

ODE TO JOY



The Burning Up Times  
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## EUROMAN COMETH

The Council of Europe must not be confused with the European Economic Community. This is an economic union whose functions, aims and modes of behaviour have not always been understood by the people for whom it is supposedly working. Certainly some of the effects of E.E.C. involvement are to be questioned. Originally an organisation involved with agriculture, it has expanded its sphere of involvement to influence the daily lives of all those living within its spheres of influence. Fortunately, changes can be brought about constitutionally, legitimately and hopefully some of the anomalies such as the food mountains can be rectified to the common good.

In recent years it has become increasingly obvious that the influence and power of European states within Europe and worldwide has diminished to such a point that we in Europe have become bargaining fodder for the larger military powers. Europe has become a buffer state between East and West. Europeanisation is an idea that far from destroying the individual cultures that enrich the European continent would glorify them in a recognised confederation. For instance, there would be no reason for Scotland to be represented in a European assembly through Westminster but instead directly.

The United States of Europe is a revolutionary concept that has been gradually gaining ground since the first of the two great wars which were focused on our continent. For our own security and futures we in Europe must learn to appreciate our fellow Europeans. After all we will now have the world's first ever international parliament.

A Europe riddled with American values and Soviet subversion is a diseased sycophantic old whore: A Europe strong, united and independent is a child of the future. The period of gestation has been long and painful. Euroman Cometh.

J J Burnel

## COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe is designed to promote co-operation and understanding between the countries of Europe. Its aims are to work for greater European unity, to improve the conditions of life and develop human values in Europe. It has 21 member states, and aims to provide a forum for an exchange of opinions and ideas.

Whilst wishing to bring nations and cultures closer together, the council has no desire to subjugate the individual identities of those involved.

The C.O.E. sets out to protect human rights, and puts down guidelines of such things as protection of the environment. Committees, consisting mainly of ministers and the like, meet from time to time to proffer advice on a wide variety of subjects ranging from football violence to terrorism.

In the final analysis, despite a certain impotence, the Council of Europe can only be for the good of all. Without continuing interchange of thought, raw materials etc, the modern world will stagnate.



*The Burning Up Times*  
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May 2009

## Ode to Joy

## Editorial

Three decades on from the release of JJ Burnel's solo debut album, **Euroman Cometh**, we at *The Burning Up Times* publish our celebratory 30th anniversary issue with the help of Stranglers fans far and wide. Admittedly, many of us are the latter these days – but in 1979, many of us formed the multitude of Burnel-obsessed teenagers kyokoshinkai-ing in front of bedroom mirrors to the sounds of this seminal album – and who could have guessed at its sonic timelessness? A perfect breach between February's **Live (X-Cert)** LP and September's **The Raven** – this solo oasis is living proof of the creative talents of our favourite bass player. We hope you enjoy this online magazine. Special thanks go to interviewee JJ for his time on the eve of European Stranglers duties and also to John Ellis.

The Burning Up Times is published at [www.strangled.co.uk](http://www.strangled.co.uk) when it's ready. It is available free of charge from the website and you are free to distribute it to whoever you want. Issue four, Ode To Joy, May 2009. © Planet Earth **Editor:** Gary Kent **Production Editor:** Dominic Pilgrim **Webmaster:** Ian Keiller

**Contributors:** Adrian Andrews, Gareth Barber, John Bardsley, Stuart Bolton, Owen Carne, Paul Cooklin, Jeffrey Curnock, Paul Gunter, Gary Kent, Simon Kent, Stephen McKean, David McLaughlin, Graeme Mullan, Gareth Noon, Adam Salem, Richard Skinner, Barry Spooner, Tony Stublely and Jonathon Wren. Please accept our apologies for anyone we have inadvertently omitted.

This issue is dedicated to the European Female



**Sex and drugs and poetry: Gary Kent meets up with JJ Burnel to talk 'Euroman Cometh' 30 years on – and motorbikes and kidnapping journalists!**

# EURO★VISION

**T**HE SUN sets and long shadows are cast across the distressed floorboards where Jean Jacques Burnel stands. Hunched beneath dim candelabra, contorted. Head twisted and crooked, jaw bent. A pause for breath, and with a fixed gaze, he speaketh in a crackled, fractured Shakespearian pitch:

*"I met a traveller, from an antique land who said: two vast and trunkless legs of stone stand in the desert..."*

With one arm bent and withered, the other flexed to form a homemade humpback, JJ's right leg trawls the floor. I am informed at this point that this is Oundling – I don't doubt it.

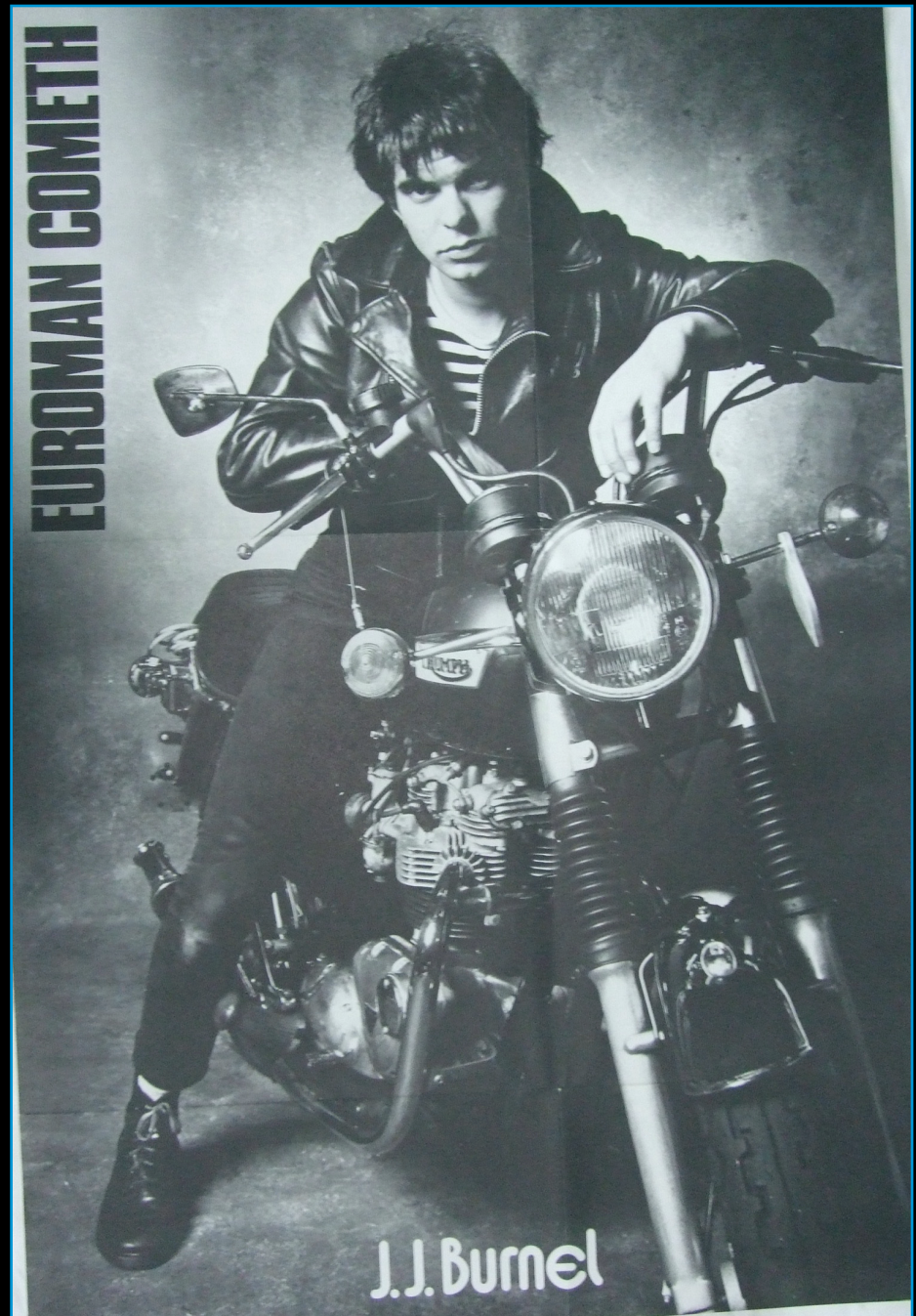
*"Near them, on the sand. Half-sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, Whose frown and wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command..."*

**W**e are upstairs in a swanky riverside eatery – and JJ's Oscar-winning feat fails to impress a couple dining nearby. Impervious, they carry on devouring each other, blissfully unaware of the identity of either Burnel or Ozymandias. It's three decades since JJ's debut solo album – Euroman Cometh –

poked the UK Top 40, augmented by an ambitious tour – and who could forget the classic Freddie Laker promo? Seeking justice, prodding the US for hammering the little man in the shape of a seismic bass riff and blurts on the Vocoder.

Earlier – as I grab a CD of Euroman Cometh for the car and take a rucksack crammed with camera, Dictaphone and a list of Euroman Q's – fears as to whether this interview will ever take place can't fail to enter my head: previous dates last summer are scuppered for various reasons: JJ's Karate duties in Sri Lanka (his team win both heavyweight and middleweight titles in a full contact tournament), followed by a Stranglers gig in Dubai; band commitments in the media and subsequent rehearsals for the UK tour – and of course, the UK tour itself – taking us up to the tail-end of 2008. An email reminder triggers JJ's reply, with a suggestion of nailing this in the few days before the band begin their next tour. Graciously, JJ crow-bars me in on the very eve of heading for Europe. Rather fitting, considering the topic. He picks the place and I get an uninterrupted Euroman run on the North Circular.

I'm ridiculously early when I find the bar-restaurant rendezvous (a local haunt







of JJ's) and park up nearby. There's a warm, villageyness to this well-heeled west London enclave, with a quaint Thameside boozier opposite. It's cold and sunny and I jump out and light a cigarette by the railings, counting swans to kill time until the chill sets in. Back inside the car, Euroman continues while I keep a watch for JJ's presence. Soon I realise just how many passing men resemble JJ, particularly when you are waiting for him. On the pavement, two people cuddle. They kiss, he leaves. She unlocks the car in front of me and phones someone, a man, saying how the traffic is holding her up. Don't rely on lies. She looks up at me, probably wondering if I'm a Detective Privé. 'I'm the Jellyfish, I take everything in...'. She gives a smirk and drives off, leaving me with an unfettered view of the restaurant's doorway. I continue my wait. It's bang on four o'clock when a blue Cherokee driven by a JJ lookalike appears and parks up. This time, it is JJ, and he's walking across the road to the doorway. Inside, fresh from training at the gym, JJ leads the way upstairs to a table by the window where we sit.

#### **So just how did Percy Bysshe Shelley's sonnet become the flip-side of the single?**

'Ozymandias is one of the greatest poems in the English language,' states a relaxed JJ, stirring the froth in his cup of cappuccino. 'Shelley talks about the transience of human existence. The poem says it all – here is this guy who is king of kings who is now dust – the same goes for all of us. But I love the imagery in the poem. It became a bit of an in-joke in The Stranglers where we devised this thing called Richard III competitions whereby Hugh and I would get very drunk and see who could do it best. Alex Gifford also did it once with me when we

had competition onstage in Switzerland when everyone was putting things away afterwards. So when we'd get invited to these record company do's – in the days when we used to get invited to these things – and end up talking in our best Richard III/Richard Burton voices to see who could 'oundle' the best. So we'd end up quoting Ozymandias, but sometimes these record company people wouldn't get what we were doing so we'd fuck them off. In which case, I'd jump up on their table and oundle, and dragging a leg along a table means that it's quite possible you might just knock over a glass of wine into someone's lap!

#### **What do you remember about the Freddie Laker video?**

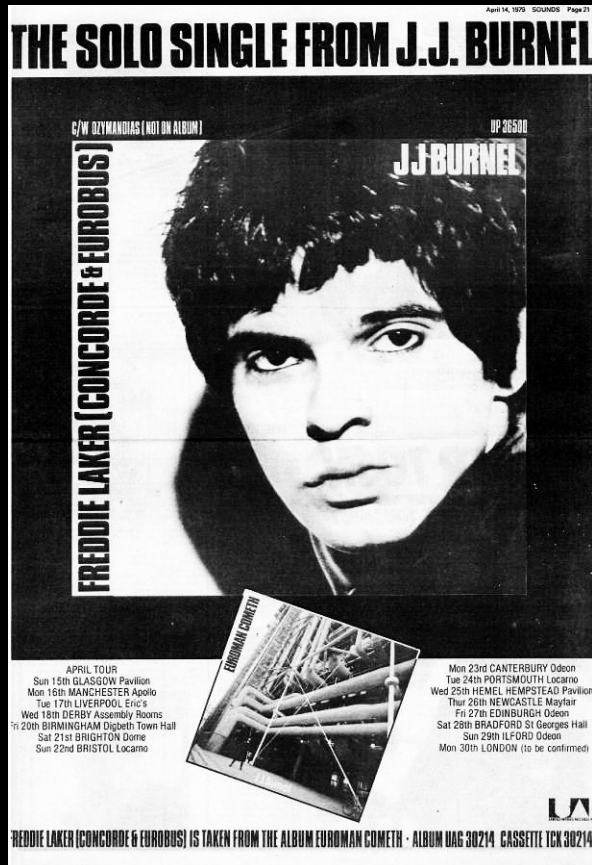


Only that it was filmed in Carnaby Street – I think the director chose that – and that it was a spoof on Bob Dylan where we improvised on the day with the lyrics printed out on a sheet and that there was cardboard and rubbish in the street.

#### **Freddie Laker was a hero of yours?**

Freddie Laker epitomised the lengths the Americans would go to fuck over the European. As far as the Concorde part of the song goes, remember Concorde was an Anglo-French project: the Americans were working on their own supersonic plane and so were the Russians with their Concorfski, to give it its media name. The Americans suddenly moved the goalposts and said Concorde is too noisy and can't land in America. It was





quite absurd really, because the flight from London to New York was subsonic overland and supersonic over the Atlantic, but they came out with all these excuses so it couldn't land. They did give it landing rights in New York and Washington, but too late, so there was no point in Concorde full stop. Thirty-odd countries cancelled their orders for Concorde, effectively ending the Anglo-French project with no further development happening after this. The other airlines dependant upon landing rights in America got New York and Washington, but it was too late

for Concorde. MacDonald-Douglas and the American government combined to fuck over Concorde. Freddie Laker who was the equivalent of today's Easyjet with cheap flights to New York was also turned over, by big business. So Freddie Laker (Concorde & Eurobus) was a rant against big business and Americans, in particular, at the time.

**The sleeve art features a real close-up, iconic shot of you.**

Yes, obviously they were prettifying me up at the time. Make-up, taking out stuff, whitewashing... all this to bring out the features.

**And looking good too.**

Yeah – I was a cutie. I think they thought the rest of them were all such a bunch of ugly old bastards, let's try and make the most of something here, so we've got to catch the girls, I've no

idea. Funny I don't remember the shoot itself at all.

**So why did you choose the Pompidou Centre for the album cover?**

Well, for me it represented modernity. At the time I thought it was architecturally grandiose although now I think it's a bit of a mess. But back then it represented this radical new thinking. It's a Richard Rogers design – half of the former Rogers and Foster partnership. He went on to do Canary Wharf, the Gherkin and the Millennium Dome.

**But you're just tiny dot in it.**  
I am, yeah.

**Although you also had an iconic look that could have been portrayed more perhaps?**

Well, no... I think the whole point was to show the enormity of this modern iconic structure which not a lot of people knew about at the time. As far as I can remember, no one has posed at this iconic building. Of course, since then, it's part of the landscape. Part of Paris. It's like the Eiffel Tower. So I got in there first, really. There's a road running along here, and round the other side there's a very successful piazza where they have mime artists and human statues, and to me, it epitomised the modern world. The way I look in the photo was just the zeitgeist of the time, my black jeans...

**The ones from Japan?**

That's right, Campbell's. I was the first person as far as I knew who had black jeans. I came back from Japan with them in July 1977, when Presley died. We'd done Go Buddy Go on Top Of The Pops. I went on holiday on my motorcycle to my parents home in France. Then I got this call saying record promotion needs to be done in America and Japan, and they said two of you need to go to America and one of you needs to go to Japan.

**Can I guess who the 'one' was?**

Yes, so they said 'any takers?' I'd never been to America or Japan, but I wasn't interested in going to America as much as I was going to Japan. So I said I'll go – put me down for Japan – and it was left to Hugh and Jet to do the America thing. Well I landed in Tokyo, and in those days it was an 18 hour flight. Now it's 12. In those days you had to go via the North

Pole with a stopover in Anchorage. So I was in my biking clothes of the time, leather jacket, DM's, black jeans, how I got up in the mornings. Landed – and got arrested! I was kept in custody for 5 hours. What mistake I'd made was filling out the landing form where it asked for the purpose of the visit, to which I put promotion. It was correct, but they thought that was a paid job, and I didn't have a work visa. So after 5 hours of deliberation, my record company who were the other side of the customs barrier got me through. Now, the whole purpose of why I was there was for NHK, who were the biggest TV programme in Japan, and they were doing a 45 minute special on The Stranglers. The whole reason I was there was to promote Rattus and No More Heroes. So, the next day, I'm in my nice hotel, switched on the TV to find Elvis Presley had died. I was then told that all interviews were cancelled as a result, and no Stranglers feature went out in the end.

**At the time, recording your solo album must have been a real buzz.**

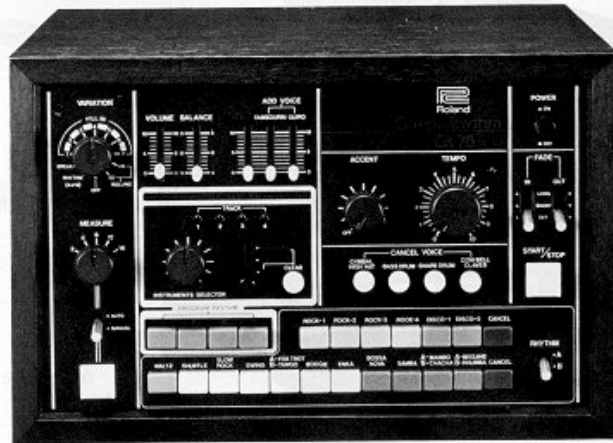
Well, I was living it because I was actually living in the studio a lot of the time and I was recording it and had nowhere to live. By which time we'd made some money but years later we found out it got kinda siphoned off by management. But at the time, I had nowhere, strictly speaking to live, so I had to live with girlfriends. There was one particular girlfriend I probably stayed with more often than not. I didn't really have a place to live, so after the Black And White sessions at TW Studios, Rushent would fuck off, and I'd be left to my own devices. I would use a beat box machine. There was a Roland one about this big and had all the settings, rock 'n' roll1, rock 'n' roll2, salsa, rumba, all these different rhythms which you couldn't



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change the single pattern, but you could speed it up. It was a similar thing they'd put into organs at the time, so you'd play an organ and have a beat box rhythm to play along with.

### Why did you choose beat box percussion? Were you trying to be innovative?

Because I had no one to play with. It kept me tight although a couple of times later I tried it with drummers just doing it a single pattern. I'd say – can you just be a beat box? I don't want any fills, I just want

it to be strict, and approach it like that. It was quite useful, creatively, because I'd just have a rhythm going and I thought right, I'll do a bass thing over it or guitar, and build it up from there. So that was the way I approached it. I had no songs in my head, just you know, a spliff here, a bottle of wine there, a couple of Finchley Boys to keep me entertained, and they'd play as well. Alan Winstanley would stay on and record a bit, and I'd say: can you record 45 minutes of beat box, Alan? Then you can go home and let me sleep here the night, and he'd say, yeah alright.

### He taped percussion so you could jam with it?

Yeah it was a 24 track by the time we recorded Black And White and he'd do 45 minutes of beat box in stereo – as a lot of the beat boxes weren't stereo – because they had a mono output. I could then play with it all night long. I think the first track was Crabs. It was a great way to jam, but through the jamming I could define sections and make sense of getting it together to become a song. I then suddenly realised I could come up with songs by using the spare time a few extra hours every night, wake up in the morning in the smelly studio, smelling of smoke and everything, open the windows and be ready for the band to turn up at 1 or 2 in the afternoon, carry on until 10 o'clock and do the same thing. So very quickly I built up a little body of work and I thought, oh God, I'm halfway to an album, I might as well carry on.

### Was the European concept there from the start?

I must have had a concept about it. Y'know at the time I was still kind of trying to find my own identity...

### Musically?

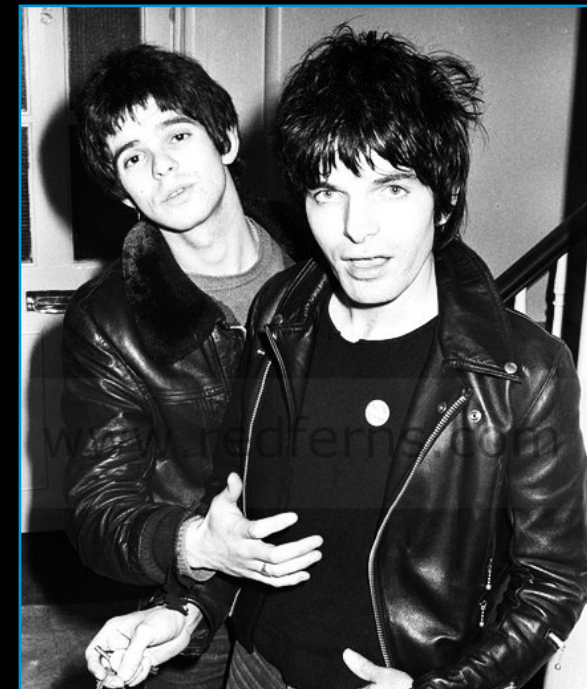
No, not musically. As a person. Well, musically in The Stranglers. In Black And White we started finding new directions after No More Heroes. Like any young band, you wear your influences on your sleeve. When you're starting out, your influences are quite obvious but it seems a ready made thing, but you're not. Our influences were Velvet Underground, The Doors, and rhythm and blues. But with Black And White we started to have more of a confluence and started to forge our sound and identity which we hadn't done up until then, I don't think.

### But Euroman was so diverse from The Stranglers.

Well yeah, but that showed some of my other interests. I was quite a big Kraftwerk fan already by then. They brought out Autobahn and Radioactivity and stuff, I was also a Can fan right from a teenager. So I liked that metronomic sort of thing and I then put my own slant on it because I was playing most of the instruments in the studio. I was still quite limited then.

### Who did you record the album with?

I recorded everything myself. I did ask friends – and some so-called friends – to help me out and then I found out they were not really true friends. One of them was a guy called [pauses] ... Brian James, guitarist of The Damned at the time. His manager was a guy called Miles Copeland who dissuaded him from having anything





to do with me. He said it wouldn't be good for his career.

#### **In what way?**

There was already that huge divide that started on 5th July 1976 when I had a big punch-up with Paul Simonon. On one side of the courtyard at Dingwall's there was The Stranglers, a few Finchley Boys and Dagenham Dave. On the other side, there was Dee Dee Ramone, The Clash, The Pistols, Chrissie Hynde and journalists. After that, there was all this big divide. So the following year in 1977, while we were outselling all these other bands, they were on the all the front covers and people's perception was changed mainly by the media. They were loved by the media.

#### **But Brian James is credited on the inner sleeve, so he played on some tracks didn't he?**

Well yeah but when I asked him to come out on tour with me, he was told not to. So this thing had built up.

#### **Do you remember choosing the Euroman Cometh title?**

No I don't. There had been a famous play called Iceman Cometh, which I'd heard about, so maybe it started off from that? It rolled off the tongue quite well.

#### **So how did the Euroman Cometh concept come about?**

At the time, I wanted to be English – but then I realised I couldn't with a stupid name like Jean Jacques, and we're such a multicultural country, you know. Now I call myself English, Norman English. The Normans and us have had a relationship for a thousand years and I'd like to keep it going. I was still fresh from being called a wog or frog at school – a bit rich as I was born in London, I'm a Londoner. I

was born in St. Mary Abbots, the same hospital Jimi Hendrix died. So fuck 'em. At the time I was sure about the way I should... people would say – why not call yourself French, it's exotic. Management used to say that. I would say – no, I'm a Londoner. So I called it Euroman Cometh, and at the time I really loved the idea of a United States of Europe and I am a believer in Europe. I don't believe in the EU. I do distinguish... in fact, in this article we should make the distinction that I am a great believer in Europe and it's fantastic that for the main part we can work and travel freely within Europe. I'm not a great believer in the impositions and rules of EU necessarily, and I think, by a natural process, we will become individual states living in harmony in the future. I think there is a lot of scepticism still involved and edicts coming down from Brussels telling us what to do. But apart from the politicians, bureaucrats and technocrats, I think the people of Europe get on much better now than they've ever done. That's a good thing and a healthy thing. And I believed in all of that at the time, the United States of Europe.

#### **Could you see this happening three decades back?**

Well not quite. I think there some good, and an awful lot of bad. We've all got opinions about it. But generally, it's been a force for the better, rather than for the worst. I would prefer that there wasn't such a Europe-wide attempt at homogenising everything and to have everything standardised because I think part of the richness of Europe is the diversity.

#### **Standardisation – in the form of the Euro?**



Well the Euro seems to be coming into its own. Personally I always would prefer to keep the pound but I think over the next 6 to 9 months, there's going to be so much pressure for the UK to join the Euro.

#### **In the present economic climate, the UK isn't such a good European prospect.**

Yes, it's not a good time to argue about it as at the moment as the Euro is sitting pretty and the pound isn't. Although up until a few months ago, what with all the travelling we do, I see how convenient it would be. Let's see. The jury's out on that one. But I didn't think it would become

such a huge group of nations and it would affect us so fundamentally in this country. I live here in west London and we've got about 500,000 Poles here. For the most part, they're contributing really positively.

#### **Are you not in favour of all these member states?**

No, I'm not actually. I think some of them have been brought into the fold too early. On the other hand, how could you expect countries like Bulgaria and Romania – dodgy countries on the whole – there's a lot of corruption, even more corruption than we have here only less transparent...





but on the other hand by joining the EU, they're being forced to pull their socks up aren't they? In an attempt to become transparent democracies and relatively corruption-free.

### **Was a united Europe you being an idealist, or a visionary?**

It was, well it was dream I had of the future because all our families have been affected by two World Wars which have backfired. Two World Wars, how many millions of people have been killed and have families affected in generations thereafter? I don't have any family. I got my mum and a couple of cousins, and that's it. And they weren't Jewish, just normal frogs, Normans that got caught up in the crossfire.

### **Did anyone else not share your views on Europe?**

At that time, after having a modicum of success, I'd get invited to parties. At one of these parties, I met Scottish comedian Billy Connolly and I asked him his views on Scottish independence. He said – Scotland will never want independence – and he was so wrong.

### **Musically, Euroman was avant-garde compared to The Stranglers – but lyrically, do you think the European-themed lyrics might have gone over the heads of us record-buying teenagers in 1979?**

Yeah, yes. I didn't see it in those terms to be honest. And I didn't see it so off the wall, which shows you what I'd been listening to beforehand! I thought it was quite poppy and people said it was off the wall and leftfield but I didn't see it in those terms, you see, because I was kind of from a different place. But people have told me for years that it was very ahead of its time but I didn't see it like that at all. I mean, there were beatboxes on it but there was also a 1963 R&B track on it by the Beat Merchants.

### **So Pretty Face isn't linked to the European idea – does that mean it was a filler track?**

No, it wasn't. It doesn't really have any bearing on the rest of the album, but no, I wasn't filling it. I was stuffing it with something which... I'd hate to think that it was a filler, but I mean, it really had no place on that album. It was just a track I loved.

### **Would you take it off, say, if you were picking the tracks for a Euroman reissue?**

{LOL} Well if I was being completely

conceptual, then I'd probably. But also I did change the words a bit for a bit of humour. I can't resist a bit of an in-joke somewhere.

### **Like Ozymandias?**

No, not really. It's linked but it's tenuous – more in the style and delivery than a proper link. Not every song is meaningful about Europe or the past. Some are and some aren't. Is that okay? So should it replace Pretty Face you mean?! [LOL]

### **Well if you're gonna have Pretty Face – you may as well chuck in Ozymandias as well!**

But you take your references from everywhere. If you live – and you have things – then you use them. At the time, someone said to me – Oh you're just being pseudo-intellectual doing Ozymandias. But I'm not. I just love the poem. It's a beautiful deep and meaningful poem, so why not do it?

### **Jellyfish doesn't relate to Europe either does it?**

No but it does relate to having a broad mind. Accommodating ideas. Not being narrow. I encountered a lot of narrow-mindedness and blinkered-thinking at that time so it does really fit. In the media, in public, you'd come out of a gig and you'd have a load of Queen fans trying to murder you. I mean, what's that all about! Jellyfish is about me trying to absorb stuff. At the time I tried to be like that, like a piece of blotting paper.

### **Are you still like that, taking everything in?**

Well yeah, I try and maintain that although as you get older you tend to build up a few prejudices. Things that you know you don't like. But you've got to be like blotting

paper. It's how you flourish as an artist and as a person. Jellyfish maybe a wrong analogy as it's dangerous, but that's how I see it. Absorbing stuff. You know, all this information, all these experiences. At the time The Stranglers were going abroad and getting shagged by all these girls and all kinds of stuff was happening and I took

## **DOING THE EUROPEAN**

The name 'Europe' is of uncertain etymology. One theory suggests that it is derived from the Greek roots meaning broad (eur-) and eye (op-, opt-), hence Europē, 'wide-gazing', 'broad of aspect' (compare with glaukōpis (grey-eyed) Athena or boōpis (ox-eyed) Hera). Broad has been an epithet of Earth itself in the reconstructed Proto-Indo-European religion.

Another theory suggests that it is actually based on a Semitic word such as the Akkadian erebu meaning 'to go down, set' (cf. Occident), cognate to Phoenician 'ereb 'evening; west' and Arabic Maghreb, Hebrew ma'ariv (see also Erebus, PIE \*h1regwos, 'darkness'). However, M. L. West states that 'phonologically, the match between Europa's name and any form of the Semitic word is very poor'.

This latter theory is supported by the fact that for Europē, eur+ope appears to be a false etymology, since the base of the first part is 'euru', with a hard -u stem that does not merge with following omega: euru+ope. 'Euruope' has been attested, with the meaning 'broad-faced', 'broad-eyed', with no connection with 'europe'.

Most major world languages use words derived from 'Europa' to refer to the continent. Chinese, for example, uses the word Ōuzhōu (歐洲), which is an abbreviation of the transliterated name Ōuluóbā zhōu (歐羅巴洲); however, the Turkish people used the term Frengistan (land of the Franks) in referring to much of Europe.

Source: Wikipedia.



everything in. Also, in that particular song, I used a riff that I've loved forever. In fact I've still got it. It's by The Ethiopians. Train To Skaville... De de de di da de de... So yes, I took that from that which I've never denied.

**Crabs was the first track which you wrote during the making of Black And White wasn't it? And Crabs bass line is a bit like a slowed down Toiler?**

That's all using two strings and I was trying to be clever. I remember writing Toiler when everyone had family to go to and I didn't, so I stayed at Bearshanks and carried on writing. Toiler came along, and possibly Crabs. I remember inviting Dennis from the Finchley Boys and his girlfriend to try and break up the tedium of being alone in Peterborough there was a big snow that year – and I asked him

if he could play some drums – and he became the first drummer on Toiler. Then I said: [jokingly] I got loads of ideas for this song... it's got lots of sections in it... and when the others get back it's gonna be soooo good... please, please! You see I didn't have drum machines or rhythm boxes at Bearshanks, but it did allow me to play all the sections to it. Hugh did the lyrics to Toiler after coming back from Morocco with a Japanese girl.

**In Freddie Laker you distort the lyrics using a Vocoder – how come?**

Because I could? It was a new toy. The point about Euroman – and I believe Nosferatu – was not only were they solo efforts, but we were allowed to experiment and learn things so we could bring them back to the family, to the herd. So I had spare time on my hands to

collect a body of material and then bring it back to the womb of The Stranglers. That particular one was a very basic vocoder and I first discovered it when I worked with a Japanese band called Lizard. I thought we should bring it into the band. We used it for a few years on The Raven and a few things. You could sing just into the mic or play the chords which would help. I put the guitar through it, as well as the vocals. Live, we had a girl called Penny Tobin who had a vocoder.

**How did she become one of the Euroband?**

I needed a keyboard player to do the parts and John Ellis knew Penny. I think she's into jazz nowadays. John played guitar although I don't think John is on the album at all, just live. On drums there was Pete Howells who I knew from the Drones – he's still around – I saw him about 4-5 years ago. Carey Fortune too – he had been our roadie for The Stranglers for about a year. We called him Mutant. He then joined a band called Chelsea. He was a tough little nut, and the boyfriend of Linda, who was one of our Battersea strippers.

**Were you surprised Euroman only just scratched the Top 40?**

Well it's been released 4 or 5 times and it's sold a lot over time. That always stuck in Hugh's claw.

**Do you know how many copies you've sold?**

No. But easily 2-300,000.

**So it made you quite a bit of money from Euroman?**

Yeah, it made a bit of money over time but it's not something I get obsessed about. People in America say you must



24 - Record Mirror, April 21, 1979

## Euroman boreth something awful

JJ BURNEL, Blood Donor, REM Pavilion, Glasgow

THE PAVILION, a theatre steeped in Scottish music hall tradition, nestles uncomfortably close to the Apollo, Glasgow's rock & roll heart. The two halls directly face each other harraasing the Glaswegian youth and dividing them.

Half entered the Apollo to see Thin Lizzy whilst the rest entered the olde worlde show biz atmosphere of the Pavilion.

"Nice to see some people have come to the real gig tonight," announces Burnel immediately raising his quotient on the schmuckometer.

Strange I thought, this wasn't the rebel attitude that JJ displayed when he actually met the Lizzies in Paris recently. Perhaps fear of young Philip and the boys forced him to be polite and chatty, but with the, to his eyes, old wave crew only 25 yards away and with an audience, punky credibility, must pervayed. However I digress.

The evening began with Blood Donor, a five piece who sounded fairly interesting. Two keyboard players laid down the required drum machine, synthesiser ground work while the occasional lead singer, an enigmatic fellow with a half moustache, pounded out percussion along with the permanent drummer, leaving the bassist to handle the odd vocal chores. Though the pop hook lines cut through, they would benefit from the luxury of sound checks and more room to present their show.

Good as they were, Blood Donor and to a certain extent their fellow support band Rapid Eye Movement and Burnel's band all displayed elements of the current trend towards structured mechanical chaos. The musicians seemed wrapped up in a world of self important border breaking when in fact this indulgence was for the most part neither good nor bad – it merely existed.

Due to the brevity of the Pavilion show your man on the spot was able to catch the last minutes of Thin Lizzy's third encore in the Apollo. One minute of 'The Roker' captured more of the true rock and roll essence than the three hours across the road. The new wave is dead, long live the new wave.

RONNIE GURR



## RONNIE'S STORY...

After meeting at the Roundhouse in '77, writer Ronnie Gurr publishes his Euro-review – and JJ is not impressed. The former Record Mirror scribe takes up the story:

"I thought Euroman was a lot of shite! I think I said it was indulgent – the kind of tosh only an established rock star would get away with. That was what he took exception to. I think I had a conversation and I said I wasn't going to write a glowing review just because it's a band I like – I'm a fucking critic! I've never felt the need to re-investigate this, frankly, because generally your first instincts are your right instincts. He said he'd do a feature, so I said - fair enough - I'll do a feature. Alan Edwards arranged for me to interview JJ in the pub near United Artists in Mortimer Street – I don't know its name. I went up and got chucked on the bus – and got taken to Hemel Hempstead, with some right fucking psychos. One of them had a cut tattooed across his neck. When I tried to get off I got thrown with such force against the window that the whole window came out. I knew then it was not worth struggling. JJ was on the bus. When we arrived I got taken round by these two morons. It was intimidating - don't engage in conversation - I hadn't yet read Hostage Techniques. They walked me round a field before being taken to the venue, a civic hall, one of those big 60s glass things.

"Then I was left backstage in a room without a window. With me was the moron with the cut tattoo. I'm sure he's a nice grandfather now but his employment prospects must have been hampered by having that tattoo. They were going to strip me bullock- naked and tie me to a chair. Graciously – sort of – they gave me a can of beer before I was led out onto the stage. The support band Blood Donor were playing - so I turned round and threw the can at the moron's face and just legged it. The crowd, such as it was for the support band, parted and luckily I landed on my feet and just kept running. So I went down two flights of stairs and luckily, as I'd been escorted round Hemel Hempstead, I'd noticed where the police station was – round the corner from the hall. I ran – with a pursuit team behind – and made it to the police station. They took me back into the hall to get my belongings but they wouldn't charge anyone for abducting me. But they did say that if I was found in the Thames floating - at least we'll know who to go after.

"Record Mirror didn't stop writing about the band - but I know Alan Edwards got a letter from the editor saying that he wouldn't touch any of his other bands if that was how he was going to behave and set up journalists. And, of course, he denied he set it up, as he would do, saying, "It was all the turn's fault!" All the time when his PR business hung on it, he didn't admit it!"

Read Ronnie's Recollections in the second part of Issue 3 of The Burning Up Times.

be making a lot of money from this and that and I say I can feed myself and I really don't know. They say that it's not right, but that's not what I'm about. I think Jet might be able to answer questions like that because he's more methodical and I'm not. My criteria for success is not about making money. My criteria is getting near to the idea I originally had in my mind, which is not always the case. I get

a great idea in my head and when it finally becomes something sonic it doesn't do what I'd dreamed it would do. Figures don't mean so much.

### What about the Eurotour – that must have lost you money?

I must have because they booked me into these big halls. The only place that sold out was Edinburgh Playhouse which

I remember distinctly because Thin Lizzy were playing on the other side of the street the same night. On one side there was a queue of people in blue denim and on the other, black leather jackets. One of the dates was cancelled, wasn't it? Was it Gants Hill?

### No, that became the last night – Hammersmith Odeon was cancelled, so too was Drury Lane.

So I didn't play London. You were there at Gants Hill? How packed was that?

### The front two rows were quite full...

Were they? [LOL] I remember Manchester Apollo – that was fantastic. Came onstage – saw the audience and invited them onstage – and then we played with them onstage!

### Do you remember John Ellis 'putting you into the audience' at Gants Hill?

Did he? Oh right. I don't remember that at all. I think if someone kicked me like that I would have sorted it out. Obviously I was past caring. I can't recollect it all.

### Is that because there a lot of powder about?

Heroin – I was completely seriously into it then. I stopped training for about three years because the drugs took over. Hugh introduced me to it – he'd come back from Los Angeles and as we did everything together in those days – like if we had a book then the whole band would read the same book and if we had a new philosophy to discuss... and the same with drugs. If there was drug... I can't remember too much of that tour actually.

### Do you remember where you rehearsed for the Eurotour?

Did we have New Hibernia House then? It

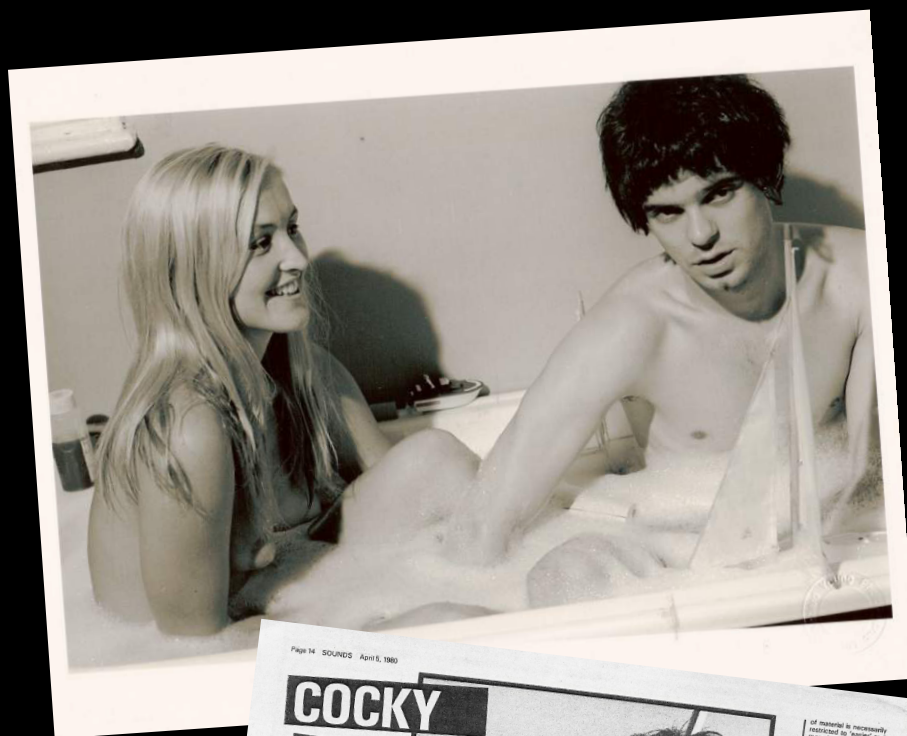
was probably there I guess. We definitely used it for rehearsals when the three of us had all the different performers playing with us for The Rainbow gigs when Hugh was inside.

### And who could forget the kidnapping of music hack Ronnie Gurr for penning a bad review of your Glasgow gig?!

Ha! After he slagged off Euroman, we arranged to meet him in a pub for an interview and ended up bundling him onto our bus. We drove to the next gig, which was Hemel Hempstead where took him inside and tied him to a chair. We were going to make him sit and watch the gig... or something like that. We gave him some Finchley Boys for company – the tattooed bloke was Dean who was told not to speak to Ronnie. He was from Sheffield, he wasn't a Finchley Boy. We'd met him at gigs and he really liked The Stranglers. He's dead now. Anyway, Ronnie Gurr threw a can or something at him and escaped while the support band were on. He ran round to the police station round the corner. Next thing, the police arrived looking for me. Of course, I was nowhere to be found because I was hiding in the ladies! The police went away in the end. There wasn't much they could do.

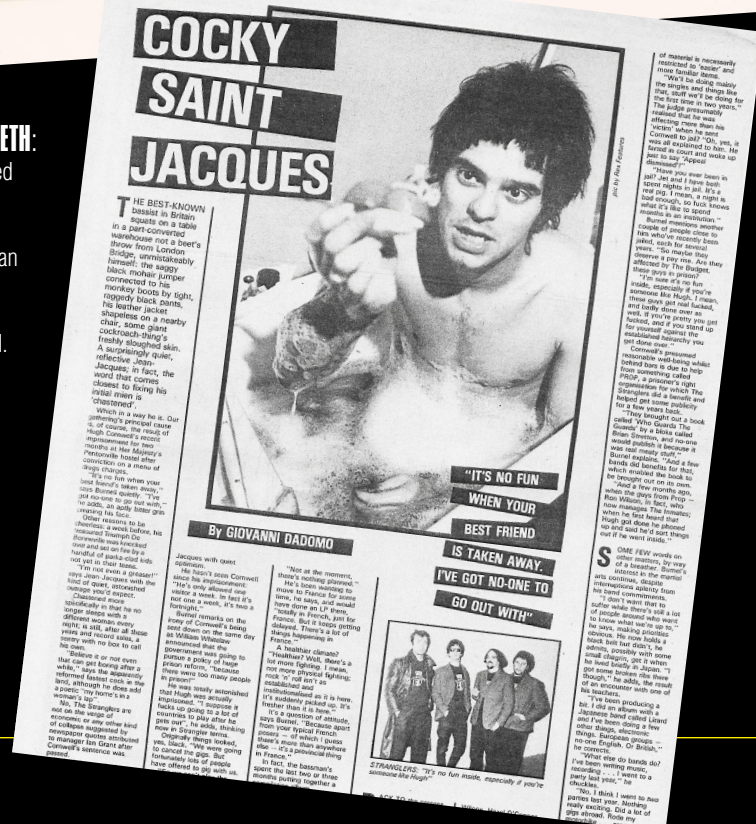
JJ's glass of Kir arrives – a French cocktail apéritif – named after Félix Kir, Mayor of Dijon and pioneer of the twinning movement in the aftermath of World War 2. Something tells me JJ is quietly quaffing to a French hero, despite his protestation of being a Londoner, born and bred. He seeks a united Europe, but creates havoc; he smashes bass guitars over people's heads, whacks The Clash's bassist, kidnaps journalists – and gaffer-tapes





## EUROMAN SOAKETH:

The photo is dated 17.04.79 – four days after the release of Euroman Cometh – and JJ enjoys a bubble bath with a friend. Photographer Richard Young snaps the suddy occasion but it is not till a year later when Sounds publish one of the shots. Photo © Richard Young.



others to the Eiffel Tower! I am then reminded of Jet Black's summation of his bassist band mate in an interview prior to the Roundhouse gig: 'I think unbeknownst to him he has this kind of schism in his personality when one day he's wearing a beret, and the next day he's wearing a trilby. Do you know what I mean?' I think so. Back to the Q's...

## How did you get along working with producer Martin Rushent at this time?

He produced it but he wasn't there for most of the sessions. It was mostly Alan Winstanley and Aldo Bocca too, who did a lot of work Euroman.

## Having your motorbike ticking over throughout Triumph Of The Good City is your Autobahn?

I just rode the Bonny into the studio one day...

## How did you get the bike down the stairs at TW?

This was at Eden – I got the bike warm and then got it in the studio ticking over because I thought it would be great to use as it had a good rhythm. Health and Safety would not accept that now! The Bonny is a twin cylinder, so it's in stereo. So with two microphones – one up one end, the other microphone up the other end – I started running it and we recorded it until it just died naturally and cut out. That was the rhythm section. Put drum machine beat box over it and jammed over it. Triumph Of The Good City was a play on words. In Plato's Republic, he talks about forms of government – oligarchy, tyranny, democracy – and at one point talks about the Good City. Triumph Of The Good City I thought was perfect because in French, good city is 'bonne ville'. So I thought I'd be clever and use a bit of Plato's stuff and

use my motorcycle as a rhythm section.

## What about live – did you ride the bike to the gigs – and was it so unreliable that you couldn't use it to tick over onstage for the track?

Most of the time it was wheeled in. Only once did I ride it to a gig. The rest, I travelled with the band. It's not that it was unreliable but it took a while before it was warm enough to keep ticking over on stage for the song but those British bikes in those days were prone to breaking down, oil leaks, etc., but not now. The track doesn't sound dated, does it?

## It's a killer instrumental. Nothing is dated on Euroman because it was so ahead of it's time.

Oh amazing. I haven't listened to it for a while...

## So you do play it, then?

Only when I'm very, very drunk and no one's around will I allow myself to go back to the scene of the crime, so to speak. My head is so filled with other stuff...

## Do you still have the Bonny?

No, actually it got nicked in Grasse, South of France in 1984. [Grasse is where JJ's mother lives.]

## Back in 1979 – with solo albums from both yourself and Hugh – it was rumoured to be the end of the band. Could it have been?


No. I never saw any of that.

Hugh once told The Burning Up Times he also thought you working on your solo project looked like a threat to the band inasmuch that you might be leaving. You earlier alluded to some solo rivalry between you two. Did you see it as



Harvey Goldsmith Entertainments by arrangement  
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**the Stranglers**  
**EUROMAN COMETH**



**Jean Jacques  
Burnel**

**RAPID EYE MOVEMENT**  
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**Derby Assembly Rooms**  
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### something more than a sideline project?

In later years, since Hugh left, I realised there were a lot of things Hugh was planning anyway. He planned things and I didn't. That was the difference between him and me because he calculated things because he was very bright and I just reacted to things and quite happy doing that. I didn't realise, for instance, when Hugh left the band when he called me and said it was the end of the band, I'm quitting and I'm going into cinema and film and stuff, and I said okay. But I didn't realise he'd been actually doing things for a while with other people. That's why Jet, myself and Dave felt hurt about him leaving. If there's a time to leave, there's a time to leave, sure. You just have to respect that. But it's the way people do things which wasn't the way Jet or I would deal with the situation. We never knew about him working with, what was it? CCW – with Roger Cook who wrote Teach The World To Sing... we never knew a thing about and didn't know he'd been doing that.

As far as the Euroman thing goes, I thought it was great that we could indulge ourselves, because it was quite self-indulgent, I mean, I thought doing solo stuff was – but on the other hand it kept me up at night rather than being bored. It kept me buzzing but I never thought it would lead to splitting up from The Stranglers. Not at all. On the contrary I was learning stuff, quite along behind the desk, learning the magic of recording and what I could do, what could be done and what was possible. I thought as 25% of The Stranglers I can bring this back into The Stranglers and help produce better tracks, learn new instruments and offer them into the band. Euroman Cometh was never going to be the end of The Stranglers.

**T**wo hours are up, and I take the shots. But not before JJ provides me with some current sound bytes from The Stranglers camp:

"The UK tour was great. We're live junkies. Jet was fantastic playing every UK date even when he wasn't feeling at his best. I asked him this before the tour; I said, Jet – you know those people who balance plates at the end of long sticks on stage? What would happen if the guy spinning the sticks had to walk offstage? Could someone else come on in his place and spin the plates so that they don't smash? He said; Fuck off, you wag. Dave too, is playing his best keyboards – and Baz is like he's been born a Strangler isn't he? He's a brilliant guitarist and treats the old guitar lines with the greatest respect, like a classical musician. I can't wait to get working on the next album. The tour bus will enable us to work on songs in between gigs because there are various lounges within the tour bus. So me and Baz will be taking our acoustic guitars to work on new stuff – and also to work out the arrangement to quite possibly the best song I've written. It's quite a long track – in acoustic form at the moment – and nine months in the making. It's called Goodbye – but don't read anything into that! I want this album recorded this year and out in 2010. There's a big-name support slot we've been offered and we're top of the list. But then – the way we're playing right now – I wouldn't want to follow us. I see Hugh's been up to his old tricks again, cancelling shows? If no one shows up at the gig, you still do the gig... Will there be a Nosferatu PDF?"

EUROVISION SONGS HERE: [http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_type=&search\\_query=JJ+Burnel&aq=f](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_type=&search_query=JJ+Burnel&aq=f)



# Ozymandias: a tail of two ditties?

**Poetry doesn't have to be confusing – although it doesn't help when you discover there are two poems called Ozymandias – penned by two different authors – and published the same year! Gary Kent**

**T**he sonnet we all know and love – Ozymandias by Percy Bysshe Shelley – was name checked by The Strangers in Year Zero – or 1977 as it's also known. The song was Ugly. Three years later, the complete poem appeared as Freddie Laker's b-side. And probably the best b-side in the world. Probably.

Rarely far from my turntable for the entirety of 1979, (and right up to 1982 if my parents had a say in this), Ozymandias was backed up by a Eureka moment a short time after. That's when I spotted it in print for the first time, in The Sheldon

Book of Verse, a collection of prose I held close to my heart: so close to my heart, I shoved it inside my school blazer, secured with a hand tucked inside like Napoleon Bonaparte with a view to liberate it from the school library the same afternoon. It gathers dust to this day on my bookshelf – but ssssh! Don't tell a soul. Especially school librarians working in the East End in 1979.

It is often said Shelley's inspiration came with the British Museum's acquisition in 1816 of the gargantuan statue of Egyptian pharaoh Ramesses II, aka Ozymandias. Incidentally, the hole on the bust's right bust is thought to have been made during an earlier Napoleonic attempt to bring old Ramesses to France, which in truth, probably triggered Entente cordiale. Anglo-French argy-bargy? It's a wonder

Concorde ever left the tarmac...

The Examiner published Shelley's poem in January 1818 when he entered a writing competition with his good friend Horace Smith; the following month, Smith's appeared: both bore the same eponymous character, the same rise and tragic fall, and the same moral header to remind us that we are mere mortals. But only Shelley's one became

the famous one, the often quoted one – and ended up in The Sheldon Book of Verse, of course. Smith's version, although of an acceptably good standard, was laden with unnecessary Babylon and London parochialisms. It also lacked the vivid imagery, fluency and interweaving style of Shelley's stanza. Personally, I would have put money on Shelley winning the competition hands down, but who knows if Shelley actually received a prize? After all, Smith was not only his friend - he held Shelley's purse

strings too.

Oddly, in later collections, Smith retitled his version to – wait for it – 'On A Stupendous Leg of Granite, Discovered Standing by Itself in the Deserts of Egypt, with the Inscription Inserted Below.' I think he knew he was beat, don't you? Hardly rolling off the tongue, it was even less



## OZYMANDIAS

I MET a traveller from an ancient land  
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone  
Stand in the desert: Near them, on the sand,  
Half-sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown  
and wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,  
Tell that it's sculptor well those passions read  
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,  
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed.  
And on the pedestal these words appear:  
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:  
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!  
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away.  
P.B. SHELLEY

## OZYMANDIAS

IN EGYPT'S sandy silence, all alone,  
Stands a gigantic Leg, which far off throws  
The only shadow that the Desert knows:  
'I am great Ozymandias' saith the stone,  
'The King of Kings; this mighty City shows  
'The wonders of my hand; the City's gone,  
Nought but the Leg remaining to disclose  
The site of this forgotten Babylon.  
We wonder, and some Hunter may express  
Wonder like ours, when thro' the wilderness  
Where London stood, holding the wolf in  
chase,  
He meets some fragments huge, and stops to guess  
What powerful but unrecorded race  
Once dwelt in that annihilated place.  
H. SMITH

likely to be quoted, let alone win awards. Apart from the most hubristic of titles imaginable, perhaps.

In today's world of instant gratification, fast living and television and internet, Shelley's Ozymandias still inspires creation, however good or bad. A quick search on video-sharing website YouTube reveals a plethora of Ozymandias related clips: from obscure rock metal band, the Black League to top thespian Sir Ben Kingsley hamming it up to the camera in his white Bri-Nylon dicky dirt. Gotta change my shirt... but this is no Don Logan performance. Check them all out - they're all there, boundless and baring all for your delectation... and you'll soon realise why JJ's Ozymandian offering was always the best tribute to Percy Shelley. Probably.

[http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=Ozymandias&page=3](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Ozymandias&page=3)

# WHAT A EUROMESS

**Stuart Bolton looks at the Euro-concept**

“I resent the Socialist Workers Party and all Moscow lovers and Washington lovers.” That’s JJ sounding-off in typically robust fashion back in February 1979. This came shortly before the release of *Euroman*, adding: “I don’t know if you’ve read any of the reports from the farm co-operatives in the Ukraine or in Georgia, but they’re totally corrupt – mainly because of the high burden of obligation towards the central government.... To claim that Russia is the great liberator, as still some old-fashioned unionists believe, is just unrealistic.”

These sentiments are explored even further in the lyrics of the fourth track of the album – *Euromess* – where JJ opens out his European ideology heart. Using the former Czechoslovakia as its starting point, there’s a firm rebuke of the notion held by old-school socialists that there has to be a centralised state to nationalise all means of production and distribution. And then there’s the inner sleeve footnote:

*“THE TRIUMPH WORKERS’ CO-OPERATIVE AT MERIDEN HAS PROVED THAT PERSONALLY MOTIVATED ENTERPRISE, COUPLED WITH GROUP INTEREST, IS A NECESSARY INGREDIENT IN SUCCESSFUL SOCIALISM AND THAT THE SHAM CALLED NATIONALISATION COULD ONLY BE SUGGESTED AND PERPETRATED BY ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE.”*

Returning to the darkened atmospheric soundscape of *Euromess* – to some it may at first appear to meander

aimlessly, both musically and lyrically – and there is the album’s most serious assessment of the political options available to Europe during that period. Beginning with a slow-burning pulse where the bass creeps in, the tone ominously drops deeper and deeper.

Distorted vocals begin by imploring the listener to consider what had been happening in Czechoslovakia over the previous ten years – a nation sitting geographically at the heart of Europe.

In 1968, in what became known as the Prague Spring, Czechoslovakia went through a period of political liberalisation and the possibility of a more democratic multi-party government arose. This situation was quashed in August that year when the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies invaded the country with its military forces.

This led to a period that the authorities labelled somewhat ironically as ‘normalisation’ when the Communist Party restored party rule, reinstated the power of the police authorities and

re-established centralised control over the economy. In Prague and throughout the republic, there was a generalised resistance as Czech and Slovak civilians greeted Warsaw Pact soldiers with abuse and arguments. Every form of assistance, including the provision of food and water, was denied the invading forces.

Even the year before, evidence could still be seen of street signs that were damaged or removed to prevent the invading troops finding their way around. It’s as if the reforming authorities had left them there for a few years as a reminder of the occupation.

On January 19th 1969, student Jan Palach set himself on fire in Prague’s Wenceslas Square to protest against the invasion and the renewed suppression of

free speech. His funeral turned into a major protest against ‘living in a bear cage’ as more than 800,000 people attended the procession.

So after a moody opener, the song shifts to a cyclical bassline with eerie, flame-like

sounds in the background. Lew Lewis’ harmonica added, as if the song, and by its implication, Europe – was ablaze.

The mantra ‘Don’t rely on lies’ is recurrent and stems from a phrase coined by Vaclav Havel, a famous Czech playwright imprisoned several times for his political activities. It was Havel who described how political and social order enabled people to ‘live within a lie’.

A decade on, he was voted President

of the Republic following the Velvet Revolution of 1989. *Euromess* also refers to the food mountains of butter and sugar beet accrued from Common Agricultural Policy set up by the new European Commission. JJ refers to this in the CD sleeve notes claiming that such anomalies ‘can be rectified for the common good.’

Then from Europe to the States – JJ reminds us that the song is not purely an anti-Soviet rant but more a pro-European call for solidarity – first observing the problem of obesity in America – and the lie-metaphor is continued with an oblique reference to Pinocchio with ‘New Yorkers have bigger nose...’ while alluding to the fact that if Europe was to follow either the Soviet example or the supposed American dream, it would be left in a damned awful mess with ‘play being stopped – no light’.

The song ends with a return to darkness and a final reminder about the ‘de-civilised’ Czechoslovakia, and ends on what sounds like a siren wail. There’s a call to arms in the notes of the CD: ‘a Europe riddled with American values and Soviet subversion is a diseased sycophantic old whore: a Europe strong, united and independent is a child of the future’.

Indeed, considering events since the late ‘70s (the demise of the Soviet Bloc; the EU now having 27 member states; the growth of the Euro currency; amongst many other political, social and economic developments), proving just how prescient JJ’s *Euroman* sentiments really were. And so here we are in 2009, three decades on from the album’s vinyl release, and the presidency of the European Union has just been handed over to the Czech government. Now what odds would have been offered on that eventuality when the album was hatched back in 1979?





# What EUROMAN COMETH Means to Me!

**You have your say. You've had 30 years to think something up!**

## SNAPS — ET LE PASTIE?

I have always loved Euroman Cometh, and Nosferatu for that matter, and have fond memories of listening to it in the dark as a pimply teenager. It always amazed me that both Hugh and JJ had the time and artistic energy to produce albums of such quality during what was an incredibly busy period for the Stranglers.

Anyway, many years later as a chartered surveyor I had to value a great little pub in Ware in Hertfordshire. The Landlord was a lovely fella called Allan

Ballard. I got chatting with Allan about what he used to do before buying the pub and he told me he used to be a rock photographer. Before long, as is my way, we got onto the Stranglers and it turned out that it was he who had taken the photos for the Euroman album cover as well as other pictures of the Stranglers including the picture of them at the infamous Paradiso Club with the Hell's Angels. As he told his tale this now rather quiet and gentle man's eyes seemed to twinkle about the fun he had obviously had around that time. Next time I was

passing the pub I lent him a copy of 'No Mercy' which features one of his pictures. He was extremely grateful and I was chuffed to have met the man who had taken what was probably my favorite rock photograph.

I've been to Paris several times since the release of the album and even as a supposedly mature 44 year old man always find time to recreate JJ's classic pose in front of the Pompidou centre!

<http://www.rockarchive.com/allan-ballard-photographer.html>

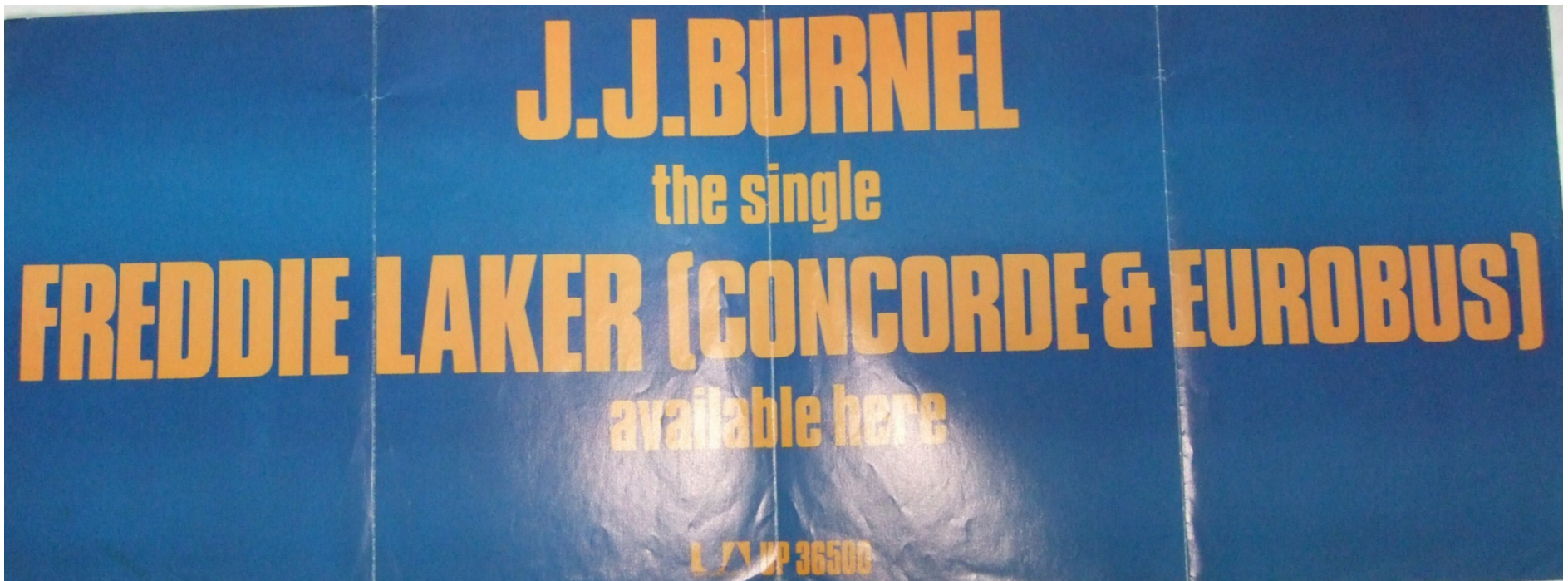
PS. The pub he had was the High Oak or the Royal Oak - really small pub in a line of terrace houses. Unfortunately he sold and moved on - I think owning a pub wasn't a great idea for someone who

clearly loved the sauce. If you can track him down he is one of the nicest blokes you could ever wish to meet! I wish I had kept details of where he went as he probably had a load of other Stranglers stuff tucked away. I kicked myself for not pursuing the original artwork (but I got the impression he no longer had it) he had no idea his prints could be worth anything. Apparently he went to the states with the Clash and had all sorts of exciting adventures.

*Jonathan Wren, Europe.*

## EUROMAN-COMETH

It was great to catch this gig because I'd only seen The Stranglers once by then. I was in Manchester and saw the Euroman album the day after release. I didn't have



the money to buy it so borrowed it off a mate I was with. Soon found out that JJ was touring and got tickets for the Manchester Apollo. I seem to remember that the gig was going to be at the Factory in Hulme but was moved to the Apollo due to the demand for tickets.

The gig was excellent and we invaded the stage and sat around the band, much to the displeasure of the security! JJ must have had a reputation by then because when he went off stage to get his bike the security leapt into action and threw us off! I can't really remember much more about the time but still think the album's good to this day.

*Gareth Barber, Europe.*

## MODERN MAN

Out of anything any of The Stranglers have ever done, solo or together, this is the most modern sounding.

*John Bardsley, Europe.*

## TAKING EVERYTHING IN

When this album was released I was still at school - the first year of my A-levels - and I was one off a group of fans who lived and breathed everything Strangler. We were all complete MiB fanatics and the release of a solo album from the bass player was avidly awaited. Of course we all sought the LP out on the day of release and it was discussed on many levels - the politics of a United Europe, the historical references and the sexually-transmitted disease - and not forgetting how cool JJ looked on the cover.

A failed French O level did me no favours trying to decipher the lyrics, although I did get the general meaning (German was a completely different language!) However, one memory from my

distant school days and the album does spring to mind. As I said, this was the first year of my A levels and we all had to attend a Use Of English class (one period per week - an AO level qualification and a complete waste of time and effort). Anyway, one afternoon we were tasked with composing an original piece of poetry. Uninspired and looking around, I decided to write out the lyrics to Jellyfish.

It was definitely an original idea and quite an interesting topic.

Arabs buying up my home town... We all left our completed pages on School Mam's desk on the way out and immediately forgot anything about the class. Next week, the teacher informed us that something remarkable had occurred during last week's exercise - an interesting piece of prose had been handed in by Graeme. I was asked to stand up - feck!! I'm not going to have to read it out, am I? However, I was soon joined by Rory and JY. We all stood looking at each other, only to be told that we had all written the exact same piece and would we care to explain! One of the most interesting classes followed (after we admitted to our plagiarism) and the teacher seemed quite interested in the concept album that the original lyrics came from.

*Graeme Mullan, Europe.*

## OUIJA!

Euroman Cometh was an album I first heard as 9 year old. I saw JJ on the cover and thought it was a Stranglers record, started playing it on my record player

at home but gave up half way through as I didn't have a grasp on French and German back then... still not very good now. I then didn't pick up the record until I was in my teens and gave it another go.

I had at least some understanding of the songs by that point. My view on the album now is that it was very ahead of it's time and still holds up today. The album opener, I'm still not sure of some of the lyrics but is Adolf Hitler mentioned? Jellyfish with drum machine bought from Woolworth's creates a good theme with JJ suffering with the knowledge with the ill-goings of the world.

Freddie Laker features the rumbling bass and catchy riff. Deutschland Nicht Über Alles is about a banned German prayer? Tout Comprendre at the centre of the album is brilliant. The albums rock moments come with Do The European, Pretty Face and Crabs. Triumph features the actual start of a Triumph bike. For an album that's 3 years older than me it still sounds up-to-date and modern to form one of my favourite band member solo albums.

*Adam Salem, Europe.*

## POMPIDOU & CIRCUMSTANCE

30 years since the release of the seminal album by the legendary bass hero JJ Burnel. Crikey doesn't time fly? If my memory serves me correct I didn't actually buy this until a few years later but soon it became a firm favourite in my then record collection. The first thing that strikes you about the album is the cover



which has the classic photo taken in front of the Pompidou centre in Paris... a few of us tried to re-create during the recent bus trip but to no avail! So to the album which given the time of release and the fragile state of our beloved Europe is very experimental and not something you would expect from such an artist as JJ.

With no real stand-out track on the album, my favourites are Do The European, Jellyfish and Triumph (Of The Good City) which has JJ's beloved Bonnevillie booming out at the beginning of it. The real gem however is Ozymandias; JJ's take on the poem by Percy Bysshe Shelley for the b-side to Freddie Laker. This is a wonderful piece of music which I used a couple of years later during an English lesson at school when we were given a poetry book each in class and asked to pick out one and explain in front of the teacher and class what it meant to you. Of course this was to be mine and I took in my trusty cassette player for the next lesson with this on and played it in class which went down very well with the other kids and even the teacher was very impressed.

The fact that vocals on Euroman are in English, French and German make it hard on the ears of the casual music fan, assuming any of them bought it in the first place. But the fact that it only reached number 40 is quite disappointing. Yet over the years, this album has become something of a forgotten gem. Stranglers fans were probably the only people who bought it like myself, and I have re-discovered it with the advent of the picture disc release and subsequent CD with 35 minutes of the Hemel Hempstead gig in April 1979. In 2000, JJ signed all these for me at the Songs And Stories gig in Swindon.

*Simon Kent, Europe*







## MOODY BLUE

Needle on vinyl, a pregnant pause, the birth of a new baby in my Stranglers collection. A crackle, and then the bolshiest bass since Jah Wobble last rattled my speakers with Theme... The bass is incessant, now with hushed French hues – new hallmark Jean Jacques – in what he labels Euro-rock. Track One – Euroman – is no three minute pop number: it's a national anthem for the United States of Europe. By Track Two, the Euro-

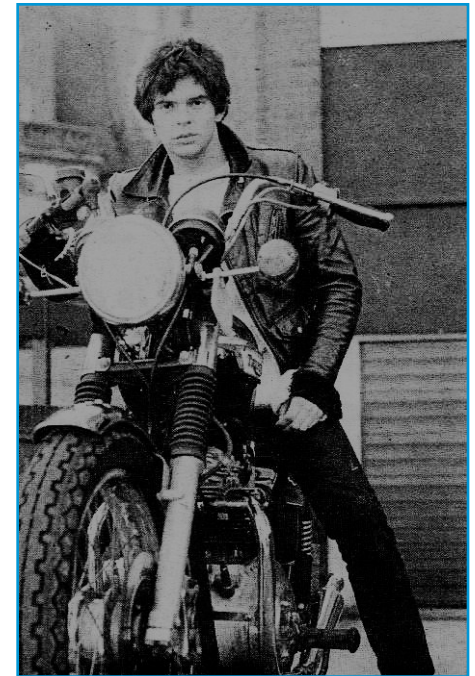
concept is confounded with Jellyfish, as Crabs does later on. Don't forget this is Piscean JJ, unwittingly alluding to the sea – this time muscle-power – and penned at the recording of Toiler On The Sea with some side-stepping crustaceans for company.

The album is timbral and textured. Not as expected, a shouty rework of Something Better Change or a bare-chested Samurai assault like Death And Night And Blood – Euroman baffles fans at first (God forbid he's using a drum

machine!) with some of the vocals sung in French and German too - foxing the linguistically-challenged (The Stranglers are polyglots, n'est-ce pas?) and further still with Dalek-like voice effects and white noise to push the tunes towards words such as avant-garde, ground-breaking and leftfield. It's not easy listening. It's like my bedroom – claustrophobic on occasions – and depressing and uplifting in equal measures. It's like me – an introvert with extrovert tendencies – or is it an extrovert with introvert tendencies? That's the trouble with Pisces – we can swim in each direction. You can say Euroman is moody – and isn't that what Brits think of the French?

As a teenage outsider in 1979, stifled in the four enclosed walls of my bedroom, I too, was Euroman. The mirror never lies. Frets about spots on foreheads, lack of muscle-power (the Bullworker is my bass!) and the opposite sex mingle in the confines of the darkened grooves. The coolest album to enter the magnolia-anaglypta womb. But did it help uphold the idealistic independent European state minus American values and Soviet subversion? Maybe, if I was growing up in the post-WW2 afterglow, or the Cold War, or amid student revolutions and living on the other side of the Butter Mountain in Surrey's stockbroker belt to Gallic parentage and ostracized for not being British. I detect a hot chip on a shoulder. A French Fry?

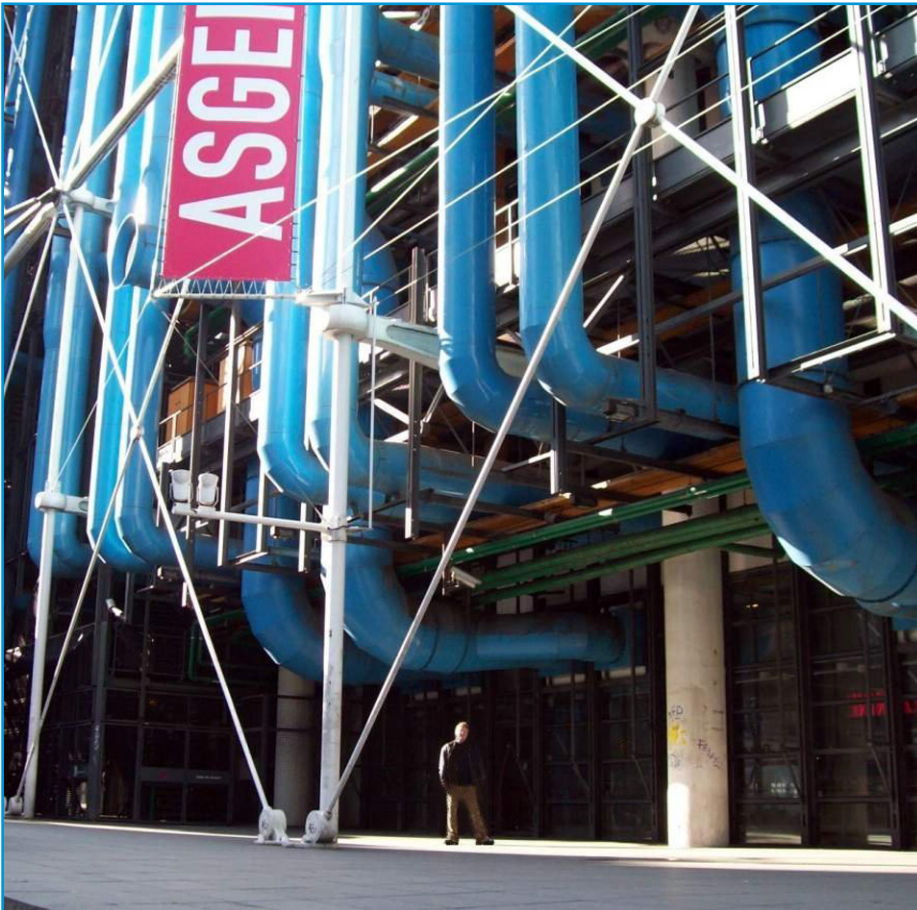
I see the outsiders uniting: Europe, Triumph Meridian in the sleeve caption, Arabs and Martin Luther King in Jellyfish, seventies cheap flight entrepreneur in Freddie Laker, Adolf Hitler, Cromwell and Napoleon in the opener, and Euromess's Jan Palach gets torched in Prague. Tiananmen Square is just 10 years off – but what happened to Tank Man?



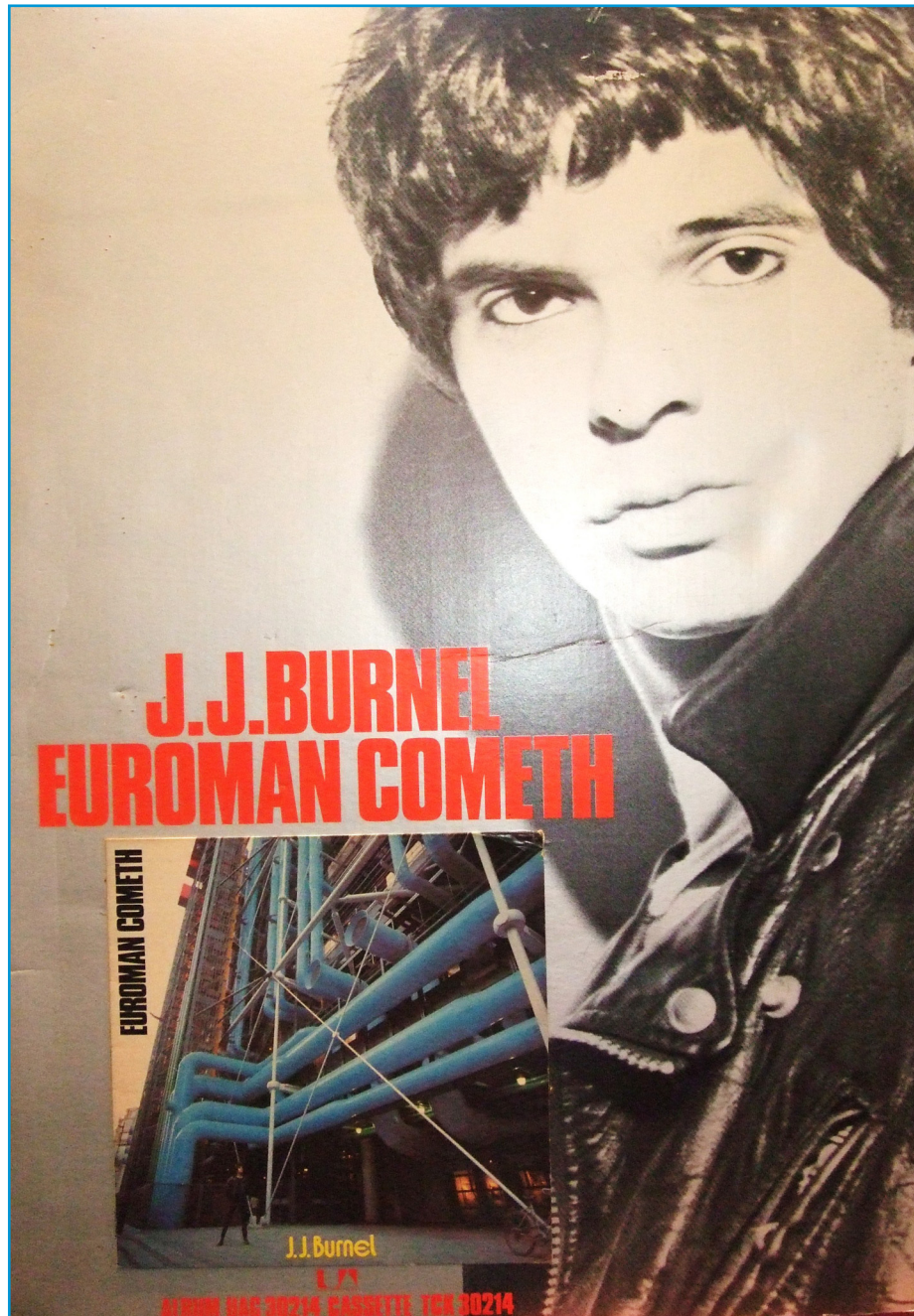
Deutschland Nicht Über Alles does for the German Tourist Board what Sverige did for Sweden – and the 'fatherland' gets a tongue-in-cheek tongue-lashing in the mother tongue. But for all the ideology of a utopian European weltanschauung (I've been dying to slip that in somewhere) – it's Euroman Cometh's Channel-hopping music that lifts, enchants and lures, leaving protest music in the arms of shouty punksters Crass soon after and Bob Dylan in another lifetime.

Euroman, Euro-rock. Post-punk experimental New Wave electronica... call it any name you like, but it remains different enough to dig out every so often and turn up loud. I'm glad JJ has sold 2-300,000 copies over the three decades since. I just wish he'd revisit this style of music just one more time.

*Gary Kent, Europe.*







## NASHVILLE TEEN

Got my Euroman LP and Freddie Laker single at the same time from Bonaparte records in Bromley. I already read that In The Shadows was probably the closest Stranglers sounding track and that there was a disco track called Do The European, so I was intrigued.

Vinyl in hand – Woolworth's stereo cranked up – it never left the turntable for days. I thought and still do that I might be more au fait with some of the possible musical influences now, and that it was a brave modern sounding genuinely different LP with atmosphere by the bucket, humour, and was unlike anything I'd heard at the time. (I had heard stuff from a cool mate by the Residents and I reckon Mr Burnel had too!) I love the cheesy drum machine, the quirky guitar lines and synth effects – and the bass!

Later on I murdered my stereo when I plugged my cheap Jap copy bass in as I struggled to master some of the riffs – and that bass riff on Euromess is genius ...and Freddie Laker with it's clash style one note guitar solo (a seriously neglected post punk classic) and not forgetting the distorted Vocoder vox. And with Ozymandias, it could have made it a double a-side single.

I WAS GUTTED when the London date of the tour, Drury Lane was cancelled. At this point my only encounter had been the Old Codgers at the Nashville and was keen to see how this transformed. If I'm honest the live version I've since got on the remastered CD ain't as good as the LP, although I think the Ode To Joy intro works.

All this – and no mention of Europe! Thanks Mr Burnel for introducing me to a bit of culture and poetry.

*Richard Skinner, Europe*

## TWO BALLS ARE BETTER THAN ONE (ANY DAY)

When I try and recall my first memories of Euroman Cometh I immediately think of O Levels. The album was released at the same time as some of us were about to take exams in our final year at secondary school. I always remember my mate Simon being very pissed off because he had somehow managed to miss one of his English exams. The same day he had gone home to play his newly acquired copy of Euroman Cometh but this experience had only served to make his day even worse! Pretty well sums up the general attitude towards the album from most of my Stranglers buddies at the time, myself included.

I actually thought that a JJ Burnel solo album would sound like a more hardcore/punkier version of a Stranglers album. Imagine a long players worth of songs like Shut Up and think of the titles on the hoax Eastern Front album. A combination of the two was roughly what I was expecting!

The first taster of the album should have had the alarm bells ringing then. However, Freddie Laker was greeted with a general nod of approval even though it wasn't quite what we expected, plus we really didn't know how to dance to it at the school youth club.

As for the album - experimental, adventurous - and before it's time. It was also fucking hard work to listen to! It wasn't the foreign language songs or the theme of the album that put me off, it was more the music and general vibe. There were a few good moments like the single, Jellyfish, Do The European and err, Crabs. But the rest of the album I found uninteresting to be honest. Having said that, the album did grow on me eventually



and over the years I've managed to acquire Euroman on three different formats.

Sadly I never caught any of the Euroman Tour but I was at both The Rainbow gigs in 1980 when Hugh was doing porridge - always wondered how JJ managed to plug his solo album by getting the remaining Stranglers to play Do The European! A case of while the cats away the mice will play maybe?

*Barry Spooner, Europe.*

## CZECH THIS OUT

I remember that Euroman Cometh was the first LP I ever bought on the same day it came out. I'd just turned thirteen at the time and I rushed to Stockport's Merseyway precinct after school on a Friday afternoon to buy it - not something any sane person would choose to do without good reason.

The album itself was quite a puzzle for me at the time: its overall sound was different to anything I'd ever heard before; it was the first time I'd come across the then EC's blue and yellow-starred flag; and the songs contained baffling references to Charlemagne, Bonaparte, the obscure Baader-Meinhof and somebody called 'Jan Palak' (sic). So, as ever with any Stranglers-related record, it was time to engage the brain and delve deeper.

And thirty years on, the music still sounds relatively fresh (considering its dated technology) and remains an interesting listen, with many of the political ideas outlined then having since become a concrete reality. And many of the album's reference point are no longer such a mystery - the Czech Republic has just commemorated 40 years since the anniversary of Jan Pallach's death; the



Baader-Meinhof gang have recently been the subject for a big-budget film, etc. .... but for the life of me, I still can't figure out what the fuck Jellyfish is about. Time to delve deeper still?

*Stuart Bolton, Europe.*

## HAZY ENDER

I remember eagerly anticipating the release of Euroman Cometh as I seem to recall that Freddie Laker was issued as a single a week or two before the album was released. At the time I thought

it was great single although I cannot remember that if it charted or not! So when the album was released I managed to get it from the local indie record store in Wigan on release day, I even booked a day off work for the momentous occasion. At first I could not get my head round it, Euro politics was a bit over my head.

I managed two dates on the Euroman Tour, the first being Eric's in Liverpool. Going from memory there were about 150 to 200 punters being in the venue and most of us there present were hoping for a few Strangler numbers but were disappointed but nevertheless we were happy to see JJ.

The second date I went to was at the Apollo in Manchester that had been switched from the Factory (later Hacienda) due to demand for tickets. In hindsight it would have been better to have played the Factory as playing to a third full Apollo !

I still play Euroman about once a year and was happy that the CD release came complete with the live recording From Hemel - stand out tracks for me are Freddie Laker, Triumph, Crabs and Do the European which although was an experimental recording can stand up with the rest of the back catalogue. I also think that on the first night at the Rainbow in April 1980 when Hugh was confined to Pentonville that Do the European was an encore... or maybe I dreamt it? [No you didn't, I was there too - Ed.]

*Gareth Noon, Europe.*

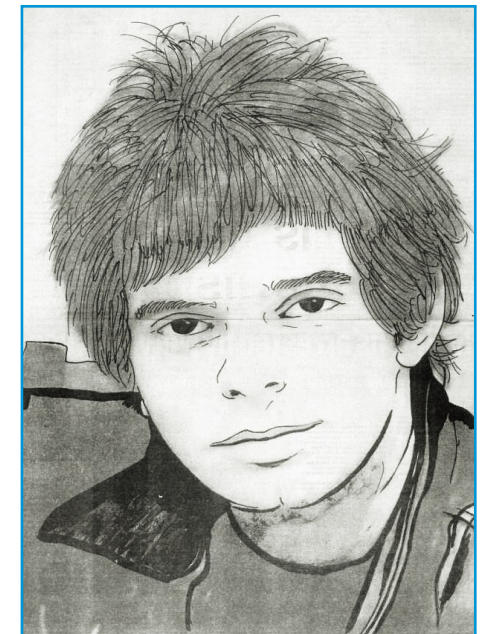
## PHAROAH NUFF

I bought the Euroman album quite late on. I think it was 1985 from a dealer advertising in the back of Record Collector. At the time it seemed like a fortune (£9 + p&p!) - the most that I had laid out for a record to date. Loved the

artwork, the Pompidou building is very striking. The Burnel look on the album sleeve was something that I (and I am sure many others reading this) aspired to back then. In fact my wardrobe is little changed today!

Continuing a pattern set by each of the Stranglers albums that I had the pleasure of discovering from the early 80's onwards, the subject matter of the songs sent me in search of the meaning and background. Just who the fuck was Jan Palach and what did that lyric mean?

My favourite track is actually the b-side, Ozymandias, which again sent me towards an encyclopaedia for the background (this was before Strangled ran a piece on the poem). When I went to Egypt years later, it was JJ's narration of Ozymandias that was running through my head each time I encountered Ramesses the Great!







It's difficult to know exactly where JJ was coming from at the time. It may have been tantamount to commercial suicide, but it was obviously an album that he had sufficient belief in to tour. Like a lot of 'post-punk' albums of the day, Euroman is quirky and challenging to listen to. Here I can only imagine, but for much of the Stranglers fan base, still struggling with

the change in direction that The Raven represented, Euroman would have been too much. Personally, I think that with the release of The Raven, Nosferatu and Euroman in the same year, Stranglers Inc. were at their creative zenith.

*Adrian Andrews, Europe.*

## NEUROMAN COMETH

Didn't get the album on release, but probably within a year of it. Yet another quality purchase from The Record Exchange, Jamaica Street Glasgow. I remember hearing the live tracks on the Don't Bring Harry EP first of all. And I remember the interviews with JJ around this time, especially the one in my music rag of choice at the time, Smash Hits. I had the cracking black & white full page and Napoleon JJ pic on my bedroom wall for years.

Euroman certainly a long time to grow on me though. Almost 30 years, if I'm being honest, apart from a couple of tracks that I've always loved and I definitely like the whole album a lot better now than I ever did. Okay, I loved Pretty Face right off the bat - it's probably the one song on the album that's closest musically to what I, at the time, might have expected from a solo Strangler. And with Lew Lewis' distinctive, frantic harp blowing it sounds like Old Codger's younger, dirtier sibling.

Listening to the other songs now, Euroman, the title track, sounds pretty awesome, very powerful. Do The European sounds catchy, post punk, electronic-musically a bit like how Tubeway Army sounded just before their debut album. I always loved the melody to Tout Comprendre, another one that confirms the album's staying power- to my ears anyway it sounds better, and fresher today

than it ever did. And is that an angular guitar solo I hear in the middle?

Triumph Of The Good City I only liked because of the growling bass rumble throughout the track (the bike, not the bass). The rest of the tune is a fairly ambient soundscape, awash with Strangler patented sound effects. Jellyfish also sounds better now than I remember it (All together now - I'm the jelly, jelly, jelly, JJ . . . FISH!). The Freddie Laker single contains one of JJ's most distinctive bass lines ever. Never did too much for me, to be honest. The usual grumble of there being better, more single like tracks on the album, but hey, it's The Stranglers and we should be well used to that by now!

Euromess, despite a busy bass line also sounds a bit ambient, musically subtle- there's a haunting, ghostly piano buried in the mix somewhere, that resurfaces a few times like a half remembered fairy tale, as the scattergun lyrics announce some pretty solid advice, such as, don't rely on lies.

Deutschland Nicht Uber Alles starts promising and then kinda meanders away again, but then again bits of it do sound like they could have been offered up as new riffs for the rest of the Stranglers to work on for the next album, and might have been better put to use as such. Crabs is, despite some terrible jokes, funnier than I remember it. JJ sounds like a sociopath, simply observing and documenting all the life forms crawling this body, before squashing them.

Eurospeed is another corker. I love the music, I love the lyrics, and I especially love the heavy breathing at the intro. So, while for me it's usually been years between plays of this album, I rediscovering it again recently and it's shown me that it has a lot more staying power than I originally gave it credit for,

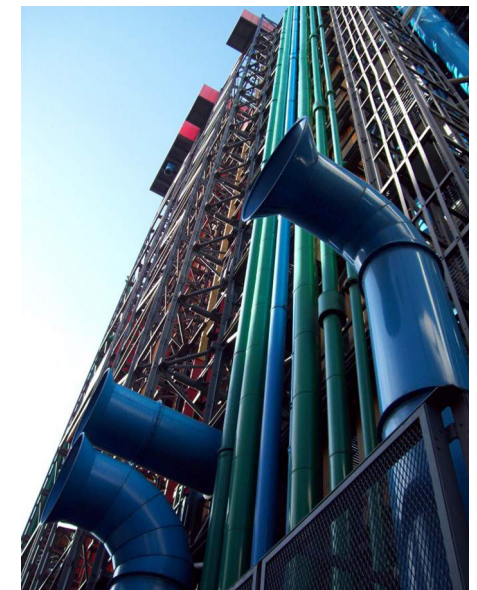
and I'm certainly giving it a blast around the house a lot more these days than I ever did. And I'm sure that if I wasn't so familiar with Euroman Cometh, if I hadn't been playing the album, on and off, for the last 30 years, and someone played me a couple of it's tracks today, and told me it was the latest hot new indie band, I might well believe them.

*David McLaughlin, Europe.*

## CLASSIC NOUVEAUX

I bought my Euroman Cometh at Wax Trax in Chicago, on UK import. I knew it was the barracuda bass from Black And White but it had an innocent whimsy that set it off from the seriousness of the Stranglers. It sounded like a side project. Nosferatu seemed to be ancient whereas Euroman seemed contemporary.

*Richard Kolkman, America*



# I was there! : JJ BURNEL & THE EUROBAND

## Glasgow Pavilion

Sunday 15th April 1979

Stephen McKean was there

## Scots sell out

The Glasgow gig was the only Euro-date sell-out. Turning up early, as you do when still a relative novice to gig going, I caught both the two support bands – Blood Donor and Rapid Eye Movement. I don't know how I remember the bands' names – maybe they were both mentioned in the early copy of Strangled that came with a JJ fold-out poster for sale at merchandise. Rapid Eye Movement were John Ellis's real band at the time so he was playing two sets a night on the tour. The most memorable thing about them was that they had a couple of sexy girl singers/

dancers to keep the male section of the audience interested. (Although it's worth noting that there was generally a far greater percentage of girls in the Stranglers audience at that time than there is now).

As the time for JJ's Euroband to appear drew near the chant of "Jean-Jacques!" filled the venue, in the same vein as we now get "Jet Black!", but much louder. JJ came onstage looking pretty much as he does in the Top of the Pops appearance for 'Walk On By' – the bikers jacket was still with us – and acknowledged the crowd with the opening line, "Welcome, to the Eighties!" some eight months prematurely.

My recollections of the set list are hazy at best, but I think 'Do the European' was the opener. If I had bought the album yet, it could only have been days before. As the gig progressed I wondered about the mysterious dark shroud covering something stage left. Mid-way through the set all was revealed however, as he pulled off the shroud to show his beloved Triumph Bonneville. Mounting the bike, it then took him about 3 attempts to kick-start, but finally the bike roared into life. After a few revs he dismounted and left the engine idling to provide the backing for the instrumental 'Triumph (of the Good City)'. Amazing to think he could have the bike onstage belching out carbon monoxide, when now the Health & Safety officers would be after you if you lit one cigarette.

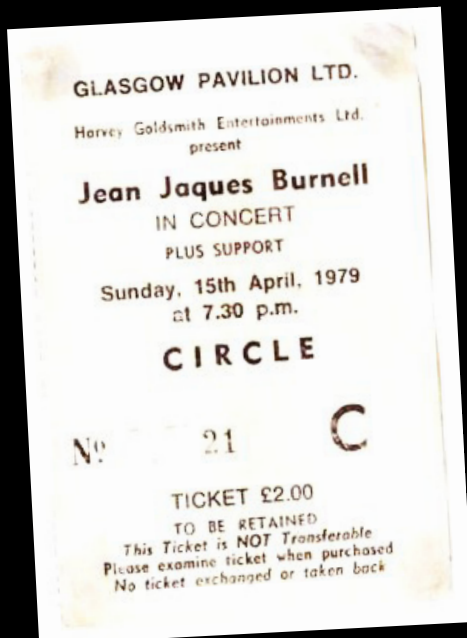
The set was quite short – little over 45 minutes I think, and although there were no Stranglers songs there was at



least one Vibrators song to pad things out from just the 'Euroman Cometh' the album. I hadn't heard the Vibrators' 'Pure Mania' and 'V2' albums at this point, so am going on what a mate said at the time on that one. Along with John Ellis (who played guitar on the tour, but not on the album despite appearing in the 'Freddie Laker' video) were Penny Tobin on keyboards and Carey Fortune on drums, who are both also in the video. I recollect that the two tracks being shouted for by the crowd were 'Jellyfish' and the hit(!) single 'Freddie Laker', but my own

personal favourite was 'Deutschland Nicht Uber Alles'. This was only the second gig I'd ever been to (first was the Stranglers on the Black & White tour) so I inevitably thought it was brilliant.

Apparently, things were quite entertaining outside the venue also. The Pavilion is the sort of venue which usually would host the likes of Sydney Devine (crap Scottish country & western singer, beloved by Glasgow grannies), the Nolans, or pantomimes at Christmas. The stewards weren't maybe as used to dealing with a punk rock crowd as those





April 28th, 1979

# J.J. Burnel

## Glasgow

The American magazine *Cream*, usually during their ubiquitous Ted Nugent features, are always declaring Detroit to be the ultimate rock'n'roll city. It's a traditional idea, this rock'n'roll city concept. Apparently, the requirements are a large, industrialised city and citizens intuitively attuned to the fundamental pulsebeat of the music; salt of the earth kind of people unimpressed by technical innovation.

In Detroit this means they like Ted Nugent, Foghat, Bob Seger and others, where it doesn't matter if you ignore the stage while dancing, shouting or taking a neutron bong.

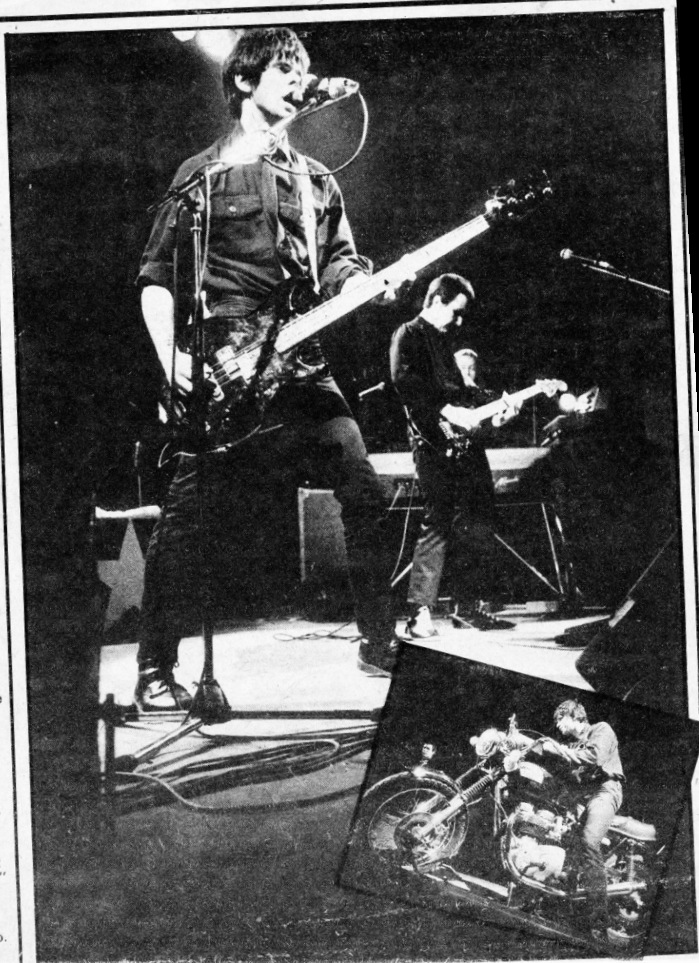
In Glasgow, my vote for British rock'n'roll city, it means they like Sham, Quo, 999 and especially The Stranglers.

We've been through a lot with The Stranglers. Their first two gigs here were test cases, attended by local councillors deciding whether to permit this nasty punk junk through the city gates in future.

The first gig horrified the councillors; punk was banned and quotes were printed which showed what our glorious leaders have *really* thought about Bill Haley onwards. The second gig, although The Stranglers made no concessions, reinstated punk.

The councillors, smiling benignly and doubtless thinking of the Sham Armies of imminent voters, claimed to have enjoyed themselves. "Are you going to let a fuckin' bunch of old men tell you what to do?" yells Cornwell from the Apollo stage. "What a bloody great bunch of lads," smile the councillors in their box.

The Stranglers played the official Apollo re-opening too. Considering that half the



immediately across the road at the Stranglers more usual venue, the Apollo. However they were doing their best at fending off a stage invasion... by throwing out all the girls! My Dad had come to pick me and my mates up afterwards (not very rock'n'roll, but we had only just reached our teens!) and he had got there early enough to enjoy the spectacle as punkette after punkette came flying out the side

doors! There was also a gig on at the Apollo at the same time. A look on the Apollo's website shows it was Thin Lizzy. Anyway, the management of both venues had obviously got together and ensured the gigs didn't come out at the same time, to avoid the mayhem of a pitched battle between punks and heavy rockers in the middle of Glasgow's Renfield Street. I wouldn't have given the rockers much hope against those girls!

## Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham

Friday 20th April 1979

Paul Gunter was there

## Eurobus is getting near...

Euro-homme arriv  – not quite how we would put it in Birmingham but even we are able to understand that our favourite Franglophile is coming to town. As an ardent 15 year old fan of The Stranglers, I see no reason why JJ or Hugh's solo work isn't just as good. Euroman album reviews are mixed, but so what? Why should a journalist's opinion be any more valid than mine? True – it's not in The Stranglers formula. Sure – JJ's bass is at the forefront of things, but unexpectedly different, and alien. But several songs are instant, some are growers – and I'm not sure what to make of Crabs! I really like Freddie Laker despite someone likening the vocal sound to being sung in a lead bucket. Maybe that critic ends up in a lead bucket! With the album out a fortnight before – Digbeth Hall becomes my very first gig.

I get on the bus with my two mates, Redditch into Birmingham. We discover the venue is not exactly smack bang in the metropolis, and after some enquiries, we head off to the Civic Hall, still nice and early. Joining a smallish queue outside, the excitement and anticipation starts to mount, and suddenly there's a commotion behind. JJ emerges from a side door and

lifts a small, pretty peroxide blond over his shoulder and disappears back inside. Amazed and amused glances all around and we carry on as normal. After all, it must be a regular occurrence for the main act to kidnap members of the audience, right?

We're inside; excitement builds among the respectable crowd, although it's not packed. Support acts pass by and aren't bad. John Ellis later doubles up playing guitar for JJ, but also in Rapid Eye Movement. One of his Hot Gossip dancers slips on someone's gob onstage. There's no accounting for humour when you're a teenager! By now we're right down the front and Beethoven's Ode To Joy begins. But my best memory moment is having my hand playfully stamped on by JJ as I had reach out onto the stage! Quite a claim to fame in my circle of friends – and I don't wash my hand for weeks! JJ's Triumph Bonneville is not allowed onstage (Health & Safety stop it) and the motorbike sounds of Triumph Of The Good City come from a tape. Performing Euroman live suited enhanced some of the songs, and what with all the rearranged gigs in London, at least our gig went ahead without any problems.

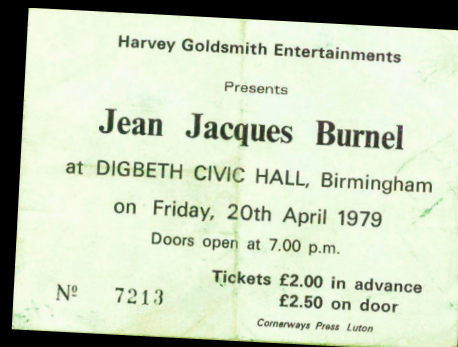
## Bristol Locarno

Sunday 22nd April 1979

Jeff Curnock was there

## Red mist in Bristol...

The Locarno gig doesn't go without incident! First I sneak in with my girlfriend (we know the bouncer) and then get into the sound check before being booted out by security – or Finchley Boys? Or JJ clones! When the gig starts, we are down the front - to the left, of course - and





watch the support acts. My girlfriend gets a couple of Hoffmeisters and I think Rapid Eye Movement are quite good to watch. Maybe a mixture of beer goggles - and the onstage nubilees?

JJ comes on late, perhaps to capture any latecomers. Only about 200 of us are there to witness this event. And the sound is superb - JJ always delivers the goods. The bottom part of the stage is covered in plywood. During the gig, I hit these panels once too many times, as do the rest of us down the front - all banging in time with the music.

Once the screws start to loosen, it's not long before the panelling falls down, leaving a gap for two or three of the audience to scuttle underneath - and dragged out by security. Midway through the gig - and another incident. Onstage JJ gets assaulted by a punter with a water pistol. He fires it at JJ and red dye squirts out all over him. JJ unstraps his Precision bass and catches sight of his assailant, jumping into the crowd to administer his revenge.

Incidents aside - and this is 1979 don't forget - the gig is enjoyable. A few people who missed 1976, then this is theirs tonight, so to speak. Afterwards, we get back stage for a chat with JJ, and I ask him to sign my Choosey Susie: 'I saw Choosey throw a glass of water over a silly cunt last night.' He wrote. I told him how I tried - to no avail - and order his new single, Woman From The Snowlands at Revolver Records in Park Street, Bristol. He corrected me: 'It's been pulled from release as it wasn't finished yet.' He told us. Of course, we all know it's really called Girl From The Snow Country. But even more amazing is seeing Jet Black there, backstage.

He travelled from his nearby home to see the gig. I take some snaps with my

camera but I sold them some years back to a collector somewhere in Devon.

I liked the Euroman album big time. I also recall enthusing to my workmates that Gary Numan was shite compared to JJ - and that Triumph Of The Good City was better than Cars.

## Gants Hill Odeon

**Sunday 29th April 1979**  
**Stubsinblack was there**

## Kick start on stage

It's a wet and windy day in Ilford. My best mate's nan lives there - and while his mum and dad are visiting her - we're off to see JJ Burnel's Euroband tonight. After dinner in a local restaurant, the excitement builds for the last night of the tour - and my first gig and first encounter with a real life Strangler. More on that later...

Euroman Cometh is already out and I love it. Even today, I rate it as a great opus portraying JJ's Gallic outlook and influence on The Stranglers as a musical tour de force. Like Hugh's Nosferatu six months later where the darker, sinister leanings originate - with The Raven out in between - the influences from these two solo offerings are brought to bear. But Euroman album reviews are lukewarm, and JJ answers back, stating 'geniuses are seldom recognised by their contemporaries.' When Record Mirror publish a bad review of the Glasgow gig, which includes: 'Thin Lizzy's three encores witnessed in a venue across the road from JJ's show were far more impressive and rock 'n' roll than JJ's...' it's time for retribution: JJ kidnaps writer Ronnie Gurr, ties him up naked, so sits him down to watch the Hemel Hempstead gig. He

The Stranglers played the official Apollo re-opening too. Considering that half the audience have probably sung into the same microphone as him a some time, Jean Jacques Burnel could probably count on support in Glasgow even if he'd joined the Temple Hill Kazoo Orchestra.

Problems gaining admission prevented me from seeing all but four songs of Blood Donor's set. They sounded like a band inspired to form in Germany after seeing a Stranglers' gig. You'll probably hear of them again when their fire-eating vocalist is killed in a stage accident.

Rapid Eye Movement have three ex-Hot Gossip dancers and a singer who sounds exactly like Mike Absalom. They vary from post-punk Gong to very sub-Tubes to a Cambridge review rock band from a satirical musical. After that they get worse.

Burnel certainly has the humourlessness to go with this intense new music of his. I was half expecting him to appear bellowing 'This one's about the economic situation in late-17th-century Italy, combining a brief analysis in the light of Adam Smith's theories with a few retrospective solutions. 1-2-3-4!' Instead he slagged off Thin Lizzy who were playing across the road at the Apollo.

I don't doubt the sincerity of Burnel's project, mainly due to the amount of audience alienation factors it contains. But it is a shame that the experiments of the famous are granted so much attention. Something like this (or 'Metal Machine Music') has to be compared with the best in its field more because of the inevitable high sales than any exceptional merit of the music.

The situation is similar to Rod McKuen being the world's top selling poet.

The audience stand, trying to like it all, awaiting any pogoable sections. J.J.'s bass is of use occasionally. 'Freddie Laker' would almost be singable if you could attach a ring modulator to your



Euro-vision in Glasgow.

Pic LAURIE EVANS

# But can a Euroman pogo?

epiglottis.

The much acclaimed 'Triumph (Of The Good City)' features a real Bonneville motorbike noise. Although initially a welcome relief from the gloomy intensity of the music, the motorbike soon stalled, leaving John Ellis' guitar and Penny Tobin's synthesizers to soar, bubble and slash across the rhythm section to at least adequate but seldom dramatic effect.

The set only lasted 45 minutes, which is probably just as well. The X-Men let Euroman escape due to his idealism and adventurous spirit.

Next month: Magneto strikes back!

Glenn Gibson

## The Jam

New York

The Jam are four stops into

their US tour and this is the big one - New York, Media Central.

There's a vague awareness that The Jam are stars back home, but expectations haven't been fuelled by the sort of press blitz that preceded The Clash. Advance reports tell of far less than sold-out houses in other cities but of rousing receptions.

This is the real test of how



escapes. Another reviewer refers to Eurospeed as Move at Your Own Speed: had he listened to the track?

Inside the Odeon I get the latest Strangled. I read all about The Stranglers' Japanese tour and which songs are previewed when I suddenly spot a

bemused-looking JJ standing at the side of the auditorium, gauging attendance numbers - a small percentage of the venue's capacity. Blood Donor support - and vocalist Keith Hale is onstage - sporting



NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

# Poor old J.J.

JEAN JACQUES BURNEL'S projected major London concert, planned for Hammersmith Odeon on Tuesday of this week, was called off at the end of last week — mainly due, said a spokesman, to Burnel's state of mind following poor reaction to the early part of his solo tour.

The Hammersmith venue had been booked as a replacement for his original London gig at Drury Lane Theatre Royal, from which he was banned when the owners realised he was a member of The Stranglers.

Out-of-town dates have, almost without exception, proved to be something of a flop. Gigs were sparsely attended, and those who did show up seemed disappointed by Burnel's choice of material — apparently expecting Strang-

## BURNEL DATE IN LONDON IS CALLED OFF

lers songs instead of a live performance of his vastly contrasting album 'Euroman Cometh'.

The promoters say that Hammersmith wasn't cancelled solely because of poor advance bookings — it was rather that Burnel was dispirited by the whole tour project. But they intend going ahead with a solo Burnel gig in London, which will now take place after The Stranglers' appearance in the Loch Lomond Festival in late May, and probably at a smaller venue than Hammersmith. Meanwhile, Burnel himself said at the weekend that he's doubtful if he will ever attempt another solo tour.

## But Cornwell presses on

DESPITE THE poor reaction to his colleague's tour, fellow Strangler Hugh Cornwell intends to go ahead with his solo dates in midsummer. These will coincide with the July release of his debut solo album, now officially titled 'Nosferatu' — which was the name of the first-ever Dracula film, made in Germany in 1922! The album was recorded on the West Coast of America, with a star line-up which included Captain Beefheart's drummer Robert Williams and ex-Mothers Of Invention keyboards man Ian Underwood.

half of a moustache. He will later be keyboard player in Toyah's band, and co-writer of It's A Mystery. They are entertaining and play their single Love Is A Disease. Next up are Rapid Eye Movement, put together by Euroband guitarist John Ellis who has recently left The Vibrators and will be a Strangler himself eleven years on. Two standout tracks are a Vibrators song called Flying Duck Theory — plus the closing number, Babies In Jars. To this day, Babies remains one of my all time favourite tracks; cutting guitar, thudding drums and a gloomy bass line wrapped in a Fortean theme — something The Stranglers should have considered— with Dave Greenfield on vocals. But tonight, he's a Eurobander, alongside keyboardist Penny Tobin,

drummer Pete Howells and the legend himself on bass and lead vocals. After a rousing version of Ode to Joy (ITV's recent Champions League coverage features Beethoven's original) they effortlessly do Do The European, Deutschland Nicht Uber Alles, Eurospeed - before scuttling onstage for Crabs to everyone's approval — another lost Strangers song of tongue-in-cheek cynicism. It's a real favourite with the crowd who sing along like the Bring me a piece of my mummy in Threatened. Only, JJ is pissed off getting requests for Strangers numbers. Then someone calls out for Burning Up Time.

'If you want that you should go and see a band called The Strangers. Otherwise you will have to put up with only 25% of them for now!'

Next up is a vastly different version - vocally at least — of Tout Comprendre. John Ellis does the English verses and JJ sings the French chorus and last two lines. It's a tactic a post-1990 Strangers should have employed. Again, it's one of my favourite tracks from the album, and is really the sort of thing that we should be entering in the Eurovision Song Contest with, instead of the dross normally served up. A true Eurosong, in every sense of the word. Freddie Laker is the single — and just out - played tonight faster, more frenetic, and minus the treated vocals making it less menacing. Euromess next — the slow, deep, meandering version that makes so much more sense live tonight than on vinyl. Jellyfish floats in next. I'm puzzled why this isn't the single.

It's brilliant — as it was when JJ airs it in 2000 with 3 Men and Black. A silent Bonnevillie sits still here on the Gants Hill stage for Triumph Of The Good City. Earlier in the tour JJ dragged it on stage to provide real timekeeping but it kept dying on him so by the end of the tour

he resorted to playing a tape of it. It was during this track that a bizarre thing happened - and I end up a lot closer to JJ than I might have imagined at the start of the day.

During Triumph Of The Good City, John Ellis creeps up behind JJ and gives him a hearty shove - propelling him into the audience directly in front of me: he's bored of JJ's posing and egotism throughout the tour and the band play on as we all catch him and bundle him back onstage.

John looks on and giggles. JJ fails to see the humour, grabs the guitarist and manhandles him into the crowd. All this, on the last track of the main set which soon ends at this point. They return for a rousing, anthemic version of Euroman to conclude not only the evenings entertainment but also the one and only tour that the Euroband perform.

Most of these songs have never been played live since and so I feel privileged to be able to say that I was there. JJ has since said he will follow up Euroman Cometh - probably with the title Euroman Seeth: how about next year then - the thirtieth anniversary of both Euroman Cometh and the Eurotour? Now that WOULD be a worthy celebration.

### Gants Hill Odeon,

Sunday 29th April 1979

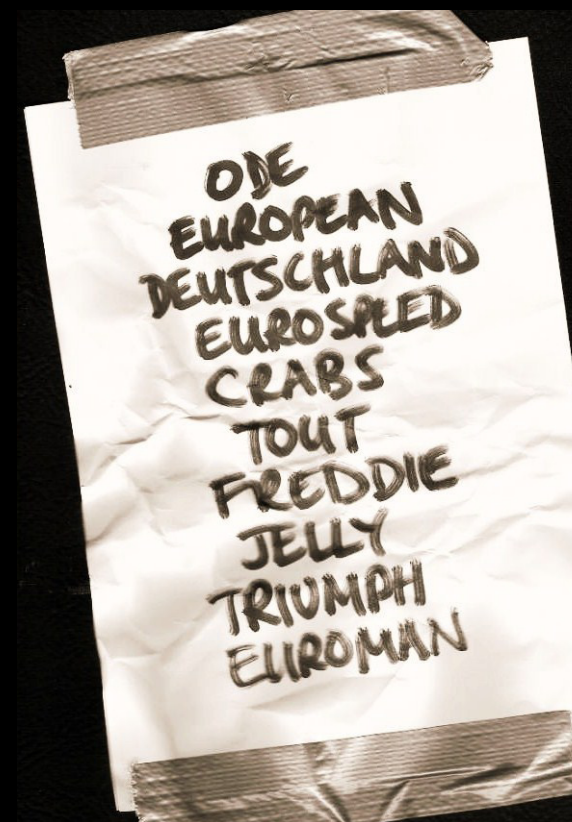
Gary Kent was there

### Euroman Endeth at the Odeon

It's the last night of the tour — but I don't have any money — and they won't let me have any. Depressed, I'm resigned to not going, and sulk in the house of the rising stench of boiled cabbage till dinnertime where I fork cremated beef and congealed

gravy - pretending I'm eating — thinking about the gig...

Now we're in the Vauxhall Victor for an afternoon ride in the country. Gloomy Sunday. My Nan is with me in the back. Blank roads and shut shops whizz by until trees poke at the sky. At Epping, we park in the herring-bone bays for some ice creams at The Brunchi Bar and eat them in the car. My thoughts are consumed with being skint, with parents who won't donate to my cause. We're heading home, back to more boredom... Stars On Sunday, Ye Olde Oak ham sandwiches, tinned cling peaches and Carnation... a stack homework untouched... I could go on. But then — the car makes a swerve





into a derelict WWII airfield – and Dad switches off the engine. He looks at me in the interior mirror and asks if I would like a driving lesson. My first driving lesson, no less.

In a flash, Mum, me and Dad play musical chairs. Nan sits tight. I'm in the driving seat, Dad's in the front, and coaching me through the synchromesh gears. The old parade ground forms my road, my roundabout, my parking space. Up the runway I hit 45 where Spitfires once took off and landed (I find out Sir Douglas Bader was born the same day as me and JJ) and a good hour and a half is spent until I'm back in the back with Nan, heading for home. While Mum wipes Rum 'n' Raisin from her blouse, Nan is swift to praise my new driving talents. She asks me if I'm going out anywhere tonight.

'Naah.' I say. 'No money.'

'You still into The Stranglers then?'

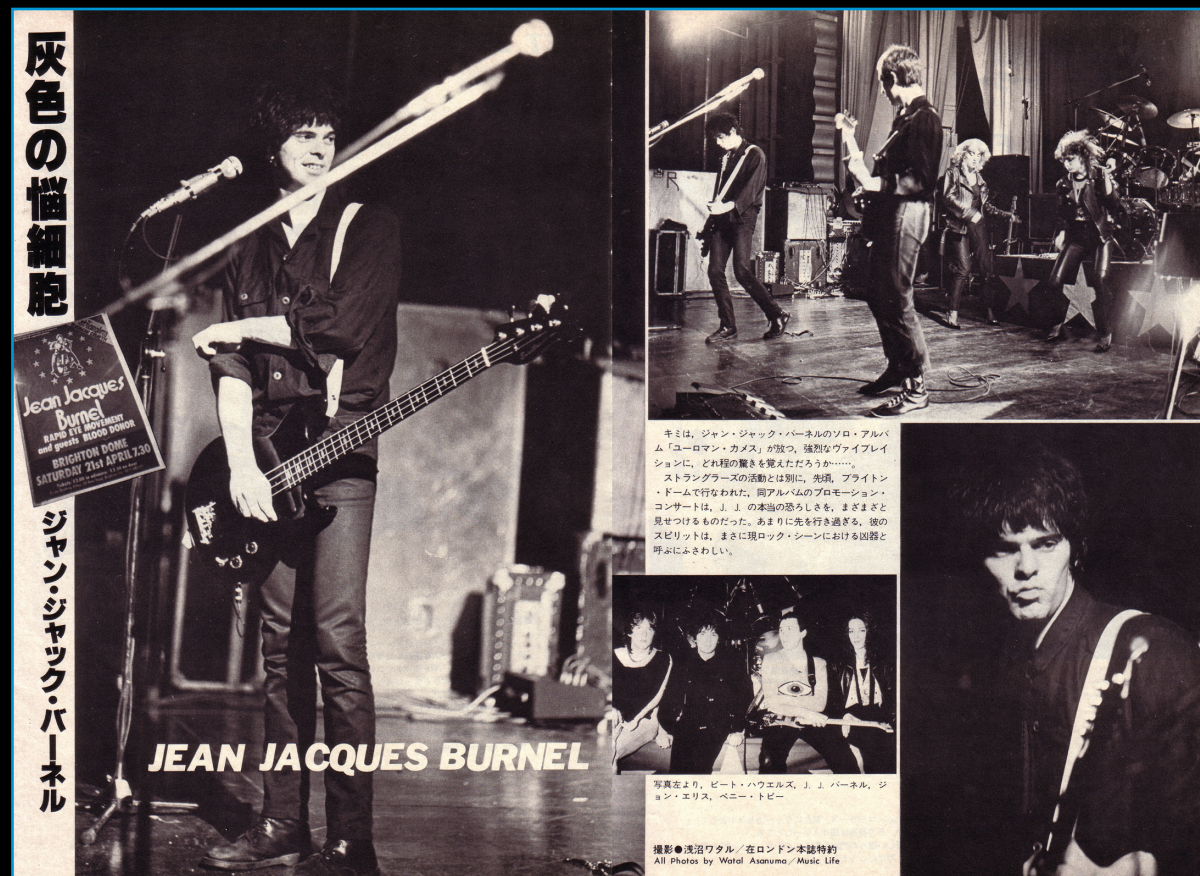
'Yeah – actually, JJ is playing tonight...'

I'm not silly. I drop that one in. Next thing, she's pressing a bluey into the palm of my hand, my ticket to ride: I can and shall go the ball tonight! Of course, there can't be too many elderly, partially-sighted grandparents around who can appreciate The Stranglers. Only that, my one happened to be tuned in to Radio Four when Hugh and JJ appear in the run-up to Battersea. At the time she said they sounded very intelligent. A minor detour down to Ilford and I'm outside the Odeon by the phone box. The cinema's parapet reads: 'JJ BURNEL & THE EUROBAND' in red lettering. I pay in and get ushered towards the drum beats and flickering lights.

My biggest shock is seeing the hall virtually empty. The front two rows are the only seats taken – all leather bomber jackets crouched down the front – and I find my space in the middle of the stall

seating. Monkey boots on blue velour, I ponder the cost of a pint watching Blood Donor and a lead singer dressed like a dick in a long leather coat and half a moustache. Rapid Eye Movement come after, with some girls in tow. I'm now nailed to the spot and go without a drink.

The biggest roar comes when JJ and the Euroband come on. I watch in awe as JJ slings on his black Fender Precision bass over his shoulder. They start with a warm-up tune that's not on the album, but familiar. The gig really gets going when the drums pea-soup – hi-hats going nineteen to the dozen – snare cracking away, and Do The European is born. My heart charges like a race horse on speed – I almost piss myself I'm so excited. Tonight is magical. I'm lost in spatial as the bass booms around the hall. Synth player Penny's shadowy shapes shimmy up the walls as John side winds around JJ – but our bass man seems subdued – or bored? He's surprisingly static considering his new role as front man, and decidedly quieter than I expect after Battersea. I expect a shed-load of Karate-kicking but no – he stays at the mic spot without troubling Kyokoshinkai too much. Acting cool? I



dunno... And Freddie Laker is a pale copy of the vinyl although the supersonic bass end from the cinema stage makes up for it. A tail wind takes us to the cyclic throb of engine on tick-over – on tape, keeping time for the transcendental Triumph Of The Good City – as the Bonny lies forlorn. Encores are denied, Stranglers songs get turned down... A kerfuffle breaks out down the front...

The Eurotour endeth here at Gants Hill Odeon on 29th April 1979 – not so much a big bang, but a little trip - effectively, ending the Euroman Cometh project.

Out in the open air with the drum beats banging away in my head, I mentally plan to join a band at school on the drums. Underground, it's the bass end pulsating all the way back to my house, my bedroom and my turntable where I relive the night and squeeze some more out of the earlier spectacle. Thirty years on – it's still fresh - both album and recall of tonight's events. The lifespan of the old Art Deco picture house has been less auspicious: today, nothing besides remains of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare. A lofty office block stretches far away...



# Dream time

**W**E'RE OUTSIDE Camden's Crown & Goose as benign bassist Alan Gruner arrives: his musicianship is already known to Paul as provider of guitar tuition to Paul's young son, Oliver. Alan also once wrote a track for a platinum-selling Bonny Tyler album in the 80s.

Inside, erstwhile vocalist-keyboardist Daniel Kleinman (video director, pal of Adam Ant and godfather to Lily Allen) quietly sits at the bar in country garb. With drinks in hand, we head for a secluded room upstairs and wonder if word has got to the other members of the band. No sooner than record gets pressed on the recorder, guitarist John Ellis pitches up, having cancelled his last guitar lesson to get here on time. As well as numerous stints with Peters Gabriel and Hammill, readers may recall Mr. Ellis's 10-year stretch in a band called The Stranglers, as well as late 80's offshoot, the Purple Helmets. He relaxes back in white shirt and matching white mane. Finally, wily drummer John Mackie (ex-Stukers, and briefly Radio Stars) arrives and suddenly we have a Rapid Eye Movement band meeting up for the first time since that spring of 1979. Unfortunately, the three dancers who provided onstage visuals - Dominique, Katie and Perry of Hot Gossip - are not present. JE recalls REM as a theatrical Art school, experimental rock band, and Dominique having the best costume. So how did REM come about?

JE: "I knew Daniel and Alan from school.

Daniel and myself formed Bazooka Joe in 1973. After I left the Vibrators, we three formed Rapid Eye Movement. When JJ asked me to join the Euroband on tour, I agreed on the condition we could play the support. To his credit, he agreed. I think we rehearsed at The Stranglers place in Borough, Battersea too. There was also Alaska Street in Waterloo which was owned by Pat Collier from the Vibrators. Penny Tobin was in the Euroband where I first met her. She had played on the Stiff tour. We did an experimental side-project together afterwards with Dave and Annie (Eurhythmics) who lived above a record shop in Crouch End close to my studio in Crouch Hill. REM was frustrating because we didn't get a record out as such although I did release *Babies In Jars* taken from the recording of the Hemel Hempstead gig. The 24 track is in my loft somewhere.

DK: You released *Babies In Jars*? Where's our cut?

JE: Didn't you receive your cheque?!

DK: Did we make any money in the band? I think we may have made a little bit of money from the tour, didn't we?

JE: I did through the Euroband.

DK: It was a lot of work and a lot of rehearsals. The girls were smitten with JJ. They got into the habit of getting onstage with him.

***Rapid Eye Movement played support on the Eurotour, never to be seen again. Thirty years later, old band members reconvene to recall that tour. Paul Cooklin & Gary Kent are all ears.***

JE: JJ was a babe-magnet and always had the best drugs!

JM: I enjoyed the tour - I love touring - I wish I'd done more of it. On the Euroband tour I played their kit. It was quite a small compact blues-type kit with three tom-toms and I loved that. I really enjoyed the musicality of it. I learned that JJ was into Karate - and so was I - I remember reading about him going to Japan to do his Black Belt. He sounded quite interesting, and so I thought we'd have a nice little chat at some point. But he was really not receptive. Completely off his head. I could never work it out. Also, we were into motorbikes. So we're on the coach going to a gig and he asked what bike I had. I happened to have a Suzuki at the time. Bah, he said. I only drive British bikes - you don't want to drive one of those. Anyway, later that evening on the coach, I was chatting to one of the Finchley Boys about bikes. JJ was in front. He turned round and said: "I'll turn the lights down,



Rapid Eye Movement: John, John, Alan & Daniel

hang on." So he got the driver to turn the lights down and said: "Right, you can hit him now." Obviously I was saying something about bikes to this roadie that wasn't kosher or something. I could hear him talking to this roadie about me.

DK: He did have a slight aura of violence about him. Whether it was a reality, I don't know. He seemed keen to engender being that and if you said the wrong thing, he was about to duff you up. But being on heroin at the time would be the answer.

AG: And also he was doing something by himself for the first time without the band. Now that Daniel's said that, I think he exhibited feelings of someone who feels a little bit out of their depth as he was taking on a tour which he'd never done before and

John Ellis teaches guitar at his home in east London and is presently working on a documentary soundtrack on bipolar illness. He performs sporadic solo shows combining electronic looping and improvisation; he also runs a music workshop for disabled children using infrared beams to trigger sounds via midi. After REM, Daniel Kleinman went from illustrator to film director, directing a string of well known TV commercials for Levi's, Guinness and Durex among others. Moving on to direct pop videos for the likes of Madonna, Fleetwood Mac and Gladys Knight, movie buffs are no doubt aware of his more recent work as title sequence designer in the James Bond films. Alan Gruner teaches guitar in north London and drummer John Mackie has swapped music for the property market.

didn't have the powers to relate to it. If he was on heroin as well to help him through it, that explains his behaviour because he came across as an arrogant shit. I enjoyed the tour for the sake of touring and going round visiting different parts in proper big venues. It was brilliant.

JM: I thought the gigs got better and better. At the end it was really strong.

JE: It felt like unfulfilled business for sure.

DK: I was kind of not into it. I was pissed off which was a bit of a shame because a lot of people put in an awful lot of work. I never considered myself as a musician. Everyone went on to do fantastic things afterwards and I was the only common denominator who did nothing in the music business! But it was a tough time for me in my early 20's. I was ambitious in that I wanted to stave off the demons, but that period didn't quite work for me I'm afraid.

AG: It was like a little bubble which started in the March and ended in April. You could see the stuff Daniel was going through which I thought was his relationship with Perry.

DK: I don't think it was that. It was a bit stormy and a bit difficult but I think I was still suffering from my depressive battle.

Luckily I got it over early...

AG: We were part of the north London music culture. I played in four different bands with all these guys. I remember being in Newcastle on the Eurotour and tasting the ale for the first time. A couple of pints and then I went on, feeling absolutely pissed, totally out of it. I think that was the gig that JJ got into the audience to smack someone. It may have happened twice.

JE: It was a general thing - a JJ thing. I have done a lot of projects with him, so I know him very, very well. The Euroband tour was when I started to get to know JJ. By the end of the tour, JJ was becoming a real pain in the arse and I put him in the crowd at Ilford. I also vowed not to work with him again. But I did! I stood in for Hugh at the Rainbow the year after, out of the blue, I got a phone call to work on some stuff up in Cambridge which was how the Purple Helmets came about. Un Jour Parfait I played on, the 10 tour, and then joined The Stranglers. So I've spent a lot of time with JJ. I don't want to rewrite the autobiography because for me, it's the past. And I became the whipping boy for that period I was in The Stranglers. I became 'that fucker who wanted to change the name of the band'. That was because the press weren't going

to review the first album we did, so I said jokingly, why don't we change the name of the band to The Strangers and have a few copies pressed up and sent to the press to hear what they say? But that's all finished and over and done with. There are two sides to JJ – and the charming side that all the girls fall for.

DK: I remember the reviews of the Eurotour at the time and they were not great.

JE: Blood Donor, they were very good. I worked with their bass player Ricki LeGair afterwards. REM continued writing together after the Euroband tour, up until Daniel's illustration career took off, or directing films was it?

DK: I started directing in 1982 so at that point I was illustrating maybe?

JE: I have to say the Euroman album was a very noble venture. It was a good experimental album with some very nice music with one or two nice tracks on it. One thing I will say about JJ is that he will have a go at stuff and he's prepared to take risks, which I admire. And I've had some very good conversations with JJ and all The Stranglers about music. You sit on a plane to Japan or New Zealand or wherever and you talk about music you love. They're all very intelligent guys and you can communicate on a level as a shared passion, which is why the Purple Helmets happened.

AG: Once you get the bug for playing it becomes part of your blood. You generate excitement.

JE: I love gigging – I do my one-man show because no one will have me in a band

anymore! It was great to do the Euroband gigs but the fact I swore I'd never work again with JJ says it all. But the time I'm happiest is playing in front of a live audience. I'm very pleased I was asked to do it, thanks to JJ, despite all the grief. I always knew The Stranglers would be grief, but I enjoyed doing it and getting to meet some great people. The grief is over there – and the gigs are over here. There's nothing like it. It's the greatest experience in the world. Working with people like Peter Hammill whose creation literally sucks the creativity out of you and you become greater than you were.

AG: I think if you're a jobbing musician, there'd be an element of having a job...

JE: Well, I've never made much money from making music. I've never written a song that's been really successful. The Vibrators never had any big hits, and when I joined The Stranglers, there weren't any big selling records. I was on a pathetic weekly wage. Musicians don't make money – writers do. Nowadays, just to make a living, pay the bills and hopefully make a creative output and get by without losing my house and still have fun making music, that's it for me."

*With such obvious bonhomie tonight between the old members of REM, The Burning Up Times wondered if they ever think about making music together again..?*

JM: "No – because I can't be arsed!

AG: Too many things going on...

JE: You'd need a financial incentive.

DK: I only came tonight to meet some old mates!"









## JEAN JACQUES BURNEL - THE WORLD'S FIRST CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN

JEAN JACQUES BURNEL is a star—love him, hate him, you can't ignore him. Bassist with the STRANGLERS for the last four years, JEAN has always been controversial. His outspoken views on America—"Americans have small brains", on the media—"I cannot accept personal criticism because it's not valid", and on Sweden—"There's a complete thumb from big brother to stamp out private enterprise and creativity", have earned him a reputation as a man who doesn't mince words. His outstanding musicianship, JEAN is easily the most distinctive bass player to emerge in recent years, has earned him the reputation of a man with great talent. A recent N.M.E. poll voted JEAN the best bass player for the second successive year. It is widely accepted that BURNEL's individual bass lines and aggressive vocals have been a major factor in the STRANGLERS success.

J.J., who although born in Notting Hill is of French parentage, has an incredible surplus of energy. It was with this, and a combination of nowhere to sleep and nothing to do for a couple of hours, that eventually led to his solo album 'EUROMAN COMETH'. Whilst hanging around the studio one night he take shape.

Subject matter of 'E.C.' ranges from the surprisingly complimentary 'Freddie Laker' to 'Deutschland Nicht Uber Alles' which is sung entirely in German and even includes a disco cut titled 'Do the European'. There is a strong European theme running through 'EUROMAN COMETH', this stems from J.J.B.'s belief in Europeanisation as an alternative to Eastern or Western influences. He believes that a strong Europe would provide an escape route from the seemingly inevitable American/Russian cultural/economic domination. JEAN JACQUES has a degree in economics, consequently, most of his theories are pretty well researched.

JEAN JACQUES BURNEL does all the vocals on 'EUROMAN COMETH' drums. Also featured on the record are, one time inspiration behind the Damned and Tanz Der Youth, Brian James on guitar and ex-Chelsea drummer Carey Fortune. The live line-up, which will make it's U.K. debut with a major April tour culminating in a show at London's Drury Lane Theatre, will feature Drone Peter Howells on drums, plus Vibrator John Ellis on guitar, Lew Lewis on harp and Penny Tobin on keyboards. After this the band are aptly set to tour, Europe.

'EUROMAN COMETH' is challenging music from a challenging man for a Music or any other act, it is most definitely European in influence. Continental no less, maybe the first record of its kind...do the continental.

P.S. This does not constitute a break up in the STRANGLERS.



MODERN PUBLICITY 147 OXFORD STREET LONDON W.1. 01-437 9353

## THE STRANGLERS' EUROMAN COMETH



Harvey Goldsmith Entertainments by arrangement with Black & White Management presents

# Jean Jacques Burnel

+ RAPID EYE MOVEMENT + blood donor

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MON 16TH APRIL MANCHESTER APOLLO  
TUE 17TH APRIL LIVERPOOL ERIC'S  
WED 18TH APRIL DERBY ASSEMBLY ROOMS  
FRI 20TH APRIL BIRMINGHAM DIGBETH CIVIC HALL  
SUN 22ND APRIL BRISTOL LOCARNO  
TUE 24TH APRIL PORTSMOUTH LOCARNO  
WED 25TH APRIL HEMEL HEMPSTEAD PAVILION  
THU 26TH APRIL NEWCASTLE MAYFAIR  
FRI 27TH APRIL EDINBURGH ODEON  
SAT 28TH APRIL BRADFORD ST GEORGES HALL  
SUN 29TH APRIL ILFORD ODEON  
All Tickets £2.00 in advance £2.50 on door

April 14th, 1979

## NEWS DESK

# Stranglers confirmed!

THE STRANGLERS have now been officially confirmed for a headlining appearance in the two-day Spring Bank Holiday festival in Scotland, plans for which were revealed exclusively by NME last week. And it can now be revealed that the site is the Loch Lomond Wildlife Park, adjacent to the village of Balloch and about 18 miles from Glasgow.

Saturday, May 26, is the date of The Stranglers' appearance, and it's understood that Dr. Feelgood will

## OPEN-AIR GIG IN SCOTLAND

be among the support acts. The Average White Band top on the Sunday (27), when Fairport Convention are also confirmed. Many other acts are in the process of being finalised. Ample camping facilities are available at the site, and weekend tickets cost £9. Otherwise daily admission is £5.50 (advance) and £6.50 (on the gates).

# BUT BURNEL IS BANNED!

JEAN JACQUES BURNEL has been banned from performing at London's celebrated Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, where he was to have starred on April 30 as the climax of his solo British tour, opening this week. The venue owners, Moss Empires, imposed the ban at the end of last week—even though hundreds of tickets had already been sold.

It seems the theatre's manager was happy to accept the booking, but the hierarchy clamped down when they realised that Burnel was a member of The Stranglers. Apparently new-wave acts are unacceptable within such hallowed portals—Magazine were banned from the venue a few months ago under similar circumstances.

Although Moss were unwilling to comment on the ban, they evidently did not learn of Burnel's background until recently—when reports of riots in Australia, in which The Stranglers were involved, were brought to their attention. It matters not that Burnel's solo act is concept rather than punk—the fact is that ticket-holders are once again inconvenienced by having to apply for cash refunds.

Meanwhile, Burnel has added Brighton Dome on April 21 to his existing schedule. And there have been two venue changes—on April 23 he now plays Canterbury Odeon, instead of Hanley, and on April 28 he's at Bradford St George's Hall instead of Huddersfield.

●MOTORHEAD have been banned from future appearances at Newcastle City Hall because of an incident when they played there recently. It seems that a slogan, far from complimentary to David Essex, was found painted on the wall of their dressing-room—and Essex was due to appear there the next night! The band disclaim responsibility, saying it was all down to fans who came backstage—but they have had to take the blame!



●As NME closed for press, an alternative London venue was being arranged for Burnel. Favourite appears to be the Lyceum, and details should be completed by next week.



April 14th, 1979



JEAN  
JACQUES  
BURNEL

## Burnel, Stranglers discs

JEAN JACQUES BURNEL has a single released by United Artists to coincide with his upcoming tour — titled 'Freddie Laker (Concorde & Eurobus)', it's due out on April 13. The track is taken from his solo album 'Euroman Cometh', now issued on April 6, one week later than originally planned. The B-side of the single, which comes in a picture bag, is a new song inspired by a Shelley poem and called 'Ozymandias'.

U-A have also decided to reissue The Stranglers' single 'Peaches' which originally came out in May, 1977. It was initially in a limited edition picture sleeve, which has long since been withdrawn, and has subsequently only been available in a plain white bag. Now a print by fashion photographer James Wedge has been adapted for a new sleeve, and the disc is being re-marketed.

**JEAN JACQUES BURNEL** of The Stranglers sets out on his much-publicised solo tour this week, to aid promotion of his upcoming solo album 'Euroman Cometh'. You can see how he shapes up to the challenge at Blackburn (Saturday), Glasgow (Sunday), Manchester (Monday), Liverpool (Tuesday) and Derby (Wednesday).

**MAGAZINE** are also on the trail, coinciding with the release of their latest Virgin LP 'Secondhand Daylight'. Supported by Scottish band Simple Minds, they open at Malvern (Monday), Blackburn (Tuesday) and Sheffield (Wednesday).

**PLANXTY**, one of the most successful mass-appeal folk groups ever, mark their reunion by way of a comeback tour kicking off at London (Sunday), Newcastle (Monday), Edinburgh (Tuesday) and Liverpool (Wednesday). They're still featuring the original line-up

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+ Rapid Eye Movement and Blood Donor

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Tickets £3.00 £2.50 £2.00

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Also at:  
Ilford Odeon 29th April

Tickets  
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