



Sugarcubes + Levitation

ACADEMY BRIXTON, SAT

There are only two constructive manifestations of weirdness in rock music. One makes you brilliantly insightful in flashes, like Sugarcubes — hear their patchy but pleasurable new LP 'Stick Around For Joy' (One Little Indian). The other makes you become expressive through a general creepy intensity, like Terry Bickers' heavy indie rock combo Levitation. All other forms of 'being weird' are merely used in a superficial

manner to conceal crap music.

If it wasn't for Bjork's stunning, child-like vocal purity, Sugarcubes' lopsided indie rhythms would be tiresome and irrelevant now they're three albums old. Levitation, currently riding bareback with their third single 'World Around' (Rough Trade), are only just beginning to utilise their blasting guitar works to full effect. With the prospect of the support band dumping on the headline act from a great height, attending Levitation's own gig at Venue in New Cross on Friday might be advisable.

Laura Lee Davies

Gavin Friday And The Big No No

GRAND, TUE

Whenever a musician pulls you to one side and hints that he's up to something a little different, you can be sure he is involved in some predictable project that makes his music only just original. When Gavin Friday, Dublin's favourite artistic mad bastard talks pay attention, and if you can, try looking up his sleeve.

The ex-Virgin Prune's last musical work, 'Each Man Kills The Thing He Loves', was a battered, bluesy album with all the high drama of Weill and Brel. For his forthcoming album, 'Adam N' Eve', Friday has darned the soul he tore asunder (in a night thick with emotion at the ICA in '89) and constructed a brassy jamboree bag of thunderous '70s pop, classic easy listening, strings, wind and sneering suss. A funky fusion of Matt Monro, Gary Glitter and Johnny Rotten. Know what I mean?

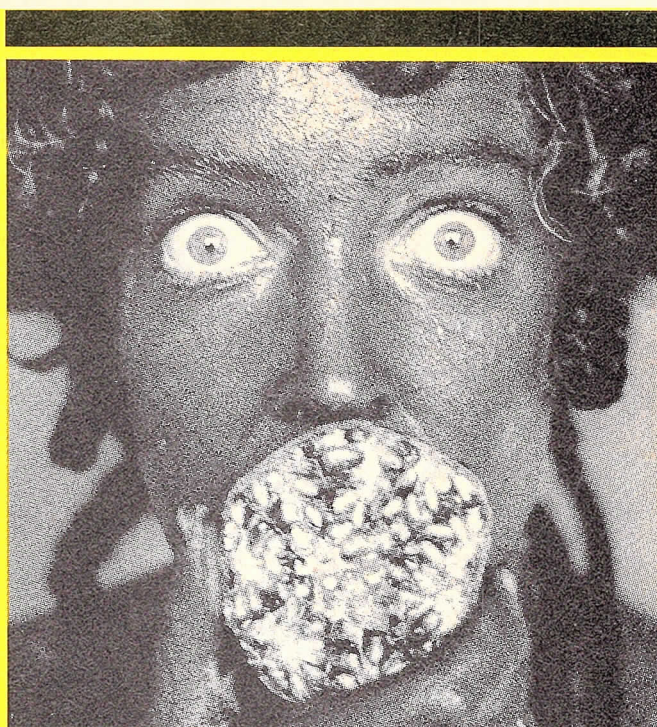
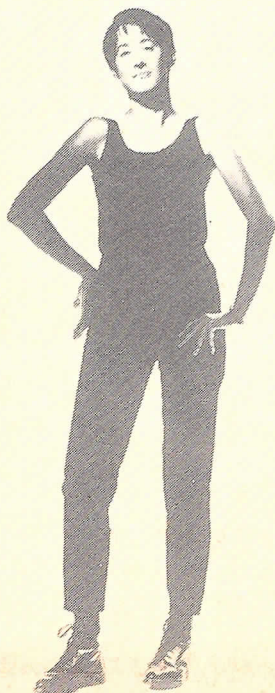
Laura Lee Davies

Michelle Shocked

BORDERLINE, WED 4

Judging from a sneak preview of her forthcoming album, the angry young woman of acoustic pop appears to have found her niche at last. Gone are those starkly feminist, anarchist and multi-ist rants of the old 'Texas Campfire Tapes' days. In their place appear some seriously clever roots-pop songs with messages delivered in a more subtle, but no less powerful manner. 'Arkansas Traveller' (to be released at the end of this month) sees Shocked exploring the music of her roots, which in true Emmylou Harris style means seeking out and playing with a selection of leading lights. On '33 RPM Soul' for example, she is joined by Pop Staples for a hellishly commercial soul-pop song that has gospel oozing from every pore. 'Come A Long Way', her anthem to LA, reminds you that the gal really can sing. It also contains the magic line 'all along the Watts Tower' and a chorus that puts paid to the chestnut that the devil has all the best tunes. As a live performer, Shocked has always generated high voltage electricity on stage and up to now she has always been better live than on record. After two plays of 'Arkansas Traveller', a long-time sceptic is in danger of turning into a fan.

Jim Driver



Ashley Maher

'STUMBLING BLOCK'
VIRGIN

A great new single from talented singer-songwriter Ashley Maher. "Stumbling Block" is taken from her forthcoming album

"Pomegranate" the long awaited follow up to 1989's critically acclaimed "Hi".

Maher's music draws upon influences from all over the world:

not surprising, considering her history. She was born in Montreal of English parents and raised in Los Angeles, where she studied history, dance and music.

She impressed Radio One listeners when she performed three numbers live on Simon Bates' show recently and her bid for world domination continued apace with an excellent live set on TV AM last week

Looks like nothing can 'Block' her now...

ashley maher
A Prodigious New Talent

"An intriguing front runner in the current crop of heart and soul bearers"
ARENA

"Her lyrics matter, her music is lush and easy on the ear, she writes from the heart and she sings that way too. One to savour."
DAILY MIRROR

"...overflowing in fact with flesh, pips and fungi from the fruit of the unconscious...a pretty gorgeous affair..."
TIME OUT

"An essential for all bohemians."
COMPANY

STUMBLING BLOCK

A Great New Single