

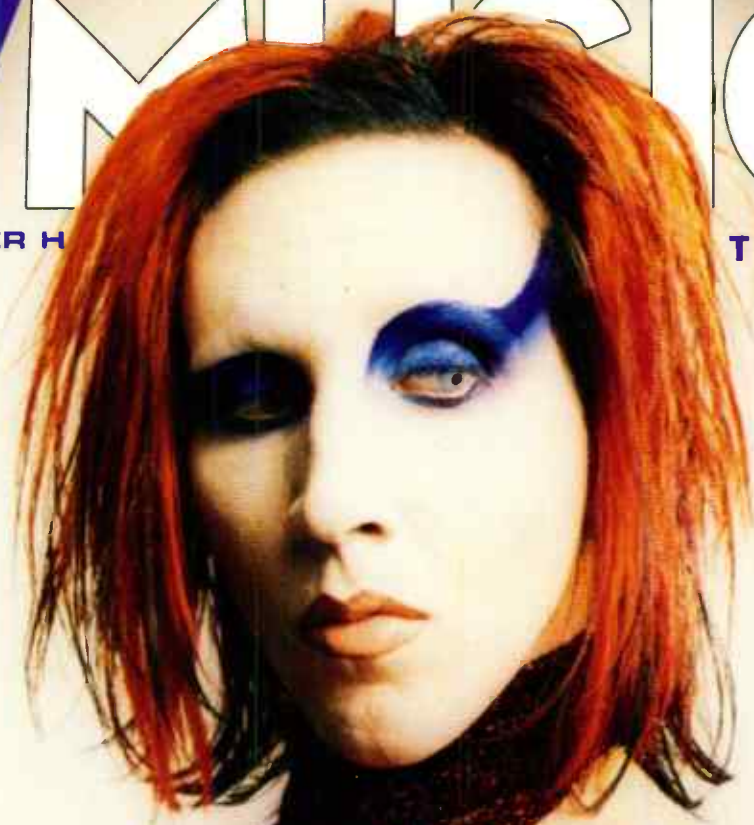
CMJ

1998 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE ISSUE

NEW MUSIC

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MARILYN MANSON

OMEGA MAN

CARDIGANS

JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION

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HERE: THE CARDIGANS PHOTOGRAPHED BY
DENNIS KLEIMAN

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ON THE COVER

Marilyn Manson

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"Whatever I do musically is always kind of a reflection of my personal life. *Antichrist Superstar* was a very cold and numb transformation and the result was a rebirth in some ways. *Mechanical Animals* is documenting the feeling coming back. It's like a leg that was asleep and now it's starting to tingle." Never at a loss for words, our favorite drag queen talks with intrepid reporter Matt Ashare about fame, fashion and scary monsters.

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"The reaction I had when I presented the songs to the rest of the band was so good—we really got close again, you know, we almost killed each other touring and then had this long break and now everybody's so into it." And we're so into the sweet Swedes' new album *Gran Turismo*. Andrew Beaujon checks in with the Cardigans, post-"Lovefool."

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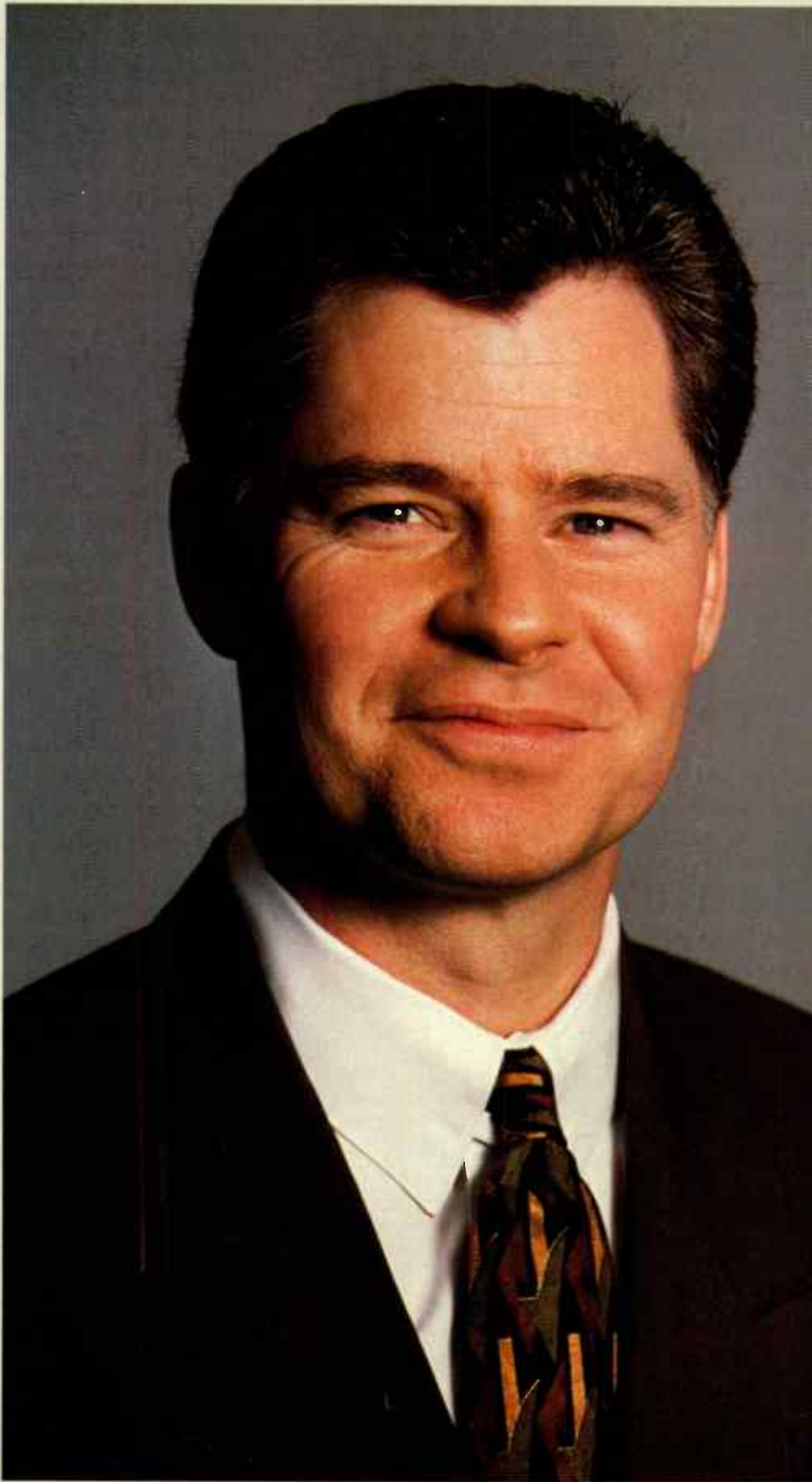
"[On] the last record we got criticism for, I don't know, trying to be something we're not. If we tried to record some song that was a response to criticism as it happened, that would be too heavy-handed." David Daley finds out what the blues-fueled trio did instead: record the ass-shakin' *Acme*.

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"I took this whole identity clash, in my personality and music, as an advantage. I found all the things that frustrated me, and turned them into something beautiful." The DJ/tabla player who introduced the sounds of London's Asian underground to Americans talks about his debut album, *O.K.*, with Kurt B. Reighley.



alanis morissette
supposed former infatuation junkie

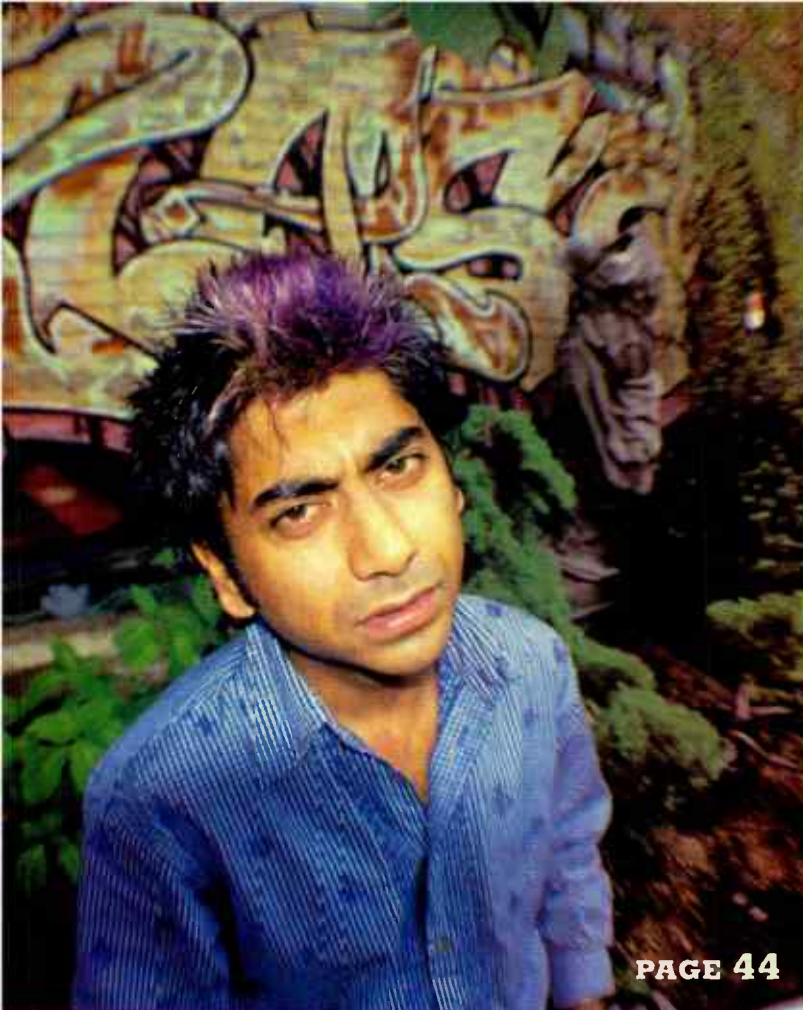


DAN PATRICK
SPORTSCENTER ANCHOR



SPORTSCENTER

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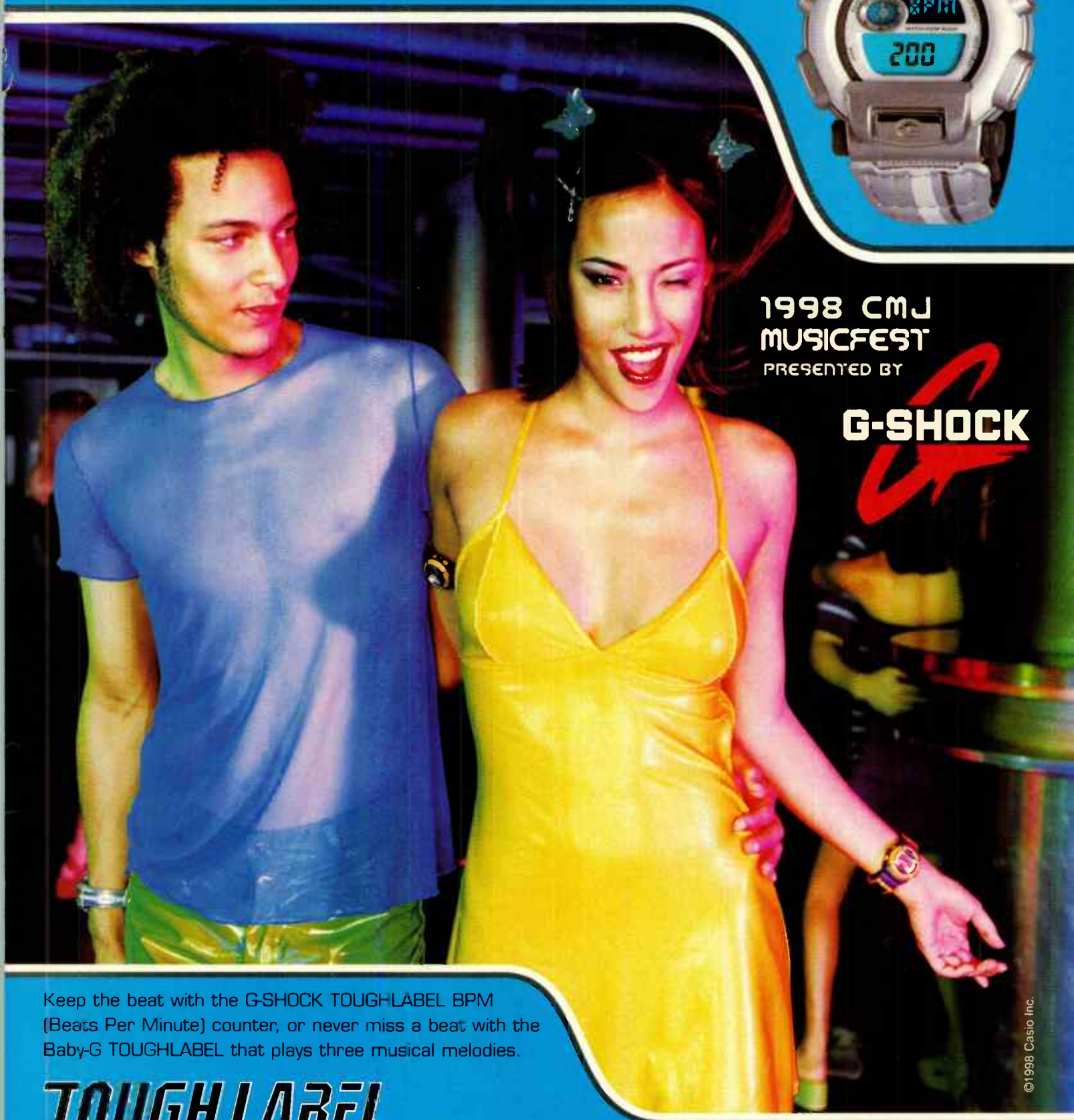
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Please Mr. Postman

Will you please give me information on the proper way (name, address, department, etc.) to submit an album for review consideration. Thank you for your time.

Jeffrey Thomas

Yes, we get emails, cards, letters and phone calls all the time asking this question, so aspiring rock stars take note: All artists interested in submitting their releases for review consideration should send them to CMJ New Music Monthly, 11 Middle Neck Road, Ste. 400, Great Neck, NY 11021, attn.: Scott Frampton. They should also bear in mind this caveat: We receive, on average, 100 CDs per week, and review only 40-50 releases a month, which is to say that the law of averages is not on your side. Another option is to send an additional copy (the kids in this play group don't share well) to CMJ New Music Report at the address above, attn.: Reviews. The NMR is our sister magazine (with whom we're often confused, for obvious reasons) and a college and alternative radio trade journal that reviews about 20 records each week, in addition to spotlighting unsigned bands in its "A&R Pick" column. —Ed.

His sweet Lord

All I have to say is CMJ New Music Monthly rocks. I don't subscribe to the magazine, because I never have the money at one time, but whenever I go out I make sure I have \$5 to buy this mag. I love this magazine because I love hearing the new and upcoming music that my friends will hear 2-3 months after I do. Thanks to CMJ, I was introduced to Mary Lou Lord's music. I heard she was touring with Lilith Fair so I was sure I got tickets. I saw her and approached her at Lilith Fair and got her autograph before she played. She signed my ticket stub. Then after she played everyone knew who she was and wanted her autograph. Thanks to CMJ, I got to meet her before anyone else there did. Thanks CMJ for introducing me to awesome bands!

Dan Reisdorf
Buffalo, NY

I'll answer a few letters once I'm no longer paralyzed by the image of ex-offensive lineman and current offensively verbose commentator for ABC's Monday Night Football, Dan Dierdorf, whom I'd originally thought had sent this letter, getting an autograph from Mary Lou Lord at Lilith Fair. —Ed.

Wonderama

I was wondering if someone could answer a question for me. On the October disc, Everlast's "What It's Like" has the "objectionable" words obscured. How come? Is this the radio-play version on the disk? Is this how the song was originally produced? Just curious.

Dave Byrd

"What It's Like," like many of the songs on the disc, is a radio version of the album track. The idea isn't to remove any of the seven naughtyies; radio versions are mixed to stand out among other songs—as opposed to flowing with the rest of an album—and as such are generally preferred by all concerned. For

those readers who feel they are missing out on the profanity, it is suggested that they ask the editor's feelings about NBA commissioner David Stern, or squeeze the toothpaste from the middle. —Ed.

A cute amnesia

I have been buying your magazine at the news stand for six months now. I really don't know what I did before then. Living in a small Midwestern town has its good points, but when it comes to keeping on top of new music, it can be like swimming with rocks in your pockets. If it weren't for CMJ New Music Monthly, I would be hearing Led Zep for the thousand and first time. Not that there is any wrong with Zep, just not hourly.

Jonathan Rees

Golden archness

Not only did you fail to mention the masterful Happy Rhodes' 10th album, *Many Worlds Are Born Tonight*, in your August 11th releases, but you missed the golden opportunity to list Ms. Rhodes as a member of your Happy, Happy, Joy, Joy "Tour We'd Like To See." Snafu!

Sharon Nichols
Woodstock, NY
terra@ulster.net

Soap Opera

I just purchased the September issue of CMJ New Music Monthly. I was extremely surprised and very impressed. Not only did the CD kick serious posterior but so did the magazine, especially "Telebuddies [sic] VS Spice Girls." It was very impressive. I think we should all be thankful we don't look like half-dressed cheese girls or seriously deformed chocolate cookies. Keep up the Crappy Soap Carvings.

Jennifer Crouse
Liverpool, Nova Scotia
Canada

Animabag

Sometimes some of the people have evil eyes but sometimes they can kiss you like an angel in the sky upon your sleeping soul that lies beneath the rivers that run dry through the hatred of your mind but still sleep with an absolute peacefulness that only exists in the darkest corner of your subconscious beautiful mind. 11-11 are your numbers. CMJ music fills the soul!

mymedkile@aol.com

And the pharmacist fills the prescription. —Ed.

Man of few words

No more fashion spreads.

Rodney Hurst
RRHurst@AOL.Com

Man of fewer words

boring mag

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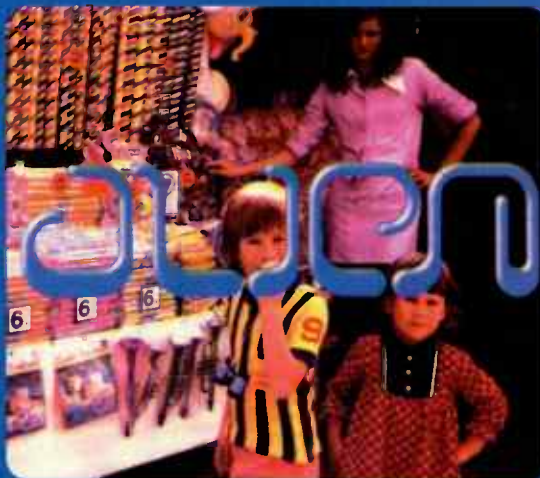
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SLAP



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"Inspiring is putting it mildly! This one isn't coming out of the CD player" -DJ magazine

"It's time to fall in love with music again" -XLR8R

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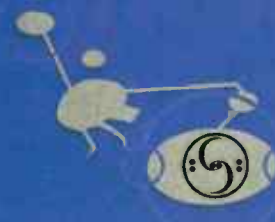
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World Radio History



BY TOM LANHAM



Metal Machine Musik

Before Trent Reznor ever scraped metal against metal, German collective EINSTÜRZENDE NEUBAUTEN was using power drills and blowtorches to forge a modern, industrial music. After a nearly six-year hiatus, the band reinvents itself, again.

It wasn't *Evil Dead II*, but it was certainly close. Last August, in his medieval-castle hideout in Mistelbach, Austrian conceptual artist Hermann Nitsch presented a controversial piece he'd been working on for years: a six-day 'Bloodbath Festival' in which bulls and pigs were sacrificed, their entrails crushed beneath the feet of 100 select 'students' and huge canvasses spattered with the pulpy guts. Countless animal-rights activists flew in to protest the event, including Brigitte Bardot, who urged Austria to ban what she termed a "Satanic spectacle." As he'd done for most of his career with the, ahem, *visceral Orgies Mysteries Theatre*, Nitsch offended practically everyone with this intensely cruel art.

Everyone, that is, but Blixa Bargeld, who was kicking himself over a Bloodbath invite that—thanks to a heavy tour schedule as guitarist for Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds—arrived two weeks too late. "I would have loved to have seen that," he dreamily purrs, sipping some afternoon wine in his San Francisco hotel room. "I consider Nitsch to

be a great artist, but I have, sadly, never attended any of his rare performances. And talking about Nitsch is one thing, because it sounds like gore, sounds like blood and all that. But that's not what it's about—it's about *life* and about transcending and about rush, or," he slips into his guttural native German, "*rausches*—about being drunk, being alive. It hasn't got anything to do with torture. It's a ritual. A big, pagan ritual!"

Bargeld, an art obsessive from way back, first became familiar with, and subtly influenced by, Nitsch in the early '80s, when his equally conceptual found-art collective Einstürzende Neubauten played a cutting-edge German exposition. "That's when I first saw a whole room of his works, remains of performances, and it touched me so profoundly I've been a fan of his work ever since," sighs the singer/power tool-operator, looking every bit the disaffected European bohemian in black pinstripe suit, shiny black dress shoes, and a mushroom-shaped painter's cap coolly cocked to one side. And he's

(Continued on page 14)

EINSTÜRZENDE NEUBAUTEN

(Continued from page 13)

sternly serious, barely cracking a smile as he discusses other modern masters like lard sculptor Josef Beuys and the late Schwartzkogler, whose artistic vision culminated in an inch-by-inch amputation of his own penis. When he fell out of a window in 1969, Bargeld says, everyone believed it to be Schwartzkogler's "last great piece of art. But that's all rubbish—it was an accident."

Another accident, according to Bargeld, was the lofty concept that launched Neubauten from a decidedly decadent (and then wall-divided) Berlin back in 1980. Several cuts on the group's new *Ende Neu* (Nothing) rely on the whirs and clanks of everyday machinery. A thumping "Installation No. 1" features a pneumatic drill grinding against a metal sheet, and the 11-minute mantra "Nnnaaamm," its composer proudly relates, "is all machines, from motor car engines to kitchen appliances, all recorded and slowed down to match each other in speed."

Early band performances, however, gave the original meaning to the word "industrial" as it relates to music. Saws, drills, blowtorches—Bargeld and company employed almost any device capable of making a nasty noise alongside traditional rock instruments. He even once recorded himself slapping two pieces of meat together, and squeezed it into a song. Once the show ended with its typical finale—the stage being set on fire—clubs rarely invited the group back. Sure, it was dangerous, Bargeld allows. "And all the scars on my body are from Neubauten concerts, that's for sure. And I've even met people who've shown me a wound," which he pronounces *voont*, "and said 'I've been to your concert and it was great!' But we never tried to hurt anyone—not ourselves or anyone in the audience."

"Still, I don't think there was any kind of artistic decision involved in the whole thing," he continues. Asked to perform an impromptu Berlin club date, Bargeld agreed and hastily formed Einstürzende Neubauten with percussionist Andrew Unruh. Long story short: That show led to more bookings; a starving Unruh was forced to sell his drum kit, so he raided construction sites for percussive debris, and voilá! The jarring Neubauten sound—the band's name translates as "Collapsing New Buildings"—was born. "People have different motivations for why they get into this business," Bargeld frowns, finishing his wine. "But for me it was simple—I didn't have anything else." Laying down bluesy licks with old pal Nick Cave, he adds, expanded his musical horizons and "taught me what a middle eight was, taught me the basic idea of writing a song."

Not every Neubauten number has to be Nitsch-splattery grotesque, Bargeld has learned. *Ende Neu* is unusually restrained, even woven with gorgeous orchestral flourishes in places. In fact, the less-is-more philosophy also applies to his other artistic pursuit. "I photograph all the hotel bathrooms in all the hotel rooms that I stay in," Bargeld notes, pointing to his trusty camera on the nightstand. "I've got a series of 1,500 pictures of hotel bathrooms, all framed and arranged in poetic metric fashion. I've been to one in the Netherlands which had, literally, a four-meter-by-four-meter bathtub in it and a '70s-style overhead light. That was a strange bathroom." Flashbulb doesn't work? No matter, he says with something vaguely approximating a chuckle. "Even if the photo's black, I catalog it, frame it, and put the name of the hotel underneath. I'm not interested in bathrooms—that's not it. If I photographed a bed, that would be more of a personal statement. But if you photograph the stupid details of a whole bathroom, well, it's certainly not as enriched in metaphor as a bed would be. That's why I choose to do it. I wanted to do something that didn't mean anything." e n d



SADIE DAYTON

No Parking

★ Touring behind *Dressed Up Like Nebraska*, JOSH ROUSE isn't your valet anymore.

"I don't like customer service, really," says Nashville-based songwriter Josh Rouse, recalling the three years he worked as a parking valet in the country music capital of the world. "It's demeaning standing there with your hand out, waiting for a tip. You're a bottom feeder. But I guess what I do now is kind of like customer service, too."

After spending most of his 26 years moving around the country (the tally now stands at seven states), Rouse moved to Nashville to attend college, but dropped out soon after. That move and his subsequent extended stint as a car-parking wage slave eventually pushed him to take a stab at songwriting.

The result of that attempt is *Dressed Up Like Nebraska* (Slow River-Rykodisc), a strikingly poised debut brimming with graceful, evocative songs about regret and desire that helped land Rouse the opening slot on Son Volt's recent tour. Not bad for a guy who, two years ago, had no intention of making a record. "Everything happened so fast," Rouse says. "We started doing the record in a living room on my eight-track. I didn't really have any expectations for the record—I was really insecure about it, actually. I thought, 'Ugh! Nobody's going to like it.'"

The album, co-produced by Cowboy Junkies tour alumnus David Henry (who helped out on bass, cello and background vocals), features a lushly romantic landscape of acoustic guitars, brushed drums, violin and Wurlitzer organ that help frame tender, exquisite songs like "Suburban Sweetheart," "Flair" and the lovely title track. The rural melancholy of Rouse's storytelling recalls fellow Midwesterner Freedy Johnston's stark prairie twang, but there's also an undercurrent of restlessness and longing that suggests Rouse's own experiences.

"I don't like to think too much about the songs, I try to just let them come. But yeah, I think some of them have to do with moving around and being kind of Nomadic," he allows. "For the next record, I'm trying to go for something more up-tempo—well, what I consider to be up-tempo is probably mid-tempo to most people."

>>> Jonathan Perry



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Label Profile

Start with revered producer Joel Dorn, who has worked with the likes of Roberta Flack, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, the Allman Brothers and Bette Midler, and whose production credits have netted him eight Grammy Awards. Add the Muse/Landmark jazz label and its nearly 600 titles of underexposed jazz greats like Pete Sims, Phil Woods and Sonny Stitt. Throw in some hand-picked classics from the Rhino/Atlantic jazz catalogue and a retail pricing policy that keeps releases at about half the price of most CDs, and you'll wind up with 32 Records, which deliberately carries the same number worn by so many great athletes (Sandy Koufax, Magic Johnson, OJ Simpson). The label was launched in 1996 and now boasts four imprints: 32 Jazz, 32 Blues, 32 R&B and 32 Pop And Hip. Current releases include a Judy Garland box set, which includes four CDs, a 30-minute video and 100-page book; *A Standing Eight*, the label's third Rahsaan Roland Kirk release for 1998, and *The Forgotten Angel*, a retrospective of the Drifters' frontman Clyde McPhatter.

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jazz

Weird Record Of The Month

The story goes like this: An antiquities researcher in New York's Metropolitan Museum Of Art discovers that two ancient scrolls contain what looks like music notation written in an obscure Egyptian style from the Fifth Century AD. Further research uncovers that the title page translates as "Holy Hymns" and that the music is an Egyptian rendering of Ptolemy's "music of the spheres." Then, after the music is finally deciphered, transcribed and recorded, someone breaks into the home of the chief researcher and steals everything of significance to said music of the spheres (significantly, all other valuables in the house were left untouched). The tapes and parchments are never recovered, but a sole surviving cassette copy (belonging to another scholar, poorly dubbed on a cheap machine) was eventually located and used to make *MUSIC FROM 5TH CENTURY COPTIC MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE COLLECTION OF H. ARAM GULEZYAN* (Global Village). This isn't "world music" but real pagan stuff—wordless chanting, microtonal riffs, and some kind of weirdly-tuned lute or oud with space-echo slathered all over it—that makes *Psychic TV* or *Current 93* sound like Jewel.

>>> James Lion

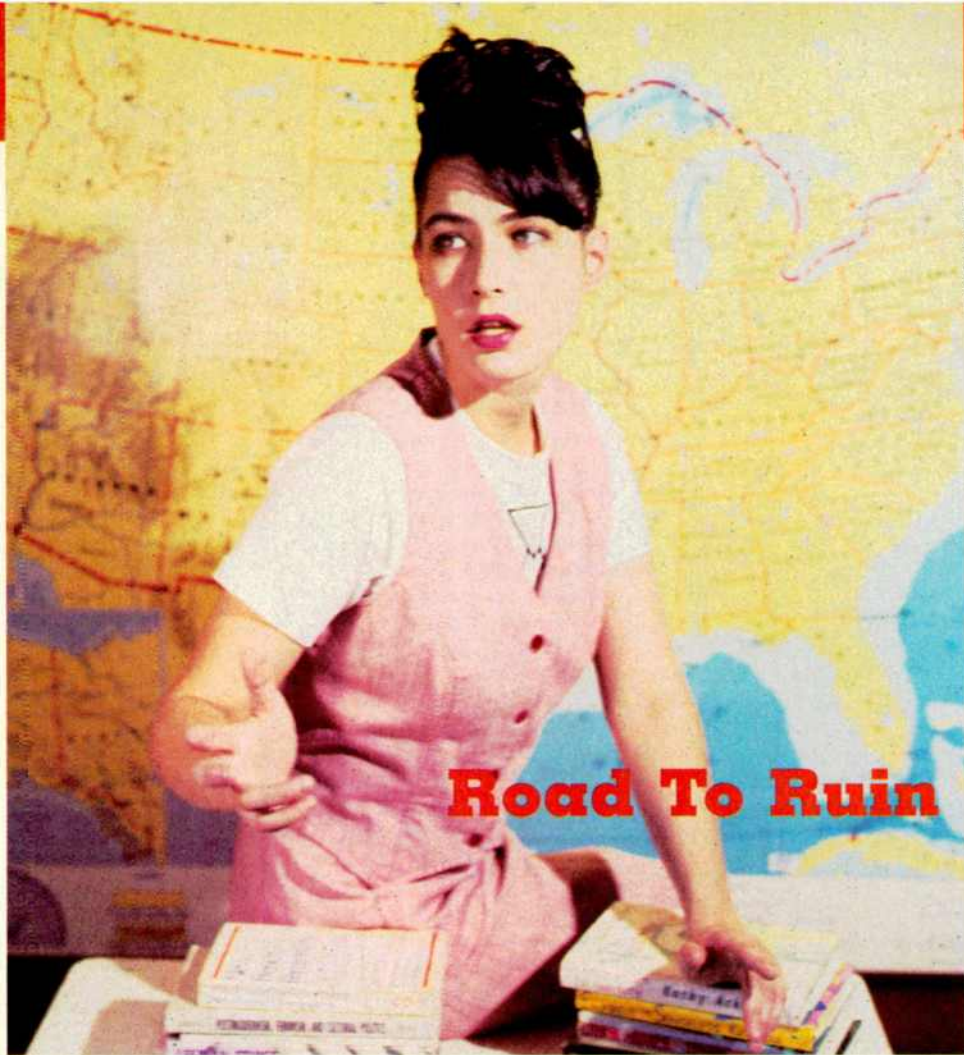
Tours We'd Like To See

WHAT'S FOR DINNER TOUR They Eat Their Young, the Donner Party, Cannibal Corpse, Soylent Green, Dog Eat Dog, Pop Will Eat Itself, Fine Young Cannibals, And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead, Dinner's Ruined.

Inspirational Verse

"What makes you think that it won't grow back in a day or two?/Husbands in winter, they know the truth but what can they do?/Don't like girls the way they are so shave their legs and make them look movie stars/Then we can pretend it's natural."

>>> Pedro The Lion, "When They Really Got To Know You They Will Run"



TAMMY RAE GARLAND

Road To Ruin

Original riot grrrl Kathleen Hanna plugs in a sampler and reinvents herself as JULIE RUIN

Now that political punk band Bikini Kill has called it quits, fans should by all means seek out the new record from BK frontperson Kathleen Hanna, whose alter ego Julie Ruin has just released a self-titled album on Kill Rock Stars (also look for a new Frumpies album this fall from her old bandmates). *Julie Ruin* is 15 tracks that are fun (yes, fun), creative, raw and compelling.

"I wanted to do it myself," says the green-eyed Hanna, who recorded the album in her apartment, and at times whispered vocals so as not to wake her neighbors. She holed up with an old eight-track reel-to-reel, a borrowed sampler and other toys. "I wanted to learn more about what the knobs do. Doing it myself I learned what I want things to sound like and how I want it to sound, and was questioning why I would think one thing sounded better than another. I mastered the record with Chris Stamey [from the dB's]. I learned so much from him; it was like total psychic connection."

In the persona of Ms. Ruin, Hanna tackles C-86 punk pop on "The Punk Singer," pulls a Puff Daddy on "I Wanna Know What ♡ Is" (giving a new twist to the old Foreigner song) and sings about having an imaginary friend on "Tania." There are moments that recall Bikini Kill, as well as Digital Hardcore Recordings music, karaoke and even the Cars.

The articulate feminist also explored new ways of getting her ideas across, on songs such as "Aerobicide," "A Place Called Won't Be There" and "Crochet." Her lyrics were selected more for texture than verbal communication, though she should be commended for their punch and originality. "Instead of saying 'I am sad. I am sad. I am really sad because you broke my heart,' I wanted the song to sound like that. I wanted it to make you feel that. I wanted to be like Disney and manipulate you and see if I knew how to do it, just to see. I didn't want to rely on language as the only form of communication."

As she's developed as a writer, she's learned how to edit herself. "I had a shitload of words like I always have, or ideas for songs or just a title, or 'I'm going to write about this.' But that was the great thing about the Julie Ruin record. I didn't have it all planned out at all. It just sort of developed. Most of the songs I just turned on the tape player. The song 'Tania' just wrote itself. That was my first take and I had no idea what was going to happen." >>> Gail O'Hara

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Bloc-rockin' Beats

PAUL van DYK's melodic dance music escapes from East Berlin

If German DJ Paul van Dyk's music, with its gripping melodic progressions pulsing above soft drum machine rhythms, seems uplifting, consider its source. Van Dyk spent his formative years east of the Berlin wall, a small transistor radio his only connection to music and life on the other side. Today he plays thundering, precise sound systems around the globe for throngs of appreciative clubgoers.

"We couldn't buy records in East Germany," he says in halting English. "Outside of politically correct ones for our communist government, which meant basically East German artists. That music wasn't really interesting at all. The way I could listen to music and keep up with the world was via West Berlin radio stations. It was basically illegal, but everybody did it."

Taking that risk provided van Dyk with a solid education in new wave that's become integral to his own music. "I'm trying to capture the emotions tracks from the Smiths and New Order had, and bring that into the '90s. And if you have enough fantasy to make your own mind up—how could someone develop from that and make his own music from an electronic, techno-y, trance-y base—then it's probably worth checking it out."

Which Americans have begun doing at his bi-monthly marathon sets at Twilo, the New York City club famous for international DJs spinning off-the-presses techno and house. When van Dyk began his residency this past August, he joined a rotation that includes Brits Carl Cox and the Sasha & Digweed tandem.

"I'm really, really honored, and I'm really proud of it," says van Dyk. "I'm always giving my best when I'm DJing, but when I'm there, I know what kind of responsibility I have."

Further bringing Americans up to speed with his work, Mute is releasing two van Dyk albums—1994's *45 RPM* and '96's *Seven Ways*, both successes in the UK—Stateside for the first time, and expects to issue his third LP, *Avenues Of Stars*, in April. "As a DJ, I'm

always in the studio producing tracks, doing remixes, and then I'm out and playing to the people," says van Dyk. "It's something really, really special if you play one of your own tracks and the people really react to it. That brings it all back together. You know why you're doing it. It could be the best track in the world, but if no one hears it, who cares?"

>>> William Werde



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Alec Empire's DIGITAL HARDCORE RECORDINGS Goes For Dollars

Alec Empire has always raged against the machine, but lately he's become something of a pragmatist. The 26-year-old anarchy-preaching post-techno musical terrorist, whose 1996 solo record carried the ominous title *The Destroyer*, is a fledgling entrepreneur. This summer, his London-based Digital Hardcore Recordings label opened shop in America and set up an ambitious schedule with more than a dozen releases planned from the likes of EC8OR, Shizuo and his own band, Atari Teenage Riot. Once distributed by the Beastie Boys-run Grand Royal, DHR now releases its records on its own. Does this mean that Empire has capitulated to the capitalist game?

"It's a compromise for me," the German expatriate admits from his London office, "but it's a reality."

He's already displayed marketing savvy, assembling eight of his label's confrontational artists onto a compilation CD, *You've Got The Fucking Power*, that retails for a cool \$1.98. The



idea, Empire says, is to provide a sampler at an affordable price, but also to showcase the evolving Digital Hardcore movement.

"In the beginning everyone thought that every band sounded like Atari Teenage Riot, but it's not like that," he asserts. "It's important that people who don't have much money can check some of this stuff out."

Like a Columbia House for gutter punks and pent-up suburban teens, the CD entices potential consumers with blistering digital blasts from DHR's current crop. The unmentioned outcome is that the kids will step up and purchase the full-length albums.

Despite his loathing of major-label counterparts, Empire is prepared to meet consumer demand. Already on the shelves are Bomb 20's *Field Manual*, a dazzling pastiche of brash sonic outbursts and sampled pop culture snippets (Joe Pesci's lawyers be damned); Christoph De

Babalón's *If You're Into It, I'm Out Of It*, a tuneful collection of electronic blips 'n' beats sculpted into non-vocal, wavelike compositions; EC8OR's second full-length, *World Beaters*, a political tract with Patric C. and Gina V. D'Orio spewing slogans over jittery techno speed punk and covering Iggy & The Stooges' "Dirt"; and a re-release of Empire's agenda-setting *The Destroyer*.

Sounding like a proud pater, Empire declares that these and forthcoming releases will establish and propel DHR's four-pronged attack. There's what he jokingly refers to as Atari Teenage Riot's "stadium noise," necessitated by the trio's appearances in front of increasingly larger audiences over the years. Another direction is "Death Funk," an umbrella for the imprint's more DJ-oriented acts which use "riot beats, breakbeats and hardcore stuff that's more instrumental," he says. Next up is an experimental sub-genre in which acts like EC8OR, Atari Teenage Riot's Carl Crack and newcomer Nitro eschew breakbeats in favor of perpetually surging noise. Last but not least, there's DHR Fatale, a women-only segment that includes ATR's Nic Endo and the upstart duo Cobra Killer. "It has a riot grrrl pose but takes it to the next level," Empire notes.

DHR's approach to music and business may be orchestrated toward taking it to "the next level," but they'd better get there soon. Asked about the label's future, Empire self-mockingly shrugs, "The world will be destroyed in the year 2000."

>>> Richard Martin



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Random Quotes

"I think if you were to look at Marilyn Manson and think that's what Bauhaus was about, you'd be terribly mistaken. That's part of why we're here. Marilyn Manson have sort of their own agenda.... I think their work is very powerful, but I think it's very naive. I'm concerned about what they're releasing, really, which is like a sort of petulant child out of control. Marilyn Manson and Nine Inch Nails, it's a particular branch of Americana, which is sort of to pick up on something rather important and make it into something completely kitsch."

>>> PETER MURPHY, on the anxiety of influence

"In the next 10 months, we're gonna feed 10 million people.... Reach into your pockets. We have real tight pants on, but we reached into ours."

>>> Kiss's PAUL STANLEY, on the band's upcoming tour, which will raise money for the Feed The Children charity

"It's those crud-rock bands that are all such posers and can't say what they really mean. Which is why I hate them.... We're not trying to be a cool indie band. I think indie rock is nonsense, even though it's probably the school we come from. I hate that mentality. It sits around and judges itself. It has nothing to do with what rock music is about and what art is about, which is supposed to be this liberating, rebelling force. Crud is a mentality that sort of closes down on emotion and whimsy."

>>> Third Eye Blind's STEPHAN JENKINS, on...um...crud

Love And Rockets

Q&A Daniel Ash, David J and Kevin Haskins formed Love And Rockets right after the demise of Bauhaus, their previous band, in 1983. Now living in LA, Ash and J talked about their latest L&R project at a New York stop on Bauhaus's recent reunion tour.

>>> Chris Molanphy

Q: I saw you for the first time in 1989 at Giants Stadium—a triple bill of the Pixies, you guys, and The Cure. You had a top-five American pop hit, "So Alive," and the British gothic-rock sound pioneered by Bauhaus was at a peak. Was that a great time for Love And Rockets?

J: It was initially a great time, and it very quickly became an awful time. It was great because of the recognition—we've never been shy of that kind of commercial success, if on our own terms. But then we did a two-leg American tour, and we were going against having to play the hit



single—that whole syndrome—and doing a whole set of improvisation. And there's all these girls in the front row waiting to hear [the hit]. The Pixies seemed to like it! But we pulled back and said, "Well, we have to play it." So we played the songs again, all mechanical. And that's when it got bad, going through the motions. What we want from a gig is to be transported, and we felt we weren't giving that to these people who'd paid good money to come and see us.

Q: Is it strange touring as Bauhaus while promoting a very current-sounding Love And Rockets album?

J: Yes, it is odd. But it's not as strange as we thought it would be. I think it's something to do with the fact that the Bauhaus stuff feels really contemporary. When we do the Bauhaus set, we don't feel like we're on a nostalgia trip at all; we feel like we're playing vital, contemporary music. Though when we three are together with Bauhaus, we are different.

Ash: It takes care of itself, to be honest. All it takes is for one person to leave the room—that being Pete [Murphy, Bauhaus singer]—and then the chemistry in the room is really different, pretty instantly.

Q: But the way you timed it, coming back after we in America had our love affair with grunge and guitars...

Ash: It's weird, that. Because it was fortunate timing, but it was completely not planned. If we'd carried on when Nirvana "happened," we would have looked a bit silly. We happened to just take a break at that time—our gut said we needed to stop.

J: We couldn't have carried on in the same way, anyway, because we were getting into electronic dance music.

Q: By the way, what did the "F.A." in 1996's *Sweet F.A.* stand for?

Ash & J: Fuck all.

J: We were down to zero at the time. We hoped it would seem ironic.

Ash: It really was apt, that title.

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BECK

Mutations

DGC

This is a really great record. That may not be the most artful way to begin a discussion of Beck's latest, but given the protestations made by everyone involved that this is *not* a follow-up to *Odelay*, the sentiment is kind of inescapable. While Beck's past successes should in no way forever confine him to sound collages and Dust Bros. beats, it would be almost unreasonable to expect a record that's such a departure from that sound to also be one of the finer records of the year. Which *Mutations* is. Tinged with folk and country, it most resembles the mellow gold of '70s album-rock radio. Backed by his touring band, Beck finds a warm and expressive voice, skipping through the bossa nova of "Tropicalia" or warbling through the comedown psyche of "Nobody's Fault But My Own"; the catchiest track, "Bottle Of Blues," even finds him sounding a bit like *Man Who Sold The World*-era Bowie. The record is decidedly low-key—the tempos all range from slow dance to waltz—which makes it all the easier for its melodies and phrases to get wedged in your head. Beck may now be hard at work on the "real" follow-up to *Odelay*, but it's *Mutations* that offhandedly cements his place as one of the premier talents in pop music.

>>> Scott Frampton



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Ft. Lake

4AD

If you've ever experienced one of those late-night college radio epiphanies, when some disc jockey segues all sorts of unpredictable songs from different times and styles and somehow makes them sound right together even though they shouldn't, you have some sense of what it's like to listen to His Name Is Alive. HNIA fans expect abrupt stylistic shifts within and between songs, but *Ft. Lake* holds surprises for even longtime devotees. For example, "The Waitress," which mastermind Warren Defever calls a "New Wave song," alternates verses between a classic "Can't Explain" guitar riff and a synth-pop re-imagining, and adds a rockist guitar solo. After "Waitress" comes Lovetta Pippen's R&B diva turn on the Prince-ly slow groove "No Hiding Place Down Her," then the catchy melodic pure pop of bassist Chad Gilchrist's "Can't Always Be Loved," then the Funkadelic/Hendrix guitar jam "Wish I Had A Wishing Ring," then the bounce of "Red Haired Girl." If this sounds dizzying, it is—but HNIA's genius is in juxtaposing pieces: the songs are crafty constructions, but the album they build becomes the major attraction. Although Karin Oliver's coolly detached voice connects *Ft. Lake* to previous HNIA albums, the bouncy pop, the guitar jams, and the soulful grooves mark this as the band's most diverse and most spirited achievement.

>>> Steve Klingle



OUT: November 3.
FILE UNDER:
 Unpredictable eclecticism.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Adventures In Stereo, Magnetic
 Fields.

DEEP DISH

Junk Science

Arista

What production secrets turn a house track into a "dance anthem," recognizable for its ability to unite a dance floor in a frenzied bliss? There's no one set of prerequisites, but Washington, DC's Deep Dish seems to have it down to a science; *Junk Science*, if you will. This album catches the DC duo of Ali "Dubfire" Shirazinia and Sharam Tayebi mid-stride, fresh from the success of last year's club hit "Stranded" (included here) and with high expectations for their debut LP. The group doesn't stray far from house staples of piano, sax and strings flourishes, hi-hat underpinnings and soothing vocals. "The Future Of The Future (Stay Gold)" pairs airy keyboard melodies with the impossibly beautiful voice of Everything But The Girl's Tracey Thorn. Richard Morel's soft croon adds a velvety new wave feel to the aforementioned "Stranded," the dour "My Only Sin" and the ultra-catchy "Mohammad Is Jesus." "Chocolate City (Love Songs)" is a smoothly textured acid jazz groove until four minutes in, when—bam!—it's on a whole other level, the track's wailing sax matched perfectly by a hard house kick. Deep Dish's formula of flawless engineering, some help from talented friends and a beautiful aesthetic worked for an anthem, so why not a whole album?

>>> William Werde



OUT: August 25.
FILE UNDER:
 House may have a future.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Danny Tenaglia, Underworld,
 Everything But The Girl remixes.



FATBOY SLIM

You've Come a Long Way, Baby

Astralwerks

OUT: October 20.

FILE UNDER:

Party-ready DJ pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Chemical Brothers, Bently

Rhythm Ace, Coldcut.

Sample alchemist Norman Cook (ex-Housemartins) is at it again, trying to get the whole world to dance like it's never danced before. *You've Come a Long Way, Baby*, his follow-up to *Better Living Through Chemistry*, boasts the hit "The Rockefeller Skank," which splices surf guitar, heavy beats and a line from Lord Finesse ("Right about now/The funk soul brother") over and over until it coalesces into a dance party. The vocoder-ridden goof of "Kalifornia" sounds like Salt-N-Pepa's "Push It" peppered with rubbery blips and an accusatory sample ("Druggie," it says). "Soul Surfing" lives up to its name, rife with glistening wet loops of small ocean waves stretched out and plied over themselves like actual salt water taffy. The irrepressible "You're Not From Brighton" mates Cypress Hill with Tom Tom Club and a Montell Jordan-like "Here we go" for maximum disco rock antics. "Love Island" hits with the hardest house beats, but softens the blows with a swirly organ and cherubic bell tones. When Fatboy's shaking a sample by the nape, he sometimes just kills it. He also isn't a master at building tension within the piles of repetition. What matters is whether you're dancing right now or not. As the man in the "Acid 8000" sample says, "If this don't make your booty move, your booty must be dead."

>>> Anne Marie Cruz



AMY RIGBY

Middlescence

Koch

OUT: September 15.

FILE UNDER:

Single mom rock 'n' roll.

R.I.Y.L.:

Continental Drifters, Liz Phair,

Lucinda Williams.

On *Middlescence*, the worthy sequel to 1996's perfect *Diary Of A Mod Housewife*, Amy Rigby confronts the quandaries facing a struggling thirty-something single parent needing, as she asserts in the jaunty "Calling Professor Longhair," "sex and sympathy." She's mining territory unfamiliar to most other former indie-rockers (Rigby was in the Shams and Last Roundup) by writing narratives of daily life, and she's at her best when she's most explicitly personal, describing the dilemma of bringing home a boyfriend to whining kids ("What I Need"), lamenting buying clothes off the "As Is" rack, and discovering she's "Invisible" to men more interested in leering at her daughter. She's so sharp a writer that, on a song about the "20th Anniversary" of her loss of virginity, you may flinch before her eye for detail does, but you'll still laugh at the jokes in the bonus track "Give The Drummer Some" (as in, "Tonight I'm gonna..."—Rigby was married to dB's drummer Will Rigby). With the Cars' Elliot Easton's help, she sets her witty songs to classic archetypes—a Byrds guitar here, a Beatles reference there, a bossa nova beat as a change of pace, lots of acoustic guitar. Fortunately for us, Amy Rigby's "time of life between arrested development and hard-won maturity" inspired arrestingly mature songs.

>>> Steve Klinge



ICE

Bad Blood

Morpheus-Reprise

OUT: October 20.

FILE UNDER:

Bad trip trip-hop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Tricky, the *Macro Dub Infection* series, Gravediggaz, God.

There comes a moment in most Japanese monster movies when, even as all Tokyo flees screaming, some poor idiot simply stands gibbering in the shadow of the gargantuan, too paralyzed with fear to move. That's what it's like listening to *Bad Blood*. No matter how much emotional or physical distress the second full-length from Ice evokes, hitting PAUSE isn't an option. Like leader Kevin Martin's other outfits, Techno Animal and God, this UK quintet—newly augmented by Gravediggaz/Wu-Tang alum Scott Harding on loops and samples—takes no prisoners. Lumbering, distorted drums anchor a claustrophobic fog of tortured guitar and saxophone. DJ Vadim scratches on two tracks, while Einstürzende Neubauten's Blixa Bargeld belches poison gas through three. Spectral raps from guests including El-P (Company Flow), Sebastian (New Kingdom), and Sensational (Wordsound) pop forth with menacing taunts, but even with headphones, only disturbing words and muttered phrases are discernible. Ice scares harder than any gangsta fantasy because rather than assaulting you from without, it gets inside your head, commanding complete attention, filling every available sonic crevice. And though the album features only seven cuts, Martin and friends take their evil time; you'll feel like a shirt pounded threadbare against a rock in a raging river after the 12-minute "A New Breed Of Rat."

>>> Kurt B. Reighley

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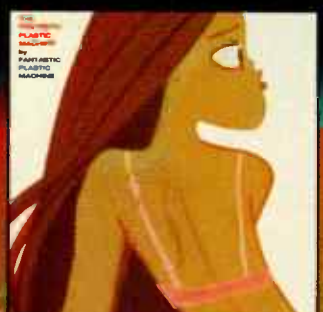
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ZOOBOMBS

World Radio History

TAKAKO MINEKAWA

CHRISSEY PIPER



JETS TO BRAZIL

Asian Dub Foundation

Dissecting the name pretty much tells the story: Asian Dub Foundation mixes Indian rhythms and instrumentation with Caribbean bass lines, and considers itself a grass-roots organization as much as a band. But from there, things about this group of five Indians and Pakistanis from East London get considerably more tricky. ADF mainly plies the samples and skittering beats of drum 'n' bass, but its stage dynamics are closer to those



of a rock band. The group's high-energy sound-clash, where tablas pile on top of breakbeats and punk, ska and surf-inspired guitar shoot through a deep current of fretless bass, wowed audiences on ADF's recent US dates, which previewed the Stateside release of *Rati's Revenge* (Slash). Proclaimed "the most important band in Britain" by the *NME*, Asian Dub Foundation will be back for more US shows beginning in the late fall. Believe the hype. >>> Scott Frampton

Jets To Brazil

Wherever it was heard, news of Jets To Brazil's formation surely elicited a collective gasp of delight from punk rock fans. After all, the group collects former members of three of the genre's recent heavy-hitters: Blake Schwarzenbach from Jawbreaker, Chris Daly from Texas Is The Reason and Jeremy Chatelain from Handsome. Its noisy pop songs are gritty and anthemic, but more quirky and angular, more allied with late '80s new wave than early '90s post-punk, than its members' earlier work. "Everyone had been trapped in a certain type of band or had gotten to a point where they felt like they were caught within a form, and this was pretty free," Schwarzenbach says. "The idea was 'anything goes.'" Shortly after Jets recorded their five-song demo, they signed to Jade Tree, which immediately sent them to Europe to open for labelmates the Promise Ring. After a brief respite at home in New York City, the trio dashed off to Memphis to record its debut album, *Orange Rhyming Dictionary*, with Jawbox's J. Robbins; that album was released at the end of October, just as the band was wrapping up its first national tour. >>> Jenny Eliscu



ZEBRAHEAD

Zebrahead

To the outside world, Orange County, California, is known for a few things: bad investments bankrupting its treasury, conservative politics, and ska-pop bands—maybe not in that order. So what does Zebrahead, winner of "Best Orange County Band" at the 1997 LA Music Awards, mix with its high-energy, punk-inspired rock? Rap. The band replaces O.C.'s natural resource of chinka-chinka rhythms with heavy guitar riffs that sprint toward radio-ready pop choruses, beckoned on by the hyper yattering of rapper Ali Tabatabee. Tabatabee's raps would never be confused with the hip-hop posturing that's also recently emerged as a trend among hard rock bands, however; his style is closer to that of the fast talker from the old Federal Express commercials than a suburban take on G-style rhyming. In fact, if there's a theme to Zebrahead, it's being comfortable with who and what you are. "The Real Thing" is as close as you get to a political statement on the band's Columbia debut, *Waste Of Mind*: "There's nothing superficial, artificial/You just get what you see." >>> Frank Mansfield

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All I Want Is You

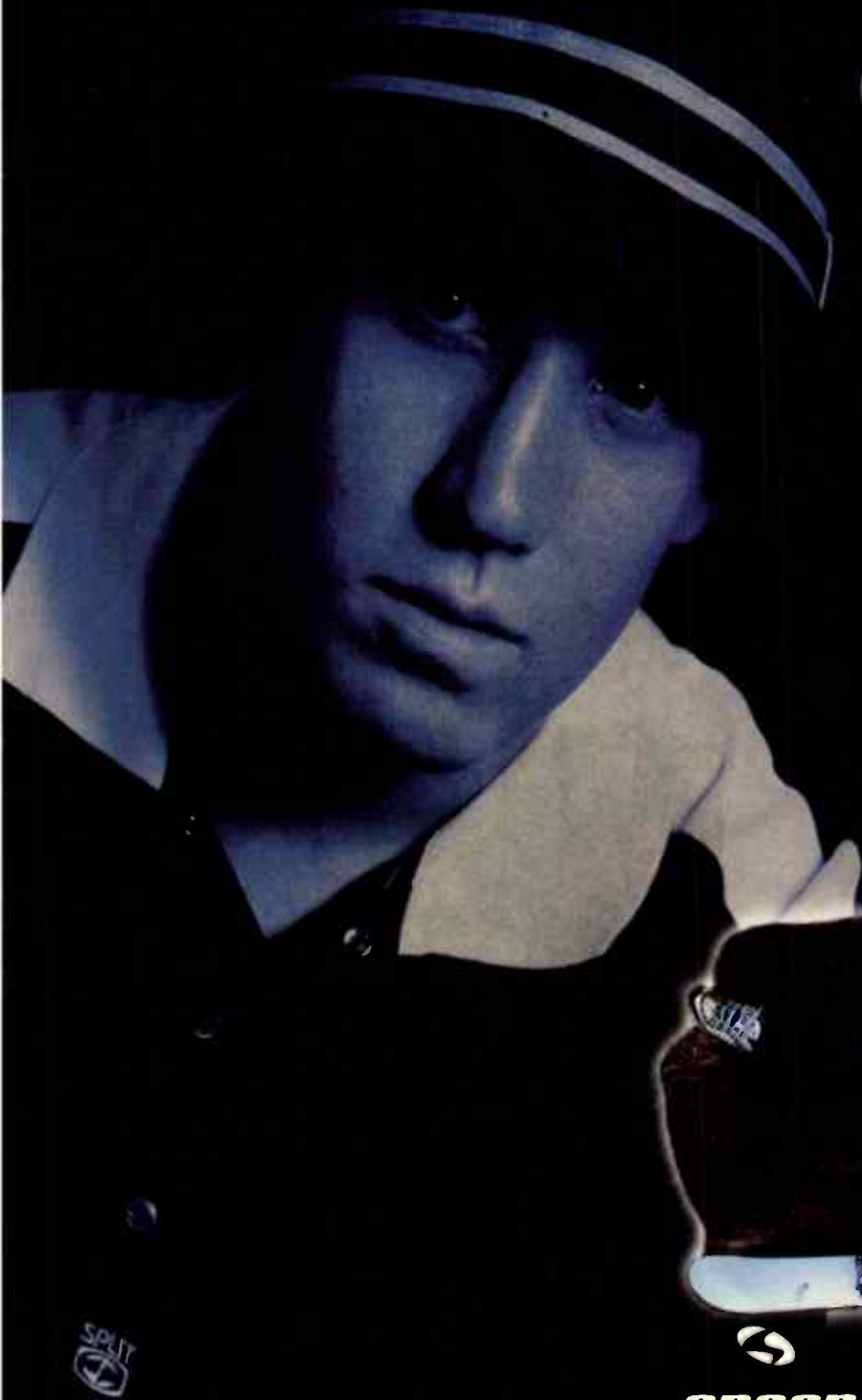
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World Radio History

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1998

**HOLIDAY
GIFT
GUIDE**



SWINGER

A PAIR OF GAP KHAKIS ALONE DOES NOT A SWINGER MAKE. OTHER THAN JITTERBUG LESSONS, HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN GIVE:

(1) Check thrift stores for cool vintage money clips (\$10), or troll stylish urban boutiques for (2) cool new Zippo lighters (\$17). Dames will need (3) metal curler clips (\$1.69) to make those Veronica Lake-style finger curls, or (4) hair chopsticks (\$5) for upsweep 'dos. (5) The original swinger's cocktail? The Highball: one part rye (Jim Beam, \$12) and four parts ginger ale. (6) *Pulp Culture's* collection of pulp novel illustrations (\$27), (7) James Elroy's *Black Dahlia* (\$5)—which opens amid the Zoot Suit Riots—and the shocking expose, (8) *The Real Bettie Page: The Truth About The Queen Of Pin-Ups* (\$16), are essential additions to any swinger's library. (9) Ain't nobody here but us chickens, and Louis Jordan's *Best Of* album (\$12). (10) Or, offer the campy bio-pic, *The Benny Goodman Story*.



raver

WHILE IT'S PROBABLY BEST TO LET DISCERNING RAVERS PICK OUT THEIR OWN BODY PIERCINGS, HAIR COLORS AND PHAT PANTS, THESE GIFTS WILL LIGHT UP THEIR EYES LIKE A GLOWSTICK:

She-ravers will stay cool and stylish in their **(1)** Liquid Sky tank top (\$20), and **(2)** Adidas-style workout pants from Old Navy (\$14). And anyone can be the life of the party with her own **(3)** laser-light pen (\$40, Radio Shack). **(4)** A water bottle with shoulder holster (\$17) and **(5)** some vitamin C candies (\$.50) will keep your loved one hydrated and groovin' till sunrise. Or, bolster the home studio with the **(6)** Vestax PMC17 DJ Mixer (\$319) or **(7)** ReBirth 2.0 (\$199) emulation software. The aspiring house party host will need **(8)** Tommy Boy's *Greatest Beats* (\$70 for the four-CD box set), **(9)** Moonshine's *Classic Rave* (\$14), and **(10)** Sasha & Digweed's *Northern Exposure I & II* (\$30 for both). Raver history buffs will want **(11)** Matthew Collin's *Altered State* (\$14) and **(12)** Simon Reynolds's *Generation Ecstasy* (\$18), or a subscription to **(13)** *Mixmag UK* (\$100, 6 mos.), which will give them a peek at techno's up-and-comers.





PUNK ROCK GIRL

WHETHER THEIR GRRRLS OR WOMYN, NEWBIE MEMBERS OF THE SECOND SEX'S PUNK SCENE WILL NEED CERTAIN ESSENTIAL ITEMS:

(1) A tube of any of Fudge hair-dye's funky colors (\$14) and **(2)** a piece of body jewelry (prices vary; this ten-gauge hoop: \$30) are fashionably N.O.W. **(3)** The 'zine- or flyer-making gal will put you first on her mailing list if you get her a \$20 Kinko's copy card. The record collection requires **(4)** Team Dresch's *Personal Best*, **(5)** Bikini Kill's new *Singles* collection, **(6)** B.K. alum Kathleen Hanna's solo record, *Julie Ruin*, and **(7)** the inventive and scary album by The Need. (Approximately \$12 each.) Necessary reading material includes **(8)** Lorrie Sprecher's punk lesbian novel, *Sister Safety Pin* (\$10), **(9)** *Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings* (\$11) and, for some background on punk's roots, **(10)** *Blank Generation Revisited: The Early Days Of Punk Rock* (\$16).



goth

NOW THAT BAUHAUS IS BACK TOGETHER, GOTH COUNTERCULTURE IS CREEPING BACK OUT OF ITS COFFIN. HERE'S WHAT TO GET THE MORBID LITTLE NIGHT-CRAWLER IN YOUR LIFE:

Goth is a very high-maintenance look. Pick up: **(1)** Sebastian's Molding Mud (\$15) and **(2)** Nice 'N' Easy's blue-black dye for the hair; **(3)** L'Oreal's Linear Intense (\$7) for the eyes; **(4)** one of Manic Panic's deep, dark shades like "Black Witch" for the lips (\$8); **(5)** black nail polish (Wet 'N' Wild, \$1.29); **(6)** clove cigarettes (\$2.50) for the mouth; **(7)** a great big crucifix pendant for the neck; and **(8)** a black fishnet sleeveless shirt for the torso (\$19). For the brain, offer **(9)** Nick Cave's novel, *And The Ass Saw The Angel* (\$5), **(10)** Bauhaus's new best-of record, *Crackle* (\$13), **(11)** Siouxsie And The Banshees's classic *Once Upon A Time—Singles* (\$14), **(12)** one of the many LPs from England's goth-folk trio, *Current 93* (we chose *Swastikas For Goddy*, \$22 on import), and **(13)** the movies *Lost Boys* (\$12) and **(14)** *The Hunger* (\$15) on video to help while away the daylight hours spent indoors. All of which goes better with a dark, blood-red bottle of wine, like this **(15)** Australian Shiraz (\$12).





roots rocker

YOU CAN'T GIFT WRAP THE GREAT OUTDOORS (AND WHO WANTS TO CHANCE CORRECTLY SIZING A PAIR OF COWBOY BOOTS?) BUT HERE ARE SOME MORE ATTAINABLE GIFTS FOR YOUR PARD'NER:

Every urban cowboy needs stylin' duds, so lasso yourself **(1)** a vintage cowboy shirt, preferably one with either shiny snaps, fancy lapel embroidery, or both, and **(2)** a rugged brown belt to hold up his dark, stiff jeans. For the gals, **(3)** a dainty gingham shirt is perfect. Prices for these items vary, depending on whether you score them at a Salvation Army (sample price: \$8) or a more expensive vintage specialty store (sample price: \$40). For schoolin' in alternative country music's roots, throw in **(4)** The Flying Burrito Brothers' *Farther Along: Best Of* (\$10), **(5)** Uncle Tupelo's classic *No Depression* (named for the Carter Family song, and namesake to the hep alt.country fanzine), **(6)** The Mavericks' new LP, *Trampoline* (\$12), **(7)** Woody Guthrie's autobiography, *Bound For Glory* (\$12), and **(8)** George Jones's *I Lived To Tell It All* (\$5). Plus, **(9)** a US road atlas is a must-have for the ramblin' man (\$9).



ALL PHOTOS BY JOHN GIBSON

Most of the books and CDs mentioned here are available from Amazon.com (www.amazon.com) or CDnow (www.cdnow.com)



1998 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

sound money

(Continued from page 36)

"Lots of people can make mix tapes, and know about music, and have 2,000 CD libraries at home," concedes Granquist. But can they stroll into Sizzler and know what tunes complement an unlimited salad bar? "The hardest part is justifying [a selection]. Not just 'this is a really cool song,' but rather 'this song has acoustic instruments that sound warm and inviting like the wood on the paneling.'"

Not all businesses opt to farm out their in-store programming. Philadelphia-based clothier Urban Outfitters relies on its own Music Promotions Director, Edward Brogna. "Everyone here is aware of the importance of the music in the stores. We try to make an inviting environment for the shoppers, and music plays an important part in most of the clientele's life."

Brogna interacts with all 31 Urban Outfitters to make sure the full-length promotional CDs he sends them (solicited from labels or bands) reflect national and local trends within their lifestyle niche. "Each store has a music contact," he explains. "We'll discuss what the local music scene is like, what the trends are within that region. I'm always up to date with what the stores decide about music, based on their clientele."

Urban Outfitters integrates music in other ways, too. In the past the chain has held special contests and promotions for artists like Beck, the Roots, and DJ Cam. Earlier this year, Urban Outfitters sponsored a mini-tour by Rebecca Gates of the Spinanes. During music conventions like Austin, Texas's South By Southwest,

individual stores have hosted performers including Damien Jurado; others periodically bring in local DJs to spin during business hours.

If those either within or outside have done their job well, and you've come to expect to hear certain sounds at your favorite store, companies can extend their brand image further by offering that music for sale, even though that's not their stock in trade. AEI routinely creates compilations for Starbucks, Eddie Bauer and Old Navy; with selections by The Grid, Xavier Cugat, Jeff Buckley, and Wyclef Jean, the company's Banana Republic *Roadtrip 1* collection outshines most of the compilations you'd find in record stores.

But while retailers have been ahead of radio and MTV in programming breakthrough artists including Fiona Apple, the Cardigans and Squirrel Nut Zippers, that's not a concern for the folks selecting the songs. Still, there's some satisfaction when the music industry figures out what they've known all along: There are specific audiences waiting for almost any artist. It just requires research to pinpoint them.

"One of the things I love about this job is we're filling a void for music that's not fitting into any specific radio format," concludes Pronga from AEI, smiling. "It's not cookie cutter music, yet it's perfect for all these different environments. And if something gets played in a place like The Gap, which has a thousand locations, it's going to be played three or four times a day, for a month. You have the opportunity to give this music a really high level of exposure."

end

If a van carrying melody
and distortion left Los
Angeles at 50 mph and...



a train loaded with harmony,
groove and punk left
New York City at 85 mph,

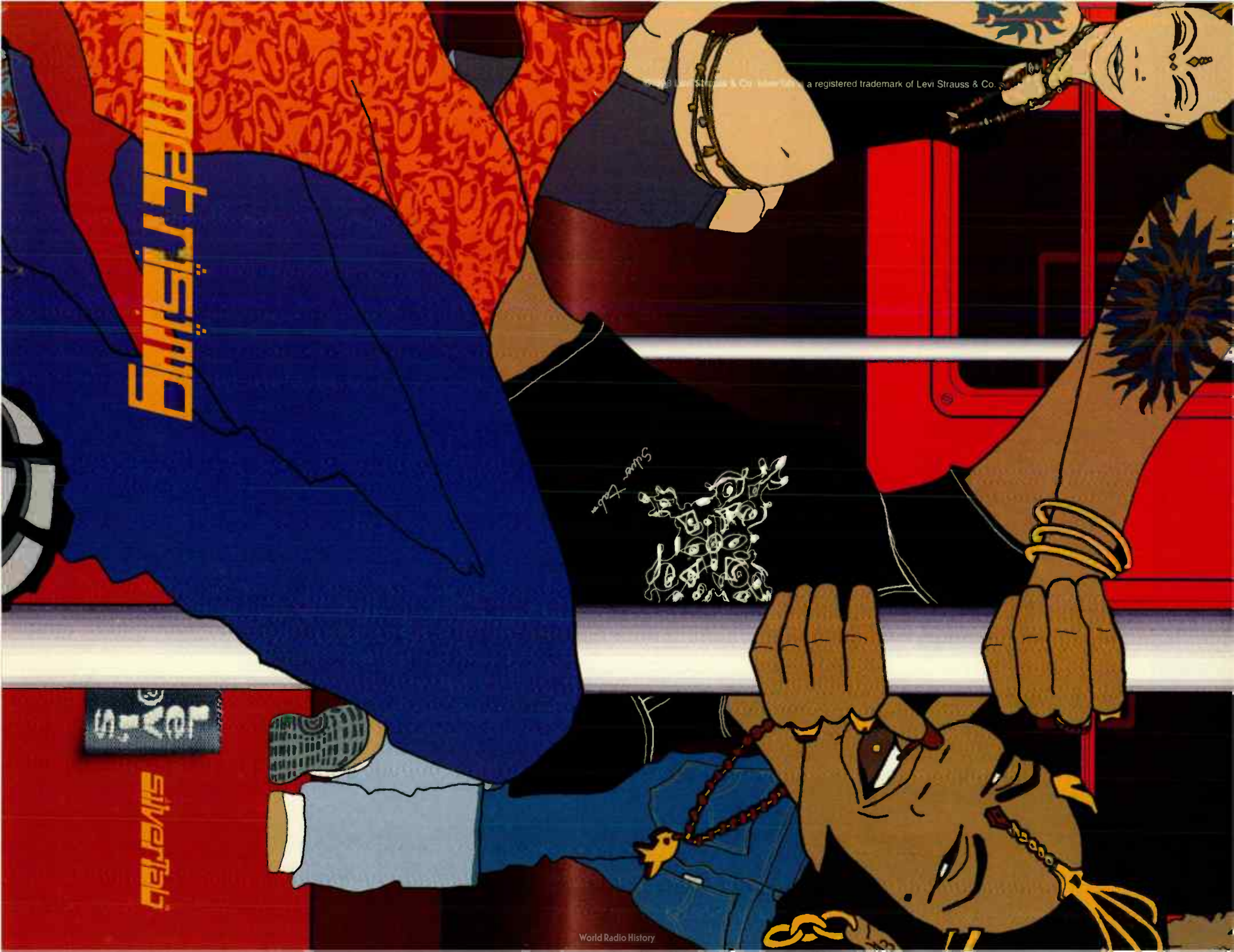


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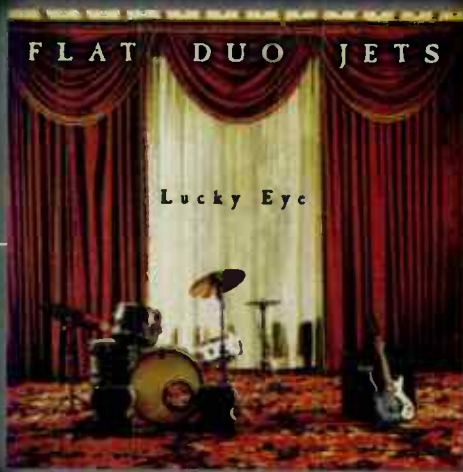
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FLAT DUO JETS

LUCKY EYE

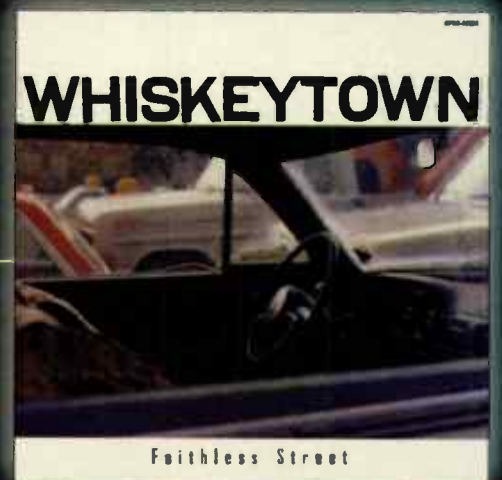
The new album is the culmination of their 14-year indie history and a bold new beginning for this legendary Chapel Hill, North Carolina, duo.



WHISKEYTOWN

FAITHLESS STREET

A reissue of their rare 1996 release including previously unreleased outtakes and early demos.



RECORDINGS

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World Radio History

Family ALBUMS

BROTHER-IN-LAW WHO'S MARRIED-WITH-TWO-KIDS

Business professional who doesn't buy much music, but loves the Mekons, XTC and Gram Parsons.

1. BILLY BRAGG & WILCO: mermaid avenue
2. RICHARD BUCKNER: since
3. LUCINDA WILLIAMS: car wheels on a gravel road
4. THE SPANANES: arches and aisles
5. JOHN MARTYN: the church with one bell

OLDER BROTHER

Beatles-lover who discovered punk rock through Dinosaur Jr., but also digs trippy psychedelia

1. MERCURY REV: deserter's songs
2. SPIRITUALIZED: ladies and gentlemen, we are floating in space
3. O-BURNS ABSTRACT MESSAGE: feng shui
4. SLOAN: navy blues
5. SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE: how it feels to be something on



foisting a music obsession on your loved ones

DISENFRANCHISED YOUNGER COUSIN

May be learning all the wrong lessons from Marilyn Manson.

1. SPAHN RANCH: in parts assembled solely
2. ADD N TO X: on the wires of our nerves
3. ATARI TEENAGE RIOT: burn, berlin, burn!
4. ROB ZOMBIE: hellbilly deluxe
5. LUNATIC CALM: metropol

YOUNGER NIECE

College radio listener who reads Harpers.

1. BELLE & SEBASTIAN: the boy with the arab strap
2. U.N.K.L.E.: psyence fiction
3. OF MONTREAL: cherry peel
4. CHEMICAL BROTHERS: brothers gonna work it out
5. STEREO LAB: aluminum tunes



OLDER SISTER

Once drove a white Camaro with Springsteen, Meatloaf and the Cars spilling from the cassette deck.

1. THIRD EYE BLIND: third eye blind
2. BRIAN SETZER ORCHESTRA: the dirty boogie
3. SEMISONIC: feeling strangely fine
4. FASTBALL: all the pain money can buy
5. AFGHAN WHIGS: 1965

ADVENTUROUS UNCLE

Likes world music, the Allman Brothers and the music between stations on NPR.

1. MEDESKI, MARTIN and WOOD: combustion
2. LAMBCHOP: what another man spills
3. BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB: buena vista social club
4. GOMEZ: bring it on
5. ERNEST RANGLIN: in search of the lost riddim





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"Your hair is a wicked color, man," beams

Talvin Singh, lightly brushing his hand over the crest of my freshly dyed fuchsia crown. I exhale a sigh of relief. Alerted to my date's sensitivity to certain shades by his handlers, I've worn neutral clothes to breakfast, but opted to forego a hat.

Confined to the back of a fashionable Soho ectery, we stick out like a pair of lost Muppets: A starburst of bright blue and violet punctuates Singh's tousled black locks. "I got ill when I did my hair red," he reveals. "Red puts too much fire in my body. And I'm a very fiery person. I've got a temper. Blue calms me down."

Since we're getting intimate, I ask the renowned percussionist to show me his hands. "They are very soft," he admits, placing his

upturned palm in mine. "I have one callus, though, right here."

I was naively expecting them to be rough as a bricklayer's from hours of drumming on his primary instrument. "The tabla is more sensual," explains Singh, demonstrating the brushing of the fingertips central to his technique on the tablecloth.

In Talvin Singh's universe, things are often much simpler than they seem on first appraisal. He can pull off this morning's outfit—which offsets a traditional Indian male wrap-skirt with high tech sneakers—with effortless aplomb because he recognizes that, no matter what your source material, you mustn't divorce an idea from its original context if you expect it to thrive within your own pan-global aesthetic.



talvin singh

the colour and the shape

A tabla master in one world and a renowned DJ in another, the figurehead of the UK's Asian Underground finds a place to be O.K.

STORY: KURT B. REIGHLEY PHOTOS: KIM APLEY

"Last night this girl said to me, 'Talvin, I really respect and dig what you're doing, the way you're mixing the Indian sound with the West,'" he recalls. "And I said, 'The reason why you like it is that I'm not actually mixing it. I'm seeing it all as one.'"

The journey that brought Talvin Singh to this moment in time has been long and colorful. Hence the title of his debut album, *O.K.* (Island) is the most common word in the world. Anchored to no one fixed point on our big blue marble, Singh's music offers a million points of entry for the curious and open-minded, regardless of national allegiance.

Featuring singers from Bombay and Okinawa, Japan, a string

orchestra from Madras, and contributions from jazz vocalist Cleveland Watkiss and bassist Bill Laswell, all framed by drum 'n' bass filigree, the music of *O.K.* has only one central constant: the man pulling the strings. "This record had to be about things that have happened in the last eight or nine years of my life," he says. "I had to pour everything in there, but in a way that people can understand it."

Singh has certainly accumulated enough experience to support his ambitious aims. As a child growing up in the East End of London he learned to play the tablas—a pair of kettledrums with goatskin heads, traditionally used in Indian music to provide drone and secondary melodic accompaniment—by listening to Bollywood LPs by

(Continued on page 46)



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talvin singh

the colour and the shape

(Continued from page 45)

composers like S.D. Burman. Later, his family shipped him off to India to study formally with a master. His current resume includes gigs playing with and/or remixing Madonna, Björk, Massive Attack, Bim Sherman and interplanetary jazz missionary Sun Ra, and the formation of a night club (Anokha) and a record label (Omni) heralded as ground zero for the so-called Asian Underground, a sound captured on last year's compilation record, *Anokha: Soundz Of The Asian Underground*.

With so many vibrant shades at his disposal, how does Singh prevent the results from emerging as just a wash of muddy brown? "For this album, the way to do it was to take loads of different ideas, about music and culture, and cultural forms, find the symbiosis, and put them together. It was like an arrangement of flowers... with some dead ones in there as well." Sunny monochromaticism doesn't interest Singh.

"On 'Eclipse,' I'm using a very spiritual mantra which isn't all nice-nice. That's the nature of the mantra." He explains that places of worship in North India are glitzy and inviting, but in the South—where this specific mantra hails from—temples are so foreboding as to provoke reflection even before you cross the threshold. "Are you ready to come in?' 'Eclipse' has got that energy, and I'm showing it through different styles of music."

Singh's openness stems from a lifetime straddling between worlds. Until recently the Indian classical establishment rejected him for being an unpredictable punk. But his Asian heritage also isolated him off from the English pop mainstream. "I took this whole identity clash, in my personality and music, as an advantage. I found all the things that frustrated me, and turned them into something beautiful." He offers up the new track "Disser//Point.Mento.B" as illustration. "When you're disappointed over losing someone, some trauma in your life, that's meant to be. It's positive. You see the dark and the light there, and I want to acknowledge that."

"An album should flow like this, and go like that," he continues, cutting arcs in the air with his hands. "You have small waveforms, which are the music, and you have large waveforms. Albums that sound like that," he says, making a flat line, "don't work." Regardless, he's savvy enough to know the boys in marketing don't agree with his viewpoint. "When albums are made like that, it's easy to pick out tracks as singles. That's not how it is with my record, because the whole album feels like one piece of music."

But just because the 11-plus-minute opener is entitled "Traveler," don't mistake O.K. for a scrapbook of Talvin's globetrotting. Though the album involved sessions in several countries, Singh insists the real work occurred in his studio in the Brick Lane section of London. He gave the participants clear instructions about what he sought from their involvement. "I wasn't recording snake charmers on the streets." And to confound the critics who thought he was he's already planning his next move. "I'm going to spend seven months going to Brazil and traveling the world, just recording all these mad sounds, and putting together tracks... and then call the album *Home*."

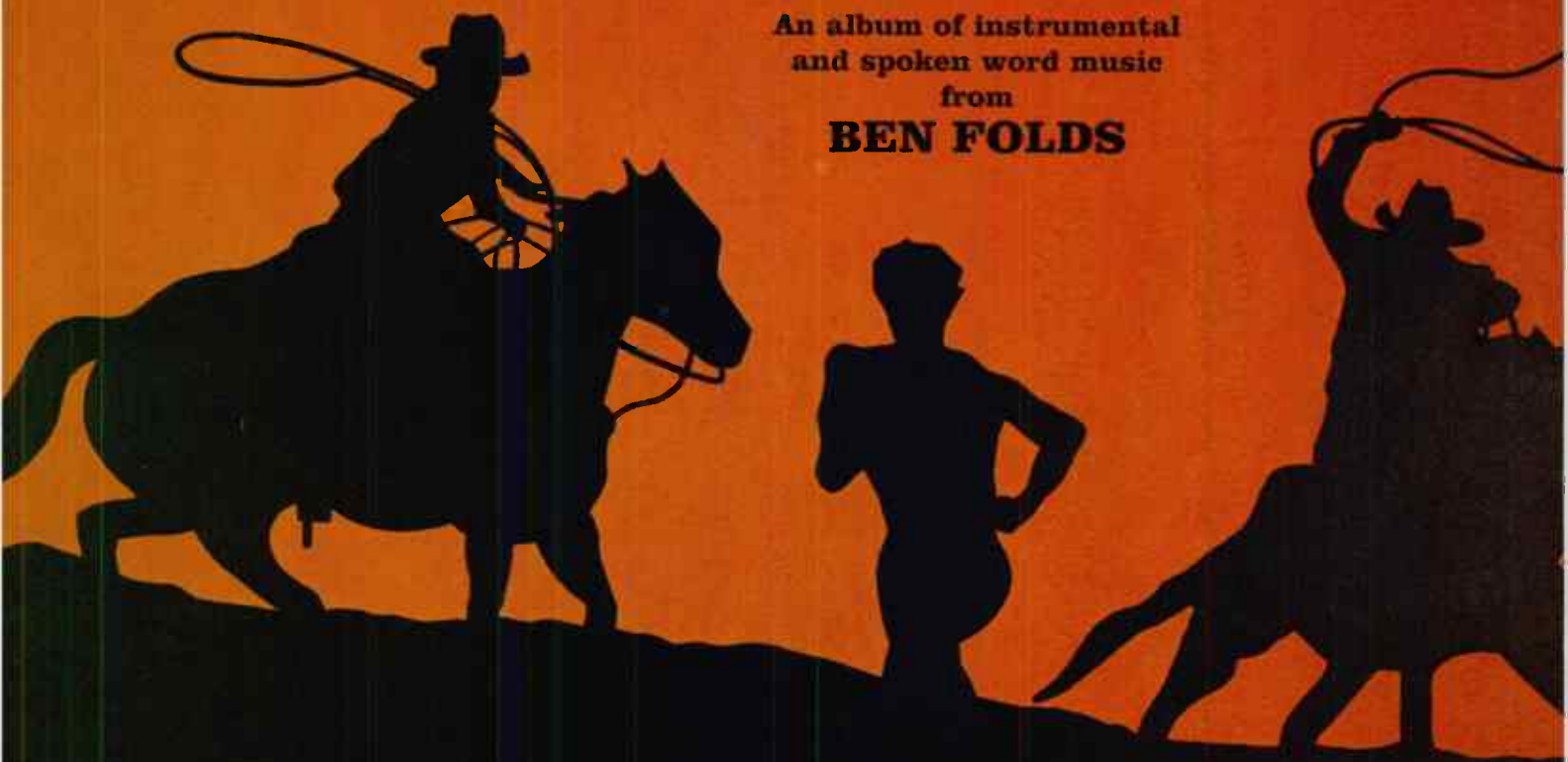


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The latest blues-punk-funk-soul mishmash from the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion is its best yet, but talking to them about it finds a band loath to reveal its true face.





STORY: DAVID DALEY PHOTOS: DENNIS KLEIMAN

When *Rolling Stone* reviewed the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion's last album, *Now I Got Worry*, the writer practically accused Spencer of wearing blackface, sporting an afro, and angling for a sitcom on the WB Network. Asking what right young, white boys have to play the blues, the scribe opined that "Spencer's faux backwoods drawl verges on minstrel-show insult."

Sitting in a diner in New York's East Village with bandmates Russell Simins and Judah Bauer, picking idly at the menu's awkwardly titled "salad burger," Spencer will only call the review "upsetting," and bemoan that "some people don't get the band, don't understand it." What actually set Spencer off, however, was a tamer *Rolling Stone* Q&A, in which he answered earnest queries about how a New Hampshire boy fresh from sneering punk deconstructivists Pussy Galore fell for the authentic blues music of Hound Dog Taylor and Mississippi Fred McDowell.

It's actually one of the few insightful articles on Spencer—whose combination of genuine shyness and obnoxious East Village cool makes him a difficult interview when he's not being downright rude—that reveals the depths of his musical knowledge, and gives Blues Explosion fans at least a half-dozen original sources to explore themselves, some they might know (Howlin' Wolf, Elmore James), and some they might not (Jessie Mae Hemphill, R.L. Burnside).

After the interview—perhaps feeling his authenticity in question, perhaps frustrated that the soul, funk and hip-hop sides of his band get overlooked because of the name Blues Explosion—Spencer sat down and wrote "Talk About The Blues," the first single off the Blues Explosion new album *Acme* (Matador-Capitol). "I got something I want everybody to hear right now, ladies and gentlemen/I don't play no blues," he testifies, riffing on McDowell's

Explosion's raw power once got the trio tagged rock's sexiest band, *Acme* has more crooning for post-coital cuddling.

"It's interesting. This record, in some ways, is blacker than the last one," Spencer observes. "When we're making a record, even after it's done, I don't really know what to say. It's not until we start doing interviews that you can sort of see it for what it is."

Spencer insists *Acme* isn't merely a response to *Now I Got Worry*, which he once fretted was too nasty and raucous a follow-up to the more accessible, bell-bottomed hip-hop soul of *Orange*.

"The thing is, we recorded really raw and raucous songs for this record. It wasn't until June that we totally started thinking about what to put on the record that we really started going for the more mellow, soulful, groove-oriented songs," he says.

The group recorded slowly, trying to involve lots of different people, to recapture the diverse feel of the *Experimental Remixes* EP that followed *Orange*. The trio recorded the basic tracks with Steve Albini (and a couple with Calvin Johnson at Dub Narcotic), figuring Albini's minimalist style would capture strong songs no remixer could completely ruin. Then they distributed the songs to different mixers whose work they admired, including Jim Dickinson, Alec Empire and Dan The Automator (Dr. Octagon, Cornershop). It's a much more collaborative, hands-off method of making a record for Spencer, who has produced his own music ever since the Pussy Galore days.

"The idea was just to kind of mix it up, to take a remix approach to the album," says Spencer. "This is the best record we've done. I really think this is a great record. I think there's something on here for everybody. We really outdid ourselves songwriting-wise on

this record. There are great songs on there. That was one of the things that allowed us to turn this loose to the different mixers."

Adds Simins, "This record also, more so than the other one, represents all of our interests. There are all these bands who listen to the same music all the time, they all dress the same, and they play the same music. That's just boring. We listen to a lot of different things. We kind of hip each other to stuff, and that's a big part as to why this band works."

Spencer, for his part, credits his status as a new dad (he's married to Boss Hog partner Cristina Martinez, who adds backing vocals to "Bernie") for the Blues Explosion's new vibe.

"Part of the reason this record is different from other Blues Explosion records is because of what's happened to me the past couple years, because I'm older—that's always an influence—and more specifically, because, yeah, I'm a father now. That was a big influence on me. Far more so than any music I've ever listened to."

You had a boy, right, I ask innocuously. Spencer turns and fixes me with a look of icy cold disdain. "I'd rather not talk about my family," he says, shutting down a subject he himself raised, seemingly for his bandmates' amusement. Attitude Explosion!

Or maybe it's just an interview inspiring the arrogant single from the next record—"(Rather Not) Talk About My Family."

e n d

"Part of the reason this record is different from other Blues Explosion records is because of what's happened to me the past couple years."

album called *I Do Not Play No Rock And Roll*, and calling out MTV and *Rolling Stone* by name. "That's right/The blues is number one/But there's something I gotta tell you right now/I do not play no blues/I play rock 'n' roll."

It's the bluesiest song on *Acme*, a blistering, chicken-scratch distorto-groove with Spencer howling in protest, that feels like an out-of-place rant in the middle of an album with a lower-key, soul-train vibe, one that opens with a James Brown-styled exhortation "Let's have a party."

"[On] the last record we got criticism for, I don't know, trying to be something we're not," says Spencer. "I wrote the song right after we did the interview, inspired by that and also some of the criticism we've received over the past couple years. If we tried to record some song that was a response to criticism as it happened, that would be too heavy-handed. The lyrics stayed true to the original, off-the-cuff feel, what you call a rant. But it's not such a big deal, you know. A lot of that stuff just doesn't merit a response."

Indeed, Spencer's response is *Acme*, an album that just appropriates more black music than ever. There's a funkier bottom to the Blues Explosion's trash-can-rattling pastiche, with "Lovin' Machine" sampling the essence of James Brown's funky heart, and "Do You Wanna Get Heavy" borrowing the soulful stirrings of Stax-Volt R&B. And there's a mellow, chill-out feel as well; if the Blues



L-R: BAUER, SIMINS, SPENCER



CARDIGANS

SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME

TWO YEARS AFTER

TICKLING

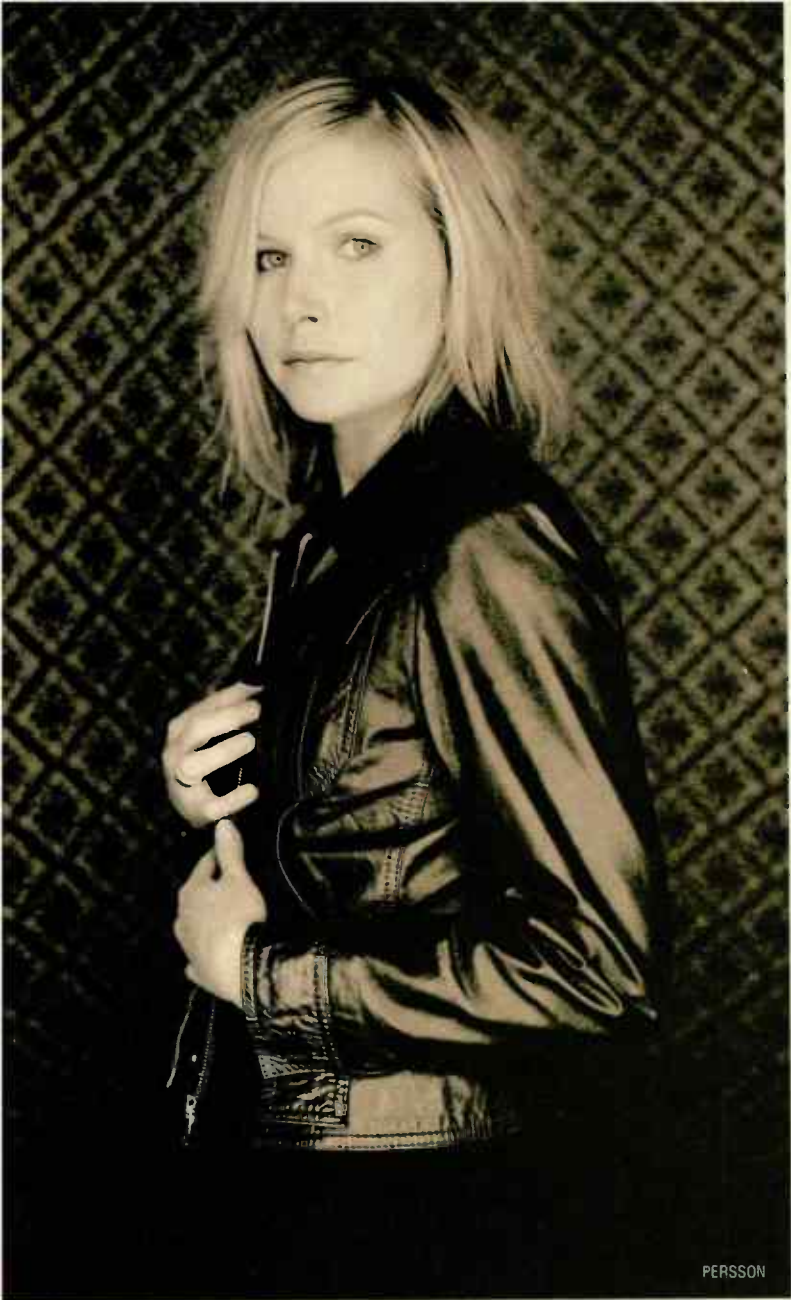
THE WORLD'S EARS

WITH "LOVEFOOL," SWEDEN'S FETCHING CARDIGANS

FIND THE DARK SIDE OF THE FIRST BAND

ON THE MOON

STORY: ANDREW BEAUJON PHOTOS: DENNIS KLEIMAN



PERSSON

"I think for a lot of people, we're still the band with that song, you know?" says Nina Persson. Understatement must be a Swedish thing: Persson, chain-smoking Marlboro Lights and wearing a leather jacket, and Cardigans guitarist Peter Svensson, sporting a black T-shirt and clunky heavy-metal rings on every finger, hardly live up to their band's cute, sunny image. Which is sort of apt, as *Gran Turismo*, the Cardigans' first album since "Lovefool" (a.k.a. "that song") made them international stars two years ago, is a much darker affair than that image would suggest.

"I think the atmosphere of the lyrics has more in common with the first album we did, *Emmerdale*," says Svensson. "It got really great reviews but there were a couple of reviews where they didn't like it because they thought that we took ourselves too seriously. Too pretentious. And it was like boring. So when we did the second album we really wanted to prove that we could make happy music. And I think the *Life* album is probably the album that I feel the least comfortable with today. I think it's a great piece of work, but I can't say it's me."

It is important to note that, at 24, Svensson is looking back on a record that he made when he was all of 18 years old.

The Cardigans came together in 1992 in Jönköping, Sweden, a town about 200 miles from the group's current base in Malmö, near the Danish border. Svensson, who describes his early musical education as "watching the cool guys on my street wearing jean jackets with AC/DC on the back, and them making tapes for me," listened primarily to '70s hard rock until he started working in a record store and began exploring pop music. He and his friends Magnus Sveningsson ("Forgive him," says Persson, "He's playing golf today") and Mattias Alheim began playing music together that reflected this new interest; shortly thereafter, Alheim brought Persson, who went to high school with a friend of Svensson, over for an audition.

"Nina wasn't really interested in music," Svensson says.

"Not more than the average radio listener," she adds. "I listened to traditional songs." Nonetheless, Svensson and Co. were sufficiently impressed to offer her a spot in the band.

"I was really eager to play in a band," says Svensson. "I wasn't thinking about releasing stuff." Nonetheless, the band was soon signed to Polygram affiliate Stockholm Records (after being rejected

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by EMI, which suggested that the band "sing in Swedish instead," Svensson mocks) and released *Emmerdale*, which was best received outside of Sweden, particularly in Japan.

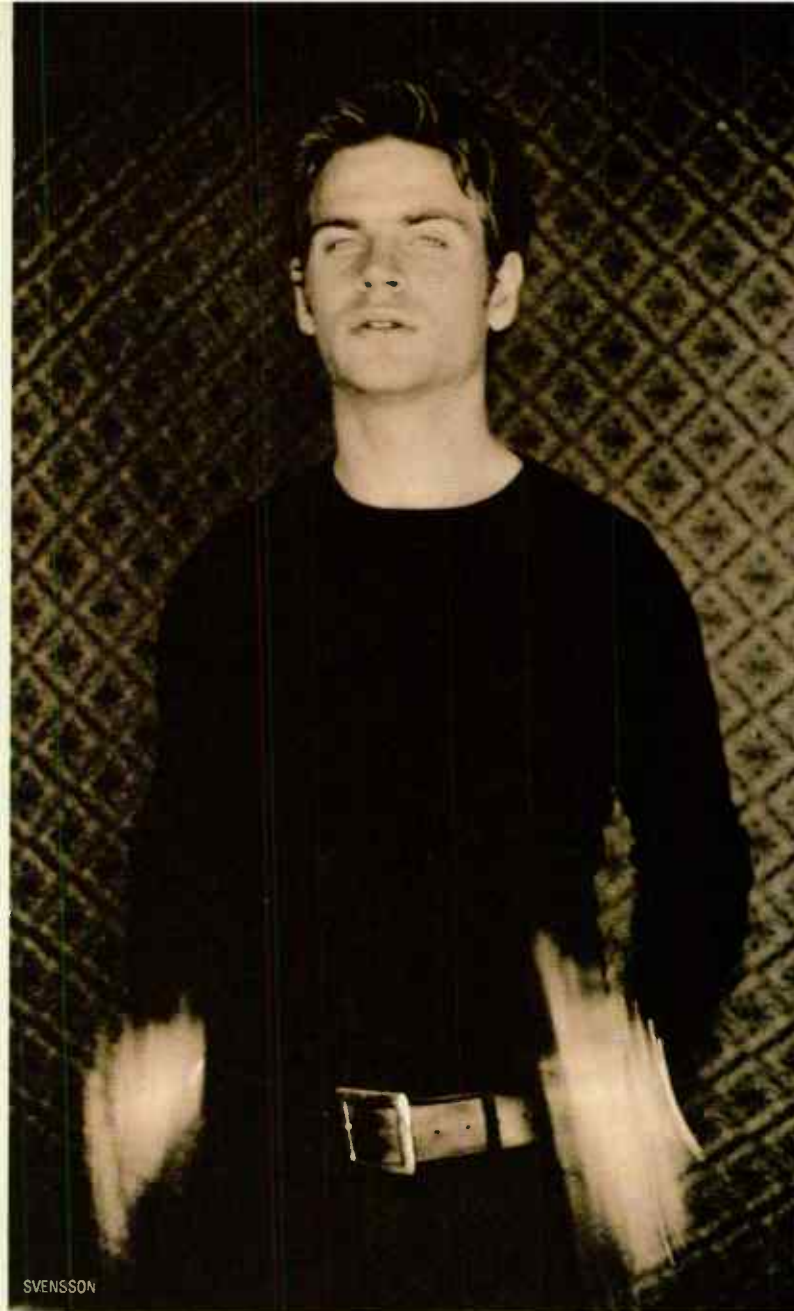
Their next album, 1995's *Life*, was the Cardigans' first release in the US and in the rest of Europe (it was released here on Chicago's Minty Fresh label, which previously brought us Veruca Salt and will be reissuing *Emmerdale* early next year) and yielded the band its first UK hit, a re-recording of *Emmerdale*'s "Rise And Shine." The band also began ceaseless touring, introducing itself here and solidifying its fan base in Japan. "We were a lot more popular in Sweden once we gained a little bit of success abroad," says Persson. It wasn't until 1996's *First Band On The Moon* and the inclusion of "Lovefool" on the *Romeo + Juliet* soundtrack, though, that things started to explode elsewhere.

"I think it's one of the best songs we've ever done," Svensson says, of "Lovefool." "To me it's still this small, acoustic, almost like a bossa nova thing. And then we did something else in the studio and it's still like this sad love song. And a lot of people say that, 'Oh, it's so happy and nice,' but if you read the lyrics it's not that happy." (Sample couplet: "I don't care if you really care/As long as you don't go.") "Lovefool" was #1 for seven weeks, and *First Band On The Moon* sold more than a million copies worldwide. And as full of pathos as the lyrics might have been, most people's takeaway was of five unnaturally good-looking young Europeans playing happy music, the album's cover of Black Sabbath's "Iron Man" notwithstanding.

Gran Turismo should go some distance toward changing that impression. "I was a bit worried about it," says Svensson, "that the record company would say, 'Make another "Lovefool."' But everyone's said things like, 'This is the perfect record after the last record.' The quality of everything—the songs, the lyrics, the performances—everything is just better. And the reaction I had when I presented the songs to the rest of the band was so good—we really got close again, you know, we almost killed each other touring and then had this long break and now everybody's so into it."

The band, which was certainly in a position to record with anyone it fancied ("I was talking about [Metallica producer] Bob Rock," Svensson laughs), eventually decided to make the new record with Tore Johansson, who produced all its previous efforts. "We were like, 'Maybe we should go to the States and do some grandiose recording,'" says Persson. "But there was no need to because we were satisfied with what we'd done before. And we'd have to build up a

(Continued on page 89)



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World Radio History

A photograph of Marilyn Manson in the foreground, wearing a dark, textured, long-sleeved sweater and looking towards the camera. He has short, light-colored hair and is wearing several rings on his fingers. Behind him, a woman with blonde hair is visible, looking off to the side. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

transformed
From fallen
angel to the
man who fell to
earth, Marilyn
Manson finds
the papers still
want to know
whose shirts
you wear

Marilyn Manson *Space Oddity*

The good news is that Marilyn Manson doesn't go out of his way to dress, shall we say, provocatively for band rehearsals. In other words, his ass wasn't hanging out of his trousers when he left for work earlier this evening. He saves those sorts of gestures for special occasions, like, you know, the MTV Video Awards. He may not be the Christian Coalition's idea of a respectable citizen, but then again, neither is the current President of the United States. And that doesn't appear to be hurting either of them in the polls.

The bad news is that I've been waiting three days for Manson to call. But, hell, he's a busy guy. Anyway, it's a little after 9 p.m. Manson's time, which is around midnight in my part of the country, and the singer who's gotten under more people's skin the past couple of years than he'd care to count is somewhat amused by the fact that I've opted to break the fiber-optic ice by asking what he's got on over his. "It's not as elaborate as what I would wear on stage or in a video or photo shoot," he replies in the guarded deadpan that he's cultivated for his many interactions with the media, a sort of reflective aloofness that belies the fact that he's oh-so used to the Q&A routine. "But I don't automatically turn into some normal guy that wears Dockers. My style, or whatever you want to call it, well, there's a volume knob for it I guess. Sometimes it's up high, sometimes it's down low, but it's still kind of the same. I mean I wouldn't wear something that I don't like. So, yeah, I wore a plain pair of black leather pants and some shirt."

There probably isn't a question Manson hasn't been asked in some form or another—everything from the meaning of life to what he had for breakfast—in marathon grilling sessions that would make a Kenneth Starr subpoena seem like a parking ticket. And yet he continues to make himself available because, as he so candidly admits, it's an integral part of his art. "It's all the same to me," he'll say. "The media is an element of what I do. A lot of people see it as a task, or something that they get abused or bothered by. But I see it as just another part of my life. I figured that if I wrote a book people would leave me alone. But I know it's not going to go away."

In a decade that's seen the very idea of the rock star blasted apart by bands and artists raised on the anti-celebrity gospel of punk, Marilyn Manson has emerged as the first of his kind: a larger-than-life sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll star ready, willing, and able to face the end of the century in full make-up, determined to march toward the 21st century in his own version of high-heeled boots leading an army of fans. It says a lot about the '90s and what these years have lacked that Manson has become such an object of fascination for the media, that his relatively straightforward artistic statements have become the subject of such frantic deep analyses. As rock stars must, he's drawn inspiration primarily from the most universal of archetypes, from the

scatologically obsessed vampire-boy of his early years (the Unholy Undead), to the fascistic Antichrist of *Antichrist Superstar* (Satan in S&M pants), to his latest creation, the Starman Omega (Major Tom with breasts), his most literal and modern metaphor yet.

"I was imagining Omega to be the most exaggerated extension of what the Antichrist Superstar was, everything that glam rock has ever been and then some," says Manson. "To me glam rock has always meant a very sarcastic and over-the-top flamboyant image that was hiding something that was darker and more depressing underneath. That was always the irony of glam rock to me. A lot of people never really looked beneath that. Even in '80s music there was that. To me, '70s glam rock went on to become '80s new wave and there's been a real void in the '90s since grunge music sort of put rock to sleep for while. I've always been trying to bring it back as much as I could. I think the last great rock bands were Jane's Addiction and Guns N' Roses. It's been really quiet since then. A lot of people approach it as a product, and I just want to remind people that it's an art form. Because when there's one band doing something it raises the standards for the rest of them. I think we're on the brink of a great period of music after being in a really shitty one. I'd like to see people take music more seriously and be more involved as artists. I think rap music has been doing that, but that rock music has been kind of lazy in that regard."

Listen to *Mechanical Animals* and you'll hear the obvious strains and allusions to the ghosts of glam-rock past, Marc Bolan, Mott The Hoople and, mainly, Bowie's Ziggy Stardust. (Manson's not the first former metalhead who talks way too much about drugs to pilfer this past: Stone Temple Pilot Scott Weiland was trying to pull an Aladdin Sane earlier this year until he got busted for putting his money where his mouth was in Alphabet City.) Read the lyrics to the album's 14 tunes and you'll hear a familiar story, that of the androgynous alien android undergoing a painful transformation on Earth, learning to be human, wrestling with the new sensations and emotions, seeing the corruption and hypocrisy of our world with unblinded eyes. It's as if Manson began by reinventing himself as Bowie's Major Tom, strung-out in heaven high hitting an all time low ("A dead astronaut in space," as Manson puts it in "Disassociative"), and then threw

caution to the wind and decided to rewrite *The Man Who Fell To Earth* as a rock opera.

It's a powerful story because it's so simple. It's been the basis for countless science fiction tales and a least half a dozen *Star Trek* episodes. Film critic Pauline Kael summed up the appeal of *The Man Who Fell To Earth* this way: "The wilted solitary stranger who is better than we are and yet falls prey to our corrupt human estate can be said to represent everyone who feels misunderstood, everyone who feels sexually immature or 'different,' everyone who has lost his way, everyone who has failed the holy family, and so the film is a gigantic launching pad for anything that viewers want to drift to." Substitute "album" for "film" and you've got Omega, the "wilted solitary stranger" discovering that he "don't like the drugs but the drugs like [him]" (to quote a song from the album), being cast unwittingly as the star of the Dope Show.

"I think that in making *Mechanical Animals* I just opened up to the idea that being everything that I set out to be on *Antichrist Superstar* includes having human elements and emotions that I didn't count on," Manson explains. "This record was easier to make physically, but emotionally it was a nightmare because I was experiencing empathy and wondering how other people feel and what they're suffering. I never wanted to feel empathy. It's a lot easier to feel alienated. It's easier to be mechanical. It's a challenge for me to try to be human. I'm at that point in my life where I've done everything; I've taken it to the extreme. Now the simplest thing, the easiest thing, is a real nightmare. I mean, *Antichrist Superstar* was driving toward and praying for this bigger than life thing, and this record is accepting and coming to terms with that thing."

Of course, that "thing" included a fair amount of controversy that eventually snowballed beyond Manson's control, as controversies are wont to do. *Mechanical Animals* may not be an actual retreat from that confrontational stance, but it certainly seems to have sidestepped Satanism in favor of a stance that may be less overtly offensive to god-fearing individuals.

"Well, I think *Antichrist Superstar* accomplished everything I set out to have it do," Manson reflects. "It wasn't just about the album, it was also about the reaction to it and the way it made people think, whether or not they liked it or even listened to it. Everyone in

America was talking about it and I think that was important to stimulate ideas. It got people arguing—is this right, is this wrong?—and that's what I wanted to do. I learned how seriously people take religion in America. That's why it's so important that I did what I did with that record, because I learned that people really do have a long way to go when it comes to thinking about different ideas when it comes to God. Because people were willing to react with violence and the way that they treated me proved all my points. We were trying to stand up for something that represented 'judge not and love thy neighbor,' and some people completely disregarded that. Usually the people that I'm criticizing—particularly in America, where people lack a sense of irony—go on to prove the point. I don't dislike America. I just like to look at things and talk about things that most people are too afraid to talk about. There needs to be someone who comes along every few years and reminds people that they should evaluate what they believe in."

So now, it appears, Manson's focus has shifted from the outside world of religion and politics to the inner realm of feelings and emotions. Right? "Whatever I do musically is always kind of a reflection of my personal life," he responds. "*Antichrist Superstar* was a very cold and numb transformation and the result was a rebirth in some ways. *Mechanical Animals* is documenting the feeling coming back. It's like a leg that was asleep and now it's starting to tingle. This record is like me coming to terms with the pain and fear of being human for the first time. It's not a regretful record, but it's kind of living in a world that you don't belong in for the first time."

Later in our conversation, when Manson brings up the idea of the human soul, I mention a parable by the science fiction writer Philip K. Dick about a man who goes into the hospital complaining of chest pain only to discover that he's an android, which prompts Manson to remember his own thoughts on Dick's work. "When I first started

working on the record I was really into his book *A Scanner Darkly*. It made a lot of sense to me in terms of what was going on in my life. To me science fiction is just as valid as philosophy. I explored as much as I could with religion on *Antichrist Superstar* and I think that I wanted to continue to explore the idea of God but with science on this record. I mean that's what the record is expressing, the idea that in my transformation or my search for something—if you want to call it God, you can call it that—I found the human soul does exist, and the only way that you can find that is through your expression. That's all you can contribute to the world. The idea of *Mechanical Animals* is that man makes himself more and more irrelevant with what he creates. You kind of have to remember where it all comes from. If machines someday replace men, they would realize that you can't replace the human soul,

“The idea of *Mechanical Animals* is that man makes himself more and more irrelevant with what he creates. If machines someday replace men, they would realize that you can't replace the human soul, so they'd have to try to start manufacturing humans again.”

so they'd have to try to start manufacturing humans again."

Whether or not *Mechanical Animals* effectively conveys any of those ideas, or achieves anything beyond creating Kael's "launching pad" for each viewer/listener to project his or her own personal alienation fantasy on, will remain open to debate. But one issue that *Mechanical Animals* has settled rather convincingly is that Marilyn Manson can function effectively as a rock band without the guiding hand of its former master Trent Reznor.

"I supposed because we had worked predominantly with Trent, and his particular style is to eschew rock 'n' roll, we hadn't had much of a

(Continued on page 89)

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Two Pages

Talkin Loud-Mercury

One likes to believe that pioneers in groundbreaking genres, having already shown musical prescience, will sidestep historic pratfalls like the double-LP concept album. Alas, having unleashed a decade of disturbing drum 'n' bass tracks like "Where's The Boy?" and "Mr. Kirk's Nightmare," Mark Clair and Dego McFarlane of 4 Hero seem to feel they can slay this legendary beastie. They're 50 percent right. Like their earlier *Parallel Universe*, much of the first disc, "Page 1," delves into jazz textures, aggressively flirting with the trappings of what some might carelessly designate a more "authentic" musical tradition than the field of samples and programming on which they're proven players. Lousy with harp glissandi, flute trills and mannered beat poetry, the results sound largely like cut-rate Herbie Hancock or Lonnie Liston Smith (or worse, Jamiroquai) seasoned with so-so breaks. Miraculously, "Page 2"—inspired by icy sci-fi themes, à la earlier black music revolutionaries like Sun Ra, George Clinton, Drexciya and the Detroit techno set—proves just as riveting as its predecessor is dull. The pummeling "We Who Are Not As Others" comes at the listener like a platoon of Rock'em Sock'em Robots, while tellingly "Mathematical Probability" resonates with a hint of warmth far more affecting than any of the forced sunniness of the first disc. Half a masterpiece. >>> Kurt B. Reighley



OUT: November 3.

FILE UNDER:

Breakbeat heroes stretch out.

R.I.Y.L.:

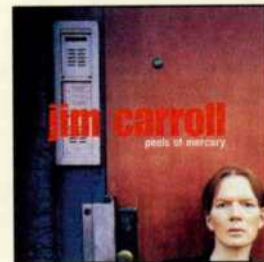
Roni Size, Cybotron, Alex Reese.

JIM CARROLL

Pools Of Mercury

Mercury

Jim Carroll was always a writer first and a rocker mainly by association, even back in the early-'80s when he scored an unlikely hit with the tune "People Who Died," which radio programmers mistook for a novelty number. He had one great album in him—1980's *Catholic Boy*—and then, after two mediocre ones, he gave up on music and went back to publishing and the spoken-word circuit. Until a couple of years ago when Scott Kalvert turned Carroll's *Basketball Diaries* into a Hollywood film and Pearl Jam backed up the writer on a re-recording of his tune "Catholic Boy" for the soundtrack. *Pools Of Mercury* appears to be the fallout from that particular twist in Carroll's fate. The disc is a sort of half-and-half collection of poetry and song that teams Carroll up with Patti Smith Group guitarist Lenny Kaye and Truly guitarist Robert Roth. There are only two real rockers—"Falling Down Laughing," which sounds like the *Catholic Boy* tune Carroll forgot to write (in other words, it's great), and the dark 'n' grungy title track. There are also a couple of pseudo-ballads featuring a mix of singing and speaking set against bongo beats and guitar noodling. The disc is rounded out by Carroll reading some of his better verse in his distinctive high 'n' dry voice with reasonably subtle atmospheric accompaniment, including the rather moving "8 Fragments For Kurt Cobain." >>> Matt Ashare



OUT: November 10.

FILE UNDER:

Poetry in motion.

R.I.Y.L.:

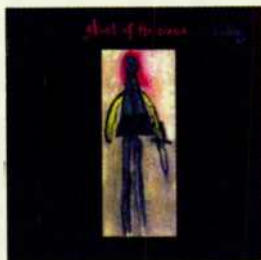
Patti Smith, Lou Reed, Richard Hell.

BIRDDOG

Ghost Of The Season

Sugar Free

Not nearly as sparse as his 1997 mini-LP or a previous 7" (made with then-Portland, Oregon, neighbors like Elliott Smith and Pond's Charlie Chesterman), *Ghost Of The Season* finds the itinerant Birddog known as Bill Santen embellishing his haunting indie-folk with a fuller lineup. Current whereabouts unknown, the Kentucky-born Santen employs drummer Glenn Kotche and multi-instrumentalist Steve Poulton (formerly of Paul K's Weathermen) as songwriting collaborators, and Birddog turns in a dark, quirky take on the storytelling tradition. From tales of small-town life ("Fruita") and drunken misadventures ("The Great Escape," "Thunderbirds And Motorcycles") to themes of loss ("Trigger," "Rats") and travel ("Deadlights"), Santen's sure got stories to tell. Even when they feel abbreviated or embryonic, he has an oddly effective delivery that manages to connect. It doesn't hurt that Santen's reedy, resonant voice resembles that of a young Jimmie Dale Gilmore, nor that Chris Tesluk's dramatic cello flourishes provide aching, emotional heft. Santen paints his alternative Americana with rich earth tones and subtle shadings. But most importantly, just when Santen's songs seem elusive and insular, they invoke a plaintive sense of universality, an odd balance that Will Oldham, in particular, mastered in his early work. >>> Mark Woodlief



OUT: September 15.

FILE UNDER:

Indie-folk.

R.I.Y.L.:

Handsome Family, Mark Lanegan, Will Oldham/Palace.

EELS ★

Electro-Shock Blues

DreamWorks

Sometimes, the song titles say it all: "Elizabeth On The Bathroom Floor"? "The Medication Is Wearing Off"? "Going To Your Funeral" ("Part 1" and "Part 2," no less)? Is *Electro-Shock Blues*—please note that title—an attempt by the Eels to exhume the heroin-chic sound of grunge's heyday? Not exactly. Since the Eels debuted in 1996 with the alterna-poppy *Beautiful Freak*, singer/songwriter/bandleader E (Mark Oliver Everett) suffered several deaths among his family and friends. On *Electro-Shock*, he spares none of his grief, at least in the lyrics; besides those evocative titles, he sings of "Feeling Scared Today," "Missing The Dearly Bereft" and "Smiling Like It's No Big Deal." Cutting the tension is the music, moody but far from dirge-like. "Descent Into Madness" sports a toe-tapping beat and E crooning a "la-la-la-la." It's easy to criticize the Eels for the familiarity of their sound. If *Beautiful Freak* showed them as dilettantes, colliding toy pianos and found sounds against mangy guitars, the new album promotes them to full-fledged pillagers: E growls like Beck, and the band does Morphine-esque sax-and-bass as efficiently as it does Nick Drake-ian strings. Ultimately, none of the individual sounds are the Eels' own, but the overall sound is a sort of signature, recognizable from album one to album two despite E's darkening mood. >>> Chris Molanphy



OUT: October 20.

FILE UNDER:

Eclectic, quirky and moody as hell.

R.I.Y.L.:

Forest For The Trees, Beck, Ben Folds Five.



EKSTASIS

Wake Up And Dream
CyberOctave

If Ekstasis sounds familiar to you, then you're remembering guitarist Nicky Skopelitis's excellent and metaphysically funky 1993 album of the same name. Reassembling much of that album's cast—producer/bassist/beatmaster Bill Laswell, Can drummer Jaki Liebezzeit and bassist Jah Wobble—Skopelitis leads Ekstasis with considerably fewer guitar explosions, but more subtle sonic smoke and mirrors, or deferring to the album's trance-inducing aesthetic, clouds and windows. Skopelitis can still be funky, but the dark, biting mysticism of his earlier work gives way here to more ambient textures of soft, shimmering guitar picking and watery backdrops (the guitar solo thing has been done, after all). The slow grooves are deepened by dub-influenced bass and echo and the album's temperate pulse is aided on occasion by the greatest living masters of the Indian tabla, Badal Roy (who laid down beats for Miles Davis in the '70s) and Zakir Hussain. The release of *Wake Up And Dream* through the no edge, new age label Higher Octave (not to mention the album title itself) may put off many potential listeners, but the album is by no means an aromatherapeutic snoozer. Even if you are able to meditate or do yoga while listening, its deep dub trip-out factor cannot be overlooked.

>>> Steve Ciabattoni



OUT: October 20.

FILE UNDER:

Ethereal Material.

R.I.Y.L.:

Material, Jah Wobble's *Invaders Of The Heart*, Laswell's dub.

JAD FAIR & YO LA TENGO

Strange But True
Matador

All you gotta do is check a few of the tabloid-inspired song titles on *Strange But True* to spark your curiosity: "National Sports Association Hires Retired English Professor To Name New Wrestling Holds," "Circus Strongman Runs For PTA President," and "Helpful Monkey Wallpapers Entire Room." Not standard Yo La Tengo titles, but standard fare for Jad Fair, a musician whose work with his band Half Japanese stands as some of the most curious, inspiring and egoless rock 'n' roll of the past 20-plus years. *Strange But True* was written and recorded on the spot in the studio on two separate occasions. YLT plays all the music, a wonderful combination of *Fakebook*-era strum and *Painful*-era hum, while Jad Fair, armed with song titles provided by his brother (and fellow Half Jap founder) David, creates stories to accompany the seemingly preposterous premises. The result is fantastic; Fair's ability to illuminate clever, fresh-faced little stories, both funny and moving, with his high-pitched wail and earnest tone, is a remarkable testament to his imagination, and the combination of Fair and Yo La Tengo on these 22 songs works perfectly. Highly recommended for fans of both artists, and especially for parents sick of lollipop-and-bunny children's records.

>>> Randall Roberts



OUT: October 20.

FILE UNDER:

Fractured Fair-y tales.

R.I.Y.L.:

Half Japanese, Daniel Johnston, pre-pubescent Lou Reed.

THE EX

Starters Alternators
Touch And Go

Ask any arbiter of indie cool to name the best bands ever, and provided they're within spitting distance of 30, The Ex is likely to get name-checked. Over the space of 18 years this Amsterdam-based squatters collective has progressed from barebones punk to avant-jazz improvisation to Eastern European flavorings, and now with *Starters Alternators*, revisits more primitive yet challenging terrain. Steve Albini's organic production is the perfect match for The Ex's percussive attack, providing an in-your-face approximation of the band's live furor. On "Let's Panic Later," G.W. Sok declaims, "It's the age of aging and I'm not afraid of age, end," making clear in one couplet how The Ex maintains a full head of steam over the years while others have softened. The raw intensity, razor-sharp precision and overt political messaging recalls Fugazi and Gang Of Four, though The Ex provides less melody to latch onto. The effect can be wearying over 53 minutes for those not in the mood, as rhythms tattoo your forehead and several tracks build to crescendos of downtown NYC-style skronk. It may not match the mind-bending highs of some earlier efforts (search out *Joggers And Smoggers* or *Scrabbling At The Lock*), but at least this record is findable. And for pure visceral wallop, *Starters Alternators* is hard to beat.

>>> Glen Sarvady



OUT: October 20.

FILE UNDER:

Ferocious political bombast.

R.I.Y.L.:

Shellac, Fugazi, early Gang Of Four, John's Zorn's guitar-driven stuff.

FEAR OF POP

Volume 1
550

On each Ben Folds Five release, the piano-playing North Carolina songwriter embraces melody with the fervor of a pilgrim arriving in Mecca. With his new side project Fear Of Pop, on which he plays all instruments, Folds doesn't exactly recant, but he dabbles in rock's notable offshoot religion, electronica, and yes, it's a mixed blessing. While the songs on *Volume 1* embody the same type of giddy spirit present throughout albums like his main gig's '97 breakthrough, *Whatever And Ever Amen*, they're constructed from surging techno beats, jaunty post-punk rhythms, faux-funk grooves and bizarre stabs at spoken-word. In the latter category, William Shatner recites an original piece, "In Love," over the album's only piano-driven tune; it also features Folds's singsong backing vocals, and it's easily the most interesting track. Elsewhere, Folds attempts a brash 'n' pop guitar rave-up ("Fear Of Pop"), a woozy R&B experiment ("Slow Jam"), a digitally-enhanced disco number ("I Paid My Money") and a blaxploitation goof complete with jittery wah-wah guitar and tire screeches ("Kops"). It's mostly fun and games, but if Folds again creates anything else as puerile as the bout of sample-ridden nonsense "Rubber Sled," he may lose his devout fans and find himself fighting the battle of who could care less. >>> Richard Martin



OUT: November 17.

FILE UNDER:

Offbeat side projects/electronic kitsch.

R.I.Y.L.:

Land Of The Loops, Golden Throats compilations.

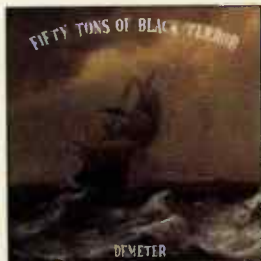


FIFTY TONS OF BLACK TERROR

Demeter

Beggars Banquet

Recorded under the moniker Penthouse, this London quartet's 1997 aptly titled full-length, *Gutter Erotica*, flew under radar screens here in the States. I missed it, anyway. Back with a new name (thanks to an American magazine), the band worships at the altar of the Jesus Lizard (and erstwhile Lizard engineer Steve Albini). Not that that's a bad thing, but there is a fine line—between honoring your influences and mimicking them. On tracks like "Road Rash," "Dick," "Beauty/Beast" and "Gin Waltz" (a Brit's answer to the Lizard's "Boilermaker," no?), Fifty Tons effectively pillages the ethos, style and needle-nose rhythm dynamics of Chicago's favorite cranks, right down to Charlie Finke's unmistakably Yow-ian (I never thought I'd write that) vocals and Jon Free's Duane Denison/Rowland S. Howard-inspired guitar muscle. The production style, too, is a faithful Albini reproduction. It's England's fish-and-chips to Chicago's Polish sausage—greasy but irresistible and satisfying. When the group leans toward sleazy elegance ("Lagrotte") or oozes through blues-aded muck ("Widows"), Fifty Tons thankfully develops a stronger identity of its own. Nonetheless, it owes a debt. Pay up, blokes. >>> *Mark Woodlief*



OUT: November 3.

FILE UNDER:

Brit-skronk.

R.I.Y.L.:

Jesus Lizard, Birthday Party, Gallon Drunk.

GIRL BROS.

Girl Bros.

Girl Brothers, Inc.

Girl Bros. is a pseudonym for Wendy & Lisa, members of the Revolution, so there's an immediate urge to compare this work to Prince's. But let's not be so hasty. *Girl Bros.* isn't even easy to compare to Wendy & Lisa's past albums. After four semi-successful releases filled with Minneapolis funk and post-punk rock, they've switched to low-key folk-pop ranging in tone from campfire sing-alongs to court ballads. That's not to say these songs don't have some thump. The drum tracks (many of which are programmed) simmer and percolate, occasionally nodding towards Middle Eastern rhythms and ambient drum 'n' bass. Tchad Blake's production is crisp and roomy: Synthesizer licks fall in and out of the mix, and simple guitar riffs hover off in the distance. This self-released album is reportedly more a personal statement than a commercial vehicle. Many of the songs ruminate on the death by heroin overdose of Lisa's brother Jonathan Melvoin, touring keyboardist with the Smashing Pumpkins. The songs' hooks might not jump out at you, but you'll find them after a couple of listens. Only when the piano takes over from the guitar as the main instrument, which isn't often, does a dirge-like demeanor take over. Oh, all right—the Prince & The Revolution album that *Girl Brothers* sounds most like is *Parade*. >>> *Neil Gladstone*



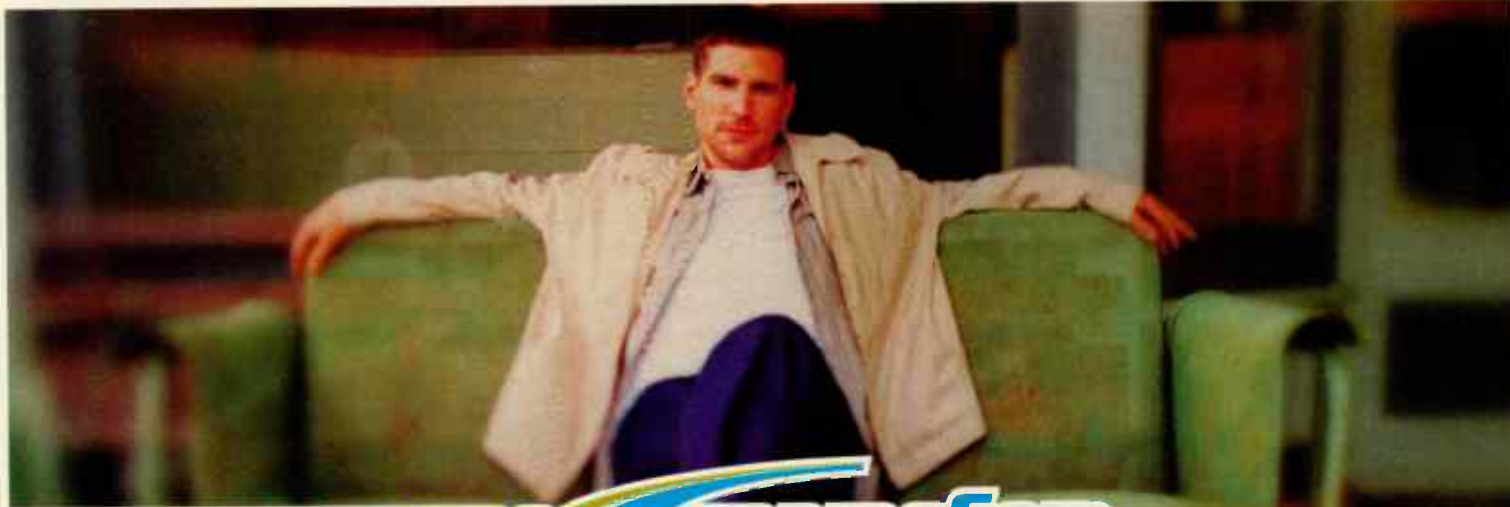
OUT: October 6.

FILE UNDER:

Funky folk pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Suzanne Vega, Luscious Jackson, Sheryl Crow.



12 WAYS TO WIN PEOPLE TO YOUR WAY OF THINKING

Wes Cunningham

Elvis never went to England,

big cars should always be parked out front and the part of Tennessee that borders Texas exists only under Wes Cunningham's slightly shaggy High and Tight. There, the tacos are always great and people write enough songs so they can feel good about going to the movies all night. All the theatres sell Junior Mints.

Wes is from Texas, Tennessee, Mexico, Indonesia, the Philippines. His favorite foods are salsa, salsa verde and gravy. He thought L.A. would be like TV but now says it's more like a John Steinbeck novel. Texas is everywhere, even in England.

Here's the proof.

DAVID GRUBBS

The Thicket
Drag City

David Grubbs has been a punk (with his high school band Squirrel Bait), an art-punk (with his subsequent band Bastro) and an art musician with barely a hint of a rock (Gastr Del Sol). His Gastr partnership with Jim O'Rourke split after the recording of this year's *Camofleur*, and *The Thicket* is the first appearance by Grubbs's new band-of-sorts: a cast including avant-violinist Tony Conrad, Tortoise percussionist John McEntire and four others, who all sit out more than they play.

For most of its duration, the album sounds like a much more spare version of Gastr, moving away from the catchy parts of *Camofleur* and foregrounding Grubbs's voice and arty, poetics-inspired lyrics (he seems to have been reading Elizabeth Bishop lately). If "40 Words On 'Worship'" falls on the arch side of the line, "Fool Summons Train" is thoughtfully wry, a nice variation on the themes of the country train song, and it has some fine finger-picking from Grubbs, whose guitar playing is, as always, nimble and elegant. Though he seems to be trying to err on the side of simplicity, sometimes it really is an error: Some of these songs cry out for O'Rourke's subtle, complicating tape-work, and Grubbs's arrangements can seem excessively dry and detached on their own.

>>> Douglas Wolk



OUT: September 14.

FILE UNDER:

The arty shadow of pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

John Fahey, Loren Mazzacane Connors, Gastr Del Sol.

HIVE

Devious Methods
Phase 4-London

Hive's debut LP, *Devious Methods*, is rightfully billed as a quasi-fusion effort. Once a rhythm guitarist in a DC hardcore band called Backfire, he moved to LA after high school and has since immersed himself in hip-hop and drum 'n' bass. These musical elements are present on the album to some degree, but dwelling on Hive's background could obscure the fact that *Devious Methods* is, above all else, a collection of wickedly good jungle tracks. But perhaps symptomatic of a young producer under debut pressure, or one who hasn't yet mastered the integration of his influences, *Devious Methods* seems more like two EPs stitched together, seam-work glaring, than a well-conceived long-player. The "first" is dark, heavy and hard; nine tracks of clever, mood-setting vocal samples, eerie and evil hip-hop rhythms and frantic hi-hat spasms colliding over extended bass lines. At his most inventive in this portion of the album, Hive uses genres to construct tempos, as on "Ultrasonic Sound," which intertwines a Bad Brains guitar riff with heavy bass assaults. Hive slams on the brakes for the album's four closing tracks, each an experiment in slow, melodic, instrumental hip-hop and jungle, and it's almost a shame. The slow grooves are fine, but objects in that much motion shouldn't be brought to rest.

>>> William Werde



OUT: November 10.

FILE UNDER:

Heavy drum 'n' bass.

R.I.Y.L.:

Squarepusher, Lunatic Calm, DJ Shadow.

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reviews

ICU

Chotto Matte A Moment!

K

Someone says "drum 'n' bass" and "Olympia, Washington" in the same sentence, and you don't know what you're gonna hear. Roni Size in a second-hand cardigan and Clark Kent glasses? Dub Narcotic Sound System played at 45 rpm instead of 33? Mercifully, this eight-song offering from Oly outfit ICU (pronounced EE-koo) proves much more engaging than either of those imaginary options. The instrumental trio mates upright bass, guitars, and analog keyboards with a battery of drum programs, turntables, and even a theremin. Typically ICU's economic use of these materials is endearing, as on the wistful yet eerie minimalism of "Can't You Even Remember That?" But occasionally ideas are stretched thin; poor bassist Aaron Hartman might as well be looped and save himself the calluses on "Flower And Moon." Overall, there are sufficient catchy musical ideas (the faux exotica keyboard hook of "Aluet") to sustain interest, and the more the topography varies within a given tune, the more intriguing the results, especially on the hallucinatory hip-hop of "Temptation," peppered with disturbing samples that put the "eros" in "neurosis." Reverent about creating quality music, yet seemingly irreverent concerning strict adherence to either indie rock or dance music traditions, ICU's debut simmers with polish and low-key charm. >>> Kurt B. Reighley



OUT: October 13.

FILE UNDER:

Analog electronica.

R.I.Y.L.:

Land Of The Loops, Flowchart, Wagon Christ.

KING DJANGO

Roots & Culture

Triple Crown

If you put together any two things for the first time, it's at least interesting, and *Roots & Culture* marries a deeply unlikely couple: ska and klezmer, which seem to have not much more in common than ties to persecuted ethnic identity and horns. Stubborn All-Stars leader Jeff Baker assembled a bunch of NYC neo-ska types, threw in a couple of well-known neo-klezmer players (including mandolinist/clarinetist Andy Statman and the Klezmaties' fiddler Alicia Svigals), and let them go to town. What comes out is a weird mishmash: bluebeat covers of "Heveinu Shalom Aleichem" and "Ya'aseh Shalom," Yiddish translations of Madness and Specials songs, and straight-up reggae songs about Jewish themes. This last category is the most convincing—the band is confident and clever (check out the dubbed-up mix and vertigo-inducing bass line of "Seventh Day"), and reggae lyrics have gone on about the Israelites enough already that it doesn't cause cognitive dissonance. The chief problem is that the ska the band is drawing on here is less the Jamaican original than the English and American revivals of the last 20 years, which means it's a little too self-aware for its interpolation of Jewish-wedding tunes to come off as anything other than a novelty. Just because you can put a ska beat behind anything doesn't mean you should.



OUT: September 29.

FILE UNDER:

Jewish ska.

R.I.Y.L.:

Specials, Klezmaties, saltfish and matzo brei.

>>> Douglas Wolk

THE LAPSE ★

Betrayal
Gern Blandsten

"When the young idea is through and we have nothing to do/It is this nothing that creates the new," sings Chris Leo of the Lapse. A veteran of the emo-core movement, Leo could well be describing the challenge of finding inspiration in an often stagnant scene. The Lapse is the latest joint venture of Leo and Toko Yasuda (ex-Blonde Redhead), whose first collaboration was the now-dissolved Van Pelt. Most of the songs on *Betrayal* are built around Leo's unabashedly pedantic lyrics and his rapid-fire vocals, often delivered in lock-step with the melodies. Several tracks sound like grad school essays set to a beat, like "We Must Move Backwards To Progress," sung with all the hopeful repetition of a socialist work song. Even if enlightenment-by-lyric-sheet isn't your thing, the Lapse's music might be. The title song revs with self-possessed energy, while the record's straightforward rhythms are peppered with delirious interludes that end as abruptly as they begin. Softer moments surface here and there, like the background plinking of a xylophone on "The Threat," or the songs where Yasuda sings, her breathy and deliberate vocals bringing a Björk-like ambiance to the mix. While strictly speaking, none of this quite qualifies as "the new," it is comforting to know that bands like the Lapse are continually building on the influences of their youth.



OUT: September 23.
FILE UNDER: Didactic emo.
R.I.Y.L.: Versus, Blonde Redhead's first two albums, Seam.

>>> Megan McCarthy

BILL LASWELL AND SACRED SYSTEM ★

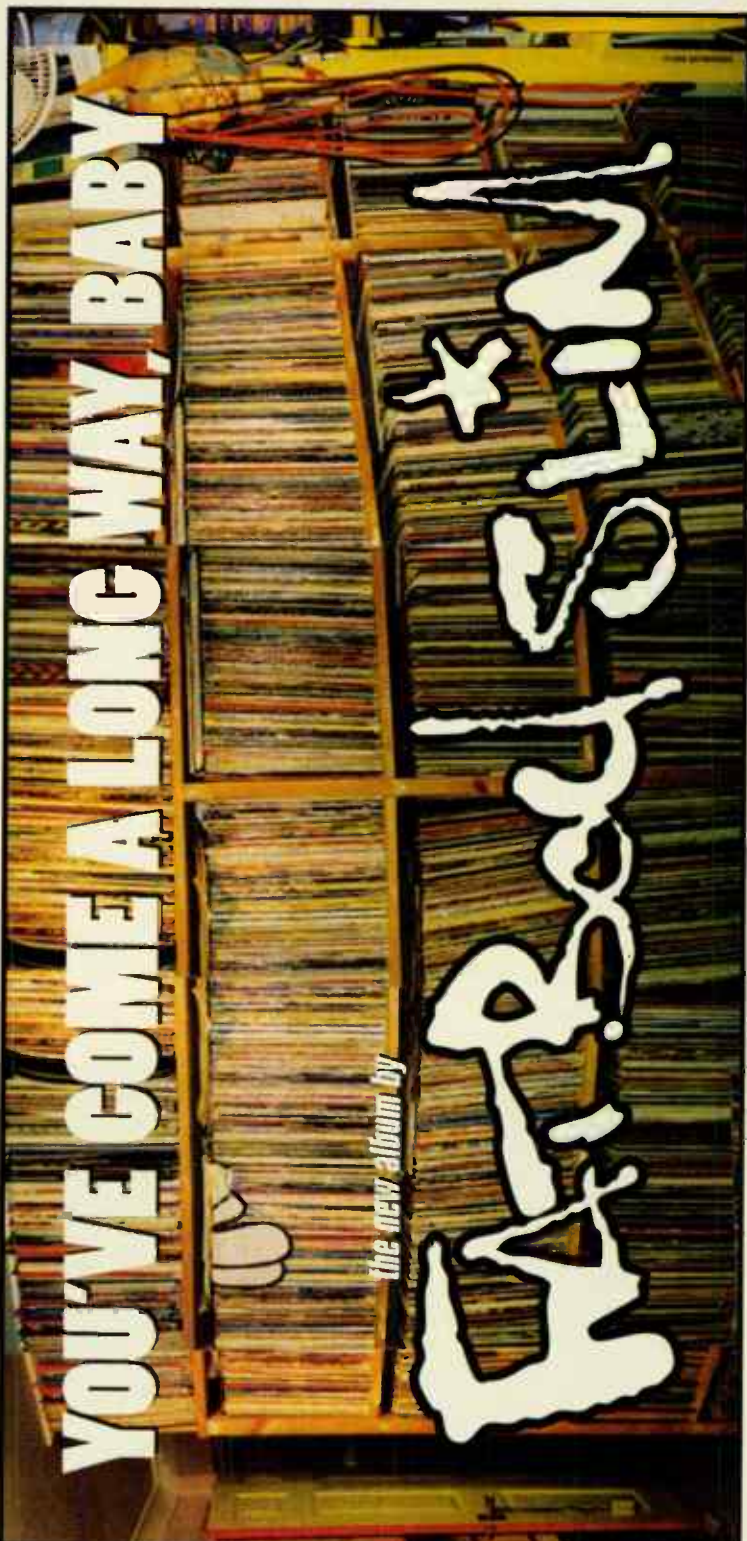
Nagual Site
Wicklow

It's hard to guess what a Sacred System album will sound like. The loose association of players offers producer Bill Laswell a chance to do what he loves best: create musical cross-pollinations. *Nagual Site* brings together Qawwali singer Gulam Mohammed Khan, P-Funk keyboardist Bernie Worrell, guitarist Nicky Skopelitis, bassist Jah Wobble and progressive jazz artist Graham Haynes. It's an impressive cast, but did you ever go to a star-packed movie and wonder, "Why isn't this great?" It's often the same thing here. There are thrilling moments, though. "Black Lotus" compliments the meditative Qawwali wails with reggae beats and smooth jazz saxophone, imbuing the devotional incantation with a sultry air. On the instrumental number "X-Zibit-i" Worrell's synthesizer swells could have been borrowed from a noir flick, suggesting that a murderer might be just around the corner. The percussion rattles and swirls with hypnotic fervor. If there were going to be a rave in Tehran, you could bet a number of these ambient house tunes would be on the playlist. But the appeal of *Nagual Site* is often more cerebral than auditory. The parts are intriguing and the combination of world beat with jazz and house is fascinating, but the overall result is just okay.



OUT: August 25.
FILE UNDER: Techno world.
R.I.Y.L.: Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Transglobal Underground.

>>> Neil Gladstone



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"The Rocketfeller Shank (The Funk Soul Brother),"
"Gangster Tripping" and "Praise You."



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P.W. LONG WITH REELFOOT

Push Me Again
Touch And Go

Listening to P.W. Long's last record, *We Didn't See You On Sunday*, is like seeing your daddy cry for the first time—poignant, but a little embarrassing. The former helmsman for Wig and Mule—unrepentantly rocking and masochistic, both—turned on the waterworks with a lament for a lost dog ("Aw Bruiser") and a sentimental ode to a mother's love ("I'll Be Your Angel"). But Long's Hallmark moment was short-lived. *Push Me Again* finds him returning to the metallic (not metal) guitar squeal and thunderous back-line racket of his Mule days. He's once again aided by the incomparable rhythm section of former Jesus Lizard drummer Mac McNeilly and bassist Dan Maister. And Mark Boyce's phat B-3 organ grooves infuse Long's songs with a sweaty funk they've always needed. Still, all is not well down at the trailer park. Any Mule fan knows that Long has a penchant for hackneyed Southern semantics, but at this point his act has taken on an almost cartoonish quality. Though Long's totems to redneckdom may be sincere, they're also contrived, and painfully deliberate. Sound familiar? Of course it does. Ladies and gentleman, meet the Gomer Pyle of rock 'n' roll. >>> Matt Hanks



OUT: September 8.

FILE UNDER:

Ballsy, boozy, bluesy.

R.I.Y.L.:

Black Oak Arkansas, Mule, Jesus Lizard.

KATE AND ANNA MCGARRIGLE

The McGarrigle Hour
Hannibal

With *The McGarrigle Hour*, sisters Kate and Anna offer an invitation to eavesdrop on a musical family reunion. Actually, the title misleads: Both the family and the hour are extended, so much so that the two sisters sometimes become supporting players on their own album. But something special occurs when families sing and play, and the permutations here produce wonders. Aside from the known quantities (Kate's ex, Loudon Wainwright III, their son Rufus, and "honorary McGarrigles" Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt), joining the acoustic song circle are Rufus's sister Martha, Anna's husband and children, and phantom McGarrigle sister Jane. The album opens with an old Loudon song about his "Schooldays"; it's arranged as a series of duets, with Kate and Anna taking the first verse and chorus, then Rufus and Martha, then Loudon and family friend Chaim Tannenbaum. Rufus sounds like Loudon, Martha like Kate, and Kate and Anna are symbiotic as always; the nuances are magical. Fans might be disappointed that the only compositions by Kate and/or Anna come from previous albums, but mixing old favorites like the atomic "NaCl" with songs by other family members and various standards heightens the family reunion effect. >>> Steve Klinge



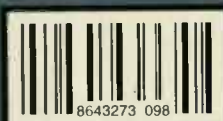
OUT: October 13.

FILE UNDER:

Family sing-alongs.

R.I.Y.L.:

Rufus and/or Loudon
Wainwright, Victoria Williams.



Unheard?01

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You can only pile so many samples and beats on top of each other before they merge into one big mess, and if you can't hear the hook and melody inside, what's the point of writing a song? Or, as Takako Minekawa lectures on the title track to her second full-length, "White creates a color." Minekawa sticks by this rule for the duration, creating catchy synthetic pop in which the open spaces brighten the melodies, and every digital bleep is carefully placed properly within the context of the song. Minekawa's curiosity with the past's fascination with the future—robots, pocket calculators, Kraftwerk, Moogs, Joe Meek—adds a wonderful personality to the synthesizer-heavy sound. The result is bedroom club music with samples and Casio tones galore that bounces with single-minded poppy perfection. The key to her success is restraint. Each song contains just enough fancy texture to thicken the whole; she never overuses or undervalues what's already there. She's smart enough to finish her songs *al dente* and, to mix gastronomic metaphors, then to gently spread her thin whisper over the top, pop a cherry or a chunk of chocolate on top, and move on to the next.

>>> Randall Roberts



OUT: October 6.

FILE UNDER:

Synth-pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Cornelius, Pizzicato Five, Joe Meek's futuristic explorations.

NOTHING PAINTED BLUE

The Monte Carlo Method

Scat



Nothing Painted Blue, fronted by UCLA philosophy PhD candidate and sometime *New Music Monthly* contributor Franklin Bruno, resurfaces for its first release in four years armed with an ace bundle of new songs to justify the downtime. An obvious reference point is the late, lamented Embarrassment, but even that Lawrence, Kansas, touchstone never compiled a full album as consistently solid as *The Monte Carlo Method*. Tasty riffs abound in ØPB's

energetic guitar rock, but it's clear Bruno spends as much time crafting lyrics as he does melodies. He's the kind of guy who can rhyme "entourage" with "decoupage" and get away with it. The lyric sheet is chock filled with clever turns of phrase and is an integral part of the package. In spots ØPB veers perilously close to hokey '80s new wave but always pulls back from the abyss, thanks in part to blasts of Pixies-grade guitar noise not normally found in the genre. When the tempo slows and vocals take center stage, it's easy to imagine Bruno downing beers with another revered wordsmith, XTC's Andy Partridge. If, like me, you can read a description of a record as "intelligent geeky white boy pop" and see that as a compliment, then *The Monte Carlo Method* has your name written all over it.

>>> Glen Sarvady

OUT: August 31.

FILE UNDER:

Literate power pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Embarrassment, Big Dipper, Young Fresh Fellows.

eels
electro-shock blues

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in stores now

World Radio History

plastikman

artifakts (bc) represents the last installment of the trilogy of albums that started with **sheet one** and **musik**. initially, I had envisioned the plastikman project as one album release, **sheet one**. after the original release of this album and subsequent single, **spastik** I began to work on various other ideas and tangents that related to the ideas expressed on **sheet one** and I began to see the development of plastikman as a series of three albums, each moving forward from the previous, but always keeping solid reference points to the past, present and future. the first album, **sheet one**, was centred around the idea of 'tripping' and the possibility of consciousness altering substances. a time of physical experimentation. **musik**, the second album, was built around more subtle ideas, funkier slower beats effectively creating a slightly chilled out experiment. the third and last installment of the trilogy was to be called **klinik**. this was the swinging back to the ideas of **sheet one**, but further. the music for this album was to be stripped down to the bare essentials, leaving only the remnants of basslines, beats, and delays to feed off, this was to be the end of the trilogy. somewhere around 1995 things got turned upside down when I was thrown out of the u.s.a. for performing illegally. this changed everything. as the plastikman project was very in-tuned with my own experiences in the detroit area, getting back to recording **klinik** became inspirationally very difficult. by the time I was re-admitted to the u.s., the detroit scene had changed and also my own

musical direction. when I finally got back to working full time on the third plastikman release, things started to turn out quite differently than I had expected. I quickly finished enough material for an album that in my mind, is album four, **consumed**. this utilised the ideas behind the finished **klinik** material and took them to a new area. instead of 'trying' to finish **klinik**, I moved on and released **consumed**. even though **klinik** was never finished, there was an abundance of material that was recorded for it. in order to close the trilogy, and to establish some of the 'bridge' between **musik** and **consumed**, I thought it was necessary to release the third album. although it has taken a somewhat different shape, I believe **artifakts (bc)** effectively concludes this trilogy. some of the material included here was intended for **klinik**, some of it just things that were recorded during the interim between **musik** and **consumed**. together the sessions represent the best outline of what happened in between **musik** and **consumed**.

richie hawtin 1998

1. **korridor klinik** (fill)
2. **psyk klinik** sessions
3. **pakard klinik** sessions now re-titled
4. **hypokondriak klinik** sessions (an intermediate stage between sickness & pannikattak)
5. **rekall** unknown session
6. **skizofrenik** repetition with random drum convulsions
7. **are friends elektrik?** recorded during the exile. for those who disappeared
8. **lodgikal nonsense** edited for our return trip.

released 3 november 1998
on cd and double lp

artifakts (bc)

cd • lp



Recycled Plastik
3019-2



Sheet One
3015-2



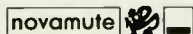
Musik
3028-2



Artifakts (bc)
3049-2



Consumed
3048-2



reviews

OASIS

The Masterplan
Epic



Most B-sides compilations offer a secret glimpse into a band's songwriting process, including goofy studio experiments, rough bedroom recordings or unexpected covers. But Oasis has always written songs destined for stadiums, not bedrooms and dens, so it's not surprising that most of its B-sides sound like they could've been A-sides. *The Masterplan* collects highlights from the many B-sides available on the band's dozen UK singles. Many of these tracks are anthemic pop-rock tunes that are as instantly likable and unbelievably catchy as "Live Forever" or "Wonderwall"; "Underneath The Sky" and "Stay Young" especially will have you hoisting your pint of lager in the air and crooning along with the choruses. While most of *The Masterplan* offers more of the same we've come to expect from Oasis, the brothers Gallagher do interject a few interesting misfits, such as the stark acoustic "Talk Tonight" (which features guitarist Noel on vocals), the bluesy instrumental "The Swamp Song" and a sprawling live rendition of "I Am The Walrus." You can't deny that Oasis's songwriting can sometimes be too derivative and formulaic (here, the insipid chorus of "Fade Away" is particularly grating). But there are enough gems in even these "throwaways" to prove that most of the time, the formula works.

>>> Wendy Mitchell

OUT: November 3.
FILE UNDER:
Crowd-pleasing Brit-pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
Beatles, Charlatans UK,
The Verve.

PAUL NEWMAN

Only Love Can Break Your Heart
Trance Syndicate



For a band that recently turned two, the Austin, Texas-based quartet Paul Newman—named for its bassist—displays startling maturity on its second full-length. Low-key, largely instrumental, conceptually audacious, and drawing on an unusually sharp group dynamic, Paul Newman manages the feat of precisely playing complex compositions that sound utterly uncontrived—the songs unfold non-linearly, but flow as gracefully as a river. Still, at times the understatement

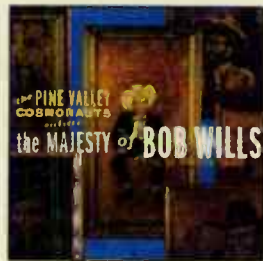
gets dull, and sounds clinical rather than evocative. This is frustrating in light of Paul Newman's flashes of brilliance—the tonal complexity of the band's odd chords, the entirety of "Arriving Early," or the ringing repeating guitar figure that sets up the ending of "Seizure's Fashion." *Only Love* begins with what sounds like a boombox recording of a rehearsal, leaving the listener wishing for the ruder textures of those moments. Luckily, the atypical closer "The New Goth" delivers them: short, fast, screamed, and borne aloft by gloriously churning guitars. Despite its faults, *Only Love* hints that Paul Newman has potential it hasn't yet realized. Say it's about halfway to greatness, but showing that the players have got it in them to make it all the way there.

>>> Jon Fine

OUT: September 29.
FILE UNDER:
Understated smart-guy rock.
R.I.Y.L.:
Dianogah, Don Caballero,
Trans Am.

PINE VALLEY COSMONAUTS

Salute The Majesty Of Bob Wills
Bloodshot



OUT: October 6.
FILE UNDER:
& Western.
R.I.Y.L.:
Asleep At The Wheel, Lyle Lovett,
Jimmie Dale Gilmore.

Western swing is the jazz to country's white man's blues, and Bob Wills was its king. From the mid-'30s through the early ascendance of rock 'n' roll, Western swing earned its place after the ampersand in "Country & Western" based largely on Wills's popularity—the Grand Ol' Opry even abandoned its no-drums policy rather than risk losing his booking. With a tapping of his fiddle bow, Wills led his Texas Playboys through jazz and ragtime, blues and big band, which placed him as far from the Nashville mainstream in his time as today's crop of insurgent country artists are now. Which brings us full circle, as the Pine Valley Cosmonauts' pay tribute to Wills with the help of Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Robbie Fulks, Kelly Hogan and Alejandro Escovedo. The Cosmonauts are lead by the Mekons' Jon Langford, whose paintings of Wills adorn the cover and CD booklet and whose vocal turn on "Sweet Kind Of Love" bridges the gap between the pub and the honky-tonk. It's all engagingly heartfelt—other standouts include Gilmore's "Trouble In Mind" and Edith Frost's "My Window Faces The South"—and so even if emotion always does make things a little messy, there's no reason not to join the party.

>>> Scott Frampton

PLACEBO

Without You I'm Nothing
Virgin



OUT: November 3.
FILE UNDER:
Nouveau glam.
R.I.Y.L.:
Suede, Gene, Mansun.

The last resurgence of glam-rock in the UK (somewhere in mid-to-late August of 1993, if I remember correctly) was barely a blip on the pop-culture radar screen, but according to the cyclical logic of British music, it's high time to try again. And *Velvet Goldmine*, this autumn's retro rock flick by Todd Haynes, threatens to wedge mascara, power chords, and gender ambivalence back into the collective hipster conscious. Placebo is in a prime position to benefit from the instant nostalgia—the members certainly have the look (singer Brian Molko is an androgynous knockout, so much so that the band was cast in small parts in *Goldmine*). And all rock-critic cynicism about of-the-moment bands aside, Placebo even has the chops. *Without You I'm Nothing* is full of catchy, well-crafted songs, and by no means is it limited to up-tempo three-chord sing-alongs. The hard-edged pieces dabble in harsh blasts of noise and atonal chords; the quieter tracks build to delicate crescendos. Molko's lyrics are witty and filled with wordplay but stay heartfelt and humane (although his voice—somewhere in the outer reaches between Brett Anderson and Geddy Lee—gets a little nasal and precious). *Without You* has all the staying power to retain its listening appeal long after Glam '98 has faded from sight.

>>> David Jarman

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QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

Queens Of The Stone Age
Loosegroove

Queens Of The Stone Age are essentially Kyuss, or some permutation thereof, without the menacing growl of singer John Garcia, who was last seen fronting his own Kyussy band, Slo Burn. Which doesn't turn out to be much of a problem because muscular guitarist and Kyuss founder Josh Homme turns out to be not such a bad singer himself. In fact, to the degree that Homme's lighter touch on vocals creates a nice contrast to the molten fuzz of his guitar, he's actually the better man for the job. Of course, lyrics and vocals really weren't the point with Kyuss, and the same is basically true of the Queens, which reunite Homme with former Kyuss Army veterans Alfredo Hernandez (drums from the last incarnation of Kyuss) and Nick Oliveri (bass from the first two Kyuss albums). Maximum-density riffage and heavy, thudding grooves are Homme's *raison d'être*, and the Queens offer plenty of that. But touring as the support guitarist for Screaming Trees seems to have taught Homme a thing or two about welding riffs to hefty hooks, which makes *Queens Of The Stone Age* seem less like a weightlifting exhibition for potheads and more like a stoner songwriting session with amps turned up to 11 and just the right amount of beautifully scuzzy guitar heroics. >>> *Matt Ashare*



OUT: October 6.
FILE UNDER:
Stoner grunge.
R.I.Y.L.:
Kyuss, Monster Magnet,
Fu Manchu.

RED HOT + RHAPSODY

Various Artists
Red Hot/Antilles-Verve

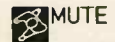
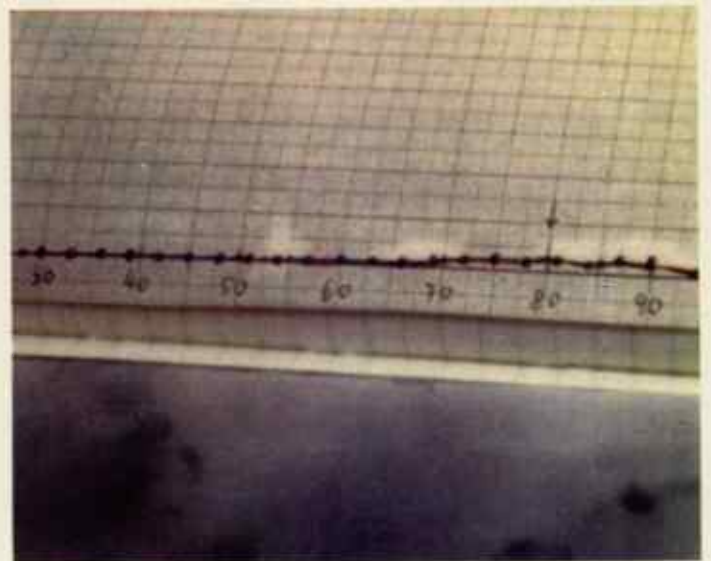
Red Hot + Rhapsody is the latest in the Red Hot series of AIDS benefit compilations, and it's also the first since 1990's near-perfect *Red Hot + Blue* to revive its concept of having new-generation pop types covering a single classic songwriter's work—in this case George Gershwin. That said, Gershwin's songs either don't adapt themselves to the modern pop idiom as well as Cole Porter's, or this batch of musicians—half hitmakers, half also-rans—just isn't up to the challenge. For the most part, either they're faithful to the originals but not quite worthy of them (Natalie Merchant just doesn't have the voice for "But Not For Me"), or they impose their own style so much that they lose track of Gershwin (as Smoke City does on "They Can't Take That Away From Me"). There are a few marvelous surprises, though, including Money Mark's berserk little sound-collage "Peter Sellers Sings George Gershwin" and Finley Quay's sinister, hip-swiveling "It Ain't Necessarily So." Baaba Maal's "Bess, You Is My Woman Now" is kind of an oddity, but, like Salif Keita's "Begin The Beguine" on *Red Hot + Blue*, it's proof that a great melody can stretch across all kinds of borders in the right hands. If only more of these performers had stretched them the right way. >>> *Douglas Wolk*



OUT: October 6.
FILE UNDER:
Old songs, new singers.
R.I.Y.L.:
Red Hot + Blue, The Songs Of West Side Story.



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RETSIN

Sweet Luck Of Amaryllis
Carrot Top



OUT: October 20.

FILE UNDER:

Indie folk femme-pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Containe, Liquorice, Danielle Howle, Lisa Germano.

Built on a solid foundation of indie cred, Retsin returns for a third CD of graceful, lilting pop constructed from glistening guitar interplay and understated vocals. Tara Jane O'Neil (Sonora Pine, ex-Rodan) and Cynthia Nelson (Ruby Falls) avoid edginess as if it's evil incarnate, yet they never compensate with simplistic melodies or hackneyed hooks. Songs like "Good Morning Bird" and "Dad Gone" don't even feature drums, but the complex structures require such intricate vocal maneuvering and acoustic/electric string-work that you'd never notice the lack of full-band arrangements. Not that Retsin is averse to such a thing: "The Story of One Party," "5 Down To Four" and others add a percussive cushion and a rhythmic sway. Sashaying between these two approaches, the duo (and a few guests) arrives at a delicately mature sound that's still got some bite, mainly because O'Neil and Nelson both possess rich, coloristic voices and can tack on a snarl or express tantalizing restraint when needed. This versatility extends to Retsin's stylistic accomplishments, as Nelson's playful flute runs fortify the Lisa Germano-like "Swallow," a countrified gallop underscores "What The Devil Said," and exquisite harmonies enliven the album-closing cover of Codeine's "Broken Hearted Wire." >>> *Richard Martin*

JONATHAN RICHMAN

I'm So Confused
Vapor



OUT: October 20.

FILE UNDER:

There's something about Jonathan.

R.I.Y.L.:

Robyn Hitchcock, Jad Fair, hopelessly romantic 47-year-old manchildren.

In the '90s, Modern Lover Jonathan Richman has tried country (1990's *Jonathan Goes Country*), Spanish (1994's *Jonathan, Te Vas A Emoncionar*), and Hollywood (1998's film *There's Something About Mary*). But no amount of tampering ever seems to impinge measurably the innate Jonathanness—the sunny disposition, the broken heart, the childlike innocence, the deadpan humor, and the earnest nostalgia—that's always made Jonathan, well, so very Jonathan. *I'm So Confused* pairs Richman with another Boston rock veteran who was inspired by the Velvet Underground early in his career—former Cars leader Ric Ocasek, who produced the disc. It's not exactly a match made in rock 'n' roll heaven. Ocasek's the classic cool, cynical hipster, a Warhol admirer who loved the seamy pretensions of "Venus In Furs." Richman's a throwback to the Buddy Holly '50s whose life was saved by rock 'n' roll. But Ocasek's tight production and occasionally out-of-place synth and keyboard embellishments are nothing more than new bumps in the road for Richman, who's too busy reminiscing about being 19 in Naples, celebrating a neglected thrift store, and looking for a party he can't find, to even notice. >>> *Matt Ashare*



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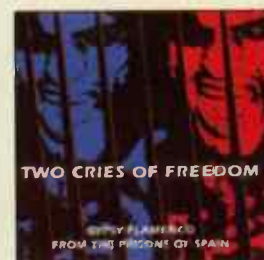
One of the most difficult achievements in rock music may be to make an album that sounds good to both people who are on drugs and people who aren't on drugs. On the one hand, you have to go a few steps too far into the sonic unknown—hold your drones and whooshes a little too long, push the same figure through a few too many repetitions—to appeal to the artificially-enhanced attention span. On the other hand, you have to maintain firm control over your pop songwriting strategies, making sure that your flights of fancy occasionally coalesce into verses and choruses. Britain's Six By Seven succeeds on both counts, keeping one foot in each camp. *The Things We Make* is the band's debut, bringing together its first three singles with a clutch of new tunes. The singles, especially the awe-inspiring "European Me," tend to set the controls for the heart of the sun, layering effects and theremin-sounding guitar parts on top of Spacemen 3-style somnambulism. But there's also a fair share of shorter and less sprawling tunes that recall The Verve's sparkly head-full-of-stars pop sensibilities. It's a soothing but heady listen, whether accompanied by controlled substances or simply a cup of herbal tea.

OUT: October 20.
FILE UNDER:
Mildly psychedelic dream-pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
Spiritualized, Swervedriver,
Flaming Lips.

>>> David Jarman

TWO CRIES OF FREEDOM

Various Artists
ROIR



Whether it's the blues, workgang chants or modern-day rap, music has always been a vehicle for those on the inside looking out—a way for people in prison to express themselves when they're deprived of virtually all freedoms, amenities and comforts. So perhaps it's really not that surprising that in the darkest corners of Spain's prisons, there lurk some dynamic and incredible flamenco musicians and singers, whose work is documented on this CD. "All The Best Flamenco Singers Are In Jail," reads the headline to one article about this compilation, and the irony is undeniable: flamenco, one of the world's most famous genres of dance music, being performed by men often literally wearing handcuffs in the recording studio. While you don't exactly hear chains clanking and cups rattling on the bars, it is rather spooky—in places, the wailing voices of the singers recall the passion and fervor found in Sufi or Arabic singers that so inspired Jeff Buckley. Quite frankly, the commercial recordings by popular flamenco acts like the Gipsy Kings sound downright tame compared to this, the Spanish equivalent to the deepest Delta blues or the hardest of inner city rap.

OUT: September 25.
FILE UNDER:
Flamenco behind bars.
R.I.Y.L.:
Gipsy Kings, Nusrat Fateh Ali
Khan, Jeff Buckley.

>>> James Lien

VELVET goldmine

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The Wylde Rottz are:

Mark Arm
Ron Asheton
Jim Dunbar
Don Fleming
Thurston Moore
Steve Shelley
Mike Watt
Ewan McGregor



Britain's **PAUL OAKENFOLD** is one of the most important and respected DJs of the UK dance scene and, for many, the alpha and omega of progressive house/trance music. The influential jockey/producer is credited with taking acid house from New York City clubs in the late '80s back to his mates in England and making his version of this melodic and euphoric brand of dance music the standard soundtrack for numerous mainstream UK clubs. Having conquered the nightlife of his homeland, Oakenfold is now selling the sounds back to America and is intent on proving the passion of his music will connect with US ears as well. Not only is **Tranceport (Perfecto-Kinetic)** Oakie's first domestically available DJ mix CD, it also includes many of the tracks that have proven to be secret weapons in converting US clubbers to the UK way this past year. Oakenfold's gift is in his ability to tell a story with his vinyl. Under his direction, Paul van Dyk's "Words (For Love)," Transa's "Enervate," Binary Finary's "1998," and eight other recent and forthcoming anthems are woven into type A audio drama—an energetic and emotional saga complete with an introduction, conclusion and climax. *Tranceport* aims to please the disciples of trancy progressive house and to educate the uninitiated on the sound of clubland's future... London's **ANDREA PARKER** has spent more than 11 years creating music, beginning with classical cello and voice training, and peaking with the dark and ominous electronic orchestrations she crafts for the Mo Wax label. Careful not to be pigeonholed by one dominant sound, Parker has emerged as a diverse and respected DJ and remixer as well as a producer—one who is able to command and control hellish trip-hop, complex drum 'n' bass, funky electro and straight-up techno with the same finesse and success. The most recent artist in the lauded **DJ Kicks (Studio K7)** series, she hand-picked 20 tracks representing her more dancefloor-friendly personality. The set begins with her own revamping of Depeche Mode's "It's No Good" and Dr. Octagon's "Earth People," transforming the two very different cuts into menacing, industrial-flavored hip-hop tracks that sound as though they were cut from the same stone. From there, Parker's set moves away from nightmarish frequencies and begins to rock with an electro groove. Incorporating choice cuts from Afrika Bambaataa ("Renegades Chant"), C.O.D. ("In The Bottle") and Space Djz ("Celestial Funk"), Parker embraces the genre's past and present, and rides the funk until the disc's apocalyptic close.



>>> M. Tye Comer

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TIM KEEGAN

& THE HOMER LOUNGE

Ex-Blue Aeroplanes guitarist Tim Keegan is a modern-day protest singer, equal parts Crowded House and Belle and Sebastian. He's featured in Jonathan Demme's forthcoming live performance movie, *Storefront Hitchcock*, and he's just recorded for Paul Auster's new film, *Lulu on the Bridge*. This is Tim's debut album, with special guest Robyn Hitchcock.



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Remembering the stark, simple funk of Gang of Four and Brno, the plucky wit of the Union, and the scintillating post-punk of the Moderns, *Number One Cup* has outdid a serious album that understands the futility of its rhythm and thus offers the opportunity to shut up and rock. Good luck.

New York City Free Jazz

With the release on Columbia of David S. Ware's *Go See The World*, the fertile and exciting New York City free jazz scene has broken through to the mainstream. Some may find it ironic that Ware's 11th album ended up on Columbia due to Branford Marsalis's enthusiastic support, a line of thinking that relies on the incorrect assumption that all Marsalises are as conservative in their musical opinions as Wynton—or perhaps that free jazz players don't have the chops to impress more mainstream players. In fact, plenty of players on the scene are versatile and well versed in a broad range of idioms, so listeners who decide to explore beyond *Go See The World* really will find a world of great music there.



DAVID KATZENSTEIN

These are musicians with a clear sense of purpose and utter conviction. "In Manhattan's Lower East Side," says pianist Matthew Shipp, who's an integral part of Ware's group, "the language we have known as free jazz, which came out of certain struggles in the '60s, is being revitalized to encapsulate an expanding and forward-looking notion of what the jazz language of the 21st century will be. This revivification and revitalization of an underground language in a lot of ways reflects both a hope for the future and the decadence of jazz marketing as it exists in major-label jazz today. The efforts of a lot of various people and groups, whether they're connected in spirit or sometimes personnel, are a part of this scene."

Ware himself states, "I do what I do because of my feelings about how life should be lived and what we're here for and where we should be going, the purpose of being here, having a physical body and all that that implies, and the development of that and your mind and spirit and to have a certain perspective on everything that comes. Basically, a spiritual approach to the whole situation. I feel that music carries a message. There's knowledge in all music!"

Ware, who just turned 49, paid his dues with tenures in the '70s and '80s in the groups of Cecil Taylor and Andrew Cyrille, followed by a long period of work as a leader that was released by foreign or indie labels. During a good chunk of this time, he also drove a cab in New York. He's been recording as a leader since 1988, usually deploying his powerful tenor sax tones in a quartet format. "I have always been into having a steady band and working exclusively with those guys," he says. "I'm not into freelancing, and every time that I do it, it's the pits for me. I need a band to really develop what it is I'm concerned about."

WARE

Shipp and bassist William Parker are longtime members of Ware's quartet, with the latest occupant of the drum chair being Susie Ibarra. Their long service together has molded them into a highly responsive and powerful group that deploys the wilder aspects of free improvisation and modal jazz in a swinging format suited to both the fiery deconstruction of "The Way We Were" and the fearless explorations of Ware's compelling themes. Last year's *Wisdom Of Uncertainty* on the Brooklyn indie AUM Fidelity is, if anything, even fiercer and more exciting than the new album.

The other members of Ware's quartet have equally exciting careers as leaders. Parker, who's been around as long as Ware, is a mainstay of the scene, with a gig schedule beyond busy, but in recent years he's been finding more time to work as a leader. He's got a fine small group, In Order To Survive, and a superb, multi-hued big band, the Little Huey Creative Music Orchestra, whose two-CD set *Sunrise In The Tone World* (AUM Fidelity) offers the freest big-band improvising since the Sun Ra Arkestra. Parker provides loose yet tensile structures within which his ever-shifting band can cut loose with expressive and challenging solos and collective improvs.

The younger (38-year-old) Shipp's career has been skyrocketing lately thanks to some groundbreaking records on the Swiss label hatOLOGY. His richly textured piano style, drawing from an array of predecessors, including post-bop cult hero Andrew Hill, free-jazz icon Cecil Taylor, and classical maverick Alexander Scriabin, is fast developing his own dynamic style, full of booming polytonal chords and skittering runs. The peak of his output so far is *By The Law Of Music*, a trio session with Parker and violinist Mat Maneri.

Ibarra hasn't recorded as a leader yet, though with the announcement of a label—Hopscotch—to be run with her husband, tenor saxophonist Assif Tsahar, that may soon change. She has anchored Ware's and Parker's groups as well as a trio including her, Tsahar, and Parker that can be heard on Tsahar's recent album *Ein Sof* (Silkheart), where Tsahar is revealed as yet another rising tenor star on the scene. Ibarra has also guested with downtown avant-garde icon John Zorn in various settings.

Much of what Zorn does falls outside the boundaries of free jazz (not that Zorn cares about such definitions), but his spirited quartet Masada gives free jazz a strong Jewish tinge, at times suggesting Ornette Coleman playing klezmer melodies. The prolific group has released 10 studio CDs on the Japanese label Avant and promises live recordings on Tzadik (Zorn runs both labels).

One of the thrills as an observer of any scene is spotting the new talent early. Downtown denizens are quickly getting excited about 35-year-old guitarist Bruce Eisenbeil. Though he studied with famed mainstream jazz guitarists Joe Pass and Joe Diorio, he considers himself primarily self-taught, and one listen to his distinctive guitar approach on his album *Nine Wings* (CIMP) confirms that he comes from no particular school but instead has built a fresh style. His single-note lines are knotty and unpredictable, and he'll sometimes dwell on chiming, dissonant chords for several bars.

Other artists on the scene worth checking out include free jazz purist/multi-instrumentalist Charles Gayle; prolific saxophonist Tim Berne and his groups Bloodcount, Paraphrase, Caos Totale, and Big Satan; the trio Babkas; multi-instrumentalist Zusaan Kali Fasteau, whose work as a leader is all on her own Flying Note label; frequent Shipp collaborator Rob Brown; the quartet One World Ensemble; Jemeel Moondoc; the late drummer Denis Charles; and Masada trumpeter Dave Douglas, under his own name and with Tiny Bell Trio and New & Used. Cumulatively they are the sound of the millennium.

e n d

World Radio History

josh rouse

dressed up like nebraska

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RYKO

Rare Laughs

I'm not really sure what constitutes a rare record. Every time someone tells me that Nirvana's "Love Buzz" single or the first Belle & Sebastian record has gone stratospheric in price, I come home to find that I've forgotten who I've lent my copy of it to, or that some junkie has stolen it from a party. I'm strictly behind the curve when it comes to *that* kind of rare record.

Yet I have a feeling that no one is going to steal the records that are most rare to me. You can get most of them in any thrift store for less than a dollar. Tucked into my record collection between Patti Smith and Some Velvet Sidewalk are *The Songs And Comedy Of The Smothers Brothers At The Purple Onion* and *The Golden Hits Of The Smothers Brothers, Volume Two*, and don't steal them from me or I will have your head on a plate. They are the records I have owned the longest and I cherish them wildly.

I assume that these records were purchased by one or another of my six elder siblings because I started listening to them when I was four or five, so I hardly think I bought them myself. I'd wait until they were all away at school and then I'd go out in the converted garage and listen surreptitiously to their comedy LPs. I was no doubt drawn to the Smothers Brothers because their humor was built upon sing-songy folk songs. Plus, I loved Tommy Smothers's dumb shtick. "Michael, row that boat ashore. C'mon Mike. Mike, trim those sails, baby." His stammered and confused explanations of things sounded profound to me. His take on the song "March On The River Kwai": "They never sang the words. They whistled the words. People said, 'I wish I could sing along to that song.' But the words were dirty! So if you see any kids walking down the street whistling—slap 'em down." I wasn't exactly a student of the double entendre, so most of the jokes passed me by, but the perceived tameness suited me and I was totally hooked.

As I aged, my sophistication (although it grew in minute increments) led me to seek out "edgier" laffs. I moved on to the Bill Cosby records, *Why Is There Air?* and *Bill Cosby Is A Very Funny Fellow. Right!*, which I thought were vastly more refined. I then became an avid watcher of *Dick Van Dyke Show* reruns, convinced that my future as a comedy writer was in the bag. When my brother gave me his 45 of the show's theme song, I created an exact pantomime of the opening

credits, complete with Dick's headlong crash over the ottoman, and performed it to the polite applause of my entire family, which probably thought I was pathetic and totally un-funny. Whereas, I thought I was a total comedy authority. I'd quote Allan Sherman and present a Mort Sahl quip at the dinner table. As I struggled in the grips of adolescence, I started listening to Dr. Demento's radio hour, although novelty songs never held the same fascination as did straight gag records.

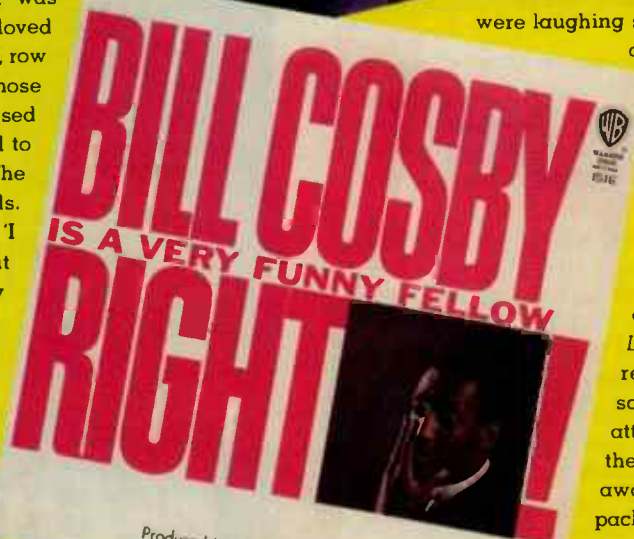
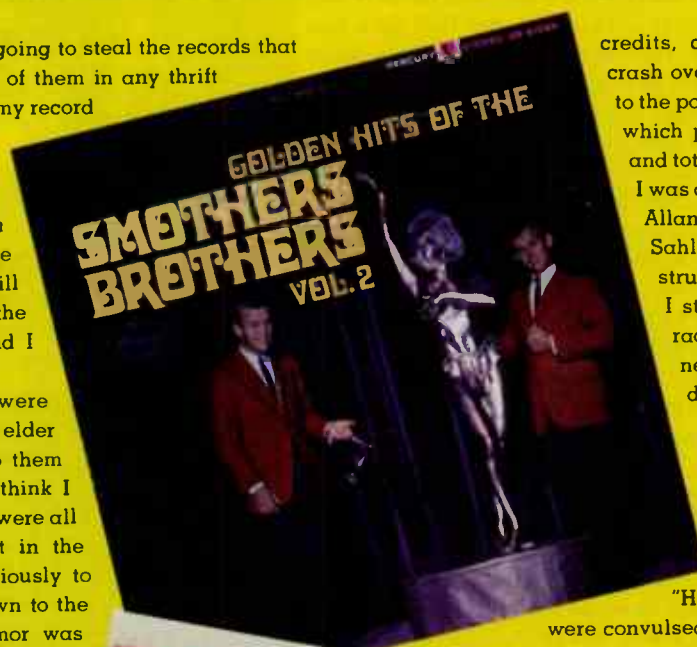
My comedy jag lasted until about sixth grade. A gang of kids was sitting around at my friend Toni Casciaro's house and somebody put on Cheech and Chong's *Up In Smoke* record.

"Hey maaaaaaaannnnnn." They were convulsed. Boys were actually crying they were laughing so hard. I was shocked at their panic of laughter. This wasn't comedy. It was crude. I couldn't even conceptualize being stoned. My popularity was crashing. I was out before they even got to side two.

Though comedy albums still cropped up in my record collection, they never again constituted the core. I may have passed an evening or two with a six pack of Coors and *Let's Get Small* somewhere in the regimented "good times" of high school, but I wasn't really paying attention. I had drifted. But somehow, in the flash forward nostalgia of my move away from home to college, I thought to pack my Smothers Brothers. I didn't even listen to them; I just carried them around for comfort. But after I started making music on my own, and every single fanzine interview led off with "What was your first

record?" I was continually reminded of *Live At The Purple Onion*. So I hauled it out and started listening. And guess what? It's still funny. (And I still hate pot.)

end



Produced by ALLAN SHERMAN

BY IAN CHRIS TE

CRANIUM

Speed Metal Slaughter

Necropolis

For those of you who have already cleared a space on the floor, now is the time to fall out of your chair laughing. Spitting in the face of reason, Sweden's Cranium has returned from the dead to deliver a hyperactive master's thesis on speed metal: an extinct mid-'80s sub-genre marked by chunky guitar riffs, caffeinated falsetto singing, and songs about how great it is to wear leather and spikes. Originally formed in 1985, Cranium worships mid-'80s San Francisco Bay Area thrash—Exodus, Death Angel, Violence, Legacy, Forbidden Evil and Blind Illusion. Taking full advantage of hindsight, the band purifies the form to its most effective elements, and beats the unholy hell out of it. There are as many outrageous riffs and silly solos on this romp as there are on practically the entire Combat Records back catalog, not forgetting Agent Steel. Nearly every track—including the anti-

disco "Slaughter On The Dance Floor," the sadistic "Dentist Of Death," and the anthemic "Satanic Rescue Team"—uses a chain saw drill, or some other type of ridiculous sound effect. The vocalist, Chainsaw Demon, sounds like a psychotic cartoon rat, and his Euro accent is purposefully horrible. Putting the "laugh" back in "slaughter," *Speed Metal Slaughter* is a hilarious and uplifting masterpiece, a celebration of the lawless stupid fun of raucous drunken metal. Even if you only keep one cassette tape around the house marked "metal," this would be that all-purpose pill to bang the head that does not bang.



>>> The United Kingdom is known to be a realm where trolls and faeries still exist and, in fact, hold high political office. From the enchanted shrubs of Ireland hails **PRIMORDIAL**, a folk-influenced black metal group that seems, above all else, a two-penny theater troupe. Beginning with the scorching blur of "Graven Idol," *A Journey's End* (Misanthropy) seems like emotional black metal on the epic scale of Sonic Youth. This first glance is deceptive, however, as the following six songs lead into an ever more torrid celebration of sanctimonious sadness. There are no limits to Primordial's gothic drama; the singer practically rips open his blouse, tears out his heart, nails it to the stage floor with a silver dagger, and mops up the mess with his own tear-soaked hair. Deep down, I feel this precious cargo has very little to do with metal, but if you respond to medieval romantic escapism in any way, you probably owe it to yourself to seek out this shamelessly histrionic effort... It would be tough to convince anyone that **MEGAPTERA** was playing dark drone music like the *Curse Of The Scarecrow* (Release) in exactly the same way before the arrival of Mortuus. The crew is obviously influenced by the dungeon master of dark ambient music, but it develops the tone and timbre much further. Lacking Mortuus's bulletproof visual style and concept, Megaptera turns to its actual music to find action and character, making this somber outing a great, quiet find... Berlin techno cherub **PANACEA** would be the dark star of drum 'n' bass, but his distortion-laden breakbeats lack the oozing visceral lurch of Ed Rush, Nico and the No U-Turn crew. Instead of embodying true terror, Panacea's *Twisted Decay* (The Music Cartel) often sounds like evil Kraftwerk, or regular jungle played through a distortion pedal. Not that there's anything wrong with that. There's no denying the record is an ominous and immaculately produced piece of audio wallpaper, but it leaves the hall of sampled metal wide open for challengers.

metal top 25

- 1 **FEAR FACTORY**
Obsolete Roadrunner
- 2 **KORN**
Follow The Leader Immortal-Epic
- 3 **ROB ZOMBIE**
Hellbilly Deluxe Geffen
- 4 **SYSTEM OF A DOWN**
System Of A Down American/Columbia-CRG
- 5 **EARTH CRISIS**
Breed The Killers Roadrunner
- 6 **ANTHRAX**
Volume 8: The Threat Is Real Ignition
- 7 **SLAYER**
Diabolus In Musica American/Columbia-CRG
- 8 **VISION OF DISORDER**
Imprint Roadrunner
- 9 **DROWN**
Product Of A Two Faced World Slipdisc-Mercury
- 10 **AGNOSTIC FRONT**
Something's Gotta Give Epitaph
- 11 **WITCHERY**
Restless And Dead Necropolis
- 12 **BANE**
Holding This Moment Equal Vision
- 13 **DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN**
Under The Running Board (EP) Relapse
- 14 **KID ROCK**
Devil Without A Cause Lava-Atlantic
- 15 **SOULFLY**
Soufly Roadrunner
- 16 **KILGORE**
A Search For Reason Unsound-Revolution
- 17 **OPPRESSOR**
Elements Of Corrosion Slipdisc-Mercury
- 18 **CROWBAR**
Godd Fellows Rest Mayhem
- 19 **HELLOWEEN**
Better Than Raw Velvel
- 20 **NILE**
Amongst The Catacombs Of Nephren-Ka Relapse
- 21 **MARILYN MANSON**
Mechanical Animals Nothing-Interscope
- 22 **PROJECT 86**
Project 86 BEC
- 23 **BRUCE DICKINSON**
The Chemical Wedding CMC International
- 24 **OPETH**
Morningrise Century Media
- 25 **MONSTER MAGNET**
Powertrip A&M

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

EAST FLATBUSH PROJECT

Tried By 12

Chocolate Industries Ninja Tune

Until the arrival of this record, the subterranean links between hip-hop and avant-garde techno were a well-kept secret. Given that many of electronic music's most daring practitioners grew up listening to hip-hop—Autechre, for example, routinely cites old school hip-hop as a prime influence—this project is not the misalliance it might at first appear to be. *Tried By 12* makes those links explicit and reveals the complicity of the two genres, which should never have been separated at all. This record's humble beginnings lie in the East Flatbush Project's original single "Tried By 12," a sparse, arid indie hip-hop single produced by Spencer Bellamy and released in 1997 to critical acclaim and widespread underground success. The folks at Chocolate Industries in Miami (home to Push Button Object, Phoenecia and other leftfield electronic pranksters) decided to ask their colleagues to remix the track in any way they saw fit. What's novel about that idea? Their colleagues include such avant-garde analog engineers as Squarepusher, Herbaliser, and Autechre, lending the project a great deal of promise. And it delivers a punch that will irrevocably change the position of hip-hop within what is referred to as the IDM (intelligent dance music) world. What distinguishes this effort from the plethora of remix work is that on first hearing, some of the reinterpretations bear absolutely no resemblance whatever to the original, but that impression is deceptive because they all retain the parched groove and moody, contemplative textures of the original version. Only Herbaliser's mixes are hip-hop in the traditional sense. Gescom and Squarepusher rearrange the vocals like letters on a Scrabble board, bringing Bellamy's regretful lyrics about his deceased friends into the center of a disturbing analog vortex which pulls the sound in a centripetal fashion, creating what sounds like a sonic black hole at the very center of the mix. This is where experimental electronics and hip-hop meet in a way that will change the received wisdom about each form.



Cologne artist Thomas Brinkmann's sister died when he was two years old. That this event had a profound impact on the German artist's life is made evident by the fact that his newest full-length record, *Totes Rennen* (Suppose), is actually credited to **ESTER BRINKMANN**. However morbid that might seem, it pales to insignificance next to the haunted, spectral quality of the music contained within. Minimal techno is a term thrown around indiscriminately these days, but for Brinkmann the phrase could not be more accurate. His approach to turntable artistry is to hand-etch pieces of vinyl, which he then plays back on two customized turntables. Thus, the clicks and pops in these tracks are substitutes for the kick-drum and high-hat, present only by suggestion. Now, if all this seems sterile and mechanical, skip to "Jeran Loop" and you'll see that the funk really hits the fan, and any dancefloor even passively familiar with Jeff Mills or the Chain Reaction will find this LP far greater than a series of mechanical experiments... Melvin White is one half of the duo Lonny & Melvin, two electro artists from The Hague, who, despite the current vogue for "new electro," never forgot that "electro" was simply shorthand for "electrotunk." Under the name **PAMETEX**, White has released the *Car Demolition* (Pametex), six tracks of body slamming electro. This isn't a subtle record, it's more akin to the World Wrestling Federation of electronic music, and it's purpose-built for dancefloors, though its textural complexities make it equally engaging as headphone music.

dance top 25

- 1 **UNKLE**
Psyence Fiction Mo Wax-London
- 2 **MIX MASTER MIKE**
Anti-Theft Device Asphodel
- 3 **FRONT 242**
Re-Boot (Live '98) Metropolis
- 4 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Untouchable Outcaste Beats Vol. 1
Outcaste-Tommy Boy
- 5 **DJ SPOOKY THAT SUBLIMINAL KID**
"Object Unknown" (CD5) Outpost
- 6 **CIRRUS**
Back On A Mission Moonshine
- 7 **SOUNDTRACK**
 π Thrive
- 8 **KURTIS MANTRONIK**
I Sing The Body Electro Oxygen Music Works
- 9 **VAINIO/VAISANEN/VEGA**
Endless Blast First-Mute
- 10 **1.8.7**
Quality Rolls Jungle Sky-Liquid Sky
- 11 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Electropolis Vol. 1 Metropolis
- 12 **LOW**
Owl Remix Low Vernon Yard-Astralwerks
- 13 **WINK**
HereHear Ovum/Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
- 14 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Hymns Of The Warlock Cleopatra
- 15 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Fultronik Structures Vol. 2 DSBP
- 16 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Trip Through Sound II Blue Room Americas
- 17 **MASSIVE ATTACK**
Mezzanine Circa-Virgin
- 18 **AGHAST VIEW**
Carcinopest Gashed!
- 19 **EIGHTY MILE BEACH**
Inclement Weather Om
- 20 **MARINER**
Amphibian Intersound
- 21 **TWELVETREES**
Boy On A Cloud Dubby-Mercury
- 22 **SMP**
Ultimatum Catastrophe
- 23 **RINGTAILED SNORTER**
Look Back In The Mirror COP International
- 24 **X-DREAM**
Radio Blue Room Americas
- 25 **HOOVERPHONIC**
Blue Wonder Power Milk Epic

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

BY BRIAN COLEMAN

hip-hop top 25

- 1 **A TRIBE CALLED QUEST**
"Find A Way" Jive
- 2 **CANIBUS**
"Get Retarded" Universal
- 3 **LAURYN HILL**
"Doo Wop" Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
- 4 **BLACK EYED PEAS**
"Joints & Jams" Interscope
- 5 **NOREAGA**
"Superthug" Penalty
- 6 **FAT JOE FEAT. PUFF DADDY**
"Don Cartagena" Mystic/Big Beat-Atlantic
- 7 **BRAND NUBIAN**
"The Return" Arista
- 8 **XZIBIT**
"What You See Is What You Get" Loud-RCA
- 9 **FLIPMODE SQUAD**
"Cha Cha Cha" Elektra-EEG
- 10 **CYPRESS HILL**
"Tequila Sunrise" Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
- 11 **FUNKMASTER FLEX**
"Wu Tang Cream Team Line Up" Loud-RCA
- 12 **SPORTY THIEVZ**
"Cbeapskate" Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
- 13 **BEASTIE BOYS**
"Intergalactic" Grand Royal-Capitol
- 14 **PETE ROCK**
"Tru Master" Loud-RCA
- 15 **RAS KASS**
"H2O Proof" Patchwork-Priority
- 16 **SNOOP DOGG**
"Still A G Thang" No Limit-Priority
- 17 **HELTAN SKELTAH**
"I Ain't Havin' That" Priority
- 18 **DEF SQUAD**
"Countdown" Def Jam-Polygram
- 19 **JOHN FORTE**
"They Got Me" Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
- 20 **CHARLI BALTIMORE/CAM'RON/
NOREAGA**
"NBC" Entertainment-Epic
- 21 **FAT JOE**
"John Blaze" Mystic/Big Beat-Atlantic
- 22 **DEADLY VENOMS**
"Bomb Threat" A&M
- 23 **EMINEM**
"Just Don't Give A Fuck" Web-Interscope
- 24 **E-40**
"I Hope I Don't Die Bitch" Sick Wid It-Jive
- 25 **MONICA**
"The First Night" Arista

XZIBIT

40 Dayz & 40 Nightz

Loud-RCA

A low profile, no-nonsense approach to hip-hop isn't exactly in vogue these days. The era when such a heads down/beats up strategy (as invented by Run-DMC and Rakim) reigned is long since past; these days most of the attention goes



to acts like Master P and his minions and the Puff Daddy/Jay-Z/Will Smith axis. Thankfully, however, there will always be some room on the side for the "leave the B.S. at home" types, a prime example being Los Angeles's Xzibit. He's been down with the immensely-talented Alkaholiks/Likwit crew for years now, and on his sophomore effort *40 Dayz & 40 Nightz*, Xzibit throws down an intensely entertaining mix of hard-ass words, strong, sometimes hectic beats and a stellar, high-gloss flow for the ultimate antidote to the pop rap flu. With assistance from a list of low-props but high-talent

producers like Sir Jinx, Melman, E-Swift, A Kid Named Roots, Bud'da and Jesse West, he lays his intense and gravelly tones over a dozen-plus dope tracks, including "What U See Is What U Get," "Chamber Music," "Nobody Sound Like Me," "Shroomz" and "Los Angeles Times." Add guest MC shots by the Alkaholiks, King T, Defari and Montageone, and you've got one of the best no-fluff programs you'll hear all year.

➤➤➤ The hype around **CANIBUS's** debut, *Can-I-Bus* (Universal), has been ridiculous. And has it all been worth it? Yes and no. Mostly no. There is no doubt that this MC possesses immense talent, shown by *what* he talks about and, more importantly, *how* he talks about it. But while he throws down killer lyrics on cuts like "Niggonometry," "Channel Zero," "I Honor You," "How We Roll" and "Get Retarded," the tracks he is given to work around are downright wack. Building up hype is one thing, but forgetting that hip-hop music is about beats and rhymes is like showing up for an MC battle without a microphone. Canibus is destined for great things, but he'll have to match music to talent next time if he doesn't want to slip and fall... Atlanta's **OUTKAST** has returned with the third installment in its quest to keep hip-hop from staying the same-old, same-old: *Aquemini* (La Face). Overseen and chiefly produced by the Organized Noize team, the new record is markedly more soulful and P-Funkish than either of the group's previous two efforts. While Outkast seems to purposefully stray from the classic two- turntables-and-a-microphone roots of hip-hop, its combo of down-home (sometimes psychedelic) funk and occasionally goddamn funky beats is always a refreshment for those who aren't wedded to the New York sound. Appropriately, the maggot overlord himself, George Clinton, gives his blessing to the techno-prophetic "Synthesizer" and Raekwon even drops some frenetic Southern flava on the excellent "Skew It On The Bar-B."... Both the already- and the need-to-be-schooled will find much to enjoy in **ERIC B. & RAKIM's** *Paid In Full: The Platinum Edition* (Island). The two-CD set lays down the duo's indelible classic 1987 debut for the first time on digital, and the second platter contains some tasty nuggets culled from singles and B-sides that only the obsessed will have previously enjoyed, including the mammoth Coldcut remix of "Paid In Full," the Wild Bunch's tweaking of "Move The Crowd" and brutal dubs of "I Know You Got Soul," "Eric B. Is President" and "My Melody."

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



After more than 15 years out of print, **THIS HEAT**'s classic 12" single "Health And Efficiency"—a dazzling piece of post-punk experimental rock—has been reissued on vinyl by These Records, in a double-pack with the group's loop-based record *Repeat*. It's a cult favorite, starting out with something like song form, then diving into an almost-loop, a

second-long riff that repeats itself nearly exactly hundreds of times, with tiny variations and overlaid sound effects, remaking itself like a virus, until it's mutated into something completely different, whereupon it slowly crossfades into a short, subdued piece for sawing viola and background clicks. Amazing stuff. It's backed up by its original B-side, "Graphic/Varispeed," a metallic/plastic drone whose progress over its duration is all but imperceptible moment to moment, but drastic overall.

The San Francisco store Aquarius Records (whose "New Arrivals" list is an invaluable resource for fans of independent music—email them at aqua@sirius.com to subscribe) has been importing a couple of swell singles on the English label Pickled Egg. **L'AUGMENTATION**, despite its name, its record sleeve's Eiffel Tower images, and the '60s French pop instrumental-via-Stereolab sound of its "Soleil" 7", is actually a group of English Francophiles. It's a neat record, though, with a carousel-ish synth joined by trombone, a rhythm section that's listened to its share of France Gall records, a bit of singing, and an appropriately long-haired flute part. **POP-OFF TUESDAY** is a duo from Osaka, Japan, whose "Unworldly" moves like an armadillo through the desert: very slowly, and not very obtrusively, but unstoppably. With nothing more than voice, guitar that the band doesn't play when it can help it, and simple but unusual electronic voicings, Pop-Off Tuesday comes up with wobbly, surprising results, and repeats the trick on the B-side's "The Sea And Poison."

The **SWIRLIES'** latest is a self-released cassette single, "One Light Flashing I Love You" (Sneaky Flute Empire). Recorded on a four-track by the long-standing core lineup of Damon Tutunjian and Andy Bernick, it's their least guitar-y, most synth-based material to date, with ultra-cheap Casio sounds and even cheaper guitar parts switching their customary figure/ground positions in the mix. Tutunjian's way with a hook—in this case a little "oo-wo-oo-wo" figure—saves the day, as usual. The B-side's "Sneaky Flutes Get Funky" is a brief, crude bit of synth bass, followed by "Indian Ocean Nosedive," a sweet approximation of the old Swirlies' immersive wash, jury-rigged out of whatever instruments were at hand.

A few quick drops of the needle: **FLEETWOOD MAC**'s "Landslide" (Reprise) reappeared after 20 years or so on last year's *The Dance*, and now it's re-appeared as a single—remixed by Ted Ottaviano of Book Of Love. He's preserved the song's gentle lilt, and reworked everything else—its form, its arrangement, its instrumentation. Only a few lines of the original

HIS NAME IS ALIVE

"Can't Always Be Loved"

4AD

His Name Is Alive has been evolving wildly over the last few years as frontman Warren Defever works his way backwards through musical history, and now he's returned to

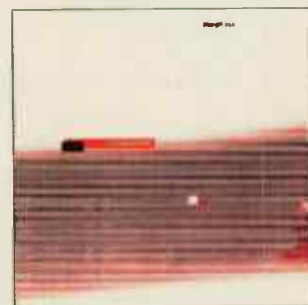


his roots, in a certain sense, with this single—a sidelong tribute to Detroit soul. "Can't Always Be Loved" is a bouncy, Motowny sugardrop, and the brief radio mix done for the single tones down the rock guitars of the version on the group's new album, *Ft. Lake*, in favor of timeless

poppiness, with Karin Oliver making darn sure you know how the chorus goes. Its counterpart is the astonishing "Wish I Had A Wishing Ring," which honors the early heavy-soul-psych period of Funkadelic. On the album, it's a six-minute rock-funk meltdown; on the CD single, it's a 17-minute volcano, a showcase for superb gospel-trained singer Lovetta Pippin (check out those falsetto flourishes on the chorus) that turns into a series of meltingly hot guitar solos by Defever, backed up by a jackhammer rhythm section. HNIA-ologists should also check out the 7" single, which substitutes yet another version of "Wishing Ring"—this one a shorter, weirder, less assured early model, with two other singers groping their way through the lyric and Defever's acoustic guitar dropping a scrim behind them—and appends a curious demo of "Can't Always Be Loved" called "Can't Wait Forever," built around some Casio tomfoolery and a home-recorded bass pulse.

lyric remain, but he's arranged Stevie Nicks's voice to sound like it's still singing an entire song. A clever idea, neatly executed...

HECKER's *IT IS0161975 EP* (Mego) is an effective way to test your speakers, your friendships and your lease at the same time. It's four tracks of ultra-mega-low-end drone—we're talking stuff that could make you queasy played at high enough volumes—graced with all kinds of croaking and clicking, mostly of a kind that sounds like digital errors that they saved on tape and decided to sample and repeat. If you've got the nerve for it, it's weirdly compelling. This must be what pop music sounds like to an insect.



BY JAMES LIEN



>>> On top of the proverbial stack of reissues this month is *How's Your Mother?*, a groovy album from soulful jazz pianist **LES McCANN** on powerhouse reissue label 32 Jazz. These previously unreleased tapes document a live date on a hot day in the summer of 1967 at the historic Manhattan jazz club the Village Vanguard. It must have been a groovy and magical time to be there: summer

in the city, girls in mini skirts and hip-huggers, flower power in the air, Otis Redding and Dr. Martin Luther King were still alive... This recording is full of beautiful energy and electricity, and McCann's beautiful, flowing piano playing probably never sounded better.

>>> I've always preferred original albums over greatest hits packages, and Virgin's two just-released *Best Of DAVID BOWIE* CDs are a reason why. They have virtually no photos, no liner notes, and no real credits to speak of, just hits and significant album tracks. In a jarring conceptual faux pas, the compilations curiously end with 1979, leaving out his last truly weird and Bowie-esque album, *Scary Monsters*, especially the neurotic disco parody "Fashion."

>>> A more successful "best of" out now is the long overdue collection from underground R&B diva **CRYSTAL WATERS**, available through Mercury-Chronicles. In a sense, Waters (whose 12" singles were favorites in New York City discos but didn't fare as well in the harsh light of day outside) was the missing link between the Labelles and the Emotions of yore and the Erykah Badus and Des'rees of today. She provides the connection between the classic disco-diva and today's tough but soulful R&B songstress. Long an underground phenomenon, Waters is finally getting her due, and that's a truly great thing.

>>> Before there was Morphine, Mark Sandman and Billy Conway were in a much more normal—and not nearly as good—Boston band called **TREAT HER RIGHT**. That group's career is brought to CD on Razor & Tie's *The Anthology 1985-1990*. Razor & Tie has also reissued the soundtrack to the great '70s cult movie **BLACULA**, as well as the original **ENNIO MORRICONE** score to the classic cowboy flick *A Fistful Of Dollars*. Meanwhile, the groovy reissue label Music Club has released *The Prime Of GREGORY ISAACS*, from the crooning reggae star's youthful early years. Out on the same label is a wonderful little compilation from the vaults of Ace Records. Called **KINGS OF NEW ORLEANS ROCK 'N' ROLL**, it features classic '50s 45s from the likes of Huey "Piano" Smith, Lloyd Price, Dr. John, Earl King and Joe Tex. Rhino has recently released a collection of songs by avant-punk quartet **GANG OF FOUR**, whose previous reissues can often be kinda hard to find.

>>> A wonderful record on the tiny label Global Village (see *Weird Record* for the label's other recent release, *Music From 5th Century Coptic Manuscripts From The Collection Of H. Aram Gulezyan*) comes from Georgia poet/painter/preacher and visionary gardener **HOWARD FINSTER**. His album *The Night Howard Finster Got Saved* consists of home recordings of hymns, sermons and

HERBIE HANCOCK

The Complete Blue Note '60s Sessions

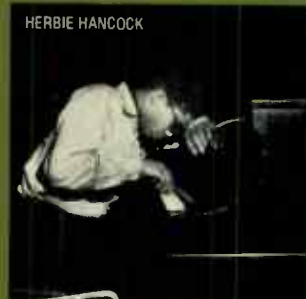
THE HISTORY OF BLUE NOTE

Box Set



Blue Note

In celebration of Blue Note's 60th Anniversary, the historic jazz label will be partying in a big way, rolling out many incredible box sets and rarities from its vaults. Founded in 1939 by two German Jewish immigrants, the label has rather amazingly documented the sounds of jazz music in seven different decades. Two of these box sets are completely awesome. If you're a total Blue Note fanatic, you'll want to check out the 50 or so related box set releases on Blue Note's limited-edition reissue sister label, Mosaic. Herbie Hancock's collected recordings for the label (1961-1969) are compiled on six CDs. It's reams of beautiful stuff from the sensitive jazz pianist. It's truly amazing that at about 19 years old, Hancock was casually tossing off immortal tunes like "Watermelon Man" and "Cantaloupe Island" with such effortless grace. *The History Of Blue Note* is a massive seven volume, 14-CD set featuring simply too much to mention it all here—tracks by John Coltrane, Bud Powell, Miles Davis, Horace Silver, Cannonball Adderley, Dexter Gordon, Cecil Taylor, Lee Morgan, Jimmy Smith, Grant Green and on and on from Blue Note's overstuffed library. Many of these recordings have become acknowledged as standards of the genre, and even the lesser-known obscurities and rarities included help to fully tell the story of the greatest label in jazz. It's like a history of the art form in one box set. And coolest of all, virtually all of these reissues feature the ultra-hip black and white photography and graphic gestalt that gave Blue Note its "look" and made it the most instantly recognizable company in the history of the bins.



observations made from the early '80s to the '90s. It's incredible stuff, especially recommended for fans of early R.E.M.—Finster's voice and peculiar Southern diction was a bigger influence on Michael Stipe's singing than many people realize.

1	SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS	Perennial Favorites	Mammoth
2	BOB MOULD	The Last Dog And Pony Show	Rykodisc
3	BEASTIE BOYS	Hello Nasty	Grand Royal-Capitol
4	ELLIOTT SMITH	XO	DreamWorks
5	LIZ PHAIR	Whitechocolatespaceegg	Matador-Capitol
6	JULIANA HATFIELD	Bed	Zoe-Mercury
7	BIS	Intendo	Grand Royal
8	MEDESKI MARTIN AND WOOD	Combustication	Blue Note
9	UNKLE	Psyence Fiction	Mo Wax-London
10	SNOWPONY	The Slow Motion World Of Snowpony	Radioactive
11	THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS	Severe Tire Damage	Restless
12	HOOVERPHONIC	Blue Wonder Power Milk	Epic
13	BELLE & SEBASTIAN	The Boy With The Arab Strap	Matador
14	PRIMUS	Rhinoplasty	Interscope
15	KNAPSACK	This Conversation Is Ending Starting Right Now	Alias
16	DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM	Out Of Your Mind	K
17	ROYAL CROWN REVUE	The Contender	Warner Bros.
18	SAINT ETIENNE	Good Humor	Sub Pop
19	RICHARD BUCKNER	Since	MCA
20	BLONDE REDHEAD	In An Expression Of The Inexpressible	Touch And Go
21	KORN	Follow The Leader	Immortal-Epic
22	BABE THE BLUE OX	The Way We Were	RCA
23	CRACKER	Gentleman's Blues	Virgin
24	VARNALINE	Sweet Life	Zero Hour
25	KID ROCK	Devil Without A Cause	Lava-Atlantic
26	SIX FINGER SATELLITE	Law Of Ruins	Sub Pop
27	SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE	How It Feels To Be Something On	Sub Pop
28	BEATNIK FILMSTARS	Boss Disque	Merge
29	JESSAMINE	Don't Stay Too Long	Kranky
30	POSSUM DIXON	New Sheets	Interscope
31	BRIAN SETZER ORCHESTRA	The Dirty Boogie	Interscope
32	R.L. BURNSIDE	Come On In	Fat Possum-Epithaph
33	LUCINDA WILLIAMS	Car Wheels On A Gravel Road	Mercury
34	MIX MASTER MIKE	Anti-Theft Device	Asphodel
35	MAD CADDIES	Duck And Cover	Fat Wreck Chords
36	GILLIAN WELCH	Hell Among The Yearlings	Almo Sounds
37	CIRRUS	Back On A Mission	Moonshine
38	DR. JOHN	Anutha Zone	Pointblank-Virgin
39	SHUDDER TO THINK	First Love, Last Rites Soundtrack	Epic
40	JACK DRAG	Dope Box	A&M
41	SWIRLIES	Strictly East Coast Sneaky Flute Music	Taang!
42	SINEAD LOHAN	No Mermaid	Interscope
43	PIXIES	At The BBC	4AD/Elektra-EEG
44	BARENAKED LADIES	Stunt	Reprise
45	BETTER THAN EZRA	How Does Your Garden Grow?	Elektra-EEG
46	BILLY BRAGG/WILCO	Mermaid Avenue	Elektra-EEG
47	ORGY	Candyass	Reprise
48	JUDE	No One's Really Beautiful	Maverick-WB
49	REMY ZERO	Villa Elaine	DGC
50	A MINOR FOREST	Inindependence	Thrill Jockey
51	VAINIO/VAISANEN/VEGA	Endless	Blast First-Mute
52	RASPUTINA	How We Quit The Forest	Columbia-CRG
53	LOW	Owl Remix Low	Vernon Yard-Astralwerks
54	KEB' MO'	Slow Down	OKeh-550
55	DOON BYRON	Nu Blaxploitation	Blue Note
56	MXPX	Slowly Going The Way Of The Buffalo	A&M
57	ZOOBOMBS	Welcome Back, Zoobombs!	Emperor Norton
58	JUNIOR BROWN	Long Walk Back	Curb
59	HOLE	Celebrity Skin	DGC
60	IAN BROWN	Unfinished Monkey Business	Mercury
61	MIDGET	Jukebox	Sire
62	HOWE GELB	Hisser	V2
63	TAKAKO MINEKAWA	Recubed EP	Emperor Norton
64	KENT	Isola	RCA
65	MARK LANEGAN	Scraps At Midnight	Sub Pop
66	GRAHAM COXON	The Sky Is Too High	Transcopic-Caroline
67	BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE	Strung Out In Heaven	TVT
68	CHARLIE FEATHERS	Get With It	Revenant
69	PEDRO THE LION	It's Hard To Find A Friend	Made In Mexico
70	CHOCOLATE GENIUS	Black Music	V2
71	SOUNDTRACK	The Avengers	Atlantic
72	ALIEN FASHION SHOW	Alien Fashion Show	Surfdog-Hollywood
73	12 ROUNDS	My Big Hero	Nothing-Interscope
74	SPINANES	Arches And Aisles	Sub Pop
75	LISA GERMANO	Slide	4AD



#1 Squirrel Nut Zippers
Perennial Favorites

FIVE YEARS AGO

1. SMASHING PUMPKINS

SIAMESE DREAM VIRGIN

2. JULIANA HATFIELD THREE

BECOME WHAT YOU ARE MAMMOTH

3. THE BREEDERS

LAST SPLASH ELEKTRA

4. CATHERINE WHEEL

CHROME FONTANA-MERCURY

5. BJORK

DEBUT ELEKTRA

TEN YEARS AGO

1. BIG AUDIO DYNAMITE

TIGHTEN UP VOL. 88 COLUMBIA

2. SUGARCUBES

LIFE'S TOO GOOD ELEKTRA

3. JOY DIVISION

SUBSTANCE QWEST-WB

4. PRIMITIVES

LOVELY RCA

5. MICHELLE SHOCKED

SHORT SHARP SHOCKED MERCURY-PG

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.

L I F E / S T Y L E



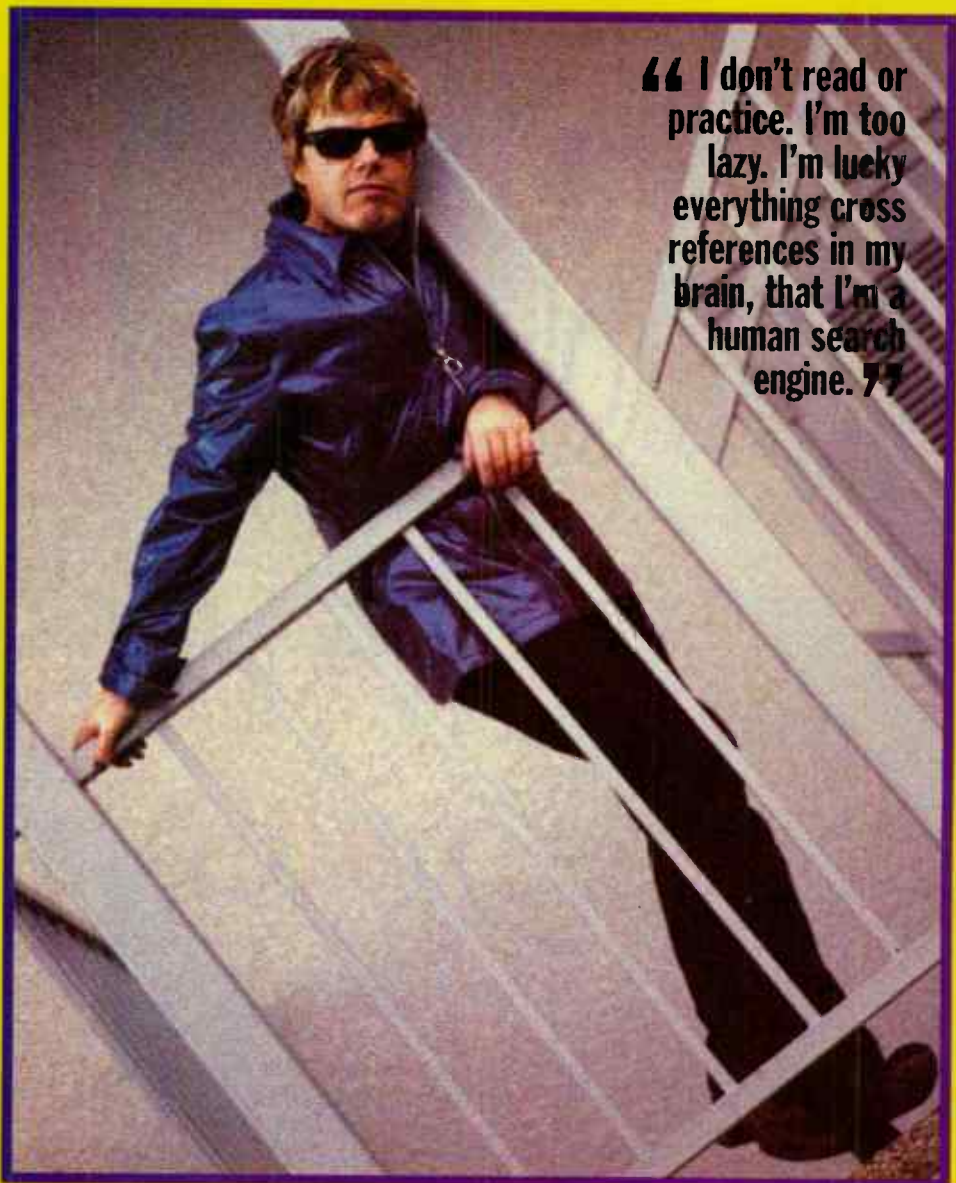
EDDIE IZZARD ALL DRESSED UP

Sitting in the garden at the Chateau Marmont, British comedian Eddie Izzard looks like any other celebrity who might be staying at the Sunset Strip rock 'n' roll hotel, with his blonde highlights, his dark sunglasses, his tight black jeans, a pitcher of water, a pack of smokes, and a gushing fan looking for an autograph. Not even the chipped purple nail polish gives away the extremity of his manic comic alter ego—the Eddie Izzard who's been hitting the stages of London, San Francisco, New York and Los Angeles for the last year in polyvinyl pants, platforms, a Jean-Paul Gaultier Chinese housecoat, eyeliner, bright lipstick and rouge.

"I'm a wee bit more normal by day," Izzard says before puffing one of a chain of American Spirits. "I have been T.V. [his tag for transvestite] since I was four and came out at 23, so you'll have to excuse that I'm bored of makeup now. I wear it on stage still because I've found it is best to be consistent. I try to shake it up a bit so I don't get pigeonholed because of my baggage. And people in America haven't seen much of my show, so my belief in total clothing rights is still a topic of interest."

The 36-year-old's transvestitism, though, is but one topic in his new stand-up piece,

(Continued on page 88)



“ I don't read or practice. I'm too lazy. I'm lucky everything cross references in my brain, that I'm a human search engine. ”

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STORY: CARRIE BELL PHOTOS: TARZAAN

THE CRUISE

(Artisan Entertainment)

Combine Woody Allen (his wit and neuroses), Weird Al Yankovic (his hair and clothing) and Richard Simmons (his verve and voice), and you have Timothy "Speed" Levitch, the intriguing subject of the freewheeling documentary *The Cruise*. For six years, Levitch has earned a living as a New York City tour guide, riding in double-decker buses and babbling on about points of interest as if he were the star of his own off-Broadway production. Mixing sincerity with sarcastic barbs, Levitch is a kooky yet entertaining orator (not surprising from someone inspired by Willy Wonka). When he's not bewildering clueless tourists—"the sun, another great New York City landmark, is above us to the left"—he's shown in more pensive moments, where his fatalistic humor emerges. "I think of every double-decker loop as another loop toward my death," says Levitch, an aspiring playwright who apparently has no permanent home. More insights into Levitch's personal life would have been welcomed. On the other hand, as a natural performer like Levitch knows, it's always good to leave the audience wanting more.

>>> John Elsasser

HARD CORE LOGO

(Rolling Thunder Pictures/Miramax)

Remember Hard Core Logo, the Vancouver-based rockers who blazed the punk trail alongside D.O.A. and Black Flag? And singer Joe Dick and guitarist Billy Tallent going nuts during "Something's Gonna Die Tonight"? Of course you don't—because they didn't exist. *Hard Core Logo*, based on Michael Turner's novel, is a vigorous mockumentary examining this fabled band during its reunion tour. The kicker: A documentary film crew headed by Bruce McDonald (the real director) will accompany the quartet on the road. Old battle wounds are soon reopened. Maybe the guys are still sore that when the group was about to get signed, Dick urinated on Sire honcho Seymour Stein during a gig and yelled: "See if you can sell that, you corporate weasel." Meanwhile, they canoodle around Western Canada in a dilapidated van, careful to meet with every cliché, from eager groupies to trite post-show interviewers. What makes all this particularly clever is the way McDonald



VELVET GOLDMINE

(Miramax)

Velvet Goldmine, Todd Haynes's homage to glam rock and early '70s England, is rich in visuals: spaceships, gender-bending coke addicts, orgies, over-the-top musical sequences, and Ewan McGregor's, uh, stuff (this is no *Boogie Nights*). But if you're hoping for deep meaning and a linear chronology, there's no need to rush to the Michael Stipe-produced film. Using death as a starting point, the film unfolds *Citizen Kane*-style, to reveal the hedonistic rise and fall of rock icon Brian Slade (Jonathan Rhys Meyers). Reporter and ex-glam scenester Arthur (Christian Bale) re-examines his own life as he listens to the wild stories of Slade's ex-wife Mandy (Toni Collette), American punk lover Curt Wild (McGregor), his manipulating manager (Eddie Izzard), and other assorted freaks and followers. The music is a valentine to anyone who ever lip-synced to Gary Glitter or slow-danced to Roxy Music. Contained within the film's soundtrack are old classics, Ziggy Stardust-ish new songs by Shudder To Think and Grant Lee Buffalo, and numbers by the film's fictional bands Venus In Furs and Wylde Ratttz, which include real-life musicians like Thurston Moore, Bernard Butler, and Thom Yorke. The buzz-heavy, technically-complicated, magnificently acted eye-candy is set to become this generation's *The Wall* or *Saturday Night Fever*. That is if *Spice World* doesn't stand in its way.

>>> Carrie Bell

doesn't tip his hand. Things seem so realistic at times, you'd swear you were watching a real band. And, yes, there's even a *Spinal Tap* reference.

>>> John Elsasser

LOVE IS THE DEVIL

(Strand Releasing)

Love Is The Devil follows English painter Francis Bacon (Sir Derek Jacobi) through the entirety of a doomed relationship, and is more a foray into the dynamics of an artist and his muse/lover than a biopic. Written and directed by Pulp videographer John Maybury, the film uses stark imagery and unconventional camera work to convey the manipulative essence of Bacon's greatness, as well as the taut consciousness of his

work. Consumed with his own prodigious talent, Bacon hasn't time for the daily maintenance required by George (Daniel Craig), a would-be burglar who becomes Bacon's lover when caught mid-pilfer. George, driven to self-destruction and vivid nightmares by Bacon's disregard, is the focus; we grasp Bacon largely through the wounds he inflicts. Jacobi has the classical training to deliver eye-widening malevolence and cold indifference, but also the panache to lace the film with acerbic, uproarious wit. The supporting cast comprising Bacon's circle of friends adds comic relief, and Ryuichi Sakamoto's somber score is the perfect, subtle accompaniment to this bleak, but brilliant look at a flawed genius.

>>> William Werde

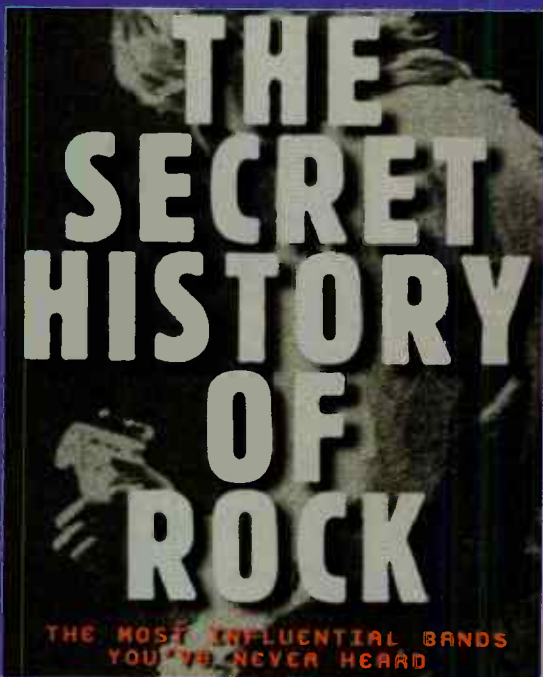
THE SECRET HISTORY OF ROCK

The Most Influential Bands You've Never Heard

By Roni Sarig

(Billboard Books)

Unless you're a rock critic or an obsessive college radio DJ who loves whiling away the hours in the mildewed corners of your station's LP vinyl archive, there's probably a lot about rock music you don't know. But in an alternative scene virtually built upon name-



dropping, not to mention the recombinant nature of today's musical landscape, it pays to know your history, which is where Roni Sarig's *The Secret History Of Rock* enters the picture. In the brief three-page introduction, Sarig sums up the entire late-'80s/'90s music milieu in a few deft strokes. Behind every famous musician there's another, earlier, far more obscure band that rocked that famous musician's world to the core when he was younger. Whether it's Peter Buck picking up on the Velvet Underground and Big Star while working at a used record store, or Henry Rollins seeing the intensity of the Bad Brains explode onstage in front of his face, there's a host of earlier bands behind today's artists that remain in the shadows. In

encyclopedic form, Sarig runs through just about every under-appreciated influential band—Jonathan Richman, Pere Ubu, Can, ESG, the Slits, etc., all the way up to the godfathers of today's post-rock, Slint. To a grizzled rock critic who knows everything, or to a fan who just wants to better understand today's music, it's more useful than a road map to the stars' homes.

>>> James Lien

WHAT IT IS... WHAT IT WAS!

By Gerald Martinez, Diana Martinez, and Andres Chavez
(Hyperion)

Even if some of the principals (Jim Brown, Richard "Shaft" Roundtree) aren't included in the 200-page effort, this oral/pictorial/cultural history of the so-called "Blaxploitation" film era is long overdue. While an international collection of film-poster art visually drives *What It Is*, interviews with leading industry veterans—actors, producers, writers, illustrators, directors and critics—raise the important questions surrounding the controversial term "Blaxploitation." What does the term mean? As Fred Williamson

asks, "Who the hell was being exploited? The public came because they wanted to see what they like. If they can call my films black exploitation, then why didn't they call Burt Reynolds' films white exploitation?" Did its invention help or harm African-American cinema? How and why were the films made? How did movies like *Coffy*, *Superfly*, *The Mack*, *Shaft*, and *Sweet Sweetback's Badasssss Song* shape American popular culture? The answers make for fascinating reading.

>>> Mark Woodlief

FATHER OF LIES

By Brian Evenson
(Four Walls Eight Windows)

Brian Evenson has been accused of many

things, but never of candy-coating his fiction. *Father Of Lies* follows his controversial short story collection, *Altmann's Tongue*, whose chilling accounts of violence and cruelty were mistaken as authorial endorsements by his then employer, the conservative, Mormon-run Brigham Young University, and lost him his teaching position. *Father Of Lies* proves that Evenson, now at Oklahoma State University, hasn't strayed from his bleak, harrowing style. This novel traces the life of Eldon Fochs, a deranged pedophile and religious leader who exploits his status to prey on the youth in his congregation. Evenson's compact and unflinching writing compels the reader to endure this difficult tale. Though this story could be seen as a direct response to the PR maneuvers that claimed Evenson's job at BYU, it more broadly condemns abuse of power and the complicated web of politics that can corrode any prominent institution. *Father Of Lies* will leave you cold and limp, but resolved to preserve your humanity at all costs.

>>> Sam Cannon

FILTH

By Irvine Welsh
(W.W. Norton)

Irvine Welsh, author of the cult classic *Trainspotting*, has developed quite a following since the movie based on his take on Scotland's heroin scene catapulted to international prominence two years ago. Twentysomethings snatch his titles up, not only to see their own club and drug scene used as the backdrop for well-crafted fiction, but to have their pretensions stripped away by Welsh's bare-knuckled, no-holds-barred style. In *Filth*, we follow the tribulations of the deplorable Detective Sergeant Bruce Robertson of the Edinburgh Police Department, but the show-stealer is his tapeworm, cleverly represented as physical interruptions to the text. The relationship between Robertson and the parasite is central to what emerges as a compelling whodunnit. Throughout, Welsh spares us no intimate details, from the stench of Robertson's frequent flatulence to his racist, sexist and homophobic views, to his dirty underwear and rash-infested crotch. It makes reading *Filth* a love-hate proposition, and makes it all the more amazing to feel, at novel's end, compassion for this seeming ogre.

>>> William Werde

EDDIE IZZARD ALL DRESSED UP

Continued from page 83

"Dress To Kill," a fast-paced assault on President Clinton, British royalty, religion, film, the army, Scooby-Doo, puberty, the magic bullet theory, the space race, Engelbert Humperdinck, and jam. The show, produced by Robin Williams, is updated every evening. "It is a cross between Monty Python, Steve Martin's stand-up, and Richard Pryor's stand-up, influenced by the fact that I am a complete information junkie," Izzard says. "When I was a street performer, I learned the importance of playing for everyone. I'm sure the T.V. thing brings in a few faces. But I think the real draw is that there's a six-year-old kid in me that I locked up when my mother died who comes out and talks complete shit about high-brow subjects like science versus religion, and elevates the stupid to topics of great importance."

Izzard is constantly preparing for his act with resources like his cable subscription, an online service, and Post-it Notes. "I just talk crap about something I heard on CNN or the History Channel. I don't read or practice. I'm too lazy. I'm lucky everything cross references in my brain, that I'm a human search engine, or I'd stutter a lot."

Like his delivery, his ascent into the mainstream has been anything but slow. "Dress To Kill" follows 1996's "Glorious," which he performed in front of 8,000 people in London, making it the UK's largest comedy event ever. His unusual point of view can be heard on any of several home videos and has earned him appearances on *Politically Incorrect*, *The Roseanne Show*, KCRW's *Morning Becomes Eclectic*,

MTV, and *The Late Show With David Letterman*. And in early 1999, Izzard has an HBO special due.

He also yearns to turn his love of film into a labor. After some small roles in British productions like *The Secret Agent* and *Hanging Around*, he made a splash (literally) as second bad guy to Sean Connery in *The Avengers*. "It didn't hold up to the original's dry wit, but I thought the special effects and costumes were brilliant. And how often do you get to work with Sean,"

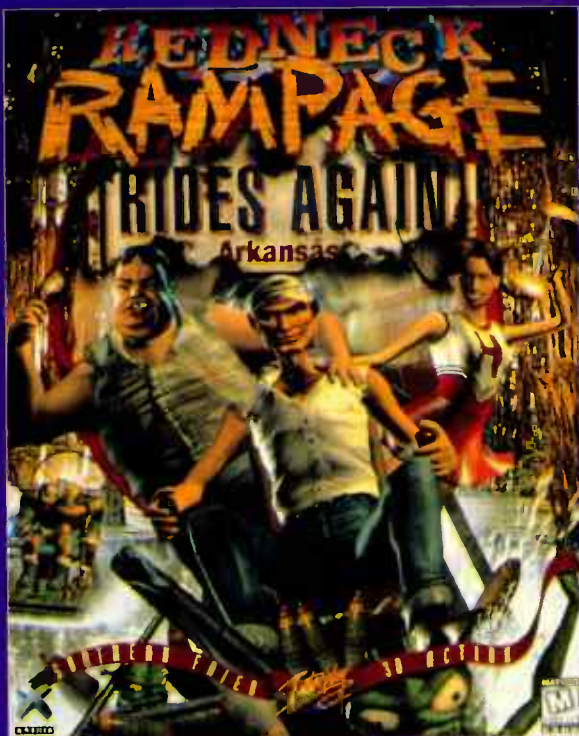
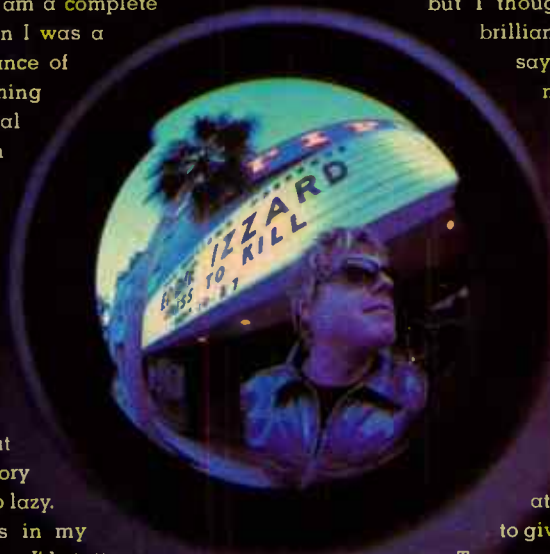
says Izzard, who has one line in the film. "I spent many hours with an acting coach for that one."

The funny thing is that it doesn't even sound like me. It's not my 'Oh, fuck.'" He has more time to talk in *Velvet Goldmine*. "I play the part of the manager who gets to say all kinds of fun cliché things."

But all of these benchmarks pale in comparison to being asked to join the Monty Python reunion at the Aspen Comedy Festival. "I've been collecting Pythons over the years as they wander in to see my show, but this was my heroes in one room letting me play with them for five minutes," Izzard bubbles, his eyes rolling back at the memory. "I really want them to see me hit it, to give back what they gave me. Kind of like parents."

To me, success is when the people you respect come up and say they get it. It's now a reality. It could all explode in my face and I'd be content."

That's not to say he is ready for retirement. Rather, Izzard sets new goals like performing his shows in multiple languages. "I have to give myself new challenges otherwise I'd just coast, which is dangerous. I have to stay on my toes. If my comedy doesn't kick, I'll be famous for being a transvestite and that's death." **e n d**



VIDEO GAMING

REDNECK RAMPAGE RIDES AGAIN

(Interplay)

Redneck Rampage Rides Again, the first real sequel the popular backwoods shoot-'em-up has seen, is determined to cash in on every ounce of the white trash stereotype—from a grunting, farting, yeehawing install wizard to newsprint instructions mocked up to look like a small-town rag. Hell, they even hired trailer park poster boy Mojo Nixon to record the soundtrack and play a cameo role. For those who just tuned in, our moonshine-guzzlin', pork rind-munchin' heroes, Leonard and Bubba, are running from aliens and trying to return to their beloved hometown of Hickston. Your mission is to get them there in style. So you wade through pig filth, drink, steal, stick dynamite up chickens' butts, and blow away everything from jackolopes to wobbly hipsters ("groovy old coots") with a shotgun or an array of makeshift weapons. Sound fun? Actually, it is—if you can live with the typecasting and potty humor. *Redneck Rampage Rides Again* offers what many sequels don't: a slew of new looks and gimmicks combined with gameplay that keeps getting better. If you think *Quake* takes itself too seriously and you miss the *Beverly Hillbillies*, chances are this CD-Rom will have to be pried from your cold, dead fingers.

>>> Sam Cannon

cardigans

(Continued from page 55)

total new relation with a new producer, and Tore knows exactly where we've been before."

"I used to go to him first with the songs," says Svensson. "But this time, the songs were a bit different as well. I think we wanted to have more simple songs but with this new, modern-sounding production."

Instead of doing the record in Johansson's Tambourine Studio, however, he and the band decamped to his new house in the country. "Everything's recorded the same way we did before," says Svensson. "It's still the same 16-track analog tape recorder and the old Neve mixing board. To make it easier, we used a computer for the drum loops—on the last album, I had to stand a certain distance from the tape recorder holding a mic stand with a piece of tape going around it." Computers were also used for mixing, but the overall feel of the record is organic and a distinct step away from *First Band On The Moon's* sheen. There is also quite definitely no "Lovefool" on *Gran Turismo* (whose title, incidentally, "was the only available one," Svensson jokes). Its opening song, "Paralyzed," speaks of "the sweetest way to die," and its most affecting song, "Explode/Implode," is about a suicidal young woman.

"I saw this documentary about this 15-year-old punk girl," says Persson, "and she was going on about how much she hated everybody and you can really believe her that she was actually hating really bad there. She was cutting her arms, just to be able to go to school and show everybody how bad she was feeling. That really moves me, all these poor young girls growing up and not having a clue. She was apparently an 'exploder,' while most young women are 'imploders.' Because tradition says that girls don't explode."

"Here, people haven't heard the older stuff we made," says Svensson. "I think *First Band On The Moon* was sort of a step back; now I think we're back where we started."

Unlike a lot of bands for whom English is a second tongue, the Cardigans actually have pretty good lyrics. Svensson says that Swedish is "a really hard language to write lyrics in," and that they never even really considered singing in anything but English. When I suggest that their lyrics tend to be a lot better than, say, "Hello/You fool/I love you," though, Persson laughs and says "I thought that was us!"

The record's first single, "My Favorite Game," will have a video directed by Jonas Åkerlund, most famous for Madonna's "Ray Of Light" clip. To look at Persson's and Svensson's extremely MTV-friendly faces, it's hard to imagine that either has as much trouble in love as the song, or for that matter most of the lyrics

on *Gran Turismo*, seems to suggest. "Well, I would say that this job does not make a good partner of anyone," Persson says. "But that's not why I write these lyrics. It just occupies my mind, pretty much, how difficult love is and how everybody wants it so bad all the time and all the things you do to get it and to save it and to preserve it. And how badly you fail. These days, when you're seen on TV, you're supposedly at the highest level a person could be at in life. And the song 'Marble Hill' is about that. People say, 'Oh, you're so fortunate—it's a hard thing to say, [in a mock whine] 'You don't know what it's like up here, it sucks, too!' We shouldn't have anything to complain about. But we bring human problems with us wherever we go."

Like death?

"Yes, death!" Persson says, laughing.

end

marilyn manson

(Continued from page 59)

chance to be a real rock band," Manson explains. "That was something that towards the end of *Antichrist Superstar* helped, or I guess contributed to our working relationship kind of dissolving. A lot of the things that I did on this record are things that I wanted to do on the last record and that we argued about. The songs on *Mechanical Animals* are supposed to evoke feeling so they had to have more skin and nerves to them. It's more of an organic record, a rock record, and that's something we hadn't really done before. But, I mean, I'm real proud of *Antichrist Superstar* and I think that Trent did a great job. I don't think that he did anything wrong. I just wanted to kind of expand more, because I've always felt that we were more of a rock band and I didn't want to travel down the path of being an industrial group. That wasn't my aim ever. I think that that type of sound represents just one emotion and this record had to represent a lot more."

Like what?

"Different people are going to accept it on different terms. It's a record that's being treated differently than things that I've done in the past because musically it's more in focus this time. I think what people are probably missing is that to me, this is the darkest record that we've done. And at times the songs that are pop, which are deliberately referential to songs that influenced me growing up—you know the glam rock sound that we incorporate—are the darkest most depressing ones. A lot of people miss the sarcasm in that. You know, fame can be so alienating and can be almost like childhood or high school. In a way you can feel completely out of place. The ways I dealt with that on the record was with two distinct personalities—the very sarcastic, bombastic,

over the top 'Dope Show' satires, and the more painful, more hollow and depressing songs like 'Great Big White World.'"

That bipolar thematic separation is made explicit in the *Mechanical Animals* CD booklet, one side of which features the androgynous innocent Manson and the lyrics to the disc's more reflective/depressive material, while the other depicts the mechanical Omega and has lyrics to the disc's more over-the-top tunes. "I've always felt like 'Why be one thing, which is what the rest of the world wants you to be, when you can be so many different things?'" Manson postulates in answer to my question about his multiplying personalities. Which raises the issue Manson is most often asked to clear up: Does he distinguish between Marilyn Manson, the person, and Marilyn Manson, the persona?

"The only way I know how to answer that is that there's no time in my day that I'm not thinking the way I think or trying to create something. I don't even know how to explain it because I don't know what it would be like to have another life. I guess a lot of people will find it easier to classify me and understand me if they think that when I go home I'm somebody else. But there are plenty of different levels to my personality, and plenty of different vibes to the way I behave. And each has a specific purpose. But for me there's not one that's Marilyn Manson and one that's not. It's all the same. And Marilyn Manson to me is just another way of describing myself. It's not another person. It's just a name. I mean, maybe there was a reason to delineate between the two early on, but there's no reason to anymore."

None of which is going to keep Manson from exploiting the multiple facets of his person/persona on the tour that will begin, appropriately enough, just a few days before Halloween. "It's kind of a three-part rock opera-style bombastic nonsense," he says with an amused chuckle. "The first part kind of deals with stepping into the world for the first time and dealing with the feelings of alienation. The second one kind of deals with the pain and the over-exaggeration of rock stardom. And then of course it evolves into our old friend the *Antichrist Superstar*. It's a longer show than last time because I think a lot of people were disappointed that we didn't play longer last time. We had enough material but I couldn't really tolerate myself for more than an hour and 15 minutes at a time, so I imagined that the crowd felt that way too. I became too violent. I think I've learned to express my aggression in different ways. You know, something mellow can be more over the top than something that's in your face. I think I've learned a more sophisticated way of doing what I do. But that remains to be seen. Some people might think that it sucks."

You really think so?

"No. I'm being faux humble."

end

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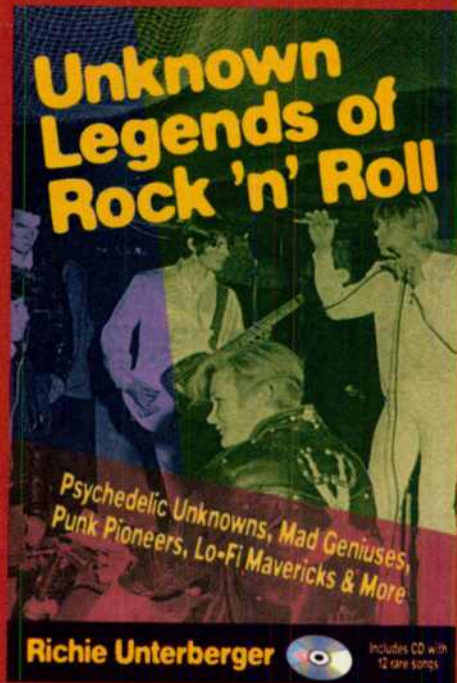
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Sydney, Australia

(Continued from page 98)

Tempe Tip

What?! I expect you to travel all the way to Upsidedownsville and then insist you go to a tip? Well let me explain: **Tempe Tip** (7 Bellevue St., (at Princess Hwy.), St. Peters, 519-1477) is a thrift store. Not just any thrift store, but the Salvation Army's main outlet, which is the size of a football field. It's a great place for those of us who enjoy trawling through society's detritus, be they Miller shirts or crazy-looking '70s Pong consoles. While on any



given day all you may turn up is a scratched Hawaiian guitar record, there's the chance that you'll leave weighed down with a plethora of goods. There's always some funky old Hammond organ for sale in the corner and piles of records (all a buck) and more '70s clothing than is imaginable. Your money goes to a good cause and if you don't buy that fancy '50s lampshade, then some second-hand dealer from up the road in Newtown will (and sell it for six times the price). It ain't glamorous but it's cheap and fun. Oh, by the way, we don't call 'em thrift stores here, they're "op (as in opportunity) shops." Catchy, eh?



Record Stores

I spent a good deal of my youth hanging around record stores and sleazy rock venues, and nothing's changed much. Although the rise of the chain store has killed off quite a few of the old-style "indie" record shops, there a few still remaining. My favorite is **Silver Rocket** (405 Pitt St., Sydney, 281-0080), run by Marek and John. Its vinyl-stuffed racks contain a wide range of albums, from spazmo Japanese hardcore to hard-to-find Jamaican dub pressings. They're cheap and the lads are knowledgeable; they cater to the record collector and can always track down an obscure Australian record for you. They also do re-releases of Aussie stuff, including the rare "Rocks" 7" and the excellent **Aberrant Records** compilations. Up the road are **Waterfront** (89 York St., Sydney, 262-4120) and **Redeye** (Tank Stream Arcade, King St., Sydney, 233-8177). They're more mainstream but excellent for imports of new records and the current releases by Aussie stars like Jebediah, Snout, Even and Sandpit. Down in Newtown is **Hatesville** (565-2306), a punker's paradise run by punks, for the benefit of punks. The store has a great selection of hardcore and garage punk and an air of authenticity: One of the guys even sleeps on a beanbag in the store because he can't afford the rent of two places! God bless 'em! On Paramatta Road you'll find **Soul Direct** (568-5522), the best place for hip-hop imports. Be warned, however, that the records aren't particularly cheap here.



Rockin' Venues

As for venues, well, Sydney's selection is a roller-coaster ride of sorts. One minute there will be loads, the next they will all have shut down. The perennials are the **Annandale** (17 Parramatta Rd., Annandale, 550-1078), **The Sandringham** (387 King St., Newtown, 557-1254) and **The Metro** (624 George St., Sydney, 264-2666). The Annandale is a lot like Chicago's Lounge Ax. It holds a few hundred and last time I was there, I had my head taken off by the masked insanity of the Crusaders. The Sandro is tiny—imagine New York City's Brownies, but with the bar in the middle of the room, and you'll get the picture. It's both the best and worst place to see a gig at the same time! The Metro is the best gig in town; it holds 1200 people and the sloping floor allows everyone a great view. I've seen some cracking gigs here: Teenage Fanclub, the Cruel Sea, Primal Scream, Tricky, Man Or Astro-man? and Magic Dirt, to name a few. We once did seven sold-out (brag, brag) shows in six days here, in a misguided attempt to be like The Clash.

Food, Glorious Food

I'm very proud of the cultural diversity at hand in Sydney. There are Vietnamese, Turkish, Greek, Lebanese, Italian, Croatian, Serbian and aboriginal communities, all within the city's limits. One of the perks of this diversity is the wide variety of food available around town. For a nice Pho Ga (Vietnamese rice noodle chicken soup), get down to **Le Pasteurs** and tuck in. For vegetarian fare, you can't go past **Mother Chu's** (Pitt St., between Bathurst & Goulburn Sts., Sydney). It's right behind the Metro, so you can go for some pre-gig Buddhist eats. For Italian, **Portofino's** (166 Norton St., Leichhardt, 550-0782) is unsurpassed, but the whole of Norton St. Leichhardt is brimming with quality Italian food. Sydney has plenty of Thai restaurants, but **Sumalee** (324 King St., Newtown, 565-1730), at the back of the Bank Hotel, is easily the best. Mmmmmm... tofu with chili jam. **Clems Chicken's Newtown** (Pitt St., between Bathurst & Goulburn Sts., Sydney) is the best take-away joint in town—Clem is the spitting image of Charles Bronson! There are heaps of restaurants that cater in "Bush" food and these days it's not unusual for even the most humble bistro to offer kangaroo, emu or crocodile. If it's seafood you like then head down to the fish markets, where an astonishing array will be at hand. Come over and check it out, we'd love to have you! **end**

All phone numbers are area code 029.
Rusty Hopkinson plays drums in You Am I.

Sydney, Australia

Sydney is a tourist destination—we've got a big coat-hanger bridge and a weird looking opera house for all the tourists to gawk at. We've got a harbor unrivaled in the world, a beautiful, azure spread of water that snakes through the hilly, green suburbs that ring the city's east, and we've got a cosmopolitan society comprised of people from all corners of the world. Sydney is big and ugly yet casual and comfy at the same time. From the bats that flock to eat fruit in the Moreton Bay fig trees at Wynyard Station to the 500,000 folks who flock to Oxford Street to witness the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, it's a place full of surprises. Consequently, there are a billion articles and guidebooks about Sydney, New South Wales. They'll tell you exactly where to get Harbour Bridge snow-domes and stuffed koalas, which pub in Bondi Beach is best for picking fights or just what those ladies in Kings Cross are doing standing around swinging their handbags all night. So I thought I'd point you in the direction of my favorite places; most won't appear in any guide books, but all are places I love to go to and I hope you'll give them the time of day, too.

GERALD JENNINGS



Sydney Cricket Ground

She's a grand old dame, the Sydney Cricket Ground (Driver Ave., Royal Agricultural Showground Dr., Moore Park, 360-6601), a beautiful place to spend the day getting sloshed on cheap beer and munching on a pie whilst either the Australian Cricket Team or the Sydney Swans Australian Football Team are inflicting some grievous bodily harm on its opponent. If you can cadge your way into the member's stand, you'll be in for an afternoon of comfort and decency, but if you're in with the rabble, prepare yourself for all kinds of foul language and degradation. The Swans are New South Wales' representatives in the Australian Football League, and although the heathen game of rugby is the traditional sport here, the S.C.G. routinely attracts 35,000 odd Swans supporters. All swathed in red and white, they show up hoping that the likes of Tony "Pluggie" Lockett will kick a dozen goals and eat at least one member of the opposing team. If you don't understand the rules, don't worry: An afternoon at the S.C.G. will help you to figure them out. Cricket is a different matter, and an entirely more gentlemanly game. When the stars are right, however, there'll be all sorts of mayhem—streakers, drunken beer fights, and the invariable sledging of the opposition, usually some hapless South African or New Zealander. All in all, for an afternoon of real Australiana, you can't go past the S.C.G. It's an anthropologist's gold mine!

(Continued on page 97)

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