ROCKER'S REPORT

- Julian Cope, Variety Arts Center, Aug. 5.

Frequent, tiresome references have been made to Julian Cope's selfishment in the Rock God Big House, wardens Osterberg and Morrison presiding. This comes not only from his acid-damage music, squirming stage protensions or standard-issue leather pants, but from his terminal case of ego edema, resulting in the messianic Saint Julian album. No one told Tamworth, England's greatest import that one usually has to die to hit martyr status, although the systematic slash-and-burn of brain cells may turn out to be a secondary route.

But enough about image and persona. Cope is one of the few artists who cultivates his talent as carefully as his lifestyle. The set ripped in with "Trampoline," a tough little number that juiced up through hell. Like his paramour Ms. Lunch, Cope is one of the more prodigious artists when it comes to lancing those sociopsychic boils. But it takes more than a Sisters of Mercy-like fog show, harsh lighting, getting fuddled up on stage and occasionally flashing public hair to transform somewhat dreary dromings into some form of either terrifying, aggressive or transcendent music-vision. Great musicians, haphazard performance, same old attitude. Why don't they do something as revolutionary as their initial work has been — like put out an album of New Age music?

As for Richard Kern's films, he's gotten certain New York anti-celebrities to act out their wildest porno-flick and snuff-film fantasies in the name of some kind of art, and it was amusing to watch Screamin-ettes, they who would pattern themselves...
As fashionable ghouls, fleeing in grossed-out horror at the cinematic sight of a man shaving his pubic hair. A genuine successor to underground filmmakers like Kenneth Anger, Kern’s unapologetic work will have most people getting too hung up on the visceral punch to see where the impulse to make these films comes from. However, for those of us who have seen plenty of fake-films and know every slasher film trick in the book, this stuff was fairly laughable. We know people can cut themselves and bleed and have weird sex and jerk off and freak out and make ugly faces and do all kinds of torturous shit... So what? But then, “so what?” seemed to be the general mood of the evening.

— Aron Berger

**Wiseblood, Lydia Lunch, Richard Kern’s Deathtrip Films, Scream, Aug. 7.**

Lydia Lunch has assumed the form of some modern Clytemnestra, a broken mirror reflecting a doomed society on its last gasp-go-round. For five minutes or so she stood there like the flipside of Tammy Baker’s devil doll, a devil doll preachin’ her version of Armageddon and gettin’ a rise from the peas. For those who still have a need to work out their self-abusive fantasies so they can re-enforce a chosen concept of “reality” as some straight-to-hell shit-hole, for those who let that funk, murderous animal nature run wild rather than trying to tame the damn critic, Lydia Lunch is the meal ticket. However, no matter how artlessly awful we found Ms. Lunch’s abbreviated tantrums (and she is never at a loss for words), we also found the whole thing almost quaint in its new pro forma nihilism. Of course, it doesn’t matter one iota to Lydia Lunch if we subscribe to her vision of the world, or even if we like her performance. That’s the correct defensive stance for an artist like her to take. But she’s not an idiot. In fact, she’s fucking brilliant when she wants to be. Which makes the inexplicable predictability of what she does all the more frustrating.

Wiseblood is the latest project for the man with a thousand names and backing tracks, Clint/ Jim/ Feetus/Brin. Aided and abetted by another sonic terrorist, Rol Mosiman, Wiseblood on record can sound like Stravinsky on bad acid, zapped-out Leony Tunes from Camarillo driving a Harley Scratchy 45 on a portable turntable. Oh well. Why should they bother anyway, it’s only the FILMS, an integral part of the COMPLETE show.

And certainly, according to their unprofessional bohoyoum, why the hell should my portion of the show be lit so that possibly the audience might be actually able to see me in my only performance in the entire area for what will surely after this be a long time as possible, because frankly, I JUST CAN’T STAND IDIOTS.

— Aron Berger

**Rock City Angels, Scream, Aug. 8.**

Scream seems to pack out when trendy bands like Demolition Gore Galore play, but when an honest-to-good rock & roll band like this headlines, it seems as if the Screamers are too cool to show their dyed-black heads. The very presence of the Rock City Angels blows the cover off all those pseudo-junkies buying trinkets on Melrose. The Angels may have elements of punk, a touch of glam and the requisite street trappings, but they’ve also got something a lot of other local trend-comes are missing — depth. Their music doesn’t come from Aeromix, it goes right for the roots, starting from 40s blues and 50s soul. Those influences are more felt than heard, as they should be — after all, this is music that depends on feel. The Angels don’t look much different from other L.A. pretenders, but behind the cowboy hats and guttersnipe wardrobe beats a lot of heart. When singer Bobby Durango performed Otis Redding’s “These Arms of Mine,” his eyes glistened with tears. It wasn’t put on. Occasionally, this group may act like it doesn’t give a damn; at the same time, they aren’t afraid to drop the facade that most bands try to define. As for all you shallow posers who paint pretty pictures over an empty shell — take a hike! No one missed you, anyway.

— James Gerza

**LETTER FROM LYDIA**

*August 10, 1987*

To whom it may concern:

Enraged as usual by the complete incompetence of people who by now should be able to complete the simple functions for which they are paid and employed to do, I can no longer squelch the hideous and overpowered disappointment, frustration and anger that still plagues me after the events that took place on the night of August 7, 1987 at the SCREAM.

After looking forward to and planning for weeks our return to the Los Angeles area, I was sadly reminded of exactly the type of behavior which drove me out of this insidious hellhole in the first place.

In a futile attempt to assure that the show would go on as planned, I had placed at least 10 phone calls to Dayle, the booking agent for that moronic inferno for which we had the incredible misfortune to perform our only Los Angeles show at.

After having received the list of our various technical requirements at least six weeks in advance, and post said phone calls, I felt that surely there would be no room for inaccuracies or discrepancies. I should have known better and am still kicking myself for foolishly trusting someone based on their agreeable and pseudo-symphonic phone manners.

Upon arrival at soundcheck, which proceeded to take five hours, since the entire staff of the SCREAM seemed to either be stoned, stupid or possibly nearly brain dead, we still had not even half our lighting requirements and a soundcheck level which completely belied what was soon to be haphazardly presented as the actual show. Having heard that the notorious RATMAN (known for originally building BLACK FLAG’S P.A.) was in charge of sound, we stupidly felt that he could at least be trusted to present a decent level of comprehensible volume, but I was once again proved foolishly wrong in trusting ANYONE to have the slightest amount of personal responsibility.

To begin my incredible infuriation, the sound for the DEATHTRIP films was akin to listening to a

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