

in satirical military garb, organising anti war demos outside Australia House, flocking to the Albert Hall to hear beat poets howl against the machine. It began to dawn that a new Oz could be launched in this subversive undercurrent. No business plan, no market research, no registering of a trademark. Through my sister Jill, a longtime habitu  of Bohemia, there was easy access to a network of articulate malcontents. A new generation of expats scattered from Earls Court to Sloane Square, were only too happy to join the fun of taking the piss out of the poms. Part of the mix was a yearning for the sun, the beach, the bright colours, and a resentment of all the signs on the edge of parks prohibiting the making of music and the playing of games. **Let's** get this very clear. I am often shocked, looking back, at the extent of my selfishness, sexism and self indulgence. And boy, did I spout some rubbish. Yes, come the mutterings, he still does. One media critic likened my soapbox rants to being "button holed outside a lav." Of course, all the high and mighty moralising on the deceptions of government did not deter our shifty behaviour in the bedroom. Overall, I should have listened less to Bob Dylan and done more for Amnesty International. **Meanwhile,** to the politics of protest, Oz added a dash of fairy dust impudence and classy design. The images of Martin Sharp bloomed from the rooftops, the crystalline mocking of Germaine Greer blew the underwear off Oxbridge dons. The list is long of generous expats who intersected with Oz, as you will discover in this exhibition, though some notables now repudiate their larrikin spasm. **By** 1968, as West Coast psychedelia fused with Parisian Situationism, and the kids of the middle classes rioted in a string of cities, from Chicago to Paris, our little mag found fame as the megaphone of a counter culture we expected to sweep the world. Madness was in the air. Lawyers and accountants threw off their flannels and fled to Marrakesh. Marxists squatted in



Caption to come

OZ #13-24



mansions. Schoolkids went on strike. The streets were alive with legalise pot rallies, groupies on trampolines, a new underground paper each week, anti war marches, live TV kidnappings, rock star excesses and wet dream film festivals. Wherever you were, vomiting in King's Road or storming the barricades, one thing was sure: close on your heels were bloody Australians, known as the downunderground. **Maybe** so many of us spun out because our parents were on the other side of the world, locked in Fortress Australia, (from which London Oz was banned). Or was it devilish cunning? The policy of our rulers had been such a stew of pig-headedness and war crimes, that outrage was an obligation. As Vietnam dragged on, the protests intensified, and so did the hitback. Round the clock B52's, even at Christmas, even over Cambodia. The actions of our political

masters escalated to the point of insanity. Could it be, that on an unconscious level, a generation sensed that the only way to break the spell was to enter a deeper realm of madness, to become so crazy as to shock the old farts into re-discovering their own humanity? In the end, it did the trick. **The** wars ended, both in Asia and between the generations. The Alf Conspirators melted away... to emerge again another day. **The** Oz journey from satire to psychedelia, moved on to the dock of the Old Bailey. This bizarre 1971 "public morals" trial was the last stand of the larrikins, presided over by a "hanging judge", who seemed to offer the real prospect, finally, of the defendants swinging in London. In the end, he settled for 15 months hard labour. After which, he ordered "the convict Neville" be deported to Botany Bay. It makes me the last person in history to be sentenced to transportation. So here I am, folks, back where it all began. In a museum.



Caption to come

OZ #25-36