

STREET BEATS

Lloyd Cole discovers music without a band

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

This Lloyd Cole chap is quite a conversationalist. In the course of 15 minutes, subjects shift from golf's U.S. Open, soccer's World Cup, a girl from Kalamazoo, the literary works of Raymond Carver and a little thing called love.

Except the latter seems more than just a little thing with Lloyd. In fact, judging by "Lloyd Cole," it's almost an obsession.

His self-titled solo album on Capitol Records tackles love and relationships in a sardonic sort of way, sounding a bit like Morrissey on the rebound.

Yet, the solo effort sparkles with freshness, a direct way of looking at the emotions at hand. Coupled with the fact this is Cole's first LP minus the somnolent accompaniment of his band, the Commotions makes this record a triumph of sorts.

"Frankly, I'm relieved I can make a record without a band," said Cole, who will perform on Sunday, July 1, at Clubland with Michael Penn.

"That was the real challenge. It was that overcome, it was to make

the best record we can."

Also, "Lloyd Cole" is a personal record. Most of the emotional aspects in his life he said had ended in 1988, splitting from his band and his personal life in a funk. He decided to write about it.

IN THE COOL style of Lou Reed or Bob Dylan, Cole expresses his feelings lyrically... although he's a bit bitten by cynicism.

Heard in the number "To the Church," "I'm looking for a religious girl/With child-bearing hips and a wedding veil/But I'm saddened to report that it's not easy."

Ironically, after Cole had written the songs for his solo album he became married. His wife, Elizabeth, was born in Kalamazoo. They were married in December of last year.

"I've always had a skeptical view of romance," he said. "That's not to say I don't love her. I think I do. I think life is full of contradictions. I think the song that says it best is... 'We're forever saying of forever.'"

"Life is full of irony. Without irony, life would be excruciatingly depressing."

The most depressing aspect of Cole's career is his lack of recognition. He's always been something of a pop idol in England, yet in America his work has been only appreciated by college and alternative listeners.

Therein lies the irony, since Cole's music is a bit quirky, but certainly palatable for commercial radio with its melodic pop leanings.

FOR THE FIRST time, Cole's touring America on his own. He said it's somewhat scary, but so far fans have been receptive. A hardcore following is familiar with all of his songs.

Cole has always been lauded for his highly literate lyrics. He studied American literature at Glasgow University before forming the Commotions in 1983.

Without a doubt, American author Raymond Carver is his favorite. Cole calls him the greatest writer of the century.

"He seems to get right to the heart of the matter," Cole said. "I just worship the guy. Unfortunately, to the extent it damaged my music for



Lloyd Cole expresses himself musically in the cool style of Lou Reed or Bob Dylan.

while by not trying to become the Raymond Carver of the pop world.

"On the second album ("Easy Pieces") I think I tried to cram so many words into so little a space."

Lloyd Cole will perform along with Michael Penn on Sunday, July 1, at Clubland, 2111 Woodward, Detroit. Tickets are \$15.50 in advance. For information, call 99-MUSIC.

IN CONCERT

● NOIZE-THAT-HURTZ

Noize-That-Hurtz will perform on Monday, June 25, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● THE TANCOS

The Tancos will perform with guest, Abraham Nison, on Tuesday, June 26, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● VIRUS B-23

Virus B-23 will perform with guests, Bovine Love, on Tuesday, June 26, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● UNIVERSAL SPECTRUM

Universal Spectrum will perform on Wednesday, June 27, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● BORAX

Borax will perform with guests, Crazy Lizard, on Wednesday, June 27, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● MIDAS & THE BRIDGE

Midas & The Bridge will perform on Wednesday, June 27, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● SUNGLASSES AFTER DARK

Sunglasses After Dark will perform on Wednesday, June 27, at Key West, 24330 W. Six Mile, Detroit. For information, call 592-0099.

● GRANFALLON

Granfallon will perform with guests, Life on Earth, on Thursday, June 28, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 663-7758.

● POLISH MUSLIMS

Polish Muslims will perform on Thursday, June 28, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● DIFFERENCE

Difference will perform on Thursday and Friday, June 28-29, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● ENEMY SQUAD

Enemy Squad will perform on Thursday, June 28, at 3-D, 1815 N. Main, near

12 Mile, Royal Oak. For information, call 589-3344.

● DEPECHE MODE

DePêche Mode will perform with guests, Nitzer Ebb, on Thursday and Friday, June 28-29, at Pine Knob Music Theatre in Clarkston. Tickets are \$22.50 for pavilion and \$17.50 for lawn. For information, call 625-0511.

● BUTLER TWINS

Butler Twins will perform on Friday, June 29, at Skylight, Griff's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. For information, call 334-9292.

● SCOTT MORGAN BAND

Scott Morgan Band will perform with guests, The Opossums, on Friday, June 29, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 663-7758.

● LIVE RECORDING

The Gear, Chinese Gage and Strange Bedfellows will all perform on Friday, June 29, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Canfield, off I-75. All performances will be recorded live for an upcoming compilation release on Boombox Records. For information, call 355-9760.

● EDDIE KIRKLAND

Eddie Kirkland will perform on Saturday, June 30, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

● GEORGE BEDARD AND THE KINGPIPS

George Bedard and the Kingpins will perform on Saturday, June 30, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

● JUANITA MCCRAY

Juanita McCray will perform on Saturday, June 30, at Skylight, Griff's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. For information, call 354-9292.

● ROBB ROY

Robb Roy and Funhouse will perform on Saturday, June 30, at Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Canfield, off I-75. For information, call 355-9760.

● ANITA BAKER

Anita Baker will perform on Saturday and Sunday, June 30-July 1, at Pine Knob Music Theatre in Clarkston. Tickets are \$22 for pavilion and \$20 for lawn.



The Polish Muslims perform on Thursday at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor.

Rappers rap Crew's 'raptures'

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

A few crews of Detroit rappers have a hard time relating to the recent arrest of 2 Live Crew members and the band's album "As Nasty As Can Be" being ruled obscene by a federal judge.

Local groups like Systematic M.C., Sentrotone and Organized Rhymes are more concerned about making a name of their own.

That's especially difficult today with groups such as 2 Live Crew and N.W.A. causing more headlines than their explicit lyrics overshadow the popularity of rap music.

Members of three local rap groups said they try to limit the profanities used in their music.

"It's not so much being obscene," said Tricky, the black member of the multi-racial group Systematic M.C.

"You try to find other ways of going about it before saying something. At least we do."

Along with Tricky, Systematic M.C. includes a Greek emcee (Chasey) and a Mexican deejay (Too Tall). The group has been rapping for nine years, trying to prove a point that all races can get along.

TRICKY SAID his group's rap music might carry a few "cuss" words in the lyrics, but adds "I wouldn't consider it rough language." The music is designed to reflect inner-city life.

2 Live Crew members contend their rap does the same, using the language common on the street. But critics and judges say the group goes too far.

The group's debut album was titled "I Want Some P—," and profanities fill the latest release, the group

has been accused of using controversial language just to sell records.

Local rappers say there is an audience for such music. Their music isn't targeted in that direction, trying to look for positive solutions to inner-city problems, such as crime and drug abuse.

Sentrotone is a three-man rap outfit that toils the importance of going to school and stopping violence. The group has been together for six years and includes Rapundzo Anderson, Kenneth Calloway and Cornell Thomas Berry.

Sentrotone will issue a 12-inch single on Just Chill Records in Detroit in the next few weeks.

"Their rapping isn't our style," Anderson said. "... Some of the young people like the language that they use. The older people don't."

Organized Rhymes is an interracial rap group that includes a black

emcee Ronnie B. and a white deejay, Brad Kallen of West Bloomfield. Like Systematic M.C. and Sentrotone, Kallen doesn't particularly care for the style of 2 Live Crew. He finds the arrest of group members somewhat disturbing, though.

IF ANYTHING, such incidents only help elevate the group's popularity. And might encourage a young rap group to adopt a similar style of profanity.

"It's a definite short cut," he said. "It gets you attention. You need as much publicity as you can get."

But Tricky of Systematic M.C. believes the arrest of 2 Live Crew members has bigger implications.

"That's against the First Amendment," he said. "If they go through that, that's the first wall. If they can go through that, they can go through anything."

LIVE REVIEW

SECOND SELF/RHYTHM CORPS — Hart Plaza

This double bill was actually part of the preliminaries for the Rik Emmet (ex of Triumph) and Eric "I Used to Be an Animal" Burdon Saturday night sets at Hart Plaza during Grand Prix weekend.

Second Self came out with the echoes of racing still fresh. Their 10-song, 40-minute set to a sparse, still-settling crowd was highly uneventful. The Detroit quartet, recently signed to EMI Records and now promoting their first major-label release "Mood Ring" may still be used to performing in more intimate settings because they displayed a lack of

stage presence throughout.

The interplay between brothers Michael and Andrew Nehra and the rest of the band was nice, but they seemed to be playing for themselves.

The set seemed to be practice for any future touring they may do, which was disappointing, considering they probably were playing to the largest hometown crowd they'd ever encountered. Leaving the door open for improvement, however, were Self's renderings of "Lose Those Shadows" and "Look Me Away."

The contrast between Second Self and the more experienced four of Rhythm Corps was surprisingly evident as soon as the Corps took the stage. Their 10-song, 50-minute set showed an overall polish that only a little seasoning can bring. Frontman Michael Persh was as relaxed as this writer has ever seen him, and it generated a positive impact with the rest of the band.

Half of the songs were taken from the band's forthcoming release, and the sounds were encouraging. "Choices" featured some decent har-

monies, and "Mother" was a spell-binder.

Mixed in with the new material were a few from "Common Ground," their major label debut. The anthem-like title track and single was the most well-received in the set — not a surprise.

The encore, "Revolution Man," featured the boys having a little fun, with Persh bouncing a basketball during an impromptu salute to the Pistons and adding a chorus from "Tommy" to boot.

— Bob Sadler

TOP 10

Best-selling records of the week:

1. "Hold On" Wilson Phillips, 2. "Polon" Bell Biv DeVoe.
3. "Vogue" Madonna.
4. "Must Have Been Love" Roxette.
5. "U Can't Touch This" M.C. Hammer.
6. "Step by Step" New Kids on the Block.
7. "All I Wanna Do" Bette Midler.
8. "Night" Janet Jackson.
9. "Ready or Not" After 7.
10. "Ooh La La" Perfect Gentlemen.

(Source: Cashbox magazine)

LOCAL

Here are the top 10 songs receiving airplay on "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4-5 p.m. Sundays (repeated 5:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesdays) on WDTN-FM 90.9.

1. "You Better Run" Chain Reaction.
2. "Serenity" Thirsty Forest Animals.
3. "Down the Road" Virus B 23.
4. "All My Teachers Were Failures" Happy Accidents.
5. "Black" Skinkwee.
6. "I Wanna Love You" Wayouts.
7. "Tomorrow Is Tomorrow" Shooting Club.
8. "I Melt With You 90" Modern English.
9. "Littlebirds" Hamaah.
10. "I'm Different Now" Generals.

REVIEWS

THE BERLIN WALL OF SOUND — The Chesterfield Kings

Today's subject is the new album by the Chesterfield Kings. It's called "The Berlin Wall of Sound." There are many reasons why you probably shouldn't buy it. Eight reasons, in fact. Here they are:

● The album cover. It features all four of the Kings sitting around after some probable debauchery — an empty vodka bottle sits on the floor, beer bottles are strewn around and someone is smoking a cigarette. One of the Kings holds a Weekly World bearing the headline "Hitler Is Alive." This is presumably to show us that he can, in fact, read. Perhaps he is interested in history.

● Lyrics like, "Gonna get myself a shotgun — I only want a little revenge get myself a shotgun — my trigger finger's itching again."

● The look. This is known as the stereotypical rock star look. If you don't know what that is, watch a Bon Jovi video — that's the look. Bangs in eyes, cowboy boots and lots of black. The Chesterfield Kings have dutifully replicated Bon Jovi videos so faithfully, in fact, that they are wearing exact replicas of the clothes from the video "Dead or Alive."

● Lyrics like, "I been drinkin' again/It's too bad she couldn't say/In a trash can I threw her away." It addition to this lyric's obviously



flaw, it contains awkward phrasing.

● Guilt by association. The album is inexplicably dedicated to Muddy Waters. Poor Mr. Waters.

● Lyrics like, "I'm gonna shoot to kill I got my ray gun/I'm gonna shoot to kill I'm gonna have some fun." Yeah, it's true, there's nothing more fun than walking around with a ray gun and shooting people.

● The song "Coke Bottle Blues." This is a blues number sung in a fake black dialect. Didn't this sort of humor get out of style when "Amos 'n Andy" was cancelled?

● Lyrics like, "Our I'm so sick and tired of you, (repeat) finally get thru and you ain't gone you're busy puttin' all your make-up on." Well, as a woman myself, I can vouch for the validity of those lines. I know that several hours of my day are set aside exclusively for "puttin' on make-up."

In final analysis, don't buy this album. Maybe you should try not to even think of this lyric's obviously

BEST OF VAN MORRISON — Van Morrison



"Me" and "(Jackie Wilson Said) I'm In Heaven When You Smile" give the package depth.

Though the material spans about a quarter-century, sound quality holds up. The ascapella opening to "Jackie Wilson" is surprisingly clean.

Almost from the beginning, Morrison has laid claim to a spot in the rock pantheon, yet his contributions have sometimes been overlooked — perhaps because his work has been spread over so many labels and not always in print (this album's compiler Mercury Records, is Morrison's fourth U.S. label).

While a boxed set would have been preferable, this one CD package does put things in better perspective and should further secure Morrison's position as one of rock's major artists.

Other favorites, including "Domino," "Wild Night" and "And It Stoned

GOODBYE JUMBO — World Party

World Party is the pseudonym used by Karl Wallinger, formerly of the Waterboys, and "Goodbye Jumbo" is his second LP in the last three years.

Wallinger steers in a traditional pop course as opposed to the traditional folk leanings of his ex-bandmate Mike Scott, so associations may be misleading.

Despite wearing his influences on his sleeve, Wallinger/World Party is subtle and seductive. He doesn't scream and roar his complaints, he lulls you into his trust and then whispers his grievances and heartache.

The current single "Way Down Now" is a jaunty slice of danceable guitar pop with a bass line that just reeks of Motown, thank God, and a fade-out backing vocal directly from the Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil." Marvelous references!

This is followed by "When the Rainbow Comes" which is touched with a pure George Harrison/Beatles melody and arrangement, and with the *de-de-coeur* of a lonely guy: "Mr. Postman look and see, if there's a letter in your bag for me/ Could be a bomb or could be a letter/ It don't matter it can only get better."

Next up, "Put the Message in the box," continues gloriously in that Beatlesque tradition.

Switch to Marvin Gaye and some



painfully sweet soul music for the gentle "Ain't Gonna Come Till I'm Ready," which is so sexy it hurts. You are swallowed whole by the gorgeous vulnerable melody before you realize his protest. One of the best songs released this year.

From here we're brought into a rather somber acoustic ballad "And I Fell Alone," a tale of failure and desperation. We are also treated to touches of Prince with "Show Me to the Top," which would not have been out of place on the "Sign O' The Times" LP.

With guest appearances by the likes of Steve Wickham of the Waterboys on violin, and Sinead O'Connor on backing vocals, we are guaranteed some haunting and evocative melodies. But let there be no mistakes this is purely Karl Wallinger's show and with the strength of those songs, we can only be thankful for that.

This is a must-have album, one of the best of the year so far.

— Cormac Wright