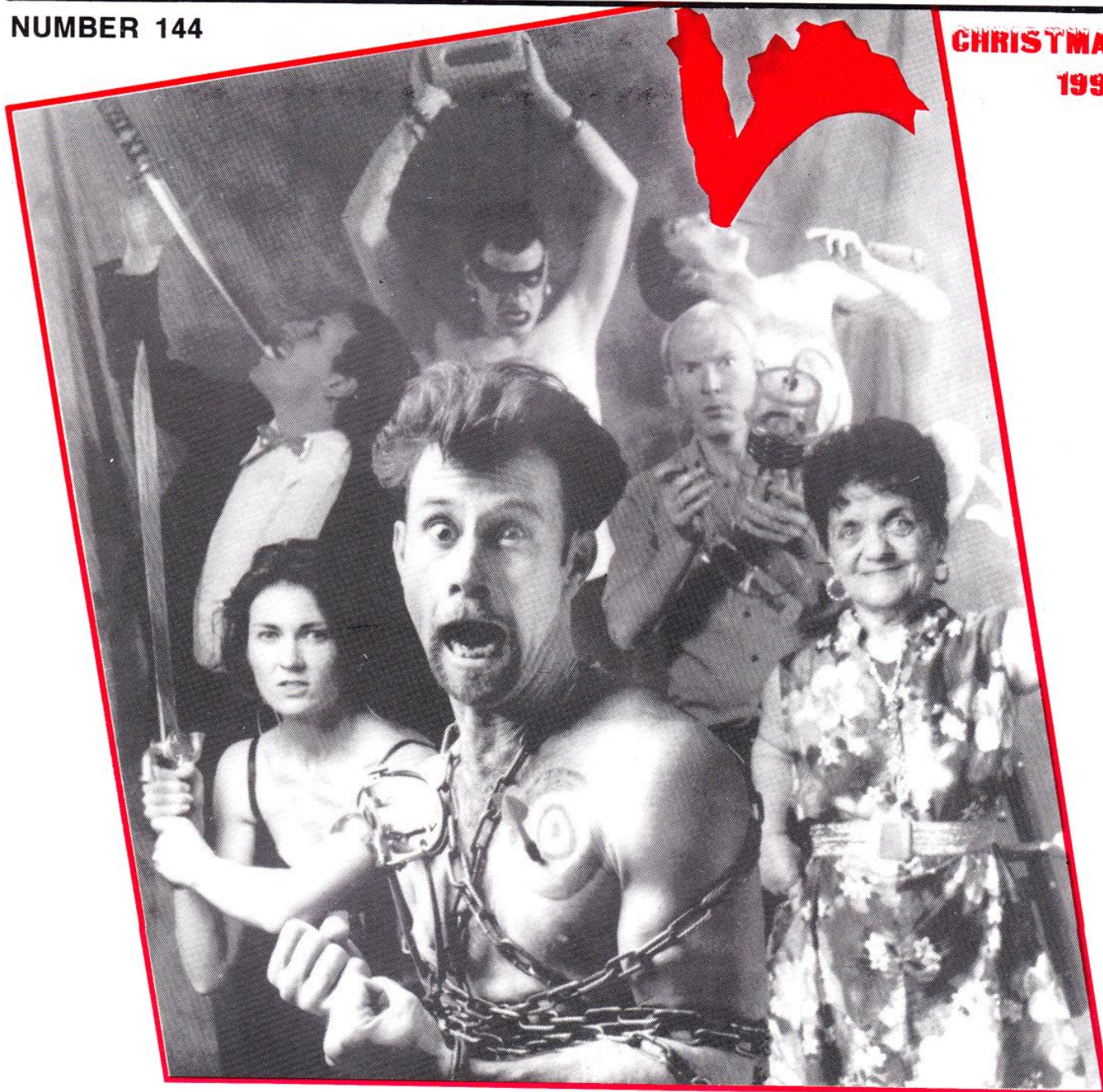


BRUM BEAT

THE MIDLANDS ENTERTAINMENT MONTHLY

NUMBER 144

CHRISTMAS
1992



THE
JIM ROSE
CIRCUS SIDESHOW

**THE LOLLAPALOOZA
FREAKSHOW
HITS TOWN**

THE GREAT DIVIDE
ALL THE REGULAR STUFF THAT MAKES LIFE WORTHWHILE
with **and**
BERNARD 'F***G' MANNING!**

ARTHUR WOOD

Completing The Great American Songwriter Festival with a December 3rd date at The Junction in Harborne, is that purveyor of Mississippi Delta Back Porch Blues, RORY BLOCK. At least that's how Dirty Linen, the American roots publication, hailed her work last year. Raised in New York's Greenwich Village during the sixties folk boom [her father owned a sandal shop], Rory left home at the age of 15 to pursue her love of the blues. That was a little over a quarter of a century ago. In the ensuing period, Block has built a second to none reputation as a genuine inheritor and interpreter of Robert Johnson's legacy. That recognition and acceptance was earned whilst working alongside old bluesmen Son House, Mississippi John Hurt and Reverend Gary Davis. Rory's latest album 'Ain't I A Woman' (Rounder/Munich via Topic) merges blues styled numbers with material that sits comfortably under the singer/songwriter umbrella. Block having composed six of the eleven cuts. If you're looking for a comparative niche, it seems to lie somewhere between a jazzy Joni Mitchell and Bonnie Raitt, the late seventies model. I can hardly lay claim to the mantle of blues aficionado but on the strength of this recording, Rory Block may be the one to lead this old hack to the new promised land. Anyone else wanna go? CAPERCAILLIE, standard bearers of traditional Scottish roots music, framed in a contemporary setting [Note: On the strength of their last local gig Runrig have blown it in my book.] are scheduled to appear at the Hibernian Centre on Thursday 10th December. For the uninitiated, that's the Hibernian public house on the Pershore Road, Selly Park. Taking their name from a black wood-



CAPERCAILLIE

land grouse, this band, currently a six piece, was formed in 1984. Following a number of independent label releases in their homeland, last year's 'Delirium' (Survival/BMG) saw the band's national profile snowball. Their latest album, 'Get Out', a specially-

priced collection of live and remixed studio tracks appeared towards the end of October. This eight cut, forty minute recording features new studio versions of band favourites such as 'Waiting For The Wheel To Turn' and 'Fear A' Bhata', alongside a live

interpretation of that anthem to modern day injustice 'Outlaws'. 'Two Nights Of Delirium', Capercaillie's first video was issued midway through last month. Filmed at Aberdeen's Castle Theatre and at an outdoor summer festival in Nairn, the 52 minute video is available via Polygram. Paraphrasing their latest press release, Capercaillie's music is not rock nor folk, not mainstream and certainly not new age. Rhythmically it's an energetic combination of fling and funk, while melodically it's laced with the beautiful, dappled resonances of the North. Based on the foregoing verbal panorama (!), surely you've got little choice but to check 'em out. This may be your last opportunity to fling the light, this side of '93.

ALBERT LEE & HOGANS HEROES are appearing at the Robin Hood in Brierley Hill on Thursday 10th. If you enjoy fast and furious guitar picking, with a country kick, you deserve to see Albert Lee at least once in your lifetime. Didn't I say that last month, about another legendary figure! Appearances at local folk clubs for December include: Fri. 4th: Singers Night (Market Tavern, Moseley Street); Keith Hancock (Woodman, Kingswinford); Sat. 5th: Isaac Guillory (Red Lion, Kings Heath); Fri. 11th: Derek Gifford (Market Tavern) Singers Night (Woodman); Sat. 12th: Rory McLeod (Red Lion); Fri. 18th: Singers Night (Market Tavern); Christmas Special with Cosmotheke (Woodman); Sat. 19th: The Market Tavern's Christmas Ceilidh with Captain Swing at the Bear Tavern!; Mad Jocks & Englishmen (Red Lion). The local folk clubs are closed over the Christmas period.

TRIED AND TESTED

In less than a year Patrick Eggle has created an impact on the guitar market that few companies have achieved in a decade.

He began building guitars at 15 years of age before spending two years at the London College of Furniture, where he gained a technical diploma in musical instrument technology. And though he acknowledges the scholarship gained in the construction of classical guitars from 150 years ago, he feels it was of little benefit in the real world. "The best way of learning about guitars is to repair them... It's better to learn from other people's mistakes than your own."

In October '91 he teamed up with Andrew Selby, who had the business acumen, and 'The Patrick Eggle Music Company' was formed, moving in December '91 to their current premises in Coventry.

Unlike the majority of British guitar makers, Patrick doesn't build custom design guitars. All instruments are basically variations on one guitar design, namely the Berlin. "I've always been a Les Paul and SG fan and basically the timbers came out of that. You've got the mahogany neck, mahogany body with maple front, and you've got better access (i.e. uppermost fret access). But it wasn't an instant design, it kind of evolved. It's still evolving now. No one ever says 'we've got it right now'. Every week we build a guitar which is the best guitar we ever built."

Particularly critical to the guitar's

FLY LIKE AN EGGLE

Mark Hadley Reports On The High Flying Guitar Man

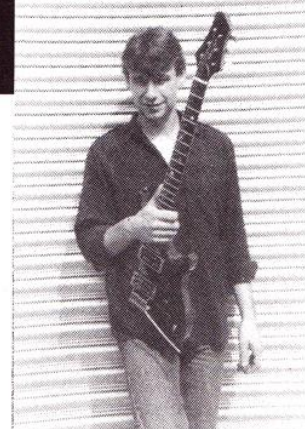
construction is Patrick's choice of timbers. Mahogany and maple are hand selected at source in Michigan, Canada, some 126 miles from civilisation and 300 miles from the nearest airport. In six truck loads only one log might be considered of suitable quality and whilst the supply of 500 year old trees might not be what it was, Patrick is insistent, from personal experience, that supplies of such timbers are not short.

The Berlin's Honduras or Brazilian mahogany body is laminated to a 3/4" maple cap, far from the decorative slither of lesser guitars the maple adds a topky character to the sound à la Les Paul. Pickups are custom built by Kent Armstrong to Patrick's specifications, based around Gibson's infamous 'Patent Applied For' pickups of 1957-1962. The switching on the Berlin is simplicity itself, Master Volume and Master tone pots with a 3 way selector each position offering distinctly Les Paul type tones. The guitars sonic palette is extended by the addition of a push/pull facility on the tone pot tapping to the 2 inner coils and offering a nice stratty sound.

Trem systems are the VS100 models by Trevor Wilkinson. Always sceptical about the Floyd Rose trem that appeared on his early instruments Patrick changed to the VS100 as it more suited the vintage style of his guitars. However, whilst vintage in its feel the Wilkinson Trem has the added advantage that it locks up in its resting position, the first trem to do this effectively. The trem also holds its tuning incredibly well.

Production figures have risen from 10 to 35 per week and will shortly top 45 instruments per week. Patrick is still actively involved in the guitar making process himself alongside 19 other production staff and 8 administrative staff. Whilst the Berlin remains the keystone of Patrick's guitar range the Los Angeles and New York offer somewhat of a departure, though not in the quality stakes. The Los Angeles, launched at this year's British Music Fair, is Patrick's version of the strat with and the New York is basically a workhorse version of the Berlin. And, whilst the retail price of this guitar is a mere £399 inc vat, it receives the same attention to detail as the JS Legend at £1600.

Amongst the users of these fine instruments (NOTE: There are no



PATRICK EGGLE
MODELS HIS WARES
(PIC BY MARK HADLEY)

freebies or paid endorsees), are Def Leppard's Phil Collen (usually totally anti British guitars), John Clarke of Cliff Richard's band (testifying to the authentic strat sounds available from the Berlin - pure Hank Marvin!). Jako of Level 42, Gordon Giltrap and Asia's Vinnie Burns are also champing at the bit to visit the factory.

The instruments are causing such a stir that Raw Power have featured the Patrick Eggle Music Company and America's MTV are due to broadcast a feature to over 26 million people.

Further details of the range can be obtained from The Patrick Eggle Music Co, Bodmin Road, Coventry. CV2 5DB. Telephone 0203 602211.

THE SAW DOCTORS All The Way From Tuam (Solid Records / Warner)

Ireland's finest do little more than consolidate their greatness with their second album.

Now that might sound contrary but whilst others might be tempted by a major label link-up to go for watered down commercial gain with a fashionable production cosmetic, the Docs simply do what they do best.

And that's to deliver fourteen more perfect pop pieces that proudly reflect a love of The Beatles, Buddy Holly, folk and country melodies. Play 'em with humour, harmony and a guitar sound Hank 'n' Duane would love and you have something profoundly unfashionable that'll provide the perfect mixer for your Guinness and Bushmills this coming party season.

Steve Morris

JOE HENRY Short Man's Room (Mammoth)

Henry's fourth album is, I believe, the first one to be issued in the UK. It's also the best of the three I've heard (his debut set remains unearthed).

Henry is unashamedly country rock; indeed this set finds him using The Jayhawks, augmented with fiddle, mandolin and banjo, as his band. What makes him special is the quality of both performance, he has a great lived in voice and the strength of his songs. Lyrically they burrow deeper than expected of the musical genre yet retain appealing melodies, commercial without being crass.

Without doubt one of the year's most satisfying albums.

Steve Morris

KRISTINA OLSEN Kristina Olsen (Philo / Topic)

Ten of the eleven tunes here were penned by Olsen. The exception being the old blues standard, 'John Henry'. On this cut, the California based acoustic musician drops her voice a couple of octaves, as she growls her way through the lyric.

As well as the here and now, on a number of cuts, Kristina's words capture the prequel and sequel to various relationships. The positive and negative aspects of each affair. Musically, the folksy feel of 'Cry You A Waterfall' contrasts with the slow, smoky, late night jazz that is 'Practising Walking Away'.

Kristina accurately captures with her lyrics, the temporary nature of friendships and imbues them with an appropriate and worldly wise poignancy.

The finely observed and gently reflective 'My Father's Piano' draws inspiration from those ancestral links which are irrevocable and impossible to sever. Anxiety is a common experience for many airline passengers. It bubbles to the surface in 'I'll Be Home Tonight' while the seemingly understated lyrics to Olsen's anti-war song 'Shades Of Grey' strike the target with the devastating accuracy of a laser beam.

Not that all is totally serious in the world of Olsen. When, in 'Lousy Night For Music', she says that she's about to "put my tongue in

your ear, I'm going to taste what you're going to hear", you know that she has an off beat angle on humour.

Another fine songwriting discovery from the House of Philo. Seek and engage for pleasure.

Arthur Wood.

ROY HARPER Death Or Glory (Awareness)

There's a sense of folly in 'reviewing' a Roy Harper album. For one thing initial impressions have a habit of coming back to haunt you when, at a later date you hear the material mean something else and for another it should be enough to know that he has a record out. Critical coercion should not be needed to get you into the store.

Fortunately Harper himself has, perhaps unwittingly, provided the key in recently describing himself as "sometimes moody about the state of the world and himself in it", for that sensibility informs the album. What makes it special is that Harper has both the lyrical and musical resources to ponder the subjects with dignity and inspiration. That said there is little self serving literary delusion or muso indulgence. The recording process dictated a certain discipline on the latter possibility and Roy's coming to terms with a severed relationship seems to have focused the former, though the album does not wallow in 'divorce' songs. If you fancy engaging both brain and emotions next time you listen to an album, try this one.

Steve Morris

BOB DYLAN As Good As I Been To You (Columbia)

Twenty five years after his eponymous debut, Dylan returns to his roots with a largely misguided attempt to do it all again. Which is to say this is an acoustic album of traditional folk numbers in the Guthrie/Leadbelly moanin' folk-blues vein. Now it does have some good moments, most notably 'Tomorrow Night' and a version of 'Hard Times' but much of it just sounds old, tired and pained as Bobby slurs the words back up his nose and punctuates things with rasping harmonica. Too often it sounds like someone's parodying him. And the choice of material isn't anything like as inspired as that angry debut. It opens with a version of 'Frankie and Johnny', inexplicably restyled as 'Frankie and Albert' and closes with a painful, interminable hash of nonsense folk tune 'Froggy Went A' Courtin'. By the time he ends with, "if you want anymore you can sing it for yourself", it'll be only the most ardent devotee who won't find themselves wishing they had.

Mike Davies

RAMONES / Mondo Bizarro / (Chrysalis) Da Brudders seem to have refound some form. Johnny's guitar slashes, whilst Joey gives it his best shot in ages. Certainly shows the young tykes a scuffed pair of heels. We'll give 1-2-3-4 stars eh? **SM**

BLACK UHURU / Anthem & Chill Out / (Island) Two seminal reggae sets given mid price rebirth. Hard, agile, soulful and unique. Shows just how cold-hearted current 'digital' trends are. **SM**

GODDESS / The Sexual Album / (Epic) Don't let the title fool you. This is second rate Euro disco of sub Boney M proportions with some naff bimbo playing pussy-pout with cum-on titles like 'In My Bed', 'Lingerie' and 'X-Rated'. As erotic and useful as limp dick in a harem. **MD**

BERT JANSCH / The Best Of / (Schanachie) Here's a quarter century of cuts to complement the Demon/Transatlantic 'Best of Jansch' All the hits are here. 'Needle of Death', 'Angie' and 'Reynardine'. How can you resist. **AW**

SLY'N'ROBBIE / Taxi & Crucial Reggae / (Island) The great riddim team in production mode on two essential mid price reissues. Sublime 'n'sexy dancing a promise. **SM**

ALL ABOUT EVE / Ultraviolet / (MCA) Back to such a vintage Gothic-folk sound you can almost hear the cobwebs spinning across the dark stones and gnarled trees as Julianne Regan weaves those bewitching vocals over the layered, burning guitars. A pagan beauty of a record and No 1 in Glastonbury. **MD**

IAN McNABB / Truth & Beauty / (Fat Cat) Former singer with The Icicle Works, this is in their great tradition of Scott Walker-ish vocals and majestic guitar pop, full of crafted melodies and Beatles/Byrds influenced songs. The haunting 'Presence Of The One' and 'That's Why I Believe' are stunners and how the world could overlook the glorious anthemic pop of 'Great Dreams Of Heaven' is beyond comprehension. **MD**

PETE TOWNSHEND / Who Came First / (Rykodisc) From the time when all rock stars made albums for their gurus. Notable for Townshend's attractive solo versions of the Who's 'Pure And Easy', 'Let's See Action' and 'The Seeker' as well as a cover of Jim Reeves' 'There's A Heartache' a fave of the guru, it seems. Surprisingly, perhaps, this stands up well as both an album and a picture of The Who's driving force as writer and performer. Have a listen. **SM**

SOUNDBITES

VARIOUS ARTISTS / A Very Special Christmas 2 / (A&M) Assorted stars do their festive thing. There's some complete dross (Randy Travis) but also real treats, notably Vanessa Williams' silky jazz 'What Child Is This', Ann & Nancy Wilson's country 'Blue Christmas', Sinatra and Cyndi Lauper swinging on 'Santa Claus Is Coming To Town' and unlikely yuletide warblers Extreme. The stand-out though is Sinead O'Connor whose song about being mocked and rejected for your beliefs now has an ironic personal significance. **MD**

JEFF BECK / Frankie's House / (Epic) The instrumental soundtrack from the TV Vietnam mini-series, Beck plays some guitar hero moody licks but in the end they don't call it 'incidental music' for nothing. **MD**

THE 4 OF US / Man Alive / (Columbia) Ireland's answer to INXS. Only even more boring. **MD**

PENTANGLE / Early Classics / (Schanachie) Over sixty minutes of music cover the fourteen tracks here, cut during the period 1968-72. This acoustic quintet aided by the unique voice of Jacqui McShee, were there at the birth of fusion music. Return with us now, to those heady..... **AW**

CHARLES BROWN / Someone To Love / (Munich/Topic) Veteran jazzy/R&B man who has been covered by Springsteen in the past. Now dueting with Bonnie Raitt and co-writing with Elvis Costello. For bourbon hazed late nite perfection. **SM**

FRIENDS / Blühsness / (Summerhouse) Perfectly acceptable but unmemorable rustic rock bed-stid indie guitar pop with reference points to Orange Juice and early Pale Fountains. With a trumpet. **MD**

OMAR / Music / (Talkin' Loud) A eclectic but hugely accomplished set of black soul grooves that slide between Latin, reggae, funk, hip hop and even big band lush jazz, framed by jingle bursts of doo wop throughout which his incredibly adept, richly textures voice oozes sophistication and style. **MD**

SIMPLE MINDS / Glittering Prizes / (Virgin) From angry art wave to majestic stadium melodrama with a didactic platform, this career retrospect's at its best as a reminder that the Minds were more satisfying when they wanted to provoke thought rather than preach. **MD**

VANESSA PARADIS / (Polydor) The French jail bait who sang 'Joe Le Taxi' is now an award-winning film star and makes stupefyingly mixed bag albums that wander between hippie dippy pop like 'Sunday Mondays' to a lascivious, under age sex version of 'Waiting For The Man'. Totally written and produced by Lenny Kravitz, it says more about his vanity and hang-ups than her common sense. **MD**

TWO TUNES / Raindrops Talking / (Brambus) If you like Sting, you'll love these guys. You might even think you've heard it all before. So why are they called Two Tunes? **AW**

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