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World Radio History

A photograph of Richie Sambora, the lead guitarist of Bon Jovi, playing a white Fender Stratocaster guitar. He is wearing a black leather jacket and has long, dark hair. The background is dark with blue stage lighting. The guitar is the central focus, and the text is overlaid on the image.

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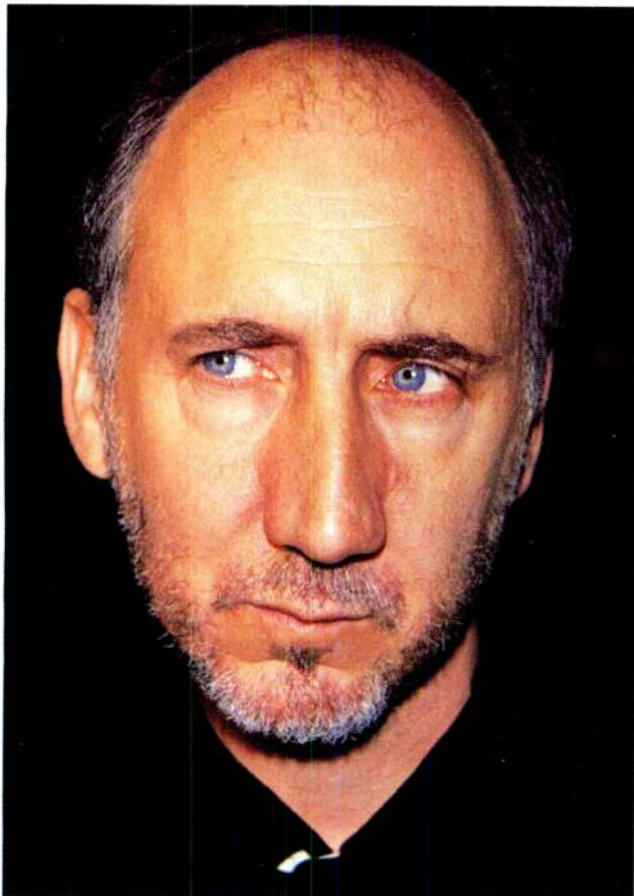
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World Radio History

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34 PETE TOWNSHEND: THE PUNK MEETS THE PHANTOM

What can a rock legend do when he can no longer tour? If he's Pete Townshend, he can try dragging rock toward the Broadway stage and radio plays. Townshend talks about rewiring *Tommy*, cooking up his new concept album *PsychoDerelect*, and all the stuff in between.

BY THOM DUFFY

WORKING MUSICIAN

67 DRUMS DIFFERENT DRUMSTICKS

If you think wood doesn't matter, think again. Pound for pound, the sound is in your hands. BY RICK MATTINGLY

68 GUITAR BRIAN MAY

Queen's maestro shares the secrets behind a fat sound and a great solo. BY MATT RESNICOFF

70 KEYBOARD SYNTH ARCHITECTURES

What happened to your synth vocabulary when digital stomped analog? An overview of the variations in digital synthesis.

BY TED GREENWALD

72 SURVIVAL WHY YOUR ROADIE HATES YOU

Make him work all day, pack all night, and then yell at him when you make a mistake. For starters. BY MATTY KARAS

74 DEVELOPMENTS

The new generation of microphone preamps. Also, E-mu updates a grand sampling tradition and G-Vox brings automated music education to guitarists. BY THE MUSICIAN MOOG NOODLERS

CONTENTS

MUSICIAN MAGAZINE
JULY 1993 • ISSUE NO. 177

7 FRONTMAN ROBERT PLANT

The hell with all this rock god posturing, says Plant, maybe those old hippie values were best after all. BY CHARLES M. YOUNG

18 PERFORMANCE VAN MORRISON

What could be better than the Celtic Cowboy in a good mood? BY MARK ROWLAND

21 STONE TEMPLE PILOTS

STP-From zero to 90 in 10 seconds.

BY CHRIS RUBIN

24 WHAT IF THE BEATLES BROKE UP IN '62?

John, a bitter old dole-jockey? Ringo, a Liverpool layabout? George, a defrocked priest? Paul, a Vegas lounge star? A new play offers an alternate history. BY BILL FLANAGAN

26 VICTORIA WILLIAMS

A bout with bad health can't deflate this blithe spirit; an all-star tribute album is a bonus. BY MARK ROWLAND

30 TERENCE BLANCHARD

His mind is moving even faster than his career, as Blanchard shifts his focus from improvisation to formal composition. BY JIM MACNIE

46 PRIMUS

When the going gets weird, the weird go gold. The ins and outs of a player's band that can admire Rush and headline Lollapalooza at the same time. Why them? Why now? What next?

BY CHARLES M. YOUNG

56 THE DAY AFTER YOU GET SIGNED

If you've been slogging through clubs for 10 years, sending out demos and getting rejection letters, signing a record deal seems like the pot of gold. But most musicians are not prepared for what happens next, which is why the world is full of sad stories.

BY BRUCE POLLOCK

60 THE WORST RECORD COMPANY PROVISIONS

Here's one for the day *before* you get signed—all the fine print that record labels try to get you to ignore while they're waving money under your nose. BY FRED GOODMAN

76 INDIE LABEL A&R LISTINGS

Complete list of independent label A&R contacts from *Musicians Guide to Touring and Promotion*.

98 20 YEARS OF SPRINGSTEEN

Bruce's first album came out in the spring of 1973. Here's a list of how it changed the two decades that followed. BACKSIDE

DEPARTMENTS

8 MASTHEAD

10 LETTERS

13 FACES

Martyn Joseph, Jungle Brothers, Giant Sand, more

85 RECORDINGS

Fagen, D'Arby, McKee, Ziggy and more

90 NEW RELEASES

95 READER SERVICE

COVER

Photograph of Les Claypool of Primus by Leslie Flores; of Larry Kirwan for "Getting Signed" by Andrew Brusso (model: Chrissie Buckley)

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ROBERT PLANT

Fate of Nations seems to be your most explicit political statement.

Not political. It's just a bit of conversation to the brothers and sisters.

You weren't referring to current events with the last two songs, "Great Spirit" and "Network News"?

Current since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution.

You must have been thinking about the war in Iraq.

Yeah. You discuss these things at home with your friends—the futility of the ever-decreasing circle we're spinning in. I wanted to use the CD booklet as a bit of a flyer, as a glossary of facts about the environment.

How did you come to work with Richard Thompson?

I've known him for years. The connection between Led Zeppelin and Fairport Convention may sound pretty tenuous, but in the old days we used to play the same towns, and we'd get together at clubs afterwards and do folk versions of Eddie Cochran songs. I often go to the Fairport Convention Annual Festival in August. I did some rehearsing with them this year, and I did "Girl from the North Country" and "Babe I'm Gonna Leave You," and "Ramble On." It was totally brilliant, and I was playing to a different vibe in the audience. This is one of the reasons why I moved my music a bit: I was so impressed that so many young people could still be masquerading as Deadheads. There was none of the competitive, rockist thing. So it was magnificent.

Thompson has a three-CD retrospective where all the relationship songs are about betrayal and torment. You still seem to have some optimism in that area.

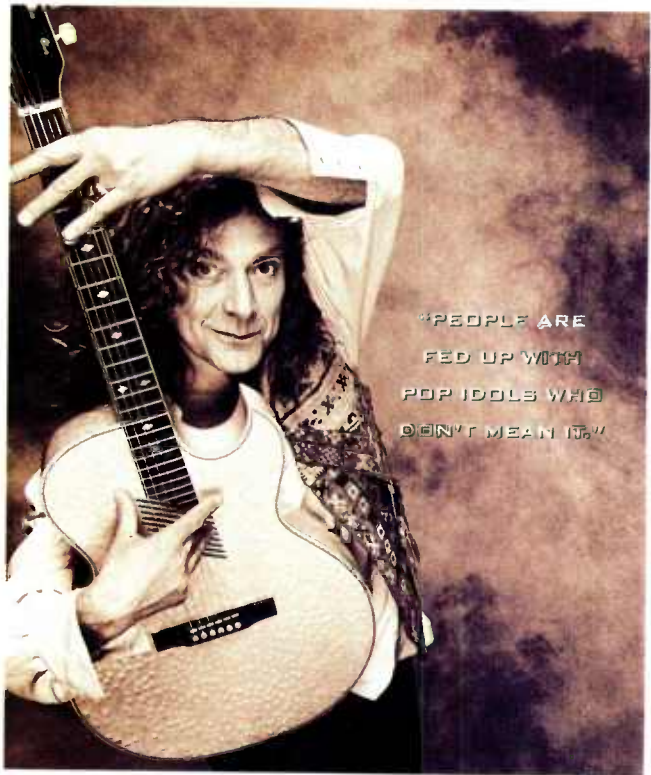
I still got my hair left!

This album seems to represent a back-to-the-future transition, almost like you're saying, "I'm just an old hippie."

Hmmm. When I got back from the *Manic Nirvana* tour, I was desperate to keep working. I'd told my manager to book me gigs in Laramie, Sioux City, any high school gymnasium. I wanted to sing. I can't give a fuck about making records and doing this shit. I wanted to do what I did at 17 and play five shows a week. And when I got home, I was absolutely shattered. I'd been listening to Rapeman and Black Flag and all this incredible aggression that has been the alternative to Phil Collins, but now I wanted peace. And I pulled out the vinyl and there they all were, waiting for me, still smiling from those album covers. Well, Blue Cheer was looking very serious, and they were a bit crap. But I put these old records on, and the amazing thing was, Jesse Colin Young meant what he was saying. He wasn't part of some alternative scene, which was alternative for the sake of it. He was part of a movement, a whole culture of optimism. "Get Together," "Darkness Darkness." And Arthur Lee came sweeping in the sitting room, and I started thinking about Janis Joplin backstage at the Texas Pop Festival. And I went to an underground record store in London and bought every single deviation of Moby Grape music. Even wrote to Moby Grape—they're the Melvilles now and they live in Seattle. I found my route again. I found that hippy dippy shit. I found the essence of it all.

Because everybody's fed up with people trying too hard. The corporate mold was only developing when Grace was singing "Somebody to Love," but we didn't know it at the time. People were doing it without any record

FRONT MAN



"PEOPLE ARE
FED UP WITH
POP IDOLS WHO
DON'T MEAN IT."

company involvement, without manipulation, without personality zoning. I think people are fed up with pop idols who don't mean it. Did you know that Wavy Gravy's manager contacted us after *Manic Nirvana* came out? We sampled him on "Tie Dye."

Was he demanding royalties?

No, he just wanted to know why. And I said, because it was one of those wonderful moments, a Biblical scene, the ultimate psychedelic Five Loaves and Four Fishes. "Breakfast in bed for 400,000"—what a line! One of the greatest things for me now is to listen to Hendrix on *Woodstock II*, his dialogue between songs. It's great, man! He's talking about love and fucking peace!

Is that why there's more emphasis on beauty on this album, and less on adrenaline?

That's right. I wanted to enter the obscurity channel discreetly, I guess, and prepare for middle age. Like "If I Were a Carpenter." That was a song I used to play with Bonham, before we knew Jimmy Page. We were both desperate, and I would have left him instantly for a break, and he would have left me too. So when we played important gigs, he set his drums up at the front of the stage, so I had to stand behind the cymbals to sing. That always happened at the Speakeasy in London, when we knew that Keith Moon or Pete Townshend would be in the audience. I saw the old bass player for the Band of Joy about three weeks ago. He'd heard "If I Were a Carpenter" and he said, "What happened to the freak-out in the middle when Bonzo used to smash the cymbals against the wall?"

CHARLES M. YOUNG

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BILLBOARD MUSIC GROUP
GROUP PUBLISHER: HOWARD LANDER

MUSICIAN (USPS 431-910), 33 Commercial St., Gloucester, MA 01930 (508) 281-3110, is published monthly by BPI Communications, 1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036. © 1993 by BPI Communications, all rights reserved. Second class postage paid at Gloucester, MA 01930 and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions \$19.97 per year, \$34.97 for two years, \$52.97 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 1-800-347-6969 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. BPI Communications President and Chief Executive Officer: Gerald S. Hobbs; Vice Chairman & Chief Operating Officer: Arthur F. Kingsbury; Executive Vice Presidents: John Babcock, Jr., Robert J. Dowling, Martin R. Feely, Howard Lander; Senior Vice Presidents: Paul Curran, Ann Haire, Rosalee Lovett; Vice Presidents: Georgina Challis, Glenn Heffernan

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Thanks to Joe Nick Patoski and Bill Crawford for the great article on Stevie Ray Vaughan (May '93).

David Harvey
Tracy, CA

Stevie Ray Vaughan was neither a god nor an egotistical monster. His ability to overcome the many obstacles to fame and his own weaknesses are just as inspiring as his awesome guitar work.

Tracy Lewis
Danville, VA

Your article on Stevie Ray Vaughan was outstanding. I had the pleasure of seeing Stevie Ray four times in concert; he was the best.

Joel Lynn Clausen
Omaha, NE

Please thank Joe Nick Patoski and Bill Crawford for their enlightening piece on Stevie Ray Vaughan. I found their account of Stevie at the Bottom Line opening for the overblown Bryan Adams very satisfying. One small correction: The caption under the 1972 photograph of Krackerjack calls Tommy Shannon the "future Johnny Winter bassist." The last Winter album Shannon appears on is *Second Winter*, released in late 1969. Johnny then formed Johnny Winter And with Rick Derringer. Lou Ann Barton should have reached Vaughan's level of celebrity. The reason why she didn't may be partially her fault. The very talented Lou Ann has tried to pick me up at two concerts: one at Antone's, the other at Rockefeller's. After reading the article, I was mortified to find out that she may have only been "teasing." Oh well!

Bill Campbell
Alief, TX

The man next to Stevie Ray Vaughan on page 41 of your May

LETTERS

'93 issue is not whoever you say it is, but guitarist Robin Syler, who leads a fine group called Robin Syler and the Skulls.

Tim Schuller
Dallas, TX

I was at first excited to hear that Stevie Ray Vaughan's biography was coming out, but you have spared me the trouble of actually buying it. After getting a flavor of the book's tone, I will not be purchasing a copy.

It is true that Stevie Ray rose above a troubled past and it is true that the story of his early career is full of some pretty sordid details. These details certainly are part of his identity and should not be left out of any complete biography. The author's telling of that story, however, smacks of tabloid journalism not worthy of the gentility and grace which marked Mr. Vaughan's true character (and, incidentally, which came through in the interviews he conducted with your magazine). So I will choose to remember the man in light of the love expressed in his music, and leave the sensationalizing to others who care for that sort of thing. God rest his soul.

Ken Kitzman
Columbia, MD

KARL VS. KRAV

Karl Wallinger's comments regarding Lenny Kravitz's songwriting ability (May '93) struck me as particularly laughable. Both artists are capable of moderately pleasant if overly derivative pop songs, but while Kravitz may be guilty of an occasional clumsy lyric, at least he rarely lapses into the preachy and pretentious psy-

chobabble Wallinger seems to favor. Get over yourself, Karl. Genius? I feel another laughing fit coming on.

Sam D. Wehunt
Atlanta, GA

PRINCE POSITION

Just a short note to annihilate the disillusioned Ms. Kratz (*Letters*, April '93). First of all, if she doesn't think that Prince is original, somebody needs to introduce her to the dictionary. Secondly, what the hell does politics have to do with music? *Nothing*. If you want politics, turn on CNN. If you want music, turn on the radio. U2 is the biggest and best band in the world? Everyone is entitled to their own *opinion*, Rachel.

In closing, let the record reflect that Prince waves his butt all over the TV because he can, he wears chains on his face because he is the personification of innovative fashion and style, and he sings songs proclaiming his name because...well, because he's Prince.

Gordon T. Crowley
San Diego, CA

SUPER GOO

Kudos on Roy Trakin's review of Goo Goo Dolls' *Superstar Carwash* (April '93). It is about time this excellent group received the critical accolades they are now enjoying. However, the lyrics printed in the review are not from the Westerberg-penned "We Are the Normal," but the album's closing tune, "So Far Away." Long live the Goos!

Brett Essler
Lockport, NY

I hadn't turned on to Eddie Vedder until recently, but hearing what he had to say about Marky Mark (March '93) made me want to go right out and buy a stack of Pearl Jam albums.

Like Vedder and many others, I too cherish the thought of a music industry free of talentless, trouserless posers like Marky Mark—people who sell records on the basis of "having attitude," a smart mouth, God-given good looks and access to gym equipment.

Geoff Healey
Hobart, Australia

HISTORICAL HARVEY

Thank you for the great article about PJ Harvey (May '93). She is a courageous and talented musician, and I look forward to hearing more of her work.

It saddens me that Harvey, like many women of her generation, so easily shrugs off the word "feminism." Harvey, of course, is a feminist: She lives on her own terms in a male-dominated world, and insists on being judged on the basis of her own talents. She is indebted to women such as Patti Smith and Joni Mitchell in the same way Michael Jordan is indebted to Jackie Robinson. We all create our own stories, but none of us can live outside history.

Laura Kaminker
New York, NY

ERATO

The label for the latest Lounge Lizards release, *Lounge Lizards Live in Berlin 1991, Volume 1*, was incorrectly noted in our May issue. The album is available from Intuition Records, 636 Broadway, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10012.

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Martyn Joseph

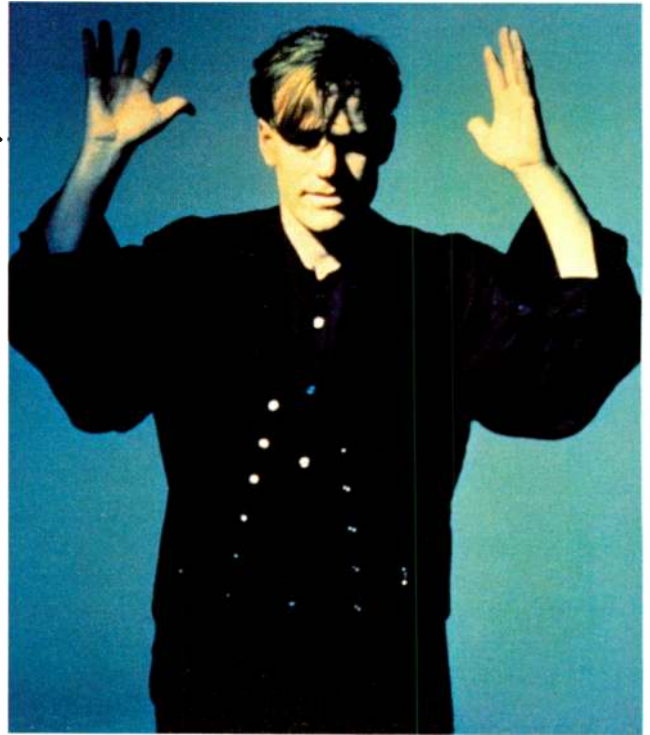
Singer/Songwriter Plays Through

How many singer/songwriters attribute their careers to the fact that they couldn't quite cut it in the world of professional golf?

"People thought that I was really gonna go places," confides Welsh-born Martyn Joseph, referring to life on the links. "It was only when I was about 23 or 24 that I really considered music as a living, because my main ambition at that point was to make it as a golfer. It wasn't a matter of which one do I do, it was just the fact that the golf didn't work out."

It should be some consolation that Martyn Joseph's other career appears to be sailing straight for the green. After supplementing eight years of gig income with the sale of limited-dub cassettes, Joseph "put some money together, made a CD and actually did a proper job." Released three years back on Joseph's own Shark label, *An Aching and a Longing* sold an impressive 30,000 copies and cut a swath to the major labels.

Being There is Martyn Joseph's first brush with serious studio recording, and his tone betrays the feeling that devoting six months to the project borders on the decadent. Produced by Ben Wisch, the basic tracks were cut in England and then schlepped to New York's



Quad studios, where Wisch had previously recorded Grammy-winner Marc Cohn.

"My favorite artists were always people that dragged you *back* into the reality. I find it difficult to write 'I love you baby'-type songs because I can only write about things I've observed or am actually feeling at the time." Joseph adds, with a chuckle, "And because I'm a fairly happily married man, I don't go through all these relationships."

JOHN S.P. WALKER

Jungle Brothers Coleman-ation



L to R: Mike G, Afrika, Sammy B, Torture

A lot of people got jobs because of us," says Afrika Baby Bambaataa of the Jungle Brothers, without malice. While other hip-hoppers have built on their use of jazz riffs and created country-fied versions of their Afrocentric, spiritual focus, the Brothers' careers have been sitting in arrested development. 1989's *Done by the Forces of Nature* didn't dent the charts, most likely because rap couldn't sustain more than one or two groundbreaking records a year at that time. The JB's pushed hip-hop's envelope without having De La Soul's easy, after-school-project appeal or Public Enemy's infectious polemicism.

"We have no preconceived notions of how a rap record should be put together," continues Afrika, and the new *J.Beez Wit The Remedy* bears this out. It varies in tone from hard-edged to sensuous to what can only be called post-Ornette Coleman hip-hop. Cuts like "Spittin Wicked Randomness" and "For the Headz at Company Z," in all their arrhythmic, hook-less glory, perhaps finally deliver on rap's promise to be the new jazz.

The "remedy" the JB's cite in the album title, according to Afrika, is just "the reality of life. The diversity. When I met with Ornette Coleman, he told me, 'Make music that allows you to be you, and the listeners to be themselves.' A lot of the group's spirituality is manifested in the dynamics of the songs. Not everything is up front in your face—things appear and fade away. The way life is." NATHAN BRACKETT

FACES

Manifesto

From Mosh to Melody

Manifesto are examining the comparisons they've endured in their four years together. Bassist Bert Querioz strokes his whiskers, searching for a good one. "We've been termed 'techno-folk'... I don't know what that means...."

"Well, the Raspberries reference certainly threw *me*..." muses drummer Ivor Hanson. "Yeah, *that* was a bit weird..." Guitarist Michael Hampton's eyes bug admirably. Reviews from last year's U.K. tour average one Big Star reference per.

Their debut *Manifesto* braids a fine jangly influence with the dual human/electro rhythms which punctuate the album. But what mainly goads scribes to cry "Pop!" is that the now New York-based trio emerged from Washington, D.C.'s hardcore scene: Querioz served in Youth Brigade and the Untouchables, while Hampton and Hanson are veterans of SOA (with a pre-Black Flag Henry Rollins), Fugazi progenitor Embrace with Ian MacKaye, and, in between, a two-year stint in Faith with Ian's brother Alec. Hanson even served a stint in Fugazi before opting out to finish college, though when Manifesto emerged in 1989, it was turned away from Fugazi's label for being musically incorrect.



L to R: Michael Hampton, Bert Querioz, Ivor Hanson

The trio views its current sound as an evolution and takes pride in its heritage. But the band is decidedly unsentimental about hardcore; Hampton goes so far as to liken thrash to another beloved dinosaur genre. "Hardcore has the same relevance as rockabilly... it's enjoyable, but more or less stuck in its place in rock history. At the time it was the most exciting thing happening, but music should evolve and change after a certain number of years. That's what we've tried to do."

JOHN S.P. WALKER

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FACES

The Devlins

Drift from the Animal Hospital

The Chelsea Drugstore couldn't get what they wanted, much less what they needed. However, now named after band leaders Colin and Peter Devlin, the group is getting plenty of both. But how did guitarist Larry Hogan and drummer Joey Pleaff respond to the name change? "Fine," says lead singer Colin. "Being in the Devlins is better than being in a band that's not signed."

Their full-length debut, *Drift*, is a spare, spirited album that draws from Dylan, Van Morrison and Jimi Hendrix, while sounding totally '90s. Colin's plaintive spoken lyrics sear through "Everytime You Go," while his wistful, melodic voice wraps around the bittersweet "I Don't Want to Be Like This."

After producing demos at a home studio that were strong enough to get them a record deal, the band signed with Capitol and began working on their U.K.-only EP, *Live Bait, Dead Bait*. The majority of *Drift* was produced by Malcolm Burn, with the Blue Nile's Robert Bell chipping in on one track. Huge fans of both producers, Colin and Peter sheepishly admit they met them both while drunk on different occasions at separate parties and approached them about working on their project. "It worked out great," Colin says. "Malcolm really



PHOTOGRAPH: DANNY CLINCH

The Devlins: Colin (L) and Peter

helped strip away the layers we didn't need."

Although *Drift* was recorded at various studios around the world, including Daniel Lanois' Kingsway and George Martin's Air, the band has expanded the primitive set-up in the back of the Devlins' house, formerly an animal hospital used by their veterinarian father. Peter and Colin have facetiously dubbed the facility City Morgue Studios.

"So many animals were slaughtered there, we feel like it's one of those Indian burial grounds," says Colin.

MELINDA NEWMAN

STEVE MILLER BAND, WIDE RIVER

The long-awaited new studio album



STEVE MILLER BAND MOVES INTO THE FUTURE ON "WIDE RIVER"

The unmistakable sound of summer '93

See Steve Miller on tour with Paul Rodgers

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FACES

Giant Sand *Desert Visions*

Part sensitive father, part bohemian bandleader, Howe Gelb of Giant Sand makes his own rules. A native of Pennsylvania, he moved to Tucson, Arizona, after a one-year stint in New York in an attempt to put together a band. "I wasn't good enough to play anyone else's songs," he says. "I could never play in a local cover band. My ear works backwards."

That backwards quality contributes mightily to Giant Sand's music, which is as hallucinatory as the shimmering heat in the vast stretches of Arizona sky. Their ninth album *The Center of the Universe* continues the tradition of psychedelic rant with a revolving crew of musicians.

"Giant Sand isn't so much a band as an elimination of what we can't put up with," Howe explains. "It's like tea leaves—what you're left with after you're done drinking the tea."

Recorded during a frenetic two-and-a-half weeks in Venice Beach, *Center's* songs range from "Milkshake Girl," about making love during an earthquake, to the more gut-wrenching and solitary "Stuck." With lyrics like "never owned a house or a car/I'm just a renter... Welcome to the center of you," the title track most effectively captures their zen-and-the-art-of-being-a-High-Plains-drifter essence.



L to R: Joe Burns, Howe Gelb, John Convertino

"It's difficult to explain," says Gelb. "When we first started rehearsing songs for this album, we went out to the Joshua Tree in July. It was too hot to even wear our headphones, so we just started playing anything, making up words and not even writing them down."

Gelb compensated by leaving his songs on friends' answering machines. "The other day my daughter came up with the best song as we were driving in the rain," says Gelb. "She was looking out the window, and she came up with this beautiful song about people driving around heaven in their cars. But we didn't get to a phone booth on time and she forgot most of it. And that's the biggest problem in life: We forget all the knowledge we had as children. We should learn from them, but they trust us and try to be like us. And then they turn into us."

MARISA FOX

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POCAHONTAS
STRINGMAN
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THE NEEDLE AND THE DAMAGE DONE
HELPLESS
HARVEST MOON
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UNKNOWN LEGEND
LOOK OUT FOR MY LOVE
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FROM HANK TO HENDRIX



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World Radio History

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ON STAGE



VAN MORRISON

AFTER THE JURY FOR RODNEY King II sequestered itself on Good Friday, L.A. spent the weekend in somber limbo, as if waiting for word of the judgment on itself. So it was fitting that Van Morrison should arrive—arise?—on Easter Sunday evening at the Shrine Auditorium downtown, and bestow upon that sold-out mecca a performance of such assurance and generosity to suggest, at least to Morrison's patient believers, that some kind of redemption was at hand.

Understand that Van the Man, who is right up there with Neil and Bob for greatest living whatever, and whose records are certainly the most consistently enduring of the bunch, is far from a sure orgasm when it comes to performing live. Too sincere or vulnerable or maybe prickly to fake it, he's often seemed awkward in his showman role, as if self-consciously

aware of the giant shadows cast by R&B heroes like Jackie Wilson and James Brown. His last go-round with slick bandleader Georgie Fame found Van sluffing off the classics in a deprecating medley, and even abandoning the stage for stretches while Fame gamely went on with the show.

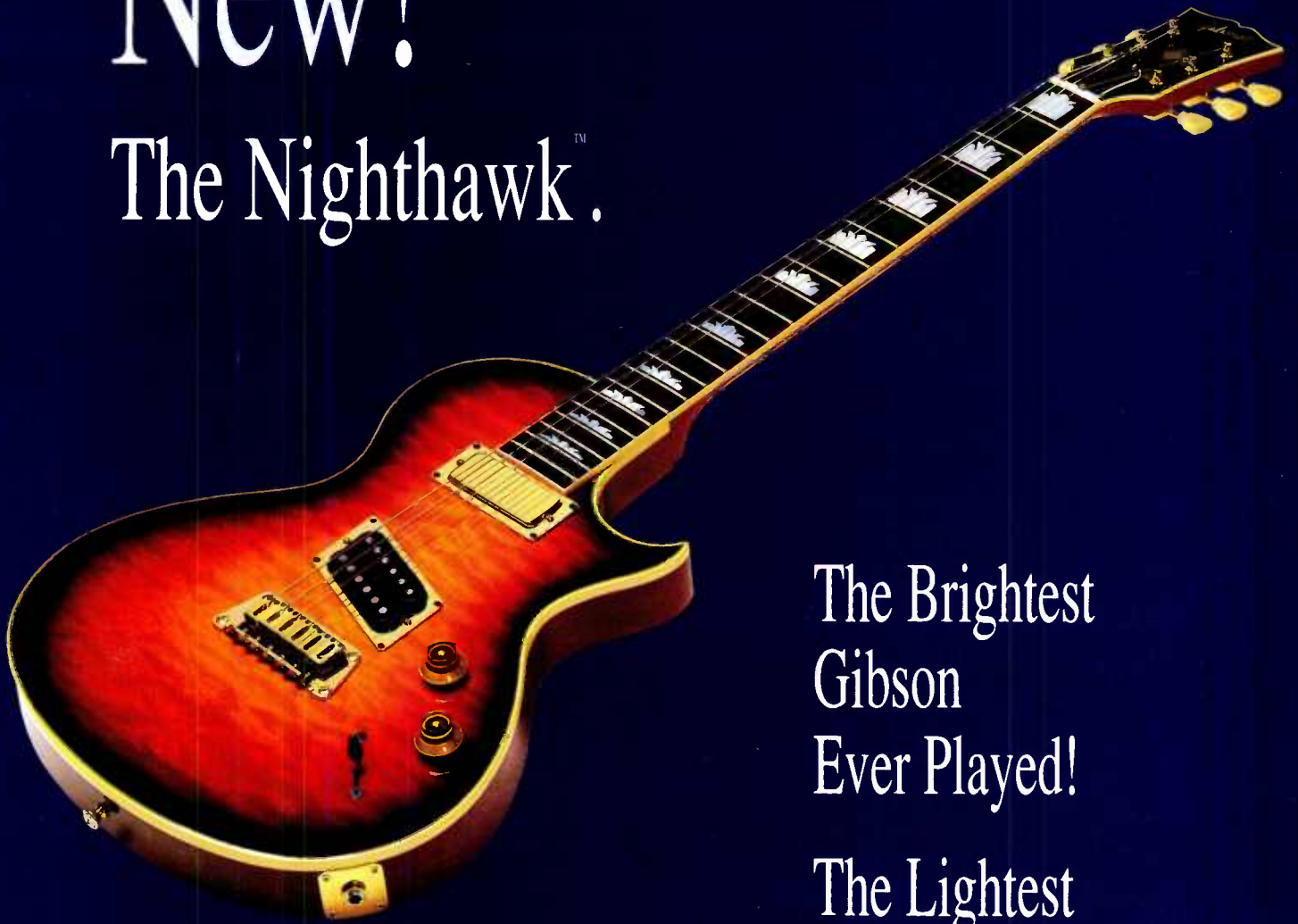
But his concert at the Shrine was the stuff of fan dreams, featuring a confident bandleader in fine voice and performing a repertoire which wove together the mystic and gritty strands of his epic career, undulating backwards from "Why Must I Always Explain" to the euphoric encore "G-L-O-R-I-A." Heck, even Van's clothes were color-coordinated. Not to mention his backing sextet, whose tight, unobtrusive rhythms, creamy vocal harmonies and crack soloists—particularly fleet-fingered John Savannah on Hammond organ and Teena Lyle's salsa flavorings on vibes and assorted percussion—allowed Morrison to uncork his older wine from fresher bottles. "Moondance" was recast as the blow-

ing jazz standard it has become; "Domino" packed its punch at a clipped, bright tempo; and a languid, Spanish-tinged arrangement of "Brown Eyed Girl" rained over the crowd like sugar.

For all that, there was little doubt whose instrument everyone really came to hear, for Van is simply one of the soulful singers of the age. Physically he's about as flamboyant as a bowling pin, but there's no lack of pop stars who could learn about the power of economy in the nuanced phrasings of his "Lonely Avenue" blues, or the easy reverie within which Morrison folded together such laments and meditations as "Real Real Gone," "In the Daring Night" and "Since I Fell for You" into his ballad of spiritual enchantment, "In the Garden." Like a great jazz solo, he walked that tightrope so well you never felt his strain, only the intimacy created by sharing such grace. And then we *were* all alone in the garden, just you and me and Van, and the father and the son and the holy ghost. —MARK ROWLAND

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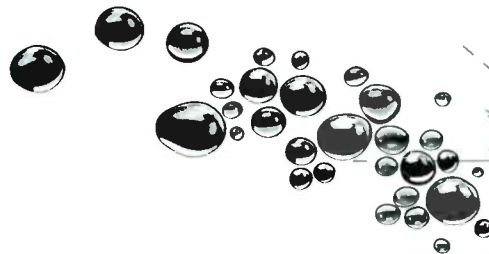
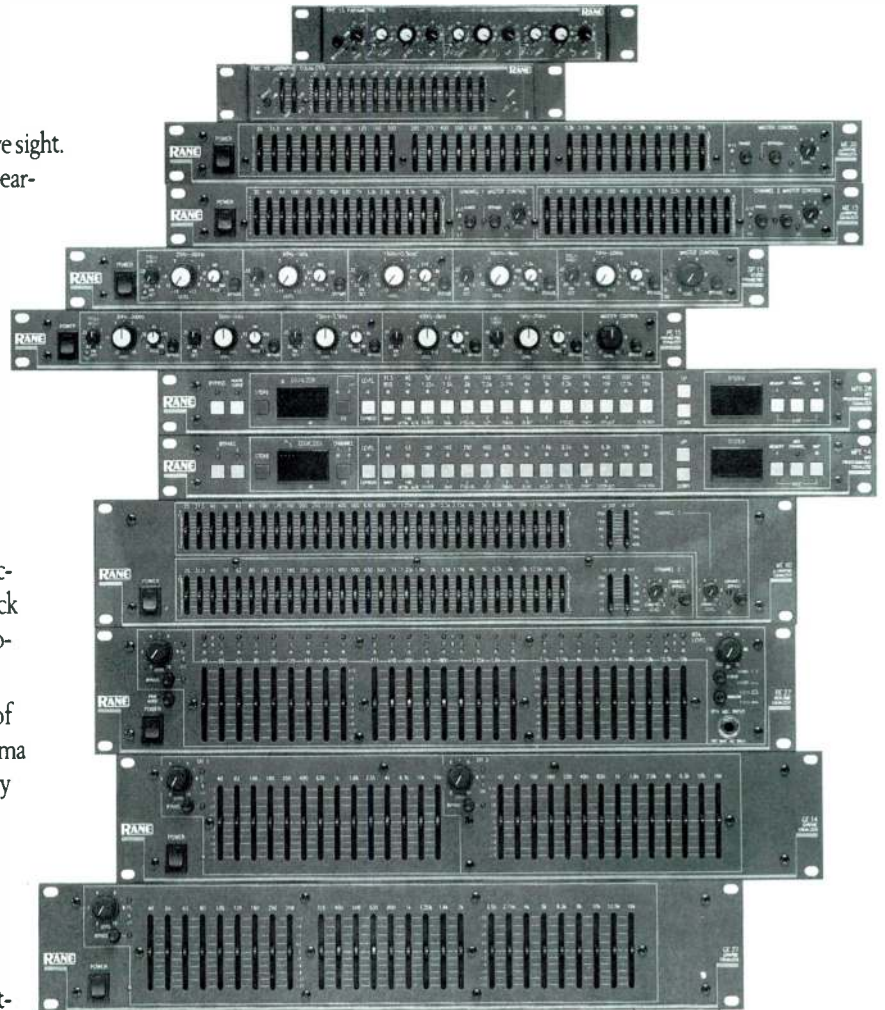
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STONE TEMPLE PILOTS TAKE OFF

STP L-R;

ROBERT DELEO,
DEAN DELEO,
SCOTT WEILAND,
ERIC KRETZ



THE MEMBERS OF STONE TEMPLE PILOTS CERTAINLY LOOK LIKE THE latest gaggle of hard-rockers who've turned up their amps to 11. Guitarist Dean DeLeo has Steve Tyler's pouty lips, long hair streaked with splashes of color and a tiny dagger laced around his neck, while his brother Robert, who plays bass, brings to mind actor Keith Carradine. Pink-haired singer and songwriter Weiland is lean and generously tattooed, resembling Rob Halford genetically enhanced with Chili Peppers abdominals. Only drummer Eric Kretz, sporting a thoughtful goatee, looks much at home here among the sprouts and vegetarian ambience of the Los Angeles health food restaurant the band has chosen for today's grazing.

But that's typical fare for a hard rock band who thank Jesus in the liner notes of their debut album, *Core*, and whose songs stake out an anti-sexist agenda within a genre hardly known for such ideals. The group's dense layers of guitar noise, until recently anathema to commercial radio, have in the post-Nirvana era become considerably more welcome there, as the group's members can testify—out of nowhere

BY CHRIS RUBIN

Core has recently shot into the Top 20. But the Pilots navigate those airwaves with a wide range of musical textures and subject matter.

Still it's a down-and-dirty sound, with kick-ass beats and, yes, grungy guitar, while Weiland's low growl bears some passing resemblance to Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder. But comparisons tend to rankle. "I've never been a 'grunge' guy, or a heavy metal guy or a punk guy," Weiland explains. "I'm into waking up in the morning, making coffee and putting on a Frank Sinatra record."

Like a zillion other hopefuls, the guys in STP

*"It's a rock type thing—
but don't misunderstand"*

arrived in Los Angeles from other parts of the country—the DeLeos from New Jersey, Weiland from Ohio, Kretz from northern California—to realize their musical ambitions. But after a chance meeting between Robert and Weiland at a Black Flag show led to forming the band six years ago, they quickly soured on a scene where haircuts seemed to count for more than chops. So they moved to San Diego. "It's an entirely different vibe," Dean explains. "Club owners were more than willing to let us play without knowing who we were, what we were about. It wasn't as jaded as in Los Angeles, and it still isn't."

While growing up, Scott Weiland—he stopped using his first name years ago—was "a member of the Kiss Army," and a fan of the Bay City Rollers. His tastes toughened after witnessing the do-it-yourself ethic of southern California punk bands like Agent Orange. He credits R.E.M.'s *Murmur* for "changing my whole idea about music."

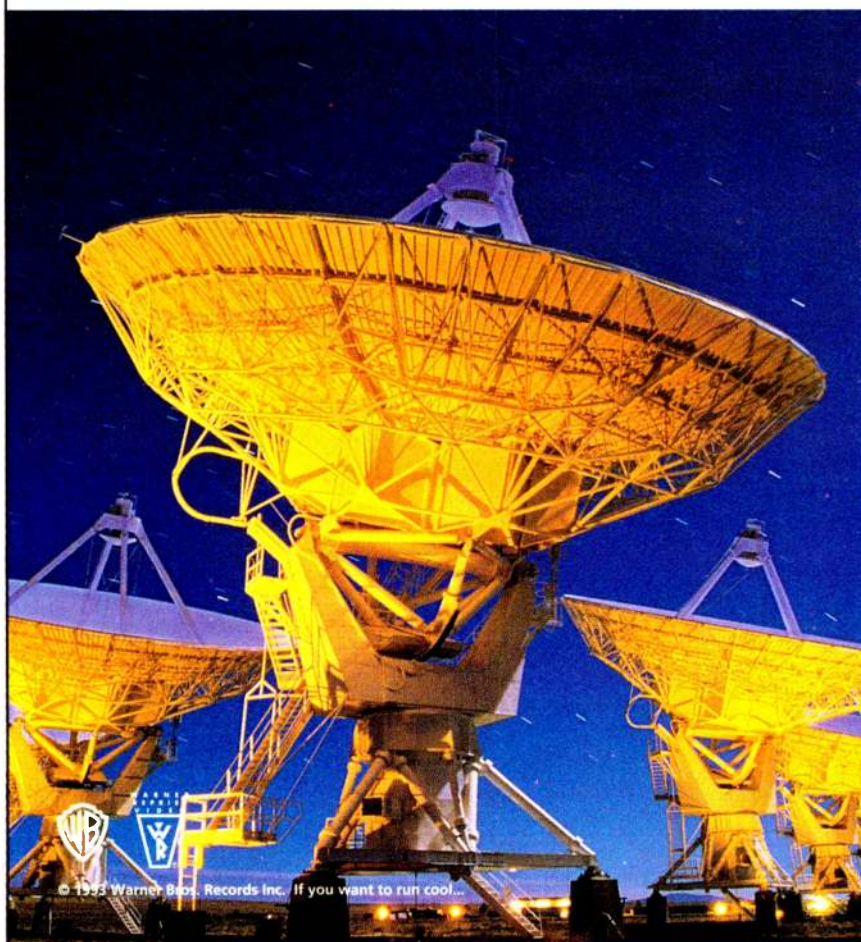
Dean's early vinyl ranged from progressive to hard rock to punk, "and of course your basic food group—Zeppelin, Sabbath and the Beatles." The first of the siblings to pick up the guitar, "I really had to wrestle with it," he admits. "I'm self-taught, and I think I'm tone-deaf." Robert, by contrast, was a "natural. We needed a bass player for a gig one week, and he'd never touched a bass before. He picked it up in a couple of days." Dean actually left music for the business world at one point, and was the last of the four to join the Pilots, following drummer Kretz, who'd met the others while studying jazz at a local college. But for all his modesty, he's a guitar player with a lean, muscular sound, and his lead playing is concise and potent. Unortho-

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dox tunings help distinguish his voicings and play well off the sonic storm emanating from Robert's Marshalls, Kretz's spare, solid stick-work and Weiland's gravelly hell howl.

The Stone Temple Pilots also point to the strong if undefinable influence of the Three Stooges (they carry videotapes of Curly, Larry and Moe on tour), though humor has yet to manifest itself in their songs. Quite the contrary, the band's themes are decidedly gloomy, from the sexual harassment/date rape theme of "Sex Type Thing" to more impressionistic songs overflowing with images of fire, guns, knives and death. "We may write about darker feelings, but it's a chance to turn emotional pain into something beautiful," Weiland says. "Sex Type Thing," their best-known track, is a case in point; the combination of a menacing lyric and dark musical textures suggests the soundtrack for a murder story. But while the first-person narrative could be read as an endorsement of the macho attitude, Weiland's intentions are clearly opposite, a point the band tries to make clear by performing at women's rights benefits.

Now that their record is doing well, the band isn't impressed by success. Of course they're happy that people like the music. "But what's strange," says Weiland, "is the more our popularity grows, people tend to have the opinion that successful artists and musicians are not made of flesh and blood or don't have human feelings. There's not a lot of respect for who you really are." Dean concurs: "The industry doesn't give a shit about who you are. You're just a product, whored out to do certain things."

One good thing, Weiland admits. "We get to treat our girlfriends better. We met them when we were still in the clubs and we didn't have any money. Now, we can buy them a slice of pizza once in a while." 

STONE IMPLEMENTS

WEILAND wails through a Shure SM58 mike. DEAN DELEO strums SIT strings (.010 through .046) on two 1978 Les Paul Standards going into a VHT Classic amp, a Demeter Tri-modal preamp, a MIDI'd Intelliverb and a stereo output through two Marshall 4x12s and 30-watt Celestions. ROBERT DELEO has two Sunset Custom Schecter Jazz basses rigged with SIT strings, with a QSC MX-1500 into Alembic FIX and Sansamp preamps into two Eden D410T cabinets and two DZ10T cabinets. ERIC KRETZ bangs away on Ford drums, DW pedals and Paiste Signature series cymbals.

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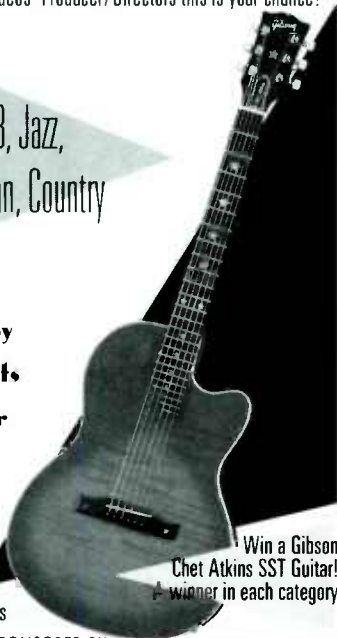
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1. Send the following with each entry: **a.** Completed entry form (or photocopy). All signatures must be original. **b.** One audio cassette recording for the song contest or VHS video cassette recording for the video category, including your name and address on cassette. Only VHS video cassettes accepted for the video category. **c.** Lyrics typed or printed legibly in English. In latin category, lyrics may be written in Spanish with an English translation. In jazz category, lyrics not required. **d.** Check or money order made payable to 5th Annual Billboard Song Contest or credit card approval for \$15.00 (U.S.) for each entry submitted. **CONTESTANT'S NAME, ADDRESS, AND SONG TITLE MUST APPEAR ON EACH ITEM ALONG WITH ANY CO-AUTHOR'S NAMES (IF APPLICABLE).**

2. Mail entries to: 5th Annual Billboard Song Contest P.O. Box 35346, Tulsa, OK 74153-0346. ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN AUGUST 31, 1993.

3. **SONGWRITING ENTRIES:** Each song submitted must be contestants original work. Songs may be no longer than five minutes. **VIDEO PRODUCTION ENTRIES:** Songs do not have to be original. Video may be no longer than ten minutes. Video production prizes will be awarded to the video producers/directors name on the winning entry forms. Contestant may enter as many songs as he/she wishes, but each song must have its own entry form and be recorded on separate cassette accompanied by typed or printed lyric sheet. Check or money order must reflect the total number of entries submitted. Contestant may enter in more than one category, however each submission constitutes a separate entry, requiring its own entry form, entry fee, cassette and lyrics. Entry fee is not refundable. Copyright registration is not required. If song is registered, contestants must put copyright notices on entries and file under U.S. copyright laws. Billboard Song Contest not responsible for entries late, lost, damaged, misdirected, mailed with insufficient postage, stolen or misappropriated. **CASSETTES AND LYRICS WILL NOT BE RETURNED.**

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6. Winners will be selected by a Blue Ribbon Panel under supervision of Laughton Promotional Marketing, an independent judging agency whose decision in all matters pertaining to contest is final. Blue Ribbon Panel will be comprised of noted professional songwriters and other music industry professionals who may be substituted due to availability or at contest discretion. Semi-finalists will be selected for consideration by Blue Ribbon Panel by preliminary panels supervised by songwriting professionals. All song entries judged equally on Originality, Lyrics, Melody and Composition. Production and performance quality not considered. No duplicate winners in a single category. Video production prize winners entries judged equally on Creativity, Originality, Concept, Visual Techniques, and Aesthetic Composition. Winners will be determined by 1/31/94. No transfer and no substitution of prizes except as necessary due to availability, in which case prize of equal or greater value will be awarded. Division of prizes among co-authors is responsibility of winners and awarded to first name on entry form. All prizes will be awarded. Taxes responsibility of winners. Void where prohibited. All Federal, State and Local laws and regulations apply.

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For additional entry form or winners list, send self-addressed stamped envelope to: 5TH ANNUAL BILLBOARD SONG CONTEST (PLEASE SPECIFY ENTRY FORM OR WINNERS LIST) P.O. BOX 35346, TULSA, OK 74153-0346. Requests for entry forms must be received by July 31, 1993. Requests for winners list must be received by January 15, 1994. If you have any questions regarding contest call 918-627-0351. Mon-Fri between 9am and 5pm central time.

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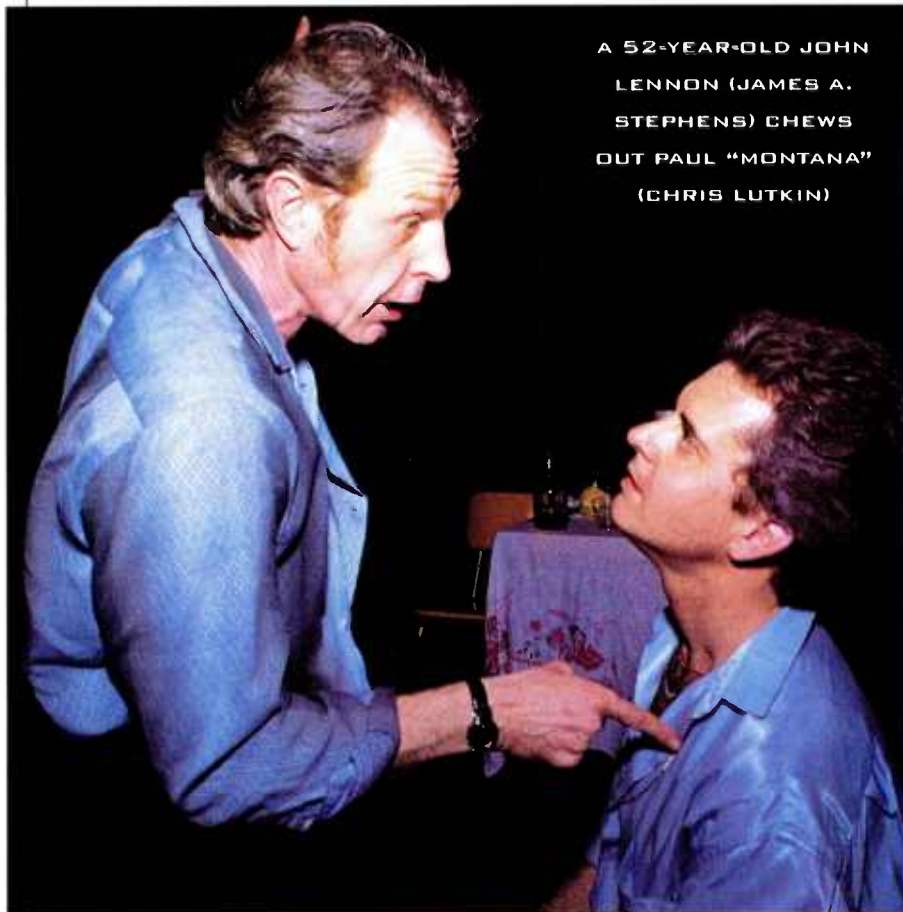
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MUSIC MAG

YESTERDAY AND TODAY

A 52-YEAR-OLD JOHN LENNON (JAMES A. STEPHENS) CHEWS OUT PAUL "MONTANA" (CHRIS LUTKIN)




achieves real resonance by avoiding the temptation to play up every irony and easy laugh. John, with his puns, nasty jokes and burning jealousy of his old mate Paul, is not the Lennon we knew in real life, but a recognizable extrapolation of what Lennon might have become if his talent had never been recognized or rewarded. Paul is a glad-handing bullshit artist who didn't hesitate to change his name and his accent to make it big in the States. At first you feel playwright Kirwan is being too cruel to McCartney, but eventually the play makes clear that Paul Montana, Vegas legend, was as cripped

What would have happened if the Beatles broke up in 1962?

by the Beatles breakup as the bitter Lennon. The difference between them is that Paul doesn't show his pain, while John revels in his.

We've all been to parties like this—the old bandmates embarrassing their wives with talk of how they were just one big break away from stardom. Halfway through *Liverpool Fantasy* the lives of the Beatles on stage seem far more realistic than the extraordinary thing that really happened. It is the curse of the play's Lennon that he can imagine what might have been.

What will make *Liverpool Fantasy* resonate for musicians is its underlying theme of the importance of collaboration to great art. Kirwan suggests that John without Paul could never get beyond Menlove Avenue or his cynical view of the world. (John snickers with contempt when Paul tries to tell him about the benefits of Primal Scream therapy.) Paul without John has great ideas for songs but they remain incomplete. At one point he sings the melody of "Yesterday" with idiotic lyrics about Dan Quayle. One of the play's biggest laughs comes when George and Ringo try to help Paul remember "She Loves You," a song he never finished.

Kirwan also suggests how different the world would have been if the Beatles had not come along to revitalize rock and make progressive ideas trendy. The fascist National Front shares political power with the Tories in this imagined England. Rock 'n' roll died out years ago; aside from Paul, the only British singers to make it big internationally were Tom Jones and Engelbert Humperdinck. It is Kirwan's great accomplishment that by showing us the dull musical world that did not happen, he makes us appreciate the miraculous one that did. 

THE WEST BANK CAFE IN MANHATTAN RECENTLY STAGED A VERSION of *Liverpool Fantasy*, a play written by Larry Kirwan, the leader of the band Black 47. It is a what-if play about the 1992 reunion of four old friends in an obscure northern English city. Ritchie Starkey is an Andy Capp character whose wife runs the local beauty parlor. George Harrison is a former Jesuit priest, just released from the loony bin. John Lennon is a bitter 52-year-old drunk, a burden to his friends and an embarrassment to his estranged family. The neighborhood still whispers about the night Lennon ran down the street singing some idiotic song about "All You Need Is Love."

The three old mates have come together to welcome home their famous friend, the Las Vegas star Paul Montana. They knew him when his name was McCartney. Thirty years earlier the four of them had a band called the Beatles that had one minor hit single before an argument between Paul and John caused them to split up.

That's the founding conceit of *Liverpool Fantasy*, a parallel history fable that

BY BILL FLANAGAN

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World Radio History

VICTORIA WILLIAMS' SWEET VISIONS



both out of print, and a devoted coterie of fans and musicians who rank her among the shining talents of our era.

Now some of those musicians—Neil Young, Lou Reed, Pearl Jam, Soul Asylum, Evan Dando, Matthew Sweet and Michelle Shocked, among others—have recorded her songs for a collection entitled *Sweet Relief* (on Thirsty Ear/Chaos Records). The initial idea for the record was to help offset medical costs for Williams, who was forced to cut short a tour with Neil Young last year due to physical infir-

Pop stars shine their lights on a unique artist

mities that turned out to be symptoms of multiple sclerosis. But with typical spirit, Williams is using the occasion to set up a fund to help other musicians, most of whom are neither self-insured nor protected by the record companies who profit from their art. "Though the companies do cover themselves with a life insurance plan," she laughs, "so that you're worth something to them if you die."

For herself, she remains upbeat. "There are good days and bad days. My hands are still numb, but I've gotten strength in them, so I can play. In January my vision went out, that was scary, but now it's back and it seems like there's a cure right on the horizon. I have great faith. When I think of the diseases you could have, it's not such a bad one..."

"I feel very grateful too. I never knew I had so many friends! I didn't really want anyone to *know* that I was sick, and the next thing... I guess that comes from having a manager who knows a lot of people," she remarks dryly. "But I was really overwhelmed by the outpour of love."

Williams may have been surprised by the response of friends and fans, but in fact she was just getting back what she puts out. Her music, despite its ability to resist easy category, is at root as spiritually radiant as the country, blues and gospel sounds she grew up with in rural Louisiana. She transplanted to Los Angeles in the early '80s, which is when I first saw her perform, fronting the Johnny Otis Revue and belting out R&B standards with a thrilling soprano that would have pleased Esther Phillips. From that vantage, her first solo album, *Happy Come Home*, for Geffen in 1985, featuring idiosyncratic song structures more suggestive of Van Dyke Parks, came as a

VICTORIA WILLIAMS RESIDES ON THE SECOND STORY OF A RUSTIC, wood-framed house, with a back porch that overlooks a sloping garden full of giant chard plants, purple-hulled peas, squash, tomatoes, peppers and eggplants. "I must have had 200 meals out of that garden last year," she says. Her old dog, Belle, rests in the shade. The air feels fresh and trees rustle in the wind. It's the kind of country idyll her fans might easily imagine for Williams, whose songs frequently contrast the perfection of nature with the foibles of humanity. With one twist: She is living in the middle of Los Angeles.

But that's fitting too, for Williams has always been a performer of unique, wittily skewed visions. Her songs retain a folksy feel, though their shifting rhythms, melodies and tempos utterly upend pop conventions. So do her narratives, which range from the haiku-like simplicity of "On Time" and "Lights" to, say, "Summer of Drugs," a musical mini-suite tracking a journey from teenage innocence through experience and redemption. Her career to date is typically paradoxical: two albums,

BY MARK ROWLAND

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HARDWARE

By Soundcraft

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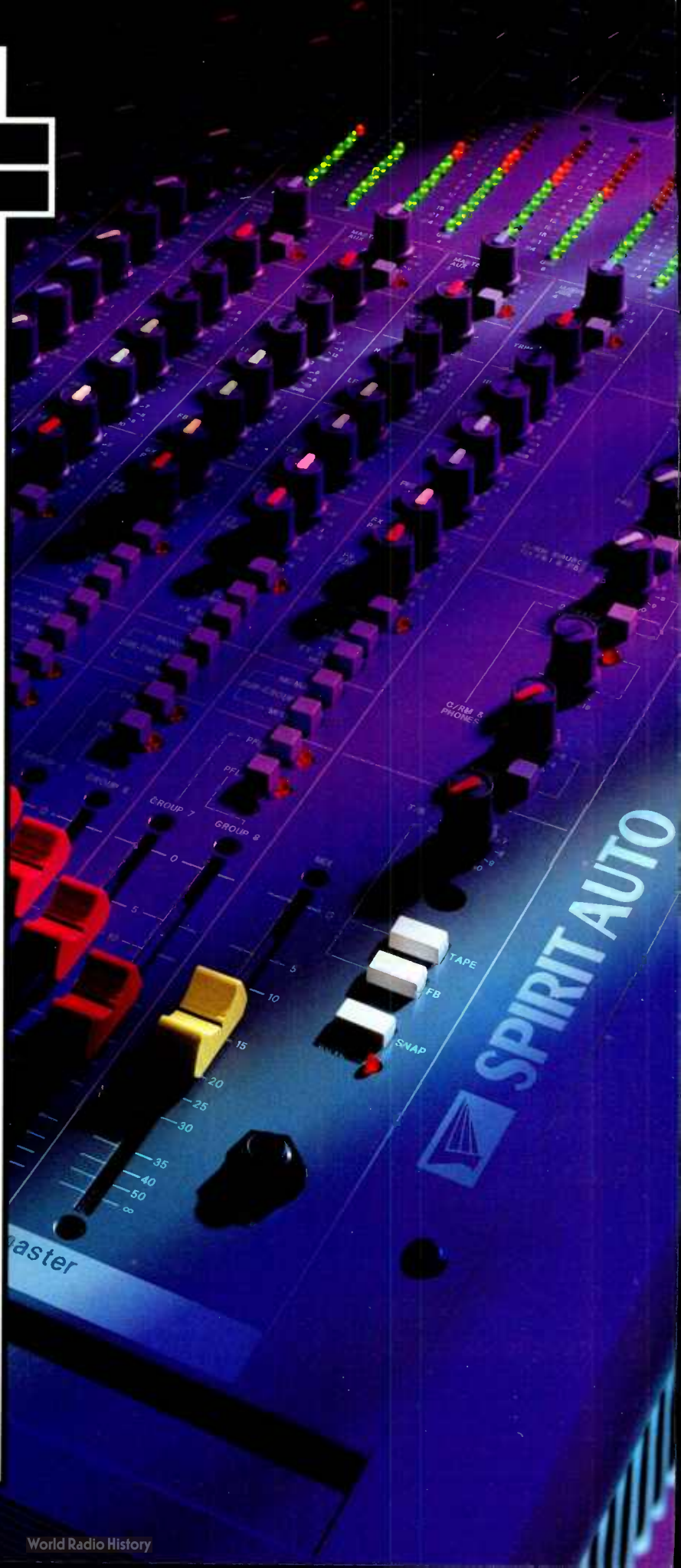
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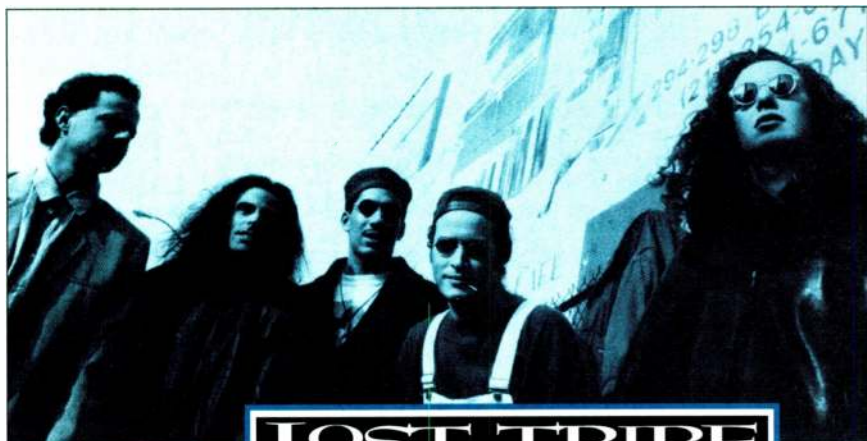
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"Shreddaceous punkboppers"
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surprise. But it also underscored her flexibility as a singer, at once contemporary and suggestive of earlier, earthier eras of American song.

A more rhythmically assured record, *Swing the Statue*, appeared on Rough Trade last year (just as that label was going out of business). Without sacrificing the intimacy that's at the heart of her music, the seductively happy hoedown of "Why Look at the Moon," "Boogie Man"'s swampy pulse, the stately gospel of "Holy Spirit" helped make the whole package more accessible. Not that Williams is in any danger of becoming a conventional artist. Until she started making records, she admits, she often made up her songs during performances, and would have to record herself just to relearn them. During shows she's not averse to asking band members to play instruments they're not familiar with, or improvising an old standard even if she's a little fuzzy about the chord changes.

"I never thought of myself as a songwriter," she says, "it's more like a little show, in the old vaudevillian sense. That's what's amazed me about this record, that there are people who can sing these songs."

Listening to *Sweet Relief*, what often links Williams' disparate compositions is a fresh sense of wonder in the rightness of the universe, and a trust that people, for all their faults, may yet find their way through its wilderness. Though she's very capable of inhabiting a sorrowful ballad like "I Can't Cry Hard Enough," Victoria's own songs tend to be more reflective of her warm, resilient character.

"I have written a lot of grieving-type songs," she confesses, "but I haven't gotten to the point where I'll put them out. I do like to write sad stuff! It's just that they all sound like 'poor poor pitiful me'—to me.

"Maybe if I get to keep making records I'll just release them all someday—put out a real blue record." She smiles to herself at the notion. "Right now I don't want to put that vibe out there. But maybe there'll be a time."

For information on the *Sweet Relief Musicians Fund*, call (800) 825-4278.

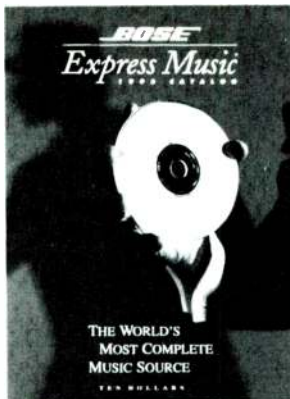
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TERENCE BLANCHARD'S X-CELLENT ADVENTURES



FOR A MINUTE THERE, PEOPLE FORGOT I PLAYED THE TRUMPET." IT'S pouring in Brooklyn on an early spring afternoon, and Terence Blanchard is explaining how "Malcolm mania" inundated his work schedule, X-panding his career and X-tending his creativity. It's Oscar night too, and though the Academy has nominated the umpteenth John Williams soundtrack rather than Blanchard's unique score for Spike Lee's sweeping portrait, the composer couches any irritation.

"What are you going to do?" he says, noting that Hollywood can be an odd place. "Some people out there asked who orchestrated my music," he confides with a sigh. "A lot of it is classically oriented, and they think of me as a jazz man—wondered where I got the help." Blanchard, easy-going, breaks into a chuckle. "Who did your orchestration? Jeez..." He shakes his head and looks up confidently. "That's one reason I wanted to do the suite, to put a different stamp on it."

The suite is *The Malcolm X Jazz Suite*, a new record featuring Blanchard's rearrangements of soundtrack material. His quintet recorded it just after Thanksgiving,

BY JIM MACNIE

and anyone who spins it two or three times will remember quite quickly that he is indeed a trumpet player. The thing scalds.

"If you think that's the case, then stop by one of the gigs," Blanchard says. "We've been playing for the last three weeks in Europe, and we've got the music swinging even harder."

Blanchard's rep for being an ardent instrumentalist has been in place since his tutelage with Art Blakey. His band with saxist Donald Harrison enhanced it, and subsequent work under his own name cemented the notion that

Jazz *Spartacus*

young improvisers had better set their alarm clocks if they were going to bust a move on his neo-bop territory.

But when Lee became smitten with Blanchard's string arrangements during the making of *Mo' Better Blues*, that focus began to shift. Scoring *Jungle Fever* gave him some creative elbow room that writing for his ensemble prohibited. He flexed further on the dynamic *Malcolm X* soundtrack, which incorporates both European motifs and blues voicings, elements he could draw from his schooling in New Orleans and at Rutgers. Instead of demure incidental sketches that simply support Lee's images, Blanchard wrote pieces to approximate the subject's bold nature.

"Actually, when I first got into this I was ready to underscore everything," he fesses up, "you know, downplay the melodies and just have some mood music that would parallel the emotional content. But then Spike told me to go see *Spartacus*, and not be afraid of writing some stuff that would stand on its own."

In Seattle on a gig, Blanchard dropped into a theater showing Kirk Douglas's heroics. "The music was cool, it stuck in my mind, definitely. We even played the theme on the stand one night. But while I was watching, it started to annoy me: The theme always came back the same way." He winces. "And being a jazz musician, my natural inclination is to take a melody and twist it, turn it around, make up 21 variations."

Before you modify anything, you've got to have a sturdy prototype, and prior to fashioning his main theme for *Malcolm X*, Blanchard deliberated long and hard on what he wanted to get across regarding Malcolm the freedom fighter.



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"My initial impressions of his speeches were still vivid," he explains. "That shit is scary, right? When I first heard a record of him speaking, it made me frustrated and pissed off. Because I was at a large gathering and everybody knew what it was, except me! I thought, 'Here's a piece of history I'm not being taught in school.' I didn't agree with everything he said, the blue-eyed devils and such, but a lot of it, yeah—like the responsibility of becoming productive citizens. He was drastic but sincere, coming through like a solitary beacon. That's what I wanted to get across."


And he does. Blanchard's theme resonates with authority, even as it evokes a bittersweet sense of melancholy. And it burns in the memory—sort of like...*Spartacus*.

Blanchard's solid melodic sense is also the key to the substance of its new jazz extrapolations. The guys in his group were itching to get at the movie music, and with everyone offering advice, these fresh versions brim with enthusiasm. "I didn't want to emulate the way the tunes were arranged in the film, that would be hokey. I wanted it to represent the way the band sounds."

The result is Blanchard's most spirited and shrewd record to date. Coherent, too. "That's important to me," he jumps in, "with all the recurring melodies, it became really musical; I was trying to write so that it would be considered one full event, with a series of different changes inside. Like a play with scenes. That's the way we perform it live. There's nothing worse than doing a song, having the audience applaud, and then scratching your head for the next tune. 'What do you want to play now?' I hate that. The music should be one big experience; you should leave a show feeling that something artistic has happened."

Taking up the trumpeter's invitation, I drop in on a Boston gig a few weeks after our chat. In a set teeming with sophisticated dynamic shifts—many at the instigation of drummer Troy Davis, whose revolving door of poly-rhythms never stopped spinning—the band has the audience on the edges of their seats. Tenor saxist Sam Newsome's lines are serpentine, pouncing and whispering within the stretch of just a few phrases. The boss shows a brash demeanor that suggests his chops are in the service of an increasingly audacious personality.

"Live performances exaggerate dynamics," Blanchard explains. "Sometimes we play ridiculously soft. Tempos might get changed, too. It makes me think of Blakey. Some groups come out killin', but Art always said, 'Ease into it, take it slow. We'll get 'em.'" And bouncing around the music is the feeling that each member could make the subtlest move and precipitate a huge alteration.

Away from the studio for a spell, Blanchard's literally moving on to new stages. He just blew through his home town ("where my mother still makes me take out the garbage and stuff") for a date at the Jazz and Heritage Festival. And he also soloed his way through "The Star Spangled Banner" before a Cubs game. "Hey," he says with mock annoyance, "keep that under your lid. I'm supposed to be a Mets fan." 

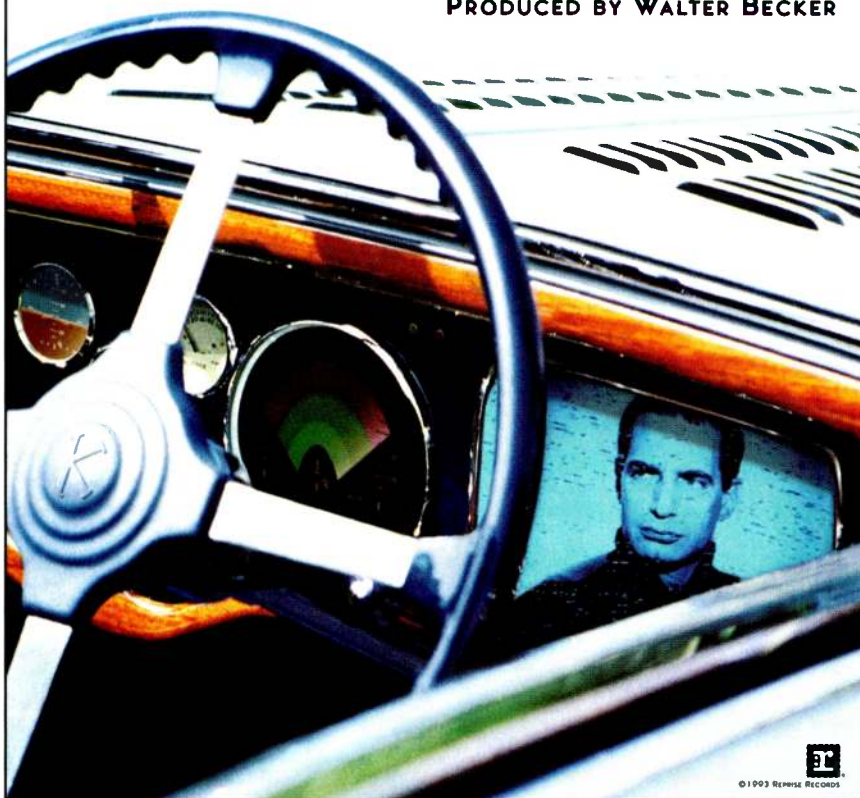
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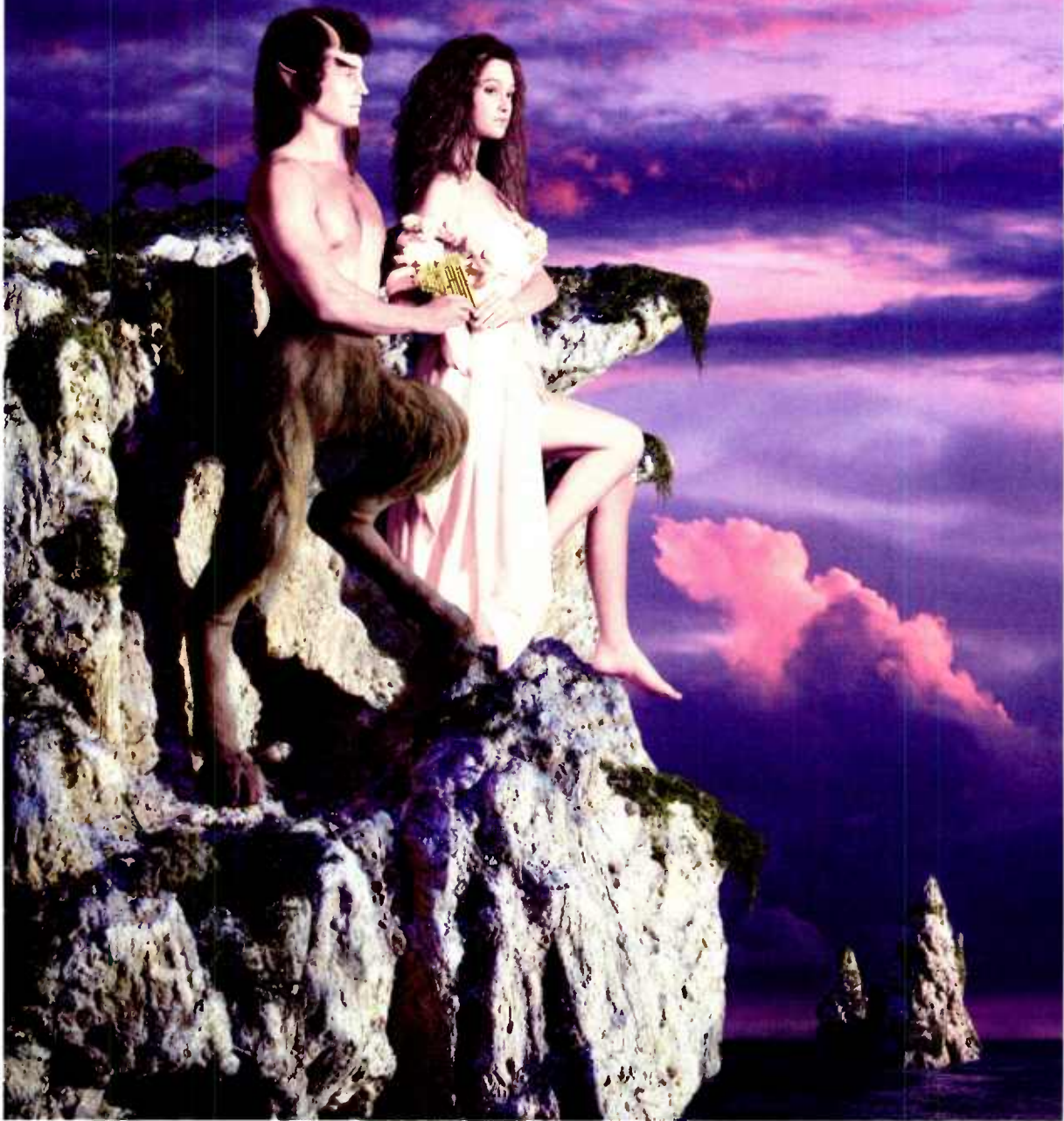
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TOWNSHEND

BUT THAT'S NOT HOW I T



BY THOM DUFFY

PETE Townshend sat in the sunny conservatory of his recording studio on the banks of the River Thames in Twickenham, just outside London. But his mind was in Times Square.

The debut of *Tommy* as a Broadway musical was days away and Townshend had just flown back from previews at the St. James Theater in New York.

Collaborating with Tony-winning director Des McAnuff, Townshend first saw his rock opera transformed for the stage last July at the La Jolla Playhouse in California, where McAnuff is artistic director. It was a sold-out success.

But Broadway is a bigger—and more expensive—gamble. Townshend knows a pan from Frank Rich, chief theater critic for the *New York Times*, could cripple the return of his deaf, dumb and blind boy.

Then again, the 48-year-old songwriter has sparred with the press for years as perhaps the most voluble critic of rock music and rock journalism to ever pick up a guitar and play. He has survived the distortion of the sound bite: for instance, the tabloid versions of his 1989 conversation with writer Timothy White about homosexual imagery in his songs.

Not surprisingly, the role of the artist and the critic and their mutual search for truth is a central theme of Townshend's new album, *PsychoDerelict*. Part theater, part concept album, *PsychoDerelict* combines the dialogue of a radio play with new songs and vintage instrumentals originally recorded by Townshend around the time of *Who's Next* in 1970. It tells the tale of a reclusive rock star from the '60s, Ray Highsmith (who goes by the stage name of Ray High), and his relationship with his frustrated manager, Rastus Knight, and a rock journalist named Ruth Streeting who deceives, then seduces Highsmith. Woven throughout the story is a kind of sci-fi subtext, Ray Highsmith's dream of "grid life," a world of virtual reality where music and technology create an ideal community.

INK OF MYSELF."

"Rock 'n' roll is about the m

MUSICIAN: *I've been immersed in PsychoDerelict but I want to start with Tommy. As you look at this debut, what is your feeling?*

TOWNSHEND: I'm excited about the excitement. I'm excited about being in a theater with Des McNuff, who is a great intellectual and a great director. I'm excited about seeing him like a boy in a sandbox, and it's great to be working on something as aged as *Tommy* with young people. I'm not afraid of Frank Rich or Virginia Woolf or any of these characters. You know, I'm an editor at Faber & Faber. And without sounding pompous, I know about critics and criticism and journalism and I know how it works and I know that one can't really control how it works. I've heard some awful stories about people like Clive Barnes. The other thing that I know, which I don't think the producers necessarily confronted, is that the Who have a strong New York following who will, I think, make *Tommy* feel like a great success for a couple of months. But then I think there will be serious national audiences to go on from there. A two- or three- or five-month run by a rock band in any town is considered to be a great success, but for a Broadway show, that's a failure. We want to be there for at least three years.

MUSICIAN: *Frank Rich does not rule the world.*

TOWNSHEND: Frank's actual response to the show in La Jolla was in *Time* magazine. He gave it a two-page rave and I think it was one of the engines that got us to Broadway. But of course now he'll be feeling proprietary, be wanting to see the show live up to his expectations. I think that's something that with the big critics you can sometimes suffer from: if you fail to give the show the due that they think it deserves, they sometimes say so.

MUSICIAN: *It's such a well-known work. What did you want to have the book add to Tommy?*

TOWNSHEND: I think what I really wanted was an ending. I know that sounds very trite, but that's what I wanted. I still want an ending for *Quadrophenia*. I want an ending for all of the work that I've been involved in. You know, I did go through a brief period around the time of the solo album called *Chinese Eyes* of severe self-analysis, which was a catharsis. But I think that actually did kind of tar me. People think that the only subject that I ever write about is me.

MUSICIAN: *Ray High's manager says, "If you're going to be introspective, at least do it in public."*

TOWNSHEND: Yeah, that's right. Thank you. But in actual fact, I've actually been quite a dispassionate and I think quite objective writer, because what started me writing was duty. I was having such fun in the band in the '60s but I saw my career really, my hard career, in graphics or journalism or a combination of both, in magazines, I suppose. That's what I was studying in college. But when "I Can't Explain" emerged, a bunch of kids from the Goldhawk Club in Shepherd's Bush came up and stuttered at me, "Th-th-this is our song. You've said what it is that we've been trying to say."

And I said, "Well, what have I said?" They said, "You've said that we can't explain how we feel." So I said, "Well, what I've actually said is that *you* can't explain how you feel." They said, "Well,

that's it. And we want you to do more, write some more, write some more straight away."

Then I wrote "Anyway, Anyhow, Anywhere" and "My Generation" and I think that's where I found that voice. I think I'm still writing for that same voice, that same group of people, who weren't all boys by any means. And I think I wrote *Tommy* for the same voice. It's only in the last six months that I've realized that.

MUSICIAN: *Is it an ending or a completion?*

TOWNSHEND: No. I mean, maybe the piece has been completed because of the work that Des and I have done to fill in the holes, but I think the real task was deciding what the ending was going to be. I think stories need indications of endings even if you don't wrap up, if you want to leave people to draw their own conclusions, at least give them some way to go. I was reading *The Painted Veil* by Somerset Maugham the other day. At the end of that, a girl who's been quite errant in her life, and has given her husband and her family a hard time, goes back home and decides to commit the rest of her life to her father. That's where you're left in the story. It's both an end and a beginning. That's the kind of ending I've always striven for.

MUSICIAN: *What was the ending that was missing from Tommy?*

TOWNSHEND: You didn't know what it was that you were supposed to think. You didn't know whether you were supposed to side with the audience who had been used and abused and were obviously by-products of organized religion, or with the benefactor, Tommy, who was the engine of it all.

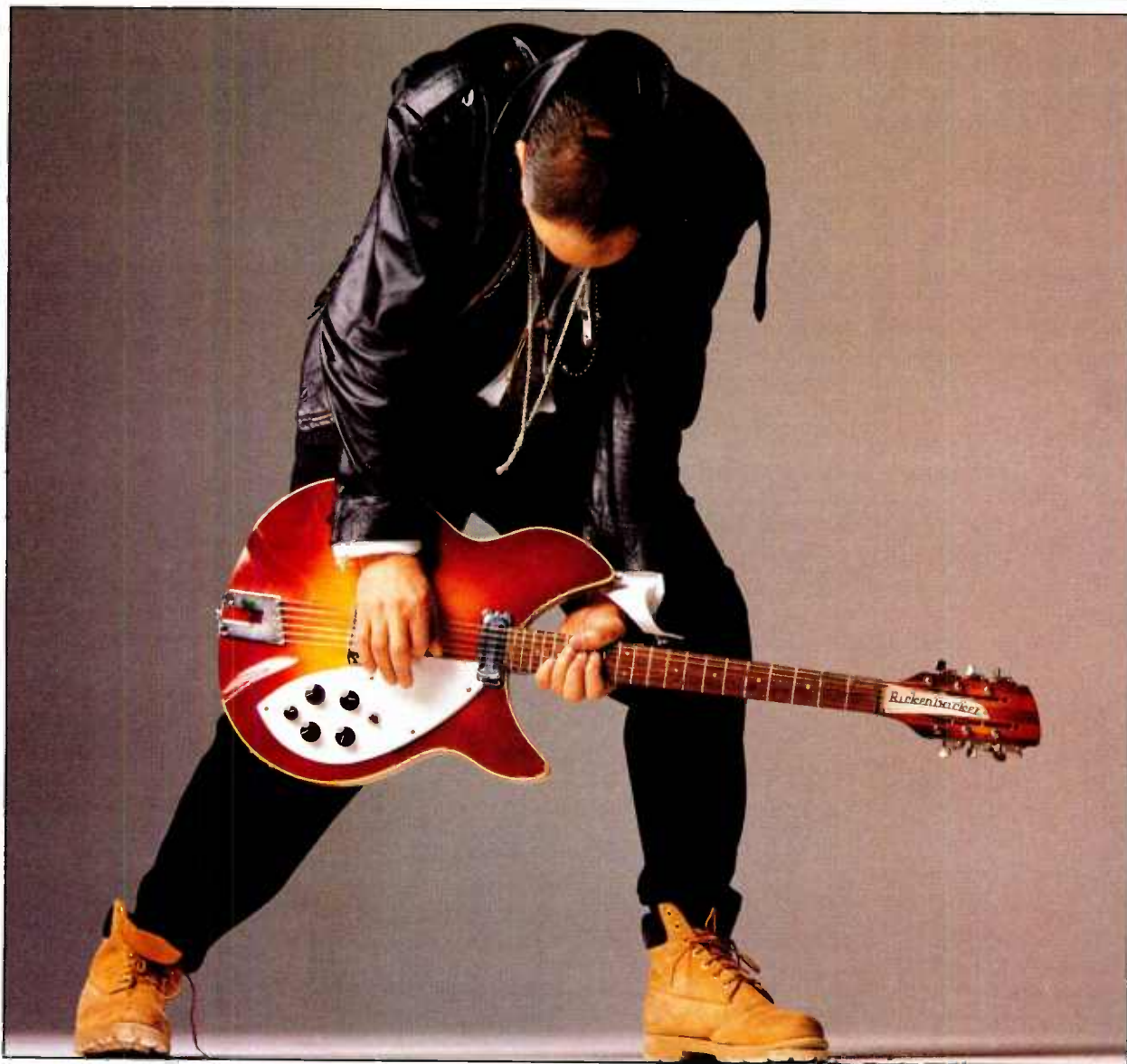
I had to answer that question. I think that in the end it came down to a very simple device. When Tommy, for whatever reason, has gone along with all this stuff that's been happening around him, when Tommy is disowned or cast aside by his fans or acolytes, what does he do? On the record, of course, he fades out. And I think that by the time you hear the last "Listening to you, I get the music," you as the listener have probably made a decision.

But that's not good enough. It didn't work in the film. In the film Ken [Russell] had Roger climb a mountain literally and stand at the top and address the sun. And it was kind of bizarre, corny, the beginning of a movie but not the end of a movie. At La Jolla, we decided that what Tommy should do is go back to his family. I think now in the Broadway production, the ending has a slightly different edge and I don't really want to get into it.

MUSICIAN: *I'm intrigued by your suggestion that you were awaiting a time when people would be ready to go to the theater for your work, rather than to sheds for the Who.*

TOWNSHEND: I was waiting for the time when the people who used to go to the shed for the Who were ready to go to Broadway. It's not one or the other at all. I don't like sheds. I don't like the idea of going and doing world tours with the Who, and maybe those opportunities have passed anyway. Some of the bigger bands are really getting burned as they go out and try to tap these audiences who have always been there. The next band to test it are going to be the Stones. And it just might be that, like Dire Straits, they find that... I think it

you're alone, that moment wh



was a great humiliation for Dire Straits to put aside 18 months for international touring and then find that they were only required for eight-and-a-half weeks. Because they're as vital as they ever were.

MUSICIAN: *But the needs of the audience have changed.*

TOWNSHEND: I think that's right. And I think what I was waiting for was the theater-going audience to be as generous in spirit as the audiences of the '60s were. I think that's where *Tommy* was born and where it grew. It grew with generous, forgiving and contributing audiences. In other words, they were out of their brains on psychedelic drugs, I suppose. But it meant that you could experiment. It meant that you could take chances and it meant that you could say, "Listen, I'll string three ideas together and *you* know what I mean, don't you?" And they would go, "Yeah, I know

what you mean." You could speak in abstracts and be unspecific.

When I came to struggle with my first theatrical piece, which was *Iron Man* in '86, I found that what is so distinctive about theatrical presentation is detail, the obsession with detail, the requirement for detail at the highest possible order. The requirement was to work with someone who understood theater. So that the music of *Tommy*, which has always been a certain entity of its own, could jump off from a very solid platform instead of trying to build the platform as it went.

MUSICIAN: *You also needed someone who saw a continuum of the audiences.*

TOWNSHEND: That's part of the thing that I've tried to address in *PsychoDerelict*. What has come out of my experiences with

TOMMY COMES TO BROADWAY

And the American Musical Will Never Be the Same...

There was a big wedding on Broadway in April. The bride, American popular theater, was a stiff old maid who worried about preserving her virtue until her beauty had almost faded. The groom, rock 'n' roll, was an aging rebel, still filled with attitude but increasingly worried that his day had passed, and scared that he looked a little ridiculous wearing the tight pants and ripped shirts of his youth. These two unlikely companions in faded glory had flirted with and rejected each other for years. At the St. James Theater in New York's Times Square they were finally joined together. It was, one hesitates to mention, a shotgun wedding, made necessary by the impending birth of a mutant child called *Tommy*.

The groom's father, Pete Townshend, stalked the aisles, smiling nervously. His Uncle John Entwistle stood at the door greeting the guests while Uncle Roger Daltrey expounded on the significance of the ceremony. Family relations like Robert Plant hung at the bar making small talk. The bride was dragged to the altar by her more daring brothers from Hollywood, Robert De Niro and Jack Nicholson, who learned long ago that a shot of rock 'n' roll energy can do wonders for the theatrical tradition.

Tommy's opening, on April 22, was a first-night out of theater mythology. Glittering aristocrats and celebrities in black tie poured out of limousines. The author looked as if he were balancing on the shaky line between vanity and humility. The audience, at first giddy with a show-biz contact high, became so caught up in the excitement of the production that they began cheering not just at the end of songs, or at the opening of songs, or for the sets, or the dance numbers, but finally whenever some passing phrase, note or God-knows-what struck their fancy. The wild standing ovation began halfway through the final number.

A lavish opening night party was held in the ballroom of a nearby hotel, where the revelers danced until the reviews came out. Copies of the *New York Times* arrived at about 10:15. The partygoers tore them open and read a rave. "*Tommy*, the stunning new stage adaptation of the 1969 rock opera by the British group the Who, is at long last the authentic rock musical that has eluded Broadway for two generations," wrote theater critic Frank Rich, who said that the show was "so theatrically fresh and emotionally raw that newcomers to *Tommy* will think it was born yesterday." A few weeks later, *Tommy* was nominated for 11 Tony awards.

Rock's gradual expansion from the subculture to the mainstream has been an advance in tiny increments. There was no one

day when rock 'n' roll became the music of commercials, or TV house bands, or movie soundtracks. And if there were such a day, what rock fan would want to celebrate it? But the opening night of *Tommy* felt like one conquest rock could be proud of. Music that had become conservative on radio and in arena performance was re-radicalized by its introduction into the Broadway musical. All of *Tommy's* faults as rock—its pomp, its melodrama, its school-boy metaphors—become virtues on the Broadway musical stage, as ritualized a form of theater as the Japanese Noh play.

Nostalgists might be horrified to see a middle-aged, black-tie audience shaking their pot bellies to "We're Not Gonna Take It" and cheering the opening chords of "Pinball Wizard," but *this is entirely appropriate*. The '50s and '60s rock 'n' roll generation is middle-aged, and Townshend's bravest move in bringing *Tommy* to Broadway to do battle with the forces of Andrew Lloyd Web-

ber is that he has changed *Tommy's* story to reflect the lessons he and his generation have learned in the quarter-century since it was written.

What will shock fans of the original 1969 album and all its later incarnations is that Townshend has, in fashioning a successful dramatic ending for *Tommy*, changed the story's fundamental message. Where 1969's *Tommy* celebrated leaving one's family and society's conventions to carve out a new brotherhood with the mobs

of the Woodstock generation, 1993's *Tommy* says that the rituals of the crowd are a dead end, and that one must finally make peace with one's family (and by implication, with traditional values).

Maybe Townshend would say that this is not a reversal of the original *Tommy*, but an extension. In 1969 *Tommy*, and his generation, had only gotten as far as moving out of the house and into the world and telling the parents, teachers and priests, "We're not gonna take it!" Twenty-four years later, the curse those parents placed on their defiant children has come true—they have kids of their own and they understand what their folks were going through. No one who knows of the 1979 Who tragedy in Cincinnati will miss the fact that in this version of the story, *Tommy* realizes the moral limits of tribalism when he sees a fan about to be killed at one of his shows.

Some people regret rock 'n' roll's passing from a secret language to a common tongue, from a culture of youth and beauty to one of memory and experience. Some people want to stay 17 forever. But the option is not available. Rock 'n' roll now contains the whole world. That is its victory and, sure, on some level that is also its tragedy. But that is the truth.

—Bill Flanagan



"You learn to control your

Tommy, the thing that I feel very much now, is that we're past the point of worrying about how and whether and what the consequences are of *aging* as part of the rock 'n' roll process.

We now understand that if we're not teenagers anymore, we can still celebrate those angst-ridden years or joyful years, whatever they meant to each individual. What we can't really do anymore is pretend that we're physically a part of that life. When we pop around to the latest Lou Reed record, we're probably sitting in some fancy sushi restaurant in the East Village, not really hanging out in the street with a transistor radio stuck to our head.

Everything has changed, and I think for people like me, for people like Lou Reed, for people like Mick Jagger, for people like Iggy Pop, for people like David Bowie, for people like Paul Simon, people who are, if not 50, then approaching 50—could be grandfathers and in some cases are—the important thing is to try to avoid the mantle of dignity. Not to assume it. To say, listen, you could call me *Mr. Townshend* if you like, but that's not how I think of myself.

My job might become a craft but it's a craft that's still very much tied to street life, and by that I don't mean people hanging around street corners, but street life as a metaphor for the ordinary family, the ordinary struggle. The trouble with the idea of categorizing our audiences into the young fan who goes to Madison Square

MUSICIAN: *Who is your audience?*

TOWNSHEND: The real audience can be described in a number of different ways. What's created classic rock radio is the demographic description of that audience, which is, for the benefit of advertisers who are buying radio time: "How old are these people, how much money have they got, what do they spend their money on, where do they live and what do they want to listen to on the radio?"

And I think that's actually been as reductive and damaging for me as an artist as it has been for the music industry as a whole. But it's there, it's a fact of life. My audience are people who grew up with me, but not exclusively. You see, a lot of people who are my age who are smart don't listen to the Who and the Stones. They listen to Pearl Jam and Ice-T and other stuff because they find in that what they originally heard in the music of the Stones and the Who in the '60s.

I don't think they sneer at what the Who and the Stones now represent, because they're part of it, they're part of the growing up, growing old, decaying process. It will be interesting to see just how long Mick Jagger can keep it up, if that's in fact what's happening. And I think that if Mick's gotta be the flat tummy, some people expect me to be the brain. And that's very, very difficult, because I'm not so much the brain as the minstrel.

There's a lot of minstrels out there. There's a lot of people out

audiences as an artist by

Garden to see Guns N' Roses and the bridge and tunnel crowd who come over to see *Cats* is that I think the middle ground is not being properly addressed. You've got there two arch extremes. I think Guns N' Roses are interesting in a lot of ways, but very, very reactionary. And I think *Phantom* is an arch-reactionary piece. What's not being dealt with is the middle ground which is actually the vanguard; it's the people who don't really know what to do next because they are in the lead. They're not lagging behind.

MUSICIAN: *Is it too much to ask for Tommy to make a statement that there needs to be that middle ground?*

TOWNSHEND: It is too much to ask because it is a 25-year-old piece.... If it was a brand-new show I was bringing to Broadway, then I would be a bit cockier, but it's not.

MUSICIAN: *There is going to be criticism that the dream you are celebrating is 20 years old. What relevance does it have today, and is this just a justification of those who listen only to classic rock radio?*

TOWNSHEND: I'm not dim. I know who I am. I know how those people see me anyway. Anything I do will be seen that way by those people. The only way I could jump on the Pearl Jam or Ice-T cart right now is to get involved in a company that produced them or wrote for them or appropriated them in some way. I'm not willing to do that. I don't need to do that. And I think I'd rather starve than do that. If there's any kind of common ground on which we can collaborate, I'll do so. But I have to put up with the fact...

there doing incredibly good work who are of my age. Paul Simon, Lou Reed, Tom Waits...there's some extraordinary people out there. Even people who are really stuck in a rut like Leonard Cohen become more interesting all the time. Because it's so narrow, it's so focused.

My life is not about me addressing any particular audience. My life is about advancing rock 'n' roll. But I can't refer back to *Sgt. Pepper* or *Pet Sounds*. I can't use other people's albums. I have to refer back to my own collateral. *Tommy* is doing that. *Tommy* is paying the rent. I don't need to justify my history because my history is being dragged into the present day by Broadway producers willing to put the money up to stage the show.

I am still very much seen to be part of a band and the Who are very much a part of my life and rock fans have an investment in the Who as a band, even though one of the members is dead. The same, of course, is true of Led Zeppelin and other bands. I sometimes feel that Roger Daltrey might even be one of those fans.

I like to be more pragmatic. I like to face up to the facts. What Ray is actually saying in *PsychoDerelict* is, "I'm 50 years old, I had a dream once and I don't know whether it's any better than the dream that's out there now or any worse. But it's my dream and it's who I am and it will grow with me and decay with me."

MUSICIAN: *In other art forms, it's understood that the author can create a persona or voice that is not necessarily autobiographical.*

being submissive to them."

"If Mick Jagger's got to be

That's been denied the rock songwriter. You have used a structure here, as a radio play, that seems to allow the creation of persona better than a simple song cycle would have.

TOWNSHEND: Yeah, and when I discovered it I really did whoop for joy because I thought, "This is it. I don't have to sit and have my work dismissed because it's self-analytical now." I can actually create a voice in a context and people will have to address it. They will have to address it whether or not they think I'm full of shit.

But I don't get dismissed just because I live in the Rockbroker Belt and am 50 years old with a flat tummy and look like something out of a Hieronymous Bosch painting. It's not *wanting* to be a serious artist. It's having become a serious artist by virtue of the fact that, as an artist living in the last 40 years, the duty that I took on to begin with has become deeper and more demanding. When I attend to that duty I feel lighter, and when I don't attend to that duty, I feel heavy and suicidal. That's when I get self-analytical, when I write an album and the kid from the Goldhawk Club who's now the 50-year-old park keeper comes around and says, "That's a load of crap, a load of bloody crap! What are you going on about?"

I didn't want him to do that about these songs. There's a moment of that on *PsychoDerelect* where I have somebody come up and say, "Are you Harold Pinter?" I get a lot of that. "Are you

TOWNSHEND: That's right. You know, at my age, one of the things that's very weird is to suddenly realize that I'm approaching 50 and I still feel that my mental processes have been frozen somewhat by being one of the Elizabethan English rock 'n' roll renaissance performers, you know, the bunch that came over in the '60s, that helped America to shape what became this great new art form which continues to evolve and continues to excite and continues to stimulate and continues to be dangerous. You know, people like Ice-T and Public Enemy and—mainly black rap performers, but also maybe to a lesser extent politically, people like Pearl Jam, who are doing things and saying things on record that are challenging and exciting and make you feel, "Hey, this is still a happening thing."

We actually have skipped a beat, and the beat was, when we first became alone, when we became teenagers and broke away from our parents, we didn't *feel* alone. Rock 'n' roll was kind of a comforter. It made us feel like we were part of a community. I think we bucked the issue of being alone. And I think it was a severe test of friendships and relationships. But it was also sustaining. The music held people together and made us feel part of a great community that didn't necessarily need mom and dad. Mom and dad were there if you wanted them, but you could survive without them.

MUSICIAN: *Have you acknowledged that you need to go beyond,*

the flat tummy, a lot of people

Pete Townshend? What the fuck are you talking about?" [laughter]

MUSICIAN: *Do the fans want as much as you're giving them here?*

TOWNSHEND: Oh, I don't know. Hmm. I'd like to think that there's a strong case for "shut up and dance." I think I'm like a lot of people of my age, I still do my most fabulous dancing alone in a room in front of a mirror. I'm just so great when I'm on my own.

I don't want to challenge my audience at all. What I really want is, I want people who like what I do now, like the albums I've done in the past and loved the Who, to actually feel that they are the continuum. What my life is about and what my job is and my duty is as a songwriter is to serve them. And what they see is me failing in that duty because I'm not doing what Guns N' Roses are doing, or not doing what the Who did in the early days. Whereas *they* don't go to discos 15 times a month. They sit home and watch TV and bring up their kids.

They want me to, as Mick Jagger has said so often in articles recently—he says that his fans want him to preserve their idea of their own youth to avoid confronting mortality. I think that my duty is to counter that. You've got Mick on one side and me on the other. He's telling them they're going to live forever and I'm telling you no, the fuck you're not. You're going to die very, very soon, comparatively speaking.

MUSICIAN: *And it might be a good idea to figure out what is true beforehand?*

with this radio play, what the rock song structure could do?

TOWNSHEND: No, I'm still a great believer in music and lyric, and words and music being able to encompass in a short period of time everything you want to say about a particular subject. And to communicate that.

MUSICIAN: *Is there a conflict there?*

TOWNSHEND: I don't think there is a conflict. I think that what I've discovered with the radio play is that in the years that I was in a band, there was kind of a context there, which isn't there anymore. The context was Pete and Roger and Keith Moon the crazy man, and John Entwistle, old school pals come together, out on the road, rock 'n' roll—aren't they having fun?

But the context for Guns N' Roses' writing at the moment is Axl Rose and the guy they kicked out and how many charter jets he's going to send to this fabulous-looking model before she tells him to fuck off or she marries him or whatever happens. It's about as interesting as Rod Stewart. Do you know what I mean? At least Rod has a context. I lost my context. What was actually happening was that people were very confused by me. They were saying, "Well, this guy's an editor at a publishing house, he's written short stories. Does he not like rock anymore? Does he not believe in it anymore?" At times when I've actually felt difficulties myself, I've gone on record as saying that I did feel that the rock song had reached an end. That was pre-rap. As soon as rap appeared, as

expect me to be the brain..."

MUSIC MUST CHANGE

Pete Townshend initially had a complex brief for *PsychoDerelict*: He wished to make a record that could evoke psychedelia yet cast cold light on unadorned virtue, which could do justice to Mingus while being underpinned with digital samples, which quoted his past without being redundant. And he wanted it to flow like a fountainhead. An erratic three-year schedule eventually repositioned him as his own producer for the first time since 1972's *Who Came First*, helping him establish a very wide context for his manifesto, and in the case of the explosive "English Boy" reprise, for his guitar.

"Originally that was about sixteen solos," Townshend says. "The guy that remixed it used one, and I actually don't think he picked the best one. That was my homage to Carlos [Santana], the Woodstock reference: You know, everybody has their take on what Woodstock was about—for me it was him. Sly and the Family Stone were important too, but for me it was his solo. And the other reference was Mingus." Pete sings the bassist's line in "Boogie Stop Shuffle," from *Mingus Ah Um*. "I felt I had to make two clear references, because what I was trying to do was to say, 'This song is about what has been happening in the '60s of the jazz era and the '70s of the psychedelic era': I really felt I needed to root it."

That solo, played with cathartic precision on an unlikely Rickenbacker guitar, is the only holdover from Pete's intention to formulate *PsychoDerelict* as a collection of jangle songs; along the way he averted what he perceived as a sonic rehash of *All the Best Cowboys Have Chinese Eyes* by interweaving synthesizer interludes, and textures recalling house music and rap. "Well, don't you think that Mingus pervades house music? He invented it! Isn't 'Better Git It in Your Soul' the birth of rap? I was in my demo studio and the guy that was cooking up the programming was down the hall, sitting with his sampler and bunches of 12-inch records, taking five or

six rhythm tracks and sampling them and just putting them all together and making this massive kind of *chub-be choov de-doov*. Up to that point I hadn't understood that the way these guys cooked up new rhythm tracks was by layering things from different places, as well as by detail sampling: sampling rhythm tracks and overlaying them. There were places from where you stole and sampled, but then you also sampled from the pre-layered samples of other house music bands. And what you're actually

dealing with is a free flow of collateral producing a sound which in the end becomes the same average sound which every record has—very much like the 12-string jangle of all the records of 1968. Everybody borrowing from everybody. I was inspired by it, and ran in and tried to cook up my own version."

Peter may do a mini-tour with a guitar and several actors to perform the Who's "A Quick One," followed by the *PsychoDerelict* and *Quadrophenia* albums in their entirety—"a dramatic feast," he grins. Or an eclectic apoplexy. "I'm very happy with *PsychoDerelict* as a musical. What I've learned through doing it, and where I feel positioned now, is that I feel I can do a lot for what's left. I have actually sat and played the whole thing through on acoustic guitar from start to finish, all those songs, and to me they sound like *really good songs*. Some of them are kind of dis-

guised with production ideas, but I always do this. I can never get hold of a musical idea and hang on long enough to finish the album."

Does that matter? "I don't know," Townshend says. "I'll try to make great records any way I can do it. The rules seem to change for me. I mean, I'm not gonna make records by other people's rules, and I'm certainly not going to be tied down to rock fundamentalism just because I fucking wrote the story."

—Matt Resnicoff



something other than just electronic, computerized house music, I changed my mind.

MUSICIAN: *The songs on PsychoDerelict work best in the context of the dialogue. Does it run into the face of the record company asking, "Can we edit this for a radio single?"*

TOWNSHEND: We're having exactly those discussions. What's actually happening is I'm walking in and saying, "Listen, I can edit it all out." I keep mentioning Somerset Maugham. He said, if you're writing a drama and in any doubt, cut, cut, cut, cut, cut. And I think the story of *PsychoDerelict* can be told in one word, which is the title. I don't think you need any more, really, particularly if you can put together a decent couple of songs to go alongside it. I think *PsychoDerelict* proves that the old way still works, it's just that the old way is not as accessible as this new way.

I can actually see a very clear job for me from now on. I'm very interested in theater. But I think now also, with the emergence and popularity of—probably the worst kind of talk radio, but nonetheless—talk radio in America, there will be space in the future for people who want to listen to longer projects, either in their car on long journeys or when they're commuting with Walkmen, or whatever. To actually hear something giving them a journey which is different from the journey that they're taking. That's what the novel is about; through experiencing the life of Jane Austen's Emma, you then compare that life to your own, you make some measure, and it tells you something about yourself.

MUSICIAN: *I was struck by "English Boy."*

TOWNSHEND: In "English Boy" there is an attack on what I call the

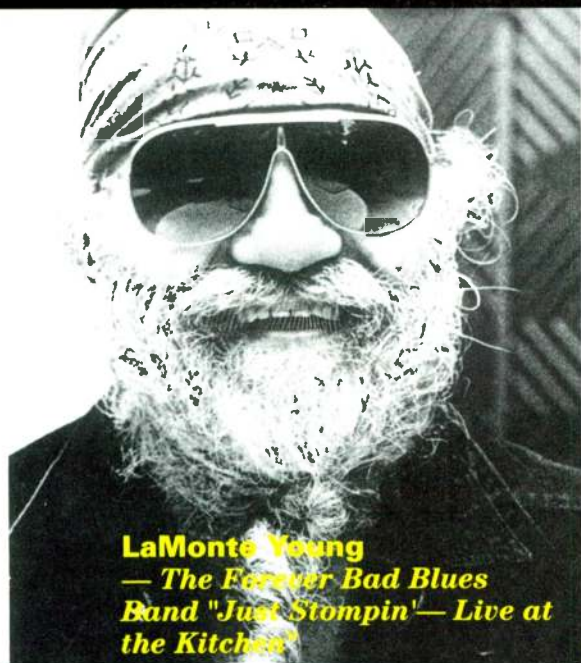
reducer... which is that whenever there is a difficulty in society, particularly in British society, we go back to our pre-colonial, Victorian, Edwardian tradition and we bad-mouth the young man, the very man we turn to to blow up the Germans or the Iraqis or whoever it is we want to blow up this month.

I just felt this outrage is very much directed against me now. I'm one of the founding figures of the '60s liberal movement and I keep seeing the fundamentalists saying the liberal movement is responsible for violence, anarchy, AIDS, world war, drug abuse and all these things that I know existed from the fucking...you know, heroin was first brought into the West by the East India Company. It was a colonial product and it's not my fault!

I think where "English Boy" became the pinion song of the whole piece is that it encapsulated Ray's anger, and this was the anger that I kept feeling from the boys and the men of my generation, the postwar people, the emasculated generation, the boys with the toys, with no jobs, no tools, no function but lots of toys. You know, I have never been in a war. I've never seen a gun fired. I've never even seen a gun, apart from in a policeman's holster. I've never seen anybody holding a gun out. We're allowed to play our rock 'n' roll games and to get into our aircraft and play mega-death. But what we can't do is we can't contribute to society. If we speak too loudly, the establishment comes back at us.

"Pretentious" was also the idea that for the English boy, for the little kid who was throwing rocks and is now a man without a function in society, if you're lucky enough to be a rock 'n' roll star, you have a function, but if you don't, you don't. And when you try to go outside

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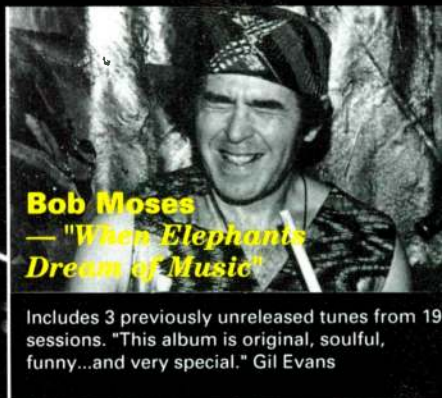
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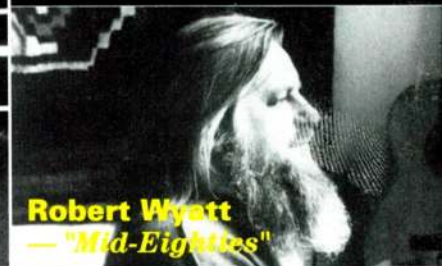
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that you're both accused of and guilty of a degree of pretentiousness.

MUSICIAN: *And that's of course something you have been accused of.*

TOWNSHEND: Yeah, many times. The song is not to say, "Don't call me pretentious because I got in there first." I'm not trying to criticize the critic. I'm just saying that you have to be fairly courageous to deal with a new idea or something that might actually be out of your scope. If you don't artistically try to struggle with new ideas, and meet new people, I don't think there's any point in living.

Once you can form a dream, once you can actually wrap it up, the dream is gone. And I say this as somebody who's lucky enough to be creative and realize some of my dreams. The great dream is the pursuit of the dream itself.

MUSICIAN: *What inspired "Outlive the Dinosaur"?*

TOWNSHEND: We're probably the only time-conscious animals on the planet. When you look in the mirror as you grow older you see this person that you regard as yourself growing old, but you start to move away from him. You start to kind of subtract yourself from that person. Nonetheless one day you look in the mirror and you see this decaying individual, and you cry. And the person sitting next to you says, "That's self-pity." You're as young as you feel. You've got to hang on to the end. You've got to believe. My belief is that you're not crying for yourself but the child you once were and you're crying for youth, which is an indeterminate and something you can't have. That's what Ray is doing.

MUSICIAN: *There's a sequence that begins with "Now and Then" that goes through the cycle of emotions that follows the discovery of love, or the confrontation of love.*

TOWNSHEND: That's right. What struck me when I first got this sequence in the middle worked out properly is that "I'm Afraid" becomes a song for Ruth, the journalist. She suddenly realizes that she's afraid of what she started.

There was a period when I was like that. In rock 'n' roll, I was afraid of the consequences. It was a great business to be in, but I used to look at Keith and think, "This guy is gonna die," and I was afraid for him. And I still struggle with, as I think Roger does, our complicity in that. It was useful for us to have this crazy man in the band. It got us publicity. It got us inches. And he eventually died. And that song suddenly, for me, got life breathed into it.

MUSICIAN: *"Don't Try to Make Me Real"?*

TOWNSHEND: I see that as a song about the process of the star system that exists between the performer and the audience. So I suppose the press is somewhere in the chain. And "Fake It" is the answer to that.

We started to get Oprah Winfrey over here about two years ago, this succession of celebrities who were lining up to talk about the abuse that had been inflicted on them when they were young. I started to think, is this really a common strand?

And I went back through my papers and found an essay I had written about 15 years ago. It started off, "I am a prostitute. I am the worst kind of prostitute. I am a prostitute who would do whatever you want and take your money and then run and then demand the right to dignity, demand the right to sanctity, demand the right to absolution, but worst of all demand the right to artistic integrity." In other words, I fuck you. Wasn't that great. Did you have an orgasm? Well, I did

Funk and Beyond



Arnie Worrell
Blacktronic Science

Ambitious, wildly eclectic project - veering
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— James Jones, USA Today



B. Horns
Funk Good News / Live

Instrumental funk that crackles with soulful fire
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Pee Wee Ellis
"Blues Mission"

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tor for James Brown and Van Morrison is in rare
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The masterful funkster who changed the direction
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and they did."
— Jim Payne

that. When in actual fact, the orgasm is probably the only truly God-given experience that the human being has. And we do tend to think, "Well, if I'm really expert with my right or left hand, then it's all down to me. It's a bodily function."

I started to feel that the great distortion that happens in public performance is when the celebrity loses sight of the fact that they are in fact submissive. And I wondered at what point you lose sight of that, because not everybody agrees with me on this. My feeling is that you learn to control your audi-

ences as an artist by being submissive to them. And that's a really, perverse idea. And where do you learn that trick? You learn it as a child. You learn it because as a child, if you're submissive, you can get by. If you do as the adults tell you, you can get by and have a quiet life. And I look back at my life and I saw times when I'd done that and times when I obviously hadn't done that. And I just thought maybe what distinguishes these great celebrities, these larger-than-life celebrities, is that they've learned that their submission will buy them the love of their

parents. And when they cease to submit, they lose the love of their parents. That's the great Michael Jackson tragedy that we've seen in the last Oprah Winfrey; when he stopped submitting to his father—in whatever way he submitted and I'm not saying it was sexual—he lost his love.

So then I thought this is very much what rock 'n' roll is about, that moment when you decide that you're alone. That moment when you let go of your parents. The loneliness of that moment, the poignancy of that moment, has been undermined by the fact that in rock 'n' roll in the '60s we felt that we had an alternative family to sustain us.

I don't know if I'm making myself clear. What "I'm Afraid" actually does at this particular point, what "Don't Make Me Real" addresses and what "Fake It" addresses, is that we're willing to humor one another into complicity, where you say to somebody, "I don't really love you, you don't really love me, but let's let the world think that we do love one another." It's a very show-biz thing.

Then you think, this doesn't just happen in show business. Everybody does this. "We're going to go to the golf club tonight, luv. I know that you found out about my affair with my secretary. You hate my guts. We'll talk about this in the morning. I'll give you everything that you want. You can have a good lawyer." And they go to the golf club, and they sit there. You know, there is a John O'Hara story called "Appointment in Samara." I've taken this scene from that. They go and sit there as a happily married couple and then the next day they come back and have that row. All those collusions. A performer says, "Here I am, I am yours, I submit, but you don't really know me. I have a private life."

That is a breaking of the contract. And that's something that I did for a while. I kept saying to people, "Okay, I am yours, but I was just a member of a band, it was a democracy. I had to do what the whole band wanted. You don't really know me." I was denying the fact that I had already been discovered by my audience and the reason why they liked me was that they could see who I was. I was saying, you don't like me because of who I really am. You like me because you don't know who I am. And that's an indictment of them.

Madonna has just done it. She says, don't tell me that you're turned on by what you see as my sexuality, 'cause there is a better sexuality that only I know about...and it's rubber and tubes and whips and things that you dim people who live out there in radio land will

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never ever come across. And that is a superior form of sexuality and if you really know me you'd know that that's the only way that I could ever be turned on.

MUSICIAN: *Where are Ray and Ruth after this cycle?*

TOWNSHEND: I think it's leading them to the point where they realize that they're very much the same. What I've tried to do in the confrontation is to make it clear that there will always be a war between the artist and the critic because the critic is necessary and the artist would like to think that they weren't. But they really are necessary.

I've just read two or three great books about criticism, gathered all this stuff together and come to the conclusion that probably in my case, the responses of critics are far more important than the audience. I think that what hurt Timothy White and me in the reduction of our conversation about the feminine machine in every writer in his book was his PR person reducing it to a moment for Howard Stern to say to Roger, "Well, is Pete still wearing a dress?" I absolutely refuse to address—undress—such an important issue as the nature of my sexuality. As a songwriter, I think, with any critic, I always feel I can address that stuff. It's with the public that it becomes very difficult...and I think the public actually finds great difficulty sometimes in dealing with the truth, the ideas and the risks: the notion, for example, that somebody can come out of the woodwork and vehemently attack an institution like the Rolling Stones. What they don't understand is that when Mick Jagger reads that review, he's not hurt. He might be irritated and annoyed and a bit concerned about it. What actually happens is that he's affected by it and it does change the way that he works. It will be taken on board. What is said by the critic, particularly if it's intelligent, will be received and will create changes in the Stones camp. They might be quite minor. But they will affect.

The power of the critic to destroy is underestimated. Not destroy the work. Not destroy the relationship of the artist or the performer to the audience. But destroy the artist's enthusiasm to work. Particularly those artists who are working for the critics.


So I'm hurt if I'm attacked too violently by critics, and I think the place where *Psycho-Derelict* gets most personal is at this point of confrontation. This is a confrontation that I avoid in real life. You know, Dave Marsh and I are very good friends and we go out to dinner but what we never talk about are the things that he said about me and the things

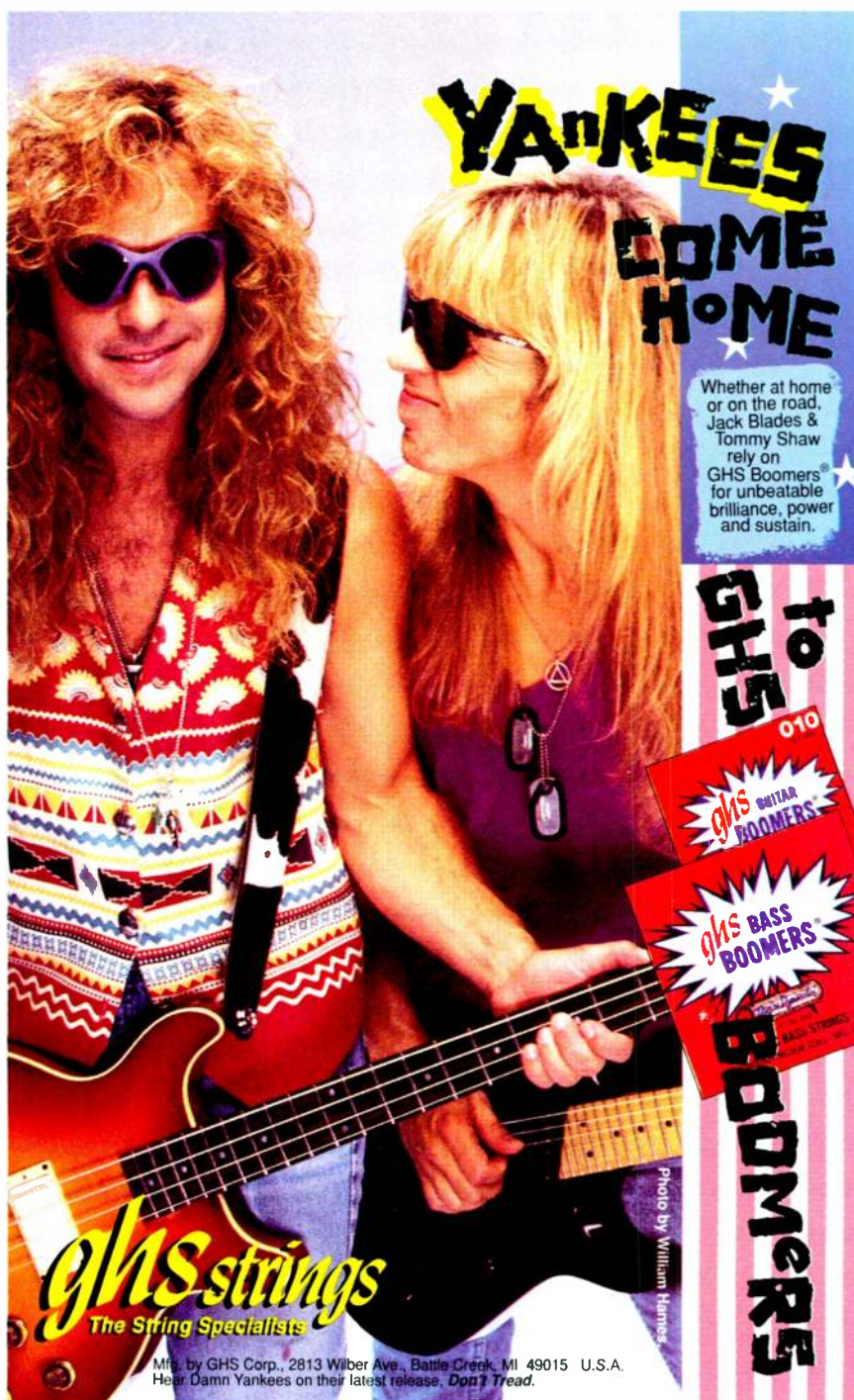
that I said about him. We try to keep our friendship aloof from that. We become professional in order to preserve our friendship.

What Ruth and Ray do is they confront our relationship as it really, really is. In other words, I am here, you are there. Why do we need one another? What is it? I don't know if they address it successfully.

MUSICIAN: *I really don't feel there's a resolution of that question.*

TOWNSHEND: Another thing I've done without an ending! We're talking about a dream here. We're talking about a dream that's driven by anx-

ety and anger and isolation. Ray High might have sorted out his life with the press, and he might have sorted out his life with the establishment. That's what's happened to me. This is where the piece becomes really very autobiographical. I am an establishment figure. You know, I said this back in 1967 but I mean now I very much am an establishment figure. I have exorcised all the demons that have driven me over the years, but what I haven't been able to deal with is the actual feelings that these events in my life, these periods that I went through, created. And the therapy I chose is songwriting. 



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Hell Damn Yankees on their latest release, *Don't Tread*.

Triumph of the Weird

Primus

Pawnshops and Perseverance

ALLED "Herb" for his penchant to ingest herbal remedies, Herb (a.k.a. Tim) Alexander settles down at a table in his manager's office and stuffs a Twix candy bar in his mouth as the Branch Davidians burn live on CNN in the background. "Well, I don't eat *a lot* of junk," he explains. "I try to take care of myself, but I like sugar and chocolate. So I got to watch it."

It's tough for musicians to eat right.

"Yeah, the road. I get lazy, and it's easy to get into a shit routine. I try to find the Chinese and Italian places. I can eat good there."

Muscular with deep and slightly sad eyes, Herb plays drums for Primus, the post-funk, post-punk, post-modern, post-reality trio from the Bay Area that is scheduled to close Lollapalooza III, which makes them sort of headliners among the eight equal bands of the bill. This was scheduled long before their latest

by Charles McYoung



Photographs by
Leslie Flores

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RACING

album *Pork Soda* debuted on *Billboard*'s chart at number seven, an especially remarkable feat as none of their previous three albums and one EP had made it into the Top 100. Okay, alternative music has been happening for years now, but an album this weird this popular? A hit song—"My Name Is Mud"—about a stupid, wholly unappealing redneck who kills somebody with a baseball bat for stepping on his foot? A video where frontman Les Claypool, currently the world's foremost bass hero, is drooling tobacco juice down his chin? And when he's not drooling, he's playing this gigantic (36" scale) six-string bass that looks like some medieval device for cracking the bones of infidels?

"I hate doing videos," says Herb. "It just ruins songs, it's so boring. But I can still listen to 'Mud' because of the great bassline. It's the six-string, man, that's what we needed. The four-string was always in that midrangy drum area, and me and Les were always fighting for space on songs, and that's why I've never been thrilled about our albums sound-wise. I think there's things about them that are good, but there's a lot of things that are just...we didn't have time to sit and do what we did on this album. But the six-string was the turning point."

Pork Soda does represent some kind of milestone in the evolution of the bass. As a collection of low-end noises, it's utterly original, almost an hour of palsied mastodons marching into a steaming volcano.

"We got a way better drum sound as our records evolved," Herb continues. "The first through the third, we were afraid to use anything that would make them sound studio-ish, I guess you'd say. When we did *Sailing the Seas of Cheese* [the third album] I used coated

Ambassadors [drumheads] on everything. It gives the drums a warmer sound. My idol, Neil Peart, says he loves that sound. I don't know how thrilled I was. We were using this reverb that's kind of hissy. On *Pork Soda* we used a room sound that wasn't so pretty. Me and Les were using the same room sound, and that gave it a consistency, like you're in the same room. I think the sound this time is amazing. On *Cheese* I was into not getting on top of the bass, which spaced my playing out. And on this record I thought, I'm just going to play. I'm not going to try to be supertight and super...uh..."

Contrapuntal?

"There it is, that's the classical term. I just decided to play and not be perfect. It turned out all right because his tone is so different from mine, similar but when the bass drum and bass guitar are hitting together, you can pick them out."

Herb lives in the hills over Oakland in a log cabin where he can make plenty of noise and not disturb the neighbors. His studio is

stocked with an African thumb piano, a marimba, an array of shakers and other nameless instruments that sound good when you whack them, and which he's been whacking for a movie soundtrack and a beautiful percussion interlude called "Wounded Knee" on *Pork Soda*.

"Luckily no one tells me what to do. The Primus thing is just the three of us doing what we want to do together, and that's pretty much it. The songs come out of our jams. What I'm trying to work into my playing is that you don't have to play a backbeat all the time for a song to make sense. There's more grooves than two and four. I like grooves that African drummers are creating now, just huge rhythms with no backbeat, hypnotic tunes that go on and on. But it's hard not to have any backbeat, especially in this band. 'Mud' could easily have been a two-four but by accenting what Les is playing, that makes it interesting. I even dropped the snare out a couple of times. It's subtle things like that that people can't pinpoint, but it will strike them as weird. Dropping something they're expecting, so something seems wrong."

It's almost like being a particle physicist, making a discovery that six other Ph.D.s will understand.

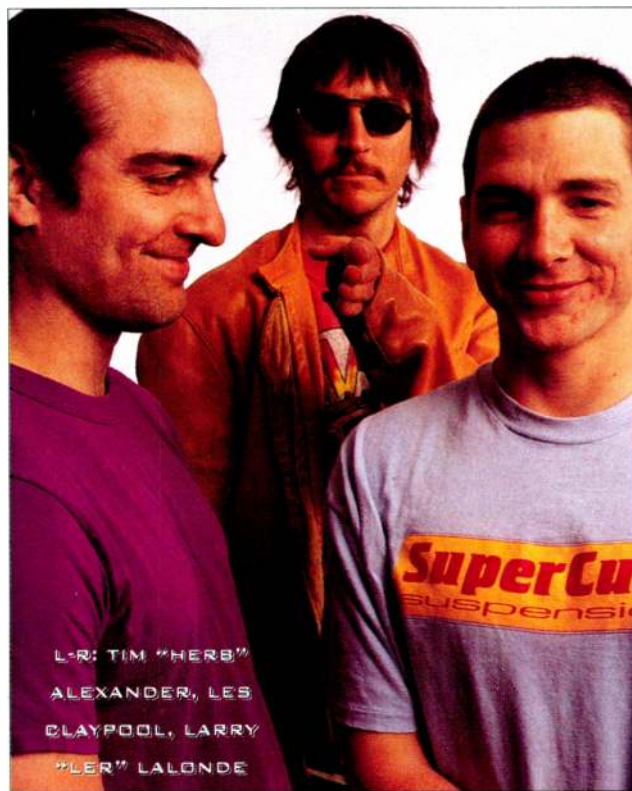
"Yeah. No one understands what's different about Stewart Copeland, or Bill Bruford, or Neil Peart. I can see it, but most people just know if they like a song."

Born in North Carolina 28 years ago, Herb never knew his father and spent his childhood moving to a new state every few years. His mother held "various shit jobs"—Herb learned to shoot a good game of pool by accompanying his mother to bowling alleys—and money was tight, but he always had a little snare drum to practice on. Like a lot of musicians, he had a talent

for math, electronics and art in school. Unlike a lot of musicians, he was a big success at football, starring at his Michigan high school as first-string tailback, second-string quarterback, and going both ways on defense. Training all day every day in the summer finally got to him, however, and he had to decide between drums and the gridiron.

"I just played drums whenever I felt like it," says Herb. "My musical education was playing air drums along with Neil Peart. I didn't even know I was teaching myself all this stuff. It wasn't until we moved to Arizona that I even joined a band, and I've been in two my whole life: Major Lingo and Primus. Whenever things get rough for the band, I just remember that things have been a whole lot rougher in the past."

IN A PAWN SHOP ON Mission Street in San Francisco, Larry "Ler" Lalonde pulls a strange old Les Paul copy from the rack. It has almost 20 buttons, promising a vast display of built-in effects.



L-R: TIM "HERB" ALEXANDER, LES CLAYPOOL, LARRY "LER" LALONDE

Unfortunately, few of them work when the beast is plugged in. "This could have been great," he says dejectedly...actually, he isn't dejected. He's the sort of person who just doesn't get dejected, but if he did, it would be because some strange old effects box doesn't work. Even with no effects or amplification, his style is immediately recognizable in the licks he's running off on the neck. It's a style so sour your mouth puckers when you hear it, but it's a delicious kind of sour, descended from the opening of "Purple Haze," maybe.

"Just random notes," he explains. "I just know notes that don't go together."

Growing up north of Oakland in El Sobrante, Ler took lessons from a student of guitar icon Joe Satriani, and then from Satriani himself. "Mostly it was me sitting there watching him play, thinking, 'Jeez, this guy's a monster!'" Ler recalls. "At first I brought in tapes of songs I wanted to learn, and Joe was really fast that way. But then it was showing me all the modes, tons of theory and stuff. And it was weird theory, scales a normal teacher isn't going to show you, and how it all works together. It took a while for it to sink in, what modes in what keys and stuff. I think it's kind of embedded now, because I don't think about it anymore. I don't usually know what the notes are, I'm just fooling around, trying to find something that sounds good. I'll find the notes that fit and make scales out of that."

Ler appears to have had three traumatic experiences in the 24 years he has spent on earth: 1) He got chased once by some rednecks yelling, "Get a haircut, hippie!"; 2) the leader of his former death metal band hit him a few times, falsely accusing Ler of badmouthing him; and 3) he took a job placement test at the oil refinery in Richmond, California, where his parents both work.

"Whatever they do in those refineries, that's what my parents do," says Ler. "I was 18 and it was time to get a job and all that. My mom made me go apply there and they show you this video of guys welding and stuff. And they all looked like they were going to die any second. Under 'Job Skills' I wrote 'None' so they wouldn't hire me, but I still passed the test ahead of everyone else."

So you decided to be an artist on the spot?

"I kind of had it figured out, but I hadn't thought much about it until that moment."

So—presto changeo!—you're a musician.

"Well, it was like my whole life up to then had been skateboarding and playing guitar. That's all I did."

Not a horrible way to grow up.

"It was fine with me. That's pretty much what my life is now."

How did you get that weird guitar tone on "Mud"?

"The Electro-Harmonix Big Muff distortion pedal. You can still find them in pawn shops for cheap, but they sell for a lot in L.A. That drooping loopy sound. We played that song over and over, trying a ton of different things, until I tried playing nothing through a lot of it. That way, when the guitar comes in, it sounds bigger. That's one of the most important things to me: If you don't have something cool to play, don't play anything at all. Better to sit back, let the song go somewhere, and come back on top."

Any theories on why weird music, after several decades of being appreciated by two kids in every high school, has become so popular?

"When I first got into Primus, I knew it wasn't going to be a big thing. It was the type of band that would be cool, but not huge. It would be something I cared about, but it's not like that anymore. I don't know what happened. People's taste has changed. They must have finally got tired of the same old stuff."

"If you don't have something cool to play, don't play anything at all"

"I WAS BORN TO SPIT tobacco juice!" laughs Les Claypool in his basement home studio on a hill over the Berkeley campus. Creatively cluttered with books, notebooks, instruments and videotapes, his house has a beautiful view of the Bay. "Actually, I put tobacco in my mouth once when I was in ninth grade. Most disgusting taste ever. Like pepper-flavored dirt. Taste stayed with me for days. My brother's friends got all excited when they saw the video for 'Mud': 'He's dipping! Hell yeah!' But I didn't use tobacco. I used shredded beef jerky."

That was beef juice running down your chin? That's almost as disgusting.

"Yeah, it's pretty bad if you're vegetarian. The jerky pulls all the moisture out of your lip, so it was

completely dry and chapped afterwards. But I got my streamers down. There is an art to good streamers. You can't just hack out a looch, it has to stream. Like Clint Eastwood in *Josie Wales*. Or whoever was streaming for him. You never actually saw him hit the target. Like when he hit the dog in the forehead: tight shot of Clint's face, tight shot of the dog getting hit. They probably had some specialist."

Was there a specific inspiration for the character Mud?

"No, there really wasn't. It was just a phrase in my notebook, and it caught me, kept spinning around in my head: 'My name is Mud.' Then the first verse popped out. Seemed to flow real nice. My notebooks are full of stuff like that: a line or verse that I'll finish later. The riff—badabadabadabadabadabadabadabadabad—came when I was warming up to play the Greek Theater. I was playing it about 10 times faster, then I slowed it down and it was warm and weird and Herb came in with this drum thing, and it was a song."

Thin and wiry, Les has the classic rock musician body, but his hair

has that misshapen, random chunks look that connotes Truth among alternative fans. Not that there's anything studied about it. On the issue of Artifice vs. Art, Forced Weirdness vs. Genuine Weirdness, Les comes by his semiotics organically as a fan of the Residents and Snakefinger. His accent is working-class California with a hint of Gomer Pyle.

"Well, El Sobrante is sort of Gomer Pyle-ville, Gomer Pyles who all worked for Standard Oil," says Les. "My dad's parents were from Missouri. He says 'warsh' for 'wash.' My stepdad was into Merle Haggard, Okie-type music."

The only continuous member of Primus from its inception in 1984, Les has made a point of surrounding himself with compatible personalities.

"Herb is quiet. Even when he's excited, he's quiet. Ler is mellow, but very quickwitted. You meet him and think, 'Wow, that's a nice guy.' I've rarely seen him mad, and when he is, you can't tell. When our last guitarist quit, the first name that popped into my head was 'Larry,' because we hung out all the time. I was in a metal band with him [Blind Illusion] but I didn't even know what his playing was like because he played second guitar in the background. A lot of times you can have the greatest player in the world in your band—and we've had some great drummers—but if the personalities don't work, it's an uphill battle. We all know there are some tremendous players who are great, gigantic, gaping assholes."

Lots of untalented people are great, gigantic, gaping assholes, too.

"And I'm one of them," he laughs. "Our whole organization is very friend-oriented. The new light guy is just one of Larry's friends from high school. Totally hilarious guy, been to 260-odd Dead shows, hops in his truck and just goes. I told him once, very off-handed, he should learn to do lights. On that basis, he called this lighting company and told them he'd work for free if they taught him the business. So on his days off, he'd schlep lights for them, and now his first gig ever on lights will be Lollapalooza. But he's a great guy. That's the important thing."

Ler seems to be much more of a presence on this record.

"Yeah, I'm super-blown-away by his playing. He's always been there, but this time, he's really in your face. If you took Marc Ribot and Jerry Garcia and Frank Zappa, and smashed them together, you'd have Larry. He's a huge fan of the bizarre—he's playing in a Zappa cover band on the side—and he's got this Jerry Garcia-melody thing. And it's his personality. Here's a guy who's never had a real job, has no construction experience, and while I'm on vacation, he builds an entire studio in his basement just by reading Sunset books. He did an amazing job. He rocked it and taped it, put

tongue-and-groove paneling all the way around, carpeted it himself. Did everything except the electrical. I was a carpenter for five years, and I couldn't have done that well."

Claypool grew up acquiring practical skills, helping his father maintain various rental properties where he would dig post holes and pour concrete. In high school, he worked at Swiss Colony handing out samples of beef log at the mall. He was assistant manager at El Sobrante Shell for a while, then busted tires at Big O Tires, where his brother is now employed. In '83 and '84 he worked for ADA.

"I was in shipping and receiving, and then they put me in quality control. I had to sit there all day and listen to digital delays. 'BA-DANK...BA-DANK...Ba-Dank...ba-dank...' I'm surprised I didn't go nuts. They were training me to be a technician, but I had to get out. There's nothing worse than soldering in a warehouse, listening to digital delays. Then I got into the carpentry thing. That was cool, a good trade for a musician. The hours are flexible and you make a lot of money. You just got to be careful you don't screw up your tendons pounding all those nails.

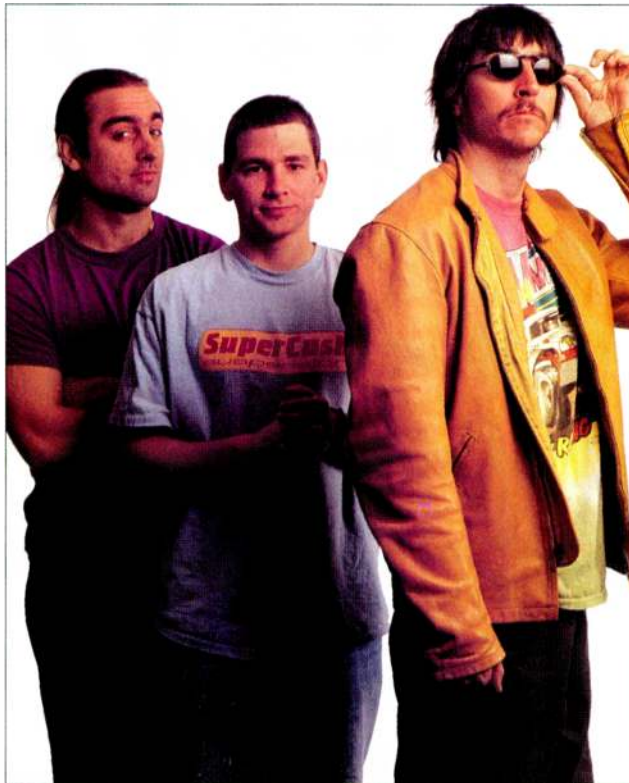
"Then the greatest thing happened: I got a hernia. I went to the doctor and said, 'I've got this weird bulge here.' I thought it was cancer. He said I had a minor hernia and I could have it taken care of now or later. I decided to take advantage of the workman's comp and get it done now, when someone else would pay for it. I was off for eight months. When the disability was up, I tried to go back to work but the company had gone out of business, so I went on unemployment."

During this period he invested in a T-shirt press and started silkscreening T-shirts for Primus and other local bands like Faith No More. They would make a new shirt for all their shows, so playing once a week got pretty lucrative by starving-musician standards.

"We've been paying the rent as a band for four or five years now," says Les. "*Suck on This* [their first album] cost \$3000. We made the tape ourselves and put it out on our own label. That money we borrowed from my father, who didn't have a lot of money. He'd just opened a transmission shop in Phoenicia with my uncle. But it sold enough to finance the next batch, and the next batch. We'd made enough money to finance *Frizzle Fry* before we signed with Caroline. Then we made that album for \$11,000. It doesn't take long to recoup when it's that cheap. *Cheese* didn't cost much either."

Well, you spent money on basses.

"Yeah, the Carl Thompsons are expensive, but he gave me the last one, the six-string fretted. This is actually the first six-string Carl ever built. He wanted to build me another one, but this neck is just super-thin. I told him to put frets on this one, and super-light strings. I used it on 'Hamburger Train' and 'DMV' on the album. It's got this unique sound—a huge, farty bottom end, and



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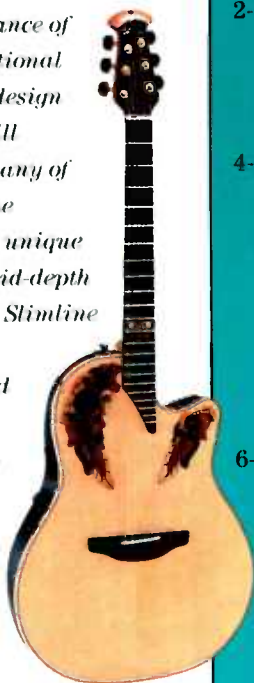


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Jason Bieler of Saigon Kick does his "Elvis thang" as the city of Miami looks on.

Jeff Sacks

CONTENTS

2-3 News Update

Guitar news from around the solar system as it looks to us in Bloomfield, Connecticut.

4-5 Weird Science — Strange tales from R&D

Richie Sambora pokes around the Ovation Research and Development lab and finds a few things to light his Bunsen Burner. Further proof that truth is stranger than fiction.

6-7 WOOF!! Squeal!! BRAZZZ!!

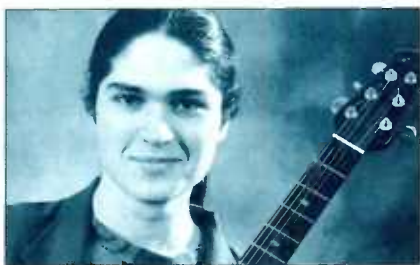
Taming your amplified guitar By Adrian Legg England's acoustic ace exports some useful tips on getting your guitar to behave when you take it out in public.

spell with *Mrs. Crowe's Blue Waltz* (Relativity) and takes on topics from 50's hairstyles to the War in Afghanistan... **Heart** has just finished an as yet untitled new album in their new Seattle studio... fellow Seattlites **Pearl Jam** have been seen on tour playing Ovations... so have Santa Barbarians **Ugly Kid Joe**.

Adamas-mates Adrian Legg and Nancy Wilson ham it up backstage in Seattle at a recent Legg gig.



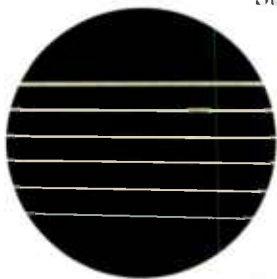
Alison Braun



Julian Coryell inherited monstrous talent and a preference for Ovations from his father, Larry Coryell.

Equality in the String World —

Just down the road from Ovation headquarters is the home of **Adamas Strings**. During the development of the Adamas guitar, a lot of experimentation was done with different string gauges and tensions.



String engineers found that using **matching core and wrap wire** on a particular gauge of wound string

gave the string better sustain and clarity. That's what sets Adamas strings apart from the others.



Small but mighty, the Trace Acoustic TA50.

Trace Acoustic — The Next Generation —

Trace Elliot revolutionized acoustic amplification 3 years ago with the impressive TA100 and TA200 amps. This year, they've added a **phantom power** feature to the TA100R, upgraded the preamp of TA50 and TA50R, and introduced 2 new pieces of gear to the line. For guitarists who

like to rack their gear, there's a new rack mount acoustic preamp, the **TA-RP1R**. This single-space unit features 2 independent channels, a 5-band graphic, notch filter, assignable digital reverb and Trace Elliot's new **Harmonic Emphasis™** acoustic exciter circuit.

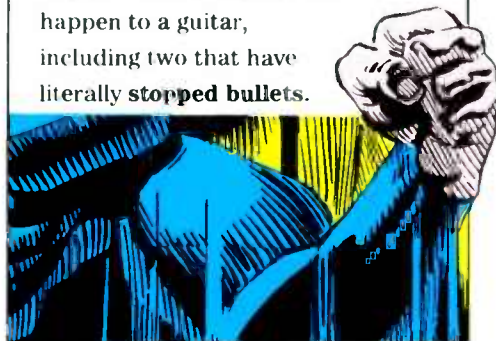


Acoustic bass players now have their own no-compromise amplifier — the Trace Acoustic TAB-100-15.

Acoustic bass players are excited about the new **TAB-100-15**, a 100-watt combo with a 15" Kevlar speaker. It features 2 independent channels, 5-band graphic, notch filter, Pre-Shape tone contour and Trace Elliot's patented **Dynamic Correction**.

Stronger than a speeding bullet —

Elsewhere in this issue, Richie Sambora pays a visit on the R&D staff at the Ovation factory. But the real strange tales come from the **Customer Service** department. Over the years they've repaired just about every mishap that could possibly happen to a guitar, including two that have literally **stopped bullets**.



High Tech, High Touch —

Production capacity for Kaman's advanced composite **Adamas** acoustic has been expanded. There are now about 75 **Adamas Gold Dealers** around the US who carry a selection of these unique instruments. They also have special services for Adamas owners, like free loaner instruments. For the name of the Adamas Gold Dealer near you, call 1-800-552-4681.



New Balladeer with an old idea —

The **Balladeer** was the original Roundback and the new **Custom Balladeer 1860** brings back more than just the visual appeal of the guitar that launched a revolution. This

one's destined to become a classic in its own right.

Players are showing an increasing preference for the sound of a **cedar top** and Ovation has three new cedar models

(1862-4C, 1868-4C, 1768-4C). Solid cedar tops tend to have a **more "open" tone** when new and play in faster than guitars with solid spruce tops. Most of you out there still prefer spruce, but there's a growing group of cedar-heads. Give one a try and decide for yourself.





Weird SCIENCE

Strange Tales from R+D

We tag along as Richie Sambora takes a look inside Ovation Research & Development —

Every guitarist has dreamed about it. "Give me a couple of days in a guitar Research and Development shop and look out!" We recently had the chance to spend some time at the Ovation R&D Department, tagging along with Richie Sambora as he checked out some of the new goings-on. We half expected to see a bunch of guys in lab coats and loose wigs. They built Richie's triple neck acoustic — they must be weird.

What we found was, let's say, different than what we expected. The R&D shop is tucked away in a corner of the factory, in a room with an open beamed ceiling and huge windows overlooking the river. The guy in charge is Don Johnson (everybody calls him "D.J."), and his able assistants Willy Vassilopoulos, Dave Langdon and Frank Morrell.

There were lots of guitar parts hanging on the walls and lying on workbenches plus the requisite black boxes with dials and switches. Richie had come up to check out the new '93 Collectors' Edition (more on that later) and find out where things were going for Ovation.

Ovation History 101 —

Anyone who's played an Ovation knows that they're different, but how did they get that way? Richie asked DJ for a little history and he turned us on to some facts we weren't aware of. "Before he started Kaman Corporation, the inventor, Charlie Kaman played guitar with some name big bands. He was also an aeronautical engineer and one of the true pioneers in helicopters. "Charlie made state-of-the-art helicopter blades in the 60's, using composites for the skin and spruce for the internal bracing. The blades were stronger than other

blades in use at the time and were many times lighter. One of the biggest design challenges was to engineer the vibration out of the blades so the aircraft would fly smoother. Charlie figured that they could use the technology they developed to *control* vibration to *enhance* it as well. Since he was a guitarist, he decided to test his theory on his favorite instrument."

Watch out for sacred cows —

Ovation rewrote the book on acoustic guitar design and the boys in R&D continue to add new chapters every year. They started with a revolutionary idea and they're never afraid to try something unconventional. As DJ puts it, "We don't have many sacred cows. We can look at alternate materials and methods more freely than traditional guitar makers."

DJ showed us some new composites that he feels will be lighter and more responsive, adding that, "You'll probably see these new materials on production guitars before too long."

Bill's Excellent Adventure —


We had just started talking about "the Ovation sonic concept" when we were joined by Bill Kaman, the inventor's son and president of Ovation. Like his dad, Bill's no slouch on guitar — playing them or building them. Bill's also a collector of vintage guitars and has a great ear for the "right" sound. He jumped into our discussion right away. "Sound is very subjective," he started, "Players of different styles listen for different things. For instance, the players in Nashville listen to the top end sound more than the bottom end. For them, the highs define the character of an



Ovation R&D gave the Adamas its high tech graphite top and awesome acoustic sound.



The business end of R&D. Bill Kaman, Don "DJ" Johnson and Willy Vassilopoulos are the core of the team that converts ideas into instruments.



It's weird, but it works. Richie Sambora asked the Ovation R&D department, "Is it possible to make a triple neck acoustic?". Here's the answer.

Rick Whelton

instrument.

This makes sense,

because country records have a lot of low and mid content. The natural 'space' for the acoustic guitar is in the high end."

Richie admitted that most rockers tend to look for a rich low end to fill in behind the vocals. So now the big question — "How do you get both good high end and good low end?" Bill had the simple answer. "You can always eq out the frequencies that you don't want, but its difficult, if not impossible, to add something that's not there. We give players a full spectrum to work with. From there they can take it wherever they want to go."

Sure Fire Pickup Lines —

We then asked Bill about some of the technical details of the Ovation system. "We started off with a piezo bridge pickup and have stuck with it, although we've made numerous changes along the way. As it's currently developed, the Ovation pickup uses six piezo pickups, one under each string. Ours is different in that it doesn't use the pressure of the bridge to make it work. We found these pressure-type pickups to be very temperamental. Unless they're installed perfectly, there's a good chance you'll have string-to-string balance problems, particularly if you change string gauges.

"The Ovation pickup isolates the elements from bridge pressure so that they sense the vibration of the top as well as the bridge. This gives you a more accurate reproduction of what the guitar really sounds like." Richie told us, "I've tried nearly all the different kinds of acoustic pickups, including microphones, magnetic pickups and contact pickups. Each one has its own particular sound and, of course, some work better than others. The Ovation system seems to work best for me and my soundman."


The Crystal Ball —

We were beginning to get a good feel for why things were like they were, but R&D is about the future, isn't it? We asked Bill about the kinds of things players can look forward to seeing from Ovation in the future. "I'm not sure where everything we're now looking at is going to take us," Bill admitted. "We try a lot of things and document the results, so that we can implement these things as we feel we need them. Right now, we're concentrating on a higher level of acoustic performance, and to be fair, so are our competitors. We're pushing each other and nobody in the guitar business is asleep at the wheel. The increased competition makes us all better at what we do and ultimately results in better and more affordable instruments for guitar players."

The Final Question —

Before we left, we had to ask, "Where do R&D guys get their ideas?" DJ was right on the answer. "People may think that this is an ivory tower. Far from it. We have a large group of demanding customers who are very vocal about the instrument they use for their livelihood. Inside the company, almost anyone can contribute. And almost everyone at the factory is a player, so they have their own ideas about the way things ought to be — its an interesting mix of opinions."

As we left, our new-found knowledge had our heads

buzzing with new ideas and new questions. We're going to have to come back here soon for a longer stay. 

'93 Collectors' Edition —

The '93 Collectors' Edition was different from previous models I was familiar with. It reminded me of some of the early Ovation Elites with its classic simplicity. DJ pointed out the different woods — padauk, ebony, and mahogany that give the guitar a great rich look. The solid Sitka spruce top, the smooth body cutaway, the gold-plated tuners with ebony buttons, and the maple "1993" and "Ovation" inlays add other touches of elegance.

Bill Kaman told me that the '93 was born in Nashville, with studio players wanting a different, brighter, more "acoustic" acoustic/electric sound. He'd been talking about it with them and Nashville guitar maven Larry Garris for over a year and even went so far as to make a few prototypes. The idea was very well received, so it was decided to let it become the '93 Collectors' Edition. The body depth is right in between Ovation's deep and super shallow bowls. The overall timbre is very well balanced. I'll bet it sounds great in the studio, recorded direct and with a mike placed a foot or so away from the top. Bill tells me that only about 1,400 of the 1993 Collectors' Edition guitars will be made, so get down to your music store and check one out soon. — Richie Sambora

Exotic woods, rich satin finish and a new Thinline pickup system highlight the 1993 Collectors' Edition.

In essence, an acoustic guitar is a box full of vibrating air, electronically connected to a speaker — another device designed to vibrate air. This is an obvious recipe for ear-splitting feedback, yet daily, optimists take just such a device into the sonic hell of contemporary gig architecture and get musical results. How?

In any situation, good gear is first base — a guitar that speaks right across the frequency range and a pickup that senses it honestly, equalisation that will shape what the pickup delivers without colouring in your elegant blue as a mucky orange and a sound reinforcement system that doesn't have its own opinions.

I want to be alone —

Though I have often dragged an acoustic into band situations, nowadays I work solo — a drum-free zone. I carry a few gizmos to help sort out major problems I'm likely to encounter, but the first requisite is still a flexible, good sounding guitar. I can tell you how I survive on stage. I hope you can tweak my ideas to suit your own battleground.

Pickups and Downs —

Getting bottom end out of an amplified acoustic is tricky. Some players use a magnetic soundhole pickup to deliver bulk sound, accepting its electric-like tonal deficiencies. Magnetic pickups get around the air cavity feedback problem pretty well, but they have the undesirable side effect of destroying some of the harmonic content of your sound.

Stick-on transducers are easy to fit, supply fair top end sound and work pretty well in conjunction with the bulk of a magnetic pickup. But note here that you can be getting into doubling up on eq units and effects processors as well. Positioning stick-ons can be fairly fiddly, with each location producing a very different sound.

Under-saddle *pressure sensitive* pickups are quite popular these days. Properly installed, they work very well, but you have to be careful about causing string balance problems when changing string gauges and action heights.

I've found under-saddle *vibration sensitive* pickups, like the Ovation, to be the most flexible system. The sound is very natural and you can change string gauges and action settings with nary a balance problem.

Resonances — The Acoustic Gremlins from Hell

Dealing with the problems of amplifying an acoustic can sometimes seem like fighting some invisible gremlins from Hell. The main problems come from Resonances. These resonance gremlins hide all over your guitar and jump out and bite whenever you play their favorite frequency. Each gremlin has a different favorite frequency, and they're very good at blaming each other for the problem. Here's how to sort them out.

The Air Gremlin —

This is the resonant frequency of the air volume inside



Slippery EQ —

I carry a parametric eq to kill feedback with and a graphic to compensate for the room. I use the parametric as a narrow band notch filter to control the twin resonant peaks of the soundboard and body air volume.

WOOF!
SQUEEAL!!
BRAZZZ!
BY ADRIAN LEGG

TAMING YOUR AMPLIFIED ACOUSTIC GUITAR

When equalisation is done right, the acoustic sound of the guitar is altered only slightly, but the usable headroom before feedback can increase noticeably.

But this is a slippery slope. If you start to notch out extra resonances, you might end up thinning out the tone until it sounds like a balalaika calling long distance.

Close encounters of the mic kind —

A microphone can help in better defining the very high frequencies that come from your strings, pick and fingers. This subtle addition will help you sound "more acoustic", even though you're amplified.

your guitar. The larger the body the lower the resonance, with most guitars falling in between the 95Hz to 130Hz band. Stuffing the guitar with foam or plugging the sound hole is often the only way to defeat this guy if you play really loud.

The Wood Gremlin —

The guitar top is the other significant resonant part of the guitar. Its usually tuned in the "G" range of 195-200Hz. A steep notch filter is the best way to deal with this nasty little bugger.

Don Johnson, Ovation R&D



In addition, I use the "proximity effect" of the microphone as an effect. You've noticed how bass response increases the closer you get to a mic. You can use the mic as a "dynamic tone control" by moving closer and farther away as you play. It can make a real impact on the audience when done creatively.

DI Boxing —

If you don't have an amplifier and will hook up to the house PA, you'll need a direct box (DI box). The DI box takes the unbalanced high impedance signal from the pickup and converts it to balanced low impedance. The practical benefit is that your signal can take the long trip to the mixer without losing bandwidth or level and without picking up any unwanted hum along the way.

DI boxes come in active and passive varieties. To my ears, an active box preserves the signal best, but the important factor is quality — cheap DI boxes sound, well, cheap.

The Sure Thing —

The surest way to sound right is to use an amplifier designed specifically for acoustic guitar. A good one will have a variety of inputs for different types of pickups and/or microphones, a good graphic eq, a parametric eq or notch filter, some reverb and DI outputs (having both pre- and post-eq DI's is most handy).

Trace Acoustic and Adamas — Legg's Holy Grail

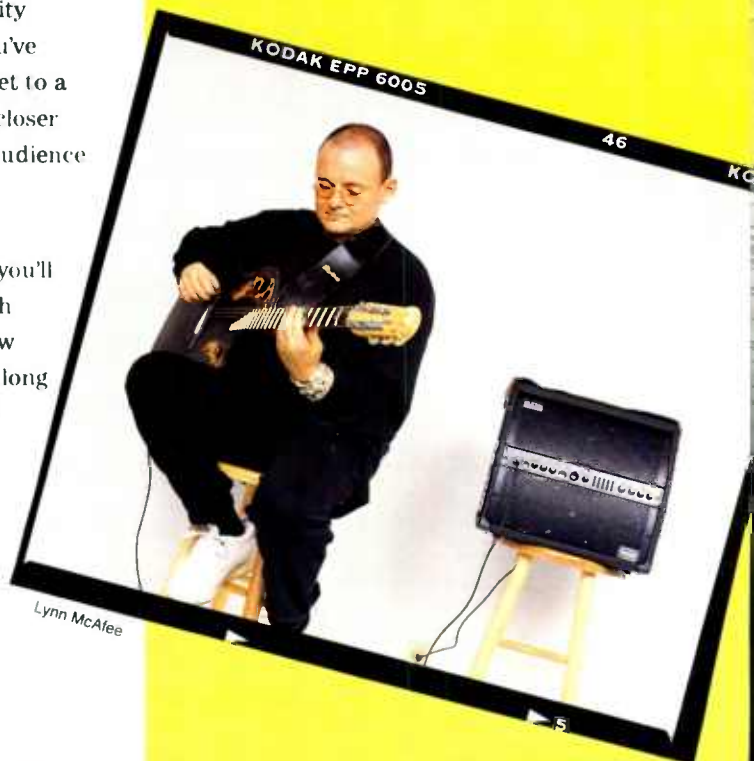
Having tried a number of very good traditional acoustics with most pickups, I have come full circle back to an Ovation Adamas. It might help you to know why.

Firstly, the pickup takes care of my light stringing without complaint because it is *vibration sensitive*, not *pressure sensitive*. It also delivers a meaty signal with excellent string-to-string balance. The shallow body avoids low end feedback on stage, with a mild resonant peak at 98Hz. Combined with the 198Hz resonant frequency of the top, the Adamas has very nice acoustic warmth in the low end. Where it really shines is above 3KHz, where it is virtually flat. This gives me the ability to adjust eq to different venues, while keeping the character of the instrument intact.

The graphite top on Adamas is very sensitive and responsive, even with the light gauge strings I use (.010"-.046"). It's a wonder that a guitar with such delicate sound can be so incredibly tough. Mine has survived two years of travel in a gig bag — from airline baggage holds to trunks of rent-a-cars — and has been completely reliable.

On the amp side, the Trace Elliot TA100R is simply brilliant. At about the size of a breadbox, it is amazingly powerful and dead clean up to max output. The input scheme will accommodate anything with a plug on it and the combination of graphic eq and a steep notch filter can handle any venue. The back panel has pre- and post-eq DI's that simplify mating to the house PA and the sound is more truly "acoustic" than anything I've ever used. — Adrian Legg

Wendi Nordeck



Lynn McAfee



In the 60's, Ovation developed the acoustic/ electric guitar and Ovation is still the performance standard by which others are judged. Thousands of touring musicians from every style of music have played Ovations on stage and in the studio. Here are just a few of them:

1st Row (l. to r.): Jon Bon Jovi, Glen Campbell, Billy Ray Cyrus. 2nd Row (l. to r.): Chris DeGarmo, Al Di Meola, Robert Fripp. 3rd Row (l. to r.): David Gilmour, Brian May, Vince Neil. 4th Row (l. to r.): Seal, Steve Vai, Michael Wilton.

Photo credits:
1st Row (l to r): Neal Preston, Jennifer Wheiden. 2nd Row (l to r): Neal Preston, Jeff Sacks. 3rd Row (l to r): Neal Preston, Neal Preston, Neal Preston. 4th Row (l to r): Neal Preston, Jennifer Wheiden, Neal Preston.

Cover Photo: Jeff Sacks

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- 21 11/79 **Brian Eno**, Talking Heads, Weather Report
- 34 7/81 **Tom Petty**, Dave Edmunds, Wayne Shorter
- 45 7/82 **Willie Nelson**, Jahn McLaughlin, the Motels
- 64 2/84 **Stevie Wonder**, X, Was (Not Was), Ornette
- 70 8/84 **Peter Wolf**, King Crimson, Sly + Robbie
- 71 9/84 **Heavy Metal**, Dream Syndicate, Tina Turner
- 102 4/87 **Robert Cray**, Los Lobos, Simply Red
- 104 6/87 **Springsteen**, The Blasters, Keith Jarrett
- 112 2/88 **McCartney**, Stanley Clarke, Buster Poindexter
- 113 3/88 **Robert Plant**, INXS, Wynton Marsalis
- 115 5/88 **Stevie Wonder**, **Sonny Rollins**, **Joni Mitchell**, **Johnny Cash**
- 116 6/88 **Sin ad O'Connor**, Neil Young, Tracy Chapman
- 117 7/88 **Jimmy Page**, Leonard Cohen, Lloyd Cole
- 118 8/88 **Pink Floyd**, New Order, Smitherens
- 119 9/88 **Billy Gibbons**, Santana/Shorter, Vernan Reid
- 120 10/88 **Keith Richards**, Depeche Mode, Steve Forbert
- 121 11/88 **Prince**, Steve Winwood, Randy Newman
- 122 12/88 **Guns N' Roses**, Midnight Oil, Glyn Johns
- 123 1/89 **Year in Music '88**, Metallica, Jack Bruce, Fishbone
- 124 2/89 **Replacements**, Fleetwood Mac, Lyle Lovett
- 125 3/89 **Elvis Costello**, Jeff Healey, Sonic Youth
- 126 4/89 **Lou Reed**, John Cale, Joe Satriani
- 127 5/89 **Miles Davis**, Fine Young Cannibals, XTC
- 128 6/89 **Peter Gabriel**, Charles Mingus, H sker D 
- 129 7/89 **The Who**, The Cure, Ziggy Marley
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- 139 5/90 **Paul McCartney**, Cecil Taylor, Kronos Quartet
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- 141 7/90 **Jimi Hendrix**, David Bowie, Bob Clearmountain
- 142 8/90 **Sin ad O'Connor**, John Hiatt, World Party
- 143 9/90 **Steve Vai**, Michael Stipe, Malmsteen/McLaughlin
- 144 10/90 **INXS**, Neville Bras., Lau Reed/Vaclav Havel
- 146 12/90 **Slash**, Replacements, Waterboys, Pixies
- 147 1/91 **Robert Johnson**, Bruce Hornsby, Saul Asylum
- 148 2/91 **Pink Floyd**, Neil Young, Art Blakey, Black Crowes
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the top string is like a guitar. It was made in 1978, may be the first six-string in the world.”

Herb sees the acquisition of the six-string fretless as the big turning point in your sound.

“That’s probably true. I was getting bored with the four-string. I find fretted instruments more constraining. With fretless instruments, you have more parameters: quarter tones, weird vibrato, sliding into notes. It’s just a more vocal instrument. You can really make it talk. Not that I’ve given up the four-string. It’s great for getting

down a pocketed-type thing. But, yeah, I’ll agree with that. That bass has a 36” scale, and it sounds like a piano on the low notes, which I always wanted to hear.”

Mostly self-taught, Les played string bass in the high school jazz band, concert band and dance band, learning (and appreciating) the music of Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey and Duke Ellington. At home he was into Rush and Larry Graham. He remembers his parents as not exactly encouraging but not discouraging either.

“My father still tells me, ‘Ya know, you

can’t sing worth a shit, but you can still play that bass guitar.’ And: ‘This new album, I don’t think it’s going to do very well, ’cause I like it, and if I like it, it can’t be very good.’”

Given your virtuoso bass skills and your friendship with Kirk Hammett (also an El Sobrante native), how did you manage to fail your audition with Metallica several years ago?

“At the time I was listening to nothing but my old Isley Brothers albums. I wasn’t even slightly familiar with metal like the Scorpions and Judas Priest. I like weird shit like the Residents or Public Image. I didn’t look the part, I couldn’t play the part. Jason [Newsted] was their guy. I wasn’t crushed. But I was disappointed I couldn’t go to my job as a carpenter the next day and say, ‘Hey, I’m going to Japan with Metallica.’ Primus was doing well in the clubs at the time, but we were still hungry. It’s better for everyone that it didn’t happen.”

What about your literary influences? The

To rage is human, to boogie divine.



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PRIMUS PORK BARREL

On the road, HERB ALEXANDER plays a custom-built Pork Pie drumkit including two 20"x20" bass drums, a vast array of toms and four Octabans. His snare is a 5½"x14" Ludwig, and cymbals are Zildjian. At home he has a vast array of gongs and exotic percussion instruments, and a semi-retired Gretsch kit for demos and experimentation.

LARRY LALONOE expects to play Paul Reed Smiths and a Fender Strat on Lollapalooza. He's also looking for just the right used Gibson SG. His amps will be two Marshall half-stacks, augmented either by a couple of Fenders or an old Ampeg Portaflex. His strings are Dean Markley Blue Steel .010 through .048s, which he finger-picks because he "can never find a flatpick around the house." He has a vast array of effects from shopping in pawn shops, and is especially fond of the Electro-Harmonix Big Muff distortion pedal. He will probably take a Yamaha SPX900 on the road for reliability.

LES CLAYPOOL has four Carl Thompson basses: a regular four-string, a four-string with a whammy bar, a six-string fretless and a six-string fretted. His strings are also Carl Thompson. He amplifies with an ADA MP-1 preamp, a MESA/Boogie Bass 400 Plus and two Boogie 2x15 cabinets. He gives a ringing endorsement to his Tascam 388 eight-track.



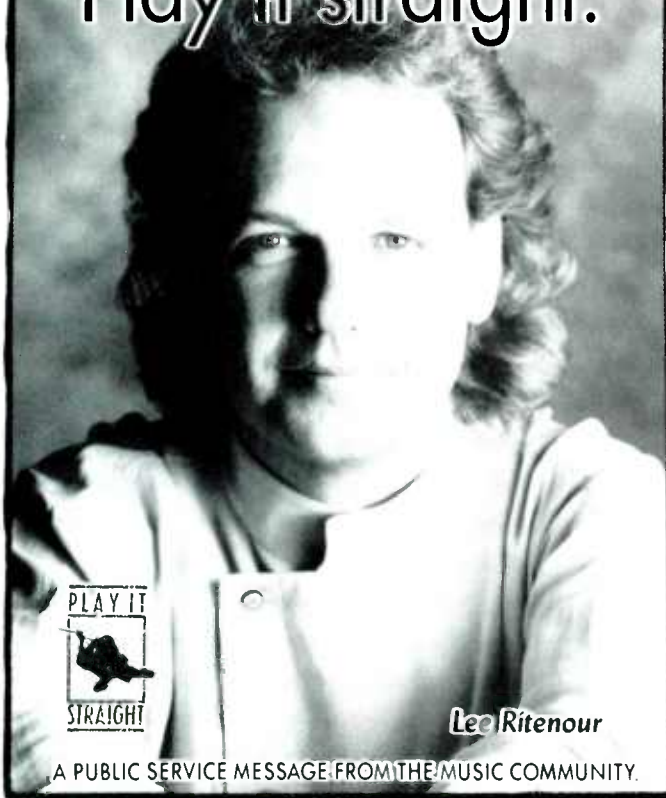
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stories you tell in your lyrics are so bizarre.

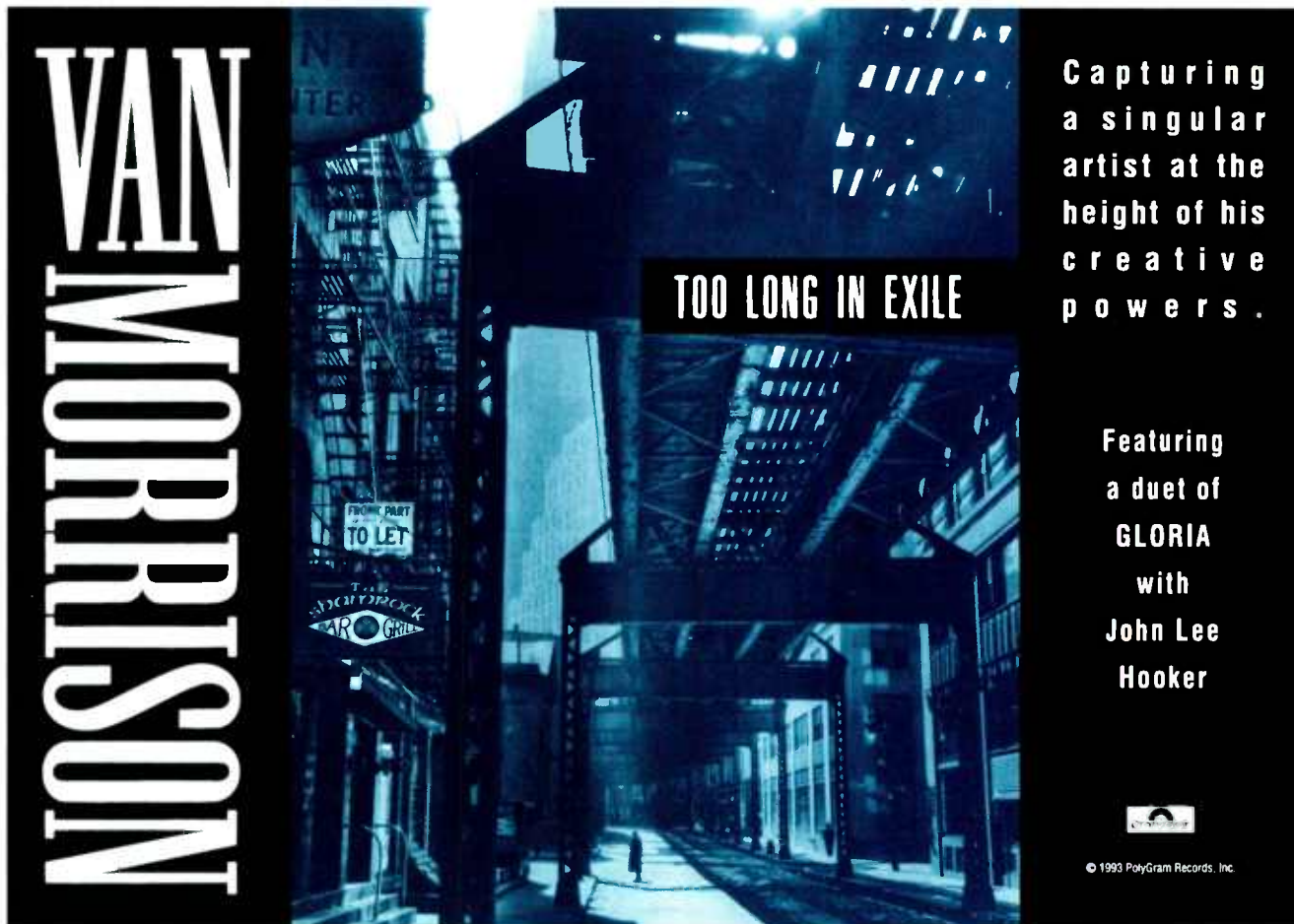
"Charles Bukowski. Hunter S. Thompson. Jean Shepherd—all his Wanda Hickey stuff. Sometimes I read a lot, sometimes I don't. I'm a big film buff. AMC is my channel. When I think of 'Mud,' I think of *Deliverance*. Or Terry Gilliam. I love his perspective. You don't see pretty people in his movies. He inspired me to put brown shit in my teeth for the video."

What's this thing you have with fish? One is never far from a fish reference on a Primus album.

"'Diamondback' is meant to show the perspective of the fish. Writers have done that for centuries, switching perspectives between the hunter and the hunted. I've always been sympathetic to fish. When I was a kid, it was just bonk them and eat them. But now as the Bay gets more polluted, you see them less and less. It's scary."

Do you have any sense of what's happening out in the country with the success of all these weird bands?

"Yeah, Lollapalooza, Perry Farrell, the Chili Peppers, the Buttholes, Sonic Youth. The thing is, they've all been kicking around for a lot of years. I remember playing with the Chili Peppers in tiny clubs in Berkeley Square. They never made a huge leap to stardom. They were like us: clunka clunka clunka. One step at a time. Not like Ugly Kid Joe: Out the gate and they're gone! Having a career like ours, I think the likelihood of longevity is greater. I don't think Primus is that strange compared to old Foetus stuff. I think we're quirky. But I don't know why these particular bands are successful now, other than perseverance." 




VAN MORRISON

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MUS

LEAVING NORMAL:

The day after the day

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW BRUSSO

You get signed

FOR A BAND at the top of the local ladder, it's the best of times and the worst of times.

It's when the answer from a major label is yes at last. It's when the band can finally hope to get their music out of the boondocks and into the car radios of America. It's when success is only one of the many lurid temptations suddenly at the doorstep, among them praise, money, a new hair cut and group sex.

by Bruce Pollock

Thirteen years ago, it was when Willie Nile was courted by Clive Davis at Arista and eventually got to tour with the Who. Four years ago, it was when Edie Brickell & New Bohemians hit number one with their first shot. Six months ago, it was when Larry Kirwan's Black 47 rode the cult buzz to a much-hyped debut release.

But, like every honeymoon, the glorious moment of having made it soon gives way to the reality of having to make it work. For many rookie bands, this is the time when local critics, other bands in town and three-quarters of their original fans all complain that they've sold out. It's when the label that just bought their body decides to tamper with their soul, and the marketing department decides some other band deserves the push that month. When management suddenly neglects to return phone calls. When they find that the top rung of one ladder leads to the bottom of the next.

It's when, despite touring with the Who, Willie Nile found himself without enough airplay or record sales to prevent being dropped. It's when, despite initial rave reviews and an article in *Time*, the BoDeans, after five albums on Slash, are still waiting for a hit single. It's the fact that, despite a hit single, when Edie Brickell & New Bohemians broke up shortly after their second Gefen LP bombed, "nobody knew, nobody cared."

For too many bands, signing a deal isn't the end of the beginning, but the beginning of the end. Like the Neighborhoods who, after 14 years, finally put out a record on Atlantic, only to break up a year later.

Willie Nile knows how seductive that honeymoon period can be. Before Robert Palmer wrote him up glowingly in the *New York Times* in the summer of '79, he was just another shipwrecked folksinger playing Kenny's Castaways in Greenwich Village and changing his name every other night to get gigs uptown.

"The article came out in July, and the next time I played, the place was packed," Nile recalls. "When I got offstage people would be handing me their cards. There were three or four labels a night in there. Clive Davis came down. I was getting offers to go to England to record. You could feel the electricity. It was a blast." On the advice of his lawyer, Nile eventually opted for Arista Records.

In Milwaukee during the mid-'80s, an A&R woman from Capitol Records, in town to hear another band, was more impressed with the opening act, the BoDeans. Slash/Warner emerged the winner in the ensuing battle to sign them. When Kurt Neumann and Sammy Llanas flew first class to L.A. to make the deal, it was the first time either of them had been in a plane.

"I think it's much harder after you get signed," says Kurt, five albums later. "Before that, you're a local celeb, you're sleeping until four in the afternoon every day, you're making all this club cash, all these women are around. All of a sudden you sign a record contract and you start playing for 10 people in all these different towns. It slaps you with a bit of reality. Back home, people start to dislike you; area musicians bum out when one band does better than another. A lot of the older musicians who have been playing around for a lot of years feel you have to do that first, because that's paying your dues. Sam and I laugh about it all the time. We had it made and then we got a record deal."

Kenny Withrow, a guitarist in Edie Brickell & New Bohemians, would agree.

"The worst part was definitely right after we got signed," he says. "We had a lot of producers who fell through, so it turned out to be about 10 months of waiting to record, getting discouraged month after

month. We had five going-away gigs in Dallas. It's so funny, that mentality—you're signed and leaving. You're going off and they'll never see you again. You don't realize that life goes on after you've been signed."

During their early years, the Neighborhoods, Boston's toast of the local circuit, stubbornly waited for the deal they felt they deserved. As time went on, however, they began to feel like Janis Ian at a basketball game.

"We had a manager back then who looked upon us as the Beatles," singer David Minehan admits. "That was lovely and flattering and such, but if you hold out for a little too much, the labels just move on to the next thing."

In 1991, Atlantic picked them up. The guys had barely finished dousing each other's heads with champagne when the label began suggesting changes in their sound, presentation and strategy. To test the

"When you're on a major label and you see the starmaking machinery that's available, you



waters, they re-released the band's latest indie album. When it didn't fly, they were dropped without recording a new one. The Neighborhoods broke up within the year.

"If someone's going to put \$150,000 down to sign you, I just don't understand why they would mess with the chemistry of the band to the point that you break up," Minehan laments. "We handed them a demo tape of almost two more albums' worth of material—15 songs—which fell on deaf ears. It had already been decided that they were going to let us go, mainly because we weren't playing ball with the A&R guy; he had a vision of us and we didn't accept his vision. I have to admit, when you're on a major label, and you see the starmaking machinery that is available—I won't say it always gets committed to you—you start to wonder, 'Is this a compromise I can live with a little while, at least to get us to the next rung on the ladder?' And you start questioning yourself. Insecurities creep in, and you almost start to give these guys the benefit of the doubt. We stuck to our guns, but once the A&R guy was disillusioned, the rest of the record company just fell by the wayside."

That New Bohemians *didn't* rebel against their record label and their producer's vision of them led to their eventual downfall, barely two years after their debut single, "What I Am," became a hit.

"Making the album was one of the hardest things I ever had to go through," Withrow remembers. "We came from an improv background, so playing in the studio was very foreign to us. On top of that, we recorded in Wales. It was just us and the producer, slugging it out. They tell you not to bring any equipment over, that you can rent whatever you need. Of course, it didn't work that way. I went through just about every amp you could name, trying to get a good sound, and it still wasn't happening. I didn't realize how much my equipment had to do with my sound until I didn't have it. We had to switch to a studio drummer and that was another thing to deal with,

er. We were interviewing managers. We went through a string of them, and they were almost always close friends or dating somebody in the band. We should have had people helping us get singles out. 'What I Am' got milked for everything it was worth. It was out too long, so people became, in my opinion, sick of us. We made four videos for our first album. Somebody could have been there to make the decision not to do them. But the record company said, 'Sure, make that video.' They're always willing to let you spend as much money as you want. We were ill-advised, and we wound up not making any money. The weirdest thing, to tell you the truth, was that nobody tried to talk us out of breaking up."

On the day they were signed to Elektra in the late '70s, the Simms Brothers received one particularly salient piece of advice from then chairman Joe Smith. "He said, 'I'm behind you guys all the way,'" drummer Bud Tunick recalls. "'Anything you want, just go downstairs and get my people motivated.' That was the hard part, getting those people downstairs motivated." Especially once the album was released and the head of marketing decided the priority that month would be the Shoes and not the Simms Brothers. Even an offer from Peter Frampton for the opening slot on his national tour failed to motivate Smith's staff.

"We were told we would get tour support," says Tunick, "and then right before we went on the road with Frampton, they backed out and we ended up having to take out a \$25,000 loan to get our act on the road. After we were dropped from the label, the band had to work for a whole year just to pay off the loan we took out in lieu of tour support."

The Neighborhoods very nearly missed a chance to tour with David Bowie and Tin Machine. "We got it because of our relationship with Bowie over the years," Minehan notes, "and still Atlantic balked at paying a few hundred dollars for gas, tolls and trailer rental." Atlantic eventually came through with the money, but not much else.

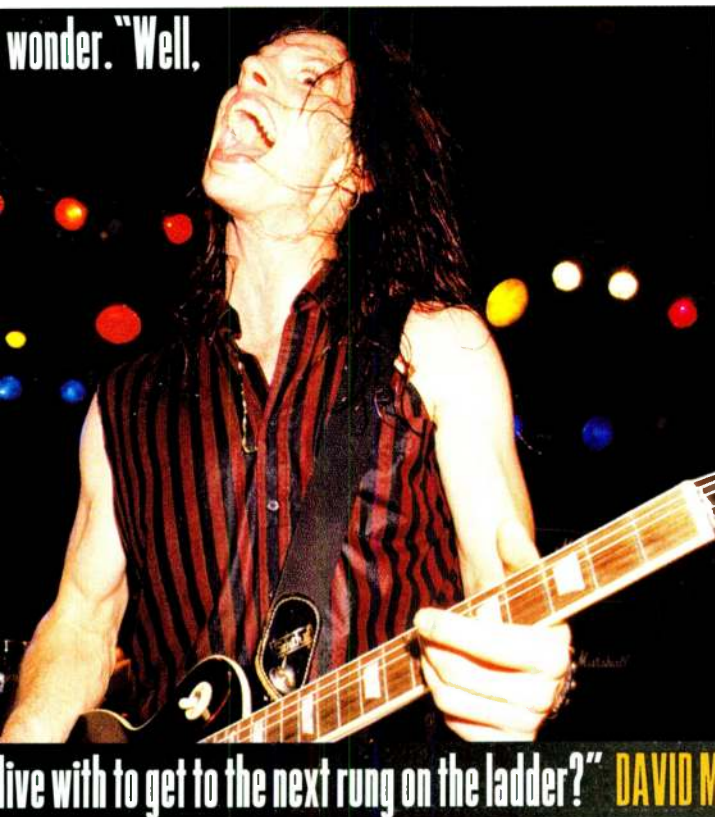
"We never saw getting signed as the be-all and the end-all," says Minehan. "But one of our reasons for signing was the theory that being signed gets you out of the minors and into the majors, and that even if it doesn't work out, suddenly you can rub elbows and make connections and be adopted elsewhere more readily. But as the Neighborhoods went through this process with Atlantic, we learned that other labels also watch new signings and base their judgment on how good or bad you did with your previous label."

Indeed, even after he released a critically praised first album and toured the country in front of the Who, it took Willie Nile almost a decade after he was dropped by Arista to latch on with another label.

"I'm not sure what I expected," Nile says now. "I was just open to the experience. I was 27 at the time. I always felt I was a poet first. I didn't, and don't, really have a huge ego. I come from a large family, eight brothers and sisters, so I always knew I was one of many, even with being able to make a record like this. I got a good bit of dough to sign, because there was a lot of attention on me at the time. It was a nice advance—but it only lasts so long. My real regret," he laughs, "is that I didn't play professional baseball."

And yet, armed with the war stories of those who've come before, players and bands arrive at this particular rainbow every day, each dead certain that he or she will be among the few to do it right. Like Larry Kirwan, leader of the latest New York City sensation, Black 47, who paid his dues of innocence back in the mid-'80s with Major Thinkers on Epic.

"If you want to be a success," says Kirwan, "there are certain



because the old drummer and I were really tight, and a lot of our parts went really well together. Once we got this new drummer, a lot of my parts didn't make as much sense. The percussionist felt even worse than I did. We had keyboards on the album because of the producer, and that ended up taking a lot of the percussion rhythms, so our sound went out the window and the record started sounding a whole lot more generic. A lot of fans felt the band wasn't portrayed accurately on the album, which was true. Also, there was resentment towards Edie, because the name was changed to Edie Brickell & New Bohemians. She took a lot of flak that the record company was just trying to get her away from us."

Despite such ignoble beginnings, the hit single very nearly gave the band a new lease on life. "Having a single going up the charts is an incredible bonding agent within a band," Withrow allows. "We all started getting along a lot better once we started touring. To me, the band part is no problem. Making the music is no problem. It's being a businessman and being part of a corporation that's the problem. All during the time 'What I Am' was happening, we didn't have a manag-

THE 10 MOST INDEFENSIBLE RECORDING C

A man labors and fumes for a whole year to write a symphony in G minor. He puts enormous diligence into it, and much talent, and maybe no little downright genius. It draws his blood and wrings his soul. He dies in it that he may live again. Nevertheless, its final value, in the open market of the world, is a great deal less than that of a fur overcoat, or a handful of authentic hair from the whiskers of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

—H.L. Mencken

SOMEWHERE in the intervening years between cutting your first demo and being told by your tax attorney that you've got to sign on to that Rock 'n' Roll Legends Tour of Midwestern state fairs being headlined by Otis Day & the Nights, you will be asked to sign a recording contract. Congratulations! It is certainly a reason for rejoicing, and you should take your parents out to dinner to celebrate. Just don't let them rent out your old room.

Although we wouldn't suggest that every record contract is patently unfair, the following list is compiled from boilerplate provisions and features of standard record contracts.

1. TERM AND LENGTH This is the whole ballgame. Most contracts seek to tie an artist up for between seven and 10 albums—which, in the vast majority of cases, means committing your entire career at a point when you haven't got much bargaining power. While it's true that if you become successful you may be able to renegotiate, that's far from guaranteed. If you become huge you can hold them up, but most renegotiations require the artist to give something to get something. Like a contract extension. Or publishing. Or your first-born.

Perhaps even more daunting for a young, cash-strapped performer than the term of the contract is its physical length: Most recording agreements are 40–50 pages long, and Sony's is around 70 pages (by comparison, a standard book contract is three or four pages). How many of the elements that will be important to you if you become successful can you possibly negotiate in the beginning? Chances are you won't have the money to pay a lawyer to hash things out on a provision-by-provision basis, and you'll be more focused on the things that have to do with your life at the moment—like the size of the advance or whether tour support is a recoupable expense. If you are a success, those things will be irrelevant—so it's all pretty counterproductive.

2. VIDEOS Fifty percent of the cost of making videos is generally charged to an artist's record royalties. Yet the label usually retains ownership. And if they are packaged for sale, the royalty you receive will be lower than what you get on CDs and audio tapes.

3. MERCHANDISING This is frequently the only place where starting and mid-level artists make any money (they're usually unrecouped on recording advances and can't play big enough venues to earn real

money on the road). Labels now have merchandising arms and ask for this as a matter of course. If they get it, your merchandising income will probably be cross-collateralized against your advances and other costs—which means you won't see any merchandising income until the record company recoups the cost of making your album. Since it's on the table as a matter of course, a lot of artists wind up giving the label at least something.

4. SAMPLING This is relatively new. In the wake of recent lawsuits, record companies now insist that the artist be responsible for clearing all samples used. That means *you* have to negotiate and pay for their use out of your own royalty—which can cut your royalties in half. And guess who's liable if you miss one?

5. AUDIO-VISUAL RIGHTS You can't make motion pictures or sing in a film unless the record company owns it. What this really means is that if you get a chance to be in a film, the motion-picture company will have to negotiate with the record company. A few years ago, MCA was forced to recall an *E.T.* album featuring narration by Michael Jackson when they couldn't arrange clearance with Epic—so it really doesn't matter who you are.

6. DIGITAL DELIVERY Chances are that by the end of the decade there will be some form of digital delivery of recordings via cable to the home. No one is sure if consumers will want to buy albums this way, but if they do, this clause ensures that the artist will be paid substantially less for the sale—usually 50 to 75 percent of the standard royalty. It's modeled on the new technology clauses that labels used in the past to introduce CDs and cassettes. The company line is that the risk and expense involved in bowing new technologies needs to be shared. Of course, they can be a little slow sharing the rewards—as when the success of CDs substantially improved the profit picture for labels but artists had to fight to lose their new technology clauses. Ya gotta admit—these guys are staying up late at night to think of this stuff.

7. PACKAGING DEDUCTIONS The label deducts the cost of the packaging of your album from the list price—sometimes as much as 25 percent. So your royalty will be figured on 75 percent of list price rather than 100 percent. Does anybody believe it costs \$4 to make those brittle clam-shells and five-inch booklets? Anybody at all? Oops! I'm being unfair—forgot the shrinkwrap and that obnoxious little strip of silver adhesive!

8. LEAVING MEMBER PROVISIONS You won't believe this one. Let's say you actually hang in there and negotiate a good deal for your band with decent money and decent points. And then a member of the group quits. The record company frequently has an option to sign the leaving member as a solo under much less attractive terms, usually without an advance.

TRACT PROVISIONS

But wait—it gets worse. Let's say the band breaks up and you're successful as a solo artist. Chances are the label will have the right to recoup whatever they're owed by your old group out of your royalties as a solo artist. Nice, huh?

9. PROMOTION If a record company is supposed to do anything, it's promote your record. Only now they charge you back for promotion expenses—frequently 50 percent of all independent promotion charges and sometimes more. If the label goes after three or four singles from your album, you can wind up with quite a recoupment bill—like \$100,000. By the way, it's hard to document these expenses—and subsequently even harder to challenge them. Which brings us to the La Brea Tar Pit of record contracts:

10. ACCOUNTING CLAUSES “When I first came into the business the accounting clause was one paragraph,” says entertainment attorney Michael Sukin. “It's now several pages.”

First, there are the reserves against returns. That means the record company gets to withhold a chunk of your royalties for a set period of time in case your records stop selling and they have to take them back from retailers. The standard reserve period is two years—although RCA Records has traditionally asked for a 10 percent perpetual reserve. Attorney Don Engels says he has seen labels try and get provisions that allow them to withhold royalties on old albums if an artist is late with a new one—indeed, that was at the core of a suit between CBS Records and the group Boston.

(By the way, record companies also ask for, and get, a “free goods” allowance of 10–15 percent—i.e., they claim that 10–15 percent of all records manufactured are given away as promotional items and therefore excluded from artist royalties [but not publishers' royalties]. Let's say you have a free goods deduction of 15 percent, a 25 percent packaging charge and a 10 percent perpetual reserve. Your slice of the pie is getting mighty small—and you're sure to get a reduced royalty rate on foreign sales.)

If you want to audit the record company—and most attorneys say you should—there are many restrictions. First, there's a set period of time in which you can challenge an accounting statement. Second, you are not allowed to hire an accountant currently auditing your label for another artist. Since the handful of entertainment accountants who really know what they're doing are always involved in a current audit, you will have to wait in line—sometimes for a very long time. The upshot is that many artists accept a settlement from their label rather than conducting a full audit.

Finally, you can only verify the numbers the record company gives you: Most contracts preclude you from looking at manufacturing records from the labels' pressing plants—which is simply outrageous. By comparison, what tour manager would ever just accept a promoter's ticket count?

BY FRED GOODMAN

ground rules. One is understanding the corporate structure and trying to make it work for you. A lot of people are so exhausted by the time they get a record deal, they go, ‘Here I am! Do with me what you will.’ You can be sure that's the end of them. You can't stop at that point. You've got to figure out what it is you want to do, what strategy you're going to take to get there, and you've got to present the company with that strategy before you sign.”

The Black 47 strategy was to take their brand of Irish rock into the blue-collar pubs of America, England and Ireland. With 600 or so gigs to their credit, they channeled their profits into an independent album that eventually converted Ric Ocasek to their cause.

“People think that because you have a record company, things happen better,” Kirwan comments. “Maybe there's more of a budget and everything, but this country, and rock 'n' roll in general, was made by little people who had a belief in something and made it on their own.”

For a year and a half, Black 47 fielded offers from record companies, eventually narrowing the possibilities down to three. “At that point,” says Kirwan, “Pete Ganbarg at SBK came to me and said, ‘Listen, our company really loves what you're doing. You're obviously doing the right thing, you're getting lots of good publicity, you're selling lots of your own CD. So what we'll do is, we'll help you to expand that base.’ And that's what I had been waiting to hear. Those were the words that made me sign with SBK.”

Randy Smith of the Regulators, from Santa Barbara, has a particularly pragmatic attitude toward the transition his 10-year-old band has gone through since signing with Left Bank, a subsidiary of PolyGram, in 1991.

“You think it's going to be real easy,” he muses. “This guy loves our band, we'll get signed real quick, we'll get an album out, we're touring, we're playing the Coliseum. That's not the way it is at all. Not a chance. That's when you roll up your sleeves and say, ‘Man, we got in this mud pit, now all we've got to do is get across to the other side.’”

Slogging across to the other side is, as Smith explains, more than a matter of grooves or payola or the right hair. It's a process that starts before the ink is dry on the contract, and may extend as much as a year after the band makes its initial deal.

“You have to keep the label interested during the period of negotiations,” says Smith. “If a band goes into hibernation because they got signed, it can damage them. That's when the label starts forgetting about you. You've got to continue doing the same thing as before you got signed. You still have to get out there and keep pumping. This is when your manager should start working the label. Let them know where you're playing; invite them to the gig. This is when you start looking for a producer. It took us a year to start on the record after we got signed. Once we started on it, they never gave us a release date. They said, take your time. We did a lot of practicing. We did demo work with an eight-track to figure out which songs we wanted to go on the record, because sometimes your favorite song just doesn't come alive in the recording. The label wanted to know if we'd co-write some songs with other people. Some groups say, ‘No. We write what we want to write.’ They try to put their fist down when they don't have that much authority yet. We tried to work with the label, never bending over too far, just trying to do our part to keep the interest up. We didn't gig as much during the songwriting and the demoing period, but we still set up gigs once in a while, just to keep people interested, keep our chops up, keep the label coming. You've got to constantly communicate with the label.”

If getting signed is like being thrown into a swamp, trying to get radio airplay for your debut disc is like finding out the swamp is 99 percent quicksand, and it stretches across the entire continent. And, just like on "Beat the Clock," your record has about 45 seconds to sink or swim.

Evaluating the progress of the Regulators' six-month-old album, Smith expresses a down-to-earth perspective that takes into account the realities of today's record industry.

"Radio stations get lots of tapes every day," he surmises. "It takes time for the label to get the radio stations interested. When I first heard Guns N' Roses, I heard 'Mr. Brownstone.' Then I didn't hear it for weeks. I thought, 'What happened to the band? That was a great song.' Then I heard 'Welcome to the Jungle.' Then, all of a sudden, they started playing these other singles, and the band started catching on. And then they went back to 'Mr. Brownstone.' It's going to happen the same way with us. They're test-marketing us across the nation, seeing which songs are going to be hits, rather than taking a guess. That's going to take longer than sticking out a single and blowing the wad. One single we picked is now one of the most requested songs in Kansas City. Now when we go back to Kansas City, we'll do good. Basically, what you do is build a following in every city just like you'd do at home," Smith says. "That's the way you should look at it. You gotta stay as if you're a local band trying to get signed. A lot of bands might change. I think you should always stay the way you are. Never become too cool for your friends and fans, because you can never have too many fans."

And though you may indeed give up your day job, Smith advises, don't spend your advance money too soon. "A lot of people grab the money and buy a car," he says. "A lot of bands, as soon as they get signed, buy brand-new equipment. Then they find that they didn't make any money and they have to sell off their gear."

Black 47's Larry Kirwan recognizes that he's still in the throes of his own honeymoon period.

"From what I've seen, all the departments at SBK are on top of things," he says. "Here's an example: I gave them a list of the 12 songs I wanted on the album. The next day, they called me up and said, 'Listen, we really want to balance the group the way you balance it on stage, and we noticed you didn't include as many political songs as you would have in your set.' I looked at the list and said, 'Yeah, you're right.' Now that's a good record company! Another record company might have said, 'This is great, he forgot all the political songs.'"

Yet his sunglasses are far from rose-colored. "Don't read the music magazines," he suggests. "You're obviously going to read your reviews, but don't take a good one as being that great or a bad one as being the end of the world. It's just one person's opinion. Always think of your audience. Your audience is more important than your record company in the long run."

Kirwan also preaches frugality. "Most bands bump up when they get a record deal. They buy a lot of new equipment and hire roadies. The record company puts the money behind them and they go on a tour—and the record company charges up all this money to them. They tour for three or four months, the record hasn't been selling;



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they come back after having toured the country, and the record company doesn't want to put any more money into them, but they've gotten used to the record company subsidizing them. Remember, everything that's charged to you, you've got to pay back in the long run. The crux of the matter is being aware of things like that."

The crux of the matter, suggests Kurt Neumann of the BoDeans, is being able to survive long enough to make radio play inevitable. "We chose the route of R.E.M. and U2," he says. "If you make enough

records and play enough, and word of mouth gets you in a popular enough position, then radio has to play you."

The crux of the matter, according to Willie Nile, is purely the luck of the draw. "In this world there's a lot of right time, right place," he says. "Arista tried very hard for me. They were supportive. I got to make the record I wanted to make, the way I wanted to make it. You never know how well things will do in the marketplace. Maybe things could have been different, but you can't live your life holding your breath."

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The crux of the matter, Kenny Withrow adds, is band chemistry. "I played in this band called Billy Goat for the past year and they finally have an album out. They were totally regional, on the road three years hardcore, losing money. For them, all the touring and all of them being together came to a head just around the time they got signed. At that point, they totally exploded and broke up. I've seen it happen again and again. Success destroys almost every band."

You can tell that to Bud Tunick, who recently took his seat behind the drums again when the Simms Brothers reunited to play Toad's Place in New Haven for the fourth time in the 12 years since they called it quits. The club flew their keyboard player in from California and paid the band a nice piece of change. The guys rehearsed one night and did it. "We sounded good," Tunick observes ruefully. "The singers were tremendous. Every time we play we sound good. It just reaffirms to us that we were a good band."

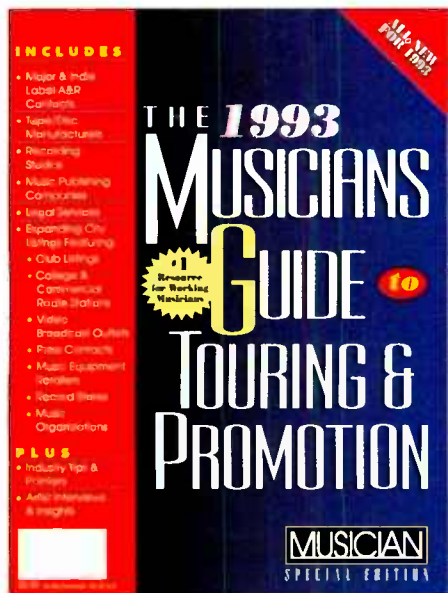
After completing the last of their farewell gigs at the Rat in Boston, David Minehan feels much the same way about the Neighborhoods.

"A lot of my identity is wrapped up in being David Minehan of the Neighborhoods," he confesses. "But we, as people, need to get a little distanced from the Neighborhoods, because the Neighborhoods became this really respected entity that everyone talked highly of, but somehow, what was it about the band that didn't allow them to break big and wide?"

"Nevertheless, I feel lucky to turn my back on this project of 14 years, feeling like, hey, it was a good band and the songs were good and our fans knew it and they let us know it right back. I'll never forget this past month. A lot of bands don't have a choice in these matters. They don't get to do a farewell tour. They have to break up due to apathy from the market. We were able to go out in top form, doing blockbuster business. Above all, I'm finishing off with the Neighborhoods in a very positive way, and now it's time to move on in a very positive way."

To move on, but not to give up or give in; to dig deep, to return to the source that brought you to music in the first place—this, perhaps, is the real crux of the matter. After all, the path to artistic maturity, and to commercial success, is seldom paved with gold. "Sometimes," Minehan observes, "these are the cathartic measures that really make you hit, finally." 

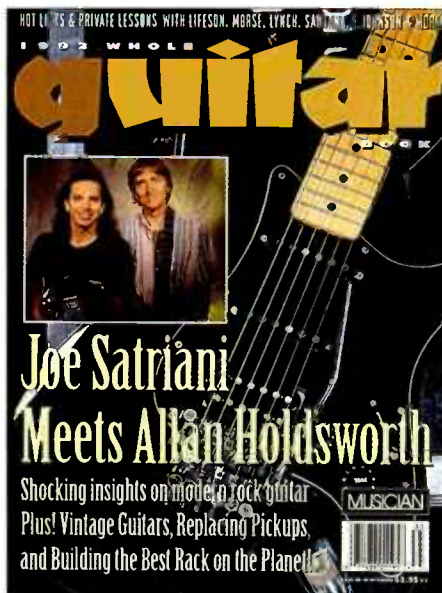
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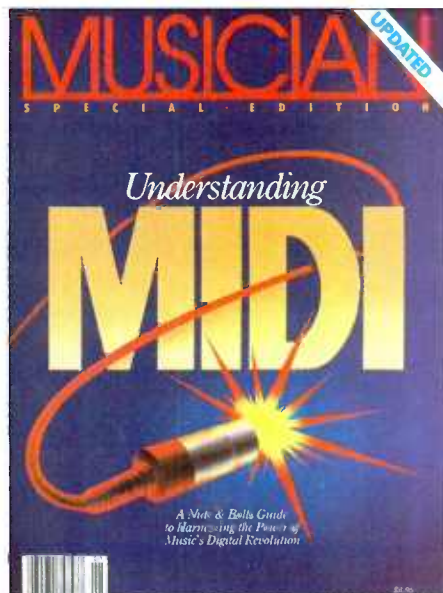
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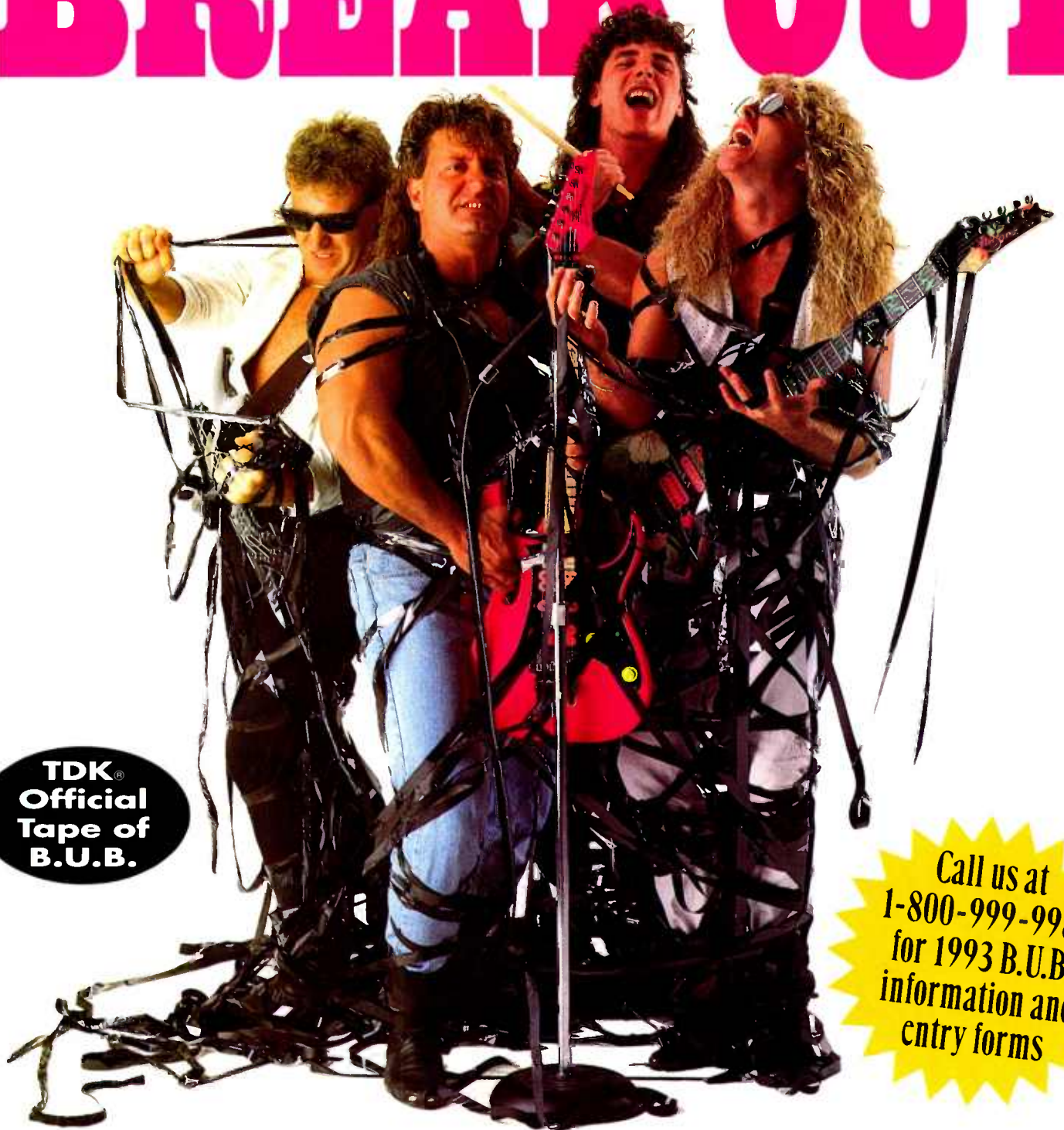
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MUSICIAN
World Radio History

Different Drumsticks

Change the sound by changing the stick
 by RICK MATTINGLY



Whether you're playing for a heavy metal band or a symphony orchestra, it's still the art of making music," says Vic Firth, who plays timpani with the Boston Symphony when he's not

running his drumstick manufacturing company. "Stravinsky calls for a different quality of sound than Beethoven. So I use different mallets to give me different sound.

"Likewise," Firth says, "a drum-set player has to reflect the character of the music. Let's say it's hard rock. Within an evening it's going to require a variety of colors. I go to concerts and see guys with 45 pairs of the same stick. A drummer should use different sticks to produce different sounds."

Go into a music shop and you'll invariably see drummers trying out sticks on a

rubber pad on the counter. That's fine for determining feel, but tells you nothing about how the stick will influence the sound of your drums and, especially, your cymbals.

One of the biggest differences is between wood- and nylon-tip sticks. Nylon produces a bright, pingy sound on a cymbal, while wood is darker. "Sometimes when I listen to a playback," Nashville studio drummer Tommy Wells observes, "I hear the crash cymbals great, but I can't hear the ride. I may pull out another cymbal or the engineer might move a microphone, but a lot of times I can solve the problem just by pulling out a nylon-tip stick." He alternates between a Pro-Mark wood-tip 5A and a Pro-Mark nylon-tip 737.

Bead shape is another factor. A drumstick catalog can contain a seemingly unlimited number of shapes, but most fit into one of the following categories: round, barrel, teardrop or football. Each manufacturer offers variations, especially the teardrop shape, which can range from an arrowhead to an acorn, or the football shape, which can end in a pointed or rounded tip.

Round beads are consistent in sound regardless of the strike angle, and their sound depends on their size. Firth's Peter Erskine model, which has a very small round wood bead, produces a tight, focused sound on a ride cymbal, emphasizing lower harmonics. Calato's Quantum, with an extremely large round bead on wood and nylon models, produces a wash of overtones.

"The Quantum was originally designed for drum corps," explains Joe Calato, Jr. "At first we only made them with wood beads. But the corps started asking for nylon, because sometimes they play ride cymbals on the field and the sound doesn't project into the stands with wood tips."

Calato recommends that when shopping for sticks, you bring your own cymbal and let someone play it with different sticks while you listen from a distance. Overtones that seem excessive right in your face might be just what you need to make the sound carry. By the same token, subtleties noticeable up close may disappear a few feet away.

Some drummers avoid a round bead because of its consistency—even Erskine, whose signature [cont'd on page 69]

Brian May's Delayed Reactions



*Secrets beneath
the Queen's crown*

by MATT RESNICOFF

... explore while propping up Queen's bottom. Yet his unaccompanied solo onstage is drenched in as much creamy echo as when he performed it with that group.

... "I know what it is," May smiled over his breakfast, looking as though he just stepped out of an album cover. "For some reason I got fascinated with the idea of canon, where you play a line and later you play the same line and make it all match up—it's the basis of fugue. There were bits of that and also some harmony guitar on the first album, which I could always hear in my head. So we did a *lot* of that on the second album, and then the question came up of how to do it on stage. It seemed obvious to do the canon thing by the delay, and there wasn't a machine available that could do it."

... At the time May turned to the Echoplex, an ungainly but wonderful tape-delay device which could provide short and gradually degenerating recordings of an instrument's signal. May needed longer delay time, more voices and more repeats, so he removed the unit's guts and put them in a larger case. "I made a long rail and used longer wires," he continued, "so you could move the pickup heads a longer way away from the record head. That made a single long delay, and it did the trick for the first thing. Then I thought it would be nice to have three-part harmonies, so I made another one." He gasped at the recollection. "We had two of those for *ages* on tour, and it was a nightmare, because half the time they would whine, and something would always go wrong with the transport.

... "Then digital delays came within a price range that you could afford, so we now have two Eventide Ultra Harmonizers to do most of that. This thing is more compact and easier to take on tour, especially seeing as we're supporting other acts, but it's not totally satisfactory. The switching between the programs is very slow. In the old days I had buttons which would instantaneously give me all the bits I wanted. The Echoplexes were so unreliable, but when they were working they sounded great. It was actually a better sound than I get from digital delays now."

Brian, when did you hit upon the regenerative properties of the analog delay unit?

Brian May squinted in the light of the morning sun. "I thought you were going to say, '...the regenerative powers of *Wayne's World*.'"

Nothing sells a record these days like a popular movie, as the surviving members

of Queen discovered when 1976's suite "Bohemian Rhapsody" became one of 1992's most frequently broadcast pieces of classic rock. A fertile time, naturally, for *Back to the Light*, the debut under the guitarist's name (his first outing apart from the band, *The Star Fleet Project*, with May's own special emphasis on "project," was a collaboration with Eddie Van Halen, Phil Chen, Alan Gratzner and Fred Mandel). May now fronts a band that includes keyboards, rhythm guitar, Cozy Powell and background singers, leaving him more space for embellishment than he could ever

As a soloist, May is vocal in tone and exceedingly melodic, but much of his best work focuses less on the tune of a song than on the *contour* of the melody; without those restrictions, he composes parts that are independent but integral to the piece. "I've always been fascinated with all these little snakes that run through chord structures and work with them," he said. "I think in chords, and when I sing a tune into my little machine, I always sing the parts of the chord to sketch them in. So if Freddie [Mercury] was writing, I would hear him sing his melody with the chords he was working around, but I could hear other tunes which interlock with that. I'd try to choose a course which complemented it so you could bring the solo back in *alongside* the voice. And I liked this business of when the snakes get close, you get all these tensions, and when they cross over, they go apart; this feeling of opening up. I love all that—it's mystical. And no matter how long you do this, you keep finding new things. You *let* yourself fall in, and analyze it afterwards to find out why it happened."

MAYWIRE

Before Guild began manufacturing his signature model, BRIAN had only the Red Fireplace guitar he built with his father, plus one English copy. Against all warning, he took the original on nearly 10 world tours with Queen and never had it stolen or refretted. May's Maxima strings are gauged .009, .010, .011, .024, .030, .036.

It would understate the matter to say May likes the Vox AC30; you'll scarcely see him perform without a large bank of those amplifiers. He splits his signal through a homemade treble booster and into two Zoom 9002s, and flanges in stereo with an Eventide H3000 and an H3500.

DRUMSTICKS

[cont'd from page 67] model has a round bead. "I recently did a tour in Europe where I only used two cymbals," he explains. "I enjoyed the variations in tone and volume I could get by striking a cymbal at different angles with a traditional teardrop bead, like on the Firth 7A."

Jim Keltner uses anything and everything to affect his sound. "My main stick is a Calato Noble & Cooley medium," he says, "but if you look in my stick bag you'll see a ton of stuff. The Calato Splitstix is one of my favorites, and LP Bundle Sticks are cool. I've got maraca and jingle sticks, even large knitting needles. A different stick can cause a difference in the feel, which translates to a different attitude you might play with."

Many drummers fear that a different weight or balance might affect their technique. But hands adjust, and with hundreds of designs available, it's not difficult to find two sticks that feel similar but sound very different.

"I use Pro-Mark's white oak sticks," says former "Tonight Show" drummer Ed Shaughnessy. "The tip isn't as brittle-sounding as nylon, but it's brighter and more penetrating than hickory." Maple sticks also fall somewhere between hickory and nylon.

When playing on a drum head, the tip shape isn't as crucial as the size of the bead. A big, thick

bead produces a fatter sound. Many drummers flip their sticks over and use the butt ends for songs that require a bigger sound.

Stick diameter can be crucial when playing cross-stick style on ballads or Latin-flavored tunes. A fat stick produces a muddy, undefined click, where a slightly smaller stick is more likely to produce a clear, high-pitched pop.

"Using more than one stick effectively shows imagination," Firth insists. "It's a drummer's obligation to make himself musically knowledgeable enough to make those changes. The music deserves it."

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Digital Variations

An overview of
synthesis architectures
by TED GREENWALD



Back in the days of analog synthesis there was something called the “standard voice.” In essence, it constituted the vocal cords of a synthesizer, the components that gave it its ability to sound a single note. The standard voice consisted of an analog oscillator, which supplied the basic waveform that made up the sound, fed through a resonant

filter and an amplifier, which emphasized or deemphasized high frequencies and made the sound louder or softer, respectively. The oscillator, filter and amplifier could be modulated by an envelope generator (EG), which shaped the sound over time, and perhaps a low-frequency oscillator (LFO), which imparted periodic variations within the sound.

Today we live in a digital world, but the standard voice lives on. Rather than an analog oscillator, the basic sound source is a sample—which may be as short as a single

wave cycle or as long as several seconds—stored in read-only memory (ROM). The sample, whose pitch may be warped by a digital EG and/or LFO, passes through a digital filter and amplifier (again, modulated by EGs and LFOs) and through a digital signal processor for reverb, delay, distortion, auto-panning and more exotic effects, often several of them at once.

Most of the current crop of synthesizers follow this basic plan, although they vary a great deal in specific features and additional functions. These include the Korg 01/W (keyboard \$2399; rack \$2299), Roland JD-990 (rack \$2195), Peavey DPM-4 (keyboard \$2399), Kawai K11 (keyboard \$1249) and the Alesis QuadraSynth (keyboard \$1495; rack \$995).

The Yamaha SY99 (keyboard \$3995) and Ensoniq TS-10 (keyboard \$2595) are also designed around the standard voice, but take greater advantage of the new possibilities offered by digital technology. In the SY99, samples are augmented by an updated version of digital FM, the synthesis technology that put Yamaha’s DX7 on the map. The TS-10 offers some interesting elaborations on sample playback, namely “TransWaves” and “HyperWaves.” Korg’s Wavestation (keyboard \$2150; rack \$1450) takes a bolder step in this direction with “wave sequencing” and “vector synthesis.” The Kurzweil K2000 (keyboard \$3995; rack \$2895; sampling option \$700 extra) scraps the old ways of doing things by attempting to unite old and new in a radically different architecture that actually lives up to its marketing acronym, VAST.

The most common strategy for creating interesting sounds is simply to layer a bunch of more-or-less standard voices on top of one another (or split them into zones across the keyboard, or switch among them in response to key velocity). The down side is that, the more voices layered, split or switched, the fewer notes are available to be sounded at once, a number referred to as “polyphony.”

The 01/W, for instance, offers 32 voices, usually layered two deep per patch for 16-note polyphony. In “combi” mode, you can layer/split/switch among as many as eight patches, reducing polyphony to two notes if they’re all layered. Most

instruments offer a sonic sandwich of up to four voices, including the JD-990 (in which layering four voices gets you six notes of polyphony), DPM-4 (eight), SY99 (eight), Wavestation (eight), and QuadraSynth (16). The TS-10 allows six-voice layers/splits/switches, yielding five-note polyphony. The K2000 typically uses three voices, but since each voice includes a sample plus three digital oscillators, the potential number of components sounding in each note is 12—all with 24-note polyphony.

Given that the basic sound source is a bank of ROM-resident samples, the ROM's content is critical. The instruments mentioned here all encode audio in 16 bits at a sampling rate of either 44.1 or 48kHz—CD quality or better. Fidelity, variety, consistent multi-sampling and the elusive qualities that make for usable samples are all part of the equation. Of course, ROM size is the easiest to evaluate—the more, the merrier.

The merriest of the bunch is the QuadraSynth, with a whopping 16 megabytes. The K11 and JD-990 weigh in at six megs each, the 01/W and Wavestation three megs. The Peavey DPM-4 packs a hefty 10 megs, plus a half meg of RAM (expandable to one meg), so you can import your own samples and layer, envelope and modulate them as you would those in ROM. Similarly, the SY99 comes equipped with eight megs of ROM and a half meg of RAM (expandable to three), the TS-10 with six of ROM and two of RAM (expandable to eight) and the K2000 with eight of ROM and two of RAM (only with the sampling option, but expandable to 64 megs either way). In both the TS-10 and the K2000, all sample-playback parameters—start point, end point, loop points, and the like—can be edited. In the other models, they're fixed.

Sample-playback parameters notwithstanding, it's useful to have a way of distorting waveforms in order to wring more variety from the sample ROM. Manufacturers tend to rely on onboard effects processors to spice things up, but more direct ways of generating variety are starting to appear. The JD-990 incorporates two holdovers from the analog days, oscillator sync and ring modulation, plus a new process called FXM, which loops a short segment of the waveform and mixes back in the invariably clangorous result. The K11 includes ring modulation and amplitude modulation. The 01/W provides "Emphasis," a filtering function that can be used to brighten or dull the sound, and "Wave-shaping," a form of envelope-controlled distortion not unlike Yamaha-style FM.


The SY99 actually includes an expanded version of FM as an alternative to sampled sounds. The crucial difference is that any sample (in

addition to 16 synthesized waveforms) can serve as an FM carrier or modulator—a unique resource. In addition, FM algorithms are configurable, with three programmable feedback loops and looping envelopes. Both FM and sampled sounds can be routed through two analog-style resonant filters in series.

The TS-10 breaks the sample-playback mold with HyperWaves and TransWaves. A HyperWave arranges up to 16 waveform loops, each consisting of any portion of any onboard sample, end-to-end to produce a 16-segment wave sequence. The tuning, duration, cross-fade time, and playback direction of each segment are programmable. A TransWave is also a wave sequence, but the timbre of each step is preset, and the duration of each step is determined by a modulation source such as after-touch, mod wheel or an envelope. That way, you control the rate at which the synth scrolls through the chain of timbres. Incidentally, like the SY99, each TS-10 voice includes two filters (non-resonant).

The Wavestation also incorporates wave sequences, comprising as many as 256 segments. If a bunch of percussive samples are butted against one another, the result is a rhythmic pattern. Cross-fading between samples in the sequence creates smoother effects. Vector synthesis is even smoother: This process makes it easy to cross-fade among four samples, dynamically mixing them in any combination.

Rather than sending samples down a fixed signal path, the K2000 offers a choice of 31 synthesis algorithms. Each algorithm incorporates four of 60 DSP functions, providing resources such as oscillator sync, EQ and various filter modes. There are algorithms for sample layering, additive synthesis and analog-style subtractive, as well as those incorporating more forward-looking functions such as waveshaping and harmonic wrapping. (A patent-infringement suit brought by Yamaha killed the instrument's FM capabilities. Korg-style wave sequencing and vector synthesis can be approximated by cross-fading between samples.)

Instruments like the K2000, Wavestation, SY99 and TS-10 may well entice jaded synthesists away from the current, lamentable reliance upon third-party sounds. But programming neophytes, and those who were left behind in the DX7 revolution, probably would be better off with a more traditional architecture, one in which tweaking the filter is the only way to brighten a sound, rather than one of several obscure possibilities. Either way, the ongoing transition from analog to digital synthesis architectures offers synthesists a range of distinct approaches to making a new noise. 

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Six Reasons Your Roadie Hates You

If something's wrong, yell at him in front of the crowd

by MATTY KARAS



heads. I got the shit kicked out of me every night.”

2) Stay up late: You slept all morning, rolled out of bed at two and now, after a night of surfing on the hands and heads of your adoring fans, you're just revving up. Your crew has been lifting cases and laying cables since morning.

“It's usually just one guy,” says six-foot-eight-inch Jolly Roger, who in three decades on the road has managed tours and worked the lights for bands like Styx and Supertramp, who could afford separate buses for the crew, and Skinny Puppy, who couldn't. Most recently, it's been members of Killing Joke and Pigface who have kept him up past bedtime with their industrial-strength partying. “They sleep all afternoon while you're setting up,” Roger broods. “You have to get to sleep 'cause you have to set up at nine the next morning, and they're just rocking out.”

3) Waiting for your man: Heroin “creates a lot of problems,” says Roger, who claims to have straightened out a lot of musicians by threatening to quit in the middle of tours. And he's not talking about guitarists forgetting how to play a G chord, or drummers forgetting when the gig is. He means “lots of lowlife people hanging around.” Adds Roger, who was working for Ozzy Osbourne when guitarist Randy Rhoads died (not from an overdose, it should be noted), “Who wants to deal with someone who dies when you're on the road?”

4) Is it important? You're yelling so loud: Don Mattingly doesn't scream at the dugout coach in front of the TV audience after he strikes out, so why should you? “I've seen people on stage screaming at people in the crew by name: ‘You're a fucking idiot,’” says a New York soundman who goes by the name Nitebob. Never mind that the problem is you as often as it is your crew; if you've still got to get it out, do it off mike. Bruce Springsteen was sued by two longtime roadies in 1987 for a variety of alleged misdeeds (the case was settled out of court), but at least, according to the allegations, the Boss knew how to do things on the sly. Once, claimed guitar tech Mike Batlan, Springsteen ran to the side of the stage at Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh in mid-song,

You pay them anywhere from a couple of Heinekens to \$1500 a week. When you mess up your guitar solo, it's their fault. When you hit the solo dead-on, you can't even remember their name. That is, it's just like any other job. Here's a joke they like to tell:

What do you get when you put a musician in a rain forest?

Reason to destroy it.

Ba-da-dum.

Why do your roadies hate you so? Let us count the whys.


1) The cretin hop: “Stiv Bators always used to leap off the stage into the crowd, and I would have to go after him,” says Joe DeLorenzo, a longtime roadie to the late Dead Boys singer. “And it was, like, fine for him—the crowd passed him over their

screamed in his ear that he was docking him a week's pay and ran back to center stage, all without missing a beat and without, presumably, alerting the fans.

Southside Johnny once blew up at roadie Larry Blasco on stage. "And then something else happened, and I came out again," Blasco remembers. "And he came over and said, 'I'm sorry.' And I said, 'That's okay.' And he said, 'No, I shouldn't have yelled.'" Blasco says he had to remind Southside to turn around, face the audience and finish the song.


5) You just can't find the sound: Are you listening, Prince? That brief set you play at four in the afternoon is called soundcheck. Not practice. Not concert. You have the best reputation among roadies otherwise, things like getting single rooms for them. But you play the kinds of soundchecks that you might as well open to the public and charge 20 bucks a ticket. Maybe you just got out of bed, but "all these people have been working all day, and a lot of times the only time the crew gets to rest is between the end of soundcheck and the opening of the doors," says Nitebob. The soundman, whose client list runs from the New York Dolls to "Wonder Woman" actress Lynda Carter (whose stage volume, Nitebob says, would have blown away Iggy Pop), says the best was Aerosmith, who, once their tours were in full swing, could go weeks without soundchecking.

6) The U.S. doesn't have national health insurance yet: And you're sure as hell not providing it for them, unless you're the Grateful Dead, a band sent from heaven if ever a roadie met one. "Say a monitor man gets sick, some sort of pneumonia—do you think he'll have a job a month later?" asks Batlan, who, in addition to Springsteen, has worked for U2, Lou Reed, Bob Marley and the Pretenders (he now trains dogs, who he says are more loyal). "I've seen people fired on the road because they were sick, even injured on the job, and left to their own devices. I've had my nose smashed on stage, broken completely in tiny little pieces—I stayed on stage with a towel on my face and threw some ice cubes on it. I ripped open my leg on a nail and required 25 stitches later, and I didn't leave the stage. Because what are you gonna do when a very large star turns for his new guitar and it's not there?"

What you do is, you pray someone else in the band has a little compassion. Like Gene Simmons of Kiss. After Peter Criss summarily fired Jolly Roger from Kiss's 1978 tour—for not having a limo there when Criss needed it—Simmons gave Roger a call. "He said he was sorry to see me go. And he sent a woman down to my room." And, no, it wasn't the company nurse. 

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Wilding/Bonus- Pleasure Signals OZ002
Featuring Danny Wilding on flute, Pete Bonus & John Goodsall on guitars, Phil Collins & Michael Shrive on drums, John Giblin & Phil Chen on bass, Robin Lumley & Bayette on keyboards, Rebop Kwaku Baah & Morris Pert on congas. A classic reissue from 1978.



Paranoise- Start A New Race
OZ003
Featuring special guests Percy Jones on fretless bass, Anthony Jackson on contrabass guitar, Gary Windo, Lenny Pickett & Steve Marcus on tenor sax, James White & Roy Nathanson on alto sax, Steve Elson on baritone sax, Miles Evans on trumpet. The long awaited new album.



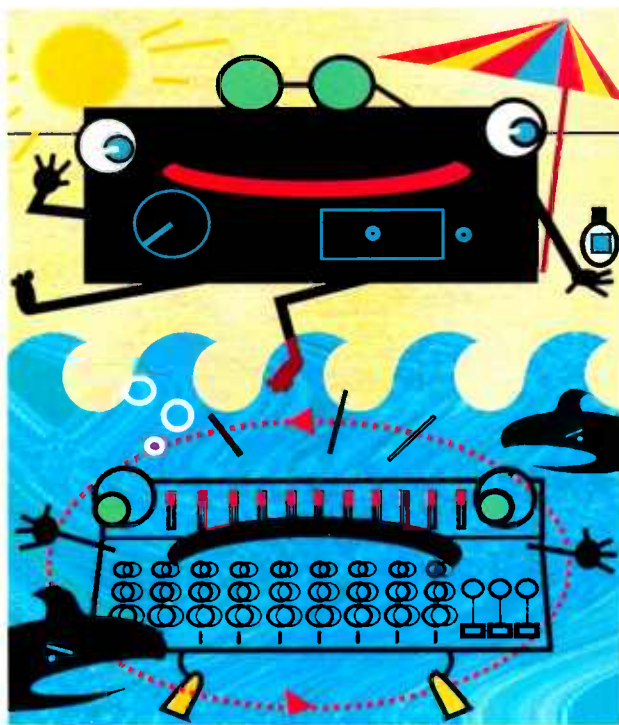
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MICROPHONE PREAMPS MAXIMIZE THE DIGITAL DIFFERENCE



Say it slowly, with feeling: microphone preamp. Kind of lacks a little zip, huh? Admittedly, the lowly "mike pre" isn't at the top of everyone's priority list. In fact, the market for stand-alone preamps traditionally has been confined to studio gurus with very fat wallets. Perhaps it's time to start counting your spare change, though, because a good mike pre is fast becoming *gearus necessitus* for the recording/sampling musician.

Dozens of models have hit the market lately, primarily because the new digital multi-track systems tend not to include a preamp at the head of each input. Many ADAT owners aren't getting the crystal-clear recordings they expected because the preamps in their mixing boards, which they're using to boost mike signals up to line level, are mucking things up. Unfortunately, you've got to spend a lot of money on a mixer before you get mike preamps that approach the quality of a good outboard model.

The same is true of portable DAT recorders, which often skimp on such details as mike preamps—bad news if you want to record in a club, or sample ocean waves at the beach. Even if you do all of your sampling directly into a keyboard or rack module, it still takes a mike pre to get a low-impedance mike signal into your sampler (a low-to-high-impedance transformer alone won't kick it up to line level). If, like many MIDI types, all you own is a line mixer (*sans* mike inputs), buying a stand-alone mike pre is a happy solution.

Fortunately, low-cost mike preamps are no longer a rarity. The Rane MS 1 (\$189), Symetrix SX-202 (\$299) and Stewart MP-2 (\$399) are a few of the least expensive. Of the three, only the Symetrix offers two channels. The Rane has the distinction of being the lowest-priced on the market, while the Stewart is the best-sounding, to my ear, in the under-\$400 class. Each includes a small complement of distinctive features, and all three offer phantom power (for powering condenser mikes) and a phase-inversion switch.

The digital explosion has made preamp designs based on vacuum tubes almost as popular as ripped jeans. Tube preamps are used to "warm up" tracks, compensating for digital's perceived cold and sterile sound. Even Groove Tubes (the folks who make tubes for your guitar amp) have jumped into the fray with the MP-1 (\$850 with power supply and cable). Peavey plans to release an all-tube pre, the VMP2 (price TBA), later this year. I haven't heard either of these; it'll be interesting to see how they compare with high-end tube preamps such as the Demeter VTMP-2a (\$1595), Summit Audio TPA-200A (\$1950) and Tube-Tech MP1A (\$1965).

If a good preamp makes such a difference with miked sources, why not use one with a direct box for recording, say, bass guitar? In fact, that's becoming an increasingly popular *modus operandi*, reflected in the inclusion of quarter-inch, high-impedance line inputs on many models (including the Stewart and the tube models mentioned above). Daring studio technophiles are even using tube preamps as an in-line effect, warming up individual prerecorded tracks and even full mixes.

If history is any indication, gear junkies will continue to buy into new technologies as prices fall and perceived needs rise. Digital has been educating our ears about what pristine audio *really* sounds like, and by now we're all spoiled rotten. Soon we'll all be replacing the stock analog-to-digital converters on our digital multi-tracks with higher-quality outboard converters. In fact, Millennia Media already plan to add optional high-res A/D converters to their HV-3 mike pre—at \$1150, the most accurate and transparent unit I've heard. That's the next step in the evolution of the mike pre—and an appetizing way of keeping the signal between microphone and recorder squeaky clean. **MICHAEL COOPER**

• Rane Corp., 10802 47th Ave. West, Everett, WA 98204; (206) 355-6000. • Symetrix, 4211 24th Ave. West, Seattle, WA 98199; (206) 282-2555. • Stewart Electronics, 11460 Sunrise Gold Circle, #B Rancho Cordova, CA 95742; (916) 635-3011. • Groove Tubes, 12866 Foothill Blvd., Sylmar, CA 91342; (712) 322-3900. • Peavey Electronics, 711 A St., Meridian, MS 39301; (601) 871-0073. • Demeter, 2912 Colorado Ave. #204, Santa Monica, CA 90404; (818) 986-7103. • Summit Audio, Box 1678, Los Gatos, CA 95031; (408) 395-2448. • Tube-Tech, 1600 Broadway, New York, NY 10019; (212) 586-5989. • Millennia Media, Box 277611, Sacramento, CA 95827; (916) 363-1096.

G-VOX GUITAR INSTRUCTION SYSTEM

In a world of me-too products, it's refreshing to see a promising application of new technology to music education. Lyrrus offers a hardware/software combo called G-Vox that connects any steel-string guitar (electric or acoustic) to Mac and IBM computers. G-Vox's hardware (\$399) consists of a pickup assembly that plugs into a small belt pack. The belt pack connects to your computer's serial port and an external power supply. The pickup mounts over the strings using suction cups. It's designed for the practice room, not the stage, and detaches without leaving a mark. Lyrrus has announced several software packages that monitor the pickup's output and respond with useful information. Only titles in the Riffs series are available now, but additional packages promise such functions as chord analysis and creation of standard MIDI files from your playing.

Riffs (\$79) is a software "engine" for lessons that are sold separately (\$16.95 to \$24.95). I played with the 10 exercises in the lesson sampler bundled with Riffs, and also with the 25 examples in the "Steve Morse Workout" (\$24.95). The computer displays notation and tab (with fingerings) for each exercise while a synthesized guitar sound plays the riff at your choice of tempo. The display either registers each note you play on a graphic fretboard, or steps through the riff one note at a time, waiting for you to get it right before showing you the next. Each riff comes with three or four screens of information, including suggestions for improvisation. This aspect of the system is impressive. I learned a thing or two, and had fun playing along.

Riffs is saddled with an insanely complicated software registration procedure, but that's a one-time hassle. A bigger problem is that, using my



trusty Mac SE/30, the audio playback was reliable only up to a moderate tempo. After that, the rhythm began to fall apart. Also, due to the nature of the synthesis used, only single-line exercises are provided.

The lessons themselves are a good value, even when you factor in the price of Riffs. I would advise good music readers to skip the G-Vox hardware. Without more interactive software, it's relatively superfluous,

although poor readers might find it helpful. If the forthcoming program that creates MIDI files can produce accurate guitar-to-MIDI conversions, G-Vox will enable a lot of guitarists to enter the world of sequencing with less pain and expense than is currently possible. It will be interesting to see how the system evolves.

WARREN SIROTA

• Lyrrus Inc., 35 N. 3rd St., Philadelphia, PA 19106; (215) 922-0880.

E-MU EMULATOR EIIIx SAMPLER

Don't be misled by the familiar name. Under the hood, the new Emulator EIIIx from E-mu is considerably different from its famous predecessor, the EIII. The most radical difference is E-mu's abandonment of variable-rate sample playback, a technology for which the EIII was one of the last holdouts. Where the EIII spat out samples faster or slower depending on whether you played a high or a low note, the EIIIx maintains a constant sample-playback rate of 44.1kHz.



Fixed-rate playback means the output can be routed directly to a digital recorder (via the unit's onboard AES/EBU or SP/DIF jacks) without having to undergo the degradation of digital-to-analog-to-digital conversions. There are similar benefits for sampling: If the source is digital (say, DAT or CD), you can get it directly into the EIIIx without converting to analog and back again.

The basic configuration, the EIIIxp (\$3995), doesn't even include an analog input, although it does provide eight analog outs, eight megabytes of RAM and a SCSI port for external storage. The EIIIxs (\$4495) adds stereo analog inputs. The EIIIxp Turbo (without analog inputs, \$6495) and the EIIIxs Turbo (with, \$6995) come with a whopping 32 megs of RAM and a rather-on-the-small-side 120-meg hard drive. E-mu also offers optional editor/librarian software for the Mac (\$295).

The EIIIx is loaded with nifty sample-processing gizmos. Upon sampling, you can auto-truncate, auto-normalize and auto-map your sample. "Loop compression" evens out the level within a loop. "Digital gain change" lets you alter the level of any portion of a sample with selectable level tapering into and out of the new level. E-mu promises additional features in a software update that should be released by the time you read this.

So how does it sound? Well, the new fixed-rate scheme makes for a huge improvement over the old EIII when you're playing samples higher and lower than their original pitch. In my admittedly subjective view, the EIIIx sounds at least as good as the Kurzweil K2000 and punchier than the Akai S-1100. It handles attacks and long decays better than anything else I've heard. In the ongoing race for the affordable monster sampler, the EIIIx is a major contender.

TED PINE

• E-mu Systems, 1600 Green Hills Rd., Box 660015, Scotts Valley, CA 95067; (408) 438-1921.

INDEPENDENT LABELS

1/4 Stick Records

PO Box 25342
Chicago, IL 60625
312/463-8316
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Hardcore
CONTACT: A&R Department

415 Records

- 888 7th Ave, 37th Fl
New York, NY 10106
212/541-9666
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock
CONTACT: Steve Schenck
- 150 Bellam Blvd, Ste 255
San Rafael, CA 94901
415/485-5675
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Alternative
CONTACT: Sandy Pearlman

4AD

PO Box 461599
Los Angeles, CA 90046
310/289-8770
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Robin Hurley

50 Skidillion Watts

5721 SE Laguna Ave
Stuart, FL 34997
407/283-6195
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: MC Kostek, Katherine M. Masser

Absolute-A-Go-Go

PO Box 187
Oakland, NJ 07436
201/405-0417
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Brad Morrison

Accurate Records

25 Atherton St #33
Somerville, MA 02143
617/628-0603
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Progressive
CONTACT: Russ Gershon

Ace of Hearts

PO Box 579
Kenmore Station
Boston, MA 02215
617/536-1770
TYPE OF MUSIC: Progressive
CONTACT: Rick Harte

DEMO POLICY: Contact before sending demo.

Alcazar/Silo

PO Box 429, S Main St
Waterbury, VT 05676
802/244-5178
TYPE OF MUSIC: World Beat, Reggae, Blues, New Age
CONTACT: Ann Tagny

Alias Records

2815 W Olive Ave
Burbank, CA 91505
818/566-1034
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Jon Wells

Alligator Records

PO Box 60234
Chicago, IL 60660
312/973-7736
TYPE OF MUSIC: Roots, Rock, Blues, R&B
CONTACT: Bruce Iglauer

Alpha Intl. Records

1341 N Delaware Ave
Philadelphia, PA 19125
215/425-8682
TYPE OF MUSIC: All Types
CONTACT: Rick Winward

Alternative Tentacles

PO Box 419092
San Francisco, CA 94141
415/431-5696
TYPE OF MUSIC: Punk Rock
CONTACT: Greg Werckman

Amazing Records

PO Box 2164
Austin, TX 78768
512/477-7055
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Blues, and Some Folk
CONTACT: Jim Geisler

American Gramophone

9130 Mormon Bridge Rd
Omaha, NE 68152
402/457-4341
TYPE OF MUSIC: Country, Pop, New Age
CONTACT: David Bucksner

Amphetamine Reptile

2645 1st Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55408
612/874-7047
TYPE OF MUSIC: Noisy Alternative, Rock
CONTACT: Mike Wolf

Antilles/Mango

400 Lafayette St
New York, NY 10023
212/477-8000
TYPE OF MUSIC: World Music
CONTACT: Brian Bacchus

Antone's Records

609B W 6th St
Austin, TX 78701
512/322-0617
TYPE OF MUSIC: Blues
CONTACT: Derek O'Brien

Arf! Arf!

PO Box 465
Middleborough, MA 02346
617/876-1646
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Erik Lindgren

Attitude Records

2071 Emerson St, Unit 16
Jacksonville, FL 32207
904/396-7604
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, R&B
CONTACT: Jeff Cohen

Aurora Records

1522 N Oakley, Ste 1
Chicago, IL 60622
312/235-9508
TYPE OF MUSIC: Indie, Alternative
CONTACT: Mark Alghini, Angela Strachan

Axiom/Island Records

400 Lafayette, 5th Fl
New York, NY 10003
212/598-3933
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Rock, World Beat, Progressive
CONTACT: Peter Wetherbee

Bad Habits Music

10 Exchange St
Portland, ME 04101
207/773-1310
TYPE OF MUSIC: Primarily Alternative, Rock, Rap—But

Open to New Sounds

CONTACT: Bob Antisdal
DEMO POLICY: Not accepting demos at this time—please contact before sending demos in future.

Bar/None Records

PO Box 1704
Hoboken, NJ 07030
201/795-9424
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Glenn Morrow, Tom Prendergast

Bearsville Records

PO Box 135, Wittenberg Rd
Bearsville, NY 12409
914/679-7303
TYPE OF MUSIC: All Types
CONTACT: Ian Kimmel

Beggars Banquet

17-19 Alma Rd
London SW18 ENGLAND
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Roger Trust

- 274 Madison Ave, Ste 804
New York, NY 10016
212/889-9110
CONTACT: A&R Department

Better Days Records

1591 Bardstown Rd
Louisville, KY 40205
502/456-2394
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Dance
CONTACT: Ben Jones

Beyond Records Corp.

569 County Line Rd
Ontario, NY 14519
716/265-0260
TYPE OF MUSIC: Pop, Alternative, R&B
CONTACT: Tony or Howard

Big Beat Records

19 W 21st, Ste 501
New York, NY 10010
212/691-8805
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, House, Techno, Dance, Reggae
CONTACT: Heidi Jo Speigel

Biograph Records

16 River St
Chatham, NY 12037
518/392-3400
TYPE OF MUSIC: Contemporary Blues, Traditional Blues, Blues Reissues, Jazz, Folk, Ragtime, Country, Gospel
CONTACT: Arnold Caplin
DEMO POLICY: Please contact before sending demo.

Black & Blue Records

400D Putnam Pike, Ste 152
Smithfield, RI 02917
401/949-4887
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Underground
CONTACT: Larry Evileff, Bari Offerhoul, Peter Yarmouth

Blackmarket Records

PO Box 189333
Sacramento, CA 95818
916/688-9116
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, Hip-Hop
CONTACT: Cedric Singleton

Black Top Records

PO Box 56691
New Orleans, LA 70156
504/895-7239
TYPE OF MUSIC: Contemporary Blues, Soul, R&B
CONTACT: A. Hammond Scott
DEMO POLICY: Please contact before sending demo.

Blind Pig

3022 N Allen
Chicago, IL 60618
312/772-0043
TYPE OF MUSIC: Blues
CONTACT: Jerry DelGludice

Blue Island Records

1481 Forest Glen, Ste 212
Hac Hts, CA 91745
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Country
CONTACT: Dino DiBella

Blue Note Records

810 7th Ave, 4th Fl
New York, NY 10019
212/603-8733
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz
CONTACT: Steven Schenfeld

Blue Plate Records

33 Music Sq W #102-A
Nashville, TN 37203
615/742-1250
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Dan Einstein
DEMO POLICY: 3 song max, SASE

Bogus Records

PO Box 42385
Pittsburgh, PA 15203
412/381-9200
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Carl Grefenstette

Bomp/Voxx Records

PO Box 7112
Burbank, CA 91510
213/227-4141
TYPE OF MUSIC: Psychedelic, Alternative
CONTACT: Greg Shaw

Bulls Eye Blues

1 Camp St
Cambridge, MA 02140
617/354-0700
TYPE OF MUSIC: Blues
CONTACT: Marian Leighton Levy

Buy Our Records

PO Box 363
Vauxhall, NJ 07088
201/538-7240
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Lenny Sblendorio

C'est la Mort Records

PO Box 91
Baker, LA 70714
504/774-8286
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Exotic, Pop
CONTACT: Woodrow Dumas, Marcia Schoelen
DEMO POLICY: Will accept all demos—just try to keep them short.

C/Z Records

1407 E Madison, Ste 41
Seattle, WA 98122
206/441-0875
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Daniel House

Cadence Records

Cadence Bldg
Redwood, NY 13679

315/287-2852

TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz
CONTACT: Larry Roye

Capricorn Records

- 120 30th Ave N
Nashville, TN 37203
615/320-8470

TYPE OF MUSIC: Southern Rock
CONTACT: Dan Schmitzerle

- 450 14th St NW, Ste 201
Atlanta, GA 30318
404/873-3918

TYPE OF MUSIC: Southern Rock
CONTACT: Jeff Cook

Cargo Records

- 4901 Marina Blvd #906
San Diego, CA 92117
619/483-9292

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Hardcore, Punk, Industrial
CONTACT: Eric Goodis,
Sharon Goodis

- 7036 Blvd St Laurent
Montreal, QUE H2S 3E2
CANADA

514/495-1212
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Hardcore, Punk, Industrial
CONTACT: A&R Department

Carlyle Records

- 1217 16th Ave S
Nashville, TN 37212
615/327-8129

TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock,
Alternative
CONTACT: Laura Fraser,
Preston Sullivan

Caroline Records

- 114 W 26th St
New York, NY 10001
212/989-2929

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Lytle Preslar

- 9838 Glen Oaks Blvd
Sun Valley, CA 91352
818/504-0965

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Rick Williams

Century Media

- PO Box 2218
Van Nuys, CA 91404
818/988-3691

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Grindcore, Underground
CONTACT: A&R Department

Cherry Disc Records

- PO Box 313
Boston, MA 02258
617/244-8521

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: John Horton,
Graham Wilson

Chiaroscuro Records

- 830 Broadway
New York, NY 10003
212/473-0479

TYPE OF MUSIC: Mainstream
Jazz
CONTACT: Jon Bates

Cold Chillin' Records

- 1995 Broadway, 18th Fl
New York, NY 10023
212/724-5500

TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap
CONTACT: Tyrone Williams

Community 3

- 7 Dunham Pl
Brooklyn, NY 11211
718/599-2205

TYPE OF MUSIC: Everything
from Punk to Folk
CONTACT: Albert Garzon
DEMO POLICY: Will listen to
everything, and will only
respond if they really like
it—everything else will be
recycled.

Concord Jazz Records

- PO Box 845
Concord, CA 94522
510/682-6770

TYPE OF MUSIC: Mainstream
Jazz, Acoustic Jazz,
Latin Jazz
CONTACT: Nick Phillips

Confidential Records

- 1013 Evelyn Ave
Albany, CA 94706
510/527-8547

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
Rock
CONTACT: Joel Brandwein

Critique Records

- 800 W Cummings Pk, Ste 2500
Woburn, MA 01801
617/935-7540

TYPE OF MUSIC: All Types
CONTACT: Carl Strube

Current/Rammit Records

- 418 Ontario St
Toronto, ONT M5A 2W1
CANADA
416/921-6535

TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Dance
CONTACT: Trevor G. Shelton,
Gerry Young

Dancing Cat Records

- Box 639
Santa Cruz, CA 95061
408/429-5085

TYPE OF MUSIC: Slack-key
Guitar
CONTACT: Ben Churchill

DB Records

- 432 Moreland Ave NE
Atlanta, GA 30307
404/521-3008

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Rock
CONTACT: Danny Beard

Def Jam

- 652 Broadway
New York, NY 10012
212/979-2610

TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap
CONTACT: Jeff Trotter, Tracey
Waples, Dawn Warnock

Delicious Vinyl

- 6607 Sunset Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90028
213/465-2700

TYPE OF MUSIC: Hip-Hop, Rap,
Heavy Metal, Rock, Punk,
Reggae
CONTACT: Orlando Aguilien

Delmark Records

- 4121 N Rockwell
Chicago, IL 60618
312/539-5001

TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Blues
CONTACT: Steve Wagner

Denon Records

- 135 W 50th St, Ste 1915
New York, NY 10020
212/581-2550

TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Classical
CONTACT: Toshio Kitatate,
Melanne Sacco,
Ken Yoshimura

Dionysus Records

- PO Box 1975
Burbank, CA 91507
818/953-4036

TYPE OF MUSIC: Punk, Surf,

Psychedelic, Rock
CONTACT: Lee Joseph

Dischord Records

- 3819 Beecher St, NW
Washington, DC 20007

TYPE OF MUSIC: Serious
Underground Hardcore
CONTACT: A&R Department

DJ International

- 727 W Randolph St
Chicago, IL 60606
312/559-1845

TYPE OF MUSIC: Dance
CONTACT: Rocky Jones

Doctor Dream Records

- 841 West Collins Ave
Orange, CA 92667
714/997-9387

TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock
CONTACT: David Hayes,
Mark Woodleaf
DEMO POLICY: Please contact
before sending demo.

Duke Street Records

- 121 Logan Ave
Toronto, ONT M4M 2M9
CANADA
416/406-4121

TYPE OF MUSIC: Country,
Classical, Rock
CONTACT: Melinda Skinner

Dutch East India

- 81 N Forest Ave
Rockville Centre, NY 11570
516/764-6200

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Camille Sciarra

Ear Candy Records

- Radio City Station
PO Box 928
New York, NY 10101
212/420-8700

TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Pop,
Dance
CONTACT: Bud Tunick

EarthBeat! Records/ Music for Little People

- PO Box 1460
Redway, CA 95560
707/923-3991

TYPE OF MUSIC: World Music
CONTACT: Jim Derhawk
DEMO POLICY: Please contact
before sending demo.

East Side Digital & Distribution

- 530 North 3rd St
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612/375-9188

TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock,
Alternative
CONTACT: Stephen Daily,
Penny Myers

ECM

- 825 8th Ave, 26th Fl
New York, NY 10019
212/333-8478

TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz

Eight One Nine Prod.

- 819 N 2nd St
San Jose, CA 95112
408/298-8520

TYPE OF MUSIC: Punk,
Alternative Underground
CONTACT: Roy Stevens

Enemy Records

- 11-36 31st Ave, Ste 4R
Long Island City, NY 11106
718/956-4530

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Black Rock/Alternative,
Noise Rock, and Hard Jazz
CONTACT: Sylvia Canis, Michael
Knuth, Rosalie Sendelbach

Enja/Mesa Blue Moon Records

- 209 E Alameda St, Ste 101
Burbank, CA 91502
818/841-8585

TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Adult
Contemporary, World Music,
New Age
CONTACT: Jim Snowden

Etiquette/ Suspicious Records

- 2442 NW Market St, Ste 273
Seattle, WA 98107
206/524-1020

TYPE OF MUSIC: Etiquette: Rock
Reissues; Suspicious: R&B,
Blues
CONTACT: Buck Ormsby

Eureka Records

- 174 Spadina Ave, Ste 509
Toronto, ONT M5T 2C2
CANADA

416/367-2197
TYPE OF MUSIC: Top 40,
Alternative
CONTACT: Joel Wertman

Fantasy Records

- 2600 Tenth St
Berkeley, CA 94710
510/549-2500

TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Soul,
R&B
CONTACT: Phil Jones,
Ralph Kaffel

Fast Track Records

- 264 Tasco Dr
Stoughton, MA 02072
617/821-0507

TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock,
Alternative
CONTACT: Michail Glassman

Figurehead Records

- 4537 Ringneck Rd
Orlando, FL 32808
407/872-1836

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Jim Faherty

Firenze

- 2343 Red Oak Dr
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
707/579-5756

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Rock, Blues, Soul
CONTACT: Katrina Markarian

First Priority Records

- 89 5th Ave, Ste 700
New York, NY 10003
212/243-0505

TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, R&B
CONTACT: Sheila Jones,
Nat Robinson

Flying Fish

- 1304 W Shubert Ave
Chicago, IL 60614
312/528-5455

TYPE OF MUSIC: Folk,
World Music
CONTACT: Seymour Gunther

Frontier Records

- PO Box 22
Sun Valley, CA 91353
818/506-6886

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Rock
CONTACT: A&R Department

Frontline Records

- 4041 MacArthur Blvd
Ste 300
Newport Beach, CA 92660
714/660-3888

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Rap, Heavy Metal
CONTACT: Matt Duffy

Gark Records

4100 44th Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55406
612/721-7945
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Jazz
CONTACT: Sam Hurlbut

Generic

433 Limestone Rd
Ridgefield, CT 06877
203/438-9811
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Alternative Rock, Top 40
CONTACT: Gary Lefkowitz

Glad-Hamp Records

575 Laramie Ln
Mahwah, NJ 07430
201/934-5665
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz
CONTACT: Bill Titone

Global Pacific Records

270 Perkins St
Sonoma, CA 95476
707/996-2748
TYPE OF MUSIC: New Age, Jazz, World Music
CONTACT: Howard Sapper

GNP/Crescendo Records

8400 Sunset Blvd, Ste 4A
Los Angeles, CA 90069
213/656-2614
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Blues, Rock, TV Soundtracks
CONTACT: Neil Norman

Grand Slam Records

594 Broadway, Ste 901
New York, NY 10012
212/334-2187
TYPE OF MUSIC: Hard Rock, Metal
CONTACT: Brian McEvoy

Green Linnet Records

43 Beaver Brook Rd
Danbury, CT 06810
203/730-0333
TYPE OF MUSIC: Celtic, Folk, World Music
CONTACT: Steve Katz, Wendy Newton

GRP Records

555 W 57th St, 10th Fl
New York, NY 10019
212/424-1000
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz
CONTACT: Carl Griffin

Guitar Recordings/Cherry Lane

10 Midland Ave
Port Chester, NY 10573
914/937-8601

TYPE OF MUSIC: Guitar, Heavy Metal
CONTACT: John Stix

Heartbeat Records

1 Comp St
Cambridge, MA 02140
617/354-0700
TYPE OF MUSIC: Reggae Only
CONTACT: Marian Leighton Levy

Hellon Records

859 N Hollywood Way,
Ste 281
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
818/352-9174
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, R&B, Jazz, Metal Rock, Rap
CONTACT: Dunia Abbushi
DEMO POLICY: No replies without return envelope.

Hell Yeah!!!/Dionysus Records

PO Box 1975
Burbank, CA 91507
818/953-4036
TYPE OF MUSIC: The Alternative to Alternative
CONTACT: Lee Joseph
DEMO POLICY: Please contact before sending demo.

Heyday Records

2325 3rd St #339
San Francisco, CA 94107
415/252-5590
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Ron Gompertz
DEMO POLICY: Does not accept unsolicited tapes.

Higher Octave Music

8033 Sunset Blvd, Ste 41
Los Angeles, CA 90046
213/856-0039
TYPE OF MUSIC: New Age, World Music
CONTACT: Michael Craig

Hightone Records

220 4th St, Ste 101
Oakland, CA 94607
510/763-8500
TYPE OF MUSIC: Blues, Rock, Country
CONTACT: Larry Sloven

Home Cooking Records

PO Box 980454
Houston, TX 77098
713/666-0258
TYPE OF MUSIC: Contemporary Blues, Traditional Blues, Blues Reissues, Rock
CONTACT: Roy C. Ames

Homestead/Rockville Records

150 W 28th St, Ste 501
New York, NY 10001
212/675-0922
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Jeff Pachmon

Ichiban Records

PO Box 724677
Atlanta, GA 31139-1677
404/419-1414
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Jazz, Contemporary Blues, Dance, Same Alternative, Metal, Rap, Urban, R&B
CONTACT: John Abbey

Imaginary Records

332 N Dean Rd
Auburn, AL 36830
205/821-7156
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Jazz, Ragtime
CONTACT: Lloyd Townsend

Imago Records

152 W 57th St, 44th Fl
New York, NY 10019
212/246-6644
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock
CONTACT: Kate Hirman

Immune Records

9269 Mission Gorge Rd, #211
San Diego, CA 92071
619/448-3062
TYPE OF MUSIC: All Types
CONTACT: Suzanne Forrest

Intrepid Records

93 Hazelton Ave, 3rd Fl
Toronto, ONT M5R 2E4
CANADA
416/928-9315

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative Rock
CONTACT: Graham Stairs

JDC Records

6100 Palos Verdes Dr S
Palos Verdes, CA 90274
310/544-4888
TYPE OF MUSIC: Donce, Rap, Rock
CONTACT: Eddie Fencesco

Jive Records

• 137-139 W 25th St
New York, NY 10001
212/727-0016
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap
CONTACT: Jeff Sledge, Barry Weiss

• 6777 Hollywood Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90028
213/464-7409
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap
CONTACT: Sean Carosov, Neil Portnow

• 323 E 23rd St
Chicago, IL 60616
312/326-4700
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap
CONTACT: Wayne Williams

JRS Records

7758 Sunset Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90046
213/850-1300
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, R&B, Hard Rock, Reggae
CONTACT: Stan Shuster
DEMO POLICY: Please contact before sending demo.

Kaleidoscope Records

PO Box 0
El Cerrito, CA 94530
510/215-9676
TYPE OF MUSIC: Folk, Blues
CONTACT: Jeff Alexson

Katz Entertainment

3423 Piedmont Rd NE
Ste 200
Atlanta, GA 30305
404/266-9668
TYPE OF MUSIC: R&B, Rap
CONTACT: Scott Mikell

Kicking Mule Records

PO Box 158
Alderpoint, CA 95511
707/926-5312
TYPE OF MUSIC: Acoustic Folk
CONTACT: Ed Denson

DEMO POLICY: Please don't send more than 3 tracks on demo—unless fully produced.

Knitting Factory

47 E Houston St
New York, NY 10012
212/219-3006
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Rock
CONTACT: Michael Dorf

Landslide Records

1800 Peachtree St NW
Ste 333
Atlanta, GA 30309
404/355-5580
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Blues, R&B
CONTACT: Michael Rothschild

Link Records

121 W 27th St, Ste 401
New York, NY 10001
212/924-2929
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Alternative
CONTACT: Andrew Kipnes

Liquid Recording Co.

PO Box 141993
Austin, TX 78714-1993
512/495-9985
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Paco Ahlgren

Living Music Records

PO Box 68
Litchfield, CT 06759
203/567-8796
TYPE OF MUSIC: New Age, Jazz
CONTACT: Paul Winter

LMR Records

40 W 57th St, Ste 1510
New York, NY 10019
212/586-3600
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, Top 40, Pop, Dance
CONTACT: Caryn L.

Long Play

PO Box 55233
Atlanta, GA 30308
404/681-4915
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Jill Kalish, Steve Pilon

Luke Records

8400 NE 2nd Ave
Miami, FL 33138
305/757-1969

TYPE OF MUSIC: Primarily Rap
CONTACT: Ron May

Macola Records

8831 Sunset Blvd, Ste 202
W Hollywood, CA 90069
310/659-6036
TYPE OF MUSIC: Hip-Hop, Rap
CONTACT: Don MacMillan

Malaco Records

3023 W Northside Dr
Jackson, MS 39213
601/982-4522
TYPE OF MUSIC: R&B, Gospel, Rap, Jazz
CONTACT: Tommy Couch, Sr., Paul Lee

Mammoth Records

Carr Mill, 2nd Fl
Carrboro, NC 27510
919/932-1882
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Steve Balcom, Jay Fairies

Mapleshade Records

2301 Crain Hwy
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
301/627-0525
TYPE OF MUSIC: Mainly Jazz and Blues; Accepts All Types
CONTACT: Rick Hallock

Matador Records

676 Broadway, 4th Fl
New York, NY 10012
212/995-5882
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock
CONTACT: Gerard Cosloy
DEMO POLICY: Don't call, just send demos.

Mechanic Records

6 Greene St, 2nd Fl
New York, NY 10013
212/226-7272
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Alternative, Pop, Funk Rock
CONTACT: Steve Sinclair

Megaforce Records

210 Bridge Plaza Dr
Manalapan, NJ 07726
908/972-3456
TYPE OF MUSIC: Heavy Metal
CONTACT: Maria Ferrero

Metal Blade Records

2345 Erringer Rd, Ste 108
Simi Valley, CA 93065
805/522-9111
TYPE OF MUSIC: Metal
CONTACT: Marco Barbieri

Milan Records

635 Madison Ave, 4th Fl
New York, NY 10022
212/688-9090
TYPE OF MUSIC: Soundtracks,
World Music, Jazz
CONTACT: Toby Pieniek

Modern Records

9111 Sunset Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90069
213/658-7600
TYPE OF MUSIC: All Types
CONTACT: Paul Fishkin

Morada Records

3212 Meadow Vista St
Bakersfield, CA 93306
805/872-9339
TYPE OF MUSIC: Latin, Spanish
Music, Pop
CONTACT: Julian Morales

Muse Records

160 W 71st St
New York, NY 10023
212/873-2020
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz
CONTACT: Joe Fields

Musidisc

143 Ave B, Ste 5A
New York, NY 10009
212/529-5881
TYPE OF MUSIC: Classical,
Jazz, Rock
CONTACT: Goran Anderson

Mute Records

- 5 Crasby St, 5th Fl
New York, NY 10013
212/334-8321
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Peter Wright
- 345 N Maple Dr, Ste 123
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
310/276-3260
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: A&R Department

MuWorks Records

111 4th Ave, Ste 5A
New York, NY 10003
212/228-7413
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz,
Alternative, Hard Rock
CONTACT: George Dillicci,
Robert Musso

Narada Productions

1845 N Farwell Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53202
414/272-6700
TYPE OF MUSIC: New Age,
Jazz, Contemporary,
Instrumental
CONTACT: Michael Sullivan

Nemperor Records

PO Box 542
Lennox Hill Station
New York, NY 10021
212/249-0041
TYPE OF MUSIC: Pop
CONTACT: Nothan Weiss

Netwerk

1250 W 6th
Vancouver, BC V6H 1A5
CANADA
604/687-8649
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Mark Jowett

New Alliance

PO Box 1389
Lawndale, CA 90260
310/430-6838
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock,
Alternative, Spoken Word
CONTACT: Robert Vodicka

New World Records

701 7th Ave
New York, NY 10036
212/302-0460
TYPE OF MUSIC: American
Composer, Jazz, Classical,
Folk, Ethnic
CONTACT: Paul Marotta
DEMO POLICY: Accepts
unsolicited demos, and will
respond to every demo sent.

Next Plateau Records

1650 Broadway, Ste 1201
New York, NY 10019
212/541-7640
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, Dance
CONTACT: Eddie O'Loughlin

Nighthawk Records

PO Box 15856
St Louis, MO 63114
314/576-1569
TYPE OF MUSIC: Reggae, Blues
CONTACT: Robert Schoenfeld
DEMO POLICY: Please contact
before sending demo.

Nonesuch Records

75 Rockefeller Plaza, 17th Fl
New York, NY 10019
212/275-4215
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Classical, World Music, Roots
CONTACT: A&R Department

Nova Records

1730 Olympic Blvd
Santa Monica, CA 90404
310/392-7445
TYPE OF MUSIC: Contemporary
Jazz, Urban, Jazz Pop,
Classical
CONTACT: John Quintero

Oh Boy Records

33 Music Sq W Ste 102A
Nashville, TN 37203
615/742-1250
TYPE OF MUSIC: Country, Folk,
Contemporary
CONTACT: Sam Corkins
DEMO POLICY: Please contact
before sending demo.

Olivia Records

4400 Market St
Oakland, CA 94608
510/655-0364
TYPE OF MUSIC: Women's
Label: Folk, Rock, Blues
CONTACT: Karen Walsh

Pandisc

843 Washington Ave
Miami Beach, FL 33139
305/538-4880
TYPE OF MUSIC: Dance, Rap,
Blues
CONTACT: Bo Crane

Parc Records

5104 N Orange Blossom Tr,
Ste 205
Orlando, FL 32810
407/292-0021
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Pop
CONTACT: Pat Armstrong

Philadelphia International Records

309 S Broad St
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215/985-0900
TYPE OF MUSIC: All Types
CONTACT: A&R Department

Philo Records

1 Camp St
Cambridge, MA 02140
617/354-0700
TYPE OF MUSIC: Singer/
Songwriter, Folk
CONTACT: Marian Leighton Levy

PopLlama Productions

PO Box 95364
Seattle, WA 98145-2364
206/527-8816
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Scott McCaughey,
Conrad Uno

Pravda

3729 N Southport
Chicago, IL 60613
312/296-0744
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Ken Goodman,
Rick Mosher

Priority Records

6430 Sunset Blvd, Ste 900
Hollywood, CA 90028
213/467-0151
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, Rock
CONTACT: A&R Department

Private Music

9014 Melrose Ave
Los Angeles, CA 90069
310/859-9200
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Jazz
CONTACT: Bobby Stephenson

Profile Records

- 740 Broadway, 7th Fl
New York, NY 10003
212/529-2600
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, Dance
CONTACT: DB

Progress Records

- 8730 Sunset Blvd, Ste 270
Los Angeles, CA 90069
310/659-7999
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, Dance
CONTACT: Dave Moss

Progress Records

Vesterbra 110.1
Odense C 110.1
DENMARK
45-66177537
TYPE OF MUSIC: Metal, Metal,
and More Metal
CONTACT: Andreas Ludvigsen

Quicksilver/Increase Records

6860 Canby Ave, Ste
117/118
Reseda, CA 91335
818/342-2880
TYPE OF MUSIC: Gospel, Oldies,
Jazz, Rock
CONTACT: Howard Silvers

Qwest Records

3800 Barham Blvd, Ste 503
Los Angeles, CA 90068
213/874-2829
TYPE OF MUSIC: R&B, Dance,
Jazz, Rock, Techno
CONTACT: Jim Swindel

Radioactive Records

8570 Hedges Pl
Los Angeles, CA 90069
310/659-6598
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Karen Malluk

Ralph Records

PO Box 1477
Hoboken, NJ 07030
201/420-0238
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Underground
CONTACT: Sheenah Fair

Rap-A-Lot Records

12337 Joens Rd, Ste 100
Houston, TX 77070
713/890-5402
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap
CONTACT: James Smith

RAS Records

PO Box 42517
Washington, DC 20015
301/588-9641
TYPE OF MUSIC: Reggae
CONTACT: Gary Himelfarb

Recession Records

PO Box 811082
Chicago, IL 60681
312/929-5035
CONTACT: Peter Strand
DEMO POLICY: Please contact
before sending demo.

Reckless Records

1401 Haight St
San Francisco, CA 94117
415/431-8435
TYPE OF MUSIC: Psychedelic
CONTACT: Jude Brown
DEMO POLICY: Please contact
before sending demo.

Red House Records

720 Washington Ave SE
Ste 202
St Paul, MN 55414
612/379-1089
TYPE OF MUSIC: Acoustic,
Singer/Songwriter
CONTACT: Bob Feldman,
Eric Peltoniemi

Redrum Records

PO Box 6652
Portland, OR 97208-6652
503/288-4385
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Rock
CONTACT: Marc Baker

Redwood Records

PO Box 10408
Oakland, CA 94610
510/835-1445
TYPE OF MUSIC: Folk,
International
CONTACT: Elizabeth Min

Relix Records

PO Box 92
Brooklyn, NY 11229
718/258-0009
TYPE OF MUSIC: Psychedelic
CONTACT: Tony Brown,
Leslie D. Kippel

Rhythm Safari/HR Music

5252 Van Nuys Blvd
Van Nuys, CA 91401
818/501-7722
TYPE OF MUSIC: World Music,
Jazz, Alternative, Dance
CONTACT: Hilton Rosenthal

Roadrunner/Third Mind Records

225 Lafayette St, Ste 407
New York, NY 10012
212/219-0077
TYPE OF MUSIC: Heavy Metal,
Underground, Industrial
CONTACT: Howie Abrams,
Monte Conner

ROIR

611 Broadway, Ste 411
New York, NY 10012
212/477-0563
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock, Reggae,
Punk
CONTACT: Neil Cooper,
Ingrid Simone
Cassettes only!

rooArt

850 7th Ave, Ste 901
New York, NY 10019
212/245-2420
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative,
Mainstream, Jazz
CONTACT: Sean Coakley
DEMO POLICY: Please contact
before sending demo.

Rounder Records

1 Camp St
 Cambridge, MA 02140
 617/354-0700
TYPE OF MUSIC: Folk, Blues, Roots, World Music, Bluegrass, Country
CONTACT: Scott Billington, Marian Leighton Levy

Ruffhouse

444 N 3rd St
 Philadelphia, PA 19123
 215/574-1742
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap
CONTACT: Rose Mann

Scat Records

PO Box 141161
 Cleveland, OH 44114
 216/341-4843
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Robert Griffin

Scotti Bros Records

2114 Pico Blvd
 Santa Monica, CA 90405
 310/450-3193
TYPE OF MUSIC: Dance, Rock, Top 40, Adult Contemporary
CONTACT: Lori Narshun, Richie Wise

Scratch Records

317A Cambie St
 Vancouver, BC V6B 2N4
 CANADA
 604/687-0488
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative Rock
CONTACT: Keith Parry

Select Records

16 W 22nd St, 10th Fl
 New York, NY 10010
 212/691-1200
TYPE OF MUSIC: House, Rap, R&B
CONTACT: Greg Riles

Shanachie Records

37 E Clinton St
 Newton, NJ 07860
 201/579-7763
TYPE OF MUSIC: Reggae, World Beat
CONTACT: Randall Grass, Wayne Martin

Shimmy Disc Records

Box 1187 JAF
 New York, NY 10116
 718/768-2424

TYPE OF MUSIC: Hardcore, Avant Garde, Alternative
CONTACT: David Rothblatt

Silvertone Records

137-139 W 25th St
 New York, NY 10001
 212/727-0016
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Blues Reissues, Pop
CONTACT: Michael Tedesco

Sky Records

6400 Atlantic Blvd, Ste 220
 Norcross, GA 30071
 404/263-7888
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Jim Parker

Skyklad Records

6 Valley Brook Dr
 Middlesex, NJ 08846
 908/968-0073
TYPE OF MUSIC: Garage Rock
CONTACT: Dave Hall

Slash Records

PO Box 48888
 Los Angeles, CA 90048
 213/937-4660
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Zydeco
CONTACT: Randy Kaye

Solar Records

1635 N Cahuenga Blvd
 Hollywood, CA 90028
 213/461-0390
TYPE OF MUSIC: R&B, Rap
CONTACT: Glen Davis

Spindletop Records

500 San Marcus St, Ste 102
 Austin, TX 78702
 512/472-4593
TYPE OF MUSIC: Contemporary Jazz, Traditional Blues
CONTACT: Barry Wilson
DEMO POLICY: Accepts solicited material only.

Square Records

PO Box 1926
 Harvard Sq Station
 Cambridge, MA 02238
 617/492-5398
TYPE OF MUSIC: R&B, Jazz, Skq, Art Damage, Parody, Comedy, Dance, Industrial, Alternative Noise
CONTACT: Andrew Wolf

SST

PO Box 1
 Lawndale, CA 90260

310/430-7687

TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Greg Ginn

Standard Records

14 W State St
 Savannah, GA 31401
 912/234-0223
TYPE OF MUSIC: All Type
CONTACT: Ivan Reyes
DEMO POLICY: Contact before sending demo.

Stanton Records

PO Box 58
 Newtonville, MA 02160
 617/527-7739
TYPE OF MUSIC: Punk, Psychedelia, '60s Reissues
CONTACT: Aram Heller
Small label with mail-order distribution.

Stash Records

140 W 22nd St, 12th Fl
 New York, NY 10011
 212/243-4321
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, Blues
CONTACT: Bernard Brightman

Sub Pop

1932 1st Ave, Ste 1103
 Seattle, WA 98101
 206/441-8441
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Hard Rock, Underground
CONTACT: Jonathan Poneman

Subterranean Records

PO Box 2530
 Berkeley, CA 94702
 415/821-5880
TYPE OF MUSIC: Underground
CONTACT: Steve Tupper

Sugar Hill Records

- 96 West St
 Englewood, NJ 07631
 201/569-5170
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, R&B, Funk
CONTACT: A&R Department
- PO Box 55300
 Durham, NC 27717-5300
 919/489-4349
TYPE OF MUSIC: Bluegrass, Folk, Singer/Songwriter
CONTACT: Betsy Heady
DEMO POLICY: Not accepting material at this time—call before sending demos.

Sunshine Records

1221 Brickell Ave, Ste 900
 Miami, FL 33131
 305/577-3400
TYPE OF MUSIC: Urban, All Types
CONTACT: Darryl Davis

Taang!!

PO Box 51
 Auburndale, MA 02166
 617/965-5673
TYPE OF MUSIC: Underground, Hard Rock, Alternative
CONTACT: Curtis

Tabu Records

9229 Sunset Blvd, Ste 813
 Los Angeles, CA 90069
 310/276-0523
TYPE OF MUSIC: R&B
CONTACT: Robin Tucker

Thrill Jockey

PO Box 1527, Peter
 Stuyvesant Station
 New York, NY 10009
 212/254-0355
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock
CONTACT: A&R Department

Tommy Boy Records

902 Broadway, 13th Fl
 New York, NY 10010
 212/388-8300
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, Dance
CONTACT: Ian Steaman

Touch & Go Records

PO Box 25520
 Chicago, IL 60625
 312/463-8316
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Hardcore, Underground
CONTACT: A&R Department

Toxic Shock Records

PO Box 43787
 Tucson, AZ 85733
 602/623-2008
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Bill Sassenberger

Triloka Records

1327 Abbot Kinney Blvd
 Studio B
 Venice, CA 90291
 213/467-1467
TYPE OF MUSIC: Jazz, World Beat
CONTACT: Katey Kagal
DEMO POLICY: Please contact before sending demo.

True North Records

151 John St, Ste 301
 Toronto, ONT M5V 2T2
 CANADA
 416/596-8696
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rock
CONTACT: Jehanne Languedac
DEMO POLICY: Not accepting demos without prior permission from label.

TVT Records

23 E 4th St
 New York, NY 10003
 212/979-6410
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Patricia Joseph

Twin Tone

2541 Nicollet Ave S
 Minneapolis, MN 55404
 612/872-0646
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative
CONTACT: Jill McLean

Vanguard

1299 Ocean Ave, Ste 800
 Santa Monica, CA 90401
 310/451-5727
TYPE OF MUSIC: Folk
CONTACT: Kent Crawford

Varrick Records

1 Camp St
 Cambridge, MA 02140
 617/354-0700
TYPE OF MUSIC: Blues
CONTACT: Marian Leighton Levy

Voiceprint

- PO Box 32827
 Kansas City, MO 64111
 816/561-0723
TYPE OF MUSIC: Old-Style Progressive—No Heavy Metal or Thrash
CONTACT: Rick Chafen

- PO Box 5
 County Durham DH9 7HR
 ENGLAND
 0207-2307-75
TYPE OF MUSIC: Old-Style Progressive—No Metal or Thrash
CONTACT: A&R Department

Waldoxy

3023 W Northside Dr
 Jackson, MS 39213
 601/982-4522
TYPE OF MUSIC: Blues, Southern Alternative
CONTACT: Tommy Couch Jr

Watermelon Records

PO Box 402088
 Austin, TX 78704
 512/448-1591
TYPE OF MUSIC: Texas Singer/Songwriter
CONTACT: Heinz Gissler

Wax Trax Records

1659 N Damen
 Chicago, IL 60647
 312/252-1000
TYPE OF MUSIC: Alternative, Dance
CONTACT: Jim Nash

Wild Pitch Records

231 W 29th St, Rm 303
 New York, NY 10001
 212/594-5050
TYPE OF MUSIC: Rap, Rock, Hip-Hop
CONTACT: Stuart Fine

Windham Hill

PO Box 9388
 Stanford, CA 94309
 415/329-0647
TYPE OF MUSIC: New Age, Folk
CONTACT: Bob Duskins

Word Nashville

3319 West End Ave
 Ste 200
 Nashville, TN 37203
 615/385-9673
TYPE OF MUSIC: Christian
CONTACT: A&R Department
DEMO POLICY: Please contact before sending demo.

Y & T Music

5753 Bird Rd
 Miami, FL 33155
 305/665-4750
TYPE OF MUSIC: Roots Rock
CONTACT: Richard Ulloa
DEMO POLICY: Not actively seeking material at present.

Zulu Records

1869 W 4th Ave
 Vancouver, BC V6J 1M4
 CANADA
 604/738-3232
TYPE OF MUSIC: Blues, Dance, Hardcore
CONTACT: Kevin Smith

MUSIC POWER

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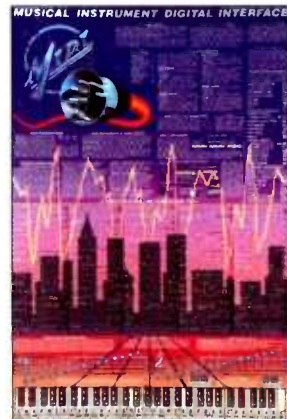


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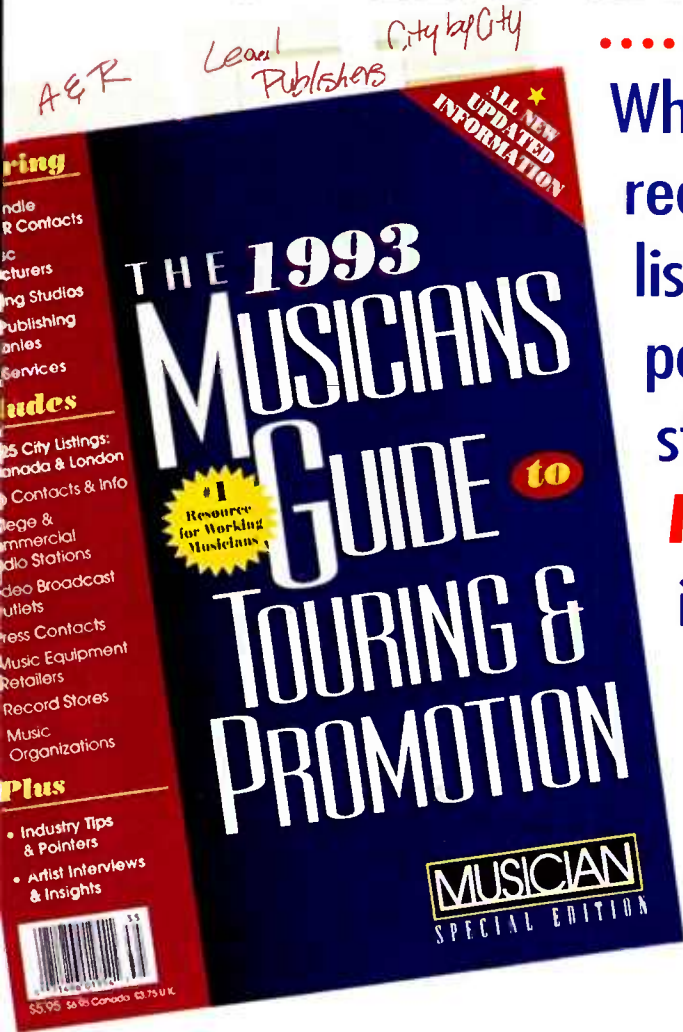
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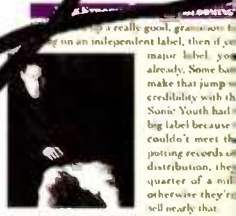
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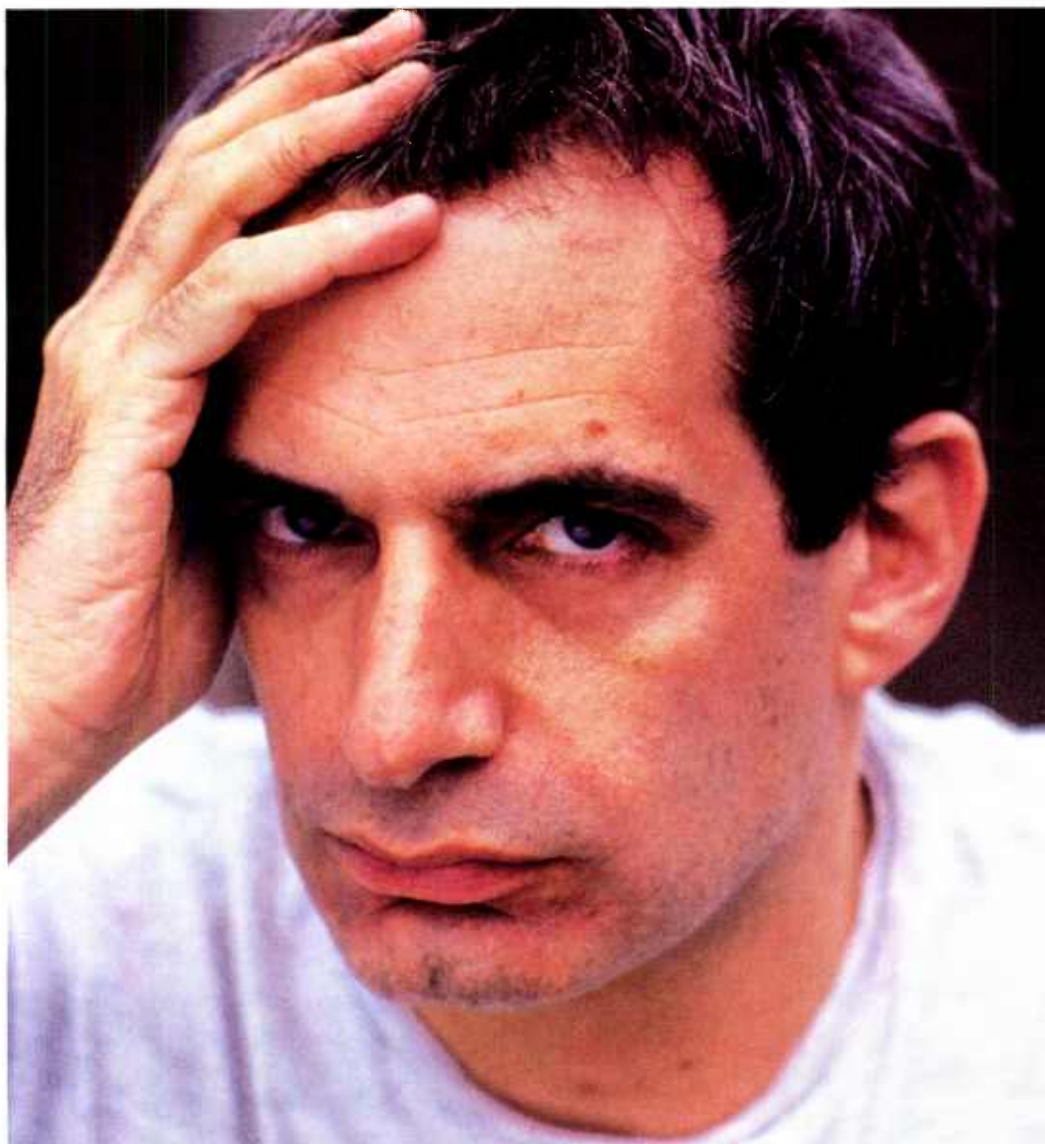
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BACK TO THE FUTURE



DONALD FAGEN
KAMAKIRIAD
(WARNER BROS.)

Look at him, all sneer and no cheer. The picture of willful detachment from time and place. To see him is to know his suffering for the heights and excesses of the past (remember Steely Dan?), the lonesome silhouette at the crossroads where life and art intersect. What has this man done to deserve such a burden?

God only knows, but he doesn't do it often enough. After Donald Fagen split with Walter Becker following their decade as poster boys for the plight of disenfranchised

thinking persons everywhere (remember Steely Dan?), the singer ducked back into the studio for two years and recast his childhood visions as the incredible *Nightfly*. Then he hit the therapist's couch, sat out the rest of the '80s, formed the New York Rock and Soul Revue and was reborn.

Kamakiriad, the result, is a supremely seductive, elegant work in which Fagen transports his nostalgia forward in time, bringing the familiar deckchair charm of seaside hotels, breakers and bebop into the

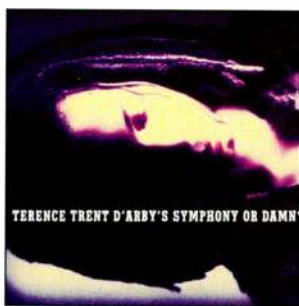
Stargate age. Just as his acerbic "Nightfly" could serve up vulnerability to love as illusion—and disillusion—the elemental settings here create solid contrast to Fagen's typically provocative imagery. The setup is soulful midtempo funk embellished by the composer's jabbing horn charts and surprises like sustained falsettos, and what comes very near in "Tomorrow's Girls" to unabashed scat-singing. The production, by Becker yet, isn't big or glossy. In places it's almost as sparing as a working master, emphasizing

ing nuance. The more subtle the shifts, the more jarring the effect.

Fagen's arrangements are slightly askew to that same end: Guitars comp with fat, noiseless precision in impossibly high registers, grooves simmer on one chord for ages and get subsumed by their interlocking parts. Instead of a dramatically extended bridge, a transition might be a seamless key change building to a snakehip rhythm, or a bridge too short to break the trance of a verse. On "Countermoon," Fagen begins a verse with the same line as the chorus, which explodes into lush vocal harmonies; a chorus opening "Florida Room" implies the first line of the verse, with the singer then drawing out the following phrases in an amusingly lazy gliss. He even allows himself some renegade sibilance around Becker's guitar dissonances for their one writing collaboration "Snowbound," a ballad subversively appealing in ways that would never have made the final cut in their old catalog.

Perhaps nostalgia is just bare sentimentality, but that's right at the root of Fagen and Becker's own delight in Charlie Parker's band, madness 'bout Brubeck, and ability to get silly to "Trane on the Trans-Island Skyway. The Odysseus of this tragicomikiriad understands the need to look back to see forward. Fagen is an illusionist, a cineastic composer with all the adorable idiosyncrasies and flourishes of Ellington, or Woody Allen, and he possesses both those artists' gift for making such qualities inseparable. Maybe one day they'll all have lunch and talk about the good times.

—Matt Resnicoff



TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY

Symphony or Damn
(COLUMBIA)

THERE'S CALCULATED CHUTZPAH, AND THEN there's real chutzpah. Prince and Madonna act "bad" to support high-stakes marketing campaigns. Meanwhile, Terence Trent D'Arby squanders the goodwill generated by his hit debut with an odd, unsalable follow-up. For those who were unwilling to sift through the

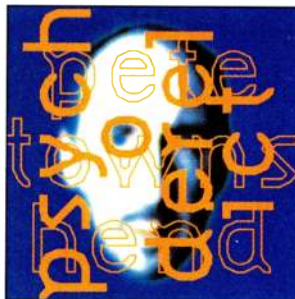
eccentricities of *Neither Fish nor Flesh*, D'Arby now has a message: He did it on purpose. *Symphony or Damn* (aptly subtitled "Exploring the Tension Inside the Sweetness") is an intentional act of another sort, an epic passion play that couldn't be more accessible. Or much better.

Since his repertoire includes everything from squalling rock ("She Kissed Me") to goey bal-lads ("Delicate"), you shouldn't pigeonhole D'Arby, but his peaks suggest modern soul music, purged of nostalgia. Rumbling like an overheated volcano, the ominous "Succumb to Me" recalls Marvin Gaye's sultry come-ons; "I Still Love You" approaches the delicate intensity of Sam Cooke's airiest delights. If D'Arby can't match those immortals technically, he understands their ability to wring deep, deep emotions from the simplest lyric, and follows suit.

As sole writer, arranger and producer, D'Arby champions thoughtful excess. The more-is-more approach doesn't preclude meticulous craftsmanship, however. Befitting the title, he piles on noises, orchestrating the drama—even the seemingly simple "Seasons" reveals subtle layers of sound upon close examination. More typically, "Baby Let Me Share My Love" punctuates furious lust with humping percussion and shrieking background voices, transforming sexual healing into the apocalypse. D'Arby doesn't play the standard one-note stud, though. To add perspective, "Penelope Please" mocks a hormone-addled teen, undercutting his randy urgency with a breezy melody catchy enough to be a cola jingle.

D'Arby scores a few resounding duds, especially the corny "Let Her Down Easy," but even the stinkers reflect a gutsy willingness to try anything. This time, he's made a thrilling, state-of-the-art pop record. Next time, nothing is forbidden.

—Jon Young



PETE TOWNSHEND

PsychoDerelect
(ATLANTIC)

PREJUDICES UPFRONT: I THINK 1967'S *The Who Sell Out* was Pete Town-

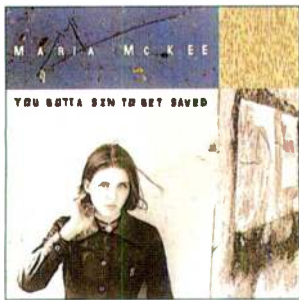
shend's best record ever; that *Tommy* was pulverized by '60s-mates the Kinks (*Arthur*) and Pretty Things (*S.F. Sorrow*), rock-operatically; that the Who will likely perform *Tommy* during every decade one of its members still exists; and that *PsychoDerelect*, weirdly enough, is one fascinating listen. Maybe not in the way Pete Townshend planned it—maybe we really *are* supposed to be drawn into the screwy and scrawny subplots within this, yes, Rock Opera Again—but simply because this guy, this distinguished rock gentleman, this elderly statesman (now 48) who could eat 'n' excrete a mountain of power-pop imitators in his day, still really cares what we think of him.

Did I say this was a rock opera? Nope, it's a "concept album." About a one-time bigshot rock star, now lying low, misunderstood by the press, feeling sore about it and working on a dynamite "new project" that's kinda-sorta like virtual reality; about an arrogant media babe who continually picks at him, calls him washed-up, owns a club in "Frisco" and has four nipples; and about his manager, who just wants to make a quick buck when he's not whipping women for sexual gratification. You know the type. There's narration, there's a goes-nowhere subplot about the virtual reality stuff he's probably trying to fool us into thinking his unreleased 1970 *Lifeforce* album was about (who remembers?) and, mostly, there's a voice—that of the rock star character ("He might in fact be several rock artists," PT helpfully notes on an accompanying bio sheet)—being all-wise, all-knowing and pretty dang smart about "the secret."

Unfortunately, the secret has to do with "being a star." How to cope with the pain of it, how the performer is intrinsically subservient to the audience, and how the press is, of course, fucked beyond belief. Not to get too personal, but, I mean, can you relate? And get this: Because this whole thing is not for real—a rock opera, a concept album, a radio drama, whatever—the opinions expressed herein (Final quote: "What happened to all that lovely hippie shit?") are really those of a "character," not Townshend himself. The songs are Townshend's—and though there's some good ones he does twice ("Now & Then" and "English Boy"), and some bad ones with helpful names ("Pretentious" and "Predictable"), they're not really the point, are they?

What is? That the man who once wrote a song called "I Can't Explain" seems determined to spend the remainder of his career trying.

—Dave DiMartino



MARIA MCKEE

You Gotta Sin to Get Saved (Geffen)

IT'S BEEN 10 YEARS SINCE MARIA MCKEE belted and trilled her way to attention as the winsome wunderkind of the SoCal cowpunk scene, a too-sweet, two-beat teenaged honey who seemed to have absorbed every roots record left in L.A.'s rapidly depleting used-country bins. But eventually McKee swore off the precocious Dolly-billy of her early days with the band Lone Justice to find her own sober voice. Old fans may be heartened to learn, then, that on her second solo album she's regressed and returned to the brilliant thievery of youth, for You Gotta Sin is devilishly full of the joie de vivre of unblushing derivation.

Only this time McKee's been boning up less on Bakersfield and more on Memphis. The album opens with "I'm Gonna Soothe You," a mid-tempo ballad with enough '70s-redolent strings and horns that you might check to make sure the CD doesn't have a Hi insignia. Following her Ann Peebles affectation, McKee sets sights toward Aretha with the melodramatic, soul-mama self-martyrdom of "I Forgive You," the kind of glorious call-and-response kitsch beyond the Commitments' wildest wet dreams.

Speaking of Ireland—where she lived for a couple of years after her last album—it takes cojones to cover Van Morrison, and McKee carries plenty in scamming Van's catalog twice here, making "My Lonely Sad Eyes" and "The

Way Young Lovers Do" sound like they were written for impetuous female singers. She also does a power-pop remake of a Dusty Springfield chestnut, and touches the contemporary folkie base with a Jayhawks leftover. That's four covers out of a possible 10—proof that she's taking her career as a singer/songwriter a little less seriously this year.

Not a weak tune in this bunch, though, and the three most charming originals hearken to the original Lone Justice. "Only Once" is a clever, regretful C&W weeper; for the rollicking "You Gotta Sin to Get Saved," McKee casts herself as a theologically confused tart with a hussy's twang and an intoxicated Vox; and "Why Wasn't I More Grateful (When Life Was Sweet)" returns McKee to her second career as a gospel singer—of the bummed-out Ecclesiastes sort, but gospel nonetheless.

Black Crowes and Jayhawks vet George Drakoulias produced, a shape-shifter's smorgasbord of pop diversity unified only by sounding like it was all set down in '72. As audio revivalism goes, the Crowes' sin is McKee's salvation. —Chris Willman



ZIGGY MARLEY AND THE MELODY MAKERS

Joy and Blues (Virgin)

WHERE DO DICHOTOMIES END AND unities begin? This is one of the central questions raised by the Marley siblings' fourth

album for Virgin, Joy and Blues. The title song speaks of the gulf which separates rich from poor, truth from lies, fantasy from destiny. But it also underscores the paradox of a family whose music still recalls their larger-than-life father while attempting to find its own direction. Can they have it both ways?

For the most part, Ziggy and Co. seek a cleaner, more compact sound on Joy than on their last release, Jahmekya. But in doing so, they have put aside some of the elements that showed a willingness to experiment and to distance themselves from the Legend. Here, except for the rowdy ragga excitement and secret-agent-dub guitar of "Head Top" and the weary Afro-warrior funk of "This One," they stick pretty close to the time-honored grooves of classic Jah music, albeit with '90s production values.

One of the better songs, "There She Goes," nurtures this personality split; by dusting off and reconfiguring one of their father's early-'70s obscurities, they show a keen feel for his oeuvre yet risk holding their own compositions up to unflattering comparison. They don't stoop to mimicry, though, creating a kind of magisterial pop, replete with tasteful pizzicato synth-strings uplifting Ziggy's ardent vocals and Chinna Smith's Miles-like minimalist guitar.

An interesting development is the emergence of younger brother Stephen as a promising songwriter. While Ziggy sermonizes against the world's injustices, Stephen shines the light on himself. In a croaky new-old voice somewhere between Lee "Scratch" Perry and Uprising-era Bob, the youthman elucidates his relationship with Rita Marley on "Mama" (Rita adds harmony vocals) and cops to his own public petulance on "Rebel in Disguise."

Is Joy and Blues a holding action or a transitional record, a forerunner of more creative blossoming or an early sign of distress? The album's lively spirit augurs well for their live shows, at least—one clear sign among a trove of mixed messages. —Tom Cheyney

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MATTHEW SWEET

Altered Beast
(ZOO)

MATTHEW SWEET DOESN'T WRITE songs so much as songlettes. They're fragile constructs built around a phrase, a bit of melody, a guitar riff. In the hands of a pop master like Alex Chilton or Freedy Johnston, such modest materials can be spun into gold, but with Sweet they remain simply that: odds and ends of pop building blocks that never quite assume the shape of a memorable song.

On *Altered Beast* we get 15 such notions, and though they rock a little harder than the batch on his last LP, the overrated *Girlfriend*, the record still

seems to evaporate as you listen to it. The influence of two brilliant outfits, Television and the Golden Palominos, not to mention the twining guitars of Richard Lloyd and Robert Quine, can be heard in edgy numbers like "Knowing People" (one of the few tracks on the record with a crisply articulated structure), but even when Sweet gets close, he never quite delivers the goods.

The problem isn't too complicated: Sweet simply doesn't write very interesting songs. The postures he strikes—sad guy, bad guy, mad guy—are predictable and his use of language is mundane. The Turtles could get away with a line like "breaking up is half the fun" because their music existed in a realm of giddy teenage euphoria, but that's not where Sweet lives, and in his hands such lyrics seem childish.

Sweet really sets himself up on side two, which opens with a bit of dialogue from the grandly memorable television production of "I, Claudius": The music that kicks in after the powerful words of Robert Graves seems tepid. Thanks to Lloyd and Quine there's a lot of sound and fury going on here, but, to paraphrase another quotable scribe, much of it ends up signifying nothing. —Kristine McKenna



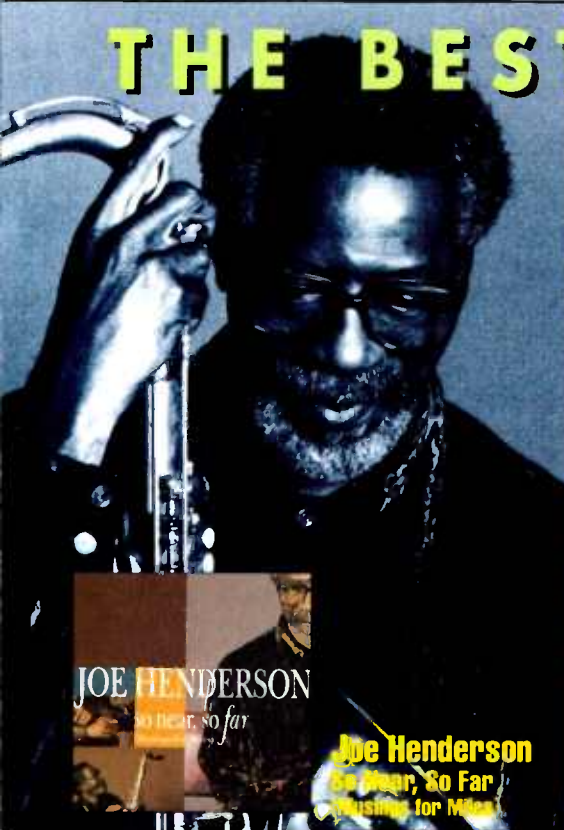
NEW ORDER

Republic
(QWEST/WARNER BROS.)

AT A TIME WHEN THE SUN-DRENCHED spring-break escapism of Snow and Duice's "Dazzey Duks" buoys college grads facing job uncertainty and high rents, New Order may seem a bit irrelevant to former fans. The other day, I tried playing *Republic* for one of my friends—a wearer of black clothing and wildly painted hair in high school, and a New Order dance fan—and she yawned and asked to hear something more fun.

Actually New Order, on *Republic*, no longer are a dance-rock band. They gave up both dance and rock after the artistic and commercial success

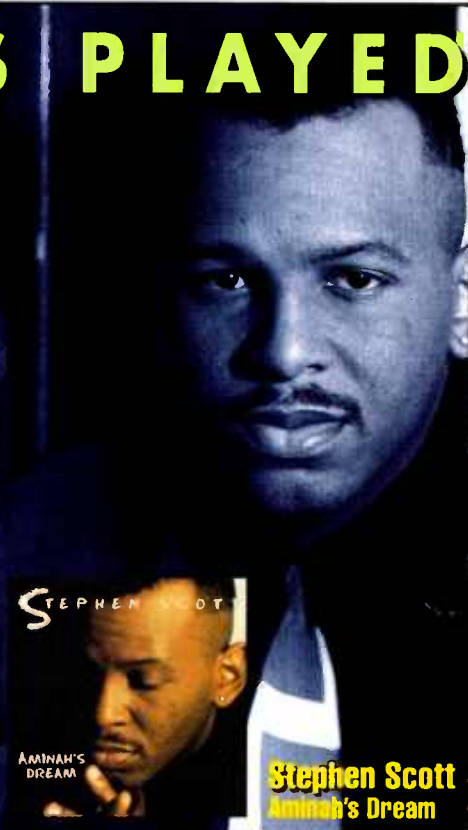
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of 1989's *Technique*. It's as if they don't want to compete with the bands that they've influenced, like Jesus Jones and EMF. Freshly disappointed by the demise of their longtime label, Factory Records, they have concocted a pleasant-sounding but ultimately trite record of sedentary pop.

New Order's narratives were always kind of annoying to me, though *Technique's* point of view was at least sincerely adolescent. Now that dance grooves and the spirit of rock-out rebellion have been abandoned, their mopey but smug lyrics are right in your face. The band also seems to be experiencing a curious nostalgia for early-'80s pop. In the dark, almost pretty "Ruined in a Day," Bernard Sumner sings that "some people want to deceive us" (circa the Eurythmics' "Sweet Dreams") and quotes "Every Breath You Take." "Young Offender" brings to mind a sub-par Hall and Oates hit, albeit with Pet Shop Boys-style rapping (Stephen Hague produced). The one song here I'd enjoy hearing on the radio, "Liar," is a bouncy new waver in which Bernard disses a faithless girlfriend, calling her the "king of nothing" and suggesting Go West's "King of Wishful Thinking." What next, a tribute to Kajagoogoo?

Republic may still sell lots of records; after

all, the song with least personality on *Technique*, "Round and Round," broke this band with the masses. But at least that song had a beat you could dance to. I'm not asking New Order to go grunge, but next time how about a little less of a hairsprayed sheen, and a little more feeling. Please.

—Jill Blardinelli

RICHARD THOMPSON

Watching the Dark

(HANNIBAL)

TAKE THE TITLE OF THIS WISELY CULLED overview at its word: Thompson chronicles the often harsh, usually private side of life with a vigilance few other pop writers can sustain. He's seen the mother who'd hamstring her son, the village that breeds scorn instead of camaraderie. The song that opened his first solo record 20 years ago contained a blunt enough promise: "Don't expect the words to ring too sweetly in your ear."

Watching the Dark goes back further even, with a smattering of Fairport Convention tracks to assure us that Thompson's unflinching eye and audacious guitar were on his side from day one. The set also proves that his sophisticated blend of

Celtic and Eastern strains never reduced his love for rock 'n' roll's basic thrust; as a bandleader, he shows brooding needn't be passive. So the three discs are chock with the mordant grace, black humor and stinging solos that have continually given Thompson zealots proof their man is one of rock's most piercing artistes. Perhaps because these fans have had access to a bountiful trove of odds and sods, *Watching the Dark* takes care not to tread over too much familiar ground—over 20 of the 47 tracks here are previously unissued.

All phases of a curious career are included, though, and several help clarify things. If you agree his mid-'80s work suffered from an overindulgence of craft (this opinion from a *Henry/Bright Lights* fan), you'll be pleased to know the bulk of selections from this period are from live dates, revitalizing tunes like "Can't Win" and "I Ain't Going to Drag My Feet No More." As for the new stuff, the severity of his portraits hasn't wavered. Yet his method of fleshing out characters with droll quips remains just as eloquent. That helps the anguish go down a bit easier, while reminding that the flickering light at the dark end of the street can quell our fears for only the briefest moments.

—Jim Macnie

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NEW RELEASES

ROCK

BY J. D. CONSIDINE

ROBERT PLANT

Fate of Nations

(ES PARANZA/ATLANTIC)

HAVING TIRED OF the post-modernism that pervaded *Now and Zen*, Plant shifts gears and turns to...hippie music? Well, sorta. Although the thrumming acoustics and Celtic modality hearken to *Led Zep III*, Plant's approach has less to do with nostalgia than emotional intensity. So, the love songs ache deeper (check Nigel Kennedy's eerily arching violin in "Calling to You"), the lust songs hit harder (catch the sucker-punch guitars in "Promised Land"), and the hope songs (particularly Tim Hardin's "If I Were a Carpenter") seem more heartfelt.

PJ HARVEY

Rid of Me

(ISLAND)

UNLIKE *DRY*, WHICH drew most of its strength from the uncluttered eloquence of Polly Harvey's songwriting, *Rid of Me* keeps its focus on the churning, Beefheartian clangor of her band. While that has musical advantages—how better to convey carnal frustration than through a lubricious 6/8 groove like the one in "Rub 'Til It Bleeds"?—it doesn't add much to Harvey's commercial appeal. But maybe that's the point: By making the listener work so hard to appreciate these songs, Harvey all but guarantees she'll get the cult crowd she wants instead of the mass audience she deserves.

PORNO FOR PYROS

Porno for Pyros

(WARNER BROS.)

JANE'S PLACEBO.

BJÖRK

Debut

(ELEKTRA)

IT ISN'T JUST that nobody sings like Björk—nobody even *sounds* like her, and the success of the Sugarcubes owed much to the unique nature of her otherworldly ululations. Yet what makes her singing memorable isn't the odd assortment of growls, moans and chirps she relies upon, but the emotions those sounds convey. That's especially true here, because this album's most moving moments come not with pop-savvy fare like the dance-driven "Human



VINCE NEIL, EXPOSED (WARNER BROS.)

FOR MARQUEE VALUE, it makes sense that Neil gets top billing here; if 10 years in front of *Mötley Crüe* doesn't make your mug recognizable with the MTV crowd, nothing will. But from a musical standpoint, axeman Steve Stevens is the real star, adding ear-catching virtuosity to "Look in Her Eyes," putting sizzle behind the double-entendres of "Gettin' Hard," even managing to keep the hook-heavy "Can't Change Me" from seeming too sappy. Here's hoping Stevens gets the Exposure he deserves.

Behaviour" or the techno-inflected "Violently Happy," but with oddly sentimental tunes like "Venus As a Boy" or the jazzy "Like Someone in Love."

KISS

Alive III

(MERCURY)

AFTER *ALIVE AND Alive II*, what could possibly warrant the release of a third Kiss concert album? New songs, for one thing; it's been 15 years since the last one, and even if Kiss hasn't maintained its mid-'70s chart presence, their material remains as crunchy and melodic as ever. But the real reason is that live is what Kiss does best, and from the shout-along intensity of "I Just Wanna" to the vintage raunch of "Rock 'N' Roll All Nite," this third time is a charmer.

RUN-D.M.C.

Down with the King

(PROFILE)

BECAUSE ANY COMEBACK requires at least some reinvention, it's to be expected that Run-D.M.C.

would make some changes this time around. What's surprising is how subtle those adjustments are. Though the rhythm tracks are fat with cutting-edge grooves, from the dense, Pete Rock pulse beneath the title track to EPMD's bass-heavy loops on "Can I Get It, Yo," the vocals stress old-school virtues like wit, pacing and verbal ability. Maybe that's why, when it comes to hardcore rhyming, they still run rings around the competition.

JAZZ

BY JIM MACNIE

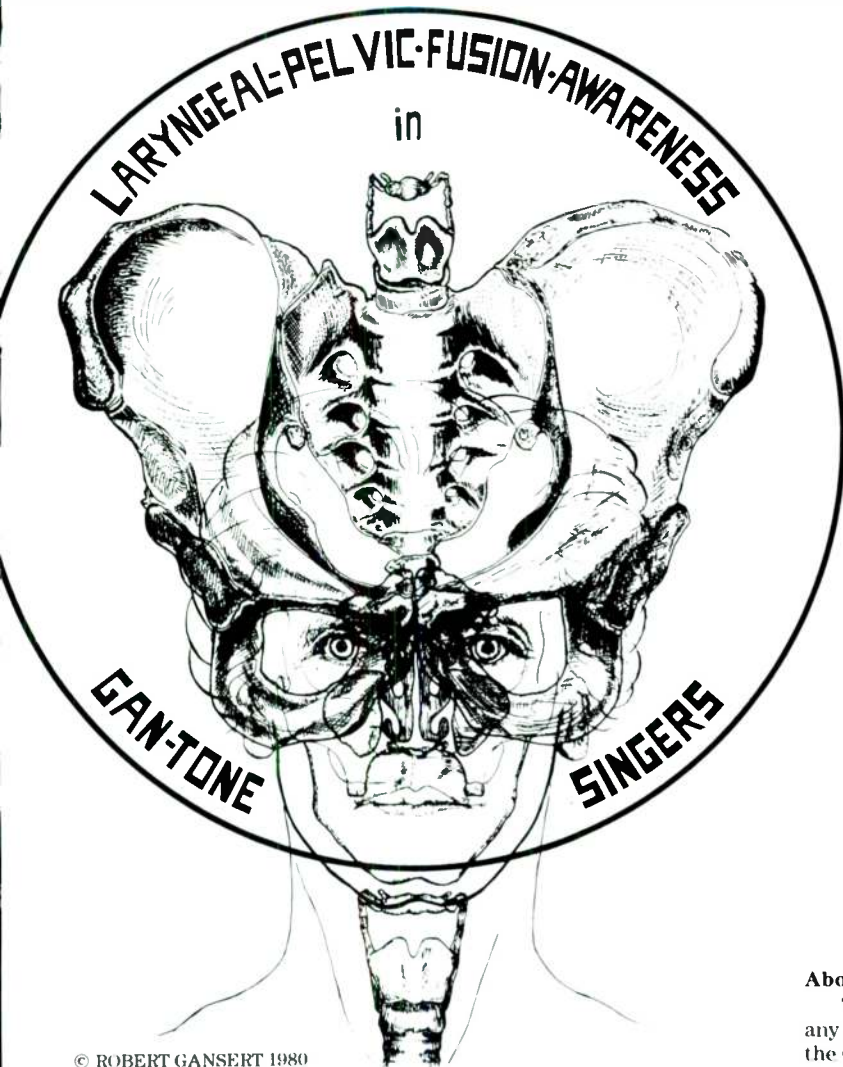
MICHELLE ROSEWOMAN TRIO

Occasion to Rise

(EVIDENCE)

RECENTLY HAPPENED ACROSS a rehearsal by the overlooked pianist, and boy, was she rocking. Does the same here, thanks to Rufus Reid's power walking and Ralph Peterson's expert roughhousing. But what

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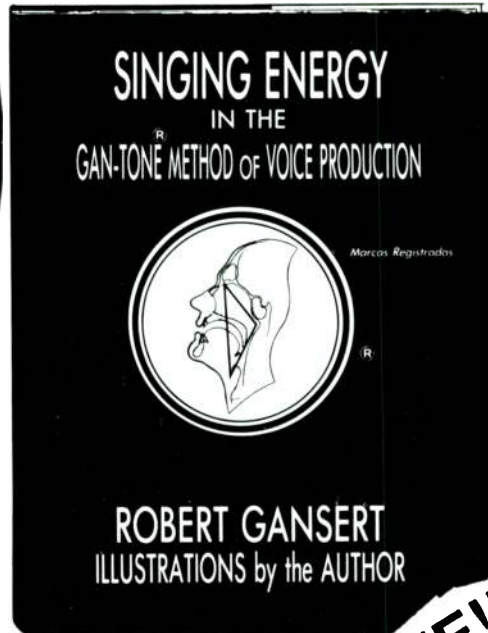
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distinguishes the group is the leader's spiky lyricism, which suits the hyper tone of several pieces here. Wise programmatic tailoring allows for unrestricted moments that pump air in between fierce bop like the title tune and Lec Morgan's "Nite Flight."

DIRTY DOZEN BRASS BAND
Jelly
(COLUMBIA)

IF YOU GRIMACED when Elvis Costello was their vocalist, this alignment with Jelly Roll Morton's scripted pearls might be more to your liking. They

haven't sounded so natural or energized in ages (except onstage), and Morton's compositions provide prudent solo limitations, relieving the band from the endless jam syndrome that second-liners often have a problem squashing. A living room ain't a barroom, and this record is constructed for repeated listens.

JANE IRA BLOOM
Art and Aviation
(ARABESQUE)

SOPRANO SAXOPHONIST BLOOM signifies with languid phrasing that often unfolds into sleek, logi-

cal contours of sound. This date reminds that she's also one of the few bandleaders who have a grip on blending electronics into acoustic jazz. So her nod to Hawk's authority maintains near-bop characteristics while squiggly electro-interplay provides a Milky Way metaphor. Though bolstered by effective improvs, a few of her own tunes are meager; by the time "Lost in the Stars" comes around, you realize why some melodies are put in time capsules.

STEPHEN SCOTT
Aminah's Dream
(VERVE)

SCOTT'S A REMARKABLE pianist, one of the best working in New York right now, but on this second outing the real feathers in his cap are variety and selection. Polyrhythms are everywhere—course, that's expected when Elvin Jones is controlling the flow. Melodies abound as well, many using blues motifs that are novel without being peculiar. Unique horn charts, a determined sense of swing—a mainstream date that just keeps on satisfying.

DEWEY REDMAN
Choices
(ENJA)

THESE DAYS HIS son's in the spotlight, but like Von Freeman in Chicago, this oddball elder still has something to say. *Choices* finds Redman working post-Ornette blues motifs, but because of the recording vitality and some chipper exchanges with Josh himself, this blowing session has several heated moments. Dewey provides the wrinkles and idiosyncrasies; Josh generates mucho drive and logic galore (and a more convincing ballad than his solo disc offers). His musette musings go on too long, while dad's tenor candor on the ultra-confessional "Everything Happens to Me" will remind you that experience has a sound all its own.

BOBBY WATSON
Tailor Made
(COLUMBIA)

SOMETIMES IT'S WAY too pretty, but like most everything the alto player signs his name to, this big-band date has a deadly accuracy. In the clutch, that becomes an awesome weapon, exploding the preciousness with ceaseless precision. The charts allow for plenty of jump-offs, too, and when Watson flies through his solos, it doesn't matter how fanciful the tunes are—his unabating verve puts a nut in the middle of each bonbon.

MIKE WESTBROOK ORCHESTRA
The Cortège
(ENJA)

THE BRIT COMPOSER'S art(y) ensemble has nodded to both Blake and the Beatles, and they always sound smarter when they keep their pretensions on

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the short side. But this double disc, framed around the emotional unfurling of a funeral procession, takes its time about everything, making huge, dynamic swoops through brass 'n' reed entanglements one minute, stroking the sonic fur the next. The elegiac verse by Lorca, Rimbaud, Hesse and other poets is sometimes treated as gibberish, even while being revered. Humor and a staunch commitment to the unorthodox keep you focused on this particular death trip, which winds up being about living.

ALLEN LOWE AND THE JACK
PURVIS MEMORIAL ORCHESTRA
Mental Strain at Dawn
(STASH)

PORTRAITS HERE, TRIBUTES there—these things multiply faster than the national debt. This nod to Louis Armstrong's unabating lyricism and the good humor that fueled its deployment signifies because it gives David Murray a chance to mingle with Doc Cheatham, while a swaggering ensemble led by composer/reedist Lowe makes uproar seem like the most amiable of all improvising qualities. Exclamatory solos come and go, and the frolic of romping through tunes with titles like "When Jack Ruby Met Joe Glaser" is front and center. Somebody break out the hanky and wipe that brow.

YOSUKE YAMASITA
Kurdish Dance
(VERVE)

THIS TRIO, WHICH brings together Pheeroan ak-Laff and Cecil McBee, is led by a pianist for whom skittishness comes natural. But so does stability, and the mix of the two creates an uncanny swing. That Joe Lovano can lay his tenor into its measured agitation proves that it isn't too out, though. Lilt requires discernible boundaries.

REISSUES

MAGIC SAM
Magic Touch
(BLACK TOP)

THOSE WHO CAN'T get enough of Sam Maghett's skyrocketing tenor voice and densely picked guitar work are directed to this crudely recorded but exciting live set, first issued on LP by Belgium's Black Magic Records several years ago. Cut live in 1966 at Sylvio's Lounge in Chicago by collector George Adins, it captures a typically raucous night at a Windy City blues club. Sam is near peak form, accompanied by a sturdy duo of drummer Mack Thompson and drummer Odie Payne; his longtime sidekick Shakey Jake sits in on four numbers. For ambience alone, *Magic Touch* is a highly worthwhile investment, but Sam's performances show why he's at the top of the West Side pantheon.—Chris Morris

WOODY GUTHRIE

Songs to Grow on for Mother and Child
(SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS)

IN THIS ERA of Songs R Us, as Raffi wannabes multiply like cells of a virus, it's heartening to discover that Woody Guthrie was making tunes for tots earlier, funnier and better. Various accompanied by guitar, what sounds like castanets or the thumping of palms on a box of oatmeal, Woody drives straight to the heart of his crowd's concerns: "I Want My Milk (And I Want It Now)" is my idea of a rock-a-bye anthem, while "I'll Eat You I'll Drink You" voices a universal fantasy even post-Freudian parents can acknowledge without shame. Bonus: includes melodies later borrowed by Bob Dylan.—Mark Rowland

VARIOUS ARTISTS

*The Jewel/Paula Records Story:
The Blues, Rhythm & Blues and
Soul Recordings*
(CAPRICORN)

CAPRICORN'S UNEXPECTEDLY REWARDING label-tribute boxed sets are defining themselves as essential both for their brevity—not that the world doesn't need five-CD Tommy Collins sets on Bear Family—and their balance. Here, expected hits (Toussaint McCall's 1967 R&B smash "Nothing Takes the Place of You") sit side by side with collectable one-offs (Big Joe Turner's "Night Time Is the Right Time" from '69) and unreleased material (three tracks by the, uh, not-underrecorded Lightnin' Hopkins). A groovy collection of contemporary blues, R&B and soul, drawn from 1965 through 1989, this two-CD set is the kind of musical portfolio that makes acquisition-hungry international conglomerates drool.—Dave DiMartino

BOBBY BLAND
*I Pity Fool/The Duke
Recordings, Vol. One*
(MCA)

THESE 44 TRACKS constitute a long-overdue honor to one of the smoothest and most epic R&B singers. Lovingly remastered, and presenting many surprisingly different non-album tracks (as well as a couple of alternate takes), this package traces Bland from gritty, unfocused beginnings to his still-unmatched *Two Steps from the Blues* album. Two tracks from the aforementioned album are missing, but this set remains an essential touchstone in American pop music.—Thomas Anderson

HARRY RESER
Banjo Crackerjax 1922-1930
(VAZOO)

FOR THOSE AMAZED by the giddy heights to which new-grassers like Béla Fleck have taken the banjo in recent years, this anthology by ragtime

wizard Harry Reser will delight. Reser's work was ingenious, from the speakasy blues of "Send Back My Honeyman" to the animal imitations of "The Cat and the Dog." But beyond the novelty of hearing lightning-fast jazz chord runs on a banjo, one is taken with the ambience of these recordings—with piano or dance band arrangements behind him, and the hiss of these 60-to-70-year-old 78s—and it's hard to imagine anyone not being charmed by his world.—Thomas Anderson

ROBERT WYATT
Mid Eighties
(GRAMAVISION)

ALL THE OFFICIALLY released mid-'80s music by this solitary British visionary is collected here, including the 1984 *Work in Progress* EP, the entire *Old Rottenhat* album, a few 12-inch sides and two interesting rarities, "Pigs" and "Chairman Mao." During this period, Wyatt's political concerns often took center stage, and though grumblings about the future of "the movement" occasionally seem out of place in such lovely musical settings, his anti-capitalist sentiments are usually on the mark. Nevertheless, it's Wyatt's intimate, plaintive voice, jazz-inflected melodies and brilliant use of space that really make the point, and powerfully. For aficionados, this re-package is still a must-own because of the number of previously non-CD tracks; for newcomers, it's a good starting point.—Mac Randall

INDIES

THE BEATNUTS
Intoxicated Demons
(RELATIVITY/VIOLATOR)

THE BEATNUTS ARE veteran hip-hop producers who have served behind the boards for the Native Tongues groups and Chi Ali, among others. Here the Afro-Latino trio makes its first foray aboveground, armed with a plethora of jazz-funk grooves. While their raps consist of fairly traditional boasting and odes to creative dissipation ("I want to fuck, drink beer and smoke some shit"), the beats stay fresh, and this EP is packed with them—like any good disciples of Duke E. and James B., the Beatnuts' priorities lie in the layers of sticky funk.—Nathan Brackett

EDDIE HINTON
Very Blue Highway
(BULLSEYE BLUES)

EDDIE HINTON'S SONGS sound lived-in, as if they were the natural result of a simple soul's ups and (mostly) downs. His sand 'n' gravel voice suggests a man who still hasn't recovered from the initial shock of hearing Otis Redding; those swampy, twangy guitar licks can soothe the bitterest thoughts. Funky all the way to his toes, Hinton has

the makings of myth: This reclusive Muscle Shoals alumnus is only on his fourth album in 15 years. But there's nothing the least bit flaky or obscure about the unadorned sentiments of "Call a Blues Physician" or "Hey Justine." Listen and let the spirit move you.—*Jon Young*

**LITTLE CHARLIE AND THE
NIGHTCAPS**
Night Vision
(ALLIGATOR)

FIFTH ALBUM OF swing blues from Sacramento's Little Charlie is a witty, well-rounded collection of songs and styles, including jazzy, Delta acoustic, kick-ass, rockabilly and even surf music. Singer Estrin mixes ribald humor with blues harp to blow down the walls. Cover of obscure but deserving Percy Mayfield song, "I Dare You Baby," featuring Little Charlie's heavenly jazz-inflected guitar, gives you an idea of their spiritual roots, while ode to surf culture, "Buzzsaw," comes closer to where they really live. Or maybe it's the other way around. Produced by Joe Lewis Walker, who also plays on three tracks.—*Robert D. Murphy*

OPIUM DEN
Diary of a Drunken Sun
(HEREAFTER)

THE WORD "ALTERNATIVE" is used far too often these days, but a group like Opium Den may help keep it meaningful. The first half of this album offers concise chunks of drone-rock from the Cure/Siouxsie school, with an ominous Arabic tinge that gives a few tunes—like the furious opener "Renaissance"—a passing likeness to *Flowers of Romance*-era PiL, except that in place of John Lydon's sneer is the gorgeous soaring and swooping of Annette Kramer's voice (complete with big reverb, of course). The second half exploits the band's formidable trance-inducing capabilities; the songs are longer and more exploratory. Tracks like "Blind," "Radio in My Head" and "The Puzzle" are both obscure and tuneful, swirling and anthemic, and in all the right places. A striking debut by a band worth watching for. (Dutch East India Trading Co., Box 800, Rockville Centre, NY 11571)—*Mac Randall*

LUSCIOUS JACKSON
In Search of Manny
(GRAND ROYAL/CAROLINE)

HOW CAN YOU deny a group that describes itself as "Patti Smith meets the Cold Crush Brothers"? Luscious Jackson are four female New Yorkers whom lazy sorts are going to call a sister act to the Beastie Boys, but the combination of singer Jill Cunniff's sweet choruses and Gabrielle Glaser's tough-girl raps makes Luscious their own animal; nobody this side of Neneh Cherry has blended

hip-hop and pop vocals so successfully. With "Life of Leisure," a salvo against a shiftless boyfriend ("You got a brain you ain't using/You got charm you're abusin'/Too busy out there floozin'/Or lying at home snoozin'"), Cunniff and Glaser may have unintentionally created the best slacker anthem since "Smells Like Teen Spirit." With intelligible lyrics.—*Nathan Brackett*

HENRY THREADGILL
Too Much Sugar for a Dime
(AXIOM)

HONK IF YOU love tubas, then go listen to this. Edwin Rodriguez, Marcus Rojas and Dorian Parreot II are masters of the underappreciated instrument, and they respond with obvious glee to Threadgill's vigorous charts. Funkier basslines are seldom heard. Add to that the stun guitars of Brandon Ross and Masujaa, the deft Hispanic arranging flourishes, idiosyncratic compositions like "Little Pocket Size Demons" and the unbelievably exuberant "Try Some Ammonia," and of course Threadgill's gritty alto sax, and you've got a record that's never less than magnificent.—*Mac Randall*

RED HOUSE PAINTERS
Red House Painters
(4AD)

UP IN SAN FRANCISCO, the area's two most eccentric bands—Mark Eitzel's American Music Club and Mark Kozelek's Red House Painters—are giving a clinic in clinical depression, and making it into a thoroughly purging experience. Kozelek writes in a brutally confessional style that makes '70s singer/songwriters seem like wimps, not for their music, but for being soft on themselves. He freely opens his wounded psyche (song topics revolve around his sense of worthlessness, isolating self-absorption, suicide) while the band plays in a slow, haunting, disquiet that tightens the focus on Kozelek's vulnerable vocals. A harrowing but often transcendent record.—*David Konjoyan*

RY COODER AND V.M. BHATT
A Meeting by the River
(WATER LILY ACOUSTICS)

BEFORE THE LATE-NIGHT session at Christ the King Chapel in Santa Barbara that produced this album, Bhatt and Cooder, slide-guitar masters from two different continents, had never laid eyes on each other. And yet, with the help of tabla player Sukhvinder Singh Namdhari and Ry's son Joachim on dumbek, they've created an improvisational masterpiece. On every track, the allusions fly—to Mississippi, Hawaii and Bhatt's native land, India—but the result is something beyond blues, raga or any other form. Cooder (on bottle-neck) and Bhatt (on mohan vina, a homemade lap

steel/sitar hybrid) gracefully toss complex melodic ideas back and forth with a sympathy and intuitive sense that are nothing short of magical. The jaw-dropping slide conversation at the beginning of "Ganges Delta Blues" is particularly sublime, but why waste time trying to identify "highlights" on a treasure trove like this? (Box 91448, Santa Barbara, CA 93190)—*Mac Randall*

INDIES

AFRICANDO
Vol. 1—Trovador
(STERN'S AFRICA)

BEFORE YOUSOU N'DOUR and other modern Senegalese innovators created their homegrown pop, Afro-Cuban music ruled Dakar. Ace producer Ibrahim Sylla and master arranger Boncana Maiga came to Nueva York along with three crack Senegalese singers late last year, seeking to continue this trans-Atlantic cultural exchange. Fronting an 18-piece *charanga* made up of renowned Latin players, the vocal trio sounds fresh yet classic. Pape Seck's feisty growling baritone punches through the violin-invigorated "Lakh Bi," while Baobab alum Medoune Diallo sweetly wraps himself around the *son montuno* of "Gouye Gui." Grupo Africando defies easy classification, creating a *muy picante* diasporic hybrid. (598 Broadway, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-1648)—*Tom Cheyney*

BOOKS

**HEADBANGERS:
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OF HEAVY METAL BANDS**
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—*Scott Isler*

**THE PENGUIN GUIDE TO JAZZ
ON CD, LP & CASSETTE**
Richard Cook & Brian Morton
(PENGUIN)

DOES THE IDEA of two thirtysomethings rating the corpus of recorded jazz raise your blood pressure? Then consider *The Penguin Guide* instead as a history organized on the basis of aural evidence. Allowing for a British perspective, the authors are reasonably thorough and catholic in their taste—at least within a Euro-American axis. Nearly 1300 typo-riddled pages long, this softcover confines itself to in-print items, has a useful performer index

and is a guaranteed argument-starter. What more do you want? Wildness?—*Scott Isler*

ELVIS: 1956 REFLECTIONS
Morris E. Kricun & Virginia M. Kricun
(MORGIN PRESS)

IT'S NOT THE nominal authors who make this LP-sized hardcover such a fascinating work of obsession. The book consists largely of Ed Braslaff's 100+ photos of Presley taken one summer afternoon in 1956. The relentless images exude a prurient invasion of privacy, and not only because El has his shirt off part of the time. Like the infamous *Private Elvis*, this softcore erotica forces us to reconsider how complicit Presley was in his own exploitation. Or you can just look.—*Scott Isler*

MONDO 2000: A USER'S GUIDE TO THE NEW EDGE
Rudy Rucker, R.U. Sirius & Queen Mu
(HARPERPERENNIAL)

REASONS TO OWN this book: It's an easy-to-understand guide (most of the time) to a budding youth culture made possible by computers and other technology. You live out in the middle of nowhere and have never been to a rave, but want to. You're a skater boy and want to order Anarchic

Adjustment clothes like Jesus Jones and EMF wear, but their clothing line isn't listed in the phone book. The lines were too long at Lollapalooza 2 for smart drinks so now you're curious. For the conversation-openers such as sex packets. Because you like music. Because you just have to have that picture of the dancers on page 153.—*Jill Blardinelli*

CLASSICAL

SIR GEORG Solti/LONDON
PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Ariadne auf Naxos
(LONDON)

THIS MID-PRICE REISSUE (two CDs) of a 1977 recording of the 1916 Strauss/Hofmannsthal opera is given a bright and virtuosic rendering under Solti—facile, maybe, but then the opera itself is too clever by half. The central conceit of a serious/romantic and a comedic/romantic piece being performed simultaneously resonates as much as you want it to—thanks to Hofmannsthal's libretto—but musically the lighter bits are pleasant asides that don't interact with the inexorable transformations of the heavier romantic theme as it manifests itself (also pleasantly) from the complaints of the Composer in

Act I to the final duet of Ariadne and Bacchus. Still heart-tuggingly melodic at times and interesting as a foreshadowing of post-modernist strategy with its mixing of old forms to create a new context. Tatiana Troyanos as the Composer sounds like a rather full-bodied aesthete to be so easily buffeted by the whims of love and commerce, but Leontyne Price is a wonderfully smoky and regal Ariadne.—*Richard C. Walls*

VIDEOS

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Times Ain't What They Used to Be
(YAZOO)

SUBTITLED "EARLY RURAL and Popular American Music, 1928–1935," these two dozen pioneering music videos by artists famous (Jimmie Rodgers, Bob Wills and, oddly, Jack Johnson) and obscure (most everyone else) are not only entertaining for their own sake, but the panoply of styles on display points up the amazing, lost heterogeneity that so recently characterized American pop culture. Some of the vids are true revelations, such as a stomping gospel choir led by Elder Lightfoot Solomon Michaux, so viscerally thrilling it'll make your hair rise. A history text for the MTV generation.—*Mark Rowland*

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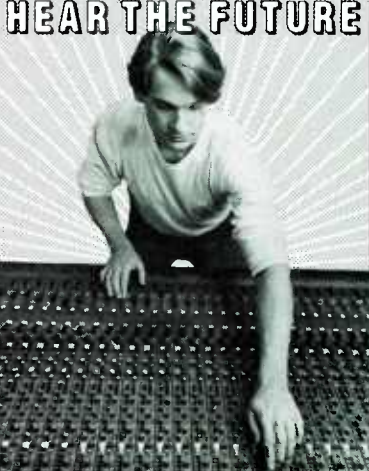
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TWO DECADES OF SPRINGSTEEN

It makes us feel old to realize that it is 20 years since *Greetings from Asbury Park, N.J.* appeared in the "S Assorted" bin at our local record store and changed the way we thought about rock 'n' roll. Before Bruce Springsteen showed up in 1973, rock stars were guys with really long hair parted in the middle who lived on bucolic rural estates and sang about things we would never know and never get the chance to do. After Springsteen, rock stars tried their best to act like regular guys and sang about things we all do all the time. Bruce shifted the perspective from kids imitating rock stars to rock stars imitating kids. As someone once wrote, Springsteen's greatest contribution was that he saw a future without rock 'n' roll and rejected it. *Musician* thought it might be worthwhile on this auspicious anniversary to list a few of the other things Springsteen has contributed to rock culture.

- **Made leather jackets cool again.** In 1973 leather jackets, duck-tails and other style statements of the 1950s were looked on with almost exactly the same distaste with which we today regard polyester leisure suits and blow-dried shag haircuts. When Springsteen first appeared in his black jacket and blue jeans, it was so bizarre that promoters put him on as opening act to Sha Na Na. But within a year of Bruce's debut album, we had Fonzie and the Ramones. Coincidence? You decide.

- **Got rid of the piano interlude.** In the 1970s every rock singer/songwriter put down his guitar halfway through the concert and went over and did some songs on the piano. Regardless of whether he could actually play the piano. This was usually accompanied by the sound of the audience going out for popcorn. Bruce used to do this, too, disregarding the fact that he had two other keyboard players in his band and he was the only guitarist. By 1974 he was trying to figure out some way around the ritual. First, he tried opening his shows at the piano (get it out of the way), then he tried closing his shows at the piano (you can leave now). Finally he got rid of the piano interlude altogether. All other singer/songwriters immediately followed suit.

- **Won respect for oldies.** Rock 'n' roll's early hits were scoffed at by the flare-bottomed FM listeners of the day, but when the Next Big Thing ended his concerts with "Quarter to Three" and "Party Lights," rock history was restored to the curriculum. After the opening night of the *Born to Run* tour, drummer Max Weinberg said, "Hey, Bruce, this is the first rock show my older sister's been to since she saw Elvis in New York in the '50s!" Said Bruce, "Good, she missed 20 years of bullshit."

- **Got rid of beards.** "You have such a nice face, why cover it up," said moms everywhere. "Ouch!" said girlfriends. But from 1967 on, all serious American rockers had facial hair. In the mid-'70s Bruce (who never could generate a decent growth) shaved his gypsy beard, changing his appearance. Soon razors were flying from Hollywood to CBGB's, and by the dawn of punk, facial shrubbery was the mark of cover bands and firemen.

- **Made rock critics respectable.** "If Bruce Springsteen didn't exist," went



the rap, "rock critics would have had to invent him." Those on the low end of the journalistic totem pole were mighty happy when Springsteen made rock writer Jon Landau his producer and manager! That, along with his well-known friendship with Dave Marsh, made those record company presidents a little less quick to treat rock writers with disdain. "Geez," they thought, "that guy I just emptied my ashtray on could turn into someone important!"

- **Made America famous.** "Born in the USA" set off an artillery barrage of patriotic titles. "American Dream," "Voice of America's Sons," "Hard Times in America," "The American in Me," "In America," "American Storm" and many many many many many many many many more too horrible to mention.

- **Didn't unplug.**

- **Generated interest in old movies.** Bruce can sing and recommend videos at the same time: *Thunder Road*, *Something in the Night*, *Point Blank*, *Badlands*, *Local Hero*, *No Surrender*, *The Long Goodbye*.

- **Rescued sax playing from jazz.** "Blow, big man!" became more than a mating call. Pretty soon even musicians who never should have been in the same city with a saxophone were adding reeds to their records and King Curtis-style honks to their homages. According to legend, technically masterful session saxist David Sanborn was asked by a producer if he could play a little more like Clarence Clemons. "Okay," Sanborn said from the studio, "but I'll need the lights in here real low. Lower. Lower! Alright, roll the tape." The producer played the track, staring into the dark studio. When it came to the solo Sanborn didn't play. "David, you missed your cue! David? David?"

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We heard that Billy Sheehan had spent twenty years customizing his bass until, at last, he felt it had what he wanted. So we asked him to help us build a bass he'd like even better. We did and he did. Then, with his help, we built a whole series of them. The Attitude Series—inspired by the demands of Mr. Sheehan, but with features any player can appreciate. In English: They kick butt.



Imagine a world without bass. Some people can.

We'd like to take this moment to make a brief tribute to modern Rock and Roll. We call it the RBX Series. These are basses specifically designed for today's player. Light, balanced bodies, deep contoured cutaways, chainsaw-sharp tones. Not for the meek.

Go to the phone and dial 1-800-879-1131, ext. 600. Another shockwave will go out urging us to send you information on every four, five and six-string bass we make.

Now, a word about those parts of the body we couldn't mention in the headline. Oh sorry, we're out of space.

YAMAHA®
Electric Bases