

# Music

## The Envelope, Please

By Michael Mariotte

OK, maybe there was at least one significant musical happening in 1982. The Who finally packed up their guitar cases for good and through a series of outdoor concerts officially passed to the Clash their title of spokesmen for a generation. But, somehow, the passing of the torch seemed not only a little arrogant—after all, it takes a bit of arrogance to claim the title in the first place—but also a little pointless, being at least four years too late. And knowing that the whole shebang was bankrolled by Schlitz made it that much less convincing.

Other than that, it was the year of the rise of the Human League and the fall of the Go-Go's. Big deal. With the exception of the rapmaster Grandmaster Flash, no artist seemed to take risks. Instead, we were treated to the blandness and instant forgettability of an endless succession of British synth-pop bands. Does anyone even now remember Haircut 100? It was a year in which the music can be summed up in one word: harmless.

Locally, by far the most important event occurred on the next to last day of the year: the announcement of the pending sale and format change of WHFS-FM. It's not possible to overstate the devastating effect this will have on the local music scene.

The other major local music news of the year was the continuing rash of club closings. Desperado's and Psychedelly shut their doors forever, while Columbia Station canned live music. On the brighter side, the opening of the Wax Museum, Gentry, Upstairs 704 and most recently, a Friendship Station, means that the club scene is in a period of retrenchment, not decay.

Still, something must have happened this past year to catch your fancy—City Paper received over twice as many reader poll ballots as last year.

Best Single. The Clash's tour with



The Clash finally made Hitsville with "Rock The Casbah."



Hoboken heartthrobs The Bongos were Rookies of the Year.

the Who and subsequent AOR airplay (finally!) paid off: "Rock The Casbah" was voted the year's best single, just nudging out Grandmaster Flash's angry rap epic "The Message"—a song that should have received a lot more airplay. No other single even came close. A local band, the Acrylix, finished a distant third with their "Waiting/Dancing" release. Two other local bands—Switchblade with "Rock Too Much" and the now defunct and missed Martha Hull & the Steady Jobs with "Face in Your Face"—also finished ahead of the pack.

Best Album. You liked the single

"Rock The Casbah," it makes sense that you would like the album it came from as well—*Combat Rock*—right? Wrong, *Combat Rock* actually received only one vote. You figure it out. Finishing at the top of the balloting was new wave/AOR crossover Joe Jackson with *Night and Day*. The runner-up was Elvis Costello's critically acclaimed but rarely heard on the radio *Imperial Bedroom*. There was a three-way tie for third: Marshall Crenshaw's self-titled debut, the Who's finale, *It's Hard*, and *Mental Decay* by D.C.'s Tru Fax and the Insaniacs. Two other local albums also received significant mention: the Faith/Void



Jackson steps out.

hardcore sampler, arguably the best of its kind ever; and the Slickee Boys German import album, *Here to Stay*.

Best Group. It's perhaps fitting that the band voted as the best didn't release an album this year. The Police apparently can, still riding the success of last year's *Ghost in the Machine*. Placing second was The Clash, and finishing a close third, perhaps on the basis of their strong live performances here (they weren't mentioned in any other category) was the Gang of Four. Honorable mentions must go to the late, lamented Squeeze, the Who, Elvis Costello, Vanity 6, and, for the nostalgia crowd, The Beatles.

Results in *The Most Overrated* category this year was a lesson in the fickleness of music fans. Last year the Go-Go's walked away with the title of best new band. You couldn't get enough of them. This year, following the dismal *Vacation*, you've reconsidered and decided they're the most overrated band in the world. Placing second in this category as well was The Clash. Third was last year's most overrated, The Rolling Stones.

Best Local Band. The top-rated local band this year, probably to nobody's surprise, was perennial favorites The Slickee Boys, whose *Here to Stay* retrospective and frenetic live performances have firmly established them as D.C.'s favorite. Second place went to art-poppers the Acrylix while the revved-up psycho doom sound of the Velvet Monkeys earned them third place, despite their having played infrequently during the last half of the year. Top runners-up included Tru Fax & The Insaniacs, Switchblade, the Nighthawks, and the Rosslyn Mountain Boys.

Most Valuable Player. King Crimson guitarist Adrian Belew topped this category with funk rocker Prince a close second. A three way-tie for third: Joe Jackson, Elvis Costello and Tru Fax guitarist David Wells. A number of other local artists were right behind, including Under Heaven's Howard Wuelfing, Slickee Boys guitarist Marshall Keith and Acrylix drummer Shelly Sienna.

The Best New Band went to Hoboken's hard popsters The Bongos, whose frequent D.C. appearances and *Drums Along the Hudson* album have won them a number of loyal fans. Tied for second were the new wave mainstream of Marshall Crenshaw and the Stray Cats, followed by the synth bands Men at Work and A Flock of Seagulls. Two local bands placed high: Under Heaven and the Court Jesters.

The Most Hated Song seemed to be everyone's favorite category this year—there were so many to choose from. When the counting was over it was a dead heat: the Human League's overplayed "Don't You Want Me Baby" and Paul McCartney and Stevie Wonder's pathetic collaboration "Ebony & Ivory." Toni Basil's "Mickey" finished a close second.

**d.c. space**  
7th & Enw

FOOD DRINKS SHOWS

**CABARET DINNER THEATRE**  
Off the Circle Theatre  
presents Debra Tidwell in  
"My Own Space"  
Fridays at 8 pm  
Saturdays at 7:30 pm  
through Feb. 6  
Call for reservations

**MUSIC LATE SHOWS**  
shows at 10:30 & midnight

Friday, Jan. 21  
Kit Watkins & Brad Allen

Saturday, Jan. 22  
Loose Fish

Friday, Jan. 29  
The Diversions

Coming in February:  
Jazz Singer Abbey Lincoln  
and new cabaret show featuring  
the music of Jule Stain

**347-4960**

**The Gentry**  
406 8th St. SE

Every Sunday  
Live Reggae with the Spliff

Every Tuesday  
Live Blues Jam with host  
Kenay DiFinais  
All Musicians Invited,  
No Cover

Every Wednesday  
Audition Night with hosts  
The New Executives

Friday, January 21  
The Secret Mammals plus  
Type O

Saturday, January 22  
Magenta Rose plus Squeeze  
Louise

Thursday, January 27  
The Essentials plus All Points  
Bulletin

Friday, January 28  
The Young Caucasians

**544-6786**

**Herb's Restaurant**

The fine art of drinking and dining  
is framed between an elegant salon  
and a great saloon—  
It's Herb's!

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, After Theatre  
Weekend Brunch

211 P Street, Northwest, Washington, D.C.  
(202) 333-HERB

**THE IRISH PUB**

Irish Entertainment Nightly  
now open for lunch

3412 Connecticut Ave. NW  
244-0860

Stainte Agus Falite

**Bronco Billy's Good Time SALOON**

ANTHONY HOUSE HOTEL  
1821 1/2 L STREET, NW / 887-5141

Country Dancing Free Dance Instruction  
Learn the Cotton Eye Joe & the Texas Two Step

Wednesday nights 9:30 til close  
Tuesday Night is Dallas Night  
All Cowgirls' Drinks are 49¢ 9 til closing

Authentic Louisiana Cooking; Jambalayas, Creoles, Gumbos.  
Breakfast and Brunch served every day, any hour. Great Beignets  
and Cafe au Lait, Pain Perdu, Eggs Hussarde, Sardou, Benedict,  
Omelettes, our own Pastries, fresh squeezed Orange Juice, Mimosas.  
Cocktail hour Mon-Fri with Hurricanes, Sazerac, laced hot Cider

Daily Specialties  
Chicken Pontalba  
chops, stuffed  
Salads with our  
Crawfish Bisque  
of wonderful & Peacemaker and

Seasonal Offerings  
Louisiana Crab-  
Artichokes, crisp  
own Dressings,  
a large selection  
tasty "Po' Boys";  
Cattfish, Plantation,  
Spicy Creole, Oyster Stew, fried Okra, Bread Pudding w/ Whiskey Sa.  
Free Parking after 5:00 pm! Relaxed Atmosphere, Reasonable Prices!  
Open seven days a week from 8:30 am - 10:00 pm. Fri & Sat. til 11:00 pm  
The New Orleans Cafe, 1790 Columbia Road, N.W. Tel: 234-5111 Visa/MC

**NEW ORLEANS CAFE**