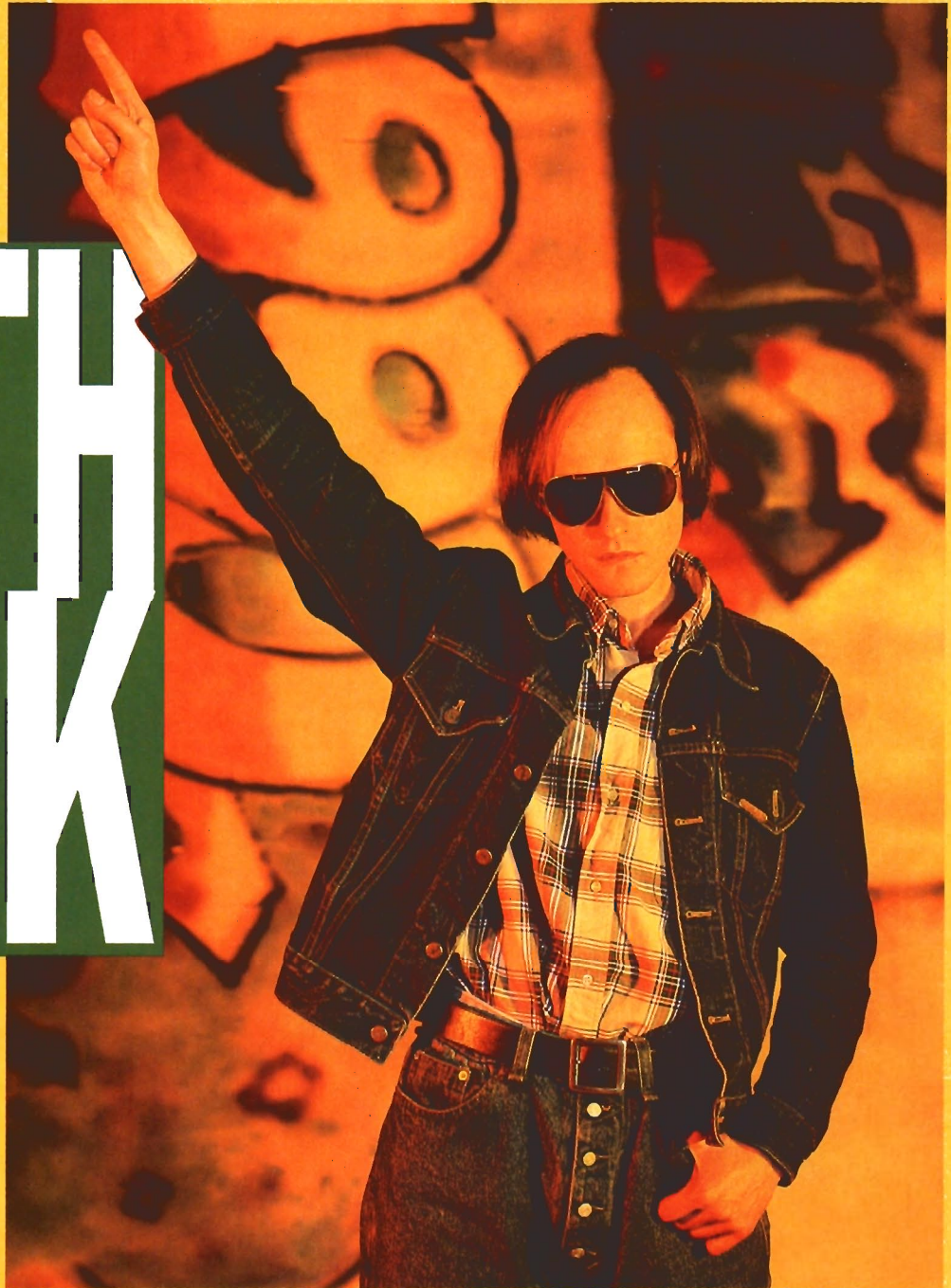




**DENIM**

# CLOTH ROCK



**Remember those halcyon days when tank tops were de rigueur?**

**DENIM's LAWRENCE does, and proves it on 'Back in Denim'.**

**Words by Max.**

I may sue. No sooner had Lawrence infected me with his reminiscences of the Seventies and his vision for the Nineties than I became listless, my eyelids felt heavy and I started to drool as I dwelled on my school days, when to admit to liking chart music in the presence of Deep Purple or ELP fans meant certain ridicule.

Even before we mentioned Denim, we spent a good twenty minutes swapping memories of Birmingham before, during and after punk rock. Then, once the interview was over, I found myself yearning for the glitter days and shed a silent tear for the records that punk made me sell, swap or throw away. Like I said, I may sue.

"Yeah, I cleared the decks in '77 too. From thirteen to fifteen, I was in a bit of a wilderness. I'd see Hall & Oates advertised as playing the Birmingham Odeon in the Evening Mail, thinking 'who are they?'. When I saw them on 'The Whistle Test' I wondered what it was all about. But punk spoke to me, I really identified with it.

So why this current preoccupation with the early Seventies?

"After Felt, I started to think about when I was

a teenager in the Seventies and I saw how I could put those feelings to music. It was 1990 and there was no Seventies retro music apart from the perennial Carwash thing. No-one was investigating the 'white rock' of the time, like Lieutenant Pigeon, Pilot, Chicory Tip etc."

Where are they now? That's what I want to know. I seem to remember the charts always being jammed full of cracking stuff.

"There were more consistently good tunes. I saw a Top Ten chart from twenty years ago and I liked every single record. I couldn't say that about a 1992 chart. Things weren't better then. I do believe in the future, but the Seventies seemed to have more tunes, songs, melodies."

I couldn't help but agree. Maybe we were gazing at those days through the old rose-tinted specs, but I don't often find myself whistling the latest chart hits whilst prowling the streets.

Before you get the impression that Lawrence and I cosily agreed on everything, I must point out

that I'm not sure I could get into his almost total dismissal of roots music and his desire to create a Kraftwerk-esque form of, robotic rock. Surely his glittering heroes owed something to rock'n'roll?

"If you study a Glitter Band record, you see it's rock'n'roll, but they were trying to do something with it, bring it into the Space Age. The Seventies was full of moon landings and space exploration and bands like The Glitter Band were matching the music to the times. After rock'n'roll's burst, roots music froze in time and didn't progress. We're led to believe that nothing could be better than Little Richard or someone. Well I think The Glitter Band tops him very nicely!

OK. Check out the Seventies, bang it into shape and sling it into the Nineties. But do I detect an Eighties American new wave tinge to Denim's debut album, 'Back In Denim'?

"You might find a Kim Wilde kind of Eighties in my music, that plastic rock guitar sound like on 'Water On Glass' or 'Kids In America'. There was