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**L I V E**

**The Ballroom Blitz**  
 Mainstreet, November 18.

The prospect of an event such as the Ballroom Blitz was enough to make the average bloke run a mile. Imagine Mainstreet full of cup cakes and hairdressers doing their best to outshine their British counterparts!

The fact that they might be there, let alone dressed to the hilt, was a prospect too horrendous for thought. But come the night, I was just one of about 600 Aucklanders who turned out for an evening of fun, revelry and good music.

Being perpetually late, I of course missed Who Slapped John. But by all reports, this three-piece, featuring ex-Ragnarok leader Ramon York, is on the improve. I look forward to seeing them in the future.

In between the bands were fashion shows, which I'm not really qualified to pass judgement on, and a dance troupe called Squadron. Both made for more exciting entertainment than watching roadies changing the stage.

Second band on were Missing Tremble. Although they use synthesizers, they don't really have much in common with blitz ethics. Their music is dynamic, slightly raw and exceedingly tight. The dance floor was packed, and the band served up a selection of extremely promising original songs, probably the best being 'Frightened Men' and 'Almost A Moment'.

Top act for the night were Danse Macabre. Looking immaculate, Weston in a frilly shirt and Ralph in a cocktail jacket, they ran through the whole of the EP, plus lots more. Surprise of the set was a rather frantic version of the Four Tops 'Reach Out', and a new song titled 'Sanctum'. The more I see Danse Macabre, the better they get.

The most refreshing thing about the whole evening was the lack of trouble. The people who went enjoyed themselves thoroughly, and surely that's what entertainment is all about. Mark Phillips

**Midge Marsden Connection**  
 Shoreline Hotel, Dunedin, Nov 26.

Stability isn't one of rock 'n' roll's strong points. Transience is necessary for it to stay healthy and on target yet there should always be room for the muscular R&B that Midge Marsden is currently totin' around the country.

Marsden kicks ass with the effortless confidence of a trooper who's been around for a generation, and the rest. With another new line-up, Ta



Rutherford (guitar), John Dodd (bass), Kevin Thomas (drums) and Liam Ryan (keyboards), Marsden controls the dynamics. A slow harp intro, a little shimmy then wham the band's in.

Whether it's re-vitalising old standards like 'Little Red Rooster' or dishing up his own brew of R&B with a shot of reggae, Marsden knows his strengths and the audiences demands.

The night raged, the band connected and out front was a gent who should be around for a long time yet.

George Kay

**Georgie Fame**  
 Ace of Clubs, Nov 24.

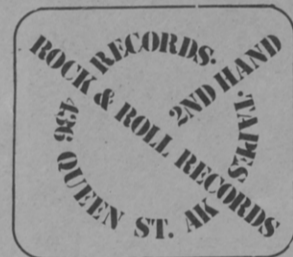
The fact that Fame had made his first trip to NZ with only a bass player and was, as he put it, 'rehearsing onstage' with locals Bruce King and Bob Jackson, didn't daunt me at all. I came not to criticize but to celebrate a man who'd played a vital part in developing my whole musical outlook.

His first 50 minute set contained many of the big 60s hits — 'Yeh Yeh', 'Sunny', 'Get Away' etc — in a generally crowd-pleasing cabaret format with a little for everyone, from ribaldry to Hoagy Carmichael. After a few numbers on guitar and electric grand piano he returned to his main instrument, the Hammond organ to close with a pounding 'Green Onions'.

However his true greatness lies in that magnificent smokey voice which has continued to mature over the years. As an interpretive vehicle it is simply superb and when matched with his marvellous rhythmic sense, songs tend to take on a definitive form.

To my, admittedly biased ears the whole of Fame's second hour-long set was definitive, whether he was singing James Moody, Willie Nelson or Fats Domino. I'd go see him again tomorrow.

Peter Thomson



**F I L M**

**Bloody Mama**  
 Director: Roger Corman

Like most of Corman's later films (*The Wild Angels*, *The Trip*), *Bloody Mama* was banned by the censor in 1970 and has only now made it onto our screens — in its original prints, alas, which means everything is pink, brown and muted green as Ma Barker rampages through America with her killer brood. Although the film is careful to include lashings of drugs (marijuana and heroin), sex (most categories except lesbianism and bestiality) and violence, it is a skilfully made piece of cinema. Held together by Shelley Winters' magnificently theatrical performance as Ma Barker, with a brood of misfit sons that includes Robert De Niro and Don Stroud, *Bloody Mama* is as powerful as ever, outlining as it does the ultimate in American Momism.

**Gloria**  
 Director: John Cassavetes

The tragedy of *Gloria* is that it is probably just too American for our chauvinistic Kiwi audiences. In another paean to his wife Gena Rowlands, director Cassavetes places her within a genre film as a hard-boiled cynical heroine suddenly taking on all the guns of the Mafia to rescue a neighbour's kid who has been literally dropped on her doorstep before his family were assassinated. Rowlands' performance is magnificent — one of the great performances of this year — and the film manages to be moving, exciting and tremendously funny. Few recently could meet all these criteria.

**Popeye**  
 Director: Robert Altman

The latest Altman epic which, like *Gloria*, has taken a year to cross the Pacific. All the Altman trappings are there, including his propensity for relentless dialogue overlapping that makes multiple viewings almost a necessity to get the most from the film. One could be facetious and describe it as a comic-book *McCabe and Mrs Miller*, but *Popeye* uses the romance of America's spinach-eating hero and his Olive Oyl (marvellously played by Shelley Duval) to highlight some of the innocence and simplicity that have vanished from contemporary American (and Western) society. If nothing else, the score is a treat with Harry Nilsson right on form and some stunning Van Dyke Parks arrangements.

William Dart

**Blitzers**

— which one's Harry Ratbag?

**BRIEFS FROM PAGE 16**  
 work. In fact he applies pretty much the same mixture of country, gospel and soul that characterises *The Belle Album* to these eight mostly traditional songs and achieves the same winning result. The passion and joy evident here places the album up with the best of Al Green's recordings and that's a very high standard indeed. (Available, Box 275, Levin.) AD

**Hattie And The Havana Hot Shots (Ode)**  
 A little souvenir, for those who have spent the odd night at Jillys, where the Hot Shots are resident. Unless you've seen them live, it's difficult to assess the band's appeal, since they are essentially a live act. The sound is a congenial mixture of blues, swing, reggae and calypso. What it lacks here is Hattie's visual impact, and the feedback the band gets from its audience. The production on this LP is flat and uninspired, robbing the band of its steam. Hattie gives her best on the torch ballad 'Angel Eyes', but the rest sounds a little tepid without the sound of clinking glasses and general revelry. DC

**The Blues Band**  
**Itchy Feet (Arista)**

This is the BB's third album. A major ideal of the band was that music should be fun, and it's certainly evident with this album. Although probably not as strong as their debut, *Itchy Feet* still delivers plenty of good, strong, driving boogie and blues, with one or two slower tracks thrown in for good measure. Best tracks include 'Talking Woman Blues', 'Itchy Feet', 'Ultimate Time' and 'Nuthin' But The Blues'. PE

**Rose Tattoo**  
**Assault & Battery (Alberts)**  
 A more menacing bunch of chaps I haven't seen on a record cover for ages deliver their aptly-titled second album. Stablemates of AC/DC, Rose Tattoo draw several obvious parallels, without quite the awesome power and finesse of Angus and the lads. Recommended, but not for the faint-hearted. GC

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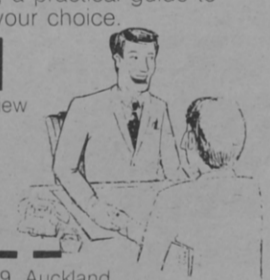
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