

The Fugs -- peace, pussy, perversion

by Pat Kutney and
Jeff Plewman

the Fugs are an emanation or hallucination of the culture of the Lower East Side. They write all their own songs, plucking them out of a personal history that includes the transistor radio, lots of grass, group-gropes, 1000's of hours of poetry, reading it, writing it, and listening; peace-freaking Chuck Berry concerts in heaven, and scholarships in various esoteric fields of knowledge.

Many of their songs deal with interpersonal relationships in the new marijuana group-grope psychedelic tenderness society (from the Fugs Songbook).

It was a real gross-out with the Fugs at Massey Hall on Sunday. They emanated with the 'sounds of peace, posterity, pussy, and perversion.' We were treated to such compositions as 'Johnny Pissoff,' 'Jack-Off Blues,' 'I Couldn't Get High,' and 'I Feel Like Homemade Shit.' They also performed their 'first single hit that rocketed up the charts', namely, 'River of Shit,' and 'Saran Wrap' — 'Rip it off; wrap it on; stick it in.' One song was 'dedicated to the Lesbian dwarfs of San Francisco who cut off their breasts and wear them as tote bags.'

While the Fugs leader Ed Sanders



Some emotional harmonizing by Ken Weaver and Ken Pine in "I Feel Like Homemade Shit."

made various vulgar announcements, Juli Kupferberg, who contributed nothing in the way of vocals or music, apart from a hockey stick with bells on it, was a constant source of amusement. Besides groping and crawling about the

stage he showed a collection of his signs placards. Some of the better ones were: PLEASE NO PROFANITY, PLEASE ADJUST YOUR CLOTHING BEFORE LEAVING, and the familiar picture of Uncle Sam pointing a finger with the

caption: HAVE YOU HAD YOUR PILL TODAY?

The Fugs did shock but they were also laughable. Their music was incredibly tight for the material they did. Their drummer is especially good.

The Fugs were preceded by the McKenna Mendelsson Mainline and Transfusion. M.M.M. plays traditional blues very well. Joe Mendelsson is a man who truly loves the blues. He has a powerful voice and is very clean both on harmonica and slide guitar (a rarity in Toronto).

McKenna played some expressive original guitar work. He is developing quite a good style since leaving the Ducklings.

Since we have expounded on Transfusion in previous columns, let it suffice to say that they outclassed the McKenna Mendelsson Mainline. On Friday night they did a fantastic jam which was thirty minutes long. It was so tight, yet it was unrehearsed and completely impromptu.

Big musical happenings in Detroit this weekend. The Cream plays at the Olympia on Saturday, John Mayall's Bluesbreakers are at the Grande Ballroom Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Catch Mayall if you can.

A light black comedy

by Jill Pivnick

Black Comedy, presented by Trio Production at the Toronto Workshop theatre on Alexandra St., is a very funny play which really does tell 'what happens when the lights go out.'

It has been directed by Eric House, who also directed White Lies, a shorter play presented in the first act. Both plays were written by Peter Shaffer.

Black Comedy concerns an artist, Brindsley Miller, his fiancée, Carol Melkett, and what happens to them on an evening when the electricity goes off. First of all Carol's father comes for a visit. To impress him Brindsley has 'temporarily borrowed' expensive furnishings from the apartment of his friend Harold Gorringer.

All is well until Harold unexpectedly appears on the scene. The audience is then treated to a comical sequence in which Brindsley under cover of darkness removes all the furniture back into his friend's apartment.

Miss Furnival, a neighbour who is afraid of the dark, adds another comic element as a teetotaling spinster who ends up stoned. And Clea, Brindsley's girlfriend, appears unannounced on the scene and proceeds admirably to complicate 'our hero's life.'

The acting throughout is superb. The players must constantly remember to act as though they are in total darkness and they bring it off beautifully. Credit for this smooth-flowing production must surely go to Eric House.

Paul Craig, as Brindsley, gives an excellent performance as the about-to-be-married bachelor who must contend simultaneously with a fiancée, a girl-friend, a future father-in-law, and an embittered neighbour.

Brian Petchy is very funny as the less-than-masculine neighbour Harold Gorringer. And both Davena Turveyand and Angela Roland give fine performances as the women in Brindsley's life.

Interestingly enough, there is a unique type of audience involvement in this play. It begins in

total darkness, but after the black-out the stage is lighted and we are pretending to look in on people groping in the darkness. Again I must comment on how well the actors communicate, and never once forget the conditions under which they are working.

White Lies, a shorter play, is also a triumph. It involves a clairvoyant and her two male customers. Moya Fenwick as the clairvoyant is particularly good — she is very commanding and easily controls her audience.

Both of these plays are funny, well executed and well worth seeing. Student tickets are sold fifteen minutes before curtain time, or the play may be seen as part of a five-part Trio Productions subscription series.

With a beginning like Black Comedy and White Lies things are looking up for the Toronto theatre season this year.



Lead guitarist Robin Trower and drummer B. J. Wilson after the Procul Harum concert at the Rock Pile.

Procul Harem--classical and complex

Procul Harum played for 1500 'beautiful people' at the Rock Pile on Saturday. Egged on by both heckling Scottish nationalists and the enthusiastic general audi-

ence, Procul Harum reproduced almost exactly on stage their album sound.

They were the first pop group to employ classical themes in their music. Their classically influenced numbers, such as 'Conquistador' and 'Christmas Camel', were brilliantly performed. In addition, they have added some original blues numbers to their repertoire, which were often disappointing musically-wise. But songs like 'A Whiter Shade of Pale' and 'Homburg' were absolutely beautiful both in lyrics and musical composition.

A few other things are noteworthy concerning Procul Harum. They have the most complex endings for songs that I have ever heard. Gary Brooker, pianist and vocalist, and Matthew Fisher, organist, produce some extraordinary interplay between their respective instruments. Procul Harum is unique in that it is the only group that engages a separate member (Keith Reid) for the sole purpose of writing lyrics.

Copyflow

by Bill Novak

When Meyer Levin lectured in Toronto recently, he didn't miss an opportunity to take a crack at the establishment, or the family, as it is now called. The New York based group of young and creative literary people, of whom Norman Podhoritz may or may not be pope, has drawn various comment in the past year or so — mostly from those critical of Podhoritz's tell-all confession *Making It*. For some reason, Philip Roth is usually included as a member. Whether he is or not is not important in the slightest; what does matter is that, like many of those in the group, he is one of our top writers today.

And I want to be supercool and hardly even mention *Goodbye Columbus*, which you've read, and *When She Was Good*, which you shouldn't have. Roth's most important book, I think you'll agree, has not even been published. When the third issue of *New American Review* carried a long story by Roth, we got a preview of what's going on. Now the news is out: this is part of a new book, called *Portnoy's Complaint*, to appear early next year. And I mention it now because in about four months everybody else will be talking about it, which is when I shut up. If the

published excerpt is any indication, this masterpiece — in effect one long monologue on the long-overworked subject of the Jewish neurosis — will contain some of the boldest and funniest observations on the subject ever published. It's going to be like twenty issues of the *Realist* all at once, if you can take that.

And speaking of the *Realist*, *Esquire Magazine* has been getting more and more interesting these past few months. One would think they had almost deliberately taken a few hints from *Ramparts* of a few months ago. Of particular interest in the Sept. issue is an article on Adala Stevenson; in the October issue is a huge monster called "Salvaging the Twentieth Century" containing a few good items. The latest issue (Nov.) focuses attention on the Chicago convention. One remembers *Esquire* about three years ago as being dull and virtually without importance. Due to a conscious and imaginative dress-up effort to catch various audience-segments (one can hardly imagine a homogenous audience for this magazine; even *Playboy*, with less variety in content, doesn't have a solid and recognizable group of readers) *Esquire* has managed to be alternately interesting and relevant, and occasionally both.