★★★ JOHN BLAKE'S WORLD OF POP

Torrid Travolta

FROM GREASE TO A TALE OF ILLICIT LOVE

ARM IN ARM with his new screen lover — it's American heart-throb John Travolta in a role which is a shock contrast to the tear-away image he built up in Grease and Saturday Night Fever.

For his newest picture, Moment by Moment, is the sensitive story of a young drifter who has an affair with an older married woman, played by Lily Tomlin, star of the Laugh In TV series.

And the story has an echo in real life for John. For he really fell in love with an older woman — but lost her when she died in tragic circumstances.

Elton tours again

ELTON JOHN will return to the London stage with six concerts at the Theatre Royal, in the spring.

And I am told they will feature only Elton and percussionist Ray Cooper.

The shows, from April 2 to 7, are part of a three-month European tour, Elton's first for two years.

In marked contrast to the super spectaculars he used to stage at massive arenas, these, says an aide will be for small audiences.

After the concerts, Elton will do a nationwide tour. It's all another success for promoter Harvey Goldsmith, who last year brought Bob Dylan to Britain.

★★★ IN BRIEF

THE CLASH seem to attract the strangest people.

At their recent Lyceum gig a naked girl leapt onto the stage and tried to molest singer Joe Strummer. She was immediately thrown back by a willing bodyguard.

Now, boys, that's no way to treat a lady ...

★ ★ ★

I HEAR David Bowie is hoping to save his acting career by turning his attention from films like The Man Who Fell To Earth to the theatre.

He has been offered the part of eccentric Quentin Crisp in a Broadway production of The Naked Civil Servant.

★ ★ ★

NAZARETH'S appropriately titles single, May The Sun Shine, was not released as scheduled—because presses at Phonogram's Walthamstow factory have frozen up.

★ ★ ★

I had hoped that after all the red, blue, yellow, chocolate and sludge coloured vinyl discs of last year, record companies would have run out of bad-taste ideals.

Wrong. Street Band's latest single, One More Step is the world's first see-through disc and comes in a see-through plastic bag.

I'M told that Raquel Welch is most upset because knicker-nickers keep raiding her dressing-room and stealing her underwear.

The problem has now become so severe that she has to carry a small suitcase of bras and panties with her wherever she goes.

"I don't know why they do it," said Raquel. "My underwear is not new—and it's not particularly expensive."

BOB DYLAN'S Japanese import album, Live At The Budokan, is London's top-selling LP—even though it costs a preposterous £16.50 per copy.

CBS are refusing to release it in Britain at a realistic price. "We need clearance from CBS worldwides and Dylan's management first," I was told.

★ ★ ★

BLONDE Disco queen Amanda Lear is expecting a baby, in June, and the father is her young Parisian lover.

Ms Lear was recently voted The Ultimate Sex Symbol in Italy and is currently house hunting in France. In February she will be touring Europe to promote her new album—Never Trust A Pretty Face.

★★★ ARTS DIARY

Enter Uncle Vanya and Mother Courage

THEATRE

Royal Court: The Ken Dodd Laughter Show.

Playhouse: The MGM musical version of The Wizard of Oz (ends tomorrow, matinee only). Bedroom Farce by Alan Ayckbourn.

Liverpool Empire: Cilla Black in Dick Whittington (for a season). Sunday: UFO in concert.

Chester Gateway: The Amazing Adventures of Robin Hood (to January 27).

Everyman: Mother Courage by Bertolt Brecht (open tonight).

Neptune, Liverpool: Sleeping Beauty and the Beast, with the Neptune Theatre Company (ends tomorrow).

Theatre Clwyd, Mold: Toad of Toad Hall by A. A. Milne from Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows (ends tomorrow). Uncle Vanya, Chekhov's Russian comedy (opens Monday, until February 3).

Southport Theatre: Robinson Crusoe, with Tommy Trafford and Stu Francis (for season).

Southport Little Theatre: Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (ends tomorrow).

Theatre Royal, St Helens: Grimethorpe Colliery Band (tonight). Fivepenny Piece (tomorrow). Duggie Chapman's Goldilock's and the Three Bears (opens Monday until January 27).

Floral Pavilion, New Brighton: Cinderella (until January 20).

Crosby Civic Hall: The Bewitched Princess, with The Dorians (to January 20).

EXHIBITIONS

Open Eye Gallery, Whitechapel, Liverpool: Arts in Action photographs of Bootle by local people. Plus photographs by Neil McDowell (ends tomorrow).

Atkinson Art Gallery: John Hitchens, paintings in oil (ends tomorrow).

Walker Art Gallery: John Moores Exhibition (until February 25).

Neptune Theatre: Paintings by Paul Griffiths (opens Monday, until February 10).

Liverpool University, Senate House: Paintings and drawings by Peter Coker (opens Monday until February 3).

Bluecoat Gallery: Women artists at Work ... in action from Tuesday to January 27 (10.30 am to 5, Tuesday-Friday and to 4 on Saturdays).

Atkinson Art Gallery, Southport: Artists associated with Merseyside (opens tomorrow, until February 3).

Liverpool Academy of Arts: Sculptural pieces by six artists. Opens Tuesday until February 4).

Bridge Arts Centre, Widnes: Paintings, drawings and ceramics by Iris Tunstall (opens Monday, until January 27).

MUSIC

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra: Works by Bliss, Tchaikovsky, Elgar (tomorrow). Works by Mendelssohn, Finzi, Tchaikovsky (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday).

Theatre Clwyd: Brahm's German Requiem, performed by Mold and District Choral Society (Sunday). The City Waites (Thursday).

Bluecoat: Poetry and Music, tomorrow night. Piano recital, Alek ei Takenouchi, Thursday.

Liverpool Academy of Arts: Phil Minton, trumpet and vocals and Fred Frith, guitar and violin, Monday night.

Wallasey Town Hall: My Music — lecture by John Amis, tonight.

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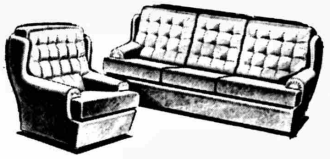

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