

Tracking down pop's gay subversives generally sets me on a beeline for England, where camp flirtation and fey extravagance are a stock-in-trade. A trip to the import bins yields some sterling current examples. **Erasure**, who will bring their show to the States in February, boast a new single, "You Surround Me" (Mute/UK). The disc has a non-LP B side that pays tribute to the group's roots in the grandeur of Euro-disco: Cerrone's hit "Supernature" (with lyrics penned by the then-unknown Lene Lovich).

Shadings of lavender and pink come from socialist **Jimmy Somerville** on a 12-inch of Sylvester's "(You Make Me Feel) Mighty Real" (London/UK), backed by "Not So God Almighty," which samples a speech by Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega. **Marc Almond**, gutter romantic and glamour weasel, takes on the cabaret-maudit songbook of Jacques Brel, waxing from melodramatic to autistic on *Jacques* (Some Bizarre/UK).

On the posh and poignant front, the Pet Shop Boys' **Neil Tennant** joins forces with former Smiths' guitarist **Johnny Marr** and New Order synth ace **Bernard Sumner** as **Electronic** on the stunning single "Get Away With It." And they *do*.

Checking out the American front, we've got to bounce from the ebullient camp of the **B-52s** clear past the edge of civility to **Candy J**, whose salacious singles range from the preposterously suggestive "Hurt Me, Hurt Me" (Echo) to the boggling filth of "Desirable Revenge" (Hot Mix Five). Only a queen could dish dick like Candy—a fact that doesn't escape gay deejays but may elude straight fans. While the limeys might make it to MTV, don't count on catching Candy J anytime soon.

MISFITS AND MEGALOMANIACS

Gay outlaw is an oxymoron in today's hard-rock scene. Check out MTV's reigning "outlaw rockers," Guns N' Roses' **Axl Rose** and Skid Road's **Sebastian Bach**. Both are defending their homophobic postures: Rose for his song "One in a Million" and Bach for his having sported a T-shirt stating, AIDS: KILLS FAGGOTS DEAD, at a photo shoot. MTV's current "outlaw comics," **Eddie Murphy**, **Andrew Dice Clay**, and **Sam Kinison**, have also been bashing "fags and bitches" all the way to the bank.

Likewise, mainstream gay culture has little time for nonguppie gonzo queers, be they psychedelic faeries, pro-sex dykes, gender-fuck anarchists, or extravagant nonconformists. These groups demand respect, even though they profess little in-

Scanning the 'Zine Scene

Rumblings From the New Gay Underground

terest in becoming "respectable." They are part of a growing gay subculture, sprung from the do-it-yourself ethos of punk and the spirit of those Judy Garland-Mickey Rooney let's-put-on-a-play-in-the-barn movies. These misfits and megalomaniacs have begun opening clubs, forming bands, and printing their own "zines." They're a crew with little to lose and no time to cavil.

Vaginal Creme Davis, editor of Los Angeles's notorious 'zine *Fertile La Toyah Jackson Magazine*, is the Candy J of publishing. "Honey," she told me, "after I ran that story 'Inside Rob Lowe's Booty Hole,' I got a call from his lawyer threatening to sue! I told him, 'Go ahead, sue a black drag queen. I haven't got anything. All you're gonna win is some used wigs and makeup!'"

Davis is one luminary of the outlaw gay population, who may be best encountered these days through the mail. Alienated from both fatuous pop culture and the mainstream gay press, they've gone out and invented ones of their own. The movement has been brewing for some time (I wrote about *J.D.s* and *My Comrade* a year ago), but the 'zines' burgeoning numbers, bold contents, and relative invisibility call out for even this hasty catalog.

At their best, these 'zines and their offshoots have the force of a sexy, liberating shared secret, like chancing upon a rock-and-roll song or even a particularly luminous piece of gossip that can suddenly give you back your place in the world. Send *cash* for a sample issue to the savages of your choice, and they'll mail back the goods. And if you don't like what you get, go out and start a 'zine of your own. But please, send me a copy when you do.

FAG RAGS

1. *J.D.s*: Still the primo homo-dyke punk 'zine. Sexy and subversive, tender and hilarious. Seems Toronto is the mother of invention. (P.O. Box 1110, Adelaide Street Station, Toronto, Canada M5C 2K5; \$4.)

2. *Fist in Your Face*: First-person accounts of gay muggings. Edited by Candy, creator of the Mary Marvel cartoons and the now-defunct *Doctor Smith*. (383 Markham St., Toronto, Canada M6G 2K8; \$1.)

3. *Jerking Off, Coming On*: Two successive issues of a gay-punk-faerie chapbook. Poetry, fantasies, and journals dealing with everything from AIDS to kids and sex. (Queer Anarchist Network, P.O. Box 6705, Station A, Toronto, Canada, M5W 1X5; \$3.)

4. *Fertile La Toyah Jackson Magazine*: Scandalous, unhinged gossip, glamour tips, and self-promotion by a posse of black drag queens known as the Afro Sisters (who also perform as a band). Fertile is the cover girl, and Vaginal Davis edits. They rate bars and male strippers and offer their own "Queen's Glossary" when not offering dirt on teen stars that the Hollywood Kids would never touch, even if they believed it. A veritable John Waters film of a skinny 'zine. (7850 Sunset Blvd., #110, West Hollywood, CA 90046; \$10 for the past three issues.)

5. *Amoeba Records Compilation Video*: A chance to catch the Afro Sisters performing in "That Fertile Feeling" as well as their alternate incarnation, Cholita ("A female Menudo"), doing "No Controllas." Plus gay, drag label star Glen Meadmore in a video from his first disc, "Lovin' in My Oven," and his just completed "paean to prostitution," "No Money, No Honey," shot among the working boys at the notorious Oki Dog stand in West Hollywood. Label owner Keith Holland promises that the trash-camp productions are "certain to offend some people." Forewarned? (5337 La Cresta Court, Los Angeles, CA 90039; \$16 for VHS tape.)

6. *Sin Bros*: This brilliantly witty Los Angeles newcomer ("For You and Your Kind") offers pieces on unintentionally homoerotic TV, the *Cosmo*-styled quiz "How to Get a Man," parodies of bad gay poetry, and the regular Hollywood gossip feature "My Life as a Celebutant." Editor D. Tor Rex's club, Sit & Spin, takes over 3626 Sunset in Los Angeles on Thursdays. (P.O. Box 618, North Hollywood, CA 91603; \$3 for first three issues.)

7. *BLK*: Not a 'zine but a passionate mag from Los Angeles's black gay and lesbian community, with astute reviews of homophobic rap records and a wicked national gossip column. It's overdue, winningly indiscreet, and highly recommended. (P.O.

Box 83912, Los Angeles, CA 90083; \$2.)

8. *Homocore*: Anarchist skate punk Tom Jennings took the name from *J.D.s* but takes a more dogmatic (if still mischievous) approach. Issue 5 features the pro-drug conclusion of the four-part memoir of a bi hippie punk, a chapter from a dyke-punk novel, Mary Marvel cartoons, record reviews, and scores of letters. (P.O. Box 7731, San Francisco, CA 94107; \$1.)

9. *Taste of Latex*: Lucy Braindrop's pro-sex 'zine features Mary Chester photos, an Annie Sprinkle interview, and a gay fiction titled "Butch Meets Femme." (P.O. Box 460122, San Francisco, CA 94146; \$3.)

10. *Carnifex Network*: Henry Bowers's mantra is "Kill Everything. Legalize Everything." A recent issue includes a poem for a teen hustler, gay book reviews, rants, classifieds, and a pro-bestiality essay. A 'zine for libertines, misfits, and sexual outcasts. (P.O. Box 479164, Chicago, IL 60647; \$1.)

11. *Teen Punks in Heat*: Sympathetic hetero editor Ben Weasal publishes the song "I Wanna Be a Homo!" which he wrote with Bruce LaBruce. A polysexual-punk 'zine with soft-core graphics for boys and girls. (Road Kill, P.O. Box 37, Prospect Heights, IL 60070; \$3 for two issues.)

12. *Holy Tit Clamps*: Cover features radical faeries on a terrorist shopping spree at the local mall's branch of Saks Fifth Avenue. Also a TV's rant against AA. (P.O. Box 3054, Minneapolis, MN 55403; \$1.)

13. *My Comrade*: "We don't follow celebrities—we create them!" Drag queens and Puerto Rican studs in mock-naïf, wryly political scenarios cast out of New York's downtown scene. Professionally done and recruiting national correspondents. (Les Simpson, 326 E. 13th, #15, New York, NY 10015; \$4.)

14. *ABC NO RIO*: Editor Matthew Courtney works with a group of gay anarchists who are into art, sex, and poetry and also run an open cabaret under the same name. They cover anarchist gatherings, attack mass culture, and look at the relationship of sex to the bomb, weddings, and S-M. Eclectic, heady, and very pro. (156 Rivington, New York, NY 10002; \$3.)

15. *AQUA*: Possibly the original queer anarchist journal. Bru Dye returns with a third issue, which includes poetry, pagan-faerie essays, and such stories as "Gays 'n' Bunks," "Safer Sex for Women," and "Cruising Nicaragua." (The Association for Ontological Anarchy, P.O. Box 1251, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; \$1.)

—Adam Block