by Peter Blegvad, Chris Cutler, and Billy Swamm for a couple of high-spirited and literate Slapp Happy numbers and a pataphysical tune called "Actual Frenzy."

The Zu Band was next, and I was sorry the espresso machine in the lounge had broken down. The audience, flagging a bit, grew more attentive as the Zu Band was joined by Gilli Smith for a "Mother Gong" set. Complete with costumes, theatrics, and her electronically-treated "space whisper," Gilli supplied the goddess/prostitute counterpart to Gong as she had on their earlier LPs, but with a stronger feminist leaning evident.

It was almost 2 a.m. when Daevid Allen reappeared and announced that, in order to inaugurate the first US performance by Gong, he was going to reveal the complete story of Zero the Hero for the very first time, spliced in with most of the material from Gong's Radio Gnome Trilogy. Even though the collector in me was eager to see Gong perform, I was somewhat apprehensive because much of the ground originally pioneered by Gong had reached a point of diminishing returns for me. As it turned out, though, Daevid's good humor and (dare I say it in the '70s?) vibes turned the trilogy material into an uplifting ritual. New York acquitted themselves admirably on the eastern-flavored, modal, electronic jazz-rock material, and Chris Cutler infused the songs with conviction and authority through his rolling, explosive drumming.

Around 3:20, shortly after the lyric "cops at the door" from "Perfect Mystery" had been sung, New York's Finest did indeed begin to pour in through the doors of the theatre to close down the concert because of alleged noise complaints. Daevid, undaunted, launched into "Isle of Everywhere," and I flashed on the last reel of "A Night at the Opera," where the police try to lure Harpo and Chico offstage. Instead, the mikes were cut off, then the power, and, finally, the lights. But the drums continued for some minutes in the darkness, accompanied by the thunderous, synchronized clapping of the audience, now starkly illuminated by the movie lights of a French film crew. A most appropriate closing for an alternative festival: The concert didn't end, it disappeared in the darkness—a perfect set-up for the sequel.

(Psst!! Interested in helping set up a new music network for sharing information, music, and concerts? Tentatively planned are Gong and Art Bears tours. Write Operation Wavelink, 12117 Portree Drive, Rockville, MD 20852, if you have access to radio or print media, concert halls, etc.) ■

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ROCK THERAPY CASE HISTORIES

In Which the Good Doctor Faces Rock Therapy's Greatest Challenge to Date: De-Evolutionary Therapy!

By Dr. Joseph Sasfy

I had been following the incidents in the **L.A. Times** even before I received the subpoena. On October 9, the paper reported that one Rupert Small, a sophomore at UCLA, was found walking rigidly in the pattern of a five-foot square in the front of his dormitory. What was unusual, said his roommate, were the extremely abrupt, almost "robotlike" right angle turns Rupert was making. Small said he was practicing for "football in the future."

On October 18, another story. Lloyd Mooney, a shakes-and-fries man at a McDonald's in Riverside, had begun to produce these classic foodstuffs regardless of customer demand. More amazing was that he was working at a constant rate—a shake every 58 seconds, fries every three minutes, 18 seconds! Mooney told his fellow employees he was willing to wait for the customers to synchronize their hunger with his production.

Finally, on the 20th, the **Times** reported that Bubba Blount, an assembly line worker at a Chevrolet plant, had been fired for "bizarre performance." Blount, responsible for placing two ashtrays in each new Chevy Nova, had begun fitting the Novas with 30 to 40 ashtrays each. Before his dismissal, Bubba had maintained that there would be more ashes and refuse in the future as more things decomposed. (By the way, the 25 Novas Bubba outfitted are now collectors' items.)

By this article, I had noted some commonalities in the three incidents. All of the individuals had used a phrase—"doing their part in a world falling apart"—and all had mentioned that a Beverly Hills psychotherapist, Dr. Lars Wingnutt, had helped in, what they called "their personal de-evolution."

In early November I received the subpoena requesting my presence at the L.A. Superior Court to testify in a malpractice suit against Dr. Wingnutt, filed by the families of Small, Mooney, and Blount. Additionally, the suit brought to the attention of the California Board of Psychologists the question of the scientific integrity and legality of the specific therapeutic techniques employed by Wingnutt. To my amazement, Wingnutt's pre-trial deposition stated that he had used a nationally-recognized treatment method known as Rock Therapy! He also mentioned that he used only the music of a group called "Devo" in his Rock Therapy.

As I remarked to Rockin' Farley Wank on our flight to L.A., "Farley, it's important that we preserve the integrity of Rock Therapy. At the same time, we've got to prove that in the hands of a crackpot like Wingnutt—who uses dangerous post-rock'n'roll musical constructions like Devo—Rock Therapy can be turned into a instrument of evil. It's sort of like genetic research, Farley. We need responsible safeguards to prevent the kind of dehumanization that has occurred in these cases."

"Un huh," Farley nodded. "You know, Doc, I'd really like to get one of them Novas with all the ashtrays 'cause I do smoke some butts."

When the judge called for my testimony, I thought the simplest approach to proving the benefits of my therapy would be to get Farley on the stand to report on my cure of his incessant stuttering. The bailiff asked Farley if he promised "to tell the whole truth, nothing but the truth," etc. Farley gulped and answered, "I...I...uh...I...uh...uh...I...uh..." After what seemed an eternity in hell, the judge asked Farley to sit down because he couldn't give the oath. I was red-faced and stunned that my most famous cure might have just stuttered Rock Therapy into oblivion.

Seizing on my failure, Dr. Wingnutt approached the jury and asked if he might give a brief demonstration of *his* musical therapy in order to make its benefits apparent. With a sneer on his face, he looked my way and said to the jury, "Unfortunately, ladies and gentlemen, it is often the case that the originator of a technique is not able to perfect its application."

He then turned to the elaborate and powerful sound system he had brought to court and gave a nod to his assistant. Immediately the quirky techno-rock of Devo flooded the room. As the music continued, five minutes...ten minutes, I noticed the jurors were starting to twitch their heads in quick, jerky movements. The judge was doing the same, as well as pounding his gavel in arhythmic bursts. The scene had degenerated into surrealistic sci-fi as the judge's and jurors' heads mechanically rotated 45°, back and forth, like cuckoo birds.

Wingnutt had not programmed the music like the album however. Instead he had rearranged the songs and varied the playing speeds and volumes to create an aural nightmare. He had obviously seized upon the most 1984ish elements of Devo and was using them to destroy primal synapses and institute, in their place, simple rote behavioral patterns that lacked feeling or intelligence.

Wingnutt now roared at the jury, "Am I not innocent?" The jury, now robot-like, answered his question in a clipped, nasal singsong, "You are not guilty."

"Am I not innocent?" Wingnutt screamed.

"You are not guilty," the jury chirped.

I don't know whether it was Farley's rockabilly instincts or memories of the voodoo he had seen practiced in Louisiana as a child, but he let out a rebel yell and stormed Wingnutt's sound system, yanking the Devo tape out of the deck by his teeth as the bailiff dragged him away. He broke loose temporarily and threw another tape at me yelling, "Let it rock, Doc!"

I jammed the tape into the deck not knowing what to expect. The judge and jurors were twitching like automatons, chanting, "You are not guilty, you are not guilty," while Wingnutt continued, "Am I not innocent?" Then suddenly from the sound system came that biologically primal organ connection that signalled the intro to the Kingsmen's Rock Therapy classic, "Louie, Louie." As that slurred, beer-drenched, frathouse vocal started, the heads stopped twitching and started bobbing. One juror started to fondle himself, two others got into some dry humping, and the judge got into a wild frug with the bailiff.

By the time the organ faded out and things settled down, it was clear Wingnutt and his de-evolutionary techno-therapy had lost to the primal urges residing in all men. When the jurors returned, a guilty verdict was quickly handed down. The judge then asked my advice on the matter of Wingnutt, Rock Therapy, and Devo.

"Your honor, it is critical that you realize that Rock Therapy is merely a vehicle or medium of treatment. Just as a hypodermic needle can carry penicillin to combat infection or heroin to cloud reality, my therapy can deliver the slurpy American rock'n'roll to relieve tension and promote vigor or Devo-type music to hasten the arrival of the brave, new world of synthesizers and frozen tacos.

"As for Wingnutt, he should be assigned to my care in order to receive intensive Rock Therapy.

"As for Devo, your honor, I have heard their album and seen their live performances, and find them safe and good entertainment for the whole family in the tradition of P.T. Barnum and Alice Cooper. Although danger obviously lurks in their music, it is the seriousness with which they are regarded by a generation raised on Star Trek reruns that causes the real problem. They are simply harmless theatre, although I might add that the choreography and costuming is better in the Lido de Paris, now in its 20th year at the fabulous Stardust Hotel on the strip in Las Vegas."

"Thank you, Doctor Sasfy. Court adjourned." ■

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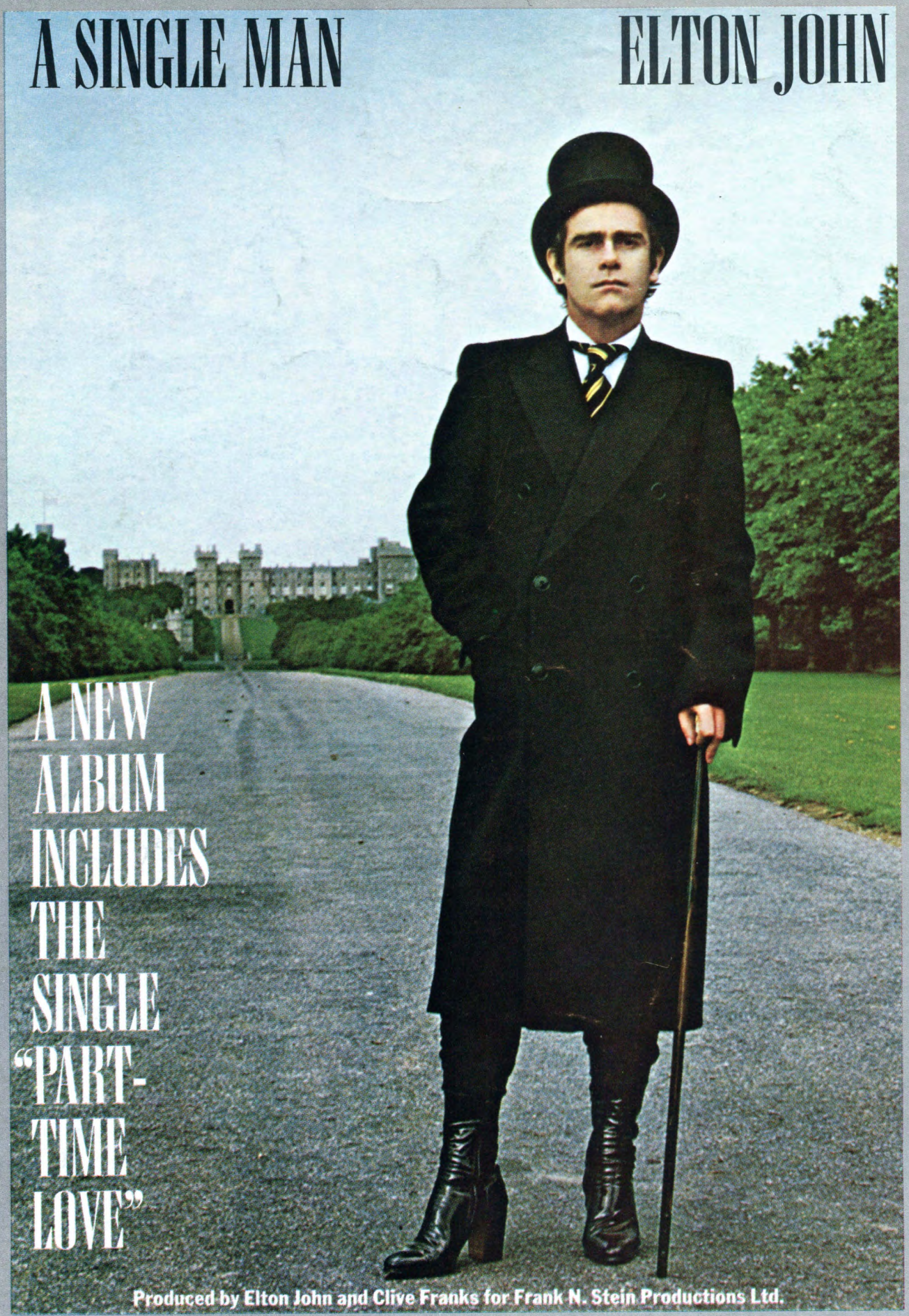

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