



HUXTON CREEPERS·THE CHILLS·DEPRESSION·YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS

# dIStANT VIOlINs

NUMBER ELEVEN

# A Chapter One

NR1

Three green fruit tingles in one end of the packet and one at the other is surely an omen I thought as I loped home with a loaf of white bread in a Safeway bag. The loaf of white bread had caused some comment, especially from Guy who had said, "I bet it's got mould inhibitor in it", as it happened he was right but fate is interesting I thought, if I had not met Guy and Simon down the shops when I went to post some letters & buy Guy's red bike outside the chippie wherein he & Simon were playing the new video game as the daughter of the people who run the chippie looked on critically then I would not have stayed to watch hour earlier... also remember I had to go to Guy's house to get the Julian Cope tape he was meant to give to me when I went to Sydney 2 weeks ago... and now I'm listening to it... it is surely an omen that now I am going to get the letter Martin Phillipps of The Chills sent me out of the brown folder and start to type it out.

"Dear David I just received your questions from Hamish Kilgour-Flying Nun & Great Unwashed so I'll do my best to answer them for you. I've been sort of elected as interviewee so I think I'm speaking on behalf of the whole band. Unfortunately no photos available at present but if you really would like some then I can track some down. I hope you can remember your questions cos I'll just waffle on here in the order of your questions. Actually to make it easier I'll write down your questions too.

1. Where do you think you fit into the NZ "Scene"? This is a very tricky question. There is a definite place for us in N.Z. While we steer clear of straight forward commercialism our music is melodic and simple enough to cross barrier - so we get probably one of the largest and most diverse audiences of any of the so-called underground bands. This has its drawbacks in that some of the underground type purists think we're too poppy but it means that whatever we do it will at least be heard and noticed. We also play live with feeling and most of our critics don't seem to have seen us play live but rather are judging us on our recordings which is not a good idea as we have enough marketing sense to release our best stuff which might sell.

2. Do you think The Chills are a great

band? I think the Chills are potentially a great band but it is potential unrealised after 3 1/2 years due to continual line-up changes + bad luck. A lot of our audience thinks we're great which is nice but I feel they, of course, can't imagine the possibilities like I can. (I'm assuming you've heard our single & the 3 songs on the E.P. released before that) We have come close to great a couple of times the second and closest shot -tered by the death of our drummer Martyn Bull. I alone seem to see what we might be and if we get there there won't be any doubt. We'll be great.

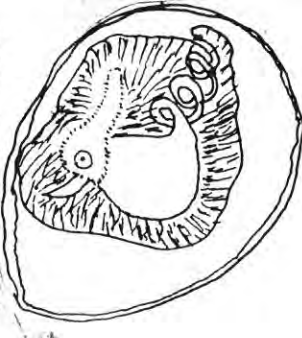
3. How adventurous are you? Not nearly adventurous enough due strangely enough not to lack of imagination but due to time. Each line-up always had to prepare for a deadline and rehearsing old songs and a few new ones has unfortunately always taken priority over experimentation which is generally time consuming. That sounds terrible but it's the truth. On the other hand our range of instruments played live now includes 12 string, slide guitar, accordion and clarinet & we are always surprising people a bit with new stuff. But just not enough. All is not lost though! The present line-up having got over the hurdle of enough songs to play for 2 hours now has time on our hands and new enthusiasm all round (for a change) for really stretching our boundaries. Good will come of this. Mark my words!

4. What's the story behind the break-up/reforming? The Chills has been plagued with problems of line-up more than any other band I know. In 3 1/2 years we've had about 7 major line-up changes and 11 people have gone through the band. Mainly due to disillusionment with all the hard work and bad breaks and never due to personal reasons. And as I mentioned before our second drummer died of leukemia which put us off the road for nearly a year.

5. What do you hate most about being in a band? I hate the people ripping you off whenever they get the chance. I hate the people who say they were a major factor in establishing the band & I hate being treated as shit by a lot of pub owners and by the police and Labour Dept, etc. I hate the band pecking order and being patronised by other bands. (Flamethrower) I hate coming offstage after a bad performance to be told "That was great" It hurts when you realise most of your audience can't tell the difference or is

too pissed anyway. I hate the costs involved. I hate carrying P.A.s around especially up thin stairways. I hate trendy shits in the audience calling out for well known songs or ones you've already played.

6. What has inspired you/does inspire you? I've been inspired by many things. Musically the usual over the years Bowie (for ages but I'm sick of him now) Velvet Underground, Stooges, New York Dolls, Suicide, Sex Pistols (at first) & more recently bands off records like Pebbles & Nuggets and things like that. I'm inspired by anything heartfelt and/or radical in any field. I love painting and reading and writing and long to make movies. It's all part of the same thing really. All tied up. I never deliberately rip things off and this, unfortunately, sets me apart from even some of my closest friends in the business.



7. What do you think of your records so far? Are they representative? Do you like listening to them? The three performances on the Dunedin double E.P. are not bad but reek of being first time in recording situation which they were. Sins especially too contrived. Also they were my first mix and I really ruin them. For those reasons I find them really painful to listen to. All our recordings to date have been a different line-up which makes assessment difficult "Rolling Moon" I still quite like and "Flamethrower" on the B side I really like a lot. "Bite" was a joke which back-fired and now sounds tired & silly. Coming soon is single "Pink Frost" (best thing we've done yet) and B side "Purple Girl" which is an exciting instrumental. I'm pretty sure I won't get sick of these in a hurry. Recorded this month are 5 songs for an E.P. It should be pretty good and out in about 4 months. I think if the first three E.P. tracks

were remixed and "Bite" removed and everything including new stuff stuck on an album one could start to get a pretty good impression of the band but there would be whole areas still not represented like our faster angry stuff.

8. Do you want to live in N.Z. all your life? Would the Chills like to tour outside N.Z.? We live in Dunedin which has a similar relationship to N.Z. that N.Z. has to the rest of the world. Sort of quaint and nice and peaceful but inspiring. There is a lot going on here in all fields and of world quality. It is our home and although it gets dull so long as one travels it's good to come back to. That's Dunedin anyway and I imagine in years to come we'll have the same attitude to N.Z. as a whole. We may be having a short stint in Australia later this year or early next year. I hope so.

9. How large is your turnover of songs? How do you write them? I write about 90% of the band's songs and I've written about a hundred. I believe in reworking songs and updating them rather than letting a good song die but inevitably some lose what made them good in the first place so they get dropped. Flamethrower will not be played again for example. It will be left as a sort of monument to our late drummer. I have patches of writing then long dry spells as I get old (I'm only 20!!) I usually have a cassette full of riffs on piano & guitar & a pocket full of bits of lyrics & ideas on paper + when I can be bothered I look through for good combinations. Of course the best songs just happen words + all in about 10 minutes. Then the band adapts them and makes them better.

Well that's all. I'm not terribly pleased with what I've written but it's the first written one I've done and I can't really imagine how it will turn out. Never mind. Good luck. Thanks again. Hope this will do. Maybe see you some time soon...

And so, I reflect, the first article is typed. The 11th issue of Distant Violins is in production. I look at the clock on the wall, it says: 5 to 8. It's dark outside and now I'm listening to Josef K on the tape recorder. I expect a phone call in about five minutes. I won't get any more typing done in between now and The Twilight Zone. I reflect upon an empty packet which until a few hours ago was full of Raisin Lunch -eon biscuits. Hmmm.

It was a sunny autumn morning late in May when I sat down and decided that I ought to get cracking & type some reviews: some spontaneous and some already given to me by others. "World Shut Your Mouth" was playing behind me again and in the street outside I could see the Scotch College boys ride to school on their bikes, or being driven to school in expensive cars... the mail was not due for at least another 2 1/2 hours and, although I had to go & do the grocery shopping, there was plenty of time for that. Searching around in the brown folder I finally found Paula's Deprogrammers review. It read:

"The Deprogrammers are a New York band, obviously quite well established, as one of the 2 tapes, and the single which were sent to DV, are from 1981. The second tape entitled "Fear of Success" is of more recent vintage- 1983. They are essentially a rock and roll band, with plenty of energy, and quite pleasing to the ear. However, I feel that their full potential has not been reached on any of their recordings, especially the earlier ones- it seems, to me at least, that they would be essentially a live band.

On "Missed Takes", their first tape, we find ten songs, all original, mainly written by vocalist/guitarist/saxophonist Kim Beggs, the others being a combined effort of S. Talley (keyboards)/Carroll. Many of the 10 songs rely heavily on keyboards, which tends to lead the other instruments. However, because of the strong guitar lead-breaks (e.g. on "Watch You Dance") and the Eddie Van Halen-type vocal style of Kim Beggs, the Deprogrammers fall easily into the category of rock and roll, with an 80's sound (whatever that may mean). Best songs are "Answering Service" and "Heart and Soul". Their single Midas Touch/Grim Reaper is much in the same vein as "Missed Takes", having been recorded during the same year- the B side is probably better than the A side.

"Fear of Success", their second tape, shows a great improvement. Two years seems to have softened the Deprogrammers to a certain extent. Guitar riffs are more melodic, and vocals are softer. Their music has become more danceable, and thus probably more accessible. They write pop songs better than rock & roll, and the result is much better. The tape only has 4 songs, including a re-done & greatly improved version of "Dead People", which was on their first tape (I love the saxophone in "Dead People") This is probably their best song, together with a nice ballad called "Coming Back Tonight". It's definitely stuff for the Countdown scene. The Deprogrammers are worth listening to - they don't present any new or astounding ideas, but they aren't bad. I don't know where you'd get any of their tapes/records, but you could try writing to:

Cryptovision records & tapes  
c/o East Village Music  
411 E. 9th St.  
N.Y., N.Y. 10009 USA"

By this stage, having finished typing out Paula's review, I'm listening to the 2nd Joy Division record and it's bringing back memories. Memories of [redacted] critique of Ian Curtis' voice: "I can't stand the way he sings. It's so boring and he does it on purpose" typical of that individual to think that Joy Division formed, played, recorded, released records & so on solely with the intent of boring him. I used to really like that band at the time Closer came out. And then Guy lent me the money to buy Unknown Pleasures... God I was an embarrassing person in those days... anyway what should I be thinking about, not Joy Div records obviously... Aha! Tom Dyer and his cassette album

"Truth or Consequences". This is very odd, mainly I suppose because the first side is so great and the second side is so truly horrible. The other odd thing is that if I didn't know that Tom Dyer is a man who lives in Seattle, Washington, USA then I'd swear that the 1st side was a Melbourne band. That statement leads to complications, doesn't it, what does a Melbourne band sound like? Well at the moment "a Melbourne Band" means a group post-Birthday Party a bit tribal very guitarry (guitarred with the same brush- ho ho) distortion sort of like The Curse or Plays With Marionettes you know Stooges/Beefheart influence & actually, there's a song here called "Van Vliet Street" which I presume refers to Don. I suppose what all this suggests is that my stereotyped Melb. bands & T. Dyer are influenced by the same 60's Americans, still it's amazing. It's great but you know all this stuff is in my blood- yes I lived in St. Kilda until I was 2 and that's the centre for underground rock and roll isn't it. Anyway back to Tom. His tape is an absolute essential, it's got 5 great songs on it & is well worth however much you have to pay for it I have a lot of information here about the tape and Tom but not how much it costs. Unfortunately the 2nd side of Truth or Consequences is dreadful what on earth made this man want to sing synthpop songs it's sort of synthesizer ska poop and truthfully the consequence is I want to spew after listening to it. This is surprisingly not just me trendily toeing the line and dismissing synths and that as soulless etc. and wanting to get back to true grit r'n'r dirty axe sounds and songs about Texas, no, I just think these songs are bad I mean Tom has just sung us this song on side one called "Fuck Off and Die" & now here's some jaunty piece of tripe about "1/2 the world is made of women/They dress in the latest styles/1/2 the world is made of women/Men can follow them for miles" he's singing like he's dressed up in formal attire at some buck's party or something it's horrible. I don't know why I'm still listening to it. See this is the sort of thing that shits me so much, this absolute bullshit about the return of the guitar which actually does make me very angry, now it's a cool thing to be like some sort of 60's garage band, you know 2 years ago people were slagging off America as the musical desert of the western world and there was England the shining beacon of progressive music. Now somehow things have changed round and everybody wants to thrill to the music of the swamp or some thing, pretend they've always looked up to Nick Cave etc. and the Violent Femmes can play Inflation (Melb. disco). Don't get me wrong though... I actually think the prevalent guitar rock trend is a lot more interesting than funky synths but that doesn't mean I'm going to throw out all of my Human League records & replace them with Pebbles, or whatever, it's just that sort of pretentiousness I object to. Not the bands but the audiences, or the people who dictate trends & the people who let themselves be dictated to, the morons. Ah well. It's not that important I don't suppose. I'm not listening to Tom Dyer any more, well actually I am, I'm listening to a song by his band The Icons on a Seattle compilation called "Local Product" which is excellent, a fantastic contrast of bands, worth buying just for Bob Blackburn's "Sirius Is" which is magnificent. Then there is Sherrie & the Mudmen's "Thin Line" which is a pretty cool number... The only thing I don't particularly like on this collection is The Cosmic Tunas, their song sounds like Ol' 55, really stainless 50's doo wop crap but look here you're a fool if you don't write to Green Monkey records P.O.Box 31983,



Seattle, Washington, 98103 USA because believe you me there is a lot of excellent music here you ought to be listening to. I was going to launch into a diatribe about here about how people are unadventurous but then I figured one diatribe per column is probably enough- the point is simply that if you don't investigate this stuff it's your loss, not mine or theirs. Hmph.

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**B** Chapter 3

A month later, siezed by inspiration, I found a bit of a

irrelevant but humorous  
SAINTS  
with TRACY PEW (ex-XXXX Party) Open 5-12  
283 Swan St. Richmond 428 1480

Depression interview that Janine originally typed up, laid out for DVD (but it didn't fit) and decided to forge on with it. Here's the first part. Done by Gavran Purdy.

- \* How long has Depression been together?
- D: The band's been together about a year and a half in the line-up it is now.
- \* What do you mean by the line-up you've got now?
- S: Well, the band was originally formed by a few other people, and a few members left & reformed over, say, about a period of six months. The band went through a lot of changes and it's been together about a year and a half. This is about the most stable line-up.
- \* Have you guys come through since the original line-up?
- S: Um, Laddy's the only original member left at the moment ... and Spike was in the band in the early stages too. So they're probably the two longest staying members in the band.
- \* Why did you want to form a band?
- D: I don't know. I guess we just got bored and got together, and got a few instruments... started mucking around ... and fiddling around on acoustic guitars & that. And then basically we had another guy called Jonny Feedback met Smear & Spike in the city in a record shop. That's how we got to know them.
- S: And the Spike joined the band and I joined later on. I'd been in a couple of bands before but I'd left them and wasn't doing anything for about 2 or 3 years.
- \* I'd say 1983 was a really bad year, I thought, in Melbourne even for bands who had singles out & stuff, like that. .. Getting gigs and things. How was it been for you?
- D: I thought it was pretty good overall.
- S: It was good because we got a bit of a lucky break when we started to play at John Harleycorn Hotel in Collingwood. We managed to get a resident night there every Thursday.
- D: They're quite supportive of the whole punk thing.
- S: Yeah, they were really good there. They started to put gigs on on Sunday nights as well, so there was a lot going on around for us. But the whole live Punk scene wasn't as big then as maybe now.
- \* Do you think the punk audience, or the people who follow the Punk thing is still growing?
- S: Yeah, I think it is.
- D: We get a lot of new people coming to our gigs now. You can really notice it each week, you know. But most times it's getting to be a really mixed audience now which is really good, you know. I think because the music is taking a more positive form, it's attracting more people. As long as people are aware that there's no barrier that they have to look like any particular thing. I think that's the main barrier there is between people & Punks. And, Ah, also I think it's been misrepresented a lot too, you know, through newspapers & stuff like that.
- \* When I was saying 1983 was a bad year for local bands... Haren Scarem had to put on their own night. It was the only way they could get a gig... Like last weekend at the Prince of Wales hotel. Do you find that there's any promoters who are willing to give you a gig or do you have to put on your own nights?
- S: We sort of ended up putting on our own nights too in a way, didn't we.

- D: Yeah. Most of the nights we put on we put on ourselves.
- S: We organised the bands to play there & stuff like that. And the guy just sort of said to us 'You just organise what you want to do.'
- D: I think that's the only alternative you can look for when there's no other venues to play in. We've even thought of trying to hire halls and throwing gigs like that. There was a few gigs like that earlier on where a whole lot of bands just went and played there, and anyone could just get in for free. We had a free night not long ago down at the Empress of India Hotel and that was really packed. It was a great night down there. That's another gig too that we've organised. I think that's the main thing we've got to do. That's why I'm so interested in what got me into the Punk scene originally - because it was an alternative from the mainstream way you could approach music. Like the mainstream way is get a demo tape & go around... do all that, but people are more on a personal level in the Punk scene. There's not that sort of thing where, you know... You go & ring up their manager and see if you can get this band to play for this much money a night... The Punk bands are more into the lifestyle too, and not just to be a band. Well that's what we are, anyway. I think definitely the only way for a lot of bands to survive is to put on their own venues. That's what we had to do... Except the (Seaview) ballroom. They had earlier Punk venues when the Zorros and bands like that were around. They started to see there was a bit of a following starting to build up again in the 'Harleycorn' and they offered us a go. But then again, they left it up to us to organise the bands there as well. Now we're running the whole ballroom thing ourselves too.
- \* You've got regular gigs coming up there now?
- S: Yeah, well it's every Wednesday night and some Friday nights as well now. What we're trying to do is try to get a really cheap venue on a weekend, because a lot of people do go to school a work, and it's hard for them to get to gigs of a weekday.
- \* Are there any mainstream bands, or non punk bands that you think are doing anything worthwhile?
- S: Ah, Midnight Oil. They started off doing their own type of gigs too at first. They were shunned at first by a lot of people... who else?... There's not really many other bands in Australia that we're interested in at all. There are other Punk bands in the scene that we know of like Civil Dissident, End result... The Bodys are a really good band and they've got no particular image at all... They haven't got Mohicans or anything like that. But the style of music they play is very protest Punk type music... I Spit on your Gravy; they're a sort of, like, fun type Punk band and they're pretty good too. In the mainstream there's not many bands here that interest us at all, really. Except for Midnight Oil... they're a pretty good band. I think lyrically they're very constructive.
- \* Can you see the Punk thing building?
- S: I can see it happening now, because in that magazine Maximum Rock N Roll there's so many Punk bands, not just in America, but all over the world. In Spain, Brazil ... and in Bloody Poland. Um, heaps of places. You wouldn't dream of half the

- places. Italy, you know. Bands from all over the world. And I think it's because Punks' a positive movement now.. it's a whole sort of attitude. It's not like you get dressed up to protest about something simple. It's a protest against the arms build up and all sorts of things like that... Which not only involve Punks, but everybody. And the PND. A lot of Punks are involved in the PND movement as well. And I think they've got a lot in common with a lot of people who are concerned with the preservation of life on Earth.
- S: I think because it's become, over the years, a lot more positive movement than when it first started out, and I think a lot of people can be involved in the issues that we sing about; not just Punks and that. And there's no sort of pressure for anybody to look Punk or have a certain haircut or anything like that. We've never said that to anybody. That's our sort of idea of Punk anyway. If you've got the sort of attitude that your willing to accept all sorts of people no matter what they look like then I think the scene will get bigger. ... It seems to be happening that way now, anyway.
- \* Do you think that, like, there is sort of this definite image of the ... I don't know what they call them... the positive Punks or the hardcores or whatever. Do you feel any sort of barrier between the straighter people who might sort of....
- S: No, I don't personally but I think a lot of the straighter looking people feel a barrier between other people who are more radical looking. They think they've got to try & be like that to be in to it. But there's no pressure at all for anybody to do anything they don't want to do. So I think there's a lot of resentment between a lot of the straighter looking people in the Punk scene towards more radical people. I don't know.
- \* Are there any sort of particular reactions that you get from audiences that don't like it, or people who don't like it just because of the way you look?
- S: Oh, there's been a bit of stuff said in the Punk scene it's self about things like that, but... um, well I think they're just carriers people create in their own mind anyway. You know, we've never sort of created barriers like that.
- D: If people know us they probably wouldn't put up these barriers. If they bothered to come up and talk to us and get to know us and stuff, instead of standing back and freaking out.
- \* How large do you think the punk audience is in Melbourne. How many people do you get along to when you play?
- D: Well, on a good night we can get up to 200 people I reckon, but then most of the people wouldn't be hardcores Punks with mohicans or anything like that. There may be 20 or 30 people like that altogether.

CONT  
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\* ABOUT ABOUT YOUR OWN SONGS... HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT WRITING THEM?

L: Smear & Spike write most of the songs.  
 S: Um, at the moment... and Danny & Liddy have written a couple too.  
 L: We mostly work out the verses with the whole band, but I think 2 members work out the words.  
 S: Some of the songs like Money Chain, World Leaders & Big Business were written before I joined Depression because at that time I was trying to get another band going, so I started writing material anyway, we were just looking through some song lyrics & found that they suited what we were doing now. But it could vary. Like Spike might come & bring a song along and we might get a riff happening on the spur of the moment to fit that song, or we might already have some riff that these lyrics fit.  
 L: Money Chain is a song out on your new single. Tell us a bit about that... how it came about.  
 S: The song?  
 L: Oh, the single.  
 S: Um, the single came about when Phil Mobergall approached me one night at a gig and said that he was thinking about starting up a label, and was interested in our band. So he came over & met us all & that.  
 L: And freaked out!  
 S: Yeah, he was freaking out, Ieah. putting up the money to do a record, and we didn't have enough money to do it anyway, so that's how it came about basically.  
 L: But how long did it take us to do it?  
 S: About nine months or something (laughs)  
 S: But, um, when we went back to the studio the second time, the guy who had been mixing there had died, so we had a lot of hassles trying to get back the master tape. It was really strange. I saw a special on him on TV yesterday.  
 L: And then we mixed it down at Melbourne Uni and it took a long time to get it pressed. It was over the Christmas period so it took a while to come out. It's doing quite well. Picking up a lot of airplay on PRR FM and RRR FM.  
 \* What do you think of the single looking back on it?  
 S: I think it was a bit rushed. Due to pressures.. um, due to the said label.  
 L: Time is money.  
 S: Yeah. So, looking back on it we did two guitar tracks on it originally but we've been back in another studio and we only did one track ... like

when we played live... and we're much happier with that sound. That's about the best sound we've got so far.  
 Yeah. Um. The single was a bit rushed when recorded but I think overall, for a first effort I was pretty happy with it. Y'know... we've been back in the studio since

it. Y'know... we've been back in the studio since and got a better sound that we're more happy with.

\* What about other recordings?  
 L: Um. Well we're not too sure. We've been talking about doing a mini album but we're, um, seeing how this single goes in the end... and we'll see if it ends up selling out. Initially 500 copies were pressed.

S: Yeah. We might be distributing it in America too soon, hopefully.  
 L: Yeah, we might be doing another run of, say, 250 or 500 for overseas distribution.

Celibate Rifles/Huxton Creepers/Gas Babies: Seaview Ballroom 2/6/84

Guitars were the key word at the Sea-view Ballroom on Saturday. No wimpy electronic drums and synthesizers here. A good guitar/bass/drums sound from 2 local & 1 not-so-local bands.

Of course I arrived late- I always forget that 3 bands means an early start. The Gas Babies had already begun their set when I got there, much to my disappointment. I mean, they were great, & I'm very sorry that I missed their 1st few songs. It was a case of the Paisley Shirt revival. They were a real psychadelic band who performed a series of cover versions, including "Psychotic Reaction" (of course) "Fire" and all those tracks from the late 60's that you've heard & know, but can't remember the names of. The drummer, who was definitely the most energetic & visually exciting member of the band, & one of the guitarists (who also played some bass) had obviously been caught in a time warp and had just arrived back from 1967. The crowd loved them: boys danced in their paisleys, stovepipe trousers and dark glasses, and little black, pointy-toed witches bopped. It was a pity that the Gas Babies didn't do an encore, as it would have been appreciated by all.

The pace of the evening digressed somewhat after the Gas Babies- even though I know that most of those present will disagree with me. The Huxton Creepers were much in the same vein as the former band, except that they did their own compositions, most of which had a fairly strong 60's & early 70's influence and a medley of covers. (including "Louie"

"Louie" would you believe) I'm not quite sure what made the Huxton Creepers not very appealing to me- maybe it was their numerous fans, who seemed to all be violent dancers and kept on bumping into me and spilling the contents of their glasses on my feet & legs, or perhaps it was the blonde-haired lead singer, who looked like he belonged on a Rip-Curl surf-board & acted like he was the best thing to have ever graced the stage at the Ballroom. But they did have some good points- their songs were danceable, very easy to listen to (that's not a good point- ed.) and had a general feeling of fun. These people were obviously enjoying themselves, and wanted everyone in the audience to do the same. And they did, so much so that they demanded an encore, & got it.

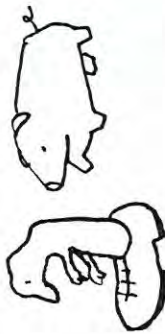
I didn't know what to expect with the Sydney band Celibate Rifles. I had heard some of their records, and knew that they were essentially guitars, guitars & more guitars. But I had underestimated them. They delivered a series of high-energy, fast & almost headbanging songs in quick succession, leaving you quite breathless and speechless. The only songs I remember clearly were one about snorting cocaine or something, and a very loud version of "Waiting for My Man. I left about 1/2 way through the set. It wasn't that I didn't like them, but 1/2 an hour of them was quite enough. All the paisley shirts had disappeared too, and the mohawks emerged to replace them. And the crowd seemed to have diminished- from this I can only assume that the Huxton Creepers have a large number of steadfast followers, most of whom retreated into a far corner of the Ballroom when the Rifles graced the stage. The person I was with remarked that the feedback between the songs was the best thing about the Celibate Rifles. I didn't agree- they had some good songs, & others not so good, but that's to be expected.

An enjoyable night. Worth the \$5 admission, worth missing "Hey Hey It's Saturday Night"- worth going to St. Kilda for. Oh and thanks to the guy who spilt beer down the entire length of my back. Thanks for wiping it off with your elbow.

-Paula Bacchia

Well what do you think of this issue so far? It's pretty slow going, let me tell you. Unfort-unately this is not an especially

inspiring issue for me to put together. The material's all pretty old, although I still think it's interesting of course, but there's no deadline or promise of reward in this business so you need motivation. Don't get me wrong, I think this is a good DV it's just not much fun putting it together. I'm watching Bugs Bunny at the moment - it's one of those cartoons about the woff and the sheep-dog. Anyway, I think I'll finish up this page with some pictures from my sketchbook.



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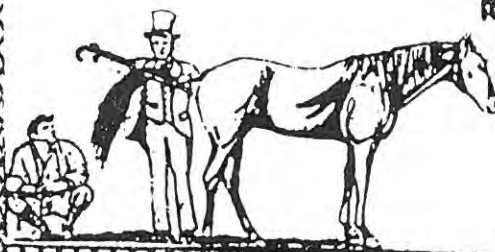
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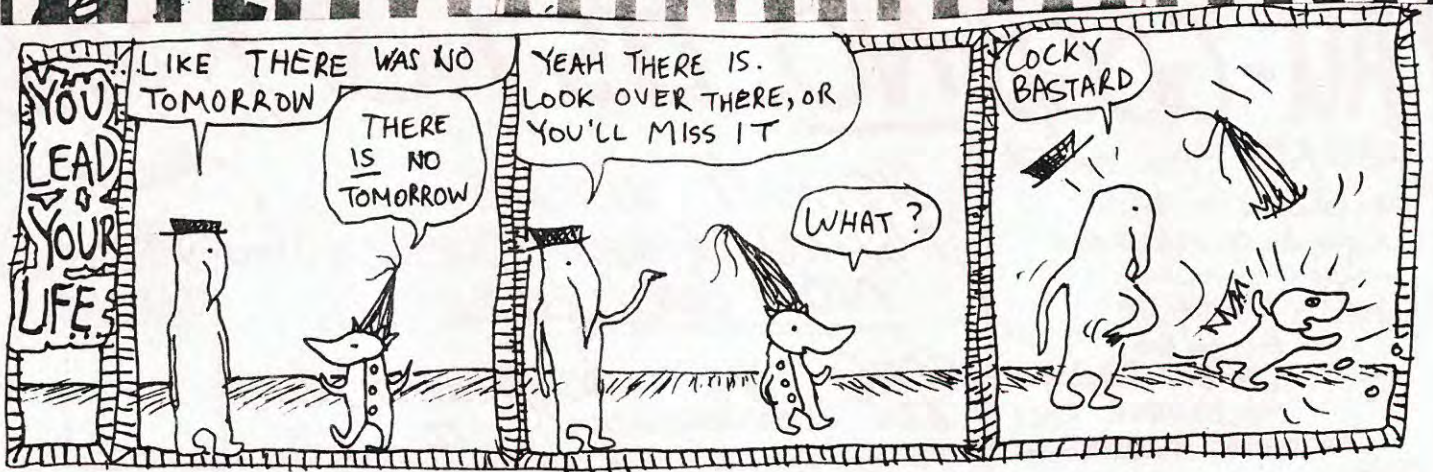
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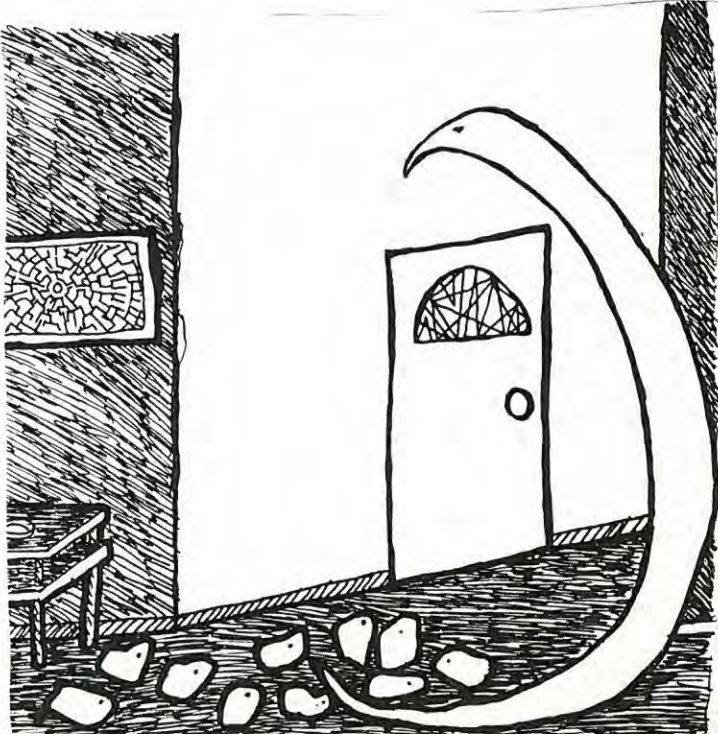
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Melbourne-30, Sydney-40, Hobart-10, Perth-10, Brisbane-10, Adelaide-10, London-10... that's DV's immense distribution! That's out of a print run of 150, I must give the others away for nothing... a bad habit of mine. So how are you enjoying the magazine so far? Do you like it? Write and tell me when you've finished. Tell me what you learned. I don't remember what's on the previous pages, & they're not here for me to check up, they've already been printed. Interesting isn't it? All the pages prior to this one were already in existence when this one was just being typed. By the way it's 22/6/84 as I type, about 6:30- dark outside. Only one fifth of my readership is Melburnian, so I'll tell you a bit about this part of the world- well- it gets dark about 5:30 at this time of the year here. At the moment we're having power restrictions, that means the tv doesn't come on til 4 and finishes at 11, that means no repeat of Rock Around the World tonight- the one time I actually would've stayed up to see it, to see Alsy being talked to by Basia & also the Spanish Blue & Bad Timing videos (the big buzz around Triffids follows this week- was that really Jill in that split-second shot in the BT film clip- or not?) There's going to be an interview with Jill in the next DV by the way it'll be really interesting too. Anyway I was telling you about Melbourne, well. Everyone in Melbourne goes round in a state of embarrassment because the town was founded by somebody called Batman. Who had syphilis (I figured if I spelt it wrong he couldn't sue me) Ho hum. I'm listening to a tape of The Triffids' PBS live-to-air. Nobody wants them to go overseas. Maybe we ought to make a petition or something. Why does everyone get so emotional about the Triffids? It's fucking pathetic. Ah well, look on the bright side, their new records out in 2 days (by the time you read this, it will probably have been out for a while) and it will be beautiful. Oh, and there's a new Fall single out, it's called Oh Brother and I must say I haven't fully rationalized it yet. You see there are two spheres to my tiny mind, and one is pop and the other is discord. I think most Fall songs appeal to the latter but this one might be being processed by the former... it's a bouncy little tune, could almost be a parody but Mark Smith is... well, he has cushioned himself so well against any criticism. I have not read a critique of The Fall that I can't imagine Mark being able to handle. So what is Oh Brother about, I haven't a clue, I think he (MES) has been mixed ~~as~~ damn can't find the liquid paper. has been mixed out of the mix. So its even more indecipherable than usual. And, oh dear, a 12" mix on the b-side (of the 12"). H'mm. However dear children, let us always bear in mind: The Fall, like The Moodists or The Triffids & so on, can do no wrong. Interesting that none of my favourite bands can do any wrong. Anyway, buy this- it's on Gary Numan's old record label it's perfect. It's a Fall record. The only thing that stops the Fall being the best band on earth is that they are absolutely incom-

-arable to all other bands, UK, US, Aust, past, pres., future... this hasn't always been a fanzine you know! One day I sold my soul... I'm not that much of a wimpy fan, am I? Probably... how awful for me. Once Robert Oertel went to London and then he did an interview with Stuart Moxham, then of Young Marble Giants. (1980.) R: Have you heard any Australian bands? S: AC/DC. I've never really heard them actually. I heard the other day that they've got an anthem, & the chords are actually a,c,d & c which I thought was a nice little conceit. No my view of Australia I'm afraid is the one given by Barry Humphries, you know people with corks on their hats being incredible chauvinists and all that. But I've got an open mind. R: Perhaps we could have a small potted history of the Young Marble Giants just to start off with. S: OK, a very small pot. OK. We started off exactly 2 years ago. Started off in November 78. Made our first record for Rough Trade in Nov. 79 and split up in Nov. 1980. We had a very strong idea of what we wanted to do, and Rough Trade, particularly Geoff Travis, saw that we had a really strong idea and just let us do what we wanted to do. The idea was realised and there was no sense in carrying on, even though it was very tempting. R: You made 1 album & 1 single. S: Yeah it was a 4 track, or 3 1/2 track, and at the same time, about a year ago, I started thinking in terms of what I was going to do next. & I got the idea of trying to do this very free thing, which is called the Gist, which is... I act as a sort of producer in control of various artists...

R: It's a very fluid type of er... S: Yeah. Very. I mean I want to get back into doing tours and things. R: Did the Young Marble Giants tour at all? S: Yeah, sure. We spent about 4 months, altogether. Actually touring America, Europe & Britain. It's a drug. R: As a joke, did you say? S: No, it's a drug. I didn't realise until we stopped playing, I was really having withdrawal from touring. R: The thing that struck me about your album was the production on it was quite strange, really. S: How do you mean the production. I thought the actual production was terrible but I don't think I mean the same thing as you. R: I thought it was a very unusual production. S: You mean the fact that it's very empty. R: Very empty, the bass was very thumpy and it... especially if you listen to it on a good stereo... what instrument did you play? S: Organ & guitar. & I sort of wrote everything except the bass, the words & the melodies I wrote. My brother Phil plays the bass, he's a very good bassist. An unusual guitar, it's an English guitar, called a Hayman (?) they don't exist anymore. R: It really had a very bottom-end feel to it. & at the same time that was sort of counterpointed by a very fluidy melodic organ & a very distinctive vocal style. S: I'm surprised that you think it's very bassy because he's not at all interested in having a bass level in the sound that you mix. That track, um... Choci Loni, people think that it's a guitar but it's actually a bass playing the main melody, the main rhythm. Things like that (mumble) R: Uh huh. Does that mean anything, Choci Loni? S: Er- well you know how we have family words, which are unintelligible to people outside- it's just like words like that. R: So you & your brother had... S: Yeah. R: Who produced it? S: We did. It was kind of very much a package. It took us 3 1/2 days to do the LP because we knew exactly what we wanted to do. Every aspect of that record- apart from the fact of coming to terms with the recording studio, because we'd never been in one. I mean every gig was playing exactly the same notes every time. Totally unspontaneous, in fact it was a regime - the whole structure was very rigid. R: Did you rehearse at all before you did the album? S: No- I'd write a song in about 1/2 an hour. And then we'd rehearse it so it was sort of fluent. But we'd never rehearse before gigs. We just knew it. I mean the thing is, because it's my brother, we have a sort of musical empathy. Everything was very deliberate, you know the fact that there were 3 people, no drummer, all very chosen, controlled. Which is a shame I wish I could write things that were very instant, ragged, excited & raw, but I can't do it. R: So, Stuart's gone from the rigidity of the Young



Marble Giants to something which sounds like the antithesis, completely.

S: Well it is. I suppose I'm overreacting but I suppose it's safer this way. I was thinking yesterday the name The Gist, you know, I felt that in a lot of ways I didn't quite get recognition for what I'd done in YMG, it was mainly because I didn't sing my own words and when I thought about making a group & I chose the name The Gist it was sort of selected from my subconscious. I just liked the word, but I didn't really realise the connotation.

R: How did the American tour come about? (For YMG)

S: Well Rough Trade set up in San Francisco, they bought an office there & a shop. And so it became possible for Rough Trade to do tours. And we were going to split up before that, but it was just literally because we wanted to go to America that we went R: God, you sound mercenary!

S: Well, what would you do?

R: No, it's just: "We were going to split up before we went anyway, no matter what"

S: Well we were going to split up before we even made our LP-it was the balance between self-destruction & trying to achieve a basic aim of getting off the dole R: Would nothing have stopped you splitting up?

S: Well there's also very personal things. But also I don't think we could've made any more records, because all the music of the Young Marble Giants was made under very, very defined circumstances... in Cardiff, unemployed, from despair & things like that that was the stimulus and I don't think we could've carried on. Once we'd actually recorded that music, there's a sort of 2nd album syndrome.

After this the conversation turns to a discussion of Stewart Copeland which I won't trouble you with. Hm that interview is 4 years old what has happened to S. Moxham? I really liked the Young Marble Giants I still enjoy that album.

By the way what I wrote about The Fall's new single on the other page was a lot of crap. I should not be so eager to accept all the time. I still like the record though.

**hard. We're all in this for the good of** ← **I love RAM. This is rock'n'roll. OK?** **What their new editor thinks**

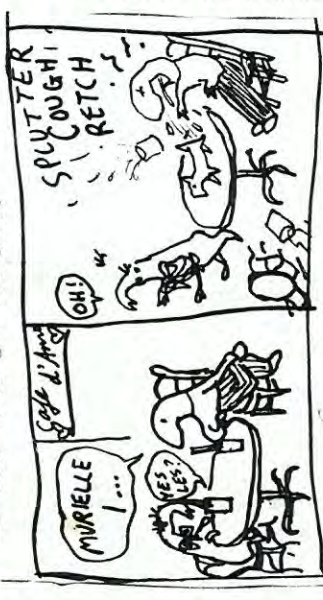
Anyway where were we. I have a bit of a headache now. I must've listened to Avalanche of Love by Grooveyard about 20 times today. I don't know anyone else who likes it (no, sorry, I know 1 person who likes it besides me) and everyone else thinks it's a letdown but I think it's magnificent. It just strikes a nerve somewhere... I have not become so obsessed with a record for years. Ah me well I daresay it'll pass by tomorrow. It is a 4 to 6 now, in the evening, 25/6/84 or if you're American, 6/25/84 I hope all you American people realise that just looks silly. And while I have your attention Americans please vote against Reagan. Probably about 10 Americans will

read this. That might just be enough. I have 2 little incarnations of myself on either side of my head, one is a demon & one is an angel and the demon is whispering, "Go on, keep on typing whatever goes into your head, it's fun, that's what life is all about" and the angel is saying, "No David start typing the Huxton Creepers interview, you're just indulging yourself and you know what that leads to"

-What will David pick?

-Will he go the righteous way?

-Or will he persist on the perverse course he is on now? We'll be right back after this small cartoon that never got finished.



OK I choose to walk the path of righteousness.

But first, I'm going to watch Rock Around the World. Don't worry, I'll be okay, I haven't had dinner yet. Later: well that was pretty nauseating. Anyway, on the 18th of April I interviewed Arch from the Huxton Creepers & this is the outcome. By the way just this week in the same Ram as mentioned previously Mr. A. McMillan has written of The Huxton Creepers; "they have, you see, this unavoidable tendency to kick arse". Arch is the HC's drummer and he lives in Hawthorn, like I do, with his family, as I do with mine. Not that that is especially important I'm just putting off the moment when I have to get down to the tedious business of transcribing this tape. Oh well. Here goes:

Everything on the tape is an incoherent mess until I hear Arch say: When we first started we were a shambles, people would say we were shit-house. It took a while to tighten things up. I don't think we were getting anywhere musically until probably February. Now it's getting... a lot more confidence. Like if someone breaks a string or something, someone can cover it, where as before, you'd do something like that & every one'd just fall in a heap, & it'd stuff up the rest of the set.

D: What were you doing before you started playing publicly-were you playing parties, things like that?

A: Yeah, we'd do that. When we started it was just me, Paul & Rob just mucking around in November '82. Just picking out songs, learning how to play them. We played a party in June, just Rob's brothers 21st. Did another one too somewhere. Then the gut from the Venetian Room, he rang us up, & he just said I've got a spare spot do you want that, so we took that, and he had us back because we brought about 40 friends which was pretty good for a Wednesday night, then we had about a month when no-one would give us anything... well once these guys started managing us... they're getting us a lot of work at the moment, & we're getting a bit of money as well...

D: Are you going to have a record out soon?

A: Yeah well there's a few record labels interested apparently. But um... we're just trying to size it up at the moment there's a few Sydney labels...

D: Do you think that's a good idea putting out a record now, when you couldn't quite be sure that you'll still be so popular in the near future? (For the uninitiated, Huxton Creepers really were flavour of the month at this time)

A: Yeah I... I think we've got to go for it, I don't believe in the old adage... that you've got to play round for a year and a 1/2 before you put a record out. I mean there's all those Sydney bands, they put out records without playing live at all. We've got that push behind us- if the song's good enough.

D: Huxton Creepers have been held up as "The Return of the guitar" I was thinking that might be a bad way to start off.

A: Yeah there's been a fair bit of publicity I suppose I don't think it affects us, you're coming up with the goods, you're not letting it affect you, we're pretty level-headed like that.

"The return of the guitar" I mean- I think a lot of people were saying the return of the guitar at something like The Smiths and REM, we're pretty different from them. It's just 4 guys having fun, playing stuff that people like.

D: Does that mean you don't see it as really long term?

A: Oh, no, we see it as a long term thing but I still think you can have fun while you're serious... I think if you can keep the fun in it, I mean we can have fun but we're not mucking around musically, like we're still playing as best as we can. Like I'd prefer to see a band having lots of fun rather than just standing there.

D: Especially in Melbourne.

A: Yeah exactly.

D: Do you always enjoy yourself?

A: Yeah, it depends a lot on the crowd... depends on the mood you're in too... we've just been playing and it gets a bit depressing when people

le just sit there.

D: What did you think of Monash on Tuesday?

A: Yeah, that was alright, we didn't play very well. But I think it went down alright I'm not sure. It's a bit hard to gauge reaction at a uni.

D: Everyone was just sitting there except for Julian Wu.

A: Yeah (laughs) geez that was funny... yeah people were clapping at the end, at least they were showing some reaction.

D: (At a uni) you're playing to people who are supposed to be more intelligent than the average.

A: That's a bit of a holdback, intelligence... that's a bit of a generalisation but a lot of people I know who are intellectuals sort of just sit back & watch.

Rob & Paul are writing a lot of good stuff at the moment, we'll be able to get rid of a lot of the old stuff like the Radio Birdman songs.

D: You've made a demo tape haven't you?

A: Yeah we've got a demo tape and a song called King of the Road on the Au Go Go compilation, and we've made a couple of demos mainly to get work

I've seen the Huxton Creepers 2 and one-tenth times and I have a rather ambivalent attitude towards them which is mainly my fault, and mainly because they seem so much destined for success. I can go and see them now and enjoy them but their following is going to grow, they're going to become popular: I'll buy their first few records and then tire of them. I am not against a band becoming popular, I'm not elitist: but when a group like the Huxton Creepers emerges - well, I've seen this sort of progress before, and artistically it doesn't often turn out well. I could be wrong and I hope I am but I have been told that when the Huxton Creepers did their 3RRR live-to-air there were a whole lot of record co. reps hanging around saying: "great revival band" &c. which isn't a good omen. Well it's probably better if I keep my predictions to myself, maybe the band does have enough sense to stay with its aims intact. We can only wait & see. Anyway back to this interview:

D: Do you get along well?

A: Very well. I mean we're always together anyway. Sort of like - we'd see each other all the time if it wasn't for the band. We've all known each other for about 8 years.

D: How did you get to know each other?

A: At school

D: What school?

A: (Names a school but doesn't want it printed, I wouldn't either)

D: Maybe if you were touring or something you'd get sick of each other.

A: I doubt it, we did 2 weeks rehearsal here, lived with each other for 2 weeks - we had a bit of friction at one stage, sort of shouting at each other but that was just one argument.

\*That's about the end of the tape really. I am not sorry, it's been a real strain on the ears trying to decipher it. Never mind. If you can, I would advise you to see the Huxton Creepers as much as you can. Otherwise get hold of the 48 Crash cassette with them on it - it's a really

good tape in the 1st place & also has The Murder - ess by HC on it. Yeah well I feel a bit drowsy now but anyway there are a few more things I have to mention before I die. One is the Sons In Jeopardy single, "Ritual" which you can get via Offbeat mail order check out the ad. This is a pretty neat record, well I enjoy it & that's in spite of myself. They have apparently been together only a bit more than a year and well I can see a lot of scope for improvement still they have done rather well with "Ritual". I think the name of the band & record is a pretty fair indication of the sort of music involved. Oh I know I'm going to forget everything I ought to mention maybe I should simply leave it all til next issue whenever that should emerge. Things you should have now: The Moodists LP, The Triffids mini-LP, Orange Juice's "What Presence" single (their best record in ages) Celibate Rifles LP (I haven't got it yet) apparently the Lighthouse Keepers have got a record coming out soon - that's something to lose sleep over... TinyTown are making a new sing

-le soon... Nikki Sudden's LP "Jacobites" sounds like it'd be superb but not 1 copy has survived the swim to Australia. There's more, I know there is, but I'm exhausted. Michael Van Vliet wrote me

a review of the Nick Cave LP but he spent so much time on it I guess he got sick of writing about it, anyway he gave me what he's done & it sort of goes like this: Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds From Her to Eternity; a song by song appraisal.

Avalanche: this song drags, it was a mistake, doing a Leonard Cohen song. The only thing Nick Cave and Leonard Cohen have in common is self-obsession, therefore the song doesn't work.

Cabin Fever: Vintage Birthday Party; nothing new really (the moaning backing guitar is nothing but annoying. Begins with shit Mervyn Peake lyrics. Almost as boring as "Deep in the Woods" Cave gets into nigger/railroad worker type music here. Seems to be the one the radio's picked up on though (not that they'd know)

From Her To Eternity: Best song on the album. A great pop song, in the classic sense. The sense of urgency in this tale of unrequited love are incredibly intense. The lyrics speak for themselves; "Ah wanna tell you 'bout a girl, You know she lives in Rm. 29... Why that's the one right on top of mine!!" and ending with "The desire to possess her is a hound, it's nagging at me like a shrew, but I know that to possess her is, therefore, not to desire her" may sound sexist to some, but considering Nick Cave's nihilist -ic view of humanity it's quite devastating.

Saint Huck: Just love the start; one is misled by the (peaceful) flute the "Ach-Tung" does snock, & that's what he's on about really I s'pose. Nick Cave's voice in the first few lines "Born of the river, born of the never-changing, ever-changing river" is reminiscent of Talking Heads, but that's 'bout all that is. Cave sets Huck in a contemporary setting; Huckleberry Finn corrupted by the cities; the analogy between Huckleberry & Elvis being an example of this. Cave just uses Huck as an extension of "The Outsider" (See C. Wilson's book) qualities of his own enormous ego as in

"Sonny's Burning", "Dead Joe", and even as early as "Figure of Fun" from Prayers on Fire.

Wings off Flies "She loves me, she loves me not" Corny correlation to King Lear - "As flies to wanton boys, are we to th' gods/They kill us for their sport" Juvenile 'in this song, I'll bare my soul' type song. - "Listen, I plead guilty to misanthropy/So hang me, I'd appreciate it!!" A bit obvious, really!

Box For Black Paul: Perhaps the most subconscious -ly powerful song on the album. Performed on the Nick Cave: Man or Myth (aka Elvis, Las Vegas phase) Tour with the single accompaniment of Mick Harvey on piano. Written in the same vein as "Who Killed Cock Robin?" Ostensibly about a fictitious dead rock 'n' roll hero but really just a means of ensuring his immortality as a Rock legend. Nick Cave's version of Black Paul's song from beyond the grave is brilliant. Sounds like Eddie Cochran at his peak. Lyrics show Nick as close to honesty as is possible in his writing.

"Well, ah had a girl she was so sweet  
Red dress, & long red hair hanging down  
And heaven jes ain't heaven  
Without that lil gal hanging around  
Well ya know I've been a bad-man  
and Lord knows I've done some good things too  
But ah confess, my soul will never rest,  
Until you, until you build  
Until ya build a box for my gal, too"

This is not "one of the greatest rock 'n' roll albums ever made" as some guy in NME put it, From Her To Eternity is worth buying (if you can't get a tape) if you think 3 'great' songs are worth buying a 7-track album for.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Ah well everybody it's a 1/2 past 10 now & I'm going to bed. Goodnight. See you next DV

yours

David Nichols

26/6/84

P.S. don't forget to contribute, Critic's &c.

Cover by Nikki