

Danny Cox (left), Liz Larin and Michael King now go by the Rebel Heels nameplate.



Renamed Rebel Heels still 'pressing' for success

By Kevin Brown
staff writer

Liz Larin and Michael King just had an album and a single released on a major record label.

Many would sell their souls for such a chance at pop music success. So why aren't these two more excited?

"We've been keeping ourselves real busy writing," King said, finishing a bowl of cereal at his Livonia home. "We don't sit around and worry about it — we've done our job, we're just waiting to see what happens."

"I think it's a real hopeful time," said Larin, who lives in West Bloomfield. "Like any new project for anybody it's filled with a lot of hope."

Then again, this thoughtful attitude is no surprise to fans who've followed their band, Rebel Heels (formerly Press), at live performances over the past six years at Doug's Body Shop in Ferndale.

LABELS LIKE "pop" or "rock" just aren't adequate to describe the original music of Larin, King and drummer Danny Cox of Warren, Mich. For lack of a better term, call them a progressive pop-rock group, moved more by a desire to express their impressions of life through music.

CONCERT

● **SPYRO GYRA**
Spyro Gyra will perform with special guest, Herbie Mann, at 8 tonight at Meadow Brook Music Festival in Rochester. Tickets are \$19 for pavilion, \$14 for lawn. For more information, call 377-2010.

● **ROBERT NOLL**
Robert Noll and the Blues Mission will perform Monday through Wednesday, through July 13, at Plymouth Rock, 8825 General Drive, Plymouth. For more information, call 455-9800.

● **CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN**
Camper Van Beethoven will perform at 10 p.m. Wednesday, July 13, at Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Tickets are \$13.50. For more information, call 99-MUSIC.

● **JUGGLERS & THIEVES**
Jugglers & Thieves will perform Friday, July 15, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Canfield, off I-75.

● **FOLKMINERS**
The Folkminers will perform Friday, July 15, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.

● **BLUES JUBILEE**
The Summertime Blues Jubilee will take place at 9 p.m. Saturday, July 16, at Moby Dicks, 3452 Schaefer, Dearborn. Performing will be The Progressive Blues Band, Johnny "Yard Dog" Jones, Doug Russell and the Paybacks and the Troubadours. Tickets are available at Moby Dicks and Ticketmaster Outlets. For more information,

call 581-3650 (Moby Dicks) or 423-6666 (Ticketmaster).

● **THE DIFFERENCE**
The Difference will perform Saturday, July 16, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-2747.

● **VICTIMS OF CIRCUMSTANCE**
Victims of Circumstance will perform Saturday, July 16, at Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Canfield.

● **SOUL ASYLUM**
Soul Asylum will perform at 10 p.m. Sunday, July 17, at Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For more information, call 99-MUSIC.

● **BOB DYLAN**
Bob Dylan will perform with special guests, The Alarm, Sunday and Monday, July 17-18, at Meadow Brook Music Festival in Rochester. Tickets are \$30 pavilion and \$20 lawn. For more information, call 377-2010.

● **ERASURE**
Erasure will perform at 10 p.m. Thursday, July 21, at Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For more information, call 99-MUSIC.

● **HOT TUNA, TIMBUK 3**
Hot Tuna will perform with special guests, Timbuk 3, at 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 27, at the Michigan Theater in Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$14.50. For more information, call 99-MUSIC.

Backbeat with a message from S. Africa's Savuka

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

Singing about problems in South Africa is not new. A South African singing about the problems of South Africa — now that's new.

Meet Johnny Clegg & Savuka, a multiracial band that packs its message with a fusion of African rhythms and Western pop.

The sound is like no other. Then again, the band's lead singer, Johnny Clegg, is not exactly a Pieter Botha chop-off-the-white-block South African.

When most kids his age were trooping off to school in shorts and knee socks to learn the government-espoused virtues of apartheid, Clegg was pulling around with Zulu street musicians at 14.

At 17, Clegg was totally immersed in the Zulu culture, learning the language. Today at 34, he can read, write and speak the Zulu language fluently and performs many of the tribe's dances.

To a lot of people in South Africa, he's communicating something much more.

"I'm a bit of a controversial figure with moderates and right-wingers obviously," said Clegg in a telephone conversation from Johannesburg. "For young people and progressive people, I'm deemed as providing alternative symbols to the apartheid culture."

PAUL SIMON'S "Graceland" LP had most people doing backflips, praising the collaboration between white and black artists in South Africa. But Clegg formed the multiracial band Juluka back in 1975.

Juluka enjoyed relative success in its 10-year history. (The group disbanded when Clegg's partner, Sipho Mchunu, quit to go back to being a farmer.)

The group had a hit in Britain in 1982.

In the United States, though, Juluka couldn't make a beachhead. Both of their albums on Warner Bros. sold poorly here.

With Savuka (which means "we have risen" in Zulu), Clegg is understandably more optimistic.

"At the moment, we seemed to be having pockets of support on the West Coast," Clegg said. "It's not a terrible amount. I think it's going to break from that type of scene."



Johnny Clegg (center) and Savuka are bringing South African music to Detroit and the rest of the United States.

'Graceland' has opened the doors for multiracial collaborations.

Simon's "Graceland" has made people here receptive to African music. Clegg said he expects to build a cult audience at the very least, possibly going as far as garnering a medium-range following on this his first tour of the U.S.

In other places, Johnny Clegg & Savuka are already a popular commodity. The group has performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival and recently opened for David Bowie in France before 80,000 people. French record buyers have purchased more than 700,000 of the band's records.

Johnny Clegg & Savuka shoot from the hip. Apartheid is not glossed over in their music.

THIS HASN'T exactly left the group on the government's top-10 list. Some of Savuka's songs have been restricted or censored from government-run radio. "I take legal advice on certain issues," Clegg said. "I know where it's easier to be prosecuted or arrested. I attack the wind."

Amazingly enough, Johnny Clegg & Savuka have built a strong following in South Africa. The group has found plays at desegregated clubs, universities and at political rallies.

LOCAL

Here are 10 songs receiving airplay on "Detroit Music Scene," which can be heard 4-5 p.m. Sundays and from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesdays on WDR-FM 90.3.

1. "They Were So Young," See Dick Run.
2. "I Hate Love," Karen Monster.
3. "Psychodrama," Funhouse.
4. "Someday You'll Laugh," Shouting Club.
5. "Released Again," Jugglers & Thieves.
6. "Burn This City Down," Third Row Balcony.
7. "Hollow," Crossed Wire.
8. "Red Crayola," Hysteria Narcotics.
9. "Pamela," Joey Harlo.
10. "Desperate Years," Johnny Allen & The Appeal.

"What's happened is there's a bell, a progressive bell, going through South Africa from Johannesburg south," Clegg said. "North of Johannesburg, there's really no places to play. And north of Pretoria there's really no places that desegregated."

The music scene is quite diverse in South Africa, according to Clegg. Fusions of reggae and township jive are popular. Country and western is big with white audiences.

Clegg said the rock and roll scene is very small, but intense. Which might also describe Johnny Clegg & Savuka's presence in the U.S.

Johnny Clegg & Savuka will appear Tuesday, July 12, at the Pine Knob Music Theater in Clarkston. For ticket information, call 625-0511.

METAL

Here are the top-10 albums receiving airplay on "Donny Love's Rock Shop," which can be heard from 2-3 p.m. Wednesdays on WHFR-FM 89.3.

1. "Metal Years," various artists.
2. "0012," Van Halen.
3. "Ram It Down," Judas Priest.
4. "King Cobra 3," King Cobra.
5. "Too Much Ain't Enough," Seduce.
6. "Survive," Nuclear Assault.
7. "Retaliatory Strike," At War.
8. "Over the Edge," Hurricane.
9. "Appetite For Destruction," Guns N' Roses.
10. "Doomsday News," various artists.

COUNTRY

Here are the top-10 songs receiving airplay on WTTW-FM, a country station in Detroit.

1. "Another Place, Another Time," Doe Williams.
2. "Always Late (With Your Kisses)," Dwight Yoakam.
3. "If It Don't Come Easy," Tanya Tucker.
4. "The Best I Know How," Statler Brothers.
5. "Satisfy You," Sweatearts of the Rodeo.
6. "What She Is (Is A Woman In Love)," Carl Thomas Conley.
7. "Fallin' Again," Alabama.
8. "Set 'Em Up Joe," Vern Gordin.
9. "Chill Factor," Merle Haggard.
10. "Don't We All Have The Right," Ricky Van Shelton.

REVIEWS

WILD STREAK

— Hank Williams Jr.

If you're a country music hater, like many yankee folk, I suggest you never see Hank Williams Jr. live.

Because son, when 'ol Hank pulls out that electric guitar and starts cutting out the rock riffs, you're going to be confused.

Hank's rock-showlike performances help make clear a simple fact obscured for years — country can be cool. And 'ol Hank has shown that country can be a brother to rock, not its nerdy cousin.

At some shows, Hank even plays a few classic Robert Johnson blues tunes on solo guitar. Trivia buffs will recall that the last big act to do that live was those rockin' Rolling Stones.

And 'ol Beethoven has written some great songs — "Stoned at the Jukebox," "Family Tradition (about getting stoned and roving like daddy Hank Sr.)," "All My Rowdy Friends Have Settled Down," and "A Country Boy Can Survive."

But in recent years, Hank Jr.'s songwriting has come down a notch. Such is the case on his new album



"Wild Streak" (Curb).

It opens with the title song. It's not exactly country, unless your idea of country is screaming guitars, pounding drums, and Hank Jr. wailing at the top of his voice. But to paraphrase a Merle Haggard hit, it's not country, but it's not bad either.

Side one is marked by several strong rockers, while the second side plays host to several so-so rockers. Oddly enough, there are no classic-type country numbers on the album. And that's a shame, because 'ol Hank is so good at singing country.

It's a decent album, but no one song seems destined for inclusion among Hank Jr.'s best.

Still, 'ol Hank does entertain, with the occasional reference to his rowdy old man, and even more references to Hank's favorite pastime — sippin' bourbon and making out with long-legged females.

— Kevin Brown

TOO MUCH AIN'T ENOUGH

— Seduce

Hand it to Miles Copeland of I.R.S. When he decided to add heavy metal artists to his eclectic label, he didn't go out and sign a bunch of posers in spandex from the beaches of California.

Copeland went to the heartland of heavy metal. And where better to find heavy metal bands than in the industrial ports of Cleveland, with Shock Paris, and now Detroit, with Seduce.

Seduce's "Too Much Ain't Enough" (I.R.S.) is as blue collar as metal gets. The Detroit threesome manages to achieve their goal of being melodic while still using plenty of ear-splitting guitar. Seduce does little to betray the headbanging sound.

Seduce runs the gamut, giving doses of speed metal at times and switching to slower, rhythmic tunes. And the group does it by avoiding the clichés of heavy metal. Songs



about girls and being on the road, thankfully, are at a minimum here. Even the non-heavy metal maven might be surprised at the substance in some of the songs. In "Watchin'," people picking in garbage and kids getting shot.

"Any Time Or Place," a raw rhythmic rocker, has the makings for a great chant. This should go over well in concert hall venues. The tune, like many of the songs on this album, uses the hooks of pop music and alarms it home with heavy metal riffs.

David Black's guitar work is exceptional here as is Mark Andrews' vocal work. Andrews' rough tone makes him seem like a Junior Steven Tyler at times.

But the raw feel of this album will make it stand on its own in heavy metal circles.

— Larry O'Connor

SHADOW MAN

— Johnny Clegg & Savuka

Before there was Paul Simon's "Graceland," there was Johnny Clegg & Savuka. And now there's Johnny Clegg & Savuka.

So anyone thinking Clegg is merely trying to jump on the bandwagon of collaboration between black and white artists in South Africa is way off base. Clegg and Savuka date back to 1975. The group disbanded and Clegg, who is an honorary white Zulu in South Africa, was picked up again with a new band Savuka.

The difference between Juluka and Savuka is that the latter is far more political in its music. The strife and confusion of living in the apartheid society of South Africa can be heard in "Shadow Man." Johnny Clegg & Savuka's second album on Capitol.

Yet "Shadow Man" is certainly not an album of despair. If anything, it's an uplifting masterpiece.

Clegg & Savuka use African

instruments and gift wrap it with Western pop styles. The end result electrifying, and very accessible to the music ear.

A cornucopia of instruments are used here, a thundering bass, a host of percussion and soaring saxophone. The temptation to try to identify every instrument in each song is hard to resist.

Also, it's quite easy to be smitten by the unique reggae-like rhythms heard throughout. And Clegg definitely has a voice that can be distinguished from the rest of the pop pack.

The real question, though, is whether this music will appeal to mainstream tastes remains to be seen. There are plenty of songs here, "Talk To The People" and "Take My Heart Away," which could easily find their way on Top-40 radio.

By itself, "Shadow Man" is a musical masterpiece.

— Larry O'Connor