

STEREO

The Jimi Hendrix Experience
axis:
bold as
love



AXIS: BOLD AS LOVE

THE
Jimi Hendrix
EXPERIENCE



KIS: BOLD AS LOVE

On Aug. 15, 1967, Jimi Hendrix's first album, *Are You Experienced?*, was banned from the airwaves in the UK. In the three months since the May 12 release of the album, the BBC's Radio One had introduced millions of Europeans. Just 100 days after the Music Broadcasting Offenses bill became law in August, Hendrix's *Axis of Evil* was released on the *As Love* period. "We've only had two records in the UK so far," he said. "I don't see that we can be in a bit." He made up, what we are doing, we might have a bit of a change in our actual direction to aim at. But we don't want to be a big, lifeless

thing. We're going to be touring and returned to the States. They played the album before we came to a tour of Sweden. "We're not after this Scandinavian tour," Jimi said. "When we come back, we'll probably another single." "It sets the seal on one of the best pop musicians, and the best rock success story since the Beatles."

On the last day of the album's release in the UK, Hendrix joined the line-up of the rush to complete *Axis of Evil* at Olympic Studios. The album was produced by Chas Chandler and engineered by Eddie Kramer. "There were no meetings in the studio," Kramer said. "I was not to know what he was

going to do until he walked into the studio." "In the early days we'd wait until some ideas got semi worked out before booking studio time," wrote Noel. "Now Jimi got into the habit of hanging out in the studio, taping everything, and hoping for inspiration... ideas were coming more slowly."

"I couldn't just keep doing it for money," Jimi cautioned, "When it comes to writing songs I have to wait till they come to me, even if I've got a record date minutes away. See, we make things at the spur of the moment and that particular album represents us at that certain phase of time. The ideas come very easily; it's just getting the song together as where it's acceptable."

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"Jimi knew exactly what he was doing," observed Kramer... everything was very carefully worked out... in his own head... in a very private sense."

"We'd slipped into the routine of doing a gig and then heading to the studio for a midnight to early morning session," wrote Noel, "The Rolling Stones came to the sessions, they were recording next door to us most of the month."

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On Aug. 15, 1967 pirate radio was banned in the UK. In the three months since the May 12 release of Jimi's first album, underground radio had introduced *Are You Experienced?* to millions of Europeans. Just four days after the Marine Broadcasting Offenses bill became law in August, *The Experience* released *Burning Of The Midnight Lamp*, marking the transition into Jimi's *Axis: Bold As Love* period. "We've only had four records out so I don't see that we can be in a rut," he mused. "I wrote *Foxy Lady* so long ago, what we are doing now is as different from that as night from day, every single record is different. Musically, we don't have any actual direction to aim at. But we don't worry. Who wants to be a big, lifeless pop idol, anyway?"

Jimi, along with Noel Redding and Mitch Mitchell, finished their first American tour and returned to Britain. They played the Saville and did radio & TV in Berlin before embarking on a tour of Sweden. "We're gonna take a vacation right after this Scandinavian tour," Jimi said, "We're going to be working on the LP when we come back, and probably another single." Back in London *Melody Maker* voted him the world's best pop musician, noting "it sets the seal on one of the fastest success stories that even the British pop scene has known."

On the last day of September the British government's answer to pirate radio, BBC's Radio One, made its debut. *The Experience* joined the line-up of scheduled guests, but first the rush to complete *Axis* kicked off on Oct. 1 with five days at Olympic Studios. *Axis* was produced by Chas Chandler and engineered by Eddie Kramer. "There were no meetings in advance," Eddie said, "Jimi created things in a very loose sort of fashion... I was not to know what he was

going to do until he walked into the studio."

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"Delays were caused by hangers-on who infested the studio," wrote Noel, "Suddenly everything was forgotten, and there we were getting high on studio time at £80 per hour... none of us had pulled the wasted session together to get the pressure off us."

The Experience gave their fifth and final Saville show and returned to the Paris Olympia on Oct. 9. "Let's see," Jimi told the crowd, "we're having a little first anniversary thing today. We'd like to say thank you for last year, for lettin' us play here, instead of booin' us off the stage, you gave us a chance." Then he informed reporters, "We want to get a single out within a month if possible, and an LP by Christmas... Axis is designed to show what else we do besides my guitar playing, like the words and the drumming. It's nice to know people think about me, but don't forget Mitch and Noel! Mitch particularly, has so much to contribute - ideas for other instruments and things for the records."

"Jimi concentrates the album in one direction," noted Mitch, "very often one track leads directly into the next. The arrangements are always worked out by the three of us. Jimi and I would often continue without Noel... usually it meant that Noel could come in later and add his bass part."

"I set up a drum platform," Kramer explained, "I remember making Mitch by raising him on that platform about a foot and using distant miking and close miking - with that D30 on the bass drum and, more than likely, 67's or C12's on the cymbals. Probably C12's and 87's on the floor toms."

"I use two 100-watt Marshall speaker cabinets," said Jimi, "with 100-watt Marshall amplifiers, out there in Eddie-Kramer-land."

"I recorded most of his guitars in stereo," added

Eddie. "What we did was split the signal with two different devices, one for each amplifier, and something he would use on the floor, like a footpedal... some kind of signal processing."

"Eddie was very efficient," Noel said, "George (Chkiantz) was very efficient too. Maybe George was more into trying different things. Roger Mayer would just plug things in and say 'try that!' (laugh). Most of the sound effects would be overdubs, once you got the basic track down, at which point myself and Mitch would disappear for maybe a half an hour and play darts."

"I've never met anybody who adapted as fast as Jimi did on electronics," observed Roger, "didn't matter if it was an equalizer on the board or a new technique, he understood it. And he used everything as one. Jimi was into the overall, he didn't care what he had to play with his hands to get the sounds he heard in his head."

"Working on Axis was the first time that it became apparent that Jimi was pretty good working behind the board," said Mitch, "it could have been the start of any potential conflict between him and Chas in the studio."

"It was the second album that really sticks out in my mind as being the beginning," recalls Eddie, "because he became much more involved in the mixing. When I was doing things on the board with echo and compression, he would say 'what's that?' and I'd say 'well, this is what I'm doing to the voice and here's how I'm going to try this effect on this guitar, listen to this'."

"All you can get now is just across and across," said Jimi, "but I want to have stereo where it goes up and behind and underneath."

"He'd get excited," said Eddie, "and I'd get further excited. We'd go absolutely crazy with effects, sometimes to excess, and then we'd back off and say OK, we should be a little calmer about this... to him recording was fun."

"I really enjoyed the creation of Axis," Noel wrote, "it's my favorite Experience album. We felt positive and reasonably relaxed during the sessions, trying to take our own time, even though it was made plain that at least three record companies were drumming their fingers anxiously awaiting the product."

But when recording was over in late October "we brought the master tapes home from the studio," recalls Chas, "and Jimi went off to a party and took them with him. He comes back in a taxi and he's lost the B side somewhere!... we went into Olympic the next night and mixed the entire A side of the album again, all in one night."

"It was mixed beautifully," Jimi lamented, "but we had to re-mix it the next morning within 11 hours, and it's very hard to do that, like you get a song in your mind and you say 'great, this is going to be marvellous, gonna change our whole sound.' All the sudden you go in the studio and it comes out a different sound, but you still dig it."

To reduce the extra work-load, a Nov. 1 concert at Leeds University was cancelled. "Thankfully," wrote Noel, "when we sat down at Chas' on Nov. 7 to hear the test pressing, it sounded good. The next day the pressure started to begin the next LP."

A week later the JHE toured the U.K. Jimi was

given a cake in Belfast for his 25th birthday on Nov. 27. Four days later Axis: Bold As Love was released in England. Keith Altham reported that "Axis cost approximately £10,000 to produce and the incredible sleeve accounted for £3000 of that amount! It depicts Jimi as a Pharaoh-like figure. Without a doubt the most impressive sleeve for an LP I have ever seen."

Asked who did the artwork, Jimi replied, "Oh, it's very embarrassing because I forgot his name. He works for one of the English newspapers, and he just happened to get that together for us, which is very nice."

David King had purchased an Indian devotional poster at the Indica Bookshop (where John met Yoko) in London and then commissioned Roger Law to draw onto it the faces of Jimi, Mitch and Noel.

"Blessed with a super special sleeve", noted Record Mirror, "a magnificent 'Pepper-ish' colored sleeve", said Rolling Stone, "making up for the very poor presentation of the first album." But Jimi

wasn't so sure. "The three of us have nothing to do with what's on that Axis cover," he told the press, "When I first saw that design I thought, 'it's great, they have an Indian painting about us, but maybe we should have an American Indian.' The LP came out unplanned, but it's alright. I like the inside cover the best, really. I can hardly wait till the next one comes though, the next one will be better." Asked how much the record cost to produce, Jimi answered, "I don't really know, our manager takes care of all that. We were really deep into making our second LP. We all



helped in producing it with Chas and I mixed it with him as well, so it really is us. It has 13 tracks, including one of Noel's compositions. We cut the record over a period of 16 days, which I'm very sad about. They usually take about 3 or 4 months, but we had to get it out to put in the kiddies' stockings for Christmas. It could have been so much better. The songs could have been better too. As soon as you finish then you got a hundred new ideas. It's made with stereo in mind, you can lose a lot of it if you haven't got a pretty good sound system. We've tried to get most of the freaky tracks right into another dimension so you get that sky effect, like they're coming down out of the heavens."

"If *Are You Experienced?* was the rocket blasting off into orbit," wrote Harry Shapiro, "then *Axis* saw the rocket drifting in orbit surveying the wonders of the universe. The album has a softer, more mystical feel to it."

"On the first album neither Noel nor I had any say in how we actually sounded," Mitch wrote in *Inside The Experience*, "Chas recorded it and mixed it virtually alone. Even Jimi only had a limited say, he knew the overall sound that he wanted but ultimately what Chas said went...But by the second album, Jimi had started to find his own feet and Noel and I wanted some kind of impact with regards to our sound. Chas did his best to put up with us."

"It makes me so mad," complained Jimi, "cause that's part of us. See, we record and then all the sudden something happens and it comes out all screwed

up. You can get in there and mix and mix and get such a beautiful sound, and when it's time to cut it they just screw it up, 'cause they go by levels. Some people don't have imagination. See, when you cut a record, right before it's been printed, if you want a really deep sound you must almost re-mix it again at the cutting place, and 99 percent don't do this, they just say, 'make sure the needle doesn't go over there, make sure it doesn't go under' and there it is, nothin' but one-dimensional. We're going to take more time."

"We didn't approach *Axis* that differently than the first one," claims Mitch, "although it didn't seem to be as much of a rush. *AYE?* was very much, 'Wham, bam, thank you - next track'; *Axis* was like that as well to a degree - if only because there was pressure on us to produce a good follow up - but much less so. There was a fair amount of material already there to be done."

"Two of the songs on it are a year old; *N 6* was *9* and *She's So Fine*," Jimi said in the spring of '68.

"We recorded this album right after the first one, it was the next sessions. It represents us then, and we've got prettier songs. Some people told me that the first album sounded the same all the way through. But there wasn't time. The first one was a quick one, you understand, for a new group. In *Axis* there are more gentle things, more things for people to think about, if they want to. I think we're getting less rebellious, if you know what I mean. Like, as you grow older you change slightly without knowing sometimes, and that's what happens to our music sometimes. The



changes between the two records are for you to decide. We're just playing the way we feel. If you want to, sit up all day and play both records. Listen to the changes and say, 'Oh yeah, here's a change, remember when we did that?' Then we either pat ourselves on the back, or kick each other in the ass."

"I thought that the first LP was a bit messy," Noel said, "The second one sounds much cleaner. The recording sounds much better."

"There are a couple of mixes on each album that are rough," admits Eddie, "actual 'take this home and listen to it' kind of things, at 7 1/2ips... I could never duplicate them, because I was flying by the seat of my pants. You had to make the decisions immediately, which is probably the reason those things sound the way they do. They were very much on the spur of the moment."

"On our first LP we emphasized maybe the sustain notes and the really free scene," Jimi explained, "and then on this LP it's quieter as far as guitar. Maybe it might be dull to some people, but then we're emphasizing the words and the drums."

"The idea of the *Axis* may yet again have come from Jimi's reading of *The Book of the Hopi*," speculated the authors of *Electric Gypsy*, "yet again" referring to *Purple Haze* and *Red House* also being inspired by the book by Frank Waters. But in the summer of 1970 Chuck Wein talked *Hopi* with Jimi. "I think it's ridiculous to say that he had an intricate knowledge of Hopi culture that inspired those things," Wein charges, "no way... I'd read *Book of the Hopi*, and I ended up going out to the reservation...Jimi wanted me to go to bookstores in London or LA and help him to get together a library, we were writing down notes of what he wanted. When he appeared on the stage in

Maui, he wore a Hopi medicine shirt. We were talking about the Frank Waters book on-set. There were a bunch of people on the Maui set who were totally conversant with Hopi."

Asked if Jimi expressed awareness of what the Frank Waters' book contained, Wein replied, "No, Jimi had a definite intuition and an awareness of the spiritual culture of the Hopis without a hell of a lot of concrete knowledge about them, nor did he really want it. He might have looked at it and taken off on it without getting totally conceptually into it. It came from his own spirit and own soul and his own heart. He understood the spiritual nature of the American Indian and was talking about himself being part Indian, but if he'd read about the Hopi, it certainly wasn't apparent. He had an intuitive knowledge of their spirituality."

When Jimi was asked about the meaning of "*Axis: Bold As Love*" he answered, "That's not hard. It's love. I just thought about the title. There might be a meaning behind the whole thing. Like the axis of the Earth, if it changes, it changes the whole face of the Earth, like every few thousand years, new civilizations come every time it changes, or another age comes about. And it's like love that a human being has, if he falls in love deep enough it will change him, might change his whole life, so both of them can really go together. In other words, the axis changes the face of the Earth and it only takes about a quarter of a day. The same with love; it can turn your world upside-down, it's that powerful, that bold. People kill themselves for love, but when you have it for somebody or something, an idea maybe, it can beat anger any time and move the sea and the mountains. That's the way it feels, that's what I'm trying to say - *Axis: Bold As Love* - 1-2-3, rock-around-the-clock. The way I can

explain myself thoroughly is through songs."

"Nobody knows, really, where Jimi's at," Noel said when *Axis* came out, "somewhere between enlightened and paranoid."

"There are periods he goes through," adds Mitch, "like Picasso's blue period, the really incredible things he conjures up."

Axis: Bold As Love was created between May 4 and October 30, 1967. Most of its 15 recording sessions were distributed throughout the month of October. "Maybe 80 hours in the studio total," said Chas. Released in England on Dec. 1, 1967, *Axis* entered the charts at #22 on Dec. 13 and remained for 16 weeks, peaking at #5. *Record Mirror* reported that *The Experience* had "produced something very special" while *Melody Maker* described how "Mitch's drums leap across the room... Noel calmly thunders out deep cannon shots... Jimi just soars up through the clouds, astride his magical guitar".

"A vast profusion of musical goodies happening," noted a review in *Disc & Music Echo*, "One of the most incredible things about Jimi is that something as deeply personal as his music should appeal to so many people... seldom a pretty sound but often beautiful in its wild, craggy, cruel grandeur. His songwriting too has passed into the high realms of experience. It still revolves mainly around chicks and outer space... a major triumph for Hendrix."

On January 15, 1968 the second *Experience* album was released in the U.S. *Axis* entered the charts at #140 on February 10. Life dubbed Jimi "the Witt Chamberlain of electric guitar players" and reported that his second album had "jumped from #140 on the pop charts to #24 in one week." At the end of January *Disc* noted that *Are You Experienced?* "has been

awarded a gold disk for sales worth one million dollars, and *Axis* is reported to have sold a half million dollars' worth in the first four days of issue."

The LP spent 53 weeks on American charts. When it peaked at #3 Jimi's earlier album was still in the Top-20 after 31 weeks on the charts. *Hit Parade* reported that on *Axis* Jimi sounds like "all the singers and all the guitarists and all the rhythms that ever meant anything since World War II." *Rolling Stone* called the music "uneven in quality" but concluded it was the "finest Voodoo album that any rock group has produced to date."

"You might be pleased with what you're doing once in a while, but never really satisfied," Jimi said, "We're pleased with the LP we've just finished, for instance, but the ideas we got out of it could go on to our next one." *Axis* brought to a climax his fever-pitch creative streak of 1967. At the end of December Jimi made a New Year's resolution: "To keep the *Axis* burning so that *Love* follows *Music as the Day the Night*."

EXP: With Are You Experienced? completed in April, the *JHE* released their third single, *The Wind Cries Mary*, on May 5. That same day Jimi returned to Olympic. Eddie Kramer was unavailable for this session. Another engineer, Terry Brown, took over. "I was sort of dropped into the middle of it," Terry recalls, "It was Eddie's gig and he knew everybody. I remember it all being very intense with quite a few people sitting around listening. We were working so hard for Jimi."

"The most gifted guitar player in the pop world starts his record off with non-guitar sound effects," *Life* later commented. Noel and Jimi had set up 6-foot

speaker horns along the amplifiers and blared a cacophony they called *Symphony of Experience*, later renamed *EXP*.

"Our outlook on music, drugs and women was highly experimental at that point," explains Noel. "In the studio we started playing around with electronic noise... I remember recording *EXP*; myself and Hendrix put the guitars on the ground and started kicking them and they recorded it! (laughs) We turned up the amps full, got my bass and he got his guitar, and smashed them against the amps. And we got this amazing feedback."

The electronic experiments taking place with the *JHE* were a rock 'n' roll version of NASA's space race in 1967. "When I'm playing, man, I go up in a rocket ship," said Jimi, "you can all come with me, join me on my ship!" *EXP* hi-tech innovations were being masterminded by Roger Mayer. "We started playing around with some of the Fuzz Faces," recalls Roger, "there weren't very many that really sound-

ed great, but we did have another distortion circuit that was not of the Fuzz Face configuration, so we put our electronics into the round Fuzz Face outer casing. Same thing with the Fuzz Face circuitry, this is what I tampered with. The Fuzz Face also changed during that period. The first series of them used Germanium transistors, then they went to a silicone, which gave it a much harsher sound. To get the smoother sound Jimi used some of my Germanium type fuzz boxes. We had a Germanium version of the Fuzz Faces as well. You can actually tune the Fuzz up if you know

what you're doing, or give it a specific sound, alter the tone, which is what I used to specialize in."

Eye called *EXP* "a little comedy routine at the beginning of *Axis* involving a Mr. Paul Caruso that'll make you shudder."

"About the backing vocals," explains Mitch, "I did that silly voice on the beginning of *EXP*, talking on the tape."

Mitch's character was based on one of Jim's Village friends. "Somebody comes over and says 'your name is on a Hendrix album'," recalls the real

Paul Caruso, "so I went over to a record store and asked them to put it on. That came as a surprise, he hadn't told me in advance. It was like firing an arrow across the ocean, hitting me in the back with it, like a bolt of lightning thrown by Zeus, 'cause who expects that? Why not make up a name? He just did it to blow my mind, that's the kind of bond we had... nothing was too big for me to be fit into, I was just a Village harmonica player...

but it was a very generous gesture too, 'cause he was kinda welcoming me onto the world stage... We talked about flying saucers and things like that, so that was sort of an in-joke with us."

"Jimi's mad about space songs," concurred Mitch.

The original mix of *EXP* was done by Terry Brown in May, but this was among the master tapes Jimi lost. "We first tried to remix it with reference to an acetate made from a pilot cut of the original master," remembers George Chkiantz, "but the record player at Olympic was terrible. Kramer and Chandler ended up



remixing the song altogether, perhaps recreating the ideas found on the acetate."

One review called the finished piece a "striking, frightening piece of cosmic composing," while another said *EXP* was "like having a space ship in your living room." *New Musical Express* warned readers that the track was "guaranteed to stand the fur up on the back of the cat's neck and reduce Frankie Vaughn fans to neurotic heaps."

"We just felt like saying it," Jimi explained, "We do freak-out, psychedelic and so on, that's all pretty limited. Musically, 'freak out' is almost like playing wrong notes. It's playing the opposite notes to what you think the notes should be. If you hit it with the right amount of feedback it's like playing wrong notes seriously, dig? On a record we might emphasize a certain point or passage. Might have the drums or the guitar swing around to the other side with the echo goin' the opposite way. Some people say this is gimmicks. We don't need that. We don't do it in person. In person we play it maybe a different way. So for the record's benefit we just try to take you somewhere as far as the record can go, makin' that sound like it's coming up and down, just to emphasize the song."

UP FROM THE SKIES: After their "first anniversary" gigs in Paris, *The Experience* returned to London on Oct. 12. More radio and TV shows followed, with more interviews and photo sessions. In order to finish *Axis*, concert dates were cut back in

October to two per week, the last taking place on a Saturday night in Dunstable. The next day, Sunday, Oct. 29, Jimi shot back to Olympic and recorded the last series of new songs for the album. Among these cuts was *Up From The Skies*, a song one London critic called "musical science fiction." "It's a story of a guy who's been on earth before but on a different tuning of the axis," Jimi said, "and now he's come back to find this scene happening."

Skies' "change of climate" theme inspired Harry Shapiro to note in *Electric Gypsy* that Jimi "may have forseen the Greenhouse Effect."

In America, where *Burning Of The Midnight Lamp* was still unreleased as a single, it was *Up From The Skies* that first introduced Jimi's fans to his new wah-wah pedal. Asked if he was the first to use the wah effect on record, he said, "We released a record about two or three days after the Cream came out with one, but it was coincidental because we didn't know about theirs and they didn't know about ours. We used it a long time ago on *Are You Experienced?*, but we used a hand wah-wah then. The pedal is great because it doesn't have any notes, nothing but hitting it straight up using the vibrato, then the drums come through and feels like, not depression, but loneliness and that frustration and the yearning, like something is reaching out."

Up From The Skies' "muted-trumpet" wah-wahs and Mexican jumpin'-bean drums were likened to "a soft, gliding jazzy piece of velvet" by one critic. *Disc & Music Echo* noted that it "could almost be easy rock-



ing Mose Allison."

"We're one of the groups who are bridging the gap between pop and jazz and being accepted for our musicianship instead of for our hit records," observed Mitch, "The bass player's and the drummer's roles are almost completely reversed. The bass player is more of an anchor, but we've both got freedom."

Even Noel contributed some jazz. "I suggested using brushes on *Up From The Skies*," he revealed, "and they did it."

"*Up From The Skies*, like people layin' up in grey buildings is dustin' away," charged Jimi, "and people run around shoutin', 'Oh, love the world! We love everybody!' Eatin' rodent seeds and so forth. People must respect other people's ideas, as long as it's not hurting anybody, and they must respect the time sequence. The president once said, 'Listen, when it's time for a change, by all means put that in operation.' Why keep livin' in the past? These buildings ain't gonna be here all that long, so why be like that? That's how I felt at the time I wrote the song. It depends on how I feel at a particular time."

While *Axis* was high in the Top-10 *Record Mirror* reported "British discs bubbling under the U.S. Top-100 include *Up From The Skies*." The single, b/w *One Rainy Wish*, spent 4 weeks in the charts and made it only to #82, which may be why Jimi deleted *Skies* from his set lists. The only known stage version dates from a January '68 gig in Stockholm.

A critic at *Hit Parader* wrote that for *Up From The Skies* "the wah-wah guitar and Jimi's Chuck Berry-like vocal phrasing is a knock-out!" Al Aronowitz considered Jimi's lyric "I want to see and hear everything," and wrote "there are moments when he makes you believe he already has."

THE

"You see everything, experience everything as you live," noticed Jimi, "even if you're living in a little room, you see a lot of things if you have imagination."

SPANISH CASTLE MAGIC: Jimi described how "Sometimes we go in the studio and somebody has a song, so we run down a few things, then we go back and listen to it and say 'alright I think we should do this.' And then Noel says what he thinks and we get together like that most of the time."

Noel was concerned about his bass innovations as well; "The new instrument was my Hagstrom 8-string bass, which gave the rich full sound on *Spanish Castle Magic* With my bass turned up to full treble, we got a tremendous variety of effects."

"Chas believes there are only two in existence in this country," *Beat Instrumental* remarked of 8-strings, "they were specially made by the Hagstrom company in America, a left handed model for Jimi and an orthodox one for Noel."

In his book *Hendrix: Setting the Record Straight*, Eddie Kramer reported that for the Oct. 27 *Spanish Castle Magic* session "Hendrix also played bass, Hagstrom, enhanced here by feeding the sound through the octave boosting Octavia."

"Noel uses an eight string bass on that one," countered Jimi, "plus I was playing the same thing on the guitar. A lot of things are in unison, like with the bass. On *Spanish Castle Magic* we used a guitar, bass and drums and piano on that one."

Setting the *Record Straight* also notes how Eddie "translated the song's chord progression on the piano suggesting, as he had done with *AYE?*, the use of the piano." *Record Mirror* reported in 1967 that it was Jimi who "played piano here." *Melody Maker* too

mentioned that "Jimi hammers out piano offbeats" for **Spanish Castle**. It was likely during the Oct. 28 session when Eddie showed him the chords. The finished cut turned out to be the one song on *Axis* that sounded most like Jimi's first album. *Melody Maker* described it as "old roaring Hendrix making it like the world was going to end tomorrow... the Hendrix trail burns like dynamite."

But Jimi had reservations about the sound, probably stemming from the last minute rush to re-mix after he'd lost the original masters. "It didn't come out as clear as we wanted it to," he said, "but it's a hint of what we were trying to do."

One thing Jimi was trying to do with this tune was to commemorate a 1950's Seattle jazz club called the **Spanish Castle**. And this became the one number from *Axis* heard most often on stage. Noel had to endure. "This was a song I never liked playing," he later wrote.

New Musical Express described it as "an invitation to take a trip on a dragonfly, and the strings on Hendrix's guitar vibrate almost as quickly as those gossamer wings." Often on stage, when Jimi sang the lyric "it takes about a half a day to get there/if we travel by my dragonfly", he got to the word "dragonfly" and inhaled quick into the mike, as if hitting off a make-believe joint, from which he could "drag 'n' fly".

"We'd like to do a thing called **Spanish Castle Magic**," he'd wam, "dedicated to the plainclothes policemen and other goofballs, that they should get into very quickly, before their minds are too alert. See if we can float or something, catch up to the wind and get back into the heavens. It's a place you wouldn't put your grandmother."

WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW: Kramer remembers that "for no apparent reason" *The Experience* had a difficult time recording an acceptable take of **Wait Until Tomorrow**. "Jimi just could not play the opening notes to his satisfaction," noted the engineer. Finally on Oct. 26 the LP take of **Tomorrow** was cut. Jimi's sliding-sixths chitlin' riffs support a background chorus sung by Mitch and Noel.

"I did loads of background vocals," Mitch recalls. "That was OK, I didn't mind. Some of those were really quite fun, I mean you'd end up with some shit hot singers and here's little me trying to squeak out and keep in tune. But it was always fun. Jimi did them as well and he was having a good laugh."

The only known "live" version of **Wait Until Tomorrow** dates for a mid-December '67 Top Gear radio session for the BBC. Prior to performing that day, a very giddy Jimi was interviewed by Tony Hall, who informed his guest that the show's producer had a favorite track from the new album: **Wait Until Tomorrow**. "Oh, yeah," giggled Jimi, running through the intro on his Strat, "that's a commercial song, that one." This exchange probably inspired him to play it for Top Gear (released on the Radio One CD).

One reviewer described this *Axis* track as a song "in which Dolly Mae's father shoots her would-be lover dead while you watch." But Jimi's lightning quick, ever-shifting grace notes show a fantastic grasp of Curtis Mayfield-style broken-chord voicings. Subtle tonal clusters interpret the emotion of each lyric image. "There has to be complete marriage between the words and music in the end," insisted Jimi, "if the lyrics lose out completely to the music, or the other way 'round, then it's not done right. But it's surprising how many people don't seem to really hear

the lyrics. A drag, considering the number of great writers who are raising standards all the time."

AIN'T NO TELLING: On Oct. 24 *The Experience* returned to London's Marquee Club with brand new amps and played before a record crowd in that venue. Two days later Noel wrote in his diary "rehearsal at Regent Sound. Thrown out after two songs for being too loud!" Jimi and Noel packed up their new amps and moved back over to Olympic. That Oct. 26 evening session yielded the two "tomorrow" tracks on *Axis* - **Wait Until Tomorrow** and **Ain't No Telling**:

Ain't no tellin' when you're gonna see me/but I really hope it'll be tomorrow...

Like **Spanish Castle Magic**, **Ain't No Telling** is also a C# tune that features the dominant 7th/augmented 9th "Hendrix chord". But with its complex bridge and modulation to distant A-major, **Ain't No Telling** was one of the most structurally progressive Hendrix compositions recorded in '67. "What we are trying to do is to be more and more progressive," Jimi said, "to make our music and our act more varied and exciting, and interesting."

Blasting-cap drums add pizzazz to **Ain't No Telling**. "Mitch had the ability to almost read what Jimi was thinking," observed Eddie, "Jimi would never cease to be amazed at Mitch's ability to play ridiculous things."

But this tune's complicated lay-out was a one-time event. "I know a lot of stuff that got used on albums

was only played the one time and in the studio," Mitch points out, "a lot of stuff never made it onto the stage."

"There are tons of songs we never played live," concurs Noel, "we only did them in the studio."

"But occasionally," warns Mitch, "if you dig deep enough, and it was always kind of a surprise, he'd go 'wait a minute, let's give it a try!' And sometimes he wouldn't even remember the words. But occasionally Jimi would drag something out of the murky past and fake it."

Ain't No Telling is a song that comes to mind when considering Chris Welch's statement in his 1972 *Hendrix* biography: "Listening to the invention... and the feeling that went into (*Axis: Bold As Love*), it was hard to believe that the band would not go on producing a whole succession of songs and brilliant albums for years to come." A depth of effortless creativity surfaces from a cut like this, as if Jimi were pulling tracks out of a hat on demand. But

this remains a Hendrix gem never to see the light of day on American radio. On the other hand, once upon a time a **Bold Swiss** TV-programmer resurrected **Telling** as the soundtrack for May '68 film clips of Jimi in Zurich.

LITTLE WING: Speaking about the songs he recorded in 1967, Jimi said, "A lot of them are ideas I've had from the Village, some of them. Like, we just got around to recording **Little Wing**, based on a very, very simple American Indian style. I got the idea when



we was in Monterey and I was looking at everything around. I figured that I'd take everything around and put it maybe in the form of a girl, and call it *Little Wing*, and then it will just fly away. Everybody was really flying, and there was really a nice mood, the police and everything was really great out there. And so I just took all these things and put them in one very small little matchbox, into a girl, and then do it."

After their Oct. 5 session at Olympic, the JHE took a three week break from the album to get through a string of concerts, radio and TV, interviews and photo sessions. Jimi attended the Oct. 18 premier of *How I Won The War* with John Lennon and later that week took out an injunction for the withdrawal of a record featuring his guitar playing. The disc had been issued in Britain without his consent. Finally, on Oct. 25 he returned to his album, beginning with rehearsals at Regent Sound. That evening the band gathered back in Olympic and recorded *Little Wing*.

"I dig writing slow songs," Jimi said, "because I find it's easier to get more blues and feeling into them." But a *Life* review pointed out how "at the most tender moment of a love song, he will suddenly sing through filters." The Pultec filter and glockenspiel effects were added to *Little Wing* during a separate session, likely on Oct. 28.

"Mitch has this feel for sounds," noted Jimi, "like knowing exactly which other instruments to use. Like, sometimes we play through Leslie speakers, you can put that on afterwards or put it on as you play." *Little Wing* as a cut for which the engineers "did a lot of

sound on," stressed Jimi, "we put the guitar through the Leslie speaker of an organ and it sounds like jelly-bread." The Doppler effect of rotating speaker baffles was devised to vibrate organ tones. Eddie adapted the gadget to add delicate swirls around Jimi's guitar figures. *Little Wing's* keyboard-like chords may have suggested a Leslie, because Jimi's thumb functions as a pianist's left hand, fretting bass lines below grace notes fingered in fragments on top. This keyboard/fretboard hybrid was then phase-shifted with Jimi's vocal for orchestral effects. "Our music is like that jar of candy over there," he said, "everything's all mixed up."

Little Wing was first reviewed for its "Oriental and Indian influences". *Hit Parade* singled out Jimi's guitar intro as music which "must be heard to be believed." The song has become the most treasured of all JHE stage numbers, only eight live versions have ever been heard. "*Little Wing* is like one of these beautiful girls that come around sometimes," explained Jimi,

"they might be spaced, they might be kinda strung out. But everybody has a right to their own releases or their own beliefs, if they want to believe that a star is purple, or whatever. And like these girls, which is one girl to me, is representing more than one person. She's the one that really comes around.

"You ride in town for the drinks and parties, you play your gig; it's the same thing as the olden days - these beautiful girls come around and entertain you. You do actually fall in love with them, because that's the only love you can have. It's not always based on



the physical thing. They actually tell you something. *Little Wing* was a very sweet girl that came around and gave me her whole life and more if I wanted it. And me with my crazy ass couldn't get it together, so I'm off here and there. It's very simple, but I like it. There's nothing else I wanted to say, keep it just like that. It's one of the very few ones I like."

IF 6 WAS 9: "You can have your own blues," Jimi insisted, "it doesn't necessarily mean that folk blues is the only type of blues in the world. We do this blues one, the last track of the LP on the first side, it's called *If 6 Was 9*. That's what you call a great feeling of blues. We don't even try to give it a name." In 1968 Jimi answered questions about his favorite Axis songs and said, "I like a lot of them; *Little Wing*, *Bold As Love*, and I adore *If 6 Was 9*, this is one of the numbers we made about nine months ago." *If 6 Was 9* was cut during the same May 5 Olympic session that produced *EXP*. It was the same day that *The Wind Cries Mary* was released, while *Purple Haze* was still in the Top-5.

Four days later *The Experience* were guests at a 'Tribute to the Recording Industry' luncheon sponsored by the Variety Club. That evening Jimi invited Graham Nash and Gary Leeds to record overdubs for *If 6 Was 9* at Olympic. "You'll be my Walkers", he told the singers. But later inside the studio they discovered his real plans. "Gary Leeds and Graham Nash did some foot-stomping," Jimi said of their contributions, "and on the fade-out, that's our manager's big feet (laughs)."

"On the end of it," confided Noel, "when we all go into three separate time signatures, that's an idea of mine. We didn't know what to do at that point, so I

started doing this, then Mitchell did this other rhythm break phased in and Hendrix went elsewhere, there's three rhythms. Then I went 'boom-boom', at which part we all went 'boom-boom' and we go to the end playing three utterly different tempos! That was created there by all of us. We went home about four in the morning and maybe Chas and the engineer and Hendrix stayed for another hour and went through the tape. We used to work quite long hours."

The A&B harmonies of the tune's tag-out jam, with its barking atmospheric squeals, sounds like something they'd been working on since the Pyramids went up. "That's me on the flute," Jimi said, "a little Indian flute I bought for about two shillings. You can get that same sound out of a guitar. That was just a straight-forward song, how we feel at a particular time, a complete jam session that we had and then put the words on. We was going to do that over again."

"Do that over again" may refer to Chas' attempts to re-mix the tracks after Jimi lost the original mix in October. When they went back to re-do side-A, Chas recalls, "The one song we just couldn't get right was *If 6 Was 9*. We kept saying to ourselves, 'I'm sure this isn't the sound we had originally.' Noel had had a 7 1/2 inch ips, 3 inch reel made from a rough mix done in June and we had to send someone off in a taxi to his flat to bring it back. It was on a tiny little spool and was all wrinkled... we practically had to iron it to flatten it enough to go through the machine. We copied it to 15 ips and put it on the album."

The *6 Was 9* numerological symbolisms have been widely commented on. Jimi's friend Sharon Lawrence reported his digit interests when she wrote "he showed me a tattered, faded book published at the

turn of the century, a standard reference book on numerology. 'This is important, I've read it dozens of times,' he said... 'I'm a nine... it's a powerful number; it can be very good or very bad. Nines are meant to accomplish things in this world.'"

Jimi also told his German painter girlfriend, Monika Dannemann, that "God's real name has been lost over the ages. His real name has nine letters... Number nine symbolizes the reality of God here on earth... six means life and love. But nine is the highest spiritual number that exists." And Eric Burdon described instructions from Jimi found after his death: "We unearthed the plans he'd left for Monika's paintings," wrote Burdon, "He'd made her promise that she would use her skills to execute the paintings and drawings that he'd left behind... Later we were to find, whilst examining the sketches, that all the numbers, all the measurements, were all in nines and sixes, nine inches, six-feet, sixty-nine millimeters..."

But the key is number three - *Multiples Of Three*. The "Hendrix numbers" progress in triplicate leaps: three, six, nine, twelve, fifteen, eighteen, twenty-one, twenty-four, twenty-seven, etc. *Multiples Of Three* means identifying a point of Hendrixia that is summed up with one of these numbers, and there exists a profusion of such incidents as to defy the laws of probability, right up to Jimi's last concert in Germany, the "6 Was 9" gig, which occurred on the 6th day of the 9th month in 1970.

If *6 Was 9* occupied the same realm for Axis as *Third Stone From The Sun* occupied for Are You Experienced? Life suggested that Jimi's musings on *6 Was 9* "can seem to teeter at the edge of mush, but he has turned out to be too good a street poet to let them fall," while Rolling Stone gathered only "banal-

ized hippie lore." But *New Musical Express* realized that "*6 Was 9* is the standout track on the first side... with Hendrix defying the laws of gravity and convention and turning his world from white to black."

"How could *6 Was 9* be anger?" asked Jimi, "I don't say nothin' bad about nobody. It just says, man, let them go on and screw up theirs, just as long as they don't mess with me. Quite naturally, you try to help people out here and there if they can appreciate it. This means that it really doesn't matter if anything is upside down as long as it doesn't bother you, and you can cope with it."

YOU GOT ME FLOATIN': "There's some tracks we might put another guitar on," mentioned Jimi, "but the only people that's on Axis is us three. Except there's one song, *You Got Me Floatin'*, *The Move* sang background with Noel and Mitch."

When the early October rush to finish Axis kicked off, in one of Olympic's adjacent rooms *The Move* were recording. After Jimi did instrumental tracks for *You Got Me Floatin'* on Oct. 3, he asked his studio neighbors to help out with the vocals. "Roy Wood and Trevor Burton sang with Graham Nash, myself and Mitchell," said Noel. The makeshift choir created what one review of the tune called "a fair old choral effect." And for this tune Noel used his new bass. The Hagstrom company had presented him with an 8-string during the American summer tour. "I was asleep in a hotel in New York," remembers Noel, "and someone said, 'Go downstairs, someone's got a bass for you.' So I went down and had this photograph taken when they gave me this bass. I'm sitting there looking bleary in my nightshirt and funny shoes (laughs). Playing an 8-string bass, they're hard to tune up and

they're hard to play. It's like playing a 12 string guitar, high action on it. I played an 8-string bass on three songs: *Spanish Castle Magic*, *Little Miss Lover*, and *You Got Me Floatin'*. We sort of felt that by not using it too much it'd make an effect, and then back to the normal bass. We used it on stage just a couple of times."

Mingling between those nimble runs was what *Record Mirror* described as "reverse guitars spinning backwards, music boxes tinkling." Jimi's "reverse guitar" technique was unique, as Kramer explains, "When the tape was put on backwards - and it was played backwards, with the music rushing by you - Jimi knew where he was on every inch of that tape. It didn't matter where you started it. And he knew exactly in his own mind as he was doing the solo what it would sound like afterwards."

Jimi's expanded-dimension perceptions were unusual. "He'd split for a couple of days, and I realized he was on acid," explains Chas. "It wasn't until the time of the second album that I realized he had in fact been taking it. At that time everybody thought it would sort out their problems... Halfway through Axis he was dropping acid every day. I told him he'd have to be straight some of the time. At first I thought it would give him a new slant on his lyrics." Journalists at the time may have been "floatin'" too, like the one who called this piece a "dancing, wheeling, reeling, feeling and thinking song."

During a December radio show to promote the new album Jimi was asked once more about his favorite

tracks. "I like *Little Wing*," he replied this time, "and, let's see, what else do we have on there? Oh yes, *You Got Me Floatin'*, I like that one."

CASTLES MADE OF SAND: October 27 was "castle day" at Olympic, as Jimi cut tracks for both *Spanish Castle Magic* and *Castles Made Of Sand*. From Moorish euphoria to architects of despair *The Experience* unfolds our human drama. Rock music reached its sensitive fragile depths when Jimi's Indian lullaby whispered *Castles Made Of Sand*. Of the duel pick-up hollow plucks that form the exquisite intro, John Burkes wrote in *Rolling Stone* that Jimi was "funking prettily, like a Delta Wes Montgomery."

Michael Thomas's article for *Eye* called this song a "dank open ended fable... in which the girl in the wheelchair walks again at the sight of a golden winged ship, but not before a little Indian brave is slain in his sleep." "Sounds a bit sick lyrically," concluded a *Record Mirror* review, "unless you listen to the whole scene."

But Jimi identified with Native American stories. "There's a lot of people in Seattle that have a lot of Indian mixed in them," he said, "it's just another part of our family, that's all... All Indians have different ways of stimulants, their own steps towards God, spiritual forms, or whatever, which it should be kept as, nothing but a step, mind you."

In *The Superstars* John Sebastian said, "The thing I like best is Jimi's delivery of tunes, which is completely unique: he doesn't always sing completely. Like the



other night I was riding around New York with him and Cass (Elliot), and Cass was rapping about *Castles Made Of Sand*, and 'You son of a bitch, you don't sing that song. You do something else with that song.' And Jimi was saying, 'Yeah,' and he says to me, 'You have to kind of pretend, like you have to sing it like you was almost falling asleep.' That's the way he spoke of arriving at the way to sing it. It's really true 'cause a lot of it, it's almost a style of reading poetry rather than a completely singer's approach."

George Clemons befriended Jimi in Harlem in the mid-60s and later met up with *The Experience* during their Sept. '67 Swedish tour. "I didn't see how to combine poetry and music," George told *Univibes*, "You've got a lot of what I call no-singing singers... this is where poetry comes in, and we discussed that. Jimi was writing this thing about castles made of sand. Before he recorded that I saw some of those lyrics, but I couldn't understand a thing that he meant. But when he put it to music, I could understand."

"I base my singing on real feelings and true thoughts," Jimi stated, "I learned that from listening to Dylan." And for a critic at *NME*, *Castles* was "almost Dylanesque... the lyric might have been considered slightly sick if the sincerity were not apparent."

"Most of the ballads come across in different ways," Jimi continued, "sometimes you see things in different ways than other people could see it. So then you write it in a song. It could represent anything. I like to write songs like *Castle Made Of Sand*, per-

sonally. When it comes to the ballads, the ballads I really like to get together. That's what I dig."

Harmony shifts through minor modes let reversed-tape solos evaporate in oblivion. Grains of sand slip through the hour glass as time reclaims itself. "About this time," noted Mitch, "I realized that Hendrix could play something forwards and know exactly how it would sound if it was played back in reverse. An amazing facility."

"Hendrix remains the most effective at manipulating tape to give his recorded solos added levels of expression," wrote John Burke, pointing out how *Castles* ends with Jimi's "unaccompanied guitar disappearing in the recesses of the speakers like a large and awkward bird tottering across the skies in a series of metallic whoops."

SHE'S SO FINE: "Most of the time we play the songs I write," Jimi said in '67, "but the boys are getting their little tunes together now."

Noel was the first of Jimi's bandmates to get a song out. "*She's So Fine*, it's my first attempt," he recalls, "that was written in *Top Of The Pops* studio. We went to record after the TV show. I had the run down and the lyrics, a basic generalization on women. It was a song about the hippie situation. (laughs) I've been trying some more." "He should quit while behind," criticized Michael Thomas in *Eye*.

On May 4, 1967 *The Experience* debuted *The Wind Cries Mary* on *Top Of The Pops* and then went to Olympic to record Noel's new song. *She's So Fine* was the first track out for *Axis: Bold As Love*.



"Redding was bored stiff," George Chkiantz said, "when his songs were done, and they were done under extreme duress and extremely rapidly, it must have hurt... Jimi didn't exactly kill himself to help with *She's So Fine*."

"When we did that I showed Hendrix the riff for it," explains Noel, "and Chandler said, 'Yeah, that's good, let's do it.' I think I played the rhythm on that, it's in A, but Hendrix threw in the G in the middle for me, he just said, 'Let's go to G,' then back into A to go to the last verse. He thought of that, and we had the song structured." On May 13 *New Musical Express* reported, "Six more tracks were recorded last week by the trio... Its latest waxings include a composition by bass guitarist Noel, *She's So Fine*, which is being considered for a possible single."

"Chandler was actually thinking about that as a single," agrees Noel, "to say that this one's written by the bass player would have been a very good PR approach." *She's So Fine* never was released as a single. The band waited until the very last session for *Axis* on Oct. 30 before adding final touches and harmony vocals to Noel's tune. "I was chuffed beyond belief that my first attempt at writing, producing and singing, was included," Noel later wrote.

Peter Jones of *Record Mirror* called the results "A very good track. Noel now owes me a drink!" *Melody Maker* proclaimed "a great English rock sound, supercharged as ever by the amazing Hendrix." In fact, the backing vocals are superb and Jimi's Aeolin-solo-into-Heaven at the end is one of the climactic moments on any Hendrix record.

When *Axis* came out, that "English rock sound" appealed to many fans "People were shouting for my song," recalls Noel, "I've got it in my diary: 'Hendrix

wouldn't play it!'"

"Noel is obviously an important part of the scene," conceded Jimi, "we are essentially a trio, but the English music nature calls for pounds and pounds of melody; Irish folk songs, complicated melodies. I'm from America. Blues is my backbone, it calls for more rhythm, more down to earth hard feeling - soul. If you don't constantly release records over there, the ballads will sneak in."

ONE RAINY WISH: After their last gig of the month, *The Experience* returned to the studio on Oct. 29 and recorded *One Rainy Wish*, a song sometimes called "*Golden Rose*" This tune is to *Axis* what *May This Be Love* is to *AYE?*, but more intricate. "That was done in Olympic," said Noel, "we took a long time going through it. If Jimi found a complex song we'd go through one section and stop and we'd go through it again and then the next section, and then attempt to put it down (laughs)."

One complexity of this piece is its rhythm, with the verse played in 3/4 time while the chorus is in 4/4. "We don't think about time," scuffs Mitch, "if you want to get technically specific about it. We're not doing this thing - 'wow, we can play a number in 19/8' or whatever. So what? Who cares? You become aware of your time and you forget all about it. Who wants to count for the rest of your life?"

Of the placid timbres that make *One Rainy Wish* so enchanting, Mitch credits Roger Mayer who "started developing equipment specifically for Jimi, to enable him to produce the sounds he wanted."

"Whatever incredible sounds we think up, he manages to create them," said Jimi, "he has rewired my guitars in a special way to produce an individual

sound and he has made me a fantastic fuzz tone, which you can hear to good effect on Axis. Actually, it's more of a sustain than a fuzz, a gadget called the Octavia that we use on a song called **One Rainy Wish**, it boosts the guitar twice as high."

Chas was on hand to keep these sonic experiments concise. "Jimi had a tendency to ramble," he explained, "and you can't have a three-minute single with a three-minute guitar solo. There's more Hendrix solos ended up on the floor of the Olympic in the cutting room than was ever put out." **Wish** was released in America as the flip-side of **Up From The Skies**. Strumming phased nasal-tones, Jimi rap/sings the "only a dream" sequence over harmony under-shifts and pizzacatto chirps. One critic wrote of the electronic effects "giving his guitar a muffled, sometimes flute-like sound as the notes clash with the octave."

"I want to emphasize that we seek only to get a variation of sound, not gimmicks," warned Jimi. "When we use repeat echo and wah-wah, or a little freaky thing, like rain drops reversed and echoed and phased, it's because we're trying to emphasize a certain point, but all these little things happen so quick, they don't really get in the way of the music."

LITTLE MISS LOVER: When the Oct. 1 push to complete Axis commenced, the first new tune tackled was **Little Miss Lover**. "We just say that a number is in a certain key and we think about what we do there," Noel relates, "on **Little Miss Lover** I had my Hagstrom bass, and Jimi got a special sound out of the guitar, it comes through like a whistle."

The first take of **Little Miss Lover** actually did include a "wolf whistle", but that version lacked the modulation from F# to A that makes the album cut

more exciting. **Little Miss Lover** is also the first piece Jimi composed using his trademark "woccka-chucka" muted rhythm-whacks chewed through a modified wah-wah. His guitar "whistle" came from feeding extreme string bends through Roger's Octavia. The group was careful to keep Roger's identity secret so he wouldn't lose his government job. "This anonymous expert of ours," Mitch teased in 1967, "he also does things for my drum kit. I don't want to go too deeply into them, because they're a bit secret."

"Jimi showed Mitch the intro to **Little Miss Lover** on the drums," claims Noel, "it was like Mitchell had two bass drums then, so I think Hendrix was trying to use them."

When recording resumed on Oct. 3, **The Move** joined Graham Nash to sing chorus while Jimi's lead vocal was warped through filters. The following week **New Musical Express** reported the "next **JHE** single is likely to be another self-penned number, **Little Miss Lover**, to be issued by Track early in December. Jimi is currently engaged in a 15 day crash recording program to complete his second LP."

"Chas helps me out with lyrics on occasion," Jimi said, "he modifies a couple of words."

"I used to change his lyrics," said Chas, "the basic thing was editing, we all felt it improved them. But he was an intelligent guy and if you suggested something that would mean a bit more, he'd say 'that's a good idea, great'. He was OK to work with, terrific."

I wish people would listen more to the lyrics of a song," admitted Jimi, "they very seldom do, yet the lyrics are very important to most songs, especially to our new single, **Little Miss Lover**."

But Jim's hype was premature, **Little Miss** never was put out on her own, even though one review

called it "a strung, building screecher" while another proclaimed "this could so easily have been a single." In fact, no singles off the Axis album were ever released in England. Still, considering Jimi's regard for **Little Miss Lover**, it's surprising that the tune didn't show up much within his concert sets. Reviews of it are very scarce and only one stage version has ever been heard, that being a hot 'n' bothered reading from the '69 Toronto show, following Jimi's frame-up drug possession bust that day (he was later acquitted).

BOLD AS LOVE: Near the end of their 1967 American tour, the **JHE** arrived in Washington D.C. on Aug. 9 for a five-day run on the heels of the most violent riots ever seen in the nation. "We saw cops using night sticks clubbing Negroes to the ground," said a bewildered Mitch, "and Noel saw five kicking a Negro on the pavement."

"I got pulled up by the police in Washington, D.C.," said Jimi, "and I was refused entry to one or two restaurants, but that was because I was with a couple of hippies. One of them looked like **Sitting Bull**. But it wasn't a racial thing." During his D.C. visit Jimi stayed at The Shorham Hotel and from there survives stationery bearing his lyric drafts for **Bold As Love**, which was later among the last three tracks cut for the LP on Oct. 29.

"Other groups relied on a variety of instruments to keep new," Noel wrote, "but we relied on Jimi's irrefragable urge to experiment with new sounds, which

he did with a vengeance, especially now that he'd embraced pedals."

Roger was devising a new line of effects. "He's making something he calls the 'heavenly sound,'" Jimi revealed, "it sounds like all the heavens opening up."

"I spent a lot of time with Jimi privately," recalls Roger, "hanging out and talking. We were normally using colors to describe the sounds."

"Some feelings make you think of different colors," observed Jimi, "Jealousy is purple; I'm purple with rage or purple with anger, and green is envy. Like you

explain your different emotions in color towards this girl who has all the colors in the world. In other words you don't think you have to part with these emotions but you're willing to try."

"The answer to how you might convey color to a blind man," was Keith Altham's description of **Bold As Love**. Of the song's pomp and splendor end section, Noel recalls that the music they created "was spontaneous between the whole

band, pretty ad lib." However, the electronic treatment applied to this section was laboriously achieved and painstaking to create. It was inspired by an old 1959 single.

"Have you heard of a record called **The Big Hurt?**" Jimi asked a Cleveland journalist in 1968, "It's old, but I don't know the label. All the new techniques were used on that record without anyone knowing about it. I'd sure like to get that one. Like there's a certain thing on the last track of Axis, it's called 'phasing', it makes it sound like planes are



going through your membranes and chromosomes. A cat got that together accidentally and turned us on to it." Phasing involved synchronizing two identical recordings mixed together to create what *Record Mirror* termed the "unusual electronic sounds" heard on **Bold As Love**.

"The Small Faces did phasing first" reports Noel, "Ogdens Nut Gone Flake, that's what it's called." Other reports cite *Itchycoo Park* as the Faces' first "phased" effort, which was done in mono.

"I don't think it was used properly though with the Faces," claimed Jimi, "except for certain parts. But *Itchycoo Park*, that was great, they used it great. I had to put that at slow speed 'cause it wasn't long enough."

George Chkiantz is the expert credited with creating the phasing sound in stereo and applying it to the last minutes of **Bold As Love**. "That's the sound I've been hearing in my dreams!" exclaimed Jimi, "that's the sound we wanted. You hear the sound, but you just don't know, you say, 'well, there's something we want, it goes Sssshhhwwsshh, and we want to make it sound like that, but we don't want to use tapes of jet airplanes. We want to have the music itself warped.' It's a special sound. If we put a certain sound on, like planes going through it, that's because we want the people to have their ears open for that feeling, instead of just putting them on. We don't call them gimmicks because all those things are coming out of us."

But as Noel explains, "In those days phasing was hard to do, because we were only working on four track. They had to get two two-track tape recorders together; they had to set up two, connect them, and then put them out-of-phase with each other, with the dials. I was watching them, but I don't know how they

did it, 'cause they used to say to us, 'OK, we're gonna have to set this up. Go down to the pub for half an hour.' We'd go down there, come back up, and they'd have it set up and we'd go back to work."

"The strain was certainly showing between the band and Chas by the time we did the track **Bold As Love**," wrote Mitch. "I particularly wanted to go for this flanging sound on the drums and finish the album with something quite big and impressive. That took a long time to set up in the studio. Chas' patience definitely started wearing thin, but we were allowed to do it. It was the first time I actually got to sit at the board and work on my drum sound. It didn't go down too well, but Jimi really stuck by me."

Although Noel had jammed on **Bold As Love's** original "ad lib" ending, Jimi later went back and beefed up the sound with his own flowing bass lines. "A lot of times we might record with us three," said Jimi, "or we might record as one instrument and then build around that. We have ideas in our minds and then we'll add to them. Like you're at home writin' your little song and you say, 'Oh great, then we could have this in there.' " One of the ideas that struck the band as a final touch was the addition of Eddie's cheerful harpsichord accompaniment.

"The mind blowing title track," read a *Melody Maker* review, "the culmination of all Jimi's blues...all his everything."

"The best way to accept some of the things that we do," advised Jimi, "if it's all that important, is to take every song for what it has to offer itself, instead of trying to put it all in one big thing, because our next LP is going to be completely different and, you know, strange..."



AXIS: BOLD AS LOVE

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All songs written by Jimi Hendrix, published by Bella Godiva Music. ASCAP.
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