

A close-up portrait of Madonna with voluminous, curly red hair. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She has bright red lipstick and is wearing a gold chain necklace. The background is a warm, orange-red gradient.

COUNTDOWN

CW91

MAGAZINE

POSTERS OF: MADONNA • SPRINGSTEEN
• PAUL YOUNG • POWER STATION

BURSTING INTO **FLAME!**

a rock'n'roll fairy tale

**SPRINGSTEEN
PRINCE
MENTALS
TEARS FOR FEARS
JAGGER
POWER STATION**

Registered in Australia Post No. NBQ-5314
\$2.00 (New Zealand \$2.50)
ISSUE NO. 20 APRIL 1985

THE Set up



COUNTDOWN



It's the only time the music industry gets together and really calls itself an industry," says Grant Rule, the Executive Producer of Countdown. He's talking about the Countdown Awards, of course, which will be held for their sixth year in May.

"Every year we ask ourselves 'Is it worth it?'" admits Grant, "because it is very, very painful to put on, due to the diverse nature of the industry. It takes five or six months solid work and is very expensive. Also, there is an enormous logistical problem — getting everyone in the one place at the one time. There are approximately

200 people involved. You have the crew on the night and the week of rehearsal, the artists and, say, 10 bands and 15 presenters, plus all the technical staff. Then, during the pre-production period there is all the Countdown unit and the music industry people who make contributions."

Getting the awards together sounds like an organiser's nightmare — where does one start?

"The first stage is technical — the setting up of voting structures, the updating of voting caucuses (comprising of those making a considerable contribution to the industry), then we

THE AWARDS



The Countdown Command Centre (pic: John Webber).

meet with the industry and finalise the lists."

Viewers of this year's awards will find that new categories have been set up to reflect changes in the industry:

"We have added video awards which the music industry vote for i.e. the best video director category is voted by directors. However, the public still vote for the most popular male, female, group and international act."

The organisers try to make the voting process as democratic as possible but problems can crop up, such as the definition of categories: "One of the biggest problems we had

was deciding what constitutes debut talent," says Grant. "For example does Tim Finn going solo become debut talent? The spirit of the debut category was to encourage people to enter the business and make a mark of it. Under the technical description of an entry it was possible for Tim to be described as debut, so a ruling was made."

Meanwhile, producer Walter Boston is busy behind the scenes. He tries to arrange an appearance for bands who might be among the winners on the night. This is particularly difficult to judge because, in a true atmosphere of suspense, not

even the Countdown executives know the results before the big night.

"They are handed the results by Price Waterhouse only half an hour before the show goes to air," says Grant.

"Walter also works on the look and style of the sets, which involves designers, graphic artists and animators - keeping in mind what we are trying to say this year and how it can be different to last year."

The bands, of course, may have their own ideas about their image, which may not fit Countdown's theme. This calls for negotiations between band and show. "You have to meet on common ground," explains Grant.

Being a retrospective honouring of the past year's music, there must be a decision made as to whether the show will feature last year's music or something current: "When we started off we dominated the awards with that year's music. But it's 1985 and the industry is vibrant, so we blend and balance the two. For example, INXS might win an award but why have them play last year's song-let's have them presenting their new single. However, a hot contender might not be releasing a new single, so to be fair we'll let them do last year's song. The artists want to make the most of it, because they have free access to the footage.

"They're some of the difficult decisions which have to be made."

The next step lies in negotiating appearances by overseas artists. People often question this - why an Australian Awards show should have overseas guests.

"We have to come back to the fact that we are making a television show," says Grant. "The audience expects to see the best of Australian and international talent. Anyway, having an international act pay tribute to our talent is a tribute to Australian music."

This year the Countdown Awards will be broadcast from a larger venue to accommodate the massive numbers: "We are going into the Entertainment Centre in Sydney solving the problem of where to sit over 1000 industry people, plus the audience.

"We are aware that we have had complaints over the years about the noise of the audience, but I think the problems are more technically orientated. We have to be considerate of both sides. To both the kids and the people in the industry. The Awards are a big deal."

BY DEBBIE MARTIN.



SWEET AND SOUR

Now you can be wrapped in the Sweet and Sour Windcheater for \$19.99 or the T-Shirt for \$10.99. Sizes range from Small to Medium and Large

They're available from ABC Shops or other record stores and by writing to ABC Shop Post, Box 10 000 in your capital city



THE DOO
ABC
SHOP

FESTIVAL

N'ROLL TALE



Who says truth is not stranger than fiction? Larger than life? For from the simple twist of fate that delivered her letter to Chris Murphy two minutes before he was due to leave for the show and Murphy's spur of the moment reaction to call, has grown the already astonishing saga of Flame Fortune. The release of her debut single, **Sex Symbol** and its attendant video is at once the end of chapter one and the beginning of chapter two. Chapter Two is the future.

Sitting on the couch of a folksy North Shore sitting room, Flame is perceptibly more confident and assured than the slightly dazed Valley Girl, reeling into her lifetime fantasy on the dreamtime set of Sydney, Australia, that I lunched with a fortnight previous. At that time everything was just plans, but it was obvious this was a girl with a vision and a determination to match.

Sex Symbol promises to be the most stunning debut single and video of the year. Produced by Michael Hutchence and Mark Opitz (who did 'Shaboo, Shooobah') and featuring an all star studio band of Barton Price (Models) on drums, Andrew Farriss (INXS) on keyboards, Tim Brosnan (ex-Dots) on lead guitar, Rick Grossman (Divinyls) on bass and James Reyne on rhythm guitar, it's a high powered romp into the sensitive area of bisexuality. After hearing a tape of the song I comment to Flame that it's probably going to raise a lot of controversy.

"Well, ha ha," she laughs, "Wait till you see the video! We had a lot of fun making the video."

"I think that it is ahead of its time, you know. People might be a bit taken aback at first but I think it will work its way through. I mean, after Boy George..."

So what was it like working with the cream of Australia's musicians on the single?

"Everybody kept telling me, you know, you're so lucky — you have the best. I'd go OK, OK — but it's hard to feel. I know that INXS are like really big out here — but in Los Angeles they're like just coming up. I mean big is big — Big is David Bowie! But

even when people are big stars I always feel equal with them.

"So I didn't get the full impact of the people I was dealing with and I think it was really good, you know, it was just 'here I am and here you are' They were so nice, especially James Reyne; he just had so much energy for it. It was just so nice, they were all so into my project and making it good."

"I was so impressed with Michael. He is such a producer. I've known him first as Michael; OK, he is really talented with his writing ability, and Andrew (Farriss) too, I just thought they were geniuses anyway. And then I knew Michael, just Michael from talking to him. And then in the studio he was Michael Hutchence, producer, and he really had a vision for it. I thought, he really is a producer!"

In a lot of ways **Sex Symbol** is as much Michael Hutchence as it is Flame. It was Hutchence who chose the song from a tape that Flame gave to Chris Murphy during a stopover in LA. The first meeting, at the Magic Mountain Amusement Park, had aroused Murphy's interest but it was when Hutchence got involved that things started to happen.

"Chris thought I was really weird," laughs Flame about that first meeting. "He was intrigued though, because he said I was a lot like Michael Hutchence. Because of the spacey things I was saying. He always tells me I'm the weirdest person he's met since Michael..."

Flame couldn't believe the choice of song at first.

"It's just too way out there! When I wrote it I was at the spa, in the shower. I wrote it when I was n-a-k-e-d (laughs). It took me a long time to talk myself into believing that 'This is it'. But once I had more meetings with Chris and Michael... Michael was saying it was a for sure hit — he was so into it. He talked me into it."

The video too is a real collaborative effort.

"The time before last when INXS were in LA they were in town for about a week and Michael and I got talking. Actually I didn't really know Michael that well, I'd

only met him that first time at Magic Mountain. On the last day we thought we'd better think about the video. So we sat down and this fan came to the door and brought Michael chocolate kisses, you know, like really really good chocolates. So we were sitting there eating chocolate kisses and talking about the video and all of a sudden we were trading back and forth and by the end... we had a video!"

Perhaps the thing that made the strongest impression on me the first time I met Flame was her saying that she had spent the time leading up to her arrival in Australia preparing to become another person. Here in Australia people would know her first as Flame. Her previous life, her previous personality, had been left behind.

"I feel like I was so young then," she says about the first time she met Murphy and Hutchence. "When you do a project, everything has to go with it. All the elements. Chris was trying to tell me that. He was saying, 'Who are you? What are you? Think about it.' And I'd go, I'm me. I'm just me! But they wouldn't accept that. So they went off to rehearsal and they said 'When we come back, you have to know who you are.' I was really crushed, in tears, emotional. I rang up some friends and asked 'Who am I?' (She laughs at the memory). I couldn't figure it out at all."

"So when they came back I said, 'OK Michael, who are you?' He laughed and said 'I knew you were going to say that. Well, I'm with a band' and this and that..."

"It was really funny you just can't think of who you are, you have to fall into it. So Flame Fortune, she came together. I'm really creative so I just started taking from who I am and putting it out. I did prepare myself in a way that was just natural. I wanted to be tip top when I came out. Of course when I came out it kinda fell apart because I was doing all this work and didn't have time to go to the spa every day!"

So what do you think about all this now? "It's like a fairy tale come true I guess. My whole life is a fairy tale."

BY DONALD ROBERTSON

BLONDES
PREFER
GENTLEMEN

Pearls
Are
A
Nuisance

CHRISTIAN

Wearing a shirt/waistcoat by PETER MORRISSEY and LEONA EDMISTON which has been inset with panels of patterned fabric and is destined to be made into ties. The back of the shirt is made out of fake fur.

Trousers by LEROY. Accessories by DARREN MCKAY.

KERRI

From fabrics that would be quite at home in the home, NESS KORTLANG has produced these elegant clothes for tea parties. Yet another example of the diversity of designs around this winter. NESS KORTLANG is from Melbourne.

FASHION

MICHELLE

Wearing clothes by MARTYN THOMPSON, one of the original team that made up OX.

The vertical stripes of the jacket are played against the black and white stripey. Paisley makes an appearance again on the under jacket.

Brooch by DARREN MCKAY.



CHRISTIAN

LEROI, whose clothes are always well constructed, produced some of the most original designs last year. Here, they play it safe with paisley. As you may have noticed, waistcoats are IN.



STOCKISTS

LEROI Sydney Cash Palace **MARTYN THOMPSON** Sydney Black Vanity, The Department Store, Zubani Newcastle Get Smart Canberra Chloes, Whitelines Queensland The Mask Victoria J. Silitto, Elegant Gypsy **STUDIBAKER HAWK** Sydney Quibbs, Cash Palace, Hot Clothing, Double Bay Dappa Melbourne J. Silitto, Projections, Pink Poodle Queensland Silitto, Tiffany WA Rodeo Drive, Orphans Canberra Euthenics NOVACLOVES NSW After Dark, Dotti, Thornton Hall, Morello, Something Nice, Ningitcka, Quisties, Chinchilla Melbourne Agrial, J. Silitto, Nostalgia, Avocado, Spencers, Toucan, The Elegant Gypsy, Club Connections, Penny Lane Hawthorn AJA, Moonee Ponds Garfunkel Queensland Brisbane The Mask, Silitto, Surfers' Paradise Manifest, Spectator Shop, Rockhampton Diversion NT Darwin Chandys Adelaide Apparell, Miss Ruby Redrock Perth Orphans, Stars, Splash, Chelsea Girl, Rodeo Drive **STUDIBAKER HAWK** Sydney Cash Palace, Clifford Gordon Melbourne Aerial Workshop Brisbane The Mask Surfers' Paradise Manifest WA M13, Breakers Tasmania Hobart John John Launceston Pret A Porter Canberra Euthenics **JASON BRUNDSON** Sydney Department Store **NESS KORTLANG** Sydney Cash Palace Melbourne Selected stores **PETER MORRISSEY/LEONA EDMISTON** Sydney Black Vanity, The Department Store, Zubani Newcastle Get Smart Canberra Euthenics Queensland The Mask Melbourne J. Silitto, Elegant Gypsy **DARREN MCKAY** and **DAVID** Sydney Paddington Markets Trade Enquiries: (02) 32 3716.

on videocassette

Prince
in his first motion picture
Purple Rain

Recorded on
hi-fi
Equipment



© 1984 Warner Bros. Inc. All Rights Reserved

A CAVALLO, RUFFALO and FARGNOLI Production
APOLLONIA KOTERO • MORRIS DAY • OLGA KARLATOS and CLARENCE WILLIAMS III
Original Songs Composed and Produced by PRINCE Written by ALBERT MAGNOLI and WILLIAM BLINN
Produced by ROBERT CAVALLO, JOSEPH RUFFALO and STEVEN FARGNOLI Directed by ALBERT MAGNOLI



WARNER HOME VIDEO

Marketed by WEA Records Pty. Limited, A Warner Communications Company
*Trademark of Warner Communications Inc.

