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# CMJ

NEW MUSIC

BEST NEW MUSIC

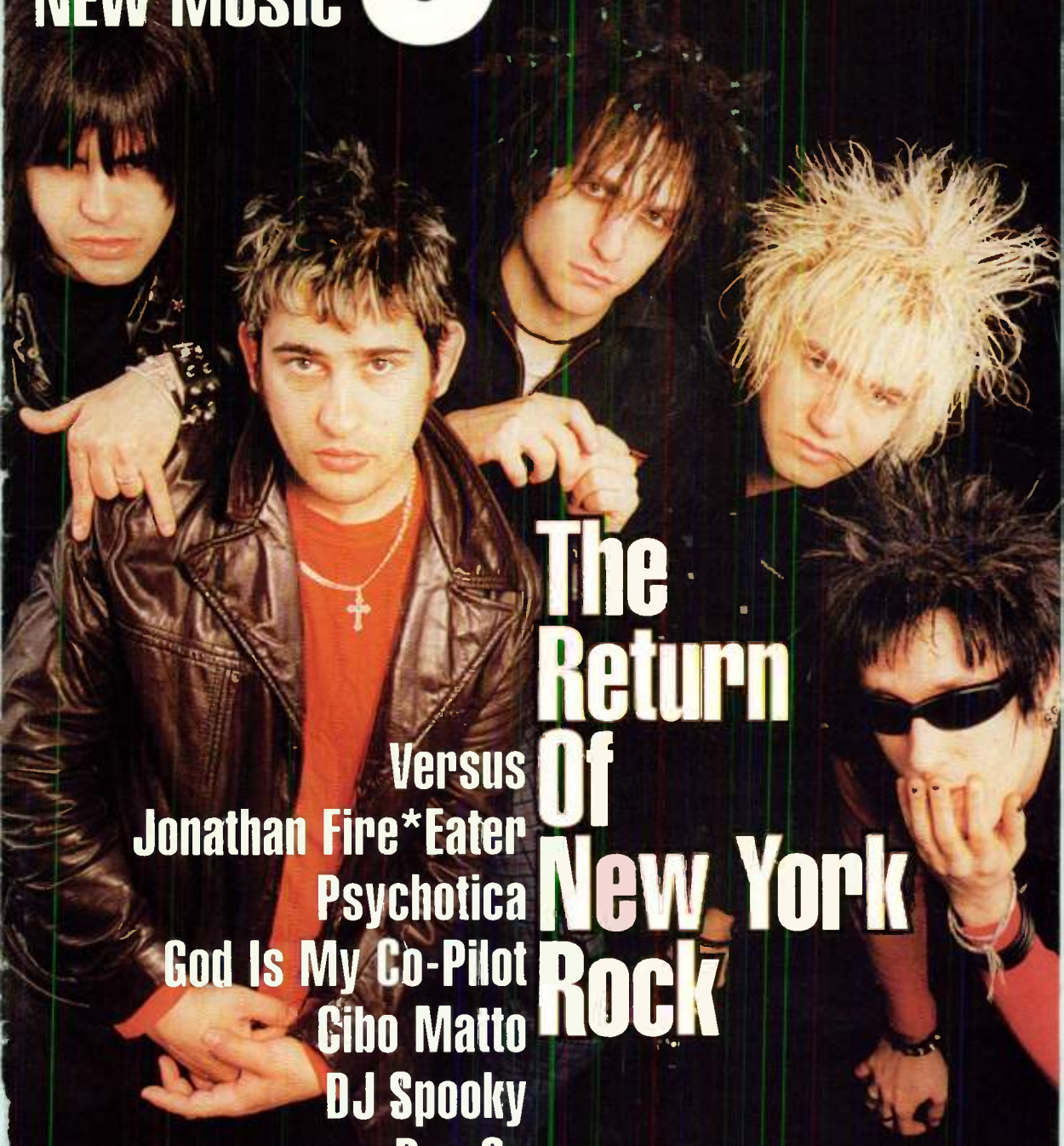
Charlie Hunter Quartet

R.L. Burnside

Jawbox

Dub Narcotic Sound System

Reverend Horton Heat



Versus  
Jonathan Fire\*Eater  
Psychotica  
God Is My Co-Pilot  
Cibo Matto  
DJ Spooky  
Run On  
Speed King  
Handsome

## The Return Of New York Rock

# D-Generation

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## FEATURES

## 17 SPECIAL ISSUE THE RETURN OF NEW YORK ROCK

Suddenly, New York matters again, and *CMJ* looks at some of the reasons why Can the scene-builders of D-Generation generate as much excitement in the rest of the country as they have in their home town? Tim Stegall thinks so; Cheryl Botchick takes us inside the freaky world of This Month's Model Jonathan Fire\*Eater; Kurt B. Reighley talks to the Cibo Matto dairy queens about Butter, their side-project with Russell Simins of Jon Spencer Blues Explosion; plus Versus, Dj Spooky, Ui and more.

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# LETTERS

## Presidential campaigns

Mr. Brian Skillin's comments regarding modern popular music [Letters, June] seem rather like music snobbery. It's only rock 'n' roll, Brian. In these musical times when pessimism and cynicism are aplenty, it is quite refreshing to hear music from bands like the Presidents.

Mark DeJohn  
Pittsburgh, PA

Whoever rants against the Presidents Of The United States Of America because the lyrics have no point is missing the point. The point is, there is no point. It's just great music. You'd think by now people would appreciate not having some bullshit political, moral, or personal message from the artist foisted on them in the disguise of music. There's plenty of this "meaningful" music out there that's very good too. But sometimes, those of us who can think for ourselves just need a break. I had the pleasure of catching POTUSA live at the Liquid Room in Tokyo in April. It was one helluva good show. Most of the audience there spoke little English, yet they could all scream "Fuck you kitty, you're gonna spend the night... *outside!*" in unison. That's the power of good music! Who cares, as long as you can laugh, sing along, bounce up and down with a bunch of total strangers, and feel darn good? That is the essence of good music—it grabs you by the balls, and it makes you feel...

Marc Cooperman  
Palo Alto, CA

*Grabs you by the balls... makes you feel... hmm. Kinda puts that "bounce up and down with a bunch of total strangers" comment in a new light, doesn't it?—ed.*

## Just left out

Do you guys only put the bands you like in the "Just Out" section? You never mentioned Rage Against The Machine or Stone Temple Pilots' new CDs, and I don't see The Cure's, either. Have these bands been dismissed from your magazine because they're too popular?

Travis Erwin  
Chatsworth, CA

*Sometimes anticipated new releases such as these can be delayed weeks or months (the new Cure record was initially slated for November, for example), and since everyone involved looks silly when a record finally makes it to the stores a long time after it was supposed to come out, there are times that the record companies would rather not commit to a release date by the time we go to print.—ed.*

## It's the p.s. that scares us

When you dish out your \$4.99 American or \$7.99 Canadian on the latest issue of *CMJ*, you feel good knowing that inside the magazine is a compact disc containing the hippest new tunes on the street, but did you ever stop and think "why did *CMJ* change the track listing card from a circle to a rectangle?" Well kiddies, I know this reason. You too will know soon. Just follow these simple instructions:

1) Flip your new *CMJ* upside-down until the track listing falls out. 2) Stick the track listing on jewel case or paper case provided by *CMJ*. 3) Look at what remains on the wax paper—a *thin sticky strip!*

Now, with this strip, you can do most anything you want! Save up for two months and make cool designs! Save up for 12 months for maximum delight! Stick your eyes shut! You see, *CMJ* is not only about the music. It's about giving you (the reader) a fantastic time.

Zach  
Toronto, Ontario

P.S. I look up to you.

## Mix-up

In the May issue, I noticed the "Mix Tape" for that month was by Liz Clark. I know Liz Phair's full name is Elizabeth Clark Phair. The clue of "breaking up with a record producer" further gave it away (Brad Wood). Did she really send that in or did y'all make it up for a joke?

Marla Moore  
Warner Robins, GA

*Good sleuthing, but something makes us doubt that Liz Phair would put Veruca Salt's "Seether" on a tape. Then again...—ed.*

## Exsqueeze me? Baking powder?

Having yesterday purchased your June 1996 issue on the newsstand near to my home, I occasioned to immediately listen to your fine CD—as I do each and every month.

*Pet Sounds* in stereo?

As much as I am loath to admit it, perhaps Pat Buchanan was right when he asserted in his speech at the 1992 Republican National Convention that "there is a cultural war" afoot to destroy the fabric of our civilization.

*Pet Sounds* in stereo is surely a testament to the insight of even such a loon as Mr. Buchanan in matters of cultural importance.

Greg L. Teetsell

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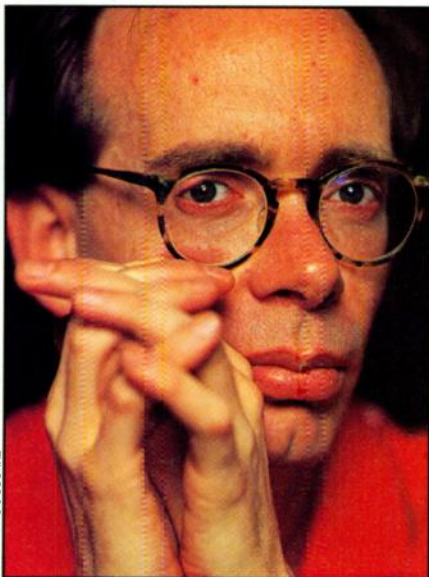


Beth Winer Management

World Radio History



# QUICK FIX



JOHN FRANCIS BOURKKE

## arto lindsay

quietly ambitious

It's a long way to be sure, from Arto Lindsay's days with art-skronk trio D.N.A. and the funk conceptualists Ambitious Lovers to where he is today, but it's not without links and parallels—you just have to listen harder to hear them. After a relative period of quietude, Lindsay has returned to domestic record bins with a remarkable album, *The Subtle Body* (Bar/None), steeped in one of the most cool and introspective forms of music imaginable: the subdued, simmering sounds of classic Brazilian music, particularly bossa nova. But to Arto, the album is something very different. "I could never do a bossa nova album like they did," he muses when this record is compared to the '60s Brazilian music of Antonio Carlos Jobim or Joao and Astrud Gilberto. "When Ryuichi Sakamoto asked me to make this record [it was released last year on Sakamoto's Japanese label,

Gut], he wanted me to make a bossa nova record, and I said, 'I can't really make a bossa record, I'm not really a bossa nova singer. I'm not that good in certain ways, you know...'"

The Brazilian bent isn't a total surprise: Lindsay actually grew up in Brazil, and in the late '80s, as the Ambitious Lovers wound to a close, his unique combination of bilingualism, extensive experience inside recording studios, and a keen ability to straddle the lines between Brazilian and New York recording circles, made him the ideal producer for Brazilian artists with American labels, recording albums for the likes of Caetano Veloso. "It was the first record I'd done after a long layoff—I'd been mostly producing," he says of *Subtle Body*. "I feel that this one... it's my record and I'm not making a record for somebody else." That gave him more room to experiment. "I was trying to do something different, something that reflects who I am. It was kind of a challenge to do an entire record that was quiet. When I was in the Ambitious Lovers, we would do a few quiet songs in that vein, but to try and do an entire record like that was really hard."

The record may be quiet, but it's also quietly subversive, a little bit like the Ambitious Lovers were in their own way. "A lot of these things that I got to do, I got to fool around. It was a ballad record, and we got to mess around with atmospheres, experiments. The thing about bossa nova is it's very tranquil, as you say, but it's rhythmically really interesting," Lindsay enthuses, revealing another of the album's secret pleasures. "It moves along, it doesn't just sit there... So it's more than just a bossa nova record. There's stuff with [Bill] Frisell and Joey [Baron], and Mark Ribot, and a couple of slightly crazier things. More uptempo things..." his fragile voice trails off, for a moment sounding uncannily like his singing voice.—JAMES LIEN

## SOUNDS OF THE AMERICAN FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS

All authentic field recordings • Recorded by Gregg Tolpin • Presented by The Field Institute



Digitally Remastered from the Original Master Tapes

## weird record of the month

Ranking just about as high as any record ever on the "why did they do that?" scale is the 7" EP *Sounds Of The American Fast Food Restaurants, Vol. 1*. Originally released on Amarillo last year, it's just been reissued on Planet Pimp (1800 Market St. #45, San Francisco, CA 94102). As the title suggests, it's actual field recordings of people ordering at branches of KFC, Taco Bell and Burger King, as well as regional chains like Straw Hat Pizza and Nation's Giant Hamburger, with a little just-barely-sarcastic narration introducing each one. Future recordings in the same series are promised, including *Sounds Of Hawaiian Car Rental Agencies*, *Sounds Of San Francisco Adult Bookstores* and *Sounds Of The American Multi-Plex Theater Chains*.

## in my room

artists' personal picks

### DJ Spooky

Twilight Circus  
In Dub Pt. 1

Genius/GZA  
Liquid Swords

DJ Soulslinger  
Musical Section

Future Sound Of London  
Cascade (EP)

Earth  
Earth 2

## THE BIZ

music industry parlance, explained

### RECOUPABLE

Costs related to a band or its recordings: paid by a record label—for publicity, promotion, video-making, tour support, whatever—that are actually considered as money fronted to the band against future royalties. If a label spends \$200,000 in recoupable money promoting an album (which isn't unusual), then the band doesn't see any of the royalties it earns up to the \$200,000 point. Most bands on major labels don't start getting royalties beyond the amount their records need to recoup until well into their careers.

## inspirational verse

"Saint Pretend/Stop calling me your friend/You live your life in A minor/With a lot of flailing at the end"  
—the Ampersands, "Cranberries"

## random fact

In celebration of the release of the Butthole Surfers' *Electric Larryland*, Capitol Records draped its famous Hollywood offices in toilet paper.

"Some records just leave you speechless."  
—Billboard

The second album from the artist Rolling Stone called the "brightest hope for '94,"  
and Vibe magazine named "the future of Funk."

**Meshell**

**peace beyond passion**

**Ndegeocello**

Club tour this summer.  
H.O.R.D.E. tour in August.



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World Radio History

# QUICK FIX



Stuart from Plastic Fantastic

## romo superior

Given the cyclical nature of pop music, it seems inevitable that the New Romantics—the late '80s U.K. trend that celebrated style as substance, giving rise to acts as diverse as Visage, Classix Nouveau and Haysi Fantayzee—would enjoy a revival right about now. After an uninterrupted diet of Britpop for months, it's not surprising a faction of British music fans has lashed back with the glamorous Romantic Modernism, better known as "Romo."

Romo reared its gilded head on the cover of the November 25, 1995 *Melody Maker*, with a quartet of mascara-heavy dandies staring down the camera. Inside, Simon Price (a *Maker* writer, DJ and Romo's #1 proponent) and company lavished a virtually unheard of crop of bands with an eight-page spread. The bright young things gushed about alienation, the stagnation of pop, and a varied yet calculated catalog of Romo icons: Quentin Crisp, Kraftwerk, Andy Warhol, Roxy Music, Duran Duran's Nick Rhodes, Sparks.

Never mind that only one of the groups had released a record; the players, and their fans, had been gathering strength at

## press release of the month

"Rumors have been spread about the breakup of Team Dresch. Jody started them believing she had been kicked out of the band. After an incredibly exciting and overstimulating 2 month European tour, Jody drank too much on the flight home from Rome and lost all of the band's money—about \$1200—gambling with some Italian guys. Melissa, Kaia, and Donna decided they couldn't trust her any more and kicked her out and said that was the end of Team Dresch. Jody was really upset and told half the world they'd broken up only to be re-jumped in two weeks later. Jody was made to sign a legal contract with the princess of darkness, lordess of rock to pay back the money with interest and to attend Gambler's Anon. meetings. Sorry for the scare. There will be a West Coast tour in June."

London nightclubs like Arcadia, Club Skinny and The Cell. Romo dared to be blatantly contrived: "Never forget: all art is, by its very nature, synthetic" declared the first sentence of the 12-point "Romanifesto."

Yet six months later, Romo has generated little recorded music, and most of it's unremarkable. The biggest exception is the duo Sexus (which quickly tried to distance itself from Romo in an interview for *The Face*); they sound like a leaner version of the Associates, and followed up their independent single "Edenites" (backed with the sublime "More Cheap Thrills And Expensive Regrets") with the equally glittering "The Official End Of It All" for Trevor Horn's ZTT label.

After much fuss, Plastic Fantastic signed to Polygram subsidiary Fontana and released the passable "Fantastique No. 5," which suggests that lead singer Stuart's real talent is spitting out bon mots like "If Pearl Jam had a sense of irony, they'd be Lynyrd Skynyrd."

A cassette entitled *Fiddling While Romo Burns...* to promote the recent Club Skinny/Arcadia tour didn't deliver too much of note, either: Soft Cell's Marc Almond co-produced Viva's "Now," and female duo Hollywood contributed the modestly memorable "Lights, Camera, Revolution," as shallow but pleasant as sunbathing in a wading pool. Most notable was Orlando's ballad "Nature's Hated," a tune which, despite singer Tim's dodgy pitch (not that anyone ever mistook Steve Strange for Sinatra), showed the group to be solid songwriters.

But before you go rushing to stock up on eye-liner and old Ultravox singles, be advised: "Romo is dead," announced Price in the April 20th letters column of the *Maker*. Not the bands, just the unified attack on the music industry. "As a media tactic, [Romo] has generated column inches and radio minutes... way beyond all proportion, with the positive side-effect of gaining major record deals for all the principal bands." See how successful your revolution can be when it allows dancing? —KURT B. REIGHLEY

## in my room

artists' personal picks

**CHRIS O'CONNOR**  
Primitive Radio Gods

Martin Gilbert  
Churchill: A Life (book)

Ween  
Chocolate And Cheese

Eric Matthews  
It's Heavy In Here

PJ Harvey  
To Bring You My Love

Keith Richards  
Main Offender

"I have an I.Q. of 190, but I play it down for rock 'n' roll purposes" — Fred Schneider, from an interview in *Entertainment Weekly*.

## tours we'd like to see

### PREFIX MENU

Unwound, Unsaney,  
Untouchables, Unleashed,  
Unseen, Undead,  
Unashamed, Untitled,  
Unrest, Unwritten Law,  
Unun, and Un.

## inspirational verse

"For walking these boots are made./And that's what they'll do./One of these days,/over you they'll walk./Lick my boots! You are nothing!"

— Women Of Sodom,  
"Boots"

("translated from German")

## random fact

Blur defeated arch-rivals Oasis, 2-0, in a six-on-six charity soccer game. The match also included members of Massive Attack and Pulp.



*angelscore*

CHAINSUCK



*featuring "prozac"*

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# QUICK FIX



## underworld

### going to the dogs

"'Air Towel,' what did I sing on that one?" Underworld's singer/guitarist Kurt Hyde ponders. "Christ, I just got off tour, I should know this. It's the one with me singing with a vocoder."

I thought that was "Juanita"?

"Yeah, that too."

Back up.

"Right, the second track is 'Banstyle,' which goes into 'Sappys Curry.' 'White robe, little engine, fishman I command,'" Hyde sings softly to himself, "or is that 'Sappys Curry'?"

That doesn't help.

The confusion lies in Underworld's new album, *Second Toughest In The Infants* (Wax Trax!/TVT), listing 10 songs, but tracking only eight. Sorting them out isn't quite as easy as one expects. So let's just say the important thing isn't song titles, but the music. Underworld has had a massive impact on the European club scene with its crossover techno-rock sound, but the way Hyde tells it, it wasn't easy. "Until then, singers and guitars had just pissed all over the heads of these great grooves. The challenge was, how do I exist in this group that chose to make

## promo item of the month

"Spare the rod, spoil the child," the old saying goes. We don't know what, if anything, that has to do with this whip-toting, "anatomically correct" ceramic dominatrix doll from Women Of Sodom, but frankly, any further consideration of the item scares us.

dance records, at a time that it was totally unacceptable? It terrified me."

In Britain, in 1990, clubs didn't want music with vocals or guitars. Thus, Hyde, programmer Rick Smith, and DJ Darren Emerson had their work cut out. But Underworld found a workable answer: "Get rid of the ego, get rid of the need to be louder than beats, get rid of that guitar wanking, and then say that everything is an instrument... That's why sometimes you can't hear what I'm singing—that's not relevant. Does it *sound* great?"

"But that was the easy part. The real challenge was: How do you write songs that aren't verse, chorus, verse, songs that are driven entirely by the groove and where it wants to go? That's why our songs take the form that they do."

The goal is to not "tread on the groove," and also to introduce the traditional elements of rock in a different way. Thus, the guitar's role is abstruse but important; like Hyde's vocals, it contributes both sonic power and mood to the songs. His lyrics, similarly, are thought fragments, seemingly connected, but how? "A lot of the lyrics are totally autobiographical from me being in a place, overhearing conversations, looking around and seeing things... Until you know I really was on the midnight train from Romford, or that 'Pearl's Girl' was written after a couple of bottles of riacha, wandering through the night, seeing all this stuff... Some of it's word association."

Which doesn't clarify the song titles in the least. "Quite a few of our tracks are names of greyhounds, because we go to the dogtrack occasionally. We just leave the racebook on the desk, and when we need a title sometimes we just pick. 'Born Slippy,' 'Sappys Curry' and 'Pearl's Girl' were all dogs." —JOANN GREENE



## in my room

artists' personal picks

### DOUG SAHM

Texas Tornados

Flaco Jimenez  
Buena Suerte, Señorita

Willie Nelson  
Spirit

Bobby "Blue" Bland  
Two Steps From The Blues

Houston Astros  
National League

John Coltrane  
My Favorite Things

## mix tape

by Steve McPherson

### SIDE ONE

Medeski, Martin & Wood  
Chubb Subb  
The Meters  
Cissy Strut  
Herbie Hancock  
Fat Mama  
Andrew Hill  
Dedication  
Albert Ayler  
Spirits  
Charlie Haden/Hank Jones  
Steal Away  
Thelonious Monk  
In Walked Bud  
Soul Coughing  
Bus to Beelebus  
Charlie Hunter Trio  
Greasy Granny  
Muddy Waters  
I Just Want To Make Love To You  
You  
Albert King  
For The Love Of A Woman  
Otis Spann  
Down On Sarah Street  
Skip James  
Devil Got My Woman

### SIDE TWO

Ben Harper  
Ground On Down  
C. Love & Special Sauce  
This Ain't Living  
Roots  
Mellow My Man  
Justice System  
Soulstyle  
Fugazi  
Bed For The Scraping  
Blind Melon  
Mouthful Of Cavities  
Hatters  
Supermarket Pony  
Allman Brothers Band  
In Memory Of Elizabeth Reed  
Wayne Shorter  
Footprints  
Sonny Rollins  
Strode Rode  
John Coltrane  
My Favorite Things

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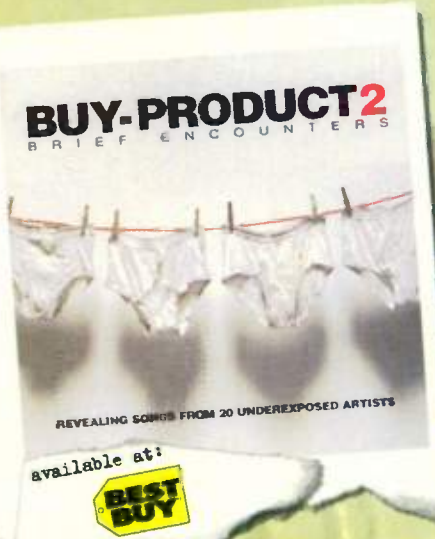
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| Jawbreaker  | Gillian Welch    | Sonic Youth    |

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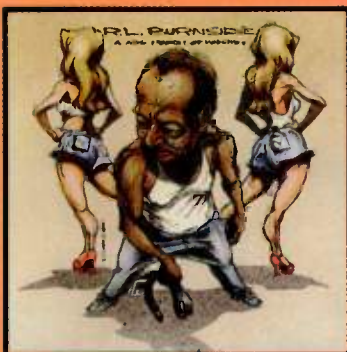
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# best new music

[ the five best releases this month ]



## R.L. BURNSIDE / *A Ass Pocket Of Whiskey* / Fat Possum-Matador

When R.L. Burnside rolls into the studio, pictures fall off walls, \$2000 microphones that worked perfectly a half-hour before start shorting out, and chaos unfurls its pirate flag waving high. Burnside's house has burned down, three, four, maybe five times depending on who you talk to—need we say more? It's the blues, see, and for his fifth album—the one that 50 years from now people will still be talking about—this 58-year-old Mississippi bluesman teamed up with the unlikeliest session band imaginable, Jon Spencer and his Blues Explosion. Punk collides head-on with blues when four guitars and a tiny drum kit are crammed into one room of a dilapidated house in rural Mississippi formerly owned by an eccentric planter fallen on hard times. *A Ass Pocket Of Whiskey* takes the rules about making blues records and plays fifty-two pickup with them, then pulls a knife, jams it into the table and asks you politely if you want to play again. It's

**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 18.  
**FILE UNDER:** Punk-blues collision.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Muddy Waters, the Stooges' *Fun House*, Jon Spencer Blues Explosion.

funny, loud as hell, and the best blues record since, oh, since maybe around when Muddy Waters went electric. There's nothing stale or archival about it—R.L. Burnside is hell-on-wheels attitude all the way. Take "Snake Drive," whose entire lyric consists of "Love is a devil but it won't get me/Gonna let my baby ride." Let us not dither on about call-and-response choruses or authenticity or tradition. Does it rock or does it not? Why, shit, man, yes. As R.L. would say, well, well, well. *JAMES LIEN*



## JAWBOX / *Jawbox* / TAG-Atlantic

It's hardly surprising that Jawbox's fourth long-player is self-titled: After nearly seven years, the Washington, D.C. quartet has finally made a record that represents its real capabilities. Jawbox has *always* been one of the most reliably kick-ass Dischord-style punk bands, touring vigorously and releasing solid album after solid album. On this latest LP, however, the band has perfected the structure and style that it's been working with for years. The dynamic shifts in both rhythm and sonic density are matched by hooky melodies, producing songs that you can not only sing along with (try *not* to chime in on "Mirrorful" or "Iodine") but that also, by the sheer force of their sound, make it nearly impossible to resist the impulse to slam your body into something solid. In most cases, the song's impetus is its shift from calm waves-lapping-at-the-shore to nor'easter tidal force. This change is most violent in the furious guitar and complex bass and drum work; on the other hand, J.

**DATALOG:** Released Jul. 2. First single "Mirrorful."

**FILE UNDER:** Dissonant punk rock.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Seaweed, Fugazi, Edsel, Quicksand.

Robbins' voice, even at its most agitated, always retains a sense of calm, a sense of unflappable understatement that accentuates the lasting power of the songs where a more excitable singer could push the roiling stew into hyperbole. Jawbox has long been about controlled tumult: hard, affecting, and at times, brilliant squalls of melody, noise and rhythm. But not until *Jawbox* has it come together this completely. *JENNY ELISCU*



### DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM / *Boot Party* / K

The genius of Dub Narcotic Sound System is that it makes use of almost everything that's great about old reggae and dub records without imitating their vernacular elements: This is American dub, not Jamaican pop once removed. *Boot Party* is the group's first "official" album—there's been a host of singles, an EP and an instrumental "rhythm record" (another one is being released with this). A few tracks follow the familiar pattern of low-fi funk with Calvin Johnson tooting on melodica or intoning goofy slogans ("Monkey Hips And Rice" takes the title and nothing else from the 45-year-old hit). But then there are surprises. "Afi-Tiome" sets a woman's tentative voice against a great, wobbly guitar part. "Shake-A-Puddin'" is *sui generis*—a deliciously loud drum

**DATALOG:** Released May 21. First single "Shake-A-Puddin'."

**FILE UNDER:** Garage dub.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Massive Attack, Ui, Augustus Pablo.

groove augmented by doubled-up bass and Casio, organ, scratching and Calvin's hilarious, patois-free *basso* toast: "Bring me the head of your demon again... bounce for goodness' sake like a cherry cheesecake." The exquisite "Ship To Shore" is

unlike anything Dub Narc has done before: barely more than two bass notes around which a gentle guitar part navigates, with a guest vocal by Lois Maffeo. It sounds like a product of Bristol's trip-hop scene more than a collaboration between former members of Courtney Love and Beat Happening, and more power to them for that. *DOUGLAS WOLK*



### CHARLIE HUNTER QUARTET / *Ready... Set... Shango!* / Blue Note

Charlie Hunter is the versatile San Francisco guitarist who's made a name for himself in guitar magazines and jazz-funk circles by playing six-, seven-, eight- and nine-string guitars, doing independent bass and lead parts simultaneously, man-with-two-brains style. If anything, Hunter actually sounds more like a barbeque jazz-funk organist from the '60s than anything else, more Jimmy Smith than Jimmy Page. Novelty act he ain't: while the similar Stanley Jordan revealed himself to be a treacly gimmick by the time his third album rolled around, Hunter keeps looking for new sounds to explore. Most importantly, as the 27-year-old jazz-funk guitarist has matured, he's not only gotten more technically accomplished, he's also

**DATALOG:** Released May 28.

**FILE UNDER:** A post-punk Grant Green with two extra strings.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Ronnie Jordan, *Live At The Up And Down Club*, *Blue Note Rare Grooves*.

gotten better at being *The Man*, that elusive, almost indefinable quality in a guitar player that made the reputations of legendary badass jazzmen from Wes Montgomery to Grant Green to Weldon Irvine. When he plays, he's *on*, and he

can raise the roof on any bandstand he steps onto, no questions asked. *Shango!*, named for a mythical dance craze that's supposedly sweeping the clubs, is both more danceable and more fun than any previous Hunter recording, expanding the spartan trio of previous albums with an extra horn player. Mellow, funky and in-the-pocket, Hunter is both a fun and entertaining evening and a serious player to be watched. *JAMES LIEN*



### REVEREND HORTON HEAT / *It's Martini Time* / Interscope

You've got to have paid some dues in order to rock as hard as the Reverend Horton Heat does on *It's Martini Time*. But then, if you're going to be bigger than life, you can't hold back. With his theatrical delivery and twanging geetar, the Reverend blazes a path somewhere in the land between the Cramps and Scotty Moore. On his fourth album, Heat returns to his rockabilly roots, after dallying with Al Jourgensen's industrial production last time. A bit of lounge culture seems to have crept in, too, as evidenced by songs like the title track and "Crooked Cigarette." The opening song, "Big Red Rocket Of Love," lets us know we're in for a wild ride, with stops along the way for some deadpan humor that never turns to parody, thanks to righteous playing from the trio.

**DATALOG:** Released Jul. 2.

**FILE UNDER:** Psycho-loungeabilly.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, The Cramps, The Paladins, big Elvis-type sideburns.

For instance, "Cowboy Love" sounds like a straight-ahead cowboy ballad, but the lyrics celebrate an "interracial, cowboy, homo kind of love." Later on, the Rev. pulls out all the emotional stops for the plaintive "Or Is It Just Me?" and it still works. Whether you're on the side of the lord of the devil,

you'll find something to make you get down on your knees on *It's Martini Time*. Added bonus: Is it just me, or on "It's Just Showbiz" does the Reverend sound just like... Jack Webb? *HEIDI MACDONALD*

# ON THE VERGE

NEW YORK EDITION

[ compiled by Lydia Anderson ]

## GODRAYS



PHOTO BY LEO

The demise of stalwart Providence pop band Small Factory left many in tears, but the emergence of the Godrays—the new project of SF's singer/bassist Alex Kemp and drummer/singer Phoebe Summersquash—should act as an aloecoaated Kleenex to fans' puffy eyes. Recently re-located to Brooklyn, New York, the Godrays pick up where Small Factory's later stuff left off, building on the edge of tension created by Kemp's voice and songwriting, and the increasingly compelling and prominent vocals of Summersquash. On their debut album, *Songs For T.V. Stars* (Vernon Yard), the two flesh out their sound with contributions from musician pals Dave McCaffrey (ex-Miracle Legion), Greg Griffith of Vitapup and producer Adam Lasus, but they never lose sight of what made their music so fun and memorable to begin with. While they flirt with grittier guitar sounds and more malleable song-structures, making for a more diverse and interesting album, the Godrays' potent pop songs are what they'll become known for—just flip on "Songs For T.V. Stars," "Both Your Names" or "Crummy" to see what I mean. —LYDIA ANDERSON

## JUICY



PHOTO BY DANIEL CLURCH

Juicy takes the maxim "Write what you know" very seriously. The three New York ladies have spent the past few years writing songs about their favorite subject:

boys. The band's clever lyrics about its frustration with the opposite sex have perked up the ears of many fed-up girls and have made it something of a role model for young, aspiring female musicians. Early last year, the group was recruited to help Sassy write a story about how to start a band even if you've never played an instrument before. For Juicy, this subject was also very familiar, since when it started a few summers ago, its members couldn't play a note. Now, having just released its second record, *Olive Juicy* (Slow River), the band has made some noteworthy advances. Guitarist/vocalist Kendall Meade says that over the past year, "I learned how to play barre chords and decided to really sing." These changes have helped the band to balance out some of the amateurishness that characterized its first record without sacrificing its tenderfoot pop charm. —JENNY ELISCU

## ~ISM

New York City sextet ~ism is made up of two basses, flute, trumpet, drums, mallet-triggered sampler, Brazilian percussion, distinctive vocals (think Natalie Merchant with tone, range and power) and *no* guitars. Formed by Brazilian percussionist Mauro Refosco (David Byrne Band) and bassists Marko Ahtisaari and Dan Cooper, the group claims to bring "new primitiveness to New York music," but its sound—eclectic, unusual, eminently danceable—is far from unsophisticated. On stage, it's orchestrated chaos, a vortex of rhythm that sucks in talk radio and fax machine samples, Mike Leonhart's wah-wah trumpet and singer Carolyn Kelley's trained but decidedly anti-diva vocals. (Not to leave anyone out, the drummer is Tobias Gelb.)



The band, not to be confused with long-standing New York punk band Ism, won top honors at both the local and East Coast regional competitions of the NARAS Grammy Showcase unsigned band contest, and just before embarking on a brief tour of northern Europe (including the Kainu Jazz Festival in Finland), recorded tracks that it may or, if the building label buzz results in a summer signing, may not, release itself. —SCOTT FRAMPTON

## EDITH FROST

In the finest bedroom-rock tradition, Edith Frost crafts personal, evocative songs that easily transcend the confines of the four walls in which they were spun. The four songs on Frost's first release, a self-titled EP (Drag City), are demo recordings on which she's backed only by guitar and Casio keyboard, but they seem to have absorbed a spooky, folk-tinged vibe that



can't have originated in her Brooklyn apartment. On "Blame You" she could be re-interpreting a blues staple, her voice graceful and crafty (not unlike Lida Husik's), while on "My God Insane" she sounds like Kendra Smith in Opal's

earliest days—a weighty compliment if ever there was one. Frost is currently in the studio recording material for a full-length, which will hopefully surface later this year. But also in the bedroom-rock tradition, it's hard to know when we'll be invited in to hear her work. —LYDIA ANDERSON

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World Radio History



As the point of entry for countless immigrants, New York City subsumes, swallows and celebrates other cultures while maintaining one distinctly its own. That's also the way with New York rock, which is notable not for an identifiable sound or style, but for the variety of artists—from D-Generation to Ui, Jonathan Fire\*Eater to Cibo Matto, Psychotica to God Is My Co-Pilot—that seem as if they could come from nowhere else.

Over the next few pages, we take a look at some of the new breed of artists that have come to define New York rock and where it's going. ▶

# *the* **Return** *of* **New York** **Rock**

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# Jonathan Fire\*Eater

BY CHERYL BOTCHICK

**Jonathan Fire\*Eater frontman** Stewart Lupton is one of those rare things in modern-day rock 'n' roll: He's more myth and mystery than just the guy at the mic. Stewart doesn't walk into a room, he *makes an entrance*, as he does this summer day in a cafe on New York City's Lower East Side. Almost an hour late to the interview, he jauntily bounds in, drawing the kind of cartoonish double-takes from other cafe patrons that you'd normally expect them to reserve for the likes of silver screen stars. He's brimming with exaggerated gestures, a quick-witted gregariousness, and an almost-comically deep voice considering his tall, wiry frame. He introduces himself, vigorously shaking hands and bellowing warm greetings to everyone—suddenly no one minds his lack of punctuality. His skin is translucently pale and his eyes sunken and dark with a depth that belies his barely 21 years. Dressed from head to toe in fine black textiles, shiny black hair neatly combed into its mod design, and actually pulling off wearing a daring, polka-dotted scarf very rakishly tied around his neck, a young man like Stewart Lupton couldn't possibly have a purpose other than to be in Jonathan Fire\*Eater.

But that quality's a blessing for the band's audience: Though Fire\*Eater's been together since 1993, it's only in the past year that the downtown masses have caught onto its magic, spurring frequent and impossibly packed live shows, as well as a signing frenzy that lead them to the artist-oriented mega-entertainment corporation DreamWorks for the foreseeable future. Live, Jonathan Fire\*Eater's been blowing other locals—large and small—right off the bill. The best comparison might be a cross

between the Birthday Party and the Scientists, but even that doesn't feel quite right. The band's got chops, charisma and texture, and a truly dynamic way with a hook. Behind Paul Maroon's reverb-heavy Gretsch guitar playing and the spare bedrock of Tom Frank's minimal bass work, pint-sized Matt Barrick drives the machine with a fierce drumming style, using his three-piece kit to lay down a rollicking, steady rhythm, beating the hell out of those traps like a man possessed. Though that may sound like any other garage rock troupe, wait until you throw in Walter Martin's classy organ work. Onstage, Martin's almost as captivating as ringmaster Stewart; lanky and downright dour-looking, he casually tends to an

down to the beat, he's there to give the crowd a show it will remember, whether it came to see him specifically or not. But as hyper as he can be when all eyes are on him, he's tremendously thoughtful in conversation. "It's important to respect people who take time out of their evening to come see you," he offers with true sincerity. "I rarely go see bands, but when I do, I hate feeling ignored." He pauses for a moment before chuckling, realizing the broader truth of that statement, "[I hate feeling ignored] always, actually, even when I'm in the audience."

Jonathan Fire\*Eater has a vibe, an image, and a songwriting angle that suggests great creative effort, but when pressed about how they came

*“That's what I've always*  
**Just something that you value that's precious or art or whatever to just**  
**and become life in general — not just a performa**

endless chain of cigarettes while tapping out the hooks on his keys. With that eerie ringing, the circusy clang and echo of an old, haunted organ, Fire\*Eater attains a vaudevillian quality that's captivated just about everyone who's seen it. And that's not even considering the über-presence of Lupton at the forefront.

When he hits the stage, he's larger than life by sheer force of ego. He's unmistakably an anomaly among his peers in an everyday setting, but you can't fully grasp his eccentric bearing until you've seen the band live. Fuse Iggy Pop with the Cramps' Lux Interior and mate that with early David Johansen and you'll begin to get the idea. Under that stage spotlight, his irrepressible energy is funneled: Twitching, convulsing, jerking his head up and

to be who they are today, bassist Tom replies, without hesitation, "I don't know what to answer about the deeper questions about what makes us what we are. As to the overall sense of what we want to create, we never discuss that at all. That comes on its own." Stewart notes what might be the band's secret weapon, or at least a very uncanny twist of fate: "Some of that aura may come from growing up together." Tom quickly points out that they "were all in Washington, DC, as youth. We've known each other, or at least of each other, since we were 10." The majority of them began playing together at the tender age of 13 as one of the most unlikely of ensembles: a ska band called the Ignobles. Word is that they were as good as their novelty factor: "A lot of people got a kick out of them,

especially adults, because here were these tiny kids playing... *ska*," Tom says, incredulous and bewildered himself. "I guess there weren't that many white, 13-year-old reggae bands around in DC at the time," Stewart replies with a grin.

Once the five finished high school

one-bedroom apartment on the Lower East Side. Stewart recalls those days as tough but fun before his mind flashes forward, telling stories about his chums' mischievous, boyish sense of humor: "Matthew and Walt have this big thing about drinking a lot

England for the first time. Since they still consider themselves primarily a live band, their onstage fury remains a must-see. Stewart speaks for all of them when he says that he loves the way playing out frequently, especially in a town as old and legendary as New York City, gives



PHOTO BY SARAH A. FRIEDMAN

Clockwise from top: Tom Frank, Matt Barrick, Paul Maroon, Stewart Lupton, Walter Martin.

**Wanted.**  
*sort of overcome its creator*  
**nice, but a way of life."**

(where Stewart admits that he and Walt had to be separated from one another in class), they briefly followed divergent paths at different universities, studying things like Russian history, poetry and Chinese at universities like Columbia and Sarah Lawrence. But before long, the rigors of academic life turned stale, and they had found each other again ("They were playing some songs, and I was conceptualizing," Stewart pauses for comedic effect, "in my dorm room.") Starting rehearsals in a laundry room at Columbia and playing some parties around town, they were tempted by the creative freedom, and quit school to chase the muse full-time.

Like a modern-day, real-life version of the Monkees, the five entered an unglamorous but no doubt fortifying lifestyle, living in a

and walking around New York City and pretending to fall over things in front of people just to get a laugh. So they'll go out and they'll just drink themselves to where they're in their cups, and they'll start walking around like [looks around innocently, humming a tune], and then they'll just fall over like seven garbage cans and make this huge clanging noise and there are cans rolling in the street, and they're like [feigns a bewildered, stunned look]." Stewart scrunches up his face and laughs heartily at their Three Stooges-style entertainment. Clearing his throat, he mentions that Matt broke his thumb in a recent pratfall: "But it was a good fall, you could say. You know, cars honked, concerned glares were earned by passers-by... He's really into crashing noises all around, I guess."

At press time, the band was planning a late summer/early fall tour, hoping to hit as many cities as possible before heading over to

the band a kind of separate identity from each of them individually, or even as a group. "That's what I've always wanted. Just something that you value that's precious or art or whatever to just sort of overcome its creator and become life in general — not just a performance, but a way of life." Those who can't catch them live can check out the most recent and successful capture of their aura on tape, the Medicine label's *Tremble Under Boom Lights* EP. It's got what might be the band's best five tunes thus far, written several months ago in what Stewart considered an ideal setting: "We went to Ithaca and moved into this farmhouse... We were there for a month. It was really nice; there was a pond, and lots of green. But there was a basement in the house with a dirt floor and all these rats scuttling around. So it was really beautiful countryside, and yet there was that gloomy atmosphere of the basement as well," he says, with ghoulish delight, looking up. "It was the best of both worlds." ★



L-R: Michael Wildwood, Danny Sage, Jesse Malin, Rick Bacchus and Howie Pyro.

# D-Generation

rock 'n' roll Urban Renewal Scheme

BY TIM STEGALL

She was maybe two or three inches below six feet, in her late thirties, and sipping perhaps the 3,915,462nd cocktail of her drinking career. She was also trying very hard to impress someone, *anyone*, with her boredom. And I guess the someone of the moment was me. Of course, she used to hang out at Max's Kansas City. She'd officially Seen It All, y'know.

"So, what's your story?" she asked, pretending that she was feigning interest.

I informed her that I was up from Texas, writing a story on D-Generation.

squeal with delight or dance 'til they drop to the healing power of good rock 'n' roll. It's just as ex-Clash guy Mick Jones remarked recently, re: Rancid: "It doesn't matter *when* you get it! What matters is whether or not you *get it!*"

New York rock is not all over-it ennui, however. There's a groundswell of energy and enthusiasm in the downtown scene, and the four-year-old D-Generation is as responsible as anyone for its revitalization.

"We're just inspired to do something," says bassist Howie Pyro, who saw Max's from the inside as an underage punkling with

natural thing. We had a lotta energy. You do your thing, and it helps out the scene. We're really supportive—some of us are—of New York and New York bands and that whole thing. But that just happens naturally. It's just us doing our thing, and we're so into what we're doing. People around us are just affected by it. We try to make stuff happen as much as we can without becoming scenemakers."

It only takes one positive example. It takes someone who remembers the truth behind old punk rock homilies like "Talk minus action equals nothing," or "When your

**"We try to make stuff happen as much as we can without becoming scenemakers."**

"But they're old news now!" she yawns. "What is new, anyway? The only reason I come to see D-Generation is because they're the closest thing to the old days. But it's all been done already. When's somebody gonna do something new?"

It's Been Done Before is the last excuse of those whose emotions have been burned dry. Anyone who's decided they've Seen It All will never again experience joy or

notorious juvie combo the Blessed, yet is still young enough to be a contemporary of Rancid. "If no one's gonna do anything, someone's gotta do it. We were just waiting for somebody to do something, and it wasn't happening."

"When we started, there just wasn't a lot happening," adds vocalist Jesse Malin, who spent his early teens fronting lefty thrashers Heart Attack, "and it was just a

culture abandons you, create your own." Mixed tapes brewed

by some of these guys, cramming Cheap Trick into the Germs, were being brought to work for broadcast by bartenders at local watering holes. When Malin, Pyro, guitarist Richard Bacchus (who was never addressed as anything other than "Rick" the entire extended weekend I spent around the band, and curiously had nothing to say during the interview) and diminutive Fur guitarist/vocalist Holly Ramos

needed a fun way to pay the rent, they began throwing the Green Door parties at the old D-Gen rehearsal space owned by one-time Yardbirds manager Giorgio Gomelski. They became a biweekly institution, a place for people to dress funny and dance to Slade and Sex Pistols records. Green Door has since moved into Coney Island High, the club Malin has an interest in. Certain members of the band blanch hard at the mention of these extracurricular activities in D-Gen profiles, but they're hard to divorce from the band and its action-first philosophy.

"I don't mind it at all," clarifies drummer Michael Wildwood. "I think it's great. There was nothing to do at night, so these guys started having parties.

I'm glad they did it. Same with the club—it's someplace to hang out, someplace for young bands to play."

The other thing any journalist sent to cover D-Generation is warned against is mentioning the New York Dolls. Which, of course, makes that Topic #1 on the conversation list. But it's hard not to think of the Dolls in connection with these guys. Although there's not much of a musical link, there's certainly a spiritual one: No New York band since the Dolls has been more in tune with and reflective of its moment and its environment, nor more encouraging by example. It's also hard not to notice its shared camaraderie, or the atmosphere both bands have built around themselves.

"Yeah, I think that's right," says Wildwood.

"We're all big Dolls fans," adds guitarist Danny Sage.

"I just don't think we sound like them," snorts Pyro.

"Well, we've changed a lot, anyway," says Malin. "The similarities [with the Dolls] might have been more so in the beginning, just coming out of New York and just having this party [atmosphere], and the earlier stuff was more like that. But I think that was like three years ago, and things have changed.

If impressions of the band haven't changed in three years, perhaps it's because despite the band's high New York profile, the rest of the country hasn't heard from D-Generation in a while. First, the band's debut, a cutout-bin classic, had its potential stunted by a monumental lack of faith on their former label's part. (One ex-EMI publicist recalled off

# Psychotica

NAKED AMBITION

BY SCOTT FRAMPTON

**"My heart is in and lives in the Manhattan downtown scene.** It's what created Psychotica," Patrick Briggs says of his show-stopping sextet, "and I hope the rest of the country gets it." The rest of the country will have its chance: Psychotica will be opening the day on Lollapalooza's main stage. "We're planning quite an extravaganza," he says.

For Briggs, who has been known to open shows by emerging from a smoke-filled, chrome-plated egg and often closes them completely naked, this is clearly an understatement, but he's not about to reveal too much too soon. Still, the question of how a band that virtually personifies New York nightlife will fare in the middle of the day

**"I plan to fully utilize the daylight to my advantage, and that's about as specific as I'll be."**

remains. "The thing about daytime shows is that most artists let the daylight defeat them," he says, "so they get up in their day clothes and just play their music and whatever, which is fine, but not for me. I plan to fully utilize the daylight to my advantage, and that's about as specific as I'll be. I will say that you will be able to see the show from five miles away. Literally. It's going to be interesting to see how people will be react to it."

Day or night, what will be interesting is how some, let's say less liberal, locales will react to a group Briggs describes as "really all things urban New York." Briggs, who, like RuPaul, got his start dancing on the bar at the notorious Pyramid club ("You could go to any popular—whatever you call them—club person around the city and I bet you three-quarters of them started dancing on the bar at Pyramid"), thinks that the time is right for his kind of entertainment. "Whether it's a drag queen playing in front of a rock 'n' roll band or some weird space-age theme going on or whatever, the kids are totally ready for it...I think people are bored and want to be entertained again and want more than just to see a band when they go to see a band. I think they want to see a little more talent than someone who can just play a guitar or sing or look good. It's old."

"Right now, anything is possible," he says, referring to the band's unlikely mix of goth, industrial, dance, rock and, thanks to a six-foot Swedish reggae toaster named Reeka, dancehall. "Crossing over those [genre] barriers is possible—coming up with something new. That's the mission we're on, to develop something completely unique. Hopefully, we'll have a long career ahead of us to do that. I'll still be doing it anyhow—whether I'm making records or playing Pyramid again, I'll still be doing it." ★



L-R: Buzz, Tommy Salmorin, Pat Briggs, Reeka, Enrique Tiru, Ina

continued on page 29



L-R: Yuka Honda, Miho Hatori

# Cibo Matto

and a side of Butter

BY KURT B. REIGHLEY

**Forget what you've heard about groupies and brown M&Ms:** Life on the road is a drag. "We've been away for quite a while now," sighs New Yorker Yuka Honda, half of the delectable duo known as Cibo Matto. "Maybe we'll come back for a week, but whenever we come back I have so many things to do. I want to breathe a little bit, but I won't until August. I'm waiting to exhale."

It's the price Yuka and her partner, singer Miho Hatori, must pay for having cooked up a debut platter as savory as *Viva! La Woman* (perhaps you noticed it at the top of the *CMJ* charts for a good long while?), a funky, all-you-can-eat buffet of samples and styles that could only have emerged from the cultural melting pot of downtown New York.

Fortunately, the two are finding that "Know Your Chicken," "White Pepper Ice Cream" and all their other treats go down easily no matter where they're served. "I think people expect us to be a little quieter," Yuka chuckles. "When they see us, they're really surprised that we do so many rock things. We do half of the set with a live band now. And we do a lot of hard stuff, and 15 minute improvisations. It's really fun."

"The majority of our crowds are very nice," she continues. "They're very intelligent and considerate." Cibo Matto fans are a friendly lot, too, and they tend to show up with edible offerings for the renowned food lovers. "A lot of people bring beef jerky." She laughs again. "Unfortunately, we are vegetarians."

On the plus side, crossing the country has allowed the duo to indulge their passion for eating in new locales. "I had amazing food in Chicago," recounts Yuka. "We went to this restaurant called Soul Kitchen. And I was imagining authentic soul food, and I was feeling heavy, because I eat so much on tour that I'm always feeling heavy. And I'm always thinking 'I wanna eat light food tonight,'" she quips in a 300-pound voice. "But this restaurant had deep fried sage, and it was amazing. They had shrimp and grits, but with Pernod and all these flavors. I was so in heaven."

"I actually got to cook while we were in Los Angeles," she admits wisely. "We had a driving day to San Francisco, and on that morning

*(continued on page 31)*

**God Is My Co-Pilot** is working on its telepathy. The band is about to begin a major tour (its fourth this year) to a part of the world where it's never been (Finland this time). So GodCo founders Sharon Topper and Craig Flanagin, and their rhythm section as of this month, drummer David Mecionis and bassists Daria Klotz and Fly,

**"My mind's eye version of a song is not**

are honing that telepathy four nights a week, because telepathy is what you need to play songs that are punk-rock loud, free-jazz tricky, and almost never what they seem to be at the outset.

Take the new song "Boxstitch." On a version they recorded for John Peel's British radio program, it begins as a sort of polka on speed, not unlike their familiar cover of "Handsome Molly." Suddenly, the drumbeats come unhinged and the song veers off into a skronking sax and clarinet jam. The beat returns full-bore a few measures later, even more frenetic and punctuated by the squeal of horns. "We rewrote 'Boxstitch,'" Flanagin now reports. "Kept the melody and the vocals and the arrangement, and ran a whole new song under it that is more fun for this group to play together. Now instead of the unisons there are three interlocking parts that are a lot cooler."

"Part of starting out with a new group is figuring out what the group's strengths are, what its voice is, instead of saying, 'this is my favorite song, let's teach this song to this group,'" explains Topper. In any case, she says, "The songs totally evolve. The recorded

**"A lot of people bring beef jerky." She laughs again. "Unfortunately, we are vegetarians."**



# God Is My Co-Pilot

dislocation Dance

BY ANDREA MOED

version is not the ideal version. If we like a song enough to keep it in

over continuity. "Early on, we wanted to work out ideas [together].

every time signature, form of music... in big letters on a card, and

what's on tape. It's a real dislocation, like looking in the mirror and not seeing yourself."

the set for two years... we constantly try to improve it. Frequently I'll listen to an old single or CD of ours, with the idea in my mind of what I'm going to hear, and I'm always wrong. My mind's eye version of a song is not what's on tape. It's a real dislocation, like looking in the mirror and not seeing yourself."

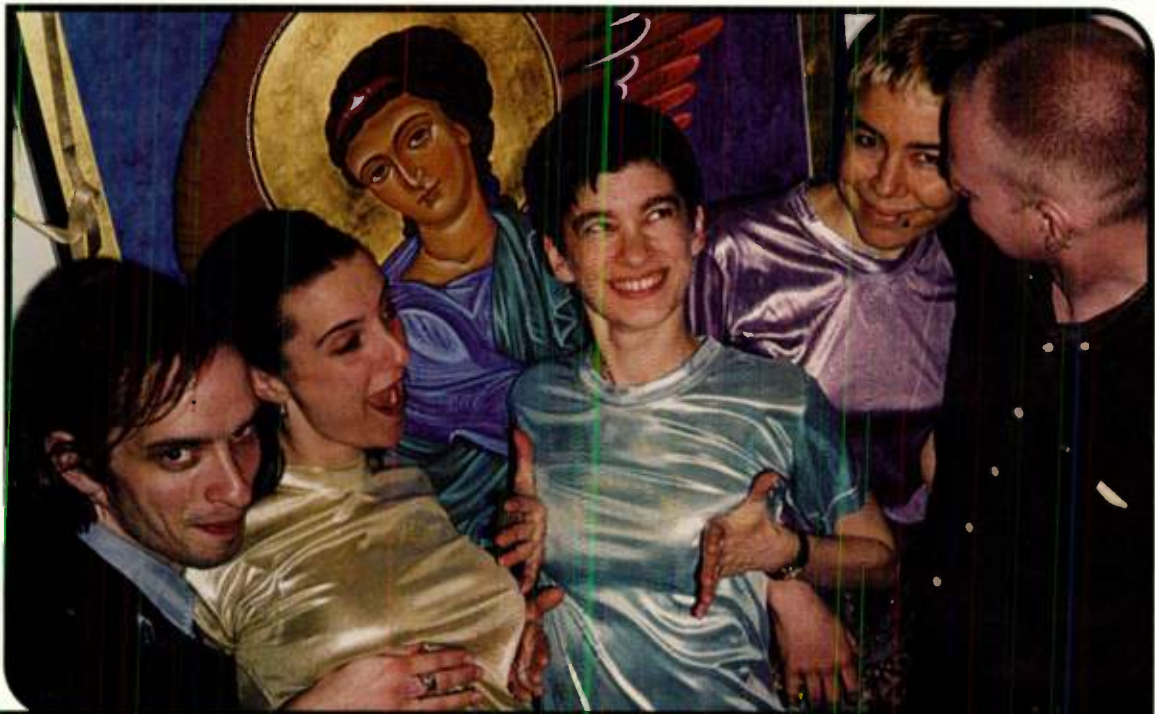
From its beginnings, GodCo has been a band that pursues challenge

None of us were technically proficient, so it was a lot of work to get our ideas expressed, and that took a long time," Topper recalls. The band's now familiar genre-jumping ways took shape as the original group of novices learned to play together. "One of the things that we used to do to rehearse would be to make cards, and put every genre we could think of, and

I would act as a sort of prompter," Topper says. "I would hold up the card that would say samba, and when I brought it down on a downbeat, everyone would play samba. It was just a way for us... to think quickly and to jump from radically different idea to idea."

Since then, the GodCo idea machine has ranged far and wide,

continued on page 30



KATRINA DEL MAR

## Speed King

Precision crafted

BY JENNY ELISCU

**Speed King values precision.** The tric places great importance on keeping firm control of its direction, and while this means that the group doesn't play out very often ("We like to be able to play new songs at every show," says drummer James Murphy), if you're there when it does, count your lucky stars. Speed King's careful calculation begins with its songs, which combine complex rhythms with intense, frenetic guitar and vocal parts, and continues through a carefully constructed career plan. The most immediately striking thing about the band is its powerhouse rhythm section, featuring the utterly proficient Murphy and six-string bassist Miriam Maltagliati (both formerly of Pony), who both also contribute occasional vocals. The band's loose cannon is singer/guitarist Chet Sherwood, whose manic chord work and spastic hollering give the songs added intensity. The band's methodical madness can be heard on its three singles and an upcoming double-LP, which it's recording this summer. ★



MELANIE WEINER

L-R: Clem Waldmann, Sasha Frere-Jones, Wilbo Wright

**"The two biggest influences on U2"** bassist Sasha Frere-Jones quips over a milkshake at the East Village's round-the-clock Polish diner Veselka, "are the Trenton train schedule and the sound of Maxell tape."

There's an element of truth to that. Trenton, New Jersey, is where the mostly-instrumental bass-bass-drums trio's other bassist Wilbo Wright has his tree farm, and where the band sometimes goes to practice in an old cider refrigerator. And as for the Maxells, Wright explains: "We improvise when we compose—we find the kernel that comes out of an improvisation and then work from there. We might say 'Play that thing you played a couple of minutes ago!' and it's already gone—it's like 'I sort of know where it was'... Having the tape going so we can go back and dredge those things up is really essential."

Tapes come in handy live, too, where the band uses them to add pre-recorded textures to some of its songs. "It's a little like having somebody improvise with you, although... not really," Frere-Jones muses. "You think you know what they're going to do, and then you bring the wrong channel up, and it's the loud static sound instead of the warbly whale call... Tonight [opening for Stereolab] we're going to use tapes for the wrong songs, intentionally. I want to see what happens."

As heard on a couple of EPs and the new album *Sidelong* (Southern), U2's uniquely bugged-out songs and not-quite-song grooves constantly combine that kind of specificity and indeterminacy. "75% of the decisions about how U2 sounds were made when the group started" in 1991, Frere-Jones says. "We think every now and then 'is this or is this

# U2

## beating the Hubcap

BY DOUGLAS WOLK

not U2?," but it's pretty much determined by who we are... It doesn't really make sense to do anything that anyone else could do, and if it sounds like 'oh, that's obviously a Meters song,' we'll say 'forget it.'"

"I think we grew into it,

time in the life of a song. "There's a pretty long process of editing and re-playing," Frere-Jones says, "and a couple of the songs on the album are the tail bit that was left after we'd gone through a month of thinking we had a song, and then we threw the song out and kept the tail bit."

Wright explains the philosophy:

**"We think every now and then 'is this or is this not U2?'"**

too," drummer Clem Waldmann adds. "The nice thing is that even when we do stuff that isn't a shaped song, or jam, or whatever, there's also ideas that come out of it that we can use."

Those ideas can come at any

"Sometimes you have things that are incredibly organic right out of the gate—'don't mess with it, there it is, it's done'—and sometimes we're beating the hubcap until it's so dented that we just leave it there by the side of the road." ★

# Handsome

BY SCOTT FRAMPTON

THE ARTISTS FORMERLY KNOWN AS...



L-R: Pete Hines, Tom Capone, Jeremy Chaterlain, Peter Mengede, Eddie Nappi

**"We're being very cautious to avoid cashing in on this 'hardcore supergroup' label,"** says Handsome's Peter Mengede. "We don't want to ride on that tag." Considering the band's pedigree, that's no small consideration; nearly every member of this five-piece has a notable "ex" in parenthesis after his name. There's guitarist Mengede (a founding member of Helmet) and Tom Capone (Quicksand), and then drummer Pete Hines (Murphy's Law, Cro-Mags), and singer Jeremy Chaterlain (straight-edge bands Iceburn and Insight). Only bassist Eddie Nappi (described only as a "Hollywood refugee") is spared having his resume appended to his job in the band.

Another reason not to dwell on the band's collective history is that its 1996 sound is a good bit away from its roots. "A lot of people who were into hardcore five to seven years ago have since moved on," says Hines. "We've all grown as people and as musicians over the years." The results of that growth have, so far, only been available on two singles: "Waiting" b/w "Needles" (Full City Blend) and "Swimming" b/w "Can't Connect" (Sub Pop), released in September and October of last year. The band is currently in Seattle with producer Terry Date (while we're at it: Pantera and Soundgarden, among others) finishing a debut for Epic to be released this fall.

The one thing Handsome is willing to ride on to make a name for itself is the floor of a van. As Mengede puts it, "Touring is 90% of this job." ★



# CHARLIE HUNTER QUARTET

ready...

set...

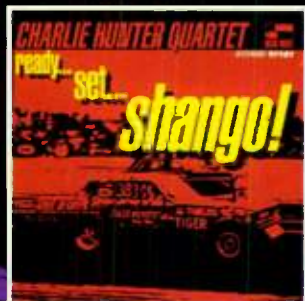
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# DJ Spooky

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BY M. TYE COMER

disposal, this sonic magician treats the faithful crowd of young urban dwellers frequenting his traveling "illbient" parties to vivid soundscapes free from the barriers of genrefication. *Songs Of A Dead Dreamer* (Asphodel), his first

New York City writer and musician. "I really wanted it to be a cinematic sweep through a late-20th-century urban landscape, [reflecting] the individual immersed in this kind of turbulent, chaotic setting. So the album has a weird ambient, almost claustrophobic, yet transcendent kind of feel."

"American imagination has been shackled by these weird boundaries, and the new energy, to me, is in techno, jungle, and [trip-hop]."

There are few artists sequencing electronic music as stimulating, captivating, or confounding as DJ Spooky That Subliminal Kid (a.k.a. Paul Miller). With a minimum of three turntables, two CD players, one DAT machine and a mixer at his

release of original material, offers an insight into DJ Spooky's eclectic, aural vision. "I wanted [the album] to have this kind of entropic bubbling up of different energies where each song would become a different thing," says the 25-year-old

Drawing references from dub reggae, hip-hop, ambient, and the constant pulse of the urban jungle, Spooky's musical elements evolve beyond their basic structures through a process of superimposition and mutation. A self-described "turntable manipulator," he redefines the sound of what he's spinning just as he redefines the role of the DJ. "A lot of DJs... are really scared to take the audience anywhere," he says. "(With) illbient, you're dealing much more with the texture of sound itself. If the beats match the texture, I'll work with it. If they don't, I'll pull the beats out. But the idea behind turntable manipulation is that you're freed up from having to make sure the crowd is always dancing, and your beats can go all over the place."

With *Dead Dreamer*, his designs are broader. He sees it as a first step towards a revitalization of American music and imagination, which he says is caught in a downward, depressive spiral. "Right now, America is just very stratified and repressed," he says. "There's no sense of organic production anymore. We really do like a pre-

continued on page 30

# Versus

BY ANDREW BEAUJON

## veterans of the Indie-Rock Wars

I meet Richard Baluyut, Fontaine Toups, and new guitarist James Baluyut at a bar in New York City. We have a few beers and things are going swell until I ask Richard if he is a tyrant.

"I'm not a tyrant. I'm kind of a perfectionist."

"Kind of?" asks Fontaine. "But he has to do that. We would do nothing but sleep all day on tour" (the group has a reputation for almost constant touring). "We're doing fewer tours, but they're longer."

And now we turn to indie rock. *Versus* seems to be the only band from the Class of '91—the bands that played the prophetically named "Lotsa Pop Losers" festival in Washington, D.C.—that is still active and still interesting.

"That was our first indie-rock show," says Richard. "We didn't know that we were indie rock until we got there. Before that, we were, I guess, just rock."

"We're new rock now," says Fontaine.

After an extremely impolitic discussion of which of our colleagues' bands were ever any good (if I included it

"That was our first indie-rock show," says Richard. "We didn't know that we were indie rock until we got there. Before that, we were, I guess, just rock."

here, I knew four people who'd never get a Christmas card again) we turn our focus to record labels. What happened with *Versus* going to Caroline?

"We wanted a bigger deal than with *TeenBeat*," Richard says. "This is only for two records. They gave us some money so we don't have to work. That was the key."

So what happened with the major-label thing?

"Well, right after Lollapalooza last year, we got the idea that was something we wanted to do. We thought we were going about it in a smart way, but I don't think

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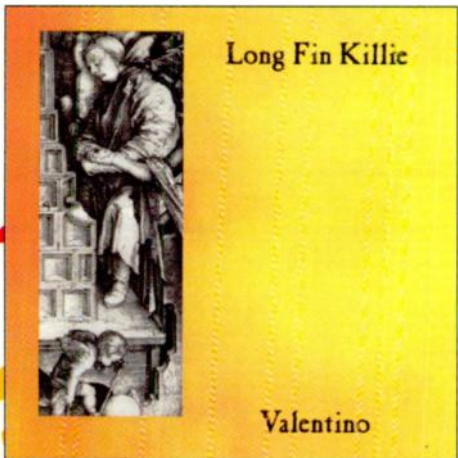
# Summer American Style



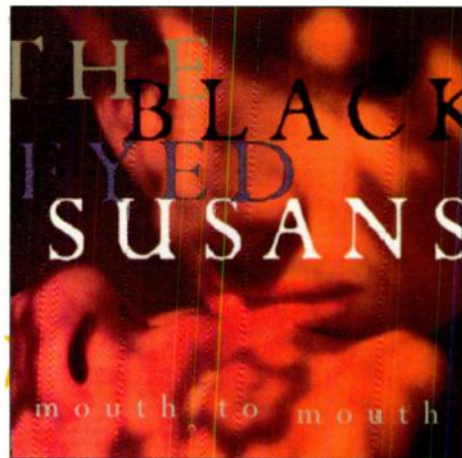
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# Run On

## STEALING FROM EVERYTHING

BY DOUGLAS WOLK

"I used to go to see a lot of free jazz with a friend of mine," Run On guitarist Alan Licht says, "and whenever the drummer would throw in a rock beat or a funk beat or something, we'd always look at each other with a look of horror... That was really my problem with a lot of the '80s downtown avant-garde scene. I remember reading an interview with Elliott Sharp where he said 'the problem with the avant-

On: it's a pop band that draws on some very non-pop ideas and techniques. The three core members—Brown, Licht and bassist/guitarist Sue Garner (they all write songs and sing)—all have extensive experience in other kinds of music: Brown



L-R: Sue Garner, Alan Licht, Rick Brown, David Newgarden

**"Pop music is supposed to steal from everything to be popular. That's what it's there for."**

garde is they're afraid to get funky, or something like that. Well, the whole fucking world is funky, man! Gimme a break! Can't you have one percent of people who don't want to get funky?"

Drummer Rick Brown pauses a moment. "I think that's very interesting, and insightful about that. At the same time, and I think I know you're talking about [the free-jazz world]... I don't know what one should call it in our music, but groove is something very important to us, to me, and it's an element in our music... 'Funky.'"

"Sure," Licht replies, "but we're a pop band, not an avant-garde group. Pop music is supposed to steal from everything to be popular. That's what it's there for."

That's probably the secret to Run

On: it's the experimental percussion duo Les Batteries, Licht has done free guitar improvisation with the Blue Humans, Loren Mazzacane, Keiji Haino and others, and Garner and Brown have been playing together in other projects for many years, including the very odd Fish & Roses.

Run On also has tremendous studio technique, heard especially on this year's *Start Packing* (Matador): fleshing out its songs with unusual instrumentation and variations in sound. In fact, the Brown/Garner/Licht trio began as a studio project a year before it ever played in public. Only when the band added trumpeter/organist/former *CMJ* staffer David Newgarden (recently replaced by violinist Katie Gentile) did it decide

that it could let loose on stage. With Run On, Garner says, "we're trying to be a little freer and... I won't say improvise, because it's not improvised, it's just not so strict. The structures are pretty laid out, but it's not as composed every second."

"Maybe it's just less the same every time we play it," Licht says.

There's also the Run On music that audiences don't hear at all: the band does a lot of practice-room jamming, though very little of it shows up on its records. "To me," Licht says, "that sort of thing is almost like background, the way actors will sometimes create this whole back-story for their character that has nothing to do with the script. Somewhere along the line, it creeps up in something you might do in a song." \*

**From: The Virgin-Whore Complex**  
**To: C.G. Ledbetter**  
**Subject: Emperor Norton Records**  
**Date: June 12, 1996**

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Our legal department tells us they've been having a very frustrating time getting their opposite numbers at Emperor Norton Records to take the lawsuit seriously; indeed they claim a sheriff's deputy who arrived with them to deliver the summons was, before their eyes, seized forcibly, tarred and feathered, and thrown from a fifteenth-floor window. Their repeated threats and abjurations were greeted with indifference or mockery, and at one point a warning that their bar membership could be revoked.

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the record how a highly placed Chrysalis executive came down to her department, announced he didn't like the D-Gen record, and ordered a cease-and-desist on the department's efforts to work it.) The band very loudly and publicly divorced itself from Chrysalis, earning press attention most bands can't buy as it made the switch to Columbia.

Then D-Generation did a curious thing: It waited over a year to get another record out.

"'Cuz we had to pick our producer and all that," says Sage.

Still, in the long silence between the band's remarriage to Columbia and the eventual release of D-Gen Album Number Two, *No Lunch*, two self-produced tracks surfaced (a blistering take on the Germs' "No God," plus an embryonic version of *No Lunch's* opener, "Scorch"). Both captured D-Gen's live frenzy far more capably than a single buffed-and-shined inch of the first record's Z-rock-friendly surface. Why do they even need a producer?

"Fear," blurts Malin.

"We didn't wanna sound 'commercial,' particularly," says Pyro. "But we kinda wanted it to sound as good as everything else, maybe. Even though the things we've done ourselves have sounded good, they might not be good enough for reality."

"We just wanted it to be as sonically great as it could be," adds Sage, "so we [wondered]: who's out there who's great at this? Also, who's out there who can deal with five people who might be saying five completely different things?"

Apparently, the only man qualified was Ric Ocasek. Either that, or budding rimshot king Jesse Malin ain't jokin' when he cracks, "we liked the way the Weezer record sounded, and we wanted to end up being friends of P!"

The band as a whole feels Ocasek got its sonic character on tape while winding up with an album that might not frighten radio programmers. Pyro, for one, feels *No Lunch* displays the first occasion a producer got the band relaxed and confident enough to get the record done comfortably.

"He got good performances on tape," says Sage. "That's the most important thing."

Besides offering superior retakes of D-Gen standards like "Frankie" and "No Way Out," Malin feels *No Lunch* "presents a lot clearer picture of what we're about, what we sound like. I think [the band] has evolved into another thing." And what would that be?

"The songs are shorter," he answers, "and they seem louder and harder, yet poppier, somehow. It seems like a weird contradiction, I know. But we had to write it in a shorter time frame, two and a half minutes or so, most of the songs. The lyrics are better, too, I think."

That was in evidence in early March, when the band played the try-sexual "Squeezebox" club night "anonymously"—let's just say the word was out—as "Guitar Mafia."

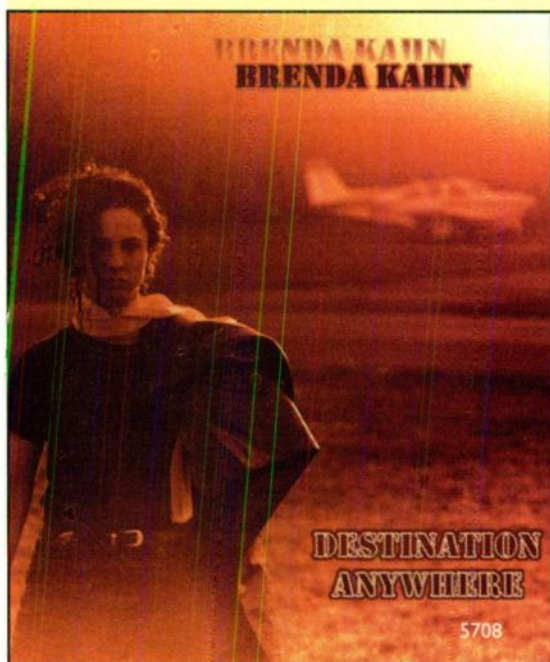
"We don't wanna suck," says Wildwood. "We go to see bands all the time, and they always suck. You gotta get up there and..."

"...give your all or don't go at all," insists Pyro.

"We just feel this," continues Wildwood. "Everybody in this band just feels this stuff and goes nuts."

"It's a release of frustration," says Malin, "all the things that fuck with your head all day and all week. You get up there and get all the adrenaline out. I think after you come offstage, you feel like you've had an exorcism or something. Or a Caesarian," he laughs. ★

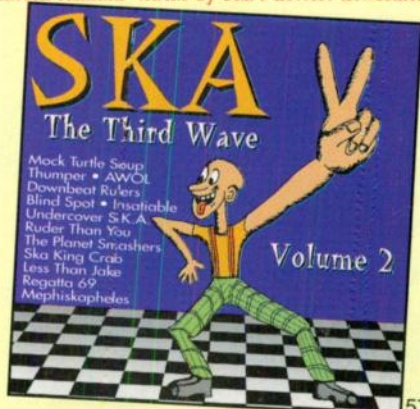
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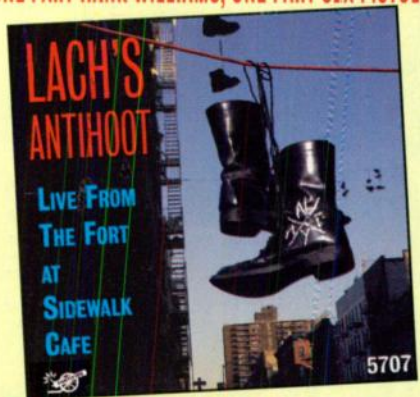
"That girl you knew in high school whose braininess was far sexier than the whole cheerleading squad." — Interview

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we went to a friend's house, and they were making pancakes. And we wanted to make them, because we wanted to cook. They were great, with fresh blueberries!"

When they return to N.Y.C., Yuka and Miho already know their next course: Butter. That's the moniker of their new collaborative effort with artist Mike Mills (no, not the R.E.M. guy), Blues Explosion drummer Russell Simins, and Rick Lee of Skeleton Key. It seems the girls were spending copious amounts of time with Russell. "We were jamming one day, and coming up with these amazing songs, one after another, and we just thought 'Oh, we should do something.'" Rick had been in Yuka and Miho's previous band, the punk outfit Laito Lychee. "And Mike was just hanging around, because we're friends."

The Butter album will be out on Grand Royal, and Yuka says making the record was a barrel of fun. "Writing with a group is so much fun, because there's a lot of input, and everybody always has things you never would think of by yourself." But what about the old adage "too many cooks spoil the soup?" "That's also possible, but I think this band is a combination of a lot of smart people."

A brief Butter tour is planned, leaving Yuka with mixed emotions about leaving home again. "I miss having my music equipment around me. At home, I have a Fender Rhodes, and all these records I can play all day long. My neighbors are pretty tolerant. Sometimes I fall asleep on the couch, because I'm too tired. And I get up around five o'clock, and then I can just play music for an hour before I go back to sleep." ★

GodCo continued

building a repertoire that includes hardcore freakouts, traditional folk songs, would-be disco, and songs in at least six languages. ("There's enough English in the world," says Topper.) Recently, Craig and Sharon played

a handful of shows by themselves, as GodCo Duo. Without the thunder of the band behind them, Sharon found these shows unusually frightening. Nonetheless, she concludes, "some of the most rewarding and exciting things we've done are the most terrifying." If GodCo has any unifying premise at all, that seems to be it. ★

DJ Spooky continued

packed identity and it shows how badly our culture has been hyper-commodified. American imagination has been shackled by these weird boundaries, and the new energy, to me, is in techno, jungle, and [trip-hop]."

Spooky believes that his music can enlighten and educate through the chaos that drives it. "The world is a place where you can take music and re-manipulate it to create a cultural collage," he says. "When you're painting, you use different palates. Each sound becomes a different way of creating this electro-magnetic canvas. I've just become a focal point for these different energies." ★

Versus continued

there is a smart way. You really just have to be in the right place at the right time. They're only interested for a span of a month or so. After that you're looking for them to call, and they don't. And then you feel like an idiot—"

"A sucker," Fontaine adds.

"For having thought you'd figured out a way to play the game," Richard continues. "It's useless to try to play that game. I still think people can sign with a major label and it might be cool, but it has to happen pretty quickly."

Versus has a kicking new album out, *Secret Swingers* (Caroline), and will be touring this summer in the U.S. and Asia with some of the other bands on the *Ear Of The Dragon* compilation. ★

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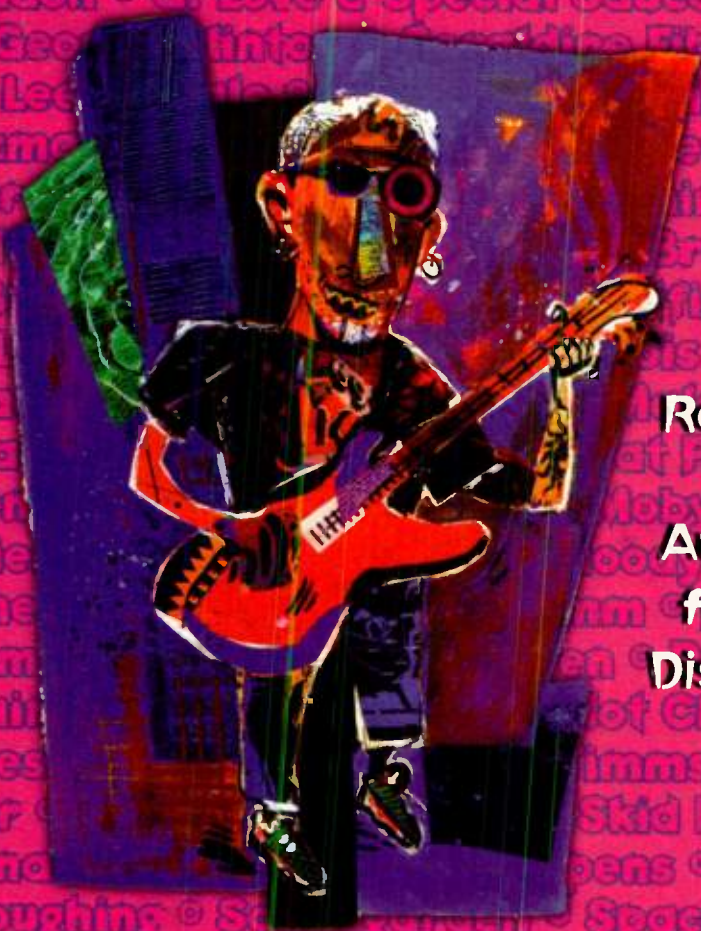
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- G THE BLUE NILE Peace At Last *Warner Bros.*
- L VAN MORRISON The Philosophers Stone *Polydor-Atlas*
- J VARIOUS ARTISTS Stealing Beauty Soundtrack *Capitol*
- L VERSUS Secret Swingers *Caroline*
- L VIRGIN-WHORE COMPLEX Stay Away From My Mother *Emporer Norton*
- J WILLIE NELSON Spirit *Island*

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# August Top 75

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- J LUSH** Lovelife *4AD-Reprise*
- J MAGNAPOP** Rubbing Doesn't Help *Play It Again Sam-Priority*
- D MAKE-UP** Destination: Love; Live! At Cold Rice *Dischord*
- A MAN OR ASTRO-MAN?** Experiment Zero *Touch And Go*
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- F MODEST MOUSE** This Is A Long Drive For Someone With... *Up*
- J MOOG COOKBOOK** Moog Cookbook *Restless*
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- I SUPERDRAG** Regretfully Yours *Elektra-EEG*
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- J VARIOUS ARTISTS** Schoolhouse Rock! Rocks *Lava-Atlantic*
- G VARIOUS ARTISTS** Lounge Ax: Defense & Relocation CD *Touch And Go*
- H VARIOUS ARTISTS** Eyesore: A Stab At The Residents *Vaccination*
- J VARIOUS ARTISTS** Trip Hop Test Part 3 *Moonshine*
- J VARIOUS ARTISTS** Punk Lost & Found *Beloved-Shanachie*
- J VELOCITY GIRL** Gilded Stars And Zealous Hearts *Sub Pop*
- I WALLFLOWERS** Bringing Down The Horse *Interscope*
- E WESTON** Got Beat Up *Go Kart*
- I YUM YUM** Dan Loves Patti *TAG*

# reviews

R.I.Y.L.: RECOMMENDED IF YOU LIKE

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 MELT-BANANA / *Scratch Or Stitch* / Skin Craft  
 MELVINS / *Stag* / Mammoth-Atlantic  
 MONO PUFF / *Unsupervised* / Rykodisc  
 MOONSHAKE / *Dirty & Divine* / C/Z  
 WILLIE NELSON / *Spirit* / Island  
 OLYMPIC DEATH SQUAD / *Blue* / TeenBeat  
 ORBITAL / *In Sides* / hrr-LONDON  
 PALEFACE / *Get Off* / Sire-EEG  
 RED FIVE / *Flash* / Interscope  
 SCREAMING TREES / *Dust* / Epic  
 SLAMBOOK / *With Riddle And Shears* / Lorem Ipsum  
 SLEEPER / *The It Girl* / Arista  
 T.V. SMITH / *Immortal Rich* / 2.13.61-Thirsty Ear  
 SWIRLIES / *They Spent Their Wild Youthful Days...* / Taangl  
 TEAM DRESCH / *Captain My Captain* / Chainsaw-Candy-Ass

"Making this record is difficult as it involves many trips dangerously close to chaos. *Antichrist Superstar* is our alpha and omega. Seeing my own death while creating this album has left me in a state of true sanity. Unfortunately, our guitarist Daisy Berkowitz had grown creatively in a different direction." —*Tense-challenged Marilyn Manson, on line-up changes in the group*

## BASEHEAD / *faith* / Imago

As the guiding force of Basehead, Michael Ivey has become known for two things—his drowsy stoner hip-hop and his difficulty in getting records released. But *faith* may give him a third calling card: spiritual seeker. Finally liberated two years after it was recorded, the album is dedicated to the Lord Almighty and His Sole Begotten Son; and Ivey, Basehead's lyricist and free-form vocalist, rarely goes for more than one song without musing on God's relationship with man. On 1992's *Play With Toys*, Ivey was preoccupied chiefly with old girlfriends and cold beers. But the darkness that pervaded Basehead's mid-period album *Not In Kansas Anymore* has evolved into a full-blown preoccupation with Why We Are Here. Ivey is up to the task,

recalling a childhood dream of overcoming oppression ("If I Were Superman"), thanking God for the positive influence of family in a cruel world ("Cold Outside," "Family Man"), and longing for closeness with others ("Friend Of Friends").

As his words turn inward, Basehead's sound has grown more varied, if no less claustrophobia-inducing. Some songs lilt and others throb, but *faith* still has the arid, rustic sound that distinguishes Basehead's records from any others in hip-hop. If *Play With Toys* was a pothead's bedroom, *faith* is an old clapboard chapel: physically unassuming but filled to the rafters with lost souls. CHRIS MOLANPHY

## THE BLUE NILE / *Peace At Last* / Warner Bros. ●

Having released three records in 12 years, the Blue Nile is not exactly the most prolific of groups. In fact, before the release of its last album, *Hats*, its previous American record company flew the band over from Scotland just to meet the company staff, because they figured that no one working there had been at the company when its last album was released. *Peace At Last* finds the duo slowly becoming anachronistic: what was fairly wonderful in the '80s becomes slowly outmoded a decade later. The big news with *Peace At Last* is that it incorporates more acoustic, natural sounds. While earlier efforts were bombastically keyboard-oriented, most of the songs here sound like vocalist Paul Buchanan wrote them solo on the acoustic guitar, though the gospel-ish choir to "Happiness" betrays the band's '80s pedigree. The chiming, interlocking guitars that were previously buried beneath the synths take to the fore: This is an album for the evening, rather than the middle of the night. Buchanan's new songs are a little more optimistic than his previous lonely

trains and all-night pacing fare, but his moody core can't shake the anxiety and restlessness that's his trademark. Ten songs in seven years: who knows where the world will be when the next one comes along? JAMES LIEN



DATALOG: Released May 21.

FILE UNDER: Stone free.

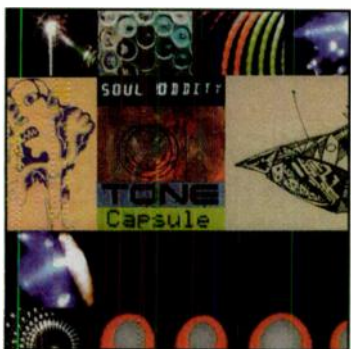
R.I.Y.L.: Arrested Development, Definition Of Sound, Spearhead.



DATALOG: Released Jun. 11.

FILE UNDER: The big '80s, downsized.

R.I.Y.L.: Talk Talk, Red House Painters, Steve Winwood.



**VARIOUS ARTISTS / Detroit: Beyond The Third Wave / Astralwerks**  
**SOUL ODDITY / Tone Capsule / Astralwerks**

During its formative years, the techno/house revolution's swelling thump and synthesized loops had only one goal: to hypnotically draw everyone feeling the aural pulse to gyrate on the dancefloor. With most dance artists now concerned with intricate, complex soundscapes as much as with the kickin' backbeat, the genre has been driven down innumerable avenues of experimentation, springing more sub-divisions than a hydra has heads. Despite confusing categorical lines between trip-hop, trip-house, ambient-house, drum-'n'-bass, and every other electro-elite hybrid, there's one dotted-line that proves most relevant and critical: When it comes down to it, there's techno meant to free the body, and then there's techno meant to commune with the mind.

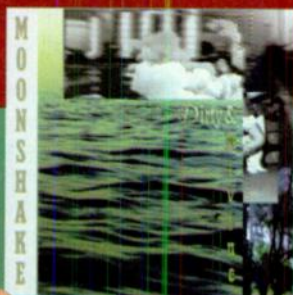
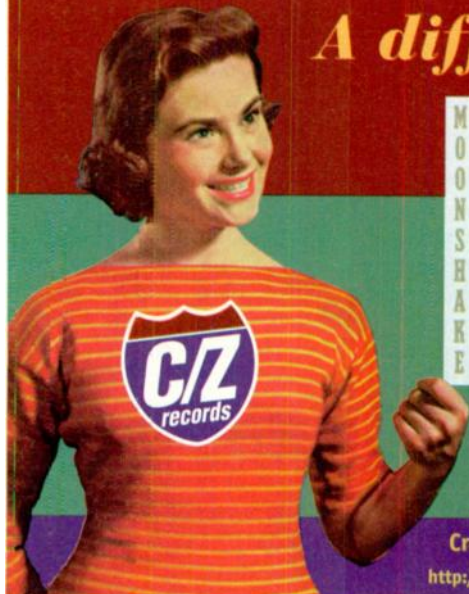
Recalling the genre's not-too-distant past, when simple keyboard frameworks, hyperactive high-hats and a throbbing 4/4 bass drum were intended exclusively for high-decibel sound systems in dark and dusty warehouses, *Detroit: Beyond The Third Wave* is both enriched and tarnished by the fact that the 10-track compilation is decidedly geared for dancefloor consumption. Honoring the Motor City as the birthplace of modern dance culture (a declaration certain to steam Chicago DJs), *Detroit* features compositions from the city's third generation of techno-innovators. Credit should be given where it's due: Claude Young's "Impolite To Refuse," Sean Deason's "Vortex," Shake's "Sandblaster" and others are resonant, mesmerizing shots of adrenaline perfect for weary club kids at after-hours dance fests. But it's next to impossible to fall into the same trance in an intimate setting when the bass doesn't rattle your limbs into compliance. Most of these selections will succeed at lulling private listeners into synchronized slumber. Only Ectomorph's "Insert Another Data Disk" and

Will Web's "Life On Tek" begin to hint at the complex and aurally stimulating structures of the emerging electro-funk movement, a realm that Florida's Soul Oddity rules with an iron fist. Drawing musical influences from funk, early '80s synth-pop and Atari 2600 video game soundtracks, Soul Oddity's *Tone Capsule* creates the most flagrantly funky and unapologetically synthetic music to come out a sequencer in ages. Picking up where Afrika Bambaataa's "Planet Rock" left off, the duo creates a space-age alternate reality of analog synths and sparse hip-hop vocals. It's like some cyber dialogue, the sound of hyper-intelligent artificial life. Devoid of any real bassline or deep-rooted groove, "Welcome Back To Earth," "DJ Tokyo" and "Little Alien" will do little to spur beat-happy ravers and club aficionados. But to take your mind on a soundtrip to a superior 21st Century funk-fest, *Tone Capsule* is your boarding pass. *M. TYE COMER*

**DATALOG:** Released May 21 (*Detroit: The Third Wave*); May 28 (*Soul Oddity*).

**FILE UNDER:** Lush dancefloor grooves; futuristic electro-funk.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Detroit techno/house; Kraftwerk, Chemical Brothers.

*A different kind of tension*



**Moonshake**  
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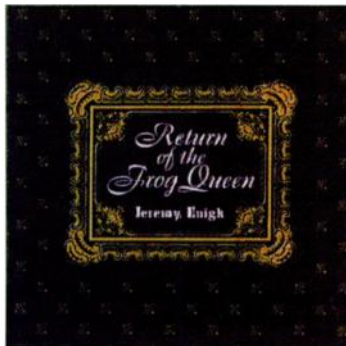
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**JEREMY ENIGK / Return Of The Frog Queen / Sub Pop**



Jeremy Enigk has been born again. The former Sunny Day Real Estate frontman and his embrace of Christianity were assigned much of the blame for that extremely promising punk band's premature demise. With *Return Of The Frog Queen*, Enigk, having shaken off that scapegoating, has undergone a musical rebirth as well. His strong suit has always been his sharply passionate vocals: If you've ever heard Sunny Day Real Estate, his voice is immediately recognizable. Somewhere between Perry Farrell and Shannon Hoon, but more soulful than either, Enigk belts out his high-end vocal melodies with tonsil-rattling fervor. It's not his range that's impressive (he often has to reach for a note)—it's the reaching itself that's so affecting, Enigk stretching his raspy yelp to its very limit, gasping as if his life depended upon it. Although he plays all of the guitar, bass, piano, harpsichord, harp and drum parts himself, most of the accompaniment is contributed by a 21-piece orchestra.

Quite different from the furiously aggressive three-piece that collaborated with Enigk on S.D.R.E., this group of musicians adds a beautiful, regal quality to Enigk's compositions, making them dark, mysterious and very enchanting. *Return Of The Frog Queen* is not a Christian-rock record, as was widely supposed, but as every one of Enigk's strangled vocal climbs makes plain, it is purely spiritual. *JENNY ELISCU*

**DATALOG:** Released Jul. 23.

**FILE UNDER:** Orchestral emo-core.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Eric Matthews, Elliott Smith, Mark Eitzel/American Music Club.

**VARIOUS ARTISTS / Eyesore: A Stab at The Residents / Vaccination**



"Tribute" would be the wrong term for this inspired Residents redux. The 30 mainly Bay Area bands of all persuasions featured here are just doing what the Residents often did: reworking found material to reveal new facets of oddness. On the jazz fringe, the Splatter Trio break "6 Things to a Cycle" into two hectic, sputtery sax tracks, and Amy Denio creates a syrupy confection of multitracked vocals from "The Act of Being Polite." Indie rockers here range from obvious Residents disciples (San Diego's Heavy Vegetable) to those you wouldn't expect here at all (Cracker, doing a moody, rather boring "Blue [...]"). Whatever their backgrounds, the bands tend to take a common approach to the Residents' aesthetic: gather up the electronic keyboards and effects pedals and vocal filters and head for the hills of high vaudeville. They favor the simple melodies and bizarre lyrics of the Residents' early years on Ralph Records; 1978's *Duck Stab* EP is mined especially thoroughly. Like the Residents' output itself, this is a polyglot mass of material, and it takes some work to sort the weird and enlightening from the just weird. Count on psych true believers like these to really know their way around a vocal filter. *ANDREA MOED*

**DATALOG:** Released May 10.

**FILE UNDER:** Organized weirdness.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Captain Beefheart, early Thinking Fellers, the Residents.

**THE FEMININE COMPLEX / Livin' Love / TeenBeat**



What do you get when you cross a rough-and-tumble '60s garage band with a bunch of unwitting feminists? An all-girl band lost to the ages, the Feminine Complex recorded one album, *Livin' Love*, for Nashville's small Athena label in 1969. But thanks to the onset of college, the five young women had gone their separate ways by the time the ill-fated record hit the racks. Reissued by TeenBeat in 1996 with an album's worth of demos appended, *Livin' Love* is an appealingly dated collection of strawberry letters set to watered-down Memphis soul and AM-ready pop. The original album was overlaid with session musicians—fuzzy guitars and a cheesy brass section crop up everywhere—but the relatively polished demos show that the FC had real potential: singer Mindy Dalton possessed a clean alto that was maturing into a Dusty-esque croon, and Stax-inspired organist Pame Stephens was eager to jam. Far from being proto-riot-grrrrls, the FC five sang polite pop songs that Neil Diamond could have easily covered—if not for the lyrics, which sound like Tampax commercials ("Hide and seek, a rose in your garden, can you find yourself?"). As a historical document, *Livin' Love* is fascinating, a window into how women B.S.Q. (before Suzi Quatro) appropriated rock culture. Who needs the Monkees when you can be them? *CHRIS MOLANPHY*

**DATALOG:** Released May 21.

**FILE UNDER:** Retro blue-eyed soul.

**R.I.Y.L.:** The Partridge Family, *If I Were A Carpenter*, the Shams.

THE FROGS / My Daughter The Broad / Matador



**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 4.  
**FILE UNDER:** Comedy records that work as music.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** National Lampoon albums, Ween, the Shaggs.

The Frogs have shared a split single with Pearl Jam, played with Billy Corgan and James Iha, had a Blake Babies record named after one of their songs, and draw club-packing crowds, and they still haven't managed to have an album out in the six years before *My Daughter The Broad*. This may have something to do with their ability to offend *anyone*—we're talking song titles like "Grandma Sitting In The Corner With A Penis In Her Hand Going 'No, No, No, No, No, No.'" The Frogs' songs are funny in a way that doesn't so much make you laugh out loud as drop your jaw at their sheer audacity. *Daughter*, a collection of semi-improvised "made up songs" from the Frogs' many self-released cassettes, isn't the equal of their infamous 1989 album *It's Only Right And Natural*, and it's really hard to listen to in its entirety, but it's still got some great bits. Sometimes they get over on the oddity of their music alone—"Dreambox" could be a silly Ween-ish joke, but then the lyrics give way to some instrumental surprises that will send you straight up. And

then sometimes they get over on the sheer potency of their vulgarity, as on a couple of ad-lib versions of "Reelin' & Rockin'": "Looked at my watch and it said two, three, four/Time sure flies when you're *fucking!*" (Maybe you have to hear it.) **DOUGLAS WOLK**

"So we're gonna get up there and cram in every single song they want to hear in that, whatever it is, two hours... plus, you know, as much pyro as the face of the planet will sustain without blowing us out of orbit."

—Gene Simmons of Kiss, on the group's in-make-up reunion tour



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# The Blue Nile

*peace at last*



**HIS NAME IS ALIVE / Stars On ESP / 4AD**



**DATALOG:** Released Jul. 9.

**FILE UNDER:** A homespun Phil Spector.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Brian Wilson, Liquorice, Magnetic Fields.

There are probably some really good songs on *Stars On ESP*. It's hard to tell, because songwriter/guitarist Warren DeFever's production is so fascinating and so far out in front of the songs themselves that it overwhelms them. The centerpiece of the album is the blindingly clever "Universal Frequencies," which sounds *exactly* like "Good Vibrations" despite having a completely different lyric, melody and chord progression—everything else is identical, from the arrangement down to the snare sound. A cover of Woody Guthrie's despairing "I Can't Live At Home In This World Anymore" appears three times—once as quasi-classic rock, once as something that can only be called space-country, and finally at the end of the album sung by a gospel choir.

DeFever's specialty is making a little sound like a lot: building a "wall of sound" out of Karin Oliver's small voice, Trey Many's meticulous, skeletal drumming and his own minimal guitar parts, plus the occasional roughly textured keyboard noise,

suggesting much more than you're actually hearing. His lyrics work the same way. More often than not, they seem to come from answer songs to never-recorded pop hits, though they're pretty graceful on their own: "Once I wore my apron low and I couldn't keep you from my door." *Stars* requires multiple listenings to appreciate—not so much to grasp its complexities as to understand the elegance of its hidden simplicity. **DOUGLAS WOLK**



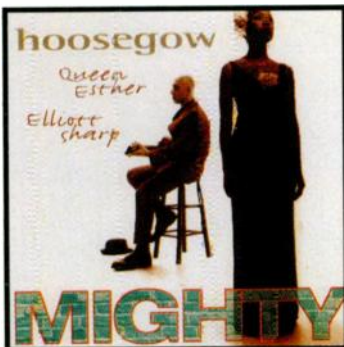
**DATALOG:** Released May 3.

**FILE UNDER:** Wise, wide-eyed pop, with a reach outstripping its grasp.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Aztec Camera, Small Factory, the *One Last Kiss* compilation.

**HONEYBUNCH / Time Trials / Summershine**

If you haven't had one ear turned to the East Coast indie-pop scene for the last seven years, you may well have missed Honeybunch entirely: They've barely toured, and never released a full-length album, just a few singles. *Time Trials* collects everything the band has released to date, and a few unissued tracks polished up by guitarist-songwriter (and Velvet Crush member) Jeffrey Underhill. The first five or so songs are, frankly, shaky. Underhill's reedy, flatish voice is no miracle, especially when he's trying to sound like the tougher member of a relationship ("...I hate to leave you/but leaving's what I do"). But Honeybunch has never quite fit with the love-rock brethren that are its usual labelmates; its arrangements and, especially, Underhill's songs, simply aim too high. Somewhere around 1991, the band hit a stride, with a broader palette of pop influences meshing with a world-weary, deeply ambivalent view of romance, resulting in such minor miracles as the *Revolver*-ish "Mine Your Own Business" and "Walking Into Walls." Every few songs, there's an organ overdub that's a hair too cloying, or a lyrical formulation that misses the mark. But a few songs are, for a lack of a better word, perfect, notably "I Won't Stand In Your Way," an unreleased gem from '93 in which Byrds/Turtles lilt meets genteel anxiety: "I don't sleep peacefully/Like I did before/Nothing tastes sweet to me/Anymore." **FRANKLIN BRUNO**



**DATALOG:** Released May 25.

**FILE UNDER:** Delta blues lite.

**R.I.Y.L.:** Lady Bianca, Joan Armatrading, Willie Dixon.

**HOOSGOW / Mighty / Homestead**

Elliott Sharp has never been without elaborate rationalizations for his musical choices. He bases compositions on mathematical sequences; he tunes instruments to frequencies that are multiples of each other. Balancing all this arithmetically determined order is "a fractal geometry of turbulence, chaos and disorder." Not surprisingly, behind the intellectualization, he feels a secret urge to be Leadbelly—just Elliott, his 501s, and a bottleneck slide. But here he does much more than prove that he gets the blues. He observes rhythms so carefully that he is free to make unusual choices about notes. Queen Esther, a performance artist from Atlanta, provides straightforward vocals on 12 original songs and a Willie Dixon number. Her strengths are energetic and unusual phrasing, and a very pretty tone on the high notes. Her lyrics convey poetic Weltschmerz, though you get the feeling you've heard them somewhere before: she even uses the phrases "running on empty" and "wasted on the way." But we all occasionally need to sing, "No one knows how I feel; no one cares for me." Spiced with the blues' frankness and abandon, self-pity's triteness disappears. **NELL ZINK**



LEE HARVEY OSWALD BAND / *Blastronaut* / Touch And Go

Running seasoned punk through '70s hard rock, glam hooks and cartoon decadence, the Lee Harvey Oswald Band is convinced that its cause is a noble one. It knows there's a difference between *rock* and rock 'n' roll, and it's struggling to fight the good fight for the latter. The group likes all the right stuff—Dead Boys, Bowie, Heartbreakers, The Damned, Cheap Trick, N.Y. Dolls (it even covers the Move gem "Brontosaurus")—but in 1996, beating those influences into something fresh is a tall order. Not that the LHOB doesn't try. The band consistently whips itself into a frenzied lather, belting out catchy anthemic choruses for the (real or imagined) gutter crowd in affected vocals, with obnoxious high harmonies singing along to lines like "Let's go, baby go, baby go, baby go/There's a bomb in mah britches, and it's ready to blow." Yes, it's all quite pleasant; but despite the swagger and saucy lyrics, I don't think this album would frighten or shock my Mom's hairdresser. The intended irony, if any, is old-hat these days,

as well. For what it is, *Blastronaut* is a good record, and the LHOB is a fine band, but simplicity of this kind is extremely ambitious when the kids crave something called "post-rock," and it's doubtful that *Blastronaut* will win any new converts to their cause. STEVE MCGUIRL

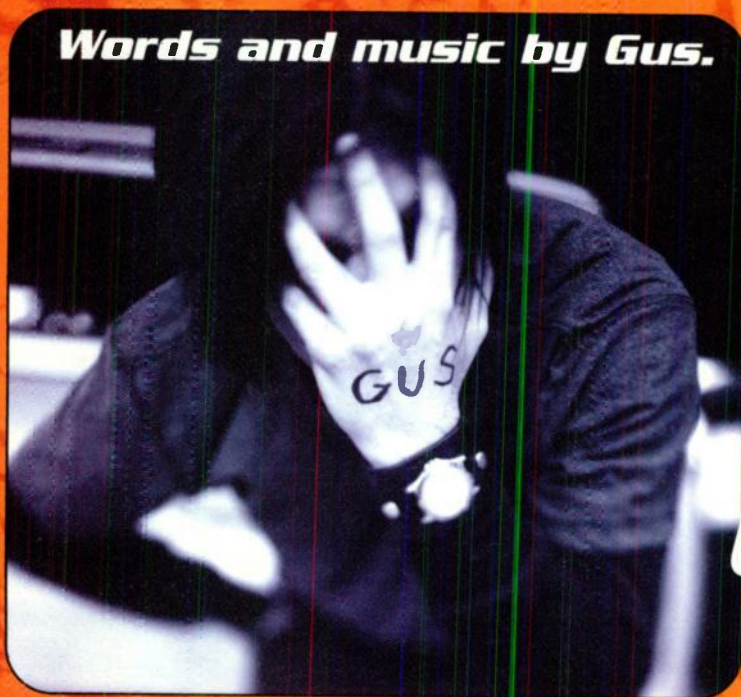
DATALOG: Released Jun. 18.

FILE UNDER: All together now: "Rock 'N' Roll!"

R.I.Y.L.: Kiss, Meices, D-Generation, early Replacements.

"I like to lick girls' sweaty armpits in the summer. The smell really turns me on, especially if they have hair. Every summer I avoid Beach Boys concerts. And air conditioning. I was raised in climate control. My dad was like, 'We have complete control over the temperature of this housing unit.' Ah! I couldn't even open windows—it warped my adolescent psyche." —Iggy Pop, from *Rolling Stone*, on his favorite summer things to do.

Words and music by Gus.



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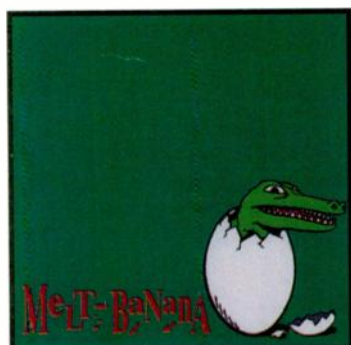


**LONG FIN KILLIE / Valentino / Too Pure-American**

Sexiness; total originality; angry, basic punk guitars; novel instrumentation, like plucked guitars and scratchy, spiky amped violins; polyrhythms, drum-cymbal-block-chime patterns that set your body in constant motion without shutting off any of your brain; a charismatic, almost backhandedly seductive singer; political awareness; relevance to Your Life, or to your love life; hummable riffs—these are some things you might look for in records, and the Scottish quartet Long Fin Killie is one of the few bands that can deliver every one. Luke sings about queer issues, and about race, in an aggressively personal way: he can half-whisper mellifluous sarcasm all through one song, and then sing out almost operatically in the next. It's the perfect merger of

**DATALOG:** Released Jul. 9.  
**FILE UNDER:** Polyrhythmic indie-queer rock.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Moonshake, Fugazi, drum-and-bass.

personal-political songwriting and the coy ongoingness of intelligent dance music. (No, there are no samples or keyboards.) *Valentino* is more consistent than last year's miraculous, uneven debut *Houdini*: every new song impresses, but none have the force of that record's "Lamberton Lamplighter." But that's exactly the point: this is a band so important that the only way to find fault with its second album is to compare it to its first. **STEPHEN BURT**

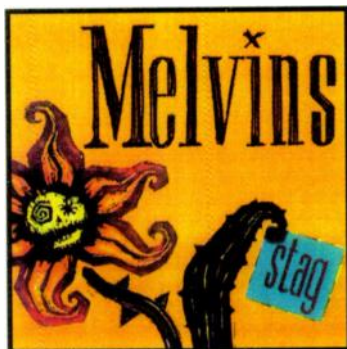


**MELT-BANANA / Scratch Or Stitch / Skin Graft**

Melt-Banana's songs sound like they've been taped in the process of exploding in a microwave. If you've heard any of the Japanese quartet's previous records, you know what to expect from *Scratch Or Stitch*: tiny, frantic, hyper-rhythmic little songs (22 of them in 32 minutes) with frontwoman Yasuko O's ultra-high-pitched screeches and Agata's screaming slide guitar vying for supremacy, plus Yasuko's hysterical English-as-a-second-language lyrics ("Nuts! Creaky crone hiding in your closet/They try to fob off those nuts on me"). In fact, you get all of that this time, but you also get a secret ingredient: Gastr Del Sol's Jim O'Rourke, who mixed the album with a free hand. In places, O'Rourke makes Melt-Banana's instrumental attack even starker; in

**DATALOG:** Released May 28. A different version of "It's In The Pillcase" appeared on the Feb. 1996 CD.  
**FILE UNDER:** Triple-espresso noisecore.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Boredoms, Mr. Bungle, Shellac.

places, he messes with it lovingly, dropping out everything but a hint of Agata's guitar or making drummer Sudoh's bells louder than anything else. "Eye-Q Trader" is a *grand mal* O'Rourke rearrangement of a bunch of fragments of the band. Some of these songs even work as *songs*—see "Disposable Weathercock," which packs a good six minutes' worth of structure into 80 seconds. Listening to *Scratch Or Stitch* in one sitting can be a little nervewracking unless you have a really high tolerance for treble, but sometimes it's good to get your nerves wracked. **DOUGLAS WOLK**



**MELVINS / Stag / Mammoth-Atlantic**

Throughout their long existence, the Melvins have mined their singularly heavy approach with more musical smarts than almost anyone will credit them with. At best, drummer Dale Crover and guitarist/vocalist/bad haircut King Buzzo can slow and extend the dynamics of simple crunch to a molecular level, particularly in a live setting, and imbue their heft with a sense of beauty, spaciousness, and groove far beyond the ability of most bands. That said, *Stag* is not their finest work. The high point is the opener, "The Bit," which suddenly swells exponentially into an awe-inspiring 6/8 stomp. It's up there with anything else they've done, but *Stag* doesn't maintain the pace. Much of the album toys with less rock-oriented territory, ranging from some

**DATALOG:** Release date: Jul. 16.  
**FILE UNDER:** Adulterated heaviness.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** The Melvins, Black Sabbath, Kyuss.

ill-advised synth excursions (the keyboard-horns in "Bar X The Rocking M," and several short pieces) and some hit-and-miss droney material. "Black Bock," a demonstration that the Melvins can write an insipid flowery pop song as excruciating as anyone else's, the Chipmunk-inspired vocals of "Captain Pungent," and the mush-mouth vocals and retardo-acoustic blues of "Cotton Mouth" are best ignored as jokes that seemed funny at the time. Still, the combined rhythmic interplay from Buzzo and Crover hits peaks that are nothing short of transcendent, and Buzzo's dada vocal approach still shines, leaving one hoping that *Stag* is only a temporary setback. **JON FINE**





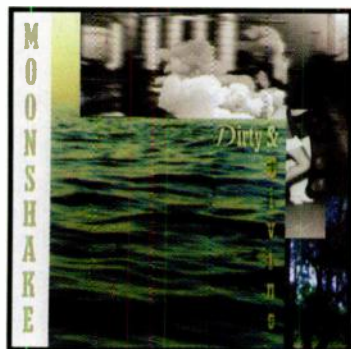
**MONO PUFF / Unsupervised / Rykodisc**

John "Not That One, The Other One" Flansburgh has done a solo project, which will be interesting to They Might Be Giants fans in that it reveals the shadowy point where the band's songwriting interests end and his begin. Given how ill-defined his interests are, it's pretty dismissable to everyone else. As the opening track "Guitar Was The Case" welcomes you to Flansburgh's world in a blaze of fuzzy surf instrumental, it's clear that this will *not* be a goofy accordion record. Soon afterward, you can hear the exact point where *Unsupervised* starts downhill: it's when the chorus of the fairly generic pop song "Don't Break The Heart" fails to complete a thought, trailing off into a nasal "Don't... don't... don't." "Devil Went Down To

**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 11.  
**FILE UNDER:** Playpen pop.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** They Might Be Giants.

Newport" returns less productively to surf culture, exchanging the Dick Dale-isms for Charlie Daniels Band parody couched in lingo like "heinous" and "rad." Genres are sampled and discarded like stale corn chips as "Dr.

Kildare" leaps from rock to funk to ska beats, and a female vocalist provides the Dusty Springfield-like vocals on the country-ish "Don't I Have The Right?" After a track composed of sampled vocals played on a keyboard fails to be fun for more than 10 seconds, it's hard not to wish for an emergency squadron of John Linnell's accordions. **ANDREA MOED**



**MOONSHAKE / Dirty & Divine / G/Z**

When half of Moonshake split off from the rest of the band to form Laika a couple of years ago, singer/scary guy Dave Callahan soldiered on, assembling a new lineup of the dark, dubwise, sample-heavy band that played all his songs this time. The first fruit of the new incarnation (megadub bass, drums, Raymond Dickaty's electronically altered saxophone, "guaranteed guitar-free" samples and Callahan's snarl), 1994's *The Sound Your Eyes Can Follow*, often seemed top-heavy or half-assed. With *Dirty & Divine*, Moonshake is back in form: it sounds like a band again. Callahan's rediscovered his gift for lurching, off-center grooves, where the bass and drums hit the beat and some weird sample misses it by a mile the same way every time. The band has been

**DATALOG:** Released May 21. First single "Cranes."  
**FILE UNDER:** Sinister dub-rock.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Tricky, Joy Division, Laika.

keeping up with its dance music, too: "House On Fire" couldn't have happened without jungle. And the lyrics have a cutting acuity about the freedom that comes from a bad life, as when one of Callahan's desperate characters murmurs

"lost my cherry to a kohl-eyed blur" or "like a dumb kid, I imprint on your dress." His five-note voice can grow wearying, though harmonies by a couple of former Stereolab members help with that, but every time the band pulls some new fragmentary sample of harps or water or formless distortion into the mix, it can give you chills. **DOUGLAS WOLK**

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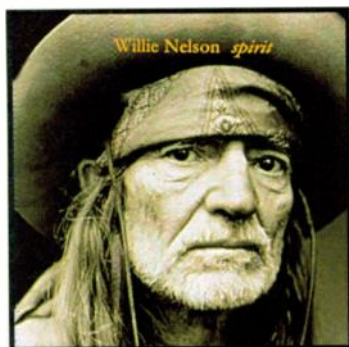
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**WILLIE NELSON / Spirit / Island ●**

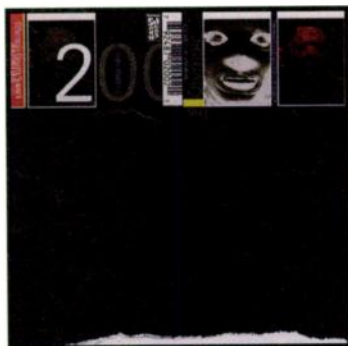
In a 31-year career, it can be hard to separate formula from style. Willie Nelson's songwriting mannerisms partake of both. His *Red Headed Stranger* was the *Sgt. Pepper's* of country music, the first record to follow a coherent theme instead of merely compiling radio singles. If there were nothing more, he'd just be another Tiny Tim—but Willie is also a mature, restrained musician and singer and a consistently brilliant writer. Like *Red Headed Stranger*, *Spirit* involves a lost love, but this time she appears to be merely estranged rather than "asleep." Willie's readiness to work with the simplest tunes and instrumentation in pursuit of simple ideas allows his tired themes to retain their innocence and credibility, disarming criticism. When he

warbles, "I said I loved you/You said you loved me/It's a memory today/It'll be a memory tomorrow/I hope you'll be happy someday," we hear the understated eloquence of an articulate man who understands that cleverness has no

place in the literature of sorrow. His crisp, elastic guitar and gospel-style piano milk the romance from each phrase as if in secret tribute to Chopin's nocturnes. Interspersed among the love ditties are two songs addressed to God, "I Thought About You Lord" and "Too Sick to Pray," apologies for ignoring Him in this time of severe romantic stress. This lapse in faith is more than adequately compensated for by four fine instrumentals. **NELL ZINK**

**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 4.  
**FILE UNDER:** Minimalist C&W.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Emmylou Harris, Jimmie Dale Gilmore.

**OLYMPIC DEATH SQUAD / Blue / TeenBeat**



Ever since Unrest made the homage/parody *A Factory Record* in 1991, Mark Robinson has aspired to take technopop to its logical extreme: no notes but hook, no noise but bounce, no statement more consequential than "Yeah, yeah, yeah, uh-huh." Olympic Death Squad, his new solo project, is a newly sharp and laconic step in that direction. Its minimal song structures will be familiar to fans of Unrest or Air Miami, but without Bridget Cross's voice adding sweetness to it and with more electronic ticks and clicks. Driving would-be dance tracks and ballads alike are made sinister by their mechanized-sounding repetition and Mark's hoarse whisper, lightly coated with reverb. Even when he sounds a bit warmer, as on "Show Your Age," the mood is airy and autistic,

with no sonic corners to hide in. Occasionally, he works over familiar material. On "Newfoundland," for example, he cops the intro to the Unrest song "Imperial," then loops it, with slight variations, through the whole song. The entirely

monosyllabic "Ski Jump" sounds like a song a child would write—little more than a vocal exploration of the words "ski" and "jump." Like *Blue* as a whole, its wayward attitude is more affecting than you might guess. **ANDREA MOED**

**DATALOG:** Released May 28.  
**FILE UNDER:** New wave undertow.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Stereolab, New Order, Unrest, Air Miami.

**ORBITAL / In Sides / fir-London**

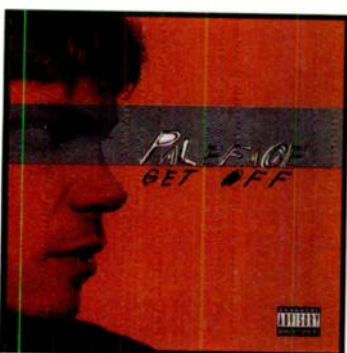


An ambient-techno fan usually wants to worship the genre's pioneers. And Orbital has its stature burned into the early '90s, especially with 1994's *Snivilisation*. But the Hartnell brothers do seem to be repeating themselves a bit on *In Sides*. Perhaps one should expect that innovators can't always "outdo" themselves, and some formal repetition is inevitable after every period of explosive growth. It's not that Orbital overdoes its specialty of sounds that sound like alien life should. Indeed, the group uses precious few vocal samples where in the past it seemed wired into a conspiracy theorist's nerve center. It's just that its perky keyboard figures, heavy-breathing beats and swirling vocals don't impact one with a feeling of new majesty. But

while the brothers aren't really hitting the state of the art here, neither are they sweeping up leftovers. A bridge here, a layer there still seem to arrive like divine aural emanations. "Out There Somewhere" spooks matters

nicely, with siren-like vocals and a delicate keyboard being overmodulated, so it sounds crunchy no matter what volume you play it. As has been said of ambient music, it doesn't matter if little "happens" if the way that nothing happens is great. But *Snivilisation* seemed to make the world turn to the Orbital rhythm, while *In Sides* seems more like Ex Trás. **DANNY HOUSMAN**

**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 4. Early copies include bonus disc.  
**FILE UNDER:** House-wise ambient techno.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Banco De Gaia, William Orbit.



**PALEFACE / Get Off / Sire-EEG**

The "B-word" is probably never said openly in Castle Paleface these days. The *A Star Is Born*-type saga of America's favorite Loser and how Paleface pupped him up and down Avenue A in the early '90s seems barely addressed here. Only on "Sorry That You're Lame" does he bite, yelling "You throw away your friends," but that could be directed at anyone. And Paleface doesn't lack for targets. "Your Commercial Sucks" says that, er, advertisements are bad (glad someone finally stood up to 'em); "G.G.F.U." takes on drunks; the title of "I'll Be Right Back" is the punch line to its lyric, "What should we do now that we've drunk all the liquor?" That's Paleface's heroic fault: Smarting from both Beck copping not a little bit of his schtick and from a 1990 major-label debut that can only be described as a trainwreck (I remember a press release written in you-likum "Indian" parlance, and a chorus of foreheads being smacked that could be heard across the country), he can't help but lash out at the bohemia's usual enemies (sellouts, yuppies, successful people) for the amusement of the converted. And in this otherwise fine record with a band (not just our man and his acoustic guitar as before), Paleface resembles only the drunks in my Brooklyn local who are always telling me how they invented doo-wop. Your next one's still on me, big fella, but I am going home soon. *ANDREW BEAUJON*

**DATALOG:** Release date: Jul. 23.  
**FILE UNDER:** Bohemian drinking songs.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Beck, Tuli Kupferberg.



**RED FIVE / Flash / Interscope ●**

This Cali-based bunch whipped a few necks last year with its first 7", "Space," a stompin li'l punk tune full of concrete-block-smashing guitar power and all manner of oddball twists and turns. "Space" inaugurates Red Five's debut long-player in re-recorded form, setting the stage for 11 more slices of similarly potent, atypical fare. Like the best of the 1996 breed of punk bands, Red Five worships Marshall crunch and the big beat, but its members probably attended a college class or two. Hence, you get a band too brainy to be total bruisers, yet too enamored of losing its shit in a gloriously sweaty fashion to qualify as junior-league Brian Enos. If you always wished that Sugar were a little less manicured, that Elastica were a lot more rough-and-tumble, or that Rocket From The Crypt were less greasy and more mod, this could well be your can of Coke. It's potent, and full of pop mystery, lush female vocals, and well-smashed guitars and drums. *TIM STEGALL*

**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 18.  
**FILE UNDER:** Mr. Wizard-goes-berserk melodic punk.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Sugar, Magnapop, Rocket From The Crypt, Sincola.



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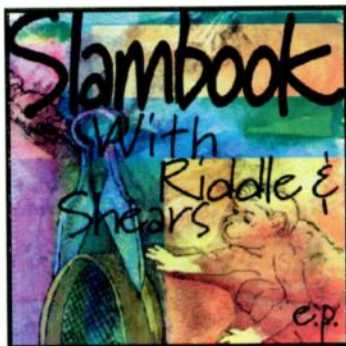


**SCREAMING TREES / Dust / Epic**

With the release of 1992's monolithic *Sweet Oblivion*, the Screaming Trees came the closest yet in their six-album career to summoning the epic sound their moniker invokes, a thick miasma of classic rock touchpoints and colorful, brooding sonics courtesy of burly axeman Gary Lee Conner and the soulful, whiskey-torn baritone of Mark Lanegan. Since then, grunge happened, the Trees had a minor hit with "Nearly Lost You" from the *Singles* soundtrack, and *Sweet Oblivion*'s follow-up recording was eventually scrapped in the fallout of rushed touring and tales of drunken inter-band fistfights. Four years after the fact, *Dust* is as worthy as could be expected, a dose of fresh, near-mythical rock wallop for first-time listeners, and a likable return for anticipatory fans.

**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 25.  
**FILE UNDER:** Woodsy, brooding psychedelic rock.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** The Doors, Dinosaur Jr., Soundgarden

Jayhawks producer George Drakoulias adds some instrumental detailing to the Trees' rumbling bombast—Hammond organ, harpsichord, some strings—resulting in some of the band's best tunes to date ("Dying Days," "All I Know," "Sworn And Broken"). There are also a few filler tracks, but given the interesting results of the lush, sitar-tinged "Halo Of Ashes" and "Gospel Plow," a re-worked old country hymn laid bare over tablas, organ and Lanegan's haunting vocal, *Dust* contains some of the most dark and inspired moments of the band's decade-long career. *COLIN HELMS*



**SLAMBOOK / With Riddle And Shears / Lorem Ipsum**

Slambook has been tooling around the New York club scene for a few years now, with various names (Corduroy, Splinter) and members. Its current material runs to the kind of moderately heavy art-rock that is always more easily appreciated than described. Imagine Cream working on new songs after a Seam show, or Slovenly minus one guitar and some propulsion (though the rhythm section of Dan Boyle and Tom Burke stays nicely ahead of the beat on "Tenpin Smile"). About three-quarters of the time, Slambook pulls off the neat trick of retaining the surface form of the rock song while slipping in some "advanced" harmonic content, or an oddly placed shift in dynamics. Better, it reins in the prog-rock leanings that often accompany above-average musicianship by keeping songs short and valorizing tight arrangements over solos. For every couple of full-scale songs, in fact, there's a minute-or-less instrumental track to break things up sonically. Guitarist Tony Dinoff sings like a less theatrical Adrian Belew (more appealing than it looks on paper), and writes lyrics that cast a dubious eye on the possibility of stable relationships. Slambook doesn't have every page filled in yet (some of the variation in guitar tone on the instrumentals could have been better applied to the 'real' songs), but this disc generally steers its course between nearly-pop structures and dense, arty ensemble playing with skill and aplomb. *FRANKLIN BRUNO*

**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 3.  
**FILE UNDER:** High-fiber, low-fat rock.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Polvo, Overpass, Fire In The Kitchen.

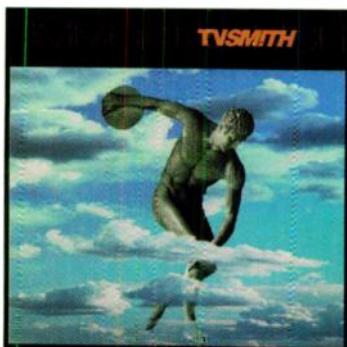


**SLEEPER / The It Girl / Arista**

Ah, the life of a second-tier English pop star. A weekly demand for news keeps one in the papers, usually through "outlandish" quotes or "scandalous" behavior rather than one's music. Then there's a try or two at Stateside success before one becomes fodder for the music papers' gossip-column journalists, who will crucify one for the rest of one's life for the crime of turning 30 and/or becoming unfashionable. Sleeper is on the last leg of this voyage, having released a second ho-hum album. Louise Wener, the group's singer/guitarist, is known back home for making public pronouncements on the subject of sex as if she were delivering position papers. And while *The It Girl* has plenty of tasty swipes at sexual politics, it's too verbose to appeal to Cranberries fans and not quirky enough for the few who are still letting their Blur flag wave. The band sounds a bit like the Smiths, a bit like the Kinks, once in a while like Blondie ("Statuesque"), but never finds a tack to distinguish itself from some record you heard last year. "What Do I Do Now?" might well be Sleeper's ticket to the middle of the modern-rock airplay charts, but at this point there's not as much demand for second-rate British bands as there was when, say, the Candyskins were around. *ANDREW BEAUJON*

**DATALOG:** Released Jul. 2.  
**FILE UNDER:** Fog pop.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Melody Maker, NME.

**T.V. SMITH / *Immortal Rich* / 2.13.61-Thirsty Ear**



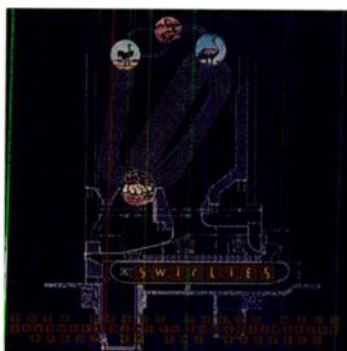
**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 3.  
**FILE UNDER:** Embittered ex-punk folk-rock.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Waterboys, Levellers, early Alarm, later Mekons.

T.V. Smith should already *be* immortal: he led the Adverts, the '77-'78 London punks whose great early songs, like "One Chord Wonders," resounded with the indignation of kids who knew the real world had been stolen from them. Then he vanished, bar the occasional, hard-to-find U.K. 12". So *Immortal Rich*, Smith's first U.S. release in 16 years, is a self-conscious comeback LP. The trouble is that what comes back here are not only Smith's old, heartfelt obsessions, but also the calculatedly soulful, overproduced "sound" of folk-rock bands that made it big in the '80s. Smith escapes the musical and verbal clichés the format suggests on only about four songs, but "there's a world out there, just shake out your hair" is all too

typical of the words to the rest. Some riffs, like the title track's, are as primitively memorable as the old stuff, and Smith's voice is just as burned-out, burning and full of splendid sarcasm as it was in '78. There are good angry

songs, and good slow, sparse songs with pianos, like "Earth 2," an album-closing, deliberately pathetic pop fan's dream of smalltime escape from "a genuine plastic land where plastic people go/Tell them everything about nothing, that's all they need to know..." Parts of this record are impressive in that vein; but those words are all too accurate about the rest. **STEPHEN BURT**

**SWIRLIES / *They Spent Their Wild Youthful Days In The Glittering World Of The Salons* / Taang!**



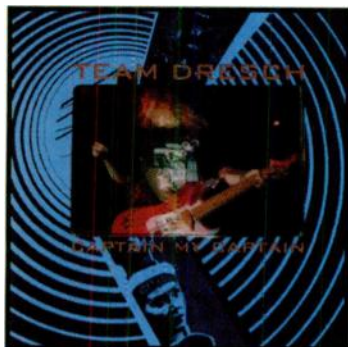
**DATALOG:** Released May 15. Preceded by an EP, *Sneaky Flutes*.  
**FILE UNDER:** Art-school indie-pop.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** My Bloody Valentine, Swervedriver, Unrest.

Back in the heady days of, oh, early 1993, the Swirlies enjoyed a brief moment where it seemed they were the future of American indie music. With their sly but catchy songcraft, cooing gender-blender vocals, colorful haze of distortion and art-damaged, whammy-barred riffs, the Boston band was poised to become America's leading candidate to live up to the promise of My Bloody Valentine. Then, just as quickly as they had arrived, the Swirlies vanished. Unexpectedly, they've re-emerged from oblivion with their second full-length, replacing original vocalist Seana Carmody with virtual soundalike Christina Files. The basic Swirlies idea remains, not sounding as fresh as it used to, but still a winner: concise pop songwriting is submerged in a wave of bent-

sounding guitars and studio experiments. But even as the dominant theme remains the interlay between Files' "ooo ooo's" and Damon Tuturjian's fey mumbles, it's clear that the Swirlies have added to their U.K.-circa-1991 influences. Most

notably, they've started tinkering with Moog synthesizers, which merely provide cutesy bleeps and bleeps on the janglesome "Sounds Of Sebring," but become a focus on the album's long finale, the Stereolab-tinged "Sunn." ...*Salons*, like its predecessor *Blonder Tongue Audio Baton*, is unabashed in wearing its contemporaneous influences on its sleeve, but that doesn't obscure the album's catchiness and low-key charm. **DAVID JARMAN**

**TEAM DRESCH / *Captain My Captain* / Chainsaw-Candy-Ass**



**DATALOG:** Released Jun. 4.  
**FILE UNDER:** Heroine fix.  
**R.I.Y.L.:** Scrawl, Heavens To Betsy, Sleater-Kinney.

The Team's second full-length album of outpunk fight songs is less coherent than last year's brilliant *Personal Best*, and more marked by the diverging songwriting styles of guitarist Kaia Wilson and bassist Jody Bleyle. Kaia-led songs are hard-driving verse-chorus-verse, moving inexorably from one guitar hook to the next; Jody's songs, which predominate on *Captain My Captain*, are tumultuous anthems, led by the narrative. What they have in common is a newfound lyrical directness. While queer coming-of-age testimonials like "Yes I Am One Too But Am I Really" are hardly new to Team Dresch, this album deals more than ever with the inner, emotional lives of the people they sing about. The most striking example is "Scared," a country-tinged diary of chronic depression that strongly recalls Scrawl's recent

work. Songs like these sometimes get mired in words; singing about, say, "emotional blackmail" in a punk context is bound to feel a little clumsy. But that's the beauty of Team

Dresch: They make the awkwardly personal, the uncool-ly confessional, into tight, militant punk rock. And when the riffs and the slogans really meld, as on the final track, "Remember Who You Are..." let's just say that when the revolution comes, I want to be on their side. **ANDREA MOED**

# TOP 75

[ Alternative Radio Airplay ]

ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL	
1	<b>STEREOLAB</b>	<b>Emperor Tomato Ketchup</b>	<b>Elektra-EEG</b>
2	<b>BUTTHOLE SURFERS</b>	Electric Larryland	<b>Capitol</b>
3	<b>BOB MOULD</b>	Bob Mould	<b>Rykodisc</b>
4	<b>THE CURE</b>	Wild Mood Swings	<b>Fiction/Elektra-EEG</b>
5	<b>BIKINI KILL</b>	Reject All American	<b>Kill Rock Stars</b>
6	<b>RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE</b>	Evil Empire	<b>Epic</b>
7	<b>POLVO</b>	Exploded Drawing	<b>Touch And Go</b>
8	<b>ANI DI FRANCO</b>	Dilate	<b>Righteous Babe</b>
9	<b>MAN OR ASTRO-MAN?</b>	Experiment Zero	<b>Touch And Go</b>
10	<b>UNWOUND</b>	Repetition	<b>Kill Rock Stars</b>
11	<b>JESUS LIZARD</b>	Shot	<b>Capitol</b>
12	<b>GUIDED BY VOICES</b>	Under The Bushes, Under The Stars	<b>Matador</b>
13	<b>KOSTARS</b>	Klassics With A "K"	<b>Grand Royal</b>
14	<b>COCTEAU TWINS</b>	Milk & Kisses	<b>Capitol</b>
15	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b>	Schoolhouse Rock! Rocks	<b>Lava-Atlantic</b>
16	<b>MOOG COOKBOOK</b>	Moog Cookbook	<b>Restless</b>
17	<b>MAGNAPOP</b>	Rubbing Doesn't Help	<b>Play It Again Sam-Priority</b>
18	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b>	Lounge Ax: Defense & Relocation CD	<b>Touch And Go</b>
19	<b>ELVIS COSTELLO &amp; THE ATTRACTIONS</b>	All This Useless Beauty	<b>Warner Bros.</b>
20	<b>BABE THE BLUE OX</b>	People	<b>RCA</b>
21	<b>CRACKER</b>	The Golden Age	<b>Virgin</b>
22	<b>PALACE MUSIC</b>	Arise Therefore	<b>Drag City</b>
23	<b>SOUNDTRACK</b>	I Shot Andy Warhol	<b>TAG</b>
24	<b>MAKE-UP</b>	Destination: Love, Live! At Cold Rice	<b>Dischord</b>
25	<b>THINKING FELLERS UNION LOCAL 282</b>	I Hope It Lands	<b>Communion</b>
26	<b>DICK DALE</b>	Calling Up Spirits	<b>Beggars Banquet</b>
27	<b>LOVE NUT</b>	Bastards Of Melody	<b>Interscope</b>
28	<b>TEXAS IS THE REASON</b>	Do You Know Who You Are?	<b>Revelation</b>
29	<b>LUSH</b>	Loveline	<b>4AD-Reprise</b>
30	<b>RICHARD THOMPSON</b>	you? me? us?	<b>Capitol</b>
31	<b>SOUNDGARDEN</b>	Down On The Upside	<b>A&amp;M</b>
32	<b>RAINCOATS</b>	Looking In The Shadows	<b>DGC</b>
33	<b>PORNO FOR PYROS</b>	Good God's Urge	<b>Warner Bros.</b>
34	<b>CRANBERRIES</b>	To The Faithful Departed	<b>Island</b>
35	<b>NADA SURF</b>	High/Low	<b>Elektra-EEG</b>
36	<b>MODEST MOUSE</b>	This Is A Long Drive For Someone With...	<b>Up</b>
37	<b>SUPER 8</b>	Super 8	<b>Hollywood</b>
38	<b>DAVE MATTHEWS BAND</b>	Crash	<b>RCA</b>
39	<b>BARDO POND</b>	Amanita	<b>Matador</b>
40	<b>UNDERWORLD</b>	Second Toughest In The Infants	<b>Wax Trax!-TVT</b>
41	<b>LOS LOBOS</b>	Colossal Head	<b>Warner Bros.</b>
42	<b>SCHEER</b>	Infliction	<b>4AD-WB</b>
43	<b>BEASTIE BOYS</b>	The In Sound From Way Out	<b>Grand Royal</b>
44	<b>PAUL WESTERBERG</b>	Eventually	<b>Reprise</b>
45	<b>LIFTER</b>	Melinda (Everything Was Beautiful...)	<b>Interscope</b>
46	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b>	Eyesore: A Stab At The Residents	<b>Vaccination</b>
47	<b>MOONSHAKE</b>	Dirty & Divine	<b>C/Z</b>
48	<b>EINSTÜRZENDE NEUBAUTEN</b>	Faustmusik	<b>Mute</b>
49	<b>IMPERIAL TEEN</b>	Seasick	<b>Slash-London</b>
50	<b>PAITI ROTHBERG</b>	Between The 1 And The 9	<b>EMI</b>
51	<b>SINCOLA</b>	Crash Landing In Teen Heaven	<b>Caroline</b>
52	<b>YUM YUM</b>	Dan Loves Patti	<b>TAG</b>
53	<b>DJ SPOOKY</b>	Songs Of A Dead Dreamer	<b>Asphodel</b>
54	<b>WALLFLOWERS</b>	Bringing Down The Horse	<b>Interscope</b>
55	<b>GILLIAN WELCH</b>	Revival	<b>Almo Sounds</b>
56	<b>DJ KRUSH</b>	Meiso	<b>Mo Wax Jfrr-I.L.S.</b>
57	<b>PRONG</b>	Rude Awakening	<b>Epic</b>
58	<b>FAR</b>	Tin Cans With Strings To You	<b>Immortal-Epic</b>
59	<b>JAMES TAYLOR QUARTET</b>	The Money Spyder	<b>Acid Jazz-Hollywood</b>
60	<b>POSIES</b>	Amazing Disgrace	<b>DGC</b>
61	<b>VAMPYROS LESBOS</b>	Sexadelic Danceparty	<b>Motel</b>
62	<b>CAT POWER</b>	Myra Lee	<b>Smells Like</b>
63	<b>WESTON</b>	Got Beat Up	<b>Go Kart</b>
64	<b>BUILT TO SPILL</b>	The Normal Years	<b>K</b>
65	<b>OLYMPIC DEATH SQUAD</b>	Blue	<b>TeenBeat</b>
66	<b>PITCHBLENDE QUARTET</b>	Gygax!	<b>Headhunter-Cargo</b>
67	<b>SUPERDRAG</b>	Regretfully Yours	<b>Elektra-EEG</b>
68	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b>	Trip Hop Test Part 3	<b>Moonshine</b>
69	<b>SWIRLIES</b>	They Spent Their Wild Youthful Days...	<b>Taang!</b>
70	<b>GOLDFINGER</b>	Goldfinger	<b>Mojo-Universal</b>
71	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b>	Punk Lost & Found	<b>Beloved-Shanachie</b>
72	<b>SLEATER-KINNEY</b>	Call The Doctor	<b>Chainsaw</b>
73	<b>VELOCITY GIRL</b>	Gilded Stars And Zealous Hearts	<b>Sub Pop</b>
74	<b>FISHBONE</b>	Chim Chim's Bad Ass Revenge	<b>Rowdy-Arista</b>
75	<b>MECCA NORMAL</b>	The Eagle & The Poodle	<b>Matador</b>

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.



## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### Schoolhouse Rock

Rhino-Atlantic

Everything you remember about the series of educational cartoon spots that ran on Saturday mornings in the mid-'70s is here on this 52-track box set: "Three Is A Magic Number" (later revived by De La Soul), the preamble to the Constitution, the bill on Capitol Hill who aspires to be a law, Lolly the adverb merchant, and football player Franklin making a connection in the other direction before the crowd starts shouting out "Interjections!" There's something to be said for *Schoolhouse Rock*. For one thing, the early '70s were unique in that for perhaps the first time in the history of children's television programming, African-American and inner city youth and culture were depicted and even celebrated—just contrast the blandness of Captain Kangaroo or *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood* with the hip swagger of *Sesame Street's* Roosevelt Franklin or the soulful, jazzy sounds of "I'm Just a Bill." (Slightly off the subject, the other ingenious thing about *Schoolhouse Rock* and the original *Sesame Street* Muppets was their subtle blurring of racial perception and stereotypes, with blue and purple people interacting happily with yellow and pink.) If nothing else, it's remarkable that something as absolutely weird as this has been given such loving treatment. What's next, the *Zoom* reunion?

Much like Neil Young, the mighty **Van Morrison** used to be prolific beyond the one-album-and-tour-per-year demands of the music business, and he also had high, exacting standards for himself, leaving material off his albums that he didn't feel was up to snuff. Often, he'd record what must have been whole albums' worth of material between released albums, while at other times he'd be halfway into a project before abandoning it to pursue something else, leaving a lot of great music left languishing in the can. That is, until now: Polydor has just released *The Philosopher's Stone*, a two-CD compilation of studio tracks that, for whatever reason, didn't find their way into the canon of Van The Man's LPs. This mini-box set is not quite enough to make the sun stand still on the day of its release, but it's a further glimpse of his talents, and an exploration of the soulful odyssey he embarked on in the wake of *Astral Weeks* and *Moondance*. That said, there is a certain penchant here for longish blues jams and songs that for whatever reason don't quite take off. Heard all at once, it seems as if the whole thing was made to be listened to on a long summer Sunday afternoon: not every moment is killer, but it moves and grooves and unfolds, and it's really good that it's here.

Usually, unreleased bonus tracks are merely the icing on the cake, but Blue Note has released a walloping three-CD set of jazz trumpeter **Lee Morgan's** famous 1970 album *Live At The Lighthouse*, with over two hours' worth of bonus tracks, and more than twice as much unreleased music as was on the original LP. Funky and in the pocket, Morgan is held in highest regard by ravenous bop-heads the world over.

When one thinks of Pete Best, one tends to think of a guy who spends every night loafing about his cold-water flat in an undershirt drinking beer and ruefully watching Beatles documentaries on the telly. Mock if you want, but Griffin Music has released *Beyond The Beatles*, a previously import-only compilation of the **Pete Best Band's** beat sides from the '60s, and it's an opportunity for more than just another round of Best-bashing. Sometimes no-brainer knockoffs are almost as much fun as the real thing. Best's beat is no exception, and it's great for precisely the same reason that the Beatles were in the beginning, before they were compared to Beethoven—there's absolutely nothing serious or substantial about it, but that's exactly what makes it so enjoyable. And actually, his post-Beatle material is certainly better than Ringo's.

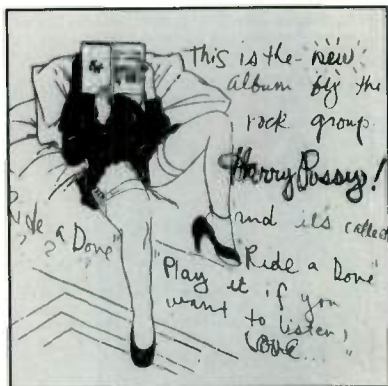
Sony-Legacy has released a collection of the complete Columbia recordings of the **Stanley Brothers** from the '50s. This is Dust Bowl country at its very best. You might want to keep a Bible at the ready for consultation while listening, and a loaded shotgun leaning by the door.

Funk mavens should peep the legendary unreleased live album from the **Ohio Players**, just out on Mercury-Chronicles. Also keep an ear out for the newest sounds from funk reissue label Luv N' Haight: the label has just expanded its much-loved series of Jazz Dance Classics to include a sizzling, must-hear new volume of *Latin Jazz Dance Classics* taken from the very funkier, spicier corners of the vaults of Prestige and Fantasy Records. Get this one while you can.

Lastly, our apologies to those who have been scouring the stores looking for last month's pick, the **Miles Davis/Gil Evans** box set. After getting us all excited, the record company bumped its release date to late August after the magazine had already gone to press. Also, our apologies to those who spent time fruitlessly searching for the previous month's pick, the **Tampa Red** box set. After presstime, its release date was also surreptitiously moved to late July.

## RIFFS

Meanwhile, off on the planet of bullet belts and inverted crucifixes, **Bathory** has released its 11th album, the cinema-sized epic *Blood On Ice* (Black Mark). Main man Quorthon has reworked unused tapes from 1988 and 1989 to finish this mythic monster, a tale of the North woods propelled with bombastic, galloping rock 'n' roll power. Quorthon relinquishes his Satanic-bee-sting snarl in favor of a clean, powerful vocal style, propelling large-scale operations like "The Sword" beautifully. With assistance from producer "Boss," hordes of sound effects, and an omnipresent backing choir, it seems like Bathory has become a two-man update of Jethro Tull... Someone please contact **Narcolepsy** and tell them not to change their ways. The young Georgia-based death metal group is apparently somewhat embarrassed by its early attempts to integrate banjo and whistles into a Decide-style act, and is working to become more "serious" and straightforward. The band's second tape, *Jesus Fuck* (c/o Box 81845, Chamblee, GA 30366), demonstrates with "Masturbating With The Hands Of God" and "UFO Calvacade Of Death" that gleeful disembowelment and scatology go down better with musical curiosities... **A.C.**'s latest, *40 More Reasons To Hate Us* (Earache), is 42 tracks of concentrated grindcore precision, guest-starring Phil Anselmo of Pantera and featuring plenty of semi-retarded in-jokes. Toss out the song titles, graze on the best violent child metal since Happy Flowers, and enjoy the reverent Manowar cover... The morbid pounding of Japan's **Corrupted**, pushed by ex-Boredoms/Dub Squad drummer Chew, reckons with the hoarse distorted doom of Eyehategod, 13, and the slowest imaginable take on Celtic Frost. The *Tiraron El Cadaver En Plena Cinta Asfaltica* CD single (NAT) finds the Osaka-based quartet singing in Spanish, plundering the imagery of Brujeria and Mexican brutality tabloids like *Alarma!* for subject matter as gruesome as its decrepit music. The dirge "Esclavo," in particular, is noisy, full of feedback, and hellish enough to pass for—yes—Harry Pussy.



## HARRY PUSSY

### Ride A Dove

Siltbreeze

Crazy from the heat, Harry Pussy is true American black metal, a Miami Beach noise machine based in over-sexed chaos and animal aggression. Maybe no one's mistaken it for a metal band before—but what else to make of this mess of screaming, feedback, and distorted breakbeats? Each Harry Pussy record is a bona fide certificate of non-compliance, a radicalizing license to act nervous, wear cut-off jeans, and watch sleazy super-8 porn. Plopped indiscriminately onto one 30-minute CD track, *Ride A Dove* is incoherent speaker abuse akin to early Napalm Death or Anal Cunt. It intersects with Florida homeboys Morbid Angel and Decide at the upper layers of squiggling disaster, whether those meaty death-dealers would acknowledge the equality of an artsy part-Cuban band or not. The difference in evil effect is that Harry Pussy doesn't plod through umpteen regurgitated Slayer riffs to generate adrenalized transcendence. Drummer Adris Hoyos can shriek bloody murder as well as any Norwegian would, and guitarists Mark Feehan and Bill Orcutt go for it with the zeal of teen grindcore kings. The fact is America doesn't have a solid social structure to rebel against, we have crazies and continuous power struggles. When it comes to extreme music, we should be proud to sponsor as fucked-up a creation as this.

## METAL TOP 25

- 1 PRONG Rude Awakening *Epic*
- 2 SEPULTURA Roots *Roadrunner*
- 3 PANTERA The Great Southern Trendkill *EastWest-EEG*
- 4 RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE Evil Empire *Epic*
- 5 SLAYER Undisputed Attitude *American*
- 6 CANNIBAL CORPSE Vile *Metal Blade*
- 7 PITCH SHIFTER Infotainment? *Earache*
- 8 NEUROSIS Through Silver In Blood *Relapse*
- 9 FAR Tin Cans With Strings To You *Immortal-Epic*
- 10 GRAVE Hating Life *Century Media*
- 11 AMORPHIS Elegy *Relapse*
- 12 CRISIS Deathshead Extermination *Metal Blade*
- 13 BLOODLET Entheogen *Victory*
- 14 METALLICA "Until It Sleeps" (5") *Elektra-EEG*
- 15 SKREW Shadow Of Doubt *Metal Blade*
- 16 OVERKILL The Killing Kind *CMC*
- 17 SOUNDGARDEN Down On The Upside *A&M*
- 18 PRO-PAIN "State Of Mind" (5") *Energy*
- 19 INTEGRITY Humanity Is The Devil *Victory*
- 20 ANAL CUNT 40 More Reasons To Hate Us *Earache*
- 21 MALEVOLENT CREATION Joe Black *Pavement*
- 22 DIE KRUPPS Odyssey Of The Mind III *Cleopatra*
- 23 SACRED REICH Heal *Metal Blade*
- 24 EXPLOITED Beat The Bastards *Triple X*
- 25 CORE Revival *Atlantic*

Compiled from the CMJ New Music Report's weekly Loud Rock chart, collected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio reports.





## SARGE

### "Dear Josie Love Robyn"

Mud

Twee pop and hardcore aren't the most obvious combination, but they go surprisingly well together—each tempers the excesses of the other. Amelia Fletcher's pre-Heavenly band Talulah Gosh pulled it off exceptionally well a few years ago, and Sarge, a new trio from Illinois, follows that band's model on this delightful debut. "Dear Josie Love Robyn" sounds like it's going to be nothing more than a breathy little goodbye song ("I'm sorry for the things I let you put me through") for about eight seconds, until the band explodes out of its shell and starts playing so fast and hard it's a wonder it stays together. The impeccable harmonies are a nice touch, as are the little high-speed rhythmic fillips that keep things interesting. For pop-historical types, bassist Rachel Switzky used to be in the underrated Corndolly, though this is guitarist/singer Elizabeth Elmore's first band ever. "The Last Boy," on the other side, keeps the harmonies but tones down the punk thing in favor of textural development and complexity; it finds the band still playing precisely and fiercely, just less loud and fast. A Sarge album is due this fall.

Beastie Boys keyboardist **Money Mark** is turning out to be an unexpectedly amazing record-maker. The new *Legitimate Pop Songs? 7"* (Mo Wax) is two mostly-improvised pieces recorded live at a London record store, with drum machine, keyboard and harmonica. In the space of 10 minutes, he plays '60s-style soul, "out" jazz-funk, way-out noise and, well, a legitimate pop song ("Sometimes You Gotta Make It Alone," from his album). It's a *very* casual little record, with a handful of bum notes, but it takes some real risks, and a lot of them pay off.

The new British group **Broadcast** has two luxurious, delicately flavorful singles out—one on Wurlitzer Jukebox and the other on Stereolab's own Duophonic Super 45s label. In fact, Broadcast's two-martini pop tunes-plus-analog synths aesthetic owes a lot to Stereolab, though it's not quite as stylized. Broadcast also relies more on samples of old recordings and electronic editing. On "Accidentals," from the former single, understated female vocals bob gently on a few discontinuous loops—think of the quieter Cibo Matto songs—while "Living Room," from the latter, has a great burbling Moog part that wafts airily through the song until it drops down into full audibility on the chorus, distorting everything around it like a cluster of soap bubbles.

Although the Too Pure label isn't quite the trademark of quality it was when it brought us PJ Harvey, Moonshake, Th' Faith Healers and Stereolab within months of each other, it's still pretty reliable, and the debut single by **Scala** (three-fourths of Seefeel), "Tears," is darn good. It's also in the floaty-female-vocals-over-electronic-noises vein, though in this case it sounds like the darkly multi-layered instrumental track preceded the song, which sidles along, building up tension and never quite releasing it. The flip side, "Triptych," is a treat—sexy and scary, with singer Sarah Peacock's coo getting more languid and come-hither as a groove full of quiet clangs repeats and mutates.

**Supernova's** new single actually predates last year's *Ages 3 And Up* album—it's the last thing recorded with the band's original lineup. "How Much More" (Sympathy For The Record Industry) is a faithful cover of one of the Go-Gos' greatest songs. Of course, "faithful" in this case means that the Supernova men sing it in the original register and preserve the original "I want to be that girl tonight" hook. On the other side, we get to hear Supernova live and silly: playing a couple of their hero-of-the-beach rockers and baiting a soundman who baits them right back.

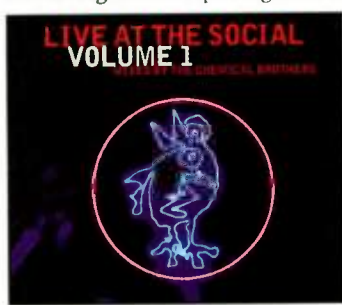
Frank Boscoe is a minor legend of the Pittsburgh scene, which is somehow appropriate: his great theme is minor-ness. The lyrics of most of his songs (for **Vehicle Flips** and his old band Wimp Factor XIV) are narrow-focused, grimly hilarious glimpses of tiny daily humiliations. "It's kind of exciting, kind of inviting/Kind of in contrast to the rest of my life," Boscoe sings on Vehicle Flips' "Impressed Beyond Belief" (Hemiola), while the band plays with battered dignity. On the other side, we get "Formula Rejection Song" ("Will you write me off like a personal exemption?") and "Citronella," the latest in the band's series of stalwart little instrumentals.

Great novelty record of the month: "I Feel So Weird" (Eskimo), the new one from Los Angeles' **The Black Watch**. Not for its A-side, a nicely arranged but unspectacular song in the early-Breeders mold, but for the flip: "Steve Albini." Accompanied only by a string quartet (actually, she plays the violin and viola parts herself), J'anna Jacoby sings an ingenuously lush paean to the Gadfly of Alternative Rock: "He can write, he can mix... Steve Albini, please marry me/I wanna be your only punk rock girl." Is she being ironic? Like that kid on *The Simpsons'* "Homerpalooza" episode said, "I don't even know any more!"

# dance

## HIP-HOP, YOU DON'T STOP

Washington, D.C. is a city normally associated with go-go, but the city has given rise to a clutch of house producers over the last year. **The Thievery Corporation** just released its second single, "Shaolin Satellite" (18th Street Lounge Music), a miracle made of crackling, whiplash breaks and minor-key synth swells. Once again, the hip-hop influence figures largely, as is true with the majority of progressive dance music right now. A vocal snippet from Das EFX stands as a counterpoint to the slightly melancholic strings. The tension and suspense here are outstanding, drawing the listener into the track's hypnotic momentum... The final nail in the coffin of purist, reductive accounts of dance music is *Live At The Social Part 1* (Heavenly-DeConstruction), one of the very few commercially available mixed tapes/CDs you're likely to read about here. Mixed by electronic grunge architects, **The Chemical Brothers**, this is a wonderful, big, rowdy, breakbeat-heavy mess of deliberately jagged segues and overmodulated recording levels. Opening with Meat Beat Manifesto's still outrageous

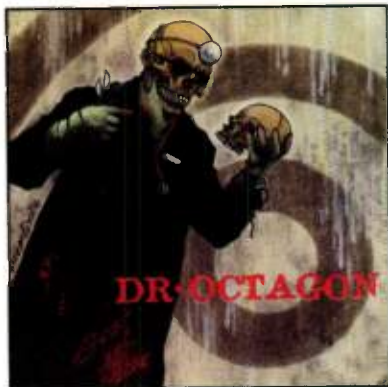


"Cutman," followed by two old-school dynamite kegs, "The DMX Will Rock" by Davy DMX and "The Mighty Hard Rocker" by Ca\$h Money And Marvelous, this is a mix that simply won't quit. From Eric B. And Rakim's menacing "Juice," the duo dives into Red Snapper's gritty "Wesley Don't Surf" and the West Coast slow-breaks sound of Metro's "To A Nation Rocking." The flip's wide range is exemplified by the mix between Funk D'Void's minimal cliffhanger "Jack Me Off" and the stark new school Detroit electro-funk of Will Web's "Mirrorshades." Hip-hop was the site of analog electronic experiments later codified by techno and its contemporary descendants, so the collection of tracks on *Live At The Social* is not at all the misalliance it may first appear to be.

## DANCE TOP 25

- 1 UNDERWORLD Second Toughest In The Infants *Wax Trax!-TVT*
- 2 DJ SPOOKY Songs Of A Dead Dreamer *Asphodel*
- 3 VARIOUS ARTISTS Trip Hop Test Part 3 *Moonshine*
- 4 VARIOUS ARTISTS Synthetic Pleasures Volume One *Moonshine*
- 5 VARIOUS ARTISTS Dope On Plastic 3 *React*
- 6 THIRD ROOM Wellenbad *Harthouse-Eye Q*
- 7 LOOP GURU Amrita...All These And The Japanese Soup *World Domination*
- 8 AUTECHRE Tri Repetæ *Warp/Wax Trax!-TVT*
- 9 VARIOUS ARTISTS Industrial F\*\*king Strength *Industrial Strength-Earache*
- 10 DJ KRUSH Meiso *Mo Wax/ffrr-I.L.S.*
- 11 VARIOUS ARTISTS Hardhop & Trypno *Moonshine*
- 12 CHEMICAL BROTHERS Loops Of Fury (EP) *Astralwerks-Caroline*
- 13 NIGHTMARES ON WAX Smoker's Delight *Warp-TVT*
- 14 SOUNDS FROM THE GROUND Kin *Waveform*
- 15 OFF AND GONE Everest *Harthouse-Eye Q*
- 16 SOUL ODDITY Tone Capsule (EP) *Astralwerks-Caroline*
- 17 HUSIKESQUE Green Blue Fire *Astralwerks-Caroline*
- 18 MASSIVE ATTACK VS. MAD PROFESSOR No Protection *Circa/Gyroscope-Caroline*
- 19 VARIOUS ARTISTS The Third Barramundi Sampler *Logic*
- 20 VARIOUS ARTISTS Sm:je Mix Session 1: By DJ Scott Henry *Sm:je*
- 21 SPICELAB "Spy Vs. Spice" (12") *Undercover*
- 22 THINK ABOUT MUTATION Hellraver *Dynamica*
- 23 PSYCHIC TV Cold Blue Torch *Cleopatra*
- 24 STERIL Egoism *21st Circuitry*
- 25 VARIOUS ARTISTS Three A.D.: A Waveform Compilation *Waveform*

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



## DR. OCTAGON

Dr. Octagon

Bulk

Now, what is a hip-hop record doing in this space? The answer is simple: The sorry state of what now passes for "techno" means that, once again, the real imaginative impulse is coming from hip-hop (which, in the early-to-mid-'80s, carved the space from which techno then emerged). Dr. Octagon is a San Francisco-based "turntable manipulation" (to borrow a phrase from DJ Spooky) crew that has joined forces with one of hip-hop's most bizarre and gifted lyricists, Kool Keith (of legendary old new-schoolers, Ultramagnetic MCs). The group also includes Bay Area beatsmith The Automator (whose John Woo-inspired *A Better Tomorrow* EP was released recently) and multiple DMC mix contest winner DJ Q-Bert, whose Technics tricks are astounding. (His recent *Bionic Booger Breaks* and *Toasted Marshmallow Breaks* albums are state-of-the-art turntable manifestos.) Enthusiasts of hard, underground electronic music will find it hard to refuse this set of 19 tracks from hip-hop's outermost fringe. San Francisco hip-hop bricoleur DJ Shadow also makes an appearance here on the jagged, analog-tweaked "Waiting List," and some of Q-Bert's most sonically dense work is found on the sliced-and-diced "Bear Witness."



## DELINQUENT HABITS

Delinquent Habits

PMP/Loud-RCA

From the opening cut, "Tres Delinquentes," you're immediately captured by a dusty mariachi horn sample and the Spanglish rap style of this new West Coast-based trio (Kemo, Ive and DJ O.G. Style). Delinquent Habits learned plenty from Cypress Hill's Sen Dog, especially how to pull off a rugged street style that is as creative, hooky and innovative as nearly anything out there. A trip through this supremely funky debut is like stepping through a dense, overgrown jungle: You're immediately surrounded by rough rhythms and fleeting noises, while looping samples swing ominously overhead. But the real treasures here don't take a machete to uncover; the group mixes humor (you'll love the recurring little old lady who yells "Is that Spanish!?"), and big, tough lyrics like seasoned vets. Delinquent Habits has been forced to suffer the "alternarap" label, which can only mean that its raw mix of DJ/MC skills isn't following tired, overused designs. Tracks like the hard bounce of "Break 'Em Off" and "Lower Eastside" should lure both blunted beatheads and suburban dilettantes. "Juvy" sounds like it could have been on any Cypress Hill record, but the trio locks into its own groove on "I'm Addicted," which loops what sounds like odd incidental music.

[ by Glen Sansone ]

# hip-hop

BONUS BEATS

Another leaf has fallen from the Brand Nubian tree in the form of **Sadat X**, who drops his hip-hop western, *Wild Cowboys* (Loud-RCA). Conceptually, this album really works at times, especially on the title track and "Hang 'Em High" (a cut that would make Ennio Morricone proud), but Sadat doesn't stick to the Wild West theme nearly enough... American MCs listen up: The rappers found on the international rap collection, *Griots* (Shadow), hail from places like Hungary, Canada, Germany and South Africa, and they're packin' mad skills. The jazzy and flavorful team of Jeru The Damaja and South Africa's Walkin' Large appears on "When I Flow," while Canada's the Plains give a nod in the direction of the Dream Warriors. Oh, about the rappin' Hungarians known as Tibro: don't expect Budapest to replace New York anytime soon... The name of the big, sweaty back-up singer in Coolio's "Gangsta's Paradise" video is **L.V.**, and he wants you to know that on his debut, *I Am L.V.* (Tommy Boy). There's no identity crisis here: L.V. is a slick G raised on blaxploitation films ("Fire From The Gun") and home cookin'. His sing/rap style is better than Domino's, and his album is a loose, party-styled how-to guide for G wannabes—the sweating is up to you. Check out L.V.'s version of "Gangsta's Paradise," sans Coolio... Ever get the feeling that the concept of hip-hop-oriented movie soundtracks is getting about as stale as "keepin' it real" or "Atomic Dog" samples? Aside from the occasional surprise, they have largely degenerated into sonic wastelands of wretched music with no lasting value. On *The Nutty Professor* (Def Jam/RAL-Mercury), and *The Great White Hype* (Hudlin Bros.-Epic Soundtrax), however, you'll find a few standouts from Warren G., LL Cool J (a "Doin' It" remix), Raekwon and other members of the Wu-Tang Clan, but the soundtrack to *Original Gangstas* (Noo Trybe-Virgin) is about as compelling as listening to Kathie Lee Gifford yak about her children... What's this?! **MC Breed** has just issued another album, *To Da Beat Ch'All* (WRAP-Ichiban), shortly after releasing a *Best Of...* retrospective. Funny, his new one sounds exactly like his last five except with more guests: Dolla bills and bitchez, how refreshing. Word out.

HIP-HOP TOP 25

- 1 **FUGEES (REFUGEE CAMP)** *The Score* Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
- 2 **DE LA SOUL** "The Bizness" (12") Tommy Boy
- 3 **BUSTA RHYMES** *The Coming* Elektra-FEG
- 4 **BAHAMADIA** *Kollage* Chrysalis-EMI
- 5 **SOUNDTRACK** *Sunset Park* Flavor Unit/EastWest-FEG
- 6 **ROOTS** "Clones" (12") DGC
- 7 **2PAC** *All Eyez On Me* Death Row-Interscope
- 8 **DJ KRUSH** *Meiso* Mo Wax/Jfrr-I.L.S.
- 9 **HELTAH SKELTAH** "Operation Lockdown" (12") Duck Down-Priority
- 10 **ARTIFACTS/MAN DIGGA** "Art Of Facts" (12") Big Beat-Atlantic
- 11 **JUNIOR M.A.F.I.A.** *Conspiracy* Big Beat-Atlantic
- 12 **INI** "Fakin' Jax" (12") Soul Brother-FEG
- 13 **MAD LION** *Real Ting* Weeded-Nervous
- 14 **GENIUS/GZA** *Liquid Swords* Geffen
- 15 **SOUNDTRACK** *The Substitute* Priority
- 16 **LARGE PROFESSOR** "The Mad Scientist" (12") Geffen
- 17 **TOO SHORT** *Gettin' It* (Album Number Ten) Jive
- 18 **NONCHALANT** *Until The Day* MCA
- 19 **PETE ROCK AND THE LOST BOYZ** "The Yearn" (12") EastWest-FEG
- 20 **CYPRESS HILL** *III (Temples Of Boom)* Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
- 21 **BONE THUGS N HARMONY** *E. 1999 Eternal* Ruthless-Relativity
- 22 **GETO BOYS** *The Resurrection* Noo-Trybe/Rap-A-Lot-Virgin
- 23 **DE LA SOUL** "Stakes Is High" (12") Tommy Boy
- 24 **VARIOUS ARTISTS** *Insomnia: The Erick Sermon Compilation* Bandit-Interscope
- 25 **XZIBIT** "Peperazzi" (12") Loud-RCA

Compiled from the CMJ New Music Report's weekly Best Beats charts, collected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio reporters

# MIXED MEDIA

## ▶ **UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN**

(Marvel)

There are roughly a dozen Spider-Man-related comics published every month. Most of them suck outright. The single exception is *Untold Tales Of Spider-Man*, which has gotten a reputation as the best straightforward, mainstream comic in years. It's unabashedly retro—the stories are set between the earliest issues of the original *Amazing Spider-Man* series, published over 30 years ago, and Kurt Busiek's stories are written in a slightly more sophisticated version of Stan Lee's breathless soap-opera/action-movie style. And it's aimed at younger readers, with a 99-cent cover price and self-contained stories every issue. Surprisingly, though, the audience that's made it a huge hit is older: readers who fled from superhero comics when the combination of greasy-kid-stuff and pretentious glitz got to be too much, but have gotten the word about *Untold Tales'* wit, simplicity and low-key charm. Craft is the name of the game here: well-crafted stories, straightforward art by Pat Olliffe that recalls Steve Ditko's early *Spider-Man* work without imitating it, and an overall sense that this stuff is just supposed to be solidly fun. And Busiek has grasped the essence of what made the stories he's building on great: high-school-aged Peter Parker coming to grips with the huge responsibility that's landed on him is a brilliant metaphor for young adulthood in general. —DOUGLAS WOLK

COMICS



READS

## ▶ **ZINES! VOL. 1**

edited by V. Vale (V/Search)

Since the mid-'70s, V. Vale has carefully curated important youth swells—first connecting punk rock with other cultural forms in his 'zine *Search And Destroy*, later working on RE/Search books like *Industrial Culture Handbook*, *Incredibly Strange Music* and *Modern Primitives*, which turned underground rumblings into mainstream tremors. Vale's new solo project (he split with RE/Search's other half, Andrea Juno, last year), *Zines! Vol. 1* (V/Search), is sure to spill a lot of ink on the self-publishing underground. Vale takes a decidedly pro-free speech stance throughout, tracing the history of 'zines from the English Ranters of the 1600s, to Thomas Paine, to the dada and Situationist movements earlier this century. Almost half of the publications in the spotlight here could be grouped together in a Capitalists Do The Craziest Things category: *Beer Frame* questions the intent behind products on the fringes of usefulness, *Thrift Score* ponders the economics of recycling, and *Crap Hound* reassembles the jarring images of commercial clip art into commentary more fascinating than most 'zine rants against the Man. The other half focuses on special interest groups: riot grrrls in *Housewife Turned Assassin* and *X-Ray*, gay rockers in *Outpunk*, and the *Fat Girl* faction. —TOM ROE

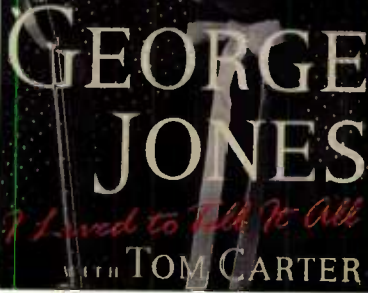


## I LIVED TO TELL IT ALL

by George Jones with Tom Carter (Villard)

READS

In the late '50s, George Jones asked the musical question "what goes wrong in the mind of a man at a bar?" The song is called "Out Of Control," and there's a terrifying aura of violence, dread and regret in Jones' voice. Read Jones' autobiography and you'll know why. It's a question that he probably asked himself everyday from the early '50s until the beginning of his sobriety in the '80s. The greatest country singer who ever lived ate pills by the fistful and stayed drunk for about 30 years. He crawled out of bathroom windows to avoid playing to fans he loathed (in the '70s he missed the vast majority of his shows), was bankrupt while his records were in the charts, and developed multiple personalities that would argue (aloud and uncontrollably) in the voices of Donald Duck and Walter Brennan. Although Jones is not the most engaging storyteller, *I Lived To Tell It All* is filled with anecdotes alternately terrifying and funny, and you'll keep co-workers amused around the water cooler for weeks. My main gripe is that there's virtually no insight into his craft, but fans have been forgiving Jones' mistakes for years, so I guess we'll have to let this one slide by too. —STEVE MCGUIRL



## MANNY AND LO

(Sony Classics)

Lisa Krueger's directorial debut might be this summer's *Kids*, albeit much more suburban and less bleak. Here, orphaned sisters Manny (Scarlett Johansson) and Lo (Aleksa Palladino) set out on their own, spending nights in model homes. The 15-year-old Lo gets pregnant and enlists her 11-year-old sister to help kidnap a nurse (Mary Kay Place), who delivers more than they ordered. They find an abandoned summer retreat in New York's backwoods, and wait for the arrival of a third child. Place is hilarious in a Mary Hartman-like way, all taut emotionally, constantly on the verge of some sort of breakdown. Like *Kids*, this R-rated film purports to expose large social issues through startling details and a dark sense of humor. Krueger worked on stories for several previous Jim Jarmusch movies, and she shares his dry humor and eye for real views. Both girls seem believable as weary products of broken homes, with breaking into *other* houses the main metaphor here. If *Manny And Lo* also sounds like a Jarmusch film, that's because of John Lurie's tasteful jazz score. —TOM ROE

FLICKS



## Surrender

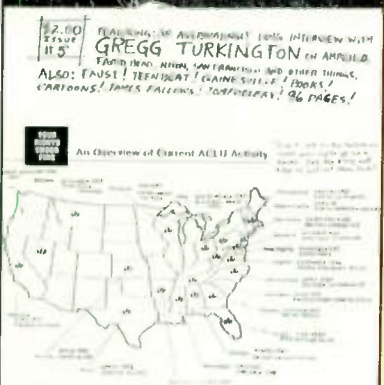
JOURNAL OF ETHICS

## SURRENDER #5

(\$2.00 from 3322 Mentone Ave. #6, Los Angeles, CA 90034)

'ZINES

Whether he's rooting out the machismo that underlay '80s zine-culture ("The real mission of the genuine musical intellectual/real man was to root out mediocrity in any form") or chatting amiably with Amarillo Records prank-king Gregg Turkington, Brian Doherty, *Surrender's* sole contributor (except for a few cartoons), may be the wisest man still committed to printing his every thought in badly reproduced 12-point Courier. Make no mistake, this is old-school zineology, dense and discriminating: a transplant from Gainesville, Florida, to Los Angeles, holding forth on every record and book he's taken in since last issue (two years ago!). The lead essay, which documents Doherty's acceptance of the fact that he would now rather have the classic rock station preset on the car stereo than college radio, is the most sophisticated piece of writing I've seen in a 'zine since Chuck Eddy liked punk rock. Doherty—too isolated from the L.A. rock scene to care who thinks he's hip—is iconoclastic enough to refer to "Jon Spencer Blues Traveler" repeatedly, but not so distant that he won't spend a paragraph telling good Pavement B-sides from bad ones, or celebrate playing "You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet" with the windows down. —FRANKLIN BRUNO



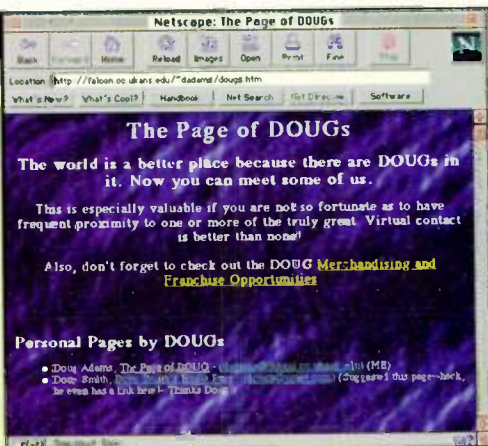
# MULTI-MEDIA

ONLINE

## THE PAGE OF DOUGS

(<http://falcon.cc.ukans.edu/~dadams/dougs.htm>)

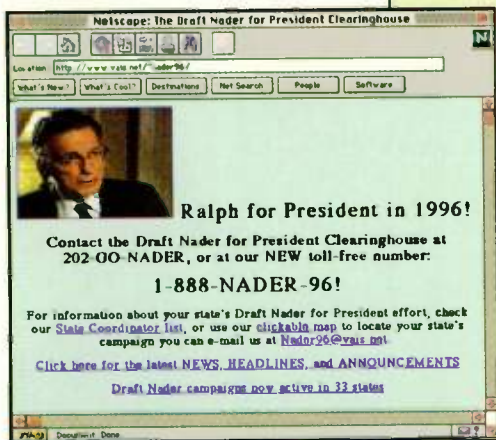
There are indices to absolutely everything on the World Wide Web—you just have to look hard enough. Case in point: The Page Of Dougs, put together by one Doug Adams. It's a set of hyperlinks to well over 100 personal home-pages put together by people named Doug. Doug LeClair's profile points out that he has a show named after him on Nickelodeon, to which Adams responds "don't we all?" There are also "DOUG Merchandising And Franchise Opportunities" and links to things like McDonnell Douglas Company and the Douglas Albert Gallery. Though it's obviously a silly concept, it's useful in one major way: it's a small but legitimate cross-section of who men with personal web pages in English-speaking countries really are. There's no link yet to Built To Spill's Doug Martsch, though I'm sure it's only a matter of time. As is, I'm sure, a page for people who prefer the full version of the name. —DOUGLAS WOLK



ONLINE

## THE DRAFT NADER FOR PRESIDENT HOME PAGE

(<http://www.vals.net/~nader96>)



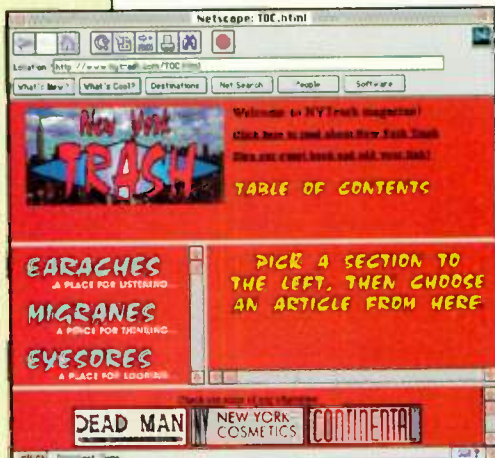
In Santa Monica this month, Draft Ralph Nader For President groups from around the country will brag about petition sizes, exercising real American democracy, and their favorite chat rooms. Of course, the mainstream media isn't saying much about Nader's wacky ideas about the "none of the above" ballot option and computerized access in libraries to government information, or about the views of the Green Party that's thrusting him into presidential politics. "We were way below the radar screen," says Nader national campaign coordinator Linda Martin about the days before the Greens picked a recognizable figurehead. "Now, the press is still ignoring us, but at least they know we're there." The site links to Cameron Spitzer's "Ralph Nader For President" page, which provides more information about the Greens, who are running Nader in 40 states this fall and have a slew of local candidates too. —TOM ROE

ONLINE

## NEW YORK TRASH

(<http://www.nytrash.com>)

Every place in the real world has an analogue somewhere on the Net, they say, and the analogue to the stretch of sidewalk on St. Mark's Place in the East Village where the punks hang out is Adam Yellin and Marlena Schwarz's garishly colored New York Trash site—a 'zine gone electronic. It's a little hard to look at, but at least you don't have to deal with Volkswagen-sized roaches. The site is divided into four main sections: Earaches (music from punk rock to techno), Migraines (think-pieces), Eyesores (visual stuff) and Cramps (a guest book and favorite links). The Earaches part is the most interesting, particularly the home pages devoted to the circle of bands that are defiantly New York Fucking City, Man: from the big (D-Generation's official home page is here) to the up-and-coming (Coyote Shivers) to the teeny local buzz bands (Killer Kowalski). The main page also has a link to archetypal E.V. dive the Continental, and to the rock 'n' roll Luddites of the Vinyl Preservation Society. —DOUGLAS WOLK



A LISTING OF LABELS WHOSE ARTISTS APPEAR IN THIS ISSUE

**18th Street Lounge Music** K  
1212 18th St. NW  
Washington, DC 20036

**4AD**  
8533 Melrose Ave., Suite B  
Los Angeles, CA 90069

**550 Columbia Epic WORK**  
550 Madison Ave.  
New York, NY 10022

**A&M/Polydor**  
1418 N. La Brea Ave.  
Hollywood, CA 90028

**American/Infinite**  
**Zero Too Pure**  
3500 W. Olive Ave. #1550  
Burbank, CA 91505

**Arista**  
6 W. 57th St.  
New York, NY 55408

**Atlantic**  
75 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York, NY 10019

**Bar/None**  
P.O. Box 1704  
Hoboken, NJ 07030

**Big Cat**  
580 Broadway, Ste. 900  
New York, NY 10012

**Black Mark**  
Luxemburger Str. 31  
D-13353 Berlin, Germany

**Blue Note**  
610 Seventh Ave., 4th Fl.  
New York, NY 10019

**Hulk**  
2440 16th St., Ste. 316  
San Francisco, CA 94110

**Candy-Ass**  
P.O. Box 42382  
Portland, OR 97202

**Capitol**  
1750 N. Vine St.  
Hollywood, CA 90028

**Caroline**  
114 W. 26th St., 11th Fl.  
New York, NY 10001

**C/Z**  
1407 E. Madison #41  
Seattle, WA 98122

**DeConstruction**  
P.O. Box 18015  
Encino, CA 91416

**Duophonic Super 45s**  
P.O. Box 3787  
London SE22 9DZ, U.K.

**Earache**  
295 Lafayette St., Ste. 915  
New York, NY 10012

**Elektra/EEG**  
75 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York, NY 10019

**Emperor Norton**  
354 Brimble St., Ste. 51  
New York, NY 10013

**Ekimo**  
824 5th St., Ste. 9  
Santa Monica, CA 90403

**Geffen/DGC/Almo**  
9130 Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90069

**Griffin**  
P.O. Box 87587  
Carol Stream, IL 60188

**Hemiola**  
35 Barnbrough St.  
Burley, Leeds LS4 2QY, U.K.

**Homestead**  
150 W. 28th St., Ste. 501  
New York, NY 10001

**Ichiban**  
P.O. Box 724677  
Atlanta, GA 30339

**Imago**  
152 W. 57th St.  
New York, NY 10019

**Interscope**  
10800 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1230  
Los Angeles, CA 90024

**Island/London/Mo Wax**  
825 Eighth Ave.  
New York, NY 10019

**K**  
Box 7154  
Olympia, WA 98507

**Loxipsum**  
153 Suffolk St., #4  
New York, NY 10002

**Luv N' Haight**  
P.O. Box 129104  
San Francisco, CA 94119

**Matador**  
676 Broadway, 4th Fl.  
New York, NY 10012

**MCA**  
70 Universal City Plaza  
Universal City, CA 91808

**Mercury**  
825 Eighth Ave.  
New York, NY 10019

**Mud**  
201 N. Coler  
Urbana, IL 61801

**NAT**  
Avenue Shinsaihashi #807  
3-18-6  
Nishi-Shinsaihashi, Chuo-Ku  
Osaka 542, Japan

**Priority**  
6430 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 900  
Hollywood, CA 90028

**RCA**  
Bertelmann Bldg.  
1540 Broadway  
New York, NY 10036

**Rykodisc**  
Shetland Park  
27 Congress St.  
Salem, MA 01970

**Shadow**  
c/o Institut  
26 W. 17th St., #502  
New York, NY 10011

**Shanachie**  
13 Laight St., 6th Fl.  
New York, NY 10013

**Siltbreeze**  
P.O. Box 15757  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

**Skin Graft**  
P.O. Box 257346  
Chicago, IL 60625

**Sympathy For  
The Record Industry**  
4901 Virginia Ave.  
Long Beach, CA 90805

**Summershine**  
P.O. Box 23392  
Seattle, WA 98102

**Taang!**  
706 Pismo Court  
San Diego, CA 92109

**TAG**  
14 E. 60th St., 8th Fl.  
New York, NY 10022

**TeenBeat**  
P.O. Box 3265  
Arlington, VA 22203

**Thirsty Ear**  
274 Madison Ave., Ste. 804  
New York, NY 10016

**Tommy Boy**  
902 Broadway, 13th Fl.  
New York, NY 10010

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4311 N. Ravenswood Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60613

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New York, NY 10003

**Vaccination**  
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338 N. Foothill Rd.  
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

**Warner Bros./Reprise**  
3300 Warner Blvd.  
Burbank, CA 91505

**Wurlitzer Jukebox**  
59 Queensway  
Hurley, Atherstone  
Warwick CV9 2ND, U.K.

# JUST OUT

## JULY 16

**WEEN** 12 Golden Country Greats *Elektra*  
**TUSCADERO** The Pink Album *Elektra*  
**AUNT BETTYS** EastWest-EEG  
**PAUL JEFFERSON** Almo Sounds-Geffen  
**ANDREA PARKINS** Cast Iron Fact *Knitting Factory Works*  
**RAS KASS** Soul On Ice *Priority*  
**HALIBUTS** Life On The Bottom *Upstart*  
**PLACEBO** Placebo *Elevator Music-Caroline*  
**MELVINS** Stag *Mammoth-Atlantic*  
**FLED** Soundtrack *Rowdy-Arista*  
**CALLIOPE** I Can See You With My Eyes Closed *Thick*

## JULY 23

**ORANGE 9MM** Atlantic  
**MULTIPLE CAT** Territory Shall Mean The Universe *Zero Hour*  
**BOO HEWERDINE** Baptist Hospital *Discovery*  
**BENNY HILL** Sings! *Castle*  
**HOLLY PALMER** Reprise  
**LOVEINREVERSE** I Was Here *Reprise*  
**PENNY DREADFULS** Penny Dreadfuls *Restless*  
**CUB** Box Of Hair *Mint*  
**YO LA TENGO** Genius + Love = Yo La Tengo *Matador*  
**LA PESTE** La Peste *Matador*  
**DEADBOLT** Tijuana Hit Squad *Headhunter-Cargo*  
**MASSACRE** Promise *Earache*  
**KEVIN SALEM** Glimmer *Roadrunner*  
**JEREMY ENIGK** Return Of The Frog Queen *Sub Pop*  
**EARTH** Pentastar: In The Style Of Demons *Sub Pop*  
**PALEFACE** Get Off *Sire-EEG*

## JULY 30

**REPUBLICA** RCA  
**SKOLD** RCA  
**VERSUS** Secret Swingers *Caroline*  
**CHANNEL LIGHT VESSEL** Excellent Spirits *Gyroscope-Caroline*  
**LISA GERMANO** Excerpts From A Love Circus *4AD*  
**SLOPOKE** Thrill Jockey  
**A MINOR FOREST** Thrill Jockey  
**FORESKIN 500** Starbent But Superfreaked *Priority*  
**CUTTY RANKS** Six Million Ways To Die *Priority*  
**RICK OROZCO** Buscando Una Estrella EP *Arista Texas*  
**NYDIA ROJAS** Nydia Rojas *Arista Texas*  
**TAMMY GRAHAM** Tammy Graham *Arista-Career*

## AUGUST 6

**WANDERING LUCY** Leap Year *K*  
**MOLLY MCGUIRE** Lime *Epic*  
**SATCHEL** The Family *Epic*  
**SIX FINGER SATELLITE** Paranormalized *Sub Pop*  
**ELEVATOR TO HELL** Parts 1-3 EP *Sub Pop*  
**GODPLOW** Grass  
**SIR MIX-A-LOT** Return Of The Bumpasaurus *American*  
**JOE MEIK** The Pye Recordings *Castle*  
**16 VOLT** Letdowncrush *Reconstruction-Cargo*  
**BOREDOMS** Super Roots 6 *Reprise*  
**JOHNNY VIOLENT** Shocker *Earache*  
**SHADOWS** The Shadows Are Go *Scamp-Caroline*

## AUGUST 13

**MANIC STREET PREACHERS** Everything Must Go *Epic*  
**GIGOLO AUNTS** RCA  
**ROBERT BRADLEY** RCA  
**LEAH ANDREONE** RCA  
**LOW** When The Curtain Hits The Cast *Vernon Yard-Caroline*  
**BETTER THAN EZRA** Friction, Baby *Elektra*

# FEEDBACK

MAIL: CMJ New Music Monthly, 11 Middle Neck Road, Suite 400, Great Neck, NY 10021-2301  
 FAX: 516-466-7159 / Email: cmjmonthly@cmjmusic.com

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think about the CMJ New Music August CD and Magazine?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What can we do to make the magazine and CD better?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RATING FOR EACH TRACK**

5 - Borderline genius 4 - I'd buy it 3 - Decent 2 - So-so 1 - Trash it  
 CHECK THE BOX TO THE LEFT IF THIS CD INTRODUCED YOU TO THIS ARTIST

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. D-GENERATION	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. REVEREND HORTON HEAT	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. PROLAPSE	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. CHARLIE HUNTER QUARTET	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. BLUE NILE	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. WILLIE NELSON	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. LIZ PHAIR (from <i>Stealing Beauty</i> )	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. IMPERIAL TEEN	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. CHAINSAUCK	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	10. GUS	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	11. VAN MORRISON	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	12. BRENDA KAHN	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	13. BRENDAN BENSON	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	14. KICKING HAROLD	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	15. VERSUS	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	16. RED FIVE	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	17. FORESKIN 500	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	18. MOONSHAKE	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	19. VIRGIN-WHORE COMPLEX	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	20. DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM	5	4	3	2	1

**1. Are you...?**

Male  Female

**2. How old are you?**

under 18  35-44  
 18-24  45+  
 25-34  What's it to you?

**3. Where did you buy this magazine?**

subscription  newsstand  
 record store  bookstore  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

**4. How many CDs do you buy per month?**

0-2  6-10  
 3-5  more than 10

**5. Where do you usually buy your tapes/CDs?**

Store \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_

**6. What radio station(s) do you usually listen to?**

Call Letters \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_

8/96

# CMJ

NEW MUSIC

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<input type="checkbox"/> Jun '95	Chris Isaak
<input type="checkbox"/> Jul '95	Soul Asylum
<input type="checkbox"/> Aug '95	Primus
<input type="checkbox"/> Sep '95	Urge Overkill
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## ▶ EAST VILLAGE, NYC

[ by David Sprague & CMJ ]

The East Village is where Greenwich Village abuts the Lower East Side, a niche carved as artists and writers moved east (you can still spot Allen Ginsberg scurrying in and out of his 12th St. apartment) after being priced out of the neighborhood they made famous. This mix of high-brow and low-culture has made the East Village the hub of New York rock.



Trash & Vaudeville

St. Mark's Place has long been the area's social nexus. Traverse the string of silver jewelry and "used" book-peddling merchants whose stands litter the sidewalks between 2nd and 3rd Aves., and take note of the bulky edifice at 23 St. Mark's. Currently employed as a halfway house for recovering substance abusers, the building once housed **Andy Warhol's Exploding Plastic Inevitable**—which gave the **Velvet Underground** its first residency and NYC's unsuspecting social scene its first taste of really bad vibrations. Walking east, don't be surprised if the urge for a spot of air guitar increases as you pass by Number 96-98—it's the tenement building immortalized on the cover of **Led Zepelin's Physical Graffiti** album cover.

If that's the kind of rock excess you're looking for, step into **Trash & Vaudeville** (4 St. Mark's Place). From its jewelry case full of Zippos, combs and pill-cases to its amazing back-room shoe selection to those great blue and green plaid three-button suits, the store isn't just for vinyl-clad dominatrixes, though they tend to get the best service. Across the street, you'll find **Coney Island High**, current dive of choice for glam bon vivants, punk rockers and all of D-Generation's toadies and familiars [see interview, pg. 20]. The club also sponsors the swell omniseual dance party **Fraggle Rock** every week, featuring a house band with members of **Luscious Jackson**, the **Lunachicks** and more. (Fraggle Rock's sister club **Meow Mix**, on Houston St., is the indie-rock lesbian bar of choice, and always hopping.) More punk rock is conveniently located right around the corner at **The Continental**, on 3rd Ave., and if you get hungry on the way, you can always grab a slice at **St. Mark's Pizza**, where they always throw a handful of extra cheese on every slice before they pop it in the oven, even though it's already thicker than the counter guy's accent. It's not the best pizza in New York (you'll have to head to Brooklyn for that), but it may be the most satisfying.

Still hungry? Spin on your heels and head East, literally. The block of 6th St. between 1st and 2nd Aves. is home to at least 20 restaurants, all of them Indian, all cheap, most pretty good. Opt for **Sonali** or the four-foot-wide, Christmas-light-bedecked **The Rose Of India**. Tell the waiter it's somebody's birthday and you'll be treated to flashing lights, a disco ball and taped Indian disco. Eastern in a different way—Eastern European—is the diner-like **Kiev** (2nd Ave. and 6th St.), which will graciously serve its challah french toast, pierogies or blintzes 24 hours a day.

More spicy fare can be found at **Two Boots** (Ave. A between 2nd and 3rd Sts.); named after the shapes of Italy and Louisiana, it has unbelievably delicious Cajun pizza, an ace jukebox and a fine selection of tap beers that can be ordered in boot-shaped glasses. **Benny's Burritos** (7th St. and Ave. A), compared to some of the area's scorchingly hot, stiflingly small burrito joints,



PHOTOS BY CHRIS TOLIVER



Mercury Lounge

seems almost palatial, and its portions—is that a burrito or a child wrapped in swaddling?—are as huge as the '50s lamps that decorate the place.

That little park across the street from Benny's with the cute dog run is the notorious **Tompkins Square Park**, which hosted its first major riots in the 1870s (the 1988 police action was no small potatoes, either), and has also been the setting of multiple counterculture celebrations—from the **Fugs'** mid-'60s occupation to **Wigstock**, the annual celebration of drag queen supremacy that has since moved on to the Christopher Street piers. The earliest outposts of New York's hardcore scene were once scattered along the park's periphery; on the southeast corner of Avenue A and East 7th St. stood **A7**, a foxhole-like encampment that offered up to ten bands for all-night early '80s slamfests (it was here that **Black Flag** fan **Henry Garfield** first took the stage to sing a song with the band). A few blocks north, in the basement of 171 Avenue A, the **Rat Cage** offered one-stop shopping for the disaffected, with a record store, practice space, after-hours club, studio and label (which introduced the **Beastie Boys**) under one roof



ABC No Rio

If soaking in that bit of history has put you in a hardcore mood, head downtown (below Houston, which you'll do well to pronounce "how-stun," as the locals do) to **ABC No Rio** (Rivington St., between Suffolk and Clinton), the all-ages venue of choice for hardcore bands



Continental

and heavily pierced high-schoolers. As far as other clubs go, the **Mercury Lounge** (217 E. Houston at Essex) has, thanks to consistently solid bookings and attractive decor, become one of the East Village's best venues. **Brownies** (169 Ave. A between 10th and 11th Sts.) tends to have lots of up-and-coming touring bands; it's also usually infested with I-saw-them-first label scouts. Touring bands that are too big for either the Mercury or Brownies usually find themselves playing **Irving Plaza** (15th St. & Irving Place), where you pay for air conditioning and clean bathrooms with \$5 cans of beer. Ticket prices, however, remain reasonable.

If you're undeterred by expensive drinks and possessed of an urge to dance, just around the block on 14th St. is the **Palladium**, a downtown dancehall extremely popular with hip-hop and freestyle fans. A few blocks east (12th St. between 3rd and 4th Aves.) is **Webster Hall**, which offers the advantage of several rooms of

dancing, each spinning a separate genre or era as its specialty. More adventurous electronic sounds can be found at **Robots** (Ave. B at 3rd St.).

By this point, you've recognized the need for comfortable, supportive shoes (Trash And Vaudeville has boots made for many things, but walking isn't always one of them), so you'll want to check into **99X** (10th St. between 3rd and 4th Aves.) where the selection (and price) of Doc Martens and Fluevogs is hard to beat. The downstairs annex has the latest in skewear (an oxymoron, we know) and stylish club clothes and skate duds, too. For more of the latter, hop a board back to Ave. A, where at **X-Large** you can shop assured that a nickel on your dollar is going into the pockets of the Beastie Boys. You can further slake your retail jones at the many small boutiques popping up on E. 9th between 2nd and A, including the lovely goth shops **Earth Sea** and **Skin Crawl** (the former specializes in clothes, the latter in jewelry), and designer **Mark Montano's** classy boutique.



Spooky, etc.), but the consistently solid stock of new releases, "seminals," imports (check the Krautrock section) and its knowledgeable staff are the real attractions.

Finally, your rock 'n' roll pilgrimage to the East Village can't be complete without a trip to the irresistably decrepit **CBGB & OMFUG** (315 Bowery at Bleecker)—that's its full name, which stands for Country, Bluegrass, Blues & Other Music For Uplifting Gourmandizers. None of which you're likely to hear there: It is, of course, the cradle of punk rock, and though it no longer gets the world-class likes of the Ramones, Television and Patti Smith very often, there's still very loud stuff going on there every night. Until you've experienced its gig-poster-smothered walls, legendarily horrific bathrooms and world-class sound system for yourself, you can't know the true essence of the E.V.



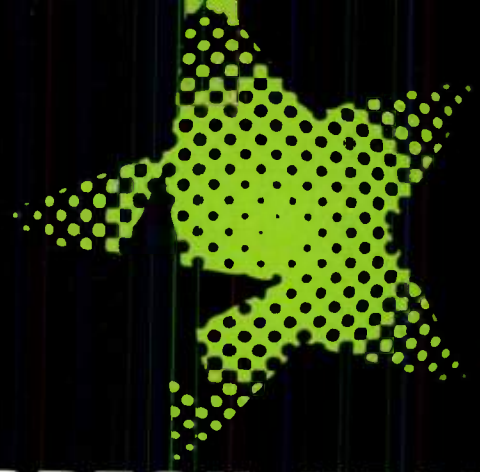
Ah, but that can wait 'til tomorrow. The night's still young, and you've got a buzz to catch. And as far as indie-rock meat-markets go, you can't do better than **Max Fish**, half a block below Houston on Ludlow, conveniently located mere blocks from major rehearsal spaces and drug dealers. Another one of our favorites is the **Beauty Bar** (14th St. between 2nd and 3rd Aves.). The space used to house a hair salon, and the old-fashioned leather-padded salon chairs, complete with those overhead dryer contraptions, remain. Almost as stylized a watering hole is martini specialist **Global 33** (2nd Ave. between 5th and 6th Sts.), which is fashioned after an old TWA airport lounge.

And if you want to actually buy some music, the East Village is host to half a dozen splendid record stores, including the mom 'n' pop indie specialists of **Adult Crash** (Ave. A between 4th and 5th St.) and the alternative-culture mini-mall of **Mondo**



**Kim's** (St. Mark's between 2nd and 3rd Ave.). It's worth a few steps over the jagged border of E.V. proper, however, to go to **Other Music**, located on 4th St. right across the street from Tower Records (between Lafayette and Broadway). The shop features frequent in-store artist appearances (Yo La Tengo, Cul De Sac, DJ





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