

B R I E F S

**The Stranglers**  
La Folie (Liberty)

Ahhh, the affairs of the heart, the folly of love. Or, are The Stranglers going soft? After the bleak side-roads of *Meninblack* they return with their most sedate and docile outing to date. Side glances at Lou Reed ('Non Stop') and tuneful songs allied to thoughtful lyrics ('La Folie' and 'Golden Brown') are common features on the Stranglers' entry into laid-back rock 'n' roll. Although not essential, *La Folie* welcomes the Stranglers to the human race, for the first time. GK

**The Four Tops**  
Tonight (Casablanca)

At long last, after a decade in the wilderness with ABC, the Tops are back with a label that knows how to use them. You can really hear a vocal group in there, not just the odd voice lost in production. And Levi Stubbs' voice is up front and in control again. Mellowed slightly perhaps, but it can still holler and smoulder to rescue tracks from MOR (the hit single for instance). On 'Something To Remember' and a couple of others they even stomp along just like their grand old days with Motown. PT

**Gary Whitcombe**  
Seeds In The Ground (Ocean)

Hard to get a line on what Whitcombe does, or likes, best on this varied collection of originals - from the bright bouncy rock of the title track to the floaty jamming of 'Hauraki Northwind'. Promising at best. Available on cassette at \$9.50 from Ocean Records, Box 876, Auckland 1. RC

**Bad Manners**  
Gosh It's ... (Magnet)

The problem is if you start out as the throwaway fun bon homie side of ska and r&b then you're gonna have a real job living it down. To their credit Bad Manners do their best on their new one to provide something that will last into the next month with songs like 'Casablanca' and 'Never Will Change'. But they'll never rise above triviality and temporary joviality. GK

**Best of The Manhattan Transfer**  
(Atlantic)

The Manhattan Transfer has

always specialized in slicked-down reworkings of pop and jazz-oriented standards. This collection spans 1975's hit 'Operator' to their recent high-gloss rendition of the Ad Libs' 'Boy From New York City'. Such astute choice of material ensures that the Manhattan Transfer remains the ultimate cabaret act. PT

**Billy Joel**  
Songs In The Attic (CBS)

"Until the release of *The Stranger* album in 1977, most people were unfamiliar with the material on this LP." So reads the blurb on the back cover. Recorded live at various concerts during 1980, it concentrates on Joel's first three albums, before they tried to make him another Elton John. Much more guts, and for me, the best Billy Joel LP ever. DC

**Kix**  
(Atlantic)

New American Heavy Metal clones meet hot English producer Tom Allom (Judas Priest, Def Leppard) and crap out badly. Apart from a couple of tracks, it's the sort of album you've heard before and wish you hadn't again. Tom, you should have stayed in Blighty, mate. GC

**Bob Marley & The Wailers**  
The Birth Of A Legend (CBS)

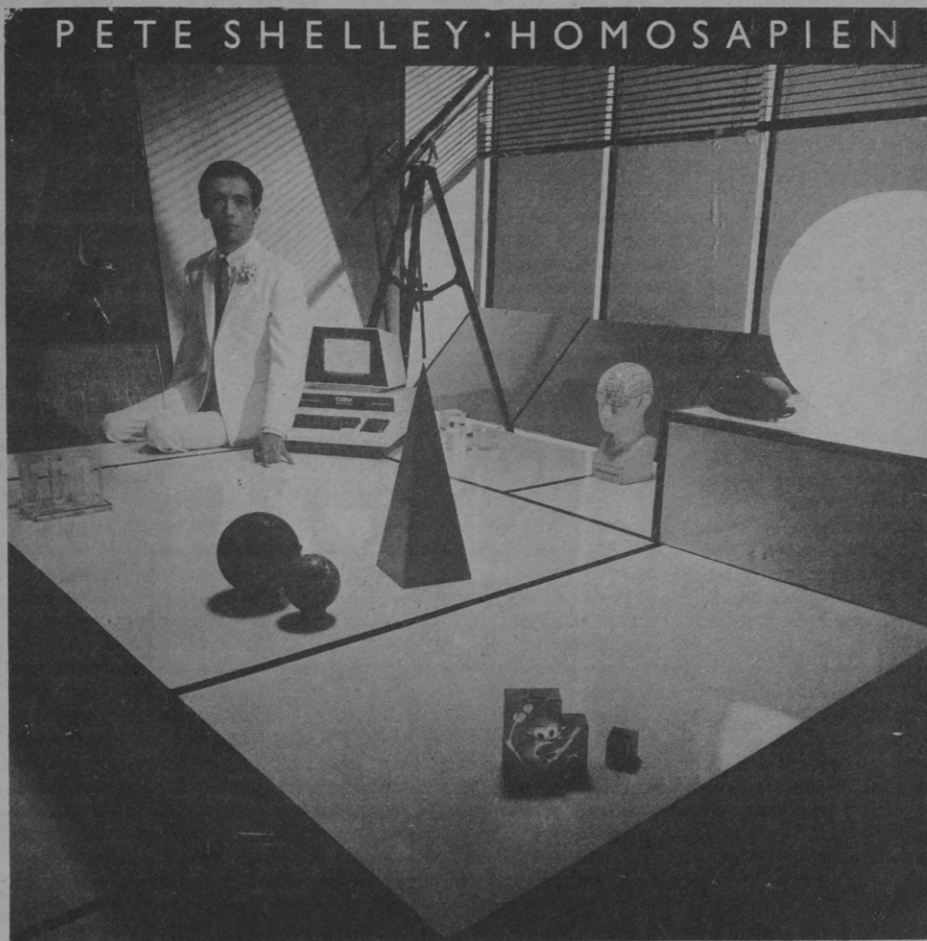
Another reissue, cashing in on the Marley legend, with a new cover pic that may deceive some. The material is taken from mid-1960's sessions with Clement Dodd, when the Wailers were still a vocal trio. It includes their first hit, 'Simmer Down' and other seminal tracks, for which the Wailers claim they were never paid. Primitive, soul-influenced ska which is only of curiosity value, despite its historical significance. DC

**XL Capris, Weeds**  
(Powderworks)

The second album in less than a year from XL Capris, and an improvement noted. Keeping within their limits Todd Hunter and co. have crafted a compact and intelligent album that uses Johanna Pigott's distant yet enticing vocal to keen effect. 'Tokyo', 'Killer Seas', 'Poor Excuse' are strong on melody and structure and 'Dark Star' adds meaning to raunch. On the way up. GK

# PETE SHELLEY HOMOSAPIEN

The solo album from Pete Shelley  
Buzzcocks remarkable guitarist/songwriter.



Features single 'Homosapien'  
Produced by Martin Rushent.



# PENKNIFE GLIDES



OUT THIS MONTH

nation wide tour  
march/april

# SOUND OF DRUMS