

about me. But they know damn well what goes on in rock 'n' roll and how much money it takes to make it work. And you don't just make money suddenly. I haven't made a lot of money but that doesn't bother me because that wasn't what I went there for. But it does upset me that people think I *do* do it for the money. If I was doing it for the money I'd probably have stayed in Generation X because I wouldn't have had the brains or the will-power to do anything else."

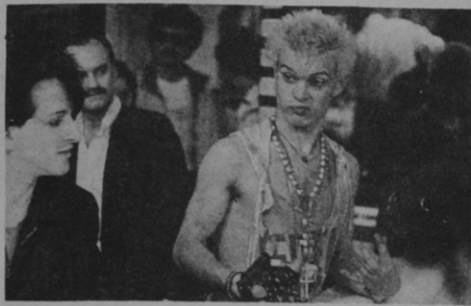


PHOTO BY WILLIAM WEST

There's a riot goin' on!

Durham Lane is packed with fans hoping to get a piece of the action at Billy's in-store appearance at Record Warehouse. Police close the street off and frustration builds among those who haven't a prayer of seeing, let alone touching, the Idol.

This is Double Platinum talking here. No wonder Michael Jackson doesn't do public appearances.

"A lot of people were saying, 'Give up, you bastard'. That's why the first EP was called *Don't Stop*. I ain't gonna stop. And also, don't fuck with Billy Idol — Don't Stop Billy Idol. You can't stop him but don't even try.

"The only thing that's important about the way I look is that it's part of my attitude, it's the way I feel. And I think it definitely says I don't wanna be part of the suited populace who run our world.

"I like leather things, 'cause you can wear them all the time and they get really comfortable and they don't wear out — saves you having to buy about 10 pairs of fuckin' trousers."

Billy ... are you a punk rocker?

"Yeah. The same basic ideals behind Generation X music, behind punk rock, are behind what I'm doing now. I'm still saying what I think. I'm trying to run my own life. I write my own music. I look the way I wanna look. I didn't let someone tell me to brush my hair down and become the new David Cassidy. I just wasn't interested."

The best thing about *Rebel Yell* is its production. The metallic overkill of the title track stands out like Boy George at an Iron Maiden gig among more conventional radio pop. For all that he does that's reactionary, flabby, heavy-handed and occasionally embarrassing, Billy Idol got bad guitars on the radio.

And you have to admire him for that.

Russell Brown

PAMELA FROM PAGE 8

Both he and Billy are able to get up on stage and do a couple of hours, three sometimes, just by themselves."

Another comedian she respects is Alexei Sayle (seen here in *The Secret Policeman's Other Ball* and, more recently, in a cameo role in *Gorky Park*).

"I used to have to follow Alexei down at a club in London called The Comic Strip. It was very hard because Alexei's so tough to follow I had to pick my toughest material. He's very good and I enjoy that sort of aggressive performing."

Stephenson doesn't see herself as a particularly aggressive performer however. "I think it's there in most comics up to a point but I hope there's generosity as well. Because a lot of what's involved in doing outrageous things is trying to be entertaining and also help give people a release. It's so they can think it's funny and alright to accept."

Nevertheless, Stephenson's assessment of what people are willing to accept may continue to veer wide of the mark at times. She has even offended that "august" journal, the *New Musical Express*. A couple of years ago she recorded a single entitled 'Unusual Treatment' and ran an advert featuring her in underwear, fishnet stockings and high heels, all bonded up in a microphone lead.

"People tended not to get the joke. It was very much on the edge. I went to great lengths to explain myself after that one, which I never like to do but I felt it was necessary in that case." Usually, she claims, she doesn't pay much attention to the rock press. "They're very fickle. I know a lot of them. But the *NME* really took me to task about that photo. Then about two weeks later they printed *NME* promotional T-shirts with the picture of a man jiving with a girl. Her legs were up in the air with her knickers showing. I mean there's a total double standard because it was a really sexist T-shirt."

It seems unlikely that Pamela Stephenson is going to tone down her public behaviour in the foreseeable future. After her short stay in New Zealand she was heading back to London to rehearse her new stage show.

"It's a revue of my own incorporating eight midgets and eight big men. It's called 'Naughty Night Nurses Without Panties Down Under (Number Two)'. You should have known."

As she'd so aptly commented earlier in the evening: "I find it difficult to change that part of my character."

Peter Thomson



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