

Cuter than Jason Donovan, more credible than Transvision Vamp, this is the man who has torn George Harrison limb from limb and TOTALLY RESHAPED THE FACE OF MODERN POP!

STEVEN WELLS grovels at the stinking sandaled feet of JESUS JONES. Picture: LAWRENCE WATSON.

There is a sound where pop meets chaos and rides its fury and when I hear it I fall in love . . .

The first time was Paul McCartney, his carcass jerking on some sick speed, screaming himself senseless on 'Helter Skelter'; the second 'Holiday In Cambodia'; the third The Beatles 'Live At The Hollywood Bowl' where pure gurdy pop is pierced through with a million screams so shrill that you smell the stink of urine, lust and madness; the fourth the Jesus And Mary Chain's 'Upside Down' and subsequently 'Kill Surf City' and 'Surfin' USA'; the fifth discovering Public Enemy; the sixth was 'Info Psycho/Freako' by Jesus Jones. Where pop meets hysteria, froths at the mouth and frays at edges but never breaks into sweat. Imagine a Cuban heeled boot stamping on a fuzzbox pedal forever. A frenzy of control.

"'Info Freako' was the runt of the litter," says Jones. "It won't even be on the album."

A guitar clangs like a dustbin lid booted down an alleyway. A bass hums, a drum machine kickstarts. A bruised and throttled voice hoarsely screams about happiness and we've hit on an '80s wall of sound. As I type this the new JJ single hammers out again and again from the cheap and cranked up record player and I feel like I've taken drugs I don't dare take anymore.

It's the best start any record has ever had this side of Chuck Berry or 'Revolution'. 'Never Enough' sounds like Public Enemy, The Buzzcocks, Duran Duran but most *urgently* it sounds like prime-Beatles. Whilst Transvision Vamp squeeze the last juicy drops from the slaughtered white cow of pure (white '60s) pop and roll, Jesus Jones, under the fake and flimsy guise of a reckless indie Noisekombo, are shaping up into *the* hard core pop (multi-racial '80s) act.

"People have massive expectations of us. Craig Leon the producer has brought in this Yaz record so we got a rough approximation of what a club record sounds like—'The Only Way Is Up'. I love the idea of pop music like that—all the hardness in the feel that great club records have. It's a great record. It has all the best things about Acid, it's exciting and it made me want to leap

MORE TEA VICAR ? - YOU BASTARD ! (PG)



Jesus Jones: "Anyone leading a band this good has to be a megalomaniac."

around the studio, up the stairs and onto the roof.

"You get these people who come up to you at gigs and say how great you are and you think these people are going to be just as interested in Toddy Terry and Public Enemy as I am, y'know? But they're not, they're interested in white indie pop. Dinosaur Jr, The Wonder Stuff and us. We seem to have been stuck in some awful indie ghetto . . ."

CLAPTON SHITS IT

So Jesus Jones aka Mike aka Norville Normington (*Time Out*) lopes in looking like Wolfie Smith and Baden Powell and acting like the ever so polite, arrogant middle class

bastard he is. Would I like a cup of tea? Delighted, where's the toilet? He waves in the general direction of the recording studio. Within minutes I am lost so I ask this beardo—Excuse me, where's the bogs? The beardo just stares. Hmm, he looks a bit familiar . . . Perhaps he is deaf? EXCUSE ME. WHERE'S THE BOGS? The beardo looks away, panicking, pressing himself into the wall, closing his eyes, pushing himself away from me. Gasping slightly, he breaks into a cringing trot and is gone.

"Do you know we've got Eric Clapton recording next door?" asks Jeese.

I wonder . . .

Recently the gangly Jesser pushed George Harrison out of the way at a Skate fest (phwoooooar! punk rock!

gaaaarn! Spit! etc) where the Beatle had paid a couple of US skate-stunters £10,000 to appear at his son's birthday party. He didn't stop for a chat either.

"There's nothing I could say to these people. I could say—I saw you in that video with Tom Petty and you were completely crap—or—why haven't you made any decent music in the last 20 years you wanker?"

We're hiding from a blistering ozone sun in the studio games room where Pete Gabriel got the inspiration for the dreadful song 'Games Without Frontiers' (while watching some Germans play table football). Jesus, being a polite boy and not speaking until he is spoken to, has not gone up to Mr Clapton and slapped him on the back.

"Eric is scared, he's really scared. I've always thought Eric Clapton was crap."

At school Jesus Jones freaked out would-be bullies by acting mad and he was never hit by his teachers. He has eight O levels, the swotty little get. He slagged off Pop Will Eat Itself and was ashamed when he met them to find that they were rather nice. The only time he's seen a real gun was during the "water pistol incident" in Leeds where JJ's aquatic pranks led to the city centre being sealed off by gun-toting bacon.

"You see this?" grunted a policeman, the sweat dripping from his trembling upper lip. He lifted his tunic like a stripper hiking her skirts and pointed to his little holster. "This is what a *real* gun looks like . . .". He started to stroke the two inch barrel, fixing Jesus with mad staring eyes and moaning softly . . .

Jesus Jones, you fake, bland would-be pop star. Have you ever thought about killing someone? Have you ever been that disgusted? Do you ever scream with anger? This pool cue; is there anybody whose head you'd like to ram it through?

"Killing people? Someone really pissed me off the other day. Who was it? Eric Clapton's road manager! Really pissed me off! Accused me of stealing his food. He's one of those people. He walks past me going—BASTARD! steal my BLOODY food! But he wouldn't say it to my face. I only had half a mushroom out of this bloody great bowl of salad . . ."

Blimey! So no Clapton guest spot axe-hammering on the new album?

"No, no certainly not! There's nothing he could do I couldn't do better. I can do anything he does better. He's crap. Really boring. I'm a loads better player."

It is the brutal function of pop journalism (at its best) to ring in the new and kick shit out of the old. Thus you oil the industry that pays the wages but maybe also sow a few seeds about the idea that *nothing* ever need stay the same. There's too much bloody

backsliding and backslapping and too little backstabbing on both sides of the typewriter. Van Morrison, The Stones, Dylan. Why is everyone in such a rush to be MIDDLE AGED? And, you—you in the stupid skate beret. Why is that everybody I meet thinks you're a completely arrogant f—head?

"Because deep down I am."

Dave Balfe of Food Records thinks Jessy is a megalomaniac.

"Anyone leading a band this good has to be a megalomaniac."

When he talks of Jesus Jones, Balfe spits dribbles in excitement.

"They call him Cuckoospitpills"

How's it spelt again?

D.I.S.R.E.S.P.E.C.T. Jesus Jones bugs the bleating bollocks out of everybody he meets because he is a smug, cocky, Home Counties ninny. A pain in the arse reminding you of one of the great unused film titles of the '60s—*More Tea Vicar—You Bastard*. Starring Malcolm McDowell and Hwyl Bennett, ending in a sten and bren-gun bloodbath at a gothic public school. If Jesus Jones were a film they would be *ff*—a frantic, English, crazy, disturbed, stylishly violent, adolescent, male, rebel wank fantasy, saying nothing but looking like a celluloid orgasm.

FREUD AND BOILED

Are you a pop band? "Yeah . . ." Like Transvision Vamp? "No, not like Transvision Vamp! No I think they're awful. Like they've read the formula book on how to get a hit single which is OK as long as you don't say at the same time 'we're in the same tradition as The Clash and blah blah blah and Ladbroke Grove' . . . That 'Sound Of The Westway' kind of crap. The 'Wendy James seriously into skateboarding' crap. I can just see Wendy James pulling off a 50/50 Gripe Meanwheel!"

What about '80s pop? Spandau Ballet, ABC, Human League?

"I loathe it because it was all so polished and pretty. It meant nothing to me all that poncing around in stupid clothes . . ."

You're there in purple, blue and yellow shorts, a thrasher T-shirt and a Vision Street Wear skate beret (currently being nicked by U2) and you're accusing Spandau Ballet of dressing up silly? Do you like Bono now that he's stolen your image?

"I would hate to end up like U2, being that bombastic. They have this search for roots in music which somehow seems to take them further away than ever. Yeah *rootsy!* A nightmare . . ."

Do you think you're better looking than Jason Donovan?

"Most people are."