

BRUM BEAT

THE MUSIC MAG OF THE MIDLANDS

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AND
WHY
NOT?

IMPATIENT
FOR THE
BIG TIME

● CENTRE
PAGES

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EVERY WHICH WAY BUT ROOTS

Some months I just sit here watching this damned flashing black n' green screen (for what seems like an eternity), wondering what alternative crap I can shoot you this month. If after eighteen months, you don't know where my musical head and heart lies, then you must be the average Brummie. Legion (or is that lesion) are they in number.

Seems like this month's forecast is a hive of activity mid-period, wedged between two further helpings of thin and deserted days.

ARTHUR WOOD

Van Morrison visits the area twice during October. With his brand of Celtic entertainment and reparation, you can catch 'the man' at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on Sunday 1st, and at Birmingham's Hippodrome precisely two weeks later. Considering the recent avalanche of CD/album reissues by Polydor, plus his newie 'Avalon Sunset', Van's banker should be a happy person these days. His orchestra on this tour is

a refretted edition of Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames. Yeh yeh - almost caught the spirit of enthusiasm there.

In fact, between the foregoing Wolverhampton venue and the smaller Wulfrun Hall, there are some tasty gigs in prospect in the next couple of months. Folkies of the sixties and seventies can unite (and hold hands), while listening to Roy Harper and Loudon Wainwright III at the Wulfrun, on the 13th and 14th respectively. Look out for Loudon's new Silverstone album, 'Therapy' - from time to time, we all need some. The Awareness label have reissued Harper's 1974 Harvest album, 'Valentine'. Closing out the month in the north west, The Blues Band play the Civic Hall on Saturday 28th. Gordon Giltrap opens November's account at the Wulfrun, on Wednesday 1st in the company of Fairport fiddler Ric Sanders.

Staying with the bell-bottom and velvet theme, though in a slightly more traditional vein, Christy Moore has discovered a need to hit the road once again. Promotion of his latest WEA offering, 'Voyage' being the reason on this occasion. This former alumni of the Planxty/Moving Hearts family is at the Town Hall in Birmingham on Tuesday 17th. If you like your sounds a little rowdier, then Jason and the Scorchers are down in Digbeth at the Irish Centre on Monday 16th. After three high energy cowpunk albums for the now defunct EMI America label, Jason and the boys have now inked a deal with A&M. Their debut album 'Thunder and Fire' is just out. More of the same? Well, so the rumour goes. Mainstream writers like Don Schlitz and Paul Kennerly, plus that San Antonio bred rocker Steve Earle, share in the composing credits this time around. Support at this gig (information c/o a good friend) is Webb Wilder and the Beatnicks. Special Delivery have reissued their debut recording, 'It Came From Nashville' on CD. I have a feeling that I read somewhere about a follow up album from Webb and the boys, but can't run the source to ground.

After nearly a decade on the road and numerous album releases on the independent Ridge label, Runrig's late '87 offering 'The

Cutter and the Clan' confirmed that they were a band capable of taking that small step/quantum leap to a multi-national label. Chrysalis promptly signed them, and issued the live recording 'Once In A Lifetime', around twelve months ago. It wasn't a retrogressive step; sadly, more like marking time. There were also alarming

letterbox. Back at the turn of the year, I mentioned that one of the many songs heard during '88, which deserved a home on vinyl, was Hugh's 'Somewhere In Kansas'. 'Troubadour' will resolve that omission. Inci-



▲ JASON AND THE SCORCHERS

shades of 'pomp' rock in their former traditional flavourings. With that lapse in concentration behind them, Runrig have just released a new single 'News From Heaven', with an album to follow. You can catch them this month, at Aston Union on Tuesday 17th.

Acoustic Roots/John Atkins at Wombourne Civic Centre, Wednesday 18th and Bob Moore at the Breedon Bar, Saturday 21st provide those of us in the West Midlands steeped in 'Americana', with a dual opportunity to catch the tasty country/folk twosome of John Stewart and Hugh Moffatt. Rumour has it, that at fifty years of age, Stewart has decided to call it a day as far as 'the road' is concerned. At Kerrville this year, apart from encountering the only rainstorm of the Festival which curtailed his set, Stewart was observed leaping around like a young thing. If big John keeps those albums coming during his retirement, at least his many fans will be satisfied. What price, Stewart bringing to these dates, 'Secret Tapes - Volume III - Farewell To The Old Frontier'. You'd have to be a faded hippie or Kingston Trio fan to get that one. Talking about new releases, what in heavens name has happened to Moffatt's second solo album, 'Troubadour' - I know the original UK release date of late July came and went, due to problems with the master tapes. It was rescheduled for mid-September. So far, a copy has yet to grace my

dentally, the record label is called Breakdown. Say no more. Just hope!

Those of the more observant among you, may have noticed that The Junction Folk and Blues Club, have yet to enter the Thursday night fray this season. Do not fear. Tim Clarke hopes to be back with a regular series of promotions during late October/early November.

The venue may change, the range of music covered will be similar. Watch this space for developments. In the meantime, keep saving your pennies.

As if to tempt you with further and future tastings. Albert Lee is at the Breedon on Thursday 23rd November. Well, that's the date in my diary. On the following evening, at Birmingham Town Hall, we might be lucky enough to catch that son of Lubbock - David Halley. I mentioned him as a name to watch, during my July/August mind ramble with 'Every Which Way ...'. Seems that Miss Griffith got wind of my recommendation. That was a joke Nanci. She has signed David up as lead guitarist, for her 'Storms' tour Stateside. Hope Halley makes it to the UK version of 'Storms', and that Nanci risks giving him a spot on her show. His songs and voice will blow you away. David's seven song, self titled debut cassette is currently the hottest selling item in Austin, Texas. Need I say more.

See ya'

LORD HAW HAW

His Lordship would like to offer BRMB's Mike Owen congratulations on having the foresight to create a totally new and as yet unexplained post on the offchance that one day they came along and removed the Programme Controller sign from his office door. Now he can happily claim to have been promoted rather than shipped sideways following less than wonderful figures for the FM side of the station. Of course His Lordship appreciates that the combined BRMB/Mercia share of the audience figures was quite good, but with Mercia's Stuart Linnell breaking out the champers and Mike Owen quitting his post, His Lordship is forced to speculate on which of the two giants had the lion's share of the percentage. Stepping in to fill the Paul Daniels lookalike's position is chuckling Phil Riley, the whizz kid who has succeeded not only in making the grim prospect of a station devoted solely to oldies, XTRA AM, sound remarkably entertaining and fresh but also gagging Les Ross. As His Lordship's serfs will have noted, Mr Riley's first act upon entering the oval office was to bid farewell to local radio yo yo, Nicky Steele, a man well used to abrupt BRMB farewells. Having already done time at WM and with Beacon's Pete Wagstaff unlikely to suddenly be seized by senile dementia, the chances of Mr Steele's tones gracing the local airwaves in the foreseeable future are somewhat slim. Unless of course he takes a quick course in ethnology and bluffs his way into PCRL. What other changes are in store at BRMB only time will tell (and possibly already has during the gap between His Lordships penning these jewels of wisdom and the stone-master chiselling them into the typing block), but His Lordship suspects alterations in the evening programming should not be discounted. Though heaven forbid that the Evening Mail's resident Rob Halford, Graham Young should be allowed to inflict more of his dubious taste upon us. His Lordship was much amused to hear of graffiti apparently scrawled across one of the current posters from new radio station, Atlantic, who are selling themselves on less chat more music. 'Our DJ's are Dumbest', boasts the slogan, atop which some wit had added, 'You obviously haven't heard Will Tudor!', a less than charitable reference to Beacon's very own breakfast show presenter who had been handling both Shropshire and the West Midlands while the other Two Stooges were busying themselves supervising new jingles in America. His Lordship has no idea what the new Beacon jingle package will sound like, but with Messrs Myatt and Perry involved he suspects it may well have been put together by Sesame Street.

Also at Beacon, Bill Young is at pains to correct His Lordship's impression that he was negotiating a move to another station. His Lordship is also sure Mr Young would like to correct the erroneous description of him in an industry journal as WABC's Programme Controller instead of the more humble role as Programme Manager. This he insists was a misquote. His Lordship fails to understand why the magazine concerned insists that it wasn't.

Thinking visually, what, His Lordship wonders, can possibly be the truth behind rumours that the current Central Television administration building in Broad Street has been designated as a potential shopping mall in plans for future developments. Surely this cannot suggest Central are planning to quit the culturally expanding Second City, merely leaving behind production house facilities.

Pip! Pip!