

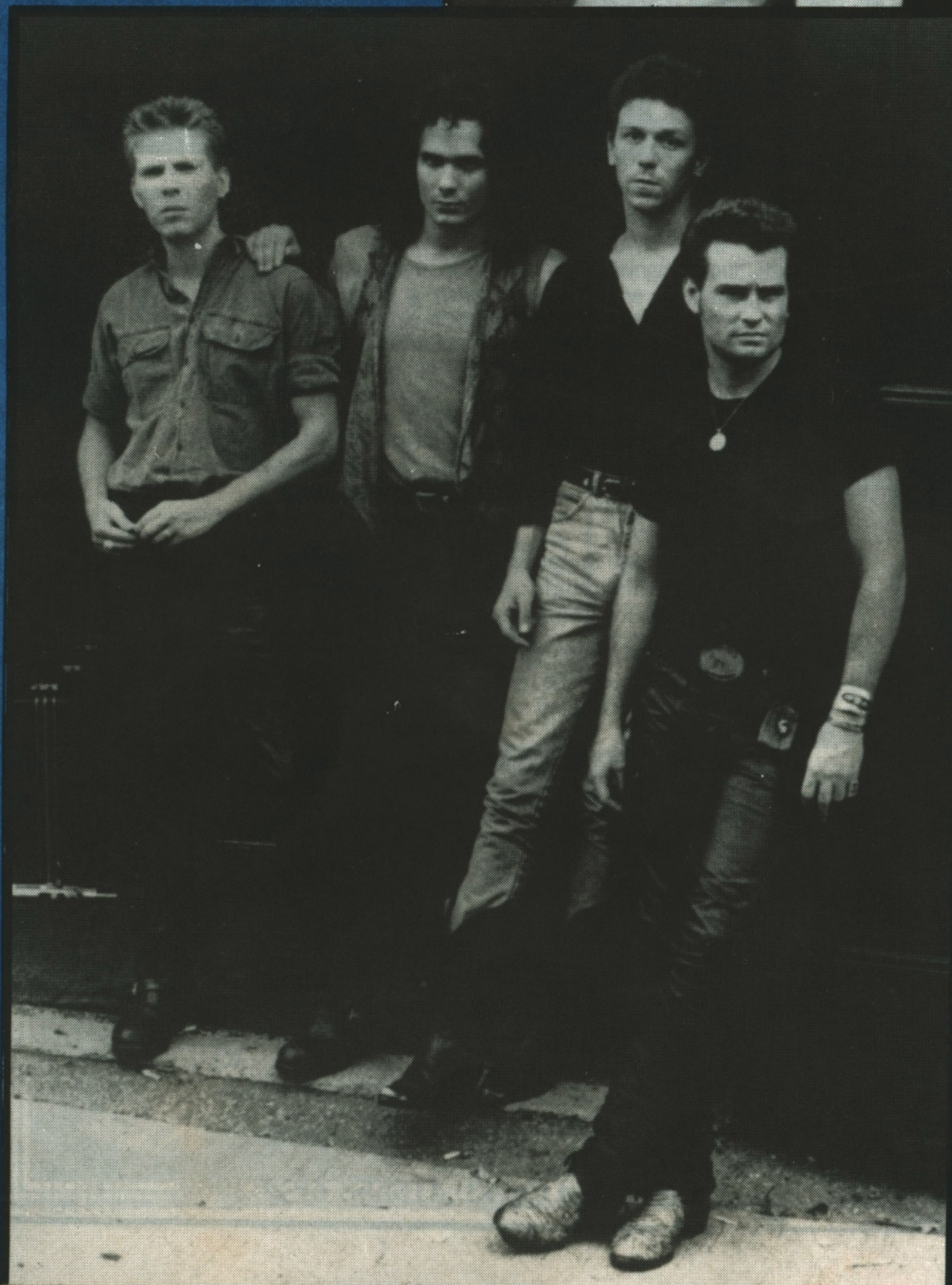
# BRUM BEAT

THE MUSIC MAG OF THE MIDLANDS

APRIL 1989

## HEART OF THE STATES

OLD, NEW & EVERY WHICH WAY BUT ROOTS



▲ THE DEAD REVIVED


◀ THE TOLL HIT BRUM

P L U S  
DEPECHE MODE  
ANDY PAWLAK  
THE GIRAFFES  
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REVIEWS  
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# up FRONT

## Raglan Punk

★Wolverhampton Punk combo, Contempt, will be thrashin' n' bashin' at the town's rather pleasant hostelry, The Lord Raglan (hi, Bill) on Tuesday May 9th. It's £1.50 in, starts at 9.30 and carries on late (with bar).



## FADING BLOOMS

BY MIKE DAVIES

★ Not everything in the garden is lovely for the Wild Flowers at present. They've lost the much publicised five album deal with Slash in America and have just parted company with Chapter 22 as label and management.

"It wasn't working," says Chapter 22 superno Craig Jennings. "I've been increasingly busy with The Poppies and I've not had enough time to spend on the Flowers. They wanted to give it a push themselves, one last chance. It was becoming increasingly difficult to get interest in them. There was some, but nothing sold despite having great songs. Slash did a particularly bad job with the album in America and lost it. They believed in it but it sold less than 'Dust' did, so they didn't take up the option.

### RIGHTS

"The band are disillusioned and so am I. It's not easy when you keep getting knocked back. The Flowers have been

with us for three and a half years and they need a heavy investment that we simply can't afford at this point. Chapter 22 are going to sign established indie acts or try fresh new stuff like Jive Turkeys. We still have the rights to the new demos - the band and I like them a lot. I wanted to put them out as a mini album in a cheapo format because I've always felt their best material has been done as demos, getting that live feel. They didn't want to; they wanted to re-record them and I didn't think that they would come up with anything better. So they're lying dormant for the present. There's no animosity. I really believe they're a great band and I wish them all the best."

## OL' RED EYES ARE BACK!

★ THOSE OF YOU with elephant memories will no doubt remember the retirement of The Redbeards last year.

Well, weep no more, they've pulled on their rock 'n' roll boots (or more likely got a weekend pass from the detox clinic) to do a limited edition tour of five only gigs.

One of these is in Birkenhead and one in North Wales so let's ignore them and tell you instead that their legions of fans should head for Junction 10 Walsall (April 15), JB's Dudley (22) and Goldwyn's Birmingham (30).

After these shows they tell us that they will be "disappearing into the sunset for good (again)".

## MAESTROS OF STEEL

★ WE HARDLY EVER feature Steel Bands in *Brum Beat*, come to think of it 'never' is a better word, so let's make amends by bringing your attention to The Maestros Steel Orchestra.

Under the direction of Norman Stewart, they have built a rather enviable reputation and have grabbed a number of prizes at national level.

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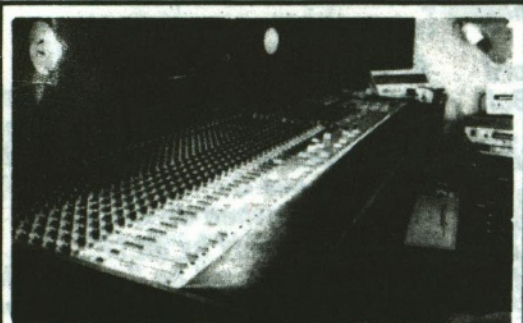
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★ **LOCAL metal monsters, Marshall Law** are traversing the nation with a forty-one date tour. Apart from breaking in new bass man, Roger Davis, the highly regarded outfit hope that it will tip the hands of several major publishers and labels currently sitting on the sidelines. The 'British Metal - The Beast Awakes Tour' can be caught locally at Stoke-On-Trent's 200 Club (April 7), Tamworth Arts Centre (23), Wolverhampton's George Hotel (29) and Telford Pisces (May 11). Each date has a different support act so check local press, as they say.

★ **SATURDAY April 29** sees a benefit gig at Gilligan's in Moseley in aid of Cerebral Palsy. Playing are The Day After, The Ozone Farm and Mice and Men. The aim is to raise money for Nicholas Barton to help him on his way to Hungary, the only place he can get the Specialist treatment he desperately needs.

# OVERHEARD

★ **HOT** on the heels of a, reportedly, sizzling show at Goldwyn's, Hue and Cry return to Birmingham for a show at the Town Hall on Sunday May 7th. Supporting the caledonian soulsters will be the strongly fancied Senators. The gig promoted by MCP, could be the one to put the Town Hall back into the tour circuit.

★ **BIRMINGHAM rockers, Felony** release 'Sweet To Please' on Ebony Records this month. The band, led by Claire Parker on vocals have just completed a three track demo, 'Crimes Of Passion' which they're flogging at their gigs.



● **CARABALI**

★ **FOLLOWING ON** from the 30,000 selling 'Can You Dig It', the new Pop Will Eat Itself single will be 'Wise Up Sucker' to be followed by their first album for RCA, 'This Is The Day, This Is The Hour, This Is This'.

★ **IF BLUES** is your bag, then the British Blues Review is your mag. The Editor is Shakey Vick, the assistant editor is Eric Clapton's predecessor in the Yardbirds, Top Topham and his mate is ex John Drummer Band bass man Pete Moody. Coverage is, as you would imagine, in-depth and knowledgeable. Try it by contacting B B Review at 6 Lodge Close, Yatton, Bristol BS19 4DX or ring 0934 833736.

★ **ENERGETIC** Birmingham-based outfit, U.S.I. have been joined by ex-Saxon member Paul "Fasker" Johnson, replacing recently departed Eddie Stratton on bass. He joins forces with his brother Steve (vocals) and Neil Anthony (drums). He says he enjoys the stimulus of playing with a relatively new band, that there is a tendency in more established bands to rest on your laurels and get apathetic about trying anything new. They will be playing the Talbot in Stoke on 22nd April.

★ **SHOTGUN WEDDING**, recovering from supporting The Toll at Edward's recently, have a gig in their own right at the same venue on April 24.

★ **THE COVENTRY-based Stoke Musicians Collective** (confusing, eh?) are going from strength to strength with a series of gigs lined up for Coventry Poly's Biko Bar. Saturday April 8th sees Head, The Ring and Paradise West at the venue whilst the following week (15) is a co-promotion with their Northampton Colleagues. Featured bands will be Tubilah Dog, Magnolia Siege, Headskaters and Big In Texas.

If noise annoys stay away on April 29th when Napalm Death and Bolt Thrower will be in residence. Finally, the collective are working on a Music Festival for July in Coventry. It's intended that it will be held in the town's Butt's Stadium. Details of all events can be had from Annabella Hardwick on 0203 635631.

★ **OF WHAT** interest to Brum Beat readers, you may ask, is BRMB's new middle-aged, medium wave spin-off, XTRA-AM? Well, for one thing Sunday lunchtime sees Midlands rock legend Noddy Holder turning DJ with a two hour weekly look at the seventies and, for another, Saturday night between 10 and 1 sees a prog dedicated to the likes of Dylan, The Doors and Creedence Clearwater Revival, a much hipper prospect that the youth-angled BRMB itself. Lastly, XTRA-AM sees the return of country to Brum's independent airwaves when the American Country Countdown fills four prime hours each and every Sunday night.

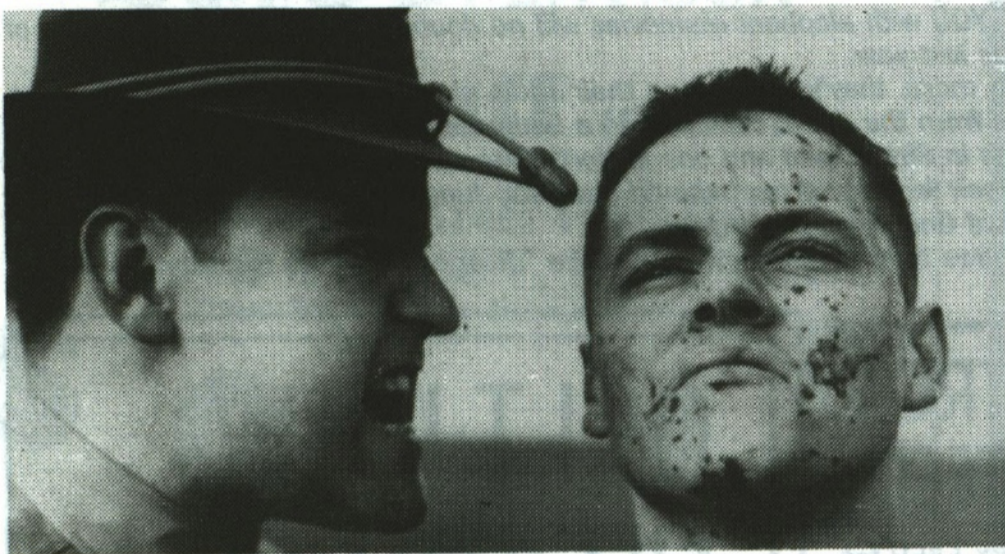
★ **ELECTRIBE 101** are being busy at the moment. Their own new single 'Diamond Dove'/'Lipstick On My Lover' is due at the end of April and after their work on Clive Griffin's single they're also being overwhelmed with remix requests and at present have knob-twiddling credits for Inner City, Derek B and, would you believe, Pere Ubu!

★ **THERE'S A** National Anti-Vivisection Society gig on April 30 at Moseley Dance Centre featuring A.C. Temple, Mega City 4, Anhfren and organised by Smoking Mirror. The Mirror's 'The Mind Grinder' album is due out June 14.

★ **REPUTEDLY** New York's hottest salsa band Carabali are playing at Birmingham's Moseley Dance Centre on Saturday April 15th. The bands pianist, Oscar Hernandez is well known to UK Salsa addicts for this work with the music's acclaimed superstars Ruben Blades and Willie Colon.

★ **RUMBLEFISH'S** long delayed EP is finally due on Summerhouse this May, following a new distribution deal after the Red Rhino collapse. Jeremy is about to start work on new material, presumably in the hope it'll be out before 1990.

★ **COVENTRY'S** psychendelic warriors, 'Tubilah Dog' are in the process of signing to the Hawkwind/Motorhead label G.W.R and a single, 'Making Love On The Telephone', will be unleashed on the nation followed quickly by an LP. The single's b-side will be 'Imotep', the tale of an Egyptian Civil engineer (so they tell us).



● **SENATORS**

Steeped in Otis, Sam & Dave, James Brown?

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# CLIMAX FROM CLAY

★ THE Climax Blues Band, recently the subject of lavish praise from Paul Jones on his BBC Radio R&B show are back on the road in support of a fine new album 'Drastic Steps' and newly issued 45 'The Winner', both on Stoke-based Clay Records.

Their current tour sees them dashing the length and breadth of the UK so be advised to catch 'em while you can at Shrewsbury Buttermarket (April 13) and The Breedon Bar (May 4).



● CLIMAX BLUES BAND

# POST HASTE

## Haw Haw Stirs It Up!

Dear Brum Beat,

Having noticed Lord Haw Haw's purile attempt at putting words to the WABC call-sign, we would point out that Arthur Wood's column 'All Directions' must be covered by the same remark, as W.A.B.C. is the only station to give air-play to the majority of artists he so lovingly mentions.

This is not a single two hour slot relayed from afar, as per Radio W.M., but at regular times Monday to Friday and during a 6 hour country show on Saturdays.

Regards,  
Jim Duncan  
W.A.B.C.

● *Touché.* Lord Haw Haw has, in fact, retired wounded this month and was last seen checking long-stay health farms for gentlefolk. Arthur Wood has taken note and re-named his column 'Every Which Way But Roots.'

p.s. Jim Duncan's country progs can be heard on WABC (303 metre medium wave/990 khz AM) between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. Monday to Friday and between 7 p.m. Friday and 1 a.m. Saturday morning. Musically you'll hear country from Alabama to Townes Van Zandt.

## Yellow is The Colour...

Dear Brum Beat,

Whilst our charts are rain-bowed with groups such as Deacon Blue, Yello and Black, thought I'd mention a newish group I happened to see recently performing in Birmingham. Written In Yellow appeared to overcome the dreadful engineering and still sail through the P.A. with a mixture of hard, punchy rhythms, Latin-style numbers and a set-break ballad in which their Gloria Estefan-ish vocalist souled her way to my heart. Nice back line, good rhythm section. Impressive saxophone solos, setting various moods. Altogether a lively performance. Be interesting to see which major snaps them up first. This group is buzzing!

Yours,  
N. Hatfield  
Market/Prom

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## MS Benefit Lights Up Black Country

★ THE CIVIC HALL in Brierley Hill has been confirmed as the venue for what promises to be one of this spring's most exciting benefit gigs.

Under the banner of 'Multiple Sounds For Multiple Sclerosis', the show features high-flyers, The Love Hysterics; R&B revivalists, The Rhythm Method and saxophone - fronted four-piece, Emilio Funk - all playing to raise funds for the oft-neglected MS charity.

### Party

Comperes for the night are Saggy and Mole, special guests are to be announced and the whole party takes place on Friday 26th May (8 till midnight with late bar, food and sundry other attractions). Tickets are a giveaway at £2.50 (advance) from Dudley Info Centre, Churchill Precinct (Dudley 50333) and £3.00 (on the door).



### AN AXE TO GRIND?

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● SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK

## Hot Sweet Honey

★ BIRMINGHAM CENTENARY'S 'Ten Day Festival' brings with it a rare chance to catch the astonishing Sweet Honey In The Rock in full flight.

Sweet Honey is a six-piece, all female acappella group capable of sweet whispers and lion roars. Their repertoire moves with ease from caribbean to tribal song, from scat singing to hot gospel and reggae.

The group was founded in 1973 by long-time civil rights activist Bertice Reagon and according to the US Washington Post a concert of theirs will leave you believing that "there is nothing the human voice cannot do".

● Sweet Honey In The Rock are at Birmingham Town Hall on Friday April 21st. Tickets are £6.00 advance, £7.00 on the door.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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# KABARET

It would appear that Birmingham City Centre has gone somewhat silent of late with regard to Alternative Comedy Cabaret. While the TIC TOC Cabaret in Coventry goes from strength to strength (Thursdays at 9.0pm) and the recently founded 'Late and Live' at Tamworth Arts Centre grows with every outing (phone Glen Burgess on 0827-65328), the metropolis has become a cabaret ghost town. It is hardly surprising that Birmingham featured as low as it did in a recent French entertainment poll.

Word has reached the good Doctor that both Birmingham's major brewers: Ansells and Mitchells & Butlers, are considering new wave cabaret developments as part of their promotional entertainment services to customers, but as yet those concerned are still undecided about this new 'product'.

Recent news of a Comedians Workshop course at Halesowen College is worth passing on to readers. Birmingham alternative comedian, Frank Skinner is hosting a ten week course for would-be stand-ups on Monday nights. Phone Frank on 0384-893366 for details if you are so inclined. Frank told me that he is particularly interested in contacting female performers as they are seriously under-represented on the circuit.

As reported in last month's column, television and radio media personnel continue to call upon the services of 'new wave' performers and I am pleased to report on seven new developments:-

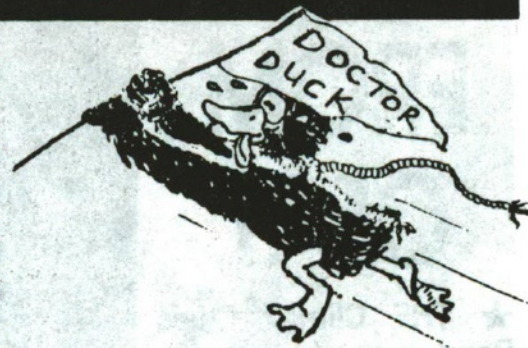
### On Radio—

'Not On Your Telly' a Radio 4 situation comedy featuring Dave Cohen, Phil Cornwell, Donna McPhail and Mark Steel.

'Lenin Of The Rovers' — a radio comedy featuring Alexie Sayle.

'The Million Pound Radio Show' — featuring Nick Revell, Andy Hamilton, Felicity Montague and Jasper Jacob.

'The Mary Whitehouse Experience' — a Radio 1 FM development billed as "comedy that provocatively undresses the issues", and featuring Jo Brand (The Sea Monster), Skint Video, Dave Baddiel, Rob Newman, Mark Thomas and Steve Punt & Hugh Dennis (of 'Carrott Confidential' fame). If readers are interested in going along to a recording of this programme (scheduled for every Wednesday from April 5th to June 28th, 9.30pm to 10.30pm at Paris Studios, Lower Regent St., London), they should



write for free tickets to The Ticket Unit, BBC, London W1A 4WW. Transmission time is set for Fridays at midnight on Radio 1 FM from April 7th.

### On Television—

John Sessions, resident performer in 'Whose Line Is It Anyway?', is to... have his one man show filmed at the Donmar Warehouse, London, on April 3rd, 4th, 9th and 16th to be later transposed into a television series entitled 'On The Spot'. Expect to see a re-working of 'Whose Line' themes which enable Mr Sessions to display his obvious comedic crafts under the guise of 'spontaneity'.

Channel 4 enter the fray with a new audience quiz show in the hands of Julian Clary, aka The Joan Collins Fan Club. Called 'Sticky Moments', this programme allows Clary the opportunity to work without the handicap of Mike Smith (see 'Trick or Treat'), and should therefore provide a masterful night of audience interchange under the guise of a Quiz Show.

Finally, Juliet Blake at London Weekend Television is currently hard at work putting the finishing touches to the second series of 'First Exposure', a first-time talent show which manages to avoid the crassitudes of 'New Faces' and 'Opportunity Knocks'. This programme gave Frank Skinner his first taste of television limelight but unfortunately Central Television programmers failed to pick up the transmission option on the first series, preferring to stay with the terminal boredom of 'Central Live's' gladiatorial debating chamber. It is to be hoped that the Broad Street Emporium reconsiders its options this time around. Give me your views and I'll see what can be done.

That's all for this month, let me know what's happening on your patch and I'll see you round and about. Well done all you Comic Relievers who helped to make March 10th such an interesting day.

Quack! Quack!

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# UPS & DOWNES

Pompous? Arrogant? The angry young toy boys of pop? This is a view of Then Jerico one has come to expect. But no, I thought, I expect that's just an image aimed at keeping them in the public eye. However, two weeks minus one day after the scheduled time of the interview, tired out with phone-watching, and still no word, I'm wondering whether I should revise my tolerant viewpoint. But finally contact is achieved.

*I'm talking to Rob Downes, lead guitarist with the band: he sounds happy and relaxed, reeking of success and joie de vivre.*



*I've heard tell there was a spot of cheeky deceit involved in your getting a deal. What was that all about?*

"That was before I joined the band; I've been with them two years and they've been going for five, but what happened was this: Mark went to the New Music Seminar, in New York, and said he was in this band which was really huge in Britain. So, they ended up creating a real buzz around themselves and they got the deal through that,

though, in fact, they'd only ever played Darlington Town Hall or somewhere".

*Shows initiative; you have to be pushy these days, don't you?*

"Hmm, well, it's a bit of a risky thing to do, but everthing's risky, especially in this business".

*Has success altered people's reactions to you?*

## SOCKS

"No, people still don't buy me drinks at the bar, and I still have to do my own washing... That's

## TERESA BASSETT MAKES CONTACT WITH THEN JERICO

the worst thing about touring, keeping your socks clean, I haven't been able to wash mine for three days... I don't think that the attitude of your real friends changes. The fans? Well, the fans go wild, it gets ridiculous; for example, there was a girl last

*I've heard talk about your political message. Tell me a bit about that?*

"Oh, AAA, yes. Well, we've supported and promoted Artists Against Apartheid for a long time, not because it's trendy, though I know it's very fashionable to be involved with a cause these days. We don't write political songs particularly, we don't like to preach, I think that's the wrong way to go about things. It's important to make people aware, but we don't want to ram it down people's throats continuously. We promote AAA at gigs, we have a banner on stage. Also it means that our records don't get sold in South Africa. They used to, but we put a stop to that. I feel really strongly about Apartheid, everyone should do what they can to smash it, because the system's so unjust, it's got to be stopped".

## BOX

*Do you think you're successful in getting the message across?*

"Well, here's an example: in Japan, we were told, 'no, you won't have any luck here, they don't know anything about Apartheid'; but we passed the money box around anyway and ended up raising 10,000 dollars!"

*You have a reputation for being pompous and arrogant. It's true?*

"Pompous? (Incredulous tone). I don't think we're like that; we're very genuine people, actually".

*It's all media hype, then?*

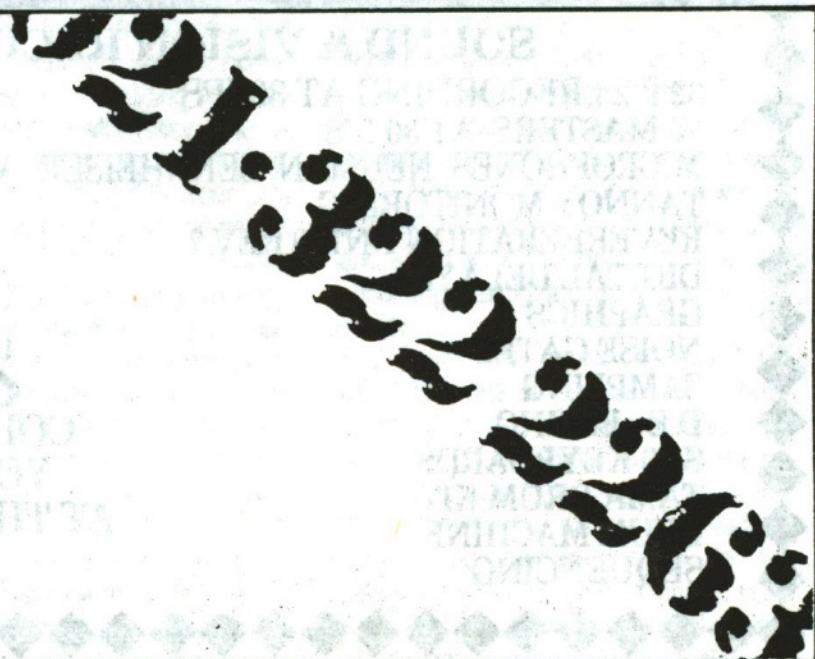
"Yes, I expect so".

*And what about this pretty-boy image. Some people say it detracts from your musical credibility.*

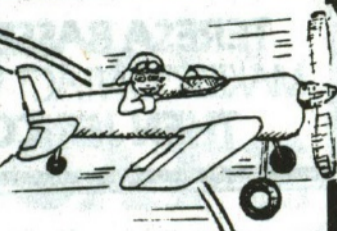
"Pretty-boy image, eh? Hmm... (As though he'd never heard such a strange thing). Now it's odd you should say that. When I first joined we were going on stage wearing ripped-up cricket jumpers and so on. Of course, people love to pigeon-hole you, but personally I don't think we're like that".

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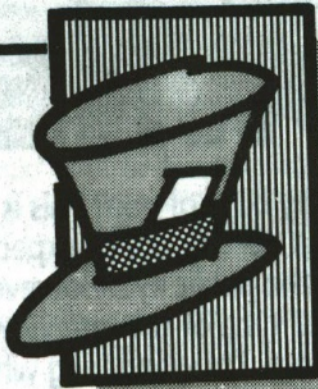
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# Mike Davies

**T** hose perplexed by the opening of last month's column might like to know that the album 'A Fridge Too Far' was actually by GBH. Seems the hacksaw edit-to-fit approach rather saw off this valuable piece of info. Good to see The Wonder Stuff in blistering form for their Birmingham gigs, complete with Waterboys style fiddle on a couple of numbers. But isn't the abuse the audience routine getting a bit tired these days, Miles?

## VINYL-ISED

Bhangra gets short shrift in the local media, and I must confess it rather passes through my system too. But those who appreciate its subtle shadings and insistent energy will no doubt seek out the 'Bhangra Plus+' cassette by Navpreet which features Birmingham jazzers and musical ethnologists Janet Sherbourne and Jan Steele. **MARK ROGERS** aka **HOLLYWOOD BEYOND** resurfaces after his turbulent and brief liaison with Warners, now linked to Warriors Dance although neither 'Lets's Get Together (Create)' nor 'I Promise' suggest there's anything to take up arms over this time round. Designed for the more trendy dance emporiums as opposed to the charts or the radio and surprisingly rather uninspiringly produced too. Coventry's **BLISS** make their album debut with 'Loveprayer' (Parlophone), a bluesy-jazzy 'n' gospel collection that's most particularly designed to highlight Rachel Morrison's often devastating vocals. Imagine Joplin, Christine Perfect and Carmel on one album with a heady dose of lyrics that draw from lapsed Catholicism, resurrection and the afterlife and you get the general idea. Can't see it selling but 'Lovin' Come My Way', 'I Walk Alone' and the thunderingly good 'I Hear You Call' show why it should.

**THE FILIPINOS'** 'Doo Wadda Doo Wop' (Swordfish) had the praise lavished over it last issue, so it seems pointless to repeat it here. But if it hadn't I would have. OK. Grinding boys will appreciate **HEAD OF DAVIDS'** 'The Savana Mixes' (Blast First) featuring 'Bugged', though I guess my leathers aren't torn or tight enough to allow me full access to their brand of hellstorms. **BILL PRITCHARD** gets a little more hefty and wider-appealing with 'Tommy & Co' (Play It Again), a song inspired by his Walsall roots unlike the Al Stewart sounding fierce burn of 'New Orleans' which deals with America's favourite past-time of segregation by job status. Several people have asked me to mention **ROYSTON'S** synth-popper 'Love Is My Cure' because it was recorded with the backing of Symph studios for Birmingham Settlement's Switchback Records. Let's face it, that's the only reason to mention it. Although keeping it a secret from us Brum Beater types, **BRIAR** have their first post J. King/A&M single in 'Gimme All You Got' (Shotgun Charlie) which I'm delighted to report finds them back on the right course at last although it still suggests they need to find the producer who'll ignite their spark.

## TAPE-DECKED

Since the demise of the band rather precludes Scarlet Fantastic's predicted triumphant return, instead let me rave over the first solo **MAGGIE DU MOND** fruits. Reminiscent of SF yet probably more directly

commercially inclined with some bubbling rock guitar both 'Hot On The Rocks' and 'Tonight' show the keen ear for melody is still active while the lyrics offer familiar images and phrases (riding horses, the sea, freedom). 'I Wanna Hold You' is a rough demo of a number co-written with Rick, a familiar 'far away and miss you' love song given the extra sparkle you'd expect. Rumours of label interest begin to buzz. Watch this space. After a lengthy absence Wolverhampton songwriter **WESTLEY JONES** returns with vocals by Priscilla Jones (no relation). She's just been nominated one of the best British gospel singers (by who?) and the voice is in superb form on a quality piece of soul-pop that sounds not unlike what a meeting between Whitney Houston and Lloyd Webber might produce. Stunning.

sion and work out where a song is actually going to go. Promising enough and probably a good live bet, but their inspirations are rather worn on the sleeve with 'To The Edge', which could easily be dedicated to a certain U2 chap.

**BORN BLIND** are currently in the market for a female vocalist after the departure of Karen Hale and until a new bassist turns up ex Falling Boy/Weeping Messerschmitt Robert Wakelin is standing in. Meantime the 'Mother' demos mark further developments with the pessimistic moodiness of 'Broken Line Of Ascent' and the churchy organ sparsity of Animal Kingdom' sitting pointedly against the neo-New Wave harmonies and commercial punch of 'A Cry For Help'. **THE CAST** are another Falling Boys offshoot who've gone very much for the guitar formula on

veins. Two more from **MONKEY MES-SIAH** fail to convince that aside from the voice there's a great deal to summon up the saliva, especially since neither of the tired funky-rock songs, 'Gone Wishing' and 'Could I Be Happy (With Less)' are particularly memorable.

**B** LISS THE POCKET OPERA evoke a mixed response, whirling as they do between early whooping Siouxsie of 'Ona Uno' and the breathy Maggie Du Mondisms of 'House Of Love', although at the risk of being accentist the Brummie spoken intro rather ruins an otherwise promising effect. There's a heavy colouring of sounds Egyptian to the crashing whooped flurry on 'Papyrus Purple' and over on side two 'Paradise Island' gives a chance for Tina to explore her vocal range while the live 'Butterfly Spies' confirms that as a unit they are still too undisciplined and lacking a firm original identity to really



**O** NIONHEAD have also been back in the studio, but to decidedly mixed results. The six track 'Level X-ing' demo kicks off with the title cut, remarkably similar in form to 'End Of The World As We Know It' and rather good, as is the lolling wistfulness they do so well on 'Let Me Into Your Heaven.' The dust-scuffing lolloping 'Mama Cow' builds nicely and 'Bless This House' has its moments but never seems too sure of itself. However, 'My Little Sister Told Me' is simply a mess and the revamp of 'Onionhead' itself does little to transform it into anything worthy of eponymous stature. Production on 4-track doesn't help with the drums clattering too dominantly into the foreground, but it should perk reasonable interest for further gigs and indie lable sniffers.

**PRIVATE I.D.** are thankfully in a busy patch at present, resulting in the much played in my car demo of 'Sometimes' which elbows aside the likes of Then Jerico with the sort of irresistible chorus hook that suggests wallets should be flapping in their direction. Ex Felters Tony & Marco aka **THE DAY** invest some cash in a new 4 track three number demo highlighting the lazily English acoustic guitar approach and the thoughtful lyrical approach you expect. Not sure anything's yet ready for sustained A&R consumption but 'Ballad Of The Talking Friend' implies it might not be too long. Former Dance Teknike guitarist Glenn Hanstock now feeds the electric strings for **THE TOUCH**, a solid enough quartet who need to discuss economy at their next recording ses-

their 3 tracker demo. 'Politics' provides their best visting card with a sense of verve and punch that's rather lost on the over-long and essentially unmemorable 'Here She Comes Again' and 'Save Yourself' which both tend to be more concerned with showing the band in the formative process than extolling cohesive virtues. Nonetheless worth an extra ear for any gigs they may have.

**M** AGDA is somewhat of a mystery of attractive physiognomy, allure and a decided taste of early Carmel to her two track demo which boasts a matured lyrical ability and a keen awareness of soulful jazzy slow burning emotional balladeering, accentuated by effectively simple piano. 'Beast Walks By' traps the attention but 'I Can't Sleep' positively takes it home, feeds it and leaves it begging for marriage. A faint sniff of Morrissey is to be found on **THE ZONE'S** 'Gigolo' but it disappears by the time you get to 'Your Loss Not Mine', leaving you with the impression of a perky indiepop item that has a definite promising scent to it. One to bear in mind. **LIKE THE RAIN**, now down to a duo and concentrating more on the songwriting, seem to have headed into an Erasure frame of mind with electro-doodles and although the thin production facilities tend to make things rather weedy 'Loser' isn't too bad and 'Why' recalls the gravity of portentous Ultravox. Best though is the dance wah persistence of 'Twilight Zone' that could do with some cut ups and samples to really put blood into the waiting

## ● BORN BLIND

weld themselves into a band with which to be reckoned. Maybe it's me but Terrayne Management seem to have more enthusiasm than musical awareness. Last batch of tapes were singularly dull and they maintain the status quo with a live set by **CAINS BALLROOM**, a meandering arty combo with a singer who patently can't, and a solo collection that could have come from the depths of Cherry Red's less worthwhile ventures by **WAYNE A. MOSELEY** that features an overwhelmingly irritating 'Passion Fruit' song and two nondescript instrumentals, one appropriately titled 'Who Cares?' **THE LOST FOREST** hail from Hollywood and their debut demo shows them to be a promising bunch of garage guitar beatsters with a sharp ear to a decent tune and bright lyrics, although the otherwise fine 'Imaginary Rain' is symptomatic of the need to be less sluggish. 'Aimee' and 'Our Country Town' are vaguely reminiscent of mid-period Jam and along with 'The Hunted' make their upcoming first gig outings worth watching out for.

And finally, the return of **MUSIC OF DECLINE**, one of the few outfits whose tapes talk in terms of album sales. This one, 'Cloudburst Communion', maintains their jazzy inflections (including, I think, vibes) but largely shifts from the shadowy vocals and heated tension to the instrumentation for such offerings as 'It Was Perfect', 'Name Saint's Day' and 'Borrowed Time'. Intelligent music.

# EVERY WHICH WAY BUT ROOTS

## (né ALL DIRECTIONS & THE SECTION WITH NO NAME)

On a personal level, nothing surpasses witnessing musicians play live. There is a vitality, an uncertainty and an edge, which most surely far outweighs the clinical processes propagated in the recording studio. Live music can only survive through your patronage. Musicians will only be encouraged to pursue such a career, if there are venues for them to perform in. For those promoters who deal with the more esoteric music fields, your committed support is vital. Their current and future viability, lies squarely in your hands.

By definition, "esoteric" should indicate to you that we are talking about the smaller and more intimate venues. Visiting such places involves employing your sense of adventure; a willingness to mix the known with the unknown being the essential ingredient. Adopt that approach and the benefits can be infinite. Of course, everything in life has a cost. First, you have to be willing to remove those blinkers. Discard those prejudices. In all of this, however, never settle for someone else's opinion as far as music is concerned. Never, never swallow the hype.

Is it too foolish to believe that there is actually someone out there who has read thus far? Will that person make the vital move, remains the conundrum?

Month four in the final



● STEVE YOUNG

year of this decade, no less. Let's get to it then.

I finally grasped what Steve Young was about musically during his 1988 UK tour. We have a double treat in store this month when Steve appears locally on two consecutive April evenings. It's the reverential and hallowed Acoustic Roots gig at Trysull Village Hall on Wednesday 12th, followed by honky tonk heaven at the Breedon on Thursday 13th. Probably the same musical menu each night, so it just depends whether you want some atmosphere as well. I trust Steve has the inclination this tour, to perform some of the material from his latest, cassette-only release, 'Long Time Rider'. Eerie, haunting and musically memorable, the lyrics on the title track and, for instance, 'War of Ancient Days' will wipe you away, should you care to listen closely. Probably the gig(s) of the month.

While we're on the subject of impeccable musicians, I

suggest you check out Kathryn Tickell at the Kingswinford Woodman on Friday 7th. Despite her tender years, this lady certainly knows her way around the Northumbrian pipes and the fingerboard of a fiddle. Certainly nothing to fret about there. Her between-song recollections are also quite pithy. To natives of the North East that gritty realism comes naturally anyway.

Although I mentioned it last month, here goes again. Santiago Jimenez Jr. plays his own second Midlands concert in three weeks on Sunday 9th. The venue in downtown Cotteridge — why it's the Breedon Bar! If you love those conjunto rhythms, then you've probably heard of Santiago's brother ... Flaco. Get it now.

Another American visitor to the Breedon next month, is country/gospel music star, Larry Gatlin with his brothers, Steve and Rudy. Early Gatlin albums like 'The Pilgrim', 'Rain Rainbow' and 'Broken Lady' remain classics in my book. By the early eighties I lost contact with the man's work. Never having seen him live, guess where I'll be on Friday 21st? You too?

Gatlin has enjoyed a few country numero uno hits in his time. But who is this particular American? He first shot to prominence as a songwriter, while with the Hot Band. Ten years ago, he began his solo career. Five albums later, he is enjoying consistent (and long overdue) commercial success. His current album has spawned two country No. 1 singles to date. He has produced albums for countless other performers, including his wife and father-in-law. What's more, his most

recent chart-topper was co-written with one of his old friends, nearly eight years ago. If you can't wait till next month for the answer, look elsewhere in this section. The date: May 10th. The venue: The Breedon. The essential ingredient: being there, right at the front.

Finally, the rest of April reads something like this: Woodman, Clent, 6th, Jez Lowe; Trysull Village Hall, 8th, High Country — American bluegrass band on their third UK tour; Woodman, Kingswinford, 14th, John Kirkpatrick & Sue Harris; 21st, Pete Morton; 28th, Allan Taylor; Longboat, Cambrian Wharf, 7th, Singers Night; 14th Beggars Velvet; 21st, Singers Night; 28th, Mal Waite; The Junction, Harborne, 6th, Harvey Andrews; 13th, Sprit of the West — this Canadian trio play a high energy mix of folk, rock and Celtic music. Their third album 'Labour Day' was released last summer; 20th, Jungr & Parker; Birmingham Goldwyn's, 26th, The Men They

Couldn't Hang — out and about promoting their new album 'Silvertown'; Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall, 6th May, The Men They Couldn't Hang; Wolverhampton Civic Hall 13th May, Clannad — their only Midlands gig on this national tour. New single 'The Hunter' and album 'Past Present' available from RCA.

Closing April's proceedings and making a swift return to the Junction, Harborne on Thursday 27th is that stalwart of the British folk scene, Ashley Hutchins. On this occasion — it's with the latest all-male version of the Albion Band ('89), following the departure of vocalist, Cathy Lesurf. A new album is also promised.

And those, more or less, are the sounds of April. And come she will. The Rodney I referred to earlier, certainly ain't the Cockney plonker. Backed by his Dixie Pearls, I was referring to the Houston Kid, Rodney Crowell. Believe it and it will always happen!

ARTHUR WOOD.

## print out

### KEVIN WILSON'S GUIDE TO WHAT'S NEW IN PRINT

► Short and sweet this month with a distinct absence of thrilling tomes or beefy biogs so, let me home in on **BALL THE WALL** (Picador £4.99), a farewell-to-style-type book as we lament the lack of gifted, modern, pop wordsmiths and bask in the glory that was and is Nik Cohn. Remember him? He it was who galvanised the artspeak movement in the 60's through columns in the Observer, Sunday Times, Queen and more. He was no commentator on rock and pop; he lived it, he loved it, he cared passionately for it. In 1968, he wrote the definitive rock novel, 'Awobopalooop Alopbamboo' and the rock establishment quaked. Cohn, a lover of the rich (James Brown, Elvis, Little Richard) and a hater of the copyist (Dylan, Beatles), fired literary bullets that zeroed in on targets far and even further. In the 70's, as if to visionise the second coming, Cohn left London in the wake of the yeukdom that had descended on the music scene (Supertramp, Genesis, Yes et al). He wrote 'Another Saturday Night' which became the film 'Saturday Night Fever' and his anger, so necessary in his writing, returned. Sadly, it didn't last and Cohn wrote no more as the 80's dawned.

► In his way, Nik Cohn foresaw and maybe spawned punk, new romanticism and even the Sloane revolution. He saw the stagnation and warned of it but none listened. In the style wars, Cohn had a fabulous armoury but few allies. What would he make of pop today had he still been penning critiques?

► Pop is...."flash, outrage, impulse, excess, and sweet teen romance. But dabble in Art and it gets overloaded....."

► As we enter the 90's, pop needs a lot of overloading.

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# BIG IN SUDAN

"One of the hottest properties around," gushed *Time Out*. "Catch the Giraffes before you hear about them from someone else."

Surely not our Giraffes, Coventry's capricious popsters?

NEVILLE HADSLEY wades through the music paper hacks in deepest Kentish Town to find out.

"We should have done all this two years ago," says Sam, obviously enjoying himself. "We're being interviewed by the World Service on Thursday. Can you imagine? 30 million listeners worldwide!" Big in Sudan, I suggest? "Probably."

Sam is vocalist with The Giraffes, and "all this" is the business of getting signed to a major

label, a long campaign which includes their first single *Pass Me By* on the band's own Love and Madness label. Sales are already in four figures, despite patchy distribution, and a second single, hopefully indie chart-bound, will follow.

The Giraffes have wised up considerably since the days of three Coventry gigs a week. They

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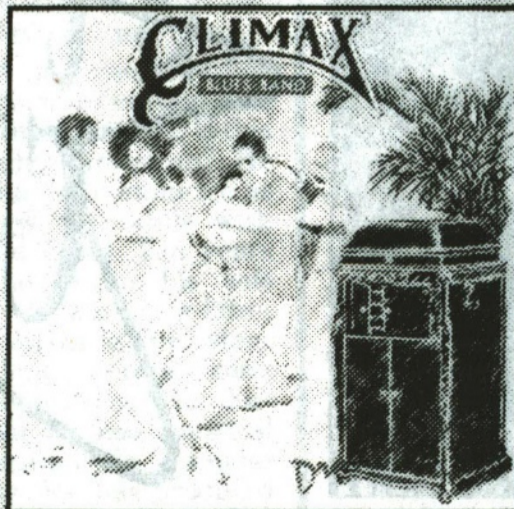
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now have professional management shape of Tony, who in previous lives se have had some connection Showaddywaddy and the Bay City Tony is an expert, someone who kn value of handshakes and using people's when talking to them. "What we're Neville," he says, "is building the profile. This band will go all the way don't want to go too quickly."

We are standing, by the way, in the b of The Bull And Gate, a pub rather General Wolfe writ small. The bar promoted by something called HYPE. w tellies on top of the PA stacks transm HYPE logos and signs suspended fr ceiling say things like WHY NOT SPEN YOU MONEY NOW? At the back, a machine discharges intermittently, rat a bodily function I'd rather not mention. The room is sparsely populated, man people who look like music-paper h A&R men. The hacks are obvious - carrying reporters notebooks. The A are more tricky to to spot. There candidate, a balding man in a pricy jacket, but he turned out to be a tourist.



I consult Tony on the record representation, and he's unsure who's informs me that CBS want to see the Coventry and he's organising a gig sp The fourth and final support band are Rather juvenile in appearance and am band seem to market themselves, through their female singer who is revealingly dressed, wearing numero and removing them one at a time. S music isn't too bad, which rather spo story. Enter Sam who looks at the "Damn," he says, "Forgot me tu-tu." Eventually the Giraffes start their effect is rather like a fog lifting, metap anyway, since the smoke machine is st In the first few bars they blow away all gone before. In a short set of only half they run through a catalogue of rock songs, barbed and twisted sometim band's Northampton fan club, who ha the trip, waste no time and begin to fil limbs.



Over the years, The Giraffes have whiff of Echo & The Bunnyme frequently used to attend, but as Steve's wonderfully textured clarinet struggles to compete with electric Ending triumphantly on *Rooftops*, B-s current single, the five of them are qu front trying to gauge the mood of the from NME, Melody Maker and Soun whom are in attendance. Some doubt about whether the set was long er review, and hypotheses and scenarios as the bar staff try everything short of violence to persuade us to vacate. Plans are revealed on co-ordinate exposure, with an NME/Sounds blitz e sometime soon. Scenarios and hyp continue - minus Tony - in the van, a motorway service station where t briefly interrupted by the reappearan Northampton posse. "Its got fuck all to do with how good y concludes a wise Sam. "We always k were the bees-knees, and we were wa a deal to drop out of the sky. Since control ourselves, things have sta happen. That's how it is" Amen.

# THE TOLL

## STEVE MORRIS meets the American rock 'n' rollers

When The Clash passed through Columbus, Ohio, on their last US tour, a young fan, Brad Circone, asked Joe Strummer for advice.

Strummer told him: "Take your band to the nastiest town in the world and play" and, as a parting shot, added, "drink Guinness".

Sometime later, Brad, by then frontman of The Toll, went with the band to New York City where they played, got signed and placed their heavily booted feet on the bottom rung of the ladder.

Movement upwards has since been steady and surefooted. With an absolute lack of hype the band's debut album 'The Price Of Progression' has become a stone cert, critical rave in the rock press.

Recently, with little more than those written words and Roger Scott's Radio One plays to introduce them, they breezed into the UK for a handful of gigs. Normally, such visits are heavily stage-managed, so had'nt it been a risk in doing it so quietly? Not according to Brad: "We were actually looking forward to it. With our style of music we take a lot of risks night to night, anyway. It's untrodden ground so it is a risk but that's what we thrive on".

To the casual listener, talk of musical risk may give rise to a wry grin as, on the surface, they are simply a guitar-driven rock and roll band: hard, driving and vital but . . . and then you're suddenly drawn into the long narratives, tales of Catholic repression, the ugly exploitation of the American Indian and the life of the repressed, middle-aged housewife. Such explorations take The Toll into the area of ten to fifteen minute performance pieces, not theatrical per se, but dependent entirely on Brad Circone's use of language and the instrumental support's ability to create light and shade of uncanny and dramatic intensity.

The Toll do not, however, see themselves as a direct reaction to the growing suffocation of the Reagan/Thatcher syndrome.

Brad: "We consider it a time of great apathy but also a transitional time. You do have groups such as U2 and Midnight Oil and Tracy Chapman trying to bring back that sense of humanism. I think that's important but I don't consider us a function of humanism or a rebellion against a right-wing bureaucracy".

"I think that no matter what the times had been for us, the songs 'Anna 41 Box' and 'Valley Of Pain' would have been because of the personalism they carry; they are generalisations, things we've all thought about. I don't think anything we do is a new thought. It's a combination of that with music that makes it different".

'Anna 41 Box' is in many ways the most threatening of their songs. It traces the sexuality of a forty-one year-old woman trapped in a loveless but physically demanding marriage. Circone's adoption of Anna's

character for the narrative was the strangest point of their gig at Edward's in Birmingham. You could actually feel the audience drawing back as he got, perhaps, a little too close to the truth.

Paradoxically, The Toll may have set themselves up to become 'Anna' in a marriage with an audience forever demanding, and actually trapping them into always delivering, the dramas.

"We'd never make it so that it became a parody of itself in it's production", states Brad, adding "at the same time as we've set a foothold with this kind of thing, we've potentially set a trap and we know that".

Bass player Greg Bartram acknowledges that the problem has already occurred. "We've seen it in the mid west, people's expectations were ahead of time. They were waiting for 'Anna', 'Valley Of Pain' and 'Jonathan Toledo'. That's difficult to deal with; it puts so much pressure on you.

Guitarist Rick Silk expects that to abate: "I think it will alleviate itself because we're not playing there so frequently. Now we're reaching new audiences who only know the album".

We finally end up back with The Clash. "Rick and I", says Brad, "were majority influenced by them you know, 'cos they let you know it was OK to pick up instruments and not be a 'musician'. I've always cared more about bands that have a bigger heart than good musicianship".

You won't find many bands with a bigger heart than The Toll or many who'll so willingly put it on the line. I really hope that as they head inevitably stadiumwards that they don't, themselves, end up paying 'The Price Of Progression'.

We're talking about songwriting and the (new) Tyneside traditions when Andy Pawlak tells me that Martin Stephenson has recently moved in around the corner. A kind of writers' ghetto, I venture, "Spouse so", laughs Pawlak, who goes on to muse on the tune and wordsmiths of his locality, "I really like Paddy McAloon, Martin and although they're knocked a lot, Sting and Mark Knopfler too".

★ The one thing they have in common is the very thing Andy strives for.

"I'm a fan of songs, of their ability to evoke emotions. I see writing as a long term occupation. I enjoy crafting songs. It can often take around two months to get a new one into a finished form".

★ There is, though, a very personal trait running through Pawlak's work, a trait that will probably limit the number of covers he attracts. Surely a drawback for a craftsman writer?

"I suppose so. I try to write in metaphors to get to the specific meaning I want and I suppose that makes them my songs but I have to write them honestly or there's no point".

★ Would he like to hear someone else's voice sing them?

"That", he enthuses "would be the business".

# ANDY PAWLAK

## Steve Morris Discovers Another Bloody Singer/Songwriter From Newcastle-Upon-Tyne!

★ Pawlak, it transpires as the conversation flows, is a socialist, a fan of Billy Bragg and of the forthrightness of Costello's 'Spike' collection.

"I couldn't write like that, though. I guess I'm a bloody hippy, really. I can't be so dogmatic, I like to be articulate and say beautiful things. I don't really believe that sloganeering gets anywhere".

★ Recently, a band has been added to his own guitar leading him into that Prefab Sprout/Deacon Blue / anglicised Steely Dan vein. Had, I wondered, the signing to a major label forced him to sweeten the sound for mass consumption?

"Well, the record has to be listenable and I do like to do things in different styles but the bottom line is that a song has to be playable on one instrument, if it

can't be done that way it's not a song. Too many are computer sequences with words these days".

★ In the same vein he insists that producer Craig Leon, ex Blondie, Marley and Talking Heads cohort, was brought in to help make a record, not to manufacture a sound.

Leon's main attribute, it seems, is that he "oozes melody".

All of which adds up to a man paddling against Pop's current predominant flow, however it could be that Andy will turn out to be one of the builders of a much needed dam.

If you enjoy well-constructed pop and you've ever had a yen for a Sprout, Daintee or Deacon, you'll find Andy Pawlak very much to your liking.



# STOURBRIDGE HOSTS U.S. STARS

## McGriff & Crawford Confirmed

★ THE LONG ARM of coincidence has a lot to answer for in jazz but the promoters of Stourbridge Town Hall's long-rumoured May 28 spectacular, with star organist Jimmy McGriff and also saxist Hank Crawford, tell us that confirmation of the gig finally came through as they were celebrating the legendary organist's birthday!

April 3rd 1936 was the date when James Harell McGriff first emerged into the Philadelphia sunlight and 53 years later, as *Brum Beat* was going to press, the overseas line rang as the team were raising an anxious mug to their would-be guest.

It was in 1962, after serving time as an MP in the Korean War (which later led to working as a cop in the City of Brotherly Love), that McGriff's recording of a Ray Charles' hit was picked up by Juggy Murray's Sue label and rocketed to the top of the R&B charts.

These days McGriff tours for 41 weeks of the year, lugging his Hammond B3 around the world and finding room in his bag for a clutch of synthesisers. The organist visits the UK to promote a brand-new album, *Starting Five*, released by Ace.

● Answers to the usual *Brum Beat* address by Monday 8th May.



### COMPETITION

*Brum Beat* has a copy of the LP, plus a pair of ringside tickets to Stourbridge Town Hall on May 28th, just complete the title of Jimmy McGriff's big Sue hit.

'I've Got A .....  
a. Mojo b. Woman c. Turnip

## BANK'S TWELVE BARS

★ WOLVERHAMPTON-BASED traditional brewers, Banks's, are set to give a new angle on "Well I woke up this morning . . ." by sponsoring the Blues.

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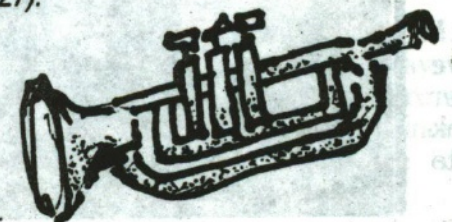
competition starts rolling in April with ninety-four blues outfits competing for the title, with this number already over the first hurdle having been selected from in excess of one hundred and seventy five entrants sifted initially by Paul Jones Blues Band member, Tom McGuinness.

The Battle takes place in Banks's pubs throughout the Midlands and North West with outposts in Bristol and Buckinghamshire.

### ALBUM

The winners will be given one week in the studio with the chance to cut an album. Runners-up win walk-away goodies from Fender and Hohner.

● *Diary dates for talent spotting blues buffs are: Dudley, Saracens Head (April 12, 28, May 10); Leamington Spa, The Gristmill (13, 27, May 9); Wolverhampton, the Claregate (13, 27, May 11); Coventry (Keresley) Golden Eagle (18, May 3); Kingswinford, British Oak (19, May 10); Bromsgrove Boat and Railway (20, May 9); Kinver, new Rose and Crown (25); Oldbury Cottage Inn (27).*



## JAZZ AWARDS

★ THE TOP JAZZ TALENT in the country came by train, car and 'plane to collect their trophies in the Tennent's British Jazz Awards held in March at Birmingham's Grand Hotel. Seen celebrating before receiving their glittering prizes are from left to right back row Allan Ganley, John Barnes, Dave Green, Tony Coe, Brian Lemon, Dick Morrissey, Martin Taylor. Front: Roy Williams and Humphrey Lyttelton.

Present on the night, but missing from the photocall were altoist Pete King; Rising Star winner Tommy Smith; Getzen Fairweather cornet recipient Kenny Baker and, for Services to British Jazz, Ronnie Scott.

# TENNENT'S JAZZ TALK

## Wilson's Big Band

"I know this will look daft in print but when I was 14 and all my friends were into Mud, I was obsessed with 1930's dance bands".

★ Pete Wilson's obsession has led him to form such a band himself, a thirteen piece tentatively called The Jack Wilson Orchestra, "all those thirties bands were led by someone called Jack!", though that may well change.

Pete's ace card is that he has tracked down one thousand authentic '30's arrangements. A collection amassed through swaps with Pasadena Roof Orchestra Leader, Johnny Arthey, and New York based musician Victor Giordano.

Another attraction is that his vocalist's mother, a lady called Tricia Dowie, was Nat Gonella's wartime songbird.

For Pete though, the ultimate thrill is his close friendship with Billy Amstell, alto sax player in the Ambrose Orchestra which he idolises. This came about through Pete's acquisition of original sound films by the Ambrose orch that features Billy.

Pete has one final need before he takes to rehearsals with vigour, he wants two saxes, a trumpet and a violin to complete his dream line-up. Interested musicians, of any age, should call Pete Wilson on Coleshill 62308.



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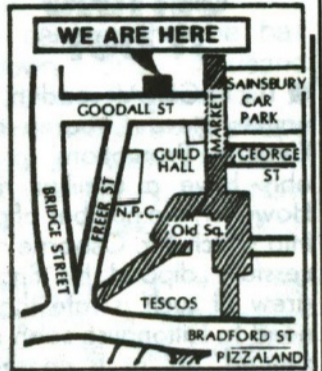
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**UP AND COMING** highlights at Wolverhampton's Lighthouse cinema include the Newcastle upon Tyne filmed 'Stormy Monday' that features Sting, Melanie Griffiths and Tommy Lee Jones in a gritty thriller with a soundtrack that includes B B King and Otis Redding (April 7 & 8). The highly praised South African movie, 'Mapanstula' screens on April 14 and 15, 'Bagdad Cafe' (28, 29) and Chris Menges' beautiful 'A World Apart' (May 5 & 6). Rockers should note that U2's excellent 'Rattle & Hum' will be shown cinematically on May 19 and 20.

**THE AMERICAN** nation's coming to terms with their embarrassing little slice of history called The Vietnam War, seems to have led to a glut of cash in movies that may yet prove to be an embarrassing little slice in the history of cinema. New World Video have the fourth episode in the 'Tour of Duty' series called 'The Kill Zone'. "Set in the action packed streets of Saigon..."

Meanwhile Cannon Video have "Platoon Leader" onto which they have tagged a competition, in which consumers can win products from the Insignia All Over Body Programme. Now wasn't one of the reasons that Uncle Sam lost in Vietnam the

# SCREEN GEMS

fact that the Viet Cong could smell the troops in the jungles because of their toiletries? Strange days indeed.

## REVIEWS

### VARIOUS

#### A Vision Shared (CMV) (E)

You may well have seen the album of the same name late last year. It caused ripples because of the inclusion of unavailable elsewhere Springsteen and U2 material. Well here's the video and it eclipses the album by a jolly good margin.

The idea is that the Smithsonian Institute benefits from monies raised to enable the preservation of the Folkways label catalogue of Woody Guthrie and Leadbelly recordings.

Unlike the record, the video is able to fill in the gaps by telling the stories of Guthrie and Leadbelly with the megastar-donated song performances alongside fascinating archive clips of the two giants.

And the new performances are marvellous. Not only Springsteen, excelling on 'Vigilante Man' and 'I Ain't Got No Home' but Sweet Honey In The Rock, Emmylou Harris and Willie Nelson.

Music videos may be becoming damned by the mountains of dross that abound. This, however, is a diamond. Essential viewing.

Steve Morris

### BUSTER

#### (Vestron) (15)

Looking like a naff British 60's comedy, this turns the Great Train Robbers into loveable rogues a la 'Only Fools and Horses', with Phil Collins as an endearing jack the lad Buster Edwards who swaps freedom in Mexico for inevitable prison in England because the missus (Julie Walters) pines for an East End steak'n'chips. The coppers are shown as incompetent buffoons and the whole thing is trivialised beyond contempt, including the brutal beating of the train driver. The stars do their best but fight against pedestrian direction, lifeless dialogue and sheer embarrassment. Crime does not pay says the director, neither should the renters. Sadly they will, in droves!

Mike Davies

### VARIOUS ARTISTS

#### Bumper Issue/Rhythm King Compilation

#### (PMI) (E)

I've said it before and here it comes again. Video is a wierd medium for dance music. Something created with itchy feet in mind presented for the sofa-bound viewer. Maybe the only explanation is chairiobics. However, this Rhythm King collection is a timely reminder of the UK's homegrown dance domination. The hipper, then, may still seek out the over-priced imports but the punters have bought Casios and are creating the exports.

They are also treading in stuff that others avoid like the plague; witness S'Express' Mark Moore. A one-man rehabilitation of the seventies; white suits, flares and Sly Stone.

Like the audio, the video is rapid cuts, pillage and pilfering. Liquid Lights and Whistle Test irrelevance abound.

For me it is unpalatable for domestic consumption having its true home on giant screens in clubs where, combined with the repetitive mantra rhythms, it could negate ecstasy, acid and alcohol.

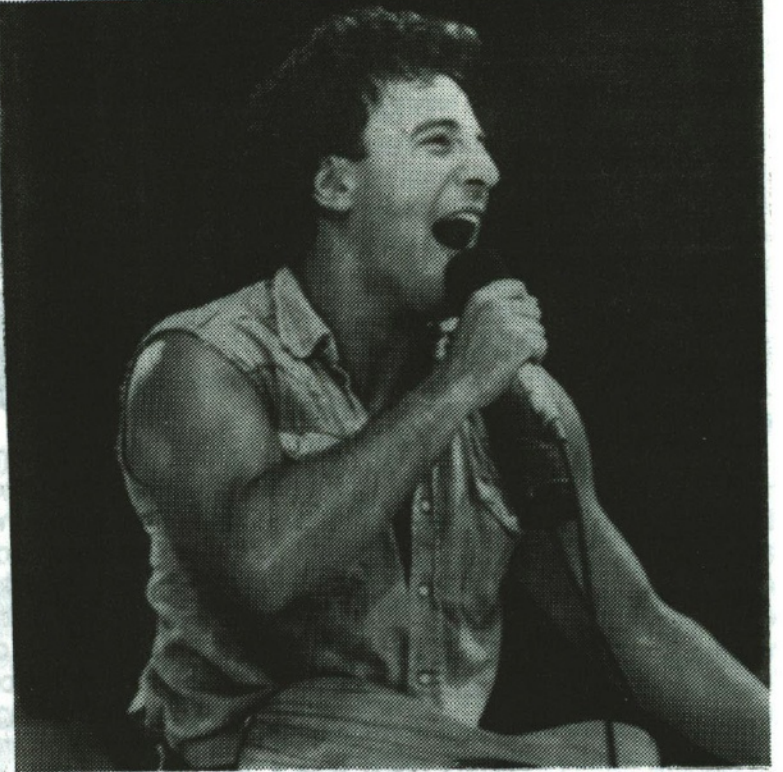
Steve Morris

### SHE'S HAVING

#### A BABY

#### (CIC) (15)

Never seen in the cinemas, this is a John Hughes delight about a young suburban couple whose dreams of a perfect life turn into a nightmare as they have to come to terms with the responsibilities of adulthood, not to mention in-laws, credit crises and career problems.



● BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

And then on top of all that... the words of the title! Funny and poignant in the usual Hughes style it stars Kevin Bacon and Elizabeth McGovern. There's also a brilliant soundtrack which includes unreleased songs by Kate Bush, XTC and the Dave Wakeling title track and which IRS still haven't issued!

Mike Davies

### BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

#### Video Anthology

#### 1978-88

#### (CMV) (E)

Last month I said that the only thing to eclipse U2's 'Rattle and Hum' tape would be a good Bruce video and, damn me, just as the printers ink was drying this snuck into the stores ahead of Bono's band.

Is it good though?

Was Bruce born in the USA?

The immediate response is that it contains little that the self-respecting Bruce bore hasn't already lified off the TV. Okay, so the editing and sound are obviously better than home-taped but there is surely some fresher footage in the vaults, some early 1973-75 perhaps? The 'No Nukes' set bits that remain unseen?

These are all good points but once you actually post the tape into the box and press play they dissolve. Bruce and the E Street Band are simply the best rock and roll outfit in the world. Sure, the set pieces are embarrassing ('Dancing In The Dark' a joke) but the real live footage erases those doubts in a micro second.

The 1988 acoustic 'Born To Run' ends the dynamic one hundred minutes perfectly by looking backwards and forwards both at the same time.

Steve Morris

## HMV Brain Of Brumbeat The Winner...

At long, overdue, last we can reveal the name of the HMV 1988 Brain of Brum Beat. Readers with long memories will remember that the ball was set rolling at Christmas time in '88 with fifty questions. Fifty questions that we thought would be a mite tough. Alas, five readers (Phil Nash of Droitwich; Clive Norman of Kings Heath, Birmingham; Alan Carruthers of Shirley; Christopher McAdams of Ladywood, Birmingham and Ian Parker of Rugeley) all scored maximum points. So we set a tie break. Four of the above again scored a max so it was into the ed's hat to find the champion. A rather sad way of eliminating three co-winners but we had to do it somehow and it seemed that further knock out competitions would simply run and run. So with no more ado the gold envelope: ladies and gents the 1988 HMV Brum Beat Brain



belongs to Ian Parker of Gentleshaw, Nr Rugeley. Many congratulations from all at Brum Beat and HMV.

For the curious the answers to the tie break are as follows:

1. Ringo Starr, Andy White, Pete Best and Paul McCartney. (We also accepted Amil Bhagwat who played tabla (Indian Drums) on Revolver).
2. Paul Rutherford.
3. James Taylor (the folkie hit with 'You've Got A Friend' whilst a different JT sang lead with Kool and The Gang).
4. Stewart Copeland.
5. Helen O'Hara.

We also set the tie break questions as a side quiz. Congratulations to M. Mielnik of Stirchley for copping the prizes on that one.

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**THE FANATICS  
THE BOATYMAN  
MONKEY MESSIAH**

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*Digbeth*

It began badly with Monkey Messiah. A band who could make it if they took a few simple actions. Viz, sack the musicians and find ones with a sense of how to groove and play less colourless monotones, get the singer a stylist and introduce her to dress sense and then lock her in a rehearsal room for six months to let her develop into an Edie Brickell. Plus points at present, though, are a few decent songs and nice cheek bones.

The Boatyman suffered from the same muffled sound that was to afflict the headliners, a pity since the new material previewed includes some real corkers (as they say), notably 'A Lover's Secret' and the somewhat disturbing 'Young Lovers'. Then came The Fanatics.

The return home after their debut UK tour should have been a major triumph. As it was the p.a. refused to ignite the spark the band sought to fire, giving the impression at times that the guitars were hidden behind a thick velvet curtain. If they were crucifying sound engineers, tonight would have been a good place to start.

However, from the onset the band showed a definite new confidence with Simon taking a solo set intro on 'Normal Town' before crashing the whole combo into action on 'Back On The Road'. The old favourites were there, grafting 'Suburban Love Songs' and 'My Brother Sarah' in with the new numbers of which the stand-out must

**L I V E  
R E V I E W S**

surely by 'Channel 4 (More Than A Pretty Face)' which has all the makings of a fine single. What it lacked was the offhand repartee and barbs and the ability to project the onstage excitement beyond the crash barrier. Not all the band's fault but it has to be said they didn't work as hard as they could to overcome the problems and the guitar thrashing and strobe climax was just faintly embarrassing.

The backlash doesn't start here. They picked things up and carried them to a warm response. What they didn't do - and I'm sure they're as aware as anyone - was leave the walls ringing with sweat. They can, they have, they will. But next time it might help to turn the volume up to 10.

**Mike Davies**

**VOW WOW**

**GOLDWYN'S**

*Birmingham*

The word has certainly spread that Japanese rockers Vow Wow are worth a watch. And the sizeable crowd that caught them at Goldwyns weren't disappointed by the band's

power-packed, unrestrained bash. They stormed onstage - four diminutive figures dwarfed further by the presence of fifth member, ex-Whitesnaker bassist Neil Murray - and delivered a stunning set which immediately got the whole room moving. Recently released single 'Helter Skelter' was the obvious stomper but I felt that other, less hyped tracks taken from the album were equally, if not better, delivered. The LOUD, unrelenting 'Night by Night' was brilliant, though the absolute classic for me must have been the unusual rock/pop offering 'You're The One For Me' - the type of tune that tortures the memory for hours after the gig!

The obligatory guitar solos were matched by the equally competent Rei Atsumi keyboard solos. Evidently the shy one, Rei kept his back firmly turned towards the crowd and head down when vocalist Genki attempted to introduce him.

After three energetic, electric encores Vow Wow were finally allowed to leave and a happy, satisfied crowd left Goldwyn's clutching albums, teeshirts and the knowledge of a red hot, new (?) band to hit the UK!

**Laura Manison**

**MADABOUT; THE BUOY**

**COD CLUB**

*Birmingham*

Darlings of the press, Madabout; The Buoy, turn out to be a singular darling with a band name and backing tapes.

I must admit the moment he took the stage

I tried to put myself in his shoes and decided it must be the loneliest feeling in the world. Rather him than me. With no guitar nor keyboard nor even a band to hide behind, he managed to create the same feelings of fragility and intensity that Joy Division's Ian Curtis could evoke.

It was a short set of about 25 minutes (6 songs) during which he transformed The Velvet's anthem of perversity, 'Venus In Furs', into a despairingly passionate love song, but the highlight was his own 'There Will Be No Pain' complete with tip-toe, Joe Cocker-type, spastic gyrations.

The music, on the whole, was similar in feel to Eurythmics but the voice so versatile, it defies comparison - from low baritone to searing, soulful, James Brown screams.

**Jenny Brittain**

**GUY CLARK**

**ACOUSTIC ROOTS/**

**Community Centre**

*Kingswinford*

Texas singer-songwriter Guy Clark rewarded the more than 100 Texoholics who located the unlikely venue with an utterly spellbinding two hour performance which - albeit with little competition - must go down as a legendary gig in this quiet corner of the Black Country!

The amiable giant, now resident in Nashville, could be on the verge of some long overdue, widespread recognition after getting the personal seal of approval from Bono and releasing a new album, 'Old Friends' (complete with contributions from Emmylou Harris and Rosanne Cash), on U2's Mother label.

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# LIVE REVIEWS

The followers of the folk/country style so associated with the Lone Star State have known for a decade or more just what a fine songwriter Clark is.

And they were out in force at the spartan, and rather uncomfortable, community hall.

The appeal of the laid-back Texan is not hard to fathom.

He has written dozens of deceptively simple but beautiful songs which tell stories about ordinary - well, American "ordinary" - Texan folk.

Among the characters who inhabit his tough but tender songs are an elderly ex-gunslinger ('The Last Gunfighter Ballad'), the old rascal and former oil well driller of 'Desperadoes Waiting For A Train', and enough faded rodeo queens and heartbroken good ole boys to fill a one-horse town.

And so they probably did, for these unashamedly sentimental songs are drawn from a Texan childhood in the 1940s and 1950s.

It was Guy Clarke's third visit to the fringe of the Black Country, at the invitation of enthusiasts Acoustic Roots, and word of mouth will ensure an even larger audience if he returns for a fourth.

Leon Burakowski

## TERRY CLARKE & STATION BREAK

### BORDER CAFE/BREEDON BAR

Birmingham

These days, Terry Clarke generally performs solo. This Sunday lunchtime bash (billed as the weekly 'Hangover Club'), featured Terry backed by four-piece band, Station Break.

Within days Clarke was due to fly out to Austin, Texas to perform at the 3rd annual South-by-South-West Music Festival. Precisely a year ago, he was in Austin recording an album, produced by former Dwight Yoakam bassman, J.D. Foster. If there is any justice in this crazy world, the album should see the light of day in the UK during the next few months.

Terry Clarke kicked off the show on his own, opening with 'Like The Moulin Rouge', a new song completed in the Breedon kitchen, at 5am that morning! The bluegrass standard 'The Bramble And The Rose', was followed by yet another new song 'Lord Franklin', about the ill-fated 1845 expedition to find the North West Passage. Clarke is a literate English songwriter, who deserves to be ranked alongside American greats like Guy Clarke, Townes Van Zandt and Nanci Griffith.

Station Break subsequently took the stage for a three number warm up, including Buddy Holly's 'Think It Over', before Clarke joined them for further standards, 'Heartaches By The Number' and 'T For Texas'. As the audience warmed to this new formed aggregation Clarke began featuring self-penned tunes like, 'Tennessee Wind', 'Why Don't You Take Me' and 'Think About It' - all of which are to appear on his vinyl debut. Station Break's sound hinges and guitar, bass, drums and pedal steel with occasional electric fiddle and National lap steel guitar.

An atmospheric and restrained rendition of Rodney Crowell's 'Til I Gain Control Again' was surpassed by the best performance I have ever heard, of Joe Ely's 'The Indian Cowboy'. Chilling. Amazing. Hell, the hairs are still standing on my neck.

Some two dozen songs delivered in around two hours, without so much as one

minute's rehearsal, showed that, given time, this combination could prove to be an extremely potent vehicle with which to present Clarke's music. The next time you see his name appear on a local gig list, make a point of catching a rising star.

Jo Paul

## FEMME FATALE/WRATHCHILD

### GOLDWYN'S

Birmingham.

Well, who else could it be? I arrived at Goldwyn's to see 'em up there camping it up, clowning about and generally having a good time onstage.

Yet still their perfectly coiffured barnets stayed intact, their conviction that they were the best band that night stayed immovable and still they delivered their

mance than the women; Lorraine shouted that "I've been accused by all them media people; they say 'that Lorraine Lewis - she likes to strut her stuff and show off her ass and her tits' and I say 'What's wrong with that?'" I think a fair few of the women standing listening could have told her exactly what was wrong...

And at the end of the night it was still Wrathchild's "What Are You Afraid Of? It's Only Rock'N' Roll..." that was ringing in my ears!

Laura Manison

## TANGLE

### EDWARD'S NO.8

Birmingham

Somebody somewhere must have told Tangle the old Sam Goldwyn quote about starting with an earthquake and working up to a climax.

They leave you with no doubt that they got the message!

From the indestructible rhythm groove and slice-through guitar in the opening chords to 'Stay', you know that this is a set guaranteed to leave you hoarse and sweating. Bass and drums - Nick Marfy and Dave Strong respectively - lay down the ideal solid basis for the slash and burn guitars of Dave Church and Mick Gardiner and the whole thing is fronted by a voice like a cross between a laser and a



● TERRY CLARKE AND STATION BREAK

unmistakeable articulated killer music. Trash, tack and pure entertainment Wrathchild are in town - not for the faint-hearted...

Then Femme Fatale took to the stage. The band play classic-type American rock - some good, some bad, all safe. Lorraine Lewis's vocals are of the Bonnie Tyler genre - a proven formula which can at times be stunning.

In this case the cause for excellence was on a track I assume to be called 'SEX...' a breathy, sweaty few minutes which involve as much juggling of the assets as juggling of the tonsils.

However, the rock edged ballad 'I'm A Rebel' was surely the winner - a number which showed that Femme Fatale have talent which, with polishing, could really get them somewhere.

I rather think the guys in the audience got a good deal more from the actual perfor-

sandblaster, given corporal form by Bob Foley.

As the set rolls over you, you find yourself looking for comparisons, but they aren't really like anybody else.

You get flashes of influence - maybe Focus in 'Press The Button', maybe Foreigner in 'Don't Wait' - but at the end of it all you're left with the overall impression of a good time - 'Party' - coupled with distinctly threatening overtones - 'Lucy'; kinda like a friendly chainsaw.

Foley's vocal is absolutely right for Tangle's brand of rock; powerful clarity with all the rough edges honed sharp, and it's obvious he's having as good a time as the audience.

The ultimate arbiter, of course, is the crowd.

The one I saw had very few stationary bodies...

Dan The Man

## NEW MODEL ARMY/FUSE

### THE HUMMINGBIRD

Birmingham

Fuse were perhaps a predictable support for the New Model Army. The three-piece combined the trebly bass sound exploited so effectively by the former, with a simpler, heavier guitar, and vocals mainly spoken or shouted. They chugged along, though not exactly with originality, to the pleasure of most, with a blend of unobtrusive lefty lyrics for the socially conscious, and praises of the New Model Army to make sure nobody lost interest.

Since I last saw the New Model Army, they have added a second guitar/keyboard and a violin to their live show. Perhaps this contributed to the more polished feel in contrast to their previous rawness and the set is now more varied. Many of the new songs from the 'Thunder And Consolation' album tend to have a folk influence, whereas the older songs are characterised by their punchy verses building up to catchy, chanty choruses.

Other changes have taken place; the lyrics are now resigned, depressing accounts of life and no longer vexed with a feeling of hope for change. Even voice-man Slade The Leveller is now merely Justin Sullivan. Some may say the band has matured.

Despite these changes they maintained their power of performance. The highlight was '51st State' with all the verses sung loudly by the dedicated following with only minimum support from Justin. Other favourites, 'No Rest', 'Betcha', and the recent chart single 'Stupid Questions', were blasted out among the newer, more mellow 'Inheritance', and 'Family Life'. Thunder and consolation?

Simon Ward

## BANG THE DRUM

### THE FLETCH

Coventry

The Fletch is quite a new venue for bands in the Coventry area. I'd been along there a couple of weeks previously to catch a band called Out Of The Blue playing to a half-filled room and was expecting something similar tonight. When I arrived there at 9 p.m., I found a queue of anxious punters jostling for entrance around the narrow doorway. Fifteen minutes later I managed to find myself the only two square feet of space in the room.

You could feel the excitement grow steadily until a gang (that's the only way I can describe them) eventually appeared on the narrow stage. These boys look MEAN, man! From the opening number I was mesmerised by the sight of leathers, quiffs and sideburns threatening and challenging their sardine-like audience with "Come on, I'll have you!" stares and struts. The mob bayed for more as Bang The Drum belted out pure pop classic after classic. Vocalist Keith Summers spat out clever lyrics on brilliantly constructed numbers which included 'Bury The Bones', 'Talk About It', 'Call Me Anything You Like' and a venomous, stomping beauty entitled 'One Damned Thing'.

There's no doubt about it, these boys can play and the singer's performance tonight knocked everything else I've heard in the last six months into the proverbial cocked hat. Pure poetry!

Kieron Byrne

**DIAMANDA GALAS**

You Must Be Certain  
Of The Devil

(Mute)

This is definitely the most disturbing album I have ever heard!

Previous attempts have proved a little heavy, to say the least, being essentially baroque sound-collages as a vehicle for poetry and "Avant-Garde" vocal techniques.

This album is a significant departure in that it is a collection of songs and although the use of 20-year-old Yoko Ono vocal techniques is irritatingly apparent on a couple of tracks, it is still her most accessible work to date. It is the concluding part of her plague mass 'Masque Of The Red Death' trilogy, the other parts being her albums 'Divine Punishment' and 'Saint Of The Pit'.

It is a bizarre fusion of Talking Heads, Hybrid Kids (Morgan Fisher), Patti Smith, Kate Bush and Tom Waits amongst others, with numerous biblical quotations, references to the devil, A.I.D.S. and gun-law.

Diamanda Galas appears to be a psychotic Enya, a demonically possessed member of the B 52's, a Cocteau Twin with serious personality problems and a tormented re-incarnation of Klaus Nomi backed by the Enid. It's enough to make Ozzy Osborne turn in his grave!

The highlight of the album is the title track which is a subversive, black-comedy, Ono-esque, gospel anthem which is incredibly infectious and could well be a hit, airplay permitting.

Listen to this album alone, late at night, in the dark and I guarantee you will be reaching for the Kleenex, but not to mop up the tears!

You have been warned! I had to put on a Leonard Cohen album to cheer me up after this.

**Gary W. Wood**

**PINTO BENNETT  
AND THE FAMOUS  
MOTEL COWBOYS**

Pure Quill

(PT Records)

Over the next couple of months the major record companies will, with the aid of the Route 89 campaign, try and sell you their idea of this year's country stars.

The fact that Pinto Bennett doesn't figure shows just how out of touch they they can get.

Whilst they're looking for pin-ups and promotable images, the stocky, hirsute Bennett and his honky tonk band have issued their third LP, a record that at the year's end will be more in contention as album of the year than the vast majority of Route 89-ers. 'Pure Quill' is pure country; good tunes, good voices and hot guitar licks.

It has harmonies that ought to make the Everlys sharpen up their act and songs they ought to be killing to record. Quite simply a bloody wonderful record. Buy it.

**Steve Morris**

**BAND OF HOLY JOY**

Manic, Magic, Majestic

(Rough Trade)

MANICal in a sense, MAGICAL in a tense way and MAJESTYcal. All refer to the efforts of Band Of Holy Joy to make a unique record. 'What The Moon Saw', a trifling tirade of a song, ebbs and flows with the riptide but as I grasped for air, so the swoon wore off as 'Bride' fell out of the speakers and ruined the carpet! Know what I'm saying? No? A good band with good intentions makes a decent album but could do better if they dropped the pretence and tuned in to the present tense. The Smiths are dead, long live the Smiths....

**Kevin Wilson**

**VARIOUS**

Scandal (Soundtrack)

(Parlophone)

Opening with the marvellously atmospheric Dusty Springfield/Pet Shop Boys collaboration, a rare theme song that actually charts the movie's narrative, the Scandal soundtrack seeks to evoke the period of its setting with what on the surface is a

K-Tel style, sixties hits album.

Where it differs is in the less obvious choices (though necessary in the movie) such as Jimmy Cliff's 'Miss Jamaica' and Johnny Dankworth's 'African Waltz' (a novelty track this - a hit jazz single!).

Included, of course, is the one track essential to any 'Scandal'. . . Billy J. Kramer's 'Do You Want To Know A Secret!'

**Steve Morris**

RECORDED  
DELIVERY

**VARIOUS**

NUMBER ONE COUNTRY

(Knight Records)

Given country music's current profile, enhanced as it is by Dwight Yoakam, Nanci Griffith, The Judds et al, there must be a lot of people willing to explore further but, because of the wealth of material available, unsure where to start.

Number One Country, six mid-price and separately available records, helps those lost souls. Divided into arbitrary groupings of Girls, Boys, Duets, Love, Classics and 80's the set contains 86 tracks with one thing in common, they have all been Billboard Country Music Chart Number Ones.

Consequently, you won't love 'em all but that's in the nature of such sets and the fact that they're drawn from the vaults of only three major record companies imposes limits that, certainly, 80's country fans will notice.

Having said that, the set is a rather good foundation on which to build a collection or a handy set of compilations for when you can't quite decide who to play.

The range of country contained is staggering: Dolly Parton, George Jones, The Judds, K.T. Oslin, Marty Robbins, Rosanne Cash and her daddy all feature.

I've a feeling that if you buy one you'll buy the lot.

**Steve Morris**

**DEPECHE MODE**

101

(Mute)

Depeche Mode, double live album? Gawd! I mean one vocalist plus machines and a tape recorder; at home it's a cool, laid-back, cold music image and now it's "Good evening, Pasadeenah!" Seventy - two thousand Californians going ape-shit. This is mega star Mode, okay?

It's also weird; somehow it doesn't fit. Weren't DM the one-finger, punk answer for non-guitarists; part of the stadium gig antithesis?

Now it's "Let's see those hands" singalongs. The presence of an audience adds nothing and, in fact, detracts from the DM distancing; it humanises them. It'll make them very rich, stadium gods. For chrissakes, there'll be virtuoso guitar bands forming to protest against such synth-poser stars.

**Roland Keyboard**

**MICHAEL JOHNSON**

Life's A Bitch

(RCA)

This album is a generous, sixteen-track compilation of Johnson's three American releases, issued, no doubt, to tie in with his involvement in Route 89.

Michael Johnson is an exceptional guitarist and pleasant singer who, on the evidence of this record and a recent live sighting at the Breedon Bar, is blessed with good taste in his choice of material.

Credit there may also be due to producer Brent Maher, a man who performs the same function for The Judds. His production is certainly sweet,

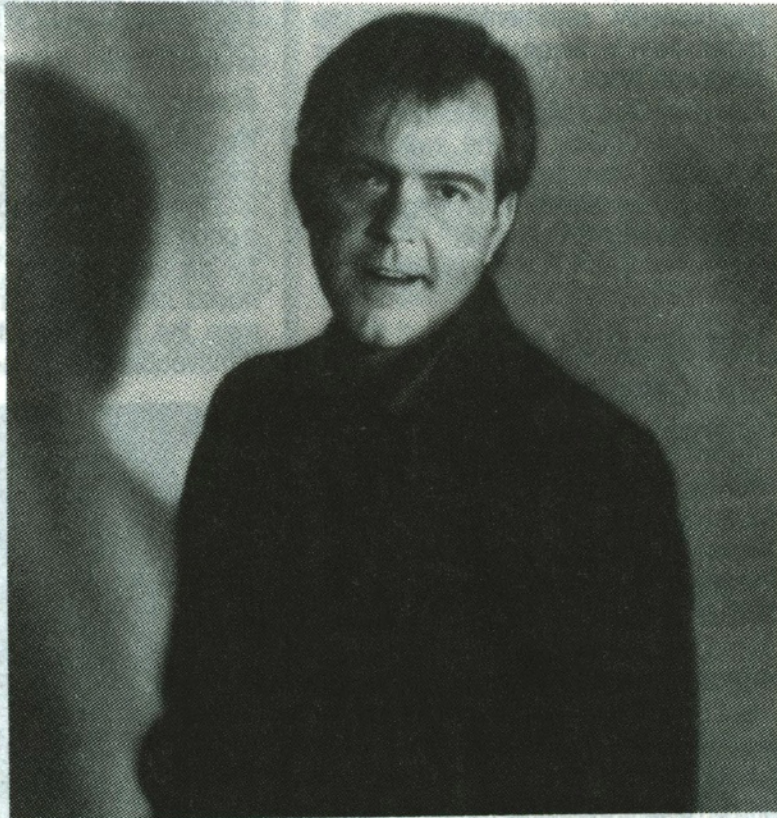
veering on MOR, but never intrudes on the songs.

On the whole, though, I have to admit that this record's natural home in the UK is Radio Two (take that as an indictment of radio not evidence of my senility, if you will!) and so will fly past most of this mag's readers.

This is certainly one of the records that will increase in worth over the years without ever becoming a great favourite; kind of close friend not lover.

Live, Michael did a Janis Ian song, 'Back In The Lone Ranger Days' sadly not included here, but wonderful, and that omission loses this record one star.

**Steve Morris.**



● MICHAEL JOHNSON

**VICTORY**

Culture Killed The Native

(Metronome)

My only regret after hearing this album was that I had been unable to make it to the Gary Moore date at the the NEC where Victory supported.

'Culture Killed The Native' is an excellent offering from the German heavies. Opening with the wild and wicked 'More And More', the mood is set for some serious rocking.

Unstoppable, driving guitar provides the bold and breathless background for the racing vocals. This is best demonstrated on mega-energy tracks like 'Always The Same' and its immediate successor 'Power Strikes The Earth'.

Victory have their softer moments - but not *that* soft; no wimp music here. 'Lost In The Night' provides such an example, likewise the seductively rhythmic but never slushy 'On The Loose'. But Victory are most at home with the hard and rocking. Side Two sees them closing in a blaze of brilliance with the crashing 'The Warning'.

These guys are treading no

brave frontiers of musical experimentation, but they're the living proof of real rocking - that tried and tested tradition which, when done well, just cannot fail. Victory do it excellently and will, I'm sure, continue in that vein.

**Laura Manison**

**PAUL ROLAND**

Happy Families

(New Rose)

I needed this LP. After the early-89 dross, something different stood a very good chance of capturing my attention. Paul Roland is that something different. Take an acoustic guitar, a few stories concerning the eccentric lifestyles of Victorian subjects and an attitude that has its roots in English humour and you have a very unusual, very whimsical and altogether merit-worthy collection of songs. 'The Curate Of Cheltenham', a flight of fancy set to stirring chords, is my favourite but any of the songs will do for me because technology is secondary to the art of song writing, aka lyricism. Take a bow Paul Roland.

**Kevin Wilson**



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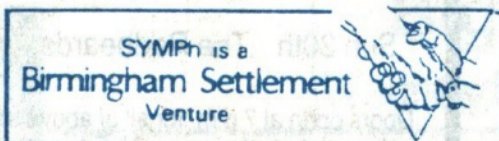
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