



THE FACE

L'UOMO VAGUE

HI'ENERGY

A history of Gay Disco

IAN MCCULLOCH

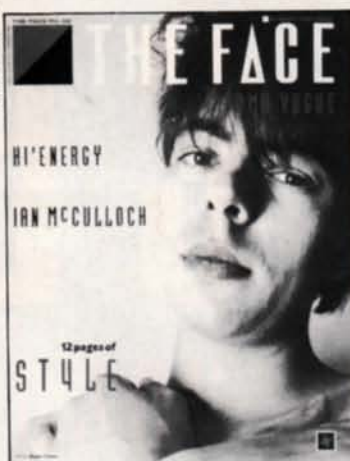
The Naked Echo

Thomas Dolby Gore Vidal
Al Green Club 18'30 Test Dept
Fela Kuti Sprint cycling

PLUS 12 pages of

STYLE





52

AMERICA • AUSTRALIA • CANADA • DENMARK
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HONG KONG • ITALY • JAPAN • NEW ZEALAND

ABC

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40/41

Clothes by Crolla,
photography by Sheila Rock

R E C O R D S

INTRO'S SELECTION

SINGLES

- Tony Baxter** *Screaming* (Island)
- Unusually convincing James Brown impersonation from Brixton's own Godfather Of Soul who screams himself silly over Bobby O's production.
- Dr Beat** *Miami Sound Machine* (Tabu)
- The top-selling pop funk import of the moment. Get it while stocks last.
- The Kane Gang** *The Closest Thing To Heaven* (Kitchenware)
- Veteran soul producer Pete Wingfield steers Newcastle's finest towards a West Coast, blue-eyed ballad. Their next hit.
- Rank And File** *Rank And File* (Rough Trade)
- Country through a rockabilly chamber with a message for our times.
- Sivuca** *Ain't No Sunshine* (London)
- Lazy summer samba treatment of the Bill Withers classic. Has to be better than the electro version.

501s

- We Are Invincible** (ERS)
- Cheekily-titled Boystown crutch shaker. Energy levels get hi-er.
- Special Request** *Take It To The Max* (Tommy Boy)
- Top of the pile of latin hip hop mixes currently swamping the DJ decks. Self-styled and distinguished.

ALBUMS

- Prince** *Purple Rain* (WEA)
- Bow to His Royal Badness. As ever, Prince over reaches but still surpasses all else. There are only so many superlatives in the dictionary.
- Sade** *Diamond Life* (Epic)
- Crisp and mellow, sweet and salty: a platter of jazzy songs and stylish moods. Robin Millar produces with a deft touch.
- Claudio Roditi** *Red On Red* (Green Street)
- Trumpet player Roditi and Brazilian vocalist Kinea present the hip without the hop: latin jazz and scat singing set the right tone.
- Violent Femmes** *Hallowed Ground* (London)
- More nerdy desires from the boys, but on this second album it's turning into religious guilt. A painfully acquired taste.
- Elvis Costello** *Goodbye Cruel World* (F-Beat)
- Master craftsman exposes the brighter side of misery.
- Pure Soul Vol 2** *Various Artists* (Kent)
- Deep blue soul for dancefloor and tear ducts.
- Roger** *The Saga Continues* (WEA)
- Part time P. Funk-er Roger Troutman with another Clinton-inspired solo album. Leans heavily on vocoder but pulls it off brilliantly with best ever cover of "The Midnight Hour" featuring Mighty Clouds Of Joy.
- Jonathan Richman & Modern Lovers** *Jonathan Sings* (Rough Trade)
- He returns, undefeated by cynicism, to regale his fans with another set of street corner homilies.

● From selections by Paul Rambali, Lesley White, Marek Kohn, Jay Strongman, Vaughn Toulouse, Dave Hill, Bob Elms, Peter Martin

● Ruben Blades: more than just Flavour Of The Month



● B L A D E S

Picture this: a warm crowded room done up in red, silver chrome and mirrors, filled with a few potted plants, smoke, and the bright crisp sound of Spanish chat. It's 11 pm and the first of three bands is churning out hot, tight salsa near the end of its first set. After a 10 or 15 minute disco break, the stage fills again with a smaller ensemble: vibes, bass, guitar, keyboards, and a diminutive, playfully serious *sonero* takes the stage. You are watching **Rubén Blades and Seis de Solar** at New York's Corso club, the sextet that dared to release a salsa album on the world's most notoriously gringo label, Elektra/Asylum. Rubén Blades, who contributed to the *Beat Street* soundtrack and is currently collaborating with the novelist Garcia Marquez, is perhaps best known as salsa's only consistently political songwriter. Songs such as "Pablo Pueblo", "Pedro Navaja", "Plastico" and "Tiburón", the trademarks of his repertoire, are about the stolen dignity of the working class; the perverse desperation of jobless street thugs; the false goddesses of compulsive consumerism; and US opportunism in Central America. On the LP "Buscando America" Blades moves far beyond the young Panamanian's usual taste for an eclectic mix of Caribbean and Latin American musics to tell his stories. English translations of his lyrics reveal a coherent pattern to the songs, moving from the "Green Roads" of ceaseless human migration, to the nostalgia of immigrants longing for the old lands on "They All Return". Blades attempts reggae in a chilling portrait of Death Squad victims called "Desaparecciones", and assays aural impressionism in the cut "People Awakening Under Dictatorships" where, against a rhythmic acappella chant, the singer

recites a chilling tale of the daily oppression involved in being one of the oppressors. Already "Buscando America" is receiving broad critical acceptance: pop music critics are inclined to applaud him as this season's most topical musical rebel. There is even talk of his double billing with Joe Jackson on the first half of an upcoming world tour. But don't let the hype dissuade you. "Buscando America" is an important statement, with every bit as much interior logic and generic fidelity as Daniel Ponce or Tito Puente. **Carol Cooper**

● *Is a Citroen 2CV a car in the fullest sense of the word? If you read their ads you'll know the spec - internal combustion engine, metal passenger container, four fully-rounded wheels etc - but is that all there is to a car? Course not! There's fins. Not all, in fact, very few cars have fins, but fins are the purest expression in metal of everything a car signifies other than transport. Car Culture (Plexus, £6.95) is, regrettably, not specifically about fins, but Frances Basham and Bob Ughetti have photographed a plethora of autos with just about all the trappings of aviation except actual wings. More than this, there's a parade of radiator grilles, airbrush illuminations and unnatural custom-built monsters. Paul Rambali, for it is he, supplies a text about car customs stuffed with motor facts and quotes. On one hand, Roland Barthes on the 2CV's sublime ancestor, the DS, with its windows like "vast walls of air and space, with the curvature, the spread and the brilliance of soap bubbles". On another, a redneck with a fleet of gas-guzzlers - "I love to pull alongside a socialist 35-mpg and leave my engine running for venting my frustration at what is happening". Voices from a bygone age; buried under Datsun, Honda and the World Car. Autoromantics, pull up to this bumper fun book. Marek Kohn*

INTRO

Cop those fins. 1958 Cadillac Coupe DeVille from Car Culture (Plexus £6.95)

