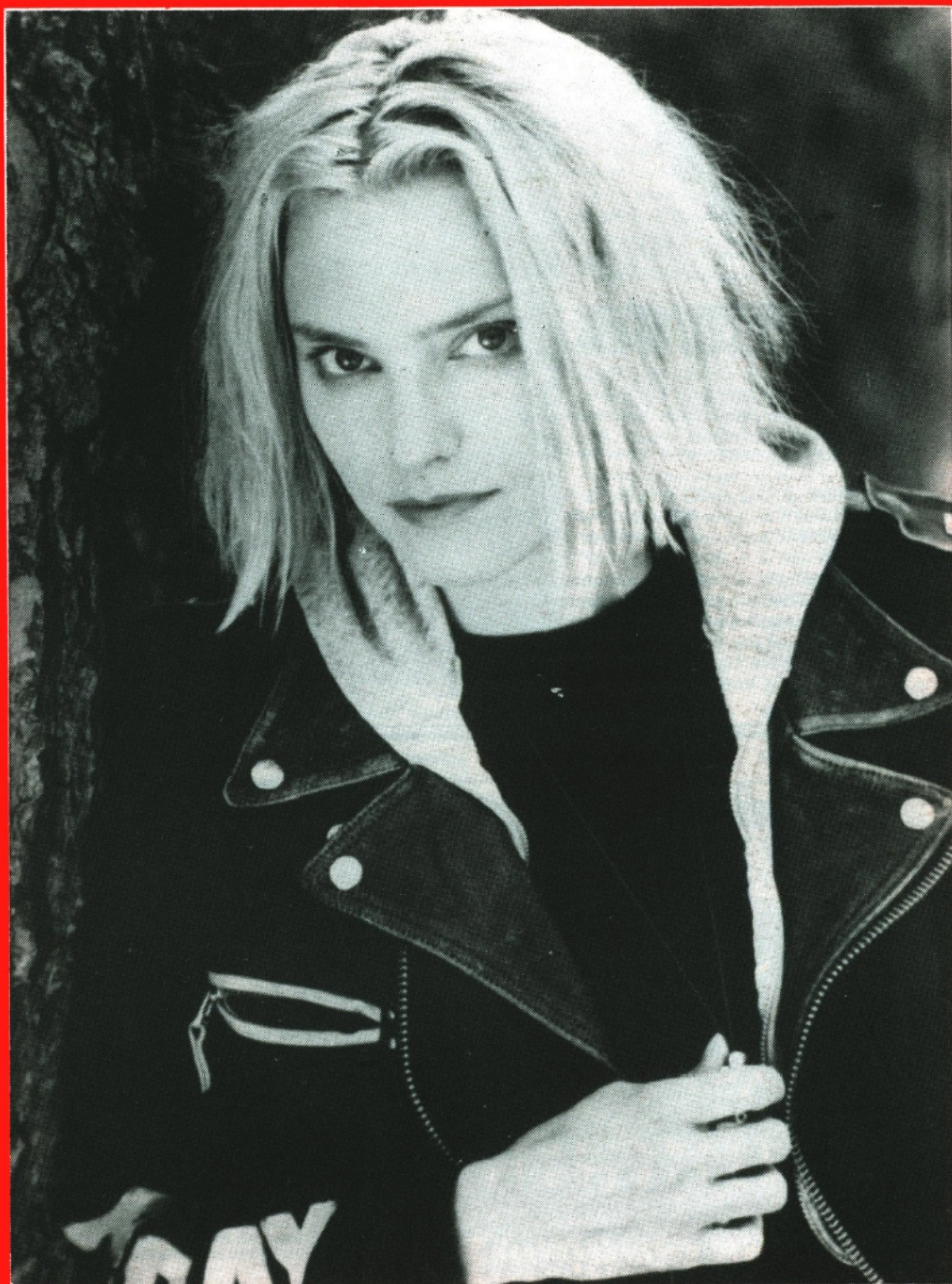




MANN'S WORLD



also
**CRY OF
LOVE**

REVIEWS
Albums
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NEWS
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NUMBER
154
OCTOBER
'93

**STEVE MORRIS TALKS TO AIMEE MANN
ABOUT ... WHATEVER**

plus
LLOYD COLE

in conversation with Mike Davies about Karma,
parenthood and the children's songs you'll never hear



Send all yer blags to Brum Beat, 54 Canterbury Road, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 4EH.

KIM WILDE: HITS CDs

Gosh! It's been a dozen years since Kim, more famous then for her had been dad than he is now for his rather more successful daughter, started her chart career. Ah! and who could've guessed that Kids In America would lead to tours with Bowie and Michael Jackson, let alone a string of international faves like Love Blonde, You Came, Cambodia, Chequered Love and more.

All of the above plus a dozen more are on the MCA album The Singles Collection 1981-1993 and we have three CD versions to give to the senders of the first three cards pulled on November 1st. Cards to Kim Hits at the above address. Closing date October 31st.



KIM WILDE

**THE ESSENTIAL CD GUIDE
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The Essential Guide to rock is a book the size of a CD case that is meant to point you in the right direction when it comes to building the perfect album collection.

Written by regarded rockster Alan Clayson, the slim volume manages to sketch the history of rock, compile a who's who, sketch biogs of the legends, review their classic albums and provide a selective discography of the featured.

By it's very nature you're bound to disagree with certain of Clayson's assertions but be aware that he knows this and so mischievously sprinkles bits of his humour around. For example, when profiling the excellent Elvis Costello he avers that Costello "was the most successful of a late seventies crop of British composer performers that included Wreckless Eric, Alan Clayson and John Otway." We also find the Dave Berry claims equal billing to Buddy Holly in the who's who section! Guess who Clayson once produced!

That aside (though not really forgiving a back to front Bono pic and a hopelessly badly captioned Traveling Wilburys shot), it's an entertaining volume and Brum Beat has six copies to give away to the first six cards etc. etc. Cards to Who Is Alan Clayson and what became of The Argonauts? by October 31st. Thank you.

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THE INTRO

Following in the giant footsteps of the lamented (or lamentable!? Ed.) Good Times Productions, who pioneered rootsy gigs at the venue, Adrian Norris is launching a **ROOTS & BLUES CLUB** at The Junction in Harborne. That's the pub situated, with a degree of geographical convenience, at the junction that marks the top end of Harborne High Street. The new club will operate on Sundays and feature local solos, duos and bands with an acoustic flavour. Rowdier elements wishing to go 'unplugged' will also be welcomed. If you fit the bill call Adrian or one of his co-conspirators on 021 730 1549 / 021 327 6382 / 021 429 7524.

FRED ZEPPELIN, a band influenced by, would you believe, Take That - mmm, thought not - play The Robin R&B Club, Merry Hill (October 25), The Breedon Bar's Venue 2, Cotteridge, Birmingham (29) and JB's, Dudley on the lunchtime of Sunday 31st. Admission is free to both the Robin and JB's gigs, incidentally.

Nuts To The Butts is the attitude loaded clarion call of **FISHBONE**, **BAD BRAINS** and **THE GOATS** who team up for the hardest gig in many a moon at Wolverhampton's Civic Hall on Monday October 11th.

That rather fine US outfit, **THE POSIES**, two of whom have been moonlighting with Alex Chilton's **BIG STAR**, will be supporting **TEENAGE FANCLUB** at Birmingham's Institute on October 13th.

LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE will be previewing songs from their pending Johnny's Garden LP, at The City Tavern, Bishopsgate Street, Birmingham on Friday October 22nd. What we've heard of it suggests that attendance at said preview would do you the power of good!

THE ALMIGHTY, a band banned from advertising in prissy Cambridge - a certain word of four letters, give or take the odd !! or **, caused offence it appears - bring their lack of gentility to Wolverhampton's Civic Hall on Sunday October 9th. In tow will be the equally forthright **WILDHEARTS** and our tip for showstoppers, **KERBDOG**.

SCUMFEST is a massive happening at Birmingham's Edwards No8 on October 27th. Buy a ticket for a mere £2.00 from any of the usual outlets (it'll be £2.50 on the door) and gird up your loins for **REVOLUTIONARY DUB WARRIOR**, **AOS3**, **MAD HALIBUT**, **HAPPY DEATH MEN**, **SPITHEAD** and **BIG STONE CULTURE**.

THE NETHERTON-MISSISSIPPI FLASH?

JENSON, frontman with The Black Country's **MONDO CARNÉ** and mega Presley fan, steps into The King's shoes later this month when he fronts a band re-creating Elvis' Sun Sessions. What makes this tribute a cut above the rest is that Elvis' original sidemen, and Sun sessioneers **SCOTTY MOORE**, the legendary guitarist, and drummer **D.J. FONTANA** will be his backing musicians for the tour. Asked by Brum Beat how it had come about, Jenson told us, "I guess it happened because of my work with the Presley fan club and meeting Scotty and D.J. on my many trips to Memphis. They heard my work with Mondo Carné and it all just fell into place." Strangely the Netherton based vocalist professes little fear at stepping into the role Elvis once filled alongside the two legends he'll be playing with!

The trio appear at Great Yarmouth on October 28th (when Eric Clapton is expected to guest), Antwerp; November 20th and an as yet unconfirmed Dutch venue on November 21st.

Jenson is, incidentally, very much alive and not an alien though rumours that he is in fact an undercover federal agent cannot be denied.

HIBERNATION at Selly Park's Hibernian looks set to expand with the imminent installation of a 3K rig and extra lighting. Simon and the guys are keeping the open house music policy with an October line up that embraces grunge, indie, rock, roots, soul, crusty ska and pop! Incidentally Simon is still welcoming

demos from all comers who should send tape and info to Simon Bristoll, 30 Hobson Road, Selly Park, Birmingham B29 7QH. Alternately call him on 021 472 1530 any evening.

The Hib in October looks a little like this:- **LAST OF THE MAD SKANKERS** (4), **TIN RIVER** (5), the excellent

and unmissable **BRIAN BANNISTER** AND **THE UNKNOWN LEGENDS** (6 & 13), **WORLD SERVICE** (9), **THE SORDID DETAILS** (15), **TYLER** (20) and **THE VANESSAS** (27).

There's loads more too and supports at every show. Call The Hib for full info on 021 472 0136.



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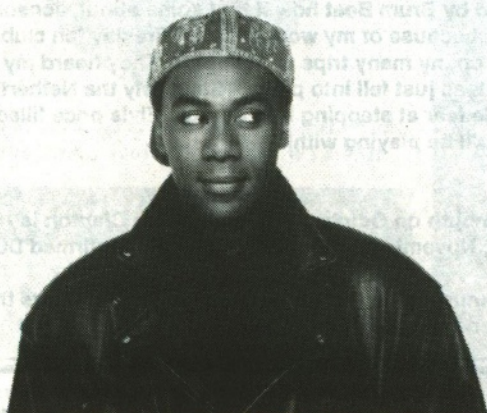
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THE INTRO



LENNY HENRY

BEN ELTON, comedy's road rat - he seems to have been on permanent tour throughout '93 - calls at Wolves Civic on October 23rd which is a mere two days after local comedic hero **LENNY HENRY** plays the same venue. That's the 21st. diary hunters.

WHOLESONE FISH, the Nottingham band rated by the NME, roots mag Rock'n'Reel, Dublin's influential Hot Press and Hank Wangford are set to play Birmingham's Breedon Bar on November 8th and December 12th. Make a note and be there.

NECROSCOPE, oft compared to Sheep On Drugs and Nine Inch Nails are at Brum's Jug Of Ale on Tuesday October 26th.

TEXAS, the excellent Sharleen Spiteri fronted band, not the state, will be at Wolverhampton's Wulfrun Hall on October 11th. If the gig is as good as the new album, I've Been Missing You, attendance is mandatory.

THE JUG OF ALE in Moseley's Alcester Road has gone mega busy with a blend of rock, metal, funk and industrial gigs. October highlights are the INXS supporting **DESPERATE DAN COWPIE BLUES BAND** (4), **TERROR GROOVE FREAKS / NECROSCOPE** (26). A call to the promoters, Findaw Promotions, 021 449 1082, ask for Dawn or Roger, will furnish full details and could, if you're of the performing kind, net you a gig.

OTWAY 2000

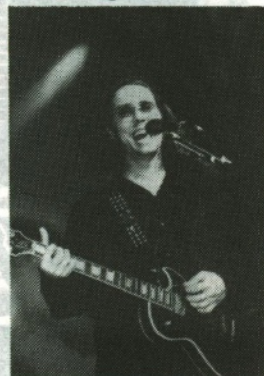
JOHN OTWAY, star of TV ads for such diverse goods as Toshiba, Bradford And Bingley Building Society, Irn Bru and R. Whites, erstwhile hit making partner of Wild Willy Barrett is setting out on a tour that will culminate with him doing his 2000th gig. Whether this will qualify him for a free Tranny is unclear at this point!

What is clear is that Otway and his big band will be appearing at The Bear in Birmingham's Bearwood on November 5th, one solitary week prior to the historic event.

Otway's stage antics are, of course, already the substance of legend; the twin necked Gibson designed for ambidextrous displays of guitar heroism. The wrecking of microphones with Headbutts which amazingly earned him the sponsorship of Shure, the acrobatics and the time when on live TV, his ebullience knocked over Barrett's amps causing Wild Will to leave him to it! Indeed, such is Otway's synonymity with chaos that this very magazine's editor recalls with relish, the looks on record shop staffs' faces when he accompanied the man on promotional sprints around the Midlands in the mid eighties. The relief when they discovered that the stage monster was an off stage charmer was palpable!

TRF, winners of several rounds of the Dave Burton Management Showcase contest, take to the stage in the semi final on October 17th at Brum's Greet Inn. The following night, the 18th, they play The Robin Hood R&B Club at Merry Hill near Dudley.

Seems that reputed studio recluse **KARL WALLINGER** has taken to the road in a big way. Not content with an earlier UK tour and two treks through the US and Canada, **WORLD PARTY** are adding a second UK



KARL WALLINGER OF WORLD PARTY

outing to the diary. To tie in with the release of All I Gave, the third single from Bang!, the album, the band play Aston Villa Leisure on Friday October 29th.

Intrepid travelling types may wish to make the journey to Kidderminster's fabled Market Tavern to catch **SENDER** before huge venues call. That's on Friday October 1st. The rest of the month boasts **CROPDUSTERS / MAD HALIBUT / CHUCK** (8);

F.M.B / YOUTH CULTURE KILLED MY DOG (14) and **THE TANSADS** (29). It's worth noting that the Tav is a mere one minute away from the railway station and that the last train to Brum departs at 23.02 (BR time).

Singer-songwriter **MICKY GREANEY** celebrates both record deal and debut release with a special comedy and music gig at The MAC's Hexagon Theatre on October 8th. Noted Radio 5 comedian **JO ENRIGHT** heads the support cast which also features **JONNY COLLINS** and 'San Francisco earth mother type' **STARCHILD** who comperes the show. Tickets are £4.50 / £3.50 concessions and on sale now. And that's all you need to know except showtime is 7.30 pm.

DOVER SOUL, with **NEW WORLD EXPLOSION** and **SAXPACK** supporting, are at The Selly Park Tavern on Saturday October 2nd. It'll cost you three quid on the door and kick off is 8pm.

INDYA take their pop-rock flavours to The Royal George, Digbeth (October 15); The Hibernian, B'Ham (November 5); **JBs**, Dudley (8) and Brum's Breedon Bar (10).

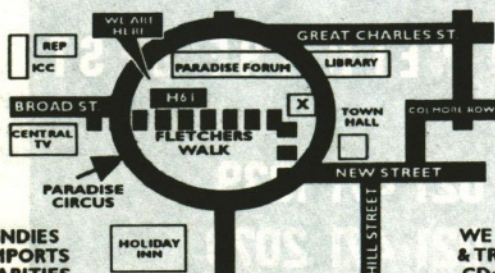
STEVE COOGAN takes to the road, not surprisingly in the company of **PAUL CALF**, Pauline Calf, Ernest Moss, Duncan Thickett and Henry Normal, with The Bag O'Sh!te Tour this autumn. He/they will be at Birmingham Town Hall on Saturday November 20th.



PAUL COOGAN OR STEVE CALF? EITHER WAY HE'S SH'TE!



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THE INTRO

THE GREAT DIVIDE have
tours with both THE FAT
LADY SINGS and PELE
scheduled for this
autumn. With Pele they
can be seen locally at
Edwards No.8 in Brum on
October 28th and
Lichfield Arts Centre the
following night.

The more mature of our
readership may
remember THE RICKY
TICK, a Home Counties
club that was the
stomping ground for the
best of the sixties R&B
set like The Animals,
Yardbirds, Graham Bond,
Alexis Korner, Stones,
John Mayall et al. Well
the club has been reborn.
In Knowle, near Solihull.
It's to be a Sunday
lunchtime hangout for
lovers of Cajun and
Zydeco flavoured music.
The Red Lion in Knowle
is the setting for the club
which launches with LA
CUCHINA, an
Argentinean led outfit
playing highly spiced
waltzes and polkas, on
October 3rd; MIDLAND
ACES [Cajun] (10); JOE
LE TAXI [Zydeco] (17);
J.C. GALLO (24) and THE
BOOGIE BAND [a
regrouping by the
leading lights of the, er,
legendary Brewer's
Droop!] (31)

There's more to
STEELEYE SPAN than
All around My Hat.
Indeed, with Fairport
Convention and The
Albion Band they pretty
much had the English
folk song revival sewn
up. Ashley Hutchings,
the three bands' common
denominator, may no
longer be with Steeleye
but original member
Maddy Prior is still
capable of inspiring her
crew to great heights for
their twenty fourth
anniversary tour which
visits Birmingham Town
Hall on Thursday
November 25th.
Former (indeed founder)
member Tim Hart will be
supporting so watch out
for a reunion encore!

FUN-DA-MENTAL, with
new single Countryman /
Tribal Revolution set for
October 11th release and
an album Seize The Time
set to roll in January '94,
will be supporting Senser
at Wolves Civic on
October 2nd.

Coventry's best live
band, according to the
Melody Maker, THE
MADDING CROWD, have
a more than impressive
debut CD available on
Candor Records. It's
called The End Of An
Indian Summer.

MARK LEMON, whose
current (and excellent)
demos are attracting
some positive A&R
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imagination, play at
Wolverhampton's Foxes
on Wednesday October
20th. Tickets are £8.00.
Further info on 0902
450045

TEN MILES HIGH are well
worth seeing at The
Breedon Bar in
Cotteridge on October
8th.

HUGGY BEAR have
compiled three recent
EPs, Kiss Curl / Herjazz /
Don't Die onto one Wilija
label album this month
with the CD, 10" vinyl
and cassette all retailing
at the same price of
£5.99.

TERROR GROOVE,
Brum's well fancied hard
rockers, play a much
anticipated headliner at
The Jug Of Ale in
Moseley on October 17th.

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(Above: Similar event held.)

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THE INTRO

Wolverhampton's Ripe Recordings, a subsidiary of FM, have a brand new SISTER SLEDGE track on release. World Rise & Shine is the disco divas first brand new recording since 1985. The B-side is a cover of Good Times, a song by one time group mentors, Chic. The record, available in the usual variety of formats is distributed by Sony who have taken a shine to another FM act, ALVIN DAVIS. Davis' 1992 album, Let It Blow has been snapped up by the giant corporation to launch their new Stateside label, Columbia Tri-star. Plans are afoot to put the former Handsworth music teacher on the road over

there and groom him for Kenny G size fame. (And that, rock minded cynics, is b-i-g.) Seems that Sony and its affiliates in Europe, Japan and Australia are falling over themselves to licence the album too.

TOOL, the Kansas based bluesy/heavy metal thrash four piece are at Birmingham's Institute on October 12th. Support comes from PAW.

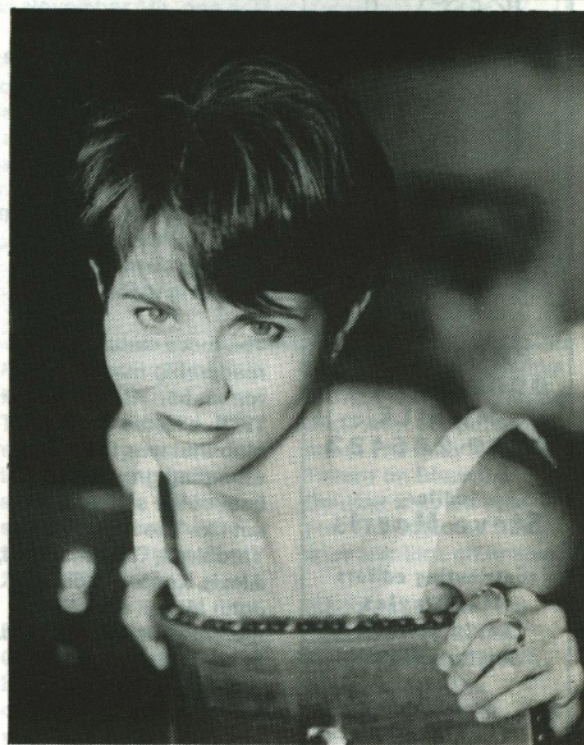
SENDER, the band most likely to explode in a big way, headline at Wolverhampton's Civic Hall on October 2nd. Look out for a new Ultimate label single and album ... soon.

The bizarre fascination with the tacky end of the seventies (have you caught all the Top Of The Pops on UK Gold - did those bands exist or is it a spoof?) continues with the massing of the grandfathers of glam, SHOWADDYWADDY, ALVIN STARDUST and THE RUBETTES which terrorises music lovers nationwide between November '93 and March '94. Birmingham Hippodrome on November 21st '93 is the local stop-over with a further fix being on offer at Wolverhampton's Civic Hall on March 5th '94.

DURAN DURAN have presented Brum Beat's editor with an unwanted Birthday present - a gig! Seriously, the band who had to pull a recent NEC date because Simon LeBon was unable to sing, er, hang on, let's rephrase that, had throat problems, have rescheduled for January 25th. Original tickets will be valid and new sales will be at the usual outlets and on 021 780 4133.

LATE EXTRA

The excellent SHAWN COLVIN, and few who saw her supporting Chris Isaak recently would argue with that understatement, has been confirmed as special guest on RUNRIG's autumn tour. She'll be with them when they play Wolverhampton's Civic Hall on November 9th. Tickets on sale now.



SHAWN COLVIN

nuggets

Random Conversation With
This Month's Movers

CRY OF LOVE

are a new American band, though the initial impression left by the debut album *Brother*, is the obvious influence of the classic stylings of Bad Company and Jimi Hendrix: "Those are definitely two big influences on the band and myself as a player," guitarist Audley Freed readily admitted when I caught up with him at JB's, one of the small clubs they played on the UK debut tour.

Another surprise is that all the songs featured are original, though vocalist Kelly Holland assures me, "We're not above doing covers," as they later prove by performing barnstorming versions of Gillan's *Living For The City* and Jeff Beck's *I Ain't Superstitious* for the greedily demanded encore.

By all accounts C-O-L are getting a good response to what they are doing in the UK. In fact, Kelly goes on to tell me that, "The kids here are real receptive. In the States they're zoned in on one thing. Here it seems they have a greater tradition for history, a lot more respect for it, anyway."

Some people might call the band retro: "We don't care if they call us retro or what ... as long as we're doing something we feel is worth saying and it's vital." The band's new single *Peace Pipe* was written by Audley Freed: "I worked in a guitar store and the riff came to me." Of the song Kelly says, "It definitely does state the native American issue."

And what are they like in concert? Brilliant, without doubt the best new live band in ages but how long can such a band last in today's market of rap and rave? As Kelly puts it: "There's no telling but it looks good from here on out." Andy Harper.

AMERICAN PIE



MAL GRAY, THE FILLING IN THE AMERICAN PIE

The song tells you of the day the music died. It's a sentiment Mal Gray, the instigator of the like titled show sympathises with; "Yea, with the onslaught of the Frankie Avalons it was buried." Gray is though no purist, going on to call The Beatles 'a breath of fresh air' and to agree that r'n'r is more attitude than specific style and something that lives on in Bruce Springsteen, someone the ebullient Gray has worked with. The show, *American Pie*, was, it transpires the idea of Bill Haley, one of Gray's past bosses and a man Gray thinks gets less than the respect due to him. "Bill had a lot of good ideas, he didn't sell the quantity of records he sold in such a short time by accident. He used to plan things like a campaign and when I started working with him in '76 he started to do that again. People tend not to think that he had original ideas but believe me he did. *American Pie* was his idea and he was very specific, it should focus on the period from the late fifties up to the point just before The Beatles changed everything."

And what was the show? "Well the way Bill put it to us was that it should be a cross between *West Side Story* and the American hits of the late fifties, early sixties, which it is. To describe the show is rather like telling you about a painting you can't see! It contains most of the songs you'll remember from the era done in a way that acknowledges how they were done in the first place. I've been lucky working with Bill, Gene Vincent and Fats Domino, people like that, I've learned about the authentic touches needed to make the show real."

And what was it, I wondered that had initially made Mal a rocker? "Oh, I can be quite specific on that one; Duane Eddy's *Rebel Rouser*. I wanted to be Duane Eddy but it was easier to learn the words and be the singer."

American Pie is at Birmingham Town Hall on Friday October 8th

MANN, OH MANN

Steve Morris Finds Perfect Pop With Aimee Mann

Aimee Mann, a name previously the preserve of the cognoscenti who, despairing of the factionalised music scene in the UK, turn Stateside to revel in that most derided of genres, pop music. That coming together of neat lyrical ideas and melodic superglue to create moments of pure spiritual uplift. The search for such highs has gouged a trail to cult figures like Marshall Crenshaw, Big Star, The Raspberries, Ben Vaughn and 'Til Tuesday.

Serious poppers will, by now, have made the connection. Aimee Mann was the creative nub of 'Til Tuesday, a Boston made band of three albums, little commercial success and a legal hangover after the split, that needed three years of judicial Alka Seltzer before Mann was free to release her new album, the simply marvellous Whatever. Thirteen slices of, well I'd call it pure pop but does Aimee agree?

"Well, it kinds of seems so but there's a lot of different things. It's all kitchen sink, whatever I like, whatever sounds good, whoever writes good chord changes, you know, that endears me to them and," she continues, laughing, "I rip them off."

Agreeing that pop is normally synonymous with teenybop these days she attempts to nail it down; "Yea, so now when I use the term pop music I mean a really specific pop music that references back to the late sixties, the heyday of pop music, The Zombies, The Kinks, The Beatles, The Byrds, The Mamas And The Papas."

Of course it's one thing to parade your influences but it's another entirely to weave them into a new tapestry; to avoid simple pastiche. Whatever never even suggests such a fault. Mann's songs are melodically refined and lyrically taught; beaming with hooks that invade your very being like some benevolent, if virulent, virus yet sophisticated enough in words that they leave an indelible mark. Yet, cleverly, she and producer Jon Brion adopted a recording technique that wraps the album in a warm glow: they used old analogue keyboards.

"We loved those kind of keyboards (mellotron / optigan / chamberlin). Jon and I had wanted to use them on a record for four and a half years

and now it feels like it's getting a little old hat because Mitchell Froom (Crowded House / American Music Club producer) and Michael Penn keep using them. Well, it's not many people using them but we started getting anxious, like our secret weapon was being unveiled before we had a chance to get the stupid record out! But it was really deliberate because we liked the idea of working with contrast in sounds and juxtaposing modern sounds with sounds that had instant history; the whole evoking of the sixties just by the sound."

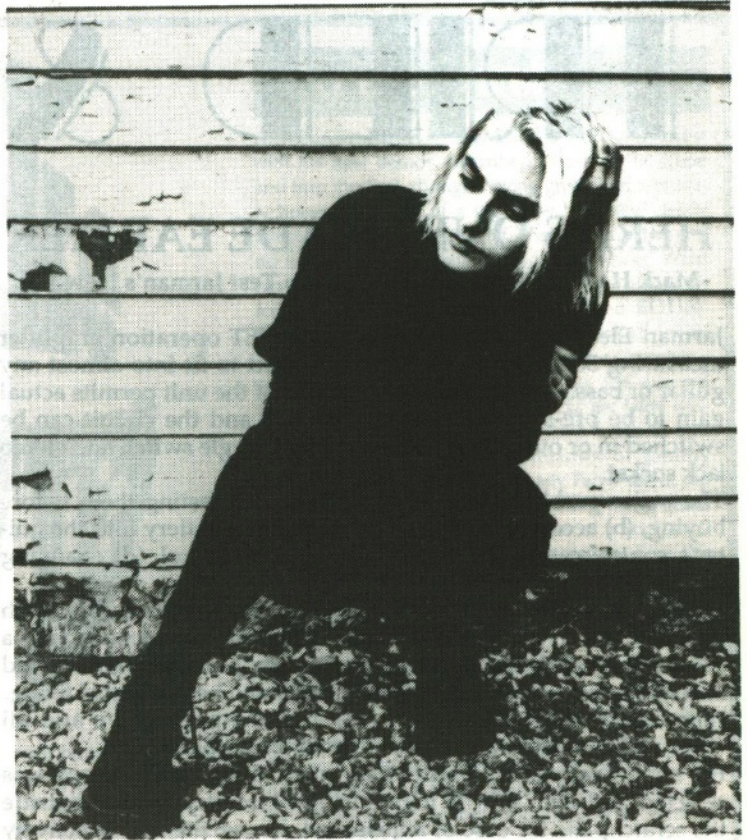
One evocation of that era came not from a dusty old machine but from a sixties legend himself though the degree of legendary imprint was not clear until later. Aimee explains; "We just called Roger McGuinn up! I'd met him before when I was with Elvis Costello so I guess he knew who I was." She quickly points out that McGuinn and Costello are the only famous people she knows, adding that Elvis doesn't count "because he's a friend if mine."

And what of McGuinn's furtively left trademark?

"You mean his quotes." On Could've Been Anyone the head Byrd's guitar contributions amount to recognisable lead licks from his own past hits! "I don't know why he did that. I thought it was the funniest thing, it's a little surreal actually. We got him primarily for Fifty Years After The Fair to do your basic Roger McGuinn thing and then we worked him to death! We had five minutes left and we said why don't you take another pass on this other song, so maybe it was just his way of saying fuck you, you've worked me too hard, I wanna have a cup of coffee now. He was just playing these quotes, it was perfect, it was great but we didn't really realise what he'd done 'til he'd left. He'd played a bunch of stuff, some of which sounded really awful because he was doing the Eight Miles High Thing which is basically noise but then we realised he'd played his really famous licks!"

Talking to Aimee Mann is a pleasure, she's sharp, good humoured and as personable as she is talented. How, I wondered, did she view the rather caustic approach of her sisters in music making, the riot grrrls? "I don't really understand what the riot grrrl thing is about. I've heard that term and I sort of know what it is but to me it's just like feminist punk girl, like when you go to college and you have your obligatory two years as a lesbian."

Finally renting superstars aside, I wondered whether making such a good album without record compa-



AIMEE MANN

ny support (the album was made prior to signing to Imago) had forced limitations. "No my manager's a complete idiot. He kept shelling out cash and I don't know why. I guess because he really believes in the

music."

One listen to Whatever and you will too.

Aimee Mann supports World Party at AVLC on October 29th

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HERE'S ONE I MADE EARLIER

Mark Hadley Opens His Toolbox To Test Jarman's New Kit

Jarman Electronics GRI is a Junction - FET operation amplifier measuring 30 x 20 x 15 mm and designed to fit into almost any guitar or bass. A small screw on the end of the unit permits actual gain to be pre-set to users requirements and the circuit can be switched in or out by use of the supplied toggle switch and stereo jack socket.

The major problems with such units are (a) testing them before buying, (b) accommodating the unit and PP3 battery into the guitar's control cavity, (c) presetting the gain control, (d) changing batteries later.

Jarman Electronics offer the unit on a 30 day trial basis, although it would be advantageous if the circuitry could be loaded into a standard effects box for testing and review purposes. This would also allow the required gain to be ascertained before guitar fixing. Installation instructions are clear and comprehensive and all wires and connections pre-tinned to simplify soldering.

For review purposes a particularly weak sounding Strat copy was selected and with a little ingenuity the circuitry located outside the scratchplate for ease of adjustment. In use, the unit effectively added body to the sound as well as increasing output. Carefully adjusting a valve amp to threshold of distortion can allow clean to rhythm crunch to overdrive to be selected using the guitar's volume control and switching in the unit. Furthermore, unlike many overdrive pedals, the unit was remarkably quiet in operation. Fitting the unit into the guitar can still be a bit of a bitch mainly due to the required PP3 battery and changing the battery will require removal of scratchplate or control cavity cover,

unless you're ingenious enough to build a charger socket into the control plate. An optional scratchplate mounted gain control pot may also increase flexibility.

The Jarman GRI can be obtained at the ridiculously low price of £24.95 direct from Jarman Electronics, PO Box 396, Wolverhampton WV4 5YZ and should soon be available from your local music retailer.

GRIMM NEWS FOR MUSICIANS

The Brothers Grimm Music Production Company have become the first organisation in the Midlands to run short music technology and recording courses. The one-day courses provide students with the knowledge and experience needed to get the most from music-making and recording, whether as a hobby or a career.

The tutors for the courses are experienced and qualified, having worked throughout Europe for a number of well-known studios and record companies. As a music production company, The Brothers Grimm have an on-going involvement in production work, advertising music and promotion.

At present, two one-day courses are on offer: One is in MIDI (Music computers and synthesizers), the other in multi track recording. Both courses provide students with theoretical knowledge as well as plenty of hands on experience in a 24-track recording environment. For the future, music business courses and more specialised music technology courses planned.

Courses are running every weekend throughout October and November.

For more information call or fax The Brothers Production Company on 021-693 0330, or write to: 218, The Custard Factory, Gibb Street, Birmingham. B9 4AA.



'HORSE'

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october 16th Warwick University, Coventry
october 20th Princess Charlotte, Leicester



THE REDDINGTON'S RARE RECORDS

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- 1: STAR WARS TRILOGY (9 disc box set)
- 2: ABYSS (Special box set)
- 3: CRYING TIME
- 4: SCENT OF A WOMAN
- 5: FEW GOOD MEN
- 6: DRACULA
- 7: CAPE FEAR
- 8: BODYGUARD
- 9: BLADE RUNNER
- 10: FIELD OF DREAMS
- 11: CHAPLIN
- 12: TERMINATOR 2
- 13: BACKDRAFT
- 14: HOFFA
- 15: BLACK RAIN
- 16: GROUNDHOG DAY
- 17: ALIVE
- 18: LAWNMOWER MAN
- 19: TERMINATOR 1
- 20: PREDATOR

DISCONTENTED

On the heels of *Big Love* (its fourth single) **DELICIOUS MONSTER's** debut album, *Joie De Vivre (Flute)*, finally sees light of day. And well worth the wait with its flurry of guitars and the vocally glacial Rachel managing to sound like Björk, Siouxsie and Kate Bush simultaneously as she sings about "fantasies, fashion, bodies, sexuality, masturbation, feminism, jealousy, anger, equality, hypocrisy and faith." Alongside *Power Missy*, *Ripped*, *Snuggle*, *Big Love* and *Secret Place* (which appeared on the debut EP), there are five other gems, of which *In You In Me*, *Talk To Me* and *For Her* are worth the investment alone. *Big Love* won't do the crossover magic, and unfortunately I suspect neither will the album, but on the evidence of the acoustic *Shedding* and *Fresh Cream* on the current EP, this is clearly one *Monster* that's evolving to an even more exciting stage of its development rather than skirting extinction.

With eight *bangra* albums already under their belt, **DCS** make their mainstream debut with *Be With Me* (Arista) and, while no *Apache Indian*, prove a tasty combination of Western soul pop with an Asian groove. Worth pursuing. Whether **THE LOVELESS** have it in them to be a great rock'n'roll guitar band remains to be seen, but right now they're nudging well past bloody good status. With *Dave Atherton* having undergone a "religious conversion which led him to join *Bizarre Inc.*" the trio return to profile with new album, *All Stood Up*. Bursting with an unbridled sense of enthusiasm and enjoyment in what they do, doused with the occasional *SLF* and *Jam* influence (*Attitude Problem* in partic) and blazing through a bunch of power-beat chords, it's a stormer ranging, as frontman *Paul Brindley* has it, "from the desperate optimism of *What Town Is This*, the bouncy immaturity of *15 Again*, the defiantly stupid *Trash Culture*, the 'welcome back to yourself' theme of *Losing It*, to the plain confused *Don't Understand The World* and the see-you-in-court version of (*John Denver's*) *Leavin' On A Jet Plane*." And let's not forget the acoustic nugget that is *Yesterday's Girl* either. Seek it out.

Unless you were in swaddling clothes during the *New Wave 80s* you may recall *Rob Peters* as drummer in the vastly excellent *Dangerous Girls*. Since then, amongst other things, he was briefly a part of *Everything But The Girl* and *Ruby Blue*, where he was reunited with old chum *Della Roberts*. They're now known collectively as **WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS** and are possessed of the rather fine *Something's Going On EP* (*Wafer Thin*) which recalls, not surprisingly, *Ruby Blue's* delicate but muscular acoustic rock melodies, with *Roberts* bearing out the *Stevie Nicks* references, though the

mike
DAVIES

muscular sparsity of *All Change* hints more at early *Richard and Linda Thompson*. Eyes peeled for live dates.

You'll undoubtedly have already read a torrent of superlatives in connection with **THE WONDER STUFF** and *Construction For The Modern Idiot* (Polydor), so suffice it to add to the swell by noting that it both marks a return to the ferocity of the first two albums and an advance on the last, taking the fiddle out of the cowpunk pastures and turning it into an orchestral assault weapon. A snarling howl at the prats that infest contemporary society, a celebration of the live hard die tough brigade (*Bukowski* in *A Great Drinker*, comedian *Sam Kinison* in 'secret' Celtic instrumental track *Something For Sammy*, and, erm, *Diana Dors* in *Hot Love Now*, a song apparently inspired by husband *Alan Lake's* depression driven suicide), and in *I Wish Them All Dead*, a justifiable rant at child abuse. From the opening fury of *Change Every Lightbulb* to the closing bitter reflections of *Sing The Absurd*, this is the *Stuffies* at the height of their considerable powers. Now signed to *Infectious*, **PWEI** make their new label debut with a bastard noise groove of molten metal guitar spit and raw throat rap under the title of *RSVP* and twin it with assorted mixes of the underwater, decompression chamber vocal of *Famillus Horribulus*. Neither are exactly user or radio friendly, but as with most *Poppies* records, end up worming their way into the bloodstream like a particularly diseased maggot.

TAPE-DECKED

Apparently **MARK LEMON's** raising interest with his new demos, described as out of the *Cope* and into the *Brel*, though having given him a brutally honest appraisal of a gig I saw him play, clearly I've been removed for the Christmas card list and no tape's been despatched in my direction. What has come my way however is the fruits of demos for *EMI* publishing by the new revitalised **BOUNTY HUNTERS**, now with *Groovy Richard* (ex of *Freakhouse*) supplying his, erm, groovy kravitzing psychedelic guitar prowess. Despite the avowed new direction though, the four tracks are fairly typical *Bounty* bars, *Dave Kusworth's* bruised and stoned balladeering approximation of *Johnny Thunders*, *Keith Richards* and early *Faces* still in top form but now given a backdrop of big biting guitar climaxes. *Tambourine Girl* is more of a rock'n'roll 60s riff than a song but does feature some *Love Me Do* mouth organ, *White Stockings* swaggers and slips in a reference to *Paris, Texas* and *Twining Park* was clearly dragged into the studio by *Wild Horses*.

COMPANY OF STRANGERS are a new outfit building a gigging profile but the demo debut doesn't squeeze out many sparks with *White Lies* and *One Fine Day* sounding like anonymous 70s club pop. *Virgin & Martyr* improves with a Gallic rootsy flavour and *Niecy Mann's* little girlish vocals but the thudding, hollow production does none of them any favours.

HORNBLOWER attack with plenty of confidence but despite a good voice and gritty guitars need to get a strong grip on songwriting construction to get in, make the point, and get out. *Drag* chimes with shades of early *Bowie* and *Mott*, and *Never Have, Never Will* indicates the muscle's there, they just need a decent trainer. **TEN** likewise need to get an idea of what they really want to do rather than churn out competently played but characterless flabby hard rock. The songs simply don't exist and are served up with too much self-conscious posturing and absolutely no conviction. Past efforts have shown they can do it, perhaps they should stop trying and just get on with it.

The ghost of *Jim Morrison* (and maybe a hint of *Teardrop* and *Mission*) prowls the dark stormy landscapes that make up the commanding demo from *Kidderminster's* **MELON**. Steady, sturdy drumming and a serial killer guitar add to the power and both *Hophead* and *Faye Dunaway* suggest a band likely to knock you for a cantaloupe before too long. No info but a four track demo from **BRILLIANT COLOUR**. The colour's basically R&B with *Cream* undertones, but the songs are plodding affairs that have much the same effect as wading through concrete. Wake up and try again. Not brilliant. **OPORTO** emerge from the ashes of *The Cudgels*, maintaining their folksy brand of naive beat pop (*Only Ones/Soft Boys*) even to the extent of matching melody lines. The songs don't yet have a distinguishing persona but both *Liverpool* and *Midnight Blue* are impressive announcements of intent.

Now based in *Birmingham*, *Oxford's* **SUSANNA WOLFE** serves a confident, superior brand of moody singer-songwriter roots-blues inflected rock, a deep, dark-shadowed and passionately expressive voice that deserves the full stadium works behind it but sounds just as happy in a sparse guitar experience. Convenient reference points would embrace *Armatrading*, *Benatar*, *Hynde*, and *Melissa Etheridge*, but *Wolfe* definitely has a vocal strength and character of her own and songs like *Suffer Little Children*, *Deed Is Done*, the smouldering reggae veined *Wild Woman*, and the naked emotional power of *Rainbows*, are not just sensationally impressive vehicles but among the best things to have graced my stereo all year. If you see the name on the gig lists, make a point of turning up.



WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS

BAD KARMA

**Mike Davies
checks out the
vibes with
Lloyd Cole**

"It's one of the only albums I've done I'm dissatisfied with. I think the songs are, for the most part, good. But that doesn't necessarily make it a good album."

Lloyd Cole is reflecting on Don't Get Weird On Me Babe, his half rock half orchestral pop album which received equally split reviews.

"I wish I'd gone the full hog and made the whole album with an orchestra because then people wouldn't have been able to avoid the fact. My record company politely forgot that side existed when it came to releasing singles although most people agreed it was the better side. I actually had one of the best reviews of my life

but I tend to average four stars and generally this dropped to a three."

It did, however, when 1992 rolled round, colour his decision on what the next album would be; something that was one sustained piece of work and pop as opposed to rock. It came together over nine months, with six weeks off in the middle for the birth of son William, during which time Cole knocked out eight songs on acoustic guitar, six of which ended up providing the core for the record.

"I don't know how it happens but it seems creativity is linked to changes in your life. When I moved to New York I wrote more songs in six months than in the previous two years."

But no 'new daddy' songs?

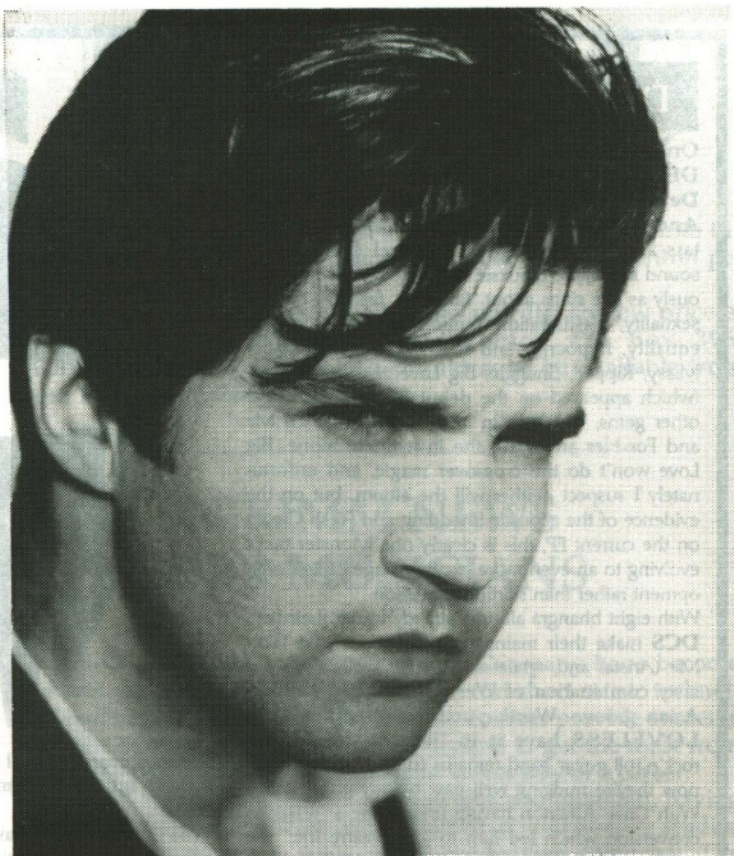
"I'm not going to start that. I don't sing songs to people. With William I write things to sing to him in the bath. I've got one that goes 'he's a lovely little boy but his knees are dirty, got to get him clean by seven thirty.' But I certainly don't intend to record it!"

Even so, taking on the responsibilities of parenthood has changed Cole's career perspective.

"I'm not about to start making records just to sell more, but certainly my approach to promotion is more workmanlike. I have to provide now and this is the first record I've really been concerned about whether it sells or not."

The record in question is Bad Vibes ("Like 'good'. In the studio stuck labels on people. My manager was the vibes slayer, the producer was the vibes person. I was bad vibes."), an album that clearly underlines Cole's Beatles, Bolan and Bowie predilections, with many a direct or indirect reference to Lennon in particular (from death of the yuppie number Fall Together to the opening riff of On My Way To You being highly reminiscent of Don't Let Me Down). Cole admits to going for a Plastic Ono feel.

"I think it's quite legitimate to get together a bunch of people who you know won't be capable of sounding like the Plastic Ono Band and saying 'let's try and sound like the Plastic Ono Band. There's a dynamic and an immediacy about something like Instant Karma that my music normally doesn't have which I was trying to get. You have to be able to give people a specific idea of what you're trying to sound like. I wanted to make an album that worked for me in the same way as the White Album and Diamond Dogs. They were my main reference points. Except for



LLOYD COLE

Seen The Future which is my usual T Rex rip-off (complete with a reference to the T-Rex line in All The Young Dudes).

Lyrical it's an ambivalent but predominantly cynical collection, as with So You Want To Save The World, an attack on eco poseurs, for example.

"That's got to be the reason it came out of me and you can take it cynically. But when I sing 'I'd really like to help you' it's being vaguely sarcastic but I'd also like to think there are people out there who are concerned."

In fact the finished version is a lot less cynical than it began.

"The joke was calling it 'So you'd like to Sting the World. The first verse and chorus came very easily but it was hard to write the second verse without sounding too cynical. One version had the lines 'to be or not to be a folk singer, baby I'm a rock' then there was a version in which the girl was a terrorist bombing the rich, and the animal lib thing was in there too. In the end I just found it all too pompous and cynical for me to sing."

On his own notes to the song Cole simply says, 'what would it be like to go out with Natalie Merchant?' Well?

"I did go out with her one night. She's a friend of friend of mine and we met at a bar. She bought a beer and made it last eight hours. She was complaining about being famous and how these boys follow her round in the town where she lives. One day one of them climbed the tree by her bedroom window and was looking in at her. I said she should have taken her clothes off and scared him away. "I WAS doing that' she cried! I thought it was very funny. She didn't."

On the subject of fame, the last track on the album is Can't Get Arrested.

'Actually that's more about the way people in my position are treated. I go to Paris and it's almost embarrassing the respect I get. Then I go to LA and get treated like a piece of meat. I'm expected to go to dinner with radio producers. I'm not having that. In fact I just got dropped by my American record company. They dropped me and then a couple of weeks later everyone got fired. Then the new MD rang me up and asked for a tape of the new record because they were interested in signing me! I'm not actively looking for an American deal. I want them to be well aware I don't care a shit if I sell records there or not and if they want me to work to sell them then they have to make it worth my while."

And here?

"I think I've done enough that people above 22 know who I am, but it's also refreshing that young people keep turning up at the gigs. I wouldn't want to make music that alienated them, like Phil Collins. There's no place for a 15 year old on a Phil Collins record, they're simply not interested in that audience. Whereas my favourite record is still a T Rex track from when I was 11."

Which may explain why he's currently recording a bunch of covers. "I'm doing them for B sides. I just did Vicious. The Slider and Mystic Lady. If it all works out and I get 10 songs I'll do a budget album called Unhinged, as opposed to Unplugged!. I just did Vicious. The Slider and Mystic Lady. If it all works out and I get 10 songs I'll do a budget album called Unhinged, as opposed to Unplugged!"

W

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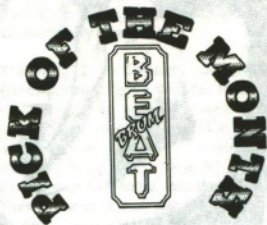
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JAMES

Laid (Fontana)

A decade ago, as a record company rep, I could barely give away James' debut offering and yet, having built up a large and loyal following in the intervening years, Laid is not by any means a celebratory set. Sometimes and the title track aside, there is little to match the anthemic commerciality of Sit Down. It's a rural sounding set with acoustic guitars and mandolins mingling with an atmospheric ambience that suggests a marriage of Lanois and Pink Floyd. Lyrically there is much introspection and brooding, from the "I've changed" mantra of Dream Thrum, to "I've been looking for truth at the cost of living" lament of the haunting Five O'. The magic is that James avoid sounding like whinging pop stars



who've just discovered that all that glitters etc, etc. There's a strand of common experience in the lyrics and Tim Biooth's delivery has a dignity that negates self pity. Add to this arrangements that are as imaginative as they are electric and you have an album that is as intriguing as it is substantial. A major achievement ... and from a band I wouldn't have previously have crossed the street to hear!

Steve Morris



JAMES

BUFFALO TOM

Big Red Letter Day

(Beggars Banquet)

You don't really need to hear more than the first 30 seconds of the opening Sodajerker to know this is an essential addition to any self-respecting guitar band devotees collection. If you proceed you'll discover more of what the fuss is all about, neatly bundled up into immaculate, be-denimed songs that go by titles like Tree House, Torch Singer or Anything That Way. Nothing rawk'n'roll in the lyrics (though Sodajerker does contain the decidedly phallogocentric line "jerk my fountain, ice cream mountain"), nothing sonically offensive in the riffs, just solid, grade A guitar muscles that come from the Neil Young textbook but don't feel obliged to actually reproduce the content verbatim.

Mike Davies

JOHN HIATT

Perfectly Good Guitar (A&M)

Fresh from super grouping with Little Village, Hiatt has enrolled producer of the moment Matt Wallace and headed for the studio. The result is a stripped down, hard edged Hiatt album in which guitars dominate and it sounds like a live in

the studio band burn.

The songs remain in the twin provinces of love town and vignettes with a Twin Peaks twist. Straight Outta Time and The Wreck Of The Barbie Ferrari typifying those strands whilst the title track contains a moral for all guitar smashers.

Little more to say other than this is another perfectly good album from the perfectly wonderful John Hiatt.

Steve Morris

JUNE TABOR

Anthology (Music Club)

Cherry picked from Tabor's Topic and Cooking Vinyl catalogues and packaged with informative sleeve notes and discography, this collection would disgrace many anthologies presently on the market but at a mere £5.99 for the CD format it simply embarrasses them.

There are seventy plus minutes of magic here that belie the simple description of Tabor as folk singer, she is more than that, though to find the right description is both time wasting and sounds apologetic as though such artistry needs a pigeon hole.

Here whether fronting The Oyster Band's contemporary material or

tackling traditionally sourced songs, Tabor's work shines with an understanding of and an empathy for the material, facets that make her versions definitive, as happens with her interpretations of Natalie Merchant's Verdi Cries and Eric Bogle's potent The Band Played Waltzing Matilda.

The opportunity of sampling such artistry for the price of a couple of bottles of designer hangover is surely the bargain of the year.

Steve Morris

TINDERSTICKS

The Tindersticks Album

(This Way Up)

Remember Balloon? Tindersticks are this year's Balloon. Guitars, piano, violin. What do they sound like? Easiest to list the comparisons and references. Cohen, Cave, Buckley, Reed, Cale, Violent Femmes, Crime and the City Solution, American Music Club, Thin White Rope and occasionally Ian Curtis. Get the picture. It goes without saying the songs are things of beautiful melancholy, sung with deadpan, miserable but mesmerising vocals, a couple of them being spoken narratives akin to the Velvet's The Gift. It gets

a bit unrelenting over a double album, but if you're dipping in and out then Not Knowing, Nectar, Whiskey & Water, Milky Teeth and the shiveringly wonderful City Sickness make for perfect companions to the sound of rain on empty windows.

Mike Davies

ARCHIE ROACH

Charcoal Lane (Mushroom)

Though originally released in Australia three years ago, this is the UK debut for the rootsy Aboriginal singer-songwriter. Recalling Springsteen at his plaintive Nebraska best, Roach has a world weary throaty husk of a voice well suited to the acoustic story songs of his people's grace under pressure and the injustices and pain born of white man prejudice. Native Born talks of the urbanisation of the bush and the eradication of aboriginal culture, Took The Children Away and Munjana paint angry pictures of less than sensitive social welfare decisions, others are melancholic reflections on old times, some talk of the despair and desolation into which the abandoned hopeless fall. And Beautiful Child is simply heart-breakingly moving. With contributions from Paul Kelly, Tim and Neil Finn, and Vika and Linda Bull from The Black Sorrows, it's an album of quiet anger, eloquent sadness and haunting dignity, a real stunner. Now, how about releasing the follow-up, Jamu Dreaming, too.

Mike Davies

VARIOUS

A Brief History Of Ambient. Volume One (Virgin)

The Positiva Ambient Collection (EMI)

New Electronica (Beechwood)

Little did we realise, two decades back, sitting in a cold York Minster watching (ha! all you could see were the red lights blinking on the monstrous Moogs of the time!) Tangerine Dream, that we were midwives at the birth of ambient. We rather believed it to be an incense inhaling hippie trip!

But here are the Tangs, rather well represented as seminal movers in Ambient. And that's the problem. What the hell is ambient? All things to all men if this set is to be taken at face

value. Cynically seen, it's a marketing man's way of teaming up Eno, Gong, Hawkwind, Material and Killing Joke. Commercially seen, it's Chill Out time, man, as the ravers rediscover grass and getting laid back. Artistically seen it's, well, all that bullshit that the superior apply to Eno and his ilk rather than listening.

In essence it's perhaps best seen as the soundtrack to whatever dreams and fantasies you fancy; an aural escape, an organic high ...

Whatever, Virgin have plundered the vaults to apply the tag to almost three hours of back catalogue to partially explain the phenomenon, and to cash-in on the demand. Does that make them ambience chasers?

Meanwhile EMI launch Positiva to feed the need with a selection of new works from new names, The Orb, Black Dog, Moby and a radical remix of Jesus Jones by The Aphex Twin. A set rooted in dance with trance in mind.

The Electronica set actually makes no claim to an ambient connection though the, admittedly more upbeat, cuts from C.J. Bolland, Kumulus, Underground Resistance and more share common ground with their use of loop rhythms and repetitive motifs to draw the listener into an adjusted state of mind.

Steve Morris.

JAM NATION

Way Down Below Buffalo Hell (Real World)

Some time back Peter Gabriel threw open the gates of his hi-tech recording palace, Real World, to a few musical chums from seemingly disparate backgrounds.

This is the result, a seemingly seamless melding of artists and cultures. You could be awkward and say that western beats dominate but that would be to deny the shifting textures they support. There's also a fair wedge of what could be called ambient, but the same goes for this, it's the shifting textures that make the fabric so interesting.

For the record the contributors include Gabriel, Karl Wallinger, Jane Siberry, Daniel Lanois, Billy Cobham and an army of African, Asian and Caribbean players whose names (shamefully) mean nothing but whose audible contributions mean much.

Steve Morris



TINDERSTICKS

LOS LOBOS

Just Another Band From East LA
(Slash)

An intelligently compiled budget priced best of double set from the Hispanic roots-rockers that trawls their career for the obscure gems as well as the more obvious tracks like La Bamba and Will The Wolf Survive. Rarities and previously unreleased cuts include three from their 1978 indie debut (same title as this), nine live performances (including Cream's Politician), an out-take of Somebody, their version of I Wanna Be Like You from the Disney tribute, Mambo Kings and The Wrong Man soundtracks, and concludes with 1993's New Zandou. A concise picture of a band and a culture that's received neither the widespread respect nor the commercial success it's so obviously deserved.

Mike Davies

BARRENCE WHITFIELD & TOM RUSSELL

Hillbilly Voodoo (Round Tower)

Following the demise of the decade old Tom Russell Band, this record, when viewed alongside his western song album Cowboy Real from last year, spearheads a plethora of special projects which Russell will undertake during the next phase of his career. And that's apart from conventional solo albums, where his intellectual prowess as a songsmith truly takes flight. For instance - What price duet albums with Katy Moffatt and Rosie Flores? Good for a fictitious rumour huh?

For this set, Russell, who also produced, avoids the obvious trap of over indulging with his own compositions. Instead, the duo paint on a wider canvas, which ranges from Larry Green's Long Black Train with loads of twangy country guitar licks, through a languid rendition of Lucinda Williams' I Just Want To See You So Bad, to Lightnin Hopkins on speed with Ice Water and a refined tribute ballad about Edith Piaf, Chocolate Cigarettes.

There's a rich vein of humour permeating this album. It bubbles to the surface on Russell's culinary The Cuban Sandwich and the double entendre of You Can't Get That Stuff No More. There's everything to recommend this aural marriage to R&B and country/folk listeners alike. Hell, the guys even delve into a little reggae, with Tom's early eighties standard, The Definition Of A Fool. Go on, discover that country soul is still alive and thriving, despite all that other (crap). After all, to paraphrase track ten, What Is The Colour Of The Soul Of A Man?

Arthur Wood



CAPERCAILLIE

ROBIN ZANDER

Robin Zander (Interscope)

Zander, frontman of the once mighty pop-rockers Cheap Trick, pulls out all the stops for his solo debut. Fellow Tricksters Tom Peterson and Rick Nielsen lend a hand with bass and songwriting duties whilst the heavy celeb presence of Dave Stewart, Maria McKee, Dr. John, Stevie Nicks, Mick Fleetwood, J.D. Souther, Divinyl Christina Amphlett and ex-Eagle Don Felder adds musical trills and shores up the notion of Zander as artist of substance.

Musically it is, as you might guess, a continuation of Cheap Trick's hard edged Beatle / ELO fixated sound with a couple of hip-hop inspired deviations; Harry Nilsson's Jump Into The Fire placed over a bed of Public Image, Free, Yes, Buzzcocks and Deep Purple samples being a successful example of the latter.

Then there's the cover of McKee's Show Me Heaven on which the chanteuse adds harmony; this is in essence a facsimile of her own cut and does little for either song or Zander.

Ultimately if you like Cheap Trick at their early, eclectic best, you'll like this. It may be adult oriented rock but it's far from pensionable.

Sam Mitchell

CAPERCAILLIE

Secret People (Survival - Arista)

Secret People marks Capercaille's triumphant arrival in the commercial mainstream.

Thus far their ethereal use of Scots/Gaelic folk roots has seemingly seen them pegged as Highlands' apprentices to Clannad. The time has come, it seems, to surpass the masters.

The melding of traditional sources and hi-tech arrangements is impressively smooth and the band's own material is now assured and mature. Wrap up these advances in a warmly embracing wide screen production and you have every reason to suppose Capercaille will shortly be emulating fellow countrymen Runrig's march to victory.

Steve Morris

RADNEY FOSTER

Del Rio TX 1959 (Arista)

Michelle Wright's re-activated Now & Then aside, the best of Arista's current country package of truck-stop, Nashville MOR, tasteless jackets, designer hairstyles, cowboys, beer sobbing honky tonkers and vasectomised rock'n'roll (okay Pam Tillis' Homeward Looking Angel has its moments). Foster's solo debut is an autobiographical portrait of growing up in nowhere Texas and musical influences that ranged from Waylon to Buddy to The Beatles (and if Just Call Me Lonesome's any indication, Leroy Van Dyke too). Twangy guitar, twangy vocals and the usual litany of 'cheatin', 'losin', 'leavin', 'drinkin', 'hurtin' and 'lovin' songs but given an extra edge and featuring good company stopovers from John Hiatt, Albert Lee and Mary-Chapin Carpenter. With the bonus of not dressing like a total cowboy convention prat too.

Mike Davies

VIKKI CLAYTON

In Flight

(The Road Goes On Forever)

It is, not surprisingly, a mite intimidating when, as you stroll the grounds of The Cambridge Folkfest, the record company press man stops you to deliver the product whilst accompanied by the artist and recording engineer.

It is then a thundering great relief to report that this is one very good album.

Vikki is best known on the folk circuit and possibly because of her numerous forays into the Fairport camp, there have been several Sandy Denny comparisons. Now

sleeve - can it really be one bass? Clayton-Baker may well prove to be one of the great collaborations.
Steve Morris

VARIOUS

The Surf Set (Sequel Records)

A slightly misleading title, in fact, for this 72 track, 3 disc boxed set. It is in fact, the sound track to teenage life in Southern California of the early 60s.

It may seem strange, given the current gritty understanding of the term street culture, to learn that this scintillatingly sophisticated sound was in fact a response by the musicians to peer group culture. We learn from the excellent booklet, that pop genius, Brian Wilson initially put pen to paper to celebrate his brother's surfing hobby and that he was not averse to writing tunes about his chums' cars.

The Beach Boys are of course well represented, as are the other surf and hot rod giants, Jan and Dean. But, it's in the also rans that much pleasure can be found; for example, you can hear the oft-cited but rarely heard Dick Dale as well as the Safaris, Rip Chords, Honeys and Fantastic Baggies. There is even, believe it or not, a credible surf track from Pat Boone.

But even more curiously the set includes two surfing rarities from the ambassadors, an English outfit recorded by Joe Meek above a north London shop and which he managed to sell to the US label that had had hits with The Surfaris and Chantays. Given the current obsession with all things surf, even it seems by land-locked Midlanders, the timely release of this set will give them both a sense of history and a sound track to surf board waxing sessions.
Steve Morris

SHARA NELSON

Silence Knows (Cooltempo)

Prejudice told me to pass on this - dance stuff y'know. Duty slid it into the CD player simply to prove, I guess, that prejudice really is a dumb idea.

Now that's not to say that this is a honey of an album; certainly not. The 'Dance' tracks are in the main too rigid in inception to let Nelson's languid vocals flow. But when space is available, such as on the title track or the stand-out voice and guitar sophistication of Inside Out, the vocals are a revelation. Smoothly assured, soulful with a jazzy phrasing and a languid melt that hints at greatness. It's not only ballads that showcase however, the Motown shaded One Goodbye In Ten shows Shara at her bedtime best but, and here objectivity replaces prejudice friends, when the programming overshadows the song and the room for expression is squeezed, so are the very things that make Shara Nelson so good.
Steve Morris

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SHARA NELSON

soundbites

PIERCE PETTIS / Chase the Buffalo / (High Street) Import only, but if you're into the likes of singer-songwriters of the Waits, Cohn, T-Bone Burnett, Stan Rogers and Mark Germino school of roots flavoured country with dark brown wooded voices and articulate lyrics, then this should be top priority in your search among the racks. MD

TEXAS TWANG / Vol. 1 / (Munich/Topic) In which noted Texas boogie man Evan Johns decamps his H Bombs band to Holland, teams up with the local equivalent to cut a selection of rockabilly, blues and rock'n'roll that prove Texas is a state of mind. SM

VARIOUS / Leaders Of The Pack / (Polygram TV) A celebration of sixties girl groups that runs airtight due to an over-reliance on Motown [stereo album takes of the singles in place of the originals] and capsize when a major label licences appalling remakes of The Crystals Phil Spector produced diamonds from K-Tel, of all people. SM

THE SOFT BOYS / 1976 - 81 / (Ryk) Admirable double CD compendium of the left field popsters and Robin Hitchcock spawners. Two dozen unreleased tracks and I Want To Be An Anglepoise Lamp making a long awaited digital debut - though it actually sounds worse than the original vinyl version! SM

JOHN HEGLEY / Saint And Blurry / (Hannibal) Didya hear the one about the comedy record that's still funny after a few plays? Nah, neither did we... SM

ED KUEPPER / The Butterfly Net / (Hot) The latest chapter in what seems to be Kuepper's determined bid to swamp the market with his catalogue. And welcome it is too, but this set of sweepings from '87 to '92 might have benefited from sterner quality control. SM

TIMBUK 3 / Espace Ornano / (Watermelon - Topic) Well the commercial future may not have warranted shades but Pat McDonald and Barbara K, with a real rhythm section replacing the machine, live in Paris in late '91 demonstrate that public disdain has done little to blunt the edge of their well honed material. SM

VAI / Sex & Religion / (Relativity) "It's a tragic condition / Sex and religion / Makin' a manic mess in your head". Thus speaks Steve Vai in the title track. I couldn't have put it better. SM

BIG SUGAR / Big Sugar / (Provogue) Canadian club bluesers covering all bases from rural to boogie with originals and covers from the greats; Billy Boy Arnold, Hooker and Henry Mancini! Er, a Duane Eddy-ish Shot In The Dark since you ask! SM

TIM O'BRIEN / Oh Boy! / (Sugarhill - Topic) Fizzing bluegrass with a twist - Dylan's When I Paint My Masterpiece with a reggae feel for example! SM

ACE / How Long: The Best Of / (Music Club) Pub rock, seventies style it may be, but this budget price reissue of the band's country / R&B mix still entertains. And shouldn't vocalist Paul Carrack be seen as the UK equivalent of, say, Michael MacDonald by now? SM

DENNIS BROWN / The Prime Of / (Music Club) A solid, hit packed and well mastered genuine Best Of from the man who was Marley's favourite reggae singer. And at a silly £5.99 too (£3.99 for tape). Essential. SM

VARIOUS / It's A Man's Man's Man's World & Doin' It (both Connoisseur Collection) A further two volumes from the label's excellent Soul Collection. Man's World is a faultless twenty track male vocalist set with Sam & Dave, Otis, Al Green, Solomon Burke heading a stellar cast, whilst Doin' It is Jazzfunk time with George Duke, Herbie Hancock, Tom Browne, The Breckers and more. SM

VARIOUS / Treasures Of My Heart / (GlobeStyle) Launch sampler for the Ron Kavana compiled eight album library of Irish traditional music drawn from the vaults of the legendary Topic Records.

From Dan Sullivan's Shamrock Band to The Boys Of The Lough and Four Men And A Dog, the sound may change but it's the same heartbeat. It's anthropology you can dance to. SM

CARLENE CARTER / Little Love Letters / (Giant) If you've got any of Carter's previous New Country, honky-tonk rock'n'roll albums then you'll know what to expect. Except given the likes of acoustic gospel Hallelujah in My Heart, Love Letter No 1 and Unbreakable Heart, this is probably her finest since the overlooked but now clearly seminal Musical Shapes, ranging between rockabilly, teardrop ballads and your basic goodtime shit-kicking pop country with added lyrical brain-cells. MD

KALEIDOSCOPE / Blues From Baghdad - The Very Best Of / (Edsel) Aptly named sixties psychedelic legends anthologised onto an excellent and crammed full CD. It's folk, country, blues, rock, oriental and exotic musics wrung through the lysergic blender. The Incredible String Band with west coast electricity. Essential listening. SM

MATTHEWS WRIGHT & KING / Dream Seekers / (Columbia-Import) Another of the sub-Eagles country rock groups that seem to dominate CMT. Unlike most of that empty headed company M, W & K have some damn decent tunes and an ounce of character. SM

RANDY TRAVIS / Wind In The Wire / (Warner Brothers-Import) Soundtrack from Travis' US TV special in which he seeks to recreate the singing cowboy western by seeking to emulate Roy Rogers, Gene Autry et al. Sadly his ultra laid back style doesn't have the grit to convince in such a role, so the blend of cowboy western swing and plains balladery can be little more than a fine background to a lazy daydream. SM

THE DELMORE BROTHERS / Freight Train Boogie / (Ace) You've seen the name banded around by Mark Knopfler, quoted as an influence on The Everlys, Long Ryders and more but never heard 'em. Well this twenty tracker of late forties and early fifties hits finally gives you the key to post war US country, pop and rock. SM

HEIGHTS OF ABRAHAM / Humidity / (Porky's Productions) Cool shivers of soul-techno groove liberally doused with urban sax jazz and some ambient vocals twin a blissfully out of body mood with sultry melodies and songs that do more than tell you to get it on and rave out. MD

EVE'S PLUM / Envy / (Epic) Okay, so Lovely You is a good slowburn fuzzy guitar ballad and Die Like Someone is catchy without being fatally infectious, but is the world really desperate for a grunge Blondie? Methinks not. MD

Print out

WHAT'S NEW IN PRINT

EDITED BY KEVIN WILSON

U2. A CONSPIRACY OF HOPE

Dave Bowler and Bryan Dray (Sidgwick & Jackson)

Being the biggest act in modern rock, U2's every move is under a massive microscope and this biog takes that microscope and shades each slide with a different hue, be it faith, opinion, politics, culture or religion. The authors state the Bono view or The Edge slant or whatever and it works time after time. The old rock eulogy taking a back seat, the objective animal gnawing away at the myth or legend. U2 devotees will enjoy but the wider audience can applaud along too. Kevin Wilson

UK TOP 1000 SINGLES

Paul Gambaccini / Tim Rice / Jonathan Rice (Guinness)

One of those! The kind of statistical examination of pop that's derided by all right thinking fans, but browsed by them anyway in order to prove a pet theory. It's also the distillation of the Bible that countless pop quiz organisers nationwide rely upon for both brain mangers and adjudication. In other words a success waiting to happen.

But, you know, it remains a comfort to know that at your fingertips is the stunning fact that Spitting Image's Chicken Song (at 358) means more to the average Brit than Slade's My Friend Stan (at 1000). Sam Mitchell

THE HISTORY OF SCOTTISH ROCK AND POP

Brian Hogg (Guinness)

There's a fair chance that if you're in the habit of purchasing CD reissues, you'll have come across author Hogg in his capacity of compiler / sleeve-note writer. Thus it'll be no surprise that this history is both scrupulously researched and written with a total commitment to the subject.

In a sense the basic story of Scottish rock and

pop would hold true for any region. Sure they've provided acts as diverse as the Incredible String Band, Lulu, Donovan, Skids, Bluebells, Nazareth, Proclaimers and so on, but most regions could muster that diversity. However, as Hogg explains, this is happening in Scotland where the scene is battling "the condescending attitude of an imperialist-minded culture south of its border". Pride, though, has the last word. As Hogg explains: "Scottish rock has railed against the subsequent ghettoisation to produce a body of music disproportionate to its small population".

Highly recommended.

Sam Mitchell

THE GUINNESS WHO'S WHO OF FIFTIES MUSIC

Editor: Colin Larkin (Guinness)

Fifties? Half a decade of pre rock'n'roll pap. Half a decade of white hot musical activity that changed everything. Sure, but underlying it all, were the blues and jazz legends and Frank Sinatra who wielded a bigger influence on popular music than it might be political for indie rebels to admit.

And it's all here in Guinness' latest addition to the most vital collection of musical reference books currently bending book shop shelves.

Sam Mitchell

VARIOUS AUTHORS

21 (Picador)

Perfect in its simplicity. Celebrate 21 years of the Picador imprint by inviting twenty one of its notable authors to each contribute a piece about one particular year in the past twenty one. Thus Tariq Ali rests alongside Clive James, Julian Barnes, Ian McEwan and, you guessed, seventeen others. Perfect for those moments when temporary enlightenment is demanded! Sam Mitchell

QUEEN: THESE ARE THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES

Stephen Rider (Castle Communications)

Subtitled 'The Essential Queen Biography', this is the latest addition to a book mountain exploiting the incredible, if incomprehensible, popularity of what was / is essentially a showbiz rather than rock phenomenon.

The charisma of Freddie Mercury, and let's not fool ourselves that the mourning is for the band, may have escaped me but Joe Public has deemed that he be elevated to some celestial throne and so, no matter how substantial Rider's work is, it will sell and sell. Sam Mitchell

TWENTIETH CENTURY BOY. THE MARC BOLAN STORY

Mark Paytress (Sidgwick & Jackson)

Now in paperback, Paytress' well researched biog puts flesh onto the legend and describes one man's desperate quest to be a pop phenomenon and how the reality turned sour. Sam Mitchell

OVER THE TOP. THE TRUE STORY OF GUNS N'ROSES

Mark Putterford (Omnibus Press)

Staggeringly successful. Staggeringly troubled. Staggeringly tedious. And yet these monsters have made several tracks that certainly make life's soundtrack spicier. Putterford delves into the story warts n'all, making you wonder how the hell it ever happened. Sam Mitchell

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SCREEN SEEN

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CATCH BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD ON MTV if you can, as the Bart Simpson fad has come and gone, so this duo of whizz kid dudes is attracting cult status. Every Saturday at 10.30 and Sundays at 9pm. You've been warned.

October 2nd and 3rd sees a **MADONNA WEEKEND** on MTV followed on the 23rd and 24th with a **PET SHOP BOYS WEEKEND**. Should be fun, huh?

GRAPEVINE NEWS insists that MTV will become subscription only sometime in the next few months ... **SKY SPORTS** will detach from the movie channels and become a stand alone subscription channel (as it is for cable viewers already) ... a new **RED HOT DUTCH** porno channel will emerge before Christmas ... and why hasn't **CLIVE JAMES** been on terrestrial TV lately? No cred now that satellite TV has made it into profit and into millions of homes ...

AND SOME ORDINARY TUBE NEWS TOO! BBC 1's flagship arts prog, **OMNIBUS**, returns this month with a series of intriguing titles that'll run through to next March. Not all of 'em are Brum Beat fodder, of course, Andrew Lloyd Webber, anyone? But several catch our eye. October 19th examines *The Russian Striptease*, a view of the growth of erotic art and straight titillation that has snowballed in the wake of liberalisation. Sociologists and voyeurs only for that one! *Houdini* (26) is a biog of the famed escapologist who apparently claimed that if anyone should ever come back from the dead, it would be him. Guess God has better locks up there than anticipated, eh? *Who Killed Tchaikovsky?* (November 2) is self explanatory as is *The Boy Next Door* (December 7); especially if you suffix Boy with George. Later on Omnibus will focus on Duke Ellington's works and Sweet Home Chicago will examine the blues. We'll bring you the dates nearer the time.

VIDEO

MUSIC

PRINCE: The Hits Collection (Warner Music Vision) is first out of the bag and a splendid and varied hour's-worth it is too. Collecting promos from debut album time up to the present, it's at once funny, sexy, stylish, adventurous and entertaining. And isn't the starkly innovative clip for Sign O' The Times one of the video masterpieces? **THE CURE Show** (Fiction / Polygram)[15] catches the puzzling outfit in front of yet another devoted mass; this time Stateside. You get the hits and more, live and some extra-mural bits'n'pieces but the fanaticism that surrounds pop's equivalent of a Jim Henson creation continues to elude. **SADE Life Promise Pride Love** (SMV) is the career in promo form

and as you could guess it's style over content every time. The vignettes that they feel have to be woven around the bloodless soundtrack simply make Sade the aural equivalent of Marie Claire or Cosmopolitan fashion spreads. **The Best Of CAT STEVENS / Tea For The Tillerman Live** (Wienerworld) catches him at his prime recording for a US radio show with a stripped down band. The performance is incisive and catches a strength in the material that studio cuts often bleached out. Oh and you get a Spike Milligan narrated and Alan Aldridge inspired cartoon of Teaser And The Firecat tagged on the end. **ELVIS IN HOLLYWOOD - THE 50s** (BMG Video) is creative barrel scraping. The premise being that it's a documentary of Presley's film career; so trot out the girlfriend of the time, a movie director and other such fawners to insist that he could have been Brando, mix in a few illustrative clips and paydirt. Can't wait for the next volume and the artistic justifications of Blue Hawaii and Kissin' Cousins!! VVL have repackaged their **Video Biographies of THE KINKS, BEE GEES and ABBA**, though with no updates. Hence the tales end in the mid eighties which is OK for Abba, Bjorn Again apart nothing has happened to them. But it does rather circumsise the ongoing tales of Kinks and Brothers Gibb. On a positive note, what you get; lots of archive performance clips and a subtitled, rather than spoken, narrative is fine stuff.

MOVIES TO BUY

Stephen King's SLEEPWALKERS (Columbia Tristar Video)[18] as you can tell from the fact that the writer is credited above the title rather than the actors, is not going to be great cinema. But if you like dead cats and mutants that'll make you put every light in the house on when you take a leak ...

FINAL ANALYSIS (Warner Home Video)[15] has Richard Gere, a shrink, falling for a patient's sister (Kim Basinger) who is married to a mobster. They take to his couch together from which point the plot becomes more contrived than the Tory party's explanation of its 'successes'. I guess it's meant to be Hitchcockian though in the event it is, at best halfcockian. **LADY CHATTERLEY** (Pickwick)[18] is the whole three hours plus of the controversial Ken Russell BBC production. Controversial because of the loss of her Ladyship's clothing and the enthusiastic bonking rather than the cartoon acting and lousy scripting I guess. **FRENCH & SAUNDERS Series Three Part Two** (BBC)[15] is all good stuff but especially recommended for the Raw Sex send up of play in a day guitar tutors in which David Gilmour, Lemmy, Mark Knopfler et al, testify against Ralph McTell's teaching skills!

BEAUTY & THE BEAST (Walt Disney)[U] is all you'd guess, excellent animation / cartoon work that still sets the standard (Manga fans note) even if the pantomime tale and script are somewhat pale and the musical score excruciating; though I doubt if the target audience, a less cynical breed than music / video writers, will care one jot.

MOVIES TO RENT

NATIONAL LAMPOON'S LOADED WEAPON 1 (Guild Home Video) [PG] puts Emilio Estevez and Samuel L. Jackson into shoes similar to those worn by Mel Gibson and Danny Glover in a

series of movies whose titles may remind you of this movie, and then sprinkles gags both visual and scatological with blunderbuss precision. You'll miss 'em as they fly by but at least they'll be fresh next time you watch. **THE ARMY OF DARKNESS - THE MEDIEVAL DEAD** (Guild Home Video) [15 tbc] may even be funnier. Having found a book of spells (original opening, huh?) our hero, complete with rifle, car and chainsaw falls through some hole in time to medieval days. There he gets to fight baddies both alive and dead-ish. The plot is preposterous and the cast rise to the challenge of wringing every nuance from it.

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- 2: THE BEATLES.....BOX SET 67-70
- 3: MEATLOAF.....BAT OUT OF HELL 2
- 4: PRINCE.....HITS VOL. 1
- 5: PAUL WELLER.....WILDWOOD
- 6: PRINCE.....HITS/B-SIDES
- 7: SHARA NELSON.....WHAT SILENCE KNOWS
- 8: BOY GEORGE & CULTURE CLUB.....AT WORST...THE BEST OF
- 9: NIRVANA.....IN UTERO
- 10: CHART SHOW.....ULTIMATE ROCK 2
- 11: VARIOUS.....100% DANCE VOL. 2
- 12: RICK ASTLEY.....BODY & SOUL
- 13: BJORK.....DEBUT
- 14: KENNY THOMAS.....WAIT FOR ME
- 15: CURVE.....CUCKOO
- 16: VARIOUS.....ROUND MIDNIGHT
- 17: ORIGINAL CAST.....GREASE
- 18: REVOLTING COCKS.....FINGERLICKIN' GOOD
- 19: ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK.....SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE
- 20: MARIAH CAREY.....MUSIC BOX

HMV TOP 20 VIDEO CHART

- 1: BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.....
- 2: PRINCE.....HITS
- 3: CURE.....SHOW
- 4: MR BEAN.....MERRY MISHAPS
- 5: PETER'S FRIENDS.....
- 6: MR. BEAN.....TERRIBLE TALES
- 7: MY OWN PRIVATE IDAHO.....
- 8: DIRTY DANCING.....
- 9: MY COUSIN VINNY.....
- 10: INDOCHINE.....
- 11: STAR TREK.....DEEP SPACE NINE VOL. 3
- 12: STAR TREK.....DEEP SPACE NINE VOL. 4
- 13: DR. WHO.....DALEKS BOX SET
- 14: DEREK AND CLIVE.....GET THE HORN
- 15: 3 x 3 EYES.....PART 2
- 16: BOTTOM 2.....PARADE
- 17: UN COEUR DE HIVER.....
- 18: ADAM ANT.....ANTMUSIC
- 19: PRETTY WOMAN.....
- 20: JUDGE.....

MUSICIANS

DRUMMER WANTED for punk band. Demo and gigs waiting. Andy 0543 453342
THE LOVELESS require bassist. Influences TFC, Replacements. Paul 0785 714734

SHORT HAIRED GUITARIST wishes to join or form power metal band. Influences Pantera, Megadeth, Trouble. Very dedicated. Phone Neil 0902 677609

BLUES VOCALIST required for tight five piece band. Dwayne 021 414 0033
VERSATILE BASSIST REQUIRED to join band. Tel 021 624 1689

DRUMMER WANTED. Grungey thrashy indie band. Experience, gear, attitude. Ring Gary 0902 630359 or Mark 0827 260422. Do it!
EXCELLENT BASSIST required. Creative / committed. Much interest. Call Me 021 784 9767
DOUBLE BASS player wanted. Acoustic band, original material. Gavin 021 472 8441

VIOLIN / BRASS / WOODWIND player. Acoustic Band, original material. 021 472 8441

2 FEMALE RAPPERS / SINGERS seek producers / musicians. Contact on 021 428 3689

BACK 2 MIAMI require dedicated bass player. No session musicians. If you can handle classic soul, gigs and hard work call Keith 0939 235302 or Neil 0952 630294
RAPPERS / SINGERS required for new dance project. Phone Martin 021 486 2074

FEMALE FRONTED ROCK band require competent, solid drummer. 021 552 5924

THE EVIDENCE require experienced upbeat bassist with groove. Neal 021 430 5811

WORKING SOUL / BLUES BAND seek sax player. Phone 0384 835871

VOCALIST / KEYBOARD PLAYER required for rock band. 20 - 25. Tel: 021 559 8562

DRUMMER SEEKS TALENTED band with professional prospects. Rock bands preferred but not fussy! Call Joe 0836 567153

INDIE ROCK GUITARIST looking for group / musicians. John 021 605 0098

GROUP WANT female singer / bassist. Influences St. Etienne, Pixies. David 021 356 1290

KEYBOARD PLAYER songwriter seeks guitarist to form band. Rob 021 471 4937

DRUMMER WANTED for dedicated melodic guitar dance band. Phone 021 449 7909

BACK 2 MIAMI require dedicated trumpet and trombone players. No session musicians. If you can handle classic soul, gigs and hard work call Keith 0939 235302 or Neil 0952 630294

KEYBOARDIST / PIANIST required by powerful, atmospheric alternative band. Paul 0902 710879

GUITARIST SEEKS GROUP / musicians. Indie rock - Alice In Chains / Jane's Addiction / Nirvana. John 021 605 0098
STONEAGE DJ need vocalist / frontman to complete funk metal band. Rob 021 604 8870

DRUMMER REQUIRED to complete band. Commitment essential. Phone Pete 021 604 7440

BASSIST SEEKS BAND. Rock and others considered. Paul 0527 516704.

FEMALE VOCALIST / BACKING VOCALIST seeks band. Into almost anything and interested in interesting music (no dance crap) phone 021 449 1463 Evenings.

COLLABORATOR REQUIRED to work with songwriter (guitarist) in various styles - pop, blues, AOR, soul. Aiming for a publishing deal. Ann 0902 409843

DRUMMER REQUIRED for band with management and commitments. 0527 74098

BASS PLAYER REQUIRED. Melodic, erudite, literate rock with industry interest and unlimited potential. Call Mark Lemon 021 784 9707.

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TOM RUSSELL**Breedon Bar** *Birmingham*

Let's keep this one short and sweet, shall we. That way the message may get across. Tom Russell is the equal to, and arguably superior of, the Mellencamp / Petty school of American guitar rock. And there are times when the blue collar humanity of his songwriting summons comparisons with Springsteen.

Now for some reason he's regarded as country as though that's reason enough to shut down intelligent ears. What trash. There are songs on show in this bar-room that would stand tall alongside any that the aforementioned rock stars could muster, and there are many that would shadow them.

Russell delivered them with urbane good humour whilst constant side-kick, guitarist Andy Hardin, turned a humble six string acoustic into an orchestra with his dazzling ability.

OK, so there are plenty of Tom Russell albums in the racks, or should be - chastise the dealer if he acts dumb - so get some homework done. And when he hits town again - be there.

Steve Morris

CREDIT TO THE NATION**JBs** *Dudley*

Smells Like Teen Spirit, the Nirvana track which thrust the Seattle trio from obscurity has had a hand in the meteoric rise of a Walsall rap trio. In May an anti-racism anthem constructed around a sample of Smells Like Teen Spirit, seized the public's attention. The track was entitled Call It What You Want, the creators, Credit To The Nation.

Since then, MC Fusion, Mista G and T-Swing have been the recipients of a

LIVE

wave of favourable media interest culminating in their third single Hear No Bullshit, See No Bullshit, Say No Bullshit named as an NME single of the week, an honour also bestowed upon their previous single. Two out of three ain't bad. I suspect it was partly due to the media furore which helped cram the modestly sized JB's with an enthusiastic mob but to cite this as the only motivation would be to underestimate Credit To The Nation. Never have I witnessed a band create so much enthusiasm and energy amongst its audience. In a growing climate of intolerance and racist hatred, for a black rap group to impel a mostly white crowd to punch the air, shouting unity, to speak of respecting women and dismissing the sexist, racist and homophobic policies of fellow artists is inspiring. It does so much more for cultural harmony than the self-righteous ranting of those elected to rant. To combine this with brilliant music surely makes them a credit to our nation.

Kati

SQUEEZE / NICK HEYWARD
Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

Squeeze must've known something. Why else would they have arranged for the legendary Manor Mobile recording truck to be umbilically linked to the Civic, if they weren't sure that they were hot and that the audience was going to be both plentiful and supportive. After all, what use is a live

radio show, for that was the reason for the Manor machinery, if the crowd is small and indifferent. It's not going to make the listener feel like he's missing out, is it?

Well, the capacity crowd proved capable of drowning the roar of the band at points and Squeeze themselves played better than I've seen them do before. Maybe it's the re-drafting of the excellent Paul Carrack to add distinctive keyboards and vocals or maybe - and more likely, the filling of the drum stool with ex Attraction, Pete Thomas, a rock hard drummer who propels the band along.

Of course, having a catalogue of songs that are all but national treasures is a major advantage, though having a new album, Some Fantastic Place, to prove that the creative juices are still 100% proof means that the show is far from a greatest hits only affair.

Praise too for Nick Heyward who demonstrated that his impressive From Monday To Sunday album is no studio fluke. Laugh you may at his teeny Haircut 100 past, but the collection of twelve string jangle pure pop that he skipped through was pure joy.

Steve Morris

SMASHING PUMPKINS
Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

Geek USA indeed! It's been a long time since I laid eyes on such a sexless bunch. Of course, this shouldn't matter - we're here for the music

aren't we? Well, yeah, but something halfway good-looking and interesting to ogle at during a live show certainly wouldn't go amiss. OK, Billy occasionally cuts a twisted and tragic figure, but on the whole I found myself following the quite beautiful lights as they danced around the hall.

This aspect of the Pumpkins didn't hit me when I saw them last in Edwards' jammed and sweaty confines in Feb.'92, mainly because I thought they were crap, coming on like petulant American fops, which was frustrating given their quite beautiful Gish album. This time, they had their brilliant follow up, Siamese Dream, to live up to. And don't get me wrong, when they whacked out numbers like Siva, Cherub Rock and Silverfuck, they shone and had the power of a supernova and they mattered. But I found the slower paced workouts tiresome, only coming alive at home through the hi-fi. That's me though, isn't it - one dimensional speed and noise freak. Ahh, I'll let 'em off then, if only for D'arcy asking those of us on the dance floor who the people sitting upstairs in the balcony were - our parents? But Billy - next time, leave the stage when the rest of your band does. You looked and sounded a right fucking fool crooning alone, off key. We didn't know whether to laugh or throw luke warm beer at you.

Max

KICK / THE HAZE
Jug Of Ale, Moseley

The Haze, who hail from Inspector Morse country took a while to warm up on this gig, but once they did, they managed to produce a decent set of songs, competently played. One or two left you with that feeling of 'Déjà vous' - most notably, the fourth song which seemed to hang on top of the bass riff from Peter Gunne and old sixties theme tune that cropped up in the Blues Brothers' film. They had a good stage presence and established a rapport with the punters right from the start, but good music speaks for itself.

Kick suffered from the engineers syndrome of 'now that the support band has gone, let's pump up the volume...' and it backfired, producing a mushy sound that was nowhere near as good as the first set. Leaving that aside, the band stayed tight even though their songs were not always as memorable as they could have been. The vocalist was excellent and managed to put a welly full of pathos into just about all of the songs with a mature, hard edged voice that cut through the sound problems and salvaged the few less memorable songs, ending the set with a cover of Everybody Hurts which I liked better than the original.

Dave Massey



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VARIOUS ARTISTS**Common Thread - The Songs Of The Eagles** *(Giant)*

Despite the common perception of The Eagles as the encapsulation of the laid back, chemically dozed LA seventies bloater, they made damn fine music. This set, instigated in the US by band drummer Don Henley to raise cash for eco-charities, will do little to change that perception, sadly. There are two reasons why: One, the covers are all country and that genre is still an outcast in the UK (tho' CMT will change that) and two, with honourable exceptions, the performances are too unimaginative. Clint Black and Alan Jackson, fine singers both, acquit themselves with Desperado and Tequila Sunrise respectively, but seem too cowed by the blueprint to actually break free. Likewise Trisha Yearwood with a pedal steel shining take on New Kid In Town and Lorrie Morgan with a fine Sad Cafe turn in exceptional vocal performances but are still haunted by the original. The star is Vince Gill whose R&B

inflected I Can't Tell You Why is a tour de force. The vocals here are quite stunning; the country equivalent (if not surpasser) of Michael McDonald. That one track makes a worthwhile set an essential purchase!
Steve Morris

JAMES TAYLOR**Live** *(Columbia)*

Derided as the wet end of seventies singer songwriter navel gazing, James Taylor's star has all but faded in the UK, unlike the US where he still packs arenas.

This thirty track career résumé justifies that American point of view, with an embarrassment of fine material, great playing and Taylor's unique vocal styling that make it all so conversational. He may be lacking in mystique and lyrical revelations of the answers to the big questions but he does have a homey lyricism and a deft touch with a melody. Gifts that shouldn't be under-

estimated.

Taylor is one of life's good guys and this set is ample proof of that. The critical re-evaluation commences here.

Sam Mitchell

TERMINAL POWER COMPANY**Red Skin Eclipse***(Beggars Banquet)*

Powerful stuff from the TPC duo. Against a pushing and pounding backdrop of programmed rhythm synths, the songs take shape with angry guitars scything a landscape of urban neurosis. John Rooome and Paul Aspel create a hopeless nightmare of living as slavery, masters, grindstones, chemical runs and tapestries of lies. Given that they have the musical vision and ability to paint the picture, this is not, a comforting listen. Then, I expect they set out with a vision that didn't include getting Michael Ball to cover their material!
Steve Morris

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