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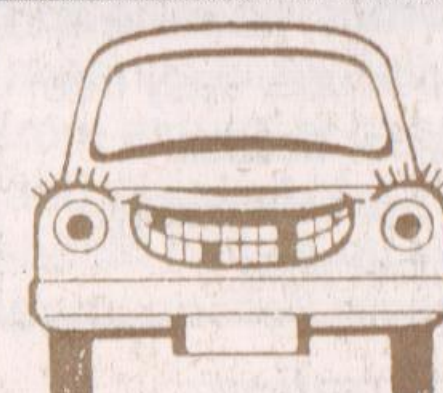
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Vol. 3 #6 December 1993 Pagan Special Photo: Ralph Barklam



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firstofall:

FREEFORALL

Nottingham's new **Square Centre Studios** have recently undergone a massive refurbishment, including a new 2300 square feet live room. Widely recognised as the most successful recording and remixing facility in the North of England, it has played host to a huge range of international acts as diverse as David Bowie, Take That and The Doobie Brothers. Now, with its new facilities and existing technical and creative expertise, the Square Centre is ready to attract even more acts to a building which already houses a number of record companies, promotion companies and some of the hottest producers and engineers in the country.

In association with **Overall**, the Square Centre is launching a national search for the best unsigned act in the country, the winner being awarded a unique package of studio time and professional advice that should ease the way to that first professional recording contract. Judging the competition will be ex-MCA records Managing Director and legendary A&R man Dave Ambrose. He will listen to all the material sent which will be judged according to style, songs, image, attitude and presentation. And remember - if you don't enter you can't win. But all those who do enter will be eligible for reduced rates in the recording studio.

Send your material, marked "Overall/Square Centre Competition" to:- Kevin Fetterplace, Mojo Working International, Sutherland Hall, Liverpool Grove, LONDON, SE17 2HH or

Nottingham University Ents. called us recently saying they were having difficulty finding "decent" bands to book for the continuing *Recession Session*, their weekly Sunday evening gig in the Buttery. Demo tapes to Lucy Rother, c/o The Box Office, Portland Building, University Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD. Indecent bands need not apply.

Meanwhile the dust has settled at the **Poly University** which is once again in possession of a live entertainments license for its **Refectory** venue in the newly extended Union Building, Byron House. (The irony has not escaped us of the fact that Bill Redhead's old office has been turned into a bank.) Big gigs start next term and little gigs will continue in the **Sub Bar**. Demos to Andrew McKenzie, Entertainments Manager, NTUUS, Byron House, Shakespeare Street Nottingham, NG1.

Name droppers

If at first you don't succeed...change your name! Or at least announce your "last ever gig". Or in the case of the **One Eyed Jacks** do both. Tired of being knocked back by cloth-eared A&R scouts on the grounds that they'd "been around too long" (note here that **Slaughterhouse 5** had existed seven years before signing their lives away) the Jack's management took to submitting anonymous demos to record companies. Eliciting an excited, positive response from at least one such, they happily admitted that it was indeed them,

the one and only One Eyed Jacks. "Oh," came the response as the sound of a tape falling into a distant litter bin was followed by the dying click of a telephone receiver. In the meantime they decided to change their name to the embarrassingly bad "Vivien". Needless to say this didn't get them anywhere. There was nothing left to do but announce their 'last ever gig.' I sincerely hope this was nothing more than a mere ploy to increase their already respectable attendances. Come back, Jacks. The same cannot be said of The Waiting List who have changed theirs to **The Bruise Violets** (TBV to themselves - they have no friends). Having failed miserably (and you don't get more miserable than them) to attract a deal in this country, despite a long and laborious campaign, they have announced the recording of the title track from their last EP *4th Of July* for Madrid-based **Elefant** label's tribute to **Galaxie 500** featuring covers of those New York art-rockers songs by groups from across Europe. This follows the inclusion of two new songs for *Amber Dregs* a Swedish collection of underground Eurorock. Meanwhile, after several changes of style, Solomon have reverted to P-Funk, the 'P' in their case standing for their new name **Psychogroovemothers**. Catch them live at the Arboretum Manor on Wednesday 15th December (it's OK, the tourists are on holiday till mid-January).

And for reasons so far undisclosed 3:6 Philly have changed their name to **Minds I**.

"Pied Pipers of rebellion" **Blind Mole Rat** return to Nottingham to play a benefit gig at the Old Angel on Saturday 18th December. All proceeds to the London's **University College Hospital Health Users Group** who have occupied part of the hospital in protest against cuts and closures. Support comes from the equally rebellious and appropriately named **Champion The Underdog**. Admission will be £2 (no charge for quadrupeds). Both acts feature on The **Anti Nazi League** compilation tape "Now That's More Like It" available on the night and in all good independent record stores. See 'demolition'.

GROOVEFORALL

Monday 27th December is the date when the fourth Groovin at the internally renewed Hippo on Bridlesmith Gate, Nottingham. Join the city's snappiest dancers in the Jazz/Performance room where DJ's **Pablo**, **Lovelee** and **Jazz Spirit** supply the Latin Bop & organic Jazz grooves for the movers. Live antics come from critically acclaimed **Minds I** with the right vibes of creativity and wisdom in hip hop form. The multi-talented wordsmith **Stickman** will drop some poetry and lead a live percussion jam which will be open to all skin slappers. Or join the grooviest formation team in town in the Soul/Groove Room vinyl junkies **Eric** and **Floyd** fuse the spirit of seventies soul with phat 'n funky beats. Solid and sweet. 10pm - 2am. Tickets £4.

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WHERE THE MUSIC MATTERS MOST

THE KOOL KAT



GETTING SQUARED

“We started with people who know scouts, not even the scouts at first. Obviously that’s not the only way, but with the position we’re in that’s the sort of thing we can do.”

Having visited Square Dance (as it used to be called) several times before, I thought I knew my way round the building. Not any more. New names on the buzzer, new corridors, new offices, new editing suites, new exits..... I got lost within five seconds. Luckily director **Tim Andrews** was there to show me round the newly refurbished **Square Centre Studios** and explain the changes that have taken place.

“Basically,” he begins, his voice echoing round the huge 2,300 square feet live room, “we wanted to provide a facility that can cope with a wide range of projects. We talked to seven or eight producers and a lot of bands who use live rooms and asked their opinions about the kind of facilities they wanted, and geared things up to accommodate some of their ideas.” I comment that it’s big enough to hold Sounds Of Blackness. “We are trying to make sure we’ve got all the different things people want and incorporate as many different ideas as possible. Obviously you have to compromise, but if you design it the way we have.....well, we’ve had a forty piece brass band in here. It’s been going down really well.”

All the homework has led to the installation of three sound booths — a dead booth, a small isolation booth, and a multi-purpose one usually used for drums or brass.

“You can get a combination of sound. You can close-mic the drum-kit and have total control of the sound, but at the same time you can open the doors, put some ambient mics in the room as well, then you get the best of both worlds— a really big sound out here, but a controllable sound within the booth.” Above this huge live room is the control room with a balcony right outside the glass. There is a screen to divide the balcony from the rest of the room.

Tim explains, “Sometimes you need the effect of a small studio, you might want the vocals to be really intimate. You want a big room but at the same time you don’t want it to be too big for certain things. Sometimes you want a one to one relationship with the producer, you want to be close, to just work.”

The other key area is combining a live room of this calibre with the studio’s historical success in the hi-tech fields. The Square Centre already has all the right equipment in that field.

“It’s unusual for a studio to combine these elements as well as we’ve done. If you go down to some of the top studios in London, the big live studios don’t have decent midi gear or hi-tech gear in the control room. We’ve been trying to pin-point what’s missing and provide it.”

Though aiming at the higher end of the market, at the same time Tim is keen not to lose the type of work done here previously. “We’re trying to expand on that by building a separate studio, and we’re offering this studio during down time to local bands at reduced rates. Plus we’re trying to move on. We want to encourage the local scene as much as possible. Ideally what we’d like to be doing more than anything

else is getting the bands in from round here. The more we do that the more chance there is of being able to attract work from outside the area as well.”

Which has always been the philosophy here, but is there enough happening in this area to give local music the boost it needs? It’s two years since the legendary Start gig saw a handful of Nottingham bands play a sell-out gig at the Poly, a start which seemed to splutter to a halt quicker than you could say “Nottingham music scene”.

“There’s a lot happening in this city, there’s been a lot happening for quite a while but it’s not really had the momentum that’s needed. But I hope that by offering this facility, people can get in here and record music of the sort of quality that people expect to hear now. In the past people have said that for demos you should just sing it on acoustic guitar. I don’t think that’s the case any more. I think the production of music is taken for granted now. People almost expect it to sound a certain way and even though they may think they can see through production, that they can like a song for a song, at the end of the day, if you’re an A&R man listening to, say, 30 tapes in one session, you’ve got to have a better chance of standing out if it sounds like a record, like the real thing.” Tim hopes that by offering such a facility at a reduced price, those who use it will have a much better chance of getting signed.

“Inevitably that means that we’ll be seen as successful if local bands are successful. One thing were up against is that, although we have a facility that’s as good as anywhere else in the country, what we haven’t got is a name for the area that we’re in. We’re battling against that all the time. It’s like ‘Yeah, sounds fabulous, but you’re based in Nottingham! That’s a bit odd isn’t it? What’s ever happening in Nottingham?’ And the only way we can ever get past that is by having some sort of success from Nottingham. So we are really very keen to help that happen. Why is Nottingham always bubbling under and never really exploding?”

Good question, Tim. What can we do about it?

“With a studio like this we get a lot of scouts from record companies ring us up asking what’s going on. What we are trying to do is give them as much information about local acts as possible. Bands can do demos and sound fabulous but unless they get heard by the right people in the right way it means nothing. Past experience counts for a lot here, for example the way in which Whycliffe was promoted.

“We didn’t go around trying to hard-sell Whycliffe. We never sent any cassettes out at all. But because we were a studio we were able to spread the word through speaking to people. We didn’t even play them any of the music for ages. You create a buzz through talking. We got so many people interested in signing them by taking that approach.....it was phenomenal. We knew we had something good. You can only play that game, if you keep your trump card up your sleeve, for so long, but when you pull it out and lay it on the table it’s got to be good, it’s got to be “Wow!”, they’ve got to be well impressed otherwise you’re only setting yourself up to be knocked down. But we were confident that we had something good.”

So does he think that could happen again?

“There are a lot of talented people round here. If we can get some really good material recorded, build a buzz for it in that sort of fashion, get people aware of it first, then people will think something is happening. Word spreads, and the more people you can get interested the better. The way for people to hear about a band is from someone whose opinion they trust, who hasn’t got a direct thing to gain, and that can be from someone such as yourselves, or a studio, someone such as Andy Dawson (former EMA Minister For Pop) or Mark Spivey (Radio Trent DJ) or Paul Needham (Derby promoter), someone who is unbiased. If a band has sold themselves to people like that, then they’ve achieved something. We started with people who know scouts, not even the scouts at first. Obviously that’s not the only way, but with the position we’re in that’s the sort of thing we can do.”

So, despite the infrastructural changes at the Square Centre, it seems that their original philosophy is still intact. If one act from this area can achieve some measure of success, then it will have a knock on effect for the rest of the local industry.

vinolution:



KINGMAKER *To Hell With Humdrum* (Scorch/Chrysalis)

It wasn’t that long ago that we saw Kingmaker following in the shadow of The Wonderstuff, and making an excellent go at it too. Several past failures have culminated in the release of this album, and prompt the question: what went wrong? It would seem that this downward spiral on which the band currently find themselves can be traced back to the fact that although giving value for money on the live circuit, of late they’ve tended to neglect their recording commitments. This is OK if you want to remain a local band, but you have to be aware of the other couple of million people out there who might want to hear what you have to say. This can’t really be deemed an album, or even a half-decent EP. The eight tracks have been evidently thrown together just to please the fans. Four new tracks that would once have been released as a 12”, along with four reworks taken from sessions recorded for Mark Goodier. It is these which really spawn any interest, that is until you realise that the guys playing at the local youth club are putting forward better renditions. It’s a strange fact, but you are never remembered for your successes, and only judged for your failures. Come on, we know we can expect more than this. **Nick James**

REVOLTING COCKS

Linger Fickin’ Good (Devotion)

The Al Jourgenson roller coaster has often been little more than a velvet cash in a leather glove, dangerous on the outside, and safe as the proverbial pussy on the inside. Linger Fickin’ Good relishes in double entendre shock tactics as it’s first line of fire sadly diminishing the fact that this is possibly big Al’s first output which hasn’t dished up the expected. In a career where ‘never playing safe’ has been his so-called trump card, this is a unique album among a back catalogue of living dangerously. The thing is with day jobbers Ministry’s *Psalm 69*, you got what you fully expected—the natural follow on to *The Mind’s A Terrible Thing To Taste*. Listen to any of the Alien Jourgenson output and, good or bad, it’s always been exactly what you had anticipated. And so, after the overblown excellence of the last RevCo album *Beers, Steers and Queers* and the apocalyptic spectacle of their London, Astoria show (still the most amazing, awe inspiring and emotionally numbing gig I have ever seen) you would be forgiven for expecting the same again, but more so, if you know what I mean. Instead *Linger Fickin’ Good* flirts with funky horns, Killing Joke-style bass and more than a dash of PIL. With obvious influential involvement from Chris Connolly, RevCo dispense with the overlaid distortion and industrial programming and instead discover a more open, fresh sound, which although not yet a finely honed machine suggests greater things to come, and is still harder than a hundred Nine Inch Nails. When is a RevCo album not a RevCo album? When it’s another great disco album for the 90’s. Now watch every industrial band in Britain get those funky horns and drop the Slayer guitar riffs. I think someone’s taking the piss. **Martin Thomas**

IDAHO *Year After Year* (Quigley)

Anyone remember My Own Private Idaho? God, it was boring. Fortunately this record (though succinctly described by my neighbour as music to slit your wrists to) re-defines my perceptions of Idaho. Expansive in its vista yet claustrophobic in its loneliness, its scene-sets in a way that only, say, Joy Division manage. Jeff Martin and John Berry have created something truly special, an epitaph for the disenfranchised. Jeff’s disconsolate and broken-hearted tenor meanders over John’s minimalist guitar chords and flashes of feedback. Imagine Mark Eitzel in one of his deepest troughs stripped of his country leanings and you wouldn’t be far wrong, but like Eitzel, Idaho never take you to the pits, they rock you back and forth on the brink leaving you immensely relieved that you never fell in and joined them. If you own any emotions you should own this record.

AFGHAN WHIGS *Gentlemen* (Blast First)

Somewhere at the end of Congregation, the Whigs last album, Greg Dulli can be heard desperately intoning the line “Don’t forget the alcohol.” This time round he’ll be whispering it again because if he reflects his lyrics, the bottle of bourbon must be about drained. More importantly, Greg Dulli and the Whigs have justified their being called soul, not in any schlock manner but in the way the guitars burn pleadingly and the lyrics slice through none’s very essence. The inclusion of the classic *I Keep Coming Back* confirms this most admirably. Greg Dulli’s own songs hold up to that track more than adequately and often eclipse it. *Gentlemen* the single is the most rank track but even then is so apologetic you can applaud its courageousness. The songs centre on repent, regret and the cleansing of the conscience, normally with regard to the opposite sex. I pity any woman ever in Dulli’s vicinity except as an observer, but we should all be deserving the man’s genius. Indulge and explore the world of the damned for it’s your world. **Dave Ellyatt**

BACK TO THE PLANET

Mind And Soul Collaborators (Parallel)

One time cover stars, oft raved about in these very pages, BTTP’s long-awaited debut album barely deserves a mention let alone a lengthy review. Rarely has so much effort gone into washing a band clean of it’s own personality and style. No I’m not talking about their clothes or their hair, just the music which has been stripped of all of it’s gritty, rough diamond, dubwise, skanking power and reduced to a pale imitation of it’s former self. I can only hope that someone realises that BTTP contain one of the best drummers in the country and a bassist who can groove his pants in the Bootsiest of manners, and release a dubbed up version of *Mind And Soul Collaborators* sans vocals and with the guitar to the minimum. I tell you this because both bass and drums are shamefully low in the mix of this album and vocals are multi-layered beyond belief. And the songs? A box of gems just covered in sticky sweet stuff. Wait till they get a good producer or just buy the demos. **Martin Thomas**

VELVET UNDERGROUND

Live MCMXXI (Sire)

The myth is broken. Rock n roll does not mean you can bring your Zimmer and hearing aid on stage. Let’s face it, we all love ‘em for their brief spell at the end of the sixties, but we don’t want them back in the middle of the nineties when they’re almost in their seventies.

BUFFALO TOM *Tree House* (Beggars Banquet)

Far gone are the days when ‘J’ used to produce the show. Buffalo Tom have developed into something more comprehensive. Having vaulted grunge and eclipsed pop (*Tailights Fade*) they now simply remain as Buffalo Tom. *Tree House* serves as a reminder to this, charming vocals, overlaid and comforted by the most afflicting but embellished guitar lines. This could only be Buffalo Tom, or maybe our dear Bivouac on one of their more Buffalo Tom days. As for the acoustic back numbers, well, they’re.....nice.

RED HOUSE PAINTERS

Red House Painters (4AD)

Perfect rainy day listening which threatens to grow and swell but never actually reaches its peak. Instead it descends easily into the abyss of being unlistenable crap. But in parts such as New Jersey it boils over into classic Red House brilliance, punctuated by the even more tearful Uncle Joe. But as a whole things are very different. By the end, (finale it isn’t) the whole thing has developed or dragged itself from being just a nondescript record into a whole nondescript package. If you like them you’ll love this. **Mike Wylie**

SKYSCRAPER *Lovesick* (Incoherent)

Second offering from ex-Milk and Swervedriver trio, and yet again damned fine piece of vinyl. As I’ve said before (and I say it again in the next issue) there is a fine line between good and bad metal, and Skyscraper sit firmly on the God-like side of the fence. A wonderful band, great musicians with the ability to write knockout tunes. “Lovesick” borders on the industrial but it doesn’t matter as they do it so much better than others of the same ilk.

MOLLY HALF HEAD *Barney* (Playtime)

I love the record sleeve but the same can’t be said of Barney. It’s dull.

TRUMAN’S WATER

Ten x My Age 10” (Elemental)

A superb live band but I’m afraid this mini album is another matter. Sonic Youth combined with jazz would be pretty appealing, but it’s hard work when it’s purely audio, no visual stimulation. After a few listens it started to grow on me, but so do warts and they’re wank. Unlistenable art-rock, I love them all the same.

COMPULSION *Safety* (One Little Indian)

Try to imagine a lethal aural cocktail; the Pixies at their most fulfilled and, paradoxically, at their most minimalist, shaken and stirred with the alterations of Big Black. The result? A bloody little number still raw at the edges but still punk rock that hurts in a gratifying sort of way.

SUGAR RAYS

Outta The Garage EP (Wa Hey!)

Sugar Rays return with an EP that should astound all ye no-hopers who have thus far ignored them. Punk pop gone mad, Billy Childish shags Mudhoney and spawns a sound whose spiritual home is firmly chez Pebbles and Nuggets. Wa-hey! There’s more to life than funk.

SULTANS OF PING *Teenage Punks* (Sony)

What a horrid band; Sultans of Sheeite, more like.

SPITFIRE *Minimal Love* (Paperhouse)

Their best offering to date, Spitfire have progressed or, regressed, shall we say, from their wah-wah sixties sounds to a more Stooges seventies rock thang. *Minimal Love* has a minimal riff but is incredibly infectious, reminiscent of Spacemen 3 without the wall of sound. Also check out the wonderful use of the World Of Sport logo on the label.

MAXINE *Hovering* (Blast First)

Do they like ambient? Do they like the Valentines? Do they like crappie indie bands like Chapterhouse? I can’t make up my mind and neither can they. **Milo F. Kelly**

NEW BOMB TURKS

Bottle Island (Damaged Goods)

Don’t get me wrong, New Bomb Turks are an excellent band, but this is so bloody awful it sounds like it was recorded in a kitchen, albeit the kitchen of Billy Childish. This one is only for sad trainspotters like myself who just can’t resist buying New Bomb Turks records.

DONE LYING DOWN

Heart Of Dirt EP (Abstract)

Born in Boston, USA but now living and gigging in London, Done Lying Down deserve your attention. This will be one of the undiscovered singles of the year. *Dissent* is a massive sound of guitars and drums that stops and starts like all the best songs do. You can forgive them for the tacky lyric, “I might have egg on my shirt but in the end the yoke is on you.” Never mind, it is still early days and in two years time this single will be changing hands for a lot of money. **SID**

**TAR *Toast*** (Touch & Go)

An excellent inner sleeve photo of a piece of bread being toasted by a blowtorch exposes the presence of a wry wit which is also reflected in the song titles such as *Altoids*, *Anyone?* and *Barry White*. Tar are a grungey hardcore band whose punk approach creates an impressive wall of noise as they deliver each song with power, gusto and a keen punctuality. Good stuff from one of Chicago's finest.

PEGBOY *Fore* (Touch & Go)

Pegboy consists of former members of the excellent and now defunct Naked Raygun. An interesting nouveau punk offering features a surprise appearance from Steve Albini of Big Black infamy. Fans of American hardcore will find this latest release from some more of Chicago's finest a real treat as the gruff vocals, angry guitars and bubbly bass are a surefire winner.

GIRLS AGAINST BOYS***Venus Luxure No.1 Baby*** (Touch & Go)

I like this band, they have two bass players, but unlike other bands with a similar status it works well for them. Just check out that superb fuzzy distorted bass sound throughout. This album is sordid in a chic kind of way and will have you swaying to grooves which are forceful, intricate and intelligent all at the same time. The powerful rhythms of songs such as the opening *In Like Flynn*, *Let Me Come Back* and *Learned* it move with the mighty deliberate pace of an ancient behemoth—huge, crushing all in its path, yet slow and wise. Their riffs crunch and grind their way through a violent and desolate musical landscape as sinister implications often provocatively raise their heads. Particularly in *Satin Down*, where Scott McCloud's damaged vocals—a Tom Waits at 4a.m. after a heavy gin-soaked session type of growl—lends the song moody, macabre elements which are quite wonderfully haunting. Girls Against Boys is cool noisy, post-modern, minor chord usin', punk structure abusin', inhibition losin' music. **J. Micallef**

ROSA MOTA *Seven Inch Sulk 7"* (Placebo)

How can anyone avoid a record when the first few seconds have the words "Fuck me gently with a chainsaw"? Rosa Mota's standard sort of grunge/punky guitar band may not be the most progressive in the world, however they are miles better than a lot of the American crap that certain people hail as being brilliant. Rosa Mota stand out.

SLEEPER *Alice* EP (Indolent)

Sleeper find themselves smack in the middle of a battle. Their sound is very similar to a lot of bands around at the moment. A four piece with a female lead singer who play indie guitar pop. In London, everywhere you turn there is a band like this. Echobelly, Salad, Insides, The Tony Head Experience (although they are from Street). But Sleeper are not prepared for battle. The weeklies will love them. but be warned—look further.

THE DAMBUILDERS *Smell/Shrine* (Krunch!)

Double A American 7" galore. HOORAY! YESS! etc. etc. Shrine is absolutely brilliant; indie guitar pop at its best. Not too noisy, just right. Rhythmic guitars, delicate drums, and Dave tops it all off with his distinctive voice. Smell is maybe not so strong on first listen, but after a while you find yourself spinning around and around in circles. Mail order only from the new Krunch! label: Cheque/P.O. for £2.50 payable to "G. Roberts", PO Box 207, Derby DE3 5ZZ. **SID**

M PEOPLE *La Vida Loca* (deconstruction)**THE GRID *Texas Cowboys*** (deconstruction)

La Vida Loca has a refreshingly carnival atmosphere, tucked away at the end of the B side after the usual corny souly dance fodder for musically safe clubs like MGM and Madison, in this case called *Don't Look Any Further*. Luckily I did. Some but not all dance music is like a long-running American sit-com such as *Cosby*—predictable, formulaic, but you have to admire the scriptwriters for churning it out consistently week after week after week. The Grid's *Texas Cowboys* is an exception, but then the Grid always have been, taking their show on the road complete with multi-TV screen compugraphics long before the Midi Circus came to town. The mixes of *Texas Cowboys* are also sufficiently varied as to stand up in their own right, rather than being mere versions on a theme, nor does this seem to take itself seriously. *The Cheerleaders Song* is a bit of a giggle, like Muppet music.

ULTRAVIOLENCE *I Destructor* EP (Earache)

I must hand it to Ultraviolence for maintaining such an uncompromisingly hard attitude. Thing is though, when it suddenly stops, the relative silence is so enduring it makes you want to play side 2. Whereupon the relative swirl is so funny it lulls you into a dream, then your face is blown off by an impulse of ferocious sonic soot.

ATARI TEENAGE RIOT***Kids Are United*** (Vertigo)

Right on "no difference between black & white" song for the football terraces. Doubt if it will find its mark, but perhaps the new Europe needs it. ATR smack of corporate manufacture, haute production, and sound brilliant on a big sound system like the one at Rock City. As for being "an extreme mutation of acid house", they could learn a lot from Ultraviolence. **Christine Chapel**

RICH RAGS *Psycho Dead Heads From Outer Space* (Warhammer)

If you thought that Rich Rags were a clichéd formularized heavy metal band just 'cos they're in Kerrang a lot, think again. They have more in common with the Clash, Ramones, Jam and Mott the Hoople than Iron Maiden, Saxon or Led Zeppelin. The Album's chock full of fine chews like *Kill Surburbia*, *Generation Bubblegum Hell*, *England is Dead*, and *Suicide By Technodrive*, an amusing little ditty about computer game addiction (take note Mr. Violent). Most of these songs tend to tackle social issues, there's not a dragon, gnome or hard lovin' babe in sight. I'd say that Rich Rags' closest comparisons would be the Manic Street Preachers or a slightly metallized Birdland, though at times they venture into Senseless Things/Mega City Four territory (Check out those harmonies!). Yeah, this is a really powerful, melodic punk/pop/rock'n' roll album, so put your prejudices aside and enjoy. **Mr. Jones**

GARY NUMAN***Golden Greats 1978-83*** (Beggars' Banquet)

...meanwhile, over here in Bargain Bin Corner, we're basking in a full two-and-a-half hours of perhaps the most embittered apeshit also-ran star of the last twenty years. Gary's still never forgiven either the music press or, more tellingly, his public for not propelling him up there to Legendary Towers along with his obvious idol, Mr. D. Bowie. C'mon, after all these years let's give the guy a break and welcome him right into our collective bosom, especially since his stuff's at least more consistent than that Tin Machine guy's. I mean, I'm not recommending that you actually go out and buy this gunk, unless yer k's outweigh yer kook-kudos or summat, but there's a whole lot more fun to be had here than you might imagine. Guffaw Factor is, obviously, way up there on the Appealometer. It's the little things, like *Remember, I was Vapour*, that really make this collection, along with the full-blown belly-laff potential of the '93 Rave Mix (I'm not even making this up) of *Cars*, or his unfathomable take of *On Broadway* (Gary as all-round-entertainer, y'see). It's time for a reappraisal of the Numan phenomenon, but why take my word for it? I'll tell you why. For the same reason you drink 1727 Cider; because it's cheap, accessible and, once you're immersed in it you wonder why you've spent years and a small fortune on all that expensive continental lager. Accordingly, I frugged along to my copy once, smashed it up with a hammer, superglued the attractive two-tone debris to my torso and hit the pshitt in search of a copy of that Visage remix. I suggest you do similar. **Neil Campbell**

RIBBON TEARS***Carnival Roundface*** (Goldfish)

"Take me higher?!! Come on boys, get a lyric!

MEDICINE SHACK *Fuschia Flame*

Gypsies!?! Red roses?! Fiery fuschia flames!?! My parents dance to this sort of thing when they get pissed at wedding receptions...

Milo F. Kelly

THE UPSETTERS & FRIENDS***Upsetting The Nation*** CD (Trojan)

Lee Perry's strange journey through life shifted directionlessly through the '60s until his fledgling Upsetter label began successfully and mushroomed in the U.K. with the help of Trojan. With Aston and Carlton Barrett providing a solid and innovative rhythm section at the core of Perry's sessioneers, reggae found definition and direction and the beginnings of the Bob Marley phenomenon. This selection of tunes from 1969-70 covers well Perry's various projects. It always brings a smile to my ears when I hear the mysterious veil of scratches, primitive mixing and off-centre vinyl cuts offending the Costly Disc's bluey whiteness. Not the reason 'Scratch' got his nickname which was down to later works of genius, this compilation is charming enough not to disservice His Master's reputation.

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Sufferers Choice:****Roots Reggae 1968-1973***

With a compilation featuring early cuts of Dennis Brown, Bunny Wailer, Cornell Cambell and Alton Ellis You can't go wrong. When it also features The Ethiopians, Bob Marley and The Kingstonians, it's sailing close to perfection, assuming of course these are the best cuts, and these are inna the prime rumpy stakes. The collection is bound by political undercurrents and a spiritual search for a progressive vision of Rastafarianism. Essential for all those in or near the know, and some of those out of it.

MEKONS *I Love Mekons* CD (Touch & Go)

One bunch of punks who really didn't know how to play their instruments through the early days of 'never been in a riot and where were you?' Here a decade and a half on it sounds like post-punk powerpop '79-81. Catchy and almost (bit not quite) back in fashion, having differing vocals on various tracks doesn't help it focus despite an infectiously winsome charm. **Christy O'Neil**

VARIOUS ARTISTS***Now That's More Like It!*** cassette (ANL)

BLAH!

Photo: Overarchive

A compilation of Nottingham acts produced by the Anti-Nazi League. Here are fourteen other reasons why you should go out and buy it now.

WHOLESOME FISH: *Rosy Red*

"When you hear a Cajun fiddle then you're nearly in the middle of the last gang in town." Wild, willing and wilfully thrashing about amongst a sea of wicked hooks. They jump through the speakers and swim round your brain.

CHAMPION THE UNDERDOG: *Up And Alive, Part One.*

Rebellion and rapture. With tails wagging they go for the jugular, imaginatively creating a reggae/rap groove and sidle, teeth bared, to the vein whilst simultaneously leading us to higher consciousness along a 7/8 two chord precipice.

KELLY'S HEROES: *Napoleon Crossing The Rhine, Dennis Murphy's, Jenny Linds*

An inspired and refreshing arrangement, recorded live, which gently won me over with its lively nature, cheerful disposition and subtle charm. "God bless, Jenny Linds!"

demolition:



HELEN EGG & ALEX CRUNCH

Photo: Anthony Fisher Photography

DR EGG & THE LOVE SPECIALISTS: *Come Together!*

Irresistible groove merchants Dr. Egg come up trumps with an instantly memorable track whose lyrics reflect the broader spirit of co-operation on this album.

THE LEMONS: *Crush*

Timewarped to late '60s California in the mellow company of The Lemons and the haunting presence of something I can't quite define.

THE MARCEL MARCEAU SOUND: *Go For It!*

An understated track peppered with subtle hooks which insinuate themselves into places other songs cannot reach.

CRUNCHBIRD: *Trouble Everyday*

Funkin' hell! Don't Panic! Listen to reason! He knows the score And sussed the urgency. This man's come to deliver the goods despite the mayhem. Let him through he's a Crunchbird!

UNCLE VULGAR: *Friction Of A Generation*

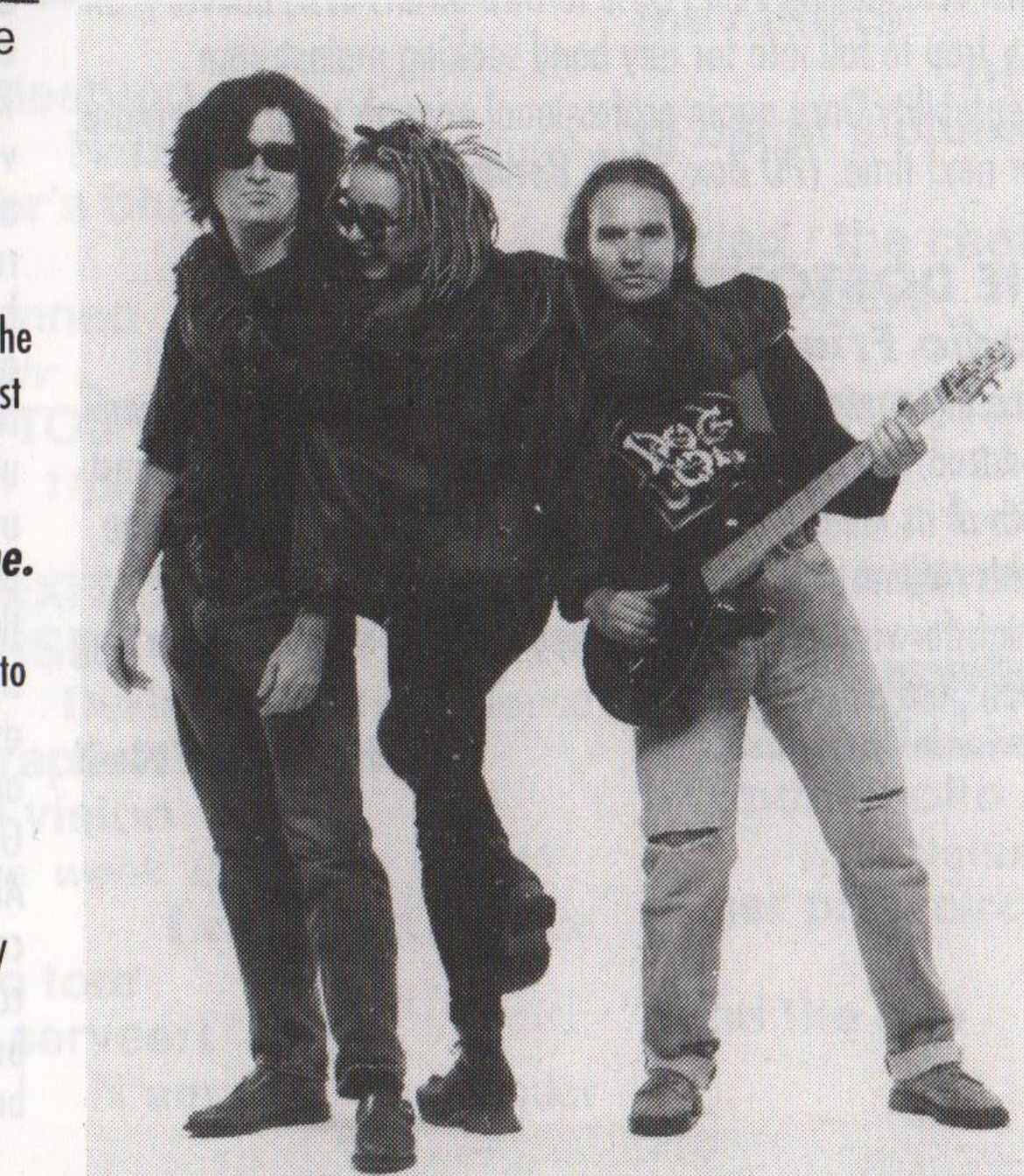
Pop-ska helter-skelter that speeds and stutters through an ominous landscape which looks a lot like home. It's time to move. Get out there and shake some action!

SHAMUS O'BIVION & THE**MEGADEATH MORRISMEN: *Early One Morning***

Amiable rogues inciting us to get our fingers out (of our ears), give it some serious stick, and revel in their rebellious irreverence. They mean business and their business is fun.

SEVEN LITTLE SISTERS***Will You Be Loving Another Man?***

A light-hearted romp through a redneck saloon where brawls are family entertainment.



MARCEL MARCEAU SOUND

BLIND MOLE RAT: *Return Of The BMR Five*

Go for your guitar and gallop along with the BMR renegade posse. Having seen their storming set when they visited Nottingham in October, I can't praise them highly enough. A personal reminder of high noon at Winns Common.

FEELERUB: *Zenmyasma Creature*

The best compilations always have a surprise in store and Feeleerub come form an unexpected angle. The intro knocked me off balance and quite casually tempted and bewildered me with it's enchanting magic.

PYSCHASTORM: *Space Age Travellers*

Dub reggae which drifts like motorway fog over across a stone circle forming cosmic apparitions and spooky ambience.

HELEN MacDONALD & PATRICK SPRAKES:***Strange Fruit***

Written by Lewis Allen in 1939, this song was made famous by Billie Holiday and Diana Ross. It's about racist murders in the southern states of America and lent its name to John Peel's record label. This is where the world stops and listens and as Helen and Patrick remind us exactly what it's all about. **Spartacus**

MIGHTY BLOW *Big Blow* demo

With more pedigree than Crufts Mighty Blow chose to demo *Big Blow*, a '70s cult clubbave by Manu Dibango. Not a real band, this was a one-off project to get a deal for this one song, here in two versions, a souly jazzy funky one and a dancey mix. Classy stuff produced by Gary Birtles. (0533 877134)

TALL demo #3

Tall have cleverly built an ivory tower on the plateau of progressive pop and will need rescuing by a knight in shining vinyl. (0533 702652)

HEADRUSH demo

This is brilliant, a brooding, hybridic funky dub, a Heads On Sticks for the nineties, with all the subtlety that Psychastorm never had, one flight ahead of Crunchbird. Other peers include EB & The System, the Co-Creators, Sub:Trance, Spithead, Crazy Beat Demons, AOS-3, C-Charge, Solid State Coalition, Spannerman, Wholesome Fish and Blind Mole Rat. These are some of what makes it such fun to attend live gigs these days—unsigned acts in the area! (0533 620611)

THIS BIG RHYTHM***Cosmic Groove/ Raise Your Hands.***

Two demos, five tracks, all ambient gallops, trots and canters, well above the average for the vinylised of the genre, let alone cassettes. Not quite frontline but I feel TBR will earn some respect. (0602 590677)

ANORAK LOVECHILD *Noise 'R' Us*

Exciting London trio with a fine set of ripsnorting, rollercoasting songs, soaring high above what is now commonplace guitar grunge. New and NOW. (071 281 2195)

absolutely folkall



Alan, Paul, Sarah, John and Justin: rattling good folk

THE RATTLED Turkey's Wattle cassette
Another branch of Derby's No Right Turn family tree with experience and some new(ish) ideas. The most immediately memorable is the twin lead guitar on *Long Way Down*. The general feel is of celtic arena rock—Runrig, Altan with hints of The Levellers, Thin Lizzy and the Oyster Band. Well produced, musicians of this pedigree can be expected to come up with more imaginative arrangements next time. Fine fiddling? Yes (0332 834438)

NEVERLAND Big & Round cassette
What have we here? A rock band with a mandolin player? Well, you know what we think about such blatant bandwagon jumping in Overland. Hah! An exception which quantum leaps to level 5 in the Sonic Wholehog stakes, by means of wit, charm, and sheer excellence, making rules redundant. *The Talking Tree*, *Stoned As A Wall* and the sublime *Doomgarden Jellyfish Blues* exist concurrently in universes of surreal gloom and shimmering power with Adrian Dent's (ex- No Right Turn) subterranean dredger voice suspended from Mick Doyle's skilful mandolin punctuations like a crucifixion in a gallery. Transcendent folk-pop of the highest odour.

LARK OF SEPTEMBER Modified Folk
Ever heard funny foreigners attempting rap, disco, or funk and falling hilariously wide of the mark—to our blinkered ears? Three guys from Hamburg churn out dreary folk with snatches of exquisite sax and keyboards a la Mind The Gap. Incongruous. The kind of crazy juxtapositioning I encourage. Two hundred gigs and a non-bedroom 4-track production could make this lot very interesting, the Wrik Mayall with a funny accent vocals I wouldn't miss. Spot on yet miles off. *Martin Verg, Beider Lutherbuche 12, 2000 Hamburg 54.*

KD LANG Even Cowgirls Get The Blues (Sire/Warner Bros)
Rare is the soundtrack album which doesn't beg barely stifled apologies for its inevitable compromise in execution but there are exceptions. You'll have guessed this is one of them if you've heard about KD Lang's enduring hotline to the muse. Effortlessly spanning decades and thousands of miles in differing styles and also taking the opportunity to record the kind of frivolity that might jar o another record, with Ben Minks' equally transcontinental and transcultural instrumentals. This is a soundtrack with no fillers, just that inevitably unparagoned voice, and the gift of anticipation for what promises to be the kind of movie that stays with you, nearer the heart.

CARIAD Is It Folk? cassette

A band of few moons, they obviously have the enthusiasm and ability to see a few more. It probably comes across much better live where, I imagine, their similarities to Simple Minds would work in their favour. In terms of production and arrangement they ave some work to do but with melodies and time o their side—who knows? Is it folk? (0332) 665123.

DA DOG Natural cassette

Fast becoming favourites in Nottingham watering holes the whirl over, this eagerly awaited living room version of the real thing, does not disappoint. Led by the fearfully fluid flute and fiddle leads from Nick Quigley and Derek Richardson across jazz-folk guitar intricacies from Steve Benford tripping gracefully around the percussive palms of Billy Adams. The kind of cultural cross fertilization guaranteed to get favourable reviews in certain quarters. Like the Chieftains meet Santana unplugged. (0602 625519)

THE TOM MARTIN/ SAM CORNWELL BAND Outsiders CD

A collaboration between Belfast's Tom Martin and Nottinghamian in Brum exile Sam Cornwell. This CD features auxiliary local folkies from the West Midlands and 21 short songs to justify the talents of two straightforward singer/songwriters. Martin has the rougher edge to is delivery while Cornwell has a pleasing delicacy to his voice, as they take turns to air their thoughts. Some worthy songwriting which occasionally veers close to Dire Straits in its delivery, an easy trap to fall into for any band seeking mainstream acceptability. Once again professional enough to promise more flair next time. (PO Box 2418, Birmingham B14 7HD)

THE DOSTOYEVSKYS

Radio Friendly 12" (Blood Records)
Some big names from the folk world involved in this one, well produced, but in compromising for a more commercial sound, much of its identity is diluted. Once again, it seems, the bane of this column strikes again: stick acousticity to some straightforward rock/pop and hope no-one misses the startling fusion. Radio nodding terms.

Christy O'Neil

JAZZ & ROOTS MIX

Nottingham Old Vic

Nottingham Congregational Hall

Now this is what you paid your council tax for, our benevolent council scouring the world for new and exciting sounds to undergo the discerning Nottingham music junkie's stringent whistle test. This season we've had cajun and zydeco from both sides of the Atlantic, in collaboration with Derby's Swamp people. There's been a smattering of jazz and a solitary African representation. Most of these gigs took place at the Old Vic, and given the dance angle on which some of these events are sold, it's a shame about the layout of that venue. In common with any other dance music, cajun/zydeco has hidden qualities, not appreciated until you are on your feet and into the groove. **Joe Walker's Zydeco Band** took the direct approach, the main man accordion-handed with washboard in tow, touring the tables one by one exhorting the recumbent clappers to discover the joys of the vertical, the discerning amongst whom realised that there's no arguing with a hat/suit combination natter than anything since *Gone With The Wind*. But much of this music disappoints in repose, lacking in the tightness and cohesion department so consummately employed at other events in the series. Which brings us straight to **Mick Jo Lusala & His Soukos Gang**, out of Zaire via London's fashion spreads, onto the beginnings of a solo career having worked under the wings of other Soukos luminaries. An insistently bubbling rhythm section underpins the shimmering, interweaving patterns so delicately woven by by the twin guitar leads, while Mr. Lusala and his partner in vocalese dance around each other with the shyness of a leg-loving dog and proclaiming "Mmmm—that is very good!" This theme was revived at regular intervals, while a pleasingly high proportion of those present were lost in a dance-trance of pleasure so deep that young Tories would have it outlawed and birched. Mmm—that is very good! Over at the Congregational Hall there's been some wild jazz courtesy of **Diango Bates & His Delightful Precipice**, and also **Edward Vesala's Sound & Fury**. Bates is a leading light in the London jazz scene along with Loose Tubes and others, his Delightful Precipice, a daunting array of goatees, arty specs and dinky ethnic hats, play a bewildering set of tempos and scales which shift with every bar. This would be quite a jarring experience if it wasn't for the slickness with which it is executed, although the finer details were veiled by the choral acoustics of the hall. Very impressive but personally I like jarring experiences, not smoothing out those awkward corners around which jazz exploration really turns. And so to Edward Vesala and his Sound & Fury. Leading from the drumkit with three sax/flautists, a trumpeter and a harp/keyboardist, rhythmic and tonal centres take a back seat as instruments and players are pushed to their barely logical limits. Diggeridation by means of circular breathing down a bass sax presaged a breathtaking variety of noises from that greatly underrated instrument, while harp and samples drifted eerily through a thunderously crazy musical ride that even the Valkyries would have refused on safety grounds. Mmm—that is very good! Back at the Old Vic another novel band layout, this time from Brittany, teased the mind's instinct to pigeonhole with **Ti Jazz's** two sax, bass and drums rhythm section driving crazed bombard and accordion melodies further round the bend. The same old problem of what is essentially a dance band playing to no dancers affected their enthusiasm, and while the musical arrangements entertained right to the end, by that time the edge had gone. There are some recurring points to this series of gigs, mostly venue related, but also largely down to the audiences. Even in an ideal dance or theatre venue, these shows are not going to reach their dizzy potential without our discerning music junkie bothering to look right under hir nose to find a variety and quality of music unchallenged by all other music events in Nottingham put together. There are dance movements untapped popular dance culture, and parts of the ear still unexplored unless you take a chance to discover. This city prides itself on its cultural standing, but pride comes before the last season of Jazz & Roots for most. Be warned, instead. Incidentally, the Old Vic's acoustics would suit better the jazz over at Castle Gate, while the Congregational Hall might make one heaven of a dancefloor, enough to knock the Fletcher Gate option clear over the Lace Market into the Ice Stadium. All of which strengthens the case for this city having a medium capacity, multi-purpose arts centre in line with its supposedly cultural standing; it would enhance the city's reputation and benefit all other venues in Nottingham. Mmm—that would be very good.

Christy O'Neil

fried circuit:



BLIND MOLE RAT appear at The Old Angel on Sat 18th Dec with **CHAMPION THE UNDERDOG**

saturday 11th

cap in hand lunchtime
uncle vulgar eve £1
Nottingham The Running Horse
crazyhead/ scum pups
£3.50 Rock City
JUBA Café Metz

national pop week Old Vic

not the strolling bones Old Angel

the haywains
The applicants
sundress
the melons
the vicarage garden
Heaven night with no name £3.50
Narrowboat

derek michaels
buhdha bros / dave king
Spin 2 Kool Kat

matz & wrighty upstairs
indecent downstairs
£5/3 Beatroot
john da silva Progress
Derby The Where House

alan barnes with the richard hallam trio
£5/4 Derby Jazz
Pymm's
ska boom Leics. The Charlotte

the razors
fincks detroit special Royal Mail

roger chapman & the shortlist
ruthless blues
mick pini band
£7.50 adv.
Mkt. Harboro' Wilbarston Hall

sunday 12th

mr. siegal
£1 Nottingham Running Horse
redstart Golden Fleece

pj baker's blues brand Filly & Firkin

murray thomson Nottingham Playhouse
the anaglypta quartet Filly & Firkin

alan parker
kevin eldon
boothby graffoe
Comedy Madness £3 adv. Rock City

brendan reilly lunch
reactivate eve
Radford Variety Club

crazyhead
fuse
menthel weapon
Stayfree Week £2.50/2
Leics. The Charlotte

jewellers eye Royal Mail

monday 13th

cariad
laura sleeping
£1 Nottingham Old Angel
pj baker's blues brand Filly & Firkin

the damned
£9.50 adv Rock City
MATT, TOM & BEN
Infusion 11pm £2.50/2
Cookie Club

MDC/ EXIT CONDITION
REVERSE Happy Mondaze
Derby The Where House

skyscraper \ aviculture
tunnel vision
Stayfree week £2.50/2
Leics. The Charlotte

buffalo tom
bettie serveert
N'ampton Roadmender

sponsored by



(0602) 784403

tuesday 14th

the pogues
£10 adv Nottingham Rock City
HIATUS Old Angel

world turtle
von daniken Filly & Firkin

folk blues & beyond Running Horse

joe / xscape
£10 adv MGM
garner & ross
julie Mcnamara
spring chickens Old Vic

anadine Beatroot

godsend / konfusion
drown Leicester The Charlotte
Stayfree death metal night £2/£1

arnold bolt
russ middleton Royal Mail

LEE EVANS Phoenix Arts Centre
chumbawamba Sheffield The Leadmill

wednesday 15th

the kage Nottingham Old Angel

wholesome fish Old Vic
£3/2.50 late bar
body count
carcass Rock City

psychogroovemothers
£10 adv Rock City
formerly Solomon Arboretum Manor

jet stream whisky Running Horse

thyroid speakers The Staircase

DIG THIS! Kool kat

create Filly & Firkin

the rattlers Derby The Victoria

pj baker's blues brand Bell Hotel

cariad / the chettles
dambusters £1.50 The Where House
headrush / kookaburra
Stayfree night £2/1.50
Leics. The Charlotte

notorious dawson bros Royal Mail

thursday 16th

hormone polio Nottingham Old Angel

finger print circus Narrowboat

mind the gap Filly & Firkin

Spin 1

Kool Kat
g.r.o.w.t.h.
zipper / atama
Stayfree £2/1.50

Leics. The Charlotte
taurea / calico joe The Royal Mail

wholesome fish Lincoln The Falcon

World turtle N'ampton The King Billy

REGGAE JAMBOREE The Roadmender

friday 17th

DR EGG
& THE LOVE SPECIALISTS Nottingham Old Angel

seven little sisters Narrowboat

Stumble Bros Old Vic

the razors Running Horse

the khan band £1
£2 Langley Mill Potters

FREnzy £4.50 Kool Kat

R cajun & the zydeco bros

£6 adv Swamp Club
Derby Post Office Institute

kissing upstairs
smashed downstairs
The Where House

marcel marceau sound Leics. Royal Mail

the dts
the lost soul band The Charlotte

R n B The Charlotte

roy wood N'ampton Roadmender

dina carroll £12/10 Sheffield The Leadmill

saturday 18th

blind mole rat
champion the underdog Nottingham Old Angel

juba Café Metz

big brother Narrowboat

cap in hand lunch
marcel marceau sound eve £2 Running Horse

atomic kandy Filly & Firkin

souled Matz & Wrighty upstairs
indecent downstairs
Beatroot

spin 2 Kool Kat

pete tong / dave seaman
allister whitehead Progress

Derby The Where House

R cajun & the zydeco bros

Swamp Club £6 adv.
Post Office Workers Institute

swirlmonkey Belper Queen's Head

diesel park west Leics. The Charlotte

mike khan band root

Royla Mail

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sunday 19th

five go off in a caravan
Nottingham Golden Fleece
tommy saville
second nature

jazz house Old Vic
back to the planet
£1.50 adv. Rock City
stan marshall's law

reactivate
Radford Variety Club

scubamaid
Derby The Where House
scum pups
headcleaner
throb Stayfree £2/2.50

Leics. The Charlotte
mental seizure
tubesurfer
grumble grinder

Royal Mail
gary glitter

Sheffield Arena
monday 20th

jam session
Nottingham Running Horse
pj baker's blues brand

Filly & Firkin
infusion

Cookie Club
the new cranes
cariad

Derby The Where house
sylvester the jester
Acoustic Club

Leics. Royal Mail
rubicon
(ex-Nephys) £4/3

The Charlotte
tuesday 21st

the rattlers
Nottingham Filly & Firkin
jam. session

Old Vic
folk blues & beyond

Running Horse
anadine

Beatroot
tallon

Ilkeston The Rutland
the new cranes
cariad

Derby The Where House
seismic ring

Leics. Royal Mail
wednesday 22nd

clint bestwood & the mescal marauders
8pm -12 £2.50 / 3.50

Nottingham Arboretum Manor
the men they
couldn't hang

£8.50 adv. Rock City
jazz juniors

Old Vic
kelly's heroes

Running Horse
feelerub

Old Angel
solid state coalition

Hippo
wilko johnson
Derby The Where House

world turtle
rog patterson
Leics. The Charlotte
band with no name
elysian fields

Royal Mail
thursday 23rd

mind the gap
Nottingham Filly & Firkin
laura sleeping

The Old Angel
madasadam

Narrowboat
john cooper clarke

Old Vic
jazz in the box

The Box
spin

Kool Kat
flying saucers

Radford Variety Club
swirlmonkey

Derby The Garrick
tomato

The Where House
ab/cd
the honeychildren

Leics. The Royal Mail
friday 24th

crunchbird
solid state coalition
Nottingham Old Angel

mr. siegal
£2 adv Running Horse
dk / digs & woosh / russ
Bounce

Rocaderos
frenzy

Kool Kat
neverland
kissing upstairs

Derby Where House
notorious

dawson brothers
ian derbyshire band

Leics. Royal Mail
santa's beaver

The Charlotte
sunday 26th

DON JOHNSON BAND

Nottingham Running Horse
REACTIVATE

Radford Variety Club
platform four
stand

Leics. Royal Mail
monday 27th

pj baker's blues brand

Nottingham Filly & Firkin
jam session

Running horse
credit to the nation

the new cranes
rosetta stone

psychastorm
seven little sisters

£7 adv. 8pm -6am Rock City
infusion

£2.50/2 Cookie Club
SY /simon bassline smith

parks & wilson/ pilgrim
easy d & mc rush

BALEARIA '93
Marcus Garvey Centre

RAW PROMOTIONS presents
THE RATTTLERS + support
0332 834438
"The outstanding band of the day - absolutely brilliant!"
—John Shaw (Radio Nottingham)
"Essential slices of melodic new folk rock -
The Rattlers are arriving in style" — John O'Regan (Radio Limerick)
WEDS. 15th DEC : THE VICTORIA Midland Place, Derby
TUES. 21st DEC : FILLY & FIRKIN Mansfield Rd. Nottm

WHERE HOUSE PROMOTIONS present
the newcranes +Cariad
at THE WHERE HOUSE 110a FRIAR GATE DERBY
on **Mon 20th and Tues 21st December 8pm.**
£6 adv. (includes FREE adm. to nightclub till 2am)
Tickets available from Way Ahead/ BPM/ Where House

BUG and **THYROID SPEAKERS**
ROCK CITY
THURSDAY 30th DECEMBER
9.30 pm **Adm.£1.50**

HAPPY MONDAZE
Derby The Where House
the patch system
the obx / entourage

Leicester Royal Mail
parks / mister 45
kittison headcase
tim westwood
soul 2 soul

£7 adv. Starlite 2000
tuesday 28th

folk blues & beyond

Nottingham Running Horse
jam session

Old Vic
anadine

Beatroot
nightshift

Ilkeston The Rutland
jimmy's rhythm

Royal Mail
wednesday 29th

the fab four

Nottingham Old Vic
atomic kandy

£1 Running Horse
kennel club

Filly & Firkin
fabian's tale

Leics. Royal Mail
thursday 30th

wholesome fish

Nottingham Arboretum Manor
bug
thyroid speakers

Rock City
mind the gap



visual:

ANGEL ROW

10th-24th Dec
Mixed show
twelve days of christmas
8th Jan - 5th Feb
mixed show
Contemporary Aboriginal art
Southern Crossings Empty Land

BONINGTON GALLERY

10th - 29th Jan
Lottie hammer & stephen McNEILLY
The Margaret Bryan Award

CASTLE MUSEUM

till 31st Dec
modern classics
till 2nd Jan
mixed show
box art/art in boxes
sarah kirby
prints

ACFF CENTRE

till 31st Jan
vanley burke
Five years = a Lifetime
black presence in Nottingham

NOTTINGHAM COMMUNITY ARTS

Till 23rd Dec
mixed show
Our Work

OLDKNOWS GALLERY

till 23rd Dec
oldknows studio group
Christmas show
14th Jan-5th Feb
mixed show
Contemporary Figurative painting

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

john martin
Visionary Printmaker
8th Jan - 20th Feb
stephen cox
Sculpture and drawings

leicester city gallery

fifth annual open exhibition

LEICESTER PHOENIX ARTS CENTRE

mixed show
Strike A Light
10th Jan -7th Feb
peter duffy
Prints

DERBY MONTAGE

Dec 31st - Jan 31st
michael ormerod
Sates Of America
Dec15th- Jan 16th
colin wilson
Horizons

THEATRICAL

NOTTM PLAYHOUSE

kenneth alan taylor
Aladdin
17th Jan
licedei 5
The Clowning Comics of St. Petersburg
19th Jan
kokuma dance Co.
The Awakening
21st Jan
candoco dance co.
World Premiere
22nd jan
v-tol dance co.
32ft. per second per second

NOTTM THEATRE ROYAL

14th Dec - 10th Jan
john inman
Mother Goose

CLARENDON THEATRE

19th Dec
draupadi dance co.
Bharattya Vlatya Bhavan

DERBY PLAYHOUSE

11th Dec-22nd Jan
Mark Clements
Cinderella

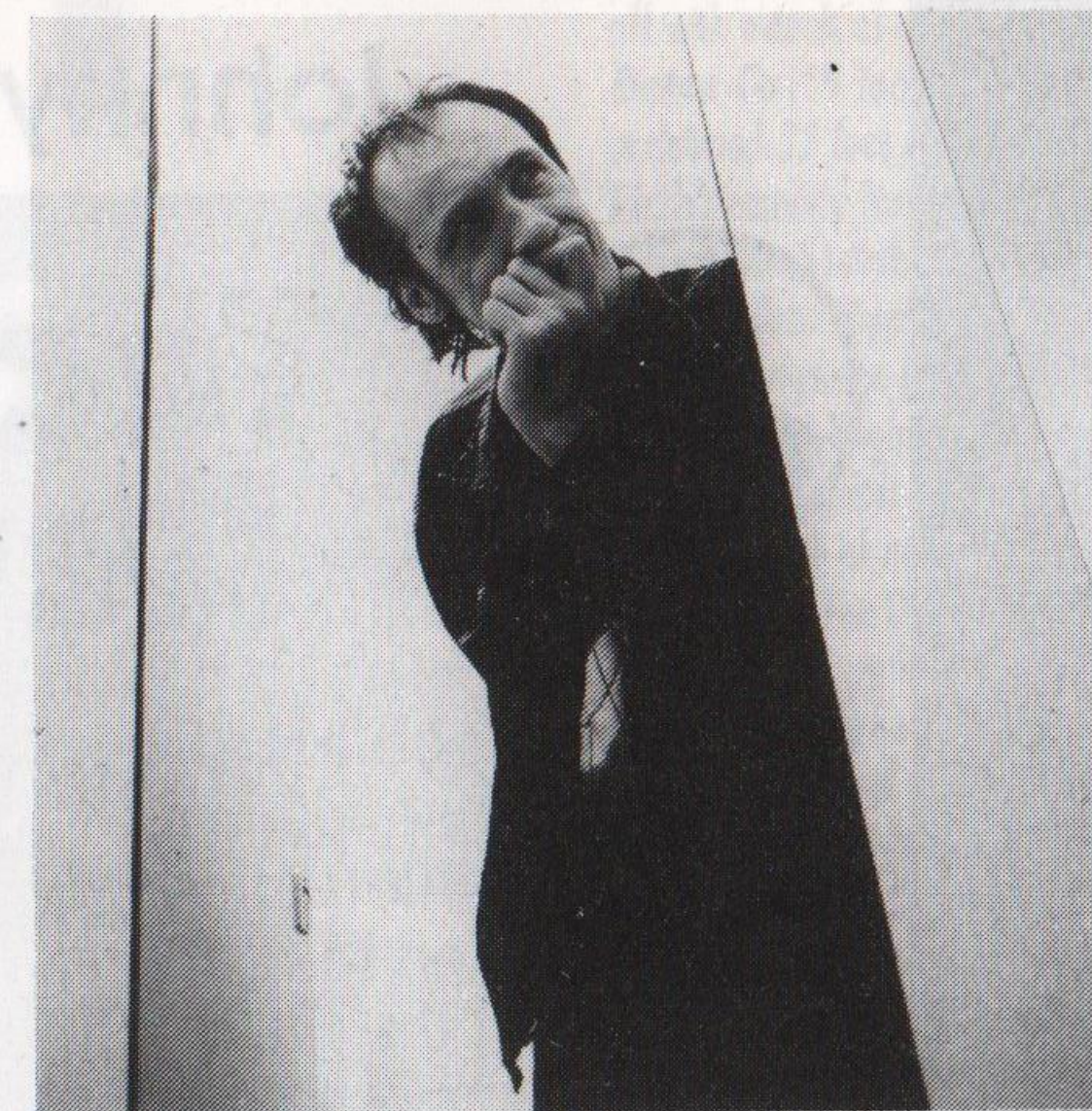
LEICESTER HAYMARKET

till 15th Jan
paul kerryson
Cinderella
till 15th Jan
Gavin robertson
The Thirst
18th -22nd Jan
pierre marivaux
The Cheating Hearts

LEICESTER PHOENIX ARTS CENTRE

till 2nd Jan
jez simons/jyoti patel
The Fire Dragon
14th Dec
lee evans
Jeff green

John Otway stops for a think at the Old Vic during his '2000' tour. Photo: Chris Olley



on the road with otway

by Alec Willetts
I jumped on the back of a truck, known by the rabble of misfits and winos as "Ol' Victoria". This gang were headed north as far as they could go, then south as far as they could go, then to Dunkerque. All in the name of music and alcohol. Seymour was the first to offer me his bottle, small comfort for a constant, never ending journey. In his early thirties, Seymour had

joined about two years ago and had yet to succumb to the chain-smoking lifestyle of the others. In fact it transpired that the band had all been accrued during a two year period.

John O. was ringleader. He mixed his natural overexuberance with the business sense of a company director. He performed for us. The others all helped and joined in. It was a ritual, a ceremony, an exorcism. John O. threw himself about and convulsed. It was somehow familiar. Though too young to join, I was fascinated by the punk movement. My parents hated it so I wanted in. Fifteen years have since elapsed and the gash in society has all but healed. But simply for the sake of neutered youth, John O. still carried its torch, potent despite being comedified.

No matter how humble the surroundings John was basking in glory, something that he hasn't done for years. For this journey was tinged with triumph; he would be in London in a few days and there was a reception waiting for him. A man who had brushed fame again and again and again, almost permanently consigned to the never ending list of also rans. Right now his little show was running dangerously close to its 2000th time of asking. He'd arrived by now and I had to talk to him; his reputation had arrived a clear five minutes earlier.

It was fifteen years ago that he had spoken of in the highest circles, when he was teamed with strange man Wild Willy B, a two man show playing vaudeville and Burlesque until a song "Really Free" hit the air. It seemed the world was his Oyster but in a freak accident he shot himself in the foot. Tenacity, always his saving grace, saved him from oblivion and since then he has been travelling the world in search of his lost fame. It was in Canada that he met his wife. "What the hell are you doing here," he said, before his flagging career took an unexpected turn for the worst and consumed his marriage in flames.

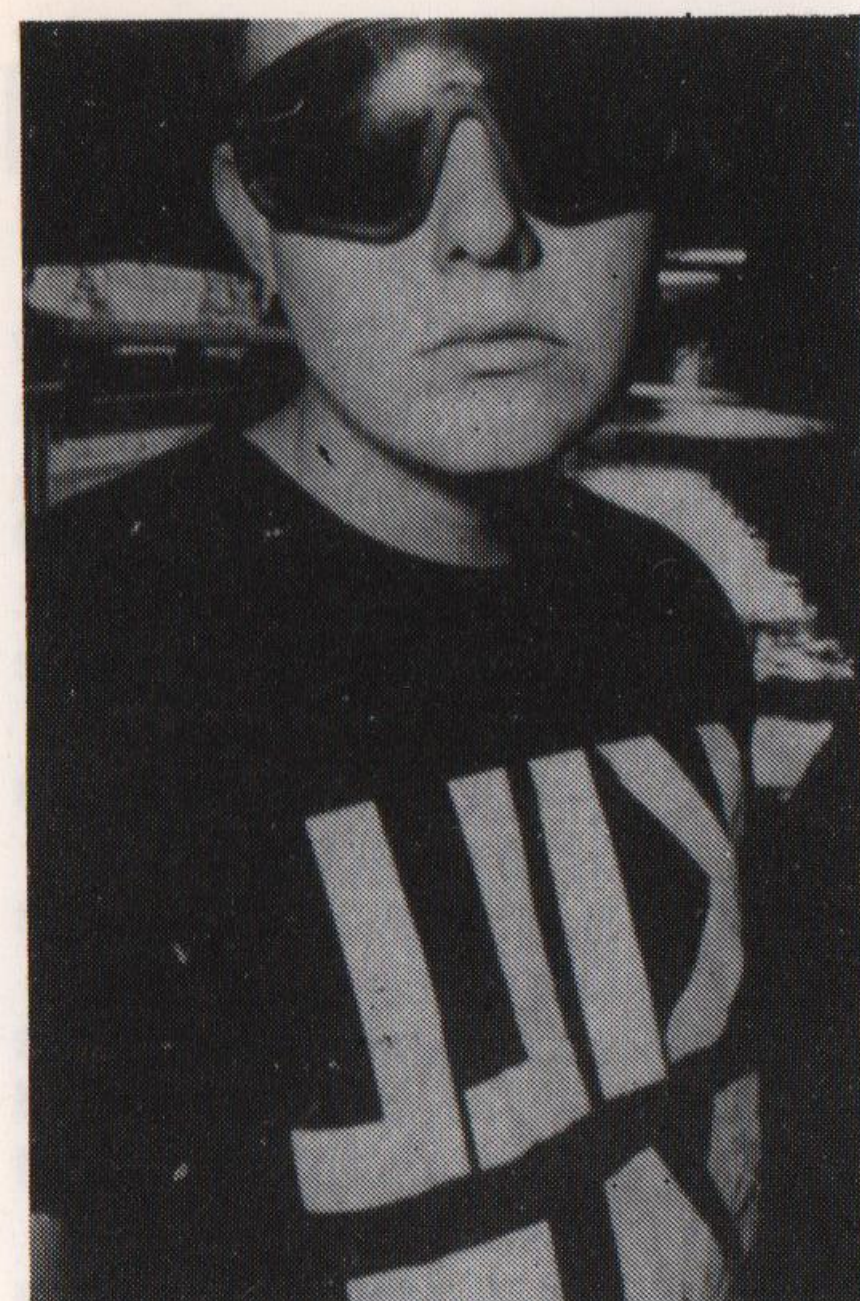
His wife gone, his partner gone, little was left but hope and determination. "Didn't you used to be on TV?" I asked him cautiously. But today he was high and the world was on his side. "I still am," he came back. "Have you heard of Wickes?...no, Wickes. Surely? Wickes? No?" Apparently it was an ad which he is in to be shown next year. Still the alcohol flowed. The conversation twisted and turned and we started talking about an old red guitar he once used. It had lasted ten years and he was obviously fond of it, having mended it so many times he had lost count.

"It was like tractor, or a piece of industrial machinery, you bash it, throw it across the stage, smash a mike with it and even if it broke a G-clamp and some quick-setting araldite would see it right for the next night." He paused, musing on his dead guitar for a moment, then added "...and it stayed in tune!" as if on a promotional roll, and still consumed by memories, "I smashed the headstock once, into four, took off the machine heads, a spot of araldite and it was up and running for the next night."

More beer. John O was an old hand at alcohol abuse and taught me well. "You just can't afford to take yourself seriously, 'cos we're only mortal after all. Somewhere along the line someone is going to come along and shit o you from a great height."

John O had seen to much to expect too much and even when he thought he had it made someone came along and shat on him from a great height. He recounted from his memoirs that a line had been omitted from his life's work. "...due to mutual disagreement, the band disagreed to split up." I love that line, and I argued for that line for a week, and in the end it was altered to "...due to mutual agreement the band agreed to split up." which loses its humour. Humour, it can be argued, has kept him sane. Alcohol and cigarettes have probably pushed him the other way. Women have driven him stark staring bonkers. Paula Yates, stood him up for more fame and fortune. Which he doesn't smart at too much, he simply seems to despair of the human condition. "She shouldn't have agreed to go out with me in the first place. I told her it would be the last time she goes out with a rock star."

"This is where I get off," I said, stubbing out another cigarette and downing the last of my beer. I bode them all farewell and hopped off the back of the truck, into the night.



Johnny Violent's

Techno Revue



Greetings Techlings!

During my absence from this page an interesting thing happened to me. I was sitting in the Filly And Firkin enjoying a quiet chat with my friends **Guinness**

and **Marlboro** when I was approached by a rather irate magazine editor, **Paul Overall**. "Techno, techno, fucking techno!" he shouted, drowning out the soothing tone of **Mind The Gap**. The room became silent as customers and barstaff alike listened for the ensuing confrontation. "That is not my name," I retorted smugly. "You know what I mean," Paul continued unperturbed, "this magazine needs banging-slammng-bass-bin-wrecking-hard-trash-motherfucking techno, not Penile McBall's column of wank. C'mon, Johnny, give me a list of your favourite tracks of 1993. Or are you too scared?" "I am not," I said, passing him a piece of paper. It read thus:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. DJ Frankie Bones | <i>Thunderground EP</i> |
| 2. Black And White | <i>The EP</i> |
| 3. Armageddon | <i>You'll Never Be Mine</i> |
| 4. Lenny Dee | <i>Fucking Hostile</i> |
| 5. Charley Lownoise and Mental Theo | <i>Verotted</i> |
| 6. The Euromasters | <i>Alles Naar KI Te</i> |
| 7. Brides Make Acid | <i>Peel Session</i> |
| 8. Koenig Cylinders | <i>99.9</i> |
| 9. Jurassic Park | <i>Film Soundtrack</i> |

"That's only nine. And Jurassic fuc. . ." Paul did not complete his sentence as his eyes began to dance as his entire body fell to the floor. It was left to his attractive companion, **Georgina**, to continue the accusations. "I hate techno," she said, "it's boring. Why don't you review some films instead?" "I hate films," I replied, "they're boring. Goodbye." I then went home to bed.

FILM REVIEWS

The next morning I contemplated my decision. Had I been too harsh? Perhaps **Georgina** was right. Perhaps I should review a film - but it must be the right film. 'Twas then the telephone rang. It was my mate **Kevin Bug**. Perchance the conversation evolved thus: "I am going to take you to see a film" he stated with intent.

"Yes, but what film are you going to take me to see?" I replied suspiciously.

"Well," he continued, "you've got a choice. You can either see **Naked**, which is **Mike Leigh**'s latest study of the plight of the working classes and the struggle of women therein. Or you can see **Hardboiled**, **John Woo**'s study of fast action violent death." Readers may not find hard to imagine my sexual excitement when I discovered the truth of Kevin's final statement. **Hardboiled** commences with a cold-blooded **Magnum .357** massacre, expertly shot with edits in all the right places.

Bullets penetrate every bodily area as the hero of the piece, whose name I forget, blasts the baddies and the baddies show heroic indiscretion as they blast members of Hong Kong's general public. The scene is set in a bar/aviary, thus leaving the viewer to decide which is more attractive—mass violent death on a gloriously destructive scale, or a budgerigar.

Yes! More please. And there is more. After 11/2 hours of foreign dialogue intercut with motorcycle-explosion-killing we are treated to an innocent-hospital-patient-blitzing-massacre. My enjoyment of this was so spiritually sublime that I feel unable to convey it on this page.

After the film had ended I praised God (RIP) and asked the usherette for a **Kleenex**.

"Would you like to see another film now, Johnny?" Kevin asked me.

"Definitely!"

"You've got a choice," he déjà vued. "You can either see **True Romance**, which is a study of fast action violent death or. . ."

"No choice," I interrupted.

True Romance is not as exciting as **Hardboiled**, even though scriptwriter **Quentin Tarantino** wants to be **John Woo**. However, here are a few of the highlights.

* Pimp and drug dealer Gary Oldman has a FIGHT with Christian Slater, who eventually KILLS him. This scene has a soundtrack of medium strength TECHNO!

* Slater's father, played by **Dennis Hopper**, is a very nice man—a role I have never seen Hopper play before, and probably won't see again as he is TORTURED and SHOT by the mafia in the film's opening stages. After another mafia member attempts to violate Slater's wife, a call-girl played by **Patricia Arquette**, who takes her revenge by BURNING him with a lighted aerosol can, WACKING him on the head with a heavy metal object and finally STABBING him with a corkscrew. Slater and Arquette carry a large suitcase of cocaine across America, whilst making regular pitstops for GRATUITOUS SEXUAL SCENES.

Once again the film ends with a gun-orgy-massacre but, once again, I can't be bothered to tell you about it.

Last Minute News

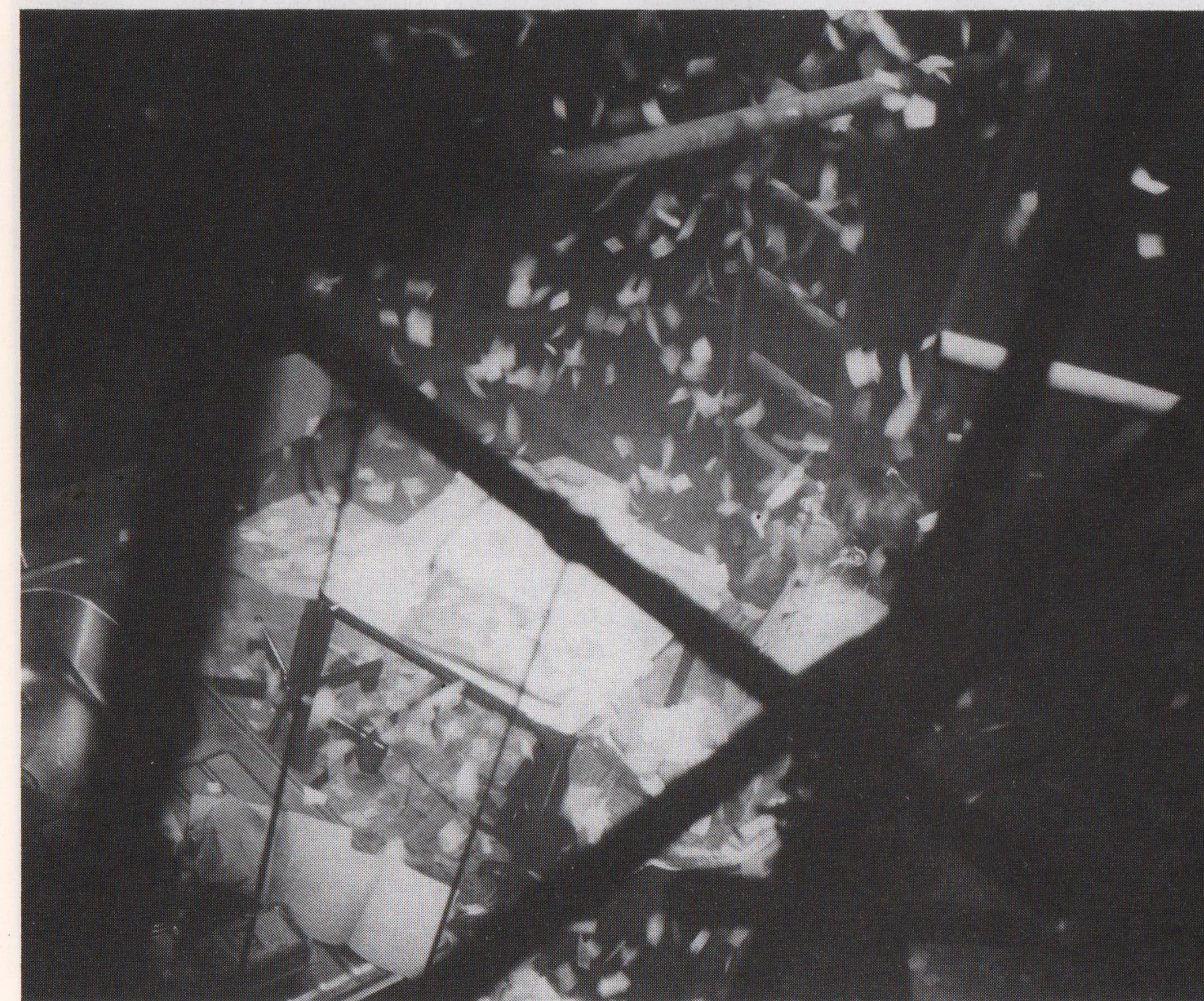
Today, the British chess champion received a shock defeat at the hands of **Grandmaster Johnny Violent**. The game transpired thus: **E2-E4, E7-E5, F1-C4, F8-C5, D1-H5, G8-F6, H5-F7.**

Jolly bad luck, Nigel.

See you soon, Techlings!

Photo: **Ultraviolence** by Jim Powell

visual



Now '93 Festival: A month of chaos.

The festival effect could be defined as an overdose that creeps in after seeing so much new material in such a short space of time. **Now '93** certainly produced this effect but held its own by virtue of variety and quality. It helps to hit the ground running and a very brief but startlingly intense display of punk pyrotechnics on bonfire night, when **Erik Hobijn** shot 40 foot pillars of fire into the night sky over Market Square, got the festival off to a fair sprint. The man was explaining himself on the Saturday, only to muddy the water further with film of his "Self-Immolation Machine" on which you too can have yourself torched and extinguished for that ultimate fairground thrill. Goose Fair next yea? **Forced Entertainment** from Sheffield followed with *Club Of No Regrets* at a promisingly packed **Clarendon Theatre**, and despite a few longeurs at the end (the last two scenes seemed to belong to another production entirely) this was an exploration of creativity that managed to be wildly entertaining whilst keeping the point (that stories come in many versions) firmly to the fore. A series of set pieces came around again and again, each time different, each time more manic and bizarre than the last. The sort of show that reminds me why I get so impatient with so much mainstream theatre, it stalked its own technical limitations with imagination and demented energy. **Semblance** did similar things at the Powerhouse in *Obituary* which had a girl called Tamzin justifying her life and loves to a stage technician with Godlike powers: use of music, costume and white fur (lots of it), interaction with video, projections and lighting, all served to keep the piece upright despite its sometimes fragmented structure. A duet with the technician on **Elton & Kiki's Don't Go Breaking My Heart** and a long conversation carried out entirely in old songtitles will remain with me for a while yet. The Old Shire Hall (soon to become a Law Museum) hosted a quartet of installations for one week only, at least two of which worked exceptionally well. **Tom Hackett's Stitch In Time** filled a room with ribbons stretched taut between floor and ceiling to conjure a fairytale forest or undersea ambience from minimal resources, whilst **Alistair McClelland's Am No** used the unsettling space of a graffiti covered prison cell to mount an eerie performance around two upturned greenhouses, a few shoes and candles and his own silent, unmoving presence. "Virgil Tracy", meanwhile, took our photos and fingerprints at the door, compiling his own **Big Brother Index**, and **Jordan MacKenzie** mounted a heckling video *Godwall* in the Old Courtroom... **Gloria's** show this year was *Night After Night Part One*, a more or less solo effort (with piano accompaniment) from **Neil Bartlett**, who on this showing must be one of the most rivetting performers on the circuit. He played at least 6 different characters besides himself and managed to draw all the nuance of a '50s West End theatre (with musical spectacular thrown in) from a chair, a mirror, a bit of red carpet and a few knick-knacks. If you get the chance to see this man in action (a "Dorian Gray" is mooted in the programme) then I suggest you take it. another

highlight was the **Wet Arts Company** and their visually stunning *Jonah's Living Room*. Jonah was a grandmother writing letters to each of her grandchildren in turn, but you could forget that (I did) and revel in the scaffolding set occupying the whole of Bonington Gallery, the wonderful visual effects wrung from lighting, torn paper, feathers and other mundane items, the screaming hammocks full of jelly sliced open to birth each child in turn to thundering percussion and the shafts of golden light streaming through the set as Julian & Iain (the Wet Arts duo) led granny to Heaven at the close. If they're doing this in second year Creative Arts, god only knows what they'll be capable of in five years' time. Definitely an outfit to watch. **Robert LePage's Coriolan** didn't quite manage to live up to the hype surrounding it, though given the amount of it flying around that isn't to say it didn't have its moments. Though difficult to follow given the erratic nature of the English surtitles, the 'slit' stage format was a novel focusing device which allowed for some memorable effects. A segment using marionettes for a battle scene, and a related gravity-defying one-to-one combat using mirrors were especially good, and although anticlimactic, it was a distinct improvement on the hapless *Crimes Of Passion* that preceded it. Designer theatre, like designer clothing, may be sold mostly on name and hype but can also (at least sometimes) be worth wearing. **Yum Loo**, a Nottingham based outfit, got through 70 minutes of *Mine* at Bonington Gallery with a manic energy that defied its essentially black viewpoint. A group of adults dressed as school children played a game of life (complete with scores) that began with pretend aeroplanes and ended in incest, rape and death. Whilst its points on privilege and power were a bit obvious, the piece had a twisted comic glee which made it an entertaining and refreshing show. Highly recommended... **Desperate Optimists**, three very laid back actors and midi-violinist Kaffe Matthews, created some very strange effects in *Hope* at Powerhouse. Distress flares, people with heads wrapped in newspaper, jerky home movies, video tableaux of dead hares, implements for attempting suicide and religious tack ran headfirst into Matthews' alternately gorgeous and disturbing music, bulletins from the Waco seige and homespun philosophy to create an inexplicable but memorable piece of performance. The highlight was a woman with her face whited out trying to scream her belief in hope over an overwhelming barrage of noise whilst a fluffy toy dog yipped absurdly round her feet - excellent stuff... **Kronos Quartet**, a US Classical outfit with attitude, got off to a slow start at the Royal Concert Hall before coming alive with the arrival of **Foday Musa Suso** onstage to play his own *Song For A Crowd*, beguilingly simple and still in my head a good 24 hours later. Thereafter things were going from great to better with **Gorecki's** haunting *Quartet No. 2*, another piece with Musa Suso (*Sunrise*) and an encore of Hendrix' *Purple Haze* transcribed for string quartet. A fine note on which to end the festival now that *Rhythms Of The Globe* has been postponed until next Spring. Here's to **Now '94**. **Wayne Burrows**

NEWS

Nottingham Playhouse has announced its Spring season. Kicking off with a week of dance featuring *Licedei 5* (17 Jan), **Kokuma Dance Co** (19 Jan), **CandoCo Dance Co** (21 Jan) and **V-To's** acclaimed *32 feet per second per second* (22 Jan), there's also **Tim Firth's** comedy *Neville's Island* starring **Tony Slattery** (27 Jan - 19 Feb), **John Steinbeck's Of Mice And Men** with **Joe McGann** and **Christopher Ryan** (24 Feb - 19 Mar), **Shaw's Pygmalion** with **Josie Lawrence** (24 Mar - 23 Apr) and **Peter Brook's** first production in England for 11 years, a version of **Oliver Sacks' The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat** (26 - 30 Apr).

Another piece of news is that **Now '93's Rhythms Of The Globe**, set to happen at the Old Station House on London Road on Dec 3, has been put back until next Spring owing to funding difficulties. The organisers are keen to point out that this is not a cancellation, and that the event will be taking place next March or April. Full details and precise dates will be available nearer the time. Watch this space...

Visual is inundated with Pantomimes this month: Nottingham Playhouse launches **Kenneth Alan Taylor's Aladdin** (3 Dec - 15 Jan), **Derby Playhouse** has *Cinderella* (11 Dec - 22 Jan), whilst the **Theatre Royal** has *Mother Goose* and **Leicester Haymarket** yet another *Cinderella*. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. Altogether now - it's behind you! Highly recommended right now is **Nottingham Castle's Box Art** show, treasure chest of bizarre and poetic objects running until 2 Jan. Half local artists, half London-based, there are two galleries full of... well, art in boxes.

Also upcoming is **Angel Row's Contemporary Aboriginal Art** show (Jan 8 - Feb 5) and **Oldknows Gallery's Contemporary Figurative Painting**, which features new work by **Denise Weston**, **Nuria Capdevila** and **Gurminder Sikand** (14 Jan - 5 Feb).

Finally, **Perrier Award** winner **Lee Evans** has a one-night stand at **Phoenix Arts** in Leicester on 14 Dec. Leicester also hosts its first **Comedy Festival** between Feb 12 - 19 becoming a "city of laughs" for eight days. **Norman Wisdom** and **Tony Slattery** are confirmed as patrons, and performers booked to appear include **Greg Proops**, **John Shuttleworth** and **Donna MacPhail**. Further details from (0533) 577813. **Wayne Burrows**

ANDY BARRETT My Nose

Now '93 Nottingham Broadway

With a combination of personal songs and hilarious, racy narrative, Andy Barrett took us on a journey into our own childhood, back to that deliciously optimistic perspective of life as a pre-pubescent. Giving an insight into his own physical and emotional development, bravely he exposed to some oh-so-creaky photo album snapshots projected screen-size behind him. He drew us into the child's psyche behind the "say cheese!" school portrait and the adolescent's pain as a tortured sixteen year old in love. Humane and touchingly true, we've all been there and know the pain of sticking-out ears, fat noses and faces that refuse to mature. Andy wasn't afraid to admit it. He probed, revealing to us a nakedness and a naivety of childhood thoughts with a warm and side-splitting depth of expression. More than anything else it was incredibly funny and left us itching for the sequel. **Jenny Elliott**

NOD'S DREAM by J.M.S. Asbury

(Jaz Books: ISBN 0952181509)

If a stroll through the Victoria Centre turns your brain inside out, and leaves you feeling like a refugee from Yellow Submarine who's just woken up on the dawn of the dead, then *Nod's Dream* is the book for you. If you are an eleven year-old with a fertile imagination, bored with being transformed into a homicidal maniac by **Chucky Childs Play**, or an adult with an equally fertile imagination, however you choose to stimulate it, then it's time to visit the land of Nod. *Nod's Dream* is the first publication of Jaz books. It is a book without words. The subject matter, as the title suggests, is the description of a man's dream after he has been administered a peculiar drug by an unscrupulous barman. The book uses the "stuff that dreams are made of" - constantly, sometimes irrationally, changing pictures, mostly in glorious monochrome. Before going to sleep Nod attempts various aspects of day to day life, playing video games, driving, watching TV, being hit on the head by policemen, that ind of thing. All in a warped state of mind induced by the mysterious potion. The 80 page brain-melting dream sequence itself sees Nod's subconscious imagination fuelled by memories of his chequered past, hurtling with tremendous speed from one bizarre scene to another, the images within the dream constantly reworking themselves and recurring in different forms, looping as visual samples. Comic format and expectations of it, are played with by the author as never before. It is essential reading in the tradition of head comic books. A black and white book for a world where nothing is that simple. Check it out, or give one to your granny and fuck her head up.

Charlie Cooper

Photo: *Jonah's Room* by **Ray Ashland**

FRIED ALIVE!



PAPA BRITTLE: Oops!

Photo: Jim Powell

PARALLAX / PAPA BRITTLE London New Cross Venue

Of course, this music is simply a game of two halves. I mean, you release a top record and score an early goal and perhaps manage a second before the live gig in the second half where you either run away with the cup or score a hat-trick of own goals. Parallax went into a ludicrously early lead with their first single — a storming acid take on that funky rock thang, which left all comers stranded, watching the replay. Then they go and field a crap team on their second release and miss the finals by a mile. Their only hope? Score at least seven in the live situation. Thankfully their rap metal angle takes a back seat as they limber up with rave 'n' roll anthems bombarding the opposition's goal. Sub bass turned high, they win the match. Think I'll stick to their live gigs.

Papa Brittle scored an early hat-trick with their singles and mini-album. An intelligent fusion of patchwork samples and rolling funk after a heavy session in a political correction unit, Basingstoke's second most famous sons looked set to hold the cup aloft. Then they went all heavy. Discovered their old Bad Brains and bludgeoned that guitar overload point live. With a rally of partisans cheering every anti-Nazi cry, applauding every anti-Conservative tackle and sympathising with each and every angle on the PC attack. Thus every shot at goal was slowed down by the attendant manifesto (itself amply supplied by the images projected between the goalposts. An embarrassing defeat then looked unavoidable as the otherwise charismatic frontman tripped over his own tongue and was forced to limp through the rest of the game. Amidst a barrage of political call and response he bemoaned the excessive use of smoke, "Turn the smoke off, it's like Auschwitz in here....." whoops that's not very PC, is it? ".....er, but without the consequences of course." Bollocks! they've been thrashed — by themselves. In future I'll stick to the records. Like I said, it's a game of two halves.

Martin Thomas

MOBY / ESKIMOS & EGYPT London Astoria 2

Eskimos & Egypt's shrewd invitation to Moby, not only to perform but also headline, created a buzz that honest Frank Stubbs might have described as "the hottest tickets in town". A line-up bringing together two acts who specialise in the art of genre bending. Eskimos & Egypt's with their marriage of grinding guitars and technopop overload, and Moby with his melting pot of progressive grooves, belting house tunes and hardcore anthems; the technopop overlord. Eskimos took the stage as if already playing stadium-size venues, giving the full, foot on monitor rock pose in direct contrast to their techno-driven groove. *GNR That's What You Want* with its Guns & Roses sample and Axl Rose put down is opened with a statement proclaiming those LA rockers to be "sexist, racist, homophobic arseholes.....it's a pity that they write such good songs." And this is where Eskimos & Egypt find their strength; in these days of image conscious paranoia, where dance DJs hide their heavy metal collections in their cellars (it's true—ask yer Dad) and musicians strive to be on the latest tip and renounce the immediate past as simply a temporary blip on the music scene, Eskimos just take everything they admire, regardless of its 'cool' rating, and blend it into their as best heard on the rap 'n' roll hardcore assault of *UK:USA*. Eskimos & Egypt create a pure rush of energy. Not quite rock 'n' roll, but what is these days? Over here to promote his Ambient album, the odds were on Moby playing a totally chilled out set of whale cries and birdsong. Not one to do the expected, instead he delivered a frenzied set of high octave bpm played as if he was the last punk in town, on a mission from God to kick life back into the western world. Imagine the telephone ringing chez Moby and the Omniscent Being booming, "Hey Moby moan, like things are getting boring down there with everyone turning into Jean Michel Jarre. Listen dude, it's like punk never happened. Get your skinny butt over to that shit hole called London and kick ass. Oh yeah, and tell 'em

not to eat meat 'cos it's too uncool." So, suitably ordained, Moby sprouted wings and flew across the stage. Flew from speaker to speaker. Flew high in the air pined to an imaginary crucifix by a strobe light and... OK, so he didn't actually fly, but at times, through the smoke haze and alcohol-blurred vision I could have sworn he at least achieved a high degree of levitation. Or perhaps he perfected the long forgotten art (on these shores) of pogoing so fast that you can't see his feet touch the ground. Playing a set which comprised most of his *The Story So Far* album including tortuously fast versions of *Go* and *Move*, he stunned the largely partisan crowd by strapping on a six-string axe to thrash his way through a storming rendition of *All That I Need* followed by a punked-up run through Joy Division's *New Dawn Fades*. Grown men were seen to cry, kids looked on bemused by this shit old rock song. What we wanted was techno techno techno techno, what we got was a punk angel playing psalms for the apocalypse. And yes, a few days later a spokeswoman for Moby assured me that he ca indeed fly. Moby—now with clever wings. Amen

Martin Thomas

THE CO-CREATORS Nottingham Filly & Firkin

Aren't drum solos boring? And aren't five guys playing a drum solo even more boring? THINK AGAIN! The Co-Creators tapped into the rhythm. THE RHYTHM, the rhythm of that track which always makes you want to dance. No matter how many times you've danced to it, the feeling is always immediate and spontaneous. It is on this fleeting ground that the Co-Creators set up camp and staged a festival. Everyone was spellbound. How can anyone pin-point one second and expand upon it for an entire evening without losing any intensity? Only by living that second over and over, each time building to reach an exultant celebration of simple, joyful expression. That is where the Co-Creators live.

Snowy

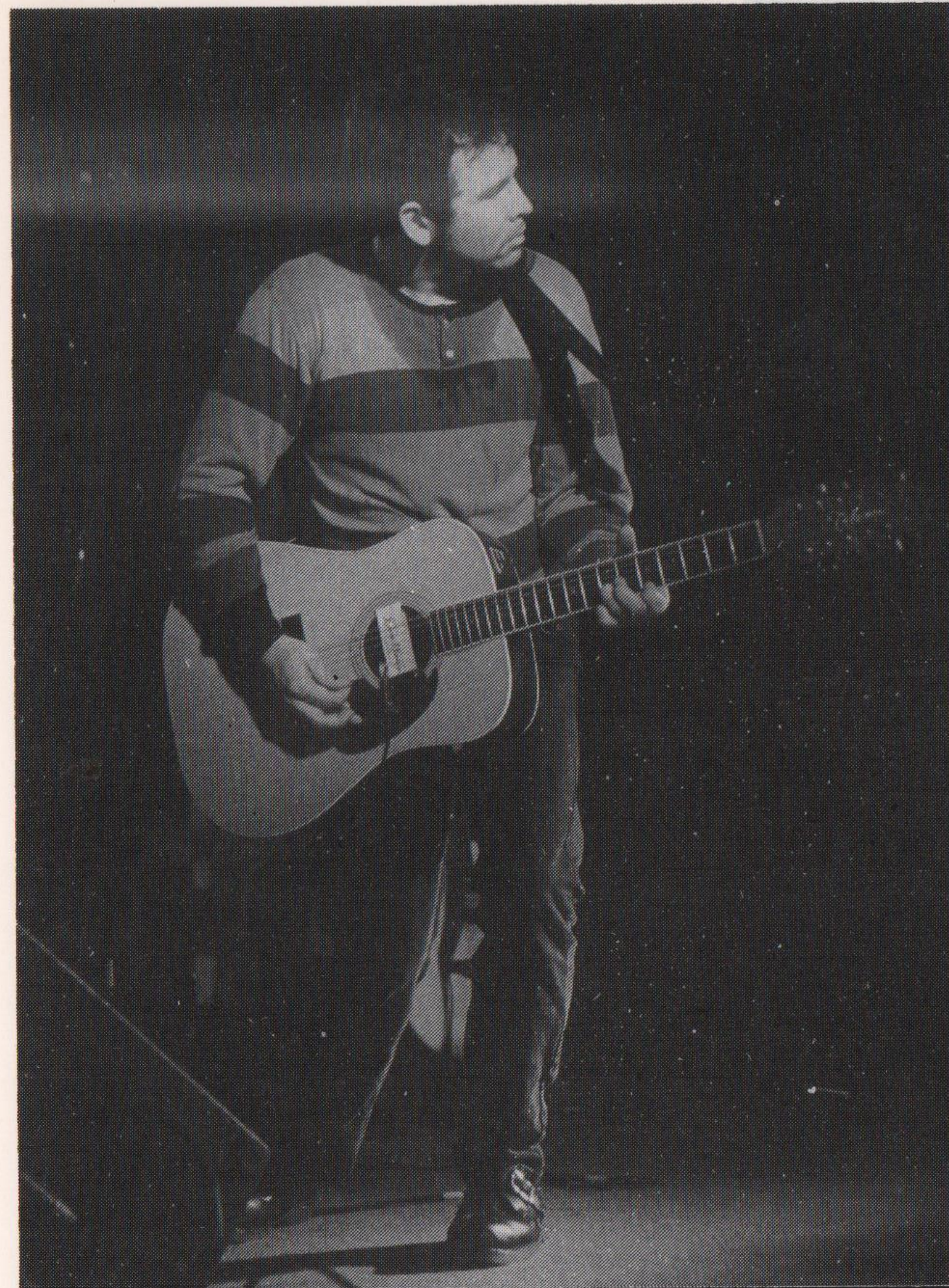
THE LEMONHEADS SOUL ASYLUM EUGENIUS Nottingham Rock City

A damn fine set by Eugenius, their sound was incredible (they were the loudest band of the night, and their songs, old and new, were played much tighter than on any other occasion that I've seen them. I look forward to their new single *Easter Bunny*. I first saw Soul Asylum back in 1946 at the Dog & Trumpet, Croydon. I was only six years old at the time, and they weren't much older. Let's just say that they were a lot better then than they were tonight. Their first two albums, especially *Made To Be Broken* were classics, produced by some sweet bloke called Bob Mould. Tonight though, I'm completely turned off. Too many supports with Guns n' Roses have turned them into a stadium rock band. This might work well at Wembley, but not at Rock City. Singles like *Runaway Train* may be fairly catchy, but so's gonorrhea. Anyhow, the Lemonheads restored my recently lost faith in music (recently lost during the Soul Asylum set). Their newly acquired pop-star credo, and their frontman sexy-symbol Evan Dando, don't detract from their performance this evening. They still rock out as they did back in the late 1950's, when I saw them for the first time (or was it the tenth?). Songs such as *Alison's Starting To Happen*, *It's A Shame About Ray*, *Come On Feel The Lemonheads*, are played with a verve that shocks in these anaesthetised times. Material from *Lick* and *Lovey* loses none of its raw immediacy. So Gram Parsons is their darling now, but punk rockers die hard, and it won't be a forty-eight track which finishes them off. This isn't a vinyl experience it's something undefinable which Soul Asylum have evidently never even imagined. Back in the 50's, they were a great band, I was first to see it, and I didn't shag Evan Dando. Later, in the sixties, when people took my advice and the Lemonheads became just that little bit bigger, I still didn't shag him. This time next year they'll probably be huge and, who knows? This time Evan might be lucky. Milo F. Kelly

SPIRITUALIZED MERCURY REV DR. PHIBES & THE HOUSE OF WAX EQUATIONS Nottingham Rock City

Jason Pierce, half of the Spacemen 3 divorce and founder member of Spiritualized, said that ideally he would have liked the Boo Radleys on this tour. Bearing that in mind, you can hear elements of the Boos within the organised chaos of Mercury Rev. The swathes of white-out noise, melody, unpredictability, soaring arrangements. But hell! they sounded sloppy and unrehearsed when compared to the 'tighter than Mussolini's necktie' Dr. Phibes. Why is it that Dr. Phibes either get bad press or no press at all when no-one has got a bad thing to say about them? Let's set the record straight. Dr. Phibes make music that makes life worth living. Waves of crescendo wash over you, the melody lilting, beautiful. From ambience it takes off and becomes a raging rock monolith. God, they did it again tonight; I was moved. Where were the audience though? At the bloody (inadequate) bar or sitting down with the booty of a previous foray. "They were pretty good," I overheard whilst eavesdropping. Faint praise be buggered. Dr. Phibes were awe inspiring. Mercury Rev came on (in every sense) one by one, building on a bass and flute harmony, roaring like a towering inferno by the time David Baker arrived, their music, studied AmArt rock from a stable similar to Sonic Youth, but tunes, so many tunes, all the time, three or four melodies overlain, and there is genius at work in "Something For Joey". David Baker, though, is a freak, and at times a little too histrionic as he adds his verbal wibbles and raspberries. I suppose it's alright if he is genuinely insane. You can't regard a Spiritualized gig in the same way as your usual gig. It is an experience. The tunes are picked from silence and crafted into pulsing soundscapes, the audience virtually lifted into the audio-visual morass. They have the ability to physically affect you, your heart and breathing synchronise to the throb, the sound builds, the lights become more frenetic, your innards tremble, your eyes bug. As it eases away to hush again you come down. Sounds like a drug! But Spiritualized the drug would never be allowed. Too addictive.

Alec Willets



GRANT LEE PHILLIPS

Photo: Chris Olley

mystic in an unselfconscious way, finding something they weren't even looking for. When this becomes premeditated, I guess they'll turn into Simple Minds. At the end of several songs the band are left looking at each other, half-awed and a little dazed at what they'd just tapped into.....Phillips shakes his head and mumbles, "wow, spooky music". He's not wrong.

Andy Catlin

JANE SIBERRY London South Bank Purcell Room

Jane Siberry is out there and I guess she's not coming back in a hurry. This isn't a gig or a concert, it's a 'sit-gather'. It's got a story, some videos, a Q & A session, even a few songs. Mmmm, your critical alarm bells should be ringing, but it slots just fine into her slightly spacey world. It's not just the content that's skewed, the whole format is curved out of an angle from the normal pop practise into a style that can accommodate her. Her take on life is refreshingly...ummm lateral. Some of her anecdotes make Kate Bush's improbable sound-bites look like they've come from the mouth of Rollins. But when you've got her pined down as an art-goof, she tail-spins all your emotions. She tells of a young boy with learning difficulties who appears in one of her videos. He's trying to explain why it gets dark at night and slowly he falls into a locked groove of "it's because there's no light.....it's because there's no light.....". Her voice cracks and fades away with the child's incomprehension and distress, dragging your empathy over bleak ground. The silence that follows is way too deep and fills with an Eitzel-like sense of catastrophe. The videos are impressionistic flashes of subtle eroticism and loss, all vibrant colours and bodies in motion. Siberry's visual sense is as intangible as here aural one, stylistically in the same vein as "Losing My Religion". The five songs are understated, fragile and infinitely sad. Yet she looks uncomfortable doing what she excels at, and leaves the coaxed encore of *Life Is The Red Wagon* as an infuriatingly bastardized sketch. She laughs along but I guess she'd prefer to be having root canal treatment. As a spoken word performer or a director she's confident, witty and self-deprecating. But she seems to fear what she's most accomplished at, as if showing too much of a private world will rob it of its power. Doubtlessly there is a vicarious soul-robbing atmosphere to every audience (why else would you be there?), but this lapsed too often into performance as veiled dissection rather than an expansion of her musical path. Quietly brilliant but not playing her strengths.

Andy Catlin

MOOSE/ ROSA MOTA NottinghamThe Narrowboat

Listen up, indie kids. If you are thinking of forming your own guitar noise band, go and see Rosa Mota before you do something you might regret. Rosa Mota have heard and loved Sonic Youth, Mercury Rev, Pixies, (insert your own favourite weird Americans) and in a truly sad attempt to appear "experimental" and "cutting edge" have donned their scuffed baseball caps back to front, ripped their jeans and turned their amps up very loud. All the rules are followed to the letter; vocals are shouted, arrangements are self-consciously awkward, melodies (if they can be bothered with them in the first place) are buried. Listen, the world is full (and has been for some time now) of indie bands whose one idea is to play loud, feed-back guitar. It is not avant-garde, it is more conservative than a grey suit at a John Major look-alike convention. Surely this copycat approach has now turned experimentation into just another genre, the new indie consensus. Oh, and one last thing: before you berate the audience for their apathy, please consider the possibility that your band couldn't excite a room full of hyperactive speed-freaks. Go out, buy a bark Psychosis record, listen, and weep as you consider the breadth of a truly original band's imagination. Three years ago Moose could have found themselves on the receiving end of the above tirade, but things have changed. Witness the chic second-hand shop suits, the beetle-crushers, the Brill Cream. This band has made an effort. Rather than jumping the latest bandwagon they have followed their hearts and brought their British indie perspective to bear on an unfashionable American genre — Country rock. The old Moose guitars are still in evidence but remain, thankfully, understated, allowing the songs to breathe. Chords ascend and descend with no thought in mind other than chasing that tingle up and down the length of your spine and massaging your tear-ducts. It's an old trick but Moose manage to make it sound fresh, and the the thought occurs: maybe they always had such god songs, it's just that now we can hear them. If Moose can achieve this in the Narrowboat, despite a p.a. that leaves most of the vocals unheard, then the least we can do is dump the old "shoe-gazer" tag and give them our open-minded attention.

Albert's Camel

JAMES TAYLOR QUARTET University Of Newcastle S.U.

I wasn't desperately excited about this gig, as I thought the James Taylor Quartet had gone off the boil lately. The alliance with Noel McCoy was a disappointing turn of events. I'm sure the record company realised that the cheesy Hammond sound wasn't getting them anywhere, so JTQ souled out. Songs like *See A Brighter Day* shifted units and deservedly so, but the shift was too severe. Granted their sound needed modernising: or else they'd be continuing to recite bad-ass '70s themes, and the Wrangler denim and turtle neck brigade won't be around forever. The deciding factor which influenced my attendance was the astounding ease with which one can sneak into the Student Union building at Newcastle. The door tax was £7.50, which seemed way too high. However, nobody was disappointed. JTQ played an outstanding set. They have rectified the balance and produced a modern street sound jazz. Noel McCoy And His Ego were thankfully absent, and the dance beats were toned down, with soulful vocals completing the band rather than taking over. This Newcastle date was played in the last week of a six-month tour, and it showed. Overwhelmingly tight, which you'd expect from this kind of band, but the musicianship was, in places, totally outrageous. When helped along by various intoxicants, such talent inspires a mixture of awe, sheer enjoyment, and a feeling that at this moment in time you don't want to be anywhere else. It was perfectly obvious that this was experienced by a few hundred others at the gig. Newcastle audiences are renowned for being responsive, but when three lengthy encores were extorted from the band, then I was surprised. The sight of the stage being invaded during the final jam finished me off. Being Derby born and bred, I became utterly confused and spent half an hour trying to grasp back a hold of reality. This sort of thing isn't supposed to happen at concerts.

Neil Riley

ALADDIN Nottingham Playhouse

Hot on the heels of Now '93 and a month of experimental theatre comes this, a radical piece of work from renowned director Kenneth Alan Taylor. This piece is a perfect example of interactive, improvisational theatre: not only are sweets and giant furry beach balls thrown into the crowd and pop-cultural icons Take That literally torn apart on stage, the piece consistently undermines its own "reality" by questioning the distinctions between the actors on stage and the characters they play. Thus we see Sally Ann Matthews questioned about her roles in other productions, and The Genie interrogated and ridiculed for his earlier appearance onstage as Chief Of Police. The audience is invited to interact with the happenings onstage by shouting and jeering, occasionally heckling, and the performers reply in kind. Surreal moments abound, references to TV culture and other theatrical (even film) genres are everywhere, and gender-roles are questioned and confused with an audacity that some may find disturbing: Love scenes between women, transvestism, role play and inter-sexual warfare — all are addressed here. Taylor's wilful, boundary-defying subversion of common theatrical practice deserves the engagement of anyone with even a passing interest in hybrid forms and cultural collision. To tie startling transgressions like these to such a popular audience is an achievement deserving of our fullest support. Oh yes, just in case I forgot to mention it, the whole thing was pretty good fun too.

Wayne Burrows



ALADDIN: What are we doing on this page?!

Photo: Gerry Murray

FRIED

ALIVE!

JOHN OTWAY BIG BAND MURRAY TORKILDSEN

Leicester Mosquito Coast

On reflection it is perhaps significant to find Otway playing a venue which resembles the set from *Swiss Family Robinson*. Otway is a castaway from the forgotten genre of punk rock. Whereas his peers made cash from chaos or by providing the soundtrack for a jeans commercial, Otway remains fiercely independent, constantly touring, trying to make a living on the back of just one hit single in twenty years of perseverance. The greatest hits compilation on sale simply reads: *John Otway — The Hitless Years*. Tonight is part of Otway's Gig 2000 Tour '93 culminating at the Astoria with his 2000th gig — an achievement to be admired.

We are first treated to a solo set by the Big Band's rhythm guitarist, Murray Torkildsen, playing early Billy Brag style. The youthful angst is there to be heard and the sentiments in the lyrics are of the 'either or' variety: either left wing pop 'n politics or unrequited love. But there is more depth in the Torkildsen repertoire than a simplistic one to one mapping may suggest. His voice is certainly more tame and easier on the ear than that of the Bard of Barking. More of a rustic Elvis Costello, Torkildsen introduced a number as "a little punk/jazz number." Pogoing with a swing beat is strongly recommended. During the brief interlude I engaged in a spot of sociological observation. Which social groups actually attend an Otway gig, especially on a rainy Sunday night in Leicester. My conclusions are that the 'two sides of punk' were to be found: the Crass/Exploited/Dead Kennedys variety, oily denim, Mohicans, a passion for strong cider etc. The perhaps seedier and more intriguing variety was the Civil Servant weekend part-time punk. You know the sort— after a couple of years Never Minding the Bollocks, suburbia beckoned along with a pen-pushing little number in the Department Of Transport. Usually found in small groups of two or three, sporting white shirts (no tie), spectacles and an obligatory bald patch. The two sides of punk do not join up.

The Big Band arrive to end this trivial trainspotting. Otway himself resembling a stuttering fairy, prancing and skipping round the stage, putting on a speech impediment to give the impression that he is genuinely embarrassed by the warm reception. He probably is. His music and lyrics appeal to the lowest common denominator grown up. Although the issues he sings about are quite intellectual and complex, he sings about them on a crude and simplistic level. Otway is renowned as a live performer, not that his gigs outstage his recorded output, simply he sells bugger all on vinyl or Costly Disc. He also has a reputation for applying his unique interpretation when addressing old cover versions. *House Of The Rising Sun* opens



up into an audience participation number:

"Where's this house then, John?"

"There is a house in New Orleans, oh yes..."

"What's it called then?"

"It's called the Rising Sun, now that you ask..."

Merit also needs to be given to the superbly tight Big Band. Originally assembled as a session group for a one off, the band has grown its own identity whose ethos is to provide a combination of professional backing for Otway's endless eccentricities, coupled with a 'take the piss out of each other' attitude, a task performed superbly, especially by the drummer who regularly appears from behind his huge Van Halen-like stack of drums. The whole performance is designed to keep the audience alert. My particular favourites of Otway's eccentricities include the feat of practising a forward roll whilst playing guitar and the encore for Headbutt which requires Richard, the much abused roadie to carry out that all essential act on the microphone. An evening of excellent musical comradeship and humour.

Tricky Skills Jase

TINDERSTICKS Nottingham Old Vic

Nottingham doesn't herald much commercial success in the music world, and as a consequence any successful musicians play down their Nottinghamness for credibility reasons (see, Stereo MCs, State Of Grace, Fudge Tunnel). Thus the return of Tindersticks to home soil brought out musicians and ex-musicians in force with a curiosity, admiration and a tacky voyeurism all in equal proportions. Tindersticks have been mixing with Nick Cave on a European tour and if nothing else, Stuart has certainly picked up his habits of non-hairwashing and the use of the drug-induced vacant stare for maximum pop-star appeal. It amazes me how 6 people can make so little noise— a gorgeously attractive trait that should be bottled and applied to rock guitarists at birth. The songs are presented like precious stones without any crass packaging so you can stare and wonder at their beauty without any distraction. The melodies are cajoled along by a frugal organ and a sparse piano, and Stuart's voice has a lethal lethargy that made me forget to buy a pint until well after the show was over. "We're getting into our natural flow," he says after a short break for a technical hitch. Yes, you are, I've never enjoyed anything this slow before— quick, send for the rhythm police! It may be the next day as I write but *Tiny Tears* is still whirling around my head and *Her* slapping me in the face lest I should forget. Thank God for Tindersticks, I've found a band that can make me unhappy. I these days when even guitar-bands want to make me dance and have fun, the Tindersticks can make me sad, longing, desperate and passionate, and keep me interested long after the gig sweat has dried. I don't want escapism, I want a stick to beat myself with, and I've found one.

Pete Bradbury

CHARLIE CHUCK

Leicester The Charlotte

The critics would have us believe that Charlie Chuck could best be described as 'Care In The Community gone horribly wrong.' I advance this theory one stage further and say Charlie Chuck is a characterisation of society spreading towards the millenium, out of control with a crisis of identity. Charlie is loopy. His rise to insanity is not a straightforward as it may at first appear — nothing ever is with Charlie. Having been initially de-institutionalised by Reeves and Mortimer, his therapy commenced with a session on the original Big Night Out tour. No improvement in the patient's condition. Glastonbury '93 witnessed a huge public recognition of Charlie's state of mind, the masses inside the comedy tent refusing to let him leave the couch. This was indeed a classic comedy performance for all those fortunate enough to witness this hybrid of the more extreme traits of Spike Milligan perfectly balanced with the darker side of Hancock. The ever so likeable James Whale saw the approaching bandwagon and placed Charlie firmly at the front of his side-show for freaks, providing the patient with the opportunity for wider group therapy as a guest Agony Aunt on his late night chat show. The cycle was finally completed when Vic and Bob returned to offer Charlie an identity change and wrote Uncle Peter into the script, introducing him to a sympathetic, not empathetic, outside world.

The crowd of curious onlookers at The Charlotte were not entirely sure what to expect. Charlie decides to employ a subtle act of abstract symbolism. Drums as Deconstruction of the Individual's Psyche. Carrying a dubious collection of drumsticks, probably more likely to be found on a bonfire, Charlie's assessment of the drumkit centre stage is that it must be an obstacle between him and sanity. As the drumsticks are removed from the Sainsbury's carrier, increasing in size one by one, there follows an anarchic public demonstration of how to demolish a set of drums and subsequently seek inner personal contentment. Private health care or what? I become concerned at the expense of the exercise, though — one drumkit per night and still Charlie is a cymbal short of a full percussion. What keeps such an intense performance cohesive is the constant availability of a counter-narrative. Whilst other comics seem intent on a constant delivery of lines, afraid to drop their front, Charlie is able to work many of his cult phrases into almost any situation. As his set progresses this feature becomes a heckler's delight. Imitation from the floor, however, is not recommended. A second rate copy of the original gesture is easily overpowered by the creator of the punchline.

An interesting interlude did occur with the introduction of Mr. Methane. Six foot six of wind and urine sporting bright green leggings, whose individual talent is the ability to produce flatulence on command. Not just the odd guff here and there, you understand, but the skill to control the frequency of the note and key changes. Non-believers were silenced by a sprinkling of talcum powder on the anus followed by a visible mushroom cloud filling the room. There was also an impressive little party piece involving lit candles. Tonight I realised that to perform comedy live is a more difficult task than that perceived by a crowd of pissed hecklers. Respect for Charlie Chuck, his live presence, his continuity but primarily respect for his originality and the intelligence required to develop such a character. Comedy is forever moving forward with fresh ideas and approaches being the moving force behind its development. Charlie Chuck has succeeded in addressing a taboo topic, and the potential to develop his character further still will be recognised as he falls deeper into the realms of mental instability.

Tricky Skills Jase

DR. EGG / HARMANIA

Nottingham Filly & Firkin

With no expense spared, Harmania were beamed into Nottingham from an all-night café noir in post futurist Bohemia. Refugees from the ravages of mercenary plagiarists, they brought out the little gem they had hidden under their coat, and gently offered us nourishing new noises laced with nuance. Rumours abound that they could return. With a bit of this, a bit of that and a hint of the other, Dr. Egg & The Love Specialists effortlessly coaxed me onto their therapeutic groovemobile. Moving out of the carwash and cruising between the '70s and '90s we put our feet to the floor, took in the view and blew away the cobwebs. An invigorating way to rejuvenate your soul. Check them out if you need a check up.

April O'Neil

GARY NUMAN

Mansfield Leisure Centre

"Neil, what brought you to see Gary Numan at Mansfield Leisure Centre?"

"Hasbeenism is obviously more interesting than isbeignism. Low quality has always been something that I've admired. I find Gary very reminiscent of Metal Machine Music as opposed to say, Transformer, I feel that's where his obvious talent lies. Y'know, cheap thrills, the usual. Will, why have you come down?"

"Over the weeks I've grown to love and respect Beryl, Gary's mother, over the phone so when the opportunity came up with a man who shaped my formative years I obviously went for it. The lure of seeing such a great man play M.L.C. was of course also a pull."

"What is it with this Beryl chick? Was she the sex-fisher who first cast a line and inadvertently caught the heart of your groin, albeit already snared by that backing singer?"

"Yeah, I guess I'd always felt for Beryl — an attractive woman with an overtly sexual motherly attitude. I knew one way or another I'd score something good tonight. But hey! What about the music? I can hear Are Friends Electric? hoot up even as we speak — what are we doing at the bar?"

"I'm just, uh, groovin' to the sounds of those glass panes rattlin' and that sound a-boomin' and a-bouncin' around the gym that is M.L.C. Yes, Lo-Fi can be found under the most unlikely stones. Full marks to Gary for encouraging Norm Tebbit's old dictum and employing North Notts. Cycling Club as his backing band. It's the best he's ever sounded. Like The Shaggs but kinda more 90's."

"Perhaps I can come in here and say I have not seen such a sad shambles of a guitarist since Iggy Pop at Rock City five or so years back. Gary is worth much more than this, his talent is a beacon that shines above the effluent discharge pipe that is, bar the singer, his backing band. Sure he's a fuckin' colossus that bestrides those decades marked "70's," "80's," "90's" as they pass beneath his mighty peritoneum. His songs have been lousurges of the purest utmost since I was that veritable tiddler tossing off into an old sock on a council estate in Corby (where, incidentally, he also deemed to manifest his Olympian presence on this tour). Why does he lumber himself with such a loserish band?"

"I agree, it's like saying that John Wayne really was the centurion at Calvary. My closing lines are fuck 'em. I dribble the jiz from my limp dick into the moustaches of every man in Mansfield. Gary Numan Is Jesus."

Neil Campbell and Will Irvine



OYSTER BAND THE RATTLERS (pictured) Nottingham The Old Vic

These poor Oysters really must be wondering when the world will finally be theirs. The band who pretty much spearheaded the late eighties revival in English folk/roots (Cooking Vinyl/Bragg/Pogues et al) only to remain in relative obscurity, have seen another generation of travelling rogue folkers seemingly reel in and hog the limelight. Over the last decade the Oyster Band's approach has developed from guaranteed-all-night-good-time-stomp into the sort of meticulous, crafted roots-rock songwriting that garnered widespread acclaim for such albums as *Deserters* and the new *Holy Bandits*. The band were preceded by The Rattlers, whose genuine sweat and tears inspired the audience to give their folk 'n' roll mix of covers and originals some equally honest applause.



DANNY & THE DOO WOPS / RAGING SLAB Nottingham Rock City

It was a long four years from when I'd first had my head ripped open by Raging Slab's eponymous debut album, one of the best since *Appetite For Destruction*, to standing in front of a crowd of three to four hundred, jaw swinging like a road-house sign experiencing a "Better Than Life" boogie through the best show never to have happened in 1972. It was obvious from the lack of movement behind me that this band were unknown to the majority; a name above a rave review, an album seen but never bought, victims of the atrocious musical conservatism of both the buying public and DJs notoriously reluctant to break a new band. It was balls Raging Slab were out to break tonight, looking more '70s than the '70s could ever have been, joyously cracking through the tightest set this side of ex-label mates The Black Crowes. A set which, powered by such stance and attitude changing growlers like *Dig A Hole* and *Don't Dog Me*, transported the crowd to some fabulous truckers bar in a mythical Never Never Land south stateside. Heads nodded, feet moved and, glory be, glasses raised to the slide guitar dexterity of Eleyse, the ultimate rock 'n' roll hard-

But the sense of anticipation for the headlines was immense, even though they ambled almost anonymously onto the stage. *Granite Years* was the opening salvo of an awesome ninety minutes which saw the group trawl deep into their own back catalogue, as well as stamping their indelible mark on covers of *Love Vigilantes*, *I Fought the Law* and *Bells Of Rhymney*, the latter preceded by a John Jones solo vocal version of *Coal Not Dole*. Jones was amazing; his soaring voice never faltered all night, and he whirled his melodeon over the stage and into the audience in a passion frenzy. Chopper on bass/cello and the maverick Scot, Ian Telfer, on violin were flanked by Lee, subtle and swinging on drums, and the wonderful Alan Prosser, a real guitar hero still waiting to be crowned.

The recent Holy Bandits recording was heavily featured, with the joyous *Here's To You* and *Blood Wedding* tempered by the more sombre strains of *Gone West*, *We Shall Come Home*, and the sublime roots-pop of *Cry Cry*. They were roared back for encores, and with the whole Old Vic swaying to *Rose Of England*, we all reluctantly threw in the sweat-soaked towel. Any admirer of the musical scope of REM to The Levellers who has yet to taste the Oyster experience is to be pitied yet envied. For in albums such as *Deserters* and *Holy Bandits* you will find the sheer depth of songwriting treasure that can enrich and revitalise a life. like the beginning of a new love. And they need you now, more than ever.

Gareth Thompson

nosed street bitch. And, boy, pretty with it. *Geranimo* led us into the final fifteen minutes of the set, a fifteen minutes which made sure that all those who came ignorant of the band went away with their name firmly branded in their memories. And it was over. No more Never Never Land (turn right at the second star and straight on till the Mason-Dixon line), we were back in Rock City and about to embark on another musical mystery tour, still within the geographical confines of the USA, but further north and west.

We were headed for Chicago, but a windy city equally as unreal as any border town inhabited by the DNA Cowboys of the Raging Slab Gang. But since Jake and Elwood are out of town a new crew are minding the soul review. Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls.....Danny & Doo Wops! The same suits, the same goofy good time soul humour— hey, it's *Reservoir Dogs*! And the playing was sharper than Mr. Blonde's razor. Danny (late of Thunder) tickled our ears and ribs with a retro riot of '60s and '80s kitsch classics, culminating in a riotous version of "Shout" which had each and every one wearing the same big dumb party animal grin.

Karen and Pete Knifton

SUPERCHUNK

Leicester University

"Sorry, the show sucked," apologised guitarist Jim after Superchunk's set supporting Teenage Fanclub.

"No it didn't at all," I replied.

"It did — what about when my amp fell down in 'From The Curve'? And Mac's sick?" Sorry, but I still disagree. I totally enjoyed everything they did, from the punky songs, the powerpop of *Precision Auto* and earlier single *Mower*, to the more mellow *Swallow That* and new single *Ribbon*. This North Carolina four-piece have certainly gained confidence and presence since their last jaunt over here in May. Mac jumps around with his guitar, returning to the 'mic when needed, Laura and her bass constantly pogo, Jim tries to keep it together while John, well he plays drums. The fact that there were a couple of hitches didn't bother the devoted, it only added to the experience.

Although they may not be 100% original or a new enigma, what Superchunk do (well) is fun with a serious side too — just because you can't make out all the words doesn't mean they're not worth something. "Sucked"? Nothing at all sucked tonight bar the reserved punters and the appallingly dire headline band.

Rachel Allen

Chris Carter

Part medicine show, part tent revival, part nuclear explosion, after three sell-out shows in London during September **Grant Lee Buffalo** returned to Britain to do a "proper" tour, and that means playing Derby. **Maria Kunica** asks singer/songwriter **Grant Lee Phillips** what happens **WHERE THE BUFFALO ROAM**



What's your aim as a band?

To get a good meal, electric blankets, a heated dressing room, to write lots of songs, play shows. See new parts of the world and play to a variety of people and do what feels right. Not a lot, hey?

Are there any major messages that you are trying to put across through your music?

No, but I feel that music is a medium that allows us to get together and throw around a lot of ideas and emotions. It is a medium for social interaction. It's tribal and primitive and I believe it's a universal thing.

What elements do you draw on to write your songs?

Anything, er....phone books, newspapers, television shows, the weather, anything that says something. Traditional elements such as those recordings or sounds we've heard that have no bearing on popularity such as, for example, workers hammering on roofs and stuff. Also the kinds of music our parents listened to as we were growing up and the kid of feeling that's in the air.

Were any of you in bands prior to Grant Lee Buffalo?

We met in the context of another band in the late 1980's. We've all played with lots of different bands. Joey as a drummer has played with the most bands out of the three of us. I once played electric bass in a marching band and I found a way of strapping an amplifier to my back. I realised I could do this with my bass and guitar and went round school doing it while everyone else was in lectures until they threw me out. That's a true story for you.

Would you ever release a live video or album?

We're releasing a live EP of our best stuff from a live performance at London's ICA. It's really good stuff, the best stuff from that evening. Our live performance is the best thing about the band; it would be nice to capture it on a video because we also go through a lot of changes and it would be good to capture us at a certain point on tape.

What difference are you finding between playing America and the UK?

In the UK more attention is paid while you're playing. In America going to a gig is more about getting drunk and picking someone up. I think it's more common to go to a club in the UK rather than a gig to pick someone up or get drunk. Whereas in America a lot of gigs are in clubs anyway. Which is weird. It's better the way it works here because you can get through some of the music which is quite dynamic to the people rather and not to drugs.

What's your favourite drink?

Lucozade mixed with Jack Daniels. I call it Jackozade.

Do you prefer baths or showers?

There was expected showers o the way here! I usually like to take a shower lying down with the plug out naked in the middle of the room!

afterall:

DO RAY ME LO FI FAR TOO OLD

Lo-Fi? The shape of new things to come? Sounds not unlike the series of tapes and tours perpetrated by the original drummer of Here & Now. Going under the banner of *Fuck Off* it gave the world such long-forgotten sub-genii as **The Nasal Surgeons**, **The Box**, **20th Century Box**, **My Personal Box**, **Personal hygiene**, **Nagasaki Twist**, etc. etc. All of them related in some way related, not unlike the **A Band**. All of them decidedly Lo-Fi. Even **Alternative TV** were involved in a small way with their *Vibing Up The Senile Man* LP. This all happened way back in 1977 and I loved it, but then I was a fifteen year-old youth with an overwhelming desire to make a noise. All of the people involved are now in their late twenties early thirties—just like the a band and, I suspect, the perpetrator of the **Lo-Fi Revue**. As for it being a reaction against the techno generation, well it seems that the main movers of the techno world will never see thirty again. **D.I.Y.**, **The Drum Club**, **The Orb**, **Fluke**, **Youth**..... a list that could go on for pages, are all ex-punks who themselves were not against a bit of the old Lo-Fi in their time. So are we to surmise that the latest thing in 1993 is a bunch of old punks still reacting against each other in a desperate attempt to remain young and relevant? There is of course a fundamental error in this observation. Not all Lo-Fi musicians (sorry, if this is an insult.....no, I'm not) or techno are by any means ex-punks with Zimmer frames on order. The point is simple. Lo-Fi ain't a new thing. I wish it was because I'm bloody sure I don't want the same faces to pop up in another twenty years, writing articles, or even editing magazines. But then again, at least I'd still be in work.

.....and finally, surely I'm not the only person to notice that Pooka, whose desperately Lo-Fi LP on Warners was reviewed last month, were the same people that used to turn up at every Creative Arts party and insist on playing a few of their tunes. The very same duo who would assault strangers in the Arboretum with the joy of song. The same two 'moonchildren' who would support just about anyone, anywhere, any time, causing much amusement to the bands who were definitely going to get signed up at the time (**Dr. Egg**, **Weirdbeard**, **Crunchbird**—hang your heads low, and that includes me, obviously). Now look at them. The other night I saw **Pooka** on TV being interviewed alongside a whole host of ex-punks, including **The Drum Club**. If punk aimed to kill all hippies, why did no-one spot these two. But then again, they can afford as many portable mono tape recorders as they want now, and I'm sure the same cannot be said for **Compact Yoguit Machine**, who probably like to go to drama school or something equally ego-ridden.

Martin Thomas

MUSTARD BEEN SOMETHING HE ATE

News reaches us that a certain local "Lalandlord" and cult leader (shurely "hard-working publican" —Ed.) is planning to unceremoniously remove all pots of mustard from his bar at lunchtime as a sign to his followers that the very thought itself of the condiment should be banished from their minds. This will come as disheartening news to local lads Mustard Rock who were hoping that a simple name change to "Dijon Mustard Rock" would get them in. Sorry lads, maybe "Wholegrain..." or "Olde English..." will do the trick.

Dreadlocks devalue dosh

Furthermore, to prevent infiltration, and in an effort to encourage smaller audiences for similar top local bands, the same lalandlord has developed a technique for on the spot DNA testing which shows conclusively that one person's dosh is not worth the same as another's. Interesting concept, still, the management reserves the right.....

Ruby

POLITICALL

Respect to those who have been consistently campaigning, forewarning, and trying to stop democratically elected fascism from being a reality in this country again. Perhaps the shock of the BNP winning a seat will jolt a few heads and give the "It could never happen here" brigade something to work on. In The Midlands, levels of street activity leading to death and serious harm are increasing, lots of fools are feeling happy, so watch your backs people. Times are hard and they're getting harder but we've got to be strict about protection, strict about our freedom, about knowing what's going down on the streets. It's so very easy to be OK in your group of friends and have a clear policy of being nice, and that's fine when you are dealing with nice folk, but we're not. D So we've got to be sensible because we're dealing with thugs and fuck ups now. If you believe, and I really hope if you read this kind of magazine that you do believe, in free expression for the greater good of mankind, art for the stimulation of debate, and free association to sow the seeds and help harvest the crops of our individual cultural progressions, then your time for positive action is here. Talk to people! Especially if you think they might be at risk from extremist happenings in your area. Don't just keep your head down and stay out of it. Just because you're not into politics doesn't mean you should be last on your street to notice the Hitler youth fitting Chieftain tank parts on their mopeds!

P.M.