

OCTOBER 1980

THE JOE JACKSON BAND

Spring 1978—Joe Jackson surfaced with self-financed *Look Sharp* album demo.

July—Signed management/publishing contracts. Demo copy sent to David Kershenbaum—House Producer, A&M Records.

August—David/J.J. Band re-record *Look Sharp*, Joe signed to A&M.

September—First gig.

Oct/Nov/Dec—First UK club/college tour. First single "Is She Really Going Out With Him?" released

... much talked about.

Jan 1979 —UK release of "Look Sharp" ... even more talked about.

Jan/Feb/March—First UK "headline band" tour. Enthusiastic reviews.

April/May—First N. American tour. Sold out shows in New York, L.A., San Francisco and Toronto.

Considerable interest in Joe's 'Spiv Rock' and white pointed shoes.

June—*Look Sharp* album in American Top 20. First European tour. UK re-release of "Is She Really" and subsequent entry into Top 20.

July/August—First UK concert hall tour. *I'm The Man* recorded. Mixed press reaction.

Sept/Oct/Nov—Second UK tour *Look Sharp* turned gold, *I'm The Man* raced up the charts.

Dec—UK tour leading to release of "It's Different For Girls" single.

Jan 1980—European promotion tour. "Different For Girls" made UK chart Top 5 and *I'm the Man* turned gold in USA.

Feb/March/April—Major tour of Europe and a six day/four gig raid on America.

May—Joe produced/Joe Jackson Band recorded 3 tracks with reggae artist Lincoln Thompson (The Rasses). One of the tracks, "Natural Wild", became Lincoln's single—UK release June. Joe Jackson Band also recorded own 3 track single featuring Jimmy Cliff's "Harder They Come."

June—"Harder They Come" released. The Band appear as special guests of Bob Marley at Crystal Palace.

July/August—Joe produced the Band's third album *Beat Crazy* and returned to USA for fast-moving cross country tour. Initial reaction to new songs? From one extreme "quirky mainstream pop music" to the other "a quantum creative leap."

Oct—Release of *Beat Crazy* during an extensive UK tour.

Nov/Dec—Proposed European tour.

Jan—?

Kids today—they're all the same all call themselves—some crazy name mods and rockers and beatle freaks punks and skunks and kooks and geeks you're looking in the mirror but you can't see your face ("Beat Crazy")

*"I keep getting asked what my hopes are for music in the 80's
I don't want to make any predictions. I want to be surprised but what I'd like to see is people becoming less
obsessed with trends, being a punk, skinhead, mod or whatever—I'm more interested in the music."*

I agree with what you say but I don't wanna wear a badge, I don't wanna wave a flag like you though I don't mind it if you do. You're beautiful when you get nomad or is that a sexist observation? ("One to One")

"I don't like to preach. I have some sense of responsibility not to go out in front of 3000 people at a concert and tell them who to vote for or something. In this business it's too easy to get yourself up as some kind of leader."

(over please)



Look round every home town every good job—every fair deal every nice house. Every square meal in every dream home a nightmare ("Ever Dream Home")

"One conscious aim I have with this album, was not to write so much about myself and my own problems. I wanted to really get away from that and write about things that are important to everyone. Because basically, we're all going through the same shit."

I got the candles burning low
I got the cramps on the stereo
I got the doll now I can start
With a pin right through the heart ("Evil Eye")

"Have you ever noticed how there are only 3 basic themes in rock 'n' roll? The first one is 'I'm in love and the world is wonderful'. The second is 'My baby left me and the world isn't wonderful'. The third is 'Hey everyone, let's go down and party'. So anyway this is a song about a bloke who works in a butcher's shop in Peckham and somehow gets involved in voodoo . . ."

When you are fixing your make-up
you know you take too long
and when you mix me a drink up
you know you mix it too strong
("Mad at You")

"We've got a review from a New York show, which said that we did some great new songs including 'Mad At You' and at the time there was no such song. I'm not knocking that writer though—I thought it was a great title, so I used it."

Someone took a fancy to my wallet and my coat
So what you smiling at—ain't you been in that boat
It's something that there really should be
Something done about
He said don't knock it Sonny
That's the way I started out ("Crime Don't Pay")

"If I didn't make music I don't know what I'd do. I'm not good at anything else . . . Anyway, whatever I'd be doing it probably wouldn't be anything legal."

We laughed as they played all the songs
We wanted least of all to hear
I guess that's when I knew
That we'd be more than just good friends
It happened just by chance ("Someone Up There")

"People have said that I'm anti-women in my songs, or bitter about relationships. That's not true. I just try to look at things from different angles, to find out what really goes on between people instead of just using cliches."

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White niggers dancing out on the floor tonight
The band's not good but the beat seems right
Clenching fists unite and fight
Rock against racism rules tonight
But the real world
No one rules
But fists are clenched alright ("Battleground")

"If I was going worrying about people not understanding what I was saying that would be a bit condescending toward the audience."

She said thanks I'm so relieved
What you are saying I can well believe
Now I know, I feel no shame
About Dave and Tony and Phil and James
I said
Baby baby this can't be true
She said well what's right for you
("Biology")

*"A lot of my songs are satirical. I think it's more interesting than saying 'This is great' or 'This is a mad of crap'
I think a lot of people miss the humour though."*

Pretty boys—on my Tv screen
Teeth so white and hair so clean
Pretty boys—sing and play guitars
How do you rate my sex appeal from one to ten
Is my image just a bit confusing
Maybe I should get a face lift, start again
Maybe I should trade my pointed shoes in ("Pretty Boys")

"I think where things go wrong is that a lot of people value style above content, I think it should be the other way around."

That's what you're for—square pegs in square holes
Round pegs in round
You get too big when they can't make new holes
So they'll cut you down
All ugly sisters must wear glass slippers
Or get out of town.
("Fit")

"I don't have strong political beliefs. Somehow I think that makes people narrow minded . . . I suppose what I stand for is the individual. It's like I'm saying, 'Hey you at the back of the class with the big ears, you can be something too.' I tend to feel now, more than ever, that I have to say what I really feel, to be uncompromising, I'm not going to stick to a formula just for the sake of trying to retain some commercial success. Because it just doesn't mean that much to me. I wonder how many people will believe that though?"

(The quotes by Joe are taken from interviews done over the past years both in the U.K. and abroad.)