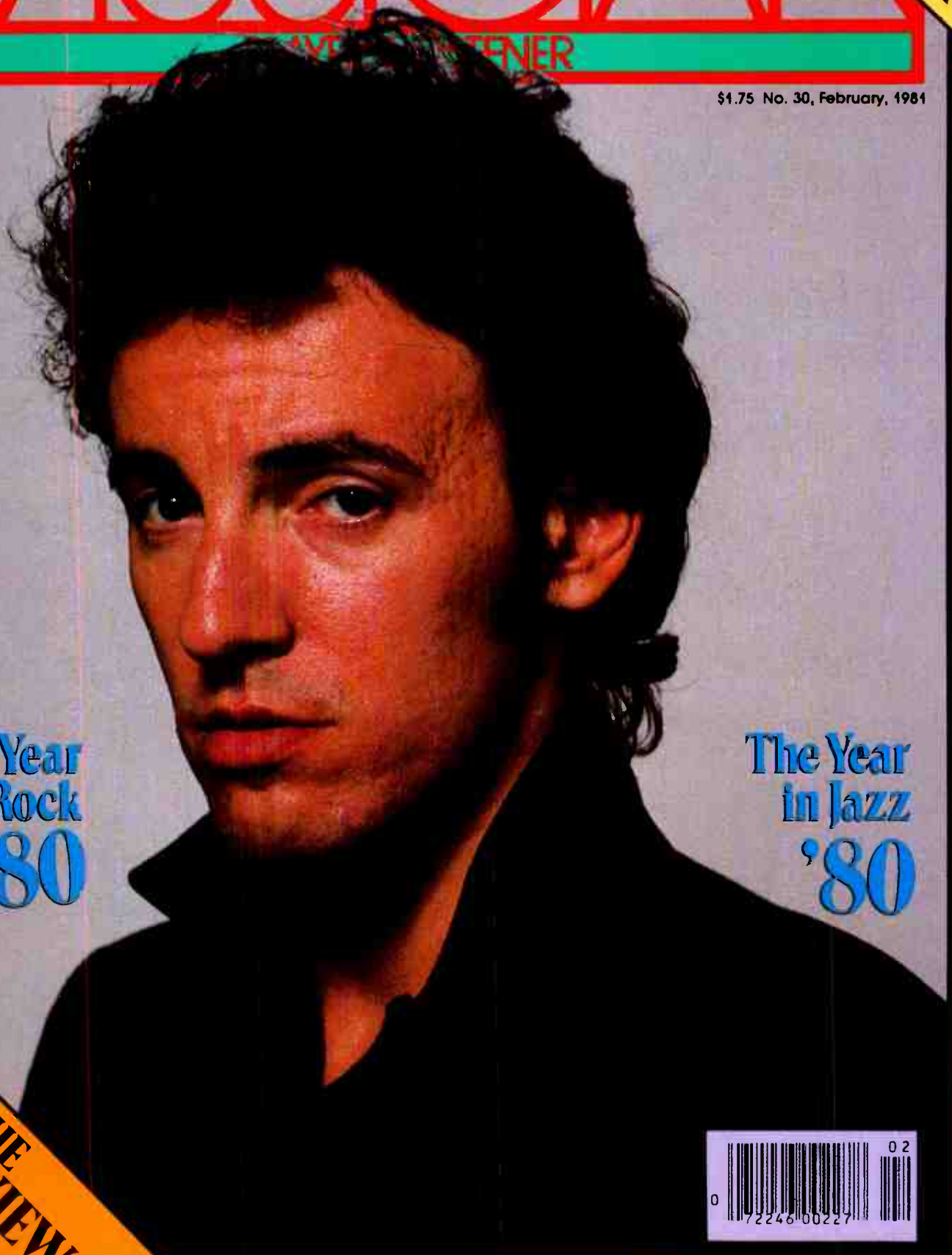
MUSICIAN

CDC 00227

$1.75 No. 30, February, 1981

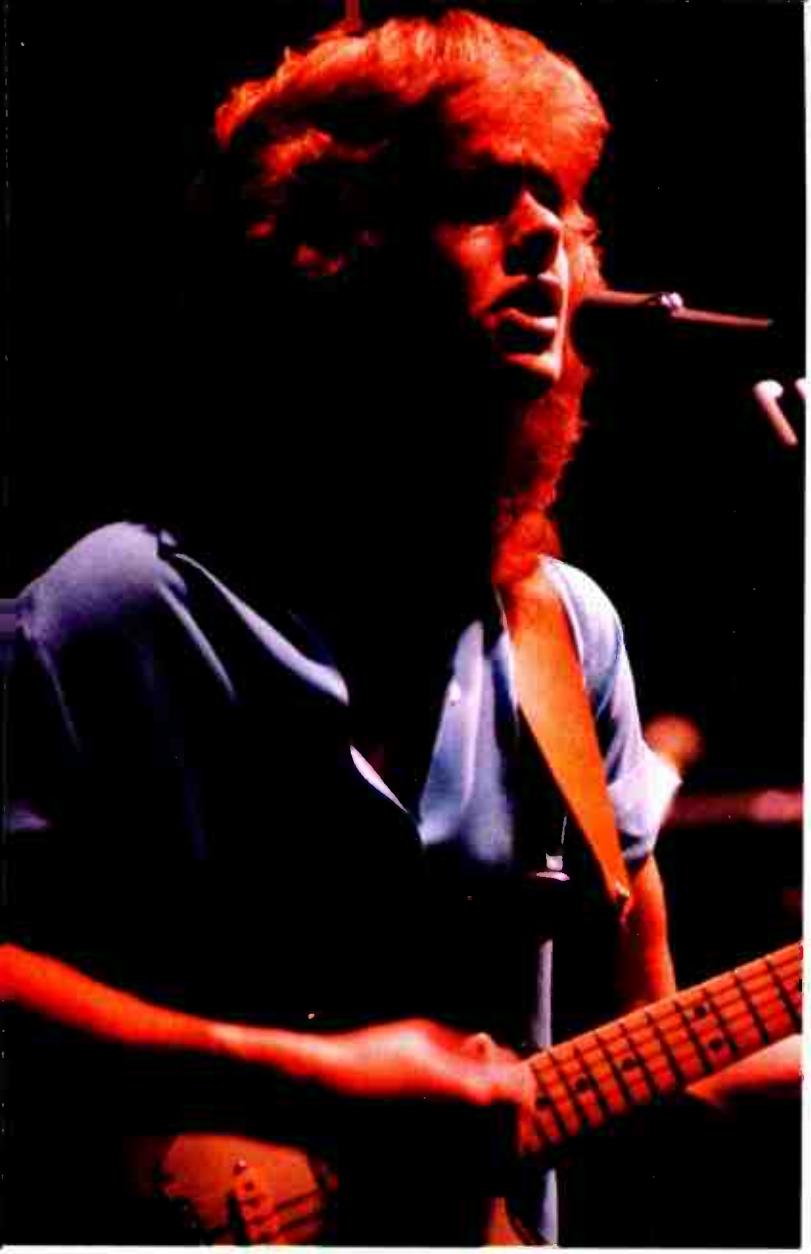
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN



The Year in Rock '80

The Year in Jazz '80

THE INTERVIEW By Dave Marsh



"My compact is so powerful I can play it in my living room . . . or in front of 10,000 people. It's a Westbury."

David Brown, Guitarist Billy Joel Band; also played with Bob James, Karen Carpenter, Garland Jeffreys and many others.

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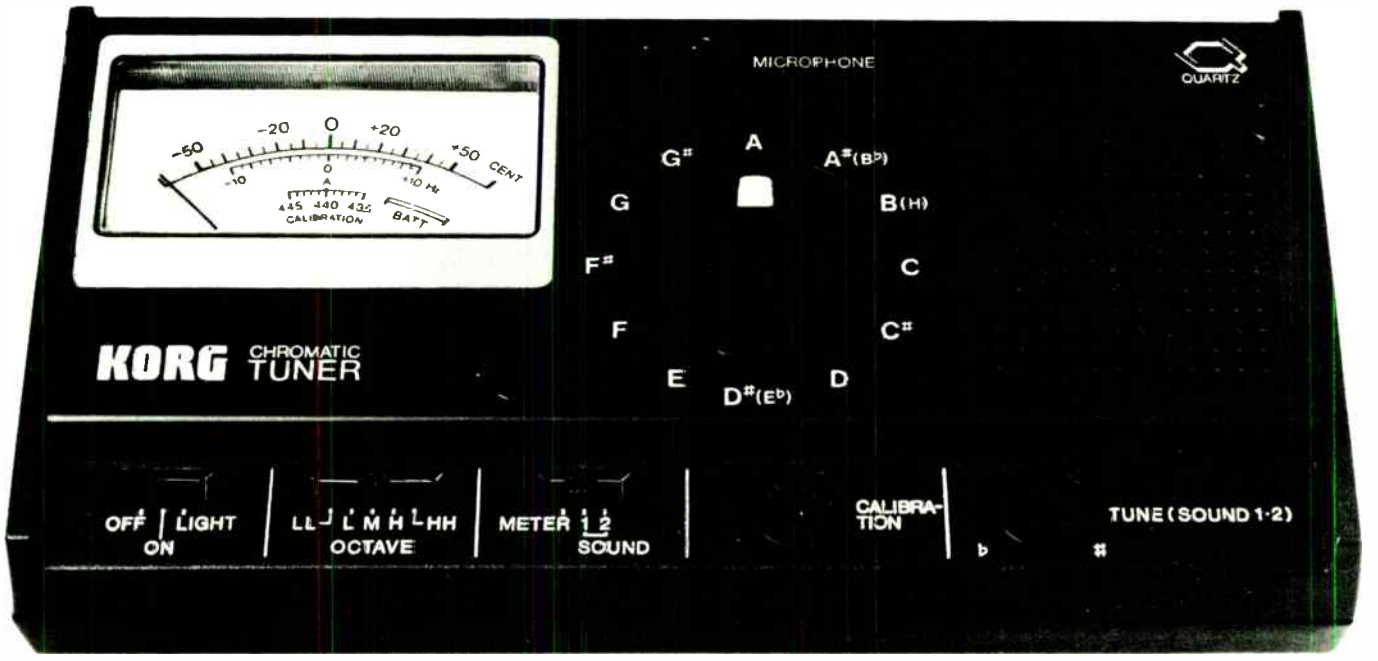

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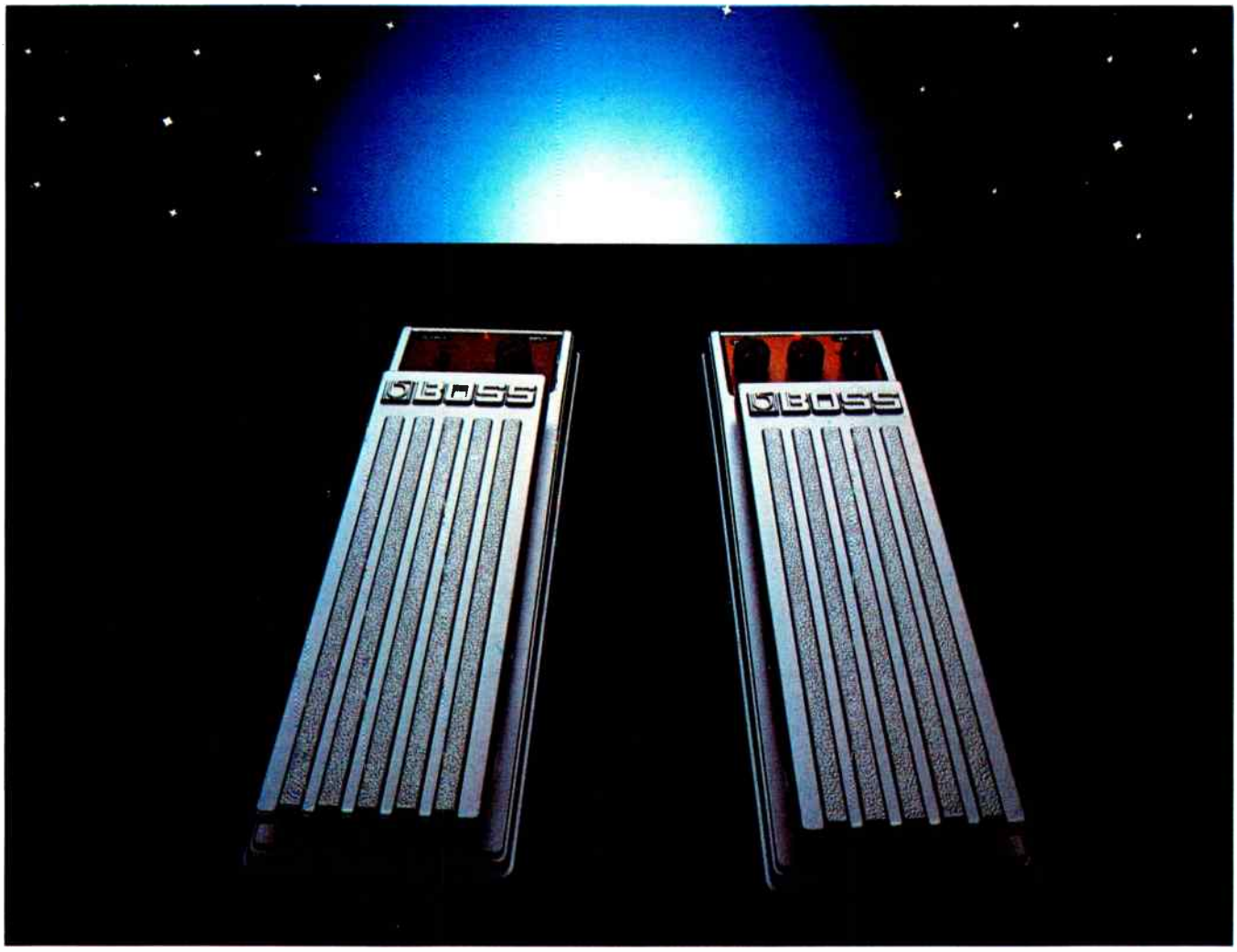

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Silver is the color of the BOSS Rocker Series—a dramatic new improvement in effects pedal technology.

Since the beginning of the special effects device a rocker pedal has been found to be the most simple and expressive means of adding the effect to a performance. Unfortunately, it has also been the noisest. Gears, cranks, potentiometers are all prone to mechanical stress, wear, and therefore, noise. The answer to this problem is the BOSS Rocker Series.

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BOSS

MUSICIAN
PLAYER & LISTENER

NO. 30, FEBRUARY, 1981

Rock and Jazz in 1980 had the usual permutations — more obvious in rock, less so in jazz. We search out the high points, the low points and the merely pointless. Rafi Zabor on Jazz, a staff effort on Rock.

Bruce Springsteen is the man of the year. "The River" is high on the charts and his tour is sold-out coast-to-coast. In a rare interview Bruce talks about the people in his songs, how he works, his influences and more. Dave Marsh interviews.

David Grisman has a dawg and the dawg makes music. The family tree is rock, jazz and bluegrass — a new genre is born. There's a lot of people and combinations involved. Dan Forte reports.

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LETTERS

WHAT CAN WE SAY?

Thanks for the Hendrix issue (even though it was a little while ago). But I must correct one recurring thing that keeps popping up in articles I read, such as D. Marsh's "In the beginning there was Surf music" from Dec. '80 (#29). When Jimi said *"and you'll never hear surf music again"* on *Axis*, he was not referring to Beach Boy-type surf music, but the sounds of the OCEAN; you know, waves and stuff.

I know this for a fact because he told me.

John P. Randomn
North Bergen, N.J.

MARSH MUSH

I like your magazine, don't get me wrong. But that *Freak*quent contributor Dave Marsh is an insult to intelligance (sic). He says, "Oh yeah, Jimi didn't die of a drug overdose, he just died while he was under the influence of a drug." What's the difference? Come on, Marsh, give it to us straight. Just what kind of a drug were you on when you wrote this article?

All disgust aside, I did like his article on Heavy Metal in the Paul McCartney issue, despite the fact he gave repetitious wango tango meateater Ted Nugent too much glory for his lack of musical ability. Come on! Where's Eddie van Halen and his crew. The only thing I really like about Marsh is his stand on punk. Finally somebody doesn't like garage bands like the Clash. I'm in a garage band but at least we're serious about our music. Get serious, Clash and Marsh!

Eric Ernest
Lexington, S.C.

N.Y. JAZZ RADIO

Your "NY Jazz Goes Country" notice in November's music industry news column misses two key elements in the present struggle to preserve New York's jazz radio.

First, long-time listeners to WRVR had witnessed a steady slide downward to programming mediocrity with the succession of Riverside Church to Sonnderling to VIA/COM ownerships. The most recent fare of jazz listeners on WRVR featured insufferable stretches of Bob Jamesian treacle, noodling Spyrogyrian tedium, and every last croaking bleat that Stanley Clarke could muster. For many of us, the collapse of WRVR into C&W has proved no loss.

Second, National Public Radio's WBGO in Newark, N.J. (88.3 FM) has been the only alternative, continuing source for exclusive jazz programming. Columbia's WKCR, Upsala's WFMU, and most recently, WYRS in Stamford, Ct. (96.7), are also providing the kind of attention to detail and innovation that the broadcast of jazz music in one of the planet's great metropolises requires.

Weldon S. Monsport
Boontown, Twp., N.J.

GOLLY, WE GOOFED

Sirs: I read with interest David Frickes' article "Brian Ferry — Roxy Music" (#28, Nov. '80), who happen to be my all time favorites. My only question concerns the list of Phil Manzaneras' equipment. I notice that he uses a Gender Twin Reverb.

Not being familiar with that particular brand, I decided to do some research. I discovered that the Gender Musical Instruments Co. was purchased by a Corporation known as GBS, Inc. This sale left the former owner, Leo Gender, free to pursue his own ventures with a company known as Gusic Gan.

In my search for knowledge, I found out that the "most desireable" types of Gender Equipment are called "Pre-GBS," which apparently refer to guitars and amplifiers manufactured prior to the aforementioned sale.

In closing, I would thank you for printing a magazine as informative as yours, and for opening my eyes to still another exquisitely-American-made product. Once again, many thanks!

Ganiel E. Gellman
Elyria, Ohio

Golly, Ganiel, thanks for calling this oversight to our attention. Heads are going to rell in our proofroading department. — Ed.

DROWN NEW WAVE

To Lester Bangs go my compliments for suggesting with great style that New Wave's deserved valuability (sic) and status in music is somewhere on the level with the cartoon characters, The Archies. The everlastingly tedious beat and damaging sound of guitars manages to destroy any existing versatility or variety of New Wave. Yes, just as there are trash movies, there is trash music. New Wave is trash! I have seen a series of "space shots" with totally absurd apparel and makeup, playing totally non-musical, fake sound. I do not see much of a solution to get rid of this trash except for us to close our eyes, muffle our ears, and pray that New Wave fades in popularity in the way of disco.

Ken Higgins
Cumberland, Me.

WONDERFUL STYLE

Usually your record reviews are very good, but when it came to Pat Benatar's new album, *Crimes of Passion*, one thing was wrong. How can you compare Pat Benatar to Foreigner? Her music is an amazing mixture of the best in New Wave and Rock 'n' Roll. Her three-octave voice is the best around. She has a wonderful style all her own. Other than this bad comparison, the review was excellent.

Steve Landes
Lansdale, Pa.

OPEN SEASON ON LESTER

Lester Bangs, the human target, drew stern rebukes from many readers for his treatment of Jackson Browne and a controversial "anti-Sgt. Pepper" paragraph in his book on Blondie (which we didn't publish). Notwithstanding the abusiveness of a Beatle person scorned, we offer these samples of some of Lester's detractors' best shots:

This is not the first time you've really pissed me off with your assenine (sic) juvenile putdowns of the Beatles that we all have to put up with...where your mind is musically is six feet under (?!)...I am sure I speak for Beatle people all across the universe when I rate you a minus zero.

Anyone who has any interest in music knows that *Running on Empty* was the first record ever recorded live with *all* new songs. It's so nice of Mr. L. Bangs to actually have liked Jackson! Wow! Really?!!! Jackson wrote "These Days" when he was 16, people change...why pity a guy cause he has the courage to play what *he* likes (not what will make him popular). "Disco Apocalypse" is a song *about* disco, not a disco song. Get your act together. Maybe even try listening to the record before you review it. Send me a letter if you get any better, 'cause I'm not buying any more "magazines" of yours to find out.

Lester says he's not afraid of punks like this, and will continue to write whatever comes into his mind regardless of whether it's true or not, and is arranging for delivery of two large attack dogs and a bullet-proof Lincoln. — Ed.

GOOD-BYE BEAR

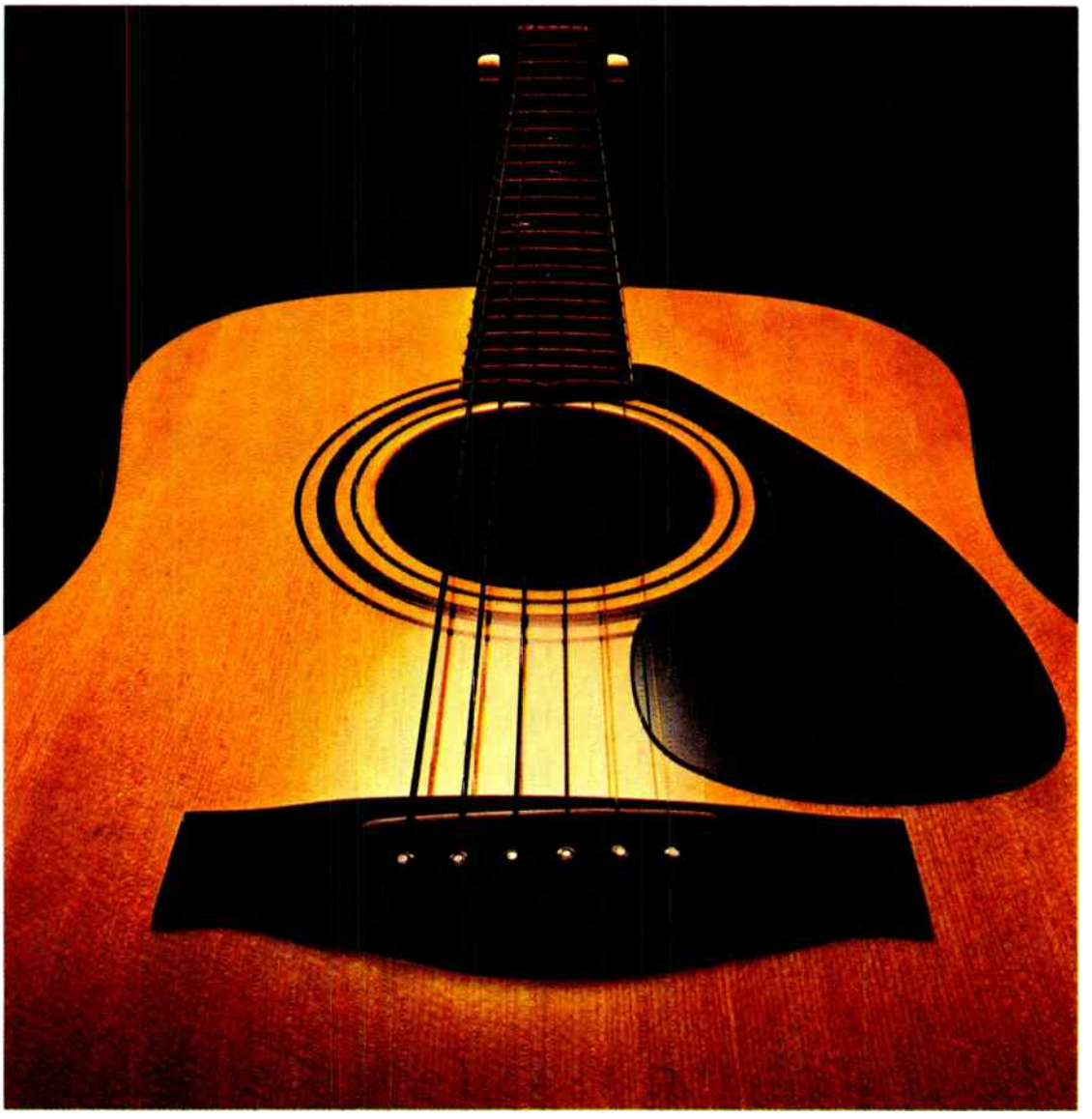
I remember when I read the first installment of The Bear. I was puzzled, wondering what it was doing in the middle of my *Musician*, but I liked it. I was delighted when a second chapter followed. With each successive issue, I began to anxiously await the next installment of The Bear. The Bear is one of the best characters I've come across in modern fiction. I eagerly await his appearance in a hardcover novel. Thank you, Rafi Zabor. Bear lives!

Gregory Lee
Camarillo, CA

CORRECTION

Oops! Due to a typo in the Music Industry News Column, entrepreneur Morris Levy was "derided for his lack of business acumen." Far from it. Levy is one of the industry's sharpest wheeler dealers. Apologies to Mr. Levy.

Play for keeps.



You know how it can be. You buy a guitar thinking, "This is it. I've finally found the guitar I can stay with."

But time passes and so does that feeling. So you move on to another guitar. And another. And another.

We know how it can be, too. That's why there's the Yamaha Handcrafted Series. Different from any Yamaha guitar you may have played in the past. A very special line of guitars with the sound, the feel, the craftsmanship that you'll want to stay with. Once and for all.

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YAMAHA

music industry news

By Nelson George and Robert Ford

Label Talk

Despite rumors to the contrary, CBS records division Bruce Lundall has pledged his company's continued support for jazz recordings. Speaking at a jazz conference in Washington, he said the company had trimmed "any group whose cost in the studio was out of proportion to what they could return," but CBS would continue to "selectively sign artists." Also of interest was his announcement that CBS had separate royalty contracts with Herbie Hancock, Arthur Blythe, and others for their electric and acoustic recordings, in consideration that sales for each usually varies greatly. A mix of jazz and classical musicians on certain records was suggested by Lundvall in an attempt to wed their audiences.

Warner Brothers is introducing 12-inch EPs, as opposed to the usual 10-incher, feeling it will fit snugly into record bins where the smaller EPs often disappear. New wavers Robin Lane & the Chartbusters and the Gang of Four are the guinea pigs.

Disneyland records, following in the small footsteps of the million selling "Mickey Mouse Disco," is releasing a Donald Duck solo album and a country album featuring Mickey, Donald, and Goofy. Disneyland claims it's going for adult dollars, but we guess if Barry Manilow gets away with it, why not?

In the battle between Warner Brothers and MCA for Steely Dan's years-in-the-making *Gaucho* album, the bunny rabbits have lost the carrot. MCA is releasing it after making good its case that Dan's old ABC contract (bought by MCA) is still valid.

The Filmore East, bless its soul, has just been made into New York's latest entry in the "who'll replace Studio 54" contest. As the chic, the gay, and the pretentious enter, one wonders what Jimi would have thought...

Finally we must acknowledge the appeal of Vince Vance & the Valients' "Bomb Iran." While anti-Iran songs are now a dime a dozen, this rip off of the Regents' (then the Beach Boys) "Barbara Ann" is at least cute. How can you hate, "Bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb Iran/Bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb Iran/Bomb Iran."

Seymour Stein's frisky Sire records has been purchased outright by Warner Brothers with Stein remaining as president and getting vice-president status at Warners. Stein retains licensing control outside the U.S. Previously Warners was a part owner and distributor. All concerned felt this would keep Sire afloat, making this another example of corporate consolidation in the record industry.

English Chart Scandal

The honesty, if not reliability, of a country's sales chart is vital to a record industry's health. This dishonesty factor has hampered the growth of music companies in many third world nations. So when England's chart has this problem, it's of international concern.

The British Market Research Bureau, who compile the chart, has been victimized by false sales reports from several English retailers. Record companies, WEA-UK a chief culprit, have bribed retailers with liquor and other "gifts" to ensure good chart positions. An investigation is underway and changes in the chart are expected in 1981.

Music Meets Junk Food

In attempts to reach the great bulk of Americans who rarely purchase records, CBS and MCA are cross-promoting with junk food manufacturers. First, CBS had a discount deal with Burger King and its specious hamburgers. Now the company has a similar deal with General Mills and its Golden Grahams cereal, a breakfast treat targeted at the adult market. At convenience stores in the Southwest MCA is, with the help of Pepsi and Mountain Dew, promoting its *Xanadu* and *Smokey and the Bandit* soundtracks. The emphasis is on in-store displays featuring the products and records. Music business folks often forget in their crowing over platinum albums, etc., that in comparison to the total U.S. population record sales reach a very limited segment of the American market. These tie-in campaigns are in recognition of that fact.

Recordgate

Fallout from the Justice Department's handling of investigations of brother Billy Carter and Nixon bag man Robert Vesco may just revive a probe of record industry price fixing. Seems Republican Senators Orrin Hatch and the venerable Strom Thurmond are curious as to why the Feds dropped a four year investigation. They wonder whether record biz contributions to President Carter's campaign didn't help things along, especially since Jimmy made a point of courting the music industry during his term. It's all part of general Congressional skepticism about Justice Department investigations. If the politicians remain interested, this could be fun.

Music Biz 1980

For the music industry's three R's (record companies, radio, retailing) 1980 was an active year with the recession affecting longstanding philosophies and several business relationships. Good or bad, change was the norm.

Record Companies — A classic example of music business consolidation was the formation of PRO-USA. Under this banner Polydor, Spring, Casablanca, and Mercury were united to cut cost and encourage efficiency.

Casablanca lost its autonomy following Neil Bogart's resignation, signalling the end of an era in the record business. Under Bogart Casablanca had consistently overshipped records, jumped on musical bandwagons (e.g.: disco), and spent piles of cash on, at best, marginal performers. This was standard industry practice until over a year ago. But with the recession the

THE doors

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*PRODUCED BY BRUCE BOTNICK AND THE DOORS.
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Producer's note: the original tracks have been electronically reworked to bring them up to "state-of-the-art fidelity." These improvements have been made utilizing mastering and lacquering techniques developed during the intervening ten years.

accountants have prevailed, so distributor PRO-USA foreclosed on Casablanca's debts.

Still Bogart bounced back by forming Boardwalk records. Similarly Ron Alexenberg has shown resiliency. He started an MCA distribution label, Infinity, amid much hoopla but had the rug pulled from under him. The young company had a high overhead due to numerous artist signings, too many apparently for MCA to wait for Infinity to reach profitability. In reaction Alexenberg founded the whimsically titled Handshake records.

As you may have noticed prices for albums and singles rose in 1980. Happily, $5.98 prices for older LPs were inaugurated at several labels, proving to be fine inflation fighters.

Because of their consistent sales country music, pop black music, and gospel were all hailed in 1980 as "the industry's backbone." Country benefited from the film *Urban Cowboy*, the appeal of country performers on television, and the current chic of cowboy clothes becoming everyone's favorite trend.

Speaking of visual aids to music, the video age is coming, but its final form is still in doubt. Soundtrack albums scored well, even when the movies they supported didn't. CBS and MGM signed a deal for rights to the latter's films, while video software invaded the American home. But the video disk still appears years away. Moreover many, like Arista's Clive Davis, expressed skepticism about its commercial potential. The conflict between musicians and film companies over video royalties illustrates that many issues about video are still unresolved.

As label support for touring performers became a once and sometime thing, so did concerts in many smaller markets. The monster outdoor concert occurred on a more selective basis. Meanwhile the so-called new wave clubs found mainstream performers viewing them as the sane alternative.

For most of 1980 the deliberations of the Copyright Tribunal were the scene of verbal battles between the RIAA, representing the companies, and songwriter groups over the need for increased royalty payments. The RIAA softened its position this fall, hopefully making for a swifter decision.

Radio — Deregulation, meaning the slacking of rules requiring set amounts of news and public service broadcast, moved closer to reality in 1980. This would result in less FCC intervention and potentially more music on the air waves, at least on FM.

AM is a different story. There was international pressure on the U.S. to follow the lead of the rest of the hemisphere and move to tighter spacing on the AM band. This could result in more stations, fewer clear channel super stations, possibly more minority ownership, and poorer reception. The latter is bad news for proponents of AM stereo. Worst yet, they still can't agree on what AM system to utilize.

The question of radio accountability vis a vis home taping of broadcast music, particularly the pre-announced play of entire albums, was never resolved in 1980 and probably won't be in 1981. To radio, it's a programming tool of great effectiveness; to record companies, it's a heinous and unspeakable crime. Neutral ground is hard to find.

Retail — The NARM convention (as chronicled in *Musician* #25) gave the industry a united front against counterfeiting and the "Gift of Music" ad campaign to stimulate musical gift giving. In contrast the indictment of Sam Goody retail chain executives for selling counterfeit recordings had companies and retailers extremely nervous and anxiously awaiting the trial. Revelations of similar practices around the country are expected, hopefully working as a laxative to clean out operators who rob both performers and record companies.

CHART ACTION

New Jersey has plenty of unemployed auto workers but it's certainly not Bruce Springsteen's fault. With 12 of the 20 songs on his *The River* album mentioning cars, the Garden State's finest is doing his best for American Business. Even if he can't fill showrooms, Springsteen's preoccupation with cars helped make *The River* both the most critically discussed and best selling album of recent months.

Tailgating Springsteen is Stevie Wonder's *Hotter Than July*, a disc that reaffirms his lyrical and musical genius. Also doing well is the Jacksons' *Triumph* showing a heavy Quincy Jones influence; Kenny Loggins' live set; David Bowie's commercial comeback *Scary Monsters*; Donna Summer's first album on Geffen Records, a release that seemingly abounds in Giorgio Moroder's unused Blondie tracks; and the occasionally melodic AC/DC *Back in Black* exercise in crash and burn.

Chunky funk and third world rhythms of various kinds made the Police's *Zenyatta Mondatta* and the Talking Heads' *Remain in Light* two strong sellers, suggesting that white America still accepts new styles in black music only in a diluted form.

Sales disappointments on the pop album chart are the new Yes album *Drama*, probably hurt by the band's so-so concert appearances, and Joni Mitchell's fine live album *Shadows and Light* that failed to excite her large following. Boosted by sales of the best selling Jim Morrison bio, the Doors *Greatest Hits* is selling briskly and may move very high on the trade sales charts. And there is talk of a movie based on the bio.

The most interesting records in the pop top 20 come from performers with rather different backgrounds. John Lennon's *Starting Over* is a 1950s throwback that recalls music from his LP of rock 'n' roll oldies. When Billy Burnette makes this record, radio programmers yawn, but being an ex-Beatle has its advantages.

Devo has never been accused of being overly commercial, but "Whip It" has received air play across the board, including among (of all things) disco fans. How long time Devo fans will deal with mass acceptance is hard to say. Moving from cult status to AM radio is always difficult, especially if you believe in Devolution.

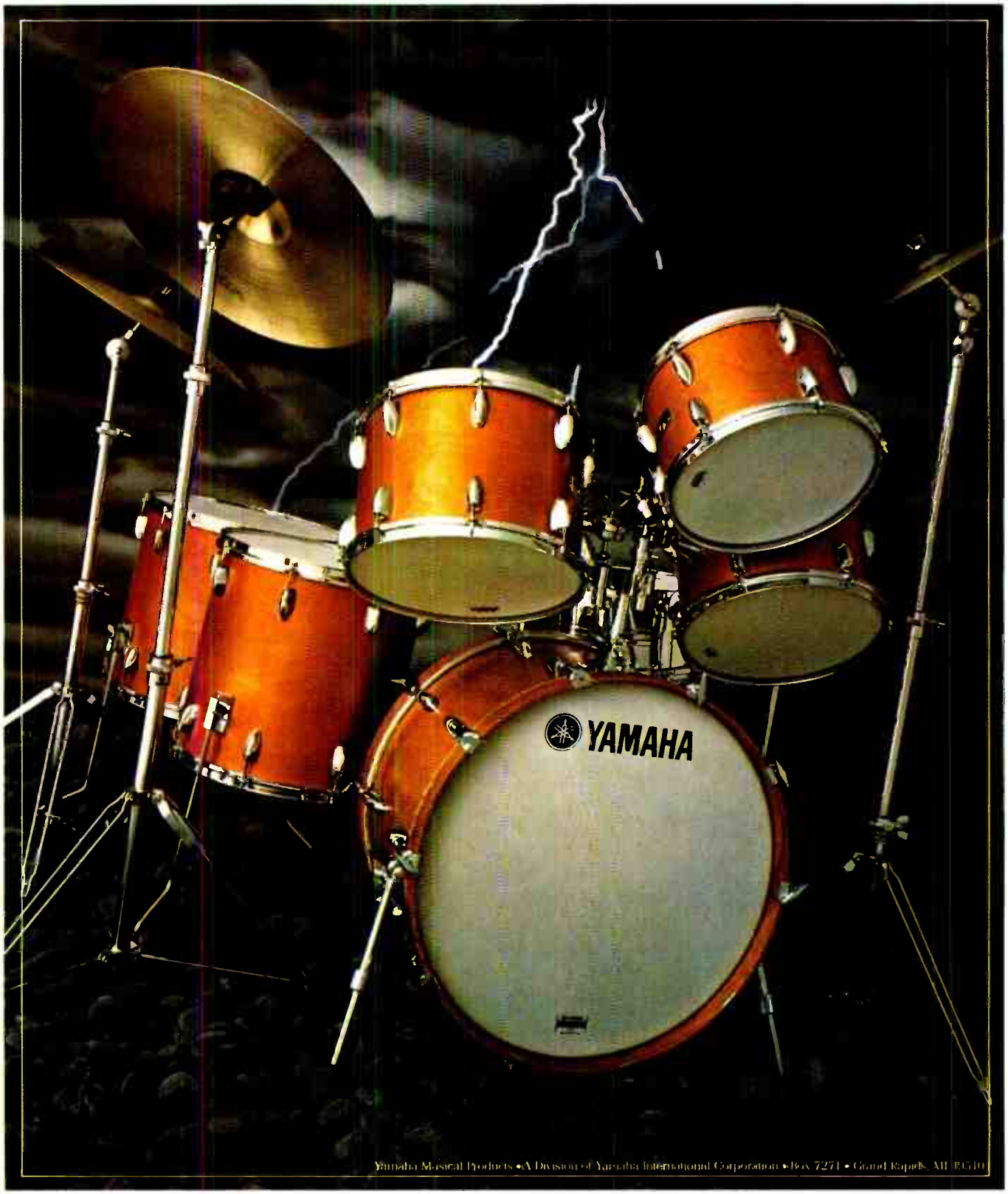
Dedicated popsters Neil "Love on the Rocks" Diamond and Christopher "Never Be the Same" Cross have no such identity crisis. Hits are their game and both are frighteningly good at making them.

The soul album chart has some surprises in its upper reaches. Zapp's self-titled album is vying with the Jacksons and Stevie Wonder for the top spot. Teena Marie, a white singer-songwriter and sometime Rick James girl friend, has created a fine solo vehicle with *Irons in the Fire*. She's a lady with a future. Rapper Kurtis Blow's self-titled album and the vocal trio the Jones Girls' *At Peace with Woman* have also shown drawing power.

In contrast, Chaka Kahn 's "Naughty" has been a sales and artistic mediocrity, while Rick James' "Garden of Love" is a real turkey, despite his considerable talents.

In country, Kenny Rogers *Greatest Hits*, featuring his Commodores written "Lady," is comfortably in the top spot. Behind him good ole boy and television star Waylon Jennings and honky tonk hero George Jones follow closely. Also moving up is Merle Haggard's wonderful *Back to the Barrooms* LP, while the Oak Ridge Boys' *Together* is perhaps the most consistent country seller of 1980.

On the instrumental soul chart, mistakenly called the jazz chart by many publications, there are two albums worth noting. Violinist Jean-Luc Ponty, one of the rare fusionists to prosper in the genre, has his *Civilized Evil* near the number one position. Meanwhile new wave fusionist Pat Metheny's *80/81*, featuring Tony Williams and other big names, has also shown strength.



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YAMAHA

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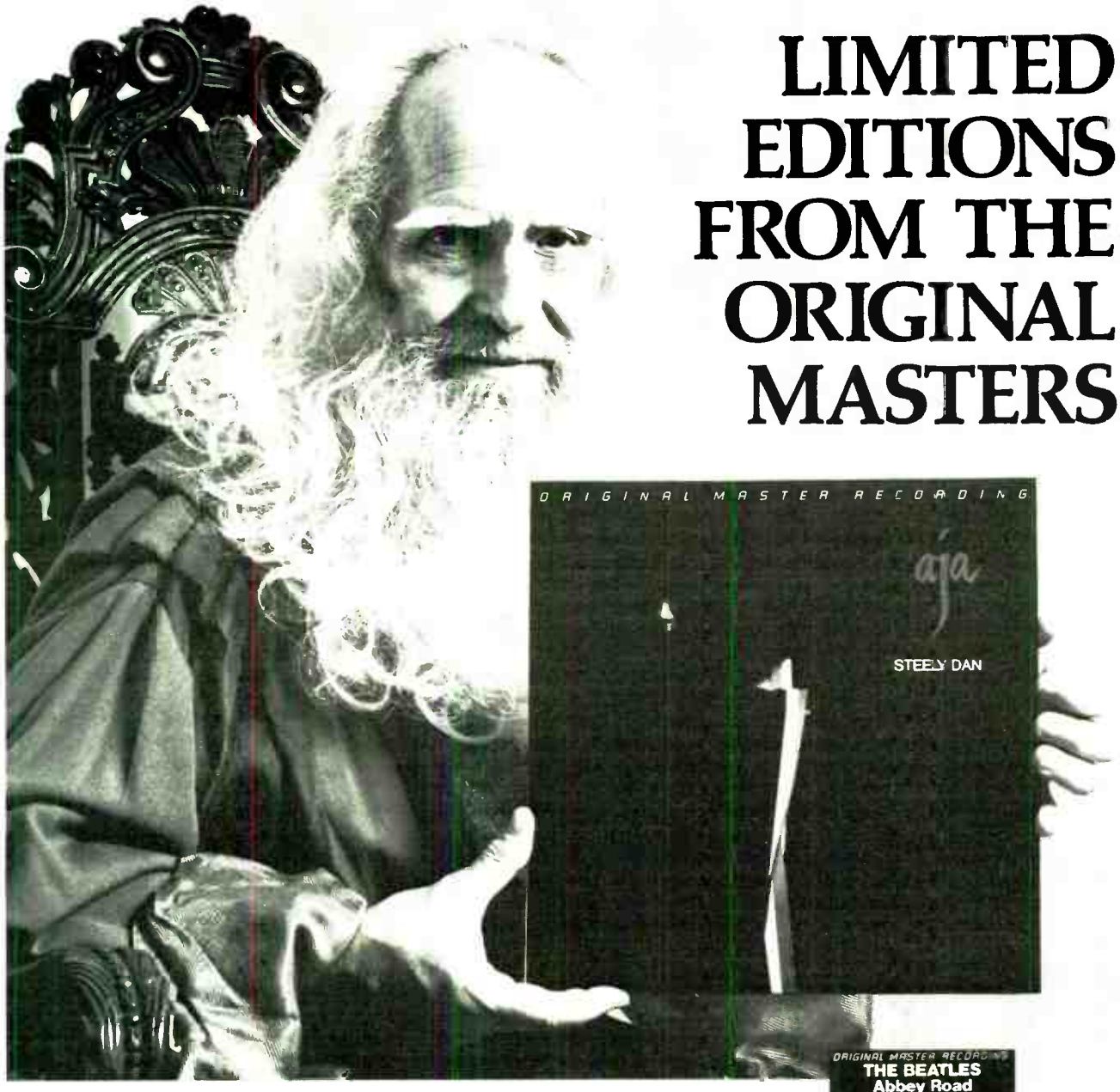

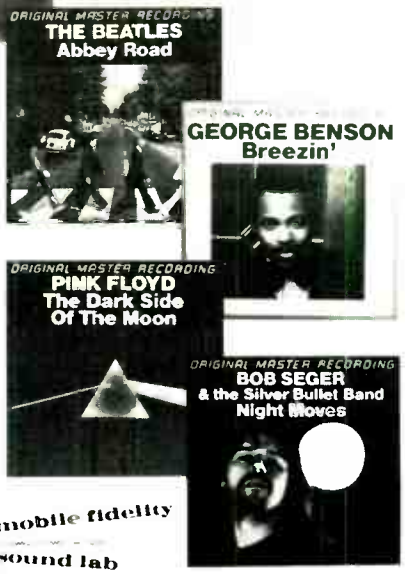

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THE TRANSFORMATION OF JIM CARROLL

Is Jim Carroll, streetwise poet, athletic Catholic Boy, being pushed into the vacant position of rock 'n' roll martyr?

By Laura Fissinger

Even unorganized religions need their martyrs. Didn't Jim Morrison make a spectacular sacrificial lamb? And Janis a great Joan of Arc? Heck, they don't even have to be dead. Grace Slick was a *lot* of fun when she was drinking. Iggy's self-mutilation phase is holy legend, passed on by Those Who Were There in nostalgic tones. At Johnny Thunder's gigs (when they happen), the rubbery grey of his skin prompts respectful speculation about how long the barely living Doll will be with us. If and when he finally destroys himself, the weighty post mortem reevaluations will be quick in coming, and someone else with lots of talent for music and little talent for living will become the new candidate for canonization; everybody needs someone to live for their sins.

Some of the faithful are currently gunning for Jim Carroll, up until recently an ex-junkie poet with a cult following and a yen to maintain existence on this plane. Now he's a rock lyricist/songwriter/singer on a meteoric rise, with all the mandatory equipment for rock martyrdom: the tragic life story, the personal charisma, and the big Gift. "People Who Died" is the single that started the buzz, even before *Catholic Boy*, Carroll's debut LP was released. In the tradition of friends and influences Patti Smith and Lou Reed, both the 45 and the album are built on grisly, lyrical poetry, dancing with abandon to the 4/4 beat. "People" lists casualties from Carroll's pot-holed, drug-riddled adolescence over hard rock that singes at fifty paces:

Herbie pushed Tony from the Boy's Club roof
Tony thought that his rage was just some goof
But Herbie sure gave Tony some bitchin' proof
Herbie said 'Tony, can you fly?'
But Tony couldn't fly —
Tony died!

T-Bird and Georgie let their gimmicks go rotten
and died of hepatitis in upper Manhattan
Sly in Vietnam took a bullet in the head
Bobbie OD'd on Drano on the night that he was wed
They were two more friends of mine
I miss 'em — they DIED.

DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Jim Carroll creates no-frills musical poetry of bleak yet powerful images.

Carroll is a transformer, chanting and moaning his litany into something infinitely more palpable than symbols made of sounds. His no-frills band breathes right along with him on this and most every track — almost as if Carroll were opening his mouth and having it *all* come out of there: the words, the guitars, the bass, the drums, the keyboards (and saxophone on the epic "City Drops Into the Night"). It's a mainstream, Stonesish sound, straightforward and unpolished, that recalls fellow New Yorkers Reed, Smith, Tom Verlaine and David Johansen at various points in their careers. But Carroll's edition is more life-affirming: he stays away from dirge-like jams on minor chords, choosing instead to give simple, strong melody an importance equal to the lyrics, his voice hanging desperately on to both. Sometimes the singer gets lost, hiding temporarily in roaring block chords that suggest an idealized version of heavy metal, bludgeoning ears with focused intensity and finesse ("Wicked Gravity"). Unlike the commerciality of Smith's last work, *Wave*, *Catholic Boy*'s "normal" rock rarely dilutes the complex satisfaction offered.

On the title track — another instant classic — Carroll makes a sort of salvation out of dogma and guilt:

I make the angels dance and drop to their knees
When I enter a church the feet of statues bleed
I understand the fate of all my enemies
Like Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane...
Cause I'm a Catholic Boy
Redeemed through pain, not through joy.

In the style of his aforementioned

continued on next page

AMERICAN ROCK N' ROLL FROM THE "HEARTLAND"

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peers, curb-side realities are mixed with the sorts of thoughts that float by in pictures right before sleep, making those vague and common shapes new, newly understood, and soaked with mystery. From "Nothing Is True," a tribute to the desperation of a life with only chameleons for certainties:

She got special tools to keep things tight
That robbed her eyes long ago of light.
Nothing is true
She told me—it's all permitted.

The best poetry always builds a bridge between conscious and subconscious. Carroll's a poet, alright, but he leads us through a minimum of dishonest verbiage to get there. He's fond of talking about what Henry Miller calls the "inner register." "That's what's screwed up about poetry nowadays, man, it's just an intellectual trip. A good poet has to write and affect the intellect, *and* be able to affect a virtual illiterate. And that's what made me want to go into rock and roll. Kids may not be able to get the images intellectually, but they get them right off through the heart and that's much more important. They want something. They don't want a goddamned message or anything like that, they want a door opened. Not anyone to lead them through and show them around, just somebody to open the door through images, saying 'there's something *out* there, man. There ain't much time left, you're born out of this insane abyss and you're going to fall back into it, so while you're alive you might as well show your bare ass.'"

Such high aspirations and low-key drama are, of course, perfect grist for the martyr mill. It's a life-script big enough to serve as a screen onto which all manner of private demons and protected fears can be projected. And that screen is, too often, where art and artists get lost. The art and the things the artist becomes a receptacle for get too tangled up to judge separately anymore. The *value* of the art becomes obscured, a matter of doubt — frequently before the martyr makes the final exit, and almost always afterward. The problem for those preparing the stake is that Carroll's demons seem to be at bay right now. Worse, as he rides them to fame he's also doing what he can to *keep* them there. The man's going to make an unwilling icon.

The saga practically sounds ghost written. Carroll was born in 1950, to an Irish Catholic bartender in Manhattan. Much of his adolescent decline is charted in "The Basketball Diaries" — the extraordinary athletic ability, the vivid imagination, the love for words. At first, being a bored, smart kid made Carroll do mean things on the mean streets; later on came the monkey on his back. "The funny part is that I thought heroin

continued on pg. 44

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THE NEW ENGLISH ART ROCK

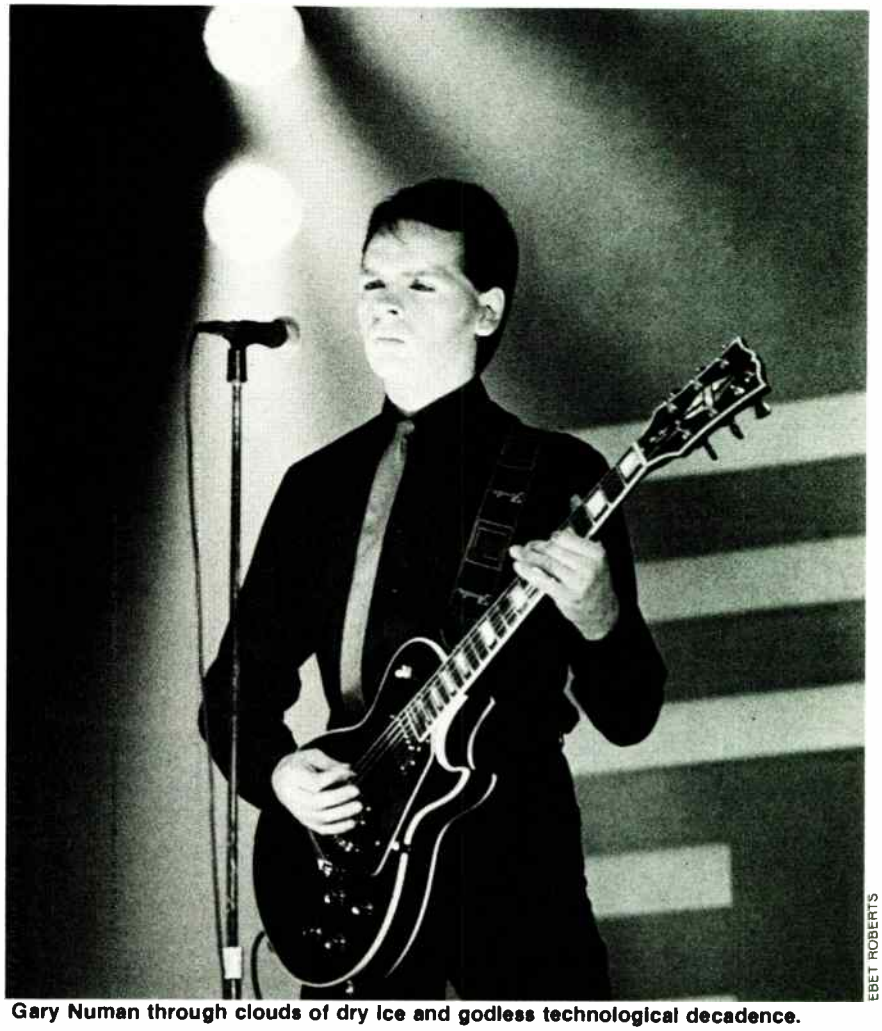
Both XTC and Gary Numan express a sense of the new English isolation. Americans seem to like the car-crazy Numan, while the pure British pop of XTC is as yet unappreciated.

By Roy Trakin

From *Sergeant Pepper* and *Rubber Soul* through *Ziggy Stardust* and *For Your Pleasure* right up to *The Wall*, England has always been a leader in that much-maligned genre of popular music known as progressive or art-rock. By adding either vocal phrasing, a synthesizer riff or a stray sitar run to the standard 4/4 guitar-bass-drums rock 'n' roll, the British have consistently managed to sell our own music back to us with a distinctive, stylistic flair. And, despite the inroads made by good ole uncomplicated rock 'n' roll lately, the studio continues to be an important breeding ground for experimentation and new sounds from the U.K.

As punk rock begins to fade, it has become apparent that there is a brand new generation of English art-rock bands ready to take the place of doddering dinosaurs like Yes, Genesis, Jethro Tull and ELP. Of course, these stalwarts can still fill Madison Square Garden and sell a great many records, as they always have, but their days of adventurous risk-taking and musical innovation are long gone — replaced by the smug satisfaction of commercial success. For true innovation, the discerning art-rock patron has been forced to turn to a new wave of British groups, most of whom have not quite broken through. These include more radical bands like Manchester's Joy Division, Cabaret Voltaire, Swell Maps, A Certain Ratio and Scritti Politti, who probably can't expect commercial success, as well as more accessible groups like Magazine, XTC, Ultravox and Human League, who probably can.

So, despite the proven sales potential of progressive rock, the American rock fan remains a conservative buyer slow to abandon an established entity for the novel. Which is why overly Anglophilic groups like XTC and the Jam have, so far, not caused a stir on this side of the Atlantic. How then can you explain the phenomenal success of one Gary Numan, who has already garnered a stateside Top 10 single ("Cars") and a pair of Top 40 albums (*Pleasure Principle* and the new *Telekon*)? The shy 22-year-old has created bubble-gum synth-rock for pre-pubescents, that's how, accompanied by a spectacular show that features innovative staging, lighting and props as well as time-tested



EBET ROBERTS

Gary Numan through clouds of dry ice and godless technological decadence.

winners like dry ice. The kid takes a vicious slagging from the press for his pretentions, but the bottom line is Numan, despite his dorkiness, can write catchy melodies. Did young Gary think the public would respond so favorably to a sound which was, if not entirely experimental, certainly futuristic?

"I had no idea," Numan tells me. "I didn't really care; I always thought I'd just continue making albums and, sooner or later, they would become acceptable. I wasn't sure when or how."

Of all the English progressive giants, perhaps none was as influential in the 70s as David Bowie, who ushered in pop music's high-tech future-shock with his series of chameleon-like changes of personality. It seems as if Gary Numan has seized on one aspect of Bowie — the godless decadence of *Diamond Dogs* — and Xeroxed it.

"If I were only a second-rate Bowie," counters the man with the red streak in his coif, "I wouldn't sell as many records as he does. And I do. But he has no reason to be jealous. Bowie has done so much. I'm retiring now anyway, so, in six months, I won't be a threat at all. He's gonna be there when I'm long finished... Bowie will go on forever. No one can touch him. He's like the Elvis Presley of my generation. If he died, he would go on.

"It's like saying Beethoven and Bach were no different because they were living in the same time doing classical music. Same with me and Bowie."

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perhaps because of it, Numan's work achieves a comic grandeur, a pop portentousness of hilariously slapstick proportions. For the encore at his recent concert at the Palladium, Gary emerged from beneath the drum platform in a miniature sports car that whizzed around the stage flashing its head lights at the crowd while the band played "Down In The Park." What did it all mean?

"'Cars' is about my reason for being in cars rather than cars themselves. My reason for liking them and wanting to be in them. Taking it further than that, it's really the opposite — my reason for not wanting to walk anymore.

"I do enjoy performing, but I don't get that big buzz from it I think I'm supposed to. I don't live for that hour-and-a-half on-stage. It's simply something I do at the end of the day before the party afterwards and that's all."

Did Gary feel responsible for delivering such bleak, despairing messages to his younger, more impressionable fans?

"I don't really know how many people actually take notice or understand what I'm singing about, " Numan admits. "Most of the people who come to see us are my age, though the first five rows are all 15-year-old girls. Further and further back, the audience gets older and older until you reach the 30-year-olds in the rear."

Will synthesizers one day replace guitars and drums?

"I hope not. The more sorts of music there are, the better. I don't want to see any music disappear...not classical, not rock. I hate jazz, but I hope that doesn't stop, either," the magnanimous popster declares.

"The problem with using synthesizers is, everyone expects you to have two thousand sounds in every song. It doesn't have to be like that. I used twenty-two different synthesizers on *Telekon*, each one has a distinct sound. What more do people expect?

"I'm getting a bit pissed off at what people want, to be honest. So I just say, screw it. The more you give, the more they seem to want, especially critics. After thirty minutes of my show, they want more! Even though a half hour of my show has ten times as much as a two hour show by somebody else."

Final question, Mr. Numan. Were you aware of any experimental, electronic music in the 60s?

"I didn't really start listening to music as a fan until 1971," Gary confesses. "But I always liked the Monkees."

Goodbye, Gary.

While Gary Numan plans an early exit, Andy Partridge and Colin Moulding of XTC are still waiting to enter the hallowed halls of Stateside commercial success. Like Numan, XTC has released four albums; unlike him, only two of the LPs — last year's *Drums and Wires* and the new *Black Sea* — have come out over here. With Atlantic recently dropping the Virgin Records catalogue, *Black Sea* has been picked up for distribution by RSO, for whom the band contributed a song on the *Times Square* soundtrack, "Take This Town." After many disappointments, leader Andy Partridge hopes XTC's breakthrough is at hand.

EBET ROBERTS

XTC, despite innovation and accessibility, have set few American hearts aflutter.

"I don't know what to think about America," says the exasperated Partridge. "We can only play here and hope. We're not an American sounding group. We don't conform to any popular American fantasies — we don't have any strains in our music that Americans like because it's their culture or recent past history, such as that country music feel.

"If I sat down now, I could write the kind of song that Americans like to buy. Not to say they would, but every country loves its own reflection, it's that narcissistic thing. America likes that romantic, denim cowboy — expensive and cool — in their music. Our music is different. We don't live American life-styles. I want to be successful for what we are. To everyone in England, everybody in America is either John Wayne or Farrah Fawcett. For Americans, every Englishman is Terry Thomas and every woman is the Queen."

"You can either change your music to suit American tastes or hope what you do will be acceptable without such a shift," adds Moulding. "Perhaps America should bend more than we should. For some bands, it's so important to be successful, they'll sacrifice their own musical satisfaction to that end. For us, it's not essential that we break here. We're not gonna worry about it. Musical satisfaction comes first. And, if financial rewards result from staying along our own course, all good and well. I'm glad we are what we are."

What XTC is is a band in the classic British pop mold, stretching back to the Beatles, Kinks and Small Faces. Between Andy Partridge and Colin Moulding, it has two distinct songwriters who excel in different areas.

"People say I write the melodic, softer, sweeter songs while Andy writes the more intellectual, phonetic songs," explains Colin. "But, if they care to look deeply enough into our material, they'll find I have written some intellectual songs and Andy has written some poppy tunes."

Indeed, on the Steve Lillywhite-produced *Black Sea*, Partridge's love of rhythm and Moulding's affinity for melody, rather than cleaving up the LP in two, as with *Drums and Wires*, now exist side-by-side. Songs like "Towers of London" and "Burning With Optimism's Flames" show the two approaches finally achieving a seamless synthesis.

"I'd like to be considered in the tradition of bands like the Kinks and Small Faces," says Andy, "when bands weren't quite naive, but they had a sort of group feeling about them and were gently experimental and psychedelic within pop song formats. It was like they had this little round soap bubble which was the pop single and they just sort of pushed it slightly out-of-shape with experimentation. Perhaps it was a little bit of studio phasing or double-tracking or some other new technique of the time."

Is XTC an heir to the English art-rock tradition of Genesis, Pink Floyd and Yes, or is it closer to New Wave bands like Magazine, the Jam and the Clash?

"We are from working class families, which is supposedly where English punks come from," answers Colin. "And only Andy ever went to art-school. Our families are quite poor, but we've all got the other sort of tendencies, too. We've always had the art-rock appeal rather than street credibility.

"We know what it's like to be on the street and we don't want to preach about it. We've been through it, *man*, and we don't like writing about it. I don't care to glamorize it because it's just not nice. I like to write about the other side, the romantic side of life.

"XTC let people make up their own minds. We merely make observations. I'd like to think we're the Vasco de Gamas of popular music, exploring new

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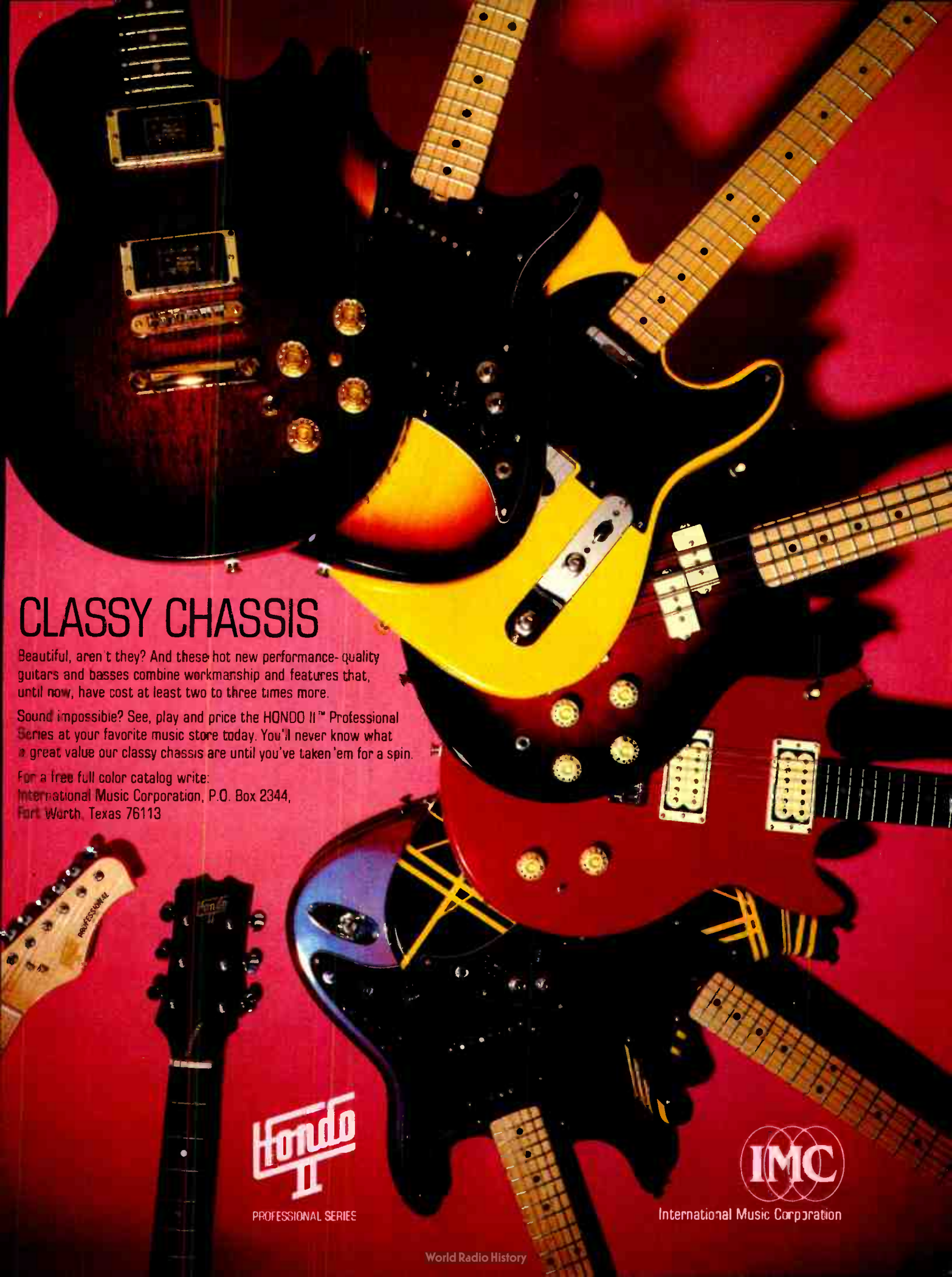

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THE CARTER CONSPIRACY

The first family of C&W presents its third generation and introduces some new members: Rosanne, Carlene, Rodney Crowell and, of all people, Nick Lowe.

By Rob Patterson

The most important Carter family in America is not from Plains, Georgia. Far more people have been touched by the legacy of A.P., Sara, and "Mother Maybelle" Carter than the legacy of the Presidential namesake. For three generations, and surely many more to come, Carter Family songs like "Will The Circle Be Unbroken," "Keep On The Sunny Side," and "Wildwood Flower" remain an integral part of the foundation of popular, country, and folk music.

The Carter Family was one of the very first and most successful groups to record rural American music as a commercial, popular idiom; their vocal and instrumental innovations influenced countless performers after them. The "First Family Of Country Music" still reigns today, the second generation under the helm of country music's most enduring and popular singer — Johnny Cash. As the third generation emerges, they promise to be as dominant a force for years to come in everything from new wave to new country.

The Carter Family line owes much of its success to natural factors such as talent and vision, but neither is as important in this story as that singular accident of love — marriage. The conjugal bond brought them together. The Original Carter family; today it unites such seemingly disparate talents as Johnny Cash and Nick Lowe, Rockpile bassist and New Wave producer, and makes for musical marriages which populate the Country top 20, animate the top sidemen of contemporary rock and reverberate in studios as far apart as London, Nashville, and L.A. The result is a musical barony that couldn't have been stronger if it had been fiendishly conspired. Although working marriages in the entertainment business are more often than not personal and professional failures, the opposite seems the rule with this family tree.

Alvin Pleasant Delaney "Doc" Carter was born on December 15, 1891 in Clinch Mountain, southern Virginia, the son of an ex-banjo player who met his wife at a square dance. According to legend, A.P. met his wife Sara Dougherty when he came across the young girl singing "Engine One Forty-Three" and playing autoharp. The Carter Family trio became complete when A.P.'s brother Ezra married cousin Maybelle Addington, known as one of the best young pickers around her Scott County, Virginia home.

PAUL COX/RETNA

Father Johnny Cash with singing daughters Carlene Carter (l.) and Rosanne Cash.

The threesome became popular in the region, but their impact and innovative approach was probably unknown even to themselves until they were discovered by Ralph Peer in 1927. When the Carters read an article on the front page of the *Bristol Tennessee-Virginia News Bulletin* that Peer would be in town auditioning talent, they packed their instruments into Ezra's old Hupmobile for the drive to town with little idea of what lay before them, and doubts that Peer would even be interested. After pushing the car through a swollen river and fixing a flat, they arrived in Bristol and cut four tracks for Peer at $50.00 each.

Even today, one can hear the raw talent Peer discovered that day (on *The Original Carter Family, Vol 1*, RCA CPM1-2763), and why it impressed him so. The Carter Family style was based on two distinct advances of old-time rural music: a structural union of vocal harmonies with the melodic structure of a song that eschewed the usual flat, atonal old-timey delivery, and Maybelle's unique, self-developed style of guitar picking — playing the melody with her thumb on the bass strings while maintaining the rhythm on the upper strings with partial chords.

Fame rather quickly spread for the Carters through those and later recordings for Victor; from popularity in the Southeast to national prominence. Popular throughout the Thirties, the Carters were among the original pop and country music superstars, selling millions of records and touching their fans through informal, family-styled performances. As both couples had children, the offspring were introduced into the act, which at times included up to eight family members. Although A.P. and Sara were separated in 1933, the original trio finally called it quits in the early Forties.

After that both sides of the family

fielded competing Carter Families, although Mother Maybelle and The Carter Sisters (her daughters, June, Anita, and Helen) won out, joining the Grand Ole Opry in 1950 (and bringing along a young guitar player by the name of Chet Atkins), and keeping the tradition alive into the Sixties, when they toured as part of the Johnny Cash Show. When Cash married June Carter in 1968, it spelled Credibility (like Carter, Cash, and Country, with a capital "C") for the son of a cotton farmer from Dyess, Arkansas with rockabilly roots and a fistful of the drinking and drug problems that seem to plague country singers. In his book, *Man In Black*, Cash clearly credits June with saving him and his career. She brought him back to the roots of the very music he loved. In his biography Cash recalls the afternoons spent singing in the cotton fields as a youth with his sister Reba. Although he sang many of the songs he heard on the radio by popular artists of the day, Reba would sing again and again a Carter Family standard — "You Are My Sunshine." The spirit of their music was with Cash long before he joined the family itself.

Although some might see Cash as occupying the very middle of the country road, in his own way he's been an innovator and force behind musical progresss like nobody else. When Columbia Records thought Dylan to be "Hammond's Folly," Cash touted the young singer and writer's talent. Kris Kristofferson recalls Cash as one of the first people who took this strange janitor at Columbia Recording Studios seriously and in Nashville, the open door policy for young talent at the Cash homestead, resulting in many living room singalongs, is all but legendary.

Now, as Cash's daughter Rosanne Cash and June's daughter Carlene Carter emerge with recording careers of their own, the family continues to enter into musically fortuitous marriages. Rosanne's husband Rodney Crowell stands as country music's most promising young writer (recently scoring three top 20 cover hits in one month — "Ain't Living Long Like This" by Waylon Jennings, "An American Dream" by The Dirt Band, and The Oak Ridge Boys' rendition of "Leaving Louisiana In The Broad Daylight") and performer, and his union with Rosanne has yielded two excellent albums as well as a lovely baby girl — Caitlin Rivers Crowell. Likewise, the production of Carlene's third album, *Musical Shapes*, by husband Nick Lowe has resulted in her finest moment yet, as well as one of the best country duets (Carlene and Dave Edmunds singing "Baby Ride Easy") since George Jones met Tammy Wynette.

It seems only natural that as his and June's daughters united with dynamic young talent themselves, Cash should partake of the natural benefits. The latest Cash album — *Rockabilly Blues* — features a cut produced and authored by Lowe ("Without Love") where the country music icon, nay American icon, is backed by the cream of Britain's new wave bands — Dave Edmunds from Rockpile, Lowe, Martin Belmont of Graham Parker's Rumour, and Pete Thomas from Elvis Costello's Attractions. Atop that backing track are the trademark "chunka-chunka" Cash leads by his guitarist Bob Wooton, resulting in what surely must be the ultimate crossover.

The Lowe-produced cut on *Rockabilly Blues* was a surprise even to Nick, as Carlene explains: "John told Nick he wanted to do it for fun and not put it on a record," she says. "They did the track

COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION NASHVILLE

The original Carter sisters; June (l.), Mother Maybelle, Anita (top) and Helen.

the day after Christmas in our house in London, where we have a little recording studio, and sent it to John. It ended up that John phoned Nick up and said, 'I'm gonna put this on the record.' Nick said, 'Oh no, you can't. It's not good enough...'"

It actually is one of the best cuts on the album, in the same league with such top-notch Cash work as the preceding album *Silver*, which celebrates his twenty-five year anniversary in music.

"I played Rodney's 'Song For Life' for my dad and he really loved it and decided to cut it," recalls Rosanne. "Ever since he's been asking us to send him more material.

"See, that's my dad," she says of his covering Crowell and Lowe songs. "His greatest asset is as an interpreter, because he can do all those diverse things, and it's so natural to him.

"Elvis Costello and my dad cut a song together as a duet that's somewhere in the can. It's a George Jones song called 'We Oughta Be Ashamed.' It's so funny — they oughta put it out."

Rosanne and Carlene couldn't have asked for more integrity than what's resulted from their respective marriages. Although Rosanne grew up with her mother in Los Angeles and Carlene in Nashville, both experienced the musical family atmosphere. As Rosanne recalls, music was "taken for granted" in the family. "It was just always there."

"It was just there, all the time," agrees Carlene. "You really weren't even aware of it, unless you didn't have it."

Both girls first performed with The Johnny Cash Show in their teens, and although thankful for the experience, both agree that is was not their proper musical setting. "It was kind of an accident that we did try it," Rosanne remembers, herself having graduated with Carlene and her younger sister Rosey Nix.

"I couldn't stand the sort of competition that was coming down," says Carlene. "It was me, Rosanne, and Rosey all on the show, and one after another John would introduce us to do a song. It was just like 'Pick a daughter, any daughter," she drawls in a slow, deep Cash-like voice. "'Place your money on this one, or that one...' I couldn't take that."

"It did get to that point," agrees Rosanne. "There were claws sometimes, but we learned a lot. It just wasn't a good place for any of us to stay, even though John would of let us go on as long as we liked."

"I went on the road with Grandma (Mother Maybelle)," explains Carlene. "We drove everywhere in her Lincoln — and and my Aunts Helen and Anita and my cousin David, and sometimes my cousin Laurie. We played colleges and bluegrass festivals — anything. Those are really the best memories of my life.

"I think that's what made me go back to all those old kinda tunes," admits Carlene, who in the Carter tradition is no slouch when it comes to penning a hot tune. "Looking back on it now, that was when I started writing more about that kind of stuff."

As a teenager, "it was kinda uncouth to like country," says Carlene. "I just grew up listening to what my friends listened to. I didn't know if I liked it or not. I thought it was corny.

"Maybe you have to live a little to like country music...to know what they're on about. I didn't have a clue. I thought they were all just drunks. But now that I'm one..."

"I remember when I didn't like country music," agrees Rosanne. "There was a time when I wouldn't listen to that shit. I listened to Joni Mitchell, early Fleetwood Mac, Crosby, Stills & Nash. That was a rebellion on my part, like every kid against their parents."

For two girls born a week apart, Carlene and Rosanne grew more naturally competitive as they emerged as singers. "We used to write together a lot when we were like 19 and 20 years old. I don't know where any of those old songs are now. We were just writin' — ballads mostly. What young girls write. I think we

continued on pg. 80

LA BELLA'S MUSICIAN of NOTE

Photo by Richard Laird

DOUG STEGMEYER

Born: December 23, 1951

Home: Born in Flushing, N.Y., resides in Huntington, New York

Profession: Bass Guitarist for Billy Joel, Musical Director, Producer

Earliest Musical Experience: My whole family is musical. My Dad toured with Glen Miller, Bob Crosby and The Haggart-Lawson Jazz Band. He then went on to arrange such T.V. shows as the "Hit Parade" and the "Jackie Gleason Show". I started to play Bass when I was about 14 years old.

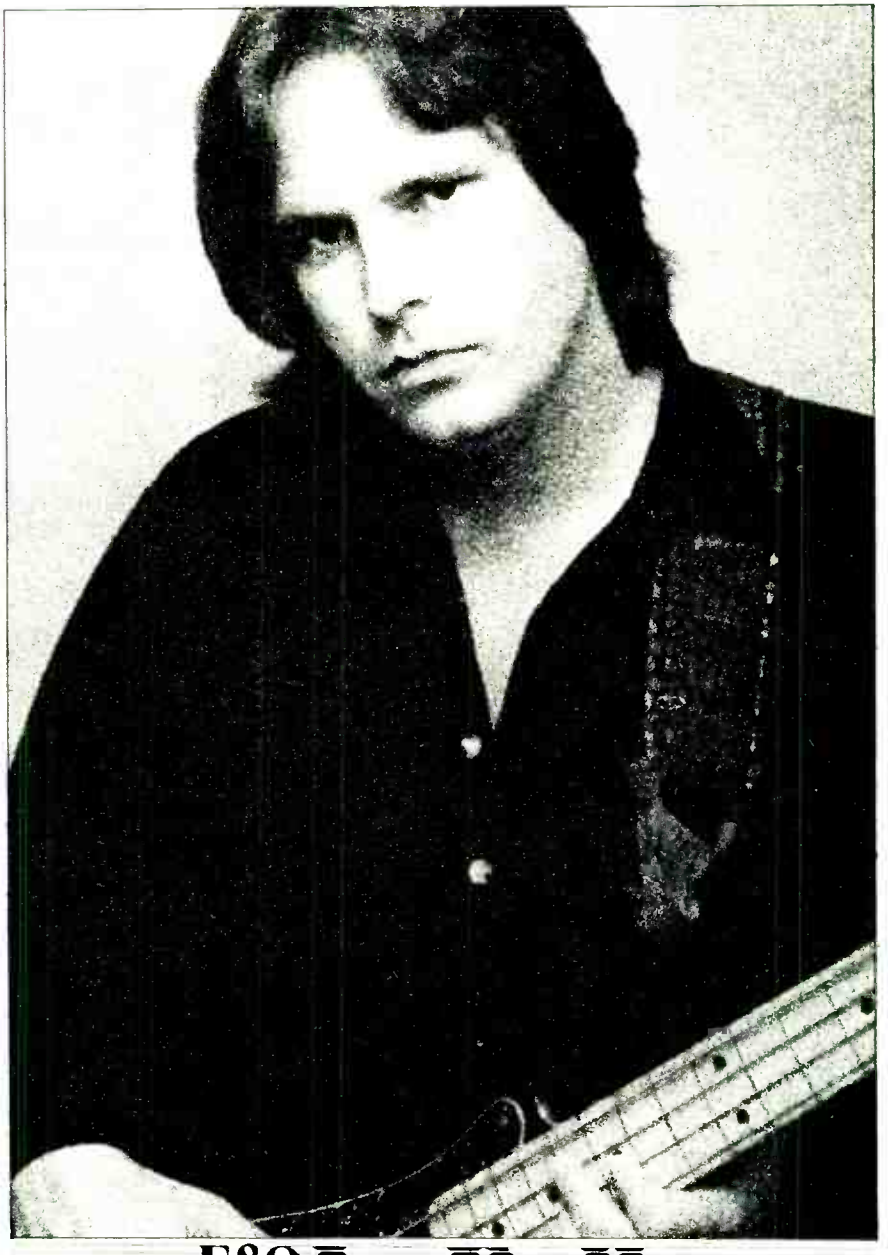
Major Influences: Well, my Dad of course, but there were many groups and individuals who influenced me when I was younger. There were a few Motown acts I really liked, but The Beatles probably moved me the most. I also have a fondness for classical music.

Latest Musical Achievements: My latest was on Billy Joel's most recent U.S. tour, which sold out 5 nights at Madison Square Garden, and Bob James latest album.

Keynotes: I've been with Billy Joel for 7 years, and have played and contributed to B.J.'s last 4 albums and his last 18 tours worldwide.

On Today's Music: I don't like to single out any one artist, group, or style of music. I like anything that is creative and played well.

On Strings: I've used La Bella's "Deep Talkin' Bass" for over 5 years. I prefer the medium gauge, flat wound strings. La Bella strings are the only strings that are dependable in any situation.



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PRE 1960 MILES DAVIS

The Prestige recordings show the young Miles at first tentative, later great, making his big down payment on the new music to come.

By Bob Blumenthal

January 17, 1951 was a pivotal day in the life of 24-year-old Miles Davis. Discographies give the date as both his last studio appearance under Charlie Parker and the first of 16 sessions he would lead for Prestige Records. The music which Parker's quintet made on the seventeenth (including "Au Privave" and "Star Eyes") clearly outclasses Davis's own date; but as an augury of the future, a down payment on new music to come, the trumpeter's modest readings of "Whispering," "Blue Room," and two blues assume an enormous significance. It would be naive to suggest

It would be naive to suggest that Davis had not made a strong impression up to the time of his Prestige signing. He had been the trumpet player (at age 19!) on the first recordings made under Charlie Parker's name, and was prominently featured in Parker's classic 1947 quintet. He also presided briefly over an ambitious nine-piece band distinguished by its use of French horn and tuba and its delicate colorations, a group whose 1949-50 Capitol titles would later be hailed as the "birth of the cool." Had Davis done nothing else, we would remember him today as a maverick soloist with pronounced technical limitations, who had the good fortune to associate with one of the music's supreme geniuses and, in the nonet, several innovative arrangers.

As it turns out, however, that was only the beginning, for during the years he was affiliated with Prestige (1951-56), Davis established himself as the most commanding musical presence and trendsetter since Parker. In *Miles Davis Chronicle: The Complete Prestige Recordings* (P-0102), we can reflect on his progress in a twelve-record, limited edition compendium. And what a monumental journey it was. Those with the resources to trace Davis's chronological progress will discover an artist simultaneously pulling himself, his music, and his cohorts up from seeming disarray to near perfection.

The Man

When Miles Davis signed with Prestige, he was a heroin addict. He was also, by several accounts, not much of a trumpet player. That he overcame his drug problem through sheer strength of character, at a time when nobody was an ex-junkie, speaks volumes regarding his dedication and self-assurance. These same qualities molded what appeared to be modest musical gifts into the most charismatic jazz voice of the Fifties.

CHARLES STEWART

50's Miles: On stage at Newport, the bandleader blows while Cannonball absorbs.

"Lugubrious, unswinging, no ideas... The tone...approaches the ludicrous," John Mehegan has written of Davis's 1945 trumpet solos with Parker; and it's easy to see how these terse, strained early efforts would suffer in comparison to the soaring attack of Dizzy Gillespie or Fats Navarro. But Mehegan was surely wrong to cite a lack of ideas, for even as a teenager Davis recognized his limitations, and saw the need to develop a conception which would turn them into strengths. During his years with Parker he polished his sound in the middle register, to the point where, if not big, it was at least solidly centered. He also focused on harmony and began gravitating toward elaborate series of more complex substitute chords than the "I Got Rhythm" and blues harmonies which filled Parker's repertoire. The harmonic studies intensified when Davis met arranger Gil Evans in 1947, and by the time of the Capitol recordings a modest and identifiable persona had emerged.

Once he signed with Prestige, Davis's virtues blossomed into something quite magical. He seemed to seize upon the technical vulnerability that became central to his appeal. As early as "My Old Flame" (recorded 10/51) we hear the squeezed tones, the lingering phrase endings, and the pregnant pauses combining to create a mood both wistful and raw. Over time the ideas would grow more abstract and acidic, but the heart-on-sleeve emoting was already *sui generis*. This sweet-and-sour character also carried over to Davis's more swinging work. His blues carried a relaxed piquancy, and his refusal to shout masked the growing facility in the more driving solos.

Heroin may have accounted for some lapses during this period (Davis sounds particularly down on a 1952 Blue Note

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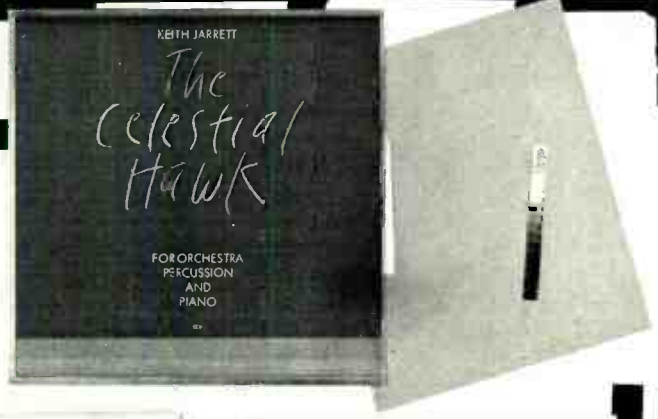

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date), but even his more ragged efforts were not outright disasters; and by 1954, with the drug problem licked, the charisma was taking hold. Simplicity, perfect note placement, and oblique turns of phrase made Davis sound mischievous on fast tunes, coyly seductive at medium tempos and achingly forlorn on ballads. While his open horn now glowed, he began to develop a new, more intense tonal presence by playing through a muted horn pressed tightly against the microphone. The effect was immediately compelling on the April 1954 "Solar," although it took two years of polishing — and the switch from cup to Harmon mute — to arrive at the piercing intensity of "It Never Entered My Mind," "Round About Midnight," and "My Funny Valentine."

For a man who became identified with hostility and racial bitterness, with turning his back on audiences and a scatalogically shrouded aloofness, there is something rapturously intimate about Davis's playing in this period. He lets you look at, and feel, every note; and this interpersonal presence was realized just as recording technology dictated a move from three-minute 78s to longer album tracks. More than any of his contemporaries, Davis showed his audience how to sit in a room and listen at length; his intimate rapport made him the messiah of the LP solo.

'60s Miles: The Brooding boxer works out , next bout fusion.

The Music

At later points in his career — *Kind of Blue* in 1959, the multi-keyboard electric bands of the late Sixties — Davis adopted and popularized new structures for improvisation. His discoveries in this regard were less drastic during the Prestige years, more in the nature of refinements on existing forms; but the musical choices Davis made in large part determined what countless other jazzmen would play in the Fifties.

Davis's 1951-3 sessions are marked by an incipient aggressiveness in the rhythm section — crisp and active piano chords, driving bass lines, muscular drumming. Engineers were getting better at capturing the nuance of rhythm instruments, and longer playing times seemed to stimulate stronger grooves. Davis was the first leader to seize creatively on this new power, to hear how it could complement his own terse and often elliptical thoughts. The seeds of hard bop, with all its percussive drive, can first be spotted in the 1951 "Dig" session with Art Blakey, and the live rhythm section sound has clearly arrived by the "Serpent's Tooth" date of January '53 (Philly Joe Jones on drums) and the Blue Note recordings (with Blakey again) made three months later.

A change in material was inevitable but longer in coming.Not all of the tunes from the first sessions were treated predictably — with their pedal point sections, "Conception" and "Dear Old Stockholm" (the latter recorded for Blue Note) anticipate *Kind of Blue*'s modal material — but most were familiar lines, or new lines on familiar change, from the Gillespie/Parker canon. Prestige instigated something different on a February 1953 session, where Al Cohn contributed four charts that now sound drab and a bit corny. Perhaps in reaction, Davis took the initiative shortly thereafter with a new mix of originals, blues, and pop songs.

That the blues needed reinforcement as a primal structure suggests how attenuated many attempts at "progressive" jazz had become. Davis, whose sensibilities were so well suited to blues, had stayed away from the form on his 1952 and'53 recordings; but in 1954 he taped one stunning blues after another. With the exception of "Blues 'n' Boogie," these were medium-to-slow melodies designed for soulful exposition, rather than frantic sprints of the boppers. "Walkin" (with Lucky Thompson and Horace Silver) and "Bags' Groove" (with Milt Jackson and Thelonious Monk) had particular impact, for here Davis, surrounded by the period's premier blues players, delivered two intensely lyrical extended solos. The father of "cool" also turned out, paradoxically, to be the master of modern funk.

Other sessions found Davis exploring less venerable material. On the one hand there were non-blues originals, which tended to be pithier and more songlike than the typical Parker line. Two stellar examples are "Tune Up" and "Four," which Davis may or may not have composed (many musicians credit singer and saxophonist Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson); others, which the trumpeter apparently did write, are "Solar" (a twelve-bar non-blues) and "The Theme." Davis also had Sonny Rollins, Jackie McLean, Benny Goodman, and Dave Brubeck contribute tunes which would become jazz standards.

Another invaluable source was Tin Pan Alley. Others might find pop tunes precious, but Davis had a knack for inhabiting these melodies. There is a buoyant airiness to upbeat Broadway show music, and an aching pathos to the torch songs, which went hand-in-glove with Davis's evolving musical personality. He was thus drawn to ballads that others had ignored, ("You Don't Know What Love Is," "I See Your Face Before Me," "It Never Entered My Mind"), as well as a score of tunes ("A Gal in Calico," "I Could Write a Book" to name only two) that might seem so very frivolous in others' hands. Armed with this diverse repertoire, Davis needed only the right musicians to make a major breakthrough.

The Band

From his first day in a Prestige studio, when he played piano for Sonny Rollins's "audition" recording "I Know," Davis was a talent scout and booster of young musicians. He also displayed a knack for molding players into a cohesive unit, as the group sensitivity on his 1954 studio bands shows. This is not to imply, however, that he was prepared to simply blend in with the others. His run-in with Monk during the December 1954 session which produced "Bags' Groove," where he insisted that the pianist not play during the trumpet solos, testifies to Davis's absolute notion of how his own music should sound.

During 1955 and '56, the last two years of Davis's Prestige contract, he was able to realize that sound in total by organizing and refining the first classic Miles Davis Quintet. Philly Joe Jones was the drummer, and a far more incendiary presence than Kenny Clarke had been on the 1954 recordings. Jones played with ferocious power or quiet taste, got uncommmonly resonant sound from his snare drums and cymbals, and swung like mad. Bassist Paul Chambers, only 20 when he joined Davis, also had impeccable time and enormous presence, plus the ability to execute horn-like phrases effortlessly

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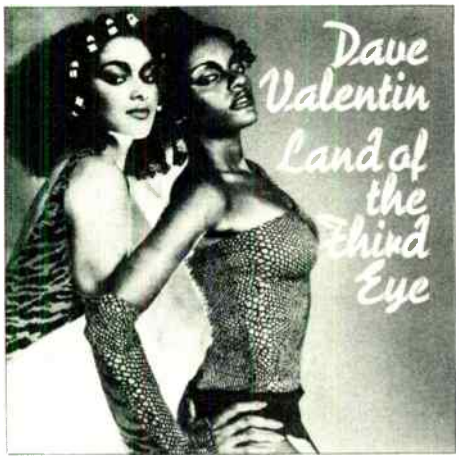

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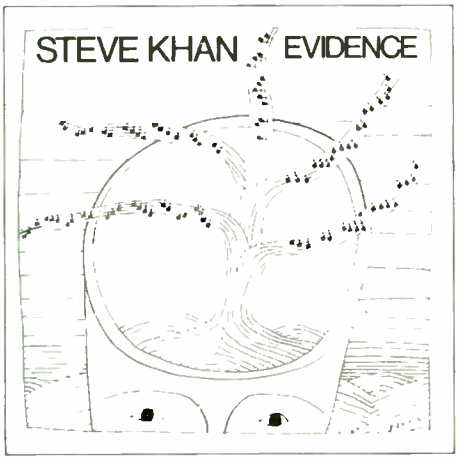

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and a startling talent for playing bowed solos at up tempos. Together, Jones and Chambers created the perfect foundation.

John Coltrane's work at this time, and Red Garland's entire approach, are more open to criticism; but in choosing Coltrane and Garland, Davis instilled a sense of contrast and texture into the quintet that imposed unities on what otherwise might have been just a series of solos. Coltrane's tenor was often groping, and one can almost write the critical pans (unswinging, lugubrious, ludicrous tone?), but in constantly reaching for the audacious he made the most rewarding kinds of mistakes. Often methodical, always hortatory, Coltrane showed the greatest growth over the band's two year life, although from the outset he was a blues player of the first rank.

Garland, on the other hand, was sometimes dismissed as genteel and pretty in a facile way, yet his contribution to the band was hardly trite. Like his rhythm section mates, his swing was beyond reproach, and this rhythmic quality, together with a sparkling touch, elevated even his most obvious licks. Most of the time Garland provided emotional relief from the more intense Davis and Coltrane, but he could also, on an occasional bop tune, deliver more brooding solos.

One of the quintet's trademarks was its ability to mold a total performance into a dynamic arc. Davis would state the theme sparingly, with Chambers playing cut-time (every other beat) and Jones on brushes. Then the first lift would come as Davis began his solo and the rhythm section switched to straight 4/4. The big eruption came when Coltrane entered, with Jones superimposing more aggressive commentary with sticks and Garland stroking heavier chords. The mood settled slowly through Garland's solo (where Jones often employed a simple rim-shot pattern) to Davis's reprise. The tension which this scheme generated was greatly enhanced by the brilliant engineering of Rudy Van Gelder, who might be considered the sixth member of the quintet. (Compare the band's Columbia recordings for a sense of Van Gelder's contribution, particularly in capturing Chambers.)

All of the elements in the Davis

continued on pg. 100

Miles Davis Live On 77th Street

With a Heineken and a cigarette and a pair of tortoise shell glasses in hand, with his elbows resting on the front wall of his sidewalk porch and his hair thinning and slicked back over his skull, there he was, catching the last rays of a late summer Saturday. After years of waiting — thrice ticketed to see him, thrice stilletoed by cancellations — here was the rumor, the legend, the dark prince, the main man, the recluse, the living cover of *In A Silent Way* staring right at me.

Flustered and fighting apoplexy, I gulped "GOD DAMN Miles Davis," managed a hello, and proceeded to say all sorts of stoopid things. I introduced my T-shirted companion (who from down the block had mistaken him for a doorman) and Miles promptly copped a feel of her ample left breast. Reports of his demise apparently have been greatly exaggerated.

We talked about friendship ("I don't want 17 friends, I want two"), his cooking ("Learn how to pronounce 'bouillabaisse' before you say it, man"), his hip and health, his music ("it's there"), his current state of affairs ("I need some money, some money"), and his possible tour of Japan ("only if they give me a million"). He shared his Heineken and told me repeatedly in his near-gone, rough whisper just how shy he is. Then he asked my friend: "What's that shit around your waist?" It was a sweater.

It seemed time to go, and we went. — *David Breskin*

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The Troubador Today Part II

The cart is finally put behind the horse and live performance is declared the end and not the means.

By Robert Fripp

Most groups only make money after breaking up. Because running costs are so high very few "successful" bands earn more than subsistence wages until the costs stop. When the group disbands record and songwriting royalties continue, for two reasons:

1. Royalties are paid 6 to 12 months after the event;
2. The life of a classic record can be 10 years or more.

Put another way, a group must stay together long enough to break up. Currently, the League of Gentlemen can't afford to work because it can't finance itself, and can't afford not to because it's $30,000 in debt. Note that when a band loses money on the road it is still liable for agency (10-15%) and management fees (25%).

Before the recent League tour of Europe and America I made three stipulations:

1. The tour should make money, or at least cover itself: $3,000 a week for the privilege of playing music is a high price to pay and in the context of the League tour, depressing.

2. The tour should not be a series of one-nighters. The main drawback to touring is the traveling, because it exhausts the Happy Gigsters and is expensive. Finding an alternative to daily moving would save energy for music, and reduce overheads.

3. The venues should be rock clubs with room for dancing, and preferably a bar. My advice to the audiences was to "actively listen while maintaining a sense of one's bodily presence in motion;" i.e. to listen while dancing. For the League, a dance band with the emphasis on spirit rather than competence, to play in a seated concert hall would invite erroneous expectations and comparisons with King Crimson.

In Europe the tour lost money in a daily series of mostly inappropriate venues; in America it lost money in a daily series of mostly appropriate venues. Because the tour was booked as promotional, with the accent on visiting record markets rather than paying

MAJORI

venues, it failed as a working tour. But as the record being promoted was Fripp's *God Save the Queen/Under Heavy Manners* Polydor had difficulty identifying the League with their artists and the promotion was ineffective.

The advantages of the tour were an improvement in personal and group competence, group feel, some exquisite music and audiences, and an educative overview of the Eastern seaboard of the U.S. and Canada in mid-1980. How else could one really experience the unemployment in Youngstown, Ohio (where a Young Turkey shouted "Play like Genesis"!) or read a sign in an elevator: "All conversations are monitored for your safety" (Cincinnati car park adjoining a store). On a commercial level, the reviews were mainly favorable and interest in the League well tickled for the future. The three months were excellent research in the field for a thesis (presumably Ph.D. Rock, Hons.). But the working conditions were intolerable.

So why should one tour?

1. To earn a living;
2. As an education;
3. To enjoy the intrinsic qualities of one's work;
4. To participate in an event with others, both players and audience.

How can this be done? Everything follows one principle: live performance is the basis of the music industry. Live music is the foundation for printed music, records and radio (in the U.S. at least). The income of recording artists has halved in the past two years and, with the shaky future of Megabucks Records, an emphasis on live performance as a way of making money becomes increasingly likely. In England during the 1950s stage shows were the Big Earners, their position taken during the 1970s by records. But the decline of the performer's importance is long term, and the reasons for that decline and the consequences of it have considerable implications for the industry throughout the 1980s.

Records are to rock what scores are to straight music: they freeze a performance forever. Written music, and records even more so, preserve the state of the art but fail to develop it. In the Middle Ages musical notation was only a guide for performers, an *aide memoire* and basis for improvisation. Up to 1830 at least a player who took a score as given would have been considered a Big Dullard. After Beethoven's death the increasing emphasis on notation changed music from a visceral to a literary experience, and switched the emphasis from the performer to the composer. With the Romantic elevation of composer to deific status, a performance would necessarily demean his sublime insight, expressed in perfect detail on a score.

The growth of music publishing and performing rights in the 20th century has cemented this split between composer and performer. The phenomenal increase in record sales, from $44 million in 1939, $158 million in 1969, to $3,501 million in 1977 (U.S.), and radio, from 200 stations in 1922 to 5000/6000 today, has turned music from a performer's art to a re-performer's, or reproducer's, art. This became quite apparent with the rise of the discotheque in France during the early 1960s, with the parallel in straight music of the "star" conductor taking wild liberties with the text in all details but the notes. (Listen to twelve different conductors on "L'Apres Midi d'un Faune" consecutively and see what you think).

A creative side to this re-performance is "rapping," probably first pioneered in a major way by Jocko in New York during the 1950s, and by Pete DJ Jones, Hollywood, Eddie Cheeba, Grandmaster Flash and Kurtis Blow in the 1970s, with close parallels between rapping and the reggae toasters. The use of "dub" and "the version" are now well-known and widespread. Negative aspects of re-performance are a decrease of audience experiencing music first hand, and the pressure on artists to duplicate records on stage. The problem of translating a burning live

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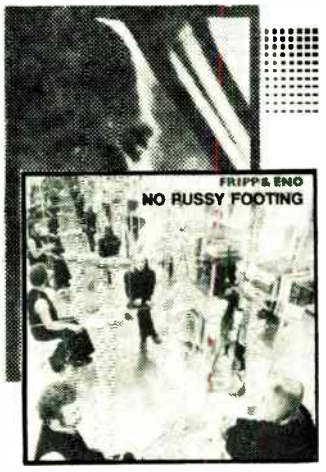

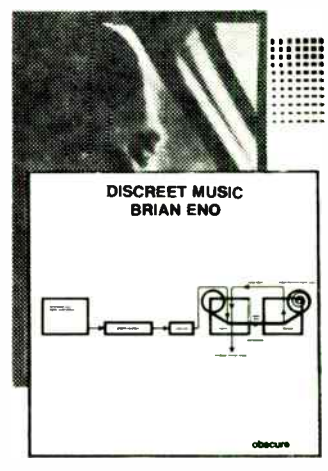

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band onto record belongs to the producer, but the problems going from the studio to the stage belong to the artist. As with film, any magic in the moment can be frozen. But the "definitive performance" implies that for all future performance the playing can only be, at best, a repeat of that moment: the experience of live music changes from instantaneous to historical. For the player there can be no definite performance: all that matters is the moment in which the music is performed. This isn't to criticize the development of recording as a new creative medium, where the aim is not to reproduce live performance but to generate new music; i.e. the record is itself the "performance," a synthesis of new "instruments" and compositional tools derived from studio techniques and technology. When working in a New York studio with Eno last year I saw him operate a Lexicon (variable pitch and delay line) with a musicality and facility that turned a sophisticated echo box into an actual instrument.

Just as live performance in the concert hall has been ossified by too much attention to the score, and all that that implies, so in live rock the influence of recording and the recording industry has restricted the possibilities for the performer to meet music and audience in a way that stirs the blood: e.g. it kept the Beatles from playing live. The tremendous enthusiasm for live performance by young players since 1977, mainly in punk or new wave groups, has stressed (deliberately or otherwise) non-competence or non-musicianship, and was initially met with scorn by the music industry. This democratic incompetence broke with the (historically recent) tradition of performer as uninvolved executant, simply because the new performer was unable to execute. The mechanical restrictions abandoned and the writer/player divide ignored, the performer can once again get stuck into the music as a contributor. A whole range of new music has been built around new players' capacities and idiosyncracies. Now that players are regaining their freedom the next step is to develop competence to *explore* that freedom. Nobody criticizes Parker or Coltrane because they had more chops than Lester Young.

So, what solution for the touring musician today?

1. View the tour as a tour; i.e. viewing live performance as the basis of everything else, it needs to make money. Set the break-even point, which for the League is around $3,000 a night in the U.S., and don't work below it. An opportunity to play in Pittsburgh for $500 as a record promotion requires a $5,000 gig somewhere else. Promotion can be arranged around the booking rather than bookings around the promotion. Touring has three aspects: playing, traveling and promoting. Any two of these in a day is enough for me, but on the Frippertronics tour of 1979 I did three a day nearly every day for four months.

2. Play in venues of 500/1,000 capacity for two shows a night, for two nights. This reduces traveling (and tiredness and expense), requires less equipment than in large halls, gives time to explore the town, enables more personal contact with the audience and a better chance of dealing with their expectations. In practice, 250 people is the top I can handle as a soloist and 500 with a group. Beyond this expectation and excitement can get out of control.

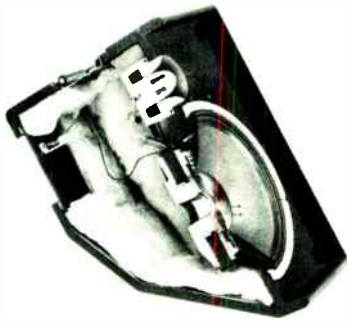
With falling gig attendances, smaller venues are at least more efficient, but worked this way still have a potential gate of 2,000/4,000. The objection that not everyone interested in the band might see it can be met by occasional larger, but appropriate, venues: Hammersmith Palais instead of Hammersmith Odeon, or an open air concert.

Note: working this way one is unlikely to "break out" and become a big star.

3. Create residuals by intermediate recording. This smaller way of working builds genuine support from below rather than having "popularity" imposed from above by high powered advertising. Gigs are a way of preparing for recording and getting music into the body, so that first takes, oozing passion, needn't break down from lack of familiarity with the notes. The League record at Arny's Shack in Parkstone, Dorset, a 24-track at $26 an hour.

4. Develop a local music industry. With the possibility of transport difficulties in the middle 1980s, how can one work as a traveling musician? For me, I look to the area I live in: the West Country, or what was called Wessex. A network of people interested in music should accept responsibility for promoting in Bodmin and Truro, Wimborne and Weymouth. This could be the local manager of a record shop, musician or music fan. A local group can headline a dance and be supported by a band from a town further away, this being reciprocated by the support group in their home town. Steve Smith, guitarist and singer with Wimborne's Martian Schoolgirls, is currently organizing the League's English tour of November 1980. This helps a local musician work, decentralizes the industry from London, and is the beginning of a local network independent of Mogul Pressure. Recently the number of rock venues of various sizes has increased in the Wimborne area, despite the recession. Recording studios are well established outside London, such as Rockfield in Monmouth, and others in Bath, Reading and elsewhere. This enables national groups to base themselves in the provinces. And once Wessex has its network of reciprocating units it can build up exchanges with the networks of Cumbria and Mercia.

See you at the Brewster Arms? M



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JBL First with the pros.

Art-Rock, *cont. from pg. 22*

grounds. This band has never really been fashionable at all."

Just as the English progressive outfits of the early 70s achieved commercial success, can't XTC eventually succeed with a steady diet of recording and touring?

"It's not quite cream floating to the top," suggest Andy P., "it's more like a being floated to the top, but it's transmuting all the time, so that when it does reach there, it's still gonna be brand new. I don't want to get to the top and be stale by the time we get there.

"I'd like to gently push XTC in the direction of more natural instruments — marimbas, saxophones, acoustic guitars. Music that is quieter, but aggressively so."

If there is a single strand running through the current British art-rock, from Numan's *Telekon* to Joy Division's *Closer* to XTC's *Black Sea*, it is the increasing isolation being felt by England from the seat of world influence. As Great Britain adjust to its role as a second-class power, its music reflects the once-proud Empire's impotence in world affairs, especially on a song like XTC's marvelous "Living Through Another Cuba:" *It's 1961 again and we are piggy in the middle...Russia and America are at each other's throats/but don't you cry/just on your knees and pray and while you're/down there, kiss your arse goodbye/We're the bulldog on the fence/while others play their tennis overhead.*

"Yeah, that's right, England's between the two big powers, like playing the ballboy in a tennis match," suggests Partridge. "The English Empire is well gone and people there do feel helpless when big things start stirring in the world. What can you do? Just wait to see what they dish us out.

"I think America will be like that in a hundred years or so. Like a comet that reaches a huge peak of success only to burn out...Egypt, Babylon, China...any of those huge empires that rose, went nova and collapsed."

There could be an analogy there to the rock world, with new, upcoming bands replacing the lapsed ones.

"Bands don't really have renaissances because they get too old," explains Andy. "A band's idea can have a renaissance, like the Who now are getting big again because they're called the Jam. The actual people don't have a renaissance, but the music styles do. And it can be just as powerful as the original thing."

Or as Gary Numan puts it, "And what if God's dead...We're independent from someone." But the best still goes on as England's latest generation of progressive rockers escape from this sociopolitical isolation to the creative isolation of the recording studio.

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Jim Carroll, *cont. from pg. 18*

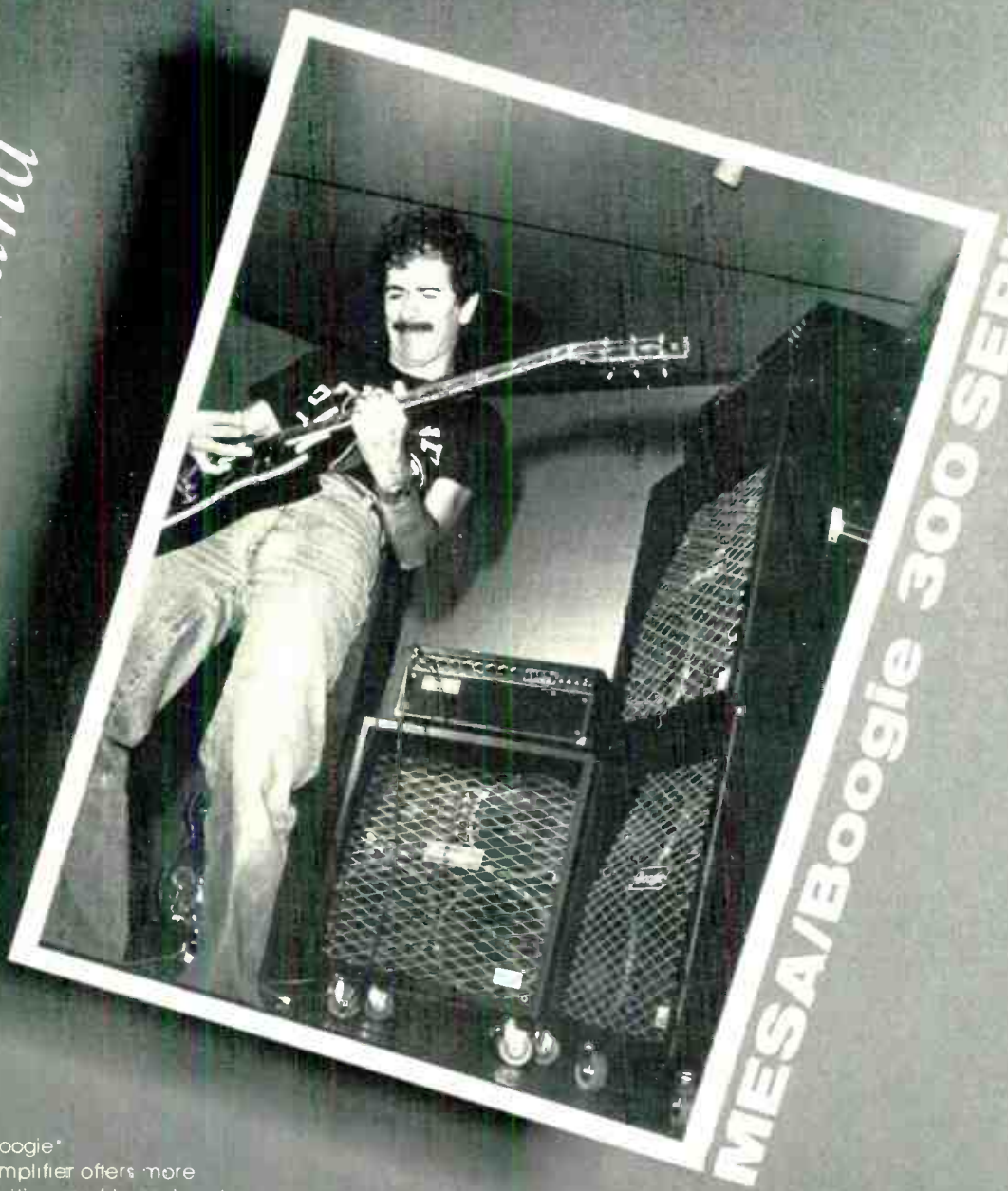
was the NON-addictive stuff, and marijuana was addictive. I only found out later what a dumb move it was," reads the passage in the Diaries, written at age 13. Thanks to a few teachers in the private school he attended on a basketball scholarship, Carroll started writing about sports in the school paper and reading poets like Frank O'Hara. After school he got inspiration and support through the St. Mark's Poetry Project, in close proximity to poets like Ann Waldman, Allen Ginsberg and John Ashberry. Ted Berrigan took the junkie teenager with him on a visit to Jack Kerouac in Maine, who read part of the Diaries and gave an assessment that's becoming rather well-known: "At 13 years of age, Jim Carroll writes better than 89 percent of the novelists working today." His poems began appearing in *Paris Review* and other literary journals. The second volume of poetry, *Living at the Movies*, was nominated for a Pulitzer prize.

For Carroll, the New York City methadone program turned out to be worse than the junk. No longer a teenager and still an addict, Carroll relocated in California. "There were certain friends of mine, like Ann Waldman, who were always trying to get me off junk. The people that were into my junkie trip were more from the Warhol scene and stuff. They were all very into being self-destructive themselves, you know? In California, the drug programs actually encourage you to get off. They dropped me real slow. I got a lot of support from them. That period was the first time in my life I had a dog, and lived in the country. A dog is kinda the biggest reason I got off methadone. I mean, if I was crying from when I was in pain from kicking it, the dog was so conscious of it. He'd just come up and start licking me." While in the program Carroll met his future wife, a lawyer. During the ensuing period of discipline and seclusion, she took him to see the front lines of the new wave in San Francisco clubs. "People had encouraged me to do rock and roll for a long time. I didn't like the negativity of punk, but at least I saw how I could get past my technical limitations, because you didn't have to sing well. And after publishing poems all those years and having a very esoteric audience, the prospect of this other audience seemed nice." The band he found had long hair, called themselves Amsterdam and looked to be "stuck in a time warp." Carroll persuaded them to tuck their hair into berets ("I didn't want a 'look.' I wanted us to look like gas station attendants, maybe") for gigs at bay area clubs. In relative anonymity they did dry runs with the material co-written by Carroll and each band member. "I wanted kids to like it, kids into heavy rock and hot guitars." Kids came to jobs, and more jobs, eventually mouthing the words to the songs, pressed up against the edge of the stage, the front half of what Carroll calls "the energy sandwich." On a trip to New York to sign some papers with Bantam, Carroll considered approaching Columbia through Allen Lanier, with whom he'd been writing some songs, or Arista via old pal Smith. He wound up talking to Earl McGrath, president of Rolling Stones Records, at a business bash. As Carroll told writer Tony Glover: "He'd heard I had this band and asked to listen to the tape. He knew my work, he'd been around the poetry and art scenes — he liked the tape and we made a deal. He wound up producing it, and I think he understood what I was doing. He had some literary references that no other record executive would've had." McGrath is now Carroll's full-time manager.

It's at this point in the script that the stage directions call for whispering noises and pointing from the crowd. That's exactly what happened. Even before *Catholic Boy*'s release, "People Who Died" started to get heavy play on a surprising number of stations, and the journalists began to line up. Most have come away intrigued. Maybe they hadn't heard much of the music yet, but they could feel the heat. And what copy he made: he looked like a ghost, like he'd been dipped in white wax. He seemed hidden, distant, and as vulnerable as a child. He was bright. He chain smoked, pulled at his pale red hair, couldn't sit still. He talked non-stop, in metaphors and street slang and guileless gestures, about anything they wanted to know. Almost. "It's gotten to the point where I don't talk about drugs anymore generally, you know? And it's all just so boring now, besides. This guy from *Penthouse* did a real long profile on me; in that many sessions, y'know, you can't avoid it because it's part of my history, and the

continued on pg. 96

Carlos Santana introduces:



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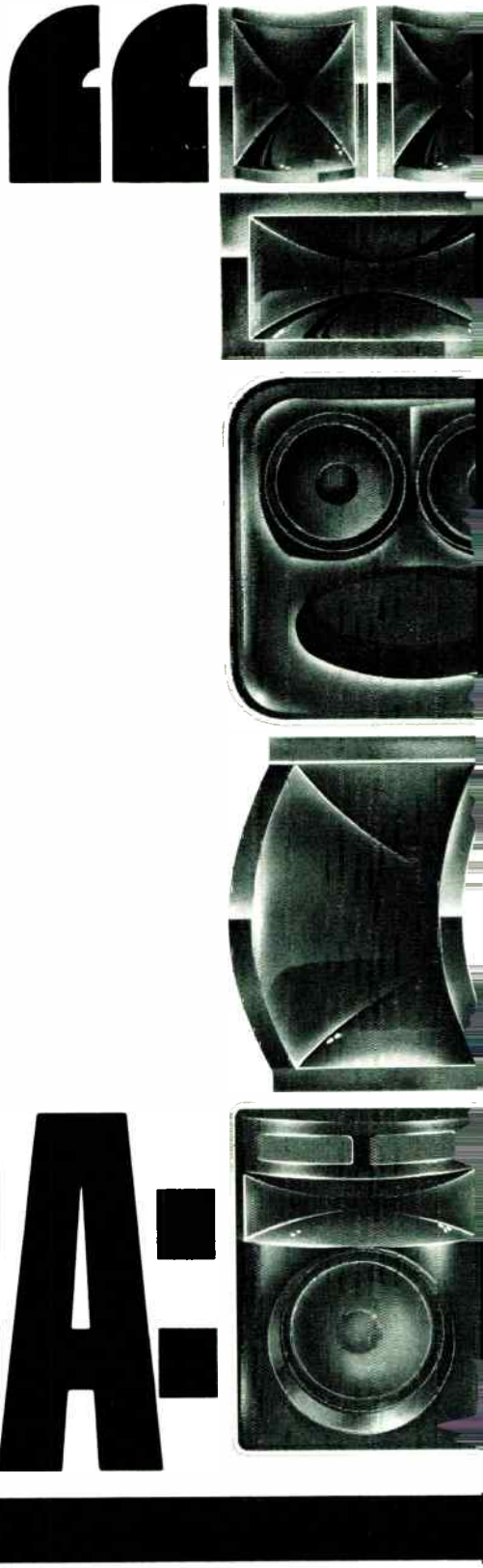

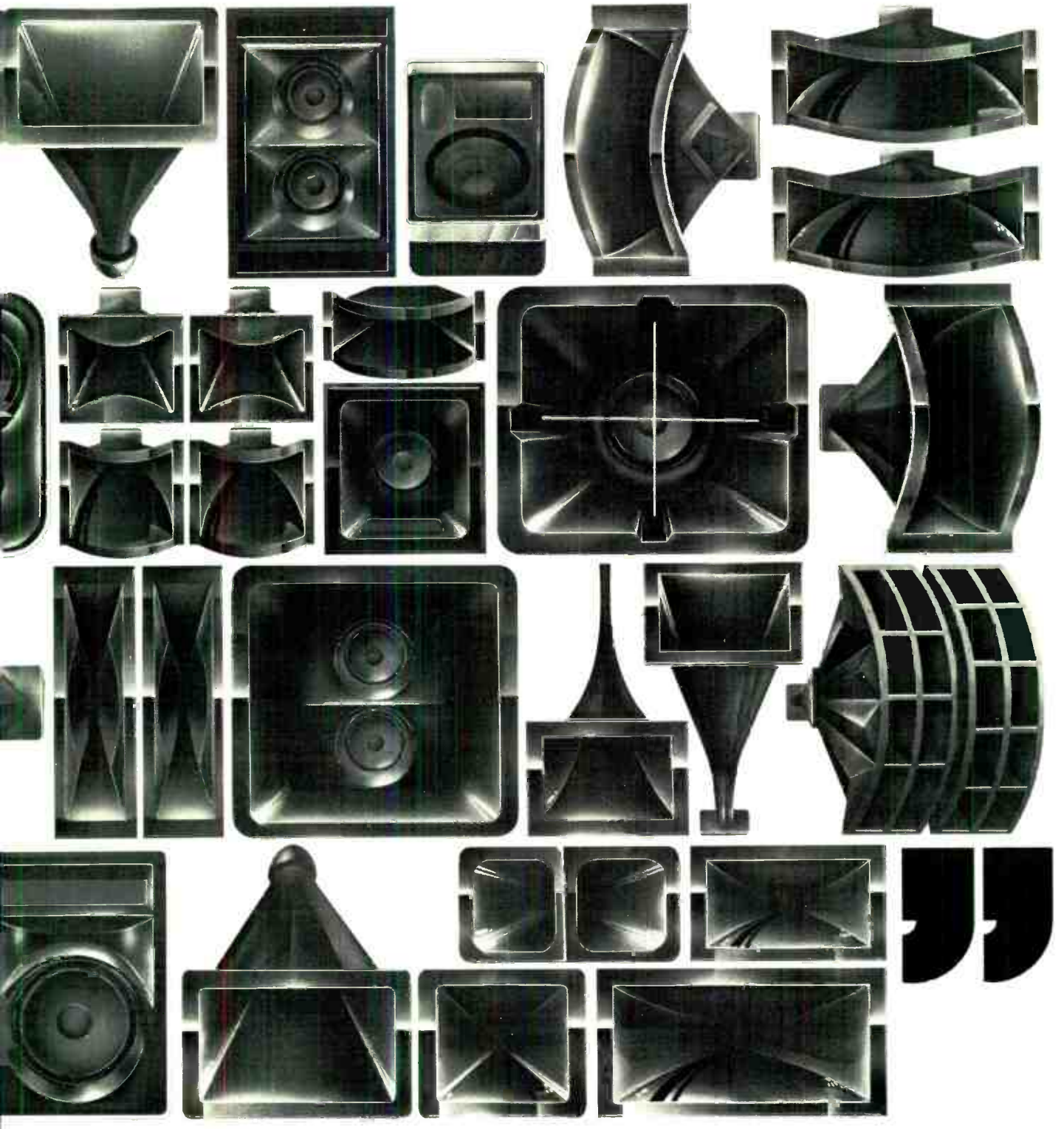

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THE THUNDERBIRDS

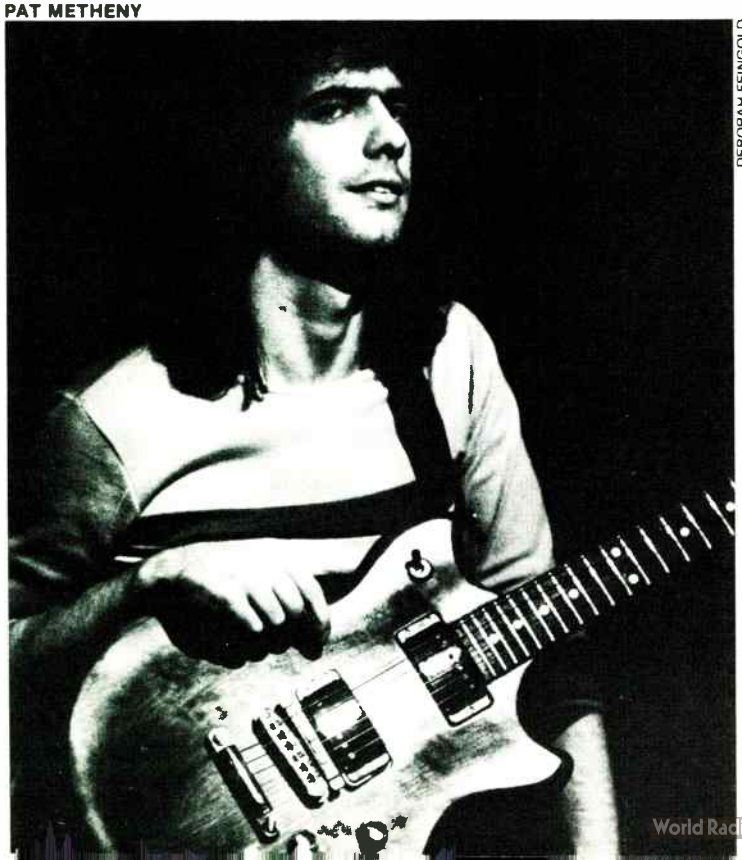
PAT METHENY

Maybe the American Dream still means steak on dinner tables, suburban split-levels, two cars and The Pat Metheny Group in every garage. I dunno. But it seems the real dream — the humanistic one — is really one of cross-pollination: the fruitful trafficking of ideas and traditions across the borders of the cultures, races, classes, and generations of the Americas. So I was heartened by the fact that young Pat reached across some of those borders on *80/81* with some success, and further elated by the news that he'd been down to Rio, found God in Brazilian music, and was rarin' to go — airplane tickets in hand — on a three-month South American tour with vocalist Milton Nascimento. That dream has been deferred (the tour was cancelled), but nonetheless November found him at the Village Vanguard with Keith Jarrett's American sidemen of the '70s. And no one was mistaking saxist Dewey Redman, bassist Charlie Haden, and drummer Paul Motian for a garage band. (Arthur Blythe was scheduled to take Redman's place for half of the tour.)

The set we heard was generous both in length and in emotional expansiveness. Ornette Coleman's "Broadway Blues" initiated the proceedings, and indeed it was Ornette's spirit, and his compositional style, that informed the music's hyper-melodic riffing, sense of swing, playful crosstalk, and hard country blues feeling — a feeling that Metheny is more akin to than most might think, but that is mitigated by his cooler-than-thou syrupy-sweet guitar tone. (Moral: if you keep your Aunt Jemima in the fridge, you're undermining your pancakes.)

The ensemble playing was loose — pleasantly loopy on the slow numbers, unregimented on the fast ones — and the soloing extensive and lucid. We heard Redman's Orphean gifts and urbane wit run into Metheny's, heck, innocent optimism run into Haden's stark, careful vivisections of compositions' structures and crisp walking, jogging, and sprinting lines. It was a fortunate mix, save for Motian's tinny cymbals and high-pitched kit clashing with Metheny's upholstered signature sound. "He sounds like he's playing garbage cans," said a man, not discreetly, to his friend on my right.

PAT METHENY



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

The set got better as it got older, louder, more rambunctious. Then Haden's aching ballad, "Silence," quieted and slowed things down, with Metheny's rich harmonic chords (on his brand new solid-body Roland) cushioning Redman's melody line. It was perfect; we've never heard the Vanguard quieter. And on the closer — a shrieking, hot, outside romp, a tune called "Rush Hour" written by Redman in the spirit of Ornette — the reluctant "leader" of the quartet took his finest (read: most unpredictable) solo of the night, summoning a decided unMethenyesque tone from his new axe that sounded something like Clifford Brown playing trumpet with an electric mouthpiece, echoplex, digital delay, and mute. It cut rather than covered; it perspired and scratched rather than cooled; it soared fancifully rather than stepped neatly. It boded well for the future. — *David Breskin*

THUNDERBIRDS

Reports predicting the imminent death of the blues have been rife through the latter half of the '70s but, as Chicago guitarist Son Seals says, no one seems to be able to find the corpse. The Fabulous Thunderbirds are keeping the music alive and kicking and the quartet's lean, mean brand of Texas-Louisiana blues, honed by years of four-set-a-night club gigs, is attracting a growing audience ranging from traditional blues aficionados to the more roots-conscious segment of the punk-bred audience.

Veterans of long stints backing leading bluesmen around the country, the T-birds draw heavily on classic models without succumbing to the habitual pitfalls plaguing most young blues bands. Their forays into the archives for cover material yield obscure gems rather than overdone standards and they never approach blues as reverential revivalists unearthing a cultural artifact. The Thunderbirds come to make an audience dance and their lack of visual flash onstage is matched by a steadfast refusal to play three notes when one will suffice.

Kim Wilson's emotionally convincing vocals and deft harmonica work evoke the Windy City masters without falling into slavish imitation. Fran Christina's solid percussive foundation meshes with Keith Ferguson's loping bass lines to supply the supple, stripped-to-the-bone grooves that set off guitarist Jimmy Vaughan's spare rhythm comping and fiery yet economical leads.

The Thunderbirds' eponymous Takoma/Chrysalis debut album is an adequate albeit thoroughly muted assortment of Wilson originals and covers that barely hints at the accomplished power of its successor, *What's The Word*. Opening with a deadly one-two punch — a brutally effective reworking of Juke Boy Bonner's "Running Shoes" followed by the sprightly Cajun romp "You Ain't Nothing But Fine" — the album lives up to the implicit boast of the title and stands as one of 1980's premier releases in any genre.

The Thunderbirds recently took a breather from the sessions for their third album (scheduled for release early next year, the LP will reportedly include a couple of tracks cut with the Roomful of Blues horn section) to play a one-nighter at the Whiskey in Los Angeles. The pair of assured, easy-grooving performances typically pointed to the most salient characteristics of a T-Birds live show; these guys not only are masters at working the grooves they lock into but take their time in getting to where they're going without resorting to superfluous padding.

The Fabulous Thunderbirds are the genuine article and I suspect their brand of blues will keep moving audiences for years to come. Check 'em out. — *Don Snowden*

JEFF BECK

On records, fusion music has tended to minimalize Jeff Beck's stature among modern electric guitarists. *There And Back* is conceived on the grand scale, with thundering herds of drums and great sonic washes of keyboard colors that play up the technical prowess of Beck's accompanists, while dwarfing his own contribution. This is, after all, the man who spearheaded the British blues movement with the Yardbirds — paving the way for Led Zepellin and others — and whose radical use of distortion and feedback helped inspire a whole new school of guitar playing; he was even an influence on Hendrix (as you can hear in Jimi's liberal borrowings on the song "Freedom"). Beck also had a reputation for being a flake, and bad

luck seemed to deny him the fruits of his innovations.

His *Blow By Blow* album of some years back still stands as a classic instrumental excursion with its heavy funk underpinning and taut rock lyricism; it is this level of creativity which animates his live performances.

What his Palladium show proved was that Beck is still probably the purest, most daring lead player this side of Hendrix. There was a certain flippancy to his solos — part shyness, part cockiness — which manifested itself in long linear lines suddenly swelling up larger than life, then choked off in mid-sentence as if to say "That's all you get this time, let's start over." Unlike most rock guitarists, who favor a scalar approach, Beck gives each note its own little halo, adding a harmonic here, splitting a tone there,

HOWARD ROSENBERG

JEFF BECK

bending each note askance in a manner that suggest the raga-ish extrapolations of L. Shankar. More importantly, Beck organizes his ideas into little phrases like a latter day Charlie Christian (albeit a very modal one), telegraphing his melodic ideas with keen logic and making the most daring high wire surprises seem inevitable in retrospect.

His sound itself was sweet and enormous, floating coyly above the sweltering density of Tony Hymas, Simon Phillips and Mo Foster. When el Becko was soaring it gave substance to his accompanists, who tended to just mark time with grandiose gestures in their own solo features. Nevertheless, this is a band, and if Beck tends to dominate with every little shrug and curlicue, it is only proper. He's been there and back, giving rock and fusion some of its finest moments; defining the parameters of high-octane electric guitar with irreverence *and* lyricism. The old man deserves the spotlight. In fact, he commands it. — *Chip Stern*

RON CARTER

Dum dum dum dum dum dum dum. Here I am at Pallson's, a spanking new restaurant, bar and jazz club on Manhattan's upper west side. My tablemates are a 50ish lady with a mink coat and a long plastic cigarette holder, a young man with a Mickey Mouse shirt and shades, and his date (who's female, upper west side notwithstanding) sporting Bo-braids, a leopard skin top and a strawberries-and-cream dessert to go along with the music. Chic Alors!

Dum de-dum de-dum de-dum de-dum. Ron Carter, neighborhood resident and bassist extraordinaire, is here for a one night trio gig. Nothing pretentious, nothing big in the works, no piccolo bass even; just a little trio to be heard through the clinking glasses, conversations, and dense smoke of the fashionable club scene. Night clubs, according to Carter, are workshops: places to grow, experiment, take some risks...hell, half the audience isn't listening anyway.

Dow dow de-dum dow dow dow dow. Carter and cohorts set up shop on the mirrored bandstand and go to work. Carter fails to identify the tunes (a blues, a bossa nova, a few ballads) or his sidemen (Jimmy Ponder on guitar, Wilby Fletcher on drums), he just plays. The music is relaxed, swinging, warm, the sort of mainstream nod-your-head, sip-your-drink jazz that's been played in clubs like this one for the past thirty years or so, without much change. It's more than background music, but less than inspired.

Duh duh duh-dow duh duh duh-dow. There seems to be a bit of an energy crisis on the bandstand. Ponder chords sweetly, too sweetly, and thumbs through the old book of souljazz solos; Fletcher slides the brushes over snare and cymbals and uses sticks as Sominex. Carter, as always, *sounds* beautiful — with his lavish chords, buxom middle-register figures, and tone as comforting as a hot bath. Problem is, hot baths make me tired and tonight Carter does too. His playing is technically impeccable but dulling, his solos pleasant but bereft of emotion and daring; I've heard him play them before. The water needs to be changed. He checks his watch between tunes.

Dum dum dum dum dum dum dum. As the waitresses allocate their checks toward the end of the first set, I realize that Ron Carter may have been in the vanguard with Miles in the '60s, but he's sure not now. He's a monster musician, but hardly a mover or shaker of the art form. He's a true conservative, and he should feel right at home these days in the night club and in the country. — *David Breskin*

RON CARTER

DEBORAH FEINGOLD

THE BUS BOYS

THE BUS BOYS

A lot of rock bands have started successful careers based upon a gimmick. Devo, for instance, first garnered national attention with the robotic posing. Leo Sayer benefited from a clown suit. Kiss had their cartoon makeup. Barry Manilow his nose.

A few months ago, I wandered into Los Angeles' Whiskey to see that city's most talked about gimmick band ever: The Bus Boys. I'm still not sure what the hype was all about. The Bus Boys are six musicians: Brian O'Neal on vocals and keyboards, Victor Johnson on vocals and guitar, Kevin O'Neal on vocals and bass, Gus Loundermon on vocals, Michael Jones on vocals and synthesizer and Steve Felix on drums. The five black, one Chicano line-up mixes satirical lyrics with intense racial posturing. Dressed as waiters (all except for Gus who, in a baggy suit, looks like a black Groucho), they take to the stage in Stepin Fetchit style and dance through a sprightly set while rolling their eyes, toting shoeshine boxes and, quite incidentally, playing quite well.

The most interesting facet about the Bus Boys' career back then was the reaction of the area's vanilla rock press to the highstepping racial satire. Everyone declared them the most important band of the western hemisphere! The chief reason for the Bus Boys' importance? Quite simply, they are a black band playing white rock and roll to white audiences. Adding to this obvious racial hook is the overt satire in the lyrics. It's a one-two combination that no white rock and roll liberal can resist.

When I say *overt* satire, I'm not talking innuendo. The piano laden tune "KKK" offers such gentle verbal prods as "I am bigger than a nigger/Wanna be an All American man/Wanna join the Ku Klux Klan/Play in a rock and roll band." That impressed L.A. more than Jackson Browne!

The band's anthem, "Minimum Wage' states "I work in the kitchen from eight 'til ten/Go home for a minute just to do it again" and the Chuck Berry parody, "Johnny Soul'd Out," is a fairly pointed tale about a guy who's into rock and roll...he's given up rhythm and blues."

At this point in their careers, the Bus Boys just may be rockdom's Great Black Hope. Their lyrics are always clever even when their melody lines falter. It's a shame that some of the groups's more subtle strengths (check out the Devo-esque vocals on 'D-Day") have been ignored by the press in favor of the band's Hellzapoppin stage act, but, perhaps, the gimmickry will fade as their popularity grows. And if, by being mere mortals, the Bus Boys can't live up to the intense hype generated out in Hawaiian shirt heaven by L.A.'s main rock mavens...so what? The group is fresh enough and interesting enough to keep their audiences from yelling "Check, please." Now if only they could learn to dance in time with the music....Just kidding. — *Ed Naha*

THE YEAR IN RO

Compiled By Brian Cullman, Jonathan Baird, Paul Sacksman, Sam Holdsworth and the Usual Gang of Idiots

THE GOOD NEWS.

Independent singles flourish in England and in U.S.
Studio 54 closes.
No new records by Ringo.
Linda Ronstadt discovers Gilbert & Sullivan.
Robert Fripp organizes League of Gentlemen and begins touring, recording.
Brian Eno & David Byrne discover Fela & Africa.
Solid Smoke Records reissues *James Brown Live at the Apollo Vol. I* (best live album ever recorded).
Village People's *Can't Stop the Music* is stopped pronto.
David Bowie opens in *The Elephant Man*.
Uncut version of *The Man Who Fell to Earth* is released.
Art Garfunkel opts for acting.
No more Disco ("we ain't got time for that now").

Impressive Beginnings

English Beat	Blotto
Psychedelic Furs	Love of Life Orchestra
Specials	Martin Rev T-Bond Burnette
Public Image	Selector

Welcome Back

John Lennon	Tony Joe White
Roy Orbison	James Brown
Sir Douglas Quintet	Jack Bruce
Captain Beefheart	Peter Noone
Wilson Picket	Peter Greene

Band Name of the Year
Hornets Attack Victor Mature

Rock Media Event of the Year
Johnny Rotten spits on Dick Clark on American Bandstand.

Rock 'n' Roll Food of the Year
Sushi
Rock Lobster

Didn't Know They Were Still Alive, Dept.
Johnny Rivers, Don Maclean, Harry Chapin, Cher, Paul Butterfield all sign new record deals.

Ambient Fellow Award
Brian Eno's *Music for Airports* is piped in at Newark Airport.

Coulda been a contender (turned left when you should have turned right dept.)
Garland Jeffreys
Karla Bonoff
Kate & Anna McGarrigle
Graham Parker
Jimmy Carter

Missing In Action

Tom Verlaine	Andy Pratt
Patti Smith	Miles Davis
Al Green	Phoebe Snow
Laura Nyro	Shawn Phillips
Ornette Coleman	The Shaggs

Albums
Talking Heads — *Remain In Light*
Pete Townshend — *Empty Glass*
David Bowie — *Scary Monsters*
Bruce Springsteen — *The River*
The Clash — *London Calling*
The Pretenders — *The Pretenders*
Van Morrison — *Common One*
Dire Straits — *Making Movies*
Young Marble Giants — *Colossal Youth*
Ijahman — *Ware We A Warrior?*
Peter Gabriel — *Peter Gabriel*
Michael Jackson — *Off the Wall*

If We Ignore Him, Maybe He'll Go Away (it sure worked with Roderick Falconer)
Gary Numan

Mongolian Record of the Year
Mongolian Folk Music — Hungaritan Unesco

Album with the Most top 40 Singles:
Michael Jackson — *Off the Wall* (5 singles)

Christmas Album of the Year
Emmy Lou Harris — *Light of the Stable*

Comedian of the Year
Richard Pryor
Rodney Dangerfield
Ronald Reagan

CK 1980

Most Tasteless Rock Attire:
Wendy Williams of the Plasmatics (can you find the plastic?)

Nixon Award for Tackiness in the Pursuit of Wealth:
George Harrison's book

The Band With the Most Replacement Members Still Playing Under Its Original Name:
Savoy Brown (over 60 members to date)

THE BAD NEWS

Bill Evans Dies.
Professor Longhair Dies.
John Bonham Dies.
Paul Kantner suffers a stroke.
Bryan Ferry cancels Roxy tour and is hospitalized for nervous exhaustion.
Linda Ronstadt discovers New Wave.
Debbie Harry for Murjani jeans.
Ornette Coleman refuses to release his new album, *Fashion Face*, unless he is given one million dollars.
Tracy Sterne, head of Nonesuch Records for fifteen years and responsible for releasing the best catalog of medieval, renaissance, and world musics is suddenly and inexplicably fired.
Blue Oyster Cult, Kansas, Styx, Queen, Billy Joel, Rex Reed, Gloria Vanderbilt, Harry Chapin, Merv Griffin, and Muhammad Ali refuse to retire.
Blues Brothers.
Chipmunk Punk.
Don Kirshner's contract is renewed again.

Ideas Whose Times Have Come and Gone:
New Wave
Video Discs
Grace Jones

Tapes? No, Sir, We Like Paying $8.98 for Badly Pressed Albums!
Record companies declare war on blank tapes and claim them responsible for declining sales, the state of world economy, & the death of Somoza.

Stop your Sobbing
J.D. Souther
Stephen Bishop

Say, Whatever Happened to Those Guys Anyway?
The Brothers Gibb sue Robert Stigwood for several zillion dollars.

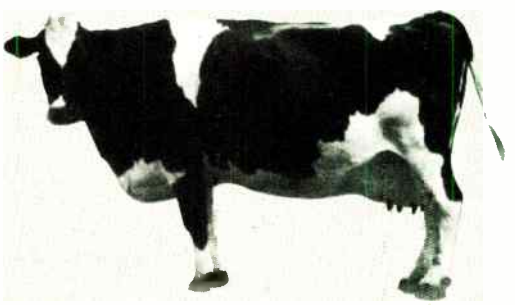
George Harrison Famous Songwriter's School Award
Rod Stewart is sued by Jorge Ben for lifting large portions of "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy" from Ben's "Taj Mahal," a hit in Brazil.

Busted
Paul McCartney in Japan.
Grateful Dead Backstage.
Producer Bob Evans.
Johnny Rotten (jailed in Ireland).
53 Americans in Iran.

Yes We Miss You, But If You Come Back We Won't be Able to Miss You Anymore
Steve Stills
Donovan
Elliot Murphy
Nico

Come Home, All Is Forgiven
Robbie Robertson
Richard Manuel
Marty Balin
Loudon Wainwright
Nils Lofgren
David Johansen
Brecker Brothers

Conspicuous by their Absence (unless you live in the U.K.)
Richard & Linda Thompson
Pete Ubu
Kate Bush
John Martyn



The "That's Incredible" Award for the Most Amazing Event of the Year:
After 5 years of isolation John Lennon reappears and sells milk cow for $265,000. Cow garners incredible national media coverage. Lennon decides time is ripe for comeback. Makes record. David Geffen signs Lennon to Geffen Records for an undisclosed number of cows.

Bye-Bye
Tom Petersen leaves Cheap Trick.
David Knopfler leaves Dire Straits.
Peter Criss leaves Kiss.
Grace Slick leaves Jefferson Starship.
Aynsley Dunbar leaves Journey.
Someone or other leaves America, and the other two guys either continue without him or dissolve the band. Can't remember which.
David Bromberg retires to study violin making.
England Dan & John Ford Coley part company.

What's All the Hype About:

Gary Numan	Kim Carnes
Robin Lane	Angie Bofill
Christopher Cross	Pat Benatar

AWARDS

Hindenburg Award for Most Overinflated Product:
Fleetwood Mac — *Tusk*

Mega-Corporation of the Year
Warner Communications — now controls: Warner Bros., Reprise, Elektra, Asylum, Nonesuch, ECM, Atlantic, ATCO, Island, Sire, Big Tree, Geffen, Hannibal.....

The Woody Hayes "Git out there and *do* something!" Award:
George Benson
Paul McCartney

George Harrison Famous Songwriters School Special Mike McDonald Award
Robbie Dupree for "Steal Away"

The Abbie Hoffman "glad to have you around again" Award for '60s Artists who Refused to Stay Dead:
Boz Scaggs
Paul Simon

The Donny and Marie "Immaculate Conception" Award:
Olivia Newton-John

The "let sleeping dogs lie" Award for Not Reuniting:
The Beatles (they won last year, too)

Best Children's Music:
The Sesame Street Album — various artists

Most Dangerous Children's Music:
Chipmunk Punk
Mickey Mouse Disco

The "Hot Rats" Award for Most Misunderstood Album:
Stevie Wonder — *Secret Life of Plants*

The "old dog new tricks" Award:
Queen

The Hal Davis/A.F. of M. Award for Artists Who Need to Pay More Dues:
Debby Harry and Blondie
The Knack

Best Dramatic Performance by a Rock Artist:
David Bowie — "Elephant Man"
Art Garfunkel — "Bad Timing"
Robbie Robertson — "Carnie"
Levon Helm — "Coal Miner's Daughter

The Standard Oil Award for Artists Concurrently Signed by the Most Record Companies:
George Clinton (5 different deals with 5 different labels)
Hon. mention: Nick Lowe, Dave Edmunds and Rockpile

The Rona Barrett Award for Checkout Counter Journalism:
Rolling Stone, for the Linda Ronstadt fashion piece

Thumbs in the Most Pies:
Quincy Jones

Dance of the Year:
The Pogo (again)

The "You're cleared for landing, already" Award for Artists in the Longest Holding Pattern:

Jesse Colin Young	Chuck Mangione
Marshall Tucker Band	Eric Gale
Chick Corea	Stanley Clarke
Robin Trower	

The "Clear the Runway" Award for Artists Completely Out of Gas:
Jefferson Starship
Bob Welch
Cat Stevens
James Taylor
Roy Buchanan

Forget the Movie, Buy the Soundtrack:
Empire Strikes Back
The Long Riders
Times Square
Rockers
The Shining
Honeysuckle Rose

Forget the Soundtrack, See the Movie:
Urban Cowboy
Fame
Coal Miner's Daughter

Forget Both:
Roadie
Xanadu

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Billy Joel
"Whatever kind of effect I'm looking for, Zildjian has the cymbal to give me what I want."

Steve Smith/
Journey
"There's power in Zildjian cymbals. They're not like anything else."

Kenny Jones/The Who
"Try one and you'll buy one."

Carmine Appice/Rod Stewart
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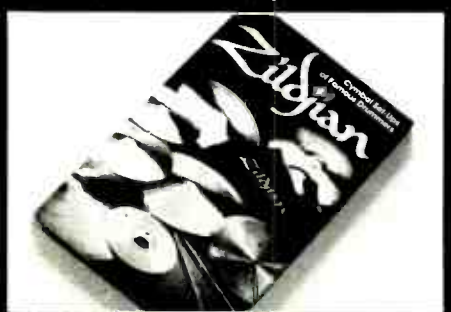

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But Jazz Doesn't Work Like That... The Year 1980

By Rafi Zabor

The trouble with writing about the year in jazz as opposed to rock is that style evolves more slowly and less visibly than rock fashion, and fewer people care. Big breakthroughs tend to come every twenty years instead of every other month; there's less zippy press in them but at least they tend to last. 1980 was a good year for the music, and it had its landmarks, like the Max Roach-Cecil Taylor

Red Rodney recalls an Orthodox Jewish wedding in Brooklyn with Bird, Monk, & Blakey while Diz breaks up.

THE JAZZ PHOTO FILE/KEITH SIPE

set-to in New York, the emergence of a first rate swing band in Panama Francis' Savoy Sultans, the reappearance of Sheila Jordan, the golden consistency of the Art Ensemble of Chicago now that they work more frequently, the growing success of Arthur Blythe — in fact if I'd spent the year in New York I could come up with an exhaustive list of this kind, including great solos played on named and nameless nights, append a tally of worthy albums (and a few wisecracks at the expense of unworthy ones), and end with a catalogue of the year's deaths, the most numbing and unexpected of which was Bill Evans' two months back. But more important than all the listables is the artistic good health of the music, the fact that great jazz is being made in every possible style by more bands than you can keep track of in New York alone, not to mention the rest of the country. There can have been few periods in the life of any art form in which so much was going on in so many ways at once.

On the other hand, 1980 was not so different from all the other years. Nobody made much money, only a few made a living, the major record companies shafted everyone and the little ones had no distribution. ECM got braver, hat Hut stepped up operations, Black Saint disappeared, Inner City released a zillion albums, Columbia's reissue series passed Arista's on the inside rail. Me, I went to my first jazz convention, and it was at least as typical of the year as the usual roster of names and events. Of course when I say I attended a jazz convention I really mean I attended the last day, or half the last day. I live in West Virginia now, and had intended to make it to Washington for the whole thing but the car wouldn't start and I ended up digging postholes in the pigpen. I did make it to D.C. for an Art Ensemble concert on Friday night, preparatory to attending the convention Saturday. I saw Andy Plesser of New York's Public Theatre in the crowd and asked him how the convention was going. "Oh, everybody's jacking off in public and doing business in private," he told me. "As usual." Ah, thought I. I had always wondered what might go on at a jazz convention.

continued on next page

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The actual convention — The Second Annual *Jazz Times* Convention — took place at the sprawling Shoreham Hotel, where in my childhood my parents and I were denied a room for looking insufficiently splendid, and by the time I got there, dutiful journalist that I am, almost all the talks were over, among them Robert Palmer on the responsibilities of the critic — they probably include things like arriving on time — and a scad of seminars on art and commerce, various aspects of same. I did arrive in time for the middle of Max Roach's disquisition on "Who is Ripping off Whom." Roach, a composed and regal presence amid the *schlumps* and slouchers of the business and the press, told typical horror stories. Item: he had gone to receive a Newport Festival memorial plaque for Charlie Parker's family — year of the Bird and all that — but the Parker estate is so tied up in legal hassles with various predatory corporations that not a

THE JAZZ PHOTO FILE/KEITH SIPE

nickel sifts down to Bird's actual heirs. Item: Roach is also involved in the struggle for Bud Powell's estate, from which Bud's daughter Celia cannot benefit because of an unconsummated marriage Bud was steered into with a member of the family that owned Birdland. Neither has Celia the legal right to make use of the unreleased recordings and films in her possession. Hassan Ibn Ali (The Legendary Hassan) had died two days before, on October 14, and nobody had noticed, much less understood his importance to the Philadelphia jazz scene that had spawned John Coltrane, MyCoy Tyner, Ted Curson, Archie Shepp, Lee Morgan and others. Item: Roach had tried to acquire the masters of his deleted album *Members Don't Get Weary* from Atlantic so he could release them himself and was told he'd have to pay $100,000 to buy his music back...It was a clear and unemotional litany of all the things that are so boring to read about and which make up nine tenths of the jazz life. Roach neither nagged nor pointed the furious finger, only told clearly what he knew. He acknowledged the fact that clubowners couldn't make a living from their nightclubs, same as the musicians who worked in them. Could the clubs in some way be subsidized? They are, after all, the natural classrooms in which the music is learned. Roach acknowledged the fact that progress was being made on several fronts: a jazz major had been instituted at Amherst; NEA grants were up a few hundred per cent; Public Radio was getting its act together; local jazz societies were working gradual wonders in particular areas...But in general he presented the picture of the uphill, not to say futile, struggle of trying to finance an art form in a culture that could not really care less. The talk ended with the sentiment of "It's America's greatest art form and let's all somehow work together." Typical of talks: an inspiring conclusion and no basis for action.

Noted panels of Jazz dignitaries wrung their hands and beat their breasts and did business at the deli; Max Roach, composed and regal, "one of the greatest shirts ever seen."

The floor was thrown open for questions but there were almost none. Instead, various entrepreneurs got up and talked about themselves and their activities at length. Orrin Keepnews, who acted as general orchestrator and weary king for the event, made a memorable attempt to call a halt to this tendency — "I don't mean to pick on you," he told one businessperson, "I just want to use you as a dirty example" — but it was impossible. Irrepressible monologists got up and talked about their operations as if they were the single key to the universe; when they sat down they were pounced upon by whispering musicians looking for work: "*Got a card?*" I myself was conducted to a seat on the dais, where I immediately fell asleep. I woke up embarrassed in the middle of an excellent talk by Noah Silverman, who explained in great detail and with considerable patience when and how musicians should hire lawyers and when not. Naturally I fell asleep again and when I woke up Mel Lewis had risen from his seat trembling in every limb, telling of a vision he'd had in which all musicians were replaced by robots. Someone objected that Chick Corea was a human and Lewis said he knew that. Then I found out what Ira Gitler looked like. I had always wondered and now I knew. Everyone wanted to go to lunch, but there was a discussion and then general agreement to the effect that local clubowners should collectivize and share name acts so that all could survive. In unity there is strength. Let's work together. It's America's greatest art form. "Right!" said everyone in glorious unison and then I followed the crowd to

continued on pg. 109

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5. *HIRSH GARDNER* New England
6. *BILL TRAINOR* Facedancer
7. *WILLIAM F. LUDWIG III* Advertising Manager
8. *VINCENT DEE* Independent
9. *MIKE ARTURI* Rick Saucedo Show
10. *PAUL QUINN* Joe Kelly
11. *ROY YEAGER* Atlanta Rhythm Section
12. *ROGER POPE* Troops
13. *BASS DRUM* Independent
14. *GARY SMITH* Independent
15. *DEWEY BOND* Independent
16. *JOHN BEKE* Sherri Lynn Show
17. *VINNY APPICE* Black Sabbath
18. *ALAN GRATZER* R.E.O. Speedwagon
19. *VERN WENNERSTROM* Tantrum
20. *HERMAN RAREBELL* Scorpions
21. *DARRELL SWEET* Nazarth
22. *BUN E. CARLOS* Cheap Trick
23. *JOEY KRAMER* Aerosmith
24. *CARMINE APPICE* Rod Stewart
25. *AYNSLEY DUNBAR* Jefferson Starship
26. *ROGER EARL* Foghat
27. *JOHN BEE* Rockets
28. *RON TUTT* Independent

Unable to attend due to schedule conflict:

RICHARD ALLEN Def Leppard
GINGER BAKER Independent
BARRY BARLOW Independent
BOB BENBERG Supertramp
STEVE BROOKINGS 38 Special
ERIC CARR Kiss
BRUCE CRUMP Molly Hatchet
JOHN CUFFLEY Climax Blues Band
CLIFF DAVIES Ted Nugent
MICHAEL DEROSIER Heart
DANNY GOTTLIEB Pat Metheny
JACK GRONDIN 38 Special
IAN PAICE Whitesnake
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ROGER TAYLOR Queen
ALAN WHITE Yes

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BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

Springsteen returns from his two year marathon in the studio and introduces some new characters and insights along with some older influences, roaring to life the cylinders of his instinctive sense of emotional event. Dave Marsh examines the view from inside the mind of the last Roadside Romantic.

By Dave Marsh

A year ago, taking a respite from recording to play two nights of the M.U.S.E. anti-nuke concerts, Bruce Springsteen pared his normal three hour show down to a more everyday 90 minutes. The result was pandemonium just this side of Beatlemania. Following the biggest stars in American soft rock to the Madison Square Garden stage, Springsteen and the E Street Band upstaged everyone, including the issue itself. The air in the hall that night was one of fanaticism and conversion, as though Springsteen were a rock 'n' roll evangelist and the Garden his tabernacle.

It's easy to imagine that Springsteen was just a pro rising to an occasion which included a camera crew and a recording truck, not to mention a backstage full of peers. What's harder to explain, unless you've seen him onstage before a crowd that might not include so much as a weekly newspaper reviewer, is that the M.U.S.E. shows were just a fragment of what he usually does. "After those shows went over so great I just figured that that's what we'd be doing on this tour," remembers E Street guitarist Steve Van Zandt. "Just 90 minutes, a couple of ballads, and make people as crazy as you can, like the old days. We can do that. But not Bruce. What we ended up doing was just adding that 90 minutes to the show we always did."

By late October, when the E Streeters hit L.A. for four shows at the 15,000 seat Sports Arena, they were playing four and one half hour shows, five nights a week. Going on at 8:30, they'd break at 10, and return a half hour later to play until 12:45 — or 1:00 or 1:15. And they weren't playing the ebb-and-flow show offered by most bands who play so long. We're talking about four hours of ensemble rock and roll here, in which even the ballads are attacked more strenuously than most modal jams. Yet Jon Landau, his manager, said one

night, "I think Bruce might actually play *longer*, except that the band just gets worn out." True enough, drummer Max Weinberg often spends intermission taping bleeding fingers, and the others are spared such medicaments only because their instruments are less physically demanding.

Generally, Springsteen did 32 or 33 songs, including 17 or 18 from *The River*, a half dozen from *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, five from *Born to Run*, the perennial setcloser "Rosalita" from *The Wild, The Innocent and the E Street Shuffle*, plus "Fire" and "Because the Night" from his seemingly bottomless supply of unrecorded hits. And, of course, the Mitch Ryder medley which was the highlight of the *No Nukes* LP.

But the show has that shape only on nights when Springsteen hasn't declared a special occasion, which is a rare night in itself. On Halloween, the second night in L.A., he cooked up a version of "Haunted House," the old Jumpin' Gene Simmons hit, at soundcheck, and opened the set with it — after appearing from a coffin, and being chased around the stage by ghoul-robed roadies during the guitar break.

On Saturday, Bruce added an acoustic guitar and accordion version of "The Price You Pay," and debuted "Fade Away," the one song from *The River* he'd avoided. On Monday night, with Bob Dylan in the house for a *second* night (he'd come with Jim Keltner on Thursday, and been impressed), Springsteen put "The Price You Pay" back in and dedicated it to his "inspiration." Plus a lengthy version of "Growing Up," from his first album. On both nights, he ended the encores with Jackson Browne, dueting on "Sweet Little Sixteen." On neither night did the inclusion of the additional songs mean the removal of any of the others.

"Yeah, but you really missed it in St. Paul," said Van Zandt. "He turned around and called 'Midnight Hour,' and we all just about fainted. Funky (bassist Garry Tallent) didn't even believe we were doing it until about the second chorus." The band had not rehearsed the song, and it's unlikely that the E Street Band's present lineup had ever played it before in its five years together. But even the musicians thought that it sounded great.

The expansiveness and elasticity of Springsteen's show is a conundrum, because arena rock is in all other hands the surest route to formula. One of the most miserable summers of my existence was spent watching 15 Rolling Stones shows in 1975. By the fifth, I was fighting to stay awake; by the tenth I'd stopped fighting, a circumstance I ascribed to the band's senility until it occurred to me that no one was meant to look at more than one or maybe two of their damn fiestas.

That's rock and roll for tourists. Springsteen plays for the natives. Although he would probably put it more idealistically, he's really just never lost the consciousness of a bar band musician, who knows that a good part of the house may be seeing all three sets. And like a bar band veteran, he refuses to resort to gimmicks. Mark Brickman's lighting is the best in rock, but it's based on relatively simple theatrical gels and an authoritative sense of timing with follow spots; any funk band in the Midwest might have a more elaborate *concept*, but nobody with lasers achieves such an effective result. (Brickman has a computer along on this tour, but only, he told me, because "if you can figure out a way to program Bruce's show, you can figure a way to make it work for anything." Most nights, Brickman and soundman Bruce Jackson might as well throw their set lists away.)

But what reveals Springsteen bar band roots more than anything is his sense of intimacy with the crowd. One night during this tour, someone told me, he actually announced from the stage, "If the guy I met at the airport yesterday is here, please come to the stage at the break. I've got something for you," which is about as close to sock hop mentality as you could ask. At his show in Phoenix, during "Rosalita," Bruce made one of his patented leaps to the speakers at the side of the stage. But this time he missed.

The crowd just kept on cheering, but back at the soundboard where Jackson and I were sitting, the tension was thick. Bruce might do anything, but this was weird; the band was holding the chord, and the chords of "Rosalita" are not meant to be held for five seconds, much less fifteen.

It's a good long drop from the speakers, two feet high, to the floor, a good eight or nine feet away. All there was between Bruce and the hard concrete floor was the band's monitor mixing board, but as he tumbled down, roadie Bob Werner reached out and broke the fall. (He sprained his wrist in the process.)

Neither the band nor the crowd could see any of this. The next thing any of us knew, the guitar appeared, tossed atop the speakers. Then a pair of hands and at last, Springsteen's head, with his silly-faced-little-boy grin. He shook his head, pulled himself the rest of the way up, and strapped on his guitar, went back into action as if nothing had occurred.

This moment is presumably on film — there was a crew shooting a commercial that night — though from what angle I cannot say. But what that incident proclaims, more than anything, even Bruce's sense of spontaneity, is his sense of event. The cardinal rule of his shows is that something *always* happens. It's not only, as he says in the interview below, that he's prepared for whatever happens. Somehow, he always makes sure that something does occur. I've seen at least 100 shows in the past six or seven years. The worst of them was fascinating, but maybe the most awesome have been the times when, after four or five nights of hell raising action, he manages to make it different again. This guy does not know the meaning of anticlimax.

"The moment you begin to depend on audience reaction, you're doing the wrong thing. You can't allow yourself, no matter what, to depend on them."

But there's the bright side. There are darker ones. In Los Angeles, where ticket scalping is legal, front row seats for this extravaganza were going for $180, $200, $250. And fans wrote Bruce to complain, not just that tickets were being scalped, but that the best ones were. It's an old story, and most bands would let it slide, but Bruce took a stand. Each night in L.A., he gave the crowd the name of a state legislator, and a radio station, who'd agreed to campaign to change the scalping law in California. This might qualify as a gesture — although the night after Landau got a pre-show phone call from a "ticket agent" suggesting that Bruce "do what he does, and I'll do what I do, so why don't he just lay off," he made the announcement *three* times — but he's also hired investigators to get to the bottom of the mess, with intentions of turning the information over to the proper authorities, if any hard evidence can be turned up.

And this reflects the spirit in which Springsteen played M.U.S.E. Although he was one of only two musicians at the benefit who did not make a political statement in the concert program (the other was Tom Petty), Springsteen upstaged the issue only accidentally. He felt that particular problem to his marrow; "Roulette," the song he wrote right after Three Mile Island, is the scariest piece of music he's ever done, for my money more frightening that even the last lines of "Stolen Car," and unmistakably based on the event. (Not to mention Del Shannon's paranoic "Stranger in Town.") There is more to come.

The River itself feels like a farewell to innocence. As Springsteen notes in the interview below, the innocent characters on this album are anachronisms. Their time is gone. That guy lying by the side of the road in "Wreck on the Highway" is not only the guy in "Cadillac Ranch" and "Ramrod," he is also Spanish Johnny, the original man-child hero of *The Wild, the Innocent and The E Street Shuffle*.

The River is, I think, Bruce Springsteen's best album for this very reason. It sums up seven years of work, and it does not shy away from the errors of his career thus far, nor does it disown them. He remains a romantic and a bit of a juvenile,

WARING ABBOTT

after all this, for who but a romantic juvenile could conceive of a purposeless car thief as a genuine figure of tragedy? But he is also capable now of tying together his hopes and fears — the most joyous of songs are awash with brutal undercurrents.

The River wasn't the record anyone would have predicted Bruce Springsteen would make. Epics aren't anticipated (although they might be the subject of certain fervent hopes.) But if *The River* was unpredictable, the album that will follow it is almost unimaginable. And not only because the society that shaped Springsteen's most beloved characters and the musical tradition he cherishes is now crumbling.

Among other things, *The River* is a Number One record. "Hungry Heart" looks likely to be his first Top Ten single. Things change when that happens, and we have not yet seen the rock and roller who is strong enough to withstand those changes. It would be naive to expect Bruce Springsteen to be any different.

Yet Bruce Springsteen's career is all about naive faith. Who else could have survived The New Dylan, The Future of Rock and Roll, The Hype, The Boss? And emerged not only successful, but respected. It's easy to play cynical rock journalist and suppose the worst — no one else has exactly cruised through success — but the fact is, Bruce Springsteen is the only human I have ever met who cannot sell out. He doesn't have a price, because the things he wants are quite literally beyond price. You don't have to believe me. Just wait and see. As Miami Steve says, "For the first time, I can really imagine rock and roll at 40."

The interview below took place at the Fiesta Motel in Tempe, Arizona on Nov. 6th, from about 3:30 AM until dawn. (The time frame is typical.) Bruce had just completed a show at Arizona State University, and in a strange way, what I'll remember about that night isn't talking with him or even the fall off the speakers but the lines he sang just after the fall, that climactic verse of "Rosalita:"

Tell your daddy this is his last chance
If he wants his daughter to have some fun
Because my brand new record, Rosie
Just came in at Number one

He won't forget, either.

MUSICIAN: Here you are, *The River* is a Number One album, the single is a hit, you're playing great shows in the biggest halls, and selling them out. In a sense, a lot of goals you must have had are now achieved. What goals are left?

SPRINGSTEEN: Doing it is the goal. It's not to play some big place, or for a record to be Number One. Doing it is the end — not the means. That's the point. So the point is: What's next? Some more of this.

But bigness — that is no end. That as an end, is meaningless, essentially. It's good, 'cause you can reach a lotta people, and that's the idea. The idea was just to go out and to reach people. And after tonight, you go out and you reach more people, and then the night after that, you do that again.

MUSICIAN: One of the things that *The River* and also the show, its length and certain of the things you say between songs, are about is seeing more possibilities, more opportunities for things to do.

SPRINGSTEEN: Yeah. There's an immense amount, and I'm just starting to get some idea about what I want to do. Because

we've been in a situation, always, until recently, there's been a lot of instability in everybody's life. The band's and mine. It dates back to the very beginning, from the bars on up to even after we were successful. Then there was the lawsuit.

And then there's the way we work, which is: We're *slow*. And in the studio, I'm slow. I take a long time. That means you spend a lotta money in the studio. Not only do you spend a lotta money, you don't make any money, because you're out of the stream of things. It's like you can never get ahead, because as soon as you get ahead, you stop for two years and you go back to where you were.

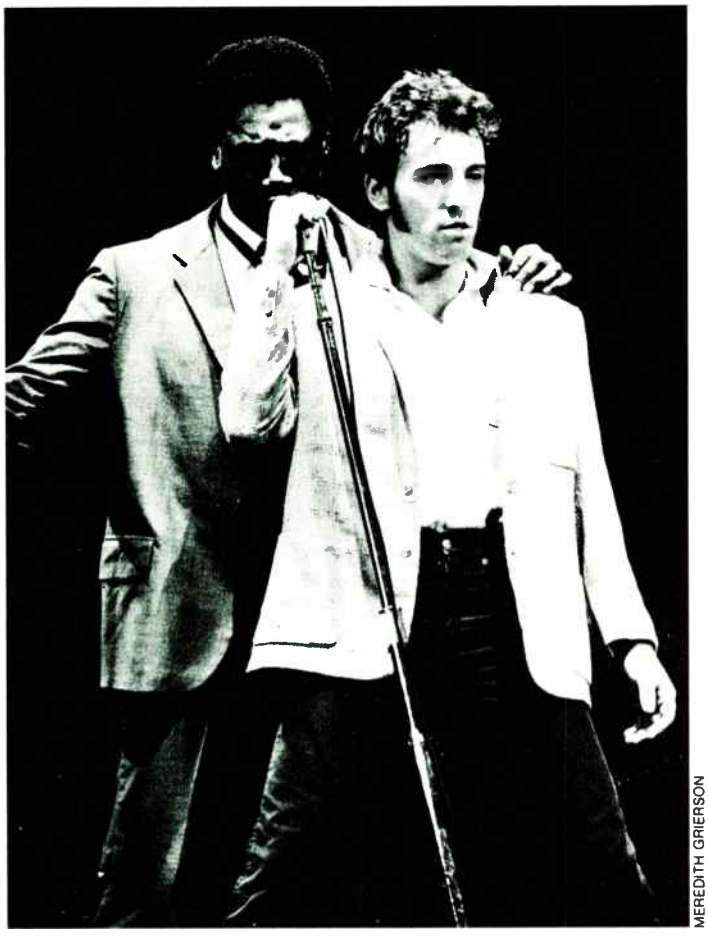
MUSICIAN: Is that slowness as frustrating for you as it is for everybody else?

SPRINGSTEEN: I'm lucky, because I'm in there, I'm seeing it every step of the way. I would assume that if you didn't know what was going on, and you cared about it, it would be frustrating. With me, it was not frustrating.

You know, we started to work [on the album] and I had a certain idea at the beginning. And at the end, that was the idea that came out on the record. It took a very long time, all the coloring and stuff, there was a lot of decisions and songs to be written. Right up until the very last two weeks, when I rewrote the last two verses to "Point Blank." "Drive All Night" was done just the week before that. Those songs didn't exist, in the form that they're on the record, until the last few weeks we were in the studio. So there's stuff happening all the time. But we get into that little bit of a cycle, which hopefully we'll be able to break — maybe, I don't know.

MUSICIAN: In a lot of ways, *The River* feels like the end of a cycle. Certain ideas that began with the second and third albums have matured, and a lot of the contrasts and contradictions have been — not resolved — but they've been heightened.

"All the characters, they're part of the past, they're part of the future and they're part of the present. And I guess in "Ramrod" there was a certain frightening aspect to seeing one that wasn't part of the future."



MEREDITH GRIERSON

SPRINGSTEEN: On this album, I just said, "I don't understand all these things. I don't see where all these things fit. I don't see how all these things can work together." It was because I was always focusing in on some small thing; when I stepped back, they made a sense of their own. It was just a situation of living with all those contradictions. And that's what happens. There's never any resolution. You have moments of clarity, things become clear to you that you didn't understand before. But there's never any making ends meet or finding any time of longstanding peace of mind about something.

MUSICIAN: That's sort of like "Wreck on the Highway," where, for the first time in your songs, you've got the nightmare and the dream in a package.

SPRINGSTEEN: That was a funny song. I wrote that song real fast, in one night. We came in and played a few takes of it and that's pretty much what's on the album, I think. That's an automatic song, a song that you don't really think about, or work on. You just look back and it sorta surprises you.

MUSICIAN: On this record, it also feels like you're relying a lot more on your instincts, the sort of things that happen on stage.

SPRINGSTEEN: Yeah, that's what happens the most to make the record different. A lot of it is real instinctive. "Hungry Heart" I wrote in a half hour, or ten minutes, real fast. All the rockers — "Crush On You," "You Can Look," "Ramrod" — were all written very quickly, from what I can remember. "Wreck on the Highway" was; "Stolen Car" was. Most of the songs were, sit down and write 'em. There weren't any songs where I worked — "Point Blank" I did, but actually those last two verses I wrote pretty quickly. "The River" took awhile. I had the verses, I never had any chorus, and I didn't have no title for a long time.

MUSICIAN: But you always had the basic arrangement?

SPRINGSTEEN: No, on that song, I had these verses, and I was fooling around with the music. What gave me the idea for the title was a Hank Williams song, I think it's "My Bucket's Got a Hole In It," where he goes down to the river to jump in and kill himself, and he can't because it dried up. So I was just sitting there one night, thinking, and I just thought about this song, "My Bucket's Got a Hole In It," and that's where I got the chorus. [*Actually, he's referring to "Long Gone, Lonesome Blues" — D.M.*]

I love that old country music. All during the last tour that's what I listened to a whole lot — I listened to Hank Williams. I went back and dug up all his first sessions, the gospel kind of stuff that he did. That and the first real Johnny Cash record with "Give My Love to Rose," "I Walk the Line," "Hey Porter," "Six Foot High and Risin'," "I Don't Like It But I Guess Things Happen That Way." That and the rockabilly.

There was a certain something in all that stuff that just seemed to fit in with things that I was thinking about, or worrying about. Especially the Hank Williams stuff. He always has all that conflict, he always has that real religious side, and the honky tonkin', all that side. There's a great song, "Settin' the Woods on Fire." That thing is outrageous. That's "Ramrod," that had some of that in it. And "Cadillac Ranch."

MUSICIAN: Earlier, you said that "Ramrod" was one of the saddest things you'd written. Why?

SPRINGSTEEN: (Laughs) Well, it's so anachronistic, you know. The character — it's impossible, what he wants to do. One of the ideas of it, when I wrote it, it was sort of like a partner to "Cadillac Ranch" and a few things, it's got that old big engine sound. That song is a goddam *gas* guzzler (laughing). And that was the sound I wanted, that big, rumbling, big engine sound. And this guy, he's there, but he's really *not* there no more. He's the guy in "Wreck on the Highway" — either guy, actually. But he's also the guy, in the end, who says, "I'll give you the word, now, sugar, we'll go ramroddin' forevermore." I don't know; that's a real sad line to me, sometimes.

MUSICIAN: If you believe it, you mean.

"I go back, back further all the time. Back into Hank Williams, back into Jimmy Rodgers. Because the human thing in those records is just so beautiful and awesome."

STEVE KAGAN

SPRINGSTEEN: Yeah, but it's a funny kinda thing. I love it when we play that song on stage. It's just a happy song, a celebration of all that stuff that's gonna be gone — is gone already, almost.

I threw that song ten million times off the record. Ten million times. I threw it off *Darkness* and I threw it off this one, too. Because I thought it was wrong.

MUSICIAN: You mentioned something similar about "Out in the Street," that it was too much of a fantasy to possibly believe it.

SPRINGSTEEN: I was just wary of it at that time, I guess for some of the same reasons. It always seemed anachronistic, and at the time, I was demanding of all the songs that they be able to translate. All the characters, they're part of the past, they're part of the future and they're part of the present. And I guess there was a certain frightening aspect to seeing one that wasn't part of the future. He was part of the past.

To me, that was the conflict of that particular song. I loved it, we used to play it all the time. And there was that confusion too. Well, if I love playing the damn thing so much, why the hell don't I want to put it on the record?

I guess I always made sure that the characters always had that foot planted up ahead somewhere. Not just the one back there. That's what makes 'em viable, or real, today. But I also knew a lotta people who were exactly like this. So I said, well, that's OK. There was just a point where I said, that's OK, to a lot of things where I previously would not have said so.

I gained a certain freedom, in making the two record set, because I could let all those people out, that usually I'd put away. Most of the time, they'd end up being my favorite songs, and probably some of my best songs, you know.

MUSICIAN: You mean the kind of songs that would show up on stage, but not on record? [*"Fire," "Because the Night," "Sherry Darling"*]

SPRINGSTEEN: Yeah. I'm the kind of person, I think a lot about everything. Nothin' I can do about it. It's like, I'm a thinkin' fool. That's a big part of me. Now, the other part is, I can get onstage and cut that off and be superinstinctive. To be a good live performer, you have to be instinctive. It's like, to walk in the jungle, or to do anything where there's a certain tightrope wire aspect you need to be instinctive. And you have to be comfortable at it also.

Like tonight, I was falling on my head. I wasn't *worryin'* about it. I just went, it just happened. (Laughs) You just think, what happens next? When I was gonna jump on that speaker, I couldn't worry about whether I was gonna make it or not. You can't. You just gotta do it. And if you do, you do, and if you don't, you don't, and then something else happens. That's the point of the live performance.

Now, when I get into the studio, both things operate. When we perform on this record, I feel that we have that thing going that we've got live. To me, we're not rockin' that stuff better live than a lot of it is on the record. I can still listen to it. Usually, two weeks after we're out on the record, I cannot listen to my record any more. 'Cause as soon as I hear some crappy tape off the board, it sounds ten times better than what we spent all that time doing in the studio. This is the very first album that I've been able to go back and put on to play, and it sounds good to me.

But in the studio, I'm conceptual. I have a self-conscious-

ness. And there's a point where I often would try to stop that. "No, that's bad. Look at all these great records, and I betcha they didn't think about it like this, or think about it this long." You realize that it doesn't matter. That's unimportant, it's ridiculous. I got into a situation where I just said, "Hey, this is what I do, and these are my assets and these are my burdens." I got comfortable with myself being that kind of person.

MUSICIAN: But only after going to extremes. *Darkness* is the least spontaneous of your records.

SPRINGSTEEN: That's right. And it's funny because *Darkness on the Edge of Town,* that cut is live in the studio. "Streets of Fire" is live in the studio, essentially. "Factory" is live. It's not a question of how you actually do it. The idea is to *sound* spontaneous, not be spontaneous.

So at this point, I just got settled into accepting certain things that I've always been uncomfortable with. I stopped setting limits and definitions — which I always threw out anyway, but which I'd always feel guilty about. Spending a long time in the studio, I stopped feeling bad about that. I said, that's me, that's what I do. I work slow, and I work slow for a reason: To get the results that I want.

When you try to define what makes a good rock and roll record, or what is rock and roll, everyone has their own personal definition. But when you put limits on it, you're just throwing stuff away.

MUSICIAN: Isn't one of your definitions that it's limitless?

SPRINGSTEEN: I think it is. That's my definition, I guess. Hey, you can go out in the street and do the twist and that's rock and roll. It's the moment, it's all things. (Laughs) It's funny, to me, it just is.

You know, my music utilizes things from the past, because that's what the past is for. It's to learn from. It's not to limit you, you shouldn't be limited by it, which I guess was one of my fears on "Ramrod." I don't want to make a record like they made in the '50s or the '60s or the '70s. I want to make a record like today, that's right now.

To do that, I go back, back further all the time. Back into Hank Williams, back into Jimmy Rodgers. Because the human thing in those records, that should be at least the heart of it. The human thing that's in those records is just beautiful and awesome. I put on that Hank Williams and Jimmy Rodgers stuff and Wow! What inspiration! It's got that beauty and the purity. The same thing with a lot of the great Fifties records, and the early rockabilly. I went back and dug up all the early rockabilly stuff because...what mysterious people they were.

There's this song, "Jungle Rock" by Hank Mizell. *Where is Hank Mizell?* What happened to him? What a mysterious person, what a ghost. And you put that thing on and you can *see* him. You can see him standing in some little studio, way back when, and just singing that song. No reason. (Laughs) Nothing gonna come out of it. Didn't sell. That wasn't no Number One record, and he wasn't playin' no big arena after it, either.

But what a moment, what a mythic moment, what a mystery. Those records are filled with mystery; they're shrouded with mystery. Like these wild men came out from somewhere, and man, they were so *alive.* The joy and the abandon. Inspirational, inspirational records, those records.

MUSICIAN: You mentioned earlier that when you went into the arenas that you were worried about losing certain things.

SPRINGSTEEN: I was afraid maybe it would screw up the range of artistic expression that the band had. Because of the lack of silence. A couple things happened. Number one, it's a rock and roll show. People are gonna scream their heads off whenever they feel like it. That's fine — happens in theatres, happens in clubs. (Laughs) Doesn't matter where the hell it is, happens every place, and that's part of it, you know.

On this tour, it's been really amazing, because we've been doing all those real quiet songs. And we've been able to do 'em. And then we've been able to rock real hard and get that thing happening from the audience. I think part of the difference is that the demands that are made on the audience now are much heavier, much heavier on the audience that sees us now than on the last tour.

But the moment you begin to depend on audience reaction, you're doing the wrong thing. You're doin' it wrong, it's a mistake, it's not right. You can't allow yourself, no matter what, to depend on them. I put that mike out to the crowd, you have a certain faith that somebody's gonna yell somethin' back. Some nights it's louder than other nights and some nights they do, and on some songs they don't. But that's the idea. I think when you begin to expect a reaction, it's a mistake. You gotta have your thing completely together — boom! right there with you. That's what makes nights special and what makes nights different from other nights.

MUSICIAN: On the other hand, the only way to do a really perfect show is to involve that audience. Maybe an audience only gets lazy if the performer doesn't somehow keep it on its toes.

SPRINGSTEEN: I'm out there for a good time and to be inspired at night, and to play with my band and to rock those songs as hard as we can rock 'em. I think that you can have some of the best nights under the very roughest conditions. A lotta times, at Max's or some of the clubs down in Jersey, they'd be sittin' on their hands or nobody wants to dance, and the adversity is a positive motivation.

The only concern is that what's being done is being done the way it should be done. The rest you don't have control over. But I think that our audience is the best audience in the world. The amount of freedom that I get from the crowd is really a lot.

"There's a beauty in work and I love it, all different kinds of work. That's what I consider it. This is my job, and that's my work. And I work my ass off, you know."

MUSICIAN: The way the stage show is organized is that the first half is about work and struggling; the second half is about joy, release, transcending a lot of those things in the first half. Is that conscious?

SPRINGSTEEN: I knew that I wanted a certain feeling for the first set. That's sorta the way it stacks up.

MUSICIAN: What you rarely get a sense of around rock bands is work, especially rock and roll as a job of work. Yet around this band, you can't miss it.

SPRINGSTEEN: That's at the heart of the whole thing. There's a beauty in work and I love it, all different kinds of work. That's what I consider it. This is my job, and that's my work. And I work my ass off, you know.

MUSICIAN: In Los Angeles one night, when you introduced "Factory," you made a distinction between two different kinds of work. Do you remember what it was?

SPRINGSTEEN: There's people that get a chance to do the kind of work that changes the world, and make things really different. And then there's the kind that just keeps the world from falling apart. And that was the kind that my dad always did. Cause we were always together as a family, and we grew up in a...good situation, where we had what we needed. And there was a lot of sacrifice on his part and my mother's part for that to happen...

MUSICIAN: *The River* has a lot of those sorts of workers — the people in "Jackson Cage," the guy in "The River" itself.

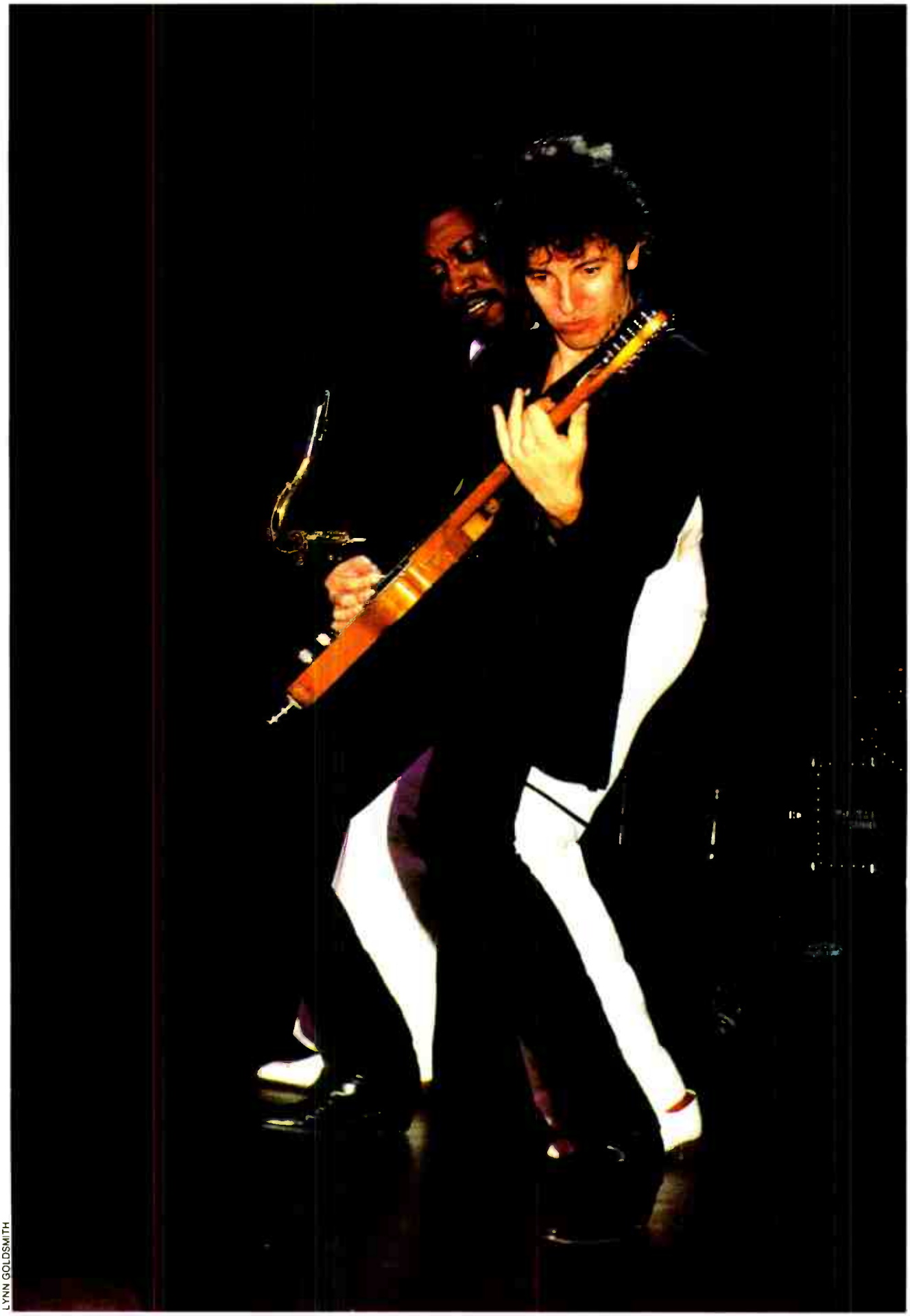
SPRINGSTEEN: I never knew anybody who was unhappy with their job and was happy with their life. It's your sense of purpose. Now, some people can find it elsewhere. Some people can work a job and find it some place else.

MUSICIAN: Like the character in "Racing in the Street"?

SPRINGSTEEN: Yeah. But I don't know if that's lasting. But people do, they find ways.

MUSICIAN: Or else...?

SPRINGSTEEN: (Long pause) Or else they join the Ku Klux Klan or something. That's where it can take you, you know. It can take you a lot of strange places.



LYNN GOLDSMITH

DAVID G. HIRR

Gary Tallent, Clarence Clemons, Bruce, Miami Steve Van Zandt, Roy Bittan, Max Weinberg, Danny Federici

The E Street Band's Equipment

Bruce Springsteen

Guitars: 1954 Esquire, modified with extra Telecaster pick-up (*the* guitar); 1956 Telecaster (spare); 1954 Telecaster (spare); Ovation six-string acoustic; two Rickenbacker 12-string electric; 1958 Gibson J-200 Acoustic guitar (this is the same guitar as Elvis's original, and was a gift from crew members Mike Batlan, Marc Brickman and Bob Chirmside). Amps: Four pre-CBS Fender Bassman amps, ca. 1958-1962; two Peavey Vintage amps (imitation Bassmans) — one of each is used onstage under the drum riser. Also: a prime time digital delay and harmonizer and an MXR distortion box. The Fender Esquire is modified with a battery operated impedence transformer for long cable lengths. Information supplied by Mike Batlan, who also notes that there is an asterisk in front of the Esquire's serial number, indicating that is was a factory reject, probably originally sold as a reject.

Miami Steve Van Zandt

MUSICIAN: What equipment do you use on stage?

VAN ZANDT: I don't know, you've gotta ask Dougie (Sutphin, E Street roadie).

MUSICIAN: When was the last time you did know?

VAN ZANDT: In '65, I bought a Telecaster, and that's the last thing I remember.

MUSICIAN: But lately, you've begun to use those Ovation 12 strings on stage...

VAN ZANDT: I went to [actor] Sal Viscuso's house here in L.A., and he had homemade pasta, homemade bracciola, he had provolone and mozarrella flown in from New York. And the strangest thing happened: I went home and dreamed I was Leadbelly with an Italian accent.

MUSICIAN: So not paying attention to the technical details doesn't have much effect on your sound?

VAN ZANDT: No. I'll tell you, I've got a secret technique. I play everything at 10. That's the great equalizer. You'd be surprised how similar everything sounds when you do that.

MUSICIAN eventually did track down Doug Sutphin, doing laps at Malibu Grand Prix. At a pit stop, Sutphin informed us that Van Zandt has two Stratocasters, a '57 and a '67, a Gibson Firebird (a spare which he almost never plays onstage, and two hollow-body 12-string Ovation guitars, with pickups. One of the Ovations and one of the Strats is capoed. Van Zandt has a Mesa Boogie amp with Electro-Voice speakers, two Roland Jazz Choirs (120) amps, and a 100-watt Hi Watt brain and cabinet, plus an MXR distortion unit. And yes, he does play it all at 10.

Clarence Clemons

The Big Man plays Selver Mark VI tenors (a whole bunch of 'em) and altos, Yamaha baris and sopranos, with La-Voz reeds and Berg Larson mouthpieces. He uses a variety of Latin percussion (claves, tambourines, cowbell, etc.) and maracas by the Argentinian Hernandez company. His horns are miked with a device invented by Clemons and Bruce Jackson.

Roy Bittan

Bittan, who's almost as well known for his session playing (with Meat Loaf, Dire Straits and others) as for his work with the E Street crew, uses a Yamaha C-7 grand piano as his basic instrument. He also plays a Yamaha CS80 synthesizer on a couple of numbers. The piano is fitted with a modified Helpinstill pickup. "The most important thing," the Professor says, "is ten fingers and fast hands."

Danny Federici

Danny Federici is surrounded by banks of equipment onstage, which is unfortunate, since it tends to obscure some of the fanciest footwork in human history. While dancing, Federici plays a Hammond B-3 organ (with a spare backstage — one of them was cut down by John Stilwell), two Farfisa combo compacts, and an Acetone (Top 5 model), used exclusively for "Wreck on the Highway." The sound is channelled through two customized Leslies, with 12 2" speakers, Gauss HF 4000 horn drivers and IF 15" speakers, and speed relays for both. Federici's amp rack, designed by Sound Specialties of Philadelphia, holds a Marantz 510 MR (600 watts) for the low end, a Phase Linear 400 for the horns, a Urei 521 cross-over system, a Bi-Amp Model 270 graphic equalizer, and a Roland RU100 reverb unit.

Danny also plays a keyboard operated glockenspiel, which is, he thinks, one of only two or three in the world. (When the E Streeters toured England and Scandinavia in '75, they managed to find one to complement his pair.) That runs through a standard Leslie 122 mounted in an Anvil case with an acoustic chamber and permanent mikes for off-stage miking.

Federici's organ modifications (B3 cutdown, speed switches and relays) were done by John Stilwell, of Ithaca, N.Y., and Springsteen sound man Bruce Jackson.

Max Weinberg

The Mighty Max, as he's introduced nightly, brought to his drum list as highly developed a sense of detail as he brings to his playing. He uses a 24" x 14" Ludwig 6-ply bass, with an Emperor head and 14 coats of white varnish; it's stuffed with two old down pillows and miked with a Beyer 88.

Weinberg's toms are also Ludwigs; he uses both a 10" x 14" and a 16" x 16". The rack tom has Countryman contact mikes taped to the inside shell and a Sennheiser 421 mike for the top head. The floor tom is miked with just the 421. The toms are slightly muffled with Green Bay paper towels — Weinberg insists on that brand.

His stage snare is a 6½" x 14" Pearl Snare, with a Diplomat snare head, and a Durotone batter head, miked inside with a Countryman, outside with a Shure SM81 and another Sennheiser 421. (For recording, he prefers a black 5½" x 14" snare.)

Weinberg plays with Pro Mack 5B sticks (no varnish), uses a Cameo Chain pedal (squared off), a Pearl Hi Hat Stand and Pearl hardware. A custom welded roll bar holds his three Zildjian cymbals (18" crash, 21" ride and 20" medium thin crash), mikes (AKG451 EB CK-1 Cart. and 3 Countrymen) and snare — this eliminates mike and cymbal stands.

"I've got four drums," says Weinberg. "Anything more is redundant. Besides, I tend to trip over things."

Garry Tallent

"I use a Music Man bass, with four strings (two of which I seldom use) — they're D'Addario halfrounds. The only modification is a can of black lacquer. I've got a Countryman direct box, which is what everybody hears. Plus my own special Funky setup, which I've thought about long and hard for two years. It includes a solid state amplifier, Acoustic 320, with an equalizer that I never use, and four Music Man bass cabinets with 15" Larsings, which I never hear. The rest is up to God and Bruce Jackson."

MUSICIAN: Introducing "Factory" on a different night, you spoke about your father having been real angry, and then, after awhile, not being angry anymore. "He was just silent." Are *you* still angry?

SPRINGSTEEN: I don't know. I don't know. I don't know if I know myself that well. I think I know myself a lot but I'm not sure. (Laughs) It's impossible not to be [angry] when you see the state of things and look around. You have to be, somewhat.

MUSICIAN: Tonight, you were saying on stage that you found the election terrifying. That seems to go hand in hand with playing the M.U.S.E. benefits, and striking back at ticket scalpers in L.A. You wouldn't have done those things two years ago, I don't think. Are you finding social outlets for that anger now?

SPRINGSTEEN: That's true. It's just a whole values thing. Take the ticket thing. It's a hustle. And a hustle has become...respected. In a lot of quarters — on a street level, dope pushers — it's a respectable thing, to hustle somebody. I mean, how many times in the Watergate thing did people say about Nixon, "Well, he just wasn't smart enough to get away with it." Like his only mistake was that he didn't get away with it. And there's a certain point where people have become cynical, where the hustle, that's the American way. I think it's just turned upside down in a real bad way. I think it should lose its respect.

MUSICIAN: Do you feel that way about nuclear energy?

SPRINGSTEEN: It's just the whole thing, it's the *whole* thing. It's terrible, it's horrible. Somewhere along the way, the idea, which I think was initially to get some fair transaction between people, went out the window. And what came in was, the most you can get. (Laughs) The most you can get and the least you can give. That's why cars are the way they are today. It's just an erosion of all the things that were true and right about the original idea.

"To be a good live performer, you have to be instinctive. It's like, to walk in the jungle, or to do anything where there's a certain tightrope wire aspect, you need to be instinctive."

MUSICIAN: But that isn't something that was on your mind much until the *Darkness* album?

SPRINGSTEEN: Up to then, I didn't think about too many things. In *Greetings from Asbury Park*, I did. And then I went off a little bit, and sort of roundabout came back to it.

I guess it just started after *Born to Run* somehow. I had all that time off, and I spent a lotta time home. We were off for three years, and home for a long time. It came out of a local kind of thing — what my old friends were doing, what my relatives were doing. How things were affecting them, and what their lives were like. And what my life was like.

MUSICIAN: Did you have a sense that no one else was telling that story?

SPRINGSTEEN: I didn't see it too much, except in the English stuff. Things were being addressed that way in that stuff.

MUSICIAN: You mean, for instance, the Clash?

SPRINGSTEEN: Yeah, all that kinda stuff. I liked it, I always liked that stuff. But there wasn't too much stuff in America happening. It just seemed to me that's the story. But there was a crucial level of things missing, and it is today still. Maybe it's just me getting older and seeing things more as they are.

MUSICIAN: On *Darkness*, the character's response is to isolate himself from any community, and try to beat the system on his own. The various characters on *The River* are much more living in the mainstream of society.

SPRINGSTEEN: That guy at the end of *Darkness* has reached a point where you just have to strip yourself of everything, to get yourself together. For a minute, sometimes, you just have to get rid of everything, just to get yourself together inside, be able to push everything away. And I think that's what happened at the end of the record.

And then there was the thing where the guy comes back.

MUSICIAN: And *The River* is what he sees?

SPRINGSTEEN: Yeah, these are his feelings. it's pretty much there, and in the shows, it's there now, too, I guess. I hate to get too literal about it, because I can never explain it as well as

LYNN GOLDSMITH

DAVID PETERS

when I wrote about it. I hate to limit it. I look back at *Darkness* or the other records, and there were other things going on that I never knew were going on.

MUSICIAN: Do you like *Born to Run* and *Darkness* better now?

SPRINGSTEEN: Not particularly. On *Darkness*, I like the ideas, I'm not crazy about the performances. We play all those songs ten times better live. But I like the idea. *Born to Run*, I like the performances and the sound. Sometimes, it sounds funny

MUSICIAN: Young and innocent?

SPRINGSTEEN: Yeah, yeah. Same thing with *The Wild and the Innocent*. I have a hard time listening to any of those records. Certain things on each record I can listen to: "Racing in the Street," "Backstreets," "Prove It All Night," "Darkness on the Edge of Town." But not a lot, because either the performance doesn't sound right to me, or the ideas sound like a long time ago.

MUSICIAN: Do you remember when you threw the birthday cake into the crowd, at the second M.U.S.E. concert?

SPRINGSTEEN: (Laughs) Oh yeah. That was a wild night.

MUSICIAN: You'd just turned 30 that night, and didn't seem to be overjoyed by it. But a couple weeks ago in Cleveland, I was kidding Danny about turning 30, and said, "Oh yeah, we're 30 now, can't do what we used to do." You said, real quick, "That's not true." What happened in that year? Was that significant, turning 30?

SPRINGSTEEN: I don't remember. It just made me wanna do more things. I think, as a matter of fact, when we were in the studio, that was the thing that was big. I didn't feel we were going too slow for what we were doing. But I felt that I wanted to be quicker just to have more time. I wanted to be touring, for one thing. I wanted to be touring *right now*.

MUSICIAN: But by the time you finish this tour, you'll be crowding 32. Then, if you're right and it's just gonna take a year or so to make a record, you'll be 33 or 34 by the time you get out again. Can you still have the stamina to do the kind of show you feel the need to do?

SPRINGSTEEN: Who knows? I'm sure it'll be a different type of show. It's impossible to tell and a waste of time guessin'.

When I was in the studio and wanted to play, it wasn't the way I felt in a physical kind of way, it was what I felt mentally. I was excited about the record and I wanted to play those songs live. I wanted to get out there and travel around the world with people who were my friends. And see every place and play just as hard as we could play, every place in the world. Just get into things, see things, see what happens.

MUSICIAN: Like in "Badlands"?

SPRINGSTEEN: That's it. That's the idea. I want to see what happens, what's next. All I knew when I was in the studio, sometimes, was that I felt great that day. And I was wishing I was somewhere strange, playing. I guess that's the thing I love doing the most. And it's the thing that makes me feel most alert and alive.

MUSICIAN: You look awful before a show, and then those hours up there, which exhaust everyone else, refresh you.

SPRINGSTEEN: I always look terrible before the show.

That's when I feel worst. And after the show it's like a million bucks. Simple as that. You feel a little tired but you *never* feel better. Nothing makes me feel as good as those hours between when you walk offstage, until I go to bed. That's the hours that I live for. As feelings go, that's ten on a scale of ten. I just feel like talking to people, going out back and meeting those kids, doing any damn thing. Most times I just come back and eat and lay down and feel good. Most people, I don't think, get to feel that good, doing whatever they do.

MUSICIAN: You can't get that in the studio?

SPRINGSTEEN: Sometimes, but it's different. You get wired for two or three days or a week or so and then sometimes, you feel real low. I never feel as low, playing, as I do in the studio.

You know, I just knew that's what I wanted to do — go all over and play. See people and go all over the world. I want to see what all those people are like. I want to meet people from all different countries and stuff.

MUSICIAN: You've always liked to have a certain mobility, a certain freedom of movement. Can you still walk down the street?

SPRINGSTEEN: Oh sure, sure. It depends where you go. Usually...you can do anything you want to do. The idea that you can't walk down the street is in people's minds. You can walk down any street, any time. What you gonna be afraid of, someone coming up to you? In general, it's not that different than it ever was, except you meet people you ordinarily might not meet — you meet some strangers and you talk to 'em for a little while.

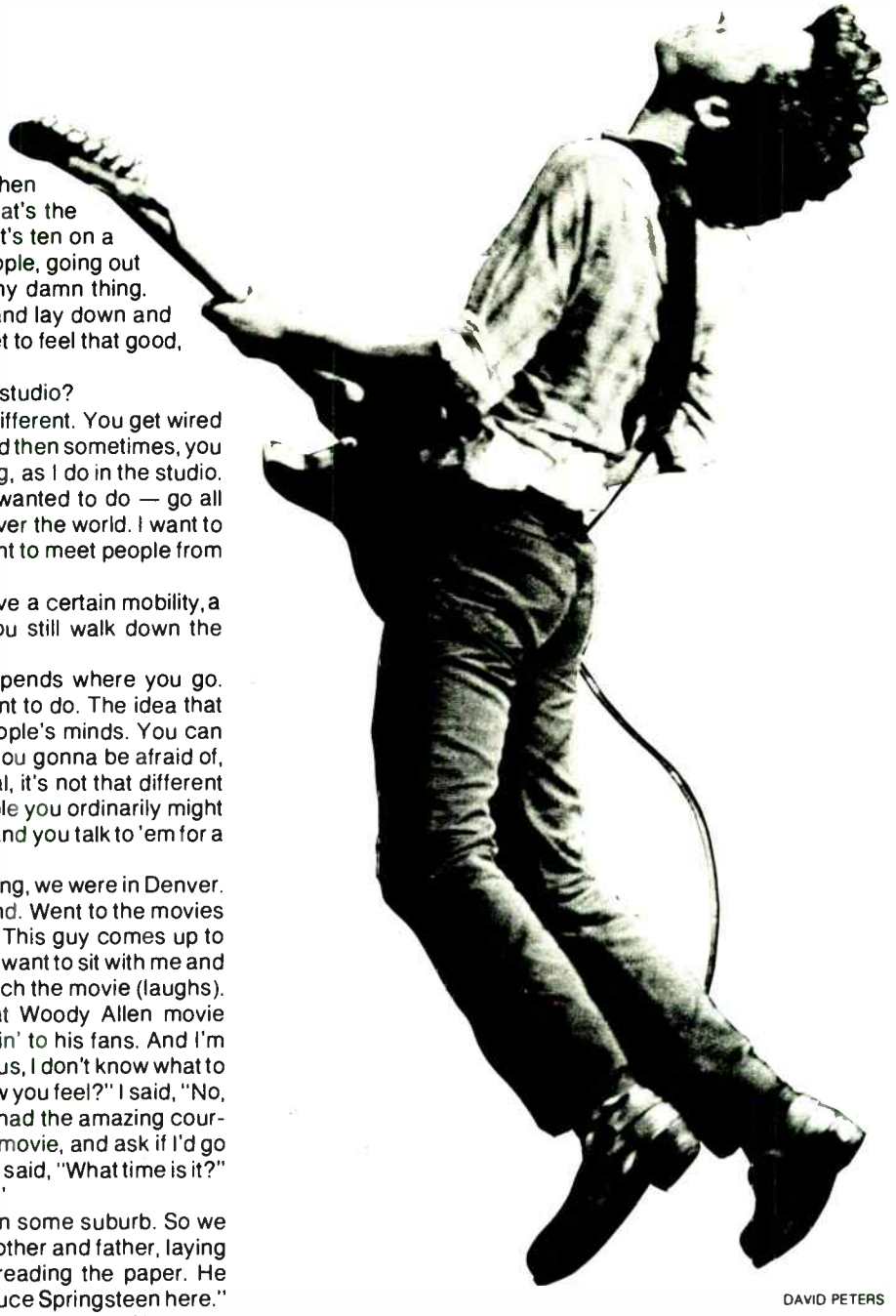
The other night I went out, I went driving, we were in Denver. Got a car and went out, drove all around. Went to the movies by myself, walked in, got my popcorn. This guy comes up to me, real nice guy. He says, "Listen, you want to sit with me and my sister?" I said, "All right." So we watch the movie (laughs). It was great, too, because it was that Woody Allen movie [*Stardust Memories*], the guy's slammin' to his fans. And I'm sittin' there and this poor kid says, "Jesus, I don't know what to say to ya. Is this the way it is? Is that how you feel?" I said, "No, I don't feel like that so much." And he had the amazing courage to come up to me at the end of the movie, and ask if I'd go home and meet his mother and father. I said, "What time is it?" It was 11 o'clock, so I said, "Well OK."

So I go home with him; he lives out in some suburb. So we get over to the house and here's his mother and father, laying out on the couch, watching TV and reading the paper. He brings me in and he says, "Hey I got Bruce Springsteen here." And they don't believe him. So he pulls me over, and he says, "This is Bruce Springsteen." "Aw, g'wan," they say. So he runs in his room and brings out an album and he holds it up to my face. And his mother says (breathlessly) "Ohhh *yeah*!" She starts yelling "Yeah," she starts screaming.

And for two hours I was in this kid's house, talking with these people, they were really nice, they cooked me up all this food, watermelon, and the guy gave me a ride home a few hours later.

I felt so good that night. Because here are these strange people I didn't know, they take you in their house, treat you fantastic and this kid was real nice, they were real nice. That is something that can happen to me that can't happen to most people. And when it does happen, it's fantastic. You get somebody's whole life in three hours. You get their parents, you get their sister, you get their family life, in three hours. And I went back to that hotel and felt really good because I thought, "*Wow* (almost whispering), what a thing to be able to do. What an experience to be able to have, to be able to step into some stranger's life."

And that's what I thought about in the studio. I thought about going out and meeting people I don't know. Going to France and Germany and Japan, and meeting Japanese people and French people and German people. Meeting them and seeing what they think, and being able to go over there with something. To go over there with a pocketful of ideas or to go over there with just something, to be able to take something over. And boom! To do it.



DAVID PETERS

"But what a moment, what a mythic moment, what a mystery! Those rockabilly records are shrouded with mystery. Like these wild men came out from somewhere, and man, they were so alive. The joy and the abandon!"

But you can't do one without the other. I couldn't do it if I hadn't spent time in the studio, knowing what I saw and what I felt right now.

MUSICIAN: Because then you wouldn't have that pocketful of ideas?

SPRINGSTEEN: Then, if you don't have that, stay home or something. If you have some ideas to exchange, that's what it's about. That's at the heart of it. I just wouldn't go out and tour unless I had that. There wouldn't be a reason.

The reason is you have some idea you wanna say. You have an idea about things, an opinion, a feeling about the way things are or the way things could be. You wanna go out and

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tell people about it. You wanna tell people, well, if everybody did this or if people thought this, maybe it would be better.

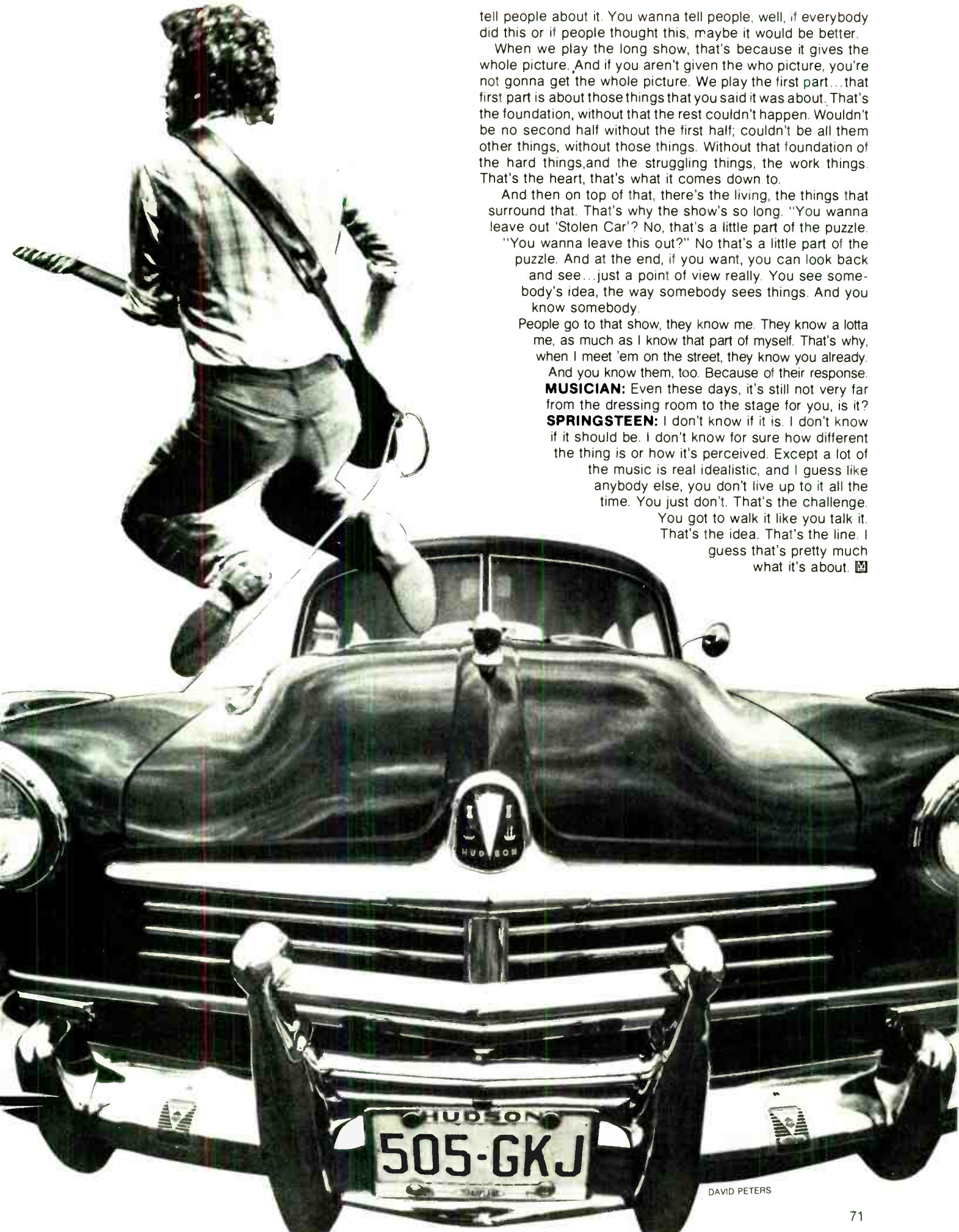
When we play the long show, that's because it gives the whole picture. And if you aren't given the who picture, you're not gonna get the whole picture. We play the first part...that first part is about those things that you said it was about. That's the foundation, without that the rest couldn't happen. Wouldn't be no second half without the first half; couldn't be all them other things, without those things. Without that foundation of the hard things,and the struggling things, the work things. That's the heart, that's what it comes down to.

And then on top of that, there's the living, the things that surround that. That's why the show's so long. "You wanna leave out 'Stolen Car'? No, that's a little part of the puzzle. "You wanna leave this out?" No that's a little part of the puzzle. And at the end, if you want, you can look back and see...just a point of view really. You see somebody's idea, the way somebody sees things. And you know somebody.

People go to that show, they know me. They know a lotta me, as much as I know that part of myself. That's why, when I meet 'em on the street, they know you already. And you know them, too. Because of their response.

MUSICIAN: Even these days, it's still not very far from the dressing room to the stage for you, is it?

SPRINGSTEEN: I don't know if it is. I don't know if it should be. I don't know for sure how different the thing is or how it's perceived. Except a lot of the music is real idealistic, and I guess like anybody else, you don't live up to it all the time. You just don't. That's the challenge. You got to walk it like you talk it. That's the idea. That's the line. I guess that's pretty much what it's about. M



DAVID PETERS

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Tony Rice, third line in the great flatpickers chain, is now a string band leader and Spacegrass composer. Richard Greene (below), once Seatrain's sardonic stringed voice, now produces "orchestrated acoustic jazz."

version of the hybrid "spacegrass," which is probably the most descriptive name yet devised. Groping for a category to lay claim to, Richard Greene offered, "How about 'New Wave acoustic music'?"

So far, most critics have been taking the easy way out, referring to this innovative style as "bluegrass-jazz" or "progressive bluegrass," which would seem to most outsiders to be a contradiction in terms (kind of like "jumbo shrimp"). Bluegrass is the last genre anyone would think to equate with the term progressive. But, rural origins and musical limitations aside, it should be remembered that bluegrass in its day was considered quite radical, and it is one of the youngest of American folk musics. In fact, its inventors are not only still alive but as active as ever, and Grisman, 35, and Rice, 29, fall somewhere between bluegrass' second and third generations.

David Grisman's quest for that "high lonesome sound" began in Passaic, New Jersey, of all places, where he grew up. At 16, he took up mandolin and began hanging out with folk music historian and mandolinist Ralph Rinzler, then a member of the Greenbriar Boys. By the age of 18 Grisman had all but mastered the mandolin styles of Bill Monroe and Frank Wakefield, and earned a reputation as one of the hottest bluegrass players around Greenwich Village. A year later, his group, the New York Ramblers, was proclaimed World Championship Bluegrass Band at the prestigious Union Grove contest in North Carolina.

In 1967 Grisman left the bluegrass scene to form the eclectic folk-rock group Earth Opera with another bluegrass dropout, Peter Rowan, who had previously played with Bill Monroe. In 1972 Rowan and Grisman got together with the legendary flatpicker Clarence White, banjoist Bill Keith, and violinist Richard Greene. The supergroup recorded one bluegrass-rock LP, entitled *Muleskinner*, before White was tragically killed in a car accident. In 1973, Grisman was jamming with the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia when the guitarist decided to form a bluegrass band. The resultant group, Old & In The Way, consisted of Grisman, Rowan, Garcia on banjo, John Kahn on bass, and Vassar Clements on fiddle.

During this time Grisman also became active as a session player and to date has appeared on more than 50 albums, with the likes of Linda Ronstadt, James Taylor, Dolly Parton, and the Grateful Dead.

For his next group, Grisman got together once again with Richard Greene and formed the Great American Music Band, which can be regarded as the first evidence of Dawg music. Although the group was short-lived and never recorded, it paved the way for the Grisman Quintet which followed. In fact, much of the GAMB's material (including some of guitarist John Carlini's arrangements) remain in the DGQ's repertoire.

Prior to the Great American Music Band, Richard Greene had played with a succession of bands including the Dry City Scat Band (in the early Sixties, with David Lindley); the Greenbriar Boys (with John Herald, Frank Wakefield, and Bob Yelin); Bill Monroe & His Blue Grass Boys (which also included Peter Rowan); the Jim Kweskin Jug Band (with Bill Keith and Maria Muldaur); and the rock group Seatrain (featuring Richard on electric violin).

Greene and Grisman first met in a bluegrass bar in California in the early Sixties and, in Greene's words, "immediately hit it off, because we were both obsessively in love with bluegrass notes and melodies."

In the Great American Music Band, Greene, Grisman and Carlini got a chance to flex their arranging skills in what Greene calls "orchestrated acoustic jazz." Of the group's musical objectives, the violinist elaborates, "I thought that all of the things I'd done in rock & roll with Seatrain could be done acoustically; it was just a matter of arranging and dynamics. So John Carlini would write out parts for everybody. I wanted all of the drama of rock & roll, but with these small instruments. I knew it could be done."

Grisman adds, "I've always tried to exploit everything that's in a tune. I've got to give a lot of credit to Richard, because when we were working together it was a real good relationship. I'd write a melody line and Richard would help me harmonize things. It was a challenge to make this stuff interesting. And Richard likes to look for something unusual. So once you've written something, if the guitarist is going to take a solo, well, give him a different setting. Don't just have him blow over the same shit. Do *this* instead. We were both out to stretch it into something more interesting."

One of the reasons the Music Band split up (with Greene going off to work with Loggins & Messina) was over a disagreement as to whether or not the band should remain strictly

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David Grisman and Mark O'Connor (right), the quintet's "second fiddle", who is equally proficient on guitar.

We thought that all the things we'd done in rock could be done acoustically; it was just a matter of arranging and dynamics. We wanted all the drama, but with these small instruments.

an instrumental unit. "I wanted to bring in this fantastic singer and rhythm guitar player named Ellen Kearney," Greene recounts, "and David wanted to keep it all instrumental. And, in hindsight, I've got to hand it to him, because he could see that in this type of acoustic music, as soon as you have a singer the rest of the band is just a backup group."

Although he had already earned a reputation as one of bluegrass' most promising vocalists, and its premier guitarist, Tony Rice agrees that vocals don't fit in with the more progressive sounds, and his spacegrass remains completely instrumental. But, while he has been fully committed to pursuing a career as a string band leader since leaving the David Grisman Quintet last fall, Rice has managed to maintain a strong bluegrass following through recordings. Just this year he released an album of old-time duets with singer/mandolinist Ricky Skaggs (Sugar Hill, SH-3711).

Prior to becoming the original guitarist with the DGQ, Rice played with Skaggs in J.D. Crowe's New South, which was somewhat of a supergroup in itself. Rice grew up in Los Angeles and started playing guitar at five. He naturally gravitated towards bluegrass, not because of any special infatuation with the music, but because it was always around the house. In his words, "It's like you learn to like mashed potatoes because someone lays them on you."

Rice is now considered to be the greatest living exponent of flatpicked guitar and the third link in the chain that started with Doc Watson and was continued by Clarence White's innovative work with the Kentucky Colonels. Rice first heard White at age nine (Clarence was 16), when the concept of lead guitar in bluegrass bands was extremely rare. Needless to say, White's playing had a profound, indelible effect on Tony's development, although Rice has taken the style to much greater lengths. (Today Tony Rice plays the very same battered Martin D-28 he saw White playing for the first time.) When asked what other bluegrass guitarists he was influenced by, Rice states, "I never really liked any of them. I've always had this feeling that people who are innovators don't really listen to any other cats of their genre a lot. They're too much tied up into their own stuff to listen to anyone else."

Grisman and Rice first met while recording Bill Keith's LP, *Something Auld, Something Newgrass, Something Borrowed, Something Bluegrass*. David played Tony a tape of the Great American Music Band, and as Rice recalls, "It was the first music I'd heard that was sort of structurally different from bluegrass that I knew I could play. It was sort of an extension of bluegrass."

As for his initial reaction to Rice's playing, Grisman recounts, "Tony had the same spirit and awareness of time that Clarence had. And he's the only other cat who does. He's got that same attitude, that *feel*."

About four months after meeting Grisman at the Bill Keith session, Rice moved from Lexington, Kentucky, to San Francisco and the David Grisman Quintet was formed — with Todd Phillips on second mandolin, Darol Anger on violin, and Joe Carroll (from the GAMB) on bass. The DGQ has since gone through numerous personnel changes, with Grisman and Anger the only original members remaining — along with mandolinist/fiddler Mark O'Connor, and bassist Rob Wasserman.

Darol Anger, 26, took up guitar in his early teens and violin shortly thereafter. He played guitar in high school rock bands and doesn't recall hearing bluegrass until he was about 16. He got back into fiddling after hearing Richard Greene's work with Seatrain.

Before the DGQ was formed, Anger was playing bluegrass in pizza parlors around the Bay Area. He knew Todd Phillips, the bassist in a rival band, and it was through him that he was introduced to Grisman. Phillips was then taking mandolin lessons from Grisman, and the two had begun experimenting with double mandolin parts. Todd brought Darol over for a jam

continued on next page

session, and, as Grisman remembers, "He had some bootleg tape of the Great American Music Band, so he already knew most of the songs, including Richard Greene's fiddle solos."

"About the second or third time we jammed," Anger reminisces, "David started talking about this guy Tony Rice, whom I'd never heard of. So I went out and bought one of his records and was completely floored."

When the Quintet first started, Anger admits, "Richard Greene was a real strong model, and always had been. At that time he was playing really spectacularly, very flashy, but it wasn't composition-oriented. At the same time, you could hear this incredible sardonic intelligence in his playing that really appealed to me. But the thing that's really interested me about this group is the concept of fiddle backup. Richard used to do a lot of interesting things, but it hasn't really been developed that much. In bluegrass, you have a guy chopping beats; Stephane Grappelli doesn't play backup — he just sits back and watches whoever's soloing. I like to create an atmospheric texture. The fiddle's a great instrument for textures."

Since joining the Quintet, Anger's violin technique has improved immensely (as he points out, playing with Rice and Grisman his technique *had* to improve), and last year he released his first solo LP, *Fiddlistics*, also on the Kaleidoscope label. The album showcases the violin (and cello, which Anger has been incorporating into the DGQ) in a variety of contexts, from bluegrass to bebop to neo-classical to Anger's own Dawg-influenced compositions. "It's impossible for me to not be *extremely* influenced by David on those particular tunes," he states. "I just respond emotionally to that kind of music, and I feel like we've all had a hand in creating it."

Playing "second fiddle" behind Darol in the DGQ is Mark O'Connor — which is ironic, since Mark had placed *first* in just about every fiddle contest held in the nation in the past five years. What's more ironic is that the reigning Grand Master and Old-Time Fiddle champion's principal role in the group is as guitarist.

O'Connor, at 18, is one of those inexplicable phenomena you sometimes hear about in music. He got his first guitar at three, and at six began taking classical lessons, later turning to folk and flamenco. He picked up the fiddle at age 11. Eighteen months later, he went to Nashville, where Tut Taylor produced his first album for Rounder Records, backed by Norman Blake and Charlie Collins. Roy Acuff introduced him as "a genius" at the Grand Ole Opry. On the surface, the idea of a 12-year-old playing the Grand Ole Opry might sound like a novelty, but one listen to that debut album is proof enough that there's nothing even slightly gimmicky about Mark's fiddling.

Mark has thus far released five LPs under his own name, two on his own OMAC label. His latest, entitled *Markology*, is an all-guitar album, with contributions from Rice and Grisman. The tunes are mostly bluegrass, but a few exhibit a feel for and mastery of more progressive harmonies. O'Connor's upcoming fiddle album, *On The Rampage*, is, as the title indicates, "way more out there."

Not long ago, Marshall, now 23, was playing in the Sunshine Bluegrass Boys in Lakeland, Florida. "We did 'Fox On The Run' on both of our albums, so you know where we were at," he laughs. Mike knew Tony Rice from the New South, which the Sunshine Boys were more or less modeled after. Like Rice, Grisman, and many of the younger generation of bluegrass pickers, Marshall was playing bluegrass while listening to jazz and rock. "I was into the jazz-rock stuff," he explains. "People like Jean-Luc Ponty and Shakti. I wasn't into very much traditional jazz — except for Stephane and Django."

When he first heard the Quintet's debut album, Marshall was, as he puts it, "dumbfounded. I couldn't get up off my chair." He started corresponding with Grisman, who recalls that one day "he just showed up on my back porch." Mike's trip to California happened to come at a time when Grisman was working on the score of *King Of The Gypsies*, so within a couple of days, Marshall found himself playing mandolin on his first movie soundtrack alongside Stephane Grappelli. He also played on *Hot Dawg* and stayed in the group (with Todd Phillips moving from rhythm mandolin to bass). "The first time I saw the band play live," he notes, "I was in it. Talk about a mind-blower. The guys didn't *move* while they were playing — except for David. After the tunes, nobody said anything — yea, nay, or whatever. And I felt like screaming, 'ALL RIGHT!'"

Grisman feels that one of the essential ingredients of Dawg music is the bluegrass backgrounds of most of the players who've been in his group. "I think it's the tunes, the way they're arranged, and then the personalities of the players. For instance, both guitar players I've had have strong bluegrass backgrounds. And some of the tunes are structured different from bluegrass, harmonically, so it already puts the guitar player in some space where he has to do something new. But there's still that drive that's in bluegrass and just an approach, an understanding of bluegrass."

Grisman regards his music as a form of classical music, partly because of the arrangements. "There are parts of the music that are written," he explains. "And I think that's neat. That's just part of the music." Grisman's arrangements are one major difference between his style and that of Tony Rice, who prefers "head" arrangements, much like a jazz combo, where the melody is stated, then everybody solos over those chord changes.

Richard Greene sees his use of jazz and classical material as a major element in setting him apart from the others. "As the source of what's going on," he explains, "I'm playing more classical and jazz. And I'm working with jazz musicians, like my guitarist, Jon Kurnick. My mandolinist, Bob Appelbaum, and my bassist, Tim Emmons, are both jazz players, but with strong country and bluegrass roots. I'll be doing original material as well, but it will have this jazz inflection. And I'm very interested in classical music. I think it's valuable and powerful, and so far that's what the audience seems to like the best. I also want to keep the bluegrass rhythm; I always have the mandolin play that chop, whereas David will do all this boogaloo stuff. I always have Bob play that backbeat."

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THE DAWG'S BONES

One of the characteristics that defines progressive string band music is that it is acoustic, and there are no drums. The members of the Grisman Quintet use a wide variety of instruments, all of which are miked onstage and in the studio with Neumann KM-84's (except for the bass, which is miked with an old Sony). David Grisman plays a 1925 Gibson Fern or a Monteleone Grand Artist mandolin. Mike Marshall's main axe is a 1924 Gibson Lloyd Loar mandolin, he also employs a Gibson H-4 mandola (circa 1920), a 1924 Gibson K-4 mandocello, a Caspar de Salo copy violin (circo 1850), and a custom-made 10-string mandolin by John Monteleone of New York.

Darol Anger's setup includes a 1902 August Hermann (German) violin, a German cello (with an Underwood bridge pickup), and a "tenor violin," tuned one octave below the violin and played like a 3/4-sized cello, made by Hammond Ashley & Assoc. of Seattle, Washington.

Mark O'Connor's famous white fiddle, autographed by many fiddle notables, is of unknown origin; his guitars include a vintage Martin D-28 Herringbone and a cutaway model custom-made by Ervin Somagyi of Berkeley, California. Rob Wasserman's German bass (circa 1945, with no name on it) is both miked and amped through a 12" ElectroVoice speaker).

For his 1934 Martin D-28, Tony Rice prefers a Neumann KM-86 mike in the studio and an AKG 451 onstage. Though his Herringbone (which formerly belonged to Clarence White) is Tony's main guitar, he also uses a D-48RC made by the Santa Cruz Guitar Co. (California) and one custom-made for him by Ovation.

Richard Greene's violin was made in 1944 by Mario Frosali (Los Angeles); it is miked and *then* connected to an Echoplex unit.

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Rock n' Roll Romance

"We grew up with an impossible ideal: that of pure eros expressed in the persona of young men giving their all for an orgasmic and transcendant moment, fortified by a bassline that never stopped."

By Catherine Vuozzo

There are women I know who are A&R secretaries and old enough to know better who still haunt Upper East Side showcase bars in smoky eyeshadow and satin baseball jackets, hoping to meet a nice up-and-coming before he turns into Springsteen; a fledgling Joe Jackson; a thin white baronet before he's upgraded.

There are 35-year-old aspiring rockers I know who still dream of life on the road trashing hotel rooms, tequila, groupies and slumming debutantes.

So much energy has been invested, first in the Beatles of our choice, and then in the genre, that a tax accountant — or tax accountancy — is often a tough one to settle for because always in the back of the mind is the idea that you'll meet Bruce Springsteen in the airport some day and he'll ask you to play keyboards for him or realize that you're the only woman in the world who can really make him happy and he'll ask you to forget your job in publishing and join him and the boys on the bus and then he'll start writing songs about you and you'll be forever enshrined in the spirit and crescendo that you love. Some of us really did give it all to rock and roll.

In our own way the sixth grade girls of Bushey Drive Elementary School were little Ladies of Shalott, staring deeply into our mirrors (as teenage girls will) and seeing beside ourselves — in the Avedon shots of the fab four from the cover of *Life* taped to our closets — the perfect incarnation of our need for romance.

Some of us had older sisters, some of us didn't. Most of us were too young still to follow the charts. Nor do I recall discussing it with anyone on Friday, although I probably did and it is modern myth that leads me to believe that we were divinely inspired.

Somehow though, it was in the air and while older girls writhed and squealed in the Ed Sullivan studio, we sat at home watching breathlessly; we hugged ourselves a bit; we felt our lives changing. The already drawn barricades had been given new weaponry: a new secret for the girls, already fascinated by romance and fascinated by its possibility. Eleven year old male counterparts who peopled our classrooms and playgrounds and imaginations were no match for our creative intelligence. Uncooperative and short, they professed not to like girls. John, Paul, George and Ringo were brilliant alternatives. They had respect. The Beatles were a ticket to a more graceful age, a chivalrous innocence, pure joy in the notion that humans noticed each other (once they were in junior high) in a special way.

"...This boy, would be happy, just to love you..."

It gave us great license, Beatle-worship. It eased us through the awkward advent of sexuality. It gave us the dreamy license to ignore the unappetizing face of early adolescence all around us, license to be delicate, license to be protective of the fine stuff of romance. Now for every "A" side, there is a "B." And apologists for the two sides to every 45 line of reasoning also tend to have an exaggerated need to separate yin from yang and trace their subsequent development. I'm no exception. On the sixth day he created the Beatles and on the seventh, the Rolling Stones.

There once was a decade when all the girls of the kingdom wanted rock 'n' rollers. And all the boys of the kingdom wanted to play in a band. As we got older, and as the Beatles got older, and as our expriential context broadened, our experience of music inevitably spilled into the experience of the demonic and the erotic. We became a generation obsessed with the passionate expression of rock 'n' roll. And, as with the worship of romantic champions, the demonic rise of erotic satyrs had its special drawbacks.

The problem lay not in sheer idolatry — heroes, champions, fantasies have always been with us. Nor that the idolatry wasn't experienced in a 5'6"-6'2" dimension (rock stars exists on the jackets of albums, on the cover of *Time*, on the TV screen next to a 4" Wolfman Jack, and of course 2" tall in the middle of Shea Stadium). No — movie stars always existed in the movies, poets on their pages, Lindberg in banner headlines and 1 mm tall on the edge of the sky. It was more than just the displacement of affection from real companions to adopted and fleshed out reproduced imagery. The problem has been that the specific experience of rock 'n' roll worship is that it establishes a seemingly endless continuum of crescendo — of romantic and erotic peaks that fill our hours and whose intensity sometimes has made the prisms of actual intimate experience seem wan by comparison.

Attached to pure love for rock 'n' roll as a way of escaping structural involvement, we grew up with an impossible ideal: that of pure eros expressed in the persona of young men giving their all for an orgasmic and transcendant moment, fortified by a bassline that never stopped.

> "...The devotion now given to art is probably more fervent than ever before in the history of culture. This devotion takes the form of an extreme demand: it is expected to provide the spiritual substance of life..."
>
> Lionel Trilling,
> *Sincerity and Authenticity*

In the endless afternoon garage sessions with their first Stratocasters, our dates dreamed of graduating from high school and growing their hair long and throbbing in the fraternity and sensuality of an all-male band and having all the women they wanted. After the show.

And while we were falling in love with the bass players and the lead singers with English accents, our dates were equally mesmerized by the bass players and the way the lead singers made love to the spotlight. As much as I was in love with Jim Morrison, my dates were too (or

continued on next page

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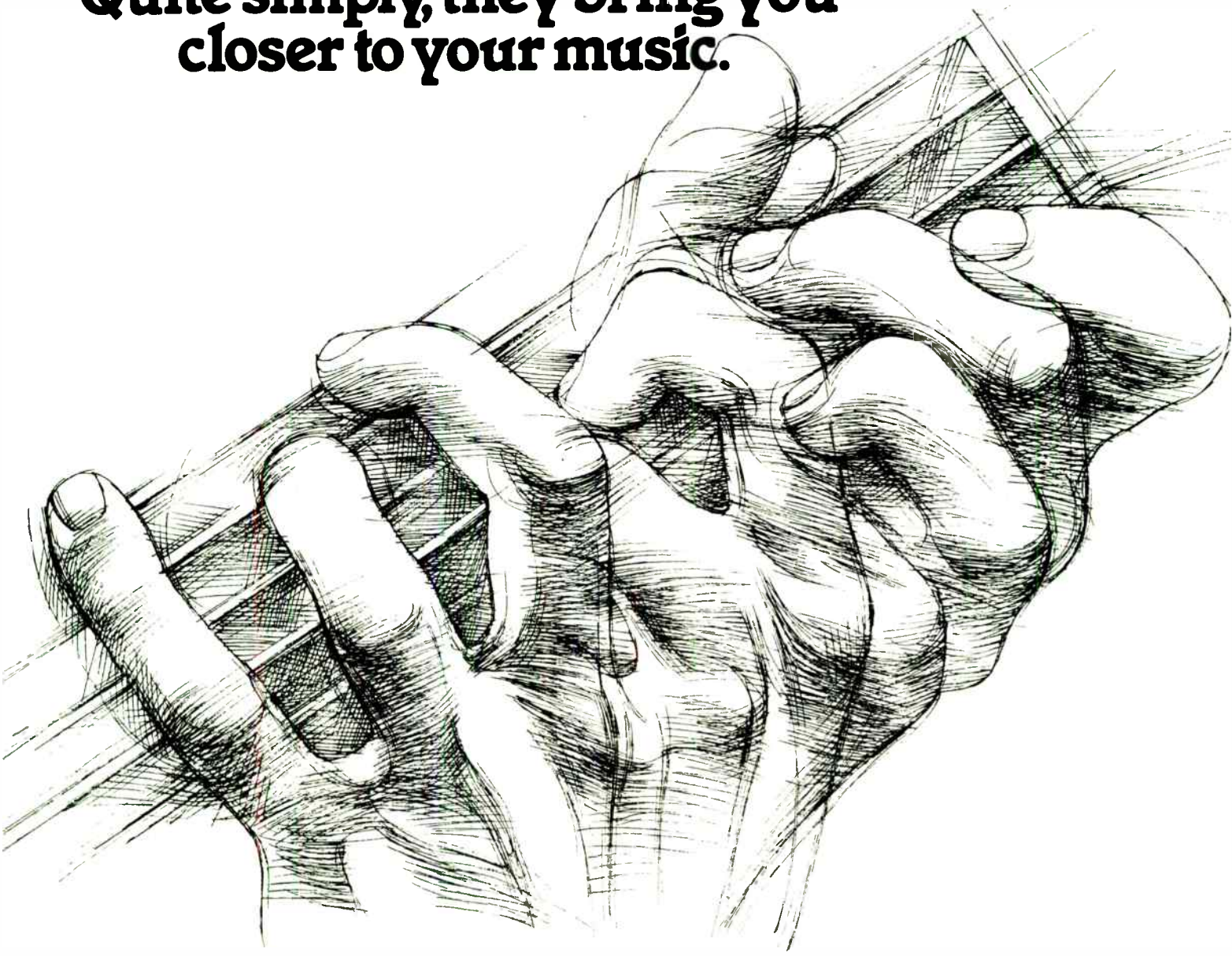

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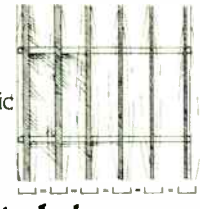

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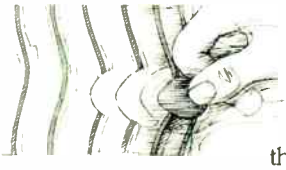

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Bob Dylan, or Jerry Garcia — that's why there's a zodiac). And when we sat next to each other in arenas and stadiums and fields, my eyes worshipfully full of the Doors, his eyes were as worshipfully full. I wanted Jim Morrison, not my date. And he wanted to *be* Jim Morrison so that I would look at him that way and he would be as blissfully unaware of me as Jim was, lost in his budding masculine power.

We achieved a voyeuristic triangle where sexual coupling had as its unwritten informant the music that seemed its pure expression. So much so that perhaps it wasn't even the men or the women we wanted. Perhaps it was just the music we wanted to join.

I remember kissing a bass player once and noticing a curious sense of emptiness. There was a thinness to the rapture, a monaural quality, if you will, that confused me. I had seen this man for the first time on a stage, part of an ensemble that filled the room with a presence that seemed to beg for a woman to complete its erotic invention.

I volunteered, but later in another room realized that what was missing in our interaction was the soundtrack, and the hum and pulsing of his bass. I wanted his record to be playing in the background informing the kisses and the inevitable surrender. Too embarrassed to suggest it, it wasn't enough to simply hear it in my head. I put Jim Morrison on the turntable. I suppose in my own way I was being untrue.

Theoretically, we could continue to live, electronically augmenting experience. But as the music industry changed, music changed, the atmosphere in civic centers changed, the quality of passion changed. And we find less and less sympatico tracks with which to indelibly stamp memories. (Who wants to call "Fee, fie, foe, fum, I'm looking down the barrel of a Different Gun" or "Beat Me With Your Rhythm Stick" *our* song?)

Indeed, highly placed sources in assorted eleventh grade classes inform me actually that Hendrix, the Beach Boys, Buffalo Springfield, the Who, and Paul McCartney's old band — the Beatles — are extraordinarily popular again among the high school intelligentsia.

So we find ourselves being weaned — learning that desire doesn't always come with searing riffs. That not all emotions peak after 2½ minutes and end after 3½, but sustain themselves, linger, and have repercussions. That not everyone is as predictably supportive as a favorite song, but that lovers can learn and have the power to surprise. That the expectation of a love song in the background can tamper with and detract from what's really in the air.

That when life goes on in silence, somehow it finds its own rhythm and its own quiet charm. M

Carter Family, *cont. from pg. 28*

wrote some pretty good songs, though Carlene started going in a different direction then. But we were both kinda real ballad oriented...real love songs."

Both cut their debuts almost at the same time, Carlene in England with The Rumour, Rosanne in Germany waxing a disc for Ariola (that she today disclaims). As if the race to be the first to release a record wasn't enough competition, in between the two came Rodney Crowell. A friend of Carlene's from his days in Nashville as a songwriter for Jerry Reed, Rodney acted as a "management consultant," as Carlene calls it, for her first album. The arrangement didn't work out,

Among the personal shuffles came some song shuffling too. "Right Or Wrong," Crowell's title tune on Rosanne's first American album, was supposedly written and slated for Carlene. At the same time, "Baby Ride Easy" was a song that Carlene had originally done with Crowell.

"After Rodney left, me and Edmunds started singin' it together," says Carlene of the duet. "We just sang it for all these years late at night in hotel rooms-...bored everyone to death. We'd be in a roomful of people and we'd be singin' it and everybody'd be groovin' at first, until we git around to the tenth time. Edmunds would just say, 'Let's do it again,' and start it up again.

Although Carlene found working with Nick easy ("It wasn't like he was doing an album for his old lady. It was more like — the band and Carlene," she says), Rosanne points out the dangers of working with one's mate. "If I was doing a record with somebody else who wasn't my husband, I could come home from the studio and say, 'Oh, he was so terrible to me,' and Rodney'd give me sympathy. But working together, we come home and battle it out.

"It's hard. All your emotional things get brought into your work, and vice versa. Then again, you can do some of your best things because you're in love. He knows me better than anyone and what I want. And he always lets me have my way."

"Rodney and Rosanne don't wanna work together either," observes Carlene, "because it's kinda uncool, supposedly. Nick and I fought it for ages. But the thing is, you do it with who you do it the best with.

The alignment of the London new wave scene and Los Angeles country-rock with Nashville through Lowe and Crowell marrying into the Carter line promises many interesting fusions for the future (my great hope — Edmunds working someday with George Jones). Few people other than Johnny Cash represent such a universality of music, so the family ties, seemingly odd as they are, make perfect sense. M

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RECORD REVIEWS

Earth, Wind & Fire

Faces, ARC/Columbia KC236795.

Throughout the 70s Earth, Wind & Fire was the standard bearer for the old values of rhythm and blues, while simultaneously adding vital new influences to the style. Vocal harmonies of ethereal beauty, strong supportive horn lines, the rhythm section's crisp play, and uplifting, often judgmental lyrics were utilized with the utmost skill. Likewise, third world instruments, such as leader Maurice White's African finger piano, the kalimba, rhythms from a variety of South American cultures, and rich jazzy solos were wonderfully integrated into Earth, Wind & Fire's arrangements.

This made E,W&F, along with Stevie Wonder, the leading force in black pop, a position consolidated by a spectacular mix of visual trickery and musical skill in concert. But the group's last album *I Am* was a disappointment, sounding competent where they were once daring, and bored instead of inspired. It was a sharp decline from the mid-70s heights of *That's the Way of the World, Gratitude*, and *Spirit*. One wondered if the stumble of *I Am* would be a permanent fall from grace.

Thankfully, its new four-sided, 15-song album *Faces* re-affirms E,W&F's role as the world's finest progressive soul band. While not an innovative work, the beauty of *Faces* is the band's feeling of renewed vigor and spirit, qualities that separate them from the many other good self-contained black bands.

For example, "Let Me Talk" is in the tradition of distinctive singles like "Shining Star," "Serpentine Fire," and "Getaway." Opening with a swirl of Larry Dunn's synthesizer and Al McKay's chucky rhythm guitar, it shifts effortlessly between two grooves while presenting an aggressive lyric filled with references to inflation, Arab oil, and pseudo-chic ("trying to find excitement in the labels that you wear") articulated by Maurice White's husky baritone. E,W&F is a very socially conscious group, but wisely they realize commercial success rides on music that usually subverts any lyrical message. Another song, 'Pride," speaks about the need for self-confidence and moral strength. Yet it's the brilliant horn arrangement that one remembers. The play of reeds against brass and the shimmering quality of the horns ensemble compares favorably with the power of the classic big bands.

Among the album's other pleasures are percussionist Philip Bailey's soaring vocals on "Sailaway" and "Win or Lose;" Steve Lukather's melodic rock guitar on "Back on the Road;" the steady groove of drummers Ralph Johnson and Fred White and bassist Verdine White on "Turn It Into Something Good;" the mix of latin rhythms and jazz soloing on the lengthy title track; and the band's harmonies on everything.

Faces may be a great album, but it's too soon to label it so. Time will, as they say, tell. What is immediately apparent is that E,W&F is back making sweet soul music. That is good news indeed. — *Nelson George*

Stevie Wonder

Hotter Than July Tamla T8-373M1.

Never mind the flora and fauna—here's the funk, mister. On his seventh album since he came of musical age in 1972 with the one-man show *Music of My Mind*, Stevie Wonder sets the wayback machine for his mid-'70s glory days of *Innervisions* and *Fulfillingness' First Finale* to make his most compelling, irresistably danceable, and completely satisfying record in — for Wonder — too many a moon. No talking to the plants while they talk back; no two-and-a-half record sets spent in search of the lost chord in the key of life. *Hotter Than July* is just that — 24-carat-Stevie, his indelible musical and spiritual stamp pressed into a winning ten-song program of discophonic dance tracks, sassy R&B struts, and stunning ballads.

It is probably approaching sacrilege as well as hyperbole to suggest that *Hotter Than July* is like a visit from a long lost (well, maybe not *that* long) friend. But there is something a bit disconcerting about the way the press, radio and fans have received this album. Though hardly flawless, both *Songs in the Key of Life* and *Journey Through the Secret Life of Plants* were earnest and often successful attempts to redefine the boundaries of both soul and modern pop, to go where no R&B artist had ever gone before. But the collective sigh of relief that has greeted *Hotter Than July* suggests that Wonder's public, in general, merely tolerated those records, particularly *Plants*, as the eccentricities to be expected of genius. *Hotter Than July* is his return to classic form and that is certainly worth celebrating.

But for all its charms *Hotter Than July* is actually a rather conservative record. There is nothing here that you have not already heard in some other form or crafty combination on *Talking Book, Innervisions*, or *Fulfillingness' First Finale*. "Cash in Your Face" is a thinly disguised rewrite of "Superstition" with a slightly less tempestuous beat bolstered by the defiantly open bitterness in the lyrics (a case of racial discrimination) and Wonder's sneering Sly Stone-like vocal. Other deja vu's include "Do Like You," which hearkens back to the rousing block party fervor of "Sir Duke," and "All I Do," a touching, understatedly romantic hybrid of the cool samba style that opens *Music of My Mind*'s "Superwoman" and the loping uptempo enthusiasm of "Isn't She Lovely" from *Songs in the Key of Life*.

The album's centerpiece "Master Blaster (Jammin')," from whence cometh the album title, is a significant improvement over Wonder's previous, rather dilettantish experiment with reggae in "Boogie On Reggae Woman." Though he is clearly inspired enough by Bob Marley to cop a few licks from Marley's "Jamming" and then pay his respects to him in the song, Wonder has orchestrated here his own unique marriage between the rockers beat and the brisk funky chops of the Wonderlove band. You can't help but wonder, though, just how funky things could have gotten if Wailers Aston and Carlton Bar-

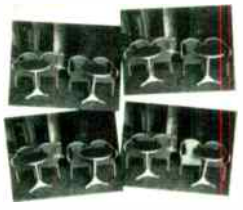
rett had been behind this beat.

And the potential hits just keep on comin' — the uplifting funk 'n' roll of "I Ain't Gonna Stand For It" with its twin guitar riffing and Hank DeVito's shimmering pedal steel guitar; "As If You Read My Mind," a slice of Latino chunka-chunka rhythm; the fragile beauty of the ballads "Rocket Love" and "Lately." Wonder is in consistently fine voice and while he is supported here by a cast of several players and singers in contrast to his usual solo extravaganzas, it is Wonder's words, music, spirit, and inner vision that defines not only his sound but his place in the Parthenon of pop.

The music does not come without a message. The innversleeve is a heated yet eloquent pitch by Wonder to declare January 15, Martin Luther King's birthday, a national holiday and he even gets the party rolling with the song "Happy Birthday." But *Hotter Than July* is an album meant to be enjoyed, danced to, whistled with — not just respected as another work of genius. In the Stevie Wonder canon, *Hotter Than July* is nothing new. It is, however, what he does best. That should be recommendation enough. — *David Fricke*

McCoy Tyner

Four by Four, Milestone M55007.



I've always loved the way McCoy Tyner makes a piano sound and have had, therefore, a lot less trouble than most of my brother critics with the sameness of his albums. The only reason reviewers *kvetch* as much as they do is that they've gotten more than one taste of glory from the man and are disappointed with anything less. Tyner has created the hope that every encounter with him will be a major occurence and no one can forgive him. *Four by Four* isn't one of the great McCoy Tyner albums, but by any standards other than those of outraged greed it 's a pretty good one. Like most of the low-voltage Tyner albums, it's the producer's date. On each of its four sides, Tyner appears with the rhythm section of Al Foster and Cecil McBee and one guest soloist: alternately Freddie Hubbard, John Abercrombie, Bobby Hutcherson or Arthur Blythe.

The side with Hubbard is in some ways the most predictable. The trumpeter sounds tense and edgy, as he usually does these days when he's called upon to play hard and fast — Will the lip hold out? Am I as good as I used to be? Aw Jesus, can't I find *something* I haven't played before? though he does get good lyrical mileage out of his flugelhorn feature and finds the beginning of a hard groove on his third and last cut. Anyone caught sneezing at him will be shot. McBee and Foster sound okay and Tyner is in good form, though without that extra intensity he brings to his best efforts — no polyphonic pythons, demolition derbies, just the possibly best and certainly most influential straight-ahead pianist in jazz doing his stuff. The side with Abercrombie on electric mandolin raises some interesting possibilities, since the electric wisp-specialist is the least typical Tyner sideman on the date and might, who knows, jog the pianist into playing a little differently. But it doesn't happen.

Tyner does his own best playing with Hutcherson, whose company he obviously enjoys, and there's a revival of "Pannonica," a well chosen tune from Monk's book, and a good Hutcherson original to help carry the side. The three cuts with Blythe are a little surprising: for the first time in recent memory Tyner is made to sound like a sideman. Blythe's lines are so clear cut, and retain their shape so vividly in the memory, that everything else is reduced to background and filler. Like Tyner, Blythe is a consistent, original and somewhat predictable stylist, and his solos here have an energy unlike anything else on the album. It's not that I think that he's a better musician than the other people on the date, but he's a bit more genuinely impassioned and a whole lot less familiar. Tyner performs ably in the background the way he did on a score of albums in the 60s, though without the architectural logic of his earlier work. These days he tends to get where he's going as soon as he starts out and stays there until he's done. So the album's not a bad one, but it is a bit of a yawn. It might have been improved by a more dangerous drummer or by lead soloists who might have challenged Tyner (people like Julius Hemphill come to mind), but that would have meant taking chances, and of such chances record companies are not made. If Tyner is allowed to complete his transformation into an old warhorse no heads will roll, but there will be less joy in the Mudville of jazz. — *Rafi Zabor*

Cheap Trick

All Shook Up Epic 36498.

In offering the last solemn note of the Beatle's "A Day In The Life" as the first note of their new George Martin - produced L P Cheap Trick creates a 13-year ellipsis, making the period between "Sgt. Pepper" and "All Shook Up" as meaningful as a function word linking main and subordinate clauses. Pop has long been the name of the game in commercial music, and the Beatles brought to it a remarkable freshness, maturity and richness of ideas, leaving in their wake a decade of cheap opportunism (Beatlemania) and revivalism.

By using the final note of the classic Beatles threnody as the springboard for their own leap into pop, Cheap Trick invariably invites comparisons that cannot be in their favor. However, they do manage to demonstrate that with enough inventiveness and adventurous spirit, today's pop musicians can borrow freely from any source without dulling the edge of originality. With that in mind, why not the best?

Side One is very much late Beatles — "Sgt. Pepper" to "Abbey Road" — the fun period, when the group turned in on its own legend and sold us all on enigma. Robin Zander on "Just Got Back" wails like Lennon on "The White Album," while Rick Nielsen plays many of the familiar guitar riffs from the lost generation. Cheap Trick's "The World's Greatest Lover" is a marvelous abstraction, a Walrus for the '80s.

Side Two leans more toward the early Beatles. "I Love You Honey But I Hate Your Friends" and "Love Comes A-Tumblin' Down" are fairly straight blues-rock, although "High Priest Of Rhythmic Noise," in its high end/fuzztone vocal counterpoint, is reminiscent of the Beatles experimentation with multi-tracking during a time when instrumental skill and execution counted more than good engineering.

Though Cheap Trick will probably remain more of a traditional Midwest rock than a pop act, the more mature style exhibited here is anomalous with their ultra-coy, almost infantile stage act. Rick Nielsen's mugging, for example, mimics the whimpering of a sly puppy angling for another 10 minutes of heavy petting.

It may be some time before the honesty of Cheap Trick's presentation measures up to the quality of their music. It would be nice to report that playing "All Shook Up" backwards at 78 rpm yields a small voice chanting, 'I buried persona.' — *Mark Mehler*

The Roches

Nurds Warner Bros. BSK 3475.

The Roches insist that *all* of life's various situations and entanglements —getting along at the laundromat, financial success, love relationships, the arrival of the boat people — can be reduced to an erector set simplicity. Yet they are equally uncompromising in their assurance that we react not to the facts of a situation, but to the perspec-

tives of our far from stable vantage points. In other words, everything's relative. The songs on *Nurds* combine a telling omniscience and a subjective emotional immediacy within a musical framework that stresses their lyrical eccentricity and the concurrent strains of humor, pathos, and sometimes anger. Suddenly emerging melodic lines are the norm; quirky key changes provide pointed commentary (especially when they are momentarily dissonant); tempos are all mixed up. Producer Roy Halee tosses in a bit more pop instrumentation than one might expect after the spareness of *The Roches* (Fripp-produced), but *Nurds* never strays far from the exquisite and vigorous urbane folk constructions that made *The Roches* shine so brilliantly. And the sisters' complex three-part harmonies are a gorgeous, ever-moving (cascading, then jutting in front of a melody, then cushioning) aural landscape.

The Roches' expertise at juggling humor, pathos, anger, and other possible responses to the human condition is exemplified in "The Death of Suzzy Roche," which concerns a most ordinary subject — Suzzy doing the wash. Now Suzzy may seem like a perfectly decent sort of woman, but some woman who works in the laundromat honestly believes that Suzzy is a self-important, inconsiderate, all-around terrible person, overloading washing machines and all. High melodrama ensues when this other woman decides she's had just about enough; she throws Suzzy's clothes all over the place and then, naturally, she kills Suzzy. Or is this her fantasy? Is it, by any chance, Suzzy's fantasy!?! This is a *very silly* song, to be sure; as in many of the weird sisters' songs, its eccentricity is in part a deliberate humorous set-up: the inherent humor in the situation; the descriptive lyrics — "She's got stinky crusty socks/She's got underwear that shocks" the insane possibility that murder might hinge (justifiably?) on dingy panties. Further, and perhaps more important, warping results from the non-stop eye-crossing (ear-crossing?) that is entailed in trying to simultaneously register all of the mundane reductions and romantic expansions.

Daring to hunt for inversions in intelligently chosen appropriated material, the Roches deliver an hilarious a cappella reading of Cole Porter's sophisticated rhythms. The obvious and knowing juxtaposition — "It's so good for me it's bad for me" — is turned into a perverse and gleeful contradiction. And the beautiful traditional Irish song, "Factory Girl," is a natural. Any time great passion is thwarted by "the dumb sound of the factory bell," don't be surprised to find a Roche or three calling for both tears and laughter. — *Jim Feldman*

Donna Summer
The Wanderer (Geffen/Warner Bros.)

The Wanderer is disco diva Donna's Inferno, a trip that will take us through her cold hell, up against fiendish temptation and out the other side to spiritual redeption. It's also her first album for David Geffen's stable of stars after bolting Neil Bogart's tottering Casablanca empire. And, from the opening synth-tones of the title track, it is clear Summer is attempting to inflate her persona to the larger-than-life station her new position demands. Within one verse, the canny symbol of disco decadence has touched on at least five potent rock 'n' roll myths: "*Woke up this morning/Dragged myself across the bed/Alice went/To Wonderland/But I stayed home/Instead/I started feelin' bad/'Cause I was left behind/'Cause I'm a wanderer.*" Donna effortlessly links the Beatles, Lewis Carroll, Cinderella, the "road" blues and Del Shannon as co-producer Giorgio Moroder drags that longing wistfulness cooly into the '80s. At every turn, Moroder and co-producer Pete Bellote provide their artist's yearning, chilly vocals with a calculating futuristic, mocking wall-of-muzak.

The melodies are uniformly haunting — inspirational hymns such as "Looking Up" and the oddly utopian "Grand Illusion," are delivered with the same eerie dislocation as explicit confessions like "Breakdown" and "Nightlife," in which Donna once more assumes the morally questionable role of hooker/waif. Ironically enough, the songs which seem the most literally autobiographical, like "Cold Love" and "Who Do You Think You're Foolin'," were not penned by Summer, but by Bellote. On the other hand, the most blatant attempts to make Donna into a dehumanized Black Everywoman come from Summer herself, on self-written numbers like the title track and the ill-fated Jackson Browne cum Phil Spector rock machinations of "Running For Cover." After all the charges of exploitation that have been aimed at the well-oiled Summer organization, one begins to realize the lady herself contributes mightily to the scheme (or scam).

Nevertheless, *The Wanderer* is the work of a confident artist at the peak of her dramatic powers, a promising music of fusion to which Munich, Los Angeles, Detroit, Muscle Shoals and New York have each contributed their influence. Whether warning about the dangers of the devil or the ecstacy of belief in Jesus, Donna doesn't waver from her icy distance, and therein lies her dilemma. By rendering good and evil mortally neutral,

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Jack DeJohnette, drums, piano, melodica.
David Murray, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet.
Arthur Blythe, alto saxophone.
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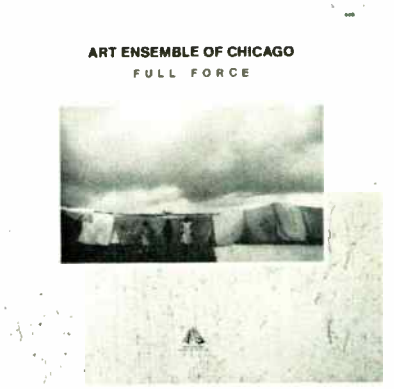
3rd Place
Full Force



ECM-1-1167

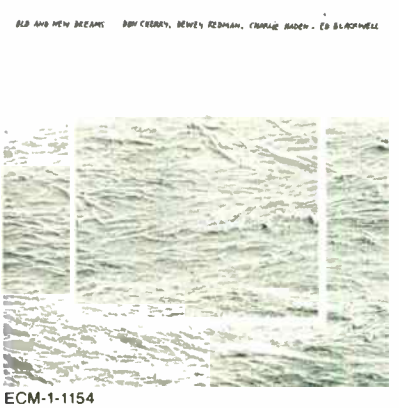
Lester Bowie, trumpet.
Joseph Jarman, saxophones, percussion.
Roscoe Mitchell, saxophones, percussion.
Malachi Favors Maghostus, bass, percussion.
Famoudou Don Moye, drums, percussion.

8th Place
Nice Guys

ECM-1-1126

Lester Bowie, trumpet.
Joseph Jarman, saxophones, percussion.
Roscoe Mitchell, saxophones, percussion.
Malachi Favors Maghostus, bass, percussion.
Famoudou Don Moye, drums, percussion.

9th Place
Old and New Dreams



ECM-1-1154

Don Cherry, trumpet, piano.
Dewey Redman, tenor saxophone, musette.
Charlie Haden, bass.
Ed Blackwell, drums.

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Donna Summer has stumbled upon the profound indifference of the universe, a message she delivers with stunning unawareness. In the final analysis, Donna makes salvation sound just as interesting (and boring) as sin, and perhaps that is her real leap of faith. — *Roy Trakin*

Steve Reich

Octet—Music for a Large Ensemble —Violin Phase, ECM-1-1168.

I was one of the handful of educated music-humans who found Reich's *Music* for 18 Musicians a nearly total bore, just when repitition music was getting chic after fifteen years of relative obscurity, just when everyone's boredom was looking for a new and satisfactory body of music to latch onto. More's the pleasure, then, as I take in the marvelously Edenic music on Reich's new album, which contains nothing very different from his last, a little more variation maybe, three shortish pieces rather than one long one but pretty much the same sounds and textures withal. The great change in the music can only, therefore, be explained in terms of intangibles like spirit, creativity, the presence of joy. There's something like a spring breeze blowing through these pieces, and it carries the smell of fresh grass, new life, possible flowers. It's not so much the motoric figures given to marimba in "Large Ensemble" and piano in "Octet"—they are substantially identical to the motifs that propelled "18 Musicians" — but the long respirations of the woodwinds beneath them and the relationships they suggest between time and eternity, activity and repose, that lift this music to a high level of discourse and make it so satisfactory and immediate an image of the created world and the process of its continuing creation. The music is at every instant in a new configuration, each of its units linked indissolubly to every other, and every moment presents a new relationship between past and present, permanence and the passing, law and incident, archetype and manifestation. Something has really opened up for Reich this time, and the life in the music is so strong that few listeners will remain untouched by it, each in his or her own way. I commend this album whole-heartedly to your awakened attention.

For those still to be introduced to this kind of music — sometimes called minimal, sometimes erroneously called trance music, sometimes in fashion and sometimes barely tolerated as a sideline, made up of a relatively few figures repeated (Glass), gradually permuted

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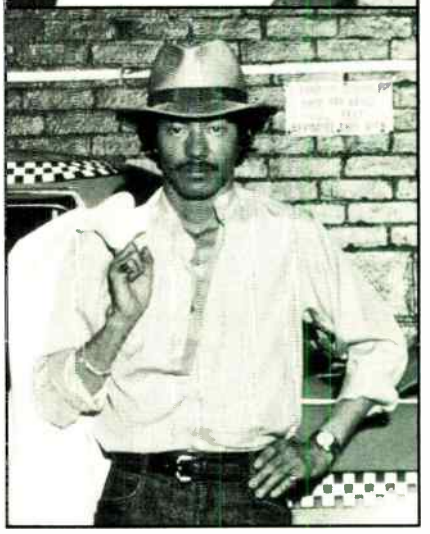

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(Reich), extended (LaMonte Young) or otherwise trafficked with to greater or lesser effect (Riley, Eno, Fripp, a scad of rockbands), ambitious in its modesty, systematic where its Third World Sources (Africa, Bali, India) were more natural breathings, nostalgic for a vision of the greater order of things while still walled into the glacial cerebrality of the Western present — this album is the best place to start. For those who have already been around this block, it will bring fresh news, an unexpected opening outwards. The third piece on the album, for overdubbed solo violin, dates from 1967 and shows how long Reich has been working this particular patch of ground, how intelligent he is and how far he has had to come. — *Rafi Zabor*

The Jacksons
Triumph Epic
Bootsy
Ultra Wave (Warner Bros.)

Once a solid state boogie unit, the funk is breaking off into intricate components. Case in point: The Jacksons have a pop/fusion/funk component, and Bootsy has a polyrhythmic/art funk module. Both groups (Bootsy's crew lost the name of the "Rubber Band" in court over the summer, due to the allegations that a white rockabilly band in the early '70s had the same moniker. Hmmm?...) will revolutionize a lot of the music that is to come.

The Jacksons' *Triumph* is self-explanatory.The lyrics are uncomplicated, the arrangements tight, and the vocals are typical Jackson. Again, Michael Jackson proves why he is one of the most para-talented performers in the world, showing his versatility in arranging and co-writing most of the songs. He lends his brothers the same spirit he utilized on his mega-selling *Off The Wall* album. Marlon, Jackie, Tito, and Randy layer colorful vocal patterns on cuts like "Lovely One" a muvic (movemusic) hit in the dizzcos, and the irresistible orchestrated pop of "Can You Feel It," geared toward a univeral oneness with mankind. One of the most interesting tunes is Mike's "Heartbreak Hotel." It is eerie, but danceable.

They lend themselves to some fusion on "Wondering Who," which transpires from their trademark drop-pocket-hand-clap-rhythm workout, to a vocoder Hancock/Wonder electric nonsense syllable vocal at the end of the song. *Triumph* is the Jacksons' latest victory on vinyl, and a must for any music lover.

Also a must for any music lover, especially romancers of the so called "new wave" fad is Bootsy Collins' *Ultra Wave*. He worked on this highly secret project for an entire 12 months or more, and his painstaking diligence has certainly paid off in creating one of the most highly progressive funk albums of the year. None of the tunes, including "Mug Push," "F-Encounter," or "Sound Crack" are standard funk; this is electrified muvic with emphasis on synthesizers constructing concurrent modal devices against heavy pocket drum configurations. Bernie Worrell and what may be Junie Morrison (or Joel "Razor Sharp" Johnson) "throw down" on one of the most intense keyboard backups (while Boosty plucks, ploinks, and pops his Space Bass into sonic symmetrical designs that surround the rhythm section) on "It's A Musical." My favorite is "Fat Cat," a message song dealing with politicians controlling and constipating the nation's monetary flow. The liquid melody slips from a synthesizer line reminiscent of Squeeze's "Another Nail In My Heart" and the chopped licks of James Brown's "Licking Stick." Bootsy and Bernie (itinerant keyboardist for the Talking Heads) put the rhythm section on edge with buoyant trade-offs between Space Bass and Moog Bass. This cut is instruction for avant garde cerebral runkers (rock/funkers), like David Byrne. While he did an admirable job encoding Brownistic/Clintonian/Fela polyrhythms on "Born Under

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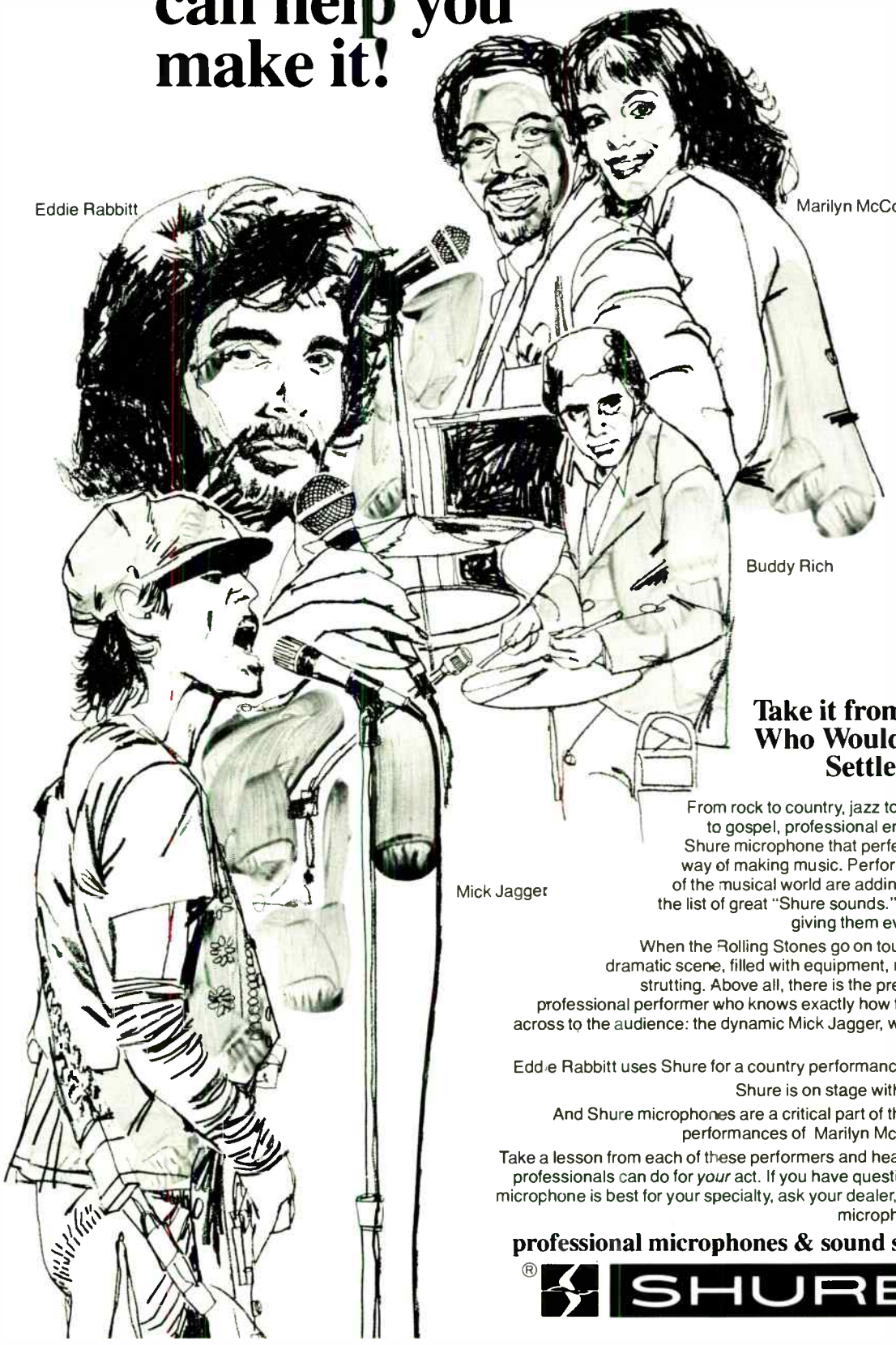

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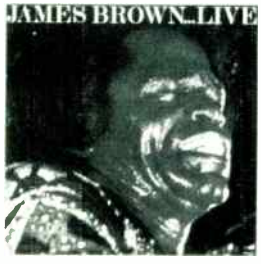
Punches" (from *Remain In Light*), Bootsy goes a step further and governs each and every individual beat into a highly organized progro-tech groovatropolis. Rick James, Michael Henderson, Ray Parker, stop wading in the funk; Bootsy is riding the *Ultra Wave*! — *Barry Michael Cooper*

James Brown

James Brown... Live/Hot on the One PD-2-6290.

Live and Lowdown at the Apollo, Vol. I Solid Smoke 8006.



"The Hardest Working Man in Show Business! The King of Soul! The Superstar Himself! The Undisputed King of Soul Himself! James Brown! Jaaaaammmmmes BROWN!" Recorded live in Tokyo. Brown's new double album sounds more like a pep rally than a concert, with Danny Ray, Brown's long-time M.C., shouting out the old platitudes between every other tune (or so it seems). His mono-maniacal gymnastics of hype seem awkward, sad, hopeless: the only thing that will bolster Brown's fading rep is some fresh jam, and *Hot On The One* sure ain't it.

Produced and arranged by Brown himself — after hassles with Polydor — this record was supposed to cap his comeback and win back his title of champeen of funk. Instead, it's his own Larry Holmes debacle. The grooves are more static than hypnotic; they lack the tension and depth and power that can make even the most minimal funk groove move. (Development, of course, is out of the question.) The band — his own JBs and not a studio group — sounds disarmingly anonymous: the horns light a match when what James needs is a blow-torch, the rent-a-chic back-up singers are useless, and the drummer doesn't even lock-it-in-the-pocket.

Brown himself can still dance and sweat, but his singing has faded into self-caricature. But see him live, it's all still there. And as for the repertoire, it's nothing but another xerox of his Greatest Hits — "genuine" imitation recordings of the tunes that made him famous. Brown's re-re-re-recording of old material does neither him nor us any good: it doesn't get him back on the radio, and it doesn't give us anything but nostalgia — smokin' concert classics like *Sex Machine Live* or *Live At the Apollo Vol 1*. The earliest of these two golden, nasty documents of R&B history — the October 24, 1962 Apollo date for King records — has long been out of print. And now for the good news: Solid Smoke has freed the LP from its status as collector's item by reissuing it as *Live and Lowdown*. Lowdown indeed, the 32 minute Apollo performance catches "Butane" James and His Famous Flames at their burnin' best. Arguably the most exciting act ever recorded live, the set established Brown as *the* force in black popular music. His performance is dramatic and dynamic, a far cry from the one-dimensional growling and yelping on his current release, and the Flames doo-wop, shuffle, swing, and testify like no other R&B group. *Hot On The One* pales in comparison to the Apollo date, which was recorded at a time when Brown was not only the hardest working man in show business but also the best. — *David Breskin*

Keith Jarrett

G.I. Gurdjieff Sacred Hymns, ECM

Some background may help explain why Keith Jarrett, known for his improvisations and jazz composing, has made a record of classical music by an obscure composer. George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff was born in Armenia in 1877 and died in Paris in 1949. His pupil, J.G. Bennett, has described his life as an attempt to answer the question, "What is the sense and significance of life on earth, and of human life in particular?" The answers he found during searches throughout the Near, Middle and Far East he conveyed in his books and lectures, in practical exercises which have been preserved and transmitted by his students, and in his music. Gurdjieff always made the distinction between subjective art, which reflects external influences on the artist, and objective art which comes

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from a 'higher' or 'more inward' place, and which carries a definite meaning intended by the artist. The Sacred Hymns convey directly to the emotions of the listener the nature of reality as Gurdjieff understood it. Many of the hymns on this record are connected with the Easter liturgy of the Russian Orthodox church, and through that the idea of death and resurrection which is the focus of the Eastern rite.

Music with this kind of deceptive simplicity demands a different kind of listening and performance. The practice of active listening will be very useful to those who wish to understand what this music has to say. But even people who came in contact with this record only through the accident of working for Warner Bros. have recognized a special quality in it. The requirements of performance are the opposite of the Western classical tradition in which a performer imposes his personality on the music through interpretation. Instead, Jarrett is here trying (for the most part successfully) to let the music come through him without imposing on it in any way. This is the same approach he takes to his own solo improvising, which is no accident since he has been a student of Gurdjieff's ideas and methods for some years. He has performed an act of service, not only to Gurdjieff, but to us all in making this music more available. — *Chris Doering*

Sonny Rollins — *Love At First Sight*, Milestone M-9098. If Sonny Rollins doesn't play the way he used to it's probably because his outlook has changed or perhaps it has brightened. Gone are those sardonic, cubist expressions that gave his '50s and early '60s work such a cutting edge; also missing (on record anyway) is the tendency to dominate his sidemen with magesterial audacity. This music is both sunnier and more affectionate than ever before, certainly Newk's best album (not performance, for that refer back to "Autumn Nocturne" and "Silver City") since *Next Album*. Doing his best to satisfy his old fans, there are several asides from memory lane liberally sprinkled throughout (like "East Broadway Rundown," "Softly As A Morning Sunrise," "Naima") and a new performance of "Strode Rode" which points out the changes not so much in his style, as in that of his accompanists. Al Foster, Stanley Clarke and George Duke turn in some of their best recent work, but their swing is heavier and more backbeat oriented than many would care to hear, but quite appropriate for the R&B inflections of side one where Rollins concentrates on the timbral aspects of his style. They are not quite up to Rollins' quirky rhythmic changes, but Sonny is deferential to their groove, only modulating extensively on "The Very Thought Of You." Clearly, Sonny needs expansive chord structures

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rather than modal jaunts to test his free association ability. In any event, this is quite chirpy, and probably as good an example of MOR jazz as one is likely to hear. — *Chip Stern*

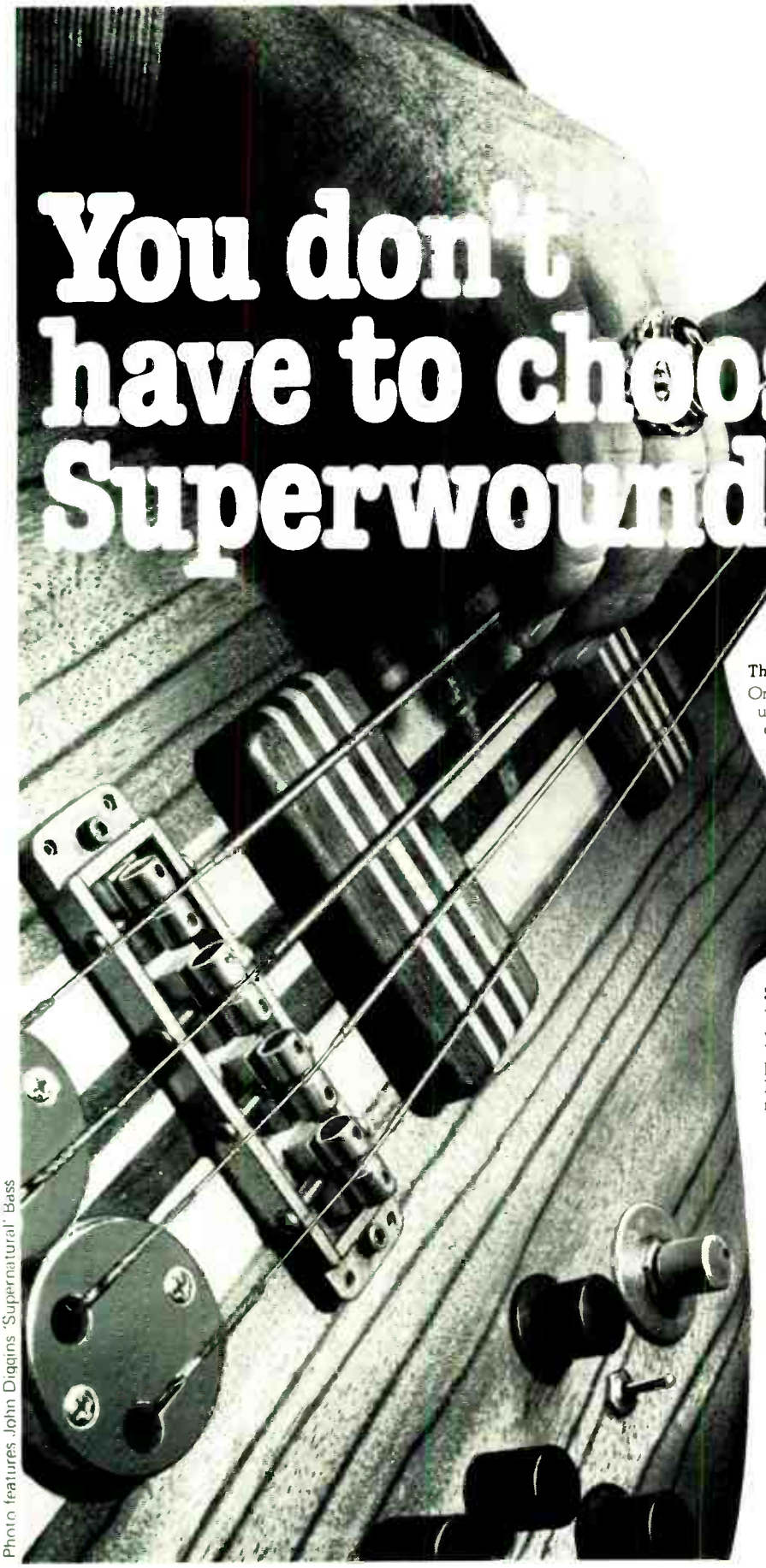
Betty Carter — *The Audience With Betty Carter* Bet-Car MK 1003. Actress, humorist, scatter, sculptor, sentimentalist, swinger and sex-kitten: every angle of Carter's shtick gets full coverage on *The Audience*. The audience was in San Francisco's Great American Music Hall last December, the backing trio of John Hicks, Curtis Lunday and Kenneth Washington was ripe enough to burst (they've since dispersed), and Carter herself was at the top of her game. The resulting double album documents the state-of-her-art; love her or hate her (if you have no taste), but don't ignore her. Supple and sensuous as ever, Carter twists and turns her way through an hour-and-a-half of torch songs, floaters, favorite things, originals and big scat attacks (one lasts 25 minutes) with the kind of spirit and energy that'll charge my battery all winter. — *David Breskin*

Young Marble Giants, *Colossal Youth*, Rough Trade Import ROUGH 8.

Listen to Colossal Youth and you'll get an eerie sense of the past, present and future rolled into one. Stuart Moxham's churchy organ gives tunes like "The Taxi" and "Wind in the Rigging" a medieval bent, while "Searching for Mr. Right," "Music for Evenings" and "Include Me Out" present contemporary situations from an alienated but witty point of view. And the dance music of the future could very well sound like "Brand-New-Life:" more tension than power from the electric instruments and so quiet that it's overwhelming. Everything this Welsh trio does (especially Alison Statton's deadpan vocals) is hushed and full of a sense of wonder. — *Stuart Cohn*

Teddy Pendergrass — *TP*, Philadelphia International FZ 36745. At his best, with Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes and on his excellent solo debut album, Teddy Pendergrass confidently exuded both a leisurely seductiveness and an often playful but unabashed sexual aggressiveness. But in the last couple of years, generally unexceptional material has led to caricature, "Close the Door," "Turn Off the Lights," and "Do Me" (get it?) encouraging Pendergrass as a manipulating (*and* manipulated, come to think of it) macho blusterer. A real waste of talent.

TP marks the return of the human, romantic Pendergrass. Adjectives such as relaxed, ingratiating, and direct describe most of the album, whether the songs are up-tempo or gentle love songs. Pendergrass' two duets with Stephanie Mills are, in fact, more respectful than sexy, somewhat of a miscalculation — after all, soul duets call for interplay and sparks. "I Just



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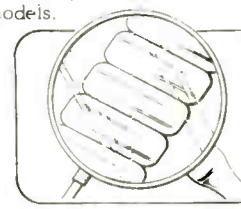

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Called to Say" recalls the soulful sophistication of the Temptations, in particular David Ruffin. The ambivalence at the heart of the grand romantic ballad, "Can't We Try" ("...go away/I wish you'd stay" — at the affair's end), is unforced and moving; Pendergrass reveals himself as a genuine crooner. And there is also some tasty "cooking," including two cuts written and produced by Ashford & Simpson. On their "Girl You Know," Pendergrass balances cocksure self-satisfaction and guileless pleasure, and the resulting smoke isn't irritating. — *Jim Feldman*

Joe "King" Carrasco and the Crowns, Stiff Import SEEZ 28.

Don't listen to this album. Just put it on and start shaking. Carrasco updates the Tex-Mex sound of Sir Douglas and Sam the Sham: drunk and frenzied with a lilting two-step beat. Kris Cummings' swirling, sinuous Farfisa sets the tone for rockers like "Susan Friendly" and "Let's Get Pretty" as well as the more Mexican "Buena" and "Caca de Vaca." Carrasco's fuzzy guitar chording takes it into motorbike-like overdrive. His vocals, though, are a bit tame and this LP doesn't have the range of 1978's *Joe "King" Carrasco with El Molino* (Lisa Records, San Antonio, TX). But the pace is just gear-fab frenetic. *Stuart Cohn*

Jim Carroll, *cont. from pg. 44*

Diaries have a lot to do with it. That's an image they lay on you, you know. But I don't want to dwell on it anymore. Besides, a lot of the songs have references to getting *away* from junk."

Carroll's voice softens. "I never thought about all this, you know. I thought we'd have some good fans like we've had from the start that would really be into it, but that it would stay kinda cultish. See, the record's starting to do past what anyone anticipated. All the attention feels strange. But I feel like the album backs up any kind of hype."

It does. But can it be considered *apart* from the hype and the doom freaks, that's the question. In a perfect world it would always be possible to pull the hype, the artist and the art apart long enough to see each clearly, to put each in its proper perspective to the others. But this is not a perfect world. Jim Carroll is already being dismissed by many as a druggie delinquent gloried for stupid living habits and questionable talents. They sense that he's being asked to be the life of the party, the new boy to keep romance and justification in the slow, self-imposed exit. Right now it looks like Carroll has declined the invitation — but a lot of the kamakazies look resolute like that when they first arrive. "You just gotta see that junk is just another nine-to-five gig in the end," it reads in the Diaries, "only the hours are a bit more inclined toward shadows." Currently, at least, Carroll is otherwise employed.

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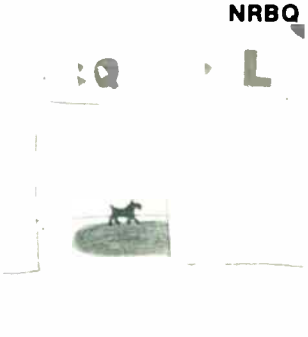
ROCK SHORT TAKES

The Clash present a capital idea, Sky reach the limit, and Jim Carroll trips over the rocks in his rhyme. Alan Parsons draws the same old hand, but Motorhead comes up aces.

By David Fricke

Jim Carroll

NRBQ



Jimmy Cliff

Robin Lane

"Deck the walls with bins of vinyl..." Christmas is coming and so is that annual avalanche of new releases orchestrated by the record companies to take up most if not all of the slack in your holiday shopping. There is, of course, something for everybody — the big names (Springsteen, Steely Dan, John Lennon), the two-record sets (EW&F, Heart), the live albums (Warren Zevon, Eagles, the Kampuchea concerts), the ever-popular "greatest hits" packages (Ronstadt, ELP, CS&N), soundtracks, kiddie discs, Christmas albums. *?)%□&★§(■‡#$$$ss

God help us all, everyone.

The Clash — *Black Market Clash* (Epic Nu-Disk) But what the holy is this? Value for money? Nine songs, ten inches, over 34 minutes of new wave raving? Clash completists will be especially delighted with this collection of UK B-sides, dub versions, and assorted rarities. More important, this half-an-album gives a remarkably complete, emotionally stirring overview of the growing pains both of the Clash as a band and of the politicized punk scene they sparked, from the arrogant thrash of the '77 take of "Capital Radio One" to the tortured 1980 skank of "Armagideon Time." Music for marching as well as dancing in the streets.

The Jim Carroll Band — *Catholic Boy* (Atco) Like spiritual sister Patti Smith and other poets who graft their rhyme to rock, tenement boy Jim Carroll rises and falls on the strength of his voice and backing group. His ratty singspeak and the surprisingly pedestrian bash behind it are not always strong enough to shoulder the burden of pain, despair, and streetcorner sacrifices in his verse. But when bard and band click on "City Drops Into the Night" and the punked-up eulogy "People Who Died," they make powerful medicine.

Sky — (Arista) A jazz-rock-folk-baroque fusion band with an impeccably seamless sound, this all-star team of English sessioneers led by classical axeman John Williams is the sum of the Anglo-art-rock tradition's parts. A little Caravan a smidgen of Soft Machine, a touch of Pentangle, some Renaissance and Genesis, lots of Curved Air (courtesy keysman Francis Monkman, a CA alumnus) — the combination ranges from the sensational ("Fifo," "Vivaldi") to the sleepy (most of Side Three) over the four sides of this set. This should go down especially well with the wine-cheese-and-good-friends set.

The Alan Parsons Project — *The Turn of a Friendly Card* (Arista) Producer/engineer Alan Parsons plays the studio like some people play the guitar — all chops and no feeling. Coasting on the sound that made him famous when he engineered P. Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon*, Parsons presents more of the same progressive muzak that graced his last four records. For an album about card-playing, this isn't much of a gamble.

Motorhead — *Ace of Spades* (Mercury) Now this is real man's music. Head-splitting drumming, Nugentia guitar hysterics, and singing just the wrong side of the bellowing of a pregnant elephant — it all sounds like Blue Cheer revisited. But this terrifying trio make no pretences to art, so you can't call them artless. Besides, if they were singing about police brutality and being on the dole, people would call it punk-rock.

Jimmy Cliff — *I Am The Living* (MCA) Cliff has done more for the popularization of reggae in this country than anyone save Marley. Yet he continues to take a lot of stick from roots purists because he is more interested in writing and singing hits than praising herb and Haile Selassie in song. He deserves it for "Another Summer" and "It's the Beginning of the End," unadulterated sap. But the pulsing funk of "Morning Train" and the three tracks produced by Cliff with his regular band in Jamaica (the rest were done in California) — rousing reggae to the core — are compensation enough.

Madness — *Absolutely* (Sire) Forget the 2-Tone connection. This North London mob are a Pop-Tone band, setting marvelously hummable ditties to the goose-stepping kick of ska, honky sax, carousel organ, and lots of Cockney clowning. Much of the time ("Baggy Trousers," "Overdone") they sound like Ian Dury and his Blockheads in pork pie hats, which isn't bad. But every so often they hit a resounding chord ("Take It or Leave It," "In the Rain," "You Said") that is pure Madness. Are they a band for the '80s? Absolutely.

NRBQ — *Tiddlywinks* (Rounder) All aboard for fun time. This madcap foursome stirs a heady brew of R&B, C&W, rockabilly, and cornball lounge jazz and plays it like the Marx Brothers on moonshine. The Beatlesque tones of "That I Get Back Home," heavy metallic jockabilly of "You Can't Hide" (a mouldy oldie from the band's '69 debut), and cool T. Monkabilly of Terry Adams' piano showcase "Hobbies" are only three of the eleven different good times to be had here. And there are seven other albums where this came from.

The Inmates — *Shot in the Dark* (Polydor) Good taste is timeless and so is the electric rivvum'n'blooze peddled with such enthusiasm by this refreshingly unpretentious British quintet. It is often

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hard to tell Peter Gunn's (nee Staines) originals from the cover versions, but then it's hard to tell singer Bill Hurley's gruff imitation South Side delivery from early '60s Jagger or Gunn's six-string blazing from vintage Keef. And they score big points for disinterring the Music Machine's "Talk Talk" and the Heard's hopelessly obscure garage-band chestnut "Stop It Baby."

Robin Lane and the Chartbusters — *5 Live* (Warner Brothers) This five-track 12" EP is not quite the bargain the Clash Nu-Disk is, but how do you put a price on the feisty yet deeply emotive vocal attack of Robin Lane, her songs of loves lost and found, and her crackerjack band? Caught live in Boston, RL and the CBs reprise her "hit" "When Things Go Wrong," introduce three nifty new numbers, and whup Johnny Kidd's "Shakin' All Over" right up side the head.

Miles Davis, *cont. from pg. 36*

Quintet did not fall into place immediately, as the records attest. Their November 1955 debut session was tentative, the tempos not quite right, and there were still rough edges (especially on Coltrane's part) in the spring of '56. By October 26, 1956, however, when they recorded their final session — and Davis's last date for Prestige — everything had meshed: Davis's muted passion on "You're My Everything" and "My Funny Valentine;" the hard-bop assaults on "Well, You Needn't," "Oleo," and "Airegin;" pop which both swaggered ("When Lights Are Low") and stung ("If I Were a Bell," "I Could Write a Book"); and timeless blues ("Blues by Five"). Five potential misfits had become one of the greatest bands in jazz history. Miles Davis would do it again — almost 10 years later to the day when *Miles Smiles* was cut by his second great quintet — but that's another story.

Discography

Anyone with $125 to spare, or a generous benefactor, should seek out one of the 10,000 copies of *Miles Davis Chronology: The Complete Prestige Recordings* (twelve records). I haven't heard the Fantasy Studios remasterings yet, but Phil Carroll's deluxe box is sturdy and strikingly designed, with a typically comprehensive Dan Morgenstern essay (including session-by-session commentary), 22 evocative photos (by Burt Goldblatt, Jim Marshall, and Bob Parent), and facsimiles of the original Prestige labels on the albums.

Those with more modest budgets can sample the 1956 quintet on *Miles Davis* (Prestige 24001), *Workin' and Steamin'* (24034), and *Green Haze* (24064). The famous 1954 sessions are on *Tallest Trees* (24012) and *Tune Up* (24022) and *Dig* (24054). Essential non-Prestige Davis from the period is found on *'Round About Midnight* (Columbia 8649) and *Miles Davis* (UA 9952). M

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JAZZ

SHORT TAKES

Some swing, some straight-ahead, lots of be-bop and a dash of fusion.

By Chip Stern

There is a problem I have with all the mainstream music of the past few years: how can you make the tried and true sound fresh; or extend and evolve the material without losing the original impulse.

I've been growing, over the past year, ever fonder of a **Charles McPherson** album called *Free Bop!* (Xanadu 170), and since no one else has mentioned it I'd like to recommend it. McPherson was a stalwart of Charles Mingus' early '70s groups, his light, bulbous alto providing a simmering contrast to the leader's raucous pronouncements. As his crystalline duet with pianist Lou Levy shows on "Come Sunday," he has the most diaphanous tone and lyrical purity of Charlie Parker's disciples. Producer Don Schlitten equals his usual high production standards, and McPherson avoids the stolid metronomic groove that characterizes some Schlitten dates by mixing up his rhythms (all of which swing in the hands of bassist Monty Budwig and drummer Charles McPherson Jr.). **Joe Henderson** — *Mirror Mirror* (Pausa 7075) Henderson has the classic tenor tone(s), and combines a free wheeling linear attack with elliptical arabesques of overtones and blues conjugations. Chick Corea's commentaries are etched with unselfconscious directness as the pianist reminisces over the stark romanticism of his formative years. Ron Carter and Billy Higgins orchestrate everything into a cloud dance with their customary depth and restraint. A very potent post-bop brew that differs from the McPherson date in that they don't so much play freely with the changes as improvise new ones. **Donald Byrd** — *Chant* (Blue Note LT-991) From the Blue Note vaults comes this 1961 date by the trumpeter, playing with the lithe gracefulness of the Clifford Brown school, especially on "That's All." Byrd, the woefully overlooked baritonist Pepper Adams and Herbie Hancock are in real corn bread moods, lending a pungent bluesiness to the changes. Another interesting blast from the past is the **Curtis Counce Group**'s — *Landslide* (Contemporary S7526), which illustrates the crisp, almost material articulation of west coast bebop in the '50s. Bassist Counce's occasional use of the two beat hearkens back to the swing era, but drummer Frank Butler and soloists Jack Sheldon, Harold Land and Carl Perkins are more beholden to the bop/gospel interface of Horace Silver and Art Blakey; a slightly less sanctified precursor to another Contemporary group, the Jazz Crusaders.

Seeking a respite from my search through bebop I backtracked into the R&B and swing eras with the help of a new Savoy release featuring *The Trombone Album* (with Curtis, J.J. Johnson, Frank Rosolino and Bill Harris), *Giants of Traditional Jazz* (featuring Sidney Bechet and Edmond Hall), Boyd Raeburn's *Jewells* and a Charlie Parker rarity *One Night In Chicago*. Most distinguished was *The Original Johnny Otis Show Volume II* (Savoy 2252) which delineates the links between early rock and roll and the swing era (particularly the Basie band with Jimmy Rushing and Lester Young) and piano boogie woogie. **Lester Young** — *Master Takes* (Savoy SJL 2202) Vintage middle-period improvisations from the period preceding the army and a red-hot 1949 date with Roy Haynes. You can hear Prez beginning to toy with a more concise choice of notes, a greater emphasis on repetition and thematic inversions, the pared down lyricism that cooled into his style of the 1950s as captured on *Lester Young In Washington, D.C. 1956 Vol. II* (Pablo Live 2308 225). Lester is in high spirits and he elongates each note like taffy, with a rhythmic assurance and heroic subtlety that belies the precipitous decline theory of his final years. *Live at Rick's Cafe Americain* (Flying Fish FF-079) Rambunctious, lighthearted blowing from Buddy Tate, Red Norvo, Dave McKenna and Urbie Green that bridges swing and dixieland thanks to Barrett Deems backfiring drum work. **Count Basie/Joe Turner/Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson** — *Kansas City Shout* (Pablo Digital D2310859) **Billie Holiday** — *I'll Be Seeing You* (Commodore XFL15351) **Helen Humes** — *Songs I Like To Sing*. Three fine vocal albums illustrate the range of expression in jazz singing. The Basie record is a showcase for two great blues shouters, the gruff, humorous Vinson (who also shines on alto) and the more stentorian Turner; also some nice delicate quartet pieces featuring the Count's punctillious blues piano. The Holiday record is the flagship of an excellent Commodore release that includes records by George Brunis, Edmond Hall and Albert Ammons. One side contains her work with the Eddie Heywood Orchestra, while the other employs a trio with Big Sid Catlett, both primo examples of her trend-setting '40s works, complete with alternate takes. One

continued on next page

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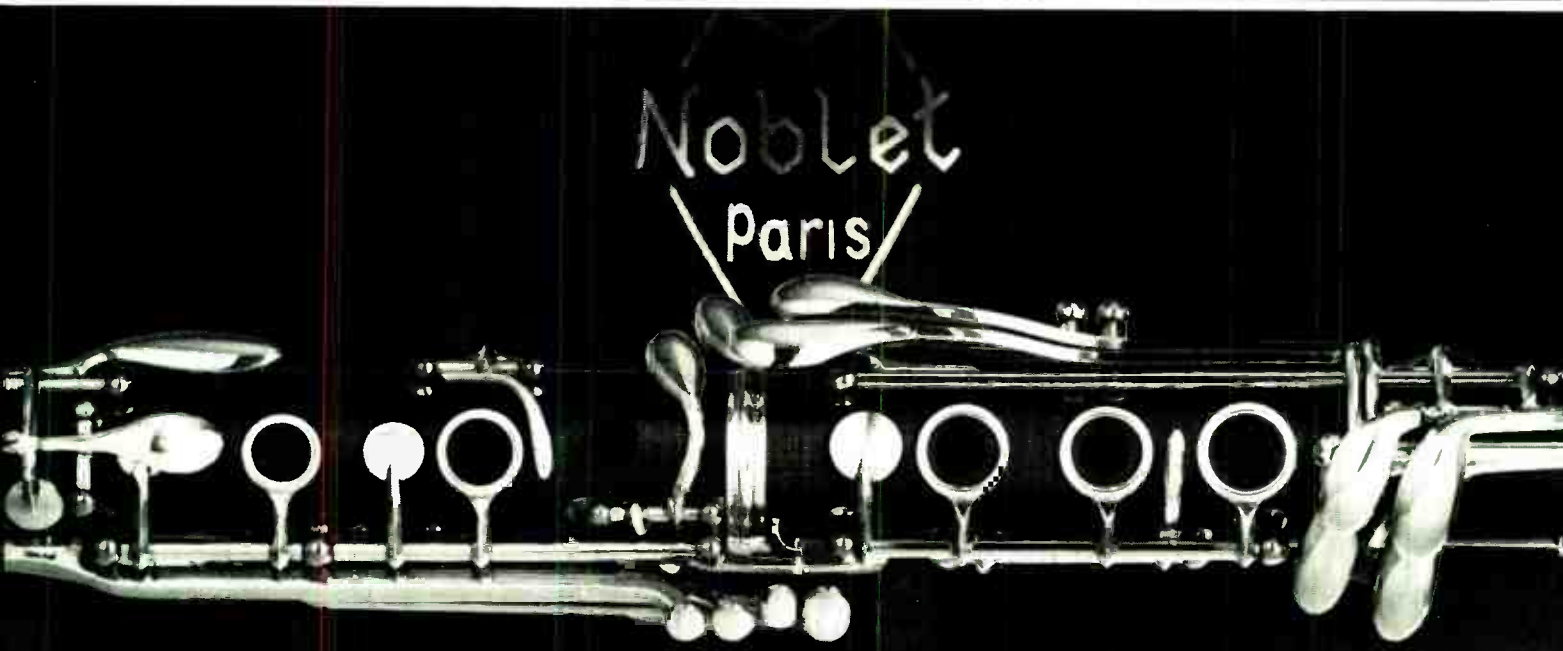

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doesn't get the sense that Holiday is singing so much as sighing in tempo; the lyrics are treated in a less than literal manner as Billie shades and floats her way through their sub-text...there's never been a voice as translucent or plastic as this, nor one so devoid of easy sentiment. The Humes record is perhaps the best available example of her art (fine recent works on Muse and Inner City notwithstanding). A brash, aggressive big band highlights the brassy timbre of Humes' pinched, shouting style, notable for its impeccable swing and swelling emotion (somewhere in between Billie and the rat-tat-tat of Ella Fitzgerald).

A few odds and ends now. **Steve Khan** — *Evidence* (Arista/Novus AN 3023). Khan transcends the fusoid filler of recent years with an acoustic album of jazz classics, including a heroic, near-masochistic attempt to translate some of Thelonious Monk's most thorny compositions to guitar. It doesn't always come off, because Khan has a tendency to fall into standardized blues riffing, but the ringing harmonies and good humor of performances like "Bye-Ya" and "Friday The 13th" are beguiling. *Live Air* (Black Saint BSR 0034). Some explosive live performances by this most unusual of all jazz trios. **Steve McCall**'s drums are in effect the lead instrument, as **Fred Hopkins**' bass provides rumbling percussive direction and **Henry Threadgill**'s witty reed work acts as punctuation for the continuous flow of sound and motion.

To wrap up, we'll cover a few of this month's fusion releases. **Narada/Michael/Walden** — *Victory* (Atlantic SD 19279). Walden has found his niche in a propulsive R&B/jazz-funk mode that takes advantage of his high-stepping drumming and arranging skills. Reminds this listener of a slightly more aggressive version of Earth, Wind and Fire, and only falls down when it attempts overly ambitious "serious" music. **David Liebman** — *What It Is* (Columbia JC 36581). Urbane, New York City derived funk jazz that employs the talents of John Scofield, Steve Gadd, Kenny Kirkland and Marcus Miller to paint a contemporary background for Liebman's emotional blowing. A slightly more committed version of the David Sanborn sound, only occasionally abandoning rhythmic power in favor of polite mannerisms. Liebman appears to be leaving his Coltrane period stylings in the wind. M

David Grisman, *cont. from pg. 76*

"It really depends on the players," Grisman concludes. "Almost any good musician would fit into this category if they got into that setting. But not too many people are going around with that setting. Of course, I could have gone for vastly different kinds of players, and the

result would be different. But I like that combination. Essentially, we're using the bluegrass instruments and developing a new music to play on them. But I think if you really analyzed it, a lot of it wouldn't be that different from Lester Flatt."

DISCOGRAPHY

Listed below is a discography of the albums essential to anyone interested in knowing more about classical-bluegrass-rock-jazz:

First and foremost is *The David Grisman Quintet* album (Kaleidoscope, F-5), an LP that is still turning heads. With six Grisman originals, one by Rice, and an extended "outside" arrangement of Artie Traum's "Fish Scale," this is the purest example on record of Dawg music. "Scale" and "Dawg's Rag" both come from the Greeat American Music Band (and "Opus 57 goes back even further), but all the loose ends didn't quite come together until this was recorded, late in 1976.

Prior to the DGQ release, Grisman got together with such notables as Vassar Clements, Bill Keith, Tony Rice, and Ricky Skaggs to record *The David Grisman Rounder Album* (Rounder, 0069). Along with dredging up some obscure bluegrass tunes, the session introduces David's progressive side, with "Op. 38" and the stunning "Waiting On Vassar."

On his two remaining Quintet albums, the brand-new *Quintet '80* (Warner Bros., BSK 3469), featuring the current line-up, probably gives a more accurate idea of what the band sounds like live. *Hot Dawg* (Horizon, SP731), although it scored big on the jazz charts, lacks continuity, already indicating that the band was in a state of flux. Oddly enough, the LP's best cut is the only nonoriginal, "Minor Swing," featuring co-composer Stephane Grappelli on violin.

If *Old & In The Way* (Round Records, RX103) and *Muleskinner* (originally on Warner Bros. and recently reissued on Ridge Runner, RRR0016) are sort of pre-Dawg, the *Early Dawg* (Sugar Hill, SH-3713), culled from live recordings and home tapes, could be classified as "Puppy Dawg."

Richard Greene's first solo effort, *Duets* (Rounder, 0075), features the Dawg on one cut and Tony Rice on two. Consisting of eleven tracks, each featuring violin and one other instrument, the LP shows off Green's wide range without becoming a potpouri, which is the main complaint with his follow-up, *Ramblin'*.

Tony Rice's two latest, *Acoustics* (Kaleidoscope, FD-10) and *Mar West* (Rounder, 0125), are probably the most energetic of the recently released things. Backed by fine blowers such as Greene, Marshall, Grisman, Todd Phillips on bass, and Sam Bush on fiddle and mandolin, Rice creates an atmosphere not unlike a heated be-bop jam session. Tony proves himself a fine composer, with 14 originals between the two discs. Each album feature one jazz cover tune — Miles Davis' "Nardis" (on *Mar*) and West Montgomery's "Four On Six" (on *Acoustics*). Rice's earlier bluegrass recordings and his sole album with the New South (Rounder, 0044) also bear listening, in particular *Manzanita* (Rounder, 0092). With support from Grisman, Bush, Phillips, Skaggs, and Dobro phenom Jerry Douglas, this is without doubt one of the greatest bluegrass sessions ever captured on vinyl, and easily the most professionally recorded (thanks to engineer Bill Wolf). Darol Anger's only solo effort thus far, *Fiddlistics* (Kaleidoscope, F-8), contains a repertoire almost as varied as Greene's but with more continuity, thanks to Anger's fine Dawg-flavored compositions.

Mark O'Connor's *Markology* (Rounder 0090) is his guitar sampler, including some fine originals, such as the title cut, as well as a bluegrass guitar summit, with O'Connor, Rice, and Dan Crary. The only possible drawback to the album, as Grisman (who plays mandolin here as well) jokingly points out in the liner notes, is that Mark didn't break out his fiddle. The soon-to-be-released *On The Rampage* (his "avant-garde" session for Rounder) should rectify that. Also check out the adolescent's first two Rounder recordings — *Mark O'Connor* (0046) and *Pickin' In The Wind* (0068) — and his two releases on his OMAC label, if you want to really feel old and in the way yourself. M

THE COLLECTOR

By Andy Dougherty

There are tides in record collecting as surely as there are tides in the sea. Two years ago, the tide was in for picture discs, particulary those intended as favors within the record industry and never offered to the public. But, picture discs have now gone the way of tail fins. Even the B-52s couldn't make them chic again. When time capsules make a come-back, the promotional-only picture disc circulated to commemorate **Bruce Springsteen**'s *Darkness at the Edge of Town* may be worth the massive price someone (not a dealer) recently quoted me. Not now, though. A mere four years after the first Bob Welch album began the picture disc craze, these gee-gaws are perceived by and large to be hopelessly tacky, as out-of-place in a real record collection as a copy of *Frampton Comes Alive*.

Those seeking a genuine status album in the collecting of Springsteen memorabilia should look in other directions. Certain advance copies of *Born to Run*, for instance, while boasting the same cover picture of Bruce and Clarence Clemons, were cast in brown-and-white rather than the familiar black-and-white. Moreover, this extremely rare item contained lettering — deleted in all subsequent editions — by none other than **Ralph J. Steadman**, the illustrator of *Fear and Loathing*. A prestigious album to own — and, unlike a picture disc, it doesn't sound like hand-to-hand nuclear combat when you play it.

Note, however, that these rarified copies of *Born to Run* don't contain any music you haven't already heard. With that in mind, also note the massive litigation currently under way between CBS, Springsteen's label, and the bootleggers who have had a field day with his concert recordings. A number of these shows — particularly Renaissance, Capitol Theatre recordings from 1976, and a set recorded at L.A.'s Roxy in 1975 — are said to be awesome. It isn't the intention of this column to glorify bootlegs, nor to debate the ethics of them. It is, on the other hand, the intention of this column to identify hard-to-get records, especially before they become hard-to-get, as may happen soon with Springsteen bootlegs.

By now most people seem aware that the Verve catalog of **Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention** has lapsed from print. What most people don't realize is the value these seminal '60s records (*Freak Out, Absolutely Free, We're Only In It For The Money, Ruben and the Jets*, and *Lumpy Gravy*) are fetching on the marketplace. Try fifteen dollars and climbing, quite a sum for records common not too long ago. Zappa is said to own the tapes to the Verve sessions and occasionally there are rumors of reissue, but, considering the difficulties Zappa has had getting his current work — particularly "I Don't Wanna Get Drafted" — distributed, I wouldn't hold my breath. The situation is somewhat similar to that of **It's a Beautiful Day** a few years ago: The records are out-of-print, in demand, and can be found with regularity at yard sales because the group had at least modest success in its day. In other words, be on the lookout.

A Zappa cohort who may have a collectible on his hands in the near future is **Captain Beefheart**. The item is none other than his latest effort, *Doc At the Radar Station*. This album was cut for Virgin Records, a British label who's product had been handled on these shores by Atlantic. No sooner was the LP released, unfortunately, than Virgin switched its distribution deal in America to RSO. This means that, barring a miracle, Beefheart is likely to be lost in the shuffle. That's what happened under similar circumstances to the stable of ZE Records artists (James White, Lizzy Mercier Descloux, Cristina, etc.) when that small label switched its American distribution from Buddah to Antilles. Therefore, the bet here is that *Doc at the Radar Station* will be out-of-print in the USA within two years and will shortly thereafter join Beefheart's entire Reprise catalog (excepting *Trout Mask Replica* and *Bat Chain Puller*, which are in print) and the four early tracks on an official A&M

continued on next page

Collector *continued*
bootleg in the realm of the difficult-to-locate. Difficult, but not impossible. The only Beefheart item which can currently be said to be impossible to locate would seem to be the bumper sticker packaged with the original editions of *Safe as Milk* (see photo).

From the boxed-set department comes news that neither the CBS six-LP nor the Prestige 12-LP **Miles Davis** sets contains so much as a trace of unreleased and/or obscure material. So nobody but completists, investors and people who just simply like the sight of fat spines in their record collections will have to resort to a second mortgage in order to complete a Miles Davis collection. Better to save the money to see the package of unreleased Miles material (a companion piece to *Circle in the Round*) CBS has lined up for the new year. Another way to save a few bucks would be not to run out tomorrow and pay a ransom for *Jazz Track*, the most rabidly sought after of all Miles' CBS albums. There are plans afoot to bring *Jazz Track* back to print within the year. M

Jazz Convention, *cont. from pg. 56*
a deli around the corner, ate a corned beef sandwich and listened to every clubowner in town and Ira Gitler, whom I now could recognize, all agree that collectivizing the local clubs was a ridiculous and unworkable scheme. I was beginning to learn about how these conventions worked. Talk it up big and then go back to the gordian routine of business as usual.

After lunch came a storytelling panel called "I Paid My Dues," featuring Red Rodney, Ray Brown, Nat Adderley, Billy Taylor, Donald Byrd, Keepnews, Roach and a well-liked booking agent whose name I have inexcusably forgotten. Keepnews immediately set the dignified tone of the event by introducing the conspicuously well-dressed Max Roach as "one of the greatest shirts I have ever seen." Everyone proceeded to tell Thelonious Monk stories, the collective point of which was that Monk is about as crazy as a fox, stalling record sessions for five days so the musicians would get paid more, losing sheet music all night so that his band could be the closing act at jazz festivals, things like that. Miles Davis stories followed, most of them centered on his financial acumen, nasty sense of humor (Miles to Max after Bird's death: "Motherfucker died before we could get even with him."), and his refusal to take second best — on being told an untroublesome way of getting CBS to send a record player to his Paris hotel room: "Frank Sinatra wouldn't do it

continued on next page

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like that."

Nat Adderley stole the show with an improbably hilarious story set at Cannonball Adderley's funeral — too long to even synopsize here, and most of the magic was in Adderley's telling of it. Red Rodney told the best pure story. When he was working with Charlie Parker, they were both strung out and broke one day and went to see the man, who didn't show. A while later, Thelonious Monk and Art Blakey showed up in the same condition, and then a phone call came for Rodney, an offer to play an Orthodox Jewish wedding in Brooklyn. Bird said let's do it, and the four of them sped to the synagogue. The rabbi saw them come in and said, "Red, none of these boys is Jewish." They got up to play, Rodney started to teach the band a Yiddish tune but Bird said never mind, let's play. Monk went plink, and Blakey went boom and Jewish music was reinvented on the spot. It must have worked because at the end of the night they were given a $300 bonus by the family of the bride. Then, ho ho ho, they went back crosstown and scored. When I spoke with Rodney later that night he said, "When I played with Charlie Parker we worked so little I *had* to play weddings and Bar Mitzvahs. That's why I got the call." Chuck Nessa (of Nessa Records) later told me that when Rodney toured the South with Bird's otherwise all-black band he was billed as the great blues singer Albino Red (he could pass) and had to sing once a night to prove it. Then Nessa and I pooled our Roscoe Mitchell obsessions; I told him about a soprano solo from the night before and he told me about a version of "Oh Susanna" from the good old days of '65.

Columbia Records bought us all dinner — Chicken Kiev, mashed potatoes, veggies, wine, fruit cocktail with real fruit flies — and the company's Vernon Slaughter addressed the assembled multitude with apparent boredom and possible contempt: in three of the hundreds of helium-filled balloons decorating the room there were little slips of paper entitling the bearer to his choice of any fifty albums from the CBS catalogue. With obvious haste and unmitigated greed, the semi-luminaries of the jazz world ran around the room popping balloons with cigarettes, Swiss Army knives, howitzers, bazookas, 88's, and Vernon Slaughter looked on, confirmed in his opinion of humanity, a weary Roman emperor contemplating the petty depravity of the lesser world. It was a disgraceful display and I didn't even get the albums. Afterward there was a jam session in which "the magnificent Baldwin concert grand donated in memory of Bill Evans" was rendered tinny by the sound system. Ted Curson (leader of the house band) took a few good trumpet solos but was eventually outdone by the soaring bebop of Albino Red Rodney who bested Donald Byrd in a trumpet battle and brought the house down. Mel Lewis replaced the house drummer and was eventually replaced by a robot. He left screaming "I told you so" and "The end is at hand." Max Roach had gone home. An Oriental Carpet convention in a neighboring ballroom broke up and gradually some very stylish types began mixing with the distinctly more homely jazz crowd. I met an old friend in the carpet trade and we sneered at each other. Rodney played higher notes, the bar opened and it was hard to go. I had a long drive ahead of me. I tried to say thanks and goodbye to *Jazz Times'* Ira Sabin for hosting the event but couldn't find him. Out in the lobby I tried to pick up a beautiful woman from the Carpet Convention but jazz was written all over me and I couldn't make the transition. As I drove alone back to West Virginia — no one at the convention would actually believe I lived there — I thought about my past year in the jazz biz. Roscoe Mitchell's solo of the night before was heavily featured in my memories — he had played the spaces between the notes rather than the notes themselves, sort of out-Shortering Wayne Shorter — as were Henry Threadgill's sextet at the now-shuttered Tin Palace, an unbelievable arpeggio of Julius Hemphill's at a World Saxophone Quartet in Boston, an Air performance in Cambridge, Clifford Jordan in New York, Sunny Murray standing outraged on the New York pavement one night after not getting a gig because he was too avant-garde: "I'm gonna be the first avant-garde corpse! This is how I'll lie in my coffin — my dick in one hand, the other stuck out for money, and a record contract with no royalty clause rammed up my ass. The first avant-garde corpse!" It was the best of years, it was the worst of years, it was a year like all the others and like the others it's gone. M

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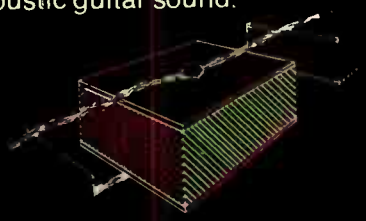

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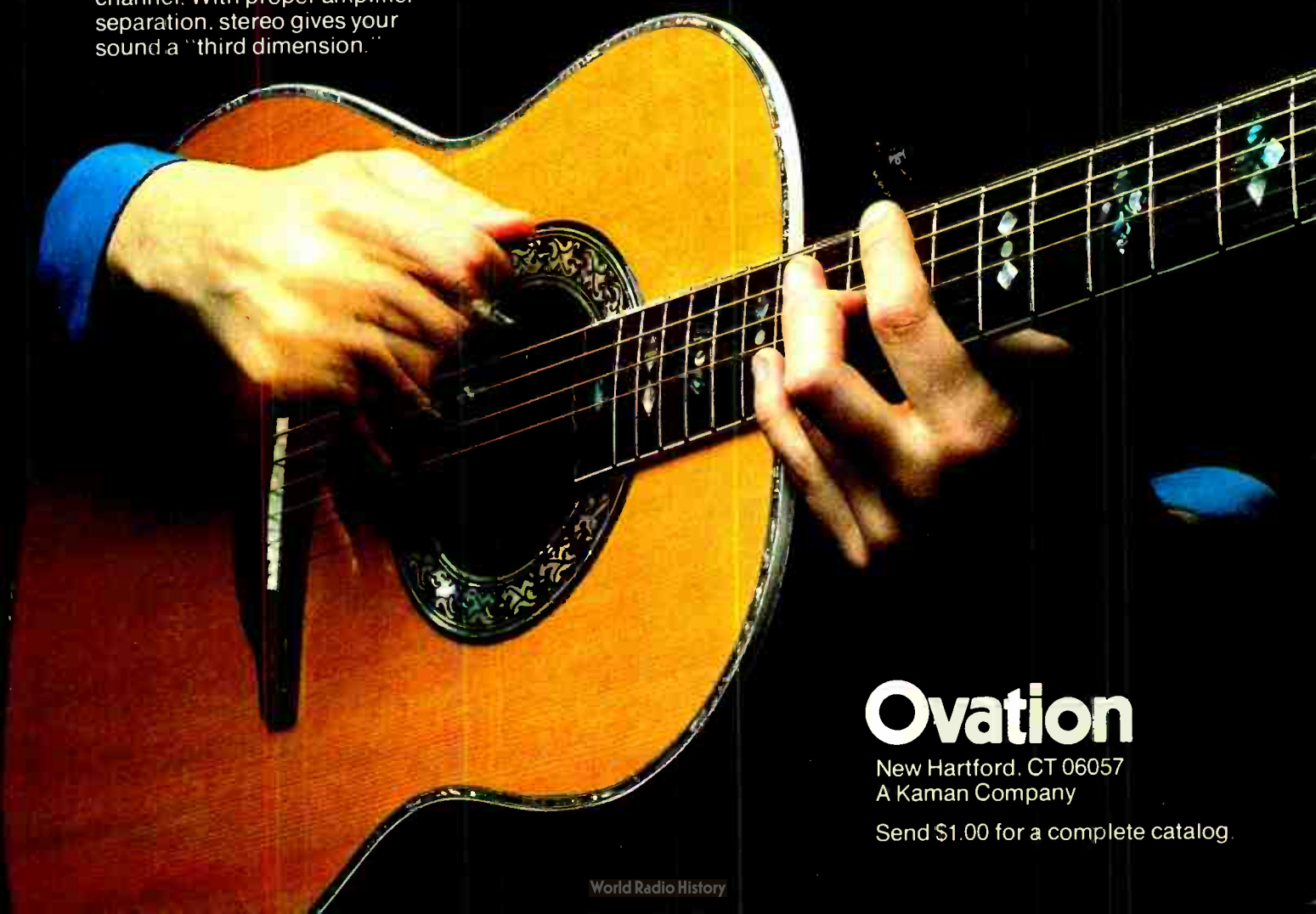

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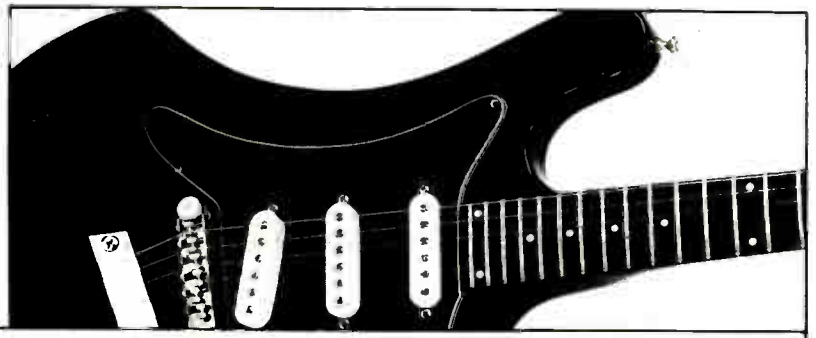
BLUES GUITAR PART I

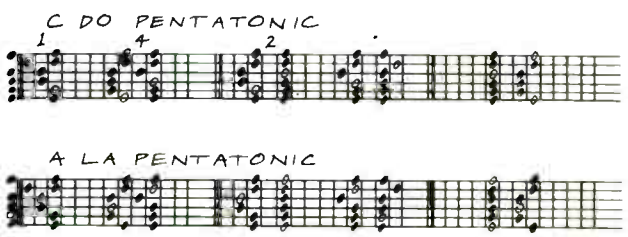


Blues soloing has always been closely associated with the guitar. Many guitarists are strictly blues players, and this is not nearly so common among players of other instruments. One reason for this is that pentatonic scales are so easy to play on the guitar.

Pentatonic scales form the backbone of improvised music. They provide the basic sounds of many musical idioms. Rock, country, folk, gospel, and especially blues and jazz have pentatonic scales as basic source material. Thorough study, knowledge of, and proficiency with pentatonic scales should therefore be a primary goal.

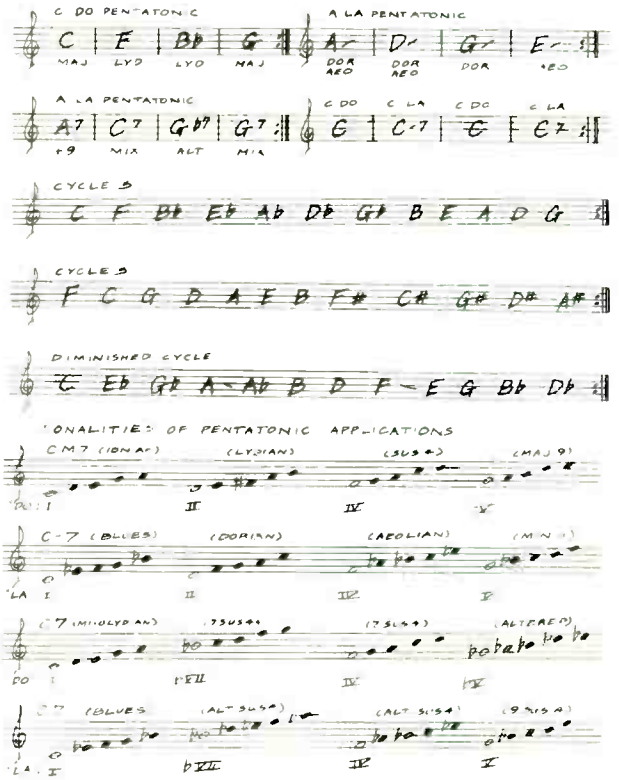
Although it's not theoretically sound, it is possible to visualize a pentatonic scale as having the notes of a major scale minus the melodic tension degrees 4 and 7. The tonality of the five remaining notes is by itself simultaneously so neutral and fundamental that it can be used in many foreign tonal contexts. The two modes of the pentatonic scale most often used correspond to degrees 1 and 6 ("Do" and "La") of a major scale.

I call these modes "Do Pentatonic" and "La Pentatonic." On the guitar there are five pentatonic scale patterns. Although there are several ways to finger each one (with first finger stretches or fourth finger stretches), the main thing is to learn the pattern. Each pattern has two modalities possible, depending on which tonic note you're emphasizing. Here are the five fingering patterns showing the tonic notes for C Do Pentatonic on the first line, and A La Pentatonic on the second line. The notes are the same; it's the tonic note that's different.



It is fundamentally important to learn these two tonalities independently, while you learn the fingerings. Put the vamps and progressions below on tape and improvise, emphasizing the tonic note of the vamp frequently. Each vamp should last at least five minutes, and you should play several minutes in each fingering. Be sure to record the vamps in several styles so that you get used to various time feels. When you're thoroughly familiar with C Do Pentatonic and A La Pentatonic, transpose the vamps and patterns through the tonal centers of the cycles listed. Pay special attention to learning the patterns for C La Pentatonic which is a parallel mode to C Do Pentatonic. It's important to be able to switch between both modes on the same tonic.

The last four lines are a summary of pentatonic relationships which you should learn by playing them over the chord types listed.



After you're familiar with these progressions and applications as a player, look for recordings to play along with that use these tonalities. Next month we'll get deeper into blues by analyzing a series of important blues progressions.

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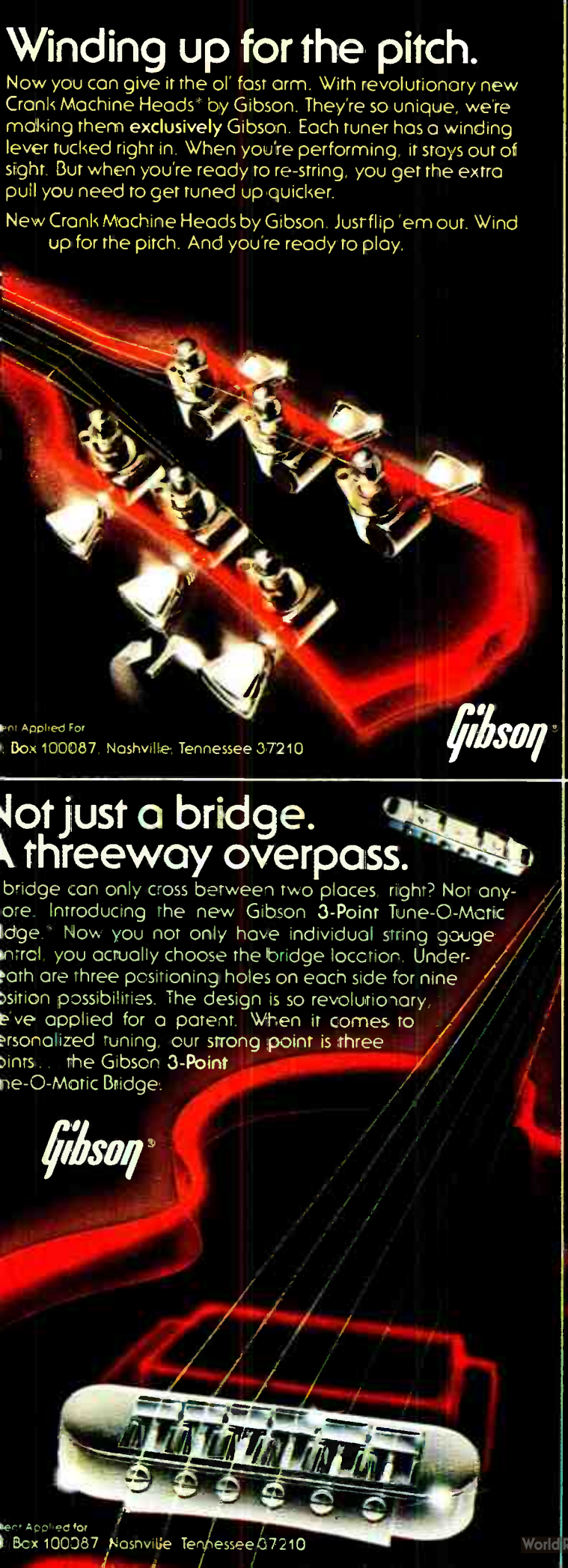

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STUDIO

CONTEMPORARY HARMONY/RON DELP

CHORD-OVER-ANOTHER-ROOT SITUATION

A harmonic situation which proliferates in music of the past decade is that in which a chord appears with a note other than the root in the bass. This harmony is usually notated:

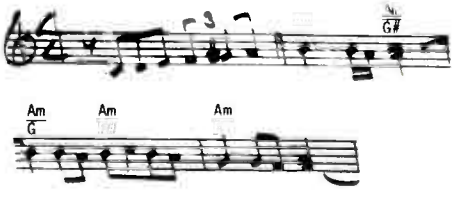
In each example the top symbol indicates the chord, the bottom symbol indicates the root note.

Harmony in inversion, i.e., a note other than the root in the bass, is certainly not new. In the early days of harmony, as we know it (around 1650), the principle for writing (mostly keyboard and choral) was 'figured-bass'... which is the technique still taught at most music schools. Figured-bass is a kind of chord symbol notation, not unlike our present day method, except that a bass line is always included. In other words, a composer writes a bass line to a given melody, then uses numerical symbols to indicate what the inner voices are (basically) to be; the performer more or less improvises the inner voices, along with passing tones and various licks and cliches of the period. The important point is that the bass line is a specific set of notes.

In the chord-symbol type music we pop, jazz, rock, country, etc. players deal with, the construction of the bass line is usually left up to the bass player and/or the pianist's left hand. In arranged music, the arranger determines the bass part (for bass, trombone, baritone sax, etc.), using the chord root as a starting place and utilizing other notes that relate to the chord or to passing chords he chooses to use. These notes may or may not be chord roots.

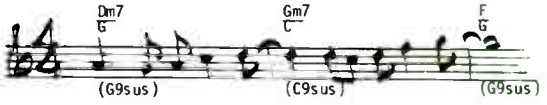
Until the past twenty or so years, progression chords (those chords basic to the song) with bass notes other than the root fell into primarily four categories. I'll cover those now, and discuss the contemporary variations next month.

I call the first situation the 'descending 7th.' This is where a triad — usually minor — is repeated while the root moves downward by half-step, as in this example of "What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life":



Notice that the chord root (A) moves down through G#, to G, and so on. Other songs with this type progression include "My Funny Valentine," "Feelings," "More," "Something" and "Traces."

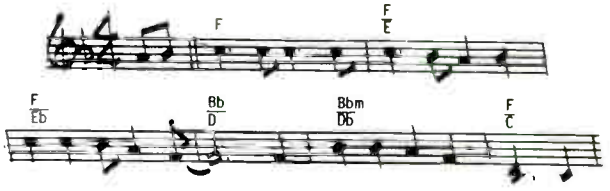
The second situation is a spelling variation of the V7sus chord. This will usually occur as a IIm or IV chord, over the V chord's root:



Many people find this situation more complicated than just calling the chord by its V7sus name.

The third situation is most common to rock tunes, like the Blues Brothers' "Gimme Some Lovin'," where the IV chord is played over the I chord's root:

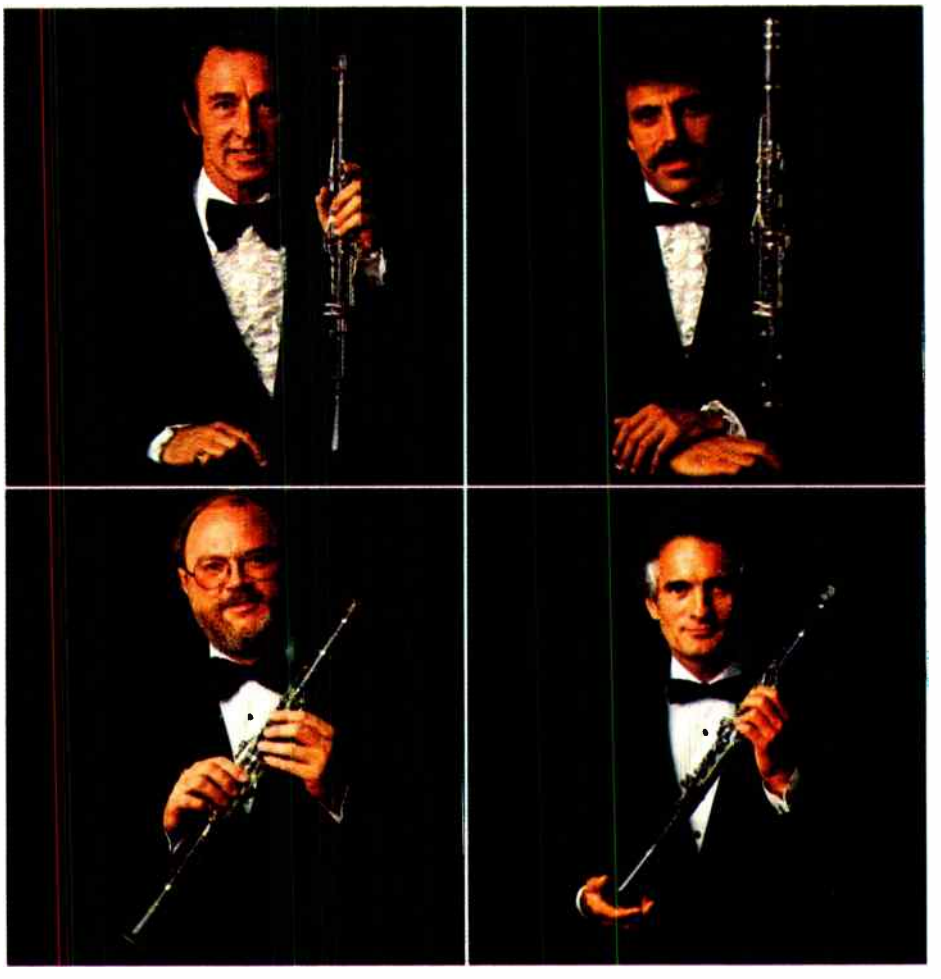
And the fourth variation has chords changing over a descending stepwise line. Here is an example using the song "If":



Notice that the chords change, but the bass line moves by step. Other tunes that use this situation include "Something," "Traces," and "After The Lovin'." (Note: The bridge of "If" uses the 1st situation mentioned above.)

These are the more or less traditional uses of chord-over-another-root harmony. Next time I'll get into the less traditional situations and a related technique, 'pedal point.'

Buddy DeFranco, Eddie Daniels, Gary Foster, and Ron Odrich. Making and breaking tradition.



Staying on top means staying ahead, not just keeping up. The musicians pictured know this. That's one reason they've picked up on the new line of Yamaha clarinets.

These top players recognize the edge Yamaha clarinets have to offer. And they're taking advantage of it. You might want to do the same.

For more information, write: Yamaha Musical Products, A Division of Yamaha International Corp., Box 7271, Grand Rapids, MI 49510.

YAMAHA

What makes the OB-SX so impressive?

People have asked why Oberheim, the inventors of programmability, created a pre-programmed synthesizer. It's very simple... the ultimate in sound at an affordable price. The OB-SX was designed for the professional musician who's too busy working to learn to program a synthesizer. We've done it for him without sacrificing the sound. The beauty of the OB-SX is in its simplicity and the fact that as new sounds become popular, they will be offered on plug in memory chips. Twenty-four of the thirty-two "killer" patches presently being used on the OB-X are programmed into the SX and more are available at a nominal charge. Send for your free OB-SX brochure for more details.

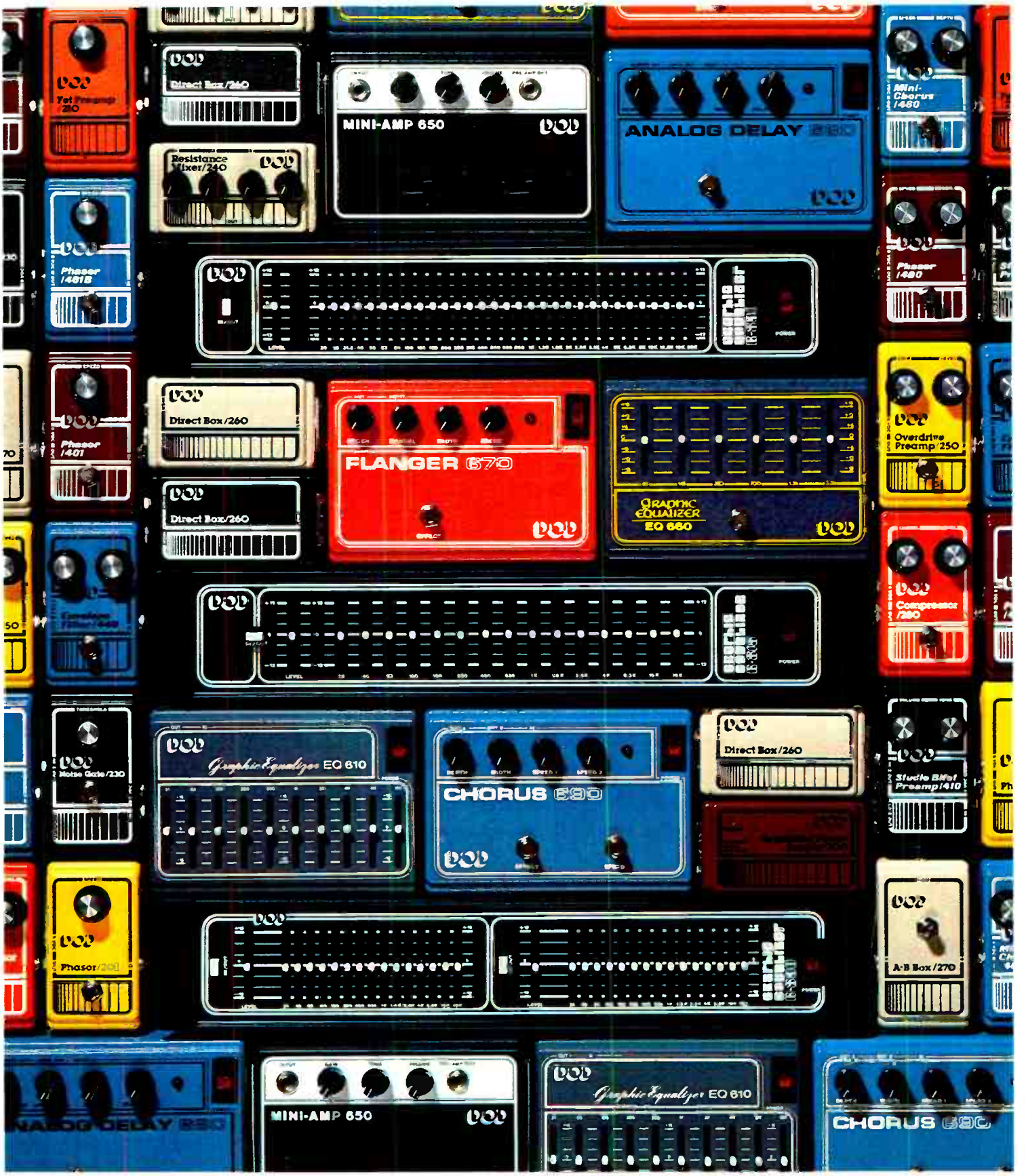
Oberheim

Some Things are Better than Others

Oberheim Electronics Inc.
1455 19th Street
Santa Monica, CA 90404

Sound.

SOUND IMPROVEMENTS

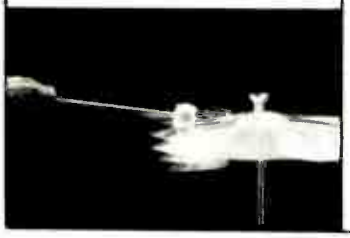


Electronics Corporation
242 West 2950 South Salt Lake City, Utah 84115 Telephone (801) 485-8534

best buys

The Madeira guitar line, distributed by **Guild**, now consists of 13 models, including Folk, Dreadnaught, 12-String and Classic guitars. Some of the outstanding features include spruce tops (some offer solid tops for optimum resonance), mahogany necks with fully adjustable truss rods, multi-ply bindings, and rosewood fingerboards. Madeira acoustics start at $149.50 with a top price of $375.00. Madeira Guitars, 225 West Grand St., Elizabeth, NJ 07202.

Hard to get percussion products, cymbals, twangers, tweeters, screamers, slangers and anything under the sun to do with percussion can be garnered from **Drums Unlimited**, who are Percussion Merchants to the World. Shown here is the Paiste Studio 200 cymbal, one of thousands of things-waiting-to-be-beat-on that they carry. Drums Unlimited, 4928 St. Elmo Ave., Bethesda, MD 20014.



Eastern Acoustics announces their new MR Series Radiating Lower Midrange Arrays which update existing two-way systems to a three-way configuration, allowing increased output capabilities, lower distortion and high SPL's and improved vocal definition. The MR Series has the ability to operate down to 200 Hz making it ideally suited for use with folded bass horns, and scoop-type bass enclosures which have characteristically poor mid-band performance. The lower crossover frequency to the bass enclosure also enables tighter bass with less vocal band distortion. The MR Series includes a single 12" cabinet and arrays for dual 12" and dual 10" mid-bass drivers. Eastern Acoustic Works, Box 111, Framingham, MA 01701.

CB700 now offers five different types of drum thrones to satisfy virtually any drummer's preference. All CB700 thrones feature padded seats, locking height adjustments, rubber feet and are heavy chrome plated. Coast Wholesale Music, 200 Industrial Way, San Carlos, CA 94070.

TEAC's Production Products Group has introduced two new recorder/reproducers in the Tascam Creative Series. The 22-4 is a compact 4-track 15 ips multichannel recorder with sync, the 22-2 a compact 15 ips half-track recorder.

The 22-4 pictured features Function & Output Select, Headphone Monitor Select, Pitch Control, Optional dbx Interface and Optional Remote Pause Controls, (RP-22, FP-70). The 22-2 features Expanded Scale VU Meters, Independent Monitor and Record Ready Controls, Detachable Head Housing and Optional Remote Pause Control (RP-22). Both units are 3-motor 3-head transports with precision moulded reel tables and spring-loaded reels holders. The 22-2 has a suggested retail price of $1,425.00; the 22-2 has a suggested retail price of $750,00. Teac, 7733 Telegraph Rd., Montebello CA 90640.

New England Digital has come out with a fully programmable digital synthesizer, the Synclavier II. It is completely portable with 8 to 128 fully programmable voices, a five octave keyboard and a complete 16 track digital memory recorder. No computer terminal is needed to operate any portion of the Synclavier — it's all done by select buttons. The unit is oriented to a live performance situation and boasts compact housing and quick set-up, not to mention a diskette drive, heavy duty connector cables, unlimited sound storage and terrific looks. New England Digital, Main St., Norwich, VT 05055.

One of the interesting and effective marketing ideas we've seen put into practice recently is Mike Mathews' **Electro-Harmonix** showroom and live performance center on 48th St. in Manhattan. Situated astride New York's Music Store Row, Mathews (who won New York State's Small Businessman of the Year Award in '79) is offering musicians the chance to come in and investigate his line from top-to-bottom. Every Thursday and Saturday, they hold special theme jams such as reggae, punk, women only, jazz, etc. If interested in a calendar of special themes and events, drop them a postcard at Electro-Harmonix Showroom, 150 W. 48th St., NYC, NY 10036.

Moog Music announces Opus 3, a 49-note polyphonic synthesizer creating strings, organ and brass voices, individually or in any desired combination. Strings and organ may be routed individually or in any combination through the "chorus" circuit, which features adjustable depth, speed and delay. Organ and brass may also be routed individually or in combination through the VCF, which has both preset and variable modes. Opus 3 may be used as a polyphonic synth, a lead synth, a string machine or a basic combo keyboard. It is beautifully finished in a maple and steel cabinet, is 29¾" wide, 5⅝" high and 15" deep and weighs only 20 lbs. Moog Music, 2500 Walden Ave., Buffalo, NY 14225.

SOMEBODY'S ARCHED RIVAL.

CF Martin's E-28 lead and bass offer the serious musician a new balance in electric guitar construction. The hand carved top with smooth rounded arches creates a soft appearance in each instrument. Nearly 150 years experience of carefully crafting quality fretted instruments are fully evident in Martin's E-28 series.

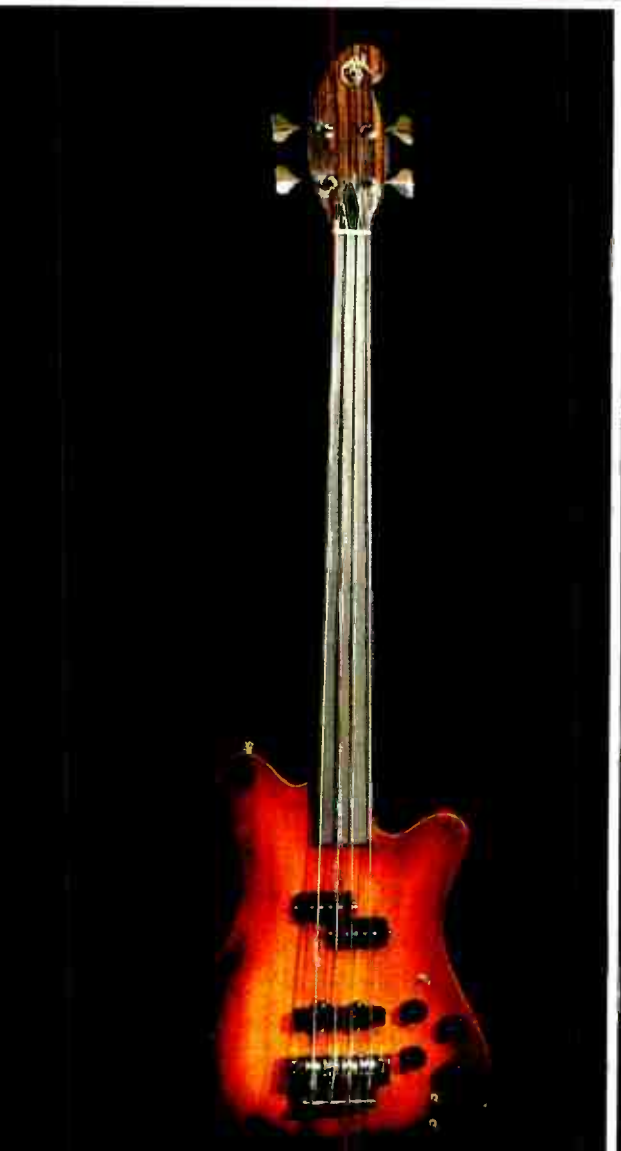
On each lead and bass a solid piece of mahogany runs the length of the instrument. "Through the body" neck construction and special pickup combinations on both guitars, provide the player with improved performance and added sustain.

Designed with "on board" active electronics, the E-28's present the player with easy tonal variations. Bypass, phase and pickup switches plus volume and tone controls are conveniently located for quick accessibility.

To compare and play the new E-28's from Martin, see your local authorized Martin dealer. You'll find that they're an "arched rival" among contemporary electric guitars.

Now available. Ask your local authorized Martin dealer or write: The CF Martin Organisation
510 Sycamore St. Nazareth, PA 18064 800-345-3104

MARTIN ELECTRIC GUITARS AND MARTIN ELECTRIC STRINGS - A PERFECT COMBINATION.



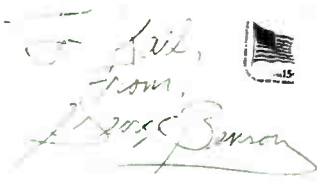
Signatures

By Karl Schaffenberger

"Graphology: The study of handwriting, especially as a clue to character, aptitudes, etc." Webster

Karl Schaffenberger began his study of graphology twelve years ago. His work is divided into two distinct areas: personality assessment and forgery detection. He has been certified by the International Graphoanalysis Society since 1976, and is qualified as a handwriting expert in various county courtrooms throughout New Jersey.

GEORGE BENSON



It's awfully rigid for a jazz artist, and not very fluid, which surprised me. This is not necessarily attributable to a lack of dexterity; like most players, he probably spent more time playing his instrument than writing to his mother. Notice how he has ignored the lines on paper. People who ignore lines tend to ignore all lines. George doesn't like things that restrict his movement. Notice also, his handwriting and signature are identical in style. This is indicative of a person who has a healthy relationship between who he is and who he thinks he is. I don't consider Benson's writing as being particularly imaginative, but it is aggressive in the sense

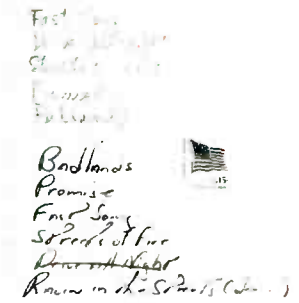
GENE SIMMONS

Simmons wrote six words on an 8½ x 11 piece of paper and damn near took up the whole page. I call these people "consumers." They are going to occupy every bit of space available to them...and then some. I heard he was once a 4th grade teacher. I would certainly not recommend him for a teaching job. There is just so much you can consume in a fourth grade classroom before you start consuming the kids. Maybe he just found a more lucrative way to consume them. This man is bold as hell. It looks like he wrote this with a paint brush. He would do damn near anything to get over. He is a businessman, not a laid back or timid guy. A great signature. Picture it on a shopping bag for Gene Simmons department stores. Flashy, creative, balanced, eye-catching.

IGGY POP

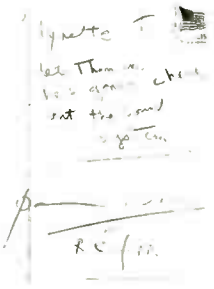
The handwriting of a casualty. It's twisted. The writing itself looks as if it may have originated from something not too bad, but the signature especially doesn't seem to know whether it's going to the left or right, coming or going. Iggy's a gone guy, a bull in a china shop. I just see him fitting the role of the stereotyped rock musician — late for everything, if he shows up at all. Off in the ozone someplace. Moody as hell, Impatient, intolerant and into himself.

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN



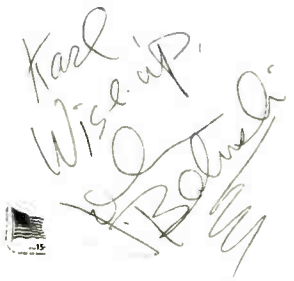
This sample is printed, unpretentious, and very meat and potatoes. Something he wrote for himself. Notice the pressure of Bruce's writing (bottom) as compared to Jon Landau's) (at the top). Quite a difference. Bruce's is heavy, which relates to emotions, not necessarily its expression but rather its intensity. People with heavy pressure soak up emotional experience like a sponge. Bruce is a "frog," a term coined by my mentor which refers to those people with strong introspective personalities. The strange "T"'s are flags, "Hey, Mom, look at me...", with tenacity hooks. A heavy desire for the spotlight. Bruce's hooks emphasize his dependency on public recognition and acceptance.

PATTI SMITH



Notice the difference between her handwriting and her signature. Her signature is what she would like her public to think she is, her handwriting is what she, in fact, is. Patti is a strange bird, but not quite as strange as she would like to think. Again, fluidity. Note the large gaps created by her mixing print and script. They speak of a person who probably doesn't handle obstacles very effectively. There's a lot I like. She exhibits a great deal of spontaneity in that she has eliminated the initial up-strokes on many of her words, beginning them with more decisive downstrokes instead. Her creativity may be self-defeating. Look at the double "T"'s in "Lynette." Patti came up with an abbreviated version, which shows imagination, but her new way is no easier to execute than the way we were all taught. She hasn't gained any ground.

JOHN BELUSHI



Big, brash and uninhibited. I'm sure that if he wrote this thing a hundred times, no two would look the same. He is the type that would write the same thing a thousand different ways. Belushi is consistently inconsistent. And folks, the John Belushi you see in the movies and on television is not kidding. It's a good thing he found his little niche in life because if he had to work check-out in an A&P, he would be in big trouble. There are no lines on this paper but I'm sure he would have ignored them if there were. And notice the baseline under "wise up." It's all over the place. The baseline is reality and stability...or the lack thereof. Loops in graphology represent imagination...lower loops being practical imagination and upper loops being abstract imagination. Look at the size of some of those upper loops. This is a man who has no trouble dealing in abstracts and intangibles. Spends a good deal of time in the clouds, I'd say. A definite wild man. I'm sure he has limited success with life's little incessancies...too impatient.

EXPRESSION

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