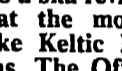


HOT LICKS

WHEN Frank Murray, ex-manager of The Pogues, first saw Dublin band The Frames play at a concert in London, he was instantly enthralled and deemed their debut single, "The Dancer", "the best Irish single since 'Teenage Kicks' by The Undertones". Murray now manages the six-piece band, who release their first album, "Another Love Song", on Monday. The Frames are all ex-Grafton Street buskers who recorded some of their entertaining street songs on a demo tape which found its way into the hands of record company representatives; Island records were the first to swoop down on the personable bunch.

The band's lead singer, **Glen Hansard**, put down his guitar long enough to tell the column that "we have a strange mixture in the band, some are heavy metallers, some are funkies, we have bits of everything and that comes out in the music. On the new album some of the songs are a reflection of what we've all been listening to, we are still at the stage where we are fans of other bands".

The band, collectively, list a diverse range of musical influences which include Bob Dylan, AC/DC, T-Rex and Fairport Convention and **Glen Hansard** says "people who think the album is going to be all-indie or all Irish folk or all raggle-taggle are going to be disappointed — it's a surprising mixture of styles". The album was produced by Gil Norton (of Echo and The Bunnymen fame) and the video for the first single, "Masquerade", was produced by Richie Smith (who did "The Fly" and "Even Better Than The Real Thing" for U2). The Frames are playing the **Project Arts Centre** on the 11th and **Glen Hansard** is playing a special one-off solo concert at The Clifden Country Blues Festival tomorrow night (late night at The Clifden Bay Hotel).



THERE's a ska revival afoot in Dublin at the moment with bands like Keltic Posse, The Umbrellas, The Officials, The Gangsters and Freres Jackman keeping the city safe for skanking. Ska music began in Jamaica in the 1950s when local bands doing covers of rhythm and blues songs added in an uptempo jazz beat. The new sound, a musical cousin of reggae, became popular in Britain and gained a whole new audience at the tail-end of the punk movement when The Specials, The Selector and The English Beat were regulars in the charts.

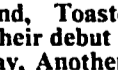
Pat Jackman of Freres Jackman (and The International Elevators, to give them their full name) says that the current Dublin ska revival "has a lot to do with the fact that it is great dance music and unlike the current disco dance music, ska has rock credibility". It also has lyrics that don't start and stop with "Let's all boogie", but that's another story.

"We like the music because it has a good, tight rhythm," adds Pat Jackman. "I wouldn't call it message music, but you can have protest lyrics. Our band like to have a lot of fun on stage; we do three-part harmonies and we have loads of stage antics to get the audience dancing. We're not a po-faced indie band or a record contract band — in fact, we're probably only two steps away from cabaret. But don't print that." (Whoops, sorry).

If you want a blast of the ska sound, you can catch Freres Jackman at The Rock Garden tomorrow night (late) and at The Baggot Inn next Thursday (9 p.m.) So as you won't embarrass yourselves, the trick to doing the two-step ska dance is to bow your stiff upper body forward in time to the music while your knees remain bent and your arms are fanned out and criss-crossed. This should be practised at home before you go out.



THE "slamming musical fervour" of Megadeth will echo around The Point Depot on the 25th of this month in the first of a series of "death metal" concerts at the venue. Metallica, a band who have been at the forefront of the thrash metal movement, will loosen your teeth on October 30th, while Faith No More appear on November 30th. The blitzkrieg finishes on the 8th of December when Extreme present, for your delectation, "manic, no-holds-barred rock".



THE much-talked-about Galway band, Toasted Heretic, release their debut album, "Another Day, Another Riot" next week and according to the band, "if it doesn't make your life worth living, at least it will bring truth and beauty to your last hours". Quite. Described as "the art-throbs of tomorrow" the band have previously released two cassette-only albums, "Songs For Swinging Celibates" and "Charm and Arrogance" which found their way as far afield as Singapore and Australia thanks to the band's own mail-order service. They are one of the most original bands to come out of this country in recent years and they launch their new album with a concert in Trends in Galway next Friday night.

Brian Boyd