

ARTS

# New vitality pumps wind

by Psych

Hawkwind  
Space Bandits  
Roadracer Records

Does anybody remember Hawkwind? Does anybody remember what they did last night? No? That's good. We're making progress.

For anyone who wants to know, Hawkwind's latest release, *Space Bandits*, is now available.

It's clean and tight and (surprise!) it's amazingly different from the rest of their material.

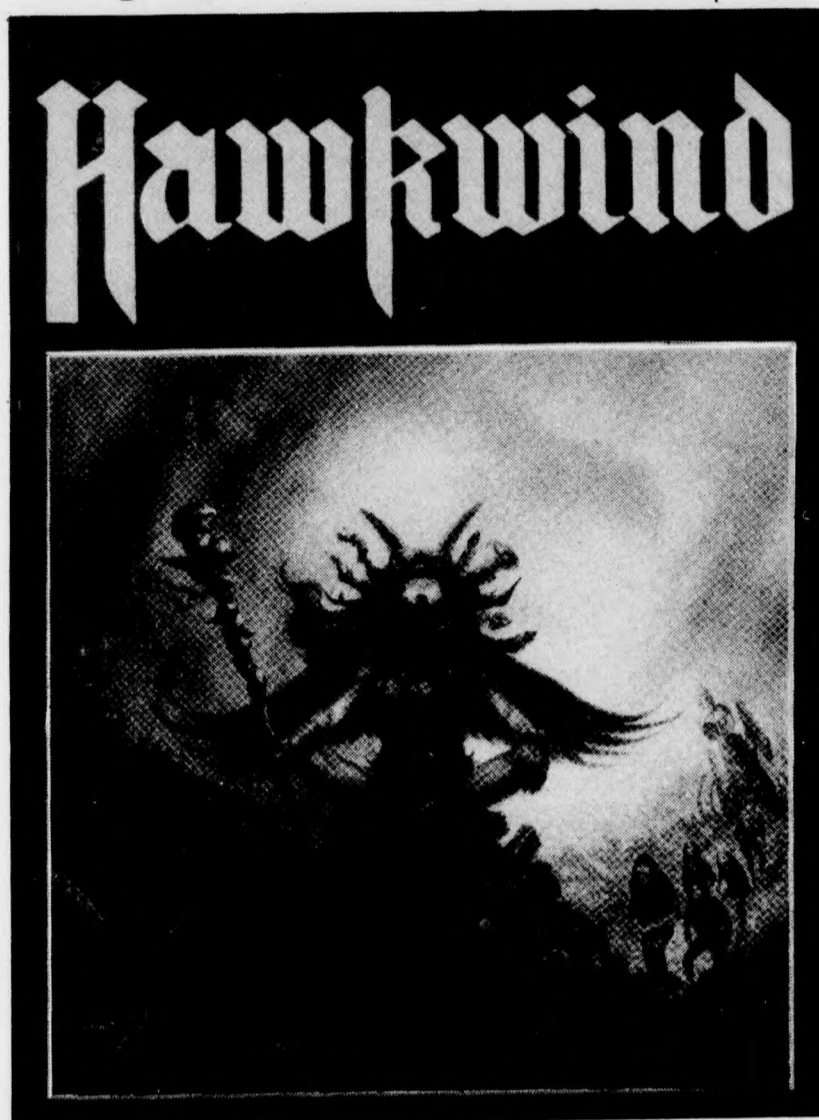
In some ways, it's perhaps far better than anything this band has produced in the last fifteen years. You might say that Doctor Has Been (David Brock) has finally broken the stagnant mould he made for himself nearly a decade ago.

While the title of the album is yet further abuse of the word "space" on the part of Hawkwind, it remains irrefutable that no other bandits can claim to have plundered the concepts of space to nearly the same extent as this band. Perhaps that is one aspect they shouldn't ever change.

Quite different from before, however, this album sports a "Stop The Madness" Anti-drug campaign label (Hawkwind? Are you sure?), a song contributing 10 per cent of its royalties to saving the birds, and a Sioux prayer courtesy of the Ogala Sioux Reservation Foundation. This all seems new and different for Hawkwind. Perhaps it's what they need to invoke a little radio attention.

Of course you have to hand it to all of Hawkwind. Dave Brock didn't pull this monumental change out of the dismal cosmic void all by himself. Bassist/vocalist Alan Davey is rapidly proving himself to be less a cardboard cut-out Lemmy doll and more a songwriter/performer and personality in his own right. Together with newfound female vocalist Bridgett Wishart, I feel Davey is pumping new vitality into the otherwise stale collective.

The overall sound of the album is clean and tight — (trademark Hawkwind). Tight enough, in fact,



*Space Bandits'* fresh approach works better than anything produced by Hawkwind in the past 15 years. The addition of vocalist Bridgett Wishart, mixed with the band's trademark clean and tight sound.

as to push the longitudinal stress of the universe to its uttermost limits.

The female vocals mark a clean break from previous material, while the voice and manner of Alan Davey sound hauntingly familiar to the late Bob Calvert (RIP). Violin bits by Simon House and contributions from Dukes Lysergic Orchestra also serve to enhance obscure corners of the album like cobwebs in the unattended wing of an old manor.

It will be interesting to see if any or all of these innovations will culminate into any kind of commercial success.

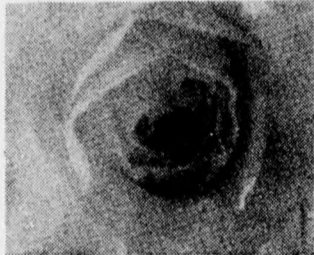
In a music industry where hit bands wax and wane, it would be a good thing for the no-hit has-been mentality of Hawkwind to yet prevail the not-so-distant future.

This one is definitely walkman approved. See you in the next plane of consciousness.

# Some friendly UK guys

somefriendly

the charlatans uk



by "Switch"

The Charlatans U.K.  
*Some Friendly*

Vertigo/Polygram Records  
On the wave that brought the retro bands from Manchester, England, the Charlatans have ridden into the North American scene.

*Some Friendly*, the follow-up album to an ultra successful single "The Only One I Know," easily found a place in the Alternative scene.

This "new" Manchester sound is poppy, up-lifting and rather fun. The Hammond organ movement is a throw back to the positivism of the 60s and is a welcome addition to the 90s music scene.

The biggest problem with the retro-push is that it seems that too much carbon copying is being done for musical depth.

The Charlatans are guilty of this peg-syndrome which includes the Happy Mondays and the Stone Roses.

The problem with the Charlatans (which would-be fans consider a BIG problem) is their rather egocentric approach to their audience. Their first North American tour in



October began at Toronto's Horse-shoe tavern. Charlie Tim, the lead vocalist, announced, "We're the best band in the world" and the band threw themselves into a groove which remained until the last song lingered as only a memory.

In concert, The Charlatans are vibrant, spirited and present themselves as a band who takes fun seriously. If you ignore the attitude problem, live, the band impels you to "move to the groove". If you go to see them, take your dancing shoes.

As for *Some Friendly*, the album, it's smooth.

The songs vibrate at about the same level and you can listen to it from beginning to end, without interruption (or attention).

Reminiscent of the Colourfield's attack on the 80s, *Some Friendly* is strong and enjoyable. As for its impact in regards to the Manchester wave? Pick a retro-band and stick with them (my personal choice is The Charlatans) in the end they all have the same value musically, but you might like one better than the others.

*The Charlatans appear once again on the Toronto Scene this time at the Opera House, Feb. 24 — a C.P.I. production.*

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