



The unpredictable Ig returns to Britain in June, no longer trying to demolish the audience, himself and the equipment in one go. Mark Piggott takes a look at what the Detroit Demon has to offer.

Irrepressible as ever, Iggy Pop refuses to lie down and die like any decent '70s cult figure should. But record companies' ranting press releases alone cannot be held responsible for keeping *The International Garbage Man* in the news, and in the hearts of our so-savage music journos. Something other than a pompous pilloried pop star stands proud on the cover, and sings proud in the grooves of Pop's recent **Blah Blah Blah**. He's come a long way since first banging those drums twenty years ago. Let me recap...

If you want to know the definition of Raw Power, try Iggy's. In it, he and the Stooges grabbed music's conceited balls long before The Pistols opened their clutching fingers. Critics called the album 'rough in the extreme'. Unfortunately, at the time dissent was unfashionable, and so was Iggy. He retained a cult status, had little chart success, and didn't appear to give a toss. Remarkably, the underground status has remained until the present day, despite a series of successful albums and associations with Bowie. The only possible explanation is Iggy's own uncompromising energy. Fit and lean and healthy, the fire is still in evidence, both physical and lyrical. Ten years ago it seemed Iggy had reached a peak, with **The Idiot** and **Lust for Life** receiving huge acclaim. Some songs still stand out as classics- **The Passenger**, **China Girl**. Both albums, produced by Bowie, displayed a lyrical awareness encompassed by rhythmic rifts. The only British contemporaries that spring to mind are The Fall. But even Mark E. Smith pales beside the thrashing figure of Iggy on stage.

If you haven't heard all of **Blah Blah Blah** - Iggy's first album for four years- then spare a slice of your giro for A&M. It's worth the thought of making one more fat bastard PR-man rich just to get your own back on your next door neighbours. Raw and raucous, melodic and musical... The Pistols (Steve Jones) and Bowie meet on one album. Mixed together expertly with Iggy's idiosyncrasies, the result is foot stompin' good, shaking the cynical apathy of many a record reviewer in the process.

And there is a new sensitivity in Iggy too, one that was rarely in evidence in his Bic-sponsored days. He admits that, "As I've grown, I've discovered that yes, other people are necessary, yes, the other guy does have something to say, and yes, if I stick with this girl past the first fight, the relationship might grow to be something."

Bad boy makes good - shock, horror. He even paints: some of his efforts can be seen in the video for Cry for Love. He acts: small parts in Sid & Nancy and The Colour of Money. Are we seeing a new, sophisticated Iggy? What is sophistication, if not screwing teddy bears on children's television (censored of course)? Is Iggy the sophisticated savage? Who Cares? Just Listen.

Ends