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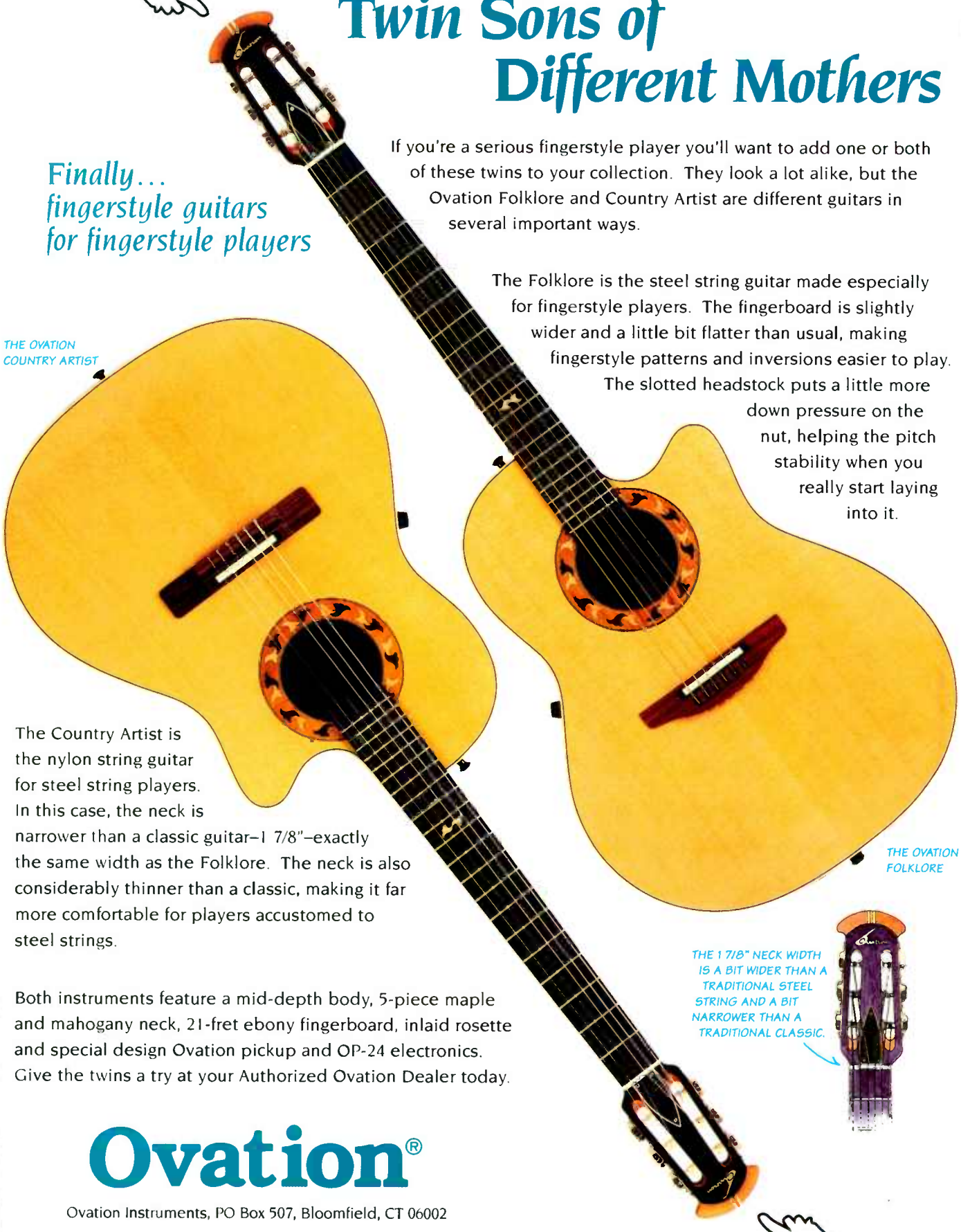

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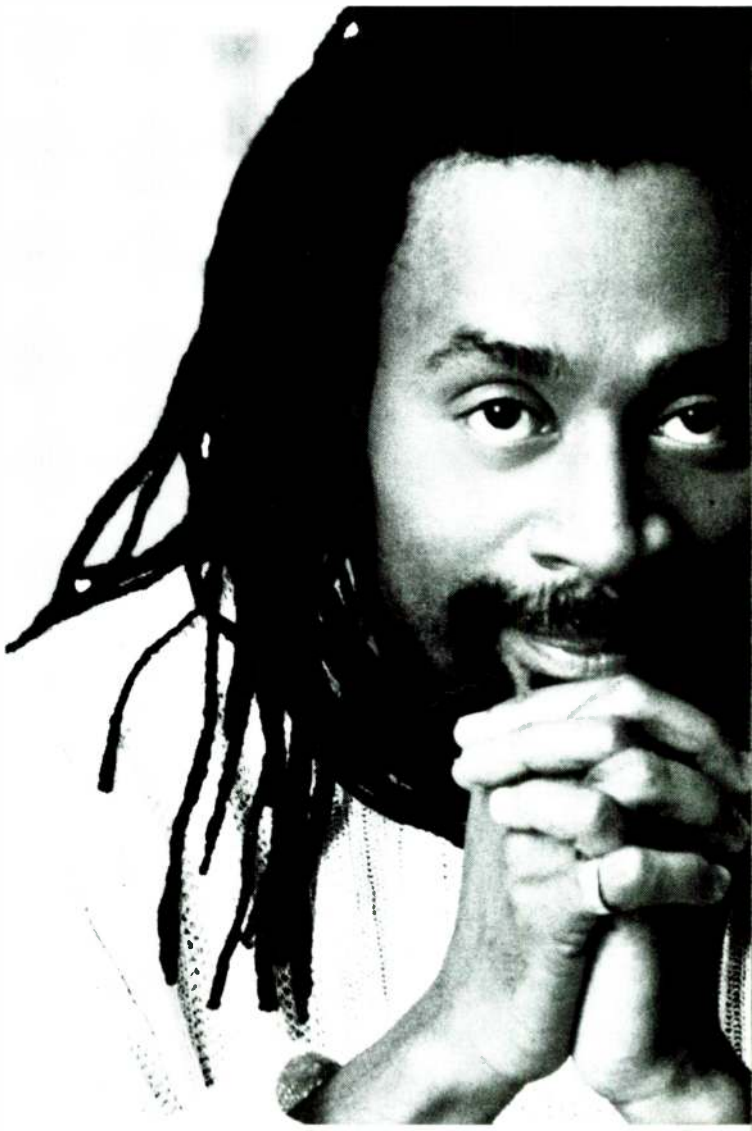

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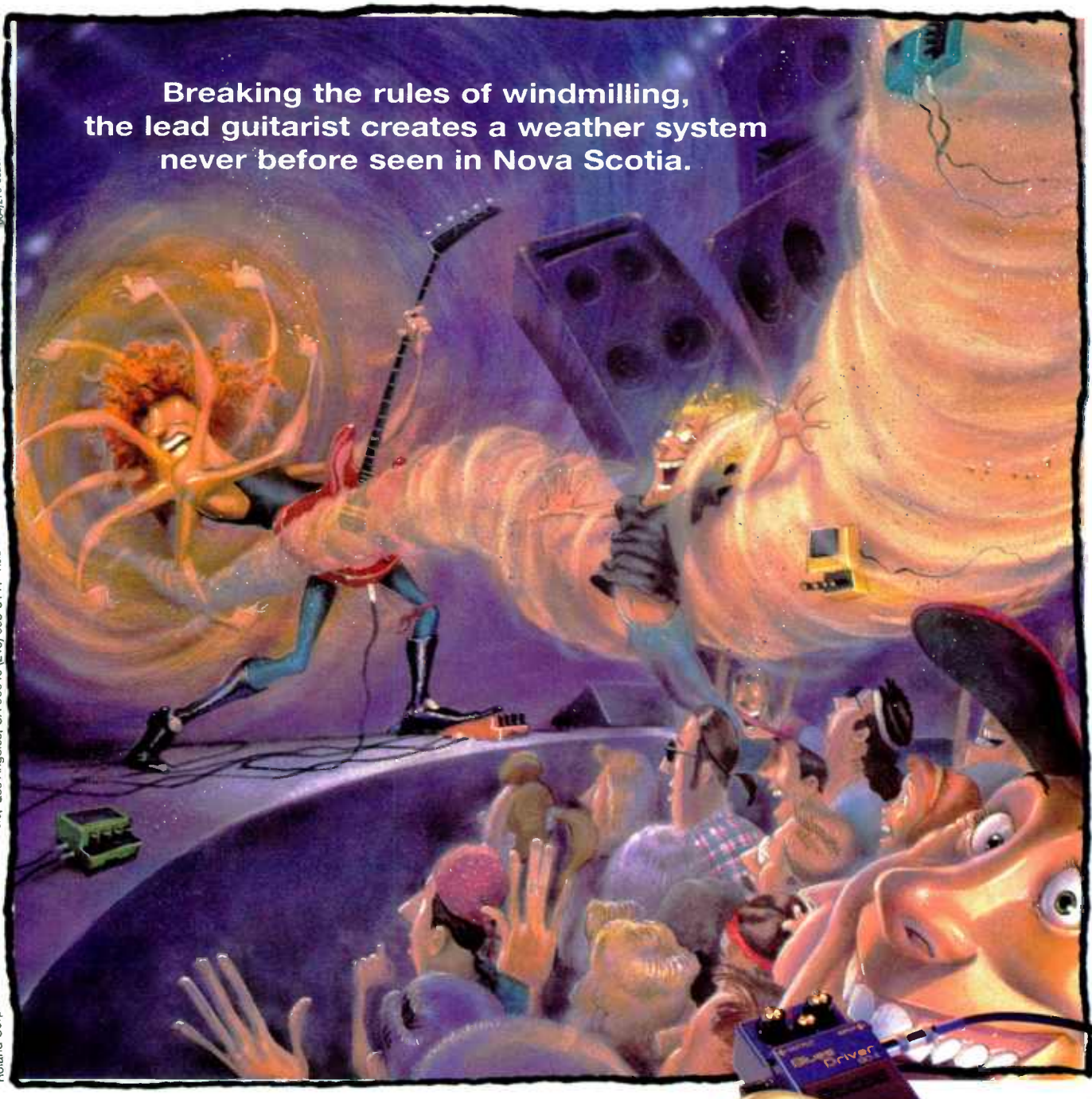

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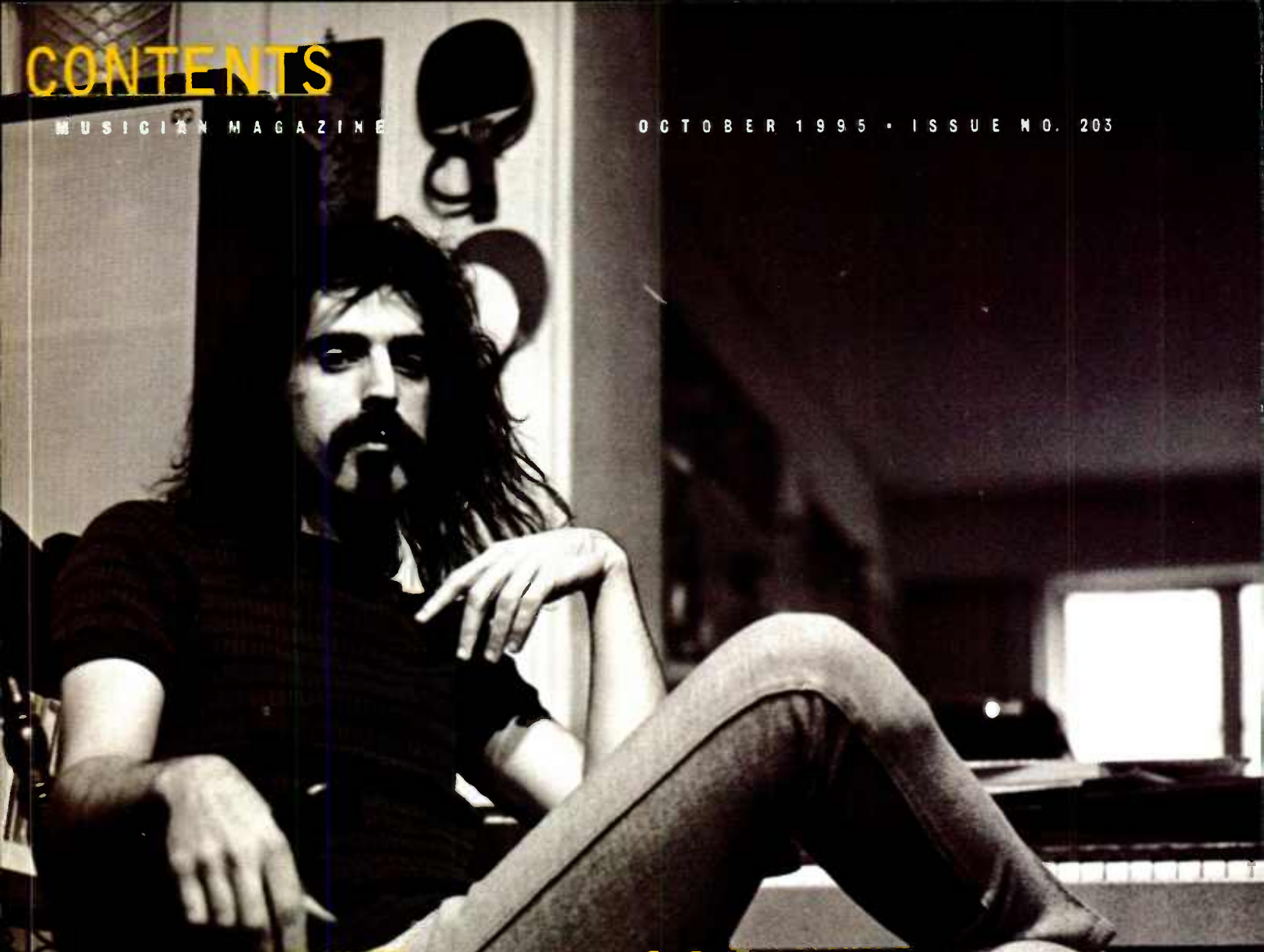

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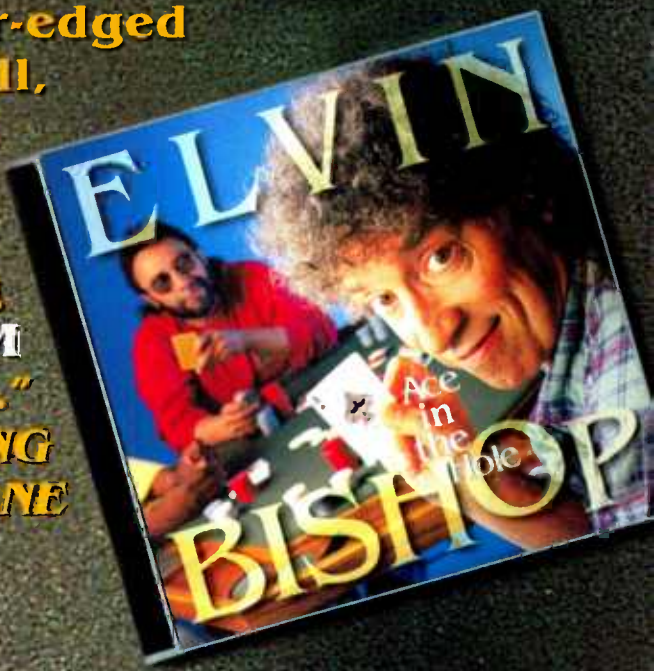

Ace In The Hole

the new release by Elvin Bishop on Alligator CDs and Cassettes, available at *About Music*, Greenfield, MA • *My Generation*, Westlake, OH • *Louisiana Music Factory*, New Orleans, LA • *Orbit Music*, Mishawaka, IN • *Ultra Sounds*, Billings, MT • *21st Century Compact Disc*, Santa Cruz, CA.

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JERRY LEE LEWIS

Your new album* Youngblood *ranges across all kinds of American music—blues, country, old time pop songs and rock. Was that by accident or design?

Well, it all started with Andy Paley, the producer. For three or four years there he wanted to record me, and finally we did it. I may have picked a couple of the songs—like "House of Blue Lights"—but he picked most of them. I think it's the best record I ever did, really—it's my real life.

So he picked the songs, and then you'd work up the ones you both agreed on?

We worked up a couple of songs I *didn't* agree on.

Like what?

Oh, "Goosebumps"—90 percent of the songs actually—I hate to say it. [*laughs*] But you know, it was time for somebody to do something with Jerry Lee Lewis. It was 12 years since I had recorded.

"I love music. When I fall asleep at night I dream about it."

Why so long?

I think a lot of people thought I'd had my run, that I couldn't do it anymore. Man, I haven't even *started*. But they don't record the way I used to, with all the musicians there at one time. I didn't think it was gonna work—I thought I needed that. But it worked. Now if I hit a flat note, they can bring it up! Not that I've ever hit a flat note. [*laughs*] Maybe that's why they invented that, for me.

You cover songs made famous by Hank Williams, Jimmie Rodgers and Al Jolson. Your style is truly original, but I get the sense you see them as having influenced your music to a degree.

I guess they did to a certain extent. I learned to play the piano when I was eight years old. I hadn't been influenced by anybody up 'til the time I was 16, when I got to listening to them. And they impressed me—Al Jolson for what a showman he was, and Jimmie Rodgers was such a great blues singer, he could yodel, do gutbucket blues—he could *sing*. And Hank Williams, you can play any record you want and you'll never hear a flat or sharp note on them, even now.

But Jerry Lee was a completely different talent. He was too hardheaded for anybody to teach him anything. [*laughs*] My daddy taught me some things. He'd say, "Son, you're playing a song and there's a minor chord that you're missing." I'd say, "What is a minor chord?" He showed me what it is, and that upset me.

Why?

He was telling me that I was wrong and he was right.

After 50 years of playing, has your approach to playing the piano changed much?

I don't get to practice or rehearse as much as I'd like to. I've got a little boy eight years old and he wants attention too. I have a wife the same age as my daughter—I'm constantly raising children. And if I play the piano they get upset, so I have to back off and practice onstage. What are you gonna do? But I love music and I love playing music. Even when I fall asleep at night I'm dreaming about it.

What are your ambitions at this point?

Maybe to make one more album, and maybe one more after that. And maybe a good gospel album, if the time is right. Because if Jerry Lee Lewis makes a gospel album people will really take notice: "What is he saying?"

At times it seems like you've lived your life without much concern for your long-term survival.

That's not true. Survival is the name of the game. I'll admit I've made a few mistakes—very few. [*laughs*] But I've never done anything that I thought would hurt me that bad. I've overshot the rim a couple of times. But I'm in pretty good health. Next year I'll be 60 years old. I've been in this business a long time. The people I knew back then are just about dead and gone.

So what's been the key to your survival?

It must be God. It sure couldn't be me. I'm not that smart.

Along with Little Richard, you established the piano as a rock 'n' roll instrument, and in a way that hasn't really been duplicated since.

I put it out in front of an audience, in front of the guitars, as the lead instrument. It's not an instrument to be hid over on the side of the stage—it's the greatest rock 'n' roll instrument in the world. All it needed was to be heard.

Any life lessons you'd care to impart to younger musicians?

Well, I wish 'em all well. Just don't get married too many times.

MARK ROWLAND

PHOTOGRAPH BY HUGER FOOTE

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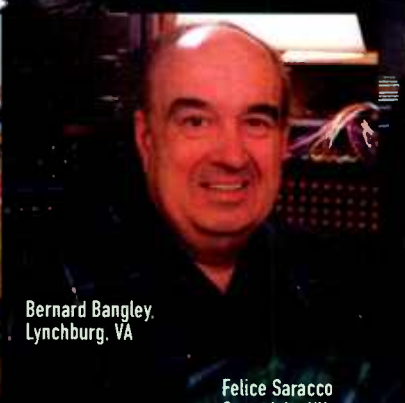
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LETTERS

McMANUS & MACCA

The August issue is chock full of Bill Flanagan and that suits me just fine. His article about McCartney and Costello was so compelling I literally got chills. Bill captured the essence and immediacy of his few days with the musicians so succinctly, so perfectly. He's damn right too! We are lucky to be alive right now.

R. Cole
Arcata, CA

Many of your American magazine contemporaries seem to have forgotten one Elvis Costello. Fortunately, you have not. Thank you for your continued coverage of one of the finest musicians, as well as thinkers, of our time.

Christian C. Rospopa
East Brunswick, NJ

It seems Paul McCartney doesn't remember his own history: he had indeed performed with a string quartet prior to the royal show reviewed in the August issue. Paul performed "Yesterday" on the "Ed Sullivan Show" in 1965; John, George and Ringo did not play with him. He was accompanied live by a string quartet, and I have the bootleg record to prove it.

Philly Frank

200TH ISSUE

Wow, what an issue (Aug. '95)! This was the first time I'd ever read your magazine, but it won't be the last. Those interviews were really interesting to read. The one thing that bugs me though is all the comments made about drugs and how they really help a musician write. Drugs don't help a person write better, they help a person kill themselves faster.

Andrea Dyche
Anddyche@aol.com

I just went downstairs to grab my Issue 200 and was met by a cover of Mostly White, Mostly Bearded, Mostly Men with Mostly Guitars. I'm not a quota fetishist, but I really hope you remember that the twin purposes of any salable "expert rag" should be to educate and entertain. I'd have been happy to see them mixed up often in your publication—Don Byron, say, or Duke Ellington, Bill Frisell, Harold Budd, Philip Glass, Rob Wasserman. For me to come up with a short list isn't any more helpful than for you to, but I hope you'll get the point: As a nonmusician and longtime reader, I have seen the gradual (5+ years) shift away from issues related to performers and composers. It has gone in two directions: sometimes (more recently) toward industry trends (last year's excellent "Future Shocks" cover story), sometimes toward celebrity-puff pieces that a publication needs to catch eyes and maintain general appeal (neither Trent Reznor's canonization nor Stone Gossard's confessional offered much that I wouldn't have expected from a *Rolling Stone* slickjob).

In the "First 200 Issues" brief history, the author candidly notes that the mag has been seeking a wider audience, with the results sometimes following the same original, quality-motivated stripe that you guys have made a hallmark, and sometimes not (the Random Notes, oops, Rough Mix). I just hope that if you insist on straddling those hard demographics, you continue to err on the side of the angels. This little love missive boils down to a tentative congratulations on a job well done (so far). I'll write back at Issue 300 to let you know what I think.

Ian P. Murphy
Richmilnix@aol.com

I am now more convinced than ever that this is actually "Mostly Male Musician Magazine." Celebrating 200 issues and you could only think of two women in your memorable interview category? Oh, and the Joni Mitchell addition at the end was a nice little bone thrown to us.

AnnReed@aol.com

Congratulations on your bicentennial issue. I enjoyed the excerpted R.E.M. interviews particularly. R.E.M. may be one of the most important and unique groups around today simply because they are good musicians, but better human beings. Honestly, how often can that be said?

Charlie McNamara
Bethesda, MD

I believe that when a person dies he will be judged according to all his actions, whether good or bad. Recently, your man Bill Flanagan made the comment that "Prince Charles seems like a good fellow, even if he does add a few inches to his height by standing on the neck of Ireland." Now I have to say that that is about the most intelligent thing Mr. Flanagan's ever said, in spite of the nasty things he's said about Guns N' Roses and John Mellencamp. After all, as that old saying goes: "You don't have to stand very tall to know when you're bein' pissed on."

However, I take issue with his statement that "The Beach Boys are musically compelling, but the words and sentiments often come off as artificial, or banal." Hasn't he heard "Caroline, No" or "Surf's Up" lately? If nothing else, "4th of July"? If he still thinks the Beach Boys are "artificial" and "banal," then I rescind my earlier statement. I know that God has a very low tolerance for those who are not Beach Boys fans.

Charlie O'Lanahan
Oliver Springs, TN

CONTEST WINNERS

CMP Records is happy to announce the winners of its Trilok Gurtu-David Torn contest. Grand Prize winners: Dick Dawkins, Joe Giordano; 2nd Prize: George Scoufaras, Carlos Aloy, Jr.; 3rd Prize: Kevin Haynes, Steven Blunk. Grand prize winners receive clinics with Trilok Gurtu and David Torn; 2nd prize winners get Zildjian and Lexicon gear, and 3rd prize winners receive autographed CDs.

ERRRRRATA

The Private Lesson with Preston Reed (Aug. '95) failed to include Reed's altered tuning. For both exercises, the guitar should be tuned, from bottom to top: C G D G A D. And in the same issue Chip Stern's byline was omitted from his appreciation of Jimmy D'Aquisto.

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EXPERT WITNESS

How We Wrote Those Hit Songs

by Noel Hogan & Dolores O'Riordan, The Cranberries

NOEL: "LINGER" WAS THE very first one, and it started in my bedroom at home. I was messing around with my guitar one day. It's only four chords. I got that intro bit first, and I worked that into the other later chords. Then I brought it into [bassist brother] Mike and Fearg [drummer Feargal Lawlor]; at this stage we didn't even know Dolores. I played it for them, and they added in the drum and bass bits. We gave it to Dolores because it was the one she liked the most out of the few songs we had. She came back about a week later with the lyrics, and it wasn't until we recorded it for the first time on a demo that Dolores put the string part down on keyboards.

Dolores: I started writing songs when I was about 10 or 11. This was my first time working with someone else's chords, because I used to just sit down at a piano and write everything myself. But when I heard that it was pretty simple—no solos, no melodies, just four chords—I knew the song could be anything, it was so wide open. At the start, Noel had a little plucking thing that I thought was neat, because it wasn't really anything like the song. He had some idea up his sleeve that I could never make out, until we went into the studio and I realized that the plucking would fade out and the song would come in over it. I took it home, wrote the melody and lyrics, brought it back in and sang it.

Noel: When Dolores came in with "Zombie," she basically had it on acoustic with lyrics, but straight away she said, "This has gotta be hard." Up until that point, we hadn't done anything like that—everything was soft and up. So we dug out the old distortion pedals, hooked 'em up and just went for it, until it was a massive noise. We slowly got it so one part of the song got soft and one part would get heavy again—it took about a week to work out. But because Dolores had such a

ROUGH

RECENT SIGNINGS

Fun Loving Criminals—Alternative rock/hip-hop—"Beastie Boys meet Tom Waits." (EMI)
Shtum—Hard-rocking quartet from Derry, Ireland. (Work/Columbia)
Tia—R&B/dance diva hailing from, um, Seattle. (Ichiban)
Supernova—"Space Wave" trio "from Cynot 3," currently residing in Costa Mesa, CA. (Amphetamine Reptile)

WHIPPING POST

Björk's second solo album *Post* may soon become a collector's item. That's because the lead track "Possibly Maybe" features music and sound samples lifted from the work of electronic collage artist Scanner. Björk's record company has offered Scanner a standard licensing fee; his management wants royalties or withdrawal of all copies.

NIELS VAN IPEREN

clear picture in her head, it made it easy.

Dolores: Inspiration-wise, "Zombie" was something that happened over a long period of time. There were emotions building up inside me because of the situation worsening between England and Ireland about a year and a half ago. There were a lot of bombs being planted in rubbish bins and tube stations, and you'd be in England and someone would casually say, "Oh, did you hear that another bomb went off today? Blah, blah." And after a while, I noticed that if in conversation with somebody, you said you were from Ireland, two seconds later the word "IRA" would be mentioned. Some people just think that if you're Irish, you're involved, and that bugged me. So there's a line in "Zombie" that goes, "But you see it's not me/It's not my family," which means it's out of my control.

Noel: I'd written the music for "Ode to My Family" a long time ago and forgotten about it. We were in Boston doing a soundcheck, and I started playing the chords again, but in a different structure, and Dolores remembered it, like she remembers nearly everything—I forget so easily. She walked around the stage, just singing bits and pieces to it. We just kept working on it for the next few days at soundchecks. So it was written on the road, like practically everything since the first album. Which is harder, I think, in

[*cont'd on page 86*]

MIX

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK TODD

GARAGE SALE

Advocates of bootleg recordings contend that some of the best bootlegs on the market came from tapes tossed into the trash heap by major record companies [see "Behind the Bootleg Industry" *Musician* #191]. Here's a new wrinkle: five years ago, a couple in Nashville paid $50 for a box in a local warehouse whose previous owner had defaulted on his rental payment. Inside, they discovered 2200 reels of unreleased performances by Bob Dylan, Frank Sinatra, Hank Williams, Louis Armstrong, Elvis Presley and dozens more, all recorded at Columbia Records' Nashville studio between the '50s and '70s. The tapes had been obtained by a studio employee through a policy that invited staff to buy up "used" reels not slated for specific records. After the lucky couple sold their cache to the Clark Enslin Group, a New Jersey label, for $6000, Sony promptly sued, claiming rightful ownership. But last month a state bankruptcy court awarded ownership of the masters to CEG, and the right to sell them—provided the company obtains copyright clearances from the labels and/or artists involved. CEG expects to eventually release what promises to be an archival treasure chest—and pay artists top royalty rates for the privilege.—*M.R.*

This month's Rough Mix was compiled by Chuck Crisafulli, Jon Young, Ken Micallef, Tom Lanham, Mark Rowland and Mac Randall.

ROUGH MIX

PAUL ELLEDGE

UZIS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, MUSICIANS KILL PEOPLE

The recent broad-side-of-a-barn attack on the music and film industry by Senator Bob Dole may be a big hit with the Republican right wing, whose support is crucial to his 1996 presidential ambitions, but it doesn't do much for his standing as a music critic. Besides misidentifying Ice-T as a Time-Warner artist, Dole went out of his way to smear Interscope Records, quoting John Leo of *U.S. News and World Report*—a magazine which boasts about its own lack of interest in popular entertainment—who called Time-Warner's 50 percent ownership of Interscope "the moral equivalent of owning half the world's mustard gas factories." We assume that's worse than the moral equivalent of owning half the world's factories of assault weapons, which Senator Dole works hard to keep unregulated. But why single out Interscope, whose most controversial music pales besides the gratuitous violence and sexual humiliations so gleefully detailed in one of Sen. Dole's favorite "family" films, *True Lies*? Could it have to do with Interscope's co-owner and top executive Ted Field having long been a generous contributor to the Democratic Party and assorted liberal causes? Nahh...well, maybe.—*M.R.*

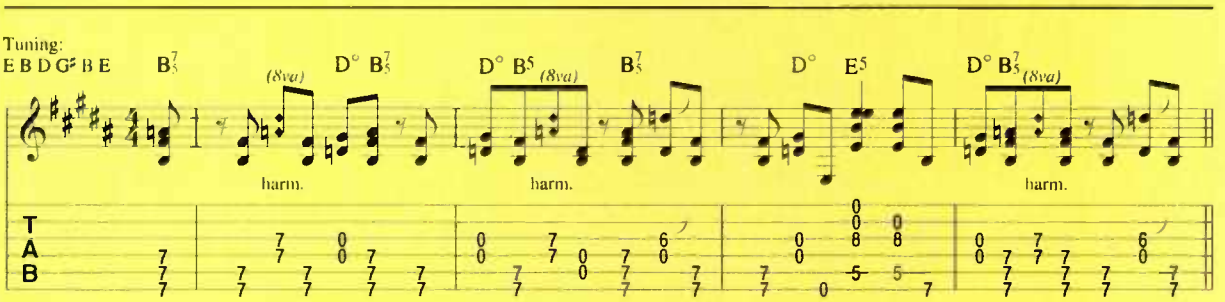
PRIVATE LESSON

CHARLIE SEXTON: RETUNING RIFFS

"I'd rather play everything than play any one thing in particular," confesses Charlie Sexton. On his latest album, *Under the Wishing Tree* (MCA), the one-time Texas guitar prodigy and former Arc Angel gamely puts that statement into action with an epic exploration of multiple American musical styles. It's catchy, it's encyclopedic, and it's got plenty of great guitar playing, much of it ingeniously reworking some well-worn riffs.

Take the intro to "Railroad," for instance. "It looks and sounds simple," Sexton says, "but there's something weird about it." Two things distinguish this from yer basic boogie figure in B. First, Sexton's tuned to an open E7 chord (E B D G# B E), which gives his playing a unique resonance. Second, the rhythms are off-kilter, with note groups clumped together in surprising spots. They don't call it "turning the beat around" for nothing; just try to play this and count at the same time.

The recorded version's cool enough, but when Sexton renders the song acoustically in a New York hotel room while on tour, he adds some extra flourishes: harmonic taps on the 7th fret (alternating with fretted notes) and two forays into minor tonality. "That [D natural] is in there because of my brother [Will], who co-wrote the song," Sexton explains. "When I first played him the riff, he didn't know I was retuned, so he played what I was playing in normal tuning, which made it come out minor. Since it still sounded good, we used it." Sometimes mistakes aren't mistakes, as Ex. 1 shows.—*Mac Randall*



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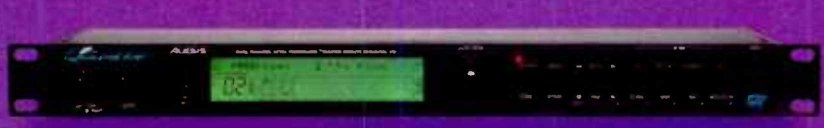

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ROB LAUFER

"It was a challenge working with other people because I'm so used to working alone. But it was a good challenge. A growing-up thing." So says Rob Laufer, a dedicated DIY-er and self-confessed "4-track fool." On his 1993 self-released album, *Swimming Lesson*, the Los Angeles songwriter and jack-of-all-instruments played almost every note, recorded and mixed, even constructed the cover art. But Laufer was up to the challenge of working on a bigger canvas, too. His Discovery Records debut, *Wonderwood*, is a sparkling collection of finely nuanced, decidedly grown-up tunes. And despite the upgraded production values, his music still feels as warm and homey as a favorite comfy chair. Laufer's songs are full of soulful grit and inviting melodies, while his often bittersweet lyrics can be elegantly reflective or passionate.

ROB LAUFER

The songwriter says he doesn't have much choice when it comes to pouring strong feeling into his music. "Sometimes I think I should wear shades and laugh cynically at everything, but when I write, my heart wants to be open. I'm willing to risk the embarrassment."

He's happy to be taking those risks now that *Wonderwood* is headed for listeners-at-large. But even through years spent working at home, alone and mostly unheard, he never considered packing his gear up: "Music is joyful and fulfilling. There have been good reasons to quit so many times, and there's a lot of crap that goes along with trying to get your music out into the 'real' world. But once you've had that magic feeling of creating music, there's not a lot that can make you stop."—C.C.

DISH

"I was never much of a joiner or true believer. I'm into subterfuge. I'm sneaky. I like to hide my allegiances," laughs Dana Kletter, singer and pianist for the Raleigh, North Carolina quartet Dish.

She's not kidding. On the band's debut album, *Boneyard Beach*, Kletter uses lush melodies and oblique lyrics to depict primal subjects like violence and betrayal. The other-

DISH

worldly "How Could Anyone," for example, is actually a scathing put-down.

Contrasts and misdirection are standard strategies for Kletter, a classically trained musician who digs Brahms and Mendelssohn, shared a house with a D.C. hardcore band in the '80s, and whose main claim to fame is her backup vocals on Hole's *Live Through This*. None of which indicates where her band is coming from. Citing everyone from Bartok and Loretta Lynn to Neil Young as guiding lights, Kletter admits, "We throw it into this big pot and mush it together. Our style is all over the place."—J.Y.

XAVIER

Born to a strict Sunni Muslim family and reared on the Oakland streets, Xavier Dphrepaulezz is an R&B tornado. *The X Factor* is the adrenaline-filled debut from this humble 25-year-old.

"I try to be honest and put that in the music," says the multi-instrumentalist. "I wrote about my brother's death, my father's death, life in America, slavery, the state of the world—that's enough to give you seesawing emotions." Xavier's childhood consisted largely of daily prayers and "dancing to Arthur Fiedler records" with his sister. But his exposure to Oakland's legendary R&B community hooked him on Sly Stone and James Brown, and eventually got him banished from his father's home. "I have no regrets," says Xavier calmly. "It taught me how to be a winner.

XAVIER

My father [the first Somali ambassador to the UN] stressed individualism and being proud of who you are. But he really felt the decadence of the American culture."

The X Factor criss-crosses styles, from the combustible energy of early Michael Jackson to *Innervisions*-esque romanticism to Staples Singers' grit. Truly a one-man band, Xavier played all the instruments. "These songs are part of me. That's why I never worry about the latest production techniques. I'm working off vibe and pure emotion, how can that become old?"—K.M.

Collective Soul (clockwise from the left): Shane Evans, Ross Childress, Dean Roland, Will Turpin and Ed Roland

The Gift of Riff

COLLECTIVE SOUL IS A REALLY COOL BAND. REALLY.

BY CHARLES M. YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMARA RAFKIN

So there's Henry's Hot House Chili: "The bigger the bowl, the hotter your hole."

And there's Red Hot Mama Chili: "Our chili won't give you a dishonorable discharge."

And there's Taste O'Bambi Chili: "You liked him in the movies, you'll love him in a bowl."

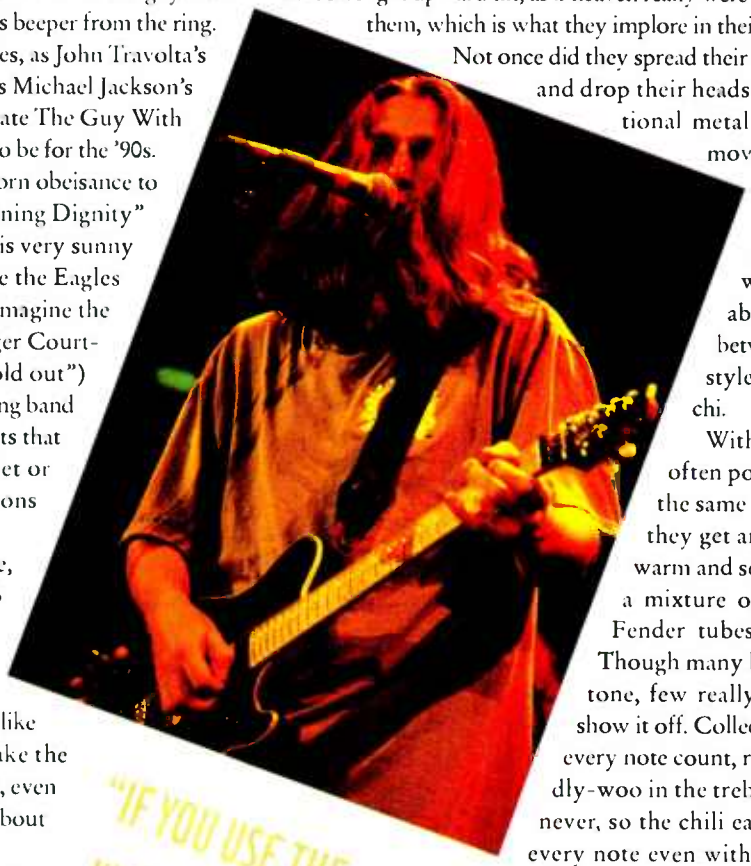
And that's just three of about forty booths wafting pungent odors into the twitching nostrils of 20,000 people peregrinating through the Kidney Foundation's D.C. Chili Championship, sponsored by DC101 radio in a little urban park slivered between a freeway and the Potomac River. By the stage, some DJ is holding a body piercing contest, declaring the winner to be this guy who gets his nipple pierced and then hangs his beeper from the ring. As the Beatles' moptop was to the sixties, as John Travolta's white disco suit was to the seventies, as Michael Jackson's moonwalk was to the eighties, I nominate The Guy With The Beeper Hanging From His Nipple to be for the '90s.

So no one's going to question my sworn obeisance to objectivity if I speculate that "Maintaining Dignity" ranks low on DC101's to-do list for this very sunny afternoon. I mean, it's hard to imagine the Eagles playing such a show. It's even hard to imagine the dangerous punk rocker and beer monger Courtney ("Someday you'll sell out like I sold out") Love playing such a show. But for a young band with an album in the middle of the charts that might in any given week shoot a bullet or drop an anchor, favors for radio stations cannot be ignored.

When Collective Soul takes the stage, they don't even look like they want to ignore the crowd, who swarm over from the Porta-Sans for some radio-friendly rock 'n' roll. Indeed, Collective Soul looks both relaxed and earnest, like they actually want to be there and make the 20,000 chili eaters smile. Which they do, even as the chili eaters experience confusion about how to react.

Let us state the obvious premise that all crowds are stupid and behave as television trains them how to behave. In the '90s, rock crowds have come to believe that if they like the music, they must create a mosh pit and leap about frantically. Yet today, the mosh pit just can't generate any momentum. The fencing that extends on either side of the stage is that temporary stuff consisting of wired wooden slats two inches wide and eight feet tall, and you can't bounce off the slats like you can the normal plywood stage barriers. Crowd surfers come close to being impaled on the metal support posts, and the prospect of some pretty teenage girl dying before one's eyes proves an annoying distraction. And about 90 percent of Collective Soul's songs are not the proper beat for moshing. Though heavy of sound, they are moderate of speed. They pulse along at the beat of sex. The proper response is thus relaxed undulation, not frantic leaping about. To be fair, I must concede that most of the rapt chili eaters eventually grasp this concept. But at the front of the stage, the pink, sweaty, shirtless, shiny frat boys, in their frenzy of steroids and kidney beans, have severe difficulty departing from their MTV training. Whenever they hear a familiar riff, whatever its speed, they shift from undulation to bashulation.

Onstage, the five musicians of Collective Soul know exactly how to move to their own music. Most of the time, they hold their position, placing one foot forward and one foot backward, giving their heads a slight upward tilt, as if heaven really were shining down on them, which is what they implore in their big hit "Shine." Not once did they spread their legs horizontally and drop their heads to bob in traditional metal manner. When moving to another area of the stage during a song, they would do a thing about halfway between R. Crumb–style truckin' and tai chi.



"IF YOU USE THE WORD HEAVEN IN A SONG, PEOPLE ASSUME YOU'RE A CHRISTIAN BAND."

With three guitars often pounding away at the same mid-tempo riff, they get an extraordinary warm and sensuous rumble, a mixture of Marshall and Fender tubes boiling away. Though many bands talk good tone, few really know how to show it off. Collective Soul makes every note count, resorting to widdly-woo in the treble range almost never, so the chili eaters can follow every note even with imperfect P.A. sound. "Deceptively simple" is a dreadful cliche, but the music truly is simple riff-based rock, and it's deceptive because the songs are so catchy and the arrangements are clever. *All* of them. For almost an hour and a half, the chili eaters suck it up like Tabasco. "Give these guys a good write-up," this fat guy yells in my ear. "I used to think they blew chunks. But this is all right."

ANYTHING SIMPLE IS of course deceptively difficult to understand.

"They really boned us out in Europe," says Ross Childress, lead guitarist, as the tour bus pulls out of the backstage area.

"They couldn't compare us to anyone except Lynyrd Skynyrd," says Ed Roland, singer/songwriter/guitarist/ first-among-equals.

"We're from the South, they see three guitars, and they think Lynyrd Skynyrd," says Dean Roland, rhythm guitarist/younger-brother-of-Ed. "We have everything in our record collection except Lynyrd Skynyrd."

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDY O'BIERNE/ANGLES

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"I listen to Elton John," says Ed.

"I listen to White Zombie," says Shane Evans, drummer.

"I listen to Radiohead," says Dean.

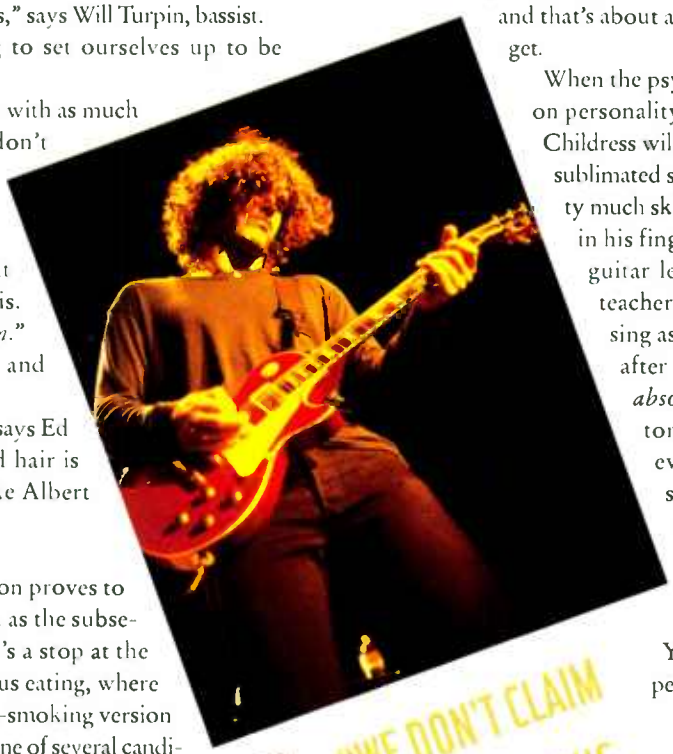
"Of all the bands who ever came out of the South, Lynyrd Skynyrd had the least influence on us," says Will Turpin, bassist.

"We must be doing something to set ourselves up to be slammed," says Ed.

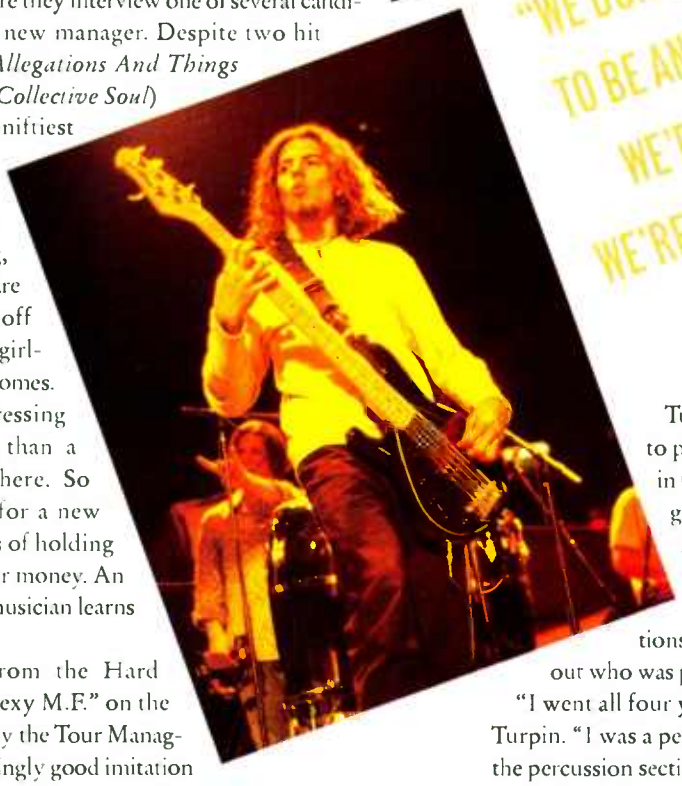
"But I can't figure it out. We play with as much passion as we can bring to it. We don't claim to be anything we're not. We're a pop rock band, and we put a lot of effort into it. I put *12 years* into it. And they tell you what it should be, as opposed to what it is. They give you three out of ten in *Spin*."

"They compare us to Skid Row and Warrant," says Dean.

"You know who you look like?" says Ed to Dean, whose recently bleached hair is sticking straight up. "You look like Albert Einstein."



GETTING OUT OF Washington proves to be almost as difficult a proposition as the subsequent drive to Atlanta. First there's a stop at the Hard Rock, where tourists stare at us eating, where Ed and Ross do an acoustic-though-smoking version of "Gel," and where they interview one of several candidates to be their new manager. Despite two hit albums (*Hints, Allegations And Things Left Unsaid* and *Collective Soul*) with some of the niftiest riffs since the demise of Nirvana, despite relentless touring, all five musicians are still sponging off their parents and girlfriends. No new homes. No new cars. Dressing grunge is more than a fashion option here. So they're looking for a new manager in hopes of holding on to some of their money. An old story. Every musician learns it anew.



Pulling out from the Hard Rock, Ed puts "Sexy M.F." on the bus stereo and Tiny the Tour Manager does his surprisingly good imitation of the Artist Formerly Known As Prince dancing. Then Tiny shows me his scrapbook, which consists entirely of photographs of Tiny standing in his underwear in various hotel lobbies and other strange places, like onstage in front of Eddie Van Halen's 5150 amp stack. As we drive by the Capitol, inspiration strikes: They all storm off the bus, run a hundred yards across the lawn as Tiny tears off his garments for a photo on the Capitol steps. Figuring the Secret Service may well shoot them and I could win a Pulitzer Prize for breaking news coverage, I follow along at a safe distance, but the grounds appear deserted. They get their photo, and that's about as wild as the tour bus antics get.

"WE DON'T CLAIM TO BE ANYTHING WE'RE NOT. WE'RE A POP ROCK BAND."

When the psychology books are written on personality types and band role, Ross Childress will be cited as a classic study in sublimated shyness. His life energy pretty much skips his mouth and comes out in his fingers. When he took his first guitar lesson at the age of six, his teacher told him he had to learn to sing as well, so he quit and thereafter taught himself to play with *absolutely no singing*. At Clayton State College, he passed every class except for the speech requirement and never graduated.

"I just couldn't speak in front of people," he shudders.

Yeah, but you play in front of people.

"Only in bands."

"I used to see Ross in the parking lot," says Shane, also a Clayton alumnus. "He'd say, 'I don't want to go to speech class.' And I'd say, 'I don't want to go to any class.' And then we'd play tennis. The only reason I went to college was to meet the right people to play music."

Turns out he'd already known the right people to play music since earliest childhood. Everyone in Collective Soul grew up in Stockbridge, Georgia, a tiny little burg that is sort of a suburb of Atlanta and sort of a Mayberry simulacrum. They all went to the same schools and were playing music together in various configurations since junior high. They just needed to figure out who was playing what.

"I went all four years to Georgia State University," says Will Turpin. "I was a percussion major, taught by Jack Bell, leader of the percussion section of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. I had 24 percussion students of my own at one point. But we always knew Shane was the better drummer. He had the backbeat."

A Gibraltar-solid rhythm section and a tastefully smoldering lead guitarist, they could make people dance at frat parties and weddings, and they could get paid well for doing it. They needed a songwriter. They needed a visionary. They needed a prophet to

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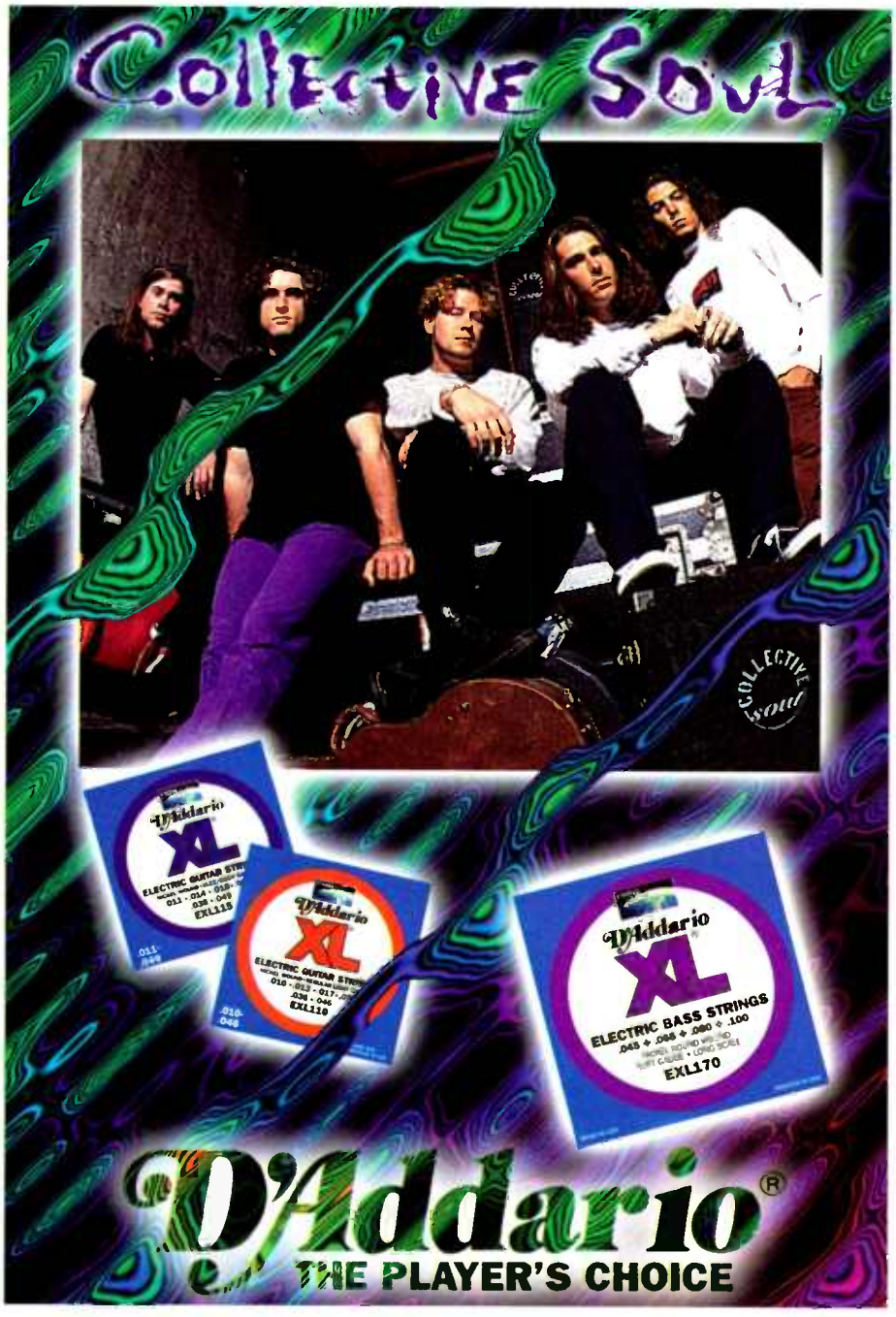
Of all the people in rock 'n' roll that I have interviewed over the past twenty years, Ed and Dean Roland are the only ones I know to be PKs. The myth of the PK—Preacher's Kid—is that he fights a lot, swears first and louder than anyone on the playground, does drugs and alcohol, and generally commits acts of blasphemy and juvenile delinquency to prove to himself and to everyone else that he is not a weenie. So you'd expect lots of PKs in rock 'n' roll, Son-of-a-Preacher-Man-types knocking over babes like bowling pins. That is, as I say, the myth. And there's a nugget of truth buried in it. But the reality is more subtle. In most cases, the P.K. is the kid on the playground with the most ambivalence.

"Do you ever stop feeling guilty?" Ed Roland asks at one point during our interview at a Chinese restaurant in Stockbridge. The question is more than rhetorical. I am 13 years older than Ed, who is 31, and I am a PK too. The answer is no.

Ed spent his early years moving from



COLLECTIVE SOUND

Ross Childress' favorite guitar is a Paul Reed Smith with a big scratch on it and a blue finish that is flaking off because somebody at the factory goofed and got air under the paint. They offered to fix it for him, but he prefers marred guitars on the grounds they have more character. Onstage, he amplifies with two '65 reissue Fender Twin Reverbs, and further sculpts his sound with various pedals like the Ibanez Tube Screamer and delay, the Diaz Tremedillo and the Dunlop Crybaby Wah. When composing at home, he relies on a Yamaha 4-track, Rocktron digital effects box, and Roland Dr. Rhythm drum machine.

Dean Roland plays a Guild acoustic and Gibson Les Paul electrics through a couple of Marshall JCM 900s.

Will Turpin has exchanged the Gibson bass pictured on the first album for a Music Man five-string that he plays through an Ampeg SVT.

Shane Evans pounds on a Drum Workshop kit with a natural wood finish. He recommends the 15" tom "for expression," as opposed to the usual 16" or 18". His cymbals are Zildjian.

Ed Roland often switches guitars onstage, alternating between a Fender Telecaster, Paul Reed Smith, Fender 12-string (looks like a Jaguar) and an Ernie Ball EVH model, personally given to him by Eddie Van Halen. The EVH he rates as the easiest to play. He recommends his Fender Tone Master for its "real dirty" rumble. For *Hints, Allegations and Things Left Unsaid*, the demo tape that became their first album, Ed used a Peavey board, a 16-track Fostex tape machine, and an Alesis drum machine. The guitars went direct through an Ensoniq DB-4 effects box. That "deep riff" sound in "Shine" came from the Ensoniq and having the guitar tuned all the way down to C. On the current album, the cool fuzz bass in "Bleed" was also from the Ensoniq ("Just dial up *Distortion Amp1*"). The watery vocal on "Collection of Goods" was achieved by running it through a Leslie cabinet and adding tremolo.

The whole band collectively strums D'Addario strings.

Atlanta to Rome, Georgia, to Dallas as his father picked up his theological credentials at various seminaries. When Ed was eight, his father became Minister of Music and Youth (later head minister) at the main Baptist church in Stockbridge. It was a big church in a small town. Being the first born and bearing his father's name, he was on display as only a PK can be on display. A minister is hired to be an example to the

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community, to live up to the expectations of the congregation, and that responsibility can fall heavily on the children as well. "Oh yeah, the teachers and everybody knew who you were," says Ed. "They'd tell your dad what you were doing long before they'd tell anything about any other kid. It seemed like that, anyway. They told your parents, who immediately did the, uh, whipping. Ya know, the discipline thing."

You must have resented that.

"I'm sure I resented the whole church thing in general. I thought there was more to life than church. But at that age, it's hard when you're dependent on your parents. You have no choice. But do I resent it now? No, I don't think about it. So I guess I don't resent it too much."

In my own case, rock 'n' roll became this alternative pagan religion. I couldn't have articulated it at the time, but the Beatles and the Stones and the Yardbirds represented this whole new possibility.

"Yeah. The Devil."

Well. Yes. The expression of forbidden emotions like lust and anger. When the Stones snarled, it was a revelation to me. Incredibly liberating.

"Do you still remember that time?"

Like yesterday.

"It's weird how you remember. One day at the store my parents said I could buy a record. I remember there were three albums on the rack: Olivia Newton-John, John Denver, and Elton John. I didn't know any of them. I just happened to pick up Elton John because I thought he looked cool with his white suit, and he was sitting there at his piano with his big glasses. I remember putting the record on and thinking, 'Wow!' That was my introduction to rock 'n' roll. I was 12 years old." Within a year of that, Elton did his famous *Rolling Stone* interview where he admitted his bisexuality. It was in the newspaper, and my father blew up. Said I was not allowed to listen to Elton John anymore, but it was too late to stop me. I started playing guitar at 15.

"When I was 17, I had this friend in church who really opened my eyes to different kinds of music. He was a college DJ, and I just sat there and listened to record after record that I never would have known about otherwise. I basically lived at his house, and became best friends. The song 'Good Night, Good Guy' is about him. He died of a cocaine overdose. And it's about my grandfather, who died of leukemia.

"Anyway, then I really fell in love with the Cars. I loved Elliot Easton's guitar. I still love his solos. They just fit so well with the songs. And the Cars were new wave, not punk. They weren't dangerous or anything, so I could bring them into the house. Mom and Dad wouldn't freak out, and yet the music was *new*, if that makes any sense. The Cars were why I went to Berklee. They were from Boston, and Berklee was in Boston."

Taking out a student loan (repaid last year), he enrolled at the Berklee College of Music at the age of 18. Over the course of a school year, he learned a lot about playing with other musicians. And he learned that he didn't care about reading music or anything else about formal training.

"I wanted to write songs. It just took me a while to realize I didn't need school for that. For songwriting, you just need to sit down and work out your emotions. There's no book to read on it."

Returning to Stockbridge, he walked

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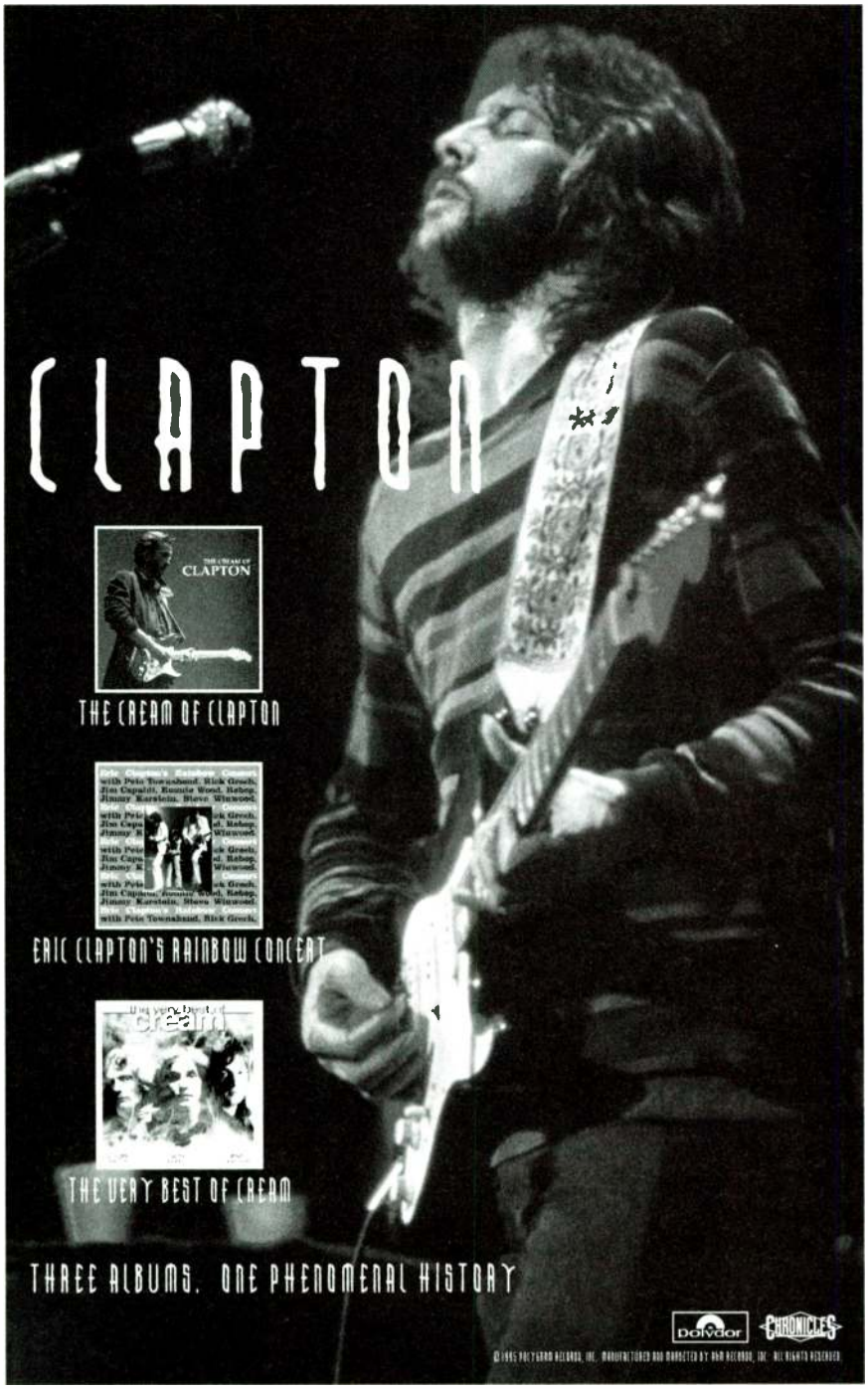
into the only local recording studio (owned by Will Turpin's father) and announced he wanted to be an engineer. A week later, he was the engineer. He had no idea what to do, catching the monitors on fire one day by inadvertently creating a loop. But from 1983 to 1991, he learned how to record by hands-on experience, and whenever the studio had down time, he worked on his own songs. When he deemed the songs ready, he worked with various bands but never played the wedding and frat party circuit with Ross, Will and Shane. "That was one thing I told myself, that I would never play in a cover band. I would only work toward what I wanted to do, which was play my own music. We only did original music, which was mine."

What were your parents thinking through all this?

"They were very supportive. There was just that one period after the Elton John interview. My father being a preacher, that put a lot of pressure on my parents as well as on the kids."



So your father came to accept Elton John's bisexuality?

"Yeah, Elton is one of his favorite artists now. It took some time, but he grew out of that phase as I grew into my phase. When he went to record burnings, he'd laugh it off. Because of what I was trying to do, he knew it was just music. When he was growing up, he listened to Elvis and Jerry Lee Lewis, and you don't get more rock 'n' roll than those guys, in lifestyle anyway."

You had record burnings at your church?

"Not at his church. Different churches in the community would get together and decide to have a big bonfire."

So after you got out of high school, your parents got hip?

"I don't know about hip. They certainly got supportive. They realized music was what I wanted to do, and there wasn't anything they could do to stop it. Now it's exciting for them. They watch MTV. I don't know if they get it, or if they just get caught up in it."

One night in 1987, he was noodling around with this guitar and came up with this riff that seemed okay. The next day he went into the studio and recorded a song built on the riff. Didn't think much of it then, and thought even less of it when he started sending it around.

"I'll always remember getting turned down by this record company president. He was a real big-name guy, and he took the time to write me a personal letter to tell me that all my songs had one-line choruses. I was so depressed. Suddenly I was aware of this rule that all choruses had to have four lines, or something."

Playing original music under various names around Atlanta for the next few years, Collective Soul was going no place so fast that Ed decided to disband the group for awhile and record a demo by himself in his manager's basement. Figuring if he couldn't sell the band, then he might be able to sell some songs and prove to the world he could write a melody. One-line chorus or not, he still had a feeling for that one tune he wrote back in 1987 and gave it another shot. On a whim he sent it to a college radio station in Atlanta and a few days later it was their most requested song. Within weeks it was a regional hit, and then Atlantic was demanding to release their album nationally. "But it's just a [*cont'd on page 66*]

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Tokyo, Japan	Aug., 1995
Barcelona, Spain	Oct., 1995
Paris, France	Oct., 1995
Athens, Greece	Dec., 1995
Tel Aviv, Israel	Dec., 1995
Helsinki, Finland	Apr., 1996

For information about international cities, contact the schools directly. **Kobe:** Koyo Conservatory, contact T. Sugauchi; **Tokyo:** PAN School, contact Kazuaki Hashimoto; **Barcelona:** L'Aula de Música, contact Arthur Bernstein; **Paris:** American School of Modern Music, contact Stephen Carbonara; **Athens:** Centre of Music Studies Philippos Nakas, contact Leonidas Arniakos; **Tel Aviv:** Rimon School of Jazz and Contemporary Music, contact Orlee Sela; **Helsinki:** Oulunkylä Pop/Jazz Conservatory, contact Jussi Saksa.

For information about auditions in the other cities, please contact Berklee College of Music: Office of Admissions, Dept. 8748, 1140 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215-3693 (USA). Telephone: (617) 266-1400, ext. 8748 or (800) 421-0084, or Fax: (617) 536-2632.

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Music fans have made thousands of songs freely available via computers. What's a record industry to do?

Pirates on the In

IT'S 3 A.M. AND JASON KONARZ WANTS to hear the funky bass line from a track off Janet Jackson's *janet*. The riff, which has been flitting through his mind for hours, is driving him nuts. Instead of flipping on the radio and hoping a DJ will answer his call, the 19-year-old turns on his computer, connects to the Internet and begins browsing through an electronic album collection so vast it dwarfs even the largest Tower Records outlet.

"I had been humming that song all night and I wanted to hear it right then," recalls Konarz, who lives in St. Louis. "Out on the Net, it's audio on demand. It's much cheaper and I get a lot of my music that way." Konarz doesn't pay for the latest Pearl Jam album. Nor does he stop by a record store to listen to a few Top 10 singles. And at the moment, neither does anyone else. All you need is the right hardware and access to the Internet to download hundreds of tunes by every pop star from Alice in Chains to ZZ Top.

The Internet has quietly become the world's largest jukebox, a haven for cyberfans who believe music was meant to be free. The

BY P.J. HUFFSTUTTER ILLUSTRATION BY TIM HUSSEY


ernet

selection of tracks available on this global network is vast, ranging from rare R.E.M. and Nine Inch Nails B-sides to entire albums by the Grateful Dead. While most of the music floating around on the Internet comes from official record company releases, about one-fifth of the available sound files are concert bootlegs and unreleased studio work. It is predominantly young fans who are posting these songs on the Net, usually without approval from either a record company, music publisher or artist. On-line enthusiasts estimate that about 75 percent of the activists are either high school or college-age students with a passion for music and—obviously—access to computer equipment. No one knows how many fans are exchanging digitized songs, but the potential audience is enormous. Right now, as many as 50 million people are linked to the Net. For the record industry, artists and song publishers, that potential is more like a nightmare.

"We see this as bootlegging," says Larry Kenswil, executive vice president of business and legal affairs for MCA Music Entertainment Group. "We don't like poor quality copies of our stuff floating around because it makes a bad impression. But I wouldn't want to press a case against someone exchanging music on the Internet unless it was a really extreme case and we were losing a lot of money," he admits. "Everything associated with the Internet right now is seen as hip and edgy."

Artists like New York–based techno DJ Moby acknowledge that record companies and music retail outlets should be afraid of the precedent set by such electronic bootlegging. The digitization of music could either cement the recording industry's clout, or eradicate the need for a middle man when shuttling a song from performer to fan. Why, for example, couldn't a band digitize their new album themselves and offer it directly on the Net?

"You could just write a song, bypass everyone and render them completely obsolete," Moby observes. "For the record companies, this is really a threatening process. But it's a double-edged sword. I'm not a big fan of record companies, but they do serve a purpose. I remember a friend of mine had an old U2 bootleg with songs off of *Boy*, before the record actually came out. It was terrible. The songs weren't in good shape. There's something to be said for developing and spending money on an artist's work."

Many musicians agree, arguing that the issue on the Internet is one of maintaining artistic control. They want fans to hear authentic, CD-quality versions of songs, rather than the telephone-quality versions that float on the Net. "Obviously, any artist would want the best quality of their work to be preserved," says Nick Rhodes, keyboardist from Duran Duran. "However, I find something quite charming about the deterioration in sound. After all, everybody has a different system at home and in their cars, and music always sounds different depending upon the ambience of the space you are listening to it in. I really like the quality of moving visuals on the Internet at the moment. It has a character all of its own."

"If I put up a mono version of a Machines song, it's going to sound like crap," says Mike Fisher of Machines of Loving Grace. The band has established an official group Net site that includes tour dates, song samples and band interviews. "And what justifies putting up an entire song anyway? You can represent the concept of a song with a short sample, much like you can represent a novel by using excerpts."

Fans such as Stig Venaas, however, contend that artists should thank them for disseminating their music. "I don't think we're doing any harm to the record industry; actually, I think that the industry gets free advertising and we make people buy more records," said Venaas, a computer systems administrator and mathematics student in Trondheim, Norway. His Internet site featured 700 songs—including singles, B-sides and live songs—until it was forced to shut down in April.

"Our audience still goes out and buys the records, because the quality on the Net is not great. If they're serious about the band, this whole thing is only a teaser." Dennis McNally, Grateful Dead

Because current copyright laws fail to encompass the Internet, many downloading proponents argue that copying music from the Net for personal, noncommercial reasons is just as legal as using your stereo to dub an audiotape recording of a compact disc. The process is considered "fair use" by the Audio Home Recording Act, a 1992 federal law that excludes most home taping from copyright infringement. In return, the act allowed the recording industry to add a tax on all blank digital audio tapes, which was used to pay royalties to music publishers and artists. Though music publishers don't see big income potential in computer networks right now, they insist the principle of copyright must be upheld. So must their profits. Last year, the recorded music industry grossed about $10 billion in the United States, with the bulk of the monies coming from the sales of albums and singles.

There are signs the music industry is stepping up to the legal challenge. Venaas shut down his Internet site after he was threatened with legal action by an international trade group. And CompuServe, one of the largest American commercial on-line services, was sued by Frank Music Corporation in November 1993 for offering its subscribers a digital performance of "Unchained Melody" that could be downloaded from a music forum for free. (The forum was run by an independent contractor.) The suit charges CompuServe with infringing the song's copyright; it also alleges similar violations involving 690 other compositions, and seeks damages of as much as $100,000 per infringement. A decision in the case is pending.

"We do not feel that we are responsible for what appears on our service, let alone what's on the Internet," objects Michelle Moran, a corporate communications spokeswoman for CompuServe. "We're like a shuttle service. We just provide our customers with the means to get to certain places." Bennett Lincoff, director of legal affairs at ASCAP, begs to differ: "When you see your work being pirated, that becomes a great incentive to protect and make others respect your intellectual property. There will always be an opportunity for fringe users to abuse the system. But we're hoping that there will soon be an understandable norm, a way things are usually done when distributing music. We intend to keep an eagle eye on all technological developments."

Taking tracks off an audio compact disc and making them available on-line, as well as downloading music from the Net, are both amazingly easy processes, according to Miller Puckette, a computer music

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professor at the University of California at San Diego.

"An audio CD holds information just like a floppy disk holds information," Puckette said. "It's all digital information. Basically, you just need any sort of CD-ROM reader, whether it's a stereo that's hooked up to the computer or a CD-ROM component built into the hard drive."

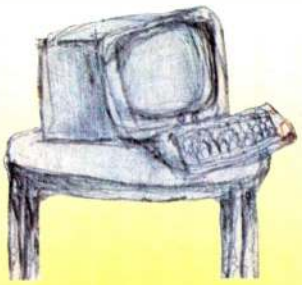
Jason Konarz, for instance, connects his stereo to his computer hard-drive, then transfers sound files from his computer to a recordable CD. "When I get a good group of songs together, I hook my MiniDisc recorder up to the sound card in my computer and transfer them to disk," he relates. "It's really simple and it makes the songs portable. It's easier to walk around with a MiniDisc player than to lug around a hard-drive."

The most important drawback is quality and time delay—the better the quality of the song file, the longer it takes to grab it off the Net. With a 14.4 kilobit-per-second modem (the most commonly purchased modem today), it takes at least four minutes to transfer one minute of a lower-quality, mono-sounding tune. For CD stereo quality, a file transfer takes a minimum of 50 minutes for every minute of playable song.

"Who wants to lock up your computer for hours, even if the song's free?" asked one avid music poster who goes by the handle "jbgarrion." "That's why everyone's using lower-quality sound files. And really, who cares? It's not like I'm listening to opera or classical music; it's pop and rap and punk. All I care about is that it's free and it's easy to get." Daniel Miller, chairman of the UK label Mute Records, agrees. "We work with a lot of different artists that fall into fairly specialized niche markets, and it's especially difficult to have the shops stock the records in the UK because they have a limited amount of space. I see that as the kind of music that will benefit."

Music can be found in news groups like *alt.binaries.sounds.music*, which attract people who like to exchange songs, offer advice on the latest recording techniques and tell where to find the best collections on the Net. Music can also be copied directly from computer storage sites such as *multivac.ludd.luth.se*, which offers selections by more than 100 mainstream bands. Commercial services like CompuServe, America Online and Prodigy allow their paying subscribers to tap into various sites that feature such files. Users browse through menus for the artist they like and download the audio file to play back later.

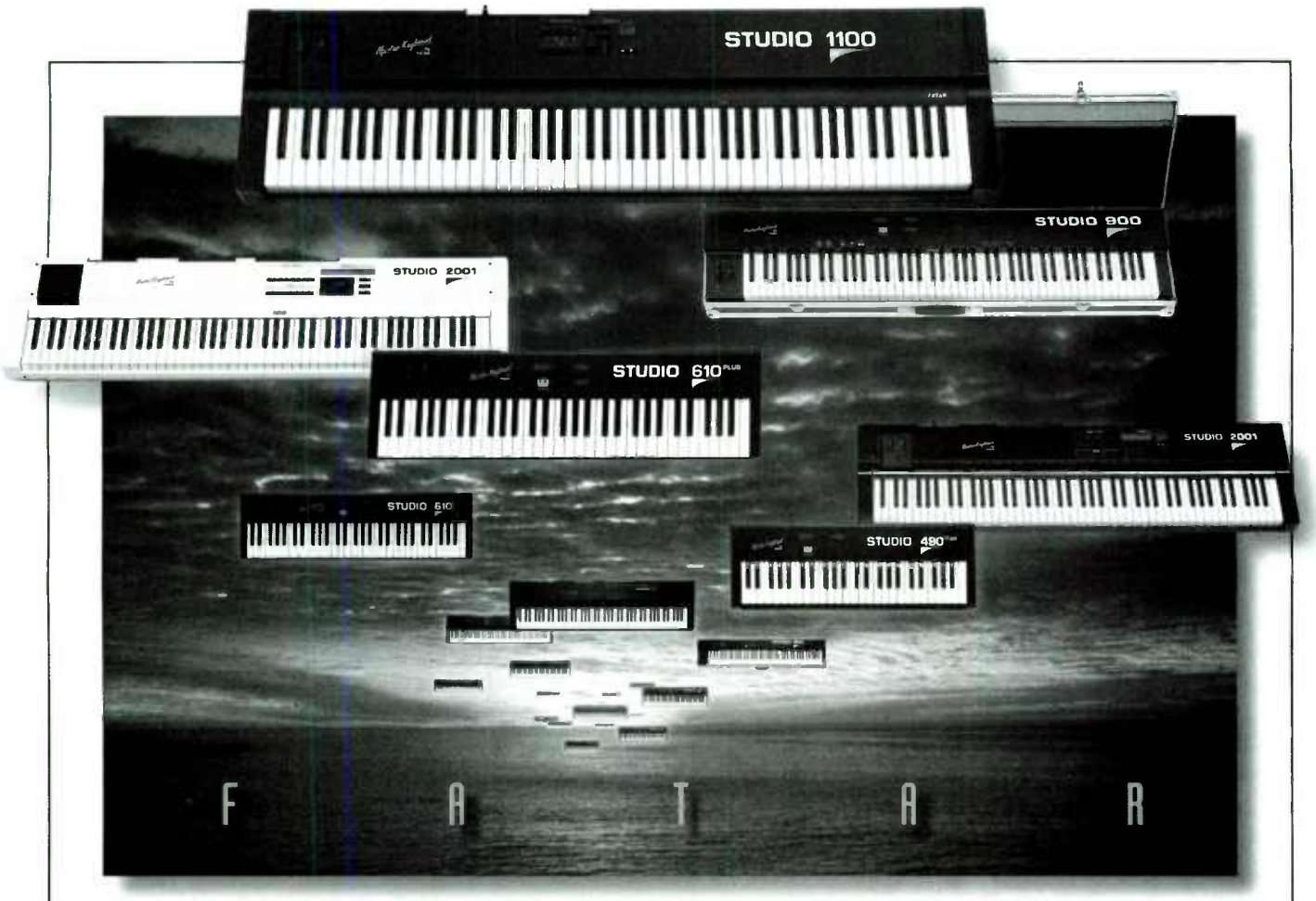
The easiest place to find both the songs and the right software is on the World Wide Web, a multimedia system on the Net that fans have used to erect elaborate, unofficial tributes to their favorite bands. Known simply as the Web, it allows integration of text with still images, sound and video. This information is displayed on individual "home pages," with a collection of linked pages forming a "site." Take, for example, *http://frabel.geom.umn.edu:8000/music.html*. Click on the boldface phrase "Music Around the World" and up pops a list of digitized songs. This page subsequently links you to other student-run sites, such as "Mega's Jukebox" and "Paul Wain's On-Line CD Collection." There are even links to sites that offer software needed to play these song files. Beyond Internet connecting costs, all are free.



"I don't care about the poor quality of posted music. When you're a kid, you don't care about quality. It's like buying a cheap cassette to record a friend's album." Billy Gould, bassist, Faith No More.

Users aren't concerned that their actions may be illegal. "It's not like anyone's making money off this," said "phantom," a subscriber at *alt.binaries.sounds.music* who identified himself as a 21-year-old from San Antonio, Texas. "What we're listening to, at least most of the time, sounds like a good bootleg."

But a bootleg's a boot-



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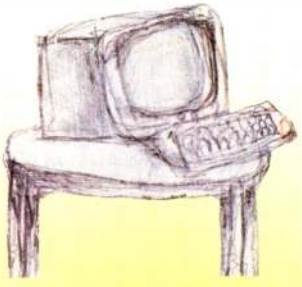
leg, and violates copyright law, regardless of the sample's poor quality and the user's lack of profit. Under federal law, pop-music songs are protected by two basic copyrights—composition (lyrics and sheet music of a song) and sound recording (a specific recording by a performer). "It's an economic right that helps artists pay their bills," says Donald Passman, a Beverly Hills music-law attorney and author of the book *All You Need to Know About the Music Business.* "This Internet movement reminds me of what people think happens with radio: Music is transmitted to your home for free. But it's not free, because a radio station pays an annual fee to music publishers so the station can play the songs."

The Net also circumvents the artists' right to control the distribution of their music. "There's a dynamic shift happening right now: from a one-to-many model to a many-to-many model," notes multimedia legal consultant Scott Fedewa, a Stanford Law School graduate whose FutureMusic consulting firm specializes in the implications of the Internet for copyright law and the entertainment business. "Instead of a big corporation selling thousands of CDs, it's one person sending these thousands of CDs to 10,000 friends."

To compensate artists whose music is posted on the Net without authorization, downloading advocate Ram Samudrala has proposed a "free music philosophy." In this system, not unlike the shareware system used by software programmers, people would sample songs on the Net and only pay for the tunes they enjoy.

"It definitely comes from a hacker's mentality," said Samudrala, 23, a graduate student in computational genetics. "You pay for what you use or what you like. No one I know is trying to rip off the very artists that they admire. What's the point of doing that?"



"What scares me is if the record companies monopolize what gets out on the Net. That stops the artist from communicating with the audience." Joey Peters, drummer, Grant Lee Buffalo

Samudrala's theory follows on-line guru Stewart Brand's now-famous maxim: Information wants to be free and information wants to be expensive. Because technology allows easy copying and casual distribution, information wants to be both economically and politically free from the confines of the traditional marketplace. Yet because it is the prime economic event in an age that is driven by knowledge, information wants to be expensive. Brand contends that technology builds tension between these two ideas, constantly making the tension worse. So if the record companies cling blindly to the expensive part of the paradox (profit), they'll miss all the positive aspects happening in the free part (building a consumer base through free publicity).

When college students set up an unofficial Web site devoted to Faith No More, the band encouraged them to expand the project. The musicians even allowed site organizers to make bootleg tapes of certain shows and post the music on the Web for free distribution.

"It saves us the trouble of setting up a site ourselves," said FNM bass player Billy Gould. "As a musician, I make music for a living and I appreciate the check I get at the end of the month. But you can't ignore the Internet because it's now part of pop culture."

Todd Rundgren has stepped into the electronic realm by allowing CompuServe users to grab a complete copy of his latest release, *The Individualist.* All 10 tracks from the record were posted June 12 in a special on-line arena devoted to Rundgren's work. Fans can either download 30-second sound samples of a song or grab the entire track. But with a 14.4 modem, it will take a minimum of seven hours to download the album—with CompuServe charging its subscribers $4.80 an hour. The on-line company says that about 50 subscribers have tried the

song bites, but only 30 users have downloaded entire songs. "Yes, it's expensive and the quality of the files isn't that great. But someday, it'll be easier and faster and cheaper to sell music on-line than in the retail stores," says CompuServe spokeswoman Daphne Kent.

Major record labels and independent studios are vying for space on the Net by establishing their own official sites. But most record-company sites feature little more than electronic press releases: a discography, a brief interview with band members and 30-second snippets from the artist's latest single. To get entire songs or albums, fans go elsewhere. The Internet Underground Music Archive (IUMA) offers one option. Started by a couple of University of California at Santa Cruz graduates, IUMA offers Net users free access to complete songs by more than 600 artists, many of whom are unsigned.

"It's a great idea, but most people want to get music by bands they've actually heard of before," admits downloading advocate Gordon Hawley, 25, an office clerk in Ventura, California. "If you're looking for something eclectic, cool. If not, then there's not much at IUMA that will interest you."

Another venture is the pact formed in April between music publisher BMI and On Ramp Inc., a New York on-line marketing firm run by former MTV announcer Adam Curry. The music performance license agreement allows the transmission of BMI music within On Ramp's Internet programming service. On Ramp's Web site, *http://metaverse.com*, lets people browse through music clips and *purchase* copies of tracks that can be downloaded to a computer. But on-line users say they aren't impressed with the service so far because the quality of the sound samples are so poor. "Why pay for something when you can find a better sounding version somewhere else on the Net for free?" asks Samudrala.

Still, the agreement was the first step in securing artists' copyrights in an uncharted electronic medium, notes John Shaker, senior vice president of licensing for BMI. "The average songwriter who is not a major star will make two-thirds of his income off of his song performance rights," he says. "Look at '(Sittin' On) the Dock of the Bay.' You don't know who Steve Cropper is, but he makes a living off that song because he co-wrote it." ASCAP has now followed suit, granting a performance license to Radio HK, a Web-based radio station owned by Hajar/Kaufman Advertising in California, and is offering the same license to other on-line broadcasters as well.

Artists are concerned that professional bootleggers will soon be taking advantage of the technology. "When someone can distribute complete CDs straight from a computer to eager fans, the losers are not just the artists but the fans themselves," said former Depeche Mode keyboardist Alan Wilder, whose work pops up on several Internet sites.

"What can I lose from adding to my collection of Depeche Mode music?" counters Gordon Hawley, who says he primarily downloads songs by the British group. "If I find a song I've never heard before by them on the Net, I'm going to take it. But that doesn't mean I'm not going to drive to every record store I can think of to buy the song on CD."

Even if a record company wanted to take someone to court for uploading or downloading copyrighted material, it wouldn't be a financially sound move, suggests Marc Geiger, director of A&R for American Records.

"So we set a precedent [of winning a copyright case]. So what?" says Geiger, who cofounded the Lollapalooza festival. "This is mostly kids who are doing this. What kind of assets does a 17-year-old really have?"

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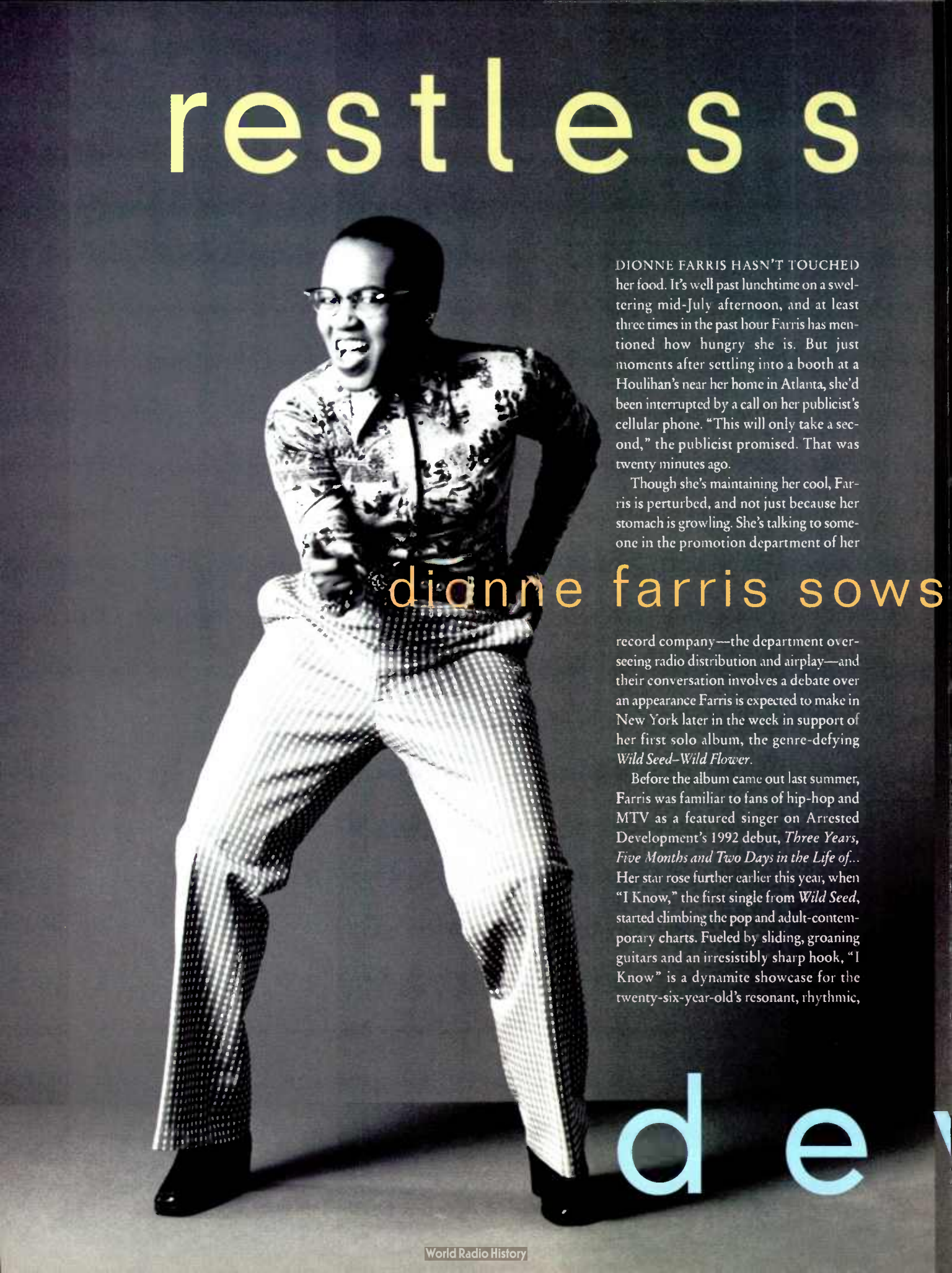
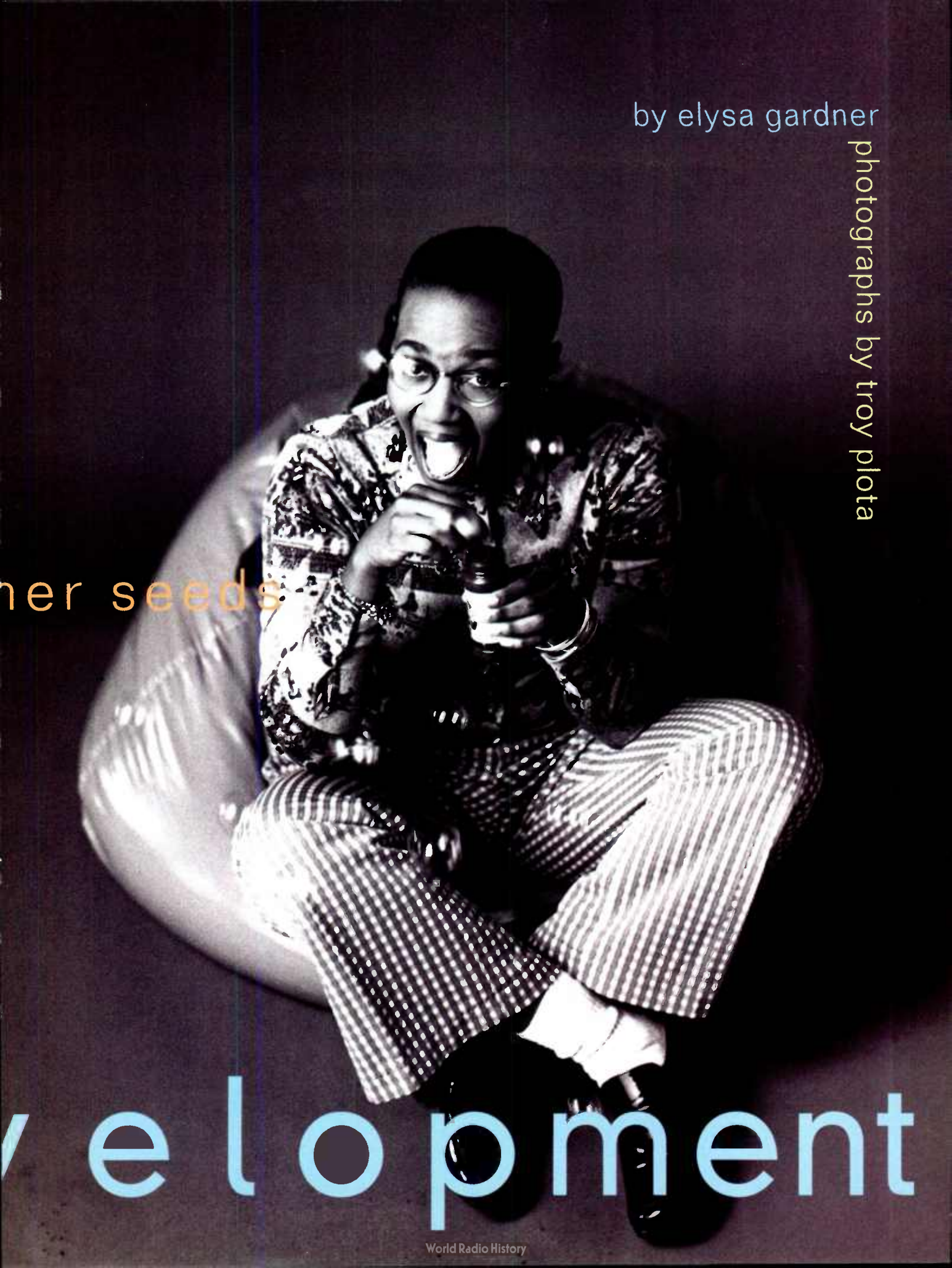


dionne farris sows

DIONNE FARRIS HASN'T TOUCHED her food. It's well past lunchtime on a sweltering mid-July afternoon, and at least three times in the past hour Farris has mentioned how hungry she is. But just moments after settling into a booth at a Houlihan's near her home in Atlanta, she'd been interrupted by a call on her publicist's cellular phone. "This will only take a second," the publicist promised. That was twenty minutes ago.

Though she's maintaining her cool, Farris is perturbed, and not just because her stomach is growling. She's talking to someone in the promotion department of her record company—the department overseeing radio distribution and airplay—and their conversation involves a debate over an appearance Farris is expected to make in New York later in the week in support of her first solo album, the genre-defying *Wild Seed–Wild Flower*.

Before the album came out last summer, Farris was familiar to fans of hip-hop and MTV as a featured singer on Arrested Development's 1992 debut, *Three Years, Five Months and Two Days in the Life of...* Her star rose further earlier this year, when "I Know," the first single from *Wild Seed*, started climbing the pop and adult-contemporary charts. Fueled by sliding, groaning guitars and an irresistibly sharp hook, "I Know" is a dynamite showcase for the twenty-six-year-old's resonant, rhythmic,



self-possessed delivery. "I know what you're doing," she sings, presumably to some overzealous Lothario. "And it's not gonna work this time."

Which is basically what she's saying to the promo guy. Having just returned from an exciting but tiresome tour of Asia and Australia, where she opened shows for the Dave Matthews Band, Farris has barely a week to rest and get settled in her new home—a sprawling loft cluttered with photos, books, artwork, and other collectibles (an MTV Award, Farris accepting the honor with Arrested Development)—before embarking on the next leg of her American tour, also with the Matthews band. So, Farris is less than psyched over the prospect of a whirlwind promo trip to the Big Apple.

Ending the phone discussion—without perceptibly settling matters—Farris starts to talk about the dilemma at the source of professional headaches like this one. "I think I've veered away from the track," she says, picking at a plate of chicken and mashed potatoes that a waiter has set beside her wilting greens. Farris is diminutive, with soft, pretty features, while her close-cropped hair and sensible style of dress—denim overalls, wire-rimmed glasses, sturdy silver bracelets—reflect a pleasantly no-nonsense demeanor. "I've stopped believing in myself because other people have been doing that for me."

"All the problems we experience, we bring them on ourselves, by not following our faith."

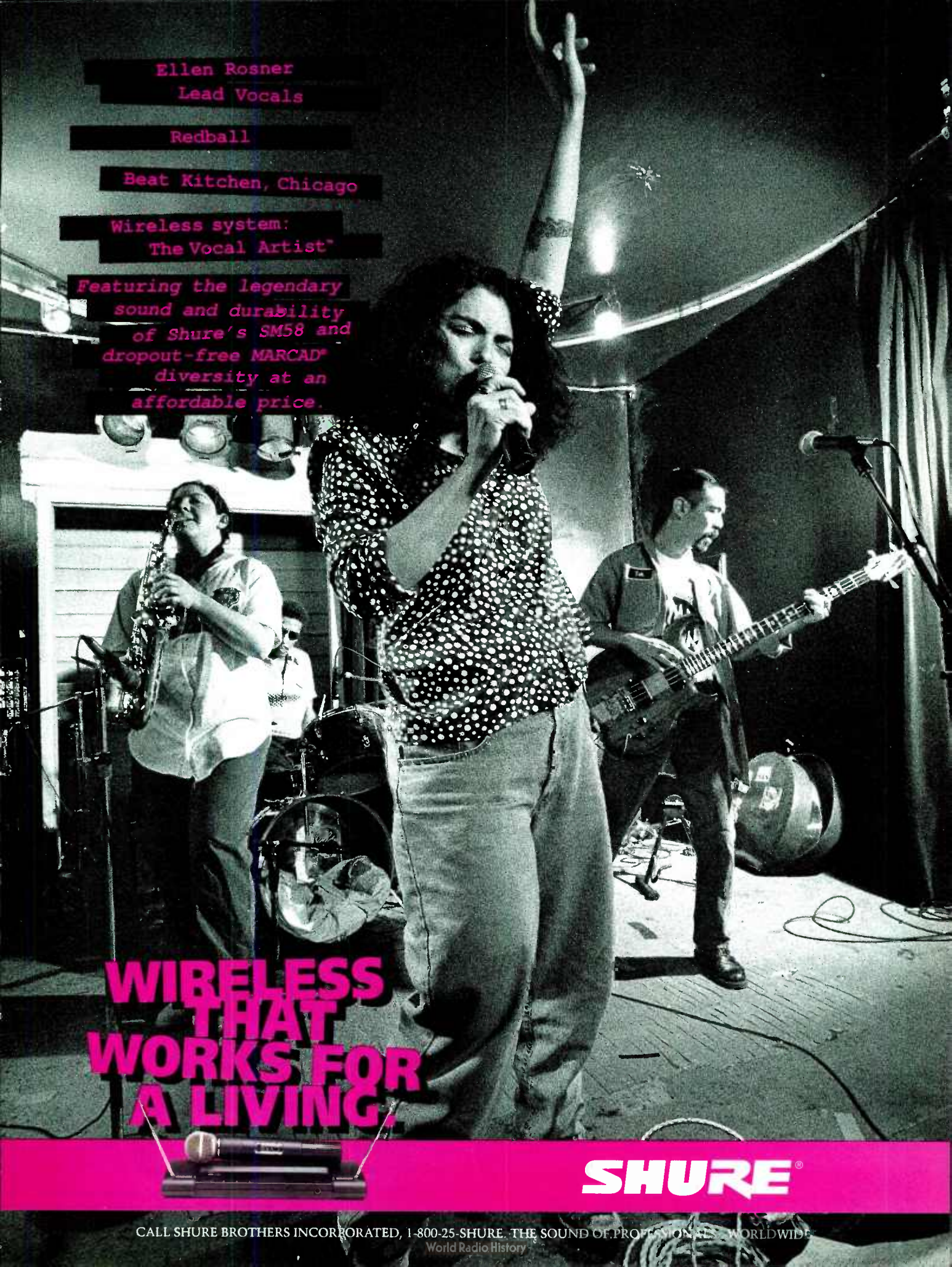
She reaches across the table for a few packets of Sweet 'N Low. "Everyone I work with has been coming up to me and saying, 'Okay, you need this, and you need that, and you need this and that,'" she says, lining up the packets in a row. "And I'm thinking, right, I need all these things. Fine. But then they're like, 'We'll handle it *for* you.' And that's allowed me to stop thinking. These people surround you, and I think they honestly try to help. But they can end up hurting you, if you let your own thought process escape. If you give it to someone else."

To which one might be inclined to respond: Get over it. At least, that should be the proper response when yet another fledgling star goes on about the frustrations engendered by success. But there's something different about Farris' story. For one thing, she's sympathetic to her tormentors. For another, she assumes responsibility for her own mistakes. She's sensitive but not whiny.

Farris reveals the same spirit as a songwriter. On *Wild Seed*, for which she wrote or co-wrote most of the lyrics, she never wags her finger at society, the popular locus of blame among people of all ages and vocations. Whether tackling a pressing social issue like crack addiction ("Stop To Think," which features darkly trippy, unsettling music by Lenny Kravitz) or molestation ("Don't Ever Touch Me (Again)," the album's single, a song Farris says isn't based on personal experience), or just taking a ride on that bumpy old roller coaster of love, she stresses that the courses our lives take are shaped by personal intuition, and our ability to act regardless of external pressure.

"I've gotten to this point in my life on faith alone," Farris says. "And I realize now that all the problems and chaos we experience in our lives, we bring on ourselves. By not paying attention to that inner voice, or to God, or whatever you wanna call it. By not following our faith."

FARRIS TOOK A considerable leap of faith in ending her association with Arrested Development two years back. Her relationship with the hip-hop collective began shortly after she moved to Atlanta in 1990. Having grown up in Bordentown, New Jersey, where she performed in school choirs and musicals (she played the title role in *Annie*, donning patent leather shoes and a red Afro wig), Farris cut her professional teeth singing in clubs around Manhattan. By her late teens, she had grown frustrated with New York life as a whole.



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David Harris Follows Up

The not-so-secret weapon behind Dionne Farris' *Wild Seed–Wild Flower* is guitarist David Harris, who co-produced six tracks on the album, co-wrote two, and is the self-professed "musical director" of her live band. Astute pop followers may recall that Harris was the principal force behind Atlanta's Follow For Now, a band he formed right out of high school in '86; he first met Farris, a longtime fan, when she was still in Arrested Development. "She came to a couple of our shows," he recalls. "Pretty soon after she saw us, she moved nextdoor to my soundman and my keyboard player. So," he laughs, "that kept us fairly close."

Follow For Now crumbled not long after. "It was destined not to happen," Harris says. "The final death knell was after the second [unreleased] record. We'd done 17 or 18 songs that we thought were brilliant, but the label didn't get it. Then we got into a lawsuit with our managers...and it was just, abort mission." Harris doesn't see many similarities between Follow For Now's music and his work with Farris. "People have said, 'I knew which songs were yours right away, I can recognize your style.' But I don't see that I have any discernible style. Maybe that's because I know where all the parts came from."

Speaking of parts, the propulsive slide hook on "I Know" was Harris' creation. "I don't remember the rationale behind it, but I do know I'd never worked with a slide. In fact, before we recorded it, I called up Paul Reed Smith, whose guitars I use, and asked if they knew a slide player who could do the session. But in the end, I stuck with it, and now I can kinda play slide. That's good, because now I have to."

Both "Don't Ever Touch Me (Again)" and "Food for Thought" originated with Harris. The former was written during the Follow For Now days. "It's a simple progression but there's [*cont'd on page 87*]

Her father lived in Atlanta—he and Farris' mother divorced when she was young—but the singer suggests that it was fate more than circumstance that drove her down South. "I mean, I could have called a cousin in Philly, or family I have in Virginia. But I picked Atlanta for some reason."

At the time, Farris was dating Rasa Don, who had been recruited into an embryonic Arrested Development as a drummer and dancer. When she heard that Arrested was looking for a woman singer, she wasn't interested at first. "I had been in a female vocal group called Onyx—not the rap group—and I didn't want to get involved in another band. But I wasn't really doing anything right then, so I said I would join in some capacity.

"Basically, I became a member of Arrested Development's extended family. And I played it like that—like I was just a featured vocalist." Still, Farris garnered a good deal of attention and acclaim for her sensuous vocals, particularly on the hit single "Tennessee." And as she sees it, that didn't sit too well with Speech, the group's charismatic frontman. "I think that he might have felt he was being overshadowed. He'd show up to be interviewed, and people would ask where I was; and he'd say, 'Well, she's not really part of the group.'"

Nonetheless, there were hard feelings when she decided to pursue a solo career. "Terrible feelings. Even though we both knew I was going to leave. Speech is a very domineering individual, I think. He's a very talented man, but he wants to control things—not just his own destiny, but other people. I think Speech has a lot of insecurities." She pauses slightly. "I mean, we were very young, all of us in the band, and green to the world. We were amazed and bewildered by our success, and we all wanted to do everything. I think that came into play as well."

Chrysalis Records, the company to which Arrested Development was signed, was initially more supportive of Farris' solo ambitions. "They wanted to release my album because I was the girl who sang on 'Tennessee,' and so they'd have a springboard for their promotional campaign. But then they told me the record needed to be done by January [of 1994]. And I'm like, it's September, and I haven't written anything yet! They said, 'Well, we have somebody who's gonna write *for* you. She's a brilliant writer, and she'll take your ideas and really go with them!' So I'm saying, hello? Where am I in this process? This is my vision; I need to be incorporated. 'Well, we don't have time for you to do that.' "

Farris passed on Chrysalis' offer. "So here I had left Arrested Development, and my own deal is shot to hell. Everybody's calling me a fool, that there are a thousand people who are as talented as me who want this too. And do you know what I told them?" She leans back in her chair, smiling easily. "I told them I'll be a happy fool."

A happy fool with ideas. She got in touch with David Harris, the guitarist and principal songwriter for now-defunct funk-rock band Follow For Now [see sidebar], who got in touch with his partner Milton Davis, and the trio began jamming and working on songs. "And great things started happening. I was writing all these songs, and I was totally amazed at myself. I'd call my dad at three in the morning, going, 'Listen to what I wrote!' I was like a bullet that got shot out of a cannon, and I was gonna hit the target."

Farris put together a fifteen-song demo,

which caught the attention of an aspiring A&R woman named Kim Burse. Ironically, Burse was an old schoolmate of Speech and Arrested Development co-founder Headliner. Farris had given Headliner a copy of the demo for "I Know," and he happened to be playing it one day while Burse was visiting. As luck would have it, Burse was being considered for a job with Sony Music, and was putting together a tape featuring artists that the company might wish to consider. She contacted Farris, and wound up using three songs that would show up on *Wild Seed*: "I Know," "Reality," and "Human." Burse got the job, Farris got the deal.

LATER THAT DAY, Farris is in the hands of her makeup artist, part of the buffing and primping routine that precedes a photo shoot. Friends and assistants are milling about the photographer's studio. David Harris has dropped by, with his two young children in tow. Also present is Farris' manager Michael Simanga, a tall, cordial fellow who is lavished with such wildly affectionate praise in her album notes that you might suspect a romantic link. (Not so.) The mood is relaxed and cheerful, with sun beaming in through the glass windows and disco hits from the '70s cranking on the stereo.

In the car ride over from Houlihan's, Farris had offered a hilarious, dead-on imitation of Melissa Etheridge's heavy metal-meets-Vegas vocal style. (The Etheridge-bashing was, to be fair, initiated by me.) Now, moments after being made up, she's crooning along with Donna Summer and Evelyn "Champagne" King, gracefully stretching her alto and gliding through sumptuous harmonies. As Harris points out, Farris studies and draws on pop music in all its motley forms. The textures and arrangements on *Wild Seed–Wild Flower* combine elements of rock, folk, hip-hop, should jazz, and blues. This is a woman who was influenced by Aretha and Sarah Vaughan *and* James Taylor.

So far, her music seems to have been embraced more by the James Taylor crowd than by much of the audience that broke Arrested Development. Like Des'ree and Seal, two other popular black singer-songwriters of her generation, Farris has managed to cultivate a strong fan base of white listeners in their 20s and 30s, but hasn't had much success with the African-American demographic as a whole. A big part of the problem is that *Wild Seed* has been virtually ignored by urban radio, which Farris has a theory about.

"I think that the black experience is often defined by people outside of it," she muses. "Urban radio is allowing other people to dictate what 'urban' music is, so that someone else is giving us a definition of what a black artist is and what a black artist does. A stereotype has been created."

Harris, an alumnus of another musically eclectic black act that got no urban airplay, offers a harsher assessment. "Personally, I've lost all hope for urban radio," he says. "Until this current dark age of black radio, things weren't so monochromatic. When Prince started out, for instance, it was conceivable to have a song like 'Uptown' on black radio, and then have other tracks on pop radio. But nowadays, black radio's just closed off. With this so-called alternative music, there's a lot more cross-breeding—you see that stuff on pop stations, and vice versa. But with black radio it's like self-imposed apartheid."

But good vibes are coming Farris' way: a Top 10 single and heavy rotation on both MTV and VH1, relationships with friends and family that the singer says are "getting ever better and stronger." There's no boyfriend at the moment, she confesses; but the support she's getting from friends makes annoyances like the promo trip to New York (which she agrees to make after all) bearable.

As for the proud parents: "My mom wanted to sing, and I think that force was so strong for her that it carried through to me, within her womb. My dad played trombone and drums and all that stuff, but he went in a different direction, too. I think that now they're able to live vicariously through me."

"I don't think Dionne knows how talented she is," Harris says. "Although I think of it not so much as talent, but as a gift. With a gift comes responsibility, whether it be to save the world or just to make yourself feel better. I have that kind of responsibility, and she does too. Hopefully, we can keep reminding each other of that."

No doubt, Farris will assume most of the responsibility for being responsible, because that's the kind of gal she is. "What I want everybody around me to understand is that we need to work to feel good about ourselves," she says. "I was reading through this book *Wisdom* yesterday, and there's this part where it says that the secret of success is to believe in what you do, and make it interesting to other people. When I read that, I just sat back and thought, Jesus! That's so easy! Nothing is impossible, you know. Everything is possible."

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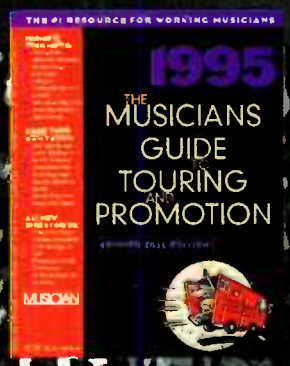

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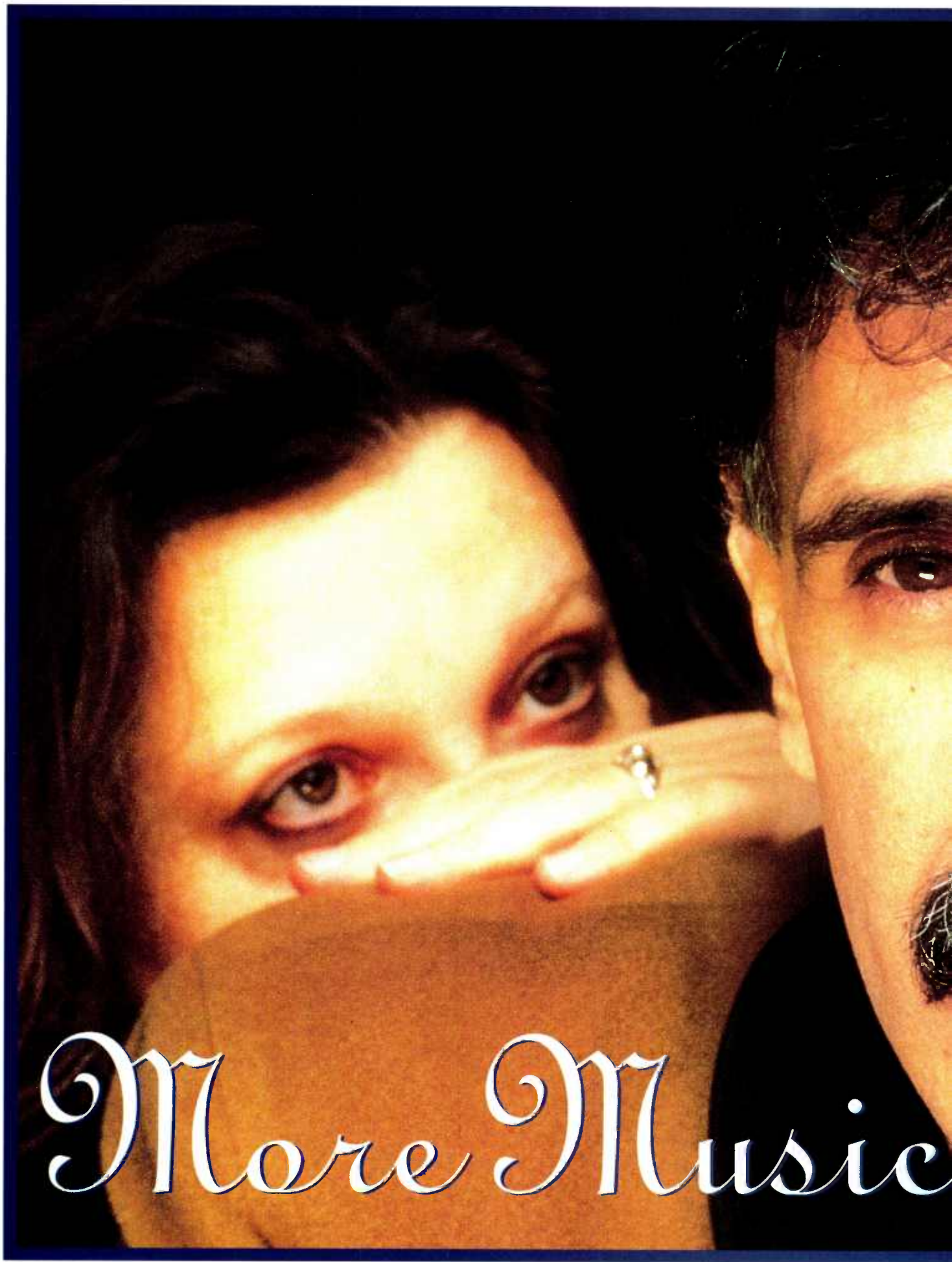
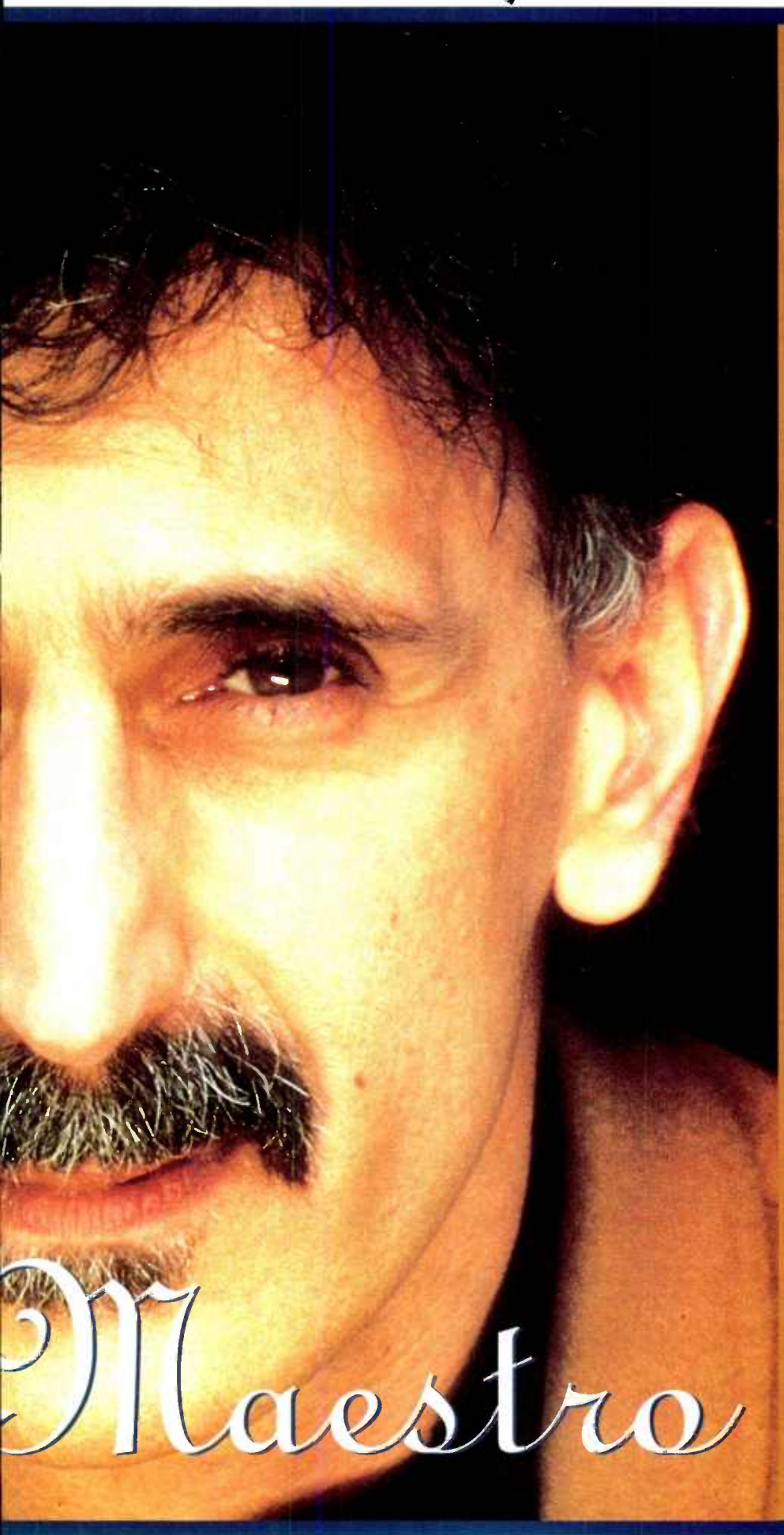


Gail and Frank Zappa



Maestro

Frank Zappa's Career in Progress

TOWARD THE END OF HIS life, diagnosed with inoperable prostate cancer, Frank Zappa was asked how he wanted to be remembered. "It's not important to even be remembered," he replied. "The people who worry about being remembered are guys like Reagan, Bush; these people want to be remembered. And they'll spend a lot of money and do a lot of work to make sure that remembrance is *just terrific*. I don't care."

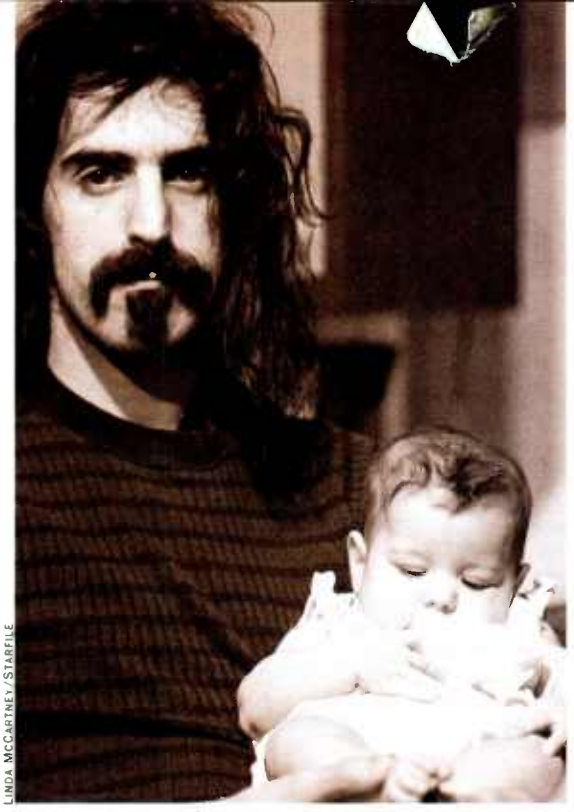
Ironically, those words are likely to be quoted a hundred years from now as newly converted fans discover his dozens of rock 'n' roll albums or scholars discuss the merits of his classical compositions in the same breath as Boulez, Ives and Stravinsky. "It's a sad note that Frank was skeptical that his music would be remembered after his death," says Don Rose, president of Rykodisc Records. "It's become our honor and our duty to prove him wrong."

When he died on December 4, 1993, just short of his 52nd birthday, Zappa had already set into motion the sale of his catalog of master recordings that Ryko closed in fall of '94 with the Zappa Family Trust, headed by his widow Gail. At Frank's request, dollar figures were not disclosed, but

By Dan Forte
Photograph by Lynn Goldsmith

it has been reported that to swing the deal Ryko restructured their company (bringing in outside investors) to the tune of $40 million. The Family Trust's chunk of change was considerably less than that, but it's safe to say it's well into the multi-millions.

Beginning last April, Ryko re-released nearly 30 years' worth of Zappa (53 titles in all, including several double-CDs and one triple) in the space of six weeks. It's hard to imagine any other rock artist whose work would merit that sort of attention, regardless of one's popularity, longevity or legendary status. Would Elvis Presley, whose recording career was about four years shorter than Zappa's, pass the microscope test if *every single album ever waxed* were reissued en masse? Would musicologists marvel that "they restored the original *Blue Hawaii* cover art and the fade on 'A Big Hunk O'Love' is nine seconds longer"? For that matter, try the same acid test for the Rolling Stones—and don't leave out *Black and Blue*.



LINDA MCCARTNEY/STARFILE

LYNN GOLDSMITH/LGI

Dad with Moon Unit, photograph by Linda McCartney, above; and surrounded by the kids below. "In some ways we were traditional, in some ways we weren't," Gail Zappa says.

While only three singles from Zappa's prolific output even charted ("Don't Eat the Yellow Snow," "Dancin' Fool" and "Valley Girl," none of which dented the Top 20), he was consistently a huge draw on the concert circuit. Although he sneered at Guitar Heroism, his six-string improvisations were as inventive as they were unorthodox. Much the same as jazz greats Duke Ellington and Charles Mingus, his real instrument was his band, whose alumni include Steve Vai, Jean-Luc Ponty, Adrian Belew and Vinnie Colaiuta. Similar to the Ellington and Mingus traditions, ex-members continue to perform his music (and original music with his indelible stamp), often in ensembles teaming players from different phases of his career.

Zappa's relationship with Rykodisc dates from the mid-'80s, following numerous legal battles with former labels, managers and band members. "We had just won all of the claims against the catalog; everything came under our control," recounts Gail. At that point the Zappas decided to either sell Frank's albums themselves, by mail-order, or license to labels in various parts of the globe on a format-by-format basis—vinyl to one, cassettes to another. CDs went to Ryko, the lone CD-only label at that time.

Pressing up CDs on Zappa's Barking Pumpkin label was impossible at the time because, as Rose explains, "Frank was still depending on the majors for his manufacturing, and at that time the majors had really saturated most of the existing capacity with their own top priorities. So Frank was still at the mercy of the hit-record-priority mentality at the majors. We had opportunities to manufacture outside of the major-label system.

"The original CD license deal we had with Frank, which dates back to about 1986, was a turning point and really helped establish us," says Rose. "It was the largest, most well-known body of work that we had up to that point." Rykodisc has since produced critically acclaimed catalogs of Elvis Costello and David Bowie, and has become the second biggest U.S.-owned record label after WEA.

Simply by the force of his creativity, Zappa changed music history—and the music business—on several occasions. For instance, *Freak Out!*, 1966's auspicious debut of his Mothers of Invention, was possibly rock's first double-album and definitely its first "concept album," predating the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds* and the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's*. His Barking Pumpkin label—launched in 1981 with the double-LP *Tinseltown Rebellion* and the three-volume *Shut Up 'N Play Yer Guitar* series—became a virtual primer for the DIY movement. "The early '80s was a very high tour season for Frank," Gail explains, "so he was gone a lot of the time. He came off the road and realized we had a real good business going in mail-order, and all we were doing was selling T-shirts. We decided that we'd make Barking Pumpkin a real label with new releases on it. We were into the Warners lawsuit at that point, and it was very, very expensive. And rumor had it on the cocktail cir-

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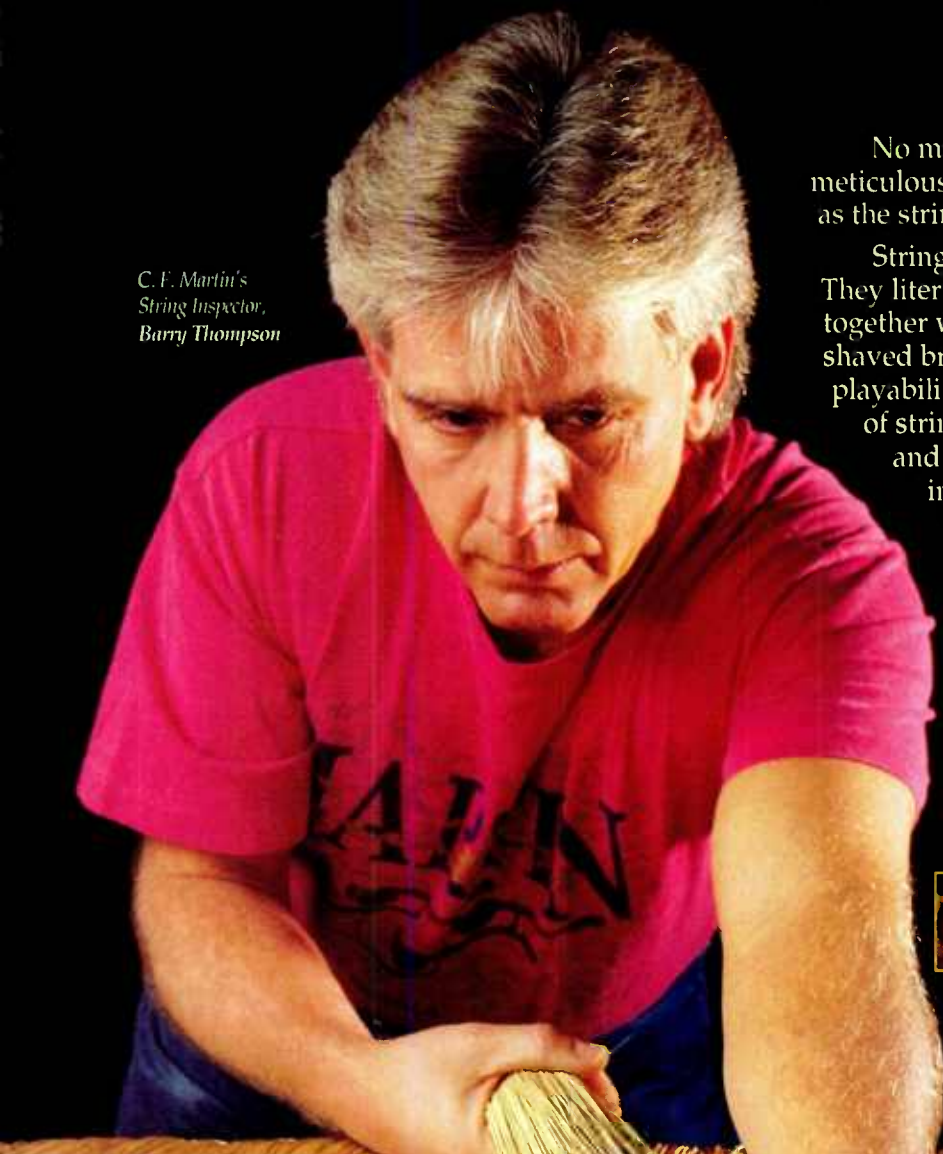

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cuit—or record company parties that we never went to—that nobody wanted to go up against Warner Bros. to offer us a deal domestically. That's when I first started taking a position. Considering that that's how my husband earned his living, I had a stake in that."

Part of the suit with Warner Bros. involved a massive work entitled *Läther*. According to Gail, Frank had made a verbal agreement with then-label head Joe Smith to deliver the four albums he owed the company. So he split *Läther* into four individual albums (which Warner Bros. titled *Studio Tan*, *Sleep Dirt*, *Orchestral Favorites* and the double-LP *Zappa In New York*) and delivered them together. When Warners refused to pay him, he played the entire set, uninterrupted, over the radio—not encouraging, per se, but certainly not discouraging, home taping and bootlegging.

DAGMAR STARFILE

Arthur Brown with FZ, New York, 1975. Did the composer of "Heavenly Bank Account" and "The Meek Shall Inherit Nothing" know how well his catalog would do?

"We were being frozen out of the business," Gail recalls. "We weren't getting any money out of Warners at the time the last four albums were turned in. There were no groceries on the table in our future; there was no table for the groceries to be on in our future. Something had to be done, and Frank was busy touring. That was his idea of how you earn money. I disagreed with that because, if you look at the numbers, tours in those days were primarily to the benefit of management.

"I started a mail-order company, selling T-shirts. It ended up paying our legal bills, which at the time were outrageous. I mean, we spent approximately two million dollars fighting Warners. That is not an easy sum to come by, even if you are Frank Zappa. The T-shirts were an option for us. I had no idea where it was going to go, and it ended up paying the bills completely. Those people who bought our first T-shirts," she laughs, "let me just tell you right here and now, *I* sat on the floor of our living room and stuffed that T-shirt into that

paper bag and sent it to you. Very personal."

Before his death, Zappa personally approved all masters that were delivered to Ryko. In some cases—for instance, *Lumpy Gravy* and *We're Only in It for the Money*—tapes thought to be lost were located, and the masters were restored to their original (but superior-sounding) form, replacing versions that had been remixed or overdubbed when Zappa put out his *Old Masters* boxed sets. In the case of 1968's *Cruisin' With Ruben And the Jets*, Zappa chose to keep the version that included overdubbed bass and drums. "That's still the 1984 version," explains Ryko's Jill Christiansen, who oversees the Zappa catalog. "Rykodisc's stance—and I agree—is to put these things out the way he wanted."

Or in Gail Zappa's words, "Ryko has the obligation to maintain the catalog in the way in which it was delivered to them—which was the last best versions by Frank. He was very insistent on that. Beyond that, I am not interested in controlling what Ryko does. But I am very interested in keeping secure those things that belong to the Family Trust. And that has everything to do with Frank's image and credibility as an artist. This is a life's work, but in the marketplace it gets converted instantly to product. I want people who've never heard his music to hear it, because I think he was one of the great composers of the century. I think Ryko believes that, too. There are catalogs that are viewed as evergreen, and Frank's has always been that."

Rose adds that the consistency of sales across the entire catalog, rather than individual records, is "nothing short of remarkable." He also points out that what the Zappa family *didn't* relinquish is "very telling"—the rights and the compositions and their role as music publishers. "From a business standpoint it's more passive," he says. "But the thing that Frank more closely identified with was the compositions. And he kept that."

Gail elaborates: "For a composer, publishing is your bread and butter. Frank decided that he didn't want me to run a record company controlling his masters; it would be better to view them as a life insurance policy and sell them. But he always said, 'Don't give up your publishing!'"

Ryko and Gail have a "joint venture" arrangement with respect to future releases culled from the "tons of tapes" in Frank's vault. Slated for 1996 is *The Lost Episodes*—described by Gail as "original versions of some material, things that have never been heard, many going *waaay* back"—personally compiled by Frank. To serve as a road map while excavating this analog mountain, both Ryko and Barking Pumpkin have solicited suggestions from Zappa fans on the information highway; Ryko's website address is *http://www.shore.net/~rykodisc*, and Barking Pumpkin's hotline is 818-PUMPKIN.

"The exceptions are anything orchestral," Gail stresses. "Those belong to me. *Civilization, Phaze III* [the 25-years-later sequel to *Lumpy Gravy*, which was Phase 2 of *We're Only in It for the Money* (and vice-versa), released on Barking Pumpkin last year] is an orchestral piece. 'Orchestral' was one of the trickiest definitions we came up with, because Frank's definition of orchestral —which I had to figure out after he was gone—was very different from what Stravinsky might have said. But then Frank had a different orchestra at his command than Stravinsky." Guitar-playing son Dweezil is busy executive-producing one project while Gail plans to relaunch the short-lived Zappa Records, with a recording of

Frank conducting the music of his boyhood idol, Edgard Varèse.

The Zappa family has also established and retained trademarks for Frank's name, his last name, his initials, his face, and even a little "moustache" logo, as well as "Mothers of Invention," under which "Mothers" is included. "Frank Zappa was one smart business cookie," says Mark Peabody, one half of the Austin-based Muffin Records, whose catalog is devoted to the music of Zappa and his alumni. "I put some advertising out that said, 'To Zappa freaks, What are your Mothers doing now?' I got a letter from Gail stating, 'Did you know that this stuff is trademarked? You won't do this again without our permission, will you?' I had no clue because, to me, it was totally unfounded in this industry to have somebody trademark their name." Muffin subsequently got Gail's okay to use Frank's name; its roster includes CDs by multi-instrumentalist Arthur Barrow, singer Ike Willis (backed up by the UK's Muffin Men), a stellar live concert by the Band From Utopia (with Willis, Tommy Mars, Chad Wackerman, and Bruce and Tom Fowler), and *The Purple Cucumber*, performed by the Belgium Philharmonic.

While this glut of Zappa product will delight hardcore fans, it's sure to confuse the newly arrived. For that reason *Strictly Commercial*, a 19-track sampler of faves, is being released. "That's a real obvious necessity in the marketplace," says Rose. "Because the catalog is so large, we need a point-of-entry for the less hardcore Zappa fan."

Oddly, one such fan was the person who compiled it. Jill Christiansen's title is Catalog Development Manager, though she prefers the job description "All Zappa, All The Time." When she was hired last December, she admits, "I knew nothing. I remember why I didn't listen to him, and my whole job is to get people like me to listen to him—to expose more people to his music, and to try to do it in a respectful way, in the right spirit. When things don't feel right, I say, 'Hey, this doesn't seem like Zappa to me.'"

Still, the relationship between Gail Zappa and Ryko is not without contention. While Ryko's marketing campaign boasts of restoring the artwork of the original album covers, changes were made in reconstituting graphics for the CD format—for instance, *Over-nite Sensation*'s wraparound cover painting by longtime Zappa artist Cal Schenkel.While contending that the graphics of the original LP versions are "closer to what Frank intended" than the Ryko CDs, Gail admits, "It's not what you see that makes you remember Frank; it's what you hear."

She refers to a different sort of "mother" to sum up her attitude. "Back in the old days when they'd print vinyl, they'd make a mother with the [metal] stamper, and when they pulled it away from the metal, it would have these little peaks that stuck up around the groove. But that contained a lot of the same information that was embedded in the grooves. So if you wanted to have your record sound as bright as possible, you would tell them not to 'de-horn' the record—that's what it's called when you smooth it out flat. I had asked Ryko not to 'de-horn' Frank, not to de-horn his intentions, not to de-horn his image. It seems like they're trying to smooth it all out—no rough corners, no raw edges—because they think that makes it more palatable. I think it's a mistake, but that's their call. They can only do it with what they say and how they present the art. They can't change his music."

Frankly speaking:

Interview with Gail Zappa

IN 1967, FRANK ZAPPA MARRIED THE WOMAN HE would spend the rest of his life with, Gail Sloatman. Over the course of the couple's 26 years as husband and wife, Frank evolved from the leader of a ragtag R&B-turned-psychedelic combo to a composer whose works were performed by symphony orchestras and chamber ensembles all over the globe, from proffering such social satire as "Who Are The Brain Police" to testifying before Senate sub-committees and discussing international business with Czech president Vaclav Havel. Gail evolved from a woman whom Frank once described as a "fascinating little vixen" to a savvy businesswoman, feisty and outspoken enough to make unsuspecting record executives wish they still had that pushover husband of hers to deal with.

MUSICIAN: *People will be surprised to hear you say Frank wasn't the greatest businessman.*

ZAPPA: No. What he had going for him was a concept—of having your own production company, then your own record label. But I don't think Frank ever really carefully looked at those agreements. If Frank trusted you, you could tell him, "This is what the deal says," and he would sign it. It wasn't until I got into the business that any of those contracts got read. For Frank it was a question of, how do you get access to the market and what kinds of things can you do in order to promote it? To be able to see what is possible is not the same as putting it together and making it pay for you.

MUSICIAN: *Frank was amazing at having a clear image of, and interacting with, his fans.*

ZAPPA: Everything that's going on today in the industry—people considering the Internet and that sort of thing—Frank saw that. In terms of knowing what he was capable of doing and what could be done, he was a visionary, I would say, without question. Remember, when Frank made *Freak Out!* [recorded in late 1965], he was 24. People forget this; they tend to think of him as being some mythical age. [*laughs*]

MUSICIAN: *Well, his level of cynicism is usually something you grow into when you're older.*

ZAPPA: I think that he was a born cynic. I'm guessing that the first sentence he ever said to himself was, "I doubt it."

MUSICIAN: *Prior to getting involved in Frank's business, what was your role?*

ZAPPA: I was a homemaker, as they say. I would refuse to be called a "housewife." Because I had a professional attitude about being a wife.

MUSICIAN: *People who only heard talk show jokes about the kids' names probably assumed, "What a bizarre household!" But from what I observed, the least traditional aspect was Frank's workload—which must have had quite an effect on the rest of the family.*

ZAPPA: That's complicated, because on the one hand I think you have an obligation to yourself to fully realize who you are, or what you do, what you value, how to express yourself, all those things. So you can't fault someone for doing that. In some ways we were very traditional, in other ways we weren't. The children had a father who was famous, and they were supported in their artistic endeavors in ways that we couldn't even imagine. And we made a conscious decision to not name them in a traditional way, to say to them, "This is the only thing we really have to give you. Anything else you must bring to yourself." I'm really proud of their names [Moon Unit, Dweezil, Ahmet, and Diva], and I think they've lived up to them.

MUSICIAN: *I first heard a rumor of Frank's illness in early '91, but it wasn't until the fall of 1992, when he couldn't attend a concert of his music in New York, that a public announcement was made. Had he been diagnosed much further back than that?*

ZAPPA: It was January of '90. At one point, right before the rumor first started, we had gotten a call from one of the rags, who said, "If you don't give us a story, we're going to print it anyway." They got all our phone numbers, and they called the kids and me, and they harassed us. I had my attorney have

a word with them, and fortunately my attorney had just won a major case for someone else who'd sued the magazine successfully, so they didn't print the story and didn't call us back. We were very lucky. I have always suspected that someone close to us had leaked that story, because we used pseudonyms in all the medical records and everything.

MUSICIAN: *Frank always had many works in progress. Did he look at the work and say, "I'm up against the clock; I've got to finish all these projects," or did he say, "I've already got a body of work, but I've got a finite amount of time. Let me do other stuff that I haven't had a chance to do because I was working so much"?*

ZAPPA: It was a little bit of both. Instead of spending any time thinking about something that *might* be a possibility, he developed only those things that were real for him. In his way, he had the time that he needed to do that. I think Frank handled himself throughout the entire affair with the same degree of perception and consideration that he did everything else. And I might write about that someday. I'm proud of everyone who was part of it.

MUSICIAN: *One last can of worms—the Rock And Roll Hall of Fame.*

ZAPPA: It's more of a can of maggots, really. And, yes, you can quote me. [*laughs*]

MUSICIAN: *You say that the Hall of Fame solicited your preferences regarding the choice of induction speaker but didn't care for your suggestions. Didn't you want Johnny "Guitar" Watson to make the presentation?*

ZAPPA: Yes, but they told me they couldn't rely on him. I said, "I have never known him to be anything but completely lucid and charming." I was livid.

MUSICIAN: *Did it seem to you that they had already decided on Lou Reed?*

ZAPPA: Oh, absolutely, because they only asked me ten days before the broadcast. We were definitely a last-minute thing, and I honestly think the reason they asked Lou Reed was because either there's some really nasty people on that board or they're just setting him up to induct him next year.

And I have to say that Lou apologized and came through in the end, in his way. He called. But when they said, "We would like to have Lou Reed," I said, "I can't believe this. Do you have any knowledge of the relationship, the *lack* of relationship? Lou has spent his life making hideous comments about Frank"—for no reason that anybody could understand, from our point of view. I said, "That's really not appropriate."

[*Suzan Evans, executive director of the Rock And Roll Hall of Fame Foundation, replies: "The board of directors tries to select a presenter that has a connection in some way with the artist inducted. The inductee is not solicited. It could lead to embarrassing situations if that presenter doesn't want to make that presentation. I didn't call Gail, and I know that nobody on the board called her. When we asked Lou Reed, he wanted to talk to Gail, and we put the two of them in touch and they spoke."*]

MUSICIAN: *So Moon accepted the award.*

ZAPPA: Yeah, she was the only one in the family who wanted to go. And I'm glad that she did because she had a great time. Because people who were the inductees and the people who really *are* rock 'n' roll were very open, and it was a great opportunity for her to see how Frank might have been received by them. And I don't think Frank could have known that he would have that much respect from that group of people. I mean, he was so modest. I know that sounds ridiculous, but it's true. —*Dan Forte*

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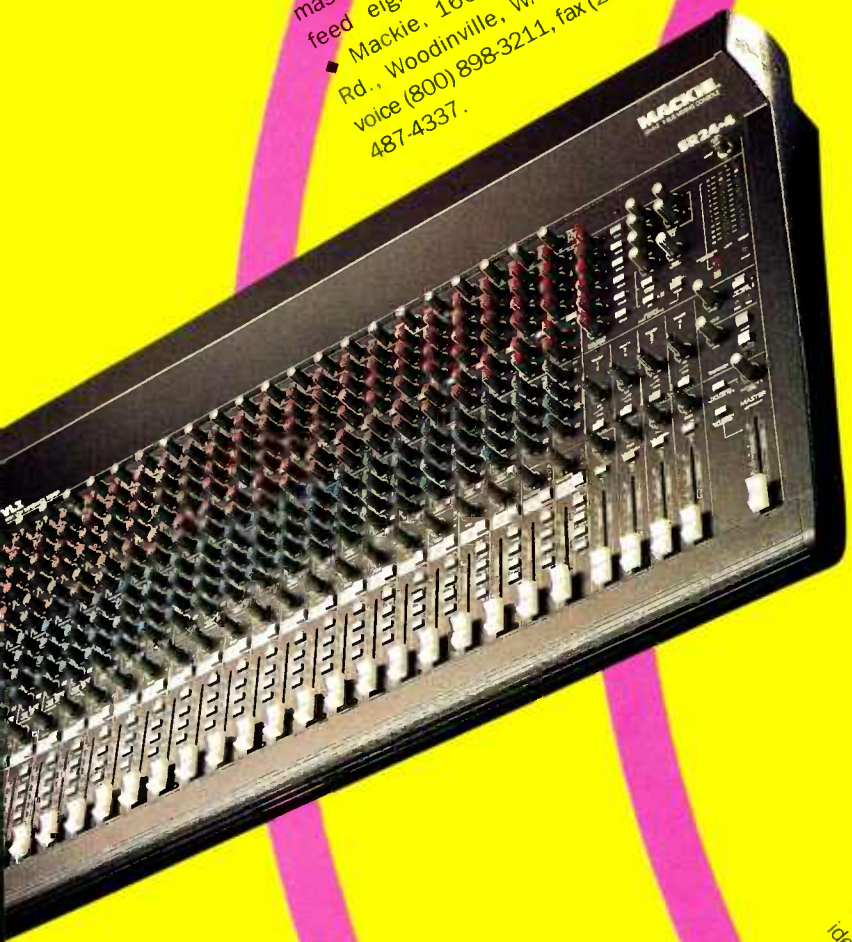

OPTEK FRET-LIGHT GUITAR

They call it a "learning system," but Optek's Fretlight design—132 LEDs in every guitar neck, displaying positions for hundreds of chords and scales—can also be attractive to schooled players who want something different. The FA-200 Plus ($549) is Optek's first acoustic-electric, a thin-line cutaway with spruce top, maple sides and back, and rosewood fingerboard. And yes, you can select which LEDs you light up at any time. ■ Optek, 5291 Capital Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27604; voice (919) 850-9045, fax (919) 510-8393.

STEDMAN N90 MICROPHONE

A 1.1-inch mylar diaphragm coupled with an Alnico/Iron magnet assembly add up to smooth frequency response for the Stedman N90 unidirectional mike ($399). The N90's transformerless design allows it to handle levels in excess of 155 dB without distortion, making it ideal for studio, live or sampling situations. Neither batteries nor phantom power circuits are required. ■ Stedman, 4167 Stedman Dr., Richland, MI 49083; voice (616) 629-5930, fax (616) 629-4149.

ORWARD

CRATE VINTAGE CLUB

The blonde Tolex and gold-toned hardware may make it look classic, but it's the all-tube preamp that gives the Crate Vintage Club VC212R ($450) its old-fashioned tone. The AX7As in the pre stage aren't the only valves here; the power amp's got two EL34s, and the reverb's tube-driven too. It all fits into a 15-watt package with a single 12" speaker. ■ Crate, 1400 Ferguson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63133; voice (314) 727-4512, fax (314) 727-8929.

REMO DOUMBEKS

The Cleopatra, Leila and Diane ($115 each) are Remo's new trio of pretuned doumbeks. These goblet-shaped, single-headed drums are based on traditional Middle Eastern percussion, but feature synthetic heads and composite shells, unaffected by humidity or temperature changes. All three are 10" x 15"; the short-bowled Diane is also available in 8" x 15" ($75) and a 10" x 17" key-tunable version ($150). ◆ Remo, 12804 Raymer St., North Hollywood, CA 91605; voice (818) 983-2600, fax (818) 503-0198.

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GUITARS & BASSES

◆ **Peavey**'s Milestone II bass features a maple neck with rosewood fingerboard, four-way adjustable bridge, and single split-coil humbucker. The Raptor I guitar, with 21-fret fingerboard, three single-coil pickups, and fulcrum tremolo system, is also new from Peavey. *Peavey, 711 A St., Meridian, MS 39301; voice (601) 483-5365, fax (601) 486-1172.* ◆ The **J.B. Player** JBA-440's semi-hollow alder body with ash top, bolt-on mahogany neck, and two humbuckers, is designed for both clean and crunchy sounds; the JBA-460 adds separate volume and tone controls for each pickup. Also, the B-2 four-string and B-2V five-string basses include two J.B. Player Artist pickups and passive electronics for vintage tone. *J.B. Player, P.O. Box 30819, Charleston, SC 29417; voice (803) 763-9083, fax (803) 763-9096.* ◆ Stress on the neck and top of the **PBC** Wishbone Series hollowbody acoustic/electric is relieved by an internal bridge support beam and steel neck rod that bear all string tension, eliminating the need for internal bracing. Wishbone Series guitars are carved from solid blocks of tone wood, improving resonance. *PBC, 217 S. 3rd St., Rt. 309, Coopersburg, PA 18036; voice (610) 282-0235, fax (610) 282-2742.* ◆ The body of the **Abel Axe** is made of solid, inch-thick billet aluminum, machined to aircraft-grade tolerances and designed for high sustain. Necks are maple and rosewood, tuners Sperzel, pickups DiMarzio. The Axe is available in tremolo, non-tremolo and bass models. *Abel Axe, P.O. Box 895, Evanston, WY 82931; voice (800) 789-ABEL, fax (307) 789-6929.*

KEYBOARDS & MIDI

◆ The SX-KN901 from **Technics** is a portable keyboard equipped with 3.5-inch disk drive and 16-track sequencer. The drive allows storage of parameters, effects, sequences, or spontaneous creations. *Technics, One Panasonic Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094; voice (201) 348-7781, fax (201) 348-7209.* ◆ The **MIDIman** Sound Card MIDI module makes life simpler for PC sound card users by incorporating MIDI In, MIDI Out and joystick through connections in one unit, rendering cables superfluous. *MIDIman, 236 W. Mountain St., Suite 108, Pasadena, CA 91103; voice (818) 449-8838, fax (818) 449-9480.* ◆ **Axon**'s NGC-66 Neural Guitar MIDI controller tracks all six strings between five and 14 milliseconds. A fret split or pluck split accesses different sounds depending on neck location or striking point. *Axon/Music Industries Corp., 99 Tulip Ave., Floral Park, NY 11001; voice (800) 431-6699, fax (516) 352-0754.*

MIKES & MIXERS

◆ **Nady**'s The Link snap-on VHF transmitter converts any handheld microphone into a wireless. The transmitter also provides 9V DC phantom powering for lavalier condenser mikes. *Nady, 6701 Bay St., Emeryville, CA 94608; voice (510) 652-2411, fax (510) 652-5075.* ◆ The **Rane** DMS 22 dual-channel mike preamp features a three-band equalizer and stereo pan controls for each channel. Each output also features a selectable 15/50/10Hz low cut filter. *Rane, 10802 47th Ave. West, Mukilteo, WA 98275; voice (206) 355-6000, fax (206) 347-7757.* ◆ **Spirit**'s Live 4 Mark II mixing console is available in five sizes, from 12 to 40 channels. Four full-featured mute groups allow engineers to master difficult cues, while the phase reverse switch on every mono input is ideal for drum miking. The *Pro*Tracker eight-channel multitrack mixer, also from Spirit, is a compact rackmount unit designed for high-quality recordings of live performances. Its mike preamps offer a full 60 dB of gain range, handling everything from low-output dynamic mikes to active DI boxes. *Spirit, 8760 S. Sandy Pkwy., Sandy, UT 84070; voice (616) 695-5948, fax (616) 695-7623.*

SOFTWARE & HARDWARE

◆ **Lyrrus** has updated its G-Vox Riffs software. Riffs 2.0 is Windows-compatible, with a new looping capability for chaining riffs together. *Lyrrus, 35 North 3rd St., Philadelphia, PA 19106; voice (215) 922-0880, fax (215) 922-7230.* ◆ **Otari** introduces RADAR VIEW graphics software for the RADAR hard-disk multitrack recorder. The visual interface displays the instantaneous status of all functions, including input/output, SMPTE time code, and digital audio routing, in one window. *Otari, 378 Vintage Park Dr., Foster City, CA 94404; voice (415) 341-5900, fax (415) 341-7200.* ◆ **Soundtrek's** Jammer Professional 2.0 for Windows features over 30 built-in "studio musicians" who compose original parts based on the user's chord progression. The new version includes 200 new possibilities for intros, grooves, breaks, and endings. *Soundtrek, 3408 Howell St., Ste. F, Duluth, GA 30136; voice (404) 623-0879, fax (404) 623-3054.* ◆ **Opcode** introduces DigiTrax 1.2 and Audioshop 2.1 digital audio recording and editing software for the Power Macintosh. DigiTrax's intuitive user interface eases automated mixdowns; the program also features plug-in DSP modules and the ability to import and edit audio from QuickTime movies. Audioshop 2.1 allows speedy processing of audio files and can convert any file to or from Windows .WAV format. *Opcode, 3950 Fabian Way, Ste. 100, Palo Alto, CA 94303; voice (415) 856-3333, fax (415) 856-3332.* ◆ **Tracer Technologies'** DART (Digital Audio Reconstruction Technology) software eliminates all surface noise, pops, clicks, or other disturbances from any audio source recorded with a Windows-compatible sound card. Three built-in processors assure total noise removal without fidelity loss. *Tracer Technologies, P.O. Box 188, Dallastown, PA 17313; voice (717) 747-0200, fax (717) 741-6790.*

PROCESSORS & EFFECTS

◆ The Microcab II from **ADA** is a stereo miked guitar cabinet emulator meant for both direct recording and feeding a live signal to a house sound system. Input signals can be taken from either preamp or power amp levels, and front panel controls allow the user to select open or sealed back cabinet, vintage or standard speaker type, and 1-12, 2-12 or 4-12 speaker arrays. *ADA, 420 Lesser St., Oakland, CA 94601; voice (510) 532-1152, fax (510) 532-1641.* ◆ **Electro-Voice**'s Fx70 digital rotary speaker simulator uses a 24-bit digital processor to approximate the sound of a rotating loudspeaker. The unit also offers the effect of the speaker operating in rooms of various size, and features 42 user-programmable parameters, including rotor balance, bass and treble speeds, and distortion. *Electro-Voice, 600 Cecil St., Buchanan, MI 49107; voice (616) 695-6831, fax (616) 695-1304.* ◆ The **Roland** AP-700 equalizing processor refines sound and removes unwanted feedback, while increasing the overall system gain. A fully functional spectrum analyzer is also built-in. *Roland, 7200 Dominion Circle, Los Angeles, CA 90040; voice (213) 685-5141, fax (213) 722-0911.*

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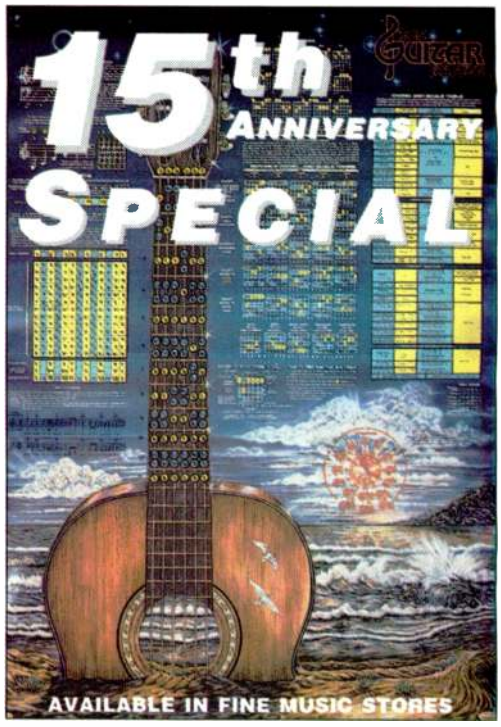

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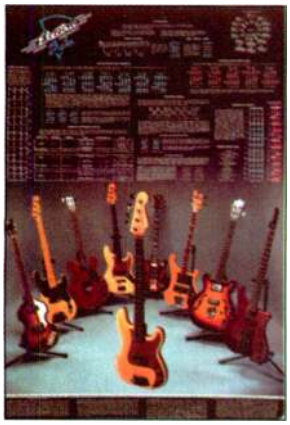

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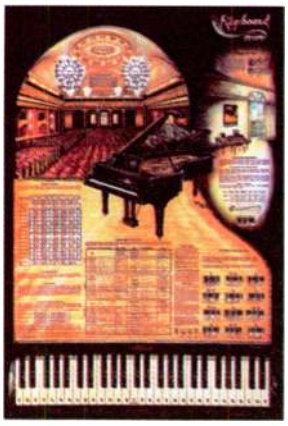

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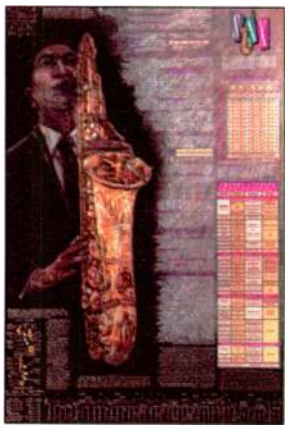

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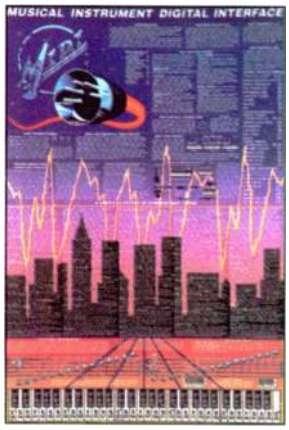

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COLLECTIVE SOUL

[*cont'd from page 28*] demo!" Ed objected. "Don't sweat it!" Atlantic objected back. Soon the song exploded on MTV and radio. It introduced the Atlanta Knights at hockey games. You'd hear it in movie theaters, and television promos for radio stations. Clairol offered them a giant pile of filthy lucre to use it as an advertising jingle. Ed hastily reassembled the band and within weeks they went from suburban basement rehearsals to Woodstock live on MTV. The fateful song was of course "Shine," with its unforgettable one-line chorus: "Woh-uh-oh, heaven let your light shine down."

"I am proud of the song," says Ed. "But as a band we felt like Milli Vanilli. It was especially hard on Shane, who had to live with people thinking that drum machine was his drumming. Success happened so fast, we were clueless."

Going from small clubs to opening for Aerosmith and Van Halen to headlining themselves, Collective Soul gradually achieved comfort onstage, but didn't much enjoy promoting an album that didn't reflect the band. They returned to the studio as soon as possible to record *Hints*, which has nary a dud in twelve tracks. The appeal of both albums lies in the hooks, which are many, deep and generously spread around over all the songs. You listen, you start undulating, and then you wonder about the lyrics, most of which concern love. Again and again, love. Not sex.

"Yeah, I sing about universal love more than anything. It's not relationship love. More a love of mankind thing."

Is that a conscious decision?

"No, lyrics are never a conscious decision. I just write what I'm feeling at the time."

Maybe your emphasis on universal love and your use of Christian imagery contribute to the suspicion that some writers have expressed toward the band.

"From age zero to when I went off to Berklee, I sang in every choir and attended every service. Some images don't ever leave you. Sometimes it's easier to express myself in Biblical terms. Once that stuff is in you, it's there forever. But we do not preach religion, we do not do it. We leave it alone.

"I got into an argument with one reporter. He kept asking, 'Are you a Christian band?' and I said no. What amazes me is that if you use the word heaven in a song, then people assume you're a Christian band. That was this reporter's reasoning. So I said when Led Zeppelin released 'Stairway to Heaven,' nobody accused them of being Christian."

The Christian Coalition is notorious for running "stealth" candidates for public office, supporting people who lie about their wacko agenda to fool the voters. Maybe the critics think you're a stealth band?

"Yeah. Maybe."

We can say definitively here that you aren't a stealth band from the Christian Coalition?

"Yes. *Please* say that."

Maybe you should just write a song about sex to prove it to everybody.

"That's all I used to write about. What else is there to write about when you're 20? I guess I haven't been feeling that sexual lately. I'm sure my wife will bring it out in me eventually."

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ROAMIN' THE RANGE

How many strings do you really need for great bass? Top players are looking for more and less.

BY TOM MULHERN

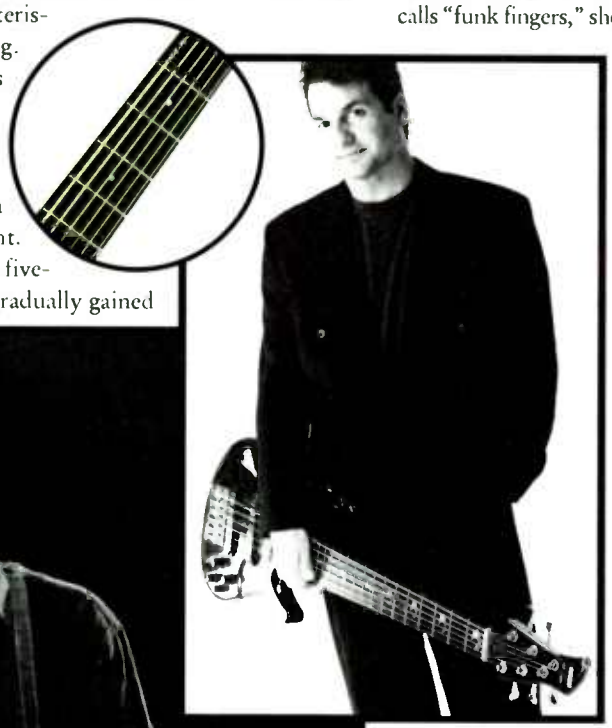
MARK SANDMAN of Morphine plays what may be the most pared-down bass on the rock circuit—a funky old Premier with only two strings. How does he coax such slippery, sinewy lines out of such a lightly wired setup? Easy; he does it as if the traditional four-string never existed. In fact, two strings are a luxury for Sandman. He actually began playing bass on a one-string, after starting out on guitar. "It's a lot easier to use one string than two," he says, "but with the two-string you can play power chords."

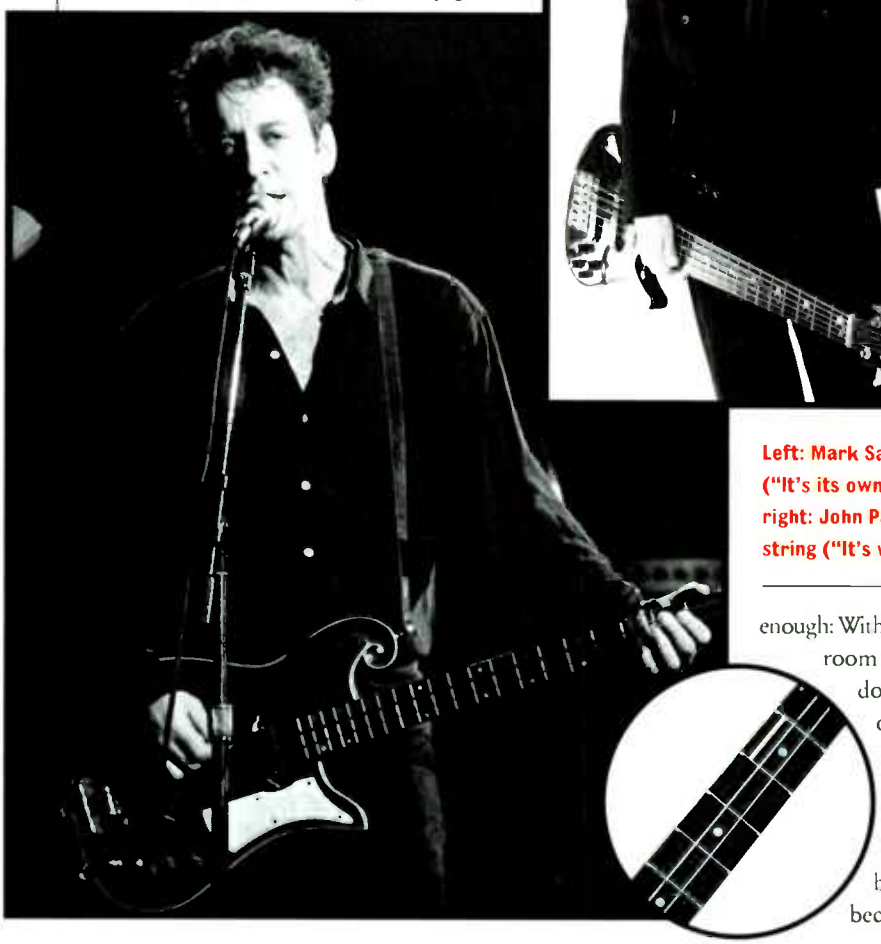
To compensate for the limitations inherent in a two-string format, Sandman relies on a variety of tunings. "I change it for different songs," he explains. "You can do fifths, thirds, unisons—those are the main tunings. I can't do octaves, but the Premier has its own characteristics that keep it interesting. It's not really a bass; it's its own instrument. And I don't feel limited at all."

Sandman's unorthodox approach is evidence of a peculiar new development. After two decades in which five- and six-string basses have gradually gained acceptance, and in which at least one company has introduced a seven-string bass, a few players have broken from the pack and have actually removed a string or two. Today, the bass seems to be evolving in two directions at once, toward more *and* less strings.

Among the pioneers of unusual string groupings is King Crimson's Tony Levin, who plays a custom three-string Music Man bass (tuned E A D). Using three strings, it's easier for him to play with what he calls "funk fingers," short percussion sticks that he tapes to his digits to tap the strings. He hasn't abandoned his old bass, though; the Music Man five-string is still his main machine. Jazz bassist John Patitucci adds this perspective: "Tony Levin may be playing a three-string, but he also plays Chapman Stick, which has 10 strings. So, it's all in the concept of what he wants to express in the music."

Expression—that is the point, isn't it? How many strings you need depends on what you want to do. In the last two decades, the quest for expression has led bassist after bassist to buy a five-string. Even steadfast four-string players like Paul McCartney have been lured by that extra low B in their desire to get down deeper into the subterranean nooks and crannies of the groove. Jimmy Johnson, best known for his work with James Taylor, has been playing five-string Alembic basses since the mid-1970s. "I'm used to five," he says, without trying to proselytize. "The reason I went to the five-string is because synth bass was happening then. To compete with keyboard players, we had to extend our range."





Left: Mark Sandman with 2-string ("It's its own instrument"); right: John Patitucci with six-string ("It's very personal").

For some, even five isn't enough: With its high C string, the six-string bass gives the soloist more room to move up top. These days, it's a rare bass maker that doesn't offer five- and six-string instruments as variations on its standard fare. Carl Thompson, who's designed basses for the likes of Les Claypool, Stanley Clarke and Anthony Jackson, is acknowledged by many as the first builder of the modern six-string; his debut model was for Jackson in 1974. (Currently Thompson only builds basses with a 36" scale length, 2" longer than standard, because he believes that it brings out a [con't on page 72]

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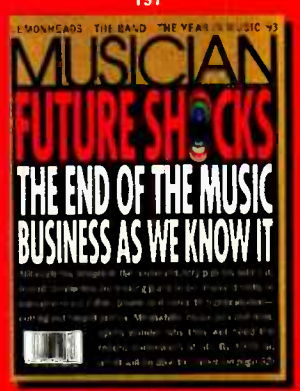

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DON'T DIS GM

In the General MIDI module-scape, you *can* often get what you want. Here's what you need.

BY JULIAN COLBECK

JUST SAYING no to General MIDI makes about as much sense as saying no to fast food. Who doesn't like to scarf down Boeuf Wellington and Pommes Dauphines? But there are times when a scamper through the drive-thru is necessary. Sometimes that's appropriate. Hell, it can even be fun.

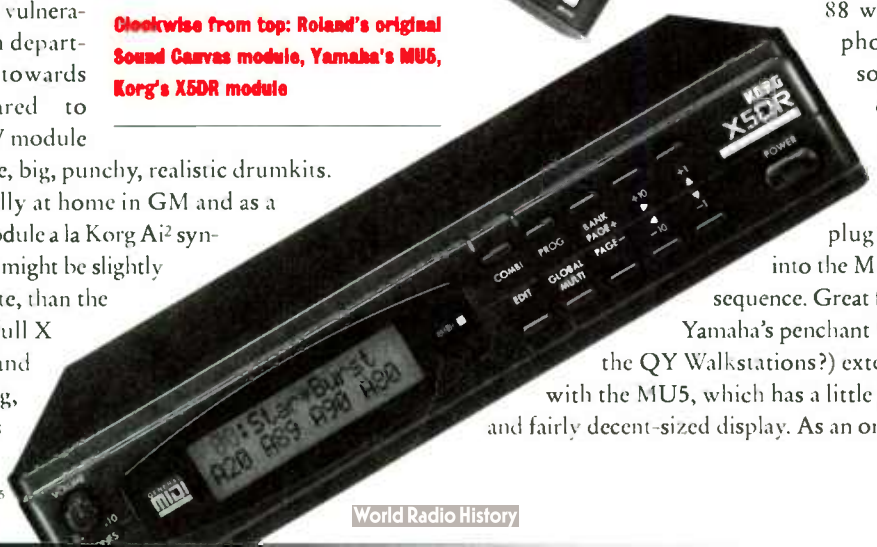
General MIDI is a purveyor of know-where-you-stand sounds, locations, and polyphony. Anyone who trades sequences from home to studio, person to person, or sketch to demo, and who has ever labored over a part that currently goes sker-plink, sker-plink, dung! trying to figure out what on earth type of sound the part originally used, needs to investigate GM. Preferably a GM module. Preferably now.

Roland was GM's prime mover and shaker when this subset of MIDI was first approved by the MIDI police back in 1991, and it has clung onto the lead ever since. The Sound Canvas SC-55 mkII ($895), son of the module that kicked this particular ball into play, is still an outright winner with more than 300 generally top-quality sounds (LA synthesis and RS-PCM generated), a direct Mac/PC interface, and a dead sexy TV style remote controller. Reverb and chorus is smooth, and there's a surprising amount of editability. Sound Canvas is also the de facto standard for software developers; you'll never be smirked at with one of these.

Nor probably with Roland's SC-88 Super Sound Canvas ($1195), which has plundered the JV-80 pro synth for its now 600+ tally of sounds. With double polyphony (64-voice) and more sophisticated effects, this is the model to choose if you're into multimedia presentations. If budget restricts, then the SC-50 ($695) is only marginally pared down from the SC-55, the major sacrifice being that you can't store edited sounds.

Roland's only real vulnerability is in the drum department, which veers towards wimpdom compared to Korg's; their O5r/W module ($635) has 8 separate, big, punchy, realistic drumkits. The O5r/W is equally at home in GM and as a regular pro synth module a la Korg Ai² synthesis. Pitched tones might be slightly thinner, more delicate, than the Roland's but with full X series program and combination editing, and Korg's peerless dual effects processing, this is a highly attractive (half U) box. Korg's 1995 message comes in the X5DR package ($895), another case of seeing double with its 64-voice polyphony, 430 multisounds (the sound snippets on which all Korg patches are based), and more than 200 drum sounds. And 'those effects' too. Still looks small but thinks and acts mega.

Clockwise from top: Roland's original Sound Canvas module, Yamaha's MU5, Korg's X5DR module



Speaking of which, the Kawai GMega series is an interesting long shot. Kawai's profile amongst pro users is sporadic, to say the least, but the GMega ($499) is sonically based on the popular K11 synth, offering not only a full GM sound set but 128 user program locations (resonant filters, even), and no less than 21 drumkits to thump. GMega is also big on tuning temperaments. Computer hounds truly strapped for cash might like the display-less GMegaLX XC-3 ($399), which has just 32 user programs and seven drumkits.

Though any self-respecting GM module can be plumbed into a MIDI synth and played as an extra set of sounds, being able to co-ordinate the box direct from a computer is at least half the fun. Most modules now offer a direct computer link, circumventing the nightmare of MIDI interfaces. The first to do this was Yamaha's TG100 ($449.95), offering preset AWM tone generation and still a quality buy some two to three years after its launch. The subsequent higher-spec TG300 and TG500 models have now been rubbed out by the MU80 ($895) and baby MU5 ($299). The MU80 squares up to the Roland SC-88 with its 64-voice polyphony, more than 600 sounds, 18 drumkits, and dual MIDI Ins. You may never admit you'd do such a thing, but you can even plug a mike or guitar direct into the MU80 and play along to a sequence. Great for practicing.

Yamaha's penchant for doodads (remember the QY Walkstations?) extends into GM territory with the MU5, which has a little push-button keyboard and fairly decent-sized display. As an on-the-road box for sam-

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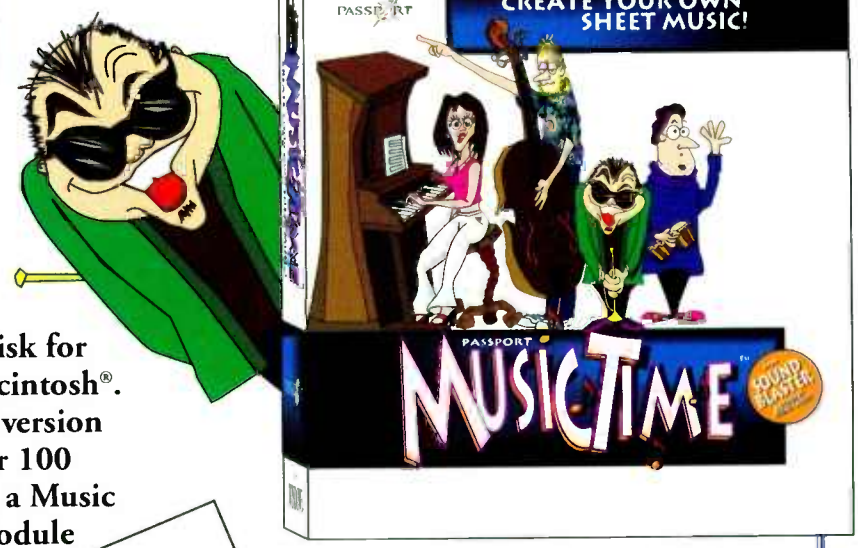

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ple auditioning or songwriting, as a MIDI interface for hooking up to your Powerbook, never mind a repository for a full 128 GM set of AWM sounds, this is the traveling muso's executive toy for 1995.

If you're not convinced that GM is going to earn its keep, you may be better off with a pukka synth module that "happens to have" a GM set. King of this heap is Roland's JV-1080 ($1695), a JD-800 or JV-80 soundalike with brilliant sounds in both non-GM and GM slots. Program and effects editing is so deep you'll need a bathysphere, and you can even plug in new sample ROM chips. With lots of rezzy, squelchy, sizzly sounds, the JV-1080 is understandably big on the techno/rave circuit. A further contender is Korg's X3r ($1400), basically an X5 (keyboard) without keyboard and sequencer. Many pros have become surgically attached to the gloss and sheen of Korg synth sounds, so if this applies. . .

Sadly, E-mu's little-known Sound Engine ($595), a repackaged, GM-nified Proteus module with a dedicated Mac software package of Edit One and EZ Vision, has now been discontinued. With 384 presets, including 128 location user RAM, and 32-voice polyphony, the Sound Engine was marketed more towards the multimedia or computer user than regular muso. File under one that slipped through the net.

General MIDI is nothing to get overexcited about. Ignore the self-styled cognoscenti who witter on about it as the death of synthesis and creativity. GM is a tool. Dig in.

◆ **E-mu**, 1600 Green Hills Rd., Scotts Valley, CA 95066; voice (408) 438-1921, fax (408) 438-8612. ◆ **Korg**, 89 Frost St., Westbury, NY 11590; voice (516) 333-9100, fax (516) 333-9108. ◆ **Kawai**, 2055 East University Dr., Compton, CA 90224; voice (310) 631-1771, fax (310) 604-6913. ◆ **Roland**, 7200 Dominion Cir., Los Angeles, CA 90040-3696; voice (213) 685-5141, fax (213) 722-9233. ◆ **Yamaha**, P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, CA 90620; voice (714) 522-9011, fax (714) 522-9832.

BASS STRINGING

[*con't from page 68*] better sound, especially for the low B and E strings.)

John Patitucci, a fiery soloist and innovative ensemble player who first came to prominence in the '80s with Chick Corea, has been a six-stringer for a decade. "I wanted more bottom capabilities to root the band," he says, "and I wanted to be able to solo more like a horn player. But it's really very personal. Hundreds of years ago, the double basses in Italy had only three strings, and the fourth was added later. I think some people miss the point: If I felt that the sound I needed only required going with one or two strings, then I would have done that. It's all subjective."

Thought six was the limit? Wrong. Around the same time as Mark Sandman and Tony Levin were removing strings from their axes, Conklin Guitars of Springfield, Missouri was busy developing a seven-stringer (tuned like a six-string, but with an added high F string). When Bill Conklin introduced the instrument in 1992, he was just hoping he could turn a

modest profit. Today it's his biggest seller, and it's featured in music from blues (John Jordan of the Chris Duarte Band) to gospel (Paul Chapman with For Him).

Playing preferences aside, some important considerations stem from the number of strings hanging on a bass. First, there's cost. You can pick up four-string basses for a couple of hundred bucks, whereas even the cheapest five-string starts at around $800. And custom instruments with five, six, or seven strings can cost as much as $7,000. Second, there's the problem of your hands' ability to deal with the strings. All five-, six-, and seven-string basses adhere to Fender's de facto standard spacing, which is great for snapping and popping, but can amount to quite a mittful, especially for the fretting hand. Third, there's tone. Extra strings (and the extra neck reinforcement needed to withstand the added string tension) will cause an instrument to resonate differently, which has a profound bearing on the sound. Even two seemingly identical instruments, whose only variation is the number of strings, can sound amazingly different.

Still, thanks to graphite composites, advanced truss-rod design, and savvy use of laminated woods, the bass' range has never been greater. But is extra range really necessary for what you want to express? Jeff Berlin, a diehard four-stringer who's worked with Bill Bruford and Allan Holdsworth, among others, doesn't think so. "Too many people think the instrument is what'll make the difference, so they try five or six strings. But having more or less strings won't make you a better player."

Despite the publicity heaped on extra-string instruments, plenty of bassists are content to stick with the old standard. They've got history on their side, as virtually every classic bass line or solo was performed on four strings. Sometimes simplicity is key. Take Larry Graham's one-note groove on Sly Stone's "Everyday People": not only did Graham use a regular four-string, but the other three strings weren't even touched during the session.

Ask the manufacturers and they'll tell you that the trusty old four-string isn't going to leave the bass scene anytime soon. "Most top players still use them," says Michael Pedulla of M.V. Pedulla, "so they definitely aren't dead." Zon Guitars' Joseph Zon agrees: "Even though the five-string is an important part of the so-called 'toolkit,' the four-string is coming back stronger than ever."

Mica Wickersham of Alembic, one of the first companies to make five- and six-string basses, relays the stats. "The four-string has always been strongest for us. Five-strings account for about 30 percent of our sales, and six-strings much less. It seems that players are wary of the six-string, at least partly because of the wide spacing." Wickersham has also observed a recent new trend in five-strings: "Many bassists are asking for a five-string with a high C, because they're trying to avoid the possible muddiness of a low B."

So how many strings are right for you? Back when James Jamerson was putting a backbone to Motown tunes, or when Paul McCartney propelled the Beatles to fame, there was but the four-string—no custom instruments, nothing tailored to suit your style. But even with today's multitude of options, it's the musician who determines the right number of strings. Performance is the proof. As the old blues lyrics say, "It ain't the meat, it's the motion."

LES CLAYPOOL'S HO

FAST FORWARD

"I'M OUT at the end of a private, not-so-well-maintained country road, so I'm the last guy in the county," squawks Les Claypool, the rooster-voiced bass player and creative kingpin of Northern California's quirkiest power trio, Primus. Slumping in a swivel chair amid the chaos of a half-disassembled studio in the wine-soaked Sonoma hills, Claypool describes how he converted his sprawling country estate into a Hollywood-style recording complex, lovingly dubbed "Skywalker Ranch." In this pastoral setting, the group wrote, recorded and mixed their most recent release, *Tales From the Punchbowl*, a whimsical and energetic Threepenny Opry.

The studio, once a poolside guest house, complete with wrought-iron chandeliers and the required '70s-style shag carpet, was chosen by Claypool for its lovely "dead" quality and interesting corners and angles, in which he finds a rich array of both "tinny and full" ambient sounds. For instance, when miking the drums, Claypool discovered a vibrant little cymbal spot for an **AKG C1000** next to a sliding glass door. Another 18 or so **Shure SM57**s, **Neumann U87**s and **Realistic PZM**s were carefully positioned on and around Tim "Herb" Alexander's **Tama Star Classics** and sent, au naturel, through a **Mackie 32•8** tracking console 1, a smaller **Mackie 24•8** return console (which got moved out shortly after the sessions), and into three master **Alesis ADAT**s 2 with the accompanying **Alesis BRC** ADAT controller 3.

For sound shaping, Claypool admits he comes as close as you can get to a walking billboard. "If you look at my rack, you can see that I'm a big fan of **Alesis**," he suggests, pointing to his six **MicroLimiters** 4, three **MicroVerb II**s 5, two **MicroGates** 6 and a **MicroVerb III** 7, all neatly stacked around a **Tascam PB 32P** patch bay 8. "The limiters are noisy as hell but pretty cool pawn shop things," exudes Claypool, "but you can still get the MicroVerb IIs and they sound great!"

Venturing briefly into other brand names, Claypool did make use of a **Behringer SNR 202** two-channel denoiser 9 as a gate to reduce hiss before pumping the tracks through a **Summit Audio DCL-200** dual compressor limiter 10 for warmth. For monitoring, an **Onkyo Integra R1** home stereo amplifier 11, a pair of **KEF K Series 120** speakers 12, and a pair of **Quart 190** speakers 13 worked quite nicely. Claypool and Alexander also employed a couple of '70s **Frazier** loudspeakers that came with the house so they could shoot some pool in the room next door while listening to Larry "Ler" Lalonde battle with his guitar parts in the studio. Chuckles Claypool, "Every now and then I would stick my head in and say, 'That sounded pretty good, let's go with that.'"

BY STEPH PAYNES

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAY BLAKESBERG

Meanwhile, poor Ler raged all by his lonesome into a **Mesa/Boogie Bass 400 Plus** with two 15-inch "diesel" speakers, parked in the bathroom shower with the door closed and a ratty carpet slung over the stall. Since no automation was used to mix the record, Claypool insisted on keeping things simple. "I didn't want to have to bring levels up, so if guitar solos had to be louder, they went to tape louder. I hate chasing guitar tracks or any of that stuff."

In keeping with this rule, Claypool's slap-happy bass lines, which give Primus its signature sound, also went directly into the board—no frills. To achieve the grooves, Claypool used a four-string and two six-strings (fretted and fretless) by **Carl Thompson**, and two curiosities custom-made by **Dan Maloney**: an upright electric threaded with gut strings and the only **bass banjo** ⑭ in existence (as heard in "De Anza Jig"). An **ADA** preamp and a hot tone served as the only effects. By the way, that's not a tuba in "Glass Sandwich," it's the upright electric played with a bow.

Time to mix? No prob for these well-disciplined tracks, which marched right from Primus bootcamp into a **Panasonic SV-3700** DAT machine ⑮. And, in the unlikely event of aural fatigue, Claypool could either rev up the old **Varicurve** Dual Equaliser Analyser ⑯ to look at the frequency response and "see what the signal sounded like" or grab a pair of all-purpose **Sony V6** headphones ⑰ for a closer listen. Finally, a couple of dubs off the **Yamaha KX-W952** cassette deck ⑱, and the fresh mixes could be ferried to critical listening stations, such as Herb's truck.

Claypool says he generally enjoyed recording the album at home. "The less money you spend the more relaxed people—especially record people—tend to stay." But being the "last man in the county" can take its toll. During the torrential spring rainstorms which plagued Northern California and coincided with the *Punchbowl* sessions, the **Furman PL-Plus** power conditioner ⑲ was summoned several times to protect the gear from the effects of sudden power surges. It didn't do much good, though, when in the middle of the final mixes with a deadline around the corner, the power went down for two days straight at Skywalker Ranch. The band had to haul in a generator to finish. "We were up here in the dark mixing the damn thing," says Claypool. He pushes his cap back, flattening the few visible thatches of mealy platinum blonde hair, and adds, "I've never seen so much rain in my life. I was ready to cut my head off with a hacksaw."

PRIMUS MULTIMEDIA SUITE

In case you were wondering, Claypool and Lalonde rendered all their Terry Gilliam-on-Mars CD cover art using an Apple 8100/80 AV Power Macintosh with 72MB RAM and 1 gigabyte hard drive, a Radius 17-inch display, Apple 14-inch display (where he keeps all of his palettes), Wacom Tablet, Lacie Silverscanner and PLI 270 Turbo S Syquest drive.

To make molehills out of mountains, they used the following software: Adobe Photoshop 3.0, HSC Software's KPT Bryce, Adobe Premiere 4.0, and Cosa After Effects 2.0.2, a $2500 investment that comes with a little magic key so nobody will bootleg it.

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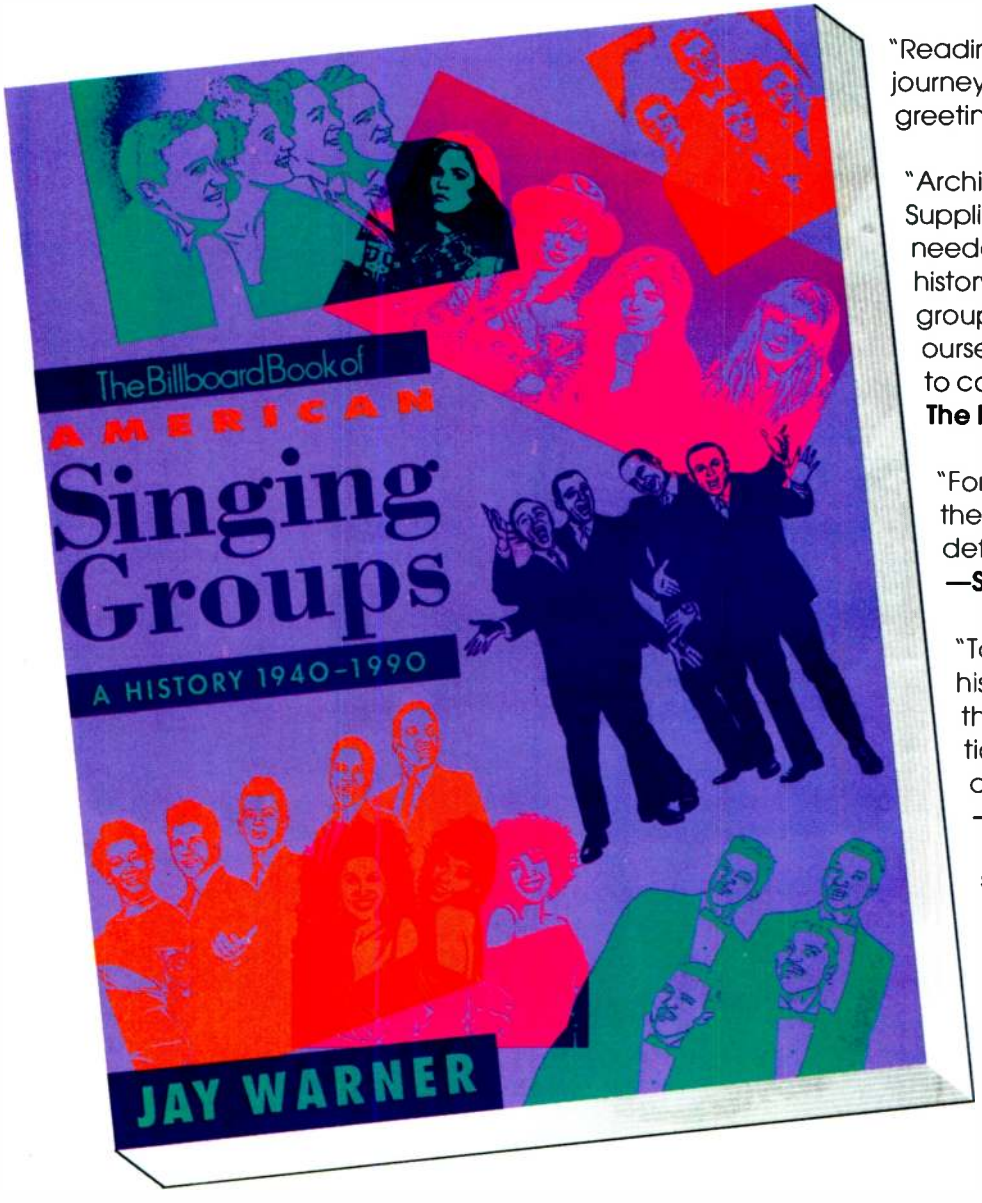

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Giant Steps for Mankind

JOHN COLTRANE

The Heavyweight Champion: The Complete Atlantic Recordings of John Coltrane
(RHINO/ATLANTIC)

AN OFT-REPEATED JAZZ AXIOM HOLDS THAT A MUSICIAN JOURNEYS toward one true sound and everything which leads to that mature aesthetic is prelude. Some players might fit into that theory, but John Coltrane is not among them. Always the restless seeker, he never settled on a single improvisational approach. From the time Trane joined the Miles Davis Quintet in 1955 after years of apprenticeship with Dizzy Gillespie, Johnny Hodges, and various R&B aggregations, he never stopped evolving, and each epiphany he reached was a world unto itself.

Nowhere is this more clear than in the two-and-a-half years Coltrane recorded for the Atlantic label, documenting his transition from sideman to leader, from respected, albeit controversial, tenor saxophonist, to the most influential player of his generation. With all the artfulness and common sense jazz lovers have come to expect from the label, Rhino Records archivists have assembled everything that Trane recorded for Atlantic in a seven-disc boxed set, including the albums *Giant Steps*, *Coltrane Jazz*, *My Favorite Things*, *Bags & Trane*, *Olé Coltrane*, *Coltrane Plays the Blues*, *Coltrane's Sound* and *The Avant-Garde*, along with additional tracks that surfaced over the years on Atlantic CDs and the posthumously released albums *Coltrane Legacy* and *Alternate Takes*. Rhino has also uncovered enough unreleased material from the March 1959 *Giant Steps* session with pianist Cedar Walton, bassist Paul Chambers and drummer Lex Humphries to fill a full CD with incomplete takes, false starts and alternate tracks of his classic tunes "Giant Steps," "Naima" and "Like Sonny." Offering a fascinating view of Coltrane the perfectionist at work, the unreleased material makes this an essential purchase for serious jazz fans.

His Atlantic recordings divide up pretty neatly into three distinct periods. The 1959 sessions feature such leading second-generation beboppers as pianists Hank Jones, Cedar Walton, Tommy Flanagan and Wynton Kelly. Though Coltrane was still employed by Miles Davis, these recordings capture the emergence of Trane as one of the great small group jazz composers, on par, as Lewis Porter notes in the booklet, with Thelonious Monk and Wayne Shorter.

Coltrane's second major Atlantic period took place in an astonishing six-day burst in late October of 1960. The most important development here is in the personnel department. Having lured McCoy Tyner from Benny Golson, recruited Steve Davis, and hired Elvin Jones right out of prison after a drug bust, Coltrane was clearly inspired to be making his first record

PHOTOGRAPH BY [illegible] TANNER

HOW DEEP FOREST HARVESTED BOHEME

ERIC MOUQUET AND MICHAEL SANCHEZ, the two musicians who are the heart of Deep Forest, are hardly two peas in a pod. Sanchez is a classically trained musician whose first love was the pipe organ; Mouquet is self-taught and a veteran of the dance music scene.

As Sanchez admits, the two don't always think alike. "Sometimes, I'll say to Eric, 'This is a little bit strange for me.' For example, a lot of musicians in dance music are able to mix a bass part in a certain tune with some chords in another tune, and it's difficult for me to understand. This is the main difference between Eric and me. He's more involved in dance music and underground aspects, and I'm more involved in all the classical ways of music—the piano parts and the beautiful chords."

They do keep one thing in common, though—a passion for exotic voices. *Boheme* is built around vocal samples from around the world, drawing not just from the gypsy traditions of Hungary and Transylvania, but also the folk music of Russia, Mongolia and native American tribes, and Sanchez and Mouquet generally begin their work with a trip to the record store.

"We buy a lot of CDs from everywhere," says Sanchez. "For example, for 'Boheme,' we found an incredible Gypsy singer who was Hungarian, and it was very difficult to make a song with his voice. It was a very sad song, and at the same time, it was a very low voice. But the singer had a very big emotional power, so we did a lot of work on that song to find the right mood, the right atmosphere.

"We always begin with the voices," he adds. "As you know, a big part of the work of Deep Forest is about sampling, so we buy the rights for reusing the voices. A lot of the singers we use are not professional singers, but they have their own way to sing, their own sound. We put the voices on the sampler, and edit the voices so maybe, sometimes, the lyrics don't mean anything. But that's not very important to us, because we want to [present] this beautiful chant that people have never heard before."

Once they've shaped the vocal melody, the rest follows naturally. "We spend a lot of time adjusting the chords, the moods and the rhythms," he says. "We want the song to put the lead vocals to [the best] advantage. If we have a sad song, we just try to make something very beautiful, to choose the right sounds. That's why we often use very soft sounds. The rhythms, too, are very soft, most of the time. We try to forget what we learned, and to just be the slaves of the singer."

—J.D. Considine

ings with his own working band.

The sessions produced *Coltrane Plays the Blues, Coltrane's Sound* and the hit album *My Favorite Things*, bringing Coltrane a popular following to match his influence among his peers. The final Atlantic session, which produced *Olé Coltrane*, is a harbinger of Trane's '60s work on the Impulse! label. With Eric Dolphy (listed on the album as George Lane for contractual reasons) pushing Trane into uncharted regions, and the first appearance of bassist Reggie Workman, who would replace Davis, the session documents Coltrane's growing interest in African and Eastern music.

Many more changes were to come, of course. But Coltrane's Atlantic years stand out as the period in which he consolidated his musical identity by surrounding himself with players capable of matching his incredible energy and boundless spirit.

—Andrew Gilbert

LENNY KRAVITZ

Circus

(VIRGIN)

OKAY, I ADMIT IT: I DIG LENNY KRAVITZ. ALWAYS have, ever since *Let Love Rule* came out back in '89. Right from the start, I loved the defiantly retro sound and grooved on the raspy, nearly out-of-control vocals. It didn't hurt that Lenny was an ace melodist, too, and a performer of such conviction that even his most naive lyrics—and there've been a lot of 'em—sounded more endearingly loopy than annoying. Over the years, I've only gained respect for Kravitz's skill, his ability to conjure up a magical late '60s/early '70s sonic world that never quite existed but should have. I can't even call it a guilty pleasure anymore; when I listen to Lenny, there is no guilt.

Circus, Kravitz's fourth album, gives me no reason to change my opinion. It's simply another batch of irresistible tunes. The sound's more raw than anything he's done since *Let Love Rule*, but I have the feeling it's the kind of rawness that took weeks, maybe months, to achieve. Though old pals Craig Ross and Henry Hirsch help out some, Kravitz handles most of the instrumentation himself, proving yet again that he's one of pop's hottest one-man supergroups. As a singer, he's lost most of the overt Lennonisms (though you can hear a couple on the appropriately titled "In My Life Today"), but in other areas, the old aural fixations—phasing, Mellotrons, chicken-scratch guitar, cavernous Zeppelinesque drums—are still there. "Can't Get You Off My Mind" suggests Lenny's picked up a few new tricks as

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5. Crystal Gayle—"When I Dream"

well; with the acoustic 12-string and twangy lead, it could almost pass for country, at least until those slick major-seventh harmonies show up on the bridge.

Be warned: Kravitz natters on a lot about this God fellow. If your sensibilities aren't offended, then lose yourself in the psychedelic gospel. If you're not the Deity's biggest fan, avoid the lyric sheet.

Musically, *Circus* is yet another demonstration of a classic equation: blistering rock guitar plus bruising funk rhythms equals excitement. Jimi Hendrix and George Clinton found that out long ago, and it's just as relevant today. You could object that Hendrix and Clinton were unique artists while Kravitz is merely a craftsman. You'd be right. But craft is nothing to sneer at, especially when it's as inspired as this.—**Mac Randall**

LENNY KRAVITZ

LUNA

LUNA

Penthouse

(ELEKTRA)

LUNA POSSESSES THE SORT OF CHEMISTRY THAT most bands dream of. Sure, they sit comfortably within the confines of post–Velvet Underground, post–Dream Syndicate guitar rock crafting effortless, perfect songs, but those who argue that they need to stretch themselves a little more miss the point.

On this, their third album (an accomplishment matching nearly all of the members' former bands: Galaxie 500, the Feelies, the Chills), you feel like you're right there in Luna's candlelit studio hearing it all go down. The recording is pristine—a warm, natural-sounding envelope. Cymbals ring and sizzle, basslines glide through the mix and subtle layers of guitar—flavored with tremolo, phase-shifting, delay and plenty of reverb—continually reveal themselves, as do tiny flourishes of xylophone, Mellotron and theremin.

Frontman Dean Wareham has a keen ear for hooks that attach themselves to the listener's subconscious and return long after the stereo's been turned off. Lyrics, given their ambiguity, come off as secondary (supposedly, during mixdowns for their last LP, *Bewitched*, Wareham kept trying to bury his vocals while the engineer kept pushing them back up). Still, it's down to how it all *sounds* in the end. If you put headphones on, you can hear how Wareham tastefully strengthens his vocals from one song to the next. On "Chinatown" he adds a barely noticeable backing track of simple humming, while on the album's standout "Sideshow By the Seashore" he echoes the main vocal with what may be a distant megaphone or vocoder. Subtle devices like these give *Penthouse* a rich, hypnotic texture. To top it off, Luna again corrals one of their heroes, this time Television's Tom Verlaine, who drops his trademark guitar sound into "Moon Palace" and "23 Minutes in Brussels" (VU's Sterling Morrison played on the last LP).

Luna is one of the better live bands at present, and they deliver in the studio even more convincingly. Unlike so many releases crowding the music marketplace, this is an album that merits listening from beginning to end, top to bottom, over and over.

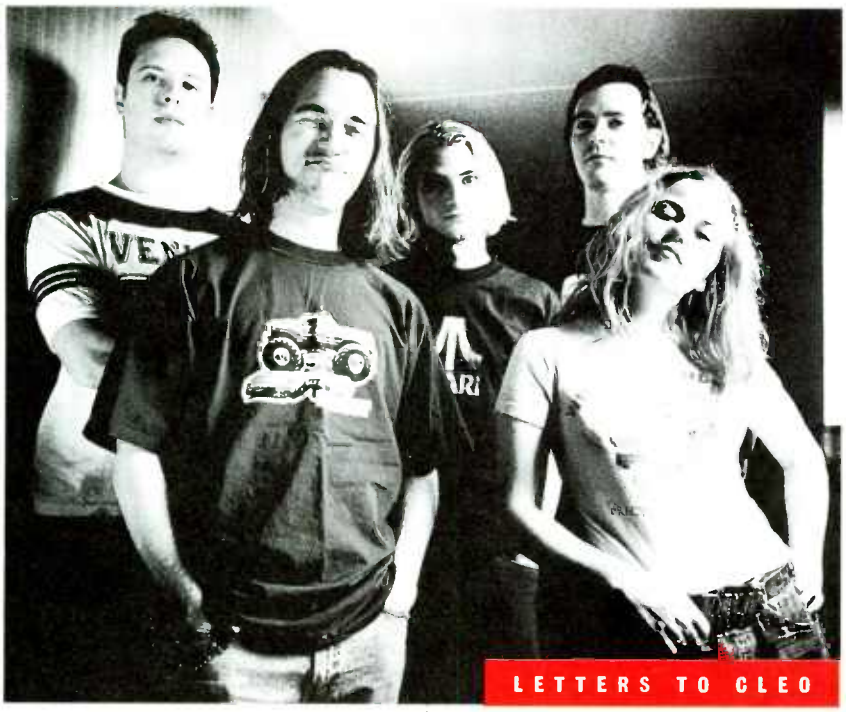
—Dev Sherlock

LETTERS TO CLEO

Wholesale Meats and Fish

(GIANT/CHERRY DISC)

AMERICAN POP IS SUCH A FICKLE, RESILIENT thing. One decade we're downshifting our Trans Ams to the power chords of the Cars, the Romantics and Bryan Adams, a few years later we're hailing Liz Phair, Veruca Salt and Weezer



LETTERS TO CLEO

as the New Big Thing. Does it ever stop? Does assimilation eventually stall into a simple parody without bringing anything new to the table? Boston's Letters To Cleo unashamedly retool the past, creating glorious, turbocharged pop with near perfect accuracy. While guitarists Michael Eisenstein and Greg McKenna crank out Rockman-slick crunch chords, cherubic vocalist Kay Hanley croons like she's slurping liquid chocolate. In fact, repeated listening to *Wholesale Meats* is like washing down blueberry pie with a whiskey chaser. Sure tastes sweet, but what a bruising kick in the ribs.

In the hands of a lesser band, these well-worn riffs (think Cheap Trick, the Knack, even "Smells Like Teen Spirit" on one song) would be cliches, but Cleo fashions every ubiquitous guitar swoop, handclap and gated snare drum with a remarkable chorus or a quirky melodic imprint that won't leave your brain alone.

Though Cleo glory in classic rock radio and juvenile, TV fodder lyrics ("I wash my hands of you/I wash my dirty feet too/And when I wash my hair, the dust clouds disappear"), it just doesn't make a damn bit of difference. This is the much-maligned face of power pop resurfacing, *re-surging* for a generation who is truly sick of it all. Heck, this goofball quintet even smile in their publicity photos. Hasn't anyone told them about post-punk angst? Still, one wonders if these delectable anthems are for real or simply an eye-winking bit of lampoonery—the result of too many CD reissues or simply an innocent band with gobs of talent and nowhere to go. For now, at the least, Letters To Cleo are a promising question mark.

—Ken Micallef

ANTONIO HART

It's All Good

(NOVUS)

DAVID SANCHEZ

Sketches of Dreams

(COLUMBIA)

HERE ARE TWO GIFTED, SERIOUS YOUNG saxophonists who will be around for the long run. Antonio Hart's *It's All Good* is an ambitious production which highlights every facet of his musical ability. He wrote ten of eleven tunes on the disc; wrote arrangements for and conducted a string ensemble on two cuts played alto, tenor and soprano; and led his quintet through the intricacies of his densely structured compositions. I started out loving it and ended up feeling suffocated. This has nothing to do with Hart's musicianship. It has to do with choices. Someone somewhere should have suggested, "You don't have to cram every idea you have onto this CD."

It is apparent that there's a band at work here; check out "Puerto Rico" for a marvel of tight execution. Carlos McKinney on piano, Darren Barrett on trumpet, Nasheet Waits on drums and Tassili Bond on bass are as energetic as their leader and full of ideas that borrow from hip-hop, Latin, funk, and straight-ahead swing. Atonality is courted passionately. "Sounds In The Streets" is followed by "Lunch Time Again," wherein Steve Nelson and Robin Eubanks help to develop a very out-to-lunch scenario. Then there's "Forever In Love," which has Antonio playing a romantic ballad over a funk bassline, some synth effects, and a lachrymose string arrangement. Less really would have been more.

Where *It's All Good* veers toward density, David Sanchez's *Sketches of Dreams* is afflicted with a curious hollowness. The shifting musical chairs might be a contributing factor: Danilo Perez or Dave Kikoski on piano, Larry Grenadier or John Benitez on bass. The percussion department gets really populous: two cuts feature Adam Cruz, Jerry Gonzalez, Milton Cardona and Leon Parker. One of these cuts, Sanchez' "Mal Social," vies for best on the CD. His reading of the ballad "Tu Y Mi Cancion" is both firm and tender. On the standard "It's Easy to Remember," Sanchez constructs a lovely intro, moving from a statement of the melody directly to the bridge. Thus graceful elision is still in the air when Perez employs a jarring voicing, which he quickly modulates. The tune could have benefited from more rehearsal or more takes. In fact, the entire album coalesces in fits and starts. As with Hart's *It's All Good*, more producer input could have helped to identify and finesse such asperities.

—Karen Bennett

ANTONIO HART

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ORPHEUS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
A Set of Pieces: Music by Charles Ives
(DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON)

MUSIC SET FOR chamber orchestra—usually about 20 players—has great appeal; more manageable, less physical than the philharmonic, more easygoing than string quartet. Orpheus is among my favorites (along with Speculum Musicae), and is guested admirably by Gilbert Kalish, Charles Neidich and others. Although there is a "yippie-i-o" quality that creeps too often into Ives' music here, the best pieces ("The Housatonic at Stockbridge," "A Set of Pieces") sound like Aaron Copland channeling Stephen Foster. Very enjoyable. —*Keith Powers*

SHAVER
Shaver: Unshaven
(ZOO)

THE LONG-DESERVED live treatment of Texas singer/songwriter Billy Joe Shaver's material emerges from a rousing three-night stand at Smith's Olde Bar in Atlanta earlier this year. Produced by Brendan O'Brien and Nick Didia, *Unshaven* staggers out of the gate at a pace where most live albums wind up. Shaver's lyrics pack more living into one verse than many songwriters realize in a life, while his son Eddy proves a formidable guitarist, with aggressive, in-your-face solos providing constant exclamation points to the storylines. *Unshaven* works so well because of its loose, roadhouse feel, the perfect presentation for Shaver's rough-hewn world view. Play it loud and enjoy it with a cold one, preferably a Lone Star. —*Ray Waddell*

PETER STAMPFEL
You Must Remember This...
(GERT TOWN)

A JUNK STORE maven in his mid-50s, Stampfel's doesn't limit his aesthetic of cool to the rock era. Placing hokiness next to godliness, he allows entry to all sorts of neglected dustballs: lonely cowpokes, biblical revamps, Tin Pan Alley curios and a song Groucho warbled all make the cut. And, yes, "Goldfinger," too. Arrangements, judicious thanks to producer Mark Bingham's savvy, are as modern as tomorrow night's macaroni and cheese repast; it's his realest record ever. Steel drums, fuzz guitar, tack piano and accordion are all employed, but the most eloquent instrument is Stampfel's voice. If anyone can conflate the silly and the sublime, 'tis he. Tell three friends. —*Jim Macnie*

CHRIS KNOX
Songs of You & Me
(CAROLINE)

CHRIS KNOX, HALF of New Zealand's brilliant Tall Dwarfs, has now released so many excellent solo albums that it's tough to tell his main gig from his side project. *Songs of You & Me* finds Knox continuing his one-man-band approach to recording with little more than a Casio, an Omnichord, some tape loops, and every barre chord in the book. Lyrically, Knox has spent a decade mining two major themes—PC soapboxing and the redemptive power of love—while deploying enough wit and smarts to avoid the obvious pitfalls of each. At 42, Knox is much farther down Maturity Road than most on the post-collegiate scene, and on songs like "Open," "One Fell Swoop," "Coda," and the amazing "Rust," it shows. —*Paul Lukas*

SHORT TAKES

BY J.D. CONSIDINE

WHALE
We Care
(VIRGIN)

SPUNKY IN EVERY sense of the term, this Swedish trio revels in the cheesiest aspects of rock culture: naughty jokes, nasty sex and noisy guitars. Yet as much as that might play to cheap titillation—and given titles like "Young, Dumb & Full of Cum," it seems safe to say they're definitely going after the Beavis and Butt-Head in us all—it's hard not to appreciate the wit involved. As if to remind us that no ordinary set of media-savvy deviants could generate a single as insinuatingly salacious as "Hobo Humpin' Slobo Babe," *We Care* fleshes out its 13 tracks with wicked wit ("Yeah, I told her/that she smells like Kurt Loder" goes one put-down in "That's Where It's At"), over-the-top carnality ("I'll Do Ya") and brilliantly black humor (the droll, verge-of-death ballad "I'm Cold"). Who says all Swedish pop is Abbaesque?

NELSON
Because They Can
(GEFFEN)

STILL, I WISH they wouldn't.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Stairways to Heaven
(ATLANTIC)

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Spirit of '73: Rock for Choice
(550 MUSIC)

BY NOW, THE novelty of remaking camp classics from the '70s has worn so thin that only the truly inspired—or truly insane—stand out. *Stairways to Heaven* qualifies as the latter: 12 takes on "Stairway to Heaven," each more warped than the last. A true monument to Australia's tribute band talent, it offers "Stairway" in the style of Elvis Presley's "Viva Las Vegas" (Neil Pepper), the Beatles' "I Want to Hold Your Hand" (The Beatnix), and John Paul Young's "Love Is in the Air" (er, John Paul Young). Nothing on *Spirit of '73* is as funny (though Sophie B. Hawkins' over-dramatized "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" does offer an unintended laugh or two), but it doesn't have to be; this Roe vs. Wade anniversary album is meant to celebrate the sound of '70s sisterhood, not send it up. Granted, Babes in Toyland do camp it up through "More, More, More," but the album's highlights—Johnette Napolitano's exquisite "Dancing Barefoot," a pungent "If I Can't Have You" from Eve's Plum, and Sarah McLachlan's incandescent rendering of "Blue"—are seriously brilliant.

PINK FLOYD
Pulse
(COLUMBIA)

ALTHOUGH BILLED AS a live album, it would be more accurate to describe this as a concert recording, since "live" does imply chance-taking and vitality, qualities not much in evidence in this set. Recorded in Europe during the group's last tour, it includes a full rendition of *Dark Side of the Moon*, but apart from a soulful stroll through "The Great Gig in the Sky," it brings nothing to the music beyond a slightly expanded sonic palette. On the plus side, the packaging does include a red light on the spine that pulses at nearly the same rate as a human heartbeat. Too bad that's as close to live as it gets.

THE CRANBERRIES

[*cont'd from page 13*] that you've got time limits, people coming around going, "Doors are in five minutes—get off the stage!" So you bring an acoustic guitar into your hotel room and get something, and the next day you start messing about with it at soundcheck. And when you're happy with it, you play it for everyone else.

Dolores: We were on tour and I'd been in a relationship, living with someone for a few years. And you know how, when you're a kid, you sit on your parents' lap and you just know they're mad about you? And then you've got your teenage life, where your parents are not cool and nobody understands you? Well, at least you *think* that. So you

either reach adulthood and *really* get to know your parents or else you leave home and risk never getting to know them. I'd left under the wrong terms—my parents didn't want me to go, because they wanted me to go to college, but I was like, "I'm going, that's it." So I didn't have much of a relationship with them at the time. When I went to live with this person, I realized it wasn't the right thing. I left and went on tour, and I was alone and reflecting on the happiest time I could point out, which was childhood. It was a time when I didn't have to make decisions, I didn't have to go on tour, I didn't have to do anything, because it was all there—mommy and daddy and your brothers and sisters and your dinner. When you're a child, you're like a little wild animal—it's wonderful. You can do what you like.

Noel: "Ridiculous Thoughts" is one of our favorites. It seemed to have this dance-y feel to it. That was done around the time of "Ode to My Family" as well, and the intro chords were actually another song I was trying to work on.

Dolores: It's quite funny because Noel will sometimes write seven chord sequences, and maybe out of two we'll make two great songs, maybe out of three—I'll choose whichever inspires me. So listening to this tape where he had about seven sequences down, I said, "Noel, do you know that one ends in the same key that this one starts in? I think you should use this one as the intro for that one and make it all one song." And he did. The first four chords inspired me to do a high, airy thing, and the other part was just bawdy and bold. I wrote the lyrics about the music industry. You've got to be careful, because people tell you, "Your next thing is going to be this." And I say, "No, my next thing is going to be what I say it's going to be." If you don't take the bull by the horns, then you're gonna be riding a bull that's out of control, and when the bull falls, you fall too, and nobody gives a damn.

HARRIS

[*cont'd from page 48*] a lot of tension in it that I liked, especially that move from E to B♭ in the bassline. My version of the song was like, 'If you're gonna keep lifting me up only to drop me, don't ever touch me again.' Dionne just gave it a whole new story."

Wild Seed's re-arrangement of the Beatles' "Blackbird" employs a drastically detuned acoustic guitar for a bluesy mood. When Harris played the song for Dionne, he'd already taken it down a step and a half, from G to E. "I played it that way partly because I was too lazy to actually learn the song, but also because I've heard so many people play it just like the Beatles, and I wanted to put my own spin on it. E was a comfortable key for me. Dionne said, 'I like the arrangement, but it's too high.' So I told her, 'Just sing it where you want and I'll find it on the guitar.' It turned out to be *way* low, B♭." Instead of changing chords, Harris simply tuned all his strings down three whole steps. Not surprisingly, a gauge change was required. "It's practically baritone, from .065 to .017. I've got a Takamine onstage now devoted to that tuning. Not every guitar can handle it; the tension may be fine but the intonation can be horrendous."

As much as Harris has enjoyed his time with Dionne, being just the guitar player is not his bag. "At first it was cool, but now I'm itching to do my own thing." He's hoping to start work on his own album soon, though there's still that lawsuit from the Follow For Now days in the way. "And," he adds with a chuckle, "I've just got too many songs." —*Mac Randall*

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QUOTE ME, BABY

How many times have you listened to a song and asked yourself, "Did they really say that?" Yes, AC/DC did inform you just how big their high-society balls really are; Aerosmith did tell you what you could do with their big ten-inch; and Trent Reznor did say he wants "to fuck you like an animal." Well, over the years *Musician* has interviewed hundreds of artists and we, too, have asked ourselves, "Did they really say that?" Yes, they really did and we have the quotes to prove it. But you'll have to match these quotes with the artists listed below. To find out who really said what, check the answers below. No cheating.

—Leslie J. Bock

1. "The first sexual experience any of us had was when seven of us went down to Detroit to see a hooker, and that went badly."

2. "...love is painful sometimes, sex too...or you can make it painful if you want to...I'm not really an S&M freak or anything."

3. "Sex and risk are a strong element in life and I've had a lot of them myself."

4. "I'd rather be teased by a woman before I get it."

5. "My problem is that my attitude is so sexual that it overshadows everything else."

6. "I get offered everything—women, little boys, money, cocaine, to just go back and do it again."

7. "Get 'em in the crotch first, then their hearts and minds will follow."

8. "I shot coke and heroin, and for the last three years, I haven't had anything more powerful than an aspirin."

9. "You've got to hate the whole guitar-as-penis thing...the more solos you do the more man you are."

10. "I'm more interested in drugs and rock 'n' roll than in naked women."

11. "I smoke dope quite a bit and that really does help when I'm writing, because it opens your mind up."

12. "I'm afraid of being mediocre, which if you're loaded you don't have to worry about."

13. "Being a rock 'n' roll star is like having a sex change. I know what it feels like to be a babe."

14. "My image is terribly accurate...the little virgin, the drug addict..."

15. "I used to jog a great deal. I gave that up because the ice cubes kept falling out of my cup."

16. "I get frustrated and tense just hanging out in a room getting drunk."

17. "...I'd light a joint and so instead of smoking two packs of cigarettes a day, I was smoking between 20 and 40 joints a day."

A Willie Nelson 7/82
B Bill Wyman 11/81
C David Bowie 5/83
D Prince 11/88
E Peter Buck 4/91
F Steven Tyler 1/90
G David Lee Roth 9/82
H Bonnie Raitt 5/92
I Marvin Gaye 8/83
J Bob Seger 4/83
K Mick Jagger 12/83
L Noel Gallagher (Oasis) 9/95
M Robert Plant 3/88
N Don Henley 10/89
O Marianne Faithfull 1/82
P Sinéad O'Connor 5/92
Q Bono 9/92

SCORING

0-5 correct: You don't read *Musician* much, do you?

6-10 correct: Only reading between gigs, are you?

11-16 correct: Having a lot of stomach problems, are we?

17 correct: You loyal *Musician* reader, you.

ANSWERS: 1-J 2-K 3-C 4-I 5-D 6-M 7-N 8-F 9-E 10-L 11-P 12-H 13-Q 14-O 15-G 16-B 17-A

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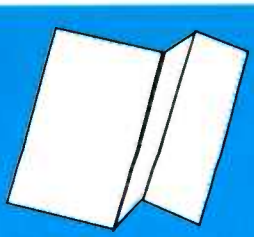

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