

SPAWNNOGRAPHY

● **ALTHOUGH ALWAYS** seen as a singularly lonely fellow, **MORRISSEY** has worked with a long line of co-conspirators, and though it is clear no working relationship has even been as creative as that which shot him to fame, **Morrissey's** right hand men and women make an interesting line-up.

While the man himself has championed one indie band after another — **Easterhouse**, **James**, **The Primitives**, **Bradford** — his cohorts' creative abilities and styles have spread across a much wider field.

From the axe-wielding punk heyday of his teenage attempts at rocking with **BILLY DUFFY** to his current affection for the weird and often freaky voice of Canada's **MARY MARGARET O'HARA**.

Here **NME** looks through our files to discover just who said what about their dealings with the man they know as **The Moz**.



When you muck around with him for long enough you think he's as ordinary as anyone else. It's only when he begins to sing that you realise how different he really is — **Morrissey's** pretty good, no doubt about it.

"I didn't necessarily like much of **The Smiths** stuff — of course there were some great **Smiths** songs but it's only since I've heard this new material that I've realised how major a talent he is. This new record of his is very extreme, it's much more extreme than **The Smiths** ever were.

"When it's heavy, it's very heavy, with raucous guitars and screaming and shouting, and when it's sad and emotional it's real heartbreaking stuff. I really think this album captures **Morrissey** digging deeper into himself than he's ever done before. **The Smiths** split obviously affected him and he must've felt insecure for a while, now he's returned with a record far better than anything **The Smiths** ever did."

JOAN SIMS, **The Carry On Queen** teamed up with **The Moz** on the ill-fated video for 'Ouija Board Ouija Board' — November '89.

"I was really totally unprepared for what I was letting myself in for. I managed to see a couple of **Morrissey's** old videos, I didn't want to be involved in anything too punky because I am getting on a bit. He's not a very conventional pop artist, he's slightly more serious than that. He's got a lovely sense of humour. I was treated like a princess all day. If ever you want a CV on my **Carry Ons** he knows them better than I do! He's a very brainy chap, that knocked me out I must say. I hate to call him a popstar, it's such a horrible word. He's a very nice gentleman."

BILLY DUFFY, lead guitar **THE CULT**, one of **Morrissey's** earliest songwriting partners — September '89.

"I got in a band called **The Nosebleeds** who also needed a singer. I told them about **Morrissey** but I didn't know if he was punk rock enough. Much to my amusement they said 'We'll give him a go'.

"Everybody liked him and we did two gigs. One supporting **Magazine** at **The Ritz** where **Morrissey** was throwing out peppermints because we had a song called 'Peppermint Heaven', somebody's got a cassette of that gig. The other was a benefit at the old **Poly** with **Jilted John** and **Slaughter & The Dogs**.

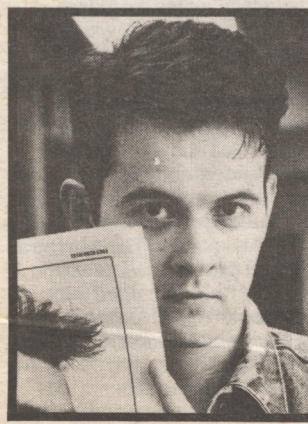
"The band dissolved and I got in with **Slaughter** who also tried **Morrissey** out as a singer. He never made the band and that was the last time I got on with him. **Morrissey** hated me because he thought we'd stolen lyrics from him, which we probably had."

JOHNNY MARR — February '87.

"We'd all become too committed



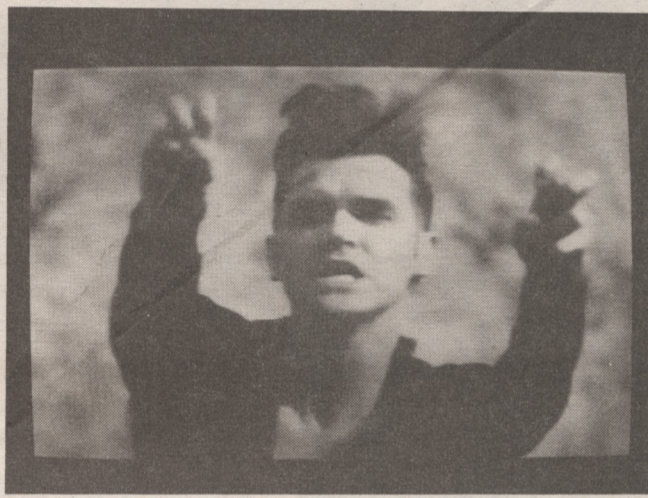
Duffy: "punk rock enough"



Street: "utter rubbish"



PICS: KEVIN CLIMMINS



Spawn in the USA! These, **Moz** buffs are stills from the great one's new video for 'November Spawned A Monster'. The film, directed as usual by **Tim Broad**, was made in **Death Valley, California** and features the required selection of **Morrissey** eccentricities. Included this time are loads of really impressive go-go dancing, a hat with the word 'vile' on the brim (above), a nipple covered with **Elastoplast**, a see-through shirt, and a harmonica solo played on a chocolate bar! What a lad, eh?

to **The Smiths**. I was a **Smith** every second of every waking hour and it was doing me no good. It isn't easy to change though, because my personal life is so closely wrapped up with the band; **Morrissey's** my best friend. I'm consciously spending more time with **Angie** my wife, but she's deeply involved with the band too. But things did have to change. With me it was a matter of saving myself.

"Panic" came about at the time of **Chernobyl**. **Morrissey** and myself were listening to a **Newsbeat** radio report about it. The stories of this shocking disaster comes to an end and then immediately we're off into **Wham's** 'I'm Your Man'. I remember actually saying 'what the f— has this got to do with people's lives?' And so "hang the blessed DJ".

"I think it was a great lyric,

important and applicable to anyone who lives in England. I mean, even the most ardent disco fan wouldn't want to be subject to that stuff would they?"

STEPHEN STREET, **Smiths** engineer, co-writer of 'Viva Hate' and 'Last Of The Famous International Playboys' — July '88.

"I sent **Morrissey** a cassette of demos with a letter saying 'chances are you won't like them but . . .' I got the impression from **Mike** and **Andy** that I shouldn't have interfered but the cassette had already gone.

"I got a letter back saying 'I don't see any point in continuing **The Smiths**; would you like to make a record with me?' When he wrote back saying he'd got some great ideas I thought it was just going to be a single. But when he came round to my place and put

vocals on my four-track demo it started sounding like it could really work.

"The idea that he didn't want 'Suedehead' to be the single is utter rubbish. He was just as excited about releasing it as anyone else. 'Viva Hate'



Reilly: "quite inspiring"

surpassed many things he'd done in the past."

VINNY REILLY, guitarist/co-songwriter on 'Viva Hate' LP — December '87.

"I really enjoyed recording the LP. He's quite inspiring is **Morrissey**.



Marr: "my best friend"



O'Hara: "making tea"

MARY MARGARET O'HARA performs on both the A and B side of **Morrissey's** new single — May '90.

"It was strange because he just happened to ring up the record company the same week I came to England to tour for the first time. I knew **The Smiths** because a friend of mine loved them absolutely, so I said I'd do it knowing they wouldn't believe it. We went down to the studio and he was really nice — making tea and stuff — and just told me to do whatever I wanted. It was kind of scary because I didn't really know what he wanted and I wasn't familiar with the song ('He Knows I'd Love To See Him') because I didn't have a tape player for the cassette they'd sent me. But I took several takes and did something, and then they said there's another song ('November . . .') which they played a couple of times over the monitors, and **Morrissey** told me he liked stuff like 'Year In Song' (the wildest track on her 'Miss America' album), so then I felt happier about going in and getting looser. I did it once and the production guys (**Langer & Winstanley**) said fine, and that was it. I don't know what **Morrissey** thought."

PIC: AL BARRAIT

PIC: TOM SHEEHAN

PIC: EMILY ANDERSON

PIC: JAVIER HUGHTON

PIC: DEBIEK RIDGERS