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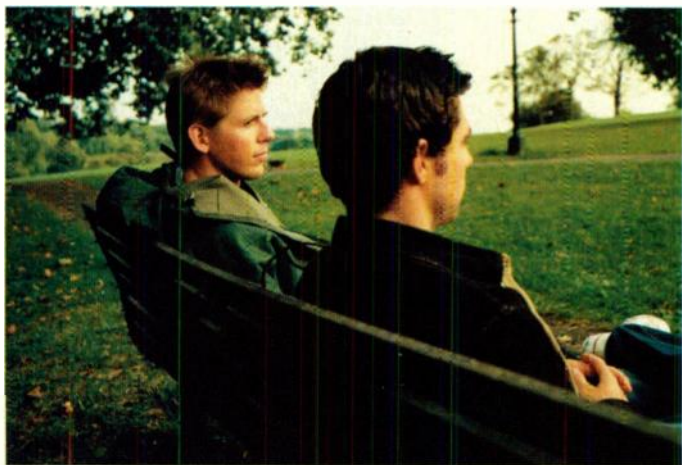
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AUDIOSLAVE



GROOVE ARMADA



MY MORNING JACKET



THE RAVEONETTES

AUDIOSLAVE 30

The combining of pedigrees in Audioslave has proved more Voltron than Frankenstein: Add Rage Against The Machine's muscle to the swagger and passion of Soundgarden, and you've formed a superpower striving to build a "classic" record. Tom Lanham looks over the blueprints.

THE CORAL 22

Mix doo-wop, folk, psychedelia, Beefheart noise, reggae, dub, soul and a group of teenagers and you'd expect an unlistenable mess. Instead, you've got the Coral, Liverpool's latest export. Doug Levy stirs the pot.

GROOVE ARMADA 24

Sorry, but we were so busy giggling at the title of the new Groove Armada album (*Lovebox*) that we forgot to write a proper blurb with some sort of wacky nautical pun. Steve Ciabattini sets a steadier course with the daring dance duo.

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Matthew Shipp, sick of the same old jazz, is reinventing it with the help of a few good samplers. Tad Hendrickson plugs him in.

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A tumbleweed rolls in Brooklyn: New York-via-Texas brooders Calla streamlined their after-midnight sound and are giving Brooklyn a much-needed dose of atmosphere. Tom Mallon breathes some fresh air.

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For everyone who's ever said, "They're much better live," let these pictures do the talking: Idlewild, Desaparecidos, !!!, Radio 4, Sahara Hotnights, the Mooney Suzuki, Ours, Robert Randolph, OK Go, Fountains Of Wayne, My Morning Jacket, Har Mar Superstar.

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Disc 2: Johnny Marr + The Healers, mellowdrone, Rotary Downs, Soulscript, Owen, Open Hand, Pat Ortman, Alaska!, Nada Surf, Baxter Dury, the Blood Group, the Warlocks, the Greenhorns, Varistor, As Tall As Lions, Laddio Bolocko, Kimone, Ilya.

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Nick Cave plays dress-up, we're not ashamed to say that Jeff Buckley was a very handsome man, Mixmaster Mike thinks about his girl, and Nada Surf's Matthew Caws thinks it's totally fine if your little brother makes time with your negligee.

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Come to Barbados and get your pasty ass a tan.

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'80s marmalade

Please tell me I didn't just read the guy from Ladytron whining about people always talking about the '80s when they talk to them. They wouldn't exist if it weren't for the '80s and I'm going to guess they probably wouldn't be selling a lot of records if fans of the old synth stuff weren't buying it. Whether they're ripping it off, paying homage, borrowing from it or making fun of the '80s, they should quit with the artiste routine and enjoy being what they are. Their records are great, but give me a break.

Fluffy
[email withheld]

Along with the music and the styles of the '80s, we're also bringing back the executive privilege of plausible deniability. This provides cover for when the electroclash movement has begun developing a) projects fusing Philadelphia Mummies string bands with club beats, b) allergies to Tenex or c) suicidal ideation involving one of those ties with a keyboard printing on it. —ed.

Gitchi gitchi a-Ha da da

Loved your November issue, and was thrilled to see two artists featured that I have recently seen live in Europe: Sondre Lerche and A Camp performed at a music festival in Norway in June. Glad to see those artists getting some attention on this side of the pond! Headlining that same festival was a-Ha, who—believe it or not—have never stopped making good music. I also saw them live at Wembley last month, and it was an amazing show. I'd love to see a-Ha's new album, *Lifelines*, reviewed in *CMJ*. I think a-Ha are sadly underrated in America—they are saddled with the association of "Take On Me" and most people can't get past that song to hear the *really* good stuff. Some little-known information about a-Ha: They hold the world record for the concert with the highest attendance (196,000 people); they released the first music video with Flash technology, beating Madonna by a few days; their March 2001 concert was broadcast live on the Internet and had the third highest online viewership, behind Paul McCartney and Madonna (this concert has just been released in the U.S. on DVD); a-Ha has just completed a 40-city tour, with excellent reviews. I hope you'll do a feature on a-Ha in the near future.

Catherine Sexton
CatherineSexton2@aol.com

Sadly, cheekbones and Rotoscoping could only take the band so far in the U.S., relegating them to Geek Love status in our benighted mag (September '02). They certainly got the jump on that whole Nordic invasion of fjord-crossing garage rock, though, and if they're playing to nearly 200,000 people elsewhere, why bother with the U.S., where they'd just be forced to witness the vicious The Hunger-like aging apparent in the VH-1 Classic crowd? —ed

Hey Joe, want to give it a go?

To John Davis of Superdrag: When I saw you in Lawrence, Kansas in '96, I really wanted to yell "Take The Long Way Home," because, you know, "Superdrag" sounds like "Supertramp." Would that have been funny?

Joe Kern
egonml@yahoo.com

No. —ed., speaking for everyone within earshot of you at a club, ever.

Boy drank all that magnolia wine

When I'm in my 40s and my parents have kicked me out of the house my placard will read: WILL TEACH YOU THE HIGHEST FORMS OF LINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY, RECITE POEMS BY THOMAS TRAHERNE AND KAHLIL GIBRAN, HYPNOTIZE YOU WITH A NORDIC DAVIDESQUE PHYSIQUE AND LONG UNDULATING GOLDEN LOCKS, BEST YOU AT NEARLY EVERY SPORT KNOWN TO MAN, THEN KICK YOUR ASS FOR FOOD.

That having been said, my plea is obviously worth more than a jaded, alienated music geek venting hatred over the utilitarian tont on the CD sleeve: More Sing-Sing! Interviews, bonus limited edition posters, anything. I feel like a 13-year-old girl with a *Tiger Beat* magazine while listening to "I'll Be" and staring at Lisa's picture (Gawd I love her).

Michael Wattenford
powerwatt5000@hotmail.com

Even though this feels like dropping off buckets of fish for the Monster of Piedras Blancas, we'll be sending Michael a live photo of Sing-Sing for his, er, appreciation. —ed.

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The Journal of the Institute
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June/July 2002

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— Zack Price
Home Recording
October 2002

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— Craig Anderton
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August 2002

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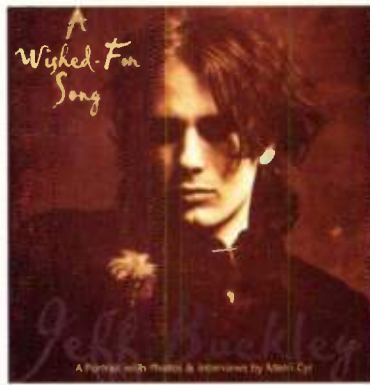
BECK

: BEACON THEATRE, NYC 10.02

: That Beck, always shifting styles and attitudes. So
: mercurial is he that he's become sort of blurry,
: apparently at a midpoint in his evolution into a super-
: sentient light being. Good thing one of his last shows
: in corporeal form, seen here at New York's Beacon
: Theatre, was so damn good.

: **Photo: Ruvan**





PORTRAITS OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

Far from the comprehensive biographical accounting in David Brown's *Dream Brother*, Merri Cyr's *A Wished-For Song* (Hal Leonard Publishing) is a photo-driven pastiche of memories of the singer-songwriter, culled from interviews with Buckley and his friends, business associates and bandmembers. Quotes placed around the Brooklyn photographer's portraits enlighten the contradictions within the subject—brooding introvert, corny jokester, born rock star rising—and remind just how tragically short Buckley's career was. >>>MAT HALL



NEWSFEED: The **Beastie Boys** are at work on the follow-up to 1998's *Hello Nasty* • **Ryan Adams** asks **Doves** to record as his backing band • On the

One From The Road: THE MUSIC

Leeds rockers *the Music* on bringing the sound of their self-titled debut (Capitol) to the States.

Where are you right now?
Toledo, Ohio.

What were last night's accommodations?

Our second tour bus. The first one had no power but it did have separate rooms, which is quite unusual.

Who in the band has the most annoying sleeping habits?

We all sleep very, very late...

What's currently being played on the tour vehicle soundsystem?

The Streets' *Original Pirate Material*, Al Green's *Let's Stay Together*, Led Zeppelin remasters.

What do you do during the day to occupy your time?

Sleep, smoke, play soccer, watch movies.

What song request are you most tired of hearing?

There's one guy who's at a load of gigs asking for "Karma." We're going to work on it just for him.



THE MUSIC: PIPER FERGUSON; DEVENDRA BANHART: KIRSTEN POSCH

IN MY ROOM

Who: Devendra Banhart

Where: His apartment in Brooklyn

Why: Before releasing the bizarro-Nick Drake stylings of *Oh Me Oh My...* (Young God), Devendra Banhart squatted in a disused salsa club; now he's moved on to fancier digs. There's still no electricity, though.

Ace of spades

[There's] playing cards taped to the wall. I find one every time I leave the house. Jack of diamonds, four of hearts; every card, from different decks.

Altar boy

It's actually a quarter of a huge wooden table that I found. I use it as an altar to pictures—of my mom, and drawings by Colter, and a picture of a woman with flames coming out her.

A bone in the bedroom

My bed is on the top of the wood piece in the corner, it's a small lopsided room, the bed is queen-sized and I found it with my girlfriend in the trash. It's a good bed. Next to it is a jawbone my father gave to me.

Too dark park

After four p.m., it gets dark. I don't have electricity, I'm trying to not pay rent for this reason. The candles come on, one for Santa Barbara and one for the Star of David, the rest are all white or pink. So now I can't see shit, so I play a little guitar.

heels of *Evil Heat*, **Primal Scream** to release a greatest-hits comp later this year • **Beck** intends to release a new acoustic album this year; he's temporarily shelved >>>



LONGWAVE

changed the distributor cap and the rotator cap on the van!" beams Steve Schlitz, shaggy-haired guitarist for NYC-via-Rochester rockers Longwave. "It was more satisfying, in a way, than making a record, 'cause I know we can do that." *The Strangest Things* (RCA) is the latest record these delay-pedal-lovin' twentysomethings knew how to make—a major-label affair that recasts the class of 1980 (Echo And The Bunnymen, Psychedelic Furs and U2) through a shoegazer lens. Although working with acclaimed producer Dave Fridmann (the sonic chemist behind wacky-titled Flaming Lips records) was like working with "some Buffalo guy I felt like I knew," to Rochesterian drummer Mike James, the experi-

ence was certainly unlike recording their 2000 debut. "I miked the wrong amp a few times on *Endsongs*, and that never happened with Dave Fridmann," smirks guitarist Shannon Ferguson. "Not even a single time." Recording in the tiny town of Cassadaga, N.Y. (population 676), Longwave had properly miked amps, but still weren't immune to hassle. "I like to take a run in the morning sometimes," says bassist/Queens native Dave Marchese. "[Lips bassist] Michael Ivins says, 'Right next to the door, there's a big orange vest for hunting, wear that. 'Cause it's always hunting season around here.' And Dave's like, 'Yeah, and carry a big stick, 'cause there's wild dogs!'" >>>CHRISTOPHER R. WEINGARTEN

LISTEN UP

50

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10

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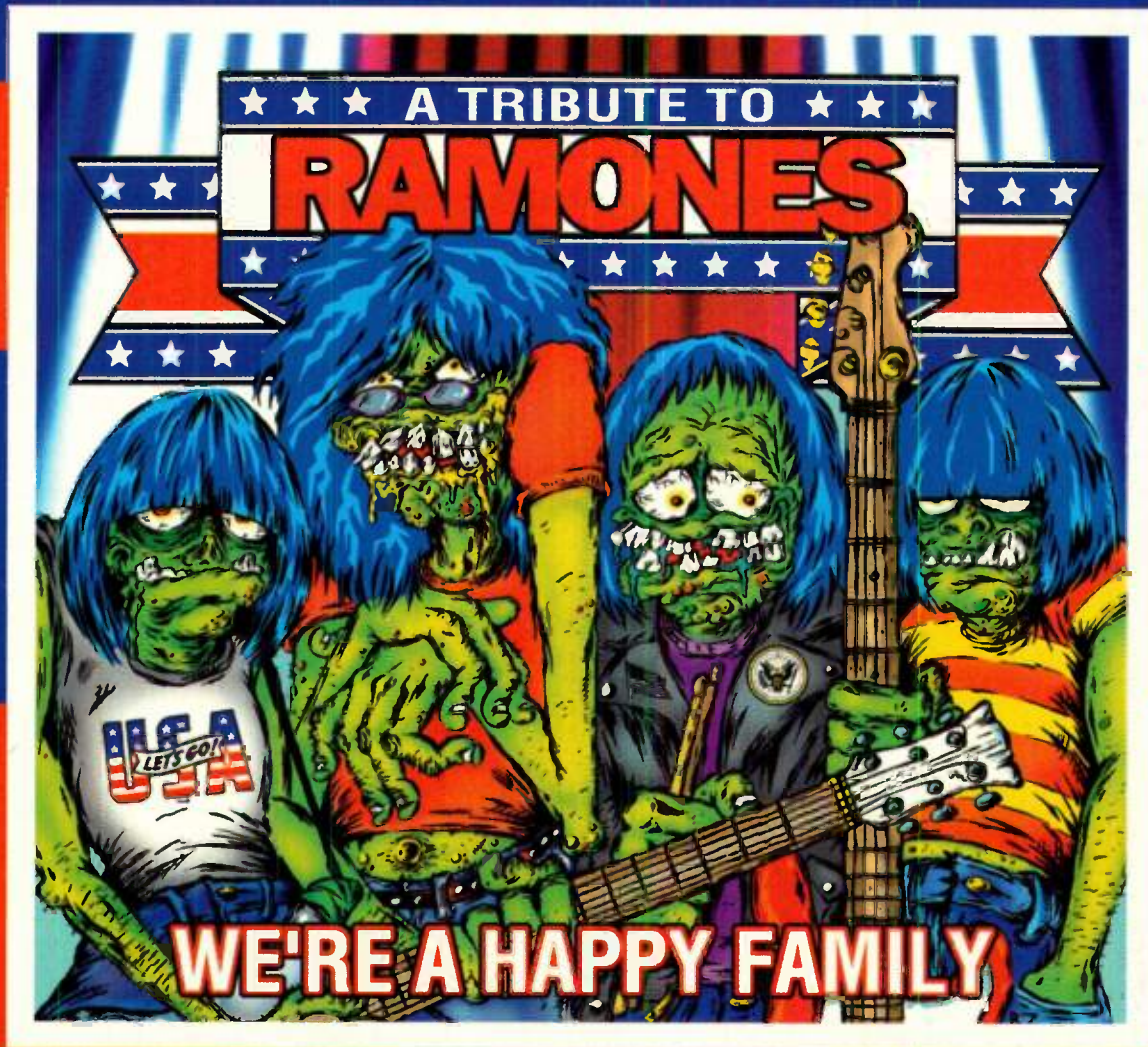
THE RAVEONETTES

I'm a huge Buddy Holly fan and I just like the expression, 'Rave On,'" says Sune Rose Wagner, the male half/chief songwriter of Danish duo the Raveonettes, explaining part of the inspiration behind his band's name. "We didn't realize there was something called Raisinets," clarifies the grinning Sharin Foo, Wagner's musical partner. Luckily the pair has a great sense of humor, not that you'd know it from the brooding, fuzz-drenched, back-alley trip that is *Whip It On* (Crunchy Frog), their debut release. That's because the eight-song EP only paints half the picture. Inspired by another Danish artistic export, the Dogma school of filmmaking, which imposes severe restrictions on directors in order to inspire both creativity and more natural art, *Whip*

It On features songs exclusively written, as its cover states, "in glorious B-flat minor." "We set up all these rules," explains Wagner, "All the songs were in one key, and they only used the same three chords." However, the release was initially intended to be one of a pair: "The next record was supposed to be recorded in B-flat major," reveals Wagner. "We always had the two sides, but we only got around to recording one of them." Sidetracked by sudden worldwide exposure and the subsequent need to record a full debut album, the Raveonettes are hardly complaining about their aborted experiment. "We always felt like our music belonged in the U.K. or the U.S., not in Denmark," says Wagner. "We always targeted the world." >>>DOUG LEVY

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Good Reef!

Forty years after the sound of the future first radiated out from Liverpool, the **Coral** are making waves.

STORY: DOUG LEVY • PHOTO: DREW GOREN

ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S **CD**



IAN SKELLY, PAUL DUFFY, JAMES SKELLY, BILL RYDER-JONES, LEO SOUTHALL, NICK POWER



How many fingers would you need to count bands who namecheck both Captain Beefheart and the Everly Brothers when discussing their music? And of those, how many would also drop '50s doo-wop, '60s folk and psychedelia, classic reggae, dub and soul, and good old-fashioned rock 'n' roll? Probably just one.

They're called the Coral, and they hail from Liverpool—leave it to the city that spawned the most famous rock band in history to provide an increasingly homogenized music scene with a much-needed dose of eclecticism and individuality.

"I think there's a reaction against bands like Radiohead," frontman James Skelly offers, attempting to explain how his band developed. "Not Radiohead themselves, but all the bands that have copied Radiohead in Britain. They all just sound like shit versions of Radiohead. So, in a way, we were influenced by Radiohead, by trying as hard as we could not to sound like them."

At 22, Skelly is the Coral's eldest; five of the six bandmembers were still in their teens when the band's debut album dropped, and subsequently exploded, in the U.K. last summer. The band—Skelly, his brother Ian on drums, bassist Paul Duffy, keyboardist Nick Power and guitarists Lee Southall and Bill Ryder-Jones—formed in the mid-'90s while still at school in their seaside hometown of Hoylake. It's a long way from New York City, where they're right now basking in the afterglow of their first U.S. shows. The Stateside release of *The Coral* (Columbia) is still months away, so the two November gigs are supporting the recently released *Skeleton Key* EP, which features the group's most eccentric track in the title role bolstered by a selection of B-sides and non-album tracks.

"*Skeleton Key*" surprises at first, with its bizarre face-slap of psycho quirk-rock, and the more you experience the Coral's music the more you realize it's all nearly impossible to define. "You can describe each song, but you can't describe our sound," agrees Skelly. "We always say we don't really sound like anyone else. It's like if you've never heard the Beatles, trying to describe the Beatles to someone—you just can't do it."

As you spend time with *The Coral*, you begin to understand how each thread ties together, from the story of a man-turned-plant that is "Simon Diamond," to the pirate-like chant of "Spanish Main" to the

singalong stomp of "Dreaming Of You." Of course, this makes you start to wonder what type of fan such an across-the-board formula tends to attract.

"It ranges from, like, 4-year-olds to 84-year-olds," says Skelly. "We see all different people at our gigs, from old hippies to little kids who love 'Simon Diamond' because they think it's like a nursery rhyme. And there'll be hippies who love 'Skeleton Key,' because they love old Beefheart records and stuff like that."

"You've got to worry about them, though, don't you?" laughs Ryder-Jones. "About what kind of person would be into that."

"If I was a person, I wouldn't be into it," Skelly deadpans.

Their music, and way of talking about it, can come off as deliberately offbeat, but the Coral isn't on a mission to obliterate the mainstream—they're doing what comes naturally.

"We think lots of music's good that's straightforward," admits Ryder-Jones. "It doesn't have to be like how you'd imagine us. I'm just imagining what the Americans are thinking about us from what we've given them." "They probably think we only listen to Ornette Coleman," laughs Skelly. "Zappa and Ornette Coleman."

The bandmembers' only real rule is to staunchly avoid artifice. They're already nearly finished with a second album, set for release in the U.K. around the same time their debut hits stores here, and the Lightning Seeds' Ian Broudie, who produced *The Coral*, is again at the helm—his "less-is-more" approach helps the band nail the rough sound they want to achieve.

"I don't really like that stadium sheen," says Skelly. "We like it to be more organic—how instruments actually sound. You can't rely that much on technology, because it's got no soul in it. It'll just break down upon you. A trust in a thing between people, that's what we want to get over in our music, because that won't let you down. Keeping the creativity in the music alive is what's important."

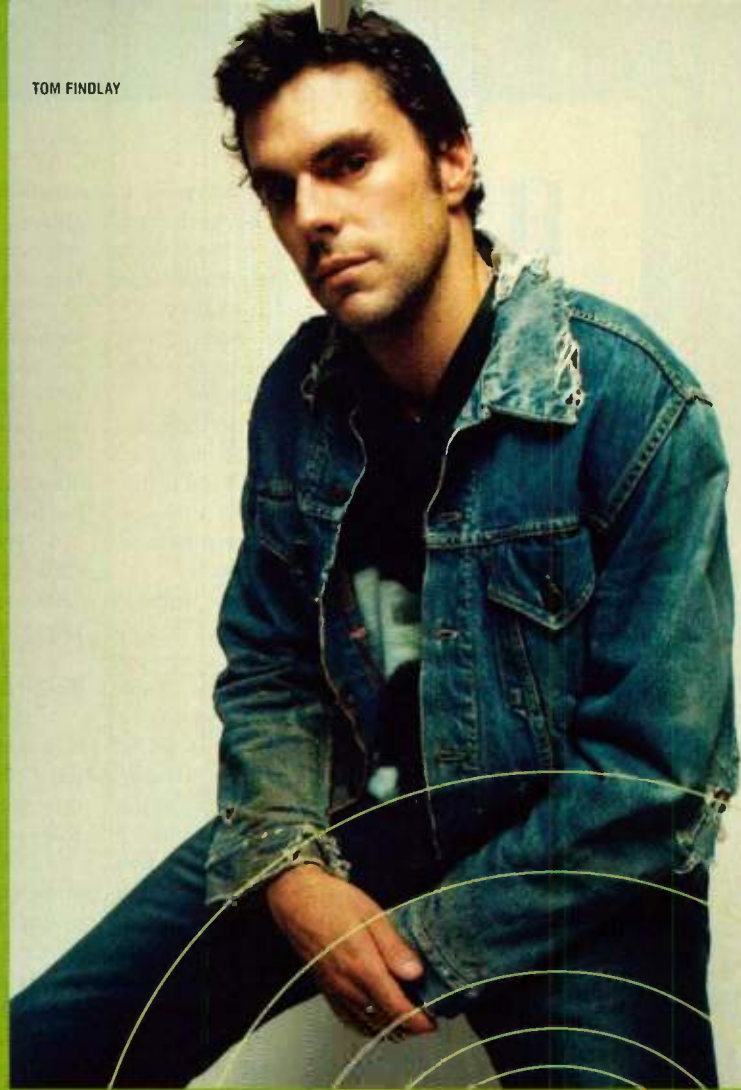
"And the stability," adds Ryder-Jones.

"And being mates. If anything was jeopardizing that, then it's not worth it," Skelly nods, firmly. "It's not even music—nothing comes before us being mates. The view for us is that it's six lads who are the best mates in the world and that's it. There's nothing really more to it." **MMM**

TOM FINDLAY

With *Lovebox*, the captains of Groove Armada return for another war on the dancefloor. Only this time, it's personal.

STORY: STEVE CIABATTONI
PHOTO: DEREK SANTINI



VOCAL POINT



Andy Cato and Tom Findlay have learned a few lessons since they formed Groove Armada in the mid-'90s—some harsher than others.

"When you arrive in London, the first thing you realize is that the whole club DJ circuit is a complete mafia tied up by a very small group of people," Cato explains. "The only way you can DJ yourself is to actually do it yourself."

So started Groove Armada the duo and the Groove Armada club night. Their late-night sets went so well that they decided to throw a party on a boat on the river Thames to celebrate their first anniversary. "We gave this guy an enormous deposit for the boat," says Cato. "But the boat never existed, and he did the runner." (Armada without boat = massive irony.)

With a sprinkling of trippy dance hits over the years, their sway in the business has improved since then. And Cato and Findlay, both men now having hit the big 3-0, claims even more wisdom as they launch their fourth full-length, *Lovebox* (Jive).

"Our last record was us learning our craft," Findlay says of 2001's *Goodbye Country, Hello Nightclub*. "We were more interested in things we were doing in the production as opposed to keeping an eye on what the tune sounded like. *Lovebox* is us getting our heads back on the thing that matters."

What matters is the human touch. The ratio of live performance versus auto-

mated music is tipped in the favor of the Homo sapiens on *Lovebox*. Credit that to Groove Armada's increased confidence as an actual performing band as opposed to just your average clichéd DJ duo.

"We got to the point where we were thinking that the peaks of Groove Armada are our live performances," says Cato the multi-instrumentalist. "If you've seen us live you know it's very hectic and sweaty. We knew we had to capture some of that rawness on an album."

You can hear the difference right away on the riff-heavy opener "Purple Haze," featuring the freestyling Red Rat and Krimal. The track comes off like a killer hip-hop/dancehall remix of the best Lenny Kravitz song he never recorded. Also breathing more humanity into *Lovebox* are guests like trip-hop matriarch Neneh Cherry and soul-folk legend Richie Havens, who was also featured on *Goodbye Country* and has done a few U.K. festivals with Groove Armada. On "Remember," however, the album introduces its most unexpected presence, that of the late folk priestess Sandy Denny.

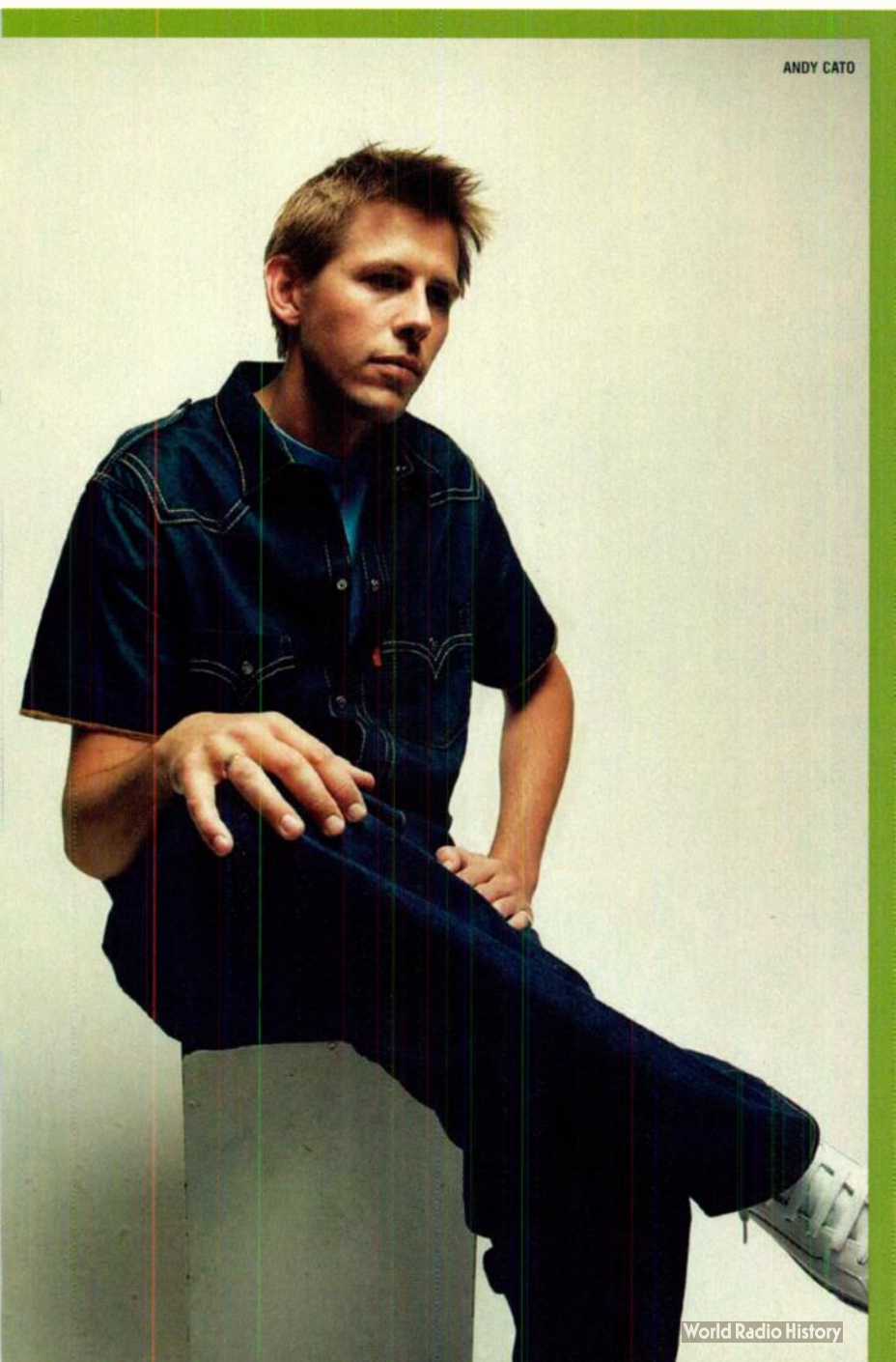
"She's got this spellbinding voice," says Cato. "When Richie first heard it he went very quiet. He took on a very intense look. Apparently in the '70s, Fairport Convention and he did loads of gigs and he and Sandy were quite close."

The track also highlights Groove Armada's increased focus on the song and the singer. "I tried cutting up her vocal sample because the timing is all over the place," says Cato. "But I realized that this song would have to have no fixed tempo. Everything is going to have to be constructed around that because the voice is the main thing. It's a real pain in the ass to do it that way, but it's the only way to do justice to that type of performance."

With the album complete, the main Armada agenda is to make noise in the U.S. "I think we're one of the best live dance acts in the world and we really want to come to America and turn a few heads," says Cato.

"We came over to America a few years ago when we weren't very good, so I feel like there's a lot of unfinished business," says Findlay, who promises it'll be a real band onstage, not just a standard DJ setup, the one that's a lot like watching two guys install software in front of a video screen.

"On the road you need more than just that heavy dancing beat, especially in those arenas which have traditional setups. People want to see a singer. They want to see somebody perform. They want to see some human-ness," Findlay says. "There's nothing wrong with beats and bleeps—we love 'em. But it's also good to play around with melodies and harmonies. That's the stuff that makes music timeless." **NMM**



ANDY CATO



ELECTRIC COMPANY

Pianist **Matthew Shipp** mixes it up with *Spring Heel Jack*, *Beans* and *E-I-P* for the future sound of jazz.

STORY: TAD HENDRICKSON • PHOTO: CYNTHIA FETTY

The Ramones and AC/DC notwithstanding, no one has had a music career of any length without drastically changing. Dylan and Miles Davis both went electric; the Who and the Stones went from pop to rock; U2 has made a much-publicized full circle. With 20 traditional avant-garde jazz (no, that's not an oxymoron) albums already under his belt, pianist Matthew Shipp felt like he'd painted himself into a corner. So Shipp took his cool cache and put it on the line by changing direction, turning to modern technology and sounds for a new way out.

"I think the way that jazz albums are still being made is very tired, and I think it's time to do something about it," Shipp says from his East Village apartment. "The idea of jazz artists recording [music] has almost been around for a century now—I'm just trying to approach things in ways that are valid for my era and my time."

The first step in this evolution was the Shipp-curated *Masses*, the 2001 *Spring Heel Jack* collab that fused of-the-moment electronic production and free improvisation. Ranging from dark and moody to abstract and ecstatic, this bipartisan meeting resulted in the new electro jazz revolution that's since swept through Europe and is currently gaining momentum here in the States. Shipp

assembled the cast of musicians for *Masses* and oversaw its release as part of the Thirsty Ear label's Blue Series.

As artistic director for the Blue Series, he's also overseen exceptional new electronic-leaning jazz albums for Craig Taborn and Guillermo E. Brown, a second *Spring Heel Jack* album, *Amassed* (this time with a British team that includes Spiritualized's Jason Pierce) and DJ Spooky's *Optometry* disc, which found the illbient pioneer splicing and dicing improvised source material.

Shipp's own official entrance was with 2002's uneven *Nu Bop*, an aggressive, seat-of-the-pants fusion of high-octane playing and rudimentary hip-hop and dance beats. Like many experiments, it didn't always work, but Shipp felt it was a necessary step. "I expected a lot more hate mail about the change," he says. "I've been surprised that people are allowing me to go where I want to go. I expected *Nu Bop* to really piss people off.

"I was so concerned with proving that I could play over breakbeats, and the idea was for me to completely funk out. Now that I knew I could do something like this, I really wanted to do something with the same compositional subtleties as a jazz suite, but with modern beat elements."

The realization is his new disc *Equilibrium* (Thirsty Ear), featuring a

contemplative jazz quartet with Khan Jamal on vibes, the ubiquitous William Parker on bass and Gerald Cleaver on drums. Several tracks also feature a skillful infusion of ambient electronics provided by Chris Flam, a New York engineer and electronics guy who also worked on *Nu Bop*. The new disc is more refined, subtle. "I don't feel the need to bang it over everybody's head," he says.

Shipp is also a player in demand. There's a yet-to-be-named collaborative effort with Def Jux kingpin El-P that will be out later this year, and we'll also see the release of a collaboration with Anti-pop Consortium in 2003, entitled, simply enough, *Anti-pop Consortium Vs. Matthew Shipp*. "I look at this album as a sort of foot in the door," says Anti-pop's Beans of what turned out to be the last album for his hip-hop duo. (Beans' solo disc drops in March on Warp.) "I'm a big fan of Sun Ra, Coltrane, Pharoah Sanders and the Art Ensemble. It's where I draw a lot of my influences from."

Beans met Shipp while working at Other Music, a New York record shop—the two just began to talk and the album's concept grew for there. For his part, Shipp gets to revisit hip-hop beats with a skilled rapper.

"I actually prefer working with people that understand very little about jazz," Shipp says. "As long as they have a feel for the concept, for what's being done, they don't need to know. The naiveté and mistakes can actually sound fresher." **NMM**

A Little Night Music

STORY: TOM MALLON
PHOTO: ALI SMITH

*With **Televise**,
Calla lightens up
on its 3 a.m. vibe.
(But not that much.)*

Calla don't make for very typical New Yorkers. They're polite, they offer you drinks, they accept compliments graciously. They are totally unpretentious and attitude free; they don't even talk shit about their hometown scene's dubious stature.

"It's great, especially in the last year," guitarist/vocalist Aurelio Valle says. "You start seeing all your friends doing really well, and everybody supports each other. We're all friends, and it's a community of musicians who really believe in what everybody else is doing." They're punctual, as well: Valle and drummer Wayne Magruder arrive right on time—early even—and when bassist Sean Donovan arrives 15 minutes late, waylaid by a stalled subway train, he's all apologies.

Still, *New York* magazine singled them out as a local band to watch among all of NYC's lauded style-over-substance acts. Calla's erected an irony-free zone in the post-punk-electro-funked-out borough of Brooklyn, delivering sculpted waves of sound in place of hack 'n' slash rhythms, sensual whispers instead of shouts, atmos samples rather than synth-pop redux. The difference between Calla and most of Brooklyn is the difference between a dimly lit lounge and a Times Square T.G.I. Friday's. The words "Gang Of Four" do not apply to them.

All of this may have something to do with the fact that one of the best things in Brooklyn was transplanted there from Texas. Calla rose from the ashes of Valle and Magruder's Factory Press, a Denton band who thought their dark sound would find a more fitting home in New York.



WAYNE MAGRUDER, AURELIO VALLE, SEAN DONOVAN

What they found, instead, was the early incarnations of the new garage movement.

"When we came to New York, we'd play shows with people like Jonathan Fire*Eater and Speedball Baby, bands like that," Valle says. "What we were doing was definitely different. We felt like a lot of people were going to be doing what we were doing, but that wasn't the case."

After the post-rock paean of Calla's self-titled debut and its subsequent slow-burning live shows attracted the attention of former Swan/current Young God records head Michael Gira, the band issued 2001's *Scavengers*, a swirling, swampy, uncomfortable monument to late-night listening that put them onstage with the likes of Nick Cave, Godspeed You! Black Emperor and Sigur Rós. But for all the new company it brought them, Calla found that *Scavengers'* (albeit excellent) after-midnight sound saddled it with limited appeal.

"[On] everything we did in the past, the mood was different," Valle says. "You know, where you listen to a record and you get a certain atmosphere, a certain vibe from it...it's like something you would listen to at 3 a.m.... If you tried to listen to *Scavengers* at work, or during the day, or driving the car, it doesn't grab the listener as much."

Their third record, *Televise* (Arena Rock Recording Co.), is

the result of that realization, a 10-song cycle that throws the often minimalist broodings of *Scavengers* into sharp relief. Nebulous ideas are given structure, empty spaces are filled with subtle washes of sound. Valle's guitar arrangements have expanded from single lines into multiple layers; Magruder's tribal beats are augmented by a new urgency. Picture Ennio Morricone blowing tumbleweeds through *OK Computer* and you're getting close: It's still dark, but closer to 9 p.m. than 3 a.m., a quality that Valle says is not a coincidence.

"With this record, we really wanted to just have something you could listen to at any time regardless of what situation you were in," he says. "We just wanted it to have a bigger impact. It still has the vibe that we've had in previous records, we've just made it more accessible and more driving, more aggressive."

That sound may be helping them fit in a little better with their peers—a week after this interview, they headed out on the road with Interpol—but that result wasn't as intentional. "We've always played with a diverse group of people; we don't always want to play with a rock band, at the same time, we don't always want to play with a DJ," Donovan says. "As long as we like what the person is doing, it kinda doesn't matter what they sound like...I don't think we worry too much about our place anymore." **NMM**




World Radio History

TIM COMMERFORD, TOM MORELLO, CHRIS CORNELL, BRAD WILK

ARMED AUDIO WARFARE

STORY: TOM LANHAM • PHOTO: DANNY CLINCH

AUDIOSLAVE: It was like those guys who call sports talk radio late at night with impossible dream-team trades: What if now-solo Soundgarden frontman Chris Cornell stepped into Zack's spot in Rage Against The Machine? But what started out as rumors slowly turned into something greater than the sum of its parts. And this project became something real. ARTIST APPEARS IN THIS MONTH'S 



IDLEWILD

IRVING PLAZA, NYC 11.02

Idlewild was here in the States last fall for a CMJ Marathon showcase, laying groundwork for the upcoming U.S. release of their third LP, *The Remote Part* (Capitol). *Remote* shows a much tamer and more pop-driven Idlewild, but the band still spazzes just as thoroughly live.

Photo: Justin Scurti



DESAPARECIDOS

IRVING PLAZA, NYC 11.02

Watching Bright Eyes might make you think Conor Oberst is all frail and trembly and shit, but *ohh no*. He can Pete Townshend with the best of em, as evidenced by the tangle of hair, sweat and soon-to-be-shattered guitar pictured below, from his politico-punk side band Desaparecidos' CMJ Music Marathon performance.

Photo: Justin Scurti





IRVING PLAZA, NYC 10.02

Not since *Pulp Fiction* has someone brought out the gimp in the name of entertainment with such aplomb as !!! . Although we sincerely hope that the band doesn't keep bassist Justin Van Der Volgen, pictured above, in a basket during the day.

Photo: Frank Mullen



ONE from
the ROAD

PHOTO: MARK OWENS

Radio 4

bassist/vocalist
Anthony Roman calls
in from their European
tour with the Faint

**Where are you
right now?**

Berlin, Germany.

**What were last night's
accommodations?**

Sleeping in our bus with the
Faint.

**Who in the band has
the most annoying
sleeping habits?**

Possibly me or our percussionist
PJ—snoring and other strange
noises.

**What's currently being
played on the tour vehi-
cle soundsystem?**

LCD Soundsystem's "Losing My
Edge" 12-inch.

**What rituals do you
have, if any, that are
part of every tour?**

Never play a show without the
brown box—but I can't tell you
why and I can't let you see
what's in it.

**What's been the
best show of the tour
thus far?**

Colgne, Germany or Camden
Town, London at the Monarch.

**What song request
are you most tired of
hearing?**

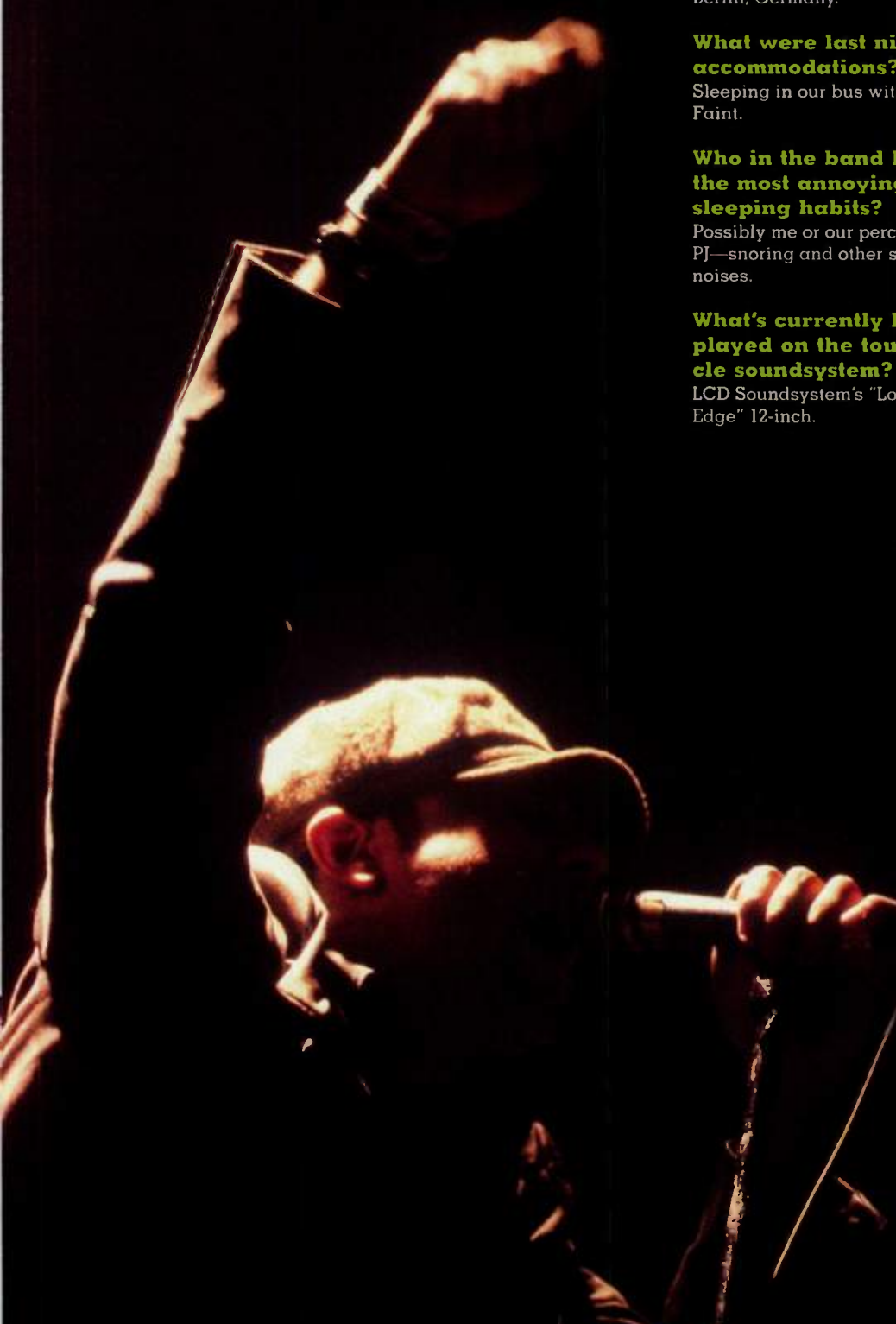
Anything from our first record,
The New Song & Dance.


**What do you do
during the day to
occupy your time?**

Read, listen to music, look at
these strange European cities,
complain.

**What's your personal
"code of the road?"**

Drink lots of water. Seriously.



A person in a brown jacket and dark pants is walking through a CD store aisle. The aisle is lined with tall metal shelving units filled with CD cases. The lighting is bright, and the perspective is from a low angle, looking down the aisle.

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CMJ NEW MUSIC MONTHLY DISC 1

1. **AUDIOSLAVE** "Cochise" 3:42
from *Audioslave* (Epic/Interscope)
2. **THE BLOOD BROTHERS** "Ambulance Vs. Ambulance" 2:49
from *Burn Piano Island, Burn* (ARTISTdirect)
3. **THE CORAL** "Dreaming Of You" 2:21
from *The Coral* (Deltasonic/Columbia)
4. **THE EXIES** "My Goddess" 2:49
from *Inertia* (Virgin)
5. **SOMETHING FOR KATE** "Monsters" 3:39
from *Echolalia* (SMI/Red Ink/Murmur)
6. **MY BLUE PILL** "Tagalong" 3:31
from *My Blue Pill* (Risus Productions)
7. **WARREN ZANES** "Where We Began" 4:05
from *Memory Girls* (Dualtone)
8. **ROBINELLA & THE CC STRING BAND** "Blanket For My Soul" 5:22
from *Blanket For My Soul* (Columbia)
9. **THE BAD PLUS** "Smells Like Teen Spirit" 5:57
From *These Are The Vistas* (Columbia)
10. **VIKTER DUPLAIX** "Lust For Life" 4:33
from *International Affairs v2.0* (Hollywood)

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CMJ NEW MUSIC MONTHLY DISC 2

1. **JOHNNY MARR + THE HEALERS** "Down On The Corner" 4:25
from *Boomsdag* (iMusic)
2. **MELLOWDRONE** "Fashionably Uninvited" 3:53
from *A Demonstration Of Intellectual Property* (ARTISTdirect)
3. **ROTARY DOWNS** "Statue Of A Drinker" 3:26
from *Long After The Thrill* (Static On Vinyl)
4. **SOULSCRIPT** "There By Now" 4:15
from *There By Now* (Nobody Big)
5. **OWEN** "The Ghost Of What Should've Been" 5:08
from *No Good For No One Now* (Polyvinyl)
6. **OPEN HAND** "Life As Is" 4:16
from *The Dream* (Trustkill)
7. **PAT ORTMAN** "It Begins" 4:19
from *The Wow Signal* (Empty Street)
8. **ALASKA!** "The Western Shore" 4:30
from *Emotion* (3-Girl)
9. **NADA SURF** "Inside Of Love" 4:58
from *Let Go* (Barsuk)
10. **BAXTER DURY** "Fungus Hedge" 4:33
from *Leo Parrot's Memorial Lift* (Rough Trade)

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cut along dotted lines and insert into jewel case



DISC 1

11. **DJ ME DJ YOU** "New You" 4:46
from *Can You See The Music* (Eenie Meenie)
12. **NELIKA** "Lime Sunday" 3:31
from *Nelika* (Youngworld Industries)
13. **SOLE** "Plutonium" 4:53
from *Selling Live Water* (Anicon)
14. **HOMUNCULUS** "Here And There" 3:33
from *Woods Howling*
15. **JON LANGFORD + HIS SADIES** "Solitaire Song" 2:42
from *The Mayor Of The Moon* (Bloodshot)
16. **CHRIS BUTLER** "The Idiot Trail" 5:19
From *The Museum Of Me* (Future Fossil)
17. **FRANKLIN BRUNO** "Tired Of The West" 4:39
from *A Cat May Look At A Queen* (Absolutely Kosher)
18. **THE SHARP THINGS** "Right" 3:14
from *Here Comes The Sharp Things* (Dive)
19. **DENISON WITMER** "24 Turned 25" 2:06
from *Philadelphia Songs* (Burnt Toast Vinyl)
20. **EVERMORE** "Slipping Away" 4:06
from *Oil & Water EP* (Self-Released)

DISC 2

11. **THE BLOOD GROUP** "Borrowed Tune" 3:17
from *Volunteers* (Le Grand Magistery)
12. **THE WARLOCKS** "Hurricane Heart Attack" 5:35
from *Phoenix Album* (Birdman)
13. **THE GREENHORNES** "The Way It's Meant To Be" 2:55
from *Dual Mono* (Telstar)
14. **VARISTOR** "Need" 4:38
from *07.28.02* (Hey Frankie)
15. **AS TALL AS LIONS** "Break Blossom" 3:57
from *Blood And Aphorisms* (As Tall As Lions)
16. **LADDIO BOLOCKO** "The Man Who Never Was" 4:21
from *The Life & Times Of Laddio Bolocko* (No Quarter)
17. **KIMONE** "In The Warmth Of Meanings Redefined" 5:14
from *Meres Of Twilight* (Silverthree Sound)
18. **ILYA** "Disturbed" 4:25
from *Poise Is The Greater Architect* (Ilya)

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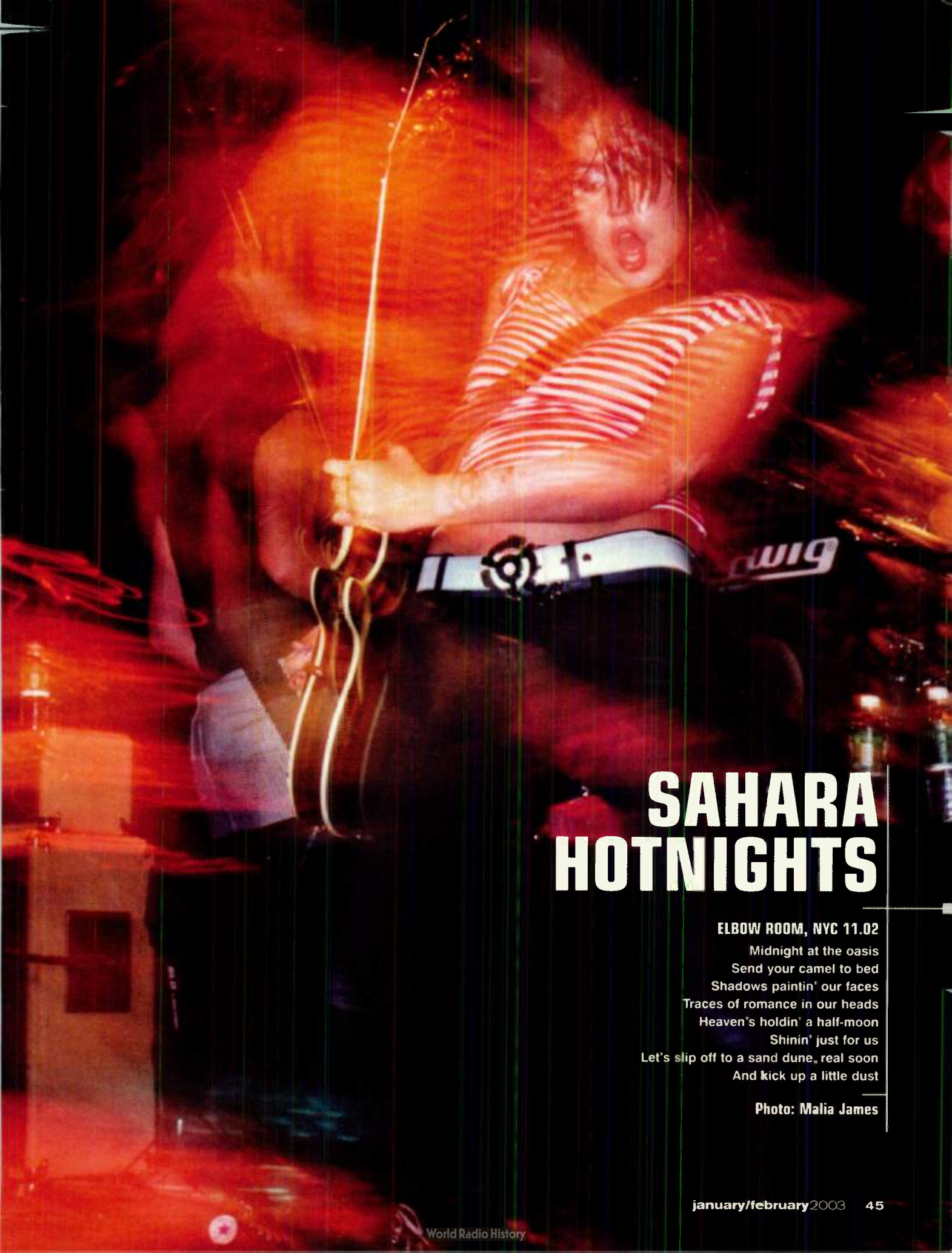


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SAHARA HOTNIGHTS

ELBOW ROOM, NYC 11.02

Midnight at the oasis
Send your camel to bed
Shadows paintin' our faces
Traces of romance in our heads
Heaven's holdin' a half-moon
Shinin' just for us
Let's slip off to a sand dune, real soon
And kick up a little dust

Photo: Malia James



ONE from
the **ROAD**
PHOTO: DUSTIN PITTMAN

The Mooney Suzuki

on giving the nation another few gallons of *Electric Sweat* (Gammon).

Where are you right now?

Atlanta, Georgia.

How are you traveling (bus, van, etc.)?

Converted short bus.

Who in the band has the most annoying sleeping habits?

Our chain-smoking road manager, who snores like a farm animal with emphysema.



What's currently being played on the tour vehicle soundsystem?

Frank Zappa's *Roxy & Elsewhere*, Eminem's *8 Mile* soundtrack, the new Beck record.

What rituals do you have, if any, that are part of every tour?

The ancient and sacred "Flushing Money Down The Toilet" ritual.

What's been the best show of the tour thus far?

Playing with the Strokes and the Realistics

at the Greek Theater in L.A. We got to shake hands with all the famous people who came to see the Strokes.

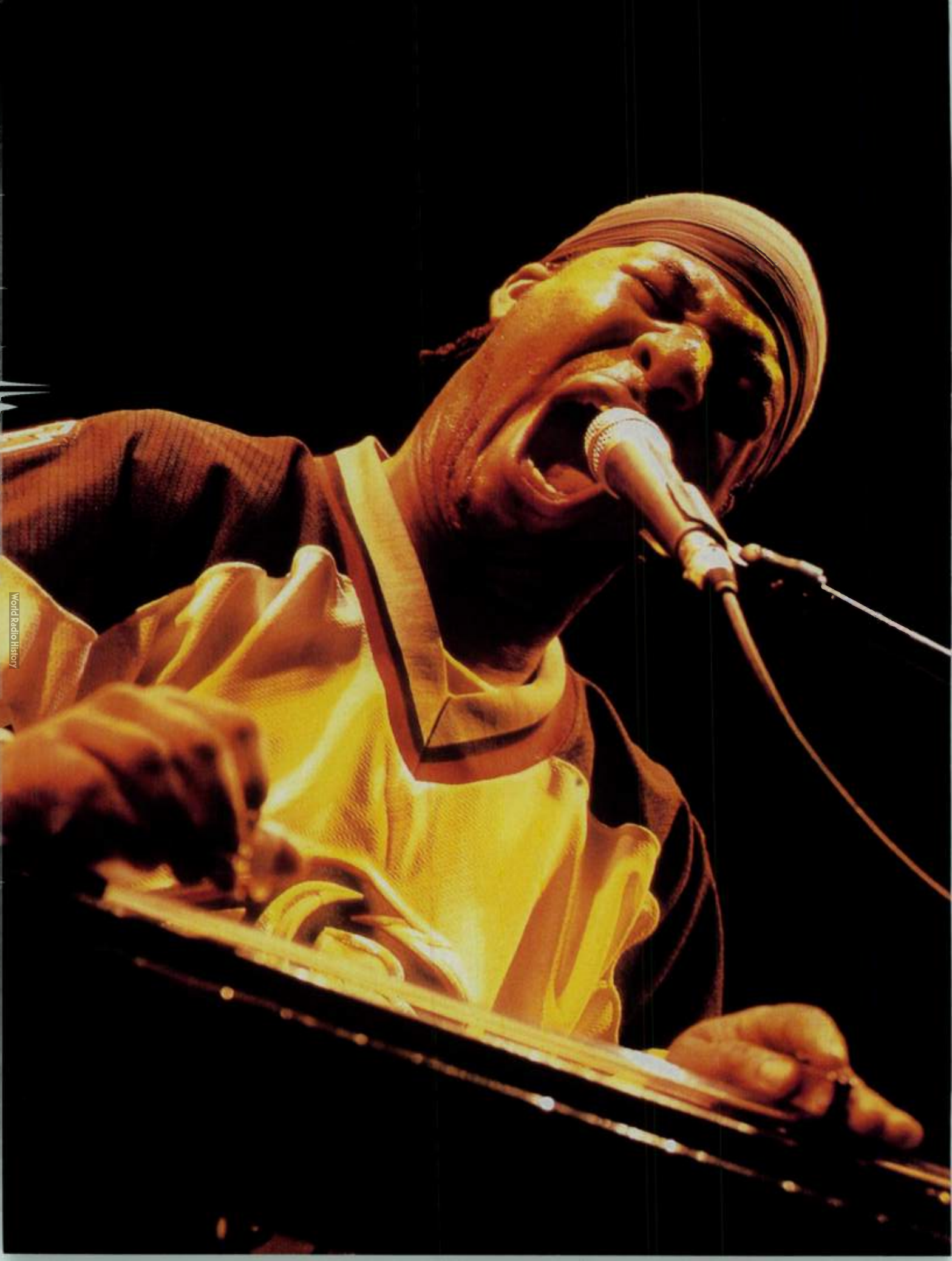
What song request are you most tired of hearing?

Anything by the New York Dolls or the Ramones.

What's your personal "code of the road?"

When you're going through hell... KEEP GOING!!!







ROBERT RANDOLPH

BOWERY BALLROOM, NYC 10.02

Having gotten his start playing his electrifying pedal-steel sounds in church, Robert Randolph knows how to move a crowd. Even the soulless slackers and unrepentant music journalists who witnessed Randolph and his Family Band at the 2002 CMJ Music Marathon felt the power. A live album is in stores and Randolph's joyful noise can also be heard in the new theme music for the NBA on ABC, replacing John Tesh's old NBC ditty. Now do you believe in God?

Photo: Mark Owens



ANSWER ME

OK Go gets road-schooled by tourmates **Fountains Of Wayne**

In the late '90s, Fountains Of Wayne released two solid, hooky, almost-Costelloian rock records upon a public that had largely been deafened by the overwhelming racket of the woe-begotten era's grunge spin-offs. A few years later, rap-metal has come and more or less gone, diary music appears to be on the wane and we can all be thankful that F.O.W. survived the scourge. They've recorded a new record, found a new label, and been kind enough to take my band, OK Go, out on a national tour with them. While we had them in our clutches, we tried to get as much advice off them as we could; here, OK Go bassist Tim Nordwind and I talk with F.O.W. founders Adam Schlesinger and Chris Collingwood. >>>DAMIAN KULASH

Damian: OK guys, give us your best touring advice.

Chris: Scented candles and pornography.

Adam: There's kind of a Zen to touring that you just have to get into; you just have to be really mellow all the time. I mean, any five people piled together in a bus for a year will start to annoy each other at times.

Damian: You're telling me. We're not even in a bus. We're still rockin' the van-style. What's it like when you graduate to the bus?

Chris: Well, we've had some pretty crappy busses. There was one named the Stinkhorn?

Adam: We heard about this bus in Oklahoma that you could rent for a dollar a day or some ridiculously cheap price. It

was a converted Greyhound from the early '60s with bunks that would routinely fall off the wall.

Damian: With people in them?

Adam: With people in them. With people under them.

Chris: The suspension was totally shot, so sleeping in the back was near impossible. Jody [Porter, F.O.W. guitarist], who was always the wastedest, would go back there because he could sleep through just about anything. The toilet was right next to the bunk, though. You'd go back for a pee and with every bump, blue toilet stuff would bounce up on him.

Damian: Seems like it might be hard to work under those circumstances. Do you guys ever write when you're on tour?



Adam: Chris just finished a song called the "Lonely Boner Song."

Chris, singing: "Make my lonely boner go away, it's been growin' exponentially all day..." It's a great song.

Tim: Sounds like a hit.

Adam: Honestly, it's really hard to be productive on the road. There have been times when I've written something just to force myself to do it. I remember buying a little cassette four-track from a European pawn shop and forcing myself to do a demo just to keep my brain active. I don't even remember what it was for, now... but the fact that it got finished was sort of an accomplishment.

Chris: Oh here's some good tour advice: Try not to leave people behind.

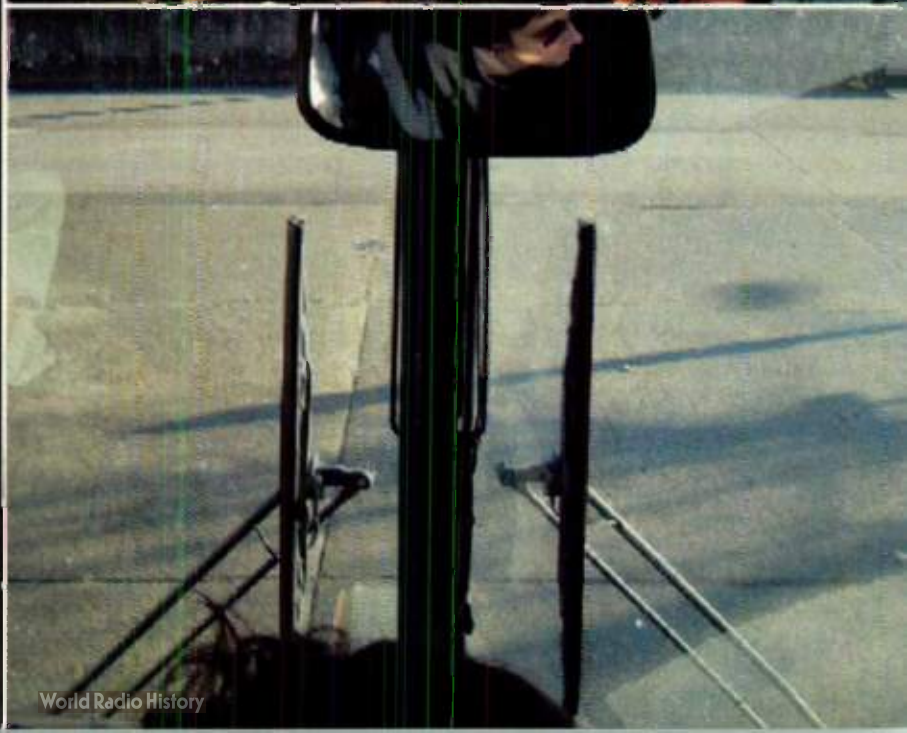
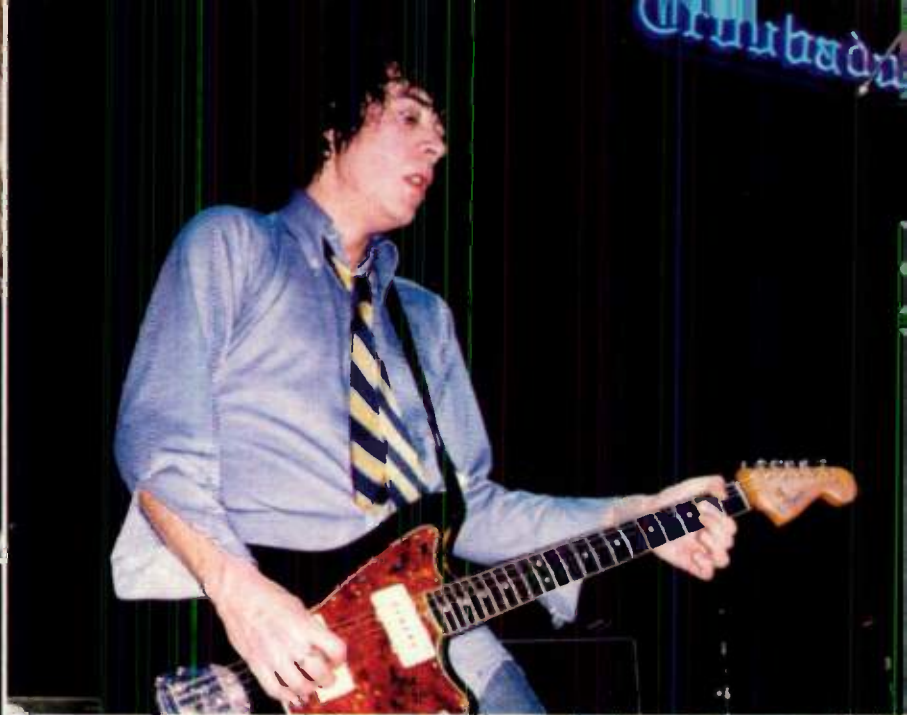
Adam: Yeah, we've actually done that several times. Brian [Young, drummer] has gotten left twice. In '99 we left him in Baltimore and drove all the way to Boston for some radio festival and honestly didn't know he wasn't on the bus until like 15 minutes before show time. We figured he was in catering or something.

Damian: What'd you do for the show?

Adam: One of the guys at our label was a drummer and he came up to us and was like, "I know all your songs, dude. Let me do it."

Damian: Was he good?

Adam: Yeah, mostly. So I guess the moral is: Make sure somebody at your label can play your songs.





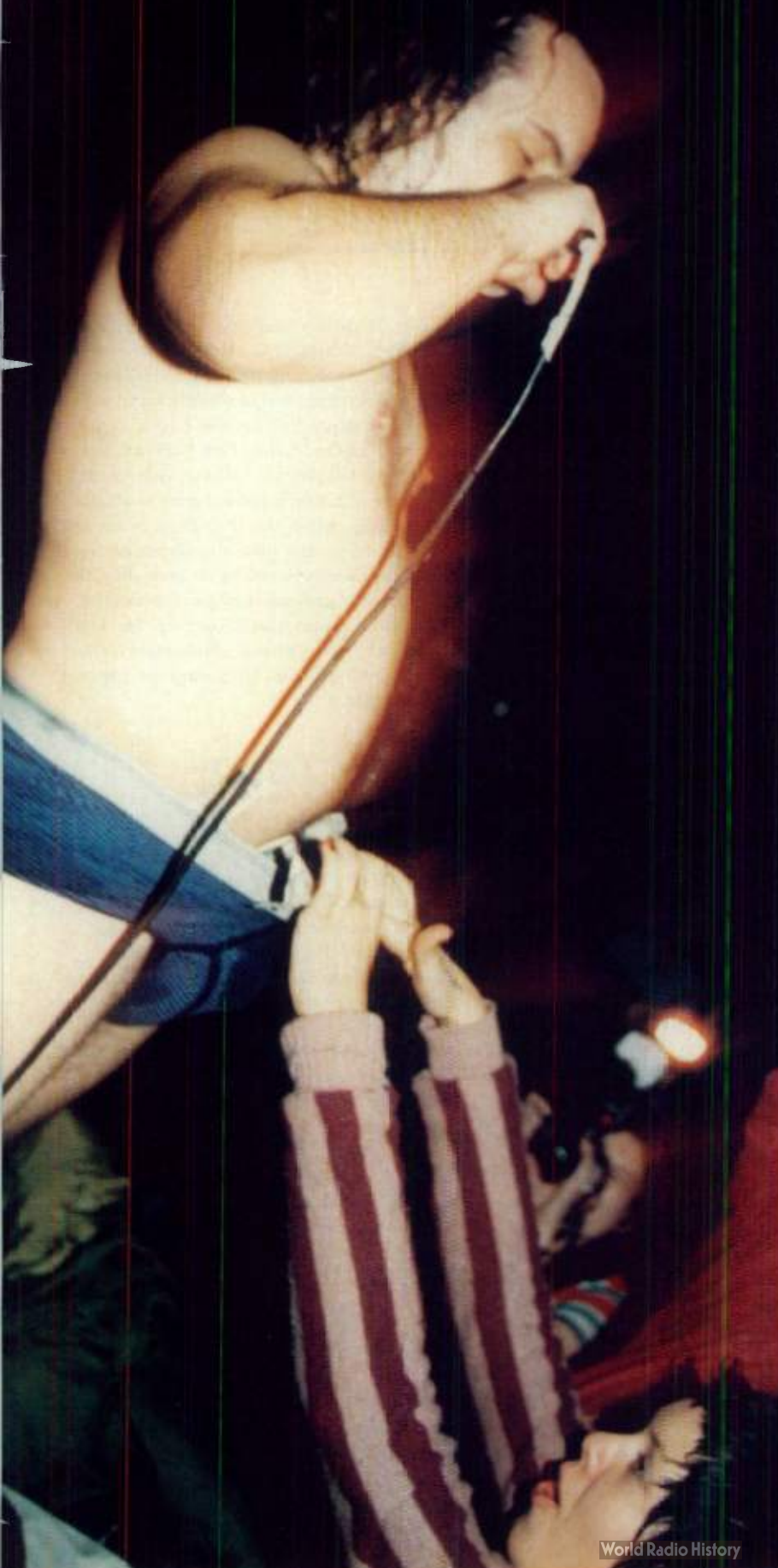
MY MORNING JACKET

BOWERY BALLROOM, NYC 11.02

Behold the rock. You'd never think that the haunting moodiness that verges on classic country spun by My Morning Jacket would inspire a mass sprouting of hornhands. But this Louisville, Kentucky band, an icon in Benelux countries, achieves many wondrous things. Here, leader Jim James manages to look like what James Hetfield thinks he sees in the mirror.

Photo: Mark Owens

PHOTO: TAD KUBLER



Har Mar Superstar

weighs in from the tighty-whitey-destroying tour for *You Can Feel Me* (Record Collection).

Where are you right now?

At the Troubadour [in West Hollywood].

What were last night's accommodations?

My friend Gabe's house in Berkeley.

How are you traveling (bus, van, etc.)?

By big, black van.

Who in the band has the most annoying sleeping habits?

Me. I am the only one and I snore very loudly—if I sleep at all.

What's currently being played on the tour vehicle soundsystem?

There are two: Nico's *Chelsea Girl* and Missy Elliott's *Under Construction*.

What rituals do you have, if any, that are part of every tour?

The dance of free cocaine and blowjobs.

What's been the best show of the tour thus far?

I've already played over 40 dates and I don't remember most of them.

What song request are you most tired of hearing?

"Girl, You're Stupid." It's a stupid song and I hate playing it.

What's your personal "code of the road?"

Never shit on someone's tour bus.



Christ Church, Barbados, WEST INDIES

STORY: MIKE TUMMINIA AND SANDRA BOSHER

Barbados: an island in the Caribbean, land of the flying fish, home of Mount Gay rum and the (onetime) world's third fastest man. Follow the curve of islands that make up the Caribbean chain down toward Latin America, and near the end you'll reach this bit of tropical paradise, thrown slightly out to the east. But this corner of the world isn't only about sunshine, palm trees and idyllic beaches: Off the well-beaten tourist track hides the true vibe of Barbados.

Drive around the perimeter: You'll find serene, quiet waters on the west coast of Barbados, loud waves crashing onto deserted beaches on the east, a weather-beaten landscape up in the highlands and twisting, winding one-lane roads and busy highways downtown. Such diversity is reflected in the music that seeps from every street corner, every rum shop and nighttime jam in the country.

The pulsating rhythms of soca, reggae and dancehall can be heard pounding from customized cars parked outside the many fetes where local DJs lic' down some tracks. The younger generation has taken its cultural music, fused it with rock, hip-hop and R&B influences, and created its own blend of rhythms. Part of the Caribbean circuit that has nurtured the talents of dancehall stars **Beenie Man**, **Sean Paul** and **Bounty Killer**, Barbados has also played host to international acts like **Shaggy**, indie bands such as **Lava Baby** from New York City and reggae giants **Third World**, **Maxi Priest** and **Steel Pulse**. The island has a vibrant calendar of musical events: January sees the **Jazz Festival**, March hails the **Spring Break Lime Music Festival** (live music on the beach by local, indie and national acts), the

Congaline Carnival gives the stage to both local, regional and international performers at the end of April and the **Crop Over Festival** in July and August is the high point on the calendar for soca and calypso. You can find more information about these events at www.barbados.org.

Always check newspapers **The Nation** (www.nationnews.com) or **The Barbados Advocate** (www.barbadosadvocate.com) for information on what's going on, as you might well be able to catch a reggae or dancehall event at the **National Stadium** (Waterford, St. Michael; 426-0627) or one of the many clubs that spring up from nowhere and disappear just as quick. The heartbeat of entertainment is St. Lawrence Gap on the south coast. Known simply to locals as "The Gap," it's the party strip of the island, restaurants, nightclubs and live music venues tripping over one another. Live music jostles with street vendors and taxi drivers on most nights of the week, but on Thursday the local crowd steps out in force to lime (hang out) with their friends and check their favorite bands, whether it be rock at **McBride's Pub & Cookhouse** (435-6352) or R&B at **The Ship Inn** (435-6961). You can also head west along the south coast road and drop into **Club Extreme** (at Worthing Main Rd., Christ Church; 435-4455), the latest addition to the scene and one of the top music venues in the Caribbean.

If you find yourself with the late-night munchies, check **The Redman** (directly opposite The Ship Inn, St. Lawrence Gap,

Christ Church), a food stall with tasty local fare from fish to BBQ chicken hot off the grill. Beg nicely and they might just organize a kickass chicken sandwich, laced with Redman's special sauce. On Friday nights **Oistins Fish Fry** (Oistins Fish Market, Christ Church) is the place to be; here, visitors can hang out with locals and eat some soul food Bajan-style, while the throbbing beats of soca music bound from soundsystems set up in the doorways of bars on both sides of the street. Continue toward the capital, Bridgetown, and you'll butt up on **The Boatyard** (Bay Street, Bridgetown, St. Michael, 436-2622), as hip during the day as it is at night.

LOCAL LOGIC: BARBADOS'S BEST

So very retro that it's gotta be done experience: **THE GLOBE DRIVE-IN** (Adam's Castle, Christ Church; 437-0479). Not complete without dinner from the snackette.

Essential excursion: Hire a moke, drive around the maze of roads that criss-cross the island. Stop off at any of the rum shops you encounter along the way and play some dominoes or fire a shot of Extra Old rum.

Place to visit if your suitcase goes missing: **LAZY DAYS SURF SHOP** (Quayside Centre, Rockley, Christ Church; 435-8115). You can even get a skateboard if you need to get around.

Stopoff for some rootsy reggae: **TEMPLE YARD** (Cheapside, Bridgetown, St. Michael). Rastafarian handiwork and crafts, some serious rootsy sounds and great Ital (vegetarian) food.

Drinking hole: **MOJO** (Worthing Main Rd., Christ Church; 435-9008). Cool music, good food, great vibe.

Local brew: **BANKS BEER**. Available everywhere.



BRIAN MARSHALL OF DESIRE AT THE BOAT YARD



BANKS BEER CHATTEL

Surf spot: Year-round go for SOUP BOWL at Bathsheba in St. John, but if the wind is your thing, visit SILVER ROCK during the summer.

Wild time at sea: Cruise on the JOLLY ROGER...you have been warned.

Representation of Barbados-bred music: Anything from the CRS MUSIC label (www.crsmusic.com).

Freebie: HARBOUR LIGHTS (Marine Villa, Upper Bay Street, St. Michael; 436-7225), Wednesday nights, drinks free. There might be a queue but it's worth the wait.

Way to get here for Spring Break: SUN SPLASH TOURS at 1-800-426-7710 or www.sunsplashstours.com.

OUT WITH THE IN-CROWD:

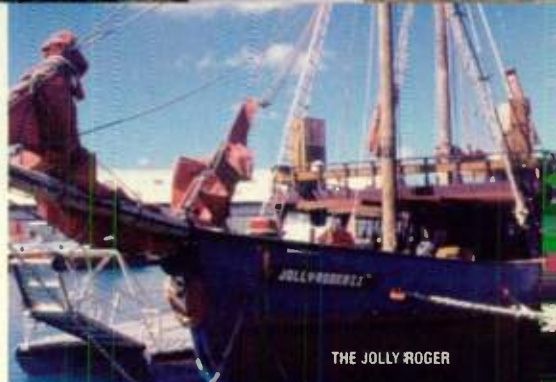
DEREK WILKIE, owner, CRS Music: "For me it has to be Bathsheba, on the East Coast. The beauty and serenity of the surroundings clear my mind and allow me to think straight. It empowers me. We have to understand and appreciate that embracing nature is becoming part of the real world."

MIKEY HULSMIEER, owner of Red Dog Studios/drummer: "An afternoon at the racetrack at The Garrison Savannah (Barbados Turf Club, The Garrison, St. Michael, 426-3980) studying the horses and making the odd wager or two always helps to take my mind off the studio, and allows me to relax and be entertained purely by the environment and the people around me. There's people from all walks of life, food and drink available and it's a free lime—what could be better than that?"

BUGGY, chanter (rapper): "Check out Le Club (Cavans Lane, Bridgetown, St. Michael) on Saturday nights. The music is mainly dub, dance-hall and hip-hop, with a little calypso. There's a great atmosphere, always a party crowd—plus it's where the bashment bunnies hang out! Afterwards we'll head to the street vendors on Baxter's Road (St. Michael) for some authentic, traditional Bajan food with some hot pepper sauce to soak up the alcohol."

LAWRENCE, man-about-town: "Baku Beach Club (Sunset Crest/Holetown, St. James, 432-6038) is a must on a Saturday night—the excellent local R&B band 4D People performs outside and when they're done, it's inside to the Casbah Nightclub for the rest of the night, 'coz they've got the widest variety of music and a cool, sophisticated ambience."

All phone numbers are in the 246 area code.



THE JOLLY ROGER



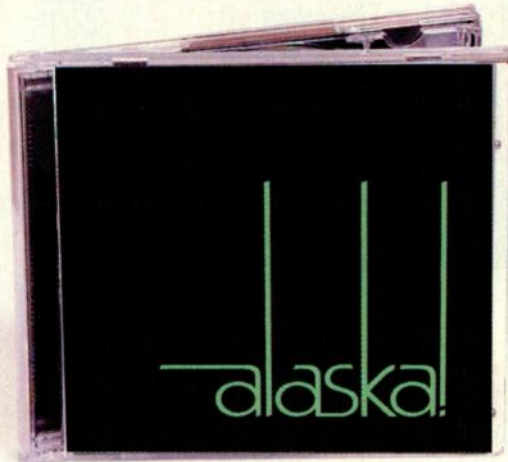
BARBADIAN CHANTER BUGGY AT THE SPRING BREAK LIME MUSIC FESTIVAL



ALASKA!

Emotions

B-Girl



Link

www.pureyukon.com

File Under

Into the wild

R.I.Y.L.

Sebadoh, Freedy Johnston, Idaho

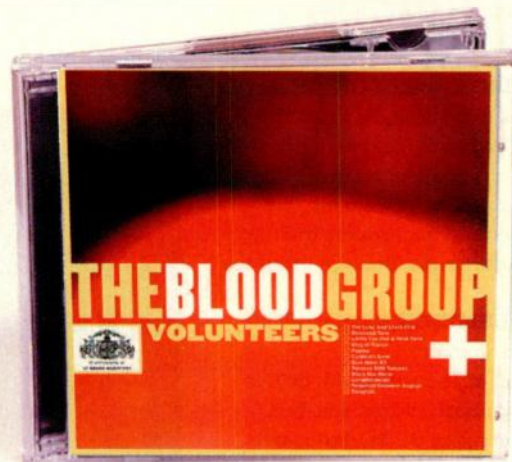
Picture the wide-open, sparsely inhabited vistas of the outer reaches of the 49th state and you've got a pretty clear idea of how *Emotions'* 11 tracks are constructed. These are character sketches from the edge of civilization where the "Sun Don't Shine" for much of the winter and its return ("Lost The Gold") is reason for rejoicing. It's a rugged vision, but there's plenty of beauty to be had if you peer through the haze covering the creatures that Russ Pollard (Sebadoh) and Imaad Wasif (joining Pollard and Lou Barlow as the New Folk Implosion) turn loose. The rough exteriors on some songs, recorded in the wilds of Malibu, California, make them impenetrable at times, so much that a pickaxe is almost needed before the pair's colorful orchestrations can be broken free. The frost disappears in enough spots, though, as when Shon Sullivan's cello pairs with a dual-guitar/two-part-harmony combo on "Rust And Cyanide," or a sleepy-eyed protagonist sings, "I wasn't happy/ I wasn't sad/ It wasn't black/ And it grew clear when the summer came" on "Resistance." As much as lyrics like "You gotta run from the from the modern age, man" ("In My Time") recall the break-free-of-society allure of the wilderness (see Jon Krakauer's *Into The Wild*) *Emotions* isn't the sound of a harsh environment, but one of the intimacy and circumspection it breeds. >>>CHAD SWIATECKI

THE BLOOD GROUP

Volunteers

Le Grand Magistery

It's obvious that things are going to be grim when, not a minute into the Blood Group's full-length debut, vocalist Miss Jessica B sighs, "We're all washed up and that's the looooooooonng of it," dragging out each breath like it's her last. Grim it may be, but it's not washed up by a long shot: *Volunteers* delivers curl-up-and-die-with-a-bottle-of-scotch music for the electronic set, sounding like Portishead stripped of their orchestras and turntables and crammed into a home studio. The Staten Island duo (Jessica B and James Jackson Toth, both on vocals and keys) vacillates between synth washes and no-smoking film noir; "Borrowed Tune" tugs on heartstrings with nothing more than a few widescreen synths, while "Blue Moon #3" wraps Jessica's Julee-Cruise-at-age-12 vocals in moody organs for a perfect *Twin Peaks* feel. Part of the record's strength should be credited to producer DM Seidel, who augments the all-electronic feel of their previous EP, *Everything Forgotten Gathers At The Ceiling*, by bringing in more human elements, occasionally swapping drum machines for live beats and adding touches like the weepy harmonium of "Lately I've Had A Hard Time" or the hurdy-gurdy that graces "Pagans." A few tracks veer into some seriously weird territory—especially the interludes produced by Def Jux cohort NASA Ives, one of which mixes royal fanfare with Residential guitar creaks—but for the most part it's the soundtrack your soon-to-be-slit wrists have been begging for. >>>TOM MALLON



Link

www.magistery.com

File Under

Electric ennui

R.I.Y.L.

Her Space Holiday, Portishead, Depeche Mode, Mono

CALEXICO

Feast Of Wire
Quarterstick



A rusted-out wire fence. Sleeping under a cardboard box while a red clay sunset looms. Town squares so deserted that even the birds have no business there. Southwestern desolation is a longtime theme for Calexico, the Tucson, Arizona roots-rock collective whose sound is as mutable as the border culture it reflects. On the band's latest, *Feast Of Wire*, stark spaghetti-western imagery and lush chamber pop strings combine with Latin rhythms, mariachi trumpets and pedal steel guitars, yielding often beautiful and sometimes unsettling results. "Black Heart" oozes a druggy, Portishead ambiance, while singer Joey Burns warbles about a sinister force that's spreading across the land like an apocalyptic plague. And "Woven Birds" is a lovely, downtrodden waltz about the passing of traditions in a dead-end town. That same hopelessness permeates the break-for-the border, better-life saga of "Across The Wire." But it's not all bleak: The instrumental "Close Behind" is so fun in its over-the-top cinematic way that you can almost see the guy in the black hat gaining on the guy in the white hat; "Attack El Robot! Attack!" is a smoky, sexy cocktail trifle. Sometimes the Esquivel-lounge vibe borders on kitsch, but the courage of the band's convictions dispels any idea of irony. Even if you only hear mariachis on Cinco De Mayo, *Feast Of Wire* is a thrill. >>>MICHELLE KLEINSAK



Link

www.casadecalexico.com

File Under

Pistol-dueling music for urban hipsters

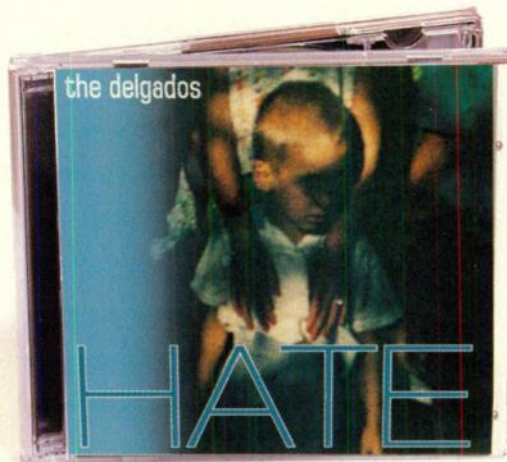
R.I.Y.L.

Giant Sand, Palace, Lambchop

THE DELGADOS

Hate

Beggars Banquet



Link

www.delgados.co.uk

File Under

Grandiose symphonic pop

R.I.Y.L.

Spiritualized, Mercury Rev, the Flaming Lips' *The Soft Bulletin*

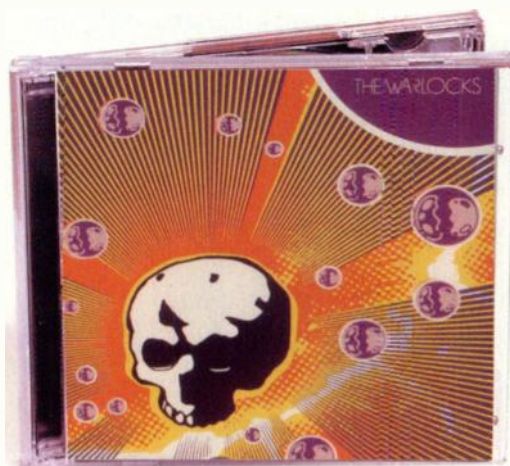
Hate, the fourth album from Scotland's Delgados, opens with a moment of cinematic strings, adds the massed voices of a choir, then crashes into the saturated pounding of tympani before Emma Pollock's lovely voice cuts through the grandiose din. "The Light Before We Land" is a thrilling beginning for an album that matches wide-eyed symphonic pop with dark and bruised lyrics. "All You Need Is Hate" follows suit: Alun Woodward sings "Hate is everywhere/ Look inside your heart and you will find it there," to a chorus worthy of that other band who idealistically claimed love is all you need. As on 2000's *The Great Eastern*, the Delgados work with Tony Doogan (Belle & Sebastian) and Dave Fridmann (Mercury Rev, Flaming Lips), and *Hate* blends moments of quiet reflection with orchestral crescendos, jangly guitars with pizzicato strings, lilting melodies with bombastic choirs. Pollack and Woodward alternate lead vocals throughout the 10 tracks; Pollack tends to search for light in the darkness (the sumptuous "Coming In From The Cold") while Woodward wallows in cynical, blackly humorous pessimism ("Life isn't precious and life isn't sacred," he posits in "The Drowning Years"). If it weren't for the redemptive powers of the dense, exhilarating arrangements, *Hate* would be a hard pill to swallow. As it is, it's a bracing, gorgeous wonder. >>>STEVE KLINGE



THE WARLOCKS

Phoenix Album

Birdman



There have already been two bands in the rock 'n' roll yellow pages listed under "Warlocks": One was the infant Grateful Dead, the other was the earliest incarnation of the Velvet Underground. Coincidence? Not bloody likely. The latter-day Warlocks owe a debt of sonic and narcotic gratitude to both pioneering bands, blurring the distinction between the strung-out city rat and the tripped-out sunchild with jagged Velvet licks and rambling Dead voyages. With four guitarists and two drummers onboard—possibly the result of forgetting to fire people along the way—the Warlocks soak the ether with the enveloping resonance of an electric tidal wave. *The Phoenix Album* sees them drift like an acid-rain cloud from the crunchy tremolo march of "Inside Outside" and the whispering, rootsy SoCal hooks of "Baby Blue," to the Skip Spence-ian mental-patient rock of "Cosmic Letdown" and the 14-minute instrumental climax of "Oh Shadie." It's the next logical step for this California seven-piece (sometimes eight, sometimes five), whose inaugural EP on Birdman earlier this year cemented their status as one of the freshest psychedelic acts this side of Spiritualized. *Phoenix* is the kind of record that makes you feel like you're high—unless of course you already are, in which case you may want to lower the dosage and get to a safe, comforting environment. >>>MATT OSHINSKY

Link

www.thewarlocks.com

File Under

California State Acid Rehab Program

R.I.Y.L.

Spiritualized, Black Rebel

Motorcycle Club, Velvet Underground

DENISON WITMER

Philadelphia Songs

Burnt Toast Vinyl

Denison Witmer is a talented singer/songwriter—that's plain. But he's also a casualty of love, and that's what ultimately makes his music so moving. *Philadelphia Songs*, his third full-length, seems to be meant for a special someone—rather, a former special someone—and no one else. Not that the songs aren't fully realized; they are and beautifully so. But the rainy-day guitars and intensely personal, even confessional lyrics filled with local references make these dour tunes feel like private conversations that the rest of us are eavesdropping on. The tearjerker "Stations," with its crying lap steel and delicate harmonies, asks, "Can you promise me you still love what you loved when you left?" Occasionally, Witmer ratchets up the guitars a notch, as on "Sets Of Keys" and "24 Turned 25," coming off like Duncan Sheik minus the lush orchestration and over-production. But his achingly honest voice is what ultimately carries these expressions of love and longing. The beautiful packaging, filled with coffee table-quality photos of the disc's namesake city adds to the experience. The CD does the same, but not as positively; at only half an hour, the disc has the feeling of a relationship forestalled. *Philadelphia Songs* shows Witmer has mastered musical melancholy, even if the disc's nine songs feel like a tour around the block that leaves you longing for an extended stay. >>>NORM ELROD



Link

www.denisonwitmer.com

File Under

The city of unrequited love

R.I.Y.L.

Don Peris, Elliott Smith,

Duncan Sheik

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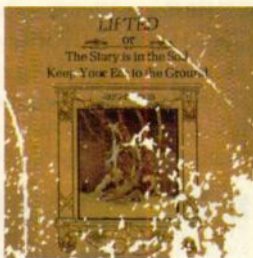
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CD-\$11.00-LBJ-44



THE GOOD LIFE

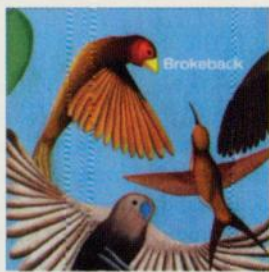
BLACK OUT

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BROKEBACK
Looks At The Bird Thrill Jockey

MICK TURNER
Moth Drag City

If you forget that old critical adage for a moment and allow yourself to judge these albums by their covers, you'll actually get a pretty fair sense of what's happening on the inside as well. The differences in artistic approach are synonymous with each album's musical aesthetic, as they float and flutter above a minimalist post-rock landscape. (Select college students reading this may be eligible for one arts elective credit.)

Those colorful birds in suspended animation on the Brokeback disc (as painted by Sea And Cake bassist Eric Claridge) are rendered in a refined style with clear outlines against a perfect blue sky. The birds are in full flight so there's a sense of freedom here, but there's also a sense of order, even with so many birds in the frame.



Link
www.thrilljockey.com
www.dragcity.com
File Under
High above post-rock
R.I.Y.L.
Chicago Underground Trio,
Dirty Three, Tortoise

Brokeback's guiding forces, Douglas McCombs and Noel Kupersmith, known for their work keeping the low end for Tortoise and Chicago Underground Trio respectively, build up layers of bass, guitar and digitally tweaked percussion with Chicago Undergrounders Chad Taylor (drums) and Rob Mazurek (coronet). With so many improvisers of groove involved, including Tortoise's Jon McEntire, the result is surprisingly refined; each musician still has ample room to breathe. On "Lupé," sparks from Mazurek's coronet cut through the track's jazzy noir undergrowth like flashes of light from above. Laetitia Sadier and Mary Hansen from Stereolab guest on "Name's Winston, Friends Call Me James," adding rounds of wordless coos and aaahs to the mix. Their breathy melodies seem to hang in the air, like feathers aloft in the soft, rhythmic breeze supplied by the hum of organ, bowed double bass and skittering percussion.

The lone moth (we're assuming that's what's lurking in those impasto swirls) on Mick Turner's album is represented in thick, bold strokes, using as few colors as possible. The painting, done by the Dirty Three guitarist himself, has the sort of unedited, one-take approach as each of *Moth's* 19 parts. Turner wants you to hear more than just the strings of his guitar; he wants you to hear the whole beast, see every brush stroke. *Moth* opens with a fragment played on a nylon string guitar, which is scraped and plucked and pounded upon. In doing this, Turner lets you hear the size of the room where he's strumming and shuffling about. And, just in case you haven't gotten it, his dogs bark in the distance. This is not lo-fi for lo-fi's sake; Turner is setting a real mood here, not just scrawling out a D.I.Y. manifesto. Elsewhere, delicate loops of electric and acoustic guitar are often greeted by daubs of piano and melodica. These brief sketches on *Moth* often sound unfinished, ending abruptly or just fizzling out. But on second thought, what else would you add? >>>STEVE CIABATTONI

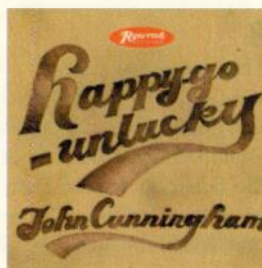


CROC SHOP
World Metropolis

The continued existence of bands like New Brunswick's Croc Shop (formerly Thrill Jockey's Crocodile Shop) essentially explains the difference between a fad and a sub-culture: The cultural face of the gothic-industrial complex seems to be the manifestation of a perpetual subterranean alienation and pointed, interminable outrage at Biff-and-Muffy conformity. Croc Shop, in particular, has survived because they're at once ideologically steadfast and yet able to twist their sound around different beat styles. In fact, the opener/title track sounds like some sort of ominous speed-house,

Link
www.crocshop.com
File Under
Apocalypse...now
R.I.Y.L.
The Faint, Nitzer Ebb,
Alex Proyas films

while "Superficial" and "Gene" possess distinct trance undercurrents. But for classicists, "Generation" and "Blackout" are paradigmatic, minimalist electro-industrial, in the vein of legendary men-machines Nitzer Ebb and Front 242. For fashionability points, on "Try," Croc Shop nicks a riff from Gang Of Four and proceeds to show up current media darlings the Rapture in the disjointed Euro-funk department. Throughout, Mick Hale's morose, fuzzed-up vocals and caustic lyrics are more chilling than engaging, but no one ever said the apocalypse would be pleasant. And as if to castigate the politically bereft torchbearers of the current musical zeitgeist, on "Generation," he implores, "Say something real/ Anything that matters to you." He shouldn't hold his breath. >>>KEN SCRUDATO



JOHN CUNNINGHAM
Happy-Go-Unlucky Parasol

Given just two notes of his parlor piano and lilting voice, it's easy to identify John Cunningham's country of origin (England) and favorite band (the Beatles, circa *Magical Mystery Tour*). His fondness for Britain's music hall tradition, with its jaunty keyboards and muted string and brass accompaniment, yields gems in the "Penny Lane" vein, while his guitar compositions draw upon "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds" and "Dear Prudence." The less derivative and uncharacteristically peppy standout "You Shine" even cribs lyrics from "We Can Work It Out," a seeming wink that Cunningham's in on the joke. Despite such hero worship, the

Link
www.parasol.com
File Under
Beatles-influenced British
eccentricity
R.I.Y.L.
Rufus Wainwright, Robert Wyatt,
Harry Nilsson, Scott Walker

impression left by *Happy-Go-Unlucky* isn't one of a shameless imitator, but rather of an addition to a vaunted line of eccentric British songsmiths like Syd Barrett and Robert Wyatt (whose voice Cunningham's closely resembles). Scuff up a vinyl copy of this disc and it could easily be pawned off as a misplaced artifact of the early-'70s U.K. art-folk revival, filed alongside a musically bouncier (but no less lyrically despondent) Nick Drake. Cunningham can pen a decent tune in his own right, and his mini-orchestral arrangements provide the ideal finishing touch. He particularly soars on "It Isn't Easy," where a pedestrian acoustic stroll gives way to an unhinged jam with a psychotic string section. Avoid the distractions of the all-too-obvious influences, and *Happy-Go-Unlucky* offers plenty of melancholy bliss. >>>GLEN SARVADY

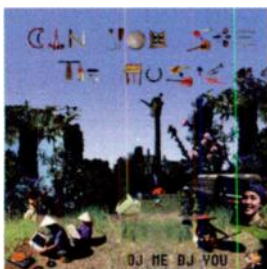


VARIOUS ARTISTS

The Detroit Experiment Ropeadope

The Detroit Experiment is a misnomer—the album is actually a case study. Following up the acclaimed *Philadelphia Experiment*, the folks at Ropeadope records have again paired a gaggle of musicians with roots in jazz (many of them session musicians) and a sonically unrelated remixer, in this case Carl Craig, who shares production duties with Ace Levinson and Karriem Riggins, to see what happens when sounds collide. While nothing can regain the tempered heights of the record's first track, "Think Twice," which recalls an organic rendition of

the early '80s boogie that Metro Area channel, there's plenty of fun to be had. "Space Odyssey" tips its hi-hats to the retro-futurism of its title, its pianos, agitated trumpets and frustrated drums pushed even further back to the future via chunky vintage keyboard sounds. In so doing, the song realizes the kind of cosmic jazz-analog fusion that Air once hinted at. The cover of Stevie Wonder's "Too High" strips everything down but the original's raw funk, and features a toasted vocal that's as convincing as Stevie himself. That track is one of two on which the instruments don't do all of the singing; the second is the record's concluding track, "The Way We Make Music," featuring an adequate MC job by Invincible. The further genre-breeding is unconvincing, but ultimately unnecessary too—*The Detroit Experiment* packs in enough truly provocative discord already. >>>RICHARD M. JUZWIAK



DJ ME DJ YOU

Can You See The Music Eenie Meenie

Hipster Los Angeles duo DJ Me DJ You—Craig Borrell and former child actor Ross Harris—sound like they discovered disco in 1988. They're so enthralled with their thin, programmable dance rhythms on *Can You See The Music*, their second full-length, that they let them ramble on and on with little in the way of counterpoint. Sometimes this general sense of self-satisfaction works to their advantage, trading tedium for hypnosis. "New You" starts off with a trebly guitar figure that recalls Antillean zouk or Congolese soukous but winds

up getting looped into the blissful, high-end stratosphere. And "Zodiac Ape" programs in some rubbery counter-rhythms to reinforce their on-the-one. But most of the rest is kitschy, bottom-deficient sampladelia. Whenever the beat slows down to trip-hop tempos, it's timestretching in the very worst sense—4:35 of "Fembot" seems like an eternity. And anyone who can further attenuate Alexander Robotnik's fuzz-dance classic "Problemes d'Amour," on a virtual remake called "Can You See," probably needs a blood transfusion. As with the new wave of new wavers and the countless electroclashers coming to an art gallery near you, DJ Me DJ You embrace irony and camp but never earn them as essential forms of communication—yet another reminder that a wink works best when hiding a tear. >>>KEVIN JOHN

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BAXTER DURY 

Len Parrot's Memorial Lift Rough Trade

Despite the fact that Baxter Dury is the son of late British punk hero and Blockhead leader Ian, it would be a mistake to attribute the masterful depth of this record to anyone other than Baxter himself. Sure, familial connections may have helped him make such acquaintances as Portishead's Geoff Barrow and Adrian Utley, Pulp's Richard Hawley and, obviously, the Blockheads' Norman Watt-Roy, all of whom contribute to the disc, but musically, Baxter unwinds in a swirling world of string-drenched folktronica that his more riled-up dad would likely have looked on just as a nice place to visit. Baxter's chosen mode of

vocal expression is a wistful falsetto, delivering hazy melodies that waver between subtle lullabies and the kind of mournful lament that's so alluring in its sadness, it becomes uplifting. Opener "Beneath The Underdog," with its sly bassline and effects-drenched backing vocals (courtesy of collaborator Joanne Hussey, who guests on a number of tracks) could actually be a Portishead tune, while lead single "Oscar Brown" is akin to Wayne Coyne fronting the Velvet Underground (from whose "Oh! Sweet Nuthin'" the chorus liberally borrows). The highlight, however, is the gloriously understated "Fungus Hedge," a quietly affecting acoustic-folk number that revels in the somber refrain, "I can't feel the pain"—given the welcome numbing effect of Dury's aural anesthetics, that's hardly a surprise. >>>DOUG LEVY

[Link](#)

www.roughtraderecords.com/baxter_dury.html

[File Under](#)

Sad and numb and rock 'n' roll
R.I.Y.L.

The Flaming Lips, Portishead,
John Lennon



THE EXIES 

Inertia Virgin

As a thousand mid-'90s alt-rock castoffs will tell you, angst can be a cruel muse in the wrong hands. The right touch of plaintive yearning can top off a churning love song like a cherry on a sundae, but use too much or too little and you come off as either a disingenuous trendmonger or just a real downer. *Inertia* begins by diving straight into overkill with the overzealous guitar grinding and treated vocals of singer Scott Stevens on "My Goddess" and continues with the Stabbing Westward-esque gnashing of "Without." A sense of gloom pervades

several tracks that would have gotten the flannel-clad, backward-ball-cap set rocking circa '94, but sound awfully contrived these days. But elsewhere, Stevens's always misadjusted lyrics ("My empathy still makes me feel alive/ Suffering is always on my mind"; "I'm just a special effect to you lately/ Am I nothing that's real to you?") get hit with a refreshing dose of sunshine that makes the songs not only tolerable, but downright refreshing. On standouts like the ambling title track and the slow-building, string-heavy lament of "Creeper Kamikaze," the band's restraint lets the pain in Stevens's words resonate more than a stage full of distortion effects pedals ever could. Therein lies the key to *Inertia's* scattered successes: When it lets its guard down there's a lot here to like, even if there's not much to love. >>>CHAD SWIATECKI

[Link](#)

www.theexies.com

[File Under](#)

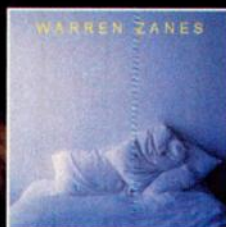
Lo-frills, hi-alt rock crunch
R.I.Y.L.

The Verve Pipe, Foo Fighters,
the mid '90s

"A THING OF INDIE-POP BEAUTY..." ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY GIVES IT AN A

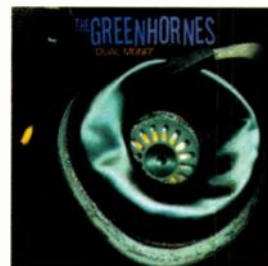
THE LONG AWAITED DEBUT FROM
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THE GREENHORNES 

Dual Mono Telstar

None of the four members of Cincinnati's the Greenhornes were alive when Spencer Davis Group released *I'm a Man* in 1967. That doesn't stop the fuzz-drenched guitars and worn R&B croon of frontman Craig Fox from feeling completely authentic, though. While borrowing heavily from the sound of the British Invasion and '60s garage-rock, the Greenhornes manage to emerge with a style of their own on *Dual Mono*. The songs range from straight-up garage romps ("The Way It's Meant To Be") to slow-burning R&B anthems ("Too Much Sorrow"). The

band nixed the organ that was omnipresent on their previous, self-titled LP, replacing it with occasional, sparse plinks of harpsichord. Producer John Curley keeps the sound raw, pushing the dirty guitar sound to the front of the mix to capture the vital, live energy that defines the Greenhornes raw brand of rock 'n' roll. Lead Headcoatee Holly Golightly contributes her distinct, smoky lead vocals to two tracks, most affectingly on the Nancy Sinatra-esque soul-ballad "There Is An End." It is ultimately Fox's Steve Winwood-meets-Jim Morrison vocal style, however, that carries *Dual Mono* to the front of the crowded pack of garage-rock revivalists, leaving countless style-over-substance pretenders in the dust. >>>ALEX NAIDUS

[Link](#)

www.greenhornes.com

[File Under](#)

Rowdy rock 'n' roll revivalists
R.I.Y.L.

Spencer Davis Group, the
Kinks, the Von Bondies

 ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD • R.I.Y.L. - RECOMMENDED IF YOU LIKE



HOMUNCULUS

Words *Howling*

On old show fliers, Homunculus used to bill themselves as the bastard sons of Frank Zappa, the Beatles and Talking Heads. They even lived up to such high-fallutin' claims with their quirky compositions, sharp hooks and energetic delivery. Those basic elements remain today, but evolution has led this Cincinnati-based foursome more toward the graceful, lasting sound of Billy Joel, in a Ben Folds-cool kinda way. *Words*, the group's second stab at a third studio effort (reconfigured and remastered for re-release), showcases

Link

www.homunculture.com

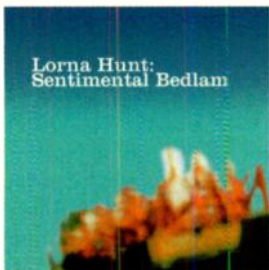
File Under

Quirk du soleil

R.I.Y.L.

Ben Folds Five, moe., Guster

this range of influences. It revels in stylistic shifts between the band's two distinct Type-A songwriters, playfully bizarre Ben Doepke (keyboards) and thoughtfully searching Kevin Shima (guitar). What unites them—the bandmates as well as the songs—is a combination of reliable beats, bouncy basslines and clever lyricism propelled by precise vocal harmonies. At least that explains the coexistence of a surreal opening line like, "Stargazing from the bathroom, naked astronaut" ("Stargazing"), with the more classically poetic, "A white dove flutters, a willow's weeping" ("When Sheila Dances"). Furthermore, there's "Deep South Beach," a percussive Latin funk groove that, even for this band, seems to come from out of nowhere. Truly, Homunculus write catchy, smart pop songs. But, as the previously released "Okay" proves with its unnecessarily rewritten lyrics, sometimes they can be too memorable for their own good. >>>ROBIN A. ROTHMAN



LORNA HUNT

Sentimental Bedlam *Hunk*

Anyone who writes a song about a character from a Sophocles play is asking for a serious listen. Lorna Hunt's tune "Antigone," the first track on *Sentimental Bedlam*, begins with a singsong guitar riff that eventually grows positively menacing; near the end of the tune, when Antigone's suicide triggers a horrible cascade of death, we can hear the insect-like buzzing of the Fates. The song is brilliant because Hunt thoroughly gets the weight of her source. "Antigone" is a giant clue to the depth of her talent, and the remaining 12 songs on the

Link

www.lornahunt.com

File Under

A woman who owns her bedlam

R.I.Y.L.

Rickie Lee Jones,

Ani DiFranco, Patty Larkin

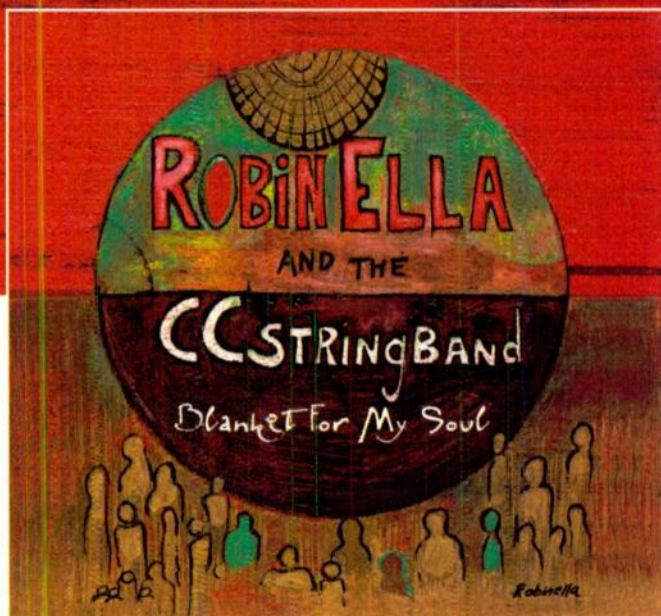
record affirm this vibe. There's nothing monochromatic about Hunt's world, either. She offers a genuine love song on "Shift (Beautiful)," complete with the observation, "I never thought I'd want a man/ For the color of his blood." Indeed, romance figures prominently in several of Hunt's tunes. It may manifest itself primarily via a sort of perverse, shadowy lust, as on "Priapus"—here drawing on Roman mythology for inspiration—or via a simple, gentle lyric, as with "Wild Balloon." Hunt's outstanding songwriting is matched by the fine arrangements she's devised with producer Dave Willey. Literate songwriting is the singer/songwriter's holy grail, and Hunt is definitely in the quest. >>>PHILIP VAN VLECK

ROBINELLA AND THE CCSTRINGBAND

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[Robinella's] soprano voice has a quality to it that stops you in your tracks."

- Knoxville Metro Pulse



The debut EP with an inventive mix of bluegrass, swing, jazz, gospel and country music from a band voted "Best Bluegrass Group" (3 years in row) in their hometown of Knoxville.

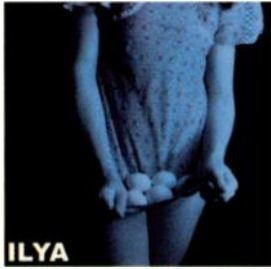
www.columbiarecords.com

www.robinella.com

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Management Jennifer Stark for Rocko and Me music



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ILYA

Poise Is The Greater Architect Ilya

Sometimes the softest touch can pierce deeper than the hardest pressure. Like a never-ceasing drizzle chilling your skin, it's impossible to ignore the unyielding power behind the tender-but-insistent energy of Ilya. On *Poise Is The Greater Architect*, their debut full-length, they lay out soft energy reminiscent of Björk, minus the skittish neuroses and hyper-balladry that have occasionally derailed her recent work. Instead, Ilya comes quiet and straightforward. A tinkling piano meanders gracefully through the background, juxtaposing the natural tensions found in the progression of low-key guitar hums and occasional trip-hop beats. With hardly a waver in the crystalline vocals of Blanca Rojas, they bring deep-rooted intensity out of the darkness and moody ambience of their downbeat shoegazer pop. Never too loud to be threatening, but just loud enough to make the hairs on your arm stand on end (with a few exceptions, notably the prodding electro-buzz of "Isola"), Rojas sing-speaks her way through the tracks in hushed tones, emoting on the universal mind-benders of "solitude and self-destruction." Armed only with longing and fragility, Ilya chips away at the most tender of emotions with an unsettling yet captivating lightness, digging into the human psyche with subdued anguish. >>>ROBBIE CHAPLUCK

Link

www.ilyamusic.com

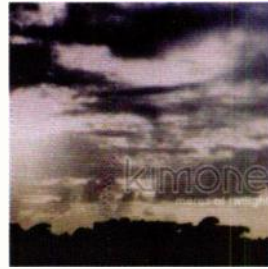
File Under

Drowsy ballads

R.I.Y.L.

Portishead, Björk, the Black Heart Procession

sions found in the progression of low-key guitar hums and occasional trip-hop beats. With hardly a waver in the crystalline vocals of Blanca Rojas, they bring deep-rooted intensity out of the darkness and moody ambience of their downbeat shoegazer pop. Never too loud to be threatening, but just loud enough to make the hairs on your arm stand on end (with a few exceptions, notably the prodding electro-buzz of "Isola"), Rojas sing-speaks her way through the tracks in hushed tones, emoting on the universal mind-benders of "solitude and self-destruction." Armed only with longing and fragility, Ilya chips away at the most tender of emotions with an unsettling yet captivating lightness, digging into the human psyche with subdued anguish. >>>ROBBIE CHAPLUCK



KIMONE

Meres Of Twilight Silverthree

A cursory review of Kimone's *Meres Of Twilight* reveals all the elements necessary to become an emo sensation: fluttering, melodic guitars, dramatic vocals and production by none other than the ubiquitous J. Robbins (Burning Airlines, Dismemberment Plan). But while many of Robbins' more notable projects are marked by angular tones and an infectious nervous energy, this Boston five-piece displays a penchant for calming, melodic excursions that are often stirring but rarely spill over. Although comparisons to Radiohead and Sigur Rós may be overexaggerating, the sound of Kimone is beautiful and delicate, complete with occasional moments of atmospheric textures not unlike the aforementioned imports. "In The Warmth Of Meanings Redefined" opens the album with a subdued but compelling stop-start rhythm over which singer Tim Den provides a simple, plaintive melody for a positively soaring effect. Elsewhere, "Earthing" and "Shipwright" gracefully roll along like Owls on Ritalin, and "We Will Write" finds the band letting its collective hair down with pounding drums and a driving, fuzzed-out bassline. But even with many a lush string arrangement behind them, Kimone aims for the heavens and falls several miles short. The best of *Meres* is encouraging enough that this goal is not out of reach—the next record should be interesting. In the meantime, Kimone provides a dreamy soundtrack to the twilight hours. >>>JASON KUNDRATH

Link

www.kimone.com

File Under

Twilight singers

R.I.Y.L.

American Football, Radiohead, Owls

sound of Kimone is beautiful and delicate, complete with occasional moments of atmospheric textures not unlike the aforementioned imports. "In The Warmth Of Meanings Redefined" opens the album with a subdued but compelling stop-start rhythm over which singer Tim Den provides a simple, plaintive melody for a positively soaring effect. Elsewhere, "Earthing" and "Shipwright" gracefully roll along like Owls on Ritalin, and "We Will Write" finds the band letting its collective hair down with pounding drums and a driving, fuzzed-out bassline. But even with many a lush string arrangement behind them, Kimone aims for the heavens and falls several miles short. The best of *Meres* is encouraging enough that this goal is not out of reach—the next record should be interesting. In the meantime, Kimone provides a dreamy soundtrack to the twilight hours. >>>JASON KUNDRATH



LADDIO BOLOCKO

The Life And Times Of No Quarter

Imagine Brian Eno wandering into a studio with Can and Don Caballero, the lot of them crafting drones and textures, sounds that swirl in circles, stop in one place and then flit the opposite way. Horns that arc like whale calls and guitar bleats like sirens, beats that are too complex to be human but too graceful to be a machine. Picture all those things knotted into a sonic tapestry that's jarring and mesmerizing at the same time, beautiful and confusing, comforting but somehow unsettling. You'd be approaching what Laddio Bolocko created over their short lifespan, but not quite doing it justice. The New York quartet formed in the late '90s and split in 2001, releasing three discs you'd likely have come across only if you saw the band live. Which, anyone who did will attest, was akin to walking in on the Aurora Borealis captured within the walls of a dive bar—beautiful, captivating and wonderfully overwhelming. Laddio never quite got their transcendent live experience onto tape, but *The Life And Times Of* hints enough. Be thankful that Philadelphia label No Quarter has collected these releases (and as-yet-unreleased short film "As If By Remote"), and given this music one last chance to be heard. Altered states suit it best, but Laddio's music essentially provides its own headtrip. >>>NICOLE KEIPER

Link

www.noquarter.net

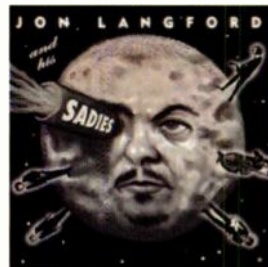
File Under

Blissful insanity

R.I.Y.L.

Can, Brian Eno, Trans Am, Pink Floyd at their most complex

lifespan, but not quite doing it justice. The New York quartet formed in the late '90s and split in 2001, releasing three discs you'd likely have come across only if you saw the band live. Which, anyone who did will attest, was akin to walking in on the Aurora Borealis captured within the walls of a dive bar—beautiful, captivating and wonderfully overwhelming. Laddio never quite got their transcendent live experience onto tape, but *The Life And Times Of* hints enough. Be thankful that Philadelphia label No Quarter has collected these releases (and as-yet-unreleased short film "As If By Remote"), and given this music one last chance to be heard. Altered states suit it best, but Laddio's music essentially provides its own headtrip. >>>NICOLE KEIPER



JON LANGFORD AND HIS SADIES

Mayors Of The Moon Bloodshot

If you could go back before the birth of country-rock—way before Gram Parsons donned his first Nudie suit—and imagine the whole cowboy-meets-Elvis thing going in a different direction, then you might have a starting point for describing *Mayors Of The Moon* by Jon Langford And His Sadies. Langford, who has more than dabbled in the country-western arena with the Mekons dating back to 1985's *Fear And Whiskey* and, more recently, his punk-country outfits the Waco Brothers and the Pine Valley Cosmonauts, makes another cozy home for himself with Bloodshot Records labelmates the

Link

www.bloodshotrecords.com

File Under

Yet another kind of country music

R.I.Y.L.

Waco Brothers, Neko Case, Waylon Jennings

Sadies. Lacking the subtle ironic distance that permeates most hip-minded country acts, these boys unabashedly rip through 12 songs that could make a whippoorwill smile in little over half an hour. From pedal steel-drenched toe-tappers to barn-house burners that make you want to reach for a bottle of sour mash, the songs sail with an easy sincerity. Langford's husky yet tender vocals, cloaked in that clouded Welsh accent, hover poignantly over arrangements deftly executed by the Sadies, whose instrumental prowess is beyond reproach. From softly strummed acoustics to rockabilly licks, there's nothing this band can't tackle. With work as accomplished as this, one can only hope Langford and the Sadies will meet again—until then, *Mayors Of The Moon* will do nicely. >>>KARL WACHTER

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World Radio History





BOB LOG III

Log Bomb Fat Possum

One has to reserve a certain admiration for anyone who plays bass drum, cymbals and slide guitar all at once, performs in a motorcycle helmet and processes his vocals via telephone mics. Bob Log III is just such a person, if not the *only* person who fits that description—regardless, the admiration is warranted. On this, his third solo album, Log comes on strong, resembling a latter-day, percussion-enhanced, over-amped busker from the 1930s Delta. If anyone ever deserved a permanent street corner locale on Memphis's Beale Street, it's

Log. His music is inspired by Delta blues, his attitude by Black Flag. *Log Bomb* is a sustained, frantic blast of elemental blues broken into individual tracks for what appears to be the listener's sake, as it only pauses long enough to introduce the band (i.e., his left foot, his right foot). It's surely an acquired taste, but his music is a buzz and his performance art a corrective for all those who suffer stage fright, are dogged by feelings of inadequacy or practice the guitar too much. Bob Log III also boogies like hell. Cue up "F-Hole Parade" or "Wag Your Tail Like A Dog In The Back Of A Truck" and feel the love. >>>PHILIP VAN VLECK

Link
www.boblog111.com
File Under
Log man boogie
R.I.Y.L.
CeDell Davis, Junior
Kimbrough, T-Model Ford



JESSE MALIN

The Fine Art Of Self Destruction Artemis

Jesse Malin, former D Generation frontman, wanted to get out from under the burden of punk-rock expectations: "We'd try to write these songs, and people would just talk about the hair and the shoes." His latest solo record, *The Fine Art Of Self Destruction*, will leave D Generation fans wondering what the hell happened and everyone else picking their jaws up off the floor. With a little twang, this album, featuring Ryan Adams on guitar and vocals and Melissa Auf der Maur on backing vocals, would've been the best whiskey-soaked, countrified rock 'n' roll

record to come down the dirt road since Uncle Tupelo packed it in. But the only dirt roads in New York are the product of jackhammers, so any twang is supplanted by the city's indigenous grit. The songs are scrappy and immediate, which makes sense since Adams, who also produced, captured many of them in one take. The vocals swing from lazy to urgent, always oozing with the conviction of someone who feels every single moment. Likewise the guitars, which cut through the songs like a rusty knife through tender skin. "Queen Of The Underworld," a ballsier take on the Jayhawks, and "Brooklyn," with its hidden reprise that comes drenched in dirty noise, are particularly impressive. As improbable as it seems, nothing's lacking on Malin's genre-shift of a solo outing. >>>NORM ELROD

Link
www.jessemalin.com
File Under
Re-Generation
R.I.Y.L.
Jay Farrar, Ryan Adams,
Pete Yorn

DENISONWITMER PHILADELPHIA SONGS



On Philadelphia Songs, Denison Witmer paints a haunting and beautiful picture of memories, people, and places. The album features a host of guest musicians and Philadelphians, as well as members of The Six Parts Seven (Suicide Squeeze Records). Philadelphia Songs, his third full-length, was recorded in Philadelphia at home by friend Scott French and at Soundgun studios by Edan Cohen (Songs: Ohia, Jim & Jenny & the Pinetops).

The instrumentation is rich and deep, adding an ambient feel to Witmer's songs that has not been fully explored until this album. From the nostalgic romanticism of "Sets of Keys" to the heart-breaking "24 turned 25" to the MiniDisc hotel piano field recording on "St. Cecilia (Ode to Music)," the words and sounds form a tapestry that reflects Philadelphia from Denison's point of view.

Other albums by Denison Witmer :::
(Safe Away, River Bends, The 80's ep, of joy & sorrow)



Other Releases :::



Circle of Birds ::: s/t cdep/10" these songs are highly melodic, cinematic, and fragile, serving as a snapshot of the weekend recording session featuring members of Unwed Sailor, Ester Drang, and Lasso. the result is a spectacular instrumental ep that combines the airy, orchestrated sounds of Ester Drang with the energetic indie approach of Unwed Sailor and just a hint of cowboy inspired country aesthetic from Lasso members. the recordings were carefully mixed by Pedro the Lion's David Bazan and Johnathon Ford.

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JOHNNY MARR + THE HEALERS

Boomslang ARTISTdirect

When the Smiths called it quits in 1987, there was reason to believe that guitarist Johnny Marr would fare at least as well as frontman Morrissey. But it was Morrissey who picked up where the Smiths left off musically, leaving Marr, primary architect of the band's distinct sound, to fade into the background as a glorified session man with the likes of the Pretenders and Bryan Ferry. Indeed, until now, Marr's highest profile post-Smiths gig was Electronic, a rather bland collaboration with New Order's Bernard Sumner. So Boomslang, Marr's first full-length as a full-fledged

bandleader/frontman, is almost 15 years overdue: It even embraces the guitar-driven psychedelic pop that dominated Manchester circa 1989, when Stone Roses emerged to inherit the Smiths' legacy as England's most important band. Backed by Ringo's son Zak Starkey on drums and Kula Shaker bassist Alonso Beavan, Marr puts his guitar front and center in some of the more straightforward rock tunes he's written since the Smiths. The trippy groove of a tune like "You Are The Magic" is ideal for Marr to work his own brand of studio magic, layering acoustic and electric guitars of various textures. But, as good as it is to hear Marr's guitar again, Morrissey is sorely missed, as Boomslang's vocals are woefully generic, with little substance to grab hold of in the lyrics. >>>MATT ASHARE

Link
www.johnnymarr.com
File Under
Too little, too late
R.I.Y.L.
The Smiths, Electronic,
Stone Roses

ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD • R.I.Y.L. - RECOMMENDED IF YOU LIKE

OUNT ERIE

THE MICROPHONES

Mount Eerie K

Lo-fi psychedelic psychotic Phil Elvrum ("known" for work with K Records ramshackle-rock bands like D+ and Old Time Relijun) loves the organic noises of the subconscious, from tape hiss to heartbeat. His fifth-or-so record as the Microphones (a five-part epic so grand that two of the songs are named "Universe") revels in these sounds, burying loping indie-rock chants under groaning bargain-base-ment sprawl. There may be some songs in there too, if you're patient enough to seek them out. The first 10 minutes of "The Sun" are indebted to the clang-and-jangle of early-'90s Olympia, but somehow channels the production-hermit noise-fuckery of industrial wonks like Nurse With Wound. Tribal ultra-distorted drums float about like a naïve, rattleshack, post-Beat Happening version of Cabaret Voltaire—and then Elvrum turns super-tender, stripped-down and out-of-tune, accompanied by mysterious noises. Like Bright Eyes with a no-fi budget, Elvrum sets his sights high and his concepts higher. As quick to create quiet as storm, "Solar System" is a gentle acousti-fuzz ballad guided by disembodied voices and "Universe" (um, the first one), is its tripped-out buddy armed with drum freakouts. Elvrum's bright eyes are bigger than his budget, but as the errant bells jingle and the inscrutable fuzz drips from the title track, you know that he wouldn't have it any other way. >>>CHRISTOPHER R. WEINGARTEN

Link

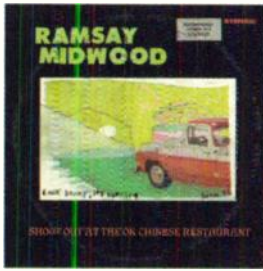
www.kreecs.com/microphones

File Under

Hi-fi lo-fi

R.I.Y.L.

Neutral Milk Hotel, *In A Priest*
Driven Ambulance-era Flaming
Lips, Mirah



RAMSAY MIDWOOD

Shoot Out At The OK Chinese Restaurant

Vanguard

It's a fortunate thing for Stateside music fans that Vanguard picked up *Shoot Out At The OK Chinese Restaurant*, first released by the German label Glitterhouse in 2000, because Ramsay Midwood is a significant talent. He's written a batch of rugged tunes for *Shoot Out*—material that possesses a natural twang that we've come to identify as elemental to the Americana sound. Songs such as "Monster Truck" and the lone traditional piece "Dreary Life" share a populist sensibility with Depression-era folk music, though most of the tunes on the album come across at a more personal level. "Feed My Monkey," "Esther" and "Waynesboro" all have an intimate, even bitter, quality to them, driven home by the tenuous backwoods tremble of Midwood's vocals. "Alligator's Lament" and "Heaven's Toll," on the other hand, seem to be assaying the daydreams of the semi-deranged neck mind. One of the most rewarding aspects of *Shoot Out* is Midwood's songwriting. He's a storyteller with a keen sense of character. He can create a voice as choleric as what we hear in "Waynesboro," and then track a tune that's just plain funny—"Spinnin' On This Rock"—or unapologetically sentimental, as with "Esther." Though late in coming to these shores, Midwood's is one of the most distinctive Americana CDs of the year. >>>PHILIP VAN VLECK

Link

www.vanguardrecords.com/ramsaymidwood

File Under

Choice Americana

(via Deutschland)

R.I.Y.L.

Tom Waits, Jim White,

Lonesome Bob

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OPEN HAND THE DREAM
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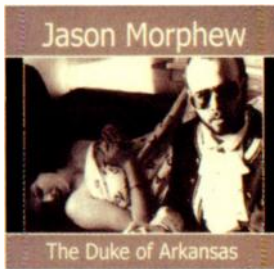
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THE SATELLITE YEARS

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VANITY

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JASON MORPHEW

The Duke Of Arkansas Ba Da Bing!

This record's title notwithstanding, duke might not be the best title in the kingdom of modern tormented singer-songwriters to bestow upon Jason Morphew. Not that he's unworthy of sitting with the kings (Ryan Adams, Elliott Smith) or princes (Bens Folds and Kweller) but it's just that Morphew's crown won't sit quite right atop that jester's hat he won't take off. Adept at whatever he tries, Morphew gets distracted by the musical possibilities before him—think of a child running amok at a post-Holiday toy sale—and lets his muse skip from

fuzzy rockers to twang to "Psychedelia," as one track thoughtfully titles itself. But things never seem insincere, and humor, both overt and subtle, plays a key role in tying the genre shuffling together. Some explorations work better than others—while a handful are too quirky to let his exuberance shine through, Morphew rivals Adams or Robbie Fulks for alt-country breeziness. Even when he sounds sullen and sings "Once I loved a girl and her parents thought I was a hippie/ I wore motorcycle boots and I played in a punk rock band" on "The Living End," there's a confidence that suggests that Morphew belongs in the royal court. >>>CHAD SWIATECKI

Link

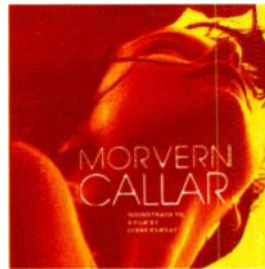
www.jasonmorphew.com

File Under

World-weary wiseass

R.I.Y.L.

They Might Be Giants, Ben Folds, Ben Lee



VARIOUS ARTISTS

Morvern Callar Soundtrack Warp

Alan Warner is there with Irvine Welsh in the pantheon of young Scottish writers. As with Welsh's *Trainspotting*, music is a vital part of both the book and film of *Morvern Callar*, though his setting of the Port on the county's West coast is much bleaker in every way than Welsh's grittily glam Edinburgh. The music here comes in the form of a tape left by the title character's dead boyfriend (who also manages to leave her a substantial sum of money and a manuscript). Putting it on an album, divorced from visuals and text, though, is much chancier—can it work alone?

For the most part, the answer's yes. Moods are built up, shattered and changed. After tracks by Can, Aphex Twin, Stereolab and Boards of Canada establish a feel, the Velvet Underground's "I'm Sticking With You" appears like a demented children's ditty; later, "Some Velvet Morning," the Lee Hazlewood and Nancy Sinatra duet, almost aches with longing coming after a bit of Lee "Scratch" Perry aural madness. The only misstep is the inclusion of Ween's "Japanese Cowboy"—it's played too straight for a tale that lives close to the edge. Even then, a return to ambience with former Can bassist Holger Czukay and more Aphex Twin manages to more or less correct the balance. Sometimes curiously beautiful, sometimes unnerving, this soundtrack captures the off-center line of the story. And that's a rare thing. >>>CHRIS NICKSON

Link

www.warprecords.com/morvernallar

File Under

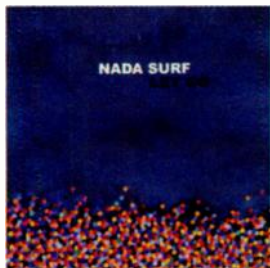
What to listen to in West

Scotland when you're dead

R.I.Y.L.

Krautrock, ambient,

a challenge



NADA SURF

Let Go Barsuk

As far as grunge-era unintentional novelty smashes go, I'll take Nada Surf's "Popular" over "Lump," "New Age Girl" or "Cumbersome" 365 days in a row, and once more on leap year. "Popular" progenitor *High/Low* and this latest, third LP from Nada Surf, are both exercises in right-angle power pop, yet have as much fraternal kinship as Bill and Roger Clinton. Weezer-enabling *High/Low* producer Ric Ocasek is in the rearview, and with him the Kurt-coined clean channel/fuzzbox dynamic that once dominated the Surf. Drum-free opener "Blizzard Of 77" (excellent title, especially to we survivors of Buffalo,

N.Y.) shimmers with grand acoustic presence. Bassist Daniel Lorca has conceded much of the vocal onus to guitarist Matthew Caws, and shines in the background. The revised attack falls somewhere in the coy-boy gamut between Death Cab For Cutie and, um, Gin Blossoms. And that's fine. "Hi-Speed Soul," "Fruit Fly" and "Happy Kid" accelerate admirably, the latter with a boisterous suckerpunch of a chorus that automatically trumps the band's back catalog. Caws's self-assessment is dead-on: "I'm just a happy kid stuck with the heart of a sad punk." This phase of Nada Surf isn't a Level One, Beck/Radiohead phenomenon (i.e. unforeseen, incredible transcendence of zeitgeist-capturing alt-rock), but definitely a work in laudable progress. >>>ANDREW BONAZELLI

Link

www.nadasurf.com

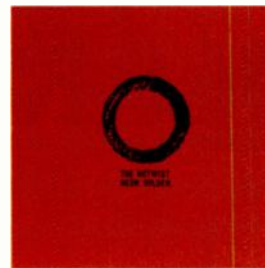
File Under

'90s one-hit wonder gets

Lennon-esque

R.I.Y.L.

Old 97's, Jawbox, Weezer



THE NOTWIST

Neon Golden Domino

The American release of *Neon Golden* provides a sonic example of the difference two years can make. When Germany's the Notwist originally issued it overseas during the first half of 2001, listeners and critics filed it most easily under IDM, thanks to producer Martin Gretschmann's (Console) asymmetric beats and love of all things glitchy. The electronics propelling the pop heart of the band suggested a hybrid that New Order could approach, if only they weren't so old-fashioned. Then came a return of the dance, as electronic music was

saturated with electroclash—which suggested that being old-fashioned was just fine—and microhouse. Now *Neon Golden* can truly be seen as the anomaly that it is: a rock and electronic hybrid that looks forward instead of back. The album's occasional clash of straightforward disco and rock is best heard in the gem "Pilot," which takes off like its titular character and sails on a sublime melody sung by Markus Acher. Acher's feyness immediately recalls Belle & Sebastian's Stuart Murdoch, and indeed, the Notwist's songwriting is as good as that Scottish band's early work. Acher's vocals add to an album that's so warm, it's beckoning to be embraced. Taken out of the context they never really asked to be in anyway, the Notwist only sound better. >>>RICHARD M. JUZWIAK

Link

www.notwist.com

File Under

Tech that knows no boundaries

R.I.Y.L.

Oval, Lali Puna, Belle & Sebastian, Console



OPETH

Deliverance Koch

Atmospheric, brooding, wintery in tone: Opeth's sixth album may eclipse its predecessor, the highly acclaimed *Blackwater Park*, for sheer musical breadth. Most of *Deliverance* hews to operatic black metal's soaring symphonic progressions and flighty blast-beat drumming, with some death metal Cookie Monster vocals growling beneath. But at critical points, Opeth's epic, 10-plus-minute songs snowdrift into airy Floyd-esque ambience, acoustic European folkisms and jazzy-prog time shifts (the latter a tendency that has served Tool quite well). And

it's during these fluid structural shifts that Mikael Åkerfeldt's vocal gifts open up. Not simply a machine-stamped growler, Åkerfeldt uses a voice that's an airier cousin to Layne Staley's more pastoral moments to great effect. It adds leagues of depth to music that otherwise grows weary of its own chugging heaviness, or by turns, its lengthy, prog-rock soloing and tempo wizardry. *Deliverance* is dark without devolving to cartoonish black magic, heavy without overkill, introspective without self-conscious navel-gazing. Opeth are truly masterful instrumentalists, with a deft ear for composition and dynamics ranging from Alpine heights to moshpit-level mayhem. *Deliverance* delivers precisely what its title promises, and it's best absorbed as a whole, front to back. >>>PATRICK KENNEDY

Link

www.opeth.com

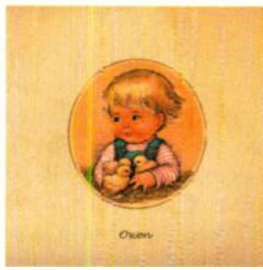
File Under

Progressive black metal

R.I.Y.L.

Emperor, Tool, Amorphis,

Dark Tranquillity



OWEN

No Good For No One Now Polyvinyl

On "Everyone Feels Like You," Mike Kinsella sings, "In time you'll find that needing things/ Only kills you slowly." So to escape a slow death, he used his entire recording budget to build his own home studio, turning Owen into a "solo" project in a very literal sense: Not only did Kinsella (ex-American Football) play every instrument and sing every note on Owen's second album, *No Good For No One Now*, he also wrote, produced, recorded and mixed each track single-handedly. The resulting album is a deeply personal and powerful collection of

hushed acoustic works that reflects the solitude in which it was created. In a particularly stark and bitter moment on "The Ghost Of What Should've Been," he sings, "What else in this fucking empty room/ Reminds me of fucking you." But his time alone also gave way to some very thoughtful arrangements. On top of his amply rich acoustic guitar and dynamic percussion, he layers tasteful electric leads over twinkling pianos and droning organs that only serve to make the experience warmer. Unlike brother Tim, who has made a career out of musical mindfucks with bands like Joan Of Arc, Mike is unafraid to incorporate elements of traditional structure and tone to his advantage. "Everyone Feels Like You" at first recalls a bit of the Allman Brothers before morphing into American Football, unplugged. >>>JASON KUNDRATH

Link

www.polyvinylrecords.com

File Under

Solitary refinement

R.I.Y.L.

American Football, Dashboard

Confessional, Owls

further seems forever
how to start a fire

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ERLEND ØYE

Unrest Source/Astralwerks

To be frank, the twee, archly low-key musical stylings of critically lauded Norwegian, um, nü-folk duo Kings Of Convenience were fine if you're one of those Belle & Sebastian types. On the other hand, did anyone need a new Simon & Garfunkel? (Answer: not really.) Which is precisely what makes this solo record by half of KoC, Erlend Øye, such a staggering surprise. In a remarkable esthetic leap, Øye is now suddenly a purveyor of elegant electro; perhaps the most amusing thing about it is that critics may now be forced to like the sort of music previously asso-

ciated with such critical pariah as the Beloved and Frazier Chorus. In fact, tracks like "Ghost Train" and "Symptom Of Disease" are dead ringers for the latter, perfect examples of the sort of fey, cosmopolitan Europop that Americans are violently averse to. Occasionally, Øye flirts with a groove—as in the gently mechanized, Gary Numan-ish "Sheltered Life," recorded with nouveau synthpoppers Soviet, and the mildly house-y cut "The Talk." The final track, "Like Gold," with its herky-jerky blip-and-bleep construction (and featuring Teutonic avant-gardist Schneider TM), is the only moment where Øye throws off the pop purism shackles. Throughout, he sings with a graceful and cultivated aplomb, which suits the music perfectly. It's Prefab Sprout with synthesizers, basically. And that's a good thing. >>>KEN SCRUDATO



LOU REED

The Raven Sire/Reprise

Lou Reed's role as rock's reigning street poet has led him astray as often as it's inspired triumphs of musical freeverse like the intricate "Street Hassle." But ever since he was elevated to a PBS "American Master" in 1998, a dicey high-art project like *The Raven* seemed inevitable. An indulgent two-disc soundtrack to an experimental theater piece based on the work of Edgar Allan Poe, *The Raven* offers a mix of atmospheric spoken-word performances based on Poe's better-known writings by usual suspects like Steve Buscemi and Willem Dafoe, and more rock-oriented showtunes, including a reworking of the bitterly sarcastic "Perfect Day" from *Transformer* and the touchingly morose "The Bed" from *Berlin*. The high, or low, point is the stiffly overblown rocker "Edgar Allan Poe"—it would be a great Reed parody if only he didn't sound so deadly serious. Of course, half the fun of being a Reed fan is the suspense of knowing that he's always on the verge of laying a big, fat egg, like '79's *The Bells*. Even his best work (say, '89's *New York*) balances precariously on the thin line separating pretentious self-parody from literate rock 'n' roll. *The Raven* appears to cross that line with a passion and intensity that, at least, is admirable in its own right. >>>MATT ASHARE

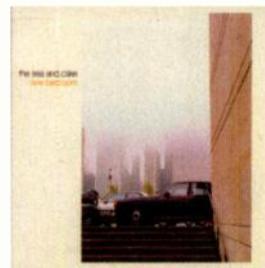
Link
www.loureed.com
 File Under
 Self-parody
 R.I.Y.L.
 John Cale, Laurie Anderson, experimental theatre



PRIMAL SCREAM

Evil Heat Epic

In Primal Scream's nearly 20-year career, the ever-changing Glasgow outfit has done its best, within the loose bounds of the super-trendy British underground, to be all things to all people. From the primal Jesus And Mary Chain psychedelia of singer Bobby Gillespie's first incarnation of the band, to the Manchester house beats of the early '90s or their Stoner-y mid-'90s, Primal Scream haswww, for better and worse, always worn its influences on its sleeve. Utterly unpredictably, the sonically expansive *Evil Heat* is a menacingly beautiful patchwork of organic and synthetic textures held together by the golden thread of good taste. Gillespie and an eclectic cast (including My Bloody Valentine's Kevin Shields) coalesce around the group's most elaborate, challenging and adventurous collection of tunes yet. Taking from as far and wide as the druggy drones of *Spiritualized*, the glitchy electronic deconstructions of *Kid A*, the motorik pulse of Kraftwerk and the glammed-up raw power of Ziggy-era Bowie, not to mention the red-lining white noise of the "Sister Ray" VU, *Evil Heat* is a veritable tour of three decades of transgressive rock. As a bonus, it's also a tantalizing hint of what My Bloody Valentine might have become if Shields hadn't lost track of himself, and his band, in the confines of his customized studio. >>>MATT ASHARE



THE SEA & CAKE

One Bedroom Thrill Jockey

Dip into the Sea & Cake's sixth album randomly, and you might wonder if these reliable purveyors of Chicago-style cool have gone all 'new new wave' on us. "Interiors" and "Left Side Clouded" pair uptempo pulses with loose, unexpectedly noisy guitars, while the title track's synth settings are as '80s-centric as they come. The closer, a succinct, danceable cover of Bowie's "Sound & Vision," completes the evocation of avant-gardes past. These moments have more bite than usual, but elsewhere, the band deliver the combination of elements we've come to expect: Archer Prewitt's warmly ringing guitar figures, Sam Prekop's jazzier approach and drummer John McEntire's meticulously digitized production style. (Bassist Eric Claridge glues the pieces together ably, and thanklessly.) "Four Corners" is the perfect opener, building a rich, polyrhythmic texture for a full three minutes before Prekop's relaxed vocals float in without fanfare. (As always, his mystifying lyrics are just another sonic element.) As on 2000's *Oui*, there's a slight but detectable retreat from the full immersion in electronica that characterized some earlier work; a few passages sound more like a band in a room than waveforms on a monitor. Certain tracks ("Try Nothing") waft by pleasantly without leaving much impression, but overall, *One Bedroom* finds The Sea & Cake gently but firmly updating their sound while ultimately remaining themselves. >>>FRANKLIN BRUNO

Link
www.thrilljockey.com
 File Under
 Post-rock perennials
 R.I.Y.L.
 Tortoise, Stereolab, the Aluminum Group



THE SHARP THINGS

Here Comes The Sharp Things *Dwe*

With well over 10 members, string quintet included, New York's the Sharp Things don't lack for texture and chamber-pop grandeur, and half the pleasure of *Here Come The Sharp Things* comes from sheer over-the-top melodrama. Singer-songwriter Perry Serpa emotes through the album's 11 songs with one eye on '60s whitebread pop—think the Association—and the other on the poetic histrionics of the Divine Comedy. It works. On "I Will Always Be Swimming In This Sea," Serpa soars through the chorus and then cedes the spotlight to a glorious orchestral string break. "It Took Forever To Get Home Tonight"

pulses hypnotically, gradually accruing layers of vibes, strings and keyboards, and "Missing The Daze" mixes lush backing choruses, horns, violins and jaunty piano. There's an occasional air of self-importance here, but the other half of the disc's considerable pleasures comes from the barbs that puncture the inflated drama. "Oh, you little bitch/ You could have anyone you want/ But you preferred to torture me," Serpa croons in "Lies About You And I," rubbing salt into his wounded ego. Desperation reaches its pinnacle in the stately "Lonesome For The Man": "Stole the pills inside your bathroom case/ And left your house without a trace," Serpa sings with suicidal sincerity. Full of grand gestures and nuanced details, *Here Come The Sharp Things* is a remarkably sophisticated debut. >>>STEVE KLUNGE

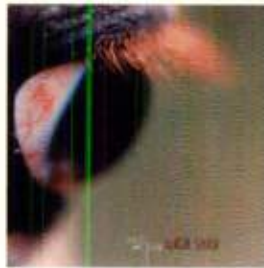
Link

www.thesharpthings.com

File Under

Unabashedly melodramatic
chamber pop
R.I.Y.L.

The Beautiful South, Burt
Bacharach, Matt Pond PA,
the Divine Comedy



VIRGIL SHAW

Still Falling *Future Farmer*

It makes no difference where Virgil Shaw may lay his head at night, his music does the traveling for him. The ex-Dieselhed vocalist traverses time and geographical plane on his second release, *Still Falling*, mixing Dixieland piano and horns with tunes that sound like they might be tumbling out of a saloon with horses hitched out front. Shaw's ability to channel sounds of distant places and times is similar to the Band, a group he shares a kinship with not least because his dusty vocals are a disconcerting but comfortable amalgam of three-fourths (you decide) of the group's singers. In a departure

Link

www.virgilshaw.com

File Under

Music from the
medium-sized pink
R.I.Y.L.

Jeb Loy Nichols, the Band,
Dieselhed

from the spare arrangements of his debut, *Quad Cities*, flugelhorn, trumpet, vibraphone and percussion stretch songs like "Wilderness Of This World" wide as the Western sky. But it's the piano romps and flourishes of Marc Capelle, on loan from Mark Eitzel, that best color in the lines sketched by Shaw's dusty vocals. While some lyrical turns might leave you scratching your head ("I'm sorry I left you there, asleep and naked in a beanbag chair"), Shaw's phrasing answers his own questions in "Owner Operator," where the words drop off his lips like a bottle bouncing down the stairs anticipating the break. Strangely timeless, *Still Falling* is a return to a history most of us never knew. >>>MAT HALL

soulscript

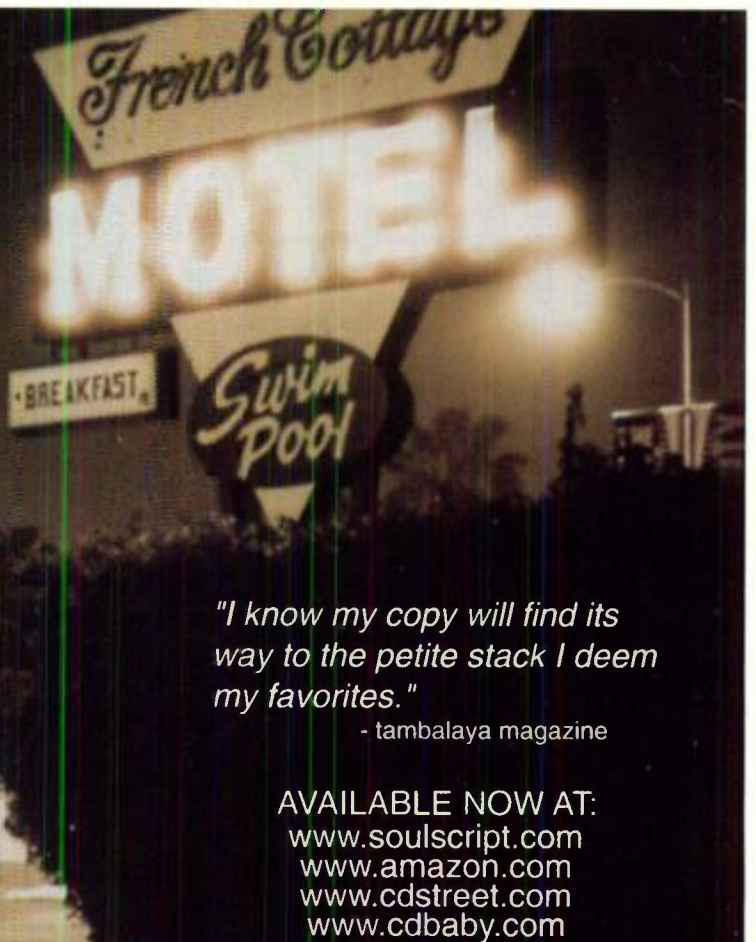
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SOLE

Selling Live Water Anticon

Of course all the money-shots from countless Anticon releases are present on Sole's *Selling Live Water*: polysyllabic barrages of non-sequiturs, self-aware/self-effacing sensitivity, crusty reverberated beats that echo Tortoise, Labradford and Portishead, all crafted by usual suspects Alias, Jel and Odd Nosdam. But Sole's second sonic therapy session, *Selling Live Water*, has too many issues to work out to be buried in distorted beatwork and ambient wankery. A former battle MC (battles probably not won with lines like "All

the king's dead money recycled themes themselves to sleep under fantastic clocks that go cold in the night/ Warm bodies huddle, cold bodies landfill under fancy restaurants"), Sole exorcizes his demons and picks at his neuroses in a digestible flow closer to the efficient rapping of Minneapolis pal Atmosphere than the art-damaged streams of Anticon cohort Dose One. Doing the dozens with his soul, Sole eschews all the *Another Green World* tedium and 20-minute-long movie dialogue experiments of typical Anticon-labeled records—indulging in 55 solid minutes of actual rapping (albeit rapping that has the rhyme scheme of a traffic jam), referencing *Watership Down*, waxing Chomsky-esque about post-9/11 paranoia, chomping some mushrooms—and drowning the whole mess in the tangle of frayed nerves in his head. Clearing the debris from the Anticon mold, the listener gets an open window into a rapper's Sole. >>>CHRISTOPHER R. WEINGARTEN

Link

www.anticon.com

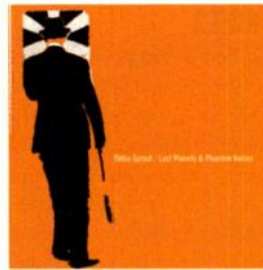
File Under

Sole-baring diatribes

R.I.Y.L.

Buck 65, Themselves,

Atmosphere



TOBIN SPROUT

Lost Planets & Phantom Voices

Recordhead/Wigwam

Tobin Sprout remains best known as the secondary songwriter good for two or three gems per album during Guided By Voices' mid-'90s heyday. His compositions are smoother and less anthemic than Robert Pollard's, typically blending sweet melancholy with a whiff of '60s pop psychedelia. Sprout's solo output strays little from this course—several of *Lost Planets & Phantom Voices*' tracks could stand alongside his stellar GBV foils, though the mid-tempo parade can become repetitive without the yin/yang of

Link

www.tobinsprout.com

File Under

Unassuming pop craftsmen

R.I.Y.L.

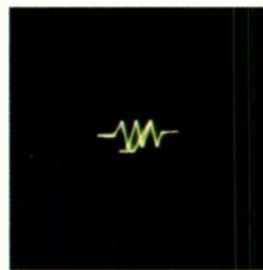
Guided By Voices, the Soft Boys,

Folk Implosion, Bevis Frond

Pollard's tunes. Sprout called his last full-length *Demos & Outtakes*, and little on this outing betrays loftier aspirations. Most of the disc's 13 tracks are overdubbed one-man affairs from Sprout's upstate Michigan home studio, a rudimentary drum machine reinforcing a lo-fi vibe. This sketchbook approach yields a handful of highlights—"Courage The Tack" sports a chorus so hummable it's easy to overlook that, in typical GBV fashion, the song itself is undercooked. The dynamics of *Lost Planets* expand noticeably when Sprout interacts with sidemen (old Dayton cohorts and members of his recent troupe Eyesinweasel both drop in), creating standouts like the cryptic, entrancing "Doctor #8." Having shifted much of his focus to painting, Sprout seems to be approaching music increasingly as a hobby, a tack that suits this comfortable, low-key effort. *Lost Planets* is unlikely to attract many new Tobin Sprout fans, but it offers plenty to devotees. >>>GLEN SARVADY

ETHAN DANIEL DAVIDSON IS A SICKO AND LIVES IN OUR TOWN

www.timesbeachrecords.com



VARISTOR

07.28.02 Hey Frankie

Before Seattle bands and their followers redefined angst with burly, melodramatic singers moaning in low, dejected tones, there were singers like Paul Westerberg, who expressed the same by reaching for higher notes simply unavailable to them. That desperate cry gave the music an urgency beyond words, and it's the register that Varistor singer Patrick Walsh works in, assigning defeat with a futile stretch of his always parched larynx. Couple that with this NYC duo's skeletal yet effective instrumental backing and "complaint rock," as Alicia Silverstone-

Link

www.varistor.org

File Under

Angst in your pants

R.I.Y.L.

Superchunk, Swearing At

Motorists, Archers Of Loaf

dubbed it in *Clueless*, is back in full force. Varistor's debut album does wear a bit over the 45 minutes—the band could use some extra texture—but they do what they can to keep it interesting, Walsh adding a low bass string to his guitar to flesh out the sound. What perks up these 8-track recordings, however, is the complicated relationship between guitar and drums. Walsh settles into elliptical patterns ("Fade Out") or soft jangle ("Brand New") to give the songs space. Then the sparks fly once the guitar forgets chords and riff-hunts into a tangle with Dan Darragh's unpredictable polyrhythmic outbursts. The fight for turf and musical telepathy between players ("Nothing," "Going Home") adds the needed extra dimension to these simply constructed songs. Things could get serious if they move up to a trio, and deadly as a quartet. >>>ROB O'CONNOR

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VARIOUS ARTISTS

We're A Happy Family: A Tribute To The Ramones DVB/Columbia

How do you fuck up a Ramones song? They all have, like, three chords, were composed by dudes with barely rudimentary knowledge of their instruments and should be over before anyone can notice any mistakes. Unfortunately, 14 major-label (or once-major-label) artists (and Rancid) are more than up to the challenge. Actually 13, since Tom Waits injects "Return Of Jackie And Judy" with some liquor-soaked Howlin' Wolf-via-junkyard-apocalyptic *sturm und drang*, which is pretty dope—but

everyone else has a lot to answer for. The Chili Peppers and U2 turn in pallid versions of "Havana Affair" and "Beat On The Brat" that are limper than a gym sock hanging from Keidis's weiner, Kiss are either too smart or too dumb to convincingly cover "Do You Remember Rock And Roll Radio" and Pete Dinklage provides less and less evidence for his continued existence. Rancid, Green Day and the Offspring, all playing at a moderate pace, are tiresome in their reverence—forgetting that most of these songs were written 20 years ago and that any listen to a Ramones live show will show that the boys rarely played their songs as leisurely as they did on record. Metallica is the biggest offender, hobbling through "53rd and 3rd" at a gait that would make Low drowsy. At least the songs are short. >>>CHRISTOPHER R. WEINGARTEN

[Link](#)

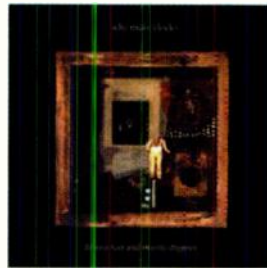
www.officialramones.com

[File Under](#)

Hey ho... Lord, no!

R.I.Y.L.

Anybody but the Ramones



WHY MAKE CLOCKS

Fifteen Feet And Twenty Degrees Rubric

When the downbeat drums and lonely guitar twang come in as a forerunner for the opening lyric, "Starting off with a slowdance/ The room sways with rented lights," those cynics listening to the debut record from Why Make Clocks may instinctively open their rock-cliché bible to the alt-country section (...and Uncle Tupelo begat Wilco who begat...) and start flinging around unnecessary Palace references. Granted, the thoughtful vocals of Dan Hutcheson may evoke visions of Will Oldham cooing with an early Michael Stipe, but it's the crisp energy of the music that

[Link](#)

www.whymakeclocks.com

[File Under](#)

Another country altogether

R.I.Y.L.

Palace, Bright Eyes, the Mountain Goats, Michael Stipe

makes WMC stand out from the pigeonholing. Rotating smoothly between mid-tempo pop songs and slower tracks brimming with a mellow forcefulness, WMC breathes life into the compositions by accentuating their arrangements. Through the tutelage of wonder-producer A.J. Mogis (Lullaby For The Working Class, Bright Eyes), they continuously evoke a subtly building passion. "Spotlight," for example, spirals in a slowly controlled fashion for more than 10 minutes, using emotive guitar bursts as a cover for the intricate piano and organ work pushing the tune just above the surface. This musicality sets WMC apart by constantly pushing forward with powerfully flowing melodies that emphasize their moody lyrics. Combined, you have tunes in a class with new breed of outstanding alt-countryers, even if they're of a different school. >>>ROBBIE CHAPLUK



ZION I

DeepWaterSlang V2.0 Live Up/Raptivism

Zion I was 'set to drop this sophomore album about a year ago on the Nu Gruv Alliance label, which subsequently lost its groove. So the Oakland-based duo of producer Amp Live and MC Zion signed on with Raptivism Records, and added new songs ("Finger Paint" and "One More Thing"), live instruments and soulful vocals from Martin Luther and Goapele. As much as their new label is billing Zion I as a "group of the future" because of their incorporation of sitars, drum 'n' bass rhythms and rock guitars, the duo also aims for the

[Link](#)

www.raptivism.com

[File Under](#)

Creative West Coast street hop

R.I.Y.L.

Jurassic 5, Outkast, Pharcyde

sort of playful party track popularized by Pharcyde back in '92 to make a comeback. *DeepWaterSlang* entertains with its catchy choruses ("Tha Drill" and "Le Le Le") and Enya-meets-Jill-Scott crooning ("Flow" and "Boom Bip"), as well as topics that go deep ("Sorry" and "Warrior's Dance" with Pep Love). On "Cheeba Cheeba," featuring Aceyalone, Zion flexes his political wit: "Who shot Malcolm and put talcum on my text/ And put the ghetto youth under vex/ Sentence end with vengeance/ Street-like presence/ Want to be kings because we live like peasants." With *DeepWaterSlang*, Zion I proves second chances are a blessing—and sometimes, having to work extra hard for something makes it that much better. >>>JESSICA KOSLOW

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December '02 PEARL JAM



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Since 1978, the *CMJ New Music Report* has been the primary source for information and chart data on college, non-commercial and commercial alternative radio airplay.

CMJ

NEW MUSIC REPORT

TOP 75

#1
DONNAS
SPEND THE NIGHT
ATLANTIC



1 THE DONNAS <i>Spend The Night</i> Atlantic	26 THE RAVEONETTES <i>Whip It On</i> Orchard/Red Ink	51 CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN <i>Tusk</i> Pitch A Tent
2 SIGUR ROS MCA-PIAS America	27 RICHARD ASHCROFT <i>Human Conditions</i> Hut/Virgin	52 SAHARA HOTNIGHTS <i>Jean e Bomb</i> Jetset
3 BADLY DRAWN BOY <i>Have You Fed The Fish?</i> BMG/ARTISTdirect	28 THE RAMONES <i>Loud, Fast, Ramones: Their Toughest Hits</i> Rhino	53 SAINT ETIENNE <i>Finistere</i> Beggars Group
4 BECK <i>Sea Change</i> DGC-Interscope	29 THE FLAMING SIDEBURNS <i>Save Rock 'N' Roll</i> Jetset	54 THE BLAM <i>The Flight</i> Self-Released
5 JURASSIC 5 <i>Power In Numbers</i> Interscope	30 AVAIL <i>Front Porch Stories</i> Fat Wreck Chords	55 TWOTHIRTYEIGHT <i>You Should Be Living</i> Tooth And Nail
6 BJÖRK <i>BJörk's Greatest Hits</i> Elektra	31 GEORGE HARRISON <i>Brainwashed</i> Capitol	56 PEARL JAM <i>Riot Act</i> Epic
7 ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT <i>Live From Camp X-Ray</i> Vagrant	32 THE STREETS <i>Original Pirate Material</i> Vice/Atlantic	57 HOT WATER MUSIC <i>Caution</i> Epitaph
8 TORI AMOS <i>Scarlet's Walk</i> Epic	33 SOUNDTRACK OF OUR LIVES <i>Behind The Music</i> Republic/Universal	58 COLDPLAY <i>A Rush Of Blood To The Head</i> Capitol
9 JOHNNY CASH <i>American IV: The Man Comes Around</i> Lost Highway/American	34 LEMON JELLY <i>Lost Horizons</i> Beggars Group	59 BLEU <i>RedHead</i> Aware
10 JETS TO BRAZIL <i>Perfecting Loneliness</i> Mordam/Jade Tree	35 AUDIOSLAVE <i>Andwashed</i> Interscope/Epic	60 HELMS <i>Micromunity</i> Kimchee Records
11 HOT HOT HEAT <i>Make Up The Breakdown</i> Sub Pop	36 MC PAUL BARMAN <i>Paulleugh!</i> Coup d'Etat	61 H2O <i>All We Want</i> EP MCA
12 PRETENDERS <i>Loose Screw</i> Artemis	37 ADAM GREEN <i>Garfield</i> Rough Trade	62 ELF POWER <i>Nothing's Going To Happen</i> Orange Twin
13 SIMIAN <i>We Are Your Friends</i> Astralwerks	38 DOT ALLISON <i>We Are Science</i> Mantra	63 DAMONE <i>From The Attic</i> RCA
14 ADD N TO (X) <i>Loud Like Nature</i> Mute	39 DREDG <i>El Ciego</i> Interscope	64 SMOG <i>Accumulation</i> Nonesuch Drag City
15 KOUFAX <i>Social Life</i> Vagrant	40 THE WARLOCKS <i>Phoenix Album</i> Birdman	65 NIRVANA <i>Nirvana</i> Geffen
16 DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE <i>You Can Play These Songs With Chords</i> Barsuk	41 THE FLAMING LIPS <i>Yoshimi Wins</i> Live Radio Sessions Warner Bros.	66 TORREZ <i>The Evening</i> Drag Kimchee
17 DAVID GRAY <i>A New Day At Midnight</i> ATO-RCA	42 LIARS <i>Fins To Make Us More Fish-Like</i> [EP] Mute/Blast First	67 SUSAN TEDESCHI <i>Wait For Me</i> Artemis-Tone Cool
18 IKARA COLT <i>Chick And Business</i> Epitaph/Fantastic Plastic	43 MINUS THE BEAR <i>Highly Refined Pirates</i> Suicide Squeeze	68 VARIOUS ARTISTS <i>Red Hot + Riot</i> MCA
19 JOSEPH ARTHUR <i>Redemption's Son</i> Enjoy/Real World/Universal	44 FOO FIGHTERS <i>One By One</i> RCA/Roswell	69 ONEIDA <i>Each One Teach One</i> Jagjaguwar
20 BEN FOLDS <i>Ben Folds Live</i> Epic	45 THE APPLES IN STEREO <i>Velocity Of Sound</i> spinART	70 LADYTRON <i>Light And Magic</i> Emperor Norton
21 YEAH YEAH YEAHS <i>Machine</i> [EP] Touch And Go	46 MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE <i>I Brought You My Bullets, You Brought Me Your Love</i> Eyeball	71 GOV'T MULE <i>The Deep End, Vol. 2</i> ATO
22 HAR MAR SUPERSTAR <i>You Can Feel Me</i> Record Collection/Warner Bros.	47 PAVEMENT <i>Stanted And Enchanted</i> Luxe And Reduxe Matador	72 THE SADIES <i>Stories Other Told</i> Yep Roc
23 GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR <i>Yanqui U.X.D.</i> Constellation	48 THE BLACK HEART PROCESSION <i>Amere Del Tropico</i> Touch And Go	73 BURNING BRIDES <i>Fall Of The Plastic Empire</i> V2
24 MOUNTAIN GOATS <i>Tailthrashe</i> 4AD	49 KICKED IN THE HEAD <i>Salita</i> Resurrection A.D.	74 RICHARD BUCKNER <i>Impasse</i> Overcoat
25 BOARDS OF CANADA <i>Twism</i> Music 70/Warp	50 THE BLOOD GROUP <i>Volunteers</i> Le Grand Magistry	75 THALIA ZEDEK <i>You're A Big Girl Now</i> Kimchee

3 YEARS AGO

BECK *Midnite Vultures* (Geffen/Interscope)
PRIMUS *Antipop* (Interscope)
HANDSOME BOY MODELING SCHOOL *So... How's Your Girl?* (Tommy Boy)
LUNA *The Days Of Our Nights* (Jericho/Sire)
ANI DIFRANCO *To The...* (Righteous Babe)

10 YEARS AGO

MUDHONEY *Piece Of Cake* (Reprise)
KING MISSLE *Happy 14* (Atlantic)
SOUL ASYLUM *Grave Dancers Union* (Columbia)
NED'S ATOMIC DUSTBIN *Are You Normal?* (Chaos)
SUNDAYS *Blind* (DGC)

HIP-HOP TOP 10

1	JURASSIC 5 Power In Numbers Interscope
2	MR. LIF I Phantom Definitive Jux
3	LARGE PROFESSOR 1st Class Matador
4	SLEEP Riot By Candlelight Under The Needle
5	MC PAUL BARMAN Paufllelujah! Coup d'Etat
6	OLDOMINION One Under The Needle
7	JAY-Z The Blueprint 2 Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam
8	DJ VADIM USSR. The Art Of Listening Ninja Tune
9	VARIOUS ARTISTS Urban Renewal Program Chocolate Industries
10	THE ROOTS Phrenology MCA

LOUD ROCK TOP 10

1	OPETH Deliverance Music For Nations/Koch
2	NAPALM DEATH Order Of The Leech Spitfire
3	LACUNA COIL Comalies Century Media
4	SHADOWS FALL The Art Of Balance Century Media
5	THE HOPE CONSPIRACY Endnote Equal Vision
6	BLOODBATH Resurrection Through Carnage Century Media
7	TAPROOT Welcome Velvet Hammer/Atlantic
8	IMMOLATION Unholy Cult Olympic/Century Media
9	PROJECT 86 Truthless Heroes Atlantic
10	DEMON HUNTER Demon Hunter Solid State

RETAIL TOP 25

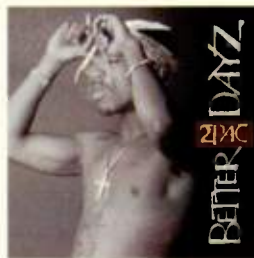
1	2PAC Better Dayz Interscope
2	SYSTEM OF A DOWN Steal This Album American/Columbia
3	THE ROOTS Phrenology MCA
4	SOUNDTRACK 8 Mile Shady/Aftermath/Interscope
5	AUDIOSLAVE Audioslave Interscope/Epic
6	BOB DYLAN Live 1975: Bootleg Series Vol. 5 Legacy
7	PAUL MCCARTNEY Back In The U.S. Capitol-EMI
8	SNOOP DOGG Paid Tha Cost To Be Tha Boss Priority
9	JENNIFER LOPEZ This Is Me... Then Epic
10	NORAH JONES Come Away With Me Blue Note
11	JAY-Z The Blueprint 2: The Gift And The Curse Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam
12	MISSY "MISDEMEANOR" ELLIOTT Under Construction Elektra
13	SUM 41 Does This Look Infected? Island
14	U2 The Best Of 1990-2000 Interscope
15	EMINEM The Eminem Show Shady/Aftermath/Interscope
16	JA RULE The Last Temptation Murder Inc./Def Jam
17	SANTANA Shaman Arista
18	TALIB KWELI Quality Rawkus
19	BABY Birdman Universal
20	DRU HILL Dru World Order Def Soul
21	DAVID GRAY A New Day At Midnight ATO/RCA
22	PEARL JAM Riot Act Epic
23	GEORGE HARRISON Brainwashed Capitol
24	MATCHBOX TWENTY More Than You Think You Are Atlantic
25	NIRVANA Nirvana Geffen



#1 LOUD ROCK
OPETH
DELIVERANCE MUSIC FOR NATIONS/KOCH



#1 JAZZ
DIANA KRALL
LIVE IN PARIS VERVE



#1 RETAIL
2PAC
BETTER DAYZ INTERSCOPE

RPM TOP 10

1	MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO R.U.O.K.? Vrun
2	FC KAHUNA Machine Says Yes Netzwerk
3	RONI SIZE Touching Down Full Cycle
4	SQUAREPUSHER Do You Know Squarepusher Warp
5	JOHN BELTRAN Sun Gypsy Ubiquity
6	THIEVERY CORPORATION The Richest... Eighteenth Street Lounge
7	THE STREETS Original Pirate Material Vice/Atlantic
8	DJ TOUCHE Journeys By DJ: Ultraviolet Journeys By DJ
9	RÖYKSOPP Melody A M Astralwerks
10	AMON TOBIN Out From Out Where Ninja Tune

JAZZ TOP 10

1	DIANA KRALL Live In Paris Verve
2	JOHN COLTRANE A Love Supreme Verve
3	CHARLES LLOYD Lift Every Voice ECM
4	BEN ALLISON Peace Pipe Palmetto
5	ORRIN EVANS Meant To Shine Palmetto
6	EITHER/ORCHESTRA Afro-Cubism Accurate
7	MAT MANERI QUARTET Sustain Thirsty Ear
8	DAVID S. WARE QUARTET Freedom Suite AUM Fidelity
9	BRAD MEHLDAU Largo Warner Bros.
10	PATRICIA BARBER Verse Capitol/Blue Note

JUST OUT

DECEMBER 3

3 Half Life *Planet Noise*
DASHBOARD CONFSSIONAL Unplugged *Vagrant*
MARK DWINELL Nonloc *Ba Da Bing!*
JOEY EPPARD Been To The Future *Planet Noise*
EVERGREEN TERRACE Burned Alive By Time *Eulogy*
HEARTSCARVED Epilogue *Tribunal*
KID BROTHER COLLECTIVE Highway Miles *One Day Savior*
PENNY LANG Gather Honey *Borealis*
MANTLER Satisfaction *Tornlab*
MOCK ORANGE First EP *Dead Droid*
NAKATOMI PLAZA Private Property *Immigrant Sun*
PROMISE Believer *Indecision*
SAMPLE THE MARTIAN Botlegs: The First Wave *Galactic Dust*
UNTIL THE END Let The World Burn *Eulogy*
MIKE V AND THE RATS Mike V and The Rats *Indecision*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Share Warez *Galactic Dust*

DECEMBER 10

ANTISEEN Honour Among Thieves *TKO*
BOOKS ON TAPE Throw Down Your Laptops *Death Bomb Arc*
GARY NUMAN I, Assassin *Beggars Group*
GARY NUMAN Warriors *Beggars Group*
SOUNDTRACK Catch Me If You Can *DreamWorks*
SOUNDTRACK La Boheme: Broadway Cast *Recording DreamWorks*
STEREO LAB Switched On *Too Pure*
SWIZZ BEATZ Swizz Beatz Presents G.H.E.T.T.O. *Stories DreamWorks*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Sweet Love Volume 6 *VP*

DECEMBER 17

THE BLOOD GROUP Volunteers *Le Grand Magistry*
CHAINSAW No Since 1991 *Six Weeks*
CIGARBOX PLANETARIUM Cigarbox Planetarium *Oh Tonito!*
JAGA JAZZIST Animal Chin *GSL*
LITTLE JEANS Little Jeans *Asian Man*
PHENOMENOLOGICAL BOYS Phenomenological Boys *Tornlab*
RIFFS Underground Kicks *TKO*
STITCHES 12 Imaginary Inches *TKO*
DENISON WITMER Philadelphia Songs *Burnt Toast Vinyl*

DECEMBER 24

VARIOUS ARTISTS We're A Happy Family: A Tribute To The Ramones *DV8-Columbia*

JANUARY 7

MUSIC LOVERS Cheap Songs Tell The Truth EP *Marriage*
PAS/CAL The Handbag Memors EP *Le Grand Magistry*
ROSS BEACH You Make It Look So Easy *A Bouncing Space*

JANUARY 14

APPALACHIAN DEATH RIDE Hobo's Cookbook *Anyway*
BELLRAYS Raw Collection *Uppercut*
DJ ME DJ YOU Can You See The Music? *Eenie Meenie*
KATHLEEN EDWARDS Failer *Zoë-Rounder*

FREED UNIT Straightjacket *Ecstatic*
GEORGE GERSHWIN The Essential George Gershwin *Columbia-Legacy*
JANIS JOPLIN The Essential Janis Joplin *Columbia-Legacy*
RATOS DE PORAO Onisciente Coletivo *Alternative Tentacles*
GARY WILSON Forgotten Lovers *Motel Records*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Mob Action: Bay Area Anarchist Book Fair *Alternative Tentacles*
VARIOUS ARTISTS 2003 Rock-Metal-Techno-Industrial-Hiphop Sampler Compilation *Dutch Underground*
VARIOUS ARTISTS We're A Happy Family: A Tribute To The Ramones *DV8-Columbia*
THE WITCHES On Parade *Fall Of Rome*

JANUARY 21

ARRIVALS Exsenator Orange *Thick*
BANCO DE GAIA Live At Glastonbury And Big Men Cry *Six Degrees*
BITTER, BITTER WEEKS Bitter, Bitter Weeks *My Pal God*
BROKEBACK Looks At The Bird *Thrill Jockey*
BURNSIDE PROJECT The Networks, The Circuits, The Streams, The Harmonies *Bar-None*
CABALLERO Bandology Volume 1 *Sessions*
CORONET BLUE Coronet Blue *Laughing Outlaw*
D. HENRY FENTON Autumn Sweet *Laughing Outlaw*
DANCE DISASTER MOVEMENT We Are From Nowhere *Dim Mak*
ELEVENTEEN In The Air *Sessions*
GFS Mount Vernon Street *Sound Gizmo Audio*
JEFF HANSON Son *Kill Rock Stars*
HOLOPAW Holopaw *Sub Pop*
(INTERNATIONAL) NOISE CONSPIRACY Bigger Cages, Longer Chains EP *Epitaph-Burning Heart*
KINSKI Airs Above Your Station *Sub Pop*
BOB LOG III Log Bomb *Fat Possum*
MENDOZA LINE If The Knew This Was The End *Bar-None*

MICROPHONES Mt. Eerie *K*
POSTAL SERVICE Such Great Heights EP *Sub Pop*
SEA AND CAKE One Bedroom *Thrill Jockey*
MATTHEW SHIPP Equilibrium *Thirsty Ear*
SLICK 57 The Ghost Of Bonnie Parker *Laughing Outlaw*
TALL PAUL Mixed Live: 2nd Session *Moonshine*
VARIOUS ARTISTS The Now Sound Of Brazil *Ziriguiboom-Six Degrees*
VEXERS The Vexers *Ace-Fu*
WAKE UPS Wanna Meet The Wake Ups? *Laughing Outlaw*
XEROPHONICS Xerophonics *Seeland*

JANUARY 28

CHARLEVOIX Begging Complication *Atoms Mechanics*
CLAUDE CHALLE New Oriental: The R.E.G. Project *Shakti*
KASSE MADY CHEIKH Mariana *Real World*
GEORGE CLINTON AND THE P-FUNK ALL STARS Six Degrees Of P-Funk: The Best Of George Clinton And His Funky Family *Tooth And Nail*
DOGWOOD Seismic *Tooth And Nail*
EASTMOUNTAINSOUTH EP *DreamWorks*
FEW AND FAR BETWEEN 3 *Elkon*
FURTHERMORE She And I *Tooth And Nail*
MARK SELBY Dirt *Vanguard*
SNOWDOGS Deep Cuts, Fast Remedies *Victory*
SOMEHOW HOLLOW Busted Wings and Broken Halos *Victory*
SOUNDTRACK Biker Boyz *DreamWorks*
SOUNDTRACK Morvern Callar *Warp*



THE BLOOD GROUP: DECEMBER 17

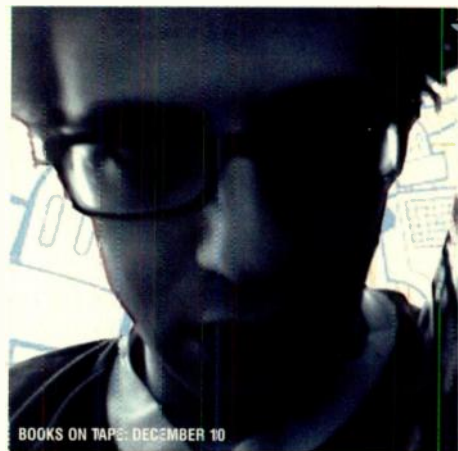
SUICIDE FILE Twilight *Indecision*
USELESS I.D. No Vacation From The World *Kung Fu*
VARIOUS ARTISTS The Great Artistic View Of The Underground Sound Of Punk And Hardcore *Dutch Underground*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Stepping Stone *Militia Group*
EAMMON VIIT Deserted Music *Self-Starter*
BILL WITHERS Menagerie *Columbia-Legacy*
BILL WITHERS Still Bill *Columbia-Legacy*
YOUNG GODS Second Nature *Ipecac*

FEBRUARY 4

BAPTIST GENERALS No Silver No Gold *Sub Pop*
BLACK WIDOWS/DOWNPOUR Split *Deathwish*
BURNING PARIS And By December You Will Know Where Your Heart Truly Lies *Magic Bullet*
BOBI CÉSPEDES Rezos *Six Degrees*
DAMNWELLS PMR + 1 *In Music We Trust*
DELANEY AND BONNIE Delaney And Bonnie Together *Columbia-Legacy*
FALL OUT BOY Fall Out Boy's Evening Out With Your Girl *Uprising*
GERMBOX Irraction Of Exaggeration *Caulfield*
KILL PILL Outside These City Walls *Uprising*
AL KOOPER AND MIKE BLOOMFIELD Fillmore East: The Last Concert Tapes 12-13-68 *Columbia-Legacy*
AL KOOPER, MIKE BLOOMFIELD AND STEVE STILL Super Session *Columbia-Legacy*
JON LANGFORD WITH THE SADIES Mayors Of The Moon *Bloodshot*
MOUNTAIN Mountain Climbing; Nantucket Sleighride (reissue) *Columbia-Legacy*
NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE New Riders Of The Purple Sage *Columbia-Legacy*
POSTAL SERVICE Give Up *Sub Pop*
PRESSURE Anthem *Uprising*
PROJECT ROCKET New Years Revolution *Uprising*
SCARLET Cut Classic *Tribunal*
SINCE BY MAN We Sing The Body Electric *Revelation*
SOUND OF RAILS Night Time Simulcast *Caulfield*
SOUNDTRACK Pulse: A Stomp Odyssey *Six Degrees*
SUICIDE FILE Twilight *Indecision*
ROB SWIFT Under The Influence *Six Degrees*
UNDERWATER Bleed Me Blue *Tribunal*
GARY VALENTINE Tomorrow Belongs To You *Overground*
RAL PARTHA VOGELBACHER Kite Vs. Obelisk *Megalon*
WHERE FEAR AND WEAPONS MEET Control *Eulogy*

FEBRUARY 11

ABSINTHE BLIND Rings *Mud-Parasol*
BAYKA BEYOND East By West *Narada World*
BLACKSTREET Level II *DreamWorks*
COUNT THE STARS Never Be Taken Alive *Victory*
FABULOUS DISASTER Party Raid *Fat Wreck Chords*
FURTHER SEEMS FOREVER How To Start A Fire *Tooth And Nail*



BOOKS ON TAPE: DECEMBER 10

GOODWILL That Was A Moment *Negative Progression*
HOLLAND Photographs And Tidal Waves *Tooth And Nail*
PATTY LARKIN Red=Luck *Vanguard*
LONGWAVE The Strangest Things *RCA*
MEN AT WORK Business As Usual *Columbia-Legacy*
MEN AT WORK Cargo *Columbia-Legacy*
MOTT THE HOOPLE The Best Of Mott The Hoople *Columbia-Legacy*
MOUNTAIN The Best Of Mountain *Columbia-Legacy*
SPIRIT The Best Of Spirit *Columbia-Legacy*
TONY ROMANELLO Counting Stars *Engine Shed*
PAUL VAN DYK Global *Mute*
VARIOUS ARTISTS African Express *Shakti*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Buenos Aires Café: Instrumental Tangos *Narada World*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Mulletts Rock! *Epic-Legacy*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Oh: Chicago Punk Refined *Thick*

FEBRUARY 18

ALWAYS Looking For Mr. Wright *Le Grand Magistry*
ANTI-POP CONSORTIUM Anti-Pop Vs. Matthew Shipp *Thirsty Ear*
CALEXICO Feast Of Wire *Quarterstick*
CANYON Canyon *Gern Blandsten*
FLARE Hung *Le Grand Magistry*
GRAY MARKET GOODS Gray Market Goods *Thrill Jockey*
KAADA Thank You For Giving Me Your Valuable Time *Ipecac*
MORPHINE The Best Of 1992-1995 *Rykodisc*
NO TWIST Neon Golden *Dormino*
REGGIE AND THE FULL EFFECT Under The Tray *Vagrant*
NOBUKAZU TAKEMURA 10th *Thrill Jockey*

Thin Lizzy

STORY: IAN CHRISTE • ILLUSTRATION: NICK MEOLA



As a merciless 12-year-old cruising the back alleys of strange German cities looking for Motörhead and Girlschool records, I always thought Thin Lizzy looked a lot better than they sounded. Their patches and posters staring out at me from every shop window, right next to switchblade knives and AC/DC picture sleeves, showed off the angular Thin Lizzy logo, album titles like *Thunder & Lightning* and those tight stage moves. When it came time to back up the posture with music, well... pitted against the glass-shattering modernism of Judas Priest, Thin Lizzy did not pack the thrill.

Later in life came the important events that water a 12-year-old's heart of stone and give seed to such strange feelings as sympathy and compassion. As my inner life expanded beyond the emotional range of videogames, a lot of things that seemed silly as a man-child started to seem like the most important things in the world. And as life grew ever more complex and multi-hued, Thin Lizzy emerged as a giant understanding force. Musically, they were the missing link between Steely Dan and Iron Maiden—you know you have to live a little to truly appreciate that kind of distance.

In a 1970s rock world that valued overrated overstatement, Thin Lizzy kept it cool. Their trademark was singer Phil Lynott's crooning howl atop unison guitar riffs by a double-helix of ever-changing dual guitar players. Though the band dressed tough in black leather, their world was based on wide-ranging camaraderie. After opening for Journey in the early 1970s, Thin Lizzy was joined frequently onstage in the late '70s by a young Huey Lewis, then an itinerant American hitchhiker playing harmonica in the train stations of Europe. The solidarity of the guitars was a mighty message, but singer/bassist Lynott was the reigning presence as bard.

I don't mean to give too much rosy credit to the mystical qualities of Ireland, but in Lizzy the Gaelic hearts were strong. The band's first hit, "Whiskey In The Jar," was a traditional bloody story written for fiddle and fife, wherein a vagabond robber pulls pistol and rapier on a soldier in the Cork and Carey mountains, spends the gold on whores and drink and ends up rotting in prison wearing a ball and chain. Then there's the up-to-date "Little Girl In Bloom," whose hero is a pregnant teenager watching the boys from her school outside playing cricket as she simmers with worry.

Lynott's own Brazilian father abandoned him as a boy, and his best songs are a siphon and a salve for pain. During the throes of

English rock fanaticism in the '70s, his song lyrics were published as poetry. The title of one book, *Songs For While I'm Away*, gives me a chill like one of those suicidal hints from Kurt Cobain. As a black rock star from Ireland living in London, Lynott took a lot of bullets. He hid behind his smile and onstage karate moves, flashing a killer grin while singing passionately about the lynchings of noble outlaws, the killers of buffalos and the star-crossed stories of young Romeos and their lovers from the other side of the tracks. His words weren't descriptive, they were lyrical, and that was partially practical—to civilize his furies.

If associations with Journey and Huey Lewis seem lily-livered, let it be known that Phil Lynott recorded with such rat-hearts as the Sex Pistols and Johnny Thunders, and he remains the all-time bass hero of Lemmy of Motörhead. As drug use gripped Lynott, his songs became anesthetized and increasingly oblique. Ultimately, Lynott let heroin take him over, and he became fixated on writing a blockbuster hit to follow up "Whiskey In The Jar," and "The Boys Are Back In Town." As VH-1 now tells the story, Lynott wore himself out climbing to the level of rock stardom everyone told him he deserved. If you've learned to believe in the nobility of ordinary life, as Lynott professed again and again, you're already one point up on the freakshow of the walking wounded all around us. Yet towards the end, Lynott let his supremely honed instinct for survival slip, and he faded in solitude in 1986.

Eventually, I was sucked into Thin Lizzy's albums and the stories surrounding them, and I constantly admire their bravery and musical invention. Thin Lizzy feels right in almost any situation, and their music always makes a crowded room feel like some sort of archaic drinking holiday. It's hard-rocking, passionate music that isn't juvenile—a rarity. To widespread surprise, the band began touring again two or three years ago led by John Sykes and Scott Gorham, veteran Lizzy guitarists with a decent claim to the heritage of "Chinatown" and "Cold Sweat." When I caved in to curiosity and went to see the show last fall, it was absolutely heroic—not a séance or a sham, just the real deal of a different flavor. With things missing all around us, we carry on living the best lives we can.

You'll need plenty of whiskey in the jar to match Ian Christe's new book, *Sound Of The Beast: The Complete Headbanging History Of Heavy Metal* (Harper Collins).



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