THE LOST ZIGZAG

Finally the March 1986 issue of ZigZag, which never made it to the shops, can be seen. More or less.

GO-BETWEENS * RUBY TURNER * RED WEDGE * DEF JAM * DEREK JAMESON *
JOHN LYDON * PET SHOP BOYS * BO DIDDLEY * BALAAM & THE ANGEL * DEREK JARMAN * SWANS * FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS * THE GODFATHERS
ZIGZAG magazine was the best music publication Britain ever had. It started humble and then developed some bite, always remaining committed to the cause of covering music the writers believed mattered, as opposed to what felt trendy.

During the 1970’s you had four music papers (Melody Maker, NME, Sounds and Record Mirror), some pop mags which I can’t recall, and ZigZag. Almost a fanzine upgrade, ZigZag was a curious amalgam of folk, West Coast rock and Pubrock. You found interviews in ZigZag that the music papers either couldn’t be bothered to do, or didn’t realise were necessary, and when Punk came along and Kris Needs infused it with a rebellious spirit it was the only publication in Britain handling the new sounds naturally. Old rubbed shoulders with new in ZigZag, based on respect for the character of the artists being covered.

I’d started my fanzine Panache, but also began freelancing for Record Mirror (which was fun) and, through Kris’ encouragement, ZigZag, which was more interesting, but in the end depressing because of its weird publisher, Julius Just. He ruined it all. I never knew the full ins and outs, as we were paid so little we were rarely in the office together, and hope Kris explains more in the second edition of his amazing Needs Must biography. That book is essential reading for anyone interested in the music of those times, followed by his equally enthralling escapades during early Hip Hop in New York, and the whole Indie Dance shenanigans where he was touring the world as a DJ.

Many music journalists I have met have tried being cool or wanted to be important, which is pretty much missing the point. You’re either cool or you’re not and trying to be cool emphatically means the latter. On radio we had Peel, and from the writing corner we have Kris. That’s the standard he’s set. He’s still doing it, still enthusiastic, still hilarious, still on the ball. He even rescues rabbits.

It’s for that reason that I was dismayed when being interviewed for Trakmarx magazine, to learn Kris thought I’d replaced him at ZigZag when he was pushed out because I was the Julius’ yesman! Nothing could have been further from the truth. I was relieved, therefore, that we were able to use that interview to clear things up, as he obviously hadn’t known what was happening once he’d gone.

In the tatty Ladbroke Grove offices of ZigZag Julius had wanted him out, particularly with the dubious ZigZag Club venture gathering force, and Kris had become deeply unhappy about the way the magazine was moving. While working under Kris was fun, working around Julius was simply awful. The people left in charge if Kris went, as we were when he was off on tour somewhere, were me and secretary Louisa Hennessy.
We’d both agreed we’d be off in 1982 regardless, having seen the way it was going. We had had enough. I wanted to freelance for Melody Maker, and I think Louisa wanted to start a family. (We both got what we wanted.) Kris being sacked was a bit of a shock, it’s fair to say.

So Kris left, justifiably disgruntled, and we agreed to keep the mag going, because we felt the magazine mattered. I didn’t always agree with what Kris put in the mag, and I expect he felt the same about some of our decisions, but those are flimsy disagreements when set aside a shared loathing of a crap publisher, and a love for the magazine itself.

Within a few months I wasn’t allowed in the office, other than to pick up post, because Julius hated me so much. It was farcical. No-one liked him, no-one did what he wanted. Eventually no-one cared about the magazine, or noticed when it died, whenever that was. I don’t even know what the final issue was. It simply wasn’t ZigZag anymore. It simply wasn’t ZigZag anymore. I was replaced by Paul (now Paulio) Barney who Julius obviously felt he could control. Surprise, surprise … Paul hated him too!

After Kris left I think I was, albeit theoretically, in charge of six or seven issues? I did this because I wanted to see the mag survive as maybe Julius would sell the club to someone and things could get back to normal. I didn’t do it as I wanted to take over. I hadn’t been paid for a couple of months before Kris went and was never paid again during my time there. The money didn’t matter, but a magazine with the spirit ZigZag had did.

Kris had gone on to Flexipop, which was great fun, and rejuvenated him as he also frolicked in the Batcave scene, as I wrote for Melody Maker and continued Panache. I was then contacted by a new publisher who had bought the rights for ZigZag and asked me to be Editor, which I was more than happy to accept.

During my time on the original ZigZag I had always encouraged new writers, such as Marina Merosi (and, through her, Julianne Regan), Jon Wilde (then Jonh Wilde) and especially those I was aware of in the fanzine world, like Tom Vague and Tony D. In this new ZigZag that would continue, including involving those who worked for music papers, sometimes under assumed names (Robin Gibson of Sounds being Rex Garvin), and sometimes not, such as Mick Sinclair and Johnny Waller, Richard North. Antonella Black found us as a sanctuary after a bad NME experience, I got Barbara Ellen from her fanzine. Eventually I was able to get Kris writing for us again. Other writers came through the door, like William Shaw who became Assistant Editor, and the unpredictable but inspired Dele Fadele.

We didn’t just have great writers, we had superb photographers and designers. Very good designers. Weirdly the initial chaps, Nick Jones and Bob Kelly, were both in bands with a sixties influence. Nick was in Playn Jayn and Bob in The Ashes. Needless to say both were superb bands. Then came the main designer Caroline Grimshaw, whose worked would be ripped off by other designers. Paul had his own design business too, and designer Deborah Barker could flit between all of the various projects.
In the 80’s the only magazines people talked about were The Face and Blitz, which were okay, if you were a wanker. Music magazines of an independent bent were unable to move past a 15,000 readership, which means they were all ultimately doomed.

We fanned the flames of Goth and Post-Punk promise in a determined fashion, but also including artier fare which we felt was of interest, as you will see from what is inside this issue, The Lost ZigZag.

When the magazine finally ground to a halt an issue had been prepared, and what you find here is pretty representative of what we were doing. Peter Coyne of The Godfathers wrote The Godfathers piece, which was a change. He’d started on Record Mirror as I had, and sadly never got to develop anything with us. I had kept a photocopy of everything people had done in case a new publisher had come along. Eventually the magazine was sold to some weirdo who produced stamp magazines. I met with him for a breakfast meeting (all of which he ate!) and turned him down. William tried to develop something with him, which went so badly wrong he recently admitted the one time he met him again afterwards he wanted to hit him. Publishing back then attracted a lot of cowboys, as it probably does now. I have no idea why.

Now, I was supposed to do this as an issue THE MICK early in 2011 and lost it all again. Forever lost! It has just resurfaced inside the Buffy board game box. Why I felt it needed to be kept in there I cannot guess. I think the best way to assess what’s here, among the visual memories I include of my time(s) at ZigZag is to think what it would be like to have a magazine available nationwide like this now. It’s pretty much unimaginable these days, isn’t it? Yup. I go now...
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NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 27 MARCH
This year's yodel

DOUBLE

As smooth, delicate and rich as a bar of the best Swiss chocolate is the mood and lyrical content of the debut album ‘Blue’, from Swiss duo DOUBLE. Having met at a Christmas/New Year’s party that went on for 10 days, vocalist/guitarist Kurt Malan and percussionist/keyboardsist Felix Haug struck up a friendship through an impromptu ‘jam’ session; discovered a common musical language; and went on to develop their mesmerically mood style. The pair formed, with the addition of a bass player, a triomfano Ping Pong, and went on to record a successful single and album. The band split up in 1983.

Coupling harmonious songs with an enterprisingly fluid instrumentation, Double then surface.

“Our idea was to find a new playground,” Felix explains seriously. “We were really just looking for opportunities to play — a bit like children. Most groups prove that they are very good musicians. They have to prove that they are Champion Of The World! But we were looking for a situation where we could play and expand and discover new sounds.”

“Our first singles were very experimental,” confesses Kurt, “so we had to get together and redefine what it is to be two. We also realised that we had a bit of freedom in which to make a point. We’re not a fashion group, we’re not a cult group. I know this sounds funny, but we’re real musicians.”

COMMUNING WITH GOD — THE GREAT OUTDOORS

If this past year or so has meant anything, it’s meant the return of songs. ‘Making Allowances For The Jargon’ by Birmingham’s GREAT OUTDOORS is an LP full of songs. And anyone who contrives to number their record ‘GODP?’ must be OK. Songwriter Martin Silver turns up in a hired car and a remarkable pair of shoes. Like many groups primarily concerned with writing songs they open themselves to the 60s revivalist chesnut. “Yeah,” says Martin. “We’ve been reviewed as some kind of psychedelic band, but we’re still all to do with psychedelia — you may as well call us Buzzcocks revivalists. Their whole style was built on songs. They probably wanted to be The Beatles.”

The LP’s just out, and later in the summer there’s a 12” due. And next? “We just want to play everywhere, write more songs, make more and better records... That sounds a bit boring. Don’t make us sound boring, will you?”

Er... do you take tons of drugs? “Um... not really.”

Russell Mills & Brian Eno

"I think if I wasn't making images of some sort I'd be devoting my time to making music." Russell Mills, artist, illustrator, sometime musician, sometime footballer, lives in a converted school hall just south of the Thames. I'd seen the room somewhere before... Click.

Cockney's "Africans'观点" video.

Best known for his careers for albums like Eno & Budd's 'The Pearl' and Japan's 'Exorcising Ghosts' (gorgeous — no otherword), Mills is first and foremost an artist but... His involvement with Bruce Gilbert and Graham Lewis goes right back to when Wire left EMI and since then he's contributed to a number of their records and performances. But it's a certain persona called ENO with whom Mills shares the strongest affinity. Apart from the album covers (three to date) they've just finished a book. MILLE's images illustrating Eno's old songs, (see illustration) with various essays on their collaborative process, music theory and so on. It is not a superficial coffee-table comic. But does that mean it's overly serious? "In part, but it's very readable. I didn't want a sloppy book that would just sit on the shelf for a few months and then disappear!" 'MORE DARK THAN SHARK' (Faber & Faber £15.95) is published on March 4th. 'More Blank Than Frank' — the retrospective record — is released by EMI at the same time.

Can you justify everything you do? "Yeah, I think so. I pushed... There have been times over the past three years when I've thought that producing static visual images is a waste of time because it can't represent change, whereas a poem... Someone said 'A poem can guide the Soul in 40 seconds. The same is true of a piece of music.'" Could you ever stop painting completely? "No, because instinctively I feel it's important. It does change somehow but I haven't really formulated my idea how it works. It's a mystery and that's probably the answer."

Dwight. To the embarrassment of most people in the Zig Zag office last year this man called FOSTER FULKINGTON used to turn up here with a batch of songs and a tape recorder and perform to us while we shuffled nervously over our typewriters. He ended up getting a deal with Atlantic and his first single is out soon. 'The Town Of Forgotten Talent' is a John Cheever meets Paul Weller sort of affair. "It's not really about unemployment." Foster pops up from nowhere to declare, "It's about people who don't see their abilities to the full." See him at the Fulham Greyhound (March 2nd), Camden Palace (April) and the Stockbroker's The Square in Harlesden (May), by which time Foster might well have abandoned his tape recorder for a three piece band.

Strange bedfellows: ROBERT ANTON WILSON, American philosopher and sci-fi author — the man who was responsible for the 'ILLUMINATI' intrigue has teamed up with Dublin group THE GOLDEN HORDE, led by film/record producer Simon Comedier to record a mini-LP. The result is a slightly 60s-like affair with Wilson providing some 'jazzy' lyrics. The result emerges under the title 'THE CHOCOLATE BISCUIT'.

CONSPIRACY: The Golden Horde are due to tour shortly and as for Robert Anton Wilson, he may be found gracing the pages of April's ZigZag.
USHERRÊTTÊE

THE RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD
Dir. Dan O'Bannon.

Dan O'Bannon, whose former connections include "Dark Star," "Dead And Buried" but more notably "Alien" makes his debut as director in "The Return Of The Living Dead." Once again, as within all horror films, the old proverb: "Curiosity killed the cat" creeps up, the difference here being that the curiosity is credited to the incompetence of the US Army which in itself is not entirely unbelievable. The cal in question is Piedy (Thom Mathews), a punk spoke who stumbles upon a medical experiment in which human beings, Frank (James Karen) unwittingly triggers off a series of macabre events, side-effects resulting in the resurrection of corpses who are intent on devouring human brains for din-dins.

The special effects are quite diabolical, too, perhaps thanks to O'Bannon's involvement with "Alien" and the special effects in "Dark Star." More importantly, there are moments of hilarity one in particular being when one of the zombies, after having climbed his way through a couple of parameters radians into the hospital with the plea 'need help more.' The soundtrack to the film which features the "Campa," "The Bum," and "The Bum" and various other little horrors is tastefully interwoven with certain scenes in order to add to the fun if indeed does. With orgies of cannibalism, disembowelment and other such anti-social behavior, "The Return Of The Living Dead" is a feast for the ghouls.

LADY JANE Dir. Trevor Nurse
When Edward VI, the sick is heir to Henry VIII died in 1553, those who wished to keep the crown protestant and so preserve their ascendency, pushed on the throne of England an unwilling sixteen year old called Lady Jane Grey. Lady Jane, a convincingly mounted conventional period drama, relates the brief life and nine year reign of an innocent.

It was presumably because Paramount decided the paying public weren't up to considering the finer points of theology that the religious issues which were, albeit in the sweeps of the cause behind the intrigue are here dealt with in a few laughably shallow aside which weakness the film's substance. The relationship between Jane (Helena Bonham Carter) and her husband Guilford (Carly Elson), is narrated by this same unnerving vein of commerce landing at a self-absorbed sentimentalism which, coupled with Jane's unflagging political naiveté (a girl reared on Plots in a political household) becomes even more unwatchable, as screenwriter David Edgar draws the sort of distinction between the corruption of the real world and the purity of Jane's idealised version which, in reality, couldn't exist. So, we're told, if Jane lost first her lieutenant, then her throne and ultimately her life, it was only because of her nobler reluctance to step down from her plateau of (peculiarly twentieh century) idealism and grip the wretched nettle of political reality. However, had Jane accepted the need for political experience and secured the throne, her people might have been spared the reign of Bloody Mary and which, I began to wonder, would have been the least selfish sacrifice.

SHADY Dir. Philip Saville
The film, billed as a "surrealistic black comedy" is about a self-effacing trans-sexual psychic called Shady (Antony Sher) who has the ability to see into other people's houses, across continents or into the future and to transpare the images he receives onto "blank film." Unfortunately, his impending bankruptcy hearing coupled with his wish to undergo an expensive sex-change operation means that he has to take his talent to the highest bidder. Sir Cyril Landau (A beaker), is willing to buy in order to trounce his financial competitors. It is incidentally similar to Sir Cyril (Patrick Steed MacNeice, now looking very long in the tooth and thick in the grin) that in buying Shady's ability he would also be paying for his sex-change, because when the subject is money, he'll talk to anyone.

Shady's problem is not his sexuality but his belief that other people will be as pleasant and trustworthy as he; so the film becomes a kind of revolutionary morality tale in which Shady has to suffer through the process of predators around him in order to reach an understanding of the essential truths: that he lets the leeches exploit him to the hilt to death, and that to get what he wants he must manipulate other people as ruthlessly as he prepares to manipulate him. To survive, he must. Finally, then, Shady picks out the one person who is even more vulnerable than himself, Sir Cyril's "cunny wife" (Katharine Holmond), and talks her into cutting off his balls off with the kitchen knife. Shady, having now been successfully inducted into the ways of the world, wakes up to discover that his psychic power has gone the same way as his manhood. But far from being a disadvantage, this means that he's now been liberated from his dangerous attractiveness to the big corporate power structures as well as from his usual prison and so, presumably, by way of a celebration, as a free woman, so to speak. But in spite of Anthony Sher's nice evocation of a character distanced from the world around him. the film is not true enough to be surreal, not black enough to be black and certainly not funny enough to be a comedy. In fact the entire flick holds barely more than a dozen laughs and most of those crop up in its last twenty minutes.

DETECTIVE Dir. Jean-Luc Godard
This is a pile of shit aimed at neo-obscurantist of such reactionary devices as plot and narrative. vehicle without which human emotion cannot be set in motion, but pitifully lacks the ability to replace them with anything of substance; hoping presumably that this incompentence can be disguised as artistry. Well, it can't. If your idea of fun is blowing three quid on a dorken machoearth for chattering, then you're well catered for. For my part, I've seen better directed traffic.
THE BODINES — "we feel stupid because we haven't got bloody leather pants!"

Picture THE BODINES. Picture four boys aged 19 (honest) from Glossop in Derbyshire, strongly the only four out of 25,000 in the locality with sufficient suss.

Michael: "There's a resentment amongst people we went to school with, and things like that — they laugh at you and say, What are you doing, you daft bastard? Get a Job!!" Picture four boys with the right idea. The Bodines, archtypal kicks from the sticks, have played less gigs than a score of chickens make dinners in a modest way though, they better some Creation contemporaries (I'm thinking of Meat Whiplash, with whom they wiped the floor and licked up the remnants of last year's petchy Clarensden packages, and maybe some others) because live, they're shy but touching and more then occasionally severe.

Their first and understandably overlooked single 'God Bless' (breakneck bitty thrill) and 'Paradise' (to a lesser extent) was a damn fine thing favouring a stringing guitar interplay reminiscent of a non-psychic Velvet Guts and a neat line in sincerely doubting, viciously sentimental "labeled" (their attempt) words. Now there's "There's..."

OK, it's pop. They don't like being compared to Aztec Camera, or the Strummens, but they do like (fans again) Julian Cope and Talking Heads. Michael is singer/guitarist and bemused leader by default, John is drummer and dry-toned pseudo-cyric, Tim and Paul play bass and lead guitar respectively and are the two whose voices fade into the background. The Bodines have landed perhaps fastly, riding the Creation wave; the Bodines, who are deadly serious about the Bodines in private and not much else in public, are getting hauled up and down to meet the arbiters of taste who would embrace their neatly mellow, already they hate Lenon.

"We don't fit in anywhere, though. We come down here and feel stupid," says Michael, "because we haven't got bloody leather pants — we go out in Manchester and we don't look right because we wear cheap clothes."

OK, I'll forgive sartorial sin. The Bodines would describe themselves as enthusiastic, youthful, honest, bright, angry, slightly I'd quantify and intelligent (definitely I'd add). And intense? Just put the shell to your ear...

"You should burn your self out as quickly as possible, and do as much as you can," declares Michael.

Yeah??

"Yeah..." (reconsiders) "but, in twenty years, when I'm still doing it, I suppose I won't be saying that. But no, I think you should do it all, as fast as you can, 'know.'

Michael doesn't need to be nervous because he can flip his fringe over his eyes. The others might not be so lucky, though they're all quite tall. And confident? Well, can you hand the ubiquitous success? We'll see, um, when we get some. We'll see if we can hand it then."

Ah, realism. I the the when I'm feeling dull. Now let's pass this affair into the hands of the gods and go get some food.

REX GAVIN
The great Jon(h) Wilde
**Bigger than Shakespeare?**

New US author BRETT EASTON ELLIS

Cocaine, sex, Parsons, violence, MTV. Los Angeles rich kids and a whole lot of boredom: the seemingly select fiction for BRETT EASTON ELLIS's outstanding first novel 'LESS THAN ZERO' which is being published in Britain this month with an inevitable cult status awaiting. Borrowing a title from Ellis Castello's first single, Ellis has actually produced a horribly black picture of life amongst LA's disaffected, wealthy teenagers. What stops 'Less Than Zero' from being a sort of Young Hollywood Wines is that it's related by one of those rare individuals: Clay returns from a college for vacation to his Beverly Hills backyard and views this surreal world through cocktail eyes, alienated and permanently depressed, coldly relating his passive involvement in it all.

The book is also remarkable because its author is only 20.

"It bothers me that that's being overpublicized," says Bret in his west coast flat. "I'm bothered that people are curious about whether I lead that life, or about my age. But maybe that's part of the fascination." A pet parrot squawks away in the background. Bret continues: "The people in the book aren't my friends, but I did grow up amongst that sort of crowd... though I wouldn't say they were exactly child monsters and heroin addicts like some of the people in the book. Some of the events are taken from newspaper, some are fictionalized. All the characters in the book are like zombies, isolated from the world by overdoses of MTV and cocaine. "Yeah," muses Bret. "What's so strange is that I don't know what they're isolating themselves from. They're not doing all this to protect themselves. They're doing it because they're bored." 'Less Than Zero' is published by Picador at £2.95.

**VOLUME CONTROL**

THE SILENT TWINS' by Marjorie Wallace

Jennifer and June Gibbons will soon be 23 years old. Identical twins, psychodynamically Siamese — though the flesh is joined, they have refused to ever speak to anyone but each other. This is their true story.

Marked as eccentrics for their silence, the twins vainly search for fame and expression led them to petty crime and arson. Where insanity is still gauged by what society allows, the girls' star existence is now transferred to Broadmoor Special Hospital Prison for an indefinite period. Their story is a novel written over a million words written over two years. Diaries, stories, novels and poems documenting their life and experiences. The words which were never spoken are being spoken with sensitivity and desire.

Tearing the post from their writings and gradually breaking their silence in prison, Marjorie Wallace's study shows a delicate spirit inspired by the twisted testament.

DAMAGED GODS' by Julie Burchill

It is not a question of wheezing literary confessions, where the most modern (elitist) writers couldn't ever create a diversion. Julie Burchill's memoirs manage to invoke a kind of explosive writing part of youth culture (as opposed to punk: a 'prag type YOP scheme') in a manner hilarious unparalled. Despite being frightfuly establishment, she takes her school into account and manages to erase the image of Julie Burchill — Laughing Sock, which has been all hers, since she began writing her colorful articles in The Face. Having finally rediscovered her touch late last year she now leaves modern music alone, about which she knows nothing, although she does the pop star actions better than most. The world is now her oyster, the Big Bad World has made the old ram's bitch, peering from her ivory tower black window, into our first female state executive.

"For all of hippie's supposed political conscience while the blacks were burning Wests most whites were burning joss sticks." Burchill has grown up! "Damaged Gods", despite being hideously over priced (or so short a book), finds her attempting to slaughter sacred cows, left, right and centre (erroneously political) although the blood of war forges her brain and her actual locus. Entertaining and inspirational yes, well thought out — never. She lacks her fingers in a great many pies, many of them half-baked, so that in between severing the 'Method Acting' of the dirigible Brando she'll wander around and kick the infuriatingly sleeping body of factually inconclusive ones like eban, tennis and children's television. It is when she drops the wet-trouserred James Dean out, blushing from behind the book case that the sparks begin to fly.

"Ina Negro Christian Church in Alabama four tray black girls were killed by a white bomb and Mr King drove the car about God and patience." The Disappearing Black, the strangely titled and profoundly far-reaching chapter is simply the best thing Burchill has ever done (and actually worth the price alone). It tackles racism down south, up north, all over the United States and it does it well, as in the historical perspective the headbutts Lincoln, with some illuminating revelations, then kicks Martin Luther King's procrastinating ass all along Fifth Avenue, and apposes the cement overhoese for Malcolm X.

"It is doubtful that Malcolm X ever faced any part of his body in service of the black community except his jewbone... Xmay have changed his name, but was little off his line".

It is a magnificent piece of writing quite unlike anything she's tried before, because this time intelligence dominates, rather than blind, irresponsible rage. There are those who treasure a Burchill sleighing, like a tattoo carved in heaven, but these days that might not be so advisable. She confronts nothing but a headline, having dropped interviews (which would only impact ineffectively), and she is part of the secondary me generation; read me, believe me, pay me. Hate of sacred cows she may be, but I guess we all hate ourselves, it can't be entirely accidental that she is one herself. And why, after all these years, and after all the condemnation of vanity, does she still use that same photo, now approaching its tenth anniversary? I think we should be shown.

Burchill proves with his book that she has a rare virtous strain in that she is able side of an issue well all take a hammering. Burchill is only interested in targets but like any sized assassin of worth, she is always interested in the victims.

MICK MERCER
"I DON'T THINK SIMON LE BON WOULD UNDERSTAND THE GO-BETWEENS. KATE BUSH MIGHT. PEOPLE INTO SPEAR OF DESTINY OR... WHO ARE THE OTHER PERFECTLY LOATHESOME BANDS?"

The feature you are about to read concerns Robert Forster and Grant McLennan of the Go-Betweens. They're sharing a sofa, ties of 'strong love' and a double act in which they're both competitive and complimentary to one another — something much akin to the four-way tension which exists within the band as a whole.

Their new LP is called 'Liberty Belle And The Black Diamond Express' and attempts to describe it as emphasising the obsolescence of pop journalism. The customary hyperbolic pushing and shoving of 11's are over used to the point of being meaningless. The Go-Betweens deserve terms of more intrinsic value. Suffice to say I love it.

Grant: "It's the highest point of our career. We've made a landmark album with a record company we feel confident and comfortable with and which is dedicated to making the Go-Betweens secure. As for the interrelationship with people within the band, it's never been so good."

The group are now signed to Beggars banquet after spells with Rough Trade, Sire and Elektra.

Robert: "Basically we've steered the same course but in personal terms I've been an absolute drag having to get to know new people all the time. Each year getting a 'thank you and goodbye' note. We have a feeling of futility behind us now.

Grant: "They approached us, we didn't approach them. They don't expect a hit single straight off like Sire did."

It was the Sire singles, 'Fat Company' and 'Bachelor Kisses' which missed the charts but broadened the Go-Betweens horizon to encompass a courageous and evocative strata of songwriting and record making. The LP 'Spring Hill Fair', on which the singles were included sounded disappointingly clinical and stilted.

'Liberty Belle' has a spindrift, liver sound.

Robert: "It was a deliberate situation where we wanted to get the drums up and the pianos up and just play, instead of three people playing the pool table and one sitting by the producer playing bass notes. It was an attempt to chuck everyone into the studio and play, which is a natty these days. Some fools might think that it's antiquated but... the album leaps performances, it doesn't have fake diminuendo which you can tell are dubbed studiocraft."

Grant: "In the past we've been approaching our own style and for the first time on 'Liberty Belle' it's coalesced into a style which is uniquely ours and no-one else is doing it anywhere in the world. We've brought that confidence to the writing of the songs and to the record and it shows."

Robert: "The melodies are strong and the band is goowy. I might have said 'pooey'. I take the best bits and run with them very well. The songwriting on the album is our most direct and it will stay, people."

Grant: "They'll laugh, cry, go to bed with someone they love, or someone they don't love. You get this great look in your eye and you glow and feel that this is the best..."
song you ever heard. When I get stoned that's how I feel. When I see a great painting it fills me with the sense that I can still be impressed and there are still great things to be done. When people hear 'Liberty Belle' they'll feel like that."

Robert confessed in a previous interview that he'd like to tour the USA coast. But only once.

Robert: "We did it and it was a nightmare. 10 dates in 12 days and flying all the time."

Grant: "East coast, mid-west, west coast, just flying everyday, it sounds like the way AC/DC operate but not us. I was dead by the time I got to L.A. (This sentence omitted by their next LP.) I considered it to be the freest town I've ever been in but I don't know if that's because I was hysteric with fatigue. I can hardly recall L.A. I would like to do a big U.S. tour in a big bus."

Many of these American dates were in small towns. The Go-Betweens have the aura of a small town band. Their songs are a manageable metaphor to grander things but are never grandiose. They have glamour with a human face (or shall human in Robert's case) from skateboarding to fried chicken joints.

Grant: "We played in a fired chicken joint in Nebraska. Everyone was coming in for the chicken and it was coincidental that there was a band on. I was quite surprised to find that the Stranglers were playing there in a couple of weeks. I don't know what they'll think of it."

Robert: "They're probably going for the chicken too. The most satisfying and enjoyable gigs were the small mid-west towns. Columbus, Ohio was bizarre. People coming up to you with pictures they'd taken of Nick Cave holding their babies."

Grant: "Hey."

Robert: "Touring them around with old grandparents and his grandson."

Grant: "I think there is a small town feel to us but it's the good qualities of a small town. Being away from people, you don't want to travel and you're not prepared to leave yourself open."

Robert: "I can see why we'll never be fantastically successful in L.A. Every band is like a circus there, but bombs going off and people doing anything to get attention. In a town like Columbus Ohio they'll sit or dance or scream out but they'll watch and it's not like U2 or WASP have been through the night before and tried to blow the town apart. They'll just sit there and enjoy it. In L.A. we might appeal to people who are tired of having their heads blown off and seeing huge fireworks displays. We're something different. We're quiet — we're not really understood."

But a quality of the Go-Betweens is their keeping of that point of understanding changing like a carrot in front of the curious listener. It's the never quite knowing that keeps their material charged with possibilities. To them, of course, the question of understanding is a little more mundane.

Grant: "I don't think Simon Le Bon would understand the Go-Betweens. Neil Young might. Kate Bush might. People into Spear Of Destiny or... who are the other perfectly hardcore bands?"

Robert: "King."

Grant: "People into King wouldn't understand. We make the simplest most direct music. I find it hard to see why people say we're oblique or obscure."

Robert: "I can understand how people got the impression of a vague world, lyrics that invited ordina people in. Now I enjoy writing a lot more. I think there is still the power and polish of the oblique stuff but I'm just bolder now."

Grant: "The question of understanding comes down to there being too much garbage around and people get used to one or two points reaffirmed in the same way and that's what the Go-Betweens don't do."

Are the Go-Betweens influential to other bands? Grant: "Highly influential."

Robert: "I always look at ads for groups starting up and see who's listed the Go-Betweens as an influence. One day I'm going to turn up for an audition."

And fall!

Robert: "Exactly! I'll walk in with my guitar and they'll say not bad but not as good as Robert Forster. I'll go to the door and say 'I am Robert Forster.'"

Grant: "And they'll say you look smaller on the records. But people like Lloyd Cole, they did everything he's done in 1970. It never comes to amaze me the amount of people who get credit for doing what we've done. Nick Cave — he was one of a gang but he just wanted to initiate Robert Forster and actually did it very well. But I don't want to name names. It's poor taste doing that in print. Better to do it at a party when you actually see them. Then it really means something."

What would the Go-Betweens like to be remembered for?

Grant: "Being a good looking band. Making records that sound good at 2 am. Powerful simple music which can inspire more than one emotion."

Robert: "I'd like people to say 'I saw the Go-Betweens and they were good'. That's all."

If the rest of the band were here would they disagree with everything you've said?

Grant: "Yes, that's why they're not here. We're four such individuals and that's our great strength. I'd like people to remember us by saying, 'I saw the Go-Betweens and they were great but jealous, I couldn't stand that guy in the red shirt.'"

Grant wears the red shirt.
It's been a while since pop music made politics fashionable. The last time was a few years back—in the time of Rock Against Racism when a million political-pop songs were aimed in the general direction of the government, "Stand Down, Margaret", "Na Na Na Man" "I'm Goin' to be Gay", "White Riot", "Lewisham", "Power in the Darkness" etc.

MPA faded away in the early '80s, for a couple of reasons. One, because in a way it had succeeded. The B's elections saw support for the front visibly dwindle. And the other thing was that—like Red Wedge—MPA was tied so strongly to pop music that it quite simply went out of fashion. Which is always going to be a bit of a problem for pop stars who want to say serious things.

The impulse behind Red Wedge? For a start, there was Live Aid. The whole event got so far up people's rectums that they thought there must be something better than that. Paul Weller, his political consciousness still blossoming, registered a protest at some of the hypocrites, but wisely kept schtum for the rest and joined in because even papering over cracks can be better than nothing. Paul used the opportunity to approach people like Gary Kemp backstage and say, how about doing something like this, that was political. Gary Kemp said "Oh. On the other side of it Live Aid had persuaded pop stars like Gary Kemp that they could muddle their hands in the world and come out of it shining.

And people like Junior had got thoroughly disenchanted with Geldof's circus. Tuning round and being told that yes, there was a British black act appearing. Sade: "I think Red Wedge is the best thing that's happened in a long time" he told me. "It's no Live Aid, thank God." So he got a phone call from Paul Weller: "Going along to that first meeting and finding out that so many people were of the same opinion was a very exciting thing. Black people have been politically aware for years... they had to be. It's part of growing up— all the deception, all the racism, always having to be twice as good to compete. Which is something which has gone on through Conservative and Labour governments."

Meanwhile Billy Bragg and his manager Peter Jenner had been humping the Bragg show round the country on his jobs for youth tour, in...
Nowt to do with Red Wedge, this is the local chip shop, where we didn't invite just anybody! This is the Very Things (top) and Ausgang (below). Artists of stature, men of wisdom.
In the pub we took on allcomers, and drank them under the table. The Jazz Butcher (top) was an early faller.

Max Eider (left) and David J (below) were made of sterner stuff.

“Lightweight!”
Politicize, detached... D.C. Lee, according to Joe, always talks big
and clever words that comprehensive-educated people don't understand.

"We've got to democratize politics... make it a bit more..." Jimmy Sommerville
grapples for the word and misses... "street creed."

"It doesn't have to be so complicated... it's really
very simple," explains D.C. Lee.

"We want to cure them of that horrible political
language they all use," explains Bragg. Politically Red Wedge is
something of a broad church. It covers a wide spectrum, from liberal
socialism to hard line leftie think. What's also
interesting, it contains people who
sometimes don't appear to have much of a clue
what they're talking about to those with
firm intellectual reasons for being on the Red Wedge tour. That the latter exist at all in the
form of Billy Bragg or The Commanders, is
something of a surprise, because you don't
really expect pop stars to be so esoteric.

"The biggest difficulty is getting people talking
to musicians about politics. Then you're in
a sticky position. Were we all politicians we'd
have had six months training in how to
avoid doggy questions. In the end you end up
waffling on/about things and contradicting yourself."

The tour had its absurd moments. There's some
peculiarity about a coach load of pop
stars taking politics, about Neil Spencer
advising them all on books to read. Strange to see
Billy Bragg chuntering earnestly with Gary
Hemp, especially when Bragg's been on record
a few times saying that his latest for The
Ballet was the main inspiration behind his
music. No wonder to Jimmy Sommerville
least of all being rejected by a breakfast
waitress of being in Brother Beat. "(Oh noo?"

Even more funny when the entire kitchen staff
begin singing Beat Boy in his honour.

Then there was Ken Livingstone — another
breakfast — eagerly turning the conversation
away from political matters to the habits of
koala bears. ("Actually, they're really vicious
little things.") And Jerry Dammers emerging
from his self-absorbed cell to become the life
and soul of the party, giggling toothlessly
and striking up a firm if slightly surreal friendship
with Mick Talbot. And Billy Bragg losing £15 on
the Superbowl result. Funnest of all watching
the hordes of journalists trying to cram rounds
of drinks into the seven minute intervals
between sets.

Out of London, abandoning their pop professionalism
away from the Robert Gilpin socialism,
as dress sense everybody went on record as a
house on fire, and though the alliance might be a
superficial one it existed for a week at least.

Among all Red Wedge's objectives there's one
particularly tricky one: to influence Labour
Party youth policy. During the January
tour some 20 odd politicians were supposed
to turn up to face the crowds.

Neil Spencer: "I think anything that gets them
out of their smoke-filled rooms and puts them
face to face with the people they're supposed
to be representing had got to be a good thing.
I've actually been in the House of Parliament
onto occasions and when you get in there the
real world just fades away. You just get this
complete sense of distance... How successful
we've been, I don't know.

It's not easy to judge how successful they were,
but generally the MPs who turned up
seemed completely unable to rise to the
casion. "There hasn't been one hostile question,"
gushed Anne Clwyd MP at the Cardiff
venue, which seemed to jar considerably with the
amount of cynicism which individuals in the
audience were expressing. Other MPs seemed
to huddle round and talk to each other.

Ken Livingstone was the only exception. He
waded into the crowd and was immediately
surrounded by a bustling throng of autograph
hunters. After about half an hour of being pushed
about he murmured over his shoulder, "God! Get me out of here!"

No hum. At the first date I'd bumped into Martin
of The Redskins, shuffling in slimmer
embarrassment at being discovered at such a pre-Labour
event. "I'm reviewing it for Socialist Worker," he
excused himself. Touring SWP scum on Red
Wedge's ability to influence the Labour Party
and again, on the Labour Party's ability to
change anything.

But criticism came from within as well. Back at
the hotel after the final concert, an attenuated
Tom Robinson confessed that he thought the idea
of being able to influence the Labour Party was
just a tad naive. "We thought we could do that
before with RAP and we didn't get anywhere."

For him the importance of Red Wedge was
simply in giving people a chance to testify.
It would be a bit flakyhard to reach any sweeping
conclusions about this sort of jiggery
polglyphy as yet. Like RAP before, it can only be
judged on its success and it's none too easy
to see exactly what these concrete achievements
are. It's a vague alliance, they haven't really had
to face the accusation yet that Red Wedge is all
style and no content. Red Wedge has no
manifestoes because to commit itself to
policies might disrupt the broad alliance.

Dean Baker, 15, after the concert at Birmingham:
"I thought it was going to be all politics
being rammed down your throat, but it was
just a good way of putting over politics. I don't
really know much about politics but it
didn't change my mind.

"I've been on two YTS schemes. The first one
was quite good, but the second one
was an absolute dog's dinner. Absolutely
wonderful. I'm going to join the Labour Party
now..."

This month, the Red Wedge Comedy Tour gets
underway, 17 dates with Skirt Video, Sensible
Footwear, Craig Charles and Mark Mwenda.
See local press and get on. And after that
there's supposed to be that Bob Erskine/Cary
Strohminger nightclub tour... Which is where we
came in.
FREIGHT TRAIN

The up track

"This," announces Jess Cape of FREIGHT TRAIN dramatically, "is our first interview. And it came about like this: at the rather and of last year a single of theirs — "Man's Laughter" — appeared on the ZigZag deck which improved with its wide melodic filters touched slightly with overtones of the pasty decade. Excellent, but Freight Train? Never heard of them. An interview was suggested without knowing that Jess Cape is the latter knew little brother of one Julian. Similar philosophy, and e ridiculously similar feature of hair.

Freight Train originally comprised bass player Barry Dovey and Donald Ross Skinner, guitar player, songwriter and singer, fallout from a different group by the name of DHSS. They roped in Jess as a temporary keyboard player. ("Temporary," explains Donald, "because we thought he was going to university") but ended up letting him join... For the moment, his name is likely to end up as Freight Train's sell line.

"I suppose so," says Jess, a born gobbler. "But Donald's brother is famous too; he's in 'Angel'. Yes, he is. I suppose it is quite important at the moment because it's one of the only things you know about us. We've got a record out and I'm Julia's brother. Hopefully once we've done a few more things that's going to disappear..."

"It's when we start doing 'Underworld' or a encore, that's when you've got to worry," announces Donald.

Freight Train's first single 'Man's Laughter' is out on 2am Records — an exception to their normal line of novelty, psychedelic output — and they're currently negotiating as to who's going to put out the next one.

Better an old demon than a new god JOHN GIORNO

"Do anything, but don't come in my novel," the charismatic JOHN GIORNO bellows to an appreciative but polite audience at the ICA. In case there's anyone out there who hasn't recovered from 'O' Level English, the attitude is one hour is the company of this dynamic New Yorker who has spent the last 20 years using every available communication outlet to promote his cause, the power of the spoken word.

Ironically he first came to fame in his silent role as the star of Sleep, Andy Warhol's first movie filmed in 1963. "Andy used to call me up and I'd always answer when he phoned. That's where the idea came from... He'd just bought a new VHS Box and end decided to make a movie. The whole thing was filmed in three minutes takes..." In 1964 John started the telephone 'Dict-a-Poem' scheme. "We set up about 15 lines, initially in New York, then in other cities. People could call any time. We used tapes which were changed daily.

Since then there have been LPs, videos, books, radio shows, editions, j OC TOS POEMS INSilk-screen poems prints, t-shirt poems, window-curtain poems... poems with titles like 'Cancer Is My Left Ball' and 'Eating Human Meat' - all is real and humorous - all in one story. He appeared on the Final Academy tour in 1962 and William Burroughs, 'cut-up' pioneer Brian Oysin, Psychotic TV and Cabaret Voltaire. The recent LP 'A Diamond Hidden in The Mouth Of A Corpse' features tracks by many of these performers.

John Giorno's poetry connections go back a long way. Laurie Anderson, Frank Zeppa, and Patti Smith appeared at the Napa convention in 1973 and are featured on the 'You're A Hook' LP which includes a version of the Giorno classic 'Last Night I Gambled With My Anger And Lost' produced by Lenny Kaye.

Of the 17 or so releases by Giorno Poetry Systems since the 'Raspberry and Porographic Poem' LP of 1973, only one is the latest — available on general release. If you're lucky you might find 'Better An Old Demon Than A New God' with tracks by the usual crew plus Lydia Lunch and Richard Hell, but classics like Giorno's own favourite 'You're The Guy I Want To Share My Money With' written with Bill Burroughs and Laurie Anderson are rarely seen.

HUSKER DU: New LP 'Candy Apple Grey'. Tour cites: New Castle Riverside (March 12th), Aberdeen Victoria Hotel (15th), Glasgow Mayfair (16th), Liverpool University (17th), Leeds University (19th), Nottingham Rock City (20th), Manchester International (21st), Sheffield Lead Mill (22nd), Birmingham Powerhouse (23rd), Bristol Bierkeller (23rd), Electric Ballroom London (26th). OK?

Jeremy rock critic JAMES BROWN

Impart us to mention the latest edition of his comic ATTACK ON ZBG in these pages. This issue is co-produced with STEETING WELLS, media star and producer of Molotov comics and the two of them share the credit for this piece of inspired nonsense, billing it as the magazine where Class War meets Smash Hits. For your copy send 50p to Iconic 75 Victoria Rd, Wallingford, Manchester M11 8BP.
THE LATEST SOUL SENSATION WHO—NATURALLY—HAS BEEN RECORDING SINCE YOU WERE IN SHORT TROUSERS

++ It seems that when you start talking about homegrown soul, the UK is hellbent on producing a restrained, dry-jacketed sound—saturated with Shalamar or squinty '70s Jacksons. I hurl breakfast, lunch and dinner over your Cool Notes and Five Stars. David Grant and Junior keep our flag steady but what about the women? Who can sit with the Lorraine Ellison, Donnie Dukes and Shirley Brown?

So hello RUBY TURNER.

A big woman with a bigger voice—one of those effortlessly sour, away lasers which strike a ballad all around its insides, and tries to make up over the open wounds.

Chances are you've heard Ruby already. She's been seen with the biggest. More recently it's been her turn, live and in action. Her sound is the biggest.

First fruit was the single, Ruby's warm reading of the Staples' I'll Be with You' Come Go With Me', to be released next month on an LP which she's been finishing up. Apart from arthritic covered versions of Chicken Shack's 'I Would Rather Be Blind' and Rita Coolidge's 'A Man Left Lonely', she's also tackled Alice Cooper's 'Only Women Bleed'.

The wonderful Womack and Womack are writing material specially for her after Ruby supported them on their first visit. Not an album to ignore.

Ruby took voice lessons for about eight years ago at the age of 18. Born in Jamaica she moved with her family to Handsworth, Birmingham when she was nine. During our chat the vivacious Miss T piddled away happily in a pair of loose pants and the odd JA twang and a whoppish laugh revealing nothing else than Ruby Lee.

Though she grew up on— and still listens to— reggae, Ruby's chosen path was soul. After starting in the theatre, she took to the clubs with her own band, belting out big soul with nods to blues and rock.

'I've been at it a long while, my love. Professionally for about five years...getting many gigs as we possibly could. Get seen. Get heard. Get written about...accumulated good gigs from that: The Womacks. Mume...

Two singles during this time—Every Soul' on her own Swansinger label. And a version of Dylan's 'I Shall Be Released' on Graduation (UIBD's launch pad) — lacked sufficient notification to make it, but Ruby's session work was stocking her reputation. She sang on UB40's 'Many Rivers To Cross'. Bryan ferry's 'Slave To Love' and really 0ve a few runs when she replaced Helen Terry in Culture Club, singing on 'Wax Song' and the last tours. Prestigious supports with the Womacks and Mume followed and now Ruby's set her sights on the front line.

'This is the crucial stage now. I'm through messing around. I want to do it for real like everyone else is doing it.'

So how are the record company going to sell you?

'I've always said they're going to have a job selling me any other way than I am. They can't dress me up! I am me. I am Ruby. They've got to make the most of what I am and I'll make the most of what I am and between us we could get quite a nice package. I've never actually found myself offensive, except for one or two things that I don't want to discuss! I want to be in there and respected as a musician, the way I've respected people. I don't want to be crowned queen of anything, I just want to be respected as a singer. People will talk to you at a party instead of going, 'oh, your lady's nice!'

'I always knew there was a voice. I knew there was a certain something because I felt it too, but it was years before I felt I could do it properly. Do you think it's helped that real soul singers are coming through again.

'Going back to real music, they're appreciating singers and musicians. For years I've been the mouse. I suppose in the musician's eye I was a real singer. Hopefully I've released a thing at the right time, when people want to hear real music. It's got to be the right time. Do you think things would have happened quicker if you'd come from, say, Louisiana instead of Birmingham?—you know—that soul snob thing, the mystique?'

'Yeah, they probably would, because the thing—if it's not from the States it's imitation—nothing that's not come from the States is an imitation. I suppose compared to the real thing. People have been misled for such a long time that they won't take anything seriously anymore. I have to stand up and say 'This is Ruby Turner! I'm serious! This is me singing!'''

'There's so much crap about 'supposed to be soul'. Here, you could set a precedent...'

'It'd be wonderful! If it's a half, wouldn't it? Obviously it's got to be accepted in your home. I dunno... whether you come from Birmingham, Alabama or Birmingham, England, it doesn't matter. Soul music is an American culture that has streamed out to the rest of the world. They didn't have plantations in England, did they? It's universal... People should just look at singers instead of their credentials. My mother wasn't a great jazz singer and didn't play trombone! Ha ha! I could be starting something new for my generation. Me Grandad sang at funerals though...'

'So what if you become a pop star, Ruby. From sessions to all that pressure?'

'I'm sure it would. My friend Jaki (Graham) took off in '65 and we took occasionally on the phone. She's up and down in and out and I'm just standing there in the hallway thinking 'oh do!' In the studios there's no pressure, but all this running about and prancing around, it's not very nice. It's one of those jobs. I'll cross that bridge when I come to it.' If that's the price, mate, YEAH! I'll do it! I'll do anything once'

Ukoulalast.
"A THOUSAND BLACK KIDS IN A WHITE NEIGHBOURHOOD WITH A RADIO GOING. THAT'S A RIOT? THEY WANTED TO BLAME THE MUSIC, BUT THEY ALWAYS WANTED TO BLAME MUSIC. EVEN BEFORE THERE WAS RAP THEY WANTED TO BLAME THE MUSIC."

THE JAM WAS MOVING

- It started as a rumble in New York City. Black clouds cracked a pneumatic hole from drum-heavy machine heaven and rap's gleaming Mercedes zipped headlong into an electric storm of metal mania. Beat met beast and the hardest music in the world trumped bland-sudden speakers. It took just eight 12 records to build Def Jam Recordings into a force so formidable that American CBS raised the label up for a cool million dollars.

DEF JAM. Just saying it makes me shudder and guggle with uncontrolable glee. This music really sorts out the men from the boys, the rams from the ewes, the bison from the boars... the barrel.

Anyone can turn on a drum machine is a common arrow sung Def Jam's way. Scratch, say I. That is the real drum-theater. Massive pounding banality, fire-breathing brains smashed with pure noise, mighty basses perverse but glorious injections of metal fury. Aural choreography to maximum economy and effect — from the most lethal DMX slam to fascist embroidery. Riffs that saw your groin so YOU ARE MOVED — flat up against the wall.

I NEED A BEAT

- Starting from scratch... Def Jam erupted out of the feverish brain of former Hardcore fan RICK KUBIN in 1984. He was studying film at New York University, running the label from his dorm and only recently moving to a proper office, after graduating.

RUSSELL 'RUSH' SIMMONS brother of DMC's RUN and manager of a dangerous Rap roster, is Rick's partner. Rick produces the records, aided by a studio team which includes JAY 'BIZZOTIC' BURGESS and sometimes the notorious LATIN RASCALS editing duo. They use a small studio in Chinatown.

First record was LL COOL J's I NEED A BEAT, released in November 1984, which set a granite-slab tone for the Def Jam experience. Rampant and explosive rap over bare-bones drumbeat, gouged by the chiseling hands of DJ CUT CREATOR.

The label's reputation as the baddest in town snowballed through '85 with each subsequent 12" — the BEASTIE BOYS were next with 'ROCK HARD' — AC/DC meets the DMX-Monster in a sea of Bud, bastardous church out. BAN-BAATAA'S DJ JAZZY JAY (who featured on a kind of Def Jam dress-rehearsal disc called 'IT'S HERE') came up with the label's theme song, 'Def Jam', backed with Russell rap-explaining his piece for 'COLD CHillin' in the SPOT'. Eburazzo and the Beasty Boys NCA arranged a screaming DMX to produce the psycho-del-crushe翱groove of 'DRUM MACHINE'... these guys even leave the studio arguments int.

'DOLLAR BILL' non JIMMY SPICER stripped the Hip Hop down even further for the sacrosanct 'THAT'S IT' chart. LL Cool J felt even more tightening on 'I BEAT YOUR DANGEROUS'... and his neighbours the HOLLIS CREW weighted in with the Run-produced 'IT'S THE BEAT'.

Each record sold tens of thousands. You snapped up the new Def Jam even if it was gonna be PAT BONCE!

'I was enough to convince CBS. First fruits for the UK. LL Cool J's 'I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT MY RADIO' and 'RAPID' album; the Beasties' Boys' grungy death-dogme burner SHE'S ON IT.'
Rap gets periodic hits but is misunderstood and maligned, especially by 'real' rappers and the more earnest factions of the rock crowd. But that is changing - the style cannot be denied. British CBS getting behind Def Jam, which is more than merely a pop concern anyway, as you'll see, is a milestone. Late January saw the Big Launch here. Rick Rubin and Russell Simmons flew in with LL Cool J and the Beastie Boys for a three-day Media blitz, climaxing in a strange but fun bash at the Embassy Club.

First major gig of the year, a real you-had-to-be-there job. Tickets dished out from a bank vault. It should have been a UK Rap convention, a display of strength to the attendant media. Unfortunately, you had the situation of Radio One producers here-for-the-kleenex, with unused invites in their pockets, while broken-hearted Def Jam - flank-crowd squashed long noses against bouncers' bottoms. Their presence would've unambiguously crushed the crowd -mania. Rick rocks in Goid J's crowns and the Beasties bounce off. They would've killed for the freshies; hot, pimply, record, sweatshirts - probably now stretched over some biz-lunch stomach when the DIRE STRAITS one got too cake-stained. Amidst all the stacked cool and backslipping glee, it was great to see the Beasties staggering around equipped with beer, bellowing, getting it (see Ad Rock for genuine mania) and guffawing at the Christmas coke on PHILIP 'DODDY' SALONI's head.

The threeimonious Nazis made two appearances on stage, loud, loud, but lovable, they first introduced themselves in a waltz of b:title references. Instead of '70s King Ad Rock says 'bitch' Two hours later and sufficiently devoid of临, they superimposed to 'Towards the New Age'. Once you play a Motorhead album you can't put on a Hardcore album. They're just as happy. If you slow down Hardcore you have Black Sabbath. If you put a Rock song, you have Black Sabbath.

What are you saying? There's much prejudice against Heavy Metal!

"Our attitude isn't suited towards Hip Hop. It's a puritan attitude to extreme boogie music. Whether it's on the Hip Hop or the Heavy Metal side it's the kids who want to hear the music and the radios want to play it."

"We don't play guns on it. It's a Rock'n'Roll record. A rock 'n' roll mentality. Dance music is usually all-american Disco. That's not what we make. We make Rock records which are beat-oriented, whether it's a guitar or not."

You've never doubled with lightweight Electro gimmickry - that's a great cost I think the heavier the Hip Hop, the better. "We too. It's the same mentality. Real Rock'n'Roll stepped down. It's not that in the advertising. Why you're so offended by the advertising. CBS has been doing so because what we stand for. We're gonna straighten that out!"

Rick: "Run-D.M.C. played the Hollywood Palladium and sold out. There were lots of Hardcore and Heavy Metal kids there. Run-D.M.C. and the Beastie Boys are not attracting kids who go for hard music. It's the same mentality."

Rick: "Run-D.M.C.'s image is stronger than the image-oriented Rock groups who don't like - like Mottley Crue." So tell us about Slayer, Rick.

A creased glam flicks his eyelashes. Green bitsusfumes with his ears and nostrils.

"They're definitely the worst of those type of bands and the most worst-received because of that. They've had two albums on a little independent label. They're just four really mean-looking kids. They're into the whole Satanic thing - upside down crosses. It's interesting because they can use some of the ridiculous HM trapping and not come off like a joke group, like so many of them do. Everything's about hell but they say they're getting tired of the Satan thing so the new album's going to be more death-oriented."

"There's an ad which says we will move you, go dance, something like that. Have you heard the remix I did of BIG AUDIO DYNAMITE'S "THE BOTTOM LINE" (top, and he's got another bigger-job on MEDICINE SHOW for the next single). It's more Hip Hop than the Beastie Boys' 'SHIT'."

CNNT: I went into HMV and found LL Cool J and the Beastie Boys in the SOUL section and the S.A.D. record in ROCK I was flabbergasted. The label is not black dance music. It's heavy music. Listen to the records before you decide where they go. I think it's gonna be funny if we have Slayer's album in the Disco bins!"

I thought the Beasties were black before pictures appeared and their hardware background came out.

"That's what they are. They were skinheads when I met them! They played 40-second songs. It's a natural progression. If you grow up in New York and lied heavy music and want to the type of clubs that played if you ended up being a Hip Hop fan. Friday night went to the Row and heard Hip Hop. Sundays we'd go to CBGBs and see the Hardcore matinees. Beasties Boys are the sum product of growing spin that time."

Run-D.M.C.'s "KIND OF ROCK" was a seminal Rap-mental compilation. As Rick reveals that he's trying to get the dynamic duo on Def Jam, in talks Russell Simmons, fast and high to Rick's slow and low energy. What's it like coming from an independent to part of CBS?

Russell: "When Def Jam was an independent we couldn't sell one of those records, but you can't take the next step. The major labels are progressing and the artists need that now."

Rick: "Promotion can't be done by an independent in the States. You need a market. Now we've sold 300,000 records in six weeks, which is a pretty good record."

Russell: "I'll be the biggest selling album by an artist in America last week. He sold 70,000 albums. It's the number one pop album on Columbia."

Any pressure to get commercial? Soften up?

Russell: "We've signed COLD CRUSH (whoa - "FRESH, WILD, FLY AND GOLIATH" and HEARTBREAKERS on Tuff City records are scorchers). I think D.A.Y. D has been sitting around long enough. He wrote a lot of the KURTIS BLOW records - he took Run's job as Kurtis Blow's DJ (check: ONE FOR THE BIBLE' and 'THE D.M.C. WILL ROCK')."

"There's also a new Jazzy Jay record and group called the ORIGINAL CONCEPT, coming out next week in New York."

Rick: "It's a real good heavy Hip Hop record - possibly the heaviest Hip Hop record. Really an extreme dumb record."

Rick would also like to do a restoration job on TROUBLE JUNKIE, who he feels has Disco-ed out. "We're gonna try and get'em back to how they were."

Another new signing are the intriguing JUNIORITY BAND from Washington DC. The members are 10 and 15. They started on the streets, penniless, hocking out Go Go on curbs, fins and the odd toy piano. Rick sees their upcoming single, "THE WORLD'S WORST" as one of the best Go Go records.

"The Juniors Band are so much as exciting and as stripped down - maybe even more so - as Trouble Junkie. Plus they're young. I've always like progressive, new music and young groups. They're kids but they play it from the heart and they mean it. I think they're gonna be worth more than all the Osmond albums put together. They could be like a new Osmond Group. We'll see."

THE END, Y'ALL.

THE DAY BEFORE, I worked my way around the Def Jam crew at the Chelsea Holiday Inn. Kinda kicking off with Rick. Behind a plate of chips at New York's King of Rock, SLAYER t-shirt, beard, hair, sneakers and one of the最best photos I've got in ten years.

As I said, Def Jam is more than just a Rap label. It's a mentality with ROCK and HARD the keywords. I'm not there five minutes and headphones are clamped round my ears for a taste of the label's latest stringing. Def Jam's new group is THE JUNKIEST, a four piece Heavy Metal outfit from the West Coast who make OZZY Sound like the Pastels.
DEF JAM +++ RUN DMC +++ DEF JAM

Russell: "They can get new instruments with the advances!"
Let's talk about 'Krush Groove'. We ain't seen it yet (and might not, he hear laugh).
Russell: "You ain't missing much.
But you're the producer!"
"The feeling's wrong."
"I thought I couldn't fail with a cast including Run-DMC, Shagg (on the woman role), LL Cool J and Kurtis Blow telling the Def Jam story (sort of)."
Rick: "I guess you could see a lot of a lifestyle that you wouldn't see otherwise, but it's not very realistic. It could have been better, it's not so real. Better than the others, it's got real people in it and the performances are accurate."
"There's a sense of good songs on the soundtrack but it's mentally wrong-you can't play both sides through. Things were forced on us," he says mysteriously.
"Seems like I've held a file other tapes didn't.
"Rick: The next movie, 'TOUGHER THAN LEATHER', will fill the gap because the last Clint Eastwood movie has been out a while. It's a gangster movie with Run-DMC starring."
"We should get in on it all. We're starting a company called Def Jam Visual."
"I've heard there's been a screening at the 50s (which the press have chosen to describe as 'rats'). Russell threw the 'KRASH GROOVE CHRISTMAS PARTY' at Madison Square Garden. He tells me about that—sensational Press has made it a sensitive subject.
"I wish I'd gone.
"You're only interested in that thing about the violence, right?"
"Wrong! No incident (a shot-up upstairs, as it happened) is pretty good going with that many people."
"I appreciate you saying that. When the movie was out they kept calling me and saying what about the violence outside the theater? There were a thousand black kids in a white neighborhood with a radio going. That's a riot.
"They wanted to blame the music but they always went to blame the music. Even after that they wanted to blame the music."

TO LLLAD BACK

- The red-hot career of his head in the poolside restaurant is yet another reason for LL Cool J, Def Jam's precious young pretendor to the Rap throne. He's well on his way to becoming a major success story. Just flown in, he's been up all night but you wouldn't know it. "I'll be LL Cool J," he says the Voice. That's what the Man-boned gold-star-adorned says too.

Now maybe James Todd Smith from Hollis, Queens, would behave like a 17-year-old on his first trip to London. Not his older ego, LL Cool J. Monsoon and self-belief man from the large frame. Instant raps turn from his lips at the drop of a Pengah hot. LL Cool J is here. We're the ones who should be impressed... and must admire. Albums rarely come as nitty as Radio, specifically Rap albums and their obligatory ballad tracks. This is still LL waiting to hear as he proclaims for indications of his UK status throughout our chat.

Right now, uppermost on LL's agenda is his ordered steaks. While we're waiting for it we'll catch back eighteen years—right back in LL's life—to a presence from his grandad, Eugene. Of course there's a song about him. He's always had encouragement from his family—two years ago his high school gave him the drum machine which launched him on his gold-plated path. There's an air of solid comfort about him. He obviously never had too tough. Thoughts from Long Island, he grew up too small in Hollis, a middle-class VFW suburb for removed from the war-zone tension of the ghettoes. Mention Hollis and LL comes back with mental pictures of "grass and trees."

But there is quite a rapping scene in Hollis—stamping ground for Run DMC and some Hollis Crew. LL teamed up with DJ Cut Creator six years ago. The older has actually been seen on the screen since the early days of '80, inspired by the young pioneers of the turntables like DJ Hollywood and DJ Divine. LL is to groups like the Freeze MCs and Lutz&Sister Gang. Young James was inspired by early rappers like Grandmaster Flash, Treach, Zapp, 2 Live Crew and Fearsome 3, a group he had heard of, encouraged by his family. He started developing a style, got his tapes passed down by DJ's Off the ground. LL Cool J became the labels first rapper and I Need A Beat was Def Jam 01. This is November, 1984. A few months later sales were into six figures. LL did the 50-city Fresh tour with the Fat Boys, Run DMC and Whodini, which really broke open the U.S. By his second single, 'I WANT YOU', LL Cool J was 'Hot' but not uninterested like all the press reports said. But he could afford to win his radio obsession to over 30 cities. The tour arrives (again) and meets with decorous applause despite its funny shape. Talks to stay in.

"We're doing this interview over in England, now we've got a quote from the dinner table... somebody step on a dog (1). My first bite of an English steak... this is truly excellent, my man. I'm new and I'm hired, but I'm hired, and I hope to work!"

"You weren't always LL Cool J."
"Oh right. My name used to be Silver Streak. Silver Streak. My name was Smith. I'm living. I'm living."
"You're not gonna do it for the kids. Maybe we can set it up so I can return here for some really chilling. Right now I don't have any plans (he's booked for the next year) but I'm looking forward to coming back... so my name is bigger here? There might be LLMonas soon."

Come back and see!
Wait till I play. See what we can do. I'm reading. I'm willing. Right, Keith?"

So how do you like having? LL?
"It's really def."
"He says, taking it in his stride. 'I'm enjoying myself in this whole thing. Travel the world, see a lot of people — plus make some paper at the same time!'
"I just handle it. I'm still the same person, haven't changed. '
"It's like another job. Need to get some money, get some money. We just cool. That's where you make the mistake."

LL has his own crew in Hollis — the Farmers. "My boy! Like I say on the record — "FARMERS' BOULEVARD"" of all the time.
You got your own crew. We ran together before this."

Cool G. currently immersed in a "Farmer's Boulevarde" has been plucked from the Farmers to act as onstage valet, catching discarded clobber and radish. "'Ss biggin'. Give him a taste — you don't forget your friends. All I want to is do a track to get it to the top without stepping on any toes. I am burning no bridges behind me."

A LL Cool Rap is hard to pick detail, humour, explosive delivery and storyline on those gut-shakingly simple tracks. On I WANT YOU, no pitches suppressed. Live with his old band ("Just a story."), THAT'S A LIE could be a bullshitter like Run DMC's 'YOU TALK TOO MUCH'. DEAR YVETTE's parking 'ROXANNE' style answer records. This ain't just a barrage of boasts (that's not to say LL Cool J is insecure or anything). He writes his Raps painstakingly at night locked away in his bedroom, before beats and guitar."
"Talk to a lot of shit", he enthuses (not meaning the older ones repeated verse), "I like to talk about different things."
"My brain works that way. I never write a rhyme that's just a rhyme. Maybe Y'LL ROCK, just in talking about the boulevard or something. You never hear one of my records say 'I'm the baddest and I'm the greatest'. I may tell you I'm the new... then I'll just tell you about something."
"I'm doing a Goldie Hawn movie. Did you know that?"

No, called 'WILD CATS', coming out in the States February 28. I do the something I did in 'Krush Groove' — come in and torch it up. Destroy the whole place at the end. I do a musical track not on the album, called 'START OF KINGS'. It doesn't live up to any standards but it is for the movie (a school-shoot with the Howard one as a teacher in a rough school) — Hollywood, black-blacks. We could have had a wild record but the producers wanted something soft, nothing hard. I didn't. I don't care."

LL Cool J's huge rockin' audition scene in 'Krush Groove' is regarded as one of the hottest clips. Then a bombshell is dropped by a waiting journalist — the grey men in the boardroom have decided there isn't a market for such a movie in this country and it's not getting a UK release. Busted! There'd be mania!

LL is non-plussed.
"No market for it? Real dumb. If you sit here and eat steak really to do a show tomorrow how can there not be a market for it? Who decided that? It's bloody rubbish?"
Any final words?  
"I'm chilling, LL Cool J has arrived and I'm here to stay!"  
And that's when he's knocked out.  
Roy's first real star has arrived.

TIME TO KILL.

The Beastie Boys are just getting up, facing 'morning after' heads with huge breakfasts. The night before they'd tried Alice in Wonderland, the Soho psychedelic den, MCA had ended up conversing with bothies, intoed pubs in a Chinatown restaurant. A half-empty can of Special Brew sits on the table and I break what ice there is by telling them about 'The Wonders of Tennessee' 'Superlum' and tales of the legendary (their hero). Apparently Madonna's road crew (the Beasties supported on her last US tour, nightly grossing out the ticketes) held the great man in total awe.

They play me a couple of tracks off the forthcoming Beastie-album, which will be called 'DON'T BE A FAC-DOT', CBS doesn't mind, and they probably will! 'HOLD IT NOW' and 'TIME TO FIGHT!' are classic stomping Beastie-bowlers, jagged and awesome.

Time to throw up - why?  
Yanks of laughter. One of the two Adams (aka King Ad-Rock) explains: 'Getting ill is like going out and (pause)....'

Going berserk?  
"Yeah, it's a good thing, because whenever you want to get ill and don't want to say it in front of anybody, you say 'what's the time?'"  
Mike D: "It's time to go mentally ill. Time to wreck your hotel (which they apparently did several times)"

Adam: "What's the time? It's time to throw up! (changing course) My friend Arthur once took a shit out of his window at school - he just stuck his ass out. My friend Brian took a shit off the roof."  
"Okay, I heard of someone doing it off Tower Bridge. And one of my mates left one in the middle of the road (Hi Bob). Adam 2 (aka NCA): 'Imagine if you're driving on a nice day in a convertible and someone shits on your wife! 'Sorry honey, I'm glad he didn't hit me!'

How do you like London, Adam?  
Adam (admiring some underpants he finds on the floor): 'We don't like the fact it closes so early and the TV shuts down. Come back to the hotel and you have to sit in the dark. We find we can't fall asleep without the TV on, cos in New York it's all night. Most people read but we've got a special TV with a remote control so it goes off when you set it.'

The Beastie Boys made friends and enemies on their visit. They like having fun and have little shame. They may be big, but I'd sooner have them than the pretentious pretenders of many English combos. They're hilarious company, love Motorhead, remind me of a 10 version of my Aylesbury mates. R.I.P., their records are glorious眼看 encyclopaedia - kicking, screaming, ranting, but simple and funny (but like the group).

The Beastie Boys formed at the end of the 70s with NCA on bass, Mike D singing and a different drummer and guitarist, who left to be replaced by King Ad-Rock. The music was Funk running to Hardcore by the '82 release of their eight-track 'PARTY WAG WAG WAG' EP on Roughage Records. The next record was another EP in '83, featuring the legendary 'COOKIE PUS'. By now they were getting into Rap - 'Cookie Puss' was a piss-take but caught on. They decided they needed a DJ. Enter Rick Rubin from Hardcore group Noise, who was spinning with Larry Jay and formulating an idea for a killer record label.

MCA: 'I knew Rick through friends. We decided we wanted to concentrate on Rap because 'Cookie Puss' was doing great at that time and we had some ideas coming up, so we needed a DJ!'  

Adam: 'Not only did we need a DJ but Rick had a bubble machine. We were going to play at this real area place called the Kitchen so we asked him if he'd play with us and bring his bubble machine.

Mike: 'He produced one record at the time. He wasn't really a producer. We just started recording.

Adam: 'And then we realized - he came full of tricks.'  

What's on the EP? Tracks include both sides of the latest single (which they don't rate as much as 'Rock Hard' - agreed). 'HOLD IT NOW, TIME TO GET IT', 'BOPPER TWINS'; 'ROCK HARD' and 'BRASS MONKEY', inspired by a premium cocktail you buy in a bottle.

Mike: 'It's like drinking something here because it tastes real sweet and is like you're drunk orange juice but then it starts to make your brain like Swiss Cheese. It's rum, vodka and triple sec.

Suddenly, Mike gets serious (check!) when explaining the secret of the Beasties' unique sound - The minimal approach. The sounds we get are probably border because there's fewer of them. It's not like there's five million keyboards. There's only rhythm and guitar. It's a lot more powerful sound.'

Like I said, the Beasties evoke extreme reactions from people. Whatever, the Beasties were impressed by most of their interviews.

Adam: 'This dude yesterday said we were the worst-dressed band. (How can you call a Miller beer sweater baggy dress?) He must've been from NME.

MCA: 'I still don't know why we didn't beat him up.'

Adam: 'Fashion and politics seem to be all that matters in the music industry here.'

Mike: 'You really are nowhere.'

MCA: 'You're not the cool dude.'

Mike: 'That's what it's like though. It's almost like they blocklist people who don't have the right politics.'

MCA: 'So because of what happened yesterday we went out and bought big rubber bondage pants.'

Mike: 'And a double-dag for (NCA).

Adam: 'It would be dead - imagine if you had two dicks for shoes! Two big dicks sticking out of your feet.'

Mike: 'That would be real cool.'

Adam: 'And you can have a big dick coming out of your ass.'

Mike: 'Just dragging along on the street like a tail.'

And as Mike tells us how he refused to go into a pep show that advertised a live nude bed show cos he didn't want to pay to see a nude bed Adam relates highlights of 'DEEP INSIDE ANNE SPRINKLE' and 'ALSO THE SHEPHERD OF THE SS' and MCA goes up to tell me about 'THE DONKEY SHOW' on 47th Street, we must leave the Beastie Boys. Come back soon chaps, we need you.

BONUS BEATS

One more time: Def Jam.

At last.
The great Mick Sinclair
"IN FACT I'D LIKE TO BE A PUNK MYSELF—BUT AT THE AGE OF 56 I'M GETTING ON A BIT TO GO ABOUT WITH A MOHICAN HAIRCUT"

I began by querying Jameson on his relationship with Sid Yobbo, the cartoon thug said to be based on Jameson and created by the leading current affairs weekly PRIVATE EYE. Jameson’s libel suit against them resulted in his incurring £75,000 costs.

"The upper class twits of PRIVATE EYE take the view that anyone who leaves school at 14 in the East End has got to be a job and I have a name like Sid."

Jameson broke down and wept at his feet. Resisting this obvious play for my sympathy, I continued my probing in the uncompromising manner demanded by you the ZZ reader.

"Sid Yobbo has caused me a great deal of pain. I hope I'm not a bit more caressing, knowing and thoughtful than that image assumes. It was in defence of my dignity that I got involved in that dreadful libel action. The jury decided it was inflammatory but not malicious. In other words they didn't think that image was far off the mark."

"This is all been through my life. Linda Lee Foster in the DAILY MAIL got it right when she said I was hypersensitive. She said I was being loud-mouthed, cared for nobody but myself and then said what's got to be so hypersensitive about it? I'm on the council of the NSPCC but you don't see that in print because I don't make a fuss about it. It's a double-edged sword, on the one hand it's nice Guy on the other Sid Yobbo."

Not for the only time during our meeting, he spoke openly of his world boyhood amid the slums of East London.

"I didn't get much of a formal education. I went to school where there were 350 boys and three teachers. My last term was spent teaching the others how to tell the time. But the most powerful influences on me were not my education and the East End but the novels of Steinbeck, Hemingway, Dos Passos, Upton Sinclair, Stirling Sillitoe — the American giants. When I was 13 I won a big essay competition that sent me on the road to journalism.

"At 14 I got a job as an outside messenger in Fleet Street, so determined was I to become a top journalist. I finished up as managing editor of the DAILY MIRROR, editor of the DAILY EXPRESS, launched the DAILY STAR..."

...and finally got fired by Rupert Murdoch from the NEWS OF THE WORLD.

"I've really come up the hard way. When I was a kid I was begging in the streets for money to buy a bit of bread. People of that type of background care about suffering."

A solemn violin concerto breaks out from the cheap music centre at the side of his living room beside another tasteless chaise-lounge.

"Yielding to my relentless demands for the truth, Jameson eventually owned up to some highly unsavoury political beliefs. I was deeply shocked and wanted to leave but, in the interest of honest reporting, I stayed."

I'm anti-establishment. Most of my life I've been on the left politically, now I consider myself a free flowing anarchist. I don't support any party and I'm against all politicians. I leach and detest bureaucracy. What cripples me is the thought that there are half a million kids walking about aimlessly without jobs, hopes or prospects. They will ring me up big bell in my head, reminding me of the situation I was in when I was a youngster."

"I can never say a word in favour of the politicians who've created this situation and nor will I until they solve it. What we have here is Ireland all over again. I was Irish editor of the Mirror for several years and know the scene quite well — as well as any Englishman can..."
The circumstances which created the conflagration in Ireland are being shown on the streets of urban areas of Britain. When the whole lot goes up it'll be like a gigantic bomb and all the politicians will be scratching their heads wondering what happened. They spend 90 per cent of their time slugging each other off. "If I were a politician — God forbid — I would take my inspiration from people like Franklin Roosevelt and do everything humanly possible to bring about a regeneration, a New Deal just like he did in the 30s in America. In other words a bit of inspiration and leadership. We're ruled by pygmies!"

Oddly or perhaps not so oddly for one so long at the helm of several dailies, he flushes off my allegations that newspapers can influence the opinions of the electorate. "When I've gone around the country and asked the people what they think of my papers, unfailingly they say 'F**K OFF'. The British public has a healthy disregard for British papers. I like that, it shows they decide what they think and feel. I always laugh at the ridiculous idea that the British public will take a lead from what they read in the papers. These days I suppose they take more from the telly screen."

Recently, of course, Jameson has been on telly. I'm about to remind him of this when he calls.

"After one election recently a M.P. I found that 53 per cent of the readers of THE SUN thought it was a Labour paper. He ha! So, you see, the British public is not very politically aware. So don't tell me what the British press do to the public. I've just proved to you that it's not so. That's another media myth created by the poster ends of the market, the serious newspapers and magazines."

Again, I'm about to point out that polls prove nothing and ask what a newspaper is if it isn't "serious" when the violin concerto squealing from the music centre begins its second movement. Visibly moved, Jameson says, "14 year olds today are still babies, by that age I'd started work. In fact, when I was 7 I was working on the street markets making any kind of money to buy a bit of bread. I think what I did was a tremendous achievement. I can't think of anyone else from such lowly beginnings who ended up running four national newspapers."

"I've always been actively engaged in survival. I had to survive two years ago when My book fired me and I lost all my money in the like case. I've always aimed to get as far away from the spectre of poverty as possible. Within a year I'd become a household name, a national institution. And now I've landed one of the top jobs in radio... the motor keeps running."

Myself, the photographer and a toy seusspit of Teneille doll perched on the mantelpiece are shaken by the unforced admission of Jameson's desire to have written books.

"I would like to have been a great novelist. That got suppressed by the business of making a living. I would rather have been a novelist. I look back and sometimes think I shouldn't have been doing certain things because they weren't me. It was very difficult being someone on the left running a Tory newspaper like the EXPRESS although I found more socialists on the EXPRESS than I did on the MIRROR. I wouldn't say I hated it but it was a job I did as a professional journalist. I'd do anything which is reasonably acceptable if it means survival."

But even that didn't prepare us for the revelation which was to follow.

"I would like to have been a psychiatrist!"

I was left speechless but could feel the fierce pounding of my heart against the bogus restaurant receipts stuffed into my wallet. He went on:

"I'm very interested in human behaviour and what makes people tick. I'm taken up with things that disturb hurt, cause doubt, anxiety, grief. I would like to write a book about people and the strange things they do. I ought to write the great working class novel of the end of the 20th Century. The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist of the 1990s — but I don't suppose I will."

After one of the strangest encounters in all my years of investigative reporting, I felt I was ready for anything. Indeed, it came as no surprise when Jameson confirmed: "I like punks! They've quite grown on me actually. When you compare them to the people who massacred 40 people at the Heysel stadium why should anyone complain about punks? They're bright, colourful, lively, interesting. They've turned their backs on conventional society in the same way the Hells Angels did in the past. They just happen to be the latest in a long line of young people who are thirsty, aggressive who have seen the system and didn't like the look of it. They want to do something different so dress up in all their tribal finery. Good luck to 'em! Great! In fact, I'd like to be a punk myself but at the age of 56 I'm getting a bit to go about with a mohican haircut."
DIN PLUG SINGLE REVIEWS

- BIG STICK 'DRAG RACING' (RECESS). The application of the layer cake principle to recording is hardly new — we've been Turing over the results in recent years, astonished at the plume recidivist tendencies that have scarred their buttocks and accompanied the output. All these mechanics and no dirty hands. Whilst metal bashers mock and assfule welders sweat, all the scientific descendents of Cabezartillini can do is use their luncheon vouchers to collect a cyclone. Their art, you see, is mass production. It is a bureaucratic state. No room for flaps and wiggles. There's no place for the personal touch, the ancient aura of the individual. This scene is the death of truly popular music. It is one at the big, intellectual cm of which certainly isn't meant to be fun, merely impressive. Conhikers to that big stick favour the visual approach. Give them a selection and they'll find you some rugged microphones for the occasional vocal idea and a slim working knowledge of taped rhythms and sooner or later they'll find you that chimpanzee which types out Shakespeare two short, incredibly sweet dichotomies. Two dilly, uplifting, shrieked synths (ac the way to Memphis, with a picked in your ear.) Two of the most potent minds in the world. As we know it, it has even been.

IT JUST MAKES YOU WANT TO DREAM. RECESS RECORDS 25-10 17TH ST., ASHTRIA, NY 10012, USA.

- DANCING IN EXILE 'LIKE A TRAIN' (RECORD). A pleading drag on the vocals makes up for the cozy formula feel of a record that wouldn't mind being Dance Society.

- IN TWO A CIRCLE 'RISE' (ARCA) Life, on the chrome side of things, with Barry and Bee (ex-CAF) throwing out some catchy stuff, wriggling delightfully at times but never serious. It's also some light-headed acoustic ruminations on the flip.

- VARIOUS 'IMPACT' (AUDIOMATION). Sampler for a reputedly great gig compilation released by Video Instant. This includes some 'Scorcher' doing a fine live version of 'I Love Her All The Time', Okean Fazer, being highly intriguing and Portion Control and Hula being sombre, serious and dull.

- BODIES 'THERESE' (CREATION). Light and lively music at its best, swirling along in a stomp of hyperactive guitars and optimism. Adorable song about the terrors of love.

- THE GO-BETWEEN'S 'SPRING BAIN' (BEAGERS BANK). Love and pain — one of the eternally jolly themes of popular music presented again from these four Australians who wanted so much to be born American. Like everything they do, it's hardly momentous, but then these plebeian aspirations are dammed pretty. The acceptable face of AOR.

- BIFF BANG Pow! 'LOVE'S GOING OUT OF FASHION' (CREATION). The membership of Biff Bang Pow is supposed to be a Residents electronica style but we know who it is: one of them comes in here from time to time telling vile slanders about Paul Weller and trying to sell us all smelly old pairs of black leather trousers. Creation has spawned more than its share of brilliant moments but like the song says love's going out of fashion especially when it's madded to death, and the summer of love is a way out of the window now. This song winds around looking for a sense of direction getting muddled by signposts from the past... You win some you lose some.

- WE GOT A FUZZBOX AND WE'RE GONNA USE IT 'IT'S A SEX' (Windchill). Almost single of the week and probably destined to be Windows biggest seller (a couple of dozen at that!) but poor girls! Imagine being trapped in the inevitable pub discussion about your band with some drunk; first the name, then the song title (oh mate, ah.) and finally the label. Ficky stuff, requiring courage, conviction and chiantly lace. Classically protest style with stumpy drums and cutthroat guitar. Four excellent bootleg recordings of PI singing chased by a grounded Heidelberg. The sort of ramshackle rag-bag that appears to indicate something of a live experience, at least once.
SINGLE REVIEWS

**BREATHE THE LIE** (Don't Tell Me Lies) (Stevie)

Well, it's official. What a preposterously unnecessary record. A four-sided, awfully slow, song. A trite, boring, endless, long, record. I'm sorry, but I just can't recommend this one...it's just too much of a disappointment.

**RED GUITARS** (Nation Avenue) (One Way)

Mediocre, monotonous, lead-guitar-driven rock band with a few good, solid songs. The rest is just flat and uninteresting. I think they should try something different next time.

**MOON OVER BOURBON STREET** (A&M)

Dullsville, Ohio, or wherever this American is meant to be. Joe Jackson is the focal point here. His problems would seem to be adequately described, but this album is too low-key and uninteresting.

**GEE MR TRACY** (Lava Me) (Backs)

I've been told about this band before. They're those dull, boring, indie bands that are all the rage right now. I must say, they're just not doing it for me.

**CHAIN BANGING ON THE HOUSE** (Music Factory)

Destructive background noise and rumbling piano make suitable bedfellows. These don't seem to be the big, bold, rough sounds that they should be.

**THE BUSINESS** (Drunk and Driving) (Wonderful World)

Aaah, the rock'n'roll sound. This album features the 'tatty guitar' sound, a combination of hard, fast, and frenetic.

**ELYSIUM CAROUSEL** (Criss)

So many bands have developed themselves in recent years, that we've now got a whole bunch of talented, hard-working young bands. This one is no exception. Their music is full of energy and originality.

**THE MEMBRANES** (Everything's Brilliant) (In Tape)

The white label is must-have material. Not a review copy, but a limited edition recording. Their guitar sound is rather unimpressive, but the lyrics are engaging and thought-provoking.

**MC CHILL** BUST THIS RHYME (Fever)

MC Ade and MC Axe are one of the greatest rap and production teams in the country today. Their music is filled with raw, unfiltered talent.

**MIRACLE LEGION** THE BACKYARD (Marina Waves)

Connecticut Yankees blundering into the Court of King Arthur, singing a collection of American folk songs. It's a very interesting approach, and I commend them for it.

**THE REDSKINS** THE POWER IS YOURS (London)

New Zealand's 'Okey Dokey' has finally arrived. They sound like a cross between the Sex Pistols and the Ramones, with a touch of their own unique style.

**THE CONNELS** (Dark Days) (Delmon)

Time was when musicians would go to extraordinary lengths to recreate their Sun studio sound. Nowadays, with the help of The Connel's Moody Blues, there's no more music. Or maybe there is. The Connel's would be half Morrissey, half Del Amitri, but they're not half as good either.

**SEE A MEEK** (The King and I) (Original Sounds)

I would say that this band is quite good, but I'm not sure if they can really compete with the likes of the Moody Blues. They're quite promising, however.

**RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY** PAINT YOUR WAGON (Red Rhino)

It's a terrible state of affairs. Londoners simply pass over all the Yorkshire music that's been released recently. The best of the lot are the 'Cameo' singles, but they're certainly not a match for this.

**RED GUITARS** (Tales of the Unexpected) (Coyote)

Having heard the surprisingly dudish single I received, I was somewhat surprised. However, I approached the album with an open mind, and I was pleasantly surprised. The music is simple yet memorable.

**HENA** IT'S ALL IN THE GAME (Epic)

Once her amapri had been peeled and she'd been given away, she shouted that she had been thrown from the crib, and record buyers alike. She must have become part of history's pop superstars, the packed crowd, as they were...
**Album Reviews**

**Ignorant.**

Love songs, often sax-soothing, urching for intimate discovery, and molten rockets, as though Art of Noise had been ordered to sprint and get some fat off, makes for a surprising selection. With vocal whispers, the cold funk of "Utopia" could put A.C.O. to shame. "Women on Fire," with the vocals cleverly positioned like artillery, would make an elegant single. She has the ability to drop suddenly to a sparse gap, or rise with a surprised shriek. Everything zeroes in on that throat. Scaff by all means but looking at the upper regions of the chart none of the top thirty currently tops off.

- **TALK TALK 'THE COLOUR OF SPRING'** (EMI)
  There was a time when Talk Talk were nothing more, before you turned up the volume, than an anonymous "pop outfit," and apologetic with it, frigid by a young David Frost. In those past-romantic days, Talk Talk were a little too straight for the teenies who invaded the record shops, and thus they missed out on the great game of "dividing the spoils." Bereft of cleaving teeth, shiny hairstyles and expensive lounge-wear Talk Talk dropped swiftly from sight, but we supposed, for the tragic fate of "European tours.

These they completed with astonishment, not giving two hoots whether good old Brightly ever leaned look in their direction ever again.

Now, with the Bryan Ferry poses long behind them, they can cut a suspiciously "commercial" ('I won't have it Doctor, it's horrid') band who have the knack of writing songs instead of hopping gnomely from foot to foot hoping we'll never notice. "Life's What You Make It," despite the repetitiveness of its existence...a sleeper...caught everyone by surprise, as should the album. Stylish without streaking your race day wear. "The Colour Of Spring" is perfect for those windseared moments when you sneer, when your feet drag, 'cos life just left you behind. Broody cinematographic imagery.

Working with children ("Happiness is Easy").

- **MARTIN DUFONT 'SLEEP IS A LUXURY'** (ST)
- **VARIOUS 'LES HEURES DU PELLE' (KRONCHTADT TAPE)
- **THE BONAPARTES 'TO THE ISLE OF DOGS' (GARAGE)

Martin's crowd have costly robbed notus; wearing the style of affairs for this keyboard swamp jazz cream. The Various bands are precious punk bands who bar a couple of hoary aggregations, ignore the basic noise in favour of some inciting funk displays and well Mexican carry on. Abundant.

The Bonapartes meanwhile continue to buoy away and have almost caught up with Killing Joke. This album finds them just pre-'Eighthies', dark, doomy and cozy.

- **TOM CROS 'CLASSIC LANDSCAPES'** (NEW AGE):
  Tom Newman "BAYOU MOON" (NEW AGE);
  MAC LADY'S "BEER 'N', SEY 'N' CHIPS 'N' GEAVY" (FART)

This New Age is supposed to be the eurhythmiser for '86. Tom Cross takes well-known classics by such as Becher, Bach and Beethoven and gentles them at 'Clockwork Orange's treacly synth mix, taking all the emotions out.

Tom Newman—whose name playing Michael O'Sullivan—lays some swampy wallpaper backdrop with the best bits bottlenecker. The Mac Lads are by far the most tasteful combining poetic lyrics about Y-fronts and buttocks with simple, home-cooked backings. As pleasant as an airmen with a toaster.

Odd hippy-novel solochter coffee table fare. Relax in your sheepdog, baby!

- **LOVEBUG STARKS 'HOUSE ROCKIN'** (US EPC)
  VARIOUS ARTISTS 'EPIDER D Presents THE BATTLE OF THE BASS' (US NEXT PLATEAU)

Rap, previously the domain of the 'IZZ now stands up to 40 minutes at 3200 (ever since LL Cool J). No ballad peddling or gimmick killers—sizzling all the way.

Starks is the under-rated veteran of Disc Jockey, the Bronx rap house where many found their happy feet.

First vinyl was in '81 on Marlin's Executive label with 'Positive Life' (title on the album but different track). Two classics on the Fever label with Kurtis Blow at the controls—'You've Got Believe' and 'Do The Right Thing.' A slight alteration in the 'rapping' film, but now THIS MONSTER.

Opens with the title track single—a full-length AC/DC blowout with the desk on overload with Lovebug mutation. The grunge-guitar doesn't surface again until an Amityville Horror tribute. The rest is easy—gratitude riffs on 'Eight Wonder' or the gothic boom of 'Positive Life.' His tone is urgent but assured while the backing is a kicking well. Killer. The 'Battle' is a compilation of talent from the NYC boroughs, mastered and produced by Spyder D. New names like the ABC Crew, Professional Fire MC's, and the mighty Boss, plus as only known-name present DJ Divine. They fling a sparkling mix of bars against the wall and it all sticks. Watch these names.

- **BILLY HOLLIDAY 'THE BEST OF...** (MCA)

Pharoah Sanders 'THIRD FROM/TAJUDH' (Impulse! MCA)

MCA really stepping with some classy reissues. Billy Holliday has probably seen the light of day because A/Hoy's treatment of 'That Ole Devil Called Love.' Now you see how the original record Sombre piano, dramatics and crooned vocals spin and clutch in these lazy grooves. Classic, tragic stuff.

Meanwhile, MCA Germany are setting about resuing the renowned Impulse label — sort of a garage jazz answer to Blue Note. Beautiful cardboard gatefolds are included in the deal — nothing changed. These two great Pharoah albums see the sexman floating and soaring through the early 70s.
LET'S SET THE SCENE FOR THIS JOHN LYDON INTERVIEW. WE'RE SITTING IN HIS MANAGER'S NOTTING HILL OFFICE.— WITH BEER. THE LAUGHTER HAS JUST DIED DOWN AGAIN AND JOHN STARTS PLAYING WITH A ZIT. "GOD, I'M SQUEEZING THE SPOTS OUT! I WAS SO HUNGRY LAST NIGHT WHEN I GOT HOME. THE ONLY THING IN THE FRIDGE WAS A TIN OF DOUBLE-WRAPPED CREAM AND SPRING ONION! HA! SO THE FRAPPE AND THE SPOTS AND THE BELCHES AND THE STINK IS RUNNING RIGHT RANCID TODAY!" AGAIN THE MANIC GIGGLE BINGS OUT FROM THE FAMILIAR VISAGE, NOW TOPPED WITH DREADLOCK-MATS YOU GET FROM NOT COMBING YOUR BARBER (I THINK, I HAD 'EM FOR THREE YEARS.) JOHNS ARE HELD TO ATTENTION WITH THE HELP OF HAIR GRIPS. THE REST OF HIM IS SHARP IN NEW SUIT AND OLD SCHOOL TIE. "I'VE GIVEN UP MEAT. I FOUND IT MADE ME SICK A LOT. I THINK I'M ACTUALLY ALLERGIC TO IT.— RED MEAT ANYWAY. IT WORKS AGAINST YOU. I HAVEN'T LOOKED BACK TO A TOILET SINCE. I REMEMBER THESE MEATY SUITS GOD, SITTING THERE FOR HOURS TRYING TO SQUEEZE IT OUT. OH HO HO — NO THANKS! BYE BYE! WHO NEEDS THE PAST? WHO INDEED? CERTAINLY NOT JOHN LYDON.

John Lydon at 30 is as old, rich and famous as the Stars he set out to dismantle from their pedestals ten years ago. There's a whole new breed lend him up there now, pouncing on yetis, posing with royalties and producing spineless synth-dj's for expensive videos. They're the same age (same) that Lydon was when plastered through an ex-wife's bag door, and equally as deserving of his hitherto and venereal as the old targets... if not more! Seemingly out of nowhere, John has started his second decade in music with formidable statement, the tepid-selling 'Album' and chat-storming single, 'Rise'. Perfect timing — he was dumping on the whisper's floating out of Punk anniversary celebrations (the usual 'hastens', 'money-laden boxer, hobbling full of laurels'.

After a two year absence since his last album tour — 'This Is What You Want, This Is What You Get' and the late '13 cabinet band visitation — Lydon materialized in London to collect his rock-backs with Mr. McLaren and happened to have a new record to promote. That's what he's been doing, apart from living in a life of domestic bliss with German wife Nora in Los Angeles and watching his 22 TV channels. 'Rise' gilded onto Radio 1 without a care in the world, or as John puts it, "it's liked before any of these bimbos got on the business", referring, of course, to his old mates The Press. He even denounced his strike, while cronically giving them a deserved tongue-lashing. Meanwhile the corn-veiled vineroic-pop-tones of 'Rise' were seducing their way up the charts.

Once again John Lydon has proved, rather effortlessly, that he's still got on his own still hot! and notching his spurt into a page in the history books. As he said in our '79 interview, he wants to write the next chapter. Lydon is astute enough to know that 'if the pathetic to covariance around like a fag-end Rotten (and I don't know since '78) he could never grow acceptance (by) whamming it up to a disco beat. He constantly changes and is one of our greatest comedians — so much more fun than the bland figureheads of '86 pop. This would be a much greater place without his periodical forays.

My view is: John Lydon was more a silly-seen, peppered with the odd point, as we zig zag wandered around subjects close to his heart but avoided terminal boredom — including pre-fall which plaguing him during his media binge. If you want the 'serious stuff' — over-illusory hacks trying to raise the ghost of Rotten by provocation, raking up an over-dated past or getting rounded harrassed for telling him he's sold out — look elsewhere. This was what they wanted. This was what they got. Not the true Lydon. He's a happy man now... but not so much when his music gets overlooked in the fevered focus on lawsons and his. The patent Lydon American accent gets whipped out of his Tommy Cooper hot-box for this one: "What are you wearing lately, John?" Well, effing are I! Heh heh. The giggle punctuates most Lydon-craty, but wails for one es... and when heSanders how attention always focuses on the wrong things, his music last. He likes it, he's a human humanometer when you mention The Press. They're waltles. What kind of car do you have now, John? I've given them the information. What? Oh. They're gonna complain, please offer an alternative. That's their stance. Then they condemn that to death too, so nothing stands the vogue hope. You can do it right, according to them, no matter what. Always zero out of ten!

They're more concerned with asking what happened two years ago. "Yeah, without understanding it, too. That's the shame and the tragedy of it. It's important to explain to you because they can back at it with a predamsh past of view and they're totally willing to believe that I'm totaly sold out because they've read all this bad literature about those days and taken it all as fact. Then as journalists should surely realize that the writer's word is a lie (to quote from 'Rise'). "It's the business you're in, Kris! Your colleagues out there are of dubious characters, most of them. I've made no neeks about my disgust with them, have I?"

And they print it.

"I know, I know! It's taken me years to get them to finally print that kind of stuff when I've been telling them all the time."

John's re-entry into a market-place saddle with warp-pop, terminal synth中心 and bounce blister-hair is with the subtlest tone — both ret to emanate from the Pi Lops. "Rise" was originally titled 'Single' — that's what it was, it gave no clue to content and nurtured no preconceptions. But this so confused denies that a hasty proper name' had to be looked on at the last minute. "I hate that," glooms John. "Why should I give a name? That's what it is — a single — but it confused too many people."

But the album remained 'Album' (the cassette 'Cassette', etc.)
I don't live in America. I don't have an American passport or anything like that. I don't want one. I'm quite happy with the one I've got.

"I don't want to become one of those old Hollywood tarts. A lot of people would like to see me become exactly that. A lot of people would be upset because I won't. I've no interest. I don't know anybody there. I don't go out. We live completely by ourselves. It's almost like being a recluse and indeed that, I do.

"The pressure of being in this pop business can be quite vile. You can really lose yourself. It won't be punished not for anybody, not for anything. It's not worth it. I like me too much. I intend to live to a well ripe old age."

You don't fancy New York then?

"Yeah, two weeks at a time, because then you're just flitting with it. Not the gear, not the drugs. I don't ever flirt with that. Not interested. London seems to be becoming a very seedy New York, which is very seedy to begin with.

"I could quite easily say New York is my kind of town, because I would never have to pay to get in anywhere. Even the restaurants (French accent) — We've a table in the corner for you sir — would you like a free dinner?" Yes! Sir would! But you couldn't live in that environment. It wears you down. "cause it's all to seek you into this scheme.

"But because there's a lot to do — not just cheap disco, just a lot in general — it's spread out over the whole day and night, 24 hours of it. I like that. I'm hungry, I like to eat. You can do it there — in a really good restaurant too. We're not talking (northern accent) pub比利!"

And of course the TV is a big attraction.

(Quite agitated) "Oh! When you get into cable networks. I've got 52 channels — at any time of the day or night. I've got 52 different things to watch, I like that. That's super!"

"Pat Boone's religious show is so funny. It's absolutely essential viewing. It's hysterical. He's there pronouncing, day in, day out."

"We've got four channels."

"Yes, and they're all unwatchable. Channel Four should be banned. God, it's grim!"

Unlike here, the Lyons features often air out of the box in America. "I'm a TV darling over there. I can pretty well command my own show. I can be like that. When I do interviews on TV I do tend to dominate. Well they haven't seen anything like me, have they?"

From this country John likes 'Spitting Image', 'Max Headroom' ("a very good idea") and 'The Young Ones' which is shown on the MTV Rock channel. "It's hysterical. Brilliant. It's so relentless. "Peace Man"" he says ending with possible Niall imitation.

People are still imitating you, you know.

"Oh yes, some of those wally bands. Don't they get it wrong?"

Wait till they start an 'Album'. There'll be less of rock bands.

"There will. Of course there will. Be funny, because you won't get the NME to admit to that."

The next interview's here. The fences go back up in readiness. Which John will they want? Which will they get? I'll have him pounding the wall, screaming "Next!" in a high-pitched voice.

*"I DON'T WANT TO BECOME ONE OF THOSE OLD HOLLYWOOD TARTS. A LOT OF PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO SEE ME BECOME EXACTLY THAT. A LOT OF PEOPLE WOULD BE UPSET BECAUSE I WONT. I'VE NO INTEREST."
because there's nothing really to compete with it except wimp-out go-far-the-young-girls' band that leaves nothing for the middle-aged teenagers. (pause) I thought that was very witty! Stupid 'Helter Skelter'.

The Lydon humour is in top from this afternoon. After berating our unfortunate photographer for his props—a black plastic tube ("this is true neat") and old enamel mixer ("looks like an ashtray")—he launches into an澄清 array of expressions and poses ranging from bug-eyed hilarity to manic to soli's one—but editors always seem to pick The Glare. The night before, John had been out for the fniteeen this visit — the Bad Audio Drama at West London's Phoenix Hall, then to Camden Palace to catch Topper Headon's soul revue.

B.A.D. are good, aren't they? "I saw'm, I really enjoyed that gig. I was really happy, the band were happy, I thought they'd really rehearsed well. No attitude, no posers, they just had a good time. All the songs sounded like lots of fun—there was lots going on in there and lots that sounded like they could be hit singles too. Very nice. What more could you ask for? A better audience maybe..."

"Hi, the old beat—audience apathy. "That lot at the back again. That East India meet's styled. Why do they bother to buy ticket? Why do they get? Who needs them?" "Audiences are much older now, aren't they?" John reflects. "Going to the Camden Palace... used to be 10-year-olds. Last night was a bit like the Ugly Bug Ball!" But American audiences—now you're talking! "It's worked! You can do a gig and 10,000 manics turn up—not the band, who don't recommend anyone. But the crowds don't seem to like to buy records, they like to be at the gigs. You have to do a gigs in America and they're very enjoyable (or that because you don't get large sections of the crowd sitting down and staring.)"

They like to go mental? "Completely! It's a fantastic feeling. It's nice to be stunned by the roars. I do like it very much. When you used to a Van Halen gig in the old days. Brilliant! Excellent!" They don't care who's looking at them while they're screaming and shouting and doing and doing whatever. Here people are very bothered about what the person next to them is thinking—do they like it? They'll have to like it before I'll admit to liking it at all.

So where and when will you expose yourself to UK apathy? "Probably March, but I don't know where. That's a problem. It's gonna be Wembley or Hammersmith Odeon—that's an awful place, reminds me of endless Jools Festival bad trains. I went to see Em at Hammersmith last night—greatful!"

What's it like to be back in London? "Well, I've had some right vicious, nasty looks from policemen..."

"I don't know anything, I've just been talking to the Press... and there was the court case (where the two ex Pistols porous won a million pound settlement from earnings Malcolm McLaren had diverted from them into his Glastonbury company, which financed The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle)."

That must have been fun. "It was. I enjoyed myself. I really, really wanted to get into that box, I'd been worrying about it for months and months and the moment had come... and Malcolm settled too late."

John bares his head. For some reason I say "ballbacs."

"Because you know it would have been his turn after me. Then the fun would begin. I mean what you gonna say against me? I haven't said a single lie. He turned up in his black boxers and a borri's blue long flowing mas- tery thing. He looked just stupid. And there will be lots of long months wearing exactly that."

What'll be playing with you at the gigs? "I'm gonna do people from here. There's been enough of us. Oh yeah."

"Yes."

Anyone we know. "Yes, I'm not telling you who. I'll keep on in mind for the moment. I don't wanna spoil it all before I come to think I learned by my mistakes in the past."

"I used to try and, I performed, I was filmed correctly—I think I was—then I went home. It's not very nice. It only keeps the gig going. That's what it should be. All these videos that come out these days, they don't put you, they just say Duran Duran over-the-top stuff. It costs an arm and a leg and what does it achieve? Nothing. Nothing."

"I find it outrageous that Simple Minds can be in the ninety thousand for that last video. All they're doing is standing in the bloody countryside. Where is ninety thousand dollars going? I like to know! Must have had a really good party..."

"There's no energy. There's no spirit. Anything. It's all going to really bland... the emphasis these days is being wiped out keyboards where nail varnish is more important than talent."

"I have to talk about this... I haven't."

"Yes, the toilet section of the interview (see introduction). "It's much more interesting, I'm sure there's those who wonder why they get all kinds of weird illnesses. Diet, boys and girls. Honest. 14-18.

It's much more fun to talk about shit. "We have done so far—on the music business, journalism... it's a natural progression."

The shit-booking question were none too receivable towards the last two album projects—the 'Live in Tokyo' double LP and the confused but captivating 'Think What You Want, This What You Get', which precipitated the departure of Keith Levene, leaving the sole property of Lydon. "It's shite, isn't it? Ridiculous. It's my favourite album but there's some really nasty shit. I don't like The Pogues or 'Tie Me to the Length of That'—very nice good stuff, shouldn't be condemned.

The set which appeared around the time of John's hissing psychic high-screen action to Justice in Order Of Death, contains his leaving hit! This is Not A Love Song (that was Dickock too, remember?) and the brilliant beat boxes of wrongfully ignored 'Bad Life'—I loved that—a really good where. We just stripped it to its absolute minimum.

Keith Levene gets a composing credit on all but three tracks but he departed in the early stages and doesn't actually appear playing, leaving Lydon and drummer Martin Atkins to handle everything with the odd session man. But shortly after it came out, Levene put out 'The Commercial Zone', a semi-bootleg (with the original title) of how to do it and thought it should have been John? "Yeah! No, wasn't it?"

"Why did he do it?"

"Because he's evil. He tried to be nasty. It's inferior... to anything you're used to mention."

Levene's solo career has so far yielded no plums. Atkins has also departed to concentrate on a solo career (not wildly successful?), "Martin can now stay on his. His solo stuff is quite bad."

We are not in John's favourite areas — look at the differences in attitude between then and now. 'Live in Tokyo? '

"I wouldn't recommend anybody buy live albums. That's record company stuff. I've little care or concern about that. It's nice when you got the cheque in the past though. You can't sit back and cry about these things. You've just got to 'go on well'—NEXT! I do view myself as an on-going force. I'm sorry, I'm not going to do a Spandau Ballet and sell the record company to court because the thing didn't sell. It's your fault! It's basically what the situation was with this."

Some don't think they ought to promote properly. In other words they weren't satisfied with they thought they should have been. "Well, that's really tragic. That's treating the human race as sheep—if they don't base and blast to your whiskey..."

"It's their fault for turning out crap. "Well, they're not very good, are they? I hope I don't shock anyone, now."

They should have just played the record in court. "Your honour, just hear the droning—I treat my case. "Heh heh heh."

Last time I saw John Lydon was at Newark Airport, New Jersey, Suffering from 24 hour over-illnesses, I missed a plane and was impersonating human wreckage on a bench, when ligged the Plague, for a gig. JohnLydon found my predicament sympathetic, "un a lot weren't so bloody brilliant either. We'd be up for 48 hours and had to face the glaring blown face of that awful airport. Didn't we look happy?"

"I was there with the penguins the Holiday in backing."

It seems that John has needed his home—work and play—Staines LA is fairly (I'm not being asked if it's not out to West Coast anyway."

"I've got a place in Staines where I stay from time to time."

"John Lydon + + + John Lydon + + + John Lydon"
Far from being rippling 'Rise'-style carpets, 'Album' boasted a ballet with the energy and punch at the best Heavy Metal / Blasé shows.

But, it must be added hastily, you will not see Mr Lydon preening in splendid strides on his next tour (interestedly enough...). He's lifted the floor, not the clothes or 'cool it, whistly woman words' -- that department remains sharp.

Just when we needed it most, up popped 'Album' like a misbehaved lobster and crushed our teethicle in a rampant iron claws. Guitar-overwrought power-throes ('Day's' colossal 'Tongue') and second-side's '1,000', ('Unwillingly') electric maniacal thrash ('Fishing') and there's even some solid radio riff-RACK (FFFF). But you never escape Lydon's stingy whine. No matter what the setting, he's there, poking and protecting -- 'Rise' numbers South Africa.

It took me a while to find a better word than 'Metal Box' to describe it; his singles gave the primal scream.

'there's no energy left in anything. It's all become really bland. I've missed that ferociously guttural music in rock music now for so long. The emphasis these days seems to be on wipin' out keyboards where another instrument is more important than talent. To hell with that... I was interviewed by Jonc Long the other night. She wanted me to pick ten of the cuts. It's not possible! I couldn't even pick twin God, a country in a sorry state when it's got Elton Mousoum up there! Bloody Yawn.'

But for the first time in ten years John has found himself adopted by the radio, resulting in 'Rise' living well up to its name.

'dressing room, I'd love to see here and let in to go 'yes it's all part of my decision to manipulate the world', but it hasn't been that way.

'It's not as if I were setting Virgin this time round to do anything at all. The record was liked by the radio before it was even released. We don't need to promote anything at all.'

Did you sit down and say, 'I'm going to have a bit new?'

'Of course not! How could it! How could anybody? Particularly me! Then again, I've made very many good records over the years.'

The most recent that springs to mind is the classic 'World Deserter' where John joined forces with the mighty African Bomboats, both trading velvety-nuinous ominous warnings over a triumphant guitar-arch-beat slam to huge effect. Shoulda stuck with those chart numbers.

'I didn't think,' reflects John judgishly, 'which is a tragedy because it was a fine record.'

But the team up did lead Lydon to Bill Laswell, the fearless collaboration-creator of Cellular Records, whose past productions include Herbie Hancock's 'Rockit', his own material, Maru Dibango and other African artists, the Last Poets and even Nick Laggard's unfortunato solo outing.

'Bombatoa wanted to make a record with me. He did one with James Brown -- you know, people that like him in the business for their energies, I suppose. He got Laswell to produce it and we got an allright in the studio. He only works on what he wants to work on.

Laswell and Lydon met again in the New York studio when John did a track on the latest album by art-jazzers the Golden Rods. ('That was a laugh!'). The band was cemented and they embarked on 'Album' with Bill also playing bass. Mr Laswell has nothing but admiration for Mr Lydon.

'Bill has no social life at all, other than his work. I do like the bizarre characters, they're very healthy.'

And slot in perfectly to the constituency by the fact that he 'drinks like I've never seen anybody drink'. He just never stops and it never knocks spots off of him ever. He's relentless! He made me feel like a real amateur and I'm pretty lethargic the stuff, but God Almighty! He's got more than one hollering part in that song -- he'll drink ANTINATH

'In the studio, because you're so tense and nervous, I suppose you don't get all that drunk because your adrenalin is so high. The alcohol doesn't kick in at all.'

John does a drop of the golden gargle, considering Red Strips to be one of this country's few magnets.
William Shaw with a magazine of the time that I don't even recognise anymore. The Beat?
ONE OF THE FASTEST RISING POP BANDS WHO ARE NOT WHAT THEY SEEM
WORDS: KEI DARVIN

+++ Cheeky monkeys from mountains tend to tumble, years roll on by, and anyone with hand on heart and an eye on the chart can usually expect no more than a weak and momentary thrill. And not often. Not since the heyday of the fringed Oasisy tremble or Soft Cell's luxuriant tremors, it seems, has anyone mounted the steps with a glint and a subversive swagger and an unshrinking resolve to just saunter straight through those big glass doors and act like Oscar Wilde (You're forgets Frankie. But then haven't we all. . . Ed.) In fact, most pop stars in 1986 have the air of someone who has set out to explore the Andes and then suddenly, changing their minds taken a stroll round Asda instead. And while it might seem absurd to hand out the chocolate cigars like you've just got a new baby sister when it's nigh on ten years since anything much and the only chart pop approaching revolutionary is New Order, the FET SHOP BOYS and their 'West End Girls' in particular have proved an oasis of sensual delight. Therefore we step, pensively and perversely enough, straight into a West End Health food restaurant.

Do you always eat in places like this?
"Well, if you eat a big plate of sausages and fried eggs and chips," replies Chris (Lowe, 26, who, as everyone knows by now, is an architect by trade), "you feel great when you're eating; but you feel a bit repulsive afterwards. It kind of spoils your skin afterwards. I think it's good to be health conscious, really."
"But I mean, it's not even a minor obsession with us," adds Neil (Tennant, 31, who, as everyone knows by now, used to work at Smash Hits), ignoring the potential metaphor. "The obsession, initially, was with Bobby O. We were really obsessed with him."

O — as in Orlando — was the first person, I recall, to record Divine. and has recently even broken ground on the radio with the Hirtis' 'You And Me'
"You should get a copy," demands Neil. "It's a really, really good record. It's a bit banal, and everything, but it's good. I think we like moronic records, don't we? Well, not moronic, but records which are kind of inevitable... not clever-dick records. When Bobby O came along, it kind of focussed what we were writing, and what we were writing about. We had somebody we wanted to aspire to. So he was definitely an obsession. And still is a minor obsession."

Do you set out to make inevitable, moronic records?
"Yes. We set out to make an inevitable moronic record, but with a kind of English... ness to it. And with, you know, not-quite-so-moronic lyrics. Bobby O's lyrics are all kinds of 'You said you loved me but now it seems you don't care' lyrics."
"West End Girls" in its original form was produced by O, but it wasn’t until they’d recorded through Epic’s ‘collapsible de-chord’ deal and the odd legal mangle that they landed on Parlophone, released the sardonic and intriguing ‘Opportunities (Let’s Make Lots Of Money)’ last year, and finally eclipsed the competition with a new, non-O version of ‘West End Girls’.

In the same move as the abundant OS’s lyrics to the light sources of influence scarcity, Neil quite happily pursues his own, abstract — in marked contrast to — a gold chain threaded between heart, ear and mind.

“Ok, I think they’re very important. I think we make the kind of records where the-lyrics don’t matter where the music does matter. I always try to write lyrics that noone else has written before.”

The loose collage of images in ‘West End Girls’ immediately transports me to outside the Empire dancing in Leicester Square, where a crowd of doped up working class nonconformists are usually found thrumming their right to enjoy (within limits). But without their limits? As the noise wavers tantalisingly in space and on the beat (no mean feat) and the voice intonates multiple dark and deadly discoveries and bewitchings. Pet Shop Boys transcend the weakness of the momentary thrill. Here and now Tennant and Lowe make an amusing, profound and ever-so-slightly-camp double act. Cowies: Murry Gilbert And George, they counter. But these and then, the classic single, it seems almost a scam, a plan. And if anyone was ever qualified...

Neil: “Yes... and of course it’s just as... life isn’t just like that. Everything is much more of a complete mess than that. I mean, anyone’s life. I didn’t set out to become a music writer, and I didn’t really set out to become a pop star — or whatever it is we’re supposed to be now — because I mean, I know what a pop star is, and I think, ‘Oh, sorry... but that isn’t me’.”

I ask how he feels from his throat.

“We’re never tried to present ourselves in that way, and we haven’t set out to make those kind of records, like, for instance, A-Ha do. I mean, A-Ha are very good-looking — two of them, anyway — they write pop songs. Although, I think, if I interviewed A-Ha, one might find that they think they’re writing pretty meaningful songs! And I think there’s a kind of better message to ‘The Sun Always Shines On TV’. I mean, I read something recently where A-Ha said that they didn’t like commercial music.”

Neil: “You’re joking!”

Neil: “No, I know they’d like that. I’ll bet A-Ha are Simple Minds fans to a man. Bet they are.”

Interlude: to describe the alien, and its corresponding charts:

Tennant: “Firstly, a lot of people criticise things for being commercial — what they mean is, it’s got a tune. Now, most of these alternative records that you hear don’t have very good tunes. I mean, that’s just a fact.”

Lowe: “Because when they do, they normally become commercial hits.”

Tennant: “Yes, they’re good, then, you know, Orange Juice, you know, had hits, and everything. A lot of these groups, they’re like Luddites.”

I look bemused. Arthur leins grainy out of the window and lands the pellet bang in the middle of Old Ma Bul’s ase.

Pet Shop Boys are not only beautiful, intelligent and cutting, they also approach from the other side of the

are knowledge and innocence in obscenely perfect first embrace posture.

Were you ever punks?

Neil: “I was disco.”

In fact, Kelly Marie, perpetrator of sappy disco great “I Like You In Love” shares the same home town as me. (I could lead you to her favourite hostelry, should you desire.) But the Pet Shop Boys are not sappy-go-luckyfinger-snapping my troussed Boyzontown Gang twelve-inchers, I don’t know that they’re disco at all.

Neil: “The idea for the album is, it’s a very sort of high album, isn’t it? I mean, in the sense that it’s got a lot of feelings and sort of fullness to it. Some of it is almost ballad. We were considering calling it ‘This Is Disco’...

Neil: “A lot of it’s got to do with my background. I was born in Blackpool, and I used to work on a pleasure beach, and also, I was a glass collector in this nightclub for holidaymakers from Glasgow, and they used to play all those records all night. And I used to like them.”

Tell me about escapism.

Neil: “I think our records are very, um... in fact, escapism is probably one of the major topics that we write songs about. The first song on our LP, called ‘Two Divided By Zero’, is about running away, isn’t it? And I think that’s another reason for being in a pop group. It’s the idea of running away from, you know, your background, your job, so that you don’t have to be caught in...”

Running away, or just running away from?

Neil: “No, running away from...”

Neil: “It’s whatever you can run to would be just as bad.”

So where do you end up? In a bubble? On a mountain?

Neil: “Where does anyone end up?”

Oh... here, there, everywhere... + + +

"I THINK WE MAKE THE KIND OF RECORDS WHERE THE LYRICS DON'T MATTER WHERE THE LYRICS DO MATTER"
I know what you're thinking, you don't often see James Last and Jordan in the same photo....
“I DON’T GO AROUND THREATENIN’ PEOPLE, YA KNOW. I USED TO BE A SHERIFF (PART TIME) DOWN IN NEW MEXICO FOR TWO AND A HALF YEARS, SO I KNOW NOT TO PULL IT RIGHT AWAY”
"I'M A LUCKY MAN."

Will you be able to say the same thing at age of 56? Here's some tips on how to combine happiness, rock 'n roll and a few other goodies in your life. Thirty years ago in a seedy Chicago hallroom, Ellis McDaniel married rock 'n roll, and a self described "monster named Bo Diddley" was born. Alan Freed presided over the ceremony. Others under the spotlight were Ray Charles, Buddy and Elia Johnson, Ruth Brown and yes, Pat Boone (you see how you can end up if you mess around with that rock 'n roll scene when you're young). In honor of this rock 'n roll milestone's anniversary, we are proud to present the man himself. Bo "swear to gosh signed rock 'n roll and am as authentic as Tiffany's jewelry" Diddley's The Survival Guide to the Rock 'n Roll Lifestyle.


+ALCOHOL AND DRUGS+++

"Only drink Grand Marnier, and that's to keep the throat from drying up in a place where there's a lot of smoke. I've gotted drunk I was 17 years old and I don't like the feeling. And for drugs, one big 'No.'

+COWS++++++++++++

"If they wanna play, you don't wanna make pets out of 'em, and you can't eat 'em — then you get rid of 'em.

+FOOD+++++++++++++

"Eat anytime, anything you can get your hands on, man — I mean it.

+HAIR+++++++++++++

Rock 'n roll hair has never been a forte for the man under the cowboy hat with the turquoise butterfly button. He points to a huge blonde mahican haido. "Are you feeling crazy now? That looks like something you go hunting, you catch somethin' like that and shoot it. Hay Dwayne, Bob's road manager you wanna go hunting? Throw a rope around him or somethin'!"

+HANGOVER CURE+++++++++

"Don't drink enough so that you get a hangover.

+HEALTH+++++++++++++

"Whenever you get to feelin' weird, take Bayer aspirin baby! I can't stand takin' all that other bullshit. Whenever I go bring T.C. Tacs (see Women), the mean machine (the historic square collet) and Bayer aspirin. (The glances at the label, look at all the stuff it does — the key to survival."

+MONEY+++++++++++++++

"Always take a lawyer with you and then bring another lawyer to watch him." (You gotta believe this guy as he still has suits pending, regarding records made two decades ago. To put it bluntly, Bo has seen himself get ripped off right and left before he brought his own attorneys on to the scene.)

+PERFORMING+++++++++++

"It's physical, I dunno how it works."

+SAFETY++++++++++++++

"You see, I can't go around sleeping people with my hands or else I'll go broke. So I take karate and kick when I fight. I'm thinking about doing a [Koreet work out] tape for guys with tanks. He puts his bulging gut and lets out a high pitched giggle. "I got 18 dogs at home. [Raconce + Wow.] Well you can't go around shooting people!"

+WOMEN++++++++++++++

"Really, bein' serious now, if you wanna meet a nice young lady then you try to smell your best. 'Cause a girl don't like nobody walkin' up in her face, smellin' like a goat you understand."

+VOLUME+++++++++++++++

Thirty years of blissing P.A.'s and Bo Diddley still hears perfectly. "Don't put your ears in the speakers."

"Really, bein' serious now, if you wanna meet a nice young lady then you try to smell your best. 'Cause a girl don't like nobody walkin' up in her face, smellin' like a goat you understand. Then you don't say crap like 'Hey don't I know you?' That line's old, you know. The first thing you ask her is, 'Are you clean?' If she tells you that she's with her boyfriend then you see if the cat ain't as big as you. Cause when a girl's in with a fatty, you can almost say she's up for grabs! She might be hangin' with a dude she cannot stand.

+VOLUME+++++++++++++++

"You don't have to have no money, just smell right and for God's sakes, don't be pullin' on her and 'slappin' on her. You don't hit the girls! If you do all this you can't miss, you gonna hit every time."

"Bo's got a new record called 'Ain't Gotta Be Free,' but he will be the first to admit that 'nothing's really new, I'm just keepin' on.' At 56."

"Why stop? Man, if you are goin' good and you made this, how can you just stop? How can you leave without giving your public another encore — even if you are well off?"
“WE GOT A PUNK BAND TOGETHER BUT WENT ABOUT IT THE WRONG WAY... WE PLAYED WORKING MEN'S CLUBS ... THEY THREW BINGO TICKETS AND ASH TRAYS.”

++++ SOMEbody SOMEwhere was trying to make me happy with a phone brawl:

‘Your Foxy Cult article got right up my nose!’

Ms. X’s coin-box invective at least lent fine drama to an evening and that even the television seemed menaced. Twenty-channel switches into the night, I decided to risk plugging it in but then, the telephone sprang:

‘DON’T EVER DOIN’ BALAAM!’

(Click!)

Had it not been for gross editorial insensitivity, I’d have gladly co-operated... or at least hidden. Instead, having arrived with a bodyguard who looked more like a fireguard, I’m a squatting duck (or threat of death by cremation from unexpected quarters).

“Now... if I wasn’t a musician, I’d be a... brickie!”

Why?
‘Because, then I wouldn’t have to think that much...’

The man picking his brains until further notice is MARK MORRIS — vocalist/bass player with necrophobic act BALAAM AND THE ANGEL. For a band who’s name will one day good Kenny Rogers into ducating fruslily with Tammy Wynette, the Morris brood seem morbidly calm. It’s almost as if these three brothers have known each other all their lives; which indeed they have. Hence their downward spiral towards sin via teaching (Jim-guitar/bucking vocals), gas-manning (Des-drums) and fork-lift truck fixing (Mark — our lone spokesman and a man who has missed his true calling).

‘I’d really like to be a drummer.’

Then why aren’t you?
‘I can’t play drums.

Aren’t you all semi-classically trained?

‘Yeah, but we’re not dead competent, you know what I mean...’ Mark fidgets, agonized. “I have real trouble singing and playing bass at the same time. I have trouble singing. I have to write songs I’m able to sing... and whenever I write one, in the back of my mind, there’s always another song that’s been written by somebody else.”

Stop being so painfully honest!

‘Why...? In years to come I’d hope that somebody would be inspired by one of my songs. “Mark scoots...’

+++ ABOUT TO HIT THE CHARTS LIKE A SUPersonic LEMMING — BALAAM AND THE ANGEL JUST TAKE IT AS IT COMES. 

DEFeNDing DEATH TREATS @ BAIE E. FACE
posting Franciscan-style as all around him evolve into donkeys. "It's not as if we copy things... just because everybody else doesn't like to admit it."

Side-stepping the odd pandemic danger could prove character building for Balaam: not that every vacation need be spent shuffling out of Saloon bars with their hands up. Jim once reflected: "We're influenced by ideas in songs... by feelings." "Balcromes" might have materialized as a direct result of Patti Smith's 'Dancing Barefoot' but What The Hell! She probably wanted to get splinters before she was too old to enjoy them. Other scoops from a glittering gala include The Only Ones, Bolan and The Doors.

We're cramped at the last seven or eight years, "grows Mark, explaining away all six tenures... "We got a punk band together but went about the wrong way... we played Working Men's clubs... they threw bingo tickets and ash trays."

All exasperatingly observed by Dad Morris.

Was the traditional stage-father figure? "Not really," smiles Mark. "He just wanted to give us a different slant on our futures."

This initially involved sewing his sons to the carpet never had one. In fact, with us, it was just the opposite... everybody hated us because we lived in the same town. We still don't get in free anywhere."

No "Key-to-the-city" yet? then? "No-o-o... nothing like that."

Alas, Balaam having little influence at Cannock means that should I ever pass that way by mistake, I'll probably have to sleep in the lorry park again. For all those ignorant of claustrophobic small-town mentality, you might find 'Day and Night' and 'Ghost Train' illuminating. Alternatively, you could always talk journalists into Balaam gigs: taking care to maroon yourself lastly.

"I want casual sex, I'll have it... not that we're the kind of band that has swinging orgies after every show."

"What is it that reviewers hate about you?"

"It's probably that we can't 'arracit..." maroon Mark unanimously pigeonholing the journalist animal's obsession with punctuation. "They use words like 'Goth' and 'Hippie' to cover a multitude of sins. They've just making life difficult for themselves. Image shouldn't really matter, but whatever image we've got, isn't conscious. One just developed... if anything, it holds us back..."

Usually Des sinks free-earning Jim and Martin to strain flamboyantly at the lashing; long-haired, splendid material (so ruffians)... Talking of things that go 'crasms' in the night. Once, whilst rightly deciding today's trend for soulless prissmacy, Mark thunderously announced: "Some people use sex to get attention."

Would you say that — What sort of people is Love and what divides them is sexuality?"

"No responders... have no idea what's going on."

In my haste to blame the crowd, I neglect to smug snidely.

Are you mildly peculiar?" "No", mark. "I can't do casual sex, I'll have it... not that we're the kind of band that has swinging orgies after every show."

Understandable really? The only thing I want to run away and try to find play-parks at that time of night? (Swinging orgies indeed) Occasionally though, Balaam do hold a court of sorts..."

"That," declares Mark majestically "was a dead good about us. This year we've done IZ3 shows in Britain which is a hell of a lot... Ten more than Iron Maiden and they're the biggest live band in the world... and... Mark plus a backup, bogging up now... We were playing bigger stadia."

(Congratulations seems in order.)"

"When we did the Marquee last, he continues, coming down a keg or two... "We did some cabaret beforehand... if the audience were going to stand there stiff-faced, you'd be to kastem them up. We want everybody to get into the spirit we were going out of free boots, got kids onstage and played really stupid corny games... it was a buzz."

"I'm so glad to see you down here... It showed how human it was to be entertained. At the end of the day, people do enjoy that kind of stuff... whether they like it or not."

Quite content to deprive Balaam audiences of all the choice in the matter, Mark now intends to spend the rest of his career spreading the red.

Your initial ambition is to change the sound of the charts... what comes next?

"To actually enjoy it..." Mark cries, bearing so prettily... I am no longer the prettiest girl in the room... "It doesn't matter how experimental you are, if there's not a song there nobody will listen... there's so many different things on our album because we wanted everything to stick individually."

With every track a single?"

"Yeah, I mean... What's better? somebody doing Tearing Jistie covers and selling, say, 100 copies of something totally different to chart run-of-the-mill rubbish getting into the Top Ten?"

In an effort to appear alert, I cock my head intelligently— somehow managing to crash up against a framed Cult poster. Mark hoists, feeling unpleasantly... "There you go. Barbara... knocking The Cult again."

(Fran it must have been ME who made the phone call Care solved.)
DEREK JARMAN: SOME CLUES

EARLY LIFE: From home to boarding school in Dorset (regarded as a boy of low intelligence until taken in hand by the art master), to the Slade (painting), Swinging London (extra-dition in ‘Blow-Up’), sexual liberation... and the rest is history...


SUPER 8 FILMMAKING: from early ’70s, including ‘In the Shadow of the Sun’ (collaboration with Thrilling Gristle). Some Super 8 footage incorporated into later films: ‘Jordan’s Dance’ became part of ‘Jubilee’; clips of the Sex Pistols (notably the Jubilee boat trip) formed the most vital moments of ‘The Great Rock ’n’ Roll Swindle’.

SET DESIGN: for film and stage, including Ken Russell’s ‘The Devils’ and ‘Savage Messiah’.

CAMERO ROLE: Temple Spokesman (“They thought I looked sufficiently evil”) in Templo Of Psychotic Youth videos.


NOTABLE ACCOMPlicES: Adam Ant, Coll. Genevieve, Heathcote Williams, Hermine, Jordan, Judi Dench, Ken Russell, Lindsey Kemp, Orlando (a.k.a. Jack Bicket), Sex Pistols, the Slits, Toyah, Wayne County, William Shakespeare and a cast of thousands!

Eight years after (the) Jubilee, eminent ‘Times’ film critic David Robinson twitched uneasily in a flatulent leather Channel 4 presenter’s chair, faced with the prospect of introducing a season of Derek Jarman’s feature films to a deadhead Remo-weaned 80s audience. The previous week, he’d dined the flying tomatoes to present ‘Jubilee’; this particular week, in the face of an unprecedented (for) display of hostility from apoplectic (not to mention apocalyptic) Mr Angry’s and (seriously) a vicar from Thomas Ditton in the ‘Right to Reply’ Video Box (sic), he’s breezing himself for suburbia to really hit the fan.

Can Robinson explain away ‘Sebastiane’ featuring a gay Christian martyr, Latin dialogue and, as a highlight: “an orgiastic phallic ritual’ involving the Lindsay Kemp Troop wearing three foot long bright blue dildoes while maintaining a suitably apologetic manner and (more importantly) a straight face? Yes. Here also battles are fought, imaginations expressed and differences confronted.

“When the newspapers rang me up it was like dejà vu. I thought you should have rung me up in 1976, please. You’d got me at the wrong moment.”

Derek Jarman, dark-haired and heavy-browed in a (obviously) black polo neck, has a small comfortable flat off Clerkenwell Road, friends who make very large cups of tea and a TV that he never watches. He’s charming, friendly and shares my incomprehension not only of the wonders of technology (a tape-recorder that, like the sereedists–with the weighty joke, I know–we can’t work out how to switch on), but also of “the bounds of decency.”

Unlike film censors (accountable to “the industry”), the IBAs (etymology for “independent TV”) are accountable to the Government. Officially, TV censorship is pretty much limited to sex ‘n’ violence: unofficially (and unsurprisingly) political censorship does exist, but there are no rules to break – it’s not censored. If you step out of line you’ll have trouble showing the programme’.

Add to this the additional constraint that anything regarded as subversive (read: exciting, provocative) is considered even further beyond the pale if it allowed to invade the “comfort” of your own home (the sacred nuclear bolt-hole), and it’s hardly surprising that England’s snoring is briefly disturbed.

“It’s obviously to do with context – if ‘Jubilee’ was set in America, no-one would think twice. The problem is that ‘Jubilee’ actually deals with media violence, and that really upsets people. I think that’s the reason. But all the violence was very much a study of violence. The joke of ketchup used as blood (a grossly overweight Toyaq assaults a greasy-spoon waitress in what Derek calls the ‘ketchup rape’; attack of the killer tomatoes if you
AS LONG AS THE MUSIC'S LOUD ENOUGH WE
WON'T HEAR THE WORLD FALLING APART

("Fluxus" 1970.)

"IN A WORLD THAT CAN BE INCARNATED AT ANY
MOMENT, THE WILL TO ACTION FADES."

(JEREMY JAROMAN, "DANCING LEGEND: AUTOBIOGRAPHY 1986.")

If there weren't anarchic people around it wouldn't be the end of everything. There'd be no manoeuvrability — just blocks of people with absolutely certain ideas. I think some form of personal anarchism is really valuable because if people can discover what they are really about then they're in a better position to actually produce some solutions. If that level of personal inquiry got cut out the window then on what basis are you attempting to alter other people's lives?

Which brings us, in a roundabout way, to his involvement with Throbbing Gristle, Psychic TV and Coil.

"I was outside the general system of film-making in this country, and TB/FG were outside the mainstream in music. They were very much people who organised their own organisation and kept it, so it was possible to work together on the Super 8s. They did the music, I did the films and they'd use them for background or whatever; it was very good. And in the course of that time no money changed hands — it was brilliant; it was a barter! The thing that stuck with me was ‘In the Shadow of the Sun’ (apart from it being visually abrasive to the point of eyelid incineration) was the number of old ladies in the audience."

"There was always an old audience for that film (!) At one screening, there was a trap there asleep at the back, and he woke up for the film. (Can’t imagine anyone managing to sleep through that!) He was mesmerised by it — I talked to him afterwards and he really liked it, it was absolutely marvellous!"
LONG STANDING BACKBONE (ALES COMATOSE ANDERSON) OF ALTERNATIVE BRITISH CINEMA—DEREK JARMAN (HE OF 'JUBILEE' AND 'SEBASTIAN') HAS JUST SEEN HIS 'CARAVAGGIO' RELEASED

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YOU WANKA HEAR MY STORY, BABE. IT'S EASY. THIS IS THE GENERATION WHO FORCOT HOW TO LIVE THEIR LIVES. THEY WERE SO BUSY WATCHING MY ENDLESS MOVIE. IT'S POWER, BABE, POWER, I DON'T CREATE IT, I OWN IT. I SUCKED AND SUCKED AND SUCKED. THE MEDIA BECAME THEIR ONLY REALITY, AND I OWNED THE WORLD OF FLICKERING SHADOWS...BBC, TUC, ATV, ITV, CIA, CBA, NFT, MGM—(gleeful pause)...KGB, COF E... YOU NAME IT—I BOUGHT THEM ALL AND REARRANGED THE ALPHABET.
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(Cardinal Borgia Gino—The man who brought you the Daughters of God live onstage and turned Buckingham Palace into a recording studio—in JUBILEE.)
OUTSIDE THE SQUARE WINDOW THERE ARE A THOUSAND LANDSCAPES WITHOUT HORIZONS, A MYSTERY POINT WHERE EVERYTHING SUBCONSCIOUSLY MEETS INTO A BLURRED SPIRITUAL MESH OF IDEAS AND EMOTIONS, A PLACE WHERE LOVE AND HATE BECOME INSEPARABLE, LOCKED TOGETHER AND CONFUSED.

It's a place where the forgotten shadows that lurk in the suburban subway of our mind whose presence is felt at the painful and harrowing experience growing insistent. The shuttered nerves will claw at your skin from the inside, until a guilt ridden introspection occurs and burps an organ of lost innocence. I'm afraid these senses are being seared in name, are running through my vein. My brain's echoing, expanding, mellowing — it's going haywire.

THE SWANS cause this sexual concession. (Stop playing their records then... Ed.) The thought of interviewing them worries me: I've also been thinking too much, and you know what that does to a boy who thinks too much? They go blind.

Tried: a simple analysis. A passing mother of nine waiters into the room. Somewhat hastily, I play her The Swan's 'Raping a Slave'. Her face concentrates, then drops as it becomes puzzled. Unexpectedly she starts to smile.

Will you?

"I like them Ron," she says in her rich Maltese accent. "They're good for you young ones. I think they'd be better live with a loud of Charlie, leather and bondage and if they have the stage lights like Tina Turner they could be big."

I smile and the go to make the Spaghetti Bolognese. The next day comes, as it always does. I'm zooming up London —

Get a ticket to ride. Surrounded by morning commuters I realize how robotic and cold they seem, the prospect of something totally unique in their lives slowly disintegrates with the passage of time. I'm going blind again.

They need something bizarre, I'm fortunate enough to have arrived there. The Swans man is laying back on a sofa, looking relaxed. He had blonde locks of hair and a smile straight out of The Tales Of The Unexpected. A man with a sorted past and a sort of future. Kim has been in prison, once a music journalist and has been described as a musician. Interview time.

Are The Swans a spontaneous creation?

"No, we are not spontaneous at all. We are probably a bit more prepared, particularly with the new recordings. The sound textures are much more varied, but we cannot get that in the studio where we try to be as minimalist as possible."

The Swans are often associated with being savage and animalistic. Why do you think you have such a primal sound?

"I guess it's just because I don't like half measures, I don't consider it to be aggressive however, it's more of a personal matter, it's more geared to being an emotional experience rather than attacking anybody. A lot of people have this idea that we are attacking our audience or something which is a misconception and I think it is a rather stupid."

The Swans were apparently disturbed as the sound of rock falling apart. Do you agree?

"I would hate to be considered as that. I like a lot of rock music."

Do you consider what you are to be in competition with the mainstream?

"We don't really think about it, we just make our music. We don't have any preconceptions and we would never set out to destroy rock music."

There you have a very simplistic analysis, but I'm afraid I can't bring myself around to believe him — the other material by The Swans seemed as if they had purposefully taken in the rock tradition, then gloriously discarded it. However, with the forthcoming "Greed" LP, the sound is immediately continued and below. The 'I don't care about music as an issue' bit. The noise The Swans make has been meticulously crafted to achieve the emotional bluntness it strives to subvert. However, The Swans have the sort of band that is eternal in rock and roll, they make you jump up and down, causing a rash under your skin. Both may exist within the confines of rock and roll, but The Swans meet you half way where as The Swans attack and subvert you before cathartic or exciting. Pain before pleasure of vice versa.

"Some people would consider it that but that wouldn't be on the merits of past materials. The new album will show emotions as you can only remain silent for a certain length of time."

What sort of emotions are you trying to exploit?

"That's a little too vague for me to comment on."

(Me being vague — a joke if ever I heard one.)

"It's just too vague, and an answer to that could be very gappy."

I'll give you a starter for ten. Are you revelling in people's worst nightmares?

"I guess that's possible though I don't consider the music nightmare myself, I guess some other people might. To me the music is positive."

(This is becoming exhausting.)

"Just the persistence of the rhythm, and the way it arg... affects the scenes. That to me is positive and not nightmareish or negative. Just because some people deal with things that are usually pushed away that doesn't mean it's particularly negative."

You've got a very destructive sound though.
"To me though that's not destructive... to me that's to do with fucking.

He gives like a snazzy bullock. So it is a sexual sound?

"Well I have to admit that most of our lyrics and most of the sound is geared around the groin. That's how we judge if a song works, whether or not it has that tension that fucking has."

So you use it as an artistic stimulus?

"Hi-da (he laughs). We don't fuck and then go into the studio but I don't know, I suppose that's what appeals to me.

Just totally losing yourself: that's what interests me about work as well. Your life and time is totally dictated, your emotions and thoughts are controlled, all of what you are becomes departed by that. I'm not protesting about it or anything like that."

Sex is an escapist thing?

"I don't know, it can also be very boring as well. It depends who it's with. I don't think about it."

Liar.

"The best rock music ever made was by The Stooges, that was the best sexual music ever made. I haven't listened to them in ages though. What I'm trying to say is the way personal identity can be devalued, rubbed out. It just interests me in that sense, it seems the ultimate pleasure for a masochist."

He smiles, I wince. He's given the game away.

You seem to like subversion as a tool as well though?

"It is sort of blatant isn't it? 'Raping A Slave' came out of thinking about work and the way I interpret it."

What, exploitation?

"No, I wouldn't say anything that abstract. It's more to do with the relationship between boss and worker. It wouldn't make it political. I look at the mass politics, I can't stand the idea of tearing masses of sweating, slinking dictation."

You communicate through subversion though?

"What do you mean by subversion, an undermining of the status quo."

No, I happen to think they're a good band — nothing that obvious but more of a subversion of the system.

"Oh that's an acute observation. Usually lyrically I set down an idea to subvert."

Finally, what's music about then?

"Listening to music is a non verbal experience, too much talking undermines the effect of it. I guess what I'm trying to say is that I kind of get excited when certain people in interviews spout philosophy and ideas that has really nothing to do with their music but it's just a way of hyping their music. I'm just trying to be as simple as possible, I would hate to be perceived as having an attitude or a philosophy."

(No worries there then... Ed.)+++
“YEAH WELL THEY TALK ABOUT A LOT OF THINGS, IT’S WHAT THEY PICK OUT. THE SLIGHTLY WEIRD THING ABOUT THE NME IS THEY CAME UP TO US WHEN WE WERE IN LONDON RECORDING THE ALBUM AND SAID THAT WE REALLY GOT TO DO THE INTERVIEW IN HANDSWORTH, WHICH IS WHERE I LIVE. SO WE HAD TO GO BACK TO HANDSWORTH TO DO THE INTERVIEW WHERE THEY ASK US ABOUT POLITICS AND WE ANSWER THEM. THEN THREE MONTHS LATER THEY ASK WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO PORTRAY THIS POLITICAL IMAGE!”

Meeting them was a disappointment. David and Andy are no higher than midgets, in fact they look like elfin extras from in Santa Claus The Movie. Roland Rat — yknow the vocalist with that voice and Canan complexion is absent.

They are a band with style, credibility, social comment, erudite overtones, good looks, soul and glitter suits. In fact you could describe The F.Y.C’s as the ultimate and possibly the best pop band around. Then again you could say The F.Y.C’s are just another soul soul nouveaux blues band who wear baggy trousers to allow for the space their genital organs may require. I think you’d be wrong though — see, my mother down the market like them. The collective decision down there is that The F.Y.C’s are “Triflic”. Me, well, I decided whilst shaving half my lip away, watching it spiral down the sink, that the F.Y.C’s are merely better than average. I apply the Blyecream and go to town.

A buzz circulates around the office, apparently Paul Weller requested to see the much publicised televised scuffle between The Fine Young Animals and Saturday Superstore “wankers” Matt Bianco. However more of that later. Firstly we can go on together with suspicious minds.

“Ern... we thought that we were getting too serious.” (David Steele says that about the reasons to release an average cover version of Elvis’s classic ballad.)

“It was like everyone was getting too serious about us and it seemed like fun to do, I don’t know whether it was the right thing to do, but we wanted something to be totally different to ‘Blue’.”

They mean having a bit, but they won’t say it.

“It was just getting a bit boring with all the politics,” says David, trying to disguise putting a finger up his spurious nostril and grabbing that demon bogey. He looks at me to see if I have noticed. I pretend I haven’t and then see his fingers work overtime as it tries to flatten and curve the offending article.

Revelation: The Fine Young Cannibals pick their noses!

Where were we? Oh yeah.

“We had that TV shows set up but when they saw the lyrics to ‘Blue’ at least three of the shows cancelled.”

What shows were they?

David: “I can’t say as we’ll never get on them again.”

Ah, such professionalism.

Are you worried that ‘Suspicious Minds’ did better than the other two singles.”

“It didn’t,” they cry back, somewhat peeved. “It did exactly the same as Johnny. If it would have gottanao. I would have been terrible.”

It did do better though as it reached the older bastard generation, the nostalgia freaks, those who like a simple melody. The reason they released ‘Suspicious Minds’ was because the second single flopped miserably and they needed another hit quickish. Besides that they wanted to turn around the po-faced public image they were beginning to build for themselves. Why else wear glittered suits on Top Of The Pops?

Dave: “We wore those glittered suits on Top Of The Pops as we had tried too hard concentrating on the music business. I think our best songs haven’t been released yet!”

FOOTNOTE: FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS. ARE THEY ANYTHING MORE THAN WOODEN HEADS AND BENDY LEGS?
So how do you feel about being 'political social commentators'?
Dare: (I think Andy's getting hot) "I don't know where all this business comes from. I personally used to read all the music papers for ten years but towards the end of last year they all got really boring so I just cancelled the whole lot of them. I think they're so boring, no one needs them anyway."

Yeah, that's right Dave, everyone just looks at the pictures don't they? I think what did it was the last 'NALE' piece?
Dare: "Yeah well, they talk about a lot of things, it's what they pick out. The slightly weird thing about the NME is they come up to us when we're in London recording the album and said that we really got to do the interview in Hanworth, which is where I live. So we had to go back to Hanworth to do the interview where they ask us about politics and we answer them. Then three months later they ask why are you trying to portray this political image?"

In my eyes typical NME policy, a fine new band can't be presented as such because they have to be credible before they get the vote. Using the Hanworth riots to get the necessary angle: They had set you up for it?
Dare: "Yeah, I mean I'll talk politics if I feel like it."

Do you feel like talking politics now, I ask whilst sucking the scab of my shaved lip. A splash of blood drops onto my notebook, I look him in the eye as he realized. He has, I can tell by his puzzled eyes. I search for a handkerchief as the blood begins to dribble down my chin.

"I only feels like talking politics when something annoys me or when I'm with my old nursing friends who I used to work with."

You used to be a nurse?
Dare: "Yeah for a year in a mental hospital."

What was it like?
Dare: "I quite liked it, it was different everyday. The small lady covering my lip is turning red, which brings me to my next question. Why haven't you joined Red Wedge?
Dare: "We might do, and we might..."

Dare is giving nothing away.

Are you considered?
Dare: "No, it's more like when it's right or the event. If they have a good idea we'll do it. We'll probably do something before the next election or something."

What do you think of Red Wedge anyway?
Dare: "It could be good, but what they want to do is get the big people in like Spandau Ballet, Culture Club and Wham."

But you're really big now.
Dare: "Yeah but not like the others. I mean, I used to be in The Labour Party or The Young Socialists Party. We'd join when the time is right but at the moment everything is so hectic and besides I don't know if the others in the group would want to do it yet."

From politics to anarchy on the TV, where our Fine Young Cannibals took the challenge to Matt Bianco and caused an uproar when a public television scuffle broke out in front of 4 million live TV viewers. Dare, for reasons known to himself, decided to baptise member of Matt Bianco in health yoga, not the sort of behaviour you'd expect from the pop culture of '88 and usually reserved Andy Cox.

What exactly happened?
Dare: "There's so little to know really."
Dare: "It was more of a protest against the event."
Dare: "They were just unlucky really. It could have been Jennifer Rush."
Dare: "That was the main idea as we'd thought Jennifer Rush would win the competition."

So you intended to get Jennifer Rush?
Dare: "Yeah."

This is getting better by the minute.
Dare: "Funnily we did this TV show to 40 million people but right at the end all the groups have to come down and vote for these groups and we thought we're not doing this. So they bring out our contract which in big letters says you will join the voting. So we did, well Andy did more than anyone else. Getting out of the place was really heavy."

"I THINK IN GERMANY WE GOT THIS SORT OF REPUTATION AS BEING SOME SORT OF SEX PISTOLS GROUP. IT WAS BIG NEWS IN THEIR DAILY NEWSPAPERS."

Why's that?
Dare: "It was like everyone else in the theatre was shocked and all these music people were totally disgusted with it. The Germans said we were banned from German TV forever and you'll never work in this country again. It was pretty funny I thought. It's like the kind of thing you do you know it's not like acting like a serious pop star. To me that's a lot harder to do holding a Red Wedge. Now they've banned all photographers and London cops from that TV show for two years. I think in Germany we got this sort of reputation as being some sort of Sex Pistols group. It was big news in their daily newspapers."

Have you heard from Matt Bianco since?
Dare: "I've spoken to representatives since and they haven't taken it too badly — there's no hard feelings."
Dare: "Apparently he'd been beaten up three months before it would have been better if it was Jennifer Rush though."

How do you feel generally with that pop class?
Dare: "I feel really sorry for it, I don't like most of the people. I don't think any interview has got what we're really like."

So what are you really like then?
Dare: "You'd have to speak with a week or two really for us to find out."

Sorry, I haven't the time.
Dare: "I mean we're like everybody, sometimes we have a laugh sometimes we get political, sometimes you get drunk and sometimes you have sex, you know."

(And that requires a week ... Ed.)

What about the Jesus And The Marychain?
Dare: "They are quite an English traditional group really."

What, I scream, opening my scab again.
Dare: "It's like a northern group joins a group and they try to be the Velvet Underground. Some of their songs are quite good but it's just like rockabilly really."

Nonsense. Can't he be said of you but from a different angle?
Dare: "Well it could do. I mean if you like a certain kind of music you're obviously going to be influenced by that music. I don't think it's bad but I think it's just kind of funny. They're like how Spinal Tap was to heavy metal but to the Velvet Underground."

The Fine Young Cannibals are taken away to be manacured for super stardom. The pair of them shake my hand before I go. They look at me as if they'd like to get their teeth into me. They don't like me as, for all their political peering they're still very mercenary orientated. (Perpetual references to how many singles they've sold in different parts of Europe.) They're comfortably feel their career will only be short term as the pollution of popular music can only sustain itself for so long before a fresh bunch of smelly socks shake things up a bit. Until then I'll take The Fine Young Cannibals before the likes of A-Ha.

Dare: "All we basically do is try and write a song."

Which at the end of the day isn't enough..."
THE GODFATHERS

THE GODFATHERS are the Sid Presley Experience. Despite its final months the original line-up of the S.P.E. Peter Coyne - vocals, Chris Coyne - bass, Kevin Murphy - drums, Del Bailey - guitar, had continually failed to function as a working outfit, so the unit imploded during the last leg of the Jobs For Youth Tour. Batterie and Murphy were sacked and new recruits were immediately sought. Both myself and my musical partner/brother Chris were determined to form a stronger, more powerful version of the S.P.E. as our next band. We also wanted to keep the best of the S.P.E.'s back catalogue so that the classic rockers 'Public Enemy Number One', 'Can't Leave Me Alone' and 'Hop Two Three Four' were not lost to the nation; introducing a new wall of sound with the new outfit, making it a more metallic, expanded basic version of The Presleys.

There were to be no more arguments, no in-jokes and no-one to blame but ourselves if we didn't succeed.

THE ADVERT IN MELODY MAKER read: "The Sid Presley Experience require exciting, powerful imaginative guitars and drums. World tour and recording imminent." Mike Gibson was among the first to join. Playing in various York bands (Pretty Shades Of Pink, Our 15 Minutes) before moving himself, his guitar and his Kawasaki 550 down to London he'd been working in Rough Trade distribution, ironically parking boxes of "Cold Turkey" when shown the ad.

KIS DOLLMORE HAD SEEN the S.P.E. and he'd been suitably impressed and inspired. When asked about his guitar style he spoke the magic words: "I've been writing to hear. "You know that guitar sound you had? Well I've got all over it."

And so he did, from a great height, as we were to find out. Both guitarists had played in separate auditions and spanked our impressive rockabilly versions of "Hop Two Three Four" and "Cold Turkey", and were recruited on the spot.

Bradford bass drummer George Morpurgo, a blonde haired Small Faces fascist had seen an audition on the Tube and liked what he saw. He told Pete at the audition and played better drums in half an hour than any of the previous drummers we'd ever worked with before. Chris and I didn't want to work with any more miserable bastards and as well as his playing (especially on "Kenny Jones and Mitch Mitchell at their very best") making the songs we were playing even more danceable, his impeccable sense of humour proving itself irremovable over the next few months.

OUR FIRST CONCERT as The S.P.E. was an unplanned secret show at the Embassy Club in London after only four rehearsals together. Seven Sid Presley songs staggered into a howling mass of feedback due to an inadequate sound system, but as a group we'd lost our stage confidence, and more importantly, Chris and I knew we'd found the boys to make the noise that we'd always wanted to make.

Our first official concert as The S.P.E. was an anti-fascist benefit at the opening of the Crayford Club in Richmond, a debut album Chris and I felt had been left over from the previous Presley incarnation. We hadn't recorded Lennon's "Cold Turkey" as our second single just because it was a brilliant exciting chilling song, but because we considered it to be relevant for the time and stated what was happening around us in the most dramatic possible terms.

We're still keen to play more benefits as each cost will be considered as merit and when we are offered them. Some groups turn into musical charitable institutions and we don't want, that to happen.

WE MADE OUR BONES in America, playing our third, fourth, fifth and sixth concerts in Connecticut, Boston, New York and New Jersey to wildly enthusiastic, attimes fanatical, audiences. A shirt on a girl fan backstage at The Spectrum bore the legend "Sticks and Stones may break my bones - but whips and chains excite me!" which we later mutated into a chorus of a kinki rocker that we'd been working on. It was an interesting exchange - a British band playing rock'n'roll to an American audience, and the tour was dubbed accordingly: 'Bringin' it All Back Home'.

WE SOAKED UP INFLUENCES in America faster than a sponge picks up water. There will be revealed in follow-up songs. The original intention of Chris and I to form a better band than the previous Sid Presley Experience had come to fruition sooner than we'd anticipated and the concert at Maxwells, Hoboken NJ, in Springton's backyard was the finest we'd ever played in any line up. On return from the States we discovered that the name The Sid Presley Experience was to be temporarily lost in legal limbo, the sacked members disputing our right to the name.

It will be decided some time in 1986 who should keep the name, by a seventy-year-old High Court judge who'd never heard of Marc Bolan or The Velvet Underground, let alone The Sid Presley Experience.

ENTER THE GODFATHERS, the name coming about through media excess. It was amazing the number of times Chris and I were referred to as...
"STICKS AND STONES MAY BREAK MY BONES — BUT WHIPS AND CHAINS EXCITE ME"

the Kray twins, or gangsters, or hitmen in the pages of Zig Zag and Melody Maker, and our new band's title was a tongue in the cheek at the expense of all that.

Our debut single as The Godfathers was given the collective title "Copa Di Tuvi Copa", because we'd all regarded 'Lonely Man', 'I Want You' and 'Sticks And Stones' as equally important; three timeless exciting tracks which, with producer Vic Maile, was to be our first excursion into the new world of sound.

Vic, who had started in the business as a tape operator boy and Who/Small Faces sessions was initially drawn to our attention by the sound he had achieved as Motorhead's 'Dutty Love' and the Ian Attack's 'Dutty Water'. Working in the studio with Vic seemed to be the educational (first hand) accounts of sessions with Joe Meek/The Kinks and inspiring — he was able to draw qualities out of the group that we hadn't even suspected existed.

THE GODFATHERS ARE A BIG BAD beautiful noise and if you can hear shades of The Yardbirds, Sex Pistols, Buzzcocks, Beatles, Rolling Stones, Cocteau Twins... mean music then you are most definitely on the right track. We deal in noise for noise's sake so if you are listening closely to any of our records there are a million things happening. "Copa Di Tuvi Copa" is an excellent example of this and as an introduction to The Godfathers it cannot be faulted. (Not that they, oh!... ZZ stuff) I think we all quite rightly regard "Copa" as the finest recorded work any of us have been involved with.

And what you may be asking yourselves, are The Godfathers' plans for 1986? As I write we are about to go back into the studios, with Vic Maile once again producing, to record our second classic single which should be released in March, and, like "Cape", on our own Corporate Image label. Listen to your favourite radio stations during March and April to hear tracks like "This Damn Nation" (a contemporary 80's rocker) and the instrumental tribute 'John Barry'. A national tour will accompany the record release and a return trip to the States and dates in Europe are also being pencilled in.

Kris Dollimore wants "The Godfathers to be massive — to get a bigger advance than Signe Sigue Spitzik". George Muzur would like" to do lots of travelling and play exciting concerts worldwide". Mike Gibson plans "to release a series of brilliant singles and record a classic album that people will still be talking about in 1999", and Chris Coyne wants everything 1986 has to offer, "except AIDS and Herpes".

PERSONALLY I WANT TO SEE all of the above and much, much more.

Some people never have the chance to be in our legendary band, let alone acquire the opportunity to be in two, so it is that respect the Brothers Coyne have indeed been fortunate. A last few words of advice. BEWARE CHEAP IMITATIONS. Do yourself a favour. Buy our record and come and see us live. You will not be disappointed.

[Images of band members]
DEBRIS

ALAN BLEASDALE: the man who wrote 'Boys From The Black Stuff', on going to a Protestant Orange Lodge to research his new film 'No Secrets', an essay on bigotry. "For the first three hours I didn't think I'd enjoy it at all because they were very pleasant, funny, nice, generous people. And then through the doors came the drums and organs, and they were suddenly on their feet shouting 'papist bastards'. One old woman who must have been in her seventies was virtually foaming at the mouth. Half an hour before she'd been buying me a drink and putting her arm around me." (Blitz)

"There's obviously a deep seated reason for these offences." So say the defence counsel for York's now famous policeman attacker, GAIL ROBINSON. She has a regular and apparently uncontrollable instinct to kick unfortunate bobbies on the shins.

February 1986: seven Americans are martyred to Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative (otherwise known as Star Wars) when the CHALLENGER SPACESHUTTLE turns into one of the most spectacular disasters in history. President Reagan declares it a 'disaster'.

[25,000 Colombians = 7 Americans = a 'disaster'.]

Also aboard the good ship Challenger were dozens of chickens eggs, sent up for experimental purposes by the mythical COL SANDERS and his fast food chain for experimental purposes. Fried eggs in the stratosphere?

Title tattle still abounds about last month's BPI awards force. Wicked rumours circulate which dare to allege that Sade was dropped from winning an award because she refused to perform at the show, or that the only reason Huey Lewis got something for his mannequin that they couldn't get any other international acts to attend. What's sorer is that Elton John lent out a string of exploites when he found out that he was sharing his award with George Michael.

PFIANC, the androgynous LA performer recently signed to Stiff who describes herself as "your basic all-American Jewish folk singer": "I always introduce myself like that, and I do it after my first song. There are always laces of bewilderment when I play my first song; like what the hell is that, is it a man or a woman?"

"Displaying the ! Prudie lower the tone of our shops," declares a person from a famous group of magazines/record shops after the chain has banned KING KURT'S 'Big Cock'. Debris sees his point but would like to remind him that his shop also stocks Penthouse, Manfair, Playboy.

SAM PHILLIPS, the man who discovered and recorded Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Howling Wolf, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Ike Turner etc. "Rock and roll has just been asleep too damn long. I think if we don't create that true atmosphere of experimentation things are going to suffer greatly. Or if the people in the industry don't take a chance on things that are not what the last thing they release is, or what this label over here is doing. I think we run a real risk of losing that beautiful thing called creativity." Sam Phillips is 63. (Rolling Stone)

MICHAEL JACKSON is now supposedly denying that he co-wrote 'We Are The World' with Lionel Richie. "God wrote the song."

Michael apparently declares. Which provides an interesting royalties problem.

JUNIOR GISCHELME: "I think the Labour Party has done fuck all for black people in this country. I'm saying that and now I'll keep saying it. I'll have nothing to do with the Labour Party. The Labour Party have to show that they support me!"

THE PET SHOP BOYS might be furious to hear that rumours were circulating about 'West End Girls' being typed into the charts with pound notes slipping over the corners.

APOLOGIES TO JOHN LOMAX AND PAUL TAYLOR WHO HAVEN'T RECEIVED THEIR PRIZES FOR THE PICTURE POSTER COMPETITION. WE'VE LOST THEIR ADDRESSES, SO COULD THEY PLEASE SEND THEM IN AND LP'S WILL BE DESPATCHED FORTHWITH.
MOUTH

WOMEN ARE CRAP — IT'S OFFICIAL!

ZIGZAG,

Regarding your Jan ’86 Zigzag (Jaguar Throckmorton) twitterings of Feminist Flop. Do you really still believe that women will one day stand with equal respect in ‘society’ as men?? Hasn’t the past 20 years shown you that it’ll never happen?? Women have been helped up the ladder with EXCESSIVE LEEWAY, FORGIVENESS and PATIENCE as we (men) listen to their hysterical demands. We gave you chances only to find you stay on the FIRST STEP or JUMP OFF at the opportunity/feeble excuse. I grudgingly admit I used to be all for just seen too many females FAIL MISERABLY TO Women just don’t have the ‘something’ it needs. I despair when I pass a college or University and boozed-up, 2-eyed BOZO girls flitting around. WHAT A OF ALL THE blakes — unemployed — who could be races; all those lost opportunities!! And as for Lydia matter, honey, does the TRUTH HURT so much?

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DEAR ZIGZAG,

Please can you print an interview with the world’s greatest group Siglie Sigie Spuntnik, cos they are fab.

Thnx

STEVIE BABY
Barnhill, Cambridge.
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

ALASTAIR INGDE: www.aicommmunication.co.uk
ANNA MARTIN: http://facebook.com/anna247
ANTONELLA GAMBOTTO (formerly Black): http://antonellagambottoburke.wordpress.com and www.antonellagambotto.com
BARBARA ELLEN: www.guardian.co.uk/profile/barbaraellen
BOB KELLY: www.kellysheels.co.uk/fr_home.cfm
www.facebook.com/kellysheels
CAROL IRVING: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=582413561
CAROLE SEGAL: www.segalpix.com
CAROLINE GRIMSHAW: www.facebook.com/people/Caroline-Grimshaw/542008042
CHRIS HEATH: American GQ
CLAIRE MONK: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000844533830
CONEYljAY: www.coneyljay.com
DAVE THOMPSON: www.davethompsonbooks.com
DEBORAH BARKER: Editor of Homes & Gardens
IAN DICKSON: www.late20thcenturyboy.com
JOHN ROBB: http://louderthanwar.com/author/johnrobb
JULIANNE REGAN: http://julianneregan.net
KRISS NEEDS: https://www.facebook.com/people/Kris-Needs/723374368
LYNNE ALDRIDGE: http://blueshedthinking.blogspot.com
MICK MERCER: www.mickmerrer.com
MICK SINCLAIR: http://micksinclair.com
PETER COYNE: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000844533830
PHIL NICHOLLS: www.philnicholls.co.uk
RICHARD CABUT (formerly North): www.3amagazine.com/3am/?s=%22richard+cabut%22
RICHARD NEWSON (Mr. Spencer): http://facebook.com/richard.newson2
SARA JONES: Cardiff University
TOM VAGUE: www.vaguerants.org.uk
TONY D (as Tony de la Fou): http://killyourpetpuppy.co.uk
WILLIAM SHAW: http://facebook.com/WilliamShawUK
HACKS FILES is my photographic tribute to the people I worked with at ZigZag, Melody Maker, NME and Siren as well as various other ne’er-do-wells I happily encountered along the way. Posed sessions, informal office shots, grabbed snaps at gigs, it’s all here. 452 pages containing a staggering 1,138 photos for the bargain price of £14.99. Simply go to www.lulu.com and in the ‘FIND - Get It’ search bar type HACKS FILES.