

BRUM BEAT

THE MIDLANDS ENTERTAINMENT MONTHLY

Number 142

October 1992

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COMPETITIONS

RUMBLEFISH: AMERICAN CDs

Read Mike Davies' review of Rumblefish's eastwest album debut and you'll find it declared an album of the year. And we here in the competitions corner agree entirely. It's eleven tracks of perfect pop; great songs, great performances. An entrancing, invigorating album!

Rumblefish mainman, Jeremy Paige, has given Brum Beat two American, long-boxed CDs to be won. Be ahead of the UK release care of Brum Beat and Jeremy Paige! First two correct answers pulled on Nov. 1st win their senders one copy each.

Q: What is the title of Rumblefish's UK major label debut single?

SIXTIES BEAT: CDs

Get Ready, Get Steady & Go with Dino's 40 track double album celebration of the decade that just won't go away. Sounding as fresh as the day they were first minted, you'll find Manfred Mann, The Hollies, Billy J. Kramer, The Zombies, Procol Harum, Tom Jones and loads more. If you like classic pop this is nirvana.

Brum Beat has 6 double CD sets of 'Sixties Beat' to be won: The first six correct entries drawn on November 1st win their senders one each.

Q: Who had a 'Lazy Sunday'?

BLOCKBUSTER! THE SENSATIONAL SEVENTIES: DOUBLE CASSETTES

It's a guarantee that if you played this 130 minute, 36 track double set 'blind', you'd not only know every track but you'd be singing along! And whilst it's early for such predictions, suck on this: If you go to any Christmas party in '92 at which Castle Communications' 'Blockbuster' is not on the hi-fi; you're not at a party. What you get is the best of the glittering glamrock generation; Bolan & T-Rex, Wizzard, The Sweet; the silky soul seventies; The Real Thing, The Jacksons, Three Degrees and the punchy pop perfection of Hot Chocolate, Pilot, 10cc and David Essex.

There is of course Showaddywaddy but!

Brum Beat has five double cassettes of Blockbuster to be won and they'll go to the first five correct entries drawn out of the platform shoe on November 1st.

Q: Who had the hit single of 'Blockbuster'?

BANGING WITH MANNING: VIDEOS

'Banging With Manning' captures Bernard having an inimitable go at sex education videos. Clad alternately in PVC fetish outfits and grubby underwear he tackles every aspect of sex ... including sheep!

Brum Beat has five copies of this Polygram video to be won. *BUT be warned they are for the broad minded over 18s only. Entries must be endorsed 'I am over 18' and signed.* This video is rude in extremis!!!

The senders of the first five convincing entries received by November 1st win one copy each.

Q: Explain Bernard Manning's sex appeal.

LEOS CARAX MOVIES: TICKETS AND VIDEOS

The Triangle Cinema in Birmingham's Aston University campus are showing Leos Carax 'Les Amants Du Pont Neuf' until October 8th. The first two readers to turn up at The Triange Box Office on or after October 1st will receive one pair of tickets each for the movie. The disappointed are strongly urged to see it anyway! If you can't make it to The Triange, Artificial Eye Video have solace in the release of Carax 'The Night Is Young'. The video is available at all good outlets for £15.99. If you have a problem, or simply desire an Artificial Eye brochure, for free, call 081 960 1860.

The senders of the first two correct cards drawn on November 1st with their senders one video each.

Q: Translate 'Les Amants Du Pont Neuf' Into English!

HOW TO ENTER

★ Brum Beat competitions are free and easy to enter. Simply send your answer on a postcard stating clearly which competition it applies to (one postcard per competition please, if entering more than one several postcards can be put into one envelope to save on stamps). Please include your name and address and daytime and/or evening phone number (if possible).

Send to:- **Brum Beat Competitions, Premier House, 43-48 New Street, Birmingham B2 4LJ.**



DIESEL PARK WEST

DIESEL PARK AT JBS

NO, NO they're not about to turn the legendary Black Country rock haunt into a lorry shelter, fool! Rather Leicester's excellent Diesel Park West are playing a rare small club in the hallowed hall on Saturday October 10th. Given the general excellence of their multi format, eleven track 'God Only Knows' covers project and the band's commitment to 'real live playing', the gig should prove unmissable.

IT'S ALL FALLING BACK INTO PLACE

HAVING FAILED TO CREATE the deserved impact with their brand of deeply textured indie rock, BORN BLIND have split. Rob Wakelin has now reformed ex Pernod Hottest Band, the FALLING BOYS and rehearsals are under way.

THEY SAY IT'S YOUR BEARTRIDAY ...

INDEED IT'S A BIG BLUE HAPPY ONE for the Blues At The Bear team. One year ago they opened the doors of The Bear in Birmingham's Bearwood not knowing what to expect. As Jim Simpson, the blues veteran and man affectionately christened 'Big Bear' by none other than a youthful John Peel (It would no doubt come as a surprise to many of Brum's Peel loving indie set, to learn that he and Blues/Jazz festival boss Simpson are actually the same age!) says, "The Tuesday night gigs began as a test run."

The year's growth, the club now has over 3,500 members, has come as little surprise to the life long blues fan; "Blues fans never let you down, put on a good programme and they'll come out of the woodwork." Accepting that the experiment has been a success he adds, "It has become so popular that it looks like it's going to run indefinitely!"

The success is clearly down to a booking policy that's seen The

Bear visited by such US Blues stars as Honeyboy Edwards, Joe Louis Walker, Johnny Mars, Steve Riley and The Mamou Playboys, Doctor Ross and more. Never one to rest on his laurels Simpson has an autumn bill that promises to clear more woodwork than Rentokil! October sees visits from R. Cajun and those Zydeco Bros. (6); US guitar star Byther Smith and the Harp Breakers (13); Johnny Mars Blues Band (20) and Honeyboy Edwards (27).

HEY MR. PORTER

THE COAL PORTERS, the new outfit lead by Long Ryders legend Sid Griffin, have announced a date at The Junction in Birmingham's Harborne. The band make their appearance on Thursday October 15th. With an encyclopaedic knowledge of and a passionate love for all types of class music, you can guarantee that a) The Porters set will be a cracker and that b) you'd have to a dunce not to be there!

ROCK'N'ROLL SITS VAC

HEY RAWK'N'ROLL, WOW... er. got any vacancies for a New York Dolls style bass player? That kind of scenario could become reality if Andy Markland gets his way.

"I'm starting a service for bands and musicians", he told us, "that's aimed at rock'n'roll players. People influenced by the Stones, The Dolls, MC5, Iggy & The Stooges, Lou Reed, Pistols, You Know.

We want to do two things. One is to help bands find musicians and vice versa and the other is to help bands arrange gigs with other like minded outfits."

Andy's service, which goes by the name of Search And Destroy, is free (apart from postage) and what he needs to make it work are personal details, band biogs, photos, demos etc. And the all important SAE.

"The scheme is going to run nationally so musicians should

make it clear whether or not they'd be willing to move. Also if there any name bands who could support the idea with support slots, they should call me." Contact Search And Destroy at 637A Washwood Heath Road, Ward End, Birmingham B8 2HJ.

LIKE A MERMAID

'MERMAIDS' STAR BOB HOSKINS is putting his weight behind a series of Mermaids sponsored swim events. The nation wide event is set for October 10th with a mass dive in at 10am.

The aim of the event is to raise a vast amount of money for the National Children's Home. There are prizes to be won including badges and T-shirts and if you raise bundles of cash you could end up with your own copy of the Cher starring 'Mermaids' movie!

The local event takes place at the Windley Leisure Centre, Clifton Road, Sutton Coldfield where celebrities will be on hand to launch the event with a bang. Sightings of Cher, or more to the point, Winona Rider, are sadly not anticipated in Sutton!

If you want to support the great event, and you should, call 071 608 2204 for your personal Mermaids Sponsored Swim Event Pack.

SCREAMING AB DABS

THE LATEST THING in people soothers has been created by The Museum Store in London. It's an inflatable version of Munch's famous, howling figure painting, known as The Scream. Nearly a metre high, this highly original piece of art nouveau is ideal for that person in your life who is so typically impossible to

buy for as it'll ensure that they never forget you in a hurry! You should move quickly as they're selling fast. Cost is £24.95 (plus £2p&p outside London). Cheques payable to The Museum Store should be sent to Clemency Moore, Retail Development, museum Store, 37 The Market, Covent Garden, London WC2E 8RF or call 071 794 9835



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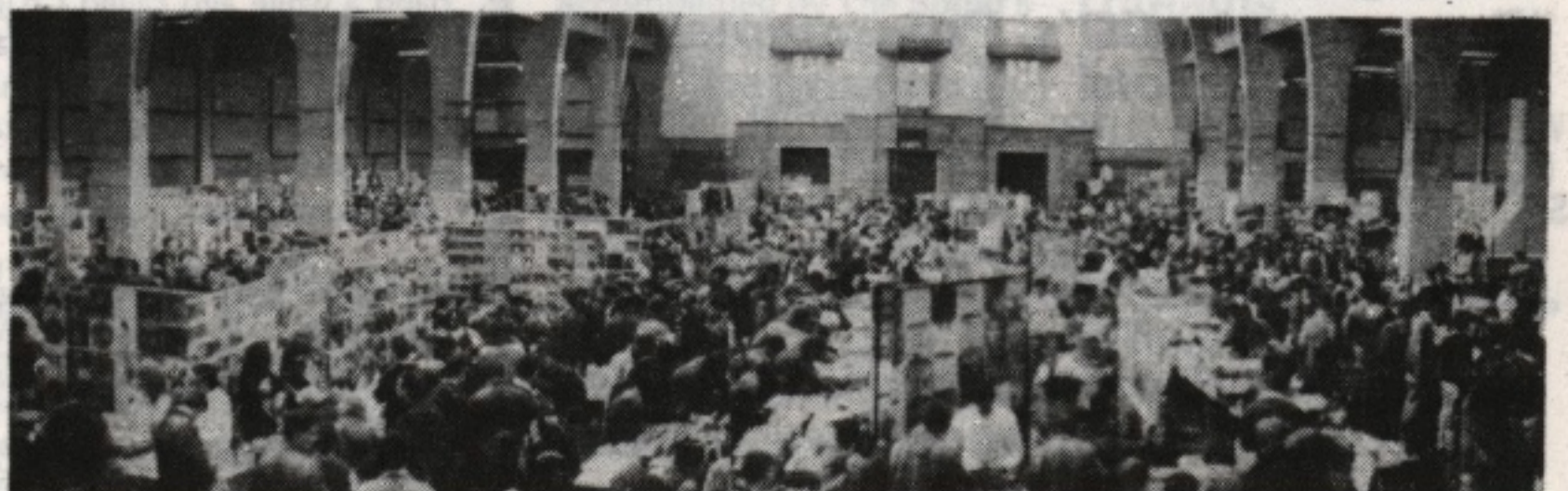
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(Above: Similar event elsewhere.)

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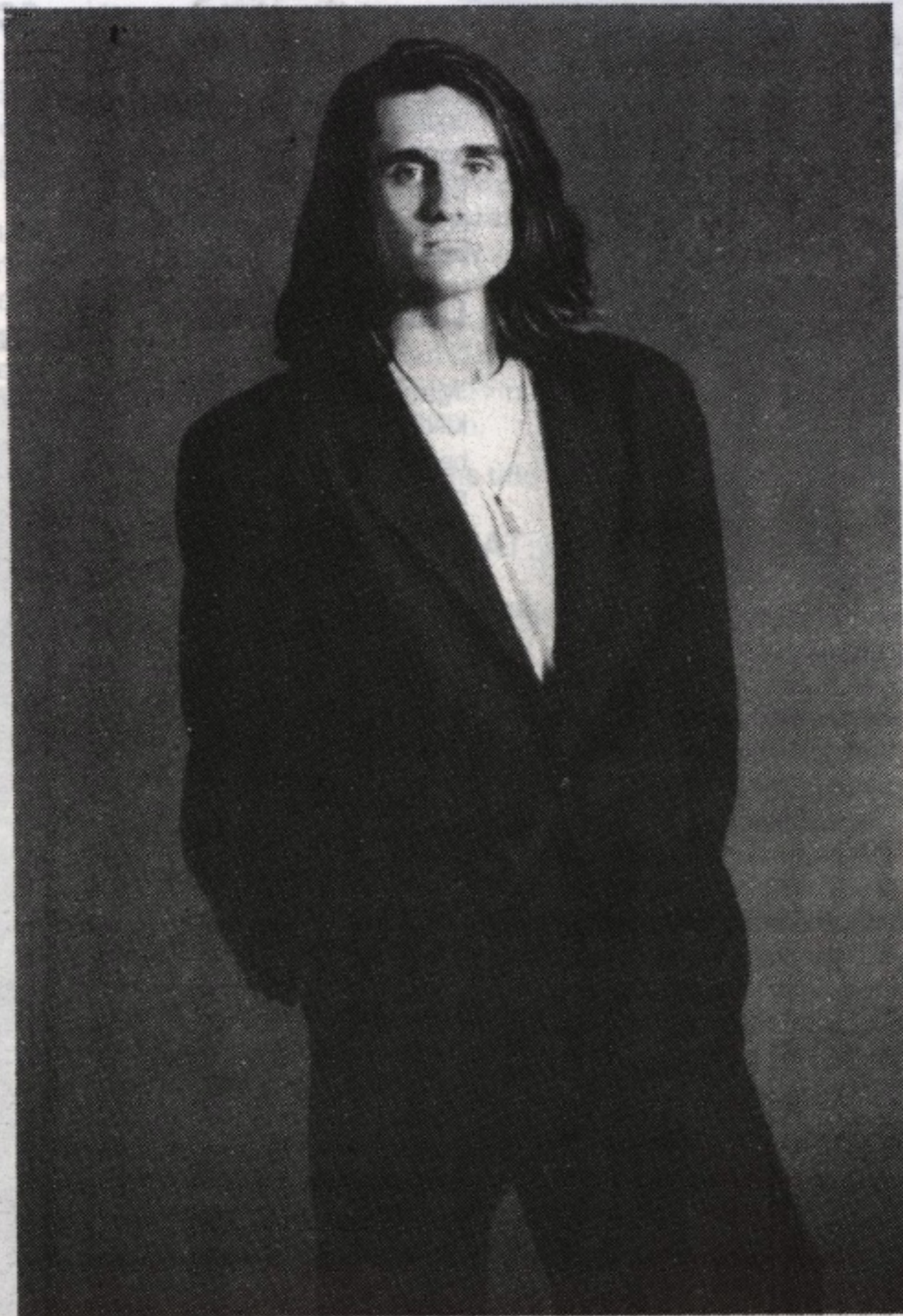
The Stray Cats have gained a reputation for being world leaders in Rockabilly. Their new album 'Choo Choo Hot Fish', is so called because they did the record in Chattanooga, Tennessee: "It's got the famous Chattanooga Choo Choo there and everything in the town is 'Choo Choo - the Choo Choo gift shop, the Choo Choo record shop and there was a little restaurant next to the hotel, The Chattanooga Hilton, that had four counter stools and they served trout and egg and catfish and beans - the weirdest kind of stuff. The name of the restaurant was, (you've guessed it), 'Choo Choo Hot Fish'."

The current single from the album is 'Elvis On Velvet' - a reverential "Tribute to the king. We want to remember Elvis as being the hillbilly cat," says slim Jim Phantom, the band's charismatic drummer. He also explains that the early Sun recordings were, "Really responsible for us starting this whole thing."

The album has been described by frontman Brian Setzer as "Rockabilly 2000." There've been a lot of changes too: "In the past we probably never would have tried that kind of stuff. We were too into being purists."

Purists or not, it looks like the Stray Cats are set to strut through the 90's.

Andy Harper



CURTIS STIGERS

● CURTIS STIGERS has chosen Wolverhampton Civic Hall as the venue for his Midlands' live debut. The blue eyed soul star brings his US show to the venue on Friday October 9th. The rest of the month is filled with The Civic Halls' usual electric flair viz:- The Stranglers (1), Rubicon (ex Fields Of The Nephilim) (6), Cud (10), Pop Will Eat Itself (12 & 13), Manic Street Preachers (16) and The Quireboys (15). An October highlight must be the appearance of the legendary Temptations, with Marv Johnson and The Three Degrees on Friday the 23rd. Call the box office on 0902 312030.

● THE CHILL FACTOR bring a cool vibe to The Old Courthouse, Tipton (October 6); The Green (Snooker Club), Darlaston (9); The Halfway House, Tettenhall, W'Ton (13); The Stourbridge Lion, Stourbridge (26) and The Brewery Tap, Worcester (30).

● TERRAYNE MANAGEMENT are back in the ring with gigs from Some Men/Last Association (Hudson Bay, Birmingham, Oct. 1st); These Foolish Things/Last Association/The Heroes (Pen & Wig, B'Ham, Oct. 20) and The Last Association (Dudley JB's November 3rd).

● Ex CHARLATAN guitarist John Baker has been seen 'getting it together in the country' and laying down four, apparently excellent, tracks at White Rabbit Studio in Bridgnorth. New Creation Records act, Freakhouse, also chose the studio for their debut waxing, the tapes of which have been winged over the Atlantic for a Larry T NYC remix. And you thought that Bridgnorth was a sleepy village near to Wolverhampton!

● ANNA PALM, the enigmatic vox/violin, One Little Indian signing supports Snap at Birmingham's Dome (Nov 2) and Wolverhampton Picasso's (Oct 6). A single 'Love Me' is out now.



ANNA PALM

DIGGIN' THEIR OWN SCENE

Adam Bostock rolls the bones with Dave West?

Coventry isn't exactly an epicentre of the rock and roll universe but that could yet change if The Bonediggers, the city's biggest unsigned band, get the break they richly deserve.

Since a reshuffling and re-assessment of their aims around Christmas '91, the Diggers have been doing a lot of spadework to con-

solidate a strong local following, keeping the hardcore fans happy with bootleg CDs and self-produced merchandise. The badges and T-shirts read 'True Rockin' Blues' which is as near as you'll get to slapping a definition on the band's refreshing sound. Vocalist/rhythm guitarist Dave West explained that categorising them-

selves has been difficult although "The clash meets Hank Williams" was a self-styled reference point when The Bonediggers were a duo - West and ex-Special Roddy Byers forming the backbone in 1987. The band has since evolved through a trio with Sam Smith (double bass) to a four-piece completed by Jim Pryal (drums), the latest in a Spinal Tap - style succession of stickmen. This quartet have established themselves as Coventry's number one band but is there anything else the city has to offer musically?

"Yeah, there's plenty going on. There's a band called The Ludicrous Lollipops that are supposed to be doing OK. And there was a band a while ago called Gdansk that disappeared off to Spain and got a record contract. But nothing has been heard of them locally since. Maybe they're doing well on the continent."

The Bonediggers aren't doing so badly themselves overseas, having signed a deal with island Records that has seen them hit the CD market in France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. The underground buzz, as Dave calls it, has also spread to Japan where the band are label-mates with all-girl supergroup The Nolans! But anyone who's seen The Bonediggers play live will know that they're about as com-

patible with The Nolans as they are with The Fall.

"When we supported The Fall at the Hummingbird, I thought we were going to fall flat on our faces. Our music is more pop-oriented than The Fall. But we got a great response from that audience. Some people there even said we reminded them of The Cure."

As well as aiming to put Coventry on the map, The Bonediggers are determined to have their say on the state of the industry.

"We just think that there's a statement to be made since punk that still has not been made. The music business has been like a closed shop. They're not really getting to the issues and they're not really speaking for the kids who go to these concerts."

Could 1993 be the year that sees The Bonediggers kick down the door?

"Yeah, I hope so. If we do sign to a major this year, it'll probably be next year before there's a release with the proper boot behind it. And if a major company doesn't come along we'll carry on ourselves anyway. We're either going to work hand-in-hand with the business or we're going to be a big threat to it."

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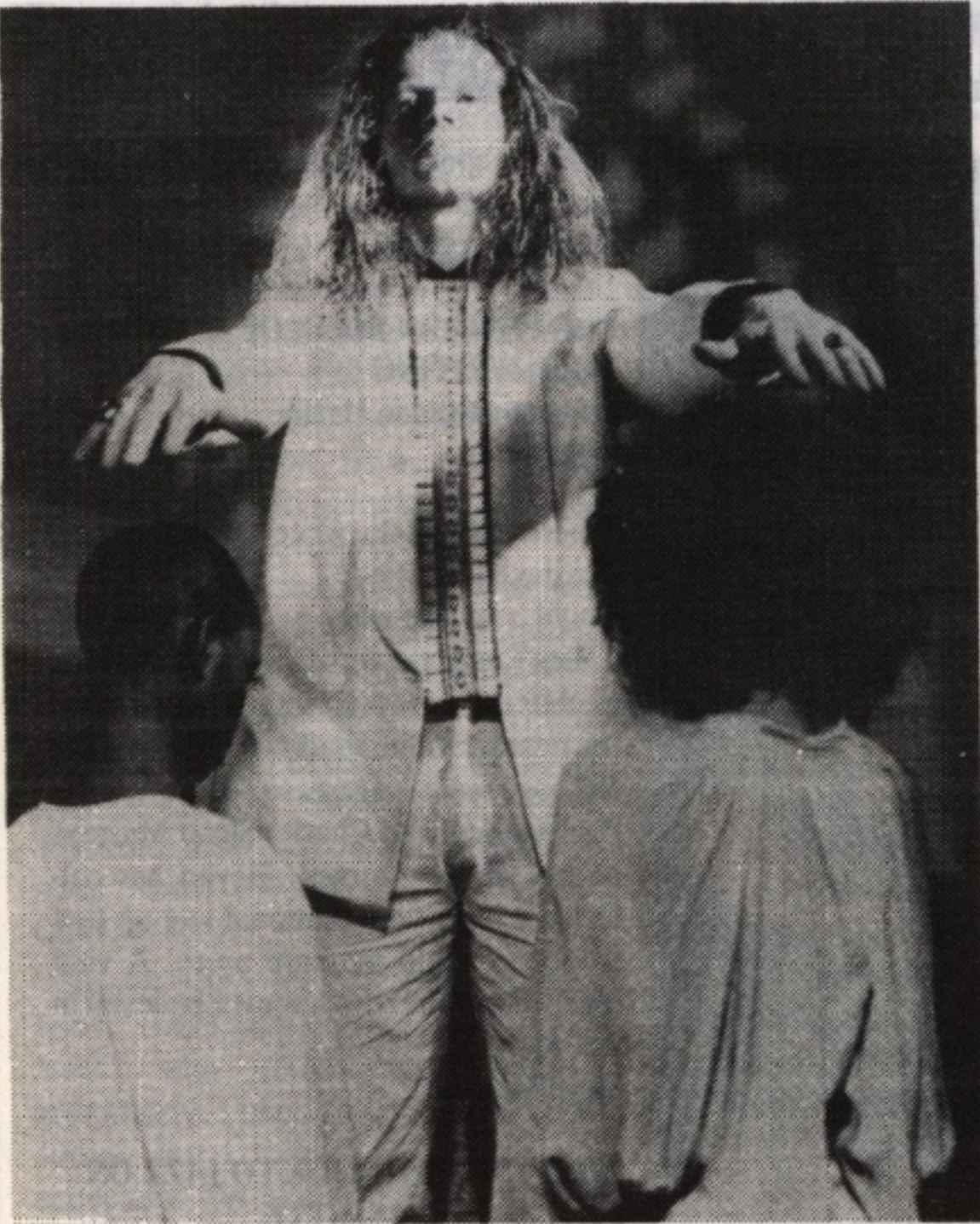
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SHORTS



THE REVEREND BROWN

● **THE REVEREND BROWN & THE EARLY BIRDS**, whose national touring is beginning to make Dylan's legendary 'never ending tour' look like a weekend jaunt, have found time to slip in the following local gigs; The Swan, Smethwick (Oct 1); The Kings Head, Birmingham (11); The Breedon Bar, Birmingham (15 & 30) and The Park, Smethwick (31).

● **MOROCCANROLL**, the Bearwood based studio continue to stage live music at Dirty Betts, that's at the rear of the New Talbot on Edgbaston's Hagley Road with October shaping up thus: - What (1st); Above Suspicion (8); 14 Times (15); RPM (22) and Rufus T (29). Bands wanting a Moroccanroll gig should send tapes etc to 25 Drayton Road, Bearwood, Warley, West Midlands B66 4AJ and NOT to the venue, please!

● **S**, a six piece with the original vocalising line up of three vocalists, piano, bass and drums are planning ahead for gigs at The Hibernian (November 3), Spokes at The Castle And Falcon, Moseley (Nov 5) and The Hibernian (December 20).

● **LOUD** are set to support The Stranglers at Wolves Civic on October 1st. A single 'Mary (She Made me ...)' coincides.

● **THE TOFU LOVE FROGS**, crusty stars of the Castle Morton 'event' are at The Red Lion, Balsall Heath on Friday October 16th. Admission is £1.50 and support is courtesy of Spithead.

● **BABY FACE**, Cannock's rock contenders can be seen at The Wheatsheaf, Cannock (October 17); The Rose & Crown, Glossop (18) and JB's, Dudley (19).

● **THE SECOND AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL** Acoustic Music Benefit takes places at The Clarendon Hotel, Chapel Ash, Wolverhampton on Thursday October 15th. Doors open at 8 pm to reveal Roostervelt, Crawdwaddy, Pietra Rosa and Larry & Mel.

● **THE FREAKS** are rolling once again at Birmingham's Institute! The legendary Freak Scene comes back to life on Friday October 20th and features the Click Club DJs, the Go For Your Guns 70s Discotheque and The Cavalcade Of Perversion's outlandish alternative cabaret. Admission to the whole extravaganza is £4, drink is cheap and there are no dress restrictions. Doors open at 9 pm and the show closes at 2 am.

● **INDIE FANS** should note Birmingham gigs during October by Pavement (Oct 1st/Edwards); Verve (5/B'Ham Uni); Frank + Walters & Radiohead (7/Edwards); A House (11/Edwards); New Fast Automatic Daffodils (12/B'Ham Uni); Suede & Auteurs (14/Edwards); Sultans Of Ping (20/B'Ham Uni); Meat Beat Manifesto & Basti (26/Edwards) and Gallon Drunk (27/Edwards).

● **BIRMINGHAM'S HUDSON BAY**, to be found in the shadows of Central TV and near to The Holiday Inn, present Some Men/Last Association (October 1); World Service (8); Tofu Love Frogs/Spithead (14); Indya/Watershed (15) and Dovetails/Something Else/Noise R Us (21).

● **PUPPET REGIME**, featuring Josh ex-Natives, can be seen and heard at The Pot Of Beer (Oct 12), Jug of Ale (26), The Hibernian (Nov 2) and The Pen & Wig (8).



SWEET JESUS

● **SWEET JESUS**, with a third 45 due at the end of the month are supporting PWEI at Wolves Civic on October 12th and 13th.

● **THE GARAGE BAND**, Birmingham's bold and brassy Blues Bros, soul and reggae instant party band are at The New Inns, Yardley (Oct 2nd), The Clock Hill, Bickenhill (4) and The Barley Mow, Solihull (21).

● **LYXZ** headline a demo launch show at Edwards No8 in the heart of Brum on Monday October 5th. Tickets are £1 in advance (£1.50 on the door) from Muthers Rehearsals in Rea Street, Digbeth. The demo, 'Fistfull Of Shit', which includes 'Down On Your Knees', 'Bulldozer' and more can be had for £3.50 inc. p&p from Phil Docker, 73 Redlands Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 2LT. Make cheques payable to P. Docker.

● **THE LORD RAGLAN** in downtown Wolverhampton is going from strength to strength on the gig front with A.R.K./Adrenalin Ritual (Oct 7 replacing the cancelled Harlots); Am I Mad/Another Fine Mess (21); The Bedridden/Gooseneck (Nov 4) and Ye Fungus (18). All gigs are £1.50 and are accompanied by The Squid's club, indie and alternative disco. Call the Raglan on 0902 25865 for up to the minute info.

● **WALLFLOWERS** (not, we suspect Bob Dylan's son's band, but a local outfit destined for an imminent name change) play the Hummingbird's Warwick Room on October 6th in the company of Corner Shop and Dead End. Kick Inside, The Suns, The Berts and River Ghosts appear at the same venue on the 20th.

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Premier House, 43-48 New Street, Birmingham, B2 4LJ
☎ 021 643 8899 Fax/Ansaphone 021 643 3060

Editor
STEVE MORRIS

Advertising Sales
MARK FREETH

Contributing Editors
MIKE DAVIES
KEVIN WILSON
ARTHUR WOOD

Contributors
JOHN TOBLER, PAUL FLOWER,
PAUL REES, JOHN KENNEDY,
LAURA MANISON, MARK HADLEY,
TERESA BASSETT, ANDY TIPPER

Photographer
MARK HADLEY

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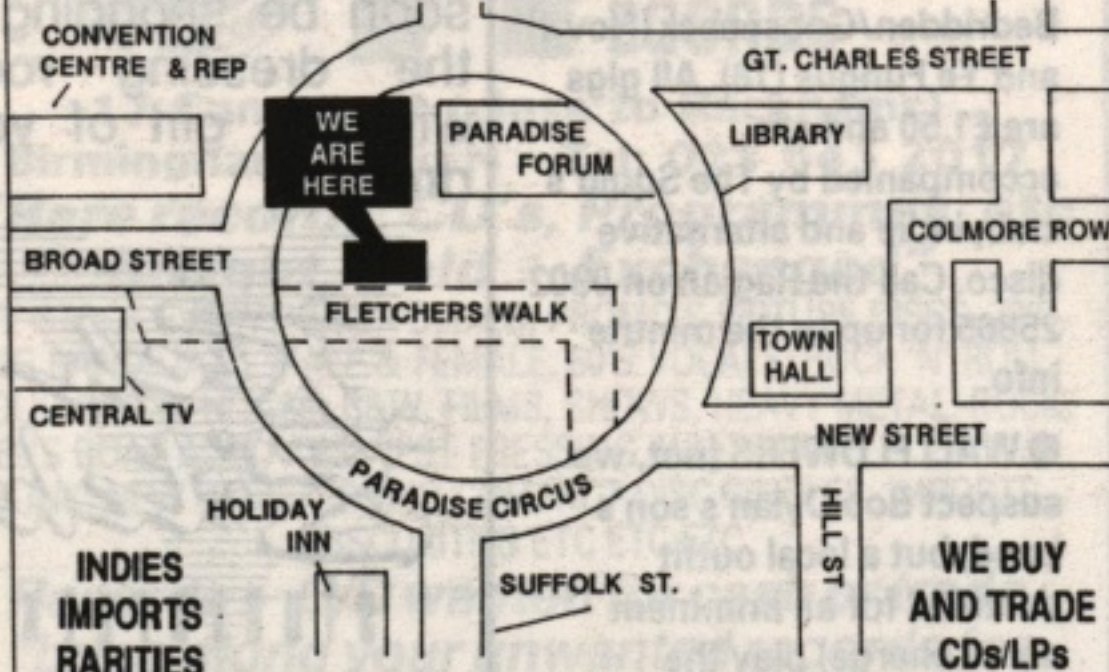
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DICKS OUT

Larry Bulmer & Rob Merrills
(Chatsby)

A compilation of British football terrace songs and chants really does show just where the class is and the riff raff hang out! Not afraid to use every expletive known to the football fan (and even I learnt the odd new one!), 'Dicks Out' is funny and a mine of information on an art form that has spawned more than the occasional hit single! The wittiest terrace choir has to be Manchester City, with their United neighbours falling from grace of late simply by being gutter dominated. Locally, the book confirms that the Holte End are now no more witty (remember 'Rioch, Rioch, Rioch, Rioch, Born Is The King Of Villa Park?'), Wolves are arguably the poet laureates, Boney M's 'Mary's Boy Child' turned into a Steve Bull hymn) and that the Blues were on the brink of greatness but the constant renditions of 'Keep Right On.....' finally got on everyone's nerves! Great book!

Kevin Wilson

QUEEN. AS IT BEGAN

Jacky Gunn and Jim Jenkins
(Sidgwick & Jackson)

Written in conjunction with the band, this rock biog is not nearly as sanitised as you'd expect with lots of interesting info and anecdotes thrown in alongside the tour hassles. From first gig, to the last sad months of Freddy Mercury's life, 'As It Began' is an honest attempt to tell an honest account of the rise and fall of one of this country's greatest rock bands and no doubt, thousands will buy it and make it the Queen biog to be seen with.

Kevin Wilson

MADONNA. UNAUTHORISED

Christopher Anderson (Signet)

Compelling... fascinating... provocative... revealing... all words used to describe an unauthorised biog of any star name in the world of rock and this little gem is no different. Full of snippets of fun and frolics from her tempestuous relationship with Sean Penn and plenty of reference to the Warren Beatty affair. It is no wonder that the material girl wanted this cast in a million pieces onto the ocean of obscurity.

Kevin Wilson

TWENTIETH CENTURY BOY: THE MARC BOLAN STORY

Mark Paytress (Sidgwick & Jackson)

Paytress' biog of the bloke many consider to be the quintessential pop star is an enthralling work. For two reasons. One is the appeal of the central character, someone whose manoeuvrings should make him repellent, but whose absolute belief in his minimal (though thoroughly effective) and largely borrowed talent is totally seductive. Secondly, though the author's narrative and research have drive they lack depth; you tend to plod on waiting for an interview to reveal more than a morsel. Someone must have substantial

beans to spill. On yet another level, it's the would be pop stars ideal manual!
Sam Mitchell

THE PENGUIN BOOK OF ROCK & ROLL WRITING

Edited by Clinton Heylin
(Viking)

Where have all the writers gone, gone to glossies every one ...

Could it be that when music is in the doldrums (and, perversely, it is despite the plethora of good releases) the service sector retreats to the shadows. This massive 682 page tome suggests so. Where are the Paul Morleys and Charles Shaar Murray of the 90s? In fairness Heylin has collected a stellar international line up that few of us could measure up to. A vital read for anyone who has ever believed in the magic.

Steve Morris

THE PENGUIN GUIDE TO JAZZ ON CD, LP AND CASSETTE

Richard Cook & Brian Morton
(Penguin)

A journey thru' jazz was always going to be a daunting challenge for this writer and just as the best map in the world can't get you off the M25 at 8.15 am on a Tuesday morn, this detailed musical route-master can't get me beyond the first step. I know it's a fine work by looking, but ...

Sam Mitchell

THE BILLBOARD BOOK OF NUMBER ONES

Fred Bronson (Guinness)

It's US singles chart toppers but as by and large they coincide with ours, no problem. Everyone is analysed from Bill Haley in 1955 to Vanessa Williams in March of this year! A vital and addictive trivia source book. Totally invaluable. Makes visits to the loo entertaining ... and long!

Sam Mitchell

FEEL LIKE GOING HOME

Peter Guralnick (Penguin)

Subtitled this 'Portraits In Blues And Rock And Roll' is akin to referring to a collection of Magrittes as a book of pictures. Guralnick, here writing on such characters as Howlin' Wolf, Jerry Lee Lewis and Muddy Waters is so evocative, informative and inspiring that you can't help but needing to hear the artist in question.

Sam Mitchell

RADIO ONES CLASSIC INTERVIEWS

Edited by Jeff Simpson (BBC)

Another piece of 25th anniversary merchandise. Except this is of value. Brum Beat contributor, John Tobler's early confrontation with then Pistol John Lydon, before the Rotten cartoon took over, is illuminating, as is Andy Peebles' John Lennon piece. In fact most of the pieces, transcribed from broadcasts of the last quarter century, are more informative than you imagine Radio One to be. A fascinating, if inessential, volume.

Sam Mitchell

Former Shy vocalist, Tony Mills, isn't a man to simply roll over and die when the ride gets rough.

"After a successful US tour, the rest of the band started doing demos without telling me and the whole thing just deteriorated into nothing," he recounts. "There was always a lot of fighting in the band and I just didn't want to work with the drummer any more. MCA came with me; they dropped the band and gave me some money to carry on. Now, with Siam, we'll be showcasing for several major labels in the near future."

The band have already cut an album length demo entitled 'The Language Of Menace', at Birmingham's Rich Bitch Studioplex. With its scything guitars and cuttingly technical arrangements, the band have attracted very favourable comparisons with American superstars Queensryche.

"People often say to me," agrees Tony, "and I take it as a huge compliment. My voice has changed immensely. I used to sound like Aled Jones! But I think the guitar work, especially the lead work, is nothing like Queensryche really."

If this band should go on to attain the same kind of success as the Seattle techno-titans, how do you think you will be affected? "To be honest, if you let something like that affect you, it's in you as a person anyway. I'm such a down-to-earth Brummie scumbag, that if I did make a lot of money, I'd probably just give it away! Some people let success go to their heads.

IF YOU PLEASE

"We Are Siam",
Tony Mills tells
Steve Beebee



Shy certainly did. Certain band members thought it big and clever to bring acclaimed stars down, which is a mistake 'cause they've mostly worked bloody hard for it."

Tony suspects that success can only come if the American market is infiltrated first. "I reckon you've got to follow the time proven route. A lot of

companies have remarked that our sound is very American market material. Often you have to prove yourself over there before the British public are willing to give you a chance.

But they're nevertheless very eager to give you a caning for going Stateside in the first place, which is a bit of a shame."

Considering Siam guitarist Chris Has-kyne-Jones has spent 9 months playing for L.A. - based metallers Hellion, an American jaunt should hold no surprises for Mills & Co. With the British record industry in depressing recession, let us hope that the die fall favourably for Birmingham's new riff kings.

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SHAMMEN

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SCREEN SEEN ... SCREEN SEEN ... SCREEN SEEN

SATELLITE

***HAS ANYONE OUT THERE** got a tape of the MTV Video Music Awards that Brum Beat's impecunious and dish free editorial staff can borrow. Seems they missed a remarkable performance from the **Red Hot Chili Peppers** and a tired and emotional fracas from Nirvana. Well, Debbie, could be you're right in telling us how vital to life the channel is!

And now back to the completely dished Kevin Wilson ...

***The Comedy Channel** bid farewell to Astra on September 30th (poor viewer response) to be replaced by **Sky Movies Gold** from October 1st. This new movie channel becomes the third of its type on BSkyB and if you subscribe to Sky Movies+ and The Movie Channel, it's all free!

BSkyB promise classic films in every cinematic genre and in the first season we are promised top rate historical drama courtesy of the Taylor/Burton epic **Cleopatra**; the fight for the skies of this once proud nation in **The Battle Of Britain** and sci fi classic **Bladerunner** in a never before seen version! Ring 0506 460 460 for details.

***Filmnet**, the continental 24 hour film channel, has disappeared off it's usual PAL transmission and on to a D2-MAC signal on Astra 1. It's rival in the porn stakes, **Red Hot Dutch** is broadcasting and can be found on Eutelsat in its encrypted form. Continental Television plc in Manchester are the people to speak to if you want truly 'adult' entertainment, call them on 0898 886650.

***Film highlights on Sky in October** include **Look Who's Talking Too**, the funny follow up to **Look Who's Talking** starring John Travolta, Kirstie Alley and the voice of Bruce Willis in another look at how babies really do see this very silly world in which we live. (October 11th at 10pm on Sky Movies+).

***Football fans locally will be tuning into Sky Sports** on Monday October 19th at 7pm, for the clash at Villa Park when Aston Villa meet Blackburn Rovers. BSkyB have transformed evening football with dancing girls, cheer leaders, half time pop performances and the use of 'Alive And Kicking' by Simple Minds as an anthem for their FA Premier League coverage. Inspired!

***MTV's popular hip hop show MTV Raps** moves schedules from October 12th when it can be found nightly on weekdays at 2am. This will then be followed by **Night Videos** at 2.30am. Three new programmes appear on MTV in October, **The Real World**, a reality based soap opera, goes out on Saturday evenings from October 10th (5.30pm on the 10th but at 6pm post 10th), **The Soul Of MTV**, a smooth mix of modern and vintage soul featuring the likes of the Brand New Heavies, Stevie Wonder and Luther Vandross. **MTV Sports** begins at 8.30pm on 10th with a regular Tuesday night slot at 5pm and it promises an MTV approach with features on bungee jumping, auto racing, snow skiing and sky surfing!

Kevin Wilson

VIDEO

MUSIC

KYLIE: GREATEST VIDEO HITS (PWL Video) is the month's biggest title, sales-wise at least. The collection covers her hit period '87 to '92 and you can't help but be struck by the fact that the help from coy soap opportunist to the so called sex-Kylie actually parallels the change in her prime audience. An eleven year old Neighbours fan in '87 is now 16. Total product identification or pure pop? Depends how hung up on being hip you are. Far more manufactured is **BILLY RAY CYRUS (Polygram Video)**. This 25 minute cash in on a novelty hit contains a mere two songs and a huge slice of hokum taken, it seems, from US TV in which Billy Ray pledges allegiance to the Protestant work ethic, mom, apple pie and mythical America. **THE ORB: ADVENTURES BEYOND THE ULTRAWORLD/PAT-TERNS AND TEXTURES (Big Life)** is a spacey, high tech light show. No more, no less. Rather good it is too and so non-specific that, with the sound down, it's a perfect partner to a host of other albums! You'll have to look hard for a copy with one of the 5000 free CDs however. **ERIC CLAPTON UNPLUGGED (Warner Music Vision)** is a commercial packaging of the inspired MTV show in which artists play acoustic for a change. This suits Clapton as it lets him demonstrate that his expressiveness with a guitar relies not a jot on the National Grid. Includes a fine, laid back 'Layla' and a heartfelt 'Tears In Heaven'. The show is also available in audio format as an excellent CD in Warner Bros. by the way. **LOU REED: MAGIC AND LOSS LIVE IN CONCERT (Warner Music Vision)** recalls his awesome appearance at B'ham's Symphony Hall earlier this year being a facsimile of that event. Reed presents all of the album of the title alongside highlights of 'New York' and classics 'Sweet Jane', 'Waiting For The Man', 'Walk On The Wildside' and more. Brilliantly performed with dignity and humanity it's possibly as close as rock gets to chamber music. An essential video. **THE THREE TENORS (Abbey Freetime/Polygram)** is on the surface a cash in on the Domingo/Pavarotti/Carerers phenomenon being a rehearsal snoop on the legendary 1990 Rome gig. However such is the charm of the protagonists that it's hard to resist.

PREVIEW: These should be on the shelves by the time you read this
WILSON PHILLIPS/SO FAR (PMI) therapy psycho babble and rehearsal footage bolster the smooth videos. But oh, those harmonies. **BUZZCOCKS/PLAYBACK (PMI)** was this snappy pop outfit really part of the punk threat? **PET SHOP BOYS/PERFORMANCE (PMI)** Filmed at the NEC this marathon 105 minute live show verges on pretension but is saved by the grandeur, humour and audacity of the project. **CARTER-WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE PROGRAMME SO FAR (PMI)** Videos, fan opinions and the thoughts of Jim Bob and Fruitbat. Good guys they are too

adrift in pop's shark filled seas. **U2/ACHTUNG BABY (Polygram Video)** will be a monster seller. It's the album's videos plus band comments, bits of Zoo TV and multiple versions of the 'One' videos. A fine band seemingly getting better as popularity grows.

MOVIES TO BUY

MERMAIDS (VVL-Orion) (15) teams Cher with Bob Hoskins and Winona Rider for a likeable tale of growing up against a less than normal background. Some great dialogue and a heart of gold. **THELMA AND LOUISE (MGM/UA Home Video)** (15) could be a feminist statement, a road movie, female bonding or a women's buddy movie but hell it's great entertainment with well honed wit and a pertinent attitude. A must see ... more than once. **JFK (Warner Home Video)** (15) has skipped the rental stage and come straight to the sales floor. Kevin Costner excels as Jim Garrison in Oliver Stones emotive telling of the Kennedy assassination

cover up/conspiracy. And if you think that Stone has jettisoned objectivity for drama grab **THE JFK ASSASSINATION: THE JIM GARRISON TAPES (Braveworld)** in which the real Garrison substantiates Stone's stance. **PUMP UP THE VOLUME (Columbia Tristar)** has Christian Slater as a galvanising pirate DJ in what is essentially a youth movie. Solid free speech message though. **THE POPE MUST DIE (Columbia Tristar)** (15) has Robbie Coltrane giving it his best, er, Robbie Coltrane in the tale of the hapless priest erroneously made Pope thus thwarting Vatican scams. With Peter Richardson at the tiller it's pure Comic Strip.

Finally, do see **THE ELVIS FILES (Polygram Video)**. Is Elvis Alive? Well here are the facts including the notion that Elvis, a well known abstainer from pharmaceutical stimulants was a narc put into an FBI protection scheme. Oh Yeah! And there'll be a full blown Donington Equivalents in Cannon Hill Park next year. With the blessing of the local residents!!

THE BRUM BEAT MIDLANDS CHARTS



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THE HMV TOP 20 ALBUM CHART

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1: ABBA | ABBA GOLD (GREATEST HITS) |
| 2: MIKE OLDFIELD | TUBULAR BELLS II |
| 3: EXTREME | III SIDES TO EVERY STORY |
| 4: BELINDA CARLISLE | BEST OF VOL 1 |
| 5: KYLIE MINOGUE | GREATEST HITS |
| 6: BOB MARLEY | SONGS OF FREEDOM (BOX SET) |
| 7: SINEAD O'CONNOR | AM I NOT YOUR GIRL |
| 8: BRIAN MAY | BACK TO THE LIGHT |
| 9: HAPPY MONDAYS | YES PLEASE |
| 10: EMF | STIGMA |
| 11: THE POLICE | GREATEST HITS |
| 12: THE SHAMEN | BOSS DRUM |
| 13: POP WILL EAT ITSELF | THE LOOKS OF LIFESTYLE |
| 14: PUBLIC ENEMY | GREATEST MISSES |
| 15: THE PRODIGY | EXPERIENCE |
| 16: LIONEL RICHIE | BACK TO FRONT |
| 17: THE SMITHS | BEST OF VOL 1 |
| 18: J.J. CALE | [t]NUMBER 10 |
| 19: PRIMAL SCREAM | SCREAMADELICA |
| 20: ERIC CLAPTON | UNPLUGGED |

THE HMV TOP 20 VIDEO CHART

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1: DANCES WITH WOLVES | |
| 2: JFK | |
| 3: THELMA AND LOUISE | |
| 4: ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO BETTER SEX 2 | |
| 5: MAKING LOVE 2 | |
| 6: LOVERS GUIDE 2 | |
| 7: SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY | |
| 8: ALIENS (SPECIAL EDITION) | |
| 9: BACKDRAFT | |
| 10: HIGHLANDER 2 | |
| 11: CASABLANCA (COLLECTORS EDITION) | |
| 12: PUMP UP THE VOLUME | |
| 13: JUNGLE FEVER | |
| 14: KYLIE MINOGUE | GREATEST HITS |
| 15: ABBA | GOLD (GREATEST HITS) |
| 16: DOMINION TANK POLICE VOLS III & IV | |
| 17: KAMA SUTRA | COMPLETE GUIDE |
| 18: CARTER USM | WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE SHOW SO FAR? (THREE VIDEOS) |
| 19: SGT. BILKO | |
| 20: MERMAIDS | |



WILSON PHILLIPS

DISCONTENTED

Looking to fill the Kylie gap in their roster, PWL have signed **NANCY DAVIS**, but while she's got an undoubted good voice her version of 'Higher And Higher' is exactly the sort of formulaic factory pop you'd expect. Ex-pat Birmingham girl **HELEN HOFFER** on the other hand is clearly Magnet's hope for their own Belinda Carlisle, with a dash of Stevie Nicks thrown in. 'Summer Love' is good, but not that good. Financed by support tour with Jools Holland, **BUILDING ROME** release a debut four track CD on their own Vesuvius Records with 'Ruled By Your Heart' leading the way with a



BUILDING ROME

rhythmically hypnotic warmth that'll justify Fleetwood Mac comparisons while 'Relentless' funks down with help from Holland and his brass boys. All four are also featured on 'Move The Mountain', the duo's impressive tape album which, with Suzanna Wood's powerful expressive vocals, the FM rock's folksy undercurrents and intelligent, evocative lyrics sounds not unlike a cross between Buckingham Nicks, Bobbie Gentry and Texas. Four hills to go. **DELICIOUS MONSTER's** second single builds forcefully on the debut, heading further into post-Seattle territory with Rachel's Bjork-like demented angel pop of 'Power Missy' and 'Best Babe'. 'Biggest High' cranks up the slashing guitar metronome to storm force while 'Blood' is a 13 minute mental breakdown with Rachel wiggling-out over repetitive drum-rim figure with psycho guitars.

TAPE DECKED

Summer recess over, the studios have obviously been on a quick wash cycle judging by the demos piling up for a tape tumble. So here's a sprawling once through the rinsers. **THE DAY AFTER** is run of the mill tired rock retreads and tedious riffs, the sort of band of mates who play naff hard rock pubs and give punters time to go to the bar by doing their own songs between the Lizzy covers. And why do they sing 'looking for the ronc on' when the songs called 'Looking For The Wrong Guy'?

CRYSTAL INJECTION are slap-grunge glam boy one-note thrashers with monotone vocals. Why waste their time making demos when they could be working as postmen? **FLYING COLOURS** were clearly born to play keyboard doodling nightclub pop in Germany. 'Sometimes Even Heroes Fall' is sub Tony Hadley and despite a half decent singer this is just nondescript anonymity. So to **ROBERT LEE TRIMUNE III** and an absolute basics, part roots / part pop demo clouded with fuzzboxed guitar. There's vague hints something may be going on, but it's also clear it'll need a lot of time to develop. Even more basic is the **DINOSAURS** portastudio live offering. It could be a pop band or it could be an exercise in noise distortion, but the quality of recording is so unrelentingly awful it's impossible to tell. Judgement deferred until I hear something that doesn't resemble a dog howling in a cement mixer.

M I K E DAVIES

More from **CAPITAL WOW** shows a slight backsliding in world domination plans. Thrash grunge guitars, shouted vocals and serrated bass zombie rhythm, but not on this occasion, the vision of tomorrow's people. Ignoring bad punctuation, **CRYSTAL BOUNDARY'S** (boundary's what?) are a cabaret pop outfit who have somehow acquired a bastard bad tempered guitarist on their way from the dressing room. Horrendous. As for **CRAZEE JOE'S ALMIGHTY EGO!** see above but as a misconceived directionless hard rocker who manages to be both a lousy Lynott and a bad Donna Summer on the same demo.

A breath of sanity and class from **MAC**, now renamed **THE KINGS OF SPAIN** but still purveying a stylish folksy acoustic indie rock that sits quite comfortably at home amid Prefab, Beautiful South and Everything But The Girl comparisons. Back to the crap with **TEMPERED STEEL**, another run up the frets heavy metal outfit with a singer screaming like there's some demons on his trail. 'Ice Diamonds' is lighter in an early 70s folk/classical-metal way and there's a brief encounter with classical guitar that doesn't go any-

where but mostly it's behemoth riffs and lack of distinctive identity.

THE DOLPHINS offer a scrappy demo on which the tape runs out before the last track's finished and includes such godawful lyrics like "as the moon begins to howl I love your jowls" which one can only hope are meant as a joke. Other than that, there's a perky female voice, jangling guitar and a touch of cerebral student indie rock but no real sense of purpose.

THE DON O' LEE BAND provide a two tracker live from Pebble Mill, acoustic roots country pop with rock guitar but unlike the studio version this is a bit draggy and 'Blue Eyes' too close to easy listening. Must have been the recording environment. Second **ROB TYLER** demo (and wedding congrats to Bob and Victoria Lamb) continues in the Lennon / McCartneyesque vein with four more examples of well crafted, melodic upper class pop which would be high on any priority list if it wasn't so currently out of signing fashion. First fruits from **THE MONEYGODS** since the 'Celibacy' album, is a 4 track demo amusingly titled 'Dirty something', re-emphasising their individual brand of sarcastically flip humour. Not too much deviation from their breezy toytown Buzzcock pop approach with ringing guitars' tinny keyboards (courtesy co-vocalist Clair Horton, ex-Life In General) and trademark lyrical wit on 'Bad Memories', 'The Ground's The Limit' and 'All Too Easy For Words' with the heavier guitar and darker urban paranoia of 'Peter Fierce' ringing the changes. Careful lads or someone's going to take you seriously.



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Featuring the original founder members of 'The Ash' Andy Powell + Ted Turner			
FRI 23rd OCT	EX QED, LITTLE ACME R'n'B FROM	RED R10	
SAT 24th OCT	SOUL & R'n'B FROM	THE CURTIS LITTLE BAND	
SUN 25th OCT	LUNCHTIME ONLY 12.00-2.30pm	BLUES & BOOGIE WOOGIE FROM BIG MAN CLAYTON Alias Mr C	Adm £1.75
THURS 29th OCT	Trevor Burton, Jim Hickman, Kate Pereira + The Red Lemon Brass Section	THE JOURNEY MEN	
FRI 30th OCT	ROCK'N'ROLL BOOGIE WOOGIE	BIG TOWN PLAYBOYS	featuring Mike Sanchez
SAT 31st OCT	HALLOWEEN SPECIAL (FANCY DRESS & PRIZES) LIVE MUSIC FROM CURTIS LITTLE BAND		
SUN 1st NOV	LUNCHTIME ONLY 12.00-2.30pm	TREVOR BURTON AND FRIENDS	ADM £1.75
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Blue Notes

FANCY WOOTTON
Brum Beat's Blues Correspondent

Happy Bearthday

AFTER BLOWING OUT the candle on the Bearthday cake, about all we can manage these days, we wish Blues at The Bear a happy first and look forward to many more. Certainly the health of the Tuesday night club has been paralleled by a solid growth in local blues activity. Can't be a bad thing can it?

There's cause for celebration over the success of August's inaugural *Big City Blues* fest too. Personal highlights include *The Rhythmaires* and *Shuggie Otis* (replete with collapsing stage!) at The Junction and *Sherman Robertson* at Monday's brunch. Did anyone recognise the familiar face fronting *Brett Marvin & The Thunderbolts* during the festival ... it belonged to none other than one time Brewer's Droop frontman ... Big Bear's own Ron Watts! On the live scene:-

The Slide Area Blues Band have a solid October date sheet with gigs at The Hollybush, Norton Canes (1st); The Bull And Bladder, Brierley Hill (4); Oddfellows Club, Shifnal (21); The Kings Arms, Cleobury Mortimer (18); The Paget Arms, Wolverhampton (22); Mother Kelly's, Camp Hill, Darlaston (23); The Mitre, Stourbridge (24) and The Green Blues Club, The Green, Darlaston (30). The Holly Bush at Norton Canes also features Back To The Blues, Gin House and The Reverend Brown this month.

A highlight of the month is the local return of *Keith Christmas* at The Junction, Harborne on October 1st (catch Him At The Hollybush, Norton Canes on Nov 7th too). Featuring material from the excellent Run River Records set, 'Weatherman', the gig will be a blast. FW

And now, for a change, my guest, Sam Mitchell casts an ear over some recent CDs:-

This month is an ace month for blues and R&B. Or rather an Ace month, as the esteemed label is determined to part blues fans from what little money they haven't earmarked for bar bills! THE BEST OF SLIM HARPO collates eighteen of his Excello sides, mainly from the early sixties, as if to demonstrate the debt owed him by The Stones. JOHN LEE HOOKER/ GRAVEYARD BLUES is a fine score of tracks originally taped in Detroit for Sensation Records between 1948 and 1950. There must be more Hooker albums on the market than partworks on a newsagent's shelves. Not a complaint but how can anyone keep up with them? JOHNNY 'GUITAR' WATSON /LISTEN & I DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE, STRANGER puts two LPs onto one compact disc. It's Fantasy material dating from the early seventies; string sweetened in part and given a contemporary, for the time, funky edge it's rescued for blues fans by bursts of incisive guitar work. ALBERT KING/KING DOES THE KING'S THINGS is subtitled 'Blues For Elvis' even though it was cut when Presley was alive. Produced by the MGs rhythm powerhouse of Duck Dunn and Al Jackson it's a creaky concept that has Albert covering Presley hits 'Hound Dog', 'Jailhouse Rock', 'Don't Be Cruel' et al.

So endemic is the blues at present that weirdo rockers THE CRAMPS have a blues EP available on Big Beat featuring covers of Lightnin' Slim, Walter Brown & The Alleycats and Captain Beefheart material. It's called 'Blues Fix'.

ARTHUR WOOD



SALLY BARKER & THE RHYTHM

DOWN AT THE JUNCTION in Harborne, KEITH CHRISTMAS with his new band, Weatherman, appears on October 1st to promote a similarly titled Run River album, whilst the lass from Leicester way, SALLY BARKER, also with a fine new album to sell, is booked in three weeks later.

The SID GRIFFIN led COAL PORTERS are confirmed for the same venue on October 15th. Griffin, now UK based, was formerly with The Long Ryders. He is Gram Parsons' biographer, all round good egg and possessor of an encyclopaedic memory, rock wise, that would prove a serious challenge to our own rock boffin MD!

With the appearance of their second Solid Records album imminent, THE SAW DOCTORS, that rootsy/pop combo from across the Irish Sea return for a date at The Hummingbird on Wednesday October 21st.

To tie in with the late September release of his first studio album in four years, JOE ELY is undertaking a nine date UK tour during early October. Unfortunately if you want to score some down home Austin, Texas rock the nearest stopovers on Joe's visit are Manchester International 2 (October 3rd) and Newport, King's Hotel (October 11th). Now enjoying his second stint with MCA, Joe's brilliant new album, 'Love And Danger' features ten cuts including a couple of

Robert Earl Keen Jr tunes; 'The Road Goes On Forever' from Keen's last studio set and the ballad 'Whenever Kindness Fails' that is destined to bring chart success for someone, someday. Joe co-produced the record with Tony Brown.

Now that Ely's long-time, eighties lead guitarist, David Grissom has moved on to join John Mellencamp's road band, this will be the first opportunity to view new boy Ian Moore. Meanwhile, that solid backline of Davis McLarty (drums) and Jimmy Pettit (bass) will be augmented on this tour by the addition of Reese Wynans on keyboards. Far from being a newcomer, Reese played on Joe's 1981 album, 'Musta Notta Gotta Lotta'.

The local folk clubs are back in action! October bookings include:- Friday 2nd: Tom McConville (Woodman, Kingswinford) / Geoff Higginbotham (Market Tavern, Moseley Street); Saturday 3rd: *The Deighton Family* (Red Lion, Kings Heath); Friday 9th: Singers Night at both The Woodman and Market Tavern; Saturday 10th: *Jake Thackray* (Woodman); Friday 16th: *Bread 7 Roses* (Market Tavern); Saturday 17th: Edward The Second (Red Lion); Friday 23rd: House Band (Woodman)/Singers Night (Market Tavern); Saturday 24th: *Dick Gaughan* (Red Lion); Friday 30th: *Steve Tilston and Maggie Boyle* (Woodman) / Mal Waite (Market Tavern); Saturday 31st: *Steve Ashley Band* (Red Lion).

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Mike Davies plays
Vegas with Terry Hall

It's been two years since the Terry, Blair and Anouchka album bombed without trace and stamped a full stop to the pop career of former Special, Fun Boy Three and Colourfield mover, Terry Hall. The man who was listed as the dictionary definition of miserable before the arrival of Morrissey, vanished from sight. And sadly, so too did his wonderfully droll vocals and cynical songs. Until now.

Having trailed the way with the classical pop of the Possessed single, Hall is back with a new album and a new band, both called Vegas, and an unlikely partnership with former Eurythmic, Dave Stewart. First things first though, why the two years away?

"I just realised that you don't HAVE make a record every year if you don't want to. You can go and do something else. When I was in The Specials and Fun Boy Three, things happened so quickly that I didn't realise how much of my life had been taken up until it was ten years later. It seemed a good time to take a break. I took a year out doing nothing, except moving houses and having children. Then last year I started to write again. After you've been on telly a bit, getting back into a normal job is very difficult." The new album is full, not of the cynical Hall of old but a new, almost seductively romantic upbeat version. The result of becoming a father?

"It's the biggest change you can imagine. For me all these petty things seemed so important until I had kids. It's changed my view of things totally. Before I was always happy to just go with the flow, if someone wanted to tour or something. Now, if I say no, I mean it. And I'm a lot happier person. It's that thing about being a teenager in a bedroom. The first successful band I was in was The Specials. They were hardly a comedy outfit and it got a bit heavy at times. And you tend to surround yourself with that life. Now I do exactly what I want to do without being forced into false positions, but before it was very difficult to be myself. The reason I was called miserable was because I was often quite nervous in those situations and my way of showing it was to look miserable. Even though I wasn't. I think a lot of the stuff I did was very humorous, but it was never seen that way."

So, born again and definitely not miserable, what about this apparently bizarre collaboration between extrovert and introvert?

"Actually we are totally similar. I don't see it as weird at all. Dave's done a lot of things and I've stayed pretty much how I am, but we actually have a lot in common. We balance each other out.

"What happened was that when I decided I wanted to work again, I just wanted to write, either with or for other artists. I was with the



VEGAS (TERRY HALL ON THE LEFT, FACT FANS!)

same publishing company as Dave and we got together. Just to write songs for other people. But we found we enjoyed each other's company and we liked what we were writing. We fell into a group really." As to why Vegas? "When people see Dave, they automatically think of this big Vegas set-up. And when they see me, they don't. So it applies to both of us, in different ways."

The album's an interesting mix musically, veering from classic pop songs, majestic melodies dripping with strings, to techno and reggae. One of those whatever we want to do albums really.

"I'm a great lover of classic pop songs. And there's not that many good pop songs around at present. I simply can't identify with dance music. I don't know how it's done and I don't care. Maybe I'm just too old."

Another indication of the changing times of Terry Hall, is the fact that whereas before the songs could usually be relied upon for some

political or social comment, these days they're far more about personal concerns and issues. "If you're true to yourself it must be that way unless you're politically active and I'm not. Even though people still expect me to be. It would be false to say I was. I was naive when I was 19, I thought the power of the song could change the world, but it doesn't. You can make people aware of certain things though and aware of personal issues, that seems a good starting point."

"The problem I had with many of the Specials' songs, was that they tended to shout at people. And that's off-putting. I can't go into what I write because I don't want to analyse it any more, I just want to get up in the morning and have the whole day ahead of me, but charity begins at home and so do a lot of other things."

So what do you want to change these days?

"My hairstyle."

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THAT HEAVY, HEAVY MONSTER SOUND

STEVE MORRIS

FINDS OUT

WHAT MAKES

IT SO DELICIOUS

Actually the sound of Delicious Monster is far more complicated than to simply describe it as heavy. That word carries with it a baggage of leather clad images replayed in the mind, to a soundtrack of mindless monolithic riffs, way past their use by dates.

Delicious Monster is the sound of sun catching on bright steel. At once a delicate twinkling, seductively fey and hard etched, as the hard light makes direct contact with the aural retina.

In performance they provide a dizzying roller-coaster ride from a quiet beginning to an all out feedback'n'phase psychedelic assault. And with the addition of their own lighting the sense of elevated dislocation is complete.

Indeed Delicious Monster have been ripe for picking for several months and have been the name on the tip of the Brum Beat tongue when A&R men have turned to us for tips. One of these tips lead to a Melody Maker piece and a veritable rush of major label activity. Yet at the centre of that whirlpool, DM remained calm, more concerned with the long term than instant ego gratification.

In a sense, however, and despite protestations from the admirably unimpressed band members, egos must have received a lift when they recently signed to Flute ... a label formed by a major influence indie, just for them. That's right, Beechwood Music, the label behind the respected Peel Sessions albums and the Mastercuts series launched Flute with the band in mind. The first, pardon the pun, strange fruit of the liaison arrives in the middle of this month as a four track EP headed up by new song, 'Power Missy'.

In an attempt to find out more about Delicious Monster, I adjourned to a city centre pub with bassman Ian and



DELICIOUS MONSTER

guitar/FX merchant Mark. Previous meetings with the pair outside of a formalised interview setting should have warned me; they do not see anything special about being the best band in Brum; they are unconcerned that they stand on the brink of the big-time. "It's what we do," is the disclaimer.

"We'd been together for two to three years," Mark explains, "but it all came together when Steve, the drummer joined. It kind of got serious at that point."

"Yeah, Delicious Monster have been together about twelve months," confirms Ian.

"It's the best elements taken from about four or five different bands," Mark eventually tells me in response to a simple question about influences, Ian having told a tale of how a Patrick Moore gig at Birmingham Town Hall was the root of the band.

Around here the presence of holidaying frontperson, Rachel, enters the conversation when Ian, quite rightly states, "But we can't be compared to anyone 'cos Rachel has a totally unique voice."

Ah, yes Rachel. A magnetic, transfix-

ing stage presence and the band member who is destined to cast a shadow over her trio of co-members. The lady has everything; a totally individual sound and a personality that'll play havoc with adolescent hormones, whilst bewitching the menopausal business suits who must be bowled over at radio stations along the way. In concert all of this personality, rather sexuality, dominates centre stage like the innocent but knowing eye of a technicolour hurricane.

Delicious Monster is, though, more than that. At the heart of the enterprise are songs and a professional approach to their presentation. The band's live set appears to be a very structured thing. "Oh, definitely," according to Mark, "we are very concerned with creating a specific atmosphere."

A major part of this atmosphere is the evolving use of slides, lights and movies as a backdrop. "It's something we've always wanted to use," explains Mark. Don't think that such a display is the result of the record company advance, "We got the gear in a car boot sale from a guy that used to lighting for The Sweet!" It's a practical note that cropped up again when dis-

cussing the new gear that advance paid for. "We just doubled up on what we had, nothing flash."

"What's the point in buying a Trace Elliott rig, asks Ian, everybody knows how you get your sound then ..."

The Tennents triggered talk continued to course its way through favourite bands (Pink Floyd for Mark, The Who/The Beatles for Ian), Radio 5 sessions ('Brilliant, they just let us play') and what a waste of money Producers are ("all you need is a good engineer, we know what we want") and the tour that is high on the agenda ("we want a good support, that would suit us. We could give any headline act in the country a run for their money").

And they could. The debut 'Power Missy' EP on Flute may not burn a path to Top Of The Pops, though it should, but it will establish Delicious Monster at the top of the indie tree. For now that may seem a small ambition but the band have sights set long term.

A monster out of control is, after all, an unattractive proposition and this Monster as you're soon going to find out, is Delicious.

D.M. play the Jug of Ale on October 21st.

APPARITION

If only that's all it was, a 1963 drum machine backed (and programmed probably) by a crap guitarist and dire twin vocals. Save me from would-be wannabes. Oh yeah, it's supposed to be Rock (I think). Baarf.

AS WE ARE

Starts off with a riot at Villa Park before bursting into gravelly, semi-rock/pop anthem with a too busy bass and far too much shouting (I thought Tenpole Tudor had split). The singer's not always in tune but it's ok this

time. He probably can't hear himself anyway. Not bad in parts, but not these parts.

BUSLOAD OF FAITH

And they've got it. They describe themselves as a melodic pop band. I beg (for once) to differ; quirky pop with barbed hooks and catchy chords bound together with Man From Delmonte vocals (nearly). I liked 'Stand Easy' because it reminded me of 'Sympathy For The Devil' and 'Right Way Up' reminded me of 'Roadhouse Blues'. Only they didn't, if you

DEMO LISTEN

JOHN SLATER RATES THE TAPES

see what I mean. Individual - almost.

BARNABY

'Drop The E' is the definitive Rave song that takes a positive stance against Ecstasy and

proves that you don't need E to Rave states this sad bastard. So mummy bought you a Casio C11/2 and a Karaoke mixer did she? You sad sod. Don't you see... it's crap like this that drives people to drugs. It's the only way the human mind could possibly cope with this shower of sad bilge.

NEW WHITE LINES

I'm sorry, I just cannot hear the Sex Pistols or Aerosmith influences here. They certainly wouldn't write lyrics as bad as these and they both had singers

who could (well nearly). Maybe a poor man's Then Jericho is their upper limit, but then they may as well jump straight into the 'where are they now?' pile.

LEE THOMSON

Lee plays the blues. He sings the blues too (though not quite as well) and is obviously a B.B. King and/or Albert King fan. Apart from that, his sojourns into Country and campfire are more or less the norm until it comes to the guitar which is obviously his forte. Most enjoyable and a social conscience to boot.

Last year Bob Geldof metaphorically packed his belongings in a spotted handkerchief, swung them over his shoulder and set off on his Vegetarians Of Love tour. But instead of the major concert halls he'd played during the heyday of the Boomtown Rats and his brief moment of solo career glory, this was to be a string of college gigs, solo acoustic dates, even busking and record store appearances.

Cynics may suggest this was because he couldn't have filled a concert hall if he'd tried, after all as far as the UK's concerned, Geldof hasn't been the flavour of the musical month for some time. However, there seems to be something deeper in this back to the roots approach. A sloughing off, perhaps, of the impossible baggage that had accrued around the public perception of him ever since those ennobling days of Band Aid that saw him dubbed Sir Bob or worse Saint Bob?

"Unconsciously, there's probably a lot to that," he agrees in distinctive tones after a lengthy pause. "But I'm not bothered about a perceived image. It was much more important to do it for myself. It started off small and I had no illusions about myself or the audience, but then as the album sold increasingly well in Europe the gigs got bigger and by the end it was back to a Rats type situation. But for me it was just a case of doing music and being fun to play. In a lot of ways, yes, it did get rid of stuff riding on my back, at least for me, but whether it altered people's perceptions of my persona is another thing altogether."

But it did give him a musical recharge, something that's clearly evident on the new album, *The Happy Club* with its fresh Cajun and Celtic influences. "Yeh, I suddenly got into something I'd never really listened to before. The sort of music that was more in keeping with what I'd been listening to as a teenager and at this point it seemed the best means of talking about things that bother me."

He pauses again, considering. "Only in retrospect do you see the significance of what you've been doing. Because I've produced an album every two years for the past 17 years, people are very familiar with me. And I've got those of other platforms to talk about what bothers me and as you know I've used them, but music is critical. It's the only thing that gives me any sense of satisfaction. It's the only thing I can hear back and think 'that's true' or 'I didn't know I was thinking that.' Because of the nature of my music, I just open my mouth and out come things that seem to mean something. On *The Happy Club* some of the songs are polemical or literal. Not that I like doing that but because I felt I had to be direct on some of them."

It's almost stating the obvious to say that the album title's ironic, the railing lyrical content firmly contrasting with the upbeat mood of the music, most noticeably on something like *Room 19* which harks back to the chorus of *Sha La La Lee* and a deliberate reference to the intro on *Monkees 'I'm A Believer'*. It's dancing into the darkness, but how much of that directly reflects the state of the Geldof psyche? Are songs like *'Sex Thing'* (self evident) and *'Too Late God'* (where middle aged men try and discover their lost youth) spawn of the male menopause? With his 40th birthday due this year, is he observer or participant in the lyrics?

"In those two I am an observer, but filled with horror. In *'Too Late God'* I'm talking about friends who are older than me by five or six years. They're good people with serious, sound values and I like them very much indeed. But what

HAPPY TALK

Mike Davies talks to Bob Geldof



BOB GELDOLF

happened to them was bizarre. Almost pathological. Howling at the moon in the middle of the night, like wounded animals bashing their heads against walls till they bled. Starting ludicrous affairs and trying to reinvent their lives, becoming neurotic. I found it all deeply disturbing. Huge tears would come from their eyes unbidden and they'd just sit there silently weeping."

One's mind flashes back to that very image in Geldof's portrayal of *'Pink In The Wall'* as he adds, "I'm keeping a look out for it in myself. I hope it doesn't happen. And *'Sex Thing'* just came off the top of my head, essentially it's the same thing."

Extending the theme, the album would seem to contain a balance between a celebration of human spirit and endurance (as with *'Soft Soil'* inspired by Yeltsin's speech at the grave of the three youths killed defending the Moscow parli-

ament in 1991's attempted coup) and a vision of the world that seeks to crush it.

"Irony is usually present in what I do, in the title or the content of a record for example. I'm not cynical generally, except for certain attitudes - as I talk about on *'Attitude Chicken'* (a rant about 'politically correct' attitudes and leisure class mores) - but I think these things are funny (that's as much peculiar as humorous) and I like to put it down." It's hard not to observe that one of these 'funny' situations is the current state of eastern Europe.

"When we were making the *'Vegetarians Of Love'* album, the East was breaking up into what we thought would be freedom. I was exhilarated by that and that feeling was on the record, that sense of new life. Two years on, there's this album.

"I remember saying I could only see nationalism coming out of the political vacuum between totalitarianism and a democracy they can't afford. In that vacuum you only get political nihilism, nationalism at its basic root. A lot of this record is about that. *'The Song Of The Emergent Nationalist'*, *'The Roads To Germany'* for example. Room 19 was something I tried to do in the break up of the Soviet Empire. At the Institute of the Brain in Moscow there's a room where they keep the brains of so-called Soviet geniuses like Lenin and Stalin and real geniuses like Tchaikovsky, Pasternak and Sakarov to experiment on them and learn what made them tick. The song's about some guy who dies and thinks he's free and ends up as a brain next to Stalin and Lenin and Lenin never shuts up making speeches about not existing. It's a joke to myself really."

Maybe so, but it does touch on a possibly unconscious subtext of the album, a preoccupation with a sense of identity. Geldof takes an even longer, considered pause.

"I don't know. That's a very clever question. In as much as any record I do is intensely personal, that's possible. *'The Song Of The Emergent Nationalist'* is disturbing and repulsive. *'The Roads Of Germany'* is straight polemic, like Woody Guthrie. About Christmas last year I was driving through the Black Forest on the road that Hitler built and I felt that the story of the Twentieth Century is driving on the roads of Germany. I can see things happening again. There's this tremendous wrestling with a new identity. Individuals all over Europe are doing it. Are we European man or Sovereign man? It's very dangerous. I'm pretty pessimistic. I think there will be another major European war within the next 25 years or less.

"But to answer your question, I can't write songs about being a teenager when I'm this age. I can only write about myself and how I feel at this moment. I'm not sure your point's valid and I wouldn't necessarily accept it, but then maybe the whole thing is about identity of one sort or another."

And what about the identity of Bob Geldof, his Latin look started out as a joke on Dave Stewart, but couldn't it also be one of those *Too Late God* moments?

"I'm not concerned about losing my youth or embarrassed by it," he insists forcefully. "I hated being young. Especially as a teenager. It gets better. I'm lucky. I have an idea of old age that is not in any way embittered. For me the sole criteria is that I don't believe in anything after death. **My last thought will be looking back and saying 'mmm, that was interesting. If that's carved on my tombstone, it'll be enough.'**"

'The Happy Club' released early October.

LORD HAW HAW

His Lordship offers belated but still profoundly heartfelt condolences at the recent news of redundancies in the BRMB/Mercia camp. In what one assumes is a panic cost-cutting exercise to make the annual reports look better than they really are, five steadfast, loyal and true staffers were given summary marching orders, including one poor engineer who'd grown from boy to man at BRMB. Among the casualties, as His Lordship predicted many moons ago when the station merger took place, was Mercia's Head of Music who was allegedly given the news in customary insensitive manner by Mercia puppet supremo, Stuart Linnell. His Lordship is much saddened at the loss, largely because it now means one of his most fruitful sources of scandal has withered. However he takes comfort in suggesting that perhaps the accounting figures might look even better if one person was in charge of running both stations rather than two.

His Lordship must also belatedly congratulate Radio WM in the small but significant rise in their listening figures. This means the threat of closure has been at least temporarily lifted. However, it probably also means another programme

for *Pat de Whalley*, last seen trying to hustle a job with Independent's Birmingham documentary TV series on the history of Birmingham pop and rock, a subject about which, of course, she is immensely knowledgeable.

Jaded viewers will have observed the appearance of a programme titled *The Other Motown* on Central TV last month. A three part history of Birmingham rock music, resident Brum Beat hack Mike Davies has apparently written a pottered history of the area's contributions to rock'n'roll for the accompanying brochure. His Lordship is amused to learn that GINA BROWN, PR head for Sounds Like Birmingham, wrote a memo describing the unfortunate hack's writing as "atrocious" because some sentences contained no verbs. Ms Brown was clearly blissfully unaware that it was meant to represent the fast cutting style of the series as opposed to the dry, plodding humourless format so beloved of her own office. There again, His Lordship observes that coming from the land of the hamburger, Ms Brown could not be expected to recognise style if it was sitting in her chair.

His Lordship has been whispered fanciful rumours that

PETE WAGSTAFF is, in his continuing crusade to remove the human element from broadcasting, considering turning BEACON RADIO into a fully automated station. His Lordship puts no store by these suggestions since most of Beacon's disc jockeys are clearly automatons anyway.

If it's not already been decided, His Lordship understands the fate of SAMANTHA MEAH's Sunday night show on the woefully spirited ghost ship that is Radio WM, hangs in the balance. His Lordship is informed that powers that be, presumably a reference to Jabba the Inchley, took offence at comments made by one of the guests. The formidable neo-feminist Maggie Whitehouse, no doubt in her favourite rubber underwear and sporting the riding crop, apparently suggested, live on air, that women should drink their own menstrual blood. This it seems upset the sensibilities of some of the station's more fragile listeners. If Meah is given the axe, it will at least bring the number of station employees into line with the number of listeners. Meah shouldn't be too worried, His Lordship learns that she's just landed a tv programme with CHRIS TARRANT, due to start in the New Year.

LORD HAW HAW



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DROP NINETEENS

ALBUM REVIEWS DROP NINETEENS Delaware (Hut)

Boston does it again. What is it about this city which makes fantastically wonderful and glorious records? This is ten tracks of pure youthful guitar orientated songs which more than once got me on the edge of shedding quite a few tears. From an initial listen it's easy to spot their influences, The Pixies, My Bloody Valentine and Sonic Youth, but that's not point. The point is what they take, they build on. If S.E. Hinton, Jack Kerouac and J.D. Salinger had formed a band whilst in their early twenties this would be it. Let the teen angst begin!

Mike Gayle

ROBERT CRAY I Was Warned (Mercury)

Cray, for some reason, inspires wrath among those who 'know' the blues. Something to do with being successful is my guess, though accusations of sameyness and lightness usually prop up the argument.

Well, Cray's seventh set ain't gonna make no converts 'cos what you get is simply a refinement of what's gone before. More songs of lovin'n'losin'. More laments about being found in the wrong bed and so on, all given young Bob's keen-ing vocals and deft guitar work to make the familiar tales come alive. Given that the band, with new bass-boy Karl Sevareid, can hit a groove like a well seasoned Harley on tickover and the Memphis Horns add the flavour of the old Johnnie Taylor/Eddie Floyd Stax R&B gems, who could want more? In the man's own words, "it's the same old funky thing." Enjoy.

Steve Morris

POSTER CHILDREN Flower Plower (Creation)

Originally released on Frontier records, this lovely slab of guitar grooves gets a second airing through Creation. Alan McGee tends not to sign any old pap and here I feel his judgement was based upon the fact that Poster Children don't rely on any one sound to get them through an album. It was quite hard finding highlights to an LP where I was never quite sure what would come up next. The tracks 'Modern Art' and 'Non Reggae' song were my particular faves but it's only a matter of time before the others join them.

Mike Gayle

NED'S ATOMIC DUSTBIN Are You Normal? (Sony Square)

Several confident steps up from 'God Fodder', more disciplined, far more concentrated, more melodic and, with layered majestic guitars, a lot more powerful. Okay, so it still sounds like the missing Wonderstuff album on several occasions, especially with John's turn of voice and the Miles-like lyrics, but it'll certainly surprise anyone who's dismissed them as noisy, thrashing indie brats.

From the opening 'Suave And Suffocated' ("I waste nobody's time but my own") to the closing 'In-tact', this is intelligently written, inventively executed top drawer indie pop, that bubbles with commercial single appeal but sustains beyond the three minute attention span, to the extent of writing a potential stadium chorus anthem with the gradually building glory of 'Who Goes First'. Golden Garbage collectors.

Mike Davies

VARIOUS 1 And Only (Band Of Joy) 32 Ones On One (Connoisseur Collection)

Both double sets are emblazoned with the Radio One 25th Birthday logo, yet both tell a different tale of the station.

'32 Ones On One' tell of a popstastic chart dominated purveyor of mind rot. The institution that HM Govt see as a money making machine as they, undoubtedly, measure it for the cloak of privatisation.

'1 And Only' describes an organisation obsessed with presenting real music to people eager to sample the new; a station ready to stage concerts, to build studios in which to encourage a constant flow of new, fully oxygenated blood. Even if the commercial worth is not instantly apparent. An attitude at cross purposes with HM govt.?

Consequently the Connoisseur set is simply a good value gathering of number one hits spanning Radio One's quarter century.

Band Of Joy's album is an archive trawling collection of in session and in concert performances, 23 of 'em previously unissued, spanning the same timespan but with such nuggets as The Yardbirds tackling Dylan, Hendrix, a ragged, smiling T-Rex, a nervous sounding U2 and a less than slick Dire Straits. Now which aspect of Auntie should we keep?

Steve Morris



RED SUN

RED SUN Red Sun (Harmony Records)

Since Chill Out replaced New Age in the marketing lexicon, albums such as this have breathed a sigh of relief! See, it's all the same; only in trend driven consumer land, to be seen with last year's badge is a one way ticket to the cut out bin. Sadly Red Sun's ticket has already been issued, new name tag or not. And it's simply because their brand of relaxing instrumental mood muzak lacks character. Too muso to be ambient and too lacking in self confidence to be muso. I'd call it pleasant but why damn it further?

Steve Morris

THE SOFT BOYS A Can Of Bees/ Underwater Moonlight/ Invisible Hits (all Rykodisc)

Perchance Robyn Hitchcock's stateside cult status and REM connection, he's a chum but that seems enough to some, is behind these re-issues. The Softies were latter day hippies caught in the nascent new wave of the late seventies when '(I Want To be An) Anglepoise Lamp', then on Radar, was a hit-ette. A live version graces the punningly titled 'Bees' set. In retrospect they're a quaint English phenomenon, too knowing to make the gorgeous pop classics they longingly hint at.

Steve Morris

A.R.K Cover Me With Rain (A.M.A Records)

Birmingham's A.R.K are determined to jettison all early 'progressive' tags and this Rich Bitch recorded set should do just that.

To set records straight A.R.K are a rock band with pop sensibilities. They know how to construct a song. They know how to arrange a song and, most importantly, they have the skills in all departments to turn ideas into reality.

'Cover Me With Rain' and 'Message To The World' illustrate the point. Both are possessed of magnetic, bold choruses that could stand tall among the band's better known peers.

However, and there had to be one, I guess, there is something amiss. It seems to be that A.R.K are so aware of their collective qualities that the making of music verges on the clinical with head ruling heart. What is missing is the excitement factor, the danger element that races the pulse. Paradoxically, they may find that when they learn to subordinate the skills to a more instinctive 'feel'.

Steve Morris

SOUL ASYLUM Grave Dancers Union (Columbia)

Having seen the way the tide of success flows, while keeping the bollocks intact, Soul Asylum have cleaned up their in your face abrasiveness with a crisper, more directly melodic brand of guitar street boxing and vintage college rock swagger. More Athens than Seattle and with not even remotely a filler to be found, such nuggets as 'Black Gold', 'New World', 'Somebody To Shove' (with Airplane chorus parody), 'Without A Trace' and 'Runaway Train' will give even the most ardent REM devotee wet dreams. A breathtakingly impressive coming of age.

Mike Davies

RUMBLEFISH Rumblefish (eastWest)

Not exactly the focus of a concentrated label effort to tell Birmingham, let alone the rest of the country of its existence, this is the long, long awaited culmination of years of demo reviews, punctuated by an almost unbroken run of label disasters that turned the band's singles into overnight rarities. With Jeremy Paige's Lloyd Cole/Edwyn Collins-like softly bruised voice gliding with a languid aching over Dominic Crane's guitars and keyboards, Phil Edwards' bass and Rupert Knowlden's drums, this is the sort of immaculate classic English pop you'd normally associate with Stephen Duffy. Exquisite, yearning melodies and disarmingly simple but nerve touching reflective turns of phrase ("God, I move so slow and you love so fast"), characterise eleven tracks of undiluted excellence from 'Everything Electrical' through to 'It's Easy Now' by the way of long cherished gems like 'Mexico', 'Tug Boat Line', 'Don't Need Ma', 'Need A Man' and 'Shimmy Shammy'. Half a decade's wait to be declared an album of the year.

Mike Davies

BUDDY HOLLY That'll Be The Day/ Reminiscing (Castle Classics)

Whilst MCA, owners of the Holly heritage, have prevaricated over CD issues of one of rock's most important catalogues, Castle have licensed half a dozen albums for budget CD release.

This debuting duo come from 1958 and 1963 but sound as fresh as anything you care to name.

Neither are hit strewn though that detracts not one bit. Would you complain if someone gave you a Van Gogh without a sunflower? Without Holly there would be neither pop nor country music as we now know it, period.

This is true roots music, a melding of Country, R&B and rock'n'roll; the work of a boundary breaking, barrier busting individual of singularly underestimated influence.

You really owe it to yourselves to hear these.

Steve Morris

STINA NORDENSTAM Memories Of A Color (eastwest)

Stina is a Scandinavian singer songwriter. That's put you off I'll bet! Well it's your loss 'cos the album sounds like Rickie Lee Jones doing ambient folk jazz fusions. And despite that awful description, it's rather entrancing. Try it.

Steve Morris

SALLY BARKER & THE RHYTHM

Beating The Drum

(Hypertension)

There's no disputing Barker's musical talents or the seductive quality of her voice, however, even more than 1990's 'The Rhythm Is Mine' this loses itself in diversity. 'Let's Play The Game' opens in what could be Bee Gees pop, 'Elephants' is sophisticated jazz complete with flutes, 'Female Rambling Sailor' is traditional sea shantyish folk and 'Iguana Waltz' is in Bev Craven female singer-songwriter territory - and that's just the first four tracks. However for those as little bothered by easy pigeonholing as Barker herself, this is excellent fare with, despite a couple of up tempo offerings, a predominant emphasis on late night, relaxed jazzy ambiances with acoustic guitar and double bass. Particular listening pleasures are 'Sad Man's Tears', 'Me And My Big Mouth', the doomy title track and a plaintive version of the old standard 'Happy Days And Lonely Nights Larger Than Life' but it's all immensely satisfying, especially if you're a unreconstructed early John Martyn fan.

Mike Davies

TOAD THE WET SPROCKET

Fear

(Columbia)

The worst name in the world but an incredibly fine record (reissued from last year) by an American quartet in the great tradition of Petty, REM, The Hooters and The Rainmakers. Combine the plaintive weary-ache vocal with chiming guitars, acoustic roots, articulate evocative lyrics and unassumingly anthemic songs, such as 'I Will Not Take These Things For Granted', 'Walk On The Ocean' and 'Hold Her Down' and you've got an album to blow the world away. Monumentally stunning.

Mike Davies

CHRIS DANIELS AND THE KINGS

In Your Face

(Provogue)

Daniels and The Kings are a great big, fat'n'sassy, brass drenched US style road band. Sweat stained with R&B legend they dream of little more than blowing into town and doing a Hurricane Andrew to the local dancehall.

And more power to 'em. Sadly when put into a studio the fire turns to an ember glow, so while 'In Your Face' is a good set and the self explanatory 'An American Tragedy' [a Vietnam Vet song] is bluesily anthemic, the overall effect is to make you want to crank the hi-fi up to PA levels, spill your drink and holler a bit.

The Kings need a hot club and then I reckon we'd see sparks fly.

Steve Morris

J.J. CALE

Number 10

(Silvertone)

'... heard the news, it's the same old blues ...'

Steve Morris

ANNA PALM

Love Me

(One Little Indian)

Enigmatic. That's the word to tie onto this one. It's also a non committal response to a puzzle.

Anna Palm offers voice and violin shadings over a machine driven light dance rhythm track. The title track and opener, 'Love Me' is a perfectly fine textural experience, that could make its mark in single format and indeed the following duo of 'Happy My Heart' and 'Don't Know' could prosper in its wake.

The cover of Simon Dupree's 'Kites' is, though, ill advised whilst 'Endlessly' with its interpolation of 'My Bonnie Lies Over The Ocean' is puerile.

Anna Palm is, it seems, an industry doyen and chosen session mate of the great. With that in mind, it seems that this short set is the product of a maverick talent searching for the right expression.

Steve Morris

MIKE OLDFIELD

Tubular Bells II

(WEA)

Nineteen years on Oldfield regains the chart peak with an anagram of his albatross.

However high tech it may be compared to version one, and the sound is excellent, it lacks the gauche fluency and inspired necessity of the parent. Themes come and go and whilst individually attractive, these strands are not woven into a whole in a satisfactory manner.

It's not an unattractive piece but maybe a yearning for lost youth can't be cured by simply revisiting old haunts.

Steve Morris

JOSIE KUHN

Paradise

(Round Tower)

A good album to make up for a recent lack lustre live outing in Brum. Those Brit pick up bands really do lack the finesse of Nashville sessioneers.

On disc (or tape) Kuhn offers a baker's dozen of class country songs, several co-written with the excellent Tom Pacheco, rendered in her heartworn Patsy Cline flavoured voice (strangely mixed tho' it may be).

Best bets to sample are 'Bury My Bones', 'Land Of The Navajo' and 'Silver Coupe De Ville'.

Josie is a refreshingly characterful addition to the generally anodyne country chanteuse scene and it's my guess that album two and a tour with a US band will be a major turning point.

Steve Morris



JOSIE KUHN

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Ugly Things - The CD

(Raven via Topic)

Afficionados of garage rock regard the series of 'Ugly Things' albums, on which numerous Australians demonstrate that enthusiasm coupled with bad taste were not exclusively an American preserve, as their nirvana and the several vinyl volumes in the series, are much prized by collectors. Now comes a CD with 26 of the best/worst of these tracks by bands whose names are mainly completely unknown, but whose full frontal attack would qualify them for instant inclusion on the legendary 'Nuggets' (the US equivalent). Over an hour of uninhibited '60s beat, with Kinks copyists (Missing Links), Pretty Things sound-alikes (The Elois), numerous Yardbirds imitators and many familiar songs ('Baby Please Don't Go', 'Louie Louie', even 'I'm Your Witchdoctor'). As a primer of what today's rock music lacks, this is exemplary, and the sleeve surprisingly features a pic of two of Brum Beat's contributing editors. Neither sleeve pic nor 69 minute plus CD are for the faint-hearted.

John Tobler

ROGER WATERS

Amused To Death

(Columbia)

Another slice of Waters' well justified, highly polished indignation as he lobs musical grenades at injustice and folly. Trouble is such targets are so glaringly large that you don't need alarming accuracy to score well.

And Waters weaponry is indeed of the scatter gun variety; there are some sharp lyrical couplets for sure: "I looked over Jordan and what did I see/Saw a US marine in a pile of debris" or "And we all like the bit when you take/The jeans from the refrigerator and then the bad guy gets hit", but they glow in a mist of unresolved anger and anguish rather than well honed argument. It's fine to recognise the bad, but shouldn't he by now be offering a little more than simple recognition; after all he's been refining his craft for a quarter of a century now. Mind by the same token he should, by now, be able to write a convincing melody rather than set a mood.

And yet despite it all, I rather like the catankerous beggar's latest and best in a long time. The production is magnificent and the sound, state of the art and there is a disconcerting quality to it when you let the entire seventy odd minutes flow over you. Oh, and with The Wall down, I think we can see, at last, which one's Pink.

Steve Morris

MY LIFE WITH THE THRILL KILL KULT

Sexplosion

(Interscope)

When Elvis Costello's manager set up a label he christened it F-Beat. The F stood for ... ah, you know ... MLWTTKK have a rhythm machine set to the F-Beat and a method the Vatican would proscribe.

There's also a flavour of old soul, you know, 'Give it to me one time, give it to me two times ...'

In leather and rubber of course ...

Sam Mitchell

SOUNDBITES

OVERWHELMING COLORFAST/ (Relativity-Roadrunner)/Butch Vig produced sniffing at teen spirit leavened with a sixties feel, including a forthright cover of The Beatles 'She Said She Said' and a Jammy 'It's Tomorrow'. Rather good. **SM**

FOUR TOPS/The Singles Collection/(Polygram TV) A tour tie in 21 tracker from the world's longest lasting original line-up. Simply essential pop-soul genius. That Levi Stubbs' voice can turn the sow's ear of 'Loco In Acapulco' into a small silk purse really says it all. **SM**

HAIRCUT ONE HUNDRED/Pelican West Plus/(Arista) The saccharin, bubbly dance pop of Nick Heyward's Haircuts has lost a little of its freshly washed appeal over the years. The hits still demonstrate a timeless grasp of the genre though album cuts and the 'Plus' filler are in need of conditioner. Listen and go. **SM**

VARIOUS/Heart Of The Gaels/ (Green Linnett via Topic) The genuine acoustic heartbeat that fuels Runrig and more is within. Peaty, earth spirited cuts from such giants as Patrick Street, Dick Gaughan, Capercaillie and Matt Molloy provide more uplift than Playtex ever could. **SM**

VARIOUS/Legends Of Speciality Boogie Woogie/(Ace) Ever been to a King Pleasure or Big Town Playboys gig? Then this collection of 'the real thing' is for you. If not, cut out the middle man and start here. **CH**

STAR STAR/The Love Drag Years/(Roadrunner) A hard as hell trash bash for New York Dolls' mourners. Produced by early Blondie studio meister Richard Gottehrer and early Sparks member, Earle Mankey. **SM**

PATSY CLINE/The Definitive/ (Arcade) This 40 track TV advertised set perhaps says more about the recent success of No 1 fan k.d. lang than the public's demand for Cline. Whatever the motive, essential for lover's of heartache vocals. **SM**

ICICLE WORKS/The Best Of/ (Beggars Banquet) Big voiced, powerful pop anthems form Ian McNabb's long term contenders. Always pop's bridesmaid, it's time for the world to catch this bouquet. **SM**

DEVO/Devo Live: The Mongoloid Years/(Ryko) Band authorised 'bootlegs' from the pre-fame years '75 - '77. Certainly wacky and experimental, these cuts suggest that Devo could've been as big as the B52s if the cards had landed differently. **SM**

VARIOUS/The Lyrichord World Music Sampler/(Lyrichord via Topic) A gem for Andy Kershaw fans. 17 brilliantly recorded catalogue temptations that put paid to the notion of world music being a dry, enthusiasts only form. **SM**

CAT STEVENS/The Collection/ (Castle Communications) Early years, i.e. 'Matthew & Son', 'The Fist Cut Is The Deepest' etc. But no 'I'm Gonna Get Me A Gun'! **SM**

VARIOUS/Sixties Beat/(Dino) 40 classic, if not over imaginative, seven inch slices of nostalgia that sum up the pop decade. But why is the unrepresentative Lonnie Donegan (a fifties person) adorning the sleeve? **SM**

RANCH ROMANCE/Western Dream/(Sugarhill-Topic) Country, Western Swing and Bluegrass with a Patsy Cline twist. Kinda four k.d. langs for the price of one. **SM**

MARTIN CARTHY & DAVE SWARBRICK/Skin + Bone/(Special Delivery/Topic) Way back when this pairing was the doyen of the folk scene and oh, so influential. Time has dulled neither talent nor sensibilities so that the traditional and Gulf War songs cohabit seamlessly. Splendid. **SM**

VARIOUS/Tejano Roots & Tejano Roots-The Women/(both Arhoolie - Topic) A mite specialist but if you've ever heard Flaco Jimenez, Joe Ely, Jimmie Gilmore, Texas Tornados or any other Tex-Mex band, these two albums provide the key to their heritage. **SM**

VARIOUS/The Originals/(Dino) - Love 'Em Do/(Instant-Charly) 'The Originals' is self explanatory; a twenty track expose as to how awful current covers are whilst 'Love 'Em Do' provides two dozen originals that The Beatles covered at some time. Now they did some of them rather better, it has to be said! **SM**

BELINDA CARLISLE/The Best Of Vol 1/(Virgin). Remember, heaven is a place on earth so live your life to be free. Radical pop for radical people. **MD**

VARIOUS/Weird Nightmare/ (Columbia) A tribute to Charlie Mingus concept album from Hal Wilner for jazzheads. Musical avant gardisms featuring Vernon Reid, Robert Quine and Charlie Watts with spoken/minimalist vocal contributions from Robbie Robertson, Costello, Keith Richards and Cohen. Difficult. **MD**

JASON/One Foot Honky Tonk (Liberty) Former Scorchers main-man returns with Texan honky tonk rocking, beer-swilling ballads and a heavy dash of Holly. Nothing sensational, but cranked up loud with a stash of Millers it's fine stuff. **MD**

SOCIAL DISTORTION/Some-where Between Heaven And Hell (Epic). The name sounds thrash and there's a definite grungey guitar to their rebel rocking country. 'Born To Lose', 'King Of Fools' and '99 To Life' make them sound like the delinquent bastard sons of Waylon Jennings. **MD**

RED HOUSE PAINTERS/Down Colourful Hill (4AD). A favourite American Music Club's Mark Eitzel and if you like this brand of sparse, melancholic, empty desert acoustic rock, you'll probably feel the same way. **MD**

Echoes of Duran Duran have been reverberating around Birmingham on and off for the last decade or so, and World Service are the latest mutation and brainchild of ex Duran man Andy Wickets. Their music defies pigeonholing, ranging from the expansive keyboard influences of the eighties to guitar based folk/rock. Given the D.D. background it struck me as strange that World Service should choose 'Girls on Film' as one of the tracks on their self produced single. Surely, I ventured, they need something fresh that is not going to be compared with past glories.

"It was a song of mine and I don't see why I shouldn't put it out if I want to. I'm not really into what Duran Duran were doing and I didn't like what they did with it anyway. The reason we chose 'Girls On Film' was because I wanted to do it with the proper words so that it makes sense. With Duran Duran it was cut up and reshaped because that's the way that they used to do it. Also I originally had the idea to include a chorus of 'There Ain't Nothing Like A Dame' from South Pacific in the song and we had the opportunity to do that this time."

Given the range and musical styles that World Service cover, it hardly

TUNING IN

Dave Massey rides the short wave to the World Service



WORLD SERVICE

seems credible that they all stem from the same source; but the band is not a democracy as Andy is the first to admit. "I write all the songs, usually about love and death. It's subconscious most of the time, I don't know what I'm writing and often they come from somewhere else outside of me.

but at the time I don't analyse it. A lot of our songs are from 'The Witch Girl', a kind of musical fantasy that we're hoping to put on for two nights at Christmas at the Old Rep. It's the story, with music and illustrations using slides and video, of a girl living in the country who is victimised. There is

a lot of stuff going on including psychiatrists and inventors who try to capture what she's got and put it in a bottle, and then there's someone who comes along called Big John who represents Jesus. At the moment we are waiting to hear about an Arts Council grant"

Whether World service make it to the Old Rep or not, they continue to use 'Witch Girl' material in their gigs, complete with a slide and light show. All of this is starting to build a following for the band who have only been together now for about nine months. They are attempting to remain loyal to their Midlands roots with a residencies at The Beeches, Perry Beeches and The Deer's Leap in Great Barr, but as a working band, World Service are finding the 'Pay To Play' policy in some Midland clubs hard to swallow. "On two occasions we've organised a gig at a local venue and they have told us to pay them for the use of their P.A.. Our response to that was, 'We've got our own thanks', and then they say we've got no choice. All this on the night of the gig when all the posters are out!

Places like that have got you over a barrel but despite that we are much happier working here than we would be in London."

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A previously unreleased WUNDER STUFF track heads the list this month. It's part of **READING: THE INDIE ALBUM** (Polygram TV), a generously full 20 track round up of acts that have played at said festival. Very good it is too with trade mark tracks from **EMF, JAMES, CHARLATANS, CARTER, PIL, NEW ORDER** and more.

Curiously, 75% of 'The Indie Album's acts are pacted to majors! However, if spirit is a measure of indie status, **THE DAMNED** are well indie. **THE MCA SINGLES As + Bs** (Connoisseur Collection) is just that, including hits 'Eloise', Grimly Fiendish' and 'Alone Again Or'. It may not be art but **JOHN**

RENBOURN: 'THE ESSENTIAL JOHN RENBOURN (A BEST OF) (Demon/Transatlantic) certainly is.

Renbourn dominated the sixties with his guitar picking skills and this 22 track set (compiled by the artist) sparkles with examples of his deft, imaginative and tasteful playing, be it alone, with sparring partner Bert Jansch or group style with Pentangle. Essential if you like guitars, this one.

'THE SECRET POLICEMAN'S CONCERT' (Connoisseur Collection) is a tenth anniversary, mid price reissue of 'The Secret Policeman's Other Ball - The Music'. The highlight is three tracks featuring Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck pushing each other to greater heights on both ballads 'n' boogies. Solo sets from Sting, Phil Collins, Bob Geldof and Donovan confirm the value.

Last month, you may remember Connoisseur mass released five volumes of 'Simon Bates Golden Hours presents **25 YEARS OF ROCK 'N' ROLL VOL- UME 2'**. This month they surpass that with no less than fifteen (yup, one five!) volumes. One per year from 1969 to 1983. Three hundred hits as disparate as Johnny Cash, Barry White, Patrick Juvet and Marillion!! Great stuff.

Collectors should note the CD debuts of **LOU REED's 'THE BELLS'** and **'GROWING UP IN PUBLIC'** (Arista):

not inspired Reed and for fans only, however.

Music Club's **'THE BEST OF THE MOVE'** is with us again, possibly as precursor to new titles of which more in a moment. Roy Wood's men are represented with a dozen and a half career snippets that convince this writer that Woody and not some driver chappie should be under consideration as Birmingham Freeman! Now those new Music Clubbers; **'THE MAGIC OF THE CHIEFTAINS'** is certainly that. Paddy Maloney and chums well represented by a dozen fairly recent works with Nanci Griffith and Van Morrison guesting. **'THE BEST OF JERRY LEE LEWIS'** is all from the Sun vaults and will leave you 'Breathless'! Also Sun sourced is **'JOHNNY CASH: THE BEST OF THE SUN YEARS 1955-1961'**. The title says it all; twenty tracks of sparse country rockabilly from The Man In Black who is perversely pictured in red on the sleeve! **'COUNTRY GOLD VOL. 2'** raids RCA's old vaults to exhume Jim Reeves, Hank Locklin, Don Gibson, Charley Pride and the like. New Country. Not! But a useful history lesson.

I'm afraid **'THE VERY BEST OF ENNIO MORRICONE'** baffles me. It sounds just like film music! Plenty of aficionados beg to differ, however, so this collection, conducted by Morricone himself should find many takers. Far better is Music Club's final budget entry in this column, **'THE IMMORTAL ELMORE JAMES. KING OF THE BOTTLENECK BLUES'**. OK, so he re-wrote 'Dust My Broom' with alarming frequency but his plangent, metallic style informed both the uptempo and the hurting 'The Sky Is Crying' with equal effect. A genuine and deserved legend.

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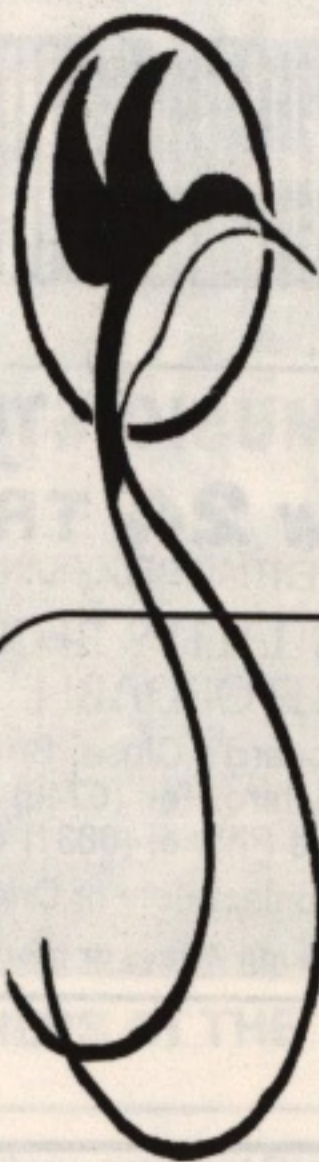
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LIVE REVIEWS

THE HOLY CITY Manor House Stetchford

"Hello, we're The Holy City and we've got some songs," announced the tousle-haired frontman. He was right on both counts: They are and they have. Catchy songs that are natural and not contrived. Songs that bounce but aren't over-inflated or allowed to become self indulgent. The performance is energetic and confident. These boys aren't ashamed to perspire and do so freely in running enthusiastically through a set whose pace and exuberance seem to make it last only a fraction of its actual 50 minutes.

Apparently the band have recently scaled down and become a five-piece unit, a move resulting in a sparser, harder sound beneficial to their material. "Why have we not heard more of them?" is the question that springs to mind, particularly as they have packed a decent sized venue with a crowd boasting more than its fair share of well-known faces from the Birmingham scene.

Two (rather belated) encores and that's your lot. The Holy City have crawled back into the woodwork, no doubt.

David Ross

SHE CHAMELEON Lichfield Arts Centre

Lichfield's own She Chameleon have created a whisper of wonderment since they first came to light circa their self titled cassette single. Their brand of guitar based pop rock with an indie penchant has received much critical acclaim and tonight, they bring it home for all to see and hear. The band mix covers with originals using a solid back line to drive home the message that passion always will count for more than fashion and, even when, as it was tonight, the sound is poorly mixed and the acoustics even worse, class will out in the end. A hybrid version of George Harrison's 'Art Of Dying' and fluently chaotic rendition of Tin Machine's 'Baby Universe' over the hordes who are drawn from bar to stage in ever increasing numbers as the She Chameleon spell works its magic. But it's the sassy 'Isabelle' that wins over the multitude completely, all calm and sensuous before the storm arrives and lead guitarist Toby Thompson attacks the crowd with a succession of solos that leave most mere stunned onlookers. She Chameleon are young and have much to learn. They have an advantage over their peers in that they have that spark of original genius that they've been born with. Take a tip catch 'em while they're still embryonic.

Todd Fox

THE APPARITION/ SHERBERT/PENGUIN 75 The Pen And Wig Birmingham

Tonight has an atmosphere reminiscent of an end of term 6th form college gig, youthful faces abound and we eagerly anticipate youth talent.

Unfortunately, the youthful fizz and sparkle we expect is absent from Sherbert's set. Essentially creation by numbers, straight out of the 'Teenage Fanclub by numbers of melodic noise-pop', they sound bored by themselves. A band this young should not sound so jaded. Disappointing.

The Apparition want us to witness an 'event' here this evening. With an abundance of dry ice and the promise of fireworks, this band were born to rock! Sadly they were born twenty years too late. This is air-guitar playing that snuck out of the bedroom. An amalgamation of Black Sabbath riffs, Led Zep covers and fake American accents. Spinal Tap? It could be tongue in cheek and when the singer shouts "Where's the madness? Where's the fire?" I begin to wonder. The fireworks explode stage front and then fizzle out. A non-event I'm afraid.

But don't become too disillusioned - Penguin 75, armed with a daft name and a handful of wah-wah injected pop tunes, proceed to win us over with their disarming unpretentiousness. It's their first gig and nerves are apparent, but they provide us with the spark of potential excitement which was sorely needed this evening.

Carrie Weekes



THE BOGUS BROTHERS AT THE ROBIN (PIC BY ROB MC MILLAN)

THE BOGUS BROTHERS Robin Hood R&B Club Merry Hill/Brierley Hill

No Bull, these Bogus boys can certainly shake it on down. 7 brothers from York, unlikely but a bunch of entertaining and competent musicians certainly.

The music was a melting pot of frenzied soul classics influenced by Smokey Robinson, Aretha Franklin and the like with the more sedate numbers sounding akin to Crowded House!

The stage presence was great; they had the audience amused and bemused with constant tempo and singer changes.

And what's more a damn good venue for a good night's boogie-ing >

Rod McMillan

L7 Wulfrun Hall Wolverhampton

You know how some girls (note the word 'some' - I don't wanna get accused of generalising here) get into an all male-band, buy the records, go to the gigs just because they fancy the pants off some ridiculously good looking band member? And then get dead defensive if you put this to them, swearing that it's the music they're into and you're going, "Yeah, yeah...."? Well guys do it too with all-female bands. As I looked around the impossibly claustrophobic, sold out Wulfrun Hall during L7's set, all the guys stood stock still, staring stage right, mulling over their opening chat-up lines to bassist, Jennifer (except me, of course. Hell, I'm a New Man!), whilst the girls in the audience rocked out, maybe sparing a thought about who of their friends they could rope in to form the next L7...

And believe me, there will be many more L7s, such will be their impact on the world at large. Despite the abundance of Mudhoney, Nirvana, Soundgarden, et al, t-shirts that covered the backs of tonight's audience (who seemed amazingly young - I'm sure there were 12, 14, 15 year olds here tonight. Actually, it's fitting that there should be, because what better youth could there be to drive a young mind?), I don't see that L7 have much in common with that whole Sub-Pop/Seattle scene. As I said last time, they are punk rockers, but American punks, you know? Punk with a groove. They were even better than their last Brum show. This constant touring, which included a slot on the Reading bill, has obviously paid off. The sound was cracking, each song (more or less the same set as before. I'm moving forward to some new material. But when have they had time?) a bare-knuckled street fight, short, sharp and to the point, no frills, no posing or hysterics, just killer riffs and glass-chewing vocals. Maybe they haven't got a limited shelf-life after all. During their set, I had a twisted vision of them as early Motorhead, knocking out this kind of stuff forever, mutating into dirty rockers, plucking buffere young boys from the audience and... well, you get the picture. Maybe these boring, distracted guys I noticed earlier were having a similar vision...?

The girls and I had a great time...

Max - x

BLACK SABBATH NEC Birmingham

"We've got tons of stuff to get through tonight!" And Dio wasn't wrong. One and a half hours of pure Sabbath, ranging from the days when Dio must have been a stand-in for either Leo Sayer or Pete Murphy c. Bauhaus, right up to the steaming slab of

'heavy metal' (and Black Sabbath are a band that you can confidently refer to as such without fear of being ridiculed) that is 'Dehumanizer'.

Ronnie James Dio, eh? Well, Yeah, superb voice and he knows how to work a crowd, but he's too - how can I put it? - light for Sabbath, y'know?

For this was an intensely heavy show and really any glints of shiny heavenly gold that pierce this dense iron fog kind of dilutes the atmosphere somewhat. This is the problem I have with Dio's voice on 'Dehumanizer'.

But who cares what I think, right? You want to know that, if you'd been there, amongst the jammed throng worshipping their dark gods, would you have heard your old faves? Well, of course you would. Followers of these precursors to goths - who cover an unbelievable age range incidentally - delighted in the glorious drive of 'Paranoid', the haunting bell-tolls of 'Black Sabbath' and the grind of 'War Pigs', as well as the whole of the present album, notably 'After All' and 'I'.

Geezer Butler, all rag-doll head shaking and rumbling, rubber-band-hand bass playing Geezer, appeared to be the one most at ease and genuinely enjoying himself. Toni Iommi, on the other hand, was cool, reserved and careful. Not showy or exaggerated like a lot of metal lead guitarists. Like an old gunslinger, he's got nothing to prove.

I toyed with the idea of what it would be like if it were your dad up there playing guitar for Black Sabbath. That'd be wild, eh? "What does your dad do?"

"Oh, he's in Black Sabbath." Wow!

And just think, the combined age of the Sabs must be the equivalent to that of a mature oak tree. Which is about right, really - Black Sabbath, the respected middle aged oak tree of the metal forest...err, excuse me while I give myself a good thrashing for that one...

But what's all this talk about age? I'm no spring chicken myself. Black Sabbath are great. Doomy, gloomy, dark and leaden. And who can blame them? They come from Birmingham.

Max - x

POST

Dear Brum Beat

It's good that you bother to review obscure records that no one else touches, but it's damned annoying that they're impossible to find in the shops round here. You should try and find the likes of Loreena McKennit, The Coal Porters or Dan Gisen Malmquist in these parts. Please think about the consequences before you tempt us.

Paul Reeves
Bridgnorth

It's good that you pay such heed to the mag, Paul, and sure with only Woolies in your hometown life must be hell. Nip over to M&M in Dudley and talk to the boss, Kieron. He's a like minded spirit who takes pride in finding the very stuff you want. Great prices on import CDs too! Ed.

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