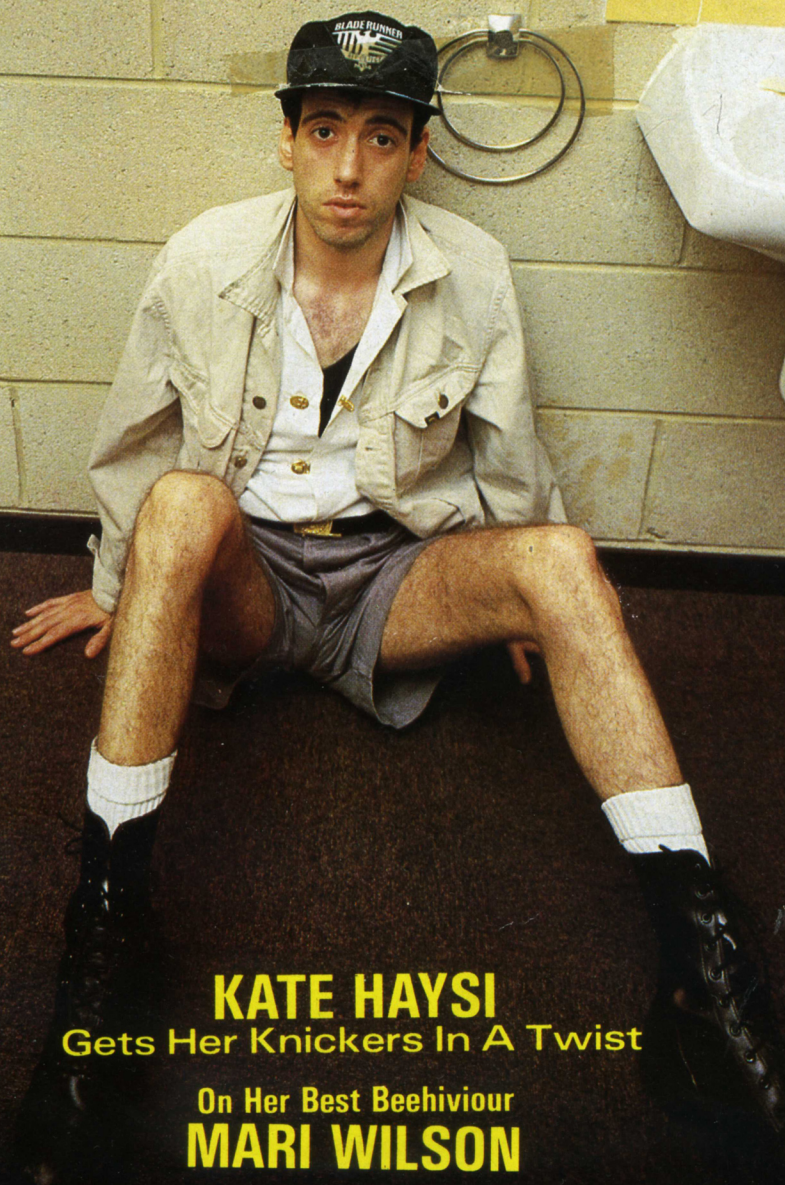


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# FLEXIPOP!

**MICK JONES OF  
THE CLASH  
EXCLUSIVE**



**KATE HAYSI**

**Gets Her Knickers In A Twist**

**On Her Best Beehaviour**

**MARI WILSON**

**Plus: Eddy Grant, Virgin Prunes,  
Jordan, Grandmaster Flash,  
The Maisonettes,  
The The.**



# PIGSW

The VIRGIN PRUNES give KRIS  
NEEDS some Pork Scratchings



**THE PIG.** Pink, blubbery, corpulent blob-animal dedicated to a life of gluttony and dung. Unashamed and unpretentious. Cap Sensible says the rabbit could never be dubbed 'pseud'. Neither could the pig. His time has come and Ireland's Virgin Prunes are leading the charge. Singer Gavin: "The pig is supposed to be a greedy and selfish animal, symbolic of dirt and filth. But the thing is, it's the

most honest." Pork has been immortalised. The Prunes oft-requested stage epic 'Pig Children' has become a spontaneous panorama of loincloths, blood and gorging. It's one of the reasons they've become one of the most notorious live acts around. MPs and clean-up campaigners throw their hands up in horror and call for whitewash. A recent Channel 4 spot was deluged with cries of outrage

when it wasn't even planned for a showing.

The Prunes are worried that such infamy will blanket their true worth and that people only go for the strips.

Let's get to the bottom of this

**Gavin:** "That's something I dislike. We go into 'Pig Children' and the audience start getting all excited, 'they're going to take their clothes off!' 'Girls run up to the front. We do

take our clothes off in 'Pig Children' but it's improvised. We don't use choreography. We just take off our clothes and eat fruit. We have pig's heads onstage too. But you can't feed off the audience if they're going to take your clothes off. 'We won't do it every time for that reason. We're not that stupid.'"

Hauling assorted pig segments onto their stages usually involves a pre-soundcheck mission to the



# iii

local butchers'. This can cause problems, specially in places like Europe.

"We played Paris and did it. We left the heads onstage. The people that cleaned the place were Arabs. They had to bless the place before they would touch them."

A German tour was pulled out "because they thought we killed pigs. But we just play with them. We don't do it all the time. That's just one level."

The Prunes find it very hard to get gigs because of these blown-up scandals.

This hasn't been helped by the safe press and the fact that their first major UK gig at the Futurama Festival ended in near-riot. After a bit of feuding with headliners Simple Minds the plugs were pulled so the Prunes just squatted and stared at the crowd for 20 minutes. It made an impression and showed they weren't gonna be pushed around. But since then things have been difficult.

They claim the Venue won't give them a re-booking even though they went down a storm "because people didn't drink and left when we'd finished."

The Lyceum supporting Theatre Of Hate?

"They hated us. It was good doing that. It's the best way. I much prefer something positive - if they hate it."

And so it goes on. The shocking visuals and grating dramatic sounds seem to magnetise berserkees or send 'em scurrying for the exits or shotguns. They're looking forward to going to America.

The Prunes reckon their image is becoming more refined and defined. They kicked off as two-fingers down Dublin's nostrils in '78 with a wild assortment of dresses, garish makeup and vertical hair. Their first set - supporting The Clash - lasted ten minutes.

**Gavin:** "The image was important. We went against everything. I wore a dress and makeup. We were more over the top then. When I was young I used to like Marc Bolan, Bowie, Roxy. We did a gig every four or five months and had a different image at each one."

"Then in '79 we said, 'right, we'll get somewhere'. The six of us all had different ideas and we wanted to get more involved."

What's behind the dresses then, Gavin?

"Well, I don't do it because I want to be a woman. I haven't got any hangups. I'm not into that. It's just self-expression."

Anyway, Guggi looks better in a dress than trousers. He's really ugly. "I got my mum to make that rude dress. It's me."

"You do get looked at in the streets. They see the dress and go 'Heads up! Bloody queer! He's mad!' I've had my head beaten in, but I can't fight. Guggi and Strongman are the goers in the band. Guggi looks the most effeminate, but I look heavy. The area where we live near Dublin is pretty heavy. You keep out of it."

He recalls fans turning up in dresses and Doc Martens at gigs and wishes the Prune-punters would think for themselves. The wrong end of the stick . . .

. . . like 'Ballad Of The Man' on the album. A few scratched heads when they heard the rippling strains of a Bruce Springsteen-style epic. "They can't take that. It's a parody of the whole Bruce Springsteen trip."

"I like to think our audience will make their own mind up. We're not going to tell our audience what to do. We don't even talk to the audience, we just play the music and the visuals say it. Unfortunately people like being led to."

The sleeve of the Prunes new Rough Trade album, 'If I Die, I Die', is a similarly startling affair - all woods, flames, loinclots, nipples and nature.

Words like 'pagan' are an easy trap, but the feel is undeniably ancient (he said in Channel 4 voice).

**Gavin:** "The feel is ethnic. I like tribal drums. You don't have to be like that, but the voice is important and we sing in an ethnic way. But we don't like it to be like a 'Quest For Fire' thing."

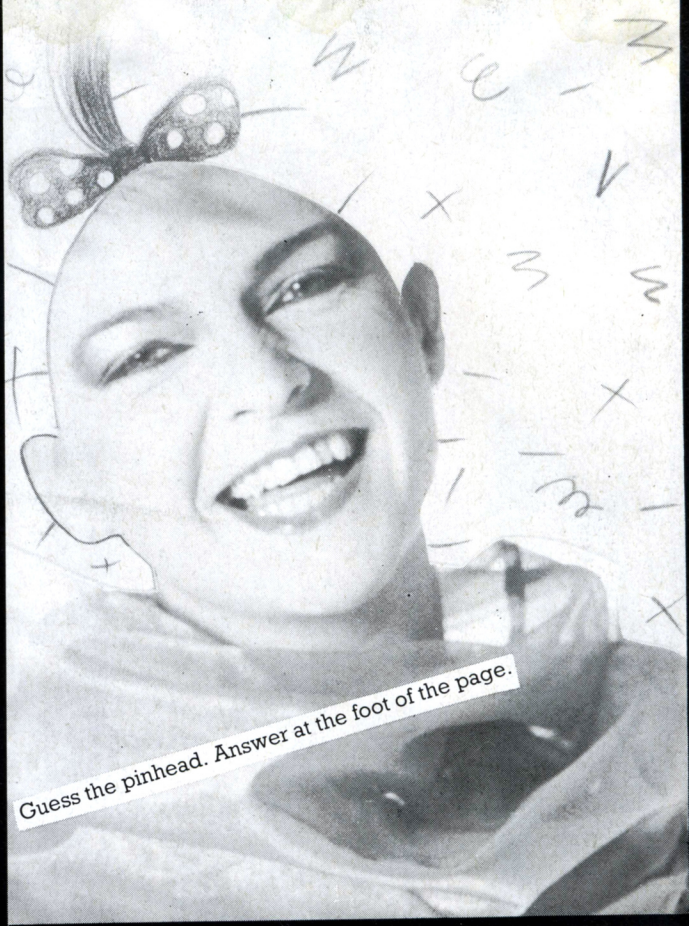
"The album sleeve is supposed to be representative of the record, not the band. One side is reality - we use fire, fighting against it. The other side is earthy and spiritual - no clothes on in a forest. It's the other side of us as people. Now the album's finished. That's it, we've done it. 'A New Form Of Beauty' was '81. It's sad when bands get so caught up. They take it too far and drain it out, make it worthless."

Gavin goes on to praise Frank Sinatra and those geezers who suddenly burst into song at the bar, so who knows where it's going?

The question remains: 'Would you go to Texas in a dress and eat fruit while playing with a dead pig?'

BU-OYY!!

# FLEXIPOP!



Guess the pinhead. Answer at the foot of the page.

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