

BLUNT

issue

20



The

dirty

three

April

Pope
on
Soap



Throbbing

Poetry

Condoms Au-Go-Go

Fiction

REPEAT OFFENDERS

Reviews Art

Cover
by
voulé
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Blunt

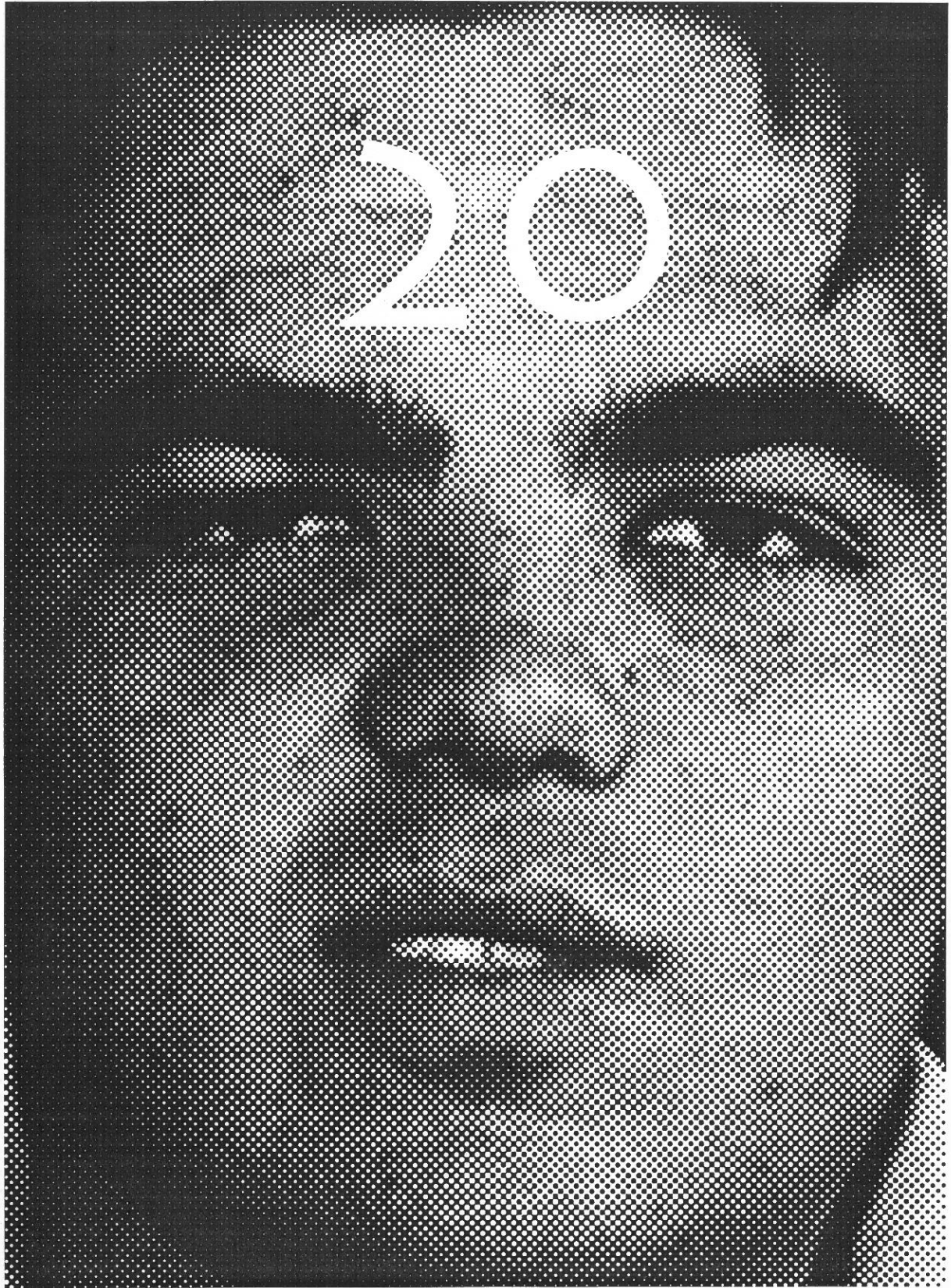


Photo: Nick Howlett.

You know, this fuckin twentieth issue would not have been possible without the help of me old mate Nick Howlett who saved me life, Roni Joukhador (I think the spellcheck is right), Mariella, Ariel, Justy, Stanley, Alex Rotsey, Voula Kitziris, Carol and the Journos, Darrin from Shaggers Ridge.. If ya wanna send us stuff, get it to 2/72 Victoria st, Lewisham 2040 N.S.W.. Remember, we love youse so be happy, huh.

bitchin'

IN BRIEF

A policy of Blunt has always been to present a subjective overview of a gig/film/book/shit/piss, etc. So what follows is basically a run down of our very boring social lives over the last months of 1994 till present. We hope you can help by giving us a few tips on how to address such important quests as dress code, hairstyles, who to talk to at important parties, who not to talk to, and what words count. So, coolness, and over to us once more!!!!?????333.

PAVEMENT - MID '94

Get this, BLUNT did all the 'cool slacker things' to get an interview with Malkumus and co. but at the end of the cool, corporate slacker day,' they were not considered cool, slacker enough' to talk to the lads, and despite fond generosity given to promoters in the past, BLUNT were also not considered important enough to get on the list to do a review!!!! FUCK.

N:B Anybody who has tips give us a call on our mobile.

Lydia Lunch arrives round the same time as Rollins and both have the gall to charge a fortune - both should take leaves out of Fugazi' book and consider the fortunes of all their masses.

BLUNT LAUNCH - Feedback in September '94 with Leftovers, Lunarcide, Whopping Big Naughty, and Bacchantes.

We're allowed out for an evening! The staff from Drum Media discover their piece in our rag and decide that maybe they would be 'cool' enough to implement a similar cocktail at the next award night. A member of Crow stresses he will no longer tell us anything in fear of reprisal. We later find that he is very much a lying cheat co's he still whispers in our ears and tells us more. Kylie from Purr agrees

on our comments about the bald fuck from the Annandale.

Music-wise, everyone revelled in dandy mayhem with band members from Lunarcide, Freudian Trip, and co, giving lessons on quick-step at the front stage. Whoppers caused most ear damage and concern, Lunarcide and the Leftovers fucked their instruments as well as they can, and the Bacchantes, who really can tell - I can't.

Oh yea, we had a similar gig in December at the same venue with a similar lineup except Repeat Offenders and Tempest Moon filled in for Whoppers and Bacchantes. Repeat are back, bigger than ever with Lisa sporting a pregnant tummy - see interview. Tempest Moon after a hellavu lot of nickpicking and fart-assing around with PR played a great show after a 1 year layoff.

PHLEGM/BUCK RIPPER at the BOWLOW in feedyaface season

The BOWLOW consistently reminds me of an old country hall out Lithgow way. A rather long bar with types who sell Reschs in a can, a log book which you are meant to sign when you enter, and a shithouse that reeks of badly hinged doors and sicko freaks. But without it, what would us poor souls do?

Buck Ripper hail from Melbourne, make lots of interesting ornate noses with guitar, bass, sax and drums. They'd be better off down at the Brasserie. But hell, the guitarist was in the Dumb and the Ugly.

It was probably a good thing that I hadn't seen Phlegm for a while. Someone once reminded me that the novelty tends to wear a little thin, but tonight they seemed recharged, and even less interested in confrontation and affront. That's not to say that they didn't provide some hellish noise and lovely squeals co's they did. What i'm trying to say was that there was evidence of change - at least they are one of the only bands around who manage to see through all this try-hard-hard crap and aim to entertain, change, etc. What would I know! Oh yes, their was lots of interesting dancing from the likes of King Snake Roost and Nu Meson staff who like us were let out for

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the night.

MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM at the Botanical Gardens - Jan. 95

Grab a blanket, some houmus and tabouli, a bottle, and head down to the garden and have a look at this one on acid. It's all there for the uncouth and toothless so if you wanna evening under the murky summer waters check Puke, Bumhead, Titty and co. out till late March.

SURVIVAL '95

Hadn't been to La Perouse since the first one and that was a pretty good effort, just like this one. Tiddas, Kev Carmody (wild and woolly mind you) Archie Roach, The Warumpis, and Roger Knox, were all on show, giving us tales of deceit, anger, joy, and passion, in what was a great day of entertainment and much more personally rewarding than say a sleazy crowded day at the showgrounds.

TWO NIGHTS OUT IN MY CITY OF SYDNEY

So.....!!!! I was walking down the street one night feelin' alright alright alright. Let it all hang out.

I've been hanging to see Gilgamesh 'cos of their classic 'Dan the Man' off the Neoteny CD that Spent put out. Cheers for that one Gilgamesh! I wanted to see them with the American band No Use for a Name at Feedback but that was 8 dollars and I only had thirty which I had to spend on beer so I went to the Sando and saw Grand Lodge. They were great with their chunka freestyle groovous bodily harm swaing thaing. A killer sax sound too. As far as I could see there is a distortion pedal of some kind stuck to the sax in its own leather pouch. I said to someone 'this is great but I don't think they need their matching suits but I asked a friend and she said they 'needed them'. Aright. Let it all hang out! Go The Lodge! The world really is your oyster.

After that there was Beathaven who just sounded like modernised pagan dance around the pole music and that is not just because of the flute. 2 songs of that and I had to get the fuck out of there. Either way there was a "Ben Doon an Philip McCrackin lightning storm" outside so I checked that out and went home, relieved to be out of Newtown.

The Metro one night was a table and chairs event starting with the Gruesome Twosome who played all their originals and sounded delightful. If you haven't heard "Pass the Flagen" ya gotta, ya just gotta. Actually the Whitlams do it and it's on one of their Ep's. Up next were Pablo Percusso who did a set in between the Gruesomes and the Stepfords and another between the Stepfords and Andy 500 and it was ever so painful. They're a



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three

piece percussion

band and they churn out

some pretty chunky rythms and it

looks like fun to do but believe me fellas, it's

not fun to listen to or watch. I mean ya good at what

ya do but it would be best if you took one of those getaway week-

ends where they dance and wail in a embarrassing attempt at soul search-

ing. Ya could link up with Beathaven, call ya selves the Painful Pagans and go away

forever. Andy Miles from the Andy 500 was the MC for the night and he summed it up after

their first set when he said 'Isn't it great to see 3 young guys with so much energy beating the fuck out of

something'. The song ya played by bouncing the basket balls in time deserved a pat on the back but I

find the whole idea of a band like yours as appalling as ya dress sense. Anyway enough

about Pablo Percusso. Up next were the Stepfords. The Stepfords play bland half

hearted country. The stuff that inspires you to roll over and die.

Last on were the Andy 500 and Bla Blaa DBlaa. It was laid

back good ole times.

May someone you love, regularly wack

their tongue up your arse.

STANLEY CLARET

was once knew a girl who was the coffee princess. She had crooked red hair, (often worn in eight irregular plaits, all may I add with little coloured bits at the end). She had one of those turned up noses, the ones that make it near impossible to wear aviator glasses, (for which she has a fetish). This nose like the rest of the body was pale, akin to an illuminated moon through the nose, differed, for it had over the years of childhood dun exposure, collected a covering of mild freckles. She was a bit of a nerd really, and she acknowledged this with a wry smile as she strapped her early 80's K mart shoes, blue, pink and grey Dunlops to her feet.

The tale though begins a long ago in a little cafe with plastic table clothes (all dull brown and tattered with nicotine stains) across from a huge concrete mass which for her and thousands of other things symbolised further education. She had always despised coffee. It was one of those things that every one else drank while she sipped lemonade. There she sat, this girl in her ugly grey tracksuit trousers, shaking, (due to some emotional crisis or another) her fingers drummed the table with enough intensity to give motion to her sugar holder and enough strength to turn her knuckles white with infuriation and a certain lack of circulation.

"How could they" she stormed moronically.

"It's alright man," her companion uttered in a soothing voice.

"It's alright".

Her companion took her hand and squeezed it into a state of semi submission, which halted her drumming of the table top. With one last squeeze Melody let

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go of her hand, she sat there alone as Melody disappeared. Grinding her teeth and kicking her legs aimlessly in circles.

Melody returned, and her hand she held 2 white saucers, 2 spoons, 2 cups and 2 portions of beige meets black liquid.

"Here, this will make you better," Melody said with her best grimms fairy tale witches smile.

Coffee.

Reluctantly she straightened her posture, wiped her nose and took a sip.

"Arrgh" was the only noise she could make as the liquid caroused down her throat.

Melody laughed and clapped her hands. "Well", she joked, "you need some of this" and as she spoke she poured a copious amount of sugar in a cup. "This," she whispered, will make it alot better.

And now, she reflected as she prepared the home brew that she had perfected. Yes she did realise it was a kind of perversion, maybe even a psychological illness which gave her the notion that she had a special relationship with coffee. It had seen her through alot since that first emotional crisis. Many a long night, writing essays, cappuccinos to balance her vodka intake, coffee to calm the dull ache of social events, to make her laugh when it should have been tears strolling down her cheeks.

Coffee even gave her that sense of 19th century glamour, that intense nausea that enabled her to faint on call.

But just now the jug had boiled and she jumped down from her laminated kitchen bench to finalise the details. The door bell rang, "just on time," she smiled to herself as she took a leaping bolt through her semi carpeted hallway to the front door. It rang again and straight away she answered by opening it, a little out of breath. There she stood her plaits disjointed by all the move-

ment. And there stood Melody, dressed in black, her beanie clad head made the dramatic expression on her face stand out so, that she caught her breath.

"Melody," she uttered slowly, "what is it, what's wrong?"

They stood there still, the autumn leaves scattering into the house and the wind tearing Melody's long blonde hair. Her hand to her forehead, Melody stumbled inside, and the gale wind slammed the door shut behind them as they made their way back down the hallway to the kitchen.

"How could," she stammered in a tone which combined both awe and disbelief "he do that to me?" a pause, "what did he say to to you?"

Melody reeled against the kitchen wall.

The coffee girl wove her alchemy and poured uneven amounts ion various cups, one steel blue with a salmon interior and the other a small plastic orange thing that she knew melody favoured.

So they just sat. In silence sipping, after all that could be revealed about this specific case of social espionage had been dissected and recollected.

Together, taking comfort in the warmth of their beverages, the gritty texture that true coffee has and the knowledge that they were both spared from the coldness of the wind outside. The small black radio on the table amongst piles of washing up and cockroach bodies played quietly songs no one knew and together their silence played a new game of comfort. Silence that comes from a knowledge in the futility of most things, so each alone - together tinkling their discordant cups they mad a toast to all, the virtue of glass windows, to the wonder of shiny stickers and to nothing that much at all.

THIS STORY IS DEDICATED TO MADAME MELODY

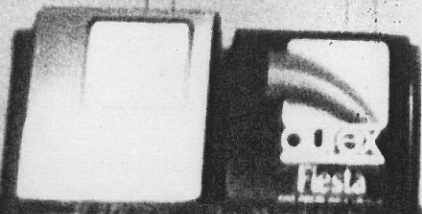


GONDOM



Kingdom

HOW MUCH



RUBBER AU-GO-GO

THE RETAIL MARKET IN AUSTRALIA IS SET TO BE BESIEGED BY THE GROWING AVAILABILITY OF CONDOMS TO POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS. CONDOMS, ONCE SEEN MERELY IN TERMS OF FUNCTION, ARE NOW AVAILABLE ON A MORE GLAMOUROUS BASIS. THEY ARE HERE, ALL SHAPES, ALL SIZES, ALL COLOURS AND ALL TASTES. WE EXPLAIN THIS GROWING TREND. YOU CAN TELL WHY HE IS HERE FROM THE MOMENT HE ENTERS THE SHOP. HE JUMPS WHEN HE HEARS THE BELL ON THE DOOR. HE LOOKS SHIFTILY AROUND THE ROOM. THEN HE STARES DOWN EVERY AISLE. HAIR ACCESSORIES, HAIR DYE, RINSES, SHAMPOO, COSMETICS, TOOTHPASTE, AFTER SHAVE, (HE LINGERS HERE A BIT, PRETENDS SOME INTEREST IN THE NEW 375ML SPECIAL FACIAL OFFER) THEN ON TO BABY PRODUCTS, SANITARY NAPKINS, PICKS UP A PACKET OF CONDOMS, PERFUMES, COSTUME JEWELLERY, SUNSCREEN AND ON TO THE COUNTER.

SYDNEY 1995. He yells across the aisle, "blue with ridges or red with cherry flavoured lubricant?"

The scene is Condom Kingdom, a small shop front situated in the hustle bustle of Sydney's CBD. Opened this year as part of a new trend of retail outlets specialising in condoms, business could not be better for proprietor Ian Smith. What began as a vague and sceptical business proposition on the Gold Coast two years back, has successfully resulted in a growing trade that has never looked back.

"Considering all the criticism we drew from friends when we came up with the idea, we have done quite well. My partner was in a flagging irrigation trade trade up in Queensland. He then went overseas, noticed the boom in condom retail stores, and decided to start one up here when he got back", Mr Smith said. Condom Kingdom offers the potential customer an

assortment of condoms, catering for all tastes, sizes and fetishes. To get my drift, some of the variety of condoms featured on the cupboards include an array of taste sensations such as mint, apple, strawberry, banana, 'glow in the dark french ticklers', and your specially designed spiked, ribbed, lumped, bumped, and/or ridge designed sheath.

It seems now that condoms have advanced in the stupidity stakes, and gathering from the laughter and interest shown by shoppers, there is new found comfort in purchasing.

Peter, a 27 year old and regular safe sex user from Melbourne, agrees that places like Condom Kingdom only serve to ensure that customers feel a degree of comfort in what they aim to purchase.

"The shopfront here is colourful, and the merchandise humourous. One does not feel constrained because the floor is open and wide. Suddenly the stigma that condoms are boring decreases and what we have is novelty," said

Peter.

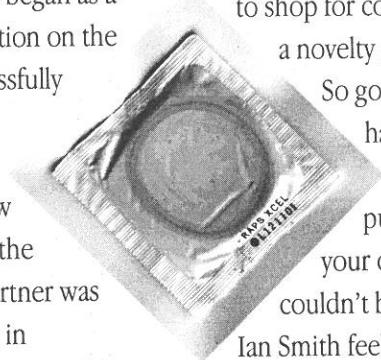
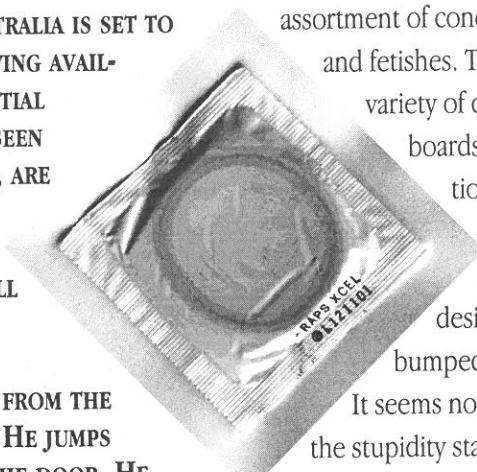
Voula, 28 from Mittagong, echoed Peter's comments.

"You can have fun in a place like this. When I used to shop for condoms I'd blush. I don't now. It's like a novelty game," Voula said.

So gone are the days when Mr and Mrs X had to nervously fidget through a pharmacist looking for the condom purchase. Safe sex is now for sale in your own retail store and customers couldn't be more comfortable with that.

Ian Smith feels that it will be only a matter of time when condoms are seen as part of an even greater retail market.

"Though I believe people out there are still embar-



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ressed about purchasing, there is a greater amount of comfort found in the shop environment as opposed to the chemist. We like to think that here we can encourage people to come off the street and buy condoms in a friendly atmosphere and that as staff we can give advice on what is available and how to use it , “ Mr Smith said. Margaret Jenkins, Health Education co-ordinator for Ansell believes that the removal of the stigma associated with buying condoms is an important part of the overall strategy being the marketing of condoms.

“ We are hoping that like sanitary protection, condoms will be as readily available and that all people will be just as comfortable to purchase them, “ Mr Jenkins said.

It is the Melbourne based company Ansell which owns 80% of the wholesale market for condoms in Australia. Along with known brands Durex and Trojan, these companies are developing marketing strategies that serve to ensure that the public is encouraged to access the product.

Ansell, in particular, continually launch marketing initiatives to promote condom use. They are playing the market, creating new product lines, indulging in various ad campaigns, and segmenting the market in all means possible. Margaret Jenkins believes its all part of a moralistic push to let the public become more aware of safe sex as an important social issue.

“ Through education we can make people feel that it is socially acceptable to buy condoms openly. There is a need to make the product more widely available and we wish to help fill this need, “ Ms Jenkins said.

So where to now for the humble prophylactic? Hopefully it will go on to bigger and better things. Lifestyle has changed in such a way that the use of a condom is not so much an option as a necessity in the lives of many people. Not far away is the day when we'll be going down to the corner shop for a “ a loaf of bread and a packet of condoms, thanks.”

REPEAT OFFENDERS



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REPEAT OFFENDERS

Repeat Offenders are best summed up by their very own attitude. This band reek of honesty, open expression, raw vitality, and a punk ethic - the sort of attitude that makes serious music industry types shit their pants and scratch their pimples in confusion. Yes, these `been around for a while yet you wouldn't know types' are one of those - you know the anarchic uncompromising types - I guess it is best summed up in the name.

They've got a history as long as your arm and as wide as your Bank Hotel cranium. You see it goes something like this.

Brothers Cameron (drums) and Andrew (guitar/voice) O'Phee played punk in Toowoomba's first real punk band Brian in the late seventies. They later left for Sydney and were seen around the Sydney traps in the early 80's playing in such outfits as Wimmin and Boys, the Blue Tongues, and more notably Radio Skid Row's very anarchic band Mutant Death. All these `crash bang experiences' as Cameron puts it resulted in the Repeat Offenders and a marriage with Lisa Stone (vocals), a string of bass players, and finally Nick (ex Blessed) last year.

BLUNT: So why all the fuss?

CAMERON: Sheer determination.

ANDREW: I suppose writing songs. One of the main things for me is that I go and see alot of bands and get pissed off with what I see. What I mean is that bands are not saying what I feel should be said, or they're tending to use too much sound here or there.

BLUNT: Doesn't it make you more cynical?

LISA: No! No! The industry is a beautiful thing. The thing that keeps us alive is the attitude of some of the bands out there - the ones who have the attitude `We Don't Care' - people who don't compete, you know, the types that don't go `oh, I can't go on at 9 o'clock `cos I don't want to be the first one on,

I want to be 3rd one on'. That sort of ego crap is pathetic!!!!

ANDREW: I tend to wanna work more with bands that co-operate rather than compete. There is nothing wrong with playing and doing your best but it is good to get along with the people you are playing with, ie. like helping each other out on the door.

The band ultimately wanna have fun and if they can not project that in their performance then something must be wrong. Andrew reckons that there is nothing better than having fun playing at a mag launch and/or benefit with all your friends there.

ANDREW: I've played at the Entertainment Centre (with Kev Carmody) and it is not a fun place to be. The fun is playing small sweaty pubs, playing in gaols, etc. We did that sort of stuff with Mutant Death and people really appreciated it. It's great when people come up to you years later and say I met you in Bathurst gaol and thanks alot.

So we have discussed attitude but what about the music, the stuff that takes you there??? Listening to their marathon demo (put down at Zen studios late last year), there seems to be this discordant rocket fuel approach to their song writing, kinda structural, but more chaotic, strong, subtle, wild and woolly, know what I mean???

CAMERON: The songs go through subtle changes up till the time we record them.

NICK: We all add little bits to each song collectively.

ANDREW: We are influenced by all types of stuff. Techno for example has really influenced my song writing style. You work with energy flows and with that it takes longer to compose, than say your average verse chorus style.

LISA: Personally I hate techno - the drumbeats, yuk.

CAMERON: That's what I thought but you've got to take acid to it and let it sink in. Then you can listen to it for longer.

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BLUNT: You're hardly a techno band?

ANDREW: More of a guitar pop band if anything.

CAMERON: We're not punk.

LISA: Or fuckin grunge.

ANDREW: We are not the types who go out there to hit you over the head either. That gets boring and falls flat on its face. We wanna entertain!

LISA: In the way Rory Macleod did last night. He did it for 3 hours. So much energy.

ANDREW: That's what I like about Ute, Rude, Downtime, Lunarcide, Purr, or say Kim Salmon.

BLUNT: So why are you having trouble getting gigs??

ANDREW: Apathy probably. I've just gone off doing it. I've done lots of big gigs until I spun out and couldn't handle doing it anymore. We need a manager. At the moment our next big thing is getting a gig at the Sando.

LISA: We used to play there once or twice a month but for some reason we're not playing there now.

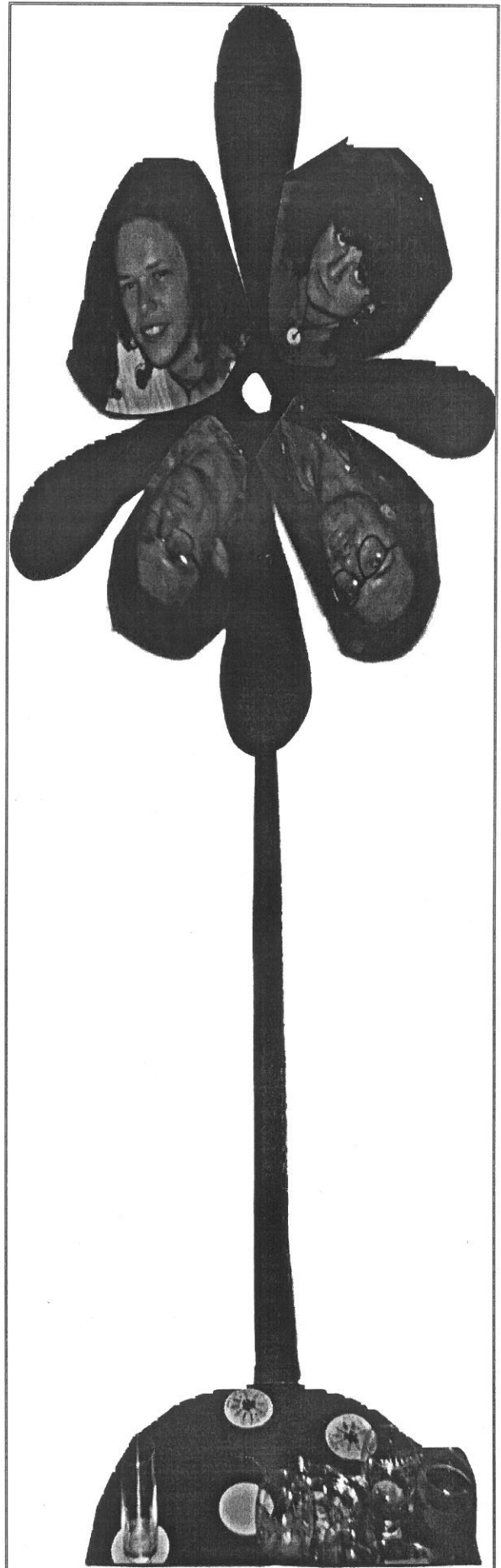
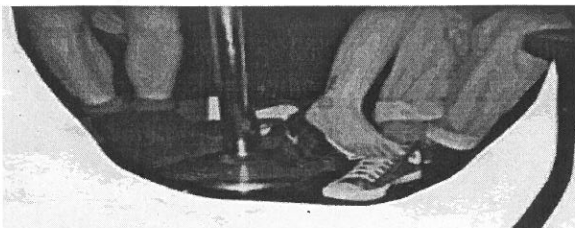
BLUNT: Is it a case of economics placing pressure on the live scene?

CAMERON: For sure, venues need to make money.

ANDREW: Before in the late 70' and early 80's there wasn't an industry like now. If you wanted a gig you'd just talk to the publican and get paid that way. Now you're lucky to get paid 100 dollars for a show unless you've got an agent. What I believe has happened is that for all the good things like studios, labels, etc, everyone is making money except for the musicians. So that's the industry.

LISA: To me music is a spiritual thing, something you enjoy. Writing songs to me is highly personalised, so how can one put monetary value on it.

NICK: We do it for the love and the expression.



THE PILL

It's hard to describe the actual transformation that occurs between downs, the low depths of sadness and humiliation, and the surge of euphoria, like a rush of speed, that characterises happiness. First I am sad. Sad in all its blueness and deep red. Than I am happy in the bluest of blue skies, the sunniest of reds.

Little yellow pills regulate my cycle. They make my ovaries run like clockwork, you could run a rail system by them. Two weeks then the slight cramps of ovulation, two more weeks and the more insistent cramps of menstruation - heavies ton the first day (Tuesday) and they are gradually reduced to a trickle by Thursday. On Friday they are gone. My periods occur when I take the little red pills. They are very bright red, smooth and round like smarties but much smaller. I used to be able to swallow them like water, just pop them in my mouth and swallow. Now for some reason I can't do that anymore. I have to get a drink and swallow them like other pills - panadols and vitamins and codeine tablets, psuedo-ephedrine tablets (for sinus), mersyndol (for migraine), iron tablets, vitamin B6, vitamin C (in calcium absorb ate form to assist with the absorption of iron).

Of course, I am not speaking for every body or even any body, but these pills make me go up and down so rapidly, so extremely, that I am afraid I'm going to fall right off the end of the earth. The string on the yo-yo will break and I will be the little wheel on the end with a picture of Darth Vader and the Star Wars emblem printed on the front, spinning out into space, released from its orbit. I wish I didn't have to take the pill. I would like to remember what it's like not to feel suicidal about missing a train, or finding a stain on the carpet. But what alternative is there? I Can't bear the thought of condoms. Sex is difficult enough to relax with, to enjoy, without adding the burden of plastic covers to keep the white stuff out.

a n o n

THE THROBBING APRILS

It's a Wednesday night and the Lewisham Hotel is abuzz with punters... well, OK, maybe not, but there is a definite vibe in the air. It's The Throbbing Aprils' Sydney debut and even though the audience is somewhat sparse, and the band has been slotted in between two funk bands [a slight hitch as this Wollongong band sound anything but funky], enthusiasm is high. "We have to break Sydney because we've gone as far as we can in Wollongong," declares Johnny the *snazzy* guitarist after their performance. "It's very hard. Sydney venues don't want to book us and some Wollongong venues won't book us because we're not in the 'in crowd'. We're not sleeping with anyone from Tumbleweed - yet!" Indeed, the stigma of being a Wollongong band can be a real set-back. Fears the bands won't draw a crowd because their friends and fans are all the way down in the 'Gong, means most bookers are reluctant to give them a go.

It seems that even the success of Tumbleweed has done little for other Wollongong bands. Asked whether they thought Tumbleweed has been of any benefit to bands like themselves, The Throbbing Aprils came up with a unanimous, flat "NO"!

With influences from bands like 'The Dickoes' and 'Toy Dolls', The Throbbers, as they are lovingly known by their fans, ooze talent, enthusiasm and an honesty that makes them all the more appealing.

"We don't have that 'Rock star' attitude," notes Glen, the lead singer. By the way, his gyrating movements on stage and abundant energy makes for a great visual experience - a must see.

Ron (on bass), though feels that their attraction is that they're all down to earth and "people have decided it doesn't matter how you look like." The boys have just released a demo with five of their creations.

"It's great value," exclaims Johnny. "Five songs for only \$4."

Ron continues the sales pitch by adding - "It works cheaper the more you play it. Every family should own one."

The band's philosophy is all about having fun and it really shows.

"It's entertaining more than trying to spread the message around," says Ron. I won't attempt a description of the band's music except to say it's fast, loud and well done. They call it cartoon punk.

But in the meantime, the band has its sights set on -

"DUBBO!" Glen vehemently declares. "You know you've made it when you play Dubbo RSL," [oh well!]

Johnny's aspirations are a little more self-indulgent - "I want to be a centre-fold in the guitar world and be asked about my equipment and stuff."

Watch out for The Throbbing Aprils. Their Wollongong gigs draw huge numbers and their popularity is somewhat nauseating. Go see what all the fuss is about for yourself.

THROBBING APRILS DEMO TAPES CAN BE PURCHASED FROM RED-BACK RECORDS (WOLLONGONG) AND FROM THE GUYS THEMSELVES. RING (042) 266 702

By Roni Joukhador.

"BULLET THE HEAD JOB" - WHOPPING BIG NAUGHTY

Sixty minutes or so of fun loving rock n rorting that'll make you wanna breathe and sweat the true spirit of rock. Whoppers have been in various forms for some time now, and this album release pretty well gives you everything they've got. And that is ????? True, honest, warped, psycho plop, that'll invigorate the senses and fuck ya mind. So fuck to seriousness and indulge yourself in some songs like 'Choc Wedge Lesbian' the hilarious 'Whopsody in E', and the previously released (Eddie Cd) 'Understanding Room Only'. Over to you.



THE BIG BACKYARD

One could say the Big Backyard resembles a big boat with lots of people on board all endeavouring to swim to various corners of the world, except the steering seems a little wayward through lack of external support. Set up in 1987 by 3 fun loving musical fanatics, Dohdson, Boswell and co., the B.B has set about improving Australia's cultural cringe reputation, thereby bringing local product closer to the overseas market. For Mark Dohdson, ex Triple j announcer and Edge of the Wedge presenter, it's all a matter of keeping bands alive.

We feel that it is important that Australian music retains its own individuality and idiosyncrasy and that by pushing products overseas we can reflect the uniqueness as a community. The shame of our musical past is that the global age continues to exploit us - English music will always be at the top of the charts in England, American music at the top in the U.S , while Australian material is hardly ever at the top in Australia," Dohdson said.

What Dohdson claims very much sums up the vexed state local music finds itself in as it tries to promote itself abroad. The torment has not been helped by a local government which seemingly leaves local artistic endeavour to its own devices. That's not to say the government entirely ignores local product - the complaint stands that their support is not open to all areas of art - a case of the mainstream receiving greater support whilst, as Dohdson puts it, 'weirder contemporary music has been relegated to the bottom position of the arts'.

Dohdson reckons that the 'government likes to think they can support the whole industry and be seen as part and parcel of a main thrust of culture but I think that there are obviously some areas that are not exposed and this is where we saw the Big Backyard as having potential..

And yes, the B.B have been doing a great job for local music in the last 7 or so years. Between 500 to 700 million people listen to the program abroad on a weekly basis, not bad considering the mechanics of the operation, its workers, are unpaid. "It's outrageous to think that we are able to do a job that is so successful, yet we still have to put on benefits to pay the rent. We're making progress each week. You just can not pull the plug on something that is going forward," said Dohdson.

So Aussie blokes and Aussie gals, if you hear the Cruel Sea in Bombay while on holiday, or Tumbleweed in a kibbutz in Israel, thank Mark and co. for giving you weird Aussie contemporary shite.



THE DIRTY
THREE

In just over a year or so, this delightful little threesome, comprising of Mick Turner on guitar, Jim White on drums, and Warren Ellis on violin have built up a reputation as one of the most powerful and captivating acts around.

Just in the month of January alone, they did two knockout shows New Years shows at the Annandale, ventured to Brisbane, did a return performance with Nick Cave at Feedback in Newtown, and then back home for the Big Day Out in Melbourne. Alex Rotsey chats to Warren Ellis on Skid Row's homebrew show.

BLUNT: Have you played o/s before?

WARREN: I did go overseas last year with

David McComb for seven weeks to England and Europe. Prior to this I'd been once before on my own for 9 months where I managed to get some busking in on my violin. But this is the first tour I have done with a band. It's not like a tour where you've got your seven weeks worked out and then you fly back. It's fairly open ended. We're basically going to try and play in different venues and see how it goes.

BLUNT: So what is the agenda?

WARREN: We're off to San Francisco, then New York for about three weeks, stopping off in Austin in Texas, Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh and the New Orleans.

BLUNT: That's a pretty big tour.

WARREN: Yeah, well, it's somehow came together. We had one date for this music seminar - 'South by South West' in Austin, Texas and I figured that it was one more than we'd ever had over there. We've released our record over there - there's also a few connections for us with small labels that work out of their home.

After the states we're going to Europe. Nick Cave liked the band and asked us to play on the last leg of the Bad Seeds tour in Greece and Israel, It is sort of like a world tour. Like a jigsaw puzzle with lots of black and purple in it. I mean that in the sense that's it's been tricky - somehow we've now got seven weeks mapped out. And no doubt it's going to be a very rough tour .

BLUNT: What about future collaborations with Nick Cave?

WARREN: I really don't know. Nick is a busy kind of fella. It's great to have him there. Apart from the Feedback thing he did accompany us at the Big Day Out in Melbourne. (The band did the Boys Next Door classic 'Shivers').

There is a story to that. Eric Erlandson from Hols saw us the nite before and wanted to come and see us on the day. After we finished we went backstage and Hole who had been playing the same time as us had come off stage and heard that we had already played Shivers with Nick. He was so disappointed 'cos it was his favourite song. Also when we played so did Silverchair. They packed them in. On a stage which held about 3 to 4 thousand people they crammed in 7 to 10 thousand. You could here people running across the roof and there was lots of fainting bodies, people with dislocated



Blunt

wrists, people needing oxygen. I missed it of course, but apparently it was quite extraordinary. We definitely need some hysteria, and it's really great that there is some young people out there putting the boot into those old farts that are around. No matter how derivative it is, it's fantastic that Farnsey and Barnsey are getting their rocks knocked off them.

BLUNT: You also played the Big Backyard concert in Sydney some months back.

WARREN: Yeah, with the Oils. We were hoping to have a bit of a jam with the Oils and do a bit of an acoustic set but we couldn't get into the tent. They seemed to be warming up with a few cool numbers and I was sorting of hoping that we could've maybe joined them but we didn't get the chance to do that.

This guy was hassling me wanting to know what songs we were playing and I said 'well, I don't know'. We've never worked out what songs we're going to do.

BLUNT: Do you have much improvisation when you play live?

WARREN: I guess there is a bit. Songs can be different every night, but there is certain things we do that are the same. I don't think we are as wildly improvisational as people think. That tends to conjure up images of 'funny fusion bands'. I think that's a bit of a stumbling block for people 'cause they think that 'cos you don't have a singer you are a jazz band. I think we are as close to jazz as Perth is to Sydney. A lot of bands have the same approach I think when it comes down to certain things they do, but a lot of it boils down to the night. So, I guess there is a bit of improvisation. We definitely do have some set things but there is a lot of space in there to change things on the night.

BLUNT: When you play live, you seem to give some songs a special name for the night. Do you come up with the names on the night, or do you plan these things?

WARREN: Some of them have got names. Some we have just worked out. When we started, we had four songs that we worked out on the day of the show. We'd get the band together, play for half an hour, work out five songs, and then we'd have to three sets on the nite!!!

The Big Backyard concert was filmed, but we don't have a video as such that we set down specifically to make.

BLUNT: Having no vocals to your music, I think you'd lend yourself well to visuals. Maybe a soundtrack or something?

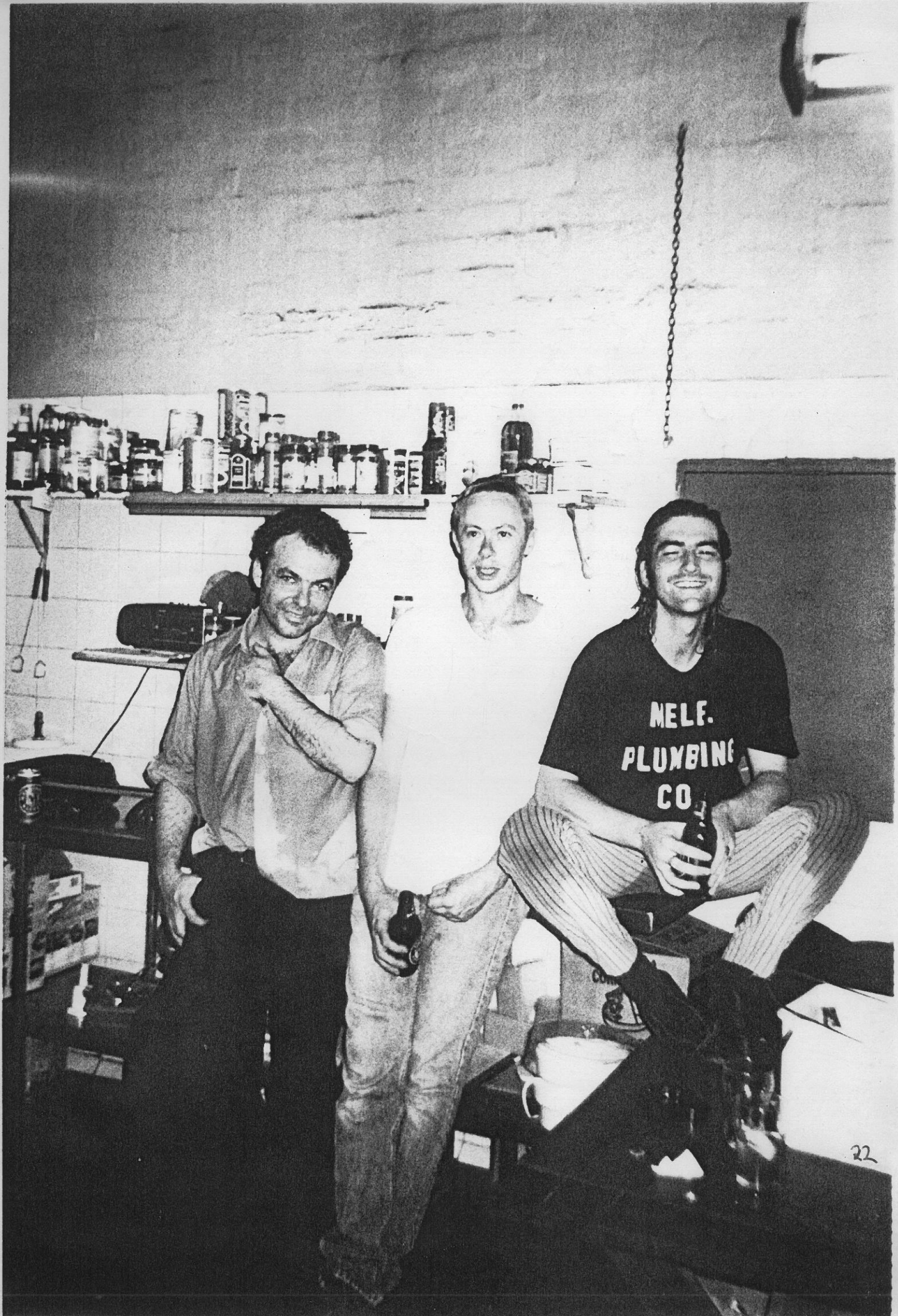
WARREN: It's hard. People who make films don't go to see bands and don't know what is going on. They tend to get who their friend says is good. A lot of the film industry is intrinsically linked to corporate stuff. There's a lot of that in the music industry as well. You see people approaching you and it's like 'if you sign with us then we can get you this and we can get you that'. You constantly hop that what you're saying gets through and speaks loud enough. Unfortunately with the music thing it doesn't matter how loud you yell. I think this whole thing about 'independent' and 'alternative' is just a bogus myth in a lot of ways. It's basically like the other big crappy one but on a smaller scale.

Unfortunately you can't do much about it - just stay true to what your vision is. It's like you see a band that people don't even know about but because they get all this money thrown to them they are made to look bigger than they seem musically.

BLUNT: You've managed to attract a fair sized following in Sydney on the strength of your live reputation.

WARREN: I think live shows speak really strongly. The playing side is fantastic but a lot of the other stuff that goes with it is absolute bullshit, and unfortunately, often a lot of disparity arises because of the bullshit. If people tell you a joke you tend to believe it.

Before heading off overseas in March, the Dirty Three are set to play the Trans Global Festival in Brisbane as well as a few shows in Sydney. After that the US and Greece and Israel loom, and after that who knows? Let's hope they come back soon for more of the brilliant shows we know them for.



S P A C E

S I S T E R

it all started on a rainy afternoon, a musical love that was to endure through the aeons. Ned the Master Axe recruited the sonic favours of Andy MacGhandi for the original three-piece combo whose name shall remain unspoken. A secret knowledge united them, the knowledge of the Albemuth Connection, the place where the pure white core of fucked-up consciousness resides, beaming down to



**MARK
LITTLER
(BASS)**

Earth the Dionysian rage for the Elected to channel. The chemistry boiled, the songs reproduced. Three years down the track (and after many line-up changes—long boring story) the surviving duo enlisted the talents of Starky Marky, who took over the



bass. Starky Marky is the shape-changing Venusian kid and holder of the Key to the Passage to the Wicked Weed, that which the Initiated have been searching for in vain through the centuries (don't tell anyone, please). In a vision, Andy MacGhandi saw that his real mission was to sing, and so he does—or at least tries to, anyway.

**NED
MATIJASEVIC
(AXE)**

Many drummers were tried, but we had to kill them all since they weren't cut for the task, and besides, they had seen our real faces anyway.

Finally, Wandering Rob agreed to play on the band. Wandering Rob is an incubus, one of many results of

Ned the Master Axe's flirtations with alchemy.

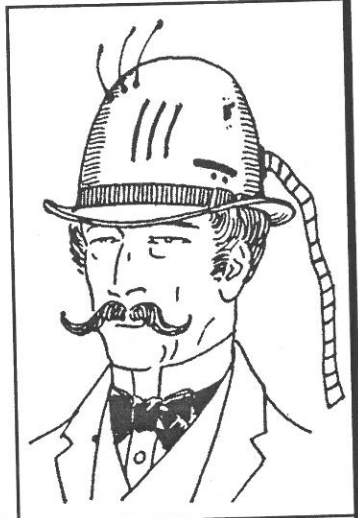
It was Rob's uncanny channelling abilities that helped the police convict Ken Remington, also known as the Granny Eater, in 1976.

Sicko Nicko was the last ingredient for the explosive sonic equation.

He refused to do it at first, so we brain-washed him using the ancient Technique of the Golden Dawn, and so now his soul belongs to Us.

Finally, the name 'Space Sister' was chosen by God, who told us so before It died.

Enjoy the music.

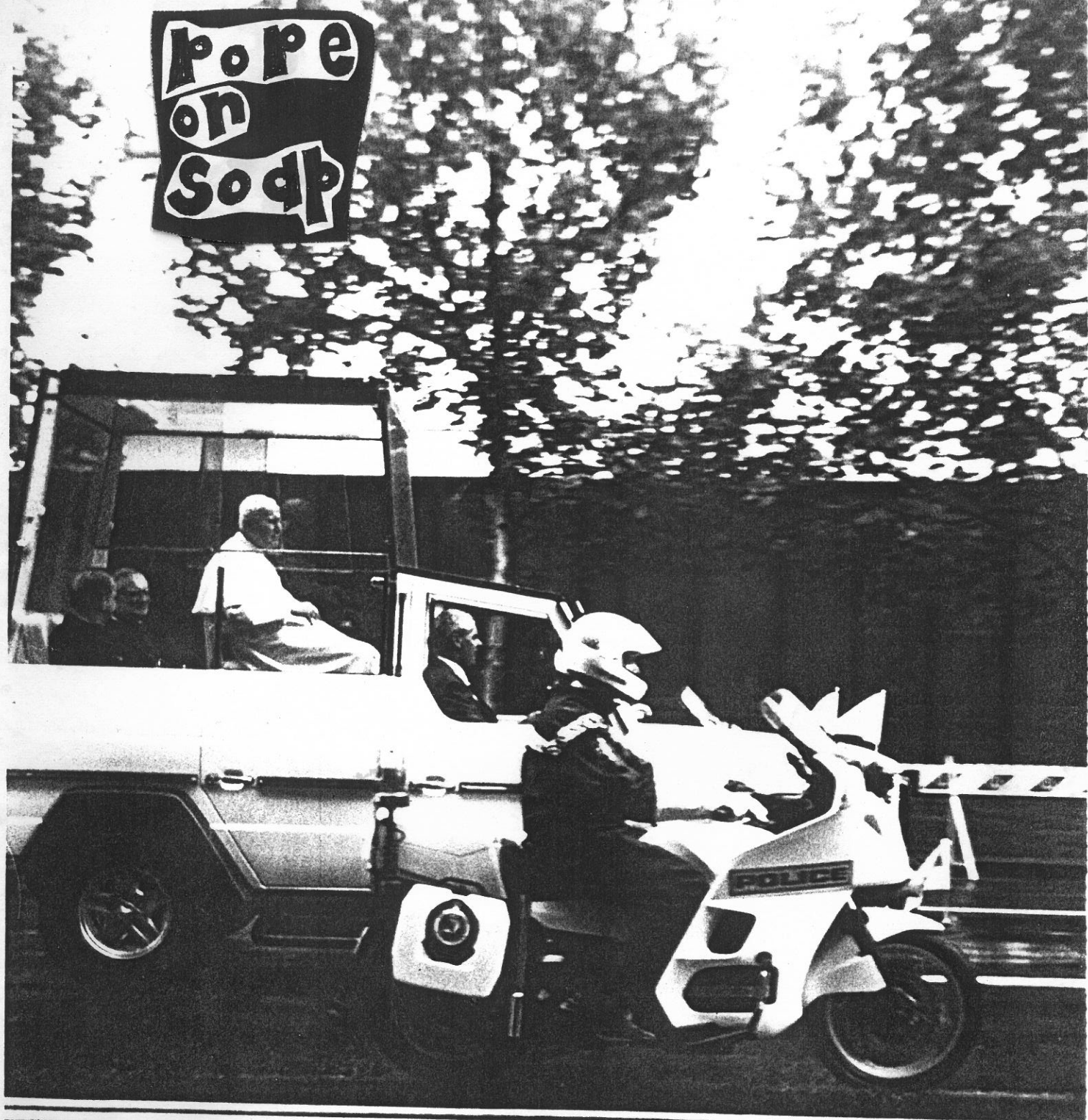


**ROB
AMHIZ
(DRUMS)**



**ANDRÉS
VACCARI
(VOCALS)**

For bookings phone **Andres Vaccari** on (02) 411 2089 or **Ned Matijasevic** on (02) 601 8639.



THE POPE CAME TO TOWN TO SPREAD HIS SOAP AROUND BUT LEFT A TEARY OLD CLOWN THANX TO THOSE WONDERFUL SISTERS OF PERPETUAL INDULGENCE WHO DECLARED OXFORD STREET A NO POPE ZONE!!!!!!

An Early Opening

The hiss from the 'Temprite' beer cooling system was still audible as Bluey ordered his first schooner. It was 7:05a.m. outside the Imperial Hotel on a Wednesday morning as Brian (Bluey to his mates) Fletcher pulled the early morning edition of the *Telegraph Mirror* apart in search of the financial section. Having found it he began mopping the dew from the pine bench seats, that like monuments and traffic lights, were bolted to the ground. Sunlight broke through the treeline across the street as he winced, then took his first swig for the day. His head throbbed with dark recollections of the night before... the blurred crash of pool balls and a half-remembered conversation about home-cooked meals. Bluey still had TAB stubs from last night's Harold Park trots in his top pocket. Alf, the cleaner (who got paid in morning middies) was hosing down the benches and seats away from Bluey, leaving small puddles that would evaporate during the day. Across the street, people filed silently up the pedestrian bridge towards the train station on their way to work; some with hair still wet from early morning showers, and most staring blankly at the space directly in front of their feet as they marched ever onwards.

Bluey's mate Sproggo was going to be late this morning. Bluey remembered talking to him yesterday, and that he mentioned a morning appointment with his specialist. He liked Sproggo's company— the mornings in particular, when they had plenty of time to do their post-mortems of the previous day's racing. They would scrutinize the results, analyse the failures and herald the victors as champions-in-the-making. But what he appreciated even more about Sproggo was his happy disposition to silence, when they both knew that there was no more to be said; that each could wander freely amongst memory's tainted rooms, to lay pity and scorn towards those who had made the journey so dark and forlorn... the sight of his wife all those years ago as she loaded the children into the back of her father's car. Why was his apathy any more evil than her lack of understanding? Bluey began to shake his head... wrenching images of children's faces made him seek refuge in the back page football gossip— How could they give Jackson six weeks for a tackle no harder than a ripe peach! The world had gone soft! This injustice was an offence to Bluey's sense of order. The morning would not be the same without Sproggo.

Bob Fletcher lived on the south side of the railway lines in a rented house on Labrador St with two welders from the steel mill. He made his way slowly from the newsagents to the overbridge on his way to the Imperial hotel. It was unusual for him to drink at the Imperial at this time of day, but sleep had deserted him earlier than usual. His first beer was normally at opening time in the Namatjira hotel. Only a couple of hours to go before Elsie the barmaid would open up and let him in. Coming down off the railway bridge he noticed the solitary figure of Brian Fletcher seated at one of the verandah benches. Like most of the pensioned drunks of Rooty Hill, they were intimate to the extent of recognition. They shared in common solitude and late-night drunken memories that had to be forgotten in more sober moments.

Bob was never a pool player. He preferred to reminisce on a career that saw him nearly reach boxing fame. In his younger days, a pub was a place where he went to assault the heroes of his time, regardless of whether they were there or not. He used to line up a couple of extra schooners before closing time and drink hard. Smoke hard. 'Men Only' public bars where he'd scream and swear, jostling in the alienating intimacy of drunken company. Occasionally a glass would be smashed across the edge of the bar as two blokes would go at each other. Dancing to the tune of his vision of manhood...

He ordered his schooner and made his way past the card machines flickering incessantly along the wall leading towards the verandah. Bob stood in awkward indecision outside and glanced mechanically around. Bluey caught his faltering, nervously glance and motioned him to sit.

Blunt

"G'day Bluey..."

"G'day Bob..."

Bob settled himself opposite Bluey and opened his *Telegraph Mirror* to the Randwick mid-week form guide. Between glances at the Jockey's ladder he watched the workers in the Asian bakery across the road as they unloaded bread rolls from the oven. He began to hate for no specific reason... Asians, Wogs, the War, politics... and an unhappy marriage. The past sat like a lonely novel on a battered shelf... a novel he barely understood, let alone read. None of it made any sense... have a beer.

The two sat in lapsed opposition for nearly half-an-hour before Bob ventured into the middle ground and started the conversation—

"So how have ya been Bluey?"

"Can't complain", Bluey mumbled back as he stared down the mouth of his near-empty schooner. Bob finished his schooner and offered to buy Bluey a beer.

"Wont say no!" Bluey snappily replied. Bob felt the bridge close between them and the morning uneasiness dissolve as he made his way back to the bar. Were the memories of some drinking co-operatives between the two about to be addressed?

Time passed gently between the two as they fossicked through their morning papers. A massacre in some foreign country held front page spotlight. The conversation shifted towards the football scores for a time. With those out of the way, the path was clear for the daily race tips. As Bob flicked blankly through the mid-section, a headline caught his eye—"Aboriginal found dead in cell". He drew a long swallow from his glass as he ventured into the article.

Bluey returned from the bar with two beers and found Bob muttering to himself whilst staring hard into the page.

"I remember the time I did a stint out in Broken Hill just after me twenty first birthday. My ol' man reckoned it was time for me to head bush and find meself..."

Bob paused and raised his eyes toward Bluey; anxiously awaiting some recognition from him that he could interpret as a sign to continue. Bob had his well-rehearsed monologue ready; his life story condensed into pub verse. His early pub brawling days that toughened him up enough for the ring. The cattle station romance with the boss's daughter, and the Roo shoots on Sunday. They would take out 'coons', as he called them, to do the dirty work, and as payment would allow them to keep the tails and intestines.

Bluey gave no hint of recognition, content with drinking his schooner and staring into his paper.

It was Bluey's turn to talk—"The day she took the kids an' left, well... I thought, fine! I was never the type of bloke to fuss about the house. I did the lawns and slogged me guts out five days a week so that her and the kids would have a roof over their heads and some food on the table... know what I mean Bob?"

Bluey didn't even wait for a response before continuing—"There were some things that a bloke just had to do to keep sane! A few beers after work and a bit of a punt on Saturday... Oh, fuck it!"

Bluey paused and they both reached for their schooners.

It was a long time before either spoke again. School children filed down the stairs leading from the overhead bridge. They watched the procession of kids pass by the pub; some in animated conversation, others quiet and alone. Bob gazed hard into the eyes of a dark-skinned boy who was staring at him as he walked past; a glance filled with poignant contempt and sadness for an era of Australian life foreign to him. Bob picked up his empty glass and went inside to order two more beers.

Bluey wondered how his mate Sproggo was, and whether he would return tomorrow. He savoured their post-mortem round ups, and the solitude enjoyed between the two.

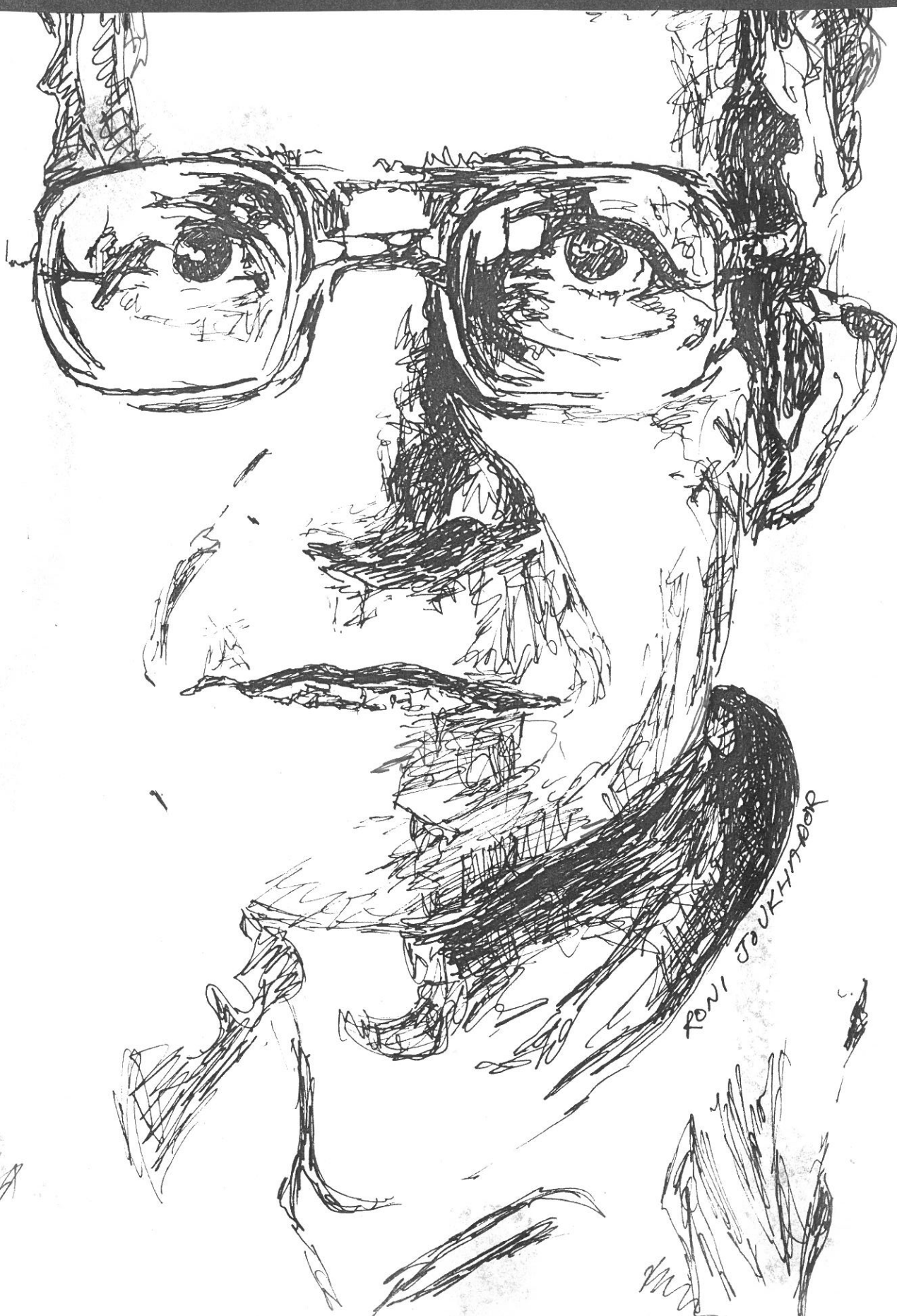
At 9:50a.m. Bob finished off his fourth schooner. He rolled his paper up and placed it under his arm as he rose to leave.

"See ya Brian..."

"Yeah Bob..."

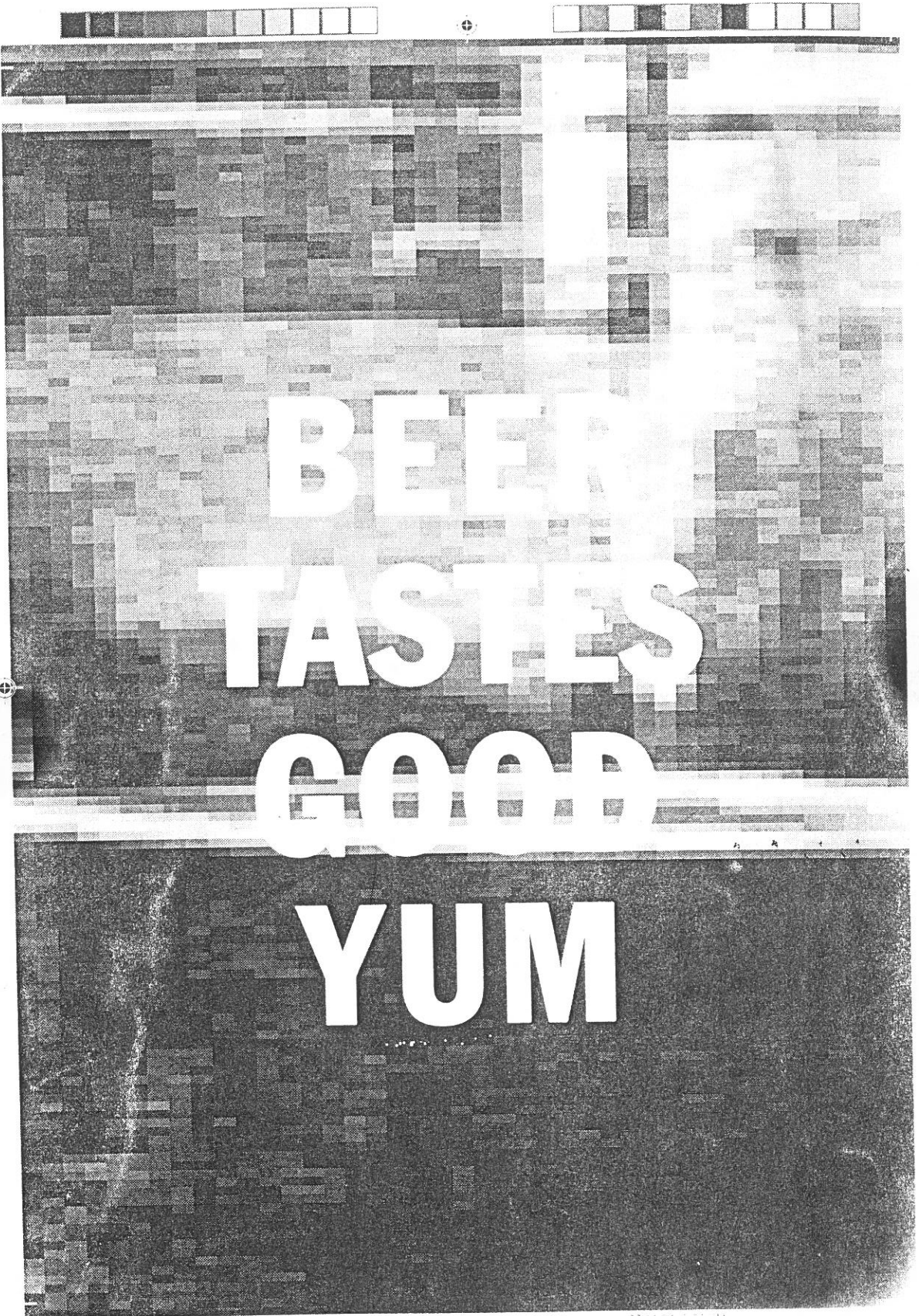
Their eyes never met as Bob left the bench and headed toward the Namatjira hotel. Opening time in ten minutes...

Darrin Baker



TONI JOUKHIDOR

NOAM CHOMSKY



**BEER
TASTES
GOOD
YUM**