



The Clash.

## music *The Clash*

By JIM BOHEN

**CLASH CITY ROCKERS:** A musician friend tells me he can't understand the premise behind the new wave. "They seem to be reversing the theory that says the more you practice the better you get," he says. "They're saying, 'We're going to put our message across even though we don't even know how to play our instruments.'"

Until recently, that sort of summed up the way I felt about the Clash. Their first two albums sounded like the work of fervent amateurs, whose fervor didn't quite make up for their amateurism. But *LONDON CALLING*, the band's new double album, made me revise my opinion. It presented the band in an orderly context for the first time, and by so doing it at last brought into focus the passions and politics that had animated their early music. Now, having seen the band at the Capitol Theater in Passaic last weekend, I'm almost ready to change my mind again.

In concert the Clash are so loud that that alone makes their performance more pain than pleasure. Their lyrics — probably their greatest strength — were lost, and the music itself, which depends on the discipline of its rhythmic starts and stops, sounded terrible when played sloppily. Strummer ruined "I Fought the Law" by spending key moments too far from the mike to be heard.

Drummer Topper Headon, who goes almost unnoticed on stage, is really the only one holding the band together; his contribution is the only thing keeping the performance from chaos. The keyboardist (borrowed from Ian Dury's band) was inaudible, and as for the guitarists — well, Strummer obviously didn't get his name for digital dexterity.

Only a few songs survived this treatment, among them "London Calling" (which is sounding more and more like one of the most powerful rock songs ever written), "Julie's in the Drug Squad" and maybe "Clampdown." The other songs, even highlights of the records like the reggae "Police and Thieves" and "White Man in Hammersmith Palais," were flat. Despite their status as the new wave's original reggae boosters, the Clash can't even do the reggae beat right.

There was little left to the evening but the Clash's stage stance. They looked good: their entrance alone was enough to get the capacity audience on its feet, where it remained for the entire performance. But the crowd's enthusiasm seemed highly artificial, if not self-deceptive. I left before the band returned for their encore.

A few days after the concert I was standing in a record store when "Train in Vain," the burgeoning hit from the album, came on the radio. Suddenly it seemed to have everything: an insistent rhythm, vocal and instrumental hooks, a tough lyric line. It sounded like a natural, unstoppable hit. It sounded like what I like about the Clash. The concert, unfortunately, sounded nothing like that.

**TAKE A SAD SONG AND MAKE IT BETTER:** Capitol is promising a new Beatles album for release March 24. Called *THE BEATLES RARITIES*, it consists of a handful of songs that have never been on American Beatles albums, plus alternate versions of some familiar titles — 15 cuts in all.

The company had planned to release the British album of the same title in the U.S., but discovered that most of the songs on it, though rare in Britain, are common here.

The most interesting cuts on the specially compiled American record are "The Inner Light" (B side of "Lady Madonna"), "You Know My Name (Look Up the Number)" (B side of "Let It Be"), "Across the Universe" (from a British charity album, not the LET IT BE version), "Misery" and "There's a Place" (released here on Vee Jay but never on Capitol).

The other cuts:

"Sie Liebt Dich," "She Loves You" sung in German, originally released on a German single.

"Help," the mono U.K. single version, with a different lead vocal from the album version.

"And I Love Her," from a German album, with the ending guitar line repeated six times instead of four.

"I'm Only Sleeping," from the British *REVOLVER* album, with a different mix and verse sequence and extra guitar riffs compared to the U.S. version.

Mono mixes of "Helter Skelter" and "Don't Pass Me By."

"Penny Lane" with an extra trumpet lick at the end, a version found only on DJ copies of the single.

"I Am the Walrus," with a few extra beats in the intro and between the words "I'm crying" and "Yellow matter custard."

"Sgt. Pepper Inner Groove," which, according to Capitol, is "a couple seconds of nonsensical verbiage that appeared on the SGT. PEPPER LP in almost every country except America."

Inside the gatefold is the famous "butcher" cover from the *YESTERDAY . . . AND TODAY* album — the full-frame photo, not the cropped album cover version.

**BITS AND PIECES:** Upcoming concerts of note: Judy Collins at the County College of Morris in Randolph on April 13, Smokey Robinson at the Capitol Theater in Passaic on March 27, Warren Zevon at the Capitol on April 18. . . . Orleans's new album, out next month, features some guest picking by former leader John Hall. . . . The Little River Band have a live album, *BACKSTAGE PASS*, due March 24 from Capitol. . . . Four ex-members of Lynyrd Skynyrd — Gary Rossington, Allen Collins, keyboardist Billy Powell and bassist Leon Wilkeson — are performing again under the name the Rossington-Collins Band. New members are singer Dale Krantz, guitarist Barry Harwood and drummer Derek Hess. They debuted last month at the Superdome in New Orleans. . . . American honky-tonker Joe Ely recorded a live album for British distribution during his recent tour there with the Clash. It'll include a Clash-Ely 45, and MCA promises to release it here if there's enough interest. . . . Daryl Hall's Robert Fripp-produced solo album, *SACRED SONGS*, recorded two years ago but delayed because of corporate and legal problems, is out at last. . . . "The Real Buddy Holly Story" is a single on Elektra by Sonny Curtis, an early associate of Holly's and the de facto leader of the Crickets since Holly's death (he's also the composer of "I Fought the Law"). First heard on the recent PBS Holly special, the song purports to correct some of the misrepresentations of the 1978 film bio. It's also a good song.

## showtime

Dave Mason, who has a new album due this month, his first in nearly two years, is at the Capitol Theater in Passaic tonight at 8. Tomorrow the Capitol has four bands from the new and highly successful black-owned, Los Angeles-based Solar Records label: the *Whispers*, *Shalamar*, *Dynasty* and *Lakeside*. The package presentation is reminiscent (deliberately, no doubt) of Motown's Motortown Revue shows of the 60s.

□□□

**Pearl Harbor and the Explosions**, the San Francisco new wave band responsible for "You Got It (Release It)," as well as an eponymous debut album on Warner Brothers, are at the Show Place in Victory Gardens tonight, with opening act the Sound. Tomorrow the lineup is the *Roms*, *Siammin Romance* and *Baron*.

□□□

It's another open stage night at the Minstrel Show Coffeehouse tomorrow, and, as always, it's both an opportunity for would-be performers and an varied, unpredictable evening's entertainment for the audience. Come early to sign up for stage time. The coffeehouse is located at the Morris County Cultural Center, 300 Mendham Road (Route 24) in Mendham.

□□□

Texas blues-rockers **Delbert McClinton** returns to the Stanhope House for a two-night stand, tonight and tomorrow.

□□□

Jazz guitarist **Joe Verruso** appears in concert at The Music Gallery, 75 Summit Avenue in Summit, tomorrow at 8:15 p.m. The Verruso trio — guitar, bass and trumpet — can also be seen every Sunday in March at Movenpick, a restaurant-lounge adjacent to the Rodeway Inn on Route 10 in East Hanover.

□□□

The New Jersey Jazz Society presents a "Wake Up to Spring" concert by **Parke Frankfield and His Swing Band** on Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Watchung View Inn, Route 202-206 in Pluckemin.

□□□

**Eight to the Bar**, a seven-piece swing band from Connecticut that made a big splash earlier this year at Freddie's in Bernardsville, is at Hambone Kelly's, at The Station in Boonton, on Tuesday.

□□□

The Suburban Music Study Club is sponsoring a Musical Showcase to benefit its scholarship fund on Sunday at 4 p.m. at the Madison Public Library, 39 Keep St. in Madison. The performers are **Adele Rotunda**, clarinet, **Nan Canfield**, coloratura, and **Adele Velo**, piano.

□□□

Ex-New York Doll **Sylvain Sylvain**, whose debut solo album is just out on RCA, appears tonight at the Hole in the Wall, Route 17 North in Rochelle Park. Tomorrow the club has the **Plasmatics**.

□□□

The **Association**, the 60s sextet whose hits include at least a handful of standards — "Windy," "Cherish," "Never My Love" — are at the Playboy Resort and Country Club at Great Gorge tonight and tomorrow. Which means it's time for the usual oldies act guessing game: how many original members are in the current lineup?

□□□

**Harry Chapin** appears next Wednesday at 8 p.m. in the gym at Fairleigh Dickinson University's Rutherford campus.

□□□

The **Livingston Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by Carol Hill, and with clarinet soloist Michael Vivino, performs its third concert of the season tomorrow at 8:30 p.m. at the Livingston High School auditorium.

□□□

The **Roches** made their initial reputation as live performers in New York folk clubs (with an occasional trip out this way to the Stanhope House). But hardly a thing has been heard from them since the big promotional push that accompanied the release of their debut album last spring. The three sisters from Park Ridge will venture out of hiding for at least one night, when they appear at Princeton's Alexander Hall tomorrow at 8 p.m. Opening the show is Eric Frandsen.

### CLUB LISTINGS

Diszy Duncan's, Morris County Mall, Cedar Knolls (539-5086): Hat Trick, Fri Sat; RD-1, Tue; The Moderns, Wed; Cloverhill, Thu.  
Final Exam, Sussex Turnpike, Randolph (895-3243): Condor, Fri Sat; Southern Cross, Tue; Gary "U.S. Bonds," Wed; Condor, Thu.  
Governor's Inn, 24 Lakeside Boulevard, Hopatcong (398-2091): Dreamer, Fri Sat; Thorin Oak, Sun; Gashouse Gang, Mon; Yagur's Farm, Tue; Trigger, Wed; Rockkids, Thu.  
The Lighthouse, 453 River Styx Road, Hopatcong (398-9450): Sundog, Fri Sat; Hat Trick, Thu.  
The Nook at Hidden Hills, Routes 24 and 57, Hackettstown (852-5694): The Sharks, Fri Sat; Miraj, Sun; Central Jersey, Wed; Dirty White Boys, Thu.  
Orphan Annie's, 1255 Valley Road, Striving (647-0138): Salvation, Fri Sat; Jamie Markley, Mon; Brent Pederson, Tue; Fred Ritter and Jamie Markley, Wed.  
Pappy's Road House, 393 Maxim Drive, Hopatcong (398-4353): All Night Strut and Gibraltar, Fri Sat; Echos, Sun; Green Drinks, Mon; Desperate Men, Tue; Sabre, Wed; Desperate Men, Thu.  
Rockpile, Route 206, Stanhope (347-7300): Stormwatch, Fri Sat; Max, Mon; Smyle, Wed; Blue Emerald, Thu.  
Smile's Restaurant and Cocktail Lounge, 199 Littleton Road, Parsippany (263-6800): Majik, Fri Sat; Fresh Heir, Mon; Bunz, Tue; KTU, Wed Thu Fri Sat.