

Are Marianne's fans still Faithfull?

Entertainment

By Ethlie Ann Vare

Someone once said that Marianne Faithfull doesn't have a career so much as she has a series of comebacks. She herself refers to her "various incarnations."

There was the sweet pop singer of the '60s — better known as Mick Jagger's girlfriend — who made a hit of "As Tears Go By."

ROCK ON



ETHLIE ANN VARE

Then there was the doom-and-gloom punk poetess of the '80s, writing her own lyrics (like the critically acclaimed "Broken English") and charting a well-publicized path to self-destruction.

"Blazing Away," her upcoming LP on Island Records, is Faithfull's first release in more than three years. But it isn't the first album she's recorded in more than three years. She completed an LP a year ago that Chris Blackwell, founder and No. 1 man at Island, refused to put out.

"I still think it was a lovely album," says Faithfull in her smoky, husky voice. "But Blackwell didn't like it. As far as I can tell, what was wrong with it was that it wasn't tragic enough. It wasn't painful enough. It wasn't dark enough."

After all, this is the woman who wrote "Sister Morphine" and "Falling From Grace" and shocked the world with the profane rage of "Why'd Ya

Do It." Nobody expected her to write an album full of songs that were, as she put it, "bubbling with optimism and light."

What happened? Quite simply, this woman who was as famous for being a drug addict as she was a singer, got clean and sober. She got married to a "rather round and jolly" Italian novelist 11 years her junior (she's 43). She started feeling, for the first time in her life, some happiness.

She admits: "It was a tremendous worry at first — what happens if I let go of my pain and nobody likes my records anymore? And I'm sure I have lost some of my audience. There are people who find it very difficult to take that I'm clean, I'm not drinking, I'm happily married... It made me very angry at first, and then I started to see it was quite funny."

"There's nothing I can do about it," she shrugs. "I'm completely committed to staying clean, and if that meant I lost my career and nobody liked my

work, that would have to happen." It was a particular disappointment

when Blackwell — her longtime friend, adviser and, essentially, boss — stopped being her No. 1 fan.

"I don't think Blackwell would ever say, 'Oh, I liked her better when she was messed up,'" suggests Faithfull. "The feelings aren't even conscious. But he knew me as a helpless, needy junkie. I needed him so very, very much. And now I don't, and that's hard."

Changing relationships and the difficulty of emerging from a 25-year drug-induced fog are some of the topics Faithfull approaches in new songs like "When I Find My Life" and "Blazing Away," the fresh tracks on what is essentially a live, greatest-hits compilation. The difference between them and, say, "The Ballad of Lucy Jordan" is extraordinary.



Marianne Faithfull

"This optimism and light, you can't really damp it down," smiles Faithfull, ruefully. "They're nothing people can do about it, so they're just going to have to accept it. It may take a while — we'll just have to educate these people."

"A long, slow road," she winks. "But it's fun, isn't it?"

Colin James just shrugs off cold

By DIAHANN NADEAU
Herald Special

Blue rock guitarist Colin James performed in front of a wet, cold, and less-than-sober crowd on Sunday night in Carlisle. Despite atrocious weather conditions, flying fireworks and beer, James put on a terrific show, unfazed by the missiles and rain.

James, who is about 25 years of age, shines in his blues numbers. His version of Morgan Davis's "Why'd You Lie" remains one of his best songs, and he opened another tune with a mini-shot of Robert Johnson's "Stones in My Passway," one of the most menacing songs in the blues repertory. The opening riffs were full of power and violence, played in a most dramatic style. An excellent guitarist, Colin shows so much talent in his pure blues tunes that one wishes he would do a set of blues covers — what could he do to a Howlin' Wolf song?

His rock songs are certainly fine, as his hits "Voodoo Thing," "Five Long Years" prove. Songs from his new album, Sudden Stop, due out June 18, mix rock and blues, and the title song is a bluesy ballad, with some very appealing hooks.

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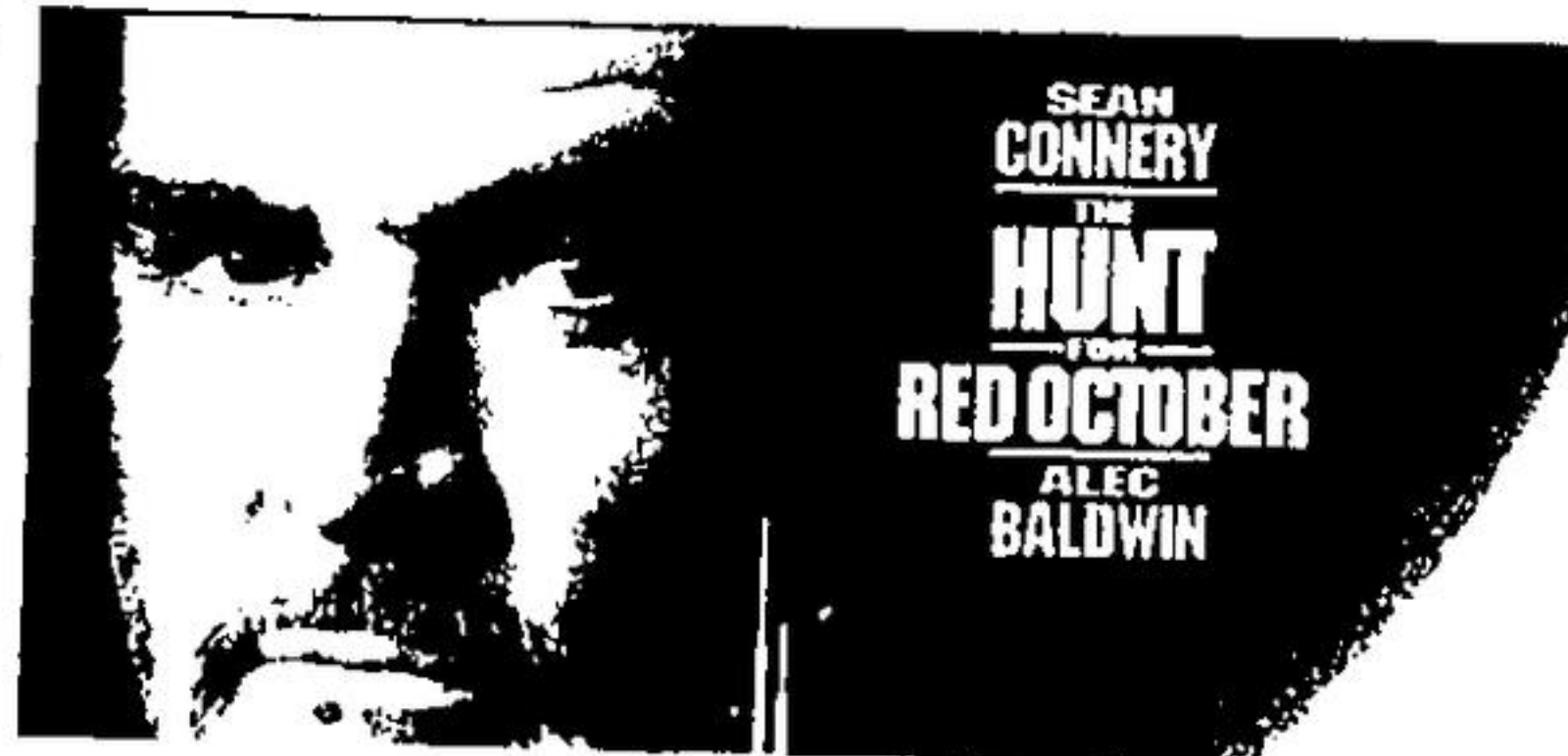
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