

GENRECIDES

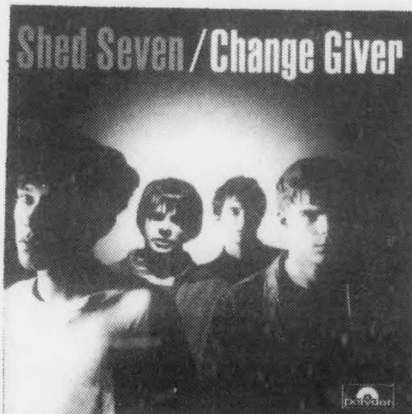
MICHAEL EDWARDS

Disturbing trend alert. Two old faces have returned to the hit parade with their latest albums. Nothing too peculiar there, except for the fact that both Annie Lennox and Duran Duran have released albums which are comprised wholly of cover versions, namely *Medusa* and *Thank You* respectively. That isn't a new idea - after all, David Bowie released *Pin-Ups* in 1973. But there seems to be an awful lot of this recording of other people's songs going on lately, not to mention all those tribute albums which are pretty much a dime a dozen now.

So why is this the case? Well, the optimist in me says that it's because artists want to show their respect for their mentors and people who have influenced them. But then there is that cynic in me that is dying to say that it's because it's such an easy option to record someone else's song. None of that nasty songwriting involved. But that would be very cynical. There are some rather curious choices on the Duran Duran album, including their version of Public Enemy's '911 Is A Joke'. But even more curious is the fact that they cover one of their own songs; 'The Chauffeur' becomes 'Drive By', and hey presto the new album is complete. Ms. Lennox (a fellow Aberdonian incidentally...) picked out 'No More I Love You's' as her first single, presumably because it is obscure enough to seem like her own song. But I for one know that it was an almost hit in 1986 for The Lover Speaks. I admit it, I bought their album. Incidentally, their version of Dusty Springfield's 'I Close My Eyes And Count To Ten' was pretty good too.

The fundamental problem with both

these albums is that the artists have taken songs from many styles such as country, soul, rap and reggae and sim-



ply recorded sanitised versions that sound a bit like every other song they have ever recorded. The guiltier of the two parties is Annie Lennox who turns some wonderful songs into horrible synthesised nightmares. Yet I am willing to bet a large amount of money that both of these will sell by the barrowload. I can almost see the platinum glinting. Sigh. Save your money for someone who isn't frightened to write their own songs.

So how about some of those talented, original artists? Well, first up is another of those new British bands this week I'm afraid; the next big things and all that. Shed Seven have been the butt of many jokes in the nasty, mean UK music press who branded them as just another bunch of arrogant, pretty, untalented young boys. On their debut album *Change Giver*, they try their best to prove them wrong.

Do they? Well, they do in places - they released a string of decent singles which are all stuck on here. So that fact alone means that there are at least four good songs on the album. And as for the rest of the songs, well they aren't that bad, but despite their attempts to swagger like Oasis, they don't quite reach those heights. But 'Long Time Dead' does come pretty close, while the eight minute epic 'On An Island With You' doesn't. Still, these tales of teenage fantasies, lust and regret are sort of charming in the same way that the early Rolling Stones were (another influence I would imagine...). It seems that the music press was wrong after all, and Shed Seven deserve to be heard. Until the next big thing anyway.

Punk. Now there's a word that seems



to be getting used way too much these days. Everyone wants to be a punk. I'm sure that even the Rankin Family want to be punk deep down inside. Person-

ally, I remember when punk bands used to gob all over the audience and tell them where to go. Sigh. Those were the



days. Now being punk seems to be a bit more wholesome, but that doesn't mean that the punk ethic has been left behind; the feeling that anyone could throw together a band, almost learn to play their instruments and record a few tunes. And that sort of energy and spontaneity that makes face to face (they like lower case for some peculiar reason) so entertaining to listen to. They have just released their second album *Big Choice*, and it is quite wonderful. Just straight-forward songs that know when to stop, and the kind of frenetic drumming that can drive even the weakest song along at a breakneck pace. Or in other words, just your average, run-of-the-mill punk band. But listening to it, I can't help but wonder why no-one has really heard of this bunch whereas Green Day are (ahem) 'superstars'. The next big thing? Maybe, it might just be a question of time before face to face

reach the same level of fame as they do everything that the kids today seem to want to hear. And they do it better than most too; *Big Choice* sounds like a band playing their music and really enjoying themselves - it's infectious. Excuse me while I pogo around the room again, just for old times' sake.

And talking of all things punk, Mike Watt is one of those people that has been a stalwart of the American scene as part of the bands Minutemen and fireHOSE. So you can be assured that he would have made plenty of friends, or at least acquaintances during his years in the business. His first solo album, *Ball-bog Or Tugboat*, gets together fifty (that's five-zero) such people from such bands as Nirvana, Soul Asylum, the Meat Puppets, Dino-saur Jr., the Pixies, Sonic Youth, That Dog, Lemonheads and the Beastie Boys to name but a few. It's pretty safe to say that we are dealing with a star-studded affair. Seventeen songs with Mike Watt on bass, and all his other pals sharing all the other duties. Of course, some songs are better than others but the only one that is bad enough to make me reach for the record player is 'Maggot Brain' which was much more palatable when George Clinton originally gave birth to it. Still, stellar performances by Evan Dando, Frank Black and Mike D. help to keep the whole thing interesting at the very least. Self-indulgent? Well, just a little bit, but any record that can make Eddie Vedder sound palatable gets my vote. That doesn't mean I'm going to buy the Pearl Jam album though. Oh no. Absolutely not. Never.



DISTRACTIONS

wants you to send your poems, short stories and cartoons to them.

Or the puppy dies...

TEACH ENGLISH IN POLAND

POSITIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE SUMMER BEGINNING JULY 1995 AND FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 1995

If you have a B.Ed. or TEFL certificate, we have teaching positions for you. Free accommodation and meals. Monthly local salary. Medical insurance. Instructors pay their own air fares. For application forms and details contact: Education and Training Programs for Poland, 77 Elizabeth St. 2nd Floor, Toronto, Ont. M5G 1P4. Tel: (416) 971-6464. Fax: (416) 971-6812.

This program is financially supported by the Bureau of Assistance for Central and Eastern Europe, Dept. of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa

NOTICE TO STUDENTS

The Search Committee has selected a short list of two (2) candidates for the position of Vice-President (Academic), at the University of New Brunswick.

The candidates will be on the Fredericton campus on 31 March and 5 April respectively to meet with faculty, staff and students. Further details, including the candidate's c.v.'s are available in the offices of the Student Union, CAMPUS and the GSA.

Students are invited to meet with the candidate, along with faculty and staff members, from 4:15 - 6:00 p.m. on each of these days in the Auditorium, MacLaggan Hall.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

with UNB's ASSOCIATED ALUMNI

Position: President of SPARC/Special Projects Coordinator
Term: May 8 - August 21, 1995 (16 weeks)/September, on an honorarium basis
Salary: \$7.00 per hour, 36.25 hours per week

Qualifications:

Applicants should be senior university students (preferably 3rd or 4th year) and continuing his/her studies in the fall. A mature, reliable, self-starter who has demonstrated leadership skills, initiative and involvement in extra-curricular and volunteer activity. Strong interpersonal and organizational skills as well as experience in organizing other activities are also a prerequisite. Preference may be given to applicants with knowledge of the Student Alumni Association (SPARC). The candidate must be willing to work some evenings and weekends. Preference will also be given to candidates with a working knowledge of the Macintosh and UNB mainframe computers.

Job Description:

There are two main responsibilities associated with this position. Firstly, as President of the Student Pride & Alumni Relations Committee (SPARC). This position will continue on a part-time basis during the academic year and will consist of approximately 10 hours commitment per week. An honorarium will be paid to the coordinator for his/her involvement during the academic year. The responsibilities associated with this position include the development of ongoing programs and the implementation of new programs; focusing on creative recruitment strategies and membership retention; conducting campus tours for prospective university students; and also acting as liaison with other university departments where necessary. Secondly, to assist the UNB Associated Alumni staff with various projects such as group coding of alumni; assisting with various mailings and the organization of special events.

The deadline for applications is Thursday, March 30th, 1995.

Please deliver your resume to the office of the UNB Associated Alumni, Room 119, Alumni Memorial Building or by mail to:

UNB Associated Alumni,
P.O. Box 4400
Fredericton, N.B.
E3B 5A3.