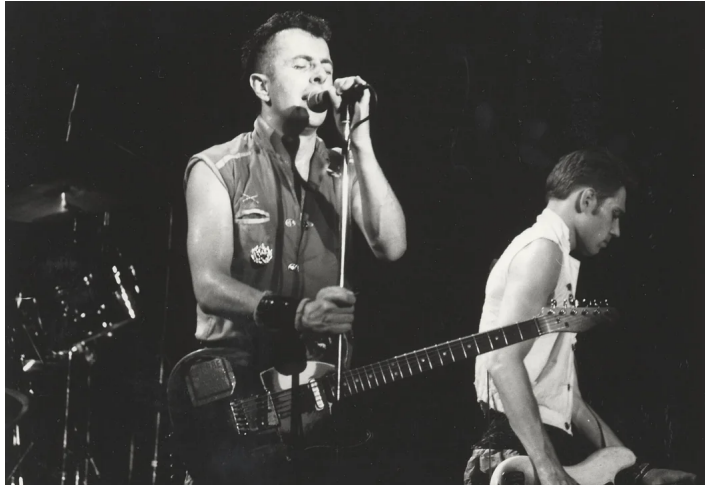


ECCENTRIC SLEEVE NOTES**POST PUNK INTERVIEWS & PHOTOS****ESN 4 FEB 1983**

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CLASH

CLASH - Joe Strummer & Paul Simonon
Newcastle City Hall 1982

A lot of preparation had gone into the visual side of the Clash tour. There was an abundance of slides representing aspects of most of the songs. Most striking were those hinged around dramatic events covered by the media: violence caused by a failure of understanding or different political views and how casually physical strength is used by those who possess it.

The Clash, musically, were unsettled: the re-instated drummer, Terry Chimes, had to be coached along. There had been little time to rehearse the set after Topper Headon's departure. It was easier for them to pick up with the older songs. After the show, I remarked to Joe Strummer that judging by the set list they could easily be in the middle of the 'London Calling' tour and not 'Combat Rock'.

JS: Yeah, that's because we've just been learning the basics with Terry. We started with 35 numbers we can play with him. We played 24 tonight.

ESN: Will the set remain the same throughout the tour?

JS: No, we've got ten numbers to play with. We try to learn new ones - two a day. The car broke down today so the sound check was fucked. We were going to play 'Car Jamming' and 'Ghetto Defendant' but it was such a crap show tonight we didn't feel like it.

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**CLASH - Paul Simonon & Joe Strummer
Newcastle City Hall 1982**

ESN: [Tonight's venue] Newcastle City Hall has always been a bad place to play.

JS: We've been trying to learn stuff with Terry we've never played live before like 'Death or Glory' but shouldn't be playing here. It's seats. We were banned for two years. I wish they'd kept the ban up. We're only playing here because there's a demand.

ESN: People can't dance here; there are too many bouncers that keep them in their seats.

JS: Yeah, we think we're going down crap. That put us off.

ESN: What's involved in Club Kasbah?

JS: We want to try and make the gig more fun for the audience. Like, it didn't go down well tonight. We had the Burundi drummers playing a couple of nights ago. We have Mikey Dread playing records. We try to come on early and leave some time at the end for Kosmo to play records and for people to dance at the unseated venues. At the end of the show a couple of nights ago, I made the announcement that we were going to get changed and come out. Everybody thought we were coming back on stage. They all stood round it watching the roadies take the equipment down. What I meant was that we were going to come into the audience and have a drink. The next night at Stoke we thought, "Right, we won't make an announcement and see what happens". So after we had done the set Kosmo started playing some great records and they all went home! We're still trying to work out how to do it. Gigs are so shit these days. We're just trying to figure out how to make them more of an evening out, a bit more fun.



**CLASH - Mick Jones, on stage
Newcastle City Hall 1982**

As we talk to Joe he is signing autographs. Everybody who waited to come backstage is there. Joe had been signing for nearly an hour.

JS: See that flicker. I'll tell you what gets on top of me, these guys mean well but the whole lock stock and barrel, having to sign all of that... then your hand starts shaking.

ESN: It's to bring some kind of personal contact into it.

JS: Yeah, I suppose so.

AUTOGRAPH HUNTER: Will you sign it to Pete?

ESN: Thanks for your time.

JS: You forgot something.

ESN: What's that?

JS: You didn't give me a copy of your mag. Something to read in bed!

SIMON McKAY

OK JIVE



OK JIVE - Ruby on stage, Newcastle City Hall 1982

OK Jive start promoting themselves in Newcastle storming all the record shops in town leaving a trail of posters, stickers and free records wherever they went. Hopefully, their album, 'Life at the Blue Chonjo Sky Day & Night Club' continued to play even when they were out of ear range of the shop turntables! This is their debut on Frenzy Records. "Frenzy is our own label within CBS. We set out to sign to an independent label. This was the next best thing. We hope to have releases by other bands on the label, maybe some African bands," explains Datsun Cherry, guitarist in OK Jive.

Swahili music has influenced OK Jive's records greatly. Bonni explains, "Swahili is not only a language but also a culture. Lee, Datsun, Bavon and Bonni are all from Africa. I remember we got slagged off in a music paper written for black people in this country. It slagged us off because our music is African-style, although there is only one black person in the band. The article was a load of racialist (sic) crap."

It seemed strange that Joe Jackson should have once produced OK Jive as they play African music. "We had played quite a few dates with Joe and he had really liked us. He wanted to produce our first single, which was 'On Route'. It was a little strange. It didn't work out that well. Nobody was particularly pleased with the end sound. Joe inspired a great confidence in us though. He

told us we had a really original sound, what an asset that was and that we should build on it and not slip into other people's slots."

Datsun continues, "Bavon does our producing now as well as playing guitar. It's much easier to do that than bring a producer in from outside who is not familiar with our sound and what we want. Producers like Martin Rushent might make hit records but it's only because they stamp so much of themselves across the recording. A producer like that takes a band as elements and re-arranges them in his mode. At the end of the year he can turn round and say 'well, I've produced so many hit singles this year' and that's what he gets paid for. That is not the kind of person we want."

A company can do a lot to make you successful. They shouldn't have this power. Bonni, "When a musician becomes a businessman he's no longer a musician. When a businessman becomes a musician he's no longer a businessman. You can't be both." Datsun adds, "CBS are hoping we'll take off soon. They released a single, 'Anyway', just before the album without us knowing it. They didn't promote it or anything. It was a complete waste of time. They did it on the off-chance that it might get picked up and become a hit."



**OK JIVE - Lee, Datsun Cherry, Bavon
Wayne Wayne, Ruby, Bonni Wanda**

OK Jive are currently supporting Squeeze on their 'Last Orders' tour. Bonni explains what it's been like, "It's always hard to go onto a stage and play to another band's audience. We were really excited about the tour. The kind of people attracted to Squeeze are an older and more laid back audience, more appreciative of music than fashion, which is good because they tend to be more open minded. It's great if the audience gets up to dance; we really enjoy ourselves. It hasn't happened much on this tour. At the seated venues we go on and start playing and we can see the people being ushered into their seats. It makes me feel like a 2-D film. It's as if we're not there. At one venue everyone got up to dance. When Squeeze came on, it was half an hour before the audience stood up: it was really strange. People don't usually show their appreciation so enthusiastically. Quite often it's a case of 'I've come to enjoy Squeeze'. Maybe it just doesn't occur to some people to stand up for anyone other than the main band. In-between songs the applause can really explode. It's so worrying when you're playing the songs; you think 'What the hell are we doing wrong?' We played with the Polecats once. The audience just glared. After that there was a rockabilly who kept turning up at our gigs to see us. He still had the suit and quiff. It was nice to know we had won a fan. Part of the incentive of the Squeeze tour was that we had the chance to win over people who would not otherwise hear us. That is an advantage of playing to another band's audience. It is something positive."

Commercially progress, whilst working up from singles to an album, has been slow. Datsun thinks it should be faster and reflect the development of the band.

"Musically, we have improved and now have the sound we want. The set has progressed and a lot of the older songs have been dropped." Ruby adds, "A lot of our new songs are in two parts: the second part might be completely different to the first part though, which is interesting."

OK Jive perform on stage with great charisma. Everything is colourful, chirpy but not sickly. Crisp rhythms combine with Ruby's steady voice. Datsun Cherry circulates, while the rhythm continues. The guitars sound like guitars - they're clean and don't screech - and Bonni can sing in Swahili!

The night is not over yet: the promotion never ends. After cooling down, those lesser talented navigators from Eccentric Sleeve Notes guide Ruby and Datsun on a visit to Metro Radio. Four miles south of the city centre, the turntable assault resumes. After the maze of motorway one way arrows the radio station's security guard is easily dealt with by a fast tongue. We wind him up and point him in the direction of the broadcasting studio with a copy of 'Take It Easy' in hand. While he's gone, we discuss how easily we could remove his very attractive hi fi with its flashing lights. Our little watchdog soon resumes his position in reception. We stand and listen as the DJ reacts quickly, obviously pleased to have something unexpected to talk about on air. With no delay, 'Take It Easy' is slotted in before the 9pm news. I walk away baffled. He said the record was by a group called 'THE OK Jive'. Who are they?

SIMON McKAY

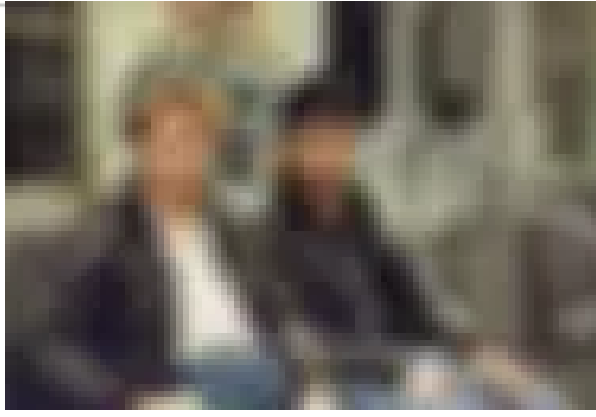
ROMAN HOLLIDAY



- Steve Lambert - Lead Vocals
- Rob Lambert - Sax
- John Pacott - Trumpet
- Simon Cohen - Drums
- Brian Bonhomme - Guitar / Vocals
- John Durno - Bass / Vocals

Steve explains: "We've been going seven months as a swing band. We started at a residency in Gossips, London. We got more live work from there and got some labels interested."

Roman Holliday's debut EP was released a couple of months ago and included 'Stand By' and 'Motor Mania' (my personal favourites by the band, ha!). Steve continues: "We played with the Clash at Portsmouth as our first main support. We've played with Culture Club and Mari Wilson since then. We went down with her crowd quite well. The only problem is when no-one watches because the bar is upstairs." Roman Holliday also supported the Belle Stars on dates recently. Steve recalls: "We were travelling in a transit and using lots of their gear!"



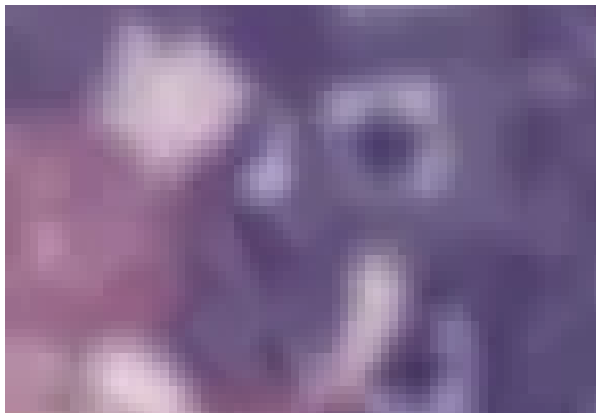
ROMAN HOLLIDAY - New York Subway 1983

The name Roman Holliday comes from a member of the band who 'was left' a year ago. Steve says: "He probably thought it sounded hip at the time. The double 'L' came from a name i.e. Billie Holliday (sic). There was a film made in black and white years ago called 'Roman Holiday'.

Roman Holliday play what was pop music in the forties or fifties. Steve: "We're not part of a revival or anything." Indeed, one of the appealing points about the band is that they do not try to emulate forties dress. They are a very enjoyable band to watch, who play a 45 minute set of well arranged numbers. It is refreshing to see them playing in scruffy jeans and placing the emphasis on the music.

SIMON McKAY

CHINA CRISIS



CHINA CRISIS - Eddie Landon Newcastle City Hall 1982

Slowly but surely, bands from Liverpool are starting to be recognised by major record companies. Once such band is China Crisis who recently signed to Virgin Records. We met the band on the third date of a British tour supporting Simple Minds. Although reluctant to respond to our questions, we managed to get a few facts out of them.

ESN: How many people are in the band?

CC: There are two members in the band at the moment, although a few weeks ago there were three.

ESN: Why are there only two now?

CC: The third member left because he didn't like touring. That's why we didn't tour much.

ESN: So how do you manage to produce music live with only two members.

CC: Onstage we have three people to help us out. We used to use tapes but now the sound is totally live.

ESN: You've just released an LP.

CC: Yes, it was recorded with the original three members and various other people helping out.

ESN: Why was 'African and White' rereleased?

CC: There was a big demand for the original single so we deleted it, held back until the orders built up and rereleased it in the hope of getting it high in the charts, but it only reached somewhere in the forties.



**CHINA CRISIS - Eddie Lundon
backstage, Newcastle City Hall**

ESN: How is the remix different to the original?

CC: The vocals were changed and it had a different B side.

ESN: What are you going to do after this tour?

CC: We're going into the studio to record a few more tracks.
At this point everything completely dries up and don't seem able to get anything more but skit out of China Crisis so we give up.

STEPHEN JOYCE

BLUEBELLS



BLUEBELLS - Newcastle City Hall 1982

Robert Hodgens - Guitar, Vocals
 Kenny McCluskey - Harmonica, Vocals
 Russell Irvine - Guitar, Vocals
 Laurence Donegan - Bass, Vocals
 David McCluskey - Drums, Vocals

The Bluebells were just about to release their first single, 'Forever More' when ESN interviewed them for the second time. The Bluebells have played Newcastle four times in less than a year; once on their own, twice with Haircut 100 and tonight as guests on the Elvis Costello tour. The Bluebells had been in the studio with Elvis Costello producing them and recorded tracks for a possible single. Why didn't any of these tracks appear as the first single?

LAURENCE: We did the tracks with Elvis when we didn't have a record company. We had originally planned to record two and bring them out as a single on Elvis' own label, Demon. We didn't have anyone to produce us so we asked our publishers if we could have Elvis. They sent Elvis a tape of our music and he came to see us play live. He liked us and agreed to produce us. We did the two tracks, 'Aim In Life' and 'Everybody's Somebody's Fool' but we didn't think they were very good. 'Aim In Life' came off the best but 'Everybody's Somebody's Fool' was really awful and we had planned to make that the A side. 'Aim In Life' will be on the B side of the new single and new version of 'Everybody's Somebody's Fool' will appear as an extra track on the 12" single.

ESN: What was it like working in the studio with Elvis?

LAURENCE: We liked working with Elvis, so we have got him to produce our debut album which we are going to record after this tour.

ESN: Do you think that you weren't ready to record a single when you went in the studio?

LAURENCE: We probably weren't ready to do it and didn't get round to talking about what we were going to do before we went in the studio.

ESN: You got a lot of publicity from the sessions you did for Kid Jensen.

LAURENCE: Things like Radio 1 sessions are up to nothing because you go into the studio and you've got 12 hours to do four tracks whereas it took us six days to record the single.

ESN: The last time we talked, you didn't have a record contract and you were looking for a good one. What is the contract you've got like?

LAURENCE: We've signed to London, which is through Phonogram. They usually just give singles deals to new bands. That's what they did for the likes of ABC and Soft Cell. We were the first to be offered an album deal for 2 or 3 years.

ESN: You've had a lot of exposure with other bands like Haircut 100 and Altered Images etc.

LAURENCE: The second Haircut tour was very good, young audiences who think you are superstars as soon as you walk on stage.

ESN: If you play out of tune they'll never know.

LAURENCE: And we did! It was good, very good exposure. We keep getting loads of letters from them. If they write them, they are sure to buy a copy of the single.

ESN: How is this tour going?

LAURENCE: We are nearly halfway through at the moment and it's going reasonably well. We've had a few good reactions. The audience are a lot older than the Haircut tour so you don't have lots of girls screaming at you when the drummer breaks his hi-hat.

At this point the interview was brought to a halt due to the sound check. The Bluebells have their own original sound, which is why they had almost every big record company after them.

STEPHEN JOYCE

KISSING THE PINK



KISSING THE PINK - Pete Barnett Jon Kingsley Hall in 1982

- Pete Barnett: Bass, violin, vocals
- Stevie Cusack: Drums, percussion, vocals
- Jon Kingsley Hall: Keyboards, synthesisers, vocals
- George Stewart: Keyboards, vocals
- Jo Wells: Saxophone, vocals
- Nick Whitecross: Guitar, vocals

Kissing The Pink must be the only band that fall over each other on stage in their mad game of musical instruments. It seems that each song finds the six members playing different instruments. Different figures even pop up behind the various microphones. At the end of the night it is very hard to pinpoint who broke what - Pete definitely broke the cymbal though!

Despite first night nerves, a little sense was wrung out of Kissing The Pink. Two years ago at the music college in Glasgow, George, Jon and Pete decided to go to London to put together a pop band or as Jon says, 'to partake in rock music'. At present, Kissing The Pink have released three singles, the first was

on an independent label, of which very few copies were available. After the relative success of that single, there were three companies interested in the band. Kissing The Pink signed with Magnet, home of the Darts.

Jon: CBS were interested in signing us but the A&R bloke, who signed Dire Straits to the label, was put off because we didn't have one style in which all of our songs are moulded.



KISSING THE PINK
Jo Wells, George Stewart in 1982

GEORGE: It's very exciting for a little band like us to be on tour.

JON: Our record company have put plenty of money up for this tour. We can afford to stay in hotels and eat and things, which is so good. We're very poor. They don't give us money in reality, for food when we're in our basement flat.

GEORGE: They lent us money to buy equipment. There's nothing for wages. It's quite open that we're all on the dole.

JON: Peter Powell keeps playing our records. He kept on playing 'Mr Blunt' when everybody else had stopped. John Peel loves us as well - he really likes us. He played 'Mr Blunt' every night for years.

PETE: John Peel actually ate seven copies of 'Mr Blunt'.

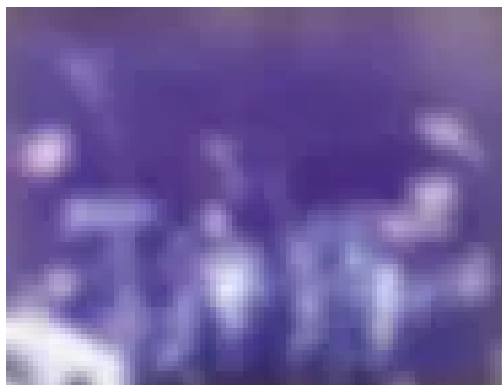
JON: He said we were going to be the next Joy Division.

GEORGE: Oh Jon, shut up.

NICK: We try to avoid having a focal point in the band.

GEORGE (staring through his black-outlined eyes): Every band has some guy with eyeliner on!

JON: Flaunting his ego. We try to get over ego so hopefully, people will listen to the music instead of concentrating on somebody's groin. It's really difficult to get people to listen to music. So many people are into image, I find that depressing.



KISSING THE PINK - Newcastle 1982

NICK: The interesting thing about our music is the styles of our songs are so different to one another. A lot of bands plump for a certain sound. We can play the instruments reasonably well.

JON: We make up a song and then decide on the style. It can vary from a sort of Kraftwerk sound to funky jazz, even military.

GEORGE: Everything hinges on the meaning of the songs, the atmosphere, which is what we want to get across.

ESN: What are the songs about?

GEORGE: We have one love song.

JON: It's not really a love song.

GEORGE: It's called 'Broken Bodies'. It's about a love affair between a cripple and 'normal' person.



**KISSING THE PINK - Jo Wells
Newcastle 1982**

NICK: There's 'Last Film' which is about a soldier who has to fly in a plane during the war. He's shown propaganda films on how wonderful life back in Britain is, although it's not true. They lie to him to give him an incentive to fight.

Hopefully, Kissing The Pink are on the verge of some kind of breakthrough. The Newcastle date was badly attended (upstairs in the Polytechnic), though the audience, small as it was, were extremely enthusiastic. Have you ever seen a punter physically stop the band leaving the stage until they've done an encore?

Kissing The Pink's debut album 'Naked' is to be released in February and a promotional tour will precede that in January. BE THERE!

SIMON McKAY

THE DAINTEES



**DAINTEES - Martin Stephenson & Jamie Harwood
Newcastle Tiffanys 1982**

Martin - Guitar, vocals
Jamie - Guitar, backing vocals
Chris - Bass
Adam - Drums

The Daintees, already familiar with busking, plugged in guitars and microphones for their audition in Newcastle's HMV (Note 2010: when it was the small single level store, located at the approach to the Queen's Square) one weekday afternoon. Their performance, even without drums secured them a place on Kitchenware Records. Since then, in August, the label released 'Involved With Love' / 'Roll on Summertime'. Martin Stephenson, singer and guitarist with the band, was disappointed with the distribution of the record though: "Red Rhino made a really bad job of distributing the single. It was unobtainable. I was talking to someone at the Venue [in London], who said pirate stations were playing the record continually. John Peel played it, Kid Jensen's producer said we're more of a Radio 2 band - he wouldn't play it. I think Radio 2 has a lot more class than Radio 1. The music is by musicians and songwriters. We're hoping to do a session for Terry Wogan."

The Daintees toured with Aztec Camera and played London, Newcastle, Sunderland, Edinburgh, Dundee, Glasgow and Aberdeen. Martin recalls: "Aberdeen was a really good gig, we did an encore there. We could have done one at some of the other dates but the Aztec Camera manager wouldn't let us run over time. In comparison the Venue was really dead, no atmosphere. It's hard to really put yourself into it when you've got no feedback. As soon as Aztec Camera came on, whoosh, straight to the front. We did win them over at the end a bit." Chris adds, "We didn't make a profit on the tour. In Scotland, Aztec Camera gave us some of their money. It was worth playing for the publicity though. It was a nice working holiday. We didn't expect to make money. Aztec Camera were really nice to us." Martin: "At Edinburgh, somebody sabotaged the PA settings between us sound checking and playing our set. Two of Aztec Camera were running around trying to sort it out as we played. They had a better sound than us on all of the dates. That's expected when we only have ten minutes to sound check. We didn't take too much notice of the sound quality when we were playing. You can become too involved in the playing to notice."



DAINTEES - Chris Mordie, Newcastle Tiffanys 1982

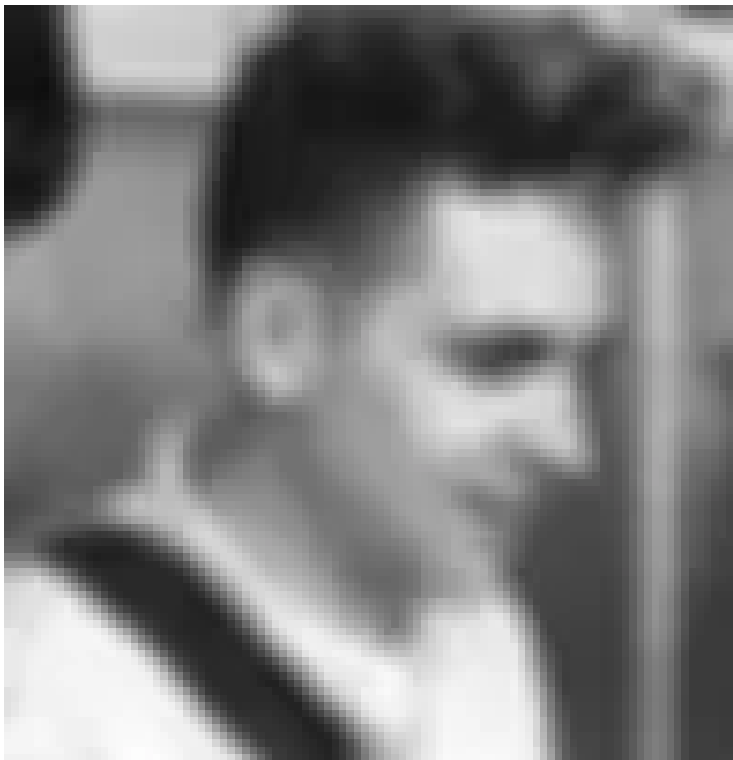
The Daintees have a gentle sound. Martin explains that they don't want to be a novelty band: "We just want people to take our music seriously. That is what matters. I want the Daintees to record excellent songs that will still be in people's minds in ten years time."

"When you meet somebody who's in a band you expect them to be exciting and something special. They're not." Chris adds, "Yeah, Martin's really boring." Martin continues unabashed, "As a band, we're all on the same wavelength. We came together by chance but share similar interests and don't have musical conflicts. If one of us left then the Daintees would probably fold."

The Daintees have recently returned from recording in London. Four tracks were recorded at Phonogram's expense as they are negotiating distribution of the band's next single, planned for January. It will still be on Kitchenware and will be titled 'Turn Me Around'.

SIMON McKAY

ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN



ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN - Les Pattinson

Face: Les Pattinson

Job: Bass with Bunnymen

Age: 24

Interview:

LP: I left school at 16. Then I worked, boatbuilding, for five years to the day. Then I decided that while I was still young, I'd give the band a go.

ESN: Were you in any bands at school?

LP: No, this was the first one.

ESN: Before that?

LP: I used to go to Eric's a lot. I thought it was fantastic. The first bands I saw were Generation X, the Damned and the Clash. I used to go three times a week, spend all my wages seeing bands.

ESN: Did you enjoy boatbuilding?

LP: They were the best five years of my life.

ESN: Better than now?

LP: Physically different. It was great to get home at night and know you'd done a day's work. Now, I sleep till about eleven, rehearse etc. It's hard, different.

ESN: Where do you live?

LP: I still live with my parents, cos it's cheap.

ESN: What is their reaction to your lifestyle?

LP: Well, it's something for me dad to say when he's in the pub. Me mum was there last night, it was the first time they seen us. It kinda like puts you off, thinking, 'God, me mum's out there', which I thought when we did the first number. She loved it and so did dad.

ESN: What was their reaction when you quit boatbuilding?

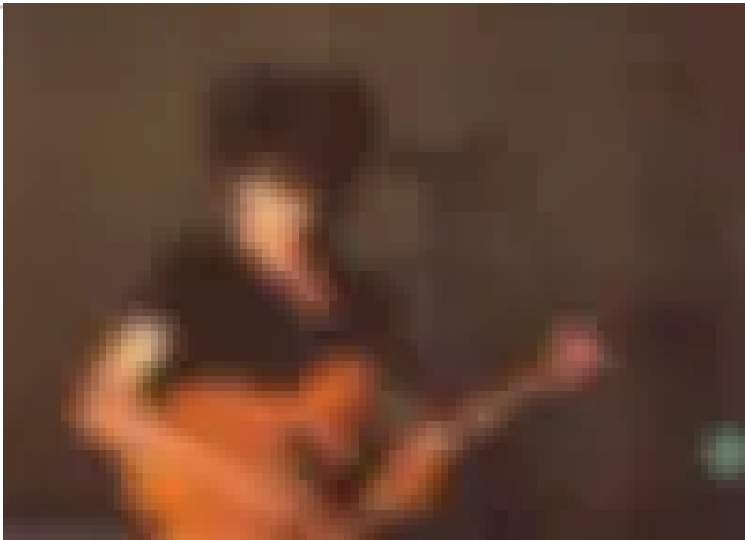
LP: They told me to stick to my job, saying I was mad. Now when I say that I'm going to quit the band and get a normal job, they tell me to stay with the band. I just do the opposite of what they say!

ESN: How long have you been playing the bass?

LP: About three and a half years. I started three days before our first gig; I'd never touched a guitar before. It was a support with the Teardrop Explodes at Eric's. Me and Pete (De Freitas) were really nervous. I'd never been so nervous in my life.

ESN: What was it like?

LP: It was great. Heart wrenching. Everyone regarded it as a classic. We only did one song, 'Monkeys', but it was fifteen minutes long.



**ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN - Ian McCulloch
Newcastle City Hall 1981**

ESN: What do you do when you go down to London?

LP: We go out and get drunk - it's the only enjoyment there is. We used to be against that rockist image but there's no point in taking that attitude.

ESN: Have your musical tastes changed recently?

LP: Oh definitely, yes. After being in the studio especially: one or two LPs from years ago I still like - early Bowie up to 'Space Oddity', 'Images' etc.

ESN: Would you let images put you off?

LP: Sometimes it does. Take Dexy's Midnight Runners; they deny it about fashion and then they ram it down your throat. To me, they're really big hypocrites 'cos they were in a cabaret band in velvet suits when I first saw them.

ESN: Musically?

LP: I like 'Geno'. 'Eileen' is really catchy and very well done... They said, 'We don't do interviews, we don't like hippies, smoking pot, they're the degenerates of today' and then they say, 'We believe in doing what you want to, keep the spirit'. It's stupid.

ESN: The rock press?

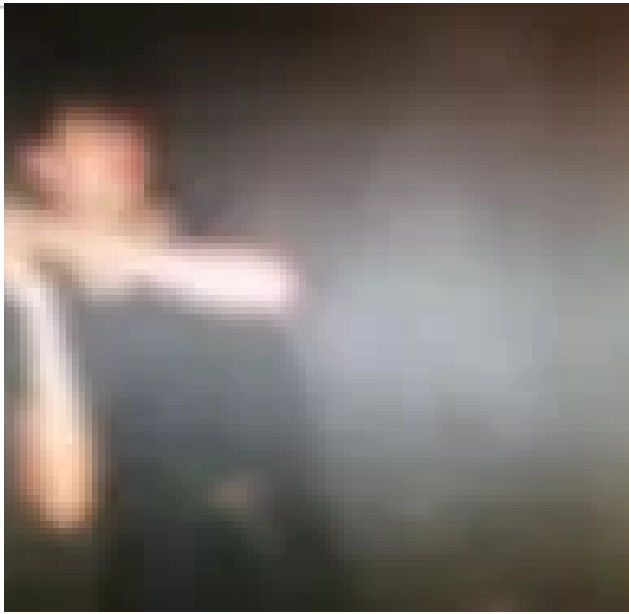
LP: Don't like 'em!

ESN: Even though they've helped you a lot?

LP: It's only because we're four nice chaps. When they come up it's just because we have a good laugh. Live, sometimes, we're great. Sometimes we're really shit. When the moments are magic, they're really ace. We savour them.

ESN: What about the new violinist [who played with them live]?

LP: His name is Shankar. We're just using him for the album. We met up with him at WOMAD and it just went from there.



**ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN - Ian McCulloch
Newcastle City Hall 1983**

ESN: Were you surprised at the success of 'Back of Love' compared to 'A Promise'?

LP: I never thought 'Promise' would make it. It was one of those weird songs, everyone could listen to it, but it didn't get any airplay. I love playing 'The Back of Love'. It's difficult to play so it's good when you get it right.

ESN: Why are you remixing the album?

LP: We didn't demo it and one or two of the tracks might be better, so... We've seen already that it is better.

ESN: What's it called?

LP: Dunno yet. What usually happens is Mac has a great idea and it goes round until we settle.

ESN: The direction of this album is now settled so where next?

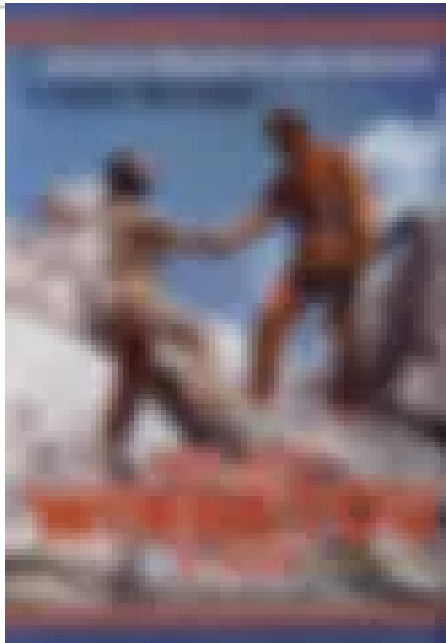
LP: I dunno. It's personal really. The other two albums have stood the test of time. It's just us. All four of us know what we want; it's just doing the right thing. The relationship within the band isn't what it used to be. Mac and Will used to go out every night and get pissed and generally have a good time. Now Mac is almost married, Will can be moody.

ESN: And you've not changed?

LP: No.

DAVE MARTIN

GANG OF FOUR



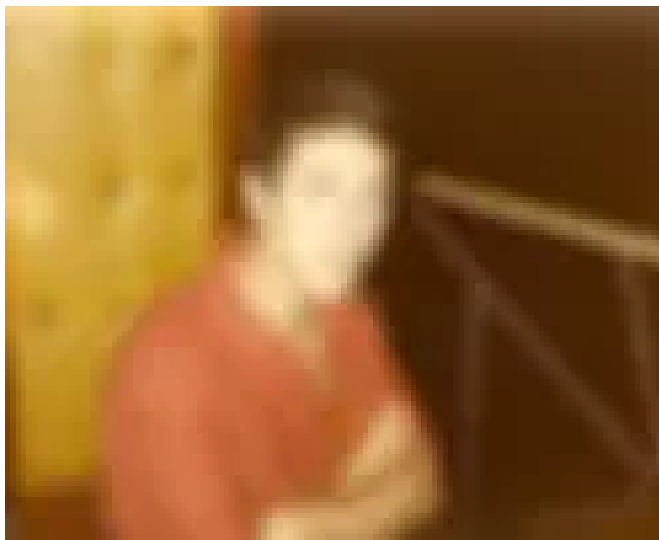
GANG OF FOUR - 'Winnetou'
image used for Entertainment LP sleeve

Jon King was quick to pick up on the introduction I laid before him: it showed a still from 'Winnetou', the image adapted for the cover of the band's first LP, 'Entertainment', showing the cowboy and Indian handshake amidst rocks and blue sky.

JON: This is one of the biggest TV series in Europe. We went to Yugoslavia and I was told the whole background to it. I saw it like this, except it was in black 'n' white, and I liked the picture. This alienated western hero goes around befriending Indians and that's what the stories are built around, which is quite co-incidental. I couldn't use the picture because of the copyright so what I did was, I traced it to avoid any possibility of connection and made the faces white and red. That was part of the idea as well. We've been sued before for using picture out of magazines. On 'Tourist' the woman on the back sued us. On an Everest advert it had said, 'It's her family'. She couldn't leave her house because it was so upsetting that a punk group had used her photograph on their cover. The BBC hated it because it mentioned 'packets'. The ad agency sued us for it as well. It cost us as much as we made on the bloody thing.

ESN: Was there any attempt to have it taken off the market?

JON: It was too late. The person didn't find out until it had sold. It was in her interests to get damages.

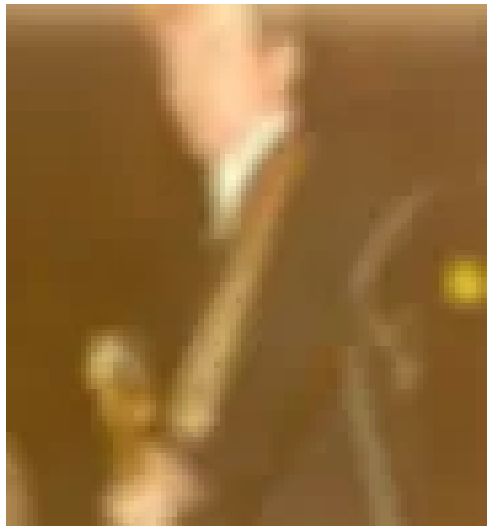


GANG OF FOUR - Jon King, Newcastle Mayfair 1982

Prior to our interview Gang of Four had been filmed for a TV news show in which they 'wore' leotards.

JON: We thought it would be a bit of a laugh. We had all sorts of different uniforms projected on us. EMI tried to convince everybody that 'Man in Uniform' wasn't about the army, although obviously it was. It isn't about people who are worried about their sexuality as the NME review of it said. Most of it's about 'handouts - they got me down'. You've got no opportunity; this is where your culture pushes you. You've got nothing else. Look at the army now; they're actually making people redundant. There's no shortage of people for cannon fodder, there are so many people who have go bugger all to do.

We had a lot of trouble with 'I Love a Man in Uniform' because of the Falklands crisis. When it first came out it was doing really well. It went to number 65, then Radio 1 stopped playing it and it started to go down. They knew it wasn't connected with the Falklands, the radio producers were being quite reasonable about it. The line was, if the 'Shoot, shoot, burrrh' was being played and there was an interruption saying another 200 men had been killed it would reflect badly on them. It was recorded two months before the Falklands conflict. It was a real pain in the arse.



GANG OF FOUR - Andy Gill
Newcastle Mayfair 1982

In the past our stuff has always been too political or heavy. We got bored making statements like on 'Entertainment'. On 'I Love a Man in Uniform' we spent a lot of time getting the vocal sound right. It depends a lot on the vocal sound as to whether the radio will play it or not. 'I Love a Man in Uniform' became so incredibly political, more so than 'To Hell with Poverty'.

ESN: Have you added a fifth member to the band on synthesised bongos?

JON: Simmons drums. Eddi Reader is not a full member. She's only playing with us live. We need extra percussion when we appear live, the songs need it. There's no way of doing it otherwise and she's got a great voice. There's loads of percussion: 'We Live as We Dream Alone' - 'Kii kii buah!' I couldn't do that unless I had five arms.

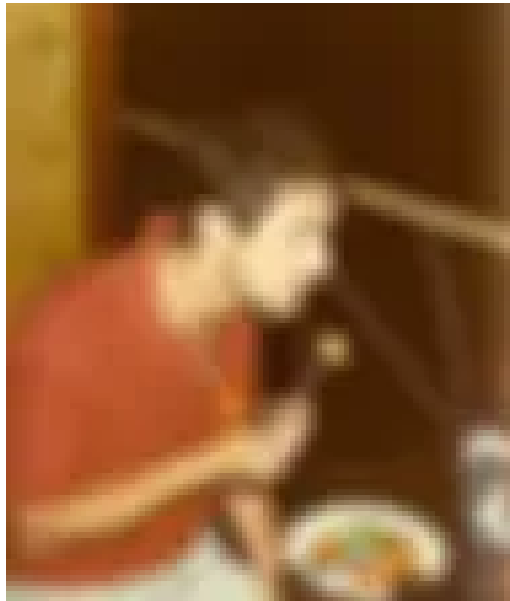
ESN: Do you feel you can achieve something and it's not just the motions like a job?

JON: On the bottom of it, it's just a job. That's how I earn my living. That is pretty straightforward. I find it really interesting, particularly having done 'Songs of the Free': I feel we're getting somewhere towards what we could have done. I think 'Entertainment' bogged me down. Dave Allen wrote them, although they were credited to Gang of Four. Dave ran out of ideas. On 'Solid Gold', Andy and I were credited on four of the songs. Now we do all the

writing. We're really productive. Together we wrote 25 songs for the last album, thirteen we recorded.

ESN: Although there were only 9 on the album?

JON: One went on the other side of 'I Love a Man in Uniform'; there was another one that was a bit of a rocker ['Producer' released on the US release of 'I Love a Man in Uniform']. We play it live but it didn't really fit the LP. On that second side, I really like playing it right through as it is. The last track has me singing quietly over a synth. It's not like anything we've ever done before. On 'Solid Gold', for me, there were only six really good songs. I don't like 'Ditch', 'Keep It', don't like 'Outside The Trains Don't Run on Time'. There was 'Army', which is one of my absolute favourites. Although it never came out good on record, live, I love it.

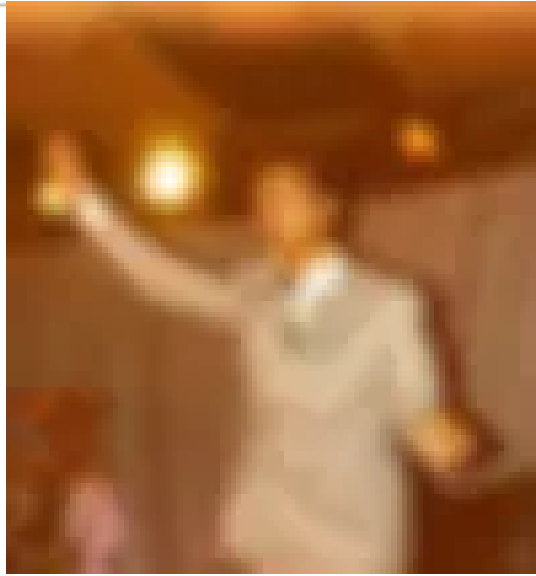


**GANG OF FOUR - Jon King gets his grub
Newcastle Mayfair 1982**

I suppose it's just a job, I really enjoy it though. I've always enjoyed music that gives you an echo in your life. I don't think you can change somebody's mind by writing a song, when people are moving in a certain way anyway. They sort of get music as a fellow traveller to themselves. They don't listen to a song and say, 'Great, now I'm gong to renounce nuclear weapons'. (We never take on grand subjects like that anyway, not ever.) Somebody moving in that direction might say, 'Yeah, I see the point.' ("Got any chicken? Chicken for me. Jon orders some Newcastle Mayfair grub. His reaction to it is well illustrated.)

Jon's wonderful, racing mind keeps doesn't need me to prompt. He has plenty to say:

JON: We got a lot of flak for signing to EMI. When EMI work well they deliver exactly what you want. You have to use them in the right way, give them a product. Then their six weeks cycle follows. They do things Rough Trade Records can never do. I've never believed in do-it-yourself things anyway, never have done. When we were with Fast Records, in Glasgow... in the sense of having made something, it's not necessarily a good thing. This magazine of yours, it's no good writing it and not being able to sell it. It wouldn't be worth your time. It reached the stage where a band would have a thousand copies of a record for themselves and nobody would buy it. Rough Trade Records have got a large turnover, but not the organisation to back up a single that may dent the charts. EMI is funny; if you know how they work you can really use the machine. 'I Love a Man in Uniform' stiffed, so we'll put another one out straight away. EMI picked up the option on us; if we make another two albums for them we are free of our contract.



**GANG OF FOUR - Jon King
Newcastle Mayfair 1982**

ESN: On the 'Solid Gold' tour you had problems with your voice. Has that cleared up now?

JON: I never used to be able to breathe properly. My singing came too much from my throat and not enough from down below. I can now sing for a long time with a different technique - pushing up from lower down. I sing in tune and loudly for as long as a 30 day tour.

For me, Gang of Four are one of the few bands that have progressed leaving a trail of good records and tours behind them. Originality comes easy to them and they convey their material and ideas easily. They are one of the few bands that broke through in 1978 and have retained an enthusiastic following.

SIMON McKAY

BELLE STARS



**BELLE STARS - Jenny McKeown & Lesley Shone
(Claire Hirst, background), Newcastle Polytechnic 1982**

The Belle Stars were nearing the end of their first British tour when we interviewed them before a gig at Newcastle Polytechnic.

ESN: What has your tour been like?

STELLA: It's OK. There aren't as many people as we expected coming to the gigs.

ESN: Do you think that's because you've lost popularity since the hit single, 'The Clapping Song'?

STELLA: No, not at all. I think it's because people aren't coming to gigs anymore; because of the recession they've got no money. It's not just us that are being hit by it.

JENNY: Even people like Mick Jagger are being hit. He played the Hope and Anchor the other week to two people.

ESN: Was that an undercover gig?

STELLA: Yes, but you would still think that people would have got to know that the Stones were playing the Hope and Anchor.

ESN: Why do you think the last single didn't do as well as the previous two?

STELLA: Because we released it too soon after 'The Clapping Song' and because it was another cover.

ESN: So you don't want to do any more covers?

STELLA: No, the next one is going to be one of our own called 'Sign of the Times': it's a real rocker, a killer.

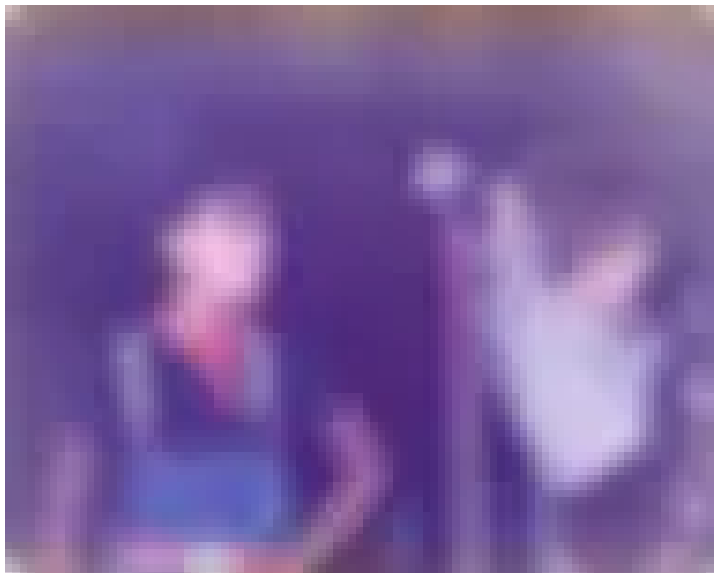
ESN: I think that 'Iko' and 'The Clapping Song' were really bad compared with the first three singles.

STELLA: You can't say they had a bad sound or badly produced. We were just trying something else because we'd tried our own stuff and they hadn't worked. You can't be poor all your life.

ESN: Why did you do the cover versions?

STELLA: To get a single in the charts. It worked - people know us. We've been on TV, so now hopefully, we can do our own stuff and get more response than we did in the early days. We didn't get a hit single even though we released three singles so we did a cover version which was the in thing. What do you think of Bauhaus doing 'Ziggy Stardust'?

ESN: Terrible.



BELLE STARS - Jenny McKeown & Lesley Shone
Newcastle Polytechnic 1982

STELLA: Yeah, that's it, but look at how high it got in the charts. You didn't even think of them doing a cover. You would have thought they'd have been against that.

ESN: They didn't even include it on their LP so they got a hit single out of it and then waved it goodbye... What happened to Penny Layton?

STELLA: She left. She found it cold when we were touring in the cold van.

ESN: I thought all those cover versions would have kept her warm.

STELLA: I suppose there were other problems as well. She works at Screen On The Green selling chocolate. About that time Jenny's brain went.

JENNY: What's that?

STELLA: Your brain, love, it left us when Penny left.

JENNY: Oh, my brain went.

STELLA: Just a joke. Claire's joined us now.

JENNY: Well, round of applause.

ESN: When does the LP come out?

STELLA: January 28th.

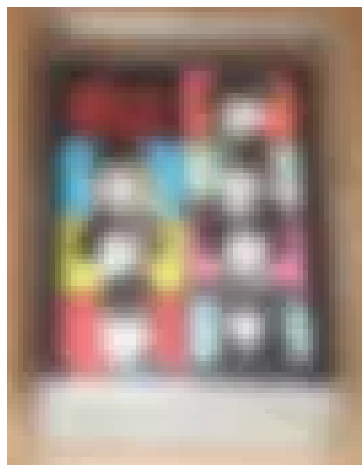
ESN: Is this the LP you promised me a year ago when you said 'Feb / March 1982'?

JENNY: Yeah!

STELLA: The album's got a lot of our own songs on it, some covers; and it sounds alright.

ESN: And it took you a year to make it?

STELLA: No, it took a couple of months. It took us a year to get into the studio.



**BELLE STARS - Pack of Playing Cards
Promo for LP on Stiff Records**

ESN: Claire, why did you join the band?

STELLA: We offered her lots of money and men every night.

ESN: How are Stiff Records treating you?

STELLA: Not too bad.

JENNY: We don't really know as we haven't been with any other record company.

STELLA: It's good now that they've moved because they're just down the road from where most of the band lives.

ESN: Are they pushing you to release more cover versions to gain hit singles?

STELLA: No, I think they've realised that we want to do our own stuff now.

SJ: I think they had our best interests at heart when they released the covers because they wanted us to be successful. Seeing as a lot of people were releasing covers it seemed a good thing to do from a record company point of view.



**BELLE STARS - Lesley Shone & Sarah-Jane Owens,
Newcastle Polytechnic 1982**

ESN: Do you get total control of what is released?

STELLA: Yeah, well, at least we get a chance to have a discussion about it.

CLAIRE: We are going to America next week to do three gigs.

JENNY: New York!

STELLA: We are really looking forward to it. We're doing three gigs; two at the Danceteria [New York] and one in Philadelphia.

ESN: Have you released any singles in America?

STELLA: No, there are just singles that have been imported from Britain. The LP will be released over there if Stiff get a distributor.

ESN: Why are you going to America without any vinyl to promote?

STELLA: Just really as a test to see how everything goes.

CLAIRE: We are all really looking forward to it.
At this point the interview ends when all the members of the band rush out of the room to watch 'Deep Roots of Music' on TV.

STEPHEN JOYCE

FASHION



FASHION - Martin Recchi, Newcastle Polytechnic 1982

ESN: What happened to Dee Harriss?

MARTIN: It was just totally out of the blue. We got a letter from the record company saying that he's left the band and that we could put it down to different ideas. On the next album he wanted to use things like a brass section and backing vocalists, which we thought 'eugh!' We were going to come out sounding like Kool and The Gang and it's not really where we're coming from. So we decided to do some demos between us. Dee did some demos in London and took them to the record company and they thought they were a load of shit. We did some in Birmingham and they thought 'this is more like the Fashion sound' and that blew his confidence. From then on we just started growing apart. You know, we could see the enthusiasm was going and then he sent a letter to the record company saying he's left the band. He didn't give any reason; just said, 'I've left the band'. I haven't even seen the letter.

ESN: Who's going to write the new material?

MARTIN: We're going to write it between us. The only reason Dee wrote the last material was because he wouldn't let anyone else write 'cos he wanted all the publishing. That's the sort of guy he was, he never fitted in anyway, just sort of took over the whole thing and it was just getting out of hand. Tonight we'll be doing three new songs, two of which Troy had already got recorded on cassette when he joined the band and one which Alan had already recorded. In future, I'll write and Mulligan will write and maybe I'll work with Dik and work it from a bass and drums point of view: we'll all contribute. It will be equal - it's much more of a band, much more of a five piece.

ESN: So will the music be very different?

MARTIN: It will be. I think it'll be dance orientated, but it'll be a lot different; a lot more youth orientated as opposed to sophisticated audience, which is here De was trying to get across to. We'll gradually move away from the old songs.

ESN: Troy, how did your split with the Teardrop Explodes come about?

TROY: It was really complicated with Teardrop Explodes as far as me leaving. It was partly leaving, partly being made to leave. It was a very complicated situation, it just fell apart really 'cos we did it for such a long time and we had different musical tastes and attitudes towards touring and playing to audiences and things like that. There's been a lot said about it that it's a waste of time.

DIK (interrupting): I see you're doing an interview. You've just joined the band. He's only been in the band for five minutes! What about me? What about me? Oh don't mind me, just sod off!

TROY: Go onstage without me then will you?

DIK: Yeah!

TROY: Go on, bang your tub. Anyway, that's all over now and I can't be bothered to talk about it.

ESN: Do you prefer Fashion audiences?

TROY: I prefer playing with Fashion, it suits me.

MARTIN: I think we attract the same sort of audiences as Teardrop Explodes.

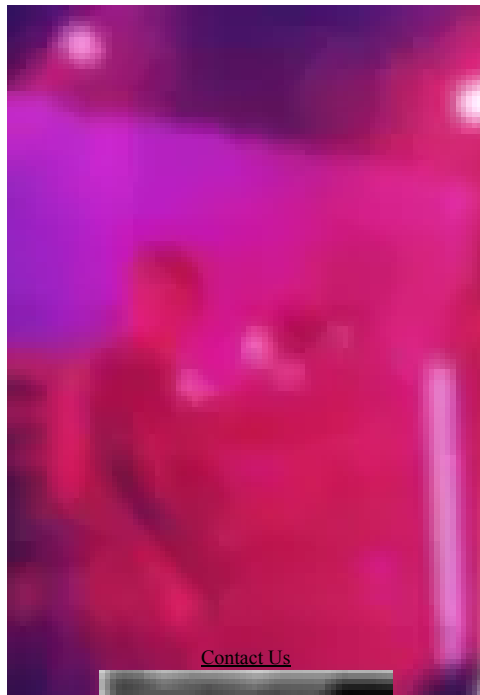
ESN: You don't get the screaming little girls.

TROY: No, we haven't go that but that was only happening when we had a hit record. When the hit records stopped you didn't have much screaming in the audience.

ESN: Did the screaming bug you?

TROY: No, it was like...

MARTIN: You got off on it!



Newcastle Polytechnic 1982
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TROY: No you're going realistically

Mailing list: please enter your email address

Join

the little girls see it ion.

And yeah, he's right, you do get off on it to some degree, but at the same time in your mind you know it's stupid so you don't really take it seriously. I was more interested in playing the music and if that enabled us to play the music, well that was good. Sometimes it was a bit frustrating like if you were going really badly. We were playing one night and it was really bad. The sound was awful and there were all these people screaming at the front, I just turned my guitar off and mimed playing guitar, right, just mimed adjusting the volume 'cos I was in this really cynical mood. Even then, there were still people going

'Wah!' and I thought 'Oh God, what's going on?' But Julian was the main focal point of the band and a lot of the girls used to come because they were into Cope's image.

ESN: They're not so much into the music?

TROY: I think a lot of people were. It was just a mixture, but it was mainly when 'Reward' was really big and then it kinda went down a bit and then we went abroad so it wasn't the same sort of mania anymore, which was good on one hand but bad in the sense that you used to getting high off a few thousand people and then you have to start getting high off 200 or so. You do notice the difference. But, personally, I'm not that bothered because I don't play music so anybody will see me: I do it just because I have to. It's really important. I can't explain it, it's like breathing.

ESN: How big a strain is the tour?

MARTIN: This tour is a strain.

TROY: I think it's pretty heavy. It's a lot of work.

MARTIN: We've been together as a five piece for five weeks. In that time Troy's had the most to do - learning the lyrics.

TROY: Learning to forget the, which I frequently do. It gives it that raw edge. What I've tried to do is to interpret the words around me. Try to stick fairly close to vocal delivery but to infer in the stage act something a bit different. Like the song 'White Stuff' - we were talking about it today and we're going to try to infer things about De Lorean. I don't think that's what De Harriss meant, it doesn't matter; I just take it to mean that. I'm trying to interpret the songs in the way that I think I can sing and really mean it, rather than just going up and miming to a song and trying to copy it exactly, which is bullshit. We are talking about things like that. We usually have about 30 seconds to discuss everything in between sleeping and driving and doing gigs.

I was into Fashion before De Harriss joined them anyway. We've got common ground between all of us. The whole attitude about certain kinds of sounds, music and certain things we want to do. We want to get a bit heavier though and I don't mean like heavy metal, it's just like...

MARTIN: Heavier!

TROY: More relative to what's going on - just doing our own sort of sound. The interview wound up as Troy limps off to do a sound check.

TROY: With me peg leg - I fell over on stage last night. Good eh?

MARTIN: It's part of the new stage act.
The only mishap on stage tonight was Alan Darby. Move on Al!

SIMON McKAY