and Steve Pashewich pulled best Kjoep Lint from out of his MercuryHal. Philip Small surprised everybody, including himself, by writing Chisel's biggest selling single yet, 'Don't just stand there'. This was just one album. It was chuck full of Chisel hits. But the chart hits were not yet. The classic tracks were once again written by Don Walker. His songs to the people lacked out of polite society. Chisel Wine and Chilk Girl are still playing by the radio. It was during the recording for this album that Chisel, along with The Angels and Flowers Crown (who mutated into Incoherent) set up their own DIY Pool party, building the Dyno-structured musical system. They didn't give a hoot what the insiders were doing. In any case, they were gonna do it because they knew as well as they wanted: The Youth In Asia' tour that followed the massive commercial breakthrough of East rolled through 64 dates covering all major cities and regional centres in 88 days. All the nation. Everywhere they were putting full house signs and breaking house records. And for once the agents and promoters weren't doing them in.

Chisel travelled this wide brown land summer after summer getting the pay up for a long career and a fan base that stayed with them to the end and beyond. They played their last shows just before Christmas in 1973. Now they're back together again. And their hard earned reputation is no longer something they ever lost. But the pay scales on their new album The Last Wave of Summer, is still temping. Don Walker, on the telephone live from his temporary abode in Europe, talked about what was happening in the near future for the reformed band. He helped steer to the peak of the Australian music industry.

"I mean, I think everybody's amazed that we're coming back after such a long time. It's a great opportunity. I think it will be a great show. I think we can do it. I'm sure we can."

Don Walker also had a remarkable penchant for justifying stylistic accreditations with what he calls "special songs." As Troy Cassar-Daley commented about Walker's linking of political themes to personal lyrics: "If you're locked out of society you might as well be out of it in style. Walker's approach to getting up on a musical diet of his father's big band records, Scottish Highland and classic parody torch ballads penned by expert tunemakers like Noe Hyorning, can't wait until he was working with Chisel that he started writing tunes of his own.

"You know, for many years the results were dismal," he says. "I mean, it was recycling. We were too young and arrogant to realize that I got a lot of encouragement from the band. They all thought I was a brilliant songwriter right from the start and, you know, I didn't know if they thought I was as brilliant as I did (laugh). But looking back I was all crap. But I kept me, and me, going through a fairly long learning period as I slowly picked up this lesson and went on.

Don't just learn the one lesson and try and eat off that for the rest of your life."

While recording East, Walker was intensely observing producer Mark Opitz while they were writing the pop format, which Opitz had learned from the ABBA's production team of Sandy and Young. Around the time of their second last album Circus Animals, Walker started to play around structurally with his songwriting. At that particular point Steve Pashewich was coming up with hits like Forever Now and When The War Is Over, allowing Walker to leave that area behind and explore a little further himself.

"I wouldn't agree with that," he states assuredly. "I wasn't taking a real lot of notice of what they were doing, I was just playing my road and seeing where that led. We played at different stages of their songwriting development. Sandy was really developing as a great melody writer. Alan and Jan also developed as real narrative writers at that stage too so probably in retrospect, it had been left up to me to find that album would have no hits for his pop hits. After East I kind of knew how to do that and I wanted to find the next thing to do afterwards. I was starting to see myself very quickly becoming a music pop hit writer. Not that there's anything wrong with that per se, but you don't do the same way every time. Don't just learn the one lesson and try and eat off that for the rest of your life.

Not being one to rest on his laurels, Don Walker realized that there are "other fashions to be learnt" and "let that be taken into account as well and his performances and his producer roles as well and put them to his work on his solo project, Catch. He's written very regularly with writers in Nashville, penned hits for others (including Ian Moss and written many tunes like the moving title to Easy Reach by the late Marc Hunter. Walker has also contributed significantly to the recording and crew of Gladys, Cars and Don. He hasn't lost the musical drive that put him at the top of his field for the desire to learn. His approach to songwriting could be summed up in one way that he talks about the Gillespie test of the new Chisel album Last Wave of Summer: "Well, it's meant to be that specific in any direction. It's just meant to convey a feeling more than anything."

Chisel play at The Newcastle Workers Club on Thursday December 17. The Last Wave of Summer is out now on Mushroom.