

the midlands music monthly and more

**BRUM**

55p

# BEAT

april 1995

issue 170

## *micky greaney*

*... and his little  
symphonies for the kids*



*the boo radleys  
...waking up to success*

*plus:  
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ocean colour scene  
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the essential gig guide  
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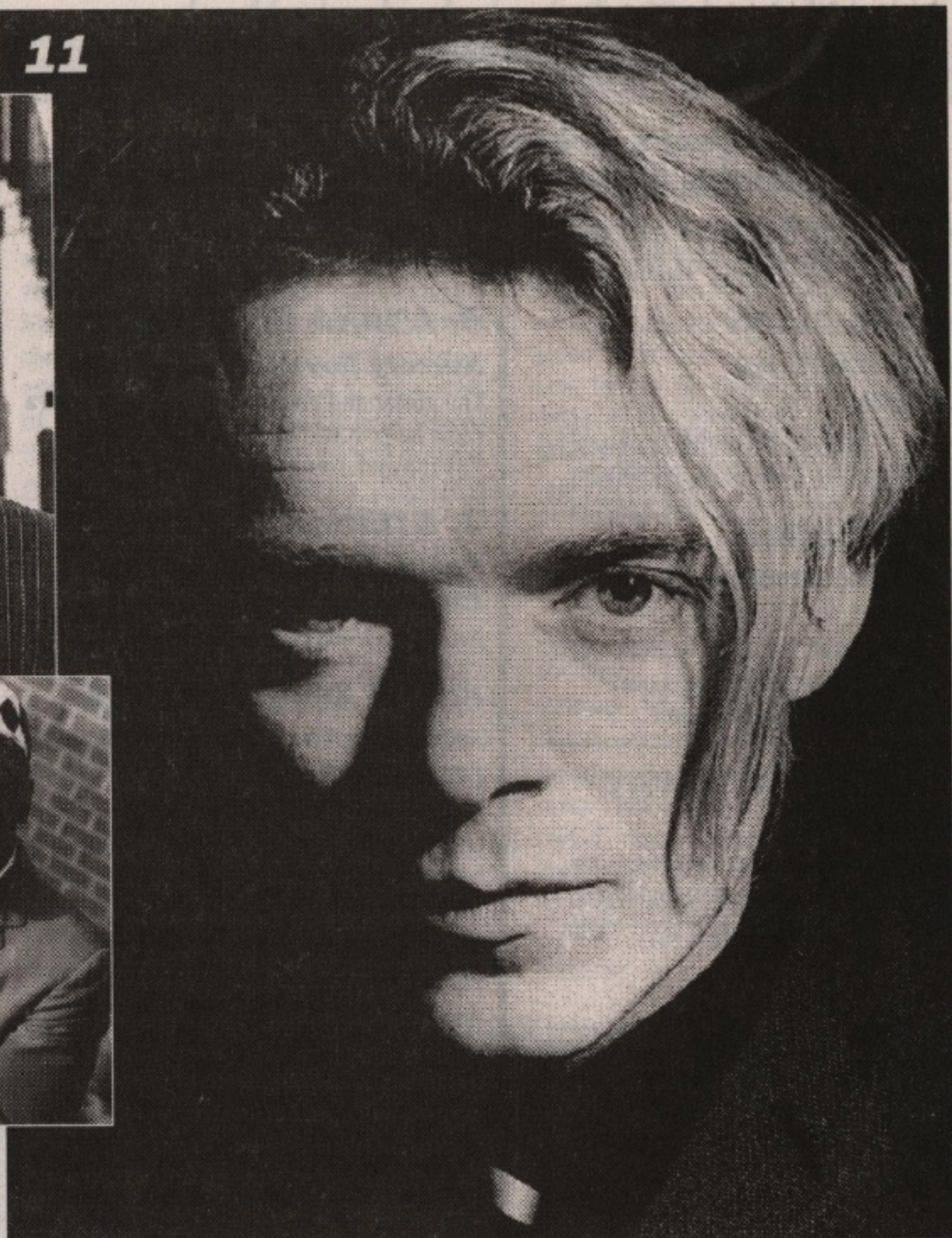


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# charts

## the mcmahon list

**Brum Beat's resident trainspotter offers a monthly countdown of vital music trivia**

10 REASONS WHY YOUR CD COLLECTION BEGINS WITH 'A'!  
(ESSENTIAL ALBUMS TO OWN AND FILE UNDER 'A')

### 1: DAVE ALVIN

**King Of California**  
(Hightone)

An ultra fantasmagoric 'unplugged' collection from the ex - Blasters guitar slinger.

### 2: AFRICANDO

**Vol. 2 Tierra Tradicional**  
(Stems)

A majestic fusion of musicians from Cuba, Puerto Rica and Senegal produce an incredible Latin- African album.

### 3: MURRAY ATTAWAY

**In Thrall** (DGC)

A magnificent solo debut from the front-man of Athens band Guadalcanal Diary.

### 4: ALTAN

**The Red Crow**  
(Green Linnett)

Arguably Ireland's premier traditional outfit - in fact buy all of their albums.

### 5: JANN ARDEN

**Living Under June** (A&M)

The brand new album from the Canadian singer songwriter - her debut is no less essential.

### 6: ABANA BA NASERY

**Nursery Boys Go Ahead** (Ace)

The guitar and bottle kings of Kenya with a Little help from The Oyster Band, Ron Kavana and Tomas Lynch.

### 7: STEINAR ALBRIGTSEN

**Bound To Wander** (Norsk Plateproduksjon)

An album from Texas - Norway!

### 8: THE AGGROVATORS

**Johnny In The Echo Chamber**  
(Attack / Trojan)

A dubwise selection of Johnny Clarke's work that'll really test your bass units!

### 9: C.C. ADCOCK

**C.C. Adcock** (Island - Import)

The nearest thing to a good ol' sweaty American bar on a Saturday night - check Highway 61's cheapo rack for this!

### 10: A- HOUSE

**On Our Big Fat Merry-Go-Round**  
(Blanco Y Negro)

One of Ireland's finest ... their debut album - and nigh on impossible to find on CD!! Worth making it your mission to rummage through every second hand shop on the planet!!

## Brum Beat playlist

... april's aural excitors...



### GRANT McLENNAN

**Horsebreaker Star**

(the best album yet . quite wonderful, in fact ... and a double at that ... from the ex Go-Between - Beggar's Banquet)

### THE RUTS Jah War

(punky reggae nostalgia from the album Something That I Said - The Best Of The Ruts - Virgin Choice Cuts)

### MICRODISNEY

**Singer's Hampstead Home**

(from the album, Big Sleeping House - A Collection Of Microdisney's Finest Moments - Virgin Choice Cuts)

### THE PRIMITIVES Crash 95

(from the Dumb & Dumber soundtrack album - RCA)

### MOBY God Moving Over The Face of The Waters

(from the somewhat invigorating album Everything Is Wrong - Mute ... and check out the challenging sleevenote too)

### FOUR MEN & A DOG

**Papa Gene's Tree**

(from the album Doctor A's Secret Remedies - Transatlantic)

### THE JAYHAWKS

**Miss Williams' Guitar**

(from the album Tomorrow The Green Grass - American)

### THE SCHRAMMS

**Heart Not Within**

(from the wonderful EP The Schramms - Matador)

### CLIVE GREGSON

**Camden Town**

(from the album People And Places - Demon)

### JOE ELY

**No Bad Or Loud Talk '77 - '81**

(the almost faultless 'best of' collection - Demon)

## midlands charts



# HMV

KNOW HMV - KNOW MUSIC

Supplied by HMV The Pavillions, 38 High Street, Birmingham and 131 & 141 New Street, Birmingham

### HMV top 20 album chart

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1: RADIOHEAD              | <i>The Bends</i>  |
| 2: GENE                   | <i>Olympian</i>   |
| 3: ELASTICA               | <i>Elastica</i>   |
| 4: VARIOUS                | <i>Routes From The Jungle</i>                           |
| 5: THE ORB                | <i>Orbus Terrarum</i>                                   |
| 6: VARIOUS                | <i>The Best Rock Album 1 n The World ... Ever Vol.2</i> |
| 7: ANNIE LENNOX           | <i>Medusa</i>   |
| 8: BILL WHELAN            | <i>Music From Riverdance The Show</i>                   |
| 9: STEVE WINWOOD          | <i>The Finer Things - Box Set</i>                       |
| 10: STEVIE WONDER         | <i>Conversation Peace</i>                               |
| 11: JANN ARDEN            | <i>Living Under June</i>                                |
| 12: MATTHEW SWEET         | <i>100% Fun</i>   |
| 13: THE TEA PARTY         | <i>The Edges Of Twilight</i>                            |
| 14: POP WILL EAT ITSELF   | <i>Two Fingers My Friends</i>                           |
| 15: TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY  | <i>Vibrator</i>   |
| 16: HOOTIE & THE BLOWFISH | <i>Cracked Rear View</i>                                |
| 17: JANET JACKSON         | <i>Remixed</i>  |
| 18: KIRSTY MacCOLL        | <i>Galore</i>   |
| 19: MONSTER MAGNET        | <i>Dopes To Infinity</i>                                |
| 20: BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN     | <i>Greatest Hits</i>                                    |

### HMV top 20 video chart

- 1: THE CROW
- 2: FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL
- 3: PHILADELPHIA
- 4: PRINCE *The Undertaker*
- 5: ON DEADLY GROUND
- 6: BLUR SHOWTIME
- 7: A BRONX TALE
- 8: PRINCE *The Sacrifice Of Victor*
- 9: ELVIS PRESLEY *The Lost Performances*
- 10: THE PELICAN BRIEF
- 11: ACE VENTURA PET DETECTIVE
- 12: STREAKER
- 13: CARTER USM *Flicking The Vs - Live In Croatia*
- 14: STING *Summoner's Travels - Live*
- 15: BON JOVI *Crossroad - Best Of ...*
- 16: VARIOUS *Irish Karaoke Classics*
- 17: CLIFF RICHARD *The Hit List*
- 18: WET WET WET *Greatest Hits*
- 19: NIRVANA *Live! Tonight! Sold Out!*
- 20: PET SHOP BOYS *Various*

VIDEOS AVAILABLE AT THE HMV SHOP, THE PAVILIONS, HIGH STREET, BIRMINGHAM

### reddington's top 20 laserdiscs

- 1: THE MASK (NTSC)
- 2: SPEED (NTSC)
- 3: CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER (NTSC)
- 4: JASON & THE ARGONAUTS (PAL BOX SET)
- 5: THE THING (PAL)
- 6: IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER (PAL)
- 7: WAYNE'S WORLD 2 (PAL)
- 8: JURASSIC PARK (PAL)
- 9: FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL (PAL)
- 10: CARLITO'S WAY (PAL)
- 11: WOLF (PAL)
- 12: CLIFFHANGER (PAL)
- 13: HARD BOILED (PAL)
- 14: WILLOW (PAL)
- 15: TERMINATOR 2 (PAL)
- 16: PHILADELPHIA (PAL)
- 17: HARD TARGET (PAL)
- 18: THE KILLER (PAL)
- 19: STRIKING DISTANCE (PAL)
- 20: THE FIRM (PAL)

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## prattle and hum

Watch out for major label signing news from WOUNDED SPIRIT. The band are currently deep in discussions with ... well that would be telling. And just what is the band's connection with BAYWATCH ... Brum Beat photographer MARK HADLEY, also a guitar buff and collector of note, has launched Munchkin Records, initially as a vehicle for six string legend GORDON GILTRAP. Premier release is Music For The Small Screen, a compilation of Gord's TV theme work. A more considered retrospective of one of the UK's finest ever guitarists should follow later in the year ... CELINE DION, only the fourth woman to sell one million copies of a single in the UK, is confirmed for the NEC on November 4 ... PAGE & PLANT have announced an NEC date for July 22 with tix at £21 and £19.50 (call 0121 780 4133) though by this time it's probably a sell out - eyes peeled for extra dates, eh? ... and before we even go to print they've added July 23 - but will that satisfy demand - keep 'em peeled ... Remember Birmingham's STRAIGHT ACES, the band who played numerous gigs at Harborne's Junction twice upon a time, well frontman FANCY WOOTTON appears on THE KEEPERS album Looking For A Sign (Lizard Discs / Direct Distribution) playing harmonica in the company of RONNIE LANE, CALVIN RUSSELL, ex Joe Ely bandmen JESSE TAYLOR, PONTY BONE and DAVID GRISSOM and Juliana Hatfield keys person (and pin up of our



Jimmy Page & Robert Plant

scribe Arthur Wood) LISA MEDNICK. Wootton was on holiday in Texas when his chum Jesse Taylor dragged him off to Willie Nelson's studio for a blow; still it's a good album despite that (joke!) ... JIMMY NAIL takes his Summer Strummer tour to the NEC on June 20; tickets at £17.50 / £15 on sale now on 0121 780 4133 ... and, having sold out three nights already, WET<sup>3</sup> add another NEC gig on July 27. Can a hit cover version really reinvigorate a career to that level? ... Look out for a POLICE live double - The Police Live - on May 15th; it contains two complete shows from November '79 and November '83 ... with her terrific hits album, Galore, quite rightly gate-crashing the album chart KIRSTY MACCOLL announces a Wolverhampton Wulfrun gig on May 19 ... a coup for Brum's XLs club when Rachel Bolan and

# #the INTRO

Rob Affuso of mega metal combo SKID ROW took time off from US promo commitments to debut new album Subhuman Race at the venue prior to its official release ... Birmingham's hot hopefuls SUBAQWA are so laissez faire about major label attention that they're apparently charging A&R men £30 for a copy of their demo! We at Brum Beat would like to help impecunious record company reps by offering to supply duplicates of the tape for, oh, shall we say, £12.50! Incidentally such is the pull of Subaqwa that a reported 26 A&R personnel were counted at a recent gig ... another Birmingham band currently pulling the cream of the industry to their gigs, RACHEL'S BASEMENT will be demonstrating exactly why at The Jug Of Ale on April 7th; expect a set of songs that'll attack your memory banks ... eagle eyed and curious readers may have well wondered what the hell the newly inaugurated McMAHON LIST was all about last month - well production faults and careless proofing led to the omission of

the headline 'Ten Essential Dylan Covers'; it also failed to highlight the fact that No.5 in said list was indeed All Along The Watchtower. The confused may now let such info settle before returning to the last ish to make further sense of Mr. McMahon's folly. He has a new list on the charts page this month ... BRUCE DICKINSON, ex Iron Maiden man, Radio 1 DJ and Bosnian rock-road-warrior brings his now permanent band to Dudley JB's on April 17; you can preview 'em on Alive In Studio A a two for the price of one CD on Raw Power ... THE PRESS DARLINGS were chosen from over 3000 bands to play the Freiburg Pop Festival in Germany between May 11th and 14th. It's a music biz showcase event that should give the band a deserved leg up ... you must hear THE DIESEL KINGS country hoe-down arrangement of Prince's Purple Rain - it's quite something, excellent, in fact. It's on a Living Beat Records EP called, with some justification, Purple Rain etc. ...

MCP by arrangement with ITB present  
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AND  
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LIFETIME  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH



PRESENTS

# Micky Greaney

## & HIS 12 PIECE BAND

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS

*"It's a triumph for songwriting and originality.  
There may be hints of Van Morrison  
(a la Astral Weeks), Nick Drake and McCartney,  
but in the end Micky Greaney is a unique talent."*

PAUL COLE - BIRMINGHAM EVENING MAIL

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**LITTLE SYMPHONIES FOR THE KIDS**

## MIFFED ON THE NET

Wiltshire based SLIGHTLY MIFFED have asked us, via the rather aged process of faxing, to inform you that they are on the net and can be contacted at <http://www.u-net.com/miffed>. Apparently it looks best if you have something called Netscape. Hmm.

If you're not caught in the net you can simply e-mail 'em at [tink@miffed.u-net.com](mailto:tink@miffed.u-net.com) or on Compuserve: 100 106, 1017. ... and the rest of us can dial 01373 864474 / 822966 or fax 01373 826729. Question is, do they have any time for music?

## SOMETIME'S A GREAT NOTION

The Sometime People are an Arts And Music Promotion Co-operative based in Birmingham that's gonna be deeply involved in carnivals and festivals throughout '95. Meanwhile the Sometimes folk are putting on SLAM nights at The Steering Wheel Club in Brum's China Town. It happens on Thursday nights and features MARVIN C (April 27) and PATRICK SMOOTH - playing Shauny Warney's birthday party (April 27). TONY SANCHEZ is due in on May 11 and all gigs are supported by in house jocks IAN ROSE and ZIGGY.

NOTE that from April 13 SLAM will be members only - you can join by calling 0121 452 1909.

## NATIONAL MUSIC DAY

Yes, Mick Jagger's brainchild is set to brighten midsummer once more. This year the annual celebration of live music is set to happen on Saturday June 24th ... and Sunday June 25th ... which makes it National Music Days, doesn't it?

Whatever, if you have an idea and you'd like to make it official, you can call National Music Day(s) events on 0171 629 8912 and register it.

## MUSIC LIVE '95

It can't have escaped your attention that BBC radio is set to invade Birmingham over May Bank Holiday weekend, that's Thursday May 25 to Monday May 29. It can't, therefore, have escaped your attention that the airwaves onslaught contains little of great excitement for the average Brum Beat-er.

MARK RADCLIFFE broadcasts live from The Institute (May 25) at 10pm with comedy, interviews and special guests; that one'll cost you £7 / £8.50 to witness. At the same time the ALEC AND JOHN DANKWORTH GENERATION BIG BAND will be featuring jazz from Cole Porter to Carla Bley as part of Radio 2's Jazz Notes. That's at Ronnie Scott's and a ticket will cost you £16.

On Saturday May 27 at 11am, outside the Glassworks Radio WM are staging Part One of their BATTLE OF THE BANDS which aims to showcase 'the best of bands from the Midlands'. Details are scant - it could be brass bands though we assume it to be, you know, bands and that it represents Radio WM's token coverage of real music for the year. At least it's free!

EAST 17 are on Radio 1 from the NEC at 8pm that night (tickets, if there are any left are £14.50) whilst PETE TONG, DANNY RAMPLING, SASHA and PAUL OAKENFOLD have the essential mix at The Que Club from 9pm with admission

set at £22 (hang on, £22 to watch DJs on the radio!?!?). At 11pm on the same Saturday - 27th - IRAKERE, the 12 piece Cuban group play traditional Cuban music at Ronnie Scott's for Radio 3's Live Jazz. Admission £10.

Bank Holiday Sunday (May 28) finds The RADIO 1 ROADSHOW in Centenary Square at 10am and a live TOP 40 countdown - with guests and videos - at 4pm in the same place. Both are free admission. Between the two Radio WM's band battle reaches Part 2 outside The Glassworks at 11.30 am. On the Sunday evening Jilted JOHN SHUTTLEWORTH hosts a show at Birmingham's Old Rep. (Ticket price TBC). The day's highlight is ANDY KER-SHAW's Sounds In The Round from the MAC Arena with the mighty FOUR BROTHERS, FRENCH ALLIGATORS, ELIZA CARTHY and POSITIVELY TEST CARD. Tickets £5.

On Bank Holiday Monday MARK GOODIER hosts the Radio 1 Roadshow at 12 noon whilst MARK RADCLIFFE broadcasts from The Institute at 8.30pm (£7 / £8.50). At 10pm in Hall 4 of the ICC there's to be an intriguing mix of JOHN DANKWORTH, CLEO LAINE and MICHAEL NYMAN presenting a specially created piece said to appeal to listeners of Radios 1, 2 and 3! (Ticket details TBC). Finally Radio 3's Mixing It with VH-1 presenter ROBERT SANDALL and MARK RUSSELL at the helm comes from The Rep Theatre Bar and features the wonderful PENGUIN CAFE ORCHESTRA. That's at 10.45pm and free admission.

## PLANT AXEMAN TO LAUNCH CANNOCK ROCK ASSAULT



FRANCIS DUNNERY, guitar player extraordinaire in Robert Plant's last road band - the one before a certain Jimmy Page passed the audition - is set to play Cannock's Prince Of Wales Theatre on April 20th.

The gig marks the beginning of a serious campaign by the venue to establish itself as a rock venue; local studio boss Pete Mawson has been drafted in to co-ordinate the campaign and promises a host of major names once the ball is rolling.

To tie in with his appearance Nottingham based Cottage Industry records are issuing Dunnery's One Night In Sauchiehall Street acoustic album - a whole performance captured in Glasgow in January of this year.

You can win tickets and Dunnery albums - turn to Blag! - right now!

# the INTRO

## WHEN ONLY XXXX OWILL DO

... and we are not talking lager! No sir. This is the larger than (ooh, er, missus alert) life It's Wicked Roadshow - an entertainment for adult minded 18 - 88 year olds. It's said to be daring, uninhibited, outrageous and unique. You can take part in the 'Wicked Ride Of Your Life'; take part in the 'Come Clean Machine' or simply enjoy the comedy, disco dancing, stage dancers and the plethora of unusual and unpredictable happenings.

You'll have a chance to enjoy all of this on Saturday April 8th at - well the venue is secret for obvious reasons - you'll have to find that out for yourselves!

Mind - it's uncensored and adults only and full info can be had from WGM Department PR101, PO Box 1846, Red-ditch B98 7HT. Send 'em an SAE will you, the brownness and plainness of which is up to you. You can also call 0839 654365 (that's a premium rate line).

## WAHP'S PRIZE TRACK EP ... WITH BONUS!

The excellent WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS have released their Dep International recorded cut (taped at the recent Dep / Brum Beat Comp. prize session), Long Ride Home as part of their Faith And Melody EP. The cassette release features, for the first time all five members of WAHP - Rob Peters, Della Roberts, Stephen Shaw (he's ex Proclaimers / Dexy's and Deacon Blue), Micky Harris (ex - Everything But The Girl / Lilac Time) and Anthony Cootie (ex Ruby Blue). There are three new songs, Melody, Amelia and The Wheel on the standard release whilst WAHP mailing listers - and Brum Beat readers, so make sure you tell 'em when ordering - will receive a 1994 Pebble Mill session (We'll Be Together Again, Lost In The Fields Of England and Forever) as a bonus. Write to WAHP at PO Box 81 Birmingham B30 2LF or call 0121 486 3400. The EP will cost you £3 inc. P and the apparently Siamese twinned P.

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## BACKSTAGE

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## DISCONTENTED

Rob Halford returns to the fray with *A Small Deadly Space*, the second album by his new outfit, FIGHT. Rob proudly announces that instead of tales of bikes, demons and sex, the songs now talk about AIDS, prejudice, child abuse, domestic violence and the Holocaust. "Twenty years ago I could not imagine writing these songs," he says. Which is a pity, because the music is still firmly locked into 70s metal clichés of pummelling drums, screaming guitars and

single choice than *All I Ask of Myself*, ...*To Be Right* and the weary *Talk Me Down* and *I Want It Over*. Hell, *Premognition* even chucks in a flute. Pumped up the volume indeed.

Whether 'long awaited' is quite the appropriate phrase, the fact is DURAN DURAN have finally let slip their covers album, *Thank You*, a trawl through favourite songs that first started in 1992 and finally finished last year. Inevitably most of it is a pile of cack, a ham-fisted attempt to either rawk and roll, funk it up or generally reconstruct in their own

# mike davies



raw vocal screeches. Perhaps there's some time warp in America where it still sounds half way relevant to head-banging saddoes, but mostly this is just a parody trying to take itself seriously. Oh yeh, the CD has a hidden track called *Psycho Suicide*. Wonder what the inspiration behind that was, eh Rob. Old news really, but PWEI have a double CD remix of *Two Fingers My Friends*, reconstructing tracks off the last album through the visions of *Jah Wobble*, *Loop Guru*, *Transglobal Underground*, *Foetus*, *Die Krupps* and others. Harder and scuzzier all the way round, maybe they should have second thoughts first in future.

Following last year's bits and bops compilation, NED'S ATOMIC DUSTBIN return with the ugly titled *Brainblood Volume* (apparently a reference to a surgical process that entails drilling the skull to produce enhanced mental awareness), a frequently ferocious reaction to their dissatisfaction with *Are You Normal* that further serves to underline the Stuffies resemblances both musically and, in *Song Eleven Could Take Forever*, flippancy. Floote is flailing thrash that seems intent on pulping melody out of existence and the noise quotient generally seems to have been upped on things like the pummelling *Borehole*, but otherwise it's business pretty much as normal with rowdy pop songs that get in, do the job and get out before the four minute mark. Doing it in particularly good form too are *Traffic*, a far better

image. Some of it does work, their cover of their own *The Chauffeur* for example, restyled as a spoken narcotic account of LA traffic and titled *Drive By*, and a bizarre but effective *Glitter Band* treatment of *Grandmaster Flash's White Lines*. But usually, even when they have the imagination, they lack the ability to pull it off. Thus a dub style *Watching The Detectives* loses the Costello bile, *Perfect Day* loses the Reed irony and what they do to *Ball of Confusion* would make a watertight case for justifiable homicide. You have to admire them for the dazzling audacity to do *Public Enemy's 911 Is A Joke* in the style of *Frank Sidebottom*, but otherwise this is a case of *Thank You*, and goodnight.

BITTY McLEAN dips into his record collection again and comes up with an irresistible cover of *Justin Hinds' Over The River*, which save for the clean studio sound (especially on the brass), sounds so authentic it could easily have been recorded at the peak of 60s Jamaican ska. Coupled with his own *Time*, a streetcorner doo wop meets blue beat number with a melodic pinch of *Another Saturday Night*, it's a tasty trailer for June's album. Add *Kevin Lynch's* nimble guitar to *Kieran Graham's* saltily seasoned vocals and you get *1 UP 1 DOWN*, as highly promising rootsy-blues Birmingham duo who also have the ability to pen more than halfway decent songs like the catchy *Someone Else's Number* and the soulful *It's Too Late*, both of which, along with

*Fragrant Pharmacy*, crop up on their debut *12"*, *Male Bonding*. If you're already into *Ezio*, this is worth adding to the list, available from 78 Rymond Rd, B'ham B34 7BS at £5 inc p&p.

## TAPE DECKED

Excuse me, but what's happened to all the demos? This time of the year usually has a wealth of stuff coming through, knocked up after Christmas, but so barely bugger all. Anyway, that which has surfaced amply compensates for quantity by quality. Still criminally unsigned, *West Mids* chugging pop guitar combo SOLO 70 again prove themselves fruitier by far than *Orange DeLuxe* with new demos *T-Shirt* and *Lifestyle*. Discover and campaign. A mere 18 months after their last demo, *INFECTIOUS* return with a new three tracker that reinforces the original references to a *Jesus Jones* crossbreed with *INXS*. Tightly funky with oiled up muscle, they flex their way through *Slow Motion* on a rub up groove leash, *Confusion* makes up for a trite open your eyes and free your mind lyric with some raspy guitar and a melody line that evokes early PWEI, and finally *Hey Fool* samples *Close Encounters* before hitting the itchy JJ dance floor. The songs could be stronger, but otherwise this seems well back on course. Not a demo as such, a clutch of numbers recorded live serve to announce the blistering return of *RED SHOES*, their brand of ringing guitar rock-folk more

gutsy than ever with both *Mark and Carolyn's* vocals seeming to have undergone an intensive course of body building, now punching through with iron fists on both old knockouts like *Somerset* and *Seeds* and some fine new material that again underlines the strength of their writing abilities. Reportedly volcanic live, if you see the name, buy a ticket.

*DEAD ON IT* return with a sterling three track set of chord swaggering, chiming guitar pop bursting from the starting gate with *Chair* that sounds inexplicably like a cross between *Cockney Rebel* and *The Church*. Easy maintains the lope shouldered approach, this time partnering backdrop choppy riffs, clattering staccato drums and snotty accusatory indie R&B. Things get more coiled with the grasping gimme of *Let's Go To Hollywood*, a *Hendrixy* psychedelic guitar blues number nailed to the sort of dirty old man heavy breathing vocals favoured by *The Stranglers*. Dead and alive.

Far too long since I last heard from them, the excellent *PRESS DARLINGS* return with a new three tracker, during which time they've mutated into a fully fledged *Cranberries* soundalike, complete with Irish brogue, though thankfully rather less overstated. However, since *Riches Of The Poor* (actually more akin to *Kirsty MacColl*), *Sick Again* and the tour de force, *Burn* are better than *The Cranberries* entire second album, they're the ones that should really be hailed as the genuine article.

**max finds peace,  
love and understanding  
with pato banton**

## positive vibration

I've been chilling to a bit of Bob Marley recently - makes a change from my usual noisy diet - and I'm feelin' mellow. And by coincidence, I've just had a chat with someone who cites Marley as the reason why he's doing what he's doing. While Pato Banton might produce a lighter tone of reggae than Marley, there's no escaping the fact that he's another successful artist, who, along with his Reggae Revolution band, is putting out good time vibes to millions of fans the world over. Yet he's still living in his hometown, Birmingham. Kinda gets ya right there, doesn't it ...

"To me, it's of the utmost importance," stresses Pato, three days into yet another nation-wide tour, "I always swore I'd never leave Birmingham to join the rat race in London."

Yet Pato originally came from London, arriving in our Motor City when he was eight, and being exposed to music straight away via his step father's ska and bluebeat sound system. Through that scene, Pato's eyes were also opened to a seedier set of experiences.

"I saw people getting drunk, doing drugs, fighting, prostitution. Some nights I'd walk into my room and there'd be guys doing stuff to women on my bed. It blew my mind to see what grown ups got up to, but when I heard the kind of reggae music played by Bob Marley, and hearing that the songs were about God, peace and love and not bad boys getting up to stuff, I started to think about who I was and where I came from."

So, is that why you're happy with your role model status?

"Yes, because it was listening to other people who did positive music that gave me the inspiration to do reggae and sing positive songs."

Positivity crops up a lot when talking to Pato. He's very aware of the influence

someone in his position has over youthful minds and wants to make sure he's putting over positive messages.

"I could never ask kids to sing along to songs about sex and violence. It's just not on."

Which is why you'll hear Pato singing songs like Don't Sniff Coke and All Drugs Out - all very mush tied up with Pato's strong religious beliefs.

"I've always been interested in spiritual things," Pato explains, "there's more to life than this material world - what you reap is what you sow."

Which makes it all the more strange that a lot of songs about peace and spirituality should have their roots in the violent culture that is the ghettos of Jamaica, Jamaica.

"It's so sad, because Jamaica is a paradise island, but it was also the centre of slavery, where they kept the most rebellious ones, so a lot of its history is based on violence and it's still there. And even though it's now a black owned country, there's still a racial tension - not a black / white thing, but a black / light."

Of course, one of the ways out of a life of poverty in Jamaica is through music, but even then you'll be attracting the attentions of gun-toting gangsters who want a piece of your action.

"And then you get killed. Jamaica kills more artists than any other country. But this is more centred on the dancehall style of reggae, which still talks about girls and guns and is associated with the ghettos, cocaine and crack. Thankfully, there are more conscious roots artists on their way up who are attracting a much mellower audience, who are into ganja and peace."

And you can count Pato Banton amongst the latter - a man at peace with himself and promoting peace through his music. Sound familiar? Save Your Soul.



A friend of mine who's into The Charlatans, reckons Spin Playground sound very similar. Would this be because ex-Charlatans - and now the Playground's - guitarist are one and the same?

"Not really," replies that very man, Jon Baker, "cause when I was with The Charlatans, I was more or less told what to play, which was part of the reason I left. With this band, keyboard player Darren and I are the main songwriters, with vocalist Mac writing the lyrics."

Spin Playground's angle seems to be a laid-back dance vibe, laced with some rather finely crafted pop overtones.

"We see ourselves as a pop band," Jon points out, "but there IS a laid-back dance feel there. When we played with the Beautiful People, our sounds were very compatible - kinda funky and funkier still! But to avoid falling into that particular pigeonhole, we allow a lot of guitar into the songs."

Their latest demo has already attracted the attentions of London-based label, UPB. Er, UPB...?

"It stands for Unexploded Persons Bureau!" Jon explains. "There's no release date yet, but things should be sorted out in a couple of weeks. At the moment, we look after all that side of things ourselves, but we do need a manager - so if you could mention that..."

No problem.

In the meantime, the guys work every

waking hour for their band, realising that, no matter what happens, they've just got to keep plugging away at it.

"I've seen a lot of friends' bands give up in the three years we've been together," Jon reveals, "But we're so passionate about what we do - I actually think we piss a lot of people off with our enthusiasm!"

Which spills over into playing as many gigs as is humanly possible...

"We've got a good Midlands fan-base through playing the Jug, Hibernian, JBs and the Varsity and producing our own fanzine. We saturate venues with flyers a couple of weeks before we play them - something a lot of bands seem to shy away from - I don't know why. Maybe it's an ego thing."

Something that isn't a problem with Spin Playground, which is why they deserve you at least giving them the benefit of the doubt. Interested? Then catch them live at the Que Club on April 27th, a show the band have set up completely off their own backs and which promises to be much more of an 'event' than yer regular gig. The Institute's Sweat DJ will be manning the desks, support comes from Serene Machine and tickets are £2 each, available from PCP, c/o 21 Cecil St., The Butts, Walsall WS4 2AZ (or call 01922 36970). That's the fanzine address too - any local bands that want a mention in it, send 'em yer stuff). Make cheques payable to Miss V. Brearley.

Fancy smashing the hell out of a set of drums? A rap workshop appeal to you? Want an all round introduction to the music biz - for free? Sounds like you ought to be paying a visit to Wolverhampton's Molineux Centre - a veritable hive of music industry related activity. They've got an open day starting at 2pm on April 28th if you want to check out what's on offer. And the Molineux is also the venue for a unique event the day after: Wulfrun College, Wolverhampton Youth Services and Brum Beat will be proudly presenting The Music Business Day.

"The reason we got involved in the Music Business Day," explains Chris Horton, the Molineux Centre's chief organiser, "is that we've got a substantial music facility here; a couple of rehearsal studios with backline, a fully equipped recording studio, a full PA and lighting rig and a room we use for live performances by local bands."

But that's not all the Molineux does, as Chris on:

## the other molineux

**brum beat check's out wolverhampton's  
first division music biz team**

"We also run courses for young people funded by the ESF, which include sound engineering and recording, a music foundation course - which is sort of a pre-amble to the Zip course - an introduction to the business, desk top publishing and City & Guilds in photography."

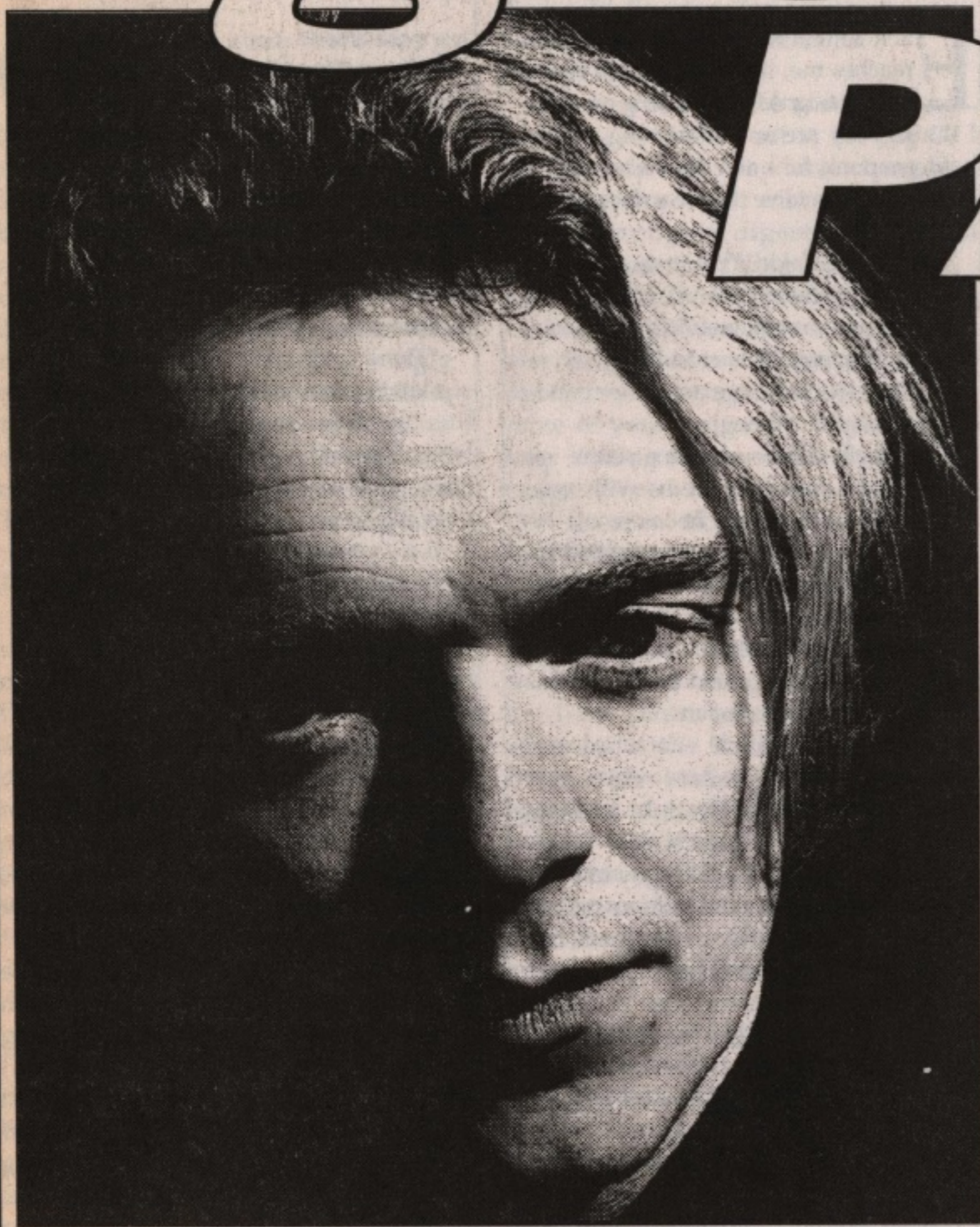
And none of this is done in any half assed way - the Molineux is very well resourced in terms of equipment and materials and the amazing thing is, it's all free to

those who qualify (and you can check exactly what qualifies you by calling the Centre), which obviously makes it very popular.

"We've had people go on to recording studio work - we've got someone in at Rich Bitch at the moment. About 13, 14 people got industry related jobs last year via us and zip. We tend to get people coming to us who've had bad experiences on training programmes and we like to think we help them to get back on their feet again."

The Music Business Day takes place between 10.30am - 4.30pm on Saturday April 29th at the Molineux Centre, Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton - near the Wolves ground. The day will include workshops and seminars on all aspects of the biz, featuring special guest speakers, instrument demonstrations and buffet lunch. Tickets are £3.50 (£2 concessions) available from the Molineux Centre. Call 01902 711418 for further details.

# the greaney PARTY



## andy tipper meets micky greaney

critical accolades into commercial success.

Micky Greaney has already written several new tunes since the making of the first album, all of which sound alarmingly good. With tunes flowing this freely and with his warm and friendly personality that comes across on-stage, Micky Greaney has everything that it takes to become, for want of a better word, a star.

Greaney has already received some favourable comparisons with musical greats from the past. His songs have a beautiful simplicity reminiscent of Paul McCartney, the velvet soul of Van Morrison and Scott Walker, and the thoughtful sadness of Nick Drake. With this kind of classic talent, combined with a modern and youthful image, Micky Greaney is on his way to the top, but he remains affable and modest about his own ability.

"Those kind of comparisons are obviously flattering, but I don't think that musically, I sound like any of those people. I also find it hard to take that kind of praise because there's so much still to learn. I like making music, and I'm surprised that people like it as much as they say they do - I'm very glad though!"

When Micky first started, he was supporting people like Hank Wangford and the Frank Chickens, and even shared a dressing room with Julian Clary of all people.

"I did okay, but I think I've got more experience of life now, and hopefully my songwriting has matured into something better."

His talent is now in full bloom and thanks to Micky's right hand men, Richard Waters and Carl Vincent, the debut album sounds magnificent. Some impressive figures from the local scene were eager to help Micky out on the album, resulting in some special contributions from ace sax man Steve Ajao (with a dreamy solo on No More, Simon Fowler and Steve Craddock from Ocean Colour Scene and also UB40 producer Bob Lamb. No wonder the album sounds so good!

"It's become an album consisting mainly of love songs, although I didn't set out to make it that way, and there are obviously some songs that don't fit that description."

In fact, the album hits all kinds of moods, touching on emotional highs and lows with some vivid lyrics. It's an album of love, an album of pain, as well as being a deeply personal account of Micky's own troubles.

"A manager would kill me for saying this, but a lot of the songs on the album were inspired by my girlfriend Lorna. We split up before the actual recording of the album, and I wrote over half of the tracks during that difficult time. I put a lot of my own heartache into the songs, so of course it feels very personal. We're back together now, and she's the most important thing in my life. I dedicated the album to her."

Songwriting is often hard work, but the best song on the album, What Matters Isn't Easy Anymore was written in unusual circumstances. "It happened so easily. I was playing the guitar and the melody came to me straightaway. It captured an emotional feeling I had at the time, but I still needed the right words. I went to take a bath and the lyrics came to me right then. It fell into place so well I didn't even have to write them down. The entire song was basically written while I was in the bath!"

A repackaged version of the album hits the shops in May, (instantly turning the original CD into something of a collectors item), and if it sells as well as it deserves, thousands of people will soon be listening to their friends waxing lyrical about 'the good old days' when they saw Micky Greaney play at small local venues like The Retort Club, wishing that they had been there too. A star.

*Micky Greaney plays a solo set The Thursday Night Music Club at Wolverhampton's Connaught Hotel, Wolverhampton on 20th April followed by a full orchestra show at Ronnie Scott's in Birmingham on April 23rd.. The full orchestra will also play The Mezzanine at The Connaught Hotel in W'Ton on May 5th.*

*Coaches to London's prestigious Astoria 2 (May 7th) are only £10, which covers both coach and gig admission; tickets from Custard Factory, Plastic Factory, Tempest, and all good indie record shops.*

*First coaches depart from Ronnie Scott's 10.00am, arriving Camden Town 1pm. Second coaches depart from Ronnie Scott's 4pm arriving 7pm. Doors open 7.30pm.*

When music is good, it's one of the most enjoyable things to grace our miserable lives, and the music of Micky Greaney is truly outstanding. Crammed with classic songs that will appeal to music lovers from *any* so-called category, the debut album *Little Symphonies For The Kids* proves that Micky Greaney is on an unavoidable collision course with stardom.

*Little Symphonies For The Kids* has it all. It's an exceptional album dripping in simple melodies and brooding, emotional atmospheres. I haven't stopped playing it since the first day I heard it, and the pleasure shows no signs of waning. Effortlessly poignant songs like *What Matters Isn't Easy* and *A Star* could light up a darkened room with their glow, and send you all the way to dreamland. Quite simply, the music of Micky Greaney is as good as it gets.

It's the best album of the year by a mile, and Birmingham singer-songwriter Micky Greaney is also set to make waves on the live scene. His first short national tour includes a solo acoustic set at the Connaught Hotel, Wolverhampton on 20th April (to be followed by a full orchestra appearance at the same venue on May 5th), before a headline appearance at Ronnie Scott's (23rd April) with his regular 12 piece band. It begs the obvious question, why does a

performer who often goes solo, need twelve musicians with him?

"Twelve sounds a lot of people to have in a band, but there were actually 31 people playing on the album, including three different string quartets, so that was more like a World Cup Squad!"

It makes the music diverse, and harder to categorise. I wouldn't have it any other way because every one brought something different to the music. I want to embellish what you hear on the album, and give it a different live interpretation, so I do need that number of musicians with me. We rehearse as a 12-piece, all contributing ideas, so it's not really practical to mess around with numbers and start chopping the line-up around."

Apart from the Ronnie Scott's highlight, there's an opportunity for Micky's growing army of supporters to see him at the large 1000 capacity Astoria 2 venue in London on May 7th. (Special coaches are being organised, at the bargain price of £10, covering both coach and gig admission for the event, with plenty of time to relax afterwards on the bank holiday? Coaches leave at 10am or 4pm from outside Ronnie Scott's). Representatives from all the shrewd major labels will be scrambling around to get into this one, and for once, they'll be fortunate enough to see that rarest of creatures, a gifted musician able to turn the

# Wakey Wakey



*mike davis sets his alarm to the  
sound of the boo radleys*

It's under two years since Liverpool's Boo Radleys released their quantum leap album, the aptly titled *Giant Steps*. A sprawling 17 track epic of infectious melodies and studio trickeries that reaped album of the year awards in NME and Select and took chief Boo, Martin Carr considerable closer to his self-avowed ambition to be the Beatles of the 90s.

Now things move even nearer with the arrival of *Wake Up*, an equally ridiculously infectious collection of hummable summery tunes that tips the heart to not only the Fab Four, but also the Beach Boys and Love's *Forever Changes*. But *Giant Steps 2*, it's not.

"We don't like to repeat ourselves," says Carr. "The day *Giant Steps* came out I decided that the next album would be 12 songs, short and direct." A pop album, then.

"Yeh, when I wrote *Wake Up Boo* last year, I thought 'you've done it now, you're going to have to go for this pop song business. People say you can't do this sort of music, but there's still not enough good choruses in music today. But saying you want to release a pop album doesn't mean it has to be lightweight and transient. You can still put a lot of yourself in there."

And with songs like *Fairfax Scene*, *It's Lulu* and *Martin Doom* in particular, that's exactly what Carr's done. Indeed Bukowski, is a tribute to the late novelist, Charles Bukowski, that simply consists of Carr recounting what he was doing and who he met on the night the great man died.

"Ever since Lazarus (their Nov 92 gem) I find it's the only way I can write comfortably. Before I used to think of a good title and then write words that were vaguely connected. This time I wrote the words then wondered what I was going to call the song. If I've got something troubling me, I tend to bottle it up and I find the easiest way to express it is to write it down. It's a release. It doesn't completely help to let it go, but it does help me feel better. And

if the song involves other people, when they hear it it does tend to resolve things one way or another. Not that I write much about other people, it's usually me and the girl I've been with for the past eight years. But she can't understand why I don't talk to her instead of writing it down and singing it."

A lot of the songs, *It's Lulu* for example, have to do with not fitting in, a personal feeling?

"I don't know what I'm supposed to fit in with. At school it was school, at work it was work. With this it's hard, I'm not sure what I'm a part of. It's like the band, we've never felt part of anything that was going on. We always feel we've not been invited to the party."

But if the lyrics can be a bit down, musically *Wake Up*, and particularly its first single and lead track, *Wake Up Boo*, in which the Beach Boys meet Northern Soul, is positively radiant even if the songs do tend to take themselves off at tangents before rejoining the plot melody.

"That's always intentional. People say they sound like three half written songs all joined together. But they are written like you hear them I just can't sit down and write verse chorus verse songs. I find it very difficult, I tend to lose interest half way through."

Which, given the tape loop, samples, and other studio trickeries, presumably makes playing things live a bit of a nightmare, especially for people who come anticipating the album on stage?

"We rehearse and play through every song and obviously some we simply can't do. So we junk those and get on and concentrate on the others. But because we've got keyboards and trumpet, we do manage to get all the melodies, if not the actual sound. We're not overly concerned, There's no point in just reproducing the album. If that's what they want to hear they might just as well stay at home and play it."

*Wake Up* is out on Creation, The Boo Radleys play Wolverhampton's Wulfrun Hall on April 10.

# nuclear war made fun

max unleashes the power that is mentalgen

Each time a Mentalgen demo tape reaches me, it pisses all over every other unsigned band asking me what I think. They are an astonishing mix of hardcore punk, funk and rap that on tape is fiery enough, but live they're a nuclear war made fun!

Drummer, Waldo: "What you've got is a collision of influences which has resulted in our sound - a mixture of Zeppelin, Lizzy, hip-hop, '70s funk, Helmet and Dr. Dre."

Do you feel there are any other bands doing what you're doing?

"Not really. Obviously some people are going to try and compare us with rage Against The Machine because of the rap/rock mix, but we've got more of a hip-hop feel and a lot of it is de-tuned and off-time. We're pretty heavy."

He's not kidding! And it matches their heavy attitude, one borne out of being disappointed just once too often.

"We are about attitude - not a bad one, just a selfish one. We're out to enjoy ourselves, doing gigs for the right reasons. We're fed up with gigs where we're patiently waiting for the A&R guy to cross his name off the guest list. If those people start getting interested in us now, great, but we're through pushing for it. They can come to us now because they've heard through the grapevine that Mentalgen are a fucking good band. If they don't, we'll continue what we're doing anyway. We're not gonna be let down anymore."

And what if you suddenly were offered a deal?

"We'd ask what our future with the label was gonna be. What could they guarantee us? We're too old to be kicked out the back door in six months time - we've got

responsibilities."

OK, so Mentalgen might be a risky choice for a label, but what's it all about if people aren't willing to stick their necks out once in a while? These guys aren't youngsters just getting to grips with their instruments - they're damn good at what they do - they've just chosen to slap us round the face a few times and challenge our preconceptions about music.

"There's not much encouragement for our kind of extreme music. Having said all this, we don't hate this business - we haven't got a chip on our shoulder. We enjoy what we do. If something cool happens, it'll be a bonus."

But it's not good enough for me! If nothing is forthcoming in terms of a deal, Mentalgen are content to carry on rehearsing, writing, gigging and demoing their - and their hardcore supporters' - amusement. Which is admirable, but frustrating, because it's bands like these that really do have something different and exciting to offer - that deserve the largest and widest audience possible. It's annoying that the apathetic response they've received from the industry - after trying everything in the book - has caused them to quit hassling the people with the money. Shit, this band can't afford to put their own record out!

Mentalgen are in my top five unsigned Midlands bands. Somebody provide them with the opportunity to show what they're really capable of. Now!

"Like we say on *Mind Over Matter*," Waldo concludes, "The gentlemen here are mental - we are gentlemen. We're just a bit hyper, that's all!"

Catch Mentalgen at O'Neills (the old Railway, Curzon St.) on April 13th.

Apparently, it came from skimming through a dictionary over a few beers one night, trying disparate words out against each other: Sock Kettle? Nah! Radiator Door? Nope. Hushblood? Now THAT's got a ring to it...

Vocalist Gray: "The other guys were a unit before I joined, playing with another singer who wasn't really up to scratch, so they kicked him out and I stepped in."

I know bands hate to be compared to other outfits, but as a way into their stuff, think of The Black Crowes' sleazy, groovy, blues slant.

"We all love the Crowes," admits Gray. "Our guitarist, Chris, is very blues influenced and I've listened to a lot of Howlin' Wolf and Janis Joplin -

singers with a raw edge."

One concern the band has is how their song, *Walking Blind*, might be perceived. After all, what do a bunch of guys from The Midlands know about Los Angeles?

"I don't want people thinking it's just another English kid daydreaming about the American rock'n'roll lifestyle," Gray points out, "It's a genuine story of me visiting my brother last year. We drove for 13 hours on Pacific Highway 1 from L.A. to San Francisco and it was the most breathtaking experience of my life!"

A tad more romantic than a song about the drive from Smethwick to London! Hushblood think and sound big. They deserve big rewards. Just you wait and see ...

the origin of  
**hushblood**  
as told to max

Question ... What's seen but never heard?

Reply ... Don't know!

Answer ... Ocean Colour!

Ouch! But, 'appen, fair comment. Let's not be abbreviating their name to OCS either: looks like one of those cowboy security vans with a silhouette Alsatian logo. Woof woof!

One upon a time there was a band called The Fanatics. Hailed by some as the original NWOOW guitar/popster combo - best thing since sliced-bread blah blah bollocks blah. Their star was in the ascendant during the latter part of the 80's and, being everybody's darling, A&R cheque books reputedly fluttered like doves in a microwave. Promises were made, gifts exchanged, a single released and then? There was no then: that was it. A change of line-up ensued (founder, Simon Fowler and dishy bassman, Damon remained) but The Fanatics, by name and nature, were finished.

#### Fannys' Craddock

The caterpillar rolled itself a new skin and lo - there emerged the psychedelically challenged name, Ocean Colour Scene. Gasps of horror: would there be an adoption of Madcaster credentials? Fortunately not. With Oscar recruited on drums and the adoption of Beelzebub guitar love-child, 'Sweet' Steve Craddock, the metamorphoses was absolute. Moody broods of disfunctional psychedelia wearing a smile as wide as a baboon's bum with damn you slap across the face on-going guitar profile with knobs on (and wah wahs to boot). Bridges burnt, voyages into uncharted waters? Brave and heady stuff indeed! But any good? The jury was out; white smoke from the Vatican awaited with anticipation.

#### Pig In A Poke?

An album in the making was eventually (mark that word eventually) released in 1992: it would all end in tears. Firstly though, a word about the sleeve art - shite! Perhaps it was a portent of the unholy mess going on during the year-long recording. The band's initial, and well founded, enthusiasm began to rapidly wane being shuffled about with different producers. Rat's from the sinking ship perhaps? Be honest now, lads!

#### All Pork And No Action...

'Artistically, we had the snatch of it,' says Steve. Yes, go on...

'As it was moved on (producer three by now) we still thought it was happening on a few tracks but...it just never happened. The songs weren't up to it anyway.' Beg to differ there: bollocks, in fact. Opening number, 'Talk On' should've had headline band, Ride, crying in their Babychams when Ocean Colour Scene kicked off their support set a couple of years or so back. It's still good, as well as a choice handful of other songs on that album, regardless of what the band say - notwithstanding the shite cover either.

#### Goodbye to all that...

It's clear those times don't bring back happy memories. They scrapped all the material, took a long time get-

ting out of legal wrangles, eventually legging it with some tasty equipment as a parting gesture (two fingers) and went to lick their wounds at Bob Lamb's studio. Simon, Damon and Oscar are not renowned for garrulousness discourse at the best of times and reflections on past events are voiced through superglued lips. Enough! Engage Time-transposer, Sarah-Jane, the future beckons.

#### Orwell and good?

It's now early 1994 and the band play a rare, packed set at the Jug Of Ale. Bloody hell, they have changed. Bert Weedon tutor manual having been thoroughly digested they rip through some dazzling material displaying a depth and maturity unheard of before. Simon Fowler now an assertive, full blown frontman (whom or what was being blown pre-gig is none of your business). Where were they coming from - where were they going? 'We've moved on,' comments the laconic skin-meister, Oscar. Noticeable was a closing, devilish cover of a PP Arnold number, a songwriter in need of instant beatification for their part. So that was the minimum standard being set. A later gig at the Irish Centre wasn't quite so successful and the impression was that they were undergoing some re-appraisal of material and style. They weren't crap by any means - but with these lads anything less than perfect is little better than crap in their ears anyway. Could they really hack it? Was it an overnight deliberation for the jury again?

#### Johnny's home!

Time passed on whilst Steve Craddock gained employment guitaring for Paul Weller on his self-healing, splendiferous come-back tour of Planet Earth. Young Steven's behaviour in Japan, as recounted in Q magazine last year, could not in all truth be described as monastic. Meanwhile, Simon Fowler's sitting on his pert little Kings Heath creative arse calling on the Muses to guide his plectrum. And it was good.

#### The Lynch pin.

1995 rang out the changes. With guitar strings boiled and re-tuned, drum skins dusted and tightened, Ocean Colour Scene are in readiness to give it total commitment smoulder. Busy beaver in a down-town stu-

dio (they more or less own) a whole new set is being demoed in preparation for an album release later this year. Paul Weller's album producer, Brendan Lynch, is booked to sprinkle the fairy dust. There's a publishing deal with Island and a label deal with Pony Canyon in Japan, of all places! Craddock must have charmed some inscrutable A&R folk after a Kamikaski drinking session (the Weller connection did it, actually.)

#### You can stick it!

The new material is smoking with candescent, catholic eclecticism (martyrs for the chords?) No point in describing what you can't hear yet but it's in your face, down your throat, a randy snog with an Alien face-hugger: the perfect subliminal suppository. It's all there. Stick your head in the time-warp(past/present/future) musical blender from Hell and groove. Oh yes.

#### Morecome and thighs

This time round if Ocean Colour Scene's music doesn't make your skin creep with intensity then it's on too tight! Loosen up. A gob-smacked, punter packed low-key publicised gig at the Varsity Tavern last month should've carried a health warning: they were loud and good and then some. Next gig be early and grease down the old pectorals, it's the only way you'll squeeze in. Share and enjoy. Far from lending themselves excessive gravity, Ocean Colour Scene aren't above the subtle wind up - lads for a lark and all that: sniggers with attitude! Look out for their DIY single release in a month or so, 'Riverboat Song/40 Past Midnight'. Your ears will orgasm...and there's more to come.

Ocean Colour Scene support Oasis with Verve at the Sheffield Arena April 22nd.



# upon a painted ocean

john kennedy sticks in oar in

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# recorded delivery

**a guide to the brum beat star ratings**

★★★★ The meaning of life captured on magnetic tape ★★★★★ You owe it to yourself to own this

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## ALPHABET SOUP

**Layin' Low In The Cut  
(Mammoth)**

Just as Freakpower take a musical lean on Sly Stone, Alphabet Soup have obviously been well simmered in Gil Scott Heron. This is a musically and verbally literate set that's as lyrically sharp as it's musically cool. Recommended.

★★★ Sam Mitchell

## ARCHERS OF LOAF

**Vee Vee (Alias)**

Dissed in some quarters as a cracked Pavement, Eric Bachmann's post grunge outfit more often sound like a lo fi roughshod Roxy Music, Harnessed In Slums and Nevermind the Enemy in particular harking back to the Enoisms of the first album and stripping away the glam sheen to reveal the bare wires. Through the throbbing guitar likes of 1985 and Let The Loser Melt, melody skitters merrily across the surface while Bachmann's pained vocals add resonance to songs about losers and under-achievers such as Greatest Of All Time, Underdogs Of Nipomo and the memorable Death In The Park, while a more experimental side surfaces through Step Into the Light and the quirky Underachievers March and Fight Song. A multi-grain experience.

★★★ Mike Davies

## ED BALL

**If A Man Ever Loved A Woman  
(Creation)**

A solo outing (with mates like Boos Carr and Sice, Nick Heyward, Andy Bell and his missus Idha) for the sometime Television Personalities / Teenage Filmstars / Times maverick popster. Acoustic rainy day bedsit stuff sporting mournful harmonica and titles like The Ballad Of A Lonely Man, You Only Miss Me When I'm Bleeding and It's Kinda Lonely Where I Am written in rooms from Mill Hill to Dallas (or in transit) Ball comes over how Neil Young might have developed if he lived in a grey British seaside town. The vaguely Cohen-ish title track, country loping The Arizona Lover and the disarmingly beguiling folksy pop of Ton Of blues (a potential surprise hit) head the pack, but it all has tea and toast charm.

★★★ Mike Davies

## MARTIN BELMONT

**Big Guitar (Demon)**

If you like guitar based western themes like the Big Country; have a twinkling nostalgia for Anton Karas and can tolerate Cajun workouts and reggafied Johnny Cash instrumentals then this gem is for you.

★★★ Steve Morris

## BLAMELESS

**The Signs Were All There  
(China)**

From Sheffield but sounding like they just stepped over a mid West white picket fence with dust on their Levis, clutching guitars and a Bud, production credits for the debut album belong to the team behind Radiohead, Dinosaur Jr and Buffalo Tom and while Blameless don't actually sound like any of them, the kindred musical spirit is apparent. Guitars alternately jangle, ring and crash, vocals swing between ache and anger, and while they sometimes lose definition when they hit rocking out mode, the muscular confidence behind such tracks as the slow building Worthless, the ferocious Town Clowns and the classic American guitar pop of More Than I, points a well deserved accusing finger.

★★★ Mike Davies

## BMX BANDITS

**Getting Dirty (Creation)**

Despite the title, this first full time line up of the Scottish survivors of 80s anorak pop is as pleasurable twee as you could hope for, though it's a little disconcerting to find the band that gave you Serious Drugs now singing Tiny Fingers, a celebration of babies. Calling up the spirit of Goffin and King may be overstating the case somewhat, but this is certainly in the tradition of classic Bacharach pop, gentle lapping pop melodies, a wisp of flute, a tinkle of vibes, the ghost of 60s British romantic movies and thoughts of Harpers Bizarre.

★★ Mike Davies

## RANDY BURNS

**Of Love And War / Evening Of  
The Magician / Songs For An  
Uncertain Lady  
(ZYX Music - Import)**

These folk gems arrived care of the New York avant garde label ESP Disk, in 1966, 1968 and 1970 respectively. By the third

album, the bones of what became The Skydog Band were in place and Burns went on to record three more band albums for Mercury [1971] and Polydor [1972 & 1973]. Burns' first trio of releases have been lovingly reissued by the German based ZYX Music label, along with numerous other ESP titles. The first album is set in acoustic mode with voice and guitar only, while percussion, bass and organ/piano augment the second set. By the third disc, Burns and the boys had gone electric. Possessed of a plaintive voice, these treasures should grace every self respecting folkie's CD rack. Which brings me to the first question ... are you guys at Mercury and Polydor going to get your act together now? By the way, during 1991, Randy issued a cassette titled The Cat's Pyjamas. It's available by mail order from Picket Fence Productions, 11 North Street, North Branford, Connecticut 06471. I've already got my copy, so that's where I've put my money. How about you?

★★★★ (each) Arthur Wood

## ELVIS COSTELLO

**Punch The Clock / Goodbye  
Cruel World (Demon)**

Two more in the remastered and expanded Elvis series ... and once again they sound better than ever and the bonuses are generous, seven more on Punch and nine on Goodbye.

Punch The Clock was perhaps the commercial peak with the brassy, er, punch of Let Them All Talk and the swagger of Everyday I Write The Book making Costello omnipresent on radio and TV at the time. The album also held Shipbuilding and Pills And Soap. Among the extras, a couple of hot live cuts and an extraordinary, Allen Toussaint produced version of Yoko's Walking On Thin Ice.

EC's own sleeve note calls Goodbye Cruel World 'our worst album' and for sure the studio sheen and claustrophobic production do rather anchor it in time but underneath the songs remain leagues ahead of Costello's peer group. And look out for track 23 (on this 22 track CD!) - a stunning version of ... well find out for yourself and wonder why it didn't beat the retreat too!

★★★★ / ★★ Steve Morris

## BILLY RAY CYRUS

**Storm In The Heartland (Mercury)**

I saw a piece recently that suggested that Billy Ray had been wronged with the harsh crits and that he wasn't too



bad after all. So I listened ... and, well there's no conversion here. Cyrus sounds like a man determined to win the Mellencamp audience with his barn filling rock, but without losing the country audience. Fair enough except the material is conveyor belt dull and the star's voice is one of the least charismatic you're ever likely to hear.

You can understand the one off Achy Breaky success (anyone wanna tell me it was worse than Agadoo?) but I simply cannot comprehend the career it precipitated. ★ Steve Morris

## TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY Vibrator (Columbia)

Well, despite the new gold curled look, TTD thankfully hasn't reinvented himself musically in the same wilfully perverse manner of Neither Fish Nor Flesh, nor has he simply regurgitated a carbon of Symphony Or Damn. Of the two though, it's the latter to which this has the closer kinship. A rawer, rockier edge dominates, perhaps best embodied in the blatant Station to Station 'homage' of Supermodel Sandwich, though elsewhere (as on Undeniably or we Don't Have That Much Time) you'll also find him in a jazzy blowing and funky moods that pulls together such strands as Miles Davis, Bobby Hebb and (with Read My Lips) Sly Stone. TTD's Recurring Dream even manages to evoke shades of Roxy Music. And illustrates the man's sense of humour on an album that explores physicality and spirituality in lyrics dealing with sex, insecurity and a need to be reassured and accepted. It's a diverse set, but whether that comes in the shape of first single, Holding On To You, a classic slice of Sam Cooke sounding R&B, fattened up with Atlantic brass fills, or If You Go Before Me (about the after-

**recorded  
delivery**

**THE EVERLY BROTHERS**  
*Original British Hit Singles*  
(Ace)

The oft anthologised Everlys on a sensibly priced twenty two tracker that simply places the singles, A sides and their flips, that arrived on the deservedly legendary London label between 1957 and 1960 chronologically.

The remastering sparkles and the sleeve notes entertain. A five star necessity.  
★★★★★ John Davies

**DUB WAR**  
*Pain* (Earache)

Every town should have a Dub War - a blistering groovecore smash with rasta undertones. But it seems Newport, Gwent is the only location angry enough to spit out something as ferocious as Pain. Don't worry though, Dub War are a hardworking live band, so it shouldn't be too long before they come and show YOUR town how to put together some metal, funk and ragamuffin and go to War.  
★★★★ Max

**CLIVE GREGSON**  
*People and Places* (Demon)

His first solo album proper (after the mail order demos and live tracks collection *Carousel of Noise*) since dissolving the Gregson-Collister partnership and relocating to Nashville, P&P finds Gregson putting aside the blues to which their latter work was gravitating and returning to the melancholic storytelling songwriter mode of *Strange Persuasions*. As such, several numbers come with a distinct folk ballad feel, most obviously so in *Mary's Divorce*, conceived as a contemporary sequel to the traditional *Mary's Wedding*, but also in *Medicine House* (asylum, prison, any similar institution for the terminally desolate) and *Camden Town*, a movingly bittersweet reflection on unfulfilled love that's among the finest songs he's written. But from *Camden Town* to *When This War is Over*, a sober riposte to the upcoming VE/VJ celebrations, there's not a weak track among these songs about regrets and self-recriminations (*Blue Rose*, *My Favourite Lies*, *Restless*), fair deceivers (*Feathers*, *Gabriel*), lonely hearts (*Box Number*), death (*Black Train Coming*) and, by way of a change, love attained (*Lily Of The Valley*). And if you need a single reason to buy, then just lend an ear to *My Eyes Gave The Game Away* which in the line "I dreamed of streets of silver but I dragged my feet of clay" earns its immortal place in the hall of betrayed by my broken heart fame. God wants you to buy this album.

★★★★★ Mike Davies

life) which could easily be a superior West End show tune, this vibrator delivers total satisfaction.

★★★★ Mike Davies

**ALVIN DAVIS**  
*Let The Vibes Decide* (Ripe)



Huge in the US where his Kenny G-ish sultry sax style and sly groove have charts and radio of their own, Birmingham's Alvin Davis easily delivers the goods with his second album but one can't avoid the conclusion that beyond a limited cognoscenti, wine bars and talkover tracks on Choice and Kiss FM, Davis' major potential lies beyond these shores.

★★★★ Sam Mitchell

**BRUCE DICKINSON**  
*Alive In Studio A / Alive At The Marquee Club* (Raw Power)

On the plus side, Bruce has got a helluva band together, who can bang out a precision rocky, funky noise...but, well, there's ol' Bruce's voice, isn't there, which I've never been that partial to. Also, there're two CDs here, containing near enough identical material - one live, the other, er, nearly live. I guess a treat for die-hard fans - a little too much for me.

★★ Max

**BILL FRISELL**  
*Music For The Films Of Buster Keaton - Go West; The High Sign / One Week* (Elektra Nonesuch)

Frisell wrote this music for live performances during which the relevant films were screened - thus reviving a dying cinematic art. These two studio albums offer those of us who missed the subsequent screenings a chance to hear the tunes, but sadly there are no plans for the films to be reissued with them as soundtracks.

Fortunately, the music, despite being far removed from Frisell's usual style, stands up well on its own. Or sometimes deliberately falls down, in an almost literal sense, if some of the slapstick-y endings are anything to go by. The sympathetic support of drummer Joey Baron and bassist Kermit Driscoll provide a canvas on which Frisell daubs splashes of acoustic and electric guitar, conveying variously the moods of jollity, pathos, humour and gleeful triumph one would expect of Keaton classics.

★★★★★ Andy Mabbett

**JERRY GIDDENS**  
*For Lydia* (Sputnik Recordings - Import)

Deserting his West Coast base, the former leader of the Walking Wounded is

a Texas resident these days. He's got a new band as well, the Stoney White Punks. This short, 35 minutes, nine track set is composed of latter day California recordings, mixed with more recent studio outings at the legendary Loma Ranch complex in Fredricksburg, Tx. Between the outset and the final curtain call, Giddens powers his way through folk/rock tinged material concerning the L.A. freeways (*Thin Veiled Line*), public order and justice (*Hannah and Burn It Down*), love (*Spanish Rain*) and family (*Precious Father*). The latter song being a reply to the Bad Livers tune *Pretty Daughter*. And finally ... was the cover shot at Austin's two step-pin' palace, *The Broken Spoke*?

★★★★ Arthur Wood

**GUTTERMOUTH**  
*Friendly People* (Nitro)

Yet ANOTHER Californian punk outfit, and while perhaps not the best of the bunch, to be honest, I can't get enough of this high-octane, infectious, riff-stained punk rock. If there's one thing that let's Guttermouth down though, it's the kiddie-shock lyrics. Other than that it's ram-mamma rockin' all the way!

★★★★ Max

**THE HAMSTERS**  
*Route 666*

(*Rockin' Rodent Recordings*)  
Titles like *Ain't Living Long Like This*, *Only Rock'N'Roll* and *The Blues On Their Own* confirm that The Hamsters make little concession for hi-fi listening; they simply boogie on in fine fettle with great, great guitar playing well to the fore - except on the title track where they prove that they can create a splendid AOR sound without at any time endangering their balls. A pointer for future perhaps.

★★★★ Steve Morris

**ISAAC HAYES**  
*The Collection* (Connoisseur Collection)

If soul music can be said to be a religion, then Isaac Hayes is Archbishop of Aural Sects ...

★★★★★ Sam Mitchell

**HEAD LIKE A HOLE**  
*Flik Y'self Off Y'self* (Noise)

Think of bands like *Stabbing Westward*, *Tribe After Tribe* and ultimately, *Jane's Addiction* and you start to notice a pattern of intelligence, clarity and above all, menace. Add New Zealand's HLAH to the list - they're multi-layered, sharp and scary. A lot of it's down to the inventiveness of the rhythms. Whatever, FYOY is a gloriously gruesome montage of torn-up images. For those with no fear only.

★★★★★ Max

**LUCY KAPLANSKY**  
*The Tide* (Red House - Import)

If you were a cynical person, you might conclude that Lucy's album was Shawn Colvin's dry run for *Cover Girl*. Fact one, Colvin produced this debut disc for her long time singing buddy. Fact two, there's certainly a swathe of cover tunes here

penned by much admired songpoets such as Bill Morrissey, David Massengill, Tom Russell / Greg Trooper and Cliff Eberhardt plus a couple of homegrown products, Richard Thompson and Sting. Of course we shouldn't forget Lucy's contribution; a trio of autobiographically slanted tunes. The title cut charts the ebb and flow of her life, which runs hot, sometimes cold. Relationships are also explored in *Somebody's Home*, while Kaplansky's maternal instincts come to the fore in *You Just Need A Home*. Obviously a believer in shining knights and damsels in need, Robin Batteau's *Guinevere* and *The Eyes Of My Beholder* address those issues. There's nothing outlandishly new or breathtaking here. It's all fairly low key in fact, yet the bottom line is that it is a damned fine elixir.

★★★★ Arthur Wood

**PETE & MAURA KENNEDY**  
*River of Fallen Stars* (Green Linnet / Direct Distribution)



The former Maura Boudreau, late of Austin's Delta Rays, went on to become backing vocalist in Nanci Griffith's *Blue Moon Orchestra* [circa the *Other Voices*, *Other Rooms World Tour*], while her hubby to be was the main picker in the band. So ... they got hitched. They formed a duo. They cut an album. And here's my two penny worth ... there's much made in the liner booklet regarding the influence of Irish melody and lyricism on their work. Apart from Richard Thompson's *Wall of Death* and the Tom Kimmel/Stam Lynch [one of Tom Petty's boys] collaboration *House On Fire*, the remaining eleven songs were co-written/written by Maura and Pete, occasionally with fellow scribes. There's little doubt that Kennedy is one of the best pickers and strummers on the face of the planet and this set gives full vent to his talent, with loadsa jangly Byrdsy guitars and he even dives into Turkish rhythms at one juncture. That apart, the problem with the end product boils down to a lack of lyrical bite in the self penned material. At turns precious and sometimes pretty thin, they have time on their side and may grow into a powerful force. Close, but no cigar this time ...

★★ Arthur Wood

## KILLDOZER

### God Hears Pleas Of The Innocent (Touch And Go)

This has the lumbering quality of Birthday Party, especially in the shapes thrown by vocalist/bassist Michael Gerald, shot through with the more gritty, growling guitar of Paul Zagoras. In fact, lyrically, there is also a hint of latter-day Cave here (love, sex, death, religion) - Pour Man for example. Psychotic, Socratic, so cry me a river. Cool.

★★★★ Max

## KING KURT

### Poor Man's Dream (Demon)

King Kurt have always tolerated a kind of limbo existence - too jokey to be credible amongst serious rock'n'rollers, and, despite being a sort of rockabilly Madness, a mite unpalatable for mainstream popularity. This is more of their standard, derivative, wacky r'n'r, built to specification for wedding receptions.

★★ Max

## ALISON KRAUSS

### Now That I've Found You (Rounder / Direct Distribution)

Prize winning bluegrass fiddler and excellent vocalist Krauss, aside from anthologising her essential catalogue on this hits set, reveals both her huge commercial potential and a hitherto unheard interpretative might. Her complete reinvention of The Foundations soul stomper Baby Now That I've Found You into a lovelorn reflective ballad is little short of stunning. And, whilst it can't top that, her transformation of Bad Company's leaden Oh Atlanta into a sexily swinging bluegrass tune simply reinforces the obvious conclusion; that Alison Krauss' time has finally arrived

★★★★★ Steve Morris

## LAMBCHOP

### I Hope You're Sitting Down (City Slang)

From the name and the cover (a scrappy black and white drawing of a girl holding a dog with its knob sticking out) and inside pic of a woman's shaven crutch, you might reasonably expect some sort of hardcore thrash or grunge. So it's a real, pleasant surprise to find instead a plaintive, lo fi countrified 11 piece bunch from Nashville who colour their dilapidated, laconic melodies with clarinet, ukulele, lap steel, cello, Farfisa and, er, open-end wrenches. Rather too many references to female genitalia to endear them to the PC brigade, but the twilight croons of Cowboy on The Moon, Betweenmus, Under The Same Moon and Because You Are The Very Air He Breathes betray a wry romanticism that weaves an intoxicating spell.

★★★ Mike Davies

## SONNY LANDRETH

### South Of 1 - 10 (ZOO / BMG)

The distinctive slide guitarist who came to prominence in John Hiatt's band reinforces the promise of his previous two solo sets in fine style here with Cajun peppered blues, ballads and boogies. Luminaries Mark Knopfler, Stephen Bruton and Allen Toussaint all guest and all remain in Landreth's shadow.

A mighty fine album.

★★★★★ Steve Morris

## ANNIE LENNOX

### Medusa (RCA)

Intended to break a decade long pattern of writing songs rather than indicative of any creative block (though there's been no new material since 1992), this is Lennox's contribution to the current trend for covers albums.

It's an eclectic choice, balancing old chestnuts like A Whiter Shade Of Pale (a delicately sparse, tinkling clavichord, chamber piece treatment) with something as obscure as No More I Love You's by The Lover Speaks or the Blue Nile's Downtown Lights. She's not gone for wilful radical deconstructions, preferring to re-interpret within recognisable frameworks so that, for example, while adding tasty Spanish acoustic guitar, the Temptations' I Can't Get Next To You retains its origins as funky psychedelic soul just as Neil Young's Don't Let It Bring You Down still exudes a wasted weariness. Indeed Paul Simon's Something So Right barely strays from the path, content simply to ease itself into Lennox's slightly detached style.

Not to say she doesn't rearrange; The Clash's Train In Vain becomes Aretha Franklin style soulful jazz while Bob Marley's reggae lilt Waiting In Vain, probably the album highlight, puts a gloss on that cool silk laid-back ambience favoured by Julia Fordham et al. Artfully pleasurable, it's perhaps too cerebral, never rekindling the blazing fires of things like Missionary Man, so that despite a Native American war dance rhythm, her version of Al Green's Take Me To The River paddles politely rather than plunges into the maelstrom.

★★★★ Mike Davies

## THE LONG RYDERS

### State Of Our Union (Prima Records)



At last the Ryders best album is available on CD - and with bonus cuts, though to be fair the previously unheard Christmas In New Zealand would not have been missed had it remained so - and that means that the Byrdsian chug of Looking For Lewis And Clark, surely flavoured by So You Wanna Be A Rock'N'Roll Star and the valve radio harmonies of WDIA can once more grace our lives.

But that's not all; despite the country rock tag that clung to the band - the fate of any that use steel and cover Merle Travis - The Long Ryders actually share with the aforementioned Byrds, The Burritos and that ilk a regard for the purer values of a lost rural America. It's something that percolates such tracks as You Just Can't

Ride The Boxcars Anymore and Here Comes That Train Again. But it's not nostalgia; this is a band that rocks up a storm with melodic hooks galore and enough licks to thrill anyone who has ever loved a twanglin' guitar.

Ultimately though, the best thing about this ten year old is that it still sounds as fresh as tomorrow's milk.

★★★★★ Steve Morris

## LOS LOBOS

### Papa's Dreams (Music For Little People / Direct Distribution)

Not really the new Lobos album - the 'with Lalo Guerrero' credits appendage gives the game away. It's almost an audio Sesame Street for the barrio of East LA; a kind of roots reaffirmation for the Chicano kids of the US; a collection of traditional Mexican songs set against a slim narrative featuring Papa Lalo.

It's for Los Lobos completists only though it's good to hear them so relaxed and playing for themselves and families.

★★★ Steve Morris

## WYNTON MARSALIS

### The London Concert (Sony)

Many cross over, or attempt to, but Marsalis is one of the few musicians equally successful in both the jazz and classical worlds. Here, he is most definitely wearing the much more disciplined classical hat, performing four trumpet concertos. Two, by Haydn and Leopold Mozart, are familiar and oft-recorded; the others, by their contemporaries Fasch and Hummell, are less well known but not through any weakness of composition. All have been recorded by Marsalis before, three when he was just twenty, but now he has the chance to display the maturity that has developed over the intervening years, during which he has taught these pieces to others. Coupled with his jazz feel and confident stage presence, this assures a note-perfect performance with drive and aplomb. Marsalis likens different musical genres to dishes at a banquet. In those terms, this album is haute cuisine of the finest order.

★★★★★ Andy Mabbett

## MASSIVE ATTACK V MAD PROFESSOR

### No Protection (Circa)

Packaged like the production line dubs of Scientist from some years back, the Mad Prof's mix of Massive Attack's current opus takes it into a surprise snagged creamy dreamy land of sweet smoke distortion-n-n-n

★★★ Sam Mitchell

## MC 900ft JESUS

### One Step Ahead Of The Spider (American)

Beat-poet-style, Mark Griffin's wry words trip out lazily over a jazzy, laid-back hip-hop backdrop. Sensual, intelligent, humorous (Tiptoe Through The Inferno and New Year's Eve are quietly hilarious) and brilliantly played, utilising sax, flute and Vernon (ex -Living Colour) Reid's unmistakable guitar. Quality stuff.

★★★★★ Max

recorded  
delivery

## KEB' MO

### Keb' Mo (Okeh)

Born Kevin Moore, 'Mo's the second singing to resurrected Okeh label (the first being G Love and Special Sauce) and the latest addition to the current crop of acoustic Mississippi delta blues revivalists, writing their own material but drawing on the influences of such country-blues legends as Robert Johnson (Moore plays Johnson in a forthcoming docudrama and includes two covers here) and Son House. With a throaty, dust coated soulful voice that makes him sound like a cross between Ted Hawkins, Ry Cooder and, at times, an Afro-American Mickey Newbury, Moore also plays a mean National Steel and writes the sort of songs you could easily believe were hidden away in an old bluesman's shack or (as on the magnificent Don't Try To Explain) discovered among long lost Otis Redding out-takes. It's almost as if Van Morrison had been born in Louisiana.

Familiar celebrations or mournings of love provide the album's core through the moody likes of Every Morning, Anybody Seen My Girl and the more uptempo Angelina, while City Boy is a superb take on the archetypal aching lament of the country boy lost among the skyscrapers and Victims of Comfort is a wry comment on a spiritually adrift society that wouldn't sound amiss on a Bruce Cockburn album. Forget Clapton's grimacing rehashes, this is the real music from the cradle.

★★★★★ Mike Davies

## MONSTER MAGNET

### Dopes To Infinity (A&M)

I've been waiting for this for a while now - another Technicolor, psychedelic mind 'n' body trip to the sound of heavy, groove-driven space rock. This is where speed-addled punks, stoned hippies and acid-crazed bikers party and the whole shebang is filmed by Tarantino and written up by, well...me! I'm sure there'll be others, but so far, Dopes... is my undisputed Album Of The Year. The Magnet will be back for shows here real soon: dress, drugs and dreams optional.

★★★★★ Max

## NIRVANA

### Secret Theatre (Edsel)

Wow, more than 20 Nirvana out-takes, demos and forgotten acetates and ... ah, it's the UK sixties Nirvana - the psychedelic mob ... nevermind ... no, actually, make that mind. This is the sort of album that gives barrel scraping a bad name. All that's needed is a genuine best of collection ... and that's a three track EP!!

Er, no stars!

John Davies

**recorded  
delivery**

## **NITZER EBB**

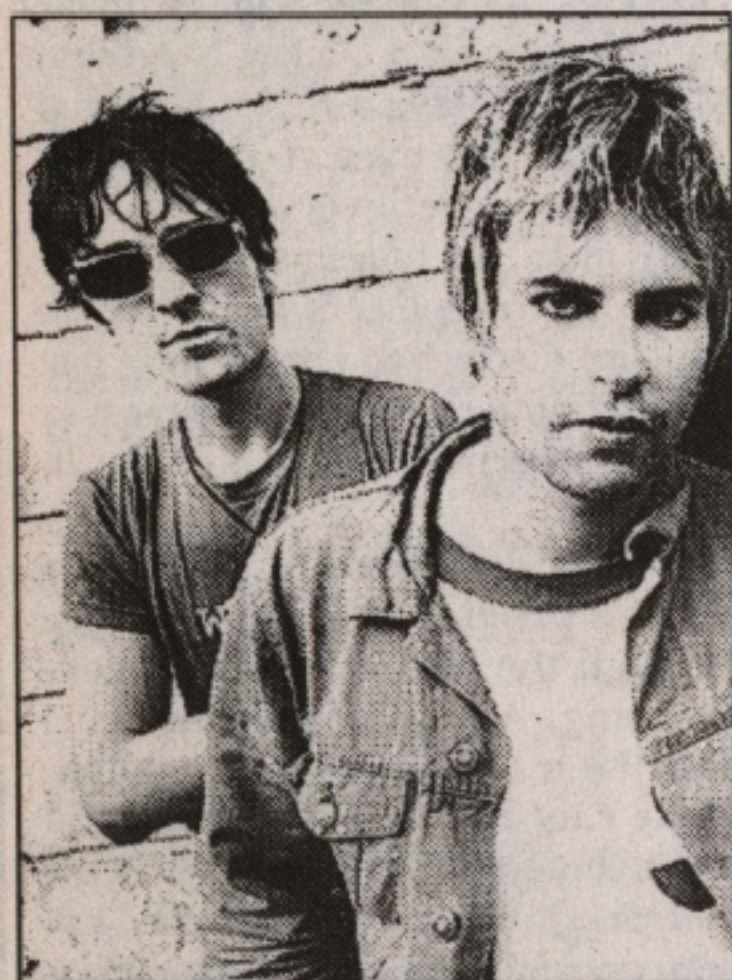
### **Big Hit (Mute)**

I've never paid Nitzer Ebb much notice, given their cold machinations, and although Big Hit falls well short of converting me, their move to using 'real' instruments instead of relying on programming, gives this a more 'human' and funkier edge. I can't say I missed the Ebb during their three year break, but this isn't a bad return to the fray.

★★★ Max

## **ORANGE DELUXE**

### **Necking (Dead Dead Good)**



Perfect pop. The kind that's bouncy and catchy enough to make your parents sit up and listen (Love 45 and There Goes My Summer), uses swear words (it IS big AND clever!), is raw and trippy (Angelique) and utilises dirty, funky blues (Hot Lung - track of the album). A stunning punk-hard, mod-sharp, '90s psychedelic debut.

★★★★ Max

## **POND**

### **The Practice Of Joy Before Death (Sub Pop)**

Imagine, if you will, a dream hallucination in which the White Album Beatles re-group to play tunes by Oasis which you can only hear through rubber walls ... this is the soundtrack. Now is that one lump, or two ... ?

★★★ Steve Morris

## **POP WILL EAT ITSELF**

### **Two Fingers My Friends (Infectious)**

Now THIS is more like it! I wasn't that knocked out by Dos Dedos Mis Amigos, but this remix by such luminaries as H.I.Agency, Youth and The Orb takes it to another level. In places, it has the feel and eclectic tastes of the Beastie Boys, but including a range of very British Killing Joke and Jamaican ambient-dub flavouring. Amazing - the Poppies finally score a hit with me!

★★★★ Max

## **PRINCIPAL EDWARDS MAGIC THEATRE**

### **Soundtrack / The Asmoto Running Band (See For Miles)**

The thirteen strong PEMT have oft been held to ridicule as the epitome of English hippie and prog rock excess. Certainly from a post punk perspective the prospect of such a troupe, including dancers and a light show for which all performers wore white to give it a 3D effect, seems absurd and strictly beyond the parameters of rock'n'roll as defined by the three chord purists. Add the fact that they were also Exeter Uni students of English and you can corner the Paul Calf vote too!

Of course at the time their folk rock epics - The Death Of Don Quixote ambles to a literary climax in a little over thirteen minutes, the length of some punk gigs - and the dancers and lights had, aided by the odd jazz Woodbine, a relevance beyond mere music.

This new combination of the band's two Dandelion LPs onto one CD does little, in the cold narcotic free light show of day, to combat the slings and arrows. It is twee, over reaching, if curiously attractive, stuff. But for those whose hair, now beating a woeful retreat, once covered incense scented afghan collars, this will be an eighty minute eye dampener. You really had to be there.

★★ Steve Morris

## **THE PSYCLONE RANGERS**

### **The Devil May Care (World Domination)**

When you get right down to it, The Devil May Care is old-time rock'n'roll - it was recorded in Memphis, how could it FAIL to be rock'n'roll? But, yep, you guessed it, it's STRANGE rock'n'roll - it was recorded in 1995 by a band called the Psyclone Rangers, how could it FAIL to be strange rock'n'roll? Marvel as the Stooges and Lynyrd Skynyrd collide on the highway to hell. No-one walks away from the wreck unscathed.

★★★★ Max

## **THE RECORDS**

### **Smashes, Crashes And Near Misses (Virgin Choice Cuts)**

Cheap and cheerfully packaged, this twenty tracker is a must for anyone who likes their pop laced with jangly Rickenbackers and stuffed with tunes that linger longer than a mistress' perfume. Mary Chapin Carpenter, no slouch in the songwriting stakes, regularly encores with The Records' Hearts In Her Eyes and if it's good enough for her ... Bargain of the year.

★★★★ Steve Morris

## **RED HOUSE PAINTERS**

### **Ocean Beach (4AD)**

Given their past reputation as minimalist acoustic gloom merchants, this is something of a surprise. Not that it's exactly bubble gum or thrash and the songs still dwell on thoughts of isolation, loneliness and the stains of regret, but its couched in an English progressive folk feel that conjures up the purity of early Harper or Nick Drake. One which, despite the depression lingering beneath the vocal drone, moping piano, and brooding guitar that paint

these vignettes and landscapes, actually leaves you with the invigoration of running your hands through a clear stream.

★★★ Mike Davies

## **ROSA MOTA**

### **Wishful Sinking (Mute)**

Fairly dark and mournful stuff - not in a dreary sense - Asbestos Frenz is strong and menacing with some Blues Explosion type madness elbowing it's way in in the shape of Little White Horse. What light there is, comes in shafts through gaps between the planks boarding up the windows. The vocal interplay between Ian and Julie is dynamic, haunting and exciting. Gothily impressive. ★★★★★ Max

## **MICHAEL SHRIEVE**

### **Fascination (CMP)**

My fellow members of the Hammond Organ Appreciation Society will no doubt award their Gold medallion to Wayne Horvitz for his playing on this melange of mellow melodies. It may be drummer Shrieve's project, and he may take the bulk of the writing credits, but he willingly shares his space with both Horvitz and ace guitarist Bill Frisell.

They make sounds cosy enough for 3am coffee, trippy enough for partying, cool enough for seduction and yet energetic enough to drive to. Indeed, the only fault I can find with such a beautifully executed musical artefact as this is that it ends all too soon.

★★★★★ Andy Mabbett

## **CORKY SIEGEL**

### **Chamber Blues (Alligator / Direct Distribution)**

Here's the recipe; add some amplified and authentically hoary harmonica - of blues persuasion and played by the co-leader of The Siegel Schwall Band, a Chicago blues outfit of some notoriety in the 60s / 70s - to a classical string quartet and provide the rhythmic pulse with Indian tablas.

Curiously the resultant musical stew is a piquant, if acquired, taste.

★★ Steve Morris

## **THE SILENCERS**

### **So Be It (Permanent)**

When you've recorded an album as exceptional as Seconds of Pleasure containing in Cellar of Dreams perhaps one of the most emotionally moving songs of the past decade, whatever follows is bound to be anti-climactic. Unfortunately, and I say this as a long term fan, their first album since being ditched by RCA would be a disappointment whatever. While perfectly illustrating Jimmie O'Neill's description of his band as electric folk and the soulful vocals still capable of sending a shiver down the back of the neck, there simply doesn't seem to be quite the same spark of passion in either the performance or the songwriting (even on something as provocatively titled as Killing For God) that's characterised past albums. The achingly heart weary acoustic Celt folk of About The Sea comes close to the old magic, but then Hello Stranger is really the sort of stuff any run of the mill Scottish guitar band might turn out while Harry's Black Shadow just sounds like a cross between Steve Miller and the Stones. Doubly ironic then that the only time it really comes together with the old

spirit is on a stirring version of the old Scottish folk chestnut Wild Mountain Thyme, featuring O'Neill's daughter Aura. Put it down to experience and trust the next one rekindles the fire.

★★★ Mike Davies

## **THE SKIDS**

### **The Best Of (Virgin Choice Cuts)**

Pocket money compilation of Into The Valley, Charles, Yankee Dollar and all you could sensibly want of the guitar swirl that was to fragment into Big Country and a TV presenter. Truth is, hits aside, this really hasn't travelled well at all.

★★ Sam Mitchell

## **SLOWLY**

### **Ming (Chill Out)**

On a label like Chill Out, what d'YOU think this is like? Yeah, laid-back fare, sliding into the neat dub of the title track, then slipping into a loose, jazzy groove for On The Loose. The smooth, instrumental vibes continue throughout the rest of the album, resulting in a well-calming, soothing affair. Bathing music.

★★★ Max

## **STRANGWAYS**

### **And The Horse (Unity)**

A new label set up by leading music industry supply company John Henry Enterprises launches with the debut album from a Scottish trio who've been likened to a cross between Pink Floyd and U2. Not hard to see why with the Gilmour style guitars and the moody Celtic coloured drama rock, this is sophisticated stuff designed to appeal to owners of expensive hi fi systems and readers of Mojo. But while there's no faulting the quality of the musicianship, some of which is tasty indeed, and Over You goes some way to lingering in the mind the overall impression left by the album is pretty much an inconsequential one.

★★ Mike Davies

## **MARTY STUART**

### **Marty Stuart (MCA)**

Stuart dresses in glitzy, pure country rhinestones plays an acoustic guitar that was Hank Sr.'s and an electric that was Clarence White's. What's more, he roams the country in a bus that was the legendary Ernest Tubbs'. He's country through and through.

And that'll keep a huge chunk of an audience that Coal Porter Sid Griffin suggests 'can't deal with country music' away from his brilliant guitar picking, his admirable vocals and the humour and sheer entertainment of his music.

And let's just guess whose loss that's gonna be!

★★★★ Steve Morris

## **MATTHEW SWEET**

### **100% Fun (Zoo Entertainment)**

Building on the ground developed by Girlfriend and the more guitar aggressive Altered Beast, Sweet's latest excursion into scowling power pop is an amalgam of the two, noisy and gritty when needs be (Super Baby) but also melodically melancholic and mournful (I Almost Forgot), ensuring him the attention of both the Green Day Johnny

come lately and those who've been following the plot for some time, indeed We're The Same and Come To Love could well pick up the odd REM listener. Richard Lloyd and Robert Quine are still aboard and Sweet's lyrics still edge towards the bitter alleyways of life and love. In other words, just what you like, honed even closer to perfection and, in the closing almost orchestral Smog Moon, an appetising vision of what may lie ahead.

★★★★ Mike Davies

## TANGERINE DREAM

**Phaedra / Rubycon / Ricochet / Stratosfear (Virgin)**

Definitive Edition re-release for the founding fathers of ambient's most commercially successful quartet. It's a simple formula really; orchestrated washes of analogue synthesiser with or without a bed of simple sequencer.

That said it was, at the time, a groundbreaking sound and one without which the current scene may have come to sound rather different. For me, there's more heart in the technically more primitive soundscapes on offer here; maybe the simple physical act of wrestling the colours out of the obstinate beasts that were mid seventies Moogs and Arps imbued the music with a certain bloodrush. Maybe the musicians simply had to try that bit harder to create what is so easy to sample now. Sure there's what might be called a naiveté running through these four discs but rather than the staleness of the new Orb or the self-consciousness of recent Sven Vath offerings.

★★★★ / ★★★★★ / ★★★★★ / ★★★★★

Steve Morris

## THE TEA PARTY

**The Edges of Twilight (Chrysalis)**

Having been bewitched by Splendor Solis and its evocation of Jim Morrison fronting folk rock Zeppelin, anticipation was high for the sequel. In essence this is more of the same. Only more so. And pretentious, oh yes. The press release quoting Jeff Martin saying "We wanted to obliterate the normal categories of perception in which a musical recording is placed" sounds the early warning signals. They've surged further into Eastern territory, adding assorted Indian instruments and tantric rhythms and, even roped in Roy Harper for a spoken word contribution on the title track. References to the muse, the goddess, the earth and things metaphysical, wrapped up in big surging swells of stoned psychedelia, counterpointed by English folkish guitar filigrees and bluesy trances, fixes this more firmly in the Morrison shaman firmament than Plant's Asian orbit. It's a beautifully constructed work, tracks like Shadows on The Mountainside, Sister Awake and Turn The Lap Down Low weaving between delicacy and muscle with hypnotic majesty, but ultimately it is incredibly derivative and whether you regard them as Wayne Hussey meets Rush or the answer to An American Prayer rather depends on whether you open the doors of perception with cynicism or awe.

★★★★ Mike Davies

## VARIOUS

**Cool Sounds For A Warm Night (Music Club)**

Compiled by Vox and NME man Roy Carr, this 18 track jazz cocktail may prove a mite obvious to the seasoned listener but at £5.99 and 76 minutes its brew of Paul Desmond, Chet Baker, Gerry Mulligan, Zoot Sims and other hip names will prove a welcoming snare for many who'd otherwise pass jazz by.

★★★ Sam Mitchell

## VARIOUS

**Deep Beats Series (Deep Beats / Sequel)**

This Is It! (Music Club)  
Old School Rap with SUGARHILL GANG's 8th Wonder and GRANDMASTER FLASH's groundbreaking The Message alongside offerings from TROUBLE FUNK and more simply demonstrates how bereft of inspiration, soul and humour the modern day inheritors of the form are. *Essential Dance Floor Classics Vol.2* is equally adamant in demonstrating that the current pupils learned little from such masters as SYLVESTER, SHARON REDD and SHALAMAR. And MONYAKA's one off hit Go Deh Yaka remains a supreme fusion of reggae and dance. *Essential 70s Modern Soul* is perhaps less vital with THE MOMENTS frothy soul pop standing tall amid a collection that's more nostalgia than truly essential. *Essential Slow Groove 2* is exactly that ... sexy soul that makes the swing phenomenon sound like a quick knee trembler by comparison. ★★★ (average mark!)

Music Club's budget release - £5.99 on CD for 18 strong cuts - sticks to the pop end of dance with an almost faultless overview of 70s handbag with MELBA MOORE, TRAMMPS, THE REAL THING, GLADYS KNIGHT, JIMMY JAMES and what ANDREA TRUE CONNECTION quite rightly designate, More More More.

★★★ Sam Mitchell

## VARIOUS

**Live At The Roxy (Magnum)**

I bought this when it first came out in 1978 (on vinyl, natch!). It was actually called Farewell To The Roxy then, featuring a host of extremely loose punk bands saying good-bye to a venue that was central to the scene in 1977. The best and tightest bands included are the mighty Billy Karloff & The Goats (!), The Jets and Open Sore. I can still get a buzz from this ramshackle racket.

★★★ Max

## VARIOUS

**Till The Night Is Gone: A Tribute To Doc Pomus (Rhino)**

Rock scholars will know of Pomus if only as part of the mantra Pomus / Shuman a team of song sculptors in the same divinity as Goffin / King and Lennon McCartney. Others may know him as the inspiration behind Lou Reed's Magic And Loss set.

As tribute albums go all you really need to know is that among the fourteen songs are Sweets For My Sweet, I Count The Tears, This Magic Moment, Lonely Avenue and Save The Last Dance For Me. Among the performers - Bob Dylan, Brian Wilson, Dion, John Hiatt, Los Lobos, The Band, Aaron Neville ...

★★★★ Steve Morris

## WARRANT

**Ultraphobic (CMC International)**

Cheesy ballads aside, it's a shame that bands like Warrant (and there are MANY bands like Warrant) remain terminally unhip, because a lot of what they do centres around quite neat grooves. But that's as far as my sympathy goes. Ultraphobic is yer archetypal Californian cock-rock.

★★★ Max

## WEBB WILDER

**Town & Country (Watermelon / Direct Distribution)**

As Webb himself'll tell ya in his spoken intro - which perversely comes at track 5 - this is like a road cassette except it's all played by Webb and the guys. A collection of fave songs that'll make travellin', partyin' or suppin' Rebel Yell that bit spicier.

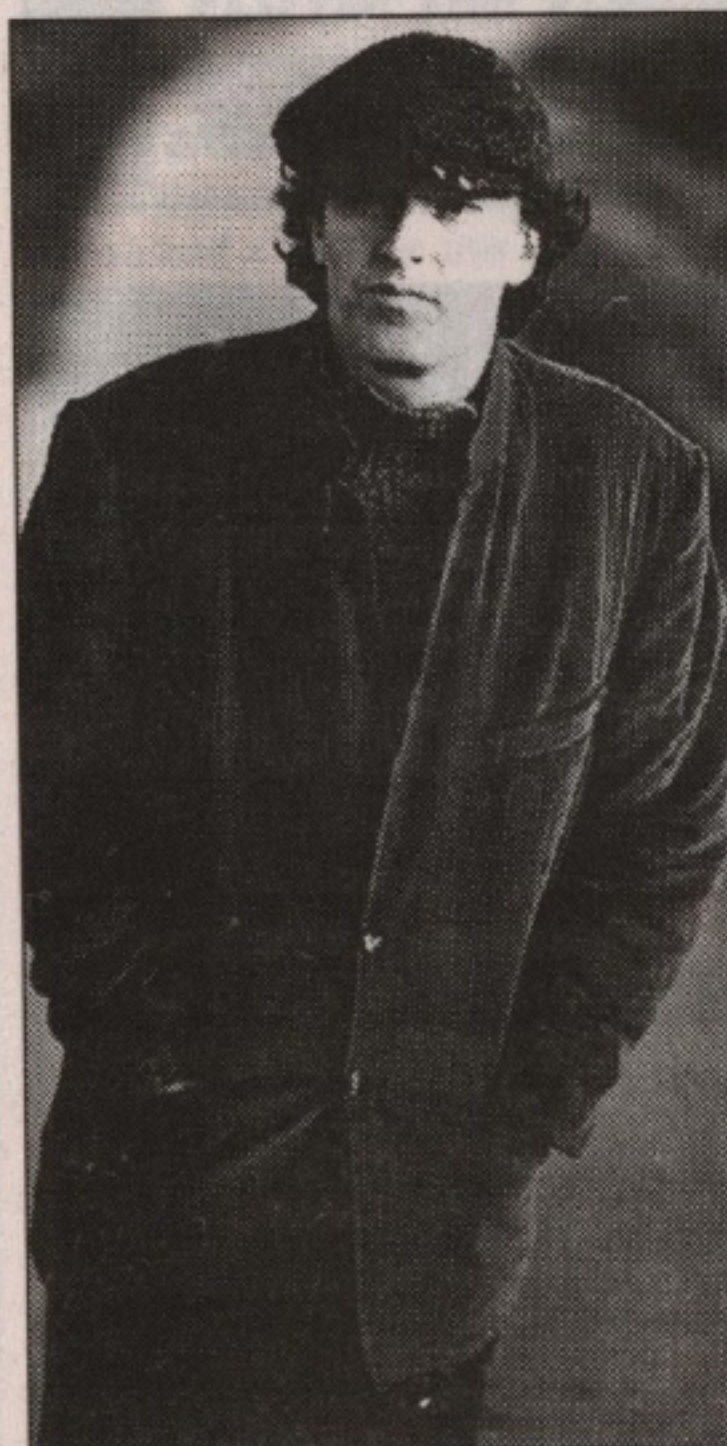
And that means Webb's countrified take on The Small Faces (My Mind's Eye) and Goldfinger, yup the Bond theme as well as The Streets Of Laredo and Honky Tonk Hell.

But you know what? Ol' Webb just loves music so it all fits together just swell and by the end of your journey, hop or bottle you'll just wanna start all over again. It's time to join the world wide Webb.

★★★ Steve Morris

## STEVE WINWOOD

**The Finer Things (Island)**



Ah, yes, the four CD box set, the record industry's equivalent of the gold watch. The ultimate packaging of back catalogue if you want to be cynical.

Truth is these packages can be helpful in creating a panoramic snapshot of an artist's development and overall value. And this Winwood box - or rather hard back book with CDs pinned to the covers, a style which Island with their exemplary Marley and reggae sets championed - certainly lands in that category.

As is becoming predictable, the remastering is A1 and the 48 book's information absolute; though here John McDermott's essay seems a mite shallow. Why, for example does the story abruptly end with

**recorded  
delivery**

1988's Roll With It album thus denying 1990's Refugees Of The Heart and the reformed Traffic. They may be on a different label but one track from Refugees has been licensed for the set and the sleeve of Traffic's Far From Home is reproduced.

There's an importance beyond completeness in the lacking new Traffic tracks too, because for me one thing that the set reveals is the importance of collaboration in Steve Winwood's career. After all it was jamming in his father's jazz band and other Birmingham jazz outfits that prepared the 15 year old wonderkid for his dominating role in the Spencer Davis Group, whose hits launch the box set (aside - surely the version of Gimme Some Lovin' included here is not, as claimed, the hit single version) and it was his time with Traffic, who are all present, curiously enough, on Spencer Davis' I'm A Man and Gimme Some Lovin', that consolidated his genius. There is, as you would expect a lot of Traffic here. There are also generous examples of his time with Blind Faith, including previously unissued material and the Stomu Yamashta and Winwood / Kabaka / Amao projects.

Strangely the promise of his solo debut album was hardly kept by the ensuing and commercially hugely successful sets. With Winwood in the driving seat - alone - they were less fulfilling as they went on. So, to bring it full circle, Traffic reform and from the comfort of a band Winwood is better than he has been for a good while. The truth is that the spotlight is still on him, maybe he simply believes that he's one of the boys.

What this stunning sixty three track resume ultimately proves is just that; he needs to believe that he's one of the band in order to be at his most creative, though in the final analysis, he is simply too talented a singer, guitar and keyboard player to be able to remain undetected in anyone's shadow.

★★★★ Steve Morris

## STEVIE WONDER

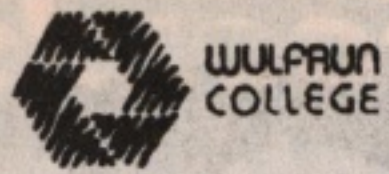
**Conversation Peace (Motown)**

It's been a long time coming, seven years is it, and the last album was a patchy affair so in some senses the reputation of indisputable soul genius Stevie Wonder is on the line. And what do we get - a hung jury. For whilst Wonder's vocals remain as smoothly seductive as ever, there are a couple of problems; one is that a thirteen track album clocking in at nearly eighty minutes is too long, many of these tracks need judicious editing and the other is that Wonder's annexing of current dance production sounds is irritating. After all when the influence needs to crib from the influenced ... need we say more.

It is not a bad record overall, but it could be a cracking record if Wonder had perhaps sought advice from Nellee Hooper or Jazze B rather than stubbornly carrying all the weight himself.

★★

Sam Mitchell



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## REVOLUTION IN THE HEAD

Ian MacDonald (4th Estate)

This is at least the third book in recent times to examine the Beatles' oeuvre song by song; fortunately, all have something to offer. John Robertson's *The Beatles (Omnibus)* is an ideal, pocket sized beginners' intro, reviewed in issue 163, while Steve Turner's *A Hard Day's Write* (Little Brown) is a coffee-table book, rich with rare and appropriate illustrations.

However, this heavy tome (MacDonald's other book is a biography of Shostakovich) is the most in-depth, the most analytical and ultimately, the most interesting. Take, for example, the four-and-a-half page examination of the Avant Garde which is the entry for Revolution No. 9. Not exactly the most whistle-able Lennon-McCartney (OK, just Lennon) composition, but MacDonald succeeds in making its importance in the history of the band - of rock music - clearly apparent. Not all the entries are as long, but the same amount of thought has gone into each - even those for the early rock'n'roll and pop numbers.

This volume couldn't be more un-put-down-able if each copy was impregnated with superglue. Andy Mabbett

## PEEPHOLISM - INTO THE ART OF MORRISSEY

Jo Slee (Sidgwick & Jackson)

Books of record sleeves tend to be more ephemeral than their subject - after you've seen them once, you'll probably never look at them again and, anyway, you probably have the records you are

most interested in, anyway. This is different. First, it's written by the woman who has collaborated with Morrissey on his (and the Smiths', who are covered equally fully) visuals for some time. Secondly, Morrissey has had more involvement in the selection and use of images connected to his work than most artists are able or willing to have. Thirdly, it doesn't just reprint sleeves, but intelligently explains how and why they were chosen, and offers an insight into failed and rejected designs. Fourthly, it's not just about record sleeves, but posters, advertising, stage shows, press reactions - the whole shooting match, if you'll pardon a photographic pun. Finally, it is sufficiently well put together to interest someone - not me! - with no taste whatsoever for the man's music or philosophy. Both they and the his fans will realise that the art of Morrissey gives an insight into the heart of Morrissey. Andy Mabbett

## BRYAN ADAMS - EVERYTHING HE DOES

Sorelle Saidman (Sidgwick & Jackson)

Despite the fact that Saidman spent time working for Adams, this biog is stitched together from press clippings and a variety of interviews with Adams sidemen - but no star. But then that seems reasonable as he comes across as a pretty naff kind of bloke anyway. The episode surrounding the writing of 'his' record breaking Robin Hood song is particularly revealing. Adams, a reserve choice after all real contenders had dissed the opportunity, adds some words and tinkers with



what's new in print?

Michael Kamen's original work; for this he wants major royalty share claiming to have made a racehorse from Kamen's donkey. Subsequently a live donkey is dumped outside of Kamen's front-door. There are other instances of pettiness that jar with the everyman image too, but then, for goodness sake, who really cares. A biography of Bryan Adams must be as unnecessary as, well one of Def Leppard. Steve Morris

## BIOGRAPHIZE: THE DEF LEPPARD STORY

Dave Dickson (Sidgwick & Jackson)

The rags to riches tale of a Yorkshire rock combo told by a man who listens to The Sisters Of Mercy for recreation. Obsessives only. Sam Mitchell

## PINK FLOYD: THE VISUAL DOCUMENTARY

Miles & Andy Mabbett (Omnibus)

That's right Master Mabbett of this very parish had a hand in this glossy career resume, though one has to wonder about his future in rock - after all his album sleeve style thank-yous singularly fail to mention God, surely a prerequisite these days! That aside the book itself, to which Andy contributes an exhaustive discography is a sumptuously illustrated diary style account of the band's career from

formation through to October '94 (when the book was sent to the printers).

The conundrum is that surely the band's real fans already have this information and the newcomers - those who joined the trip via the middle class safe marketing of The Division Bell possibly don't give a hoot for the flesh and bones that make up this week's fashion accessory. And what will those who do make of the Floyd's first steps and Syd Barrett? Indeed when faced with such a work themselves how do the band reconcile their present endeavours with the sheer energy of their early ambition. Steve Morris

## THE CURE ON RECORD

Daren Butler (Omnibus)

This is the sort of book that snares fan and simply curious alike. It's a generously and colourfully illustrated factual listing of The Cure on vinyl and almost any format that succeeded it. Listing everything from domestic 7" singles to Brazilian promo 12"ers it's either an Aladdin's Cave of unseen wonders, a shopping list or a source of never to be requited lust.

What intrigues is that despite the band's carefully cultured alternative image, they are obviously as adept at the marketing game as any less right on outfit, and the evidence is here for all to see; page after page of promos, alternative formats - the works. It doesn't however mention the only Cure track I own - Friday I'm In Love as an MTV promo CD. Sam Mitchell

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## lord haw haw

Requested to honour their little get together with His Gracious Presence, His Lordship duly presented himself at Ronnie Scott's for BBC wireless's launch of Music Live 95 during which assorted lesser luminaries proceeded to inform the gathered gentlemen of the media (though not of course any representatives of commercial radio who will, presumably, pretend none of the events are happening) about the details of their five days of live music and broadcasting in Birmingham towards the end of May. His Lordship understands that among the many joyous moments scheduled for the delectation of the denizens of this fair city, the BBC are singularly responsible for ensuring that teenage pop ensemble East 17 added Birmingham to their tour, curiously absent from the original itinerary. However, perhaps the finest moment of the proceedings came when erstwhile head of Radio One million lis-

teners lost every week, Johnny Beerling, announced the search to find the busker of the year, though His lordship was bemused to hear Beerling proudly declare that BBC was an acronym for Britain's Best Busker. Silly bunt. His Lordship would have been delighted to follow Beerling's invitation to question further the BBC's representatives of local and national radio, but sadly, as Ronnie's is still feeling the financial pinch and was therefore unable to stretch to turning on the lights, even if one could make oneself heard over the din of the BBC Big Band duffers, one felt it a little inelegant to have to peer closely at people's chests to try and discern the scribbled name on their identity labels. Perhaps the press releases were also produced in similar lighting conditions. How else to explain twice misspelling that highly acclaimed young folk artist Eliza Carthy as Eliuza.

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the Vicious Circle (15), Henry V (PG), Unbearable Lightness of Being (18), The Tin Drum (18),  
Black Narcissus (PG), Priest (15), Four Weddings and a Funeral (15), Pulp Fiction (18), Citizen  
Cane (PG), Shallow Grave (18), Suture (18), The Red Shoes (PG)

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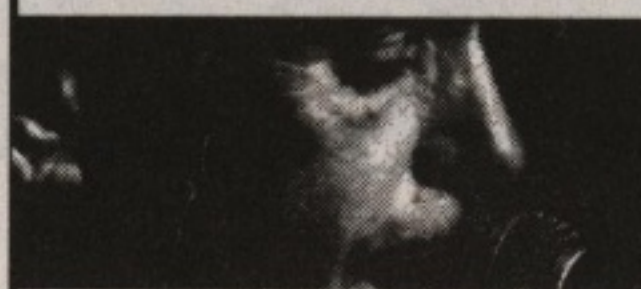
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## THE INTERVIEW:

### SCANNER -

#### A.K.A. ROBIN RIMBAUD

George Orwell's vision of a controlled society where others watch your every move was a frightening idea in a novel, but now it's almost become a reality in the field of music too. By using bugging devices and new technology, Robin Rimbaud (a.k.a. Scanner) taps into telephone conversations and uses them in his musical montages. It's an invasion of privacy for the purposes of creative entertainment, but it's also a 'stealing' process that goes one step beyond mere 'sampling'. Robin Rimbaud trades in a technique that raises some disturbing ethical questions. "Society has no privacy anymore, and my music is proof of that. Scanners can tap into anyone's private conversations, and you don't need expensive or sophisticated technology either. You can pick up a radio receiver or scanner for £99 from Tandy's that could listen in over a couple of miles, or £200 for something with a bigger range, spanning ten miles or more." The fact that spying equipment is so readily available on the high street is worrying enough, but Robin 'Scanner' Rimbaud has something even more sinister up his sleeve.

"I've got scanners that can even tap into hearing aids that people wear, so I can listen to their conversations through their ear-piece. Technology has made sure that nothing is private."

Before the release of his new album *SPORE*, Scanner's *Mass Observation 12* was regarded as probably his best work. He's played with Orbital and Mixmaster Morris, and thrilled the faithful at the Phoenix Festival with an ingenious combination of live scanning and mixing. He's a non-stop workaholic, having previously worked on the soundtrack for Derek Jarman's film, *The Last Of England*, edited a video magazine, and most surprising of all, Scanner was even asked to do the next series of Coca Cola TV adverts. He's off next to do an art installation with Brian Eno in Vienna, and then deliver a public lecture on the same platform as the police, on the dangers of state surveillance!

Everyone from the Melody Maker to the Guardian wants to talk to Scanner about his activities. Apart from the Big Brother implications, where do the stolen conversations all come from?

"Everywhere. One of my tracks includes a threatening phone call that was made to me when I was 15 years old. Others include telephone sex lines, and just normal couples arguing. People always ask if I ever try to tap phones of famous people, but I don't - only because they've got nothing interesting to say! It doesn't matter whether you're listening to astronaut in space or a taxi driver in Peckham, they're still probably just discussing whether to have an egg or a ham sandwich. Life is all about the little mundanities we take for granted, not any big secrets. Real life is much more interesting."

Scanner's album *Spore* is out now, on the *New Electronica* label.

After my recent romantic break-up, I'm feeling a little better this month, but that old loving feeling has probably gone missing for a good while yet. You can fix a car in a jiffy, but you can't mend a heart that easily, so while I

endure the hopeless wait for the next perfect girl to turn up in my life, I'd better get on with the reviews.

### THE HOT ALBUMS

CARL COX's legendary techno set is released on a double CD, with pumping, thrilling selections from Quench, Union Jack, Joey Beltram, The Aloof, Thomas Heckman, and Carl Cox himself. F.A.C.T. could become one of the essential albums to have in any collection.

APOLLO 440's *Millennium Fever* LP is determined to make full use of the lethal combination that always upsets the purists - techno with guitars. Sticking to their guns, Apollo 440 have created plenty of real highlights. *En-Trancing* opener *Rumble / Spirit of America* sets the high standard which Apollo 440 never let slip, and they even have some fun with an acidic version of *Don't Fear The Reaper*. Yes, that song! Despite the stigma (huh?) of belonging to a major label, this LP puts Apollo 440 right back up there.

Mashed-up African rhythms and wavering electronic moods characterise the double CD from MOODY BOYZ. With 7 equally intriguing mixes of 3 tunes: *Destination Africa*, *Pygmy Song*, and *Shango* among the 18 tracks, Moody Boyz turn the much-maligned remix into a useful creative tool. Using hints of soft jungle, scraps of techno and all kinds of electric paraphernalia bolted together into a usable product with the help of some dub, *Recycled For The Environment* seems a very appropriate title for this interesting bag of hard-to-categorise techno.

Minimal is a scarcely adequate description for ENTROPICA which is a floating, fragile piece. The resonance on Entropica has a curiously calming effect, allowing soft auras to melt slowly into your ears. Rather nice and one you could go back to many times and still find something new. By way of contrast, AROUND THE DAY IN 80 WORLDS (*Explorations In Tribal trance*) bumps up the BPMs with unexpected shudders and throbs fleshing out the meaty trance formula. The *Talking Windmill* by CROWBAR is particularly excellent, adding experimental ingredients to trance. SOLAR QUEST's *One Nation* is awesome!

This month's s compilations are excellent, especially NEW ELECTRONICA VOL.5. Showcasing juicy titbits from artists who are neither European, Japanese or American, but exclusively from Britain, the style is intriguingly different from the Euro sound, and the quality is high throughout, though without anything approaching a definitive classic. HAPPY ANTHEMS VOL.2 threatens to wipe away the shadow left by overbearing -junglist sounds, and replace it with a smile. It's hardcore from the rave genre, but with pleasing new variations - 6 Days by JIMMY J and CRU-L-T sounds best. ACID FLASHBACK is a more traditional look at rave culture, with contributions from luminaries like Detroit legend Derrick May (as Mayday), Baby Ford, Fast Eddie and Bam Bam.

The mainstream dance sector churns out CLUB BUZZ VOL. 1, and although it's obviously commercial, with hits like Loveland's *I Need Somebody*, it's a cred-

# plug me in

Andy Tippers Monthly Guide To Electro, Ambient And The Dance Underground

This Month: An Interview With The In Demand  
SCANNER ... Hot Albums ... Hot Singles ...  
Que Club Door Policy Questioned ...



itable album. THE ASCENSION COLLECTION is a belter, with some delicious popular dance tunes from the underground. Caspar Pound, Positive Science, OBX, and the divine Plavka all receive an inspired mix by Francesco Farfa.

TECHNOPUNK is a brand new selection compiled by Melody Maker's ORBIT columnist Ben Turner, featuring European interpretations of the original Detroit techno music. Vienna's Patrick Pulsinger comes up with a techno-jazz sound, contrasting with the electro-gospel sound of French-based Nuages. Germany and Amsterdam also find some soul, Detroit legend Eddie Flashin' Fowlkes adds some blissful strings, while Glasgow's Slam dollop on the beats. It's smooth, classy and inventive, making it a brilliant album. Buy it.

(Or win it! *Brum Beat* has 5 CD copies of *Technopunk* to give to the senders of the first five cards sent to *Technopunk* - at the usual *Blag!* address - that are pulled on May 1st.) Finally, Nation's new compilation CREATIVE, INNOVATIVE, UNCOMPROMISING sets out to be exactly that by mixing Eastern rhythms with hip hop. Throwing new twists into the niche first carved by Transglobal Underground, the LP is perhaps too varied in its approach, throwing together too many styles.

### THE HOT SINGLES

GPR are busy with a trio of releases, From NEV, GERM, and best of all from 7th PLAIN (a.k.a. Luke Slater). Anything from Luke Slater is brilliant by me, and his

characteristic silver rhythm that sounds like 'steel coming alive' makes his *Shadows Amaze* EP the month's best single. LOOP GURU's *Shrinic Visions* is not far behind with six Eastern mixes to whet Eastern appetites. ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION is a deeper forage into cross-cultural music on the Nation label. Hardcore bass and drum singles from BABY DOC (Eurotic), DOMINATRIX (*Possession Remixes*), ALEC EMPIRE's *Generation Star Wars* also deserves a mention.

### THE QUE CLUB

A monster good time was had by thousands of revellers - and myself - at the recent Que Club all-nighter with BANDULU (complete with lasers), spoilt only by the needless ban on alcohol. It was great, except for one or two problems getting in.

There was a ridiculously long wait to get in - an hour - even if you had a ticket, followed by some ludicrously detailed body searches. Even worse was the disgraceful way that girls were treated. Without explanation, they were separated from their partners and kept waiting outside even longer, only to have their handbags unceremoniously emptied over a table when they finally got in. The blokes inside were then herded upstairs, not even allowed to wait for their girlfriends to re-join them. *The Que Club* might like to note, that when people pay £10 to go somewhere, they don't deserve to be treated like cattle or criminals, so how about a proper welcome next time?

# GIG guide

ADMIT ONE

Please send details of the event, band, name of show plus some background if possible, along with the address and phone number of the venue with booking details and ticket prices. If you have a good photograph, it could help too. Take note that without such info your gig could go unlisted as we need to give your potential audience as much reason to come along as we can.

The deadline for the Gig Guide is the sixteenth of the month preceding the cover date, though you can send info as far ahead as you wish. Send it to Gig Guide,

Brum Beat, 54 Canterbury Road, Wolverhampton, WV4 4EH.

## rock & pop

### SATURDAY 1 APRIL

- **WILD BILL HICCUP'S SATURDAY SESSION:** 2 - 4pm - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **WAY OF LIFE:** A new band with a pedigree borne of members time with Swan, Reg Jones (I), Mack & The Boys, Vincent Flatts, Steelwater Gang and The Applejacks. 8.30pm Tickets Free - Spring Cottage, Sheffield, Sutton Coldfield. Tel: 01922 691315.
- **TRAVIS CUT:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **THE VELVET UNDERPANTS:** Tasteful tunes a speciality... *skul.* - The Rock Tavern, Brierley Hill. Tel: 01384 77224.
- **SKULDUGGERY:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.
- **SHUTDOWN / TARBRUSH:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE / SYMPHONY IN SLANG / THE LAST RIDE:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **BLUE VELVET:** - The Lamp Tavern, Barford Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 622 2599.
- **BIG TOWN PLAYBOYS:** Tickets £9 - Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 4525.
- **4 ON THE FLOOR:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.

### SUNDAY 2 APRIL

- **COBRA:** - The Rock Tavern, Brierley Hill. Tel: 01384 77224.
- **HUE & CRY:** Tickets £TBC - Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 4525.

### TUESDAY 4 APRIL

- **FOUR ON THE FLOOR:** - The George & Dragon, Church Street, Brownhills. Tel: 01543 372047.
- **PARIAH:** Heavy rock band... 8pm Tickets £2 (£1 concessions) - Sloan's, Sutton Coldfield. Tel: 0527 503343.
- **PEEPSHOW / VENUS:** Tickets £3 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.

### WEDNESDAY 5 APRIL

- **THE MISFITS / SAHARA DARC:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **WAY OF LIFE:** 8.30pm Tickets Free - Xtreme Wine Bar, Stratford Road, Shirley

### THURSDAY 6 APRIL

- **HERB:** - The Flapper & Firkin, Cambrian Wharf, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 236 2421.
- **LETICIA / WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS:** Tickets £3 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **SWAMPMANGIRL / EYZ:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **THE THURSDAY NIGHT MUSIC CLUB:** 8.30pm Tickets £2.50 - The Connaught Hotel, Tattenhall Road, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 24433.
- **THROBBIN' BOB:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.
- **WAY OF LIFE:** 8.30pm Tickets Free - The Station, High Street, Kings Heath. Tel: 0121 444 1257.

### FRIDAY 7 APRIL

- **AUTOMATIC POPE / INFECTIOUS:** 8.30pm Tickets £2.50 - The Hibernian, Pershore Road, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **BALLROOM GLITZ:** - Kings Highway, Quinton
- **CLOUD 9:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.

- **FOUR ON THE FLOOR:** - The Adam & Eve, Bradford Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 693 1500.
- **FRED ZEPPELIN:** The officially sanctioned Led Zep tribute band... - The Hollybush, Penn Road, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 342164.
- **HALLUCINATION / AUTOMATIC POPE / TRAGIC LOVE COMPANY:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **RACHEL'S BASEMENT:** A band with more than its fair share of songs with crafted melodies and lyrics... - The Jug Of Ale, Alcester Road, Moseley, Birmingham
- **STANLEY BAGSHAW:** - The Jug Of Ale, Alcester Road, Moseley, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 449 1082.
- **VINCENT FLAT'S FINAL DRIVE / JACK DANIEL'S DAY:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **WEIRD'S WAR:** New single, *Beat It Off / Perry Farrell* is released on *La La Land Recordings* on April 3. - Market Tavern, Comberton Hill, Kidderminster

### SATURDAY 8 APRIL

- **EARTH / SERENE MACHINE / DOYENNE:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **FOUR ON THE FLOOR:** - The Yenton, Sutton Road, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 373 1130.
- **SAHARA DARE:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.
- **STANLEY BAGSHAW:** - The New inn, Salop Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 23779.
- **STUBBLE BROTHERS / UTOPIA:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **WAY OF LIFE:** 8.30pm Tickets Free - Duke Of York, Harborne. Tel: 0121 427 4936.
- **WILD BILL HICCUP'S SATURDAY SESSION:** 2 - 4pm - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.

### SUNDAY 9 APRIL

- **FOUR ON THE FLOOR:** - The Bull & Bladder (The Vine), Delph Road, Brierley Hill. Tel: 01384 78293.
- **THEN JERICHO:** Tickets £10 - Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 4525.

### MONDAY 10 APRIL

- **HEADCHECK / X CREW / NEGATIVE EARTH:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **MOIST:** The hotly tipped Canadian live piece on tour to support their new *Chrysalis* single, *Freaky Be Beautiful*. - Edwards No.8, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 5835.
- **THE BOO RADLEYS:** The best damn *Wake Up call* you'll ever hear!! Tickets £7 - Wulfrun Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 312030.

### TUESDAY 11 APRIL

- **BRUCE DICKINSON:** Touring with his new permanent band - as featured on the double live, *Alive In Studio A (Raw Power)* album... - JB's, Castle Hill, Dudley
- **DELIVERANCE:** Very 'heavy rock'... 8pm Tickets £2 (£1 concessions) - Sloan's, Sutton Coldfield. Tel: 0527 503343.
- **LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE / SYMPHONY IN SLANG / THE LAST RIDE:** Tickets £3 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.

### WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL

- **SHAKIN STEVENS:** Tickets £11 / £10 - Civic Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 312030.
- **VALOU / DOMINION / FATE AND DESTINY:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **WAY OF LIFE:** 8.30pm Tickets Free - Xtreme Wine Bar, Stratford Road, Shirley

### THURSDAY 13 APRIL

- **FRED ZEPPELIN:** - The Spring Cottage, Lichfield Road, Sheffield, Walsall. Tel: 01922 691315.
- **INFECTIOUS:** - Jug Of Ale, Alcester Road, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 449 0182.
- **MENTALGEN / WEDGE:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **ONE GREAT DAY:** Pop influenced from 70s to the present... 8pm Tickets Free - Great Western, Yardley Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 707 4350.
- **PRESS DARLINGS:** A return to live action with a new line-up... - The Hibernian, Pershore Road, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **ROYAL SNAKES:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.
- **SERENE MACHINE:** - Jug Of Ale, Alcester Road, Moseley, Birmingham
- **THE HOLLIES:** Tickets £13.50 / £12.50 / £1 - Civic Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 312030.
- **THE THURSDAY NIGHT MUSIC CLUB:** A solo acoustic appearance for the man of the moment at *The Thursday Night Music Club*... 8.30pm Tickets £2.50 - The Connaught Hotel, Tattenhall Road, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 24433.
- **WAY OF LIFE:** 8.30pm Tickets Free - The Station, High Street, Kings Heath. Tel: 0121 444 1257.

### FRIDAY 14 APRIL

- **BALLROOM GLITZ:** - The Queens Head, Redditch
- **D:RUNK / No.9:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **FOUR ON THE FLOOR:** - The Adam & Eve, Bradford Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 693 1500.
- **KICK:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **UNLEASHED TRAUMA:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.

### SATURDAY 15 APRIL

- **BIG BUS GROOVY / VALOUS / ZIGYELLSEED:** 7.30pm Tickets £2 - Hare & Hounds, High Street, Kings Heath, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 444 2081.
- **CURTIS LITTLE:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **FOUR ON THE FLOOR:** - The Coach & Horses, Keeveven Way, West Bromwich. Tel: 0121 588 2136.
- **FRED ZEPPELIN:** - The Queens Head, Queen Street, Redditch. Tel: 0527 64166.
- **HERB:** - The Flapper & Firkin, Cambrian Wharf, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 236 2421.
- **NIGHTMARE SHOCK SHOW:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.
- **OEDIPUS COMPLEX:** 8.30pm - The Ship Ashore, Moor Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 7669.
- **ONE GREAT DAY:** 8pm Tickets Free - The Yenton, Sutton Road, Erdington, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 373 1130.
- **STANLEY BAGSHAW:** At a recent Wolverhampton gig 50% of the capacity audience purchased the Bagshaw's new *Until Tomorrow EP*... - The Paget Arms, Park Lane, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 731136.
- **THE BLAGGARDS / TANK TOP / KOOKABURRA:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.

### SUNDAY 16 APRIL

- **CARMEL:** With the new album, *World's Gone Crazy* demonstrating a determined commercial thrust, could be that Carmel's time has come... Tickets £10 - Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 4525.
- **ELVIS (PRESLEY) DISCO:** 7.30pm - 11pm Tickets £1 - Waggon & Horses, Cannock Road, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 453315.

### MONDAY 17 APRIL

- **ALAN PRICE:** He of the *Animals*, *Set and Combo*... 17-22 Apr Tickets £11 - Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 4525.
- **DAZ PUKE & THE VOMITS / METAL PIRATE GEESSE / PARIAN / INNOCENCE / DISORDER / CLOUD 9 / JAM JAM MAN:** Easter Monday All Dayer - all proceeds to *Beechcroft & Brunswick House* for the handicapped and *The Heart Foundation*. - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.
- **HERB:** - The Hibernian, Pershore Road, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 604 0136.
- **KAPOSVAR / JUSTIFIED / HERB:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **THE INNOCENCE:** Back on the road with new drummer *Martin Dolman*... - The Wheatsheaf, Cannock

### TUESDAY 18 APRIL

- **ALAN PRICE:** See 17th April for details.
- **AUTOMATIC POPE:** A mind boggling, self declared melange of *The Rutles*, *Squeeze*, *Aztec Camera* and *New Order*... 8.30pm Tickets £1.50 - Flapper & Firkin, Cambrian Wharf, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 236 2421.
- **JUST PLEAD GUILTY:** *Stompin' 'n' Moshin!* 8pm Tickets £2 (£1 concessions) - Sloan's, Sutton Coldfield. Tel: 0527 503343.
- **SLIPSTREAM / THE LIGHT:** Tickets £3 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.

### WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL

- **ALAN PRICE:** See 17th April for details.

- **ACRIMONEY / CHOKE ON IT / ZEUS:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **THE INNOCENCE:** - JB's, Castle Hill, Dudley
- **WAY OF LIFE:** 8.30pm Tickets Free - Xtreme Wine Bar, Stratford Road, Shirley

### THURSDAY 20 APRIL

- **ALAN PRICE:** See 17th April for details.
- **DOVER SOUL:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **FRANCIS DUNNERY:** - Prince Of Wales, Church Street, Cannock. Tel: 0543 578762.
- **FRED ZEPPELIN:** - The Kings Highway, Hagley Road, Quinton. Tel: 0121 422 2980.
- **MICKY GREANEY:** A solo acoustic appearance for the man of the moment at *The Thursday Night Music Club*... 8.30pm Tickets £2.50 - The Connaught Hotel, Tattenhall Road, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 24433.
- **SIX FEET UNDER:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.
- **WAY OF LIFE:** 8.30pm Tickets Free - The Station, High Street, Kings Heath. Tel: 0121 444 1257.

### FRIDAY 21 APRIL

- **ALAN PRICE:** See 17th April for details.
- **AFTERMATH:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.
- **BALLROOM GLITZ:** - The Rock Tavern, Brierley Hill. Tel: 01384 77224.
- **DIRTY DEEDS:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **EMMITT TILL & THE BACKYARD BAND:** - The Beaufort Arms, Hamstead, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 357 2662.
- **ERIC BELL BAND / SCREAMING MURDER:** Tickets £4 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **FRED ZEPPELIN:** - The Oasis, Station Road, Stone. Tel: 0785 818166.
- **SLOWBURNER:** New album, *A Few Little Imperfections*, is out now... - Queens Head, Redditch

### SATURDAY 22 APRIL

- **ALAN PRICE:** See 17th April for details.
- **BIG BUS GROOVY / ZIGYELL SEED:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **EMMITT TILL & THE BACKYARD BAND:** - The Adam & Eve, Bradford Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 693 1500.
- **NITZER EBB:** Tickets £6.50 - Wulfrun Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 312030.
- **ONE EYED JACK:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **ONE GREAT DAY:** 8pm Tickets Free - The Rose & Crown, Gravelly Lane, Erdington, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 373 1445.
- **SLOWBURNER:** - The Brewery Tap, Worcester
- **THE BUTTLES:** - The Wheatsheaf, Stafford Road, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503109.
- **WILD BILL HICCUP'S SATURDAY SESSION:** 2 - 4pm - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.

### SUNDAY 23 APRIL

- **FOUR ON THE FLOOR:** - The Bull & Bladder (The Vine), Delph Road, Brierley Hill. Tel: 01384 78293.
- **JEFF HEALEY:** Seeking *Reservoir Dog* cred with the new single - a cover of *Gerry Rafferty's Stuck In The Middle* from his better than feared *Cover To Cover* album... Tickets £12.50 - Civic Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 312030.
- **MICKY GREANEY:** A terrific writer and a charismatic performer with his own 12 piece orchestra. *Enormous success can only be a silver away*... Tickets £9 - Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 4525.
- **SUMMERLAND:** 9pm - The Rose & Crown, Town Centre, Warwick. Tel: 0926 492876.

### MONDAY 24 APRIL

- **FRED ZEPPELIN:** - Sloanes, South Parade, Sutton Coldfield. Tel: 0121 354 3461.
- **THE HERBIS:** 8.30pm - The Wherehouse, 110 Friargate, Derby. Tel: 0332 381169.
- **TOMORROW NEVER KNOWS / IDIOT DRUG HIVE:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.

### TUESDAY 25 APRIL

- **LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE / SYMPHONY IN SLANG / THE LAST RIDE:** Tickets £3 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **THE HUNGER PROJECT:** Indie rock... 8pm Tickets £2 (£1 concessions) - Sloan's, Sutton Coldfield. Tel: 0527 503343.

### WEDNESDAY 26 APRIL

- **BALLROOM GLITZ:** - JB's, Castle Hill, Dudley
- **DEAD ON IT:** - The Flapper & Firkin, Cambrian Wharf, Birmingham
- **WAY OF LIFE:** 8.30pm Tickets Free - Xtreme Wine Bar, Stratford Road, Shirley
- **WINTER OF TORMENT / CHAPEL OF REST / BREED:** Tickets £3 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.

### THURSDAY 27 APRIL

- **WAY OF LIFE:** 8.30pm Tickets Free - The Station, High Street, Kings Heath. Tel: 0121 444 1257.

- **THE THURSDAY NIGHT MUSIC CLUB:** 8.30pm Tickets £2.50 - The Connaught Hotel, Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 24433.
- **SPIN PLAYGROUND:** - Que Club, Corporation Street, Birmingham
- **SERENE MACHINE:** - Que Club, Corporation Street, Birmingham
- **ONE GREAT DAY:** 8pm Tickets Free - The Blue Brick (The Tap House), Brierley Hill. Tel: 01384 78448.
- **MARK TAYLOR:** *The show's called 'A Dead Ringer For Meatloaf' - another lookalike tribute scenario - but who the hell would want to admit to being a Loafalike? . 8pm Tickets £8.50 - The Gatehouse Theatre, Stafford. Tel: 01785 54653.*
- **HOLE:** *Is it pure cynicism to suggest that this band would be having a hard time selling out the smaller Wulfrun had not circumstance intervened? . Tickets £8 - Civic Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 312030.*
- **HEARTBREAKER / THE 3 AMOEBAS:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **FRED ZEPPELIN:** - The Robin R&B Club, Pedmore Road, Brierley Hill. Tel: 01384 77756.
- **DC FONTANA:** - The Old Hill, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 475 1337.
- **BALLROOM GLITZ:** - The Sandwell, West Bromwich

### FRIDAY 28 APRIL

- **BALLROOM GLITZ:** - The Manor Sports & Social Club, Halesowen
- **EMMITT TILL & THE BACKYARD BAND:** - The Green, Darlaston. Tel: 0121 526 5051.
- **LIGHTNIN' WILLIE & THE POOR BOYS / THE SUSANNA WOLFE BAND:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **OEDIPUS COMPLEX:** 8.30pm - The Hibernian, Pershore Road, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **OFFSPRING:** Tickets £7 - Civic Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 312030.
- **PORCUPINE TREE:** See *Blag!* - Flapper & Firkin, Cambrian Wharf, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 236 2421.
- **RABELASIAN:** - The Rock Tavern, Brierley Hill. Tel: 01384 77224.
- **THE BLUE RAUYS / THE DILLINGERS:** Tickets £2 - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.

### SATURDAY 29 APRIL

- **FRED ZEPPELIN:** - The Stage, Lowesmoor, Worcester. Tel: 01905 22177.
- **SPEEDIE BANTON:** Tickets £TBC - The Hibernian, 1063 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 0136.
- **STANLEY BAGSHAW:** - The New Inn, Salop Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 23779.
- **SUMMERLAND / EVE'S ATTIC:** 8.30pm with Late Bar! - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.
- **WILD BILL HICCUP'S SATURDAY SESSION:** 2 - 4pm - The Railway Lounge - O'Neill's Alehouse, 45 Curzon Street, Digbeth, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 333 6434.

### SUNDAY 30 APRIL

- **DC FONTANA:** - Tweedale Arms, Tamworth. Tel: 01827 62748.
- **ONE GREAT DAY:** 8pm Tickets Free - The Halfway House, Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 20778.

## roots

### FRIDAY 7 APRIL

- **SINGERS NIGHT:** *The Black Diamond Folk Song Club.* 8.30pm - The Red Lion, Warstone Lane, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 459 7061.

### SATURDAY 8 APRIL

- **ALLAN TAYLOR & MIKE SILVER:** - Red Lion, Vicarage Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham
- **LINTON KWESI JOHNSON:** *A rare live outing by the pioneering reggae poet. He'll be supported by Dennis Bovell, John Kpaye, Steve Gregory and Binta Breeze for this LKJ Records Showcase.* - The Que Club, Corporation Street, Birmingham
- **ZUMZEAUX:** - Red Lion, Vicarage Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham

### FRIDAY 14 APRIL

- **CHRIS WOOD & ANDY CUTTING:** *The Black Diamond Folk Song Club.* 8.30pm - The Red Lion, Warstone Lane, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 459 7061.

### SATURDAY 15 APRIL

- **EMMYLOU HARRIS / TRISHA YEARWOOD / MARTY STUART:** *Could well prove to be the country event of the year. Yearwood and Stuart may veer toward the middle of the road, though there's no denying the abundance of talent in both. Emmylou, however, seems to have found a second wind... and look out for Rodney Crow.* 7pm Tickets £16 / £14.50 - Symphony Hall, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 212 3333.
- **THE SHOESHINE BOYS:** *A 'footstompin' acoustic 3 piece blues'n'country' band - they tell us.* Tickets Free - The Lamp Tavern, Barford Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 449 2379.

### FRIDAY 21 APRIL

- **SINGERS NIGHT:** *The Black Diamond Folk Song Club.* 8.30pm - The Red Lion, Warstone Lane, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 459 7061.

### SATURDAY 22 APRIL

- **ARTISAN:** - Red Lion, Vicarage Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham

### FRIDAY 28 APRIL

- **BRIAN PETERS:** *The Black Diamond Folk Song Club.* 8.30pm - The Red Lion, Warstone Lane, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 459 7061.

### SATURDAY 29 APRIL

- **HARVEY ANDREWS:** - Red Lion, Vicarage Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham. 8pm Tickets £5.50 - MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 440 3838.

### SUNDAY 30 APRIL

- **SHARON SHANNON:** *The brilliant Irish accordion player with the imagination, skill and band to take jigs, reels and airs into the 21st century.* Tickets £TBC - Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 4525.

## blues & jazz

### SUNDAY 2 APRIL

- **SOUTHSIDE BIG BAND CHARITY SHOW:** *The music of Glen Miller / Stan Kenton / Count Basie.* 3pm Tickets £6 - Symphony Hall, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 01212 212 3333.
- **THEO TRAVIS GROUP:** Lunchtime gig - The Strathallan Hotel, Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 559 6205.

### MONDAY 3 APRIL

- **JOHN PIZZARELLI TRIO:** *Pizzarelli's fourth RCA Novus album. Dear Mr. Cole celebrates one Nat King, so expect to hear Nature Boy, Honeysuckle Rose, Sweet Lorraine, Route 66 and more from this acclaimed guitarist who has recently bill shared with one Frank Sinatra.* 3-8 Apr Tickets £8 - Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 4525.

### TUESDAY 4 APRIL

- **JOHN PIZZARELLI TRIO:** See 3rd April for details.
- **BLIND JIFF LEMON:** Tickets Free - The Royal Oak, Market Place, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503205.

### WEDNESDAY 5 APRIL

- **JOHN PIZZARELLI TRIO:** See 3rd April for details.

### THURSDAY 6 APRIL

- **JOHN PIZZARELLI TRIO:** See 3rd April for details.

### FRIDAY 7 APRIL

- **JOHN PIZZARELLI TRIO:** See 3rd April for details.

### SATURDAY 8 APRIL

- **JOHN PIZZARELLI TRIO:** See 3rd April for details.

### SUNDAY 9 APRIL

- **TIM ANMAN:** Lunchtime gig - The Strathallan Hotel, Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 559 6205.

### MONDAY 10 APRIL

- **JIMMY McGRUFF / HANK CRAWFORD:** *If cool, legendary jazzers with pose value are your bag... this is your gig.* 10-15 Apr Tickets £9 - Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 643 4525.

### TUESDAY 11 APRIL

- **JIMMY McGRUFF / HANK CRAWFORD:** See 10th April for details.
- **THE MOOCHERS:** Tickets Free - The Royal Oak, Market Place, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503205.

### WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL

- **JIMMY McGRUFF / HANK CRAWFORD:** See 10th April for details.

### THURSDAY 13 APRIL

- **JIMMY McGRUFF / HANK CRAWFORD:** See 10th April for details.

- **THE GLOUCESTER BLUES FESTIVAL:** *A major feast for bluesers with Philip Walker, Billy Boy Arnold, Jay Owens, Larry McCray, R.L. Burnside, Big Joe Louis and our very own King Pleasure & The Biscuit Boys headlining over at least a couple of dozen other worthies.* 13-17 Apr Tickets Various prices - cal - The Guildhall Arts Centre, 23 Eastgate Street, Gloucester. Tel: 01452 505089.

### FRIDAY 14 APRIL

- **JIMMY McGRUFF / HANK CRAWFORD:** See 10th April for details.
- **THE GLOUCESTER BLUES FESTIVAL:** See 13th April for details.

### SATURDAY 15 APRIL

- **JIMMY McGRUFF / HANK CRAWFORD:** See 10th April for details.
- **THE GLOUCESTER BLUES FESTIVAL:** See 13th April for details.

### SUNDAY 16 APRIL

- **THE GLOUCESTER BLUES FESTIVAL:** See 13th April for details.
- **MIKE HATTON'S INTO THE RED:** Lunchtime gig - The Strathallan Hotel, Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 559 6205.

### MONDAY 17 APRIL

- **THE GLOUCESTER BLUES FESTIVAL:** See 13th April for details.

### TUESDAY 18 APRIL

- **BLUES REVIEW:** Tickets Free - The Royal Oak, Market Place, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503205.

### WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL

- **TIM BERNE & BLOOD COUNT:** 8pm Tickets £6.50 - MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 440 3838.

### SUNDAY 23 APRIL

- **NICK SMITH QUINTET:** Lunchtime gig - The Strathallan Hotel, Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 559 6205.

### TUESDAY 25 APRIL

- **DAVE SMITH BLUES BAND:** Tickets Free - The Royal Oak, Market Place, Cannock. Tel: 01543 503205.

### THURSDAY 27 APRIL

- **TI JAZ:** *Red hot Breton dance music combining traditional 'jazz' instruments and traditional Breton bombarde and accordion.* 8pm Tickets £6.50 - MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 440 3838.

### SUNDAY 30 APRIL

- **TREVOR LINES / ANITA WARDELL QUARTET:** Lunchtime gig - The Strathallan Hotel, Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 559 6205.

## dance / soul / R&B

### SATURDAY 1 APRIL

- **HOUSE OF GOD:** *Guest DJ is TERRY DONOVAN.* - Dance Factory, Birmingham

### THURSDAY 6 APRIL

- **EXPLODING CINEMA:** - Vegitopolis / Angle Gallery, James Street, Birmingham

### FRIDAY 7 APRIL

- **JANET JACKSON:** 8pm Tickets £20 / £18.50 - NEC, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 780 4133.
- **PEACEKEEPER:** - Future Dub at The Circus Club, Moseley

### SATURDAY 8 APRIL

- **SPACE FISH:** *The band's called RHYTHM KILLER; the DJs HELMSMAN and AUTOPILOT. The decor is by CYCLORAMA and the lights and projections by SPACE FAMILY ROBINSON. The crowd and vibe is down to you.* 8pm Tickets £3 - The Venue Bar, Axiom Centre For The Arts, Cheltenham. Tel: 01386 421058.

### THURSDAY 13 APRIL

- **MAREVIN C: SLAM CLUB.** - Steering Wheel Club, China Town, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 1841 /

### FRIDAY 14 APRIL

- **ATHLETICO:** *Red Snapper & James 'Mo Wax' Lavelle.* - Que Club, Corporation Street, Birmingham
- **CLUB KATUSI:** - Circus Club, Moseley

### SATURDAY 15 APRIL

- **HOUSE OF GOD:** *Ege Bam Yasi.* - The Institute's Dance Factory, Digbeth, Birmingham

### MONDAY 17 APRIL

- **BARRY WHITE:** 7.30pm Tickets £18 / £16 - NEC, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 780 4133.

### THURSDAY 20 APRIL

- **WARREN G:** Tickets £13.50 - Civic Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton. Tel: 01902 312030.

### THURSDAY 27 APRIL

- **PATRICK SMOOTH: SLAM CLUB** - part for Shauney Warney's birthday Party - Ticket only. - Steering Wheel Club, China Town, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 472 1841 /

### SATURDAY 29 APRIL

- **ANOINTED:** *Gospel, soul and R&B from Columbus, Ohio.* 7pm Tickets £13 - Town Hall, Victoria Square, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 236 2392.

## comedy & theatre

### SATURDAY 1 APRIL

- **CLAIRE RUSS ENSEMBLE:** *Dangerous When Wet Double Bill - razor sharp choreography drawing on Busby Berkeley / Esther Williams Holly wood excesses.* 8pm Tickets £6.50 - MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 440 3838.
- **CLASSICAL SPECTACULAR:** 7.30pm Tickets £16.50 / £19.50 / £2 - NIA, Broad Street, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 200 2222.

# GIG guide

### SATURDAY 8 APRIL



● **LILY SAVAGE:** 8pm Tickets £11 / £10 - Town Hall, Victoria Square, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 236 2392.

### THURSDAY 13 APRIL

- **FIND ME:** *Stage Two theatre company's exploration of a mentally disturbed girl 'lost' by the system with awful consequences.* 13-15 Apr, 7.30pm Tickets £5 - MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 440 3838.

### FRIDAY 14 APRIL

- **FIND ME:** See 13th April for details.

### SATURDAY 15 APRIL

- **FIND ME:** See 13th April for details.

### THURSDAY 20 APRIL

- **GAY SWEATSHOP:** *Lust And Comfort - a provocative exploration of gender, class and abuse of power ....* 20-22 Apr, 8pm Tickets £6.50 - MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 440 3838.

### FRIDAY 21 APRIL

- **GAY SWEATSHOP:** See 20th April for details.

### SATURDAY 22 APRIL

- **GAY SWEATSHOP:** See 20th April for details.

### THURSDAY 27 APRIL

- **MILLENIUM DOUBLE BILL:** *Kurt Weill's Down In The Valley and Simple Gifts - danced to Copland's Appalachian Spring. In association with The Birmingham Royal Ballet.* 27-29 Apr, 8pm Tickets £6.50 - MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 440 3838.

### FRIDAY 28 APRIL

- **MILLENIUM DOUBLE BILL:** See 27th April for details.
- **NO WAY OUT:** *Creation Theatre English translation of Sartre's best play.* 28-29 Apr, 7.45pm Tickets £5 - MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 440 3838.
- **RANDOM DANCE COMPANY:** *Wayne McGregor's explosively original choreographic style. Raved over by The Independent and The Sunday Times.* 8pm Tickets £6.50 - MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Tel: 0121 440 3838.

### SATURDAY 29 APRIL

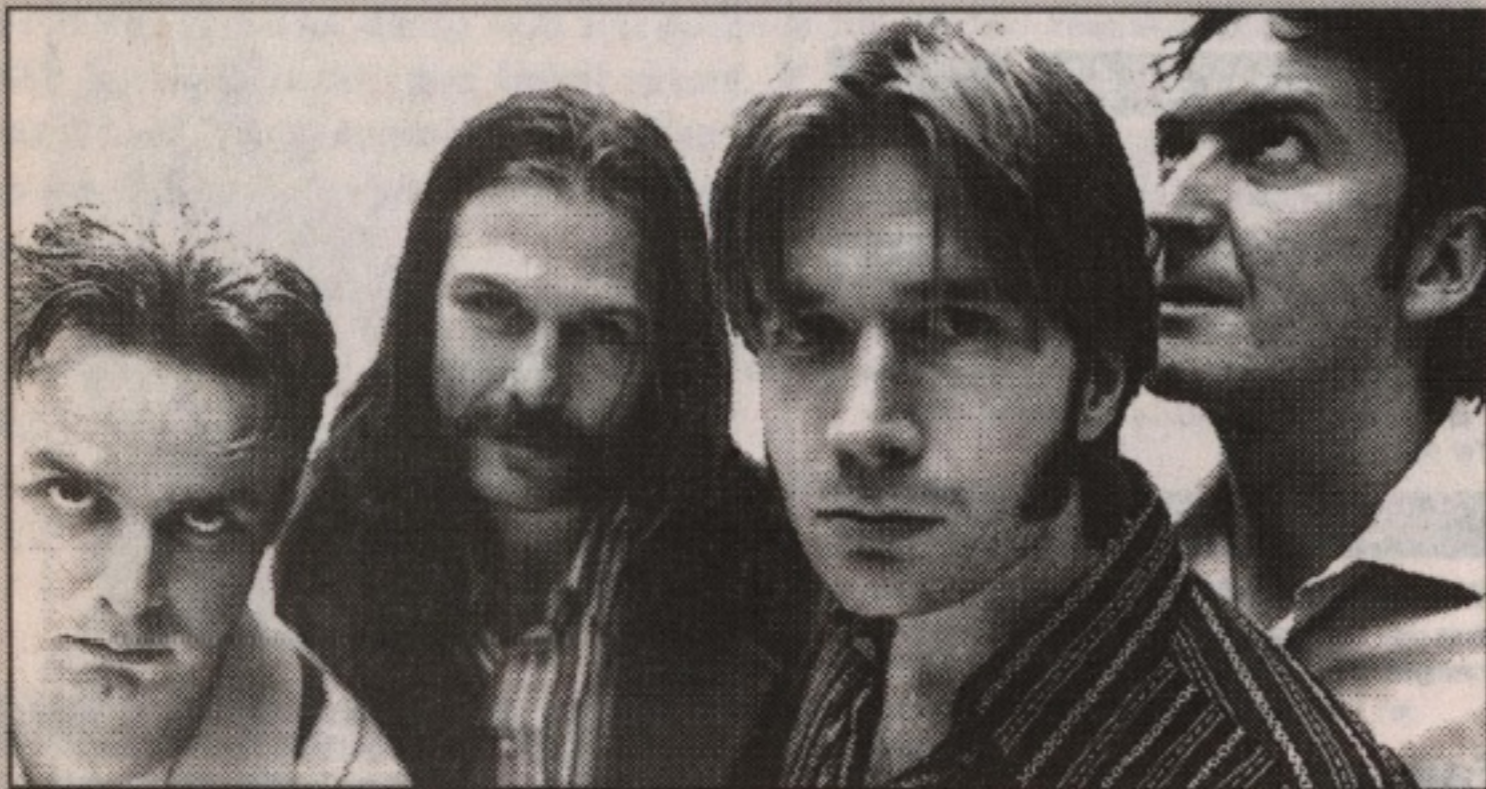
- **MILLENIUM DOUBLE BILL:** See 27th April for details.
- **NO WAY OUT:** See 28th April for details.

## coming soon

- **KIRSTY MacCOLL:** *A gig to look forward to with unbridled joy!* Wulfrun Hall, North Street, Wolverhampton, 01902 312030. May 19
- **LITTLE RICHARD / CHUCK BERRY / FATS DOMINO:** NEC, Birmingham, 0121 780 4133. May 20
- **HOUSE OF GOD:** *All nighter.* The Institute's Dance Factory, Digbeth, Birmingham. May 7, 10.30pm to 6am. Ticket Only.

## events

- **MEMORABILIA 95:** *A giant collection of Videos, programmes, magazines, rare records, clothing 50's Americana jukeboxes - in fact the best collection of pop and rock items you'll ever set eyes, cash or plastic upon!* NEC, Birmingham, 0121 780 4133. May 6-7, 10am - 5pm Tickets £3.



### **DEL AMITRI**

**Civic Hall, Wolverhampton**

I always feel like I'm back at college when I watch the Dels. Perhaps that's because they seem well at home in front of a crowd of largely cheerfully bevvied up lads. Or maybe it's because their classy songs fit student stereotypes so comfortably: lots of lyrics of introverted guilt and gloom, nicely packaged with a bit of knockabout rock and the odd singalong anthem. Mind you, the set is packed with 70s throwbacks - Iain Harvie's guitars go through Orange amps, and both he and Justin Currie sport improbably retro facial hair. That's before the Iggy Pop, Mötörhead and Undertones covers. Still, I'm not complaining. Del Amitri are getting better all the time, and they started out very good indeed. In the States, they're up to Platinum status. So I'm glad I can still see them, close up, at a stand up venue with drink in hand. I didn't like them at Symphony Hall - too formal - and I probably won't at the NEC. They're that kind of band, bless 'em. **Robin Valk**

### **ROD MacDONALD**

**The Red Lion Folk Club, Kings Heath, Birmingham**

What can you say. Two sets. A total of seventeen self penned tunes. A voice, an acoustic guitar and a harmonica rig. This was one of those magical nights. Hell, there were even four as yet unrecorded tunes. Me & Uncle Joe inspired by the time MacDonald spent on an Oglala Sioux reservation with the late Frank Fools Crow, the politically influenced Last Train To Pontiac and his paternal Scottish roots tribute Walk In The Highlands. Out In The Country, another back to my roots/coming of age influenced tune, gets my latest epic vote. Most folk remember their personal where, what and when in terms of receiving the news of John F. Kennedy's assassination. I could tell you almost to the minute, the date and place when I first heard another of Rod's epic songs The Way To Calvary. That's the mark of a great writer ... and with each succeeding UK tour, more and more folk fans are discovering that universal truth.

**Arthur Wood**

### **BEASTIE BOYS / JON SPENSER BLUES EXPLOSION**

**Civic Hall, Wolverhampton**

Possibly the tour of the year by the now, officially recognised, 'Coolest Band On

The Planet'. Yeah, the B-Boys kicked up a storm when they were last here, but it's different now - no discerning music lover could question their credibility. Thus, this tour was sold out before the beginning of time and every show will have been attended by anyone who thought they were anyone. But first.

There was always the possibility that Jon Spenser Blues Explosion's fucked-up blues would throw a gloriously chipped spanner in the night's vibe, but the Blues Explosion are doing something very similar to the Beastie Boys - taking older musical forms, throttling them whilst paying them homage, and fusing them to ultra-hip, ultra-contemporary 'alternative' 'tude. I would say a respectable percentage wouldn't've known who the Blues Explosion were tonight, but by the end of their stark, orange-lit, jarring set, EVERYONE was a fan. "Than'yuhver'much." mumbled the Theremin-infected Presley/Cave/Wolfmonster that is Jon Spenser as his band left me nearly wiped out.

Nearly. See, I'd secreted some 'reserve energy' about my person, because although dancing at gigs has kinda lost its appeal to me these days, this was an exception. If you don't dance to the Beastie Boys, you are the dweeby cousin you thought you never had. THIS hall was rammed with clued-up hipsters. We ALL danced. You want details, don't you? 'Fraid I can't give 'em - I was too busy groovin' to superfly '70s pimp-funk.

stompin' to bone-shatterin' hip-hop and pogoing to out-and-out punk rock. As were Yauch, Ad-Rock and Mike D, blastin' out golden oldies like Egg Raid On Mojo, through to the catchiest of NOW! anthems, Sure Shot. I caught snatches of double basses, bongoes, Chinese lanterns and flying keyboard players, but - and I know you'll forgive me for this - I was more interested in Gettin' Down than Takin' Notes. If you were there, you know what I'm talkin' about, if you weren't - I think you can guess. Get up earlier next time and make sure you get yourself a ticket. DON'T try tellin' me you didn't wanna go - you'd sell your SOUL to be a B-Boy. I know I would. If I had one to sell.

**Max**

### **CYNDI LAUPER**

**Symphony Hall, Birmingham**

The Symphony Hall is such an odd place for a gig - it's famed acoustics aside, the sit-down, refined atmosphere dampens any hope of this being a Rock'n'Roll event, no matter how many times Cyndi reminded us that's just what it was. And yet, despite this rarefied setting, there was something amateurish about it all - from the band's gear looking lost on stage, a tuppenny-ha'penny riser for Cyndi to run up and down on, the Spinal Tap-like curtain that got stuck half way through it's unveiling process, and Cyndi herself - a kind of punky, crazy-coloured, down-at-heel Madonna.

But no question about it, once into her stride, she was the spirited, professional performer, with that distinctive, piercing Brooklyn-baby-doll voice. Out came the hits and a whole bunch of stuff that was lost on me, but which this strangely older audience (was it the venue or does Cyndi attract a more mature fan?) recognised instantly and responded politely to by gently clapping whilst remaining in their seats, watched over by sour-faced geriatric stewards. "They must be somebody's uncles!" quips Cyndi before sweet-talking them into letting her fans get up and come towards the stage. There's a big love between her and her people - a mutual trust, as demonstrated when she does a walkabout amongst them. No mob scenes here - they approach, nervously shake Cyndi's hand, then scamper away, while she skips and hops like some little girl in a large playground. Support act, David McAlmont joins Cyndi for a duet near the ends, and it's during these mournful, folkier moments that I hear something quite touching about Cyndi's craft. It's still not my kinda thing y'understand, but Cyndi seems genuine enough, her band makes nice enough sounds and - all things considered - this was a very pleasant evening. **Max**

### **RACHEL'S BASEMENT**

**Jug Of Ale, Birmingham**

I like my pop perverted. Good, catchy melodies, but with something 'off centre', whether lyrically or musically. Failing that, my pop must be well crafted by a fine songsmith and performed with marked enthusiasm. Step right up, Rachel's Basement. Jarring Beatles and mod-60s influences aside, Rachel's Base-

ment demonstrate the kind of good feelin' quality talent and originality that shows up bands like Oasis and Blur for what they really are - remarkably average. The Basement could strut cockily around the charts given half the chance and no-one would dare ask them why they were there. Me, I was swayed by Tariq's superb guitar playing during Midnight Rolls Again, the bluesy-folky (and quite Skynyrd-y in a way) Take Me Over and the groove-funk of Top Of The Edge. Oh, and frontman, Daniel's ease in the limelight, energy injection and quiet confidence in the knowledge that it won't be long before he has a complete lack of personal privacy.

**Max**

### **CARTER USM / SALAD**

**Que Club, Birmingham**

Salad, I've always thought, were no more than a no-hope indie band fronted by an MTV babe. Whereas, in fact, they are an inventive quartet with some depth and a gutsy/breathy vocalist in Marijne. A lot more to 'em than their rather lacklustre recordings. Odd moments reminded me of early P.J. Harvey. Slap my wrists if y'like, but I left half an hour into Carter's one-dimensional, cartoon, early '80s-sounding punk rock. I know EXACTLY what the rest of the set would've been like: one-dimensional, cartoon (etc.).

Bored, bored, bored, bored, BORED!

**Max**

### **(The Artist They Used To Call All Sorts Of Things, But Who They Still Call) PRINCE (Despite His Best Efforts)**

**NEC Birmingham**

No support acts, but you can catch just about all his banned New Gold Experience album on the video screen before he starts. I can see why he's so upset with Warners. The music is great, and he looks better than ever. And that's before the show. The set is amazing. Sensational lighting, brilliantly programmed. But then it all starts to go downhill. Prince (I'm tired of this alias stuff) is in a bad mood. He swears at someone - audience or band, I'm not sure; he spends a fair amount of time off stage; as the set wears on he spends more and more time going through the motions. The PA doesn't help either - muddy and bass heavy - and it definitely hinders communication on the raps. No question that his subject matter is getting pervier, though. Which might be OK if he wasn't feeling so petulant - I'd just like a bit of enthusiasm. He wraps it all up after about two hours. And he thanks us for letting him be himself. All of which is fine and dandy, but doesn't this presuppose a bit of inter-reaction between performer and audience? Still you could always get your Symbol condom on the way out - only £2.00 each. And Prince thinks he's the one being shafted.

**Robin Valk**

## **DODGY / THE ROCKINGBIRDS**

### **Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton**

Let's ignore the opening band, shall we? Fine. After all who the hell needs a band that sounds like The Stuffies trying to sound like The Small Faces? I don't know who they were - and I don't care.

Let's leapfrog to the headliners then - Dodgy. I kinda feel that their stance is a little too studied; the liquid lights, the film clips projected onto the postage stamp sized screen, all scream sixties. But the songs with their taloned hooks and honeyed harmonies transcend all such doubts. Perfect pop? Sure it's a cliché phrase but it's the only way to describe 'em.

That leaves the mighty Rockingbirds. Forget the fact that the simple sight of a banjo and pedal steel had the popsters running for the bar - they ran back darn quick as the 'Birds picked up steam - and that they play music with the C word, this band has a song chest crammed with classics; a frontline with harmonies to break hearts and a rhythm section as determinedly mobile as an 18 wheeler.

To answer the Whatever Happened To The Rockingbirds? question of the band's new album title - they just got better and better. **Steve Morris**



## **THE REAL McCABE**

### **The Hibernian, Birmingham**

It's a pleasure to see a band who ooze enthusiasm for their own material on stage, and refreshing to hear clarity in lyrics, despite a PA which was working beyond its limits. This tight and professional quartet from Scotland worked their way through a flawless set of 10 original songs. Unashamedly influenced by North American bands like REO Speedwagon and Toto, they have a sharper edge which distinguishes them with a very individual sound. Great Songs like You Say with its bright and high harmonies and their beautiful love ballad Hold On, slightly reminiscent of the best of Air Supply. This band still await their first recording contract. When the time comes their success will be international, rather than parochial. Melody transcends political boundaries, and The Real McCabe are set to conquer.

**Mike Baker**

## **P.J. HARVEY**

### **The Que Club, Birmingham**

The new glamorpuss Polly Harvey, despite reports of the accessibility of her new material, is more frightening and intense than ever. White-faced and red-lipped, the light shining through her skirt turning her into a thrashing X-ray, a sexy Nick Cave in drag, she doesn't even look human. No longer bound to a guitar on stage, she is now free to shimmy and horrorshow to her heart's content, lifting her dress with her microphone-free hand to swing back and forth in a frankly disturbing fashion ... almost daring you to burst out laughing.

Working with Bad Seeds and Captain Beefheart session men certainly demonstrates impeccable taste; it is difficult not to be reminded of the former at their frenzied best tonight. The constant sense that something of Biblical proportions is heading in our general direction, and it is likely to be fairly unpleasant, is conveyed by Polly Harvey's astonishing voice set against the backdrop of a band that wouldn't know how to drop a note. The opening To Bring You My Love, set the tone ... simple and brutal. Her most recent material was showcased at the beginning of the set but mixed seamlessly with the old; Yuri-G coming out particu-

larly well, and then closing, appropriately enough, with Goodnight.

The audience were clearly gobsmacked by the entire set, unable to tear their eyes away from the spectacle. Rid Of Me wasn't played, but that was easy to forgive - she's clearly moving into a whole new territory.

**Raymond Murphy**

## **THE HERBS**

### **The Golden Cross, Coventry**

The multi coloured strobe and dry ice provide an apt introduction to the Herbs' mix of indie-rock and trippy instrumentation and it is soon clear that their name refers to neither the old kids' TV programme nor the plants that lent names to its characters. The Herbs' songs are strong enough but their over-emphasis on pay-by-the-note guitar solos and Here and Now style improvisation breaks make the material too long for tonight's audience's attention span. The stand-out song of the set had none of this and was the shortest, most straightforward and tightest that they turned in. **Roy Spencer**

## **PROPELLER**

### **Flapper & Firkin, Birmingham**

The weather didn't do a lot for the few people who made it tonight. Heavy snow with more on the way. Local lads Propeller offered their usual set. It's competent enough but the songs are overlong and lack sparkle. Songs about diseases and strippers don't do much for me or the rest of the small crowd. It seems that the Flapper's promoter can't decide where to put Propeller on the bill. Sometimes, like tonight, they open the evening, yet on other occasions they headline. If the band are going to get a local following, fans need to know when to expect their set.

**Tom D**

## **DEAD ON IT**

### **Flapper & Firkin, Birmingham**

As anyone who's heard their 1993 demos will know, Dead On It are a band bristling with potential, confidence and a collection of damn fine songs. Having rather lost their way in the last year, bogged down in personnel changes and the like, the good news is that that Dead On It are back and proving that their ear-

lier work was no happy accident.

Singer Simon Martin looks rather self-conscious and nervy but with brother Andy's guitar cranked up to full throttle the band churn out lessons in the bleaker side of life. Good songs and grooves are what Dead On It's sound is built on and tonight there is no shortage of either.

Kicking off with Let's Go To Hollywood the foursome race through their set pausing only for the excellent Chair which is the sort of tight pop song that has debut single written all over it. This isn't a band scared to chill out and cross the magic three and a half minute threshold either, Easy is just that, cool and raunchy and providing Richard Thompson lookalike Andy Martin with a chance to show us what he's capable of - and he's not half bad. The encore of Chair finishes the evening and we all troop home but on tonight's showing it won't be long before we all return to see what Dead On It can come up with next. Whatever it is I'm sure we'll be humming it for days.

**Andy Milton.**

## **THE SERVANT**

### **The Rep, Birmingham**

The Birmingham Rep is fast turning into a theatrical paradise and proving that Britain's second city can not only match but out-do the efforts of the West End. After last year's revival of The Atheist's Tragedy this time it's The Servant written by Robin Maugham which enjoys only its second run in this country.

Set in the changing world of post-war England the play explores the moral and social disintegration of Tony Williams under the influence of his servant Barrett, both superbly played here by James Purefoy and Paul Cople. It's a sort of Remains Of The Day meets Dr. Faustus. Tony is in many ways a traditional tragic hero, charming and likeable but with a total inability to judge character and an unhealthy interest in his own vanity. Through the course of the play he jilts both his fiancée Sally Grant (Amanda Harris) and his long suffering friend Richard Merton (David Phelan) preferring the company of Barrett and his string of sluttish housemaids/ lovers. There is a sense of displacement that pervades the play both on an individual and global scale, an atmosphere beautifully caught in Kit Surrey's set design contrasting insular comfort with urban decay. This performance oozes subtext and communicates the social values and mores of the time in an amazing way that is rarely successful in the theatre. We understand everything said and unsaid and Maugham's revelation of sexual licence shocks us in a normally undreamed of way.

The Birmingham Rep can add The Servant to its list of recent triumphs. A masterful revival, superbly performed and most of all, uniquely thought out.

**Andrew Milton**

## **RAGGED GLORY / SCENIC YAWN**

### **J B's, Dudley**

"Was there something good on telly tonight?" asked Ragged Glory's Rob Stanier to a small gathering in J B's. Those that stayed in missed a powerful perfor-



mance by the Stourbridge four piece. Live-ly support was offered by Scenic Yawn the young outfit with vibrant tones of the early Wonder Stuff - an influence which even shone through to lead singer Ricky's T-shirt. Whether covering Stiltskin's Inside could be classed as a credible move is another question (stick to Green Day lads), even so a bright future could lie ahead. In the event the night was stolen by the excellent Ragged Glory. In particular their new offering, Cheese and the final song Stone Cold. The band influenced by the likes of R.E.M. and Teenage Fanclub covered Nirvana's All Apologies and stormed through a glorious version of the Beatles' Paperback Writer. On this form tonight's privileged few could have heard 'the future sound of Stourbridge'. For those that missed the gig, you are advised to check out the bands soon.

**Lee Knowles**

## **OCEAN COLOUR SCENE**

### **Varsity Tavern, Birmingham**

If there were awards for being in the wrong place at the wrong time then surely Ocean Colour Scene would receive a special order of merit - in 1992 they released their eponymous debut album, a near flawless collection of sixties coloured, guitar driven pop - Wrong Time! Two years too late to be part of the ecstasy fuelled 'baggy' movement and two years too early for the renaissance of British guitar pop. Wrong place? Birmingham not Manchester!

After suffering the indignity of being dropped by their record company, Ocean Colour Scene made their first steps on the comeback trail with a low key appearance at the Varsity Tavern where they showcased new material. They proved that they've not lost the ability to write songs that bristle with hooks and can produce live the sort of harmonies that would make Roger McGuinn nostalgic. The difference now is that Ocean Colour Scene have become a fully fledged rock band, with lumps on, without losing any of their pop sensibilities. The inclusion of The Beatles' Helter Skelter on the bands pre-performance tape is a good indication of their new direction and with guitarist Steve Craddock having spent so much time as Paul Weller's right hand man, it's no surprise that there's more than a touch of the former Style Councillor's influence on some of the newer material. Highlights were many and included the pot boiler Blown Away and the dramatic So Sad. Surprises? How about a version of Fairport Convention's Meet On The Ledge?

Ocean Colour Scene have a new single scheduled for release this month. Whether they'll be luckier this time is anyone's guess, but on a cold winters night in Selly Oak there was no doubt that I, at least, was in the right place at the right time.

**Joe Norman**

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## **GRANMA DYNAMITE - The Empty EP**

Can't believe the wealth of excellent stuff this month! This Stoke On Trent quintet fought to the death for the DOTM crown, with their big (and I mean BIG!) Jane's Addiction-slugging-it-out-with-Headswim sound. Gaj's pounding drums, Jase and Jiz's swirling guitars and Rich's powerful, but mournful vocals all conspire to make a gloriously wild sound.

## **SAHARA DARC**

A cassette-album of exceptional quality and impressive musicianship (individual members have been knocking around in various outfits for a while now), but working as they are in an album-oriented prog-rock area, it's a) fairly unexciting stuff, and b) gonna be hard to make their mark. But don't let that stop ya, guys. Go for it.

## **GLYN STAFFORD**

19 year-old Glyn has been turned on by 'very English sounding music' such as The Kinks, The Who and The Small faces. Add to that the more recent influences of Billy Bragg and Paul Weller, and that's where this voice and acoustic guitar is coming from. It's OK, but nothing special, y'know...

## **LEE THOMPSON - Shrapnel Hallelujah**

Lee doesn't play live because he feels he hasn't the stage presence to do his material justice. Shame, 'cause there aren't that many solo musicians who deliver with such energy and conviction. And you'd all like to witness that, wouldn't you? Here, Lee wacks out a neat rocker, Hold It, a gentle slide-guitar lover, I Don't Know Why, and the ghostly Friend. Keep 'em comin', Lee, it'll pay off in the end.

## **DANDYLION**

A very mid-60s pop feel, coupled with an 'indie' sensibility. Shirley is light and fluffy, Hole is fairly interesting sparse minimalism and Time Bomb? is just plain silly. They've recorded for the BBC, supported UB40, Magnum, Roy Wood and Ruby Turner, but to be honest, I haven't the highest of hopes for this Cannock trio. They DO have a band member who looks like a cross between Bolan and Out Of My Hair's Comfort though, so all is not lost.

## **THE OUCHMACS - Ouch!**

Very Fall-ish. Apparently, the drums on Rock'n'Roll Is The New Poetry and Hands were sampled from Led Zep's Rock'n'Roll, but as this tape sounds like it was recorded on a piece of paper with a blunt pencil, I wouldn't really know.

## **PETE EARLE - Belief**

Following his departure from The Eternal, Pete decided to ditch the guitar and go solo, accompanying himself on the piano. Delicate, well crafted and very poetic. A tad serious for my liking, but no question about the talent within.

## **NAOMI BOLSTER - Dream**

Naomi has yet to jump into the live circuit, but when she does, my guess is she'll be wowing critics as well as break-

ing hearts. This 16 year old singer/songwriter has penned a catchy number and roped in a couple of session musicians - guitarist Andy and drummer Victor - to lay down a faithful recording of it. And that's when it all comes to life: Naomi has a fine voice, with a raw edge that has a raunchy Janis Joplin slant to it. I don't envy her just starting out, taking that voice out to grotty pubs, but you gotta start somewhere. Maybe she'll get lucky and someone'll cotton on before she has to do too much of it. She's good enough to warrant cutting a few of the rougher corners.

## **HIGH ON JESUS**

This is cool stuff. Accomplished, jazzy, funky rock from Wolverhampton, who've been working damn hard to perfect their craft and let people know who they are. Luke, Ade and Nick have come up with three more Magic Garden-recorded killers, which will hopefully be the ones to do the business. Dig that name, too!

## **SPLIT**

Comprising of electric and acoustic sides, the former is beatbox driven and rife with spoken samples, and the latter is, er, acoustic versions of two of the three songs. Comes with notes on them, pointing out 'the 7th chords' here and 'the acordial nature of the composition' there - duh, yeah. And apparently, America has 'that sinister touch that Nirvana tried to aspire to'. In a parallel universe, maybe.

## **RITTEN' IN BLOOD - Witch Hunt EP**

Powerful punk-metal from this year-old, Walsall-based outfit. The accompanying letter suggests I 'PLAY IT LOUD!!!', and y'know, it works! Not the most innovative thing I've ever heard, but it's got balls, and sometimes, that's enough. One query: why the odd spelling and strange location of inverted comma of Ritten'.....?

## **BUFFLEHEAD - Starfish In Aspic / MONICKER - My Elvis Fixation.**

Two demos in one here, with vocalist/guitarist, Justin as the common denominator. If you're a regular giggoer, you'll have probably come across the Buffs and their sweet'n'sour rock. Monicker is Justin's side-project, which - it has to be said - doesn't sound that much different to the Buffs' material, which begs the question: why a separate vehicle for these songs?

## **BUSLOAD OF FAITH - The Bard's Heart Demo**

'Song Rock' is how the band describe themselves. What a horrible term, but y'know, that's exactly what BOF perform. It's simple and gentle with catchy melodies, but with a soft rock approach. Vocalist/bassist Col has a good voice, but doesn't seem to be putting that much effort in. Frankly, that goes for the whole band. I'd like to hear 'em let rip.

# demo LITTON

demos reviewed by max

... and bloody 'ell! No question about it!  
Rip-roaring Demo Of The Month! Is ...

## **ADRENALIN KICK**

These three new iron-fisters from the Black Country gang currently fielding all manner of interest (any day now, guys ...) are savagely throaty and more Metallica-like this time round and (sorry 'bout the comparisons) containing an excellent, Hawkwindy chorus in Chosen Few. Gutsy, punchy, chugging guitars occasionally make room for some light, shade and pacing (dynamics is important with such an in-your-face band, and AK have it pinned down), but overall, it's breastbone-shatterin' stuff all the way.



## **GURU MEDITATION**

Kill Me is proficient funk-rock, all the parts fitting in very neatly and Preacher is... well, more of the same, only a little more up tempo. Nowt wrong with any of this, except it's all a bit safe, tried and tested and Just So. Nothing that made these ol' ears prick up.

## **ALEX SANDHOPPER - Some Stuff**

'How Lo can the Fi go?' asks Alex in his accompanying letter. He also goes on to explain that these ten numbers were recorded on 2 track, were first takes, the mistakes were left in and no song is over two minutes. And yep, it sounds like it. I'm not entirely sure what Alex hopes to gain from all these bedroom antics.

## **MAZEY FADE**

More Fall type anti-dynamics, this time from Merseyside and in the form of a jarring selection of songs that displays their opaque grittiness.

## **SHADRACK**

Shadrack can be noisy and excitable (The 17516 Fever and On The Slide) or quite gentle (the lengthy intro to Filtered and Crashing Stores). Oddly, I prefer their latter side, which has a little more depth. However, those noisy bits at least have the right attitude. Overall though, just not special enough.

## **ALEX VANN - Parts Of Me 1**

This is nice. Sorry to use that revolting word, but it describes POM1 exactly.

No, I'm not being sarcastic, 24 year old singer/songwriter (yeah, ANOTHER one!) Alex writes and performs pleasant, folky, acoustic guitar/vocals-based songs that evoke sunny Sunday mornings in the country. I'm not saying it's the best thing I've heard in this genre by a long chalk, but I'd have no problem listening to this over my Weetabix and Sunday Times.

## **HUSHBLOOD - Revolver Session**

Like a lot of people, I can be bought. My price is stickers. I love 'em. And one of Hushblood's now adorns one of my files. And very handsome it looks too. As for Hushblood's music, it's a snarling, attitude-ridden thing with a feel for that southern US groove. Like a heavier Black Crowes. It's great - Crucified has a cocky swagger, Walking Blind is a ballad with balls and Bullet For The Soul is a funky, bluesy sleazebag. They carry it off well and ought to be rewarded with worldwide recognition. Very nearly Demo Of The Month. And speaking of other Very Nearly Demo Of The Months...

## **TWIN HAZEY**

A throaty guitar leads Mustard into a late 60s, underground psychedelic groove and Louise chugs along in a similar vein. The vocals (no details other than they're Warwickshire-based) are those of a mod starting to grow his hair, weaning himself off the speed and getting into hallucinogenics. Well played, well recorded, well good and well recommended.

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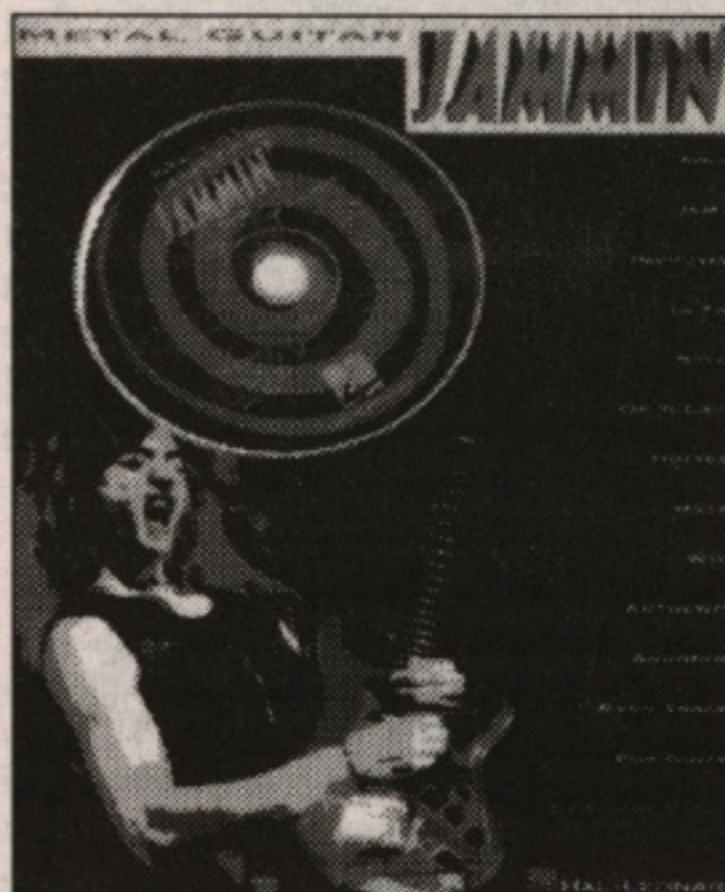
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**THE MARTIN BOOK**, published by IMP is, believe it or not, a seductively illustrated crafted by arguably the finest acoustic luthiers in the world, and certainly the most influential. The book details the history of the company and includes a

detailed reference guide to constructional details in an easily readable format. The book is a worthy addition to the series which so far includes The Fender Book, The Gibson Les Paul Book, The Rickenbacker Book ...

... and **THE STORY OF THE FENDER STRATOCASTER (IMP)**. Subtitled **Curves Contours And Bodyhorns**, this is Ray Minhinnet and Bob Young's book of the TV special and video. It's a loving appreciation and history of the instrument that arguably defines rock'n'roll; an instrument that despite its forty odd years on the planet still looks sexier and more up to date than any of the 'futuristic' designs that puke out of Tokyo PLC. You've only to read the plethora of celebrity love stories with the guitar that this book contains to understand how special Leo Fender's little toy is.

This is not simply a book for the pickers; it should have a place on the shelves of anyone who cares about rock culture ... and on the shelves of anyone who cares about contemporary art, for surely The Strat is a thing of beauty. (SM)

**GIBSON ELECTRICS: THE CLASSIC YEARS** by A.R. Duchossoir (Hal Leonard / IMP) is, perhaps, more for guitar players. It's a drier look at exactly what the title promises lavishly illustrated with pics of instruments that'll have collectors salivating. They're accompanied by production histories and detailed technical specs. For the outsider the historical ads that are reproduced will fascinate and give an insight into the symbiosis between guitar maker and the changing music scene. (SM)

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**APRIL**

ALL APRIL EVENTS  
 GUILDHALL, BORE STREET

Saturday 1st at 8.00pm £4.50 & £4.00 concs  
**CAJUN NIGHT- HARRISON SHAW CAJUN BAND**

Sunday 9th at 8.00pm £5.00 & £4.50 concs  
**LIAM O'FLYNN**

Saturday 15th at 8.30pm £4.50 & £4.00 concs  
**RIC SAUNDERS + FRED BAKER**  
**+ VICKY CLAYTON & DARK LANTERN**

Friday 21st at 8.00pm £4.00 & £3.50 concs  
**REGGAE DREAM POETS**

Saturday 22nd at 8.00pm £5.00  
 Lichfield Lions Charity Evening  
**DROWSY MAGGIE**

Sunday 23rd at 8.00pm £5.50 & £5.00 concs  
**TI JAZ**

Friday 28th at 8.00pm  
**CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT**

Saturday 29th at 8.00pm £4.00 & £3.50 concs  
**CELTIC FOLK ROCK - NEVERLAND**

Sunday 30th at 8.00pm  
**CHARITY EVENING - "A EVENING OF THOMAS HARDY"**

**MAY**

Saturday 6th at 8.00pm £5.00 & £4.50 concs  
 GUILDHALL, BORE STREET  
**CAJUN - TRACY SCHWARZ CAJUN TRIO**

Saturday 13th at 8.00pm £4.00 & £3.50 concs  
 HOLY CROSS HALL, CHAPEL LANE  
**PAUL O'BRIEN & JOE MURPHY**

Friday 19th at 8.30pm £7.50 & £7.00 concs  
 SWAN HOTEL, BIRD STREET  
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**JUNE**

Thursday 22nd - Sunday 25th  
**6TH LICHFIELD REAL ALE JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL**

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**JULY**

Friday 7th - Saturday 15th  
**LICHFIELD FESTIVAL FRINGE**

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TICKETS FOR THE ABOVE EVENTS AVAILABLE FROM: DONEGAL HOUSE, BORE STREET, LICHFIELD. TEL BOX OFFICE HOTLINE: 01543 262223

## video

### music

#### CARTER USM

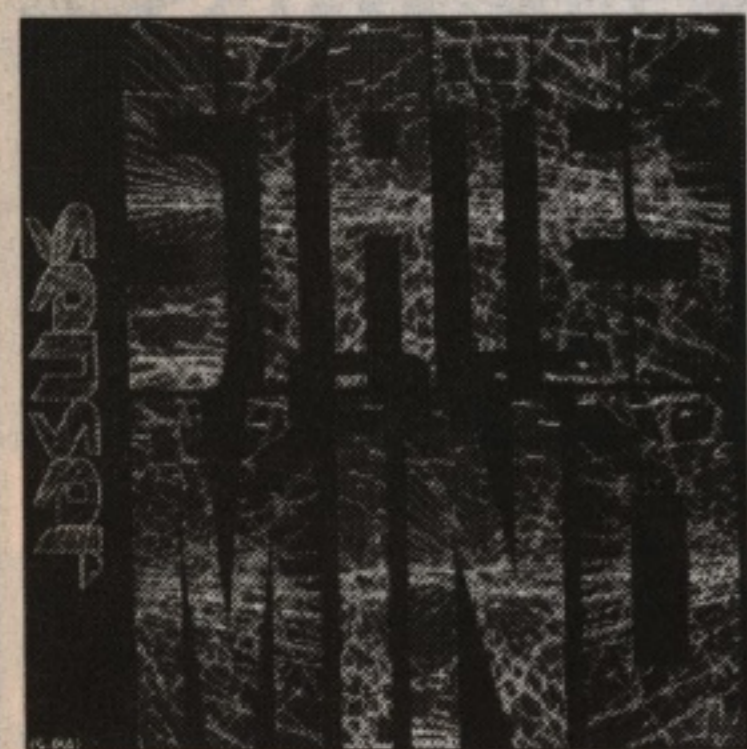
**Flicking The Vs - Live In Croatia (PMI)**

All power to the Carter trio for taking their show to Croatia and hopefully the copyright in this video being attributed to Radio 101 (Zagreb Croatia) means that some of the money generated by the exercise will find its way to where it's needed. Sadly Carter seem past their swill by date; the programmed rhythms are little enhanced by the addition of a drummer and the pun ridden lyrics have become caricature. Perhaps they should bite the bullet and become a real four or five piece to see if they can salvage the now diluted edge they once demonstrated.

Sam Mitchell

#### SENER

**States Of Mind (Ultimate)**



Starts off with the band introducing themselves and the machine that is Senser, and then it's in to tons of exciting live footage, highlighting the whole Senserian range - from trippy ambience to hardcore metal. Woven into behind the scenes snippets and promo vids, SOM isn't the most original of music vids, but a shit load of fun with a cracking soundtrack anyway. Max

#### EAGLES

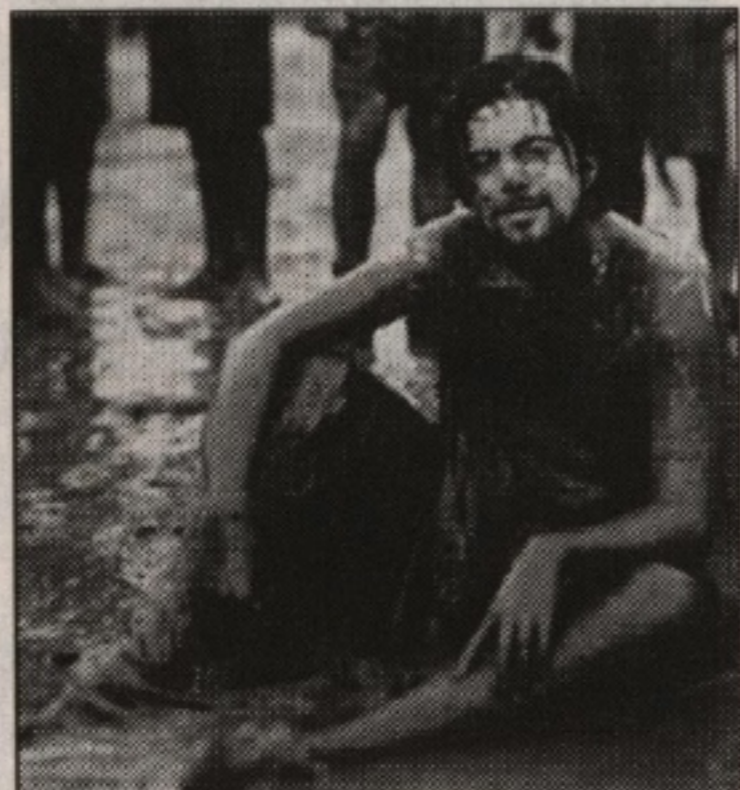
**Hell Freezes Over (Geffen)**

The movie of the MTV sponsored reformation gig that proves, despite the hipper than thou snipes of the detractors, that The Eagles are fab. Great tunes, perfect harmonies, beautifully fluid guitar

playing - yes all the hallmarks of music. Perfectly unfashionable and perfectly wonderful. Steve Morris

#### WOODSTOCK 94

**(VVL [15])**



Whilst the split screen, scene setting footage might wish to recapture the innovative feel of the real Woodstock movie, the glimpses of body surfing and menacing moshing cannot soften the fact that twenty five years on, nothing will recreate three days of peace, love and music. In the end this is a corporate beanfeast; the number of Phonogram affiliated bands on the bill - the movie comes courtesy of the very alternative sounding Polygram Diversified Entertainment - alone tells a story. Zuchero a Woodstock act? I think not. Sure there are some good bits but there's absolutely nothing that burns with the fervour of almost anyone at the original fest. John Davies

John Davies

## movies (and stuff) to buy

#### STREAKER

**(Video Collection [15])**

A.k.a. much ado about precious little, unless of course you're famous Twickenham streaker Erika Roe. But then such gags are strictly non PC these days - as is this exploitative little pot boiler. Strictly for the Benny Hill brigade but a plague upon the producers if it inspires a Ray Stevens revival. Sam Mitchell

Sam Mitchell



ALL VIDEOS AVAILABLE  
FROM HMV SHOPS

#### SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER

**Paramount / Polygram [18])**

Re-racked at budget price (£5.99) to take advantage of the John Travolta revival, SNF is the movie that best encapsulates the late disco 70s. It's your everyday moral story of the tearaway finding a better life, but it's done with a swagger and a soundtrack that matches the editing just perfectly. Visually it may look dated, flared white suits'n'all but it's till hugely enjoyable.

John Davies

#### A BRONX TALE

**(Polygram Video [18])**

Robert de Niro's directorial debut is the assured tale of growing up in the Bronx under the twin pulls of the Mafia and goodness. Typical de Niro stuff and turf that he's trod rather often, but then maybe he wanted to feel comfortable in the boss' chair first time out - and the results, it must be said support that theory.

Sam Mitchell

#### ACE VENTURA PET

**DETECTIVE**

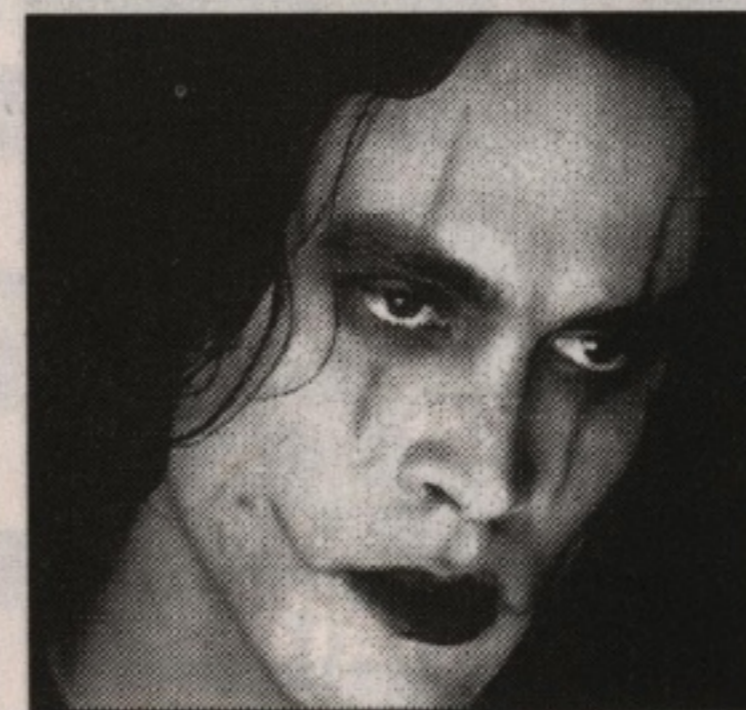
**(Warner Home Video [12])**

The one thing you don't get when you buy this, the movie that announced the presence of Jim 'The Mask' Carrey is the one thing you need - a pooper scooper to clean out your video afterwards.

Sam Mitchell

#### THE CROW

**(Entertainment In Video [18])**



I must admit that the background to this didn't promise much - the star gets shot dead on the set and his part is finished by computer. All clever stuff but basically the stuff of unscrupulous hype given that it's fundamentally a gothic horror / supernatural movie.

In the event the late Brandon Lee proves to have the requisite screen presence for such a venture and Alex Proyas' dark and claustrophobic setting adds just the perfect amount of cartoon menace. Thoroughly inconsequential and thoroughly good entertainment.

Sam Mitchell

## satellite, cable and bog standard TV NEWS

Way ahead of time but look out for BBC TV's Rock Family Trees in June - we've seen the Birmingham Beat pilot and it's pretty good. More detail nearer the time.

Meanwhile it's all down to MTV and VH-1 for regular doses of rock and CMT for country buffs. If you're a rap fan then there's always The Box. Incidentally if you're not on cable or don't subscribe to Sky Multi Channels you might find that MTV will soon disappear; the channel is due to encrypt shortly.

VH-1 for April offers an ELTON JOHN WEEKEND (April 1 / 2) whilst the ongoing raid on the Old Grey Whistle Test vault throws up FAMILY, LINDISFARNE, DAVID BOWIE (10); VINEGAR JOE, RICHIE HAVENS, JACKSON BROWNE (7 & 8); BILL WITHERS ROXY MUSIC (14 & 16); THE WAILERS, THE DRIFTERS, JOHN MARTYN, STEVE GOODMAN (21 & 22) and ALEX HARVEY, VAN MORRISON, RY COODER, JANIS IAN (28 & 29).

The channel's On The Road concert series promises ELTON JOHN (1); REM (8); TRAFFIC (15) and DAVID BYRNE (22).

One question though. Do VH-1 have any Rock Stories other than Yes and The Yardbirds with which to fill the Saturday evening slot? These two seem to crop up with astonishing regularity!!

MTV has a SIMPLE MINDS WEEKEND over April 1 / 2 with footage of the band at Barrowlands and In Verona as well as a compilation of their hits wittily called The Hits. Despite it being the Minds' weekend BJORK goes Unplugged on April 1st, which should be a relief from the Kerr / Burchill bluster. BLUR are live on the 6th as are THERAPY? on the 13th. NIRVANA dominate the 8th with a tribute hosted by Flea and Anthony Chili Pepper and the band's Unplugged.

But if it's rock you want, it's THE BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN WEEKEND you need. It's over April 22 / 23 and has A History Of The E St. Band; a Boss Rockumentary (which has some great footage of Bruce playing at a wedding reception!); the predictable MTV Plugged rounds off the weekend with a double play on both 22 and 23 April. Chart topping ANNIE LENNOX is Unplugged on April 29th.

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**ALTERNATIVE**, funky band. Seek guitarist m/f. Phone Donna: (01902) 651185

**BASS PLAYER** needed to complete Red Venice for summer shows. Good live attitude a must. Ring Carl 01543 877476.

**ESTABLISHED INDIE BAND**, seeks new bass guitarist and vocalist, experience of gigs preferred but not essential, ex Utopia Tel: Stu 01384 895685

**FEMALE SINGER WANTED** for ex named band. London management THINK Hope Sandoval, Bjork, Juliana Hatfield, Nancy Sinatra, Nico. Phone 01203 520714 / 633936 a.m.

**KEYBOARD AND TRUMPET** needed for Acid Jazz / Funk band. Gigs waiting. Call Al on 01922 648074.

**KEYBOARD PLAYER / PROGRAMMER** available for session work. Latest equipment including sampler, 8 track midi studio. Programming, production and arrangements, no problem. Ring Mitch 0121 551 2079.

**MANAGER/MANAGEMENT** required by original North Staffs based modern punk band "Typhoid Mary", male or female, must be prepared to put in 100% of their effort. No time-wasters need apply. Tel: 01543 424160.

**MUSICIANS WANTED** - fans of Janice Joplin? want to create the ultimate cover band? Big Brother and the Holding Company required. Phone Claire on Walsall 01922

# classified

for details of rates phone sue on 01743 235070

614629.

**SINGER/LYRICIST** looking for ambitious, innovative guitarist to collaborate with and form band. Influences Smiths, Cramps, REM, Bowie, Patsy Cline. phone Gall 0121 444 6636.

**SOUL FUNK BAND** with original material, require all round competent guitarist, gigs and recording waiting, commitment essential. Tel 01902 27629 or 01902 380059.

**VOCALIST/GUITARIST/SONGWRITER/PRO MUSICIAN** (male), seeks female vocalist/guitarist (or bassist) to form classy, locally-based band - other musicians also. No time wasters. Tel: 0121 429 2912

Tel: 021 449 6603. 24hrs. (See our main ad elsewhere in this magazine)

## tuition

**BASS GUITAR TUITION** with Colin Vallance (ex Chris De Burgh Band) All styles. Beginners welcome. Tel: 0121 471 1186

**EXPERT GUITAR TUITION** by ex 'Felt' guitarist all styles and standards are welcome Tel: 0121 420 3015.

**GUITAR TUITION** all styles, Classical to Rock, beginners welcome. Tel: Coalman 0121 708 0849

**MODERN DRUM TUITION**, all styles, beginners welcome. Solihull and South Birmingham area. Tel: 0121 705 7606

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SUN 2 APRIL WOUNDED SPIRIT + SUPPORT

MON 3 APRIL BAND OF THE YEAR COMPETITION - 3RD SEMI-FINAL

THU 6 APRIL VINCENT FLATTS FINAL DRIVE + F.B.I.

FRI 7 APRIL SOUL SURVIVORS + DR BULLFROG

SAT 8 APRIL\* MAGNUM + HEAVEN SENT

MON 10 APRIL BAND OF THE YEAR COMPETITION - GRAND FINAL

THU 13 APRIL THE GROUNDHOGS + THE RIPPS

FRI 14 APRIL THE RED LEMONS + SUMMIT

SAT 15 APRIL\* THE ANIMALS + LITTLE AMERICANS

MON 17 APRIL BAND OF THE YEAR COMPETITION - RUNNER UP FINAL

THU 20 APRIL THE STUBBLE BROTHERS + JUMPIN' MOTHER EARTH

FRI 21 APRIL THE STEVE GIBBONS BAND + THE PRESIDENTS

SAT 22 APRIL JEAN GENIE

MON 24 APRIL BAND OF THE YEAR COMPETITION 95/96 (1ST HEAT) FEATURING T.B.C

THU 27 APRIL FRED ZEPPELIN

FRI 28 APRIL THE HAMSTERS

SAT 29 APRIL QUILL + DANTE FOX

MON 1 MAY BAND OF THE YEAR COMPETITION 95/96

THU 4 MAY RICKY COOL AND THE HOOLA BOOLA BOYS + BIG JIM'S BOOGIE BAND

FRI 5 MAY ACHTUNG BABY + SUPPORT

SAT 6 MAY\* DENNY LAINE + STUBBLE BROTHERS

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WED 5	DOMINIC HOLLAND	RICKY GROVER	NICK SMITH	GORDON SOUTHERN
THUR 6	DOMINIC HOLLAND	DERMOT CARMODY	RICKY GROVER	TBC
FRI 7	STEVE GRIBBIN	DERMOT CARMODY	RICKY GROVER	HELEN AUSTIN
SAT 8	STEVE GRIBBIN	DERMOT CARMODY	RICKY GROVER	HELEN AUSTIN
WED 12	MARK MAIER	MARIANNE PASHLEY	PAUL ROGAN	GINA RYAN
THUR 13	MARK MAIER	BERT TYLER MOORE	PAUL ROGAN	CHRIS LYNAM
FRI 14	MARK MAIER	BERT TYLER MOORE	PAUL ROGAN	CHRIS LYNAM
SAT 15	MARK MAIER	BERT TYLER MOORE	PAUL ROGAN	CHRIS LYNAM
WED 19	ANDY ROBINSON	WOODY BOP MUDDY	GEOFF BOYZ	OPEN MIKE SPOTS
THUR 20	ANDY ROBINSON	WOODY BOP MUDDY	GEOFF BOYZ	ADAM BLOOM
FRI 21	SCOTT CAPURRO	WOODY BOP MUDDY	ANDY ROBINSON	ADAM BLOOM
SAT 22	SCOTT CAPURRO	WOODY BOP MUDDY	ANDY ROBINSON	ADAM BLOOM
WED 26	PHIL DAVEY	DAVID HADDINGHAM	ALAN TAYLOR	OPEN MIKE SPOTS
THUR 27	PHIL DAVEY	DAVID HADDINGHAM	TOM BINNS	ROGER DEE
FRI 28	TERRY ALDERTON	PHIL DAVEY	TOM BINNS	ROGER DEE
SAT 29	TERRY ALDERTON	PHIL DAVEY	ALAN TAYLOR	ROGER DEE

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- FRI - COMEDY FOR ALL ● SAT - COMEDY & DANCING 'TIL LATE

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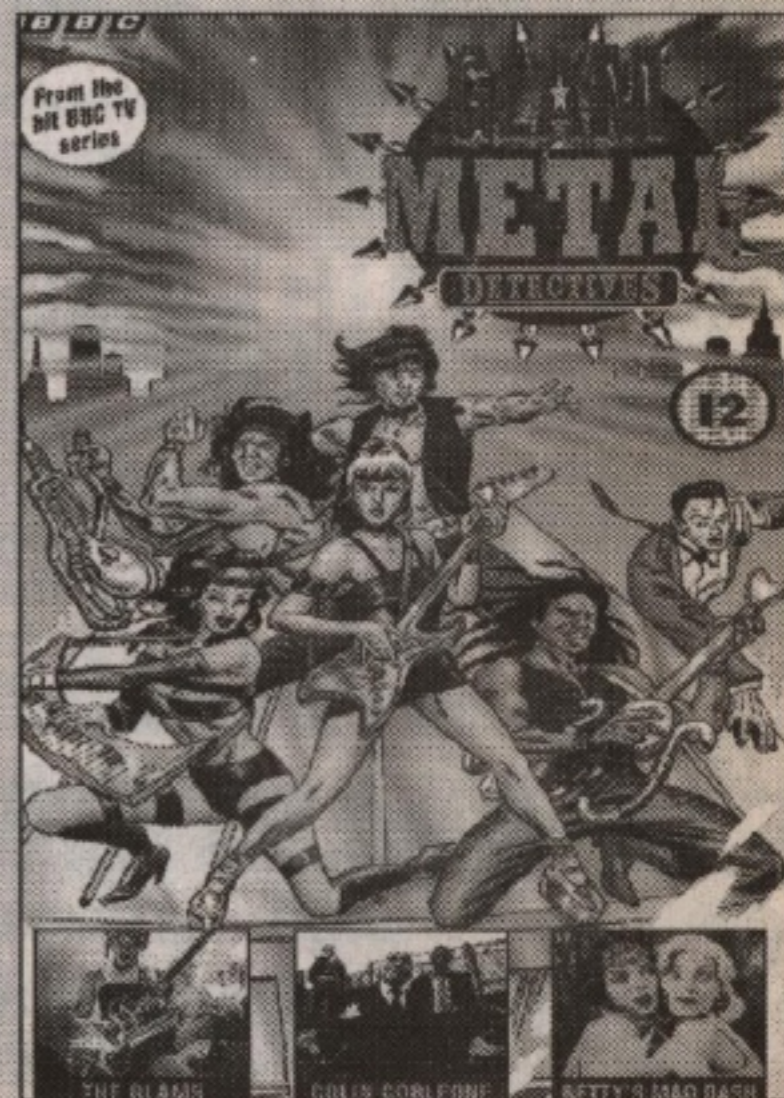
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### GLAM METAL DETECTIVES: VIDEOS

Caught BBC TV's fab GLAM METAL DETECTIVES yet? The latest creation from Comic Strip mainman Peter Richardson. Well if not - and why not - the Beeb have done you the great favour of releasing the first three wonderful episodes on video for you to buy, watch and cherish. Or win. See, Brum Beat has five copies of Glam Metal Dicks Parts 1 - 3 to brighten the lives of the senders of the first five cards to find themselves drawn from the mythical hat on the morning of May 1st - though that being a Bank Holiday it could well be May 2nd, still you get the picture. Cards to GMD at the usual Blag! address.



### PORCUPINE TREE: CDs

Master Mabbett graced Porcupine Tree's *The Sky Moves Sideways* with an honourable four stars in last month's mag remarking that the band 'fit snugly into a niche between rose hued rockers and the ambient market'. Brum Beat has five CD copies of the album to shower upon the senders of the first five cards to be drawn from the proverbial hat on May 1st. Cards to Porcupine Tree at the usual Blag! address.



### THE BEST OF BLUE NOTE: CDs

The revered Blue Note label have issued a remarkable catalogue taster called - with no room for argument - *THE BEST OF BLUE NOTE*. The tracks have been culled from the cream of the legendary marque's masters and features such giants as MILES DAVIS, CHARLIE PARKER, JOHN COLTRANE, HERBIE HANCOCK, CHET BAKER, COUNT BASIE, DUKE ELLINGTON; you get the picture. It's both instant cred for the style conscious and a pocket sized essential anthology for the jazz lover. Brum Beat has six CDs of *The Best Of Blue Note* and they'll go to the senders of the first six cards plucked from the hat on May 1st. Cards to Blue Notes at the usual Blag! address.

### FRANCIS DUNNERY: TICKETS AND CDs

The founder of *It Bites* and one time axe lieutenant for Robert Plant, FRANCIS DUNNERY appears at Cannock's Prince Of Wales Theatre on Thursday April 20th. Tickets, at an attractive, pocket friendly price are now on sale at the venue, The Ticket Shop in Brum, Killer Sounds in Rugeley and Tudor Tunes in Lichfield ... or Brum Beat has 3 pairs of tickets - each of which comes with a CD of Dunnery's brand new acoustic *One Night In Sauchiehall Street* album. They'll be expressed to the senders of their first three cards pulled from the ubiquitous hat on Friday April 14th. Cards to Dunnery at the usual Blag! address.

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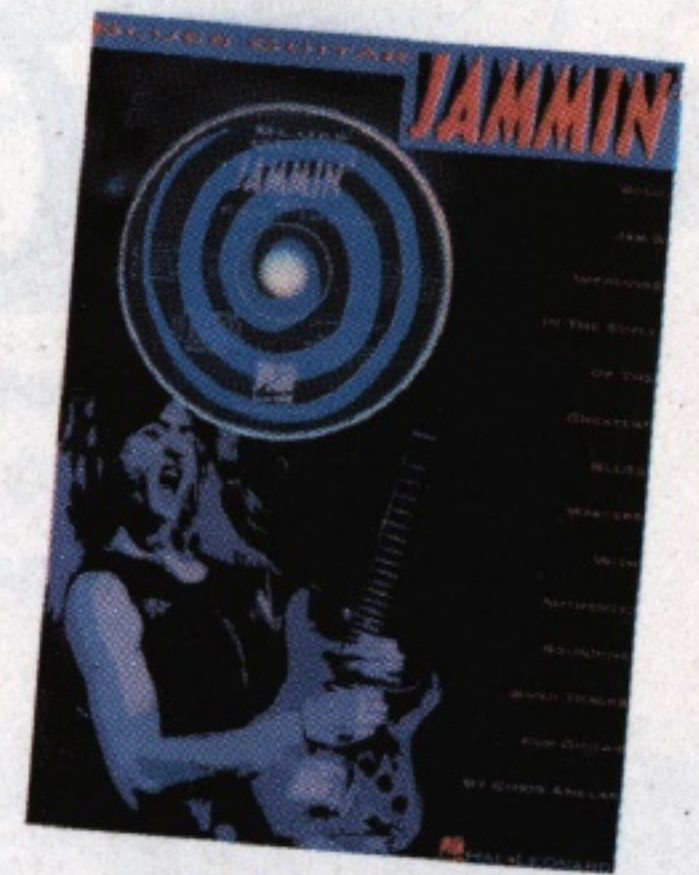
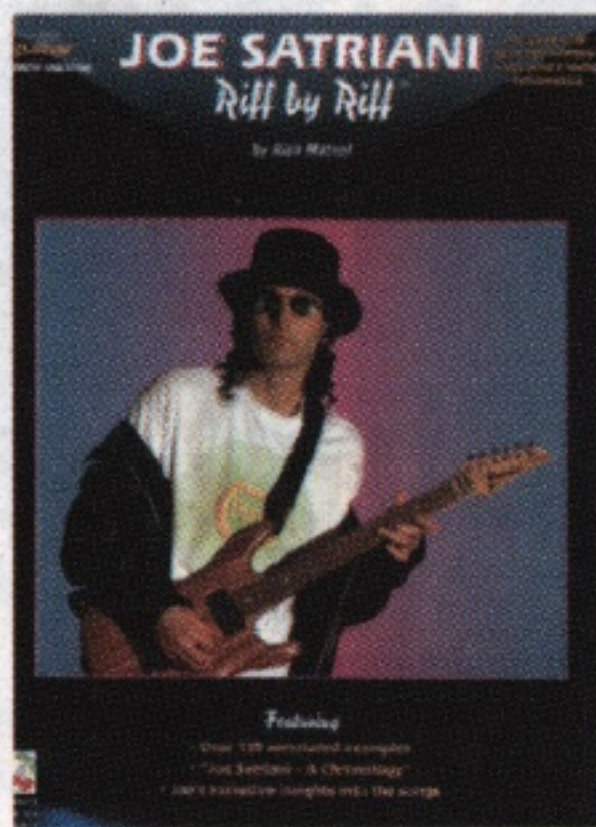
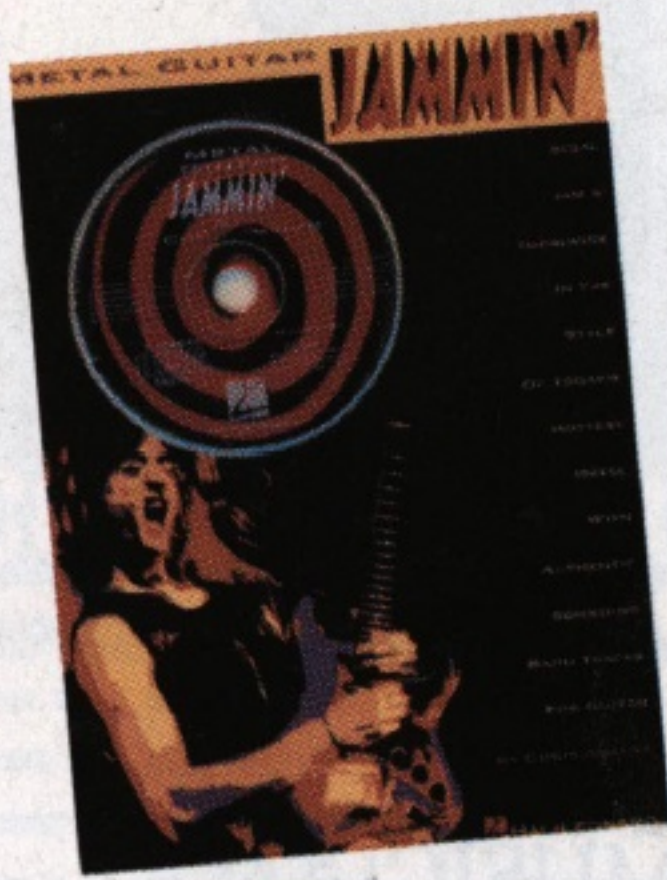
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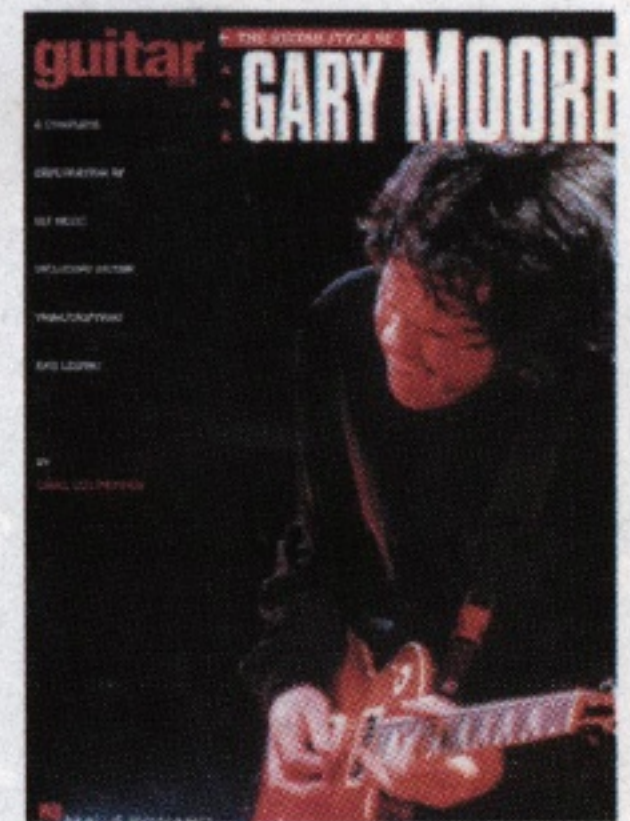
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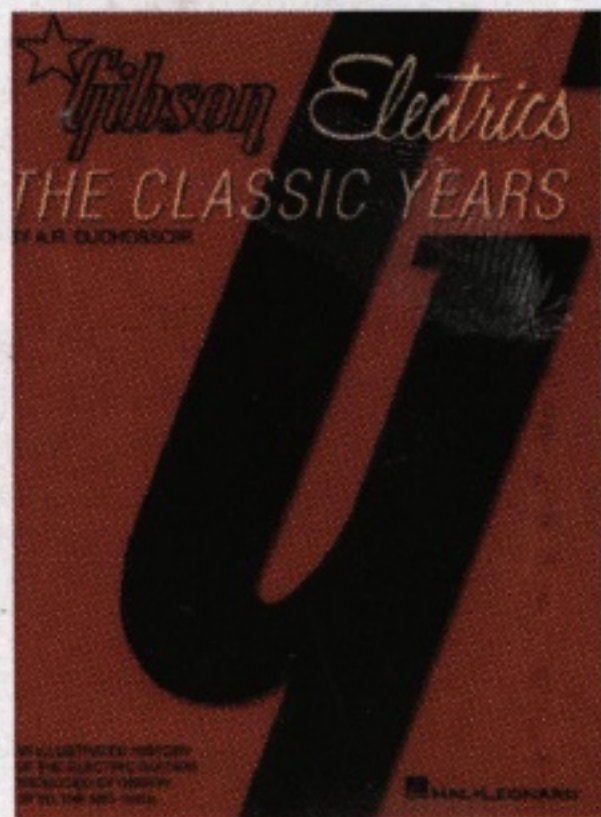


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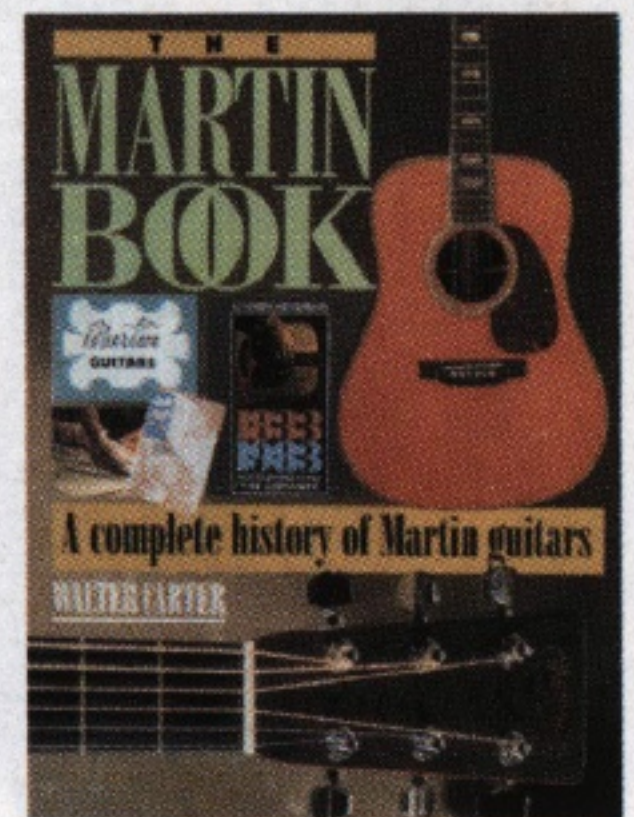
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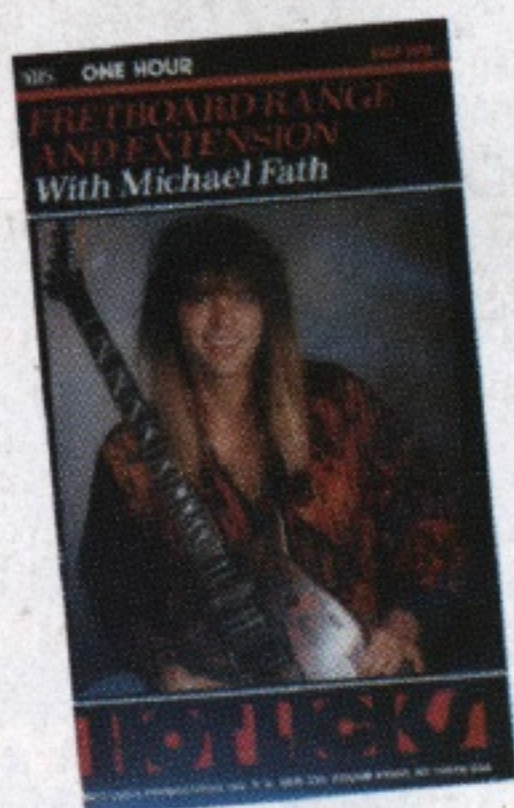
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