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instruments as well as the group itself. The record was social comment on the United States of America. Some of the comment must have been too strong, for Zappa was jailed by the Californian Authorities for making an obscene record. The first of many brushes with the powers that be!

The next album "Absolutely Free" was again a satire of life styles in the States (high school etc.) It also contains snatches of contemporary classical music - (something previously unheard of in pop. His next effort "Lumpy Gravy" features an electronic symphony orchestra made up of Los Angeles session musicians. It consists of musical interludes between humorous monologues relating to life in Los Angeles. During this period Mundie and Collins quit the group and were replaced by Ian Underwood - a Mozart influenced pianist and multi-instrumentalist. Also Arthur Tripp joined on drums and xylophone. Tripp is an ex-member of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

In September, 1967, Zappa paid his first visit to England and played a concert at the Royal Albert Hall. He dismayed critics who considered the show a huge joke. The group displayed many innovations: the use of the Fuzz Wah pedal on the guitar, which Zappa originated and which has since been used to great effect by many rock artists, notably Jimi Hendrix, and the use of amplified saxophones, flutes and horns, double drummers and electronic sound effects. Perhaps the "Mothers" were too advanced for the audience at that time.

Meanwhile they recorded "We're only in it for the money", a parody of hippies and flower power, and "Ruben and Jets", a satirical and nostalgic collection of 1950's type rock and roll. Don Preston, piano and electronic effects was added to the group.

In January, 1968, Zappa completed his most ambitious project yet - a double album entitled "Uncle Meat" which was intended as the sound track to a film of the same name. Both albums featured many novel electronic recording effects: the use of multi-track recording techniques e.g. forty track build up and the use of sound filters to amplify sections of the instrumentation. They also used Melchor Compressors and Lang Equalizers; these enhanced the group's sound and marked the beginning of an evolution towards more complex and improved modes of recording.

Between March 1968 and July 1969, Zappa's "Mothers' of Invention" recorded at least twelve albums, none of which (to my knowledge) have ever been released. These albums feature studio cuts and live cuts from concerts. I believe the album "Weasels Ripped My Flesh" released September, 1970, is a sample of these.

In the summer of 1968, "Mothers' of Invention" paid their second visit to England. Their sole concert was at the Royal Festival Hall. It was a multi media event featuring clowns, acrobats and dancers. Respected violinist Don "Sugar Cane" Harris came along with the group. The whole show was filmed and recorded. The product was some superbly recorded music, perhaps the finest Zappa has ever produced. The critics

in England again did not seem to comprehend the show. Zappa and the "Mothers!" returned to America leaving people still a little unsure if they were serious musicians or comedians.

Some of the music from the show was later released in February, 1970, on the album "Burnt Weary Sandwich". The track on side two, "The Little House I used to Live in", is 21' 52" of free flowing music, brilliantly recorded. For those new to Zappa's music there is no better introduction than this track in full stereo. It features a shrilling electric violin solo from Sugar Cane Harris. Also an exhilarating rolling organ solo from Frank himself.

Most of the next year in America saw the group's fortunes increase only slightly. They were earning nowhere near the amount big British rock bands, e.g. "Cream", were grossing.

The next British tour in May, 1969, was very successful and for the first time the "Mothers" appeared outside London. On Friday, 30th May, they gave a concert at the Birmingham Town Hall. This was the best music concert I have ever had the pleasure of witnessing. Supplemented by Buzz Gardener (brother of Bunk) on horns, flugelhorn and bassoon, they played what Zappa calls contemporary American music and electronic chamber music. The sheer intensity and beauty of the music astonished the audience. I myself spoke to Zappa after the show and can reveal that he is intelligent, and considerate towards his fans. During this tour Frank and his "Mothers!" won many admirers. It is ironic that shortly afterwards he disbanded the group. He gave lack of audience appreciation as the main reason. The disbandment of "Mothers" was the tragedy for progressive music.

Zappa, Ian Underwood and several Los Angeles musicians recorded "Hot Rats" in August and September, 1969. Jean Luc Ponty, a friend of Zappa, also appeared on the album. The French violinist's presence perhaps showed how much respect Zappa commands in music circles. The album was a great success selling particularly well in Europe. It did more than anything to bring attention to Frank Zappa's music. Rolling Stone magazine called it "A significant piece of Jazz, as influential as any this decade."

Zappa began to get some of the praise he so justly deserves. He won the Pop Musician Award from Downbeat (1970). He played a concert with Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra. He re-formed "The Mothers of Invention" though unfortunately with certain brilliant musicians from his previous line missing. His main project at the moment seems to be "200 Motels" which has just been filmed and brings us back full circle to the Albert Hall, 1971.

APPENDIX

The following is a list of players who appeared with Zappa in 1966-69 as original members of the "Mothers of Invention".

Frank Zappa,	Guitar, percussion.
Jimmy Carl Black,	Drums.
Roy Estrada,	Electric bass, vocals.
Don Preston,	Organ, piano.
Billy Mundi,	Drums (Quit early 1968).
Bunk Gardner,	Flute, saxes, bassoon.
Ian Underwood,	Organ, piano, saxes.
Arthur Tripp,	Drums, xylophone, vibes.
Roy Collins,	Vocals (Quit late 1968).
James Sherwood,	Tenor sax, tambourine.
Buzz Gardner,	Horns, sax (from 1969).
Don Harris,	Electric violin (1968 only).

ALBUMS RELEASED

- (1) "Freak Out" double (U.S. only) 1966
- (2) "Absolutely Free" 1967
- (3) "Lumpy Gravy" 1967
- (4) "We're only in it for the money" 1967
- (5) "Ruben and the Jets" 1968
- (6) "Uncle Meat" double 1968 (TRA 197)
- (7) "Hot Rats" (RSLP) 6356 1970
- (8) "Burnt Weeny Sandwich" (RS 6370) 1970
- (9) "Weasels Ripped my Flesh" (RS 2028) 1970

New Group 1970

- (10) "Chunga's Revenge" 1970

All except the latter strongly recommended. The first five albums are M.G.M. label and in the process of being deleted.

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