

SPECIALISSUE

MUSICIAN

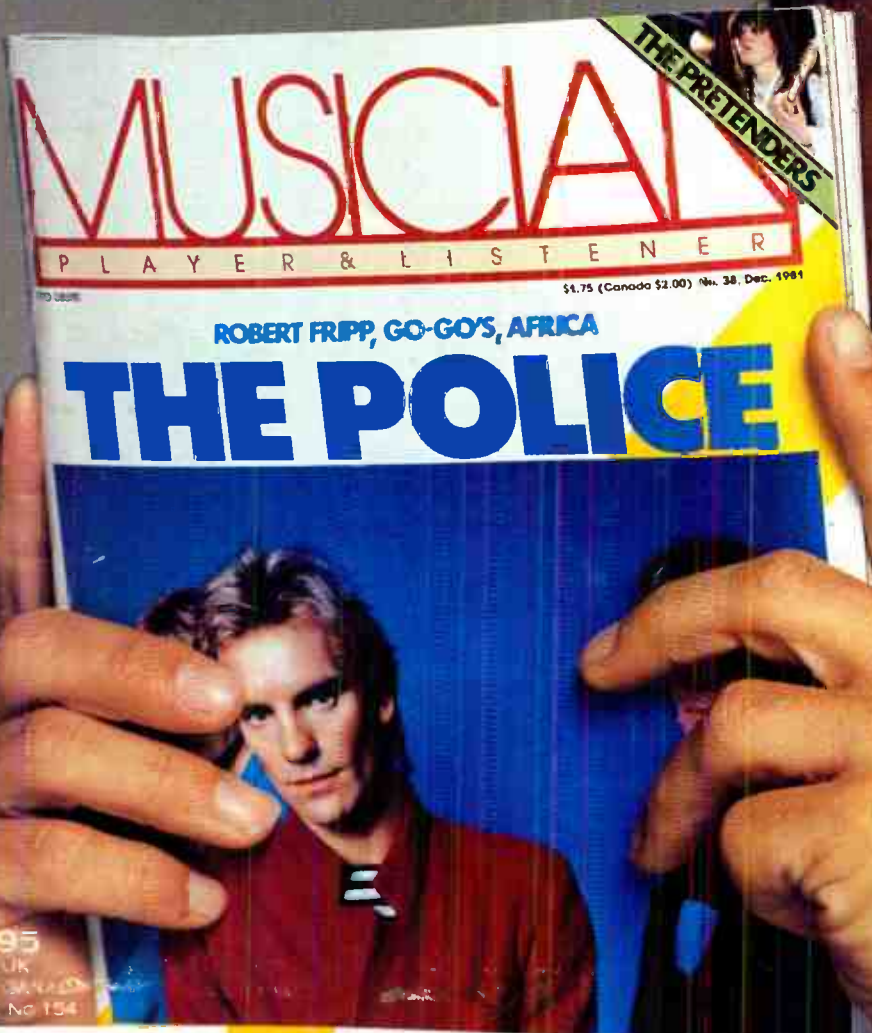
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August 1991

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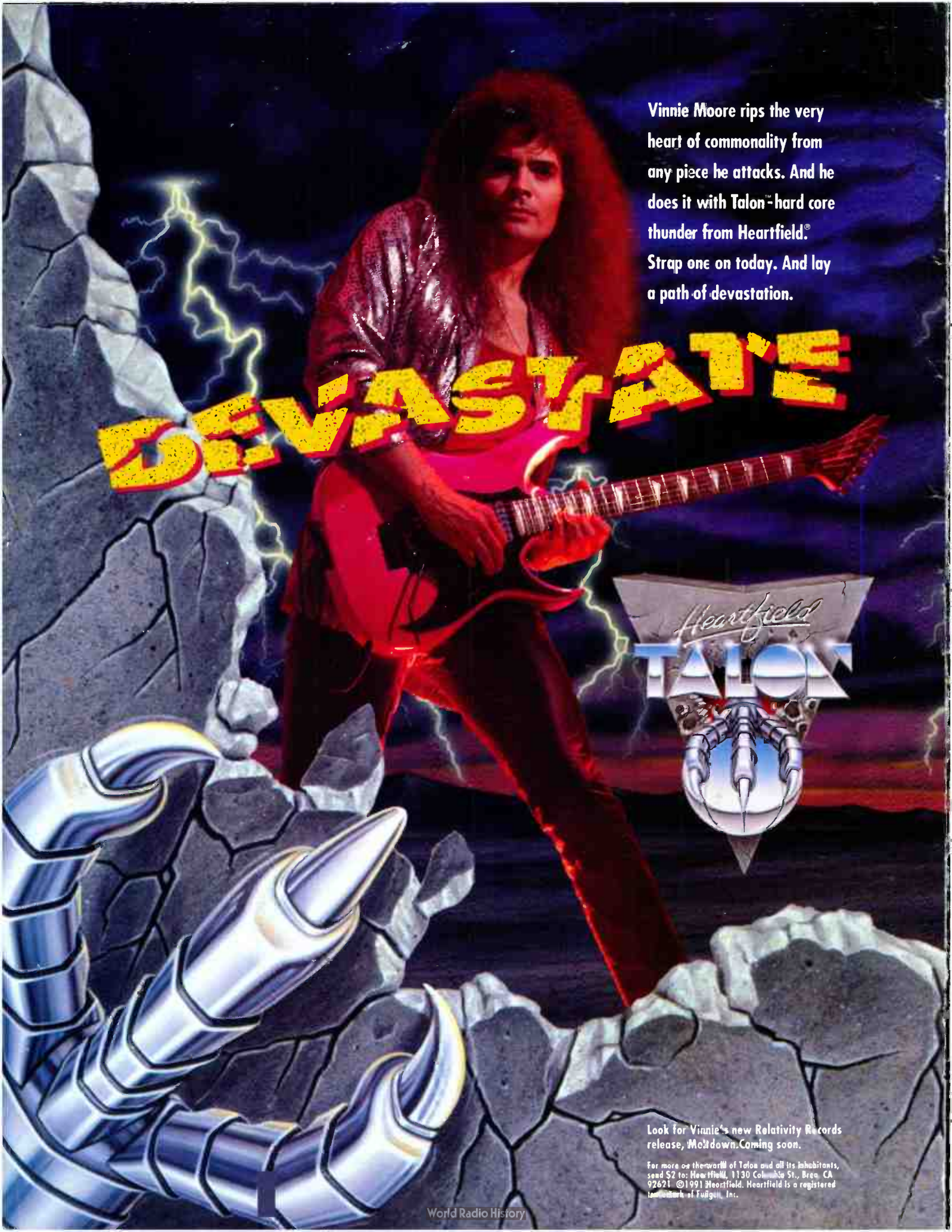


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World Radio History

7 Front Man Ric Ocasek The Cars were one of the biggest pop bands of the '80s, but their leader saw no place for them in the '90s. Starting over. By Scott Slater

21 Stevie Wonder He's got *Jungle Fever*. He's also got about 150 tracks completed for the album that will bring back the Stevie-funk. By Barry Krutchik

24 Gary Burton How to construct a solo so that it sounds more like brilliant improvisation and less like spaghetti. By Rick Mattingly

26 EMF Britain's new dance-rock sensations are straddling the thin line between being as hip as Jesus Jones and as popular as New Kids. One slip and it's curtains. By Mat Snow

31 15 Years of Musician Magazine Why writing about musicians is so much more important than writing about actors, politicians or other phonies. Plus classic quotes from John Lennon, Prince, Marvin Gaye, U2, the Stones, James Brown, and Patti LaBelle on joining the E Street Band. By Charles M. Young

36 Sting's a Jolly Good Fellow "Say it loud, I'm 40 and proud!" shouts Sting as his big birthday approaches. We race with our hero across the Netherlands with party guests Sinéad O'Connor and Peter Gabriel. By Bill Flanagan

56 Bands in the Phantom Zone How could acts as great as Lucinda Williams, the Mekons and the Silos not have record deals? Tales from the music industry crypt, where whatever can go wrong will go wrong. By Peter Cronin & Bill Flanagan

60 Charlie Haden's Simple Truths The jazz bassist plays as pure and open as the country he grew up in—the heartland of the U.S.A. A story of joy and disillusion—with great technique. By Chip Stern

66 Ice-T: From Gangsterville to New Jack City His fourth album, *O.G. Original Gangster*, ignites consciences and consciousness. Ice-T talks about the long climb from the ghetto to the Hollywood Hills—and why success is no more corrupting than poverty. By Mark Rowland

102 Backside 'Who's on the Cover?' Which artists have had the cover of *Musician* the most—and why.



Nuno Bettencourt, p. 73



Stevie Wonder, p. 21



Peter Gabriel & Sinéad O'Connor, p. 36



Ice-T, p. 66

Working Musician

73 GUITAR Nuno Bettencourt Extreme's star is the latest guitar hero—a mantle he doesn't want. By Matt Resnicoff

76 KEYBOARDS Benmont Tench The Heartbreakers' master of balance on piano tricks and Hammond settings. By Alan di Perna

80 BASS Duck Dunn He was Booker T's bottom, the sultan of Stax—but Donald "Duck" Dunn made it look so easy even he didn't know what his left hand was doing. By Peter Cronin

82 DRUMS Doubling Up on Bass Subtle secrets of the second kick, by experts Rod Morgenstein, Kenny Aronoff and Gregg Bissonette. By Rick Mattingly

84 GIG Jazz Salaries How much can a successful jazz musician expect to earn in a year? We'll tell you if you don't tell the IRS. By Jeff Levenson

88 PERFORMANCE James Brown Turning jailhouse charisma into pay-per-view. By Chris Morris

90 DEVELOPMENTS Overcoming fear of sequencers, Sony's new Mini Disc format, Steinberger's headless violin and lots more. By the Musician Science Dept.

Departments

10 Letters The Battle of Van Halen

13 Faces Johnny Marr & Bernard Sumner; Black Uhuru; Kitchens of Distinction; Paul Brady...

18 Charts A new column explains *Billboard's* upheaval

93 Recordings Tom Petty's *Great Wide Open*; Aaron Neville; Stax Box

96 Short Takes From Paula Abdul to John Coltrane

Also: Masthead p. 8; Reader Service p. 101

Cover: Sting photographed in Bordeaux, France, June 1991, by Brian Aris. This page (from top): Mark Seliger; Lenny Baker/Retna; Terry McGough/LF; Aaron Rapoport/Onyx.

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Ric Ocasek

Considering how popular the Cars were, their break-up was surprisingly quiet.

As long as I had the Cars I always had great fun with them. In retrospect I can see the advantage of having a full band sound. But it's hard to be married to one person; it's harder to be married to five. Everybody goes in different directions.

The last tour, *Door to Door*, was a bit of a disaster for us. I almost thought it was premature. Shit was flying between people on that tour. It got real weird after that. I basically—and I think other people in the band too—we just made a decision to stop it cold and not just do it for the sake of a lie. If you don't feel it in your heart, you're not doing it for the right reasons.

[Elektra Records chair] Bob Krasnow came to Madison Square Garden [during the *Door to Door* tour]. His comment was, "You guys definitely aren't doing what Mötley Crüe's doing." I said, "I know! I know we don't do that, Bob." I didn't feel too bad because I never doubted what we were doing. I didn't want to prod audiences. I really didn't want to be in show business, say the same things every night. I never felt I was a great performer. To me, Iggy Pop's a great performer.

You read about other bands' clashes: I think ours might have been milder. But there were philosophical differences, negatives, envy things: who does the press, all that stuff. I thought it was a relatively democratic band. [laughs] I did want things to go a certain way, but I thought it was always pretty open. After that tour some people were traveling one way, some people were traveling other ways. I just felt I'd rather put full concentration in what I'm working on than have to appease other people.

Door to Door was a substandard album.

People came, did their parts and left. That was not the vibe of a band to me anymore: people eating cheeseburgers while they were singing. Maybe they didn't like the idea that I produced it; maybe they thought I had too much control. I just thought it would be fun to do it ourselves. Then it got nuts with, "Who gets those points?" "Maybe we should split the publishing five ways." "But

time. Being on that label was getting me wiped out, I owed them five solo albums and only did two. I didn't think they were coming up with the right producers. They wanted Cars albums. Geffen is the kind of company where they hear every song you're going to put on your record and go, "What about *that* line?" I recorded about five songs but it wasn't working out. That was about a year ago. I just said, "Aah! I'm not gonna finish this!" I just wanted to change my label.

Do you think you'll ever form another band?

I don't think so. A band sound has to develop. It's totally separate from having songs that you would like to arrange and do all kinds of ways. The Cars had a sound because of that combination of people and because we played together for a long time. Now it's more like how you would present the songs; it almost wouldn't matter who would play on them.

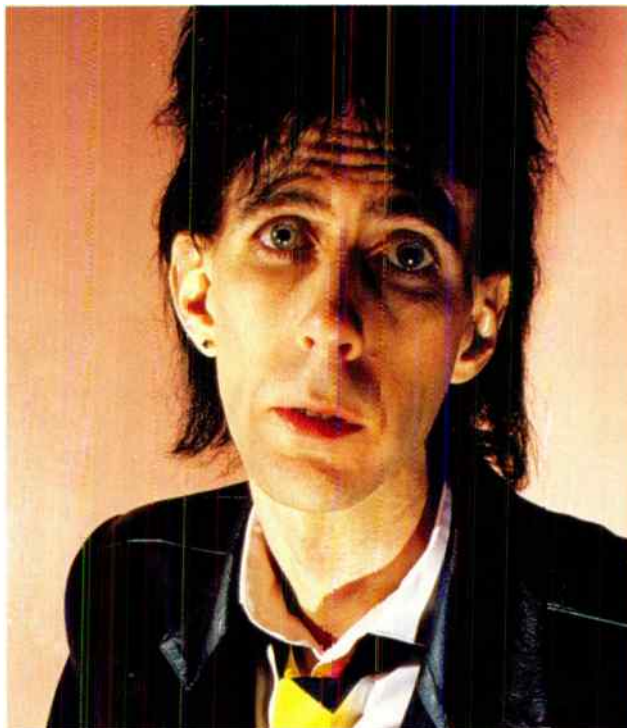
Can you ever imagine a Cars reunion?

I thought about it but I'm not sure what it would take! I wouldn't be interested in it right now at all. And I don't think I'd be interested 10 years from now, 'cause I'll probably just be producing records. I don't feel like I want to make that statement again.

Suppose everyone in the band came to you in 10 years and said, "Ric, we're starving! Help!"

Well, that would be for the wrong reason. I would just have to say, "Better do some work, then." It would have to be motivated.

I made a lot of dangerous changes in the last five years. I just had to make myself do some other things. Not having a band; wanting to spread out in different directions; changing locations; remarrying. I have new management, a new label. You could easily stay in a comfort zone instead of a fireball zone. You could be stuck with a band because it's successful. Soft chairs and nice cars are really not what it's about. —Scott Isler



"You can be stuck with a successful band. Soft chairs are really not what it's about."

you didn't write it." "We don't care. We play on it." In a couple of people's cases there was a lot of jealousy.

Is it liberating or scary to be on your own without hiding behind a band identity?

It started getting scary when I started working with people I didn't respect sometimes.

You mean your original producer for Fireball Zone, which you started for Geffen?

Yeah. Although his heart was probably in the right place. I don't want to badmouth Geffen Records, but I think they wanted the Cars without the Cars. I got that notion all the

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MUSICIAN (USPS 451-810), 35 Commercial St., Gloucester, MA 01950 (508) 281-5110, is published monthly by IPL, Inc., 1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10056. Billboard Publications is a subsidiary of Affiliated Publications, Inc. © 1991 by MUSICIAN, all rights reserved. Second class postage paid at Gloucester, MA 01950 and at additional mailing offices. Subscription: \$17 per year, \$32 for two years, \$49 for three years. Canada and elsewhere, add \$12 per year, U.S. funds only. Subscription address: MUSICIAN, Box 1923, Marion, OH 43305. Send address changes to above address. Call 1-800-347-8989 for subscription in the cont. US and 614-382-3322 elsewhere. Current and back issues are available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Billboard Publications, Inc. President and Chief Executive Officer: Gerald S. Hobbs; Executive Vice President: Samuel S. Holdsworth; Senior Vice Presidents: Ann Haire, John B. Babcock, Paul Curran, Martin R. Feely, Rosalee Lovett, Lee Zhit.

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LETTERS

Fisticuffs

DO YOU THINK MATT RESNICOFF could have pissed off Edward Van Halen any more than he did in that interview (May '91)? You don't go telling the guy that the rhythm section he's been playing with for the past 16 years sucks. Next time you want to do an interview with Edward, ask me—I'll ask questions that are more appealing to your readers.

Mark Bresky
Cleveland, OH

WHY ARE YOU SO DETERMINED TO force Eddie into the dreary world of "my licks can lick your licks" Berklee bombast when the guy is probably the most influential guitarist since Hendrix? And you didn't answer the big question: Why does the volume knob on his new guitar say "tone"?

Chris Clark
Hamden, CT

I HOPE THE DESCRIPTION OF EDDIE'S humbling at the hands of Morse and Lee doesn't anger Van Halen's fans. Instead, I would hope they'd take the opportunity to check out some of Steve Morse's music.

Doug Bracey
Jupiter, FL

RESNICOFF'S PERSISTENT BADGERING of Eddie Van Halen about his reluctance to discuss upcoming projects or his refusal to record solo was annoying enough, but to insult the guy's rhythm section was downright distasteful.

Michael Steckling
Madison, WI

IT TAKES A LOT OF GUTS TO JUST jump into a superstar band—I hope articles like this don't prevent Eddie and other notables from stretching in similar fashion. I guess Edward wasn't stretching the way Resnicoff wanted. But you have to worry

about a guy that makes so many references to housewares.

Robin Marks
Malibu, CA

WITHOUT DAVID LEE ROTH, ED IS surrounded by "yes" men (Al, Sammy, Mike) who've convinced him that he's God—à la Elvis Van Halen. Keep drinking, Ed, someday you can buy Graceland.

Ravi S. Raman
Edison, NJ

A BETTER RHYTHM SECTION, MATT? "More interesting music"? Get rid of Matt Resnicoff. Life is easier without Charles M. Young, right? No doubt these guys respect music and musicians, but maybe their intentions don't come through clearly.

Jeffrey R. Kahl
Abington, PA

IF IT'S SO UNFAIR THAT EDDIE IS RICH and famous, and not as deserving as Morse or Lee (as is inferred throughout), then why didn't your cover read: "Morse's Guitar Rumble" or "Lee's Guitar Rumble"?

John Conklin
Mohegan Lake, NY

MY COMPLIMENTS TO EDWARD ON his admirable restraint for not popping the jerk in the nose.

James Hackman
Two Rivers, WI

SURELY EDDIE IS NOT THAT NAIVE. Does he really think that the rhythm section in Van Halen affords him the latitude to grow as an artist? All I've heard from him lately are the same little guitar tricks he's been doing for the past 11 years. Eddie could use a few more interviews like Matt Resnicoff's to kick him in the ass and shake him out of his comfortable little rut.

Jim Genova
Burbank, CA

ED LEFFLER MAY BE A VERY TALENTED manager, but he obviously does not have a way with words (*Letters*, June '91). What Matt Resnicoff did with his article was not a "cheap shot"—I would have called it criminal. Most of Resnicoff's complaints about the band itself seemed to be directed at members that were not present to defend themselves. It was grossly unfair of you to use the Van Halen name as a guarantee for an audience, and then proceed to bite the hand that fed you.

Jan Soeder
Las Vegas, NV

I THINK I CAN CLEAR THIS WHOLE Van Halen/Resnicoff thing up. Matt—you owe Edward an apology. As a veteran of many NAMM shows, Matt, you should have known better than to "review" Edward's "performance."

The NAMM show is about gear manufacturers and music dealers. "NAMM jams" are about fun and are totally secondary. He wasn't the only guy at the show sipping a beer. Basically, you broke a sacred NAMM show trust: Leave the performances at the show—and take the good vibes home.

Or Ed Leffler will hurt you.

Joe Brasler
No. Hollywood, CA

ALTHOUGH ALEX AND EDDIE'S PLAYING will always be dear to my heart, their manager Ed Leffler is a racist asshole. If the entire Hebrew community can be held accountable for Resnicoff's honest, insightful article, then Van Halen will have to be accountable for their manager's unwarranted, bigoted name-calling. I'm renewing my subscription to *Musician*, and I'm not buying any more Van Halen product. Hopefully Eddie, Alex, Michael and Sammy won't let him get away with it—anyone with a brain knows that the "very prejudice" one firing "cheap shots" is

their manager, and I hope he gets the heave-ho.

Chris Moor
Salt Lake City, UT

I FOUND MATT RESNICOFF'S APPROACH towards the fragile Edward to be fascinating and gutsy. Van Halen came off looking like a nice guy whose talents appear indeed to have been squelched by sycophants and business thugs. Confirming the latter, his manager's pathetic comments only further validate Resnicoff's impressions.

Jerry Beal
Lawton, MI

I HAD A GREAT TIME PLAYING AT THE *Musician* NAMM jam. I'd like to thank the other players in the band for doing a great job: Jimmy Cox on keyboards, John Ferraro on drums, Sherwood Ball on vocals and guitar and Sterling Ball on bass. Eddie and Albert played fantastically and I found Eddie and his wife to be some of the nicest people I've ever met. It's rewarding to step out of my normal routine and perform with players of this caliber.

Steve Morse
From the road, USA

Erroratus

THE IDS OF MALCOLM YOUNG AND Cliff Williams were transposed in the AC/DC photo on page 28 of our April '91 issue; Aldo Mauro should have been credited for the photo of Michael Blair in June's Sound Off column; and in the May '91 *Faces*, we ran a photo of the wrong Dharma Bums: The story was about the Portland, Oregon Bums while our photo was of the Boston Dharma Bums. At least it wasn't the Brooklyn Bums, right?

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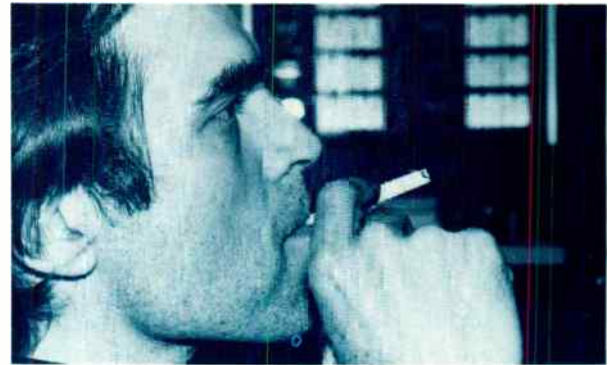
Black Uhuru

MARTYRS IN MIND

REGGAE STILL CAN'T GET NO RESPECT, ACCORDING TO Black Uhuru founder Derrick "Duckie" Simpson. Take the music industry's most coveted award—please. "The people who control the Grammy, they don't know what reggae is or which song is on top," Simpson says. "This music empire in America, they are out to keep reggae down. They don't want us makin' money."

Black Uhuru's latest album, *Iron Storm* (Mesa), continues the trio's tradition of militant Rasta lyrics and gale-force polyrhythms. Simpson wrote the title track with two fallen martyrs in mind—Puma Jones and Peter Tosh. Jones, whose minor-key harmonizing and stunning stage presence were a crucial part of Black Uhuru's early and mid-'80s work, passed away in 1990. "Her blood will not be shed unforgotten, she feel the pangs of Babylon biting," Simpson recites from the song's lyrics. "America did Desert Storm, and our war is Iron Storm." Meanwhile a new ingredient—rap—has been added to the maelstrom: Wordslinger Ice-T delivers a peace-and-unity message on the hip-hop-inflected "Tip of the Iceberg." "He's a street general like us," Simpson explains. "Three-star."

TOM CHEYNEY



Eric Andersen

'BOUT STAGES AND THINGS

"I FELT SHOCK AND HORROR. IT WAS LIKE A BAD JOKE—WORSE THAN being stood up on New Year's Eve." Eric Andersen smiles grimly, recalling how the tapes for his *Stages* album abruptly disappeared back in '73. Coming off the acclaimed *Blue River*, the folk troubadour had cut tracks with producer Norbert Putnam in Nashville only to see the masters vanish en route to New York. And with Columbia Records in turmoil following the ouster of Clive Davis, Andersen found no allies to help solve the mystery.

Pressed, he admits that the official version of the story doesn't add up, acknowledging that foul play, not just negligence, may have played a part. "I've had my suspicions, but I don't have any evidence. There are people who know more than they're saying and I think the truth will surface," Andersen observes. "I wish I could tell you more."

Happily, Columbia researchers unearthed the tapes in a vault in '89, leading to the recent release of *Stages: The Lost Album*. Worth waiting for, it reaffirms Andersen's poetic gifts with haunting tunes like "Baby, I'm Lonesome" and "Time Run Like a Freight Train." There's a bonus, too: three new songs, which show that Eric's knack for illuminating deeply personal emotions remains undiminished.

Elsewhere, the years have wrought change. For most of the last decade, Andersen's led a tranquil life with a woman in Norway, becoming the proud poppa of four children along the way. ("Townes Van Zandt said to me, 'After four kids, isn't it time to pop the question?'"

For someone who started out a quarter-century ago as a restless romantic in love with the highway, isn't such a settled existence a little strange? "Not at all," Andersen says firmly. "Having children enhances my creativity. Being home with the kids is great; you don't run around in bars looking for the muse. Records come and go, music business attention comes and goes, but it's all illusory. The only thing that matters, in the final analysis, is your family." JON YOUNG



Duckie Simpson,
Garth Dennis &
Don Carlos

Photograph by Carla Gahr (top);
Alex (bottom)



Johnny Marr (l.) and Bernard Sumner

Electronic

PLUG 'EM IN AND WATCH 'EM GO

"JUST BECAUSE DANCE MUSIC IS CURRENT" doesn't give it carte blanche to be boring," says Johnny Marr. Electronic, a collaboration between the ex-Smiths guitarist and vocalist Bernard Sumner of New Order, warms up the chilly machine aesthetic of the genre, producing synthpop with soul.

"Electronic isn't really a group," Marr says. "It's two songwriters/producers making a record. When you work as a duo, the ideas don't get diluted and there's very little compromise." The biggest compromise was finding time for Electronic between New Order and Marr's work with The The. The pair "threw together" maybe 15 ideas in '88," but a year passed before they cut the single "Getting Away with It" with Pet Shop Boy Neil Tennant. "Finally,"

Marr says, "we had to cancel everything and just knuckle down and get into it."

Sumner's dreamy vocals, perfect for lush pop singalongs, are grittily underscored by Marr's guitar bursts. Electronic can transport you to mindless dancefloor Nirvana, but cuts like the galloping "Tighten Up" or the instrumental "Soviet," a brooding Cossack of a song, give the album a deeper bite. "I'm perfectly happy being entertained for three-and-a-half minutes," says Marr. "But I'm starting to believe again in the power of music to move someone's spirit." The partners are turning to other projects, but Sumner thinks Electronic will return. "As a duo we need to retain, maintain and proclaim an active profile for the '90s."

MARK BARSOTTI

ReBirth Brass Band

ROCKING THE CRADLE OF JAZZ



DECADE OR SO AGO, NEW Orleans' venerable brass-band tradition was mired in a major malaise. Neither repertoire nor performance style had changed significantly over the course of a century, and young people in New Orleans' black community were tending to lose interest in their rich heritage of street parades and jazz funerals.

This stagnation was reversed when young brass bands like the Dirty Dozen—and the even younger ReBirth—introduced faster tempos, supercharged solos, complex arrangements and lots of new material. Some purists were displeased, but the result is a brass-band resurgence. Today, ReBirth (founded in 1983) is all over the global festival circuit, and has as many young black fans in New Orleans as any national rap or soul group.



ReBirth's "Do Whatcha Wanna" has become a contemporary classic, heard everywhere in town; the group's new album *Kickin' It Live*—which ranges from Hugh Masekela's "Grazin' in the Grass" to New Orleans classics like "Tin Roof Blues"—seems destined for the same stature. Fronted by singing trumpeter Kermit Ruffins, ReBirth is also emerging as an in-demand horn section, gracing new albums by the Subdudes and Robbie Robertson. "At concerts," says tuba man and co-leader Philip Frazier, "we keep it on the traditional side. Back home in the neighborhoods, we'll do more funk and originals. We try to play for everybody. We just might go out anywhere and start playing, and start up a street parade."

BEN SANDMEL

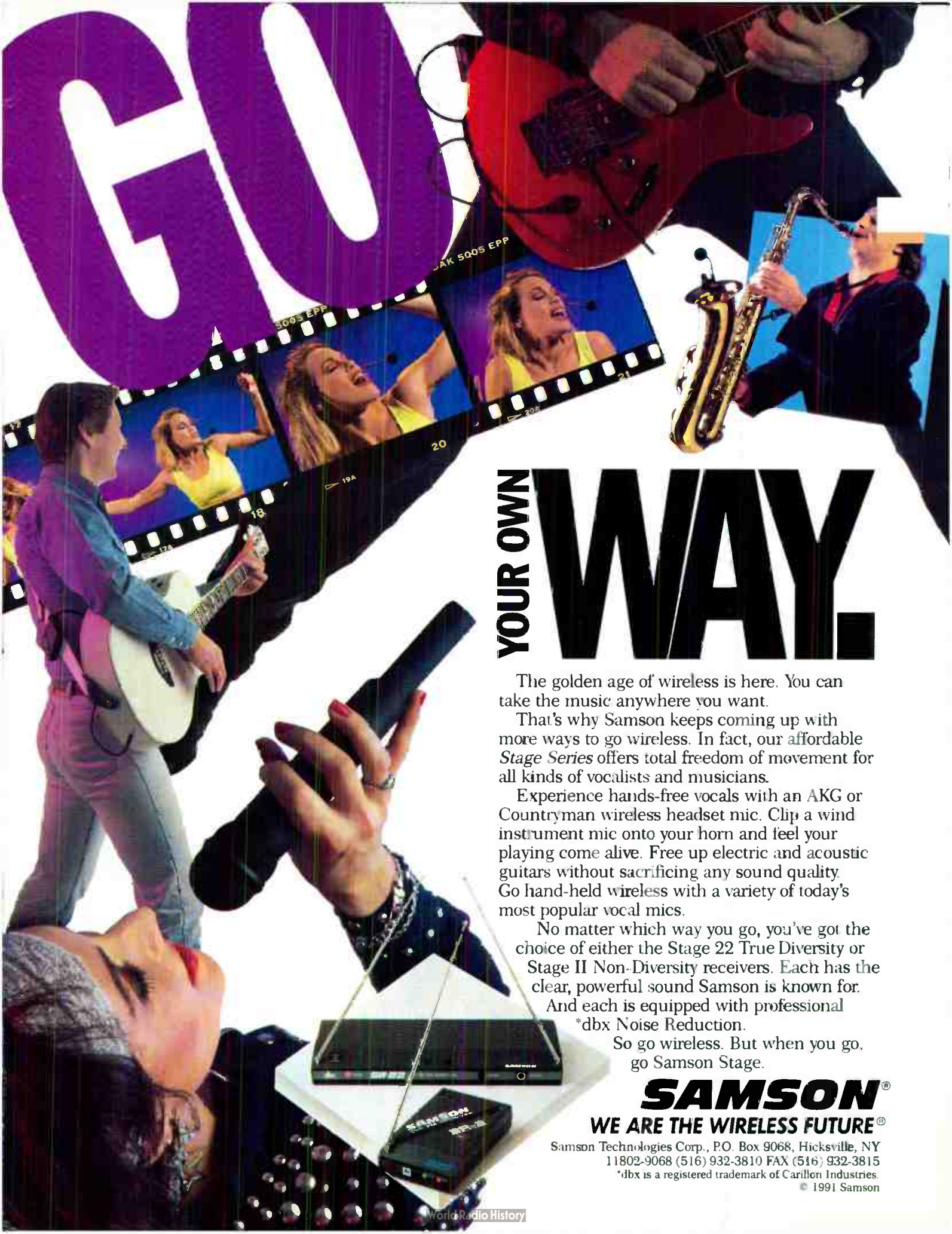
N E W S
DEAR LANDLORD: In 1963 a young member of Maryland's landed gentry named William Zantzingler was convicted of manslaughter in the death of Hattie Carrall—"The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carrall," as Bob Dylan called the case in one of his angriest early ballads. In the eyes of the world, William D. Zantzingler became less a real person than a character from folklore, a twentieth-century cousin of Simon Legree.

So it gave us quite a jolt to read the news of a handful of impoverished families in Charles County, Maryland who'd paid rent for five years to a landlord who no longer owned their homes. In May 1986 the landlord lost the 20 lots and six houses to the county; his unpaid taxes and penalties totaled over \$18,000. Losing the property didn't prevent him from collecting rents, sometimes raising them, sometimes taking tenants to court for overdue rent. Until this year, nobody seemed to realize he didn't own the land anymore.

You guessed his name: William D. Zantzingler, still around.

Charles County officials, meanwhile, have declared the houses (which have no running water or toilets) unfit to live in, saying they should be demolished and the residents relocated.

On May 29, Zantzingler was charged by the county with "unfair and deceptive practices." The single court carries maximum penalties of a \$1,000 fine and one year in jail. For the manslaughter of Hattie Carrall, a 51-year-old barmaid with 11 children, Zantzingler was fined \$500 and given six months in jail.



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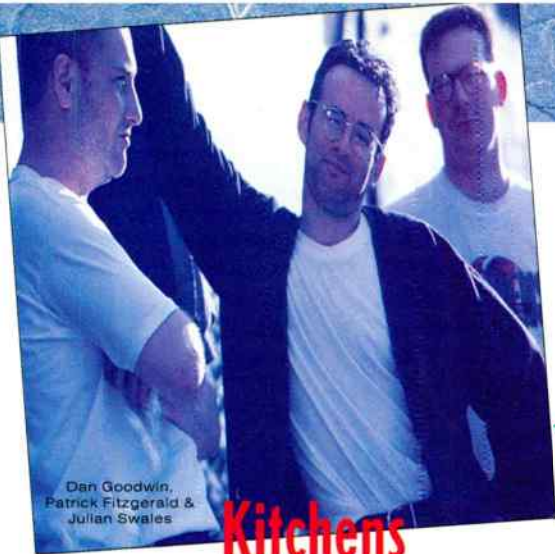
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FACES

Paul Brady

SINGER/SONGWRITER SEEKS IF NOT SMASH AT LEAST SUCCESS



Dan Goodwin,
Patrick Fitzgerald &
Julian Swales

Kitchens of Distinction

POST-CHER LOVE SONGS

STRANGE BUT TRUE: ALTHOUGH KITCHENS of Distinction make moody, somber guitar rock in the tradition of Jesus and Mary Chain, they're actually jolly old souls. They don't wring their hands and ponder the futility of existence when writing songs, for example—"We get together, smoke some spliffs and play really loud!" giggles guitarist Julian Swales.

We're talking about a band that got its name off the back of a truck. In the same spirit, singer/bassist Patrick Fitzgerald sees the role of pop musician as "totally childlike and silly. I really enjoy this life. I have complete and utter freedom, and whenever I have to work it's a pleasure."

Others take the trio—especially Fitzgerald—more seriously. One of the few openly gay men in rock, he's inspired a fervent British following. "A lot of people have written to express relief that I'm out. It's nice to realize how fanatical some of our listeners are," he says, while noting the Kitchens' *Strange Free World* contains just a few specifically gay songs. "I'm not going to stick to one subject in my lyrics. I want to write about anything and everything," he adds, admitting he isn't too interested in strictly hetero material. "The straight thing has been done to death. Cher's said it all, man."

And speaking of intense fan response, Fitzgerald has one for the record books. "Last Christmas, a guy mailed us some stuffing, a roast potato and a piece of mince pie. In an envelope." Why? "Who knows?"

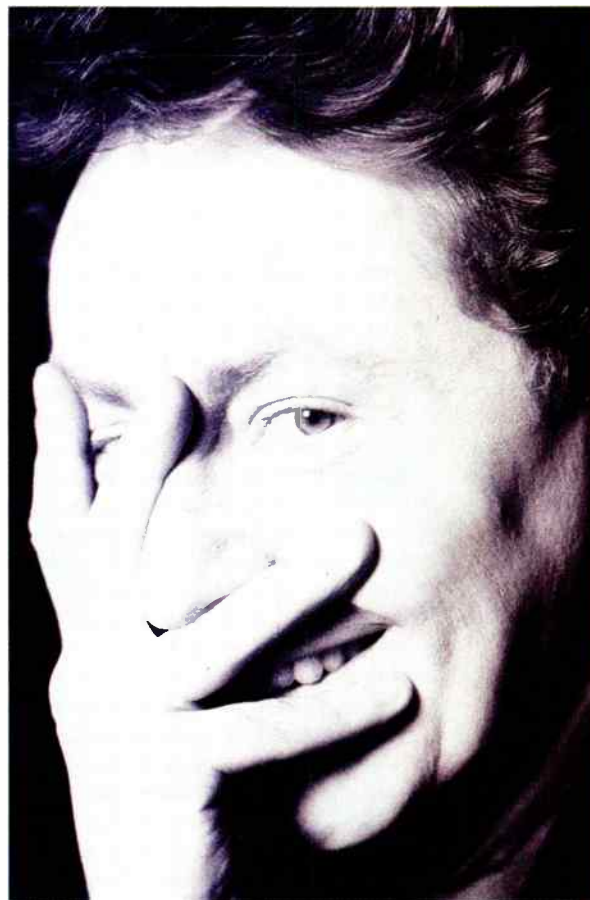
Closer to home, Fitzgerald hasn't received such a hearty response. "My mom asked me yesterday what I actually did. When I told her I played bass, she asked me what that was." Has she heard the album? "She doesn't like drums, so she hated it." Laughing, he adds, "There comes a time when it doesn't matter anymore." *Strange free world*, indeed. JON YOUNG

WHEN LAST WE ENCOUNTERED Paul Brady (*Faces*, August '88), the Irish singer/songwriter had just finished playing gigs in the States without an American record deal and was beginning a leave of absence. "I decided to take a year off from touring and recording, but not writing," he recalls. "I needed time to write at a natural pace, to let myself get blown around emotionally and stay up too late at night. When you're chasing after emotions and translating them into songs, sometimes you have to tear strips off yourself and let it all hang out."

Brady admits he also wanted to make music for someone besides his fellow artists. Though he has collaborated with Mark Knopfler, opened for Eric Clapton and seen his songs covered by Tina Turner, Maura O'Connell and Dave Edmunds, he's never made an impact with his own records. "I was beginning to get a reputation as a writer for other people. That's not what I do at all." He accepts responsibility, however, for this predicament. "Coming out of traditional music, I started writing in a brutally instinctive way. Although I've always had a pop sensibility, my records would have benefited from a bit more craft. They might have made a bigger impression if they

demanded less from the listener."

The solution: *Trick or Treat*, recorded with veteran producer Gary Katz (Steely Dan) and session stars like Michael Landau and Jeff Porcaro. It's a smooth little number that suggests Elton John as often as it echoes Brady's folk roots. For added appeal, it even includes a duet with Bonnie Raitt, a longtime fan who also sings two Brady tunes on her own new LP. Will Brady's fifth album help him crack the mainstream? Hard to say. He's got the enthusiastic support—for once—of a U.S. company (PolyGram). "I've never had such attention before, but it's fine with me. People are saying nice things at the moment. A little more of that, please!" JON YOUNG



Photographs: John Soares (top);
Deborah Feingold



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Top 100 Albums

The first number indicates the position of the album this month, the second its position last month.

1 • 3	R.E.M. <i>Out of Time</i> /Warner Bros.
2 • 100	Michael Bolton <i>Time, Love and Tenderness</i> /Columbia
3 • 1	Mariah Carey <i>Mariah Carey</i> /Columbia
4 • 10	Soundtrack <i>New Jack City</i> /Giant
5 • 2	C&C Music Factory <i>Gonna Make You Sweat</i> /Columbia
6 • 33	Garth Brooks <i>No Fences</i> /Capitol
7 • 13	Another Bad Creation <i>Coolin' at the Playground 'n' Knowin'</i> /Motown
8 • 5	The Black Crowes <i>Shake Your Money Maker</i> /Def American
9 • 4	Wilson Phillips <i>Wilson Phillips</i> /SBK
10 • 12	Rod Stewart <i>Vagabond Heart</i> /Warner Bros.
11 • 18	Amy Grant <i>Heart in Motion</i> /A&M
12 • 59	Extreme <i>Extreme II Pornograffiti</i> /A&M
13 • —	Luther Vandross <i>Power of Love</i> /Epic
14 • 9	Queensryche <i>Empire</i> /EMI
15 • 6	Enigma <i>MCMVCA.D./Charisma</i>
16 • 17	Vanilla Ice <i>To the Extreme</i> /SBK
17 • 23	L.L. Cool J <i>Mama Said Knock You Out</i> /Def Jam
18 • 19	Roxette <i>Joyride</i> /EMI
19 • 8	Whitney Houston <i>I'm Your Baby Tonight</i> /Arista
20 • 7	Chris Isaak <i>Heart Shaped World</i> /Reprise
21 • —	Paula Abdul <i>Spellbound</i> /Capitol
22 • 20	M.C. Hammer <i>Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em</i> /Capitol
23 • 97	Garth Brooks <i>Garth Brooks</i> /Capitol

Top Concert Grosses

1	Guns N' Roses, Skid Row <i>Alpine Valley Music Theatre, East Troy, WI/May 24-25</i>	\$2,050,560
2	Grateful Dead <i>Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, CA/May 10-12</i>	\$1,083,409
3	Grateful Dead <i>Cal Expo Amphitheatre, Sacramento, CA/May 5-5</i>	\$978,750
4	Frank Sinatra, Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gorme, Tom Dreesen <i>Rosemont Horizon, Rosemont, IL/May 18</i>	\$827,215
5	The Magic of David Copperfield <i>Fox Theatre, Detroit, MI/May 9-12</i>	\$775,117
6	Yes <i>Great Western Forum, Inglewood, CA/May 15</i>	\$405,095
7	Frank Sinatra, Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gorme, Tom Dreesen <i>Olympic Saddledome, Calgary, Alberta/May 9</i>	\$392,815
8	Roger Whittaker <i>Fox Theatre, Detroit, MI/May 2-5</i>	\$380,571
9	Frank Sinatra, Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gorme <i>Ervin J. Nutter Center, Wright State University, Dayton, OH/May 15</i>	\$377,145
10	The Judds, Garth Brooks, Pirates of the Mississippi <i>Jon M. Huntsman Center, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT/May 11</i>	\$351,690

24 • 24	Madonna <i>The Immaculate Collection</i> /Sire
25 • —	Yes <i>Union</i> /Arista
26 • 31	AC/DC <i>The Razors Edge</i> /Atco
27 • 16	Tesla <i>Five Man Acoustical Jam</i> /Geffen
28 • 14	Gloria Estefan <i>Into the Light</i> /Epic
29 • 47	DJ Quik <i>Quik Is the Name</i> /Profile
30 • 32	Jesus Jones <i>Doubt</i> /SBK
31 • 67	Firehouse <i>Firehouse</i> /Epic
32 • 61	Dolly Parton <i>Eagle When She Flies</i> /Columbia
33 • 34	Warrant <i>Cherry Pie</i> /Columbia
34 • 49	Gerardo <i>No Ritmo</i> /Interscope
35 • 60	The Kentucky Headhunters <i>Electric Barnyard</i> /Mercury
36 • 35	The Simpsons <i>The Simpsons Sing the Blues</i> /Geffen
37 • 59	Soundtrack <i>Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II</i> /SBK
38 • —	EMF <i>Schubert Dip</i> /EMI
39 • —	Ice-T <i>O.G. Original Gangster</i> /Sire
40 • —	Huey Lewis & the News <i>Hard at Play</i> /EMI
41 • 21	Divinyls <i>Divinyls</i> /Virgin
42 • —	Various Artists <i>Deconstructed</i> /Arista
43 • 53	Clint Black <i>Put Yourself in My Shoes</i> /RCA
44 • 28	Nelson <i>After the Rain</i> /DGC
45 • 85	Scorpions <i>Crazy World</i> /Mercury
46 • 63	Paf Benatar <i>True Love</i> /Chrysalis
47 • 36	The Doors <i>Best of the Doors</i> /Elektra
48 • 27	Great White <i>Hooked</i> /Capitol
49 • 71	Reba McEntire <i>Rumor Has It</i> /MCA

50 • 15	Sling <i>The Soul Cages</i> /A&M
51 • —	Michael Bolton <i>Soul Provider</i> /Columbia
52 • 25	Bette Midler <i>Some People's Lives</i> /Atlantic
53 • 91	Yanni <i>Reflections of Passion</i> /Private Music
54 • —	De La Soul <i>De La Soul Is Dead</i> /Tommy Boy
55 • 42	Hi-Five <i>Hi-Five/Jive</i>
56 • 22	Rolling Stones <i>Flashpoint</i> /Columbia
57 • 58	George Strait <i>Chill of an Early Fall</i> /MCA
58 • —	Alan Jackson <i>Don't Rock the Jukebox</i> /Arista
59 • 54	Harry Connick, Jr. <i>We Are in Love</i> /Columbia
60 • —	Keith Washington <i>Make Time for Love</i> /Qwest
61 • 55	Poison <i>Flesh and Blood</i> /Enigma
62 • 26	Londonbeat <i>In the Blood</i> /Radioactive
63 • 11	Soundtrack <i>The Doors</i> /Elektra
64 • 37	Rick Astley <i>Free</i> /RCA
65 • 30	Guy <i>The Future</i> /Uptown
66 • 66	Steelheart <i>Steelheart</i> /MCA
67 • —	Boyz II Men <i>Coolerhighharmony</i> /Motown
68 • —	Hank Williams, Jr. <i>Pure Hank</i> /Warner Bros.
69 • 41	Carreras-Domingo-Pavarotti <i>Carreras-Domingo-Pavarotti in Concert</i> /London
70 • 45	Bell Biv DeVoe <i>Poison</i> /MCA
71 • —	Various Artists <i>Club MTV Party to Go, Vol. 1</i> /Tommy Boy
72 • 84	White Lion <i>Mane Attraction</i> /Atlantic
73 • —	Alan Jackson <i>Here in the Real World</i> /Arista
74 • 29	Oleta Adams <i>Circle of One</i> /Fontana
75 • —	N.W.A. <i>Efil4zaggin</i> /Ruthless
76 • —	Alice in Chains <i>Facelift</i> /Columbia
77 • 46	Digital Underground <i>This Is an EP Release</i> /Tommy Boy
78 • 70	Phil Collins <i>Serious Hits...Live!</i> /Atlantic
79 • —	The Judds <i>Love Can Build a Bridge</i> /Curb
80 • 52	Damn Yankees <i>Damn Yankees</i> /Warner Bros.
81 • 94	Yo-Yo <i>Make Way for the Motherlode</i> /East West
82 • —	Travis Tritt <i>Country Club</i> /Warner Bros.
83 • —	UB40 <i>Labour of Love II</i> /Virgin
84 • 75	Slaughter <i>Stick It to Ya</i> /Chrysalis
85 • 77	Eric Johnson <i>Ah Via Musicom</i> /Capitol
86 • 99	Bob Marley & the Wailers <i>Legend</i> /Tuff Gong

87 • 51	Soundtrack <i>Dances with Wolves</i> /Associated
88 • 48	Lenny Kravitz <i>Mama Said</i> /Virgin
89 • —	Elvis Costello <i>Mighty Like a Rose</i> /Warner Bros.
90 • —	Original London Cast <i>Phantom of the Opera Highlights</i> /Polydor
91 • 82	Vince Gill <i>Pocket Full of Gold</i> /MCA
92 • —	Pirates of the Mississippi <i>Pirates of the Mississippi</i> /Capitol
93 • 89	Soundtrack <i>Pretty Woman</i> /EMI
94 • —	Mötley Crüe <i>Dr. Feelgood</i> /Elektra
95 • 65	Tony! Toni! Tone! <i>The Revival</i> /Wing
96 • 43	Trixter <i>Trixter</i> /Mechanic
97 • 92	Soundtrack <i>The Five Heartbeats</i> /Virgin
98 • —	Andrew Dice Clay <i>Dice Rules</i> /Def American
99 • —	Ricky Van Shelton <i>Backroads</i> /Columbia
100 • 72	Black Box <i>Dreamland</i> /RCA

The Musician album chart is produced by the Billboard chart department for Musician, and reflects the combined points for all album reports gathered by the Billboard computers in the month of May. The concert chart is based on Amusement Business Box Score reports for May 1991. All charts are copyright 1991 by BMI Incorporated.

Chartmurmur

If this month's numbers look a little excited—big drops, big jumps—it's because our August chart is the first to reflect *Billboard's* massively reorganized chart system. Working with a research firm called Soundscan, *Billboard* is applying a technology used for years at your neighborhood super-market. Right at the record-store counter, the bar code on a CD, tape or LP is electronically scanned; the week's totals are tallied by Soundscan and relayed to *Billboard*. Under the old system, stores simply ranked their best-selling albums of the week, phoning or faxing their lists to *Billboard*. No hard numbers were involved; even *Billboard* admits the old method's shortcomings.

But in its first weeks the new system provoked howls of protest, mostly from record companies. The main complaint: Soundscan's sample—composed, at this point, almost completely of record-store chains and the record departments of mass-merchandise stores—gives far too much weight to mainstream pop. Labels are worried that rap, alternative rock and new artists will suffer; judging by Fishbone's nosedive in the new system's first week (#49 to #182 in the Top 200), the critics might seem to have a case.

Not so, insists *Billboard*, pointing out that 80 percent of America's records are bought at the top 20 chains and that even an alternative-heavy label like L.R.S. sells 75 percent of its product through its top 25 accounts—that is, mostly through chains. Still, Soundscan plans to add some 300 "independents"—single stores and smaller chains—to the sample. (In the meantime, *Billboard* points to N.W.A.'s June 15 debut at #2 as a sign that rap is as strong as ever in the new regime.)

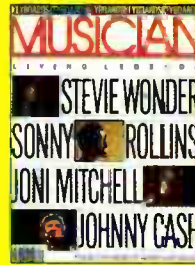
For now it's hard to do any meaningful trend-spotting; the tea-leaves are still swirling around too much. By next month some interesting patterns are sure to emerge.

BACK ISSUES

- 21. Brian Eno, Talking Heads, Weather Report
- 24. Bob Marley, Sun Ra, Lydia Lunch
- 33. The Clash, L. Buckingham, R. Shannon Jackson
- 34. Tom Petty, Dave Edmunds, Wayne Shorter
- 36. Grateful Dead, Zappa, Kid Creole, NY Dolls
- 57. Black Uhuru, Bill Wyman, Rickie Lee Jones
- 45. Willie Nelson, John McLaughlin, The Motels
- 64. Stevie Wonder, X, Was (Not Was), Ornate
- 67. Thomas Dolly, Chet Baker, Carl Perkins
- 70. Peter Wolf, King Crimson, Sly + Robbie
- 71. Heavy Metal, Dream Syndicate, Tina Turner
- 77. John Fogerty, Mamas & The Papas, Los Lobos
- 95. Peter Gabriel, Steve Winwood, Lou Reed
- 98. Jimi Hendrix, The Cure, Prince, 38 Special
- 101. Psychedelic Furs, Elton John, Miles Davis
- 102. Robert Cray, Los Lobos, Simply Red
- 134. Springsteen, The Blasters, Keith Jarrett
- 105. John Coltrane, George Martin, Replacements
- 102, Tom Waits, Squeeze, Eugene Chadbourne
- McCartney, Stanley Clarke, Buster Poindexter
- Robert Plant, INXS, Wynon Marsalis
- 115. Stevie Wonder, Sonny Rollins, Joni Mitchell, Johnny Cash
- Sinéad O'Connor, Neil Young, Tracy Chapman
- Jimmy Page, Leonard Cohen, Lloyd Cole
- Pink Floyd, New Order, Smithereens
- 119. Billy Gibbons, Santana/Shorter, Vernon Reid
- 120. Keith Richards, Depeche Mode, Steve Forbert
- 121. Prince, Steve Winwood, Randy Newman
- 122. Guns N' Roses, Midnight Oil, Glyn Johns
- 123. Year in Music '88, Metallica, Jack Bruce, Fishbone
- 124. Replacements, Fleetwood Mac, Lyle Lovett
- Elvis Costello, Jeff Healey, Sonic Youth
- Lou Reed, John Cale, Joe Satriani
- Miles Davis, Fine Young Cannibals, XTC
- 128. Peter Gabriel, Charles Mingus, Bob Mould
- 29. The Who, The Cure, Ziggy Marley
- 30. 10,000 Maniacs, John Cougar Mellencamp, Jackson Brown/Bonnie Raitt
- 31. Jeff Beck, Laura Nyro, Billy Sheehan
- 32. Don Henley, Rolling Stones, Bob Marley
- 133. The '80s, Daniel Lanois, Syd Straw
- 134. Grateful Dead, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Paul Kelly
- 135. Aerosmith, NIRVANA, Richard Thompson, Max Q
- 136. Eric Clapton, Kate Bush, Soundgarden
- 137. George Harrison, The Kinks, Abdullah Ibrahim
- 138. Tom Petty, Lenny Kravitz, Rush, The Silos
- 139. Paul McCartney, Cecil Taylor, Kronos Quartet
- Robert Plant, Suzanne Vega, Soul II Soul, Drums
- Jimi Hendrix, David Bowie, Bob Clearmountain
- Sinéad O'Connor, John Hiatt, World Party
- 143. Steve Vai, Michael Sipe, Malmsteen/McLaughlin
- 144. INXS, Neville Bros., Lou Reed/Vaclav Havel
- 145. Jimmy Page, John Paul Jones, Stevie Ray Vaughan
- 146. Slash, Replacements, Waterboys, Pixies
- 147. Robert Johnson, Bruce Hornsby, Saul Asylum
- 148. Pink Floyd, Neil Young, Art Blakey, Black Crowes
- 150. R.E.M., AC/DC, Top Managers, Jim Morrison
- 151. Eddie Van Halen, Fishbone, Byrds, Chris Isaak
- 152. Stevie Ray Vaughan, Morrissey, Drum Special
- 153. Bonnie Raitt, Tim Buckley, Sonny Rollins
- SP1. Best of the Beatles and Rolling Stones
- SP2. Masters of Metal, Metallica, Def Leppard, more



33
The Clash



115
Stevie Wonder



130
10,000 Maniacs



151
Van Halen



147
Sinéad O'Connor



132
Don Henley



104
Bruce Springsteen



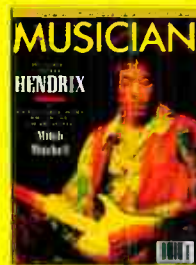
122
Guns N' Roses



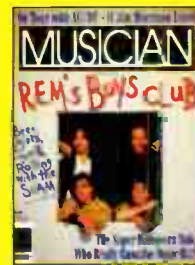
128
Peter Gabriel



112
Paul McCartney



141
Jimi Hendrix



150
R.E.M.



117
Jimmy Page



118
Pink Floyd



140
Robert Plant



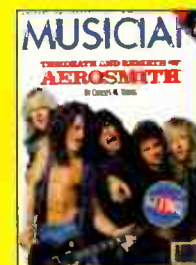
127
Miles Davis



134
Grateful Dead



144
INXS



135
Aerosmith



77
John Fogerty



105
John Coltrane



123
Year in Music



143
Steve Vai



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21	24	33	34	36
37	45	64	67	70
71	77	93	94	101
102	104	106	108	112
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119	120	121	122	123
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129	130	131	132	133
134	135	136	137	138
139	140	141	142	143
144	145	146	147	148
150	151	152	153	



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World Radio History

Stevie Wonder: Jungle Fever & Funk

At home in Wonderland with the Master Blaster

By Barry Krutchik

THE REASON I'M STILL DOING what I've done since I was eight years old is because I love music," Stevie Wonder says. "To have been given the

blessing to be able to do music in the first place is a great feeling. It's something I love the most. I'm motivated because I enjoy doing it."

Welcome to Wonderland. Filled with computers, instruments, games and mystique, Wonderland is Stevie Wonder's state-of-the-art recording studio, his second home. Although the blind artist has never actually seen the place, he walks the corridors as if he designed them.

Stevie's been working around the clock to complete his soundtrack for director Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever*, a film about the tribulations of an interracial relationship. "Spike Lee and myself have formed a really good friendship," Wonder says. "And through that friendship I've been abreast of what he has been doing. Recently he told me about the idea of this film, dealing with a relationship between a black man and a white woman. I said, 'Well, I like this. It's controversial. It is something that will make people think.' It was something I wanted to just check out. It was interesting and challenging because I wanted to not only write songs that would fit the visuals, but that would give people

something to think about.

"What happens a lot of times with interracial relationships is that the people who are in love have no problem. The only problem that they have is people on

are committed to that, then there really is no problem.

"I think the marriage between myself and Spike works because we both like confronting things and dealing with issues that

people don't want to touch but are right here in front of us every single day. I didn't approach it any different than I would for any song. An album of songs is a statement. Ultimately the songs have to all stand up on their own."

Jungle Fever is only one of the projects occupying Wonder. He is four years into work on an album he calls *Conversation Piece*. Wonder says he's written 150 songs with titles such as "Tiananmen Square," "Key of Life" and "My Love Is with You." Stevie promises the unfinished album is "soooo hot!" And if it takes a long time to wrap up, that's okay. Wonder's happy in his studio wonderland. The 41-year-old musician has been living in music since



the outside. In any situation when people are in love, really in love, then obviously they're going to confront a lot of different things in their life. The easiest part is to love. The hardest part is to keep it straight like it is supposed to be. You just have to work together. And if two people

he was a child star.

"I think back to being at the Regal," Wonder says of his early fame. "I was so excited when all the girls would scream. I would always throw my ties out in the audience. At the end I would get so into it that they would have to drag me off the

Schönherz
to Scott



Under a Big Sky



An intriguing musical portrait, rich with European influences. The awaited follow-up to *One Night In Vienna*.

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stage and I'd try to come back. It was fun, it was cool."

That childlike excitement found its focus at Motown's studio, Hitsville U.S.A. "Little Stevie Wonder in the studio," Wonder says wistfully. "I got into every instrument that I was able to touch. I was curious about it. I wanted to know what was going on with that instrument, really. This is my adult Wonderland; back then Motown was like a wonderland to me. It was like a store, with all the instruments. I went from instrument to instrument and played it, or tried to play it, or tried to break it."

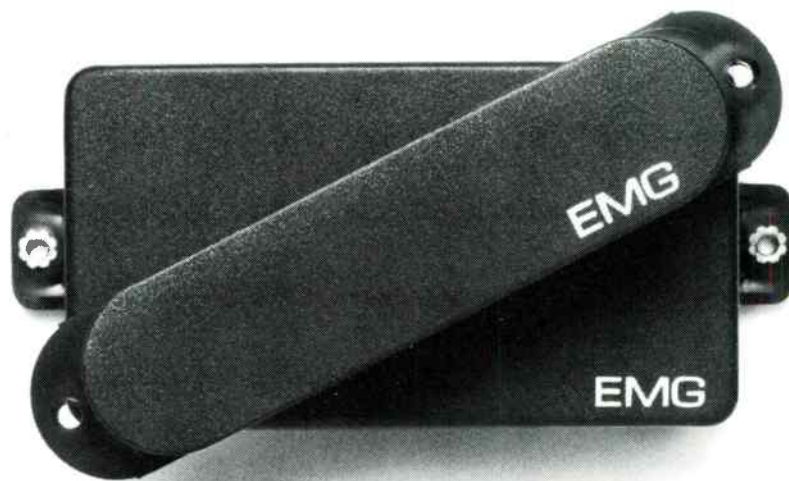
Wonder's memories of Motown's '60s glory days are equally rosy: "When you have incredible writers, producers, artists—people who are at the prime of their creativity—you get a domino effect where one affects the other. That is what happened with Motown. You had that kind of factory energy. It was just a lot of people with a lot to say. The songs themselves dripped with hope and prosperity. And love, passion. And you had a country with the

same kind of energy. You've got a different situation now. Unfortunately you've got a lot of people expressing a lot of pain and disbelief. We've got to turn that pain and disbelief into some goodness and joy. We don't need homelessness or joblessness in our country. We need to rid this society of this problem."

Stevie Wonder's gift for grooves has been as steady as his social vision. On *Jungle Fever* he does a bit of rapping (on the scorching "Each Other's Throat") and a whole lot of the sort of patented funk/soul that radio's been missing so badly for most of the last 10 years.

"The Stevie Wonder funk!" Wonder laughs. "I'm out there. I listen to music. I like the latest music. I like the technology that is happening today. It has changed a great deal since we did 'Superstition' and all that stuff. The bottom line is, you still get down to the bottom *thang*," Wonder snaps his fingers, "the S-funk. I like technology, but I also like simplicity. I mean, I'm just myself in the studio." 

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Gary Burton: An Improviser's Game Plan

A good solo is like a conversation

By Rick Mattingly

WHEN YOU'RE PLAYING A solo," Gary Burton says, "you have to pretend that the audience is listening to you in a foreign language. If you speak clearly enough, they can follow you. But if you just start rattling stuff off, pretty soon it becomes a blur. They might get the impression that you can sure play fast and look smooth, but they're missing the actual details."

Burton finds that the way a solo begins has a lot to do with audience focus. "There are different kinds of melody phrases. Some I would describe as 'running lines': arpeggios, scales and so forth. They might convey the soloist's dexterity, but are not the kind of thing a listener could whistle back to you. I like to start off a solo with strong melodic phrases that are like simple, declarative sentences that sort of say, 'Hi, my name is Gary. Check this out. I've got something to show you.' I

want to make it really direct, and I'll often use snatches of the original melody as source material so that it will have a familiar ring to the audience."

Once he's got his listeners' attention, Burton takes more liberties. But he strives to make sure his solo is the most interesting thing happening at that point in the tune. That depends on the solo being complete within itself. "A lot of people think the role of the accompanist is to spell out the harmony for the soloist," Burton says. "But

my feeling is that if you take away the rhythm section and support group and just listen to the soloist, you should be able to follow the harmonic structure of the song. The real role of the accompanist is rhythmic. You're talking about something, and he is giving you little vocal encouragements: 'Oh really? That's interesting...tell me more.' But it's the soloist's job to sug-

stronger and clearer."

A solo's length is also crucial. "Some people just play until they get tired," Burton laughs. "Other people play until something good happens, and they don't give up till they've given it plenty of time to coalesce. The ideal solo has some kind of shape. It's like a story that builds to the major point, and then it ends. For a solo to have that kind

of logic, the soloist has to have some idea how long it is going to be. When I begin a solo, I have a game plan as to how many choruses I'm going to play. That helps me pace the intensity. If I go in with no plan at all, my building tends to be not as well proportioned."

That's not to say that Burton never abandons his original plan. "If you get near the end of what you thought was going to be your final chorus," he says, "and you realize that you're playing the greatest solo of your life, you can certainly keep going if you feel it's appropri-

ate." But even the most experienced improviser can miscalculate. "Sometimes you decide to go for one more," Burton smiles, "and you're no sooner into it than you realize you would have been better off quitting. That's why I like planning a certain number of choruses as a guide. For me to violate my plan, I have to be really convinced that something big is going to happen in the next chorus. I only depart from my original plan 10 percent of the time, at the most."

[cont'd on page 28]



gest the harmonic outline and lead the changes of the chords."

Burton is not advocating solos built from endless arpeggios. "All you have to do is look ahead to the next change and pick a target note on that harmony. The two primary ones are the third and the seventh. So pick a strong note on the new chord and lead your melodic line to it. The audience will hear the harmony shift from your solo line, not just in the accompanying parts. That makes the solo much

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EMF: Naughty Neophytes of Noise

The thin line between accessibility and credibility

By Mat Snow

SURELY AMONG THE MOST IDYLIC-sounding addresses in the British Isles, 4 Great Orchard Street, Gloucester, summons an agreeable vision of a snug little blacksmith's cottage nestling in the cobbled bosom of one of England's loveliest cathedral towns. Sadly, it is not. Grey, rain-lashed and conspicuously on the wrong side of the tracks, this stretch of decrepit Victoriana is now given over to panel-beating and stripping down car wrecks. Except for Number 4, from whose bowels may be heard a din quite the equal of the enthusiastic metal-bashing echoing the length of the rest of the street. It's the sound of British pop's latest sensation rehearsing—a sensation likened by Pet Shop Boy Neil Tennant to the Sex Pistols, and a sensation, in

the wake of the Charlatans U.K. and Jesus Jones, ripe for export to America.

EMF is the name, a rock-dance quintet determined to add theirs to the modest list of star names—Brian Jones, Jet Harris of the Shadows, rock *auteur* Joe Meek—who hail from this famously picturesque and therefore very un-rock 'n' rollish nook of Olde Englande. "It's got a bit of history, Cinderford has, but it's more famous for EMF than for anything before," says keyboardist Derry

Brownson, 20, about the village on the edge of the Forest of Dean which birthed the band. "We've still got friends there, but we know for a fact that we don't owe them anything. They've never done anything for us. We've given the town *everything*."

Standing for Epsilon Mad Funkers (Epsilon

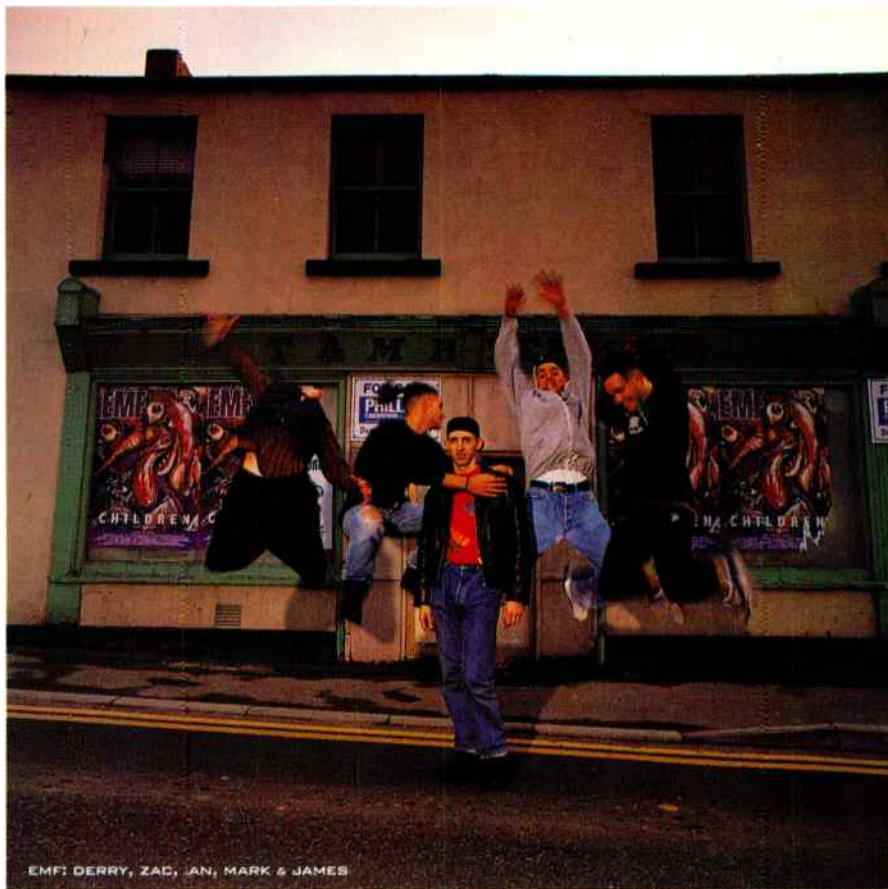
local rugby club; they're billing themselves as Sin City Sex.

Shrinking violets they ain't. "My dad owned two nightclubs," Derry says, "and I remember my uncle playing guitar in our living room when he was stoned out of his head. But my dad's got no musical ability at

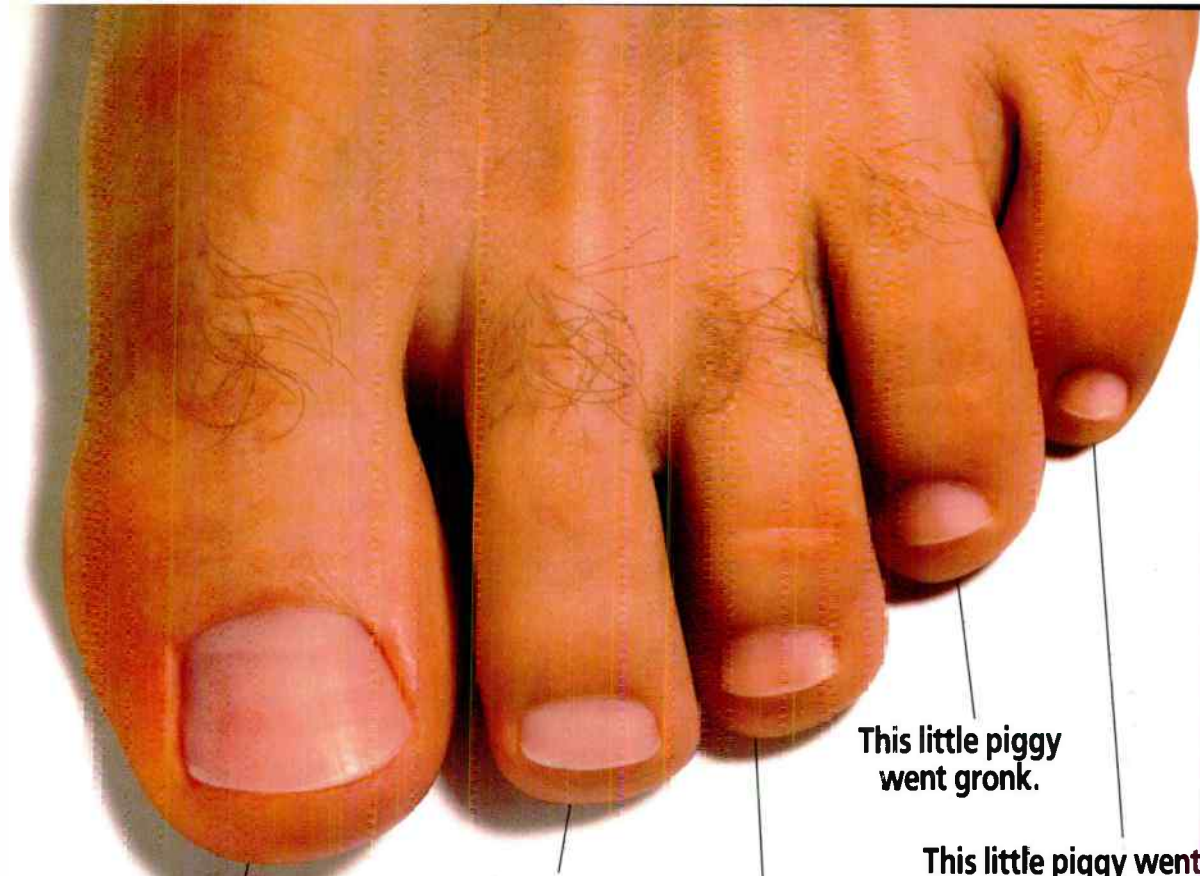
all. And I don't think I have." Then there's 20-year-old bassist Zac (Zachary Sebastian Rex James) Foley (Derry: "I think Zac's dad did a lot of acid in his hippy days. He's an artist, a pretty cool bloke"), singer James Atkin, 22 ("His dad used to play banjo and guitar with Miles of the Wonder Stuff's dad in a folk band"), and drummer Mark Decloedt, 21 (non-descript dad).

At 26, guitarist Ian Dench is the band's musical brains (daddy's a classical guitarist-turned-post-man). Dench had

quit his previous band, jangly Apple Mosaic, and was looking for something meatier and beatier when he ran into this bunch a little younger than himself. Members of low-tech bands on the local pub circuit, they'd gather on Saturday afternoons in Derry's Cinderford clothes shop, Kix, guzzle beer and check out records by such migraine merchants as Nitzer Ebb. Their taste and attitude was just what Ian Dench was looking for to refresh his interest;



computers, that is, heavily advertised on British TV), EMF has sprung from nowhere to international success in just over a year. Formed in October 1989, the band signed to EMI Records the following May after being spotted at only their fourth gig. Five months later their debut single, "Unbelievable," went British Top 5, followed by two more hits and now an album, *Schubert Dip*. What they're rehearsing for now is their sellout tour, starting with a "secret" warmup at the 220-capac-



This little piggy went
wa, wa, wa, wa!

This little piggy went
zzzzzzzzzzzzzzya!

This little piggy went
wooooooowooooosssssshhhhhh.

This little piggy
went gronk.

This little piggy went
nyawaaaaaawwuhaminneeeee
all night long.



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they, in turn, needed his skill. "We met halfway with our thrash and his melody," says Derry. "We clicked in our first rehearsal." The origin of their punchy sound is a Casio SK-1 bottom-of-the-line sampler purchased from a local electrical shop, plus Ian's mum's upright piano with a microphone crammed down the back. EMF's teenybop appeal has catapulted them straight into the British tabloids, who've typecast the group as naughty alter egos to those nice New Kids. The guys in EMF are all too aware that such a reputa-

tion may leave them high and dry when the teens have moved on, leaving a gap that an older rock audience may snobbishly refuse to fill. "It's a thin line to tread between accessibility and credibility," muses Ian Dench. "If you look at our cross-section audience, I think we've done pretty well."

"We can," Derry declares, "all play." As if to advertise their musicality, their album's title drops the name of the nineteenth-century Romantic composer of whom Dench is a buff. (It also puns on the old-fashioned

powdery-white British candy, sherbert dip, thus alluding to "showbiz sherbert," as cocaine is often called by English rockers.) And proclaiming its rebel-rock credentials, the band occasionally torches and trashes its gear at encore time. Hence the Pistols tag, which Tennant bestowed after he saw EMF win over a beerglass-chucking alternative audience in London. "Neil turns up at the weirdest gigs," says Derry. "In he walks in his three-grand overcoat, gliding along like Darth Vader. The crowd wasn't malicious—they were dancing away. I'd rather have them throwing glasses than teddy-bears and knickers with 'I love Derry' on them."

Personalized knickers—a welcome compliment, surely?

"Not," Derry draws his hands a few inches apart, "when they're only this big..."

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EVERY MINOR FACT

SINGER JAMES ATKIN'S mike of choice is a Shure Beta 58; **DERRY BROWN-SON**'s fave keyboard is a Yamaha PC 200; the Casio SK-1 got smashed onstage—"quite obliterated," says a member of EMF's management—six weeks ago. **MARK DECLOEDT** plays Sonor drums 'n' sticks and Zildjian cymbals, **IAN DENCH**'s main axe is an '81 Les Paul Custom and bassist **ZAC FOLEY** switches between two basses: Music Man Cutlass and Fender Jazz.

BURTON

[cont'd from page 24] Burton is just as careful with endings. "We've all heard players end their solos as though someone has suddenly pulled the instrument out of their hands," Gary says. "To me, it's like ending a conversation. You don't just abruptly walk away. You say things like, 'Well, it was great seeing you again. Hope to see you again soon. Say hello to the family.' We should end solos the same way, by sending signals that we're wrapping up what we're saying and are getting ready to pass it to someone else. We taper off the phrases, bring the dynamics back down and melodically hint that we're finishing. It's more comfortable for the audience, as well as the other players, when they know what your intentions are."

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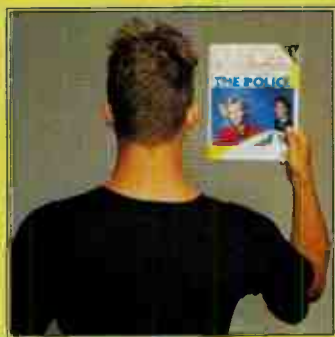
ESTING WHEN LISTENED TO. WHEN WRITTEN ABOUT, IT IS BORING. TRY IT SOMETIME. TRY WRITING ABOUT JUST MUSIC WITH NO REFERENCE TO THE MUSICIAN. NO VENTILATION OF OPINION ABOUT HIS SEX LIFE, OR HIS PEPSI COMMERCIALS, OR HIS PHILOSOPHICAL INTENT, OR HIS CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE AMAZON. NO AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL, FREE-ASSOCIATED RAMBLINGS TO CONVEY YOUR ENTHUSIASM—OR LACK THEREOF—FOR THE ORGANIZED NOISE IN QUESTION. NO COMPARISONS WITH THE ARTIST'S EARLIER WORK. NO SUPERLATIVES TO CREATE BOGUS HIERARCHIES. NO RIDICULE OF THE INTELLIGENCE OF THE GUY'S

of AUDIENCE. NO HISTORIC INFLUENCES. NO SPECULATION ON CHART POTENTIAL. NO DECONSTRUCTING, NO POST-MODERNIZING, NO SEMIOTICIZING. JUST DESCRIBE THE MUSIC. IT'S REALLY, REALLY BORING, RIGHT? EITHER YOU RESORT TO TECHNO-TERMS AND LOSE ALL EMOTIONAL COLOR, OR YOU HAVE NO WORDS AT ALL. SO, CONTRARY TO

Musician

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**Why we write
about what we
write about**



THE LETTER-WRITERS WHO RIGHTEOUSLY AND SEMI-REGULARLY DEMAND THAT *MUSICIAN* DROP THE BIOGRAPHICAL TRIVIA AND CONCENTRATE ON THE MUSIC, I SAY IT CANNOT BE DONE. YOU MIGHT AS WELL DEMAND THAT SOPHOCLES CUT THE OEDIPUS ANECDOTES AND CONCENTRATE ON INCEST. OR THAT SHAKESPEARE CUT THE HAMLET CRAP AND GET TO THE POINT ABOUT RULING-

By Charles M. Young

class decadence. Or that Tolstoy deal with the issues of war and peace, not the personalities.



MUSICIAN
KINKS
C'mon Ray, is it rudeness, the weather, comedy or just Confusion?
MARVIN GAYE
THE INTERVIEW
REBEY ALLEN
BRYAN FERRY

Marvin Gaye's words on the phone from London were full of sadness. "There was not the kind of love for me in Los Angeles that I was accustomed to," he said in an eerily calm voice. "I wanted more love, more respect for me as an artist. There were so many plots and plans against me. People were saying that I was finished. My personality took a horrible beating there. I couldn't work in that kind of psychological hell-hole. I won't go back until my tarnished image is repolished by my work. I can't do my best work in America right now."

MUSICIAN #58, AUGUST 1983

Having dropped those heavy names, I'll get really pompous and talk about myself as a writer. Every morning I wake up and worry how the piece I'm working on is going to pay the bills. Every afternoon I sit at the word processor and worry that the words won't process anymore. Every evening I watch the news and worry that the population has become permanently atomized under the constant assault of lies from our corporate and political rulers. Every night I make phone calls and worry that my friends are even more screwed up than I am.

Then I remember: Musicians are interesting, and everything else is boring.


From a literary standpoint, I couldn't ask for anything better than what I've got. I've spent about 95 percent of my career

writing about musicians, eight of 16 years as a professional right here at *Musician*. That's a lot to be grateful for, and I shall count the ways.

First of all, musicians are honest. Select any issue of *Musician* from the past 15 years and I defy you not to find a bunch of quotes that are astonishing, charming, unique, eccentric and straight from the heart. For most musicians most of the time, the first impulse when asked a question is to blurt the truth. Try to think of another profession regularly in the news where this is true. Politicians are the worst interviews in the world. Except for actors.

Second, musicians want to make people happy. Social conservatives regularly accuse musicians of being in it for the money, as if coming to terms with capitalism is a crime when you have long hair. It is true that most musicians talk endlessly about making it, or staying there if they have made it. This is because the vast majority of professional musicians have no money. They can't pay the rent and their nutrition is abysmal. Like other poor people—and this is an idea you never heard before in American journalism—their lives would be better if they had more money.

S O WHY DO MUSICIANS MAKE MUSIC when the odds against making money are staggering? Because there is no experience in life more gratifying than watching a crowd go berserk for your songs. Creating joy in others creates joy in your own self. It is the healthiest addiction known to humankind. It makes getting




MUSICIAN
THE GREAT
JAMES BROWN!

This afternoon, as he hums the martial melody to "Living in America," Brown is immersed in his more mundane moment-to-moment insistence on reflex homage from the obliging retinue he's collected over the years. These include burly alto/tenor saxman Maceo Parker, rawboned baritone saxman/arranger St. Clair Pickney and one Al Sharpton, Jr., portly field marshal and impromptu pitch man for the soul potentate, who announces he's secured a waiting limousine for a pressing round of errands and appointments. "I've known Mr. Brown since I was 15 or 16, hanging around the back fence of a mansion he useta have in Queens," Sharpton says brightly. When not acting as "road supervisor" or providing the halftime homily at the singer's shows, Sharpton runs a vague-sounding organization he calls the National Youth Movement. But mostly he simply keeps company with the Padishah of the Licking Stick. Brown turns on the crisp edge of his Cuban heels and heads down the plush hallway. A phalanx of tuxedoed gentlemen pass noiselessly in the opposite direction. "Well now, look at those fellas," Brown says in a strident stage whisper. "Ain't they clean!"

"Ah, excuse me fellas," Sharpton brays, barely catching his cue. "But this is James Brown who you are looking at, yes, indeed. Hold on now, don't hurry off. Excuse me, could somebody hold the elevator a moment when these very fortunate business executives meet Mr. James Brown...?"

MUSICIAN #90, APRIL 1986



MUSICIAN
U2
THE INTERVIEW
CULTURE CLUB

Bono's "nerd disguise" serves him well until the group comes to the shooting gallery. Everyone gets pellet rifles except Edge, who for some reason is given a .22. As Edge splinters targets Bono, excited, yells over the recoil, "Yeah, Edge! Go, Edge!" That lets the cat out of the bag. How many young men in Bordeaux are named "Edge"? And how many speak English? French kids start turning and pointing to the Irishmen at the shooting gallery. "Ur Dur! Ur Dur!" ("U Deux"; "U2" *en français*) "Ur Dur?"


Mullen shakes his head no and the band moves quickly down the midway. Bono spots a tent promising oddities of nature and zips in, leaving Mullen and the Edge outside. Suddenly all the fun goes out of the fair. Lined up before him are glass jars containing monkeys, mummies and human fetuses in formaldehyde: Siamese twins, a human baby with a fishtail sewed on. Bono's face goes gray. In the midst of this depravity sits a dwarf in a three-piece suit, cleaning his fingernails with a knife. He never looks up. Around his feet the dirt is littered with *centimes*. Bono walks, as if asleep, outside where Mullen and the Edge are laughing. Finally he says, "I've never seen anything like that in my life." The park P.A. is blasting "Pride (In the Name of Love)." As we leave the carnival a barker is shouting into a microphone, "Ur Dur! Ur Dur!"

MUSICIAN #75, JANUARY 1985

cheated by club owners, managers, record companies and booking agents worth it.

Third, musicians are elemental. It is easy for writers, who spend a lot of time in solitude wrestling with words, to forget that they are spirits in the material world. Unless they are so rich that they have become morons, musicians spend most of their time in the material world solving problems of an immediate, physical nature: getting the amp to work, finding a club in a strange city, convincing their girlfriends to lend them more money, sitting for six hours on an amplifier in the back of a van. So musicians tend to scratch where they itch. The lubrication of their conversation is humor—often extremely gross and brutal—not the euphemism that rules in white middle-class talk. Physical specificity makes the job of the writer in bringing characters to life vastly easier.


Fourth, musicians have better publicists. I still find it astonishing, yet totally



Someone passed around a book to be autographed for a raffle, and while Watts was away from the table, Wyman and Eric Clapton started nudging each other and giggling. Ronnie Lane asked them what was so funny. "Charlie's autograph," Wyman smiled. He passed it over. It was almost illegible. "See," Wyman explained conspiratorially, "everyone in Charlie's family is named Charlie. It's like, 'Ello, Charlie, 'ow's Charlie?' 'Not bad, Charlie.' So they used to call him **Charlie Boy!** When the Stones first started gettin' asked for autographs, that's how he'd sign his name. We told him, 'Here! You can't be signing **Charlie Boy!**' But sometimes he still forgets. Look here. What he's done is start to write 'Charlie B—' and then tried to cover it up." Watts returned to the table and everyone shut up. The conversation floated around for a while before Clapton started glancing through the souvenir book. "Say, Ronnie, whose name is this?" "Which one, Eric? Oh that. Say, I can't tell. It looks like...**Charlie B.** But your middle name doesn't start with a B, does it, Charlie?" Watts remained stonefaced. "Say, you know what it looks like to me? It looks like **Charlie Boy!**"

MUSICIAN # 91, MAY 1986

logical, that American universities grant degrees in Public Relations. For four years they train you to lie, to figure out ways to make toxic waste dumps look like bird



Patti had seen Bruce play only once before joining the band. She met him in the summer of 1983 while sitting in with a local bar band, Cats on a Smooth Surface, in Asbury Park. At the beginning of the summer of '84 Bruce invited her over to his house to sing with Nils, Roy and him. "We just sat around with acoustic guitars," Scialfa remembers. "It was very casual, which I thought was nice. He called about two days later and asked if I wanted to come up and sing with the whole band." Patti passed the audition and was asked to join the E Street Band on a Sunday night. The tour began that Wednesday. She got through the first show using crib notes. Patti still hasn't told Bruce that she's one of the girls who auditioned to join the band when **Born to Run** came out. Is there a greater lesson in Patti's story? She thinks so: "You can meet somebody nice in a bar."


MUSICIAN #73, NOV. 1984

sanctuaries. I have occasionally met people like this, often watched them on the news, and there seems to be nothing in them that corresponds with what I like about musicians. They are the sort of people who would never laugh about some bodily function unless they saw someone who makes more money laugh first. Music publicists, on the other hand, tend to have been art majors who stumbled into a typing job at a record company and then got promoted when someone noticed they were personable. Music pub-

licists tend to introduce you to the act and get out of the way, figuring any weirdness that goes down can only generate more attention.

Best of all, music publicists perceive themselves as lower in the social hierarchy than music journalists. Or at least they behave that way when they want you to do a story. Having no prestige outside the biz, music journalists are extremely appreciative of anyone to look down on. Movie publicists, by contrast, view themselves as higher than the working journalist, view reporters as the enemy, and they constantly meddle to prevent anything like truth or spontaneity or joy breaking through an actor's image.

Fifth, musicians have spectacular personalities. Keith Richards, Johnny Rotten, James Brown, Ted Nugent, AC/DC, Aretha Franklin, Sinéad O'Connor, Ice-T, the Butthole Surfers, Robert Plant—need I continue? They are all bigger than life. They are the stuff of literature. Read, as I say, *any* issue of this magazine. Politics, acting, athletics and all other forms of human endeavor are smaller than life.



"What I did in the last 10 years was rediscover that I was John Lennon before the Beatles, and after the Beatles, and so be it. The actual moment when I remembered who I was...I was in a room in Hong Kong, because Yoko had sent me on a trip around the world by myself and I hadn't done anything since I was 20. I didn't know how to call for room service, check into a hotel...If somebody reads this and they think, 'Well, these fucking artists' or 'These bloody pop stars,' or 'These actors,' they don't understand the pain of being a freak. Yoko said, 'Why don't you do this?' I said, 'Really? By myself? But what if people bother me?' I had a big excuse for it, you see. Because I was famous—therefore I can't go to the movies, can't go to the theater, can't do anything...I'm looking over the Hong Kong boy and there's something that's like ringing a bell. What is it? Then I just got very very relaxed. And it was like a recognition. God! It's me! This relaxed person is me! I remember this guy from way back when!"

MUSICIAN #31, MARCH 1981

SO I HAVE A LOT TO BE GRATEFUL for on this fifteenth anniversary of *Musician*. I'm grateful to have worked with editors whose judgment I trust. I'm grateful to have appeared in the same pages with so many other writers I admire. I'm grateful to the readers who seem to be me in some parallel universe: fanatic record and CD collectors deeply afflicted with equipment lust, although through some strange accident in the cosmos, the average reader makes twice as much money as I do. I'm grateful to the business guys for keeping the magazine going on its "shoestring" budget. Shameful though its remuneration is to us writers, *Musician* has a certain attraction in its



Prince says, "The same people who told me I wasn't gonna be anything treated me with a lot more respect now. And it made me a much better person. It took a lot of bitterness out of me. Because that's all I really wanted; I didn't want the respect so much as I wanted friendship, real friendship. That's all that counts to me. And I tell my band members the same thing now. I mean, you have to learn to deal with me on an up-front level, or else it's dead. I don't want people around me who don't do that."

MUSICIAN #59, SEPT. 1983

parsimony. If it generated more money, they'd hire a vast bureaucracy of cement-head copyeditors to fiddle with my sentences. As it is, I'm pretty much printed as I write.

Finally, I'm grateful to all the musicians who have taken time out of their lives to talk with us. They've made *Musician* interesting and everything else boring. **M**

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PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE RYAN



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b. One audio cassette recording including your name and address on the cassette.
c. One copy of the song's lyrics typed or printed legibly in English. In Latin category, lyrics may be in Spanish with an English translation. In Jazz category, lyrics are not required.

d. A check or money order made payable to the 4th Annual Billboard Song Contest, or credit card approval for \$15.00 (U.S.) for each song submitted.

Contestant's name, address and song title must appear on each item along with any author's name (if applicable).

1. Mail entries to: 4th Annual Billboard Song Contest presented by Kentucky Fried Chicken, P.O. Box 35346, Tulsa, OK 74153-0346. ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 30, 1991.

2. Each song submitted must be the original work of the contestant. Songs may be no longer than five minutes. Contestant may enter as many songs as he/she wishes, but each song must have his own entry form and be recorded on a separate cassette accompanied by a typed or printed lyric sheet. Check or money order must reflect total number of entries submitted. Contestant may enter his/her song in more than one category, however each submission constitutes a separate entry, requiring its own entry fee, cassette and lyrics. Entry fee is not refundable. Songs may be copyrighted, but copyright is not required. If copyrighted, contestants are responsible for placing copyright notices on their entries and for filing under U.S. copyright laws. The Billboard Song Contest presented by KFC is not responsible for entries that are late, lost, damaged, misdirected, mailed with insufficient postage, stolen, or misappropriated. Cassettes and lyrics will not be returned. Contestants are responsible for keeping duplicate copies.

3. PRIZES:

One (1) Grand Prize of \$25,000 cash, round trip for two via Northwest Airlines to Billboard Awards Presentation where Grand Prize winning song will be performed valued at \$1,500 maximum, Technics SX-KN200 Keyboard, approx. \$1,000 value, plus Dean Markley Custom Made Guitar, approx. \$1,700 value and K150 amplifier, approx. \$500 value.
Six (6) First Prizes (one in each category excluding Grand Prize winner) \$5,000 cash, round trip for two via Northwest Airlines to Billboard Awards Presentation where winning songs will be performed valued at \$1,500 maximum value, plus Technics SX-KN200 Keyboard, approx. \$1,000 value.
Grand and First Prize winning songs will be submitted to major recording labels for recording consideration.

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4. Contest is open to persons who have averaged less than \$5,000 per year in total royalties earned from music since 1986, including prize winnings from previous song contests. Employees of Billboard Magazine, Billboard Publications, Inc., J.A. Halsey and Associates, Inc., Kentucky Fried Chicken, Panasonic/Technics, Dean Markley Strings, Inc., Joseph Sug-

erman and Associates, Northwest Airlines and Laughton Promotional Marketing, and their families, franchisees, affiliates, advertising, public relations and promotion agencies are not eligible.

5. D.A.R.E.: One special cash prize of \$1,000 will be awarded on behalf of the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program to the writer(s) of a song submitted with an anti-drug message. Song may be in any of the seven music categories. To be eligible contestants must check the D.A.R.E. box on the entry form. The D.A.R.E. prize will be awarded in addition to any other prize won by that contestant.

6. JUDGING: A special cash prize of \$1,000 will be awarded on behalf of the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program to the writer(s) of a song submitted with an anti-drug message. Song may be in any of the seven music categories. To be eligible contestants must check the D.A.R.E. box on the entry form. The D.A.R.E. prize will be awarded in addition to any other prize won by that contestant.
7. WINNERS: Production and performance quality will not be considered. Winners will be determined by May 31, 1992. No duplicate winners in a single category. No transfer and no substitution of prize, except as necessary due to availability, in which case a prize of equal or greater value will be awarded. Division of prizes among co-authors is the responsibility of the winners and will be awarded to the first name on the entry form. All prizes will be awarded. Taxes are the responsibility of the winners. Void where prohibited. All federal, state and local laws and regulations apply.

8. WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY MAIL AND WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN AND RETURN AN AFFIDAVIT OF ELIGIBILITY/LIABILITY/PUBLISHERY RELEASE WITHIN 14 DAYS OF THE DATE OF THE NOTIFICATION. AFFIDAVIT WILL INCLUDE A STATEMENT THAT THE WINNER'S SONG IS HIS/HER ORIGINAL WORK AND HE/SHE HOLDS ALL RIGHTS TO SUBMISSION OF THIS SONG. FAILURE TO SIGN AND RETURN SUCH AFFIDAVIT WITHIN 14 DAYS OR THE PROVISION OF FALSE OR INACCURATE INFORMATION THEREIN WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION AND AN ALTERNATE WINNER WILL BE SELECTED. AFFIDAVITS OF WINNERS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE AT TIME OF AWARD MUST BE COUNTERSIGNED BY HIS/HER PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN. AFFIDAVITS ARE SUBJECT TO VERIFICATION BY LAUGHTON PROMOTIONAL MARKETING AND ITS AGENTS. BY ACCEPTING THE PRIZE THE WINNER RELEASES SPONSORS FROM ALL LIABILITY REGARDING PRIZES AWARDED. ENTRY CONSTITUTES PERMISSION TO USE WINNERS' NAMES, LIKENESSES AND VOICES FOR FUTURE ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY PURPOSES WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION.

FOR ADDITIONAL ENTRY FORMS, ENTRY FORMS IN SPANISH, OR WINNERS LIST, SEND A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPEO ENVELOPE TO: 4TH ANNUAL BILLBOARD SONG CONTEST PRESENTED BY KFC (SPECIFY ENTRY FORMS OR WINNERS LISTS) P.O. BOX 35346, TULSA, OK 74153-0346. REQUESTS FOR ENTRY FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED BY OCTOBER 31, 1991. REQUESTS FOR WINNERS LIST MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAY 31, 1992. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE CONTEST YOU CAN CALL 918-627-0351, MON. - FRI. BETWEEN 9AM AND 5PM CENTRAL TIME.

I certify that I have read and understand the 4th Annual Billboard Song Contest Official Rules and I accept the terms and conditions of participation in the 4th Annual Billboard Song Contest as stated in the official rules. (If entrant is under 18 years old, the signature of a parent or guardian is required.)

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Parent/Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____
(if entrant is a minor)

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SONG TITLE _____

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What a Piece of Wo





P K I S

STING

The Rock Star Races Toward 40 • By Bill Flanagan

It's a beautiful May afternoon in Holland. Sting is in the dining room eating, Peter Gabriel is in the foyer talking and Sinéad O'Connor is outside in the garden with her friend, waltzing. All of these luminaries are waiting to board the tour bus outside their hotel in the Hague and go to the concert hall where Sting is in the middle of a five-night stand. Gabriel and Sinéad have flown over to guest-star in a seg-

Photography by Brian Aris

ment of tonight's concert which will be broadcast around the world as part of the Simple Truth Appeal, a charity telecast to benefit the Kurdish refugees in Iraq.

STING IS HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WHOLE affair. As everyone boards the bus he wonders aloud if it wouldn't be better to share the money about to be raised with the new disaster victims in Ethiopia and Bangladesh. "Three weeks ago the Kurds really needed help," Sting sighs. "But now the Kurds seem well taken care of. From now on their problem is *political*. But the situation in Bangladesh is just horrible. So I've spent the afternoon sending faxes, trying to see if there's some way to re-direct some of this—and I've been causing panic with everyone."

Sting is told that if he allows himself to be paralyzed because he can't do everything, he'll never do anything. Probably best to just let the Kurds have this one. Sting shakes his head and says, "Once you open this can of worms..."

Peter Gabriel kids two security men that he and Sting whipped in tennis earlier. That cheers up Sting, who says that he sort of wishes he were a professional athlete instead of an entertainer because "an athlete has to do only *one* thing really well." It is pointed out to the 39-year-old musician that if he had been an athlete, his career would now be over. "I hadn't thought of that," Sting says as Gabriel laughs. "Forget it."

Sting will turn 40 on October 2nd. "I'm playing at Hollywood Bowl," he says. "I'm going to make a big thing of it. A lot of people try to disguise the fact, like 40's the threshold of middle age. I say, 'Hey, I'm 40 and I'm proud!' Why not? We're the biggest generation in history and we're all getting older. It doesn't mean anything anymore. I just feel in the prime of my life. Why shouldn't I crow about it?" He adds, half-jokingly, "Actually, I'm a baby compared with the rest of our international rock stars. Peter's 41. Bruce is 42 or 43."

No one mentions that Springsteen is actually 41. No one mentions U2, Prince, or Michael Jackson. All anybody says is, "Dylan is 50," and everyone nods and agrees.

AT THE STATEN HALL, STING AND HIS BAND—drummer Vinnie Colaiuta, guitarist Dominic Miller, keyboardist David Sancious—run through a soundcheck for an audience of film crew and arena fast-food vendors. The band's main job this afternoon is to rehearse the guest-star segments. The finale of Sting's version of "Purple Haze" is the cue for Gabriel and guitarist David Rhodes to come onstage and go into "Games Without Frontiers." Sting slips easily from the spotlight to being Gabriel's bass player. Still, the overall sound is ragged. As "Games" finishes, Sinéad appears.



Sting moves to upright bass and supports her on a new song, "My Special Child." Then Gabriel and Sinéad duet on his "Don't Give Up." Sinéad has a tough time getting a grip on the female part sung on Gabriel's album by Kate Bush. Gabriel himself seems stiff. That this shaky newborn supergroup will have to sing to the world in just a few hours seems more than intimidating. They run through the sequence a second time and everything's vastly improved. This is what separates the pros from the amateurs—not what they can do but how quickly they can learn to do it. At the end of the four-song cycle everyone is relieved. But Sting still isn't satisfied. "Come on," he calls, "let's do the whole thing once more!" ("I'm still a schoolteacher," he explains a few minutes later.) On the third run-through it all clicks. Gabriel is suddenly animated, dancing as if the house were packed. As "Don't Give Up" climaxes and fades Gabriel

raises his fist in the air and looks over at Sinéad to see if she's following suit. Sinéad looks back at him like *You gotta be kidding* and instead sings a snatch of a rowdy punk jig. Dominic Miller starts playing Elvis' "Guitar Man" and Sting and the band jump in, pulling off a swingin' little rendition. As they finish Sting says, "That oughta help the Kurds."

Sting says later, "One of the dangers of raising money with pop stars and big concerts is that people then assume a miracle will take place. There are no miracles. You take part in a process which can last for a lifetime. People come up and say, 'Have you stopped the rainforest burning yet?' It's such an infuriating question and so naive. We started a process that involves real experts who work day to day as they have for years and years. It's like, 'Didn't Live Aid solve the problem in Ethiopia five years ago?' No, the bunch of crooks in the government of Ethiopia who caused the problem are still there. Bomb *them!*"

The musicians have dinner in the auditorium basement. Sting, who eats nothing, says how great it feels to just play bass while someone else sings—though he immediately qualifies that by worrying that perhaps that freedom leads to overplaying. So maybe he's a better bassist when he does sing, after all. "You leave holes in the bass part when you sing," Sting says, "which became a kind of style in the Police. Sparse basslines."

Gabriel, friendly but perhaps a little uneasy about the impending broadcast, dines distractedly on trout. He mentions that his new album is coming along slowly, but he hopes to have it out by Christmas. Sting stands up and starts moving around. One gets the impression that, whatever he is doing, Sting is always thinking about what he should do next. He says he's going to go work out. He returns half an hour later, while everyone else is having dessert, and asks Sinéad and Peter to join him in the next room for "a meeting of the board." The three stars draft a letter to the Kurd-Aid organizers, formally requesting that some of the money



"Hellblazer"—superhero based on Sting



"I couldn't run for president," Sting says. "I've taken drugs. I've had sex outside of marriage. I've done all of those things that preclude me leading a country."

from the benefit be distributed to other disaster victims.

Is Sting always this active? David Sancious smiles. Monday, Sancious says, was supposed to be a deserved day off. Instead, Sting decided the band should play on an Italian TV show. The band woke up in Germany, flew to Italy, did the show and then traveled all the way up to Holland before bedtime. Sting doesn't like to sit still.

Dominic Miller, Vinnie Colaiuta and drum tech Donnie FitzSimmonds move upstairs to the band dressing room and fall into overstuffed chairs. Vinnie, a top U.S. session drummer, heard that Sting was holding auditions in England and phoned him and said he was paying his own way over to try out. Sting asked Vinnie please not to do that, it would just be embarrassing if he didn't like him. Vinnie said, "I'm coming anyway," and he got the gig. Sting wanted an English guitarist—he figures Brits have a quirkiness Americans don't—and producer Hugh Padgham suggested Dominic, a former member of World Party who played on recent albums by Phil Collins

and Julia Fordham.

With the *Blue Turtles* band Sting played guitar. He seemed to float above that group—one felt that if Sting stopped playing it would make no difference to the rest of the band. Now, for the first time since the Police, he's playing bass in a small rock group. Sting figures that by controlling the bottom with his bass and the top with his high voice, he can drive the band without being obviously dictatorial.

"Sting's a great bass player," Vinnie says. "He has a great groove, great timing, he's adventurous. Plus, nobody plays reggae like him. It's interesting that he's a great bassist who's a songwriter. Songwriters look at things differently. He has the ability to look at a part or a riff from a player's standpoint and from a writer's standpoint. All those things are revealed when he plays."

Sting's belief in sparseness is mirrored by Dominic, who says, "I can't listen to a piece of guitar work that is continuous, without a gap. Saxophonists have to take a breath between licks, don't they? I

think guitar players should do that too. Let their fingers take a breath." Dominic says he'd rather hear Neil Young play a heartfelt solo full of mistakes than all the guitar heroes in L.A.

"Heroics are heroics and music is music," Vinnie says. "If somebody doesn't play like a 'hero' that doesn't make him any less of a musician. It's like the way people get used to going to movies to see new levels of violence and shock value. What's the point? Why does someone have to do that to be judged 'good' or 'better'? It doesn't matter. Ability is just a means to an end: to make music."

Two walls away 10,000 people have entered the hall and watched opening sets by Nashville singer/songwriters Kennedy Rose and vocalist/percussionist Vinx. Sinéad is in her dressing room with her friend Tex Axile from Transvision Vamp. There's almost two hours before Sinéad goes on and Tex convinces her the time would be well spent learning to juggle. Soon the contents of her complimentary fruit basket are bouncing around the room. Sting's band is about to go on when Vinnie storms by Sinéad's door, muttering that the TV people have sent him off to shave so that he can be made-up for tonight's filming. A few minutes later Vinnie is shaved, Sinéad has all her fruit in the air and a big roar goes up from 10,000 Dutchmen as Sting and his band run onstage and swing into "All This Time," his latest hit.

"All This Time" is from Sting's most recent album, *The Soul Cages*, a meditation on his Newcastle boyhood and the recent death of his parents. Most of the album is slow and moody. "All This Time"—though its lyrics are full of a boy's first glimpse of death and

the rituals around death—has the sort of bouncy pop melody and contagious rhythm Sting turned out regularly when he led the Police. When "All This Time," complete with funny MTV video, appeared last winter, fans who missed that old Police magic rushed out and bought *Soul Cages*. But when that song's run was over, *Soul Cages* began falling down the charts. It's easy to figure that a big part of the public wants the old Sting back. His first post-Police album, 1985's *Dream of the Blue Turtles*, used jazz musicians and stretched Sting's songwriting in new directions. The follow-up, 1987's *Nothing Like the Sun*, was subdued and delicate. "All This Time" sounded like a return to the energy and warm hooks of "When the World is Running Down," "Roxanne" and "Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic." But it was not typical of the ghostly *Soul Cages*. Onstage tonight, Sting and his band kick the songs through new arrangements. Material that was brooding on *Soul Cages* becomes more emotionally complex when performed with such fire and joy. The album versions of Sting's latest material are fine. The live versions are better.

"Purple Haze" brings the already ecstatic audience into chair-stamping, match-lighting heaven. The appearance of Gabriel and Sinéad induces rapture. "Games without Frontiers," "My Special Child" and "Don't Give Up" are received like Woodstock. By the time Sting leads everyone through a sing-along "Every Breath You Take," the crowd is going nuts and Sinéad and Gabriel are grinning ear to ear. When Sting and his band play "Message in a Bottle," Sinéad hides behind a speaker at the side of the stage, doing her

THE DOOR IS WIDE OPEN

KEYS OF THE KINGDOM



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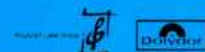
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"Emperor's New Clothes" dance. The dressing rooms after the show turn into a party, as all those pent-up, pre-show nerves give way to glee. Sting crosses the room, cups Sinéad's face in his hands and announces, "You are beautiful!" Sinéad, with joking lustiness and swinging a beer, grabs an eyeful of Sting's naked chest and declares, "Hey, you're gorgeous!"

"A fucking great time!" Sinéad grins as Sting moves off. "I got to sing the *dododos* on 'Every Breath You Take,' which I've been practicing for years." She takes a swig. "Hoping I'd be asked!"

The bus ride back to the hotel is giddy. The musicians are laughing, singing, waving to teenage fans. It feels like a football team returning from a big win. All the gloom is gone from Peter Gabriel, who seems downright lighthearted. Sinéad demands a sing-along and Sting leads everyone in Spinal Tap's "Big Bottom." They all know "Big Bottom." Then Sting and Sinéad recite the Tap's "Stonehenge" monologue. Manager Miles Copeland insists that when *Spinal Tap* was shown in middle America, audiences thought it was a real documentary.

"Hey, man!" Vinnie yells to Sting. "Were you playing 'Bonanza' on the bass during 'Message in a Bottle'?"

"Yes!" Sting shouts.

"I knew it!" Vinnie falls back in hysterics.

"Only you catch those, Vinnie," Sting says. "I do it for you. I don't play for the audience! I play for the drummer!"

Sancious marvels at the telepathy he and Vinnie were sharing onstage. It turns out the two of them—and Sting—all memorized the

same albums as kids: *Hymn to the Seventh Galaxy* by Return to Forever, Mahavishnu Orchestra's *Inner Mounting Flame*. They start singing John McLaughlin's guitar lines. Sancious announces that he's found note-for-note transcriptions of Chick Corea's *Seventh Galaxy* solos.

"Don't tell me," Sting says. "Done by some guy in Japan, right?" He's right. "It had to be!"

"Yeah," Sancious says. "He slowed the record down to 16 and got them all!"

One reason Sting's a big star and the rest of us are not might be that unlike every less secure young player growing up in the '70s, Sting was devoted to fusion *and* the folkies before catching a ride into the record biz with punk (punk-reggae, come to think of it). He didn't let barriers or snobbery obstruct his musical education. This guy who knows his Mahavishnu note for note, who got famous tearing up places like CBGB with spiked hair and punk songs like "Fall-out" and "Peanuts," who was in *Quadrophenia* and plays Hendrix songs onstage, is also the last of the sensitive '70s singer/songwriters. In concert Sting's been doing "Ain't No Sunshine" by Bill Withers and "If I Were a Carpenter" by Tim Hardin. The next afternoon we head off to a Dutch recording studio so Sting can cut a version of Elton John's 1970 ballad "Come Down in Time." Joni Mitchell just told *Rolling Stone* that she considers Sting the child she and James Taylor never had. Sting says he agrees.

"It's funny to say that, but probably right," Sting says. "Both of them were primal influences on my work. I can play and sing every

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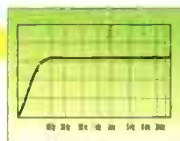
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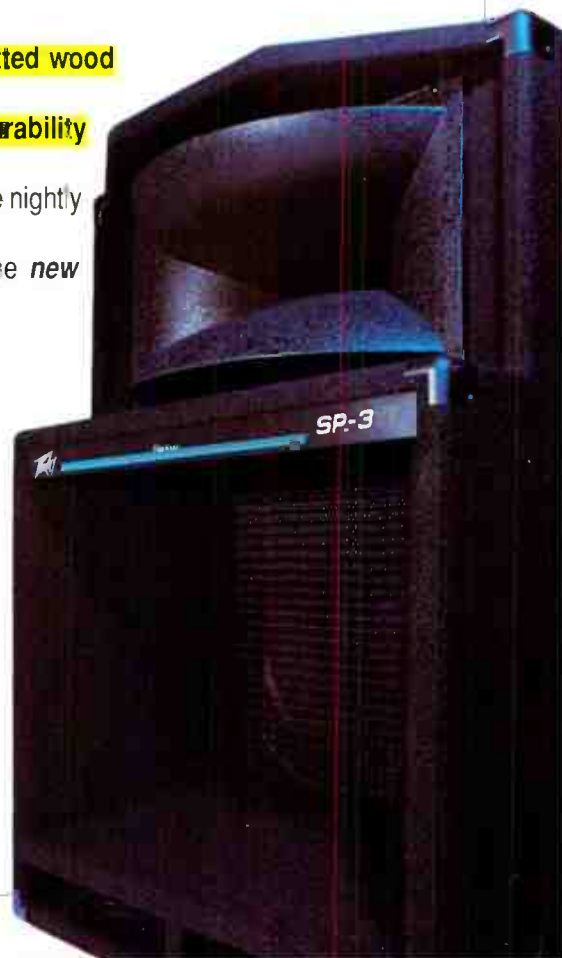
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song from *Ladies of the Canyon* and *Sweet Baby James*. I know those songs back to front. The sensibility they had as lyricists and songwriters, but also with a great understanding of music from a wider perspective than just a folk club. Their music reached into jazz, it reached into rock 'n' roll, it reached into pop. That's where I saw my niche. I could write songs but I was also a musician and I wanted my songwriting to not be ghettoized into three chords on an acoustic guitar. It could actually be broadened. So yeah, I would be the first to admit

that James Taylor and Joni Mitchell were prime influences on everything. Joni on my vocal style—high, keening vocals.”

Sting's in the back seat of a small car, heading toward the town of Hilversum. In the front seat, next to the driver, is Hugh Padgham, who produced *Soul Cages*, as well as *Ghost in the Machine* and *Synchronicity*, the two biggest Police albums. Trudie Styler, Sting's long-time girlfriend and the mother of three of his five kids, sits next to him. Trudie arrived at the hotel from England just as Sting was leaving. She and

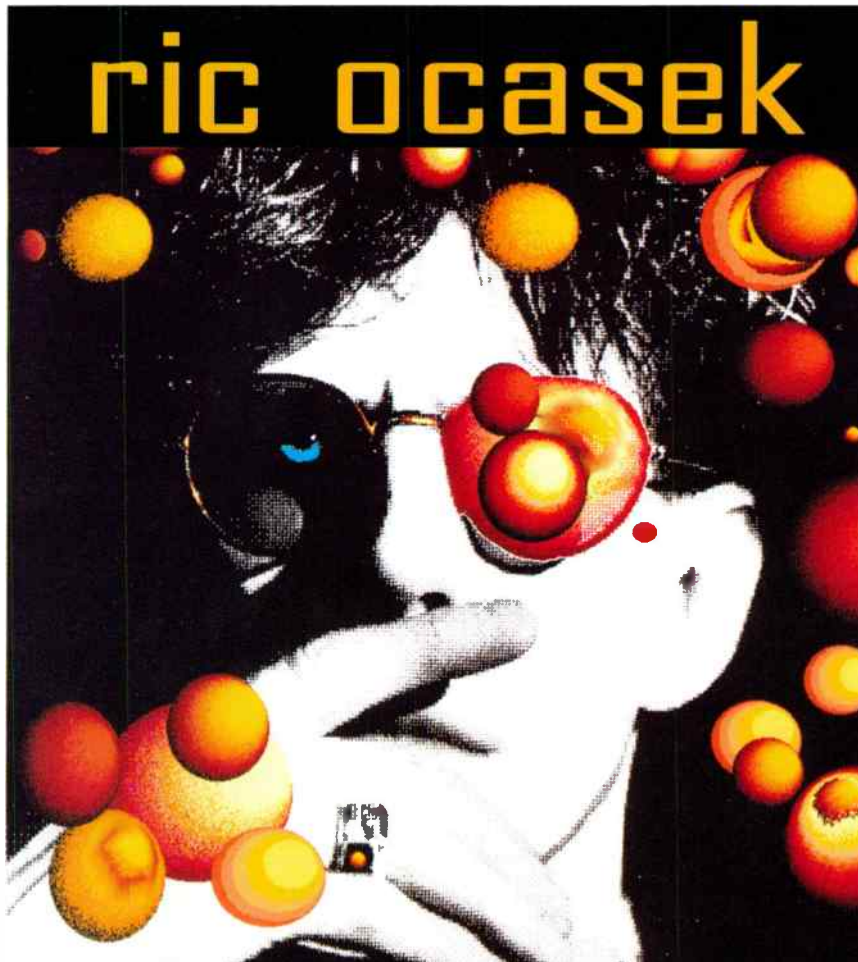
Sting kissed in the lobby like schoolkids, and they continue to cuddle as Sting talks.

“The whole movement in rock music is to ghettoize and to try to find a pure form,” he says. “The musicians I use aren't like that. Branford Marsalis is a complete polyglot—jazz, classical music, a Led Zeppelin riff—he knows everything. People in my band have no prejudice about what music is. I'm not interested in pure form. ‘You can't go here and you can't do this because this isn't pure rock 'n' roll.’ Bullshit! I don't like it. That's why I get called pretentious a lot of the time. ‘How dare you break this code!’ There is a formula for good reviews and bad reviews. I've noticed a tendency in the *New York Times*. Anything that obeys the strict rules of a genre—ZZ Top for example—and doesn't explore anything outside that genre is reviewed well. A heavy metal band, a jazz group. They are favorably received. They confirm the structure, the ghettoization. Anything that steps outside of that is hammered fiercely. That's how they work. They are afraid of anything that moves outside its parameters. And that's killing music.

“I think writers have a tendency to think of intellectual areas as their private domain. They like artists to be idiot savants so that the writer can patronize and analyze and then create or deconstruct the artist. Anyone who can analyze themselves gets hammered for that.”

Do a lot of Sting's fans wish he'd go back to the sort of rock 'n' roll he used to play? “Why the fuck should I go back?” he asks. “You have to keep moving on, even at the risk of losing your popularity. You can't expect your music to coincide with popular tastes forever.

“When we were turning out those Police albums I felt very close to the pulse. I had my finger on the pulse. I knew when I was writing hits. ‘This is a hit, that's not a hit, this is a hit.’ Now I don't know anymore. I don't really feel I have my finger on the pulse anymore. I think I go a little bit deeper, so it takes longer. And also your standards get raised all the time. You always want to make a record or write a song that's better than the last one. Ideas don't come that readily. When Dylan was at his peak he just poured this stuff out, incredible song after incredible song. Now he finds it more difficult. You can't be on that level of output forever. So then you have to go for quality, you have to go for saying more with less. I couldn't put out more than one album a year. Lucky if I




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World Radio History

get one out every two. Peter Gabriel puts one out every five years—it's always great. It's a slow process. I'd like to make a record next year 'cause it's enjoyable, it's a good process, it's good therapy. But I don't know what to write about."

THE CAR PULLS INTO THE WOODEN DRIVEWAY of Wisseloord Studios, where the Police recorded their third album, 1980's *Zenyatta Mondatta* ("Don't Stand So Close to Me," "De Do Do Do, De Da Da Da") and, according to Sting, broke up emotionally (they did

not break up officially for another five years). Outside the studio is a small statue of a figure laden with drums. As Sting passes it he mumbles, "Hello, Stewart." Stewart Copeland was the drummer in the Police.

A copy of *Zenyatta* hangs on the lobby wall, and the folks who run the studio greet Sting like a returning brother. After a quick cup of tea and honey, he finds a grand piano and plays quietly while a film crew anxious to document Sting's singing argues with Padgham about the relative importance of sound and pictures. Sting is recording

I'M USING the bass I've had since I was 17," Sting says, "a '62 Fender Jazz Bass, one of the first ones. I would challenge any bass player to find a better neck. I was given a lifetime supply of Rotosound strings 10 years ago and I'm hardly through them. The more you play an instrument the more power it has. If you boil your strings they come back to life. If you're short of money and you're a bass player, boil your strings. Rotosound's gonna be really happy with me now! I have one pedal—a Roland Octaver." Onstage Sting also plays an Ibanez fretless bass. His main backup is a reissue Fender Precision with a Modulus Graphite neck. If his 150-year-old upright goes wacky, Sting pulls out the weird bodyless standup bass made by Dutch designer H. Van Zalinge.

Sting uses Carver power amps. His cabinets were designed by Claire Brothers. Sting's sound runs through a rack with JBL compressors and a Rane mixer. Sting uses a Beyer Dynamic Wireless. Two Korg equalizers round out any hot spots. He sings through an old AKG C12 valve mike from the '50s. His acoustic is a Gibson Chet Atkins.

VINNIE COLAIUTA plays a custom Yamaha drumkit. The snare is a joint effort by Noble & Cooley and Zildjian. Yamaha supplied the toms. The pedals are Drum Workshop, the hi-hat's Remote (DW5000 series) and the trigger box is a Drum Kat. "Kat is the best MIDI trigger on the market," says Vinnie. He uses Kat's ethnic percussion samples for Sting's reggae tunes. Vinnie also makes use of an Akai S1000 sampler and a Lexicon delay. His cymbals are Zildjian, and his sticks are Vic Firth SB wood tips.

DOMINIC MILLER plays Fernandes guitars, with Ernie Ball light-gauge strings and big fat Herco picks. He's got two MESA/Boogie Mark III combo amps, sometimes run through two 4x12 Boogies. Between them Dominic keeps a Roland JC 120 with no effects, so if other gadgets start to overpower his tone, the soundman can boost them back to normal. Pete Cornish and Dominic designed a rack system that runs from four very basic pedals, all dissected and then reassembled in the pedalboard. The first is a Boss compressor/sustainer, the second a Boss Heavy Metal pedal, the third a Boss Chorus (mono—Dominic doesn't like a stereo chorus) and the fourth a DigiTech delay. Dominic uses Dunlop CryBaby wah-wah and Ernie Ball volume pedals. Cornish also designed an MXR fuzzbox copy and a booster. Guitar tech Phil Docherty leads us onstage and points out a Yamaha SPX1000 used for flanging and compressing, and two Roland SDE-3000 delays (all in stereo—one side makes triplets, one side quarter notes). Dominic's acoustics are Takamine.

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"Come Down in Time" for an album of other artists performing Elton John songs. "It's not a charity album," Sting explains. "It's actually for profit." Sting thinks the world of Elton, who he says is greatly loved but vastly underrated. Elton has recorded a piano track in England, now Sting has to add vocals and bass.

Sting deserts the piano for his standup bass and begins to play jazzy licks, then the Pink Panther theme. Padgham's voice comes from the control room, inviting Sting in to listen to the tracks. Sting says no: "I

don't want to get too precise." The studio is big and open. Padgham wonders aloud if they should build a screen of baffles behind Sting. "Build?" Sting sighs, walking off to pee. "We're not Fleetwood Mac."

Padgham rolls the piano track to get levels and Sting, singing softly in his head voice, performs a gorgeous reading of "Come Down in Time." He doesn't need written lyrics; he's living the song. He sways gently, eyes closed, pouring out the melody in a sensual croon. When we think of Sting's voice we think of his high, powerful howl.

That he's a fine singer is well-known. But this subtle ballad style shows a range even a fan doesn't expect. When Sting finishes the boys in the control room say, okay, they've got a level, they're ready to begin.

"Did you keep any of that take?" Sting asks.

"No. Sorry." ("Sting has a low threshold of boredom," Padgham says later. "You don't let him sing unless the machine's in record 'cause you never know what you're going to miss.")

Padgham says there was a bit of popping on that version anyway, and asks for a pop shield, a round screen that is put between the microphone and Sting's face—to the horror of the film crew who are now looking at a filter where a rock star just disappeared. Sting says a lady's silk stocking over the mike will solve both problems.

Sting performs the song for real now, in his full voice. It's great singing, great use of dynamics, but loses a bit of the sexy intimacy of the run-through. A second recorded take is a little huskier and, one bad line aside, good enough for Sting. He says to the booth, "Let's play some bass."


The bass parts don't take long at all, but Padgham thinks the last note needs to ring out so it can fade slowly with the piano and vocal. Sting suggests that he bow the last two notes, goes back out and does it. "It didn't sound very pretty to me, that," Padgham says. "There's a lot of harmonic, to start with. You can do better."

"Back to school," Sting laughs. He plays the two notes a different way. Padgham's voice comes over the talk-back. "You can't do it smoother, without the jumps?"


"Yeah, I can." Sting bows the two notes without vibrato. Padgham says, "That's it. Cool." Sting lays down his fiddle and goes into the studio's front office to phone a public statement about Kurd-Aid to his London publicist: "Following a meeting last night in the Hague, both Peter, Sinéad and I feel that it would be ludicrous and inhuman not to take into account the need for relief in Bangladesh and Ethiopia which has recently arisen. We also feel that if the scope of relief was widened, it would encourage a greater awareness to raise the ceiling of relief sought. We do not propose to dictate the proportions of money that should be allotted to each cause and we can leave that to the experts. We just feel it should have urgent consideration and we are trying to force the organization to realize this."

BLACK UHURU

IRON STORM




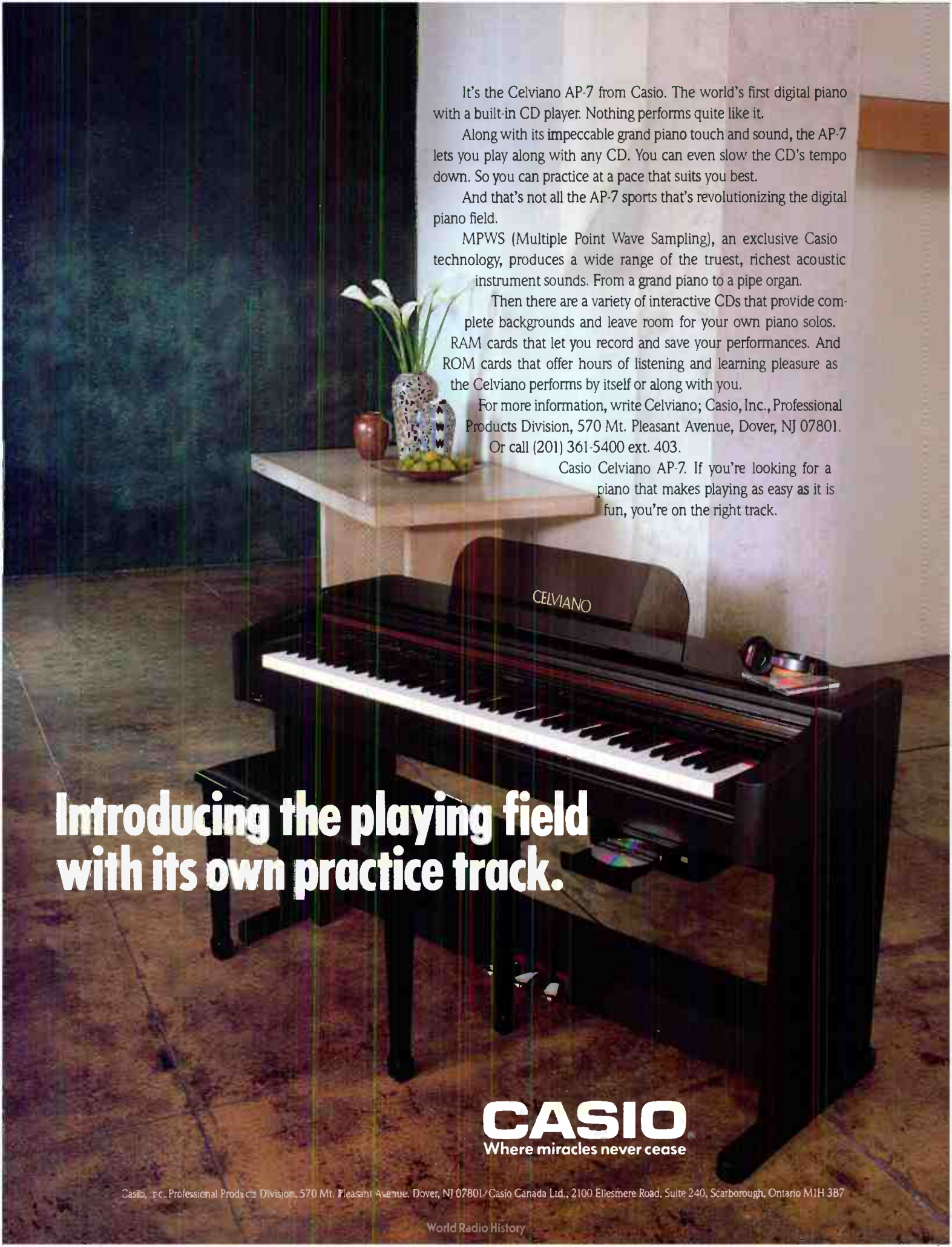
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Padgham comes out of the booth, sits down on a couch in the corridor and relaxes. "In the old days," he smiles, "if I asked Sting to do a bass part again he'd probably have just told me to fuck off. Nowadays he's probably a bit more amenable. We're all 10 years older and more experienced. He's a great guy to work with in the studio because he's such a good musician. When he goes in to sing a song there's no fits or tantrums, the moon doesn't have to be in the right house. We're normal human beings. We just get down and do the job."

STING AND TRUDIE SAY GOODBYE TO EVERYONE at the studio and climb into their car for the hour-long drive back to the Hague and tonight's concert. As farms and windmills flash by the window, Sting considers the proposition that his concerts have regained some of the joy that was a big part of early Police shows, but which had not been apparent for many years. "I think it reflects that I'm very happy in my personal life," he says. "My life has balanced out. When the Police became successful, that meteoric rise coincided with a terrible

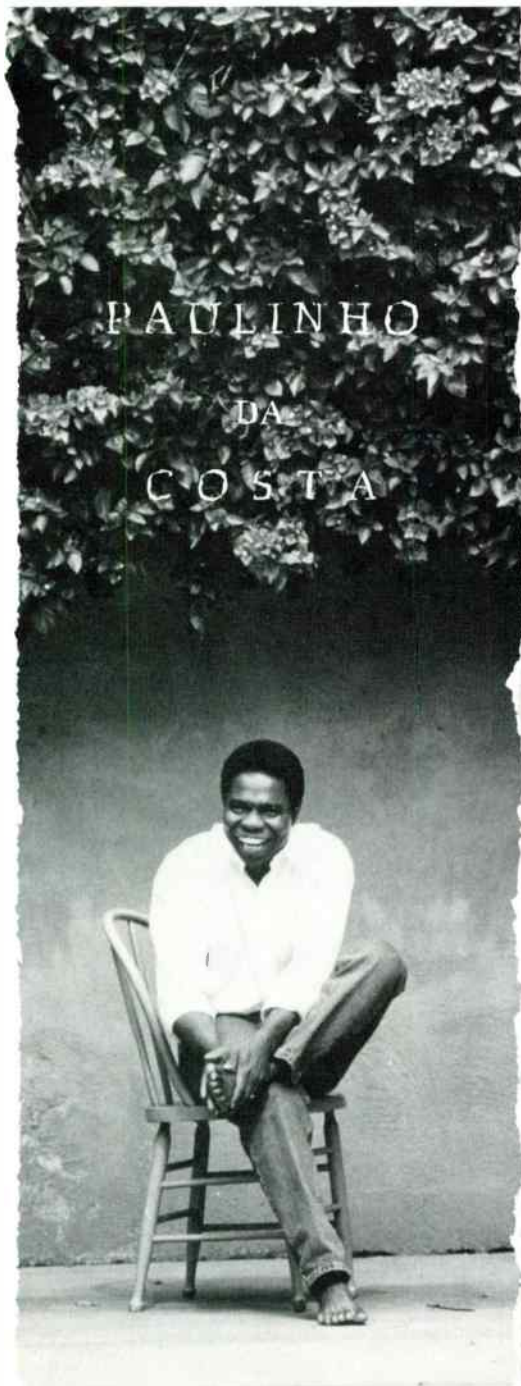
ennui, a terrible sense of displacement. My first marriage was breaking up, my personal life was a mess. Just when you think everything is going fantastic, beneath it is this swamp. Having balanced that out over the last 10 years, I feel I can enjoy my work and it's real. I'm not surprised that I seem more happy onstage—I am more happy onstage. The Police was not a happy little outfit."

The road to such happiness had lots of potholes. After the breakup of the Police, Sting faced the slow deaths of his parents. His mother died while he was making *Nothing Like the Sun*, and three weeks later he returned to Newcastle to star in a film, *Stormy Monday*. At home with his grieving family and dying father, he gave his best screen performance, as a tough, aloof nightclub owner. He says he modeled that character on his brother. His father's death gave Sting the inspiration to compose the songs on *The Soul Cages*. And the entire painful process, he says, helped him reconcile himself to his hometown, the people he comes from and who Gordon Sumner really is.

Of course, Gordon Sumner is still Sting and Sting is still the only rock star who'd answer a question about the use of bird symbols to represent both his mother's death (in "Lazarus Heart") and his father's (in "All This Time") by saying, "Free association leads us to the collective unconscious. Birds symbolize death in myth, certainly in Jungian terms. Once you start accepting these archetypal images they just keep occurring. The songs stand scrutiny because they were written almost unconsciously. The fragments that they're built from are from the subconscious. The art of putting them together was crafted, but the inspiration was very natural, almost automatic."

Sting is working in a distinct tradition. The great untold history of rock 'n' roll is that so much of it is about mothers dying. Elvis Presley, the Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, Johnny Rotten, U2, Madonna, Sinéad O'Connor—all of their music to some degree deals with, "My mummy's dead."

"What else do we write about really?" Sting says. "It's such an enormous concept. Death! What is any storytelling about? What are myths about? It's all about dealing with death. Something that we can't understand, that we can't quite grasp, that really terrifies us. So we put it on a big screen and try



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to figure it out with symbols. It doesn't surprise me that pop music is about that. Everything is about that. Sex is about death!"


Trudie looks up at her profound sweetie and says, "Really?"

Sting cracks a smile and says, "Like the phrase, 'I'm gonna fuckin' kill ya!'" Everyone laughs.

Wherever Gordon Sumner ends, there's no question that the public image of Sting has taken on a life of its own. There is a bleached blond wrestler in the States who calls himself Sting ("I'm gonna have to take him on!" Sting declares. "That's something I might actually do!") After Sting mentioned that he liked Anne Rice's novel *Interview with the Vampire*, Rice published a sequel in which her Vampire became a blond rock star (somebody's agent must have smelled a movie). Last night Sting was talking about the DC superhero comics of the early '60s when he was reminded that these days DC has a supernatural hero, Hellblazer, modeled after Sting. As a kid Sting read about Superman and Batman. Now he's in the comics hanging out with them.

"That's not me," Sting says. "That's the public domain creation. Anything can happen to that, bad or good. It doesn't affect the core of me. Having created a kind of mask or image, you should then put it aside and get on with your life. The mistake [celebrities] make is they confuse that thing that's been created by them and by the media for reality. Then they sit inside that thing and they wonder why everything's fucked up. That character is someone else. It's not me. And thank God. Nice things happen to it, bad things happen to it—fine. Just leave me out of it!"

"Every year my press agent sends me everything that's been written about me. It's quite amusing to look through it. 'I was never there, never fucked her, wasn't in that restaurant, never met this person.' A certain percentage of it is true but the *perception* is a complete fabrication. That's consoling—it's not me!"

STING AND TRUDIE LAUGH. HE LOOKS OUT AT the horizon of Amsterdam passing by. "I think I've remained fairly objective to the process of fame and becoming successful," Sting smiles. "I don't, contrary to popular opinion, take myself so seriously that I can't see the jokes sometimes." 



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The Silos' Civil War

IMAGINE YOU WORKED FOR A COMPANY, went on vacation for two weeks and came back to find that everybody had been fired—all new people. That's exactly what happened to us." Bob Rupe, former singer/guitarist for the Silos, is talking about his band's short history with RCA Records. In 1989 the Silos (Rupe and singer/guitarist Walter Salas-Humara) were signed by RCA president Bob Buziak. It seemed a good marriage. Buziak, in the process of assembling a tasteful, esoteric roster, signed Michael Penn, Cowboy Junkies, Thin White Rope and Lucinda Williams, among others.

Salas-Humara says, "When we first talked to Buziak he said, 'I really like what you guys do, and I'm signing you because I like what you do.' That was music to my ears. We went ahead and made the record we wanted to make."

The record sounded great and got good reviews, but Rupe says it all went downhill quickly. "We saw an initial promotion, but they didn't have enough people working radio nationally to give the record the profile it needed to be heard. And their video department, which is critical these days, was practically nonexistent. We did what we wanted with the

record, but nobody told us that they wouldn't do anything with it!"

After RCA fired Buziak in 1990 they dropped many of his acts. The Silos got their pink slip at the end of a badly timed European tour (they landed the day the U.S. bombed Baghdad). "I was sort of relieved," says Rupe. "I just don't think RCA knew what to do with us."

Record-label headaches, along with personal friction, caused a civil war within the Silos. Recently a new version of the band—minus Rupe—surfaced with a bunch of new songs for some onstage rehearsals at New York's Rodeo Bar and is heading back into the studio. Salas-Humara filled the hole left by Rupe with various Silos alumni: drummer Brian Doherty, bassist J.D. Foster and sometime-keyboardist Kenny Margolis, who remained from the album, and violinist Mary Rowell, last heard on the band's indie releases.

"I think it's more wide-open," says Salas-Humara. "It's not as much of a democracy in the songwriting, but it's much more a democracy in the playing." Salas-Humara now lives in Los Angeles. Rupe, the rebel, lives in Richmond, Virginia, where he's producing local bands and planning to tour with House of Freaks.

"Richmond's great," Rupe says. "There's a lot of good players, it's affordable and there's trees. It's also the capital of the Confederacy."

Lucinda Williams' War of Independence

WITH HER 1988 ALBUM *LUCINDA Williams*, on the indie Rough Trade, the Arkansas-born singer/songwriter cut a big niche with a sound that recalled Neil Young & Crazy Horse and Dylan & the Band. Lucinda signed with Bob Buziak's RCA and went into the studio with her band to cut her major-label debut. She didn't like the results. "Before we did the Rough Trade album we'd been playing live a lot," she explains. "We were a tight unit. This was a whole different

THE PHANTOM ZONE

thing. Plus, there was that element of, 'Now we're on this bigger label, there's more at stake, what songs are we gonna put on the album.' And that whole fear of the second-album syndrome really got the best of me. I was uptight about the whole thing, just couldn't let it go."

With the label's support Lucinda took time to write a bunch of solid new songs, hooked up with sympathetic producer Peter Moore (Cowboy Junkies, Silos) and made a second pass at the album. Then Buziak left RCA, the purge of the Buziak acts began and Lucinda felt like a newlywed who'd had husbands switched on her.

In what has become a notorious legend in the music business, RCA allegedly sent a young executive out to supervise Lucinda. He suggested she get a hit producer. According to the story Lucinda said, "Well, if it were somebody like Bob Johnston." Who's Bob Johnston? asked the boyish exec. "He produced *Blonde on Blonde*," Lucinda explained. "I'm not familiar with *Blonde on Blonde*," he said. "Are they a British group?"

Asked if that story's true, Lucinda says she doesn't quite remember. She's trying hard not



to bad-mouth RCA. She spent a considerable amount of energy in early '91 trying to get off the label—who did not want to let her go. She went public with her gripes on an L.A. radio show, and then blasted them again on a panel at the South-by-Southwest music conference. After that, RCA let her out of her contract.

"Well," Lucinda sighs, "the panel was entitled 'How Does Commercialism Affect Creativity?' I just explained that when I first went in with RCA they weren't acting like the usual major label, 'cause Buziak was there. When he left, what was expected of me as an artist changed. And I didn't agree. 'This is how I want the record to sound, this is *not* how I want it to sound. Okay. Bye.' That's it in a nutshell," she shrugs. "It's not that unusual. It happens a lot."

Except a lot of artists don't have the guts to leave.

"That's true," Lucinda says, "and that's part of what's wrong with the music business right now. That's why I spoke out about it at the panel. There were young songwriters in the audience looking

up to me for advice. I just said, 'This is what happened to me, this is what I went through with a corporate label, this is what can happen, you have a choice.' Then everybody was patting me on the back telling me, 'Wow, you spoke out, you're so brave!' It just goes along with the songs I write, I guess. People tell me the same thing. 'How can you possibly bare your soul like that? You're so honest! Aren't you afraid?' I don't think about that. It's not a conscious thing. That's just me. That's just the way I am."

The Mekons' Cold War

AFTER 10 YEARS AS A BRITISH CULT band, the Mekons reached a new level of acclaim and accomplishment with their 1989 album *Rock 'n' Roll*. The album was released in the U.S. by A&M, as part of that company's distribution deal with Twin Tone Records in Minneapolis. *Rock 'n' Roll* was a wonderful record, but it didn't sell well in spite of mountains of ecstatic reviews. A&M financed a U.S. tour in late 1989, but when the Mekons asked the label to spring for more tour support in 1990, the band was told to forget it, that album was over. When they finished their new album, *The Curse of the Mekons*, the band told A&M they wanted out of their contract. A&M said no way. After much grumbling the Mekons gave the record to A&M—who then rejected it! The Mekons are not sure if they are free to sign another U.S. deal, as Twin Tone still has the legal option to find them another major-label distributor. What really confuses things is that Twin Tone is undergoing "financial restructuring"—so



By Peter Cronin and Bill Flanagan

it's unlikely that they will be closing any big distribution deal anytime soon. That leaves the Mekons' freedom to sign elsewhere in the sort of questionable area where lawyers get rich. And that means *Curse of the Mekons* will probably not be released in the U.S.A.

"The situation is fairly complicated," says guitarist Tom Greenhalgh. "We're trying to see what options we have. Blast First [the Mekons' British label] and Mute have done a deal with Elektra, so that's one thing. We're also looking at the possibility of setting up our own label, but that's a bit of work and

money. It's moving very slowly."

"We weren't disappointed with what happened with *Rock 'n' Roll*," adds co-leader Jon Langford. "We didn't really *know* what happened! We gave them the album and they seemed to understand what we were about. We bent over backwards to do everything we could possibly do and then the album didn't seem to sell any more than normal. So we felt, what's the point in slogging around licking the wheels of the industry? A&M was being taken over by PolyGram and we spent the whole of last year doing hardly anything at all.


We just kept getting put off. They were dictating to us what we did and that's not the way we ever worked. Then when PolyGram took over A&M a lot of budgets were cut and a lot of people left. It seemed like a worse situation rather than better."

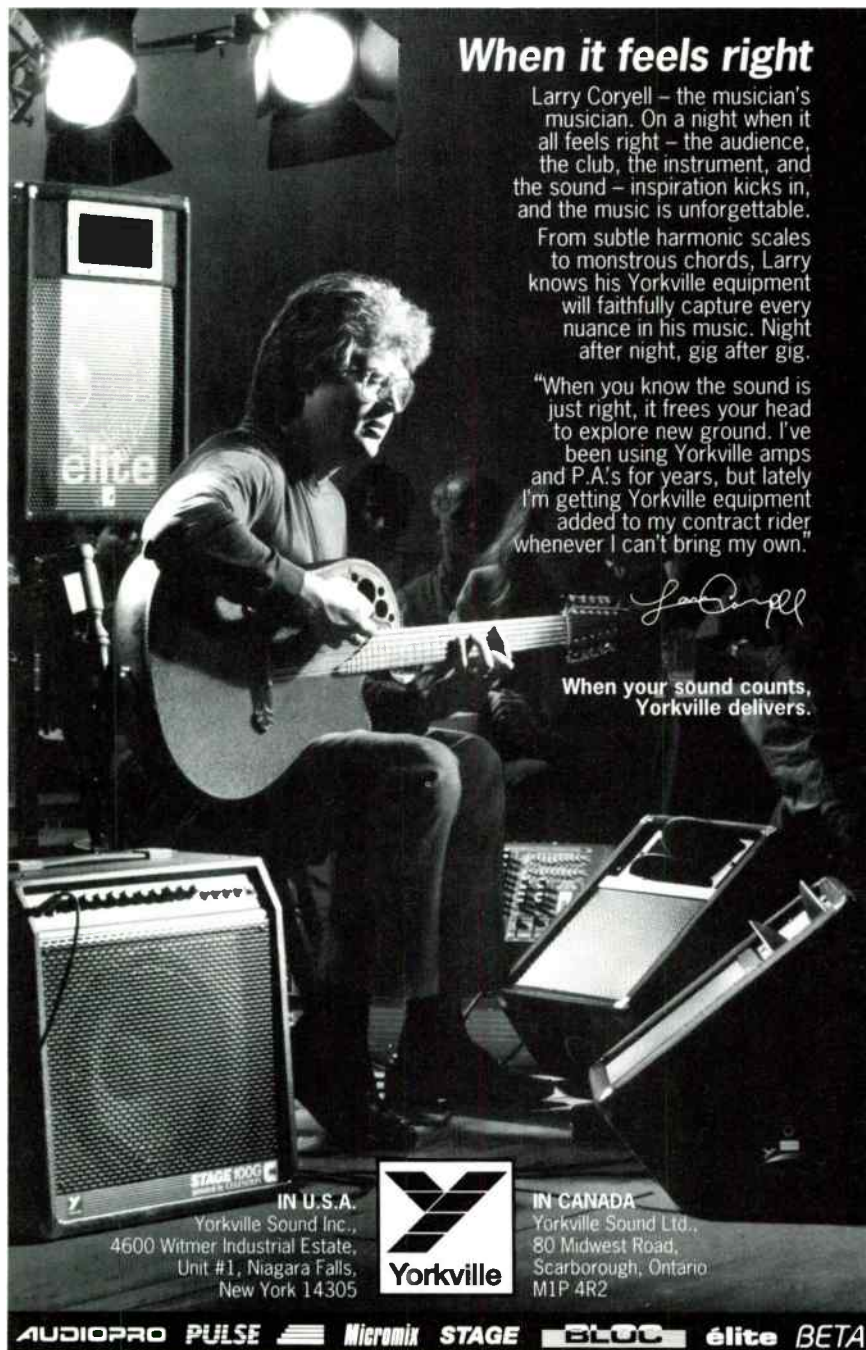
How many copies did *Rock 'n' Roll* sell? Langford says, "When they're trying to say how well they did it seems to have sold quite a lot, but when they're actually paying you it seems to have sold hardly any."

Rock 'n' Roll was politically radical, a musical barn-burner, the album the Clash might have made if they'd lived. *Curse* has high-powered moments, but the general mood is of vague dread.

"It's just about how we feel at the moment," Langford says. "You sometimes feel a bit useless. There's a mass of information out there but does any of it mean anything? The *Rock 'n' Roll* album came out of a period of intense gigging. Last year we hardly played at all, so the way we were thinking about music turned into something different. This is a looser, more studio-based album."

Not that *Curse* was only inspired by their personal problems. The songs also deal with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe—about which the leftist Mekons have mixed feelings. "I just don't think any of those countries ever had much to do with socialism," Langford says. "They had a lot to do with Stalinism. How can you say something's dead when it's never even happened? Those songs are about that, and the horror of America saying they've won the cold war."

Will the Mekons survive their own cold war? "I'm certainly not worried about whether the band can survive the experience and continue to function," Greenhalgh says. "We may have to adapt some things and rethink certain strategies, but as a band we can continue to exist. The problem obviously lies with the music industry." 



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• *Lucinda Williams* is managed by Metropolitan Entertainment, P.O. Box 1566, Montclair, NJ 07042. At press time she was talking with several record companies.

• *Curse of the Mekons* is available as an import in many U.S. record stores, and through Blast First (New York office: 262 Mott St. Room 324, New York, NY 10012. Phone: 212-941-9560).

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Charlie Haden's Basic Values

By Chip Stern

Photography by Ken Shung

he face of the bass is an illusion.

Most see it as a specific instrument, the lowest note, the deepest sound. But in truth it is the first note, the last note, the one without which any of the other notes or rhythms would make no sense. The bass is a fulcrum, a pivot point, translating the rhythms of the drums to the melody instruments, grounding the harmony of a song in time and space. The face of the bass is the center of life.

First ascending on the jazz scene as Ornette Coleman's prodigiously swinging teenage bass man, Charlie Haden portrays the face of the bass like a great romantic poet. Eyes closed in deep rapture, his head thrust back like some mighty oak mast swaying in the breeze, he appears in awe of music every time he plays. Each silence is as telling as the tones which precede it.

"As a child growing up, whenever I heard music—whether it was country or classical or jazz, whether it was a band or a choir—the bass held everything together," Haden explains. "When the basses stopped, it kind of got empty for me. My mom used to take me to the black churches in Springfield, Missouri, and when I would hear the choir singing, I always loved the bass. And when I began listening to classical music, I loved the sound of the bowed basses in the orchestra. They just filled up the room for me, and made everything really *warm*."



FOR ALL OF HADEN'S DRIVE, IT IS THAT SENSE OF WARMTH WHICH most distinguishes his playing. Over the last 30 years there have certainly been bassists with more facility and flash. But if Haden doesn't play the most notes, he's made a career out of playing the prettiest. Therein lies the gift which has elevated the ensembles of leaders like Ornette, Keith Jarrett and Pat Metheny. Certainly it has animated Haden's own recordings, from intimate encounters with the likes of Hampton Hawes, Geri Allen, Carlos Paredes and long-time rhythm mate Paul Motian, to large-scale, consciousness-raising works by his Liberation Music Orchestra—most recently on the Blue Note release *Dream Keeper*, a magnificent marriage of folk, classical and jazz musics with spiritual ideals.

Up close, over the table of an Upper East Side diner, Charlie Haden is a gently imposing presence; with his square-cut features and Dudley Doright jaw, he's at once forceful and shy. Looking out from behind his trademark spectacles, his eyes have a boyish glow that lights up the rest of his face, giving him an earnest, Clark Kent demeanor. Yet at times, when he warms to the subject, any subject—from human rights and the spiritual qualities of music to his own misadventures out on powder ridge—you can feel the turbulence behind Charlie's genial all-American facade. I sense that among his many selves is a stern psychic parole officer, ever vigilant, ready to rein in his emotions at the drop of a dime. The thoughts come out single file, in solid 4/4 time, each cadence rounded to emphasize the first beat, rapt in the romantic resignation of a born idealist.

"I approach each performance as if it were an offering," Haden says. "It's like when you walk into a beautiful cathedral, you have to raise yourself to the level of awe you feel. That's the way I try to prepare myself for a concert. You're in a very intimate relationship with the audience, and you want to convey the preciousness of life to them in a succinct way. So I look for the notes that are going to make the greatest impact on everyone, the notes that are going to make something the most beautiful it can be. Whether or not I succeed is another story. I'm never happy with the way I play. I always think there's so much more in the notes that I heard and couldn't play. But I make sure that the notes I do play are played with great care and great intention and great respect and great reverence. And hopefully, it'll give someone a good feeling when they hear it."

Haden's musical journeys began literally at his parents' feet. His father, a veteran of Nashville's Grand Ole Opry, led a family singing group called Uncle Carl Haden & the Haden Family. "It was similar to the Carter Family," Haden explains. "And as each of my brothers and sisters were born, they were added to the group. I was born August 6, 1937, and I sang my first song on the radio when I was 22 months old: 'Little Sir Echo.' Some of our sponsors were Waits' Green Mountain Cough Syrup, Cocoa Puffs, Sparkolite Cereal and Pillsbury. We used to get duffel bags full of mail, and we went out over these real powerful radio stations in Springfield, Missouri near the Ozarks—that's where I grew up—and would broadcast all the way to Canada and Mexico. When I was 14, we got an opportunity to

do a TV show in Omaha, Nebraska. I began my freshman year of high school there, and began thinking about playing the bass."

As a player, Haden is "basically self-taught. But from the time when I was two years old until I was 15, I sang twice a day on the radio. So I was really disciplined in the harmonic sense. My dad was very strict about intonation—if we got flat or sharp we heard about it, believe me, man. So we developed these brilliant ears.

"My brother played bass on the show, and he was a big jazz fan. Around 1949–50 he'd acquired some Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker and Duke Ellington records. Now my brother would *never* allow me to pick up his instrument. So I'd wait for him to leave, then run into his room and play the bass along with his records, and play drums with cardboard hangers on the pillows. That's how I got close to the sound of the bass and the sound of jazz.

"The orchestra instructor in school taught me about reading music and bowing. I formed a group with a drummer at North High—we called ourselves the Cool Four, right—and we played several assemblies in the auditorium. Our big hit was 'Ragg Mop.' 'I say R-, I say R-A, R-A-G-G...'" Haden chuckles at the memory. "And then Jazz at the Philharmonic came through Omaha with Ray Brown, Charlie Parker and Lester Young and Willie Smith. Oh, man.

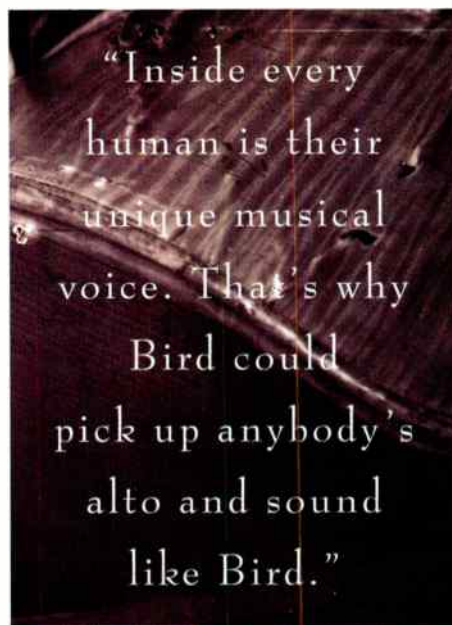
"I can never, ever remember questioning what I wanted to be when I grew up. I knew I wanted to play jazz. Then my dad just decided he wanted to retire and get out of show business, and we moved back to Springfield. He was a fisherman, so he built a fishing lodge down on Lake Bullsholes in the Ozarks, and I finished high school there. I applied for a bunch of scholarships, and finally decided to go to this jazz school on the West Coast, the Westlake College

of Modern Music. But I dropped out because I was playing with a lot of different musicians every night, and I kept waking up later and later, cutting classes, and finally realized I was wasting my tuition. Then I started meeting up with some of my heroes at varied sessions, and I began learning the language by playing with them."

EVEN IN THIS FORMATIVE STAGE, AND IN SPITE OF HIS PRONOUNCED admiration for the grand masters of the bass fiddle, Haden had already internalized a rich, resonant sound of his own. Listening to Haden on Ornette Coleman's "Ramblin'," you can hear the high lonely echo of the Ozarks in his plaintive chordal melody and the celebratory holler of Southern blues each time he triggers the swinging release with his tubby dancing fours.

"It was very important for me to get a really deep sound from the instrument. How do you do that? Well, when you telephone me I know who it is because I recognize your voice. Everyone has individual vocal cords. And I really believe that we're all put together for a reason, and everything makes sense and our vocal cords go along with our structure and our metabolism and our genes."

Well, if that's the case you should sound like Eddie Gomez, I suggest. "Oh no, no, no," Haden laughs in horror. "No, I'm not talking



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about if your voice is deep then you're going to be a deep bass player. That's not what I mean at all."

I was just checking.

"That's great," Haden replies, in his distinct midwestern twang. "What I mean is that inside of every human being is their unique musical voice. That's why Bird could pick up anybody's alto and sound like Bird. Why Art Tatum could play on any awful piano and sound like Art Tatum. It was always real important for me to get a deep sound, because I wanted everyone to feel like they were sitting around a fireplace or standing in the middle of a rain forest among these gigantic trees. I wanted a feeling of depth, and that's what I strived for on the bass."

Charlie draws a breath and looks around anxiously for the waitress, offering me a run at the menu before we finally settle on a couple of cappuccinos with an espresso sidecar for Charlie. Between musings on the bass violin Charlie goes off on a favorite tangent, deriding the shallowness of society and MTV in particular; upbraiding them for selling out our youth on corrupting images of decadence and drug use. "There's no puritan quite so cold as a failed reprobate, eh Charlie?"

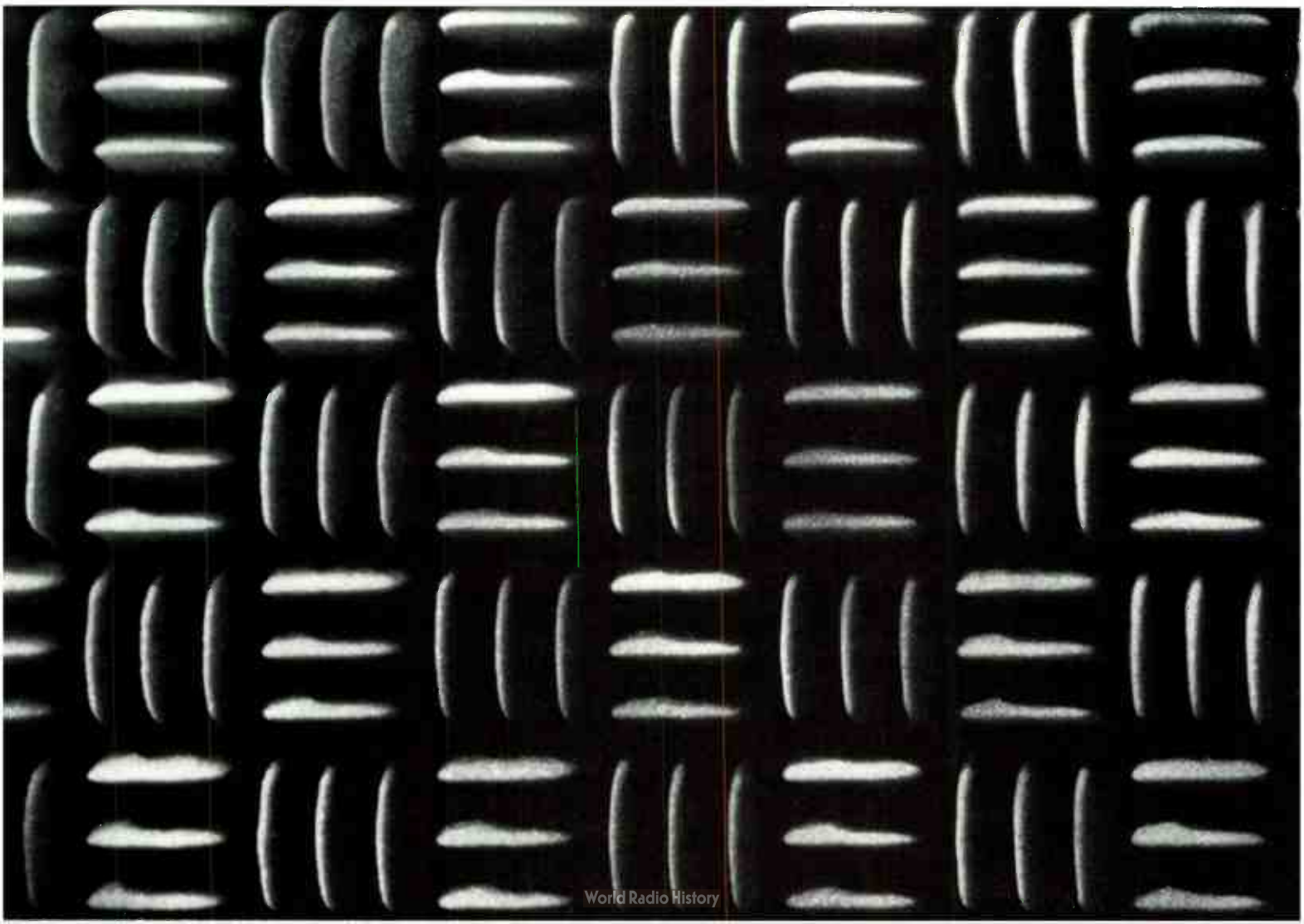
"You got that right." He nods enthusiastically, emptying his espresso sidecar directly into the cappuccino, before downing the caffeine depth charge in a couple of vigorous gulps.

"I mean, when young players shop around for a better instrument, it's not only important to find an instrument that sounds close to the way you're hearing, but an instrument that feels good. Because if the fingerboard and the neck feel good to your left hand, that's going to make the sound even warmer—because you're going

to almost feel your soul every time you press down on those strings, man. And I always try to play as if I could feel the depth of the instrument through my fingers, and through my ears. And hopefully, it makes somebody else feel cozy. When I'm with students at Cal Arts, I tell them to make the sound as deep as they possibly can, because when the sound comes back to you, it inspires you even more.

"See, nothing upsets me more than when I hear someone with a beautiful French, Italian or German instrument that's maybe 150 years old or more and has this beautiful deep tone—and then they drop the action so low that the instrument doesn't resonate. They get a really bad pickup, plug into an amplifier with the treble and volume way up and man, when you finger those G and D strings, they have a real metallic twang to them. In essence you've taken a beautiful acoustic instrument and turned it into a bad electric bass. Go get a nice old Fender Precision or a Steinberger if that's the sound you're looking for.

"I've always played on gut strings. You see, on the low strings, the wood sound can already come out, but on the G and D strings—which are the high vibrating strings—you've really got to have strings that lend themselves to the wood sound of the instrument. Metal strings won't do that. It's easier to bow a bass if you're playing all metal strings, because the gut strings don't accept the bow as readily as the metal strings do. So the A and E strings that I use are Thomastik Spirocore, which are metal strings, but my G and D have a gut core and a Tynex nylon winding. They're called Golden Spiral strings, and are distributed by D'Addario."




With the advent of rock music (and the ascension of gifted, assertive drummers), volume levels grew to such a degree that these unamplified resonances of gut and wood became anomalous. "I used to just put a microphone in a towel and place it in the tail-piece of the bass, and that's how we got heard," Haden recalls, "but soon everybody was so loud, I had to get myself a Barcus-Berry pick-up and an Ampeg amplifier just to hear myself. I'd turn the treble completely off, the bass completely up and the volume very low to try and get a natural acoustic sound. But it was really difficult.

"Then about four years ago, this young bass player from St. Gallens, Switzerland, Stefan Schertler, gave me the first prototype of his new pickup design. He put it right on the bass and I recorded with it and it really knocked me out. It was the only pickup I'd ever used that amplified the true sound of the instrument without having a separate personality. Amplifiers were a big hangup in that way, too, until I discovered this wonderful little Gallien-Krueger amp, the 200MB. They're very light and compact, with one little speaker, and they also have an outlet in the back for a mike cable so you can go through the house, which is even better than a direct box. I record with it and do concerts with it without using a DI, although when I'm recording I usually go on three tracks, going direct along with two acoustic mikes—one up on the fingerboard and one down by the bridge—and I mix them together, to get the body sound and the action sound."

While Haden's sound control has become more sophisticated, years of live sound systems and intense volume levels have taken a toll on his hearing. "It's as if the volume keeps going up and up in my

head. I have really severe ringing in my ears—loud unharmonic clusters—all the time. If I don't wear protection in my ears every time I play, my ringing gets louder and louder. I've been to several ear doctors and specialists, and they tell me there's nothing that can be done about it. I even asked them if there were any way to make a hearing aid where I could turn *down* the volume of everything, and they cracked up. So as a result I have to carry earplugs and stuff with me all the time, even if I'm walking down the street. It's very frustrating, because if I think about how loud the ringing is in my head I could easily flip out. Sometimes I can't sleep because of it. But I've kind of gotten accustomed to it. I've accepted it, and it's pretty much a part of my everyday walking-around life."

Acceptance, however, is not in tune with Haden's artistic credo. Ideals of struggle and resolution motivate him. He sees and hears things not as they are, but as they should be—could be. So when Haden produces the brilliant young Cuban pianist Carlos Rubalcaba's *Discovery* for Blue Note, or when he imparts the aura of the Spanish revolution on Carla Bley's "Dream Keeper" suite, there is something more than music at play—it is, hopefully, an expression of talent in pursuit of higher truths. "People have expressed their feelings about human rights and racial equality through many different art forms for hundreds of years," Haden says. "Whether or not you know what your art is about, everyone that makes an impact in an art form has to be—or has to *feel*—a responsibility to improve the quality of life. It's like spreading creative values. It's like wanting to bring some depth back into the world." 

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ICE

THE CODE OF MANY COLORS

On the cover of Ice-T's new record, *O.G. Original Gangster*, are two photos. In the first he's wearing a tuxedo, standing against a backdrop of moneyed cool—potted palms, austere architecture, bodyguard, Ferrari. In the second, chained at the wrists and flexing defiantly in a T-shirt and denim, he appears to be on his way to the hole. "But if you look at those pictures close, he's still the same person," Ice-T

points out. I mean, if Al Capone was alive today writing books, he'd still be Al Capone, right? I make records, I'm

an actor—but I'm still Ice-T, the gangster. No way I'll ever totally separate from that."

Actually, there are many Ice-Ts. In the recent film *New Jack City* he played a street-wise cop; in his next movie he'll portray a drug hustler. In the studio he's collaborated with musical figures as diverse as Quincy Jones, Jello Biafra, Black Uhuru and Jane's Addiction. He fronts a heavy metal band, Body Count, whose fans include members of Guns N' Roses.

Foremost, of course, Ice-T is the initiator of

By Mark Rowland

Photography by Aaron Rapoport

gangsta rap—“though I was never really a gang-banger,” he admits; “a hoodlum, maybe”—whose firsthand reports from the underside of the L.A. dream bubble opened a window on an urban gang culture previously unimagined by outsiders. To do that he rejected the party flavors of most popular rap—“we did not want to make a record people could dance to”—in favor of stark, frequently sinister sonic atmospheres. His

“You’re white if you think the system is

working for you. If you don’t, you’re black.”

rap have been routinely excluded from radio airplay, as much for their politics, one suspects, as for their profane language. But his stories have the ring of truth. Certainly “Six in the Morning,” a vivid description of L.A. police abuse from Ice-T’s 1987 LP debut *Rhyme Pays*, resounds even louder today, in the aftermath of the notorious Rodney King beating.

Through the course of three subsequent records (all gold-selling or better; his latest debuted at #17 on the *Billboard* charts), Ice-T has opened ire on targets ranging from free-speech censors to our elected masters of war. In the process he’s achieved the not inconsiderable feat of speaking to two audiences at once—exposing the detritus of racism and social injustice to middle-class white listeners, while counseling poor black kids to escape “the killing fields” of urban blight.

“My stuff is definitely for discussion,” he says. “When you’re listening to an Ice-T album you’re listening to me in the middle of a park yelling out my attitudes, my ideas. You can agree or disagree. But you should never think everything I’m thinking. ‘Cause then only one of us is thinking.

“I know how black people think and I also know how white people think,” he goes on. “And in my book, you’re white if you think the system is working for you. If you don’t, you’re black,” he laughs, “whether you know it or not. I mean, there are black people as far as skin color, who are white—who are winnin’ and love it and fuck all these poor people. I judge a devil by his deeds.”

ON RECORD, ICE CAN BE CORROSIVELY FUNNY, THOUGH NEVER lighthearted. His voice has a flatly modulated intensity which gives his stories an air of no-nonsense authority, like episodes of “Dragnet” related from the victim’s point of view. In person, he’s no less intense, but his manner is unpretentious and thoughtful. With his goatee, high cheekbones and hair pulled back to a thin braid, his appearance suggests a hipster Confucius. He has alert, almond eyes, a cynical laugh and a warm smile.

He lives in a comfortably furnished split-level house a few blocks above Sunset Strip. There’s a wide-angle view of L.A. from the terrace, with a telescope pointed in the general direction of the south-central “killing fields.” So near and yet so far.

“The first escape from the killing fields is a mental escape,” he declares. “The mental escape says, ‘Okay, I’m from 54th and Western. I want to go jet-skiing. I want to surf. Who says black people can’t surf? But the system is set up to make you feel all you’re good for is hanging out on a neighborhood corner. I say—want to leave!’” he practically shouts. “Move the fuck out. Let’s leave that ghetto a big barren wasteland.

“The ghetto is not a black community, it’s a poor community. People live there because they can’t afford to live anywhere else. You can rent a two-bedroom apartment in south-central for \$400—and over here,” he says, gesturing to a luxury high-rise next door, “it’s \$3000. That’s an economic gate.

“But the feeling in the ‘hood,” he notes sadly, “is, if you leave you’re selling out. I would like to know who invented that idea,” he laughs coldly. “I

don’t think it was nobody black.”

Lately Ice has been hearing a new refrain: “Now that you live on the hill, how can you be in contact with the ghetto?” he asks, mimicking the tone of a snotty interviewer. “That’s like asking if a guy who was in Vietnam can still tell you about a firefight. I’m the only one out of the ‘hood! People look around and say, ‘Oh, you’ve got art on the wall, paintings...’

Well, what do you think I was trying to do when I lived down there? I broke my neck to get out. This is all I wanted from the jump.

“It’s funny though, when you deal with these rock ‘n’ roll guys who come from rich white families, they all want to stay in the dumpiest hotels.” He shakes his head in disbelief. “Fuck that. I’ll move into their

father’s house. I’m not trying to live like no bum.”

As *O.G. Original Gangster* demonstrates, Ice-T isn’t one to conform with anyone’s pat notions of behavior. At 24 tracks it’s one of the few double-album-length rap records in memory, and one of the few pop records of any genre whose vision and quality justify such ambitions. Noting that the fourth album has often been “the monkey wrench of rap,” the one where other artists ran out of steam, Ice assembled a crew of four producers—D.J. Alladin, DJ Su, Bilal Bashir and long-time associate Afrika Islam—and assigned them musical “missions,” spurring creative competition in the old Motown tradition. The result is a fresh group of wildly contoured riffs and rhythms, from funk to speed metal to ‘70s rock, melded together in ways that render their origins unrecognizable while deftly complementing the moods of Ice-T’s cinematic narratives.

As its title indicates, the record is at once a return to Ice-T’s roots and a summation of his ideas. In “Midnight” (set against a fierce mix of sounds from Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath and Ministry) he takes the listener on a terrifying night ride, during which he and his friends are shot at and chased across town by apparent strangers, crawl through the back alleys of gang neighborhoods wearing the wrong colors, steal a getaway car and get caught up in a police sweep before finally staggering home in time for a “six in the morning” police bust. In “The Tower,” he shows how prisons inculcate a survivalist mentality while inciting racism and homophobia, suggesting that it’s all part of the same disease. In the brilliant “New Jack Hustler” he portrays a drug kingpin at once vainly boastful (“I got nothin’ to lose/Much to gain/In my brain/I gotta capitalist migraine”) and dimly aware that he’s really just a pawn in an even nastier game (“Got me twisted, jammed into a paradox/Every dollar I get, another brother drops”).

At heart, Ice-T is a moralist, albeit one who understands the demands of the street. “It’s up to each man to determine his destiny,” he says. “There’s a morality play that goes on inside each person’s brain. We’re supposed to abide by the laws, but laws are like the rules of the game. Very few people abide by all the laws. So the question is, how far will you take it? What’s the difference between selling dope because there’s a demand, or an oil man who pollutes the world? Or a war we claim we won but poured millions of gallons into the water and is destroying the earth? Those are eco-criminals.

“Unfortunately, there is a gun tower in the world that looks down on us and can suck us in, take our lives. Our government can decide who they think should die—but does that make it right? I can go to war and kill, but if somebody attacked my mother and I went after them I could end up in



prison for the rest of my life. And I could visualize the reasoning of doing that. The war, I don't

father was killed and he was sent to live with an aunt in a middle-class section of L.A. He attend-

have money. I was always pretty smart, had common sense and was good with my hands. I

“My buddies would call me from jail saying,

even know why I'm over there.

“It's a problem people find with my music,” he sighs. “They say, ‘You contradict yourself a lot.’ But life is a paradox. I don't know all the answers, I just call 'em as I see 'em.”

Now in his 30s, Ice-T was born Tracy Marrow in Newark, New Jersey. When he was in third grade his mother died; four years later his

ed Crenshaw High, where he wrote rhyming slogans for local gangs. His friends committed crimes for money, and soon he did too.

“You become a product of your environment. When I was living in the hills I wasn't doing nothing wrong. But once I decided to leave my aunt's house, at 17, I started hanging out in the 'hood with my friends, and those kids didn't

could talk well”—he smiles shyly—“and that always comes in good with being a crook. Not being from there, I spent a lot of extra time trying to be liked. I could fight good. I was just a good part of the crew. And if you get involved with crime and you start winnin', it's addicting.”

FOLLOWING A FOUR-YEAR STINT IN THE Army, Ice returned to L.A. His crew's ambitions had broadened: “No longer were we trying to get rims for the car, we were trying to get the Benz in one lick,” he says. Their methods could be as crude as purse snatching, as sophisticated as jewelry heists and insurance fraud. “We considered ourselves ‘players,’” he recalls. “But it ain't nothin' to be proud of. You don't know how lucky you are to get away with that shit and live to tell about it.”

By the early '80s, inspired by Kurtis Blow's “The Breaks,” Ice-T had rap ambitions as well. He mentions Parliament, Curtis Mayfield, Hendrix and '70s metal as influences; his lyric timing came more from X-rated comedy records. In 1982, Ice cut “The Coldest Rap” for a local label and received \$20 for his efforts—not much of a return for a high-rolling “player.” But crime was getting riskier too.

“I didn't want to kill nobody,” he explains. “But eventually someone is gonna try you, and your hesitation will be what gets you killed.” Friends who got caught were getting slapped with serious time—five years, 10 years, 18 years. “Then one of my buddies got life,” Ice says. “And they were all calling me from jail, saying, this ain't the place, homes. Stay with that rap. Stay down. They continually stressed that I stay with it.

“That's why I have an allegiance to the streets,” he goes on with noticeable passion. “It wasn't no social worker that got me out; wasn't no cop. It was these so-called ‘evil’ people that are now stuck, who saved my life.”

Many of Ice's most effective “message” raps, like “Mind Over Matter,” are variants on that theme—exhorting his homeboys to think positively, to use their brains to better themselves, offering his own success as an example. He doesn't pander to easy prejudices—“Bitches 2,” for instance, which castigates wife-beaters, is a welcome antidote to the self-serving invective routinely hurled at women by rappers like N.W.A. At the same time, he's not afraid to invoke his tough-guy past to keep his fans listening.

“Those gangs are in a war. 387 kids were



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killed in L.A. last year. Probably not that many people died in Beirut. For us to say, 'They

Not long ago, Ice-T performed before a literally captive audience, onstage at San Quentin

said, 'Time.' That's no puzzle.

"I first started rapping because it was a way

'This ain't the place—stay with the rap, homes.'

should just stop,' well then, you should be able to snap your fingers and have people stop fighting in Northern Ireland, in the Middle East. When somebody kills somebody it's deep. It's a weird game that goes on down there.

"And there's a lot of admirable qualities in gang membership," he suggests. "A guy will look at you and say, 'If something happens to you I'll be the first one to die.' There's a lot of love. Now with dope it's also turf, it's money. And in America you learn that money is worth killing over.


"My objective is to keep those kids out of jail, give them the ability to believe they can make it. Don't fuck with dope, 'cause I can't tell you one good story about it. Go to school, do the right thing. But for an unconventional enemy you need unconventional tactics," he concludes. "Cause I'm dealing with hard kids who don't want to listen to nobody."

On the liner notes to *Original Gangster* Ice-T offers thanks or peace to dozens of rappers, from Professor Griff to M.C. Hammer. He can still battle-rhyme with the best of them, as "Mic Contract" makes plain. But that's mostly for show—"Ice talking crazy," as he puts it. Mostly he sees rap as a force for racial understanding.

"With white youth sucking it up so good, it creates a bond. In the '50s, they were able to separate rock 'n' roll into white and black. Now here comes rap: It's a rock attitude again, and white kids are like, 'Yo, this is kind of different.' It's eliminating a lot of stereotypes about black people that their mothers taught 'em. That's why this whole censorship thing is bullshit. It's not about fear of these kids hearing the words, it's fear of them liking Ice-T, or Too Short, or Chuck D. It's fear of a black icon. Now you see a lot of white kids with African pendants and stuff. And I think rap is what's tellin' them."

When making records, Ice won't tailor his language to suit radio formats—"that's like an artist asking the gallery what they'll hang; I'm just painting a picture. Besides," he adds. "I don't swear on purpose, that's how I talk." (Occasionally, he'll let others bleep out an offending word after the fact.) Despite his popularity, he still considers himself an underground artist. "Whether or not the masses have put me on some plateau, I haven't changed my attitudes," he points out. "I'm still 'Fuck the Police'—I ain't changed how I talk. Look at Madonna—she hasn't sold out, she's still ill. Just be yourself and get what's yours."

prison. Not all his fans there could make it to the show—three of Ice's friends are currently on Death Row. "I'm the number one rapper on the San Quentin playlist," he laughs, then gets quiet for a moment. "It was strange," he admits. "They look at me like I'm the one that got away. When I was on Arsenio, he asked me, 'What would you be doing if you weren't rapping?' I

of getting girls and making my friends happy," he muses. "And if I wanted to quit today, it would still be my friends who would be saying, 'Yo Ice, you can't quit—it's a chance for us to make it.' So that's my main motivation—my friends, my homeboys. Theoretically they're still the ones pushing me on that stage. Sayin', 'Kick it man. Tell 'em what time it is.'" 

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GUITAR

AS FLASHY AS YOU WANNA BE

Extreme's Nuno Bettencourt puts the groove back in business

By Matt Resnicoff

THE BEST THING ABOUT NUNO Bettencourt's playing is that it doesn't immediately register as the best playing you've ever heard. Nuno noodles, by God, but his voice is getting strong in contemporary hard rock guitar precisely because he doesn't abuse the need for attention the form usually demands, attention that can send young guitarists spiraling from overdevelopment into rote "performance." He's even confounded by the volume of guitar press devoted to his use of fingertapping, which by his calculation accounts for less than 10 percent of his playing.

So if Nuno's not the best guitarist you've ever heard, it's probably because he wants it that way. He plays with all the flash and feel of a funk drummer, and as he noodles away on the couch he interjects accurately picked lines with rolling, low-register pull-offs that link together some of his band Extreme's tightest rhythm-section excursions. And over the course of an hour, he doesn't tap one single note. He says he's just not that lazy. "When you're trying to come up with new stuff, it's tempting to take the other hand and tap because it's easy," he laughs. "That's why people do it: It's a way out of writing something more interesting. People abuse it. It sounds tricky, so if you're not much of a flashy player without it, then that's the way to cover that stuff. Even when

I tap live, I almost feel...not *embarrassed*. but very young. I like what I do with it, but pointing your finger down and tapping just feels very ancient. A lot of people have done it before and after Eddie. Steve Hackett used

it, though he never got any press for it."

Nuno's uniqueness is less apparent in his solos than his rhythm playing, but even that's less unique than solid and creatively in-the-pocket. It comes from starting out on drums ("Learn drums, man," he says as he chops out a syncopated rhythm, "because everything is related to upbeats and downbeats"), winding up on guitar and landing in a good band that respects above all else the integrity of the groove. "So many great players can do anything as far as soloing, but think there's only 30 seconds to the song," he says. "There's a whole other three minutes to have fun with. Extreme is fun because there's something happening all the way through; it's not, 'Wait till the solo.' George



Lynch is a perfect example. He's a great solo player and he's got the greatest tone; when it comes to rhythm playing, it's boring to listen to. It's very"—Nuno plays a typical Lynch figure in E at the seventh fret, occasionally flattening the B on the D string and leaning heavy on low open-E quarter notes—"I can't listen to another guitar player do that. A whole decade is enough. When Warren DeMartini [Ratt] came out I thought it was cool, but it's been repeated. That whole era was spawned from Eddie. They completely ignored what a great rhythm player Eddie was. It was

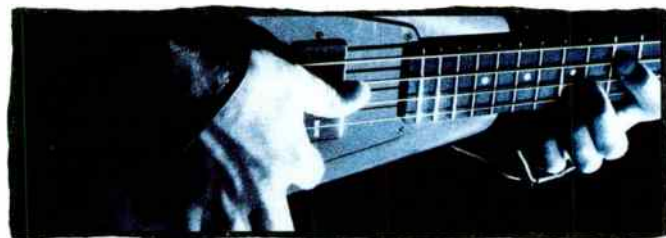
pizazzy and fun. Technically there's nothing special; it's the writing."

Nuno's writing may encompass working out a melodic idea, dropping it an octave or two and editing it into a riff. More often, it involves adding chordal colors to a rhythmic idea, weaving in contrasting single-note ideas to suggest another feel. "I drummed for years, so everything I write is rhythmically on the busier side than normal," Nuno notes. "I'll pick a groove I want to write to. Once you've got a groove going, you fool around with it. I like variety during one song,

as opposed to picking one song as being just riff. I like to break into bridges with some chord stuff and let the bass go off on a limb. And the opposite sometimes: Let the bass stay straight and play off that. That's what people are wowed by, because it's playing with the band," he laughs. "Most guitar players in bands are saying 'follow me,' whereas what we do is work with each other."

Operating that way, even the most basic ideas can burn. After all, it isn't just the riff, it's the oomph you put behind it, as Nuno demonstrates with the simple opening to Zeppelin's "The Ocean." But Extreme won't leave it at that; their arrangements feature abrupt twists, funky unisons and lots of hot space to let the data sink in. The influence of Joe Walsh and Pat Travers becomes obvious as Nuno works through the core of his parts: muted eighth-note strumming over blues motifs and dominant chords. "The right hand is lacking in a lot of rhythm playing," he says. "Nobody's locking in anymore. It's become a fad to go back to your roots and do this Zeppelinesque thing, but instead of learning from it, people are trying to emulate stuff Hendrix and Page did without taking it into the '90s."

Pornograffiti's "Get the Funk Out" has some Extreme signatures: The bass is locked in funky-tight with a sparse kick-snare, and plays a verse pattern that ascends into F# while Nuno power-chords over the line from B to A; A, B, D7 and E7 chords lead into the chorus. There the guitar line centers on an F# minor riff on the low E string (F#, G#, A) that jumps into a rough outline of B7 (the notes D to D# on the fifth string, then B at the fourth fret of the third string). That line cycles up to B twice, then reaches only to A. The A note, which is the minor third of F#, serves also as the flat7 of B, and suggests that bluesy chord as it leads back into the main F# minor riff. "Something a little more peppy than just"—he plays another plodding E groove. "A lot of people just play and play when they should rest. Sometimes space is so powerful when you come back in. It's like the old Sly Stone stuff where it was very [cont'd on page 78]



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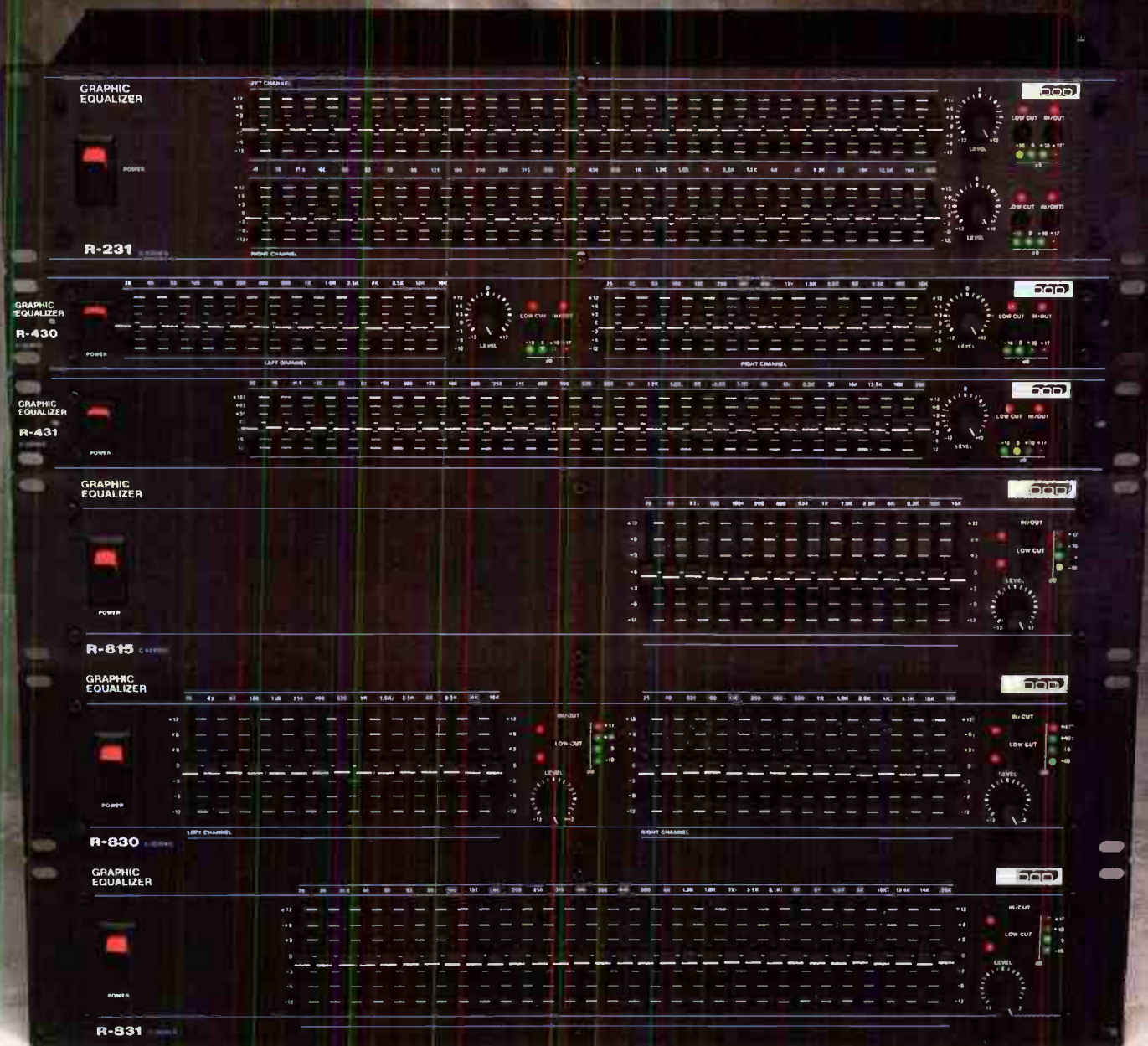
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MEAT-AND-POTATOES ROCK

Benmont Tench on piano and Hammond

By Alan di Perna

CHICKEN PICKIN' ON A STEINWAY grand? Benmont Tench reaches inside the piano in the big room just off his kitchen and lays his left forearm across the strings. With his right hand on the keyboard, he fingers the main riff to "Steppin' Out" from the *John Mayall with Eric Clapton* album. The result sounds surprisingly like a muted guitar.

"Then there's this other wonderful trick," Tench chuckles. "Danny Kortchmar and Jon Bon Jovi showed it to me on a record we were doing for Billy Falcon. You hold down a

chord silently, without letting the hammers strike the strings, and then you just strum the strings. (The felts come off the notes being held down, so only those strings ring out when the piano's harp is strummed.) The engineer put it through some weird effect and it sounded like God's Zither. Anything goes! It's one thing to have a synthesizer make all kinds of wild noises for you. But what was great about the old Motown and Beatles records is that they had to make up their own strange sounds by hand. And when you do that, you get something more unique and soulful."



Tench is best known not for doing parlor tricks on the piano but for *playing* the thing—notably with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, a band he joined when he was 19 and has stuck with for nearly 20 years. In an era when most keyboard players went horn mad for synthesizers, Tench kept faith with the tried-and-true virtues of piano and Hammond organ. Musical styles spun around again, and now Tench has to balance his job as a Heartbreaker with session calls from the likes of Elvis Costello, Bonnie Raitt, the Replacements, Joe Cocker, John Prine, the Cult, Dramarama and others. Relaxing at home after finishing the Heartbreakers' new album *Into the Great Wide Open*, Tench stresses simplicity and supportiveness as the keys to his style.

"I listen to the bass and drums a lot. Most of the right-hand chord voicings I play are pretty straightforward. A lot of times I'll leave the thirds out, especially working with Tom and Mike Campbell, because they play those rock 'n' roll guitar chords that aren't necessarily major or minor. With my left hand I mostly play bass octaves. I don't do much comping with chords. With the way Stan [Lynch] and Howie [Epstein] play, that would just cloud up the rhythm. Live, I'm often using my left hand to hold down chords on the Hammond while I play piano with my right hand."

Ironically, the Hammond is an instrument Tench didn't cotton to at first. "I thought all you could do with it was a bar-band attempt at being Gregg Allman," says the keyboardist, who admits to playing in a few failed garage ensembles of his own before hooking up with Petty's successful bar band, Mudcrutch, in the early '70s. "Petty talked me into playing Hammond in the studio a couple of times. Then when we started touring after the first album, I started using a Hammond to fill out the live sound. It developed from there."

Switching seats from his Steinway to his Hammond, Tench explains how he goes about getting his sound. "I go like this first," he says, pulling the first three of the second group of drawbars all the way out. "So I'm playing on the upper manual, no percussion. That's the setup I was using on 'Refugee,' for the verses." Tench uses the classic Petty tune to illustrate the basics of his approach to any song. "On verses, I just try to find a simple melodic or rhythmic figure that builds elegantly and smoothly into the chorus and isn't just copping the guitar

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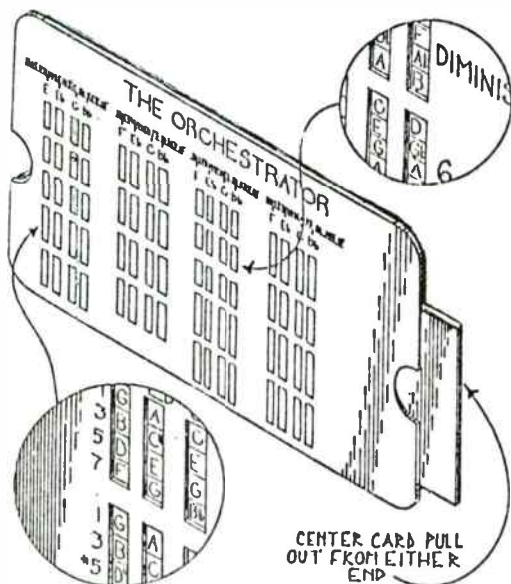
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riff. In 'Refugee,' the verses are generally broken down to two-note intervals."


Working off an F# tonic, Tench plays a series of ascending two-note groupings as follows: C# and F#, E and G#, F# and A, A and C#, C# (sliding up from C natural) and F#. From here, he moves to the chorus chord progression (F#min, A, E), voicing the chords so that the A note common to the F# and A chords is uppermost until the progression resolves to E.

"I try to find one note on the Hammond that I can hold for a long time and I change the chords around that note. I really like that effect. I first noticed it on the Beatles' 'You Won't See Me' on *Rubber Soul*. It creates this wonderful mournful tension in the song. Also it means I can be lazy. If I can find the one perfect note, I don't have to move around that fast." 

BETTENCOURT

[cont'd from page 74] straightforward but there was a lot of holes. It's a little busier guitar-wise, but with everything in its place."

In its place, but not too firmly. Nuno is coming into an unsteady age for young guitarists, with the understanding that listeners have gotten their fill of harmonic-minor metal clichés. "It's enough," he says. "Yngwie's the only one I like that did it because he came up with those sweeps. Whenever somebody comes up with something cool, all everybody worries about is keeping up. A lot of guitarheads just think 'Nuno, Nuno' when they listen to Extreme; that's natural. What's good about all this guitar press is being able to tell kids to get away from that. It's great to become as good as you can, but you've got to listen to the bands these players are coming from. I could never come up with these songs or ideas without the other guys. Take Page away from Zeppelin and look what he did—it wasn't even a smidgen of the atmosphere or soul he had. Even Eddie—I don't think he has anything to do anymore. He reached so many of his goals so quickly that he's in shock. He doesn't know what to do with himself. It's too bad, because he changed guitar as far as I'm concerned. Playing away from Dave [Roth] took a bit of the hunger away. It's just a vibe.

"It's also a pulse thing," Nuno continues, forgetting himself for a second and showing off his speedy right hand. "It can be as busy as you want it to be, and it won't be busy. If you lock in, it moves and you don't care what it is; it's just a groove." 

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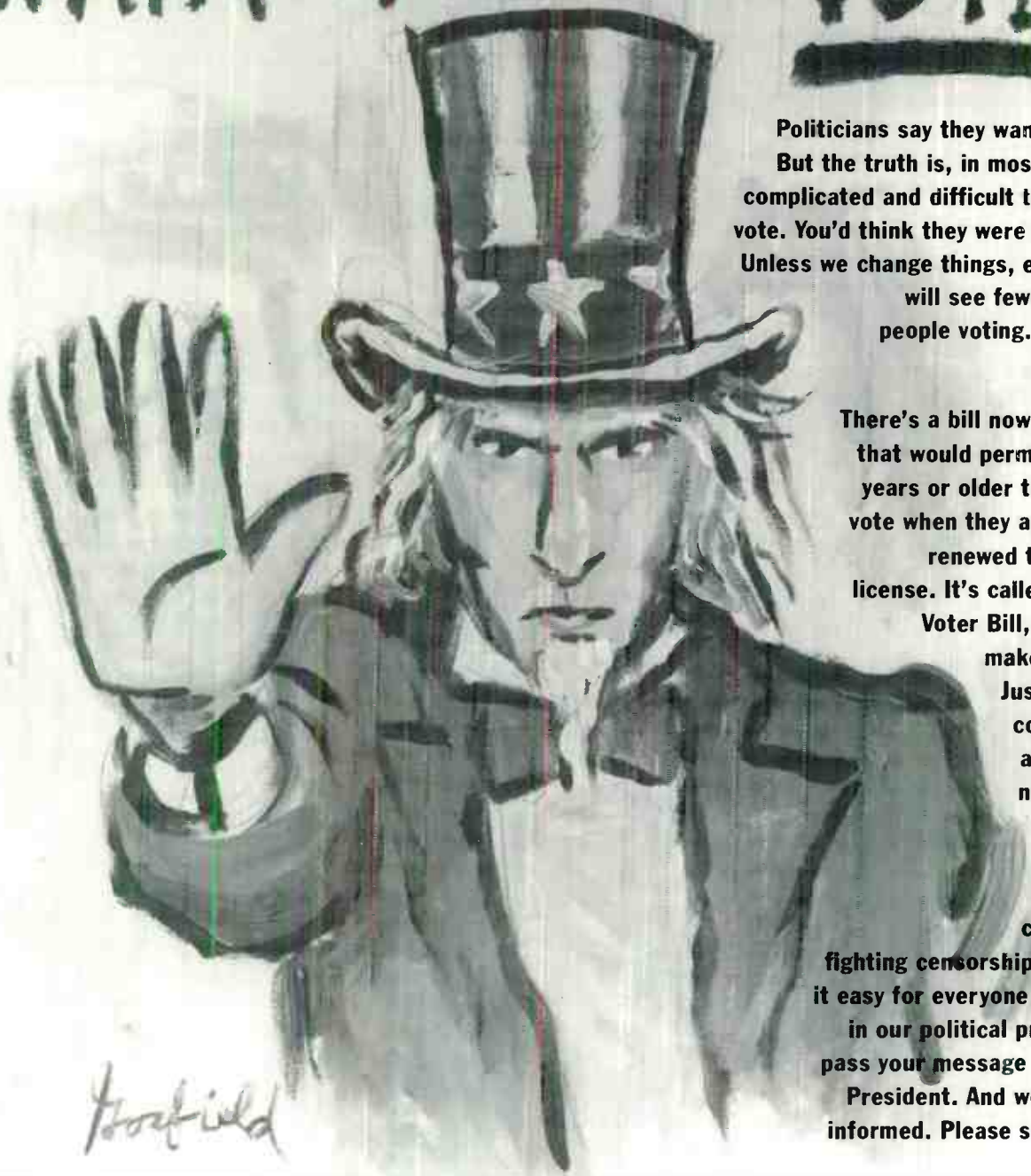
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WHAT DUCK DUNN'S DONE

Playing from the heart,
not the chart

By Peter Cronin

IT LOOKS LIKE A SCENE FROM the '60s. Booker T. and the MG's are burning down another nightclub stage, blasting through their funky classic "Hip Hug Her." Donald "Duck" Dunn, back arched and head thrown back, pumps away at his Fender Precision bass. Then, just before he either breaks his spine or falls over backward, they reach the middle eight, the tension breaks and Dunn goes into a walking bass pattern, his head swinging and his body moving to the music's southern-fried groove.

The occasion is a show at New York's Lone Star Roadhouse celebrating the release of *The Complete Stax/Volt Singles 1959-1968*, a soul-deep, nine-CD retrospective collection, and Dunn, the bassist most often associated with the term "laid-back," is acting out the groove with his entire being. "I don't tap my foot, I move my head," says the feisty 50-year-old in a thick Memphis drawl. "When I was a kid I was considered a pretty good dancer, and that's the way I keep time. I just shut my eyes and get lost in it." Dunn was *still* a kid when he started keeping time for Rufus and Carla Thomas, Sam and Dave, Eddie Floyd

and Otis Redding. As the house band at Stax Records, the MG's (Dunn, keyboardist Booker T. Jones, guitarist Steve Cropper and late, great drummer Al Jackson) forged a "Memphis Sound" that became the backbone of a decade-long string of soul hits. When not backing the stars, Booker T. and the MG's pulled the neat trick of simultaneously turning their own sparse, interlocking instrumentals into hit records.

"When I think back, we were just four guys—two black, two white—who had the perfect marriage," says Dunn. "Each instrument is separate. It's never cluttered." Dunn downplays his role in the development of the behind-the-beat feel that became a Stax trademark. "If they call me laid-back it's because of Al Jackson. He could play the slowest of any drummer I've ever heard." Dunn picks up his bass and plays a painfully slow but funky I-IV-V. Even unplugged and without a drummer, he instantly creates a snail's-pace groove, but pulls *hard* on the strings, hanging way back on the 2 and 4. But laid-back doesn't necessarily mean relaxed. "Oh, I *break* strings," he laughs. "I use my fingernails to get volume, but mostly I just play hard. I've played flatwound strings all my life, but on this trip I took my son's Precision Bass along. It had roundwounds on it and *damn*, they sound good. They get more of that kick and thump with the bass drum, which I like. I call it spit. You know... ptooyey!" Dunn plays the bouncing bassline from "Hip Hug Her," and the spit flies as he explains how he mutes the string with his right hand. "But Duck," I say, "you're using your *left* hand to mute." He looks down at his left hand as if he never saw it before. "Yeah... I guess I am," he laughs. Sure enough, his left hand is alternately fretting the note with the index finger on the 1 and 3 beats, and pivoting to slap/mute the strings, mimicking the snare drum on the 2 and 4.

Dunn's decidedly untechnical approach worked well at Stax, where most of the arrangements came from the heart and not off a chart. "I'm a feel player, not a note guy," he says, "and feel is sound. If it's got a certain feel, it's got a certain sound." Dunn looked both to MG's guitarist Cropper and drummer Jackson to find his pocket. "I'd listen to Steve a lot," he says. "He is one time-keeping son-of-a-bitch, but I'd say I'm usually concentrating on the snare and the sock [hi-hat] cymbal. I try to listen to what's on top so I can find that happy [cont'd on page 101]



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FACILITATING FURIOUSLY FAST FOOTWORK

Morgenstein, Aronoff and Bissonette
on double drums and double pedals

By Rick Mattingly

A FEW MINUTES BEFORE A Winger soundcheck, Rod Morgenstein grabs a pair of sticks, but the first thing he plays is a shuffle on his two bass drums. Pretty soon the hands join in, while the bass-drum beat continues to dominate. Even when Rod's hands join in, his feet are equally involved, often mimicking what his hands just played.

"Even though more can be done with the feet than you normally hear," Rod says, "most drummers don't treat them as being equal to the hands. If you want to develop

double-bass technique, think about things you did to develop your hands and do the same things with your feet. When you sit down to practice, don't pick up sticks right away. Play basic patterns on the bass drums with singles and doubles, like paradiddles or exercises from George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control*. Then play simple patterns with your hands and mimic them with your feet.

"The next step is to play consistent single strokes back and forth on the bass drums, while playing different hand patterns over that. Play over quarters, 8ths, double strokes, paradiddles, triplets, shuffles, whatever.

Then try something like this." Morgenstein gets 16ths going between his two bass drums and plays random syncopated accents between his ride cymbal and snare. Eventually, a pattern emerges.

"That's a good way to come up with cool beats," he says. "When you find an accent pattern you like, start repeating it. If you play the same pattern over and over again, no matter how weird it is, the ear will pick it up, and it might be acceptable as a beat.

"The other thing to do is play double-bass patterns that mix up different rhythmic values, so it isn't always a continuous thing. By using your imagination, you could easily come up with a 30-minute practice routine that focuses on your feet. After a few weeks of concentrating on that part of your body, you should definitely see results."

Morgenstein leads the same way with his feet as with his hands. As a lefty, he plays the strong beats with his left hand and foot, the offbeats with the right. Many double-bass players, however, lead with the opposite foot: With the hands they lead with the right, but with the feet they lead with the left.

"I've never done that," says Rod. "If I'm doing 16ths with my hands and all of a sudden I want to double it with my feet, I feel more comfortable matching the left foot to the left hand and the right foot to the right hand. Also, when I play a pattern with my hands and mimic it with my feet, I think it would be confusing to lead with the opposite foot."

But Rod understands why some guys play that way. "I was taught to play hi-hat on 2 and 4," he says, "but younger guys learned to play straight quarters or 8ths on the hi-hat. So they were used to keeping a straight pulse with the hi-hat foot."

That was exactly the case with David Lee Roth's drummer Gregg Bissonette. "I learned a lot of beats where the hi-hat foot played straight 8th notes," Gregg says. "So when I tried double bass, I just slid the foot over from the hi-hat to the left pedal and kept doing the same thing, and then plugged in the offbeats with my right foot."

But Bissonette doesn't always follow that procedure. "I lead with the left for any pattern that has double bass going throughout, like straight 16ths or a shuffle," he says. "But whenever I do any broken patterns, where the basic beat is simple quarters or 8ths, I lead with the right and just use the second bass drum for little embellishments, like a quick triplet or ruff figure. I wouldn't want to



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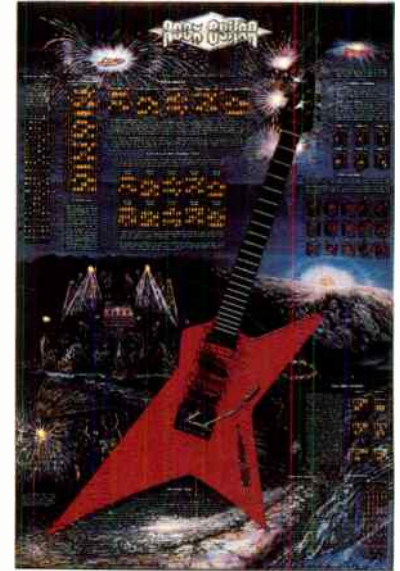
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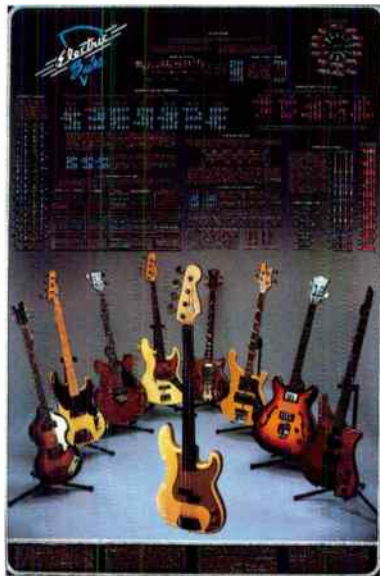
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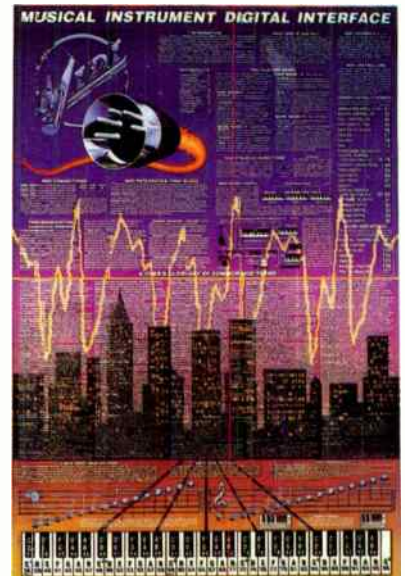
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break the flow by changing the lead foot.”

In this age of fast feet, the question remains: “Two bass drums, or one with a double pedal?” Both Bissonette and Morgenstein favor two bass drums. “There’s a definite feel factor involved,” Morgenstein says. “I’m used to feeling that impact right behind the foot. Also, having both drums ringing gives you a bigger sound. Each stroke isn’t cutting off the stroke before it, the way it does on one drum.”

For Kenny Aronoff, a double pedal makes more sense for his gig with John Mellencamp, although he agrees that two drums feel better. “When you use two beaters on one drum,” he explains, “there is a little bit of a trampoline effect. As one beater is hitting, the head is already in motion from the previous hit. I’ve gotten used to it, though, and one thing that helps is the pedal I use. With a lot of double-bass pedals, the main beater hits the middle of the drumhead and the secondary beater is offset. On my pedal, both beaters are offset equally, which helps even out the feel.”

Aronoff feels that the double pedal can add clarity to double-bass work. “With two drums, each drum might have a bigger impact, but you have all that sustain, which can tend to cover up the next note. When you play on a single drum, each stroke cuts off the stroke before it, giving you better articulation.”

Morgenstein agrees that too much bass-drum ring can be a problem when playing fast 16ths. “Some of it probably does get lost,” he admits. “But I think the audience will feel the effect even if they can’t pinpoint what you’re doing.”

KICKS

ROD MORGENSTEIN uses two 18x22 Premier Resonator bass drums, fitted with clear Premier heads. His pedals are Premier chain-drives, which he stomps on with Nike Air sneakers.

GREGG BISSONETTE plays two 36x24 Pearl MLX bass drums, fitted with Remo coated Emperor heads. He strikes them with DW 5002 Turbo pedals, and likes to wear Nike wrestling shoes when doing so.

KENNY ARONOFF has a 15x24 Tama ArtStar 2 bass drum with a Remo coated Ambassador head. He hits it with a Tama/Camco chain-drive double pedal while wearing Reebok high-tops with loose straps and laces.

G I G

NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT

How much money do jazz musicians make?

By Jeff Levenson

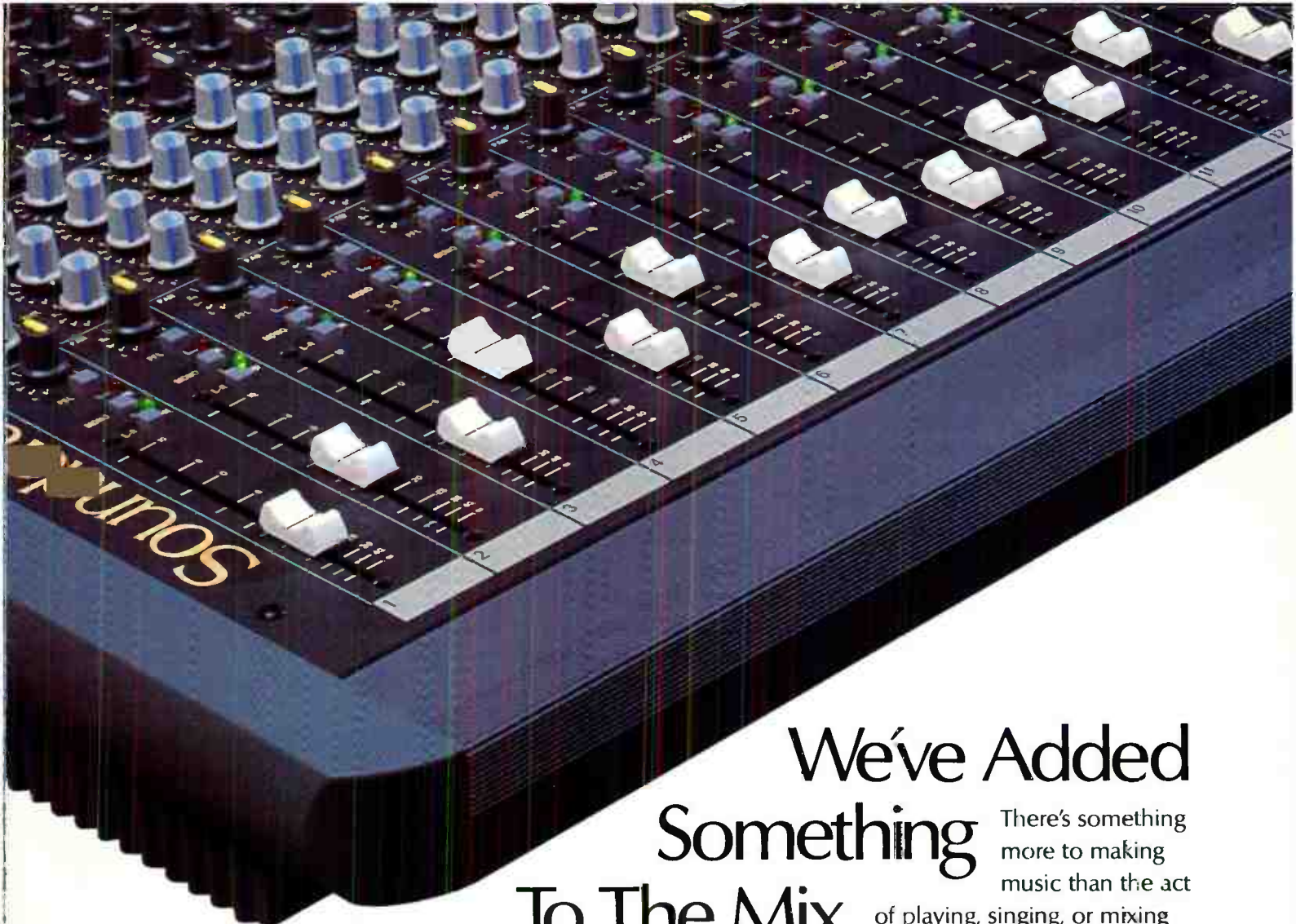
AT LEAST NO ONE CAN ACCUSE jazz musicians of talking out of turn. Try asking a few New York-based, gray-collar, work-ethic jazzmen (no, not guys named Marsalis, Connick or Sanborn) what they earn, how much they filed on this year’s 1040 and the money they expect to pull down doing the things that musicians do, and you hear the kind of flustered “hommina hommina” that made Ralph Kramden famous. (Remember when that suitcase Ralph found crammed with crisp hundreds turned out

to contain nothing but bogus bills?)

Not that fear of violating a social taboo is the only cause for such discomfort or embarrassment. As it turns out, many musicians won’t talk because they’re concerned that the IRS leafs through magazines such as this hoping to finger scofflaws. And I can’t say these wage-earners are out of line, considering that the sound of hard cash resonates in many, if not most, jazz transactions.

Given the intimate nature of the topic (“Okay, what do you make? I won’t tell anybody—promise”), it should come as no surprise that much of this information was





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amassed back-door, detective-style. You hear numbers, you piece them together, you fit them into a pretty accurate picture.

That said, the category of jazz musician under discussion involves those whose love of music—not the desire to make money—dictates how much they earn. These are nose-to-the-grindstone players who don't need to peruse the daily society pages for wedding jobs; nor do they covet chairs in pit bands. They work as sidemen or leaders, sometimes supplementing their incomes with teaching gigs, jingles or by writing

charts. In some instances, they enjoy distinguished status as viable club headliners. Jazz fans know these players well.

"The pay you receive in clubs really varies," says tenor saxophonist Joe Lovano, whose current affiliations with class groups—John Scofield's quartet, Paul Motian's trio, Charlie Haden's Liberation Orchestra and Tom Harrell's quintet (occasionally billed with Lovano as co-leader) will likely kick him into a higher income bracket than the one we're looking at here. "It all depends on the group you're working

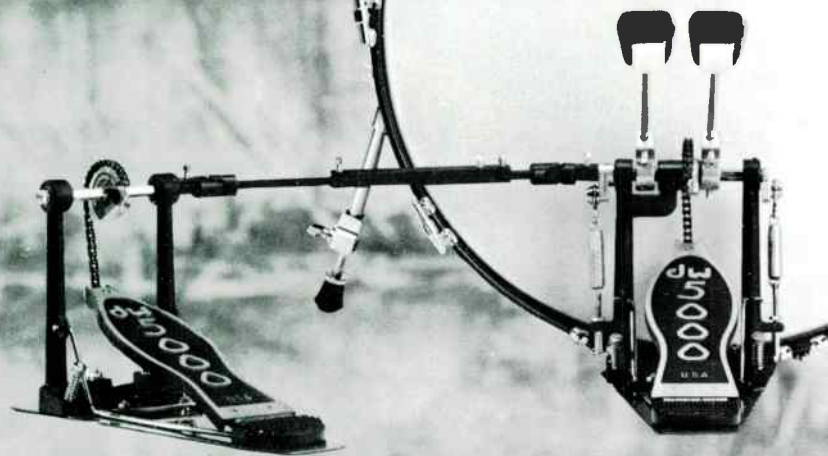
with and the kind of room you're booked into. If I try to book myself as a leader, it's going to help if I have some name guys with me. Then, I'm in a position to ask for substantial money. Of course, I'll have to pay my men. If I can offer quality sidemen \$300 a night, then that's a good piece of change. It could happen that someone holds out for more. If I want a player like Ron Carter, for instance, maybe he'll ask for \$500. Maybe he won't. It depends on how much he wants to do the gig and how much I want him."

The nature of the room may prove more important than the amount of money artists see. Each of New York's clubs has a personality all its own. The Blue Note's aura of posh New York nightlife casts artists in a different light than the Knitting Factory, with its shadowy embrace of the experimental and bohemian. It's the metaphorical difference between up- and downtown. For an artist attempting to fashion a musical reputation, the room—its history, image, clientele—is no small consideration.

Witness Harry Connick's spin-doctored engagement at the Village Vanguard earlier this year. After huge successes on Broadway, in film and on records, Connick wanted to reaffirm the jazz side of his personality. The Vanguard, with its ghosts of jazz greats past, was a perfect choice. Perhaps Connick grossed \$10,000 working off the door for 12 shows during the week—small potatoes, it would seem, for a guy who can command

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cut in half the time lavished on seemingly obsolete ear-training courses currently taught. M.S., music teacher ★ *I feel that Mr. Burge has given me the key to what I once considered a closed door.* D.H., voice piano ★ *I can't understand why it's remained a secret for so long.* B.T., music student ★ *The life and breath of feeling part of what we play can be more fully experienced through this knowledge of Perfect Pitch.* D.S., piano ★ *Perfect Pitch is synonymous with fine musicianship. By fine musicianship, I mean someone who really hears sound as it is. Without this ability (which I feel often separates a professional from an amateur), one cannot fully play in tune, phrase, produce a beautiful tone, and create music that is what you are feeling and thinking inside. If one enjoys (knows) every note for itself—voilà—a delightful and deep experience unfolds.* L.E., voice, harp ★ *It brings musicians to the root of their art, sound.* R.C., piano ★ *It touches the core of musical perception.* D.S., violin/viola ★ *Strange how some things that seem so hard are so simple.* D.W., flute ★ *It all boils down to taking the time to listen.* M.B., piano...

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eight times that amount in one concert and whose income last year was estimated at well over \$1 million. In marketing terms, Connick was using the opportunity to reinforce an image that could translate into long-term futures. No other jazz room, no matter how much it was willing to pay him, could satisfy that particular career objective.

Okay, numbers. They don't mean much until they are entered into the gross/net ledger. "It's very hard to calculate what artists net over the course of a year," booking agent Scott Southard of International Music Network says. "It's easier to determine what they gross. It may seem like a lot if you say that a guy makes \$150,000. But by the time he goes through his expenses—travel, payroll, insurance, equipment—you could be looking at numbers that are far less formidable."

Here's how the breakdown of an actual booking might look: An acoustic jazz group such as those led by Tony Williams, Horace Silver or Dizzy Gillespie could earn as much as \$20,000 a week for a high-profile club engagement, here or abroad, with travel and hotel expenses covered by the promoter. Out of that amount the leader pays a 10 percent commission to his agent; then he pays each of his four sidemen \$1250 a week, totaling \$5000; finally, he gives his tech, who doubles as a sound man, \$1000. He is left with \$12,000. Let's say he has a personal manager or publicist who takes an additional 10 percent off the top; incidentals swallow \$2000 more. Out of that original \$20,000 a week, our headliner is left with a net of \$8000—not quite chopped liver, but less than half the gross. Granted, with that kind of earning power, upper-echelon musicians like Williams or Gillespie may not be typical of the artists spotlighted here, but their sidemen are.

Let's look at the earnings profile of another leader, an accomplished downtown artist with a penchant for privacy. He is a composer and free-blowing altoist who records regularly for European companies (mostly German and Italian), though he's had deals with a major label in the States. Not surprisingly, New York's club scene offers him few performance opportunities that pay meaningful money. He goes overseas, perhaps for as long as five months, where he'll earn three-quarters of his \$50,000 annual income. A particularly intense period finds him playing 15 gigs in 15 nights, necessitating bus or train hook-ups covering [cont'd on page 101]

PERFORMANCE

THE GODFATHER, PART IV

By Chris Morris

IT WAS A LOVE FEAST FOR THE GODFATHER—A CELEBRATION OF JAMES BROWN'S 55 YEARS in show biz and the soul kingpin's first live performance since 1988, when he was thrown into the slammer in South Carolina after an aggravated assault conviction.

WHO
James Brown
& Guests
WHERE
Wilbur Theatre,
Los Angeles, CA
WHEN
June 10, 1991


Broadcast as a live pay-per-view cable TV event, the show came with a raft of big-deal trappings: a parade of guest stars, scads of Hollywood glitter in the (very) expensive seats, obsequious testimonials galore and breathless introductions from hosts ranging from Gladys Knight and Quincy Jones to Mario Van Peebles and Sherman Hemsley (!). About the only thing missing from this pumped-up atmosphere was a papal benediction.

For the first hour and a half of the show, it was uncertain whether the night would be a tribute to JB or an unintentional indictment of contemporary R&B. A wearying procession of talents performing to taped tracks—rappers Tone-Loc and Kool Moe Dee, pubescent soulsters the Boys, a sexed-up C+C Music Factory, New Edition refugees Bell Biv DeVoe—failed to incite a logy crowd. Only the a cappella cooing and sultry grinding of the female quartet En Vogue and the hyperkinetic gamboling of M.C. Hammer and his 50 troupers supplied some transitory arousal during the coma-inducing buildup. But the narcotized atmosphere was dispelled when, after an "invocation" by the Rev. Al Sharpton and a puffy intro by Dan Aykroyd in Blues Brothers multi, the night's honoree hit the stage to the vamp of "Living in America."

His band was big and loud, his eight dancers were leggy Caesar's Palace showgirls and his staging was ultrapatriotic (the Stars and Stripes were lowered from the rafters, to be succeeded at a later juncture by the United Nations flag). And it was apparent from note one that James Brown was back and baaaad.

Looking pretty trim for his 55 years and none the worse for wear after almost three years on ice, Mr. Dynamite worked himself into a lather as quickly as a horse on the Derby post. He still possesses a voice with which you could sandblast a building, and his falsetto shrieks set the hair rippling on forearms throughout the audience.

While his footwork was for the most part restricted to a few lightning ankle-popping shuffles, Brown asserted himself as the master of Star Time with at least one precision-tooled mega-move. At the climax of an almost Wagnerian "It's a Man's Man's World," he whirled into a patented spin-kneedrop-mikestand snatch; the entire audience rose and shrieked as one.

As in chitlin' circuit days of yore, Soul Brother No. 1 dutifully felt good, got on the good foot and stayed on the scene like a sex machine, cranking out the hits as his band churned the riffs with brute vigor. An apex of inevitable ritual and near-religious rapture was attained with "Please Please Please," as, for the 10,000th time, master of ceremonies Danny Ray draped the crouching singer's agony-wracked shoulders with a sequined royal purple cape. For all the trappings, it proved ultimately a fairly typical James Brown show—excessive, convulsive, assaultive, perched just this side of mania. 



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User Illusions

PLAYING WITH LEXICON'S LXP-15

Sploinnkkkkkkk... I drop a sizzly snare sample down a deep dark well. Tcheeowww-grhhh... I steer my guitar through a toxic cloud of hyper-regenerated flanging, half expecting the strings to melt all over my fingers. Oh boy, the new LXP-15 is full of digital effects that make time and space do the hippy-hippy shake. More scientifically: There are 127 preset programs, divided loosely into general-purpose reverb/delay spaces, guitar-oriented mirages and keyboard-oriented sheens. They're all remarkably lifelike for a unit with a mere 31.25 khz sample rate (16-bit linear format).

There are also fairly extensive facilities for programming 127 of your own shimmering aural illusions. Five algorithms provide the usual spectrum of natural, gated and plate reverb, delay, pitch shift, panning and chorus/flange/phase options. Each algorithm offers anywhere from 12 to 21 parameters to tweak. I was especially impressed with the amount of tonal shaping the LXP-15 lets you do on reverb programs.

Now for the bummer: The LXP-15's user interface is minimal and pretty awkward,

depending largely on two clunky click-detented rotary knobs. Dialing up the right sound can be like trying to crack an ingeniously burglar-proof safe. Luckily, things get much better when we move into the real-time control zone. This has been a pet idea of Lexicon's for a while now: a near-studio-quality digital effector that can be an extension of your instrument, a performance tool. The concept is very nicely realized in Lexicon's Dynamic MIDI system, which allows any effects parameter to be modified in real time by any MIDI controller. (For the uninitiated, this means you can do things like have the reverb's illusory room size get bigger and smaller depending on how hard you pound your MIDI keyboard or how much you wiggle the mod wheel.) Those who would rather not diddle with MIDI can achieve many of the same results by hooking up conventional footpedals to any of the LXP-15's four rear-panel pedal jacks, or by using the internal LFO and/or envelope follower to modulate effects parameters.

Each new addition to Lexicon's LXP series for musicians gets a little bit slicker. This one is no exception. ALAN DI PERNA

Minding Little Brother

THE PDC100 PRO DISK COMPOSER



You know that commercial where the older kids give the Life cereal to Mikey? Well, after the Brother Company told us that their PDC100 Pra Disc Composer was the ideal introductory sequencer for inexperienced digital dunderheads, my editor decided to take them at their word and (you guessed it) I became Mikey and the PDC100 became the cereal.

They picked me because I'm an analog-only kinda guy. In other words, I'm scared shitless of MIDI. "Just take it home for the weekend," they said, so I went out and bought a couple of MIDI cords, plugged the PDC100 into my old Roland synth and opened up their manual expecting the worst. That was when I got my first surprise. The folks at Brother wrote the manual in plain, easy-to-understand English, and just reading the first chapter calmed a lot of my digital fears.

First of all, this baby does real-time sequencing. It'll step if you want it to, but for those of us who tend to think in fast forward, the PDC100 behaves essentially like a multi-track recorder—one with no tape generation loss and 32 tracks! The front panel of the unit is also easy to use, with keys that say Forward, Reverse and Stop that even I can understand. Within an hour I had put together a barrelhouse piano part, played bass-part-first with the two-finger method. That went on Track One. A press of two buttons and I was ready to add the right-hand part, a rolling, bluesy 7th chord arpeggio for Track Two. Sounded pretty good, but the port was just a little busy, so it was back to the manual where (miracle of miracles!) I learned to step through the measures and edit out a few notes. Now that wasn't so painful. Finally I went to Track Three and rolled up to each bass note—ba-RUMP—and that did it—I'm a regular Johnnie Johnson! Surprisingly, it's about the most un-sequenced-sounding keyboard part I've ever heard. By Sunday afternoon I'd synched my drums up with the piano part, dumped the whole thing onto my tape deck and added bass and guitar. And it sounded great.

What's more, it really wasn't so difficult. The PDC100 is surely going to open up zillions of tracks and possibilities in my home studio. You see, I've decided to keep the damn thing and learn how to really use it. As they say on TV, "He likes it! Hey Mikey!"

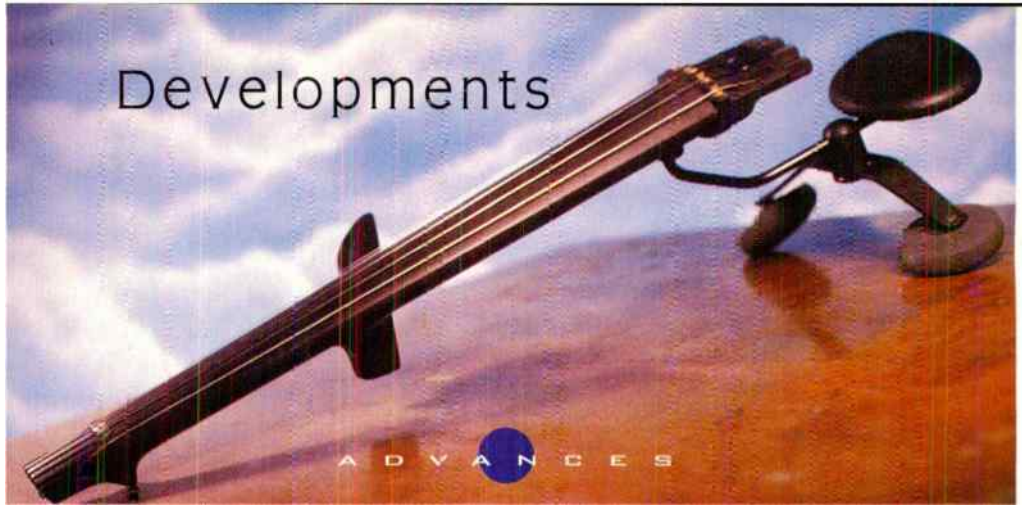
PETER CRONIN



SOUND BITES

Ensoniq has come up with two new SQ-Series synths. The SQ-1 Plus (\$1595) has an extra megabyte of internal wave memory, giving it twice as much capacity as the original SQ-1. The added memory is devoted mainly to new 16-bit piano samples. Like the SQ-1, the new machine has an onboard 16-track sequencer and plenty of drum sounds. Meanwhile, the SQ-2 (\$1795) has all the features of the SQ-1 Plus and a new weighted 76-note, synth-action keyboard.... Speaking of things electronic, the newest invention from synthesis pioneer **Doer Buchla** is a device called Lightning, which transforms human gestures into MIDI commands. Mr. Buchla must have been reading a lot of folk tales while designing Lightning: To use it, you slip on a special ring or pick up a wand. Your every movement will then be plotted, via infrared, along four spatial coordinates and eight zones, each of which can be assigned to any type of MIDI command you fancy. Starting at \$995, it sounds like just the thing the alternative-controller crowd has been wishing for... From magic wands and rings it's a short Hobbit hop to **Bag End**, the noted P.A. speaker manufacturer that has just gotten into the guitar market with a new 4x12 cabinet. It's loaded with Bag End's own E-12 speakers and can be had in a hand-oiled imported birch enclosure or poplar plywood covered in black ozite.... Finally, we arrive at the **Gadden Travel Guitar**, a full-scale electric with **Schaller** keys and a **DiMarzio** pickup. Yet the whole thing slips into a svelte 34" case which fits into most airline overhead luggage compartments. Back at the hotel, you pop a **Scholz Rockman** into the guitar's detachable body clamp and wail. Five-star rockin' for \$945 (with Rockman, \$745 without).

Developments



Bow and Narrow

WHEN THREE OF THESE DIABOLICAL-LOOKING THINGS SUDDENLY APPEARED ON THE WHITE TABLE IN NED Steinberger's lab, we instinctively reached for a big can of Raid. What *are* they? Well, they chirp and sing, have no discernible head, weigh a bit over a pound and sit comfortably on human shoulders. And they make "Flight of the Bumblebee" sound just great.

Right now Ned's electric violin is about as rarified as the praying mantis, and just as arresting. Stripped of scrolls, tuners and body mass, the graphite-based axe provides an uncluttered playing experience, and without a headstock, the gravity center keeps close to the chin for balance and comfort. The five-string really screamed, thanks to two piezo crystals on each string, which trace the multi-directional shake violin strings make. Just so as not to ward off traditionalists, there's a body-reference heel, and optional MIDI-readiness sure to confound those who are wont towards wood. "The idea *isn't* to sound acoustic," Ned says, "but to free up the violin's potential as a truly electric instrument." For those with arachnophobia, Ned emphasizes common design sense: "Less is more in an instrument if you can get performance without all the paraphernalia." **MATT RESNICOFF**

Sony Springs Mini Disc on Consumers

READY FOR YET ANOTHER digital format? Tough binary codes if you aren't, because Sony has got one. It's called the MD (Mini Disc) system. The company is touting it as the digital replacement for conventional audio cassettes. Which is to say you can do digital recording on MD as well as playing back pre-recorded digital albums. (Of which there will be no shortage since Sony now owns the CBS/Columbia label group.) Two different types of discs are used. For playback only, MD employs a 2.5" CD-style disc housed in a plastic casing like a computer diskette. And for digital recording, the system uses magneto-optical discs: a medium that has recently made big waves in the world of film and television audio production.

Unfortunately, MD's audio quality will be lower than CD's. In order to make MD achieve what it does, Sony has had to use a data compression scheme, which shaves sonic subtleties off the signal. They've definitely targeted the non-audiophile, beach 'n' subway,



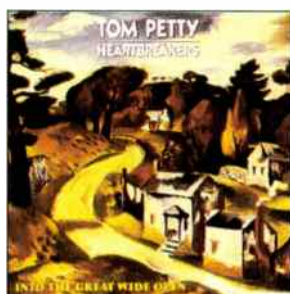
Walkman crowd for this new high-tech toy, which also has a three-second memory buffer that enables it to take serious jolts and keep on playing.

If the Mini Disc has any impact on musicians and home recordists, it is likely to be negative, since MD doesn't really shape up as a high-quality mastering alternative and the availability of a low-budget digital alternative or the consumer market means that DAT prices will probably not be plummeting the way VCR prices did in the '80s. Meanwhile Sony's arch-rival Philips will soon be bringing out their own affordable consumer format, DCC (Digital Compact Cassette), which records digital audio onto a conventional cassette. This too employs a data compression scheme, which once again means less-than-CD quality. Like they say, choosin' is confusin'. You mean you really thought the '90s would be an era of clear thinking?

ALAN DI PERNA



Tom Petty's Wild Blue Yonder



■
Into the Great Wide Open
(MCA)

WHILE TOM PETTY HASN'T BEEN A STRUGGLING ARTIST SINCE the Carter administration, the Traveling Wilburys and *Full Moon Fever* marked his official emergence as one of the Big Boys, bringing a degree of recognition never accorded his work with the Heartbreakers. Now he stands at the crossroads. In returning to his fab band, should Petty recapture the sinewy Byrds-Stones hybrid of his grittier music? Or does he continue to make the small, albeit honorable compromises conducive to brand-name status? *Into the Great Wide Open* can't decide. It presents some of his most powerful tunes yet, only to burnish 'em with a sheen suitable for another solo flight, not a noisy rock 'n' roll group.

Credit (or blame) producer and fellow Wilbury Jeff Lynne, who also did the honors on *Fever*, for the sonic ambience. Having spent his entire career celebrating the Beatles, Lynne strikes paydirt on the title track and "All or Nothin'," both of which would fit neatly into the White Album. He puts more thought into his labors on "All the Wrong Reasons," a gorgeous old-timey ballad, and "Built to Last," a bril-

LYNYRD SKYNYRD 1991 KICKS ASS!



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World Radio History

liant update of "Stand by Me," where witty nuances enhance the stories of desire and loss. Just once, though, he should try making a record without adding those chirpy background vocals, which entered the realm of self-parody long ago.

Lynne's own stuff has shown how little he values content. Thus, from the perfectly coiffed "Learning to Fly" to the clean boogie of "Makin' Some Noise" (shades of the Move's "California Man"), slickness threatens to become an end in itself. Fortunately, Petty couldn't make a soulless record if his life depended on it. The LP swings between the desire for freedom and an aching need to belong, between rebel abandon ("Out in the Cold") and warm-compassion ("The Dark of the Sun"). If Petty keeps singing about the tough choices facing real people, he'll likely remain vital and true.

Today, TP's still one of the good guys, and he socks a few homers on *Into the Great Wide Open*, including the loping "Two Gunslingers," an essay on self-determination in the form of a sagebrush tale. Regardless, he should temper that mature assurance with the ragged urgency of a less consistent effort like *Let Me Up (I've Had Enough)*. Confidence has a way of hardening into complacency real fast, you know. —Jon Young



Stevie Wonder

Music from the Movie "Jungle Fever"
(Motown)

IUST CALLED TO SAY... FIGHT THE POWER. THAT'S THE mix of sensibilities that Stevie Wonder's soundtrack to the new Spike Lee film represents. After the huge success of Wonder's mid-'80s cream-puff singalongs "I Just Called to Say I Love You" and "Ebony and Ivory," he seemed destined to be scoring Neil Simon movies. But Lee must have a longer memory. It was Wonder, after all, who helped define the role of social conscience in pop with such pointed '70s hits as "Living for the City" and "You Haven't Done Nothin'." And "Skeletons," the lead-off single from his last album (in 1987), was a vitriolic attack on Reagan-era corruption and complacency.

Wonder pushes even further on a few songs for this album, his freshest and most satisfying collection in a decade. He dabbles in rap and reggae and gives several compositions a street sensibility. "Chemical Love" blasts various forms of addiction. "Each Other's Throat," which has the hard edge that its title implies, concerns familial death by gunfire. The title song takes on racial prejudice. But Wonder

never tries too hard to toughen his sound, a pitfall that would have bedeviled a less confident composer. Indeed, the lead-off song, "Fun Day," is the lightest in tone, with its lilting melody and carefree lyric about "tweeting birds that sing." Wonder has taken flak in recent years for becoming "white-bread," but as an artist he's secure enough to know that pastels belong on his palette as well as darker hues.

The frisky title song is the album's standout, its randy playfulness mirroring the joys of young love. Wonder deserves a second Oscar just for turning a plot summary ("I've gone white-girl crazy/She's gone black-boy hazy") into the catchiest pop lyric of the summer. He also dips into his seemingly bottomless well of gorgeous melodies. "If She Breaks Your Heart," sung by Kimberly Brewer, is this album's "Lately," a bittersweet ballad of exceptional grace and beauty. "Lighting Up the Candles" is even prettier, with a melody that could warm the house in the dead of winter.

A few of the songs are mediocre: The first single, "Gotta Have You," is generic, repetitive '70s-style funk; "These Three Words" is as sweet and obvious as the title suggests. But overall, the record marks a recovery for Wonder. Its success also points to the value of fixed deadlines. A notorious perfectionist, he'd been laboring over a new studio album for years when Lee called. Wonder put the other album on hold and whipped up these songs in just a month. Put that man on a time clock! —Paul Grein



Sam Phillips

Cruel Inventions
(Virgin)

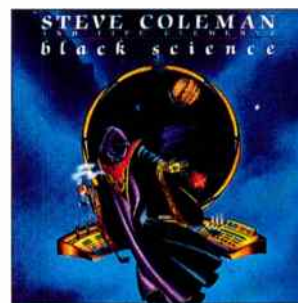
SAM (NÉE LESLIE) PHILLIPS MADE HER FIRST record for the Christian Word label, then went secular with 1988's much-acclaimed *The Indescribable Wow*. Her latest, *Cruel Inventions*, has all the hip earmarks of the former, including a supporting cast of husband/producer T Bone Burnett, Elvis Costello, Marc Ribot and Van Dyke Parks. But with its childlike faith in the illogical and its discontent with modern civilization, *Inventions* also suggests Phillips' religious underpinnings. Indeed, one of the major themes on the new disc is the way Sam continually ridicules her own predilections for thinking and analyzing so much, a process that threatens to find her "Standing Still," paralyzed with doubt.

"Lying," the first single, starts out like "Broken

English" as Phillips, with a husky Marianne Faithfull vocal, grapples with the separate dictates of brain and body, mind and matter: "If I said I believe my eyes/And science can move my soul...I'd be lying." The song's clever use of the subjunctive gets its final kick when you realize the whole tune could be considered "lying." Elsewhere, Phillips' tunes and witty wordplay rescue her songs from becoming too precious. The title track's litany of woes and its bluesy "Ghost Rider" backbeat are brightened by the chorus' catchy hook, reminiscent of Dusty Springfield's "I Only Want to Be with You." "Tripping Over Gravity" avoids Suzanne Vega's English-major pretensions even as it emulates her way with a melody.

Far from a proselytizer, Phillips is bemused rather than enraged at the world's problems. She sings that "arches of commerce have made the sky corrupt" in "Go Down," about "noises that drug my brain and make me buy" in "Standing Still." But she blames her own doubt and lack of faith as much as she does society. Ultimately, *Cruel Inventions* creates a small, circumscribed shelter from the storm, slices of reality that have the resonance of a gently seductive dream. Maybe that's as close to transcendence as we can achieve this side of heaven.

—Roy Trakin



Steve Coleman

Black Science
(RCA/Novus)

Greg Osby

Man Talk for Moderns Vol. X
(Blue Note)

SINCE THE MID-'80S, M-BASE HAS BEEN A HOT wind blowing out of Brooklyn, with alto saxists Steve Coleman and Greg Osby its chief practitioners and most eloquent spokesmen. They have chipped away at the time-honored premise that R&B-rooted jazz requires a definable downbeat and a specific harmonic key center. In the world of M-BASE, grooves are serpentine and polyrhythmic, the harmonies liable to arrive from multiple perspectives. Coleman and Osby are young jazz cubists, the Picasso and Braque of a movement now in the refinement stage.

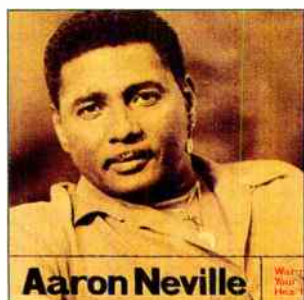
Their recent releases find Coleman holding fast to the feisty spirit of M-BASE tenets, while Osby—on his fifth album and first for Blue Note—makes a valiant attempt to temper his more cerebral ideas

with market-palatable sounds. Whether the wares of M-BASE ideology were meant to be brought to the marketplace, however, is still open to question. Osby's approach on *Man Talk for Moderns Vol. X* involves a sandwiching of harder-edged tracks with cooler tunes, organized in soft-hard-soft-hard fashion. The more commercially viable numbers are several cuts above the funk-jazz as Osby seeks subtle subversions and alternate routes to infectiousness, à la Miles Davis' *Amandla*.

Strong as this underlying musicality is, Osby's mix sometimes sounds like the grafting of two different projects. Out of the sleek funk-making of "Lo-Fi," for instance, come the exotic tonalities and dual alto sax solos (with Coleman) of "Balaka." "Carolla" is an unabashedly catchy ballad, segueing into the sharply contrasting "2th (Ttwooth)," on which Osby's alto slices and swerves with typical prowess over a dream-like rhythmic track that is woozily sped-up and slowed-down.

Coleman's *Black Science* is a more seamless and decidedly headier affair. Coleman's sax voice is analytical, exacting and yet restless, a lean cat with a long leash. His compositions are intricate maps grounded in new-jazz math and an aura of mystique, as on the aptly named "Twister" and the muscular frenzy of "Black Phonemics." Fascinating rhythms and tense harmonic material abound. A cool, hypnotic melody line prevails on "A Vial of Calm," featuring Cassandra Wilson's dark vocal coo and Dave Holland's affirmative bass. M-BASE drummer-of-choice Marvin "Smitty" Smith offers his inimitable crumbling/rumbling approach—instinctively smart and funky—and righteously vents his conceptual chops on "Turbulence."

Now well into their artistic strides, Coleman and Osby are still making music that smacks of newness. Whether or not any of it "gets over," things are very much going on. —Josef Woodard



Aaron Neville

Warm Your Heart
(A&M)

WITH HIS BROTHERS AND ON HIS OWN, AARON Neville has been involved with some truly fine records. But it's also true that he recently reached his widest audience (and garnered two Grammys) by dueting with Linda Ronstadt on the chanteuse's snoozy *Cry Like a Rainstorm—Howl Like the Wind*. As the Neville Brothers' *Brothers*

Keeper, the recent follow-up to their near-breakthrough *Yellow Moon*, barely drew in the fans let alone potential newcomers, you figure that this one, co-produced by Ronstadt, will attempt to duplicate *Rainstorm's* MOR pleasantries. Everybody agrees that the guy deserves to be more famous, including, no doubt, the guy himself. Why not give the people—i.e. radio programmers—what they think they want?

So it's a bit of a surprise that this is about half of a pretty good album, with the remaining half dipping into the expectedly drecky. It begins with three solid cuts: Randy Newman's "Louisiana 1927" is done affectingly straight, followed by a pleasing cover of the Main Ingredients' "Everybody Plays the Fool" (with Aaron really laying on the falsetto) and an equally pleasant version of John Hiatt's "Feels Like Rain." Then there's this long middle stretch where everything goes kind of blah, and which includes two forgettable Allen Toussaint sketches, wince-inducing cornball arrangements and a duet with Ronstadt ("Close Your Eyes") where Aaron, with his freely soaring falsetto, plays the female principal and Ronstadt, with her flat-footed contralto, takes the traditional male role. Weird. These doldrums are broken up by the zippiest cut on the album, "Angola Bound," which sounds like the best of recent Neville Brothers—polyrhythmic soul with a simmering groove. The set ends as it begins, with a trilogy of good ones, including the title cut and a rendition of Schubert's "Ave Maria" which may seem a bit much in the abstract but in fact works. Like some of Schubert's lieder, "Ave Maria" is a prototype pop song (even Paul Anka did a pretty neat version of it in the 1959 Mamie Van Doren flick *Girls' Town*)—unabashedly romantic, excruciatingly sad.

It should be added that even during the worst of this set Aaron never falters, his gracefully pained vocals shaking off the embalming caresses of gratuitous back-up singers and soap opera strings. Of course, you can't help but feel that he deserves better.

—Richard C. Walls



Various Artists

The Complete Stax-Volt Singles 1959-1968
(The Atlantic Group)

MEMPHIS'S STAX RECORDS WAS GROUND ZERO for the explosion of Southern soul music in the '60s. This monolithic 9-CD boxed

set of every single released on Stax and its sister label Volt, from the company's beginnings through the end of its Atlantic distribution deal in '68, is a marathon history lesson and a highly entertaining one to boot. While not entirely devoid of dross, the 244 tracks herein deliver the high-water marks of the genre and a deluxe portion of delectable obscurities.

Formed in 1959 by bank employee and country fiddler Jim Stewart and his sister Estelle Axton, Stax (originally known as Satellite Records) began unpromisingly, cutting a number of archaic doo-wop groups and sweet-soul units in the Motown style. The label's original stars were the middle-aged R&B performer Rufus Thomas (who had cut a few hits for Sun Records in the early '50s) and his honey-voiced daughter Carla.

By 1961, Stax had recorded two singles that would set the style for most of what was to follow. The instrumental "Last Night" by the Mar-Keys foreshadowed such later dance-oriented grooves as Booker T. and the MG's "Green Onions" and the Bar-Kays "Soul Finger"; it also formulated the gritty, bluesy sound those combos would lay down as the Stax house bands. William Bell's "You Don't Miss Your Water" was a harbinger of Stax vocal hits to come—earthy, gospel-inflected, soul-wrenching numbers that stood in marked contrast to the smoother pop approach of Motown.

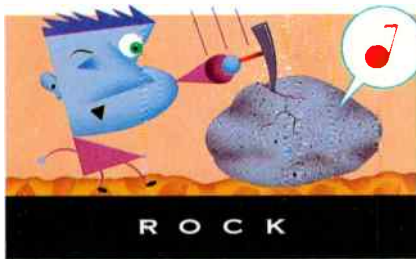
Bell was succeeded on the label by a slate of singers—Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, Eddie Floyd, Johnnie Taylor—whose gospel-fueled approach and unrestrained manner set a new standard for soul intensity. Singing the hand-tailored material of house songwriters Isaac Hayes and David Porter and backed by the seamless funk of producer Steve Cropper and the Stax band, these performers forged an honor roll of raw R&B hits—"These Arms of Mine," "Hold On I'm A Comin'," "Knock on Wood" and many more—that stand as the style's most durable achievements. They're all present on *The Complete Stax-Volt Singles*, and hearing them in their original crisp mono mixes provides a fresh, thrilling rush.

But there's plenty more than the hits on this set, much of which is illuminating and just plain fun. There are stellar numbers by such little-known but brilliant female vocalists as Mable John (Little Willie John's sister) and Ruby Johnson, dimly recalled gems by such R&B stars as Bobby Marchan and Ivory Joe Hunter, and deep blues from Albert King and Eddie Kirkland. For every clinker like "The Three Dogwoods" by Memphis DJ Nick Charles, there's a winner like Derek Martin's "Soul Power."

You don't have to suffer from collectoritis to have a natural ball with *The Complete Stax-Volt Singles*. Dive in, dig the hits and marvel at the misses; few excursions through the annals of soul are likely to offer as many genuine masterworks and neglected delights.

—Chris Morris

SHORT TAKES



ROCK

BY J. D. CONSIDINE

CHRIS WHITLEY

Living with the Law [Columbia]

Whitley plays acoustic slide like a Delta bluesman, sings falsetto with the grace of a Kentucky hillbilly and urges his band into grooves as hypnotic and intense as any on *The Joshua Tree*. Not bad for a novice. But what ultimately makes *Living with the Law* such an arresting debut are the songs, artfully drawn and insidiously tuneful, coming as close to short-story writing as anything that can be hummed. An utterly addictive album.

PAULA ABDUL

Spellbound [Virgin]

This being album number two (give or take a few remixes), Abdul has decided to show some musical maturity, meaning that in addition to the usual dance-pop fodder, she tries her hand at ballads, funk and the obligatory Prince song. Though her singing has improved—note the get-down whoops on “Vibeology,” the quivering sincerity of “Blowing Kisses in the Wind”—the fact remains that this album’s real strength is its production. Meaning that Abdul’s step forward has left her precisely where she started.

ELECTRONIC

Electronic [Warner Bros.]

Not an entirely new Order, Electronic finds Bernard Sumner doing the usual while Johnny Marr fills in everything but Peter Hook’s basslines. Which is fine as far as it goes, as the melancholy charm of “Get the Message” or “Reality” makes plain. Still, Electronic only sparks when Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe join in, adding a witty warmth to the group’s arch tunes and chilly grooves.

N.W.A.

Efil4zaggin [Ruthless/Priority]

Given the violence—criminal, sexual and verbal—on hand here, even hardcore rap fans may pass on this one. The shoot-'em-up sagas are pointless, the Ice Cube dis is juvenile, the anti-woman raps are just ugly. Which is not to deny N.W.A.’s musical ingenuity, or even their moments of insight. But before accepting the perverse pride with which they declare themselves niggaz, ask yourself: Isn’t self-hatred a kind of bigotry, too?

PRIMUS

Sailing the Seas of Cheese

[Interscope]

Strip away the warped lyrics, the fashionable dissonance and the occasional incursions into thrash, and all Primus’ time tricks, obtuse melodic structures and jazzy virtuosity really add up to is an alternative rock equivalent to Rush. How hip.

MARSHALL CRENSHAW

Life’s Too Short [MCA/Paradox]

If the dense mix and distorted guitar seem annoyingly noisy at first, give them time; Crenshaw hasn’t abandoned his vision of pop-rock purity, he’s just changed the amp settings. It’s not a matter of adding power to his pop, though, because that blaring guitar is meant to muddy melodic optimism, thereby lending a genuinely adult ambiguity to his true-love lyrics. Which, ironically, ends up intensifying the pleasures to be found here.

TOWER OF POWER

Monster on a Leash [Epic]

Sure, the horns sound great. The horns always sound great. What makes this one fun is that the rest of the band sounds great, too—particularly the rhythm section, which pumps funk with the same assurance that powered *Back to Oakland*. A real return to form.

THE REIVERS

Pop Beloved [DB]

All too often, bands that specialize in understated vocals, droning guitars and lean, flat rhythm arrangements do so out of desperation—they can’t think of anything better. Not the Reivers; if their songs seem slight, it’s only because the group has distilled each idea to its essence. Even when the sound of *Pop Beloved* seems as dry as a

West Texas wind, it’s still possible to catch a whiff of jimpson or honeysuckle in each bittersweet refrain.

SON OF BAZERK

Bazerk Bazerk Bazerk [Soul]

“Change the Style,” with its rap-to-reggae-to-thrash groove, established this crew early on as masters of hip-hop slice-and-dice. But that’s only half the story. Imagine Public Enemy with Digital Underground’s sense of humor and George Clinton’s eclecticism, and you’ll understand why more and more rap fans want to go Bazerk.



JAZZ

BY PETER WATROUS

BENNY GREEN

Greens [Blue Note]

A trio album that delivers all sorts of recidivistic piano pleasures, like block chording, Phineas Newborn-styled unison lines and pure bebop. But it’s the arrangements that make this special. Green’s sculpted the tunes with basslines, tricky figures and interweaving themes. Chris McBride, the next wunderkind bassist after Charnett Moffett, has a beautiful fat tone (thankfully, he doesn’t use an amplifier) and a great walk—funky, rising, on the move.

TOUGH YOUNG TENORS

Tough Young Tenors [Antilles]

What a scary record. If I were a tenor player, I’d just give up. Again, there’s recidivistic pleasures here, with five tenor saxophonists in their 20s—Todd Williams (of Wynton’s band), Tim Warfield (from Marlon Jordan’s band), Herb Harris (from Marcus Roberts’ band), James Carter and Walter Blanding Jr.—working out their responses to Paul Gonsalves, Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt, Coltrane and Lockjaw Davis on blues and standards. It’s the sort of record that’ll attract lots of attention, and lots of argu-

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ment. But if deep blues and bebop tenor playing is close to the heart, this stuff is life itself.

ELMO HOPE

Trio and Quintet [Blue Note]

It takes a minute to figure out how Hope, a Harlem bebopper, got his effect, that rumbling and clanking sound that puts him in the same context as Randy Weston (an old running partner), Bud Powell (same), Herbie Nichols and Horace Silver. It's that left hand, nailing a single note, minimally sailing through harmony as the right hand delineates the changes. The right hand's a decoy, fast and clever, while the left puts out that sound, a sheen of thunder in the distance staining a perfectly pleasant day. Hope's writing, sometimes articulated in a trio setting, sometimes with horns, could supply a few albums' worth of retrospective material for the next tribute album.

NANCY WILSON

Yesterday's Love Songs Today's Blues [Capitol]

Sheer nastiness—bitter, dry and just out-and-out unpleasant. Wilson's got that Dinah Washington tone and intonation that turns sunny melodies into blues tracts. Not that this is bad; actually, it's hard not to love the clashing musical signifiers, from the string section and Gerald Wilson's orchestrations to the adult lyrics, from club sophistication to real improvisation. On the cusp of the Beatles, this stuff was ripe to be wiped out, pop music as an adult preoccupation; like today's pop, it was loaded with class details—buy it and be cool. For a year or two.

PETER APFELBAUM AND THE HIEROGLYPHICS ENSEMBLE

Signs of Life [Antilles]

Round up the usual suspects—world music, jazz, funk, rock—and all the usual critical clichés—mixed up like jambalaya, pureed postmodern record collection—and you get the idea. Apfelbaum, a saxophonist, has prepared a world where the impulse to make dance music isn't limited by the usual conservatism of form. If this music has the luxury of coming from a middle-class, educated perspective, so be it; there's also an optimism (and hippyness) that, with a little suspension of cynicism, takes you to church.

ART TATUM

The Complete Pablo Solo Masterpieces [Fantasy]

123 examples of the finest piano music recorded in the twentieth century. Some are set pieces—check out the similarities between earlier and later versions of the same tunes—but what reimaginings, jammed with harmony and detail and references. This is knowing music, impossible without real refinement and discipline. Tatum just knew more than anybody else, and he wasn't afraid to show it; his sense for the baroque and ornamental caused him grief among critics, but so what. Life's different now and Tatum—who was loved by musicians—sounds better than ever.

ROY HARGROVE

Public Eye [RCA]

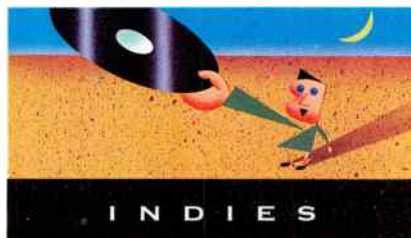
The opening blues, "Public Eye," has about as succinct a bebop solo as can be found; Hargrove smokes it. The

problems of his first album—slack material and playing—aren't here so much, but it's possible that the sense of grace that Hargrove projects in person can't be captured on disc. Given that he's working with conservative forms, he has to work harder to prove himself. Which is to say tremendous talent as an improviser carries him live, but records demand a bit more. Though he's enlisted the help of bassist Christian McBride and Billy Higgins on drums, the album needs to engage the listener with arrangements that stray beyond standard.

JOHN COLTRANE

Live in Japan [Impulse/GRP]

There's always more. The original album—made with Coltrane, Pharoah Sanders, Alice Coltrane, Jimmy Garrison and Rashied Ali—has been supplemented with nearly three more hours of the same absolutely unrelenting group improvisations (alright, not really; there's a 12-minute Jimmy Garrison solo opening "Crescent" which gives you a chance to go out and get a beer). Although the music's basically tonal, the sense of radicality it gives off comes from the textural effects of the soloists—especially Sanders' dying-animal noises—and mostly from the flexibility of the rhythm section, which nods a bit to steady time, then goes its own way. Though expressionism can sound pretty dumb nowadays, as archaic as the lamest bebop, this has the intensity and integrity of its time—and it's thrilling.



TOUMANI DIABATE/KETAMA

DANNY THOMPSON

Songhai [Hannibal/Rykodisc]

This could have been a committee-planned nightmare: Toss British bassist Thompson, Malian kora player Diabate and Spanish flamenco group Ketama together in a studio and see who survives. Fortunately, they had pretested their disparate mix. In this context Diabate's filigrees of notes take on a Moorish air; Thompson's jazzy rhythms push the continental drift into hyperspace. Weird, but it works. So why not? (Pickering Wharf, Bldg. C, Salem, MA 01970)—*Scott Isler*

URGE OVERKILL

Supersonic Storybook [Touch and Go]

Nothing in Urge Overkill's career compares to this record. They've dropped the ironic art-rock for visceral hard-rock (is there any other kind?). The cover of Hot Chocolate's "Emmaline" sports the only soulful vocal attempted by an Amerindian sensation that can be recalled. But it's the production that makes this thing kick. John Cougar once thanked "the Rolling Stones for never takin' the livin' room off the records," and that's what this one is all about. The drums/bass/guitars interlock for an earthy feel, not far removed from *Tupestry*, but with substantially louder results.—*Rob O'Connor*

THE BLACK GIRLS

Happy [Mammoth]

The Black girls are three women of paler hue than their name suggests, who purvey a gorgeous alternative/underground chamber music with piano, acoustic guitar and violin, and adorn with lyrics ranging from the confessional to the enigmatic. On their previous album it seemed one of the 'girls was a terrific writer and one wasn't. *Happy* is a hundred times more consistent, and the few anomalies have a quirky charm of their own. Lovely stuff.—*Thomas Anderson*

EVAN JOHNS

Rocket Fuel Only [Rykodisc]

The ripped-up opening chords of "Back in the Backseat," the go-far-broke rocker that kicks off this record, tell the whole story. Evan Johns always goes for the throat. This latest self-produced effort makes last year's *Bomb's Away* (produced by E-Streeter Gary Tallent) seem almost slick, and is a better representation of the kind of noisy hell Johns raises in his burning live shows. True to form, his barely-in-control guitar and roaring non-voice are squarely up front on no-brakes numbers like "Who You Are (Where Are You)" and the title track. But it's Johns' big, goofy heart that puts this over and helps him get away with the big-lug sentimentality of "Prove It to Each Other." Fill'er up, mister.—*Peter Cronin*

U SRINIVAS

Modern Mandolin Maestro [GlobeStyle]

Don't ask why a 21-year-old classical Indian musician chose electric mandolin, let alone how he squeezes such Karnatic sounds out of it. Just marvel at Srinivas' technique, one any fretted-chordophone player might envy. With its limitations on microtones, the mandolin offers a warm welcome to Western ears—and a bridge to the repertoire. (46-50 Steele Road, London NW10 7AS, England)—*Scott Isler*

ART DECO AND THE TOE-TAPPERS

Laurel and Hardy's Music Box Volume 2 [TER]

These are new recordings of music heard on the soundtracks of 1930s Laurel and Hardy comedies. You'll either love it or not even begin to understand it. The pseudonymous band is composed of British pros; leader Ronnie Hazlehurst painstakingly recreated arrangements and assembled medleys of pieces composed mainly by LeRoy Shield. The palm-court sound (violin, saxophones) is south of jazz but irresistibly delightful.—*Scott Isler*

THE LEAVING TRAINS

Sleeping Underwater Survivors [SST]

The nine songs comprising the fifth Leaving Trains LP are their strongest since their second LP, *Kill Tunes*. With a slightly revamped line-up of musicians, around whom singer/guitarist/lyricist Falling James Moreland throws his drunken animosity, boozy self-infatuation and bleary-eyed poetry, the Trains have recharged the firepower that makes them an engaging guitar-rock entity. "Suicide Blues" takes on rock's seminal fluids—Catholicism and masturbation; "I Love You" confuses love with sex; "What Was Left Was Red" sounds like Falling James taking Sonic Youth's "Providence" (both use phoned-in vocal tracks) to a logical, almost tuneful conclusion. If Warren Zevon had

kept right on drinking he could've ended up jamming with these guys on a regular basis.—*Rob O'Connor*



GENE VINCENT

The Gene Vincent Box Set [UK Capitol/EMI]

Feel like a sucker because you just shelled out for Charly's nine-and-a-half-LP *The Capitol Years '56-'63* and here comes British EMI with this six-CD doorstop? With Vincent's 20 (UK) Columbia recordings from 1963/64 as well as his preceding 131 Capitol tunes? With 10 songs—all but two, unfortunately, after 1960—previously unreleased in stereo? With 21 alternate takes including the world's most boring studio chatter? Don't feel too bad. EMI's booklet has some nifty color photos but Charly has much better documentation (from the same people who put the *Box Set* together: strangely enough), and a long interview and two live performances from 1957. As for the alternates, Rockstar's single-LP *Important Words* has 17 additional out-takes with marginally less soporific studio talk. Yet you can't resist this chunky little cube. Materialism—it's wonderful.—*Scott Slater*

OLIVER NELSON

Sound Pieces [Impulse/GRP]

Like his more famous contemporary Quincy Jones, Nelson had a '60s West Coast orchestral sound that merged traditional bop arrangements with film score impressionism. But his tonalities were at once more daring and more firmly rooted in the blues, particularly when Nelson himself was soloing on soprano saxophone. This gem, a companion to *Blues and the Abstract Truth*, features a trio of Nelson big band orchestrations that range from dense to airy, and a fine quartet date in the company of Steve Kuhn, Ron Carter and Grady Tate. Terrific adaptations of "Straight No Chaser" and "Shadow of Your Smile" underline Nelson's own compositional feel for jigsaw rhythms and clear melodies. Worth exploring.—*Mark Rowland*

SONS OF THE PIONEERS

Sons of the Pioneers [MCA]

You've heard this stuff before, and it's better than you think. Part of a Country Music Hall of Fame series that also features best-ofs by the Carter Family, Tex Ritter, Floyd Tillman and Jimmie Davis, the Pioneers are most easily associated with such cowboy classics as "Tumbling Tumbleweeds"—recorded on their first session, in 1952!—and "Cool Water," not to mention the subsequent TV career of founding member Roy Rogers. With all that campy baggage around, it's easy to overlook the effortless melodicism of composer Bob Nolan and the group's graceful vocal harmonies. What gives this set its special kick, though, are "jazz hot" instrumentations by the Farr brothers, Hugh and Karl, on violin and guitar, respectively. Not as hip as Bob Wills, perhaps, but for music to ride the range by, it'll do just fine.—*Mark Rowland*

FATS WALLER

Turn on the Heat [Bluebird/REA]

This two-CD set chronicles Fats' surprisingly small array of strictly instrumental recordings over an otherwise prolific career. I say surprising, because, for all of his charm and vocal verve, Waller was one of the greatest jazz pianists ever, equally at home with the strict stride eloquence of his mentor James P. Johnson or the technical bravura and romantic flourish of Art Tatum. Above all, he was Fats, whose humor, wit and tenderness was self-evident in everything he played. And most of what he plays here is of a higher compositional standard than the rest of his oeuvre—Johnson's "Carolina Shout," Hoagy Carmichael's "Rockin' Chair" and "Honeysuckle Rose," "Handful of Keys" and the gorgeous "My Fate Is in Your Hands." Almost every solo is a little masterpiece, guaranteed to make you shake your head and smile.—*Mark Rowland*

CEDELLA MARLEY BOOKER

Awake Zion [Rykodisc/ROIR]

In case you missed it the first two times around, this pop/gospel tribute by Bob Marley's mother to her son has been reissued on CD, with an additional track, "Something in a Something," adding to what was already a well-arranged, deeply moving song cycle. Musical accompaniment by several of the Waiters, including Carlton and "Family Man" Barrett on bass and drums, and Junior Marvin on guitar. Mother Booker sings with familiar warmth and messianic fervor.—*Mark Rowland*

THE BEACH BOYS

Lost & Found 1961-1962 [JGCC Compact Classics]

Who says CDs aren't cheap? Original copies of the Beach Boys' earliest (pre-Capitol) 45s will set you back thousands, if you can find them—and they still won't sound as good as they do here. But that's only four songs. The rest of *Lost & Found* consists of alternate takes, "studio chatter" and other in-the-beginning arcana. This is not only serious history, it's mesmerizingly poignant; they really were boys then. And those harmonies melt in their mouths.—*Scott Slater*

MEADE LUX LEWIS

The Blues Piano Artistry of Meade Lux Lewis [Riverside]

Lewis is usually typecast as "boogie-woogie pianist," one of the tightest straitjackets there is. That description hardly accounts for some striking harmonies that wouldn't sound out of place on a Thelonious Monk record. Or his jogging monophonic bass figures that have nothing on Conlon Nancarrow. Or the delightful use of celeste, transformed into a demented music box. The spiffy-sounding 1963 recording does justice to a master.—*Scott Slater*

SON HOUSE

Delta Blues [Biograph]

These 15 digitally remastered tracks by Muddy Waters' mentor come from field recordings made by Alan Lomax 50 years ago, and are some of the most beautiful Delta blues recordings available. Stylistically, House's gruff voice recalled his friend Charlie Patton, while his slide guitar was what Muddy would later take to Chicago. The tracks here include four string band numbers, a reworking of Patton's "Pony Blues" and "American Defense"—a WWII pep talk in waltz-time. As a bonus, there's train whistles and crowing roosters in the background. Highly recommended. (Box 369, Canaan, NY 12029)—*Thomas Anderson*

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JAZZ PAY

[cont'd from page 88] 300 miles per day. It's a grueling pace, even without considering creative components—namely, performance material and wind to blow.

"What we have to do for the money is obscene," he says. "But, remember, we're doing what we want. If Europe didn't exist, I'd be working a day job. For every one of us, there are 50 guys who can really bitch and moan, and rightfully so. I have no reason to complain about my work or my earnings because I'm in a better position financially than the guys I learned from when they were my age—guys like Julius Hemphill or Oliver Lake."

In part, it would seem that many of today's jazz artists owe a debt to Wynton Marsalis. By stepping out in the '80s as the music's unofficial (but no less authoritative) spokesperson, Wynton helped establish a climate of jazz legitimacy and respect that suddenly brightened futures.

Though plenty of players accuse Wynton of grandstanding, the movement he spearheaded had tangible economic consequences—earnings improved. The amounts won't ever be close to those in pop music (Wynton excepted; insiders guess that his 1990 income topped \$3 million), but

at least they rose to levels that promise middle-class lifestyles. Jazz musicians of all stripes are finally looking at a living wage.

"That might be true," says bassist Michael Formanek, whose 1990 album *Wide Open Spaces* inspired interest in him as a leader. "But compare us to lawyers or surgeons or other guys who have trained hard to be at the top of their professions. The difference between us and them is that we have to work harder to make the same kind of money. Maybe they make \$250,000 or \$300,000 a year. And maybe we're at equal points in our respective careers. I will never make what my equivalent person in those professions makes. If I could make \$80,000 a year doing my music, doing what I want to do, that would be amazing."

For all players interviewed, a career in music never presented itself as one choice among many; it was a calling, something they had to respond to. For such people—used to following their hearts—there are limits to what they'll do for money, even if it means denying themselves a shot at the big bread. "If I feel that I've earned money by doing something below my capabilities, artistic or otherwise," says keyboardist Gil Goldstein, "I get pissed. I get depressed and no amount of money makes me feel good.

That is, I haven't found the amount yet."

It's not likely that he will. Temptations abound, but no less a windfall than a satchel found filled with dollars isn't always what it's cracked up to be. Even Ralph Kramden knew that. It just made him nervous to talk about it. M

DUNN

[cont'd from page 80] medium and stay with it." That's exactly what Dunn's done. Through the 20 years of bass technique innovation since his Stax heyday, Dunn has stuck to what he does best. "My son does the thumb and pop thing, but I don't have a lot of chops," he says. "There's a certain tempo you pass where I'm useless, and if I can't do it good, I don't wanna do it." M

QUACKER BOX

ALTHOUGH it's been retired, Duck's still got his '58 Fender Precision and still uses LaBella strings "cause they were the original strings on those Fenders." Dunn lost the old Ampeg B15 he used on all those great Stax records; these days he prefers an Ampeg SVT. And he'll never part with his big blue Naugahyde monster. "I got a '67 Kustom amp. I love it."

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BACKSIDE



C O V E R B A N D S

MUSICIAN IS 15 YEARS OLD THIS MONTH. HAPPY birthday to us. This gives us an excuse to dust off the back issues and meditate on how we got this far while so many of our competitors have gone under. Yeah, we know what you're going to say: "*MUSICIAN* is better written, more honest, classier, funnier and smarter than other music magazines." Well yeah, sure. But what else?

Covers.

That's the real story, folks. You can put together the best magazine in the world, but if the mug on your cover doesn't pull in the joker walking past the newsstand, the issue bombs. So it's interesting, after 15 years, to see who's showed up on the cover of *MUSICIAN* the most.

The champ is **STING**. This issue's cover is Der Stinger's fifth—three covers on his own and two with the Police. No big surprise here: The Police were so closely associated with *MUSICIAN* that executive editor Vic Garbarini ended up leaving the magazine to work for Sting. Still, the singer's relationship with *MUSICIAN* has been volatile. After Peter Watrous' 1987 cover story "Slapping Sting Around" we figured he'd never speak to us again. When we'd bump into Sting socially he was always cordial (he walked up to Watrous at a party and shook hands not long after the article appeared) but that run-in left hard feelings. Last month we got in touch with Sting to get some quotes for a feature about David Sancious, and in the course of doing that he invited us to come do an interview during his European tour. He said he didn't mind if it wasn't a cover.

Two artists with nothing else in common have been on the front of *MUSICIAN* four times—**ELVIS COSTELLO** and **EDDIE VAN HALEN**. Elvis' fourth appearance—with Jerry Garcia a few months ago—was cooked up over Christmas, when another cover was cancelled at the last minute and everyone in the music biz was gone for the holidays. We called on Costello in London and Garcia in San Francisco. They both cleared their schedules and saved the day. (That's the sort of friendship that makes it embarrassing when one of our critics gives one of their albums a bad review—but that's also the price you pay for having honest critics.) Van Halen has fronted *MUSICIAN* alone, with David Lee Roth, with the Sammy Hagar line-up of his band, and—a few months back—with Steve Morse and Albert Lee. Right now Van Halen and *MUSICIAN* are feuding, but hey, if we could go from "Slapping Sting Around" to this issue's cover, there's hope for eventual reconciliation with Van Halen, too.

PETE TOWNSHEND has had the cover to himself once, another time with the Who, and has twice been the biggest figure on split covers. So Pete's sort of a four-timer. **PAUL McCARTNEY** has had the cover three times—but we once did a split cover that included a shot of the Beatles. Does that put Paul in the highest division? Probably not. Let's give Macca a solid three.

MICK JAGGER and **KEITH RICHARDS** are both triple-timers. Each has had one solo cover, there was one Mick & Keith cover, and one Rolling Stones cover. Other trifecta winners are **PRINCE**, **DAVID BOWIE**, **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**, **U2**,

JIMI HENDRIX, **TOM PETTY** and **ERIC CLAPTON**. **MARK KNOPFLER** has had two covers of his own and split one with Tina Turner. The duet with Costello was **JERRY GARCIA**'s third.

JONI MITCHELL, **STEVIE WONDER**, and **PINK FLOYD** have each had two solo covers, plus part of a split. Other two-timers are **MILES DAVIS**, **PETER GABRIEL**, **DAVID BYRNE**, **GEORGE HARRISON**, **CHRISSE HYNDE**, **BOB MARLEY**, **JEFF BECK**, **STEELY DAN**, **BILLY GIBBONS**, **SLASH**, **ROBERT PLANT**, **JIMMY PAGE**, **R.E.M.** and **SINÉAD O'CONNOR**.

Does that mean that all these covers sold well? Actually...no. The 33 artists who have had multiple *MUSICIAN* covers are a pretty good representation of the magazine's sensibility—call it rock with half a brain—but only a very few (Hendrix, Prince, U2) have cleaned up on the newsstand every time out. One of the great mysteries of magazine life is why one McCartney or Beck cover will go through the roof and another will flop. Or why a Phil Collins cover—that goes on sale just as his album and single hit number one and his arena tour sells out—dies a horrible death.

Luckily, for every sure thing that goes wrong there are leaps you take for love that pay unexpected rewards. When we put John Coltrane on the cover in 1987 we figured we were going to lose our shirts, but that issue was a smash. Common sense said our recent Robert Johnson cover would be a noble disaster, but it sold pretty well. Sometimes God has mercy on good intentions.

And finally, good intentions just might be what's kept *MUSICIAN* going all this time. **M**

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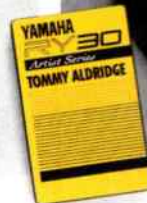
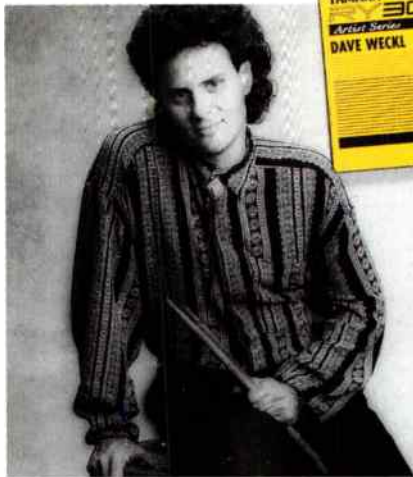
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