

# BRUM BEAT

THE MUSIC MAG OF THE MIDLANDS

DECEMBER 1989

# WIN!

25 YEARS OF  
CONNOISSEUR

★ POP ★

● PAGE 21



BIG BEAR LOGO BY HUNT EMERSON

## GIG GUIDE SPECIAL

● EIGHT PAGE CENTRE SECTION ●

# THE BEAR LOOKS BACK

WITH

ALAN

CLAYSON

● PAGE 9

PLUS ►  
EXCLUSIVE  
REVIEWS

● AND WHY NOT?

● ONIONHEAD

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● BOOKS ● VIDEOS

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# EVERY WHICH WAY BUT ROOTS

Just when you think you're flying on that magic carpet, you wake up. Picture the telephone ringing at my domicile early November, whereupon the voice at the other end related some good news - the album had been mixed in Florida (a DAT master was winging its way to England as we spoke) and the liner photos would be ready in a few days. Then came the not so good news. David Halley had decided to remain in Austin to pursue his own solo career. He had contributed to the Eastern (US) seaboard leg of Nanci Griffith's Storms tour but thought better of trailing round Europe. Another case of "where did the floor go?"

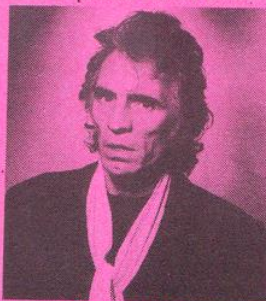
As always, life remains full of connections. Flaco Jimenez is undertaking a short, nine-date British tour during December and will be calling at the Breedon Bar on Sunday 10th. On this occasion, the San Antonio accordionist will be accompanied by his full Texas band, including that "trustworthy right hand man" Oscar Telles (bajo sexto), along with Ruben Valle (bass) and David Jimenez

(drums). Support act on the whole tour is our man from Reading, Terry Clarke. He of the DAT master. His album *Call Up A Hurricane* should be available on PT Records sometime during the next two months. It is hoped that a CD version will follow by the early Spring (possibly with an extra track). When Terry played the Breedon (New Routes Club) on Sunday 29th October, he produced a blistering set of his own songs, moderately laced with some country and rock n' roll standards, which lasted over two hours. Add to that the fact that Terry has recently been involved with composing some songs for Flaco. I predict further developments in that area. All in all, this promises to be a not-to-be-missed gig.

First there was a chorus of crickets (!), in the West Texas Hill Country. Lubbock was closer that L.A. in those days. Even the geography of the original liner notes was out by one hundred and eighty degrees. At least it was partially coloured air gun green. There followed, the days of a barge on the

By  
**ARTHUR WOOD**

Thames, make-believe campfires on a Whistle Test experiencing its death throes, and a modicum of public acceptance. On the rear of the next liner, there was a respectful parody of Guy Clarke's *Old No. 1* and a new country producer. Up front, in black and white, a committed citizen of protest for all to see.



● **STEVE GIBBONS**

Blessed are the image makers. Distribution was less of a problem with London. And she certainly made those boys in Cape Town pay

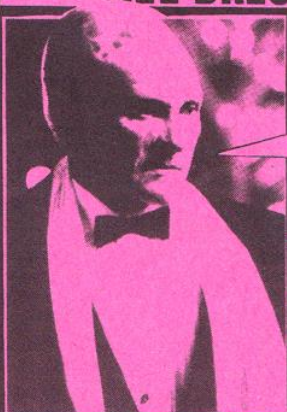
the price. We were all allowed to know it as well, via the weeklies. The profile was being developed. To keep the avenging critics of mediocrity from the door, our lady of the "quick spark and sharp repartee" then changed the direction and plot of the soap opera. Home became the City of the Angels. A flirty wink, a dash of 40's big band brass, some rock n' roll and those customary biting lyrics made the reviewers of her (new) third recording stand up in unison. The video of her song *On The Greener Side* even contained (an intentionally vitriolic?) parody. Enough of her-hi-story, you can catch the former Michelle Johnson at the Town Hall on Tuesday 5th. With tour logos like 'unity through diversity' and 'Swing is a feeling. everything else is just style', to me the whole scheme from the beginning has boiled down to one thing - she had it taped. Think about it!

Clive Gregson and Christine Collister are at Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall on Monday 11th, presumably attempting to retrace the steps they took

before the former decided to reform his old band via the *A Change In The Weather* tour earlier this year. Same week and venue, but the other end (ie Friday 15), the Albion Band prove that Xmas is the time of year which brings a rash of reunions. Or was that rash reunions? Who knows?

I first saw Steve Gibbons do an acoustic set (accompanied by Tom Martin from the Outsiders) during the Breedon Bar Songwriters Festival in September 1988. Pretty neat show it was as well, if my memory serves me correctly. Since then, Steve has repeated the prescription successfully, on a number of occasions. Billed as Steve Gibbons and Friends, the Breedon Bar plays host once more on Xmas Eve. One week later, the New Years Eve bash at the same venue will feature cajun band Le Rue, along with Steve Gibbons (again!) plus Terry Clarke and Station Break. For reasons of good health, seems like an advisable way to bring in the nineties. Only ten years to the big two. Will the human race make it ...?

## ALL DRESSED UP WITH NOWHERE TO GO?



God, I'm  
bored

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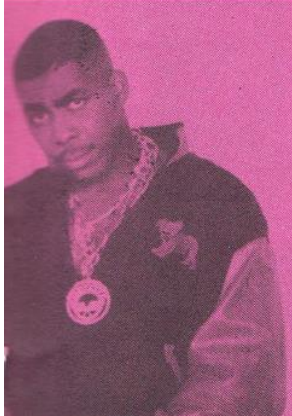
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▲ EPMD

**A R. KANE**

(Rough Trade)  
Pretentious, Moi?  
Mais Oui....

Kevin Wilson

**TISH HINOJOSA**

Homeland  
(A&M/Merica, Import)  
Diminutive Hispanic chanteuse currently based in Austin, Texas, proves via her twelve-track major label debut that she picked up the baton where Griffith dropped it. Produced by Steve Berlin of Los Lobos, it reeks of three factors - memorable voice, tunes and lyrics. Folk and coun-try-hunto.

Arthur Wood

**STONE ROSES**

(Silvertone)  
Maybe it's just those cascading acid, waterfalls of guitars that set the shimmer on fire, maybe it's the Byrdian folk-rock undertones or maybe it's just songs like 'She Bangs The Drum' but this just explodes a sherbet bomb in the brain.

Mike Davies

**JIMMIE DALE GILMORE**

Jimmie Dale Gilmore  
(Chrysalis)  
Straightforward traditional honky tonk country and no emperor's new clothes marketing excuses. Great songs, deceptively laid-back playing. Fired with the zeal of one who found himself back on route, this spent a lot of time in the car tape deck, though it has to be said my harmonies added little.

Steve Morris

**EPMD**

Unfinished Business  
(Sleeping Bag)  
Eric and Parrish Making Dollars (EPMD) are the sound of the street 1990. Reggae rap and frenzied funk, socio-rant and high-powered dance stance all wrapped up in neat style that took 'So What Cha Sayin' into the charts Stateside and looks set to repeat over here soon. Remember...EPMD...medallions, nice shoes, flash cars and a street sound second to none.

Kevin Wilson

**SECOND DELIVERY**

★ This month Second Delivery asks *Brum Beat* regular reviewers to commit themselves to naming their picks of '89, both new and re-issue.

**THE BAND**

To Kingdom Come  
(Capitol)  
Thirty-one tracks with the aroma of woodsmoke and the damp, warm feel of nostalgia for the ideal heritage. A perfect synthesis in music of the American journey. Robbie Robertson's evocative songs have rarely been matched. They'd be America's finest ever had they not been Canadian.

Steve Morris

**GALAXIE 500**

On Fire  
(Rough Trade)  
Blue guitars, lazy lyrics, scant percussive emotion...Galaxie 500 are here, set fair for the 90's belt-tightening ethic. They're economical in thought, word and deed; they see no evil, they hear no evil, their songs of innocence match their experienced singing superbly.

Kevin Wilson

**MICHAEL SMITH**

Love Stories  
(Flying Fish, Import)  
Further proof (as if any were needed) that Smith is one of the best songwriters ever! Five albums in twenty years may hardly be termed prolific. If 'Sister Clarissa' was truly eleven feet tall, then Smith also deserves to stand as an equal with those other 'windy city' folk giants Prince, Goodman and Gibson.

Arthur Wood

**RUNRIG**

Searchlight  
(Chrysalis)  
At the core is a Celtic heartbeat tempered with impassioned humanity but Runrig's roots embrace the pop of Abba as warmly as their folk heritage. Rousing, anthemic, warming and essential.

Steve Morris

**THE FLATLANDERS**

One More Road  
(Charly)  
Kind of predictable really. Great to have this gen-u-line Texas folk 'n' country artifact back on the catalogue. Joe Ely, George (a.k.a. Butch) Hancock and Jimmie Dale Gilmore will be seen in a Flatlanders reunion c/o Hank Wangford's next Channel 4 series, early in the nineties. Essential listening. Essential viewing.

Arthur Wood

**CASSELL WEBB**

Songs Of A Stranger  
(Venture)  
One of the world's finest female singers with folksy, country-flavoured ache to the voice and versions of 'If I Needed You' and 'Jim Dean Of Indiana' that hit the pleasure centres dead on.

Mike Davies

**DION**

Yo Frankie  
(Arista)  
A comeback at fifty that had the young pretenders floundering in its wake. Almost arrogantly swaggering at times, Dion reclaimed the old turf for all time. Rockin' 'n' rollin then going for the emotions with power ballads to rattle the ghost of Spector. Magnificent.

Steve Morris

**BUDDY MONDLOCK**

On The Line  
(Sparkling Gap Music, Import cassette only)  
Young kid from Chicago, now based in Nashville and co-writing with the likes of Janis Ian, proves that even in the late eighties you can make a valid album in the mould created by Paul and Arlie. At turns, lyrically thoughtful and hilarious with memorable melodies - what more could you ask for?

Arthur Wood

**VAN MORRISON**

Wavelength  
(Polydor)  
One of his greatest records, capturing his gospel Gaelic soul at its best on tracks like 'Kingdom Hall', the good timing 'Checkin' It Out' and the heart-swelling lengthy fade of 'Take It Where You Find It'. A gem.

Mike Davies

**THE CARPENTERS**

Love Lines  
(A & M)  
Four songs from Karen's unreleased solo album and the rest from circa '81. Here, 'When I Fall In Love' (yes, that song) is as close to vinyl onion-peeling as I've heard in a long time. It takes the mentality out of sentimentality alright. Richard Carpenter should've been Billy Joel - he'd have made a better job of it.

Kevin Wilson

**LOU REED**

New York  
(Sire)  
Reed bares soured heart cynicism and naked disgust at the contemporary squalor and decay into which the Big Apple's sunk. The master on vintage form with caustic brilliance and perhaps the last great rock 'n roll album of the 80's.

Mike Davies

**DANIEL LANOIS**

Acadie  
(Warners)  
U2, Gabriel and Dylan producer makes own stunning album. Folk, soul and French-Cajun flavours with compelling lyrics, hypnotic melodies and strong echoes of Robbie Robertson. Brilliant.

Mike Davies

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## LEE CLAYTON & HIS TRUE LOVES BREEDON BAR

Birmingham

Considering the array of instruments and amplifiers on the small Breedon stage, it was pretty obvious before the first note was struck that Lee and the boys were aiming to play hard n' loud. Well in the aftermath, possibly that was an underestimation.

And what did we hear from the Breedon stage? Was it an eighteen song set of combat country rock? An aural blitzkrieg with gentler intermissions? Sure it was all of those, but maybe you have to peel away that outer coating of noise to understand what Clayton is driving at. When the opening line of the first tune goes "Ah, tonight I could wrestle with the devil, 'cause tonight I couldn't lose" you know for certain that this ain't gonna be no "roses are red, moon in June" affair. Taking prisoners is not part of the deal tonight.

While introducing the song 'Industry', Clayton explained that he grew up in Oak Ridge, Tennessee where the first atom bomb was built. That song appeared on Lee's 1981 album, 'The Dream Goes On'. Unleashed on the public three years post Three Mile Island, it was a personal indictment of the nuclear industry, far harsher than Jackson Browne's 'Before The Deluge'. If our chickens came home to roost, it sure as hell was Chernobyl. On 'Industry', the lead guitar screamed relentlessly in pain. To fit the bill, it kind of had to.

Closing out his set with two personal favourites '10000 Years/Sexual Moon' and 'The Dream Goes On', Clayton left the stage while The True Loves took off into an intense three minute electrical soundstorm. Eventually returning alone, Lee broke into an acappella version of his poem 'Oh How Lucky I Am'. Sometimes the simple things hit home the hardest. The rather sparse audience certainly responded appreciatively to Clayton's effort. Rejoined on stage by the band, he launched into the beautiful ballad 'My True Love', followed by the rocking 'I Ride Alone'. Almost a theme song really. Lee closed the show with the autobiographical 'If I Can Do It (So Can You)', followed by the bitter realism of 'What's A Mother Gonna Do'.

Clayton once penned the lines, "To always speak the truth and be a good man - that's my plan". Through the eighties, the road for Clayton has been hard. As we stand on the threshold of the nineties, his lyrical visions still remain that of a seer. If you didn't catch him this time around, it seems that Clayton is due back in the UK next Spring. Before it's too late, listen to this man.

Arthur Wood



▲ LEE CLAYTON -  
Pic: Arthur Wood

# LIVE REVIEWS

## STEVIE NICKS/ RICHARD MARX NEC

Birmingham

On paper a good night. MOR diva tops the bill and up-and-coming, hitmaking, power-pop rocker adds value for money ballast.

In reality Richard Marx and his lamentable band came on like The Kids From Fame pretending to be rawk 'n' rollers, on a bad night. Mr Marx will doubtless be best known in certain quarters by the more succinct version of his christian name.

And then Stevie, the queen of the night. Floating about in diaphanous cloaks, a different one for each song. Fleetwood Mac's house hippie gave the audience the cosmic feed they craved.

Mixing her Mac songs with solo hits she kept them beguiled. Which is odd because the disenchanted (i.e. moi) could see right though the new age twaddle. "It's twenty years since Woodstock" she emoted at one point, adding "those that are gone were poets to me, prophets even".

Dear, oh dear, Ms Nicks, I fear, is not of the same earth.

And the music? Well puddingy over-arranged, synthetic MOR exposing Steve Nicks as a great Mac team player but a poor captain.

Yes, as usual, twelve thousand adulating adults were wrong. I was right!

Steve Morris

## ANDERSON, BRUFORD, WAKEMAN AND HOWE NEC

Birmingham

How the hell you can call the band anything but YES is beyond me. The absence of Chris Squire, who legally retains the band's original name, did little to dampen my enthusiasm once they eventually appeared on stage together. Tony Levin's bass work, whilst rarely obtrusive, ideally complemented the multi-textured arrangements. He and his former bandmate, drummer Bill Bruford, (both of Bruford and King Crimson), ably demonstrated their flawless and unique techniques in a dynamic duet.

Howe's ungainly and totally unrhymic stage antics (and appalling dress sense) were fortunately not echoed by his playing. In traditional fashion he changed guitar more times than Kylie Minogue changes stage outfits, adding subtle variations to the feel and texture of the songs. From his solo acoustic pieces 'Mood For A Day' and 'The Clap' through numerous Yes classics, he showed why his playing is so revered.

The somewhat more gainily and light-footed Jon Anderson was in cosmic form. Occasionally a little self-indulgent, particularly in newer material, his vocals have never been more acute. Maestro



▲ JON ANDERSON - Pic: Mark Hadley

Rick Wakeman embellished the songs with his characteristic keyboard wizardry and humour.

The additional keyboardist and guitarist only really came into their own on the preliminary solo spots but otherwise appeared a little superfluous. Throughout an extensive set which included the classics 'And You And I', 'All Good People', 'Close To The Edge', 'Starship Trooper' and a selection of tracks from their new album, ABWH proved they were back with a vengeance.

Mark Hadley

## GERRY SADOWITZ IRISH CENTRE

Birmingham

Discretion and taste are words that don't immediately ejaculate to mind when watching Sadowitz during his 'Lose Your Virginity Tour'. One gets the impression that he lost his to a rabid bulldozer. Blowing wind to caution he would probably give the Pro-Life lobby sufficient cause to call for (in his case) retrospective abortion. Our ability to laugh relies on a highly developed response mechanism that reacts to shock. It may be the ridiculous, irony or the Jeremy Beadle

voyeuristic relief that we are the observer not victim. Sadowitz exploits shock.

He chainsaws through taboos denying that he's racist, sexist or what-everist because, "I hate every f\*\*king thing!" Something to do with his existential nihilist angst being born an American/Glaswegian/Jew, no doubt.

The singular, but fundamental, difference between him and the Bernard Manning school of closet fascists is that the latter engenders a conspiracy of compliance; a collective re-affirmation of bigotry; whereas, Sadowitz's outrageous slash and burn technique becomes a glutinous excess of intolerance that implodes with self-ridicule. His magical dexterity is unquestioned as the ghost of Tommy Cooper leans over his shoulder whilst a top-hat is pulled from a rabbit's arse. A hard-core wizard who conjures up that delicious spoonerism whereby instead of performing cunning stunts, he's stunning...

Sadowitz lifts up stones we prefer left alone; scrapes beneath the emotional barrel of rotten apples. When we laugh, is it at his target, his daring, our prejudice...ourselves? His is the ecstasy of brutal extreme, a dissection of the psyche left open to carion thinking.

John Kennedy

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