

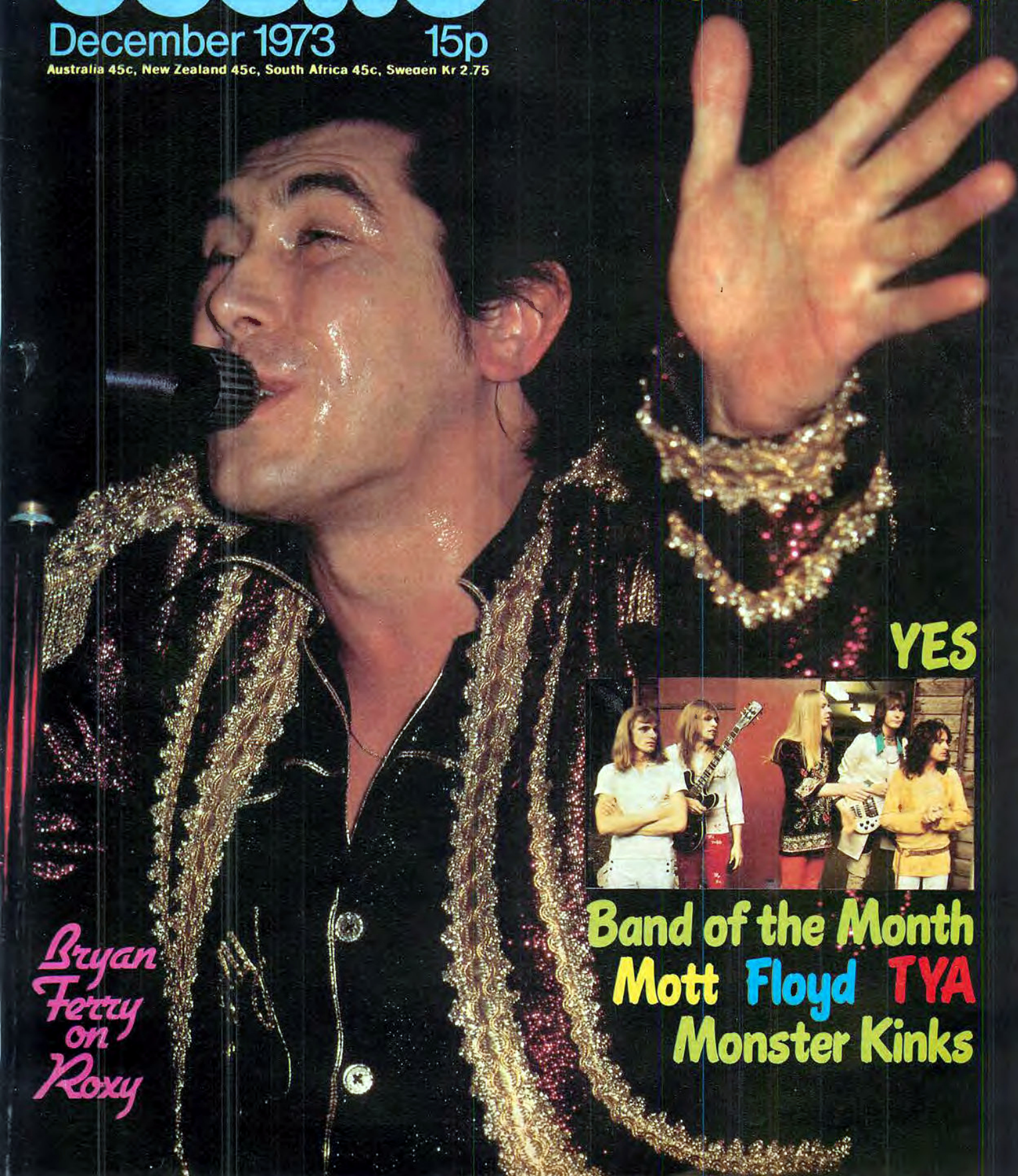
COMPETITION - FREE PRECISION TAPE

Music scene

December 1973 15p

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New-style Bolan
*Bowie-Prophet
without Honour*



*Bryan
Ferry
on
Roxy*

YES



Band of the Month
Mott Floyd TYA
Monster Kinks

Music Scene

Band of the Month

YES

HAVING YOUR HEAD SCREWED on in this business isn't a bad idea, especially as there are a lot of sharks about only too eager and willing to nick all they can from an unsuspecting group and nip off with the proceeds leaving the artist to literally face the music

Fortunately for themselves, Yes learned at an early stage that having a working knowledge of the financial side as well as the musical side of the business can be a big help and their belief has been borne out by a good deal of success, healthy individual bank accounts and the freedom to explore new avenues.

So many musicians sneer at the big business side of the music industry that it is refreshing to hear someone as well-respected as Jon Anderson state with

conviction: "It's all very well writing songs, but it's a lot easier if you've got a revox, piano, bass and drums to help."

That doesn't seem such an obvious thing to say when he qualifies it thus: "I want to be able to get the facilities to expand my musical knowledge with the money that's made from making sure we play the right places at the right time. All of us in the band realise that music isn't just for the next twenty years, it's for all time. We have all got lots of things we want to do as individuals."

There are, however, limits to the Yes-business involvement.

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"The hierarchy of business, the power game, is very dangerous, so we leave that alone when it comes up and get on with our music. But we are aware of what is going on so we can make sure that our taxes are always right. We have seen so many other bands stepped on by the Government who take so much from rock music and put

nothing back. Over the last ten years of rock and roll there have been a lot of casualties. I've always felt that one day the record companies are going to have to put something back into it."

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Yes are in the fortunate position of being a top-flight band, commanding respect and power as well as admiration. Their beginnings are as interesting as their current philosophies.

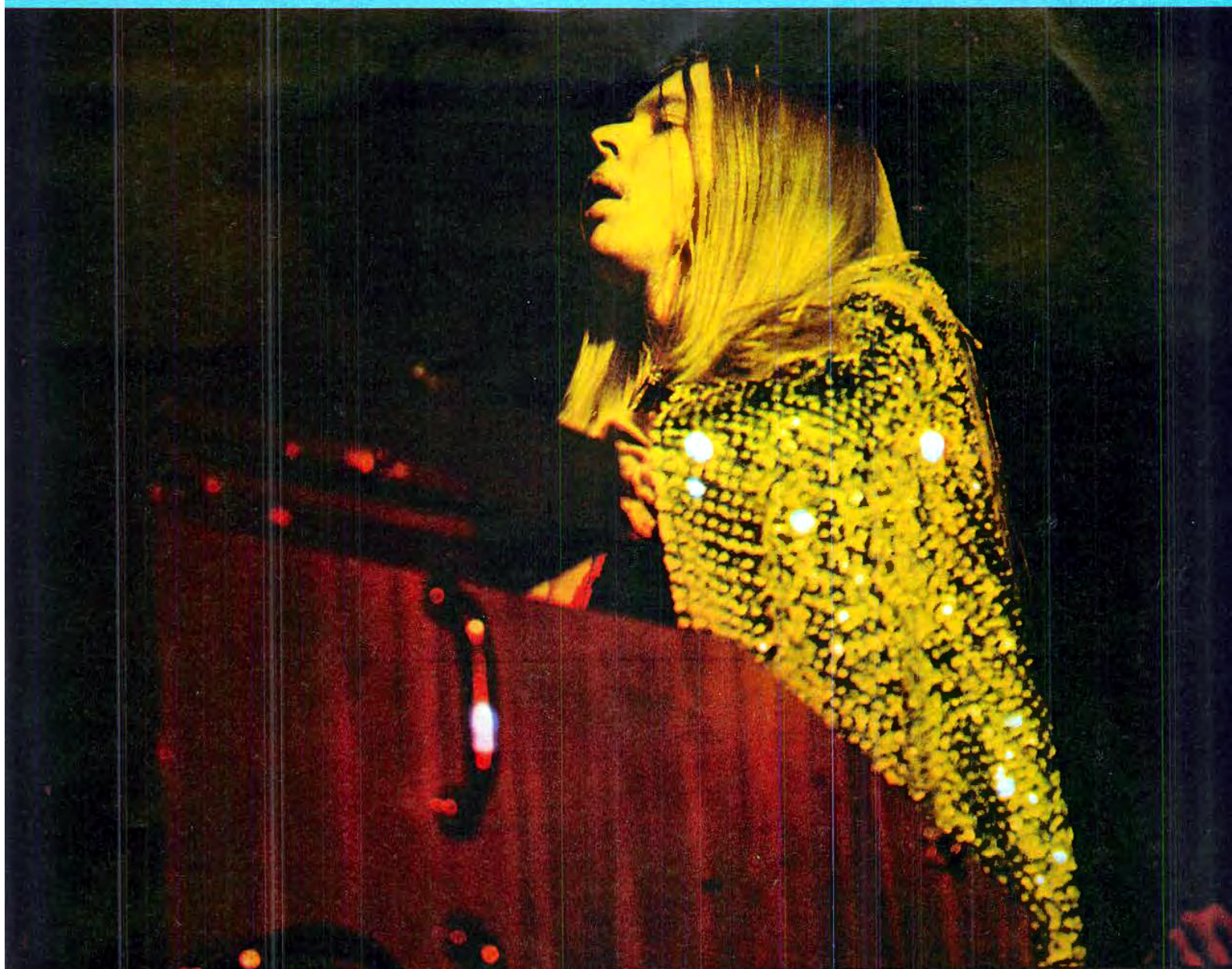
As he poured more tea in the lounge of his terraced house in Bayswater, Jon told me: "The initial idea was to make a Nice with vocals — they were the creative element for a lot of bands, they turned a lot of people on to classics. They were a good band to learn from. I used to listen to vocal groups like Association, Beach Boys and Fifth Dimension.

"We just put a show together during one month's rehearsal and worked solid for six . . . turn to page 22





Yes (top, l-r) Jon Anderson and Rick Wakeman; (bottom, l-r) Steve Howe, Alan White and Chris Squire. Pictures by Robert Failla and Mike Putland.



Discography

SINGLES

Sweetness/Something's Coming (Atlantic — deleted)
Sweet Dreams/Dear Father (Atlantic — deleted)

ALBUMS:

1969 **YES**

Beyond and Before/I See You/Yesterday and Today/Looking Around/Harold Land/Every Little Thing/Sweetness/Survival. (Atlantic)

1970 **TIME AND A WORD**

No Opportunity Necessary No Experience Needed/Then/Everydays/Sweet Dreams/The Prophet/Clear Days/Astral Traveller. (Atlantic)

1971 **THE YES ALBUM**

Yours Is No Disgrace/The Clap/Starship Trooper/Life Seeker/Disillusion/Wurm/I've Seen All Good People/Your Move/All Good People/A Venture/Perpetual Change. (Atlantic)

1971 **FRAGILE**

Roundabout/Cans and Brahams/We Have Heaven/South Side Of The Sky/Five Per Cent For Nothing/Long Distance Runaround/The Fish (Schindleria Praematurus)/Mood For A Day/Heart Of The Sunrise. (Atlantic)

1972 **CLOSE TO THE EDGE**

Close to the Edge/The Solid Time Of Change/Total Mass Retain/I Get Up I Get Down/Seasons Of Man/And You And I/Cord of Life Eclipse/The Preacher The Teacher/Siberian Khatru. (Atlantic)

1973 **YESSONGS Volume 1**

Siberian Khatru/Heart Of The Sunrise/Perpetual Change/And You And I/Cord Of Life/Eclipse/The Preacher The Teacher/The Apocalypse. (Atlantic)

Volume 2.

Mood For A Day/Excerpts From The Six Wives Of Henry VIII/Roundabout/Your Move/All Good People/Long Distance Runaround/The Fish (Schindleria Praematurus). (Atlantic)

Volume 3.

Close To The Edge/The Solid Time Of Change/Total Mass Retain/I Get Up I Get Down/Seasons Of Man/Yours Is No Disgrace/Starship Trooper/Life Seeker/Disillusion/Wurm. (Atlantic)

1973 **TALES FROM TOPOGRAPHIC OCEAN**

Magical And Revealing Signs Of God/Remembering Of Your Own Life And Other Lives In The Creation/Ancient Civilisation Before Ours/The Ritual Of Life, The Reality, The Strength And The Beauty Of Life And Us Have Got To Come Into Consideration All The Time.

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months for about £25 a night. We did the Cream farewell gig, that was a carrot if ever there was!"

An Atlantic contract was welcome, but other things didn't look too good. Jon recalls that the time was coming when there would be two major splits — Yes and manager Roy Flynn, and Yes and lead guitarist Pete Banks.

"The band was getting to the state where we couldn't carry on as a warm family when Pete Banks didn't give a damn. We got Steve Howe in and that was the turning point I think. We raced forward for a year and kinda left Tony Kaye behind and got Rick Wakeman together and he's been steaming away since then. He's got about ten keyboards now, he's gone crazy."

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Resisting the temptation to dive straight in to the American market, Yes waited until after their third album, then they did three Stateside treks one after the other — the first with the late Jethro Tull — then another, then a seven-weeker covering colleges and other small venues.

"We got a single from the 'Yes' album in the top twenty," Jon recalled. "We thought they would buy the album, but they bought the single and then the album. 'Fragile' got to number seven and it's developed since. We did the same in Japan this year, doing five thousand-seaters. We didn't want to steam in as bands have steamed in, we just wanted to make sure the places were full because we're not that well known in Japan, but next time people will want to see us and we can fill bigger halls."

Yes also realise the importance of their albums as a means of communication and as a thermometer of success.

Talking about their various LPs, Jon commented: "'Closer To The Edge' was a big mark for us, being able to play twenty minutes of music and holding an audience listening to us. It's good to be able to keep an audience in touch with the concept for twenty minutes because they go through

changes. We'd been doing arrangements (surely one of Yes's strong suits) for so long we couldn't just say 'We'll blow it now and do some rock and roll.'

"That album was a pre-conceived idea. We had a lot of the elements but they needed sorting out and it took a long time. 'Fragile' was one of those very quick albums that we had to finish in a certain time and as it turned out it had a lot of new elements of music in it. Initially 'Yessongs' was an important album. We heard ourselves 'Live' on cassette. It's very exciting to hear yourself like this because you remember exactly where it was recorded and when and I know just how I felt at the time. It was a Yes people's album.

"I didn't expect it to be a big hit, we put it out as cheaply as we could and I'm very surprised it's done as well as it has. The new one, 'Hail From The Topographic Ocean', is a double album. We put down four tracks in demo style which is the first time we've ever done this, then we started recording from the beginning. It's given us a little insight into what we're going to do. It's the first time we've really planned it. This one could be good for the critics, they could go to town on it.

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"'Yessongs' is a good link between 'Closer To The Edge' and 'Hail From The Topographic Ocean'. Every band wants to put out a 'live' album to show what they are capable of doing 'live'. We realised that we had to do something in the range of our certain kind of music, something substantial that people that liked the band would get the ultimate enjoyment from, and this new album is a four-part work running an hour and twenty minutes."

For no apparent reason that I can now recall, Jon began talking about the life of a band, commenting: "A band is a school to learn about rock and roll. It's very simple. It's a very enjoyable lifestyle as well. I used to work on a farm and I used to enjoy it but although it was bloody hard work — it's the

same with tours, you accept the travelling and the Holiday Inns, it's all part of the game, it's the two hours on stage that matter. If we're not on stage people think we're not working. We had two months off at the beginning of this year and that was the first time we weren't working for four years. You learn a lot when you're touring and when I come home I start writing."

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Summing up all his thoughts about Yes, his career and the future, Jon says: "We carry on hopefully measuring up to what we're getting from the music. If you dropped out for a couple of years you could never catch up unless you're very good. People like Neil Sedaka get so involved they forget about their music and that it was the music that put them there in the first place. If you go backwards you always feel you could have done better, but as we're going steadily forwards we realise there are people better than us.

"When I listen to Sibelius I can see that level of purity that I know I'll never reach, but I can think about expanding my musicianship and work hard on it and it'll come through in the end that at least you've tried hard on it. After the band has been going a while we wanted to become as well known as the Nice and Family and when we'd done that we wanted to make it in America and then there's always something else. That's why I can never understand people dropping out."

words: Richard Green/
 picture: Robert Failia