

The Swingers
Mainstreet, Oct 13.

I missed the Mad Ranks, but heard good reports. After a solid, sombre set from the Steroids, the Swingers finally appeared.

Fans old and new swamped the floor to welcome the band as heroes, prodigal sons returned. First off is 'One Good Reason', and then the standout 'Ayatollah'. The lighting is excellent.

The Swingers are in the process of adjusting to different audiences and demands. It shows in a new aggression, strength, and volume. But it's an overt volume, and parts of the music get lost.

Phil Judd is able to indulge in being the enigmatic guitarist that he is, with Bones taking over the chore of inbetween song patter, and intros. The bassman is truly exuberant giving a completely different character to the old front line, a good balance to Ian Gilroy's tidy drumming.

The show goes on, and we get 'Don't Ask Me'; however, Judd



doesn't project the mixture of pain, disgust, and intensity which used to come across in the Liberty Stage days.

There's the old 'Counting the Beat', 'One Track Mind', and some rockers 'Dynamite' (designed for the Australians - but they didn't like it says Bones), 'Funny Feeling', '5 O'clock Shadow' and 'Wildlife'. The encore is 'Teacups'. Crys for 'Yellow Star' are ignored.

But hey! This is no time to be sentimental - the boys aren't your own anymore.
AnnLouise Martin

John Green Eggs & Ham She Collapsed
Rumba Bar, Oct 23.

Oh wot fun! Three new, fun bands on one bill at Auckland's number one pub for a rage - the Rumba Bar.

John, who has recording contracts rumoured, are on first. "We're the best band in the world!" yells singer, David Pinker. They forge their way through a short set of Johnny Rotten meets the Beatles' distortions, with song titles like 'Idolize Me'. Shouts of approval from the somewhat sparse audience spur the band on, while the 'boys in blue' drag out underagers and warn everyone in sight (including the doorman).

Green Eggs and Ham follow with more of those "salient percussive techniques" in an offbeat bracket of what could be, 'twenty toytown hits'. Nick Hanson's rinky-dink keyboards lead the trio through such gems as 'Feel That

Rhythm - Feel That Beat' and 'Good To Be Back'.

Fun ho! She Collapsed make it a family affair, with Nick's brother Julian fronting his very own ska/rock outfit. Solidly anchored around the rock steady guitar of Rick Herbison, they power through a mixed set of entertaining originals and some good covers like, 'It's Only Make Believe' and 'Sweet Pea'. They win scattered applause and the dance-floor's the fullest it's been all night.

I hear about a party afterwards and the police come back for about the sixth time ...
Tom Wilson

Renee Geyer
Mainstreet, October 11

Mainstreet's by no means crowded, looking around we can see quite a few faces who were also here for last night's show. Obviously we're not altogether alone in regarding Renee Geyer as one of the great singers of her generation.

This woman has it all: a tremendously strong and soulful voice, wonderful expression, superb timing and phrasing. Oh yes, and excellent taste. Who else could take such great, yet identity-stamped classics as Jimmy Cliffs' 'Sitting In Limbo', Allen Toussaint's 'On Your Way Down', James Brown's 'It's a Man's World' or B.B. King's 'The Thrill Is Gone' and make them utterly her own? Of course one or two classics have always been hers and we happily relive 'Heading In The Right Direction'. But there are plenty of new songs too; a fair sampling from her latest album.

Although boasting strong backing vocals - in fact admirable competency all round - it is the least exciting band Geyer has brought here. Battered down by a straight and stolid rhythm section, it lacks the fluid buoyancy that has driven her in the past. In many of the harder numbers their heavy riff-thump almost obstructs her magnificent vocals. Unforgivable.

As a stage personality Renee Geyer can be awkward: dressed in what looks like an oversized marine's battle-jacket she sometimes moves gracelessly and can snub or get irritated with members of her audience.

But her singing is a marvel.
Peter Thomson

F I L M

The Mirror Crack'd
Director: Guy Hamilton

'Stars on 35 mill' have another stab at an Agatha Christie whodunnit. Although proceedings are more fun than what we experienced on the *Orient Express* or the *Nile*, with tighter pacing in the script department this could have been much better. After all, did not Guy Hamilton direct *Goldfinger*, perhaps the snappiest of all the James Bond epics? *Mirror* gains most of its momentum from the various star turns. Rock Hudson does a nice Cary Grant role, Tony Curtis seems to have aged about fifty years since his last film, Liz Taylor and Kim Novak are agreeable sparring partners and Edward Fox's Scotland Yard movie buff tends to steal the thunder from Angela Lansbury's Miss Marples - a much more understated character study than one would expect after her flamboyant outing in *Death on the Nile*.

The Four Seasons
Director: Alan Alda

As Vivaldi's Spring chugged away on the soundtrack and the camera swept over blossoming landscapes, I steeled myself for what seemed likely to be a dreary film. Having got his characters introduced in the Spring section, Alan Alda got to grips with the film in the Summer sequence when one of the three husbands brings a newly acquired mistress along for the communal holiday. Despite obvious parallels with

Cassavetes' *Husbands*, Alda's film (which he scripted himself) is more traditional in format, with its reassuring portrait of the American middle-classes coping with the modern American nightmare of ageing. A thoughtful film, with some of the best ensemble playing seen on New Zealand screens for some time.

The Postman Always Rings Twice
Director: Bob Rafelson

James M. Cain's famous novel of guilt-edged passions in the thirties was an interesting project for the director of such varied films as *Five Easy Pieces*, *Head* and *King of Marvin Gardens*. He has classy performers with Jack Nicholson and Jessica Lange, evocative settings with stylish camera work from Sven Nykvist. The only thing that stands in its way is the earlier 1946 Tay Garnett film which, in spite of its hedging around all the steamy sexuality, is a much more effective piece of cinema. Jessica Lange's utterly believable and human Cora still doesn't register as magically as Lana Turner's icily unruffled performance although John Garfield's particular brand of granite-hewn machismo is less interesting than Nicholson's more rounded portrait of Frank. Where Rafelson does score is in the greater depth with which he sketches the Cora's duped husband - a marvellous and resonant performance by John Colicos. In the Garnett version, Cecil Kelleway presented him as a quaint and dodderly old English gent - a two-dimensional cardboard sketch.

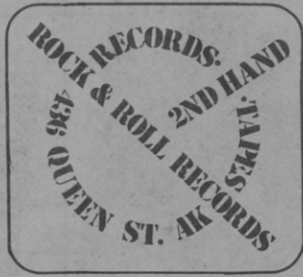
Shogun
Director: Jerry London

Handsomely mounted, but ultimately tepid historico-drama from the uninspired pen of James Clavell. The direction is appropriately pedestrian and performances are soporific - the only entertainment being gained from listening to the leading lady struggle with English.

Battle Beyond the Stars
Director: Jimmy T. Murakami

With the production talents of Roger Corman in the credits, one can be assured of stylish campy, and this delightful cocktail of galactic nonsense is just what we need to brighten our cinema screens. Flashy and trashy. Just what the doctor ordered.
William Dart

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