



The Tom Russell Band appeals to both rock'n'roll and country tastes.

IN CONCERT

- BELAIRS: Belairs will perform on Monday, Aug. 7, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 926-2747.
• SACRED REICH: Sacred Reich will perform along with guests, Forbiden, on Tuesday, Aug. 8, at Blondie's, West Seven Mile Road, east of Telegraph, Detroit. For information, call 535-8108.
• WAY OUTS: The Way Outs will perform on Tuesday, Aug. 8, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 998-2747.
• B-52S: The B-52's will perform with special guests, Royal Crescent Mob, at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 9, at Royal Oak Music Theatre. Tickets are \$18.50. For information, call 548-7610.
• ALYZE: Alyze will perform with special guests, Noosance, on Wednesday, Aug. 9, at Blondie's, West Seven Mile, east of Telegraph Road, Detroit. For information, call 535-8108.
• JUGGLERS AND THEIVES: Jugglers and Thieves will perform on Wednesday, Aug. 9, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 998-2747.
• GODFATHERS: The Godfathers will perform on Thursday, Aug. 10, at Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.
• HIPPODROME: Hippodrome will perform on Thursday, Aug. 10, at the Garden Bowl, 4120 Woodward, near Warren Avenue, Detroit. Cover is \$4. For information, call 833-9850.
• JOE JACKSON: Joe Jackson will perform on Saturday, Aug. 12, at Royal Oak Music Theatre. Tickets are \$10. For information, call 548-7610.
• 24-7 SPYZ: 24-7 Spyz will perform on Thursday, Aug. 10, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 998-2747.

Urban cowboy

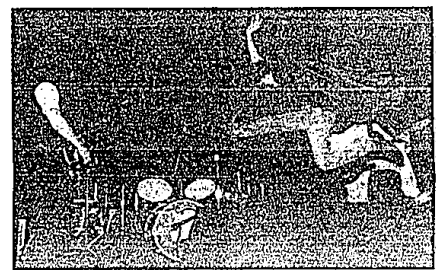
Brooklyn is home on the range for singer

By Larry O'Connor staff writer

The honk of a Brooklyn cab is not the same as a moo from a Texas steer. But Tom Russell is a cowboy nonetheless. No honky-tonks, no railroads running down the avenue... what's a country artist to do? Well, Russell gets along just fine. In fact, Russell's address might be considered one of the reasons he's considered one of the most progressive country artists around today.

though, the disc didn't exactly rocket to the top of the country charts. "THE MAIN problem, to be frank, is that country radio format seems to be quite stiff and closed," Russell said. "I think we could be played on country radio, but we don't have a pop sound. I'm willing to play along, but I think our market might be with the rock crowd." "I don't think there is a tremendous amount of art coming out of Nashville," he added. "I think they've settled on a format that works in a small way. There's a bigger market they're not hitting — the people that buy a Mellencamp or Springsteen that would buy a hip country album and not be turned off by it."

my guitar shot up by some drunken security guard," he said. "I knew it was uphill after that. "Road to Bayamon" was released in the U.S. in 1988, covering his experiences in Puerto Rico. Russell has since released another LP in Europe, "Poor Man's Dream." He's waiting for the possible major label deal before putting the LP out here. In the meantime, The Tom Russell Band continues to build a ground swell with some gritty blend of country and rock'n'roll in clubs. The group features noted guitarist Andrew Hardin, fiddle and accordion player "Fats" Kaplin, bass player Billy Troian and drummer Charlie Caldorola. Band members hail from such unlikely country ports as Las Vegas, San Francisco and New York. "It doesn't matter," Russell said. "They're all steeped in honky-tonk music. They've all paid their dues playing in the bars."



Royal Crescent Mob will be in action on Wednesday at the Royal Oak Music Theatre.

LIVE

SKANKING VOODOO DOLLS — Hamtramck Pub

Instead of lights, perhaps ropes and turnbuckles should have been strung up around the stage Saturday at the Hamtramck Pub. Reggae meets rock'n'roll? The concept of blending reggae and rock'n'roll is an ambitious undertaking. Especially when you have a guitarist who looks like he's been kidnapped from Motley Crue. Yet, if anything, Skanking Voodoo Dolls should be commended for at least trying to put a different twist on what has become fairly standard

fare called "new music." An amiability exists when this four-person outfit is onstage. Call it warmth, call it not being obnoxious. But Skanking Voodoo Dolls have an easiness about them that can make a person feel downright homey at times. Part of that is due to the steady, reggae-fied beat provided by drummer Perez and bass player Jim Negeeran. Also, lead singer Beaux Mitchell also contributes to the am-

blence, gliding along with her rhythm guitar and sweet vocals. But while those three careen with the musical feather, lead guitarist Brian Smith wields the axe. He provides the edge to the beat, venturing out into the bar with his wireless guitar (He was careful not to disturb the guys playing pool, though). Thus the edge is provided. Sometimes, however, it cuts the band off from the listener. The heavy metallish tone of his playing is dandy for the black leath-

er and mousse haired crowd, but runs against the grain of the heartbeat of reggae. That's not to say rock'n'roll and reggae are unlikely bedfellows. Nor is it to imply Skanking Voodoo Dolls is a failed experiment. Quite the contrary. If there is a middle ground for the reggae and rock'n'roll, Skanking Voodoo Dolls will undoubtedly be the one to find it. — Larry O'Connor

LOCAL

Here are 10 songs receiving airplay on WDRR-FM's "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4.5 p.m. Sundays (9:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesdays).

- 1. "Attitude," The Idiots.
2. "Why Do I Cry," Peter G.
3. "A Dirge," Nemesis.
4. "A Lot Like Me," Missionary Stew.
5. "Little World," Daerag Smoothies.
6. "Fragile," Pantheon.
7. "Hardille," Rubber.
8. "Within Myself," Socoed Corp.
9. "Stand a Chance," Root.
10. "Too Hot," Skanking Voodoo Dolls.

COLLEGE

Here are the top 10 songs receiving airplay on WOUX-AM, campus station of Oakland University in Rochester.

- 1. "Here Comes Your Man," Pitrix.
2. "Love Song," Care.
3. "Fool," All.
4. "So Alive," Love & Rockets.
5. "Out of Nowhere," Faith No More.
6. "Hipp Swinging," Naked Raygun.
7. "Toys," T.T.
8. "Just Like Heaven," Dinosaur Jr.
9. "Fight the Power," Public Enemy.
10. "So Far Away," Screaming Trees.

REVIEWS

ONE — Bee Gees



Inside the mind (and notebook) of a reviewer... What's this thing on my desk. Hmm... plain brown wrapper, too. Oh, it's the new Bee Gees album. Can't let anybody see me looking at this thing. I'll just snag it over the counter. I think I'll slip "One" (Warner Bros.) on the turntable. The first cut, the title track, isn't half bad. Kinda catchy. Paula Abdul could dance to this thing. Here's comes the bridge. There are those carry-you-up-to-heaven Bee Gees harmonies. "We are one... we are onnneeeeee..." I give it an 80. Next up, "Ordinary Lives." Not bad, either, even if it does sound a little like Stevie Winwood's last beer commercial, "Bodyguard." "It's My Neighborhood" — kinda forgettable. "Tears" — there's that big Bee Gees ballad, even if it isn't quite up there with "More Than a Woman" or "Too Much Heaven." (Not that I've listened to either song in the past decade, of course.)

"Tokyo Nights" — a winner, even if it does show where the brothers Gibb may take their act, if they can't break back into the American market. "Flesh and Blood," "Wish You Were Here," "House of Sham," — gee, I can't remember these at all. "Will You Ever Let Me?" — doesn't this song ever end? "You Win Again," there's that flop single from a couple of years back, these guys don't give up easily, I'll say that for them. Tell ya the truth, this one still could be a hit. Okay, let's total it up. Three decent songs. A couple more that aren't too bad, either. It sounds contemporary, yet distinctively Bee Gees. And they leave their nasally vocals at home. Here's the dilemma: This isn't a bad album, but I can't really tell people I like it. C'mon, this is the Bee Gees. Now, where's that George Michael album? — Wayne Peal

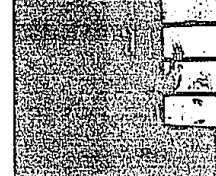
COSMIC THING — B-52s



The B-52s return after a three-year hiatus prompted by the death of founding member, Ricky Wilson. Despite his absence, there is no noticeable difference in the "wacky dance" B-52s sound. B-52s are B-52s — gee, I can't remember these at all. With the distinctive spoken-sung vocals of Fred Schneider and the easily recognizable and attractive harmonies of Kate Pierson and Cindy Wilson, the sound remains the same. While the Bs may still be looked upon as the "party dance" band, on this album, "Cosmic Thing," (Reprise) they are lyrically more overt in their dealings with the world around them. On previous albums they have been more subtle with their environmental commentaries, e.g. "Private Idaho" or "Juicy Jungle." The first single from "Cosmic Thing," "Channel Z," is a pretty straight forward social commentary. "Space Junk, laser bombs, ozone holes/better put up an umbrella/giant stacks blowin' smoke, pollicteritis pushin' dope."

Or from "Bush Fire" this, "Rolling through a field of molten flowers, there's a bushfire burning." With the creditable B-52 history on albums like "Messopotamia" and "Whammy" along with singles such as "Rock Lobster," "Give Me Back My Man," and "Legal Tender," mixed with the solid dance-oriented experience of producers Nile Rodgers (Cale, Slater Sledge) and Don Was (Was Not Was), it is easy to understand why "Cosmic Thing" is tight, punchy and funky. Highlights of the LP are "Dry County," "Love Shack," "Channel Z," and, not to belittle their lyrics, mention must be made of the beautiful instrumental "Follow Your Bliss." Here's looking forward to hearing them live at the Royal Oak Music Theatre on Wednesday. — Cormac Wright

QUEEN ELVIS — Robyn Hitchcock 'n' The Egyptians



Robyn Hitchcock is pop music's equivalent to a ring master and his albums are a circus of sounds, images and whimsical lyrics. "Queen Elvis," (A&M) the British singer's latest effort, fits the description. Except, unlike his last LP "Globe of Frogs" (A&M), he drives it home in more of a rocked-out fashion at times. His songs can be rich with orchestration or acoustical bare, but he brings home the lyrical bacon. He sings about cold women ("Madonna of the Wasps"), questions the human nature of the Queen ("Veins of the Queen") and takes a swipe at a British showbiz person ("Wax Doll"). Electric guitars soar, drums boom and bass lines thunder from the opening cut, "Madonna of the Wasps." The song exemplifies what a true pop genius Hitchcock is when he works within the boundaries of conventional pop. Fortunately, Hitchcock doesn't do that often. The musical parts provide some of

the best books, whether it be the extra guitar work of R.E.M.'s Peter Buck on "Swirling," the overblurred piano by Andy Metcalfe on "One Long Pair of Eyes," or the trumpet on "Veins of the Queen." But when talking Hitchcock, we're talking lyrics. And, as usual, there are plenty of insightful lines suitable for framing. From "Veins of the Queen" we hear Hitchcock ask some questions about the Elizabeth, "Oh the Queen and her cellar full of dogs/Wonder has she any frogs/Does she ever chop up logs?/Woah oh no — I do not suppose she does/ Anyway she'd have a private detective with her." Not exactly poetry, but nonetheless, it's vintage Hitchcock. — Larry O'Connor