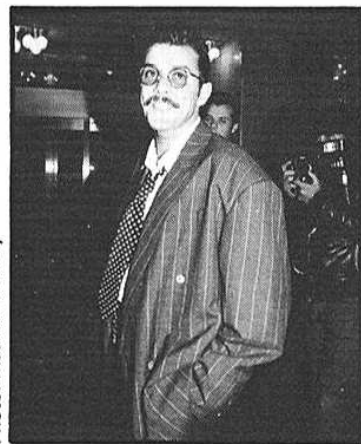




# STAR PARTS

## IMAGE

### BY PAUL RUTHERFORD



#### Interview by Paul Simper

Say the word 'Frankie' and you immediately set off a cartload of images: 'Frankie Say', The Lads, Pleasuredome, slaves, chainsaws, shiny black boots and a dancing black moustache... These were the trappings that made the Frankie of 'Relax' and 'Two Tribes' so vivid, so visually all-consuming. The wonderful world of FGTH.

A lot of the credit for this imagery has been given to Frankie's record company, ZTT. Also to Paul Rutherford, the dancing fifth member of the band, whose keen sense of style seems

to unite this motley bunch of scraggy scousers into something exciting and complete.

#### EARLY FRANKIE

"We thought we were really *dangerous* when we used to run round Liverpool in leather," Paul recalls. "Total prats! But it was fun. And that's what it's all about."

"When we were getting it all together we went to see a lot of bands, like King, and they weren't that exciting," says Paul. "Hence the leather and rubber. It might look pretty dumb now but it was quite exciting. Especially in a small club in Liverpool."

"We never really discussed image in the early days. ZTT wanted something off the wall and we were that."

"In fact they were slightly disappointed when we went on *Top Of The Pops* for the first time in jeans rather than jockstraps."

"Some people said we were taming up then, but we'd just got bored of the other. We'd been doing all that for 18 months."

#### THE ROLE OF ZTT

Frankie have always acted in close partnership with the image-makers at ZTT.

"They're our record company; they're our helpers," explains Paul. "I actually dearly love ZTT — basically all of us do."

"Paul Morley (the label manager) is great to have on your side because he likes upsetting things too. He wants you to be *worse* than you want to be yourself."

"We don't go off on a limb to get in trouble. It's just us."

The rumours about FGTH being manipulated are wrong, then?

"Oh yeah. You couldn't make Holly do something he didn't want to do. *No way*. No one can do that."

#### TRENDY SETTERS

"If it hadn't been for punk there'd be nothing happening right now. Especially if it was left to record

company A&R men to choose things."

"They think they do it. They *believe* they predict things. That's the funniest. The bands have the foresight, not the A&R men."

"It's really weird how little trends happen. You notice it in fashion designs. How on earth do they all decide that the colours of the season are green and yellow? It just kinda happens."

"It's the same in music. Suddenly everything's heavily black influenced or heavily rock... Everyone suddenly gets bored at the same time."

#### BLACK MOUSTACHE

So why did Paul get bored with the black moustache?

"When I had it people used to say I looked like the Clark Gable of pop music and I *felt* like that."

That's why I grew it. As a kid I used to love all the MGM movie classics. I wanted to look really dapper all the time."

At that time Paul and the Frankies bought reams of suits. Now he dresses down much more.

"I do still buy clothes, but it's just a hobby."

"I wish I wasn't that interested in clothes. Then I'd be able to just put on me favourite T-shirt and me favourite jeans. I'd like to have seven T-shirts, seven pairs of jeans, seven pairs of socks, seven pairs of underpants — cos you don't really need to look any other way."

"I only wear white, black and grey now — that always matches. You can't go wrong!"

#### STYLING THE LADS

"You really can't dress the Lads. Not in suits and that. If you did they'd just stoop and look like they'd been dressed. It's the worst thing in the world."

"That's why styling's quite a difficult job. You have to predict things they would want to wear."

"I find it a real headache with the Lads sometimes."

"I do think Mark should wear a

black T-shirt all the time. And keep his hair greased like Elvis. I only say that cos if I had straight hair I'd have it like Elvis Presley. When my hair grows I'm like Bob Marley!"

#### PICCIES

Photo sessions are where a group's stylist really comes into his own. Does Paul enjoy them?

"I enjoy seeing the results but I don't enjoy doing them. I'd like to be the other side of the camera. I know how to present myself before the camera. I don't get embarrassed."

Paul's favourite photographer is Bruce Weber, the fashion photographer world famous for his work with designer Calvin Klein.

"His pictures are so erotic it's untrue. The blue Obsession (perfume) ads are brilliant. And the ones for Calvin Klein jeans. I'd like everyone in the world to look as beautiful as he makes people look."

Paul's next ambition is to see Frankie in a movie.

"It'd be brilliant. It'd be much better than the records cos you'd have something to look at as well. The music would suit a film."

"It'd be great to do *A Hard Day's Night*. That's all we could do. We're not actors."

#### THE LIVE BITS

Frankie didn't play live for the first year after 'Relax' — people began to think they *couldn't*. Now they've got a deserved reputation for a hard-hitting, exciting stage show. Paul's got his own theory about it.

"I've decided now that Frankie are basically a high class strip-tease act when we play live. Second song — jackets off... third song — shirts off..."

"We've learnt now that all that stage gear is a waste of time except for first impressions. It's all icing on the cake."

PAUL'S PICKS: SEE OVER

I said to the others: 'I know exactly what I want everyone to wear'. They just laughed...





**IMAGE  
STARS**  
BY  
PAUL RUTHERFORD

SADE



"Brilliant—and that's not cos I sort of know her. In fact that's why I wanted to get to know her. She's not affected. She knows what's classic and what isn't. Good on yer, girl!"

PHOTO: GRAHAM SMITH



PRINCE

"He's brilliant. Again he's got it all together. He's not stupid. He knows what he's doing. Anyone who can get six people in a band who can all dance the same must know what he's doing. He's the best thing around. A true 80s popstar."



ART OF NOISE

"The Art Of Noise should be heard and not seen. They seem to be forgetting that a bit."

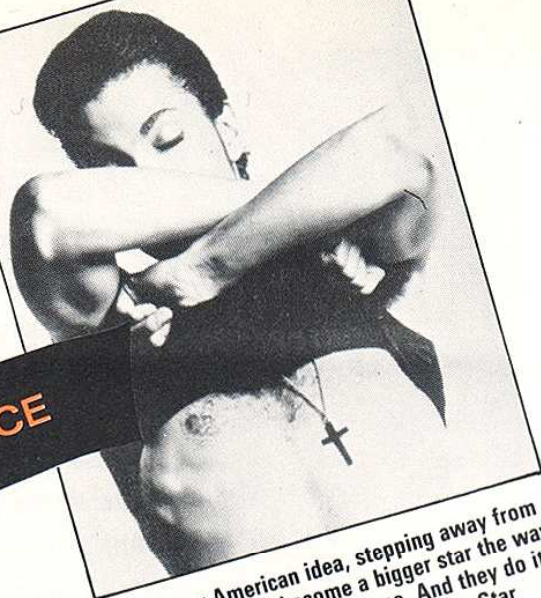


PHOTO: MIKE NORTON

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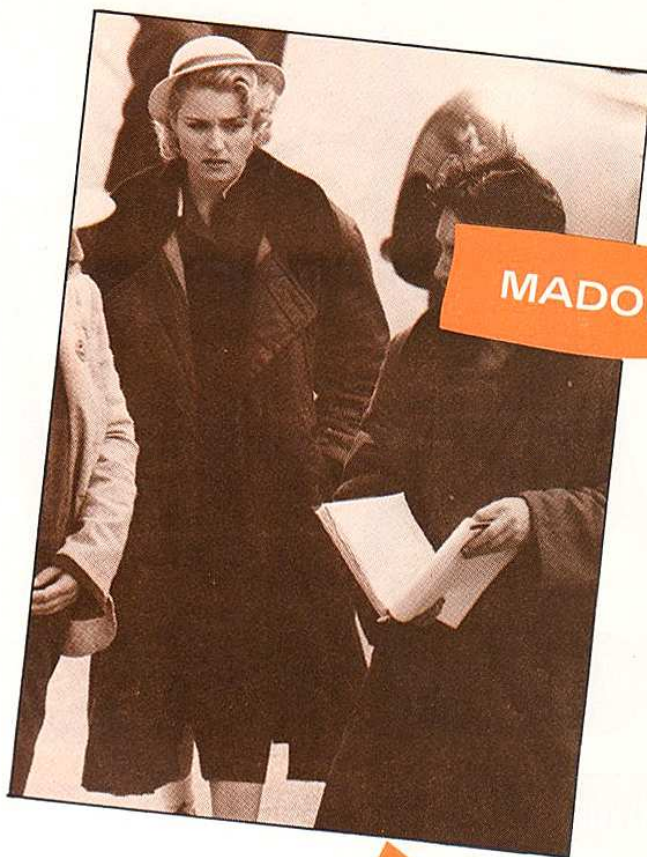


PRINCE

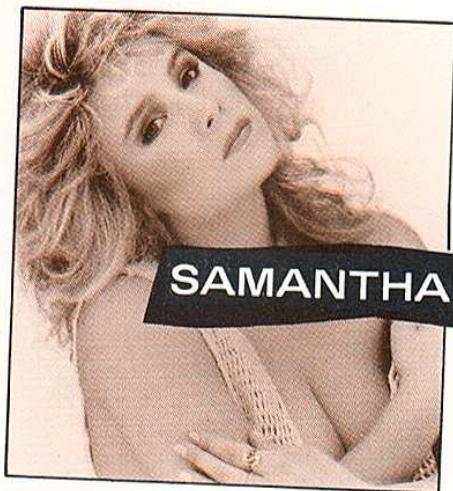


"It's a very American idea, stepping away from all the publicity to become a bigger star the way Madonna and Prince have done. And they do it so well. These people are regarded as Star Stars — that being which doesn't go to the toilet or blow its nose.  
"If you do that here it's not tolerated. I think you feel more human for that.  
"Fleet Street's reaction to Madonna didn't surprise me. It's just frustration. We always like people being successful till they are."

MADONNA



SAMANTHA FOX



"There's always going to be the novelty side of it. Music is so many different things to different people so there's always space for someone like her.  
"I like Samantha Fox. I think she's a great personality so I don't begrudge her success. Like I don't begrudge The Young Ones."

"I really admire the way they've gone about things. They've built up and built up and now after nine albums they seem to be at a peak. That way of building a career really appeals to me. It must feel very exciting."

SIMPLE MINDS



SIGUE

SIGUE

SPUTNIK

"I think they're great. It's all been done very entertainingly — visually exciting, the wind-ups... At the end of the day though they're going to have to start writing songs."