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MONTHLY

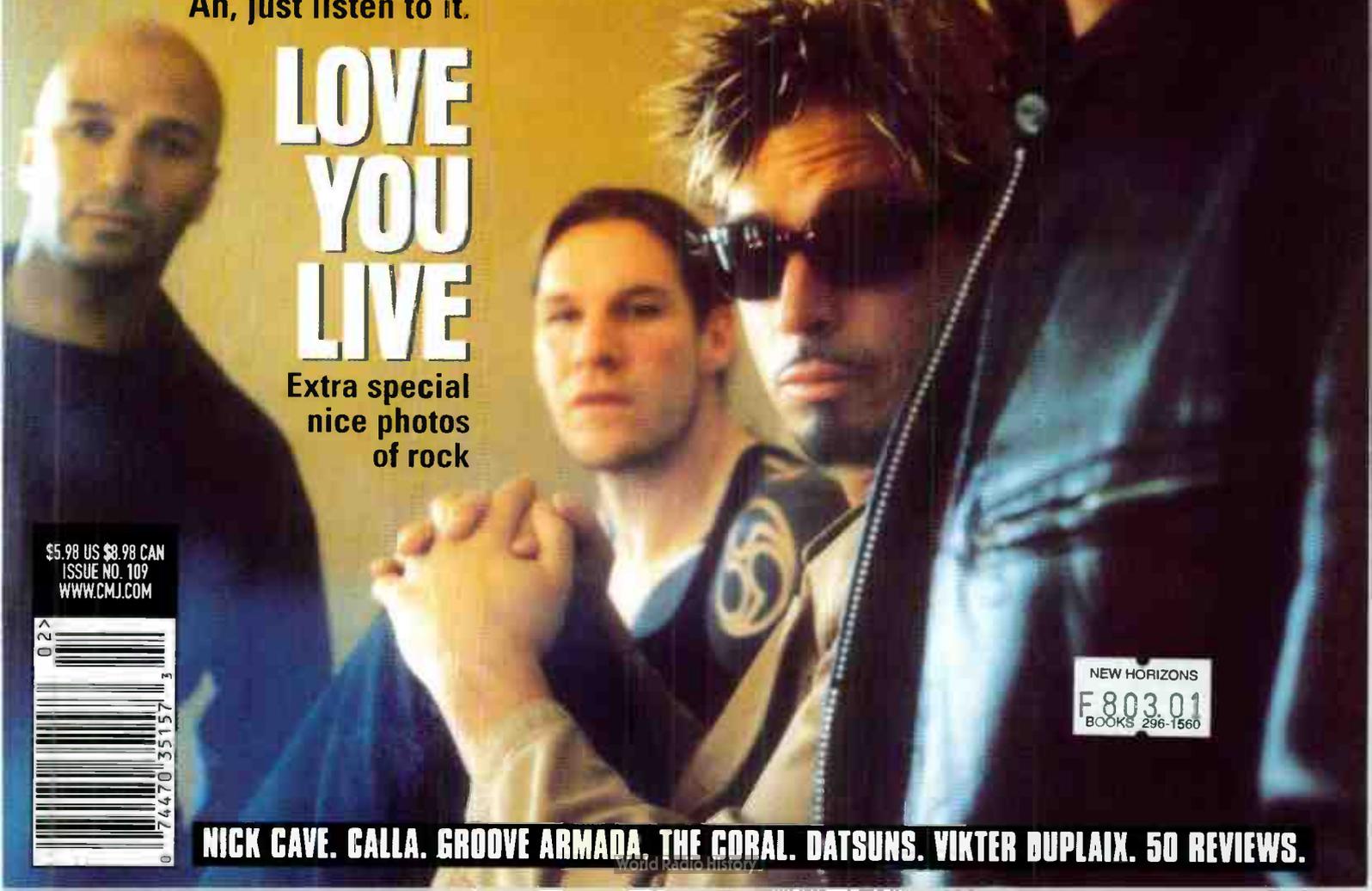
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**DOUBLE ISSUE**

# Audioslave

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AUDIOSLAVE



GROOVE ARMADA



THE RAVEONETTES



MY MORNING JACKET

AUDIOSLAVE: DANNY CLINCH; GROOVE ARMADA: DEREK SANTINI; MY MORNING JACKET: MARK OWENS; THE RAVEONETTES: STEFAN DE BASTELIER

## 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 Ciatbattoni sets a steadier course with the daring dance duo.

## MATTHEW SHIPP 26

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

## CALLA 28

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.

## LOVE YOU LIVE '03 35

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, Durs, Robert Randolph, OK Go, Fountains Of Wayne, My Morning Jacket, Har Mar Superstar.

## ON THE VERGE 14

Are you listening? Whoa oh oh oh-oh oh: Longwave, the Raveonettes, Mclusky, Vikter Duplaix.

## ON THE CD 43

**Disc 1:** Audioslave, the Exies, Something For Kate, the Blood Brothers, the Coral, My Blue Pill, Warren Zanes, Robinella & The CC String Band, the Bad Plus, Vikter Duplaix, DJ Me DJ You, Nelika, Sole, Homunculus, Jon Langford + His Sadies, Chris Butler, Franklin Bruno, the Sharp Things, Denison Witmer, Evermore.

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

## QUICK FIX 8

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.

## LOCAL ZINE 56

Come to Barbados and get your pasty ass a tan.

## GEEK LOVE 82

Ian Christie is back in town with Thin Lizzy.

## REVIEWS, CHARTS, SERVICES

## BEST NEW MUSIC 58

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CMJ NEW MUSIC MONTHLY (ISSN 1074-6978) is published monthly by The CMJ Network with offices at 151 W. 25th St., 12th Fl., New York, NY 10001. Subscription rates are \$39.95 per year. Subscription offices: P.O. Box 57414, Boulder, CO 80322-7414. Phone (800) 414-4CMJ. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Ride Along Enclosed. Postmaster: Send address changes to CMJ New Music Monthly, Membership Office, P.O. Box 57414, Boulder, CO 80328-7414. CMJ New Music Monthly is copyright 2003 by College Media Inc. All rights reserved; nothing may be reproduced without consent of publisher. Unless indicated otherwise, all letters sent to CMJ are eligible for publication and copyright purposes, and are subject to CMJ's right to edit and comment editorially. Why didn't anyone tell me this thing said "Copyright 2001" all throughout 2002? Good lookin' out!

## '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 font 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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— Gary Dean Ahrens  
DJ Times  
September 2002

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— Roger Derry  
Line Up  
The Journal of the Institute  
of Broadcast Sound  
June/July 2002

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— Paul Riario  
Guitar World  
July 2002

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Home Recording  
October 2002

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Keyboard Magazine  
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TechTV  
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— Scott Colburn  
Tape Op Magazine  
September/October 2002

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Radio World  
July 2002

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Computer Music  
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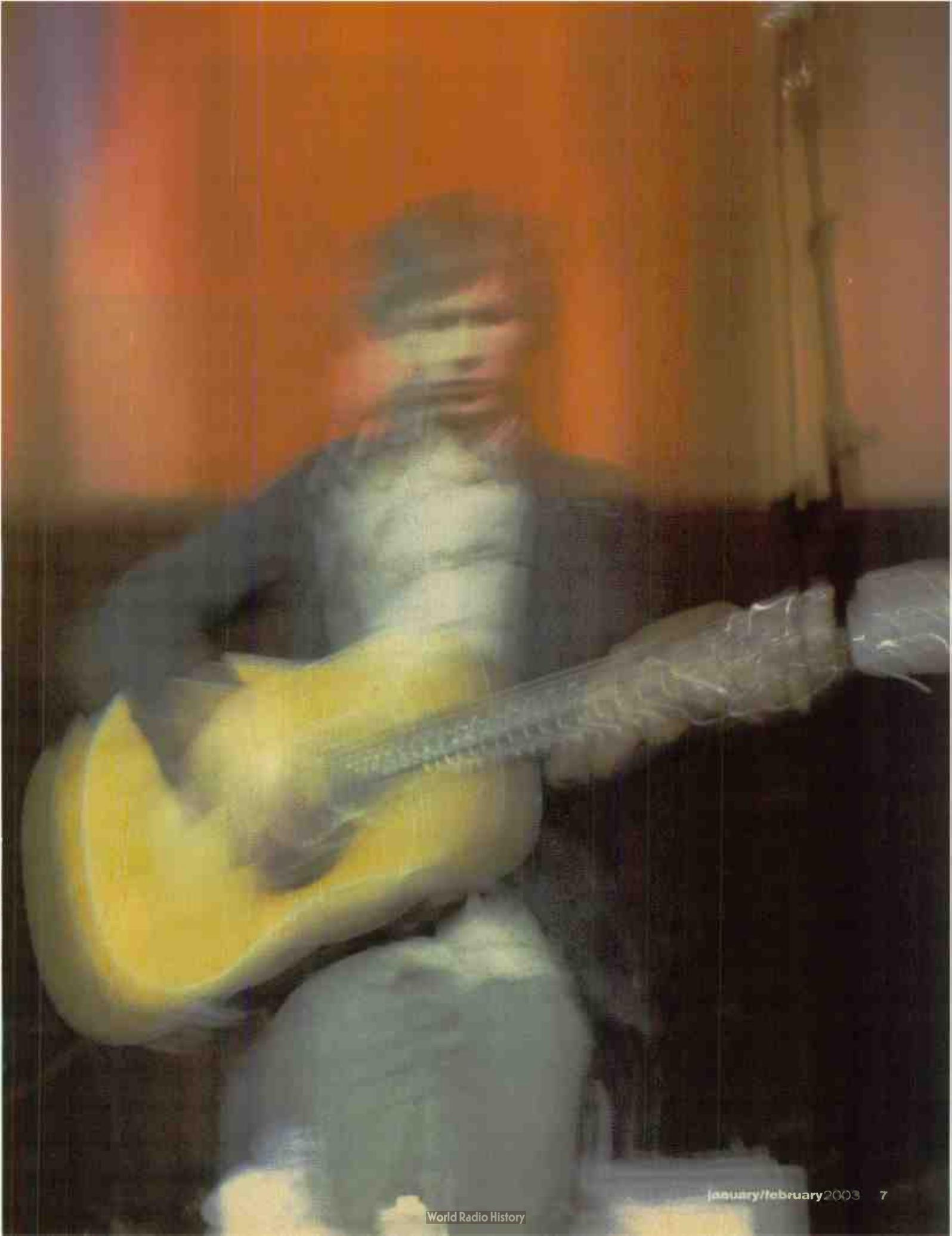
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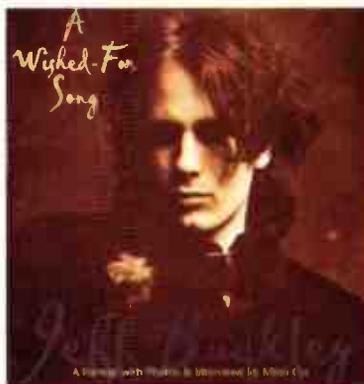
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**BECK** : BEACON THEATRE, NYC 10.02  
: That Beck, always shifting styles and attitudes. So  
: mercurial is he that he's become sort of blurry,  
: apparently at a midpoint in his evolution into a super-  
: sentient light being. Good thing one of 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.

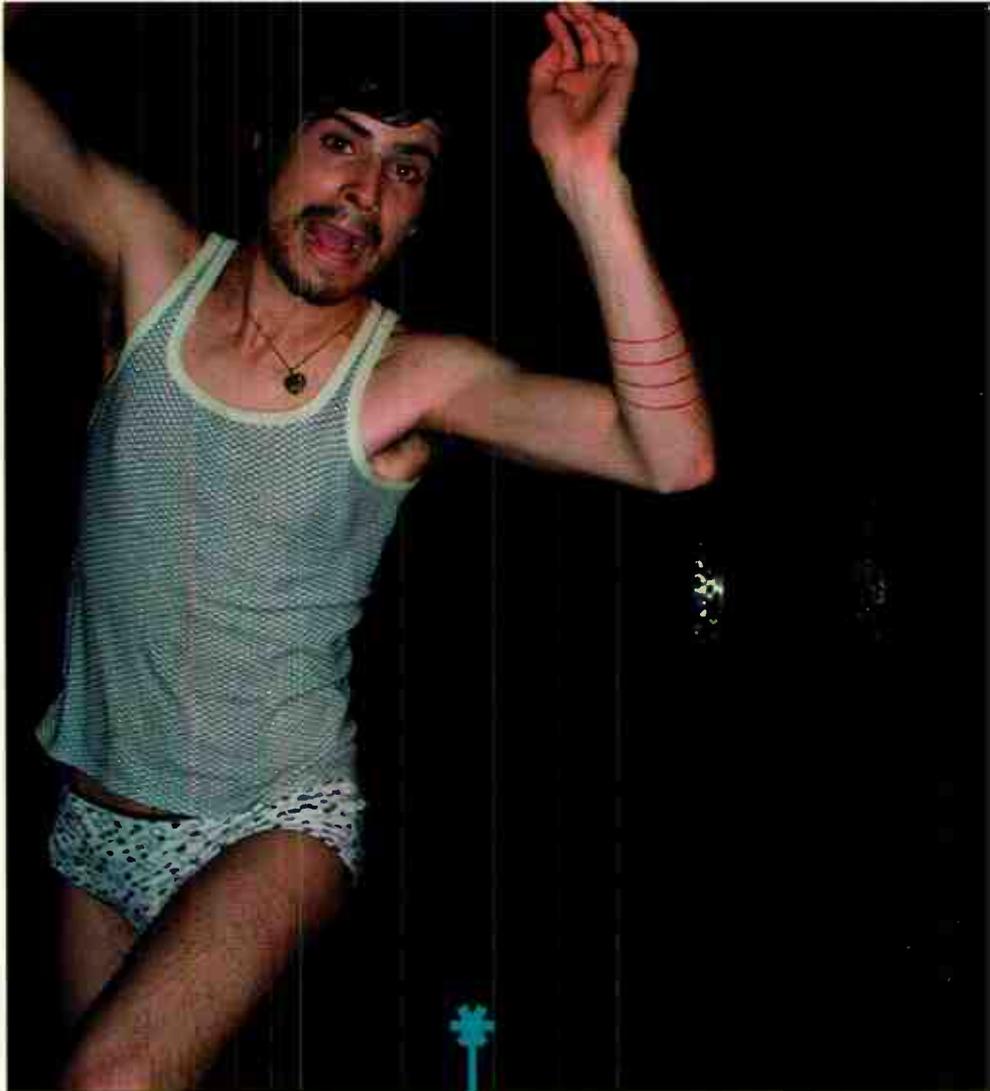
**What do you do during the day to occupy your time?**

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: MIRISTEN POSCH



## IN MY ROOM

**Who:** Devendra Banhart

**Where:** His apartment in Brooklyn

**Why:** Before releasing the bizarre-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

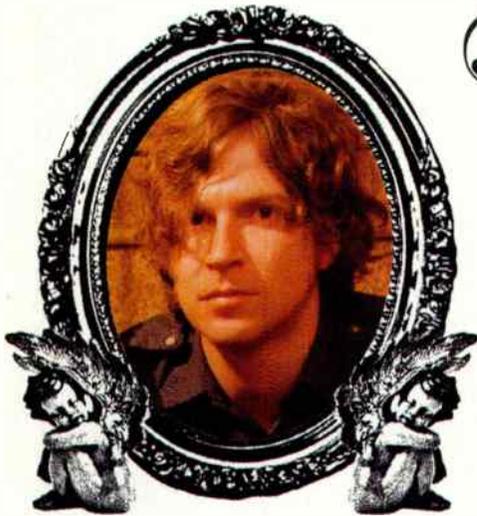
My bed is on the top of the wood piece in the corner, it's a small lopsided room, the bed is queen-sized and I found it with my girlfriend in the trash. It's a good bed. Next to it is a jawbone my father gave to me.

### 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 >>>

# Tough Love



**NADA SURF** Nada Surf frontman Matthew Caws parlayed thoughts on adolescent love into a mid-'90s altnapop hit called "Popular"; here, he ponders your troubled lives, only without that whole record-selling, radio-play, MTV-fodder thing. Don't think they'll mind much—the new *Let Go* (Barsuk) shows that the band's matured considerably since those days, trading the radio sheen for a lush indie-rock aesthetic. *The number one benefit to this column is that you can dump someone and say a rock personality told you to do it: lovelorn@cmj.com.*

**I have this red lacy nighty-thing, but I don't wear it much. A few weeks ago, I went looking and couldn't find it. Then this morning I was in my brother's room and saw something red under his bed. And there it was. I'm both freaked out and worried by this. Should I confront him? Is it more likely that he's wearing it or just using it for, um, "inspiration"?**  
—Jen, Sioux City, Iowa

ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S 

OK, even though most of us don't feel comfortable picturing our relatives doing anything racier than, well, sleeping, a bit of objectivity would be useful here. Your brother shouldn't have gone snooping in your stuff and shouldn't be holding on to something that's not his, but other than that, there's nothing wrong with him doing whatever he feels like with a red lacy nighty-thing. You could confront him, but give the kid a break—going through one's sister's eveningwear is a phase best forgotten, and that will be easier to do if you don't bring it up. Hell, as long as you're not wearing it much, let him keep it awhile.

**I was messing around on my girlfriend's computer while she was in the shower, and when I clicked the "favorites" tab on her web browser the only things saved were her two favorite bands' sites, *The Onion* and *Nerve.com*. Honestly, why would she be playing around on *Nerve* unless she's trying to find a new guy? I'm bugging out but I'm afraid to admit I was snooping. What do I do?**  
—Aaron, College Park, Maryland

Bugging out might be jumping the gun a little. Don't discount the idea that she may just be reading. Questions based on suspicion have all sorts of unwanted side-effects—they chip away at trust and almost always come off as overly insecure. Come to think of it, "Guy Confronts Girl Over Web Bookmarks" sounds like an *Onion* story, too.

**My boyfriend and I have been together almost five years, and I have to admit the sex is starting to get stale. The past few months, I've been fantasizing about other people. Sunday night I happened to be thinking about Nelly. Not Furtado, "Hot In Herre" Nelly. (Shut up he's cute.) I apparently muttered**

**"Nelly" at an inopportune moment. Now he's convinced I'm cheating on him with some girl named Nelly, but I'm afraid to tell him the truth.**  
—Melinda, Buckhannon, W.V.

Letting him believe that you were fantasizing about another woman is probably your best bet. Might be a good time to share some fantasizing, if the sex is getting stale. Don't tell him the truth—not because Nelly is a guy, but because he's flippin' everywhere, and you don't want your boyfriend wincing every time he sees a TV or a Band-Aid.

Love, Matthew



ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S 

his in-progress rock record after being deterred by the likes of **the White Stripes** and **the Strokes** • Billy Corgan's **Zwan** signs with Reprise Records, to release debut in

“Of course, my hope is to one day release a new STRYPER album... **Keep us in your prayers** over the next few months that God would lead in our lives. He is doing **GREAT** things in these last days.”

—Stryper bassist Tim Gaines, who apparently can't find a better way to spend the Last Days.

## MY FAVORITE GEAR:

Chris Butler crams 100 years of recording history into a single disc.

Some musicians strive to capture "that analog sound"; ex-Waitress Chris Butler chases "that Thomas Edison sound." His *The Museum Of Me* (Future Fossil) is also a museum of arcane recording methods, tracked on everything from Edison's original wax cylinders to paper-backed tape to the mobile studio used by the Who, the Stones and Zeppelin. "This truck is just splendid," Butler enthuses. "It was used on *Exile On Main Street*, *Who's Next*, *Bob Marley Live*, *Led Zeppelin's II*... All those amazing drum tracks that were done at somebody's house, Jimmy Page's house, were done on this truck." Not all the gear proved as reliable: The 1940s Webster-Chicago wire recorder, which replaces tape with a four-thousandths-of-an-inch wire, was particularly difficult. "They figured out the best way to get sound out of the wire was to have it go at 24 inches per second," he says. "You get an incredible amount of torque on the wire; if it snaps when you're doing something it goes flying around the room and it's impossible to untangle. Once you get to the end of a [reel]...every finger is crossed to try and make it through before the machine goes." The result is an archivist's wet dream, all snaps, crackles and pops, 2002 songs recorded in an 1898 fashion. "Every time the wire broke, I thought, 'Oh, screw it. This is mad,'" Butler laughs. "[But] in the end I guess it was worth it. That's the problem: You get a wacky idea, and you know it's got a nice, fun resonance to it. Then you're compelled to build it, and there are gonna be bumps." >>>TOM MALLON



BY VINCENT G. CURRY

I used to think Ralph Fiennes was a good actor until I realized he was a miserable bastard in real life, so all his great portrayals of miserable bastards weren't acting at all. In fact, he'll probably go down in film history as the actor who smiled the least in all of his films. The latest addition to that grim list is *Spider*, directed by the weird, but rarely boring, David Cronenberg. Unfortunately, this is one of those rare times. The story of a man who gets out of an English mental institution after 30 years, if you don't know everything that's going to happen from the moment the first flashback appears, you need to get out more...just not to see this. ●●● A two-hour foreign film set in the slums of Brazil? Normally, I'd run screaming, but *Cidade de Deus* (*City Of God*) is so great I almost wish it were longer. Based on a novel, it tells the story of two young men growing up in the ironically named City Of God, a slum so horrible even the cops are afraid to venture into it. But rather than the bleak, existential film you'd get if it were, say, French, you actually get a vibrant, stylized, coming-of-age story filled with humor and life, even though it chronicles two bloody decades in a place where very few grow old. It helps that we have not one, but two contrasting protagonists to follow. One fully embraces the criminal life from childhood, while the other lives cautiously on the periphery. Ironically, it's his hobby of photography that helps him succeed, as he chronicles the violence with his camera. Stay for the credits and see the real life characters depicted in the film.

For more rants, go to [www.angrygeek.com](http://www.angrygeek.com).

January • Stephen Malkmus's the **Jicks** to return this spring • **Eels** frontman E scores new Billy Bob Thornton movie and heads to the studio for the fifth Eels record • >>>



## Speed Freak

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION  
(SEGA FOR GAMECUBE)

Quoth Marc Antony, eulogizing history's original Lil' Cease: "I came to bury Caesar, not to praise him." Using Sega's GameCube-exclusive *Sonic Mega Collection* as a primary source, the similarities between the oft-stabbed dictator and Sonic—spiky, greased-lightning-fast protagonist of yore—become clear. Both rose to power quickly, and both met unfortunate ends (one due to conspiracy, the other to PlayStation), but only one receives the lavish remembrance. *Mega Collection* compiles the good (mad-addictive, strategy-free gameplay; seven different games) and the bad (pointless, spice-up-the-franchise extra characters, anyone?) into one edition. Add in some fun-yet-useless extras (Sonic's comic book), and you've got a solid eulogy to a brilliant anthropomorph. All Caesar got was a lousy salad. >>>JAMES MONTGOMERY



## OF GREAT IMPORT

Get it from over there, 'cause you can't buy it here.

### VARIOUS ARTISTS

1 Love  
B-Unique (U.K.)

**What it is:** Compilation album that simultaneously benefits the War Child charity organization and celebrates the 50th anniversary of U.K. music publication *NME*.

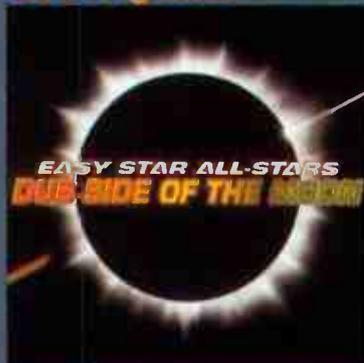
**Why you want it:** The artists contributing to *1 Love* were faced with the challenge of selecting and covering any No. 1 U.K. single from within the last 50 years. The result is a fittingly wide-ranging assortment of tracks including everything from Prodigy's beat-heavy, vocoder-enhanced take on the Specials' classic "Ghost Town" to the Animals' "House Of The Rising Sun" gone all prog-rock, courtesy of Muse. "Come On

Eileen" suits Badly Drawn Boy almost too well, while Ms. Dynamite sounds like she grew up singing Soul II Soul's "Back To Life (However Do You Want Me)." Regardless of all the big name U.K. acts gathered here, though (also including Dasis, Stereophonics, Manic Street Preachers, Faithless & Dido, among others), it's the one American act on board that really sets the standard: Jimmy Eat World takes the Prodigy's "Firestarter" and turns it into the most heartfelt emo remake since the Vines took on "Ms. Jackson." >>>DOUG LEVY

**LINK:** [www.warchild.co.uk/wc\\_onelove.html](http://www.warchild.co.uk/wc_onelove.html)  
**R.I.Y.L:** War Child's *Help* compilation, *NME*

# WEIRD RECORD

The Delicate Sound Of Bong Hits



Last year saw numerous atrocities committed in the name of paying tribute to Pink Floyd: bluegrass versions of *The Wall*, electronic tributes, goth tributes, Roger Waters's "In The Flesh" tour and so forth. Just when you were feeling desensitized by all the horror, along comes *Dub Side Of The Moon* to remind you what it feels like. The Easy Star All-Stars recast each and every song from Pink Floyd's 1972 classic in a dub stylee, even replacing the cash registers of "Money" with bubbling bongos and coughing rastas. The result—58 minutes of Floyd riffs crammed into stereotypical reggae formats, buried in intense reverb—is only slightly more enjoyable than *The Division Bell*. (And it even syncs to *The Wizard Of Oz*!) Bonus tracks are included for the masochist in you, but we can't seem to find "Step It Pon The Rastaman Scene" on our original copies of *Dark Side*. The lunatic is on the grass, indeed. >>>CAM'RON DAVIS

Elbow and the Polyphonic Spree both tapped to remix Peter Gabriel's "More Than This" for an upcoming single • Universal rappers like Warren G and Master P will

# Answer Me

**Nick Cave** on songs with a satanic number of verses and the glory of the man in black. No, not the Goths at his shows, Johnny Cash.



It's been a good year for Nick Cave: He did a sold-out tour of the U.S. and Australia and did a duet with one of his heroes, Johnny Cash. In between he found a single week to make his 12th record with the Bad Seeds, *Nocturama* (Anti), an album that wraps a decade's worth of incarnations into one dark and beautiful package. And how many goth icons do you know who're willing to dress up as Bill Gates for a laugh? >>>TOM MALLON

**What was it like recording with Johnny Cash? How did it come about?**

Rick Rubin called me when I was in L.A. and asked if I'd like to sing a song with Johnny Cash. And I said, "What does he want me to sing?" And he said, "Anything you like." I was just sitting there thinking, "What the fuck am I going to sing, what does he mean anything I like?" And my violinist, Warren Ellis, was playing some Hank Williams, and he said, "Sing that." So I went in there and said, "Do you know, Hank Williams's 'I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry?'" And Johnny goes, "Well, of course I do." The

band started up, we sang it and that was that. We also did a version of "Get Along Home, Little Cindy." He was a lot older, and I guess weaker, than I had expected to see him, but when he started to sing it was just all power, all strength. It was an extraordinary thing to see. And an incredibly beautiful man... I guess for all of us there will be two or three things that have happened in our lives that you can say, "Well, at least that happened." One of them was that I got married to my current wife, the other that I have a whole lot of really beautiful children. The other one was that I recorded with someone like Johnny Cash.

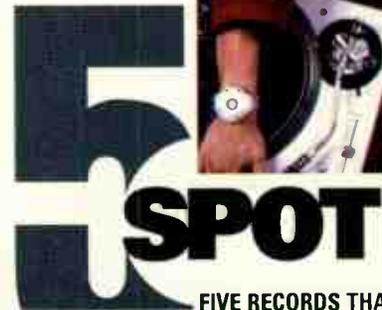
**How are you going to remember all the words to "Babe I'm On Fire" live? It's got eight verses and is over 10 minutes long.**

Well there's a lot more than that. That was the edited version that you got there. There were twice as many verses... I don't know. I'll have a girl in a bikini and cue cards or something.

**And you made a video for it? Will it get released?**

Yeah, I suppose so. I don't know if anyone will play it; it's obscene and it's too long... 18 minutes or something like that. But we're basically dressing up as all the different characters in the song. It's very good; it's very funny. Some people will probably find it amusing. We certainly did, making it. Dressing up as Bill Gates or the President of the United States or the "menstruating Jewess" or the "hymen-busting Zulu." ...It was very clever. Beautifully done. I also had my head actually being shitted out of [Bad Seeds drummer] Jim Sclavunos's naked backside as the "hooligan mooner." It's fun.

**That we have to see.**  
It brought us closer together.



## FIVE RECORDS THAT SCRATCH MIXMASTER MIKE'S ITCH

### 1. Miles Davis, *Autumn Leaves*

He helps me meditate and get into a musical state of mind. It's also a musical learning chart; I study the patterns of his horn playing.

### 2. Jimi Hendrix, *Are You Experienced?*

He's so diverse on this record, with many flavors and colors of music. "Foxy Lady" is one of my favorite tunes because it reminds me of my girl.

### 3. Public Enemy, *It Takes A Nation Of Millions To Hold Us Back*

It gets me into an aggressive state. It's one of my favorite records made because it's all original and where hip-hop was at its finest point.

### 4. Johnny Cash, *Essentials*

This is good roadtrip music. I'm doing a lot of driving on tour right now and it really fits in with the view. He's just plain psycho.

### 5. Muddy Waters, *Folk Singer*

It matches the weather. When it's raining or snowing driving through the country, it sets the moods.

*If Mike's Return Of The Cyklops (Asphodel) reminds you of your girl, you've got problems.*

soon appear on bags of "Rap Snacks" potato chips • DJ Shadow announces that he is also contributing tracks to Zack de la Rocha's solo debut \*\*\*\*\*



## LONGWAVE

I 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

MADE THE FIRST CUT

10

COMPETED IN NYC

3

GO HEAD-TO-HEAD IN L.A.

1

DREAM BECOMES A REALITY

## THE FINAL 3.

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# NEW MUSIC AWARD





## 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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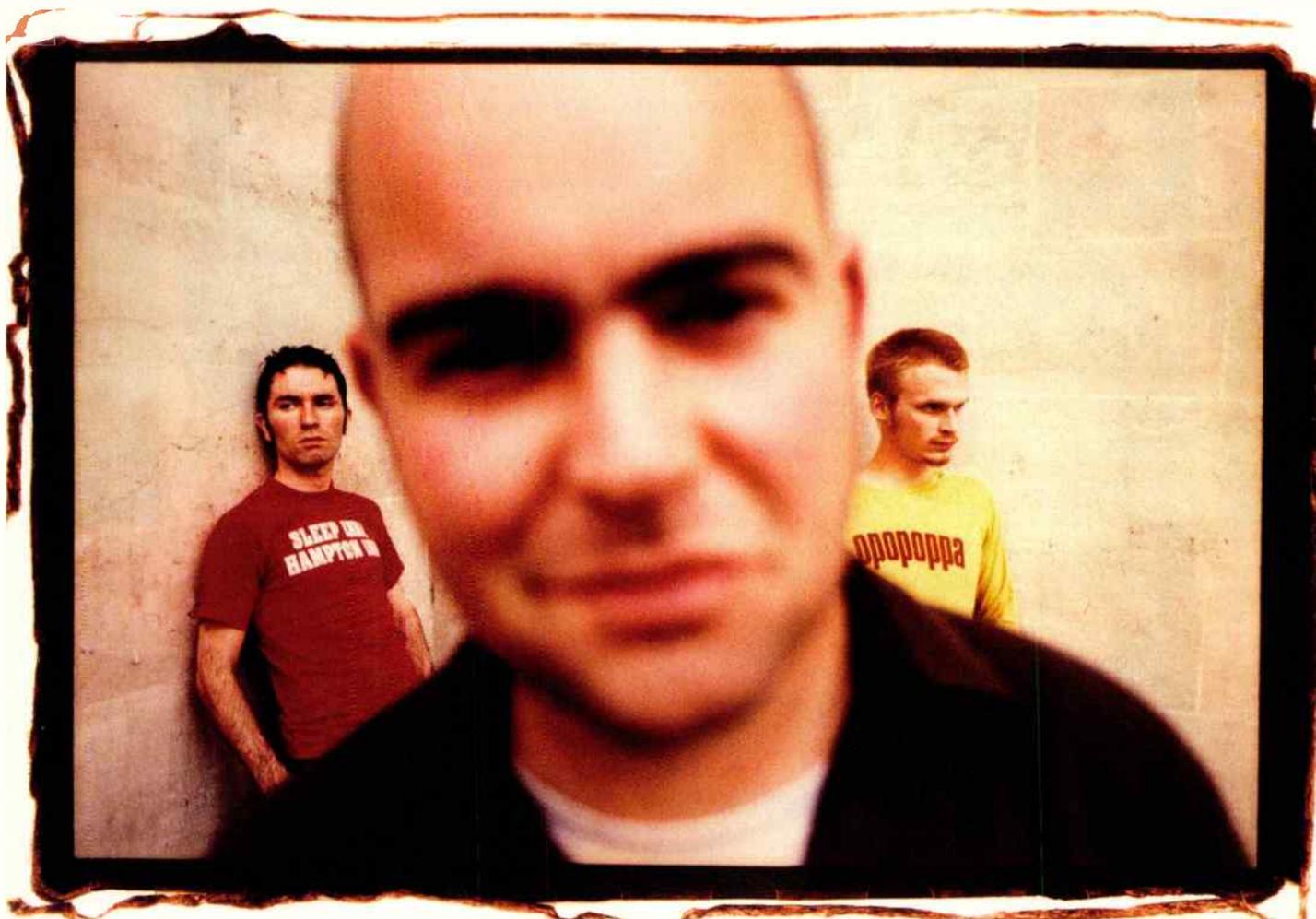
RANCID ★ GARBAGE ★ METALLICA

MARILYN MANSON ★ PETE YORN

GREEN DAY ★ THE PRETENDERS ★ ROONEY

THE OFFSPRING ★ TOM WAITS

IN STORES TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11



# MCLUSKY

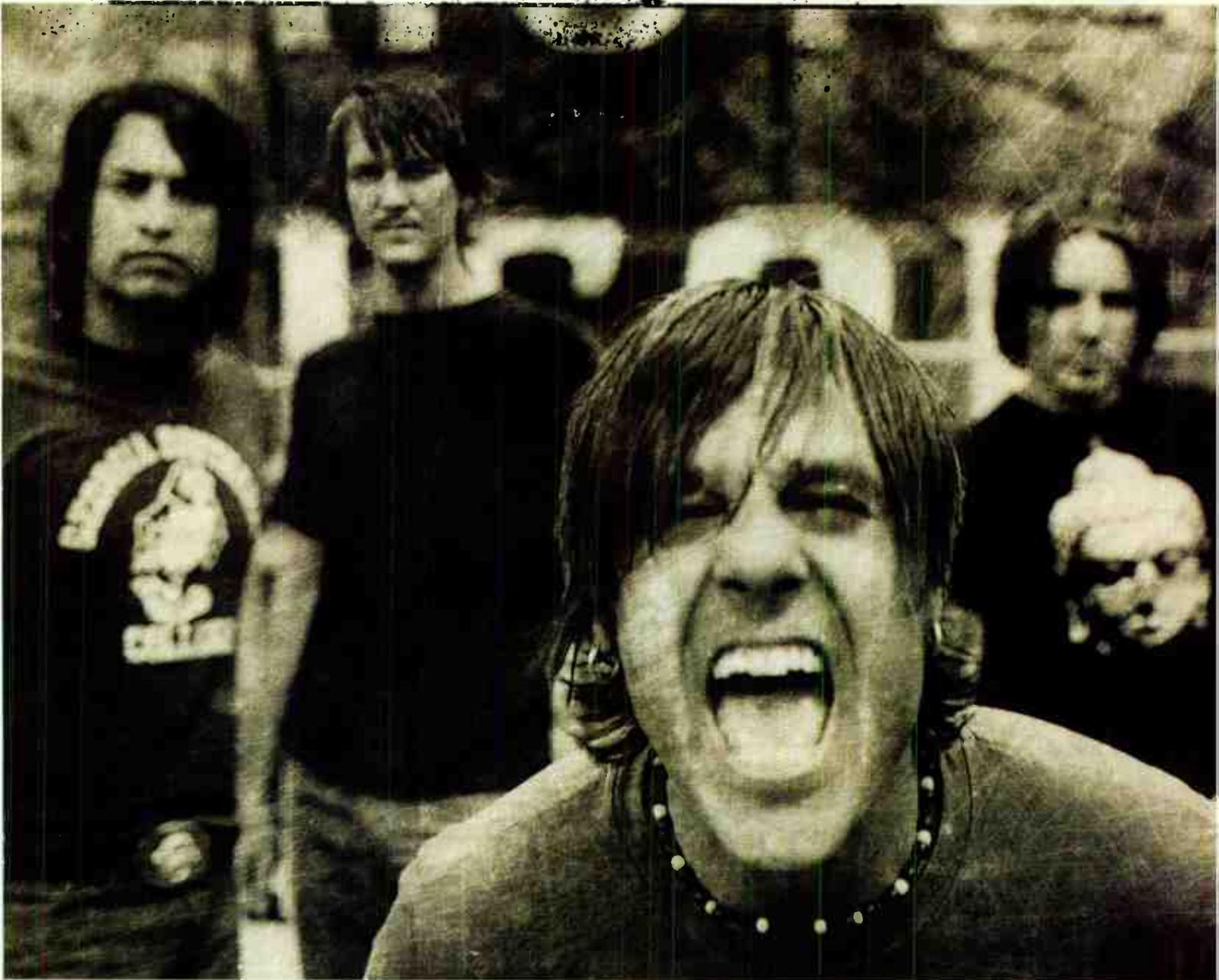
**R**ummaging for an ashtray in his Cardiff, Wales home, Mclusky guitarist/vocalist Andy Falkous seems far more subdued and solicitous than the unhinged beast who shrieks his way through *Mclusky Do Dallas* (Too Pure-Beggars Banquet), a relentless barrage of bouncy yet caustic tunes that recall the heyday of bands like the Jesus Lizard and Three Johns. Mclusky's profanity-peppered lyrics ("We honestly didn't realize how much swearing was on it until we went back and listened to it," Falkous claims, "but my mother still says she's proud, so fine by me.") are chock-full of British cultural references, beginning with the trio's name itself. "It comes from a British TV series, *Grange Hill*," Falkous explains. "Mrs. Mclusky was the headmistress. She was a good woman, hard but fair, kind of a less poncey Jean-Luc Picard." Mclusky's

throbbing basslines have led some to more primal conclusions. "A few people have told me 'Lightsabre Cocksucking Blues' is their favorite song to have sex to," Falkous says of *Dallas*'s lead track and radio-unfriendly U.K. single. "That's a real stop-start rhythmic kind of sex. You'd need someone with a hi-hat keeping time in the corner of the room." It's also only 111 seconds long. "What do they say, four minutes is the average? You don't want be coming at the beginning of [track three] 'Collagen Rock.'" Having briefly stormed U.S. clubs in late 2002, Mclusky will test the resilience of Falkous's vocal cords in March with a more extensive Stateside tour. The trio also hopes to reunite with Steve Albini for *Dallas*'s follow-up, which Falkous says will be "a little less power chord-y, more chaotic." More chaotic? Bolt down the valuables. >>>GLEN SARVADY

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## VIKTER DUPLAIX

This is from the '80s, right?" asks Vikter Duplaix, as the Dave Clarke remix of Fischerspooner's "Emerge" surfaces on the jukebox in the SoHo Grand's bar. No, Vikter, it's only a toddler. "Why can't people come with something fresh?" he blinks, amazed. His debut album, *International Affairs* (Hollywood), doesn't necessarily answer why—it shows how. A soulful mishmash of deep house, rock, hip-hop, vintage soul, 21st century skitter 'n' blues and Afrobeat, *Affairs* suggests the demented divergence of Prince colliding with the idealistic positivism of early '90s dance music. "The record is about sharing some of the finer things I've seen, some of the finer emotions

that I've experienced around the world," says Duplaix, whose eclectic DJ sets have earned him global accolades. The 30-year-old got an early start in high school, hanging out with the likes of Jazzy Jeff and spinning rap sets in the burgeoning Philadelphia hip-hop scene. He's produced neo-soul icons like Erykah Badu, Jill Scott and Musiq, but singing on and helming his own record has proven liberating. "I want to be an artist in control of my own destiny and feel like I'm making a solid investment into myself," he says. "I'm not a producer in spirit. I'm an artist in spirit who's been producing for a while. I'm not a studio rat anymore. I outgrew it." >>>RICHARD M. JUZWIAK

*"When a band starts life at this level  
there's great hope ahead."*

*—The New York Times*

# THE BAD PLUS

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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, LEE SOUTHALL, NICK POWER



**H**ow 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."

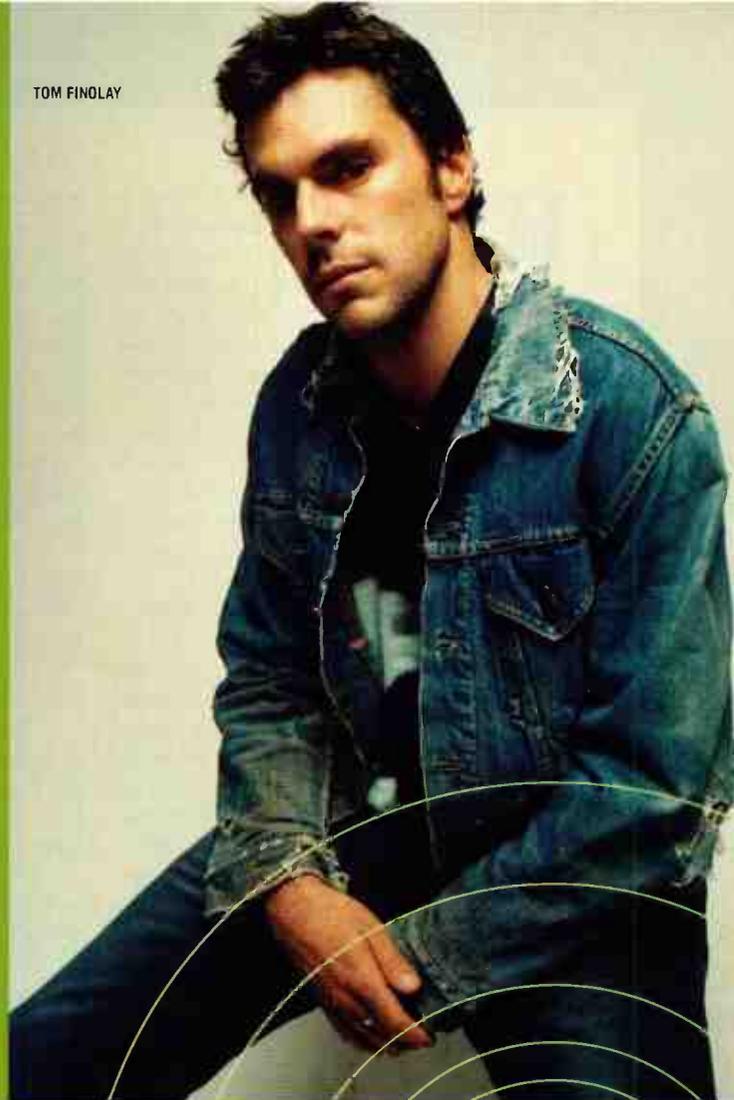
"And the stability," adds Ryder-Jones.

"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." **NMM**

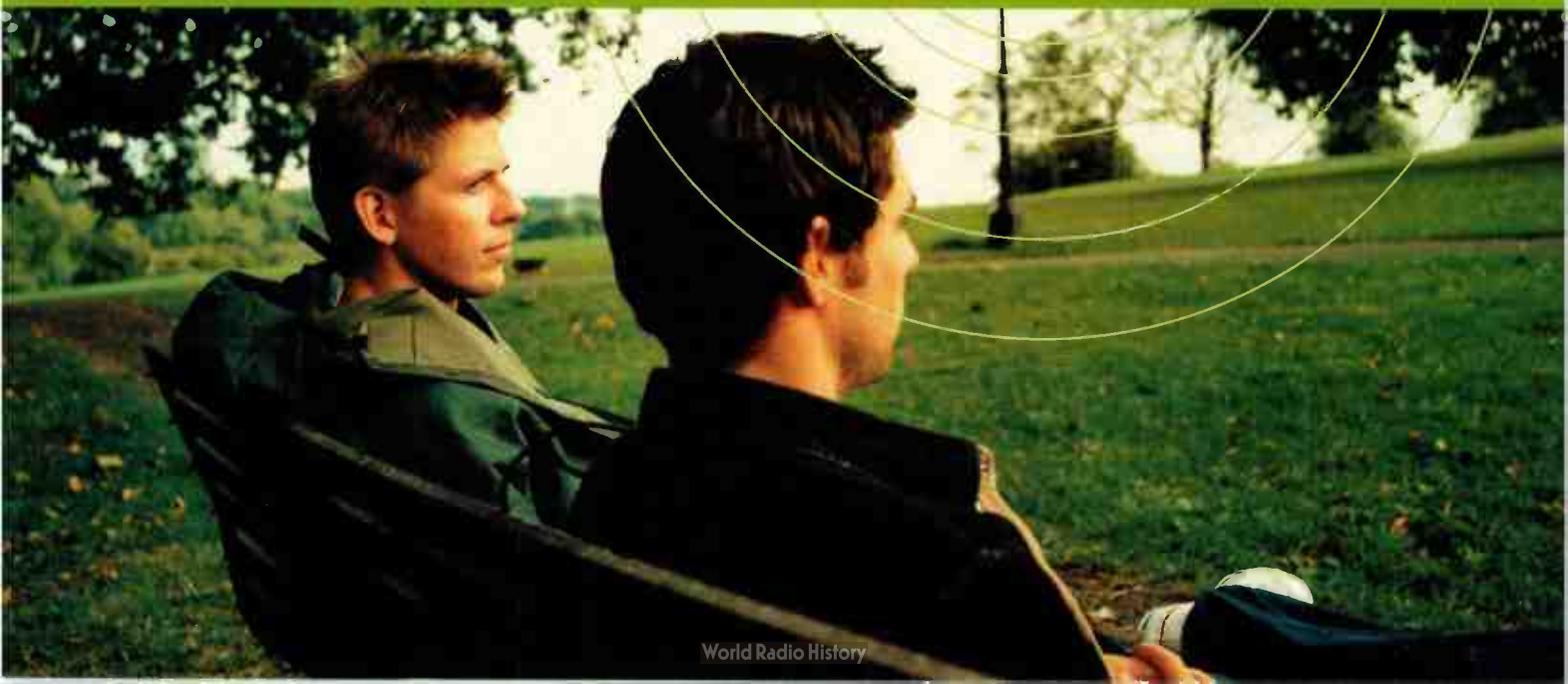
TOM FINLAY

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 Kriminal. 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.

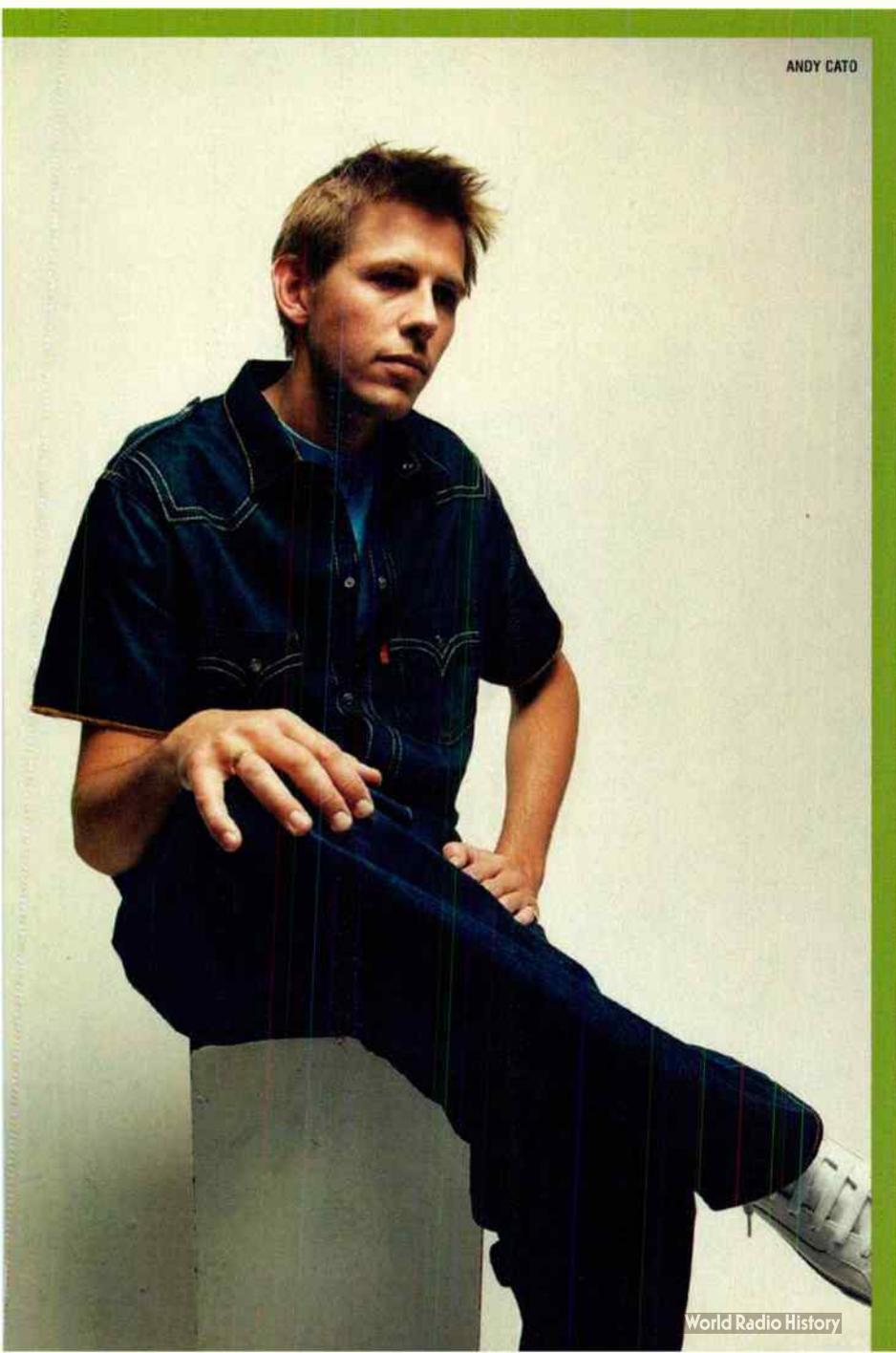
"She's got this spellbinding voice," says Cato. "When Richie first heard it he went very quiet. He took on a very intense look. Apparently in the '70s, Fairport Convention and he did loads of gigs and he and Sandy were quite close."

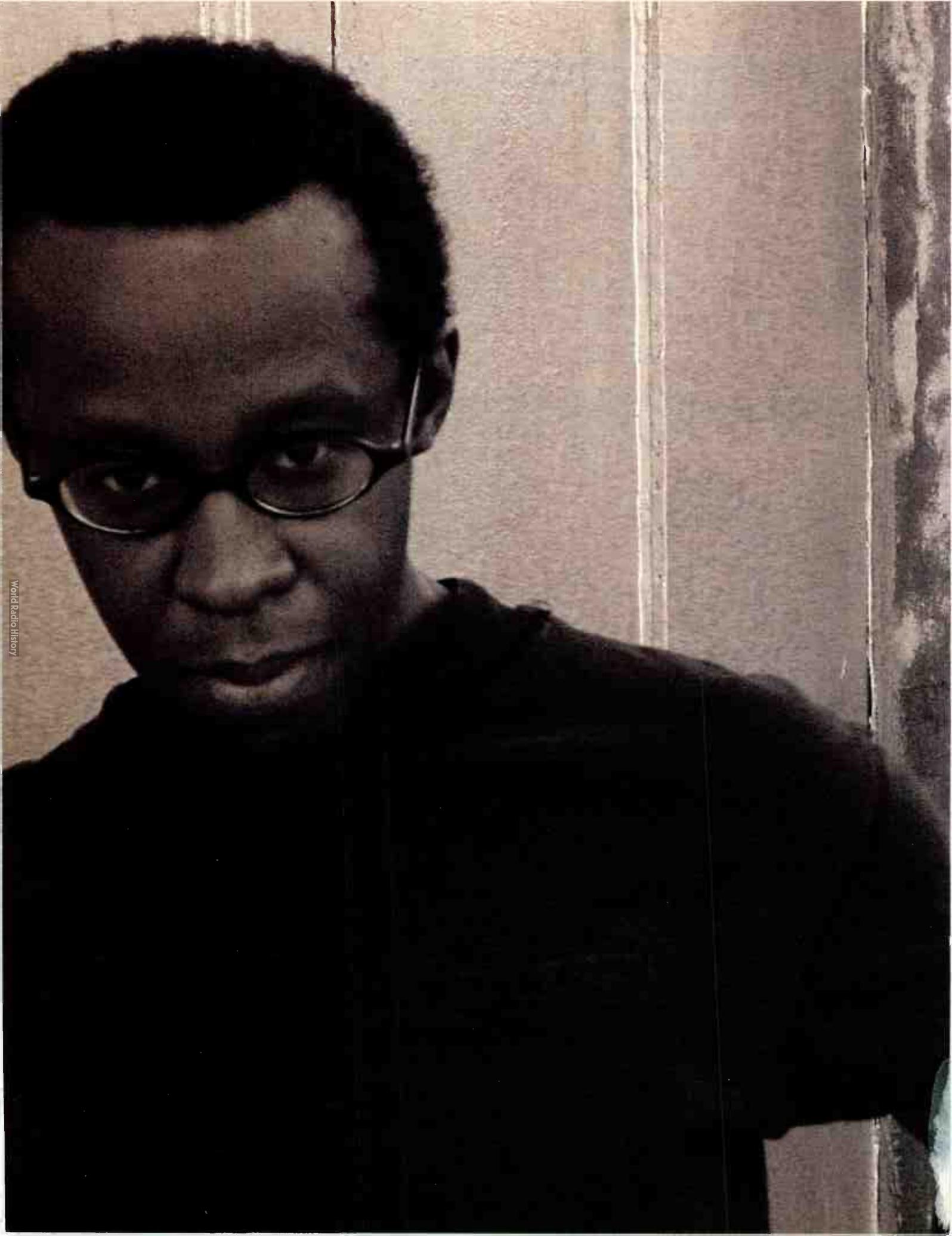
The track also highlights Groove Armada's increased focus on the song and the singer. "I tried cutting up her vocal sample because the timing is all over the place," says Cato. "But I realized that this song would have to have no fixed tempo. Everything is going to have to be constructed around that 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**





# ELECTRIC COMPANY

Pianist Matthew Shipp mixes it up with Spring Heel Jack, Beans and El-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**

# CALLA A Little Night IV Music

STORY: TOM MALLON  
PHOTO: ALI SMITH

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

**C**alla 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

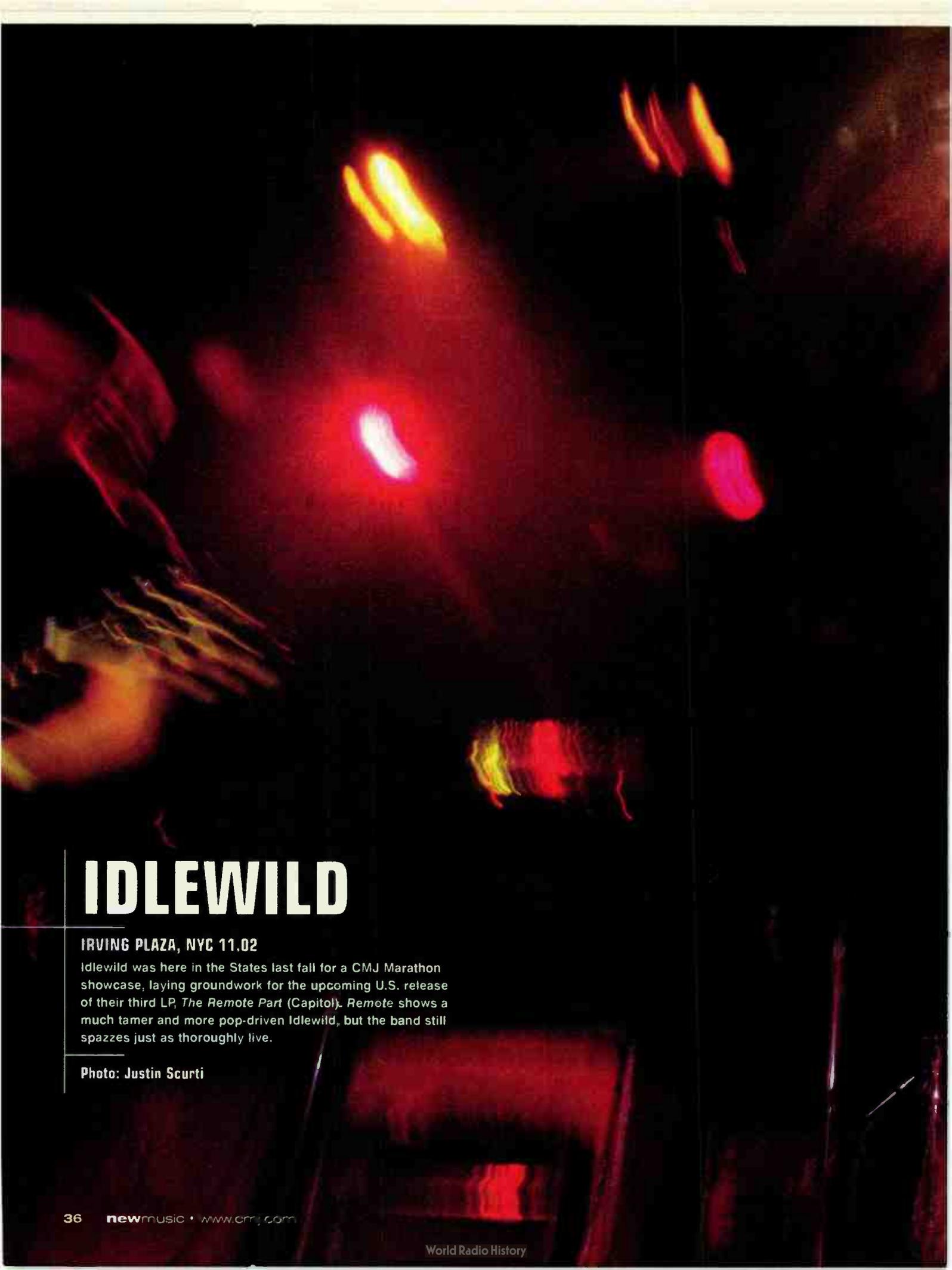
# ARMED

# AUDIO

STORY: TOM LANHAM • PHOTO: DANNY CLINCH

# WARFARE

**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 ON THIS MONTH'S **CD**



# IDLEWILD

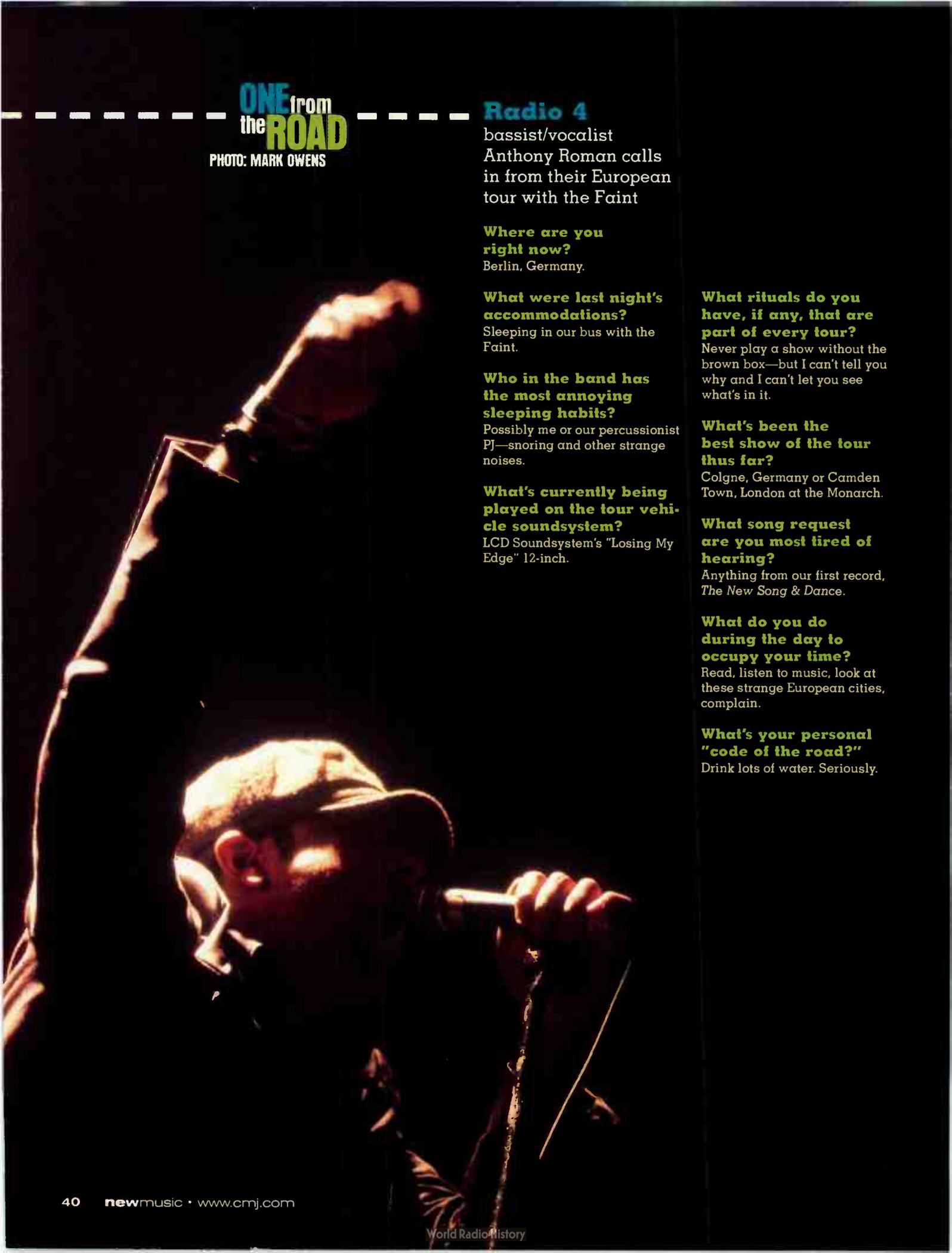
IRVING PLAZA, NYC 11.02

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



World Radio History



**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 vehicle 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.



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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" 4:26  
from *Boomslang* (Music)
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* (B-Girl)
9. **NADA SURF** "Inside Of Love" 4:58  
from *Let Go* (Barsuk)
10. **BAXTER DURY** "Fungus Hedge" 4:33  
from *Len Parrot's Memorial Lift* (Rough Trade)

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cut along dotted lines and insert into jewel case



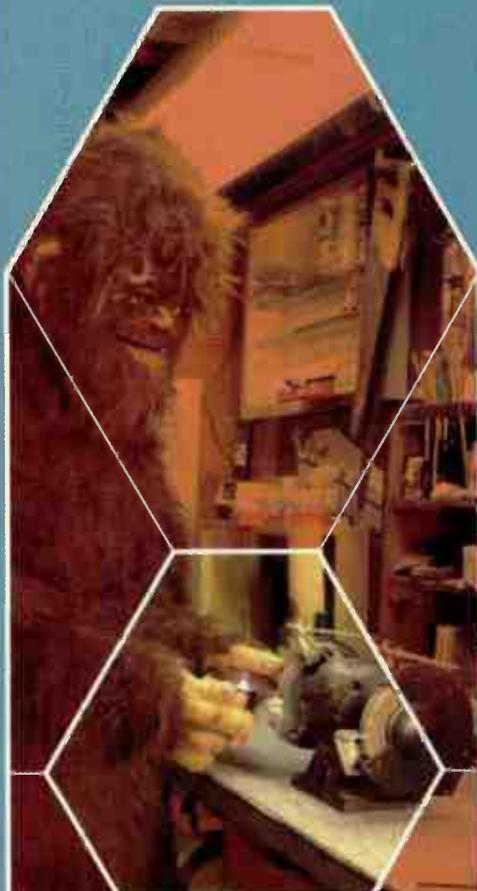
## DISC 1

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* (Anticon)
14. **HOMUNCULUS** "Here And There" 3:33  
from *Words* (Howling)
15. **JON LANGFORD + HIS SADIES** "Solitaire Song" 2:42  
from *The Mayors 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 *Valkyries* (Le Grand Magistery)
12. **THE WARLOCKS** "Hurricane Heart Attack" 5:35  
from *Phoenix Arkham* (Birdman)
13. **THE GREENHORNES** "The Way It's Meant To Be" 2:55  
from *Over White* (Telstar)
14. **VARISTOR** "Need" 4:38  
from *01.28.02* (Hey Frankie)
15. **AS TALL AS LIONS** "Break Blossom" 3:57  
from *Blood And Appearances* (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 *Mores Of Twilight* (Silverthree Sound)
18. **ILYA** "Disturbed" 4:25  
from *Poise Is The Greater Architect* (Ilya)

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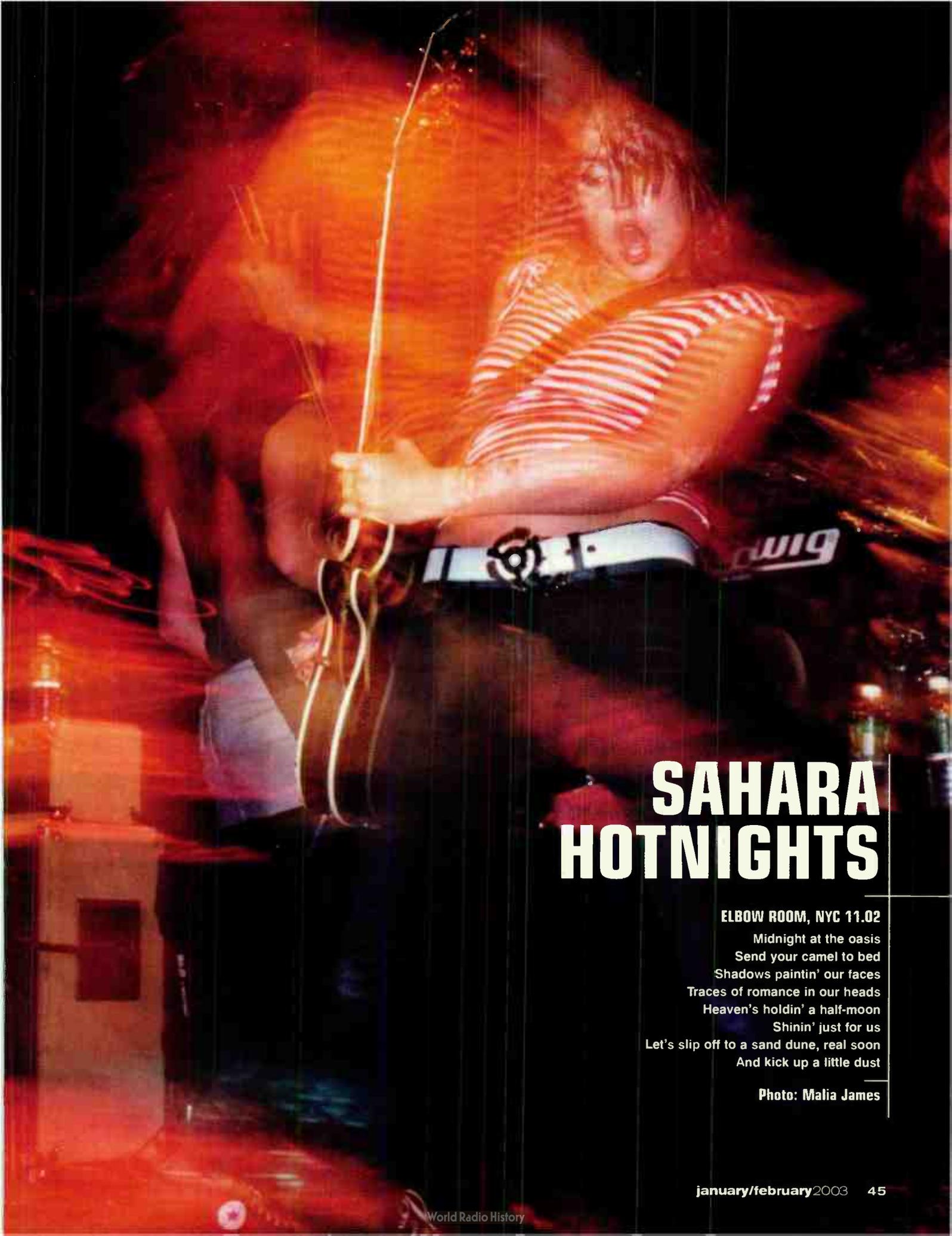
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# SAHARA HOTNIGHTS

**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**



ONE from  
the ROAD

PHOTO: RICHARD AGUDELO

**Ours** frontman Jimmy Gnecco gets *Precious* (DreamWorks) on the road with the Wallflowers.

**Where are you right now?**  
Hartford, Connecticut.

**What were last night's accommodations?**  
The back lounge of the bus.

**Who in the band has the most annoying sleeping habits?**  
Dave [Milone, guitarist]. Though I wouldn't call them annoying. Just interesting.

**What's currently being played on the tour vehicle soundsystem?**  
Citizen Cope and Jellyfish.

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

**What song request are you most tired of hearing?**  
"Free Bird."

**What do you do during the day to occupy your time?**  
Mostly think about the next record.

**What's your personal "code of the road?"**  
What happens on the road stays on the road.





# 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.

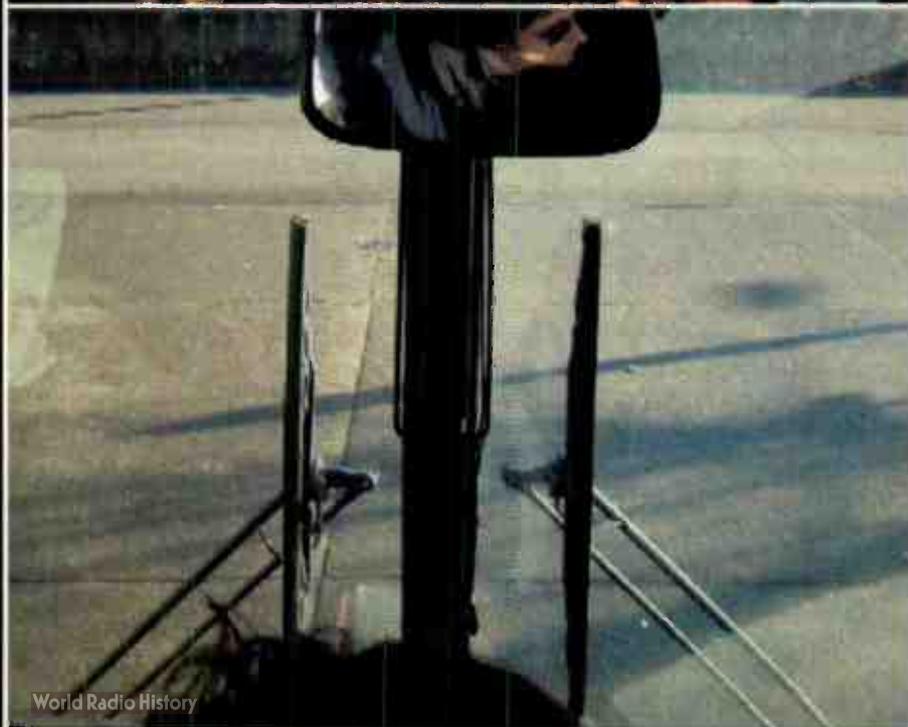
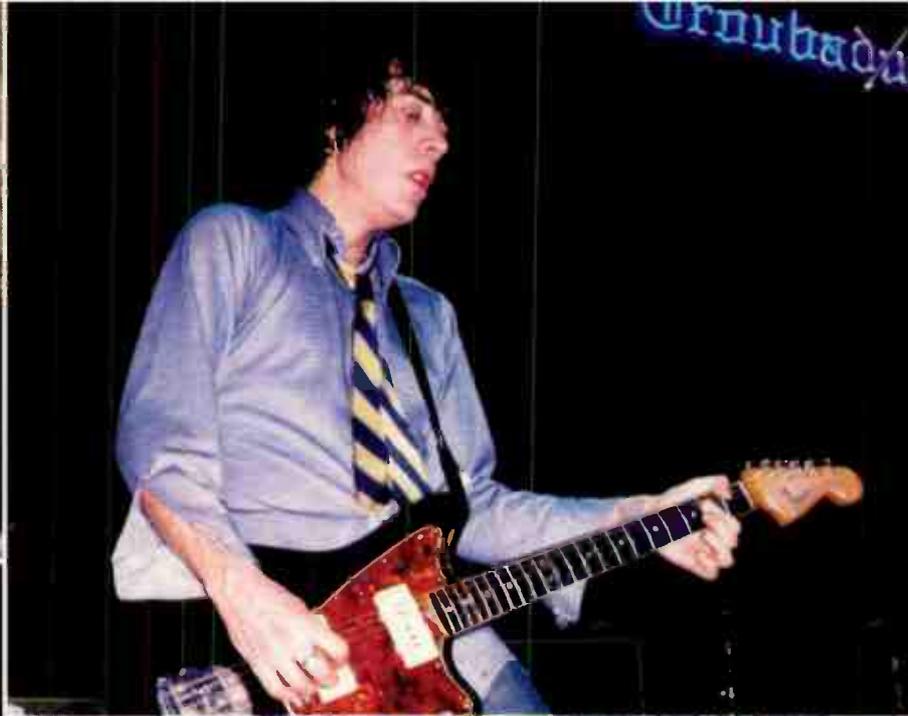
**Adam:** Yeah, we've actually done that several times. Brian [Young, drummer] has gotten left twice. In '99 we left him in Baltimore and drove all the way to Boston for some radio festival and honestly didn't know he wasn't on the bus until like 15 minutes before show time. We figured he was in catering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

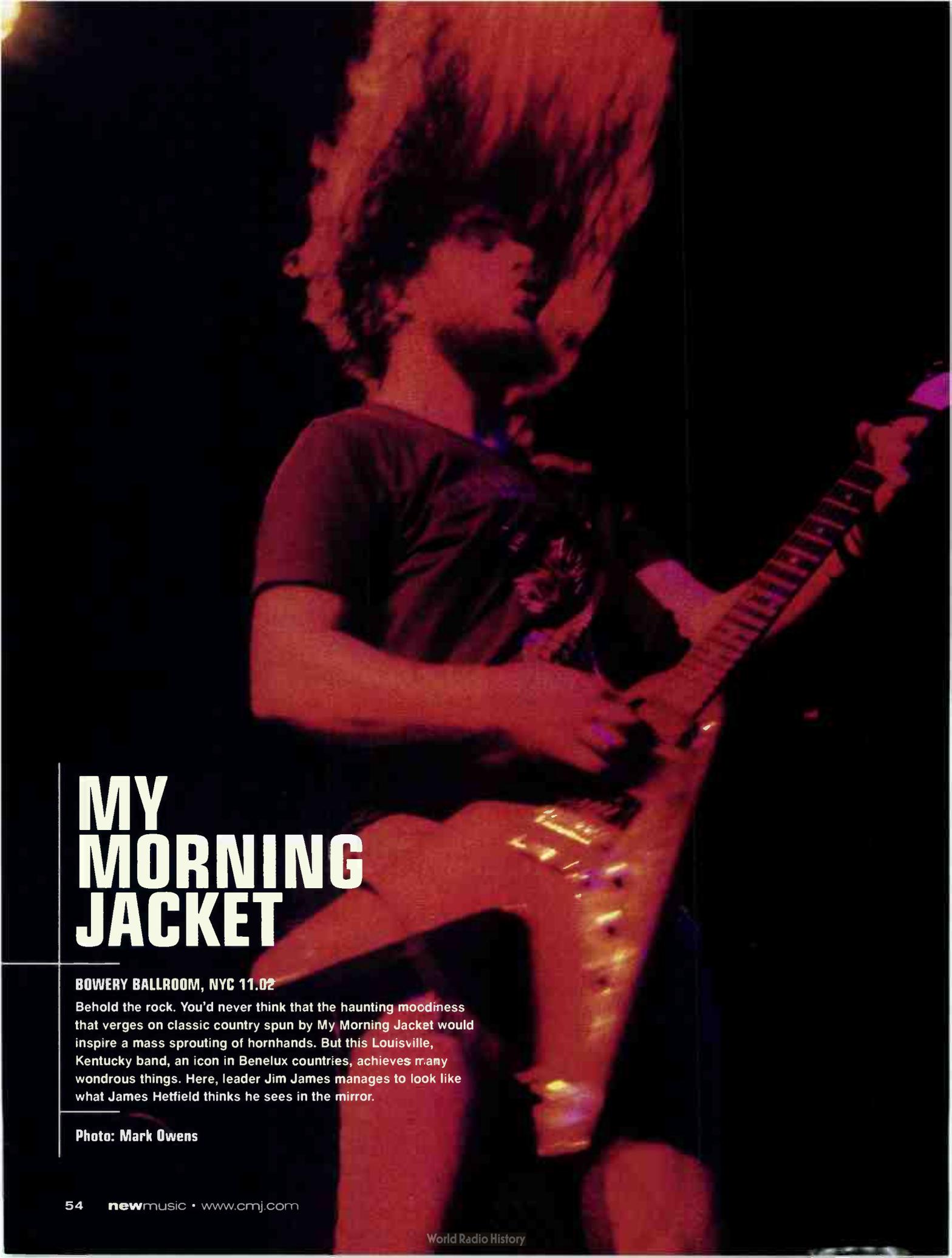
**Damian:** What'd you do for the show?

**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**

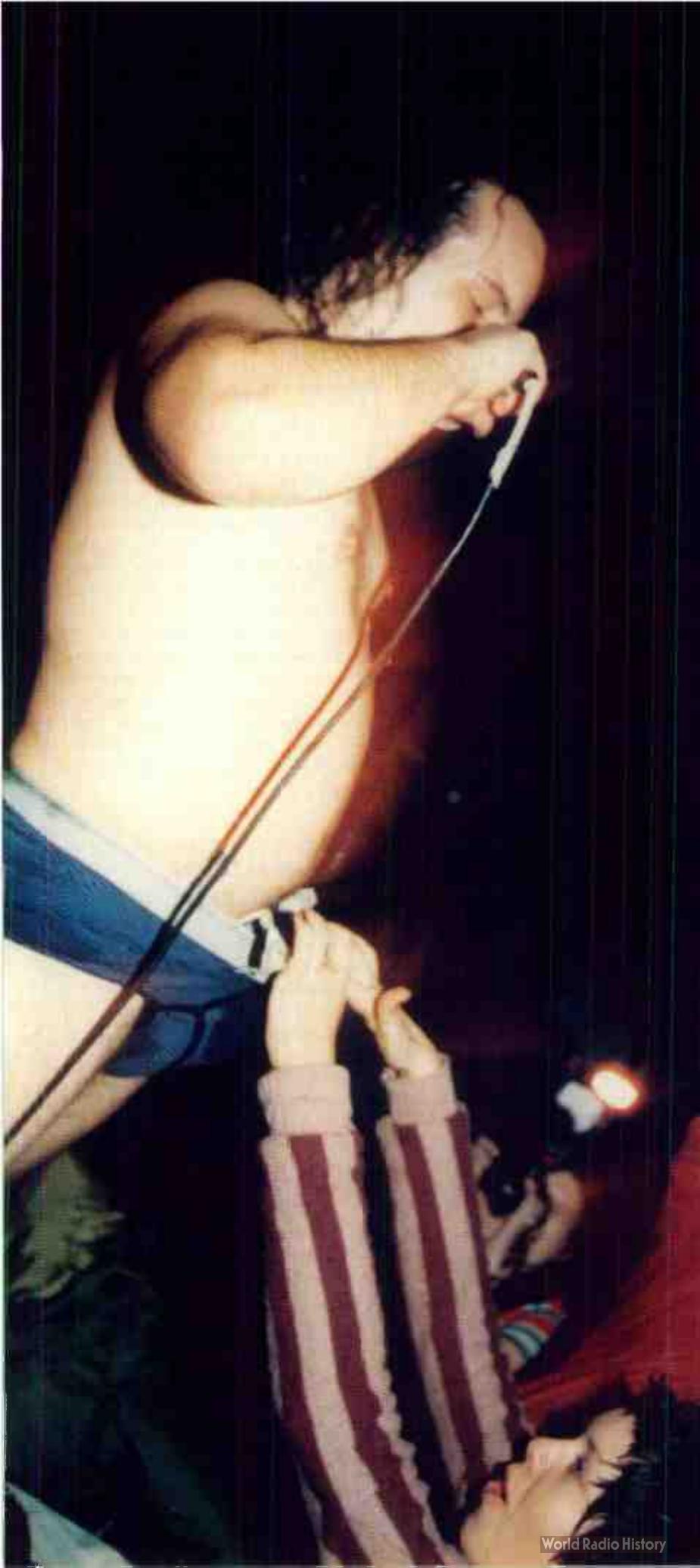


PHOTO: TAD KUBLER

## 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](http://www.barbados.org).

Always check newspapers **The Nation** ([www.nationnews.com](http://www.nationnews.com)) or **The Barbados Advocate** ([www.barbadosadvocate.com](http://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 moko, 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.

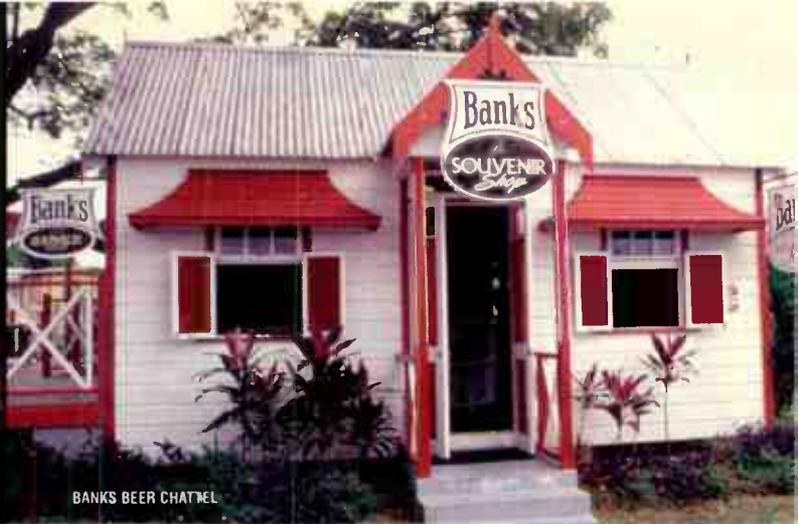
**Stopoff for some rootsy reggae:** TEMPLE YARD (Cheapside, Bridgetown, St. Michael). Rastafarian handiwork and crafts, some serious rootsy sounds and great Ital (vegetarian) food.

**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 CHATMEL

**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](http://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.sunsplashtours.com](http://www.sunsplashtours.com).

## OUT WITH THE IN-CROWD:

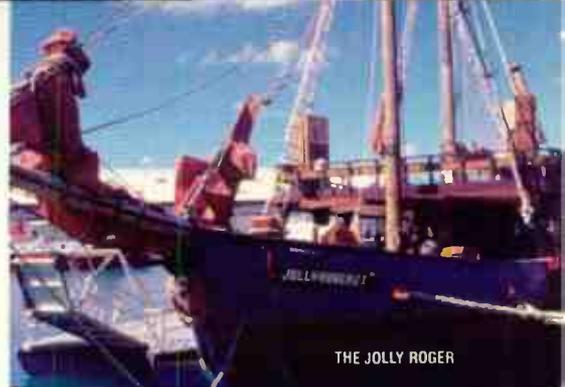
**DEREK WILKIE**, owner, CRS Music: "For me it has to be Bathsheba, on the East Coast. The beauty and serenity of the surroundings clear my mind and allow me to think straight. It empowers me. We have to understand and appreciate that embracing nature is becoming part of the real world."

**MIKEY HULSMER**, 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



BUGGY



BARBADIAN CHANTER BUGGY AT THE SPRING BREAK LIME MUSIC FESTIVAL



**ALASKA!**

**Emotions**

B-Girl



**P**icture 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

Link

[www.pureyukon.com](http://www.pureyukon.com)

File Under

Into the wild

R.I.Y.L.

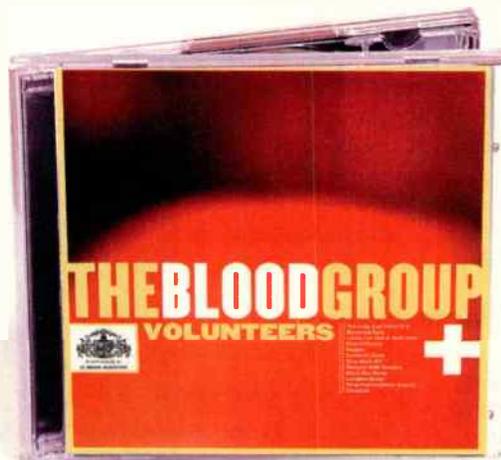
Sebadoh, Freedy Johnston, Idaho

**THE BLOOD GROUP**

**Volunteers**

Le Grand Magistry

**I**t'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 loooooooooooooong 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.magistry.com](http://www.magistry.com)

File Under

Electric ennui

R.I.Y.L.

Her Space Holiday, Portishead,

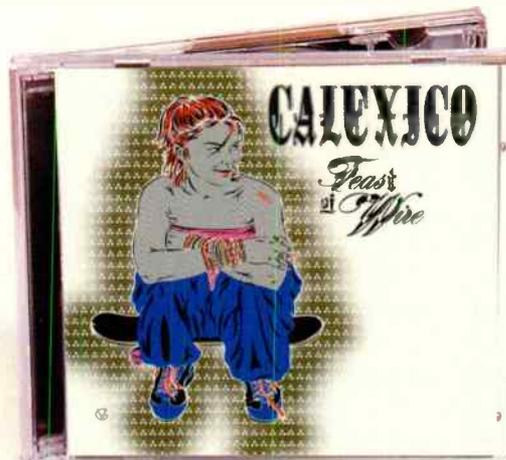
Depeche Mode, Mono

## 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](http://www.casadecalexico.com)

File Under

Pistol-dueling music for  
urban hipsters

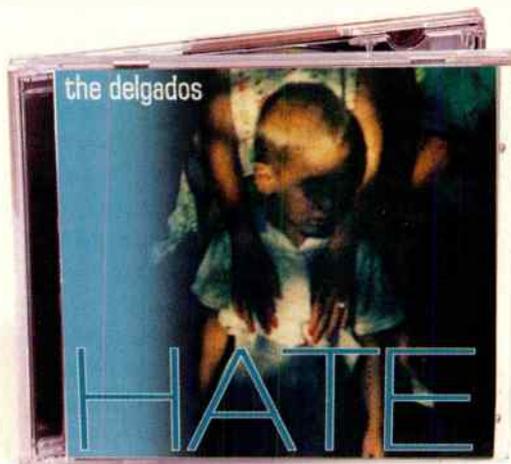
R.I.Y.L.

Giant Sand, Palace, Lambchop

## THE DELGADOS

### Hate

Beggars Banquet



Link

[www.delgados.co.uk](http://www.delgados.co.uk)

File Under

Grandiose symphonic pop

R.I.Y.L.

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

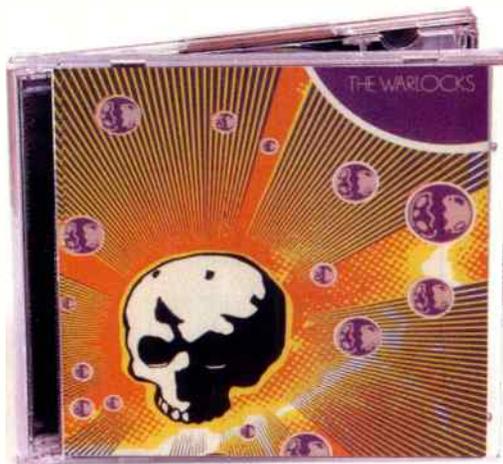
**H**ate, the fourth album from Scotland's Delgados, opens with a moment of cinematic strings, adds the massed voices of a choir, then crashes into the saturated pounding of tympani before Emma Pollock's lovely voice cuts through the grandiose din. "The Light Before We Land" is a thrilling beginning 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



Link

[www.thewarlocks.com](http://www.thewarlocks.com)

File Under

California State Acid Rehab Program

R.I.Y.L.

Spiritualized, Black Rebel

Motorcycle Club, Velvet Underground

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

## 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 fore-stalled. *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](http://www.denisonwitmer.com)

File Under

The city of unrequited love

R.I.Y.L.

Don Peris, Elliott Smith,

Duncan Sheik

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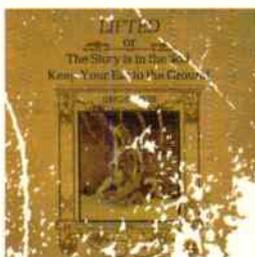
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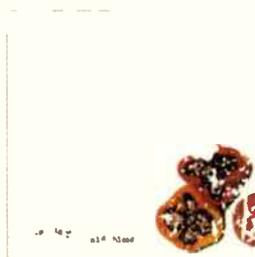
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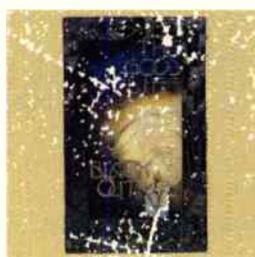
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World Radio History

# REVIEWS

**THE ALUMINUM GROUP**  
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 BLUEBIRD  
 BROKEBACK  
 CHRIS BUTLER  
 RY COODER & MANUEL GALBÁN  
 CROC SHOP  
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 DJ ME DJ YOU  
 BAXTER DURY  
 THE EXIES  
 THE GREENHORNS  
 HOMUNCULUS  
 LORNA HUNT  
 ILYA  
 KIMONE  
 LADDIO BOLOCKO  
 JON LANGFORD AND HIS SADIES  
 BOB LOG III  
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 JOHNNY MARR & THE HEALERS  
 THE MICROPHONES  
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 JASON MORPHEW  
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 LOU REED  
 THE SEA & CAKE  
 THE SHARP THINGS  
 VIRGIL SHAW  
 SOLE  
 TOBIN SPROUT  
 MICK TURNER  
 VARISTOR  
 VARIOUS ARTISTS:  
 We're A Happy Family: A Tribute To The Ramones  
 WHY MAKE CLOCKS  
 ZION I



## THE ALUMINUM GROUP

**Happyness** *Wishing Tree*

Who hasn't hummed along to music in the grocery store? Thoughts often wander when one is scanning the label on a soup can or the headlines of the Weekly World News. Seconds later, in a moment of weakness, a piped-in Alan Parsons Project melody infiltrates unsuspecting ears then sneaks out through sealed lips. It happens to everyone. After all, the tunes are familiar, even infectious, and homogenized to soothe the mind and lull it into a kind of defenseless stupor. Brothers Frank and John Navin, better known as the Aluminum Group, give the world *Happyness*, another collection of pop gems for the next generation of grocery store shoppers.

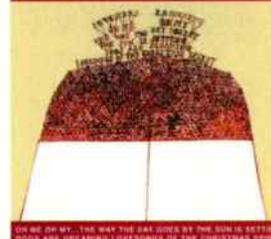
Link  
[www.wishingtreerecords.com](http://www.wishingtreerecords.com)

File Under  
**Snacking could ruin your dinner**  
 R.I.Y.L.

Saint Etienne, Stereolab, the Alan Parsons Project's "Eye In The Sky"

With guest appearances from John Herndon (Tortoise, the Sea And Cake) and John McEntire (Tortoise, Stereolab) and the help of what could be an old Casio keyboard stuck on Jazzanova, the two build smart pop tunes out of innocuous background music. Biting lyrics occasionally belie the album's flittering beats and '70s A.M. radio underpinnings, though most tracks (particularly "We're Both Hiding" and "Oxygen") strike a nice balance. Too much *Happyness* may inspire cravings for fluorescent lights, shiny buffed floors and copious amounts of Easy Cheese or, frankly, a more substantial listen. But consumed in small amounts the Aluminum Group is pure delectable pop goodness. >>>NORM ELROD

## DEVENDRA BANHART



## DEVENDRA BANHART

**Oh Me Oh My...** *Young God*

With little more than an acoustic guitar and double-tracked vocals, Devendra Banhart conjures a weird, unsettling world on *Oh Me Oh My* (full title: *Oh Me Oh My...The Way The Day Goes By The Sun Is Setting Dogs Are Dreaming Lovesongs Of The Christmas Spirit*). Banhart hails from Texas, but his is the Texas of iconoclasts like Roky Erickson and Daniel Johnston—outsiders with a loose grip on reality and a flair for memorable melodies. *Oh Me Oh My* is full of psychedelic reveries and surrealistic songlets—"Lend Me Your Teeth" just repeats, insistently, threateningly, "I'm

Link  
[www.younggodrecords.com](http://www.younggodrecords.com)

File Under  
**Lo-fi outsider psychedelic folk**  
 R.I.Y.L.

Tyrannosaurus Rex, Syd Barrett, Daniel Johnston

lost in the dark/ Lend me your teeth" for just under two minutes. "Soon Is Good" is a dead-ringer for starry-eyed, pre-T. Rex Marc Bolan; when Banhart locks into some la-di-da-das, you could swear you're hearing a lost Bolan demo, especially with the four-track hiss that's present throughout the album. But Banhart doesn't seem to imitate anyone consciously: *Oh Me Oh My* reveals a private, cryptic mind, one that's both beautiful and strange. The tender "Pumpkin Seeds" is a fingerpicked folk lament that hinges on the line "there's a lot of love, but not the kind I need." Conversely, perversely, "Nice People" turns "you certainly are nice people" into a screeching accusation. Banhart's high, wavering voice and quirky imagery make *Oh Me Oh My* a compelling, discomfiting listen. >>>STEVE KLINGE



## BITTER, BITTER WEEKS

**Bitter, Bitter Weeks** My Pal God

If you had to guess the time and place this 12-song acoustic collection was crafted, it wouldn't be unjustified to think of England in the mid-1960s. There's just enough melodic whimsy and unadorned acoustic strumming to suggest that period when folksingers were discovering pop music. Except you'd be way, way off. *Bitter, Bitter Weeks* is the current work of one Brian McTear, a record producer and recording engineer (Swearing At Motorists, Burning Brides) from Philadelphia. Hardly merry ye olde anyplace. Yet the album, recorded simply with little

reverb and primarily one microphone, sounds like a distant work. It's partly McTear's voice, a gentle childlike instrument that expresses fresh wonder with an unusual accent, not unlike the frail underpinning of Alex Chilton or Sunny Day Real Estate's Jeremy Enigk. As McTear professes, "These are the best days of my life," the cynicism underneath the tune hardly seems real. But the primitive recording approach also defines the album. Just as the Palace Brothers' early work attempted to replicate the raw feeling of an Alan Lomax field recording, *Bitter, Bitter Weeks* uses its rudimentary nature for charm. Guests occasionally add backup harmonies, pedal steel and harmonica, but the overall vibe is one of solitude, of a world best left to progress at its own pace, undisturbed. >>>ROB O'CONNOR

Link

[www.bitterbitterweeks.com](http://www.bitterbitterweeks.com)

File Under

Lilting acoustic folk

R.I.Y.L.

Donovan, Ray Davies,

Jeremy Enigk, Alex Chilton



## BLUEBIRD

**Hot Blood** Dim Mak

While some bands tend to drift further toward the fringes with each release, California's Bluebird got through the awkward phase early on, and proof that they've matured into a clear-cut yet still uncompromising act is right here on their latest and most easily digestible offering. Seemingly following the lead of sludge wizards-turned-MTV-rockers Queens Of The Stone Age, *Hot Blood* sees Bluebird ditching all but the basics of their earlier post-hardcore sound and churning out edgy riff-rock worthy of an arena full of pumping fists. Dark grooves stand beside the mellifluous vocals of Sam

Link

[www.bluebirdsounds.com](http://www.bluebirdsounds.com)

File Under

Proof the hardcore kids are

listening to pop music

R.I.Y.L.

Rival Schools, Queens Of The

Stone Age, Foo Fighters

Velde to create tunes that stumble in and out of a foreboding catchiness. Some of the disc's cheekier moments have an allegiance to Hot Snakes-style chaos, but on the whole, *Hot Blood* is an aggressive block of rock that plays it surprisingly safe (save for the forgettable guitar effects-riddled closer "Lillie May"). A cred-boosting guest appearance by Wayne Kramer must have been a nice experience for the boys in the band, but the best moments on the record come when the group tears through the no-frills rockers and leave nothing to the imagination. Here, the band takes a step forward by not trying to stretch in the name of angularity. If the commercial success of utilitarian rock like the Queens and Foos means anything, simply rocking out might just be coming back. >>>PETER O'ANGELO



## CHRIS BUTLER

**The Museum Of Me** Future Fossil

Multi-instrumentalist Chris Butler cut his teeth in the mid-'70s with Ohio art-punks Tin Huey, and later achieved success (if not fame) as the Svengali behind Patty Donahue's Trilby in the Waitresses. Since then, he's devoted himself to preserving the dodo birds of technological progress, breathing new life into antiquated, even "obsolete" recording devices: Neumann vinyl-cutting lathes, monophonic tape decks, and notoriously delicate mid-century wire recorders (the kind Alan Lomax collected folk songs on) all figure in the making of *The Museum Of Me*. One song,

Link

[www.nutscape.com/ChrisButler](http://www.nutscape.com/ChrisButler)

File Under

Lost and found sound

R.I.Y.L.

They Might Be Giants, Brian

Wilson, Thomas Edison

the jug-bandish "Thinking About Them Girls," even combines digital techniques with a guitar-and-vocal performance waxed (literally!) onto a 100-year-old Edison cylinder. (The multitrack cassette and reel-to-reel machines that show up elsewhere aren't as outmoded just yet, but it won't be long.) What's fascinating isn't merely that these methods of reproducing sound make the listener aware of the recording process, but the way the 'nostalgic' sound quality rubs up against Butler's unmistakably contemporary songwriting sensibilities. An outstanding guitarist and lyricist (if a wobbly vocalist), Butler skewers the futility of human endeavor ("The Idiot Trail") and blue-collar politics ("The Bottom Of A Workingman's Beer") alike with cheerfully misanthropic wit. Imagine reading a hand-lettered edition of *Infinite Jest*, or watching *Seinfeld* through a stereopticon: The mismatches between medium and message on *The Museum Of Me* are almost that jarring. >>>FRANKLIN BRUNO



## RY COODER & MANUEL GALBÁN

**Mambo Sinuendo** Nonesuch

Now that everyone and his hermano who played a role in the Buena Vista Social Club has released a solo project, the time has come for the BVSC's deferential gringo mastermind Ry Cooder to revisit the Latin groove. Teaming with Cuban guitarist Manuel Galbán, Cooder presents another non-traditional version of traditional music. (Is that a drum machine on the title track?) Like the BVSC, *Mambo Sinuendo* is rustic Cuban fare, but it's spooky and jazzy with blues, country and assorted Caribbean spice mixed in as well. Cooder's woozy slide guitar on "Bolero Sonámbulo" suggests a sort of

Link

[www.nonesuch.com](http://www.nonesuch.com)

File Under

Lagartos del Salón

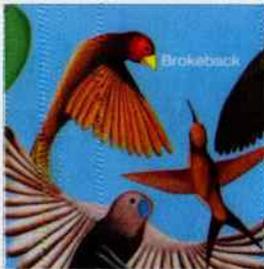
R.I.Y.L.

Marc Ribot Y Los Cubanos

Postizos, Bill Frisell, Buena

Vista Social Club

Hawaiian hangover, exactly the kind of gesture that gives *Mambo Sinuendo* its mysterious beauty. In many ways, Cooder and Galbán's take on island music is not unlike Bill Frisell's impressionistic swatches of Americana. The opening "Dru Me Negrita" lopes like a spaghetti western theme, with Cooder and Galbán twirling lazy lassos of echoey guitar across the beat. What's missing here are the great vocal performances (save two tracks with a female chorus) that gave the BVSC a joy that transcended the music. But there's no lack of passion here, it's just that Cooder and Galbán have different aims. It's more like last call at the BVSC and Ry and Manuel are there to play dance music for bleary-eyed dreamers. >>>STEVE CIABATTONI



**BROKEBACK**  
Looks At The Bird Thrill Jockey



**MICK TURNER**  
Moth Drag City

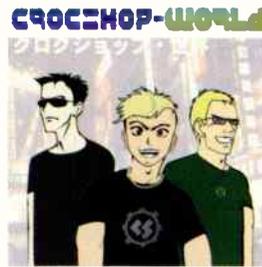
If you forget that old critical adage for a moment and allow yourself to judge these albums by their covers, you'll actually get a pretty fair sense of what's happening on the inside as well. The differences in artistic approach are synonymous with each album's musical aesthetic, as they float and flutter 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.

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 (cornet). 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 cornet 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

Link  
[www.thrilljockey.com](http://www.thrilljockey.com)  
[www.dragcity.com](http://www.dragcity.com)  
File Under  
High above post-rock  
R.I.Y.L.  
Chicago Underground Trio,  
Dirty Three, Tortoise

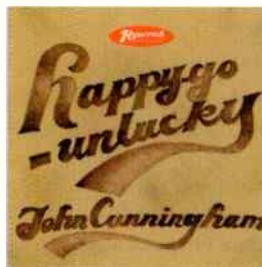


**CROC SHOP**  
World Metropolis

The continued existence of bands like New Brunswick's Croc Shop (formerly Crocodile Shop) essentially explains the difference between a fad and a subculture: 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,

while "Superficial" and "Gone" 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

Link  
[www.crocshop.com](http://www.crocshop.com)  
File Under  
Apocalypse...now  
R.I.Y.L.  
The Faint, Nitzer Ebb,  
Alex Proyas films



**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 cribbs lyrics from "We Can Work It Out," a seeming wink that Cunningham's in on the joke. Despite such hero worship, the 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

Link  
[www.parasol.com](http://www.parasol.com)  
File Under  
Beatles-influenced British  
eccentricity  
R.I.Y.L.  
Rufus Wainwright, Robert Wyatt,  
Harry Nilsson, Scott Walker



## 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

Link

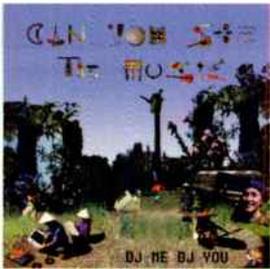
[www.ropeadope.com](http://www.ropeadope.com)

File Under

All that jazz and a bag of chips

R.I.Y.L.

Carl Craig, Metro Area, Flanger



## 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

Link

[www.djmedjyou.com](http://www.djmedjyou.com)

File Under

"Disco" not disco

R.I.Y.L.

Sukia, Fantastic Plastic Machine, Arling & Cameron

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

Link  
[www.roughtraderecords.com/baxter\\_dury.html](http://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**

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



**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

Link  
[www.theexies.com](http://www.theexies.com)  
 File Under  
**Lo-frills, hi-alt rock crunch**  
 R.I.Y.L.  
**The Verve Pipe, Foo Fighters, the mid '90s**

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

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

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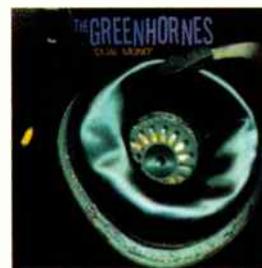
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**THE GREENHORNES**

**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").

Link  
[www.greenhornes.com](http://www.greenhornes.com)  
 File Under  
**Rowdy rock 'n' roll revivalists**  
 R.I.Y.L.  
**Spencer Davis Group, the Kinks, the Von Bondies**

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



## HOMUNCULUS

Words Hawling

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

Link

[www.homunculture.com](http://www.homunculture.com)

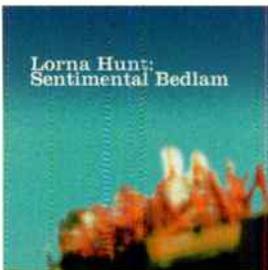
File Under

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](http://www.lornahunt.com)

File Under

A woman who owns her bedlam

R.I.Y.L.

Rickie Lee Jones,

Ani DiFranco, Patty Larkin

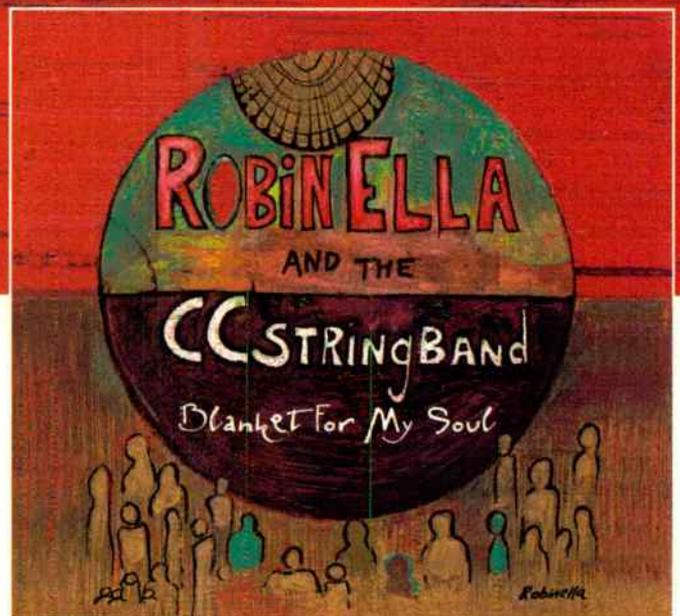
record affirm this vibe. There's nothing monochromatic about Hunt's world, either. She offers a genuine love song on "Shift (Beautiful)," complete with the observation, "I never thought I'd want a man/ For the color of his blood." Indeed, romance figures prominently in several of Hunt's tunes. It may 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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*- Knoxville Metro Pulse*



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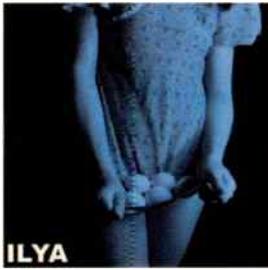
[www.columbiarecords.com](http://www.columbiarecords.com)

[www.robinella.com](http://www.robinella.com)

Produced by Robinella and Cruz Contreras  
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 though the back-

ground, 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 CHAPLICK

Link

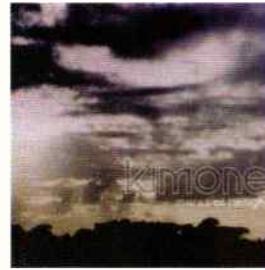
[www.ilyamusic.com](http://www.ilyamusic.com)

File Under

Drowsy ballads

R.I.Y.L.

Portishead, Björk, the Black Heart Procession



**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

Link

[www.kimone.com](http://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

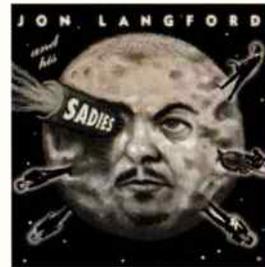
[www.noquarter.net](http://www.noquarter.net)

File Under

Blissful insanity

R.I.Y.L.

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



**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](http://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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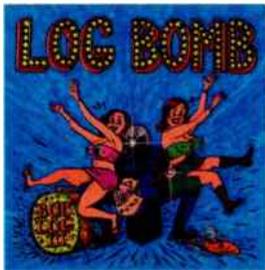


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World Radio History



**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](http://www.boblog111.com)

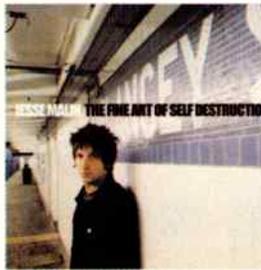
File Under

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

Link

[www.jessemalin.com](http://www.jessemalin.com)

File Under

Re-Generation

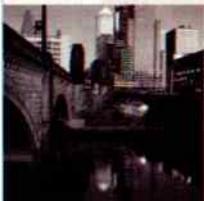
R.I.Y.L.

Jay Farrar, Ryan Adams,

Pete Yorn

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

**DENISONWITMER PHILADELPHIA SONGS**



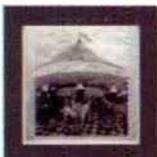
On *Philadelphia Songs*, Denison Witmer paints a haunting and beautiful picture of memories, people, and places. The album features a host of guest musicians and Philadelphians, as well as members of The Six Parts Seven (Suicide Squeeze Records). *Philadelphia Songs*, his third full-length, was recorded 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.

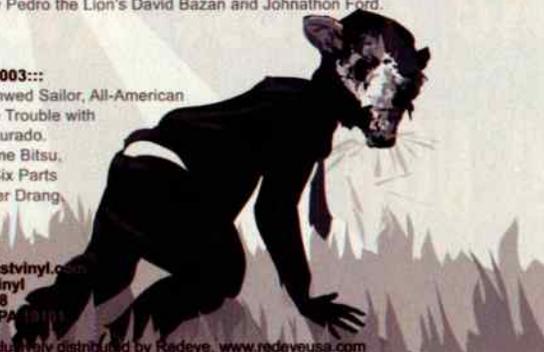
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**JOHNNY MARR + THE HEALERS**

**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

Link

[www.johnnymarr.com](http://www.johnnymarr.com)

File Under

Too little, too late

R.I.Y.L.

The Smiths, *Electronic*,

Stone Roses

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

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# 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-basement 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 noisefuckery 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

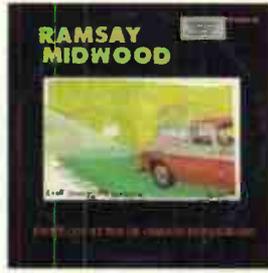
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File Under

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

Link

[www.vanguardrecords.com/ramsaymidwood](http://www.vanguardrecords.com/ramsaymidwood)

File Under

Choice Americana

(via Deutschland)

R.I.Y.L.

Tom Waits, Jim White,

Lonesome Bob

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 redneck 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

# OPEN HAND THE DREAM

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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-911 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

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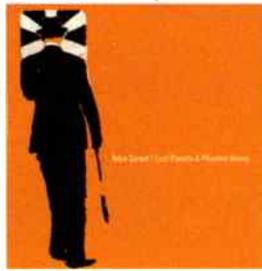
File Under

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

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

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[www.tobinsprout.com](http://www.tobinsprout.com)

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Unassuming pop craftsmen

R.I.Y.L.

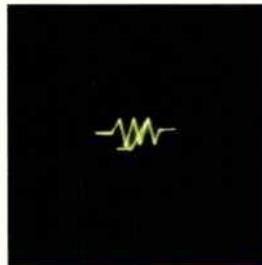
Guided By Voices, the Soft Boys,

Folk Implosion, Bevis Frond

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DANIEL  
DAVIDSON  
IS A SICKO  
AND LIVES IN OUR TOWN**



[www.timesbeachrecords.com](http://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-

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

Link

[www.varistor.org](http://www.varistor.org)

File Under

Angst in your pants

R.I.Y.L.

Superchunk, Swearing At

Motorists, Archers Of Loaf

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## VARIOUS ARTISTS

**We're A Happy Family: A Tribute To The Ramones** DV8/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

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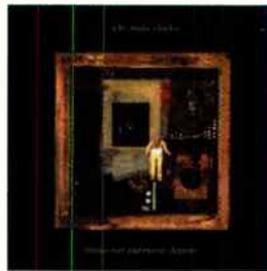
[www.officialramones.com](http://www.officialramones.com)

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](http://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](http://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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NEW MUSIC REPORT

# TOP 75

#1  
**DONNAS**  
SPEND THE NIGHT  
ATLANTIC



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23 GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR <i>Yangui U X O</i> Constellation	48 THE BLACK HEART PROCESSION <i>Amore Dei Tropici</i> Touch And Go	73 BURNING BRIDES <i>Fall Of The Plastic Empire</i> V2
24 MOUNTAIN GOATS <i>allahassee</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>Twistin'</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 MISSILE *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	<b>JURASSIC 5</b> Power In Numbers <b>Interscope</b>
2	<b>MR. LIF</b> I Phantom <b>Definitive Jux</b>
3	<b>LARGE PROFESSOR</b> 1st Class <b>Matador</b>
4	<b>SLEEP</b> Riot By Candlelight <b>Under The Needle</b>
5	<b>MC PAUL BARMAN</b> Paufllelujah! <b>Coup d'Etat</b>
6	<b>OLDDOMINION</b> One <b>Under The Needle</b>
7	<b>JAY-Z</b> The Blueprint 2... <b>Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam</b>
8	<b>DJ VADIM</b> USSR: The Art Of Listening <b>Ninja Tune</b>
9	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Urban Renewal Program <b>Chocolate Industries</b>
10	<b>THE ROOTS</b> Phrenology <b>MCA</b>

## LOUD ROCK TOP 10

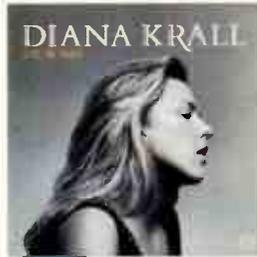
1	<b>OPETH</b> Deliverance <b>Music For Nations/Koch</b>
2	<b>NAPALM DEATH</b> Order Of The Leech <b>Spitfire</b>
3	<b>LACUNA COIL</b> Comalies <b>Century Media</b>
4	<b>SHADOWS FALL</b> The Art Of Balance <b>Century Media</b>
5	<b>THE HOPE CONSPIRACY</b> Endnote <b>Equal Vision</b>
6	<b>BLOODBATH</b>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

## RETAIL TOP 25

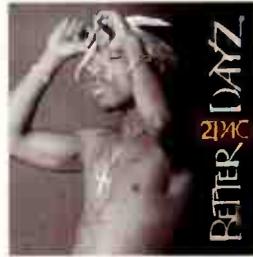
1	<b>2PAC</b> Better Dayz <b>Interscope</b>
2	<b>SYSTEM OF A DOWN</b> Steal This Album <b>American/Columbia</b>
3	<b>THE ROOTS</b> Phrenology <b>MCA</b>
4	<b>SOUNDTRACK</b> 8 Mile <b>Shady/Aftermath/Interscope</b>
5	<b>AUDIOSLAVE</b> Audioslave <b>Interscope/Epic</b>
6	<b>BOB DYLAN</b> Live 1975: Bootleg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



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

## JAZZ TOP 10

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

# JUST OUT

## DECEMBER 3

3 Half Life *Planet Noise*  
**DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL** 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 *Tomlab*  
**MOCK ORANGE** First EP *Dead Droid*  
**NAKATOMI PLAZA** Private Property *Immigrant Sun*  
**PROMISE** Believer *Indecision*  
**SAMPLE THE MARTIAN** Bootlegs: 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 Bohème: Broadway Cast Recording *DreamWorks*  
**STEREOLAB** 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 Tonit!*  
**JAGA JAZZIST** Animal Chin *GSL*  
**LITTLE JEANS** Little Jeans *Asian Man*  
**PHENOMENOLOGICAL BOYS** Phenomenological Boys *Tomlab*  
**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 *DVB-Columbia*

## JANUARY 7

**MUSIC LOVERS** Cheap Songs Tell The Truth EP *Marriage*  
**PAS/CAL** The Handbag Memoirs 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 PDRAO** 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 *DVB-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*  
**HOLDPAW** 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. Erie *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 *Zingiboom-Six Degrees*  
**VEXERS** The Vexers *Ace-Fu*  
**WAKE UPS** Wanna Meet The Wake Ups? *Laughing Outlaw*  
**XEROPHONICS** Xerophonics *Seeland*

## JANUARY 28

**CHARLEVOIX** Begging Complication *Alarms 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*  
**SNOWDDGS** 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

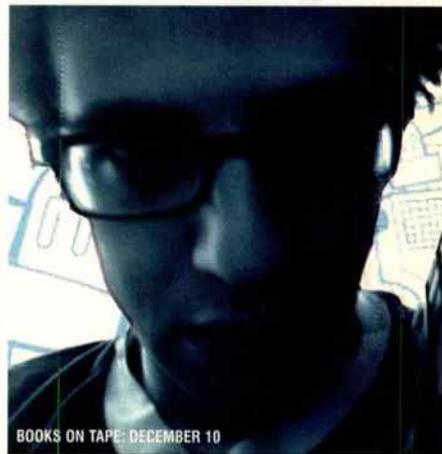
**SUICIDE FILE** Twilight *Indecision*  
**USELESS I.O.** No Vacation From The World *Kung Fu*  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** The Great Artistic View Of The Underground Sound Of Punk And Hardcore *Dutch Underground*  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Stepping Stone *Militia Group*  
**EAMMON VIIT** Deserted Music *Self-Starter*  
**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 CESPEDES** Rezos *Six Degrees*  
**DAMN WELLS** 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** Fraction Of Exaggeration *Caulfield*  
**KRL PILL** Outside These City Walls *Uprising*  
**AL KOOPER AND MIKE BLOOMFIELD** Fillmore East: The Lost Concert Tapes 12-14-68 *Columbia-Legacy*  
**AL KOOPER, MIKE BLOOMFIELD AND STEVE STILLS** Super Session *Columbia-Legacy*  
**JON LANGFORD WITH THE SADIES** Mayors Of The Moon *Bloodshot*  
**MOUNTAIN** Mountain Climbing; Nantucket Sieghride (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** Gull Classic *Tribunal*  
**SINCE BY MAN** We Sing The Body Electric *Revelation*  
**SOUND OF RAILS** Night Time Simulcast *Caulfield*  
**SOUNDTRACK** Pulse: A Storm Odyssey *Six Degrees*  
**SUICIDE FILE** Twilight *Indecision*  
**ROB SWIFT** Under The Influence *Six Degrees*  
**UNDERWATER** Bled Me Blue *Tribunal*  
**GARY VALENTINE** Tomorrow Belongs To You *Overground*  
**RAL PABTHA VOGELBACHER** Kita: V., Obelisk *Megalon*  
**WHERE FEAR AND WEAPONS MEET** Contro' *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** Panty Raio *Fat Wreck Chords*  
**FURTHER SEEMS FOREVER** How To Start A Fire *Tooth And Nail*



BOOKS ON TAPE: DECEMBER 10

**GODDWILL** 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** Feat Of Wire *Quarterstick*  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Mullets Rock! *Epic-Legacy*  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Oil: Chicago Punk Refined *Thick*

## FEBRUARY 18

**ALWAYS** Looking For Mr. Wright *Le Grand Magistry*  
**ANTI-POP CONSORTIUM** Anti-Pop Vs. Matthew Shipp *Thirsty Ear*  
**CALXICO** 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*  
**NOTWIST** Neon Golden *Domino*  
**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 Christie's new book, *Sound Of The Beast: The Complete Headbanging History Of Heavy Metal* (Harper Collins).*



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