

Party Fears

Number Fifteen

FREE

August-September 1991



Some more of the Healers in action.

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Perth News

• The **ACCELERATED MEN** have accepted being a duo for the time being — Jay Nova (v,g), Shane Hart (g,v) and various machines — the elusive ideal bass-player being coped without for now. The tape *Dead Names* was due to be sent off to Sony for pressing, then Sony shut down their vinyl press that week; it is now waiting in the queue at Festival.

• The **BEEKEEPERS** are playing in Melbourne, with Dave Shaw on drums and someone called Jo on violin. Back some time or other. (c/o 113 Anzac Road, Mount Hawthorn 6016)

• The **BOOK OF FUNK** are Peter Underwood, Martin Luck, Cameron Kinsella, Al Moffat, Paul Ormsby and Dave Pensabene. "The band *Thrombus* called 'pretty boys.'" Currently planning a south-west tour and a big party at the Fly By Night Club (once it re-opens). (311 Wylie Place, Leederville 6007)

• The **BRAUTIGANS** will be returning! (so much for the panic. Well, I thought it was the case at press-time. Honest.) The lineup is as before, though the band will be playing less often — perhaps once a month or so — and perhaps releasing more recordings. "Just an idea at this stage But none of us want to play as much as we were before" — Laura. Their first show back will be at the Rainforest Rampage show at the Ozone on August 10th.

Laura's tinnitus isn't a sign of impending deafness, you may be pleased to hear — "my hearing seems to be better than normal, actually. I can't figure out what's going on with my hearing, so I'll keep playing music. Even background noise in an industrial civilisation is enough, so it might as well be music. I could be run over by a car tomorrow, y'know. I wear earplugs a lot now, though."

• The **CEREMENTS** are Eben Peart (v,b), Doug Berry (l-g), Stuart Engle (r-g) and Daniel Booth (d). The band's first show was last August in the Campus Bands competition, "and we did exceedingly well, getting up to one of the semi-finals" (Daniel). "Melodic ... hard ... I'll come back to you on that one ..." The band is recording something for a demo with the possibility of release. (GPO Box W2044, Perth 6001)

• **CHARLOTTE'S WEB**'s CD is currently being pressed and is due out in August. The track listing is *Tea With Biscuits / Services Rendered / Safety In The Net / Farmer Takes A Wife / The Day After I Died / Chilliest Winds* and the disc will have a cover done by Kym Skipworth.

Charlotte's Web also have a T-shirt competition going ... come up with a great T-shirt design for them and win a copy of your shirt — and, should the thing actually show profit potential, negotiation will be made for a suitable royalty rate. Send your design to the band or c/o PF, as soon as possible. (5 Tuart Trail, Edgewater 6027)

• The **CHERRYTONES** have split again, this time for good, their final show having been at one of the Ozone's Original Music Showcase nights, Monday 24th June

— Brett Alderson (v, l-g) is going to the UK and they've let the bastards grind 'em down in any case ("Outside pressures got to us, that's all" — Paul), so have decided to call it a day. Paul Colundine (r-g), Alan Balmont (d) and Stephen Hird (ex-Fcends) are getting something together. "If the last *Cherrytones* single is released, I may be releasing it under the new band's name." A few of the *Cherrytones* tapes are still left.

• The **CHEVELLES** will be releasing a ten-track LP in Europe through Normal, to be the five EP tracks, the two tracks from the first single and the three tracks recently recorded and due out in a few months. The band start recording their full LP proper in a few months, to be ten new tracks plus the three recently recorded (some of these thirteen to be on the album and some to be B-sides) and to come out on Zero Hour. Got all that straight now? Everything will be released locally in due course, so you don't need to rush off and buy the European LP. The band will be playing live next at the Melbourne on Friday 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th July. (c/o 42 Denis Street, Subiaco 6008; Zero Hour, PO Box, Spit Junction 2088)

• **CIRCUS MILITIA** are Wade Ranson (v), Andrew Dixon (g), Justin Gorn (g), Rod (b) and Matt Yovich (d). Their first show was Saturday 13th July at the White Sands with *Thrombus*. "Guitar-based, up-tempo ... something similar to *Radio Birdman*" (Matt). (41 Somerton Way, Karrinyup 6018)

• The **CUSTARD CRASH** have now played a show! at the Melbourne on the 20th of June. You may or may not catch them supporting Helvelin in early August. A new tape may be out soon. "It was exactly the same playing again after five years. There was no difference whatsoever" — André. (72 Crowther Street, Bayswater 6053)

• The **CUTTING** have reformed, minus the vocals of Meg. They have an unreleased album, *Sex/Death*, that their manager is screaming to release. Playing some time soon. (c/o 6 June Road, Gooseberry Hill 6076)

• The **FARADAYS** have added Ashley Reid (l-g) and have recorded a single, "Camden Town/Frustration".

• **FUR VERSIONS** have a contract impending with Survival for a few albums and will be moving to Melbourne permanently at the end of the year. Some of the already-recorded tracks will be coming out on singles. The band's next show will be at Fruition at the end of the month. For those wondering, the change from Limbo (dance club) to Fruition (alternative people's club — i.e. us) came about from the club now being run by Sam Mladineo, the Furies' guitarist.

• The **HINDUS** have their self-titled cassette out now and available around town, recorded as the duo of Mark Cooper (heavily effected g) and Caroline Hadwin (v), with guest vocal from Rob Alberts. The band have since added Lachlan Tuppin on bass, the first show with Lachlan being at the Melbourne on Thursday 18th July.

• The **KRYPTONICS** came to Perth in June (really good, actually ... much better than before) and recorded their second mini-LP, tentatively titled *Motherload*, "though we haven't decided just how to spell it yet" (Ian). Tracks are "Rejectionville", "Never", "Undemeth The Ashes", "Melancholy Valentine", "Astrid's Song" and "Troublemakin'", with a video having been done for "Rejectionville". They have

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Party Fears #15

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Phone: (09) 387 6578; weekdays, either after hours (after 6:00p.m. is good) or early in the morning (7:00-8:00a.m. is OK too); weekends, any time you may catch me.

Writers: moi, Larry W., Ross C., Robert Brokenmouth, Samantha.

Photographs: Michelle Milton (Healers), Jodi Burgess (Ed K.).

Contributions: welcome, but **CHECK WITH ME FIRST** as space is drastically limited and I have never had room for everything, ever. Don't risk doing a whole lot of work for nothing.

Letters: Will get a pretty-close-to-instant reply with SASE (or two IRCs for overseas). Others may or may not. Phoning is a good idea.

Distribution: me (Perth), Robert Brokenmouth (Adelaide), Ian Wadley (Brisbane), David Nichols (Sydney) and David Laing/Shock (Melbourne).

Back Issues

#1-#4, #6, #8: not available.

#5 (October '86): Martha's Vineyard, Died Pretty, Errol H. Tout, Citadel Records, Waltons, Blue Ruin, Flamin' Groovies, Paul Kelly, Gravybills, A Company Of Angels, Sydney punk. \$1 mail-order, 75¢ distributors.

also done a cover of "All You Get From Love" by the Carpenters for a Waterfront/Shock charity compilation. The mini-album label has yet to be decided. The band will be back in Perth soonish or "when the record is out."

• **MANIC PIZZA** have had a lineup change, Simon leaving due to T'Roll commitments and being replaced by Laura MacFarlane (b.v.).

• The **MARS BASTARDS** have put out a new tape, "Crazy", but it's almost gone! and won't be reissued. Grab while you can. The band is going into Planet to record in August and is looking for a label. Playing at the end of the month. (43/59 Malcolm Street, West Perth 6005)

• **DAVID McCOMB** has a solo single on the schedule for UK release July 28, probably not to be released in Australia. Watch the import shops.

• **A MONTH OF SUNDAYS** are now a three-piece with the departure of **John Dutton** from the lead guitar spot. "Just differences in musical direction; he's getting a new band together" (Neil). The band is presently recording four tracks with Dom Mariani and Greg Dear at Planet, guests on the recording including **Matt Corcoran** on whatever, **Dom Mariani** on lead guitar and **Bob Patience** (Dave Hole Band) on Hammond organ and Leslie speaker. "Our main thrust is to record. When that's done, we'll look for a new guitarist." These four tracks are to be put out with the two already recorded as a six-track CD/cassette. "I'll have to get myself a CD player now so I can play my own album. Dom and Greg are working together really well as producers — Greg understands all the machines and technical details, whereas Dom is a rock 'n' roller at heart."

A Month Of Sundays won't be playing until the CD is recorded and possibly not until it's released, but in the meantime you can catch their alter-ego the **MANDELBROT SET**, which is M.O.S. plus **Matt Corcoran** (and now minus John Dutton), this being the band actually reviewed in PF#14. Neil Preston is also getting something together with **Velo Zupanovich** and **James Rogers** — "full-on distortion guitars with nice sweet melodies" — Neil and Velo having played at the Electric Crayon Set show on Saturday 20th July as the **MOODS**, though the final name of this new band is still up in the air. (clo PO Box 8068, Stirling Street, Perth 6849)

• The **RAINYARD** have "Technicolour Blind" on the rooArt *Youngblood III* compilation and a 7" of "Let It Speed/Die" on the way. Next show August 9th at the Melbourne with the Chevilles.

• Trivia time: did you know that the un-

#7 (October '87): Greg Dear, Stu Spasm/Lubricated Goat, Rabbit's Wedding, Triffids, White Cross, Lime Spiders, Did-dy-wah Hoodaddys, Kansas City Killers, Pontiac Conspiracy, Caterwaul, Sydney punk, Liverpool. \$2 mail, \$1.20 distributors.

#9 (December '88): Mick Harvey pt 1 (Bad Seeds), Honeys, Triffids family tree, White Cross family tree. \$1 mail, 75¢ distributors. Slightly water-soiled PF#9 still available free with other back issues or post.

#10 (April '89): Kim Salmon, Neptunes, Widdershins, Kryptonics, Waterfront Records interview and discography, Summer Suns, Rainyard, A Month Of Sundays, Mick Harvey pt 2 (Crime And The City Solution), Purple Hearts, Hunters & Collectors, Sunday's Child, '88 roundup, Peter Hartley philosophy, Waltons/Love Pump family tree, Mangolds/Neptunes family tree. \$2 mail, \$1.44 distributors.

#11 (February '90): Black-Eyed Susans, Celibate Rifles, Ed Kuepper, Rabbit's Wedding (five pages), Martha's Vineyard, Greg Dear/Beautiful Losers, TISM, Brisbane, fourteen pages of news & reviews. \$2 mail, \$1.44 distributors.

#11½ (November '90): News on seventy different Perth bands (Perth band update for '90), zine reviews and why every songwriter should join APRA. Free with other back issues or send postage (\$1 Australia, US\$2 overseas).

Special deal for overseas readers: get the lot above for US\$10 air.

#12 (February '91): Someloves, Charlotte's Web, Chevilles, Crabstick, news and reviews. Quite limited, so \$1 by post while they last. (Trickling out.)

released **KIM SALMON** solo LP actually reached test-pressing stage? Yep, copies exist in the world. Hmm, perhaps not so trivial.

• **SPIRAL DRIVE** is the new permanent name for **JANCO'S MASK**, the lineup remaining Jason Ward (g.v), Mark Taylor (g.v) and Mark Ward (b), plus "floating machinery" (Mark). "We'll be playing again when we find the right gigs, 'cos we've done lots of dodgy ones. More interesting ones, something that we can enjoy. We're spending some time absorbing some things. I think we're getting more interested in noise and sound. A bit freer, a bit more confused."

• **THROMBUS's Nun Chuckers** double 7" has been delayed due to the incredibly bright move of taking the job to Modern Records. The records have been promised by Modern on a daily basis for the last month. Plans were for bassist Anthony Isaacs to go over and camp out in the factory until the scrupulously honest folk at Modern come through with the requisite frisbees, but (latest, day before press) is that they are on the way! Really, truly! They've seen the postal receipt and everything! Check the Dada window display!

Tom Scutt is almost off his walking stick, and the band's next shows are at the Karrinyup Tavern on Friday 9th August and then the Australian Thrombus Show at the Melbourne on Saturday 17th — free beer and cider 8pm-9pm. Coming soon: the Thrombus Karaoke Night!

Modern have a policy that half the payment for a pressing must be made up-front of everything, with the other half being required with approval of the test pressing. We can see why. (clo 26 Karimba Street, Wanneroo 6065)

• **TWENTIETH CENTURY CRUCIFIXION's 12" EP Angel** is just out (*My Movie Show / This Is City // Only In America / Es Walt*, "Only In America" being the standout track). The launch is Sunday 4th August at Fruition, this to be their last show for eight weeks as **Dave New-Wave (b)** is going to America for eight weeks. (134 Manning Road, Wilson 6107)

• The **VOMIT BAGS** are Tracey Austin and Johnny Thursday and have released two cassettes, *Come Dancing* (1989) and *Look Out Doctor, Here Comes A Big One!* (1990). Just out is their third, the cassingle "D.I.Y. (It's Not Plumbing, Is It?)". You can also get the *Vomit Bags T-shirt*, "featuring the decapitation of a king size teddy bear with a rusty saw." The band also enclosed photos of their famed Kidnapping of Maynard stunt, but we at PF have aesthetic standards. (Fan Club: Sue President, 67 Samson Street, White Gum Valley 6161)

#13 (April '91): Healers, Clean, Greasy Pop, janglers' family tree. Free.
 #14 (June '91): A Terminal Posture, Mars Bastards. Free.
 Postage: Australia: \$1.00 extra on total. Overseas SAL: A\$4.00 extra on total. Overseas airmail: A\$5.00 extra on total.
 Payment: Cash is best (Aust/US/UK preferred), but it's your risk — hide it well. Money orders or bank cheques (Aust. dollars, else a huge chunk goes in exchange) are expensive but safest. Personal cheques are fine in Australia, but will be ignored from elsewhere. Make everything payable to DAVID GERARD.

Deadlines

The deadline for advertising and news is **MONDAY 16th SEPTEMBER, 1991**, the magazine being due at the printer the following Monday. The issue is due at the end of the month.

News after that time will probably make it in (up until about a day or two before the printer, in fact), and you should definitely call and tell of anything you have going.

Ad bookings after that time will probably make it in. (I took one at four days' notice: this issue. I LOVE YOU.) Don't be afraid to ask. As I have said *ad nauseam*, this magazine doesn't run on air.)

Payment up-front for ads helps a lot in getting the cash together for the printer. Please do it.

If outside Perth, please send the artwork and payment. Calling ahead and saying what you've sent is a good idea (a slight booking). If it arrives after the deadline, I'll

do my level best to fit it in (see above), but it may get held over.

Overseas advertisers: US cash equivalent is fine.

Cancellation of ads: Make bloody sure you bloody tell me in good time, not the third time I ask for the artwork three days before the printer. Such behaviour will henceforth cause publication of your name in our brand-new *Horse's Arse* column, whose contents are being polished up as I speak.

Subscriptions

Australia: A\$5 for five issues. (Try a \$5 note inside a piece of paper to hide it.)

US: A\$14/US\$11 for six issues air.

UK/Europe: A\$16/US\$13/UK£6 for six issues air.

US/UK/Europe: A\$9/US\$7/UK£4 for six issues surface.

"Air" means economy air, i.e. SAL. If SAL isn't available to your country, you'll get five issues by ordinary air instead.

If you live somewhere not specified above, write with 2 IRCs and I'll tell you your rate.

Advertising

Party Fears comes out **REGULARLY BIMONTHLY**, dammit, end of every second month. Reach **two thousand** eager, grasping readers desperately haunting their local record/book/coffee shop for a copy 'cos they always run out. Go for it. **FULL PAGE (184h x 271v): \$120**

HALF PAGE (184h x 134v or 90h x 271v): \$60
QUARTER PAGE (90h x 134v): \$30
EIGHTH PAGE (44h x 134v): \$20
Front QUARTER: \$40 (first come, first served); Back FULL: \$120 (ditto); Odd shapes: by very early booking and at exorbitant surcharges.

Apologies to our non-Perth readers for the delay. Were you wondering if I'd upped and quit? Well, PF don't die that easy and that's official. Last issue's eastern copies were still being assembled when this issue went to print (I get them back from the printer as a pile of separate sheets and myself and a pack of helpers run around tables for ten hours assembling them and folding them ... it's 'cos I'm a cheapskate and won't pay the printer to do it) because I left it a week and then went down with the work-related lurgi, all repetitive movement verboten ... currently spending two weeks off work, working through a hideously degrading exercise regimen and waiting for ergonomic furniture, i.e. that suited to someone who is 6'4" and not 5'8". Anyway, most eastern copies should arrive with a #14 tucked inside. Enjoy. I promise to do better next time.

This issue's dedication goes to Richard Kingsmill of JJJ-FM. Why would I dedicate PF to a JJJ DJ? Two reasons: 1. He hates CDs. 2. Announcing a 10yr: "Well, it's only going to Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane, so I guess it isn't an Australian tour ..." This is what we like to hear.

Other News

• **RAINFOREST RAMPAGE:** The Rainforest Action Group have a benefit show, the *Rainforest Rampage*, happening at the Ozone on Saturday 10th August. Scheduled to play are Cinema Prague, Charlotte's Web, Manic Pizza, the Brautigans and the Pink Fluffy Bunnies, plus the Serious Young Men (comedy duo), Gabby the Mad Bad Witch Bitch Woman, Mar Bucknell (these two poetry), street theatre and possibly some video stuff. Show up.

• **BEDLAM BOOKS** may disappear at month's end, after an eight-year run. Get in there and snap up what you can, while you can. Clint Walker plans to go to Sydney and take any left-over stock with him.

Perth Family Tree #7

A word on the Perth Family Trees: sure, they're full of spelling errors, factual errors, etc., etc. This is because they are largely based on the recollections of musicians.

Correct information is eagerly desired (with refs) and will be acted upon. **WRITE IT DOWN** and send it to **Ross Chisholm c/o PF**. Do not come up to me and tell me, as I will tell you to go away.

SODOMIZED AGAIN!



I WAS DETERMINED NOT TO SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE DOING THE SAME MEANINGLESS SHIT! REAL LIFE HAD TO BE ELSEWHERE.

18 YEARS OF OBEYING THE RULES OF MY FAMILY AND TEACHERS. I EVEN SERVED TIME IN COLLEGE. NOW THIS....



I BEGAN TO FUCK UP AND STEAL FROM THE REAL TIME BANDITS-THE BOSS. I ALMOST LOOKED FOWARD TO WORK UNTIL...



I WAS TIRED OF WAITING FOR "SOMEDAY." I MADE UP MY MIND TO ACT! I DIDN'T WANT TO DIE FROM TERMINAL BOREDOM. JANE HAD A SUGGESTION...



SHE WAS RIGHT! IN A SOCIETY THAT ABOLISHES ADVENTURE, THE ONLY ADVENTURE IS IN ABOLISHING THAT SOCIETY...



TODAY'S OUR LUCKY DAY! WE'VE HUNG THE BOSS AND SEIZED THE FACTORY. NOW LET'S TRASH THE COUNTRY!!



Frank Discussion

The Healers interviewed in the rehearsal room by David on a phenomenally bad recorder belonging to Miles Hitchcock just after their eastern jaunt over summer.

Miles: "The tour was fine, the tour was good."
Did you come back all wanting to kill each other?
Tony: "Oh, we did that there."
Miles: "I'm on about my fourth life now. It was pretty good, considering we'll probably stay in there until we're forty, forty-five ..."
Tony: "At the Prince Of Wales (St. Kilda), there's a pigeon's nest on the window with syringes as part of it. I should have taken a picture of it and made it into a postcard of St. Kilda."
Miles: "There wasn't really a tour, we just did a poster round."
Tony: "We washed car windscreens as well, which was pretty ..."
Miles: "See, you can't believe the hype."
Tony: "I've forgotten it already, really."
Your brain just doesn't take it in?
Tony: "Oh, it takes it in, but only the shit ..."
Miles: "A tour was a good thing to do. It was like we turned up in town and were a new band in Melbourne. We started off with a couple of people in the MCG bar."
Craig: "Oh yeah, the drunken yobboos."
Miles: "Yeah, they were the only people who enjoyed the first gig! That night we were supporting the Clouds."
Jim: "It was a weird gig. They were from Sydney, we were from Perth."
Tony: "And it was the first night for both bands."
Miles: "There was that Led Zeppelin freak."
Craig: "Oh, that guy! We first saw him at the MCG. He kept putting 'Black Dog' on the CD jukebox and playing the drums to it. And then we saw him drumming in this band."

I heard that interview with Ian Rogerson on JJJ ... Did you hang up on him?
(all laugh)
Craig: "That's what these guys thought. The truth is that the satellite connection dropped out."
Miles: "Tony and I were sitting in our hotel room and we thought the same."
Tony: "I looked at Miles and went, 'he hasn't, has he? He's bound to have done it, I saw his face before he left ...'"
It was really interesting hearing him going "jabber-jabber" and you responding slowly, "uh ... well ..."
Craig: "I was in a room in the ABC in Melbourne and he was in Sydney; he came back from playing 'Secret Show', and he asked a really good question, and I answered it ..."
Miles: "It was a weird question: 'It sounds like the music has come a long way since the "Dark Country" EP.' It was odd 'cos that track was actually done at the same session as the EP."
Craig: "I started answering, then he started talking about having lost the connection."
"The ABC in Melbourne is not even as impressive as the local one. The Perth ABC is a palace. You walk into the Melbourne one and it looks really dingy in there ..."
Tony: "This tiny little foyer and all these little rooms."
Craig: "... and it was two o'clock and I said, 'I'm here to do this interview with Ian Rogerson at two-thirty,' and she says, 'OK, sit down ...' and, at twenty-one past, she took me into a little room and we did the interview ... and lost the connection, and I just walked out of the room and walked up to reception and said, 'what's going on?' She said, 'oh, the satellite must have cut off. We should be getting a phone-call from Sydney. Sit down.' They called. She was the only person I saw there at the ABC."

How's the record doing?
Craig: "Nobody knows."

Miles: "I think it's doing all right ... but we haven't really heard how 'Dark Country's done yet."
Craig: "You could talk about all these songs for ages; it depends on how you want to go into it. Every song is a statement of some kind and any kind of statement leads onto something else; the implications go on forever and end up with questions you can't answer. But we're talking about rock music, so ..."
Miles: "It's easy to talk about how a song comes about; it's harder to talk about what a song's trying to express."
Craig: "How it came together is OK, but maybe what we really want to talk about is the finished product and what it means to us. I'm pretty sure that a lot of people that see us play don't really have much of an idea about the full implications. That's fine, people take out of it what they want; that's OK."

Let's imagine that someone's bought the record — they've got the record and the lyric sheet — and they're reading this and reading about the songs. Imagine it's a reasonable human you're talking to.

Craig: "Yeah, exactly. Someone who wants to know. ... It's not as if these ideas are exclusive to us and our songs are anything startlingly new."

Miles: (something lost in the garble, about 'desperation' ... garble 'passion'...) "All the songs haven't got a message, but they do express passion."

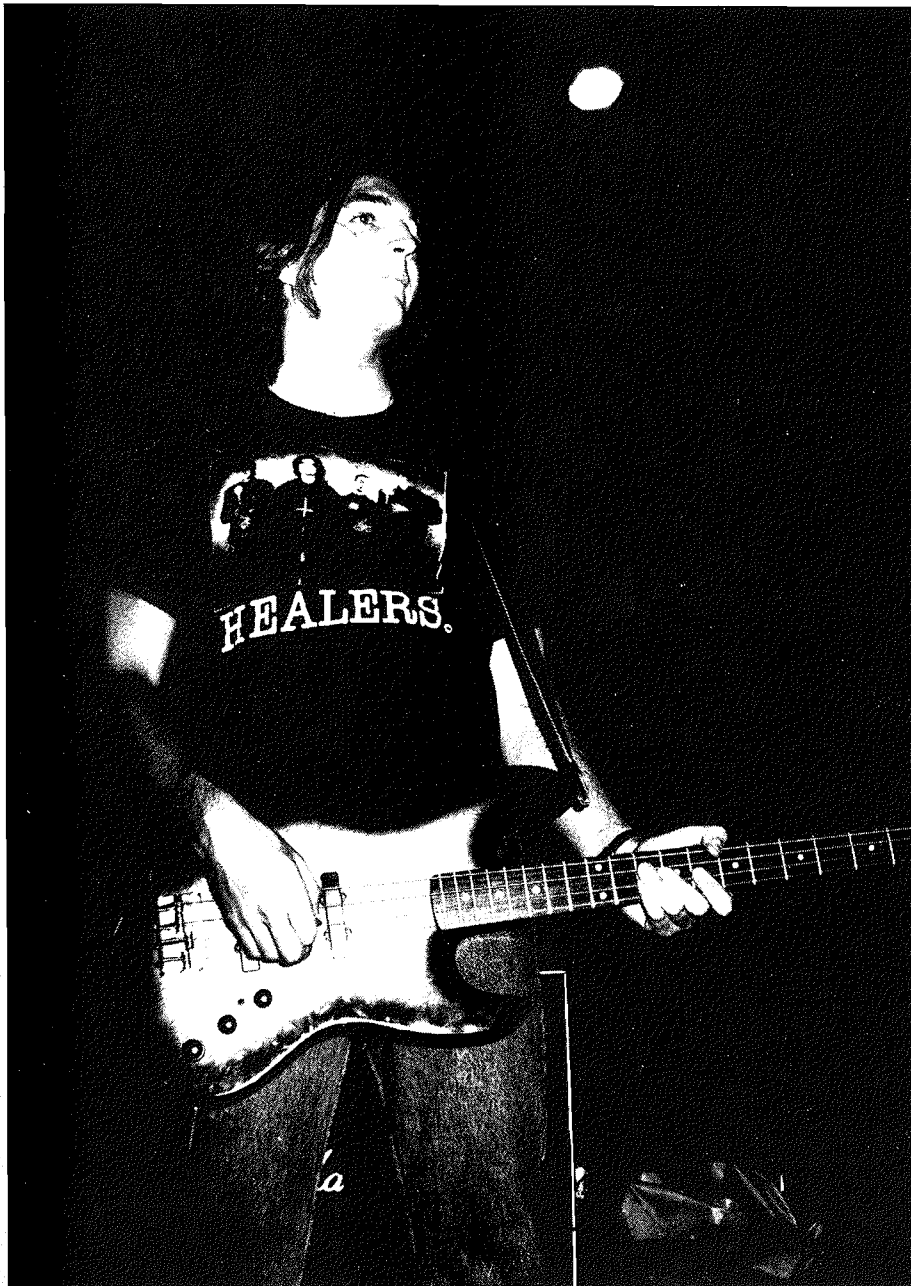
Craig: "Because our songs are in a rock format, the meaning is not something that you'd normally find in rock music. Most rock music is celebrations of sex, cars, the strings attached, whatever."

"I think about these songs not so much in a format of playing them to an audience set in a pub, hundreds of people there, most of them drunk, you there playing these songs really loud ... that's OK, it's a form of entertainment; but it's not the whole idea and it's not the impetus behind getting those songs together; because the idea to me is ... I wrote half of these songs sitting in my home, in my bedroom or something, looking out the window ... moments like that."

"When do people listen to music? People go and see bands play shows in pubs, but the real thing is when they've got control of it in their own room or something — they've got a record and they can become intimate with it. And I'd like to have a record that people could become intimate with; not just a rock'n'roll record that sounds like any kind of stupid noise."

Though disposable music for the moment can be great.

Craig: "Those kind of attitudes are fine. Everybody



Healers

should do whatever they think about doing. You could sit around and talk about this stuff and still be disposable ... we could talk about our songs for weeks and months and years and still be disposable. It doesn't matter if you spend a year on a song and a lyric, getting it the way you want it, and release it as a record and then see it two months later in a second-hand bin. It doesn't matter. It's been done. You've got to follow it through. Take a step at a time. Then other ideas present themselves."

I like the way you did the whole lyric sheet without titles or breaks or even apostrophes.

Craig: "Well, that's the thing — I have a real problem about the lyrics. I don't want to put them onto a page like a poem, written out as first verse, second verse ... it's not poetry, it's another thing. They're songs. They're sung. And on the page you wouldn't see that, so it wouldn't be accurate. But it's good to have 'em on there — no titles, just the words there."

Miles: "Also, it's an album, a thing together, rather than individual pieces."

"Wildfire":

Craig: "Tony and Jim were in a band called Jerry-Anne's Plan and they had a song called 'Wildfire'. John Phatouros was the vocalist and he wrote the lyrics. We decided that we'd play that."

Tony: "At the time, we were looking for a three-minute pop song, 'cos we couldn't write anything that was less than five or six minutes, and that was the one."

Craig: "I changed major parts of the lyrics. The music is changed a bit; it's shorter than the version Jerry-Anne's Plan did. 'Baby, I'm a wildfire,' the chorus, is John's. He told me that one day he got up, he felt great, he was in his car, driving down the road, and just said, 'Baby, I'm a wildfire!' He says that's where that lyric came from. Tony wrote the line 'Scratch my head, my brains fall out.'

"That's the song that I have the least knowledge of as far as what it means, 'cos Tony wrote that line, John wrote the other line, I'm just trying to make sense of it. To me, it's about an energy thing, it's not in brain mode. It's about confusion. ... Most of our songs are about confusion."

Miles: "It's probably the most off-the-cuff and least cared-about song."

Craig: "It's a many-twisted thing."

Tony: "It was good at the time. It's a pop single."

"Ghosts":

Miles: "Jim came in with the chorus and most of the verse. The structure. It was written in late '88. Most of the

record was written in that time."

Jim: "I had most of the music down and most of the lyrics."

Craig: "You had that line 'Try not to get blown away.' I just streamlined it. Repetition — I picked out the lines that I thought were good and repeated them."

"It's not 'I'm a ghost,' it's 'It's a ghost ...' They're all the same — confusion, aimlessness ... searching for something, anything at all ... it just seems that even the simplest human relationship, between one person and another, is such a fragile thing, even though it's what we base our lives upon, especially the people that are closest to us. And the same, if you can hold onto that ... it's a big if."

"Secret Show":

Craig: "I wrote that before the Healers."

Jim: "It's a very strange song, that."

Craig: "It's really personal to me."

How did you come up with "a bone-white moon"? I really like that line.

Craig: "That's ... I used to spend a lot of time sitting at a desk, looking at dictionaries, thesauruses and bits of paper, thinking about things, and that just occurred to me. A lot of the lyrics (... *garble* ...) simply because I really like the dictionary; and a thesaurus as well — that even more, because it doesn't give definitions, just similar words."

"It was originally a yellow moon. I'm not criticising the moon or anything ... 'bone-white' was more visceral."

(conversation steers to Ray Bradbury, religion, science, the difference between the two ...)

Miles: "I like the 'cataract from the sky.'"

Craig: "Yeah. A cataract is water, blindness ..."

Miles: "The combination of those two meanings."

Craig: "Yeah. That's a happy accident."

Tony: "And the cow jumped over the bone-white moon."

Craig: "That's the stuff I want to get into." (all laugh)
There's a Nick Cave thing with the line "... and the moon's a cataract."

Craig: "Blind Lemon Jefferson. I don't know what he means by that ... I don't know what Nick Cave means at all. I used to be a fan, but not really any more."

He's a great pop star. The David Bowie of the '90s.

Craig: "He's OK as a pop star, that's fine. I'd rather Nick Cave than Jon Bon Jovi. I knew that from the first moment I heard *Prayers On Fire* or *Junkyard* ... 'this is

part 2

making a really big effort to sound like what it sounds like ...

Junkyard is such a full-on killer rock'n'roll record.

Craig: "I reckon, I can hear Chuck Berry in *Junkyard*."

Prayers On Fire is a bit wanky and theatrical.

Craig: "Yeah, yeah, yeah, but I like that as well. There's a lot of pretentious shit, some of it's half-realised and they probably don't like it either. I like the idea that the Birthday Party, after *Junkyard*, didn't release any full albums. I think that's a good idea; there's only so much you can stand of that kind of stuff. *Junkyard* is a real chore ... two sides of it is a bit much."

"You know the song 'Dim Locator' ... the guitar is just rock'n'roll, Chuck Berry or something. The lyrics are stupid ... 'Intriquintomtry.' I've got a much better word than that, I'm saving it up: 'Pornofornocacophagomanical.' I've got to put that in a rock'n'roll song. It means: 'insanely, exotically erotic — in a furnace, fornicating — shit-eatingly.' That's what my *Penguin Dictionary Of Strange And Obscure Words* says it means."

"You're In My Blood":

Craig: "That was written because someone told me there was going to be another Bamboos single, so I wrote a song 'cos we had no songs left to do. This was right at the end, after everything, just before it totally died. Rusty had left, Greg had been over east and we never saw each other, but there was still this idea that there was going to be another single."

"By the time I finished it, it was obvious that it wasn't ever going to be a single for the Bamboos. It was actually one of the first songs when the Healers started jamming."

It wasn't a Bamboos single, but it was going to be a Kryptonics single — whatever happened with the split single?

Miles: "Ian, being the commercial genius that he is, decided that it would be really good as a marketing exercise. This was when we were playing with the Kryptonics all the time."

Tony: "The song we were meant to do, 'Melancholy Valentine', that's a good song. The only way to play that is to hang back a bit."

Miles: "It's almost like country."

Jim: "We didn't really want it ... we didn't really want them playing 'Blood'."

Craig: "It just didn't happen because ... it obviously didn't inspire us that much, so nothing happened. We didn't go out of our way to make it happen."



Miles: "It also clashed with the time that we were recording. We were working really hard on our own record."

Tony: "It would have been good if it wasn't going to be released as a single. It would have been good to do it for fun ..."

As opposed to part of an advertising campaign.

Tony: "It was too much ... work, almost. The only reason we would have done it would have been because we're good friends."

Miles: "It didn't fit in."

"What I Said":

Miles: "The chorus occurred from a jam." (long bit lost in *garble*) "It was another serendipity thing."

"Margaret":

Craig: "'Margaret' is inspired by a woman's face, a woman that I don't know. I used to work in a factory with a woman called Margaret who had this kind of face that inspired 'like a doomsday cabaret'. It's just an idea. I saw that face and made up a song about her. The way her face looked, it wasn't just an ordinary face, it was a really tragic face and, in a way, was kind of beautiful, but not in a way that most people would think of beauty."

Tony: "'She's thinking about vodka and the sound of ice.'"

Craig: "Yeah, I put that in there — I really can't remember why — but that's nothing to do with her or anybody. That was an idea; I just played it onto a tape and brought it along to the band."

Tony: "I remember Survival saying something like, 'if you're going to put an album out, you might as well have all songs like this or don't have it on there at all.' Ten 'Margaret's or none.'"

That's rubbish, it sounds great where it is.

Tony: "Yeah. We were trying to explain to them that ... the idea of this album, we wanted to have, y'know, a

diverse album. We didn't want it to be a standard rock 'n'roll album. The way the band's going."

Jim: "They don't understand, they just think we're another Screaming Tribesmen. Twelve rock songs on an album, that's what they want."

(!!) That sounds like a really good reason to change record companies.

Tony: "Well ... um, yeah."

Craig: "They liked 'Lonesome One'."

Jim: "Oh, they did, actually."

Miles: "We were playing songs that were really sparking; at the time of the album, 'Margaret' was fairly new and we were really right into it. It should be there because it was part of what we were playing at the time. Then someone from the record company who's never seen the band live and didn't even know what we look like is expecting to hear a re-creation of a certain fashion. Then again, they did eventually accept it."

Tony: "I just really didn't understand how a publishing company, Survival, are dead against having an album with diverse sort of material. To survive these days you have to do that."

What about the bombastic ending?

Craig: "Yeah, that is a bit like that. That will never happen again."

I listen to it and keep wishing it didn't have that ending on it ...

Miles: "Yeah ... I regret that, in a way. I did that drumming as an in-joke."

Tony: "It just didn't happen, it just didn't work."

Jim: "It was very deliberate at the time. I've always thought of that ending as tongue-in-cheek, anyway. I've always played it like that. It never really sounded ... orchestral on the record."

Craig: "The attitude, it doesn't fit in with the beginnings of the song. That's what we didn't understand."

"It's like 'Every Time I Die' on record ... it sounds like

a 'rock band' fucking around with a tango rhythm and doing it for a joke, when, actually, the song's better than that."

Tony: "It should be played the way it should be played."

Craig: "It's almost screaming out, 'we are a rock band, playing this for a joke!'"

Tony: "Yeah, exactly. But it's not a big thing, it's just the way we played it. It's just a matter of knowing about it and what can go wrong."

"Goodbye Joe":

Craig: "'Goodbye Joe' is based on the character Joe Christmas in the novel by William Faulkner called *Light In August*. The middle section, about 'Everywhere I'm walking now! Dark cloud above me now,' is taken from a Hoyt Axton song called 'Voodoo Blues'. The final line of the song, 'Do not go gentle,' is taken, obviously, from Dylan Thomas' 'Do not go gentle into that good night.'

"The rest of it, I made up a story about this character, Joe Christmas. The real thing I put in is the bit about 'Carrion crow,' about the meaninglessness of his existence. In the end, he's gonna die; just because of the way he is, he's going to be forced to die early.

"He's a half-caste, not white or black, and he's ..."

Miles: "He's hounded down by his community. He's accused of murder and it's sort of confused whether he did or didn't. It's got the whole American fear of the Negro, purity and the odds of a second-class citizen ... he was blamed for this murder, so he was chased down and killed by the White racist community."

Craig: "The guy also has a relationship with a white woman. She tries to give him religion as well as trying to do the normal things that they do ... but she tries to read the bible to him, tries to give him this White version of Christianity. And he obviously doesn't need that at all, he doesn't want it. He's a strange guy, a really strange guy. He works in a sawmill and doesn't relate to anybody. Somebody offers him some lunch — he's got no money, no food — and he says, 'I ain't hungry, you can keep your muck!' 'Muck.' He's the archetype of the outsider, and he comes to a grisly end.

"This is not in the song, but 'My, my, a body does get around' is about a young girl who gets pregnant to some man who runs away to the same town as Joe Christmas and follows the man there by wagon, horse, walking, whatever, and she says that a couple of times. 'This morning I was in Alabama, now I'm in ...'"

What about the music?

Craig: "Um ... I wrote that — I had the idea of starting off with 'Carrion Crow' ... I was sitting, again, at the desk in the room looking out the window and with the words in my head, then I'd come in and sing it. A lot of the time, if you don't think about it, just do it ... see, things happen naturally if you don't fight it and just let it happen. I didn't work that music out, I just let it happen. I worked on the lyrics."

"That's The Way Charlie Goes":

Miles: "We wrote 'Charlie' at the ABC studios one night when we were doing 'Dark Country' and the JJJ compilation track."

Craig: "No, we wrote that here."

It's like a song without a song ... a big intro then an ending.

Tony: "I think that, every time we play it, people maybe think we're making it up on the spot ..."

Miles: "It's actually very hard to play because it's pretty unstructured — it's such a simple idea that it's hard."

Tony: "To play it well, you have to get back to how it started — get that attitude back."

Craig: "That stuff about Charles Manson on the record ... that just happened when we recorded it."

Miles: "The Charlie in the song isn't really Charles Manson, is it?"

Craig: "No, no."

Tony: "It's also a saying."

Miles: "We were at (garble's) place and this girl called Charlie was there, and she'd run off ..."

Craig: "... and this girl just said, 'that's the way Charlie goes.' It's not about a girl called Charlie, it's not about anyone; it's about ... something. A person that you might be writing about in a song — somebody called Charlie, somebody called Joe, someone called Margaret — all these are composite figures of different people that are either real people or ideal people, fictional characters ... it's not really about anybody. 'That's The Way Charlie Goes' is certainly not about Charles Manson, and I don't even know who this girl Charlie was."

"Gutterward Angel":

Craig: "Miles came to rehearsal with a song called 'Riot Queen', which had some lyrics and pretty much ..."

Miles: "The structure was there. We changed the music. It's the sort of song where I had what felt like a quarter of an idea. I had what turned out to be the verse, the bassline, the little break that happens and also the progression in the chorus. I had the first half of the song with some words. We played it, then Craig just took what I had lyrically home and completely changed it."

Tony: "If you heard the first thing Miles did on a four-track, you'd think, 'how the hell could you get this out of that!'" But you can still tell where the flavour's coming from."

Craig: "I spent a hell of a long time on the lyrics. We worked out the music together as a band, which was

good."

Who did the music for the chorus? I mean, some songs have a chorus, but that song has a chorus.

Miles: "It was sort of there when I did it, but Tony put the inflections in it, the bit that builds up. (sings it to self) I basically had a fetus of a song that we all worked on and turned into a full song."

Craig: "That's how I approached the lyrics, 'cos I've gotta write these lyrics and I've gotta sing them; and not only sing the words, but sing them in a melody."

"Working on those lyrics took quite a while. I had the title 'Gutterward Angel' and really liked it and wanted to write a song called 'Gutterward Angel'. This song 'Riot Queen' came along and I spent a lot of time working on it and thought, 'fuck, this is probably the song.'"

Miles: "Where you sing 'gutterward angel,' I had 'riot queen.'"

Craig: "Yeah. I had actually finished the lyrics, and it wasn't gelling in my head with 'riot queen,' so I thought 'fuck it, I'll call it 'Gutterward Angel'; and the moment I changed the title, it all made sense."

"That song's about the same things all the other songs are ... Confusion. It's a very physical song about simple things that might happen — when you're in close proximity to another human being, the warmth of that person; the ideas of survival and the ideas of the future that you might get from another person, not from yourself. 'While we sat in the dark, the city shone' — while we're going through this torment as part of our lives, everything else is still going on regardless. That final line is actually a Daily News headline from a blackout."

"It Ain't Me, Babe" — why did you put that on instead of another original?

Craig: "I looked in my head at the way the album was going to go, the order of songs, and that was the obvious thing to finish the record with at the time. I had an order in my head before recording. I can't remember what happened, but I had that order in my head."

Miles: "It Ain't Me" seemed to fit in. We worked out one night to do this particular Dylan song in this way."

Craig: "It was actually Kelvin Flanders' idea. It was his idea that we do 'Richard Corey' as well."

Miles: "We just adopted it as a live song. It was popular, which influenced it going on the record, but also the fact that it fitted in. And it seemed a good dedication as well."

OK, what's next? What have you got cooking?

Craig: "Um ... This is a really important time, 'cos if there's any kind of future for this band, this point we're at now is really important. We're going to do some things that are good for the band."

"We've got a contract with Survival for three years, three records, but I think we have to just play music — we were talking today about just playing some music and releasing it locally on cassette; not necessarily songs that we've worked out for the Healers' set or anything like that, but just music 'cos there's music happening."

"I'd rather not play the same thing we've been playing; I'd rather split up the band than just keep doing the same thing. And I think we all feel that way."

"The one thing you can always expect from us is that the only reason we're doing this is because we really want to do it."

Miles: "We come up with a lot of stuff all the time that we don't really know what to do with and I think it would be good to get out a tape of stuff that isn't necessarily structured songs."

"At the same time, the end product that is this album was born from us coming down for a few afternoons and writing songs; it was born from a lot of chaos and inspiration and, if you like, serendipity and happy accidents. But we're at the point now where I think we're going to have to be a bit more planned in the music we write."

Craig: "It's going to be much better. The next record's going to be much better."

Do you think Secret Show effectively communicates some of the soul of the Healers?

Jim: "Yeah, I think so."

Tony: "It's hard to say, really, 'cos you always change, y'know. Well, sure, otherwise we wouldn't have proceeded this far."

Miles: "I think it has the sound of the Healers at the time it was recorded. We're at the point now where we've probably played a hundred gigs since we recorded this album; we've been waiting for this record to come out and we've been having ideas in that time. And we can't just rely on coming down here and spending weeks coming up with a few good songs."

"The Healers' sound has happened, it's an accident; but now, at this point, we almost know what that sound is and almost know what we can do, how we can use that sound to do things better than we have. That's the way I see it."

Craig: "Yeah. I'm thinking about making a record that's ... I don't listen to a lot of contemporary music — I listen to some things — but I want to make a record that's a really good record. I'm not talking about from the point of view of a Perth band making a record, I'm talking about from the point of view of any band in the world."

There's a hundred thousand good records out there, and you want to make a record better than them.

Craig: "Exactly. I mean, you've got to aim ... This might sound megalomaniacal, but I want to aim to make a record that's better than any other record you've ever heard."

You're artistically ambitious?

Craig: "I'm very fucking ambitious artistically. See, we're at the stage now where we've been around long enough that it's crucial that we think about these kind of things. We've been around long enough to have decided that we either have to really do it, or not do it at all. That's the way I feel. And I've decided that I really want to do it and I think we've all decided that we really want to do it. So from now on, it's going to be done. I want to make some music. I want to record a record that's as good as anything I can think of."

"The thing is, I'm getting bored listening to music; I can't find new music that inspires me that much! So, logically, I think, I'm going to have to make it."

"You get to the stage ... I listen to some things. Jane's Addiction, I really like them a lot ... the music's great, but I like the idea of Jane's Addiction — I like the idea that it's rock'n'roll and it's really effective, but it's art as well. And we can do that; but, more importantly, we can live that and make things that are real, not just crap ... not just stupid rock music. I'd rather split up than make stupid rock music. I'd rather not do anything."

"I could go on about this for hours, but I think that'll do."

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It has no home
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Black beating trouble
I am an insect to such napalm
Black endless arrhythmic engine
Peel up the concrete
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The engine is above me
The engine is beside me
My engine is black within me
Dragster beat laying scars of rubber
The road of my soul is my engine
I'm in trouble dynamo pulse
Grind black grin chop shudder
Feed my engine kiss me black
My engine will hold me evermore
Leave me wasted by the road
I am but a casing
oh, my engine
Ache and beat within like fever
I'm in trouble I am diseased I am engine
Trouble disease engine
Engine altar disease
Crack up the slabs of my life
The worms fight for darkness
Here is my engine
Here is my familiar
Here is my disease

Robert Brokenmouth © 18.3.1991.

CELIBATE RIFLES — Ozone, June '91

Back In The Red / Jesus On TV / World Keeps Turning / Johnny / Cycle / Light / Killing Time / Electravisoin Mantra / Ocean Shore / O Salvation / Invisible Man / Glasshouse / Sean O'Farrell / Wonderful Life / Sometimes II (encore 1) Thank You America / L.G.M. / Temper Temper Mr Kemper I (encore 2) Born Out Of Time / Wild Desire

After years of waiting for the Rifles to make it to town, it was strange standing there waiting for them to emerge with the smell of burning incense wafting from the stage. Spying where the slammers were congregating, I decided the other side of the stage might be more conducive to actual listening, which just happened to be smack in front of Kent Steedman's speaker boxes. The Rifles came on, plugged in and plunged straight into "Back In The Red". Fuck, is Kent L*O*U*D!

It took the band a couple of songs before they seemed to feel happy enough to take a breather and acknowledge the audience. Damien Lovelock's vocals were a touch hard to hear early on, while bassist Jim Lowe remained coolly detached all night and, from where I was standing, Dave Morris seemed lost amongst the hair.

Some young guitar hopefuls were down the front casting an admiring glance or two at Kent's playing. He's a string-bender of quite some skill and subtlety, which I suspect is often overlooked because of the musical style and the volume at which he plays. He makes good use of his effects, especially the combined use of the tremolo arm and his wah-wah pedal. That's not to say the Rifles play everything at full pelt; "Ocean Shore" and "Glasshouse" showed a slower and, dare I say it, subtler side of the Rifles. Even those on the other side of the stage stopped slammng for a while and just sort of swayed. The band then immediately turned around and whipped them into a frenzy again with the boogie-ish "O Salvation"; or, as in "Sean O'Farrell", the audience witnessed Kent's attempt at dancing an Irish jig while still playing his guitar, while Damien had a hard time not laughing as he sang.

The material was pretty faithful to the album stuff, maybe a bit heavier and faster. The only cover of the night was something of a surprise once I'd recognised it — choosing to cover the New Christs' "Born Out Of Time" showed not only particularly good taste, but fitted very well into the flow of things.

I'm really glad they finally made it into town, shame it took so long. Apparently, they should be back in town about Christmas or New Year to plug their next album, next time using their own equipment. If you haven't heard them, go and have a listen. I may well see you down the front.

Larry W.

6-RTR GO LOCO: WATER DIVINERS / ERROL H. TOUT / BOB'S LOVE CHILD / DIXIE OUTLAWS / MARS BASTARDS / ROB SNARSKI / WALTONS / HEALERS — Old Melbourne, Saturday 29/6

The Water Diviners are no good. They are all good musicians, don't know what on-stage movement is and play horrible bland-jazz things that aren't really songs, but sort of *sound like* songs. You know the stuff. They play a lot around Perth due, doubtless, to great togetherness and professionalism of organisation. Everybody hated them. No-one I spoke to from RTR was quite sure how they got on the bill in the first place.

Errol played a bunch of unreleased stuff (or that I don't know, anyway) and was great. Errol just plays one guitar through a thousand black boxes without singing. The point is that he is there to *play music*, not to show off guitar techniques, and he never forgets this. Ever.

Bob's are going to be the new taste sensation in coming weeks and months. They are a nice indie-pop guitar band with a stand-up singing drummer (one snare, one cymbal, brushes) and amazingly good and together songs, especially considering this was their second-ever show (I had the privilege of attending the first, at Plaistowe's the previous Monday). They were placed between some moaning acoustic loser from New Zealand who did a Paul Kelly song, a Bob Dylan song and then an original about travelling from New Zealand to Perth and another band who I remember were truly

vile but, thankfully, no other detail. Admittedly, Bob's couldn't help but shine, though they would have even with fair competition. Dammit. We just drank as fast as we could and left ten seconds into the third band) and the folks danced all night. You will too. Check 'em soonest possible.

I have no fondness for rockabilly, but enjoyed the Dixie Outlaws a great deal. They put on a great show and played real well and I didn't even worry it was all covers. Apparently, they have a single of two originals on the way. The Dixie Outlaws are a good band.

The Mars Bastards played possibly the top set tonight. These boys have it together — a pop band with top-class songs that can really rock (man) as well. Packed floor again. One of the city's few first-raters at present (*n.b.*: see above re: Bob's).

Rob Snarski did a gorgeous set alone with a guitar and rates 97% only due to some inappropriateness of the room. Did you know that Rob did "Ocean Of You"



Live



live on *Good Morning Perth* on the morning of Thursday 27th? (Tapes welcomed, video or audio.) Rob is the King.

I ended up missing the *Waltons* altogether (upstairs sampling the delights of the Firm and the squillion DJ megastars, running in tandem with the show downstairs), but caught all of the *Healers*. Not a set to light the world (it started at 2:20am ... this sort of time of day occurring in this room has got to be against the order of nature), but a fine cap to the night — the diehards sticking around, some coffee, some food, some new stuff, some messing about, an unforced "Viva 6-RTR!" at the end.

Cute touch: the handbills and posters all around explaining the licensing regs for the night (drinks flowing downstairs to *midnight only*, coffee and food thereafter) with the last line: "All enquiries should be directed to 6-RTR Management." Find one.

THE AINTS — Ozone, June

I'm not sure what I was expecting from this. The band is a simple three-piece of Ed

Kuepper on guitar and vocals, Michael Couvret on bass and Mark Dawson on drums. At first, it seemed it could have been any band running through old Saints songs. I think the point when I realised just what was going on was when I realised that the ten-minute song they were nine minutes into was, in fact, "Runaway". It had been set up as an extended Kuepper hypnotic drone ... "drone" isn't precisely the correct word, but it should give you the idea. Keeping the drone running is the idea here — it's powerful and it drags you in.

Bought the live album as a souvenir — tonight's set being basically the album songs (album track listing: *This Perfect Day / Erotic Neurotic / Runaway / Know Your Product // River Deep Mountain High / Messin' With The Kid / Nights In Venice*). The LP comes in pink or purple, though both versions should have the bonus single with them. I don't know that it would work that well as an LP on its own, but it's a great trigger of memories.

Kuepper is the John Cale of the Saints — he doesn't get the bucks, but he makes the good records. This man deserves nomination for the Nobel prize for rock 'n' roll.

THE FISH JOHN WEST REJECT — White Sands, Sunday 14/7

The singer complained about the PF#12 Fish review live on stage on Thursday. Uhh, brilliant. Stylish. Not very nice considering that, of the one and a half dancers tonight, I was fully half. (You try jumping around with an immobile right arm.)

(Repeat after me: *All Guitarists Are Knobs And This Is The Law Forevermore*. La, la, la la la ...)

There is nothing much good about the White Sands. It is located in nowhere and is a poeey tacky '70s suburban pub. It has good sound — a real plus — and a reasonable setup for viewing bands and (tonight) lacked the locals I'd read of in *Marcy #1* ... the sound and setup should be enough, but the cumulative aesthetic does a lot to sabotage this.

The Fish were very good tonight, better than I'd expected. The crowd was minimal (I saw a Shock Records newsfax telling of the Fish "playing to packed houses in Perth at the moment" — a wee distortion; it doesn't specify whose house in particular ... I know, I know, everyone on tour *always* does brilliantly if you're several thousand miles away), but this didn't stop the show at all, with the *Here's What I Think Of The New Fish Song* diversion (they played it, fresh from that day's soundcheck, everyone wrote what they thought — "great" and "new Wedding Present album" was the consensus) keeping the spirit in. I'm tempted towards the new recordings. Yo.

FALLING JOYS / FUR VERSIONS — Old Melbourne, Saturday 27/7

The Fur Versions really surprised me tonight — way better than I've ever seen them before. The music has gained depth and dimension. [It no longer (a) shrieks or (b) reeks of two chords per song.] (The excellent sound helped matters.) They were actually a lot like I'd expected the Falling Joys to sound like — a good and polished alternative-pop band. The crowd gave an appropriately powerful positive reaction.

I came out tonight because I'd spent the two weeks before at home; I've never been terribly interested in the Falling Joys, in fact going out of my way to miss them last time (just after the *Ω 12* EP). That given, I got my second surprise of the night. The band you hear on the radio plays polished alternative-pop; the live band rocks out severely. Four great members! Pin-sharp drums and flashy bass holding the power and structure; especial points to the female vocalist/guitarist (Suzanne something?) holding a large green Fender Coronado and does she *play it* or what? There is something aesthetically very correct about female guitarists who know how to rock out; something that belongs in the world and should be implemented forthwith.

The other guitarist leaves his mouth hanging open too much and looks completely out of it, but these things happen. Hey, the irritation factor was missing from "Lock It" and "Baby Doll Messiah". (It was interesting to realise how many of these songs I know from the radio already — not including "Just Like Heaven".) Go see them if you have a chance. What a lovely night out.

David.

P.S.: The Aints @ Ozone, 19 July.

Stevie Plunder — guitar, vocals
Nic Dalton — bass, vocals
Geoff Milne — drums.

The Plunderers came over to Perth for one show, on Friday 26th April at the Ozone. Ross Chisholm chewed the fat with Nic and Geoff on the 29th.

Why come to Perth for one gig?

N: "Circumstances made it either one gig or no gigs. We weren't going to do it, then we thought, 'what the heck, we haven't been away for a while.' It seemed a pretty special and pretty stupid thing to do."

G: "We've treated it more as a holiday, really; just a chance to see something different."

Who lined up the gig, Jeff Halley from the Rock Exchange?

G: "Yeah. We played with the Chevelles in Sydney. Hippy Dribble supported the Chevelles last time they were in Sydney."

That would be an interesting contrast of styles.

G: "It was!"

Give us a brief outline of the Plunderers — your beginnings in humble Canberra, to starving in horrible Melbourne, to starving in horrible Sydney.

N: "You seem to know all about it, so we'll skip that one. Me and Stevie had been in a band together and we formed from the shell of that. That was called Get Set Go. The Plunderers formed in the same week as the Falling Joys, which is interesting, 'cos both bands went to Sydney. It was good rivalry 'cos our previous drummer Pete left us two-and-a-half years ago to join them, and that's when Geoff joined."

G: "We started rehearsing around late '88 and did our first gig in January '89."

N: "We had Ratcat supporting."

G: "We did Hippy Dribble, the first Hippy Dribble — we played as Hippy Dribble, but did a Plunderers set."

N: "We wanted to do a little quiet one to test it. We supported the Proton Energy Pills' first Sydney show. I painted the drum skin and we all wore bandanas and Stevie wore the fur outfit."

G: "Flowers showed in the drumkit."

N: "Hippy Dribble has always been there from the outset. Before that we had a different lineup and a whole different attitude. We've sort of reverted in a lot of ways to before even Pete joined, when we were more of a folk rock band. With Geoff, we've gone even tougher and lighter, much lighter."

Yeah, "Peggy" was something really different. I couldn't figure how that fitted in.

N: "Well, it fits in, because people must think that because we moved to Sydney, we became a guitar band; but I've never seen us like that at all. When we moved to Sydney, we were influenced wrongly, thinking we should be tougher, blah, blah, blah ..."

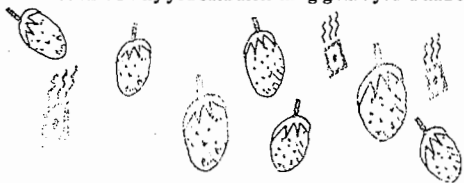
G: "Everyone was doing that at the time."

N: "That's the thing. Everyone had long hair, we didn't. Then, suddenly, when it was nice to be pop and woosy, we'd gone a bit tougher."

"We've never followed a trend; we've always just done what we wanted to do. At one stage, before Geoff joined, we had a manager that even wrote our setlist for us. 'Right, the crowds aren't liking it, you've got to stick to one style. Do all your pop-thrash stuff.' I agreed with it — it seemed the only way to get some interest, to get some sort of crowd — but it didn't really work, because we were just one of those sort of bands."

"It's like people's record collections — they've got a Joni Mitchell record next to a Big Black record. We're like that live; a ballad followed by a psychedelic song followed by a hard rock song or whatever. So that's why it's taken us a while. When Geoff joined, we thought, 'we'll always do what we want to do.'"

So that's why you said after the gig that you'd had to



edit out some of the stuff you'd normally play.

G: "There's about thirty songs we rotate each gig, and to play a one-hour set and try to cram all our songs in ..."

N: "You've got to pick out bits and pieces. It was as if we were in Sydney and playing to a new crowd, like, say we were supporting Ratcat; we could do an impressive best-of. Friday night, we were more in the mood to do that. We had to be more professional and do 'Sarah's'. The week before, we played two sets at a party and just made up half the stuff."

G: "Songs we'd never played before. We did venture off a bit on Friday. We made up one song."

You play off each other like a proper jamming band?

G: "Yeah, that's how we rehearse. We just set up and start playing."

N: "We never practice our set. Never!"

G: "There's usually only about half a dozen songs we rehearse."

N: "We only play songs like 'Sarah' live — grudgingly!"

How does Hippy Dribble fit in? It hasn't done badly

for a band that's put out one EP and done a handful of gigs.

G: "It seems to mean more over this side of Australia than over there."

N: "Melbourne wanted us to tour."

Just Hippy Dribble?

N: "Yeah! These two girls came into the shop in Sydney (Half A Cow, run by Nic), obviously out-of-towners, and they looked at the Hippy Dribble record; I asked how they knew of Hippy Dribble, and they said they'd heard of them in Melbourne. I said, 'heard of the Plunderers?' Naah!"

G: "There are people who come to Hippy Dribble gigs who don't come to the Plunderers. They don't know we're the Plunderers."

N: "The first Hippy Dribble was the Plunderers' other name for a low-key gig. The next incarnation was on Woodstock's twentieth anniversary. I think we only did one song from Woodstock; the rest were just late '60s psychedelic classics like 'White Rabbit', Donovan, all that sort of shit. At nine o'clock, it was the busiest night ever at the venue. It was a highlight of the year. We were the only people in the whole of Sydney to actually think of putting a gig on. We just raked it in."

"We got really out of it. Well, I did, anyway. I tried to relive the whole late '60s feel. We practiced for months, only to get up there and ... wheee ... We had a light show; not overboard and kitsch, quite tasteful and laid back. We ended up with a stage full of people and did really well. And that was Hippy Dribble's major debut."

"So the next year pulled around, and we hadn't played as Hippy Dribble the whole year. For the second Woodstock anniversary, we thought that, rather than being branded as a '60s cover band, we'd do an all-original set. That tied in with the fact that we had too many songs to play in an all-original Plunderers set, so we decided we'd make that our other set — you go to the Plunderers to hear one set, you go to Hippy Dribble to hear another. When we start our lighter band, that will be like hearing the first set of a band building up."

"Hippy Dribble was songs that were a bit too silly for the Plunderers or a bit too modern-sounding, like Sonic Youth or Dinosaur Jr — long, psychedelic and experimental; more free-form. We did that at the second Woodstock and it spun everyone out, 'cos it was all originals. We put the record out on the originals night. We've done free shows since then, not dressing up as much, and it's starting to turn into this really cool band with all originals. We've only got twelve songs and it flows. Plunderers shows don't flow."

G: "It's more relaxed when we play; we tend to have more fun and don't care if there's no-one there."

N: "We only do free shows, so people can't complain. All it is is the Plunderers on a cheaper budget, doing a different set. It's the same three people. Maybe we should think up a different name to cover all these things."

How important is it to you as a band to have this other creative outlet? When you're writing a song, do you think "this isn't going to fit into the Plunderers" or whatever?

N: "It just happens. We've got so many songs with the Plunderers anyway. If I wasn't writing so many songs and was saying, 'sorry, guys, I'm saving this one,' but wasn't coming up with anything new, it'd look stupid; but we're constantly adding songs to the Plunderers and most of them have been written by all three of us, building on things we can jam. We jam in the rehearsal room and we thought, 'wouldn't it be unreal for people to hear that live?'"

"Last year, I thought, 'right, I'll stop bringing songs to the band,' 'cos we had too many songs that we couldn't record unless we were given some money to do an album, which no-one is going to give us; and it was too frustrating. We had to stop learning new songs because we had too many new ones."

"Also, it meant we had to keep practicing, and we prefer to jam on record rather than practice. Now we don't need to, but last year I was turning up without any songs, hoping everybody would be creative."

What you really need is an album to get rid of your backlog.

N: "We should have started doing that in 1986. The first lineup of the Plunderers was bass, drums, guitar, violin and saxophone and we had our whole folk-rock set ... which we started bringing back in with Geoff."

G: "I'd come to rehearsal and they'd pull out this old song from four years ago, and I'd go, 'this is the best song!' I just couldn't believe it."

Do you see any problems with having this alter-ego from the audience's perspective?

G: "No, 'cos I think they're going to have problems with the Plunderer's set."

N: "We've taken a long time to build up a following and, because they can't pigeonhole us, things like Hippy Dribble and the new one, Captain Denim, are not really a problem to anyone because people are expecting it of us. I don't see us as a normal band. We shouldn't have to be."

"We were going to split up a couple of months ago because we realised we had found our level and it meant too much hard work to get any further without playing the suburbs or playing Melbourne every six months; and we didn't want to do that. Then we thought, 'why should we do what all other bands do and split up? Why can't we keep going, releasing groovy ten-inchers and seven-inchers, playing what we want to play, recording all these different bands, different records ...' It's all music."

G: "It's all fun. I didn't want to stop doing it."

How does Captain Denim fit in?

N: "Captain Denim is the Plunderers doing some lighter stuff like 'Peggy'. More laid-back, folk rock, Buffalo Springfield or whatever. Not using the Marshall stacks and the big guitar sounds. It depends on how lazy we are. Learn ten songs and start playing around and put the record out. That's coming next after the new ten-inch. We've also got a Hippy Dribble record coming out, and that will be a twelve-inch."

"With the Captain Denim, we might do a history of all four songs, because all four are from the Plunderers' first lineup."

When Geoff joined, the band's sound changed quite a lot.

N: "That came from us being unleashed from Pete Velzen, basically. It's like a relationship between a boy and a girl — you've been going out with someone for a number of years, then you start going out with someone else. You turn over a new leaf; you start thinking about things in a new way."

He was a songwriter and a lead vocalist, which is unusual for a drummer.

The Plunderers

N: "When he joined us — this is going back to '85 — he was in a band where he was just the drummer and that was it. 'Don't hit the cymbals there, no drum rolls ...'"

G: "Keep it simple."

N: "And me and Stevie joined a band and that band split, so we took him as our drummer; and we said, 'can you open up, be yourself, have a microphone to sing, write songs, do whatever you want; you are equal, this is a three-piece.' And it was great watching someone come out of their shell. He started writing songs and we did the 'I Don't Mind' single as a farewell."

"Him leaving meant a big rethink about how the band was going to operate. We got Geoff and started doing all the fast, poppy stuff; then, realising about playing together and where the band was headed, we thought we should start thinking about ourselves more."

When did you tie up with Green Fez and Citadel?

N: "When we moved to Sydney, we had been playing for four years and not doing much. We wanted to put a record out, and we were pretty good friends with Charlie Owen from the New Christs. I played in a band with his for a while."

Is he another Canberra boy?

N: "Yeah. He originally came from Brisbane and spent his teenage-hood in Canberra. When we moved to Sydney, the first person to mention us in an interview was Bill Gibson, in an interview in *B-Side* after the Eastern Dark accident. (*The Eastern Dark ended with the death of guitarist James Darroch in a car crash in March 1986. Bassist Bill Gibson is now in the Smelly Tongues and drummer Geoff Milne, of course, is now in the Plunderers — ed.*) We were really thrilled because it was the first time we had been mentioned. The only people that came along to see us were people like Bill and Charlie."

Other musicians?

N: "Yeah. Through that we thought we'd do a record and get Charlie Owen to produce it for us. He organised the studio and all that stuff. He'd never taken a band into the studio before and I reckon we weren't that good. Didn't know anything about studios."

And that was the first 12" EP.

N: "Yeah. We'd done a single before that."

(?) Which one was that?

N: "It was called 'Strange Affection/Into The Ice', in '85."

"We did five songs and had Louis Tillett playing on them. That was through Charlie; he did it for free and took it to Phantom, Waterfront and Citadel."

"We knew Citadel would probably take it because of Charlie, and that's what we wanted. Phantom and Waterfront wanted to pick two songs. We would have been interested, but we didn't really care about those labels — we wanted Citadel. We didn't actually get Citadel; they started a new label for all the bands that weren't good enough for Citadel — a testing ground. You had Rob Younger and Charlie saying, 'put out the Plunderers' and John Needham (Citadel) saying, 'I don't want to put them out on my label, so I'll start another label.' Green Fez was pretty much started from that pressure from us and Johnny Teen. I didn't care about that, it was good anyway having a record out. Then we went onto Citadel because we were good enough."

How did you manage that? You were the only band on Green Fez that actually made it onto Citadel. The Bambalams went the other way.

N: "Apart from that, we're the only group left on Citadel. John Needham folded up the entire Citadel label; he started Blue Mosque and he didn't have to worry about all the bands that went onto Blue Mosque, because Festival dealt with that. So he chucked everyone off, which at that time included the Moffs, Harem Scarem, Sacred Cowboys and the Wreckery."

He had some great bands and pissed it up against a wall.

N: "He didn't, he just wanted to concentrate on Died

Pretty, and he wasn't doing distribution for any other labels at the time."

Most of the bands subsequently went down the tube.

N: "That's the thing — they weren't doing much. We were about the only up and coming band; all the others had been around a while and had had their day, like the Sacred Cowboys."

Did Citadel give you a higher profile?

N: "We did our first Citadel single, 'I Didn't Even See Them At All', which John paid for. We were thinking, 'this is good, we get money to record with now,' then the label folded. We wanted to stay on Citadel because we didn't like the idea of label-hopping like the Trilobites and because Citadel had a great reputation."

"We said, 'we want to stay on your label — you let us have control and we'll still be on Citadel.' It's a pretty full-on thing to ask someone, 'cos it's his label, but he said yes. We weren't going to make any money from the label side of it and that way he was happy; we would still put out a record and would know it was in good hands. Rob Younger was still the person we dealt with."

G: "He was our sort of go-between."

Turning to production: apart from "Sarah's Not Falling In Love", everything else on that 10" is co-produced by the band. Why did you decide to get into production? Did you want to move away from just one person, Rob Younger, doing it?

N: "The names on the backs of records are just superficial. They're formal things that people have to have. I don't know what people read into it when they read, 'Produced by so-and-so,' because the engineer is the guru of any recording. Then you've got the band and the people they've dragged in, like Rob."

G: "When Rob's there, it's just good to have him there. He can tell you whether you can do that better. He's just on the other side of the glass."

You weren't ever worried that you might get labelled as having a certain sound?

N: "No. That was one of the many arguments we had with Pete over doing a record in Sydney. He never wanted to get involved with Citadel or Waterfront or Rob Younger; he'd say, 'Listen, I don't want the snare and hi-hat sound that's on that record,' and I'd say, 'yeah, Pete, but it's all the style of the bands.' I never thought we'd have that sound because I knew we weren't like that. No way."

You're never going to sound like Died Pretty, no matter how much you might try.

G: "We wouldn't want to."

N: "Peggy" was starting to sound a bit more like it."

Do you do lots of overdubs in the studio?

N: "Depends on what the song is. The new 10", 'Home Movie' (just out!), has two new songs done in the studio which have heaps of overdubs and us really going for it. It's only now that I reckon we're doing good things in the studio, rather than just the basic band. The most recent record people have heard is 'Christo', which was recorded in September '89."

G: "We recorded 'Christo' the same day we recorded 'Sarah.'"

N: "It was fun coming over here and doing that show on Friday because of what people expected of us. They hear pop songs like 'Sarah' and 'Christo' and imagine some sort of cross between the Hummingbirds and the Dubrovniks."

I was really surprised so many people were up and dancing. You must be getting some airplay somewhere.

N: "No, we hadn't for ages, and those two songs are so old to us. What we're starting to do now in the studio is really exciting. I think it is. This is all studio stuff; we couldn't do it live, so why make it the same? Though on the 'Home Movie' 10" we've got two live songs that show how we are live. They fit in, there are a lot of weird things happening."

You must have a lot of fun doing the mixing on these.

G: "It's all hands-on. The last one, there were four of us at the mixing desk, pushing things up and down. There's a twelve-minute song which had a whole foolscap page of directions, a whole list of things to do."

N: "If you stuff up with a twelve-minute song, you have to go back and do it all again. You have to concentrate."

"When we did 'Home Movie', we'd been recording all day long, so we did a mix at the end of the day, then did a second mix 'cos we weren't happy with the first one; the second one ended up having a whole guitar accidentally left out, so we listened to the first mix again and just decided to put that out because it still sounded great. Geoff said it sounded good 'cos there's all this ... noise."

"We've always had this thing that, once a song's recorded, people can listen to the record if they want to hear it. We usually stop playing songs 'cos we've got better ones to play."

Bored with it by then?

N: "I don't think boredom ever comes into it. It's more a question of having enough songs to play. That's why we started Hippy Dribble — to play them."

Ever afraid that you might overextend yourselves in some of the areas you're dabbling in?

N: "No, because it all sounds like one band to me. It's all pop music. Once the audience get to know the stuff, it's just a band; they get to know the styles and the characters of each style. With both Stevie and I writing and singing, we have a song of mine and a song of his. 'Christo' with 'Peggy' on the B-side is two sides of the band."

Perhaps that's better; people can't pigeonhole you.

G: "Yeah, we've been told that lots of times by promoters — they don't know what sort of band we are."

Which is great, I reckon."

N: "I went to see this agency about trying to make us a big band, like all the others, which meant playing the suburbs. At the time, we thought it was a step we had to take. I went up there knowing what he was probably going to say, then he did and I was so happy. 'cos it was great hearing what the industry thinks of the Plunderers. We're out there on our own and being successful at it."

"This guy said, 'You're too hard to sell to the venues.' It was great, y'know — 'Sarah' was out and still in the charts after four months and still on high rotation and we were just about to release 'Christo'. It was amazing to hear this agency say, 'no, guys, you're not commercially viable.' A song like 'Sarah' is so cheesy. If it was distributed through the mainstream stores then, given the state of radio now, with Ratacat going to number one ..."

Are there some radio-friendly songs on "Home Movie"?

N: "Not really. It's got a version of 'Groove Is In The Heart' which could be really radio-friendly 'cos it's such a popular song, but it was recorded live before Stevie even heard the original. It's not that commercially great."

"The A-side song, 'Home Movie', is really catchy, but we crammed it with all this sort of weirder shit. Then the latest Butthole Surfers record came out, and they're meant to be 'out there' ... We're really happy with it. It was meant to be a Gary Glitter stomping number."

With the right breaks, if JJJ decide to put it on high rotation ...

N: "They played the last two records. If they don't, I'm not going to be disappointed, 'cos I don't think of radio like that any more. We've got our own audience, anyway; if we didn't get airplay, it would obviously affect Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane, 'cos we don't travel. We've got our two-fifty, three hundred people that come to our shows."



But you're going to get bored with that and want to break out of it.

N: "We've already made decisions. The Plunderers aren't gonna conquer the world as a touring play-the-game slog-it-out band. We're gonna do things on our own terms."

"We're just going to do a lot of recording. That's the thing; that's why we've got Hippy Dribble and another band for the lighter stuff."

How's the new release laid out?

N: "It's a ten-inch, like 'Sarah'. That was from thinking about the vinyl format as a dying thing, 'cos we can't afford to do a CD. Doing another ten-inch made sense."

A ten-inch is such a pain in the arse if you've got a record collection.

N: "Exactly; but it shouldn't matter, because records are dying out."

G: "And now at least you'll have two ten-inchers."

N: "'Sarah' has done really well as a record, so we know people have that in their collection; and if 'Home Movie' can do as well, we'll be really happy because people will have both, and the two B-sides are meant to join up, like part one and part two. With four or five songs, you can get the same quality on a ten-inch as on a twelve-inch, using less vinyl and cardboard and making it cheaper. We can sell it for seven dollars ninety-nine instead of eleven ninety-nine."

"And it is a gimmick. Vinyl's dying, so why not do one of the more obscure versions of vinyl? Also, the shops said, 'you can't do a ten-inch, it'll get lost in the shelves,' but it was an advantage, because they always had to keep it up on their display rack and people kept asking for it. It was on display for four or six months in Waterfront and it wasn't a pain in the arse; they can eat their words, because if the record hadn't been good, it would have been two weeks on the shelf and then hidden away."

"Anything over four songs is in the album charts, so

we've made sure this next one is four songs. The other gimmick we had was that 'Sarah' was twenty-two minutes of music, which is half an album on a ten-inch. This new one's twenty-one."

Who's doing the production on the next one?

N: "It's just like the last one. Rob came in to help us on the main song; it was a case of getting more experimental, and we needed another person there to make sure ... It's good to take Rob in there, 'cos basically he didn't ask for a cent to do it."

He's still a fan.

G: "That's for sure."

N: "He's more upset now if he doesn't come along to our recordings, 'cos he loves being part of it ... he's there."

"The other stuff is the live songs from the JJJ live-to-air. We had the live recordings and we thought we'd use them."

"The last track is the twelve-minute one that we did on an eight-track where we practice, so it's really relaxed. We did that ourselves with an engineer."

Have you been getting any overseas reaction at all?

N: "Ever since Geoff joined. We've had a slow trickle of fan mail and we see the occasional article, but we don't have a publicist searching and none of us really read fanzines or magazines, so we don't see much of it."

G: "It's mostly from Europe."

N: "We apparently made a top ten in Minneapolis. Jim from the New Christs said we were getting chart action on the college stations, but we never actually see anything. We've never been terribly smart in making the contacts and getting a network, but we're starting to do that now."

"We've never had any offers of licensing. We're about to put out a compilation CD. That's going to be all the stuff with Geoff, with the new stuff as well, but not the live stuff. That won't be coming out straight away."

Ever thought of expanding the Plunderers?

N: "Yeah, but not any more, 'cos it's working as a three-piece and we can do whatever we like in the studio. It's limiting live, but that's what we do. I can live with it, though I don't see why, in the future, if we wanted to do a short tour, we couldn't get a section in."

"We have too much fun as a three-piece; it's more like an event than just playing a batch of your songs to people. Which we sort of had to do here on Friday, but at least we tried to ..."

What do you listen to outside the Plunderers?

G: "I don't listen to a lot."

N: "Across the board, but I hardly buy any records these days. The biggest influence on the Plunderers is the Plunderers."

"When we started we were a terrible band, but we could write really good songs. Now we're better players and put on a professional show. We grew up in public. When we put on a show, we want to make sure we bring the best of us out, so we decided to make every gig special."

"People living over here probably thought they'd never get to see that unknown Sydney band whose records you see in the shops. It was good to come over and do a show we do any night in Sydney. That was our normal set at the moment."

So you're not coming back in the near future?

G: "I can't see it, but I couldn't see this one. This one came up out of the blue."

N: "Now people know us. If the next record does well, a package could be put together based on guarantees. The idea is that we come here, have a holiday and do three gigs."

G: "And not lose money."

N: "It's better than going to Club Med."



HELIOS CREED

Helios Creed used to be a part of a band called Chrome, who were making some astonishing, wild and bent records way back in the mid-seventies. They continued making a highly tactile music for most of the latter part of the seventies and early eighties before splitting in half. Damon Edge decided to both try a few solo records, most of which are okayish, and also produce a few more using the old name Chrome. Any Chrome record which doesn't have the name of his partner, Helios, isn't really worth looking at.

Not that Helios himself is any genius; it's just that the music he's capable of is far more interesting than anything Damon has managed to come up with since Chrome split.

I bought the box set of six records in 1981 after hearing a few tracks at a friend's place. Cost me thirty dollars, and these days the individual LPs sell for that much. Six LPs for thirty dollars. Not bad at all.

The reason that Damon Edge's solo stuff isn't really much good is probably best described by Steve Albini, who said that "they started hanging out with French people, which is a big mistake." The sound is more techno and a lot less driving ... aaah, I guess it's the usual story.

And after all that, in 1985 or so, Helios popped up again with his own solo LP, which was halfway decent, on Subterranean. And for the last couple of years he's been putting out a few more and getting some pretty good reviews.

The Last Laugh, in 1989, is a step more toward Chrome territory, while 1990's *Superior Catholic Finger* is a development of sorts within whatever wired landscape Helios has claimed.

X-Rated Fairy Tales from 1985, by comparison, seemed to be a record of a man who didn't quite know how the hell to get what he wanted onto record, which might have something to do with the musicians, the recording technique or the budget ... whatever, something didn't gel as well as perhaps it might have. Maybe it was the best he could do right then. Whatever — if these last three LPs are what Helios was

intending back then, he'll probably think of the '85 LP as an awkward attempt to define his own form. There's some great stuff on the LP, but nothing consistent, at least to my ears.

The Last Laugh uses a number of devices familiar to Chrome fans and in a couple of tracks the songs are very close to certain originals. However, the LP itself is quite cohesive, whereas Chrome records tended to sound a bit scatty in places and, on more than one occasion, required a bit of patience to get into 'em thoroughly. The thing which got me in was Chrome's more obvious intentions, which ran through their most daunting stuff like lightning through butter. *Blood On The Moon* is about their most accessible and exemplifies this neatly. Sonic Youth's first LP, when I first heard it, reminded me a lot of Chrome's *Alien Soundtracks*, but much straighter and nicer. More rock'n'roll. But *The Last Laugh* is a complete change from the '85 LP, rearing and raving like a beast almost of the plain just before the summer storm hits.

Superior Catholic Finger takes all this, and finally the substance of Chrome begins to take on its life without reference to Chrome. In other words: a brilliant development, a severe jolt to anyone who would chum out the equivalent of *X-Rated Fairy Tales* ad infinitum. The growing horde of Creed fans are now getting into this and his subsequent LP from 1991. *Superior Catholic Finger* steps out and buzzes, cracks and snaps its fingers in my face again and again. Often surprisingly delicate and primal — an area which Chrome got close to and, for some reason, did not develop too much.

On the fourth LP, Helios walks a bizarre and not unexpected path. Sailing with effortless ease in and out of the pyromania of so much compatible metal (since that is what this creature now resembles, sort of), Helios' music is perfectly defined by the cover: his own image with a layer of insidiously patterned language over and under it.

He'll never lose what he learned in Chrome, and much of this LP swings between foreground and background, insidious and unnerving, beautiful and exhilarating.

Creed cruises through a modern genre

which is none too adventurous. Beyond the apparent posturing appears to be a stance less than arrogance and more of genuine alienation. I bought the CD and the inside cover has the man with a pronounced third eye, the expression of which sums up my own feelings toward this music more than anything else. Looks okay at first, but then the cold yaw in the stomach flips me.

Play loud and flex back. The neighbours haven't complained yet ...

Brokenmouth.

The PF Selection

- Aints — *S.L.S.Q. (Very Live!) LP*
- Antiseen — "My God Can Beat Up Your God" 7"
- Beasts Of Bourbon — "Graveyard Train" (off *The Axeman's Jazz LP*)
- Blanketmouth — "Next To The Sun" (from demo)
- Bloodloss — *Bloodloss* cass; *The Truth Is Marching In LP*
- Cannans — *The African Man's Tomato LP*
- Crabstick — "Ugly At Six" (2nd version) (from *Ugly At Six* cass)
- Human League — "Seconds" (B-side of "Don't You Want Me")
- Jackson Code — "Bringer Of Light" (from *Del Musical Del Mismo Nombre LP*)
- Joy Division — "The Sound Of Music" (off *Still LP*)
- Kraftwerk — "Europe Endless" (off *Trans Europe Express LP*)
- Reels — "I Don't Love You Anymore" 7"
- Martin Rev — *Clouds Of Glory LP*
- Kim Salmon — "Zero Blank" 7"EP
- Iggy And The Stooges — *Raw Power* cass
- Tactics — "Coattails" 7"
- Various — *Positively Cleveland Street LP*

ANTISEEN: My God Can Beat Up Your God/Surfin' Freebird (Dog Meat 7")

A non-thraway novelty single with powerful punk-rockin' music being the reason for such. Walk around singing it really loud. B-side is in memory of Stiv Bators. (GPO Box 2366V, Melbourne 3001)

BENEDICTS: Hoon (Waterfront LP)

Loved the band's first single "On The Air" (the press-release even has the review from PF#11 as the first quoted) and still recommend that you snap up a copy should you be so lucky as to see one ... didn't mind the second, "Shout Me Down" ... hated the third, "You All The Time", the LP taster — was going to review it saying something like "sounds like something expressly designed to fit slickly into the JJJ playlist", then vile rumour reached me that that was the actual reason it was picked ...

This LP will not achieve frequent playing and re-playing at PF Towers. "On The Air" was a simple, direct and powerful three-minute pop-song and apparently a fluke; the rest seems to be technique and slicked and intricately to the gills, and my ears slide straight off it.

Even starting from the premise that this isn't that, when I play it I always seem to miss the joints between songs. Perhaps as a reviewer I should listen more carefully, but as a buyer (I was about to buy it, then the review copy arrived) I think it'll be filed under D for 'Disappointment' and ignored for at least a year. I'll pull it out then and tell you if there's been any change.

HACK: The Rotten World Around Us (Seaside LP)

Hack are a bunch of Adelaide folk (most prominently Michael Farkas, ex-Grong Grong, on vocals and Harry Butler, DNA magazine and ex-Fear And Loathing, on guitar) making horrible noise (the songs are not particularly structured, changes tending to come when it feels right) with a view to making their heads feel better. Perhaps it will help yours feel better too. This was recorded quite some time ago and the band has since changed considerably — about time for another record, hey, guys?

SPLASH: Don't Look Up/Head To Toe (Phantom 7")

"Head To Toe"'s main features are its Manfuckingchester beat and its resemblance to that Julian Cope song that's biggish right now. I hereby move that anyone using a Manfuckingchester beat who cannot show substantial and recent ancestry involving that esteemed city (and

many who can, for that matter) be ceremonially whipped, chained and then spayed. "Don't Look Up" is a dull recording of a decent pop song — needs bigger production, but you can hear something's there. One to watch, provided that all M***r tendencies are soundly beaten out of them. (PO Box A566, Sydney South 2000)

David.

THE AFFECTED: The Affected (Rubber Records 7" EP)

Primitive garage sounds, with songs to match — trouble is, the garageland mentality and production has, I think, robbed the songs of their original character. A song like "Living A Lie" sounds like it needs a cleaner sound to be more fully appreciated. Then again, this record may have been cut a bit too early in the band's life. Whatever, it sounds like rough demos.

THE CREAMERS: Not Now No Way/Mom Watches TV (Dog Meat 7")

The A-side has a heavy guitar sound and is fast-paced with female vocals plus some guitar histrionics thrown in. The B-side is live and messy — very funk'n' average. Could be any band coming out of the American punk/hard rock scene.

HACK: The Rotten World Around Us (Seaside mini-LP)

I sort of worry about any record that has as its opening line "My name is mud, you shower me with shit." Complementing the tasteful and profound lyrics is a heavy, oppressive guitar noise backing, direct from the swamp to you. Next is the band's theme song "Hack", which very much reminds me of vocalist Michael Farkas' previous band Grong Grong (one of the most distinctive groups to emerge in Australia in the last decade). The name of the piece sums it up pretty well. "Everything" has a funeral dirge pace and feedback throughout, with vocals to match. The lyrics sound like someone's been dropping too many chemical substances and has a bad case of paranoia. I could go on, but I think you've got

Records

the idea.

Hack is a five-piece Adelaide band combining the talents of a number of that city's musical luminaries. It's no easy matter to describe the music on this record, let alone put a label on it. If you're at all familiar with some of the music on the Aberrant label, particularly the Adelaide contingent (King Snake Roost, Bloodloss), then you're getting warm. It's not a pretty sound and certainly isn't going to appeal to many; but that's to be expected, 'cos it doesn't sound like anyone else around at the moment. No catchy hooks here.

I think that's why I like it, because it requires something of you, the listener. Passive listeners should give this a wide berth. Those of you still left who seek something more from your music may like to give it a try. It takes a few listens to get into the right frame of mind, but I think you may find it worth the effort. Definitely have a taste before you buy.

NUNBAIT: Nowhere Fast/Head In A Jam (Waterfront 7")

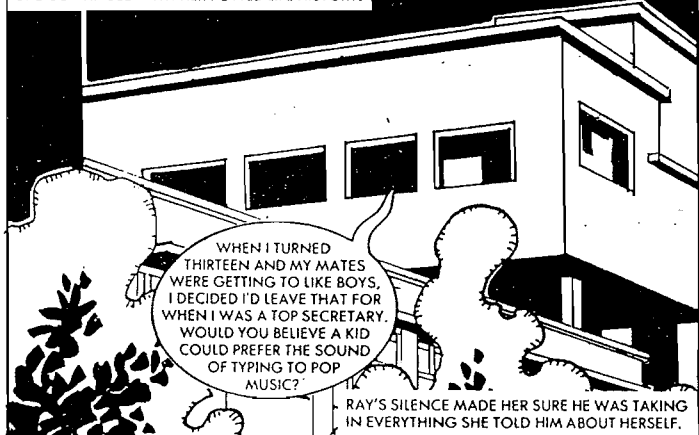
"Nowhere Fast" has a spartan sound until the bass is mixed up about halfway through. The essential features are effect-laden vocals and a recurring guitar pattern which goes on too long. "Head In A Jam" is more adventures with some acid-psych-type effects which, surprisingly, work.

HENRY ROLLINS AND THE HARD-ONS: Let There Be Rock/Carry Me Down (Waterfront/Festival 10")

You just kinda know how this cover of the AC/DC classic is gonna sound, don't ya, primitive! Ray Hard-On has to work his arse off to make up for the missing guitar, while Keish sounds very restrained on drums — just keeps the beat. This has more of a Rollins sound than a Hard-Ons one.

"Carry Me Down" is quite strange. Its writing credit is Rollins/Hard-Ons, but I'd like to know how this was written and who wrote what. The chorus sounds like the Hard-Ons in hard-pop mode, while the rest sounds like the Rollins Band, with Henry doing mostly spoken-word vocals, which

SHE CONTINUED WITH HER POTTED LIFE HISTORY.



could almost be ad-libbing. If this sounds strange, listening to it is even stranger, 'cos it actually works. This is the hardest I've ever heard the Hard-Ons work musically. They have had to stretch themselves just to keep up with Rollins. This is probably a must-buy item for fans of either Rollins or the Hard-Ons. For others, have a listen first.

RUM BABAS: 3 Good Reasons (Timberyard 10" EP)

This is a pretty good stab at hard rock crossover with pop overtones, but without the blandness normally associated with this area. The band gets a nice fat sound which is sort of mandatory for this kind of thing to work. Given the breaks it could be a hit, but probably won't be.

KIM SALMON AND THE SUR-REALISTS: Zero Blank/The Cockroach/Obvious Is Obvious (Red Eye/Polydor 7")

"Zero Blank" is quite deceptive. For the first few listens your attention is drawn to the recurring but superficial Manchester sounds; with repeated listens, especially on headphones, you hear a lot more going on, with bits and pieces surfacing here and there; while the lyrics, one of Salmon's more underrated talents, are intriguing. Not as immediately accessible as the previous ("Lightning Scary") and it sounds too long to succeed as a single, but, as I said, it's a deceptive song.

"The Cockroach" has been in the Surrealists' live show for quite some time. I think I like the live version of this better for some reason. I don't think the vocals come across as well as they might have.

"Obvious" is, in fact, Salmon sans Surrealists, recorded in January '90 for a proposed solo album that got canned, this song finds Salmon in solo acoustic mode sounding not unlike early Kevin Ayers or even Damien Lovelock. This is pretty representative of the solo gigs he was doing about this time. I've got to say I really like this as a song. Makes me want to hear more of these particular recordings.

SCARECROW TIGGY: Passing For Human/Edge Of Your Smile (Shock 7")

"Passing" is dominated by double-tracked female vocals which are used to good effect, but I'm not sure I could listen to this too often as the music tends to take too much of a back seat. "Smile", however, makes use of a sax and has the music much more up-front and interesting. Again, the use of double-tracked vocals gives a good echo-type feel and a better balance between music and vocals. I only wish it could have been longer.

SWARM: Gutless Wonder/Jesus Freak (Sundial 7")

What I suspect is a fairly faithful reproduction of their live sound. Progressive power pop reminiscent of some early '80s US bands, but with the organ/keyboards giving it a distinctive feel. Gets better with repeated listenings. I particularly like the line "You're a walking, talking, living gutless wonder." "Jesus Freak" definable Melbourne alternative quality about it and all that implies. I have a feeling I'll be coming back to this record a bit in the near future.

TUMBLEWEED: Captain's Log/Space Friends (Waterfront 7")

If you were wondering what happened to the Proton Energy Pills, then this lot may interest you, being essentially the same people with a new moniker. Despite its title, "Captain's Log" isn't an ode to James T. Kirk and Co. What it is is a bit hard to figure out. Musically, it's a short, sharp, bass-driven piece with some concise guitar work and dinky handclaps, while "Space Friends" has a long instrumental intro with prominent bass, almost atmospheric guitars and generally less of the hard rock leanings that tended to characterise the Protons. Sounds similar to some of the musical areas the Plunderers are now in.

VAMPIRE LOVERS: Acid Commandos From Planet Fuzz (Shock Value mini-LP)

This Brisbane band has been around on and off for the best part of ten years now, releasing record now and then. When these guys hit their stride, as they do on most of this record, they come out with some of the best hard rock music of the genre since the Lime Spiders circa '84-'85, but without the overtly '60s references. For me, however, there are problems with the sequencing and

a lack of continuity on the first side, particularly with the first and last tracks.

The opener, "Heavy Planet Fuzz", which surfaced as a single back in 1988, has a fat guitar sound, even some harmony vocals, which I don't mind, and the lyrics are a bit of a giggle; it's quite catchy in its own way, but it sounds dated. I suspect the song itself comes from the band's earlier days (it sounds it) and it was not a good idea to open the record with it.

The other problem is "Holocaust" which finishes off the side and consists of about a minute of atonal noise with a not-so-subliminal spoken message, which, unfortunately, doesn't stand up to repeated playings — i.e. it becomes a piss-off. Which is probably why I prefer side two of this record, as it's more consistent.

Apart from these two problems, this is hard and tight and doesn't overstay its welcome, and that's a compliment. Hell, I can even get used to the Alice Cooper/Jello Biafra-sounding vocalist.

WHITE ELEPHANTS: Vic Morrow's Head/You Endanger Us (Dog Meat 7")

Both these songs have a standard 4/4 beat, a recycled Sabbath riff, some guitar noise and a shouted/grunted vocal. Sorry, guys, but you'll need more than this to keep my attention for any length of time.

Larry W.

PSYCHOTIC TURNBUCKLES: Rock'n'Roll Terrorist/Herd Mountain (Shock 7")

This is very competent Sydney (Detroit) hard rock with (intentionally) stupid lyrics (I hope!). File this alongside the current incarnation of the Hitmen, except that the Turnbuckles are better because they're not obviously trying for the FM crossover market, and at least with them I'm pretty sure they're taking the piss.

SUGARGLIDERS: Furlough (Summershine 7" EP)

Ah, songs with melodies — I'd almost forgotten about them. This record has a simplicity in the musical structures and lyrics that I find quite appealing. I'm not sure why; I guess it's just one of those things. "Give Me Some Confidence" has a couple of guitars being strummed, which gives it a quite hypnotic feel. "Furlough" has a touch of soft English psychedelia, while "Coffee" has a lovely dreamlike quality about it.

If you're after some music with character that you'll still be playing five to ten years from now, and this sounds your kind of stuff, give this a try. For the price of a single, you'll get just under eleven minutes' worth of quality music. Money well spent.

Ross C.

THE RECORDS: Paying For The Summer Of Love (Skyklad, US LP)

Paying For The Summer Of Love is a collection of demos the Records did in 1978, which, even in their somewhat incomplete state, leave the piddly efforts of bands like (review deleted — ed) wallowing in insignificance. There is no mistaking a classic song, and this LP is a bonanza. There's even a Coca-Cola jingle (an offshoot of "Teenarama") which is almost reason enough to start drinking the icky stuff, it's so cute. "Coca-Cola, sweet little rock'n'roller! Gimme gimme gimme gimme gimme gimme Coca-Cola ..." You have to hear it to believe it. I wonder if it was ever used? The Records were hardly the megabuck superstar gherkins that are usually used for soft-drink promotions. In fact, they never came close to the big-time teen-screamies they deserved.

This album is full of power pop gems, the type of music that makes you want to be a teenager again. There is an innocence about it, in the perfect melodies and harmonies and in John Wicks' sweet, boyish vocals that is conspicuously absent from most music today. (Everyone these days tries to be tough/sexxy/decibel-defying [or 'mature' or 'sophisticated' ... ugh], which is all well and good when done convincingly, but an absolute travesty when attempted by the likes of New Kids On The Block.) Listening to this record reminds one that the golden days of pop music are gone and we are now horrendously bombarded by a bunch of gesticulating mummies who wouldn't

Hey Fats Waller

There's a old church organ Callin' for my fingers.
It wants me bad.
I gotta go, it's my friend.
You just know I gotta go.

I gotta appetite
It sets me loose.
I gotta sound that's strong,
I gotta wrestle goin' on in every song.

Gimme more of what I can have.
"Oh, I can have this?
This too?
Some more to go?
And a box for my brother, sure."

Hey Fats Waller.
Hey Fats Waller.

"Hey do that old time swing;
Give us the stuff we can dance to!
Hey do that old time thing;
We just wanna groove to what we know.
Don't you give us that SHITBOY look;
Just you play the good old days
Like we recall reading about, yeah!
It ain't so friendly, Fats
To play the unfamiliar ..."

know how to write real music if they had rainbow paddlepops shoved up their bots.

By innocence I must stress that I don't mean squareness, but, rather, an eternal youthfulness of sorts, a freshness (excuse the cliché) and beauty that hasn't faded or become irrelevant over the years. Certainly, there's nothing square about *Paying For The Summer Of Love* — all sorts of situations are covered that balance out the purity of the music itself. "All Messed Up And Ready To Go" complains of not having had a lover for days, but that the next one will get down on her knees (!), whilst the glorious, energetic piece of superlative pop, "Teenarama", concerns a case of infatuated cradle-snatching. Actually, the master recording of this song is preferable, being more 3-D in its impact. "Starry Eyes" is one of the most gorgeous songs in the world. (Imagine, releasing this

Hey Fats Waller.
Hey Fats Waller.

"I'm drinking down my music
Before it's ever played.
Reelin' from the sale
Of what I'll never hear.
I'm a swingin' man ...
Hey, you tellin' me???"

Yeah, danglin' from a white beam of turgid lead;
This ain't human but if it's what they want ..."

Hey Fats Waller.
Hey Fats Waller.

What I don't expect
Is my path to freedom
I'm jokin' to myself
As my cell door closes.

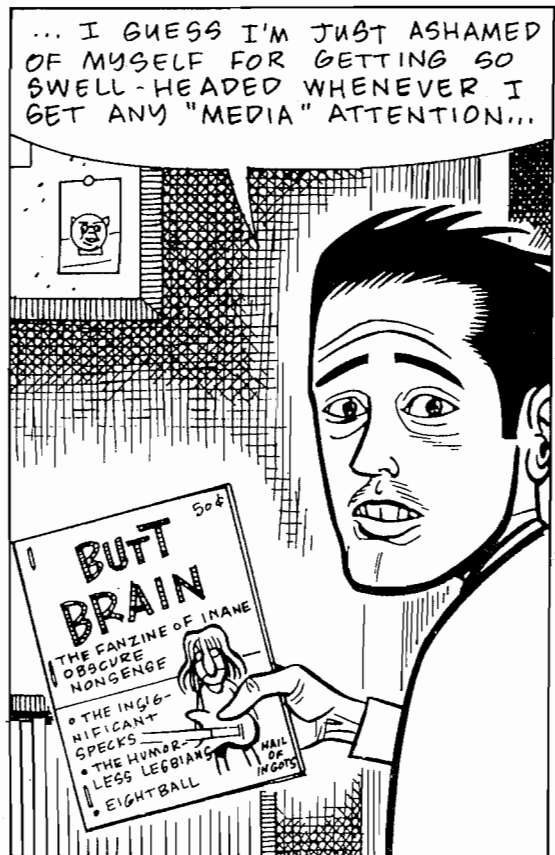
Hey Fats Waller.
Hey Fats Waller.
I'm condemned.
I'm condemned.
I'm condemned.
I'm condemned.

Robert Brokenmouth.

as your first single! It's unsurpassable.) It's here, in all its spine-tingling, delicate, melancholy, beautiful perfection. Other mentionables include "Hearts In Her Eyes" for its definitive Records lyricism, "Up All Night" which would have been at home on *Revolver* and "If I Write Your Number In My Book" written, with typical angst, for Rachel Sweet.

Several of the songs on this album can be found in their final form on the CD *Smashes, Crashes And Near Misses* and generally sound more lush and finished; but *Paying For The Summer Of Love* is a great record in its own right and should be purchased immediately!

Samantha.



AYLMER'S TUNE #2 (40pp A4 recycled): One of the better hardcore-and-related (and some not so related) zines I've ever seen. Creative use of little clippings to fuck with your head (and bigger ones ... get yourself a shirt like the one on the cover), a spirit of creative hate (prefer love, myself, but never mind), local news, some interviews — CüCühlanne Powerhead (Perth), Seein' Red (Holland), Atta (Switzerland), Thou Gideon (Perth), Final Pestilence (Perth ... a revival of old Perth band Pestilence, though the revival has apparently split already), Adelaide report by Harry Butler, a little piece by one woman on why there are very few females in the HC 'scene' in general and none in Perth (the gist of it being "we have more sense, basically; and don't tell me what to fuckin' do!") and some live (copy of poster or handbill plus a paragraph on the show) and record reviews. The writing isn't so good (says "fuck" far too often), but it's nice to see a zine that has an attitude and something to say, even if it is only "fuck off" ... (\$1 Australia, \$2 or 3 IRCs overseas, from Matt, 58 Matlock Street, Mount Hawthorn 6016)

BLIND CONFORMITY #1 (12pp A4): Part of the present flood of Perth zines. (Where were you all five years ago??) It's not very good, but then if I'd tried to do a zine at seventeen, God knows what it'd have been like ... interviews with Goon Gut Babies, Thou Gideon, Hard-Ons, record/live reviews (let's blow their cred irretrievably — they give a good review to the Southern Sons, er, Screaming Jets single ...), a cartoon, a personal ad/article on goth girls that I thought was a vicious piss-take on someone but am beginning to fear was for real (hold on! persevere! life gets better! really! trust me! ... doing a fanzine may be loads more effective than placing personal ads, but not quite so directly ...) ... *Thax 2: ... D.N.A. & Party Fears for inspiration* ... It's not a wonderful zine as

GIGANTOR "Ready To Fight For Right Against Wrong"

Did you know that the USA is at war? With itself? The endlessly savage, incorruptible CIA has been mauling the corruptible, bumbling, ignorant buffoons of Congress for years.

The Shrub is the first President who is completely an fait with the CIA and, of course, the CIA are in complete control for a time, having demonstrated the bureaucratic blood of Congress is composed of shamanist custard.

Since the rapaciousness of the USA has been obvious to anyone who can read a history book — bloating and goading since the conquest or, rather, first settlement took place — it is appropriate to find the CIA encouraging a nation of ignorance and xenophobia, based on a rock-solid platform of poverty and self-loathing.

I see the Shrub was in Czechoslovakia recently, taking a cue from Hitler, making a similarly nonsensical and hugely emotive speech, carried by the satellite winds of the world, spreading his canker of disinformation and fatuity ...

yet, but I see no reason why it won't improve. (\$1 shops, \$2 post from 13 Stormon Ridge, Winthrop WA)

B.U.M.S. #30-31 (16pp A4): That stands for Brisbane Underground Music Scene, a fortnightly giveaway on the 'alternative' sector of Bris, though not generally in an aggressive mode. The layout and graphics are terrible and too much of the writing is wishy-washy (leaving this looking and feeling like any free-sheet from anywhere or nowhere — Perth has had a few magazines like this, but a lot of it is pretty good and it is, after all, the sort of idea that is much better to exist than not to exist. Doesn't give me a strong sense of Brisbane as yet, but I certainly wouldn't discount the possibility. (Free with post from 58 Carinya Street, Indooroopilly 4068)

DNA #80-81 (10pp A4): Now distributed in Perth by Iain MacIntyre of FreakZine.

Zines

#80 has S.S.D.C./Bladder Spasms (Canberra punk), five pages on Slub (why I bought it), Storm of Perversion and Sydney and Melbourne bits. #81 has Adelaide news, Sydney stuff, four pages of John Murphy (and again ...) and Brisbane and (by Iain) Perth bits. A ten-issue subscription is \$15 in Australia, A\$20 overseas. All back issues (to 1979!) available. This magazine is a valuable source of raw information and is heavily recommended to all those interested in such. (E.C. Productions, PO Box 602, North Adelaide 5006)

ENDZONE #5 (32pp A4): Brisbane news, the Falling Joys, Crystal Set, local bands Too Green For Summer, Spiny Norman Conspiracy, Waiting For The Daffodils, Boxcar (yes, that Boxcar), Ziggerants,

Hitler used the same tactic, isolating Germany from the rest of the world — his media isolated and deranged his people; and untruth became truth — if it sees the light of print, it is correct — especially if it is not readily corrected. Television moves so fast — who can correct it?

The mass public likes a dramatic speech. When a politician like the Shrub talks of good and evil, and of making sacrifices, this politician is defining the undefinable and extrapolating from it. No such absolutes as 'good' or 'evil' exist. We know this, all of us. Yet we feel reassured when some kindly politician pins it down and tells us that the world is really black and white, not the blurry smudge which we see every day.

The joy of delusion. Hitler hypnotised his country with terror and falsehood. Shrub has seen the light.

Maybe I was wrong. Maybe the USA isn't at war with itself. Maybe the masculine forces of numbness and seduction, which the Shrubbery has utilised to his best advantage, are simply harnessing a load of movie extras who know their lines a little too well and whose last movie was *Day Of The Dead*. I hope the latter is true, because the former doesn't bear thinking about. — Brokenmouth.

Earwigs and Big LummoX, plus Radio Skid Row (Sydney) and a whole pile of live and record reviews of varying quality. The magazine is sort of wide-eyed and very enthusiastic, but it does seem to have substance, and I certainly don't know of any other Brisbane zine covering the same area. Editor Gary Williams is considering quitting, which I suspect would be quite a bad thing. A bit pricey, but worth checking. (\$2.99 shop, \$4.50 mail; 12 Borrowers Street, Virginia 4014)

FORCED EXPOSURE #17 (132pp quarto): FE's looking a bit, ah, mellow these days ... The music interview is MX-80 Sound (cover); there is also an excellent piece on the fall of the Berlin Wall by Eugene Chadbourne, an interview with filmmaker Alexandro Jodorowsky (*Santa Sangre*) and an int with science fact/fiction writer Rudy Rucker. The old attitude still lures unscathed in the record review section (just under half of the zine), including an excellent couple of pages on classical vinyl (a good start in the field) and *Eyewitness Record Reviews* by Steve Albini — the dirt on his time as producer. Mellow as it may be, this is a fine item to have — and worth checking for the FE record label mail-order catalogue. Just make sure you actively ignore almost all advertising to be found in FE. (\$US26/4 issues by air from PO Box 9102, Waltham MA 02254, USA)

THE HARVEY #1 (36pp A4): A year in the making and quite a production at this end. A big fanzine in the standard style, with long interviews with alternative popstars in small print — Kryptonics, Ratacat, Marty Willson-Piper, Pop Will Eat Itself, Kim Salmon (great article!), Martin Moon, Hummingbirds (also fine), Crystal Set, Kim Williams, Doug Anthony Allstars (Tim Ferguson — I wanted this int for PF), A Month Of Sundays — books, records, problem advice page, hilarious Alex Manfrin cartoon ("Jeremy, The Boring Old Pseudo-Intellectual Of The Club Scene!"). Decent layout, excellent photos. Uncredited where credit is due, though — Vicki Walmsley (de PF): lots of transcription, interviews and pix. But nevertheless, it's impossible not to recommend this one. I look forward to the next. (\$2.70 shops or \$3.70 post from Deborah Dickson, 331 Stirling Street, Highgate 6003)

p.s.: if they really do print a certain top ten next issue, I predict that everyone listed in it will promptly pop around and break their heads, not to mention probably suing them (for real).

PIG MEAT #2-3 (10pp A4): Free zine of scribbles on music, odd fragments of graphics, poetry, comics and whatever. #2 has Thrombus and Cinema Prague interviews, #3 a Kim Salmon history of varying accuracy and a Ratacat int. Constable Care: "It should not be done, but kicking heads is fun." "Next time you're outside the Old Melbourne, on the Milligan Street side, take time out from swapping your drugs to wave to the nice police officer's watching you through their well disguised spy camera on the second floor on the opposite side of the road. Tell all your friends to wave at the candid camera." (Free for post from Nick Potter, 19 Sheahan Way, Marmion 6020)

"... So we went and ended up buying some black dye hairspray. You could spray somebody's car and they'd come out and go, 'Ohmigod! Somebody's painted a swastika on my Cadillac!' yet they could wash it right off with a hose. It has the same initial emotional effect as permanent damage done by spray paint, yet if you're actually caught, it's something that can wash right off ..."

"... We used to break into the display cases at school and substitute our own displays. We did them carefully so they looked like the ones the school put up, but they'd be weird ... We did one display on meat, using props from an educational supply store. At the top it said 'Meat Is Life' and at the bottom it said 'We Are Meat.' It started out with pictures of cows, pictures of ground beef and progressed to an anatomy chart with somebody's skin peeled off, and pictures of dead bodies.

"Our displays got weirder. Toward the end of the year we put up one that said, 'Seniors! You must have your Senior Dummy Cakes if you want to graduate! If you haven't gotten them yet, go to your counsellor. This is your last chance!' ... Later I went to the office and asked, 'There's a sign in the quad saying that if I want to graduate I have to have my Senior Dummy Cakes.' The woman said, 'I don't know who put that sign up! You must be the thousandth person today who's asked me that!'"

"I know a girl working in a candy store who would ring up sales, give customers a big smile and say, 'Fuck you very much, and have a nice day!' No-one ever called her on it. Not once.

"The old cliché is true: When we assume, it makes an ASS of U and ME. There's no reason to assume the sun will rise tomorrow, just because it always has in the past ... That's an overstatement, of course, but the less you take for granted the better off you'll be in the long run. Belief is one of the trickiest traps there is. Nothing takes the place of direct experience and experiment.

"One time I planted a long row of large purple eggplants impaled on stakes across from a shopping centre. That's all!"

The police couldn't fit you into their polarization structure. They know how to deal with real criminals, but somebody who puts eggplants on sticks — you're making a mockery of their social order, and that's worse than what most criminals are capable of doing. By doing something incomprehensible, you place yourself outside their magic, and then they lose control. And authority needs control with a simple set of uniforms and buzz words.

"You realize that everything is completely fictional and completely made-up; that it's only real for people because everybody's in agreement ... but you don't have to agree.

"Words are tools. It doesn't matter whether you believe them or not; what matters is if other people believe them to be true. On the phone I've gotten women to beat their children, people to break down and cry, people ready to buy an airplane ticket and fly across the ocean — just because they're playing by certain rules and you aren't. And when you know what their rules are, you know exactly what you have to do to get around them. And they assume everyone's playing the same game they are."

— Boyd Rice, Re/Search #11: Pranks!

THE FANZINE IDEA KINDA APPEALS TO ME, SINCE YOU'D GET A LOT OF FREE STUFF IN THE MAIL IF YOU PUT IT OUT ON A REGULAR BASIS, THOUGH YOU'D NEVER MAKE A LIVING OFF OF IT...

I'D LIKE TO DO ONE LIKE THIS ONE... THESE GUYS JUST WRITE ABOUT WHATEVER THEY'RE INTO AT THE TIME, REGARDLESS OF MARKET DEMANDS...

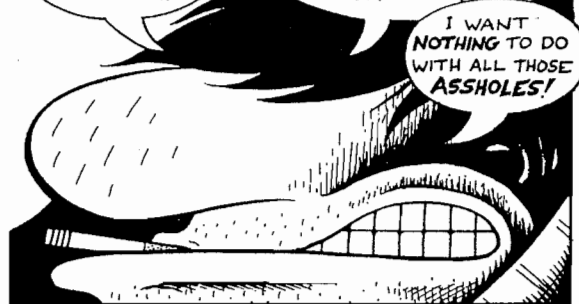


THE PROBLEM IS THAT IF YOU WANT TO MAKE A BUCK OFF OF IT YOU'VE GOT TO SPECIALIZE, AND TAP INTO SOME ESTABLISHED COLLECTOR SCENE... LIKE THERE'S A GUY IN THIS TOWN WHO PUTS OUT A MAGAZINE THAT'S ABOUT BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND NOTHING ELSE! NOT MY IDEA OF A GOOD READ, BUT I'LL BET HE'S MAKING A PRETTY PENNY OFF IT...



OF COURSE, STINKY WANTS TO DO A MUSIC ZINE... HE NEVER OUT-GREW THAT WHOLE ROCK SCENE TRIP... HE STILL DREAMS OF MAKING VIDEOS AND FUCKING GROUPIES...

I HATE THAT WHOLE SCENE SO MUCH... I HATE THE FANS, THE GROUPIES, THE CLUB OWNERS AND ALL THE OTHER PARASITES... AND I ESPECIALLY HATE THE MUSICIANS! THE YOUNG ONES ARE SO ARROGANT AND THE OLD ONES ARE SO PATHETIC!



... Tell everybody that *not all* the rock'n'rollers in Gulf grooved to the sound of bombs dropping while Van Halen and Slayer boomed on Walkmen. — Fred Mills, PO Box 221132, Charlotte NC 28222-1132, USA.

... After 5 issues of the zine (#5, 7, 9, 10, 11 — ed) ... One thing I found quite funny is the way in which the writers talk about Perth as a place where nothing ever happens, in the middle of nowhere, out of touch with the real world. Whereas to me, there seems to be a wonderful, fresh scene — lots of people making good music. They should be proud of that! ...

Hans Wyndaele, Belgium.

It's called "the grass is always greener on the other side." Music and culture are something that happens in other places, never where you can see them yourself ... — ed.

David:

Thanks for the boatload of 'zines (and the flexi!). PF has really come a long way! (in quality as well as distance) You really have a good format going. And I'll never be the writer you are. We are square, trade-wise. I'll send you a EBB! #2 in June. I'm doing one more, in Dec., and then I have other things to do.

The indie music business is certainly not a James Herriot story. One can easily name a dozen assholes, but good people are rare. See the enclosed Peter Bagge comic.

TOURISM:

I traveled alone ... got to overhear a lot of yobbish Americans ... I was stupid on occasion, but always contrite. And never arrogant. Americans are the whiniest people ... and the better off they are, the more they complain. Had to endure endless American-bashing at the free-J's bennie. (No, I didn't start the war! Everyone here is completely mesmerized by the whole thing. They fucking LOVE it! Buncha psychos!)

As it was, I had NO complaints about Australia. I can't say enough about how much I admire the music scene there. It was nice that I was able to hear the full range of bands there (at least a good cross-section). There didn't seem to be much boundary-crossing. I saw janglers, stoozers and noisers, but everyone was warning me away from the other type of show.

I noticed a lack of 'hardcore' bands — I theorize that it's because Australians have less angst/alienation/self-hate than people do here. Any comment? Anyway, most Oz janglers still rock more than a lot of American Metal bands. (Drag balls on the pavement?)

On the plane back, all the young americans were commenting on how ODD everything was. I found it to be pretty NORMAL. I got used to it FAST. Hated to leave. (I'd rather raise my kid there!)

The supposedly cutting-edge FM station here plays only MidOil (I see they have a Grateful Dead cover on a compilation of Dead tunes — worst of both worlds) and INXS (and sponsored a Church show). (INXS — now there's a band where every song sounds the same. They can play any one of their songs and call it a medley! Disco mixers can run three at once!) The college radio here might play some Nick Cave or Trilobites. There is no inking here about the depth of the indie scene there. *Noise For Heroes* actually is one of the best sources of information that we have. Steve Gardner does a good job at least mentioning what's out there — even if I don't share his admiration for the Exploding Mice. (Though they aren't that bad.) It's still the best we get here.

Glad you're a bass player. You're only in one band? I was surprised at the number of people who have multiple gigs. God, Perth has more bands than we do here! (@ 1/6 the population ...) (And most importantly, you probably support your local bands — something they don't do here. People here only go to see Manchester touring bands.) To me, the Australian approach to music is very egalitarian. "From each band a 7" — to each band a pub gig!" Over here, most kids are shooting for the major-label and arena circuit right off.

Rock and the Pop Narcotic ... I dug it for the crit-bashing. But he had to be one to write it.

Many thanks, and CHEERZZZZZZZZ.

TTTTTTTT>>>>>

Paul Keller, Chicago, Illinois, USA.

I see that they get 6m waves at Margaret's — perhaps I can die on my Mach 7 there in a couple of years!

Dear Mr. Brokenmouth,

Your scathingly personal attack on Ratcat's "ugliness" in that ratshit fanzine Party Fears ("I wouldn't wipe my diarrhoea dripping arsehole with it" — Tex Perkins) served not only to damage your journalistic credibility and perpetuate the notion that 90% of people in Adelaide are stupid, imbecilic no-hopers (whose greatest cultural exports have been Barnesy, Ernie Sigley and The Exploding White Mice), it gave us an insight into your totally fucked concept of aesthetics.

Ratcat, now suffering from the Tall Poppy Syndrome, are far from awe-inspiring as a musical unit, but it was really fuckin' stupid of you to use the word "ugly" when summing up their visual appeal. Visual appeal that has been more than instrumental in zooming 'em up the charts as other "ugly people" sit around "accepting it".

Print a photo of yourself next time, will ya ... or send me one. I bet you'd sell your arse to look even remotely as edible as Simon Day, Super-Root-Sex-Stick-Yumbo-Mega-Spunk of 1991.

That's all,
Baby Wolf.

1) I should've been more specific as to why Ratcat are ugly and why I thought they were ugly that night. They pretend to be something special, and they're severely less than mediocre. Seeing the crowd lap 'em up was irritating in the extreme.

2) Popularity means zip — Ratcat are popular, so are Barnesy, Ernie Sigley etc. Gerald Kersh isn't, nor Lewis Furey, nor Kim Salmon. Shame.

3) What I look like in PF will be very different from me on stage. I look okay. Everyone looks like the neg was sucked up by the Hoover in PF anyway.

4) How come you dislike PF so much, but read it cover to cover? Listen to music, not hype. (This goes for me, too.) — Robert Brokenmouth.

"Glad you liked the zine. It is nice to see someone with an opinion; sometimes I get the feeling the readership consists of sticks of wood without names on 'em.

"I have disliked Ratcat from the first note. (Got sent a badge by someone who was their bass player for three weeks. I suspect she got the flick 'cos she was taller than either of the others. [She was.]) The Short Poppy Syndrome. So, you have a mid-get fetish. My favourite Rat-song is "Don't Go Now", which has a lot to do with the Hummingbirds connection.

"Who cares how many copies a record sells? Aesthetics are an absolute.

"Adelaide's greatest cultural exports are Bloodloss, Grong Grong, King Snake Root and Blanketmouth.

"A friend of mine once told me that, at that moment, I looked like Simon Day. I didn't kill her on the fuckin' spot, just pointed out the extra sixteen inches and thirty kilograms. Restraint. Restraint.

"Official PF editorial opinion has it that the vid for "Don't Go Now" is powerfully ideologically sound: a three-piece gtr/bass/drums band playing their instruments ... for the whole song. With any luck this will imprint on a whole new generation of nine-year-olds and help SAVE THE WORLD FOR MUSIC AND CULTURE.

"We at Party Fears use our real names and addresses. (If you don't believe me, call up Adelaide directory enquiries and ask for Brokenmouth, R. It's a silent number, but will confirm his name. Yes, he has endless fun with Telecom, electricity, work, etc ...) If you have an opinion, stand by it.

"I am quite sure that, without your valiant defence, Robert's unkind words would surely have been sufficient to hurl Ratcat to the depths of rock'n'roll obscurity and cab-driving within weeks, if not days, and am also sure that Mr Perkins would agree with you completely re: Ratcat. (I'd love a source on that quote.) — ed.

Next time: Mark Snarski, Ollie Olsen (hello, Ross??) and, later, another tree ... see you in October.

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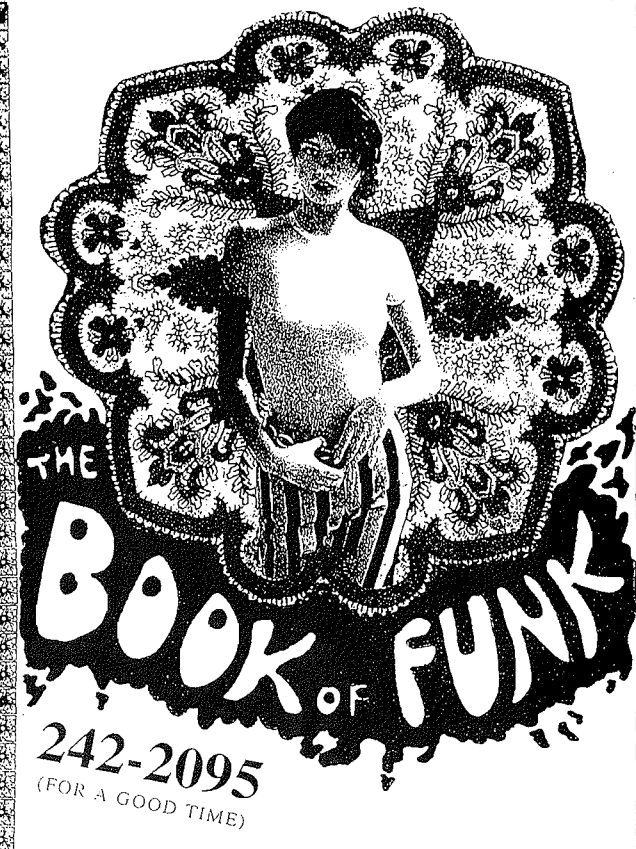
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