

A LITTLE BIT OF

MITCH is messing with the HEAVY METAL KIDS

the GO SET interview:

FATE is definitely smiling on Sydney group, Hush. Years of dues-paying and sensible money-handling have resulted in an exciting rock outfit who are the talking point of rock-interested folk in and out of the country. Wizard Records waved their magic wand and secured the talents of Hush to a long-term recording contract and their last Warner Brothers' single, "Man-Eater", is currently headed for chart action. The "rush" that Hush give is finally proving as good as they get.

Being a rock-writer ain't all fun, despite what you think. Nine times out of ten, interviewing is simply a ritualistic job with the questions descending to the uninspired level of the answers. A most notable exception are the four Hush members who, individually, or collectively, brighten up the dulllest day.

Hush are always 'passing through Sydney, headed north or south on their busy tour schedule, yet their energy level remains high. A lot of credit must go to their lovable manager, Peter Rix, who puts concern for the boys' health, wealth and happiness above all else. He has an uncanny knowledge of their breaking point and always knows when to call a halt to their working day. Because of this concern, Hush always give a 100 per cent performance on and off stage and negative thoughts are rarely entertained in their creative minds.

On this particular occasion, the group picked me up in a rather snazzy car and we wound our way through the narrow streets of Sydney's Eastern suburbs to a converted Church which is the studio home of photographer, Graham McCartney — a man whose talents with the camera were sussed out by no less than The Rolling Stones during their Australian tour. The group had recently completed a highly-successful tour with English group, Georgie, who had publicly and privately, expressed their admiration for Hush in a refreshingly, non-competitive fashion. Hush, it seems, were equally fond of the fun-loving Newcastle lads:

"They were fantastic", said Rick Lum, bass guitarist for Hush, recalling the good times of the tour. "It was nice to work with an overseas band who suggested you come over to their country. They were so straight-forward and naturally friendly."

Following the Georgie tour, Hush were in Melbourne when the

news of release from their Warner Brothers' contract reached them. Instantly, they had meetings with Ernie Rose, producer at Armstrongs Studios, hit it off well and began recording their second album — this one under their new Wizard contract. Smiley, flushed with excitement, told me: "It's unbelievable — we've even amazed ourselves."

His pride cannot be viewed as vanity because, up until now, Hush have been guided more by love than recording expertise. It was the unanimous opinion of the music industry that all Hush needed was the right producer:

"We got him in Ernie", said guitarist, Les Gock, looking decidedly sleazy in a black, felt hat, pulled down over his oriental eyes. "Everything was just right for the album. Armstrong's Studio is so conducive to recording and Ernie had the ability to demand the very best from each of us. It was brilliant working with him and, likewise, he enjoyed working with us. It was like three years experience crammed into a week of recording. He added whole new dimensions to our sound because he understood what we were trying to do. If a song wasn't going right, he would come into the studio and dance for us. Inevitably, the very next take would be perfect."

"Did you tell Mitch about Ernie's dancing?" cut in Keith at that precise moment. Goodnight Keith.

During the conversation, the various members were called by Graham for naked-to-the-waist shots. Made me feel good, too,

'cause even my flat chest looked remarkably big next to these guys. And not a hairy chest between the four of them!

Eventually, we head for the corner shop, where ice-creams and chocolates are purchased before motoring down to Woolloomooloo where the album cover will be photographed. The talk centres on the "Man-Eater" single being picked up for airplay:

"It's on high-rotation on 2SM", Keith proudly informed me, refusing to grin too widely in case I see the dreadful damage done to his front teeth in a confrontation with an uncontrollable microphone stand. "It took a long time, but it's finally been given a chance although, in Newcastle, they had to take it off because a listener complained that the lyrics are dirty!"

Down at the 'Loo, where the antiquated terraced houses are deserted while the council decides how many concrete blocks it can put up, and we crawl through even narrower alleyways, looking for a suitable wall to act as a backdrop. Success finally, then Graham has awful trouble stopping Smiley from doing what his name suggests, as the pictures call for sullen looks. A great deal of position, gear and expression-changing ensues before the mission is completed and we return to the studio to chat some more.

Les is usually nominated spokesman and we make ourselves comfortable as Les sketches a reasonable look-alike of Wizard boss, Tony Hogarth, and a less-fortunate attempt of yours truly. Rick gets in on the act and comes up with a more flattering piece which everyone signs and I eventually hang on the wall of my offices.

The album! That is definitely uppermost on Les's mind and he proceeds with a run-down of each track:

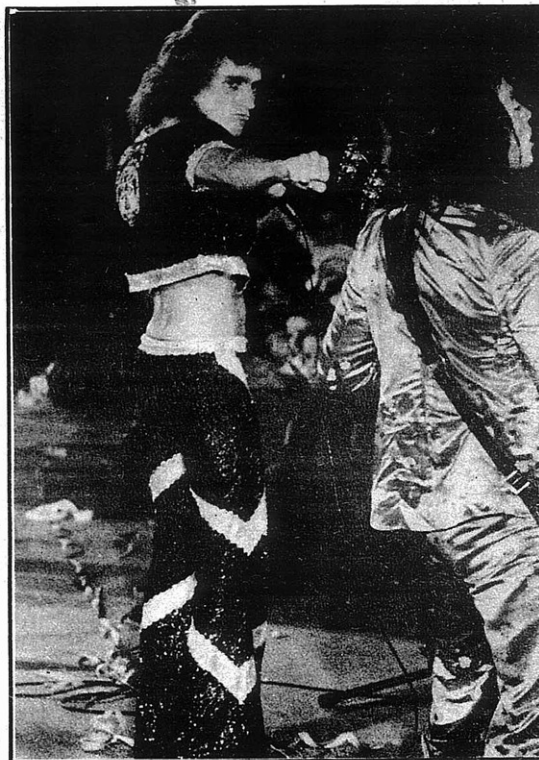
"It starts with the title track, 'Get Rocked', combined with the Stones' 'Satisfaction' — which, incidentally, is the only song we didn't write on the album. 'Get Rocked' is a love song. We had the title and we just wrote the song around it. From the reaction it gets on stage, we knew it was a good song and, on the album, it sounds very funky and sexual."

Peter Rix had mentioned earlier that the boys opened their new stage act with the Theme from "Enter the Dragon", going into a song called "Nanchunka Man". Les said it was a personal favourite of the group:

"It starts with a fantastic bass run through a wah-wah pedal, some freaky guitar effects and a sudden, terrifying scream from Rick. For those who don't know what 'Nanchunka' means, it is a Kung-Fu weapon made of wood and wielded about on a chain. The song is about an old Chinese legend concerning a Chinese Robin Hood how steals from the rich and gives to the poor. One day he meets the Emperor and there's a sad ending."

"One song that will surprise people who dig Hush and want to see what they can do with a beautiful ballad is 'South Coast Standards'. It's about our band, but it could easily apply to most groups. You know, trying to get a record played and getting down. People used to say about us 'who are these idiots?' but we stuck to our guns and we're doing okay now."

"We wrote the song after doing our third gig in one day. The audience were a bit cool and we had to work really hard to win



them over, despite our exhaustion. It was a minor achievement for us, but it's a constant battle all the time, so we wrote the song on the way home. We used strings on the track and there's a lovely piano passage.

"Of course, there are the Hush smash-grabbers, like 'Mind-Rocker' which is in the best Hush tradition. It blasts from start to finish and is guaranteed to turn the oldies off."

Prior to doing an album, Hush spent two glorious weeks on the 'Fedor Shalyapin' — a Russian ship — and it was inevitable the cruise would inspire at least one track:

"We were so relaxed and happy on the ship", said Les, "and one song that captures the serenity is 'Rocking the Boat' which has a Jamaican feel."

"What about 'Francis Rain-bow'?" prompted Keith who, as it

