

The Passions - "Hunted" (fiction).

This starts with a snappy drumbeat and a fluid bass prodding and poking about. These are joined by a restrained lead guitar and the reggae riff takes over. Barbara Gogan's haunted vocals add to the atmosphere, as does the careful use of echo, to give the whole thing a white reggae/dub feel. This single succeeds in being both entertaining and yet slightly eerie and the chorus/hook line is catchy enough to give it a chance as a commercial success if it gets the airplay. An excellent single from an interesting new band who we will probably hear more of in the future.

T.W.

Ruefrex - "One by One"

Ruefrex are an Irish band and this single is released on Northern Ireland's "Good Vibrations" record label.

"One by One" starts with a Magazine type introduction and the strained vocals sound like a new wave Bob Dylan. After about a minute there is a pause in the playing and the tempo speeds up. The vocals become more emotional and are at times emphasised by the use of a second vocalist as an echo. The drums become more frantic with vigorous use of the cymbals. Towards the end an electric violin breaks in for a short while before the vocals once again intone to end the track.

Although the full meaning of the lyrics is slightly confusing we still recommend this single.

THE CLASH - Friars Aylesbury.

Standing in the bar and somebody shouts Ian Dury is on stage. On entering the hall I see the hunched figure of Ian Dury with his marvellous backing band The Blockheads. They play favourites such as "What a Waste", "Hit me with your Rhythm Stick" and the impressive "Sweet Gene Vincent" and encore with "Clever Trevor". They were very well received and with the powerful rhythm section you can't help but dance to them.

The Clash are disappointing. Energy, sweat and gob exudes from band and audience alike. Clash put a lot into it but, probably due to an at times atrocious sound, they are frustrating. Joe Strummer occasionally is reduced to turning away from the crowd and grimacing. Songs like "London Calling" and "White man in Hammersmith Palais" are given the same decibel treatment as stronger songs such as "Brand new Cadillac". The band, who seemed upset by the poor sound, only came back for one encore and then left the stage for good.



X-HIBITION

X-hibition I recently discovered playing Kettering's Corn Market Hall. They are Alan Ayre, writer vocals and guitar, who comes from Leeds & Terry Kerr, bass and occasional vocals, from Luton. They are at present without a drummer as he left because of personal differences musically and direction wise. Their first gig was at Bishops Stortford leisure centre on the 31st August 1979 and they have also played Stroud Subscription Rooms supporting Capital Letters. Their immediate priority is to find a drummer and they will then proceed to record and cut their debut single. Gigs are also planned for the Nags Head at Wollaston, Kettering Corn Market Hall and an invited return to Stroud.

The three tracks I reviewed are full of potential. The first two "No looking back" and "Time devours" deal with the wasting away of time and have the obvious message of get on with it. "No looking back" is memorable for its use of the fluid bass as a second guitar. "Time devours" starts and ends with a distinct Adam and the Ants/Zerox Machine guitar sound. On all three tracks the lyrics are sharp and definitive and although sung with conviction they remain clear and decisive. "Stranded in the City", the final track, compares the city with a desert. The loneliness, the abandonment in a sea of people, the struggle for survival. Alan Ayre exposes the problems of city life. The guitar is brought to the fore and there is a cutting break towards the end of the track. An overtly telling piece that deals thoroughly with a subject without ever going over the top.