



Vanessa Winstrip

BRILLIANT CORNERS hastily cover up some obscene graffiti

ROUGH AND ready, rugged and riotous, irreverent and raucous. These would be a starting point for describing the Brilliant Corners, a quartet from Bristol who've picked up the increasingly flaccid form of 'rock and roll' by the scruff of the neck, and given it a damn good shaking.

The initial offensive has been carried out by the release of two self-financed and produced singles — 'She's Got Fever' and 'Big Hip' — which have drawn rave reviews from all sections of the music press. Both songs are short, sharp, sweet bursts of fire-cracker power, of the sort that has to be played again and again in order to quench the thirst of their fiery potency. Two

minutes of condensed catharsis.

Flip over to the 'B' sides and you get 'Black Water' and 'Tangled Up In Blue', displaying the Corners in a lower-key mood, which singer/guitarist/lyricist Dave Woodward described as "twangy, abstract country and western" as opposed to his notion of "minimal lyrics with an idea" that characterises 'Fever' and 'Hip'. The motto is, "play both sides."

Attempting to unravel these and other aspects of the Corners crusade, I talk with the four members of the band — Dave, Bob (drums, blunt haircut), Chris (bass and vicious wit) and Winston (percussion and Milk Tray backing vocals). Not for these boys the following of the path which leads to flogging the local gig circuit, or spending endless hours in the bedroom and studio creating demo masterpieces

that no-one will hear.

Releasing a single was a conscious decision, aimed at stimulating interest and at the same time proclaiming the group's own individuality.

Dave: "We wanted the records to be the opposite of everything that's in the major and independent charts, whether it was pop or gothic anarcho-punk, both of which are really boring. The only real problem that's resulted from that approach is that some of the people who come and see us get confused and disconcerted because we don't fit into a mould, but that's not something we worry about. We leave it to them to sort out."

SO ONE essential point to make is that the Brilliant Corners are a Not-a-billy band. Go through any influences, overt or covert, and you could end

up with no Everlys extremes, no Creedence Clearwater Revival steals from the Bayou, no Pistols or Stones, and only a source of their name from Thelonious Monk. There's bits of country, punk, rockabilly, blues and voodoo all jumbled up in there, best summed up by the phrase 'Big Hip Grease Boys Go Pop In The Delta'(!) mixed with the notion that short songs take chances, but that perhaps the Corners may break through the four-minute barrier in their compositional efforts sooner, rather than later.

The Brilliant Corners could be four individuals who are unintended look-alikes, who sound like no-one else. Winston reminds people of a young Sidney Poitier or Edwin Starr, to others Chris is a dead ringer for Neil Arthur or Dave for Edwyn Collins. And Bob, well it's obvious isn't it? Vyvyan Young One. Appropriately it

was Bob that was the last to join the group, and he held out with Vyvyan-style obstinacy for a year before taking the plunge, and that in spite of daily persuasions from Dave while they were working together as technicians in the labs at a terribly-terribly boys' public school.

Chris commented that the Corners concentrate on "the things that count," and it's a reflection of that commitment that there are possible Radio One sessions in the offing, the group now have London based publishers working for them, and the word is getting round. The surreal brag sheet that accompanies every BC communication sums them up — "rasping, violent, beautiful and incoherent" — and the Brilliant Corners are a real shot in the arm and tonic for the troops. They won't be forgotten.

DAVE MASSEY

SUNSET