



"Broken branches, empty windows,
The Madcap's presence lingers on."



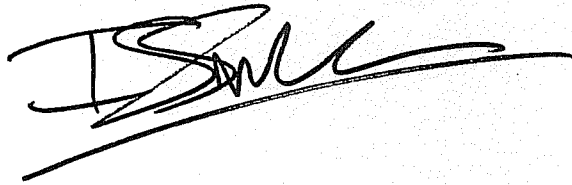
ESKIMO CHAIN
THE SYD BARRETT/PSYCHEDELIA ZINE

WELCOME to the first edition of 'Eskimo Chain', the new fanzine devoted to Syd Barrett, early Pink Floyd and anything else that takes our fancy.

Step inside and you'll find an eye-witness account of the 14 Hour Technicolour Dream, new information on unreleased Barrett-era Floyd and a detailed discussion of 'Arnold Layne', the first instalment of our on-going analysis of the Madcap's work.

We hope you'll find plenty of interest, as well as being introduced to other artists that keep the faith.

Yours etc.,



Editorial Address:

I. Smith, 2 White Cottages, Long Garth, Durham City DH1 4HL.

Ordering Details:

Further copies can be ordered for £2.50 (Cheques/POs made payable to 'I. Smith'), from the above address. Price includes UK postage. Readers in the European Community should send £2.95 (Eurocheques/IMOs made out in £ Sterling to 'I. Smith'). Anyone further afield, please write first before ordering.

Special Thanks To:

Steve Wilcock, Stu Woods, Adrian Eckersley, Mike Watkinson, Brian Hogg, John Kelly, Uwe Goller, Dietrich Pless, Alberto Durgante, Luca Baldini, Greg Shaw and of course, Arthur Machen.

A Happening 44 Production.

EMI - AN UNLIMITED SUPPLY ?

With three complete albums and 19 unreleased tracks, the 'Crazy Diamond' box set must surely be the definitive collection of Syd Barrett's solo work. Yet despite all the care and attention that went into it, the end result is curiously unsatisfying. Because scratch the glossy veneer, and you're left with the two original LPs plus the 'Opel' collection of out-takes, all padded out with yet more bungled guitar strums, none of which made the grade for 'Opel' the first time round.

To my mind, the original criteria still hold. Play someone the original records and they'd be impressed. Play them the new CDs and they're left with the impression of someone who can hardly play two bars of a song at a time. Does this really do justice to a musical visionary like Barrett ?

The worst thing however, is that the out-takes that should be released, all from Syd Barrett's Pink Floyd tenancy, are still languishing in the EMI vaults. After all, most Barrett fans would rather have legal versions of 'Vegetable Man' and 'Scream Thy Last Scream' than a boat-load of bodged 'Madcap' out-takes. Not to mention the 'Arnold Layne',

'See Emily Play' and 'Apples & Oranges' singles, all of which are currently caught in CD limbo. Of course, there are legal problems, with the on-going Waters Vs. The Rest feud, but that didn't seem to stop the release of the 'freebie' singles CD with the swindle-priced Floyd box-set. Surely there can be no reasonable objection to at least issuing this disc as an album in its own right ?

Ideally of course, we'd get all the Floyd's early work in a tasty box set, bulging with out-takes and alternative cuts and all done to the same high standard as 'Crazy Diamond'. There would be two obvious approaches to this: either a selective choice that showcased the individual genius of Barrett, or a more comprehensive package that took in everything the early Floyd ever did, with Syd, or under his influence, right up to the 'Point Me At The Sky' 45. After all, pastiches such as 'Julia Dream' are almost as good as the originals.

Personally speaking, I'd prefer to see the latter, mainly because it would round up everything recorded by Pink Floyd during the most interesting phase of their career. It would also give a more honest impression of the way that Barrett was faded out of the Floyd mix, with more of a gradual reduction on the fader, rather than a sudden cut-out.

However, all this speculation

raises the question of what exactly is in EMI's Fort Knox of an archive? Very little seems to have been bootlegged or documented and even the details of Barrett's contributions to 'A Saucerful Of Secrets' seem to be shrouded in mystery. So for further illumination, I got in touch with Brian Hogg, the author of the 'Crazy Diamond' booklet, with some questions about the unreleased Floyd tracks and the secrets of a 'Saucerful'. His response was:

"Hopefully I can answer some of your points, but the details will be somewhat sketchy. Obviously our remit was Syd's solo career & when working on 'Crazy Diamond' the only tapes & paperwork made available to us concerned his own albums. However, I also worked on 'Opel' and during that time we briefly looked at the Pink Floyd paperwork. Sadly, we didn't get to hear anything.

I don't remember much of the intricacies because time was tight & there was no way any of the Floyd stuff could have been used. However, my impression was that Syd appeared on a lot of the early work for what became the 'Saucerful' album, but how much remained in the final mix is unclear. Without studying the paperwork, there's no way to determine which takes were ultimately used or how much was

overdubbed. I'm almost certain 'She Was A Millionaire' & the original 'Set The Controls' do still exist, Abbey Road are meticulous & do not wipe false takes or early versions. Yes there were several unreleased titles, but without hearing them there's no way of telling whether these were original pieces or merely working titles for well-known tracks. There were several instrumentals, but no live recordings, and yes it would be possible to determine Syd's exact contributions to 'Saucerful' by leafing through the paperwork. I guess it will have to wait until Gilmour & Waters settle their differences (when hell freezes over) and a definitive overview of the Floyd's early years in constructed."

He also added: "...I'm almost sure 'In The Beechwoods' was one of the improvised instrumentals done at the 'Piper' or 'Vegetable Man' sessions, but I could be wrong. As for the other 'unidentified' tracks, I can't help there."

So it does seem that plenty more Floyd remains in the can. When we'll get to hear it is another matter, though the current EMI CD re-issue program does offer a glimmer of hope. To contribute to the debate, I have compiled a list of the most interesting unreleased tracks I have either heard or read about. There must surely be many more that have never seen the light of day since 1967.

THE TRACKS THAT TIME FORGOT:

DOCUMENTED RECORDINGS:

Lucy Leave King Bee (cover)	Demo acetate 11.65 (possibly a fake)
Interstellar Overdrive Let's Roll Another One Stoned Alone	Hemel Hempstead Session 31.10.66
She Was A Millionaire	'Piper' out-take 5.67
Set The Controls	Alternate take 7.67
Vegetable Man Scream Thy Last Scream Instrumental '67	Studio out-takes 10.67
In The Beechwoods	Out-take mentioned in print

POSSIBLE OUT-TAKES:

Pink
Gimme A Break (cover)
Snowing
Piggy Back
Flapdoodle Dealing
I Can Tell
One In A Million
Reaction In G

Gig lists 14.10.66 & 10.9.67



List covers unreleased songs and alternative versions of particular interest. There are of course, plenty of live/radio/TV versions of familiar Floyd songs available on bootleg, plus acetates and mono versions (with slightly different mixes) of 'Piper At The Gates Of Dawn', 'Saucerful Of Secrets' and the 'Arnold Layne', 'See Emily Play' and 'Apples & Oranges' singles. If you have any further details or information on early Floyd out-takes, then drop us a line (and preferably a tape !) to the editorial address.

WASH N' GO - WITH MANDIES.

One of the most legendary stories in the Barrett Mythos is of course, the 'Mandies Incident'. According to this unlikely tale, Barrett had decided to fix his flagging perm with a load of Mandrax pills crushed up into a jar of Brylcreem. On stage, under the heat of Pink Floyd's lightshow, the warmed up goo started sliding down over his brow, giving the nightmarish impression that his whole face was melting. The horrified audience of tripping flower children freaked out in unison.

In most accounts, the story is credited to apocryphal sources, but I came across the quote below in an excellent oral history of the Sixties called, 'Days In The Life. Voices From The English

... front seat of the van, a pile of Durex in front ...
scissors and a record sleeve, cutting up these johnnies. The police ...
absolutely aghast. 'That's just our roadie,' says Peter. 'He's cutting up
johnnies, but he's crazy ...'

SAM HUTT: I went to UFO quite a lot. Saw the bands, the very loud music, the oil lights and Joe Gannon, who used to run a light-show. I remember near the end with Syd [Barrett], him coming up and somebody had given him a bottle of mandies. Mandies were the big bouncing-around drug, very dodgy indeed, and probably a very good idea that they took them off the market. Syd appeared on stage with this jar of Brylcreem, having crushed the mandies into little pieces, mixing them up with the Brylcreem and putting this mixture of Brylcreem and broken mandy tablets all over his hair, so that when he went out on stage the heat of the lights melted the Brylcreem and it all started to drip down his face with these bits of Mandrax.

SAM HUTT: Hutt spent the 60s as a medical student, an occasional actor, and founder of London's first alternative practice with fellow doctors Ian Dunbar and Bernic Greenwood. The rock business's favourite doctor, he has gone over to the other side, and is best known as his alter ego, Country and Western singer Hank Wangford.

Underground 1961-1971' by Jonathon Green (Minerva 1989). Who would have thought that the tale would be confirmed by of all people, Hank Wangford, the singing gynaecologist ?

If, as his account implies, this took place in the UFO Club, it would suggest a date of either July 28th, or September 22nd 1967. Rick Sanders claims that Syd's Mandrax habit developed in the second half of 1967, which would suggest the later date. However, Nick Mason has dated Barrett's breakdown to the day he walked out from a BBC 'Saturday Club' performance. As this occurred in late July 1967, around about the time of Syd's other hairstyle derangement during the 'Top Of The Pops' shoot, I'd say that the circumstantial evidence points to the July 28th date as the most likely candidate. Probably.

TAKES TWO TO KNOW.

When it comes to debut records, there are very few in the same league as Pink Floyd's 'Arnold Layne'. Think of the Beatles: 'Love Me Do' is hardly earth-shatteringly original, nor the Rolling Stones' 'Come On'. Neither has the panache, originality, or sheer perve appeal of the Floyd's opening shot.

It has been said that the very Englishness of the disc was a pop first. But surely that's not where the real quality lay. After all, the Kinks had been exploring similar terrain for some years before. Instead, it was the creepy, otherworldly sound that really made it register, both in the song's harmonic structure and in the band's performance. For 'Arnold Layne' provided the definitive early Floyd statement, compressing all their legendary weirdness into a crisp 3 minute cut you could buy in Woolworths.

On first listen, the most noticeable instrument is Rick Wright's wailing Farfisa organ, particularly on his soaring solo, memorably described in Rick Sanders' Pink Floyd biog as:

"...raga-like modal improvisations with a keening bagpipe quality - a Scottish Martian in a Persian market in a church by a moor in the

Crab Nebula, briefly, with shades of Cecil Taylor, Rachmaninov and Dave Brubeck."

I would settle for the modal-raga bit myself, but there's no denying that the sound is distinctly exotic, doing for the organ what the Byrds had done for the 12-string Rickenbacker on their '5th Dimension' album.

Underpinning it all, is a throbbing, almost punky bass part from Waters, his lack of sophisticated technique adding to the punch of the sound, and Nick Mason's drums, loose and exuberant, a thousand miles away from the dull plod he seems to have favoured since. Barrett's barre chord riffing is almost lost in the rush of sound, but there's no mistaking his ghostly vocals, strangely distant and detached already, soaring above the others.

However, Syd's main contribution is of course in the songwriting department. His verse structure is short and pithy, using chromatic runs to suggest an edgy compulsion, before lengthy builds give way to tuneful chorus parts that wouldn't be out of place in a contemporary Beatles hit. All climaxes with a coda section that provides the perfect musical punchline.

But the music is only half the story. Barrett's score comes with a fine set of well-observed lyrics that

economically suggest the whole seedy saga of Arnold's underwear snatching habits, before delivering the denouement. Hardly a word is wasted, with strong images such as 'the tall mirror' and 'moonshine, washing line' lingering in the mind.

The 'takes two to know' line in the chorus also seems to imply that the writer is in on the act. We know Syd dressed extravagantly even by the standards of 1967, wore make-up and appeared publicly in drag on occasion, but it seems unlikely that he enjoyed the dubious delights of clothes line snatching too. I think we can reasonably assume that the line is either a joke on himself, or intended to suggest that either the jurors who sentence Arnold, or we the listeners, are as pervy as him in our voyeuristic excitement.

According to Roger Waters, the story was based on real life from their youth in Cambridge:

"Both my mother and Syd's had students as lodgers because there was a girl's college up the road, so there were constantly great lines of bras and knickers on our washing lines. Arnold or whoever he was, took bits and pieces off the washing lines."

Syd gave his version in a contemporary interview with the *Melody Maker*:

"I was in Cambridge at the time I started writing the song. I pinched the line about 'moonshine washing line' from Rog, our bass guitarist - because he has an enormous washing line in the back garden of his house. Then I thought Arnold must have a hobby, and it went from there."

True life or not, the track was recorded at the Sound Techniques Studio in Chelsea on February 27th 1967, less than a month after the band had turned professional, with Joe Boyd in the producer's chair and John Wood engineering. At the same sessions, a B-side, 'Candy & A Currant Bun' (originally entitled 'Let's Roll Another One'), a 16 minute version of 'Interstellar Overdrive' and an experimental instrumental, 'Nick's Boogie' were also recorded.

According to Nick Mason, the original idea had been to record the best six songs they had at the time, but as it turned out, 'Arnold Layne' and a B-side, 'Candy & A Currant Bun' were so good, it was decided to tout them around as a single, with the intention of getting a record deal.

It worked. EMI signed them for an advance of £5,000, a record sum at the time. The single was released on March 11th and a reception was held on April Fool's day at EMI House in Manchester Square to launch the band. Rigorous hyping pushed it into the charts,

despite it being banned by Radio London, yet strangely, not the BBC. It reached No. 20. Reaction was mixed, but the NME got it right with their snappy review:

"Off-beat weird lyric and blockbusting sound. Great organ work, twangs and spine chilling build. With all their publicity this could well be a hit."

To accompany the record, an excellent black and white promotional film was made, showing the group larking about by the seaside with a tailor's dummy dressed up in a suit. It was due for broadcast on Top Of The Pops on the 6th of April, but sadly, it was never shown, as by this time the single was sliding in the charts. It was however shown on French TV at the time and was recently exhumed for the 'Omnibus' documentary on BBC 2 last November.

'Arnold Layne' was later included on the 'Relics' compilation (in a ghastly mono reprocessed for stereo mix) and the European 'Masters Of Rock' set. EMI also generously included the original version on a freebie CD in the bloated Pink Floyd box set.

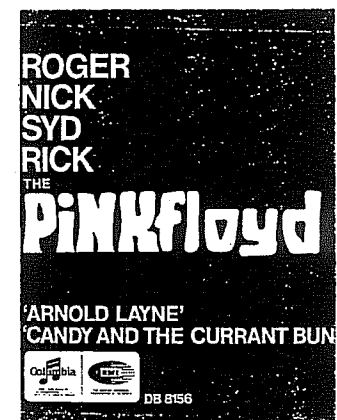
There is also an abbreviated acetate version available on bootleg. Allegedly, this is the version that got the Floyd their deal with EMI, the thinking being that A & R men wouldn't bother to

listen to a middle-8. It also seems to be slightly faster and punkier than the single, though clearly mixed from the same original tapes.

One other version exists, recorded live at the Star Club, Copenhagen on the 10th of September 1967. The performance is much slower, indeed almost clumsy compared to the record and the crisp delivery of the original is dragged out with a 'freak-out' section in the middle that doesn't really fit. Worst of all, the vocal is lost completely, either due to poor recording quality or the weakness of Barrett's voice by this stage.

There may also be a recording somewhere of the version that was broadcast on BBC Radio in April 1967. This has never appeared on bootleg to my knowledge.

None of these alternative cuts could be better than the original though. Almost thirty years on, it still remains one of Syd Barrett's and Pink Floyd's finest moments.



BOOKS etc:

PINK FLOYD - THE VISUAL DOCUMENTARY **Miles & Andy Mabbett** **(Omnibus Press)**

With the honourable exception of Rick Sanders' brief but immensely entertaining Futura paperback, the 1980 edition of 'The Visual Documentary' was the first major book on the Floyd, and as I recall, essential reading in the Sixth Form Common Room at the time.

Updated once and now twice, it still remains one of the best accounts of the Pink Floyd odyssey, starting with their first gig at the Countdown Club in Palace Gate, London back in 1965 and finishing with the retinal overload of the Division Bell Tour last year.

Visually, you can't argue with it. The photos are excellent all the way through, from the comprehensive collection of early Barrett-era Floyd studies, to the present line-up, looking much more like the partners of a high powered City legal firm than any stereotypical 'rock n'roll' band - Floyds of London indeed.

However, the opportunity to revise the text with the full details of the Floyd's early career (available in the 'The Amazing Pudding' and other sources) has been missed. Instead, the authors have simply brought the book up to date with a new section at the end, covering the events of recent years.

But this is nit-picking. If you haven't already got a copy, then get the new souped up edition. If you have one of the earlier versions, then you'll need to be seriously into 'The Division Bell' to consider investing twice.

PINK FLOYD - LEARNING TO FLY **Chris Welch** **(Castle)**

With Chris Welch's name on the front, I was expecting a lot from this book, but unfortunately, 'Learning To Fly' is little better than a cut and paste job with very little new material.

Although there are a few photos here that I haven't seen before, the overall look is spoilt by poor art direction, the whole package looking as early 70's as Roger Waters' flares. In short, a disappointing general Floyd biog.

BARRETT HOMES.

During research for an article on Syd Barrett's London (see 'On The Trail Of The Piper', in Issue 2 of 'Chapter 24'), a film's worth of evocative photographs was taken. Some appeared with the feature, but many great shots remained in the archive due to lack of space. Appearing for the first time overleaf, are four of these images, each showing a real-life location from the Barrett Mythos.

The first picture shows a view of Egerton Court, a distinctive block of flats directly opposite South Kensington Underground. Barrett stayed here after being rescued from Mad Jock and Mad Sue, the notorious Richmond Hill Acid Fiends. Sadly it was too late. According to one astonished visitor at the time:

"...there was this terrible noise. It sounded like water pipes rattling and shaking. 'God,' I said, 'What on earth is that?' They all started giggling and said: 'Oh, that's just Syd on a bad trip again. We always lock him in the linen cupboard'."

The shot beneath (and the back cover picture) shows The Wetherby Mansions, just off Earl's Court Square, where the 'The Madcap Laughs' album sleeve was shot. It looks genteel enough now, but

back in 1969, it was a different story:

"That flat was an absolute hovel...your typical hippy-type hang-out - washing up never done, dog shit in the corner, cat piss on the floor and Sunday papers all over the place. In those days most people's flats looked like that but Syd's was particularly raunchy."

On the top right is the Chelsea Cloisters, an exclusive, but rather grim-looking building, on Sloane Avenue. Here, Syd would spend his days sprawled in front of the television, 'in perfect isolation'. A visitor described the scene:

"When we got there I found all the curtains were drawn, no windows were open and there was this horrible smell. In the middle of the room was a huge television set."

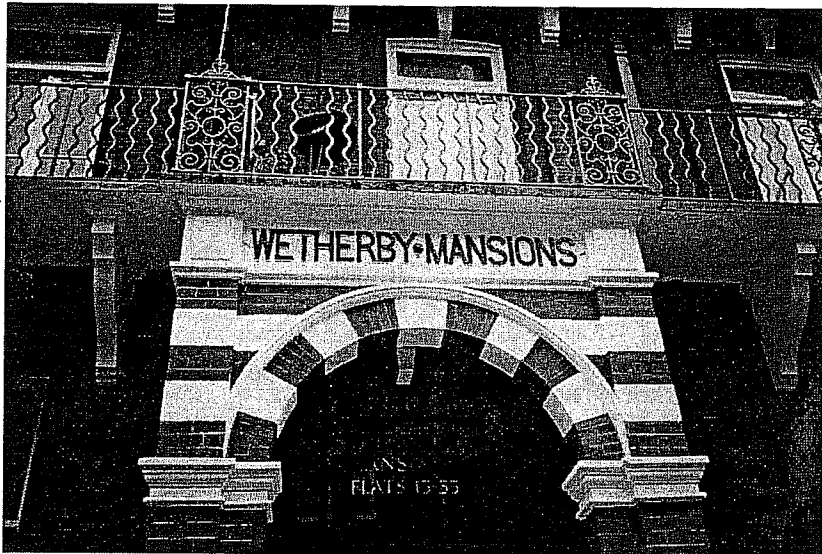
However he did turn out to spook the Floyd, for the legendary encounter during the recording of 'Wish You Were Here'.

The final shot shows the Marlborough Arms, a pub just around the corner in Elystan St., where Syd Barrett was often spotted drinking vast quantities of Guinness:

"...we'd see him sitting over in the corner as if in a dream. He was on his own all the time...always on his own."



1
2



1
2



THROUGH WAREHOUSE EYES.

Sixtyseven is legend and media recreation, but it was also a very good year. Spring and summer were the best, maybe Spring best of all because of the rising curve of expectation. That Spring flowers had sprung up in order to be available to hand to policemen; a lot of people were still trying to love policemen, who were still called fuzz, not pigs. "Give Him a Flower" sang Arthur Brown, with a cockney, sarcastic cuteness that went back to the Kinks and stayed part of the sixtyseven scene until submerged in the welter of full-blown psychedelia. London was buzzing - you knew if people were your friends just because of the clothes they wore. You'd see a Lord Kitchener's Valet brassbutton jacket, a chiffon scarf or a police cape - that was your culture, just walking by on the other side of the road. You could crash out with it in the squat at 144 Piccadilly, or at the Arts Lab in Charing Cross Road.

But getting accurate about it presents serious technical problems, first of all because the whole culture was about it being now, this instant, and who cares about dates and labels and all that external referential shit anyway? If you could remember all that stuff afterwards it's just saying

that in another way you Weren't There.

So this stuff locked inside my warehouse eyes is fragmentary. Another problem is that the word on the gigs was happenings. The implication was that the music and any other available stimulant was going to provide liftoff for something unimaginable. There was the half-expressed idea that something would ignite, that you'd all be changed in some way, that maybe the happening would never end but would flow into other events, all beyond the edge of possibility. Something surreal, mindblowing, would tip you over the edge and would spread like a virus. A sense that legends were only just out of reach, like the legend of the freak who took so much acid that he never came down (Barrett maybe?), but just settled permanently in another dimension.

The 14 hour Technicolour Dream at Ally Pally, organised by International Times, is now remembered as the supergig of the era. I was well prepared, so well I remember mostly only hazy impressions. The Soft Machine's later albums fit best against my memory of the sound - long, tangled impro lines you could get lost in. Also there, I'm pretty sure, Pineapple Truck, 117, The Move, but I'm less sure about Mick Farren's Social Deviants, later just Deviants, later still Pink

Fairies. There were definitely stalls selling things like streamers, because I bought some that turned up in my pocket next morning, and that confirms somehow the atmosphere of mad but still seedy fairground. It hardly mattered who was playing because the acoustics were as awesome as the vast, complex, fuzzydark space it was all happening in. The sound was enormous and vague, a melange that seemed to surround you so completely that you could never get a perspective on it, never pin it down, but only swim about inside it. The space was so huge it never quite filled up - around the stage the crowd was thick, and you never actually saw the bands unless you got stuck into that, but many stood and wandered darker, pillared regions, where you'd unexpectedly glimpse towers with lights on, or the huge boards with slowly mutating blobs and bubbles called lightshows which I think I must have seen there for the first time. These didn't move fast. You'd watch for ages while a great bubble did nothing, then the whole thing would divide suddenly, like an amoeba having a peak reproductive experience.

Certainly my overall impression is that the psychedelic sound had come of age. The sound was awesome in size, but out in limboland it was so mushy that I remember having the impression that maybe two bands were playing at once. Nobody in my

hearing said anything over a pa about who played what (it's possible I just wasn't listening), so if you weren't hanging in near the stage you'd have needed to be already a connoisseur to pick them out, all of which added to the overall impression of amorphousness. There were one or two clearer musical moments. The sound of many voices which all seemed to change direction at the same time, cosmic harmonies, and the insistent funky rhythm with long, vaguer guitar and melodyline that seemed to float over it. It's easy to read into this impression that this might have been the first time I heard "Astronomy Domine", or the Machine in overdrive, but easy too to remember into it things like Peter Green's "Supernatural" that I'm pretty sure weren't there.

My peak moment came early. I was with a group of people but we wandered about losing and finding one another. I saw this man standing very caftanned, beaded, moustached, grannyglassed; and I knew I recognised him, and the name came fast - Lennon. It didn't seem right that this cat was just standing there without entourage in the middle of dark space. First, I was in no state to trust to mechanisms of objective perception, and second I'd always figured him as being taller than his about five-four or five (legends are always large). I wanted to go up to him and corroborate, say

something stoned like "Hey John, man, good to see you, but tell me if you're really John, please, John". I stood a few feet from him for quite some time lacking the bottle for this ripping conversational gambit, and convinced myself it wasn't him after all. I wandered off and found Simon, and we went back to the spot. He agreed it was Lennon, but by this time there were about fifty people all standing around him, a good impression of Stonehenge on a quiet night, all just gazing, the same cogs slowly rotating.

That night was the nearest I got to happening. The world of album-covers and the world of me, contiguous, coincidental. After he was dead I remember wishing I'd said Hi to him or just nodded in a human way, like welcome to the dark spaces between the pillars, but really talking wouldn't have been possible anyway. At some stage later I went outside, and the building seemed to be moving with the wailing, formless sound, as if it were breathing. It was a cool Spring night, and the music, from that distance, scored patterns in the air. That had to be enough.

It must have been later, early summer I think, that I saw the Floyd at the Roundhouse (I'm not even sure that I literally saw them at all at Ally Pally). The night was warm and our electric satin shirts stuck to our armpits. This was a much less authentically weird gig



than the Dream: the musicians were right there in front of you, the crowd medium density, urbane, more of a bunch of good-timers than the astral travellers at Ally Pally. People talked about joy poppers and day trippers; it was the first time it struck me that psychedelics didn't have to be a cosmic-meaning part of the universe big yearning Aldous Huxley thing, but might just be Fun (didn't someone try to kid us that Fun was the one thing that money can't buy?).

Fun was on sale at the Roundhouse, anyway, dispensed by afghan-coated, metallic-shaded rats-tail haired bad-tooth guys who drew you into corners and then tried to haggle on the basis that you were desperate and they weren't. Hamburgers were on sale too; generally, I found buying a hamburger a simpler, clearer process. This, I think, was the first time I really heard the Floyd, rather than just got lost inside the sound. I'm fairly sure I heard something about "Neptune, Titan, stars can frighten". It wasn't Highway 61 Revisited yet in terms

of lyrics, but the music added a nice foreboding. Later - was it "Arnold Layne" or was "Corporal Clegg" really that early? - I caught that note of cockney jeering sarcasm which seemed to add a note of continuity and gave the music a social dimension. This was British rock'n'roll.

I think there were four visual screens that night. Two, flanking the stage, had the lightshows that still hadn't been persuaded to move with anything like greased slickness. The other two were further back, behind the crowd, and films were being projected onto them. One of the films they showed was fascinating; it was just two images superimposed: there was the gyrating pelvis of a woman, just hips and crotch moving sensuously while, not in scale, a man dressed in white, his feet just about where her crotch was, did pushups, kneebends, arm-stretches, so his whole body mimed the in-out of sex, a living organ, weird and ridiculously pompous in his white day-glo.

It was sexy and strange. The music was much more together (or maybe it's just that I was). Somebody else I'm in touch with says they pulled some sort of chariot across the stage, but I must have blinked. For me the happening element came at the end: they had lots of bags of flour and they threw it over us, so the air was dusty and bits of people

turned white. They did this very deadpan, moving frontstage to chuck the stuff as if emptying out a bin - no laughter, no reaction at all, a withdrawn priesthood of weird. "Why are they throwing flour over us?" a bright girl asked near me. I didn't say anything, but I knew what the answer should be: "Something is happening to you, and you don't know what it is, do you, Mizziz Jones?"

So the happening finally happened - the authentic, Dada gesture. But it came, already, too late. It didn't send us raging into the streets to subvert the structure of reality by perpetrating acts of insidious meaninglessness: instead, after our moment of defamiliarization, we all went home to cookers, toothpaste, lawnmowers. The Flower Power summer was inches away - Sergeant Pepper, free concerts, being sure to wear a joss stick in your hair - but the thing was already defined; already the gigs were called love-ins, no longer happenings. Retrospectively, Ally Pally was the night madness was in the air and anything was possible - but it could only happen once. After that, you just learned to expect the unexpected.

Adrian Eckersley 1995

Mr Eckersley is a Lecturer, a Cancerian and a Stakwart Member of the Arthur Machen Society.

*14 Hour Technicolour Dream - 29/4/67
Pink Floyd at the Roundhouse - 9/7/67*

GIVE IT TO THE SOFT BOYS.

Unlike most of their New Wave contemporaries, the Soft Boys took their inspiration not from Iggy Pop or the New York Dolls, but from John Lennon, Syd Barrett and Captain Beefheart. As a result, the critics of the time dismissed them as either old hippies or overgrown students, thus missing out on some of the weirdest pop psychedelia ever committed to vinyl.

The embryonic Soft Boys came together in Cambridge towards the end of 1976, with a line-up that included Robyn Hitchcock on vocals and guitar, Alan Davies (soon to be replaced by Kimberley Rew) on more guitars, Andy Metcalfe on bass and Morris Windsor on drums.

In 1979, they released their debut album, 'A Can Of Bees', independently on their own Two Crabs label. Unfortunately, it turned out to be more of a curate's egg, and judging from the number of different versions, the band weren't convinced by it either. Predictably, it sold few copies. However, recording continued on material which was never actually released at the time, but which later emerged as the 'Invisible Hits' LP. Ironically, these out-takes form a much stronger set than 'A Can Of Bees', with such

delights as 'Have A Heart Betty (I'm Not Fireproof)', rubbing shoulders with the unforgettable 'Rock 'N' Roll Toilet'.

However, their greatest moment was undoubtedly the 'Underwater Moonlight' album, originally released back in 1980. Hitchcock's songwriting was at its very best on 'Kingdom Of Love', 'Queen Of Eyes' and the extremely psychedelic title track, songs that all made full use of the Soft Boys' sense of light and shade. But sadly, the LP sold little better than its predecessor and discouraged by their lack of success, the band broke up in January 1981.

Yet, like a character from one of Hitchcock's songs, the ghost of the Soft Boys has refused to go away. Ryko reissued the three original Soft Boys albums on CD (all with generous servings of bonus tracks), and then a bumper 38 track box set, 'The Soft Boys 1976-81'. The band even reformed for a few well received gigs last year, with the promise of more to come.

If you're new to their work, the 'Underwater Moonlight' CD (now including a superb cover of Syd's 'Vegetable Man') is definitely the best point of access. As for Robyn Hitchcock's on-going solo career, with or without the Egyptians, we'll be reviewing the new CD remasters of his 1980's albums (10 in total!) in the next issue of your super soaraway 'Eskimo Chain'.



The Soft Boys



EAR CANDY:

SPIRITUALIZED Pure Phase (Dedicated)

When the first Spiritualised album, 'Laser Guided Melodies', came out in 1992, it was like a bolt from the blue. Although they had formed from the fall-out of the excellent Spacemen 3, no-one could have reasonably expected the new music to be even better than the old stuff.

But excellent it was, with a combination of Velvet Underground drones, orchestral arrangements and blissed-out production values, producing a new psychedelia that was not retro, but 100% Nineties. With 'Pure Phase', they've done it again. Although the new CD lacks the startling originality of the old, they've pressed their magic spangle button once more to create another spaced-out mantra.

This time round, the sound is a little more 'live', reflecting more accurately the 'Sister Ray' inclinations of their stage act, but the effect is the same. Opening with the hypnotic 'Medication', it also boasts the soul-inflected 'Good Times', the summer chill-out anthem 'Lay

Back In The Sun' and the uplifting 'All Of My Tears', the latter propelled skywards by the surging strings of the Balanescu Quartet. There's also the majestic sound wash of their recent single 'Let It Flow' and the flute decorated space blues of 'The Slide Song'.

But for the full effect, be sure to seek out the special limited edition version, presented in a sleek melamine case, styled like a make-up compact. Great to hold, beautiful to behold, slacker wombodelia has never sounded so good!

VARIOUS ARTISTS Pebbles Vol. 3: The Acid Gallery (AIP)

Now available for the first time on CD, the 'Pebbles' series originally kicked off in 1979, in the style of Lenny Kaye's much-acclaimed, but sadly long out of print, 'Nuggets' album. Between them, these compilations helped create a posthumous cult for the long forgotten US garage punk bands who sprung up between '65 and '68, imitating the British Invasion R n'B of the Stones, the Beatles and the Kinks.

Ironically, these bands are now a major influence in their own

right, inspiring such fringe heroes as Julian Cope, The Cramps and the Damned. It's easy to see why. In the 'Pebbles' world, adolescent aggression is everything, A testosterone fuelled rush, with or without extra stimulants, that transforms even the most basic two chord thrash into a sound that is genuinely explosive.

Take the Bees for example: their 'Voices Green and Purple' says more about the acid experience in two minutes than the entire Grateful Dead back-catalogue. Or the Monocles' 'Spider and the Fly', a frenzied, psychedelic insect nightmare. Then there's 'Diamond Mine' by Dave Diamond and the Higher Elevation, in which the crazed singer exhorts you to, "witness the flight of the precious, peanut butter angel of love!"

You might think it would be difficult to maintain this standard, but the 'Acid Gallery' boasts another twenty such psychedelic delights, from the likes of the Driving Stupid, the Third Bardo and the Crystal Chandelier.

The recording quality is consistently low-fi mono and the arrangements are basic to say the least, but what these records have is energy by the bucket load and a quality of

innocence and discovery rarely heard in today's po-faced music industry. Not to mention their experimental attitude, psyched up with a heady dose of genuine weirdness.

If you're interested in investigating the twilight zone of the garage punks, you could do a lot worse than this collection - before moving on to investigate the other 'Pebbles' collections, or Rhino's more pop orientated 'Nuggets' samplers.

EAT STATIC Implant (Bark)

New electronic music doesn't come much better than this. Aimed at the head as much as the feet, 'Implant' is a solid-state blast of spacey techno music, pitched in a high orbit somewhere between ambient and trance.

Brewed up by a breakaway faction from crusty festival-rockers, Ozric Tentacles, it sounds like exactly what you'd expect from people with a Hawkwind mindset playing with the latest technology. If you're looking for a good entree into this sort of music, check this out. With titles such as 'Dzhopa Dream' and 'Uforic Undulance', who could resist?

ENJOY THE FULL MULTI-MEDIA TRIP

As well as a zine, Eskimo Chain is also a new musical project that aims to carry on where Syd Barrett's Pink Floyd left off - preferably without going insane.

Combining modern and retro instrumentation, the idea is to start from the vibes of 'Interstellar Overdrive' to create a new 'free sound'. An impressionistic space jazz, with a healthy dash of punk and psych-pop, to keep the spirit of UFO alive.

The first emanation is an album of original music inspired by the

never-recorded titles in the Floyd canon (see article above), and features the following:

In The Beechwoods (Happening 44 - H44004)

Side A: i can tell
flapdoodle dealing
in the beechwoods
pink

Side B: stoned alone
just before you
disappear
snowing

Copies (cassette format only) are available for £4.75 (PO/Cheque to 'I.Smith'), from the editorial address. They are currently working on further new material to be released on their own cassette label, Happening 44.



YOU CAN'T BUY THESE IN W.H. SMITHS:

CHAPTER 24 - John Kelly, 101 Amersham Road, Terriers, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 5AD UK.
Punked-up Syd zine with attitude.

THE AMAZING PUDDING - Andy Mabbett, 61 Meynell House, Browns Green, Birmingham B20 1BE UK.
Much lamented ex-Floyd zine. Plenty of back-issues still available.

FREAKBEAT - PO Box 1288, Gerrard's Cross, Bucks SL9 0AN UK.
Full-on psychedelic reading, with record label to match.

ECLIPSED - Uwe Goller, Buchenackerstrasse 22, 63768 Wenighosbach, Germany.
Quality German-language Floyd zine, with extensive boot info.

BRAIN DAMAGE - PO Box 385, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB9 5DZ UK.
State of the art international Floyd bible.

HAWKZINE - Dietrich Pless, Schillerstrasse 9, D-65817, Eppstein, Germany.
Interesting German/English language zine, covering all Hawk news.

PINK COLLECTORS - Alberto Durgante, Borgo Treviso 120, 31033 Castlefranco, V. TO (TV), Italy.
Friendly Italian-language Floyd zine. Mostly post-Waters Floyd.

AVALLAUNIUS - Rita Tait, 19 Cross St, Caerleon, Gwent NP6 1AF UK.
High brow literary fanzine, dedicated to Arthur Machen, the Flower-Tunicked Priest of Nightmare.

REACTION IN G - Luca Baldini, Via Riccardo Galli 9, 20148 Milan, Italy.
Italian-language Syd-era Floyd zine. Also covers new Italian psych.

EARLY FLOYD VOL. 1 - David Housden, Stonecross House, Fitton End Road, Gorefield, Wisbech, Cambs PE13 4NQ UK.
Interesting scrapbook of early Floyd articles and ephemera.