

cont'd from T-1

back to at least 500 BC but wasn't written down until nearly 1,700 years later. It's a typical tale of simple Irish country folk, fighting and murdering and boasting of their prowess, actually based on a cattle raid between Connacht and Ulster.

But just as they take Irish musical themes and turn them inside out to make them contemporary, this mythical war between a husband and wife quarrelling over who was the richest is constantly given up-to-date turns of phrase which put it right into a modern context and avoid the sort of archaism which is so suspect in some folk rock groups.

Drummer Eamon Carr describes their music as ethnic rock and likens them to Santana and Osibisa in the way they have used their traditional backgrounds to formulate their rock sounds.



## Horslips Hurricane

"A lot of the Irish heritage is very mystical, and a lot of our music is very spacey and trippy in fact," says Eamon. "If you listen to us play when you're stoned it's incredible. The first time I heard us on tape I was out of my head altogether, it was spacey I couldn't vibrate that it was us playing on the tape. The clothes we wear are spacey. It's not so much of a Roxy Slade thing, it's more spacey than showbiz."

"Most nights when I go on stage I wear space clothes and flying helmets and things like that. When I'm behind the drum kit I actually do think it's a module."

Horslips rise to being Ireland's top rock group is as interesting as their music. After bass guitarist, Barry Devlin, Charles O'Connor and Eamon, had made their TV ad appearance they decided it would be fun to form a group and began rehearsing in the basement of a friends art gallery in Dublin.

They had all been involved in groups before on a semi pro level, and with the wealth of PR experience they had from working in advertising it wasn't long before people knew their name if not their music.

With a guitarist who was working with them in the advertising agency on guitar, and Jim Lockhart from traditional music, playing assorted pipes and electric organ, Horslips first gig reached notoriety in Eire after a local priest had them banned because of the obscene poster advertising the venue.

From there they started a weekly appearance on one of Eire's television rock shows. That according to Charles' wife Sue was hilarious. At one time they had the whole of Ireland trying to get the sound on their television to stop fizzing. A hopeless task as the splutterings were coming from their own amps. If the programme did not help their music, it got their name around and made people aware of who they were.

"What happened was nice," explained Eamon "but we had to work at it. We played together for six months playing a strange mixture of rock and roll, blues and traditional music. It turned out the way it has because we didn't have a lot of equipment and had to use things like concertinas and pipes."

In Ireland the ballroom circuit is something out of a time gone by. The regulars who attend to watch the showbands go along to get drunk, to dance and find future wives. Consequently in country area the age of the audience ranges from 16 right through to forty-year-old cattlemen.

Not the easiest of audiences to get through to, and at first they emptied halls in amazing speeds. People couldn't take their music, and by the end of their set only the hardest heads were still freaking to them. Everyone else had split for the pub

and sanity.

They were forced into a position of having to change their music. Slowly it began to get more funky and as the small but mible Irish freaks began to hear and became aware of them their audience grew. Once their second single "Johnny's Weeding" was a hit in Eire they didn't have to look back.

After being offered a lot of silly three per cent recording deals by English companies they figures their best bet was to stay in Ireland and form their own label.

"I think you can tell when something is going to happen, so there's no point in rushing out. I think if you wait for it to catch up with you, that's the best move," said Eamon.

Recording their 1st album at Longfield with the Stones' Mobile recording studio was the perfect step for Horslips, especially as they brought in Alan O'Duffy known as "Irish" when he worked at Olympic as a sound engineer.

Alan is patient with the group, working hard at getting their unique music caught perfectly on tape. If they had gone to London as was originally planned I am sure the results would not have been as stunning.

We talked about traditional Irish music and the contact Horslips have with the older Irish musicians especially those who live on the West Coast in Connemara where many of the traditional values still survive and where Gaelic is still spoken.

When they first played there, Horslips were dubious as to how they would go down, especially as their music is based around ancient melodies and feature lyrics by the 18th century O'Rathaille and O'Carolan. Surprisingly enough the Connemara folk love them.

"They came along and really freaked out. They've gone to great lengths to help us actually. They could understand what we were doing to the music, they gave us lyrics and played melodies for us. They're sending Jimmy a set of pipes that's about a hundred years old. It's like everything really, the people who are into the music are just genuine."

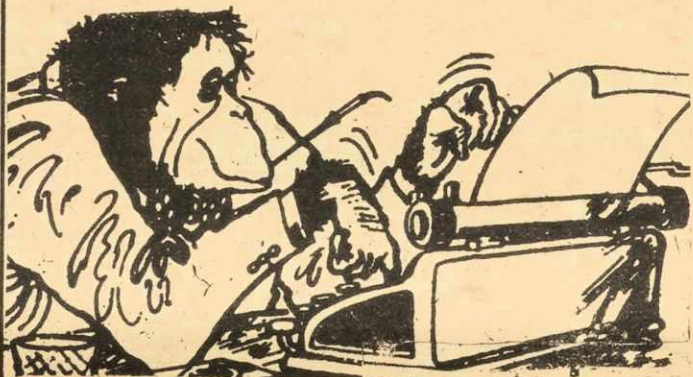
Eamon actually gets very excited when he talks about the old Irish poets like Turlough O'Carolan and Aodhagan Rathaille.

"The old poets to me were amazing. They were like the old blues men, oppressed and turning on to wine or whatever it was. They usually died young as well."

"There is a parallel if you like between the blues and Irish traditional music. They are both music of an oppressed people. Things like the Villeain pipes are just as emotional as a slide guitar. It's the same poignant crying type of sound."

"I find Irish traditional music very strange, it's almost cerebral. If you're high and listen to some of those old guys, I'll tell you it almost takes the top of your head right off."

## Dilemma of the Dance



by Peter Cameron

This week I'm going to return to a subject that I covered in one of my dance reviews of about a month ago. Back then I complained about the lack of tables and chairs at a dance. Since that time a lot of annoyed people have asked me why some dances have tables and chairs and why others don't.

One reason for the lack of furniture, that I gave to those asking, was that it let more people get into the dance. To this the reply was either to the effect that, the capitalist

SUB wants to make more money, or "why the hell put more people in there, it is crowded enough with five hundred."

From many conversations of that same general tone I came to the conclusion that a very small percentage of students (if any) like the dances without the tables and chairs. Now you are all wondering just what is objected to about this set-up.

The thing that is top of the list is that there is no place to leave your drink, except for putting it on the floor. Now,

if you do leave your drink on the floor, the chances of it being intact when you get back is very small. You will probably find that someone has kicked it over when you turned, this is good for bar sales but can become hard on the pocket-book.

The second gripe stems from the first. The only place that one can sit is on the floor and after about two hours the floor is too wet to sit on, so you stand up for the next two hours.

Gripe number three stems from number two and from the number of people in the place. Since you can't sit on the floor you must stand and with the quantity of bodies present it gets rather cramped.

Should dances be made uncomfortable so that more people can attend? It is a tough question to answer, and I would like any feedback you might care to voice on the subject.

# STARYK-PERRY DUO

STEVEN STARYK, violinist  
JOHN PERRY, pianist

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74**

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