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MONTHLY

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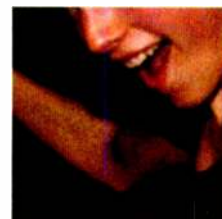
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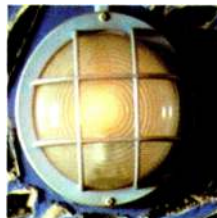
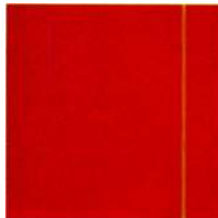
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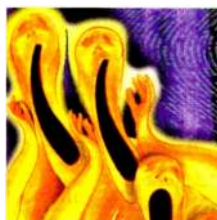
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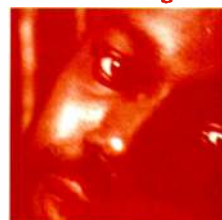
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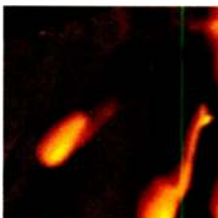
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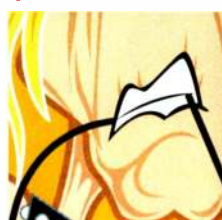
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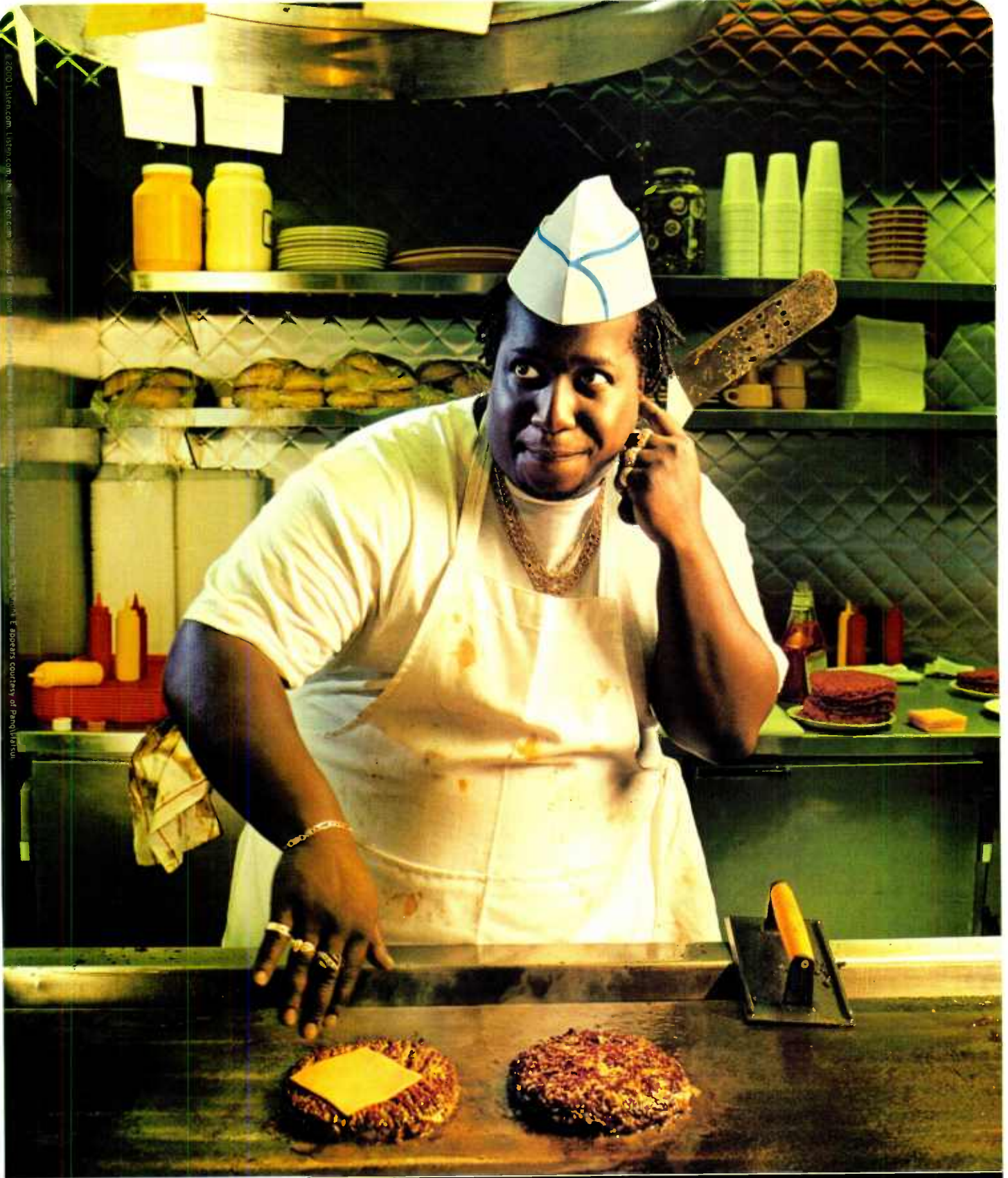
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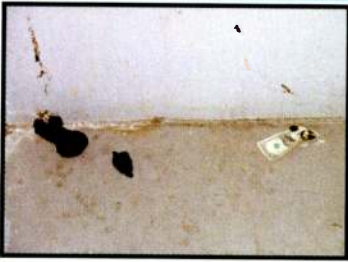
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**POOP
OF HUMAN DUMPAGE**

I've seen a lot of bad and a lot of good in my time as an editor. It's why I keep a bottle in my desk drawer. Not the Evian that the uptown boys drink, but straight from the tap to keep me honest.

Then one sunny spring day as we were packing to leave Great Neck, a woman's shriek pierced through the rattle of a Prada purse. As I followed that siren song down the stairs, I happened upon the kind of message you just can't click, drag and delete out of your memory banks: a human poop that would make a chocolate cruller shudder.

Jean Jacques Rousseau said: "To write a good love letter, you ought to begin without knowing what you mean to say, and to finish without knowing what you have written." But what would Frenchy make of the E. coli epistle left to molder on a concrete canvas that's also my primary exit out of this joint? There the pinched loaf sat, with no ransom note or warning, only a dollar bill beside it. Was this an indictment of the American capitalist system? Great Neck reveled in Social Darwinism. What other purpose could those princess-piloted SUV's serve other than to weed out the slow, the weak, the pedestrian? No, capitalism ruled here, and those feeling left out of the WTO riots in Seattle might have found better targets than our steps.

Might it have been one of our own in desperate need of paper? Us music rag folks have paper to spare, and we're not too proud to make hasty use of back issues. There's always the patrons of the men's club down the hall (you thought we worked in the glamorous section of town? Ha, this is the glamorous section of Great Neck). But men's club folks prefer elevators; small spaces allow them to bask in their own cigar smoke for just a wee bit longer. Nah, this was a message if I ever smelled one. I had to find out who

dispatched the dookie, and why.

I took the elevator down, my mind filing through a rogues' gallery of cable-laying candidates. Maybe Run didn't take kindly to the comment about being on a "body by Dre" program in the March issue. Liam Gallagher might not have liked us printing that quote from his brother Noel: "Liam fucking thinks he's John Lennon." (At least he didn't say he "thinks he's fucking John Lennon." That would just be too weird.) And Henry Rollins, well, who knows where to begin with what might have pissed him off? I mean, it's not our fault that his neck is so enormous that the photo made him look like a porpoise. No better off than when I started, I turned the broken doorknob that leads to Middle Neck Road, dodged another murderous Mercedes and crossed the street.

I headed for the bad part of town, that street corner near the Sam Goody where the high school kids smoke cigarettes. On my way, I hit Bruce's bakery. Bruce was nowhere to be found, but there was something even more incriminating left behind—cakes. Not just any cakes. Celebrity cakes. Here was frosting in the form of Bill Cosby, Cindy Crawford, Wayne Newton, Micky Mantle, Joe Piscopo. I closely scanned the photos of Bruce presenting the eerie confectionary likenesses to stunned celebs, but there were no hard clues on the wall of fame. I bought a chocolate rat and skirted past a clot of old ladies in taffeta jogging suits. I had to get away from the overwhelming babka fumes, so I leapt for the door. Heart pounding, with choruses of "Is this fresh? Fresh today..." still ringing in my ears, I landed on my feet, only to have my egress blocked by one of Great Neck's notorious baby stroller convoys. Cell phones were drawn, so I pivoted and dove into the street, narrowly missing one of the martinet meter maids as my lungs burned.

The Goody's gang loomed only a few feet away, sucking butts with ball caps canted at jaunty angles, but I had no more idea of whose butt squeezed a turtlehead onto the staircase than when I started. And I had the feeling that I could spend weeks rousting every nail salon ("Something smells like a turd in here and it ain't the

Warm-O-Lotion!") and upscale shoe shop ("Give me the poop on the poop or you'll have trouble a Brannock device couldn't measure...") in this town, never finding the secret shitter. My trusty assistant Nicole stopped me before I slaked my rage by hiking up the drooping drawers of some cul-de-sac gangsta. "You're letting this case get to you. It's like when you couldn't remember that Lydia J. Cornell was the other sister on *Too Close For Comfort*."

She was right, so I went back to the office, and the following e-mail was waiting:

I just got back from the newsstand, where I'd hoped to find the new CMJ New Music Monthly. Sure enough, there it was, a brand new CMJ cover staring at me. I bought it, but when I got it home and opened it and looked at the CD, the titles looked familiar. I dug out my previous CMJ, and saw that it was the same CD and the same month. "Couldn't be," I thought, "the covers are different!" Then I saw the fine print buried in the lower corner: "Cover 2 of 2." What could be your intention besides misleading people into thinking they didn't have the April issue and buying it again? Thanks for ripping off your readers, assholes. —Dave Voelker

My internal "Quincy" alarm rang loud and clear: the clue was in the last word. Of course, where does feces come from? Elementary, my dear Felix (oops, wrong Jack Klugman vehicle). This is not to say that Dave was the culprit, but at least we knew where to start looking. Oh, and our intention with the two covers was to do something we thought would be kinda fun that would bring more attention to the magazine and the new artists we were spotlighting. We also wanted to see if more people would buy a cover with Neko Case on it or one with Travis. We apologize if anyone bought the issue twice by mistake; we assumed that anyone who'd read the issue would've seen the two covers on the contents page or would see the "cover 1 of 2" on the cover—or at least that almost all of the cover copy was the same. Again, all apologies—just please, we have new offices and our little town blues is melting away, so send as many death threats as you like, but please, no more drive-by dumping. —ed.

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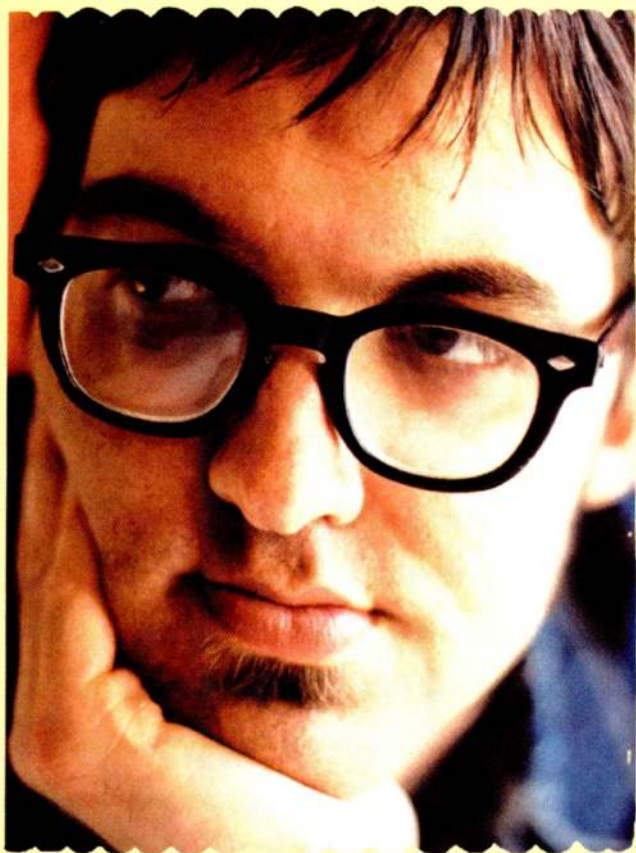
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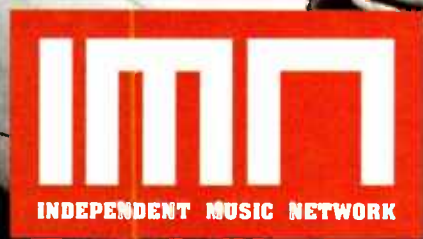
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Just think
of us
as your
Rockin' Fall
Fairy God
Mother

You got a band. Or maybe just a guitar and a dream. You've played for your mom. You've played in dive bars. Hell, you'd play a junior prom if they let you rock. You know every lyric played on top ten radio from the last fifteen years but you can't remember the state capitols. You've got the hair, the tattoo, the attitude, the talent and the desire. You know you're destined for greatness... destined to be huge. You just need a little exposure.

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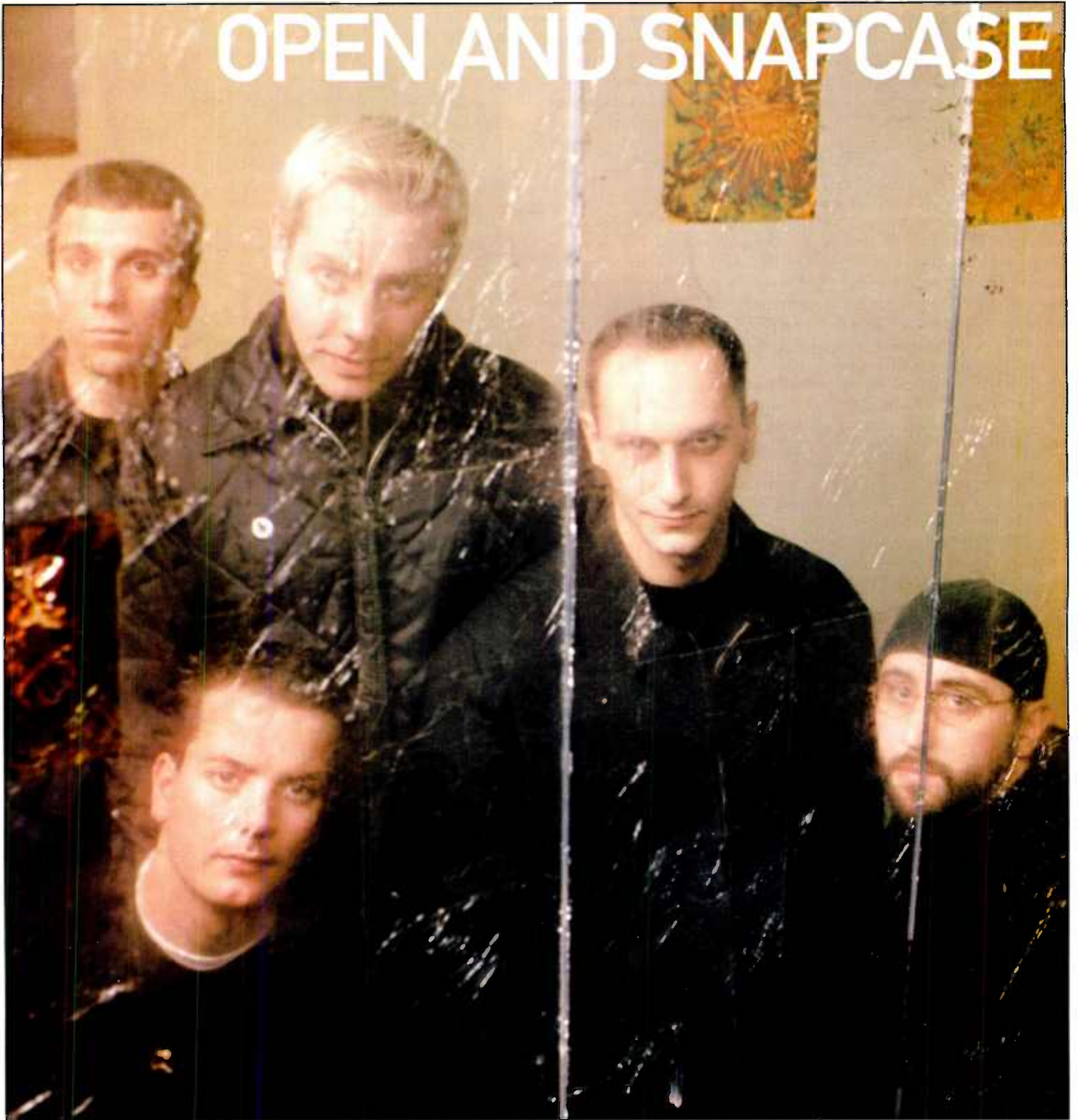
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OPEN AND SNAPCASE



Snapcase: Caring. Sincere. Hardcore.

STORY: DAVE MALACHOWSKI PHOTO: DIANE COLLINS

On stage, Snapcase wavers between shamanistic fervor and spiritual reserve. Frontman Daryl Taberski marks the ritual by pogoing throughout his band's furious performance, raising his arms in between songs as if sanctifying the hypnotic feedback washing over the crowd. The ardent, all-ages congregation includes more than just pierced and tattooed hardcore kids. Young girls who look like they'd be more at home cruising the food court at the mall sing along, nodding in recognition from the first chord on.

THOSE SCREAMIN' KIDS



THE MAN WHO RECORDED "CONSTIPATION BLUES."

FROM WWW.JAYSKIDS.COM:

"A massive search has begun, via the Internet, in hopes of locating all 57 children of recently deceased legendary Rhythm & Blues and Rock & Roll singer Screamin' Jay Hawkins, who died February 12, 2000. He was 70 years old. His family and friends wish to locate any of his children, or any other descendants which are unknown." In an attempt to bring much-needed closure to the matter of locating each of Mr. Hawkins's 57 varieties, we offer the following as potentially sired by Screamin' Jay.

MIKE TYSON

Screamin' Jay: A middleweight boxer with a heavyweight voice.

Tyson: Heavyweight boxer; lightweight voice.



THE SIMPSONS' SIDESHOW BOB

Screamin' Jay: Unruly hair, bone through nose.

Sideshow Bob: Unruly hair; bone through nose.



SOPHIE B. HAWKINS

Screamin' Jay: "I put a spell on you!"

Hawkins: "Damn! I wish I was your lover."



FISHBONE'S ANGELO MOORE

Screamin' Jay: Brandished "Henry," a skull on a stick; released album called *Black Music For White People*.

Moore: Carries a cane; releases black music for white people.



KELIS

Screamin' Jay: Wanted to be an opera singer but didn't have the voice to hack it.

Kelis: Sang opera with the Boys Choir Of Harlem but didn't have the equipment to hack it.



LIMP BIZKIT'S WES BORELAND

Screamin' Jay: His outrageous stage appearance got him kicked out of Fats Domino's band.

Boreland: Think Fred Durst is happy with a guitarist who looks like a Monchichi?



OL' DIRTY BASTARD

Screamin' Jay: Recorded "I Hear Voices."

ODB: Was ordered by a California judge to undergo a 90-day psychiatric evaluation.



CARROT TOP

Screamin' Jay: Spent 18 months in an orphanage before being adopted by the Blackfoot Indian tribe.

Carrot Top: Has never denied being raised by the confetti-laden hand of Rip Taylor.



ALICE COOPER

Screamin' Jay: Began shows rising out of a coffin; has since died.

Cooper: Began shows rising out of a coffin; has since taken up golf.



"SIGH... NEIL GLADSTONE IS SO DREAMY WITHOUT HIS GOATEE."

FRIENDLY FIRE

Kelly Hogan's heroes pushed her onto center stage.

On a wintry day in late '98, Kelly Hogan and the Mekons' Jon Langford were hunched over a couple of cold ones in a Chicago dive bar. The two began chatting about the lush background vocals she'd added to the recent Pine Valley Cosmonauts album. After a few had been tossed back, the salty Mekons guitarist convinced his drinking buddy to take the spotlight for the first time. "According to Jon, the new Pine Valley Cosmonauts theme was going to be 'The Mystery And Exoticism Of Kelly Hogan,'" she snickers. "He obviously drank a lot of beers to come up with that one."

It wasn't an easy task getting the lovable, self-deprecating Hogan to star in her own show. Although she spent years toiling as a publicist behind country's curtains, it was obvious her sweet and brassy voice was well beyond the dime-a-minute zone. Langford signed on as producer and player, and the guest list grew: Edith Frost, Neko Case, Robbie Fulks and John Wesley Harding all add to the delicate cowgirl-meets-Dusty Springfield soul of her debut, *Beneath The Country Underdog* (Bloodshot).

"I started to feel like Missy Elliott, being surrounded by all these great musicians," cracks Hogan, who co-penned the majestic "I Don't Believe In You" and the swooping "Gone" with guitarist Andy Hopkins. The album's pinnacle is Hogan's pulse-quickening take on the Magnetic Fields' "Papa Was A Rodeo." The singer begged for Stephin Merritt's permission to record the song, which details a nomadic life of diesel-fume love and sad-sack truckers.

Despite Hogan's strong command of her voice and her exuberant fans, she unfortunately sounds neither mysterious nor exotic during the first leg of the Pine Valley Cosmonauts' tour. The singer is spending a weekend at her parents' home in Atlanta, where coincidentally, pine trees are driving her sinuses wild. "I've got two shows tonight, and I'm gonna sound like either Peter Brady or a seal barking on a rock," she croaks, the lament in her voice glowing like a wayward firefly.

»»Kristy Ojala

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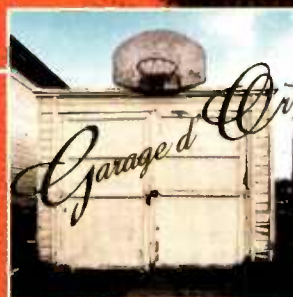


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PRIMAL SCREAM VS. UNCLE SAM

Why a Scottish band wants to kick America's ass.

Don't want an alleged former cokehead or pot smoker in the White House this year? Then when you get your ballot, write in a candidate that makes no bones about *still* being into illicit substances—Scotland's Primal Scream. On the beat-punk mercenaries' new album, *XTRMNTR* (Astralwerks), they smoke out the American dream, waging war on corporate greed, nationalist brainwashing and trigger-happy politicians with "swastika eyes." During a recent stop on the campaign trail, singer Bobby Gillespie and bassist Gary "Mani" Mounfield outlined Primal Scream's platform for a better America. Let the flag (and blunt) burning begin! **»»Stuart Berman**

PUSH, PUSH, BUT NOT FOR BUSH

Mani: George W. Bush is the fucking return of the Antichrist, man.

Bobby: I read somewhere his grandfather was part of a business consortium that helped finance heroin. I don't know if it's a conspiracy theory, but I believe it's true, because those fuckers are so set in their eugenics; they're complete white supremacists. That whole family, they're really fucking sinister. But whether it's Bush or Reagan or Clinton, it doesn't matter, they still bomb the shit out of Iraq. It's fucking genocide, man, a terrorist state. There's no real left-wing opposition—it's an illusion of democracy.

GET OUT OF THE CAFÉ AND ONTO THE STREETS

Mani: The world of coffee is taking over, man—that's the quiet revolution. They're going to be fucking ruling the world next week. I reckon violence is the only answer, really. It's a pretty horrible thing to say, but people don't listen. You've got to do something to make people listen. When there was a riot over the four cops who shot the guy [Amadou Diallo] who was reaching for his wallet—that gave me such a buzz to see Americans on the streets kicking against it, man. It really, really cheered me up.

FEWER JOCKS, MORE ROCK

Bobby: Those Trenchcoat Mafia kids in Columbine, the people that they took out first were the jocks, who used to pick on them because



PROOF POSITIVE THAT SID VICIOUS ISN'T DEAD.

they were skinny little kids. [Jock culture] has always been there and it always will be. Because of that, you form a rock 'n' roll band to try and get away from it.

THE THREE R'S: RAGE, RIOTS AND ROYAL TRUX

Mani: [I miss] Sly Stone, Elvis, James Brown... There's no danger in music or politics anymore; it needs to get more militant again. I was just out with Zack from Rage Against The Machine—I respect that guy, he's not afraid of opening his mouth and telling it like it is.

Bobby: The only other band I like is Royal Trux. Everything else is so conservative; it's just a bunch of 19-year-olds trying to sound like Bryan Adams. It's disgraceful.

JUST SAY YES!

Mani: I've had some nice weed here, we've met some nice people who sorted it all out. Weed's weed, it always gets me stoned, but I'm looking forward to coming over and smoking some of that West Coast homegrown weed—the hydro and all that!

ARE YOU EMO?

Admit it. It's the question you want to ask, but you're afraid you'll get the shit kicked out of you if you bring it up. So, like a punk-ass Sally Jessy, we at *CMJ New Music Monthly* take the risks to get you the goods. Here's what we found. **»»Nicole Keiper and Dylan Siegler**

THE ANNIVERSARY'S JOSH BERWANGER

"When I think of the word 'emo' I think of the word 'pussy.' I'm not saying as in a girl's vagina, I'm saying like, a really weak person. Any band right here thinks they can take on The Anniversary, my ninety-pound ass'll whup you.

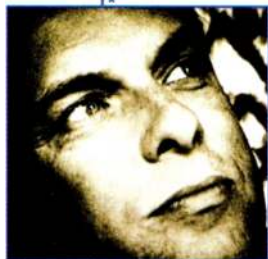


HOT WATER MUSIC'S JASON BLACK

"Who the hell would want to listen to music that isn't played with emotion? You can't seriously think The Boss hasn't brought a tear to more than one blue-collar worker's eye in his 20-odd year career. Jesus, Barry White has stirred how many married women into a love-crazed frenzy? Come on, people, screaming until your blueblockers fly off should not be the defining criteria of whether an artist plays with emotion."

PIEBALD'S TRAVIS SHETTEL

"Emo is for suckers. Does emo have anything to do with Motörhead, Led Zeppelin or AC/DC? Does emo have anything to do with sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll? I didn't think so. Piebald is all man, baby."



BRIAN ENO

From *Rolling Stone*, 1974: "I can't play any instruments in any technically viable sense at all." Neither can The Promise Ring, but we'll take that as a "no."

AMERICAN FOOTBALL'S STEVE LAMOS AND STEVE HOLMES

"The cream of the bands associated with the emo tag can look forward to five weeks of saturation on *TRL* some time in the next six months. Then, they will likely experience dropping off the face of the earth. Of course, we at American Football hope to be no exception to this trend."

EMU

According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the five-foot-tall emu produces a "loud booming note...during the breeding season." So does Jets To Brazil! Emu = emo!



AT.THE.DRIVE.IN'S JIM WARD

"I have no problem with emo, I've just never understood why people call us that. Some people are predicting an emo world tour, like an Emopalooza. But since all these bands share the same 25,000 fans, I think we're safe from that."

EMO PHILIPS

"It's exciting, a whole genre of music named after me. It's become much bigger than I ever was. I was hoping for something listenable, but beggars can't be choosers. Emo is a wonderful universal attitude, and no one should be ashamed of it, until they hear from my lawyer."



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I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER OF LOVE

Madchester goes millennial.

In barnyards, warehouses and airplane hangars across England, a Technicolor club culture emerged in 1989 as fading hippies, disillusioned punks and nightlife vampires tripped the strobe light fantastic. The surging psychedelic sensation of e-enhanced evenings engendered a new love generation outfitted in disturbingly oversized clothing accented with the paisley prints of '60s predecessors. With the help of hotwired dinosaur rock 'n' roll fueled by electronic beats and garish bursts of lysergic soundscapes, Manchester transformed into Madchester. It's been a good decade since the summer that birthed landmark records from Primal Scream, Happy Mondays, Stone Roses and Inspiral Carpets. Primal Scream isn't the only day-glo groove monster popping up of late. >>>Lorne Behrman

a.INSPIRAL CARPETS:

The band that took its name from a Manchester-area clothing store is best remembered for its cow mascot, T-shirts emblazoned with "Cool As Fuck" and the 1992 single "Two Worlds Collide." After the band broke up in 1995, vocalist Tom Hingley formed The Lovers with ex-Lotus Eater Jerry Kelly. Now, however, Tom is uncool as fuck, touring England as a solo folk artist. Organist Clint Boon remains medium-cool as fuck, with a swirling electro-pop combo humbly named the Clint Boon Experience.

b.THE FARM:

The members of the English cookie-cutter non-Manchester Madchester band best remembered for the singles "Groovy Train" and "All Together Now" have been fighting the good fight of late, battling BMG with the claim that Los Del Rio's "Macarena" is a rip-off of their own "Higher And Higher." (Well, at least it's a fight.)

c.THE SOUP DRAGONS:

The band's house-rock reading of the Stones B-side "I'm Free" catapulted them onto the American charts in 1990. Two albums and four years later the band was dropped by Mercury. In 1995, drummer Paul Quinn re-emerged with Teenage Fanclub; bassist Sushil Dade joined the BMX Bandits (coincidentally, Dragons main man Sean Dickson and Teenage Fanclubber Norman Blake's old band) and Dickson now has a bluesy, trip-pop project called High Fidelity.

d.THE CHARLATANS UK:

Though the group had many number ones in England, it remained a poor man's Stone Roses in America. Keyboardist Rob Collins achieved notoriety when he spent time in the gray-bar hotel for driving the getaway car from a liquor store robbery. On July 23, 1996, he died in a car accident near the studio where the band was recording its fifth record. The Charlatans soldiered on, and Stone comparisons dog the band to this day—most recently for last year's rootsy *Us And Us Only*—only now they're of the Rolling variety.

e.THE STONE ROSES:

After a genre-defining debut, The Stone Roses returned with the disastrous blues-rock fiasco *Second Coming* that led to the band's unraveling. Guitarist John Squire continued trying to be a Yardbirds-era Jimmy Page with his short-lived Seahorses. Vocalist Ian Brown took a two-month vacation in Manchester's big house before returning to the acid house to release the strong solo effort *Golden Greats* (Interscope). The Roses' ace of bass Gary "Mani" Mounfield enlisted with Primal Scream in 1996, rescuing the band from its own Second Coming, the 1994 Black Crowes-styled *Give Out But Don't Give Up*.

f.THE HAPPY MONDAYS:

The band whose name was a reference to New Order's "Blue Monday" had a string of Stateside hits with "Hallelujah," "Kinky Afro" and "Step On" before tumbling. Vocalist Shaun Ryder and vibe-guy Mark "Bez" Berry went on to minor success with Black Grape, namely the single "Reverend Black Grape." Ryder allegedly then went from being an e-head to being a crackhead to being a smack addict, and is now reportedly a methadone addict. Ever-adventurous and enterprising, Ryder recently reformed the Mondays, who toured and released a cover of Thin Lizzy's "The Boys Are Back In Town" to pay his taxes (and cash any credibility checks he had left).

IN MY ROOM

L TJ BUKEM



L TJ BUKEM has been at the center of the UK drum 'n' bass scene since its beginnings in the early '90s. Just in case you're wondering, "L TJ" is a Latin-influenced tip of the hat (EI DJ), and "Bukem" is from TV's *Hawaii Five-O* ("Book 'em, Danno," as the DJ's real name is Danny Williamson). Kinetic, the American label releasing Bukem's new double album, *Journey Inwards*, plans to promote his smooth breakbeats in both jazz and electronic spheres. Here, Bukem describes the "record room" in his house in the London countryside. He doesn't describe many personal effects, because, as he says, "music is my entire life."

ANALOG KEYBOARDS

You can't get that warm sound from anything else. My most recent acquisition I just sold to Conrad [an MC on Bukem's label]. It's an '88 Fender Rhodes. The Rhodes was featured so heavily in '70s soul and jazz.

BIG BUD'S "BLUEBERRY MUFFIN"

Big Bud, like what you smoke. The single is kind of a cosmic, funky house track. That's going to be out on Earth [one of Bukem's imprint labels].

MIA

My dog's a Dogue Bordeaux Mastiff like the one from *Turner And Hooch*. She's a year old actually, and getting very big.

PHOTOS

I have a picture of Marvin Gaye. You can't buy it or get it anywhere. I got it from the guy that used to look after him on tour. Also Lonnie Liston Smith and Leroy Hudson. There's a lot of their music in my house, too. I love Smith's *Expansions*. It has tracks like "Voodoo Woman."

MC CONRAD'S "LOGICAL"

It's a track he's working on for *Logical Progressions 4* [label compilation out later this year]. He's making it with a live band—drums, keyboard. Very techno-influenced, but definitely a drum 'n' bass tune.

LABEL PROFILE:



"We're a community-based label with an emphasis on activism as well as music," says Indigo Girl Amy Ray of Daemon Records, the label she started 10 years ago this summer. "I'd like for our bands to share my politics, but they don't always." The label roster favors female songwriters with an Indigo vibe (Danielle Howle, Rose Polenzani), but Daemon also launched the reverb-mad Rock*A*Teens and harbors the beat-savvy pH Balance, reflecting Ray's quest for diversity. Daemon's most saleable material often graces benefit albums; the label's benefit comps raised \$46,000 in 1999 for causes like gun control and the environment. Ray's proudest moment—and Daemon's biggest seller—is a benefit CD recasting *Jesus Christ Superstar* with 200 Atlanta scenesters. "It worked artistically, brought the community together and raised all this money," beams Ray. "Our next benefit will be for Daemon," she jokes, referring to her solo project due later this year. "So we can continue to fund these kinds of projects."

»»Glen Sarvady



PH BALANCE



I'D LOVE A PIECE OF YOUR MEATLOAF, MRS. CLEAVER.

5 things you should know about TOM LEHRER

If you grew up watching *Electric Company* or listening to Dr. Demento, you've heard Tom Lehrer's voice and satirical songs. Although he hasn't cut an album since 1965, his work continues to attract new fans. *The Remains Of Tom Lehrer* (Rhino), a just-released three-disc box, collects his entire oeuvre: the sick-but-literate wit of his first two albums ("It's not against any religion/ To want to dispose of a pigeon") and later topical material ("Smut," "Pollution"), plus new recordings of such rarities as "I'm Spending Hannukah (In Santa Monica)." »»Franklin Bruno

1. He never set out to be a political satirist

"I never would have thought of it myself, but a friend said that this TV show [the short-lived *That Was The Week That Was*] was accepting submissions, so I started sending in songs, and they used them."

2. His first album was as indie as they come

In 1953, Lehrer spent a whopping \$15 to record the songs he had been performing at Harvard social events, and a few hundred more to press up 300 to sell to fellow students. "It never dawned on me that it would sell, I just did it. Despite nonexistent radio play for the likes of "The Old Dope Peddler" in the mid-'50s, *Songs By Tom Lehrer* eventually sold 370,000 copies.

3. Math's where it's at

Lehrer, who studied mathematics at Harvard, currently teaches at the University Of Santa Cruz. "I never had any desire to leave mathematics entirely. I don't think the people who are brainwashed into it early ever want to get out of it. The people who do leave are mostly looking for more money."

4. He hasn't performed publicly since 1967 (almost)

"When Cameron Mackintosh [the English theatrical producer behind *Tomfoolery*, a revue featuring Lehrer's songs] had a show celebrating his 30th year in show business, I had to do one song, because he's been so good to me. I did 'Poisoning Pigeons In The Park'—if you bring Al Jolson out for one song, it's 'Mammy,' and if you bring me out for one song..."

5. All hail the Jell-O shot inventor

During a stint as an Army cryptographer, Lehrer and a friend invented the frat-house favorite to get around "no alcoholic beverages" regulation at their base. ("Of course, I take credit for a lot of things.") Do his students know of his varied cultural contributions? "A few have heard my songs when they take the class, and the rest seem to find out. I don't think they know about the Jell-O shots, but when the liner notes for the box come out, that'll all be uncovered."



DOUGLAS WAIN
ROCK AND ROLL EVOLUTION

WEIRD RECORD

The music on Douglas Wain's *Rock And Roll Evolution* (WainWave Music) is just plain bad; what's weird is that it's *four discs* long. Wain evidently started recording himself as a teenager in New Jersey in the '80s, and kept the tape rolling through all his various bad hairstyles and even more embarrassing over-the-top guitar riffs. The set might have been more accurately titled *A Sloppy Aspiring Musician Progresses To A Level Just Short Of Mediocrity*, or maybe *A Concentrated Study In*

Over-Ambitious Hobbies. With lyrics like "Well I want you/ Yeah, girl I want you so badly/ And I'll show you/ To the world so gladly," *Evolution* will likely have even sympathetic listeners exercising their own natural selection. The best part? Its \$19.99 (plus \$4.95 shipping and handling) price tag puts it in the same marketing class as Thighmasters, Flowbees and other money-wasting devices you might see advertised (by Ron Popeil) on late-night television. Why wait another minute? Go to www.wainwave.com and mock it today. »»Bill Werde



sean schoff

IF YOU'RE FEELING SINGULAR

ACT BORED, YOU'RE ON CANOID CAMERA.

Looper's Stuart David bolts Belle & Sebastian to live his futuristic fantasy.


Who says a mother-in-law is a pain in the ass? Stuart David's wife's mum was working on a crossword one day when she discovered that a "looper" is "the larva of the geometrid moth." David had long known about the term's connotation in Irish slang as "lunatic," and of course being a bit of a tech-head, he realized that people who like to make sample loops are also consecrated with the idiom. But this crossword find opened up a new realm of creative possibilities.

One might say that David's group Looper started as the larva of mother moth Belle & Sebastian, the band David left as bassist in February to take his side project full-time. "Playing in Belle & Sebastian came about almost by accident," he recalls. "I always thought of it as a social thing, just getting together with friends. I was quite worried that it [might] be unfriendly when I left, but it turned out really well. Their direction hasn't changed so much, and I wasn't really contributing too much musically anymore. There just wasn't room to do both."

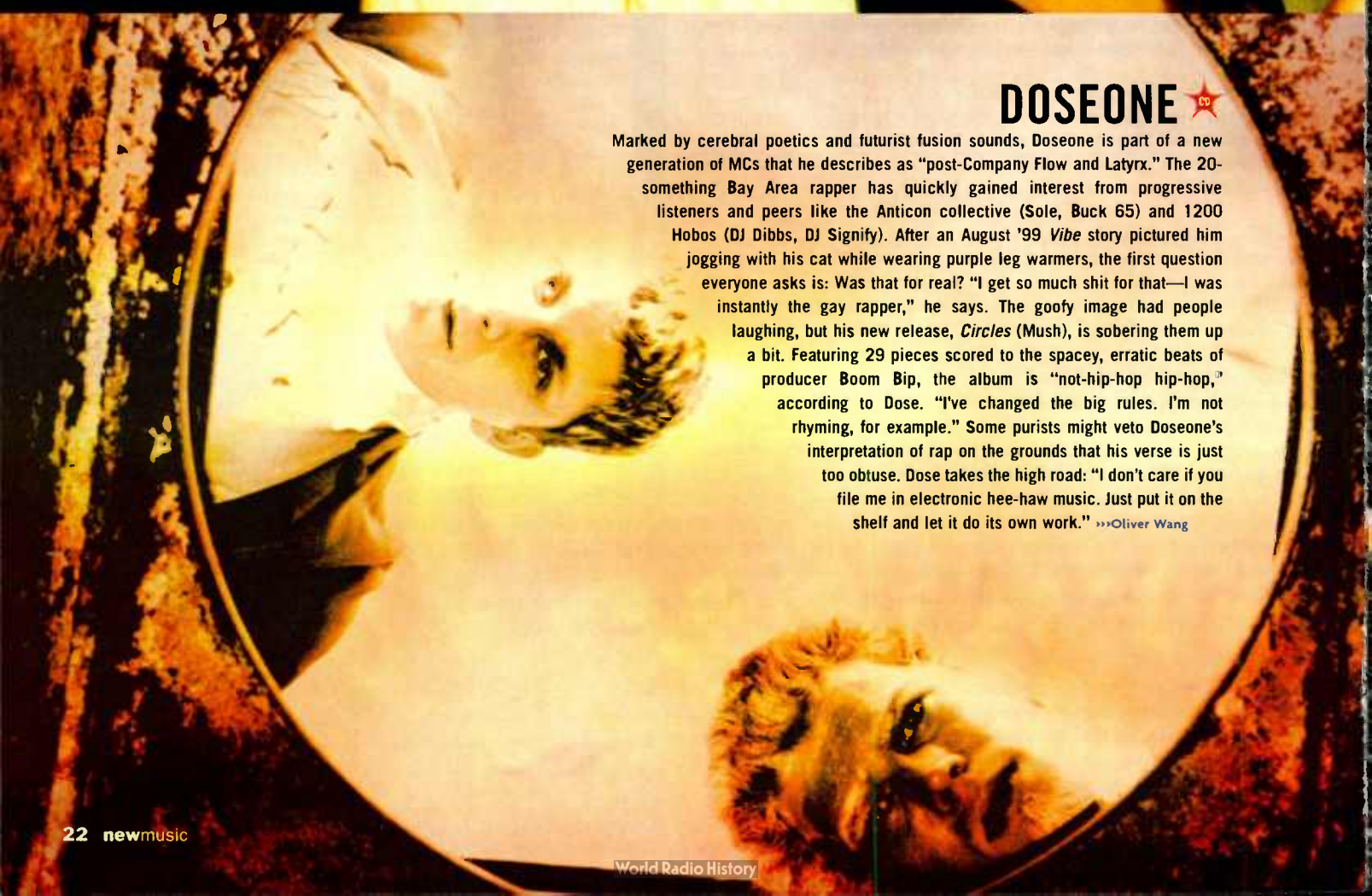
In the droll fantasy world of David's sigh-fi dreams, the "geometrid"

sounded like the name of an old space station. Which brings us to *The Geometrid* (Sub Pop), Looper's spacelab-themed second album and accompanying web portal (www.geometrid.co.uk). Conceptually, *The Geometrid* is a meditation on the broken promises of the '60s future age, when space stations were big and bubbly and computer technology was still a wide-eyed pupa. Inspired by the bygone era's naive idealism, Looper stages a techno-pop circus with music like cotton candy spun from twisted circuits. "Modem Song" is built around looped modem-connection sounds and David's spoken-word storytelling; "My Robot" is an allegory about a failed attempt to build a song-writing cyborg.

"This record came about from the idea of the year 2000 and all the stuff people thought would exist by now," David says. "Technology has a reputation for being cold and emotionless now, but we're interested in its more organic side, the way fractals grow in computers like things in nature grow in binary twos. To us, it's a symbol of possibility and making the imagination material." >>>Andy Battaglia

 STEP KINGS

The members of The Step Kings know it takes more than buzz to make a great gig. "We played with Kid Rock barely over a year ago," remembers Bob McLynn, bassist and vocalist for the New Jersey post-hardcore quartet. "We were like 'Yeah, it's gonna be a good show, radio's behind Kid Rock, we're gonna play for a couple hundred people.' Kid Rock gets up with his big [stage] show, and there's about 20 people he's playing to," he laughs. Kid Rock is playing to a few more people these days, and so are McLynn and The Step Kings, whose four years of self-funded records and self-booked tours convinced Roadrunner Records to re-release *Let's Get It On*—the heavy but hummable debut that landed the Kings opening slots for the likes of Incubus and Everlast. The label support will mean more exposure, but the band still respects the DIY ethic it came up with. "A lot of bands, they didn't go through all that, they didn't live in their van and eat shit out of garbage cans for a couple years," McLynn says. "I think you have to do that to really appreciate moving up to the next level." >>>Nicole Keiper

 DOSEONE

Marked by cerebral poetics and futurist fusion sounds, Doseone is part of a new generation of MCs that he describes as "post-Company Flow and Latyrx." The 20-something Bay Area rapper has quickly gained interest from progressive listeners and peers like the Anticon collective (Sole, Buck 65) and 1200 Hobos (DJ Dibbs, DJ Signify). After an August '99 *Vibe* story pictured him jogging with his cat while wearing purple leg warmers, the first question everyone asks is: Was that for real? "I get so much shit for that—I was instantly the gay rapper," he says. The goofy image had people laughing, but his new release, *Circles* (Mush), is sobering them up a bit. Featuring 29 pieces scored to the spacey, erratic beats of producer Boom Bip, the album is "not-hip-hop hip-hop," according to Dose. "I've changed the big rules. I'm not rhyming, for example." Some purists might veto Doseone's interpretation of rap on the grounds that his verse is just too obtuse. Dose takes the high road: "I don't care if you file me in electronic hee-haw music. Just put it on the shelf and let it do its own work." >>>Oliver Wang

BARGAIN MUSIC

Any Long Beach, California band that's into reggae and hip-hop-infused rock and likes to smoke a little dope now and again—like Bargain Music—runs the risk of Sublime comparisons. “We knew there would be name-calling because there are many obvious connections,” shrugs Bargain’s frontman, Josh Fischel, who directed several of Sublime’s videos and a documentary about the band. “But that’s exactly what labels are—obvious. I won’t deny that we’re inspired by them. Hell, we grew up listening to them and come from the same geography. But so does Snoop Dogg, Los Lobos, X and The Beach Boys. We take eclecticism to the next level.” The band’s stylistic mish-mash is its mission statement: “There are 12 notes and they can be used to make all these different sounds and styles,” says Fischel. “And you only have to buy one record to experience a little piece of them all. That’s a bargain.”

»»Carrie Bell



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CALEXICO

Hot Rail
Quarterstick

One might easily argue that environmental factors influence the work of Tucson, Arizona's Calexico. The act's third album, *Hot Rail*, adheres to the artsy yet austere garage twang, trad mariachi and drifting experimental lounge jazz found on its previous albums: 1998's *The Black Light* and the 1997 debut, *Spoke*. And all these elements combined indeed suggest the wide-open vistas of the Arizona desert or a similar mysterious, untamed place, as much so as Giant Sand, the Calexico boys' other regular outfit. As Giant Sandmen, John Convertino and Joey Burns make an excellent rhythm section. Here, along with composing and improvising, they fulfill instrumental roles ranging from vocals and accordion to marimba and cello. The tricked-out turntablism of "16 Track Scratch" lends *Hot Rail* a contemporary touch, which contrasts nicely with the more pensive drama of a song like "Fade," with its prominent cornet exerting increasing dominance over a slowly strangled vocal, as well as with the deathly strains of accordion and cello that form the nebulous instrumental "Untitled II." Taken as a whole, though, *Hot Rail* is an example of freeform experimenting that highlights Calexico's symbiotic impressionism and defies geography, genetics or even a simple quirk of fate. >>>Linda Laban

OUT:

May 9.

FILE UNDER:

Avant-country lounge noir.

R.I.Y.L.:

Giant Sand, Richard Buckner, Friends Of Dean Martinez.



MARC RIBOT Y LOS CUBANOS POSTIZOS

¡Muy Divertido! (Very Entertaining!)
Atlantic

Downtown guitarist Ribot (Lounge Lizards, Rootless Cosmopolitans) assembled his "prosthetic Cubans" more or less on a lark and then found himself with a small hit from the group's Atlantic debut in 1998. His source then was the late Cuban songwriter and master of the *tres* (an acoustic guitar with three sets of double strings) Arsenio Rodríguez. Working in front of congas and trap drums, Ribot riffed over clave rhythms in lazy reverb- or fuzz-drenched tones, laying into a percussive attack when the spirit, or the arrangement, called. On the follow-up, Ribot again draws on Rodríguez and adds his own good-natured originals—"Las Lomas De New Jersey," for one, delivered in the guitarist's typically flat-affect recitation with percussionist Frankie Vasquez "translating" into Spanish in the background. In fact, the first album was mostly an awkward translation—that was part of its charm. Caught between authentic Cuban son and Knitting Factory-style noodling, it cast a hypnotic glow. On the new album, Ribot delivers more overt rock guitar, so some of the mystery is gone. But he still lets loose with some uncategorizable six-string spasms. A tuba goeses the cross-rhythms on one cut, and keyboards (most by Anthony Coleman) strengthen the jazz-guitar-organ link. >>>Jon Garelick

OUT:

April 25.

FILE UNDER:

Faux Cuba.

R.I.Y.L.:

Compay Segundo, Arsenio Rodriguez, Rip Hanrahan.



DILATED PEOPLES

The Platform
Capitol

The chances of California's fertile hip-hop underground bubbling to the surface haven't looked this good since the glory days of 1993, when acts like Freestyle Fellowship and Souls Of Mischief fought the good fight to define West Coast rap as progressive and then handily lost the commercial battle to Dre/Snoop post-gangsterism. Along with the forthcoming major-label bow by fellow Angelenos Jurassic-5, Dilated Peoples' long-awaited big-time debut, *The Platform*, constitutes a second phase of true-school shock troops storming a still-hostile terrain to fill the current void in Pacific Coast hip-hop. Of course, Dilated's two MCs, Rakaa and Evidence, are not urban syntax-sculptors on the scale of the Fellowship's Aceyalone—for proof, compare their verses with his virtuosic cameo on *The Platform*'s hopeful "The Shape Of Things To Come." But by opting for the neo-classic rap style of The Roots and Black Eyed Peas on this set (which includes the group's previous indie singles), the act finds a more accessible middle ground between dense complexities and old-school populism. Even so, Dilated's wordplay towers over most contemporary commercial rap. And with ample hooks, familiar guests (B-Real, Everlast) and Beat Junkies turntablist Babu adding prominent scratching and soundbite commentary, *The Platform* succeeds as one of the richest, most dynamic—most hip-hop—mainstream rap records in recent memory. >>>Roni Sarig

OUT:

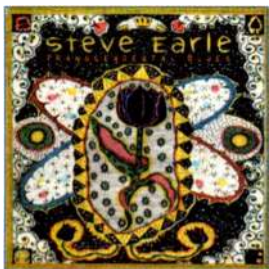
May 29.

FILE UNDER:

Progressive hip-hop on the rise.

R.I.Y.L.:

Black Eyed Peas, Jurassic-5, Dofari, Aceyalone.



STEVE EARLE

Transcendental Blues

E-Squared-Artemis

Steve Earle is the orneriest man in country music, and that's saying a lot for a field that includes such stubborn cusses as Merle Haggard and prima donna Garth Brooks. Nothing stops him, not addictions, drug busts, about a half-dozen divorces, self-imposed exile, Nashville's disapproval or marketers' confusion over where to place him. To his mix of rockabilly, traditional twang and bluegrass (a genre he first explored on *The Mountain*, last year's collaboration with The Del McCoury Band), Earle adds Beatles-esque pop and Irish folk on his latest release, *Transcendental Blues*. The title track displays the singer's newfound serenity, both in the lyrics and the arrangement, which sounds like something George Harrison might have recorded if he'd grown up in Austin. Earle effectively puts his own spin on *Revolver* with "Everyone's In Love With You" and "I Can Wait." He proves that Ireland and Appalachia aren't that far apart on the mournful "The Boy Who Never Cried," the bitter "The Galway Girl" and the stomping "Steve's Last Ramble." About the only styles Earle hasn't yet mastered and thrown into the stewpot are gangsta rap and techno—guess he's saving those for the next CD—but in his hands, it's all country. And it's all good. >>>Gary Susman

OUT:

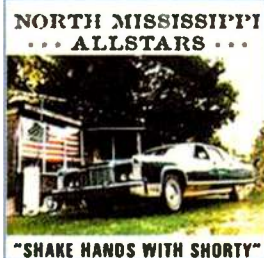
May 2

FILE UNDER:

Diversified country portfolios.

R.I.Y.L.:

Jimmie Dale Gilmore, The Jayhawks, Wilco.



NORTH MISSISSIPPI ALL STARS

Shake Hands With Shorty

Tone-Cool

Brothers Cody and Luther Dickinson are the heart of the churning little juggernaut that is the North Mississippi All Stars, propelling their hard, hill-country blues and Southern-fried jams with urgent guitar work, a thicket of call-and-response vocals and mighty tight group dynamics. Samplers and other hip-hop toys had not been dreamed up when Furry Lewis, Fred McDowell and other old-timey bluesmen first recorded "Shake 'Em On Down." But when Luther (stringed instruments), Cody (drums) and Chris Chew (bass) let it loose as their opening cut, the street rhythms sound both fresh and natural behind the timeless blues licks, distorted vocals and sludgy chords. The Dickinsons trace their inspiration to their father Jim, who turned them on to a variety of gritty sounds and towed them along when he was producing folks like Mojo Nixon and The Replacements. Though All Stars inspiration McDowell famously said "I do not play no rock and roll," the band sure enough does on riveting cuts like the 10-minute set-ender, Junior Kimbrough's "All Night Long." And on "Po' Black Maddie," the boys trade raw-throated shouts while Luther's bottleneck work slithers and slides into a masterful crescendo that would make Dickie Betts and Duane Allman proud. >>>Bill Kisiuk

OUT:

May 9

FILE UNDER:

Mississippi blues-rock.

R.I.Y.L.:

Gov't Mule, R.L. Burnside, Jon Spencer Blues Explosion.



MIKE LADD

Welcome To The Afterfuture

Ozone

"We live in the afterfuture/ And that takes mad stamina," says Mike Ladd on "Bladerunners"—and no, he ain't joking, and he's not paranoid, either. Recorded around the time of the Amadou Diallo shooting, the song finds Ladd adopting a futurist aesthetic quite unlike his earlier releases. "Takes More Than 41" (a reference to the number of shots fired at Diallo by four NYPD officers) sounds like the eulogy of a fallen astral trailblazer, echoing morosely with the sound of a laser speeding into outer space. "Red Eye To Jupiter (Starship Nigga)" imagines the hardcore of tomorrow, with Ladd polemicizing violently over jazz idioms, all off-kilter horns and quick-and-dirty drum patterns. Yet Ladd's futurism is merely a mask for his very tangible discontent with the present. "Woe is me and my gullibility/ Somewhere in me still exists the American fantasy," he laments on "The Animist," where he dims the lights for a heart-to-heart, coming off as the phattest lounge performer you'll never see. References to the police state permeate the album, arguing that the new world order and newspeak are more than just things weeded street-corner bards philosophize on; they're integral to maintaining the power status quo. And on "Airwave Hysteria," he pleads, "Don't shoot me/ I'm just a piano programmer for mass media emissions." >>>Jon Caramanica

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STORY: ADRIENNE DAY PHOTO: B. ASH

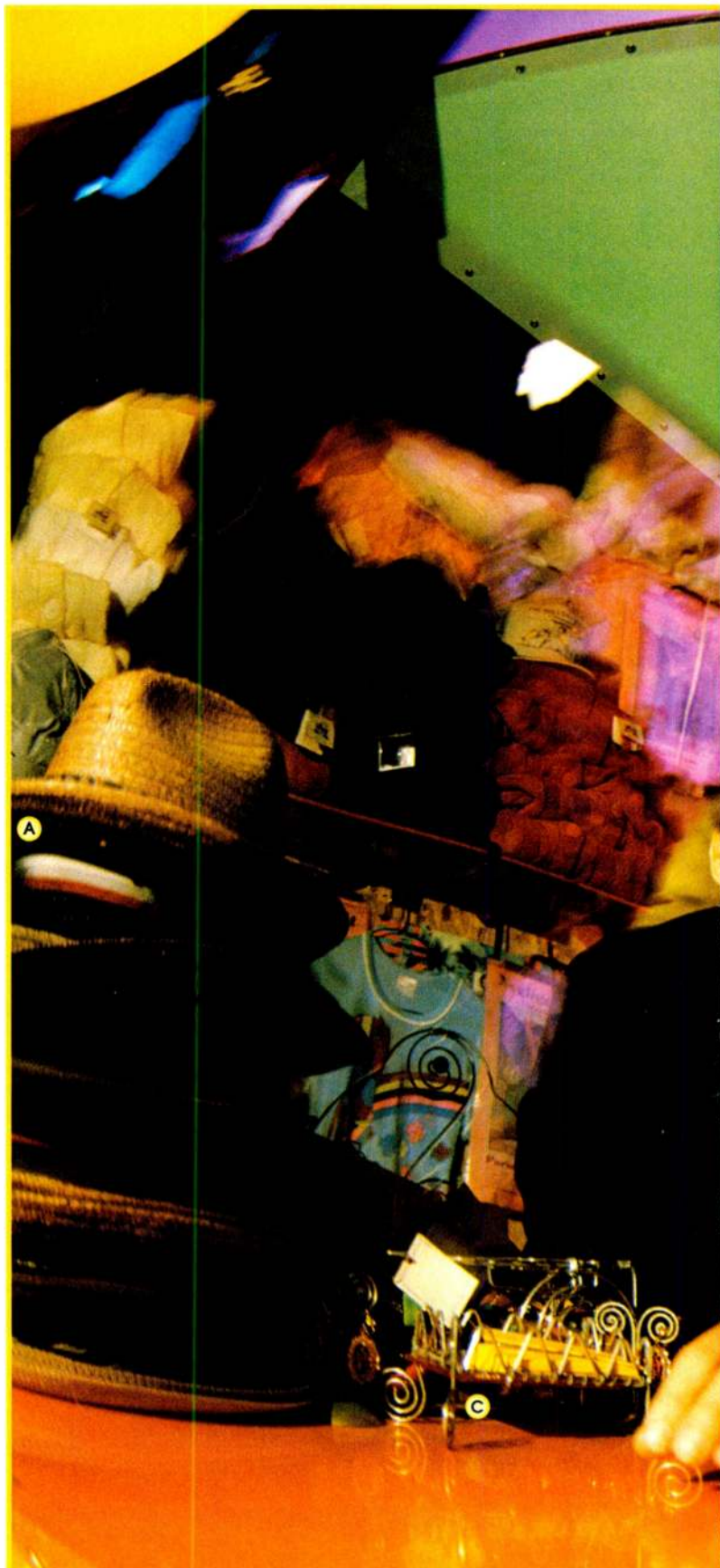
The Center For The Dull might seem like your typical one-stop mom-and-pop quirky vintage clothing shop. Yet this overstuffed New York kitsch emporium houses more than just retro finds: Down in the basement, squeezed in behind rows of faux fur coats and dust motes, is a small recording studio that, oddly, fits right in with the operation's general pandemonium. In his spare time, Chris Brick, who owns and operates the Center, composes lyrics for his band, Family Of God.

Although his music (and the store, for that matter) might appear a kitsch lover's paradise, Adam Peters, singer and keyboardist for the band, refuses to let his work cater to the market. "Pop culture is totally irrelevant," Peters says, even though he's made a living from it, "and anyone who thinks [it isn't] is severely deluded." Brick then relates this notion to the music Family Of God is working on now: "Most likely, the people that will get into it are going to be the folks that have just started experimenting with acid. It'll make them very bummed out, very paranoid," he laughs. "That's what I hope for, anyway."

Both British ex-pats, Brick and Peters met in London in the late '80s, where Brick was selling clothes and throwing the occasional rave, and Peters was playing keyboards in the dreamy new wave outfit Echo And The Bunnymen. "They gave me orchestras to conduct," says Peters of his Bunnyman experience. "Basically, I just stood there and waved my arms about."

FOG's new album, *Exiter* (Sugar Free), plays on every corny rock-star stereotype. From Robyn Hitchcock to Flock Of Seagulls, *Exiter* borrows catchy synth hooks and goofy lyrical refrains, even tossing in some psychedelic qawwali-style ululations for good measure. On "Baby You're Your Own T.V.," a disembodied voice chants the title on top of a ping-ponging synth, a combination that almost manages to filter out the band's new-wave tendencies. The band specializes in confusing fans with erratic live sets—which often involve six-piece bands, impromptu Krishnamurti textbook readings and Christo-style performance-art antics (such as covering a 3,000-square-foot space in blue Mickey Mouse fabric).

Brick and Peters formed Family Of God five years ago, around the same time Center For The Dull opened. The store and the music operate on the same principle, resuscitating swatches from different eras by placing them in new contexts. Brick explains Family Of God's gestation process: "You're trying to make something that's maybe a year or so ahead of its time, 'cause it takes that long to come out. It's a bit like designing clothes a year in advance—you have to conceptualize something that's going to be relevant further on down the line." **NMM**



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FLOWERS IN THE DIRT

Romancing those *Dusty Trails* with Breeders and Luscious Jackson alumnae.

STORY: DYLAN SIEGLER

Josephine Wiggs, former bassist for The Breeders, is brainstorming slogans for *Dusty Trails*, her new project with ex-Luscious Jackson member Vivian Trimble. "Dusty Trails: Better than a cup of tea and a lie-down," she announces, gazing into the distance and pantomiming a brightly lit marquee.

Trimble responds to the joke with a glance you might bestow on not-quite-spoiled milk. The wispy blond, soft-spoken member of the act seems nonplussed by Wiggs's frumpy depiction of *Dusty Trails*, which the two are billing not as a hot beverage and an afternoon nap but as the soundtrack to the dramas we might all star in given the chance. Trimble's own party line involves Cary Grant, shimmering ball gowns, gobs of mascara and the orchestral synth lines and breezy bossa nova accents intended to evoke the same.

After the two years of full-time studio noodling that yielded the duo's Atlantic self-titled debut, Trimble wants to move on. "By the end, we had no life anymore. We were really sick of it," she admits. Wiggs objects: "I like that feeling," she says, looking pointedly at Trimble. "I didn't get sick of it at all." Trimble shrugs; the

album was recorded at her home studio. "There's a moment where you cross the line with the work/live/never-leave thing. Forget friends, forget exercise," she taps her bicycle helmet on the seat next to her—"I wasn't even doing any shopping; we were eating peanut butter for the last month there..." She rolls her eyes, then looks at Wiggs hesitantly, like she may have crossed some kind of line.

The duo may row like college roomies now, but the album reveals a refreshingly clear, unified musical vision. Despite guest appearances by most of Luscious Jackson, the album is eons beyond Wiggs' and Trimble's respective previous work: Trimble's voice has lost the white-girl-out-of-her-element quality that pervaded the funkified output of LJ, and both women log successful riffs on unfamiliar instruments like accordion and bongos. The lilting, melodic set toys with typical movie score tropes—the minor-key surges of Hitchcock, the groovy percussion of a Carmen Miranda routine, the trombone riffs and accordion grinds of Fellini. But the album manages to be a nicely chilled pop spin, not a schmaltzy cop-out.

The clarity of mission—and the time spent thinking up problematic slogans—might have something to do with the project's would-be profitability. While shopping the demo to labels, the duo also used it to pitch themselves as film score composers, placing six non-album tracks in *Next Stop, Wonderland* director Brad Anderson's newest, *Happy Accidents*. And there's more where that came from. The "filmic theme" that pervades *Dusty Trails*' website, press materials and conversational tack make Wiggs and Trimble a walking ad for their own film-ready goods, a markedly healthier cash cow than off-center pop music, even with the stray guest vocals by Emmylou Harris ("Order Coffee").

"Dusty Trails could have been the name of an old B-movie actor—he's got this great name but he goes his entire life playing bit parts," imagines Wiggs. "So," continues Trimble, "this is our chance to play the most glamour-puss, Grace Kelly versions of ourselves."

NMM

“This is our chance to play the most glamour-puss, Grace Kelly versions of ourselves.”

FIGHTING WORDS

Dilated Peoples will knock you out, one rhyme at a time.

STORY: JONATHAN PALMER PHOTO: ALIA MALLEY

“We share this stage to speak our social, philosophical platform,” offers Iriscience, sounding more like an inspirational speaker than a SoCal rapper. “The main thing I want to get across is not to have people believe what I believe or think what I think, but start to be a catalyst for people to go and further investigate their own beliefs.”

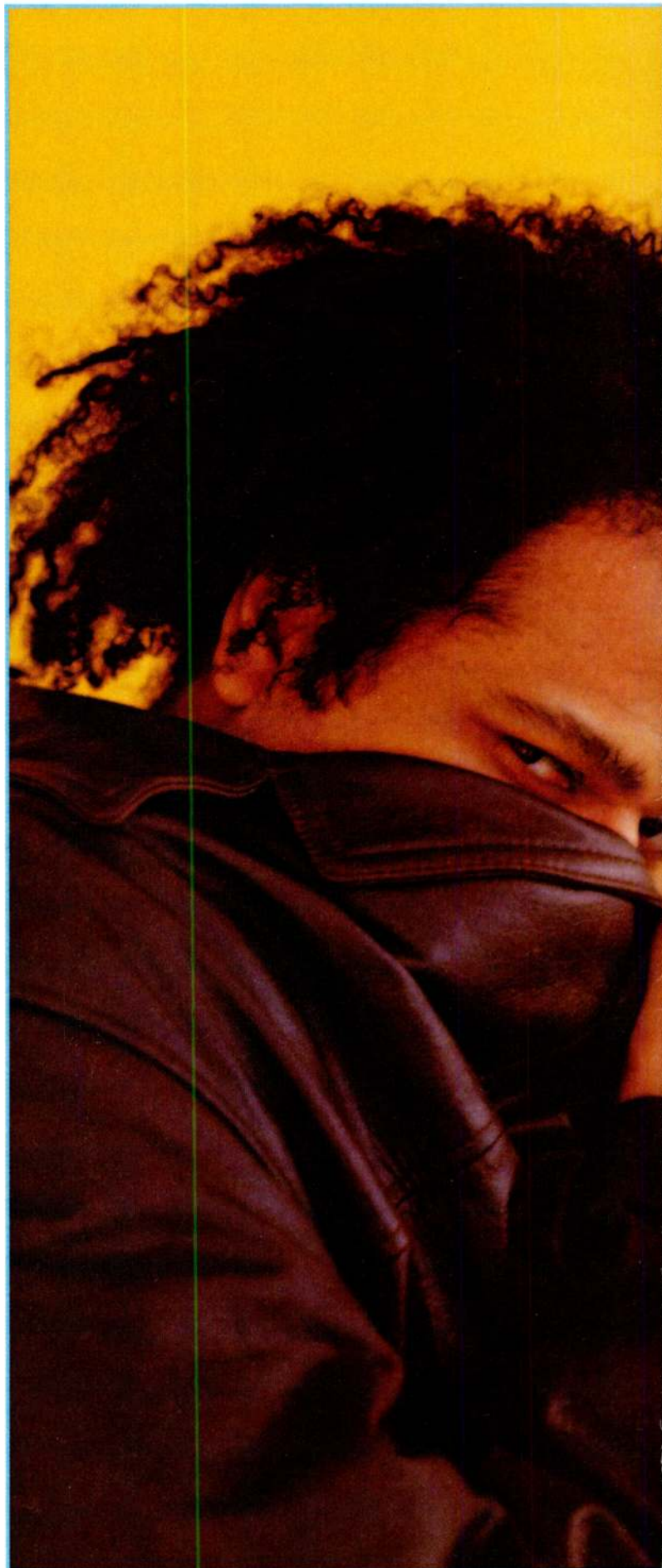
This isn't another Anthony Roberts or Deepak Chopra but a member of Dilated Peoples, one of Los Angeles's most animated and promising posses. His approach to exploring and disseminating inner truths has nothing to do with aligning your chakras. “The way I like to do it is the way boxers do it. They say blows to the body help soften up the head. You hit them in the body enough times, the hands gotta drop, and you're right there to hit 'em with a headshot.” Perhaps it's not that surprising, then, that fellow Dilated Peoples beatboxer Evidence has a sprained right wrist bound in an uncomfortable-looking brace. That, however, isn't the result of dropping science, but playing hoops. “I was doing a reverse, came down on my arm,” he explains.

Still, the group's major-label debut, *The Platform* (Capitol), provides enough headshots, jabbing beats, dizzying samples and wicked scratching to fake out the most worthy contender. Lyrics run the gamut from traditional hip-hop braggadocio (“Stand my ground, dig in with both feet, no surrender, no turning no cheek, no retreat”) to boldly political posturing (“Nah, I haven't forgotten all those drugs that Bush brought in/ It's funny how it's maybe his stash his son got in”), often in the same breath.

Both on record and in person, Evidence is conspiratorial, making snide remarks from underneath a tight ball cap. He correspondingly raps in a sinewy, acidic voice, snaking through a rhyme. Iriscience, however, is eager to pontificate on any given subject, whether speaking or rapping with basso bluster and warmth. Their interplay brings to mind the classic MC duos that inspired these two to rock the mic. Both herald a kind of new-school traditionalism, name-checking influences like Run DMC and EPMD. “Two emcees and a DJ,” Iriscience avers. “And we get down live like that every night.”

The two first teamed up nearly a decade ago, admiring each other's work at local freestyle sessions. DJ Babu brought his brilliant cutting skills to the tables in 1997, and the group began to gain a regional audience. A string of indie singles—“The Third Degree,” “Work The Angles” and “Triple Optics”—established Dilated Peoples as a top underground hip-hop act, selling more than 100,000 copies combined. Touring with fellow Cali acts Jurassic-5 and Rage Against The Machine lent to the group's growing rep, swagger and storied chops.

Iriscience's explanation of his chemistry with Evidence may sound a bit diluted, but it's clear that all involved understand Iriscience's formula: “He takes it one way, I take it another way, and we form the connection points later, lock it together, polish it all as one complete joint.” **NMM**





BEAT SURRENDER

Drum 'n' jazz producer Amon Tobin jettisoned his signature sound when everyone started playing it.

STORY: KURT B. REIGHLEY PHOTOS: PAT GRAHAM

They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. But imitators prompted Amon Tobin to shift gears abruptly when he started recording his fourth full-length, *Supermodified* (Ninja Tune).

About eight months ago, he did a show in France with a couple of acts who cited Tobin's work as influence. The 28-year-old producer from Brighton, England, was flattered by the praise. Then he witnessed a set by two guys with upright bass and jungle drums in the background, playing a frighteningly homogenized, stereotyped version of Tobin's music.

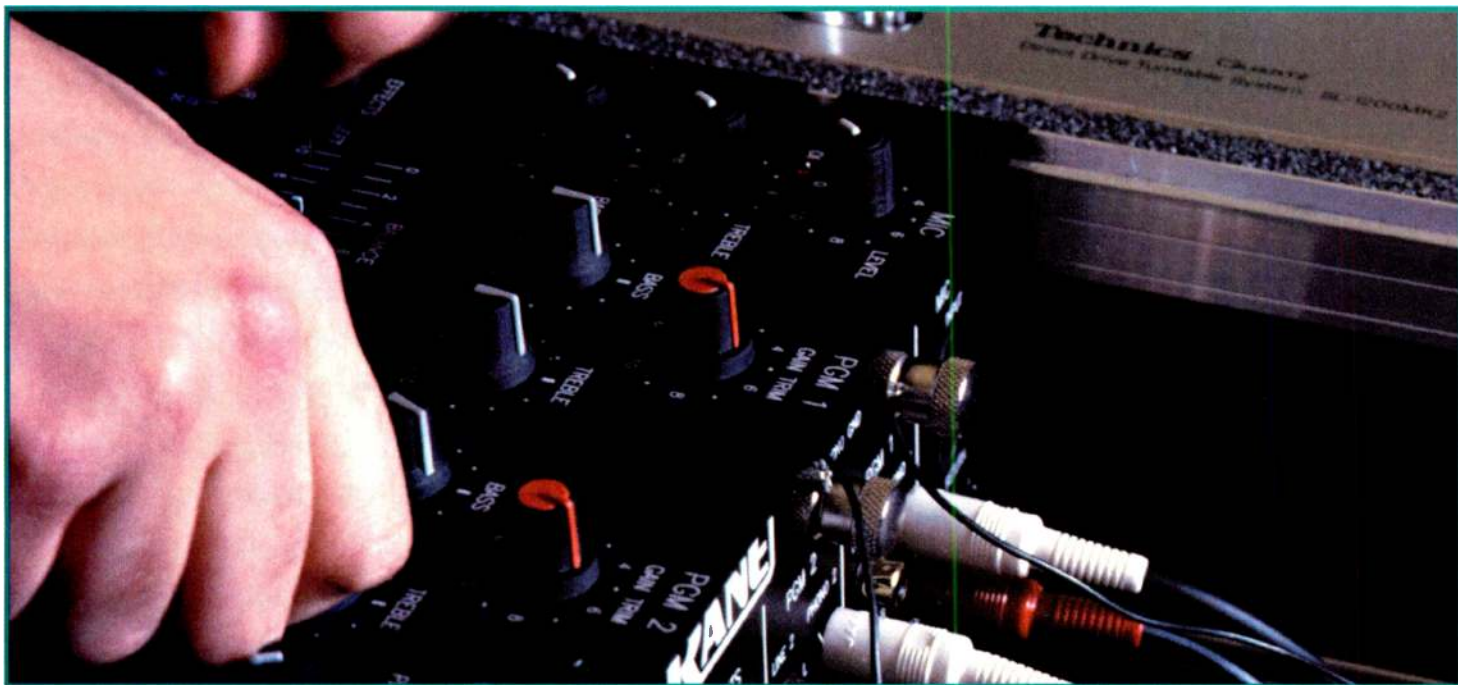
"All very clear-cut," remembers Tobin. "That worried me. I don't want to become that predictable."

The exotic time signatures and polychromatic palette on '97's *Bricolage* and its '98 follow-up, *Permutation*, were anything but predictable. Fans who anticipate a cosmopolitan grab-bag of jazz, drum 'n' bass and soundtracks on the new album are in for a shock. Elements of those influences remain, but many now-common "jazz" gestures are nowhere in earshot. While *Permutation* has often been compared to Dave Brubeck, Charles Mingus and Art Blakey, *Supermodified* lands closer to Sun Ra. Finding a downbeat on these 12 tracks is about as easy as catching a salmon with your bare hands.

"At the time I was making this record, I was hearing jazz-influenced stuff everywhere," Tobin recalls. "That made me think, 'Maybe I should concentrate on something [else].'" Leave the meandering flute solos and Buddy Rich soundbites to LTJ Bukem and 4 Hero. "There have been a lot of liberties taken with jazz, noodle-y chords floating over drum breaks that are sort of jazzy but aren't saying much," he opines. "It's almost as if you see the weakest aspects of different [types of] music being brought together to form one big weak piece of music."

The producer's listening pattern goes through cycles; during one spell he may favor film scores, perhaps hip-hop during another. "I'll get into using specific types of sounds and do a whole block of tunes." Lately his fascination is with Astrud and Joao Gilberto and other greats of bossa nova and batucada. Although he was born in Brazil and lived there between the ages of seven and nine, Tobin categorizes his initial exposure to that country's music as strictly "by default," and he only recently investigated it avidly. While those influences aren't immediately apparent on *Supermodified*, his passion for Heitor Villa-Lobos and classical guitar pops up in the intro to the new track "Deo."





Older Tobin tunes featured unadulterated passages pilfered from thrift-store LPs; "Nightlife," one of the kitschier cuts on *Permutation*, tacked breakbeats to Ravel's *Bolero*. *Supermodified* takes his sampling to another level. All the tracks on this album were made with the same style of records used on previous albums, Tobin insists. "The source material's just been abused a bit more."

Tuba compahs morph into rumbling low notes; the central rhythm of "Anvil" suggests a choreographed accident in a high school metal shop. "I got into substituting noises you wouldn't normally associate with having that role in a piece and seeing what would happen if you could get the same characteristics with a motorbike throttle that you could from a bass."

In general, these experiments complement rather than distract from the tracks. His creations may be smart and crafty, but please don't brand them "intelligent dance music." "I didn't want to make things too involved in the process. I wanted [the record] to be something that rocked. Hopefully there's a balance." Tobin's art is fueled primarily by emotion, not technique: "I'm not one for working away at a single sound for three days, finding my perfect snare and then trying to figure out where to put it."

One of the things he likes most about using samples is that the sound is never completely controllable. Messy fingerprints—the fading residue from a snare hit, for example—add to the patina. It was that element of unpredictability that initially attracted Tobin to his chosen instrument, the sampler. He'd previously played guitar and loved the blues, but he didn't feel he could make a legitimate contribution to that tradition. "I always felt a bit of a charlatan," he confesses. "I could never make a blues album, because I wouldn't feel it was authentic, by the nature of where I come from and where I've lived."

"The sampler was a way of making honest music again," he continues. "Instead of pretending that all of these notes come from me, I'm using the actual notes of the people who inspired me, developing it into something of my own while still recognizing where everything came from." This impetus has informed Tobin's aesthetic since his first release, 1995's *Curfew* EP, under the Cujo alias. "Suddenly I could use

blues sounds, but I wasn't saying 'I'm a blues man.' I'd be saying, 'This is what blues means to me, and this is what I'm going to do with it.'"

Since then, Tobin's continued pushing the limits of his instrument, maximizing its unique properties. "It's not an objective of mine to make a live sound," he emphasizes. The drum solos on *Supermodified* may be riveting, but they're also inhuman, Frankenstein-style pastiches stitched together from dozens of disparate performances. "Ultimately, what I want to do is make it more than live, so the instruments are doing things that they wouldn't be able to do in a band set-up."

Naturally, this posed a bit of a challenge when it came time to tour. Since assembling a live ensemble defeated his purpose, Tobin opted to spin records instead. "I've got no big ideas about being a scratch-happy, beat-mixing, all-singing, all-dancing DJ—I just want to be able to make sure that everyone has a good time."

When he started performing a couple of years ago, he was still a studio head, and playing two turntables and a mixer live didn't come

easily. The first dates were in front of crowds about 500 strong. "It was a complete nightmare. I had to go on after The Herbaliser with Ollie Teeba, who's a really good DJ. It was a case of me running backstage going, 'Ollie, why is there no sound coming out?'" Even with constant prompting, it was all Tobin could do to figure out where the crossfader was. "I'd never seen it all before," he admits.

A realization that most of the people in the audience were probably bedroom DJs only compounded the pressure. "You're in front of this very judgmental audience that thinks, 'Well, I should be there—this guy can't mix!' And they've got a point. If you're gonna stand up in front of a load of people and play some records, you better at least know what you're doing. It was a baptism by fire."

"I'm all for being out of my depth and trying to learn as quickly as possible. I didn't make that many mistakes too many times, because I had a big audience in front of me." Though his skills have sharpened immensely, Tobin continues to hone them, even as he hits the road in support of *Supermodified*. "I'm doing this tour now with Kid Koala," he enthuses. "That should be great for picking up tips." **NMM**

"I've got no big ideas about being a scratch-happy, beat-mixing, all-singing, all-dancing DJ—I just want to be able to make sure that everyone has a good time."

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The band's album, *Mer De Noms* (an Americanized twist on the French for "sea of names"), shares certain prominent characteristics with Tool—most noticeably Keenan's unmistakable voice and smoldering melancholy—yet the music is mellower, more ambient. For Keenan it was less a stylistic stretch than a shift in working mode.

"Normally on a Tool project we all tend to write together at the same time," Keenan says. "It all kind of evolves from the ground up in the same space. We all go chasing our tails, then come up with the finished piece. With this, Billy was chasing his own tail for several years, coming up with the pieces and putting them in place as they came."

Howerdel wrote and refined most of the tracks in his own studio. "Some of them are 12 years old and have gone through so many different levels—from trance beat songs to straight-up movie scores, because that's what I thought I wanted them to be. I'm a big cinema fan and wanted to get into scoring, so that was kind of the intention in the beginning. A couple of them are [condensed] 'cause they were so long, and they became three-minute pop songs from there."

An intimate, home-studio ambiance underpins the songs' classical scenarios played out in modern settings. *Mer De Noms* isn't a concept album per se, but Keenan—a student of Jung's theory of the collective unconscious and Joseph Campbell's folklore and myth analyses—peoples these songs with characters from Greek epics, the Bible and the Grimm Brothers fairy tales, making them rub elbows with everyday people. Not surprisingly, the oblique vignettes that unfold in tracks like "Orestes," "Judith," "Magdalena" and "Sleeping Beauty" display a philosophy reminiscent of Tool.

"It sounds a little cliché, but music is a higher form of language, so you can just let the music direct where the vocals are going to go," Keenan says. "They're kind of a harmony to the emotion that presents itself with certain chord progressions or whatever's being played...The synchronicity of language is how those things work. The dynamics between people and how they relate to each other—there's an archetype or story that's been told for every one of those relationships, so it's easy enough to draw from that. That's why classic writing like Shakespeare, *The Odyssey*, *The Iliad*, even Biblical stuff is relevant because they're drawing on root [imagery] about specific

emotions or specific words that describe a situation."

Notable as the theories behind Keenan's tales are, it's the songs themselves that demonstrate his mastery of allusion and metaphor. Like the musical arrangements, which flow with a mercurial intensity offset by occasional strings and exotic instruments, his words unwind in an

“Something like this has shed a whole new light on how to go about writing words and melodies. I'm kind of poisoned from my old method now. I've got a new method for this and for Tool, and I'm enjoying it.”

evocative blur that only occasionally resolves into concrete images before melting back into the fabric of the music.

Far from diverting his energy away from Tool, Keenan says his new project only complements and enhances his creativity. Even as *A Perfect Circle* took shape, Keenan has been working on new material with the old boys.

"Sometimes you get comfortable in your process, and it takes some kind of outer experience to gain a better perspective on what that process is, what's stagnant about it and what's still vital about it," he says. "Something like this has shed a whole new light on how to go about writing words and melodies. I'm kind of poisoned from my old method now. I've got a new method for this and for Tool, and I'm enjoying it. It's not necessarily harder or easier—just different."

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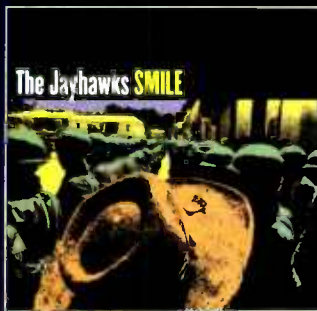
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LIKE I SAID

P.O.D. rocks for God.

STORY: LORNE BEHRMAN PHOTOS: STEPHEN STICKLER

“Brother, has the Lord been talking to you lately?” Marcos Curiel, P.O.D.’s guitarist, says in a solemn whisper, mimicking reactions conservative churchgoers have when the Southtown, San Diego quartet decides to take a church service pit stop while on tour. “I just smile. He talks to me all the time, dude.”

God’s talking to some mean-looking mofos. Frames thick from manual labor, skin decorated—tattoo sleeves, tattoo collars—like a South Central freeway underpass. Sporting sagging pants, braided hair—like extras from the 1988 gangsta flick *Colors*—it’s easy to see why the Sunday-best crowd would think these guys skidded in from the highway to hell looking for salvation. What the congregation may not know is that these fellowship-attending hoods have already been saved, and now they’re doing God’s work their way, with some righteous rap-metal.

P.O.D. (Payable On Death, alluding to the Christian concept of settling the score sin-wise when it’s time to go) has been slinging salt-of-the-earth spirituality to the streets since 1992, busting hip-hop-inflected lines against a churning wall of thrash-style guitars and in-the-pocket funk grooves. Papa Bernardo (drummer Wuv’s father and vocalist Sonny Sandoval’s uncle) laid down the loot for the band’s first four records, releasing them on his own Rescue Records, but Atlantic is footing the bill for the band’s latest, *The Fundamental Elements Of Southtown*.

P.O.D. has shared stages with Green Day, Face To Face, Fu Manchu, Primus, Kid Rock, Cypress Hill, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Korn and Sevendust, and this summer the band will be on the Ozzfest’s main stage. Between these big-stage breaks they’ve played farms, parking lots, YMCAs, coffeehouses and skate parks. To show for seven years of these labor-of-love road ventures, P.O.D. has amassed a rabid



following of face-painting fans they call “warriors.” The band sold more than 40,000 records on its own, and is now moving more than half that each week—*Southtown* is certified gold and climbing up the Billboard 200 chart. Sandoval has appeared on ABC’s *Politically Incorrect*. The entire band has guested on MTV’s *120 Minutes* and *The Howard Stern Show*. And the “Southtown” video is generating a buzz.

It’s Wednesday night at Bernardo headquarters in Southtown, San Diego, a minute and a half from the Mexican border and four miles from Tijuana. The band has just returned from a two-month road trip, which started off with Primus and then continued with Sevendust, before ending with Kid Rock in Jamaica. The Sly And The Family Stone song “Babies Makin’ Babies” comes to mind as Wuv’s son, a golden blond boy and the younger of two, dashes toward his dad and leaps into his arms. Wuv feeds him strawberry chocolate cake, a specialty of Noni’s (his and Sandoval’s grandmother) as he and his

friends pore over vintage P.O.D. photos and make wisecracks about bad hairdos and even worse guitars. (Remember ‘80s metal?) Here, friends are family and family are friends, and everybody glows with a youthful spark. Wuv’s parents had him before either hit 16, and at 27, Wuv is a husband and father too, as is the rest of P.O.D. (except guitarist Curiel, who’s engaged). Bellies bulge from the home cooking of Noni and Agnes Bernardo (Wuv’s mother). Familiar faces drop in to catch up. Children scamper around the backyard. The night is balmy. The image is beautiful. It wasn’t always this way.

“When I look back, it seems like a movie,” Wuv says the next morning over another love-cooked meal with his bandmates. “I grew up right next door. I’d be sleeping and people would break into my house and have my mom and dad at gunpoint looking for drugs and smashing things up. My parents hated each other;

“These fools are standing up in a frickin’ keg party singing about God, and that’s more guts than anything I’ve seen in my life.”

culture. Further, it's hard to imagine those 'neck-snapping beats' getting much airplay on Christian hit radio, or program directors knowing what to do with a band that's so musically and ethnically mixed."

As ForeFront's Nicholas says, "They're bold about their faith, but they're making music like, 'We came here to rock this jam' [from 'Rock The Party (Off the Hook)']."

"Christianity has built such a stereotype about what Christian music should be," states Wuv. "We've been doing it for so long, but they've chosen to ignore us. Not the people, but the industry: 'P.O.D. is too hard and heavy, and they don't look the part.' Even when we signed with Atlantic and we were going to put our album out, they banned our cover, the Christian industry." (Christian retailers refused to carry the album due to the cigar in the upper right corner of the cover. The album appears with a black border, the only remnant of surrealist Jean Bastarache's original artwork being the cross-legged wooden man in the center.)

"Many of the core stores that have supported P.O.D. in the past are more conservative in nature," says Barry Landis, Atlantic Christian VP/GM. "We tested it among some of them and were told they would not buy the album with the original cover on it. We didn't want to cut off the grassroots support system that P.O.D. had emerged from, so in conversations with the band, we arrived at a cover that everyone was happy with. It was a tough decision."

In some ways, distance from the Christian music machine has been a personal choice. "The Bible says to be in this world but not be of this world and to separate yourself," Sandoval explains, "But I think Christians have separated themselves so far where it's just like, 'Dude, I'm on the safe boat to heaven.' And they're like waving from the island, 'Good luck buddy,'" Wuv adds, grinning as everybody cracks up. "P.O.D. comes up in a jacked-up little canoe—I don't think he's going to make it in that boat, man," Wuv says mockingly. Curiel breaks in, "And you know what? Sometimes little holes happen, and I start sinking a little, I put in a little bit of putty and keep paddling."

Streetwise and road-worn, P.O.D. has a spiritual ruggedness that's suited to secular success. "For us, no matter what people are doing, smoking weed or hating us and flipping us off," Sandoval explains. "If we have a 45-minute set, I believe God has given me 45 minutes to let loose."

"It's between us and God, whether they like it or not," Wuv adds. "He's the one the who booked the show, not the promoter." Sandoval returns, "He said go to Sin-cinnati and wreck it." Everyone laughs. Wuv fires back, "We call them appointments, dude. God has an appointment for us."

So does management. Recently P.O.D. had an appointment to appear on *The Howard Stern Show*. "The only thing Howard Stern could do to

“When we first started, we were militant and cramming it down people’s throats. People were flipping us off and leaving.”

like, 'I think I'm okay, I got the power.' And before you know it, you got like two holsters with whipped cream cans going *shhhhhhhhhh*, playing the whipped cream game with Howard Stern and these chicks, saying, 'I should have just ran from the beginning.' We told each other, if we have to run because there's naked chicks on the show, at least we'll get publicity for being known as the frickin' guys who took off on *The Howard Stern Show*."

In reality, Stern was on his best behavior (he found out P.O.D. were Christians a minute before the show went on the air). He said he felt "optimistic" for the band, complimented them on their tattoos, and after fielding numerous phone-ins from P.O.D. warriors, Stern quipped, "I can't find a bad caller."

P.O.D.'s uncompromising boldness accounts for the band's fanatical following. "Years ago we used to say, 'Where's all my warriors at?' We related it to our faith—we believe it takes a warrior, someone with honor and dignity, to stand up in this world. Nowadays you get persecuted if you're still a virgin at like 15 or 16, or if you're not doing drugs. And here we are doing songs like 'Breathe Babylon,' dancing around like tribesmen, and it just kind of came naturally. We didn't want them to think they were just fans." Curiel finishes, "When they come to the shows, they kind of look like KISS fans, they got crazy makeup on." They also have a thriving Web presence—the

"spirituality" forum on P.O.D.'s Web site (www.payableondeath.com) recently collected 5,487 posts.

"My devotion to P.O.D. led me to do one thing I never thought I'd do," says Nekeisha Alexis-Manners, 19, a warrior from New York City. "I made a bright orange sign with the words 'Vote for P.O.D.' on it, hiked up to 42nd Street [MTV's home] from NYU, where I go to school, and stood in the cold, waving that sign like crazy to try and get it on the *Total Request Live* cameras. At one point I even had three copies of their CD. I try and collect everything I can to track their rise—Internet articles, magazine interviews, postcards. I keep them in prayer and support them 250% in true warrior fashion."

"We try and set an example, but we're nothing but regular guys," Sandoval says. "And we're not problem-solvers either—the real problem-solver is God. When kids come up it's like, 'I can lead you in the direction, homey, but don't plan on leaving today thinking I'm going to work a miracle.' Man, we're just a step."





BLOOD OF ABRAHAM

"We're living in spiritually depleted times," says Benyad, half of the Los Angeles-based hip-hop duo Blood Of Abraham, known for its militant Judaism. The band's name refers to the Old Testament's Abraham—"the father of many nations: Christianity, Islam and Judaism," says partner-in-rhyme Mazik, who notes that while both members have foundations in Judaism, his own spirituality is universal and he studies all religions. "Kids that are raised in the Internet generation, they're bombarded with such negativity, such shallowness and emptiness," opines Benyad, which Mazik notes can lead to "making material goods your God. The message we want to convey is: don't shut yourself off to what your blessing is. Everyone has their own blessing. Everyone has low points and high points, we want people to remember the high points." >>>Lorne Behrman



SHELTER

Shelter invented Krishnacore in the early '90s, and with 1998's "Here We Go Again," took it to #1 on MTV Brazil's Top 20 video countdown. Shelter guitarist Porcell and vocalist Ray Cappo first blasted out of the NYC hardcore scene in the mid '80s with Youth Of Today, a wide-eyed breath of drug-, alcohol- and meat-free air. "After the band broke up, I realized before you go out and change the world, you've got to change the world in yourself, which is a spiritual quest," Porcell explains. The two became Krishna devotees and began Shelter. "When we first started, there was a backlash, like, 'keep religion out of hardcore,'" Porcell recalls pensively. "That was a slap in the face—hardcore means believing in something and getting up on stage and shouting about it." He continues, "My intent was never to get people to shave their heads...But I think there is a universal example to spirituality that people can apply to life and get good results. I would like to open their minds—there is more out there than going to college and getting a good job. People think it's like a cult...[but] Vaishnavism, which is the technical name for Krishna consciousness, has been around 5,000 years, which is longer than Christianity." >>>L.B.



DANIELSON FAMILIE

All hail the Danielson Famile, the 8-person Christian rock collective that's bringing the Old Testament fire of William Blake to indie rock. Since 1996, frontman Daniel Smith has been leading five of his siblings and two friends in making a tweaked, twinkly joyful noise that suggests Daniel Johnston taking a stroll down Sesame Street. Don't go looking for their albums in your local Christian bookstore; Smith says he's had an aversion to traditional Christian pop since he was a kid. "At 12 years old I knew something was very wrong with 'Christian music.' I found that there is very little that points to the one who created that music." Raised on what he calls "Jesus hippie songs, acoustic guitars, long hair and bare feet," Smith found musical direction in the likes of Bob Dylan, Royal Trux and Brian Eno. While Smith says Jesus is his creative guide, he is also quick to point out the saving grace of living in the Southern end of the Garden State. "New Jersey has a better sense of humor than Philadelphia or New York," he says. "It's our only means of survival." The group's latest release is *Tri-Danielson!!!* (Omega-Tooth And Nail). >>>Carlene Bauer



DEICIDE

For 13 years, Deicide (as in, "the act of killing God") has been churning out a crushing, sonic holy war. The Florida death metal quartet helped define the genre with 1992's *Legion* and 1993's demo collection *Amon: Feasting The Beast*, but never fell prey to cartoon evil. Singer (or make that "barker") Glen Benton's take on Satanism is down-homey: "I'm beyond all those altars and sacrifices, all that illusion. I keep it as real as possible. Satan is a spiritual force, an energy source...I can't picture Satan as this pitchfork-wielding saint. It's the same with God; I don't picture him with this big fucking white beard looking like Santa Claus. I look at it as a philosophy that I've based my life on. The good thing about Satanism is that you can be yourself and not feel like there's any pressure. I'm not out trying to convert people into what I believe, but you can't hear the lyrics and not know what they're about. The Satanic religion is in there. When every thought coming out of your brain is evil, you've got to go with it." Being an underworld disciple isn't all about butchering babies and axing animals, he assures. "You got these kids that want to be Satanists going around and burning churches, then telling their friends. It's all done for shock value. I'm not about that—it's an inner thing." Deicide's latest back-to-blood raw album, *Insineratehymn* (Roadrunner), offers a not-so-quiet time with the man downstairs. >>>L.B.



KILLAH PRIEST

"I don't try to shove it down nobody's throat," says rapper Killah Priest of his spiritual beliefs, a complex intersection of the world's faiths and sects. "The Bible just sits in your house, it doesn't say, 'Come, open me and read.' It's there [though], it's the truth. It's what I am," he says. On his solo debut, *Heavy Mental* (Geffen) and his new album *View From Masada* (MCA), Killah Priest spits blessed science about everything from Job to Leviathan to the second son of Pope Alexander. "I came up on a Hebrew pillar," says Priest of his religious upbringing. "I studied under Solomon. And Proverbs gets your mind straight—all of that is ancient wisdom." Allah is also a part of the MC's holy cornucopia. The Nation Of Islam was a strong presence in Killah Priest's first neighborhood in Brooklyn, and as an adult he studied the beliefs of the Five Percent Nation (a branch of Islam) with GZA of the Wu-Tang Clan. The new track "When Will We Learn?" echoes the Nation of Islam's emphasis on the importance of self-discipline as a path to self-improvement. But Priest's overall focus is being connected with Christ, he explains, "being in tune with our maker." >>>Bill Werde



your head

The Mekons beat their curse.

Now they're wandering into their own myth.

Story Douglas Wolk Photos Charlie Langella

"A myth is, of course, not a fairy story. It is the presentation of facts belonging to one category in the idiom appropriate to another. To explode a myth is accordingly not to deny the facts but to re-allocate them." —Gilbert Syle, *The Concept of Myth*

The myth closest to the Mekons' experience is the story of Orpheus, the divine musician who went to the land of the dead and returned, whose head was torn from his body but kept singing even as it floated down the river Hebrus. The Mekons have a song called "Orpheus," a staple of their live performances. Tom Greenhalgh and Jon Langford and Rico Bell and Sally Timms trade lines that are both about Orpheus's experience and their own ("Lose the Mekons! came the cheer"), then toss the beginning of the chorus back and forth: "Lose—" "Lose—" "Lose—" And then they yell all together: "Lose your head!"

They lose their head all the time; the band might have stopped dead many times over. They can't be killed. They never stop singing. They could be a myth, a story we tell ourselves about the world of music to make it make sense in the face of the brutal and baffling facts. It turns the coldness of failure within capitalism into a curse to be triumphed over, dogged persistence into the heroism of a different kind of fine art, drunken camaraderie into classical ritual.

The Mekons have been their own favorite subject for a while—not with the subjectivity of the lyric poet or solipsistic lyricist, but with the perspective of the self-documenting contemporary fine artist, the myth-making that an old record title called "the dream and lie of The Mekons." On their new album *Journey To The End Of The Night* (Quarterstick), named after a Louis-Ferdinand Céline novel, the Mekons wade into their own story—not its plot, but its softer infrastructure, the part that doesn't seem like comprehensible narrative unless you can grasp its dimensions from the outside. It opens with a slow, uneasy song called "Myth" that slips bafflingly between tour stories and Heracles's war stories. Langford explains: "Part of the myth is when you come home from a tour with your stories and you tell all your friends about it. And most of the stories are drunken exploits of staggering out on the street at 10 in the morning—it's daylight, you've been in the club all night, and the woman you've gone down there with is unconscious, face down in the men's room in an evening gown—I actually saw that." (It subsequently became a line in the song.)

Greenhalgh takes up the story. (He and Langford are the only two founding Mekons still in the band, though the lineup's been pretty stable for a long time—bassist Sarah Corina is the new kid, and she joined almost 10 years ago.) "We were reading *The Greek Myths*, by Robert Graves. These people in the myths were like gods and heroes, when in fact they had a few cows and lived in huts. But they made their lives this epic sort of thing, and I wondered what it would be like to have a modern-day version of that."

"That's what we do," Langford chimes in. "The stuff about the Lower East Side and all that is our lives. It's mythic—great mythical events in the Mekons' history."

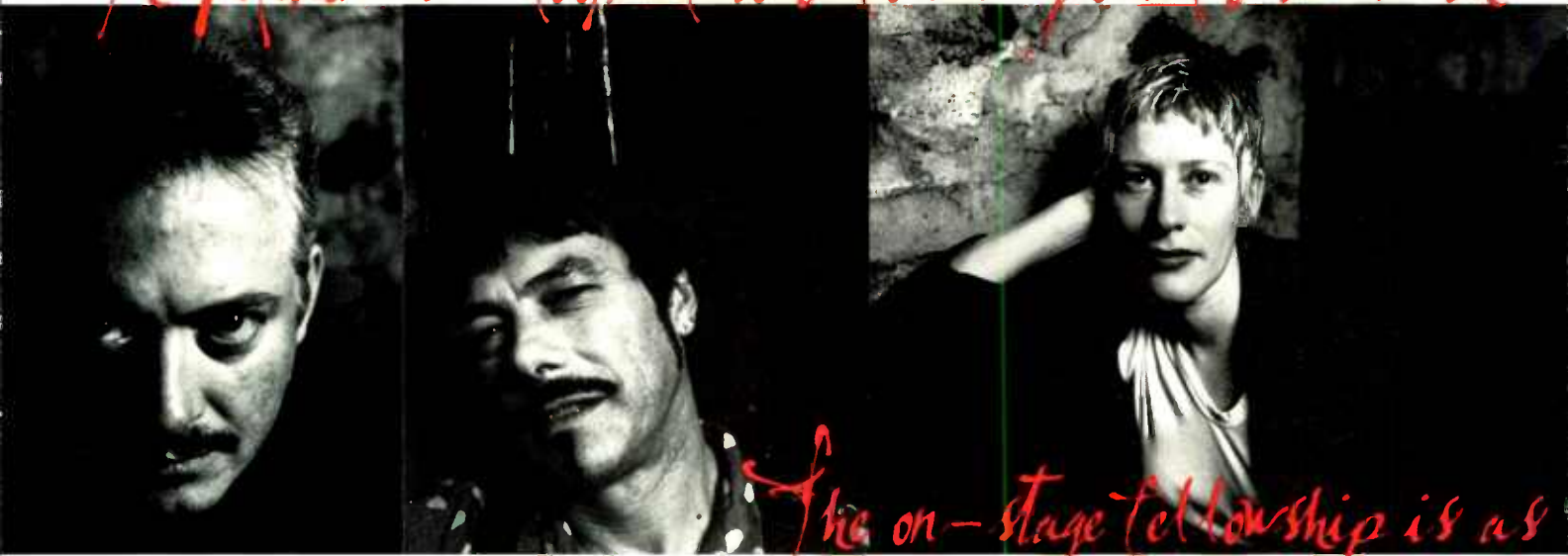
"And a lot of it's true," Greenhalgh adds. "It becomes mythology after its time, when it's retold."

The myth starts in 1977, as a footnote to someone else's bigger story. There are punk bands springing up in England like dandelions on a lawn, too many and too fast to count. A big, ungainly group in Leeds names itself the Mekons (after the evil alien in the old *Dan Dare* comics) and records a single: a joke about the Clash called "Never Been In A Riot." It's pretty inept. The next year, though, Athena smiles on them. They write a song called "Where Were You?" about a sudden flash of desperate love for a woman with yellow hair, and the single sells 35,000 copies. The world is theirs to lose.

Flash forward to the early '90s. The Mekons, who are by now a visual-arts collective as well as a band, paint a detailed canvas. In its background, a ratty-looking punk band is on the stage of an immense, palatial concert hall. In the foreground, seraphim are parting gold and crimson curtains. A young punk guy is drinking with his friends, his attention caught by someone he sees far away. The painting's called *The Writing Of "Where Were You?"*

Flash forward again, to 2000. Langford, who's been playing it for more than half his life, is talking about why he loves it. "People used to say 'the Mekons are a country band or a folk band'—I'd go 'no, no, we're a punk band.' And you read the lyrics to that song, and it's like—it's like a

The Mekons are doomed to be forever ground between the



The on-stage fellowship is as

fuckin' 1977 version of a George Jones song or something! It's very honest." Later tonight, the Mekons' rite will reach its climax when the band's roadie, Mitch, races onto the stage, commandeers the mic and bellows "Where Were You?," hurling himself into the audience when he reaches its last line—"Could you ever be my wife? Do you love me?"

In 1979, the Mekons are about to discover their curse: They are doomed to be forever ground between the wheels of the music industry. Their record company puts a photo of the wrong group—specifically, Gang Of Four—on the back cover of the first Mekons album. It's the first in a 14-year series of record-label catastrophes. The band shrinks; the hits don't keep coming. The next album, *Devils Rats And Piggies A Special Message From Godzilla* (recently reissued by Quarterstick), sounds like a death rattle, with synthesizers. The band shrinks some more. Another single or two follows, and by the middle of 1981 they're gone.

The head keeps singing through the '80s. Langford, Greenhalgh and the band's co-founder Kevin Lycett record a bit more, then start playing again. Someone has held American country music's smell of fear and whiskey under their nose, and they wake like Finnegan. They draft in accordionist Eric "Rico Bell" Bellis, and later Timms, the finest country singer England has produced. They build up their rep with barnstorming tours and a series of stellar albums and EPs. The big time waves at them again like a bullfighter waving its cape, and they charge. Their American

That's the climax of their myth, the way they won their victory over the curse: they gave up the fight. The Mekons realized that, as Rico Bell puts it, "being a Mekon is a way of life, rather than a job." And then everything more or less fell into place.

"Why stop?" continues Timms. There's been points where we've been pissed off or had long periods when we didn't do as much, but the idea of stopping doing something if you still have something to say seems ridiculous. Or even when you don't have something to say. We come at it from the point of view of fine artists: it's a process. So you don't always do great work, but it doesn't matter: the idea is just to keep continuing until you do."

Scattered like Orpheus's limbs across the globe—Bell lives in San Francisco, a few of them in Chicago, others in Leeds and London and New York—they've nonetheless pulled themselves together for eight albums over the last eight years, including the 1996 traveling Mekons *United* multimedia project and *Pussy, King Of The Pirates*, a 1996 collaboration with the late author Kathy Acker. *Journey* was recorded in four different studios, including bassist Sarah Corina's house, and assembled with ProTools in Chicago. They're effectively exiles wherever they go, and somehow they thrive on it. "I love being in a weird little band of people who are traveling through a foreign country, essentially, even though I live here, going to all these places and

The stories are drunken exploits of staggering out on the night, and the woman you've gone down there with is un

major-label debut, 1989's *The Mekons Rock 'N' Roll* (Blast First) is the hardest-rocking self-criticism ever performed. "Destroy your safe and happy lives before it is too late," it begins (and that line still draws cheers when they sing it at almost every show). "The battles we fought were long and hard just not to be consumed by rock and roll! *Rock and roll!*"

Of course, "capitalism's favorite boy-child," as they call it, rises to the bait, bites their head off again, and spits it out. And still the head keeps singing. Tossed back to the indies, they mythologize themselves a little more: the next album's called *The Curse Of The Mekons* (Blast First).

"We always say that the only way out of the band is in a box," Timms says in 2000. "From our point of view, we are unable to leave the band. There are times when people kind of ignore us—it's almost irritating to the industry, because we keep popping up and saying 'we're still here, and we don't make aaaaany money at all, and we don't give a shit.'"

playing for a few people every night," Timms says.

The catalog for *Mekons United* demonstrates how far the band has developed as a creative entity. It's a riotous conversation between their music, lyrics, art, prose and essays by both art critics and music critics. Paintings, photomontages and sketches share space on the page with fragments of lyrics, hyperliterate tour diaries, bits of critical essays and letters between members of the band and their pseudonymous alter egos. A swatch of the band's collectively written novel, *Living In Sin*, appears in the middle, with mock-scholarly marginal notes. Among the visual highlights is a series of surrealist-pointillist paintings of great moments in the business lives of country legends: "Bob Wills Signs His Contract #2" (all in blue and white, with clots of ink all around him), "Hank Williams Signs His Contract" (an animal carcass hangs in the foreground, the canvas is scratched like old celluloid), and an outrageous parody Last

wheels of the music industry.



much a part of what people come back for as the songs.

Supper called, naturally, "The Mekons Sign Their Contract."

They've blossomed outside the context of the band, too—especially since the curse lifted, they've been flabbergastingly productive and creative. Timms records and tours on her own (an album of country covers and collaborations with Langford, *Cowboy Sally's Twilight Laments... For Lost Buckaroos*, came out late last year), sings on the Aluminum Group's *Pedals*, and is putting together a record with Dallas Good from The Sadies. Rico's got his own band, the Snake Handlers. Langford's been making records and touring with Waco Brothers, Kelly Hogan & The Pine Valley Cosmonauts; he also paints ingenious, sharp-witted images of old country stars, and draws the even sharper-witted comic strip *Great Pop Things*. Most of the band works on visual art that's simply credited to "The Mekons" (they had a touring art show a few years ago), and they've been working on and off on the novel, *Living In Sin*, for the better part of a decade. Timms reports that they've been kicking around the idea of making a film called *The Royal Family*—"we want to be kings and queens in some kind of bizarre medieval court, and have lots of bit players... Nothing's ever abandoned. Sometimes it's in abeyance."

The everybody-pitches-in approach extends to their songwriting, as well. "Generally, Tom and Jon come up with concepts," Timms says. "On *Journey To The End Of The Night*, I had quite a big say in—they call it the role of 'censor,' I would like to call it 'editor,' but I don't mind either. We've

knowledge"), then lifts itself out of the narrative: "Something left out of this story/ Absence taking shape before me." When the Mekons sing "Powers & Horror" on stage, the women are absent, and the men intone the words in unison at the bottom of their ranges; it's a detached, poetic address to a prostitute who's made good, or something like one. Then it turns strange: "Cast our mind back to the time/ He lay weeping in your bed." (Note that "our mind.") "The young man loved you so passionately/ He had to leave the country." The facts are somewhere in there; the idioms are somewhere else.

In 1956, Elvis Presley tells an interviewer "I'm afraid I'll go out like a light, just like I came on. Know what I mean, honey?" In 1995, the Mekons release a shattered-sounding single called "Untitled 1," all chanting together: "I'm afraid I'll go out like a light/ Do you know what I mean?"

In 2000, they follow the trail of "Untitled 1" into *Journey*, the darkest-sounding album they've ever made, with all its sounds circling like a whirlpool toward the dub gravity of Corina's bass. Langford explains that the singing on *Journey* is far more subdued than usual for the Mekons, partly because both he and Timms had laryngitis when they were recording. "It seemed extreme and confessional, like whispering secrets, or saying too much. Some of the songs are extremely personal—I'm not going to say which." So how does that translate to broadcasting them in front of a thousand people? "It's problematic. When we're live on stage,

street at 10 in the morning—you've been in the club all conscious, face down in the men's room in an evening gown."

put out a lot of records recently that are either reissues or haven't been necessarily our best; a lot of times we've just thrown stuff on, I feel, just for the hell of it, because that's the way we work. But there were certain songs where I said 'if these go on the album I'm quitting.' I was pretty hard-assed about it. It's not my work, it's their work, but they allowed me to oversee the vision.

"The concept [of the record] is the idea of just getting through the night, and the process of how things change a lot at night and how we live different lives after the sun goes down. Emotionally, things are different—you're often dragging yourself through dawn doing all sorts of bizarre things, and everything becomes a little uphill after dark."

In *Journey's* words, nothing stays definite for long. "Out In The Night" starts with a hand groping for another, drifts into cryptic, painful ruminations ("My personal ignorance/ Is now public

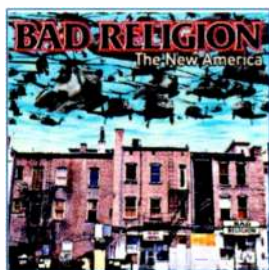
though, it's just a party." That's another part of their legend: the party never stops, the beer flows like wine, the on-stage fellowship is as much a part of what people come back for as the songs.

But it's also impossible to contain a myth in the fragile vessel of a real person's body. Tonight, at the Bowery Ballroom in New York City, the show starts with Timms announcing that she's just been puking backstage, and partway through she can't go on any more and vanishes. Again, they lose their head. It doesn't matter; they have four singing heads. Five, if you count Mitch, who leaps onto the stage again for his big ritual number. "I watched you from a distance—did you see me?...Where were you?"

The lights have gone out; it's the middle of the night. The head is still singing. Where were you when the lights went out?

In the darkness, in the night, a myth is exploding.

NMM



BAD RELIGION ★
The New America Atlantic

Always the bridesmaid, never the bride. Such would seem to be the fate of Bad Religion, the band that's been punk-rocking since before most of today's college freshmen were born. The fact that the band has yet to score the crucial crossover hit is not for lack of effort—its members are not of the cynical, sneering, contemptuous punk variety. "You have the chance to be relevant today," goes a line in the hopeful leadoff track to *The New America*, "You've got a chance to confront the world today." Pragmatically worded, geekily earnest optimism has been a Bad Religion

hallmark for two decades, and *The New America* serves up a few more big helpings of chicken-soup-for-the-punk-rock-soul epigrams. Though they've never skimped on melody, this may be the first time in Bad Religion's long crusade that the punch of the hooks has matched the heavenly convictions of the band's sentiments. "I don't want to live in a world without melody," goes one tune; and on *The New America* they unleash their inner boy band with ba-ba-bas, Wagnerian flights of soaring glam-metal vocal and soloing prowess, even drum loops. It's a batch of songs as subtle as soft money and as adult-contemporary slick, in punk terms, as anything Diane Warren or Richard Marx ever penned. >>>Carly Carioli

OUT:
May 2.
FILE UNDER:
Adult contemporary punk.
R.I.Y.L.:
Descendents, Green Day.

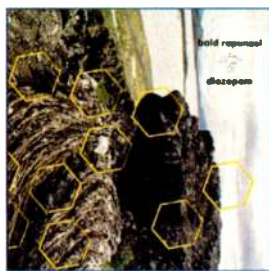


BLOOD OF ABRAHAM
Eyedollartree Master Grip-Atomic Pop

Last time we heard from Blood Of Abraham's Benyad and Mazik, on the duo's 1994 debut, *Future Prophets*, they were Eazy E's Jews, pledging allegiance to Old Testament law and popping off about Hebrew family trees and anti-Semitism over post-N.W.A. left-coast beats and Musical Youth samples. On BOA's deftly cobbled (and way overdue) follow-up, *Eyedollartree*, the act's rabbinical b-boyness has gone the way of Everlast's shamrocks and shillelaghs, and the only six-sided nod we get is "I don't really care if you're a gentile or a Jew." They've kept the honest-Abraham, hip-hop oracle

OUT:
May 2.
FILE UNDER:
Keepin' it real, Old Testament style.
R.I.Y.L.:
Dilated Peoples, Jurassic-5, Everlast.

shtick, though, lacing *Eyedollartree* with prophecies of a flossed Armageddon and anti-ice prognostications of benjamin-worship gone bad. Their sermons can get clunky ("Everyone's a fighter/ I can burn your house with a 99 cent lighter") but lucky for their followers, the tracks—from the slurry dub slush of "Know The Half" to the trip-hop vocal dalliances of "Rosetta Stone"—mostly cook, especially when the duo strays farthest from hip-hop sound commandments. The plague roll call of "Calling All Citizens" unfolds like rapped garage go-go on loan from *Hair*, and "Hurricane," which opens with a creepy "God's gonna set this world on fire" church chant, finds salvation in good ol' fashioned psych-rock guitar twang. >>>Josh Kun

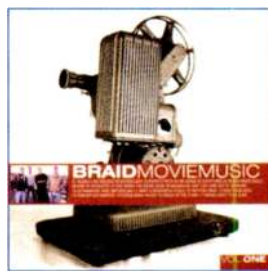


BALD RAPUNZEL
Diazepam Resin-Dischord

There's a dreamy sexiness to Bald Rapunzel's Resin-Dischord debut. The 10-track long-player conjures up images of vocalist Bonnie Schlegal singing from the open doorway of a cozy, beachfront abode, her lazy, soulful rasp lavishly mixing with the crisp ambience of a summer evening, the whisper of a refreshingly cool breeze and the hiss of foamy waves slicking the sandy shoreline. But it's hard to say where the band, or even the songs, figure into this moony soundscape. With the exception of the opening track—an abbreviated a cappella rendition of the R&B ballad

"Dark End Of The Street"—each track meanders aimlessly through spiraling melodies, mangled jangly passages and single-note jazz guitar lines. This laid-back lushness, which calls to mind the shimmering beauty of college rockers like The Story and The Sundays, combined with a Fugazi-like art-punk thrashing, ultimately does the DC quartet a disservice in terms of impact. In the end the album seems to pass by too quietly and anonymously, like sweetly erotic visions before you slip into a deep slumber. >>>Lorne Behrman

OUT:
March 21.
FILE UNDER:
Dischord college rock.
R.I.Y.L.:
The Sundays, Fugazi, Lungfish.



BRAID
Movie Music Vol. 1 & 2 Polyvinyl

After six years, three albums and countless hours in the tour van, Illinois don't-call-it-emo stalwart act Braid has unraveled, leaving as its last testament this two-disc, 36-song sprawl of non-LP recordings. *Vol. 1*, which collects the band's 7-inch appearances, is essential for late-joining fans who missed these releases the first time. After early experiments with throaty confrontation, this is canonical emo-pop: jangly intros giving way to breakneck tempos and hairpin rhythmic shifts, plenty of crosstalk from guitarists Robert Nanna and Chris Broach and loads of interpersonal

OUT:
April 7.
FILE UNDER:
Collected works, emocore.
R.I.Y.L.:
Boy's Life, Cap'n Jazz, early Promise Ring.

wordplay. The final three songs (including the unreleased "You're Lucky To Be Alive") sacrifice expressive power for tightness, but there are no major stylistic shifts here—just a good band getting better. *Vol. 2*, mostly culled from compilations, favors intriguing instrumental ideas over wholly memorable songs, but includes a few gutterballs (an ill-advised remix of "Roses In The Car") and several outright strikes, especially the intricate "To Kiss A Trumpet Player." The band's memory is less well-served by the lump of six fun-but-slight cover songs (Billy Joel, The Smiths, The Pixies), though fine taken singly, that end the disc. Despite this, *Movie Music* leaves Braid's legacy only slightly tarnished, raising the question: Will the members' subsequent projects extend it, shame it or ignore it entirely? >>>Franklin Bruno

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Caipirissima: Batucada Caipirinha

Caipirinha batucada is a general term for Brazilian percussion. These 13 tracks represent an alternative music movement in Brazil that uses batucada rhythms, rather than familiar American and Jamaican ones, as the basis of techno music, much of it Brazilian-style drum 'n' bass. DJ Dolores works the squeak of a *cauca*, the paired-string chime of a *cavalquinho*, and the bleat of a whistle into the mix on "Monica No Samba (She Loves Drums N' Cavaco)." Elsewhere we find fragments of a newscast, synthesized bird and insect sounds and, on Arto Lindsay's "Whirlwind," soft, bossa nova vocals in English. But

electronically manipulated percussion is the mainstay here. As it turns out, sampling and looping the dense textures of percussion styles like Rio's samba and Recife's *maracatu* softens their impact. These tracks are more spacey and abstract than they are visceral, even when compared to exponents of Brazil's alternative roots rock, like Os Mutantes, Chico Science, Mestre Ambrosio, Mundo Livre and that group's breakaway percussionist Otto. Players and producers associated with all of those acts are represented here, reaching even further into the outlands of electronic folklore. Brazil has shown a consistent genius for absorbing musical trends and reshaping them into distinctly local forms. Recognizing the inherent strength of Brazilian rhythms, these artists continue that tradition by creating sounds that even Brazil may not yet be ready for. >>>Banning Eyre

CALIFONE

Califone Road Cone

Chicago's Red Red Meat has suffered its share of personnel losses—singer and guitarist Tim Rutilli's girlfriend Glynis Johnson died of complications from AIDS in 1992. And over time, loss led the band's modern blues to resonate with spookier, harsher tones. The band's sense of play, in which the band deftly rewrites the Stones' darkest hour, became less a travail through an inexhaustible record collection than a personal mission of self-exorcism. Perhaps Califone, Rutilli's "solo" project featuring several RRM alumni, is a way of turning things inside out. Once again, Rutilli has self-titled an EP (the first

came in 1998 on Perishable-Flydaddy). Though his lyrics are stream-of-consciousness, evocative and impenetrable as ever (the William Burroughs school of automatic writing in full effect: "nail gun marines foaming midget horses black smoke threads a straight line from your kidney to your hand"), musically the five songs are largely acoustic-based and nearly orthodox. Occasional loops and samples twist these delta blues toward the freeform mesas of Tom Waits and Captain Beefheart, but never to the point of copyright infringement. One just gets the same sense of sawdust and a sleeping dog on the floor. >>>Rob O'Connor

CATHERINE WHEEL

Wishville Columbia

If God is in the details, England's Catherine Wheel are sleek, modern-pop Apostles. Just a few naked guitar notes placed beneath Rob Dickinson's enraptured singing twist gritty tension into the otherwise transcendent wash of chords that propel "What We Want To Believe In." A song later, the bare-bones "All Of That," simply a spine of drums and vocals dressed with a few slashes of organ and Stratocaster, becomes a sonic metaphor for the examined life, supporting the chorus "I am delicious/ I am crap/ I am all of that." And so it goes: crescendos of laser-beam guitar give way

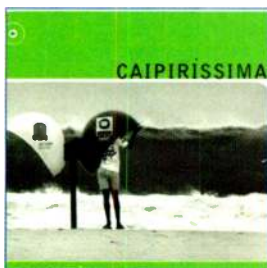
to quiet ripples; mile-high pop hooks on numbers like "Gasoline" and "Sparks Are Gonna Fly" dissolve into silvery spider webs and explosive six-string ruptures. Meanwhile, Dickinson—a devilish lyricist with the sweet 'n' low tenor of a puberty-stricken choirboy—plumbs notions of delusion, redemption, self-loathing and ambivalence. All of this amounts to a brainy, brawny stare-down of the human condition. Which, in turn, makes *Anybody Hurt* a concept album, like Catherine Wheel's previous CD, *Adam And Eve*. But unlike that 1997 disc, which was badly fumbled by then-unraveling label Mercury, *Wishville* is a gem that might catch some light. >>>Ted Drozdowski

CYPRESS HILL

Skull & Bones Columbia

Cypress Hill's latest effort—one disc, *Skull*, showcases the group's evolving hip-hop style, while the other, *Bones*, offers an explosive rap-rock hybrid—may be very of-the-moment, but it's not necessarily about hopping the bandwagon. After all, Cypress member Sen Dog launched SX-10, his punk-rap outfit, in 1995, and Cypress collaborated with Pearl Jam ("Real Thing") and Sonic Youth ("I Love You Mary Jane") on 1993's groundbreaking *Judgment Night* soundtrack. *Skull* takes the Hill's imagery—rife with violence ("Cuban Necktie"), weed ("Can I Get A Hit") and street life ("We Live

This Shit")—to new levels, as producer DJ Muggs employs rich, dramatic string arrangements, keyboard riffs and innovative beats to create haunting textures. At points, there's too much griping about the record business, but after a decade in the game, that's somewhat forgivable. That MCs B-Real and Sen acknowledge some of hip-hop's rising stars, bringing a nasty, Eminem-esque delivery to "Stank Ass Hoe," shows an acute eyes-in-the-back-of-their-heads mentality. On six convincingly tough tracks, Cypress taps members of SX-10, Fear Factory, Downset and Rage Against The Machine's Brad Wilk. There's not much room for innovative songwriting and performance here (who can beat Rage at its own game?), but the drop-tuned, menacing "Get Out Of My Head" and "Valley Of Chrome" more than hold their own. >>>Mark Woodlief



OUT:
June 5.
FILE UNDER:
Brazilian electronica.
R.I.Y.L.:
Chico Science, Os Mutantes, Mundo Livre.



OUT:
May 16.
FILE UNDER:
Psycho-delic moderne.
R.I.Y.L.:
My Bloody Valentine, Pink Floyd, The Pixies.



OUT:
April 18.
FILE UNDER:
Deconstructed blues rock.
R.I.Y.L.:
Red Red Meat, Tom Waits, Captain Beefheart, Sparklehorse.

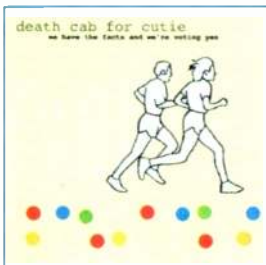


OUT:
May 2.
FILE UNDER:
Hip-hop meets rap-rock.
R.I.Y.L.:
Rage Against The Machine, Eminem, Ice Cube.



FIGHT THE MONSTER.



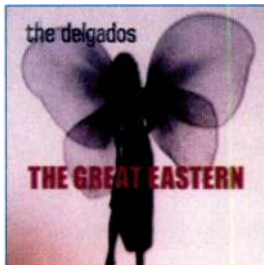


DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE
We Have The Facts, And We're Voting Yes Barsuk

On the surface, this Bellingham, WA, quartet's name—lifted from the Beatles' *Magical Mystery Tour* film—evokes a certain perverse wit and absurdist whimsy. But the progressive sensibility of the band's second album suggests a somewhat more direct, if unintended, meaning: *We Have The Facts, And We're Voting Yes* literally kills off the cutie in Death Cab For Cutie. Not content to embrace pop's extroverted joys, the band aims to elevate its pretty compositions to the level of contemporary art song. If there's a model for what DCFC seems to

OUT:
 March 28.
FILE UNDER:
 Too-smart-for-its-own-good indie pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Built To Spill, Sunny Day Real Estate, Pedro The Lion

have in mind, it's the epic guitar-driven explorations of Built To Spill. So the band's opted for slower tempos than on their brighter, brisker debut (*Something About Airplanes*) and has begun to focus inward on instrumental interplay. The result is a collection of songs full of promise, power and undeveloped bits of melody, yet lacking the kind of anthemic peaks and emotional surges that might take the place of tuneful hooks and memorable choruses. *We Have The Facts* simply meanders from interesting part to interesting part, occasionally bumping into something vaguely Beatles-esque, but mostly losing sight of the fact that at a certain point, pop music's flirtations with difficulty and pretension kill its ability to be pop music. »»Roni Sarig



THE DELGADOS
The Great Eastern Beggars Banquet

Glasgow's Delgados were key players in the teeming '90s Scottish indie-rock scene, helping to launch the careers of Bis, Mogwai and Arab Strap with its Chemikal Underground label. On its own, the band has relied more on chemistry and charm than originality with its brand of angsty, melancholy pop crafted from angular guitar leads and sad vocals. Echoing New Zealand's 3Ds, Alun Woodward and Emma Pollock trade off vocal and guitar leads and sound like they've been doing it since grade school. And though the songs on *The Great Eastern*, the band's third album, remain grounded in organic guitar-bass-

OUT:
 May 2.
FILE UNDER:
 Slanted and enchanted.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Pavement, Mercury Rev, 3Ds, Flaming Lips.

drums arrangements, the disc also incorporates synth washes, synthetic strings, and other keyboard embellishments. The result is more ambitious and sophisticated than last year's *Peloton*. The opening track, "The Past That Suits You Best," cruises along, and there's no surprise in Woodward's Pavement-esque vocal delivery. But the track's recurrent piano motif and pastiche of samples find the Delgados exploring fairly new-to-them terrain. The album also bears the indelible fingerprints of producer Dave Fridmann, who assembled the tracks from hours of raw recordings. Fridmann's touch lends "American Trilogy," which dips and swoons with strings supporting the melody, the feel of the recordings he's done with Mercury Rev and the Flaming Lips, giving the album a dreamy, psych-rock vibe. »»Lydia Vanderloo

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DEPARTURE LOUNGE
Out Of There Flydaddy

Now that this London quartet has finally settled on a name, it can get down to business: namely, making more of the wistful, daydreaming music that carries its full-length debut to often blissful heights. On the follow-up to 1998's *Long Distance Information* EP, the band previously known as: 1) Homer; 2) Tim Keegan & The Homer Lounge; and 3) backing band for Robyn Hitchcock, reveals a gift for conjuring restless, free-floating desperation that never quite climaxes or diffuses. On the softly acoustic-driven Hitchcockian ballad "Stay On The Line," for example, singer Tim

OUT:
 April 2.
FILE UNDER:
 Smart pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Robyn Hitchcock, Cinerama, Lilac Time.

Keegan reaches out to an old, lost flame whom he hopes just might still feel a flicker of the same spark. We're not sure if his plea to make a lovers' getaway is real or just in his head—and that's precisely why the song works so well: there's no concrete resolution. Most of the tracks here embrace a similar kind of nocturnal, romantic limbo, seeping almost unbroken into one another amid an ether-spiked consciousness of warmly strummed guitars, pulsing keyboards and dabs of Air-y electronica (courtesy of the Cocteau Twins' Simon Raymonde and Kid Loco). Add to that Keegan's caressing tenor, and *Out Of There* makes for a remarkably smooth flight. You barely notice the turbulence until it's past you. »»Jonathan Perry

JIMMY PAGE & THE BLACK CROWES
 Jimmy Page & The Black Crowes
 Live At The Greek Musicmaker.com

BUILT TO SPILL
 Live Album Warner Bros.

When The Black Crowes joined Jimmy Page in London for a charity gig in the summer of '99, nobody expected it to be anything more than a one-off collaboration that fans might talk about but that would otherwise be soon forgotten. Instead, the gig was the beginning of a beautiful thing for Page, who's been having trouble luring Robert Plant into more Unledded action, and also for the Crowes, a retro-rock ensemble perfectly suited to partnering with one of the original titans of rock. But the biggest surprise is how good Page and the Crowes sound ripping through Zep classics (plus a few blues oldies) like "Heartbreaker," "Whole Lotta Love" and "Hey Hey What Can I Do." Crowes singer Chris Robinson doesn't ape Plant's vocalisms—at least not to the extent that David Coverdale or The Cult's Ian Astbury once did—because he doesn't really have to: his is a bluesy voice built to belt a tune like "You Shook Me." The real treat on this set, recorded at Los Angeles's Greek Theatre at the end of a short American tour and only available online through Musicmaker.com, are layered-in-the-studio tunes like "Nobody's

Fault But Mine" and "Ten Years Gone," where the three-guitar lineup allows this ensemble to do some things Zeppelin never had the personnel to pull off live.

When the Seattle-via-Boise, Idaho band Built To Spill signed with Warner some years back, few expected the arrangement to last more than an album or two. After all, for all the critical kudos that BTS has collected over the past decade, the band proffers a brand of psychedelically skewed indie rock that likely would have had a hard time finding a mainstream audience even when alt-rock was on the rise in the early '90s. Besides, Doug Martsch looks more like the dad he is than a rock star, and his adenoidal voice is, well, an acquired taste. *Live Album* marks number three for the BTS/Warner Bros. team, and while it's not going to win over any new fans, it is a powerful display of one of the things this band does best, namely cutting way-loose on extended guitar odysseys like the nearly 20-minute "Broken Chairs" and an absolutely ripping 20-plus-minute cover of Neil Young's "Cortez The Killer." There are also briefer moments of relative pop clarity, like the four-minute "Stop The Show," but *Live Album* has more in the way of classic guitar heroics here than the Crowes' Zep set, and that's saying something. >>>Matt Ashare



OUT:
 March 7.
FILE UNDER:
 (It's been a long time since) I rock 'n' rolled.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Led Zeppelin, The Yardbirds, Physical Graffiti (the Led Zep cover band).



OUT:
 April 18.
FILE UNDER:
 Post-indie guitar heroism.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Dinosaur Jr., Treepeople, Neil Young.

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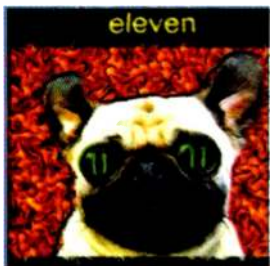
By The Way Slabco

Dynamite D is a cut-and-scratch guy who's probably better known in the context of indie rock than hip-hop—he's remixed tracks by 764-HERO and Modest Mouse, among others. His first solo album shows off his collection of obscure vinyl breaks, his knack for live instrumentation, his clever ways with a beat and his solid turntable prowess; what it doesn't have is much that sets him apart from anybody else who can stick a kick drum under a cocktail-lounge groove and an answering-machine message. The one track on *By The Way* with really extraordinary scratching ("No Excuses," featuring a

OUT:
April 25.
FILE UNDER:

Beats and scratches.
R.I.Y.L.:
Kid Koala, DJ Hurricane, Beastie Boys instrumentals.

couple of amusing soundbites trading off with a heavy guitar part) turns out to feature Kid Koala. Almost every piece here has a few snappy gestures (the skip-step beat of "Cold Rock," the old-school electro synth gargle of "No Empty-V"), but they're the kind of gestures that are most effective as context rather than foreground. Even though D keeps his pieces short, they seem somehow unfinished. Occasionally, he'll stumble on a sample worth repeating a few dozen times, like the maniacal Fat Boys yelling, "brrr—stick 'em ha-ha ha-ha stick 'em," and build it into a cool piece of funk. Too often, though, Dynamite's firecrackers are a little damp: They're beats in search of rhymes, or production in search of a song. >>>Douglas Wolk



ELEVEN

Avantgardedog A&M

It's been five years since Eleven's last album, when the Los Angeles band's songs blared from radios and co-founders Natasha Shneider and Alain Johannes shared airwaves, band members and friendships with Pearl Jam, the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Soundgarden. Shneider and Johannes most recently resurfaced to co-write, co-produce and play on much of Chris Cornell's *Euphoria Morning*, but now they and drummer Greg Upchurch have fired up Eleven's engines again. Most immediately evident progression:

OUT:
April 18.
FILE UNDER:

Around the world in 13 songs.
R.I.Y.L.:
Chris Cornell, Smashing Pumpkins, Pond.

They've sharpened their world-music instincts. *Avantgardedog's* guitars and drums vie for attention among an array of Eastern instruments such as sitar and tabla. Not that Eleven is hangin' at the Cornershop; the closest the duo comes to lighthearted and whimsical is the ace pop track "It's Okay" and the three quickie instrumentals—about one minute each—that testify to the band's world leanings. Most of the new rock-flavored songs range from brooding to dramatic, albeit with Eleven's signature psychedelic flourishes. In the sidwinding "All Falls Away," a banjo-plucked melody sticks in a rut until a rousing chorus lets Johannes's effected vocals and thick guitar riffs run the show. It's a memorable tune that sets the course for a bizarre and fascinating journey. >>>Richard Martin



ECHOBOY

Vol. 1 Mute

English knob-tweaker Richard Warren (a.k.a. Echoboy) is trying to find new intersections between his track-maker's groove sense and his songwriter's sensibility. The former tends to win out here; only a couple of these eight mostly longish pieces involve singing, and the best is the nine-minute "Constantinople," an unfiltered dub tribute to Augustus Pablo, complete with a lead melodica part and percussion that sounds like hammered sheet metal. Warren's favorite trick is coming up with something that sounds like the introduction to a song, then extending and intensifying it until

OUT:
May 9.
FILE UNDER:

A rocking in electroland.
R.I.Y.L.:
Underworld, late Talk Talk, recent Primal Scream.

it's clear that it's never going to become one. The lightly fingered guitar and hissing drum machine at the beginning of "Broken Hearts" could be the red carpet for a first verse, but the spotlight turns out to be focused on his high-density percussion programming. Likewise, the forest of moaning and shivering strings in "Crocodile Milk" grows too dense for a voice, and only thins at the end for a heartbeat and the sound of water. Despite its title, *Vol. 1* isn't the first album Warren has made as Echoboy, and he's yet to match the time-warping splendor of his debut single, "Flashlegs." Still, his constructions have the lush, repetitive detail of progressive electronica, and when they let go of the songwriter's impulse toward brevity, they stretch out and billow. >>>Douglas Wolk



MARIANNE FAITHFULL

Vagabond Ways Instinct

After having dawdled with kindred spirits Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill for a couple of albums, the bruised but unbowed heroine of wretched-excess survivors everywhere returns to the sort of moody grown-up pop that has been the cornerstone of her second career. Her voice has hardened since her late-'70s comeback; still fibrous, it's pitched at a tough, nearly androgynous level, as though her earlier vulnerability had shriveled behind a carapace of fuck-all assertiveness. It's not exactly appealing but it's certainly expressive, and appropriate for the songs of *Spider*

OUT:
April 25.
FILE UNDER:

Bruised-but-unbowed grown-up pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
Leonard Cohen, Françoise Hardy, Marlene Dietrich.

Woman love here, like Daniel Lanois's "Marathon Kiss" and Elton John and Bernie Taupin's "For Wanting You"—the latter written expressly for this album with all the enervated meandering one would, at this point, expect from this veteran show-biz duo. The other thematic strain here is curdled nostalgia, as on the title cut and "File It Under Fun From The Past," as well as a wonderfully evocative piece by Roger Waters, written in '68 but never before recorded, called "Incarceration Of A Flower Child," a psychedelic soap opera with a really, really bummed story line. All these bad vibes would seem like some sort of shtick if it weren't for the mordant way Faithfull attacks her material. She may be too crusty to ever really sound sad again, but she certainly sounds sincere.

>>>Richard C. Walls



THE FLYS ★
Outta My Way Trauma

With the pop music market completely targeting little girls, what are little boys supposed to listen to? They could do worse than The Flys. Post-grunge surfer dudes who spike tales of adolescent awkwardness with guitar crunch and a touch of hip-hop, The Flys probably sound really boss to the too-old-for-Pokemon, too-young-for-learner's-permits set, and almost endearingly quaint to anyone older. Remember the band's hit from a couple years ago, "Got You (Where I Want You)," with its Soundgarden-y stomp, soaring falsetto howls, and nyah-nyah sneering—all on a freaking power ballad?

OUT:
 April 11
FILE UNDER:
 Post-grunge pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Korn, Limp Bizkit, Green Day.

Well, they're still mining that ample vein of teenage confusion (mostly about girls), arranging it to a Ritalin beat, sounding like nothing so much as Korn or Limp Bizkit with training wheels. Plus, junior high students may even find the CD educational, in a historical way. "Damn" wittily quotes "You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby," daringly referencing a pre-rock song for an audience that regards Nirvana as classical music. And the concluding "Hawaiian Dream," a nine-minute ukulele epic, is as jaw-droppingly goofy as any of those vaudeville symphonies The Beach Boys churned out during Brian Wilson's late-'60s/early-'70s out-of-his-gourd period. Plus, The Flys look like they could kick 'N Sync's asses. >>>Gary Susman



THE FOR CARNATION
The For Carnation Touch And Go

TFC's Brian MacMahan is, one assumes, equally sick of a) people who are only interested in his new band because he was in seminal indie experimenters Slint, and b) people who don't like his new band because it doesn't sound like Slint. That said, the group's debut full-length (six songs, 45 minutes) has more connection with the Louisville sluggers than previous EPs (at least, with the parts of *Spiderland* between the parts that rocked out). Ex-Slintmate Britt Walford shows up on "Being Held," though permanent member Steve Goodfriend (Radar Bros.) ably holds down the math-groove elsewhere. Despite the

OUT:
 April 4.
FILE UNDER:
 Post-minimal mystery rock.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Low, Godspeed You Black Emperor!, Rachel's.

rotating-drummer conceit and assorted guests shots (Kim Deal, That Dog's Rachel Haden), this Los Angeles-based in-Carnation is an actual band, with strong contributions from guitarist/brother Michael McMahan and sampler whiz Bobb Bruno. (Tortoise's John McEntire mans the mixboard; beyond a few dub tricks, he's unobtrusive.) The group wrings surprising variety from its minimal, change-the-texture-not-the-chord m.o. The main riff of "Tales (Live From The Crypt)" might have been transplanted from an early Sabbath song, while "Emp. Man Blues" (with strings arranged by Christian Fredrickson of Rachel's) is a lush-but-abstract soul workout. As always, McMahan's cryptic lyrics beggar interpretation, though the prominence of his whispery voice in the mix indicates that they've got some significance, at least for him. >>>Franklin Bruno

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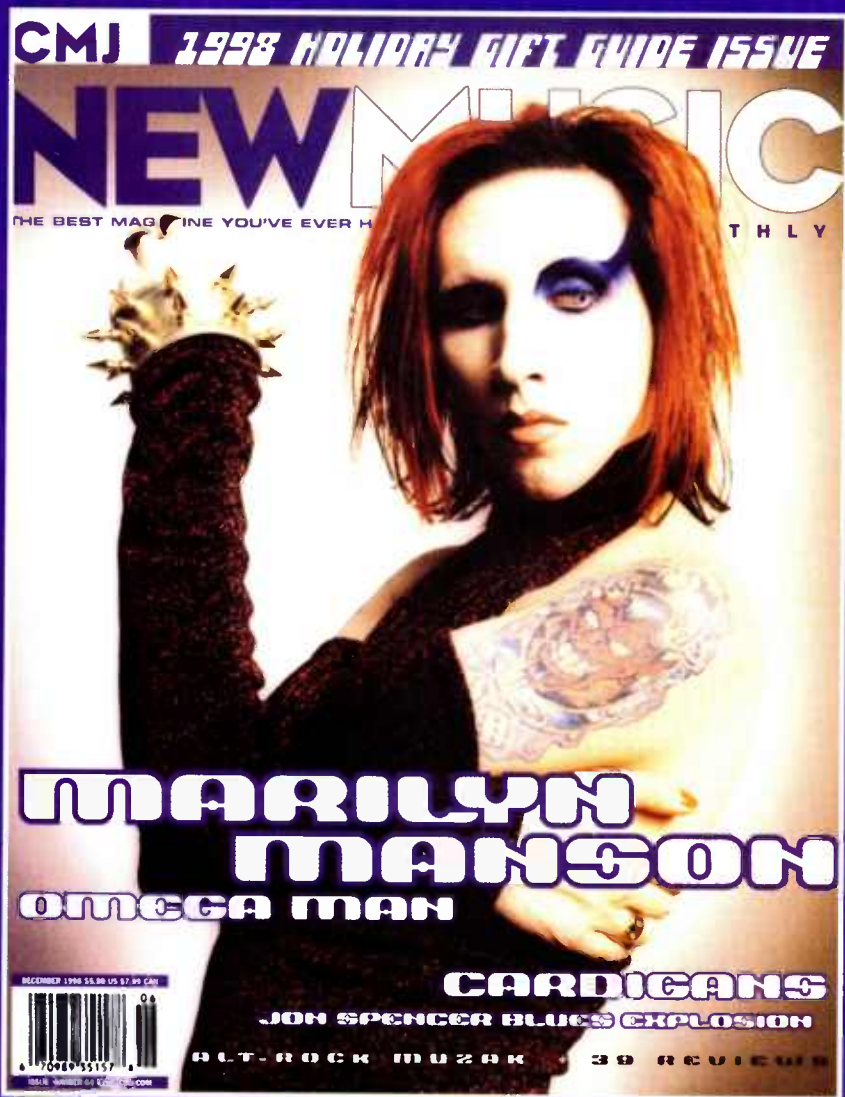


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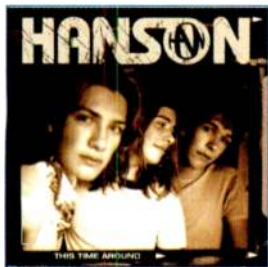
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HANSON

This Time Around Island Def Jam

To think they're blamed for starting it all: the rampage of Generation Y, the return of goopy pop, the failure of electronica—in an Mmm-bop it was gone, say punters, thanks to Hanson. But really, the Tulsa-born, Breck-haired Hanson brothers had no more in common with the Spice Girls in 1997 than they do with 'N Sync now. So let's start Hanson's redemption: Not only do Isaac, Taylor and Zac have chops as instrumentalists, they've just written and coproduced a great sophomore disc. *This Time Around* won't appease Hanson-haters, but it shows more versatility and skill than most of today's radio-ready

OUT:

May 9.

FILE UNDER:

Growing up nicely.

R.I.Y.L.:

Rhino's *Have A Nice Day* series, Ben Folds Five, The Partridge Family.

acts. Middle brother Taylor's voice has deepened, but harmlessly: He still has that growl and sounds, warmly, like a kid. As on their throwback debut, *Middle Of Nowhere*, the less "relevant" Hanson tries to be, the better the band is, which makes *Around's* gospel-flavored title track, the sitar-dewy "Save Me" and the *Partridge Family* homage "Sure About It" standouts, while the regrettable boy-band ballad, "Love Song," is simply pointless. Hanson is simply too much of a rock band to ever enjoy Backstreet-style fame again, and that's a promising development. >>>Chris Molanphy



ALVIN YOUNGBLOOD HART

Start With The Soul Rykodisc

On his sophomore album, *Territory*, Hart expanded his palette from his acoustic blues debut to include Western Swing, a Beefheart cover and an increasingly electrified sound. He follows that up on *Start With The Soul*, recorded in Memphis with maverick producer Jim Dickinson (Big Star, Ry Cooder, The Replacements). The result is as greasy and tasty as good barbecue, but that's not the only flavor Hart picked up in Memphis. The R&B standard "Treat Her Like A Lady" becomes perfect Stax soul; "Back To Memphis" could have come out of the original Sun Studios; and "A Prophet's Mission" and

OUT:

April 25.

FILE UNDER:

Memphis soul stew.

R.I.Y.L.:

Willie Mitchell, Eric Gale, Booker T & The MGs.

"Will I Ever Get Back Home?" are a reminder that Memphis is the traditional home of the blues. A solid groove keeps Hart grounded, even on wild guitar flights of fancy like "Porch Monkeys' Theme." This is the sound of a man searching for the heart of American music, and quite possibly finding it. It's as far from slick as you can get—truly down-home—but Hart nails every tune. A relatively young talent who's already been the subject of much critical acclaim, Hart has come a long way in a short time. *Start With The Soul* proves that he's still a contender. >>>Chris Nickson

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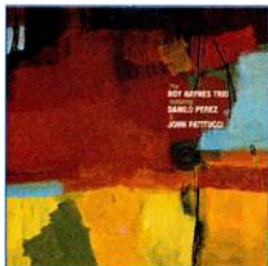
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**THE ROY HAYNES TRIO
FEATURING DANILO PEREZ
AND JOHN PATTITUCCI**

**The Roy Haynes Trio Featuring
Danilo Perez And John Pattitucci**

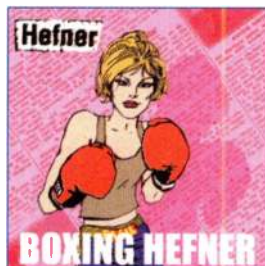
Verve

The trio format is in many ways the crucible for drummers, as their strengths, or lack thereof, are naked for all to hear. That's one reason why this ensemble is such a powerful and illuminating display of 75-year-old Haynes's talents. Haynes shows himself to be much more than a mere time-keeper, using his sticks to state the melody of tunes while also shoving, nudging or simply creating a soft bed for explorations by pianist Perez or bassist

OUT:
April 18.
FILE UNDER:
Straight-ahead, man.

R.I.Y.L.:
Kenny Clarke, Elvin Jones, Max Roach.

Pattitucci. Haynes stands among the foremost drummers in jazz history, having played and recorded with Sarah Vaughan, John Coltrane, Rahsaan Roland Kirk and all the legends in between. Perez, a young dynamo with a Latin-tinged touch, brings a fresh take to Monk's lopsided "Bright Mississippi" and Bud Powell's "Wail." The disc also includes material by Duke Ellington and a number of Haynes' past musical associates, including Pat Metheny, Miles Davis and Chick Corea. Pattitucci has a warm tone and a quick mind, making him an easy fit for the material, half of which was recorded before a live audience at Sculler's Jazz Club in Boston. >>>Bill Kistiuk



HEFNER

Boxing Hefner Too Pure-Beggars Banquet

Hefner singer Darren Hayman can't help himself. Words—lots and lots of them—come pouring out of the guy like the bitter oceans of beer, whiskey and other emotionally scarring spirits he can't bring himself to stop singing about. On the British band's third album (technically, a compilation comprised mostly of early singles and BBC tracks), Hayman wraps his verses about spurned love, self-loathing and spectacular longing in a cocoon of epic narcissism and scathing critiques of everything from cocktail-hour social mores to post-coital etiquette. In

OUT:
May 9.
FILE UNDER:
Vorbose, narvel-gazing Britpop.
R.I.Y.L.:
Pulp, Violent Femmes, Buzzcocks.

Hefner's mansion, the eternal battle of the sexes is alive and well. What do you expect from a band who named its last album *The Fidelity Wars*? Hayman's voice—a preening, adenoidal sob that falls somewhere between the Violent Femmes' Gordon Gano and The Buzzcocks' Pete Shelley—is ostentatiously well-suited to songs named "The Hymn For The Things We Didn't Do." As phenomenally self-absorbed as they are, these odes to heartbreak and betrayal might be endlessly grating if they weren't so eloquent and astute at capturing a real sense of human frailty. On "Lee Remick" (not the Go-Betweens song of the same name), Hayman wonders aloud: "All my pretty friends who just grew up and failed/ And what if I've failed? What if I've failed already?" If this clever, often ingenious work constitutes failure, I'd love to hear what success sounds like. >>>Jonathan Perry

**PRIMAL SCREAM
XTRMNTMTR**

XTRMNTMTR features appearances and production work by **Jagg Kooner**, **Kevin Shields** (My Bloody Valentine), **The Chemical Brothers**, **Hugo Nicolson**, **David Holmes**, **The Automator**, **Brendan Lynch**, **Bernard Sumner** (New Order), **Tim Holmes** (Death In Vegas), in addition to a stellar line up that includes **Mani** (ex Stone Roses).

ASTRALWERKS
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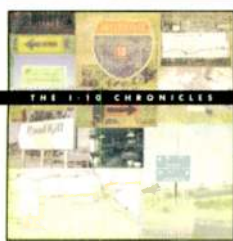
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	05.28.00 NYC	06.01.00 CHICAGO	06.06.00 DENVER	06.11.00 SEATTLE	

World Radio History

VARIOUS ARTISTS

The I-10 Chronicles Back Roads-Virgin



OUT:

March 28.

FILE UNDER:

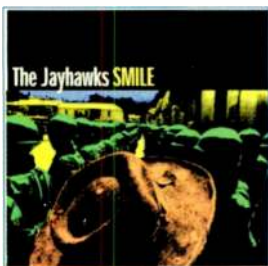
Roots redux.

R.I.Y.L.:

Santana, Traveling Wilburys, Los Lobos.

Don't Care About Me," the most twangy of the cuts. But while Adam Duritz of Counting Crows croaks through a near-death "Carmelita," his seniors know better how to survive this road: Charlie Musselwhite finds the blues in "Black Magic Woman," flattening the Santana trademark into cool understatement. And when Willie Nelson breezes through a cover of "Everybody's Talkin'," venturing into lyrical detours the composer probably never intended, one can only wish he had followed the I-10 into Louisiana and tried his hand at some of the bayou classics as well.

>>>Clea Simon



OUT:

May 9.

FILE UNDER:

Grown-up pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Wilco, The Silos, Fleetwood Mac.

THE JAYHAWKS ★

Smile Columbia

"Smile when you're down and out," sings Gary Louris on the title track of The Jayhawks' sixth album, *Smile*. That's no doubt how Louris has managed to keep his band going since the mid-'80s, despite what may be the unluckiest career in rock, replete with label troubles, lack of a breakthrough record and the 1995 departure of founding member and co-frontman Mark Olson. When Louris took the reins of the Minneapolis group, though, the pop streak that cut across its rootsy rock broadened, and it has come to full fruition on *Smile*, a far more optimistic affair than the act's last release, 1997's

Sound Of Lies. The dual lead vocals of Olson and Louris that were sorely missed on *Sound* have been replaced by the lush harmonies of keyboardist Karen Grotberg and drummer Tim O'Reagan. Louris employs the same chord progressions that built songs of soaring beauty on previous Jayhawks discs, and his hooks still often reference '70s radio hits. But producer Bob Ezrin (Pink Floyd, Kula Shaker) broadens the classic sound with string sections and big rock guitar solos to great effect. Still, the Jayhawks haven't completely lost that penchant for roots rock—it's evident in the pedal steel guitar on "A Break In The Clouds" and mandolin on "I'm Gonna Make You Love Me." >>>Meredith Ochs



TONIC
MEDESKI MARTIN & WOOD

MEDESKI MARTIN & WOOD

TONIC

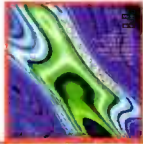
25271

For their first official live album, Medeski Martin & Wood have thrown electronics aside for a thrilling set of acoustic musical magic. Recorded last year during a week-long engagement at New York's downtown club Tonic, this recording captures the trio in full fire on acoustic piano, upright bass and drums.

TOUR DATES

- | | | | |
|---------|--|------|---|
| 5/10 | St. Louis
Mississippi Nights | 6/2 | Portland, OR
Roseland Theater |
| 5/12 | Minneapolis
The Woman's Club | 6/3 | San Francisco
Warfield Theater |
| 5/13 | Chicago
Park West | 6/5 | Oakland
Yoshi's |
| 5/14 | Detroit
Clutch Cargo | 6/6 | Santa Cruz
Palookaville |
| 5/17-18 | Boston
Jordan Hall | 6/8 | Anaheim
Sun Theatre |
| 5/19 | Portland, ME
State Theater | 6/9 | San Diego
4th & B |
| 5/20 | Philadelphia
Zellerbach | 6/10 | Los Angeles
Henry Fonda Theater |
| 6/1 | Seattle
Moore Theater | | |

THE COMP PILE (Our guide to compilation CDs)



TITLE:	Darkwave: Music Of The Shadows V2 (K-Tel)	Getting Into The Grooves: A Tribute To Madonna (Vitamin)	Statra's Paradigm Shift (Statra)	Cuban Nights (Narada)	Straight From The Gutter And Into Your Panties (Junk)
CONCEPT:	An exploration of not-quite-goth, not-quite-industrial darkwave music.	Unknown electronica artists reconstruct the queen of pop.	New electronic label sampler featuring breakbeat and techno of various tempos.	A selection of popular styles and artists from contemporary Cuban music.	Gutter rock riffs and anthems from Junk records stable.
TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC:	Angsty, sad little trolls and those who love them.	Madonna sycophants.	You don't need your DJs to have big names, just big talent.	You know your <i>sones</i> from your <i>timbas</i> —or would like to.	Your main requirement of a rock song is volume.
NAMES TO DROP:	Cocteau Twins, Spahn Ranch, Miranda Sex Garden	Marvin Camras, who has nothing to do with this comp, but invented audio tape recording in the 1940s.	Susumu Yokota, Lypid, Denver McCarthy—drop their names before everyone else does.	Bamboleo, Rolo Martinez, Laito	Hellbenders, Bullys, New Wave Hookers
SUMS IT UP:	"Gush Forth My Tears" (Miranda Sex Garden)	"The Power Of Goodbye" (George Sarah)	"First Reflections" (Denver McCarthy)	"¡Sonando!" (Maraca)	"Rock And Roll Is Dead (And We Don't Care)" (EF2000)
VERDICT:	Something else to buy if you're picking up some black clothes at Walmart.	Justify This Comp: Not as horrible as it could be, but Madonna did a much better job ripping off electronica than these DJs do ripping off Madonna.	Props to Statra for scouring the globe for real talents; this is a label to watch.	Who cares if Ricky Martin is gay, straight or a eunuch? Get beyond the hype of the Latin music "explosion" with this comp.	Big, dumb rawk that's so bad, it's good. Get your mind into the gutter!

V N V N A T I O N

V N V N A T I O N



EMPIRES

EMPIRES (MET 170)

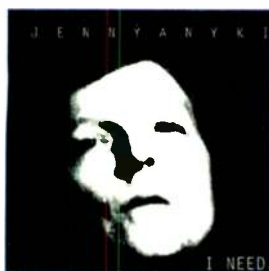
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JENNYANYKIND

I Need You Yep Roc

Chapel Hill's Jennyanykind found rock heaven on its third album, 1996's *Revelater*, by abandoning grungy bombast and adopting (and adapting) gospel blues instead. With its songs of sin and salvation and its compound of southern blues by way of the Velvet Underground's *Loaded*, *Revelater* was a revelation to the few people who heard it. *I Need You*, the band's fifth album, continues *Revelater*'s mix of urban tension and rural roots, paranoia and faith, Saturday-night celebration and Sunday-morning penance. Recorded at home by brothers Michael and Mark Holland (who

split the vocal duties but share a talking-blues voice), the album favors bass-heavy grooves layered with organ, harmonica or piano colorings, two-chord riffing, slide guitar centerpieces and minimalist blues-structured lyrics. The Holland twins drop a spoonful of Howlin' Wolf into "Young Boy Blues," follow it with "Ballad Of A Thin Man"-type organ chords behind "It's A Wicked World," and then edgy VU riffing on "Why You Wanna Treat Me Like That?" Like Bob Dylan or John Lee Hooker, they're blues guys with rock 'n' roll hearts (or vice versa) who appreciate distortion and volume. True, grooves sometimes take precedence over song development, but that's a minor fault on *I Need You*'s path to salvation. >>>Steve Klingle

OUT:

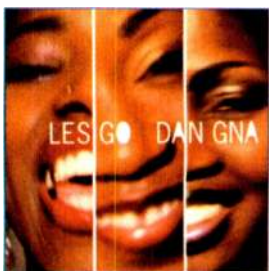
April 25.

FILE UNDER:

Alt-blues rock.

R.I.Y.L.:

Bob Dylan/The Band, Velvet Underground, Giant Sand.



LES GO

Dan Gna Juna

This female vocal trio from the Ivory Coast was already comfortable fusing West African roots with smooth international pop before teaming up with producer Bruce Swedien (Quincy Jones, Michael Jackson) to create this polished, pretty set of songs. Les Go's tight, strong vocal sound takes center stage, and the act's stylistic versatility is a plus. A shifting lineup of support players lets them rev into Afro-Cuban pop ("Faso Den"), feline funk ("Mother") and moody dance floor Afropop ("Dan Gna"), or settle into soulful west African grooves ("Theba" and "Na M'bara"). "Sou" builds around a riff

played on a traditional lute. Benin's star singer Angeliqye Kidjo sidles into the mix, and the four women construct satisfying vocal vignettes over a spare vamp. A cover of the Hall & Oates single "I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)" seems calculated for the French pop charts. The music is intensely careful and controlled throughout, although live drumming and bass playing saves it from the canned feeling that mars a lot of similarly slick African pop. Busy keyboard playing works well enough on the funky material, but it spoils the mood on quieter numbers, making you long for the real thing when it resorts to imitating horns and traditional African instruments. >>>Barning Eyre

OUT:

May 9.

FILE UNDER:

Female-vocalized African pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Angeliqye Kidjo, Zap Mama.

the JAZZ MANDOLIN PROJECT



XENoBLaST



25251



Led by mandolin virtuoso Jamie Masefield, JMP has quickly jumped to the forefront of an exciting movement in jazz. The trio's hard-playing live shows have electrified thousands of fans across the country. XENOBLAST marks an auspicious Blue Note debut.

Tour Dates

	6/2	New York
5/10	Charlotte	6/6 Burlington
5/11	Winston-Salem	6/11 Pittsburgh
5/12	Philadelphia	

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Q: What is "OPERATION: HIJACK THE PLANET"?
A: A MISSION TO INSERT DIVERSITY, CREATIVITY, AND RISK BACK INTO HIP-HOP CULTURE

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reviews



LIQUID SOUL Here's The Deal Shanachie

Acid jazz is too narrow a label for Liquid Soul's work. With more members than Wu-Tang Clan but fewer than the Count Basie Orchestra, the ever-expanding ensemble has also found labels of hip-hop, funk and swing too confining. On its third release, the Chicago combo goes beyond a mere fusion of these elements and renders all pigeonholing academic. After all, rap started as another way to get people out onto the floor, as did swing and bop; no matter how respectable Duke and Dizzy made it for chin-stroking, cigarette-smoking intellectuals, big band music was always about dancing first and

OUT:
 April 25.
FILE UNDER:
 Acid jazz and beyond.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Us3, James Brown, Herbaliser.

foremost. *Here's The Deal* further proves Liquid Soul's case that the missing link between jazz and hip-hop was James Brown's horn section, as tight as a military inspection and as loose as Saturday night. Mixing live and studio cuts as seamlessly as they do genres, the musicians work in lockstep to create a furious, all-consuming groove, turning even Miles Davis's supremely contemplative "All Blues" into a rhythmic workout that would put a smile on his too-cool scowling mug. Adding a touch of grace are the vocals of Simone (as in Nina's last-name-only daughter), who proves, like the rest of the band, that the musical DNA has lined up nicely.

>>>Gary Susman



LOOPER The Geometrid Sub Pop

Looper's always been a little more like an art project than a band. It began as the sideline of Belle & Sebastian bassist Stuart David and his wife, artist Karn David, who staged visually rich live shows with Super-8 films and onstage sculptures and wrote cute, synthy songs that picked up where Stuart's spoken B&S stories ("Space Boy Dream" and "Century Of Elvis") left off. Stuart, who recently published his debut novel, *Nalda Said*, has left B&S, and Looper's second album seems the immediate beneficiary. Whereas the group's debut, 1999's *Up A Tree*, got by on naivete, the songs on *The*

OUT:
 May 9.
FILE UNDER:
 iMac indie pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Land Of The Loops, Clinton, Magnetic Fields, White Town.

Geometrid, built of electronic beats, playful synth bits and chiming guitars, are more fully formed. And the band itself now boasts a stable four-person lineup. Technology emerges as the disc's loose theme with "Modem Song"—one of the better tunes built around the blurring and clanking of modem connection static—the new wave-y "My Robot" ("I thought I'd teach my robot how to write all my songs/ I sent off for the book that told me how to rearrange its circuits") and "Tomorrow's World." Stuart and Karn's voices entwine beautifully on the bouncy "Uncle Ray" and the wistful ballad "These Things." These are all tunes that exude charm and wit, while proving that arty pretensions don't preclude quality songwriting. >>>Lydia Vanderloo

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MIRIAM MAKEBA

Homeland Putumayo

Back in the '60s, Miriam Makeba became the first African singer to make waves globally. She's kept her mantle, even though her output in the past decade hasn't always lived up to her promise. This is Makeba's most solid effort since her *Graceland*-era release, *Sangoma*. She cooks up satisfying pop tracks like "Masakhane," which delivers a sweet take on the pendulous downbeat swing of the townships, as well as a punchy remake of her 1956 classic "Pata Pata," the song that made her. Soulful ballads like "Africa Is Where My Heart Lies" border on syrup, but Makeba hasn't lost her knack

OUT:

April 25.

FILE UNDER:

South African pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

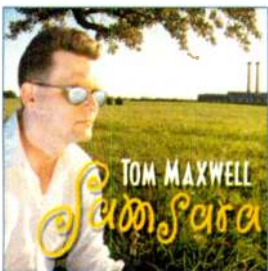
Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Mahlatini And The Mahotella Queens, Hugh Masekela

for irresistible hook melodies. The punchy title track is particularly strong, an anthem to a newfound sense of peace after all the struggles of the past. Makeba's voice has more growl than it used to, but it remains a formidable instrument capable of bird-like sweetness ("Amaliya"), smoky jazz swell ("Lindelani," a collaboration with Congolese vocal innovator Lokua Kanza) and true grit ("Homeland"). Given the hard road behind her, Makeba can be forgiven a little sentimentality. Her delivery transcends well-worn clichés in her lyrics, rendering them newly authentic. With the help of fine collaborators, Makeba has produced an album worthy of her legendary status. »»Banning Eyre

TOM MAXWELL

Samsara TMR

Jazz fans tend to dump on the Squirrel Nut Zippers and other travelers in the so-called swing movement as campy poseurs. True, the originals (Billie, Louis, Bechet) pack an inimitable authority, and the Lincoln Center Jazz crowd can probably bop 'em in a cutting contest. But the neo-swing gang also flaunts something that most "real" jazz cats are too cool to stoop to: a naked display of their desire to connect with an audience. Former Zipper Tom Maxwell (he wrote the breakthrough hit "Hell") presents a varied program that gets you scratching your head for comparisons to sources in



OUT:

May 16.

FILE UNDER:

Viper jazz.

R.I.Y.L.:

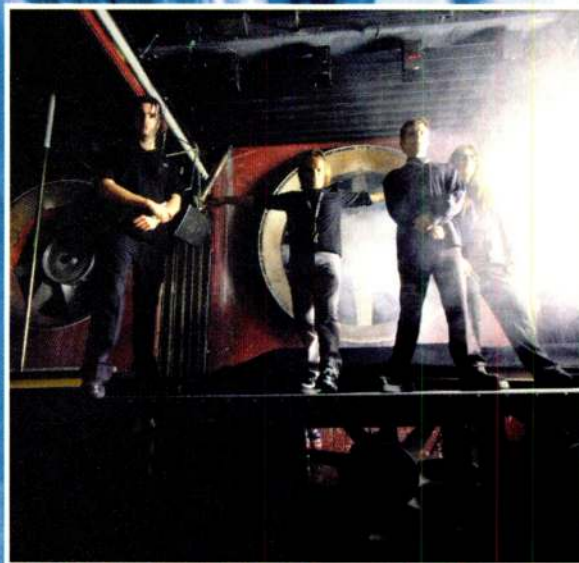
Squirrel Nut Zippers, Louis Armstrong's Hot Fives And Sevens, Don Byron's Bag Music.

ancient jazz and pop. What's with that post-gospel, proto-doo-wop male vocal quartet ("Can't Sleep," "Roll Them Bones")? Or the Fats Waller pipe organ-and-vocals ("You Always Get What's Coming")? Or the touch of opium-den Chinese opera ("Some Born Singing")? Yes, there's plenty of hot jazz here, even a credible take on Ellington's "The Mooche." But by album's end, when a lightly plucked harp introduces Holly Harding Baddour singing the title song and then floating out on a cloud of mournful reeds, you realize that you've gotten something rare enough on a CD of any genre: a fully imagined musical world that echoes with the haunting depths of prose fiction. »»Jon Garelick

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moe.

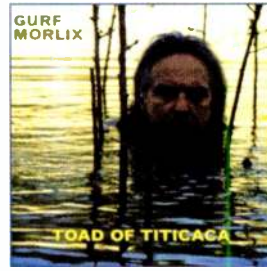
L Fatboy

Jam bands don't mean to alienate anyone. Genre jumping, chatterless song segues and lengthy tangential improvisations just aren't what everyone wants to hear. But moe. has found an audience for its brand of jam, and that audience has found a band that delivers. *L*, a two-hour-plus live double-disc set from the New York act, opens with an a cappella harmonized absurdist intro—"You say potato and I say three." Then it's 12 minutes before that begins to morph into the reggae-ish "Buster," which moves the groove for another 23 minutes. It's a jam fan's fantasy and radio's worst nightmare. Ditto the

"Timmy Tucker"/"Recreational Chemistry" marathon, which clocks in at 41 minutes. Live discs are generally intended for the faithful; *L* is no different. Otherwise the show might've begun with the shorter tunes on disc two. As is, the sequence sets the stage for yet another hour on *L Version 3.1*, available only at www.moe.org. With or without *3.1*, quality matches quantity throughout. *L* offers a showcase of styles—from twangy country to funky bass-popping to straight-up rock—three previously unrecorded songs, and a crispness that bootlegs lack. Enough to satisfy the most discriminating jam fan. >>>Robin A. Rothman

OUT:
April 11
FILE UNDER:

Cred and jam for fanses.
R.I.Y.L.:
Zappa, Camper Van Beethoven, Grateful Dead.



GURF MORLIX

Toad Of Titicaca Catamount

Gurf Morlix is probably as well known for his falling out with Lucinda Williams as he is for the marvelous guitar playing and production he contributed to her records over the years. But *Toad Of Titicaca* will put him on the map in his own right, and not just for its strange title, a reference to real-life toads indigenous to a certain Louisiana pond. Though Morlix has been a guitar slinger for numerous acts since the early '70s, this is his first solo album—an effort that's low-key but highly entertaining. Like another ubiquitous roots rocking sideman-cum-songwriter, Duane Jarvis (also a Williams alum),

OUT:
April 11
FILE UNDER:

Seasoned roots-pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
Duane Jarvis, Wayne Hancock, Holy Modal Rounders.

Morlix combines the twang he loves with the British Invasion and '60s soul music on which he was weaned. Special guest Ian McLagan's glistening Hammond B3 organ is a treat on "You Don't Know Me" and on the Memphis soul style "I Blunder On." And like Jarvis, Morlix isn't afraid to use humor in song—the *Bonanza*-themed bridge of "Dan Blocker," which name-drops the cast of the '60s television series, is highly amusing. *Toad's* name isn't completely in vain, though. "Robin Sings At Midnight" is appropriately swampy, thanks to Morlix's wiry Weissenborn lap guitar and his jug-blowing, which mimics the sound of critters exhaling beneath the surface of muddy waters. >>>Meredith Ochs

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NEW WET KOJAK

Do Things Beggars Banquet

Girls Against Boys' last album, *Freak'on'ica*, neither moved past nor expanded upon its idiosyncratic industrial-pop sex rock. But *New Wet Kojak* offers GVSB moonlighters Scott McCloud and Johnny Temple a forum to nudge boundaries. More than NWK's two prior records (a 1995 self-titled debut was followed by *Nasty International* in 1997), *Do Things* drops the punk edge that blunted, mostly brilliantly, earlier NWK and GVSB. A decadent, dark underbelly still permeates, but in the brave-new-world dance pop of the title track, with its seductive house beats and sublime violin

OUT:
May 9.
FILE UNDER:

Jazzy industrial pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
Girls Against Boys, Love And Rockets, Morphine.

and cello break, NWK discovers a new atmospheric esthetic. Later, "USA" finds McCloud playing the voyeur, egged on by belligerent sax honks instead of the sexual musing he usually turns to social satire. In the loneliness and self-loathing evoked in the autoerotic discussion "Auto E," McCloud and Temple are practically involved with emotion, breaking away from their ritual of the cool detachment. But in the end, for better or worse, that distinct, stylish GVSB verve remains very firmly intact. >>>Linda Laban





NOOGIE ★
Learn To Swim Trauma

Surf/skate rock gets a surprising infusion of maturity from Sydney, Australia's Noogie, despite the band's juvenile choice of a moniker. Not that the young four-piece, a year or two out of high school, has completely abandoned the NOFX-isms of its teen years—the band still holds a slight grudge against a rival school band, for example, and briskly address it with “Mr. Fabulous”—but this 10-song debut shares some of the same grown-up nuances that earned down-under elders Silverchair notice for their 1995 debut. Like that group's Daniel Johns, Noogie songwriter/vocalist/guitarist Nick Hyde

OUT:
March 7.
FILE UNDER:
The young and the restless.
R.I.Y.L.:
Ash, Green Day, The Pixies.

eloquently captures the awkward passage from adolescence to young adulthood without fully giving in to either developmental stage. The disc's varied tempos and arrangements highlight Noogie's keen sense of melody, especially on “Let It Flow” and “Danger,” while “Remote Controller (TV Screen)” sets a thoughtful rumination on a bad relationship and the telly's paralyzing effects to ethereal, watery songwriting. Three-minute standards (“I'd Rather Float,” “Six Little Days” and “Meantime”) are the specialty here, but “Remote Controller” stretches successfully to five minutes—a sign that the band at least has the potential for continued growth. >>>Mark Woodlief



PAPA ROACH
Infest DreamWorks

Once any genre breaks, flimsy soundalikes are always destined to arrive. In the scramble to find the next Pearl Jam and Nirvana, we end up with STP and Bush (admittedly more resilient to the bargain-bin-debut syndrome than their hair-metal predecessors). And then it's flannel-flying fashion spreads, suicides and overdoses, greatest-hits packages for the lucky, and back to the 9-to-5 cappuccino-bar gig for those who aren't. Papa Roach ushers in the Bushification of rap-metal. It isn't a question of authenticity; it's one of quality, because the followers are never quite as

OUT:
April 25.
FILE UNDER:
Children Of The Korn.
R.I.Y.L.:
P.O.D., Rage Against The Machine, Limp Bizkit, Korn.

convincing as the artists who lead a trend. The Bay Area quartet has been kicking around since 1993 and led up to *Infest* with four EPs and a full-length. This second DreamWorks effort is essentially 11 tracks (plus a decent, hidden reggae-dub track) of canned grudge-groove—the hardcore-funk stylings of Rage without the grease in the rhythm section and the dynamics in the rants. And although subtle and complex guitar interplay, a couple of ballads and ballad-style vocals over hefty axe-grinding add dimension, when all is said and done, it's hard not to roll your eyes and mutter, “Not this again.” >>>Lorne Behrman

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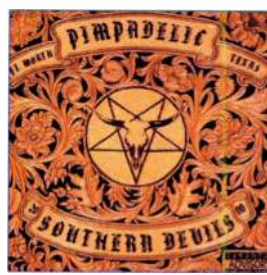


PHISH
Farmhouse Elektra

Jerry Garcia's justification for allowing fans free reign to tape Grateful Dead shows included the suggestion that the band he led for so many years never recorded a great studio album. These days, tape trading is crucial to the jam-band scene. But, as evidenced by *Farmhouse*, Phish is one band of jammers who believe in the relevance of studio recordings, a particularly difficult feat when most of the tunes here have enjoyed years in live rotation. The title track, for example, debuted on *Late Night With Conan O'Brien* in 1997. The band played it eight days later at a Denver performance and recently released it as part of a live box

OUT:
May 16.
FILE UNDER:
Radio-ready hippie hits.
R.I.Y.L.:
Beatles, Bela Fleck, Talking Heads.

set. The super-produced "Heavy Things" originated on guitarist Trey Anastasio's solo tour last year, as did the almost seven-minute instrumental "First Tube," which borrows back from the Phish-influenced Disco Biscuits' live electronica jam sound. "The Inlaw Josie Wales" is a Bela Fleck-esque instrumental which by name is new but was actually formerly known as "Minestrone" (among other things). The studio has afforded Phish an opportunity to present these songs in short form—not layered as much as the similarly short songs on their last album, but minimalist versions where every note and noise counts and stands out. This leaves only two minutes of the sweet, acoustic "Sleep." And the loopy "Piper" loses some of its usually subtle build but gains a more straight-to-the-chase intensity instead. Contrary to common belief, short can be good. If the tight, solid groove of "Sand" doesn't convince you, nothing will. >>>Robin A. Rothman



PIMPADELIC
Southern Devils Tommy Boy

It isn't Kid Rock, but the born-to-lose, studied indifference (if there is a Lord in heaven, please, let it be okay to care again someday soon) of Pimpadelic's *Southern Devils* sure could pass for a Kid Rock disc. The Fort Worth-based band—two MCs, a drummer, a bass player and a DJ—brazenly cop the sound, vibe and salacious vision of the Detroit Kid on its Tommy Boy debut. Obvious A-B-A-B rhyme schemes? Enough gynecological references to desensitize Tipper Gore? Simplistic grade-school beats and hair-metal guitar riffs that depend on being obscured by high-energy expletives? It's all here, as if

OUT:
April 18.
FILE UNDER:
Kid rock.
R.I.Y.L.:
Kid Rock, Eminem, Insane Clown Posse.

by checklist. Even the album's title apes the Kid's breakout *Devil Without A Cause*. All that's missing is the midget with the extra-large penis. So lame is this white-trash tapestry of boasts and misogynistic meanderings, it is painful to note that the two MCs—Easy Jesus and Dirty K—are actually capable of juggling their flow fairly well, and some of the tracks are undeniably catchy. One ponders, might this be the Kid himself, playing a joke on the record-buying public? >>>Bill Werde

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PINEBENDER
Things Are About To Get Weird Ohio Gold

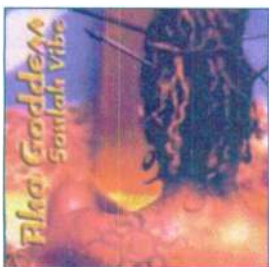
Side projects afford musicians countless luxuries, like beginning an album with a song that cruises around a single groove for eight minutes before the singer shows up. It also allows for tacitly wacky and wordy song titles like the opener of Pinebender's *Things Are About To Get Weird*, "There's A Bag Of Weights In The Back Of My Car." For Joan Of Arc bassist Matt Clark, playing in Pinebender also gives him the liberty to switch to guitar and fiddle around with feedback or trade riffs with guitarist/vocalist Chris Hansen. The two Chicagoans, along with drummer

OUT:
May 2.
FILE UNDER:
Emo side-project weirdness.
R.I.Y.L.:
Archers Of Loaf, Joan Of Arc, June Of 44.

Stephen Howard and guests on fiddle and singing saw, live up to the title of this debut CD while staying close to the line between abject experimentation and traditional emo-punk structure. As a result, a typical Pinebender song starts with an instrumental setting that's variously jazzy and slow or feverishly thrashed, then gives way to Hansen's alternately restrained and throat-shredding vocals. But rather than fall into a formulaic gap, the trio rearranges these pieces into enticing puzzles, staggering seven- or eight-minute tracks with songs half that long; at either length, they can be anthemic or esoteric. When it all ends with "The Depth Of The Silence That Was Reigning Over The Veranda," you may find yourself scrolling back through the disc to find that exquisite noise burst or that mellow moment again, just before things get weird. >>>Richard Martin



OUT:
May 2
FILE UNDER:
Aural Sex.
R.I.Y.L.:
Mos Def, Company Flow, Dead Prez.



OUT:
March 8
FILE UNDER:
More crucial poetics.
R.I.Y.L.:
Queen Latifah, Mike Ladd, Black Star.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Eargasms: Crucialpoetics Vol. 1
Ozone

RHA GODDESS

Soulah Vibe Next Millennium

In the early '90s, just as the Lyricist Lounge was cultivating the next generation of MCs, another New York institution was birthing a parallel type of wordsmith—the spoken-word poet. The NuYorican Poet's Café traded hard rock pretension for, well, intellectual pretension, all in the pursuit of a higher musical form that was built upon hip-hop's foundation but not beholden to it. *Eargasms* is perhaps the best collection of released material that can be more or less attributed to the NuYorican scene, with contributions from a range of hip-hop-influenced poets and poetry-influenced rappers. Originally released in 1998, it's been reissued in response to the increasing popularity of the artists on the compilation—Mos Def, Company Flow, Saul Williams and Sarah Jones, among others. In particular, Saul Williams's "Twice The First Time" has lost none of its piercing impact, with the *Slam* star chanting menacingly, "I will not rhyme over tracks/ Niggas on the chain gang used to do that way back." The collection's most pleasant surprise comes from the duo Righteous Cartel, which sounds like a more thugged-out Dead

Prez: righteous, but rough around the edges. "Who's To Blame?" is a potent tale of social tribulation on which the pair confront their inner demons and those of society: "Am I my brother's keeper?! Fuck, no/ I'm my brother's killer." But *Eargasms* isn't dark throughout: Sarah Jones gets pretty with it on "Metaphor Play," an extended love ode she dedicates to "the pick to my afro/ the touch-up to my perm/ the Erick to my Sermon."

Former Zulu Nation spokesperson Rha Goddess, whose "My Pen" appears on *Eargasms*, has just had her '99 debut EP, *Soulah Vibe*, re-released. It shows Rha at her diverse best, flipping a variety of styles. "Can't Touch This" echoes the flow of Queen Latifah, "Gangsta Religion" is straight-ahead New York hardcore with a message, and the title track even delves into a bit of Southern stutter flow. More important than her delivery, though, is her wisdom. It's hokey at times, but you can't fault her intentions or those of her NuYorican peers: "Sometimes the message lingers in my temple for fear that you can't handle it/ Won't understand it... Yet I'm reminded that it's my own fear of the truth that traps them there." »»Jon Caramanica



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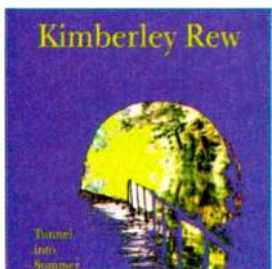
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KIMBERLEY REW

Tunnel Into Summer *Gadfly*

On his first solo outing, Kimberley Rew—formerly guitarist for The Soft Boys and then the pop power behind Katrina & The Waves—proves himself as much influenced by Ray Davies as by former bandmate Robyn Hitchcock. Although, like Hitchcock, Rew displays a fondness for rambling monologues barely disguised as ballads, he lacks Hitchcock's knack for both quirky wordplay and indelible hooks. Instead, the somewhat nasal singer fares better at the wry picaresques of the former Kink, extolling the joys of "Simple Pleasures" in an unsteady but enthusiastic swoop or

OUT:
March 21.
FILE UNDER:
Old-school Britpop.
R.I.Y.L.:
The Kinks, Robyn Hitchcock, Difford & Tilbrook.

lamenting youthful exuberance with soul in "Heart Of The Sun." In such cases, particularly on the booming "Little Ray Of Sunshine," Rew's fractured voice catches an emotional hook, and the underlying songs—largely the theatrical pop at which the Kinks excelled—can support it with music-hall flash and mirrors. Soft Boys colleagues Andy Metcalfe (who produced most of this disc) and Hitchcock lend their skills sporadically throughout (those are Hitchcock's wiry guitar curlicues ornamenting "Tart With The Heart"), as does like-minded Glenn Tilbrook of Squeeze. But what Rew could have used were some of his backers' composing skills. Gone are the breezy radio tunes of the Waves days, and too many cuts here (like the interminable "Beautiful Ruth") rely on an excess of verbiage where a melody is needed. >>>Clea Simon



rinôçérôse

Installation Sonore V2

Oh, to be young, electronic and...French! Welcome rinôçérôse. From the south of France, this duo-turned-stage-crowding ensemble has packed its trendy flight bags with all the most desirable genres: dub, house, electronica and a European pedigree. *Installation Sonore's* 10 cleverly titled instrumentals do well to remind you where they're coming from: the land of *la guitare*. Spearheaded by Jean-Philippe Freu's guitar and stretched tautly across Patrice "Patou" Carrie's bass, rinôçérôse manages to wend its way across the electronic landscape without ever really getting too far out. Unlike its ancestors

OUT:
April 4.
FILE UNDER:
Post-rock instrumentalists from France.
R.I.Y.L.:
Air, Daft Punk, Underworld.

and influences, rinôçérôse, while able to achieve a trance-like state on more than one brief occasion, seems somewhat unwilling to really hit a groove. This isn't always a problem per se—"I Love Ma Guitare" is fantastic, and "Popular Mechanics" is a lovely ambient number that's more rock-inspired than anything else. But only rarely does rinôçérôse make a real impact with its looping, tripping, sometimes too-throwback mixes. The album's opener, "La Guitaristic House Organisation," starts off rocking (its taunting riff is pure Wire-by-way-of-Elastica). But with few exceptions, the rest of the album features too much instrumentation and too little—well, excitement. It is lovely—but only as background music. >>>Liz Clayton

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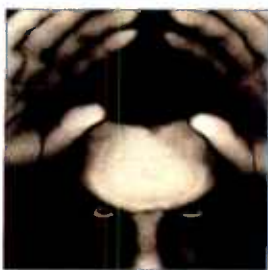
SARGE

Distant *Mud*

Maybe the guitars were too loud. Or the singing too unpredictable, swaying between sweet and vitriolic. For whatever reason, Sarge never translated the barrage of glowing press that greeted the band's first two records into widespread appeal, and now the band has split. It's a shame, given the variously pummeling and sharply melodic stomp of 1998's *The Glass Intact*, which suggested that this Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, quartet would ascend the indie-rock ladder as assuredly as frontwoman Elizabeth Elmore's vocals could rise from whisper to scream. Before the glass shattered

OUT:
April 11.
FILE UNDER:
Parting gifts.
R.I.Y.L.:
Scrawl, Wedding Present, Sleater-Kinney.

completely, Sarge wanted to leave a final document, hence this collection of live tracks ("Stall" and "Homewrecker" among them), B-sides and offbeat covers (Nancy Sinatra's "These Boots Are Made For Walkin'," Cyndi Lauper's "Time After Time" and a brilliantly buzzing emo take on Wham's "Last Christmas"). Surrounding this ratatouille are some bracingly exceptional new tracks: The three that kick off *Distant* spring from some of the final Sarge recording sessions, and flailing rock gems like "Detroit Star-lite" and "Clearer" give no indication that the band had soured. Nor have Elmore's songwriting skills. The final two songs capture her work in a stripped-down, mostly acoustic setting, and the entrancing, fibrous closer "All My Plans Changed" hints at uncertainty while reinforcing the sense that she'll be back before too long. >>>Richard Martin



SPEEDY J

A Shocking Hobby NovaMute

The roughed-up beats of Rotterdam's DJ Speedy J are more than simply fat. They are downright obese. This back-in-the-day experimental techno freak constructs oversized beats you can sit on, rub your booty on and cruise around in a pimped-out car to. Derelict techno bass beats in big old hoodies, sipping 40s at a warehouse party at 3 a.m. Hard, cool, sexy, and possibly dangerous, these beats will scare off a patchouli-doused Deadhead quicker than an undercover Fed. But with Speedy J, it's not just about the girth of the grind. Each tone and rhythm is worked over with a cruel fastidiousness. Layers of

obsessively designed industrial sounds collide and implode, all while remaining tethered to that heavy, heavy beat. Tempos range from the basic head nod to the frenetic dance floor pound, but Speedy interjects the expected with interludes of darkly abstract, post-apocalyptic sound effects. The overall impact is hardass and twisted, yet elements of soft ambient beauty surface throughout. Speedy J expertly drags his beats through the tweaked-out wastelands of technology and makes you wonder if perhaps this is the sound that harsh machinery emits as it makes angry, futuristic love. >>>Amanda Nowinski

OUT:

April 18.

FILE UNDER:

Big bottoms.

R.I.Y.L.:

Plastikman, Luke Vibert.



SPLEEN

Little Scratches Function 8

Since relinquishing his duties as PJ Harvey's drummer, Rob Ellis has apparently not been sleeping very well. His 1996 debut under the Spleen moniker, *Soundtrack To Spleen*, was characterized as much by its sense of paranoia and unease as it was by its discordant musical textures. On *Little Scratches*, he collaborates with members of Laika, 16 Horsepower, PJ Harvey and others to create a series of feverish, near-instrumental set pieces. The album shares much of its predecessor's restless undercurrents, only here they come off as more alluringly sinister, as if Ellis's fitful

nights had suddenly been enlivened by a whiff of eroticism. "In A Silent Violent Way," co-written by Polly Jean Harvey herself, is the album's most successful bit of noirish mood-making: Pairing the dimly lit coo of Harvey soundalike Pinky Maclure with Ellis's gothic organ fills, the song achieves a startling balance between smoky elegance and just-below-the-surface dread. Elsewhere, things take on more experimental, often ominous shadings, from ambient creepers like "The Drone Chorus Of Home" to the discomforting, jazzbo-in-a-psychiatric-ward writhing of "Thatman/Throbbin'." As fractured and heavy-handed as it is at times, there's an unsettling dreamworld in here somewhere, as richly imagined as any David Lynch creation. >>>Colin Helms

OUT:

March 13.

FILE UNDER:

Experimental noir.

R.I.Y.L.:

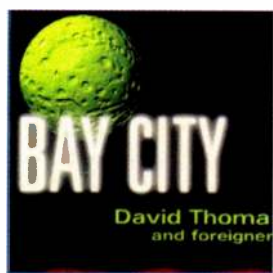
Barry Adamson, Tricky, *Lost Highway* soundtrack, PJ Harvey.

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DAVID THOMAS AND FOREIGNERS

Bay City Thirsty Ear

It isn't that David Thomas is incoherent, it's just that he keeps changing the subject. He is, of course, the lead singer of the long-running surrealistic pillow fight called Pere Ubu, and the Foreigners who join him here are referred to in the album's press kit as "Danish improvisers," which is a mite misleading since they're a pretty tight trio. Comprising Jorgen Teller (guitar and Casio), Per Buhl Acs (clarinet, melodica, slide guitar and bass) and P.O. Jorgens (various percussion and vibraphone), they sound, at times, like one of Beeheart's more disciplined bands,

their preferred modes of playing being a kind of primitive techno-clang and a looser rubato style with free jazz doodads around the fringes. Thomas is in good form here, favoring his lower register, meting out his eunuch-like croon judiciously and generally sounding like a distracted stalker—explicitly so on songs like "Charlotte" and "The Radio Talks To Me," more implicitly on paranoid puzzlers like "The Doorbell" and "Black Coffee Dawn." As usual with Thomas, sadness and anxiety peak through the welter of obfuscating going. The guy has to be one of the most soulful abstractionists going, and these three Danish improvisers are as simpatico as any band he's been with. >>>Richard C. Walls

OUT:

April 10.

FILE UNDER:

Art and soul.

R.I.Y.L.:

Pere Ubu, Captain Beefheart, Eugene Chadbourne.



TIN HAT TRIO ★

Helium Angel

On Tin Hat Trio's 1999 debut, *Memory Is An Elephant*, accordionist Rob Burger, violinist Carla Kihlstedt and guitarist Mark Orton stayed close to the styles that that lineup suggests: tango, Parisian café music and strolling-gypsy strains. All three members have extensive classical backgrounds, so the sound was executed with close attention to texture and nuance. *Helium* is equally well-played, but more varied, both instrumentally (Burger doubles on piano and pump organ, Orton on banjo and dobro) and stylistically. Main composer Orton's pieces are full of bold, open intervals

OUT:

April 11.

FILE UNDER:

Pan-ethnic chamber jazz.

R.I.Y.L.:

Andrew Bird, Joe Venuti, John Fahey.

whose folk-classicism is closer to Aaron Copland's than, say, Astor Piazzolla's. There's everything here from Charles Ives-ish tone clusters to a vocal cameo by Tom Waits (the title track, with *Rain Dogs*-style pastiche lyrics by Orton), but the real payoff is on several longer tracks, where the members flex their improv muscles, with Kihlstedt's playing a cut above that of most classical violinists who deign to play in populist forms. Even at its freest, the Trio's interplay is still melodically grounded, which may be its Achilles heel; despite flirtations with dissonance and rhythmic complexity, much of *Helium* may be too accessible to appeal to serious new-music chin-strokers. But who cares, when the results are as sweetly swinging as the two minutes of hot, squeezeboxed, not-exactly-jazz of "Brennero"? >>>Franklin Bruno

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OUT:
May 2.
FILE UNDER:

Bleak house.
R.I.Y.L.:
Frankie Knuckles, Masters At Work,
John Digweed.

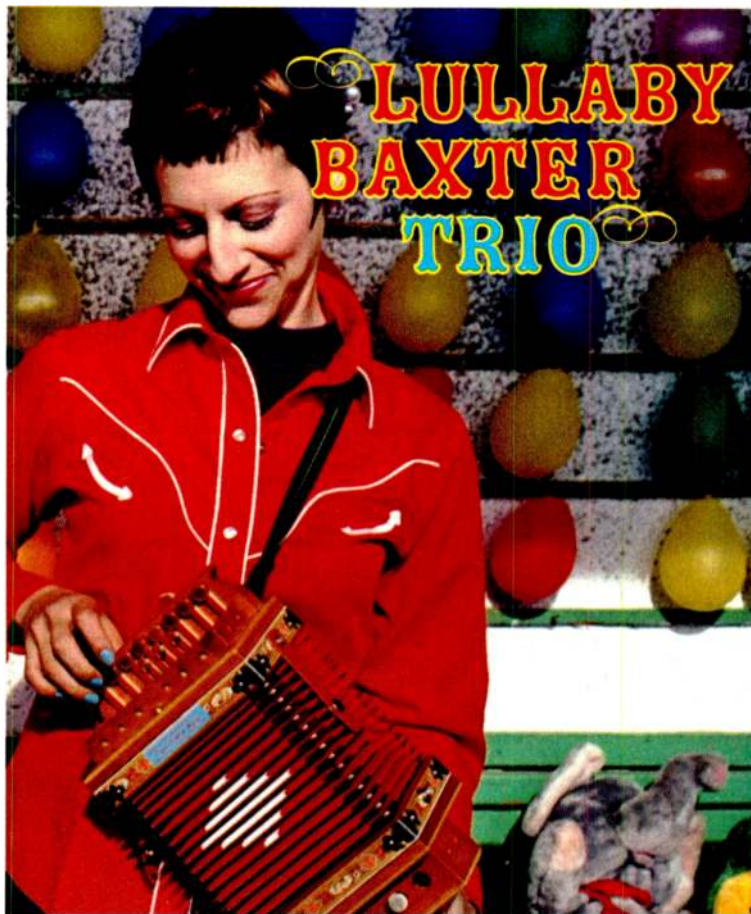
SATOSHI TOMIIE

Full Lick Columbia

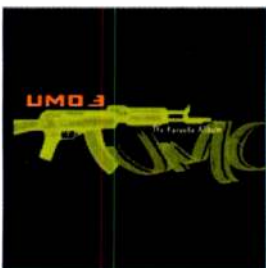
Satoshi Tomiie, best known for his work with Frankie Knuckles on 1989's "Tears," starts off his debut album by sticking to what he knows best: the four-on-the-floor slam of house. The first half-hour does this four-ward march admirably; it's a stately, elegant (if rather unmomentous) program of dance music with quirky vocals from Robert Owens and Sneaker Pimp Kelli Ali providing a welcome retreat from diva rafter-reaching. Then Diane Charlemagne (of Goldie's "Inner City Life" fame) takes over, and *Full Lick* devolves into the worst Chaka Khan rip-off you've ever heard.

Because Charlemagne's voice is incapable

of conveying anything other than jazzy pretension, even the peppiest numbers sound like 6 p.m. at the Holiday Inn rather than 3 a.m. at Twilo. But Tomiie must be blamed as well for falling prey to a half-assed stylistic diversity that has plagued great DJs/remixers from Knuckles to Josh Wink once they've thrown off the chains of their live set lists. In the end, all the scat fantasias and real musicians (yawn) prove is that an ability to keep the beat going till da break of dawn does not guarantee you the same staying power over a full-length of original material. >>>Kevin John



*She buried her toy piano
in the yard
and grew up to sing music
that's a little cuckoo.*



OUT:
April 18.
FILE UNDER:

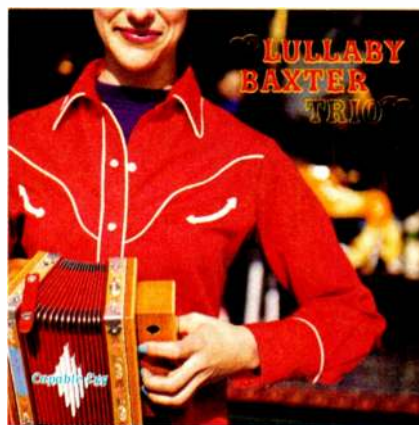
Electro G-Funk.
R.I.Y.L.:
DJ Food, Nowie B, Fila Brazzilia.

UMO3

The Karaoke Album Pharma

If you've ever taken the mic at a karaoke night, you know that you get what you deserve. That's true from a listener's standpoint as well. But somehow I doubt that UMO3's "Karaoke Night" parties are quite the same experience. The Berlin trio has been hosting its own twisted version of karaoke for the past year and using the performances as litmus tests for this disc. Surprisingly, singing doesn't feature heavily on *The Karaoke Album*, but the two songs that do have vocals are unqualified successes. Vocalist Sketch lends a sweet tone to the somber organ-led groove of "I'm Trying" and a more

fleshed-out voice on the sexy, textured soul of "Fishin' Round Midnight." Elsewhere, UMO3 (Unidentified Musical Objects) broaden the description of post-R&B with a strange but enticing blend of styles. The hypnotizing keyboard line and wah-wah stabs of "Cool Off" are pure blacksploitation, while "Stupid F**k" goes from tense Wu-Tang strings to demented techno samba in the blink of an eye. Don't be shocked that "Introducing The UMO3 Karaoke CD" comes 11 tracks late, with a computerized refrain of "It's time to rock/biotch," Too \$hort style. No vocalist necessary on this one. >>>Kuri Kondrak



"Truly a treasure." — CMJ

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"The Anyway Song"
and "Hopscotch"



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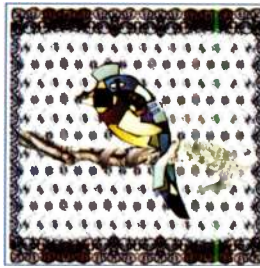
SVEN VÄTH
Contact Ultra

What decade is this? Save for some contemporary production touches, Sven Väth's fifth full-length could easily pass for the long-lost German cousin of Depeche Mode's 1981 debut, *Speak & Spell*, which isn't a bad thing at all. Continuing the move away from extended techno structures he began on 1998's *Fusion*, the celebrated DJ/producer fashions 12 new tracks from beats and tunes that sound dead simple, yet prove bedrock solid. A squealing sine-wave melody à la DM's "New Life" surfs over herky-jerky rhythms on "Ydolem," while the whooshing percussion of the title cut

OUT:
April 18.
FILE UNDER:
Musique non-stop.
R.I.Y.L.:

Depeche Mode's *Speak & Spell*, Kraftwerk, Westbam, Les Rythmes Digitales.

suggests the Soul Sonic Force popping-and-locking in a vacuum chamber. With its talk of "flying sausages," "Apricot" evokes the silly futurism of bygone New Romantic acts like Landscape. Väth isn't afraid to vary moods, either; "Once More" features a solo oboe that sounds like it was hijacked on its way to a performance of *Peter And The Wolf*, while Hammond organ, brass and upright bass color "Agent P.," a tune that brings to mind Mancini spy flick themes. Väth only stumbles when he stretches his modest materials thin: The three tracks that clock in at more than six minutes are too long by half. Otherwise, without stooping to retro-kitsch, *Contact* yields a surprise treat for synth-pop devotees who "just can't get enough." >>>Kurt B. Reighley



SARAH WHITE
Bluebird Jagjaguar

With the exception of "Crazy +," a group-housing tale à la Grant Hart's "2541," nearly every song on Virginian Sarah White's sophomore effort finds her uttering one response after another to heartbreak, from pissed-off kiss-off ("You're Not Easy, You're Hard") to all-too-eager victimhood ("It's hard to love you/ Ask me again"). White is a touch humorless about love, but not hopeless: on the sadder-but-wiser "Trees Fall Down," she identifies with a toppled pine ("It can't fall twice") over the album's most cohesive melody. Half of *Bluebird* finds her flying solo with wobbly results;

OUT:
April 17.
FILE UNDER:
Thrush with a broken wing.
R.I.Y.L.:

Kristin Hersh, Mia Doi Todd, Julie Doiron.

though her modal acoustic work betrays more genuine Appalachian roots than most of the indie-folk pack, "Skirting" and the title track are too slight to stand, much less soar. The better numbers add something to the mix, from "Got You Back," made vivid by Bret Payne's dirge-like drumming, to "Bride," on which cellist Amy Dominguez (Telegraph Melts) frames a wry wedding album: "Everyone dressed up/ The bride got sick." The wary feminism of this song (and "Red Ribbon") extends to the way White uses her voice, which is earthier and sturdier than her wispy material. At times she goes jarringly flat ("Poker Night"), but no one expects Lou Barlow or Bill Callahan to twitter away prettily, so why should their distaff counterpart? >>>Franklin Bruno

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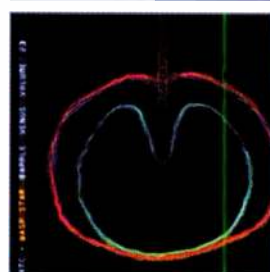
KULT MEMBERS NEED THESE TOO

HIT & RUN HOLIDAY
SEXPLORATION!
DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS
13 ABOVE THE NIGHT

my life with the Thrill Kill Kult

A CRIME FOR ALL SEASONS
INCLUDES BONUS TRACK 'SEXY SUCKER' (JUICY MIX)

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XTC ★
Wasp Star TV

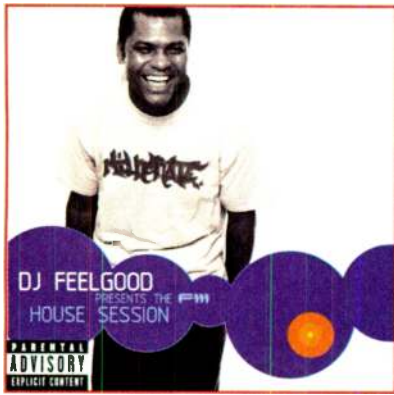
Hands up, everyone who was secretly disappointed by the gentle orchestral sound of last year's XTC comeback, *Apple Venus*. That album revealed its charms over time, but this long-promised "rock album" is far more immediate. While the sound of *Wasp Star* harks back to old-school XTC (i.e. guitars are back), the songwriting follows naturally from the last album. Once again, the tracks are driven more by hooks and harmonies than manic energy, and they all have a warm, rustic sensibility. The blast of guitars that opens "Playground" may be a short walk from *Black Sea*'s "Respectable Street," but

OUT:
May 23.
FILE UNDER:
Pop masters doing what comes naturally.
R.I.Y.L.:
Fountains Of Wayne, Travis, The Rutles.

the new tune's subtly crafted chorus is more typical of this set. The best song on *Apple Venus*, "Your Dictionary," was inspired by a bitter divorce, but the standouts here ("Stupidly Happy," "You And The Clouds") reflect singer/guitarist Andy Partridge's newfound bliss. He had to go back nearly 10 years to dig up a cynical song, "I'm The Man Who Murdered Love," an ultra-catchy number that was originally demoed for *Nonsuch* and could have been its hit single. The real surprise is the reemergence of singer/bassist Colin Moulding, who ends the songwriting slump he's been in since *Oranges & Lemons* with "In Another Life," a song that's among the most charming Fab Four homages this band's ever done. And that's saying a lot. >>>Brett Milano

In the early to mid-'90s, Baltimore threatened to usurp New York City as the rave capital of the East Coast, and **DJ Feelgood** was one of the reasons behind the city's prominence. Starting in 1990, Feelgood and partner Scott Henry held court at Fever, the biweekly, 18+ club event that brought global DJs to a packed house of enthusiastic ravers and club kids thirsty for underground sounds. Feelgood's backroom sets of hard, funky and uplifting house—flowing from diva anthems to filtered disco loops—became as much of a draw as any of the visiting superstar DJs on the main floor.

Although his first CD mix, *DJ Feelgood Presents The F-111 House*



Session (F-111-Warner Bros.) is largely a promotional tool for the F-111 roster (it culls tracks from several of the imprint's recently released 12" cuts), the collection is still remarkably Feelgood. The 14-track set is powered by upbeat tunes and mixes by some of the biggest names in hard house: Jason Jinx, Bad Boy Bill, Terry Mullan and DJ Dan (who earns a special shout for his exceptional remix of Ory's unforgivable cover of New Order's "Blue

Monday"). Not only does the offering showcase Feelgood's near-flawless turntable skills, it also premieres two mixes of his latest self-produced track, "Fly."

House Session is the first in a series of DJ mixes to come from the year-old F-111 imprint. Discs featuring the label's drum 'n' bass and trance offerings are forthcoming... California's Moontribe collective, the organizers of the West Coast's wildly popular full moon desert parties, presents the first in a series of independently released DJ mixes that will bring the unique energy and uplifting sounds of its lunar celebrations to your living room. Past "desert rave" discs (released on Moonshine Records) have exposed the funky-breaks assault of DJ John Kelley and the psychedelic goa trance of DJ Brian; this time, **DJ Treavor** is behind the decks, delivering a set fueled by fast-paced, hypnotizing music that would make techno godfather Richie Hawtin beam with pride. *Relentless: The Sound Of Moontribe*

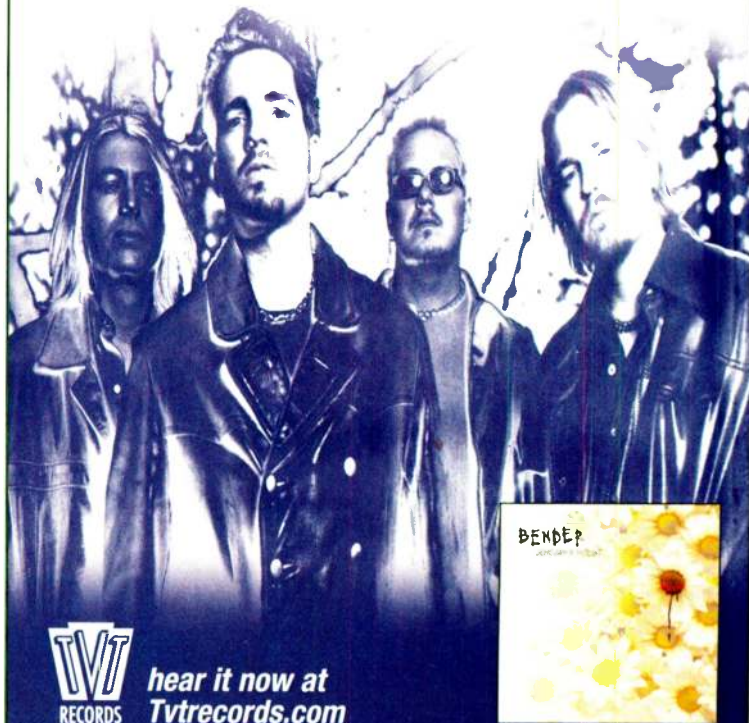
Vol. 1 (Lunar Cycle Music) proves an apt title for this 13-track, party-igniting disc that pushes your stereo's EQ levels into the red from beginning to end. The set is bookended by washes of psychedelic goa (Shiva Space Station's "Shiva Devotional") and sleek tech-house (Christian Smith's "Bush Trance"), but it's the driving techno currents of artists such as The Advent ("Drop Zone"), Astralasia ("Beyond The Astraldome") and Eternal Basement ("Raw") that sets *Relentless* apart from other Moontribe offerings and shows why Treavor stands as perhaps the collective's brightest talent... For something truly different, check out London's **Idjut Boys**, who present their unique style on *Saturday Night Live* (Nuphonic), a tribal, 14-track DJ mix that runs the gamut from dubbed-out afrobeat (Femi Kuti's "Shoki Shoki [Francois K. Mix]") to disco psychedelia (Sweat Shop's "Syrup"). Unlike many house mixers, the Idjuts have created a solid album that flows from alluring lows to hand-raising highs and remains remarkably coherent, despite the wealth of influences in the mix. The disc is a UK-only release, but it's worth scouring the import bins for this gem. >>> **M. Tye Comer**



**SOULS HOLLERING.
YOU BETTER DIG IT, BOY.**

BENDER

JEHOVAH'S HITLIST
the debut album featuring **SUPERFLY**



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Twtrecords.com

THE MOTOWN LOWDOWN



ESHAM

Detroit Hip-Hop City

STORY: KHARY TURNER

Eminem might be today's cover boy for Detroit hip-hop, but the story predates him. Artists such as Awesome Dre, AWOL, The Merciless Amir, Boss and The Almighty Dreadnaughtz built the scene that gave birth to Slim Shady. After two decades of hip-hop history, the city best known for the Motown sound is finally bubbling up with a cadre of artists who eat, sleep and shit beats and rhymes.

"I watched Eminem go through a phase where he was nothing one day; then, the next day, he was the man," recalls Royce The 5'9", a rapper touted as one of Detroit's next big things. "He didn't let it overcome him. I can't let the shit overcome me." Known for his razor-sharp voice and sizzling delivery, Royce, born Ryan Montgomery, was first heard with Em on the underground single "Scary Movies" (Game) and later on "Bad Meets Evil" from the Grammy-winning full-length by the great white dope. Royce's solo full-length, *I'm The King*, followed, also on Game.

Detroit has developed an amalgam of styles influenced by artists from across the country. In the '80s, rappers and DJs in silk shirts and

acid-washed jeans mixed distinctively local elements with hints of outside influences. Silveree incorporated dancers and highlighted Detroit landmarks and hangouts like Belle Isle and 7 Mile in party and battle rhymes.

Crews such as 5 Ela, Da Enna C, The Crew Called Open Mic and Goon Squad ushered in early '90s hip-hop. Detroit artists re-aligned their images, along with the rest of the country, from progressive, lyric-driven music to hardcore, gangsta soliloquies. As other midwestern cities like Chicago and Cleveland were put on the map by Twista, Common and Bone Thugs N Harmony, Detroit artists began to get restless.

In response, crews like Slum Village, the Teamstaz, Soul 2 Eclipse and EP The Energy Provider have begun to recast the original flavor and camaraderie Detroit enjoyed in the '80s. Given the distinct personalities of Detroit's East and West sides, it's almost inconceivable to expect a unified sound from the town's MCs and DJs. The East Side is historically labor-oriented, with many of its families boasting Southern roots. (Hence Detroit's affectionately "up south" reputation.) The West

Side is considerably larger, more contemporary and middle class (at least in parts). While these generalizations don't describe the full scope of Detroit's citizenry, they explain some of the styles and hybrids that have formed there.

Eminem's success has of course focused the spotlight on Detroit's talent, and soon his Shady imprint, distributed by Interscope, will help bring his hometown crew to a larger audience. The MCs allied with Eminem in the six-member Dirty Dozen (don't let the name confuse you), Bizarre, Denine Porter, Von, Swift and Proof, will have their debut distributed through the label.

Some homegrown artists were able to make noise long before Eminem's rise. Producer Jay Dee was known only in small circles until he approached Q-Tip backstage at gig featuring A Tribe Called Quest in Detroit. It wasn't long before Dee's skills were being put to use on Tribe's album, *Beats, Rhymes & Life*. In a matter of months, Jay Dee was laying sonic foundations with The Ummah, a production team consisting of him, Q-Tip and Ali-Shaheed Muhammad. Jay Dee laid the groundwork for such hits as Busta Rhyme's "Woo-Ha!," De La Soul's "Stakes Is High," and "Down Here On The Ground" by Dianne Reeves. Now, with his Slum Village counterparts, Dee has just released the long-awaited debut *Fantastic Vol. II* (GoodVibe-Atomic Pop), which features some of the most genre-bending material ever to come out of Detroit. At home, it's been said that the vocal styles Q-Tip copped on A Tribe Called Quest's *The Love Movement* were borrowed from Slum Village members Baatin and T3.

No artist in the history of Detroit hip-hop has been as consistent, or as stalwart, as Esham. The unsung pioneer was one of the first rap artists to release a double-CD (*Judgement Day, Vols. I & II*), in 1992. Esham arguably invented "acid rap," which became popularized as horrorcore. As a solo artist and with his affiliate groups Natas and Dice, Esham has appeared on 25 albums since 1990, including the new solo release *Bootleg (From The Lost Vault)*—Vol. I on Overcore-TVT.

The 20 or so artists packaged in the Teamstaz inject Detroit-centric slang and styles into a conglomeration formula similar to the Wu-Tang Clan's. The Teamstaz's recent self-released debut, *Don't Cross The Line*, also boasts a blue collar, Detroit labor image. "We were looking for something different," says Teamstaz producer Chris Cobb, "something that actually represented Detroit, Michigan, where we were at. So we were doin' a little reading and research on the Teamsters Union, and the concept worked with everyone."

Highland Park, one of two actual cities (Hamtramck is the other) that sit literally in the center of Detroit, is home to one of the area's most potent crews, The Almighty Dreadnaughtz. These Teamstaz affiliates, known for their elite lyricism and energetic (and crowded) live shows, are self-releasing their latest CD, *Point Of No Return*, any minute now.

"Detroit artists are startin' to find their own niche," says D'Phuzion, one of Detroit's few female emcees. "They're using their own slang: 'Whadup, doe,' 'dog'" —common Detroit terminology for 20 years—"and 'raw dog.' I'm old-school. I still say 'fresh' and 'that's sweet as hell.'" Another female artist gaining recognition is EP The Energy Provider, whose recent EP, *Da Product* (Unbeeleevable Entertainment) attracted the interest of 88hiphop.com. On the site's "Queendom" webcast, she explained her position as a woman representing Detroit hip-hop: "You gotta be you," she said, referring to her distinct delivery and light tone. "Don't let the industry tell you what you gotta do." She's not keen on the attention-getting bare skin policy adopted by many of today's female rap stars. "I'm not following the trend of losing clothes to make major ends. I feel sisters should stay true to themselves, and let their personal and unique personality shine through."

"Right now, everybody's doing things the right way; going about their business," says Dreadnaughtz manager Hex, who struggled through Detroit hip-hop's lean years. "It's more love and support."

Khary Turner fronts the Detroit-based Black Bottom poetry collective.



SLUM VILLAGE



EP THE ENERGY PROVIDER



ROYCE THE 5'9"



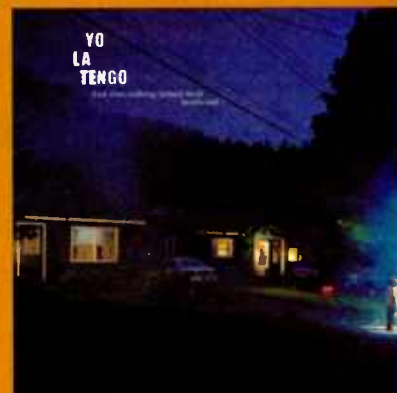
EMINEM

The Now Motown Sound's Top 10 Ways To Be Down

1. Eminem *The Slim Shady LP* (Aftermath-Interscope)
2. Slum Village *Fantastic, Vol. II* (Atomic Pop-GoodVibe)
3. Teamstaz *Don't Cross The Line* (self-released)
4. The Almighty Dreadnaughtz *The Point Of No Return* (self-released)
5. EP The Energy Provider *The Product* (Unbeeleevable)
6. Various Artists *Unbeeleevable Entertainment Compilation* (Unbeeleevable)
7. Binary Star *Waterworld* (self-released)
8. Esham *Bootleg (From The Lost Vault)*—Vol. I (Overture-TVT)
9. 5 Ela (self-released)
10. 3rd Kind *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* (self-released)

(Available at Detroit mom-and-pops like Buy-Rite Music 313-864-0219; Shantinique's 313-923-3040; Street Corner Music 248-644-4777.)

1	YO LA TENGO	And Then Nothing Turned Itself	Matador
2	THE CURE	Bloodflowers	Fiction-Elektra
3	AIR	The Virgin Suicides	Source-Astralwerks
4	REVEREND HORTON HEAT	Spend A Night In The Box	Time Bomb
5	MDFMK	MDFMK	Republic-Universal
6	MORPHINE	The Night	DreamWorks
7	BRAID	Movie Music Vol. One/Vol. Two	Polyvinyl
8	SMASHING PUMPKINS	MACHINA/The Machines Of God	Virgin
9	MODEST MOUSE	Building Nothing Out Of Something	Up
10	GUNGA DIN	Glitterati	Jetset
11	THE THE	Naked Self	Nothing-Interscope
12	BLOODHOUND GANG	Hooray For Boobies	Geffen-Interscope
13	DIRTY THREE	Whatever You Love, You Are	Touch And Go
14	KID KOALA	Carpal Tunnel Syndrome	Ninja Tune
15	BERNARD BUTLER	Friends And Lovers	Creation-Columbia
16	BOWERY ELECTRIC	Lushlife	Beggars Banquet
17	GOLDFINGER	Stomping Ground	Moya-Universal
18	PEDRO THE LION	Winners Never Quit	Jade Tree
19	ENDU	ENON - Believe!	See Thru Broadcasting
20	MOUSE ON MARS	Niun Niggung	Thrill Jockey
21	EELS	Daisies Of The Galaxy	DreamWorks
22	APPLES IN STEREO	Look Away + 4 (EP)	spinART
23	NERF HERDER	How To Meet Girls	Honest Don's
24	GUIDED BY VOICES	Hold On Hope EP	TVT
25	PAPAS FRITAS	Buildings And Grounds	Minty Fresh
26	OASIS	Standing On The Shoulder Of...	Epic
27	STAR GHOST DOG	The Great Indoors	Catapult
28	FU MANCHU	King Of The Road	Mammoth
29	JUNGLE BROTHERS	V.I.P.	Gas Street-V2
30	CLINTON	Disco & The Halfway To Discontent	Luaka Bop-Astralwerks
31	BOSS HOG	White Out	In The Red
32	KID DYNAMITE	Shorter, Faster, Louder	Jade Tree
33	BECK	Midnite Vultures	Geffen-Interscope
34	ON	Shifting Skin	Epic
35	BLUE MAN GROUP	Audio	Virgin
36	ARLING & CAMERON	Presents Music For Imaginary Films	Emperor Norton
37	PINEHURST KIDS	Viewmaster	4 Alarm
38	SUPREME BEINGS OF LEISURE	Supreme Beings Of Leisure	Palm Pictures
39	DJ SPOOKY VS. SCANNER	The Quick And The Dead	Sulfur-Beggars Banquet
40	CADALLACA	Out West (EP)	Kill Rock Stars
41	ANNIVERSARY	Designing A Nervous Breakdown	H & V-Vagrant
42	DAY ONE	Ordinary Man	Melankolic-Astralwerks
43	MIDTOWN	Save The World, Lose The Girl	Drive-Thru
44	NEKO CASE & HER BOYFRIENDS	Furnace Room Lullaby	Bloodshot
45	DJ ME DJ YOU	Rainbows And Robots	Emperor Norton
46	POSTER CHILDREN	DDD	spinART
47	VIOLENT FEMMES	Freak Magnet	Beyond
48	AUTUMNS	In The Russet Gold Of This...	Risk
49	WILL OLDHAM	Guarapero - Lost Blues 2	Drag City
50	JAPANESE	Down The Elements (EP)	Kindercore
51	FROM BUBBLEGUM TO SKY	Me And Amy And The Two...	Enic Meenie
52	CHUMBAWAMBA	WYSIWYG	Republic-Universal
53	FEMI KUTI	Shoki Shoki	MCA
54	JOHN SCOFIELD	Bump	Verve
55	APOLLO FOUR FORTY	Gemini High On Your Own Supply	Stealth-Epic
56	THE NEED	The Need Is Dead	Chainsaw
57	TREMBLING BLUE STARS	Broken By Whispers	Sub Pop
58	MILLENCOLIN	Pennybridge Pioneers	Epitaph
59	JOSEPH ARTHUR	Come To Where I'm From	Real World-Virgin
60	GOV'T MULE	Life Before Insanity	Capricorn
61	JOSH ROUSE	Home	Slow River-Rykodisc
62	WICKED FARLEYS	Make It It	Big Top
63	A NEW FOUND GLORY	Nothing Gold Can Stay	Drive-Thru
64	ROLLINS BAND	Get Some Go Again	DreamWorks
65	TAKAICHI MINEKAWA	Fun 9	Emperor Norton
66	SUICIDE MACHINES	The Suicide Machines	Hollywood
67	SNAPCASE	Designs For Automation	Victory
68	WILLIAM ORBIT	Pieces In A Modern Style	Maverick
69	SARAH CRACKNELL	Lipslide	Instinct
70	MEKONS	Journey To The End Of The Night	Quarterstick
71	ANI DI FRANCO	To The Teeth	Righteous Babe
72	CROOKED FINGERS	Crooked Fingers	Warm
73	LO FIDELITY ALLSTARS	On The Floor, At The Boutique	Skin - Columbia
74	TRACY CHAPMAN	Telling Stories	Elektra
75	MR. OIZO	Analog Worms Attack	Mute



#1

FIVE YEARS AGO

1. PJ HARVEY

TO BRING YOU MY LOVE (ISLAND)

2. QUICKSAND

MANIC COMPRESSION (REVELATION-ISLAND)

3. BELLY

KING (SINE-REPRISE)

4. MIKE WATT

BALL #ING OR TUSHGAT (COLUMBIA)

5. THROWING MUSES

UNIVERSITY (SINE-REPRISE)

TEN YEARS AGO

1. SINEAD O'CONNOR

I DO NOT WANT WHAT I HAVEN'T GOT (EIGN-CHRYSALIS)

2. MIDNIGHT OIL

BLUE SKY MINING (COLUMBIA)

3. PETER MURPHY

DEEP (BEGGARS BANQUET-RCA)

4. THE CHURCH

GOLD AFTERNOON FIX (ARISTA)

5. THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

FLOOD (ELEKTRA)



Chart data culled from CMJ New Music Report's weekly top 200 radio chart, based on combined airplay of approximately 500 college, non-commercial and commercial radio stations reporting their top 30 most played releases that week. Incontinent, or seeking vengeance? You've got us stumped. And Neil wants to know who to thank for the back. So if you made a poo-poo in our stinnell or know who did, e-mail us at stir@cmj.com.

TOP 25

- 1 **PANTERA**
Reinventing The Steel EASTWEST-ELEKTRA
- 2 **DISTURBED**
The Sickness GIANT-REPRISE
- 3 **LOCK UP**
Pleasures Pave Sewers NUCLEAR BLAST AMERICA
- 4 **ARMORED SAINT**
Revelation METAL BLADE
- 5 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Heavy Metal 2000 RESTLESS
- 6 **CRADLE OF FILTH**
From The Cradle To Enslave (EP) METAL BLADE
- 7 **SNAPCASE**
Designs For Automotion VICTORY
- 8 **KITTIE**
Spit NG-ARTEMIS
- 9 **SOILWORK**
The Chainheart Machine CENTURY MEDIA
- 10 **PRIMER 55**
Introduction To Mayhem FAT STATIC-ISLAND
- 11 **DEMONS & WIZARDS**
Demons & Wizards STEAMHAMMER
- 12 **CROWBAR**
Equilibrium SPITFIRE
- 13 **ROLLINS BAND**
Get Some Go Again DREAMWORKS
- 14 **DISMEMBER**
Hate Campaign NUCLEAR BLAST AMERICA
- 15 **CHIMAIRA**
This Present Darkness EAST COAST EMPIRE
- 16 **DIO**
Magica SPITFIRE
- 17 **COALESCE**
O:12 Revolution In Just Listening RELAPSE
- 18 **FU MANCHU**
King Of The Road MAMMOTH
- 19 **DEADLIGHTS**
The Deadlights QED-ELEKTRA
- 20 **STEP KINGS**
Let's Get It On Again ROADRUNNER
- 21 **FULL DEVIL JACKET**
Full Devil Jacket ISLAND DEF JAM
- 22 **KRISIUN**
Conquerors Of Armageddon CENTURY MEDIA
- 23 **THERION**
Deggial NUCLEAR BLAST
- 24 **AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED/CONVERGE**
The Poacher Diaries RELAPSE
- 25 **PROJECT 86**
Drawing Black Lines BEC/TOOTH & NAIL-ATLANTIC

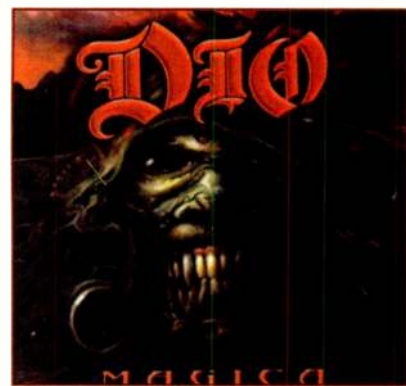
>>>Make room for some **Gorgoroth** on those mixtapes



PICK!

"When Love Rages Wild In My Heart" originated is anybody's guess, though, unless the band was reaching for Nick Cave and overshot. Back in 1986, Ronnie James **Dio** ran around the world with six semi trucks, a fleet of buses and a crew of 50, including four laser techs and a dragon handler. Says the magic man: "It became quite a traveling circus. It was just giving something more to the kids. We didn't charge more for it. We gave them a dragon, we gave them a fantasy for two hours, we gave them a chance to escape. We thought that was important, and especially today it would be important, because there's so much brutality out there." After a couple years of cyber-this and virtual-that, Dio has returned to his senses and

you reserve for non-black metal songs played by black metal bands. Savor the player piano and laser swooshes of "Unchain My Heart!!!" Dig the crazy "Will To Power," an inverted song pieced together from too many days spent listening to The Residents' *Mole Show* album while stuck on an unpleasant level of *Final Fantasy VIII*. Hey, the savagery we've come to expect from Gorgoroth's four previous albums (you heard me) is all here on *Incipit Satan* (Nuclear Blast), but along with the Dark-thronisms and slower Norse heave-ho is a certain unmistakable playfulness. Call it black humor, but when Norwegians stick a synth line in the middle of a battle hymn, they show their little-publicized fun and subversive side. Ivar Peersen of *Enslaved* knows all about that, and it's small surprise he's a guest on this release. Where the crooning, Scott Walker-esque vocal on

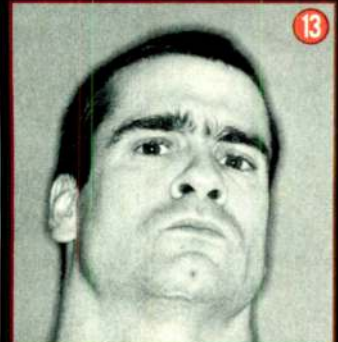


conjured *Magica* (Spitfire). It's a concept album lacking a concept, minus a guitar player on par with Tony Iommi and Ritchie Blackmore. But oh, that voice!... **Monumentum** has worked hard for the past 10 years to become competent and trustworthy, so you can be sure the members aren't going to want to hear that *MusaeuM HermeticuM* (Necropolis), a 1989 basement recording, is the most charmed and moving thing they've done. Unfortunately for their egos, they signed the permission slips, and what was once a limited cassette release of 180 is now officially out of the bag. This might be the first band to form immediately after hearing Celtic Frost's weird *Into The Pandemonium* epic. The goth-like post-punk metal just goes to show how heavy a band can be with a loud bass, a scratchy fiddle, a bold Casio, egg-frying guitars, a detuned piano and a strange accent. Behold that eight-cent production, and get into the honesty of this UHF-spawned, low-budget creature feature.



NEWS

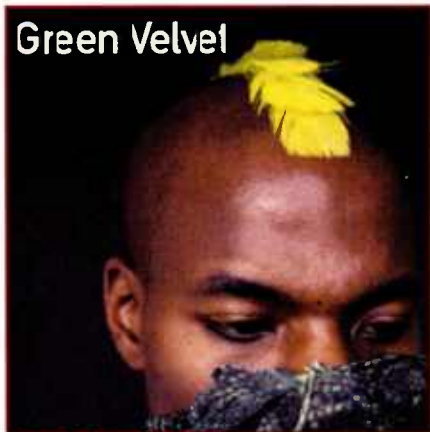
Where the Franklin Mint has failed them, the laudable Norwegian black metal act **Emperor** will commemorate its eighth year with *Emperial Vinyl Presentation* (Candlelight), a box set of heavyweight picture discs encompassing much of the band's recorded output. Due in mid-May, the lavishly designed LPs will sell here for close to \$100. The first of five records unites the hallowed Emperor self-titled mini-LP (1993) with the incendiary *Wrath Of The Tyrant* demo (1992), which chronicles the earliest incarnation of Ihsahn, Samoth and Mortiiis (or Izzy, Sammy and Morty, as they were known on the Oslo breadboards). *In The Nightside Eclipse* (1994), *Anthems To The Welkin At Dusk* (1997), *IX Equilibrium* (1999) and the live LP *Emperial Live Ceremony* (1999) follow. Helping ensure a deadly postage fee for mail-order customers, the box will include a full-sized glossy eight-page booklet with a thoughtful prison letter from ex-drummer Bard Faust—along with dozens of photos chronicling the band's rise from basement bugs to church-burners to international touring sensation.



13

Compiled from CMJ New Music Report's weekly Loud Rock charts, collected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio reporters.

>>>Curtis A. Jones ran Cajual, one of the most



Green Velvet

PICK!

highly respected Chicago house labels of the late '80s and early '90s. It was on that label's Relief imprint that Jones's persona morphed into the creature known as **Green Velvet**, a character whose artist-narrated, hedonistic pursuits and sarcastic sense of humor played alongside a hard techno edge. His domestic self-titled debut album (F-111-Warner Bros.) is definitely a lease-breaker, capturing the finest efforts of the Velvet catalog at excessive volumes. Though the tempo here remains within house range, the drums are as thick and compressed as the walls of a dam and the synths are tweaked for maximum bodily impact. In the opening, "Flash," Green Velvet narrates a night inside a club packed to the rafters with pleasure-seekers. It's a lethal combination of hammering, bounced kick drums and a wry (though menacing) voice-over. On the remix of "Coitus," the artist pays homage to the lithe, sequencer-laden Eurodisco of Sylvester. "Percolator 2000" is an updated version of Jones's finest hour: a blip-driven hard house leviathan that refuses to forego any of its power.

The last 18 months have seen a new wave of laptop-driven, experimental electronic dance music from California, including releases from Kit Clayton, Lexaunculpt and **Twerk**. The latter (a.k.a. Shawn Hatfield) has just released *Humantics* (Force Inc.), which, while similar in some regards to the others, has an ethereal, ambient and deeply melodic quality—particularly on tracks like "Defective Manufacturing." But Hatfield is more than an ambidextrous knob twiddler. He's also got a keen ear for what makes a crowd move... The two new EPs **Sutekh** has just released on his own Context label are from the same California school, but use percussion as a starting point for a range of musical experiments. The *Double Entendre* EP is full of rattling, ghostly toms and off-kilter xylophone sounds held together by sticky, stringy acid basslines. The *Deadpan Escapement* EP houses remixes of Sutekh's track of the same name, done by the likes of Phoenecia, Stewart Walker and Scorn (a.k.a. Mick Harris). This is darker, more cerebral stuff: the sound of old industrial machines slowly grinding to a halt over a skeletal 4/4 beat... *Mixed Up In The Hague Volume 1*, put together by The Hague's electro marauder **I-F** (a.k.a. Ferenc), is an exception to the usual mess found on mix CDs. Having cut his teeth on everything from Kraftwerk and late-'70s Italian and German Eurodisco to the *Blade Runner* soundtrack, I-F jumps behind a pair of decks and goes off—moving from new Dutch electro by EOG, to Giorgio Moroder's "Chase," the Jonzun Crew's Sun Ra-inspired "Space Is The Place" and Klein and MBO's hook-laden gem, "Dirty Talk." This is 74 minutes of gritty electronic funk that demands to be listened to very, very loudly.



TWERK

NEW7

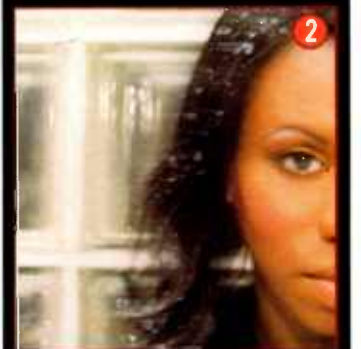


NITZER EBB

Expectations are high regarding some prominent summer releases: Berlin's Stefan Betke, better known as **Pole**, will be releasing *Pole 3* on Matador in July. Leaf recording artist **Beige**—who emerges from the Cologne school of Thomas Brinkmann, Mike Ink and others—will be releasing his yet untitled full-length debut album. Though Mute has remained, well, mute about the project, there are evidently plans to release a **Nitzer Ebb** remix album, featuring some prominent contemporary electronic artists. The inclusion of the Ebb's "Let Your Body Learn" on Richie Hawtin's *Decks*, *EFX*, and *909* last year prompted interest from old fans and new converts alike. A number of the band's early lean and mean singles will also be released as part of Mute's Grey Area series.

TOP 25

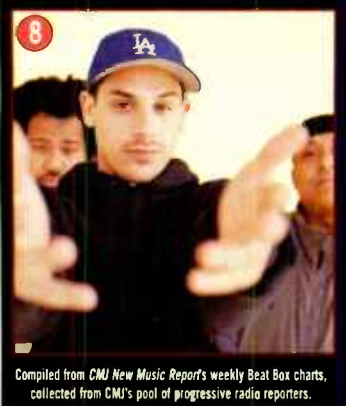
- KID KOALA
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome NINJA TUNE
- 1.8.7
The Cities Collection JUNGLE SKY-LIQUID SKY
- i:CUBE
Adore Versatile-Big Red
- VARIOUS ARTISTS
Brassic Beats USA SKINT (UK)
- COVENANT
United States Of Mind METROPOLIS
- SUPREME BEINGS OF LEISURE
Supreme Beings Of Leisure PALM PICTURES
- APOPTYGMA BERZERK
Welcome To Earth TATRA-METROPOLIS
- GEORGE ACOSTA
Awake ULTRA
- OJ ME DJ YOU
Rainbows And Robots EMPEROR MORTON
- DANNY TENAGLIA
Back To Mine DMC-ULTRA
- ASSEMBLAGE 23
Contempt GASHED!
- ARLING & CAMERON
Presents Music For Imaginary Films EMPEROR MORTON
- LUKE VIBERT & BJ COLE
Stop The Panic ASTRALWERKS
- GOLOIE
INcredible Sound Of Orum 'N' Bass OVUM-RUFFHOUSE
- DJ SPOOKY VS. SCANNER
The Quick And The Dead SULFUR-BEGGARS BANQUET
- AIR
The Virgin Suicides SOURCE-ASTRALWERKS
- SMITH & MIGHTY
Big World Small World STUDIO K7
- VARIOUS ARTISTS
Tektonics OM
- VARIOUS ARTISTS
Om Lounge 3 OM
- MOUSE ON MARS
Niun Niggung THRILL JOCKEY
- VARIOUS ARTISTS
Plastic Compilation Volume 03 NETTWERK
- AGHAST VIEW
Truthhead GASHED!
- WILLIAM ORBIT
Pieces In A Modern Style MAVERICK
- MR. OIZO
Analog Worms Attack MUTE
- E-CRAFT
Electrocution INTERBEAT



Compiled from CMJ New Music Report's weekly RPM charts, collected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio reporters.

TOP 25

- 1 **GHOSTFACE KILLAH**
"One" RAZOR SHARP-EPIC
- 2 **INSIGHT**
"True To The Game" BRICK-LANDSPEED
- 3 **JAY-Z**
"Anything" ROC-A-FELLA-DEF JAM
- 4 **NON PHIXION**
"Black Helicopters" UNCLE HOWIE-MATAADOR
- 5 **COMMON**
"The 6th Sense" MCA
- 6 **MAD SKILLZ**
"Ghostwriter" RAWKUS
- 7 **ANTI-POP CONSORTIUM**
"Lift" 75ARK
- 8 **DILATED PEOPLES**
"The Platform" ABB-CAPITOL
- 9 **LOUIS LOGIC**
"General Principle" SUPERREGULAR
- 10 **BLACK ROB**
"Whoa" BAD BOY-ARISTA
- 11 **THIRSTIN HOWL III**
"Polo Rican" GAME-LANDSPEED
- 12 **SPOOKS**
"Things I've Seen" ANTRA-ARTEMIS
- 13 **PHAROAAHE MONCH**
"Livin' It Up" PRIORITY
- 14 **MYKILL MYERS**
"Wanna Be An MC?" ILLBOOGIE
- 15 **DEAD PREZ**
"Hip Hop" LOUD-COLUMBIA
- 16 **BEANIE SIGEL**
"The Truth" ROC-A-FELLA-DEF JAM
- 17 **SISQO**
"The Thong Song" DEF SOUL-DEF JAM
- 18 **JUNGLE BROTHERS**
"V.I.P." GEE STREET-V2
- 19 **PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS**
"Youth Explosion" OM
- 20 **KID KOALA**
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome NINJA TUNE
- 21 **ENCORE**
"Sporadic" 75ARK
- 22 **DR. DRE FEAT. EMINEM**
"Forgot About Dre" AFTERMATH-INTERSCOPE
- 23 **CANIBUS**
"2000 B.C. (Before Canibus)" UNIVERSAL
- 24 **DEL THE FUNKY HOMOSAPIEN**
"If You Must" HIERO IMPERIUM
- 25 **AGALLAH**
"The Crookie Monster" GAME-LANDSPEED



Compiled from CMJ New Music Report's weekly Beat Box charts, collected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio reporters.

>>> A new hero has arrived for those who tune in to



PICK!

>>>Chicago's **Common** is back on the scene again with another album that charts his ever-expanding style. *Like Water For Chocolate* (MCA) finds the MC that hip-hop critics love to love in a comfortable and forthright zone, with solid production guided by The Roots' ?uestlove. But by showing all sides of himself—from the depths of heartfelt love on "The Light" to the depths of tasteless metaphor (he describes himself as "deep like a skinny girl's cunt" on the super-funky "Heat")—he presents a hypocritical tug of war. Either way, it's his best album yet. Tracks like "Time Traveling," "6th Sense" and "The Questions" (with Mos Def) are worth the effort of sitting through Common's moral ebb and flow... Flipmode Squad's **Rah Digga** has finally dropped her debut, *Dirty Harriet* (Elektra). Please forget that she's a "female MC"—her skills are above and beyond male vs. female comparisons. The album sags a bit in the middle, but the bookends are amazing, with top notch production: "What They Call Me" (produced by Pete Rock), "Break Fool" (Rockwilder), "Lessons Of Today" (DJ Premier). Flipmode don Busta Rhymes produces "Harriet Thugman" and guests on "Imperial." Rah isn't a talent to be slept on... From Los Angeles comes **Blood Of Abraham**, the radical Jewish undergrounders that Eazy-E signed to Ruthless in the early '90s. Rapper-producers Benyad and Mazik have grown a lot since back in the day, toned down their rhetoric a tad and produced a very appealing album in *Eyedollartree* (Master Grip-Atomic Pop). With a rock-tinged pop feel that would appeal more to Beck fans than to followers of The Arsonists or Company Flow, songs like "Diseases," "Paranoia Is Awareness" and "Calling All Citizens" are natural and catchy without being soft, recalling some of The Jungle Brothers' and Definition Of Sound's best.

the freaky side of the hip-hop dial. **Quasimoto** may sound more like the mutant fourth member of Alvin & The Chipmunks, but he's 100% hip-hop. Produced by The Lootpack's Madlib (astute listeners just might notice some vocal similarities...hint, hint), Quasi has lumbered onto the hip-hop scene with an album you'll either throw away or fall in love with instantly. *The Unseen* (Stones Throw) is a bizarre piece of wax, no doubt, filled with stop-start beats, lounging basslines and electro keyboard shrapnel piped in from a frequency far beyond the ozone layer. His calm, terse style is addictive. Freed from the restrictive esthetics of MCing in the modern age, this spaced-out entity jumps from topic to topic (and even voice to voice) without worrying about linear logic. As hinted on "Come On Feet," "The Unseen" and "Discipline '99," there are interesting similarities to Melvin Van Peebles's brilliant and tweaked soul opera *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song*. But it might be more appropriate to imagine Sun Ra's return to Earth as a hip-hop producer with this new Saturn-bred MC in tow.

>>>Chicago's **Common** is back on the scene again with another album that charts his ever-expanding style. *Like Water For Chocolate* (MCA) finds the MC that hip-hop critics love to love in a comfortable and forthright zone, with solid production guided by The Roots' ?uestlove. But by showing all sides of himself—from the depths of heartfelt love on "The Light" to the depths of tasteless metaphor (he describes himself as "deep like a skinny girl's cunt" on the super-funky "Heat")—he presents a hypocritical tug of war. Either way, it's his best album yet. Tracks like "Time Traveling," "6th Sense" and "The Questions" (with Mos Def) are worth the effort of sitting through Common's moral ebb and flow... Flipmode Squad's **Rah Digga** has finally dropped her debut, *Dirty Harriet* (Elektra). Please forget that she's a "female MC"—her skills are above and beyond male vs. female comparisons. The album sags a bit in the middle, but the bookends are amazing, with top notch production: "What They Call Me" (produced by Pete Rock), "Break Fool" (Rockwilder), "Lessons Of Today" (DJ Premier). Flipmode don Busta Rhymes produces "Harriet Thugman" and guests on "Imperial." Rah isn't a talent to be slept on... From Los Angeles comes **Blood Of Abraham**, the radical Jewish undergrounders that Eazy-E signed to Ruthless in the early '90s. Rapper-producers Benyad and Mazik have grown a lot since back in the day, toned down their rhetoric a tad and produced a very appealing album in *Eyedollartree* (Master Grip-Atomic Pop). With a rock-tinged pop feel that would appeal more to Beck fans than to followers of The Arsonists or Company Flow, songs like "Diseases," "Paranoia Is Awareness" and "Calling All Citizens" are natural and catchy without being soft, recalling some of The Jungle Brothers' and Definition Of Sound's best.



BLOOD OF ABRAHAM

NEW7



CHUCK D

Video game fans will have a chance to dig one of the legends of old school hip-hop production on **Kurtis Mantronik's** soundtrack to the Sega Dreamcast game *TrickStyle*, released as an EP on Oxygen Music Works (www.omw.com). Aside from the "TrickStyle Theme," there is a remix by edit god Albert Cabrera (of the Latin Rascals) and two other Mantronik remixes of other theme music... Online hip-hop radio has a great new weekly event: **Chuck D's** "Beats, Rhymes And Life," a this-week-in-hip-hop news show hosted by Public Enemy's frontman, every Saturday night on www.bringthenoise.com... Aside from great recent singles from Louis Logic and Outerspace, Philly's Superegular Recordings will release the **Jedi Mind Tricks'** new album *Violent By Design* this summer. Check www.superegular.com for details on one of the highest-quality indies around.

Guided By Voices

HOLD ON HOPE EP



PICK!

>>>The songs on albums are usually expected to belong together; the songs on singles generally aren't. **Guided By Voices** works that phenomenon for all it's worth on the new *Hold On Hope* EP (TVT). This "single" from last year's *Do The Collapse* (the lighter-waver "Hold On Hope" itself is tacked on after the disc's eight new songs, not before them), is a trove of goodies. Most of the new material was recorded by Ric Ocasek at the same time as *Collapse*, but it belongs to GBV's tradition of great throwaways. In the old days, it seemed these abbreviated tracks were being slapped onto tape and then abandoned—now, they demonstrate how Robert Pollard came up with a great idea for another song before he finished the one he was working on. "Tropical Robots," for instance, gets in two promising verses, then abruptly ends before it gets to a chorus. Also, guitarist Doug Gillard is doing great things to Pollard's songwriting (as on the recent collaborative album on Rockathon-Recordhead, *Speak Kindly Of Your Local Volunteer Fireman*). A showboating lead guitarist is something this band has always needed (see the future guitar-store classic "Avalanche Aminos" for proof), and you can sense Gillard's hand in the strapped-in harmonies and dramatic tension of "Interest Position," too.

Pollard's old foil **Tobin Sprout** has also been keeping busy. He recently self-released an excellent double LP, helpfully entitled *Demos and Outtakes* (Recordhead-Wigwam), and now he's formed his first post-GBV band, unhelpfully called

Eyesinweasel. Fortunately, the quartet's first single, "Seven And Nine" (Recordhead-Wigwam), is way better than its name. It's a short, tightly wound tune that moves like it's trying to wriggle out of something; its compressed sonics and frantic three-note guitar solo make it sound like the tense Midwestern bands of 15 years ago who sometimes managed to blurt out one great indie single before imploding. The B-side, "Daughters Of The Moon," is a bit closer to GBV's roots as



"NEOPRENE SO TIGHT"

earnest R.E.M. wannabes in the early '80s, spending weekends in the basement for the sheer joy of playing pretty things at deafening volume.

The Clientele has yet to release an album, but the indie-pop community is abuzz—the act's singles are pale and fluttery, blurred but formally concise. The new single, "(I Want You) More Than Ever" (Elefant), is the band's sweetest yet, ringing like The Hollies' "Bus Stop" heard through a sleep-haze and a warm quilt, both of its strong, direct tunes diffused and softened as far as they can be and still remain intact. Alasdair MacLean's voice is a lover's whisper on your neck, hushed but very much present.

Former Clientele member Innes Phillips is backed up by current Clients as **The Relict** on another new single, "Southern Way" (Johnny Kane); it's got the same slow loveliness, but the songs are more figmentary and uncertain than The Clientele's, the band's arrangements as spare as a half-disintegrated cobweb. Phillips sings like his lyrics are from a yellowed letter he wouldn't show to just anyone, recollecting powerful experiences from the incidental details of their surroundings without describing them directly.

Closer to an instrumental chamber music quartet than anything else, **Town & Country** shapes its pieces in terms of their form over time, rather than complicating their simple, airy lines with strongly felt rhythm or abrupt changes. Following a fine, austere self-titled 1998 album (BOXmedia), the act's *Decoration Day* EP (Thrill Jockey) includes three pieces



recorded live; the arrangements include bass, harmonium, piano, guitar and hints of brass and percussion. There are touches of improvisation, but the members of T&C are mostly concerned with staying out of each other's way and drawing thin melodic lines around the room's negative space. The band is from Chicago, naturally; though the music doesn't especially sound like the AACM or Tortoise, it's clear how the city's tradition of anti-traditional formalism had an influence.



A FEW QUICK DROPS OF THE NEEDLE

Those who miss the days when **Elliott Smith** recorded mostly on his eight-track are directed to the single version of "Happiness" (DreamWorks). Its B-side is a version of "Son Of Sam" that's got Smith on his own, showing off his tense, magisterial guitar playing (the only other instrument is a quick blast of harmonica) and reconstructing the chilled mood of his first few solo albums... "Two People" (Pickled Egg), by the London trio **Fariña**, is one of those debut singles that tries to squeeze in everything the band can do and make it all look easy. In about four minutes, we get a post-Belle & Sebastian shimmy, some lounge piano backing straight-faced lyrical absurdity, a trumpet solo, a stiff-backed march, a few distant, tubercular blurts of guitar and a sputtering improv breakdown, during none of which do they appear to cease staring at their shoelaces. The other side's less ambitious, though the Eno-ish chorus that sings along for the last 15 seconds is a nice touch... **Love As Laughter** continues to labor under the fortunate misapprehension that they're The Rolling Stones in 1972. "Hall And Oates Have Disappeared" (Sub Pop), the spiffy B-side of the lesser "Looks Like This City's Broken," lurches and slithers with a kind of macho gusto they seem to have psyched themselves into. Only its peculiar synthesizer run breaks Sam Jayne's possession by the spirit of Keef.



THE BEACH BOYS

discovered by a record producer who heard him singing while banging away on a fender in an auto body shop, and within a matter of months, his first hit record was riding high on the charts. Dorsey went on to score several cultish '60s soul hits, Sundazed has reissued two key Dorsey albums that feature musical backing by legendary New Orleans funk band **The Meters**, called *Get Out My Life Woman* and *The New Lee Dorsey*. What's more, they've also released three more of The Meters' own records (*Rejuvenation*, *Cabbage Alley* and *Fire On The Bayou*). Hardcore devotees of the group's grooves will no doubt rejoice at the copious amount of unreleased bonus material.

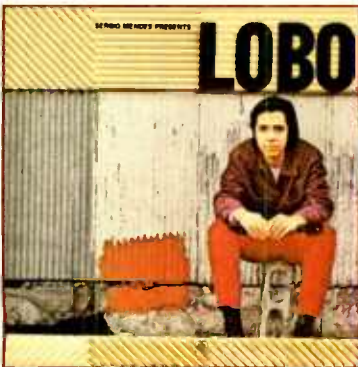
What happens when a wisecracking Harvard student sits down at his piano and begins spinning out witty little ditties full of humor and wry social commentary? Well, of course, his

>>>By now, most of the rock cognoscenti knows the weird saga of **The Beach Boys** following the 1967 crack-up of Brian Wilson during sessions for their now-legendary unreleased album, *Smile*. What hipsters are still discovering is that the leftovers from the star-crossed project wound up trickling out over the years, one or two tracks at a time, as the original B-Boys desperately scrambled to come up with new material without their bedridden and bloated primary songwriter. And so, the later Beach Boys albums of the early '70s, especially *Sunflower*, *Surf's Up* and *Holland* (all recently reissued on Capitol, along with the Carl And The Passions album, *So Tough*) have a strange poignancy to them, as the band, in particular Carl and Dennis, grew into uneasy manhood. Still, as they battled against

dinner guests all promptly leave, but in the case of **Tom Lehrer**, the highly educated piano-playing pundit actually released a score of funny and successful comedy albums in the '50s and '60s. Rhino has collected them all in *The Remains Of Tom Lehrer*, a three-CD box set. Some listeners find Lehrer's music absolutely appalling, which for the rest of us is really a large part of the appeal. A great Lehrer moment: he sings the entire periodic table of the elements to the actual tune of a Gilbert & Sullivan operetta.



LEE DORSEY



EDU LOBO

irrelevance amidst the general malaise of the '70s, they managed to write a few great songs. "Sail On Sailor" (from 1972's *Holland*) hides a deeper commentary on Brian Wilson's delicate mental state in its maritime metaphor of a windswept sailor battling a storm. Back in the swinging '60s, Verve Records was home to the coolest of cool sounds, Brazilian bossa nova jazz. The label has reissued some of the classics of the genre's early- to mid-'60s

zenith. There's the self-titled album from Brazilian musical titan **Antonio Carlos Jobim**, and a simmering live album from **Bela Sete**, *Live At The Monterey Jazz Festival*. But the pick of the litter is the first album from Brazilian songwriter **Edu Lobo**, entitled *Sergio Mendes Presents*. For newcomers to the Brazilian music party, there's also an impeccably well-chosen introductory collection, entitled *Brazilian Verve By Request*.

In a story befitting an R&B legend, soul singer **Lee Dorsey** was

These releases are out there, as it were, but don't need or warrant too much description or flowery prose. There's the *Best Of The JB's*, **James Brown's** ultra-funky backing band from the '60s and '70s. Also out are **Led Zeppelin's** *Early Daze* and *Latter Daze*, two flimsy best-ofs comprising classic rock radio hits. (What's the point? The multi-media portion features sinfully enjoyable footage of the band in full concert flight.) There's *Dream All Day*, a neat little Geffen Records best-of from power-poppers the **Posies**. Also of note is **Judy Garland's** *Live At Carnegie Hall 1961* (DCC Classics), which has to rank up there with Elvis's late-period concert recordings for the sheer amount of weird vibes emanating from the stage. And even though beloved **Grateful Dead** tape archivist Dick Latvala is no longer among the living, he's somehow still pickin' 'em: the vaunted *Dick's Picks* series still rolls on, and *Volume 16* features live recordings of The Dead at the hallowed Fillmore West in November 1969.



JUDY GARLAND

MAY 2

SHOLA AMA Warner Bros.
AMERICAN GIRLS Like The Movies, Only Slower *Trauma*.
ANASTACIA Not That Kind *Epic*.
FELA ANIKULAPO-KUTI Original Suffer Head/L.L.T., Shuffling And Smiling/No Agreement *MCA*.
 —Both are two-CD reissue sets from the late Afrobeat king.
APARTMENT 26 Hallucinating *Hollywood*.
BEVERLY Heart And Soul *Elektra*.
BLOOD OF ABRAHAM Eyedollartree *Atomic Pop*.
CHICAGO UNDERGROUND DUO Synesthesia *Thrill Jockey*.
ORNETTE COLEMAN Skies Of America; The Complete Science Fiction Sessions *Sony Legacy*.
 —Two-CD remastered reissue sets.
CONTROL FREQ Freashow *Warner Bros*.
CYPRESS HILL Skull & Bones *Columbia*.
RICHARD DAVIES Barbarians *Kindercore*.
DECKARD The Deckard Record *Reprise*.
GENE DEFCON Liz *Lookout!*
 —7-inch EP.
THE DELGADOS The Great Eastern *Beggars Banquet*.
DEPARTURE LOUNGE Out Of There *Flydaddy*.
ECHO Adrenachrome/Plazma *Thermal*.
 —12-inch.
EUGE GROOVE Euge Groove *Warner Bros*.
SUE FOX Enhanced CD *Kill Rock Stars*.
 —A reissue of her cassette with some new material.
JAHEIM Warner Bros.
JANITA Janita *Epic*.
JODECI Love U 4 Life: Greatest Hits *MCA*.
BILLY JOEL The Millennium Concert *Columbia*.
 —Live recording from New York's Madison Square Garden.
J.U.I.C.E. Sincerely *Ground Control*.
 —12-inch.
KEVIN KINNEY The Flower And The Knife *Capricorn*.
 —Ex-Drivin' 'N' Cryin' vocalist's solo record.
K.D. LANG Warner Bros.
LIL WOMEN *Epic*.
MASTERS OF THE HEMISPHERE I Am Not A Freemdom *Kindercore*.
LYLE MAYS Warner Bros.
RONNIE MCCOURY Heartbreak Town *Rounder*.
CARLOS MENCIA Warner Bros.
MEPHISTO ODYSSEY Warner Bros.
MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES Pay Attention *Island*.
MODEST MOUSE *Epic*.
MR. NITRO Hustlin' Pays *Columbia*.
NINE DAYS The Maddening Crowd *550*.
OTHELLO Othello *Warner Bros*.
OUTHUD 1st Single Of The New Millennium *Kill Rock Stars*.
 —7-inch.
PIETER K Bog Mon/Payback *Thermal*.
 —12-inch.
PINEBENBER Things Are About To Get Weird *Ohio Gold*.
QUASIMOTO The Unseen *Stones Throw*.
FINLEY QUAYE *550*.
RUFF ENDZ *Epic*.
SLEATER KINNEY All Hands On The Bad One *Kill Rock Stars*.
SNAKE RIVER CONSPIRACY Sonic Jihad *Reprise*.
STRINGS The Black Widow *Epic*.
THUNDERBUGS *Epic*.
SATOSHI TOMIE Full Lick *Columbia*.
TRANS AM Singles Compilation *Thrill Jockey*.
VNV NATION Empires *Metropolis*.
WEEN White Pepper *Elektra*.
WITH EVERY IDLE HOUR Finally *ISYWAP*.

MAY 7

THE SEWERGROOVES Seventh Floor *Estrus*.
 —7-inch.

MAY 8

ATOMBOMBPOCKETKNIFE Alphasounds *Southern*.
CLEANER Solaris *Metropolis*.
THE NO W.T.O. COMBO Live From The Battle In Seattle *Alternative Tentacles*.
 —Features Jello Biafra, Kim Thayil and Krist

Novoselic.
SWEEP THE LEG JOHNNY Sto Cazzo! *Southern*.

MAY 9

4 BITCHIN' BABES Beyond Bitchin' *Shanachie*.
AVANT My Thoughts *MCA*.
BAD RELIGION The New America *Atlantic*.
BEENIE MAN Art And Life *Virgin*.
THE BLACK HALOS Jane Doe/Russian Roulette *Sub Pop*.
 —7-inch single. "Jane Doe" comes from their forthcoming full-length, and "Russian Roulette" is a *Lords Of The New Church* cover.
BOSSON One In A Million *Capitol*.
PETER BRÖTZMANN Nipples *Atavistic*.
 —Rumor has it that this record was inspired by our very own Managing Editor, Nipples Gladstone.
JEFF BUCKLEY Mystery White Boy *Columbia*.
 —Collection of live tracks from the late singer.
CALEXICO Hot Rail *Quarterstick-Touch & Go*.
NICK CAVE The Secret Life Of The Love Song *King Mob*.
CHICAGO UNDERGROUND DUO Synesthesia *Thrill Jockey*.
THE COME-ONS The Come-Ons *Sympathy For The Record Industry*.
DEEP PURPLE The Very Best Of *Rhino*.
DEVO Pioneers Who Got Scalped (Anthology) *Rhino*.
 —Two-CD set featuring one new track.
DJ RECTANGLE Ultimate Ultimate Battle Weapon *VA Ground Control*.
 —Two-LP set.
DUSTY TRAILS Dusty Trails *Atlantic*.
 —Features Vivian Trimble of Luscious Jackson and Josephine Wiggs of The Breeders.
STEVE EARLE Transcendental Blues *E2-Artemis*.
EASY MO BEE Now Or Never: Odyssey 2000 *Priority*.
ECHOBOY Volume One *Mute*.
SUE FOLEY Love Comin' Down *Shanachie*.
THE GLANDS The Glands *Capricorn*.
GLASSJAW Everything You Wanted To Know About Silence *Roadrunner*.
HANSON This Time Around *Island Def Jam*.
WHITNEY HOUSTON Greatest Hits *Arista*.
 —Two-CD set.
THE INTERNATIONAL NOISE CONSPIRACY Survival Sickness *Revelation*.
SONYA ISAACS Sonya Isaacs *Hollywood*.
THE JAYHAWKS Smile *Columbia*.
JUDAS PRIEST Hero, Hero *Koch*.
KID ROCK The History Of Rock *Atlantic*.
 —Compilation of The Polyfuse Method and Early Morning Stoned Pimp, including the new track, "American Bad Ass." Because he is, after all, an American badass.
KILLAH PRIEST View From Masada *MCA*.
LOOPER The Geometrid *Sub Pop*.
JOE MCPHEE Nationtime *Atavistic*.
THE MOUNT EVEREST TRIO Waves From Albert Ayler *Atavistic*.
 —Reissue.
NEW WET KOJAK Do Things *Beggars Banquet*.
NORTH MISSISSIPPI ALL STARS Shake Hands With Shorty *Tone-Cool*.
OVAL Thrill *Jockey*.
PORTASTATIC Merge
 —CD-EP.
RACHEL'S Full On Night *Quarterstick*.
RAFFI Raffi's Box Of Sunshine *Rounder*.
 —Gift set featuring 48 tracks from North America's top-selling children's musician, including hits like "Something In My Shoe," and "Tingalayo." Yeah, you're laughing now, but the dude wrote a song about something in his shoe, and he could probably buy us all 10 times over. Now that's punk rock.
HAL RUSSEL Hal Russel's Chemical Fest *Atavistic*.
SOUNDTRACK Me, Myself & Irene *Elektra*.
SPORTY THIEVZ Sporty Thievez *Columbia*.
SPRING HEEL JACK Oddities *Thirsty Ear*.
 —Previously unreleased tracks with guest appearances from William S. Burroughs and Thurston Moore.
TAHITI 80 Puzzle *Minty Fresh*.
 —Parisian band's debut featuring Eric Matthews, Fountains Of Wayne's Adam Schlesinger and Andy Chase from Ivy.
TARWATER Animals, Suns & Atoms *Kitty Yo-Mute*.
PAUL VAN DYK FEATURING ST. ETIENNE Tell

Me Why (The Riddle) *Mute*.
VARIOUS ARTISTS Deep Concentration *3 Orm*.
 —Tracks from *Craze*, *Immortal Fader Fyters*, *Radar*, *Cash Money*, *Z-Trip* and others.
VARIOUS ARTISTS Feel Like Jumping: The Best Of Studio One Women *Heartbeat*.
 —Features tracks from female artists on reggae's famed Studio One label, including Nina Soul, Dawn Penn, Cecile Campbell, Little Audrey, Norma Fraser, Jerry Jones and others.
VARIOUS ARTISTS Stone Immaculate *Elektra*
 —Doors tribute album.
THE VON ZIPPERS Monkey On You *Estrus*.
 —7-inch.
WE Decentertainment *Liquid Sky*.
DWAYNE WIGGINS Eyes Never Lie *Motown*.
 —Ex-Tony Toni Tone member with Hootie And The Blowfish's Darius Rucker guesting.
WORKHORSE MOVEMENT Sons Of The Pioneers *Roadrunner*.
SHANNON WRIGHT Maps Of Tacit *Quarterstick*.

MAY 15TH

MOODS FOR MODERNS Two Tracks Left *Doghouse*.
LAZYCAIN July to October *Doghouse*.
AS FRIENDS RUST Fists of Time *Doghouse*.

MAY 16

AMETRIA It's Not About Me *MCA*.
ANALOG BROTHERS 2005 *Ground Control*.
BANGS Sweet Revenge *Kill Rock Stars*.
 —Follow up to their debut full-length, *Tiger Bone*.
BLACK CAT MUSIC One Foot In The Grave *Lookout!*
 —7-inch.
BONFIRE MADIGAN *Kill Rock Stars*.
CHARLES ATLAS Play The Spaces *Star Star Stereo*.
EARTH, WIND & FIRE Best Of Volume II *Columbia Legacy*.
ELWOOD The Parlane Of Our Time *Palm Pictures*.
FYP Toys That Kill *Recess*.
MARVIN GAYE Midnight Love *Columbia Legacy*.
GRANDDADDY The Sopotware Slump *V2*.
ALVIN YOUNGBLOOD HART Start With The Soul *Hannibal*.
JULIANA HATFIELD Beautiful Creature; Juliana's Pony: Total System Failure *Zoe*.
 —Limited edition two-CD set of all new material from Hatfield. Beautiful Creature shows off her vulnerable side, while Total System Failure delivers the rock. Both discs will also be available individually.
MAD LION *Reprise*.
BRAD MEHLDAU Warner Bros.
GEORGIA MIDDLEM Endless Possibilities *Giant*.
MY LIFE WITH THE THRILL KILL KULT Crime For All Seasons *Rykodisc*.
NAVA Nava *RykoLatino*.
THE O'JAYS Survival *Epic Legacy*.
OMINOUS SEAPODS The Super Man Curse *Palm Pictures*.
THE PALMER Tender Hooks *Reprise*.
THE POSERS Anti-Christian Animosity *Cargo-Grilled Cheese*.
THE PROMISE RING Electric Pink *Jade Tree*.
 —CD-single.
SPEEDBUGGY USA Cowboys And Aliens *Cargo-Headhunter*.
SPOT Unhalfbaking *Upland*.
MICHAEL STANLEY Eighteen Down *Razor & Tie*.
THRONES Sperm Whale 12-inch *Kill Rock Stars*.
TRAGEDY Against All Odds *Gee Street*.
BILL WITHERS The Best Of Bill Withers: Lean On Me *Columbia Legacy*.
WITNESS UK Before The Calm *MCA*.
NEIL YOUNG *Reprise*.
THE YOUNG AMERICANS Warner Bros.

MAY 23

98 MUTE Slow Motion Riot *Revelation*.
A PERFECT CIRCLE Mer De Noms *Virgin*.
 —Debut from Tool vocalist Maynard James Keenan's side project.
THE A*TEENS The Abba Generation *MCA*.
BUJU BANTON Unchained Spirit *Revelation*.
JOHNNY CASH Love, God, Murder *Columbia Legacy*.

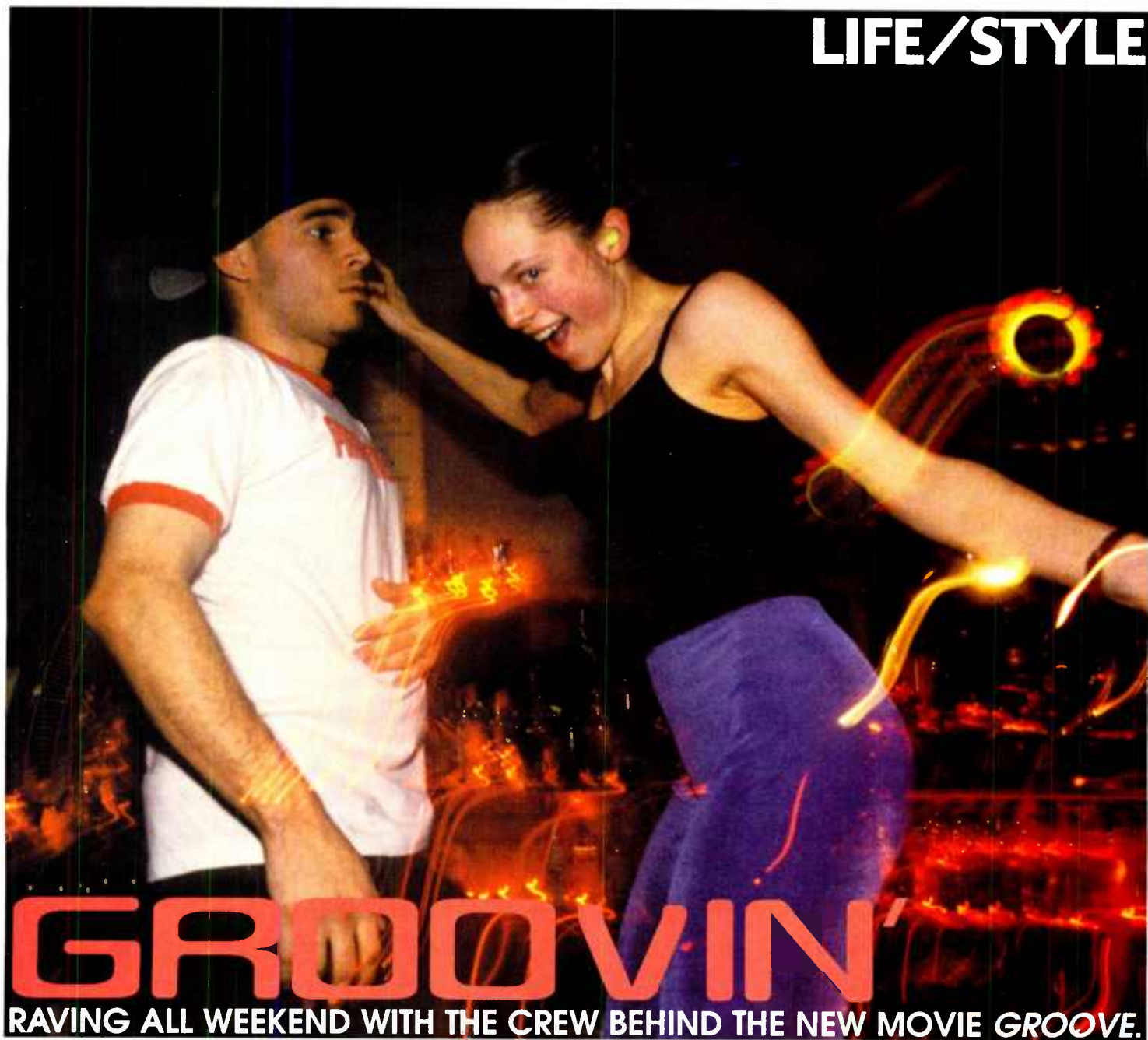
—Three-CD box set. Each disc represents a theme with liner notes written by June Carter Cash, Bono and Quentin Tarantino, respectively. Each will be released individually the same day as well.
DILATED PEOPLES The Platform *Capitol*.
DIN FIV Escape To Reality *Metropolis*.
DROPKICK MURPHYS Early Years *Revelation*.
EXTOL Solid State.
TISH HINOJOSA Sign Of Truth *Rounder*.
LIL' KIM *Atlantic*.
MPXP The Everpassing Moment *Tooth & Nail*.
SINEAD O'CONNOR *Atlantic*.
OLD 97S Early Tracks *Bloodshot*.
 —Eight-song EP.
PEARL JAM Binaural *Epic*.
PITCHSHIFTER *MCA*.
P'TAAH Compressed Light *Ubiquity*.
BLUES SARACENO Best Of *Spitfire*.
SHAGGY Big Game *MCA*.
THE SLACKERS Live At Ernesto's *Revelation*.
MICHAEL SHEEHY Sweet Blue Gene *Beggars Banquet*.
SLICK SHOES Wake Up Screaming *Tooth And Nail*.
FRANK SINATRA Love Songs *Reprise*.
SOCIETY'S FINEST The Journey... So Far *Solid State*.
WUMPSQUIT BloodChild *Metropolis*.
ZEN GUERRILA Sub Pop.
 —7-inch single.

MAY 30

BILLY BRAGG & WILCO Volume 2 *Elektra*.
RICK BRAUN & BONEY JAMES Warner Bros.
CALI AGENTS How The West Was One *Ground Control*.
 —Two-disc set.
DADDY'S HANDS Tutankhamun *Cargo-Headhunter*.
DIANOAGH Battle Champions *Southern*.
EN VOGUE Masterpiece Theatre *Elektra*.
FOURPLAY Warner Bros.
LIL MO *Elektra*.
BOB MARLEY ALL-STAR TRIBUTE One Love *Palm Pictures*.
 —DVD.
MISTA *Elektra*.
OLIVE Trickle *Maverick*.
SIT N' SPIN Enjoy The Ride *Cargo-Headhunter*.
SPARECHANGE At First Sight *Cargo-Grilled Cheese*.
 —Grilled cheese. Mmmmm.
MARTIN TAYLOR Kiss And Tell *Legacy*.
TURNING POINT 1988-1991 *Discography Jade Tree*.
ZION I Mind Over Matter *Ground Control*.
 —Two-LP/CD set.

JUNE 6

12RODS Separation Anxieties *V2*.
AFU-RA Body Of The Life Force *Gee Street*.
 —Jeru the Damaja's sidekick goes solo after two LPs with Jeru.
AMAZING CROWNS Royal Time Bomb.
BT Movement In Still Life *Network*.
CALIBRETTO 13 Enter The Danger Brigade *Tooth And Nail*.
DARK LEAF VS. NOBODY *Ubiquity*.
 —12-inch.
FIVER Strings For Satellites *Devil In The Woods*.
GLUECIFER Tender Is The Savage *Sub Pop*.
THE GOLDEN GUINEAS Shit Or Bust *Estrus*.
LEATHERFACE Horsebox *Revelation*.
JACK LUKEMAN *Razor & Tie*.
MIKE E Master Plan *Capitol*.
MING & FS God's Plan *Liquid Sky*.
 —12-inch.
THE MURDER CITY DEVILS In Name And Blood *Sub Pop*.
SAINT ETIENNE The Sound Of Water *Sub Pop*.
SNOWBOY Afro-Cuban Jazz *CuBop*.
MATT SUGGS Merge.
SUPER FURRY ANIMALS Mwnng *Flydaddy*.
 —Welsh language album featuring bonus disc with six tracks not available on the import.
SWITCH TROUT Cuttlefish Boogie *Estrus*.
 —EP.
UNCLE CRACKER *Atlantic*.
 —The DJ from Kid Rock's Twisted Brown Trucker band.
VEGA Life On Earth *Capitol*.
THE VON ZIPPERS Blitzhacker *Estrus*.



RAVING ALL WEEKEND WITH THE CREW BEHIND THE NEW MOVIE *GROOVE*.

WORDS AND IMAGES: KIERAN WYATT

What drama does a warehouse rave offer? If you've ever been to one, you know there's plenty: blossoming love, police raids, surreal drug experiences and that intense moment of madness when the DJ drops a killer record. *Groove*, the new movie from writer/director Greg Harrison, captures the highs and lows of the party, wraps them into a gritty package and asks, "Are you feeling it?"

Harrison moved to San Francisco in 1993 to pursue his dreams of writing and filmmaking. "I took a whole year off and wrote," he says. "Going out to the parties was a way to meet people." The night in '93 he attended his first rave was when he "truly understood electronic music for the first time...As I discovered the music and the scene I was struck by how creative and inspirational people were."

The director applied the "write what you know" principle and began to gather material for a script. The psychological aspects of rave—a DJ's effect on dancers and how crowds become consumed in orgies of music, light and sound—have never been fully captured for the silver screen. Such intangible phenomena were the inspiration for *Groove*. Despite early pressures from potential film distributors to have a "moral" ending to the drug-laced tale, Harrison didn't want to

compromise what he perceived as the rave scene reality.

"They all asked me where the 'drug death' was... I wanted to look at both the good and the bad. People gravitate to the bad, i.e., the overdose. But that's almost safe. It's not just people randomly taking drugs or getting 'sucked in' to taking drugs. There's a real psychological and emotional reason why."

The director's vision was vindicated at this year's Sundance Film Festival. *Groove* received solid reviews and, after a bidding war, Sony Pictures has set a June release date. "It was a challenge to convert what most would describe as a subjective experience into a film," admits Harrison. "People think raves are about masses of strange people, and you pan way back and you think it's just people going crazy to the groove. But I wanted to zoom in and say, 'Who are the ravers, the DJs, the personalities? What connections are people making on the dancefloor?'"

In the spirit of *Groove*, members of the cast and crew escorted us on a 24-hour weekend bender San Francisco-style, lurching from funky drum 'n' bass clubs on Haight Street to outdoor raves in the mountains to a techno sweatdown at the local superclub. Were we feeling it? Most certainly.



10 p.m. Saturday

Club flyers, rolling papers, funky posters (1) and beer bottles are strewn throughout the living room lounge owned by one of Groove's rave organizers. Dimitri's (2) stylish dive in San Francisco's Lower Haight boasts a recording studio in one corner and a pair of turntables. The members of Dimitri's posse, the Lower Haight Players, prepare for the evening: fixing hair, comparing nail polish, reading new music mags, taking bong hits and catching up on the past week's events (3). The sartorially outlandish DJ Polywog (4) (who plays herself in the movie) shimmers in Spiderman garb, entertaining us with a selection of breaks and beats. Harrison chaperones, introducing new recruits like a camp counselor tending his flock. Mackenzie Furgens (5) is a ball of energy, exhibiting her flashing sneakers and chatting with an exuberance not too dissimilar from her Groove role as the loved-up 18 year-old rave veteran Harmony Stitts. We get a sneak preview of Groove's just-cut trailer, two-and-a-half minutes of hyper-kinetic cross-cutting, bright lights and pumping dancefloor soundtracks (6). Although everyone's seen the film about a hundred times, the trailer draws gasps of awe.

Midnight Saturday

We swiftly relocate a few doors down the street to a drum 'n' bass hoedown hosted by DJ Wade Hampton (7), Groove's music supervisor. Wade's been involved in the dance music scene for eons and used to promote Los Angeles' Circa raves. "Circa was a mind-of-its-own kind of party. It was a continual cycle of chaos and redemption, depending on whether the riot police busted it or not," he says. He's already halfway through a four-hour set, churning out tough, booming basslines and booty-baffling beats like he does in the film. By this time Dimitri and Mackenzie (8) are firing on all cylinders, getting up on the bar for an impromptu jig while everyone else twists into a frenzy on the dancefloor, either going spastic to the ultra-fast drums or grooving slowly to the half-speed dub basslines. Meanwhile, Harrison (9) voyeuristically surveys the

scene, as if he's sizing up the place for his next shoot, though he says he wants his next film to be "a road movie kind of inspired by Jack Kerouac."

3 p.m. Sunday

Relocating an hour north of San Francisco, we're at a party nestled next to rolling green hills and a glistening clear lake in wine country. The outdoor gathering, entitled Sunset, has been a Bay Area institution since the early '90s. A motley crew of spangled ravers, techno-hippies, Deadheads, glammy house queens and hardcore junglists surrounds the DJ (10), as if mimicking an outtake from Groove. There's a cozy community vibe (probably aided by something more powerful than fresh air). Dimitri takes the opportunity to kiss as many girls as possible (11). As 800 souls get down to a soundtrack of deep house, the sun sets on one side of the lake and the moon rises on the other. That indefinable rave spirit is in the air. "What has been so compelling about the scene," muses Harrison, "are the personal and interpersonal responses, meeting people and how being around the scene and the music affected my life."

11 p.m. Sunday

Back in the heart of San Francisco, we're in the town's biggest club, 1015 Fulsom, for its week-ending meltdown, Spundæ; a fog of dry ice, piercing lasers and red glowsticks envelops us. DJ Christian Smith (12), who has tunes on the film's soundtrack, serves up a jumping selection of gritty techno, colon-quaking trance and ribcage-rattling bass to a mass of writhing bodies (13). Few people are letting go as much as Bing Ching, who plays up-and-coming turntablist DJ Snaz, waving his glowsticks like a rave monkey on amphetamines (14). Meanwhile, Mackenzie (15) outdances everyone else in the club, putting on a few wildstyle moves. Even Harrison (16), up until now a model of calm, is clapping and beaming as the DJ hits the overdrive button. Like him, many ravers say that when they first went to a rave, they "finally understood" electronic music. Wade remarks on that common experience: "At some point everyone walks into that room!"



CIBO MATTO LIVING

Is it any surprise that the woman behind such song titles as "Know Your Chicken," "Sci-Fi Wasabi" and "White Pepper Ice Cream" has been reading cookbooks since she was knee-high to a Cuisinart? Cibo Matto's Yuka Honda says she inherited her love of recipes from her mother. But would you expect the lauded exponent of Japanese pop culture to be infatuated with Connecticut's uber-WASP? Yes, Martha "Wall Street" Stewart has an oh-so-downtown fan in Honda. "She has the most amazing recipe books; I have tons of recipe books and she has one of the most smartest, simplest recipe books," says the Cibo Matto member known for entertaining the likes of bandmate Sean Lennon. Favorite recipes include ricotta cheese ice cream and noodle-stuffed salmon. Honda also gets pointers from *Martha Stewart Living* on interior design: "I would love her to come to my house and show me how to organize it, because it's really a mess." The oft-touring singer, sample artist and songwriter has a "woman-needs-to-work side," but another part of her loves to be home, shop, cook "and think about how to wash a toilet bowl really well." So, how do you clean a toilet bowl really well? "Soak it with cleanser and clean it as if it's your baby." As long as you don't sing it to sleep, it's a good thing. »Neil Gladstone

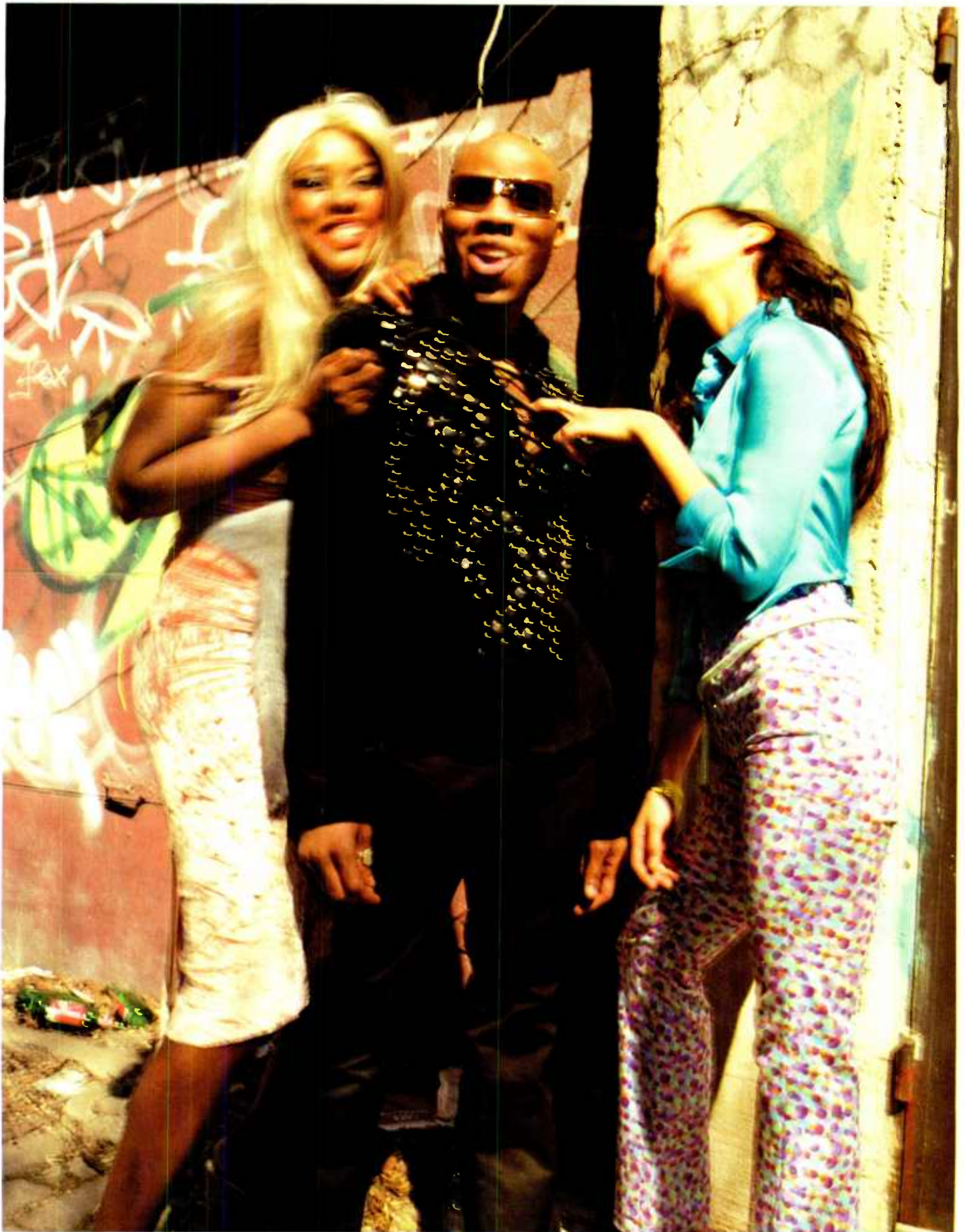
THE MACK PACK

Though plenty of artists past and present celebrate the superbadassmofo style, **Beans**, rapper for Anti-Pop Consortium, isn't one of them. "I think '70s blaxploitation movies glorified the exploitation of women, the same way modern hip-hop artists glorify violence and self-hate. It's the same media manipulation, things haven't changed that much, really."



Above: Beans goes over inventory in a D-Squared cobalt blue ruched vest and Richard Edwards side-zipper pants. Angela (left) feels the material of a pink nylon zipper skirt by In The Now while Beans checks out her Sky London hot pink drawstring boots. Susan stands tall in rhinestone h-strap natural wood mules, also by Sky London, and a green print knee-length skirt by Alice Roi.

Right: What is it about Beans that's so riveting? Is it his rhymes, his head shine or his shirt? He wears a D-Squared black suede lace-up pullover and black pants. From left, Susan squeezes into a peach velvet dress by Elisa Jimenez For Hunger World and a Rebecca Danenberg grey fur wrap. Angela teases in a Paige Novick turquoise silk blouse and Sharango dotted pants. Yellow chain-mail bracelet and multicolored jeweled necklace by Calin Jewelry.





Left: Beans's Angels get to work. From left, Susan surveys the territory in a tan leather bustier by Rebecca Danenberg, a green silk print knee-length skirt by Alice Roi and gray Patrick Cox pumps. Angela works the middle in a pink and red ruffled top by Alice Roi, hot pink "Knot" capri pants and chain mail bracelets by Cain Jewelry and Sky London tan lizard sandals. Ellen advertises the goods in a striped ruched dress by Elisa Jimenez For Hunger World, Tristan Webber light blue leather jacket, Patrick Cox rhinestone t-bar mules and metallic mod sunglasses by Incognito.



"I think [gangsta] music sets the stage for where we're at now. I think a lot of that is really self-perpetuating," says Beans. "I hope I don't come off as a hypocrite because I did a photo shoot that portrayed that image, but I'm not really about that, [and neither is] my music." The science Beans drops on Anti-Pop Consortium's new album, *The Tragic Epilogue* (75Ark), and his solo single, "Nude Paper/Star Killer" (Mo' Wax), ruminates on "self-expression through experimentation."

Above: Beans cools the heat. From left, "Officer" Eddie haggles in a Spiewak NYPD jacket, Richard Edwards blue, side-zipper pants and a blue Dickies work shirt. Beans parries in a Richard Edwards cloud-pattern tank and pants and custom-made "vintage" sunglasses designed by Claude Sabbah. The ladies size up the sale: Ellen in an Alice Roi pink flowered dress and Patrick Cox black-strap heels, Angela in a Tristan Webber mint mesh tank, purple aviator glasses by Incognito and Sky London nude sandals and Susan in a Sharango red silk dress.

Below: Angela, the lucky, er, winner, frolics in a velvet "Naughty Little Girl" shirt by Punk Empire and pink nylon zipper skirt by In The Now. Angela of Madison and Susan of Boss Models. Eddie of Spirit Models.



Where to score your stash: Elisa Jimenez For Hunger World at Fragile Boutique (212-982-5437), Incognito Sunglasses at Pat Field's (212-254-1699); Dickies Workwear at Canal Jeans (212-219-0312 or 1-800-Dickies), Spiewak merchandise at www.spiewak.com, Sharagano at Sharagano Boutique (212-941-7086), Alice Roi at Kirna Zabete (212-941-9656), Tristan Webber at Zoo (212-505-0500), In The Now at Scoop (212-925-2886), Rebecca Danenberg, Punk Empire and Page Novick at Barney's (212-826-8900), D-Squared and Sky shoes at Jeffrey's (404-841-0215), Richard Edwards at Stanley Korshak (214-871-3600 or www.richardedwardsnyc.com) Patrick Cox Women's Shoes at Bloomingdale's (www.bloomingdales.com), Calin Jewelry at M Shop (212-505-9371).



CELEBRITY PIMP STYLE: JAMIROQUAI

Proof that even earthy-crunchy neo-soul singers are embracing that *Across 110th Street* look, Jamiroquai's Jay Kay is seen here rocking a black-on-black pimpin' ain't sleazy style. While Kay and his wife, British TV personality Denise van Outen, likely went to Paris for their fashion emergency on planet earth, the same shiny suits are available at upscale department stores like Barney's New York and Los Angeles's Fred Segal, and ladies' boutiques where designers like Daryl K and Rebecca Danenberg rule. Of course, if shiny duds and lacey stuff for the ladies weren't consistently available in thrift stores, all rock life would probably cease to exist, and polyester's indestructibility bodes well for finding vintage talkin'-'bout-Shaft wear in good shape. (Just remember that those artificial fibers also retain odors, so sniff before you buy.) A mid-point between the two are joints like Trash & Vaudeville (in New York, 212-982-3590; Philly, 215-238-8817), which has served the fashionably seedy for decades. »»»Evelyn von Gizycki

NEVER MIND THE SWINDLE JULIEN TEMPLE RETURNS TO TELL THE SEX PISTOLS' SIDE OF THE STORY.



The claustrophobic, desperate world of 1970s Britain: brown and gray housing projects, sudden street riots, Benny Hill. This was what spawned the Sex Pistols. *The Filth & The Fury* (Fine Line) documents the band's rise and fall from its own point of view—starting as London street urchins and ending as quarreling louts on a stage in San Francisco.

The film's opening montage soon gives way to less familiar stuff, like Cockney weathermen, oafish chat-show hosts, goofy slapstick performers—even the Bay City Rollers are cut and mixed into the narrative.

"I was among the first people who had a video machine in England," recalls director Julien Temple, explaining his collage-type style. The soft-spoken, 46-year-old Cambridge grad continues, "I was a movie freak so I taped hundreds of movies, which obviously had commercial breaks," that he couldn't resist using. "I quite like the randomness of it—being bombarded by random information."

Temple made *Filth* to balance another flick he directed about the Pistols, the 1980 film *The Great Rock 'N' Roll Swindle*. "That film was designed to puncture the air of pop divinity they'd achieved," he says. "They were being idolized in the same way that Rod Stewart had been five years previous, which they hated."

Swindle sabotaged the hero worship by making the Pistols out to be manager Malcolm McLaren's art-school conspiracy. Though it was meant satirically, it's been taken as fact.

"The band were keen to have their own point of view out there," adds Temple, and the members spend the film taking the piss out of each other ("We were the very first people to call each other cunts," one says nostalgically) and dissing McLaren. Temple even offers a beyond-the-grave interview with Sid Vicious, who sits leisurely on a lawn chair in Hyde Park and describes the hell of heroin addiction. John Lydon, who comes across as a smart, solid bloke in silhouetted, present-day interviews, even cries while recalling Sid's spiral downward.

But most of the film is fast, funny and nasty. The Pistols' stage performances, many unearthed recently and seen for the first time in years, show how great a live band they were, and how well their jackhammer-driven songs—"Anarchy In The UK," "Bodies," "God Save The Queen"—hold up. To Temple, the movie shows how our world was made by the Pistols. "It's a film about the difference between their time and now. They seem very modern, now—you wouldn't bat an eye seeing them coming down a street in London—while the weathermen and chat-show hosts seem ancient, freaks of nature." **»»»Scott Timberg**

HAMLET (Miramax)

OK, 'fess up: the thought of a contemporary retelling of *Hamlet* with Ethan Hawke in the lead leaves you queasy. We're with you. However, Michael Almereyda's Y2K spin on the Bard is a delight, outdoing recent Shakespearean adaptations like *Romeo + Juliet*. Set in Manhattan, the film introduces Claudius (Kyle MacLachlan) as the media titan running the Denmark Corporation after his brother (Sam Shepard) croaks. Meanwhile, Claudius shacks up with Gertrude (Diane Venora), the wife of his dead brother and mother of Hamlet. Sound familiar? Almereyda, who made *Nadja*, the excellent 1994 East Village vampire tale, creates stylish moods and images within the city's skyscrapers—it's almost a shame there's so much dialogue. Still, this gives the likes of Julia Stiles (Ophelia), Bill Murray (Polonius) and Liev Schreiber (Laertes) time to shine. **»»»John Elsasser**



AMERICAN PIMP (Seventh Art)

For their coming-out-of-retirement party, the Hughes brothers (*Menace II Society*) update blaxploitation with a slice of true American mackdom. *American Pimp* looks at a slew of modern-day flesh peddlers, unapologetically addressing women as bitch and pocketing fat wads of cash. The Hugheses paint these men sympathetically—businessmen just trying to make a dollar out of the proverbial 15 cents. Despite the occasional laugh at the pimps' expense and a few pauses for thought—the legendary Fillmore Slim confessing that he couldn't attend the funeral of a girl murdered on the job for fear of her family's reaction—the pair never truly question whether pimping might be, gasp, wrong. Even the prostitutes they interview are lucid and immune to criticism, proving again that pimping might not be necessary, but it sure seems easy.

»»»Jon Caramanica



UP AT THE VILLA (USA Films)

Although *Up At The Villa* is set in Florence, Italy, in 1938, this tragic love story has all the timeless elements of a dandy melodrama: Intrigue! Sex! Murder! Despite the threat of war, Mary (played by *The English Patient's* Kristen Scott Thomas) is one of many Anglo-American expatriates living in luxury, attending fashionable dinner parties thrown by a busybody neighbor (Anne Bancroft). Sean Penn, playing a cad who doesn't let his marriage stop him from being a womanizer, soon arrives to make things more combustible. Through some inventive plot intricacies, Thomas and Penn get entangled with a suspicious local cop. The lavish production and ideal cast makes this an affair to remember—and if nothing else, the gorgeous cinematography will make you long for an Italian holiday. **»»»John Elsasser**





ZIP UP AND STRAP ON

These days everyone's talking about their baggage: if they're not rambling about some guilt trip their mother laid on them at age 12, then they're worrying whether to get a mini-backpack or messenger tote. When picking out your equipment for the never-ending war of accessories, be sure to employ the latest technology. As with electronics, that sometimes means turning your sights on the Far East. Wawabags' (1-877-lov-wawa) fabricate their tong hipsters and matching handbags (\$165 for the pair) out of Chinese silk and satin brocade. True, this isn't exactly a street-corner bargain, but hey, do you want to win the war or just get by?

DROP AND UNCOVER

Are your Under-roos not fitting like they used to? That doesn't mean you can't have style right down to your skin. With a cold war approach to design and a product line inspired by everything from cigarette packages to vintage burlesque, Calamity Jane and factory uniforms, Frisk Underthings (215-634-8850) enables you to keep retro style where it counts. They might not offer Superman or Wonder Woman, but Frisk cammies (\$30 and up), panties (\$16 and above) and boxers (\$36) are fabricated from sheer nylon, vinyl, lambskin, glistenette, cotton lycra, silk chiffon and mesh to keep your privates purring. Please, ahem, keep your panty-weirdness to yourself.



FLASH AND BURN

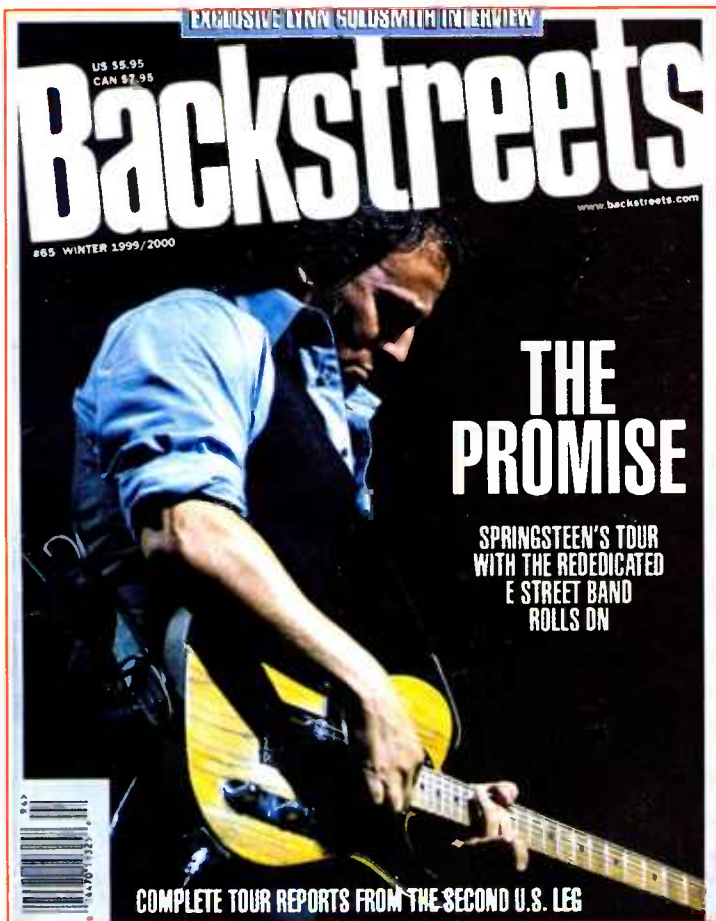
Even ravers need to know what time it is, because if the party starts at 2 a.m. you don't want to miss a second inside a sweaty warehouse packed with dancers tripping more than the light fantastic. But reading those dials when you're hopping from one dark club to another can be difficult. Luckily, the new e-watch from Flipo (www.gammagard.com/ewatches) boasts electro luminescence technology that uses fluorescent compounds, luminophores and phosphor compounds to emit hypnotic flashes of light in shapes such as a bullseye, a roulette wheel or a bomb. Let's just say at the touch of a button you'll be guaranteed to freak out anyone in your sight line. That's certainly worth \$24.95. And when you wake up after the rave with no idea where you are, it'll be comforting to know what time it is.



FLASH AND TURN

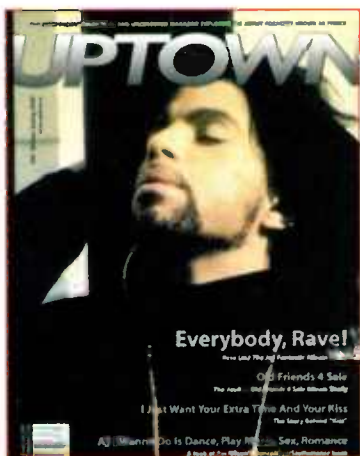
Were you ever envious of sports and fashion photographers who snapped off a gazillion frames by just holding down their shutter clicker? Well, for those who can't afford auto advance, there's the \$38 Russian Lomo Action sampler. No focus, aperture or shutter-speed to slow you down, just press, and it takes a series of four different shots. Okay, so you might not win a Pulitzer with it, but the Lomo site (www.lomo.com) gives away awards for the best images of the week. This is one accessory that gives a little something back.





HOPELESSLY DEVOTED 2U

Zines devoted to a particular band or artist have a feel to them that nothing else can match, a mixture of radiant devotion and a wide-mouthed fascination with minutiae. Take, for instance, **Backstreets** (2607 24th St. NW, Ste. #4, Washington, DC 20008), the magazine of Bruce Springsteen devotees. The latest issue, #65, doesn't just include complete set lists and notes on every performance from last fall's tour; it's got descriptions of what the E Street Band played at soundchecks, as well as a chart of which songs were played at which shows and in what order. There's also an interview with former Springsteen photographer



and girlfriend Lynn Goldsmith, and some amazingly passionate reader letters ("I feel hopeful now. Hopeful that things are gonna start turning around for me...Thanks, Bruce, for showing me the light").

Uptown (published in Sweden but available through P.O. Box 43, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44222) is devoted to the continuing exploits of let's-just-call-him-Prince, though it breaks with the single-artist zine tradition of unfettered sycophancy—even its editors can't find much good to say about *The Vault...Old Friends 4 Sale*.

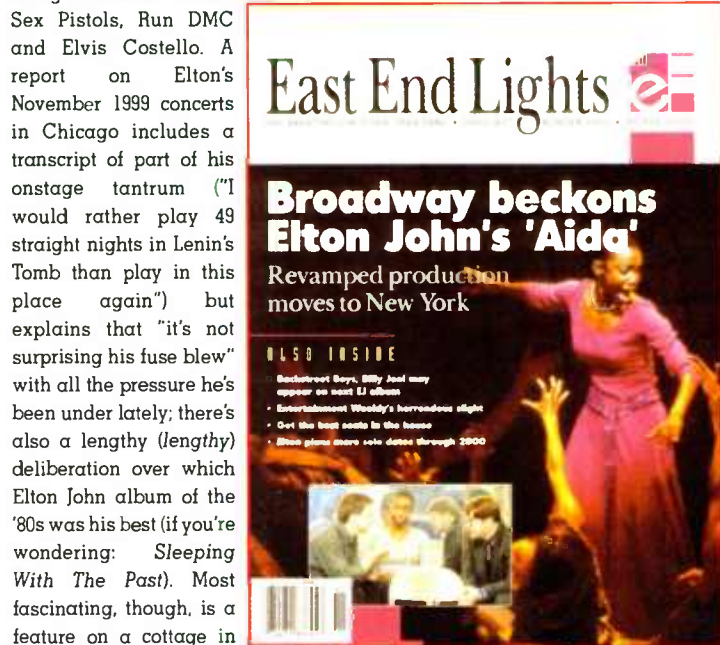
The track-by-track exegeses of that album and *Rave Un2 The Joy*

Fantastic push the limits of obviousness, and the same goes for the blow-by-blow descriptions of every live performance he's given since September of last year ("he emphasized that the commonality we shared was, in fact, love"). But there's also a solid article on the origins of "Kiss"—turns out that Prince originally gave it to Mazarati to record but liked the band's arrangement so much he took it back—and a favorable review of *DanceMusicSexRomance*, a book with some harsh things to say about Prince. Still, it's a little disconcerting to note that the book was written by *Uptown's* editor-in-chief.

The editors of **Daytrippin'** (1730 N. Lynn St., Suite A-14, Arlington, VA 22209) have it a bit harder—the magazine is devoted to current Beatles news, and aside from a nutcase stabbing George Harrison a few months ago, there hasn't been much of that lately. Still, they manage to scare up a reasonable amount of material: a couple of pieces on the John-and-Paul-reunion TV movie *Two Of Us* (including an interview with its screenwriter and an article by its song consultant). And some of their contributors even have more or less direct Beatles connections, like Rod Davis, from the pre-Beatles band the Quarrymen, writing about a Sotheby's auction of the guitar John Lennon owned in 1957 (Davis recognizes it by a telltale bloodstain), and former Lennon lookalike Chet Carmen describing how he was flown out to meet the band in 1964.



But more than any other one-artist zine, **East End Lights**, a quarterly for Elton John fans (P.O. Box 636, New Baltimore, MI 48047), raises the bar for fan adoration. The cover of the Winter 2000 issue promises a feature on "Entertainment Weekly's horrendous slight"; the slight in question turns out to be that Elton wasn't listed among its 100 greatest entertainers of the past 50 years alongside the likes of the Sex Pistols, Run DMC and Elvis Costello. A report on Elton's November 1999 concerts in Chicago includes a transcript of part of his onstage tantrum ("I would rather play 49 straight nights in Lenin's Tomb than play in this place again") but explains that "it's not surprising his fuse blew" with all the pressure he's been under lately; there's also a lengthy (lengthy) deliberation over which Elton John album of the '80s was his best (if you're wondering: *Sleeping With The Past*). Most fascinating, though, is a feature on a cottage in Tealby, England, where Elton's lyricist partner Bernie Taupin once lived; the current resident is interviewed about some tilework that Elton had paid for. That's devotion.





A ROCKER'S WRITE GRAHAM PARKER TELLS TALES OF BLOKEDOM.

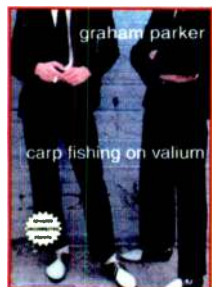
Before embarking on a career as a brash, wickedly literate rock songwriter, Graham Parker bred lab rats and pumped gas. But his latest vocation may be his toughest yet: short story author. The 49-year-old has been writing fiction in fits and starts since his early 20s. Despite having just published his first collection of short stories, *Carp Fishing on Valium* (St. Martin's), Parker considers the work a result of "excess energy" and figures he's too lazy to be a "real" writer.

"So many people think, 'Wouldn't it be great to be at home and be a writer,'" he mocks in a put-on poncey tone. "They don't know what it's like, man. I've dug ditches. I've done some really hard jobs—and writing's been the hardest. With songs, you try to capture a very powerful emotional experience in three or four minutes. And you can get away with a lot more in a song. If one verse isn't as heady as the one before it, that's okay." You can always fall back on an "ooh, baby" if you're at a loss for words, he adds.

In 10 linked vignettes that borrow from Parker's life, *Carp Fishing on Valium* follows Brit Brian Porker through the 10 stages of blokedom—from amateur childhood ornithologist to insecure mod, put-upon husband, rock musician and comedian. The rascally slice-of-life tales are poignant and often laugh-out-loud funny. You'd almost never know that Parker's preferred reading material is "absurdist," and that his literary heroes are avant-garde sci-fi novelist William Gibson and that Gen-X Pynchon David Foster Wallace. Parker's 1980 novel *The Great Trouser Mystery*, (published in England) nodded more towards those influences; he describes it as "Monty Python meets *A Clockwork Orange* in outer space." The singer/songwriter has another novel completed—he wrote it before *Carp Fishing*—but that was just a little too "out there" for big publishing houses.

Don't expect a book business version of "Mercury Poisoning," his infamous record label jeremiad that accused a former label of making him "the best kept secret in the West." He claims that publishing hasn't driven him to it—not yet, anyway. Besides, his real life is still filled with plenty of absurdist tales. Backstage at a recent show at New York's Bottom Line, Parker was showing a copy of the book galley to his first drummer from the band Rumor. "He said, 'Why do you have a picture of The Jam on the cover?' I fucking freaked out!" recalls Parker with a laugh. "I knew the photo was familiar," he says of the picture of two headless mods. "So I called up my editor and said, 'I cannot have a competing pop group of the '70s on the cover!'"

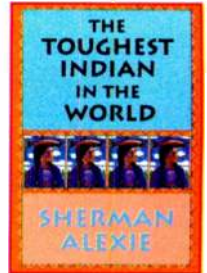
»»Carlene Bauer



THE TOUGHEST INDIAN IN THE WORLD

By Sherman Alexie (Atlantic Monthly Press)

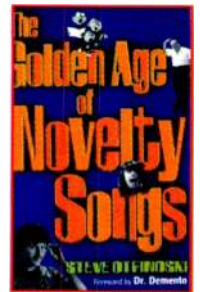
It's no accident that Sherman Alexie (*The Lone Ranger And Tonto Fistfight In Heaven*) opens his latest collection of short fiction with a story called "Assimilation." The collection's central characters are Native American lawyers, pro athletes and college students who caffeinate at Starbucks, attend WASP-y office parties and marry white partners. It's no wonder modern Indians with the rock-and-a-hard-place choice of Reservation poverty or second-class citizenship in white America feel trapped in the dizzying collusion of class and culture. And whether his characters' psychic claustrophobia manifests itself physically (the lawyer who winds up in a street fight), emotionally (the aging Indian who claims to be John Wayne's mistress and antagonizes a white anthropologist) or sexually (the Indian woman dallying with a white man other than her husband), Alexie conveys it in powerful, seductively simple prose. Here, the most lasting form of colonization is mental. Alexie conveys this world so deftly, readers may piss their pants in terror when they realize it's the world we live in. »»Harry Thomas



THE GOLDEN AGE OF NOVELTY SONGS

By Steve Otfinoski (Billboard Books)

Do tunes about "Barney Google" and his goo-goo-googly eyes deserve a closer look as an important part of pop history? Well, for those who'd like to consider the contribution of "Short People," "On Top Of Spaghetti" and "Purple People Eater" to the musical canon, there's *The Golden Age Of Novelty Songs*. Author Steven Otfinoski (who's written more than 80 books) sifts through all the recorded shtick and satire that's been set to a beat over the years, concentrating on the '50s and '60s, when tunes such as "The Battle Of Kookomonga," "My Boyfriend Got A Beatle Haircut" and "Tip-Toe Thru The Tulips With Me" could actually make noise on the charts. Chapters like "Flying Saucers And Singing Chipmunks" and "Monsters, Madmen, And Other One-Hit Weirdos" attempt to categorize tunes by comics and jokes by musicians into genres, adding bits of historical background. For the most part, it's just a tip-toe through an embellished listing of goofs, but if anyone releases a recorded companion, it'll definitely be worth a spin for chuckles. »»Neil Gladstone



TRUE STORY: A NOVEL

by Bill Maher (Simon & Schuster)

Twenty years ago, long before *Politically Incorrect*, Bill Maher was just another fledgling comic struggling to make it on the amateur circuit. Pay was bad, time was abundant and responsibility was out the door and down the street. Lacking distraction, Maher decided to write a novel about a certain five comedians (Dick, Fat, Shit, Buck and Chink) who walk into a bar in search of comic nirvana, a.k.a. a joke that gets a laugh. And as unrelenting and goofy as their jokes are, it's hard not to laugh. They do occasionally get deep—plenty of gazing at women's navels and male bonding. But mostly they get free booze, free burgers and if they're lucky, free sex. So Mr. Maher, thanks for the yuks and the glance into your past, but a word of advice: don't quit your night job.

»»Kristin Keith





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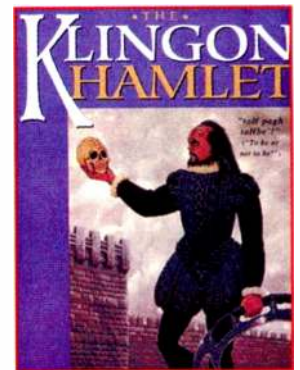
The finest flowers of language are in the garden of classical rhetoric, but like a lot of gardens, these blooms of brilliance are walled off by barbed wire—in this case, one made of complicated Greek and Latin terms. Brigham Young University's Dr. Gideon O. Burton has set up **Silva Rhetoricae** (humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/silva.htm) as a guide to rhetoric's forms and terms, designed for experts as well as people who don't know their acismus from their exergasia. Each one is illustrated by pronunciation, definition and examples (generally from Shakespeare, the Bible or classical sources, though the occasional reference to Taco Bell or Ted Kennedy sneaks in), and linked to related terms. As a bonus, there's a walk-through of the 14 progymnasmata—the basic exercises that rhetoric students master before they move on to convincing you to buy underwater real estate at a very reasonable price.

100newmusic

Not everybody's command of expression is quite so absolute, though. There's a special closet in purgatory reserved for people who put quotation marks around anything they want to emphasize. For a preview of its depths, have a look at the **Gallery Of "Misused" Quotation Marks** (www.juvalamu.com/qmarks). Its multiple chambers ("Current" Exhibits, a Permanent "Collection" and a Donation "Rotunda") include hundreds upon hundreds of inapposite and inadvertently revealing examples, from a sign reading "Female Dancers' on Wednesday Night" to an ad for "Fresh 'Squeezed' Orange Juice" to the classic menu plug for "'Ho-baked' Rolls and Bread" all followed by comments that attempt to determine what they "really" mean by the scare quotes. It only includes citations for quotation marks per se, though it does include a link to the small but cozy **Home For Abused Apostrophes** (www.nuff.ox.ac.uk/Users/Martin/APOST/Apostroph.htm).

The all-time classic of English abuse, though, has to be Pedro Carolino's 1883 book *The New Guide Of The Conversation In Portuguese And English*. Carolino wrote his English phrasebook for Portuguese speakers despite the fact that he knew no English and didn't have a Portugese-English dictionary; he had a Portuguese-French dictionary, and another to go between French and English. As they say in sitcom pitches, hilarity ensues—even babelfish.altavista.com doesn't manage to mangle translations quite this badly. (Mark Twain's little essay about the *Guide* can be found at www.inform.umd.edu/EdRes/ReadingRoom/Fiction/Twain/MarkTwain/portuguese-english: "It was written in serious good faith and deep earnestness, by an honest and upright idiot who believed he knew something of the English language, and could impart his knowledge to others.") **English As She Is Spoke** (www.fragment.com/~ganz/spoke.html) links to extensive reprints from Carolino's book; have a look at the "Idiotisms And Proverbs" section, in particular, for classic sayings like "to craunch the marmoset" and "nothing some money, nothing of Swiss." And if you doubt the original's existence, there's a sample page scanned in at ling.ucsd.edu/~rose/Pedro.gif.

Fed up with broken English by this point? Maybe it's time to check out a language whose abusers are dealt with more severely. It may have only been invented in the last 15 years or so, but there's a comprehensive database of information on "the warrior's tongue" at the **Klingon Language Institute's** site (www.kli.org). It includes an FAQ, information about basic Klingon grammar and vocabulary and a pronunciation guide (for Q, "close off your mouth as far back as you can...and force air up, like you're trying to dislodge food stuck in your throat"). Further into the site are plugs for *HolQeD*, the quarterly journal of Klingon linguistics and culture, *jatmey*, an annual anthology of Klingon-language fiction and poetry, and *Qo'noS QonoS*, a monthly Klingon newspaper—the last of these with some reprints of recent articles and



(shudder) cartoons. The administrators are also responsible for the recent publication of *The Klingon Hamlet*—as you may know, you can't really appreciate Shakespeare until you've read him in the original Klingon.



NHL2K

(Sega Sports) DC

Hockey fans who've been eagerly awaiting a Dreamcast title with realistic NHL action are bound to be thrilled by Sega Sports's latest entry in the stellar "2K" series. *NHL2K* features fully detailed and accurate NHL arenas, motion-captured movements and the most varied play-by-play announcing (courtesy of Hall Of Famer Bob Cole) to appear in a console hockey title to date. The real test of greatness in a hockey game lies in the goaltending though, and here *NHL2K* falls prey to a common weakness—competition is quashed as soon as you learn the "secret move" that can beat the goalie every time. Though the positioning is excellent and a lot of saves are made, the 2K goalie is tricked easily enough to make head-to-head matches with well-practiced opponents ridiculously one-sided. Getting a good view of the action can also be difficult—the "change lines" pop-up-box often obscures the player with the puck, and the default on-ice, low-angle "chase" camera (as opposed to the slightly tilted overhead camera most titles use) takes some getting used to. With this much eye candy though, you'll want to get as close to the action as possible. »»»A.C.

CRAZY TAXI

(Sega) DC

The concept of *Crazy Taxi* is fairly simple: pick up a passenger, drop him off within the time limit, and repeat the process until too much time is wasted between stops. The real fun in the game comes as you start to learn the layout of the city (which is remarkably similar to hilly San Francisco) and its shortcuts—like driving in the subway tunnels, jumping over parks and even driving underwater. With quick-scrolling scenery and super-fast gameplay, *Crazy Taxi* takes advantage of the Dreamcast's advanced graphics. Accompanied by a soundtrack featuring Bad Religion and The Offspring, and enhanced by temperamental passengers who aren't afraid to say "you suck," this action-packed adaptation of the arcade game could make anyone want to quit that day job. »»»Merv



ZOMBIE REVENGE

(Sega) DC

The government tries to create the perfect soldier, one who will continue his mission even if he dies. When the experiment is sabotaged, zombies overcome the world—and it's your job to find out who's responsible. That's the story behind the lightning-paced *Zombie Revenge*, an



impressive translation of the arcade classic. Sega includes the trigger-finger-numbing arcade version (in which the player must fend off millions of zombies), as well as a more reasonably paced "original" version. The latter allows you to fight your way through the game as one of three characters, in a traditional gun-and-fists mode or a refreshing "bare knuckle" mode (without weapons). Both versions are simplistic, the object being just to go in and kill everything that moves. There is some strategy involved as well though, since the action requires quick thinking. With no "save points" and a limited number of "continues," players will need all the help they can get. »»»A.C.

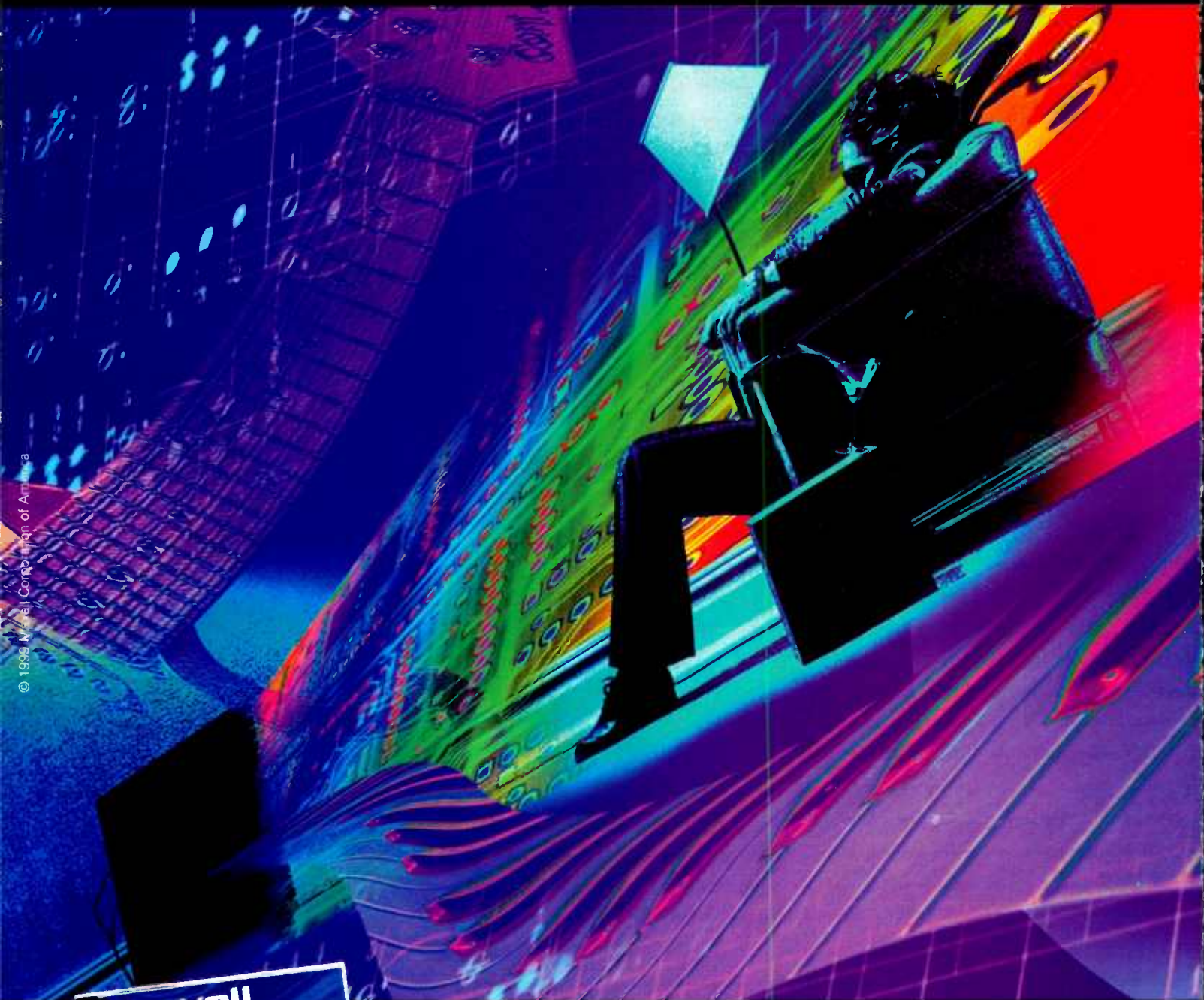
MICROSOFT X-BOX

With the Dreamcast making a substantial impact in the gaming scene and the North American release of the Playstation 2 just around the corner, who would dare to step up to the plate with yet another console offering? Who else but Microsoft? The company recently unveiled its "X-Box," which will be powered by an Intel Pentium III 600Mhz central processing unit, partnered with an advanced graphics processor by Nvidia (the graphics chip manufacturer of choice among savvy computer gamers). Also included will be an 8GB hard drive and broadband capability. If that sounds like a PC in a box to you, consider that Microsoft also owns WebTV, and X-Box just might be Microsoft's latest attempt at forcing consumers to accept the convergence of TV and the Internet. Microsoft has always been strategically smart with its PC games division; its *Links* and *Flight Simulator* series place among the best-selling game titles. With Microsoft's gaming track record, big developers like Activision and Electronic Arts already pledging support and Nintendo's next-generation Dolphin system subject to more official delays, Bill just might be able to rack up a few more billions. »»»A.C.



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ONE UP A MILE

- 16 The four 19-year-olds that make up Australia's **NOOGIE** live a lot like Southern California punk bands, skateboarding and surfing between writing songs. According to vocalist Nick Hyde, however, the similarities end there. "We started off as more of a punk band than we are now. Melody is more important to what we're doing. We've always been into a pretty broad range of music." The band's debut full-length, *Learn To Swim* (Trauma), which features "Meantime," will be its introduction to American audiences. "That was really always our aim," says Hyde, "to go to America and conquer...and to meet girls."
- 17 As a star of the Cartoon Network's *Cartoon Planet* and frequent guest on *Space Ghost Coast To Coast*, **BRAK** is known for such witticisms as "My name is Braaaaaak!" Recently, the semi-reformed former space pirate has taken time from trading *bon mots* with *Space Ghost* and *Zorak* to foster a music career, the results of which are heard here on "I Like Hubcaps." His new disc, *Brak Presents The Brak Album Starring Brak* (Kid Rhino), features guest appearances from *Zorak* and *Grape Ape*, plus duets with Freddie Prinze, Jr., The Chieftains and wrestler Diamond Dallas Page.
- 18 Part of the Bay Area's Anticon collective of MCs and producers, **BOOM BIP & DOSEONE** have just released their debut, *Circles* (Mush), featuring "The Birdcatcher's Return." The whole affair is an eclectic take on hip-hop, with erratic beats and lyrics. "You'll hear a wonderful idea that gets cut short because it has to rhyme with 'emancipation,'" explains Dose. "I kind of threw that to the wind. I started doing more vocal training and inflecting syllables and counting my 4/4 in breath. You can totally tell I'm not rhyming but it allowed me to do my poetry and stylistically be more of a vocalist." (See On The Verge p. 22.)
- 19 "You have certain associations with sounds, and that's quite a useful thing to tap into," explains jazz and breakbeat auteur **AMON TOBIN**, who took a dark turn on his latest, *Supermodified* (Ninja Tune). "If you have a certain type of string that represents tension to a lot of people, it's nice to drop it in at an appropriate moment. There's a thin line between drawing on that and making a cliché. But then...the associations people have are generally a clichéd form, so there's no reason why you can't use that in music." Check "Get Your Snack On." (See Feature p. 34.)
- 20 San Francisco's **TIN HAT TRIO** has a hard time categorizing its music, what with the group's classical, jazz and pop influences. "I can open my CD collection and have a million different references to a million kinds of music," violinist Caria Kihlstedt told the *San Jose Mercury News* recently. "But I don't want to be in a position where I feel like an imposter. I'm drawing on influences that have interested me, and I hope we're integrating them in a way that's our own language." "Helium" is the title track from their latest (Angel-EMI Classics). (See Review p. 74.)
- 21 **LULLABY BAXTER TRIO!** Hardly. There is no Lullaby Baxter. The name refers to a character from Billy Wilder's film *The Apartment*. And there is no trio. The group is actually a quintet, fronted by Montreal's Angelina Iapao'o. Iapao'o recently told the *Montreal Gazette* that her intention was to make music that is "crafted, yet accessible, something people can relate to, yet interesting and different enough to keep them coming back for more." Her kitschy-jazzy-poppy take on that can be heard on "Knucklehead," and on the rest of her debut album, *Capable Egg* (Atlantic).

CMJ NEW MUSIC

ISSUE 82 JUNE 2000

- 1 "We never wanted to create the idea that we're a metal band or that we're a rap-metal band or that we're in any category," says P.O.D. frontman Sonny Sandoval. "When you break everything down, there are so many different elements to it. Do you love reggae music, hip-hop, jazz? That's what it comes down to. I know this music is heavy and it's loud, but it's all groove." Adds drummer Wuv, "We've been playing with all those different sounds from day one." The San Diego quartet's Atlantic debut, *The Fundamental Elements Of Southtown*, features "Hollywood." (See Cover Story p.42.)
- 2 Since the release of Tool's acclaimed *Aenima*, vocalist Maynard James Keenan has been splitting his time between crafting a follow-up and configuring **A PERFECT CIRCLE**, the project he conceived with guitar tech Billy Howerdel. The band's debut, *Mer De Noms* (Virgin), features songs Howerdel's had in the works for years, including "Judith." Says Howerdel on songwriting: "You could have [Trent Reznor] on an acoustic guitar or piano and vocals and it's still going to be a good song. Take an Elton John song and you barely even need anything behind it. That's one thing I really like about these songs. They stand on their own as well." (See Feature p. 38.)
- 3 Though **THE STEP KINGS** aggressive rock was born and bred in the New Jersey/New York hardcore scene, the band isn't looking to stay in the underground. "There's a lot of guys closing their arms and wanting [bands like us] to go back in the closet and keep it real," says bassist/vocalist Bob McLynn. "Hey, we're keeping it real. We're doing the shit we like, and if more people want to hear it, then so be it." The re-release of the quartet's debut LP, *Let's Get It On!* (Roadrunner), features "Right Is Wrong." (See On The Verge p. 22.)
- 4 "We discovered that we all like two things," says **PITCHSHIFTER**'s vocalist/programmer JS Clayden. "Breakbeats and punk." The band's newest full-length, *Deviant* (MCA)—which houses "Condescension"—features both. "This is a new breed of guitar-and-sample music," Clayden says. "Call it what you will. It could be 'strum 'n' bass,' it could be whatever you want." Besides re-bending, the quintet also looks to blur the line between making music and making a statement. "Pitchshifter is about making people think," urges Clayden, "about the world around them, about how they perceive music, about themselves."



P.O.D.



A PERFECT CIRCLE

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STORY: MARIE YARBROUGH PHOTOS: TAMIKA MOORE

In Tuscaloosa, three things are for sure: Jesus, drinking and football. Home to the University Of Alabama and its 12-time champions the Crimson Tide, the city is a drinking town with a football problem.

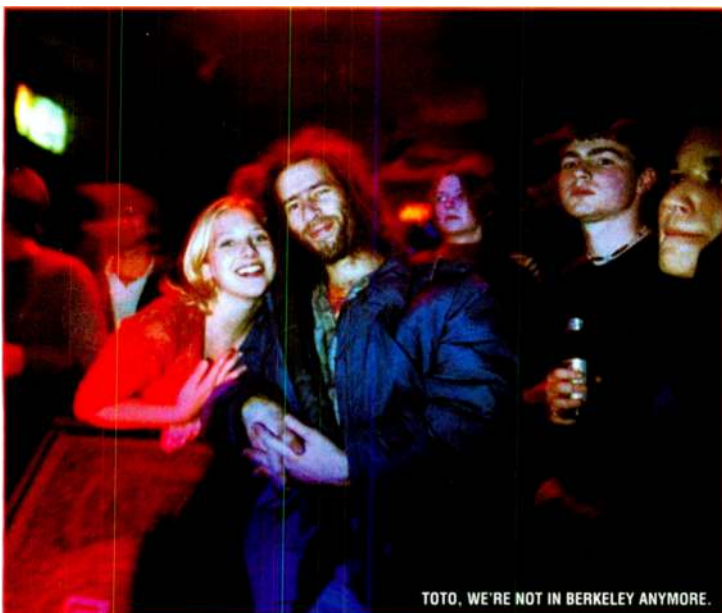
Not far beneath these mainstays, however, lies an emergent music scene. During the past half-decade it waned to a dismal collection of pop-rock, reggae-funk and Grateful Dead cover bands whose gigs attracted the uncritical drinking crowd, but as the 20th century dwindled, the local original music scene began to pick up steam. With the city's current musical momentum, it's no longer a struggle to hear good music on the weekend. According to Stuart McNair, a local musician whose recently self-released solo album, *I Can't See Over The Accordion*, features collaborations with many Tuscaloosa musicians, this long-overdue upswing stems from a growing sense of community. "If the Tuscaloosa music scene is going in any direction, that's it," McNair says.

Right now, Tuscaloosa bands—who thrive on the love of college students—lament that the city has ruled all bars 21-and-up. This amounts to an almost 50% decrease in gig attendance, which has sent many bands underground to play at house parties. Some venues

have helped combat the exodus—Hale's Tavern (1225 University Blvd.), for instance, hosts a Monday-night songwriters' circle.

To some, this move away from the traditional bar scene and into more creative venues is an ideal direction. Music scene stalwart Lauren Krothe, who sings with psych-rock band Blip and the punk-metal band Green Beret and has recently self-released a solo album, says the best thing about the Tuscaloosa music scene is that "a lot of the music hasn't been uncovered yet."

There's a lot out there, though, like hippie rockers Full Circle, Planet Jive and Freak Magnet. Odile plays a hybrid of funk, rock and jazz. Punk rockers The Dexateens and funky rock purveyors Mindseye have long been a part of the mix, while The Wayne Mills Band and The Jason Herndon Band keep the country tunes a-comin' at Harry's Bar (1330 Hargrove Road). Once hailed as Tuscaloosa's great skankin' hope, punk-ska rockers Pain took their trombones, trumpets and saxophones on an extended US tour last year, then disappointed hometown crowds by going on hiatus. Other local bands to catch when you roll on through: bluegrass mavens Rollin' In The Hay; Birmingham, Alabama's Flair; outlaw country freaks The Inlaws and always-infectious rockers The Katies.



TOTO, WE'RE NOT IN BERKELEY ANYMORE.



YUPPING IT UP AT 4TH & 23RD.

While hip-hop and electronic music have taken the nation, only traces can be found in Tuscaloosa. Most successful bands here rely on their bluegrass-influenced roots to produce their organic regional sound. "We're nestled in a place in which Southern music traditions are everywhere," McNair says. "Every band here has got to know what bluegrass is. Aside from the college-dominated music scene, there is a subcultural community of bluegrass musicians."

Local bands find support at the college station, New Rock (90.7 fm), on the local shows on commercial station Tide 101.7 and from independent local music stores. At the 20-plus-year-old Vinyl Solution (1207 University Blvd.) you'll find a large selection of both CDs and vinyl (alterna-kids, check here first), as well as a decent jazz and blues selection and a friendly, laid-back staff. Whirligig Records, though not as large or as inviting as Vinyl Solution, also has a good vinyl selection on top of its new and used CDs.

When the weekend rolls around—at about 9 p.m. on Thursday, since many students blow off Friday classes—bands usually start playing around midnight. When it comes to nightlife, there are essentially two choices: The Strip, just beyond the UA campus, caters to the college crowd, while downtown, for the most part, caters to grad students and the older non-student population. The Strip's bars, like The Booth (1201 University Blvd.), Pounders (1137 University Blvd.) and Gallette's (1021 University Blvd.), offer a smoky, loud, crowded atmosphere in a collection of grungy, rundown buildings. Next to these three you'll find Pepito's Mexican restaurant, a favorite to all because of the friendly service and drink specials, and Phil's, known for buffalo wings and live jazz on Friday nights.

At downtown establishments, you'll meet both yuppie-wannabes who sip wine while gabbing on cell phones and students and locals who just want to drink away from the Strip's beer-soaked madness. A relaxed place to start off the evening is 516 Blue (516 Greensboro Ave.), a wine bar with reasonably priced (and delicious) appetizers and desserts. Right around the corner are performance spaces like Rhythm and Brews (2300 Fourth St.) and The Copper Top (2300 4th St.). Classic venue The Chukker (2121 Sixth St.) resembles bars on the Strip in its dilapidated appearance, and bands like Sublime, The Dave Matthews Band and Fastball all played here before they broke. At jazz and blues treasure 4th & 23rd, you'll run into the quintessential redneck alongside the business professional, enjoying a beer and dancing.

If, of course, that doesn't strike your fancy, head out toward the highway on McFarland Boulevard. Perched just beyond the first traffic light is the Christian bookshop Christian Publishers Outlet, right next door to the ABC Liquor Store: a vision of shopping convenience. Amen!



OF ALL THE RECORD STORES IN ALL THE TOWNS IN ALL THE WORLD...

LOCAL LOGIC TUSCALOOSA'S BEST:

- SWEET ICED TEA:** Milo's (1307 McFarland Blvd.)
- PLACE TO MEET AN ESCAPEE FROM BRICE MENTAL HOSPITAL:** Roaming around University Boulevard
- SITES TO SPOT GHOSTS:** Woods Hall or the Little Round House (UA campus)
- MONEY-MAKING SCHEME:** Sell your plasma
- CHEAP PITCHER OF BEER:** Phil's (University Boulevard)
- PLACE TO PUKE AFTER TOO MUCH TO DRINK:** behind the University Of Alabama sign on Old Row
- BAR TO PICK UP REDNECKS:** Rhythm and Brews (2300 Fourth St.)
- SMOOTHIES:** Planet Smoothie (809 Paul Bryant Dr.)
- PLACE TO SEE FARM ANIMALS WITHIN CITY LIMITS:** Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity house lawn
- CHOCOLATE MARTINI:** 516 Blue (516 Greensboro Ave.)
- REAL SOUTHERN COOKIN':** Northport Diner (450 McFarland Blvd.)
- GRATUITOUS CLEAVAGE:** Sorority Row

Gilbert & Sullivan

STORY: CAITLIN DOVER ILLUSTRATION: NICHOLAS MEOLA

A friend and I were having a battle of the geeks: one of those fruitless arguments over who was the bigger junior high misfit. We'd laid out our transgressions—bad perms, elastic-waist corduroys, orthodontic headgear—and still she claimed ownership of the geek crown.

It was time to play my trump.

I cleared my throat and sang, loudly, "Three little maids from school are we/ Pert as a schoolgirl well can be/ Filled to the brim with girlish glee-ee! THREE LITTLE MAIDS FROM SCHOOL!"

"Stop, you're hurting me," cringed my friend, defeated.

That's a fairly common reaction to my fondness for Gilbert & Sullivan, the Victorian writer/composer duo best known for operettas such as *The Mikado* and *The Pirates Of Penzance*. At age eight, while most of my peers were attempting to breakdance, I became enamored of 19th century British light opera.

Perhaps this development was inevitable. After all, I wasn't allowed to watch television (with the exception of *Mr. Rogers*), I loved British children's books, and my parents, after the manner of many East Coast intellectuals, supported latent anglophilia.

But there was more to it than that. Arthur Sullivan, who studied under Mendelssohn and learned his lesson well, wrote the kind of hummable, heaven-sent tunes that Andrew Lloyd Webber would sell his soul for, if he had one. William S. Gilbert's lyrics, replete with highly political 19th-century humor, mostly went over my second-grade head. But, having skipped the simple pleasures of *Scooby-Doo* and *The A-Team*, the wordplay, the farcical, endlessly twisting plots and the advanced, sometimes archaic vocabulary (Whig? Impecunious?) tickled me.

Tickledness soon turned into obsession. After only a few listens to my parents' recording of *The Mikado*, I decided to learn every song in every Gilbert & Sullivan operetta in existence. And then, by God, I went and did it. By age 11, I owned 10 operettas on vinyl, and knew all of Gilbert's elaborately silly storylines by heart: the captain and the sailor switched at birth, the executioner who "cannot chop off another's head until he's chopped his own off," the Oscar Wilde-like poet who falls in love with a milkmaid (little did I realize the true absurdity of that situation). While other kids exclaimed, "Cool!" I preferred to express my joy with a fervent, "Oh, rapture!"

In short, I was happily and blindly preparing for what would become my own pre-teen hell.

It started when we moved to New Hampshire the year I was in fifth grade. "Who's your favorite singer?" was one of the first questions addressed to me by Popular Girl #2 in my new class. I named one of the tenors featured on my records. "Who?" she sneered. Soon it was revealed that not only did I not know of any bands, but that I owned nary a jelly bracelet, and that, forced to choose a favorite car, I would pick, not a Ferrari, but a Volkswagen Rabbit. It began to dawn on me that any further explanation of my tastes would only result in torture, and I shut up—for the next four years.

But I didn't stop listening to Gilbert & Sullivan. While I might not have had friends in that godforsaken place, I could at least gain some comfort from my beloved records. (Anyone who, shunned by peers as a kid, took refuge in the alienation of punk or the melancholy of The Smiths will know how I felt.) I tried to remain aloof, convincing myself



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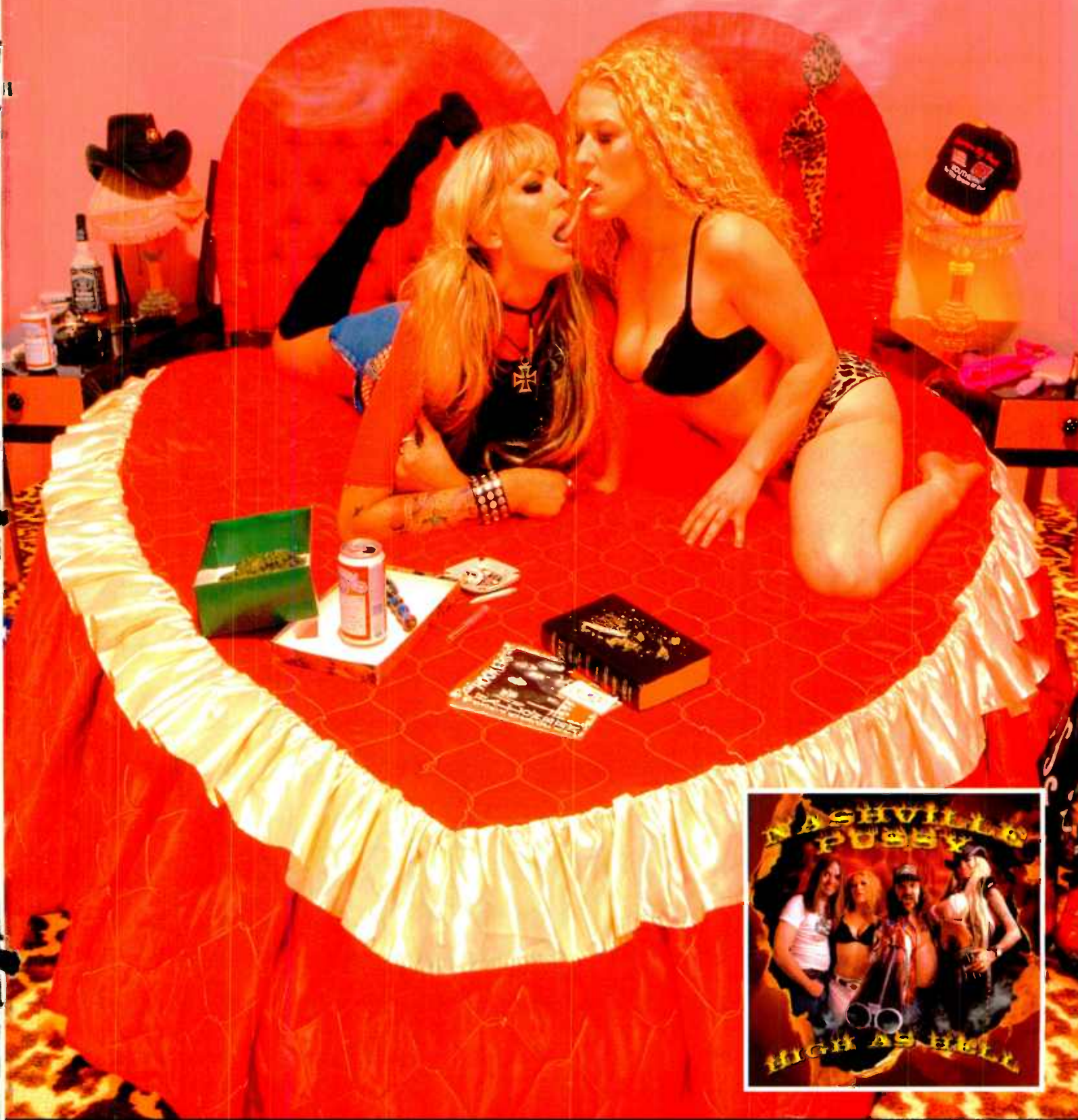
that knowing about the British parliamentary system and the Arts & Crafts movement made up for not having any friends.

That said, high school was a surprisingly different story. My incipient anglophilia led me to spend a year at a secondary school in England. And, as this was the early '90s, my stay exposed me to a healthy dose of Britpop. Suede and Blur, while not yet mainstream at the time, ushered me into our own era's pop culture. In Blur's Damon Albarn I finally had a favorite pop singer.

But the allure of inclusion lasted only so long. As the ghost of sixth grade past ceased to torment me quite so much, the need to go with the cultural flow at all cost also waned. Now I find myself searching Tower Records for *H.M.S. Pinafore* and singing snatches of "A Wand'ring Minstrel, I" on my way to work, to the disgust of downtown New Yorkers and their dogs. Their distaste doesn't bother me anymore, though. Let electronica-lovers and their chows turn their noses up at me: I listen to Gilbert & Sullivan happy in the knowledge that I love 'em, and I don't care if I'm the only one. Oh, rapture!

Caitlin Dover quietly hums Victorian show tunes while working as an editor at *Print* magazine.

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