

with Szymczyk and Ladanyi — you have to back 'em down a little because they want to put their stamp on there too, so they get a little gizmo'd out by the end of an album. You have to say: Come on! Back that down a little, we've got to let the music come through here."

It is understandable with so much happening in the technology, they want to try it all out in the field.

"But," said Don with a laugh, "not at my expense. I have mixed emotions about all this technology. I think it can be good and bad depending on how it is used, as with any technology."

But I could still hear Don playing real drums on the album.

"Oh yeah, we try to keep the human warmth. I think we've succeeded with this album, even with all the technology that is on Side 2, at keeping some sort of warmth. What we do usually — if we use a drum machine — is I'll go out and overdub snare, maybe some toms or bass drum on top of that — which drives me insane, because playing in time with a machine is very difficult to do. It flams if you're not right on the beat. But usually I'll go out and overdub real drums and we mix things.

"Kootch bought one of those new Roland **707** guitar synthesisers, which are not exactly perfected yet but we got some great use out of that. On the track *Sunset Grill*, Kootch did an amazing job on that with the solos. Those are not horns, that's a guitar. We got two of the best trombone players in America in the studio and they just couldn't cut

it. So Kootch said: Let me try this thing? I've just bought it.

"When you get a chance to listen to *Sunset Grill* — the jazz kind of thing — it's got everything in the world there. That's the kind of *piece de resistance* on this album. It's got everything except the kitchen sink. I finally got Randy Newman to come and pay me back for some of the work I'd done on his albums. I did backing vocals on three or four of his albums. I sang on *Red-necks* and *Christmas In Capetown*. Anyway, he arranged the synthesiser strings for *Sunset Grill*.

Randy Newman must rate as one of the last of the gate eccentrics. His music comes across as being very genuine.

"He's quite a character. (laughs). Yeah, he is genuinely crazy, eccentric and neurotic. But he's a nice guy underneath all that. You can tell by his music he's very serious. So anyway, I got him down there to arrange this thing and I got the synthesiser guy he uses named Mike Boddicker — he does quite a bit of work around LA — and he came down and did about 12,000 dollars worth of overdubs on it. When I got the bill I went; Jesus Christ!"

Is it the same as in Britain, session musicians get an extra session fee for each additional overdub?

"Sometimes. But basically it was just time, searching for the right sounds and things like that. There are a couple of those guys in L.A., you hire them and they bring down this giant bank of stuff into the studio and it looks like the inside of a **747** cockpit or some-

thing. Ben Tench — from Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers did a little bit of synth on it. It's got real horns — a brass section on the tag. It's got the drum machine and all kinds of stuff. But I really like the synth arrangement that Randy did."

"It's great. That's the most fun for me doing a solo album, having all these incredible musicians at my disposal and I am sort of sat up there like a movie director and cast people in certain roles. I called up a lot of people I didn't know from Adam for this album and I was delighted with the response. Everybody from newcomers to veterans. There's a kid called Charlie Sexton on *Man With A Mission* — the sort of Rockabilly rave up on Side One — he's just sixteen years old and he's the latest Guitar Wiz from Austin, Texas. He's a great kid, he's got both his feet on the ground and I'm going to try and write some with him.

"There's Patty Smyth who is the vocalist in a new group happening in United States called Scandal. She's an incredibly good vocalist. She grew up on the streets of New York. Her mother ran several nightclubs when she was a kid so she got to see it all happen. I called her up, I didn't know her, because I'd seen her on MTV and thought she was an incredible singer. I figured she'd say: Bug off you old fart! I don't want to work with you!

She said she'd love to and I said: You do? You would?

She said: Yeah, are you kidding? I used to go around singing Witchy Women when I was fifteen."