

## Gruppo Sportivo

### From the pages of blah-blah

Paul Ellington

(Holland)-In a recent interview with Gruppo Sportivo, Holland's leading group, some interesting facts were learned about the band and their experiences in Europe's volatile political climate that has been sparked by ever-increasing incidents of youth rebellion.

When asked about their musical background and style, the lead guitarist and songwriter, Hans Vanderburg, explained that they liked to experiment and mix their rhythms, which include such forms as ska, reggae, and rhythm and blues.

Gruppo Sportivo also try to inject humour and satire into their music and they are not against making an occasional political statement on the violence of the times. Songs such as "Don't Count On Me" and "Police Dog" express anti-establishment ideas, but Gruppo Sportivo makes it plain that they do not over-do-it, preferring instead to keep the image of a fun-loving, carefree, rock band.

Their lyrics portray a vivid, live style with musical influences from as far wide as American disco to British electronic rock groups and punk bands. Vanderburg expresses open admiration for the antics of the bizzare Franklin Zappa, whom he tried to pattern himself after in the early stages of his career. When asked if they could see themselves as rock and rollers at 50, he laughed and said "I'm already growing bald so maybe we're not too far away." Vanderburg has tried to hide his baldness, going as far as to have all the other Gruppo members wear bald wigs for the inside cover of their recent album, *Copy, Copy* (Attic).

As good as this band are, however, they are currently in a bit



Hans Vanderburg, second from right, a real Dutch treat.

of a crisis, as Vanderburg explained, because of their inability to tour America due to the costs, and the failure thus far to break in the American singles market. Also, the group seems to have a love-hate relationship with their fans who seem alternately turned off and on to their music. The group's hottest hit in Europe, "Radio", is a comment on the difficulty of hearing good music on the radio and this frustration is expressed in the climactic lyric of the song which tells of irate youths ripping their radios from the sockets and smashing them to bits on the floor.

The group tours extensively in Europe, and though they enjoy it, they have wistful eyes cast upon the American scene which they think would expand their musical horizons.

Most members of the group were at one time enrolled in art college, where they met, so it's not surprising that they do their

own album graphics. They started playing together while in college and after the unexpected success of their first album, music has become a full-time project. Typical of the humorous style that is a mainstay in the relationship between band members is the fact that the inspiration for their name came from a poster advertising an Italian bicycle club; and they certainly do have a free-wheeling image.

Finally, Vanderburg expressed bitterness at the failure of the group's Dutch fans to understand the humour in their music, and pessimism about their chances of coming to North America.

However, their music is optimistic and carefree and it is just a matter of time before North America gets to know this really interesting outfit.



### Dark Forces-The pages drip blood



Lloyd Wasser

*Dark Forces*, ed. Kirby McCauley, Viking Books, 551 pp., \$22.95.

Anthologies of good horror fiction have been rather scarce in the last few years, with most of the best macabre writing appearing in novel form, from such writers as Peter Straub (*Ghost Story*), John Farris (*The Fury*) and Stephen King (*The Shining*). Short horror fiction, once the only medium in which these terror tales could be published in popular form, has been resigned to a few specialty publications and many of the tawdrier men's magazines, with DAW Books' series (*The Year's Best Horror Stories*), the only anthology serving the field of supernatural horror and suspense. Until now.

The book that's changed this situation is *Dark Forces*, a 'monster' anthology (500-plus pages) devoted to tales of haunted sinister figures in black, and shuffling corpses that won't stay

dead. This book is a fright fan's dream, and serves as a representation of the best new writings in the horror and suspense field.

Editor Kirby McCauley has assembled some of the finest writers in the business to fill his anthology, with such craftsmen as Isaac Bashevis Singer, Robert Bloch and Ray Bradbury heading the list. Also included are such new writers as Ramsey Campbell, Charles L. Grant and T.E.D. Klein.

*Dark Forces* is comprised of 21 short stories and two novellas, and the tales range from the merely frightening prose of Ramsey Campbell's "The Brood", to the outright gruesomeness of Edward Bryant's "Dark Angel". One of the most truly horrifying tales is by Richard (I am Legend) Matheson and his son, Richard Christian Matheson. Entitled "Where There's a Will", this tale of a man who awakens to find himself in a casket and buried underground is a prime mixture of outright concious terror and subconscious

fear. It plays on all of our fears of premature burial and the shock ending is chillingly effective.

Also included is the humorous "Traps", a brief piece by famed *Playboy* cartoonist Gahan Wilson, in which an extermination company is faced with a pack of rats who are willing to fight back.

But perhaps the finest work in this anthology is Stephen King's novella, "The Mist". King's tale is about a group of people trapped in a Maine supermarket after the area is covered by an unearthly mist—a mist that holds "things". Long, tentacled arms whip out from the centre of the mist to carry off victims and strange, insect-like creatures attack and kill other people. A small group of survivors fights to stay alive as the mist spreads slowly across North America and the creatures inside it take control. This novella is Stephen King at his finest. His characters are so likeable and his creatures so horrifying that you find yourself glancing over your shoulder to see if the mist has entered through your bedroom window.

If you purchase only one anthology of short stories this year, make it *Dark Forces*. It's the best scare you'll get.

The Entertainment Editors want you to have a great summer and do weird things. Adios.



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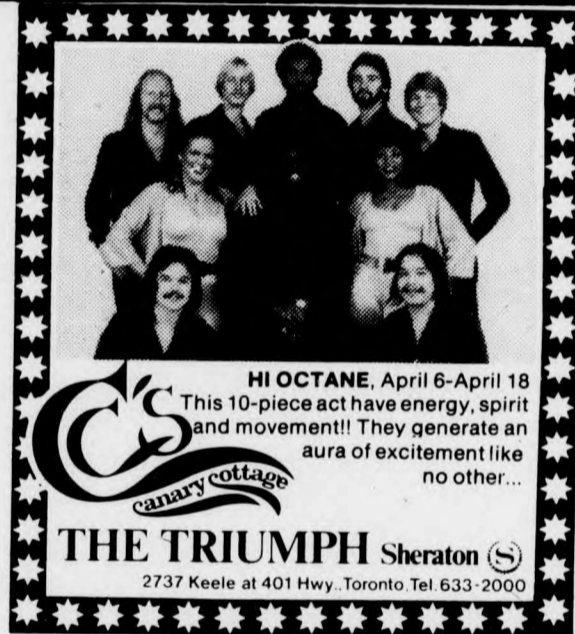
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