The term begins, the work starts pouring in, and once again I find myself searching for a good reason not to do anything about it. Just in the nick of time my friends (and some of your friends, too) at Rough Trade Records send me a whole shipment of new releases. Here's what I listened to, and why I was interested in any particular problem set—you might consider using this list as music for nurturing:

*Document and Eyewitness, Wire on Rough Trade Records*

Once upon a time, there was a band called Wire. They were one of the best punk groups in England, but they aspired to higher things—they wanted to be art. During the course of their career they recorded three albums, starting with 'Flage' (the punk album—1,000,000 songs, no waiting) and ending with '154', a perfect art-rock album. Wire had finally realized their goal.

The skeptics among you may wonder if this "perfect band ever made mistakes, or if what they sounded like live. Document and Eyewitness answers both questions to satisfaction. There are two discs in this set—an LP recorded prior to the 154 recording sessions, and an EP recorded at Notre Dame Hall after the sessions. Did Wire make mistakes? Yes—but just listen to the LP, it's fraught with serious compositional blunders that should never have been committed to vinyl. Only the lovely "Eastern Standard" saves the collection from total mediocrity.

The EP is the product of a more accomplished group, both instrumentally and compositionally. A comparison between the two (LP and EP) versions of "Underwater Experiences" shows that Wire had managed to overcome some of their earlier difficulties, compressing the tune to a manageable length and tightening the overall sound. The picks to click, however, are "Our Swimmer" with its irresistible one-to-the-best bounce and the frenetic "Witness to the Fact," marked by vocalist Colin Newman shouting "Change" to introduce the chorus and verse. Also of note in the version of 154's "Two People in a Room"—a closer, more monochromatic variation on the original.

Wire must be given credit for their willingness to experiment rather than remain stationary. Their use of synthesizers and sax in an art/punk context predates similar work by Blurt and John Hassel. Which becomes very evident from the production on these recordings is how much of a contribution producer Mike Thorne made to Wire's sound. It was Thorne that helped Wire achieve their artistic goals, and his presence is missed on this set. The album also provides some insight into the divergent stylistic differences that eventually split Wire into two factions—Colin Newman's pop/punk approach and the Graham Lewis/B.C. Gilbert art axis. Document and Eyewitness is the definitive set of "must have" tunes for the diehard, and a reasonable introduction for the curious—definitely worth the price, especially if you weren't in London at the time.

*Provisionally Entitled the Singing Fish, Colin Newman on 4AD Records*

Wire disbanded two years ago, but the members have been incredibly busy since. Colin Newman, vocalist extraordinaire, released an amazing album—"4AD"—his collection of (but slightly warped) pop songs in a Wire-ish vein. Not content to progress linearly, Newman continued to experiment, with the results collected on Provisionally Entitled the Singing Fish (love that title!). The disc consists of twelve pieces, titled "Fish 1" through "Fish 12," all composed, performed, and produced by Newman. Although he contributes no vocals, he makes mouth noises that prove to be as effective as words. It's rather difficult to describe these pieces since they are closer to sonic textures or experimental riffs than they are to songs, but they do fall into some general categories: ambient experiments, piano drones, some promising rock 'n roll riffs, and pieces that could pass for Wire outtakes. My favorites are "Fish 1," a bouncy synthesizer vamp with Newman's "ah" sounds floating over it, "Fish 7," an Eastern drone/chant, and "Fish 9," a percussive punk riff. I think there is probably something (or a piece of something, at any rate) on this disc for everyone, but I recommend it only to the very curious.

*The Return of the Art Brigade*

Graduate Students

Interviews for seats on Institute Committees will be held October 5th and 6th. Openings presently exist on the following Committees:

**Presidential Committees**
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- Advisory Committee on Educational Video Resources
- Equal Opportunity Committee
- IAP Policy Committee
- Committee on International Institutional Commitments
- Prelaw Advisory Board
- Committee on the Use of Humans as Experimental Subjects
- Committee on the Visual Arts
- Women's Advisory Board
- Advisory Committee on Shareholder Responsibility
- Advisory Committee for Women Student Interests

**Faculty Committees**
- Committee on Discipline
- Committee on Educational Policy
- Committee on Graduate School Policy
- Committee on Student Affairs

**Corporate Committees**
- Corporation Joint Advisory Committee

For an application form, please contact the Graduate Student Council by calling x3-2195, or stop by Room 50-250 (Walker Memorial, riverside, above Muddy Charles Pub).