

# CLEANERS FROM VENUS





P 003-Jo-91

## Foreword

To write about the Cleaners from Venus, is to write about 10 years of my life. It started off as two overgrown schoolboys making crude tapes in a living-room with borrowed, homemade instruments and sometimes domestic objects. Lawrence "Lol" Elliott and myself were and still are very firm friends. We were both Cleaners in a restaurant, we were both musicians and writers. I wrote poems, Lol wrote some plays. We both became gardeners. We were as close as brothers and even today there exists a sort of telepathy between us. This was the essence of the Cleaners. Even when things got slightly lost, later on in our career, the original spark and ideas we had were still there in some small quantity.

No-one ever left or got thrown out of the Cleaners. The Cleaners from Venus was an idea. The idea was that you said "Let's do a song. Let's write it now. Let's have some fun-it mustn't get serious." Whoever happened to be around was a Cleaner from Venus for that song or that tape. If they didn't play on the following tape, it didn't mean they weren't in the Cleaners. I took this to its own extreme in spring of 1988 when The Cleaners from Venus toured Germany and I didn't go. The record company didn't see the idea so clearly.

A big part of the Cleaners was our listeners. We didn't have fans we had listeners. They wrote lots of letters and sometimes even got to Wivenhoe and had a drink in the pub with me. During the Falklands War, a radio operator on a ship was listening to a Cleaners from Venus tape in between combat periods. We had been the soundtrack for his war. I still have the letter from him.

A lot of the time, life was quite idyllic. I washed-up in a restaurant part-time, looked after a big house and lots of animals and made tapes. Sometimes there was poverty..not by third world standards, but nevertheless there were bad times when I simply didn't have the money or place to make music. Other times, towards the end, a mixture of exhaustion, illness and misunderstandings with the music biz made me angry and bitter. At times I was just a gardener and it was the only thing I could bear to do.

There wasn't another group like The Cleaners from Venus. We had our own world. Giles Smith gave The Cleaners a new lease



of life from late 1985 through to 1988. He is now a respected journalist who writes about the arts. Nelson (Peter Nice) played bass on our last two l.p.s and was one half of The Brotherhood of Lizards with me. We toured England by bicycle in 1989 and early 1990 and had an unforgettable time. He now plays bass in New Model Army and you might say I <sup>am</sup> quite proud of him.

My behaviour has not always been perfect in this story. I've been indecisive, erratic and often torn between a sort of punk-hippy idealism and my own occasional ego-mania. The fact that I'm still such good friends with Lol, Giles and Nelson, attests more to their patience and belief in me than it does to me as a good bloke. I think I may have been quite difficult at times.

There may or may not be other Cleaners tapes in the future. I can never get rid of music, but at the moment I am becoming slightly better known as a rock poet. I have a regular poem in The Independent each month, and I have a small book out. I'm happy with words at the moment and I'm giving music a rest. Sometimes I listen to the old cassettes and I feel vaguely guilty that I should be doing something. For the time being however, everything I wanted to say, musically was done with The Cleaners from Venus.

I hope this book, which Joachim has so lovingly put together will give you a clear picture of what The Cleaners from Venus was and how life was during that very rainy decade, the 1980s. In retrospect, I think The Cleaners general optimism and wistfulness was a direct reaction to the times we lived through. It was a much more fraught and dangerous time then, than it is now. Who would have predicted two years ago that Thatcher would be gone and the Berlin wall would come down? Miracles can happen but you have to believe they will. Maybe there will be another Cleaners tape. Thanks for listening.

Martin Newell



# Disc/Tape-ography

## T A P E S

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THE STRAY TROLLEYS - BARRICADES AND ANGELS

POW 003 • Recorded 1979/80 Released 1982

THE SECRET DREAMS OF A KITCHEN PORTER

NOW 004 • Recorded 1980 Released 1982

BLOW AWAY YOUR TROUBLES

WOW 002 • Released June 1981

ON ANY NORMAL MONDAY

ROW 001 • Released April 1982

MIDNIGHT CLEANERS

MAD 005 • Released December 1982

IN THE GOLDEN AUTUMN

FRAU 006 • Released August 1983

TWO FOR THE WINTER /cassingle

007 • Released December 1983

UNDER WARTIME CONDITIONS

TAO 008 • Released May 1984

SONGS FOR A FALLOW LAND

009 • Released May 1985

LIVING WITH VICTORIA GREY

010 • Released April 1986

MIND HOW YOU GO

011 • Released March 1987 • Germany only /Jarmusic

APRIL FOOL

012 • Released 1987 • Germany only /Jarmusic

BROTHERHOOD OF LIZARDS

BRUV 1 • Released November 1988

NUMBER THIRTEEN

013 • Released June 1990

## RECORDS

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### UNDER WARTIME CONDITIONS / LP

Modell Records (EFA 1671) • Released September 1985

### GOING TO ENGLAND / LP

Ammunition Communication Rec. (CLEAN LP 1)  
Released May 1987 • in Germany released on RCA

### ILLYA KURYAKIN LOOKED AT ME / 7"

b/w BLACK & WHITE & BLUE ALL OVER  
Amm. Comm. Rec. (JANGLE 1) • Released 1987

### ILLYA KURYAKIN LOOKED AT ME / 12"

b/w BLACK & WHITE / ALBIONS DAUGHTER / ILLYA KURYAKIN (FULL VERSION)  
Amm. Comm. Rec. (JANGLE 1T) • Released 1987

### LIVING WITH VICTORIA GREY / 7"

b/w SUNDAY AFTERNOON  
Amm. Comm. Rec. (JANGLE 2) • Released 1987

### LIVING WITH VICTORIA GREY / 12"

b/w SUNDAY AFTERNOON / SHE'S CHECKING YOU OUT  
Amm. Comm. Rec. (JANGLE 2T) • Released 1987

### MERCURY GIRL / 7"

b/w GAMMA RAY BLUE  
Amm. Comm. Rec. (JANGLE 3) • Released 1988

### MERCURY GIRL / 12"

b/w GAMMA RAY BLUE / THE ICEBERG & UNICORN  
Amm. Comm. Rec. (JANGLE 3T) • Released 1988

### TOWN AND COUNTRY / LP

RCA (PL71651) • Released May 1988 / Germany only

### LET'S GET MARRIED / 7" + 12"

b/w GAMMA RAY BLUE • RCA (PB41835) • Released May 1988 / Germany only

### BROTHERHOOD OF LIZARDS - LIZARDLAND / LP

Deltic Records (DELT L.P. 6) • Released October 1989

### CAPTAIN SENSIBLE / BROTHERHOOD OF LIZARDS / 7" + 12"

SMASH IT UP (CAPT SENSIBLE) / MARKET DAY (BROTHERHOOD OF LIZARDS)  
12" had CARMOSINE as an extra track (by BROTHERHOOD...)  
Deltic Records (DELT 5) • Released May 1990



## Barricades and angels (1979/80)

### secret dreams of a kitchen porter

I don't wanna dance now  
for the bolshoi ballet  
I never did anyway  
just liked the girls  
I don't wanna have a say  
in kulture with a small k.  
I never did anyway  
it's a different world

the secret dreams of a kitchen porter  
the secret dreams of a boy

I know I never can afford  
to live like a slum-lord  
it's back to the draining board  
for a kitchen boy  
sink-shock/dish-pan  
gonna wear away my hands  
but the power of a kiss can  
take me away

the secret dreams of a kitchen porter  
the secret dreams of a boy



## The secret dreams of a kitchen porter (1980)



## Blow away your troubles (1981)



### marilyn on a train

**I**hen you see her on a station  
brightening up your deadly afternoon  
later on you'll think about her  
in the quietness of your lonely room  
do you hear her in a backstreet  
calling out in echoes just to you  
do you see her in a taxi  
painting town another shade of blue  
does she make you choose your clothes  
that everytime you see her walking by  
you'd disappear into some sunset  
when you think you maybe caught her eye  
then again she's someone's daughter  
you may never know her private mind  
still you want to hold and keep her  
live with her until the day you die

(chorus:) she's like marilyn  
marilyn on a train  
she's like marilyn  
marilyn on a train



## a blue wave

**S**he's cutting something nearly every day  
the landed gentry back her all the way  
and something's happened in the u.s. of a.  
the phones are ringing there'll be hell to pay

got no time to dream  
it's a blue wave  
it's a blue wave  
and it's . . . here comes mr. clean  
it's a blue wave  
washing washing washing all over you

this is the moment when the dancing stops  
but does it really have to be this way  
they're lining up along the eastern bloc  
and none of us have really got a say  
well have you ever met a russian kid  
I can't remember if I have or not  
and would you have to kill him if you did  
cos that could be the only chance you got

(repeat chorus)



# On any normal monday (1982)

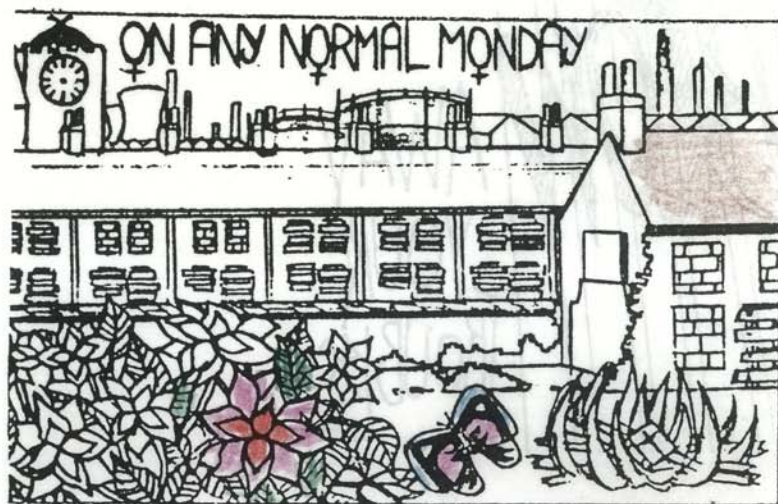
## be an 'idiot pop star

**h**ey gringo - your sister is in my oven  
welcome to the very fabulous world of hipness and lies  
you can spend all your money and never actually open up your eyes  
mmmm - I speak of the synthesiser table cloth opera singing mentality  
say hello to money and goodbye to reality

be an idiot pop star  
be an idiot pop star, be an idiot pop star  
a popular boy

you don't have to write a song  
or ever learn to play guitar  
as long as you take the time to learn your cocktails off by heart  
collect another thousand pounds for switching on your drum machine  
or turn shopping list into a concept album scheme

be an idiot pop star, be an idiot pop star  
be an idiot pop star  
a popular boy







## Midnight cleaners (1982)

### time in vain

**Y**ou're going out with my best friend  
 I know that friendship's going to end  
 I should not come round and see you  
 but I come round anyway  
 if you left before I told you  
 it could never be the same  
 if I never got to hold you  
 all that time would be in vain

time in vain . . . time in vain

he doesn't treat you like he should  
 I'd make it better if I could  
 I can't wait a second longer  
 if you stay another day  
 I will come round in the morning  
 say you won't turn me away  
 we'll go walking out together  
 and we'll never have to waste

time in vain . . . time in vain

### wretched street

**T**his is a wretched street  
 in the sixties it was quite neat  
 now recession's got them beat  
 so they stay behind their doors  
 this is a wretched street  
 people walking drag their feet  
 in the cold or in the heat  
 they stay behind their doors  
 and there's nothing to leave for

this is a wretched street  
 these are wretched times  
 the sun unfolds but it doesn't shine  
 nothing else to do all day but drink or fight  
 the commies on the corner put the world to rights  
 and the anarchists are crazy  
 but I think I might just join them

this is a wretched street  
 from a window hear them scream  
 less room for you to dream  
 with a gino overlord  
 this is a wretched street  
 all the kids look really mean  
 must be hell being seventeen  
 must drive you out your gourd  
 seventeen and bored

this is a wretched street  
 these are wretched times  
 the sun unfold but it never shines  
 nothing else to do all day but drink or fight  
 the commies on the corner put the world to rights  
 and the anarchists are crazy but I think I might  
 just join them

## midnight cleaners

**S**till grey morning  
wednesday  
half light november  
no birdsong  
trees dripping  
a distant roar of traffic  
from another busier street  
and we are the midnight cleaners  
coming back from the night shift  
been cleaning offices  
high up in the city all night  
these early morning people  
on buses  
looking at us like we're some kind of aliens  
I don't trust them  
on the way back  
along down the high street  
past the television shop  
these commercials for all these idiot families  
the t.v. family-2 point 4 lovely children  
grinning . . . . . idiots  
all cleaning their teeth together  
or going to the building society  
to take their money out  
or live on one of those homes  
barratt homes . . . broselly homes . . . I dunno  
all the houses look the same  
these people don't actually exist  
nobody ever dies or gets cancer  
not in the adverts  
it's just a big lie  
I get really paranoid sometimes  
walking on further down the street  
past the cinema that they turned into a bingo hall  
like . . . if you imagine it was 200 years ago  
and people were soaked in gin  
instead of media lies . . . like they are now  
I mean would that make it any better  
I dunno but it's like in orwell's 1984  
you have this feeling constantly of being . . . .  
cheated



Monday 6.2.83

Dear Diary what a fab time I'm having. Well..Lol arrived about Saturday evening, we had a meal and drank a fair amount of blackberry wine as well as listening to each others new tapes. Later we retired to Annabels room , lit a fire and read each other stories by Saki . On Sunday I must say I felt a bit rough having not hit the sack till three a.m.

After another megabreakfast, Richard came round and we got down to the serious business of having our photos taken.

There was a bitterly cold wind blowing and Mick Wea ver accompanied us as we got snapped in a number of locations ranging from our garden up to the shipyard, Richard took about 20 frames so one of them should be good (I hope!).

After the pics we went next door to set up the gear. We rehearsed without any problems and set up for recording. It was just amazing how smoothly everything went. Monitoring was good. Recorded sound was good and we started laying tracks down very quickly. By about 5.30 we'd got seven backing tracks down on tape. Listening back to them today they sound just as good and I reckon at least four of them will be useable. Lol was a bit inhibited by the presence of a few members of Toby's band and in the end I had to ask them to leave us for a while. Apart from that the only hitch was this stupid bloody woman from across the way and down, who came and complained about the noise.

The idea of recording was for Lol to take copies of the backing trax back to Bath and for me to do my versions of them.....THEN when we've both constructed different versions of the songs....release a cassette with the results of his experiments on one side and mine on the other like...."The two sides of the Cleaners from Venus or something...aw I dunno...you know what I mean.

Last night, having put the gear away we had something to eat then went round to visit Keith and Kate who I haven't seen for ages. After that we went to the pub and on returning home found that Barry, Annabels ex-husband had arrived and was having a cuppa.



I made another cup and we sat down and chatted while I strung my guitar and generally prepared myself for the studio.

Today has been fine. We got to the studio on time and laid the backing tracks (bass and drums) down with such lack of problems it fair made my heart leap for joy. Things have gone so smoothly the last few days I really do find it difficult to believe....I'm just so happy!

I had a few minor problems duplicating the guitar sound on Only A Shadow but we managed to get the whole track down except for backing vocals.

Tony was talking to me along the lines of "C'mon Martin we should be able to get you a really big deal with Island or Virgin etc.etc. etc..." but I've heard all of this before. That's not to say that I think Tony's the same kind of bullshitter as are rife in the music biz but I just can't take that kind of thing seriously. In spite of this if someone could pull me off a deal with a largish company who were IDEAL LOGICALLY SOUND and.....who I could get personal treatment with, I might consider maybe signing with them, but at the moment.....

Anyway we'll see how this single goes...if it goes. At the present stage of the recording Tony's already talking about the Lennon song I wrote (Johnny the Moondog's Dead) being the A-side instead of Only A Shadow. He said it's got to at least be a double A-side.

We shall see we shall see we shall see.

Jaywick, by the way, where the studio is located (in a street of Art Deco type houses) is the most surreal place to step out of a studio into.

IX The main Broadway looks like a set from the Prisoner T.V. series. There was one bafe wpen and it was appallmg. Double egg and Chips at £1.30 and God and Chips and £1.20! Bt we wuz starvin'.

It would be quite possible to eat in that cafe and not come across any sort of fresh vegetable. The whole place is a kind of Nutritional no-go area as was proved by some big white tub of lard that left the restaurant just as we walked in. The only other occupants were a young couple who looked like they could be on the run.

oh well..I m off up the pub. Night.....



## In the golden autumn (1983)

### please don't step on my rainbow

**P**lease don't step on my rainbow  
it's only staying for a while  
and it won't be too long  
until the day is on the run  
and night-time will shutter it's smile

aw please don't cough in my doorway  
go if you're going - stay if you're staying  
and if you'd be so kind  
to lend me money for some wine  
then you won't have to catch your train

please don't step on my rainbow  
it's only staying for an hour  
and if the price of gin  
can make your money look too thin  
it's only cos this government's in power

please don't talk on my phone now  
it seems silly but it's true  
that if you wear a heart  
which is political or art  
then they might like to question you

please don't step on my rainbow  
it hardly ever comes around  
and I may have a writ  
because I didn't sign for it  
you know how people talk in a small town

(repeat first verse)

## sandstorm in paradise

**T**here's a sandstorm in paradise  
clouding my way  
it's not only today - it's tomorrow  
there's a sandstorm in paradise  
covers the light  
it's not only at night - it's the daytime

do you believe in circular time  
or are you inclined to the spiral?  
you can travel forever inside the rings  
but the pendulum swings . . . it can tell you

there's a sandstorm in paradise  
it's not only today . . . it's tomorrow  
there's a sandstorm in paradise  
covers the light . . . it's not only at night  
it's the daytime

sandstorm in paradise  
burns me away till . . .  
till such a day that I go there  
you think you're real  
but you're in a dream  
and this isn't the world  
this is nowhere . . . . .



## golden age saturday

**I** read the papers yesterday . . . they say the golden age  
ain't far away - like saturday  
and if I turn a page or two . . . they'll tell me  
all those boys and girls will have some work to do  
in a golden age, in a golden age  
in a golden age saturday  
I switched the t.v. on at noon . . . the russians stay in tune  
by always crashing on the moon . . . and if I wait a little while  
the president will soothe me with a reassuring smile  
in a golden age, in a golden age . . .  
in a golden age saturday



# Two for the winter (1983)

## when fire burns dreams

**W**hy don't we learn from america?  
we can be burned by america  
do what we're told by america  
we can catch cold from america  
white lies the road in the pale moonlight  
when I come home on a winter's night  
soft is the light of an english sky  
turning the mood as the hour goes by  
such thoughts as these  
are frames I freeze  
when fire burns dreams  
and memories will fill my needs  
when fire burns dreams

don't wanna burn don't wanna burn

earth lying still as the snow at dawn  
haunted by sons and by daughters she's born  
breezes which dance with the uncut corn  
whisper "revolt!" to suburban lawns  
but dreaming spires turn funeral pyres  
when fire burns dreams  
and flame will kill a daffodil  
when fire burns dreams

grab yer coat grab yer hat  
don't forget to feed the cat  
go to work on an empty head  
then... gee I'm tired - let's go to bed  
the american way  
like big men (uh uh) doing important jobs yeah  
big man (whaddya want?)  
doing important jobs  
big men (can I put this here?)  
doing important jobs (it's a cruise missile)  
big men...



I can be blamed for  
this tape at  
23 West st. Wivenhoe  
Essex CO79DE  
where I am currently  
president....

XX

... high was the song of the wind in my ears  
ancient and soothing down all the years  
I listened hard and it seemed to be  
singing and singing these words to me  
'deep are the wounds of this century  
fighting against what it's meant to be  
and fools indeed will take no heed  
till fire burns dreams  
and who will chant the funeral chant  
when fire burns dreams

no I don't wish to be alarmist but ...  
at any one point in time  
eight millions naked americans are sitting  
in their jacuzzis dreaming of launching  
a pre-emptive nuclear strike on your home  
I mean is that not enough for yer charlie?  
are you kidding bunky

honey I don't wanna burn  
honey I don't wanna burn

it's a good job I don't have an a-bomb  
it would fall through a hole in the cockpit  
and I'd lose it in the china sea  
or the middle east ...



# Under wartime conditions (1984)



## summer in a small town

It's an unimpeachable summer dream  
to fall in love with an ice machine  
in the corner of the pub across the street  
and working spends - if working does  
but nowadays it's them or us  
which means that someone has to take the heat  
hey hey hey  
who writes the soundtrack?  
lend us a pound coin  
who writes the play?  
it's a loudmouthed summer sun  
who tells you good is on the run  
and the golden age is not the present one

aaaaah ah ah . . . . . aah ah ah ah aaaaaah

in the summer in a small town where you stay  
you're a bluebird in a broken down cafe . . . . . for a day

those crazy kids what will they do  
they're not a bit like me and you  
with their crypto pun' y psychobilly beat  
they took your sacred rock and roll  
they stripped it down and they left a hole  
then they filled it up with anger from the street  
hey hey hey hey hey mutant beat freaks  
woh woh woh woh . . . . . so far away  
a day in the country is not on the menu  
for anyone you met today

aah ah ah ah . . . aah ah ah ah ah aaaaaah

in the summer in a small town where you stay  
you're a bluebird in a broken down cafe . . . . . for a day



## drowning butterflies

If I use this silver pound  
to buy a drink and fool around  
I am only drowning butterflies  
I said I'd see you at the factory gate  
I was there but you were late  
you said sorry - but it wasn't in your eyes  
I got four figures redundancy pay  
and just two weeks to our wedding day  
I won't blame you - whatever you want to do

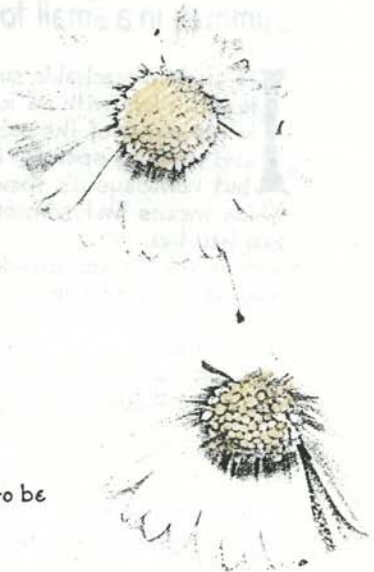
when they knock the terraced houses down  
there will be no butterflies to drown

things are changing all around  
all my friends have gone to ground  
and I'm trying at least to hang onto you  
you know... this used to be a boom town  
now they're closing all the factories down  
it's no wonder we're all drowning butterflies

when they knock the terraced houses down  
there will be no butterflies to drown

## luke-warm lovesong

I would not be with you unless I wanted to be  
I would not be with you unless I did  
pride is a dangerous thing  
I know how it can sting  
and I would not be with you unless I wanted to be  
I would not call you up unless I wanted to do  
I would not call you up unless I wanted to  
I will give you a bell  
I know your number so well (twice)  
I would not think about you if I didn't like you  
I wouldn't think of you unless I did  
I'm just hanging around  
I'm only sounding you out  
and I would not be with you unless I wanted to be  
I will give you a bell  
I know your number so well



Thursday 26th January 1967 cor wish it was, but it's not..it's 1984 aaargghh!  
Well a pretty crummy day at work today in my secret identity as Sude A-go  
-Go...The Prince of the Sinks. If things get any worse I'm just going to  
have to get a job. Damien's mousette Vivien is still at large under the  
floorboards of his bedroom. It has now eaten all the food that was lying  
in crumbs on the cupboard floor so I'm hoping it's going to go for the stuff  
in the trap next. Oh it's not a killer trap, it's one of those humane traps  
made out of perspex. The idea is the mouse walks in for the food you put in  
there and the trap closes after it encapsulating it in this long perspex  
case. I understand that the more modern traps now have full stereo/video  
wash and brush up facilities and mini shopping facilities so that the mouse  
has something to do until you let it out in the morning.

Speaking of animals, Piper Paws, our youngest and dumbest cat is spraying  
the whole house and sail loft with Essence de Tom. It looks like his  
knackers are going to have to come off.

I'm not happy about this...on the other hand it does seem to work. I  
mean what do you do? Have seven adults and two children live in  
something that smells like a piss factory so that 14 pounds of rampant  
feline stupidity can live au naturelle???

At the moment nobody has the spare ten or twelve quid necessary to get  
the foul deed done but it's gotta be soon.

I am definitely not very inspired at the moment. The book doesn't look  
like it's any nearer getting published...and at the moment if they asked  
me to modify it in any way, I'd be inclined to tell them to fuck off.  
Maybe I ought to keep my mouth shut at least until they finish talking  
because let's face it.....I'm broke.

Well I've still got this record to do and I should be looking forward to  
that because the recording session is less than two weeks off. Quite  
apart from this, my very good buddy Lol is coming up to play drums on it.  
It's just that I don't want to build up the excitement too much in case  
it's an anti-climax. Like Gide said, "Nathaniel, never prepare your joys."

# Songs for a fallow land (1985)



## julie profumo

I'm going to england  
I'm leaving today  
I'm going electrically  
there's no time to stay  
cos this ain't the sixties  
and there's nothing to lose  
and julie profumo is singing the blues

some day soon I will forget this junkyard  
take you with me if you're going that way  
it's a changing world and I can tell you one thing  
time is wasting.  
shadows waiting.  
love will slip away

o mother of islands  
I am your son  
and though I remember sunshine  
the damage is done  
the images haunt me always  
like a cry from the street  
and julie profumo is dead on her feet.

some day soon I will forget this junkyard  
take you with me if you're going that way  
it's a changing world and I can tell you one thing  
time is wasting  
shadows waiting  
love will slip away.

## stars are cold

Pale... the winter sun  
on hard ground  
where we run  
sky  
is charcoal grey  
in flat fields  
where we lay  
I catch my breath  
time stands still  
on the edge of a blue day  
when you are gone  
stars are cold  
stars are cold  
dark  
the shadows fall  
trees are blue  
trees are tall  
then the day is old  
dreams are still  
turned to stone  
I catch my breath  
time stands still  
on the edge of a blue day  
when you are gone  
stars are cold  
stars are cold

## gamma ray blue

When I'm alone and I'm waiting for you  
I sit in my room and the t.v. is on.  
but the lights are tuned off  
and the sound is turned down  
and I think about you in ethereal blue.

it's a summery night and the town in a light  
with the roar of their cars  
when they close all the bars.  
then the telephone rings  
and you're there in my head  
and I'm feeling so tired but I can't go to bed.

and I'm so in love  
with gamma ray blue  
gamma ray blue and the gamma ray tube  
I'm so in love with gamma ray blue  
gamma ray blue and you.

I gaze at the clock and it's quarter to two  
I was drinking some wine, but I left some for you  
there's a saxophone playing  
in the bedsit upstairs  
but nobody complains because nobody cares.

then a flickering starts and I turn to the screen  
there's a fight going on, but it's only a dream  
so I turn over quick  
'cos I'm not really sure  
then your key's in the lock  
and you're there at the door

and I'm so in love  
with gamma ray blue  
gamma ray blue and the gamma ray tube  
I'm so in love  
with gamma ray blue  
gamma ray blue and you.





First ever photos of  
The Cleaners, Wivenhoe  
Shipyard - February 1984



# Living with victoria grey (1986)



## victoria grey

**h**er lovely face was everywhere  
someone pretending to care  
the image of victoria grey  
I heard some hungry children cry  
rumbling wheels passed them by  
the carriage of victoria grey

save it up, it's for a rainy day  
save it up, I heard victoria say

she looked so good sometimes it was convincing

some sailor's south atlantic fray  
seemed like a long way away  
they were fighting for victoria grey  
and blue eyed sons of miners cried  
when a community died  
they were working for victoria grey

save it up, don't ever give it away  
save it up, I heard victoria say

she looked so good sometimes it was convincing

now if I'm ever free again  
I could not forget the pain  
of living with victoria grey  
and when I feel the cold night air  
I know that she doesn't care  
and I'm finished with victoria grey

save it up, it's for a rainy day  
save it up, I heard victoria say

she looked so good sometimes it was convincing.

## mercury girl

**S**he's staying around or else she's going away  
it could be forever or it might be today  
or maybe forever I call her a mercury girl

she's building me up and then she's knocking me down  
like a factory chimney in a northern town  
and I am demolished I call her a mercury girl

she never sees me till the sun goes down  
lives in a secret world  
says her career is in another town  
life with a mercury girl

one day once when I got some time  
I tried to hold her but she wouldn't be mine  
she slipped through my fingers and I missed the mercury girl

she came back to me with her mocking eyes  
she told me she loved me but it could have been lies  
and life can be up and down  
life with a mercury girl  
life can be up and down  
life with a mercury girl

she never sees me till the sun goes down  
lives in a secret world  
says her career is in another town  
life with a mercury girl

she's staying around or else she's going away  
it could be forever or it might be a day  
or maybe forever I call her a mercury girl  
she's building me up and then she's knocking me down  
like a factory chimney in a northern town  
and I am demolished I call her a mercury girl  
and I am demolished I call her a mercury girl



## follow the plough

Come with me martin down to the corner  
I've got to buy some bread for the boarder  
if he were not here, we'd be much poorer"  
grandmother's world had edwardian order.  
and I can remember how  
I followed her like a seagull follows the plough  
follow the plough.

by the bay window, when it was raining  
watching the people on the pink paving  
I didn't mind if I had to stay in  
some of my dreams were really worth saving  
and I can remember now  
I followed them like a seagull follows the plough  
follow the plough.

I am much older than you would take me  
I am much younger than you could make me  
live in a world of violence and danger  
finding myself a comparative stranger  
when I came to meet you how  
I followed you like a seagull follows the plough  
follow the plough.

you are before me you are behind me  
it was predestined that you would find me  
"come with me martin - down to the corner. . ."  
your ancient world has a much older order  
and when I come to see you now  
I follow you like a seagull follows the plough  
follow the plough.



## ilya kuryakin looked at me

**I**ta tushingham isn't smiling  
waiting for the green electric train  
to take her down to london  
where she will see mr. wilson  
standing by the iron railings  
opposite the chestnut palings  
david hemmings will be waiting  
with a job for david bailey

and the sun is always shining  
on wardour street's piled up pop stars  
and the king is in the counting house  
costing out smashed up guitars

and ilya kuryakin looked at me  
ilya kuryakin looked at me

bobby dylan's only bleeding  
johnny says he's only sleeping  
in the window, george and ringo  
see you down the pink flamingo  
mrs peel, or is it emma?  
leaning on a black umbrella  
had to be the biggest seller  
after martha the vandella

and the rain is only falling  
on the northern streets documentaries  
and they hardly say a word about vietnam  
shhhhh...

and ilya kuryakin looked at me  
ilya kuryakin looked at me

we forgot our politicians'  
love affair with nuclear fission  
drowned ourselves in coloured visions  
making love but not decisions  
meanwhile back in st tropez  
the rich and famous out to play  
stayed quietly out of taxing range  
and waited for the times to change

and the sun is always shining  
on wardour street's piled up pop stars  
and the king is in the counting house  
costing out smashed up guitars

and ilya kuryakin looked at me  
ilya kuryakin looked at me.



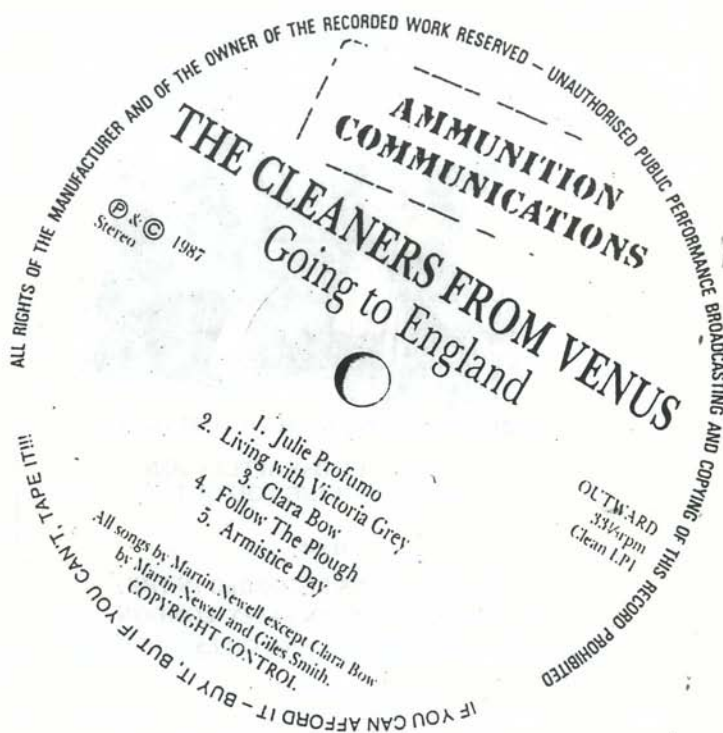
## clara bow

I saw your face on a silent screen  
and on the cover of a magazine  
clara bow  
you were the image of a plastic age  
you spent a lifetime in a silent cage  
clara bow

clara bow is it true the camera struck you dumb?  
clara bow I would like to hear you speaking  
but I can't.  
you were the lipstick butterfly  
no need for words when you could flutter your eyes  
clara bow  
and you were living in an it world, it girl  
but you were speaking for american working girls  
clara bow  
clara bow did your money make it any better?  
clara bow I would like to see your pictures  
but I can't.



Autumn 1985 / Very drunk.  
I don't have that guitar  
now. I really miss it.



## armistice day

Sister mine your face so fine  
your hair red-gold at harvest time  
in a field on a cloudy day  
when the reaper comes to claim his pay  
they have all gone away  
armistice day

sister mine some damson wine  
while the woods wear white in winter time  
drink it down and remember how  
you could not cry then but can cry now  
they have all gone away  
armistice day

there's nothing can make men happy  
like the sound of a cannon's roar  
there's nothing can make men happy  
like a war  
like a war.



# LIVING WITH VICTORIA GREY

BY

THE CLEANERS FROM VENUS



PAGE ONE: LIVING WITH VICTORIA GREY

PAGE TWO: SUNDAY AFTERNOON  
SHE'S CHECKING YOU OUT

BEING

COMPOSITIONS RECORDED IN THE  
STUDIOS OF TIN PAN ALLEY, LONDON,  
BY MARTIN NEWELL AND GILES SMITH.

WITH

NIGEL HASLAM AS THE ENGINEER  
AND DAVID SHAW AS HIS ASSISTANT.

INCORPORATING

AN ILLUSTRATION BY VIRGINIA MASON  
(AFTER 'PHIZ') AND A PHOTOGRAPH  
BY CHRISTOPHER CRASKE

AND

DISTRIBUTED BY PINNACLE RECORDS

FIRST EDITION

PATRONS: AMMUNITION COMMUNICATIONS  
22 DENMARK STREET, LONDON WC2  
01 379 6266

*"What Larks"*



Mid-November 1985 - Our  
'Victorian' period. In the  
sail-loft where we made  
a lot of our tapes and  
the record, "Under Wartime  
conditions"

WRITTEN DURING A HARD  
WINTER 86/87

LETTER TO MANAGEMENT FROM SHOP FLOOR .....music business

This is an essay to let you know how a 34 year old all purpose pop musician in England lives in 1987.

"I live in the front part of a crumbling victorian house opposite a dock/coalyard in an Essex fishing village. I say I live there-I don't...I actually stay there with my woman and her two children by a previous marriage(boy,13 girl 11).

She's on D.H.S.S. so I couldn't actually LIVE with her but I stay here most of the time because I don't have a place of my own.

All of my possessions are in boxes in a storeroom which has been temporarily lent to me. The landlord wants us out. He can't actually throw A.(my woman) out on the street but there's a subtle pressure there the whole time. Even though he and his wife only have two children, and they have the whole of the back of the house and the small house adjoining this building they want the whole place. Why? Well I once heard him say something like they have a "higher lifestyle expectation" nowadays.

Rooms in this village average forty pounds a week. This is because there's a university not far away and they can pay higher rents than us normal mortals. Hence....price average goes up. You can't rent a family house for much under four to five hundred pounds per month. Also...they don't like D.H.S.S. tenants. Why? This is more complicated. Since the government handed over the onus on paying rents to claimants over to the borough treasury...the borough treasury have been sending round people to assess claimants rents. If they think a house or room isn't worth the money being charged they reduce it. Naturally landlords/ladies aren't going to take a claimant on as a tenant because it could very well reduce their profit. A. says she's already lost 28 potential homes because of this problem. The council waiting list for housing is about two and a half years now I think...it might be more.

Because of his lifestyle expectation, the landlord is constantly working on improvements to his side of the house. Major work is going on the whole time and has been  
~~xxxxxxxxxx~~

for months. This means the place is constantly dusty and often noisy. He's working on the landing at the moment outside the kids bedrooms where the smell of woodworm and damp treatments are quite strong. There's a lack of privacy (he always seems to be around) and it's not much fun.

Heating in A.'s room is by open fire. This is where we sleep, watch t.v. (black and white) or read. If there's some money at the beginning of winter I get £30 worth of logs. It's cheaper than coal if you make sure you get a good deal i.e. not green wood. Mostly we burn scrap wood. This is my department. I forage in the woods for dead wood then drag it back on a barrow during the early autumn. Sometimes I go to a small cove where wooden pallets from the port get washed up. I drag them out of the river then hide them in the bushes to dry out (in case anyone else comes to take them, like kids looking for bonfire wood). Later on I go back and smash the pallets up and drag the wood home. I keep my eyes open for people doing building or roofing work because if I ask them they'll often let me take the old ~~timber~~ or rotten wood away.

The other communal room is the kitchen/dining area. It's very big so therefore cold. To heat this we use an ancient double-burner paraffin heater. We usually take it in turns to chip in £1.50 for a gallon of paraffin. We get the paraffin from a garage some way up the road. In the midwinter it's FREEZING here. The other two rooms are the kids bedrooms... they get really cold so they don't usually go to their rooms in winter except to sleep. Luckily we're all pretty hardy for a late twentieth century family so we can get by on subsistence warmth. Nevertheless on really cold days you don't actually warm up until you've been in bed for a while. Cooking gas and bathwater are on meters.

You wouldn't believe what I have to do to get money. I dig people's gardens and prune their trees. Late winter that gets me between fifteen and twenty-five pounds in a week. It's cold out but if I work hard I get quite warm.

In the summer I was doing alright. I had about seventy





five pounds a week and I was putting by some money for the lean months. This is one of the "service industries" that some Tories think will flourish in our leisure packed modern age. Fortunately I live in East Anglia where some people actually have the money to pay a gardener. In the North what would I do? I stopped doing gardening full-time in August because I got the chance to make another l.p. and I was told that some money was about three weeks around the corner. Money always seems to be about three weeks around the corner in the music industry. Gardening is a thoroughly blameless job and a wonderful existence once ones muscles get used to it, but I had to take a chance on furthering my musical career. More on that later.

Last year I had a trailer made for my bicycle. Well I don't like cars and I couldn't afford one even if I did so it seemed like a good idea. As well as carrying my garden tools it's useful for collecting scrap wax in. Scrap wax? There's a village ten miles away. In this village are two posh country restaurants who like the rest of this wasteful society throw out lots of useful things. In this case they have boxes of half burnt candles....perfectly good but they don't look good on the table so these restaurants throw pounds and pounds away. What I do is to go to the restaurants buy the wax very cheaply then cycle it home in the trailer. I can usually get about fifty or sixty pounds in the trailer. It's a bastard coming home with a full load if it's pouring with rain or very windy. So what do I do with the wax? Simple. I melt it down and make it into half pound medieval type column candles which I then sell to a Bistro in the nearby town. If I do this every so often it's worth about another ten quid per week to me. This means I'm making about £35 per week and I give about half of this to A. for the money I cost to feed etc etc. I often wonder whether people think I'm crazy cycling around with my bicycle trailer full of wax or tools....~~g~~ but it's how I live. I can't sign on myself because I'm homeless.....Well I could sign on but it would mean going four miles into town daily to collect the £3 60 or whatever it is that I'm entitled

to as a vagrant . ~~xxx~~ Oh and of course I'd have to give them my daily reassurance that I was looking for work. It's really not worth the bike tyre rubber to claim £3.60 My bicycle needs a new tyre soon so I'll have to forgo a couple of the bottles of cider which I get for a treat sometimes. Maybe I should start homebrewing soon...I used to be good at it once.

I've got an l.p. out in Germany which has sold about five thousand copies but I haven't been paid for it. I've got another l.p. due out soon and a single out now. I get fan mail from Germany and America as well as here and magazines and D.J.s write to me. I've been on radio and television and I know pop stars but I've got no place to live, and no money apart from that which I make from my gardening and recycling candle wax. I could go out and busk in town but it can be dangerous. It's a rough town and you can get shaken down or attacked or just moved on.

If I got some money to live on it would probably be in the form of a publishing advance from a music publisher. What is publishing and what does a publisher do? No...after years of being involved in music I don't exactly know either and I don't think anyone I know does but I saw a picture of a publisher recently in a glossy music biz guide and he looked like this.... He had a beard, he was wearing clothes in the style of that Cowboy Chic which I normally associate with Californian urbanites of the seventies and he was holding up a wine glass and grinning.

Everything that is supposed to happen in the music industry seems to happen three months later....or longer....or.....never. The people in the music industry appear not to understand the simple everyday problems of those outside ....Or maybe they understand only too well which is why people will answer phones clean toilets or jump out of cakes for a record company-Anything rather than go back to reality. When I tell the people I know, what I have to do to live...I'm sure they don't believe me.

When I was working more I used to always have a couple of hundred pounds stashed. I called it my "bust and eviction" money. It meant I could always stand my own bail or put up my half of the deposit for rented accomodation. It was handy if A. busted her spectacles or one of the kids needed new shoes and she didn't have the money.

She will never take money off me because she knows I have sometimes less than her but I used to ~~xxxx~~ "lend" it to her then one day say.... "forget it". It was the only way I could get her to take it. Like last autumn I got about fifty quid from an anarchist tape-distributor in Germany who'd sold some my tapes so I gave her forty because she needed it badly.

We've got ducks and chickens, a wild rabbit and a few cats. Most of them were strays who got dumped on us and who now live with us. I don't know how we manage to feed them all sometimes. Scraps if we're short of money....mash if we're not. Duck mash is about £5.00 a bag and lasts about a month. If one of the cats gets ill and has to go to the vet we've got a collection of pennies in a big bottle we call the "vet bottle" It's nearly always empty because one or other of the creatures always needs something doing or other. If something went seriously wrong with a cat and we couldn't afford the fees I guess it would have to be the chloroform pad if we couldn't get credit. We might have to get the poultry adopted soon if we don't get a place. I don't think the owners wife is too happy about them since she came back here to live. I'd miss the ducks a lot but they probably wouldn't miss me.

I can't afford guitar strings at the moment and the guitar I write songs with is borrowed anyway. I've got no place to demo new songs and my recording gear (what there is of it) is packed away in boxes. I don't know if I can afford to be in the music business. I took a chance last autumn I had my winter money stashed and thought "Ah well lets hope it lasts till my publishing money gets here." Well it's spring now and it didn't...I'm in trouble. The current project is to try and save up enough money to pay the next phone bill-otherwise they wont even be able to ring me up and tell me there's no money. Looking at it even harshly....I'm a good tunesmith....good at my trade. The music biz is the only way I'd ever be able to buy a house. Even if I was a full-time gardener again I'd only make about £75 a week...I'd have to save some of that against the winter months...so I'd be better off living in the woods than paying some alternative capitalist forty quid for a room. Good job it's nearly the end of the winter because we've run out of logs...it's scrap wood through till the warm weather now.....When people ask me "How's the music going?" I don't know what to say really..... "




to as a vagrant . ~~xxx~~ Oh and of course I'd have to give them my daily reassurance that I was looking for work. It's really not worth the bike tyre rubber to claim £3.60 My bicycle needs a new tyre soon so I'll have to forgo a couple of the bottles of cider which I get for a treat sometimes. Maybe I should start homebrewing soon...I used to be good at it once.

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doesn't help. As for after work drinking.....It just doesn't occur. I know it's not essential but it really is great to be able to go and have a couple of beers after you've finished a tough day in the studio. There's a constant feeling that life is slightly sub-standard down there. The other day I was bitching about it. I said "Out of the essentials like Tea, Milk, Sugar and Bogroll we always seem to be out of one. Okay we've got tea and milk so I can put bogroll in the tea if I want. Tomorrow we'll have sugar tea and milk but we'll be out of bogroll. It's gonna be impossible trying to use sugar etc etc etc....."

The bog stinks of stale urine sometimes. I would clean it but out of principle I don't think I should....maybe I would if it got really bad. It shouldn't be like this. We must be idiots to put up with it and yet.....There is a closeness amongst all of us. Andy and Pete aren't any better off than us at time like this and put up with the same shit that we do. The same discomfort the same lack of sleep, money and luxury. And we tend to share what we do get. You can be cross with them for allowing the situation to occur, but you can't be annoyed with them too much because to a large extent they go through it too. There's also a feeling of all working towards the same goal. We're all orphans of the same normality. Cut off from normal society and hating or fearing the drabness that lurks outside our world. We're all taking the risk that some of this madness is going to pay off and that we'll get enough money to continue living outside of mundanity for a while longer.

Even so I rebel against anything really pointless and maybe I just rebel and question anything everythingxxxxxxx we're still dealing in a capitalist industry here. I have a mad urge to bite the smooth pink hand which feeds me because I know that that same hand has never done a day's straight toil or given a scrap from its table out of genuine love or compassion. No, always with a motive....and never as much as it could have given. I don't trust this industry and I think it pollutes and corrupts people. It's still going to take all my self restraint to stay in it and not blow everything for myself in one impetuous moment. I know I could just walk out the minute anything upset me. At night, Giles, Chris the engineer and myself take the tube to Andy's flat in Notting Hill Gate again....although I'm not sure what I'm doing tonight. I might sleep in the studio. V.O.A. have problems with their video. Chris is knackered, Giles is knackered I'm knackered and there's no money.

Wednesday 13th January 1988

Same scene 24 hours later. After two days of playing Rickenbacker I've been singing and playing an acoustic guitar for most of today. I must say that the l.p. is going to be better for all these finishing touches and amendments but I'm bloody tired I woke up with a fearsome headache this morning and I only had a couple of beers last night, No justice. I'm still feeling a bit disorientated and a little bit melancholic. I rang Annabel tonight, which made me feel a bit better. I've got to send her some money tomorrow cos she's run out of firewood and probably needs some coal. After a day in the studio I don't have much energy or inspiration to write.

Sunday night 17th January 1988

Giles arrived on Thursday and the re-mixing of the l.p. began in earnest. I've had no time to write. This is what happens in the studio. Great blocks of hours go ~~xxx~~by. Some hours are fraught with anxiety, some laden with boredom, and some a genuinely inspired but whatever it is, the studio seems to demand nearly all my time and energy, leaving me no time for anything else. We work all day, from about 11 in the morning. We finish about 9 at night and then we go back to Andy's comfortable but rather bare flat and finally go to bed at about 3 a.m. after eating. In the studio you go into a kind of timeless zone. Being underground in a windowless place with no ~~xxx~~clocks doesn't help. You may for instance find yourself going upstairs to get some bread or milk and find to your astonishment that it's got dark. You might find yourself standing in the West-end at rush hour in the dark when you thought it was sometime after lunch.

The atmosphere at the moment is frantic. Andy and Pete are preparing to take their wares to the MIDEM music fair in Cannes and both The Cleaners from Venus and Voice of America are in a mad rush to finish our respective products so that deals can be done. An added complication is that this week, because of an unpaid debt to the company...there's absolutely no cash around. This means that Giles and I and Nigel and Dave have no money for expenses apart from what we have ourselves...which sometimes isn't very much. Sometimes we run out of Tea, Coffee, Toilet Roll ~~at~~Sugar. This ~~xxxxxxx~~ leads to a situation whereby we're constantly grubbing around for pennies to get up enough money for these essentials. In an ~~atmosphere~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ which is already uncomfortable and tense it really

# THE CLEANERS FROM VENUS

*town & country*







The Cleaners outside our  
touring van in Late August  
1987, Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire.



The Cleaners from Venus  
'live' at Bigwalls in  
London - Summer 1987





September 1988. By the  
waterfront with the Irish  
rock musician Ron Kavana.







## the beat generation and me

Well then", she said, "we need another 50p"  
"or soon the meter will run out on you and me"  
this is how we spent the winter  
in her room - the beat generation and me  
for nearly free.

and then she said she hadn't worked for oh - a time  
sometimes she thought that people judged this as a crime  
"once I nearly died..." she stopped  
we sat there, the beat generation and me  
for nearly free.

the beat generation, the beat generation  
the beat generation and me.

"I'd like to go away but don't suppose I will",  
she said, "the money isn't there since I was ill"  
but we found some things to do  
to do for free - the beat generation and me  
for nearly free.

"well then", she said, "we need another 50p"  
"or soon the meter will run out on you and me"  
this is how we spent the winter  
in her room - the beat generation and me  
for nearly free.

the beat generation, the beat generation  
the beat generation and me.

*These songs were recorded on a  
rainy afternoon - April 1st 1987.  
There was only a voice a guitar  
and a few mistakes The moments  
can never be captured again.*



# April fool (1987)



## iceberg and unicorn

**T**he iceberg and unicorn  
mean the end of the party all over the world  
bells are not ringing for me and my girl  
I know it's over  
I know it's over  
the iceberg and unicorn  
they have closed every tunnel of love in the land  
young casanova stands head in his hands  
he know it's over  
he know it's over

and words whispered out of wedlock's door  
"it's the young ones I feel for . . ."  
"we had our fun when we were free"  
"he was faithful - but was she?"

and the iceberg and unicorn  
now reside in a place where the bomb used to stay  
send out their greetings and hope that you'll say  
"I know it's over"

## major mandy

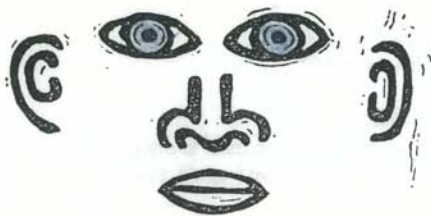
**M**ajor mandy - found the money came in handy  
for buying her favourite clothes  
he said they were for his wife  
major mandy - people said he was a dandy  
but he led a double life

he hung around in wine bars  
beaujolais and new commission  
but when he went out shopping  
no-one guessed his strange position

major mandy - he was really christened andy  
but you know the way it goes  
and what are you laughing for?  
major mandy - people said he was a dandy  
he was there in case of war

he bought up telephone shares  
and which way do you think he voted?  
he was a model soldier  
not the type to be demoted

major mandy drank a fair amount of brandy  
and went out for a drive  
with sode in stereo  
major mandy's wife was very very angry  
when the police brought home the clothes



## Mind how you go (1987)

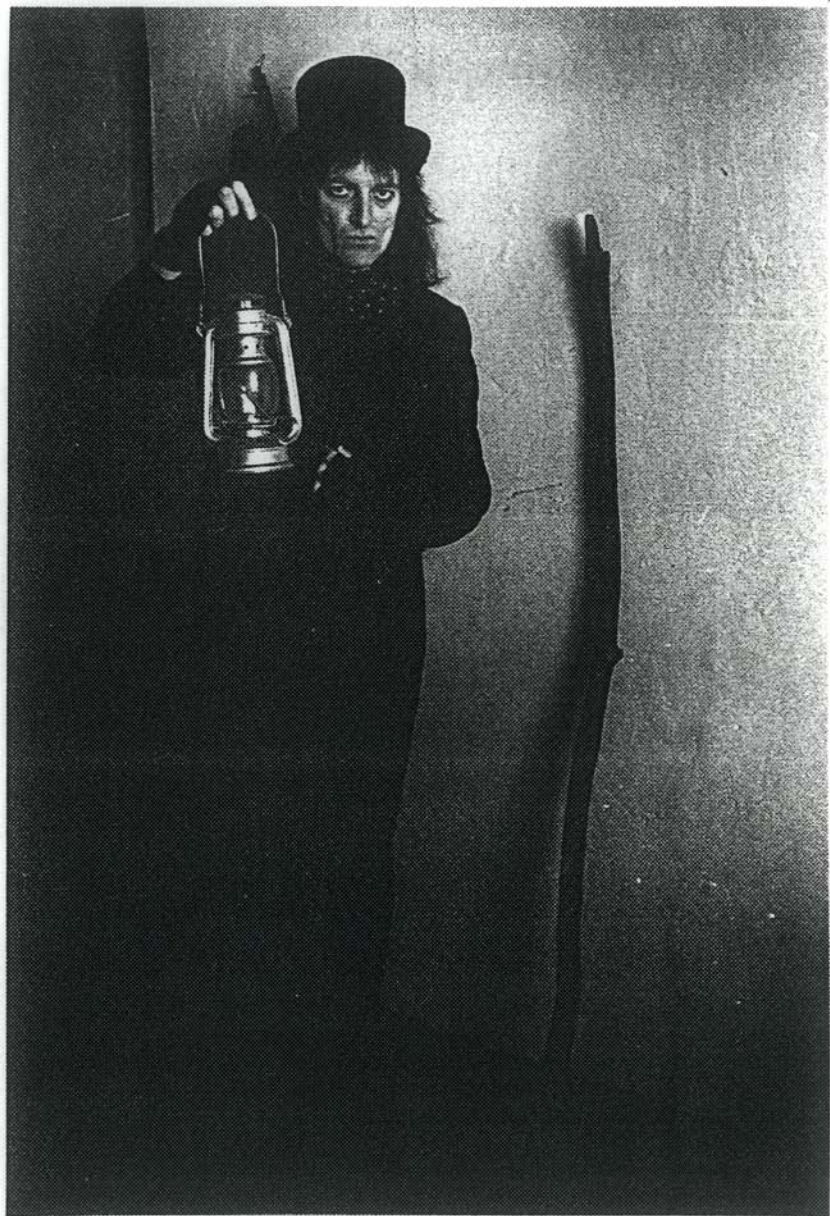


### cardboard town

**U**nder arches under-ground  
cheap-jack lovers lane  
down and out in cardboard town  
listen to the rain  
sister soup-line, brother bread  
distant as the stars  
light me to my paper bed  
bright as burning cars

wake me up when it's over  
shake me gently and say  
"it's okay it's okay it's okay..."  
walk me down to the river  
tell me home wasn't built in a day  
in a day in a day  
and it's only... only cardboard town  
lonely..... this is cardboard town

house of straw and house of stone  
house of brick or granite  
welfare worker from your home  
welcome to my planet  
others I am not the worst  
trek from town to city  
driven by a simple thirst  
buried in your pity.



Same photo-session I love  
oil lamps and candles  
They change the atmosphere  
of a place



# Brotherhood of lizards (1988)

5 Paget Road Wivenhoe Essex  
CO79DE England

Hallo Joachim,

Enclosed is a very good quality master cassette for the new Brotherhood of Lizards cassette which I'm very pleased with. Enclosed also is some artwork. The Black and White is for you to make an easier copy and the orange colour is the colour of the covers in England if you can do that in Germany. I think it's going to be quite a popular tape. I knew you'd want it as soon as I could get it to you so I hope you like it and that some people will have a happier Christmas because of it.

When you've made a good copy of the tape can you post the master cassette back to me because next it must go to ~~xxxxxx~~ in fact I have a better idea to save time.....

- 1) When you have finished with it send it to

Jan Rune Bruun, Heiryggen 2 N8614 , Ytteren, Norway.  
send it with the artwork

- 2) Tell him when he's finished with it to send it to

Me.....

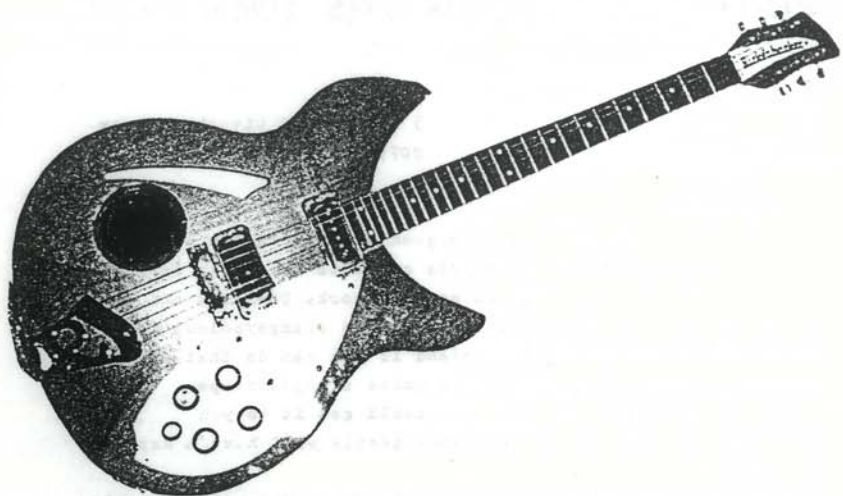
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Some good news is that Captain Sensible is definitely lending me his tascam 8 track home studio (The Studio 8). It's in London waiting for me to pick it up....unfortunately like most old hippies I have only a bicycle and don't know many people with cars so I have to organise that....

As soon as it's done Nel-sun and I will start on the next Brotherhood stuff. Exciting isn't it?...I've heard about Kentucky Fried Royalty too....can you get me in the catalogue Gotta go now .....

Write back soon-all the bestest

*Martin*



THE CLEANERS FROM VENUS - Town and Country (RCA)

Martin Newell ist zur Zeit wohl einer der englischsten Songwriter überhaupt, er geht unbeirrt seinen Weg zwischen so großen Vorbildern wie Syd Barrett, dem verrückten Gärtner, und Ray Davies, dem genialen Working Class-Chronisten (der Vollständigkeit halber sei noch auf den musikalischen Einfluß von XTC, den Beatles und - neuerdings - Style Council hingewiesen).

Die neue LP läßt sich in eine Country (nicht C&W)- und eine Town-Seite unterteilen. Auf der ersten wimmelt es von verfallenen Häusern, geheimnisvollen Winkeln, wo das Gras höher wächst als anderswo, einem blauen Schwan und dem Nordwind im März - pure Dorfromantik also.

Die zweite Seite behandelt das Stadtleben, es geht im wesentlichen um Elendsquartiere, Möchtegern-Popstars und das Trinken. Zu diesem Thema ist auch Martins Partner Giles Smith, der bei den Cleaners eine Mischung aus Mick Talbot und Colin Moulding darstellt, mit 'The Last Club in the World' ein Meisterstück gelungen.

Es wäre leicht, Martin Newells Gedankenwelt anachronistisch zu nennen (wahrscheinlich wäre das nicht einmal falsch), aber in Verbindung mit den phantastischen Melodien, Giles Smiths Keyboards und der luxuriösen Produktion entsteht hier eine ganz eigenwillige Art von folkloristischem Pop, der in dieser Qualität seit 'Autumn Almanac' und 'Village Green' nicht mehr zu hören war.

(Abgeschickt am 27. Mai 88, unveröffentlicht, möglicherweise deswegen, weil die Kritik mit meinem Cleaners-Artikel in SPEX 7/88 kollidiert ist.)

von Armin Müller

# Brotherhood of lizards (1988)

5 Paget Road Wivenhoe Essex  
CO79DE England

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Write back soon-all the bestest

*Martin*



5 Paget Road Wivenhoe  
CO79DT Essex u.k.

Hallo Joachim,

Nice to hear from you again. It hasn't been such a tough winter this year. I've done quite a lot of gardening work and had a little bit of money. By March usually I'm getting short of money before the music royalties come in and before the gardening work begins. I'm still not rich but thanks to the Greenhouse Effect I haven't had any serious problems this winter-apart from worrying about whether there will still be a planet to live on soon.

So generally my morale is quite good, my health is quite good and most important of all The Brotherhood are working steadily but slowly on our first l.p.

We're doing it on the eight-track machine in my room. We've got four songs so far and are working on another two. Captain Sensible has a new record label (indie) of his own and we will release the l.p. on that label when we finish it. I hope the l.p. will be out by next autumn. Of course there will be more d.i.y. stuff even if I have to change the name again!

I'm very excited about the new music...it's typical English pop with a good home-produced feel...but it's much better quality than the four-track stuff.

I'm keeping the new music a secret until we finish it but whenever we do finish it you'll be one of the first to hear it.

I got a telephone call from Mirko Whitfield a few weeks ago. He said that he knew a record label that was interested in the Brotherhood stuff. Just a small Berlin indie label. He said he'd send me some info but he must have forgotten or something.

I'm still supposed to be signed to R.C.A. for one more l.p. but if I give them the Brotherhood of Lizards l.p. they have to give me £15000 by law. Whatever happens it's not a problem. The mastertape I sent you went all round Europe then to New York and Cleveland in America then back to me. I just thought you'd like to know that the ~~world's~~ world's postal services are more reliable than the world's music industries. I hope everything is well with you....Don't worry...everything gets better after March usually....

All the best

Martin



# Young Scene



Gavin Nightingale highlights what's happening, and what matters to young people



## ...is writing for the famous

MARTIN Newell is also well-known as a songwriter to the stars.

For he's been working as Captain Sensible's lyric writer and the fruits of their efforts will be available on an album coming out soon.

The record has taken three years to complete. It features guest appearances by countless stars ranging from 10CC man Graham Gouldman to Eddy Grant.

Remember Captain Sensible's brief appearance at the May Fair? Well, that was courtesy of Martin who was the event's emcee.

Martin recalls the day he started working with the Captain. "That first day when I went down to the studio to start writing, I arrived on my bicycle half an hour after Graham Gouldman had left in a helicopter!"

But Captain Sensible isn't

the only one to appreciate Martin's song-writing talents. His old band The Damned are considering using one of Martin's songs — so are the re-formed Monkees!

"It's quite good writing to order," he says. "And I don't mind artists radically altering my tunes so long as the results are honest."

"I can't stand ghastly synth washes."



Captain Sensible — uses Martin's lyrics

5 Paget Roadwivenhoe  
Essex CO79JUT  
September 18th 1989

Hey Joachim,

what's happening maaaaaaaan? It's autumn again and time for activity. I just thought I'd let you know that the Brotherhood have an l.p. out soon on Captain Sensible's little indie label called Deltic Records. The l.p. is called Lizardland and should be out very early October.

We're doing a 'green' tour of southern England in October on our bicycles carrying acoustic instruments with us to promote the l.p. We're going to busk and play a few gigs and invade radio stations. Should be fun.

I hope your fortunes have improved out there and that Lord Litter and everyone are okay. Let me know what's going on. As for me...as usual lots of energy, little bit of money and a slight hangover.

Tell any Cleaners /Lizard listeners that we've got an l.p. out and that it's safe to buy it this time.

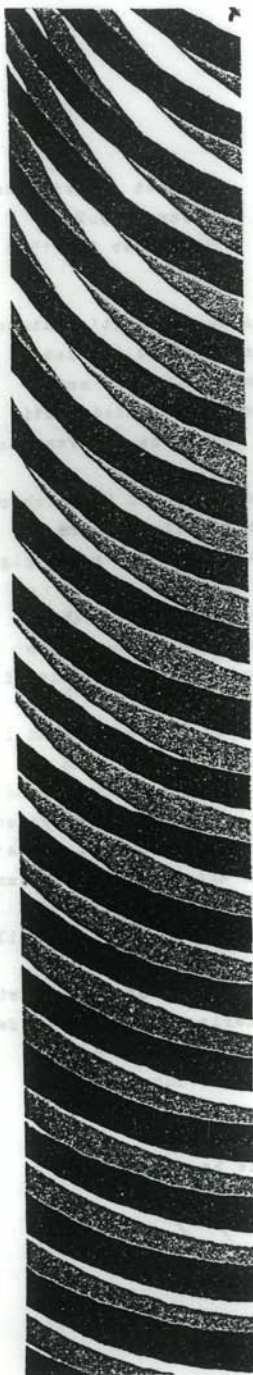
It was all done at home. We designed our own sleeve and the record cover is recycled paper, the vinyl's recycled ....even the songs are recycled from the sixties. There's only one keyboard on the whole l.p. and that's ~~an~~ ~~xxix~~ ~~xpiano~~. It's 100 per cent acceptable this time I promise. The first l.p. I ever did with no problems. ....yet. Now all I have to do is get paid for it.

Did you know that there are bootleg copies of Under Wartime Conditions (C.D. !) being sold in America? That Alfred Zeller never fucking paid me a penny. I have to laugh now but when I had no money at all it wasn't so funny.

Hope you're okay

all the best

Martin



**Tuesday 10th October 1989**

Kept thinking about the B&B we stayed in last night. First thing you see in an average B&B is a sign in the hallway saying "Thank you for not smoking". Half expected to see a sign in the bedroom saying "Thank you for not wanking".

**Friday 13th October 1989**

Milton bastard Keynes. Makes Colchester look like Florence. All roads built on ley lines apparently. Staggering really. Press didn't turn up. While busking opposite The Point (and what is the point?) saw some poor sod busted by three policemen and four security guards. Shoplifter I think. Must have been well-heeled. He was getting a taxi when they lifted him. Spent the night at a farmhouse somewhere outside M.K. Nice people but Sun readers.

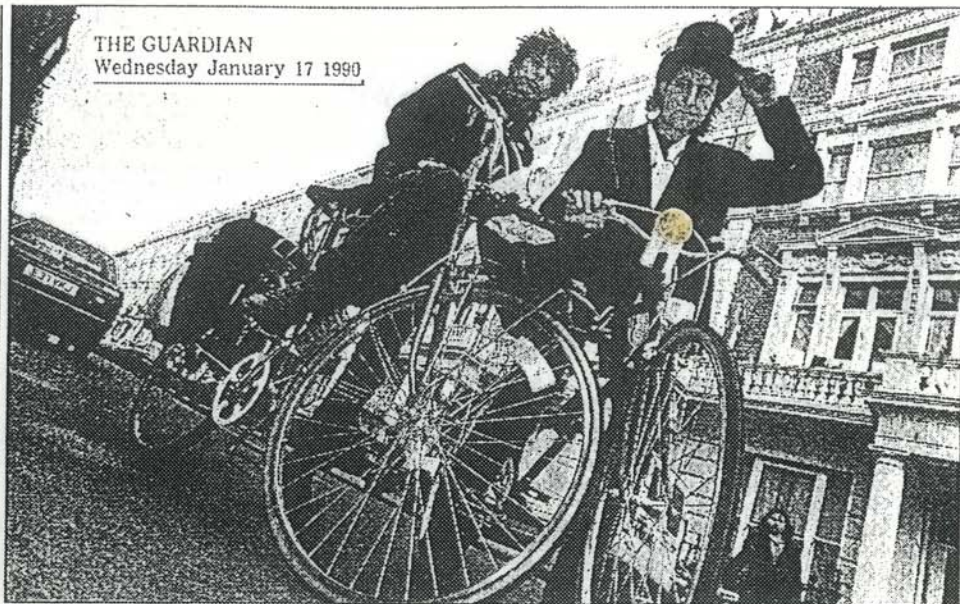
**Sunday 22nd October 1989**

Back on the bikes and staying at Captain's in Brighton. Cycled over 500 miles now. Another radio interview then gig. People in Brighton dress so hip they should turn the whole place into a rest home for the Chronically Fab. As the Captain seems to know every landlord in Brighton, we were able to have a substantially late drink after the gig. We insisted Sensible joined us on his byke. As we cycled home that night somebody threw a fire extinguisher out of a car at us and shouted "Bloody hippies". Perhaps it was because I was singing very loud in an alien voice. Phoned home after and was warned not to knacker my adrenal system by taking too many glucose tablets. Didn't even know I had an adrenal system. Nelson's knee now a bit better. An interesting encounter with a local journalist. After we had explained to him why we were doing an ecologically sound tour on bikes he said, "But wouldn't it have been easier to do it in a car?"

**Thursday 26th October 1989**

Over to fortress Wapping for an interview with the News Of The World. Wonder what they'll print. Dread to think. "Sex Change Cyclists Slay Clergyman in Alsatian Love Triangle" Yeah probably.





Top hat and tales... Nelson (left) and Martin Newell, Lizards with no time to lounge

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAMAM TURNER

## Greens never soft-pedal on pop

Some bands express their ecological concern with their voices; Brotherhood of Lizards do it with their feet, cycling to all their gigs. **Pete May** reports

**I**T'S ALL very well for Sting to go all green and say save the rain forests and then tour with three juggernauts full of gear. I wonder if they run on unleaded petrol?" asks Nelson (he has no surname), half of the Essex based duo Brotherhood of Lizards.

The band are entitled to be critical, since they toured the South of England recently on a pair of pushbikes, covering 619 environmentally sound miles during their 21-day tour. Their only equipment was an acoustic guitar and mandolin, carried on specially adapted rucksack frames, a pair of practice amps and a drum machine carried in their panniers. Like wandering medieval minstrels they would bask in every town they passed through and then play evening gigs using the venues' own PA systems. "All rock gigs should have a good PA; the idea is bands will travel to work with nothing more than a briefcase," says Martin Newell, the Lizards' main songwriter.

There were no after gig thrashes or groupies for these eco-rockers. "After we'd finished playing I'd have a bar of chocolate and Nelson would rub a bottle of Deep Heat into

his knee, or if he was really feeling relaxed he'd take off his elastic bandage," he explains.

During the tour they were pursued by an Anglian TV crew for six miles, unsuccessfully seeking evidence that somewhere between gigs they secretly sneaked on to the train. The idea has been so successful that they now plan to tour the West Country and the North of England by bike. "People really are more friendly when you're on a bike," says Martin. "If they see a bunch of hairy yobboes getting out of a transit van then it's 'oh my God, it's a rock band.' The world would be a better place if everyone cycled."

With his patched trousers, baggy shirt, waistcoat, tweed jacket (replaced by top hat and tails for gigs) and hennaed hair, Martin Newell might look like he's attempting to become the Percy Thrower of his generation, but there is a practical reason for his clothing. "I suppose I am a bit of an eccentric. I do wear tweed jackets but they're also good clothes for gardening. I'm like this weird crossover between a young fogey and a rock and roller."

Gardening is "at least as important as music" to Newell

and when not playing music he is the "wild gardener" for a group of Essex University lecturers in his native Wivenhoe, known locally as Sociology-on-Sea due to its high academic population. When his last band, the Cleaners From Venus, sold 10,000 copies of their album in Germany he quit their tour in favour of his beloved gardening. "to get my head together" after his songwriting dried up.

The Lizards' green credentials are further enhanced by the fact that neither Martin nor Nelson has ever had a driving licence. They are both lifelong cyclists and vegetarians, and the sleeve of their album, *Lizardland*, recorded on Captain Sensible's Delic label, is made from recycled paper.

The album cost just £23 to produce and most of that went on train fares for Nelson when it was raining and coloured pens to design the sleeve. Their name itself was thought up after a liberal session in their local pub, but Martin thinks that lizards "are good animals, green and somehow occult. Our name is also quite like the Brotherhood of Man..."

Musically, their album is an exquisite, eccentric slice of 60s nostalgia inspired by what Martin describes as his "English electric folk heroes." The Move, Small Faces, Who, Beatles and Kinks. But they are more than just revivalists: classic harmonies are accompanied by a lyrical concern for "how the under-

class survive in this tarnished age." Dandelion Marling tells the story of a Falklands soldier who cracked under fire, was bullied and then joined the peace convoy at Stonehenge, while Clockwork Train manages to combine personal alienation with the closure of railway stations and must be the only pop song in history to mention the Beeching report.

Newell has also co-written the lyrics for Captain Sensible, another rock eccentric, on his album *Revolution Now*, which resulted in a clash of rock lifestyles. "Graham Gouldman [ex-10cc] had just been recording at the Captain's studio. He left in his helicopter just before I arrived on my bike."

## The Brotherhood of Lizards is a rock band. But this is no Route 66. It's the B111 to Bury St Edmunds.

It's 10am on the second morning of the Brotherhood of Lizards' British tour – a time when most other rock stars would be peeling back the satin sheets in their luxury penthouse suite, stumbling over last night's champagne bottles, and preparing to board their luxury tour-bus for the next mega-stadium.

The Brotherhood of Lizards, though, are not like any other rock stars. Their morning began at 8am. They peeled back the winceyette sheets on their twin beds at the £13-a-night Coventry Guest House in Lowestoft, administered a few thumps to the ancient bedside tea-maker (which lit up like the *Close Encounters* spaceship, but still refused to heat up any water), then bounded down the stairs to scrutinise their tattered map of Suffolk.

These breakfast-time map-reading sessions are the most important part of the day for the Lizards because no sleek high-powered tour-bus is waiting on their beck and call. Instead, for reasons of economy, ecology and plain old job satisfaction, Martin Newell and Peter Nelson do their rock tours on pushbikes.

The Lizards conducted their first rock tour on bikes last October – a 619-mile round-trip which took them from their homes in Colchester and Wivenhoe respectively, down to Bristol and Bath, then back home via Southampton, Bristol and London. A mixture of busking, live sessions playing on local radio, and straightforward pub and club gigs, they did it to promote their first LP – *Lizardland* – recorded for just £50 ('including feltpips to do the cover') but it's the actual cycling which overshadows all else. Where bigger rock bands might swap lurid tales of groupies they have known, Martin and Nel exchange fond reminiscences of the landlady who gave Nel an elasticated bandage for his strained knee in Cambridge.

'What we're trying to do with these tours is show that there's an alternative way to promote your music,' explains Martin – who describes himself as an 'eco-hippy', and once quit the music business completely for four years to concentrate on being a gardener. 'You just don't need an articulated lorry and 35 roadies.'

It's an exhausting alternative, though – as I'm finding out as I trail the Lizards along the B111 on the 45-mile ride from Bury St Edmunds to Norwich: the first stage of a 250-mile tour which will eventually take us round to Ipswich and finally Colchester.





# Number thirteen (1990)



NUMBER THIRTEEN

These recordings were made in a bedroom  
on an 8 track machine.

Everything written and played by the  
Psychedelic Gardener.

If you've got no money-copy it.

CLEANER FROM VENUS - 13

## no go (baggy music) for louis macneice

**I**t's no go the acid house  
it's no go stone roses  
all we want is a hooded shirt  
and an ecstasy psychosis  
a day return to manchester  
a pair of purple kickers  
never mind the records  
get the t-shirts and the stickers  
johnny normal got a job  
a mortgage and a motor  
claimed his dad was dylan  
and he came from minnesota  
conned a generation  
of smiling hippie tossers  
who shaved their beards and trimmed their hair  
but failed to cut their losses

it's no go for live aid  
it's no go the wagons  
all we want is chrystals  
and our dungeons and our dragons  
darren darren wayne and shane  
kylie kev and jason  
beat a blind man half to death  
with his own alsation  
it's no go your artsy films  
it's no go your passion  
all we want is a shopping mall  
and some pissy high street fashion  
it's no go kinnochio and goodnight ronnie  
so kiss goodbye with a lullabye  
and a strawberry-flavoured johnny  
it's no go humility  
and no go our nation  
what we've got is a yuppie farm  
with super-annuation ...







The 'missing' 12 inch  
single of Market Day. I don't  
have a copy of this record.

5 Paget Rd.  
Wivenhoe Essex  
CO79RT  
July 8th 1990

Hallo Joachim,

Thanks for ~~xxxx~~the money a few weeks back.  
I've had quite a tough time the past couple of months.  
I spent the last year working really hard with the  
Brotherhood of Lizards. We got a lot of publicity, television  
newspaper articles etc but in the end I wasn't happy  
with the outcome.  
I found myself sitting down one day and wondering why  
I wasn't happy like the old days when I used to make cassettes  
and brew beer and go for walks in the country.  
Nelson my partner joined New Model Army. They're quite  
well-known and supposed to be a political sort of a band.  
Well they travel in cars, eat meat, make their demos in  
24 track studios and are signed to E.M.I. so I guess  
they must be really radical.

Enclosed is a new Cleaners from Venus cassette.  
That's right....a Cleaners from Venus cassette. I think it's  
more or less safe enough to go back to what I was doing  
in the first place now...don't you? It's a mastercassette  
and there's a black and white cover. As you will hear  
it's the real thing and I think people will like it.

If you want to sell copies of it- I don't know how many  
tapes you still sell but start right now. If you don't...  
pass it on to another d.i.y. person when you've made  
your ~~own~~ copy. I don't have a lot of money at the moment  
but every week or so I'm going to make ~~ixxx~~one or two  
new master cassettes and send them to people until  
I run out of people. You were the first. Spread the word.  
The Cleaners are back-if anybody's interested. There's a  
new Cleaners or two as well.....

Write and let me know how you are and what you think.

all the very best

*Martin*  
martin

P. S. Lord Litter  
will get a tape soon.

... Sarah septic lives in france  
and drives a lamborghini  
saves her whales with metaphors  
and claims that she's a greenie



old macdonald had a farm  
then he had another  
then he had another and another  
and another  
it's no go the hospital  
it's no go education  
all we want is a line of whizz  
on piccadilly station  
it's no go tachini  
it's no go lacoste  
but try to tell the cissy southern bastids  
that they've lost  
it's no go the poll-tax  
no go registration  
all we want is a summons  
and a year or two probation  
jimi hendrix in the lounge  
nico in the kitchen  
brian jones the rolling stone  
coming down and itching

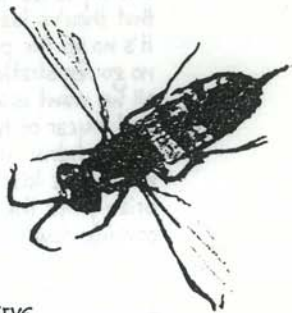
there you see virginity  
face down in the river  
write yourself a getwellsoon  
and send it to your liver  
it's no go my angel breath  
it's no go my dogstar  
all they want is £40 quid to see some dodgy rockstar  
they'll package up rebellion  
like a pot of clotted cream  
then they'll sell it back at twice the price  
and nullify the dream  
and all your friends and lovers  
and places that you knew  
you'll wonder what became of them  
and what became of you  
it's no go my moony rose - it's no go tomorrow  
all we are are tiny blips  
in a databank called sorrow

## a man for our time

doesn't it please your heart to know  
he used to go where the wild things grow  
and he's younger than the youngest rolling stone  
and doesn't it please your heart to see  
he got a post with the ministry  
he's a groove as far as politicians go

and he was standing at a party  
in 1968  
wearing beads and waving a joss-stick  
while nurturing dreams of running the state

you know  
he was a man for our time  
there's one in every crowd  
if it was allowed  
you'd drown them young  
and he was a man for our time  
he never spared a dime  
for you or your kind  
when he had made it



doesn't it thrill you to observe  
he makes the change as the fashions swerve  
cos a mouldy image maims the smooth machine  
oh be still my fluttering heart  
there on the stage in the leading part  
is a man who can't tell life from margarine

and now he's shaking hands at charity concerts  
with pop stars with no brains  
while the rest of us are throwing our money  
driving the buses and digging the drains

you know he was a man for our time  
there's one in every crowd  
if it was allowed  
you'd drown them young  
and he was a man for our time  
he never spared a dime for you or your kind  
when he had made it



## the jangling man

They're breaking glass and burning buildings  
in the early greenhouse sun  
the powers-that-be will blame extremists  
and I may well be one  
and old wat tyler's ghost is smiling  
as approving he looks on  
they haven't really been this angry since 1381

and I am just a jangling man  
been in the cold too long  
and I live with a raggedy-ann  
we never had any money  
is it really so wrong?

the velvet glove the iron rod and a bridle for your tongue  
the tanks which trundle through the square  
when the old have killed the young  
the wind seems all the colder now  
in the early summer sun  
the old man sees the wall come down  
and he reaches for his gun

and I am just a jangling man been in the cold too long  
and I live with a raggedy-ann we never had any money  
is it really so wrong just to dream  
dream of the feeling  
to wake one day and find that you are gone  
and will we dance  
dance by the graveside  
so glad so glad so glad that you are gone

so all you kids in cardboard city  
I hope you're having fun  
and all you voters everywhere  
will remember what you've done  
and wander dimly through the past  
of the england that you knew  
these dispossessed and homeless children  
they all belong to you  
they all belong to you (repeat chorus)

## mine-sweeping memory lane

**S**ee woolworths with wooden floors  
on a saturday believe it oh yes  
sweet smell of the pick'n'mix  
and your goddess-in-green-overalls  
there painted in red on white  
like three and six our love was oh yeah  
electrical counter dazzling opposite your lovelight


mine-sweeping memory lane  
I'm always mine-sweeping memory lane  
the same old ships going down again  
but I'm still mine-sweeping memory lane

watch horrified polo-necked  
as white-lipsticked she emerges lunchtime  
and meets with an older boy  
who knows much more than you do  
now downed like a chestnut leaf  
on a paving slab mid-rainstorm as you  
sigh into your black rose talc-scent shirt  
you thought would send her

mine-sweeping memory lane  
I'm always mine-sweeping memory lane  
the same old ships going down again  
and I'm still mine-sweeping memory lane

some permanent saturday  
is a version of you standing shielded  
so beautifully hurts so young  
such a dying-swan umbrella  
love stories in stately hums  
written on forgotten raincoats, you sigh  
then wander home in the rain  
with your chelsea boots osmozing

## a street called prospect



**S**he's drifting by the place where she pawned her rings  
stepping out the way of the skateboard kings  
tomorrow could be sweet and she's living on a street  
called prospect  
a girl of many aims  
and the beatbox bums they work in relay teams  
like a blacksmith customising noisy boys dreams  
and the old men tap their feet  
cos they're living on a street called prospect

and there's a brownstone church  
with a cracked bell ringing  
where the boys learn boxing and the girls learn singing  
where the good take the cloth and the fallen join the game  
before they burn out so briefly like an insect in a flame

the lone ranger buys a drink for old st. john  
he says it's been some time since the cavalry's gone  
then his voice begins to crack  
cos he's never coming back to prospect... and nothing's going on  
and then the sunlight splinters in a cloud of dust  
cos it's the devil's flour now the mill's gone bust  
and you don't give up your seat  
when the bus goes down a street called prospect

and reason's never sweet and ambition isn't choosy  
when politeness is a blade and assertion is a uzi  
the poor get angry and the rich wake may  
and your youth is like a dog-rose  
only blossoms for a day

they say they're going mining in the parking lot  
it's down to metal and to minerals  
but they won't say what  
then they're shakey on their feet  
when they get back on a street called prospect  
like burn-outs on parade  
so love me now and leave me cos I'm going away  
I only get a ticket for a very short stay  
and should we ever meet well it's best not on  
a street called prospect.

## "Poems"

### gatecrashing oyster park

**T**ex abrasive and the sandpaper cowboys  
are practising in the dark  
the word's got round  
up in boudicca town  
that they're playing in oyster park  
they're playing in oyster park  
just imagine  
now wouldn't that be a spark?  
and 600 robots from the revolution  
are hoping to make their mark

they're gatecrashing oyster park  
they're gatecrashing oyster park  
and 600 robots from the revolution  
are hoping to make their mark

the sons and daughters of the recently wealthy  
are taking some time off school  
with a balance of payments  
looking wonderfully healthy  
if you go by a sliding rule  
so tex abrasive and the sandpaper cowboys  
are planning on another gig  
and 600 robots from the revolution  
are hoping to make the lig

they're gatecrashing oyster park  
they're gatecrashing oyster park  
and 600 robots from the revolution  
are hoping to make their mark

don't turn around bus driver  
don't turn around  
cos 600 robots drinking our champagne  
is a fairly depressing sound

(repeat chorus)





## crash landlord

January was the hardest  
marxist students burning lights  
never wanted to be landlord  
not for any feudal rights

would you risk it for a virus?  
not until they get the vaccine  
have a biscuit - call me cyrus  
hear that squeak? the cat's relaxing

some of my best friends were tenants  
filled the place with smoke and laughter  
now it's like a bombed-out ballroom  
rusty glitterball and rafters

life is like a bowl of sugar  
which has been left out too long  
I can't seem to get my spoon in  
am I getting something wrong?

sweep the stairs and fix the cistern  
do repairs and take the rent  
single bedsit - claimants welcome  
suit a lady or a gent

there's no room for understanding  
even for a new messiah  
if he came to your salvation  
you would push him in the fire

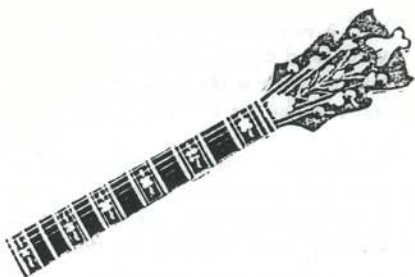
had a wife who wouldn't tarry  
very fond of heavy rock  
ran off with a lead guitarist  
left me like an undarned sock

when I die I hope the ravens  
beat the taxman to my soul  
take my darts and hit this giro  
best of three collects my dole

## I hank marvin

I hank marvin  
we all did  
with cricket bats  
in front of a mirror  
in our bedrooms  
after school  
I hank marvin  
quite regularly  
my mother nearly caught me  
what were you doing?  
nothing mum  
cricket bat still warm  
I hank marvin  
unashamedly  
on the bed sometimes  
standing up  
I knew the dance steps  
I thought I'd grow out of it  
when I got married  
but the other day  
when she was out  
they played apache  
on the radio  
and I hank marvin  
in the living room  
I straightened the place out  
afterwards  
but somehow she found out  
I'd been seen  
you hank marvin?

she made me burn the cricket bat  
and see a psychiatrist  
I go to a special group now  
once a week  
they give us all cricket bats  
and blackframed spectacles  
and we have to do it  
hank marvin  
in front of everybody  
it's pathetic  
half a dozen men  
in their late thirties  
cricket bats in hands  
spectacles on  
doing the dance steps  
grinning inanely  
shadows  
of our former selves



## the funeral of a young man

**W**akes colne white colne  
earls colne and colne engaine  
rainwashed green in early summer  
as I cycle home again  
past the chappel viaduct  
only memories will remain  
wakes colne white colne  
earls colne and colne engaine

at the church-st peter's halstead  
cycle oil on trouser leg  
hymns were hardly made to measure  
service strictly off-the-peg  
always worse when it's a young man  
wheezed an older woman's voice  
yes I thought - a decent send-off  
pay your money take your choice  
sleep forever in the graveyard  
at the eastern edge of town  
toxic yew trees - raised umbrellas  
english weather - pouring down

he'd been chef and I'd been porter  
font of cricket kind to me  
strange the things that you remember  
liked a song by kiki dee  
working in a narrow kitchen  
deafened by the radio  
shouted jokes and muddled orders  
table five-away you go  
different blokes on different wages  
makes me sorry now I think  
he was bringing up a family  
I was spending mine on drink



he'd been ill - I got a phone call  
now I'm cycling in the rain  
wakes colne white colne  
earls colne and colne engaine  
had to borrow shirt and jacket  
he'd be laughing like a drain  
wakes colne white colne  
earls colne and colne engaine

nineteen miles from home to halstead  
nineteen miles then back again  
had the notion that exertion  
might stave off potential pain  
coming home I passed a postman  
and we spoke as cyclists will  
asked me was I in a hurry?  
only to be living still

past the chappel viaduct  
only memories can remain  
wakes colne white colne  
earls colne and colne engaine



## a bottle of youth

**h**ad a bottle of youth I carried about  
I shook it up till the cork came out  
I took a swig - it tasted sweet  
I spilled a bit in wardour street  
it trickled down to leicester square  
and left a pool of memories there

had a bottle of youth  
just laid on me  
it seemed to blur mortality  
clear and good it bore my name  
and all my friends got one the same  
it cured fear and banished doubt  
we never saw it running out

had a bottle of youth  
gone halfway down  
and drunk on it I owned the town  
I knew the world and it knew me  
and no change due that I could see  
I wrote that riff I banged the drum  
I never heard those strangers come

got a bottle of youth  
with some left still  
I only take it if I'm ill  
and since my friends have gone to ground  
I never have to pass it round  
so wiser now I watch and think  
as all these strangers waste their drink.

## ringo starr

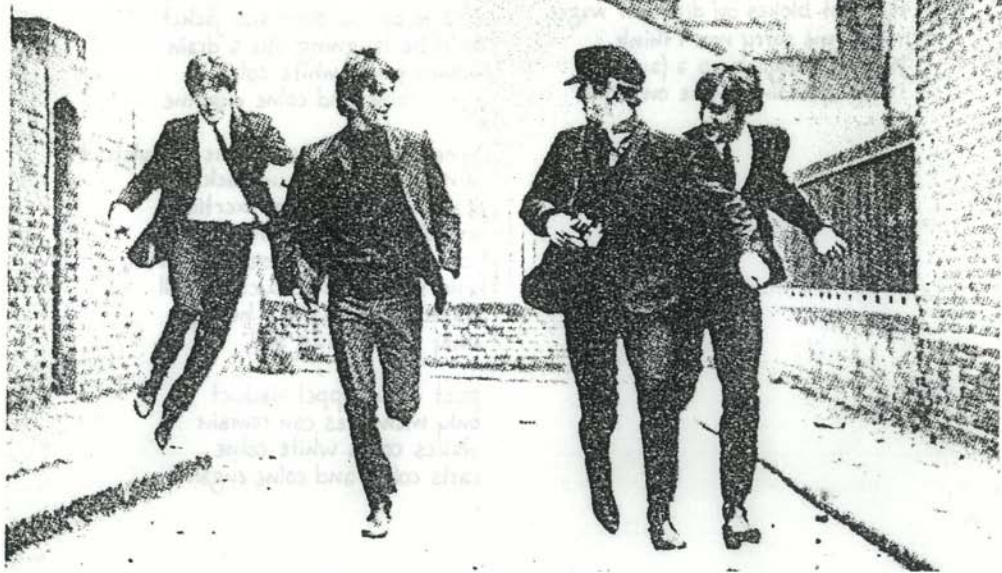
**R**ingo starr ringo starr  
nodding dog in beatles car  
dingle drummer- ludwig kit  
kept the beat and sang a bit

ringo starr ringo starr  
mad to let him near guitar  
master of the tom-tom roll  
narrowly escaped the dole

ringo starr ringo starr  
clinking cowbells- four each bar  
teenage memories coming back  
oh no - it's the ringo track

ringo starr ringo starr  
better than dave clark by far  
never seemed to be as gear  
once he had his own career

ringo starr ringo starr  
did the drums on drive my car  
took a glammy second wife  
having had a hard day's life



## thorpe market

The bric-a-brac and gaudy tack  
of any generation  
are sold for pennies not for pounds  
at thorpe-le-soken station  
and kept in circulation

the portrait of king edward swings  
in creaking celebration  
and peels by the public house  
at thorpe-le-soken station  
in which they serve libation

then plant and flower auctions  
in rusting iron sheds  
are filled with Essex faces  
on weathered turnip heads  
from clacton or from toosy  
with their end-of-winter colds  
who bid at thorpe-le-soken  
for a box of marigolds  
at one pound eighty? eighty-five?  
ninety do I hear?  
they stick at one pound ninety  
and sod the auctioneer  
who glances over half-moon specs  
with keen and practised eye  
at hardy annual gardeners  
who won't be hoist so high

and paperbacks laid up in stacks  
defying your concentration  
are found on trestles ten-a-pound  
at thorpe-le-soken station  
some still in publication

the prices paid for literature  
immune here to inflation  
where barbara cartland lies with joyce  
at thorpe-le-soken station  
for your imagination

but despite the april sunshine  
there's an easterly which wields  
a cutting edge to chill you  
from the thorpe-le-soken fields  
and there beneath the conker tree  
in quiet resignation  
the traders turn their collars up  
at thorpe-le-soken station  
and curse their occupation

the maltings by the railyard  
the legend says it plain  
make malt for double diamond  
you'll read it from the train  
you can smell it in the market  
you can taste it in the rain  
and it lingers in your nostrils  
till you're nearly home again

then market womens' wartime eyes  
are closed in concentration  
to takky takings in the pub  
by thorpe-le-soken station  
a tricky operation

and I may have a drink or two  
of devil's embrocation  
I like to watch the trains go by  
at thorpe-le-soken station  
and miss my destination.

## poll tax collector

I fell in love with a poll tax collector  
she stood at my front door  
waiflike in her raincoat  
hair like golden straw  
her eyes were sage-flower sapphires  
she shivered in the rain  
and I knew as I asked her in for tea  
that the system had won again

I fell in love with a poll tax collector  
and she in love with me  
the only name I knew her by  
was 127b  
I didn't want to rush things  
I said I couldn't pay  
but I promised I'd consider  
if she called again next day

I fell in love with a poll tax collector  
political disgrace  
I rained my unsound kisses  
on her lovely upturned face  
oh 127b, oh 127b  
she liked dub reggae and early clash  
the same as me

everytime she came to mind  
my principles would melt  
I dared not tell the anti-poll tax  
union how I felt  
this was not infatuation  
this was something wild and free  
when I fell in love with a poll tax collector  
and she in love with me

it got to be ridiculous  
she'd come round every day  
we'd make love in the kitchen  
then I'd refuse to pay  
she'd fix me with those lovely eyes  
with just a hint of pain  
saying very well then mr. mcwell  
I'll have to call again

she'd straighten up her clothing  
I'd make a cup of tea  
it was love in ten installments  
127b and me  
I explained I had no money  
we were meeting more and more  
when the bailiffs took my bed away  
we did it on the floor  
we did it in the garden  
if raining - in the shed  
the passion so consumed us  
we hardly missed the bed

I fell in love with a poll tax collector  
it ended tragically  
she lost her husband and her job  
courtesy of me  
a bloke has taken over now  
doing her old rounds  
and still they haven't got my 340 something pounds  
so darling if you're out there  
here's a joke for you . . . . .  
what have pelicans, toucans and the community  
charge office got in common?  
they can all shove their bills up their arses.



## a brush with death

**O**n incidentally . . . . .  
I saw mrs. death the other day  
she looked knackered as ever  
pale and scruffy  
she doesn't look after herself  
is what I reckon  
she'd just been to see old mrs. james  
in the high street  
I said to her  
well I haven't seen you for some time  
she told me she'd popped in  
once or twice  
but I'd been out  
so she'd stroked the cat  
and left  
told me she'd got a lot on at the moment  
what with the middle east  
and america and that  
said she'd been on a holiday flight  
to spain  
and in germany  
on a train.  
then down a mine in france.

her job certainly gets her about  
so when are you coming to see me?  
I asked her.  
told me there was a bit of a stack up  
at present  
and that I was way down the list  
but that she'd be around  
in time  
we were both in-a-bit-of-a-rush  
she had to nip up the general hospital  
to see someone in intensive care  
and I had to go home  
to bury my cat.





## miss l. holden

Supposing  
I married the girl  
in the building society  
miss l. holden  
lynn . . . I later found out  
with her c.f.c. hair  
and her strong leanings  
towards normality  
with her grey suit  
and her ruffy blouse  
not too high heels.  
supposing I just woke up  
and found myself married to her?  
how would we get on?  
could I bring myself to like,  
her lionel richie cassettes?  
her jackie collins books?  
her daily mail feminism?  
her-mrs-thatcher-may-be  
a-complete-psychopath  
but-she-says-what-she-thinks-views?  
how would I cope with

going to florida  
for two weeks sunbathing?  
what would I do  
while dynasty was on t.v.?  
what about sex?  
I expect I'd have to  
take a shower first  
and ultimately  
there might be a baby  
then I'd be forced  
to go to the christening  
and talk with the women  
about job prospects



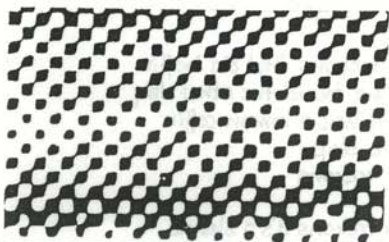
with the men  
about cars and football  
the answer might be  
a computer course  
then while lynn was at home  
nursing little lionel  
I could be on the 6.15  
from colchester to liverpool street  
in my burton raincoat  
and hepworth suit.  
going to work in computers  
somewhere in london  
and dreaming  
of doing the square lawn  
of our barratt home  
with a flymo . . . . .  
on sundays  
there would be a lunchtime pint  
or driving in the car  
to her mum's.  
I would sensibly  
not be under-insured  
make sure of the best buys  
go to the freezer centre  
take up d.i.y.  
be adventurous in bed.  
by getting some books  
on the subject.  
pay lynn little compliments  
about her hair  
still give her valentine cards  
great big ones  
with a giant shiny rayon heart  
and a pre-written message.  
build a shelf  
for baby things  
while she read her catalogue  
yes I think perhaps



I could be quite convincing  
for a while  
but what would happen  
if I cracked?  
supposing she came home one day  
and found me completely naked  
in the garden  
except for a napoleon hat?  
being wheeled round the garden  
on a small trolley  
pulled by two sheep  
and shouting with laughter  
or what would happen  
if I turned the spare bedroom  
into the temple of ra  
painted symbols on the walls  
burned incense  
and took strong hallucinogenics  
chanted mantras late on thursday nights  
and had spiritual experiences?  
how would she cope  
with monthly sufi weekends  
or rebirthing  
in our living room?  
supposing I lent the garden shed  
to a french-vietnamese lesbian  
who needed to finish her novel?  
would lynn mind?  
I think she would  
her parents  
mr and mrs holden  
most certainly would  
they would be onto their solicitor  
like a shot.

finding out what could be done.  
police and psychiatrists might come.  
lynn would be tearful  
but determined now

I'd lose my job  
the two sheep and myself  
the french-vietnamese lesbian novelist  
we'd all be homeless.  
and even though  
I never married miss l. holden  
from the building society  
I can't forgive her for that.



## gary reckons

**g**ary reckons two-be-four  
is good enough to do the job  
but when you come to hang the door  
that's specialist  
gary reckons

gary reckons what we need  
is soft and sharp and some cement  
then not too wet- to make a screed  
and keep it level  
gary reckons

gary reckons roman stuff  
and priceless too was what it was  
the guvnor kept it quiet enough  
in case they stopped us  
gary reckons

gary reckons they could make  
us stop... the archaeologists  
cos covering up a whole mosaic  
that's sacrilege  
gary reckons

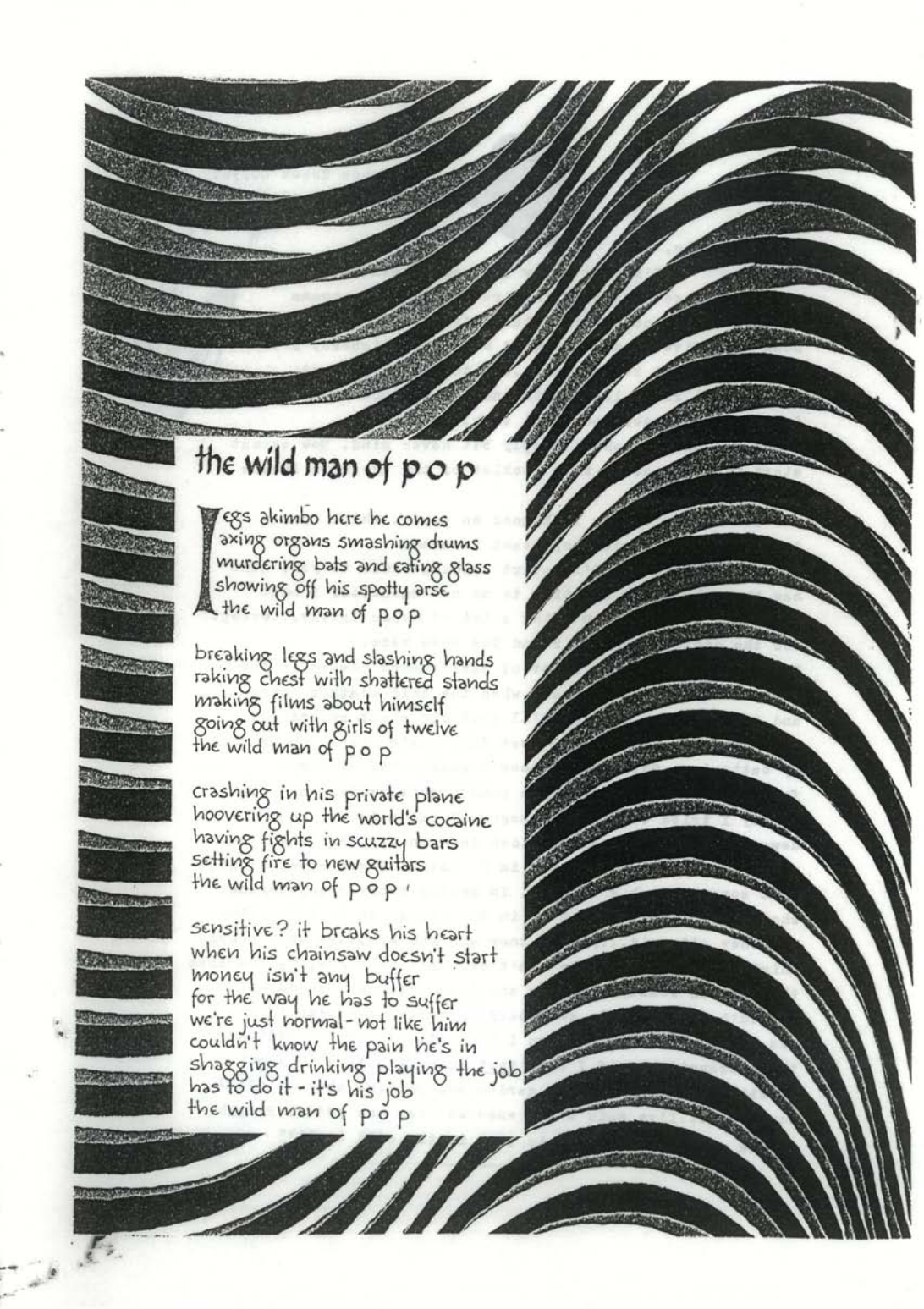
gary reckons that old boffin  
sniffing round the other day  
said it was a roman coffin  
in the skip  
gary reckons

gary reckons it's a shame  
to concrete over roman gear  
but there you are - we're not to blame  
it's time and money  
gary reckons

## a tour

**I**wo soldiers wives  
good friday shopping  
loading up a taxi cab  
outside tescos talking  
my husband  
has done two  
tours of northern ireland  
one of them said  
a curious choice of word  
a tour  
was it like  
a coachload of boisterous young men?  
happy with hold-alls  
waving out of windows  
silly hats and sunglasses  
singing on country roads  
past beautiful lakes  
and sleepy farmhouses?  
or was it like  
a rockband tour?  
condoms under coach seats  
hangovers  
broken guitar strings  
and bits of silver paper  
what did the woman mean  
by tour?





## the wild man of p o p


**L**egs akimbo here he comes  
axing organs smashing drums  
murdering bats and eating glass  
showing off his spotty arse  
the wild man of p o p

breaking legs and slashing hands  
raking chest with shattered stands  
making films about himself  
going out with girls of twelve  
the wild man of p o p

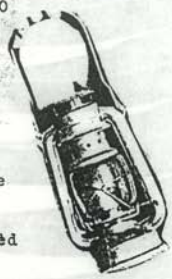
crashing in his private plane  
hoovering up the world's cocaine  
having fights in scuzzy bars  
setting fire to new guitars  
the wild man of p o p

sensitive? it breaks his heart  
when his chainsaw doesn't start  
money isn't any buffer  
for the way he has to suffer  
we're just normal - not like him  
couldn't know the pain he's in  
shagging drinking playing the job  
has to do it - it's his job  
the wild man of p o p





5 Raget Road  
Wivenhoe Essex CO79DT  
October 6th 1990



Hallo Joachim,

I'm very sorry I haven't been in touch with you. I got a lot of inspiration to write poems and it doesn't come very often. I've got enough for a book now. I've been mailing it off to publishers. I've already got two rejections...but they read one out on national radio last month and I got a poem mentioned in a national newspaper last week.

Money has been in short supply but never mind. Now we must start thinking about this booklet of the Cleaners lyrics and information.

Not all of the lyrics look good on paper. Which lyrics do you think are most important to send?

Write back soon and I'll start sending stuff to you. Also has there been any reaction to my new cassette? I must confess I haven't been doing a lot of music lately...except for the odd performance round the area here.

I'm going to be doing a lot of performance poetry in the next few months and I guess when the cold weather comes and I can't work outside I'll probably start recording again. It's good to have a rest from music and re-charge my batteries. This year I took a really bad kicking from the music industry. The pain hasn't quite gone yet. In May I tried to find a manager. I had a lot of good newspaper clippings and a video documentary, and I'd been on television about 6 times in 6 months. I got appointments with some quite big managers. In nearly every case, they knew who I was or they'd seen me in the papers or on television. But they all said...yes we know who you are...we know people think you're good but we can't or won't help you. In one case the guy was really friendly and then suddenly one day I couldn't get past his secretary. I began to wonder if I was being sabotaged....then I thought...No if I'm getting that paranoid and if I care that much it's time to admit defeat and go and do some gardening. But the thought still remains....I've made a few enemies over the years. Enough people who would like me to stay in the cold in case ...

---

...I got rich enough to employ a good lawyer and come looking for my old royalties. Plus I'm not quite respectful enough to them maybe. On the other hand maybe none of this is true. Maybe I'm just too old/too difficult and not polished enough. It was like I banged at the door...then kicked the door...then pounded it with my fists before I collapsed exhausted. Then while I was lying there panting...the door creaked open slightly....I got up and went over to it.....Then a boxing glove on the end of a stick knocked me down again. That's what happened earlier this year...and of course Nelson went off to join New Model Army. Well some good has come out of this. I got a good cassette and I've finished my book. I was digging a drain for an old doctor the other day and I thought...Captain Sensible is in Ibiza on holiday....and Giles Smith is interviewing famous pop stars and buying a house And Nelson is in New Model Army and I'm digging a fucking drain in the cold wind. And I started laughing. The old doctor came out and looked at me laughing and he must have thought I was a bit mad or something...and maybe I am. Anyway in spite of all this I'm feeling pretty good now with plenty to do and plenty of wild new ideas and ten cigarettes and a bottle of cider and two mad young sheepdogs and a pagan witch to sleep besides. So send me a letter and tell me what you think and what you're doing out there.....

Yours in the middle of autumn



paget road November the 5th

Hallo Joachim,

Here's a surprise...  
some song lyrics.....some bits from  
my old diaries.....some photographs...  
the negatives from the original  
Cleaners l.p. photographs....(please  
send photos and negatives back)....also  
some odds and ends....You should be able  
to make a start from all this. If there  
are any specific song-words which you  
still want....drop me a line and i'll  
send them to you. i hope this lot  
makes you happy and that you have enough  
for a booklet....write back



all the best

magic-mushroom

-martin

5 Paget Road Wivenhoe

Essex CO79DT

December 3rd 1968

Hallo Joachim,

Here's another surprise. Nearlyx all the lyrics  
you asked for. A few I didn't send for various reasons.  
As for mentioning Herr Zeller. The best thingx is to say  
nothing...or as the now defunct Mrs. Thatcher would say  
"Starve him of the oxygen of publicity" If you want a  
foreword....Yes i'll do it...but not now. First assemble the  
booklet and then ~~xxxx~~send me a rough copy of it and i'll  
write a foreword nearer to its completion when i know what  
shape it will be. Perhaps Giles Smith and Lol Elliott might  
write a few words if i ask them too.  
Lol fell 60 feet off a roof recently after eating 200  
magic mushrooms. He was trying to get a better look at  
the moon and slipped-he wasn't trying to fly or anything.  
He was very lucky and only injured his legs.  
i'm very very busy....doing gardening....and there's a good chance  
that i will have a book of rock poetry out next year but it's  
not certain as usual. i'm also helping out with this Ziggy  
Stardust concert and doing gigs and writing songs so....  
i hope you appreciate how much of a brain strain it was  
trying to remember old songs from eight years ago.  
write back if you need anything else. I may even consider  
coming to Germany to do some concerts to promote myself.  
Do you think people would come to see me?

Write

All the best

*J Martin*







5 Paget Rd.  
Wivenhoe  
Essex CO79DT  
U.K.

Hallo Joachim,

Thanks for sending  
the letter and the strange  
collection of money. I've been  
very busy the past few months.

I've begun to make a name for  
myself as a performance poet  
nationally.

A national newspaper runs  
one of my poems every month  
and I've been doing a lot  
of readings. For June however  
I need to do a lot of gardening  
I'm really looking forward to  
seeing the Cleaners booklet.

By co-incidence...a small booklet  
of my poetry is also being prepared  
for publication this weekend.  
Stay in touch. Let me know  
whatever you want me to write  
in addition to what you've got.

all the best

*J. W. T. M.*



5 Raget Road Wivenhoe Essex CO79DT

Hallo Joachim,

Thanks for sending me the rough copy. Do you want it back? I can send it but I guessed it was for my reference.

I enclose the missing list of records and tapes, which is now complete as far as I know. There is some talk of a live poetry e.p. but it's only talk at the moment. I have a little book of poems out soon. I'll send you a copy. It's A5...about 20 pages but very well designed.

The poetry is going very well at the moment. I recently did a gig with Dave Stewart (of Eurythmic's) band...The Spiritual Cowboys and I'm doing a poetry spot soon at The Marquee. A lot of people seem to really like my poetry and I'm getting more well known than I was as a musician.

Enclosed are some very recent photos taken by a very good young Irish-woman called Aileen McCenville. She took them in a pub, where she felt I would be more natural. I'm looking quite old now. It shocks me when I look at earlier photos. I guess age comes to all of us.

Also enclosed are my photo comments, which are numbered and a foreword, which was as honest as I could be. You should maybe write an introduction yourself or get someone else to do it for an outside perspective on what the Cleaners were/are.

The handwriting of the lyrics is very good and seems to suit them.

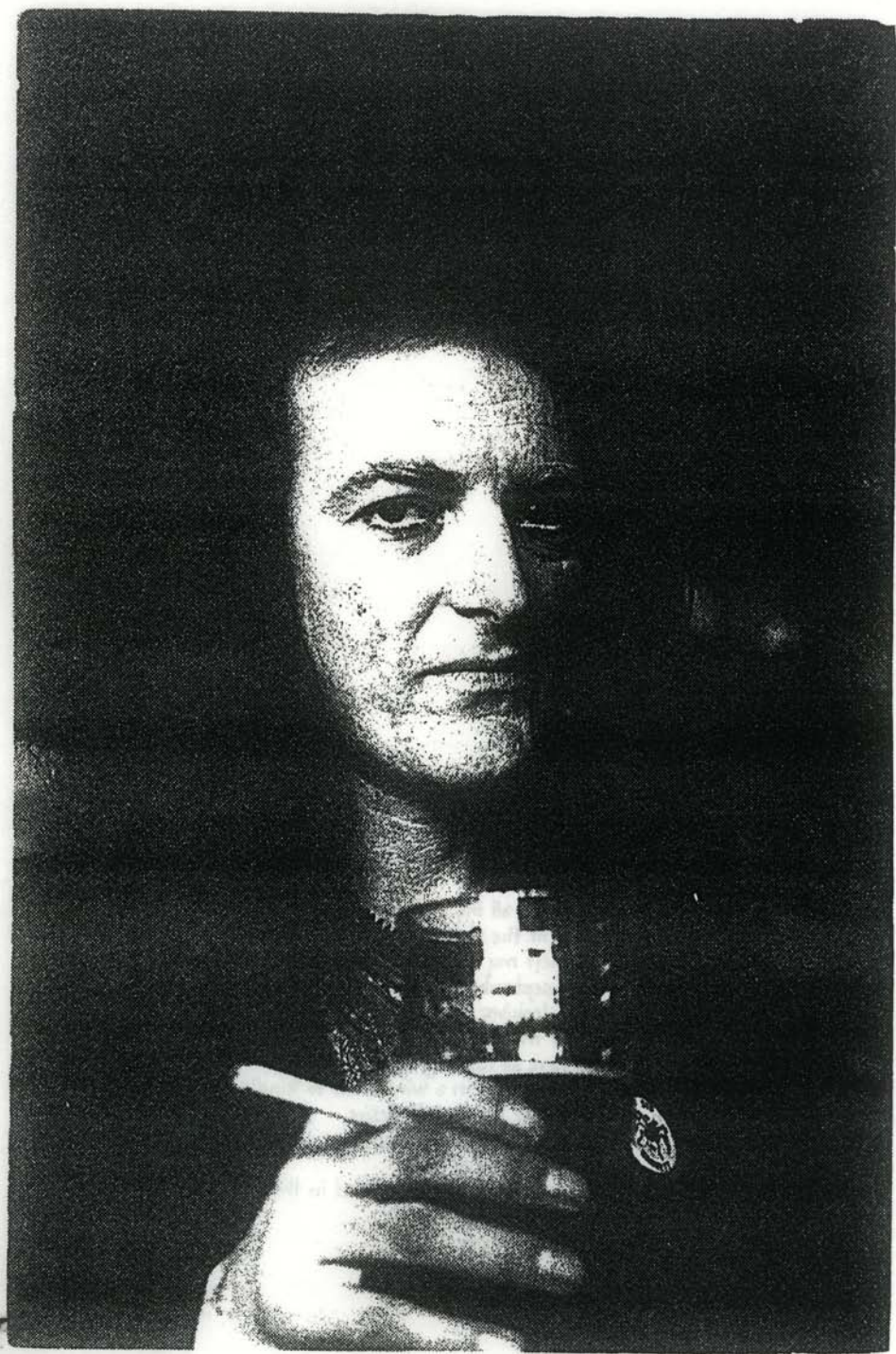
As for the live Hamburg tape. I didn't even know it existed until a few weeks ago. It sounds a bit rough to me-although it was a good gig.

Thanks for the dollars...they were quite useful when I had no cash.

Let me know if there's anything else you need.

Cheers

  
Martin







### prince of the winter

I hid away all the summer  
I sought the shade of the trees  
but I left my hide  
when september fell down  
I was looking for lost and golden dreams  
large sat the moon on a hillside  
leaves were all turning to fire  
and I ran around in a wind sent to kindle  
my prisoner spirit into desire  
I saw the prince of the winter  
just for a second or two  
there in my eye when I looked in the mirror  
he was calling to me  
and calling to you

im frühjahr 1984 hörte ich zum ersten mal einen CLEANERS-song, es war "love in vain" von der "midnight cleaners"-cassette. ich war fasziniert von der frische und leichtigkeit dieses songs aber auch davon, mit welch einfachen mitteln solche musik entstehen konnte. ich schrieb martin spontan einen brief und bat ihn um sein o.k. CLEANERS-cassetten in mein damals noch winziges vertriebsprogramm aufnehmen zu dürfen. ich durfte...

es war in jenen cassettenhochtagen ein leichtes 1 - 200 kopien einer CLEANERS-cassette zu verkaufen und ich schwärmte (noch auf jahre hinaus) bei dem gedanken, martin (und anderen musikern) mittels eines wohlorganisierten vertriebsnetzes eine lebensgrundlage zu bieten. es macht mich zuweilen noch heute traurig, daß dies nie bzw nur sehr unzureichend gelang... es machte martin traurig - und wie er selbst sagte auch bitter - daß er dies ziel auch mit zahlreichen ausflügen in die vinylwelt nicht erreichte. daß er diesen frust immer wieder bekämpfte und auch überwand, bescherte ihm phasen von kreativität und spielfreude, uns eine lange reihe gelungener popsongs...

wie oft habe ich schon martins musikalischen durchbruch vorausgesagt - und nie ist was draus geworden... es lag gewiß nicht an martins fähigkeiten, eher an seinem notorischen mißtrauen der musikindustrie gegenüber, noch mehr an seiner weigerung, sich deren einflüssen und manipulationen preiszugeben. und dennoch werde ich weiterhin daran glauben, daß er eines tages von seiner musik leben kann - auf indirektem wege soll dieses booklet dazu einen kleinen beitrage leisten!

ganz herzlich danken möchte ich heiko für seine große hilfe ( er übernahm u.a. die "schönschrift" der texte sowie die gestaltung des umschlags und der mittelseite)...

und natürlich "thanx very much" an martin selbst, sowohl für die zahlreichen briefe mit texten, fotos, zeitungsausschnitten etc. als auch für seine wunderschöne musik...

breese/marsch im spätsommer 1991



