

# 28-year veteran



Albert Louis (second from right) with Culture Vulture ... a feisty collection of covers.

again, if need be.

## Culture Vulture

WITH 28 years' experience as a professional musician, Albert Louis recalls the time he was dismayed by the critical attacks on his ethnic-fusion sounds in the group Culture Shock in 1985. It was during the time of a backlash when the popularity of Tokyo Square's *Within You'll Remain* made Culture Shock sound like it was jumping on the bandwagon.

To prove his detractors wrong, Louis stuck it out even

when Culture Shock disbanded, developing his East-meets-West brand of Singa-pop with Culture Vulture. This month, it celebrates its sixth anniversary as a band by releasing its second album, *The Great Asian Cover-UP* — a feisty collection of cover material dating as far back as Louis' first stint with the *October Cherries* in 1968.

Having come a long way down the Singaporean rock trail — from fronting his first bands *Tribes* and *Status* to temporary stints with Anita

Sarawak's *Singapore Swing* and then *Speedway* before forming *Culture Shock* — the versatile drummer and percussionist is as enthusiastic about making music as the day he first began.

Louis says that, while many strive for the 5 Cs, his goal is to see a Singaporean band making it in the international circuit one day. Hopefully, it will be his group which he believes is unique enough to stand a chance. After all, *bhangra* music, he notes, has caught on in England and Europe, so why not Singaporean ethnic-crossed good-time pop?

So far, Culture Vulture has sung in six different languages, performed in some major song festivals in Japan and Taiwan and clinched the second-runner-up award in Russia's *Voice of Asia* contest.

And just how Singa-pop is Culture Vulture's Singaporean pop? "From strings to skins, our band rocks in a truly ethnic style. When it comes to rock, it's hard to compete with the bands in the West on their level. Rock is their culture. So we do it our way."

*Culture Vulture performs nightly at Paulaner Brauhaus in Millenia Walk until Aug 17.*

*The Great Asian Cover-UP is out in the stores.*

*Ethnic Jam is available at Tower Records and Roxy Music.*