

# LIVE

## PRIVATES ON PARADE

**NEW MODEL AR'MY  
BILLY BRAGG**  
*Central London Poly*

STUDENTS ARE a disgusting and filthy menace who should be whipped and lashed on otherwise enjoyable nights like this. Two



**William Bargg — Booker Prize nominee and sensitive high-brow low-slung solo artiste.**

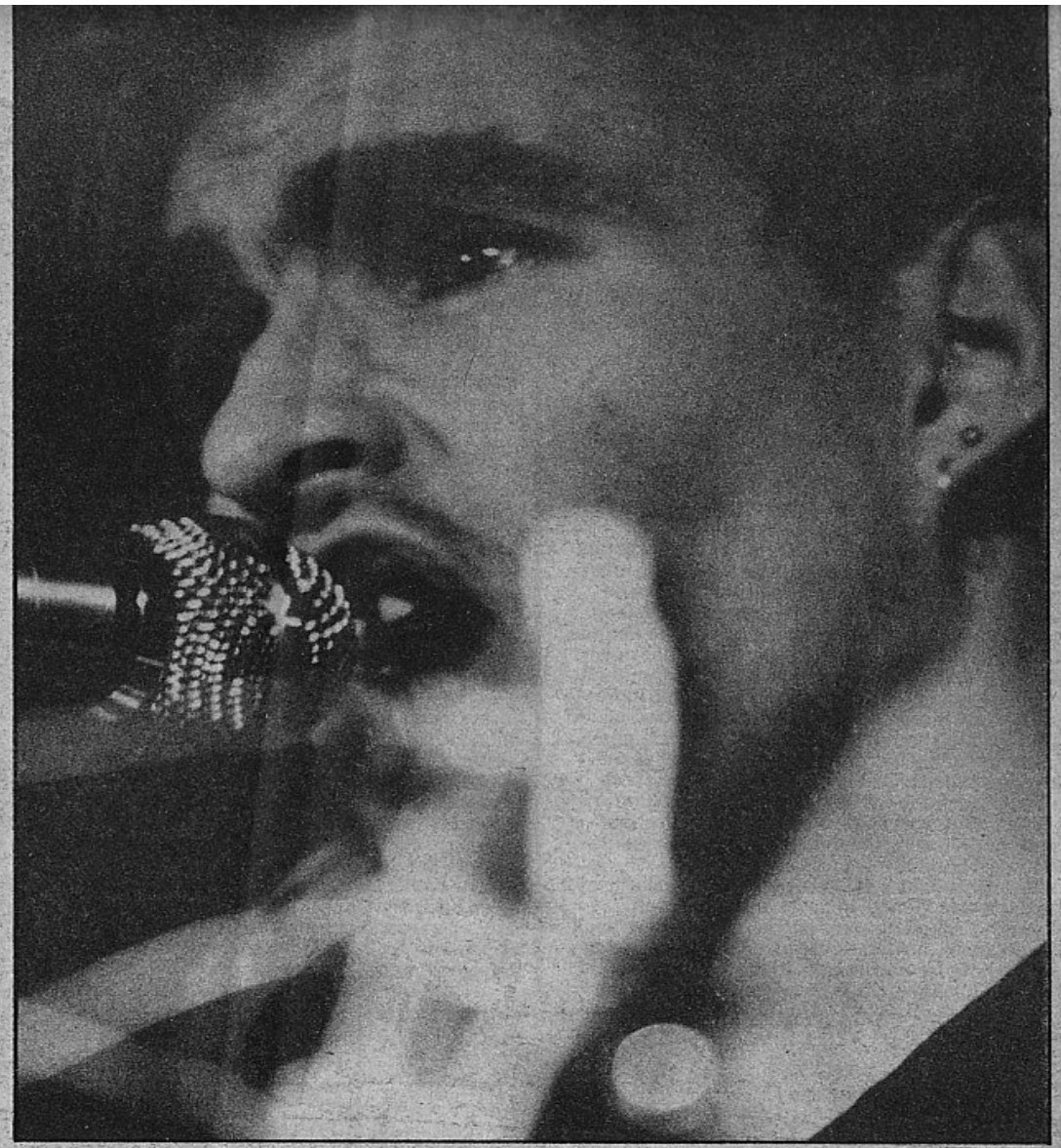
acts, one all balls and sagging trousers, the other all trousers and sagging balls.

There's something undeniably satisfying in watching Billy Bragg drag razor-sharp brilliance across the strop of a lacklustre night. One man and his guitar go TWANG!

The art of E-Motion with a capital 'M', and the strutting clash of metal strings wrapped around the voice of heartbreak . . . They were all there of course, all the classics . . . 'The Milkman Of Human Kindness', 'Love Gets Dangerous' and the superior 'New England', the superb words of which should be stamped on pensioner's foreheads, tattooed on the backs of schoolchildren's knees and emblazoned across England's soccer strip, lest we forget what real talent is! "I don't want to change the world/ I'm not looking for a new England," blagged Bragg, full of balls in the face of apathy . . .

From new model futures to New Model Armies and an astonishing display of repulsion as lead-singer Slade-The-Leveller (sagging balls in skintight trows) leapt on stage. Now I should say right from the start that New Model Army are extremely talented and provide the sort of thrash that success should be made of. That said, however, they are positively the ugliest band it has ever been my (mis)fortune to witness. "Worship the Devil in the name of God!" screamed Slade between the affectionate gap in his teeth, a sort of Stiv Bator without the dentures.

It's not that I doubted their ferocity mind, as they launched



**Wedding tackle well visible, Slade screams "Cum On FEEL The BALLzzzz. . ."**  
*Handsome piccies by Lawrence 'Smurfhead' Watson.*

into 'A Liberal Education' and Slade barked what sounded like a venomous "We were in the Garden of Eden/All we wanted was some DEN-TIS-TREE!" No. It's just that when a Polytechnic rugby thug, slaughtered on ale and with fists as fat as picks, jumped on stage and demanded to "sing a song" they didn't seem very army-like in their (lack of) enthusiasm to eject him. Still, with

the compensation of the superb 'Spirit Of The Falklands' (the old ones are the best, folks) and a bass player dressed in tights and clogs and dancing like Max Wall, NMA's armoury can't be all that bad.

Treading water with 'Small Town England', then pouring the stuff on his head during the classic 'Great Expectations', Slade-The-L is very much the

man we must love to hate. But it's a hard life and pounding chords of provincial and social disillusion is no easy thing. We must give him time. Curses and contradictions, promises and pitfalls, NMA can be anything you want. New Model Army or Fred Karno's Army? Take your pick mate, they're hanging on the rugby thug in the corner . . .

**Taylor-The-Leveller**