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ISSUE # 58

THERE IS A SMELL OF FRIED ONIONS



PIC: SEAN O'HAGAN FROM

THE HIGHS LLAMAS

PLUS DIGITAL HARDCORE

FRIED ALIVE THE LONGEST NIGHT/BLUR/DAVID DEVANT & HIS SPIRIT WIFE/MARK THOMAS
FILMS THE ICE STORM/THE WOODLANDERS/IN THE COMPANY OF MEN/LUCIE AUBRAC/TITANIC
ALBUM REVIEWS IN THE NURSERY/GUY CHADWICK/LONG FIN KILLIE/MALI RAIN/PIZZICATO FIVE

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firstofall

So, Hollywood has finally jumped on the Carpenterwash bandwagon with *Boogie Nights* and Polygram are quick to follow with a series of releases of classic seventies bands with collections of **The Ohio Players**, **Womack & Womack**, **Cameo**, **Barry White**, **The Gap Band**, and so on. All due for release this month on the Spectrum label.

Also dusted off for the young generation's new found fad for the old and put into a Polygram package is a collection of **Jimmy Webb** classics *Someone Left The Cake Out In the Rain* including **Glen Campbell** (*By The Time I Get to Phoenix* and *Galveston*), **Donna Summer** (*MacArthur Park*), **Johnny Mann Singers** (*Up, Up And Away*), **Dusty Springfield**, **Scott Walker**, **Joe Cocker** and more. If you're young enough to think they were all written for tv ads, there's a reminder of more recent times in *And I Just Can't Get Enough*, a collection of—you guessed it—New Romantics with **Heaven 17**, **Spandau Ballet**, **Adam & The Ants**, etc., stretching things as far as **Landscape** and **Bow Wow Wow**. And if you just can't get enough nostalgia *This Is More Northern Soul* is Vol. 2 of Tamla Motown rarities to mark that label's 40th anniversary. All three are out in Feb on the Debutante Deluxe label which also plans to release collections of Bob Dylan classics. The times they aren't a-changing...

Marcus Garbage
A more modern fad is Speed Garage and Nottingham-based collective **Groove City** intend to bring you plenty of it. They have a weekly Friday night at Golds in Leicester beginning 6th Feb. They also plan a Valentines all-nighter at The Ballroom, Nottm (14th Feb). The new sound of the UK Underground (apparently), Speed Garage is also known as "Raggage". So I guess if you were to throw in a bit of Gabba you'd end up with a new sub-genre called Garbage, and when it gets knackered into the mainstream it'll be called Handbaggage.

Black catalogue
Xenon is a new video label launched this month. Fed by parent company Xenon Entertainment Group in the USA, which has the largest single collection of Black film under one roof, it promises a catalogue of films as wide and diverse as Black life itself. The first set of releases will be the original Blaxploitation movie *Sweet Sweetback's Baadassss Song* by rap pioneer **Melvin Van Peebles** whose soundtrack became the debut album by **Earth Wind And Fire** once made mandatory viewing for all Black Panthers by their leader Huey P Newton; *Dolemite*, starring the original blue Black comedian **Rudy Ray Moore** as a nightclub entertainer and featuring an all-girl army of Kung Fu killers! Moore, whose career began in 1959, was the inspiration for a new generation of black entertainers including Eddie Murphy, Richard Pryors, Ice-T and a host of rap artists, and is renowned for his special brand of humour based on traditional ghetto stories handed down for generations. He performed much of his material in rhyme, often backed by music, which earned him the title "Godfather Of Rap"; and *Thug Immortal*, the real life and death story of one of America's most notorious rappers, **Tupac Shakur**, using original home videos, interviews and comments from friends and family. It's the story that the media never knew. All three are released at £12.99 each on Feb 26th on Xenon via MIA.

DiY's latest album is due out in April. It's one of funky, chilled out backroom bar and café beats and tasty mellow drum 'n' bass. At the time of

going to press the actual line-up has not been finalised but a sneak preview of a d'n'b tune sounds promising.

Flow, a Nottingham crew who put out no fewer than eleven tunes in '97 (anthems all of 'em mate) have just released a triple house pack on Lo Pressings. Recent events surrounding Flow which have reached the Overoffice bring to mind proverbs about glass houses and stones and business and pleasure... 'nuff said.

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VISUALL



THE WOODLANDERS

THE WOODLANDERS (dir. Phil Agland)

In this adaptation of Thomas Hardy's novel childhood sweethearts Grace (Emily Woof) and Giles (Rufus Sewell) are reunited when she returns from finishing school to the small rural community of Little Hintock. Her father Melbury (Tony Haygarth), a self-made timber merchant believes she can now do better than a plain woodsman so entreats her to marry the attractive young doctor FitzPiers (Cal MacAninch). Soon after the honeymoon, however, cracks begin to appear in their happiness with FitzPiers being wooed by a wealthy widow and Grace's old feelings for Giles resurfacing. Finally and predictably events lead to tragedy and death.

Director Phil Agland, best known for his award-winning documentaries *Baka: People Of The Rainforest* and *Beyond The Clouds*, here makes a promising, keenly observed but low-key debut. His strength lies in a love of Hardy's landscape and the interaction between the characters and the countryside. One of the author's main theme, Agland's portrayal of a community and its everyday, hand-to-mouth existence is wonderfully evocative. Often, though, the plot rushes headlong to its conclusion, sacrificing minor characters and some of Hardy's inherent melodrama. Emily Woof holds everything together in a star-making performance that isn't extravagantly ostentatious but brilliant in detail and slow-burning intensity. It's not enough to convert non-believers but *The Woodlanders*, like last year's *Jude*, certainly won't disappoint Hardy's many admirers nor those of a more gritty period drama.

Hank Quinlan

At Broadway Fri 6th-Thurs 19th Feb and Metro, Derby Fri 13th-Thurs 19th March.

THE ICE STORM

dir. Ang Lee

From contemporary Taiwan in *Eat Drink Man Woman* through 19th century England in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, to 1970's Connecticut in *The Ice Storm*, Ang Lee is proving to be the most adept and versatile of modern directors. As an outsider he approaches the assorted subject matter with an honesty unburdened by excessive cultural baggage and elicits from his actors performances of rare warmth and humanity. This latest work located, as the title suggests, in a colder emotional climate once again balances humour with human drama, satire with sad, poignant tragedy. Based on Rick Moody's 1994 novel, the film is set on Thanksgiving weekend against a backdrop of Watergate cynicism, sexual freedom and bad 70's fashion, and follows two affluent but dysfunctional families.

Neighbours Ben Hood (Kevin Kline) and Janey Carver (Sigourney Weaver) are engaged in an unfulfilling, adulterous affair. His wife Elena (Joan Allen) suspects but is already on the brink of a nervous breakdown and their teenage children are about to quench their own carnal thirst. Between them all, open, honest communication barely exists, while behind the waterbeds and wife-swapping parties brittle relationships are irrevocably breaking apart. Kline, weaver and allen all excel in their finely written roles and the younger element (Elijah Wood, Adam Hann-Byrdm Tobey Maguire and especially Christina Ricci) add a disquieting dimension to their adolescent adventures. Throughout, Lee's control is exemplary, showing great sensitivity and slowly, subtly building up the tension. It's highly unlikely that his next project will be an eye-popping sci-fi blockbuster, but with his record, who knows? At the moment his talented touch is turning everything to gold. **HQ**

The Ice Storm blows into town from Fri 6th - Thurs. 19th Feb at Broadway, Nottm and Fri 27th March - 2nd April at Metro, Derby.



THE ICE STORM



IN THE COMPANY OF MEN

IN THE COMPANY OF MEN

Winner of the Filmmaker's trophy at Sundance, US director Neil Labute picks on anytown in America for a starkly authentic tale of about two office workers, Chad and Howard, sent to do a project out of town for six weeks. Good-looking, self-confident subordinate Chad (Aaron Eckhart), comes up with a plan which he persuades his technically gifted but serious and shy boss, Howard (Matt Molloy) to go along with. They will look for a local girl, a romantic conquest whom they can wine and dine and compete for during their six week stay, after which they'll drop her and leave all the better for the use of their female distraction. The unfortunate girl who ends up swimming amongst the sharks is brunette Christine (Stacy Edwards), an efficient deaf typist and a kind, gentle sort who deserves better. The attractive and brash Chad knows that he's a charmer and finds instant attraction from Christine even though he makes fun of her deafness behind closed doors. He's an interesting but disturbing character who talks dirty, bad-mouths colleagues and humiliates office subordinates, to the extent that you wonder whether he was treated badly as a child. Howard, his boss, although lacking confidence with women, nevertheless rates himself highly. Labute concentrates on showing their respective plays on the attentions of Christine, dividing the action into the six weeks of their project, as different stages of the wooing of the innocent typist. The outcome is kept under wraps but at all stages the action moves with a coldly believable manner towards an effective conclusion. Labute has come up with a provocative 'feelbad' thriller which shows how social graces are lacking in the selfish 90's. Whether any men will learn anything from this is debatable, but Labute is not interested in crime and punishment and, as he states himself, the end is more chillingly potent dished up the way it is. **MA**

Join In The Company Of Men at Broadway Fri 20th- Feb Thurs 5th March.

IN AND OUT (cert. 12 dir. Frank Oz)

In And Out was inspired by Tom Hanks' puke-inducing Oscar acceptance speech for Philadelphia, where he unexpectedly "outed" his drama teacher before several billion viewers. The resulting "romantic comedy", starring Kevin Kline as the unfortunate schoolmaster, therefore has an amusing set up but thereafter fails to deliver in either the laughs or social comment departments. It is interesting that Hollywood is finally acknowledging "subversive" subjects such as homosexuality but *In And Out*, like *Philadelphia*, seems really dated. Humorous clips are shown from the feature film parody for which Cameron Drake (Matt Dillon) wins the Oscar, a gay Vietnam melodramam in which Drake is dishonorably discharged from the army for owning a signed copy of the Bette Midler weepie, *Beeches*. **DG**

I WENT DOWN

A lively Irish road movie about a couple of bungling henchmen Git Heynes (Peter McDonald) and Bunny Kelly (Brendan Gleeson) sent to pick up Frank Grogan, a criminal associate of a Big Cheese gangster, Tom French, to whom they owe a favour. They think the job is a simple pick up until Grogan tells them that he's about to be bumped off and suggests that they make a deal. Irish director Paddy Breathnach's earthy comedy, taken from a script by Connor McPherson has pace. Likeable characters and a sparky script (littered with four-letter words). It's Tarantino-esque with a plot that involves greed, betrayal, double-crosses and a violent shoot-out. Breathnach will go on to better things on the strength of this, his second film. *I Went Down* won't be a landmark film, but a young audience will enjoy it as a breezy, black road-movie about shoot 'em up gangsters. **MA** Broadway Fri 27th Feb - Thurs 5th March.

KITCHEN

Hong Kong director Yim Ho thrilled audiences with his last film on release *The Day The Sun Turned Cold*, a harrowing drama about a son who discovers that his mother has killed his father and decides he must do the right thing and turn her over to the authorities. Yim Ho's latest effort *Kitchen* is based on Banana Yoshimoto's cult novel about the nature of grief and how it can be tackled through compassion and good humour. A Far Eastern variation of *Truly Madly Deeply*, it stars Yasuko Tomita as Aggie who, at the funeral for her last surviving relative, meets deep-thinking hairstylist Louie (Jordan Chan). Hitting it off, Aggie moves in with Louie and his transsexual mother. Aggie is then helped over the inevitable grieving process, coming to terms with change as death forces an alteration in circumstances. It's a witty, wistful tale of grief, romance and the release of human compassion between new-found friends. **MA** Get into the Kitchen Fri 27th Feb - Tues 3rd March at Broadway

SPAWN: ANGELA

Todd McFarlane & Neil Gaiman (Titan books £7.99 Feb 23rd)

The movie has been and gone without much fuss, although this graphic novel series remains an all-time best-seller. This off-shoot (Spawn of Spawn!) features the less than angelic angel from *Spawn: Evolution* who hunted and then tried to kill our reluctant hero. In this book, covering issues 1-3 of the Angela stories, the Elysian babe warrior is interrupted in her pursuit of a Sandalphon dragon, whose head she seeks for her trophy collection, by a host (apparently that's 333,000) of fellow angels who arrest her in connection with the incident involving Spawn. Which means that the Hellspawn must be brought to Heaven in order to bear witness at the trial of the angel who would be his death. It soon becomes apparent that there's more to all this than a mislaid dimensional lance and it's not long before, outnumbered a million to two, together they make a run for the glass walls and a long jump into the abyss. Having escaped the hosts of Heaven they now face the hordes of Hades... **Christine Chapel**



LUCIE AUBRAC

LUCIE AUBRAC

A fine French film set in occupied France during the Second World War, Lucie Aubrac conjures up a suspenseful tale based on real-life events pitting the wits of the local French Resistance against the might of the Gestapo. The story begins with an intricate operation to blow up a bridge in order to scupper the movement of German weaponry. In much the same way that the BBC's admirable series *Secret Army* concentrated on the elaborate plans made by the Resistance to cover their tracks, Claude Berri's film focuses on the hierarchy and planning that went into Resistance operations in the area. Central to the film, too, is the love shown between Raymond and Lucie Aubrac (Daniel Auteuil) and Carole Bouquet who show commitments to the Resistance as well as to each other. The capture of Raymond by the Gestapo brings to an end their happiness and from then on the resistance Network has to do all it can to keep the movement going and help Lucie in a daunting attempt to free him. Both Auteuil and Bouquet act with great conviction in their respective roles in this nail-biting slow-burner which keeps the tension high and provides an admirable and intelligent approach to the detail underpinning the Resistance's valuable work. **MA**

COVER STORY

THE HIGH LLAMAS

In 1980 Sean O'Hagan formed Microdisney in his hometown of Cork, Ireland with keyboard player Cathal Coughlan. Almost a decade of songwriting and recording followed, with three albums on Rough Trade before they signed to Virgin in 1987. They toured extensively, famously supporting U2 on a major tour that year, and even flirted with Top Fifty singles success. But Microdisney was destined to remain a cult phenomenon and a final album was released in 1988.

In 1990 Sean's first solo album entitled *High Llamas* (after a magazine picture of a Victorian hot air balloon), a collection of vignettes and demos, was released by Demon records, foreshadowing the direction Sean's songwriting was heading. It was also the first time he sang on any recordings other than backing vocals.

By 1992 Sean had adopted the name The High Llamas for a fully-fledged four-piece group. A mini album was released on Plastic records showing Sean's emerging pop sensibilities, the now trademark soaring harmonies and pumping melodies, although at a time when grunge still ruled it was considered 'experimental' pop. Soon after its release Sean took time out and was recruited into Stereolab, initially to play keyboards on a UK and US tour, although he has since appeared on all subsequent Stereolab albums in a variety of roles as musician and arranger.

Working with drummer Rob Allum, guitarist John Bennett, Microdisney bassist Jon Fell and multi-instrumentalist Marcus Holdaway, who still make up the High Llamas today, Sean began work on the songs which became the highly acclaimed *Gideon Gaye*. NME called it "a small but perfectly formed dream"; and Dave Cavanagh in Q concluded that "it was not only the best Beach Boys album since 1968's *Friends* but it is 1994's word of mouth cult hit." Word indeed spread and the Boo Radley's asked Sean to remix a couple of their tracks. Mercury Rev took The High Llamas on tour and later in the year Sean worked with them on a Peel Session. As Sean's involvement with Stereolab continued and they recorded a sculpture inspired project *Music for The Amorphous Body Centre* instigated by the American artist Charles Long. A 10,000 cd limited edition sold out in a day.

In 1995 *Checking In Checking Out*, released on The High Llamas own label Alpaca Park, (via Sony records who also reissued *Gideon Gaye*) became an airplay hit, while additional tracks on the cd hinted at what was to come.

Among the contenders to sign The High Llamas at this point was Herb Alpert for his then new label,



Vive la Resistance! at Broadway Fri 20th - Thurs 5th March and Metro, Derby Fri 6th - Thurs 12th March.

THE COMPLETE BOOK OF SCRIPTWRITING

J. Michael Straczynski (Titan books £12.99)

Not for the casual dilettante nor those seeking that elusive formula for the perfect script, this indispensable nuts-and-bolts guide is aimed directly at the serious, aspiring, writing who possesses talent and persistence but little business acumen. Individual chapters on Television, Motion Pictures, Animation, Radio and Theatre include a brief history of each medium with analysis of their respective markets and future trends, script format, presentation, packaging and marketing, advice on plotting, characterisation, pacing, camera angles etc., and techniques for tracking down producers and agents. As an added bonus there is also a complete shooting script for an episode of *Babylon 5*, the TV SF phenomenon created by this book's author. Straczynski's writing is clear and informative, drawing from personal experience and cutting through the crap to help the ambitious novice progress towards professional scriptwriting status. However, for those residing on this side of the Atlantic there is one major drawback; the entire book is based on America's indigenous industry and no concession or commentary is made for any other country. Constant reference to the Writers Guild of America and its trade agreements, and the repeated advice to move to Los Angeles may be well meant but are of little relevance to the average Brit. Flawed, then, but for those individuals concerned still a highly recommended read. **HQ**

TITANIC dir. James Cameron

An early scene in *Titanic* has Kate Winslet ask victor Garber, who is boasting about the sheer magnitude of the ship he has designed, what professor Freud might have thought about his obsession with size. ("Freud? Is he a passenger?" he replies) When James Cameron picked up the Golden Globe for best picture, he announced, "bigger is better." Need we say more? *Titanic* is a hulking Juggernaut of huge screen entertainment drowned beneath a vast, clumsy dollop of sugary Hollywood icing. Down on his luck, Leonardo DiCaprio wins a ticket for passage on the *Titanic* with a lucky poker hand. At the outset of the journey he manages to fall in love with a beautiful brit toff (Winslet) who is having difficulty coping with her rotten cad fiancé (an outstanding Billy Zane). Winslet is itching to bust down some class barriers, so DiCaprio teaches her to spit like a man; takes her to a booze 'n' brawl party below decks; and sketches her naked. The couple frolic about for a few hours, never too far from the possessive gaze of Zane. But enough becomes quite enough (this is a Cameron film after all). Slip it into 5th, bring on the iceberg and start spending some of that mammoth \$200m+! So towards the end of the multi-hour ordeal we get great 45-minute disaster/adventure movie, a kind of *Poseidon Adventure* with T2 effects, and it's all very exciting! Magnanimous emotions! Voluminous thrills! The Academy'll love it. **DG**

Almo. At the end of the year they undertook the yet more ambitious and this time better funded recordings that became the *Hawaii* album.

Released in the spring of 1996, *Hawaii* was a 77-minute epic, a pioneering record that painted an idiosyncratic portrait of early pioneering life in North America. The High Llamas' visual image was translated by means of instrumentation using massed banjos, trombones and strings and electronic music—all on the same record. A mixture of Hollywood soundtrack music, horns and easy listening,

Jimmy Webb song structures and Bacharach and Mancini inspired arrangements nestled together with great charm and originality. The plaudits came once again: "defiantly anachronistic and blissfully free of irony..." — NME; "A masterly work of verve and vision and class and taste" — Time Out.

1997 was a remarkably busy year for The High Llamas spending the summer recording a new album *Cold And Bouncy* for the new V2 label. Sean also recorded and collaborated with Stereolab's Tim Gane and Andy Ramsey on the instrumental experimental project Turn On released last summer (look out for a live appearance by the trio in Sheffield during April) and The High Llamas were the first ever to remix a Mouse On Mars track. They toured Europe with Pavement and supported Beck in London before finishing the year with a tour of the States where Hawaii has only recently been released to critical acclaim.

Early 1998 sees them on a UK tour with the release of *Cold And Bouncy*, an album with the same epic scope as Hawaii but with a more predominant electronic edge. Indeed the title refers to German electronic music and how the band were "struck by

the way it could be cold and digital yet also warm, pleasant and bouncy". As in all the group's recordings *Cold And Bouncy* represents a monumental communicative effort on the part of all the musicians in The High Llamas.

Catch **THE HIGH LLAMAS** live at Sam Fay's on Sunday 8th Feb. Tickets are £5 adv. from *Way Ahead*, Selectadisc and Sam Fay's. Credit card bookings 0115 912 9000. Support comes from **Scott 4** with their unique hybrid of avant garde lo-fi country, blues and progressive rock with spacey breakbeats topped with Stetsons.

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FRIED CIRCUIT

FEBRUARY 1998

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Derby The Victoria

BLUE PRINT / ALISON THEORY
Mansfield The Woodpecker

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The Golden Fleece

THE FOOTWARMERS
MIND THE GAP

SHADES OF BLUE
£2 The Running Horse

ZZ BIRMINGHAM
Derby The Dolphin

UNION
Leics The Charlotte

monday 9th

PRIMAL SCREAM
ALABAMA 3

THE OMEGA BAND
The Bell Inn

STOMP BROTHERS
£1 The Running Horse

ACOUSTIC ROUTES
The Golden fleece

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jam session

CAUSE FOR ALARM
FREEBASE / INNER CRY

AMELIA / THE KIDS
Leics The Charlotte

tuesday 10th

SUGAR & LUST / BROMIDE
THE CHIHUAHUAS

THE SHOD COLLECTIVE
£2 Nottm Sam Fay's

MARTIN BLUES
KULE JAZZ

MARIN / BLUE PRINT
THE PLASTICS

BOB WILSON
THE TEDDY FULLICK QUINTET

ARNOLD BOLT
Derby The Dolphin

OXYMORON /SHORT & CURLIES
The Victoria

THE DANDYS
The Loft

wednesday 11th

DJ PABLO / DEEP JOY
Nottm The Maze

STYLUS / MIRACLE DRUG
The Skyy Club

MIKE SAUNDERS QUARTET
The Old Vic

ESPIRITU
The Bell Inn

COLIN STAPLES BLUES JAM
The Running Horse

AERIAL / MOGWAI
£5 adv Derby The Loft

thursday 12th

MOTHERSHIP
Nottm The Maze

WIDE-EYED WONDER
Rock City

THE HAMSTERS
£6 adv

GUNS N OATCAKES
Mansfield Fat Sam's

THE UNBELIEVABLE TRUTH
MINI THIN / CHRISTINE LEVINE

FACE DOWN / SEIZURE
SOUL QUAKE SYSTEM

friday 13th

DC FONTANA
Nottm The Maze

SENSATION
Dubble Bubble

THE VINYL YEARS
The Old Vic

CLONE
The Britannia Inn

FARLEY JACKMASTER FUNK
Quench

CHAOS UK / SCREAMER
Derby The Victoria

OXYMORON / SHORT & CURLIES
Leics The Charlotte

saturday 14th

THE SHOD COLLECTIVE
3pm Nottm The Golden Fleece

OUT OF THE BLUE
The Running Horse

SEVEN LITTLE SISTERS
The Maze

ZARABANDA
The Lincolnshire Poacher

ROADHOUSE BLUES BAND
The Britannia Inn

PLANET CAKE / PHAT J
Dubble Bubble

THE SHOD COLLECTIVE
midnight

NEIL MACEY
Giddy Up

DANGEROUS DAVEY E / EZ
THE BUBBLIN CREW

Groove City
Lenton The Ballroom

DARREN PRICE / BRYAN GEE
Fusion

SUPERCREEPS
ELECTRIC SOUND OF JOY

DOG THOMAS / CF KANE
Mansfield The Woodpecker

GWYN ASHTON
fat Sam's

A / 99 YEARS
Leics The Charlotte

DANNY RAMPLING
SEB FONTAINE

PITCHSHIFTER / BULLYRAG
The Leadmill

sunday 15th

ZARABANDA
Nottm The Golden Fleece

UFO
Rock City

THE FOOTWARMERS
JUBA

BEGGARS FARM
£2 The Running Horse

CROSS THE HANDS
Derby The Dolphin

ED & DENYZE ALLEYNE
JOHNSON

Leics The Charlotte

monday 16th

ECHOBELLY
Rock City

HARRY STEPHENSON
& FRIENDS

6 X 7
Skyy Club

THE OMEGA BAND
The Bell Inn

THE PROFESSIONALS
Derby The Dolphin

PALA
Derby The Loft

NIAOMI / AMBER
Leics The Charlotte

tuesday 17th

JOHNNY JOHNSTONE
JAZZ GROUP

KELLY'S HEROES
The Golden Fleece

KULE JAZZ
Langtry's

VELAVATONES / RESIN
The Old Vic

GRAHAM ALLDROYD
TEDDY FULLICK QUINTET

ZEPHYR 6
Derby The Dolphin

IRON MPNKEY / SKEEM
CONDEMNED SOUL

SLEEPER
Leics De Montford Hall

THE AUDIENCE
The Charlotte

wednesday 18th

MARK EITZEL
£6 adv Nottm The Market Bar

THE PHIL WARE QUARTET
The Old Vic

TWENTY-SIX RED
The Bell Inn

DJ PABLO / DEEP JOY
The Maze

COLIN STAPLES BLUES JAM
The Running Horse

STINKY / DJ PSYCK
The Skyy Club

THE FAB FOUR
Sam Fay's

thursday 19th

HARRY & THE GROWLERS
Nottm The Maze

BENNETT / DAYTONA
Rock City

LUGA
The Old Vic

THE HAMSTERS
Mansfield Fat Sam's

JUNO
Leics The Charlotte

SUNWHEEL
Derby The Victoria

friday 20th

ODDBALL
Nottm Dubble Bubble

THE RANDEES
The Maze

CONNIE LUSH & BLUES
SHOUTER

SHUT UP
The Old Vic

MARK CONSTANTINE
JACK & EMMA

AREA 51 / CYNICAL SMILE
10 INCH FREAK

Derby The Victoria Inn

ULTRASOUND
DAWN OF THE REPLICANTS

Leics The Charlotte

saturday 21st

THE SHOD COLLECTIVE
3pm Nottm The Golden Fleece

JOE FOSSEY
& THE SHAKEDOWN

£2
THE THREE DEUCES / TONY B

OASISN'T
The Maze

MIDNIGHT PUMPKIN TRUCKS
The Old Vic

SENDER / YOUNG OFFENDERS
HEN / LYNDIA

SUZU CREAMCHEESE
Giggle #12

SOULMASTER LEE
Northern Soul night

ENORMOUS / TOSCA
Mansfield The Woodpecker

MOVER
Leics The Charlotte

TONY DE VIT / MARK MOORE
Gatecrasher

sunday 22nd

THE THIRD EYE FOUNDATION
HOOD / JOHN SIMS

FANTASTIC SHOES
The Golden Fleece

THE FOOTWARMERS
BLUNT

CLUB O
Leics The Charlotte

monday 23rd

THE DEFTONES
Nottm Rock City

COLIN STAPLES & DOC
The Running Horse

THE OMEGA BAND
The Bell Inn

STORMY MONDAYS
jam session

ACOUSTIC ROUTES
The Golden Fleece

NIAOMI
MONSOON INTERNATIONAL

APARTMENT LOUNGE
Derby The Dolphin

tuesday 24th

NIL / FECAL MATTER
Nottingham Sam Fay's

THE SHOD COLLECTIVE
The Bell Inn

THE BEE HATCHERS
The Golden Fleece

KULE JAZZ
Langtry's

INFANCIE / BAZOOKA JO
PEOPLE FROM THE 3RD FLOOR

BEN MARTIN QUINTET
TEDDY FULLICK

TY GARNER
Derby The Dolphin

wednesday 25th

BOXED UK
exploring Dub

ESPIRITU
The Bell Inn

THE FAB FOUR
Sam Fay's

COLIN STAPLES BLUES JAM
The Running Horse

PECCADILLOES / JOLT
Leics The Charlotte

GENTLEMAN'S QUARTERLY
HOMELANDS

Derby The Victoria

thursday 26th

LAMBS TO THE SLAUGHTER
SELLOTAPE

SUGAR & LUST
The Old Vic

HORIZON
£1.50

LIMEHOUSE LIZZY
Fat Sam's

KOOKABURRA
BRONCO BULLFROG

PANIC / SPEED URCHIN
LIGHTYEAR

Derby The Victoria

friday 27th

EARTHLIFE
Dubble Bubble

BORDERLINE
The Running Horse

CATBOY
Filly & firkin

JURASSIC
The Old Vic

BEAN
The Britannia Inn

BILLY NASTY / ED RUSH
Fusion

SWING HOLIDAY
Leics The Charlotte

THE BEEKEEPERS
Derby The Victoria

saturday 28th

THE SHOD COLLECTIVE
3pm The Golden Fleece

DISCOVERALL

Reviews by **Gareth Thompson, Christine Chapel, Hank Quinlan, Tricky Skills Jase, John W. Haylock and The Vinyl Junkie.**



THE HIGH LLAMAS

THE HIGH LLAMAS

Cold And Bouncy (Alpaca Park/V2)

After leaving the provocative Irish poppy punksters Microdisney, Sean O'Hagan surprisingly turned his hand to the beguiling cocktail of sophisticated pop, lounge jazz, ambient beats and airy harmonies which comprise The High Llamas. String quartets are now also the order of his day, and this new release, their third, continues the beguiling momentum. Samples of gurgly loops infiltrate the otherwise hazy *Sun Beats Down*, and then scratch at the surface of *Hi Ball Nova Scotia*. *Tilting Windmills* begins with an almost childlike folkish simplicity, building a banjo line into the score, and yet maintains the eerie sense of abstract that defines O'Hagan's band. Chiming vibraphone notes seem to permeate the whole disc, lending the instrumental pieces an oddly familiar strain that yet remains elusive. The recording is virtually seamless, and appears designed to be heard very much as one piece. Spooky and laidback, this is the presence of a friendly ghost tiptoeing through your entire record collection. It works surprisingly well live too, which you can hear at Sam Fay's on Sunday February 8th.GT

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Welcome To Sarajevo (Premier Soundtracks)

Soundtracks sell films. Some time in-between *The Bodyguard* and *Trainspotting* (not the most harmonious of meeting points), the music became the message. The film industry now views the licensing of a cool soundtrack to be just as an important marketing tool as the product itself. This all means that a compilation is often rushed out to tie in with the promotion containing a hastily assembled collection of disparate tracks. Sometimes this works with electrifying effect (*Romeo & Juliet*). The downside though is that even the most unforgiving of film buffs will fail to see the connection between two different art forms originally conceived in isolation (RE: *Bean The Movie* —of course Wei Wei always write with a pathetic, nerdy, wimp of a tosser in mind. Sometimes Marti Pellow even writes songs that are about people other than himself. Ho ho). *Welcome To Sarajevo* may be a fine film with a disturbing and important message, but the running order for the soundtrack makes even less sense than the three-way religious / political war did itself. Consider the inclusion of Van the Man sitting next to Bobby McFerrin's *Don't Worry Be Happy*, which as any budding Martin Bell knows, this is the song that all the Sarajevo orphans who have been bombed out of their homes, deprived of food and then sexually abused, whistle along to at regular intervals as they go about their daily business of dodging snipers. Musically this album contains some absolute gems such as The Stone Roses' *...Adored*, House Of Love's *Shine On*, Blur's *MOR* and Teenage Fanclub's *It's A Bad World*, but you probably own all of these anyway. The only new track comes from Massive Attack who scramble together an instrumental that sounds like a poor demo for *Unfinished Symphony*. TSJ

SUBCULTURE: HOUSE MUSIC EXPERIENCE

Selected and mixed by Harri (BMG)

The Sub Club in Glasgow has been spinning House for over a decade now. This mix of current deep tunes has been put together by resident DJ and general Glaswegian face, Harri. Since club compilations now surface about as frequently as Tory Party leadership contests (and are only slightly less tedious and a far less sweater affair), the task of making a club endorsed album appear genuinely fresh and free of corporate marketing bullshit is a difficult idea to pitch. There is a sense that *Subculture* tries just a bit too hard to maintain a genuine underground atmosphere flavour. The sleeve notes are as bold to suggest that this 75 minute mix is a celebration of the Sub Club and all that it has achieved. This may be so, but already the safe formula of House sounds incredibly dated against the real dangerous beats of Drum 'n' Bass and Speed Garage currently hijacking London. This compilation has a feeling of nostalgia rather than progression. It is the kind of project that you could well imagine DJ supreme, Mick Hucknall becoming involved with—more Armani than Adidas. The whole album effortlessly passes by, which is either a statement on some top class mixing skills, or a reflection on the monotony of it all. Of course all music styles have cycles where they are more in demand during certain periods. Maybe this is the case and *Subculture* has been poorly timed with House currently not the force right now that it once was. TSJ

GUY CHADWICK

Lazy, Soft & Slow (Setanta)

Ex-House Of Love mainman Chadwick may describe his recent years as nightmarish, but his debut solo is stuffed full of heady, romantic dreams. It also marks a defiant and dignified return to prominence for the man whose searing vox/guitar angst never pushed his former band to expected heights. The title track opens things here on a lush croon of feathery melody, before *You've Really Got A Hold On Me* kicks in with the melodic drive of yore. Even here, though, Chadwick resists the temptation to beef things up into a chartbound stomp, and the song holds pace with the album's flow. *One Of These Days* is a pure rush of optimistic calm, while *In Her Heart* delivers another set of uplifting refrains. The sumptuous *Song For Gala* shuffles on a folksy twang with nods to Leonard Cohen and *Mirrored In My Mind* is a classic slice of folk psychedelia. There's another five gems besides all the above, as this comparatively seasoned campaigner holds his nerve perfectly amidst a raging sea of Britpop feuds and legends.GT

UMAJETS *Demolition* (Clearspot)

What starts out punky soon becomes clear pop with sparkling lyrics —“Did the hypnosphere, snare you dear?” (*Half Man Half Wrecking Ball*) and “I'm a virgin of words so you'll have to forgive my immaculate reputation” (*Girl Named God*) and tunes so catchy (*Skywriting*) you could use them as bait. Pure pop love songs and beautiful ballads with singalong choruses many bands would indeed

go fishing for. Plus a bonus track of hysterical laughter. Popportunity rocks. CC

IN THE NURSERY *Asphalt* (ITN Corps)

Whilst other bands with arty pretensions produce soundtracks to imaginary films, patiently waiting in vain for the opportunity to write one for real, electronic pioneers In the nursery have turned the idea on its head, providing an existing silent classic with a brand new musical score. *The Cabinet Of Dr. Caligari* in 1996 was the first in their Optical Music Series and last year they toured the countries film theatres with *Asphalt*, one of the last great German expressionist films of the 1920's. It's a tale of doomed romantic obsession set in a disorienting urban milieu and perfectly suited to ITN's atmospheric synthetics. Low bass notes resonate, eerie pulsebeats shatter the silence and grand yet sombre orchestral sweeps send the requisite shivers down the spine. As live accompaniment to the on-screen action it works to perfection, and even at home on the stereo the music is strong enough to sustain the imagery. A sensual and spooky soundtrack. HQ

MALI RAIN

Electronic Music For The Mind And Body (3rd Stone)

At last! The new album from Mali Rain and it won't disappoint the discerning who bought last year's *Forecast for Storms* or their superb 1995 debut *We Shall Return To The Sea*. Mali Rain is the brainchild of Dave Kirby and on this occasion he is aided and abetted by Steve Gordon and Mark Cotton. Together they have created this collection of ten stunning and quite often beautiful instrumental soundscapes. Many are rich in melody and suffused with a keen sense of dynamics which caresses your ears with waves of gorgeous, electronically enhanced knob twiddling.

The opening track *In The Presence Of Angels* is a typical seven minutes of shimmering electronica reminiscent of *Phaedra* era Tangerine Dream but with a nineties techno edge. The news this time around is that Dave has incorporated elements of drum 'n' bass and even acid trippy guitar into his latest compositions. The results are astounding, Cove and Pin Points especially so. But you would be impressed by any track since this is one of those rare alums which possesses no bad tracks and is certainly a contender for techno album of the year. Now where's that 'repeat' button? JWH

V. ARTISTS *Erotica Italia* (Bistro/Arista)

Super Rendezvous with... (Odor)

Pizzicato Five Happy End Of The World (Matador)

V. ARTISTS *Spiritual Cleansing* (Clean Up)

The latest compilation from Easy Listening revivalists Martin Green and Patrick Whittaker (the “Sound Curators”) follows their previous compilations *The Sound Gallery*, *The Sound Spectrum* and *Cinema 100*. This one is less wide-scope in that it's a collection of soundtracks from rare Italian erotic movies of the 60's and 70's, suggesting their game might be up. However, with Whittaker's collection of 400 albums of film music that's not the case. *Erotica Italia* puts you instantly in sexy mode with its various seductive soundtracks from films about Vespas and vice, frustrated Italian housewives and depraved hippy culture, complete with heavy breathing and bongos, and smoke lounge jazz and assorted pre-Spanish spaghetti frolics from Ennio Morricone and his contemporaries.

From Italy we now journey to Finland for a *Rendezvous With Super*, a Helsinki-based quintet with a dreamy debut album celebrating sixties kitsch of pure lounge pop pazz featuring a feast of Farfisa, Hammond, Fender Rhodes, Wuritzer, Moog and Hohner keyboard sounds and song titles such as *Bingo Hostess Goes Berserk* and *Wicky-Wacky Rodeo*. Super —cool.

And now we travel to Japan where Pizzicato Five's foxy Nomiya Maki is la-la-la-ing some lo-fi lyrics in a lounge way but crazily over Konishi Yasuharu's throwaway drum n bass licks and other more modern instrumentals. Their 21st century pop music switches in and out of more conventional techniques (e.g. harp, Hammond, cheerleading), hints at *Do You Know The Way To San Jose?*, and flies dangerously close to the Pearl & Dean theme, *Mission Impossible* and The Doors' *Light My Fire*. Cutesy bad translation sleeve notes invite you to “Please enjoy the stereo action fully that will surprise you”, there are a few jolly Japanese jingles and *Happy Ending*, “the accompaniment for a long credit roll of the movie starring Henry Winkler”. Sexy, slick and sweet. Back home and still on a laid-back lounge tip, but in a more modern style, *Clean Up* records, the brainchild of DJs Craig Mineard and Kevin Beadle and through which Sneaker Pimps were formed, have collected together their catalogue of limited edition vinyl

released since 1993 to bring you some Spiritual Cleansing and a fine album it is too. Trip hop is what it seems to be called these days, artists include Line Of Flight, (Liam Howe and Chris Corner's project prior to forming Sneaker Pimps with Kelly Dayton), the drum 'n' space of Forces Of Nature and Hunch, the floating jazz 'n' scratch of Livonia, and Control Freaks with *Very Serious Smoking*, a real trip and space hopper, and finishing on a funky stroll from The Magnificent Three. With latest signings Essen, Outcast featuring singer/songwriter /pianist Sarah Winton, and former lead singer with Galliano, Valerie Etienne, *Clean Up* may do just that. CC



LONG FIN KILLIE

LONG FIN KILLIE *Amelia* (Too Pure)

From the label which uncovered Polly Harvey and Jack comes the third album from Scottish recluses Long Fin Killie. You may not have heard the previous two— not many people did. Like all good stories *Amelia* completes the trilogy and linking the albums together is the theme of great 20th century dreamers. Houdini and Valentino have already been explored, and the bulk of intellectual reappraisal this time round is concentrated on the heavyweight subject of Michael Barrymore. Eh? Sorry, *Amelia* Earhardt, the ill-fated female aviator. Fasten your seatbelts because we're in for a rough ride. Long Fin Killie are not known for their three minute pop songs. After the false start of *British Summertime* begins the serious business of breaking the world record for the number of obscure percussion instruments contained on one album. Guitars scratch away repeating the same note continuously, Luke Sutherland sings whilst suffering an anxiety attack and the rhythm section races away in a speed-fuelled world of its own. All of this makes for a sound which comes close to the ‘ambience’ that has troubled Brian Eno during his twenty year quest... except this isn't bollocks. It is difficult to position Long Fin Killie amongst any contemporaries. They are producing music in the true sense that is original as it is sincere. Arab Strap is the closest you get to any musical clan, the difference being that Long Fin Killie replace the false *Trainspotting* chic with a very real bleak existence. *Amelia* is a painful record and it is doubtful if the Scottish FA will call Long Fin Killie to record the *France '98* team song. Duncan Ferguson would make for an ideal duet, though. TSJ

BENTLEY RHYTHM ACE

Run On The Spot (Skin/Parlophone)

With an opening rhythm section sounding like a game of table tennis being played under fast forward to the power of 500, this has all the BRA trademarks — vocals sampled from *Listen With Mother*, *Pinky & Perky* being scratched, a horn section in the same key throughout, before the cops arrive with the sirens to break it all up. The joy of BRA is that they know that they can't groove with the real dudes, whereas PWEI actually believed that they were club kings supreme. TSJ

SPIRITUALISED

I Think I Love You (Dedicated)

A simple but effective ditty in a *Bummed* Happy Mondays meets Alabama 3 vein, with sweet and sour, singer subject to backing vocals object, lyrics like “I think I'm in love/ probably just hungry/ I think I'm the life and soul/ probably just snoring/ I think I've caught it bad/ probably contagious/ I think I'm a winner/ probably Las Vegas”



etc. Chem Bros then take over and in an astounding feat of barewired electronic plagiarism (or to be kinder, in the light of *You Re Mixed*, paying homage to those who came before) that would fool even the most devoted Gong fan, manage to recreate the textures and phrasing of one Tim Blake, Hi T Moonweed the Favourite. But then, there are much worse influences to pull from your sleeve and I'm thoroughly enjoying over and over every single rhyme, riff, refrain and sprinkling of synthetic stardust. Wicked! CC

PHOTEK *Modus Operandi* (Science)

A toon in the most mellow style of phat jazz bass with a mellow rimshot hip hop beat and delicious slidy guitars. Whooshing sound fx pass by before a nice little poiano break. Mellow as dope but great at both 33 and 45 rpm, this gets the ten out of ten in the Vinyl Junkie's guide to cruciality. STVJ

CANDYSKINS *Feed It* (Ultimate)

Faultless, classic guitar pop from the Oxford perennials that should have been put out in the summer to grace radio airwaves and blue skies. Nonetheless, everybody needs uplifting tunes under cold, grey skies. It's backed by some frantic drum & bass which shakes down the speakers and blows of the commercial cobwebs to display a hugely adaptable and indeed consummate sound. Buy it, listen to it, make it happen—it deserves it. AH

HELEN LOVE

Does Your Heart Go Boom (Ché)

Yet another hormone-laced collection of pretend rock chicks jumping the crap South Wales Catatonia bandwagon. A complete lack of soul, distinct lack of dominating instrumentation and little else to shout about, but shout and bawl they do about who they are and where they are from. No point, no magic. Nothing. AH

HEADSWIM *Tourniquet* (Epic)

Hugely refined, hard-edged Radiohead rock with plenty of aspects, from gentle repeating riffs to dominant chorus rhythm. Thought-provoking lyrics carried on a vocal vehicle that is up there with the best. One listen of this and you're caught wondering when the next single is, fingering through the gig guides to see if they're playing anywhere within reach. AH

MANBREAK

Round And Round (One Little Indian)

Now, this I like. It sounds like Arrested Development have acquired a good band and started singing properly. A nifty mix of rap, vocals and guitar all served up in big portions topped with cheese, and it only takes up 3 minutes 14 seconds of your time. MG

CHINA DRUM *Somewhere Else* (Mantra)

Jesus, this came on loud! Are they trying to make up for the fact that (and as a cd fan it pains me to say) this sounds like a Terrorvision rock ballad. Adam even sounds like Tony 'Vision. Mischa says: not a fan pleaser; they've lost their old edge, maybe Adam should get back behind the drums where he belongs and start the adrenalin flowing again. MG

GIGANTIC *Disenchanted* (Kittensoft)

Clock the look-alike Liam on guitar on the photo and you'd think they were a Brit pop act but no! Gigantic are actually purveyors of '90's grunge', otherwise known as gravel-voiced rock with no guitar solos. It's pretty good, actually, but this is coming from an ex-grunge chick who is still living in the past. Five years ago it would have been a youth anthem, but now I can't see Gigantic becoming any more than medium-sized. MG

ONE INCH PUNCH *Angela Davis*

(Audioink/Hut)

Drum 'n' bass-driven guitar funk rock in a Nine Inch Nails vibe, this is challenging work from L.A.'s weirdest and most menacing creators of nineties cross-over trip-hop rock. Geographical lyrics put you right inside the story behind the song, making this release truly accessible to anybody with any taste. Top stuff. AH



“With three years of true extreme music we leave the easy listening fakes of people like The Prodigy looking castrated.”

DHR send us a health warning and Dael Walker grabs his nuts and sets off to investigate.

To some, Digital Hardcore Recordings and its main protagonist, **Alec Empire** will be no stranger. The existence of the label is due to an ill-fated deal that Empire signed with Phonogram for techno punks Atari Teenage Riot. Empire, previously known for a batch of breakbeat and trash ambient for a host of labels including Frankfurt's Force Inc as well as ATR, delves into the dirtier side of electronic music. Unleashing uncompromising energetic breakfast and dabbling in extreme sonic alchemy that others would not dare to touch for commercial or other reasons, Empire steers DHR and its avant terrorist crew into deeper and dirtier territories, abusing formulae, drum 'n' bass as well as corrupting the all too often fluffy ambient genre into desolate Enochian landscapes. DHR is a label that wants to dance but to a different tune, aiming purely at inciting a new generation of technocrats dedicated to the art of noise. Its compilation DHR Riot Zone contains seventeen slabs of experimental mantric breaks and mutant mayhem. Kicking off with ATR's *Sick To Death* which pisses over the so called 'punk' of the 90's with its “sick to death like I've never been sick before” and “burn baby burn” refrains, it then goes on to the mangled trip-hop grooves of tough girl Shizuo, who covers the Cramps' *New Kick* coming across like a jumped up Björk shagging Sonic Youth. Check out her new *Kick* ep on DHR Limited Editions. Elsewhere Patric C stomps on bleeding Teletubbies with his *Moogified Sex With Annemone*, a fantastically trashy popcorn stomp fest.

Acid mayhem of the fucked up variety can be found on Empire's own *Squeeze The Trigger* lp on which he proclaims himself “The Destroyer”, mangling the last remaining remnants of hard trance and chopping them with speedy breaks creating a sulphate fuelled frenzy. Compiled from limited editions and oddities of his 200+ back catalogue of releases, *Squeeze...* is Empire at his most acidic extreme. DHR Limited Editions gives the label the opportunity to release more experimental sounds in limited runs (only 2,000 per format). *Death Funk No Safety Pin Sex* is a prime example of such experiment. Fluctuating, filtered freakbeats and uncomfortable sonics framed by unpolished production is the epitome of the label's attitude. Its unpredictability, its flirtations with noise, its complex rhythmic contents form the soundtrack to Empire and company's political agenda: “Noise cannot be faulted.”

“Perfectionism is a council of despair.” Unafraid of extremes and savage of tongue DHR's philosophy is simple. “Hundreds of beats per minute, relentless noise, incendiary and unforgettable and a fab tune or two.”

Tues - Bleuskool vs Godfather

Weds - Le Beté de Bleu

D.C.I (Rumpshaker)

Mark (Go Tropo)

Thurs - Serve Chilled

Digs & Woosh (D.I.Y)

Fri - Departure Lounge

Sat - Nail & Quadrant

Sun - Dimanche le Bleu

Café Bleu

390 ALFRETON RD
RADFORD, NOTTS
0115 979 1357

FRIED ALIVE!



PHOTO: DAVID DEVANT & HIS SPIRIT WIFE by Davies & Davies



DAVID DEVANT & HIS SPIRIT WIFE London NW1 Dingwalls

David Devant & His Spirit Wife went unnoticed over the past two years as they manoeuvred from a novelty act to a leading face on the London loser, lo-fi and hairspray scene. They can sell out Dingwalls with a loyal fan base who haven't become bored by bored by their set which hasn't changed since they arrived back in '95. More of a Victorian cinematic experience, a DD gig is one with great detail focused on on the visuals such as projector shows, props and general other artifacts that would easily pass as Art & craft homework. Avoid the question: 'Name the line-up of David Devant & His Spirit Wife?' in any pop quiz. Sporting a quiff the size of a lamp-post is not sufficient to secure membership: Cocky Young 'Un seems content with the role of Origami mentor/props assistant; Vessel (for he is the lead singer, DD doesn't exist) has the voice of Freddie Mercury after his balls have dropped further than they should. the sound is a throwback to 70's glam with the glitter replaced by white goth paint. But though the songs may be dated, most would hold their own minus the gimmicks. *Auntie Mabe* is a great finale for apathetic losers of the world with its catchline "I ain't even gonna try". This is good advice for DD. Paul Daniels may rely on his stage tricks but then he's a wig-wearing, Tory-voting midget who doesn't have a song in his set which dismisses all ginger-haired people en masse as evil.

Tricky Skills Jase

BLUR London Wembley Arena

As opening songs go, *Beetlebum* is perfection. No introduction needed. Build it up slowly then knock it down. The synchronised chaos of a four-piece jamming towards the end of the song would carry far better in a smaller venue, a criticism of Wembley, not the group. Make no mistake though—Blur are a punk band. Maybe not in manifestation (major deal, marketing strategies etc.) but certainly in their current 'loud' attitude. *On Your Own* is remarkable as it heralds the introduction of Damon Albarn, Human Beatbox Extraordinaire. There is one awful moment when Damon teases with his thrusting motion and then falls to the ground. No plastic bottles, he's simply tripped over his jeans (which become more homeboy baggy with each tour). Graham meanwhile remains hunched over his guitar acting the nerd to Alex's cad. The live version of *Death Of A Party* mirrors the current Adrian Sherwood remix, mellowing into an irresistible blend of *Ghost Town* meets *Guns Of Brixton* with super extra cranked up dub. This may be Blur's last live appearance for a significant time but it represents the best set they have assembled since they entered the Arena circuit. Tracks such as *There's No Other Way*, *She's So High* and the seminal *Popsene* finally make

sense in the new Blur hardcore context. There is no longer the need to include them simply to appease the pre-Parklife brigade. It is far too early to speculate if Blur will 'do a Quo' and resume a living (of sorts) out of touring. Hopefully they will become even more experimental, deliver some wonderful studio albums and then come back in three years time with a rejuvenated energy for touring. They will find it tough to repeat this current high. TSJ

MARK THOMAS

London Clapham Bread & Roses

Twice a month the TUC-supported the Bread & Roses boozier in SW4 rounds up South London's vagabonds and visionaries who outline their manifesto to music. Occasionally a recognised name shares the stage to like, well, get back to their roots, man. Mark Thomas' appearance drew in an unhealthy mix of Soho Media Wannabes mixing with Clapham's finest revolutionaries. I know which camp my foot's in. Thomas is a bit of south London rough and he knows it. Tales of blaming alcohol for everything (I was very, very drunk) are rationally argued, as is soft drug legalisation (the only crime a doped up burglar will commit is to nick your shit records and chocolate). Thomas characterises the perfect traits for any individual who puts himself up as an anti-establishment figure; his current stance in these days of New Labour (New Slippers) is to become a public nuisance and to 'out-weird' all that is bland. Despite a 'left-wing' government, there are still legitimate targets to attack. The Church of England makes ideal cannon fodder, and to out-weird the weirdos, Thomas advocates sitting on the front pew each Sunday with eleven of your mates, all wearing white robes and sandals. Gotcha. Hecklers become helpless and stranded as Thomas invites them to repeat their drunken stupors and pit them against his curious blend of razor sharp wide-boy philanthropism, his genuine compassion was lost on some sections of the audience who came to hear knob gags but went away with uncompromising social satire. TSJ

PERFORMANCE / K9

Nottingham Dubble Bubble

The support act tonight was (and still is) the new bar on the ground floor of the latest happening club in town. Small but perfectly formed and not in the least bit pooch-like, (in fact it's more like a greenhouse), K9 is a bright bar with natural daylight strips (a theme which is repeated on the top floor—see *Fried At Night*) and a row of clocks telling the time in New York, Tokyo etc., either so that rich tourists know when trading opens on the world's stock markets and can nip to the twenty-four hour internet site on campus, and sell their shares in the toothless Tiger economies, or so that the less well off can cheer themselves up

with quips about how "they're still serving in New York" when asked to sup up and go home. Either way it's another pleasant little new watering hole in a continental style awaiting an extended license, with thoughtful beige blinds on the streetside to block out the grime of Greyhound Street.

Upstairs and it's a discotheque and up another floor we find... shock! horror! in a nightclub on a Friday night... a live band—with guitars! What's more about 100 punters are up there grooving along to Performance a handsome bunch of guys with an original (except for an inspired choice of covering America's *Horse With No Name*) line in melodic pop music fronted by a man with a dream voice and a weird line in introspective intersong banter. In an unusual move for a nightclub in a city besotted with dance and dub culture Dubble Bubble, very soon after opening, changed its former Friday dance nights into indie nights with live bands. Since manager Ian Gardiner used to run the renowned *Kool Kat* indie flavoured nightclub this is not entirely surprising: "We started putting live bands on Saturday nights," he explained, "and were approached by other artists. Since there is too much going on on the dance scene and because I'm not really into it, we started putting bands on on Sunday nights as a taster, which went really well. But the bands are similar to what was already happening on the dancefloor so they actually fit into the night. We also hope to change people's attitude towards clubs." Performance like most of the bands and guest DJs booked at the club, are from Nottingham. "The point is to promote local talent rather than going for name DJs and nationally known bands. Often name club nights are just another set of people from another city trying to get their own thing going, so we might as well promote people from this city." I'll drink to that, I thought, and did.

Christine Chapel

FRIED AT NIGHT :

The Day The Earth Stood Still

The Winter Solstice is the shortest day and, when as grey and gloomy as it was this last December, it seems like perpetual night. Which is perhaps how it was possible to attend three gigs in one day.

First up was The Shod Collective, early birds that they are playing during Saturday afternoon. You read all about them last issue so on to the evening slot at The Running Horse where Harry & The Growlers are giving it their festive fullest of fun and frolics with a humour as dark as the December sky but Harry's diamond bright showmanship illuminating the proceedings as the most original and entertaining act out of all the Runner regulars. Due to the late opening hours there taking me by surprise it was literally a dash to Dubble Bubble to catch a midnight Nova Lounge set which might have been quite good but for the inexcusable inaudibility of the so-called "public address" system. Nova Lounge would be as well to do what Harry & the Growlers claimed and "borrow Megadeath's p.a.". In the top room of Dubble Bubble there are some false windows with lighting so clever it gives you the impression that it's daylight outside all the time, so don't worry about going there in the dark.

It seemed like the same night when post-apocalyptic power groovers PAP played Sam Fay's later on during that dark weekend. Incidentally, the word 'solstice' is a terracentric misnomer, taken as it is from the latin 'Sol' meaning Sun and 'sticere' meaning to stand still. It is in fact this planet which stands still, momentarily ceasing to move from side to side that is, although it keeps spinning, of course, otherwise we would all fall off into endless night. Still, the word 'terrace' does not have the same ring (or should that be corona?) to it. Anyway, some light-shy Shod members and friends kept the stage lights to a minimum as they performed their debut set of jazz grooves and Hungarian disco, including an extended version of the *Theme From Yellow Pages* by JR Hartley! Anglosaxophonist Howard described their equally photophobic fans huddled around candlelit tables as the "best quality jazz audience I have ever played to", perhaps trying to compensate for it's lack of quantity. Those quality few fearless enough to venture into the perpetual darkness of bleak midwinter found a sea of tranquillity with a gravity as low as its lunar namesake and floated away on a wave of revolving light like the children in the *Phoenix & The Carpet*. Luckily the Earth creaked and groaned and pulled her massive weight back towards the Sun picking up the temporarily gravity free and conveying them along on her long haul back to summer and the longest day.

But it was a close squeak!

Christine Chapel

SAM FAY'S

The Great Northern Close, London Road, NOTTINGHAM
TEL (0115) 941 8560 <http://www.innotts.co.uk/~samfays/>

Tuesday 3rd February
CARLO'S LOUNGE
live acid jazz adm. £2

Sunday 8th February
THE HIGH LLAMAS
+ special guests **Scott 4**
Tickets available Way Ahead/Selectadisc Credit Card bookings 0115 912 9000 £5 adv.

Tuesday 10th February (formerly Sugar & Lust)
SUPERFI
+ **BROMIDE + Chihuahuas** adm. £2

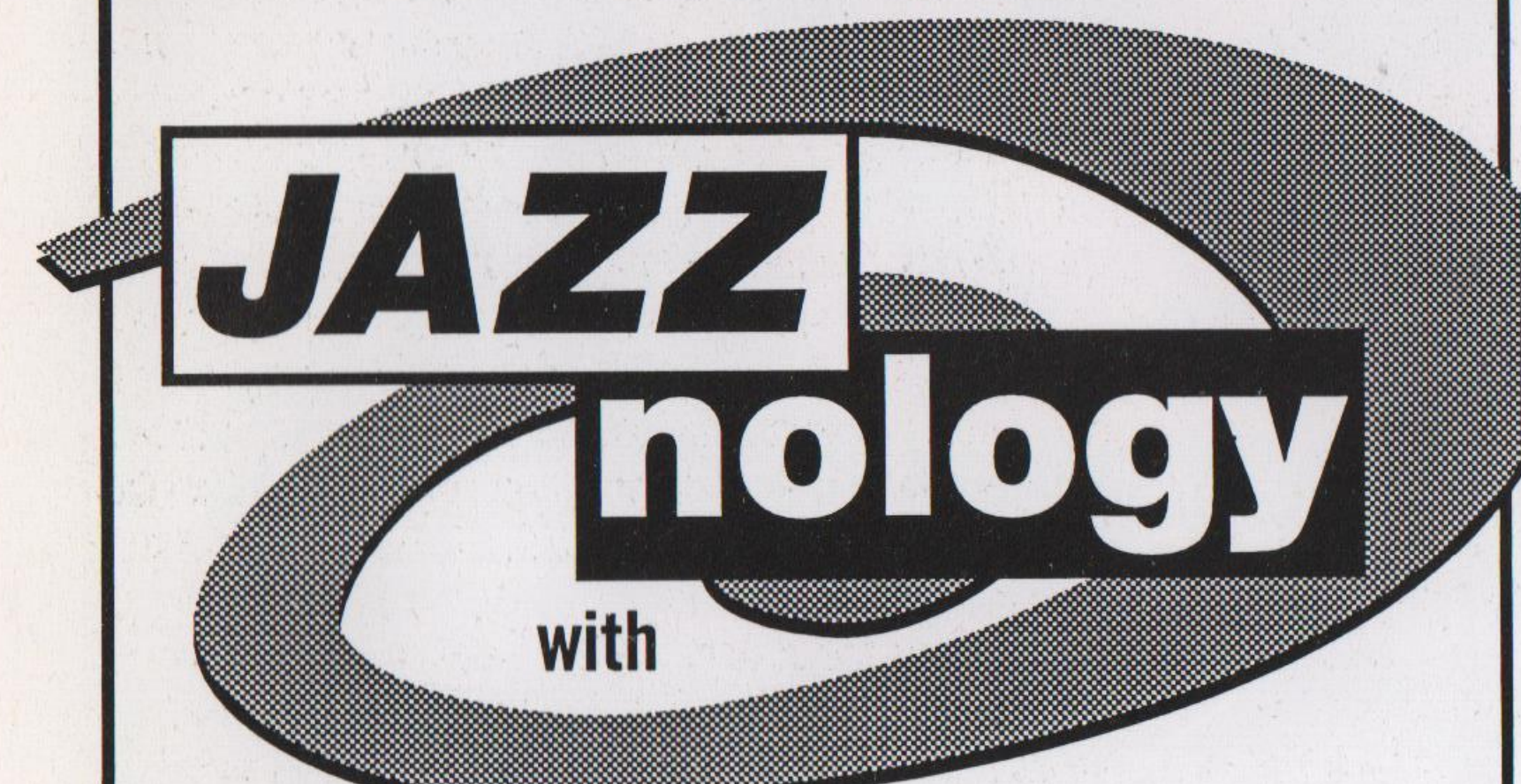
Tuesday 24th February
NIL + Fecal Matter
Irish power trio adm. £2

Sunday 1st March
Caged Bat presents
FAITHFUL DAWN + SQUID

Sunday 8th March
WILSON + HARPER adm. £2

Tuesday 10th March
PRAM + Warser Gate adm. £3
new album *The North Pole Radio Station* on Wurlitzer records

Overall in conjunction with Sam Fay's present



Simon The Vinyl Junkie

"Excellent mixing" PULSE MAGAZINE "Delightful" MIXMAG

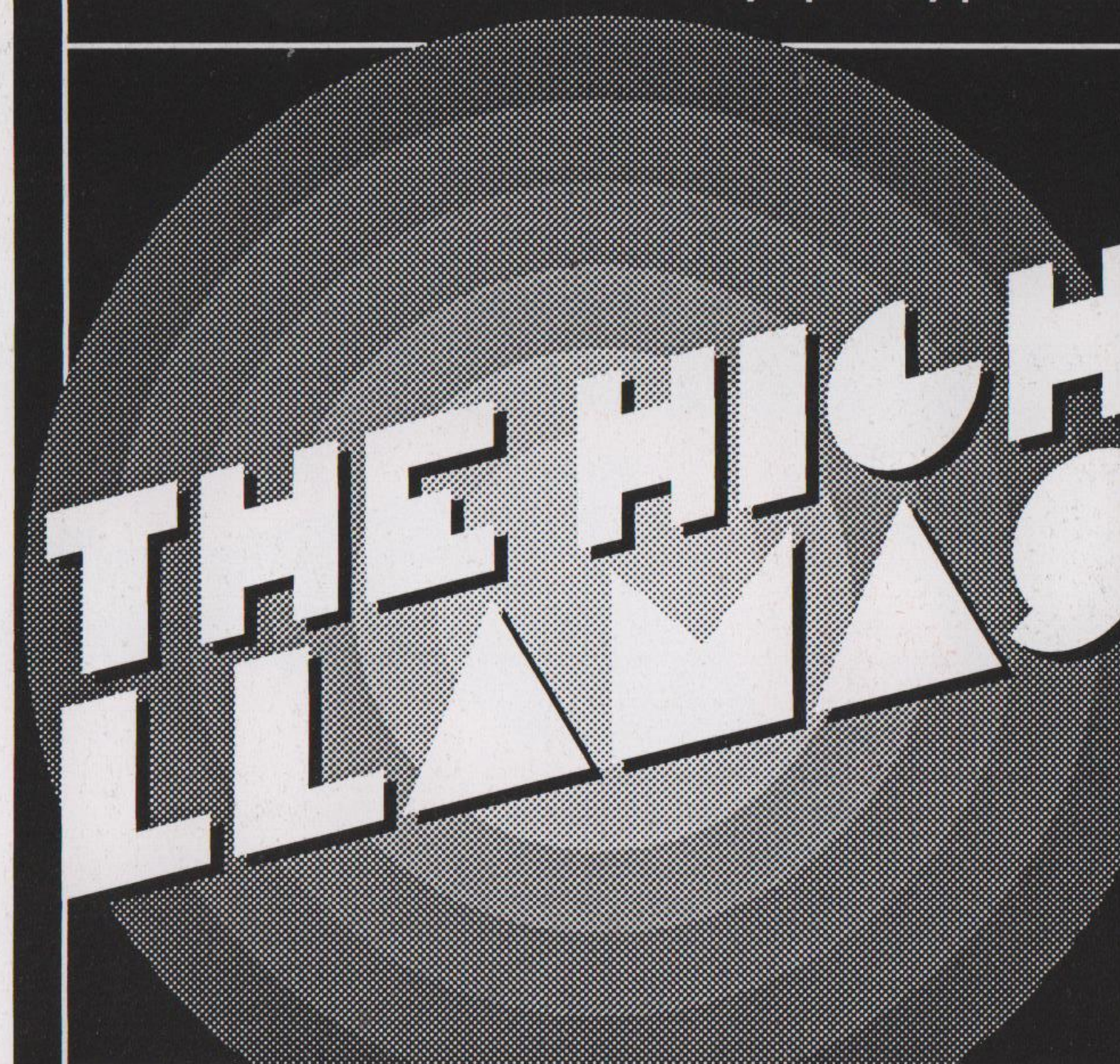
EVERY TUESDAY 11pm - 2am
at **Sam Fay's**

The Great Northern Close, London Road (behind Nottingham Station)

Admission £2 on the door

DRUM 'N' BASS ACID JAZZ REGGAE LATIN
HIP-HOP SOUL FUNK HOUSE + LIVE BANDS

Overall in association with Sam Fay's proudly presents



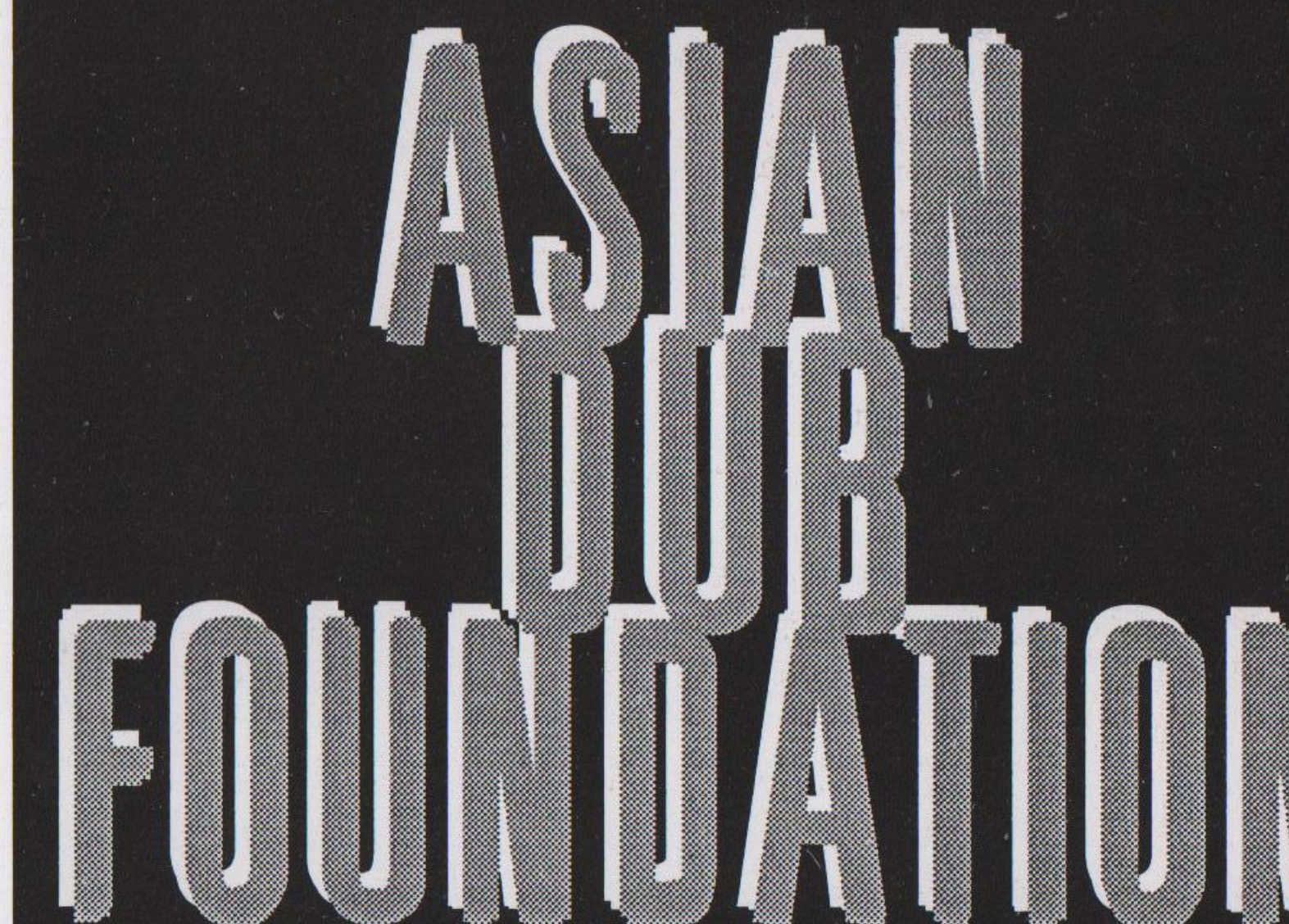
SUNDAY 8th FEBRUARY

At **SAM FAY'S**
The Great Northern Close, London Road Nottingham Tel. 0115 9418560

with special guests **SCOTT 4**

Adm. £5 adv. doors 8pm
Tickets available from Selectadisc, Way Ahead and Sam Fay's.
Credit card bookings 0115 912 9000. Info. 0115 953 8333

Overall in association with Sam Fay's presents



LIVE! at **SAM FAY'S**

The Great Northern Close, London Road, NOTTINGHAM
Tel 0115 941 8560

Tuesday 17th March
doors 8pm Adm. £5 Adv. £6.50 door

with resident DJ **Simon The Vinyl Junkie**
BAR TIL 2AM