

CLASH

RATS

JUDAS PRIEST

SOUNDS

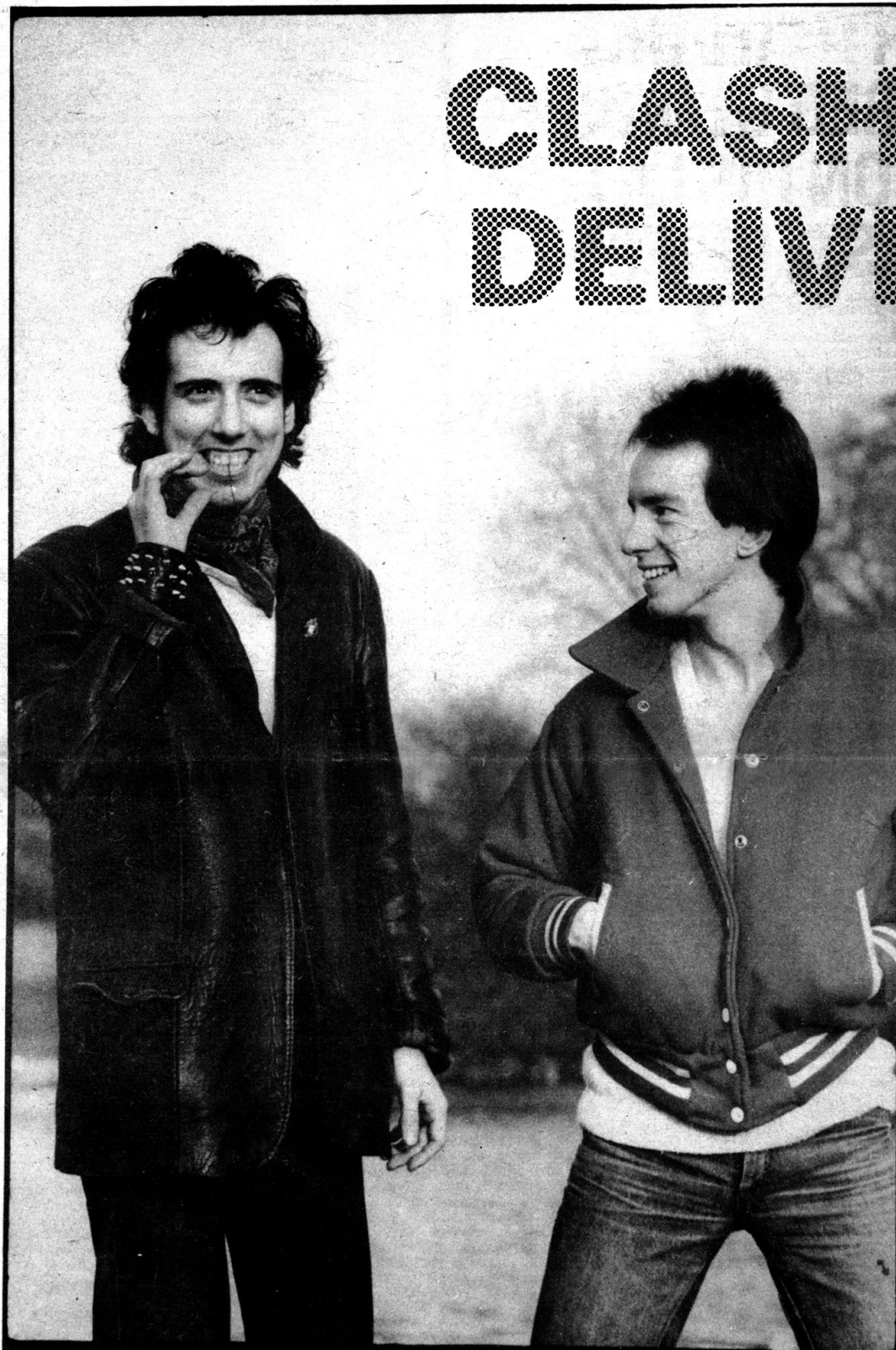


HESBITT

**MALE
MODEL
IN
KILLER
ALBUM
SHOCK**
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CLASH'S MICK JONES: PIC BY JILL FURMANOVSKY

CLASH ON DELIVERY



INTERVIEW BY



GARRY BUSHELL,
PIX BY
JILL FURMANOVSKY

*'A spliff ana pound.
And half a pint of brown.
That's how we spell
Camden Town' ('All The
Young Punks').*

*'Just because we're in a
group you all think we're
stinking rich.*

*'N you think the cocaine's
flowing like rivers up our
noses.*

*'N every sea will part for
us like the red sea did for
Moses' ('Cheapskates').*

I THINK the album's bloody great. Most groups after they've done their album they go 'aww, this could 'ave been better' or 'we mixed this badly cos we got stoned' an'all that. But we don't have that cos we spent like five days on each track getting it right."

Mick Jones laughed, it was like a Monty Python sketch, with him and me sitting on a 3d arrow, with 'admission free' stamped on it, plonked outside the Serpentine Art Gallery in Hyde Park with all these sculptured Morrismen behind us.

"I 'ate sculptures." Why meet here then? "Why not." Under the firm guidance of lensperson Furmanovsky, Jones and Topper wandered round the gallery posing, with me and Mick's long time mate Robin Banks (as we shall see, an appropriate name) bringing up the rear. It was a weird place, stuffed full of frightfully-frightfully pretending not to see the star in their midst — me, dummy. Jonesy looked more like a lighterman with his red neckerchief and leather sports jacket with

CONTINUES OVER

OR: how to beat the backstabbers and come up with a good second album. ('Good? It's bleedin' great' says the detached and objective Mr Bushell)

the little Lenin badge on the lapel.

"Lend us your handkerchief Garry, then I can pose with these Morrisonmen....."

I did. The bastard blew his nose on it. Close forensic examination revealed not even the minutest speck of cocaine.

"Drugs are complete muck. Cocaine is the worst kind of drug ever — Joe said that months ago and he was getting at me cos I was snorting, but he was right, that sort of drug is really soul-destroying."

THAT WAS Mick's first serious moment of the day and just one indication of the new sense of clearheaded purpose running through the Clash camp after they have once again undoubtedly delivered the vinyl goodies.

"Not that you'd have guessed it by the way they were letting off steam in the park, rapping round the ponds (Tupper won every time) or winding me up with scarily made-up tales about 19th century anarchists perishing in the park's own isolated copshop or dropping in little anecdotes that all you Clash fanatics love (like did you know Joe once entered a marriage of convenience to get the money for his first Telecaster?)."

But later, walking down to the Notting Hill flat Mick shares with Gen X's Tony James, he spelled out more of the Clash's current mood of positivism.

"I'm really optimistic about punk. I think it's like a matter of thinking straight. If we can think straight then I think a lot of people'll follow suit, not fall for the same trick twice..... I mean I don't like to talk about it in the past tense, I don't see why everybody gets so down. When people talk about punk these days it's like they're at a wake.

"I can't tell you know, the spirit of the thing won't die until we break up and we ain't in a mood to break up at the moment. I think straight, being enthusiastic, believing....."

I'M NOT gonna go on and on about the new album, suffice it to say that when Dave 'Slightly Put Out' McCullough described it as the best album since the last Clash album that's exactly how I feel too. It's just that no other group EXCITES me as much as the Clash. The first week I was here I reviewed them and said "as long as they generate the same buzz of excitement as you get when you skip off school for the first time they'll still be the Clash we know and love."

offering, they were asking questions too, making you think.

Living on White City they somehow articulated their frustration that I felt; when it looked like the Front/New Party Army really were on the up and up, they were an uncompromising 'stuff you'; and when we finally did have a riot of our own kind of drugs ever — Joe charging up Belmont Hill, exactly 15 months ago then it was their lyrics screaming "Guns On The Roof". And if you think that's posing, I've cliché'd a joke then screw your cos it's true.

"Which doesn't make for a whole 'thick or thin' fan worship. If that album had stunk like for a time I was allowing myself to think it would have been the best to say. But more of the latter."

"The best thing about this job has been meeting people who've been admiring and hating that they're decent people after all. Mick Jones is such a man. Wish I could say the same about the wretched Banks tho', who during the course of the interview swiped my pen, my Clash lyric sheet and my copy of the Parsons/Burchill book of sluff offs. If it hadn't have been for my old war groups, who do you think Rob, can I have me braces back now?"

"You can't write muffin about the flat. Mick had the album's got to say, starting with one of the albums best cuts, 'All The Young Punks':

"Face front we got the future. Shining like a piece of gold. But I swear as we got closer. It looks more like a piece of coal. But it's better than some factories. That's no place to waste your youth. I worked there for a week once. But luckily I got the boot. But all the young punks. Laugh your life cos there ain't much to cry for. All live it now cos there ain't much to die for."

"THE SECOND part of the second side is a progress report on us. It's also one of the answers cos it's an indication of what can be done — just to make you feel alright. They want to keep you preoccupied with troubles so you can't think about anything else, same with all the working stuff. This says 'at least I've a laugh to start with'."

"And 'Stay Free' is your song. 'It's me and Joe they're all me and Joe but that one's got a bias towards me. It's just where I come from, that's what I was like for me.' (Robin Banks is actually one of the hoiligans who never got caught make the best rock 'n' roll."

composers. A new album to do them, but they keep

soon come perhaps? "We're doing one, the soundtrack for the film."

What film? "It's about our roadies..... no it's about us going to court all the time an 'all, but that won't make it dull, it's got film of the Glasgow concerts. It's not really a documentary, it's more like acting. It's loads of things that actually happened and we're going to do them again. I think it'll be called 'I Found The Law and it should be shown as a proper film to several celebs."

"The film's nearly finished, it'll be finished by Christmas and all we'll do is pluck ourselves in a studio for about a month and finish all the music. But it'll be proper stuff. It'll be like a doc and it'll be the album. It's not, I'll warn everybody before" and "Not another three month job then?"

"The work that went into that album! We did the whole thing about three times, two lots of demo tapes, then the actual making and then we cut down and cut bits out that weren't necessary and eventually got in down to what it is now. See, we weren't gonna be pushed into the second album two weeks after the first zone like those other groups, who do you think what they're writing' about and ended up sayin' the same things as before."

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Guns On The Roof:



those systems as some sort of alternative? "No, not really. I see them as big blank spaces full of people with nothing to do and it's worse than here. They just say they do this, do that, and you do it. It worries me but I haven't got a liberal worry about it. Like, my main concern is survival."

"I was originally a jam, the traditional jam, just three chords, it sounds like I Can't Explain and 'Clash City Rockers'." "Tommy Gun" is about mercenaries and Mick whips out an American map called "Soldier Of Fortune", which is much more pornographic than Tony James' battered copy of "Spanking Schoolgirls", full of ads for t-shirts bearing legends like "Be A Man Among Men-Rhodesian Army". A snip at just under six dollars — real sicko stuff.

"Down from the edge of London. The rockabily rebels came. An from another edge of London. The skinhead gangs call out their name. But not the zedco kids from the high rise. "I hate Englishmen just

as bad as wops" . . . there's some stuff on 'Deny and also in the middle of 'What's My Name' it goes 'Dad got pissed an' I got clocked/Couldn't hear the tannoy so I lost the lot/Others made a bribe thru the letters box/Drives yer fucking mad... All those swear words on the new album won't endear you to American radio stations."

"I warned us about not getting on the radio that 'some of these records are potential hits'. They said 'Here's this apple, you can be rich and famous if you only take the swear words out' — we had to tell 'em where to stuff their apple. But we needed the big production to take on the groups over there. It's really horrible, it's still all groups like Aerosmith. I'm not sure how the new Roman Empire — I was almost drawn there. It was the most horrible thing, all laid back and disgusting and I hated everybody but it was so gross I was fascinated by it."

"You were saying at the press conference about the pressure from CBS about not doing Top Of The Pops etc. The whole thing seemed

to come back to the "Complete control" conundrum.

"The pressure is immense but I don't think I've got any right to moan about it. People understand it's not a peach, not all that glamour — and we never wanted it to be that. We just felt we had to 'ave a go cos everything else was so shitty."

"We don't do those TV programmes cos we don't want to perpetuate that crap. Who wants to do 'Beatles To Go' for an hour? We don't play only to students. How can you have a programme like 'Revolver' which is supposed to be a punk programme where the bloke in charge doesn't even like punk? Or some old cunt like Robin Shand deciding what is popular?"

"What about Jimmy Pursey's argument that TOPP is going out to kids who aren't old enough, or can't afford to go to gigs?" "I'd rather make myself available to people who couldn't see us in different ways like doing schools or playing prisons, rather than that pathetic representation. I wish Jimmy well, but it's not for us."

How about CBS? "I want records out. I want hit records but I won't eat shit. There's certain things you have to do but I've never eaten shit. I've been shit on while I'm not looking but I've never eaten shit."

"I stand by nearly everything I've ever done and I believe we're still true to the spirit of the album as opposed to some groups who've used punk to become what they are now which is nothing different to what's gone before. They need to be destroyed. I won't name names but if they act like berks and tossers they're gonna be seen as berks and tossers in the long run."

"The band's break-up with manager Bernie Rhodes is still sub juss so Mick's only comment was words to the effect that Managers Lib is about as pathetic as Mens Lib, that the group are as badly off now as they were two years ago and that he saw the case as a stand for all groups who get treated as they were."

"The Harlesden guys are seen as the ending of an era — the fulfilling of their final Rhodes obligations. The slagging they received didn't seem to particularly bother him."

"Yeah, I went out and walked past some dolo office again, so I could remember what it's like. No, then reviews were pretty good. It was like people had been waiting a long time to say their things — but I wish 'em all the best..... and a bit of the consolation."

Robin: "And a craftsman made coffin..... who the fuck is Ian Penman anyway? The most insignificant peck of dust in the earth." "Mick: "I know Eric Fuller was pissed and couldn't get off with some bird . . . No, but really Penman's working class entertainment bit is really fucking insulting. Only an upper class twit would say a thing like that. An upper class twit who goes 'oh yes they're working class entertainment in the form of Slade and the Faces' and like what's this guy know about rock 'n' roll and the excitement its given thousands and thousands of people?"

At this stage this Guinness Book Of Intentionary was rudely interrupted by a noisy Tony James...

"I've just come by but..." Mick (posh): "Oh what, Limbo broken down then? You mean you had to mix with the common people? I say..."

"It's been hard work down the gentlemen's club all day . . . aw look, Crossroads is on."

"Coronation Street's better. Its been really gripping with Ray and Desiree. It's that year of conscience speaking — A.N. Office-Gossip."

Topper: "Ain't they emigrating or somethin'?" Mick: "See we watch it too — we got nothing better to do. Everyone watches it. It's official — a Pope watches Coronation Street."

I hear you got a theory about Italians and rock 'n' roll.

"Yeah, a lot of Italians play great rock 'n' roll. You mean Giovanni? "No. A lot of Italians don't play great rock 'n' roll too. In Italy there's a lot of things going on. And with Italian Americans — like there's Thunders, David Johanson's band, half the Dictators at Springsteen looks Italian to me... what a stupid question."

Well let Topper answer some questions.

"Okay Topper, tell him how the set on the tour's over an hour long and 'ow an hour long is the new album live. We still can't play really. We 'ad a lot of fun watching our recording being recorded by session musicians. On the album are Stan Bronstein from Elephants Memory on sax on 'Drug Stabbing Time' and groups who get treated as they were."

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