

TAJ MAHAL • BLODWYN PIG

BEAT INSTRUMENTAL

MAY
3/-



BEAT INSTRUMENTAL

No. 73

MAY 1969

EDITORIAL & ADVERTISEMENT OFFICES:

58 Parker Street, London, W.C.2. Telephone 01-242 1961

Publisher and Managing Editor: SEAN O'MAHONY

Advertisement Director: CHARLES WOODS

Assistant Editor: MITCH HOWARD

Art Editor: GLYN PEACOCK

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Editorial

The current fight over Northern Songs, the company which holds the copyright of all John Lennon's and Paul McCartney's songs, highlights something which should be remembered by every musician or songwriter and that is the importance of carefully studying any contract before you sign it.

I am not suggesting that Paul and John didn't study theirs. In actual fact, I think that they have done extremely well out of the deal with Dick James. But they could have done much better. If they had waited another few months in 1963, many publishers would have been happy to handle their material and give them 90% of the returns. Indeed, there would have been nothing to stop Brian Epstein or The Beatles setting up their own publishing company to take care of everything.

Any music publisher who works on an artist's material is worth his weight in gold. But the drags on the scene are the publishers who sign up copyrights, do nothing about them and hope that either the artist or someone else will record the song and make it a huge success. Then they can just sit back and rake in royalties for which they have done absolutely nothing.

When one sees the tremendous sums involved—Northern Songs is reported to be worth well over ten million pounds—one does begin to realise the returns that can be achieved. Unlike five or 10 years ago, most British songs are considered very favourably by overseas publishers and artists for exploitation in their countries. America certainly is no longer the home of pop music writing. They recognise that British tune-smiths are just as capable as they are of turning out hit material in large quantities. And so the rewards have gone up accordingly. There are just as many song-writers riding around in Rolls Royces these days as there are pop stars.

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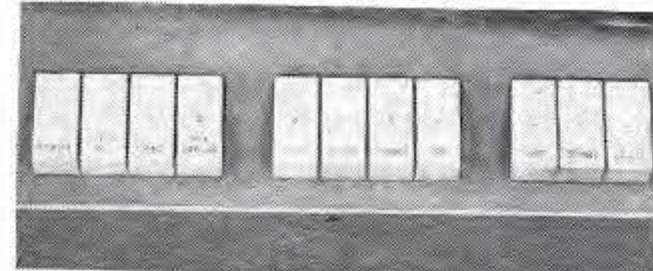
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Blodwyn Pig

Mick Abrahams' new band

"THERE'S this guy who keeps popping up all over the place. He just suddenly materialises. We were sitting round trying to think of a name for the group and were coming up with all the usual stuff when he walked into the room and came out with it just like that. We stopped, looked at each other, and that was it."

That is how Mick Abrahams answered my number one question about his strangely named group Blodwyn Pig. These days a Kaleidoscopic Karrot or an Invisible Worm wouldn't make me raise an eyebrow but Blodwyn Pig seemed totally incomprehensible and so it is. As Lord Buckley says, there you jolly well are, aren't you?

Blodwyn Pig has been together for a mere couple of months but in that time has built up a considerable reputation as a result of constant club and college gigs. At first it tended to be billed as the Mick Abrahams Band (and a dozen different spellings of Blodwyn Pig), for Mick formed the group and he was the name, having been lead guitarist with Jethro Tull and rated for his version of *Cat's Squirrel*, not to mention his long curly hair and his perennial Levi shirt. Mick and the rest of the group didn't mind this sort of billing, because it got them audiences, but now they feel that the time has come to make Blodwyn Pig stick by itself. (You could hardly forget a name like that, anyway.)

And this is quite right, for Blodwyn is not Mick Abrahams plus backing group; it is a corporate effort with each member playing his part. They produce a round, strident sound, very much in the British blues/rock tradition. Their music is blues-based but they do not do very many straight blues numbers and in fact their most impressive performances are of their original material that is not in the strict twelve-bar format. As Mick says, "We don't want any labels stuck on the band. Just playing blues all the time is not enough. You could say

that blues is the essence of our music, it's there at the middle, but we are not a 12-star blues band. We just aim to play good music and music that we like. We don't want anyone pushing us into something else that isn't us."

I asked Mick how he thought the band related to Jethro Tull and his answer was simple: "It doesn't relate. We are deliberately trying to get away from that, for instance, Jack only features flute on a couple of numbers." The only number that Blodwyn Pig play that Mick featured with Jethro Tull's *Cat's Squirrel* which they used to get the second set off to a successfully thundering start when I saw them at the Bluesville Club in North London. And that number was always Mick Abrahams, not Jethro Tull.

Not an imitation

Blodwyn Pig is definitely not an imitation or duplicate Tull, but shades of Jethro seemed to come through on occasions, which is only to be expected as Mick's guitar was a very important part of the Jethro Tull sound. Talking to him you get the impression that he underestimates his own contribution to Tull and his influence on their finished product.

Now, however, Mick Abrahams and his guitar are an important part of Blodwyn Pig. Mick does not push himself forward instrumentally and often slips into the background to play a rhythm part behind Jack Lancaster on sax, with whom he works very closely the whole time. The guitar and sax are often playing harmonies together and the sounds produced are very good. Jack and Mick have known each other for quite some time now and they played around clubs in Manchester together some while back. They had the idea of forming a band then, and it just happened they were both free at the right time.



Jack has blown his saxes in all places at all times, including the less salubrious dens of Hong Kong, and the other two members of Blodwyn Pig are both experienced musicians. Bassist Andy Pyle played with the old Victor Brox Blues Train of years gone by and skinfreak Ron Berg has played his drums with Graham Bond, and with Bobby "Watch Your Step" Parker when he toured Britain. Andy and Ron work closely together and lay down an interesting and solid beat which Mick and Jack work from, but, although you can write it down and analyse it like that, you hear it as one thing.

It is really interesting listening to Mick Abrahams playing and also interesting watching him, for he shows that you do not have to play like Clapton or Alvin Lee to be a good guitarist. A lot of his playing is more or less straight chord work with odd notes and melodies picked out, and then he will let himself go. He also plays a great slide guitar on a couple of numbers during the show. And there is another side of Abrahams . . . the singer. He sings all Blodwyn Pig's numbers and does it very well. His voice is full and not at all strained, and he has a natural sense of timing and expression that he will no doubt develop further. But Mick thinks he is a rotten singer: "I only sang a couple of backing pieces with Jethro Tull but now I sing everything. I've never thought I was a good singer but the others say it's O.K.". Jack Lancaster backed

this up: "He sounds good in spite of the fact he doesn't like it himself. The test of a singer is when he comes to record. You can make a mistake on stage and the number carries along and no one even notices, but if you goof on an LP it's there for everyone to hear every time they play it. And Mick does sound good on the album tracks we've cut."

Their LP "Ahead Rings Out" (make what you like of that) is due for release this month. "We have just been in the studio for two whole days," Jack told me. "And when I say whole days, I mean whole days, right the way through from morning until the early hours. We went in and it's worked." All eight tracks were written by the group, including *Dear Jill* which will be coming out as a single as well. On two of the tracks there will be a big band sound, but there are no session musicians playing . . . all the extra instruments are played by Jack, a true one-man big band.

And that is Blodwyn Pig. A great band with a great future and the only person who hasn't had a mention yet is the Pig Machine, an invention of Ron's that is most mysterious. It makes strange sounds and falls off drums, as do his clockwork ducks. Other activities of the Pig Machine are not for publication, and rumours that he is to make a double album may well be without foundation. Oink oink.

M.H.



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PLAYER ^{OF} THE MONTH



TERRY SYLVESTER

TERRY Sylvester is, of course, the new Hollie. He is the one who, in a blaze of publicity, took over from the controversial Graham Nash. Terry stands there, an angular fraction of an inch under six feet, and he totes his Gibson Jumbo as in the manner born. As for his voice, an amazingly flexible instrument of wide range—well, you'd never, ever, know that Nash was no longer there.

And Terry is very much for the Shadows—both as musicians and for the influence they created over his own musical life. He says: "I was about 14 when music started affecting me. The Shadows and Cliff and all that sort of thing. I saved up, with paper rounds and so on, and bought a £7 10s. guitar—from a hock shop, but a good instrument. Nobody taught me to play—I'd just listen to the records of the day (Cliff and the Shadows again) and then try to copy it. At school, a mate and I formed a group, which was then all instrumental.

"I left school at 15, went to work in a garage for 11 months. But playing in a group at the same time led to trouble—one had to go and it wasn't the group. Our group was the Liverpool Escorts and we got a lot of publicity when, in competition with 80 other groups, we won a talent contest at Philharmonic Hall. Suddenly our price went up from a fiver a night to £25 a show, which was tremendous for us."

Then Terry went with the Swinging Blue Jeans and stayed for three years . . . right up to January this year. Then, in the face of tremendous opposition, he nicked the job with the Hollies.

Terry owns up that he always wanted a Gibson Jumbo . . . "Trouble was that I always had to be electric with The Escorts, though I shared rhythm and lead with the Blue Jeans.

"Things recently have happened very fast, but it's going nicely with the Hollies, despite the obvious nervousness at first. All that newspaper talk about the big money I'm going to earn—well, I suppose it is only natural that people should suddenly start asking me what the secret is".

In many ways, the story of Terry Sylvester is unique—a real rags to riches story, though the rags looked pretty sharp as it happens! The break-through came and Terry was able to take it because he'd bothered to learn his trade. Born in Liverpool, he's an ardent soccer fan. Born, in fact, on January 8, 1947. The Shadows may have split up, each going his own way, but there's a place in Terry's heart for the four boys who did so much to create a group scene in the first place.



Savoy Brown

THERE are a tragic number of examples of the good old British public playing it just a bit too cool with their best groups. Maybe it's the old thing about a prophet being without honour in his own country. Maybe we've had too many good groups so we get blase about them. Or maybe when a group makes the trek to America it really pulls out all the stops to win a new, strange audience.

Whatever the case, we've lost too many groups to America. And it looks as if it may happen all over again with Savoy Brown. As I write this, they are one of the biggest draws in the States. Amazing mob scenes with audiences of thousands rising to their feet and giving half-hour ovations—it's hardly like a British blues club.

For the various Savoy Brown bands over the years, there's been a lot of sheer hard graft, plugging away on the blues circuit. Many times Kim Simmonds, leader of the group on guitar, has felt like calling it a day and getting a job as guitarist in someone else's group. Four years has Kim been on the road with musicians coming and going, while the Savoy Brown band has got so close to the big time but never managing to get up to the top rung of the ladder.

The present band that's driving them crazy in America has been together now for 14 months. The same line-up that made their fine last-but-one album, *Getting To The Point* (there will soon be a new one—*Blue Matter*), except that bassist Rivers Jobe has been replaced by new man Tony Stephens. Singer and figurehead is the evil-faced Chris Youlden, a far better vocalist than the blues trendies realise, who writes the songs with Kim. Lonesome Dave

Peverett is on second guitar, Roger Earle plays drums, and Bob Hall is the pianist.

It had been originally fixed that they should fly to America last November. A considerable underground following had grown up purely as a result of their records and the U.S.A. was interested to hear what they were offering live. Various hang-ups ensued and it wasn't until late January that Savoy Brown finally boarded the great metal bird. Even then they'd spent three days kicking their heels waiting for visas and permits to materialise.

So they arrived late in New York. Straight off the plane to Steve Paul's Scene Club. The first night they were awful—the club itself is appallingly difficult to play, with bad acoustics and a ceiling two inches above head height, and to add to this baptism of fire the group were struggling to get to grips with unfamiliar new Ampeg equipment.

Taste of glory

The next two nights at the Scene were better, and they at least succeeded in winning the audience over. But the first taste of the glory to come was at Boston. They went down a storm, the audience yelling "saa-voy saa-voy" and refusing to let them off stage. And this pattern was repeated at practically every gig they played right across the country.

Their manager, Harry Simmonds, was there. "The first time a group goes to the States you don't expect to come home without losing money. We just went over to see what happened. None of us expected too much and we knew that if you don't work and put on a good show you'll be killed stone dead. A promoter will drop you straight away

if he isn't completely satisfied. An audience doesn't show itself immediately. They wait and judge you. There isn't generally too much applause between numbers—it all comes out at the end of the set when they've decided one way or the other.

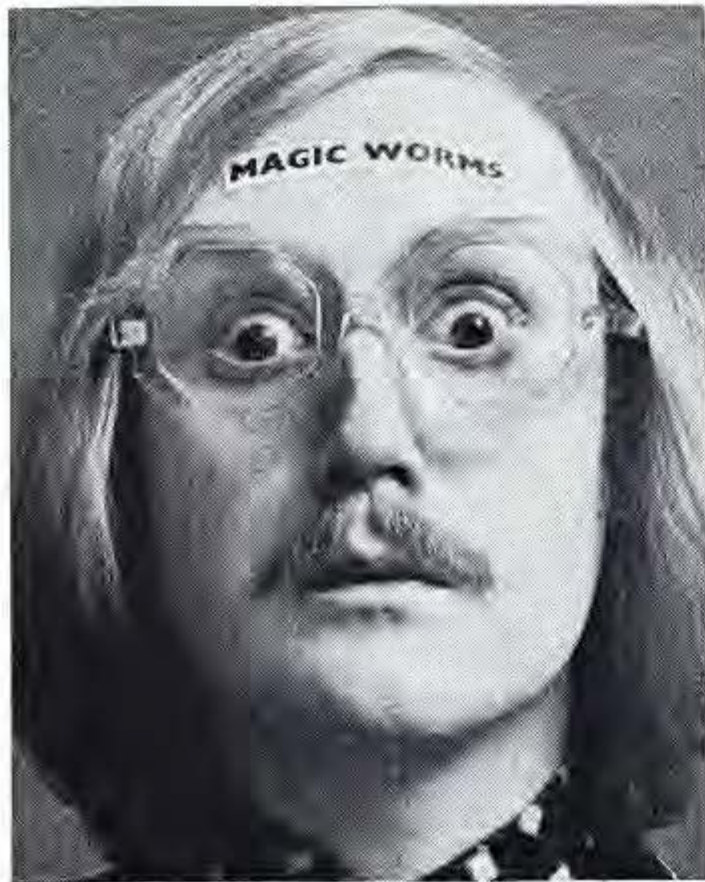
"It turned out that Savoy Brown actually made a profit. We started with booking for the weekends only but it soon spread that the group were a sensation and right now I could have booked the group solidly for another three months.

"The good it's done them is enormous. They are inspired by the great audience reactions. Whereas in England they used to wear dirty old jeans and just play the music, they really put on a show now. Kim doesn't hide in the background on stage any more—he and Chris are right out in front.

"At one show Chris was so exhausted that he collapsed in the middle of the *Boogie*, the climax to the act. The audience started chanting 'get up, get up, get up' until he got back on his feet and gave them more. It's unbelievable the way they've latched on to him as the character of the group. He comes on with a black bowler hat, monocle and smoking White Eagle cigars. They love it."

And so, having come away with all the honours from the biggest challenge so far, Savoy Brown are back in Britain. They're going back to the States in July for another three months, knowing they've made it at last. The last time I met Kim Simmonds, in October, he said, "It takes time—but in the end it's worth doing the music you believe in." Take note, young musicians!

R.S.



The Vivian Stanshall Column

Swaying, swearing, red-as-a-radish furious, sitting in the buffet-car of an express-strain to Kings Cross, gawped at by the passengers, ignored and insulted by the waiters, perspiring, "engaged" or "in a station" at the toilet, wishing I'd brought banana sandwiches (you make up your own mind with cheese and tomato!), deliberately spilling my drink on people, regretting it and trying to lick it back Dear Reader I write to you. I'm coming home after three days cabaret in Middlesbrough. We played in a club with surprisingly high standards. In the foyer I saw a large notice signed by the Führer to the effect that: "Nobody with long hair, sideboards, or wearing dark or floral shirts would be allowed into the club". This of course excluded us as we are frightfully trendy, as you know. We were musing on this strange paradox in the life-like "bistro"-styled bar when loud roaring and barking heralded the compere; a gentleman in shiny blue mohair tuxedo, very tight trousers and dark glasses ("shades", man) that lent just the right hint of intrigue and St. Tropez to his 15 stone. "Now look lads, you can't come in here looking like that, Gerroutovvit". We did and spent three days sulking in our dressing-room. By special permission only, we were allowed on stage. The club was packed every night, although this may be misleading as people tend to be fatter in the North and take up more room. But despite the rigorous entrance exam., sheep-dip and disinfectant shower provided by the management to keep out rough people and undesirables there did seem to be a lot of punch-ups and disgorging going on amongst the elite.

A quite extraordinary and depressing thing happened. Three blokes came up and told us that they had shaved their sideboards and cut off their hair in order to get in to see us. I felt awful about that, but thank God it wasn't a Jewish club.

The other day as I sauntered through Soho softly humming a sonnet and enjoying the sunshine and whistles of shopkeepers, a geezer stopped me and tried to sell me an Oxo cube for £5. Why is gravy so expensive? (Dunno chum, but we reckon you must have been fair browned-off.) Unfortunately Sol Warthogstein, my manager and close friend is on alcohol holiday in America and is unavailable for serious comment.

Love Viv.

BI's CHART FAX

Britain's best-sellers of the last four weeks, in alphabetical order showing songwriters, producer, studio, engineer and publisher.

Boom Bang A Bang (*Warne/Moorehouse*) Lulu
RP—Mickie Most. S—de Lane Lea. E—Dave Siddle. MP—Chappell.

First Of May (*R. B. and M. Gibb*) Bee Gees
RP—Robert Stigwood/Bee Gees. S—IBC. E—Mike Claydon. MP—Abbigail.

Games People Play (*South*) Joe South
RP—Joe South. S—American. MP—Lowery.

Gentle On My Mind (*Hartford*) Dean Martin
RP—Jimmy Bowen. S—American. MP—Acuff/Rose.

Get Ready (*Robinson*) Temptations
RP—William Smokey Robinson. S—American. MP—Jobett Carlin.

Goodbye (*McCartney*) Mary Hopkin
RP—Paul McCartney. S—Olympic. E—Vic Smith. MP—Apple.

Good Times (Better Times) (*London/Cooke/Greenaway*)
Cliff Richard
RP—Norrie Paramor. S—IBC. E—Mike Claydon. MP—Francis Day and Hunter.

I Can Hear Music (*Spector/Barry/Greenwich*) Beach Boys
RP—Carl Wilson. S—American. MP—Lidber/Stoller.

I Heard It Through The Grapevine (*Whitfield/Strong*)
Marvin Gaye
RP—Norman Whitfield. S—American. MP—Jobette/Carlin.

If I Can Dream (*Earl Brown*) Elvis Presley
S—American. MP—Carlin.

In The Bad Old Days (*Macaulay/McLeod*) Foundations
RP—Tony Macaulay. S—Pye. E—Alan Florence. MP—Welbeck.

Israelites (*Dekker*) Desmond Dekker
RP—Leslie Cong. S—Jamaican. MP—Sparta.

Monsieur Dupont (*Bruhm/Funkel/Callander*) Sandie Shaw
RP—Eve Taylor. S—Chappell. E—John Timperley. MP—Carlin.

Pinball Wizard (*Townshend*) The Who
RP—Kit Lambert. S—IBC. E—Damon Lyon-Shaw. MP—Fabulous.

Sorry Suzanne (*Stephens-Macaulay*) Hollies
RP—Ron Richards. S—EMI. E—Peter Bown. MP—Schroeder.

Surround Yourself With Sorrow (*Martin/Coulter*) Cilla Black
RP—George Martin. S—EMI. E—Geoffrey Emerick. MP—Peter Maurice.

Where Do You Go To (*Sarstedt*) Peter Sarstedt
RP—Ray Singer. S—Lansdowne. E—John Mackswith. MP—Mortimer.

Wichita Lineman (*Webb*) Glen Campbell
RP—Al deLory. S—American. MP—Carlin.

Windmills Of Your Mind (*N. Bergman/A. Bergman*) Noel Harrison
RP—Jimmy Bowen. S—American. MP—United Artists.

You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin' (*Spector/Mann/Weil*)
Righteous Brothers
RP—Phil Spector. S—American. MP—Screen Gems.

RP—Record Producer. S—Studio. E—Engineer.
MP—Music Publishers.

KEYBOARD FINGERING

BY THE TUTOR

If you pick up any ordinary piano tutor you will find it full of terms like quavers, semitones, arpeggios, and so on. We have tried in this series to explain exactly what some of these terms mean in simple language.

This month I am going to talk about playing arpeggios. First of all, what is an arpeggio? Previously, we have talked about playing all the notes of a chord at the same time. If, however, you play them one after the other, you are playing an arpeggio. But, as you will have noticed on many recordings—particularly of sentimental ballads—the keyboard player does a much longer run than not the three or four notes of a chord. What he does, of course, is to play the same notes going up the piano so that he plays, for example, the chord of "C" two or three times in succession.

Before I explain exactly how this is done, I think I should tell you exactly what the two pedals are used for on the piano. The one on the left is connected to a series of felt pads which damp down or quieten the sound when you hit a series of notes. It is not used half so often as the one on the right, which sustains a note. You can, of course, sustain a note two ways. One by depressing a note and keeping your finger on it. This will lengthen it. Or you can first of all press the right pedal down and then hit a note. It will go on sounding after you have taken your finger away from the keyboard.

The right or "sustaining pedal" is normally used when you play arpeggios to spread out the overall sound.

Now let's look at the chord of "C" which, you will remember, is made up of the notes C, E, G and C. But I want you to play this with the left hand at the lower end of the keyboard, two octaves below middle "C".

We will leave out the "E" because "thirds", the distance between "C" and "E", sound muddy this low on the piano. So play "C" with your fifth finger (left hand) at the same time press down the right-hand pedal. Play "C" with the second finger and the next with the first finger. At this point the player runs out of fingers if he wants to progress up the keyboard, so when you get the thumb on "C", pivot your hand on your thumb so that your fingers pass over it and the third finger can reach the next "E" above the "C". This leaves you your second finger for "G" and your first finger for "C". With the pedal down, you are sounding a chord of two octaves played with one hand.

Before you move on to another chord, you have to release the pedal, otherwise all the notes of the new chord will be superimposed on the first chord.

With the right hand you can play "C" as a chord or an arpeggio slipping in the "blue notes" of Eb, Gb and Bb to make things a bit more interesting.

If you want to move up the keyboard in a run of more than one octave, you have to practise passing your thumb under your hand to give you enough fingers to finish the run. If you take the chord of "F", for example, you will play "F" with your first finger, "A" with your second and "C" with your third finger. At this point you will have to pass your thumb under the other fingers to reach the "F" an octave above where you started. To do this quickly and accurately will take a fair bit of practice. But when you can do it, with your thumb on "F" again, you can move on up again.

Coming down you have to pass the fingers over the thumb like this; with your fifth finger on "F", third on "C", second on "A" when you reach "F" with your first finger you have to pass over it so that you reach "C" with your third finger, leaving plenty of fingers to continue the run. Next time, I shall continue to give a few tips on piano techniques and some more colourful chords.

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STATESIDE REPORT



WITHIN the next couple of years San Francisco may very well be a self-contained music industry possessing all the vital organs necessary to maintain a community independent of the rest of the music world. It may seem hardly more than wishful thinking at the moment; but David Rubinson, noted in rock circles for his production work with Moby Grape, left his production post at Columbia recently to start work on this "utopian" community that he visualises in the future of San Francisco. Rubinson will be working out of Bill Graham's new record company, tentatively called Fillmore Records, taking charge of operations.

Rubinson's plans include the training of musicians and aspiring production men every phase of producing records through instructional seminars headed by experienced men of the field. He feels these seminars will produce competent studio men, something San Francisco has been lacking all along. By instructing the various aspects of production to musicians, the bands will be able to rehearse and tape themselves and be able to appraise their work before putting it on record.

Seminars

Recording for Graham's company and instructions for the proposed seminars will take place at a modern studio in the S.F. area called Pacific Recorders, one of the city's eight recording studios.

Graham's record company will be made up of two labels, one distributed by Columbia and the other by Atlantic. At this writing only one band has been announced signed to a recording contract by Graham, but he expects to have several of the young San Francisco bands, as well

as some popular ones, under his fold.

The San Francisco debut of Janis Joplin and her new band in late March, which drew 20,000 fans over four nights, left many people wondering whether or not her departure from Big Brother to pursue this new course was really a step forward. For most people her new role (as queen of a Memphis-styled R and B ensemble) and new band were disappointments. Janis wailed and her septet was loud and swung hard, but the emotions of the crowds were not aroused. There was no encore opening night, and many people left before the last number had ended.

The reviews that followed

the S.F. debut, much like the criticism that came from Memphis and New York earlier, knocked the band for its lack of originality and its attempting to simulate an R and B revue *à la* Ike & Tina Turner. Ralph Gleason, one of the country's leading rock critics, suggested that Janis scrap her current band and return to Big Brother. Her new unit has not received a favourable review since it performed for the first time last December.

The group that stole most of the attention away from Janis was a Bill Graham discovery called Aum that was listed at the bottom of the bill. Aum is a power trio with a captivating showman

in guitarist-singer-harp player Wayne Ceballos, whose guitar style can be compared to that of Jimi Hendrix. Graham has signed Aum to a contract, and they will be one of the first bands to issue a record through his company.

First albums

Two of the most talked about blues guitarists to emerge from Texas, Albert Collins and Johnny Winter, have released their first albums, both on the Imperial label. Collins, whose performances with his band have been limited to the Texas area until recently, has been an influence on many guitarists while he was an unknown. Albert King and Carlos Santana, I suspect, have been influenced by Collins, judging from the similarities in technique.

Collins' album is called *Love Can Be Found Anywhere (Even in a Guitar)*. It's mostly instrumental and really isn't a sparkling debut for the excellent guitarist. Most of the instrumental tracks are quite simple and lack variety in the structure of arrangements. Even though Collins' guitar is the dominant instrument on this record, the shortness of the tracks seems to inhibit him from letting loose.

Another LP by Collins was released earlier on a small Texas label, but its distribution was confined to the Texas area. Since it had a limited pressing and consequently became classified as a collector's item, one retailer in Los Angeles was reported selling it at \$25 per copy.

Johnny Winter's album entitled *The Progressive Blues Experiment* was recorded prior to his signing a five-year contract with Columbia and was originally released on the Sonobeat label, a small Texas



Janis Joplin's new band has disappointed those who've seen it

company that pressed only a few hundred copies of it. Following news of Johnny's exceptional talents reported through the underground press, Liberty records purchased the distribution rights and redistributed the LP on Imperial.

Winter's debut album is just what the title suggests—an experiment with various blues styles, ranging from simple country blues numbers like his *Bad Luck And Trouble* to powerful contemporary renditions of *Help Me* and *Rollin' And Tumblin'*. Winter's best performance is B. B. King's *It's My Own Fault*, which exemplifies the speed and excitement of his guitar that has drawn much attention in recent months.

Free form improvisation and experimental electronics are very much a part of the Quicksilver Messenger Service's second and possibly final album, *Happy Trails*, just released in the states. This LP better represents their stage performance; two of the numbers (*Who Do You Love* and *Mona*) were recorded



Quicksilver's second album may be their last

live and a good 80 per cent of its 50-minute length is instrumental. The album features another of Quicksilver's fluid-like instrumental tracks, along the same lines as *The Fool*. This one's a Gary Duncan composition entitled *Calvary*, loaded with subtle musical

progressions and effective electronic sounds. The title song, *Happy Trails*, is a short rendition of an old western tune, and possibly Quicksilver's way of saying farewell.

The Sons of Champlin, the last of the original S.F. groups to get recorded, have

made a move unprecedented in the music industry, giving away a record free to all their fans who made a request when the offer was made. The record, an EP titled *Jesus Is Coming*, was played on a number of the underground stations around the country a few months back. The band received some 5,000 letters from all over the world, including religious radio stations and organisations, requesting the song. The EP preceded the release of the Sons' two-record package (which wasn't free) on Capitol called *Loosen Up Naturally*, their first album release.

Live shows

Probably the most unique feature of underground radio programming in the U.S. to come along is the broadcasting of live performances by rock bands. One station in San Francisco has been experimenting with this facet of programming, airing shows each week from the Avalon ballroom (which is back in business). M.A.



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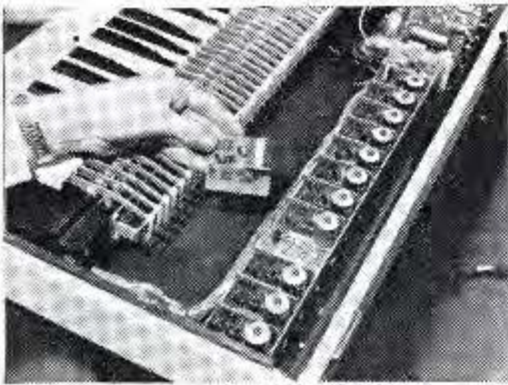
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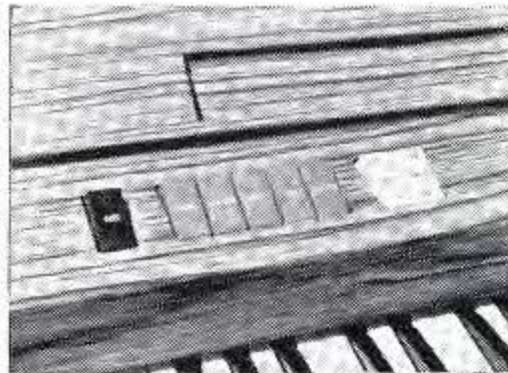
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BEN E. KING



WITH the Drifters, then on his own, Ben E. King has carved himself a permanent place in pop history. He looks with amusement at the 14 or so groups currently touring the world and billed as the *original* Drifters; and he looks with rather less amusement at the umpteen people, many British, who try to copy HIS style.

Said Ben: "It can't be helped that a lot of singers base their performances on someone else's approach. I did—I copied Brook Benton and Sam Cooke. But you only do so much. Say you dig Johnny Mathis and go for his style. You end up too close and you have no individuality at all.

"But the funny thing is this. It is flattering, of course, to have people base themselves on, say, me. For a start, I don't think any artist really knows, to the last nuance what he actually sounds like. So somebody comes up to me and says: 'You should go to such-and-such a club—guy there sounds exactly like you'. Off I go and this sounds a little bad! I wonder: do they really mean he's *exactly* like me?

"Anyway the imitator never really makes it. The Beatles, Elvis—they're still there. The copyists aren't. You got guys trying to sound like the American blues singers. Okay—but why copy? Your own Beatles started it this side of the Atlantic—the scene surely wouldn't have happened from the American side of things.

Looking back

"I suppose you can't help looking back sometimes, but I mostly believe in looking forward. Be one step ahead, if you can. But then you get this amazing scene in Britain of old records making it all over again. Martha and the Vandellas—not a freak, but part of a general scene here. They've been on at me to re-release *Stand By Me*, but I'm not sure. It's a gamble . . . maybe the kids have already bought it.

"These re-releases get people talking about may be there's a shortage of good new music. These records don't make it in the States right now, but the problem basically is the same in the States. It's a bit slow on good tunes and good writers, which could be why instrumentals are cropping up again. Shortage of words. Dee-jays have to look for the good stuff so I guess you can't blame them for going back seven years or so for the best material.

"Tell you this, though. The standards of musicianship in the groups are well up. I work here with the Globe Show band—all guys between 18 and 21. I'm happy that they use horns now, not just the basic rhythm that the Beatles started. And these guys respect music for itself. They dig from Beethoven to James Brown.

"One thing I notice . . . you have some great organ players here. I've attempted to hire a few for the States with me. But they'd have to become American citizens, which means face the Army—and why *should* they have to worry about someone else's war? But nothing gives me more pleasure than the way groups are getting away from that pure rhythm sound. The Beatles again: they started dipping into the horn sounds, into strings. Their influence is tremendous.

Cut some stuff

"Recording? Well, I'd like to cut some stuff in London. All the time I say how important the engineer is—maybe THE most important man on a session. But studios are the same the world over. This talk about such-and-such a 'sound' is plain ridiculous.

"It's the musicians. They talk about the Memphis Sound. So Aretha Franklin moves all those musicians to New York—it's the same sound. See my point?

"But the engineer is the guy with it all at his fingertips. Especially in getting the right sort of scene for the underground groups.

"Now they got these 16 and 32 track studios. I'm not for them. It's gotta be too much. It's like an octopus—too many arms all over the place. If you know what you're doing, four tracks is the same as eight. Have more than that and it's really a throw-away show. I wouldn't like to record with anything more than eight tracks. Over that, it's merely a matter of experimenting and I've had enough experiments made over me already to last a lifetime.

"Sometimes they use a microphone for every instrument. Every voice. It's not necessary. Four microphones is plenty to get a complete sound, just so long as the engineer knows where it is at. Still, the guy who makes the machines wants to make a profit—he isn't too worried about the actual standards of recording! We don't need to get too clever. . . ."

P.G.

★ IN THE STUDIO ★



GIVING THE FACTS BEHIND THE HITS

YOU'D think that over the Easter weekend, most studios would shut down for at least a couple of days to take some well-earned rest. After all, engineers by nature of their profession have to work ridiculously long and strange hours, and it's not all that unusual to hear of sessions lasting upwards of 12 hours. But there was no rest for many of them, and work steamed ahead despite the so-called holiday. The banks and everything else may close but there's so much recording to be done that for the bigger studios it was business as usual.

Last year at de Lane Lea they had a couple of days off over Easter. Engineer Martin Birch told us that this year, with work booked up for weeks ahead, there was no rest. Among the names who have visited the studio during the last few weeks are the Glass Menagerie, who made

an album with Chas Chandler producing; singer Elkie Brooks recorded a single under the auspices of Peter Gage; and Sam Gopal and his group recorded a single entitled *Horse* with producer Trevor Walters. This is to be released shortly on the independent Stable label.

Terry Reid

The Terry Reid album, produced by Mickie Most, was practically completed as we went to press. This will be Reid's first album to be released in this country; his previous LP *Bang Bang You're Terry Reid*, was not thought to be suitable for British listeners. There's no doubt that a considerable demand for records is being generated by his exciting live performances on the club and college circuit.

Mickie Most has also been in the studio to record songs by Lulu for an album. Work

is still in progress on the record, which is a mixture of different types of song—beaty, ballad, standards and traditional. As we spoke to Martin, the sounds of Jeff Beck and the group could be heard in the distance. Apart from Jeff, Nicky Hopkins, Rod Stewart and recalled bassist Ronnie Wood, Tony Newman was playing drums. He is apparently a full time member of the group now, replacing Micky Waller. Newman will be remembered as the drumming force behind Sounds Incorporated. The group had booked a good deal of studio time to make a new album with Mickie Most producing.

Again with Mickie Most, Donovan was due in the studio to make a new single. Derek Lawrence has been doing more production for Deep Purple, who have done a new album at de Lane Lea, and has also been working

with Country Fever. This group, led by Albert Lee, one of the best—but least known—guitarists in the country, has its music well-described by the name. The sound is countrified and exciting. Al also sings and plays piano with the group.

Tom Allom at Regent A reports that at last the Tony Hazard album has been finished. "It's turned out very nice indeed," he says, "and is going to be released on CBS. The title of the record, made up of all Tony's hits when recorded by other artists, is called simply *Demonstration*."

The collection of buskers brought together by Don Partridge for the Festival Hall show a couple of months back have made an album which at present is not quite finished. Producing was Don Paul, who also produces Partridge.

EMI have been more than usually busy recently. Apart

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from the usual flow of established stars such as Cliff Richard, Des O'Connor, Frankie Vaughan, Joe Loss, Vince Hill and Hank Marvin, work has been done by the Pink Floyd, the Wallace Collection, the Locomotive, the Edgar Broughton band, the Gods, the Mandrake Paddle Steamer, Paul Jones and the Bedrocks.

Up in Birmingham, Hollick and Taylor studios have been recording an album by Anna Dell. Anna is going to be playing organ on the Queen Elizabeth II and the record will be initially for sale on the ship only. She recorded with her trio and also had some brass session men to augment the group for the record.

Hollick and Taylor have one of their records released on the new Bowler Hat label—about which, more elsewhere—by a group called the Excaliburs, *Doodle Diddle Dum*. Although the group are based in Birmingham, they are from the Sheffield area. Jean Taylor tells us that the studio is having a new mobile



Anna Dell in Hollick and Taylor's studios working on her LP "Cruisin"

mixer built, and a new studio mixer is on its way.

At IBC, the Who were finishing off the big project which has occupied so much of their time, the *Deaf, Dumb and Blind Boy* album. When this record finally does come out, it's going to be something of a landmark in the history of pop—the whole thing is an integrated story and the group

are convinced that the songs, taken individually, are their best ever. *Pinball Wizard* is one of them.

A lot of IBC's time has been spent on Vince Melouney's self-produced album, and Ginger Baker has started work on his album, produced by Robert Stigwood for Polydor release. The first session, which lasted from six in the

evening until seven o'clock the next morning, consisted of Ginger and an African drummer, Guy Warren, playing together. An exhausting session, we are told.

The Aynsley Dunbar Retaliation have been in the studio to start work on a new album. Ian Samwell is producing this, following the group's first two albums which sold well for Liberty. Barry Ryan has been busy trying to learn Italian and Spanish lyrics for recordings of *Love Is Love* to be released in these respective markets. He is also working on a new single for release over here on MGM.

Shel Talmy has been putting in many hours at IBC recently. He recorded the Amen Corner live at the Tottenham Royal with a

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mobile, has worked with the Pentangle on a lot of new recordings, and has been recording American star Lee Hazelwood's latest sessions.

Maurice Gibb has been producing on sessions by two new artists, Steve and Stevie and Harmony Grass, once better known as Tony Rivers and the Castaways, have been in the studio. John Goodison has been producing new tracks by the Gun, and Eddie Trevett has been working with Bill Kenwright on his new single for MGM. The Bee Gees and the Marbles have been in and out of the studio recording a number of tracks and trying various things out, and Paul Getty Jr. has produced an album of poems by Christopher Logue. (He writes the *True Stories* in *Private Eye*—judge his poetry from that.)

The Tages

Advison, too, have been extraordinarily active over the last few weeks. Gerald Chevin says that most of the work he's been doing has centred

on the top Swedish group, the Tages. He is very enthusiastic about the group—"they do some of the best stuff I've ever heard"—which is having the album released in Britain and the States as well as Scandinavia. The orchestral arrangements on the LP were done by Bill Shepherd and John Cameron (who has worked with Simon and Garfunkel). Backing tracks with voice to be added soon have been recorded by underground group Yes, with Paul Clay doing the production, and Alan Price has been in the studio to produce recordings by Paul Williams and the Set for an album, as yet unfinished. A group called Tangerine Peel, who once did a tremendous version of the Gibb Bros' *Every Christian*, have recorded a new single—*Never Say Never*—with producer Tony Colton.

Jackson Studios recently had the coincidence of recording a group called the Pop Single Workshop for Page One records. The power of the mass media is again demonstrated. Jackson's have

also recorded two artists with their own recording companies. One was Johnny McCauley, who runs his own Denver Records. He recorded a record which recently got as high as number four in the Irish charts at Jackson's, called *The Pretty Girl From Armagh*. A long-player is presently being made by McCauley.

The other man with his own company—at least he's certain of getting his stuff released—is Martin Linford, the owner of Bowler Hat records. His first single on the label was *Can I Take It With Me*, which featured the excellent backing voices of Sue and Sunny, Joe Cocker's friends. It was recorded at Jackson's.

Three singles

The Jackson label itself is now getting under way with three singles available this month. They are *Big Part Of Me* by the Hubbub Sound, *Susannah* by the Treaty, and *The Fugitive* by the Breada Barry Four. The Ad-Rhythm label, which specialises in

organ music, has also come in for much recent success. They released six albums last year, and these are already certain of release in Australia, South Africa and Holland, and two directors of the company, John Jackson and David Burrows, are going to the USA to finalise distribution deals over there.

New studio

A new studio has recently opened at 593 High Road, Leyton, E.10. **Progressive Sound Recording** is run by Bob Bloomfield, and although only a small studio—it can accommodate eight musicians—the results are good. A group called the Standing Ovation, who have recorded at major studios, were overjoyed by their demos, which they considered a lot better than the work of some better-known studios. The studio has multi-track facilities, limiters, echo and reverb, full equalisation on all channels and offers very good value for money.

Studios.....

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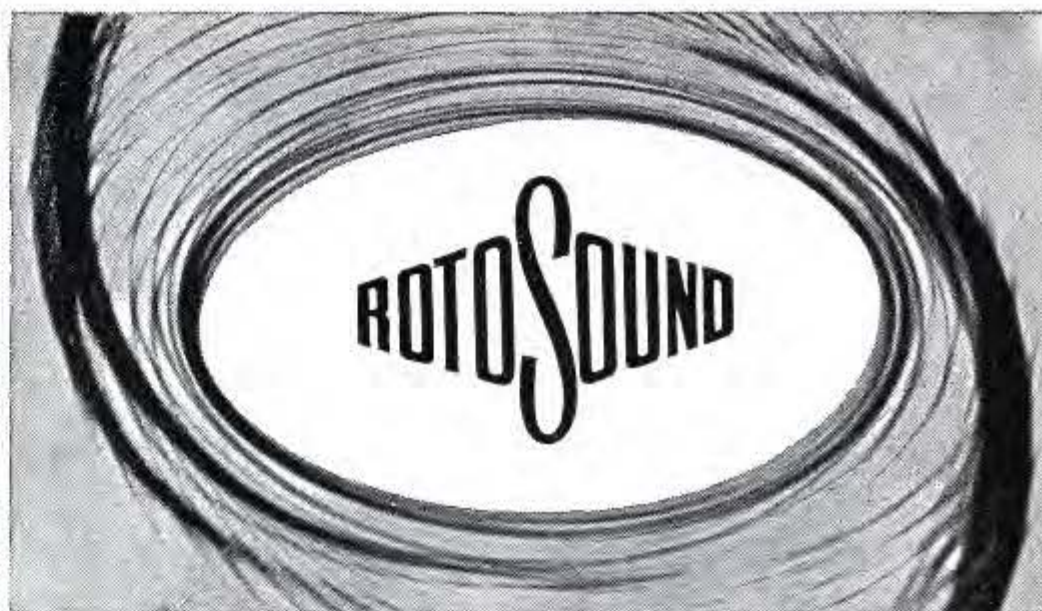
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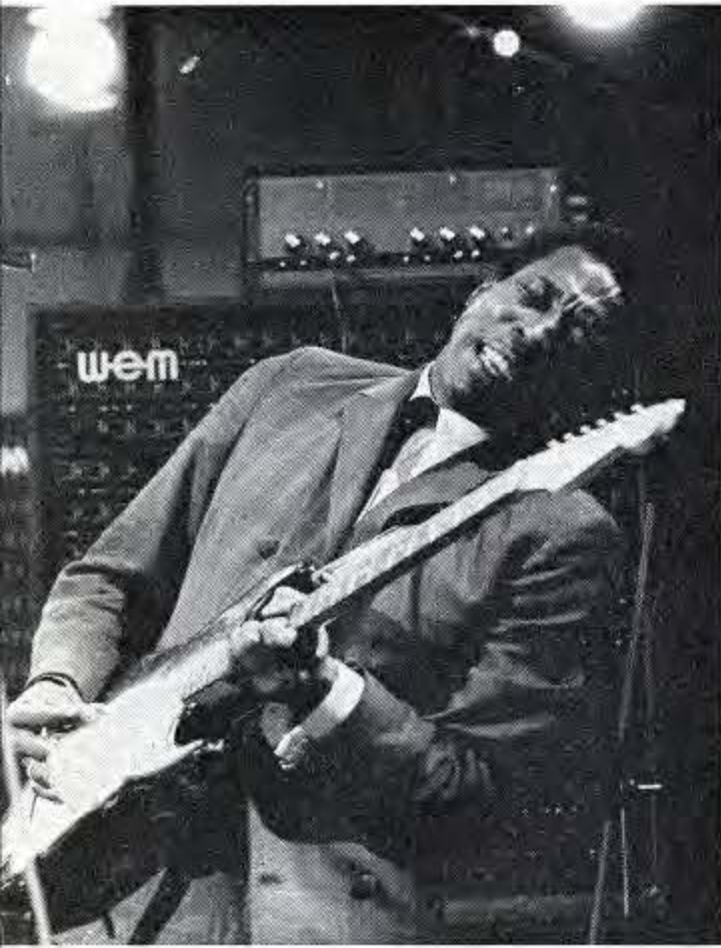
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Where does jazz meet pop? What is the future for super sessions? You can talk and talk about these questions but hearing jazz and pop men jamming together is something else completely. Beat was lucky enough to be at Staines last month when Colourtel TV Productions made a colour TV film, produced by Tom Parkinson, of the best in pop, blues and jazz. The musicians included Eric Clapton, Jack Bruce, Jon Hiseman's Colosseum, Led Zeppelin, Roland Kirk, Buddy Guy, Buddy Miles, the Modern Jazz Quartet, Steve Stills, saxophonist Chris Mercer, steel guitarist Glen Ross Campbell and Duster Bennett on harmonica!

The photos on this page and on our front cover give an idea of the excitement at the session. It was an experience in itself to hear Dick Heckstall-Smith and Roland Kirk playing side by side, and to have Buddy Guy sitting in with Colosseum. But at times the results were far from spectacular, which is perhaps inevitable when you get so many talented musicians playing hard through a 20-minute, 12-bar piece. But then the idea was to play together and see what happened and from their two days filming Colourtel will be coming up with a fine show.

Clockwise from top left: Buddy Guy; Dick Heckstall-Smith and Roland Kirk; Buddy Miles; Roland Kirk with Jack Bruce; Jon Hiseman; Eric Clapton, Buddy Guy and Duster Bennett; Duster Bennett and Steve Stills; Buddy Miles.



chambers brothers



THE Chambers Bros. may well have taken over Blue Cheer's title of the world's loudest group.

Last month they arrived in London on a promotional visit armed with 600 watt amplifiers. The equipment has been specially perfected to give the minimum of distortion at maximum volume, and the amps are to be marketed in Canada under their own name.

Julius, their road manager, demonstrated that the power effectively runs through Chambers' amps for about 10 seconds after they have been switched off. After two concerts from the group their sound was still going through me about an hour later.

The great problem for the group and the pleasant surprise to the casual visitor to the show is that the Chambers Bros. are so much better on stage than on record. It seems that it was not until their recordings managed to capture some of the feeling

of a 'live' performance that they began to sell.

Lester, Willie, Joe and George were born and raised in Mississippi. The Chambers family would all sing in church together — father, mother, eight brothers and five sisters. Today their father is 89 and still looking after the garden, and taking extensive walks around Los Angeles.

Shindig

By 1965 the Chambers Brothers were well known for their shows in California. They made their first television appearance on *Shindig*. And their first record—*Call Me 17*—for a small local label, Vault.

They appeared at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival, and soon after found they had a choice of work between the east and west coasts.

It is only in the last year that they have had comparable success with records. *The Time Has Come Today* album has now been in the

American LP charts for over a year, it being a certified million seller. When a shortened version of the title track was released as a single it spent many weeks in the top 20.

Time is one of the few songs to have sold successfully to two distinct markets of soul music and so-called psychedelic. It is the mind-rearranging climax of their current act, when the amplifiers are given most freedom.

The follow-up single, which also made the U.S. top 50, was a version of Otis Redding's *I Can't Turn You Loose*, with Lester doing a hoarse vocal. In similar vein is the latest—*Are You Ready*—Lester screaming still more than ever before.

This side of their music is primitive. Lester hits a large cowbell with a stick for many numbers, or otherwise helps out with a tambourine. Brian Keenan is the loudest and most ruthless drummer to play with the Brothers. With George on bass, Willie

with a Les Paul Gibson and Joe a Gibson Stereo, it is not unusual to find all the instruments used fairly percussively. And lately, with the arrival of their new equipment the Brothers have been listening to the sounds of their own machines.

The Chambers also sing sweeter songs. With Joe or Willie singing lead and the other brothers harmonising, they produce fine versions of *Love Me Like The Rain* and Jesse Belvin's *Guess Who* and the most meaningful of all, *People Get Ready*. Willie makes some sensitive high-pitched fluttering sounds from his guitar, and Lester's harmonica is at all times remarkable for his ability to breathe while playing very long passages.

Everything they do is basically gospel. All the Brothers sing, and the first songs they learned were spiritual harmonies. The influence persists into every one of their songs today so that each carries its own conviction.

The strength of the Brothers lies in their affinity. The co-ordination many groups must spend a lifetime learning has come very naturally to the four brothers who are just as close off stage as on. Although not particularly adventurous instrumentally, their playing is usually tight enough to allow complimentary exchanges.

Determined

It seems the Chambers Brothers are quite determined to make it in England. For, frustrated by the lack of interest shown them by British promoters, the group decided themselves to finance a promotional tour of Europe.

Bringing with them the Joshua Light Show they played three concerts for the ICA in London, and also several television dates. A *Colour Me Pop* show was taped and should be worth watching. They also promise to be back for a wider tour next September. See you, then.

THE JOSHUA LIGHT SHOW



DAVID EDWARD BYRD 1968

PROVIDING a most beautiful accompaniment to the Chambers Brothers at their London concerts was the Joshua Light Show. This is the group who have been resident at the Fillmore East in New York and have backed all the major English and American musicians to play there. It is not surprising then that their co-ordination of visual effects with musical changes far outshines the displays of other artists in light.

Their secret is simple. Joshua's band builds on the screen in the same way as pieces of music are built. The five members of the show have their own distinctive roles and exercise the same amount of self-discipline in creating light variations as must the musical group with their instruments.

Joshua White is the leader, who says, "We deal with projection of pure visual material, as opposed to flashing lights—the strobe—and ultra-violet light. We set up a series of propositions, each of which can do many things and then listen to the music and interpret it.

"We never jump into it and we wait till we see where it's at—if the number is slow, I usually ask Tom to begin" said Joshua.

Mirrors

Tom Shoemith works mainly with mirrors. He concentrates for the most part on reflecting a bright beam on to the screen and is comparatively isolated from the others who are concerned with the various projections. "Structurally, music is very predictable," Tom told me. "Acid rock is

fairly unpredictable. It used to depress me with a group like The Grateful Dead waiting for their music to change, since I'd produce no major change on the screen. For the Chambers Brothers' *Time Has Come Today* I can employ massive changes."

Bill Shwarzbach projects movements of coloured oils and waters compressed between plates and is also concerned with the more technical problems the light show encounters.

Lois Zelman and Cecily Hoyt are responsible for the cooking and filtering of the chemicals used and a further oil projection.

Use is made of an overhead projector, with film loops, slide projector, dimmer controls and a colour wheel. The resultant light is a spontaneous interpretation of the music.

"What we are doing with the Chambers Brothers is not very typical of our work—except perhaps for something like *Time Has Come Today*. There we have a full musical range and a full light range," Joshua continued. "We are mostly motivated by rock—the beat in this music is extremely important and we'd be fools to ignore it but sometimes the lights are a long way from the beat. I follow the bass quite often but backing jazz, for example, when they are laying down no recognisable tempo and going completely abstract we are not committed to anything.

"Sometimes, if the audience has come to see a particular person more than hear the music, we incorporate closed circuit television. We integrate it physically into the light show."

Trade shows

The Joshua Light Show has not only operated within the world of pop music. Members of the group have provided the light environments for industrial and trade shows, have appeared in a film called "Midnight Cowboy", have presented Berlioz's *Symphony Fantastique* at Carnegie Hall, and managed to throw light some 130 feet at the last Light Olympics.

J.L.S. is a most futuristic business organisation that may sometime find wider application for its talents. In the meantime, wherever it appears it continues to increase the depth of many a musical experience.

C.P.

WHAT'S going on in the vast retail world of musical instrument selling? What's happening that is trendy? Any signs of either slump or boom? Best way to find out is to take a conducted tour round the biggest outlets in London, which is still headquarters of the musical instrument scene.

First port of call for us was at **Rose-Morris**, with plenty of shop frontage in Shaftesbury Avenue. A busy shop, yet the business has been going for rather less than two years. Big display of brass and saxes on one side; guitars and organs and so on, over to the left. Man in charge is Rod Hannaford, bespectacled, thinish, energetic—and expert.

He told us: "We stock everything for the musician. And we're specially proud of having the widest variety of instruments in London. We've even got bagpipes in stock. Downstairs we cater for the beat group scene; upstairs more for brass and reeds."

"We have a huge range of guitars—acoustic and electric. Among the Spanish guitars,

the Aria is the best-seller now. Followed by Suzuki and Tatay. We also have a big selection of jumbo guitars, such as Eko, Ariana and the Big Timer folk guitar. We stock Fender and Gibson and the new line, the Shaftesbury guitar, our own make, is becoming a fantastic seller.

"Interesting point is the number of middle-aged, and older customers coming in to buy the electric organ, the Thomas, for their own homes. At one time, of course, they would have been after pianos. We also import the Gem organ from Italy.

"On the amplification side, we handle Marshall equipment which is the biggest seller in the world.

"Sales these days are right

CAPITAL H

A B.I. survey of some of L



Selmer's sell more Spanish guitars than any other type

across the board. Tenor saxes are a good line and the baritone is gaining ground. Country and Western looks like becoming a boom scene. Another interesting thing is the development of the Multi-vider, by Conn, which enables the trumpet to get a three-part sound, an octave below the note played, and an octave below that."

Among their customers are: the Move, the Nice, the Rolling Stones, and the Herd. While we were in the shop the roadies for the Love Affair arrived. Rose-Morris make their own drums at a factory in Kentish Town and can make any size, custom-built. The drum department is enlarging . . . and the new Buddy Rich sticks, with a waisted shape in the middle,

already a huge seller, though only out for a couple of months.

From Shaftesbury Avenue to Selmer's in Charing Cross Road. Two hosts here — Mr. Hawkins, in charge of the guitar section; and Mr. Fahey, who copes admirably with the reed depot. Says Mr. Hawkins: "There has been a trend change over the recent years. In 1964, we were selling to individuals on amps and guitars. Today we tend more to sell to groups as a whole . . . they go for the same equipment to get a uniform appearance. We are Gibson agents and the Gibson solids, SG Standard, SG Special and the Gibson Jumbo are all good sellers. We sell two to three Spanish guitars to any other type. Customers



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St. Giles Music Centre specialises in the Hammond organ.

are certainly more discerning and know exactly what they are looking for."

Said Mr. Fahey: "Selmer saxes sell themselves. And of course the Mark VI tenor is the favourite. But the guitar remains surely the biggest overall seller."

Both assistant managers talked. Flutes selling well. Amplification for saxes strong on the Gibson Maestro unit. Trombone slow because groups aren't using it. Good sales on Lowery organs for the home. As Premier drum agents, they found silver glitter was the most popular colour for a while. Best-selling sticks: Premier Ex Hickory and Premier C Hickory. Baritone sax next to tenor in popularity; altos quiet.

By way of farewell, Mr. Fahey said: "We cater for the professional and most of his needs. Violins, cellos, string bass—we can go into the classical field. On classical guitars, the imported (Japanese) range of Sevilla and Granados do well—and the Hofner Classic, of course."

The tour goes on. To St. Giles Music Centre, within hailing distance of Tin Pan Alley. Here we're greeted by genial Bill Lee. Here, they cope with the demands of brass bands, school bands—as well as the basic beat scene. Said Mr. Lee: "We can provide everything from a pair of finger cymbals to a Viking trumpet, which we supplied to the BBC. A full service to the professional."

"We specialise in the

Hammond organ—the only electric organ as opposed to the electronic organs. Also we deal in modifications, repairs and, naturally, sales. We do the servicing for most of the top group organists. A recent prize for us was the sale of an X-66 Hammond to Alan Price. We sell more organs than guitars, nowadays. We also sell more Spanish guitars than electric—such as the Angelica, a Japanese import, and this one really sells well.

"The Angelica Jumbo and 12-string guitars are also popular. But the servicing side is all-important... for John Mayall, Stevie Winwood, Alan Price, the Foundations, Small Faces, Love Affair. On the drum side, we handle

Rogers. There's a tendency for drummers to go for American kits rather than the British ones. And people are buying flutes in addition to tenors and baritones.

"The thing is, it's such a varied life here. One minute you are talking to a brass bandsman and the next to a church organist. And there are the new developments always coming up, like the Rogers pedal tympani, the latest thing to come into the country from the States."

On, now, to L. W. Hunt, Doc Hunt, the drum company in Archer Street, long time haunt of musicians. There we meet Mr. John Spence, general manager of this percussionist's paradise. Says Mr. Spence: "The trend is towards drummers with adventurous tastes asking for twin bass-drum set-ups, tablas, sleigh-bells, cow-bells, finger-cymbals. Some are using a 20-inch bass, some an 18-inch.

"Some of the boys are going back to calf-head skins. People are also asking for bigger kits—and, of course,



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we can make any size required. A lot more are thinking about lessons and learning to read. And the conga drum is more popular than bongos. We sell mainly Premier, but can get any kind—there's interest in Slingerland Gretsch and Ludwig.

"We have seven Premier kits in right now, and the price tends to put some drummers off the American kits. We have some second-hand ones. A snare drum getting popular is the Beverly 21, almost a copy of the Ludwig snare and costing £25.

"American kits are all made in the States now. Rogers used to be made here but no longer is. Drum tuition books going well are those by Buddy Rich and Max Abrams. Repairs? We'll tackle any kind and make it as good as new. We also have a hiring service of unusual instruments, like African talking drums, barrel organs, genuine Witch Doctor's drums."

Our next call was at Chas. E. Foote, in Denman Street now as we write but

moving soon to 17 Golden Square, to much larger premises. We met Mr. Foulds, a tall, distinguished, bespectacled man. He is managing director and told us: "We don't do electronic stuff, such as organs or guitars, except for bass guitars and amplifiers. We cover the whole range of percussion—Premier as the best-seller in a twenty-to-one ratio, possibly because we are Premier agents. We also sell Rogers, Ludwig, Gretsch, Slingerland. Drum-

mers tend towards English kits rather than American, probably because of the price difference.

"These days the bubble seems to have burst for American drums and also for German drums like Trixon. We find an interesting move towards string bass among the group members.

"On the repair side, we carry a complete set of spares for Premier and pride ourselves that we can fit a chap up immediately."



The whole range of percussion—in Chas. E. Foote's

He said that Zildjian have close competition from the Five-Star Super Zyn—on the sticks side, steady on Premier C, with Ringo Starr sticks popular too. Also a Japanese stick called "Star Medium", either with nylon tip or without.

Classical guitars

"We specialise in classical guitars . . . a big range from Jose Ramirez downwards. And there's a big education business to schools, including rental plans for classical guitars. Flutes go better than any other wind or brass instruments.

"There are the sudden enthusiasms, like for trumpet when Eddie Calvert came in but real developments are really imperceptible. Our belief is that a good shop should have a specialist on their instruments—we have Sid Grant who looks after the percussion side."

At London W.3, South Ealing road to be exact, is the Bargain Centre. Here we talk to Dave Simms, one of the

at the

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Dave Simms at the Bargain Centre

largest second-hand dealers in London. Dave said the most popular line was in amplification, though no one make was more popular than the other. He didn't think there was any discernment.

"We manufacture the Simms-Watts amplifier which sells at the same price as most of the second-hand equipment. The reason for this is that we cut out the middle man. We deal with new and second-hand amplifiers and have a discount arrangement for Selmer's amplifiers. We also sell new and second-hand

electric and acoustic guitars . . . and the most popular seller is the Fender guitar and bass.

"New equipment is hard to push because of the price. One trend I've seen is most of the groups switching to 100-watt outputs in a two-cabinet stack.

"How do we get our second-hand material? We travel all over the country buying it up, mostly from people's homes—people who advertise. They don't normally get expensive equipment in part exchange, it's mostly the second lines.

The more expensive items we buy direct. We also stock a small quantity of second-hand horns and organs. One of the main things we do is a tremendous amount of servicing for organs and equipment.

"We try to give a very good service and our customers tell me it is the best in London. Come in, leave the equipment, go out and have a cup of coffee, come back—and it's there, ready. As quick as that."

Back to the West End area now to see **Ivor Mairants' Music Centre**, which is in Rathbone Place, just off Oxford Street. His range of equipment, on guitars, is really comprehensive. "We stock the Jose Ramirez, which Segovia plays—and another guitar of beauty by an Englishman, David Rubio—which Julian Bream plays. And there is the flamenco side. . ."

At this point in came Manitas de Plata, trying sever-



Ivor Mairants' stock a very wide range of guitars

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al kinds of guitar—his own had been destroyed in a hotel fire. And this was an incredible display of virtuosity. And of course Mr. Mairants himself is an acknowledged expert on all kinds of guitars

The difference between concert and flamenco guitars? Said Mr. Mairants: "It is in the wood. The back and sides of a flamenco guitar are made out of cyprus wood—instead of rose wood as in the concert guitars." He added that Khono did the best-class guitar in Japan—he won an international award in a Guitar Concors in Brussels in 1967 . . . with 32 competitors.

"On the pop side," said Mr. Mairants, "we have made great strides forward. We import the best of the lower price range—and sell them at much lower prices than we could normally. We never camouflage an instrument—it always has the maker's name on it. Best seller in the electric category is the Gibson ES 330 and ES 335. Guild's acoustic and electric go well, but we sell few solids.

"And we also sell lutes to young people. Banjos sell slowly but steadily. But trends? There is a trend towards the classical and folk guitar and also one back to jazz. The people who buy are in the lower and in the higher bracket of age."

Mr. Mairants also heads a repair department to repair any make—and they have the



City Electronics are big organ dealers

sanction to repair Gibsons. There's also a world-wide sale on tuition books . . . particularly Mr. Mairants' own one. If you bust a string, go to this centre—and there are 60 different kinds in stock.

We are now in North Harrow, Middlesex—because there is **City Electronics**, situate at Broadwalk, Pinner Road . . . and the man we spoke to was Mr. Gummer. He said: "We deal basically in organs. We have the Middlesex Agency for Hammond, and also stock Lowery, Thomas and Baldwin organs. We also do tuition for organ—and this is a service in great demand.

Make themselves

The firm does not deal in guitars. On amplifiers, they deal in Sonyne, which they make themselves, and are used in conjunction with the Thomas organ. Apart from selling organs, they market organ records, which are made in the Ad-Rhythm Studios. They also specialise in organ hire, servicing and modifications and can repair any make of organ.

Said Mr. Gummer: "One of the trends which I've noticed is that 90 per cent of organ sales go to the home. Some go to bands, for example Brian Auger uses the Hammond B-3, Mike Carr uses the M-100 and Deep Purple use the C-3. The Hammond is the favourite organ here, though a few use Lowery, Baldwin and Thomas. Lowery is good for the solo artist or the duo because of the different tonal

effects you can get. The Hammond is completely individual, although of course you can get the same effects—you cannot mistake a Hammond organ.

"Groups nowadays always seem to want something louder. And they are spending more money to get it. Semipro, just getting organised, will spend out anything from £800-£1,000 for an organ, which is something you would not have had a few months ago.

"Often the home market is for someone who has never played any keyboard before. Why is the organ so popular? Music is an art form to most people, but instant rather than art painting itself, where you have to get out the paints and mix them. There's a much wider market now with pubs, clubs, churches—one pub has an organ, then the next one, with maybe only a piano, must get one. . ."

And then on to a most interesting call—**Orange Studio**, in New Compton

Street. Interesting? These premises are run by Cliff Cooper and Brian Hatt . . . Cliff was with the Millionaires and Brian with the Candy Choir. They've only been going six months and already this young and progressive team are doing extremely well.

Their first aim was to open a recording studio. Then they moved into manufacturing their own amplifiers. Fleetwood Mac wanted to borrow an amp—"we loaned them one, they were delighted and asked if we would make them some. But more powerful," explained Cliff. They used that equipment to record "Albatross", a chart-topper, and since then John Mayall, Geno Washington, Steamhammer, Desmond Dekker have all used this equipment

Electronics

Cliff and Brian both have degrees in electronics from Southgate College, where they both met. They sell all kinds of amps and second-hand guitars, often as good as new equipment at half the price. "Anyone spending £200 or more can have a free double-sided master which we'll submit to record companies. We have our own music publishing company, our own agency and our own label, Orange.

"We think we're the first complete organisation of this kind. The oldest of us is 28 and we're all ex-group members. We understand what's happening. Many top groups call in. We built Emperor Rosko's disco set-up—at 1,000 watts, the most power-

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They've had export orders for over £100,000 from France and Germany; and the studio features Ampex machines, a C3 Hammond, a Leslie and Mellotron—plus choice of any guitar or amplifier from the shop—video tape, two and four track, with eight track on the way and they can record a full orchestra there.

The trend, they say, is for groups to become much more quality conscious and to work individualistically as opposed to copying. "We're fair to the musician because we're dedicated. We don't make a fantastic profit on what we sell."

Our next stop was in Holloway Road, North London, where we spoke to Pat Nolan, managing director of **NB Amplification**. Shop life started for Mr. Nolan when his £200 "name" amp blew up on stage. He stripped it down to repair it and then decided to build amps him-

self. He says that he can produce his Nolan range of amps and speakers at a lower price than major makes because his overheads can be kept to the minimum. Mr. Nolan's order book is filling up faster than he can turn out amplifiers, so it seems that, even today, there is still room for the small man with a personal service.

Three shops, all under the same organisation . . . **Drum City, Sound City and Modern Sound**. All in the Dallas-Arbiter scene. All very successful . . .

We called at **Drum City** and spoke to Dave Golding, who said: "Our trade is evenly balanced between the pop groups and the straight professional. One thing I've noticed is the standard of pop drummers is very high—rather higher than the standards of the other members of groups. In fact, some of the pop drummers are comparable to our top drummers."

"We are the main agents for Ludwig and also do the George Hayman kit, which is



Inside Sound City on Shaftesbury Avenue

made by Dallas-Arbiter. Both are very popular. There's a lot of interest in the George Hayman kit, possibly because it is one of the few new makes to appear in recent times. One feature of a Hayman kit is its appearance. They use round nut boxes, which are simpler to make, but have no real advantage. On the technical side each drum is painted inside with a hard paint finish which is non-absorbent for sound—and this is the secret, the patented Vibrasonic linings of each shell.

"Here we keep about 20 new kits at any one time, plus many second-hand outfits. We're agents for Paiste cymbals, which are very popular. One reason is that there is more choice in tone colours. This company has got down to sorting out sounds, rather than just manufacturing. And they're guaranteed for life."

Drum City also stock Zildjian cymbals and the K. Zildjian range. Look in the shop and you'll see a large range of Tam-Tams and Dave said: "This large 30-inch make is

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Gibson B.45 12 string Sunburst Jumbo Guitar	£135
Fender 'Strat'	110 gns.
Harmony Monterey Semi-Acoustic with De-Armond Pick-Up	£37
Colorama with Trem.	£30
Livingstone Burge Spinet Organ, built-in Leslie speaker, as new	360 gns.
Kimbal Spinet Organ, internal Leslie, sustain, percussion	£330

Rodger 4 Drum Kit with Avedis Zildjian Cymbals as new	£130
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Rogers 4 Drum Kit, new cymbals and cases	125 gns.
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always out on hire. For example, in one week we hired it out to the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra and two days later it was used by Keith Moon, on a Who recording session.

Doug Ellis is the manager of **Sound City**, just down the road in Shaftesbury Avenue. He said: "Basically we only deal in amps and guitars and a few organs. We have our own manufacturing set-up. We cater for anyone, from an £8 guitar upwards. We have the Fender agency, dealing with all their models and repairs, but also have other makes."

There is a very friendly atmosphere here, making one feel at home right away. They go in, use the phone, have a cuppa. In the Fender range, the Telecaster is most popular—and the most popular bass is the Precision. A trend?

"One towards more powerful amplifiers—200 watts and also towards Sound City equipment."

They also have a 24-hour repair service. A good range of lower-priced Spanish guitars. Their own H.P. system, where only 15 per cent deposit is put down. Also a trend towards customers paying cash.

Managing director Brian Gilford added, about **Modern Sound**, that it had only been open two years and stocks all instruments, brass and reeds, and recently they started a drum department where you can get Ludwig and Hayman kits.

Another store at the tail end of Denmark Street, alias Tin Pan Alley, is that of **Baldwin's**. Jim Frost is the man to see—and we saw him. And he said: "We stock the full range of Gretsch guitars,

drums and accessories, plus Baldwin guitars, amps, as well as Fender guitars and amps.

"WEM amps and Impact amps also do well. The Baldwin brass and banjo and the famous Sho-Bud pedal steel guitar are also stocked."

At this point Alan Marshall came in to talk organ talk. "The most popular is the GB 10, with the authentic voicing and percussion effect—it's 352 guineas and has unparalleled performance. The Baldwin organs have a standard of performance which other makers are still trying to achieve. Each stop is independently voiced so that you can build up a massive sound.

"And we use the same basic tone-generation system on all organs. The biggest market is for the home—and the organ is definitely here to stay; more and more people of all ages are buying them."

They give personal tuition at Baldwin's—either at the store or in the home. A new instrument is the electric harpsichord, solid body, movable, only weighs 85 pounds. It can imitate many musical sounds

—they sold one to Spooky Tooth. Others have gone to recording studios.

Repairs are done at Buckhurst Hill, in Essex. They do their own tone cabinet which can be modified for the organ, incorporating twin-speed tremelo unit and 12-inch heavy duty speaker for percussion, strings and reeds.

Next came Pete Dyke, who looks after the guitar section. He told us: "The Marvin solid is a good seller and the matching Shadows' bass guitar, too. Gretsch is one of the top American instruments and is expensive, of course. Acoustic, flat-top and cello and solid body are all good sellers and the Jumbo is becoming very popular.

"The American Baldwin C1 amplifier is very sophisticated-looking and is most popular with the guitarists.

"On drums, the Gretsch range is extremely good—and the price doesn't turn people off. On the stick side, the Gretsch 6D is perhaps the most popular. No, if people want something good, then they are quite prepared to pay for it."

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Up in Mansfield—in the Midlands—is Carlsbro Sound Equipment . . . the actual address 45 Sherwood Street. A thriving business and we spoke to Mr. Woodcock, the manager, about trends 'n' things up that part of the country.

We started with the electrical and amplification side of things. He said: "Mainly we supply our own local groups, though the occasional national name comes in. We supply our own makes of equipment, also Marshall, Selmer and the other 'name' products and amplifiers. In the shop we have a very wide range of amps, microphones and also deal in electronic organs.

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sphere B 565 and the Shure Unidyne—and the Beyer M260.

"Best-selling guitars here are the Fender and the Gibson, which we sell second-hand. In fact, we do a very good trade on class second-hand instruments.

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Switching from things to trends, Mr. Woodcock said: "At the moment, there is a spate of cabaret artists in the various clubs up here. And they seem to be fitted with bad PA systems where they are working. So they come to us. Specially strong on sales is the CS 60 PA reverb, made by Carlsbro—and with this particular equipment we provide whatever speakers they need to best suit the voice. The

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CLOUDS COMPLETE SCRAPBOOK

Terry Ellis, who produced the Jethro Tull album *This Was*, has completed the first album by Scottish trio Clouds. Entitled *Scrapbook*, the LP consists entirely of material penned by the group—Billy Ritchie (organ), Ian Ellis (bass) and Harry Hughes (drums).

The boys were formerly members of different top Scottish outfits prior to teaming up and coming to London. They found immediate success as One, Two, Three via a residency at The Marquee and a contract with Robert Stigwood.

However, due to the increasing success of the Bee Gees, Stigwood couldn't devote enough time to the boys and let them go.

Chris Wright, manager of Ten Years After, spotted them in a club and recommended them to his partner, Terry Ellis. Terry was impressed, changed their name, encouraged them to develop their songwriting abilities—and put them out on the club and college circuits.

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Mothermania is upon us

New albums from the Velvet Underground, the Mothers of Invention, the Righteous Brothers, Richie Havens and Tim Hardin—all in one month and from one company: M.G.M. Records.

The new Mothers album, on Verve, called *Mothermania*, includes the best (or should it be worst?) of Zappa's little creatures including *Brown Shoes Don't Make It*, *The Idiot Bastard Son*, *It Can't Happen Here* and *America Drinks and Goes Home*. Also on Verve is volume two of the *Righteous Brothers Greatest Hits* which should create a lot of interest with *You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling* back in the charts again this year.

Richard B. Havens 1983 is a fine double album on Verve Forecast that includes Havens' versions of *Strawberry Fields Forever*, *She's Leaving Home*, *Lady Madonna* and *With A Little Help From My Friends* as well as Dylan's *I Pity The Poor Immigrant*.

Jimmy Powell for new label

Jimmy Powell and the Five Dimensions, highly rated in the R. and B. clubs when R. and B. didn't mean soul, are starting recording with Mikki Dallon for a new record label that he is starting through Beacon Records. Cupid's Inspiration will also be on the new label that, as yet, has no name. Mikki also has a record of his own on release, *Lindy Lindy* on Beacon.

WALLACE XT 100

The Foundations have taken delivery of two Wallace Presence Master XT 100 amps. This new amp has built-in fuzz and a number of other effects and the tone systems are said to give about 200 possible permutations.

Erma follows footsteps of sister Aretha

First Aretha, and now Erma Franklin is about to burst upon the scene and follow in her sister's footsteps. Erma, who is already an established R. and B. singer in the States, released her first British single "Gotta Find Me A Lover" on M.C.A. in April.

Erma made her singing debut at the Buffalo church of which her father (himself a gospel recording singer) was pastor. She went on stage with Aretha and stood before the congregation . . . and her voice froze. She ran in fright from the rostrum and in subsequent years had to fight hard to overcome her fear of singing before an audience.

While at college, in Atlanta, Georgia, where she was studying business administration, Erma started singing in Atlanta nightclubs. She won a recording contract and sang with the Lloyd Price Band and has gone on to become famous in America. Now comes her chance in Britain.



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BBC-TV FILMING RISE OF LEVIATHAN

How does a group emerge from nowhere to where it's at? What are the changes and stages they go through on their way up? These are questions that heads in the BBC Film Unit were asking, so they decided to find out by following the career of Leviathan, a four-piece band that has been making a good name for itself on the college circuit.

The BBC have been filming the group for over a year now and the final document will be screened later on this year. P

Elektra records released a double-single set from Leviathan last month, under the title *Four Sides of Leviathan*, since they felt that one single was not enough to display the range of Leviathan's music. Titles in this package were *Remember The Times/Second Production* and *The War Machine/Time*. An album will be released shortly.

The members of Leviathan are Stuart Hobday (singer), Roger McCabe (bass), Brian Bennett (guitar) and Roscoe Murphy (drums).

Eire Apparent

This month sees the release of Eire Apparent's first album. Produced by Jimmy Hendrix in studios in New York and Los Angeles, it includes the group's single sides *Rock and Roll Band* and *Yes I Need Someone* (which was the A side of their US single). They are at present working on another album but since Jimmy Hendrix is in the States much of the time a "major English producer" may step in for some of the tracks.

KEFFORD STAND

A "stand" in one sense, is a gesture of defiance. Defiant is one way of describing the tough sound of the brand new Ace Kefford Stand, featuring the former Move bass guitarist in a new role as lead singer.

The group, which lives in a tiny village near Birmingham, has been writing and recording original material for several months but make their debut on the Atlantic label with their highly individual treatment of "For Your Love" a hit tune of years back with the Yardbirds.

Better sound from Zyn

The Premier Drum Company's popular, medium-priced range of Zyn cymbals is now being manufactured to a completely new formula, and factory-matched pairs of 14 in. and 15 in. hi-hat cymbals have also been added to the range.

One of the important results of the new formula is that Zyn cymbals now have a very much better sound than ever before—with standards of tone quality and performance normally found only in the most expensive cymbals. The factory-matched pairs for hi-hats will solve the problems of having to sort through a number of cymbals to find two that are ideally matched.

FOOTE MOVE

Owing to increased business, Chas. E. Foote's shop has moved to new and more spacious premises at 17 Golden Square, London W1.

Oddest yet from Beatles

The Beatles are renowned for their well organised single and LP releases. In the past, they have always run a carefully planned campaign usually tying in with a new Beatle trend. For example, *Sgt. Pepper* with psychedelic painting. But their new one must be the most unheralded single ever.

In fact, the version played by dee-jays John Peel and Alan Freeman on Radio 1 on Sunday, April 6, was NOT the final version. The boys took it back into the studio and re-mixed it the following Monday. All of which meant that all the shops did not have the disc in stock on the release date.

Many people, including *BI*, feel that, unlike their 18 previous hits, it doesn't deserve to make the No. 1 spot. The "A" side is unusually undistinguished for Britain's top creative group, and the "B" side sounds very like a John Lennon plea to Yoko.



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BIZ-6

ON The Mall, which runs from Trafalgar Square to Buckingham Palace, lives the Institute of Contemporary Arts. When I heard that a group called Andromeda were playing there I was aroused from my cynicism—otherwise known as healthy scepticism—about “great new groups”. After all, the ICA is not Coalfield Working Men’s Club, so this group probably had something.

And they had. The three-man group produced an extremely loud and heavy sound, it is true. But no run-of-the-mill loud and heavy sound. Andromeda’s music was deafening through their Hi-Watt amplification but it was crystal clear and melodic too. Heavy *and* clean guitar sounds are to be valued for they are rare indeed. And that is what gives Andromeda their fresh individual sound—the music comes through loud *and* clear.

Andromeda has been in

plays a mean tambourine”.

John, Mick and Ian have all been playing with various groups for a number of years now, but they all feel that with Andromeda they have at last got the set-up they have always wanted. Apart from the fact that they see eye-to-eye musically and get on well together, the fact that they approach their music in a planned and careful way has much to do with this feeling. They put great store on arrangements and building up numbers with a firm structure—really creating their own music rather than stamping out other people’s numbers.

Said Mick, “We used to be



andromeda



existence since last October and practically the first thing they did was appear on radio. They sent some tracks to Bernie Andrews, producer of Top Gear, who liked them as did John Peel. So they played Top Gear and got dates as a result.

Andromeda consists of John Cann on lead guitar who shares a flat with bassist Mick Hawsworth who lives at home at Clapham (work that one out!), and drummer Ian McLane who lived in a green Mini when I talked to him. I spoke to the group in their room at Clapham, treading carefully round wet paint on a blue and orange school desk and shielding my eyes from the array of flashing lights and UVs that Mick has rigged up. Also with the group was their roadie Roger Searle “who

in blues groups, but you want to move on. We don’t do any twelve-bar numbers now. We plan our numbers but we don’t have any total view of them when we start writing them. Also the arrangements are not rigid, we alter them as we feel the need. If a number gets boring for us, we either change the arrangement or drop it, and we have rearranged some things we’ve been doing since the beginning about five times. If we are bored by a number, the audience is going to be as well.”

The group is in the process of cutting an album and their thoughtful approach, taking all factors into consideration, really comes into its own here. John told me, “We want to get an album that is consistent all the way through, with no

duff tracks that you skip over, because that means you eventually stop playing the whole LP. We want our album to hold together without any numbers that make you say “What on earth is this doing in here?”

They hope to get their loud stage sound through on disc but making it even cleaner and tighter than it is already which, judging from the couple of tracks I have heard, is paying off well. The music is loud and powerful, with quiet contrasts where necessary so it’s not thump-thump-thump all the time. But above all it is a real treat to listen to loud music where you can hear all the instruments and all the words.

On one track they have used a nameless string instrument that Mick has made and designed. It has a long neck, and practically no body—rather like an electric double-bass which you see around occasionally. “It’s a cross between a cello and a guitar,” said Mick. “I bow it and it produces a cello-like hanging noise, a sort of drone.”

Andromeda-watchers with keen eyesight will have noticed that John uses a ten-string guitar on a couple of numbers. (“I was going to make it a twelve, but there wasn’t room, so it came out as a ten instead.”) The group is also renovating a very old and very ornate National steel guitar.

When I spoke to Andromeda, Mick and John did most of the talking, for drummer Ian McLane has only been with the group since March. The first thing he had to do with them was go into the studio, the second thing was playing his first gig with them at the ICA—no time for rehearsals. He too is happy with Andromeda: “I’ve always been looking for a group doing the sort of stuff we do and now I’ve found one. I have a chance to do some interesting stuff and I really enjoy it.”

And everyone who has seen Andromeda has enjoyed them too. Beyond that the best thing to say is “Go and see them for yourself, then you’ll know.” And you won’t be disappointed, that I guarantee.”

M.H.



Get Your Group Together

PART TWO: THE PROBLEM OF FINDING SOMEWHERE TO PLAY

ASSUMING you've managed to get through Part One of this series without falling by the wayside, you are now the member of a group and itching to get started on the long hard road to stardom.

You have been furiously rehearsing all the numbers that make up your act until you're sure you can put on a good show to last for anything from an hour and a half upwards. Most of your purely musical problems will probably be well enough sorted out to start thinking in terms of getting out on stage to play for people who will have paid for the privilege of seeing your group perform. All you need is somewhere to play.

Getting enough work is a problem that besets all but a few of the hundreds of pop bands already established in this country. But then if they're established they're unlikely to take the sort of work which you'll probably have to take in the early days.

Practically all the big groups on the scene today started out from very humble beginnings.

The Rolling Stones spent a lot of time starving during the week and then playing a couple of weekend gigs in a pub. John Lennon — when he was with the Quarrymen — began playing at garden fetes and at school raves. And though times have obviously changed somewhat, most of the groups trying to get going today will have to play their first dates in similar places.

If you want to be a musician in the first place, then you'll be almost certain to know the clubs and pubs in your area where they have music. You'll know the sort of groups they have and will be able to judge your suitability — so make a point, when you think the group is ready, of finding out who is responsible for booking the groups. Talk to them, tell them about the group, ask if you can play. The promoter or landlord may or may not ask to hear you. If he does, then play exactly as you would with 50,000 fans yelling their support for you at Wembley. If there seems to be a chance of work, don't quibble about the money. Jump at the chance of playing to a live audience.

YOUTH CLUBS

Other avenues of finding work will probably present themselves. Once the word begins to spread that you are in a group you may find that you'll get invitations to play at parties, youth clubs and so on. Take them. At this stage, the most important item on the agenda is to build up as much experience as you possibly can of actually playing to people.

Riches are less vital. It will surprise you how quickly the act will tighten up as you gain the confidence that comes from having people hear you.

You will also be surprised how many problems that bothered you before will sort themselves out when you're playing. You'll soon discover which numbers get the best reactions and, hopefully, the technique of performing a paced, exciting act which gets the very best out of all your resources. You can't underestimate the importance of taking as much work as possible. The amount you get will very much depend on how much time and energy you expend in seeking every conceivable outlet for your talents.

It's difficult and probably of not much value to attempt to explain any cut-and-dried method of finding places to play at this stage, then. You will know best what goes on in your neighbourhood — and it probably will be within your neighbourhood since it costs money to hump gear, and yourselves, all over the country.

But after a while you will be wanting to spread your wings as a group. There are a number of possible directions you can take; though it is at this stage that the big-time illusions start to rear their heads. So don't be too hasty to launch yourselves in at the deep end. Think long and deeply before you decide to throw in your job or education and give yourself the headaches of going pro.

More about the problems of turning pro next month.

your queries answered

Bridge position

I am at present in the process of building myself a guitar but I am not sure how to work out where to put the bridge. Is it really important to get the positioning exactly right and how do I check it?

DAVID WILLIAMS,
Bath.

● It is important to position the bridge correctly if your guitar is to play in tune. To work out where to place it, measure the distance from the nut to fret twelve. If your instrument has a $24\frac{1}{2}$ inch scale the distance will be $12\frac{1}{4}$ inches, that is half the total scale measurement. Position the bridge exactly the same distance from fret twelve. If you have positioned the bridge correctly, a harmonic tone played on fret twelve will correspond exactly to a fretted tone played on twelve (provided your strings are in good condition). If the fretted tone is lower, move the bridge forward (towards the nut) and if higher move the bridge back towards the tailpiece.

Hendrix guitar

Can you tell me what sort of guitar Jimi Hendrix plays?

TERRY INGRAMS,
Lincoln.

● Jimi uses a Stratocaster with Fender light gauge strings most of the time, but he also has two Gibsons that he has used on some LP tracks.

Painting drums

I am a semi-pro drummer with a local group and we think it would be a good idea to paint our name on the bass drum since we are now pretty settled. My bass drum has calf skin and I am worried in case the paint harms the skin in any way. Also, what sort of paint is the best to use?

ALAN STEWART,
Nottingham.

● It is fairly safe to paint on the skins if you want to, but it is probably best to paint the name on a sheet of paper and tape this on to the skin. You will then be able to remove the name if you want to for any reason. Poster paints will give you a bright, striking finish.

What's watt?

I am thinking of buying an electric guitar and amplifier and I have heard that amplifiers do not always put out the power claimed for them and that there is more than one way of rating them. Can you explain how wattages are rated?

JIMMY BASSETT,
Newcastle-on-Tyne.

● This is a serious problem that confuses a lot of people. Firstly, sometimes manufacturers do make slightly optimistic claims for their amps. If you are buying secondhand equipment of course, the person selling it may mislead you, but if he seems an untrustworthy

sort who might be pulling a fast one, steer clear anyway. As with buying anything technical, take along a friend who knows something about what you are buying.

Secondly, it is true that there is more than one way of rating amp output? The three methods of measuring power output most commonly used are peak power, music power and root mean square (RMS), of which the last is perhaps the most accurate since this is based on continuous power at a given number of cycles over a period of time not less than 30 seconds. However, none of these rating methods allow for speaker efficiency, but refer to the electrical output of the actual amplifier only. So, when buying an amp the best method is the time-honoured one of trial and error, you find the equipment that sounds best to you.

Mike problem

I am a lead guitarist and one of the vocalists with a blues group. When I play loud breaks my guitar is picked up by the mike and over-amplified. How can I get over this problem?

L. G. KNIGHT,
Tavistock.

● The thing to do is to try changing the position of the mike in relation to the speakers. Move it to one side of the amp, if you have not done so already, and angle it up and away from the speakers. This should solve your trouble.



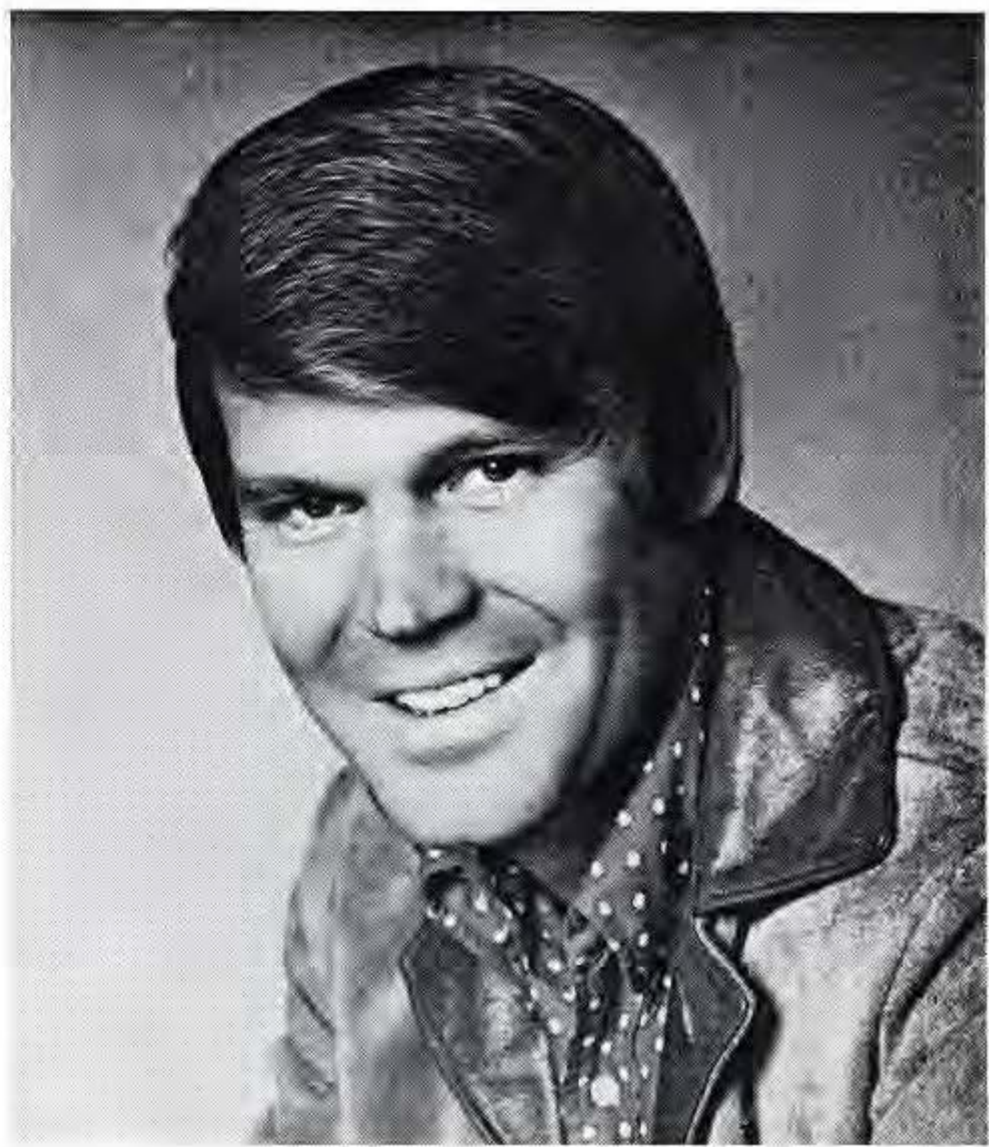
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GLEN CAMPBELL



AN explanation of country music from Glen Campbell: "The whole scene is in a process of change. The new country sound is much smoother—not like the old concept of corny tunes, with a fiddle and a banjo and a rhythm guitar. That stuff was pretty bad blue grass, in reality, not country at all."

"Now country music is earthy but smooth. It tells stories of people and things that happen to them in their everyday lives. *Wichita Lineman*, the Jim Webb song that made it happen for me in Britain, is typical of the sort of new-country material that is gaining in popularity all over the world."

Times certainly are a-changing for Glen. Last year, around this time, he visited Britain. He did the odd promotional spot, working on his version of *By The Time I Get To Phoenix*, hopelessly lost the disc battle on that song . . . and he earned only the odd line in the newspapers.

Now, he says, he will be here again in May. "It would have been earlier, to tie in with the record, but I have many commitments on television here in the States." He has films, too—one, *True Grits*, is a John Wayne starrer. Another, *Norwood*, has Glen playing a country bumpkin who goes to the big city to make good. Which, Glen says, is about as true to life for him as any casting could ever be!

Glen's talent in the music scene was well recognised in the States long before he made his first fruitless visit to London. Fruitless? "Well," says Glen, "we didn't raise too much attention. But the courtesy of the British people

was something else—very relaxing. In fact, my wife Billie and I were made to feel very much at home . . . and it's no coincidence that our baby son was born just nine months after we were in London!"

At the age of six, Glen was singing and playing guitar on the local radio stations around Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma. "But though these folks were my kind of folks, I got itchy feet," recalls Glen. "I just had to try my luck in Hollywood. All I can say is that I was like Jethro Clampet in the TV Beverly Hillbillies. I was a real country bumpkin . . . kinda open-eyed and amazed at the pace of them city folks. Only thing was, unlike Jethro I didn't have a few million bucks stashed away in the family vaults."

QUALITY ARTISTS

But eventually he did get plenty of work—mostly on sessions with quality artists like Nat King Cole and Sinatra. "I made some singles under my own name but nothing happened until I came by John Hartford's song *Gentle On My Mind*, which made the charts. And I guess one of the most flattering things nowadays is how other artists are putting out their versions of songs that were originally hits for me. Like Dean Martin has now a big hit with *Gentle On My Mind*—and Duane Eddy had success with his version of *Break My Mind*.

"So soon I'll have out a new album, called *Turn Around And Look At Me*, which has on it fourteen of my biggest favourites, but not including *Wichita* or *Phoenix* . . . I guess people will have

heard enough of those two by then."

For a time, Glen worked with the Champs, a vocal and instrumental group, but he found working within the confines of a "co-operative unit" was a bit of a handicap. And he is still rather sorry that his version of *By The Time I Get To Phoenix* didn't make it in Britain, but he is pleased that it has since become a most-covered song on albums by artists of all types.

At 28, Glen is sitting pretty—his late-night television show gets high in the weekly ratings. "I just appear as myself—casual and relaxed and introduce some of my friends in the business. I don't feel that I have to confine myself to the country field of music, but seeing as my roots are in that scene I'm glad that it is getting such wide appreciation right now. I guess it is principally the lyrics that are setting new high standards."

Last year, Glen won four major Grammy awards—which were for Best C. and W. Singer, Best Pop Writer, Best Solo Performance and Best C. and W. Song. This positive shower of recognition leaves him predictably breathless . . . especially when you think that he beat F. Sinatra in two sections and it wasn't all that long ago that he was a session man lurking in the background of the Guv'nor's studio stints. He was, in fact, on guitar on *Strangers In The Night*, though you don't hear too much of the Campbell technique on that one.

Around the third week in May sees Glen's return to Britain. Not as a "nonentity" this time. As a recognised star.

P.G.

SONG- WRITER'S COLUMN

What about the words?

How important are lyrics to a song? As far as chart success goes, a catchy tune and a repeated phrase that embeds itself in a million record-buying heads is the time-honoured formula, and it still holds good today. The success of the Eurovision Song Contest co-winner "Boom Bang A Bang" owes little to the words. The same can be said of "Surround Yourself With Sorrow" and "Michael And The Slipper Tree".

It is obvious that a distinctive tune is all-important because no-one will give a song a second listen (or even a first one) if it is a monotonous drone, whether the words are the greatest mind-blow since "Greensleeves" or of the "all alone by the telephone" variety. So what of all the talk about better lyrics, the influence of Dylan, and expanding your consciousness?

Simple reason

Any songwriter wants to be commercial for the simple reason that he needs bread but if a song has words that actually say something it is likely to stay around a lot longer. After people have tired of the catchy phrase they hate the song and sometimes wish they had never heard it. This won't worry the songwriter who has made a fortune from the song if he is writing for money alone. But if he sees writing songs as a way of making money and a means of expressing his thoughts as well he won't be satisfied with this.

The songs that will be remembered (and recorded) in 20 years time will be the ones with a good tune and meaningful words. There is no great division between poetry and songwriting. Pete Brown is an established poet as is Leonard Cohen, and now Marc Bolan is publishing a book of poems, and no one can say they are unsuccessful in the songwriting sphere.

The importance you place on lyrics depends on your attitude to songwriting. If you aim to find a hit-making formula, then the words are important in getting the public to remember the song. But if you use songs as a medium to get across your thoughts and feelings the words are going to be important in themselves and your sense of satisfaction will probably be greater.

THE A & R MEN



MICKIE MOST

Gomelsky their mentor, really created the scene which is the basis of music today. From this scene came Beck, Page and Clapton.

"From this set-up, the Stones and the Beatles created their own commercial thing. Now the others, too, are finding that they have to become more commercial—though still maintaining their own musicianly standards.

"The producer's job is to get the artist chart success. Every artist has his own different reason for being an artist—you can't differentiate between a pop commercial star like Lulu or Herman and the others. I have to adapt myself to suit each artist—though I suppose that sounds like I'm putting on an act. But Jeff Beck, for instance, is a very sensitive chap and I have to be careful not to put him down. Herman, Peter Noone, no hassle. You tell him he sang out of tune and he owns up and does it again.

"Trouble is that artists are often self-destructive. They sometimes think of the record sessions as being a bit of a game. I have to get the interest going. Have them nipping into the control room, anxious to hear the results. No interest and nothing comes out of it.

"It takes enormous energy and strength. The days of the three-hour session and then pack up are over. Funnily enough, *House Of The Rising Sun* took only 15 minutes to make. But the Beatles started the fad of long sessions. Months in the studios for a "B" side. It was different for them. For a start they didn't pay for the studios. But they weren't touring. They just stayed at home, then decided to record—and were so glad to have something to do that they made it spin out.

"One problem is getting the artists involved and getting the atmosphere. They must rehearse outside—and this is tricky for them are so many reasons why they didn't do it. If you rehearse in the studios, then when it comes to the actual takes they and you are exhausted. Terry Reid, for instance, has a very delicate voice—the slightest cold causes havoc with it.

Four a year

"As one new record say, for Lulu, comes out, I go immediately into looking for the next. I aim for four a year from artists like Lulu and Herman. I can never give up listening for the next hit.

"The song is the most important thing nowadays, followed by performance and arrangement. But the competition is enormous. In the old days, you'd say 'There's a new Elvis out in three weeks' and it'd be a milestone. Now read the review columns of the pop papers and almost every record is by some kind of 'name' artist."

Mickie ended: "Today's heavier music stemmed from what went on three years or so ago. Now it looks as if the country blues thing is starting to happen. That could be the basis, commercially, adapted of the pop scene in three years' time. But that's only a guess, mind you!"

A shrewd guess, no doubt!

P.G.

MICKIE Most—one of the most successful record producers in the world. One of the most consistent, too. One of the most farsighted. Aged 30; born in Aldershot, Hampshire; educated in Stanmore, Middlesex; hit parade star in South Africa. Now the man behind the hits of Lulu, Donovan, Jeff Beck, Herman's Hermits—and Terry Reid, Mickie's latest tip for the top.

Mickie talks fast. Thinks fast. He said: "For me, pop started when I was about 12. Frankie Laine and Guy Mitchell—I bought their records and sang along with them. Singles were 4s. 6d. It wasn't too easy to hear the latest hits in those days—you got them via AFN and Luxembourg."

He left school at 15, had a variety of jobs. Then he bought a guitar and got in on the skiffle craze. As Haley, Presley and the rest came up, Mickie's interests got stronger. He "discovered" the folk-type coffee bars in Soho, formed a singing duo with Alex Murray as the Most Brothers. "The British Everlys", he said. "But nowhere near so talented." For four years, he worked in South Africa, returned to find the state of the charts much as they are today . . . "no real direction". He toured with the Everlys, with Little Richard. Then he went to Newcastle on a talent-finding mission and came up with the Animals. Their second record for him was *House Of The Rising Sun*, a world-wide hit . . . "a breakthrough in that it was the first five-minute single." He did *Tobacco Road* for the Nashville Teens—finally splitting with both Animals and Teens. Next came Herman and "we've been together now for five years."

"Now I'm getting into the area of the heavier music—I prefer that title to Underground, which somehow reminds me of the war. This is a more critical kind of music. The musicianship is what counts—people, fans, listen to a drum solo and analyse it. It's harder work to record it, with every single note counting. But it started back in 1963, with the Stones, John Mayall, Fleetwood Mac—and the Yardbirds who with Giorgio

DESMOND Dekker, the Jamaican hit-maker of *007* and *Israelites* fame, will sing for you anywhere, any-time, any place . . . place him in the spotlight and he will respond. Mr. D. Dekker, wealthy Jamaican householder and sun-worshipper, is a different chap altogether, almost mouselike in his reticence to say much about anything.

A split personality of pop, then, yet the two sides of Dekker are surprisingly well integrated. It took time to get him to open up—for the first few rounds he appeared to be merely sparring with me, mentally summing me up. Eventually the quotes flowed from this short, shy and sunny soul-ska star.

"Working in Britain has been a wonderful experience. We've been packing in crowds, sometimes playing three dates a night, and it's been just wonderful for me, my two Aces who sing with me, and the seven-piece backing band. *007* was two years ago, which is a long time between hits, but I've spent my time writing and performing in Jamaica. I only work weekends there—the rest of the time I'm at my house by the beach, getting the air. I guess that's a sort of part-time professional life, but I've still enjoyed being pushed real hard here in Britain. Fact is, Britain is the only other country I've been in.

"I see there are a lot of interpretations about the song *Israelites*. Well, let me put the record straight. Back home, we have our own kind of hippies and they're called Rastafarians . . . *Israelites* is one of their own words, a sort of expression for the oppressed levels of humanity.

"Some of these people are victimised even in Jamaica. My own philosophy is that people should be allowed to do what they want—if they want long hair, if they don't want to wash even, then they should be able to go right ahead without being frowned upon and put down. Actually these people are very happy-go-lucky. They work just to make enough to eat—they don't worry about material things. But they are still put down.

"When I come to write a song, I just study what is going on round me. If I write about a happy-go-lucky girl I see in the street, then it's a happy-go-lucky song. If I see something sad, then it's a sad song.

"I think the scene in Britain is very good. Me, I'll go for any kind of music. I like Tamla, for instance, but I'll also go for Scott Walker or Cliff Richard.



May not be in my own bag, but I don't feel myself restricted in what I should maybe like or just enjoy. What I find, though, is a big difference in the audience reaction to our music.

"Some of our songs have about three or four different dance rhythms incorporated and back home the kids will switch from ska, to blue-beat proper, to rock-steady, to straight rock—all during one number. Here they do pretty well the same thing throughout. But British audiences are certainly as receptive as the Jamaicans. All you need to understand the music is to have a knowledge of basic rhythm.

Bassy not brassy

"We have a new single ready for when *Israelites* falls out. Funny thing about our music is that it seems to come over better on a record-player than on radio—it's very bassy, as opposed to brassy. We're re-doing some of the new single over here."

Desmond hired his PA equipment here from Orange Studios—and he's very complimentary about how good it is. On stage, he works for 45 minutes

. . . and again he doesn't talk, not if he can help it. New songs are introduced by him singing the titles over. And he works hard on the "we're-all-soul-brothers" kick . . . "Let's all clap along on this one". His voice is almost alarmingly wide-range—one minute he's down in the Satchmo basement, the next soaring stratospherically.

Back home, Desmond has been top of the Jamaican charts no less than 40 times since he started seven years ago. He's won the Golden Trophy for the best song of the year five times in succession. Add in two number one albums. He is also waging a one-man battle to make the new Reggae dance popular in Britain—and he's off to a good start among the coloured population.

About the only "gimmick" associated with Desmond is his insistence on wearing his trousers at the half-mast position . . . roughly six inches above the ankles. He bought a selection of perfectly-fitting pairs in Carnaby Street then astonished the assistants by insisting they remove half-a-foot of material from the nether regions on all of them!

P.G.

He is 27 this month. He is a He sings electric blues in the

IN these days of controversy about blue men singing the whites (thank you, V. Stanshall) it's amazing just how few black men are singing the blues. Snooks Eaglin was probably the youngest down-home bluesman sticking with the old forms to get any sort of acclaim when the blues revival hit Britain. There seems to be an unwillingness for today's urban negroes to sing the old-time music, preferring to get involved mostly with the atom-age soul scene. Soul is louder, more braggart, more glossy and has no unpleasant Uncle Tom associations, so it's O.K.

Taj Mahal is black. But he stands more or less alone today among the young whites who immerse themselves in the old blues, winning himself a fine following with the authority, ease and sheer feeling he puts into his music. When a white blues band plays—all but the very best, that is—one is struck by the straining effort they put into getting to grips with a basically *different* music. Taj Mahal knows what he's doing.

The first record came out in Britain in Autumn last year. Called simply *Taj Mahal*, it didn't sell enough to come storming into the charts, but as part of the Rock Machine promotion it reached enough people to make the name of Taj Mahal mean more than just a curry house. The Rolling Stones wanted to have him on their television circus show, though in the event he couldn't make it, and his name began to spread among the more discerning blues circles.

The first record has eight tracks, all reworkings of old country blues songs (with the exception of *Checking Up On My Baby*, a Sonny Boy Williamson favourite). There are three Sleepy John Estes numbers, a Robert Johnson, and three traditional songs. Taj Mahal does them electric, but the amplification is always restrained and the sounds never take precedence over the music. The spirit of the songs is a logical step from the country blues. The treatment is near-rock.

Taj says: "The first album was good, it was a little rushed, but it was honest, it was one man standin' up front and playin' what was inside."

And now the second Taj Mahal

album is out. A necessary record for any blues lover and a fine achievement by any standards—*The Natch'l Blues*. This time it's a more developed mixture of old blues, city blues, rock and even the Stax feel of *You Don't Miss Your Water*. And it's so relaxed, so intense, so real.

Taj Mahal was born on May 17th 1942 in New York City and was brought up in Springfield, Massachusetts. He is the son of a well known jazz arranger and pianist and studied at the University of Massachusetts where he received his BA in veterinary science. His only formal music education consisted of one hard week of piano lessons. The teacher gave up, saying 'He'll never be a musician.'

On his own Taj mastered not only the piano but also the guitar, harmonica, electric bass, banjo, tambourine, vibes, mandolin and dulcimer. CBS inform us that he has given "special request" concerts for the cast of "Peyton Place" and for Anthony Newley. He is six feet four inches in height and plays a 55-year-old steel-bodied guitar he calls Miss National and is reputedly sexier than Jimi Hendrix.

Took to the road

After he'd been through college, Taj didn't turn to curing animals for a living. He took to the road with his guitar and was shortly performing as a solo artist in the Boston area. Two-and-a-half years ago he was out on the West Coast where he formed a band called the Rising Sons. An article by Tom Nolan relates how the group were making an album when Bob Dylan turned up at the studio and was knocked out. The album was never released, unfortunately, and all that came out was a single, *Candy Man*. "Disastrous," said Nolan. The Rising Sons also made an appearance with the Temptations at a club laughingly called The Trip and were not liked—black and white men together in a band playing blues. Boo!

The group split, and the next thing to emerge was Taj Mahal and unnamed backing group, the people on album one. It wasn't, says Taj, "four kids

Taj

who grew up together in Long Beach and said let's grow our hair long and play rock and roll. Play everything and respect nothing; that don't work." It was "a pretty tight band. A son of a Texas sharecropper, a Hungarian Jew, a wild-eyed Irishman and a crazy swamp spade."

No matter how much he and the band may have appeared to monkey around with their material, Taj and the blues are much closer than with any comparable British singer—how could it be otherwise? "This is the music I feel at home with. Those older guys . . . they know. Now I could play this tune just exactly like Robert Johnson, but what would be the point of that?" How many British blues singers would give their right arm to sound like Robert Johnson. And there's one big difference.

Taj Mahal has actually played with some of these greats. "I'll never forget one time. Sleepy John Estes and Yank Rachell came over to my house; over to *my house!* We just sat there for hours and hours and played, played the blues. John and Yank on my front porch, all that fine music. I was very happy. And proud." About the recent masses of white men singing blues he says: "They don't understand, but they're doing the same thing as their father did . . . but on a whole other level. They're taking somebody else's thing, their music, and using it. Now I'm not against someone who plays and plays until he finally gets down to where the real him gets in touch with it and he can play what's inside of *him* finally; it's the people who never do that, who just use somebody else's music, never give

negro from New York City.
country spirit

Mahal



any credit, never create anything of their own."

"This is the truth I'm singing" he said when talking about the blues to a high school audience. On the marvellous sleeve notes to *The Natch'l Blues*, Taj quotes a significant interview between a white bluesologist and Blind Willie McTell. It comes over how much more aware McTell is, just why he was a blues singer:

Interviewer (proddingly): Why is it a mean world Willie?

Blind singer (catching a mental breath): Well sir, it's not altogether.

Interviewer (determinedly): You mean it's as mean for the blacks as it is for the whites?

Blind singer (thankful he's been let off the hook): That's the idea.

(Hard times, "altogether" or "all together" and "that's the idea" are the obvious clues—this was 1940 in Georgia.—Taj Mahal).

And reading this you realise how little has changed. How Blind Willie was so great. How Taj Mahal feels about the world and what he's doing in it, perhaps better off than McTell but basically the same.

But it would be a mistake to think that you're really any better off to listen to Taj Mahal as an intellectual exercise. There is a song on the second album (most of the songs here are his own) called *Whole Lotta Lovin'* "and that's what we *all* need in our lives, we gotta try and get that, a lotta lovin'-feeling—emotion."

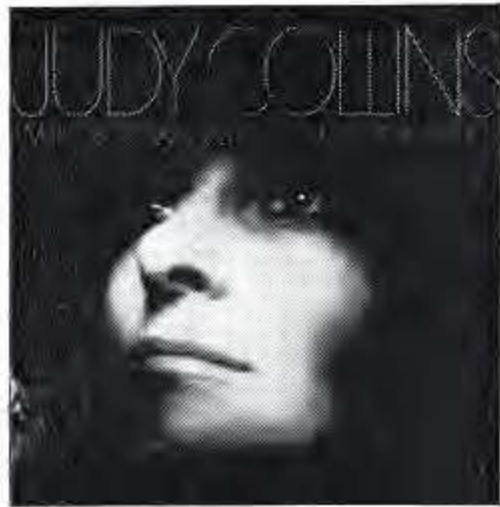
The Natch'l Blues, Direction 8-63397, produced by David Rubinson, musicians—Taj Mahal, Jesse Edwin Davis, Gary Gilmore, Chuck Blackwell plus Al Kooper & Earl Palmer. "Now this album" says Taj, "is a real mind-blower. Listen, let me tell you the way to enjoy this record. When you get it, don't play it, wait till you've had a really hard day, the hardest day you've ever had, you're miserable, nothin' went right for you, you just can't wait to get home; so you go home, take a shower, smoke some weed, and then put the record on, and listen to the whole thing and I guarantee it'll straighten some things out in your head."

R.S.

L.P. REVIEWS

BY
JOHN
FORD

WHO KNOWS WHERE THE TIME GOES



JUDY COLLINS
ELEKTRA EKL 4033

This album is sure to further enhance Judy Collins' reputation, as if she needed it anyway. The whole thing is handled so delicately and tastefully you have to sit and listen in dumb and tingling respect. The backing group, including Steve Stills, offsets Judy's voice beautifully and never obtrudes. Her singing is as haunting as ever, clear but never cold. All the songs are of the highest quality, and it would be foolish to try and pick out star tracks. They are all there and should all be listened to. I say no more.

Side One: Hello, Hooray; Story Of Isaac; My Father; Someday Soon; Who Knows Where The Time Goes.
Side Two: Poor Immigrant; First Boy I Loved; Bird On The Wire; Pretty Polly.

NEW ALBUM



HOWLIN' WOLF
CHESS CRLS 4543

"This is Howlin' Wolf's new album. He doesn't like it," it is boldly announced on the sleeve. Wolf's comments on this album are well known, and I'm afraid it looks like he's right. Muddy Waters' *Electric Mud* may have worked but this doesn't. Although the list of titles makes you gasp the music doesn't as you recall the Wolf originals which were so much better. He sings as well as ever, but he is going one way and his psychedelic band is going another, which is a pity, because it could have worked.

Side One: Spoonful; Tail Dragger; Smok stack Lightning; Moanin' At Midnight; Built For Comfort.
Side Two: The Red Rooster; Evil; Down In The Bottom; Three Hundred Pounds Of Joy; Back Door Man.

HALFBREED



KEEF HARTLEY BAND
DERAM SML 1037

John Mayall's Bluesbreakers has been the source of many fine musicians who have left and formed their own groups. No need to mention names. Firmly in this tradition is Keef Hartley whose band is also firmly in the British blues band tradition that stretches back to Graham Bond. Along with Miller Anderson on vocals and guitar, Peter Dines on keyboard, Spit James on guitar and Gary Thain on bass, Keef has come up with an album that is going to be looked back on as a British blues classic. It includes a special guest appearance of John Mayall too!

Side One: Sacked; Hearts and Flowers; Confusion Theme, The Halfbreed; Born To Die; Sussin' For You.
Side Two: Leavin' Trunk; Just To Cry; Too Much Thinking; Think It Over; Too Much To Take.

SPOOKY TWO



SPOOKY TOOTH
ISLAND ILPS 9098

A lot of groups are being dubbed "heavy" at the moment. At the head of the heavies are Spooky Tooth, and this, their second album, will please all devotees of this sort of music. They pound their way through eight numbers and show they play the heavy stuff as well if not better than anyone else. The only trouble is that a whole album of this music can get a little boring and this one could do with more variety. Nevertheless Spooky Tooth remain one of our best and most underrated groups.

Side One: Waitin' For The Wind; Feelin' Bad; I've Got Enough Heartache; Evil Woman.
Side Two: Lost In My Dream; That Was Only Yesterday; Better By You, Bet Than Me; Hangman Hang My Shell O Tree.

POET AND THE ONE MAN BAND



POET AND THE ONE
MAN BAND
VERVE FORECAST
SVLP 6012

This oddly-named group was got together specially to make this record by Tony Colton and Ray Smith and it includes such notables as Nicky Hopkins and Albert Lee in its session-man line up. Now, however, there are plans for Poet to play gigs, which should be worth going to judging from this album. Superbly planned, played and recorded, it gets better every time you hear it, especially on good stereo equipment. No gimmicks, nothing but quality. All original material. Buy it and you will hear why it is too good to try and describe.

Side One: Please Me, She's Me; The Days I Most Remember; Jacqueline; Now You've Hurt My Feelings.
Side Two: Light My Fire And Burn My Lamp; Good Evening Mr. Jones; The Fable; Ride Out On The Morning Train; Twilight Zone.

UP ON THE ROOF



THE DRIFTERS
ATLANTIC 588 160

The Drifters had their first hit in 1953 and ever since then they have been around in one form or another making good records and generating fantastic excitement on live shows. This album, subtitled *The Best Of The Drifters*, shows the enduring quality of the group as they cool their way through *Up On The Roof*, *Sweets For My Sweet*, *When My Little Girl Is Smiling*, etc., etc. *Save The Last Dance To Me* doesn't match up to the original recording when Ben E. King was with the group, but it is still good. A must for Drifters fans.

Side One: Up On The Roof; There Goes My Baby; Sweets For My Sweet; This Magic Moment; Mexican Divorce; Stranger On The Shore; What To Do.
Side Two: Save The Last Dance For Me; Loneliness Or Happiness; Another Night With The Boys; True Love True Love; Room Full Of Tears; When My Little Girl Is Smiling; Ruby Baby.

LETTERS

Home wanted

Yet again London's Middle Earth club has been forced to search around for new premises. They were chased out of their old Covent Garden home by a combination of angry veg porters and police harassment, they had to leave the Roundhouse, and now they are unable to use the Royalty Cinema off Ladbrooke Grove after 2 a.m. Sunday morning. Apparently this follows complaints from local residents about noise and the fact that they are unlicensed for music after this time.

It is a great pity that a club like Middle Earth should have such trouble finding permanent premises, for where else in London can you listen to a whole string of really good groups right through until the dawn every week, or dance or do what you like in one of the friendliest atmospheres I have ever encountered in any club. There is no need for bouncers and there is never any trouble, because the people who frequent Middle Earth do not get kicks out of kicking people.

No doubt the worthy residents across the road from the Royalty, who could be seen peeping through the curtains as people queued up to go in, had a great time imagining the depravity and perversion that must surely have been going on inside. What a pity they were not inside to see what really happened.

Society is always coming down on the longhairs who are totally harmless, while the close-cropped thugs to be found making a drunken nuisance of themselves on late-night buses are welcomed in clubs everywhere.

Let's hope that Middle Earth quickly finds a friendly

new home where they can stay for a long time and create a really good environment of good music, good people, good lights, good atmosphere and good will.

Roger Armistead,
London W.11.

Prejudiced indeed

Your correspondent J. Facer of Harpenden is indeed prejudiced against Tyrannosaurus Rex and I suggest that he listens to their records instead of writing self-confessedly ignorant opinions. Perhaps Mr. Facer is happy bopping away to soul music but some of us like peace and don't sneer at things we can't understand. One day everyone will turn on to gentleness, perhaps even Mr. Facer.

Geoffrey Norman,
Hounslow.

Rocky

The argument goes on. It has been going on since 1961 or thereabouts. Is there going to be? Could there possibly be? Has it already happened without anyone noticing? Big Bill Haley dropped in a while back and now Zappa's Mothers are Ruben and the Jets. Could this, at last, be the time to get out the dusty drape jackets and rusted-up bike chains? No, the last word has been spoken and the last chord played. After the Bonzos' (Rocky) *Canyons Of Your Mind* there is nothing left in the wardrobe of anyone's soul, and one-time rock stars Archy Bonneville and the Shoulderblades have missed their last chance.

K. J. Rickards,
Grimsby.

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chet atkins

IT seems that we in this country have been spared country and western music for too long. This year solid promotional plans have been laid to launch the style and it could prove to be as big a boom as the Kwela Whistle Bash of '58. A shrewd move made last month was the connecting of the music with beer. A brewery has opened a chain of pubs that specialise in bringing country music to the drinkers and the latest in the line—The Nashville Room in West Kensington—is intended as the London Centre for C. & W.

Chet Atkins flew into London to open The Nashville Room. There couldn't be anyone more appropriate, for Chet virtually made Nashville into the music city that it is today. From working as a session guitarist, he has progressed to a vice-president of R.C.A. records.

Chet made a brief appearance on stage at the new C. & W. Lounge. He presented a guitar from his collection, which includes about 20. This one he reckoned to be 150 to 200 years old, 'although it still produces a nice tune'. His presentation guitar was then contrasted with a red and white streamlined Gretsch, which he coaxed into *Teensville*. He watched his left hand on the fretboard and gently picked with his right a short medley of pop country hits, effectively signing his musical autograph.

Chet was born on a 50-acre farm at Luttrell, Tennessee, 20 miles from Knoxville in the Clinch Mountains, the heartland of country music. When he was 11 his family moved to Georgia and by that time he had saved enough money to buy a 20 dollar Sears-Roebuck mail order guitar.

He attributes all his skill to practice. 'Sometimes I practised for a week at a time,' he said, 'only stopping for sleep.' He is forever learning and as a conscientious instrumentalist has offered guitar manuals to those who follow him, and, to his guitar-makers Gretsch, designs for such models as the 'Country Gentleman'—said to be the world's best selling guitar.

Smoking a thick olive-green cigar, Chet on this occasion was more the executive than the guitarist, however. The amount of time he has spent on sessions has lately declined, with the increased desk duties. 'Sessions are O.K.



when you're doing it every day,' he said. 'But I'm leaving it to the younger fellows now. I think when you get over 40 then you've got to move out and let the younger boys get on with it. I still do one or two sessions though.'

Chet recalled that in the early days of Nashville, with Owen Gray, he virtually had a monopoly of the studio sessions. Through thousands of dates with Brenda Lee, Elvis Presley, Connie Francis, and so many more, his 'Nashvillesound' became famous. He gradually concentrated more and more on working behind the controls. Today he is still A. & R. man for Hank Locklin, Waylon Jennings, Charlie Pride and all R.C.A.'s artistes in Nashville.

He is also playing 40 to 50 appearances a year with Boots Randolph and Floyd Cramer. The trio is called 'The Master Festival of Music', and since they have played literally thousands of

sessions together, they should really have an advanced musical understanding.

In the last couple of years Chet Atkins has also been featured as solo guitarist with orchestras such as The Boston Pops and The Atlanta and Memphis Symphony.

And, of course, Chet continues to make his own records. Since *Booboo Stick Beat* and *Teensville*, inspirational soul food for every would-be Shadow of the late 50s, he has produced a long line of albums. While his guitar work must inevitably bear a country and western feel, it clearly demonstrates that no field of music need be limiting. His latest album—*Hometown Guitar*—shows more pure technique on middle of the road material and sounds all the more remarkable when one remembers that he is never double-tracked.

P.G.

"WE want to recollect people's childhood memories with our music," says Mick Wayne, describing his appropriately titled band Junior's Eyes. "I think we all like to be reminded of our past—the best of them if possible, but you can't erase bad memories." Not quite the textbook answer, but the sort of opinion which can break down very easily if questioned heavily enough. I endeavoured to, but the group's musical principles are very genuine and are getting through to more and more people. And audiences are the true test of the honesty of any band. Mick continues: "We want to find a modicum of acceptance for the group. We never intend musical masochism against a hostile audience. We pick a theme—a set of experiences which have happened to everyone, and set out to re-live them in music. Fighting with words and integrity against the public really doesn't do you or them any good. You don't move from square one, and the people are probably glad you didn't. We don't intend to play down to any audience. If it looks as though we're having a hard time of it, we'll probably think 'Oh forget it,' and keep on without any worry."

Junior's Eyes have been together for just over six weeks with their present line-up of Mick, on guitar and valve trombone, Grom Kelly, vocals, Rick, on organ, Honk, bass, and drummer Steve Chapman. They've finished an album, and have a single, *Woman Love*, on release now. They've had the inevitable publicity, which doesn't amount to a "new super group", but has bandied their name about around the business, and they've done several gigs at the Marquee.

They got their group together through a mutual frustration from the other things they were doing, and also, because they get on well together. "If you play music," says Mick, "you're either an extrovert or an introvert. Luckily, we were able to recognise each other's own particular—er, virtue? We cut out all the dead wood from the things we thought we ought to be



Junior's Eyes

doing, and started with a fairly uncluttered beginning. From then on, we felt things were moving for us."

Mick, with roots firmly in jazz, is a very fair valve trombonist (where did that instrument go?), and plays it with a great deal of humour. "That's an aspect which music seems to have left behind," he says. "All the early jazz was played to amuse and entertain, not to wow audiences into total disbeliefment of the artist's ability. Let's all laugh this week."

Those godforsaken groups who polish themselves as well as their flower shirts before going on stage to create under-fifteen sounds are treated warily by Mick. "It's easy to get like that. I'm thankful that I think that money's

just a material necessity. I don't think I'll ever be ruled by it. But some of the blokes fall spellbound by the sight of it. You know, they could be doing some nice things if they bothered.

"They're trying what I hope we're succeeding in doing. There is a formula which will get across to the majority of people and I know a lot of people say 'You'll make a million' if you find it. I don't mean it in quite such commercial terms. It really means finding the point of communication between yourselves and your audience and playing on it. Feeling a surge and good vibrations is the sort of commercial success I'm interested in. The money can buy me another valve trombone." M.C.

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Our amplifiers are built to make the most of what you've got to offer.

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