

MADONNA UNCOVERED!

record

AUGUST 3, 1985 45p

FAKE

FRAUD OR FIGUREHEAD?

M O G G ! S S E 4

BELOUIS SOME + THE CURE + SOUL HIPLIST
ALTERNATIVE TOTP + TOPPER HEADON



ders a harmonic telepathy that's great fun to watch and not at all bad to listen to.

You can check this out for yourself now on their debut album on Stiff, 'One Time'.

Four of the girls (Marcia, Sandra, Lizzie and Debbie)

are sisters, which gave them a headstart, and old school friends Debbie (number two) and Julie soon picked up the tune. And none of them older than 22 yet.

Da Bu Da Bu Stun Nup Stums Doo Be Doo Drippity Dropa Dum, as they say.

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■ **WITHOUT BEING** rude you could say ADELE BERTEL has been around a bit. A native of Cleveland she has variously dabbled in the New York art-punk, punk-film circles, provided backing vocals for both Tom Dolby and Culture Club, and more interestingly worked in a factory and mimed with a bunch of transvestites.

And now, after one false start — a 1982 Billboard dance top five 'Build Me A Bridge' — she is back on the solo trail. 'When It's Over' is her new 45, a smooth piece of disco-pop produced by Maher and Gamson of Scritti and sweetly aahed and oohed by backing vocalist Green Gartside.

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record

● there is life after the c l a s h !

TOPPER

HEADON



● TOPPER '85: a reformed character who's kicked a smack habit to launch his solo career

EX-CLASH DRUMMER Topper Headon was undoubtedly given a raw deal when he was unceremoniously dumped by that band. He's not one to whinge about it, but how many people realise that he not only wrote 'Rock The Casbah' — the Clash's most successful single — but played every instrument on the track?

Now he's back in business, and he's out to prove he belongs back at the top.

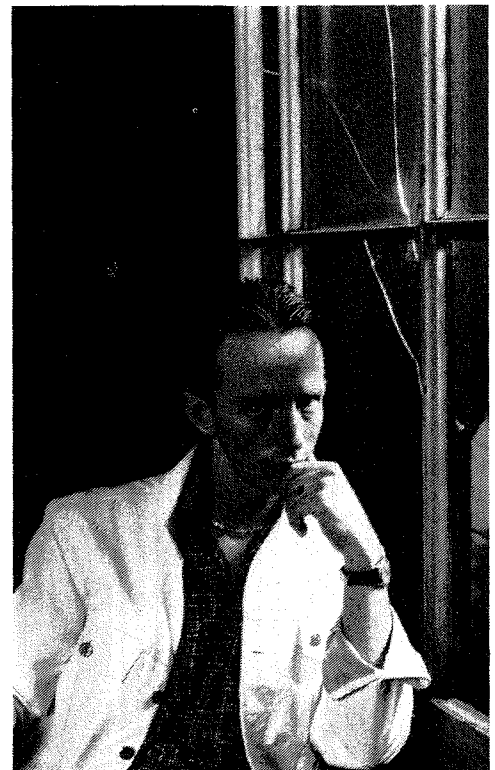
So what actually went wrong? "Basically, we were earning good money but the rest of the group didn't want that publicised because we were supposed to be a street band. That was creating a lot of problems. I wasn't getting on with Joe. He tried to nick my girlfriend and I got the sack. I hit rock bottom and it eventually struck me that I was letting myself down.

"It got to the point where I was in such bad physical shape (his weight plummeted to seven stone) that either I pulled myself together or I wouldn't be around too much longer."

You've guessed it. Heroin. When Topper joined the Clash, he was a keep fit fanatic who shunned alcohol and cigarettes. Within the space of two years, he was a junkie.

The classic sex 'n' drugs 'n' rock 'n' roll story line?

"Partly. Joe was the spokesman, Paul was the good-looking moody one and Mick was the sensitive songwriter. The only role left over was to be the wild one and I found myself creating an image I had to live up to. I always had to be first at the party and last to leave.



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"You go to America almost everybody seems to be doing cocaine. From there, it's a very easy step to heroin."

C L A S H

TOPPER IS one of the lucky ones. A course of acupuncture, coupled with the vital support of family and friends, finally helped him kick the habit. And the timing couldn't be more pertinent. Anti-heroin propaganda is rife and the music press in particular is currently saturated with harrowing images of the physical damage inflicted by the drug.

Topper Headon is wary of aligning himself with the cause. Highlighting the problem may also serve to exacerbate the situation.

"All this publicity worries me. Obviously, if someone asked my advice on taking heroin, I'd say definitely not, but I don't know if it's such a good idea for all these people to come out and shout about it. It's like with the 'skag kids'. That's almost glamorising heroin in a way."

The drug is being replaced by as many interests as can be fitted into a 24 hour day. He's learning to drive and he's also undertaking a course of tap-dancing lessons, but the



Photo: Pennie Smith

● ABOVE AND left—Topper with the Clash in America, heading for rock bottom and a weight of seven stones

musician in the man is still foremost.

He's just released a stomping big-band style single, a cover of a Forties Gene Krupa number. 'Drumming Man' is an appropriate anthem to herald the return of Headon and demonstrates the man's versatility in no uncertain terms.

"I've got something to prove to a lot of people. I was at the top of my profession, doing what I always wanted to do and I blew it."

THE CELEBRATED drum sticks won't be permitted to gather dust, but diversity is definitely the name of the game. He's not seeking to emulate Phil Collins, "he's a fantastic singer anyway", though there's no reason why he shouldn't. He seems to have taken to lyric writing like a fish to water.

"Touch wood, it's like driving. Once you've got the confidence, it clicks."

Something has certainly clicked, and the new material is flooding off the production

line; a captivating melange of jazz, reggae and good ol' rock 'n' roll. Strident brass lines are underpinned with a pulsating drum beat. All highly danceable stuff.

Topper is yet to make the transition to vocalist but, rest assured, he'll be grappling with a microphone in the near future and his mum says he has a lovely voice!

"I'm getting very worried that I'm neglecting my drumming." Lest this should happen, the vocal duties will be shared with a new recruit to the band.

Expect an intriguing LP in the near future.

"It'll be called Topper Headon but we'll be like Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band or Ian Dury and the Blockheads. I don't want to travel in a limo and have the band following in a minibus."

I just wonder if there's a Mr Joe Strummer out there somewhere, gnashing his teeth. After all, busking outside Alarm gigs can't be much fun. Snigger.

■ LESLEY O'TOOLE



Photo: Laura Levine

DETROIT SPINNERS

7" & 12" Single

'LOVE IS IN SEASON'

RE-RELEASED DUE TO PUBLIC DEMAND

12" Also Includes

'COULD IT BE I'M FALLING IN LOVE'



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