



Cab savvy: a few of Black Taxi's drivers.

## Keynotes MIKE DALY

### SATURDAY STREET Black Taxi

Larrikin/Festival

THE fact that Black Taxi's principal performers and songwriters live in four different states explains why it's taken two years to follow up their debut *Taken For A Ride*. The dynamic pop/jazz mix is, if anything, even more eclectic than before and involved more than 40 musicians over 18 months of sessions at North Melbourne Institute of Tafe's Collingwood studios. That's also where Dave Wayman (Black Taxi's co-writer/producer with Terry Bradford) teaches budding musicians by example with this kind of polished product. Among the stand-out songs are tender ballads *Gone To Water* (a potential laid-back single) and *The Kite*, sung by former NMIT student April Ronsisvalle with a level of emotional subtlety few singers achieve. Then there's Leah Cottorell, whose smoky-textured

vibrato energises the earthy *Mr Greenaway* and *Crazy Kind Of Love*. But this is a team effort, involving the vocal talents of Yasmin Shoobridge and newcomer Rachael Kennedy (also from NMIT), backed by the Pantazis brothers, Gerry on drums and Jack on guitars, bassist David Ross, and Enio Pozzebbon on keyboards. Add a line-up of brass, reed and string players, including multi-reedman Glen Blair, who co-wrote the delightful, big-band arrangement *Don't Go Thru Town Dave*. The swinging harmonies of *Banana* and *Saturday Street* could have come from the Andrews Sisters' era... but that's part of Black Taxi's charm, you never know what's next on the musical cab rank.



### HORN TRIOS Harding/McDonald/Munro Trio

Tall Poppies TP114

WHEN three of Australia's most talented musicians get together to record works that are both intellectually stimulating and musically satisfying, the listener has much cause for rejoicing. At the centre of this trio, currently touring for *Musica Viva*, is Hector McDonald, former second horn of the Berlin Philharmonic. He is joined by John Harding, co-concertmaster of the Sydney Symphony and Tasmanian-based pianist Ian Munro. Together, this group display exemplary sensitivity and versatility across their varied program. Lennox Berkeley's 1954 *Horn Trio* recalls the lean but powerful style of Britten. After a haunting slow movement, the concluding set of 10 variations displays Berkeley's skill in effectively creating a succession of mood changes. The lyrical sixth variation is handled with particular charm. Don Banks's *Horn Trio* from 1962 is couched in an approachable serialism. His use of the 12-tone technique does not draw attention to itself by producing angular, "barbed wire" music; rather, the music has a somewhat romantic ebb and flow created by the alternation of fast,