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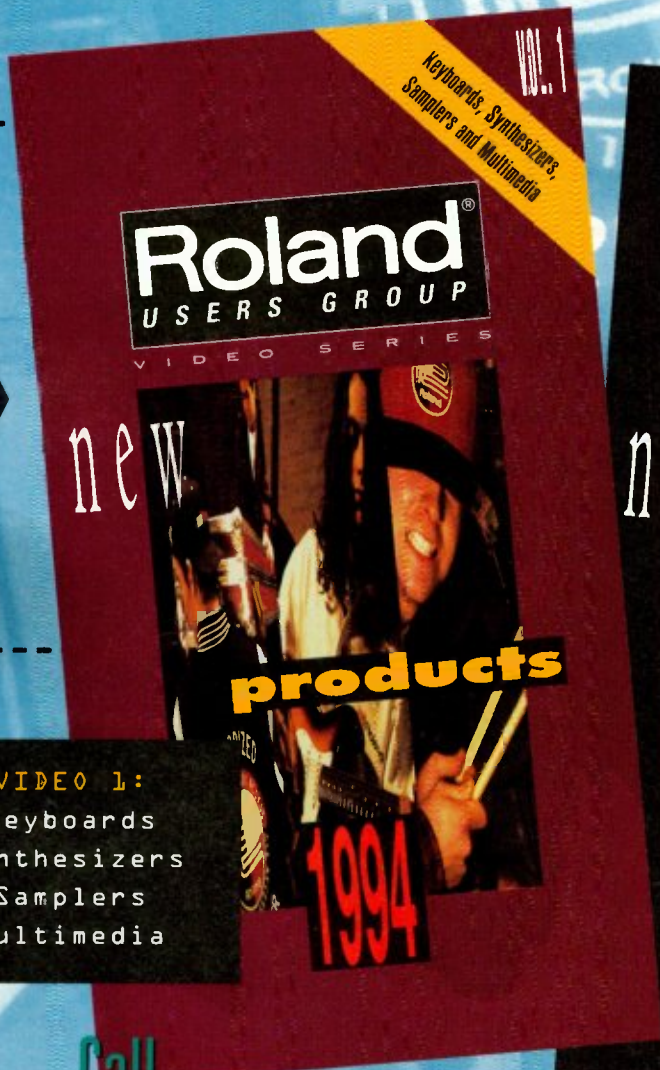
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World Radio History

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# AMATEUR HOUR IS OVER.

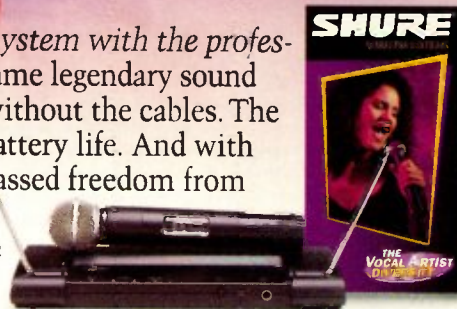


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*I got a big kick out of your book about life in the Sex Pistols [Rotten: No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs] but I wondered if you were kidding when you said Laurence Olivier's Richard III was an inspiration for the persona of Johnny Rotten.*

I'm afraid he was! You've got to bear in mind I was 17. I didn't want to give up on this opportunity. I thought, "This is great fun, I could really do something here!" Play-acting or role-modeling was a good way to get around it, but nothing that I'd ever seen in pop music before, thank you. It was hilarious. Richard III was the most vile character I'd ever seen. Which is deeply funny for a pop star to be! When I joined the Sex Pistols they were really a covers band doing Small Faces and Who numbers. There was no way I could get my head around any of that because it wasn't from my generation. I was heavily into reggae and other kinds of weirdness and the vocalists I appreciated were absolute individuals. So in a way, yes, it was calculated of me to sit down and say, "Well, I'm not going to be like any of them."

*How'd you decide to sing in an English accent?*

Ian Dury. He was around at that time and I thought, that's fine.

*Think how different the Sex Pistols story might have been if you'd added Jab Wobble on bass instead of Sid Vicious.*

I considered Wobble, 'cause Wobble could actually play. But it wouldn't have worked because Mr. Wobble was a very violent chap.

*Oh, unlike Sid!*

No, no, Sid was a pussycat. Sid acted it out but Wobble was the real thing. Steve and Paul couldn't tolerate Wobble in any shape or form because he would physically attack them.

*I'm always surprised when people within the music world buy the Sid Vicious myth. I was amazed that Kurt Cobain put in his suicide note, "It's better to burn out than to fade away," that somebody in that position...*

Could be so naive, could think that there is some kind of glory in it. There most certainly is not. And unfortunately the second you say it there's enough people out there saying, "Oh, that's 'cause you're an old man." It's just wrong! I want to be an old man! I want to be a very old man and then I want to be a bit older than that, thank you. I intend to live for a long time. It's just so ridiculous to follow some kind of fashion statement that didn't work for the Velvet Underground and has failed ever since. Why keep repeating it? It does not work! It's a dead end! You will be ripped off, abused, used and ultimately dead long before your proper time.

*Maybe the people who need self-love the most are the very ones most inclined to be up on a stage trying to make people cheer for them.*

This is my point and it always has been: We're all bloody pop stars. Ego plays a very large part in all of this. The fact that you jump up in front of a large audience shows that that's what you really want, secretly. You can pretend to be this shy retiring type but that's not the reality. Maybe it's that lie that begins to cause the rot. Because you cannot live a lie for very long. It will catch up with you, and in the music business it will happen in

**"When I joined, the Sex Pistols were a covers band doing Small Faces and Who."**



## JOHN LYDON

a matter of weeks, not years. That must not be what you enter this industry for. If you don't enjoy doing what you're doing then just don't do it. You must understand before you begin that you do this first and foremost for yourself. The rest is just bonus points.

*One important point you make in your book is that the Sex Pistols had no interest in being on an independent label. Like the Clash, you wanted to be on a major, to reach the biggest audience.*

Don't you think indie labels are distributed by the majors? You're just removing yourself twice, ten-fold, ultimately into nothingness. And you're making your job ever so much more difficult. If you're going to attack any industry, really, you're going to have to do it internally. Nobody does this to be a voice in the wilderness. "Oh woe is me, the lonely poet, the hermit on the mount." Just stop it!

*Yet a lot of young bands feel that if they reach a million people it must mean they have compromised or sold out.*

And that is so unforgivably stupid. These are not intelligent people and the audience should realize this.

*How often do you get Sex Pistols reunion offers?*

Do you know, I've never had one. Not one! I've read about them, I've seen ridiculous amounts of money being bandied about by journalists, but nobody's ever approached me. I've talked to Steve and Paul about it and they've said the same thing. We don't know where it's coming from.

*Well, let me see how much I have on me.*

No, it's not possible. I'm sorry but what's the point of mid-30-to-40-year-old geezers trying to pretend they're 18 again? It would be fake and it would be purely for the cash. I would feel very seriously guilty. It would ruin everything I've achieved.

BILL FLANAGAN



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# Jah wobble's invaders of the heart

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and

### Becoming More Like God

(guest vocal: Anneli M. Drecker of Bel Canto)



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## READER RESPONSE

It'd been a thoroughly entertaining decade and a half or so that I've been a subscriber to *Musician*, and in all that time I don't believe I've ever written to praise your magazine for consistently drawing out the human being behind the celebrity image. I've had a blast, but now my tastes are changing. It reminds me of a friendship that dissolves amiably as both parties drift in new directions. What can I say? I guess at age 36 I'm simply moving out of your demo. But for all the enjoyment I've gotten from *Musician* over the years, I couldn't just let my subscription lapse without a word of appreciation.

Okay, I *do* have a beef, but this is *not* why I'm not renewing. I was quite put off with your choice of photos to lead off the album review section in the February issue. I think of myself as fairly open-minded, but I couldn't escape having an emotional reaction to having a gun pointed at me. No thanks. That's *not* an image that adds anything useful to my life.

Bill Cochran  
Chicago, IL

With your new format, your magazine is now essential reading for all musicians. Please continue with articles by musicians and songwriters telling the real spoons and forks of the music business. Please discontinue breaking up those articles in your layout! This may seem petty, but the legend "cont. on pg. 98" is like a giant boulder dropped on my spiritual roadrunner.

Blake Methena  
Quiet the Monster  
Bowling Green, OH

A few comments from a reader who subscribed about a year ago, and who renewed my sub just before your revamped Feb. '94 issue arrived. Like other readers whose letters you have printed since then, I blanched when I saw some of the changes: sharply reduced space for reviews, choppy layout and editorial style in the *USA Today*/*MTV/Spin* tradition, and worst of all, a nasty "analysis" of alternative vs. adult alternative music by Alan di Perna. I filed the issue away in the attic with my collection of 1970s *Rolling Stones* before taking to my bed to count my gray hairs.

Luckily, the next few issues showed that *Musician* had not abandoned its commitment

to substance and thoughtful analysis. In particular, I took heart from Steve Morse's favorable writeup of adult alternative radio. I also think Steve is correct in crediting the AA stations for playing women artists in something like a just proportion.

A few words of thanks to Bill Flanagan for his insightful review of Neil Young's '70s reissues. (Cute picture of Neil, too!) I had spent 1993 buying up all of the Neil Young LPs I had missed in the '70s—a pleasant way to work through a mild midlife crisis. By the way, does anyone but me hear in "Tired Eyes" an eerie ele-

they call) this lesser-known artist, it's wonderful to read an article by someone who's been following Lyle *almost* as long as I have!

Amy Van Court  
New Fairfield, CT

It was nice to see a "real man" on your cover. On behalf of Lyleheads everywhere, there is no need to be heard on the radio, because we want him all to ourselves. Now about those amps we loaned you in Berkeley...

Litza Jane  
Joketown, USA

Forever I've avoided picking up your magazine from newsstands. I'm just a part-time, amateur, do-it-yourself kind of musician—of course I feel overshadowed by the "big guys." In your mag I felt sure I would be getting yet another with over-chic babes with over-styled hair licking guitars and the tech-knows and egos careering out of control. I was wrong. It was a down-to-earth, plainly written, nicely illustrated "these are the ropes, kid" kind of mag. How refreshing! All of a sudden there was everything I ever wanted to know about recording music but was afraid to ask. Thank you.

Paul D. LaBate  
Schenectady, NY



gy for Kurt Cobain?

A sad song, a sad, unnecessary death and a sad comment on our culture.

Martha Coons  
Williamstown, MA

## SET-UP

Thanks for the informative article by Chip Stern with help from Joe Satriani and Roger Sadowky on setting up your guitar (Apr. '94). It was an excellent overview of the changes a guitar goes through as it ages and how best to keep your guitar in ideal playing condition.

C.F. Martin IV  
Chairman of the Board/CEO  
The Martin Guitar Company  
Nazareth, PA

## SMYLE

Thank you for the interesting, insightful and well-written piece on Lyle Lovett (Apr. '94). After the meaningless tabloid coverage of (what

I was just going to read your Lovett article while in the bookstore until I saw the profile of his cellist, John Hagen—then I bought it. I saw John in concert with Lyle and I got so excited about what he could do with a cello, I went out and bought a CD of cello music.

Julie A. Wysocki  
Raymond, MN

## LESS IS MORE

Your article on baby amps was great (Apr. '94)! You guys have a way of cutting through the writers' bullshit and straight to the stuff a musician wants. *Musician* continues to be a user-friendly guide to the sometimes unfriendly world of the music business.

Nelsen Adelard  
Los Angeles, CA

## CONTEST WINNER

RCA Victor is pleased to announce that Joseph Kuntz of N.Y.C. is the lucky winner of a Gibson ES-175 electric guitar as grand prize in the *Symphonic Music of Yes* Steve Howe Guitar Giveaway Contest.

## ERADA

In our winter NAMM wrapup in May '94, JBL's director of systems engineering Bill Gelow was misidentified on page 53 as Warren Williams. Also, in our April '94 issue, page 12, the DJ with Difford and Tillbrook is Scott Muni, not Cousin Brucie.

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## GONZALO RUBALCABA, RAPSODIA

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## JOE LOVANO, TENOR LEGACY

Joe Lovano, whose last disc for Blue Note earned five stars, Down Beat's highest rating, joins forces with young tenor sensation Joshua Redman, the most acclaimed new jazz artist of the year ("He's too young to be so good," said The New York Times). Don't miss this incomparable album that points the direction for the next generation of saxophone players.

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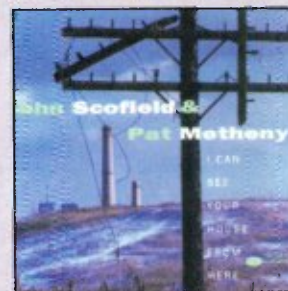
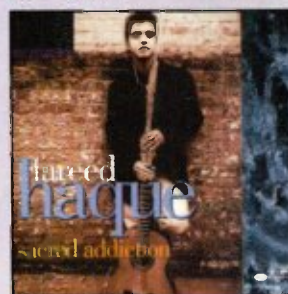
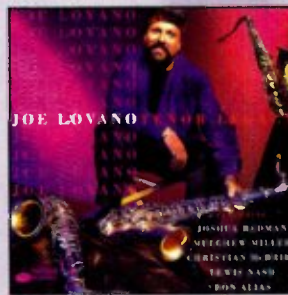
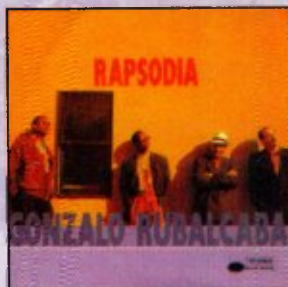
Fareed Haque, seen by thousands with Sting, Dizzy Gillespie's United Nations Orchestra and many others, Fareed haque is poised to be one of the most acclaimed players of his time. SACRED ADDICTION is a perfect blend of jazz, pop and world music sensibilities.

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## PIRATE WATCH

The RIAA busted pirates in four states and Puerto Rico during the first quarter of 1994. In California, over 35,000 counterfeit cassettes were confiscated in three separate operations. Meanwhile, 35,000 cassettes were impounded in Brooklyn, New York. Officials seized 53,263 cassettes during raids on Texas flea markets and trade fairs, and took 3975 tapes in Little Rock, Arkansas. In Puerto Rico, San Juan police raided a manufacturing facility, intercepting 17,750 unauthorized tapes.



ILLUSTRATION BY MARK MATCHO

### SAY IT LOUD

Atlantic artists Manowar chose Hamburg's Alsterdorf Sporthalle as the venue in which to make their mark on rock 'n' roll history. Flanked by 410 speakers and 80,000 Watts of amplification, the band set out to establish the Guinness record for world's loudest band—a feat requiring sound pressure levels of 160 dB. As it happens, Hamburg law forbids anything in excess of 115 dB (on the high side of average for a rock show). Authorities pulled the plug before the first note was struck.



# Record Like a Real Band

by Audley Freed

**W**HILE ON tour with my band Cry of Love, I'm often greeted by fans and musicians with "Your album sounds like a live band!" Just goes to show you how far rock music has gotten from the plug-in-and-play ethic it was founded on.

Rock started being recorded live and raw because that was all the infantile technology would allow. But about 10 years ago, the use of technology on records increased exponentially. Snare drums became electronic cannons, eighth notes were quantized perfectly rather than played with a human feel, and guitars started sounding more like "Space 1999" than "Funk #49." All this helped to suck the life out of countless bands. Don't let technology cloud your vision.

Our band had rehearsed so much before even being offered our deal that, when recording *Brother*, we never questioned our ability to stand in a circle (just like in our rehearsal hole) and cut our tracks live. To eliminate bleed from numerous close and room mikes on the drums, we sequestered my Marshall 4x12 in a wooden isolation booth and ran the bass direct. Four sets of headphones, a

guide vocal (in another booth), some eye contact and there you have it. The basic live tracks were done in three takes or less and went to analog tape dry via a Neve console. By knocking these out quickly (five days), we had spare time for vocals and guitar overdubs (and experimenting freely with each), not to mention extra songs, a stacked-vocal harmony piece and a lot more.

Don't get me wrong. I don't fear technology. Exploration is an essential ingredient of great and ground-breaking music from Hendrix and the Beatles all the way to the Wax Trax stable. What I hate is gadgets for gadgets' sake. Remember, it's the end and the means.



# ROUGH

### NEW SIGNINGS

- Steve Morse** Ex-Dregs guitarist eschews the low road (High Street)
- Julian Cope** Too nutty for Island, too normal for Rubin? (American)
- Seaweed** Former Sub-Poppers—Japan will eat 'em up (A&M)
- Wedding Present** Will they wear white this time? (Island)

### PULP

"I don't know what it's like in America, but in England, there's a bit more personality coming back into the music," judges Jarvis Cocker, gentlemanly frontman and founder of the decidedly English quintet Pulp. Indeed, Pulp's songs soar to lively pop heights, held aloft by shamelessly over-indulgent strings and synths that wouldn't sound out of place in a Parisian disco. But when Cocker's over-the-top romantic vocals come stumbling in like Bryan Ferry's



PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL PECK

**SHAFTMEISTER RETURNS**

Isaac Hayes looked comfortable as he wheeled out past hits with original *Hot Buttered Soul* guitarist Michael Toles at the opening night party for the hip new House of Blues club chain's Sunset Strip franchise. With clubs already in New Orleans and Harvard Square—other famous investors include Dan Aykroyd, Aerosmith, Jim Belushi and Hard Rock Cafe founder Isaac Tigrett—the House of Blues has been “long overdue,” says the singer, “as far as recognizing what America has to offer musically to the world. It also creates an atmosphere in which we can have some live music again—some more players, man.”



BETTMAN ARCHIVES

Including Hayes. Newly signed to Virgin Records, the Stax songwriting legend is readying his first album in six years—and planning to rectify some of the problems that have dogged his past.

If that means using real strings—as opposed to the synthesizers and computers he regularly used in the mid-'80s (“I’m the entire orchestra now,” he boasted in '86)—then God [cont'd on page 26]

# MIX

tipsy evil twin, it all makes sense. “Everybody’s so aware of rock history now that they have this idea of what a band should be like,” says Cocker, who began Pulp more than a decade ago in his Sheffield hometown. “And it’s boring because people have done it so much better in the past.” So what are Pulp’s influences? “Oh, no, bands never admit to that kind of thing, do they?” laughs Cocker. “We know we’re all unique.”



World Radio History



ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTIAN CLAYTON

## NOSOTROS ESTAMOS EQUI AHORA ¡ENTRETÉNGANOS!

Much has been made of foreign stars from ABBA to Julio Iglesias crooning songs in stilted English in a bid for U.S. success. But now the tide is turning. Pop fans traveling through Central America recently could hear Mariah Carey, Toni Braxton and Boyz II Men singing their hits on the radio—all in Spanish.

They're far from alone. Bryan Adams' Spanish-sung "Everything I Do (I Do It for You)" went top five in Mexico and Chile. "There's a whole other market—different people, different radio stations," observes A&M International Marketing Product Manager Martin Kierszenbaum, who translated that song and gave Adams vocal coaching. The rapid globalization of the music business ensures

that foreign language "covers" by American pop stars will become more prevalent in the near future, and the proximity of the Latin market within and without the U.S. strongly suggests Spanish as the first language of choice.

Of course, it helps to be bilingual. Cuban-born Jon Secada included two songs in Spanish on his debut album, which sold five million copies. Then he re-recorded the LP entirely in Spanish, and sold another half million. But not every artist is ripe for crossover success. David Lee Roth's recent foreign language release on Warners, "Sonrisa Salveja" ["Eat 'em and Smile"] turned out to be, well, *muerto*.

## DIZZY'S LEGACY

Before he died last year, Dizzy Gillespie requested that his local hospital, the Englewood (N.J.) Hospital and Medical Center, help provide for other jazz musicians. With the help of the Jazz Foundation of America, a program now exists to extend free emergency medical care and hospitalization to unin-



MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES

sured and/or indigent musicians in the New York area. Patients who qualify are referred by the Jazz Foundation to a medical panel based at the hospital. Costs are covered by medical volunteers and by donations to the Dizzy Gillespie Memorial Fund. For more information, call the JFA at (212) 213-3866, or Englewood Hospital at (201) 894-3499.

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# ROUGH MIX

## CHERON MOORE

When hip-hop heavies like Dr. Dre or Snoop Dogg need to beef up their beats, Cheron Moore gets the call. Moore says it's his cymbal playing that keeps his beats sounding fat rather than overweight.

"Tom-toms can clutter a song. When you drive a band with your cymbals, you're making your beat bigger and fatter. Cymbals can lay behind the beat and give you a deeper pocket." One of Moore's favorite flourishes is a quick double-handed double crash: He'll roll his hands over, strike upwards to catch the edge of the undersides of his crash cymbals, then whip his wrists around to give the cymbals a straight-on strike from above. He'll throw that move in to accent the "and" of 4 and a strong downbeat, or, if he's feeling particularly speedy, the final sixteenth of a measure and the following downbeat.

"That not only sounds good, it looks good," Moore laughs. "Who said drummers can't have a little flash."



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*George Petersen*  
Electronic Musician  
July, 1993

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*Ian Masterson*  
Home & Studio Recording (U.K.)  
June, 1993



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*Mark Vail*  
Keyboard  
November, 1993

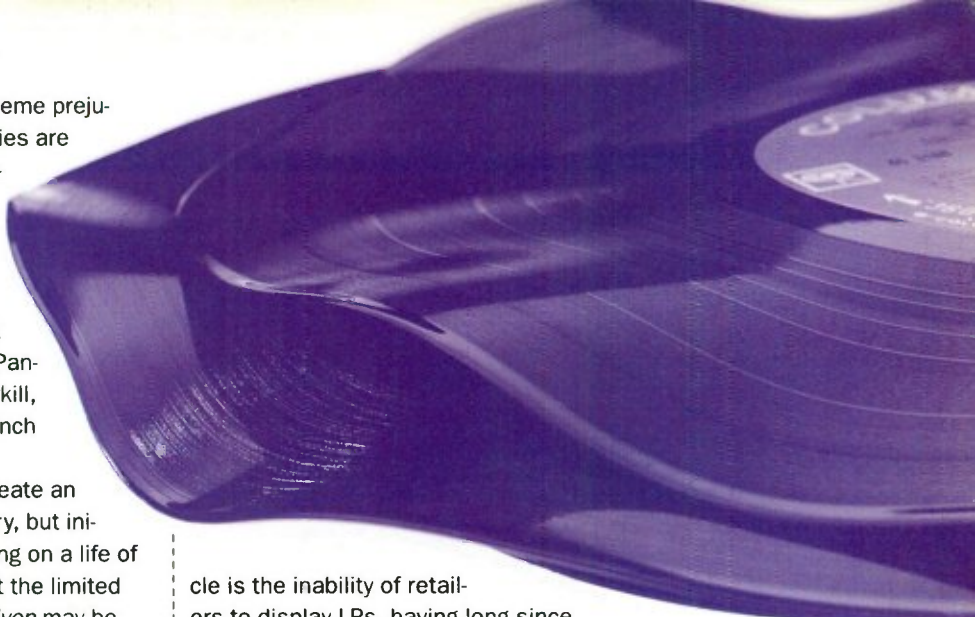


**BACK TO VINYL!**

Having terminated the 12-inch LP—with extreme prejudice—over the past decade, record companies are dealing in vinyl again. In recent months, several major rock releases have debuted on vinyl, sometimes with alternate contents and/or cover art, often weeks ahead of their scheduled release dates as CDs and cassettes. Recipients of the retro treatment include the latest from Pearl Jam, Nirvana, Pantera, Gil Scott-Heron, Indigo Girls, Urge Overkill, Sonic Youth, Soundgarden, Therapy?, Nine Inch Nails and the *Backbeat* soundtrack.

Labels undertake a vinyl pre-release to create an anticipatory buzz. Does it work? Reports vary, but initial indications are that vinyl issues are taking on a life of their own. EastWest Records execs hint that the limited 10,000-unit run of Pantera's *Far Beyond Driven* may be extended. Meanwhile, Epic pressed up 50,000 LPs of Pearl Jam's *Vs.* (list price \$7.98). Around 3000 vinyl copies of *The Downward Spiral* by Nine Inch Nails were distributed as not-for-sale promotional items—only to appear in collector's shops priced at around \$45.

Despite such apparent success, insiders are quick to deny that these experiments prefigure the return of the LP. Aside from record company reluctance to support vinyl after having eradicated it so thoroughly, the biggest obsta-



cle is the inability of retailers to display LPs, having long since converted their racks to accommodate CD jewel boxes. Mercury Records, at least, is serious enough to work around that roadblock: LP copies of the new Kiss tribute are shipping complete with countertop display stands.

*This month's Rough Mix was written by Chuck Crisafulli, Dave DiMartino, Ted Greenwald, Mark Rowland, Chris Rubin and Dev Sherlock.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY TERRY DOYLE

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHEL DELSOL

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*Musician*  
October, 1993



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Sound On Sound (U.K.)  
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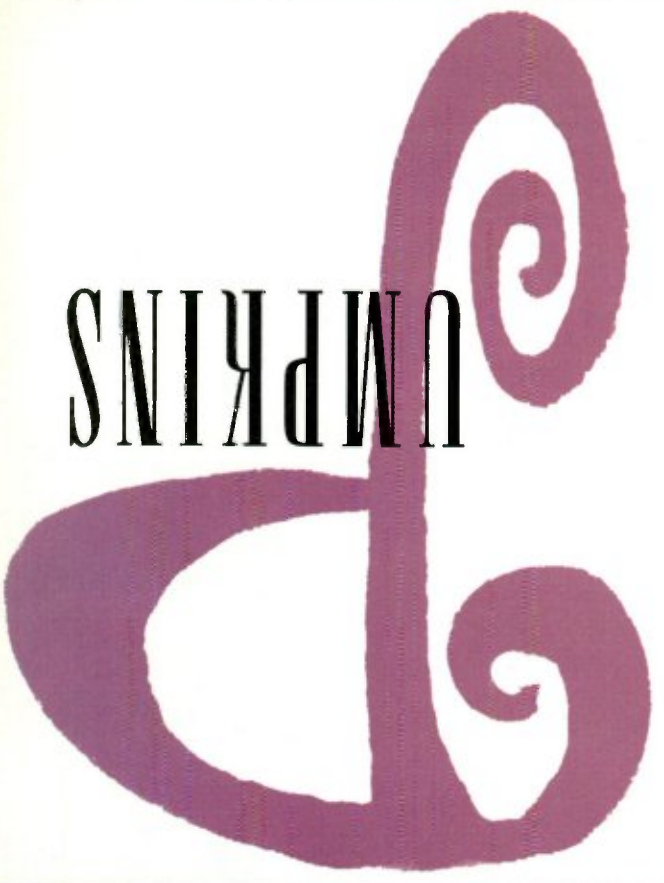
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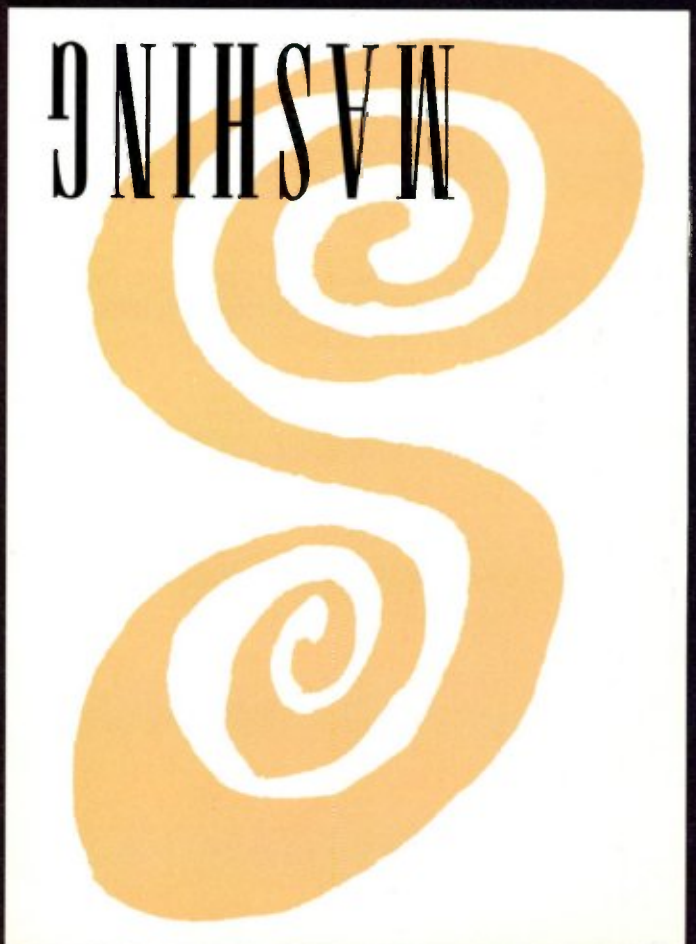


UMPRINS



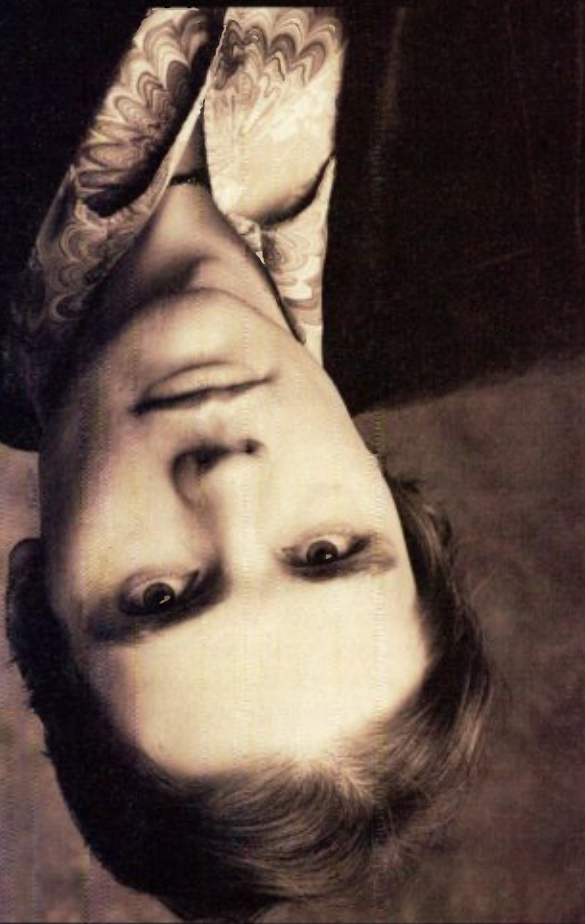
IN A WORLD OF ANTI POP STARS BIG

MASHING

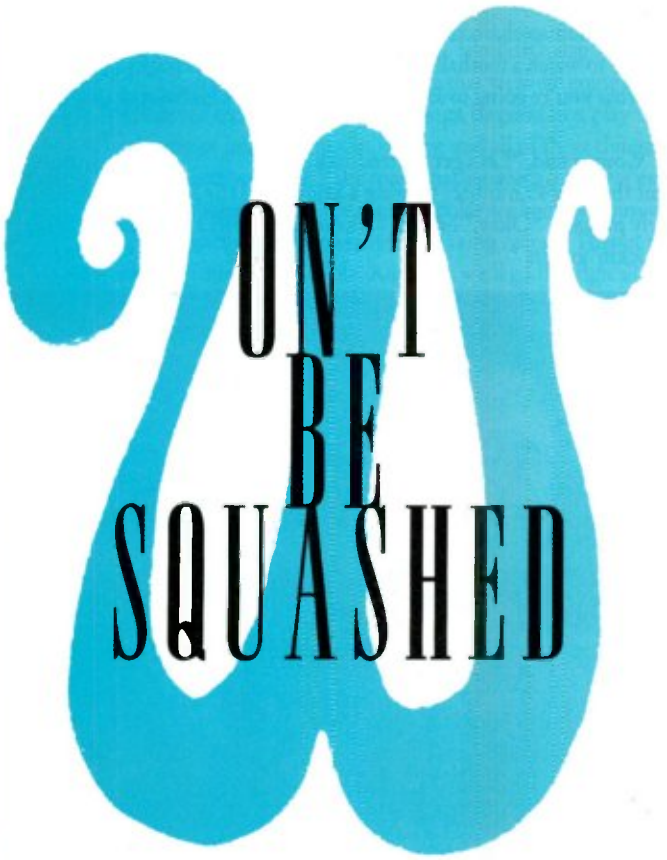


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BILLY GORGAN



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SQUASHED



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARC HAUSER

BILLY CORGAN IS REALLY ALTERNATIVE



JAMES IHA

BY JAMES HUNTER

JIM, THE GUY WHO SERVES Chicago breakfasts and Chinese entrees at Jim's Diner, seems nonplussed by the presence of a journalist and a tape recorder at Billy Corgan's table. Jim is a Smashing Pumpkins fan. A framed poster for *Gish*, the band's 1991 Caroline Records debut, adorns his modest room's west wall, and over the course of my lunch with Corgan, he shows up a time or two at the table, inquiring about the publication, wondering whether Corgan had heard Bono plump for the Pumpkins a few weeks ago during the Grammys telecast, and generally exuding pride at Corgan's patronage.

And why not? *Siamese Dream*, Smashing Pumpkins' major-label bow, is about to be certified double-platinum. Yet on this cold, sunny Chicago afternoon, it's not two million Jims Corgan conjures as he splashes catsup across his eggs over-easy and home fries. What he sees instead are many recent instances of

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARC HAUSER

HAND LETTERING BY TABBOO!

long way from the early Pumpkins, circa '88 to '91: "Our heavier songs were always pseudo prog-rock/metal/psychedelic/Goth. And then we'd have super pop-pop songs. Urge Overkill was always kind of happening back then, as well as many of the Touch & Go bands. But we never really saw them, never really clicked with anyone. We did play with the Crows, who turned into Red Red Meat.

It's been noted elsewhere that Corgan tends to play most of the fast leads and extravagant guitars while Iha favors "weird slow parts." He agrees. "In the beginning,"

he says, "there were all these weird tangents, and basically the first album was the honing of them all, getting the heavy-rock Smashing Pumpkins sound together. The second album is the diversification of all that. Still, at the core it had the kinds of songs that distinguish us, and things with different instrumentation, pop elements like 'Today' and 'Mayonaise' that definitely were not on the first album. Plus, we spent more time on everything."

Like any good Pumpkin, Iha makes the most of his remove. Rummaging through his record collection, he mocks the cover of

*Who's Next*, and calls Nick Drake an "awesome sad man." He points out a passage from the *Midnight Cowboy* soundtrack where "they're at a party and Dustin Hoffman tries to steal this lunch meat." He's abashed by his creeping interest in singer/songwriters: "For years, I was like 'Why would anyone listen to these guys who don't rock?'" He aspires to some notion of country ambience, wants to bring more songs into the band, and assures me that the reason we both think *The Low Spark of High Heeled Boys* is Traffic's best is that "by this time they were these burned-out pros" commandeering great grooves. "Oh boy," marvels Iha, 26, at one point, deep into trying to extrapolate motive and psychology from a photo of some obscure '60s band's album cover. "That great old rock stuff. They can never take that away from me."

BILLY CORGAN lives with his wife Chris, a museum worker, in a fine and unflashy renovation of an 1897 Chicago house. It sits on an upper-middle-class street with only slight residential traffic and noise; not on the Lake, where "all the yuppies just *have* to live," Corgan notes. The living and dining rooms are outlined with warm, dark Victorian woods; period furniture that Corgan purchased along with the house fits in handsomely. A recently acquired, Chicago-built '20s grand piano luxuriates in front of a window.


Corgan, 27, began playing music when he was 15; a sky-high score he made on a musical aptitude test administered to him at age six went ignored, due largely to his divorced parents' indifference. He describes his home life as "totally uneven, inconsistent. Music and baseball were the two things I turned to for solace. I wore out records by the Beatles and Black Sabbath, for example. My father was a musician. I grew up basically with my stepmom, a stewardess. She was gone a lot. I used to listen to the radio for six-seven hours on end. The things that really stuck out, considering what else was going on, were Boston, Cheap Trick, Queen, the bands that were sort of post-Beatles with a twist. We also had pop records around the house. We had Hendrix's *Monterey Pop* album and *Houses of the Holy*. I had no prejudice about music whatsoever. I remember listening to *Return to Forever* at nine."

"In '88," Corgan remembers, "I was listening to the Cure and Bauhaus. That's another important stage in anyone's life, when you disconnect from the music of your adolescence. A lot of people gravitated toward the


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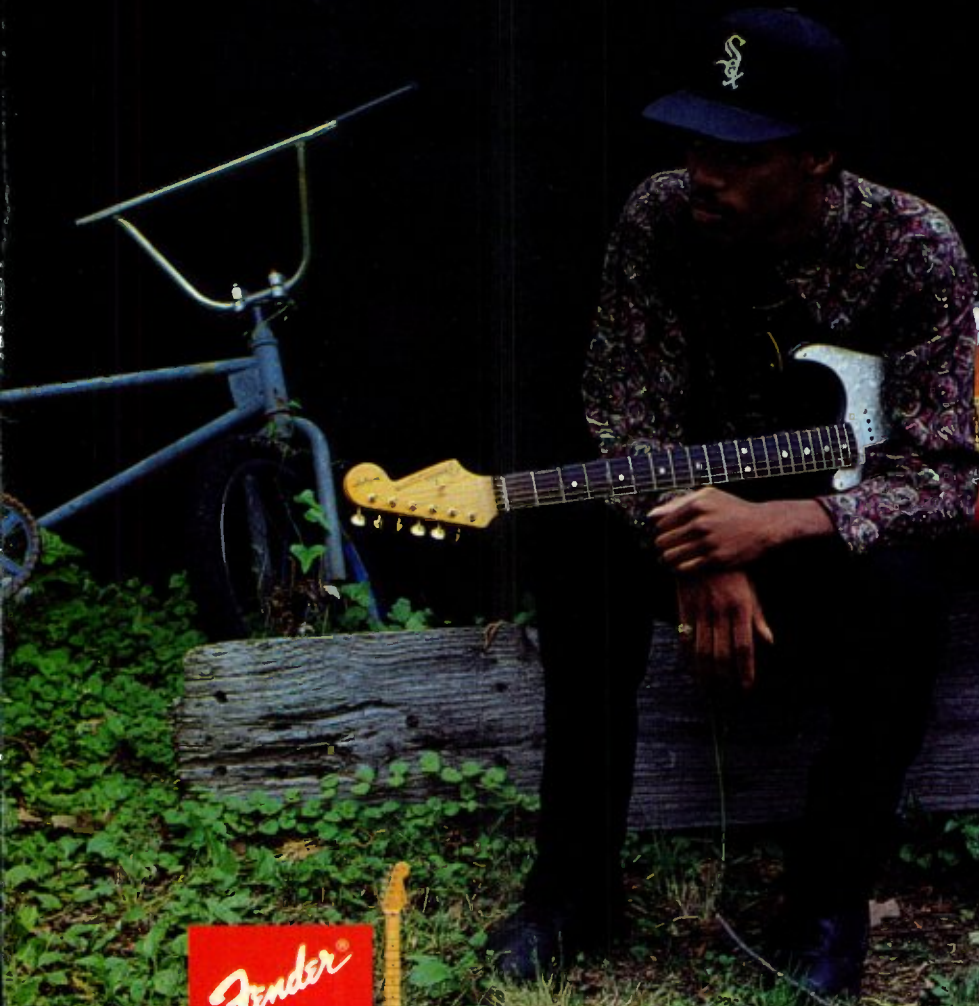


Produced by Ben Harper and JP Plunier  
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“ Jimi Hendrix  
the things that he did,  
he made me stay interested.  
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# STAGES

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Dead Kennedys and all that stuff; I gravitated toward gloomy Echo & the Bunnymen new-wavey stuff. That seemed to strike a chord with me. I sold all my Black Sabbath records, then ended up buying them back. Did I force myself to listen to the Dead Kennedys because the guy down the street in combat boots thought they were cool? No, I tossed them in the corner and went on listening to whatever else it was that appealed to me."

Corgan, who maintains that he's played "alternative music" since he was 18, is a champion of obscure bands who have little

or no Black Sabbath, Return to Forever or E.L.O. in their backgrounds; after he's mouthed off about strict alternativists, he'll voice regret that some of them don't respect him. But he's not afraid to say that "sometimes, bigger is better," knowing that ambition is a cardinal sin in the cranky little world of American punk. When Pavement's Stephen Malkmus recently gave an interview to CompuServe, an online subscription service, he made a few expected jokes at Corgan's expense, then sobered up and posted, "I like some songs by Smashing

Pumpkins. It's their ideology I despise." Of course, Malkmus's world isn't really punk: It's a post-everything, intentionally

David Byrne's new self-titled album reverberates with ecstasy and despair - a dozen songs of haunting reflection and hypnotic energy personified.

Prepare to get Byrned.

# david Byrne

And be sure to check out **BETWEEN THE TEETH**. It's the new video, directed by David himself. On Warner Reprise Video.

David Byrne.  
The new album.  
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## DREAM GEAR

For a man who swears by a '57 Fender Stratocaster reissue (fitted with Fender Lace Sensor pickups), **BILLY CORGAN** uses a lot of amplifiers. His collection includes three MIDI-controlled programmable preamps (Marshall JMP-1, Mesa/Boogie Triaxis and ADA MP2), a Mesa/Boogie Strategy 500 power amp, a Marshall model 1960 Lead cabinet loaded with 75-Watt Celestions and a Marshall Classic cabinet loaded with 25-Watt Celestions. Effects from an Eventide H3000-SE UltraHarmonizer, Digitech DHP55 Digital Harmony Processor and Drawmer Dual Gate are routed through an Uptown Technologies Great Divide audio splitter and two Flash MIDI-controlled audio switchers, also from Uptown, MIDIed to a Butler Sound Mitigator RFC-1 foot controller.

**JAMES IHA** strums either an '87 Gibson Les Paul Custom, Gibson 30th Anniversary SG, Fender Bronco or a guitar called Kingston (of unknown extraction), which he runs through a Marshall JMP-1 programmable preamp, Mesa/Boogie SimulClass 2: Ninety amp and dual Marshall JCM 900 heads with 1960 Lead cabinets. His effects rack includes a Digitech DHP55 Digital Harmony Processor, Alesis Quadverb reverb, DOD FX-17 wah-wah, Boss OC-2 octave divider and an ancient MXR Phase 90 phaser. Effects are routed through a Rocktron Patchmate switcher, controlled by an ADA MC-1 MIDI foot controller.

**D'ARCY** goes for a more stripped-down approach. Her Fender Jazz Bass (fitted with EMG pickups) is amplified by an Ampeg SUT 2 preamp and Ampeg AP6500 stereo power amp, which feed two Mesa/Boogie Power House cabinets and two Mesa/Boogie custom 8x10s.

Seated behind a Yamaha kit, **JIMMY CHAMBERLIN** bashes away on Sabian cymbals: crashes, splashes and chinas between 16" and 20", a 22" ride, and 13" and 14" hi-hats. He has two snare drums, a 5½"x14" chrome model and a Brady 7"x12", and seven rack toms in sizes between 8"x10" and 16"x18". His bass drum, fitted with a DW 50002 double foot pedal, is 16"x22". Chamberlin favors Vic Firth 5B sticks.

The Pumpkins favor Audix mikes and Ernie Ball strings.



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complicated comedy of manners where guitar parts, or even the overall sound of any apparently godawful recording, might produce more meaning for some listeners than more conventional texts or music. But what it shares with strict punk is a kind of horror about "super pop" procedures, even where they convey music as demonstrably, well, alternative as *Siamese Dream*'s.

Thrust into that world, via sheer fan popularity comes Corgan, a rare pop visionary. He dreams of new musical experiences which pop's cynical elite dismiss as impossi-

ble. He considers, even *values*, technique at a point when everyone this side of Garth Brooks has their doubts. He spews pointed opinions when the captains of far less successful bands play things as close to the vest as congressional lobbyists. He likes populism but won't brook its accepted formulas. He says his only regret about *Siamese Dream* is that it isn't original enough.

Sitting behind his piano, Corgan starts talking about the next Smashing Pumpkins album. Suddenly he doesn't have a worry in the world. Possibly a double recording, he

says, it will concern itself with speaking a new rock language, at least sonically, and that it will probably require the integration of some sort of new technological means. Corgan cites U2's *Zooropa* as an example of the kind of refuge from meticulousness that he imagines his new music will take. He contemplates song texts that will be more understandable, or at least more understandably rendered, than before. As a songwriter, he's looking for others to help. "If we're going to do a double LP next time," Corgan says, "we're going to have to find other subjects besides me and my fucked-up life."

He says he's always wanted to belong somewhere. Yet he resists the easy pose of the outsider. "Being an enigmatic, twisted rock star doesn't necessarily mean that you belong to any club," he says. "When I finally found the other Pumpkins, a group of people who represented what I wanted to represent, and then found out that the whole scene was a pose, well, you find yourself lost at sea.

"I've been playing alternative rock since I was 18. It's an old subject for me. I've gotten over it for the most part. I remind myself that there's nothing wrong with my assessment of what I want to do. I'm not going to wake up one day and realize that I've done it all wrong." And he won't, either. ♪

ISAAC HAYES


[cont'd from page 13] bless his hot buttered soul. "I was coerced into a lot of situations I wasn't comfortable in," he says now, "and it showed in my music."

Despite writing some of the best-known and most frequently covered tunes in pop music—"Soul Man," "Hold On! I'm a Coming," "I Thank You" and over 200 more, all penned with David Porter—Hayes isn't reaping the financial benefits you might expect. "I mean, I got ripped good," he says bluntly. "I won't go into it, but mine is the most classic story you ever heard. I see my money going to other places, all the things I did, and it's just not fair." He adds that many of today's best-known rappers—including the Geto Boys, Big Daddy Kane, Kool Moe Dee and the '90s' own Black Moses, Snoop Doggy Dogg—have often sampled his past work, "and a lot of people don't even know it."

But Hayes, the Original Rapper, carries on. "I take everything one day at a time and work my craft," he baldly states. "I don't fit into a certain bag. I've done jazz, pop stuff, R&B, soul, blues... I've done it all. I don't even know how to categorize myself." ♪

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blues for thought

As a session vocalist, he's known for his work with the likes of Ry Cooder, Pops Staples and John Lee Hooker. On his debut album **blues for thought**, Terry Evans takes the floor—accompanied by Cooder, Jim Keltner, The Paramount Singers, Spooner Oldham, Robert Ward and Frankie Ford.

Produced by Ry Cooder.

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John Lee Hooker

Riviera



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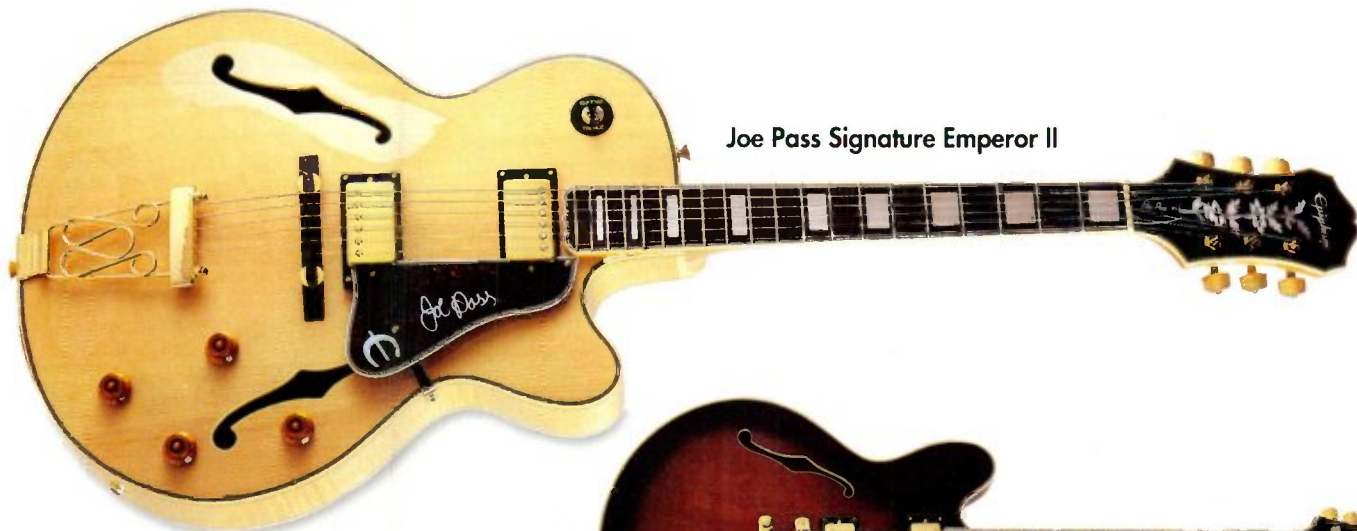


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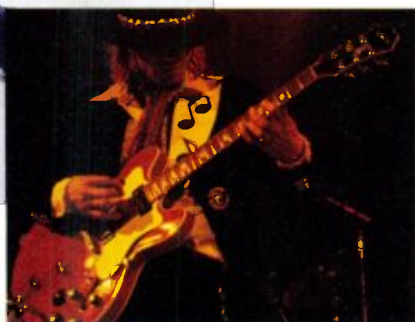


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# READY FOR THE COUNTRY

RODNEY  
CROWELL

CLEANS UP  
HIS MESS AND COMES  
OUT  
PAINTING

**BY PETER CRONIN**

Rodney Crowell is happy. He's cleaned up some serious habits, his turbulent Nash-Vegas marriage to Rosanne Cash is finally a thing of the past, and friends and family members have stopped dying on him. He's got a nice house and a cool car and a great girlfriend. He's also signed with MCA Nashville, reunited with producer Tony Brown and released *Let the Picture Paint Itself*, his most unabashedly country record in years. Hey, this guy's life ain't so messy after all.

Unfortunately, this could pose a problem. Fans and critics who count on Crowell for the kind of incisive, confessional, wrung-from-the-heart songs that you just don't hear much on the radio anymore might have a tough time recognizing the cheerful-looking guy on the record cover. They might even jump to the conclusion that the 43-year-old singer/songwriter has caved in to pressure from his



new label to make himself accessible and more commercially viable in today's youthful, image-conscious country market. And, in a way, they'd be right. There was pressure, but it came from Crowell himself.

"Rodney was the one who picked the cover shot," says MCA's senior director of A&R creative development Susan Levy. "There were definitely people surrounding this project who weren't used to seeing that particular image of him. They were accustomed to a more out-of-focus, somber Rodney. And there were many pictures available for this cover that would have shown that side of him, but that's just not where Rodney is at right now."

Fitting any multidimensional artist through the increasingly narrow keyhole at today's country radio is a problem, but for the first time in his career, Crowell seems truly at ease with the idea of trying to make it happen. Sure, his songs have been covered by just about everybody—Waylon Jennings, the Oak Ridge Boys, Emmylou Harris, Willie Nelson, Foghat, Bob Seger, the list goes on and on—and nobody in Nashville gets more respect as a songwriter. But as a recording artist, Crowell has never quite found a comfortable fit.

"Most of what I do as a songwriter is a pretty unconscious process," Crowell says. "Getting the recording artist on a par with the songwriter has taken a long while. When I listen back to some of the records I made earlier in my career, I can appreciate the writing but not the artistry. With this record I think I've finally reached a place where I feel like a recording artist in my writing and in my singing and playing."

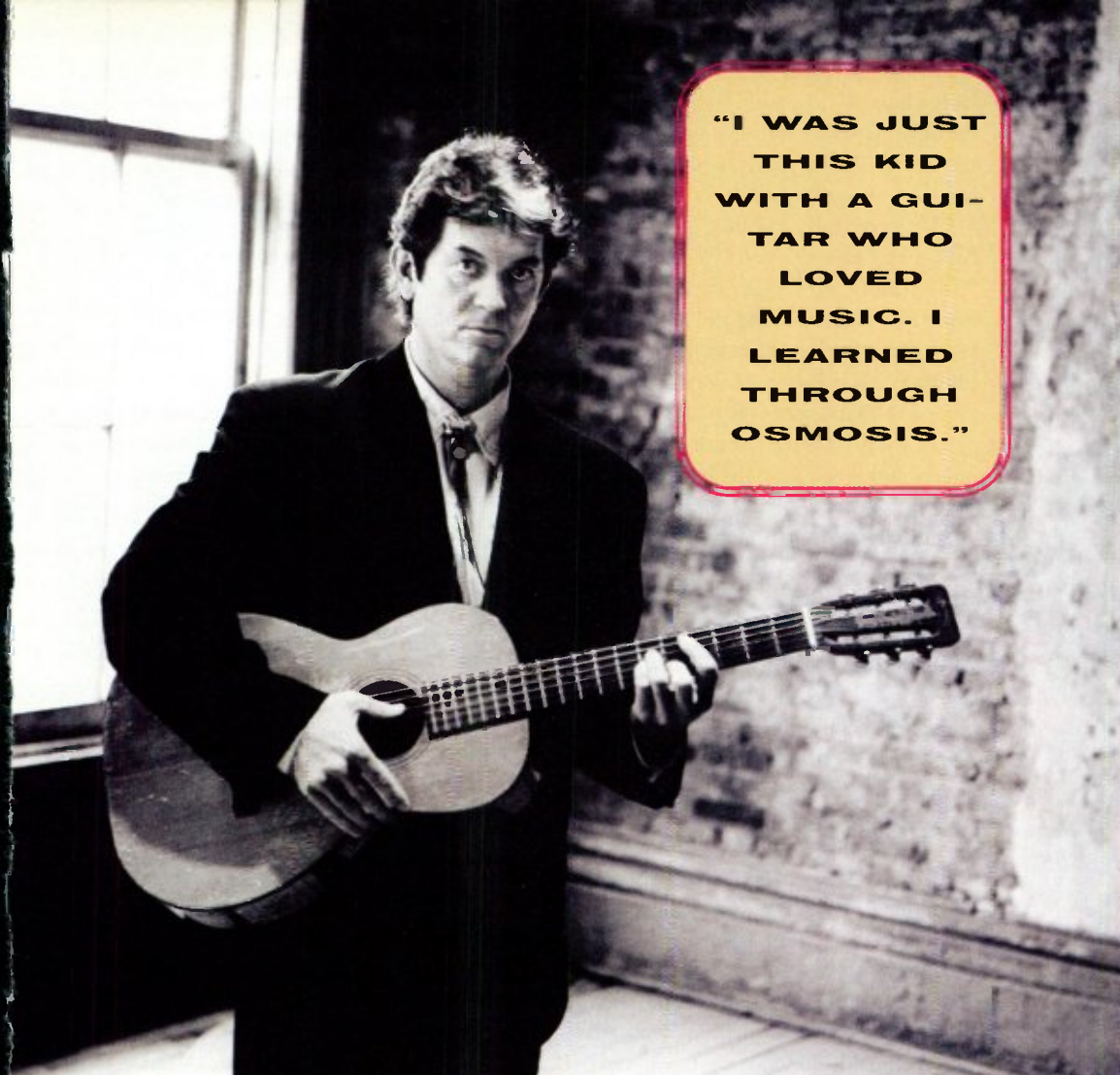
**T**HE SESSIONS for *Let the Picture Paint Itself* felt as upbeat as Crowell's new songs. Engineer Chuck Ainlay sat at the console, his shoulder-length blond hair flying back and forth to the beat, as Crowell and band—guitarists Dann Huff and Brent Mason, drummer Eddie Bayers, bassist Bob Glaub, steel and dobro player Paul Franklin and pianist Jim Cox—ran through the album's title track. Crowell was back in the vocal booth belting out the lyric at the top of his range. As usual, he was singing about his own dilemma—"some guys live for money, some for art, one guy thinks he's funny, the other guy thinks he's smart...but if the only thing that you're living for is pain, there's a real good chance that you'll get nothing more than a lot more of the same..."



As the musicians regrouped in the control room for a playback, Ainlay instinctively gave up his seat at the console to Crowell, who flopped into the engineer's chair. He flipped his baseball cap around to get a better view of things, revealing the big letters "DNA" emblazoned across the front. He was studiously tweaking the track when Brown arrived and interrupted his artist to ask what the initials on his hat stand for. Crowell spun around, cocked a Mr. Spock eyebrow toward his co-producer and said in his best you're-interrupting-me voice, "Do Not Ask."

Crowell's stubborn streak was clearly in place. When 1988's *Diamonds & Dirt* catapulted him into the mainstream major leagues and simultaneously established Brown as a commercially viable producer, Crowell began to kick at the confines of country music, while Brown capitalized on his success by making hit records with everyone from Vince Gill to Reba McEntire to George Strait to Wynonna, rising to the presidency of MCA Nashville and becoming a key player in the current country music boom. By the time *Diamonds & Dirt* had earned him a Grammy and become the first country release in history to yield five consecutive number one singles, Crowell was already starting to drift.

"I had all that acclaim for *Diamonds & Dirt* and it did not make me happy," Crowell says with a shrug. "There were enough things wrong in my life where I thought, 'Oh, commercial acceptance is something that's missing here, so I'll go get that.' Well, I got that and it didn't do it, and that really pissed me off."



**"I WAS JUST THIS KID WITH A GUITAR WHO LOVED MUSIC. I LEARNED THROUGH OSMOSIS."**

firm, his bus driver, everybody—and for the first time in 20 years seriously considered hanging it up. Fortunately Crowell had hit bottom before, and, not totally unfamiliar with the territory, he could at least imagine a light at the end of the tunnel.

"It was 1972, the year they opened Opryland," Crowell recalls. "I was living in my car and starving, and a friend told me they were looking for someone who could yodel like Jimmie Rodgers. Hey, I can yodel, so I went out and auditioned and got the gig. But the day before the season started, I got a job as a songwriter for one third the money. It was never a question. I let the Jimmie Rodgers gig go, and went to work for \$100 a week. Guardian angels do come in sometimes."

Crowell's not-so-angelic overseers back then were Guy Clark and the other songwriters, including Townes Van Zandt, Steve Earle, David Olney and Richard Dobson,

As Crowell became increasingly impatient with the obligatory rituals of country stardom, and his personal problems began to mount, sessions for the crucial followup to *Diamonds & Dirt* quickly turned into a creative tug of war between artist and producer, with Brown aching for a repeat of his initial commercial triumph and Crowell anxious to head in more serious directions.

"Rodney on purpose did not want to repeat *Diamonds & Dirt*," says Brown, a touch of exasperation still in his voice. "On top of that, there were a lot of things happening—he and Rosanne were going through their problems and Rodney's father passed away suddenly—so the record we were making became very hard."

After that album, 1989's *Keys to the Highway*, failed to come close to the commercial success of its predecessor, Crowell changed horses, teaming up with co-producers John Leventhal, Larry Klein and Bobby Colomby to make the cathartic, wide-ranging and very un-Nashville *Life Is Messy*, a record that, despite some truly inspired moments, slowly skidded to a halt, stuck between formats. Crowell was still smarting from a record executive's well-intentioned promise that *Life Is Messy* was going to turn him into "Columbia's own Don Henley." He was doing some halfhearted touring behind the release when he got the news that one of his oldest and dearest friends, New Orleans-based folk singer Harlan White, had shot himself in the head. Confused and disillusioned, Crowell fired everybody—his band, his management, his publicity

who were the cornerstones of a healthy writer's scene springing up around Nashville's Bishop's Pub. "When I first showed up, I was just this kid with a guitar who loved music and songs," Crowell says. "The background that made it work for me, and part of the reason a guy with the brilliance of Guy Clark had more than two minutes for me, was that from the time I was three until the time I left Texas, I learned through osmosis all these old Appalachian dead baby songs my father knew like 'May I Sleep in Your Barn Tonight Mister,' 'Great Speckled Bird,' 'Rabbit in the Graveyard' and 'Little Footprints in the Snow.' It was like, 'Hey man, listen to the songs this guy knows.'"

Crowell emerged from the Bishop's Pub scene with a pocket full of great songs and a growing reputation as a prime mover in a new generation of Nashville songwriters who drew as heavily from

#### PAINT BOX

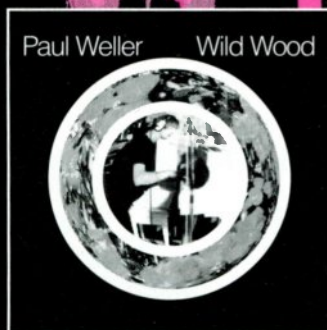
Like his songs, Crowell gets his instruments wherever he can find them. He spotted his beloved '60s-vintage Gibson J45 "hanging up in a dress shop in Santa Fe, full of chicken feathers with a price tag on it." Onstage, he runs the acoustic through a Demeter tube direct box. His favorite electric these days is his Music Man Eddie Van Halen model, which he plays through a Music Man 2x10. His strings are Ernie Balls.

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Dylan and the Beatles on one side as they did from Hank Williams and Roger Miller on the other. Crowell managed to balance the old and the new in a deeply personal style that showed equal respect for both.

"We never talked about 'getting cuts' back then," says Crowell. "When I played 'Till I Gain Control Again' for the first time it was two in the morning and nobody said to me, 'Hey, that's a perfect song for Emmylou or Crystal Gayle or Waylon. It was more like 'Wow, you really did it, that's a pretty song.' It wasn't about business or money. It was romantic and innocent, and I miss that."

Although he went on to inspire the current generation of Music City songwriters, Crowell never bought into the kind of nine-to-five-in-a-cubicle, Tin Pan Alley-style writing so prevalent in Nashville. Instead, he headed to L.A. and joined Emmylou Harris's Hot Band, hooking up for the first time with a young piano player fresh out of Elvis Presley's touring band, Tony Brown.

"Rodney has this Pied Piper thing about him," says Brown. "After I left the Hot Band I moved to Nashville to work for RCA as director of A&R for the country division. I'd just signed Alabama. As a matter of fact, they were in my office when Rodney called and said, 'I'm starting a band called the Cherry Bombs. Quit RCA and come out on the road with me.' I said, 'Rodney, I can't quit,' and he said, 'Sure you can.' So you know what I did? I quit! And it was one of the best things I ever did, because that crew shaped my whole musical taste."

The Cherry Bombs, which also included steel player Hank DeVito, bassist Emory Gordy, the late, great Larrie Londin (to whom *Picture* is dedicated) on drums and one of three guitarists—Vince Gill, Richard Bennett or Albert Lee—toured with both Rodney and Rosanne for the next few years. Ironically, even as Crowell tries to find his place today among the new crop of "young country" singers, he was instrumental in developing the sound that drives every one of their records.

"The old Nashville structured style of guitar and piano playing was replaced by the freestyle approach of those bands," says Brown. "It's a looser, more energetic style that is still very much here. Ricky Skaggs introduced it to radio, they accepted it, and it just started spreading. The Hot Band and the Cherry Bombs definitely set a standard that there was more to country music than

the blandness that had been happening."

Crowell hopes to get a chance to do the same thing for the music here in the '90s, and production- and style-wise, the freewheeling songs on *Let the Picture Paint Itself* are definitely radio-ready. This is country music all right. But Crowell's writing has never been sharper, and these musical/autobiographical snapshots mark a kind of creative new beginning for the writer. They came out as easy as they sound.

"I'm still doing all the same shit, but it does seem as though music is a joyous occasion right now," Crowell says with a nervous laugh. "I'm just sort of back home with *Let the Picture Paint Itself*. Maybe it's down to experience, doing it long enough till it starts to become second nature, but there are less of those blocks or insecurities or whatever, and it's fun to play."

One thing's for sure. The country radio playing field has changed radically and gotten a lot more crowded since Crowell's last serious pitch, and right now playlists are cluttered with fresh young Randy, Garth and Billy Ray soundalikes.

"I'm too old to try to be hip," says Crowell with a laugh. "Country music really has become image driven, but there's nothing worse than a man in his 40s posing. If I'm going to survive in this market it's going to be as an adult. It's really coming home to me because I have this new record, and MCA feels that creatively we're right in the ballpark. Trying to pick out the artwork I'm walking on eggshells because it could be an easy one to miss. But this is the truest format for what I do, and I believe more now in what I'm doing than I ever have."

Rodney Crowell is a hell of a songwriter, but he's always been one lousy actor. In the end, it doesn't matter what his record company demands or what the market requires or even what he tells himself. In the end, Crowell has no choice but to follow his heart, and for now at least, his heart is in the country.

"There was a time that I viewed the limited canvas of country music as a total encumbrance," he says. "It seemed so small and narrow and confining that a real artist wouldn't do that. I wanted to paint the whole damn wall. But now I look at that canvas and say, 'Wow, I can really fill that thing up. I can make that canvas *pregnant* with color and tone and depth.' There's a real joy in creating within that space. That's where I am right now."

*"I have always used  
D'Addario strings."*

-Lou Reed

*Victor Frabon*

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World Radio History

**B**ASICALLY," says Lenny Waronker, "I want to be known as the father of two kids who play in rock 'n' roll bands." ★ Well, okay: Son Joey plays drums for Walt Mink, whose terrific album *Bareback Ride* was released last year on Caroline Records. Daughter Anna is a singing/songwriting third of That Dog, whose equally acclaimed debut album was recently released on Geffen. And while we're tracing the family tree, let's not forget Lenny's dad Si Waronker, a classically trained violinist and a co-founder of Liberty Records.

But Lenny Waronker's musical family is bigger than that. For 25 years he's worked as an A&R man, staff producer, executive and, since 1982, president of Warner Brothers Records. His time there coincides with that label's rise to prominence in the modern pop era, and not incidentally with its reputation as a company whose homey atmosphere and track record of artistic loyalty belie its enormity. From breakthrough signings of musicians like Jimi Hendrix, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young and the Grateful Dead in the '60s, WB has established itself as the songwriter's label nonpareil, whether launching the careers of such talents as Prince, Ricky Lee Jones and Randy Newman, or attracting established stars in mid-career like Elvis Costello, R.E.M. or the Red Hot Chili Peppers, seeking fresh challenges and a creative atmosphere. "I'm sure we have a point of view

here," Waronker modestly concedes. "I'm just not sure what it is."

Casually dressed in jeans and sneakers in his relatively spacious office at the label's bustling Burbank headquarters, Waronker, with gentle self-deprecation, likens his role to that of a sincere cheerleader. Warners may be the biggest record company in the world, but when its president starts talking about the artists whose albums he's produced or careers he's helped guide, he sounds more like a kid who just got his favorite star's autograph. Waronker doesn't merely respect musicians, he reveres them—or more accurately, he reveres that "magical power that a great songwriter or a great artist has—it has always, and hopefully will always, be mystical to me."

Could it be, in this cynical age, that such an attitude can still co-exist, even correlate, with financial success?

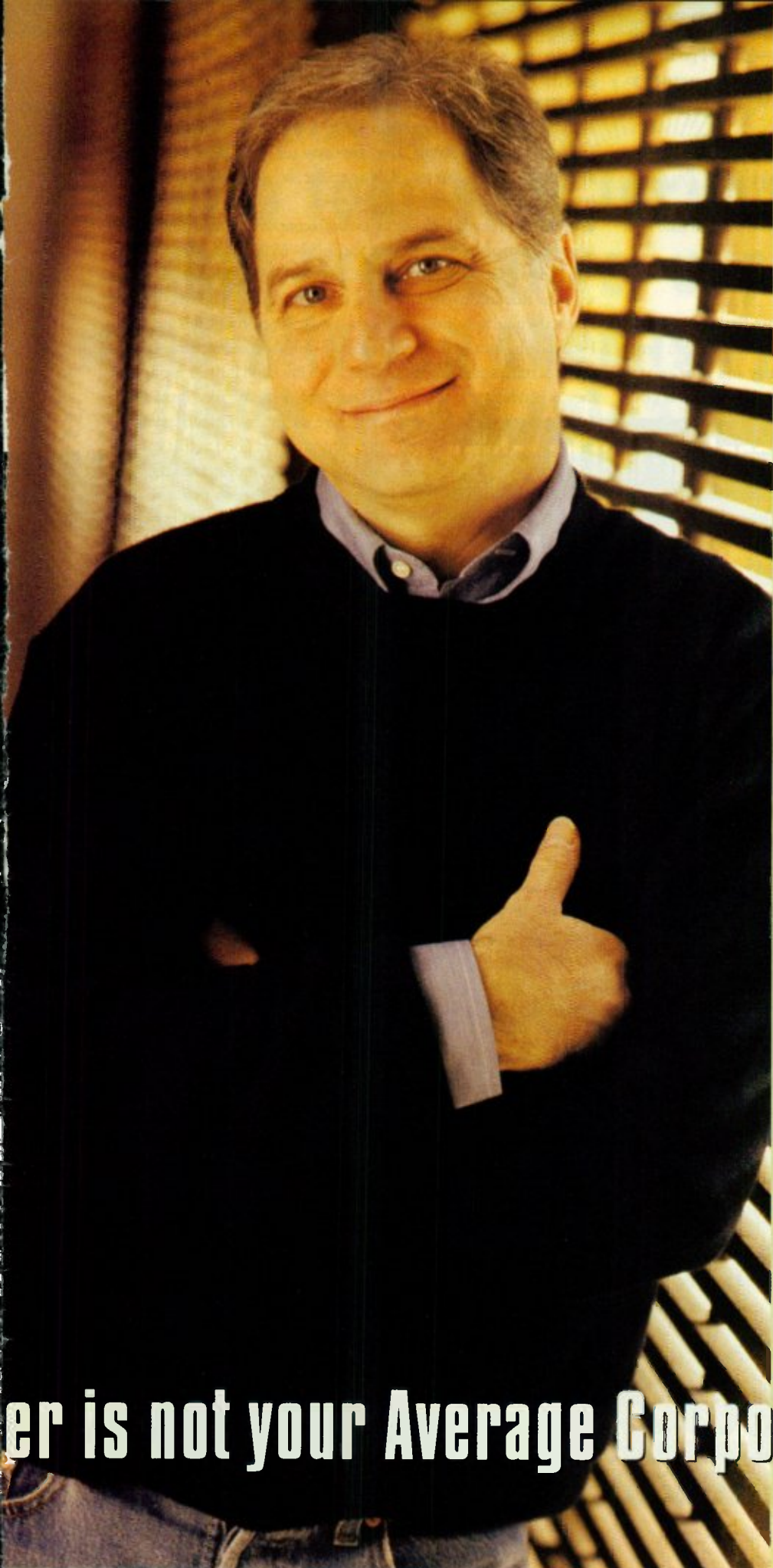
BY MARK ROWLAND ★ PHOTOGRAPH BY CATANZARO & MANDESSIAN

# FAMILY

All In The

Warner Brothers President Lenny Waronker





**MUSICIAN:** *So, what does the president of Warner Brothers do?*

**WARONKER:** I don't know. *[laughs]* I'm all over the place. The thing that's nice is that, because I've had the 17 years as a producer, I feel like it's okay for me to talk to an artist about mixes and tracks—not to impose, but at least to have an opinion. And I can talk to our people inside the company about a record in a way that nobody else can.

I remember when John Fogerty brought in "Centerfield," there was nothing for me to do except to jump up and down at the right time. And he needed that. He was sitting there and I was sitting here, we talked, and we listened to it and after eight bars I knew this guy was on it and it freaked me out! And he saw me freak out and it helped him go on to the next part. That was rewarding to me, even though it was nothing. Because it gave him the sense that somebody knew, and he was able to finish the record with a little more confidence. And then, talking about that experience with our promotion staff and getting their interest, because they'd much rather hear about *that* than how to go promote the record...those are the things that probably have a positive effect on the company. And if we're going after an artist, to be able to talk about their stuff, as opposed to how profitable we are, is important. Because when you hear that word "president," it conjures other things.

**MUSICIAN:** *Do you still spend much time in the studio?*

**WARONKER:** I try to stay away from that. I don't like the studio. I'd rather hear it in my car, 'cause that's when I really feel it. In the studio you hear these big speakers and it bowls you over—it's intimidating. 'Cause when you're dealing with someone who's truly inspired, it just boggles the mind.

**MUSICIAN:** *Even though you've known a guy like Randy Newman all your life?*

**WARONKER:** Yeah. I mean, I think I could sit down and talk with him about where it comes from, but when you hear it...going to the right place musically and then saying the right thing on top of that is too big for my brain to totally comprehend. So it's magical. *[laughs]* Even at its very straightest, a great pop record to me is a work of art. I was trying to explain what Babyface and El DeBarge were up to to somebody the other

er is not your Average Corporate Cheese.

they want to do. They're not going to be questioned about taking chances.

But I also grew up with a pop background. I worked with Snuff Garrett for three years at Liberty, and that was a tremendous learning ground for why a song worked or didn't work commercially. Hooks, choruses, verses, all the things you have to be concerned about. I didn't really get it, not like he got it. He was the best I ever saw. He could listen to a song and say, "That's a number one song" or "That's a number five song," and be right on. I mean, 22 hits in two years! And when you were around him, somebody with that much self-assurance and power—I didn't want to be a record producer because of him.

**MUSICIAN:** *It feels like we're on the cusp of another sea change in the business as well as the art of pop music. How do you size it up?*

**WARONKER:** Well, I live with it at home. These kids are tremendously concerned about the protection of their own stuff. Control is even more of a factor than I remember in the '60s and '70s, and there was plenty of concern about it back then. At the same time, there's an understanding of the business aspect of playing the game.

In the '60s and '70s you had tremendous tension and because of that it was a difficult time. It was out there, everywhere you looked. You had people in the record company who were philosophically coming from different places. You had the old Columbia studios run by guys from a different generation. You had these crazy union rules, where you couldn't bring in any help, and they were struggling with this new thing, eight-track. When we did "Sit Down, I Think I Love


You," at one point a guy turned around, he was a rough guy and he said, "If you want to do it, then you hold these two knobs, 'cause we've given up!" He couldn't do it. It was like the changing of the guard.

Now, it's a pretty difficult time too. But this time at least here, it's not like that—because to some extent, we're the mothers and fathers. [laughs] So we can talk. My kids have been great teachers in a way; just observing what they're up to and seeing that it's real to them, makes me feel good. I think it's a very positive cycle. Because there's real concern about what is most important, and that is the music. If they're willing to protect that and fight for that, then I think we're in for some good times. And I think there's more of that now than there has been for a long time.

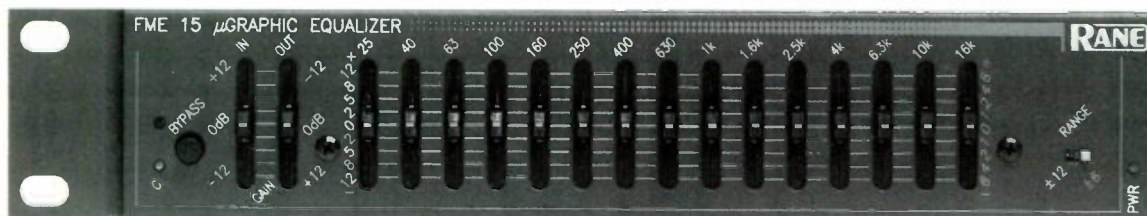
**MUSICIAN:** *After 25 years here, are you still easily stimulated by new music?*

**WARONKER:** I don't understand everything all the time, but I never did anyway. Even if I don't quite get the music, if what's behind it is real, you can tell that in a quick way. And you know, chord changes haven't changed that much. If the changes are right and somebody's saying something intelligent, there's a very good chance I'm gonna like it. When that goes, I'll be gone.

**MUSICIAN:** *Any parting advice for younger musicians?*

**WARONKER:** It always comes down to the same things. Stay true to what you're about. Don't get caught up in those magazines, get caught up in how far you want to go. And don't be afraid to take chances. 'Cause being conventional can kill you. 

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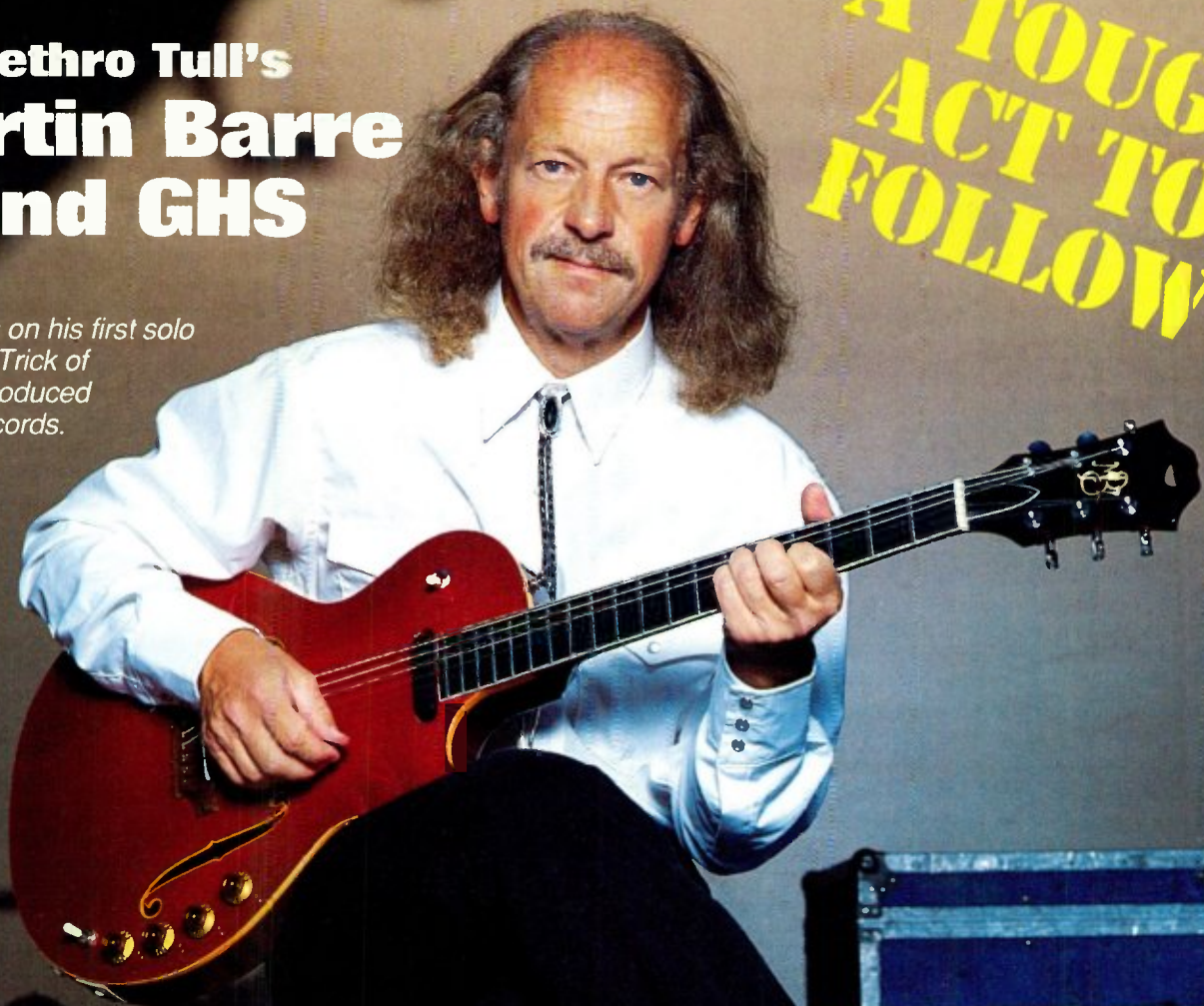


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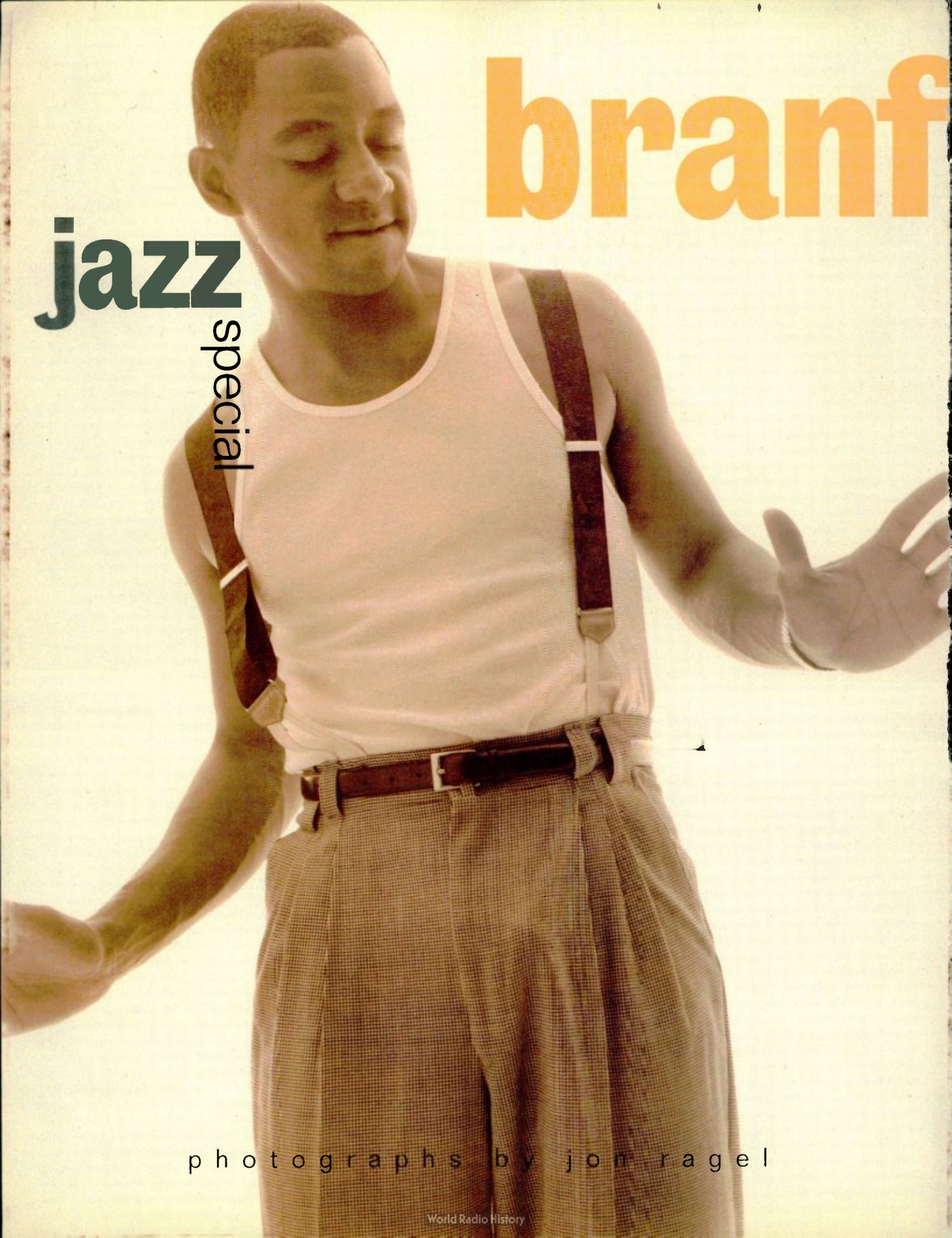
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# marsalis

In the spring of 1985, I was walking down 8th Street in Manhattan with Branford Marsalis. Better known at the time as Wynton's brother, the talented tenor saxophonist had just returned from Barbados, where he had played on Sting's first solo album. At age 26, life was good. Decked out in a Mets cap and torn sweatshirt, Branford was cruising past Electric Lady Studios, heading for 6th Avenue, when, suddenly, he seized up in the middle of the street.

"Oh God, I don't want this shit," he blurted out. "I know what's going to happen, man. I'm going to be in the movies, I'm going to be doing something on TV. I don't know if I can handle all that celebrity shit."

I looked over; Branford Marsalis was literally shaking. "It's not what I was put here for," he said. "I was put here for the music."

**B Y V I C G A R B A R I N I**

# jazz



special

him how it feels from the perspective of that guy who realized a decade ago that success and stardom was a tempting playground that hovered over the abyss. He emits a wry laugh. "The built-in defense mechanism is screaming, 'WARNING! DANGER, WILL ROBINSON. DANGER!'"

And how would he define the danger? "I guess it's basically that you can never believe the hype," Marsalis sighs. "When you get on a show like the 'Tonight Show,' you're not only suddenly recognizable, but 'respectable' to a whole group of people whose opinions don't really amount to a hill of beans to me. It's funny, you can play with Dizzy Gillespie and Ron Carter and Herbie and Tony Williams. Suddenly you're a 'celebrity' and people are saying, hey, this guy's a really good musician on TV—where I'm playing a thousandth of what I played before. I've become a lot more self-critical and cynical." Pause. "And that's really saying something, because you know I'm a cynical son of a bitch."

He's also a warm-hearted son of a bitch, but blunt when expressing opinions, sometimes to a fault. Which makes Burbank a weird place to find your bearings. "There's a false air of civility which must be maintained at all times here," he says, "and one of my things is whenever I have a problem with somebody, I walk right up to them and say, 'I have a problem with you.' So there's a lot of things said behind one's back." He is not, he emphasizes, referring to Jay Leno, who has

A decade later, he is a star whose luminance eclipses even his brother's, easily the most recognizable figure in jazz. He has been in movies, he has made more records, on his own and with pop figures from the Grateful Dead to Public Enemy. And of course, he is on TV.

We are sitting in his "Tonight Show" dressing room, surrounded by computers, music stands and instruments, baseball paraphernalia and Gaultier suits of many colors. His subterranean quarters in NBC's Burbank basement is his crib away from home, a kind of clubhouse for band members and NBC staff dissidents. As leader of the "Tonight Show" band, each night his visage flashes across the screens of 4.4 million Americans—for about 4.4 seconds at a time, usually as the band leads into a commercial. When Jay Leno first approached him for the job, he'd resisted, but the promise of "complete artistic freedom" and the chance to expose middle America to the crown jewel of African-American culture, and the money, and the opportunity to ditch the road for a spell, all sounded good. That was two years ago.

As I remind him of that decade-old incident on 8th Street, Branford lowers his head and nods slowly. It's not a typical gesture. I ask

## "i'm not going to be here 50 ye

been a firm supporter. He talks about "the huge amount of compromise" involved in doing a TV show, and how the decision-making seems antithetical to what he believes jazz is about.

"Let's just say that for me, jazz means living in the moment. People who work in television seem to believe that you can successfully *can* spontaneity, and open it up any time you feel like it. Real spontaneity drives a lot of TV people crazy, because it kind of usurps *their* authority."

The last few years haven't been Marsalis's happiest, despite his artistic and career successes. The painful breakup of his first marriage didn't help. Friends speak of a dark night of the soul that he's finally begun to emerge from, though, as one associate put it, "He's still a bird in a gilded cage."

"NBC is desperate to hang on to him," offers another insider. "With Arsenio gone, and Letterman kicking butt in the ratings war, Branford is the hippest thing they have going for them. They may not understand him, but they sure don't want to let him go."

None of this has stunted Marsalis's growth. Last year's live trio CD

*Bloomington* is arguably his most rigorous work yet. On the other end, he's just released what he calls his first "experimental pop" album, *Bucksshot LeFonque* (Columbia), which draws together jazz, funk, pop, rock and world musics in ingenious combination. It's a pleasant shock to hear how Marsalis, in tandem with Gang Starr's DJ Premier, integrates such disparate styles into organic configurations that confound attempts at categorization. Maya Angelou rapping over Nils Lofgren's guitar? Marsalis and Premier pull it off with dignity and grace. Similar epiphanies inform a cover of Elton John's "Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters," a deep-dish Jamaican house groove, and lean R&B ballads—all perched on fat beats cobbled together from everything from live metal drummers to classic Elvin Jones samples. Marsalis's vibrant sax is the common thread weaving through most tracks, a genuinely innovative approach instead of the usual "jazzy" R&B clichés. It might be a stretch to claim *Bucksshot* is the hip-hop progeny of Miles Davis's *Bitches Brew*. But at times that's what it sounds like.

Aide Colleen Slattery briefs Branford on schedule changes, while another asks about setting up the music for tonight's guests. Actor John Goodman? Easy—the "Flintstones" theme. Carrie Fisher? Branford notices me noodling in the corner with Led Zep's "The Ocean." A genuine Zep fanatic, he enthuses about Page's playing a seven against Bonham's four: "Okay, we'll open with that for you tonight, man." For guest filmmaker John Waters, somebody upstairs has suggested Edgar Winter's "Frankenstein." Sure, Marsalis shrugs—why not?

Hold on a second here—what happened to those promises of artistic freedom? "That was before the ratings went bad," Marsalis declares flatly. "I make compromises every night. I don't play jazz on this show anymore. I play pop music. Mostly '70s retro shit, 'cause that's what a lot of our audience is."

Actually, the band does play some jazz on the show. And Branford has always enjoyed playing certain pop musics, from Sting to current favorite Soundgarden. He'll even laugh at Jay's jokes—if they're funny. He explains how the executive producers came to him, music adversely affecting the show, changes needed, Branford a team player, etc...

"I'd be lying if I said this shit is unbelievably satisfying," he

What's surreal is when you look around and realize that *nobody is paying attention*. The audience is either watching the commercial on the monitor, or gawking at Jay and his guests literally having their noses powdered by a swarm of NBC minions. The only exception here is John Goodman, a happy grin plastered over his face as he nods and bops vigorously about.

How can anyone play music so intensely in a virtual vacuum? "That's what you learn from playing jazz," Marsalis reflects later. "You get so used to people either not understanding or not paying attention to what you play, that you learn how to look inward and inspire yourself. As a band, that's what we have to do." He's not surprised that Goodman was the only guest who seemed into the music. "John lives in New Orleans, he knows his shit," says Marsalis. "Did you notice the reaction when Goodman was talking and made a reference to the Ibsen Festival and *The Master Builder*? That didn't go over too well as a joke. How many people in that audience do you think even know who Ibsen is? They probably think, isn't that the guy on 'The Beverly Hillbillies'?"

It's difficult to get a handle on the complexities of Branford Marsalis's personality and career without taking into account his extraordinary parents. Here's one description: "They argued a lot, but they were the same, really. They were both very intelligent and carried themselves with a lot of dignity. My father [jazz pianist and educator Ellis Marsalis] was somebody who was more likely to let shit pass, like me. He was more interested in his own agenda. My mother—and this is where Wynton comes in—she's more interested in letting people know she's wise to their bullshit. *Don't take any shit off those motherfuckers*. That was my mom. But they were both very intelligent and dignified. There was an air of regality about them wherever they went. That's what you remember most."

But to simply assume that Branford takes after his father, and Wynton his mother, is to see only one dimension of the family dynamic. Certainly Branford can switch between his father's assured, Zen-like patience and his mother's in-your-face aggression. Like any artist, he's aware that his gift involves bringing both intellect and intuition into

ars. i'm not **going** to be here 10 years."

admits. "The one thing I can't get used to around here is the latent insincerity," he continues. "If someone has a beef with you, they would rather tell someone else and let it trickle down to you. They can retain that veneer of civility without it being tainted with the reality of confrontation. Look, there are some very good, hard-working, decent people working here, really...and there are also some *ass-licking, two-timing, back-stabbing sons of bitches*." Mmm...are we clear yet?

Watching a "Tonight Show" taping from the audience is a truly surreal experience. On your left is Jay Leno's set; the band, an eight-piece juggernaut that includes such ringers as Kevin Eubanks on guitar, bassist Bob Hurst, trumpeter Sal Marquez, pianist Kenny Kirkland and drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts, performs on the far right of the soundstage. At the first commercial, they kick in, and I am lifted out of my seat. They're impressive enough on a tinny TV speaker at home. Live, they're an aural hurricane.

balanced interplay. But like Wynton, he'll lean heavily on intellectual arguments and values, perhaps overcompensating for what he calls the "Noble Savage concept."

Speaking of his friend Joshua Redman, Marsalis says, "There's a perception of him that he didn't go to school, so his music has an emotional immediacy ours can't because he's 'not intellectual.' That's what the critics want to hear, that you learned the shit intuitively. I was talking to a guy doing an article on Joshua for *GQ*, and his whole premise was that he's better than Wynton because 'Joshua has passion,' and that he has that passion because he didn't go to school. What do they think, Joshua just picked up the saxophone one day and played on that level? This motherfucker has been listening to music and practicing. But you're dealing with the perceptions of certain critics who write about black people, the perception being we're not *supposed* to be that intelligent. Because everything we do is supposed to be intuitive."

# “i make compromises every night.”

**MUSICIAN:** *Let's start with the issue everybody wants to know about. Rev. Farrakhan, why an Eagles reunion now?*

**MARSALIS:** Why the hell not? Just felt like doing it. I always did like Don Henley, even though he doesn't look good in a bowtie. But that man can sell some bean pies... “The Singing Bean Pie Salesman,” that's what we called him. He does have this propensity for white women, though.

**MUSICIAN:** *Seriously, why stay on the “Tonight Show” if they've taken away your control, and you have to put up with all this crap?*

**MARSALIS:** Because it's not up to me. I can't walk out and say, “You turned on the music, I quit.” What's real is that I have a five-year contract I must honor. And I'm not that kind of person. I don't believe in walking out just because... I have to really be in a tremendous amount of pain, like my marriage. It has to be at a point of no return, where it's actually about to become destructive to me.

**MUSICIAN:** *And is it ever destructive to you?*

**MARSALIS:** There's times. But the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages. I get here at 8 every morning, and my call is at 2. I get three good hours of practicing in every day—and I get paid to do it.

**MUSICIAN:** *Still, people quit all the time if they don't want to do...*

**MARSALIS:** No, people don't quit all the time. Particularly if the company decides they really like you and want you around. This ain't like working at Sal's Pizzeria. If you're working for a major company like IBM, and you get into a scrap and you want to walk off, do you think they're just gonna let you go off and join Apple? And Jay went out of his way to bring me here. I owe him something more than just, I don't agree with this philosophy, fuck you, I quit. I have to give it a fair run. But I'm not going to be here 50 years. I'm not going to be here 10 years.

**MUSICIAN:** *Having seen you wear a bikini one night on the show, exactly where would you draw the line?*

**MARSALIS:** Hmmm...pantyhose. Wouldn't do that. And I won't be wearing any more bikinis. I did that because I lost a bet. I went for Buffalo in the Superbowl. But I won't be losing any more bets like that. Here's a hint. When Buffalo goes back to the Superbowl this year, bet against them.

**MUSICIAN:** *The one time you really dug your heels in was the night Jay came over and kidded the band about bad road food. You wouldn't give an inch, even playfully poked him in the stomach.*

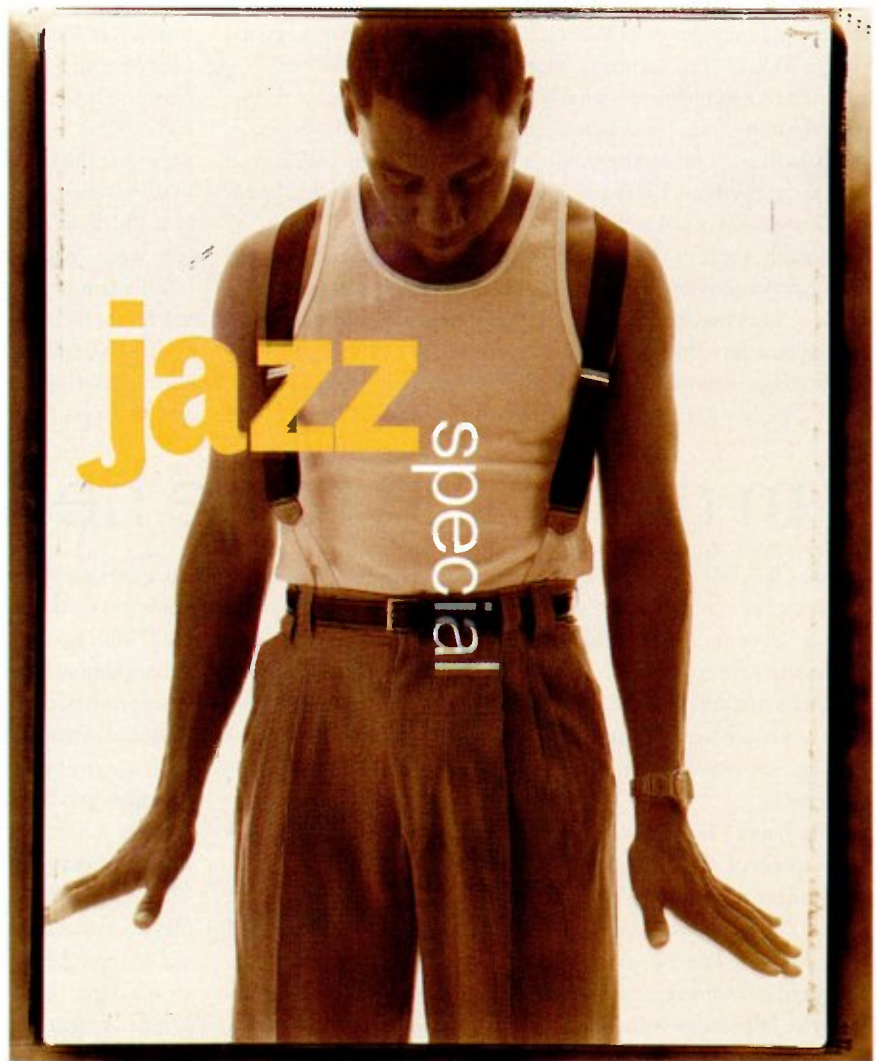
**MARSALIS:** I spent all my life fighting stereotypes. Jay's point of reference for everything is

the '60s. He still thinks that jazz clubs and the way we do business is like when he was an up-and-coming comic opening for Rahsaan Roland Kirk. “Jazz musicians like bad food”—which is stuff I don't even eat. He'll say something like “Aren't you glad you don't have to play in those chintzy clubs anymore?” It really doesn't register with Jay that on Tuesday night he's playing Indiana University, and on Thursday night I play the same fucking hall and sell it out.

**MUSICIAN:** *Still, most people would just freeze up on camera and say, “Yes, Jay, whatever you say.” Some NBC executives have been quoted as saying you looked like you regretted being in the studio.*

**MARSALIS:** No. When I deliver a fucked-up joke or a nasty, cynical punchline, I'll do it deadpan. If Jay gives a zinger, he'll then go, “Fine, fine people.” When I say a joke, I ain't going to slam them and then say “fine people.” So a lot of times when Jay says something to me I'll retort, but I won't smile when I do it—much to Jay's chagrin. And the thing about a show like ours, is that people believe everything they see. Now *there's* a scary thought.

**MUSICIAN:** *If somebody bought NBC next week and said you could*





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# "You were raised unconsciously

believing you were inferior to white people."

leave immediately, what would you do?

**MARSALIS:** I would deal with that when I got to it.

**MUSICIAN:** You sound like a politician—

**MARSALIS:** I mean, that's all hypothetical. It's not going to happen anyway. Call me a politician if you like.

**MUSICIAN:** I just did. Maybe you have to be.

**MARSALIS:** Damn right. You have to temper your decisions with a little intelligence. I like making people feel uncomfortable, but I'm not in the burning bridges department—except when it comes to critics.

**MUSICIAN:** And why do you like making them feel uncomfortable?

**MARSALIS:** Because particularly in our country, you get to a certain point in your career and there's a smugness that settles in. And people are then not used to having their sensibilities attacked. Now, I like my sensibilities to be attacked.

**MUSICIAN:** Last time I saw you, you said you missed arguing with me. The word competition in the original Latin means to struggle together with—not against—somebody. Like two people playing tennis or chess to improve their skills, not polarize into winners and losers. I think people miss that positive aspect to your big mouth. [laughs]

**MARSALIS:** Arguing is great, man. A constructive difference of opinion will always promote dialogue, as long as two people are really willing to discuss things. It's like when Wynton talks about how much he doesn't like a lot of rap music, and all these people get mad. Like my grandma used to say, if you throw a brick into a crowd, the one that it hits will always holler.

## BRANFORD'S BRANDS

For a sax man, BRANFORD MARSALIS is surprisingly adept at techno-savvy sleight of hand. "The one trick to this album was combining drum samples to make it sound like a real drummer is playing," he explains. "Sometimes we would use three or four different samples at once, and put a slight delay on the trigger so it comes in a little late, a little inconsistent. If you're programming drum machine beats and you want that live feel, you leave them a bit loose. 'Cause the only thing about live music that's consistent is that it's inconsistent!"

"We used an Alesis D4 drum machine with sounds from the Sabian Cymbal Sample Library CD for a lot of the crashes and rides," he says, "played back on a combination of Akai S900 and S1000 samplers." Marsalis also relied on Digidesign's SampleCell sample player and SoundTools digital recording system, both of which are installed in a Macintosh IICI loaded with software including Studio Vision by Opcode and Sound Designer by Digidesign. His collection of synthesizers includes E-mu Proteus marks 1, 2 and 3, a Korg Wavestation and a Roland MK80 ("great for simulating a Fender Rhodes electric piano").

For his solos on the record and onstage with the "Tonight Show," Marsalis uses tenor and alto saxes made by Dave Guardala and a Selmer Mark 6 soprano. Mr. Guardala also makes his mouthpieces, while Fred Hempke supplies his reeds.

**MUSICIAN:** You've also been on record as saying rap doesn't always hold up for you. But you wouldn't have built your new Buckshot LeFonque album on a hip-hop foundation if you didn't find something about it transcendent.

**MARSALIS:** It's the beat—the beat is transcendent; the beat is universal. They brought the soul back to R&B. The shit that they call R&B now is unbelievably sad and whacked. But the thing that hip-hop has always had that I've been attracted to is attitude. It has the same attitude that R&B had in the '60s and '70s. It was black, it was unique.

Now it's like everything is a business decision, crossover this, crossover that. Music is so fragmented now. Some guy in my record company was listening to the *Buckshot* record and he goes, "What is this record trying to say to me? Is it saying I want to be jazz? Is it saying I want to be hip-hop? Is it saying I want to be R&B or pop ballads?" I said, "I think it's saying I want to be music—and leave me the fuck alone." The point is, I wasn't trying to make a record that appeals to any specific market. Like when you pick up *Billboard* it says, "Should appeal to R&B, CHR, MOR, and DMF."

**MUSICIAN:** What's DMF?

**MARSALIS:** Dumb motherfuckers. When I make a decision to do something artistically, I don't care who likes it or buys it. Because if you use that criterion, Mozart would have never written *Don Giovanni*, Charlie Parker would never have played anything but swing music. There comes a point at which you have to stand up and say, this is what I have to do.

There are a whole lot of people in the gangsta community who come to a point where their lives change. And they might want to change, but the day they change is the day they're labeled as sellouts, and they stop selling records. They're victims of the commercialism that made them the successes they are. I was talking with a cat in that idiom once and I said, "Why don't you combine this with that?" And he said, yeah, that would be fat. But you don't understand, man, those kids.

**MUSICIAN:** Is it an assumption that the kids can't reach...?

**MARSALIS:** No, it's an assumption that they won't reach. And it's not very far off. People identify with hip-hop for various reasons. People have always been in love with gangsters. But we've never seen the glorification of it on this scale.

**MUSICIAN:** Ice Cube recently made the point that a lot of his audience have been stuck in darkness for a long time. If you light one candle, they can look at it, then another. But if you shine a flashlight first thing in their faces you're

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going to be in a fight. So it's got to be a gradual thing. Does that hold water?

**MARSALIS:** It makes good sense, but... what I'm saying is there's no gradual anything. It's like when those jazz guys who were playing fusion started saying, "I'm gradually introducing a new audience to jazz." You can't introduce anything to anybody on their terms. You have to smack them in the mouth with it.

**MUSICIAN:** *A lot of people accused you of that when you played with Sting. Or said it would mess up your jazz chops. Of course, you made it clear that the Sting project had nothing to do with jazz.*

**MARSALIS:** That's right. As for my jazz chops, I guess they were basing that on a lot of the jazz players in the last 15 years who became lousy at jazz when they started doing rock. They lost interest in jazz and stopped playing it. And then they'd come back every now and then to make some money and they sounded like shit. I never lost my love for playing the music.

**MUSICIAN:** *So they played rock because they needed the money, but privately disliked it?*

**MARSALIS:** They didn't need the money—they *wanted* the money and they wanted the adulation. They wanted to feel the crowd roaring for them. In all honesty, none of that has ever mattered to me. I did rock music because I like it.

**MUSICIAN:** *When people would ask you what you were learning playing with Sting, you used to deflect the question. What did you get out of it—there must be something?*

**MARSALIS:** Aggression. I was very pensive when I played with Wynton's band. At times I had time to build solos, but I didn't come out and attack you from the first note. But when you're in a band like Sting's, you have to be burning from note one. There ain't no time for lacrimosity. And that helped me out a lot when I went back to playing jazz.

Sting is one of the few people in rock that can actually use chord structures to convey varying moods in music, like jazz and classical people do. The second record we did, *Nothing Like the Sun*, was awesome. By then Sting was writing to Kenny [Kirkland] and my harmonic and melodic strengths. He was organizing the songs brilliantly. And Sting is talking about his parents' death on the record in a way that the average person cannot conceive of, so there's a bit of jealousy involved. People talked about Kurt Cobain's ability to talk about his angst. And basically he would get on his records and say, "I ain't shit and I hate everybody." And he wouldn't do it in a particularly inventive way. It was very direct and in your face.

**MUSICIAN:** *Now you're full of shit. I'll play you a record like "Lithium," and you listen to the lyrics.*

**MARSALIS:** No, I liked Nirvana too. I got the last two records. My point is that American groups do not use metaphors. People would have loved Sting's second record if he'd said, my mother's dead, wah wah wah, my father's dead too, wah wah wah. But when he sings about it by saying, "Birds on the roof of my mother's house, coming to take her away. Birds on the roof of my mother's house will be on my roof someday," people can't get that. In America, if you're going

# Etta James

## mystery lady

Songs of Billie Holiday

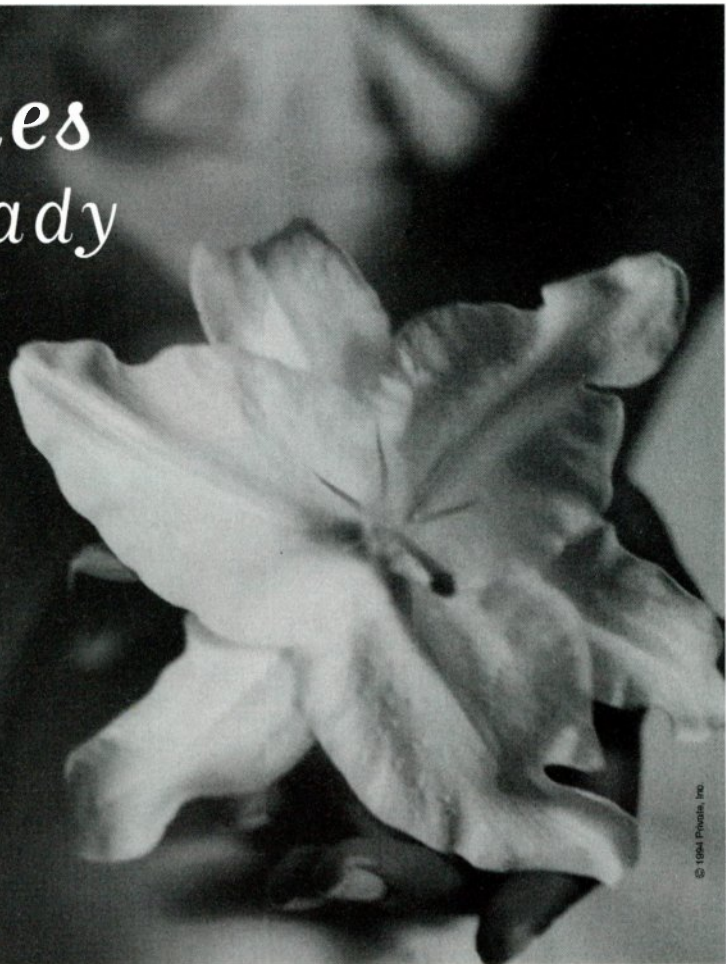
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to hit a guy on the head with a hammer on film, you have to cut to the hammer behind the guy's back.

**MUSICIAN:** *Slow down. Have you read the lyrics to "Lithium" for instance?*

**MARSALIS:** I don't read lyrics. The kid was on lithium, okay.

**MUSICIAN:** *No he wasn't. The word lithium was used in reference to a kid who had lost himself in some religious cult or belief. It's what we call a metaphor.*

**MARSALIS:** Forget about Nirvana then. Take the average song that's out there and the shit

they talk about.

**MUSICIAN:** *It's your theory, you give me an example.*

**MARSALIS:** Okay, Liz Phair. "Let me fuck you till your dick turns blue."

**MUSICIAN:** *Maybe that needed to be said.*

**MARSALIS:** I am not questioning whether or not it needed to be said. Do they think it's a big deal because a woman says "dick" on a record? They're a little late. Black people have been doing that shit for a long time. Donald Harrison gave me a record from the '30s of a woman talking about how she was

going to fuck a guy's brains out, put some pussy on you. But I prefer something more inventive, like Bessie Smith in "Kitchen Man," where she says, "I like the way my chef cooks his meat, it's sweet to eat."

**MUSICIAN:** *Maybe it was finally time a white, middle-class intellectual woman said that directly. Can't you accept that perspective?*

**MARSALIS:** No, because no matter what kind of woman fucks me—my dick can't turn blue.

**MUSICIAN:** *Good point. Moving along. When I first saw that you had put Maya Angelou with Nils Lofgren over a hip-hop beat, I thought this could be a pretentious mess. But it's really elegant. How did it come together?*

**MARSALIS:** Of course it's not pretentious. I did it, you fuck! First of all this was an organic process. I kept a promise that I've continued with everything I've done; I let the music dictate to me. It tells me what it wants.

The record kept reshaping itself. First it was going to be all hip-hop, then it just kept going in all different directions. Maya Angelou wasn't even part of the original idea for the track. It was going to be an instrumental. That track was fat, and somehow I kept hearing the resonance of her voice in my head. She chose the poem.

I chose Nils Lofgren precisely because he's never played any shit like this, and we're old friends from the Amnesty tour. He comes down and goes, "You want me to play over that? I don't play this kind of thing." I told him he could do it, and that's exactly why I wanted him. I told him I was going to go play video games, I'll see you in an hour. He comes in an hour later and goes, you gotta come hear this shit. I said, I know you know what you're doing.

The songs are all about nine minutes long on the original tape, and I'd let people solo over the whole track, then take 40 seconds or so of it for the solo. I learned that shit from watching Miles Davis, 'cause that's how he did it.

**MUSICIAN:** *You do an Elton John cover on Buckshot that should turn some heads. Obviously, a lot of you guys who came of age in the '70s are citing groups like Pink Floyd, Kiss and Elton as influences. How much of it is nostalgia, inflating the memory of a first love, and how much of it holds up today as music?*

**MARSALIS:** Elton stands up for me: It's timeless, it works. I don't yearn for the good old days, because they were a sack of shit, and I know it. But when I [cont'd on page 91]

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**D**RUMMERS ARE OFTEN PERCEIVED AS THE spark plug of a band. Apostles of instigation. Master percussionist Roy Haynes and young expert Cindy Blackman are among these exclamatory operators. Through a combination of nuance and certitude, they lift whatever bandstand they're on. Call them urgemeisters.

"My band doesn't work all that much," explains the man who titled his recent quartet record *When It's Haynes, It Roars*. "So the excitement level is high even before we get onstage. When we actually start, it's like a tiger that's been locked in a closet; I'm ready. My problem is restraining myself, cooling out until all the juices are flowing right. Then, watch out, I explode."

From Thelonious Monk to Pat Metheny, Haynes, 69, has propelled many of jazz's more articulate improvisers. He says that diversity—finding myriad ways to enliven a performance—is key to creating memorable sounds.

"You've got to understand what situation you're in. I remember working a gig with Stan Getz in L.A. before he had the bossa nova hits. John Coltrane was playing on the other side of town. It was Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday with Coltrane, and then the weekend with Getz. I could have tried to do the same moves with both, but they wouldn't have had the same meaning. Sometimes I came back to Getz really wanting to kick ass, but I eased up. You have to adapt."

It's an outlook Blackman clearly shares on her Quartet's new *Telepathy* (Muse). "The drums can be bombastic," she observes, "a vehicle to really shake things up. That's one of the things that initially attracted me to them. But they can be romantic and pretty and moody as well. That range, and the exploration necessary to get it, is what I'm about these days."

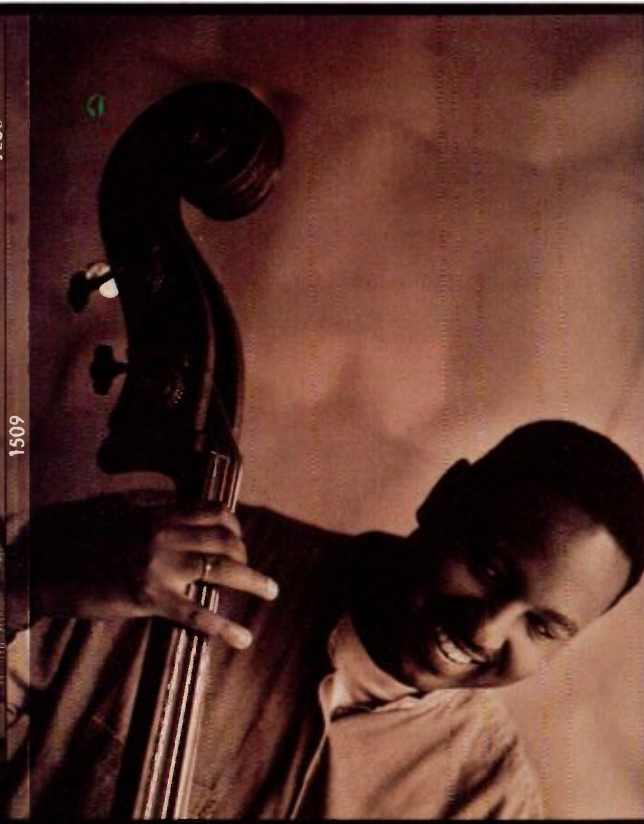
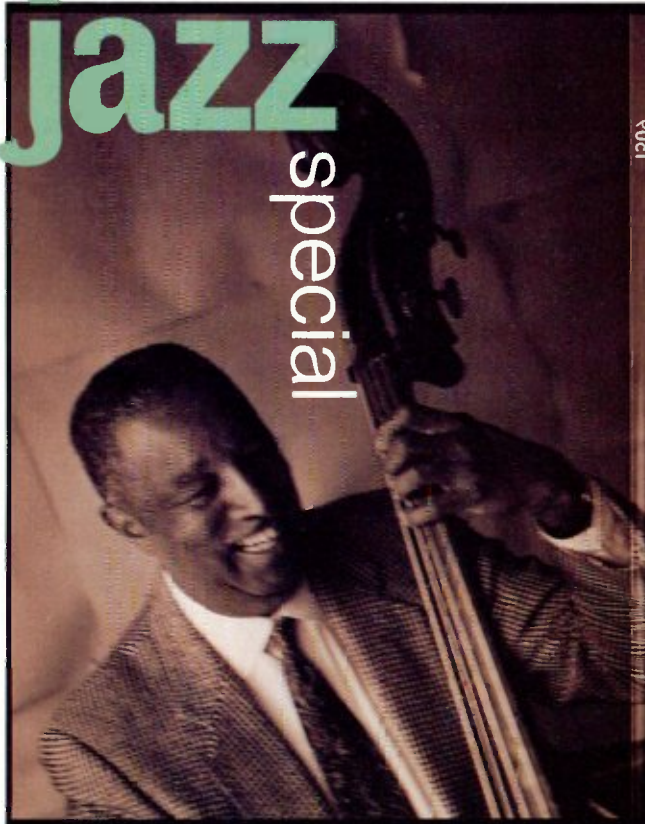
The day we spoke, Blackman was practicing certain percussion motifs backwards. After having been on the road for months with Lenny Kravitz (there's diversity for you), she had gone club-hopping the previous evening, taking advantage of the lessons available on New York's bandstands.

"I love being on the scene, because listening helps me [cont'd on page 60]

BY JIM MACHIE

photograph by chris buck

# jazz special



## ray brown and robert hurst

**A**SK A BASS PLAYER WHAT THEY LIKE about Ray Brown's playing, and you better have time to spare. "The first thing is his sound," said Bob Hurst, who made a name for himself anchoring Wynton Marsalis's mid-1980s powerhouse rhythm section along with pianist Kenny Kirkland and drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts, all now ensconced in Branford Marsalis's "Tonight Show" band. "It's the perfect bass sound. And his time; everything's swinging all the time. Then his note choices, it's obviously improvised and inspired but it's so perfect, as far as the notes relating to the changes and the soloist. Whenever I hear him play a song, it's like he wrote out everything that he's playing."

Brown has been one of jazz's premier bassists since he joined Dizzy Gillespie's classic mid-1940s small group while still a teenager. The bass's path to modern jazz had been cleared only a few years earlier by the tragically short-lived Jimmy Blanton, who, in the Duke Ellington Orchestra, singlehandedly transformed the bass from a rhythm section workhorse into a versatile and expressive axe capable of holding its own on the front line. "Oscar Pettiford is the next person in the chain and then there's Ray—that's the lineage of the instrument," Hurst said. "On early Ray Brown recordings, I hear him doing verbatim Oscar Pettiford. Ray told me a couple of weeks ago that Thelonious Monk used to call him Slam Pettiford, 'cause he loves OP and Slam Stewart."

"I've heard Bob on a few occasions before he got that ["Tonight Show"] job," Ray Brown said. "He's a very fine young player. We're making plans to get together and play some. I hope he doesn't stay at that job too long, though. He should be out playing as often as possible, because I used to do that kind of work and I know it slows you down. You get fat and rich, but your playing deteriorates."

After 15 years of touring with Oscar Peterson, Brown put on a few pounds in the late 1960s when he became a first-call studio musician in Los Angeles, appearing regularly on the Merv Griffin show and making hundreds of record dates. Hurst shows no signs of putting on weight yet, and his chops haven't gotten soft either.

"I don't know if Ray remembers it, but the first time I saw him play was at the Blue Note in New York," Hurst said. "He gave me a lesson. I played a tune for him, and I was trying to play all my most important things, and Ray said, 'That's cool, but play that same song and just play it with a two-beat feel.' Then he said, 'Play the bassline and sing the melody.' I remember him telling me how to really relate a bassline to the melody, more so than the changes—and I couldn't do it. So he started clapping his hands and making me feel the beat. And he said, 'Once you get that beat, don't turn it loose.' Those were his words: 'Don't turn it loose.'"

BY ANDY GILBERT

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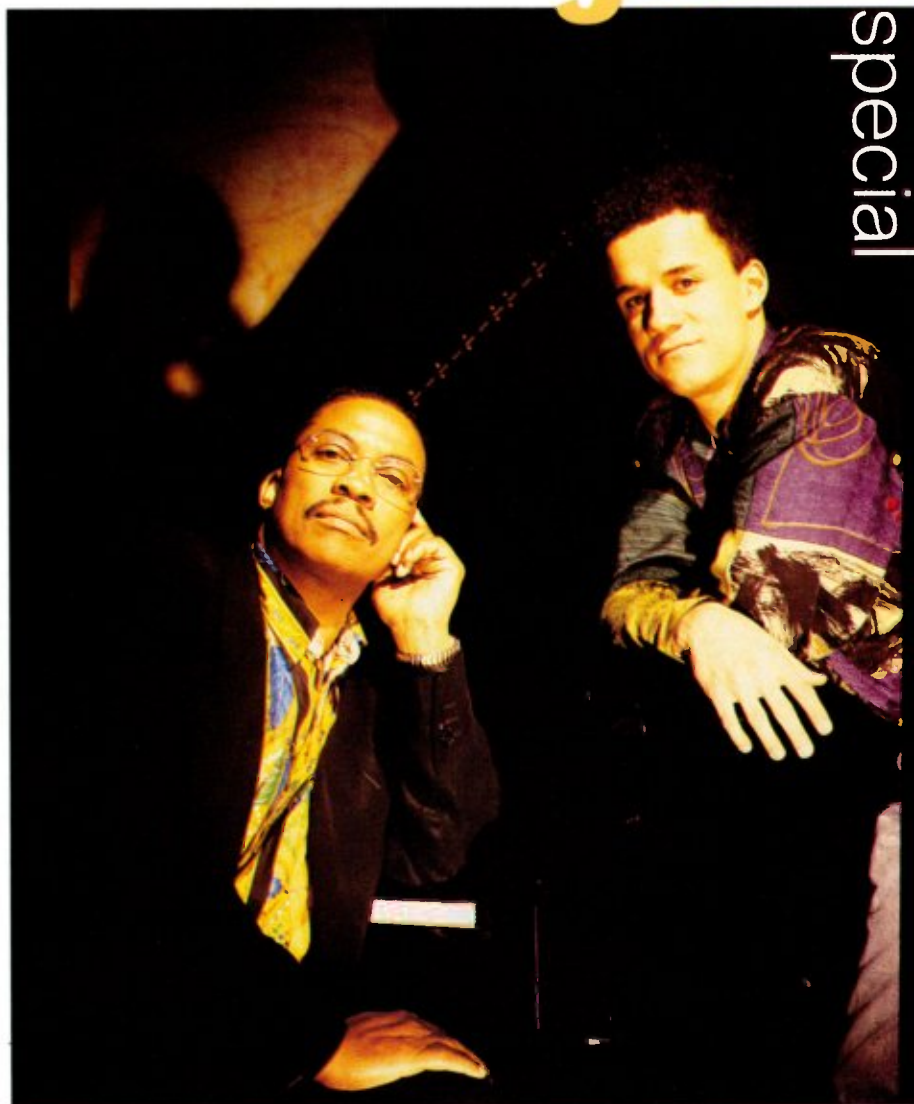
special

**O**NCE UPON A time in Paris, a budding pianist named Jacky Terrasson met keyboard colossus Herbie Hancock. Hancock was in town for the filming of *Round Midnight*, which is based on the friendship of Francis Paudras and Bud Powell. Terrasson, who grew up in Paris listening to his French father's classical piano playing and his American mother's jazz records, was obsessed with Powell. So he and Herbie spent hours talking about Bud, and according to Terrasson, it's a good thing: "If I had been into Herbie then as much as I am now, he would have been sick of me!"

In 1993, Terrasson won the Thelonious Monk Piano Competition. Hancock, by now his idol, was one of the six judges.

Recently signed with Blue Note, Terrasson, 28, has a pianistic style unlikely to be mistaken for that of any other player. "One of the most important things is the way Jacky uses silence and space," Hancock observes. "He uses whatever academic understanding he has inspirationally, through the right brain. I've been told you're not supposed to use the phrase 'more unique,'" Hancock opines, "but 'more unique' is three-dimensional as opposed to 'unique' being two-dimensional, and every time Jacky plays a composition, it will be more unique than it was last time. He doesn't seem to rely on technical prowess in order to play his music. I'm not a great fan of flash; sometimes technique can be used as an excuse for lack of courage."

Hancock recounts an apocryphal event: "I remember that when the electric piano was introduced, a lot of musicians were saying that they were just toys for people who couldn't play. One day I went to the studio with Miles, and he said, 'Play that over there.' It was a Fender Rhodes. I had great respect for Miles, so I said, 'Okay, if that's what you want me to play,' but my *idea* was 'I'm not gonna like it.' So I turned it on, and it sounded so pretty and warm, and I could play just as loud as the drummer. I said, 'Oh, I'm gonna enjoy this!' And



I realized that the opinion that I had held was not really *my* opinion. I vowed not to do that again."

Staying open to serendipity is another part of Hancock's credo. Inspired by the funkiness of Sly's "Thank You (Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin)," he set out to write music that was not jazz, reasoning, "If I feel it, it must be in there. The result wasn't what I *thought* I was reaching for, but it *was* something new, and it was the album *Headhunters*."

"We get caught up by tunnel vision," he laments, "and consequently ignore a lot of the beauty that manifests itself along the way. I find no fault with a musician deciding on a single path, but I do find fault with those who don't allow other musicians to choose multiple paths. Are you listening, Wynton?" he asks pointedly. "We don't take chances in America anymore. When I stop taking chances, I'm dead." ❧

BY KAREN BENNETT



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# gary bartz and antonio hart

# jazz

**A**LTO SAXOPHONISTS Antonio Hart and Gary Bartz have more than a few things in common, beginning with their Baltimore hometown. They met at a club there some years ago, where Bartz held a regular gig. "Antonio was about 15 years old," he recalls. "I didn't realize he was that young, because he shouldn't even have *been* in the club." Hart, now 25, admits to the crime: "Around that time I didn't even know about the music and I used to sneak out of the house. Mr. Bartz was the only person I knew actually playing the music in Baltimore." Bartz put Hart through a passive-aggressive endurance test: "He used to ask to sit in, and you know how older musicians are: 'Yeah kid, right.' You have them sit all night, and this goes on for a couple of weeks, and you see how serious they are. Tony kept coming. Finally I said, 'Let me see what he sounds like,' and he sounded good."

What also impressed Bartz, who'd already spent years playing with Max Roach, McCoy Tyner, Miles Davis and Art Blakey, was Hart's industriousness. "I noticed that every time he would sit in, he would have picked up on something that I, or someone else, was doing.

Right away that endeared me to him because I saw that he was going home and applying what he learned at the jam session. Which is what *we* used to do."

Hart, who lists Johnny Hodges, Eric Dolphy, Earl Bostic and Lester Young among his influences, was taking it all in. "I watched Gary, to see what he did. But I didn't realize how great he was until I went to college at Berklee and started to understand the music and listen to his records. A lot of things stuck with me: his sound, his intensity."

Recently, in live performance at Sweet Basil's, Hart strung several tunes together via a solo sax segue, something he picked up from watching Bartz lead his band at Bradley's. When Gary is booked there, Antonio, if he's in town, comes by and often sits in. Part of Hart's philosophy is reflected in the title of his current RCA/Novus release: *For Cannonball and Woody*. "I'm trying to be around as many of the masters as possible. A lot of young musicians aren't taking advantage of those situations—and we've been losing a lot of the masters."

Bartz had a similar opportunity when he was young, listening to the finest jazz musicians at his father's club in Baltimore. Having familiarized himself with



his uncle's record collection, he was seduced by the sound of Charlie Parker's saxophone at age six. "It could have been a drum for all I knew," Bartz says, "but it was the prettiest thing, and I knew it was what I wanted to do. It was like a message from God."

Now Bartz's musicianship is inspiring Hart: "I listen to him every day. I think he's the greatest alto sax player alive; he gives me everything." But he is careful to make the distinction between influence and imitation. "I want to understand my voice and my place in this music, and to be true to Antonio Hart."

His mentor offers advice: "I would tell him, don't ever lose the love for wanting to play the music, and don't let other people tell you what to play," says Bartz. "And—this is a message not only to Tony, but to all black musicians especially—don't be separated. Don't think that because you're playing jazz, you're better than the guy who's playing with Prince or the rap guys. It all comes from the same source, we all have the same message, and we are all on the same path."

BY KAREN BENNETT

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# "They LAUGHED when I said they could have Perfect Pitch

...until I showed them the secret!"

## The TRUE STORY by David L. Burge

I ALL STARTED IN ninth grade as a sort of teenage rivalry.

I would practice the piano for five hours daily. Linda didn't practice anywhere near that amount. But somehow she always seemed to have an edge which made her the star performer of our school. It was frustrating.

What does she have that I don't? I would wonder.

Linda's best friend, Sheryl, sensed my growing competition. One day she bragged on and on about Linda, adding more fuel to my fire. "You could never be as good as Linda," she taunted. "Linda's got Perfect Pitch."

"What's Perfect Pitch?" I asked.

Sheryl gloated over a few of Linda's uncanny musical abilities: how she could name any tone or chord—just by ear; how she could sing any pitch she wanted—from mere memory; and how she could even play songs after only listening to them on the radio!

My heart sank. Her fantastic EAR is the key to her success I thought. How could I ever hope to compete with her?

But later I doubted Sheryl's story. How could anyone possibly know F# or Bb just by listening? An ear like that would give someone a mastery of the entire musical language!

It bothered me. Did Linda really have Perfect Pitch? I finally got up the nerve and point-blank asked Linda if the rumors were true.

"Yes," she nodded to me aloofly.

But Perfect Pitch was too good to believe. I rudely pressed, "Can I test you sometime?"

"OK," she replied cheerfully.

### Now I couldn't wait to make her eat her words...

My plan was ingeniously simple:

I picked a moment when Linda least suspected it. Then I boldly challenged her to name tones for me—by ear.

I made sure she had not been playing any music. I made her stand so she could not see the piano keyboard. I made certain other classmates could not help her. I got everything just right so I could expose Linda's Perfect Pitch claims as a ridiculous joke.

Nervously, I plotted my testing strategy. Linda appeared serene.

With silent apprehension I selected a tone to play. (She'll never guess F#!)

I had barely touched the key. "F#," she said.

I was astonished.

I quickly played another tone. She didn't even stop to think. Instantly she announced the correct pitch.

Frantically, I played more and more tones, here and there on the keyboard, but each time she knew the pitch—without effort. She was SO amazing—she could actually identify tones as easily as colors!

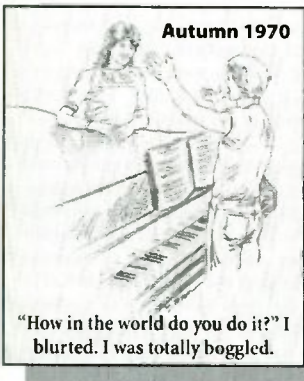
"Sing an Eb," I demanded, determined to mess her up.

With a bare pause she sang the proper pitch. I had her sing more tones (trying hard to make them increasingly difficult), but still she sang each one perfectly on pitch.

I was totally boggled. "How in the world do you do it?" I blurted.

"I don't know," she sighed. And to my great dismay, that was as much as I could get out of her!

The dazzle of Perfect Pitch hit me hard. My head was dizzy with disbelief, yet from that moment on I knew that Perfect Pitch is real.



"How in the world do you do it?" I blurted. I was totally boggled.

### I couldn't figure it out...

"How does she DO it?" I kept asking myself. On the other hand, why doesn't everyone know musical tones by ear?

Then it dawned on me that most musicians can't tell C from C#, or A major from F major—like artists who brush painting after painting without ever knowing green from turquoise. It all seems so odd and contradictory. I found myself even more mystified than before.

Humiliated and puzzled, I went home to work on this problem. At age 14, this was a hard nut to crack.

You can be sure I tried it myself. I would sweet-talk my brothers and sisters into playing tones for me so I could guess each pitch by ear. My many attempts were dismal failures.

So I tried playing the tones over and over in order to memorize them. I tried to feel the "highness" or "lowness" of each pitch. I tried day after day to learn and absorb those elusive tones. But nothing worked. I simply could not recognize the pitches by ear.

After weeks in vain, I finally gave in. Linda's gift was indeed extraordinary. But for me, it was out of reach.

### Then came the realization:

It was like a miracle. A turn of fate. Like finding the lost Holy Grail.

Once I had stopped straining my ear, I started to listen NATURALLY. Then the incredible secret to Perfect Pitch jumped right into my lap.

I began to notice faint "colors" within the tones. Not visual colors, but colors of pitch, colors of sound.

They had always been there. But this was the first time I had "let go"—and listened—to discover these subtle differences within the musical tones.

Soon I too could recognize the tones by ear! It was simple. I could hear how F# sounds one way, while Bb has a different pitch color sound—sort of like "hearing" red and blue!

The realization hit me: THIS IS PERFECT PITCH! This is how Bach, Beethoven and Mozart could mentally envision their masterpieces—and identify tones, chords and keys just by ear—by tuning in to these subtle pitch colors within the tones.

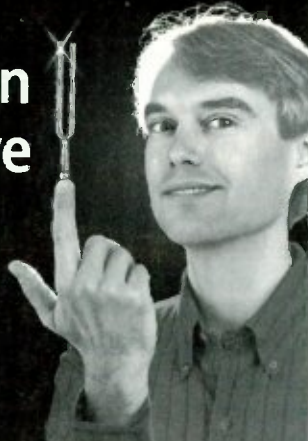
It was almost childish—I felt that anyone could unlock their own Perfect Pitch by learning this simple secret of "color hearing."

So I told my best friend Ann (a flutist) that she could have Perfect Pitch too. She laughed at me.

"You have to be born with Perfect Pitch," she asserted.

"You don't understand how Perfect Pitch works," I explained. "It's easy!"

I showed her how to listen. Timidly, she confessed that she too could hear the pitch colors. Soon Ann had also acquired Perfect Pitch! We became instant school celebrities. Students tested us in great amazement. Everyone was awed by the power of our virtuoso ears.



Back then I would not have dreamed I would later explain my discovery to college music professors. When I did, many of them laughed at me at first. You may have guessed it—they told me you had to be born with Perfect Pitch.

But once I revealed the secret to Perfect Pitch—and they heard for themselves—you'd be surprised how fast they'd change their tune!

As I continued with my own music studies, my Perfect Pitch allowed me to progress far faster than I ever thought possible. I even skipped over two required college courses. Perfect Pitch made everything much easier—performing, composing, arranging, sight-reading, transposing, improvising—and it enhanced my enjoyment of music as well. I learned that music is definitely a HEARING art.

### And as for Linda?

...Oh yes—well, time found us at the end of our senior year of high school. I was nearly 18, and it was now my final chance to outdo her.

Our local university sponsored a high school music festival each spring. That last year, I scored an A+ in the most advanced performance category. Linda only got an A.

Sweet victory was music to my ears—mine at last!

THESE DAYS, thousands of musicians and two university studies have already confirmed my Perfect Pitch method. Now I'd like to show YOU how to discover your own Perfect Pitch!

I hope you won't laugh as you picture yourself with various Perfect Pitch skills—like naming tones and chords by ear with laser-like accuracy! I think you may be surprised at just how simple—and how valuable—Perfect Pitch really is.

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[cont'd from page 53] further my direction. I remember working with Joe Henderson at the Mount Fuji festival one year, and it was a drummer's dream: Art Blakey, Tony Williams and Max Roach were all there. Roy Haynes played this great set, and then finished by taking the sock cymbal out front and working on it. Everybody was enthralled. I think he's a master of that kind of thing: options."

You can hear it on Haynes' new CD *Homecoming* (Evidence), a live date cut in Boston. Haynes is adamant about "breaking up" rhythms. "You keep the heat, sure, but you don't hesitate to express yourself. My band understands the concept. At any second I can stop playing or go in another direction. Never do you figure it out ahead of time."

It was that penchant for spontaneous combustion that made Haynes first take notice of Blackman. "Someone introduced me to her and said she was a great player," he recalls, "but it wasn't till a while later that I heard her myself, at an after-hours jam at the Blue Note. She sat in, and yeah, she was doin' it. She's got the fire!"

"As fiery as Roy is, I'll take that as a compliment," laughs Blackman, "the drum chair's definitely hot when he's around."

Haynes ends the conversation by blasting a track from his forthcoming *Tevou* (Dreyfus) on his stereo. "Is that the shit or what?" he queries. "It's got that smiling thing like Jo Jones: up there smiling, chewing gum and kicking ass! If you're looking to inspire people, always incorporate that happy thing." 

**GARY BARTZ** owns two Selmer alto saxophones, a Mark VI he's had since 1958 and his current horn of choice, a Super Action 80 Series II. He uses the same model soprano sax, with a Vandoren 35 or 45 Classical mouthpiece and Otto Link 3 metal reeds. On alto, he prefers a Yanagasawa #7 mouthpiece and Hemke 3 or 3½ reeds.

**ANTONIO HART** plays a King Super 20 alto saxophone, vintage 1950s, with a Ponzol 100 mouthpiece and Vandoren V 16 2½ reeds.

**HERBIE HANCOCK** owns a Steinway nine-foot Concert Grand and a Baldwin seven-foot grand. His electric keyboards and modules include a Korg T-1, O1/W FD, Wavestation A/D and M-1; Roland MK-80, JD-990 and D-550; Ensoniq TS-10, Yamaha DX7II (with the E! expansion board from Grey Matter) and VL1; a Rhodes Chroma with Expander; E-mu Proteus 1, 2 and 3; and Studio Electronics SE-1 Minimoog clone.

**JACKY TERRASSON** does not own a piano or keyboard. But he's looking.

**ROY HAYNES** plays Ludwig drums with a hammered-brass snare. His cymbals are Zildjians, A's and K's.

**CINDY BLACKMAN** plays Sonor drums and Zildjian cymbals.

**BOB HURST** plays a Hawkes acoustic bass from the turn of the century with regular Thomastik strings. His electric bass, built by Abe Rivera, has D'Addario strings and is plugged into a Hartke amplifier.

**RAY BROWN** couldn't tell us who built his Italian bass, but it's strung with Thomastik strings.

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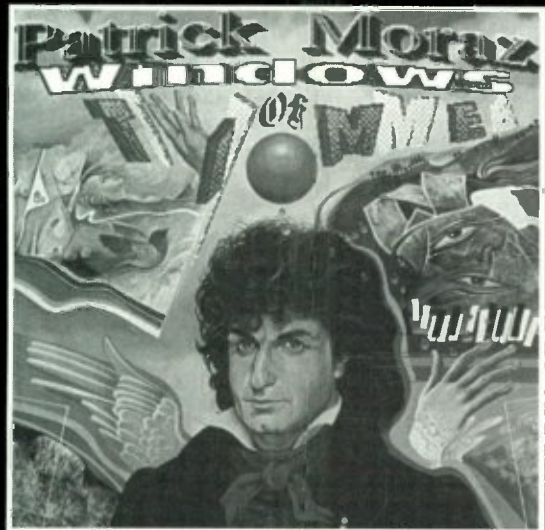
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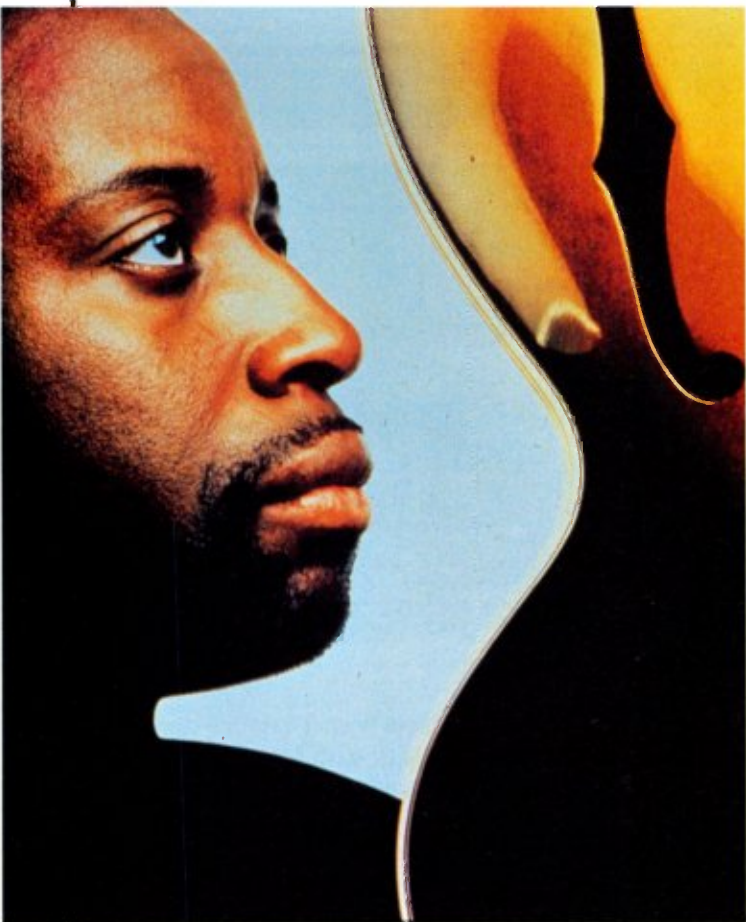
Some people think drinking and doing drugs gets them deeper into the groove and closer to their music. But how can you be in touch with your instrument when you're out of touch with reality? Experienced players like Dennis Chambers know that combining drugs and alcohol with drumming is a recipe for destruction. That's why, as the groove-master himself puts it, "To really put it in the pocket the only habit you should have is a drum addiction. So play it straight and feel what's real."

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# jazz!

They came from other planets of awareness, with strange new ideas and open attitudes. They are the jazz guitar mutants, whose cellular structures have been informed by jazz, but who have taken other routes into or away from that tradition. Nurtured by hip-hop, heavy metal, funk, punk, ambient and avant-garde, even new age, they hover around jazz, pass through it or otherwise

traverse its spheres, without ever really adhering to its conventions.

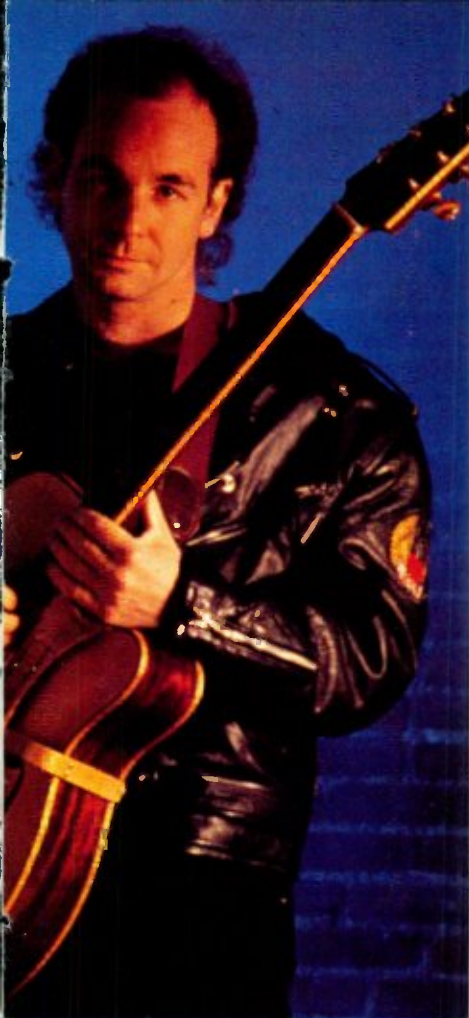


# guit

No, these are not *fusion* players per se, locked into the established jazz-rock vocabulary of that now notorious F-word. But they have forged distinctive styles by mixing—okay, *fusing* other genres. If there is any guru of this post-trad stratosphere, it would have to be Bill Frisell, who began developing his own private language more than a decade ago. In Frisell's world, jazz roots, folksy overtones, avant-garde sensibilities, and penchants for dry humor and pop psychedelia happily coexist. But what began looking like a personal idiosyncrasy has become the vanguard of a guitar revolution.

What follows is a sampler of some of the top practitioners in this brave new world. Wildly diverse musically, what they share is a fierce desire to create a singular voice. Ronnie Jordan and Charlie Hunter

ronnie jordan



BY JOSEF WOODARD

# musicians!

randy roos

# ar

siphon jazz guitar phraseology through hip-hop and R&B-related grooves. David Torn hones his textural palette with digital loops, while Mike Stern favors skewed rock riffs. David Tronzo has taken the slide guitar to a new plane of flexibility. Randy Roos's agreeable matting of "contemporary" jazz and musical savvy goes down like fine sherry while Wolfgang Muthspiel's sweet/salty range has the tang of tequila. Steve Tibbett's airy folk flavorings contrast with Marc Ribot's avant-grunge and Brandon Ross's downtown funk.

Together, they're out to pose new questions to old answers. The results are not only refreshing, but perhaps a harbinger where the future of all popular music is heading within our ever-shrinking global village.

**I**N THE LAST several years, jazz met up with hip-hop and begat a child—and lo, it wasn't bad. Among the early and best exemplars of this hybrid is Londoner **RONNIE JORDAN**, an admitted "disciple of Wes Montgomery and George Benson" who layers his fat 'n' clean riffs over and between shuffling street rhythms. His second album, *Quiet Revolution* (4th and B'way), lives up to the title, percolating with a warm buzz and a gentle genre-crossing jolt. Mildly careening from soulful ballads to velvet-lined rap and even a Wes tune, "Mr. Walker," done up à la hip-hop, its commercial success has surprised many in the record industry—but not Jordan.

"Back in the '80s, I was convinced that fusing jazz with hip-hop would be the new music. It was a matter of when, not if. But I didn't want it to sound as though there was a reason for it to belong together. I see jazz and hip-hop as two very similar styles—they're both from the ghetto, and are strong forms of black, urban music."

A Gibson endorsee, Jordan has ES-335s and an old 175, but has recently fallen in love with the obscure 135. On acoustic, he prefers his Chet Atkins electro-acoustic model. His rackmount setup is built around "The Access," from Hughes & Kettner, and includes a Hughes & Kettner Combo and 3x12 cabinets with Electro-Voice speakers.



david torn

# New Jazz from Delmark



DE-466

## Ritual Trio • Renaissance Of The Resistance

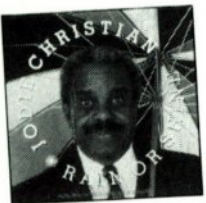
**Kahil El'Zabar, Malachi Favors and Ari Brown:** The Ritual Trio, has earned acclaim for its distinctive sound which blends elements of the avant-garde with world music and a touch of blues.



DE-469

## Roy Campbell • La Tierra del Fuego

What strikes a listener foremost about trumpeter Roy Campbell is the Spanish quality of his lyrical lines. *La Tierra del Fuego* (The Land Of Fire) features **Zane Massey, Rahn Burton** and others.



DE-467

## Jodie Christian • Rain Or Shine

With AACM charter member, **Roscoe Mitchell** and saxophonist **Art Porter**. From standards like "Cherokee" to Christian and Mitchell originals, *Rain Or Shine* showcases this vibrant pianist at his most innovative.



DE-468

## Lin Halliday w/ Ira Sullivan • Where Or When

Lin Halliday is a fine bop tenor player, a legend among fellow musicians and best known for sensitive, narrative solos that tell a story for the careful listener. Also with **Jodie Christian**.

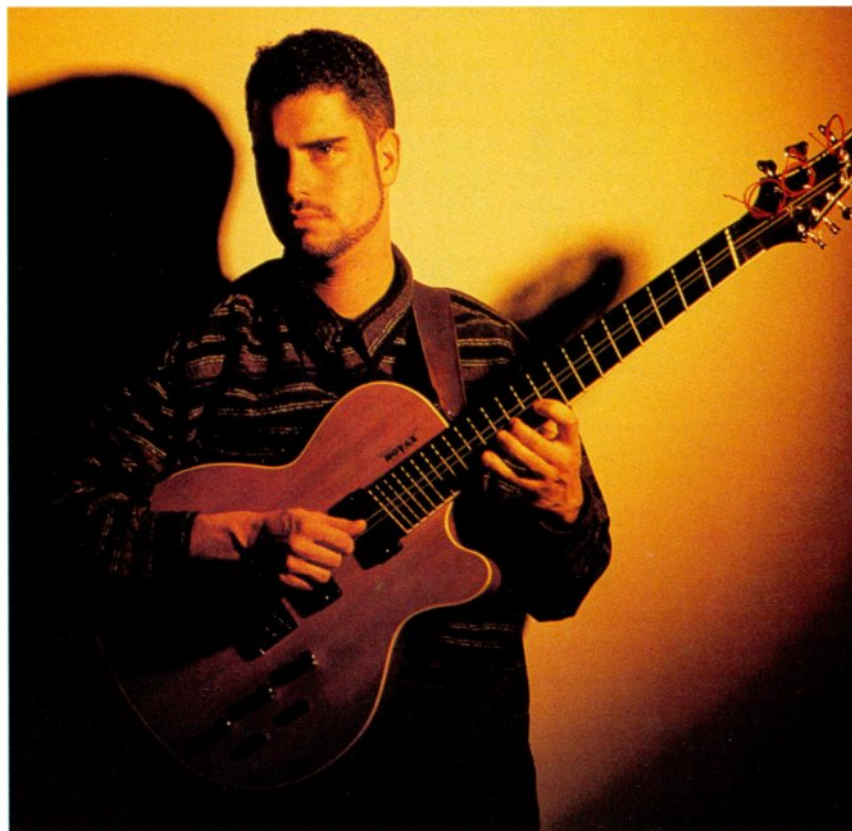


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**O**N ITS DEBUT album on Mammoth, the San Francisco-based **CHARLIE HUNTER TRIO** snakes its way from Mingus's "Fables of Faubus" to the acid Latin-jazz "Dance of the Jazz Fascists." Hard-bop begets hard rock begets hip-hop, as Hunter dishes out ornery guitar lines and chordal shards, while also holding down a rudimentary bass role on his seven-string gui-

"Should I really give out any free advertising information?" he carps. "Tell 'em a guitar amp and a bass amp."

**D**AVID TRONZO seeks new vistas for the slide guitar. From his tender teen years in Rochester, he's been violating slide guitar orthodoxy, venturing into atonal improv as naturally as he plays



## charlie hunter

tar. Formerly of Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy, Hunter, 25, is on a mission. "People of my generation who are playing guitar have listened to Wes Montgomery and Jimi Hendrix and awful disgusting heavy metal guitar players and funk stuff like Graham Central Station and country music—what have you. They bring all these styles to a jazz format, and it's kinda cool. It opens things up."

He recently switched from a seven- to an eight-string guitar, made by Bay Area luthier Ralph Novak. Tongue locked in cheek, Hunter says his seven-string choice is a matter of "grasping wildly at any gimmick that will enable me to stop from having to take a job at a candle factory again." Amps?

barbecue blues riffs. Tronzo's resume bulges with gigs ranging from Leroy Jenkins and the Lounge Lizards to John Hiatt and Marshall Crenshaw. His trio's debut album, *Roots* (on Knitting Factory Works), is a raucous and slippery mix of folk, blues and jazz. "Monk's Dream" never sounded so down-home.

He says, "I'm a real fan, student and romantic about American music. It's wide open, in the sense of a musician using everything that you like and that has influenced you. With this trio, there's a roots influence with a sense of modern improvising skills." For more outside musings, check out the tuba-trumpet-Tronzo

trio Spanish Fly on *Rags to Bitches* (also on Knitting Factory Works).

Tronzo uses a "half-open tuning," merely dropping the high E string to a D. "That explodes the interval availability," he says. "If you move around the neck and skip strings, you can get almost every interval." After using a Steinberger guitar for several years, he recently fell in love with a vintage Silver-tone: "It's got a sound like a voice," he explains. He plugs it into Fender amps, and, of late, a Mesa/Boogie Dual Rectifier.

**D**AVID TORN, king of loops and master of snarly-cerebral attitude, got his jazz guitarist tag by association—specifically his records on the ECM label. But the aptly surnamed Torn actually occupies some netherworld between progressive rock, ambient textures and high-diving guitar heroics.

Just don't call him a jazzier. "I realized a long time ago that I could never play jazz guitar like a John Scofield, who did develop his own thing, or a Frisell," he says. "So I veered off in my own way. I loved the intellectual side of jazz and also the vibrancy and the search involved with the great players. But anything that borders on ossification of an idiom, that is not more personally derived, doesn't appeal to me."

Torn is recovering well from brain tumor surgery in early 1992. Apart from appearing on numerous fringe-y projects as a loopy sideman, he's released his first solo album in four years, *Polytown* (CMP), with Terry Bozzio and Mick Karn. "We were trying to listen to the music and get a handle on where it might have come from. It came from fucking Polytown, buddy," he laughs.

Torn proudly plays his Klein guitar through Lexicon gadgets (a consultant to the company, he helped develop the Jam Man) into a Rivera amplifier and cabinet.

**M**EANWHILE, down at the devil's crossroads where jazz meets (gasp) new age, **RANDY ROOS** is giving mellow a good name. On the surface, his *Liquid Smoke* (Narada)

THINK SOUND THINK REMO THINK SOUND THINK REMO THINK SOUND TH



# Vinnie Colaiuta has a head for drums.

Several, actually. Coated Ambassadors on his snare and coated or clear Ambassadors for his tom batters. His tom bottoms get clear Ambassadors. Vinnie chooses a clear Powerstroke™3 or clear Ambassador for his bass drum.

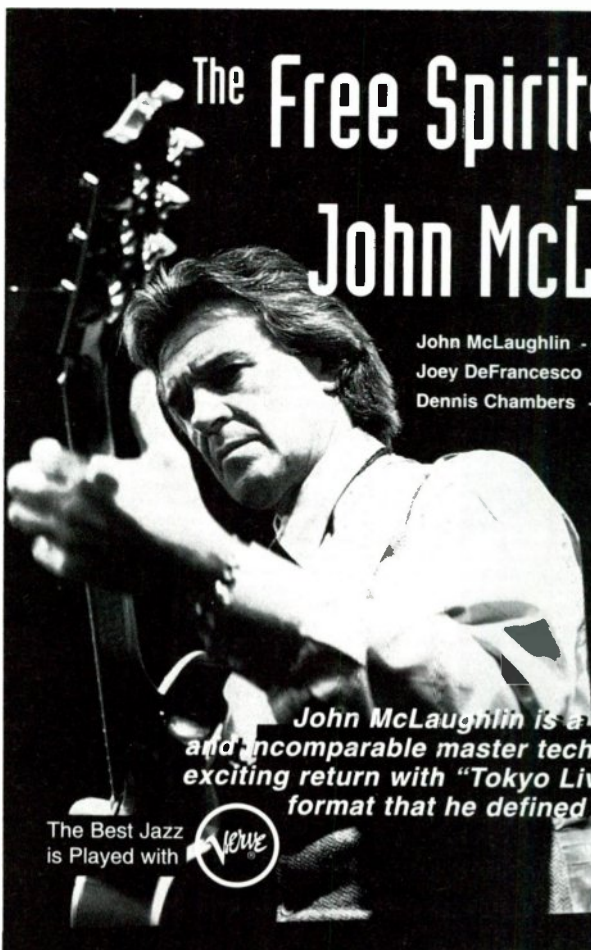



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# The Free Spirits featuring John McLaughlin

John McLaughlin - electric guitar  
Joey DeFrancesco - Hammond organ and trumpet  
Dennis Chambers - drums

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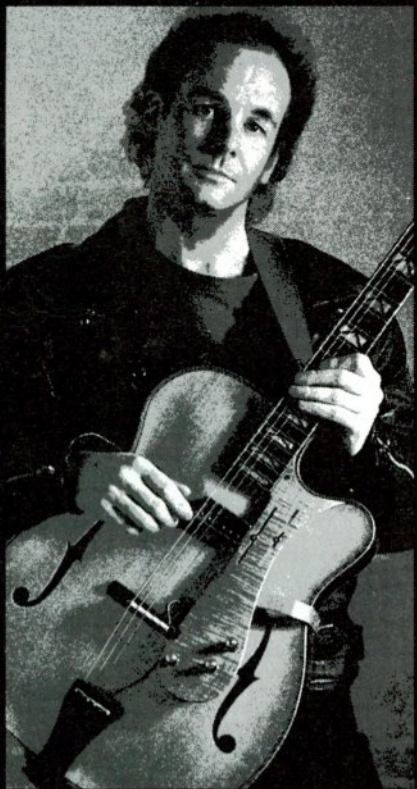
John McLaughlin is a brilliant musician and incomparable master technician making an exciting return with "Tokyo Live" to the electric format that he defined in the early '70's.

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**“Randy Roos**  
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# NARADA

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flows like so much chardonnay. But slipped into those tranquil tracks are intriguing twists and—for the genre—a refreshing intelligence. Roos was a guitarist to reckon with around Boston in the mid-'70s, when he played with the theatrical rock group Orchestra Luna. He figures the impressionistic imagery of his current music has been enhanced by subsequent experience scoring films and video. “You have to simplify the emotional content and make it direct. There have to be very specific shadings to it, and you have to exercise a lot of control over what the music is saying. I got interested in orchestral music a long time ago. I think that’s one of the principle reasons I never wanted to pursue being a straight-ahead mainstream jazz guitarist. I’ve been intrigued with more complex forms and ways of structuring sections of pieces; hopefully to get things to develop in a coherent direction, but not necessarily a predictable one.”

He plays custom electric and acoustic guitars built by Alan Carruth, as well as a Fernandez Strat-styled guitar. No fan of amplifiers, he records direct and, onstage, uses two Polytone amps.

**A**USTRIAN-turned-Bostonian-turned-New Yorker **WOLFGANG MUTHSPIEL**, 29, first made a splash as Gary Burton’s guitarist-of-choice for a couple of years, during which he showed a distinctly Pat Metheny-esque touch. His solo albums have been progressively more adventurous and less predictable: The latest, *Muthspiel, Peacock, Muthspiel, Motian* (Amadeo), is an improv-lined, Euro-leaned outing with trombonist brother Christian, bassist Gary Peacock and drummer Paul Motian. He says: “It’s not necessarily that I want to keep getting more out, more experimental. I just want to avoid clichés.” Trained as a classical violinist before switching to guitar, he headed to Boston to study with the likes of Mick Goodrick (they play together as a duo). “My biography comes from so many different streams. Now I have a feeling that they are starting to go together more. But they have not met yet.”

Muthspiel plays an Ibanez Artist and a Swiss-made Avalon, and avoids amps by running through a rack set-up that includes a SansAmp and a Jam Man.

**A**S MORE guitarists approximate sonic landscape painters, **STEVE TIBBETTS** has ascended to the top of the palette. For 15 years, he’s been creating a brand of impressionism in which sweeping distorted electric guitar or delay-enhanced 12-string acoustic guitar, underscored by waves of percussion, conspire to create a hypnotic sound that simultaneously blends and skirts world music, rock, folk and jazz. *The Fall of Us All*, his sixth project for the ECM label and possibly his best, comes four years after *Big Map Idea*, due to extensive global gallivanting, especially in Indonesia. The marketing question of what bins to find his albums is a telling “problem” for Tibbetts, who says that he’s as likely to land next to Three Dog Night as to Toots Thielemans.

“Jazz never throbbed in my abdomen like some organ, the way some rock music did. As a 12-year-old, I didn’t sit with my head between the speakers and listen to the Paul Whiteman Orchestra. My jazz education came much later. By the time I started working on a jazz show on Minnesota Public Radio, I had been tattooed over by *Revolver* and *After Bathing at Baxter’s*. But when you talk about influences, certainly ECM is a big one. I think about the museum of people on that label, and it’s extraordinary to be aligned with them.”

Not one to fix unbroken systems, Tibbetts still uses an old Martin 12-string that once belonged to his father, a folk musician and union organizer, washing it in a long delay from a Lexicon Super Prime Time. “It gives you an instant and cheap orchestra,” he explains. In his electric mode, he plays a Stratocaster through Marshall JCM-800 or Mesa/Boogie amps.

**W**HEN Miles Davis emerged from his late-'70s “dark period,” he effectively launched the career of a hip, hopped-up young guitarist named **MIKE STERN**. Stern bent strings maniacally and cranked up the distortion, bringing to Miles’ band a surly

save of rock-fueled attitude. Subsequently, his fiery jazz/rock approach has made him an instantly identifiable figure in the post-fusion guitar world, and one of its better tunesmiths. Stinging bluesy attack, boppish harmonic zeal, daredevil phrasing and Metheny-esque lyricism: You can hear it all on his latest album, *Is What It Is* (Atlantic).

"In terms of attitude, there's a lot of similarity between Jimi Hendrix and John Coltrane, in terms of just raw emotion," he says. "There's some burning attitude there in the way they played. That's one thing I really got a sense of from Miles—he was always looking for a certain kind of attitude. Of course, then you have to think about how to get it. But you don't want to lose that feeling you're trying to communicate."

Stern's guitar of choice has long been a Fender Telecaster—not your tried and true jazz axe, but well-suited to his range of playing. He likes the textural flexibility of biamping, using both a Yamaha G100-212 and a Pearce top with a Hartke cabinet. Effects include a Yamaha SPX90 and a pedal board with Boss distortion and delay boxes.

**F**OR OVER a decade, **BRANDON ROSS** has been making waves on the periphery of the jazz scene, playing with Oliver Lake's Jump Up, Leroy Jenkins and in Henry Threadgill's critically acclaimed Very Very Circus. Suddenly, as a principle texture wizard behind Cassandra Wilson's popular *Blue Light 'Til Dawn* (Blue Note), he's in the limelight. Ross's style, a seamless tapestry of jazz, folk, rock, blues and world music, colored by subtle volume pedal and distortion effects, adds up to a musical dialect all his own.

"I've always played acoustic guitar and I've always been more interested in things other than guitar," he says. "I started out playing rock 'n' roll, R&B or straight blues. In high school, my brother turned me onto Ornette Coleman and I started to get to this thing that was like a voice."

"I've always tried to do things by osmosis, catching the spirit of what something was about, tuning into the essence. Henry Threadgill said to me, 'You know, technique is the result of music, not the other way around.' That's a beautiful statement."

Ross plays a Steinberger GL4T electric

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## Sit in on Russ McKinnon's set.

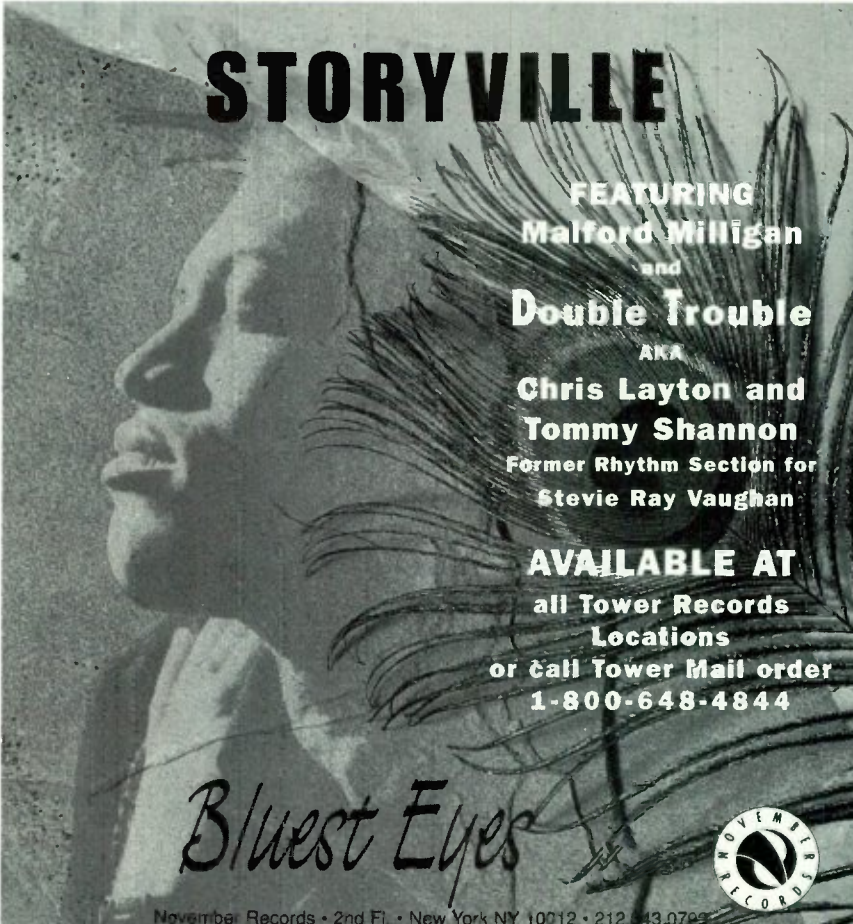
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and a Michael Jacobsen Hardy steel-string acoustic guitar, using DR acoustic strings. He runs through Boss pedals and a Lexicon LXP 5 and into a Pierce G2R stereo guitar amp.

**W**HEN IT comes to all-over-the-map guitarists who have found themselves through a signature sound, **MARG RIBOT** is among the heroes of labor. You've heard him as the dispenser of wayward Americana behind Tom Waits, Elvis Costello, Sam Phillips and other pop figures, but Ribot's more serious strum and sturm, twang and drang investigations are undertaken on the experimental fringes of the downtown N.Y.C. Knitting Factory scene, with the Lounge Lizards, Jazz Passengers and John Zorn among others. If eclecticism ran rampant on his 1990 solo debut *Rootless Cosmopolitans* (Island), he's moving away from the e-word that once defined him: "It bought time," he laughs. On his cathartic new album *Shrek* (Avant), Ribot claims Albert Ayler and Ornette Coleman's Prime Time as critical influences.

"The first record was me journeying through styles that impressed me in the past and screwing them all up. This is less reacting to other things and more trying to be its own unified style. A musical tradition is like a book. You can take any piece of music and inscribe it in that book. But you can also inscribe it in other books. For example, to me, Albert Ayler's mid-'60s stuff and Ornette's Prime Time band and a bunch of other bands constitute a really important chapter in the history of rock—of my rock, anyway."

Ribot has long been a champion of the Fender Telecaster, playing ESP Teles, but he recently picked up a Japanese-made Fender Stratocaster. "I still am a champion of the Telecaster, but in terms of *Shrek*, I stopped using it regularly, because I got tired of taking people's heads off. The band had too much of a tendency towards shrillness, anyway, so I decided to de-emphasize that." He plays through a reissue Fender Vibroverb amp, or a 1949 Fender Super amp which once belonged to Bucky from the Sons of the Pioneers. In his bag of toys are a RAT pedal, a Lexicon PCM 42 and a Schaller vibrato pedal. "I recommend it highly. It's almost made my life worth living."

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## OVATION COLLECTOR'S SERIES

Ovation has established a tradition of introducing new features with their annual Collector's electric/acoustic guitar, produced in a limited edition of 1000. This year's model (\$1595) boasts an enhanced electronics package, with four-band EQ, tunable notch filter, balanced output and built-in tuner. ♦ Ovation c/o Kaman, P.O. Box 507, Bloomfield, CT 06002; voice (203) 243-7941, fax (203) 243-7102.



## REMO DJEMBE DRUMS

One reason for the current boom in hand percussion is that anyone can get involved with minimal preparation. Another is the availability of low-priced, high-quality instruments. Modelled after one of the traditional drums of the Mandingo people of west Africa, Remo's Djembe (\$199-\$399) weds high-tech materials with ancient craftsmanship. The synthetic drum head, designed to duplicate the sonic properties of goatskin, is unaffected by temperature and humidity and can be tuned using a standard drum key. The shell likewise is impervious to climate. ♦ Remo, 12804 Raymer St., North Hollywood, CA 91605; voice (818) 983-2600, fax (818) 503-0198.



## DIGIDESIGN SESSION 8 MAC

Session 8 Mac (\$3995) performs eight-track digital recording to hard disk, mixing, editing and computer-controlled signal routing. The system runs on a Mac IIci or better, Centris or Quadra, and integrates with the MIDI sequencing functions of Opcode's Studio Vision Pro, MOTU's Digital Performer, Emagic's Logic Audio and Steinberg's Cubase Audio. ♦ Digidesign, 1360 Willow Rd., Suite 101, Menlo Park, CA 94025; voice (415) 327-8811, fax (415) 327-0777.



MUSICIAN

## LONESTAR KEY

Conceived for the consumer market, the Key (\$400) from Lonestar Technologies is an "intelligent, interactive controller" that enables inexperienced performers to make music. When fed a special digital signal ("key code"), the Key supplies the proper notes while the player strums the rhythm via "strummer veins," fingers keys on the neck and selects the instrumental part (lead, bass or chords). The key code can be included along with music in cassettes, CDs and videos. GM sounds and MIDI out jack are included. ♦ Lonestar, 920 S. Oyster Bay Rd., Hicksville, NY 11801-3518; voice (516) 939-6116, fax (516) 939-2834.



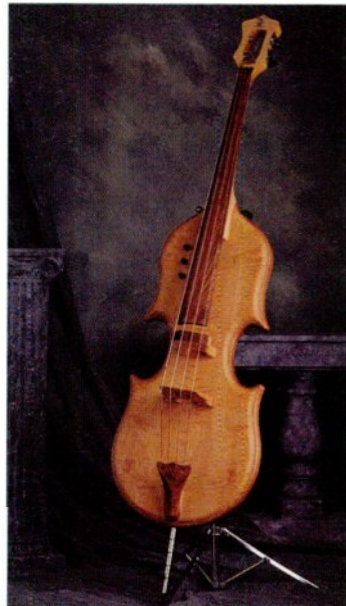
## GIBSON CENTENNIAL GUITARS

Gibson celebrates its 100th year with the Centennial Collection of 12 limited-edition reissues, enhanced with a wealth of details and accessories (all models, \$10,000). A mother-of-pearl logo inlay adorns the 12th fret, and knobs are gold-plated with diamond detent markers. In addition to a hand-tooled leather case, each guitar comes with a gold signet ring engraved with its serial number, a portrait photo and a certificate of authenticity. ♦ Gibson, 641 Massman Dr., Nashville, TN 37210-3781; voice (800) 283-7135, fax (615) 889-5509.



## ALEMBIC CLASSICO BASS

While acoustic/electric bass guitars are enjoying a vogue, electric uprights remain relatively unexplored. Alembic's Classico (four- and five-string models, \$4550-\$6200) is designed to ease the transition from guitar to upright by rewarding even inexperienced upright players with a full, consistent tone. The 24-lb instrument features a mahogany back and flame maple top (with optional ebony fingerboard and tailpiece). Alembic CS-2 pickups are concealed in a maple and rosewood "pickup bridge." ♦ Alembic, 3077 Wiljan Ct., Santa Rosa, CA 95407-5702; voice (707) 523-2611, fax (707) 523-2935.



## SPECK 316 16-CHANNEL EQ

Multichannel line mixers have become essential for keyboard and recording rigs. But packing 16 input channels into a compact, cost-effective package often means skimping on essentials like EQ. For those who would rather not do without, Speck Electronics offers the rack-mount model 316 (\$698). The 316 comprises 16 independent three-band semi-parametric equalizers complete with bypass switches and LED level indicators, all in three rack spaces. Frequency response extends to 110kHz with a noise floor of -89dBu. ♦ Speck, 925 S. Main St., Fallbrook, CA 92028; voice (619) 723-4281, fax (619) 732-3294.



## NEW TOYS & NEW TOOLS

### GUITARS & BASSES

**Washburn** debuts the Lyon series of electric guitars, featuring hardwood bodies, one-piece maple necks with "skunk stripes," Washburn Eliminator pickups in various configurations, enclosed chrome machines and tremolo. The six guitars in the new Mercury series include the MG90, with an oil-finished Honduran mahogany body, chrome locking Gotoh machines, Seymour Duncan pickups, Wilkinson VS100 tremolo and Wilkoid nut. Also, the Bantam series of basses, comprising six new five- or six-string models, includes the XB800, featuring a book-matched flamed top, solid alder body, 24-fret rock-maple neck, Status UK active electronics and gold hardware. ♦ The AT-1AC Acoustic Tuner from **Korg**, designed for acoustic stringed instruments, comes with a contact mike and features a seven-octave tuning range and three-octave reference tone. ♦ Building on their J-200 Deluxe Phosphor Bronze strings for acoustic guitars, **Gibson** introduces J-200L (.012-.052w) and J-200UL (.011-.050w) strings. The new models are lighter for a softer feel. ♦ Quick Pick from **Meld** holds up to four picks and several Allen wrenches, attaching unobtrusively to any guitar or bass headstock (or elsewhere) for quick access while playing.

### KEYBOARDS & MIDI

**Korg** offers two new 32-voice Concert Grand electronic pianos, the ebony-finished C56G and cherry wood C56FP French Provincial models. In addition to acoustic piano, both instruments provide organ, brass, string, bass, drum and other sounds that can be split and layered across the keyboard, and sequenced in 16 tracks. The onboard sound system is powered by 200 Watts.

### AMPS & SPEAKERS

**Yorkville's** 300K is a 300-Watt stereo combo designed for keyboards. The unit includes two balanced XLR mike inputs and three balanced/unbalanced stereo line inputs, each with volume, bass and treble controls plus two effect sends. LEDs on all channels and buses indicate clipping, and a limiter protects against overdriving the power amp. Balanced line output, unbalanced tape output and headphone output are included.

### SOFTWARE & HARDWARE

**Digidesign's** MasterList CD performs all functions necessary for CD mastering. The resulting masters are compatible with the Red Book standard and

can be used directly to cut a glass master for CD manufacture, eliminating costly studio time, expense and potential mistakes. Also, Digidesign's SampleCell II is now available for the Windows/IBM platform, and ProTools for the Mac has been updated to version 2.5 and supports the Open Media Format (OMF) multimedia computer file format. ♦ **DrumTrax** offers a new edition of their library of drum patterns designed specifically for **Mark of the Unicorn's** Performer sequencing software. The patterns come in Performer format and include features that take advantage of the latest Performer update, version 5.1. ♦ **Quantum Sound** introduces a new speaker design, TorqueDrive, which replaces the conventional piston and cone with a motor and rotating blade assembly.

### MIKES & MIXERS

**Azden** introduces the Performance series of wireless mikes. Model 211 provides one channel of VHF transmission/reception on any of ten frequencies, while the 221 offers the same features with two channels. Model 311 adds true diversity reception for drop-out-free performance. ♦ The Status line of digitally controlled analog mixing boards from **Otari** includes the Status RP, which offers 12 tracking buses and eight auxiliary buses, high-pass filter and four-band EQ on each channel, and automation with a host of options. The console accommodates between 32 and 96 inputs. ♦ **Yorkville** debuts the Audiopro 1220, a 20-channel version of their 12- and 16-channel powered mixers. This one delivers 600 Watts per side to drive loads down to 2 Ohms. **Alesis** effects, phantom power, dual nine-band graphic EQ and automatic hum reduction are built in. ♦ The TK-50 is a new headset microphone from **LightSpeed Technologies** that works with most wireless mike systems. The specially designed condenser element cancels background noise and minimizes feedback.

### SIGNAL PROCESSORS

**Dunlop's** Crybaby 535 pedal combines a boost of up to 11dB with a wah-wah. The wah effect offers four frequency ranges, including the original Crybaby and Hendrix-series settings. ♦ The PM-8 Power Conditioner/Monitor from **Furman** duplicates the functions of the PL-Plus without that unit's pull-out lights. In addition to providing a clean power source, the PM-8 includes an AC voltmeter and RMS-reading AC ammeter for monitoring line status. ♦ **Marshall** introduces the DRP-1, a

recording preamp/distortion unit that pipes guitar outputs directly into a recording deck. ♦ The G1 Guitar Distortion Processor from **Korg** includes eight ROM presets and nine RAM programs with fuzz, delay, EQ, speaker simulation, noise reduction and a pedal input for wah-wah effects. The G2 Acoustic Guitar Processor provides seven ROM and nine RAM effects with limiting, EQ, chorus, delay, reverb, 12-string simulation and built-in tuner. The G4 Rotary Speaker Simulator provides Leslie effects with control over upper and lower rotors, speed, overdrive and mike placement.

### DRUMS & PERCUSSION

Several models have been added to **Sabian's** Pro series of Euro-style cymbals, including a pairing of 13" Fusion Hats and 14" Hi-Hats, 20" Dry Ride, 20" Studio Ride, and 14", 16" and 18" Studio Crash cymbals. ♦ **Pearl** introduces the B-531D brass-shell snare drum, which measures 6 1/2" x 14" and features 20 low-mass lugs, die-cast hoops and rim, and 24-strand high carbon snares. They also offer the PS-85 pedal stabilizer, designed to keep double bass drum pedals from slipping, and the DR-50 "Bridge" Drum Rack, a front crossbar with a square shape that holds attached drums, cymbals and accessories firmly in place.

### RECORDING & PLAYBACK

The operating software for **Akai's** DR4d hard-disk recorder has been updated to version 3.0, adding internal track merging, MIDI machine control (MMC) support, MIDI time code (MTC) output and enhanced SMPTE and SCSI capabilities. Optional SMPTE and MIDI expansion cards for the DR4d have also been enhanced. ♦ **Otari** has updated the software for their ProDisk digital audio workstation to version 4.4. New features include time compression/expansion, magneto-optical disk support, sync to video and VITC and the ability to record directly into the editing environment. The DTR-90T four-head DAT recorder also has new operating software, adding a number of features. In addition, Otari is now the exclusive distributor of RADAR, the Random-Access Digital Audio Recorder from **Creation Technologies**. ♦ **Pioneer's** CDJ-500G professional CD player is designed for DJs. It includes a turntable-style jog wheel for scratching, and features seamless looping, varispeed, independent control over pitch and tempo and a graphics output for playing CD+G karaoke discs.

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World Radio History

## EIGHT-BUS MIXERS

NATURE IS full of what scientists call "mutualistic symbiotic relationships." Think of bees and flowers, parasite-eating birds perched upon lumbering African beasts and, of course, Alesis ADAT digital eight-track decks hooked up to Mackie 8•Bus mixers.

ADAT begat a need for a well featured, quiet-enough-for-digital, affordable mixer with eight tape-send buses, and Mackie delivered the goods. Now, as ADAT battles for turf with Tascam's DA-88, Fostex's RD8, Akai's DR4d hard-disk recorder and a multiplicity of computer-based workstation systems, a bunch of new mixers have arisen to compete with Mackie's 8•Bus: the Soundcraft Spirit LC, Soundtracs Topaz and Tascam M-2600. You don't need to be Darwin to wonder: Which is the fittest?

**BIRDS OF A FEATHER.** Feature-wise, these consoles have more similarities than differences. This reflects a commonality of application (they're designed for eight- to 24-track recording in a semi-pro environment), customer needs (*more features! more inputs!*) and price point (roughly \$3000 to \$5000).

To begin with, all these boards have a *unified* construction. Many commercial studios and sound reinforcement companies don't mind paying for *modular* construction, where individual channels can be pulled out of the console's frame for repair while the show goes on. But all that metalwork is expensive, hence this crop of non-modular (and, fortunately, reliable) boards.

The U.S.-built Mackie, British-built Soundcraft and Soundtracs, and Japanese-built Tascam all can be considered *eight-bus* mixers (regardless of the total number of audio-routing paths built in). That is, you can route any combination of inputs to any of eight discrete

**GET IN-LINE.** A *tape monitor section* is the primary difference between most recording consoles and PA boards. Commonly known as a *tape return* (sometimes labelled *mix B input* or *input B*), this is a built-in submixer through which you can listen to previously recorded tracks while you record new tracks. Most ministudios and many older pro consoles have a *split monitor* design in which the tape returns are "split away" from the input channels, usually to an area right above the group faders.

The *in-line monitor* design of this new breed of board is more space-

Digital multitrack recorders demand a new breed of mixers.

BY BRENT HURTIG

### MACKIE 8•BUS

**STRENGTHS:** Parametric hi-mid EQ provides the most precise tonal control. Two separate headphone cue sections. Tape monitor doubles as an additional stereo aux send. Expander available, automation announced.

**LIMITATIONS:** No mute or solo on tape monitor inputs. Limited aux sends, no aux summing. Mike/line switch inconveniently located. No direct assign to tape outs.



### TASCAM M-2600

**STRENGTHS:** Superb aux send options with aux summing, two stereo sends (for headphone cue or effects) and four mono sends. Most flexible EQ switching. Most flexible routing for stereo effect returns.

**LIMITATIONS:** No independent headphone source switching. No solo on tape monitor inputs. Tape level (-10dBV only) may require external level-matching gear.



and cost-efficient. Above every main channel fader, positioned vertically "in line" with the rest of the channel controls, you'll find gain and pan controls that let you mix a tape signal (or any other line-level signal, such as from a digital reverb or even a drum machine) into the main stereo output bus. So these consoles, while nominally offering 16, 24 or 32 input channels (24 or 32 for the Topaz), can be thought of as true *dual-input* boards, with up to 32, 48 and 64 simultaneous line inputs respectively—not counting effect returns.

**THEY CALL HIM FLIPPER.** In any dual-input console, instrument or mike signals normally follow the main *channel path* on a trip through the EQ section, auxiliary sends (including effect and cue sends), fader, pan, bus output assign switches and so forth. Meanwhile, signals entering the tape-return inputs take a simpler trip through the *monitor path*. Typically they meet a gain control, pan, maybe an aux send—that's pretty much it.

What if you want to route a monitor source through EQ or effects, or you want to bounce one recorded track to another through the buses without repatching? Each console sports a clever switch called *fader flip* that reverses the two paths: The monitor input gets routed through the main fader, EQ, buses and so forth, and

*bus*, or *group*, outputs. Most commonly these feed the inputs of your multitrack deck or workstation. If you're lucky enough to have 16, 24, or even 32 multitrack inputs to feed, these consoles can even handle that (more on this below).

ELECTRONICS

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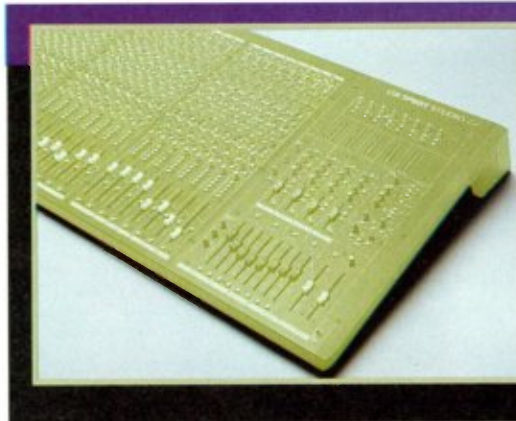
...ON LIMITS

World Radio History

the main mike or instrument source gets routed through the simple monitor path.

**DO THE SPLITS.** Okay, we know the flipper trick—but with six or eight aux sends on each board, couldn't we use a few of them in the channel path and the others in the monitor path? And with several bands of EQ, wouldn't it be nice to assign some to each path?

No problem. Borrowing a feature common to expensive in-line boards, all four of these brave new consoles let you "split" the aux sends so that, for instance, sends 1 to 4 are fed by the channels, and sends 5 and 6 are fed by the monitor path. (Don't confuse "split aux sends" with "split monitor.") Soundcraft and Tascam go further to provide a feature we'll call *aux summing*. This mixes aux sends from the channel and the monitor paths so, for instance, you can route both channel and monitor inputs to the same processor—very handy if you're mixing both tape tracks and virtual tracks from



## SOUNDCRAFT SPIRIT LC

**STRENGTHS:** Great aux send options with aux summing. Tape monitor doubles as an additional stereo aux send. Four stereo effect returns have faders and rotary cue sends to phones. Solos and mutes on tape monitor.

**LIMITATIONS:** Least flexible EQ, with no split to tape monitor path and only three bands. No independent studio speaker level control. No optional meter bridge.

synthesizers, or to create a quick headphone mix from both paths without patching.

One more thing about aux sends. While these boards provide ample numbers of them, in most cases you get a smaller number of rotary knobs to feed them. On the Soundcraft Spirit LC, for instance, eight sends are available for each channel but only six knobs. Four knobs feed sends 1 through 4; the remaining two knobs can be assigned to sends 5 or 6 and 7 or 8. Only the Tascam M-2600 gives you access to all of its aux sends simultaneously.

As for the EQ, Mackie lets you split the

high and low bands to the monitor path, leaving the two mid bands for the channel. The M-2600 one-ups this, letting you choose whether the high/low bands or mid bands or all four are assigned to the monitor. Topaz, meanwhile, puts on the Ritz: You get a complete four-band EQ for each channel and a separate two-band EQ for each monitor. (Only the Spirit LC doesn't do split EQ. You have to flip the fader to get EQ into the monitor path.)

**WHEN EIGHT ISN'T ENOUGH.** Each board has *multed* bus outputs, which "multiplies" the

## EIGHT-BUS MIXERS: THE NEW BREED

FEATURES	MACKIE 8-BUS	SOUNDCRAFT SPIRIT LC	SOUNDTRACS TOPAZ	TASCAM M-2600
EQ in channel path	Four-band (hi/low shelving, low-mid sweep, hi-mid parametric)	Three band (hi shelving, mid/low sweeps)	Four-band (hi/low shelving, mid sweeps)	Four-band (hi/low shelving, mid sweeps)
EQ in monitor path	Mids split	No	Dedicated two-band shelving	Mids and/or hi/low split
Auxiliary sends	6 (4 simultaneously available). Monitor path switches to stereo send	8 (6 simultaneously available) Monitor path switches to stereo send	6 (4 simultaneously available)	8 simultaneously available (2 stereo & 4 mono)
Aux summing	No	Yes	No	Yes
Stereo effect returns	6	7 (3 rotary, 4 faders)	4	6
Switched direct assigns	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Levels	+4dBm/-10dBV	+4dBm/-10dBV	+4dBm/-10dBV	-10dBV
Independent headphone mix	Yes (x2). Switchable sources, effect return assign	Yes (x2). "Studio" monitor has switchable sources, effect return mix; "Control Room" follows control room monitor	Level follows control room monitor only; "studio" monitor signal could be fed to headphone amp	Yes (x2). "Cue" follows stereo aux sends, "control room" follows control room monitor. Effect return assign to cue (x6).
Monitor mutes & solos	No (global mute to L/R mix only)	Individual mutes & solos	Individual mutes & solos	Individual mutes
Studio speaker controls	Level only; follows control room	Studio phones only (see above); could be fed to amp	Level plus switchable sources	Level only; follows control room
Talkback	Yes (built-in mike)	Yes (built-in mike)	Yes (mike socket)	Yes (built-in mike)
List prices (16/24/32 ch.)	\$3197/\$3995/\$4995	\$2995/\$3995/\$5495	(n/a)/\$3995/\$4995	\$2999/\$3799/\$4699
Optional meter bridge	\$695/\$795/\$895	No	(n/a)/\$849/\$949	In development
Channel input expander	Yes (24 ch., \$2995)	No	No	No
Automation	Yes (Otto 34, price TBA)	No (avail. on Spirit Auto 8)	In development	No



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# FAST FORWARD

eight buses across 16, 24, or even 32 tape output jacks (depending upon the console). With a 24-channel board, bus 1 feeds tape output jacks 1, 9 and 17; bus 2 feeds output jacks 2, 10 and 18; and so forth. This way, if you're feeding more than eight tracks, you simply choose which tracks get recorded by record-enabling those tracks on the recorder itself.

For recording more than eight simultaneous tracks, you can patch the Mackie's direct outputs to any of your recorder's inputs. The Spirit LC, the M-2600 and the Topaz, however, offer a much more convenient *patchless* way to route inputs to more than eight tracks. Instead of typical direct outputs, these consoles allow you to choose whether the tape outputs are fed by the buses (as described above) or directly from a corresponding channel. This way, for instance, a flick of a switch lets you choose whether tape

sends (which can be used as stereo cue sends or for stereo effects). Furthermore, you can switch any or all of its six stereo effect returns to feed the cue bus. As for the Spirit LC, four of its stereo effect returns provide rotary controls (rather than switches) to adjust the *amount* of the return you're sending to the cue—*independent* of the amount you send to the master left/right outputs! Yow.

Even though few project studios have a studio room apart from the control room, all of these boards boast separate "studio" level controls and outputs. (Two clarifications: The Spirit's studio out is marked "studio headphones." To drive speakers, this could be kept at a low level and fed to a power amp. Second, the Topaz's studio headphone facility simply follows the control room monitor. But it does have the most complete studio section, letting you choose the source signal

## SOUNDTRACS TOPAZ

**STRENGTHS** Only mixer with separate EQ for channel and monitor paths. Most flexible studio speaker section, with multiple source switching. Solos and mutes on tape monitor inputs.

**LIMITATIONS:** Headphone mix must follow control room signal. Limited aux sends, no aux summing. Only four stereo effect returns.



output 9 gets fed from bus 1 or directly from whatever is patched into the channel path of channel 9. While Mackie's design does let you route a channel to a bus and simultaneously use its direct output (say, to send to an effect), its competitors have something generally more useful for the project studio.

**THE EARS HAVE IT.** Project studios tend to be personal studios, with the occasional friend or two plugging in. Naturally, any of these boards can provide a decent headphone (or control room speaker) mix for the solo musician. The Mackie, for instance, offers two headphone (or *cue*) mix sections in addition to the control room mix, and lets you mix two of its six stereo effect returns into either set of phones.

The M-2600 and the Spirit LC make cue mixes even more convenient. First, both allow you to sum aux sends (see above). The M-2600 also provides two separate stereo aux

from several options, the output of which could go to a headphone amp.)

**MORE FLASH FOR MORE CASH.** You might want to know that most of these boards can accommodate an optional meter bridge for the input channels. Meters sure make it look like you're in the big time, but all of the consoles have perfectly adequate *built-in* metering for the bus outputs, the master L/R mix, solo levels and individual channel overload. But hey, it's your money (and I'd probably buy one too).

An important note: This article has made no attempt to evaluate the sound of these units, focusing instead on design, features and signal-routing options. You can expect that all four will sound good, *and* different. If you're looking to buy, invest some time up front listening to the equalizers, and for relative distortion, headroom and noise.

There are plenty of [cont'd on page 97]



## COUNTRY BLUES GUITAR

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1. What is the name of the organization based in NYC that will provide music biz legal assistance in most major cities if you can't afford a lawyer?  
A. National Entertainment Lawyers Organization  
B. Lawyers Who Care Foundation C. Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts
2. Which group has a health insurance program for anyone in the music biz?  
A. US Coalition of Record Distributors B. Recording Industry Association  
C. National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences
3. The people at a record company who sign the talent work in the A&R department. What does "A&R" stand for?  
A. Artists & Relations B. Artists & Repertoire C. Aid & Relief
4. Who is in charge of signing songs/songwriters at a publishing house?  
A. Professional Manager B. A&R Rep C. Song Plugger
5. Which copyright form protects authorship of your songs?  
A. PA B. VA C. SA
6. What is the new type of songwriter royalties mandated by Congress?  
A. Public Performance B. Mechanicals C. Digital Surcharge
7. Which 'Association' annually presents thousands of artist showcases on a regional & national basis directly to college talent buyers?  
A. National Association of Campus Activities  
B. College Booking Agent Association C. Talent Show & School Association
8. To protect the "brand" name of your group which do you NOT have to file?  
A. Trademark B. Servicemark C. PKA (Professionally Known As Form)
9. To protect the name of a solo artist must they file the same registrations as a musical group? A. YES B. NO C. Under Certain Circumstances
10. Name the watchdog agency dedicated to preventing hearing loss from music? Clue: Call 415-773-9590! A. HEAR B. QUIET C. ListenUp!

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ANSWERS: C,C,B,A,A,C,A,C,A,A,A

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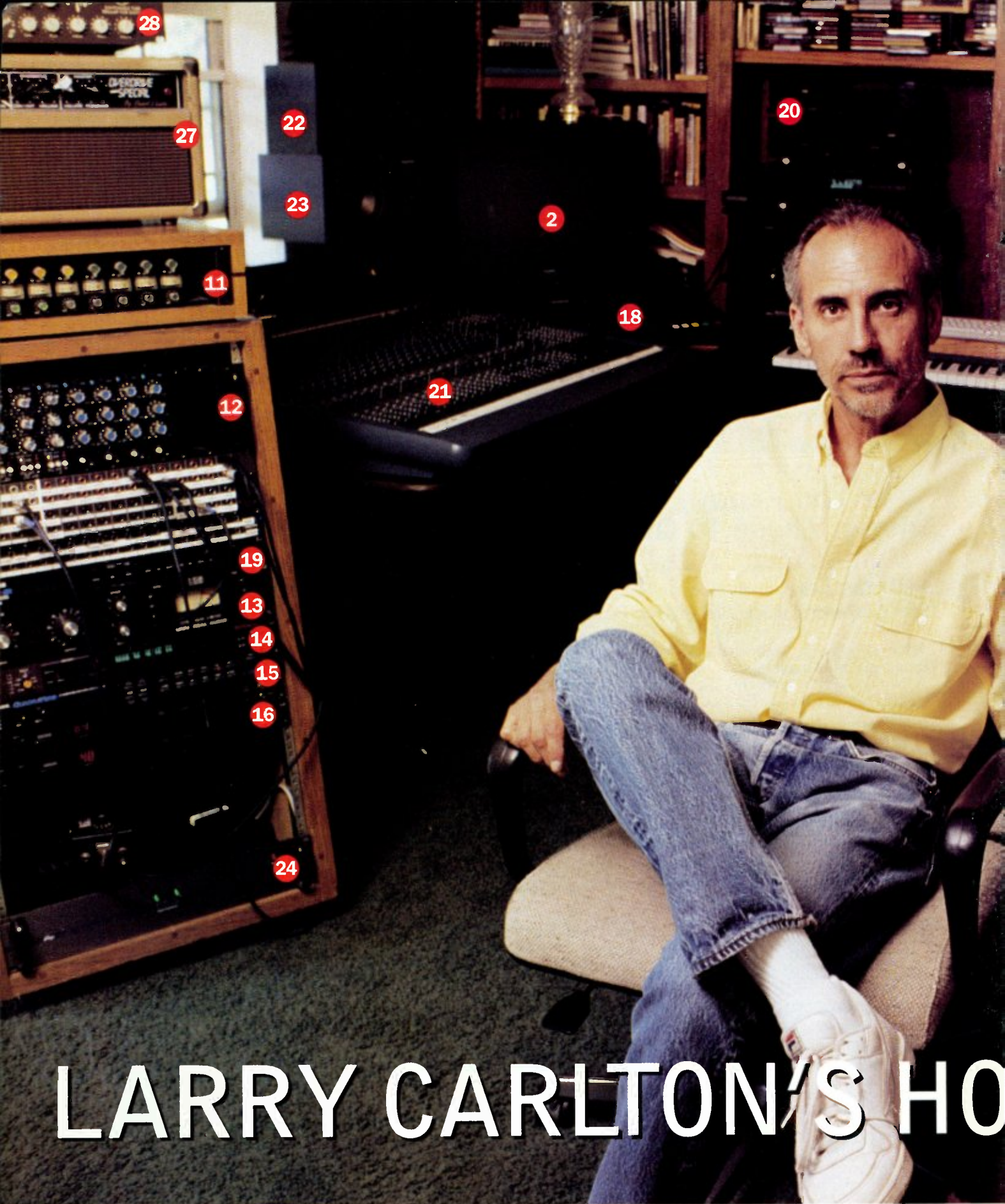
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MAGAZINE



**TAXI**

LA Songwriters Showcase



# LARRY CARLTON'S HOME



# HOME STUDIO

FIVE NIGHTS in the same room with Shannen Doherty might be a tall order for some, but Larry Carlton had one major advantage: a pause button. The renowned guitarist spent five hectic days in April composing the score for an episode of "Beverly Hills 90210" in his California home, the first scoring he had done since the 1984 film *Against All Odds*.

But there was a catch. "We had just rebuilt this studio and installed a new console," he says. "Everything was barely up and running when we started the show."

Working more than one 20-hour day, Carlton played a ¼" video dub of the show through an old **Sony VU-5600** U-matic deck **1** owned by his technician, Dave Rouze. As he viewed the footage on a **Pioneer SD-2601** 27" video monitor **2**, he found a tempo to fit each scene by playing the metronome from his sequencer, Steinberg's **Cubase 2.5** running on a **Macintosh Centris 650** **3**, in sync with the picture. "If it was fairly close, then that was good enough," he says. "Then I would start looking for some thematic material."

He composed on a **Yamaha KX88** keyboard **4** fed into the computer through **Opcode's Studio 3** MIDI interface **5** to trigger a **Korg 01/WR** **6**, **Roland JV-880** **7** and **Roland S-760** sampler **8**, whose audio outputs were mixed through a **Kawai MX-8R** keyboard mixer **9**. He "fell in love with" the S-760, particularly the woodwind and string patches from Roland's CD-ROM library via a **PLI PL-1** CD-ROM drive **10**.

Carlton boosted signals entering the board through a bank of **API 512** mike preamps **11**, and enhanced them with a bank of **API 550A** equalizers **12**, a **Urei 1176** limiter **13**, **Roland SDE-3000** delay **14**, **Alesis Quadraverb** **15** and two **Yamaha SPX90** multieffect units **16**. Two **Alesis ADAT** digital tape decks **17** complete with **BRC** remote controller **18** handled tracking, locked to video via an **Alesis AI-2** sync interface **19**. Mixes were recorded by a **Sony PCM 2300** DAT deck **20**.

The major unknown factor was the new **Alesis X-2** console **21**, lent by the company. It arrived only one day before work began. Alesis also provided a pair of **Monitor One** speakers **22** (seen here stacked atop a set of **Yamaha NS-10s** **23**), which are fed by an **Aphex PS-3** power amp **24**.

Still, Carlton's first love is the guitar, particularly a '62 **Fender Stratocaster** **25**. To his right is a **Valley Arts** acoustic **26**; obscured are his '55 **Les Paul Special**, '51 **Gibson L-5** and a **Fender Precision Bass**. He runs the axes through a **Dumble Overdrive Special** **27**—Carlton's choice for 12 years—and a **Dumble Steel String Singer**. He modifies his tone using a **Groove Tube Trio** preamp **28**, t.c. **electronic 2290** delay and **1210** stereo chorus and two more **Quadraverbs**. A **Boss TV-12H** chromatic tuner **29** is always at the ready.

BY DAVE DIMARTINO

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALDO MAURO

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# It's a Jazz Salsa Thing

**O**N SOME PRIMAL LEVEL, LATIN MUSIC IS concerned with conquest. Salsa, a music of action if ever there was, celebrates boldness—the singers are out to seduce the women and compel the men. Honor is on the line; any old Saturday dance can have a life-or-death urgency. Interpersonal tension informs every beat.

There's no parallel magnetism in latter-day Latin jazz. The salseros insist "Dance with me!" and offer compelling reasons to do so, while their jazz counterparts are forever pleading, "Listen to me," then playing solos screechy enough to send the faithful running for the eject button. A demonstrative rather than participatory form, Latin jazz has become a playground for boys with excess testosterone, a soundtrack for World Wrestling Federation bouts. POW!

## EDDIE PALMIERI

*Palmas*

(ELEKTRA NONESUCH  
AMERICAN EXPLORER SERIES)

## TITO PUENTE

*Master Timbalero*

(CONCORD PICANTE)

The brass attacks. THWACK! The rhythm section pummels.

It's certainly macho, impressive the same way Evel Knievel used to be impressive. But so what? The cool mambo king never strides off with the girl. The sizzling show-biz fanfares rarely inspire an interesting solo the way they used to back in the Diz-and-Chano Pozo

"Cubana Bop" days. Recent records by Tito Puente and his Latin-Jazz Allstars, including the latest, *Master Timbalero*, find horn players rehashing "The Peanut Vendor" and other clichés, and the rhythm section drowsily following along, perfunctorily supplying the expected accents. With the exception of Mingus's "Nostalgia in Times Square," *Master Timbalero's* highlight, there's little snap and even less sense of discovery. It's a passionless display of virtuosity.

Meanwhile, salsa and other forms of Latin dance music have blossomed. Ever since the early '80s, when Manny Oquendo's Libre created highly charged versions of jazz standards and Ruben Blades' synth-obsessed *Seis Del Solar* broadened salsa's canvas, the dance bands



## RY COODER ON TALKING TIMBUKTU

OVER THE YEARS, Ry Cooder has dabbled in all kinds of music with a wide variety of players, including Gaby Pahinui, Flaco Jimenez, V.M. Bhatt and, most recently, Ali Farka Toure. How does he cope with such a wide array of styles?

"I gotta tell you the truth—it all feels like the same shit to me," he says. "Here these people are, expressing some basic things in their music, and in a rural style, so it comes across like personal music."

Take Toure, with whom Cooder collaborated on the album *Talking Timbuktu*. "He's very personal," says Cooder. "He's a kind of renegade in that way. He's not a strict, traditionalist African player, nor is he a city pop-guy. He's avoided all that, and somehow came up with this unique style."

What Cooder tried to bring, then, was a complimentary approach to the music. "When I'm playing with him, what I'm trying to do is put some feeling into it, so it'll have more of a heart throb to it," he explains. "Just because it's what I like to hear."

Of course, it helps that what Toure plays is very close to the blues. "If you listen to the fiddle music that he does, that's basic building block of

his tradition, the oldest form that he's got," says Cooder. "He claims that it's 2000-year-old stuff—that those one-string fiddles have been played for that long a time—and that when you play them, it sounds like this. If that's true, it contains some of that blues, so I do believe that's a root."

"Blues, as we think of it and know it, is an American thing. But over in Africa, that mode is there, the tempo is there, and the kind of lament that is there. But the guitar is pretty recent over there, so when he expresses it on guitar, it comes out sounding like guitar music. It sounds like blues guitar music—backwards, with a different emphasis, less on the downbeat and more on the upbeat."

That wasn't the only difference in Toure's time, though. "When you play with Ali Farka and you go to play blues, there is a lot of space. It was the most spatial this stuff has felt to me, ever. I've played this slow blues piece with a lot of people. It's feeling very spatial, I noticed, it's feeling very open."

"I asked [drummer Jim] Keltner later, 'Did you feel that?' And he said, 'Yeah, I felt a lot of air in the thing.' It was good. You could wander around in that."

—J.D. Considine

have been reliable providers of highly charged clashes between soloist and rhythm section. Percussive pianist Eddie Palmieri, for one, has always treated his arrangements as vehicles for improvisation—whether writing for studio orchestra (the gorgeous 1981 *Eddie Palmieri*, a multi-culti masterpiece) or his regular dance band (among many, *Palo Pa' Rumba*, from 1984). His music demands spontaneity. The spider-like piano *tumbao* pattern and gently simmering rhythm beds generate a kind of freewheeling, chattering crosstalk that's forbidden in Puente's tightly controlled "jazz" group.

Since he's been so effective integrating improvised-music philosophy into dance styles, Palmieri should be a natural to reinvent Latin jazz, and *Palmas*, his first attempt at writing purely instrumental music, does restore vitality to this long-sleepy form. Emulating Art Blakey's early-'60s Jazz Messengers, he joins his usual rhythm section with horn players from the hard-bop wars—saxophonist Donald Harrison, trumpeter Brian Lynch and trombonist Conrad Herwig—and provides charts that are rooted in essential Afro-Cuban rhythms (guaguanco, son montuno) but are not obsessed with upholding tradition.

The writing, as usual, is superlative: Palmieri melds catcalling mambo phrases with unusual intervallic leaps, and jumbles fast runs with jarring, apocalyptic syncopations. But these devices, common in Latin music, are never just for show: They help him conjure the blues ("Slowvisor," which could be an outtake from Lee Morgan's *Sidewinder*) and funk (the crawling "Mare Nuestrum"), and give his themes a propulsive danceband-style momentum.

Alas, not every soloist builds on that momentum. Palmieri, whose explosive, fists-first style is the album's anchor, only allows himself a few extended solos—and his block-chord-fueled excursion on "Doctor Duck" is one breathtaking example of polyrhythm. Harrison, who grew up in New Orleans, is the most fluid of the horn players: While the others often disregard the three-two clave pattern that is the heart of this music, the alto saxophonist lays into it, feeding on Palmieri's agitated energy, toying with bebop, distilling Cuba's romantic melodies. Harrison isn't paying lip service to the past or spewing endless runs designed to impress: Following the lead of Palmieri and his crisp, interactive rhythm section, he's using everything at his disposal to move this hide-bound music gracefully forward.

—Tom Moon



## STONE TEMPLE PILOTS

*Purple*  
(ATLANTIC)

**O**NE THING YOU CAN SAY FOR THE FORE-fathers of cock rock (does that make 'em the foreskins of cock rock?), they took success like, well, men. But nowadays you might almost think that corporate rockers who burst out of the gate with a multiplatinum company saver are subsequently contractually obligated to provide essentially the same riffs (the execution of which will inevitably be superior, the construction inevitably be inferior, thanks to 364 nights of lots of practice and little introspection) accompanied by lyrics that whine about the incredibly tough life at the top. Who is responsible for this disturbing trend? Guns N' Roses? Nirvana? It's almost enough to make one pine for the good handful of tour bus and groupie tales you could depend on from the Bad Companies of yore.

Stone Temple Pilots refuse to break this new rule. Their follow-up to the multiplatinum debut *Core* is filled with bitter asides about tacks on the road stopping meatplows, bullets not intended for them, and words that "sell lies." Are they talking about their words or the ones they expect people like me to write? Then again, at this point these guys seem so dazed and confused they haven't even bothered to slap the title in English on the album; no doubt *Purple* in Chinese has some incredibly heavy significance to at least one member of the band. In any case, given their previous success with dodging most issues, they probably figure it doesn't matter what they say, as long as it

HOUSE PARTY

## What Are You Listening to Lately?



### WYNONNA

1. Aretha Franklin—Amazing Grace with James Cleveland
2. Bonnie Raitt—Luck of the Draw
3. Michael English—Hope
4. Soul Mission—Soul Mission
5. Sting—Ten Summoner's Tales



### JULIANA HATFIELD

1. Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Extra Width
2. Bjork, "Big Time Sensuality"
3. Madder Rose, "Panic On"
4. Human Skab, Thunderhips and Saddlebags
5. Til Tuesday, Everything's Different Now

### YO-YO

1. Intro—Intro
2. Babyface—For the Cool in You
3. Snoop Doggy Dogg—Doggystyle
4. Toni Braxton—Tori Braxton
5. Tina Marie—Greatest Hits



sounds vaguely familiar. Which it does—even if what it sounds most vaguely like this time around has less to do with Seattle (which may be less trendy this season) and more to do with Led Zeppelin (which, of course, never goes out of style, despite all of the predictions of the last 25 years). Nor is it much of a surprise, given producer Brendan O'Brien's well-proven genius at replicating the overall tube compression that used to distinguish the originals' clas-

sic drum sound. Hey, it worked wonders for Soundgarden. But Soundgarden, even in their weediest moments, have always pulled through on sheer sincerity. Unlike Led Zeppelin, Stone Temple Pilots, who still haven't quite figured out which house of the holy they want to worship in, may not even be able to pull through on the strength of their bullshit. This is, after all, an outfit crafty enough to swing a chick from a meathook in a video and then turn around and insist they were making an anti-rape statement. For those who want more of the same "Sex Type Thing," they graciously offer the more graphic "Lounge Fly," which hinges upon this catchy refrain, "I wanna fuck, I wanna fuck, but do you need me?" to which the only appropriate response is also the most obvious: No.

—Deborah Frost

## JOHN MELLENCAMP

*Dance Naked*  
(MERCURY)

**W**HETHER IT'S NEIL YOUNG GOING techno, Paul McCartney sucking Elvis Costello's blood or Bob Dylan flying solo, some vets will try almost anything to keep those creative juices flowing. On *Dance Naked*, John Mellencamp stumbles onto one of the best strategies yet: Stripping away the polish, he spits out nine tracks in under 30 minutes, discovering glory in a slapdash vibe. Some songs stink and some astonish, but

STEPHANIE DANIELIAN



nothing feels fake. What a radical concept.

Relying more on the central nervous system than the intellect, Mellencamp sticks to an austere garage-band approach, meaning no sublime Lisa Germano fiddle. "When Margaret Comes to Town," a deceptively pretty tune that recalls last year's more civilized *Human Wheels*, suffers from rough handling; on the other hand, "The Big Jack" approaches idiot perfection, since it's essentially just an eruption of manly guitar chords anyway. He's most persuasive acting out crude impulses, snarling at a sibling in "Brothers" or strutting with obnoxious glee for "L.U.V." And the airy title track spotlights one of Mellencamp's more memorable roles, the tender brute. Think Harvey Keitel in *The Piano*, wooing Holly Hunter by looking up her skirt.

The meant-to-be-daring vocal duet with Me'Shell NdegéOcello on Van Morrison's "Wild Night" reflects a degree of calculation not evident elsewhere. Besides the fact that Morrison's nearly perfect original didn't need revision, these supposedly odd partners find a safe middle ground instead of playing off each other's differences, while her intrusive bass licks suggest slickness, not soul. Otherwise, *Dance Naked* offers relief from superstar fussiness. Reportedly cut in two weeks, and coming nine months after his last long-player, it harks back to the good old days before self-conscious artistes took years to craft stale albums. But why stop here? How about an EP every 90 days? Stick your neck out farther, John. Your goofs deliver a bigger charge than most people's masterpieces.

—Jon Young

## JOAN JETT AND THE BLACKHEARTS

*Pure and Simple*  
(WARNER BROS.)

## 7 YEAR BITCH

*¡Viva Zapata!*  
(C/Z)

**B**ACK IN 1977, WHEN THEN 19-YEAR-OLD Joan Jett declared herself "the bitch with the hot guitar" on the *Runaways Live in Japan* album's signature statement, "I Want to Be Where the Boys Are," rock 'n' roll riot grrls were not only few and far between, but invariably doomed to be categorized as simply either hormone-driven boy toys or envy-driven penis-choppers. Seventeen years later, they may still be nowhere near where the boys are in terms of equal footing, but the ranks of rock's sisterhood have at least grown enough so that



JOAN JETT

MICHAEL LAVINE

there should no longer be any need for female rockers to feel they have to justify themselves. (All except Tori Amos, of course.)

"You shouldn't care what people think of you," snarls Our Ms. Jett on the Ramonesish "Insecure," from her leather-tough new album, *Pure and Simple*. It's certainly titled appropriately, as most of the tracks here feature the four-on-the-floor, gimmick-free approach that's always been her hallmark. As demonstrated by the hard-rock/bubblegum DMZ-occupying tracks as "Eye to Eye" and "Torture," all Jett needs are a few good power chords and a hook-filled chorus to get her point across. She can be subtle if she wants to—"As I Am" is as good a girl-group homage as anyone's tried in years, maybe even decades—but, on the whole, this grizzled young veteran of nearly 20 years in the business is still just a bitch with a hot guitar—god bless her.

As for 7 Year Bitch, well, this angry young Seattle quartet, already infamous for having lost guitarist Stefanie Sargent to a fatal heroin OD, spends most of its second album buzzsawing its

way through a batch of songs dripping with equal parts bile and venom. "I keep track of my friends and enemies/Who is who? It changes daily," howls Selene Vigil above the suitably clashing metalloid riffs of new guitarist Roisin Dunne and bassist Elizabeth Davis. No dewy-eyed romantic notions clouding up these bitchin' babes' judgments, either: "Don't let your emotions get in the way of a really good time," advises Vigil on the blistering "Damn Good & Well," while "Scratch" puts the whole sexual yin-yang of it all in good basic perspective. "I'm the bitch, and you got the itch." Your move, boys.

—Billy Altman

## THE AUTEURS

*Now I'm a Cowboy*  
(VERNON YARD)

**T**HE AUTEURS MUST HAVE LISTENED TO lots of Nirvana in their cars on the way to the sessions for *Now I'm a Cowboy*. Over and over again, they lull you into a false sense of serenity (or, depending on how charitable you're feeling, to sleep), only to evoke Arma-

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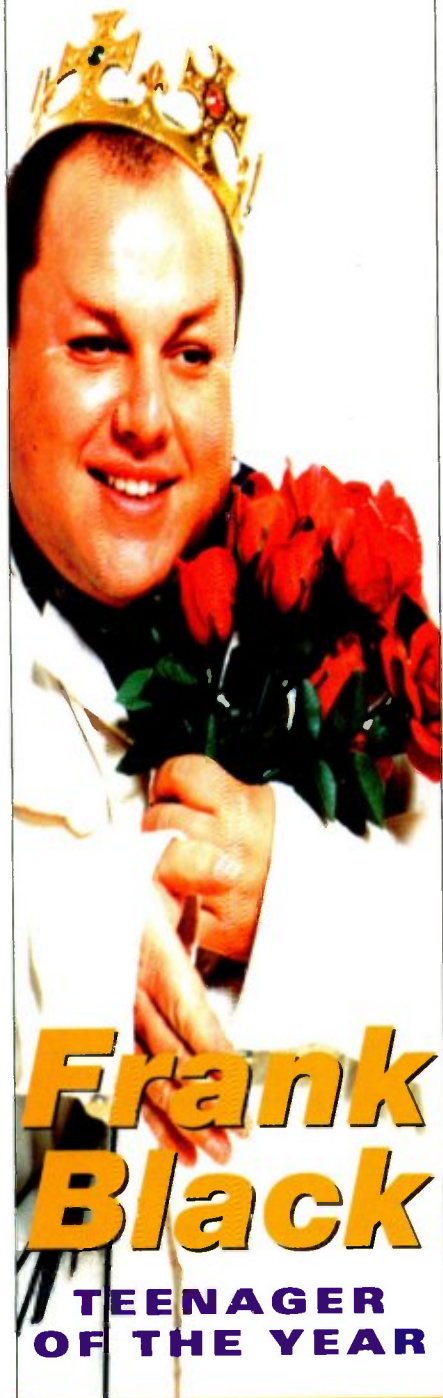
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# REVIEWS



## Frank Black

**TEENAGER OF THE YEAR**

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**Headache**

Produced by Eric Drew Feldman,  
Frank Black and Al Clay

4AD



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geddon through a Marshall stack four bars later.

Eventually it occurs to us that the reason they're injecting dynamism into their music in so brazenly predictable a way is because Luke Haines is such a limited singer, with a range from sardonic desiccated whisper all the way up to sardonic malign croak.

A lot of these songs, Luke assures us, are about caste resentment in his native Britain. Ray Davies he ain't. Most of these songs, our ears tell us, are pretty nearly devoid of melodic interest, and the arrangements bespeak so stunted an imagination that we're compelled to seek pleasure in the smallest things—in the shimmering guitar arpeggios in the very "Femme Fatale"—sounding "Upper Classes," the fleeting finger cymbals and flamenco strums in "A Sister Like You," the tiny bells in "Brainchild."

We are given to understand that Luke regards

"Chinese Bakery" as melodically Billy Joelish. If only wishing could make it so! No acoustic instrument can engender foreboding better than a cello, but poor James Banbury, a full-fledged member of the group and everything, is almost invariably enjoined to play in his instrument's lachrymose northernmost register. He might just as well have studied the viola.

We will admit to being amused by his reference to the pope in the irrefutably propulsive, if thematically muddled, "Lenny Valentino," and by the wonderful opening line of "Daughter of a Child," wherein Our Luke observes, "You had your fill of laughing gas." In the end, though, we're rarely engaged for longer than a few syllables.

"You can get so far with a perishing wit," Luke croons sardonically—and presumably self-referentially—in "Upper Classes." He overestimates himself. —John Mendelsohn

## SHORT TAKES

BY J. D. CONSIDINE

### SPIN DOCTORS

*Turn It Upside Down*

(EPIC)

Of the Spin Doctors' musical growth there can be no doubt. "Big Fat Funky Booty" and "Hungry Hamed's" continue in the tuneful jam-band vein of the Docs' debut, while country rock "Mary Jane" and the Fishbone-ish "Biscuit Head" move the band in interesting and appropriate new directions. But Christopher Barron's delusions of poesy (including a burst of Latin in "Cleopatra's Cat") is a definite symptom of trouble.

### HUEY LEWIS & THE NEWS

*Four Chords and Several Years Ago*

(ELEKTRA)

...this band had a clue.

### SEAL

*Seal*

(SIRE)

Seal manipulates mood the way James Brown works a groove, but that doesn't always work to his advantage. Because it's so easy to get lost in the luxuriant warmth of Seal's music, you may not even notice how great the songs are. So listen close—"Bring It On" is Marvin Gaye redux; "Kiss from a Rose" is romance made audible; and "Dreaming in Metaphors" is the kind of song

George Michael would give his good looks to have written.

### COOLIO

*It Takes a Thief*

(TOMMY BOY)

He may claim South Central as his home turf, but this isn't just another gangsta album. Coolio shows too much of the poverty and desperation—particularly on slave-to-the-pipe raps like "Out Da Closet"—to glamorize gang-banging, while there's more humor than menace in tracks like "Ghetto Cartoons" and "Ugly Bitches." But the real kick here is Coolio's ear for the funk, from "Can O' Corn" to the Lakeside-driven "Fantastic Voyage."

### ROXETTE

*Crash! Boom! Bang!*

(EMI)

Given Roxette's track record, it's no surprise that the best songs here are the slow ones. But instead of power ballads, these evoke the quiet melancholy the Beatles did so well, making the most of Marie Fredriksson's voice without turning the chorus into a chance to show off. And though that may not turn "Crash! Boom! Bang!" or "First Girl on the Moon" into hits, it should be inducement enough to put this in your personal hit parade.



## HELMET

*Betty*  
(INTERSCOPE)

**L**IKE FELLOW NEW YORKERS PRONG, Helmet has embraced the idea that metal can mean more than muscle flexing and throat-shredding. It can serve as fertile ground for rock's least-respected strain of superpowered mutation.

*Betty* chronicles Helmet in restless transition, reaching for some new form of expression while inhabiting the same syncopated, piledriver mechanism that propelled '92's *Meantime*. But where *Meantime* was a brutal cellful of ominous unison riffs and bone-cracking drum beats, *Betty* blows the lid off the sucker using hip-hop, hints of jazz, reams of speaker-altering noise and, unexpectedly, humor. Helmet have de-metallized metal.

Singing now more like a slacker than a strangler, guitarist Page Hamilton begins with "Wilma's Rainbow" (get it? Betty, Wilma, "The Flintstones"), an unassuming tale of high art. "I Know," an anthemic song tempered with oceanic, beautiful guitar harmonies (a briefly recurring theme on *Betty*) and anguished vocals, gives way to "Biscuits for Smut," a Primus rip-off with a buzzing, Jack Bruceish bassline. "Milquetoast" is quintessential Helmet—a head-slammng double-time section with startling chord progressions, while "Tic" covers itself in a thick crud of Hendrix blips and eerie circular noise.

*Betty's* two most unusual (and shortest) tracks, seemingly throwaways, reveal Helmet's

influences and point to its possible future. "Beautiful Love" is pure Jim Hall in the intro, Hamilton's lone guitar stating the melody as a ballad then switching to swing. At the point where a solo would normally emerge, the band tumbles in, surrounding the gentle melody with corrosive free drumming and avant-squawk guitar and bass. Finally, a hoary bottleneck guitar and a Leon Redboneish vocal prop up "Sam Hell," a Mississippi delta blues that closes *Betty* in understated Son House fashion.

Often characterized as metal for the alternative crowd, *Betty's* experimentalism will do little to clear up Helmet's demographics. But it positions the quartet as impatient innovators in a most unlikely field. —Ken Micallef

## JIMI HENDRIX

*:blues*  
(MCA)

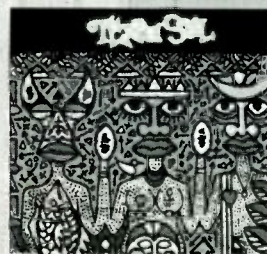
**N**O ONE IN ROCK, AND CERTAINLY NO one whose name is bandied about with as much reverence, has been more defiled by posthumous releases than Jimi Hendrix. Still, Hendrix fanatics have long been anticipating the release of his fabled LP of blues recordings. Inevitably co-produced by Alan Douglas—the man responsible for the controversially overdubbed *Crash Landing* and *Midnight Lightning* LPs of the mid-'70s, who now handles the Hendrix catalog—eight of the 11 cuts here are previously unreleased. In terms of quality and consistency, *:blues* suffers from many of the same problems as its posthumous predecessors—but it also has more to offer.

Though cover tunes like "Mannish Boy" and "Bleeding Heart" clearly offer insight into Hendrix's influences, for the most part the songs are less important than functional as spacecraft for musical whims that took him way beyond the blues. The solo on "Born Under a Bad Sign" turns into a mantra, as the rhythm section (Billy Cox and Buddy Miles) marks time and Hendrix takes his time exploring a world of sounds and styles. The vocals on "Once I Had a Woman" are painfully intimate, while his playing alternates between the guitar-following-vocal style of Mississippi Fred McDowell and the string trickery of Albert Collins. As the song fades, Hendrix switches off his distortion and demonstrates a devastatingly quick right hand.

Of all the versions I can recall of "Red House," "Electric Church Red House" is one of the most intense and concise examples of his straight-up blues work, delivering flurries of Albert King-styled riffs. For my money, though, the brightest moment is an outtake of

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"Voodoo Chile Blues" from the *Electric Ladyland* sessions. Accompanied by Steve Winwood (organ) and Jack Cassidy (bass), Hendrix finally plays *with* musicians rather than simply using them as accompanists. Not only is the sound fuller, but the solo section simmers, percolates, then finally explodes. Through the hiss and crackle of these recordings, you can actually hear the blues giving birth to the gymnastic blues-rock and psychedelic guitar that influenced the Stevie Ray Vaughans, the Robin Trowers and the Vernon Reids. There are awkward moments, but overall it's not unlike hearing Bo Diddley and Chuck Berry make their respective transitions to rock 'n' roll.

Part of the motivation for this set is to prove once and for all that Hendrix was indeed a "blues player"; the painstakingly annotated booklet (cassette version guaranteed to cause eye strain) reads like a master's thesis on the subject. I suspect it's an issue that would make the guitarist himself uncomfortable. As he remarks in the liner notes, "I don't understand this business of trying to classify people."

—Michael Lipton

## VIDEO

DAVID TORN

*Painting With Guitar, Parts 1 and 2*

(HOMESPUN TAPES)

If you're one of those back to nature guitarists who shudders at the sight of blinking LEDs, this lesson is required viewing. In two enlightening one-hour videos, David Torn commands you to stop playing your guitar like a guitar and, by probing the nether regions of electronic sound and texture, to wield it as an orchestra in its own right.

Torn, an admirer of such iconoclasts as Henry Kaiser, Fred Frith and Adrian Belew, applies his electronic alchemy through unusual techniques such as bowing and using stone picks and moveable bridges to create a completely original palette. Surrounded by an array of pedals, cables and processors, he guides you carefully through every link in the signal chain starting with the tone of each individual pickup. Along the way he touches on channel switching, fuzz boxes, compressors and wah-wahs, culminating in a Frippertronic frenzy of looping delays and thick reverb. One particularly groovy device is his Steinberger Transtrem whammy bar, which bends all six strings up or down an entire octave to create smooth Hawaiian-style glissandi.

In an impressive display of generosity, Torn gives all his secrets away. But if you think that that's all you need to play similarly unearthly new-age soundscapes, you've failed the class. The assignment is not to copy, but to prod yourself to think in new ways and discover your own sensibilities. Of course, if that seems too tall an order, you wouldn't do too badly if you simply ripped him off.

—Steph Paynes

# BEST UNSIGNED BAND COMPETITION SEMI-FINALISTS PART TWO

MUSICIAN

Last month we listed the first half of our semi-finalist list for The Best Unsigned Band Competition. Below, you will find the second half. The bands and artists who have made it this far represent what our judges found to be among the best of nearly 2,500 entries, so congratulations! Keep an eye on future issues as our judges whittle these two groups of semi-finalists down to 50 finalists, to be judged by our celebrity judges: David Byrne, Sonny Rollins, Roseanne Cash, producer Butch Vig, and Flea. Stay tuned...

- Jimmy Wilgus & The People
- Deadline
- The Big Picture
- The Basiks
- The Bedrocks
- The North American
- Zen Cowboys
- Alex Ballard and Sugarfoot
- The Yell Leaders
- Val Bankston
- Ansley Court
- Animus Mundi
- New Frontier
- The Clique
- Visible Shivers
- The Griffins
- Theodore & Rebic
- The Patsy Foster Band
- The Accidents
- Y'All
- Honor Among Thieves
- The Grievors
- Collar Bone
- One Hitter
- Todd Kray
- The Coolhand Band
- Magic Bag
- Avatar Blue
- Goodman Bros.
- L.J.S.
- Twelve Chairs
- The Willies
- TED 302
- Pamela J. Cook
- Treehouse
- Sound Asylum
- Feo Y Loco
- Gravity's Pull
- Distant Fathers
- Medicine Crew
- Jeffrey Halford
- The Positions
- Bitoto
- Big Guitars From Memphis
- Calu!Callay
- Vib
- Meeting Of The Minds
- Mock Turtle Story
- Me Llamo Jorge
- Carla Hall
- Eric Howell
- Jason Richman
- Call Of The Wild
- Bobby Zurek
- Infinity
- dt's
- Perception
- The Vatchers
- Really Wow
- Bottom Line
- Punch

[cont'd from page 50] was 10 years old, the first record I ever bought was *Honky Chateau*. My father was making fun of me because I always kept playing "Honky Cat" over and over again. He said, "Man, I don't understand. You got 11 songs on the record and you only play one. You stupid. You just paid \$3.99 for it, you might as well listen to the whole thing."

So, when he left the room and I could get my pride together, I started listening to the whole thing. And the second to the last cut on the album is "Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters." At the time I had no intention of being anything other than a pop musician. So I said, when I do my first pop record I'm going to record that song. And when I started working on this project it was the first song I worked on. I didn't want it to be a ballad, because he'd already done that. I found a tempo I was comfortable with, and I just started to put it together with some beats.

**MUSICIAN:** *I know you hate the neo-classical label, but what was lost or left behind in the early '70s that you felt the need to carry forward? And how do you see Miles' role in all this?*

**MARSALIS:** Nothing was really lost. You had this tradition that included Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins, Sidney Bechet and so on right up through the '60s to Miles and Wayne Shorter and that real bad-assed group. Then the Beatles came along, and the bottom dropped out of everything. Because then Miles decided he wanted to play electric music. Which was not a bad thing. But when Miles did that, all the cats under him jumped in, so there was drop off. Now everybody's picking up where they left off.

**MUSICIAN:** *Because it was electric, were there harmonic and timbre changes that you feel took the music away from the essence of jazz? Mingus felt strongly about acoustic music being more authentic.*

**MARSALIS:** Acoustic music has very different properties than electric music, definitely. There's a lightness and sense of space, a different density. Rock is kind of heavy, and Miles went for that thing, that sense of groove. And he was wise to use the best attributes of those electric instruments, and it was cool. But what happened was a whole generation of cats that might have played jazz didn't, because of those directions. I don't think it's a coincidence that in the

midst of all this, Wayne Shorter wasn't discussed in jazz really until Wynton and I came out and started playing that music.

One night after a show some dude, a musician, came up to me and said, "Yeah, man, I hear a lot of Wayne in your playing." We were playing standards, and I happened to have played a Sonny Rollins solo *verbatim*—note for note, so I realized this cat had read this shit somewhere. Then he came down to the club and listened to what I played, but he never really heard it. He wouldn't know the difference between Wayne Shorter and Sonny Rollins if they came and spat on him. A lot of people function on such a low level.

**MUSICIAN:** *How old were you when this dawned on you?*

**MARSALIS:** Pretty young—I was a black kid in the South. [laughs] We were the first generation of black kids to go to school with white people as young children. Not as high school kids, when you already have some sense of identity. And you were raised subconsciously believing you were inferior to white people.

There's a strange dichotomy to Southern white people. They're almost schizophrenic. Like Wynton and I were in the Scouts, and we had this great Scoutmaster, he taught me so much about life, lots of individual attention. But at the same time he would tell me these nigger jokes. Just matter of factly: "I know you'll think these are funny." So there's an odd duality there, because I can't tell you this was a mean man. He'd come up and say, "I like my coffee like I like my women: hot, sweet and black." Then his house burned down one time and he said, "Probably some niggers did it." Very odd.

I can point to people that didn't have that vibe. My band director in high school was a white man, and he's one of the reasons I'm still playing music. But there was always one person to remind you where you stood. It was interesting growing up with that kind of duality. Actually, it was very refreshing. At least we didn't grow up believing shit will be equal, like some of the people I met in New York.

But I never did really answer your question. One day when we were in high school, Wynton turned to me and said, "You grew up all your life believing that white folks are better than you. Man, look around: It's amazing how dumb some of these motherfuckers are." The next day in English class I looked around and it struck me like a thun-

the change has come....



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**Maire  
Brennan  
(of Clannad)**

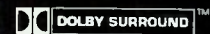
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derbolt: Holy shit, God really does not dole out intellect on a racial basis! [laughs] Wyn-ton came out of all that a lot more bitter than I did. And I'm not saying he didn't have damn good reasons. But I have more sympathy for people and gray areas. My crusade is different from his. Mine involves weeding out all the bullshit, and finding people of any color that think like me. I ain't just for all the black people that think like me, because I'll be a lonely motherfucker waiting for that.

**MUSICIAN:** *There's been a lot written about the rage of the black middle class, the frustration of succeeding and still having to deal with the constant subliminal racism.*

**MARSALIS:** That's true, but why the rage? I don't push through the crowd to get to the train. I get locked out of the door, and I let it go. Because the next train is coming down the pike. I don't have to push, because I believe the cream rises to the top. On the "Tonight Show," there are people who think that what they do defines who they are. That's how they get their self-esteem. Like they'd say, I work for the "Tonight Show,"

I'm so and so. For me, it's gotta be, I'm Branford...and I work on the "Tonight Show." My father used to quote an African proverb that says one should never curse a tiger for being a tiger. So I can go on the streets of New York right now and have taxis pass me by, but it doesn't enrage me. Because I've never expected a tiger to be anything but a tiger. That's the problem with Hollywood. Everything seems so nice and equal here, and people who call you nigger are miles away where you can't hear it. So you can begin to think everything's cool and equal. It's not. But I never expected it to be. So I have no rage.

**MUSICIAN:** *You certainly have a healthy anger that can be one of your greatest assets. Can the shadow side of that anger also be a problem?*

**MARSALIS:** I have anger, and it will never leave. But you have to learn to control it. A psychiatrist once told me something great. He said the question is not whether or not we have demons. Everybody in the world has demons. The question is, do your demons have you?

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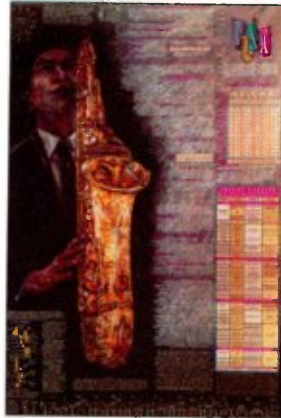
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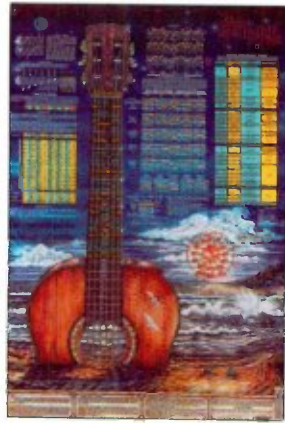
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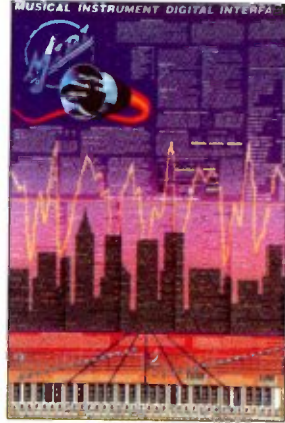
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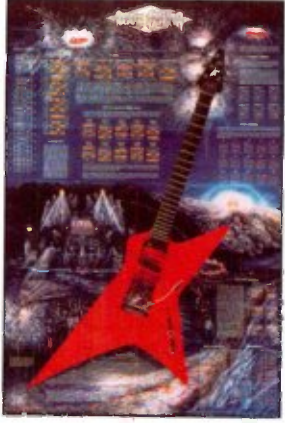
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MIXERS

[cont'd from page 78] other eight-bus consoles on the market (and under development) that cost both less and more than these. Generally, you get what you pay for. At lower price points, important features tend to be lacking; for more money, you can get a more capable mixer. For instance, the Alesis X2 (24 channels, \$7999) adds several enhancements including built-in MIDI muting and an LED meter bridge. Allen & Heath's GS3 (16 channels, \$4495; 24 channels, \$6495; eight-channel expander, \$1995) brings brains to the party, with MIDI muting and VCA automation. And as we move into the \$10,000+ range, we can drool over a variety of pro-quality (read modular and very quiet) eight-bus boards, some with integrated patchbays, from D&R, Amek and others.

But don't underestimate the new breed. Each of the four boards we've looked at boasts an impressive price/features ratio. None is the clear "fittest," since each has strengths and drawbacks (as indicated in the accompanying chart and profiles). So, like choosing a mate, figure out which board matches your needs best, and look forward to a long mutualistic symbiotic relationship.

# HENLEY'S FAMILIAR QUOTATIONS



Pundits and pooh-bahs throughout the nation are struggling to explain the excitement generated by this summer's Eagles reunion tour. What is it about a group of California cowboys popular during the Ford and Carter administrations that speaks across the gulf of years to the children of the Clinton era? Is it that we lack anyone with that twangin' post-Byrds sardonic sound? No, we have the Gin Blossoms. Is it that we lack a defining symbol of the California dream? No, we have the Chili Peppers. Is it that we lack our own hard-eyed, tight-lipped lady-killing icons? No, we have the guys in jeans ads. So what is it the Eagles provided that we have not been able to find elsewhere?

Poetry! To be specific—the romantic, symbolic, multi-leveled lyricism of the bard of Mulholland, Don Henley. No other writer (with the possible exceptions of Shakespeare and the Bible authors) has so completely informed the language of an entire culture. After all, the very first Eagles single introduced into the vernacular an expression—"Take it easy"—still in common use 22 years later! Since then The Donald has ventilated the vulgate with epigrams ("We have met the enemy and he is us"), similes ("sharper than a serpent's tooth") and catch phrases ("coming apart at the seams") that seem as if they were always with us.

Henley is tied up in a lawsuit with his label which has kept him from recording since 1989's *The End of the Innocence*. Still, a quick listen to that album reminds us of how quickly Henley's turns of phrase find their way into everyday speech. Here is a partial list:

- "Whistling past the graveyard" (IF DIRT WERE DOLLARS)
- "Life goes on." (HEART OF THE MATTER)
- "The flesh gets weak." (HOTM)
- "Noses pressed up against the glass."  
(GIMME WHAT YOU GOT)
- "The home of the brave and the land of the free."  
(GWYG)
- "One day they're here; next day they're gone."  
(NEW YORK MINUTE)
- "The wolf is always at the door." (NYM)
- "Hang on tooth and nail." (NYM)
- "You might fear the reaper." (LITTLE TIN GOD)
- "How are the mighty fallen." (LTG)
- "In a blaze of glory." (LTG)
- "Every day's a new day." (SHANGRI-LA)
- "Try to hold your head high." (S-L)
- "It's hard to follow footprints in the shifting sand." (S-L)
- "Who's gonna carry the weight of the world?" (S-L)
- "It's sink or swim." (Last Worthless Evening)
- "Too many tire tracks in the sands of time."  
(I Will Not Go Quietly)
- "Stop on a dime." (IWNGQ)
- "All these heroes with feet of clay." (IWNGQ)



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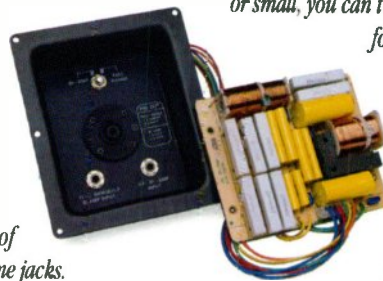
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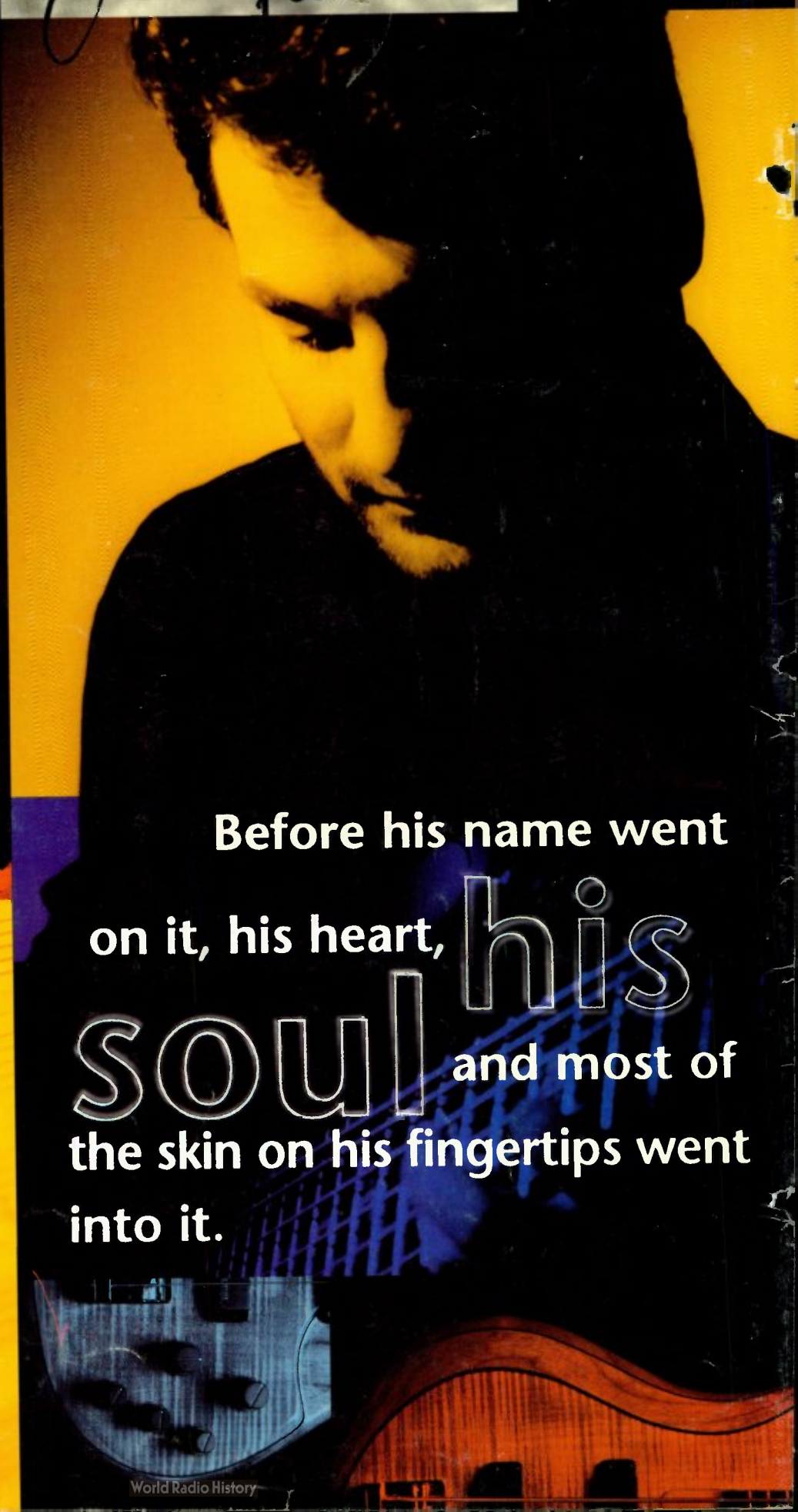
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