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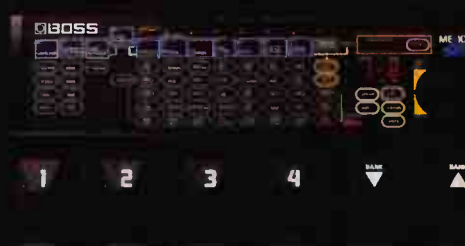
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STING

FRONT MAN

There's a warmth and a lightness to your new album, Ten Summoner's Tales, an element of humor. It's a big change from The Soul Cages.

I think the record came from a feeling of contentment. I was—I am—very happy. The last record was very dark and personal and confessional—and therapeutic, ultimately. And it worked. I moved on and decided to make a record for fun, to write songs that aren't necessarily about me. I recorded in the house, in the dining room with the kids around, with the desk and the drums all in one big room. We didn't separate anything. The windows were open, so we weren't trapped in the studio for months on end, and that warmth and ambience seemed to be a personality of the record.

Making Soul Cages was therapeutic for you, but does that automatically make it as useful for your audience? Perhaps you should have recorded it and not released it.

Maybe, but some people liked it. Three or four people liked it. Maybe three. But perhaps you're right. Still, if it's been useful to me, then I think it has to be useful to somebody else. The fears and anxieties and strengths and weaknesses I have are all common to lots of other people.

The narrators on some of these new songs aren't at all like philosopher kings, brimming with wisdom and insight. They equivocate.

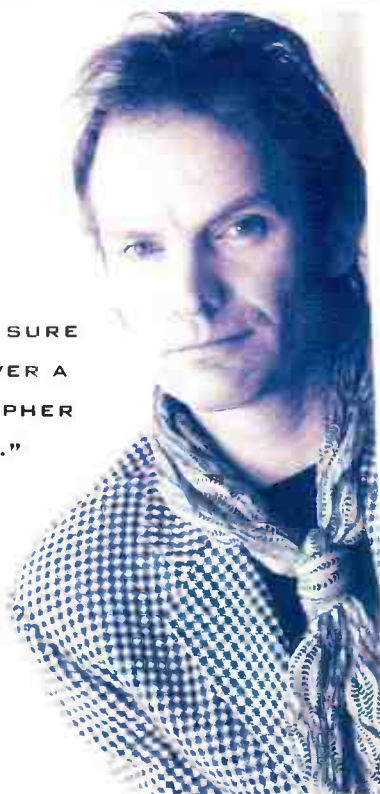
I think that they're facets of my personality, without being the whole of it. Actually at the end of making this record, I thought, "There's none of me in this record, this has just been a technical exercise," which is why I added that song, "Nothing 'Bout Me." But I now feel I was kidding myself, and I probably revealed more of myself by accident than I'd planned to, because people asking me about this record have read very clearly into the lyrics and figured it out while I was trying to hide it. I'm not sure I was ever a "philosopher king," but I think people got the impression I was—that was a distortion brought about by people's focus on songs about issues or politics, because they're easier to write about, and so I end up looking like that's all I ever do. It's not true and it never was.

There are definitely more echoes of the Police on this album, things like ringing guitar parts and odd time signatures like 7/8 and 5/4.

Yeah. Because then I was writing for a small group, a three-piece, and now I'm writing for a four-piece. I'm the same guy, so I have the same sensibilities. Yes, there was very little guitar on the first two records, and that was a deliberate strategy. The obvious move for me as a solo artist would have been to recreate the Police, which I suppose I could've done. But I decided not to. I made a career on the momentum of the Police without resting on its musical heritage. But I'm very proud of that band, and although I don't want to recreate my youth, I can use elements from it without feeling bad about it.

The Police got back together for my wedding. We played three or four numbers, and it was funny because 10 years just slipped by and I became the person I was 10 years ago, and so did Stewart [Copeland]. I turned around to look at him, because he was playing a little faster than

"I'M NOT SURE
I WAS EVER A
PHILOSOPHER
KING."



I wanted—he's hell to play with, in terms of where the beat is. I turned around and [makes a snarling expression] and so did he. And then we both caught each other doing this and we both started to laugh. It was like we were *back!* But we really get along much better now.

You're planning to tour with the Grateful Dead?

Yeah, this idea was floated to me a couple of months ago as kind of a ridiculous thing. I've never opened for anyone before, so this would be a first. But I figured the Dead have this home-grown audience that travels with them, and I think this is a totally new audience—I doubt if they've even heard of me. I can go out there and play to totally new people, and lots of them. What do I have to lose? The Dead are good musicians, they play, they improvise, and so does my band. It might pay off, it might not. And in between I'll be headlining my own shows.

Implicit in that decision is your recognition that your clout in the market may have diminished. And the word on the street is that A&M was hoping for a more commercially viable album.

This record casts a wider net, and the record company is thrilled that it's a lot easier to get on the radio. So I'm willing to play that game as long as it gives me more freedom to do as I choose the next time. I made the record I wanted to make, but I think it'll also create a sense of freedom for me the next time. It's only a game, and staying in that game as long as possible is all you can do. I don't necessarily want to *win* the game, but just to keep playing.

JOCK BAIRD



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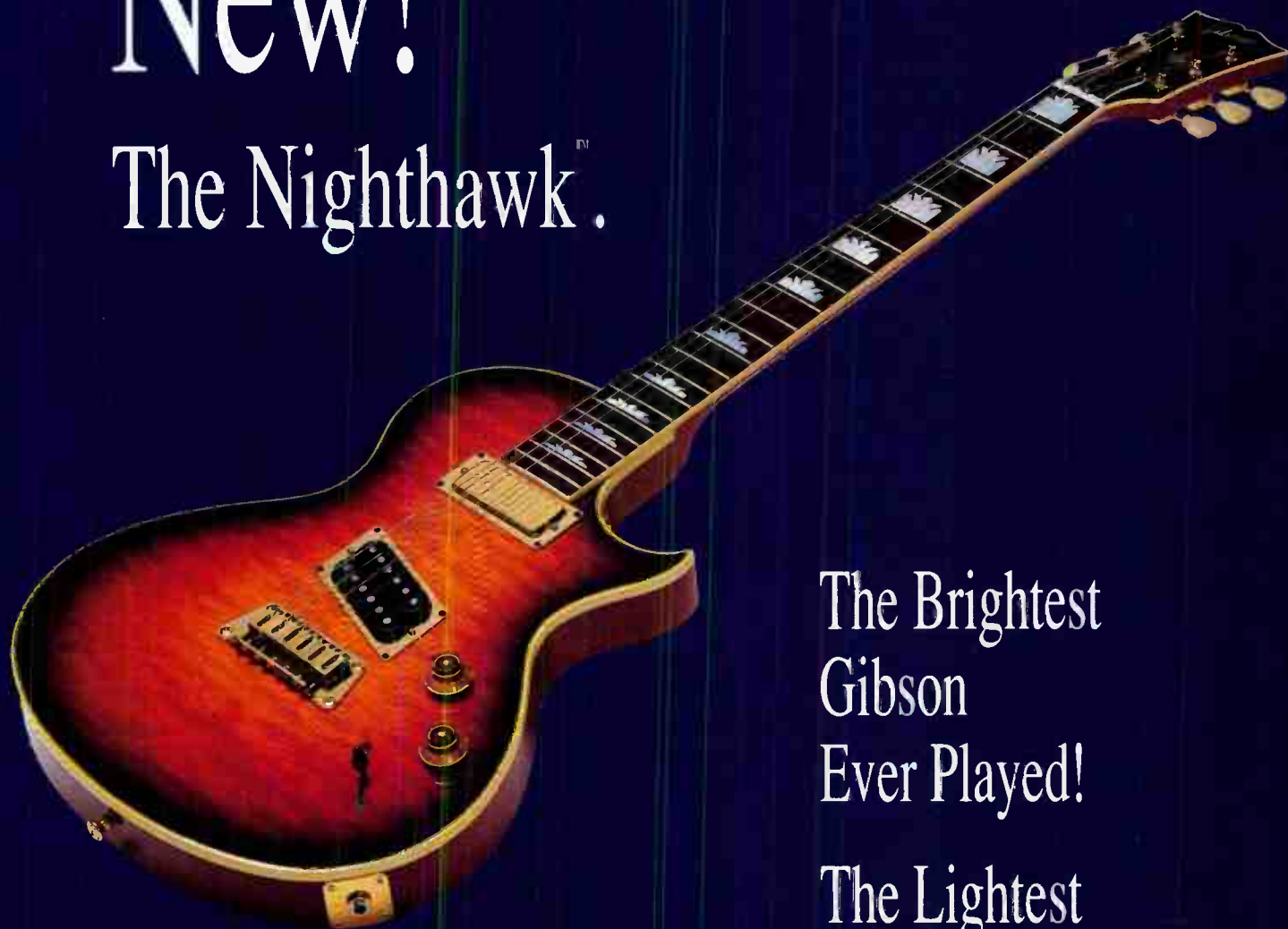
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Your interviews with Anthony Kiedis of the Chili Peppers and Nuno Bettencourt of Extreme (Jan. '93) strengthened my faith in the fact that not only are there talented and, um, attractive men in rock these days but that some of them also have intelligent and thought-provoking things to say. I applaud Kiedis' concern with rain forests and Bettencourt's opinion on premarital sex. But the devil in me can't help but to ask of Nuno: So, are you a virgin or a hypocrite?

*Rachel Remick
Philadelphia, PA*

Your cruel and vicious cheap shot at Michael Jackson (Jan. '93) turned me off big time. Reprinting that doctored photo of Michael proves beyond a shadow of doubt that *Musician* is a mean-spirited publication, and I want no part of your sleazy brand of journalism.

*Jennifer Peters
New York, NY*

After your interview with Trent Reznor, I love NIN even more—the fact that he doesn't really want radio and video play is exactly what I love.

*Mike Brown
Philadelphia, PA*

RESPONSE TO GILMOUR

Please permit a very brief follow-up to David Gilmour's shrill letter of March 1993 regarding supposed "lies" in my years-past "account" of a 1986 lunch with Gilmour, Bob Ezrin and CBS Records' Steve Ralbovsky regarding Pink Floyd's then album-in-progress. The only "accounts" of this meeting were from Roger Waters and Bob Ezrin, and both were quoted verbatim.

*Timothy White
Editor in Chief
Billboard*

LETTERS

YEAR IN JAZZ

Tom Moon is clearly disturbed because young jazz musicians have chosen not to sink down into sound effects, funk and imitations of either television scores or twentieth-century concert music clichés ("Year in Jazz," Jan. '93). Though they are usually described as reactionaries, these musicians are truly rebellious; they refuse to be dictated to by MTV or those jazz critics outraged by good grooming and the determination to master the rich and varied language of jazz. Such musicians are familiar with Mr. Moon's argument: It hardly originates with him and represents a now predictable appetite for novelty that has been presented under many bylines over the last decade.

Mr. Moon also distorts a significant quotation to provide his piece with a conclusion. In his attack on Wynton Marsalis and, by more than implication, the jazz program at Lincoln Center, Mr. Moon holds up Randy Weston's *The Spirits of Our Ancestors* as one of "the year's notable efforts." Most of that music was presented by Jazz at Lincoln Center for the opening concert of the 1991-92 season, before the recording was released. Mr. Moon's truncated quote of an Andre Hodeir observation about Thelonious Monk is a perfect example of intellectual dishonesty. What Hodeir actually wrote is, "Monk's solution, though related in some ways to the formal conceptions of serious modern music, is not indebted for its guiding principles to any school of music, past or present, which is foreign to jazz; this, I feel, is essential." Mr. Moon uses a version that ends with the word "present." Obviously, the meaning becomes very different, ignores Monk's relationship to

Ellington, Basie and the Harlem stride piano school. It also sets up your writer's decision to conclude his essay by going on about what "we" should do in order to become jazz visionaries instead of students.

Well, Mr. Moon, I suggest you and your "we" organize a situation that presents what the rest of us need to hear. Since we know that you won't do that, you should face a fact that the Arabs expressed quite clearly, "The dogs bark, but the caravan moves on."

*Stanley Crouch
Artistic Consultant
Jazz at Lincoln Center*

PRINCELY THORN

It's no wonder that Prince has a thorn in his ass about U2. They are original, political, not to mention that they are the biggest and best band in the world. But they don't have to wave their butts all over TV, wear chains on their faces or sing songs proclaiming their name.

*Rachel Kratz
Winston-Salem, NC*

TINY BUBBLES

I think you've finally blown a gasket. After reading "Rest in Peace" in *Backside* (Jan. '93), I couldn't believe you included Lawrence Welk, but excluded Dee Murray, the backbone of Elton John's band! How could you include Welk, who is not even a musician, and not Murray, whose basslines are nothing short of incredible??

*Mark Miglietta
Port Washington, NY*

TOMMY'S TUTU

While Tommy Stinson (Feb. '93) has now matured into a semi-

respectable solo artist, I hope that he will not discontinue such antics as twirling himself around like a drunken ballerina during guitar breaks. As once witnessed at New York's Beacon Theater, his "Tutu Rock" beats the current "Flannel Goth" any day of the week.

*Robert Wallman
New York, NY*

CONSIDINEKILL

Okay, even I'll admit that calling GTR SHT is funny, but some of J.D. Considine's capsule reviews fall into the category of completely inane, if not complete BLL SHT. Of particular note: Julian Cope's *Jehovahkill* (Jan. '93). Cope has consistently released thoughtful and probing music that compares favorably with any rock music being produced today. J.D. may not have ever given Cope's oeuvre a good listening, or he may just not get it. But the bottom line is, he's simply wrong.

*Chris Grimm
Norcross, GA*

ERATAH

You guys really messed up in the Awards and Embarrassments article (Jan. '93): Vince Neil was ousted from Mötley Crüe, but Rob Halford is still in Judas Priest. As for Charlie Benante, he is Anthrax's drummer—not the lead singer. Their former lead singer, Joey Belladonna, was the one who was ousted.

*Antonio Cheng
Puntarenas, Costa Rica*

It was beautiful to see Rage Against the Machine (Jan. '93), but the caption was incorrect. From left to right, it should read: Zack, Tom, Brad, Timmy. Thanks.

*Galeen Leigh Roe
Los Angeles, CA*

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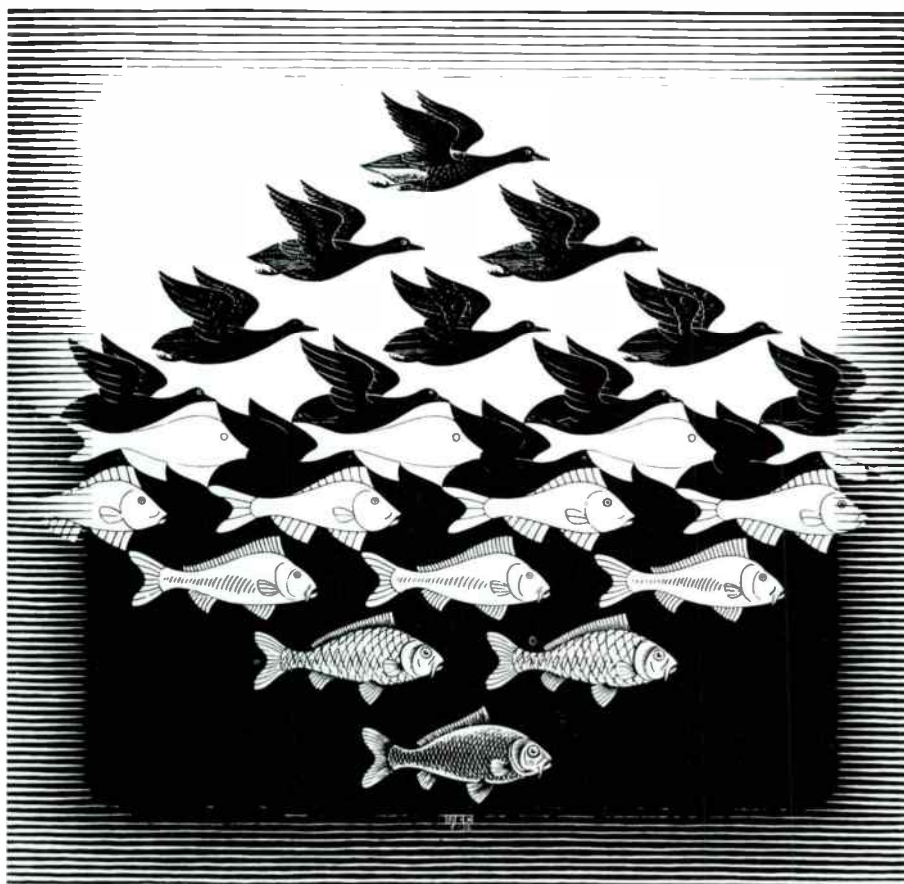
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A C E S

CHARLES THOMPSON IS BLACK FRANCIS IS FRANK BLACK

Breaking Up the Pixies

The Pixies were alternative rock's most popular puzzle makers, trailing weird lyrics about the apocalypse, mystics, death by drowning and sensual awakening through a tangle of riff-heavy rock. Now Pixies leader Black Francis is offering a new conundrum. He's disbanded the group, flip-flopped his name and become his own twin: Frank Black.

"We'd made five records and it was enough," Black says of his group's dissolution. "It wasn't a matter of our being on good or bad terms. Some people are quite comfortable working in a factory for 30 years. That's fine, if it suits their purpose. But I need to change things once in a while."

Black had already begun recording *Frank Black* when he announced the Pixies' demise; Pixies guitarist Joey Santiago even appears on the new project. Mostly, though, Black and co-producer Eric Drew Feldman (who's played with Captain Beefheart and Pere Ubu) concocted these 15 new songs alone, with the help of some computer technology. "With just Eric and me, there was plenty of elbow space," says Black. "I was playing producer, and so I felt more like I was making a record than just being involved in one." The songs, from the shipwreck tale "Parry the Wind High, Low" to the UFO love song "Places Named After Numbers," will satisfy fans of the Pixies' elusive pop. While marking no great change in Black's style, they represent his



determination to move beyond what's familiar. "I can't attach much nostalgia to my music," he says. "If it becomes precious, making it gets weird. I'll start thinking about what the lyrics mean and how they connect to my soul and ah...forget it. I don't want music to be that serious."

ANN POWERS

THE WORLD FROM YOUR ARMCHAIR

Some sounds are easy to find: Garth Brooks and Pearl Jam are no further than your radio dial or nearest mall. But say your taste—or curiosity—runs toward Mexican zither, Mongolian folk or Philippine gong music. Who you gonna call?

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music, which embraces everything from Skip James to French hurdy-gurdy to classical Indian to *Music of the Sandinista Guerrillas*.

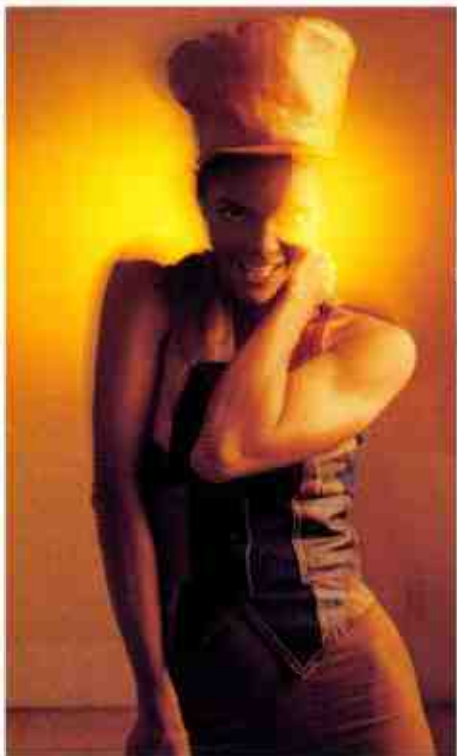
Executive and artistic director Robert Browning says the Institute's best sellers are in its extensive Arabic/Moroccan holdings. But why go with the crowd?

Although offering a seemingly bewildering variety of styles, the catalog carries out Browning's agenda of "trying to get people to understand other people." The surprise is it isn't that hard. (World Music Institute, 49 West 27th St., Suite 810, New York, NY 10001)

SCOTT ISLER

PHOTO: MICHAEL HALSBAND

EFUA



VICKY KASALA

Singer/songwriter Efua (pronounced "Ef-wa") figured out at a tender age that image means everything and nothing at all in this business of pop music. Her translation: If you don't have a look, no one will listen; if you don't sound good, no one will look at you. Hence it's no accident that the adjectives *eclectic*, *insouciant* and *seductive* could describe Efua's sound and style.

"My writing is an extension of myself," says the 26-year-old former fashion model and dancer about her Virgin debut *Dream Juice*—a refuse-to-be-categorized album which draws on pop, R&B, hip-hop and reg-

gae stylings (thanks to her father, who is Jamaican). "I try to be honest. I thought about writing songs about the homeless and Somalia when I was recording. But that's not what I think about *every* morning. I write the way I dress and walk—with a sense of humor."

The feline, husky-voiced Efua began studying jazz dance at age 15. By the age of 18, she was a triple threat: touring Europe as a runway model and choreographer for multimedia Nike and Levi trade shows as well as studying arts and sociology in college. Later the fashion plate appeared in numerous music videos, including Maxi Priest, Lil' Louie

and Soul II Soul, to pay the bills.

But after a while, Efua got bored with merely stylin' and profilin'. Or as she sings in "Down Is the Drop," "I'm no background chick." "As a model I got taken out by a lot of people. But a lot of the time, if you're a pretty woman, you don't get introduced to people. You're treated like an ornament."

Those days are over for Efua, who has joined the cadre of post-Soul II Soul, high-style black Londoners like D'Influence, Ephraim Lewis and Lil' Louie, who are tantalizing listeners with late-'70s, smooth-funk sound and poetic lyrics.

"I've done a lot of 'being the chick in the video,'" she says. "That's why I started writing songs." GORDON CHAMBERS

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—Rolling Stone, Feb. 1993

The Best of Van Morrison Volume Two
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The Best Of Van Morrison Volume Two

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GUTTERBALL

Taking Care of Business

Gutterball is a decidedly informal band of indie vets who'd love to keep their guitar rock on the ad hoc side. The product of that old pop myth—camaraderie being exceptionally fruitful—jumps out of their *Everybody-Knows-This-Is-Blonde-on-Blonde* rave-ups. House of Freaks guitarist Bryan Harvey says, "We found out feeling is more important than thinking."

Gutterball was recorded in Richmond, Virginia (it's the next big spot, you A&R folk—stop off on your way back from Charlotte) with ex-Silos bassist

Bob Rupe and HOF's Johnny Hott on drums; Long Ryder Steve McCarthy played guitar. Steve Wynn bused in from Nashville, where stabs at churning out some C&W hits made him bug out. "I wouldn't say it was a miserable experience... well, yeah, I would say it was miserable," he carps. Inspiration was waiting at the end of the Greyhound trip.

For an impromptu session ("It was eye contact, a kerosene heater and lotsa drink," offers Wynn), *Gutterball* is arguably the most vivid pop these guys have ever made; it seems fully lived-in. Mixing literalisms



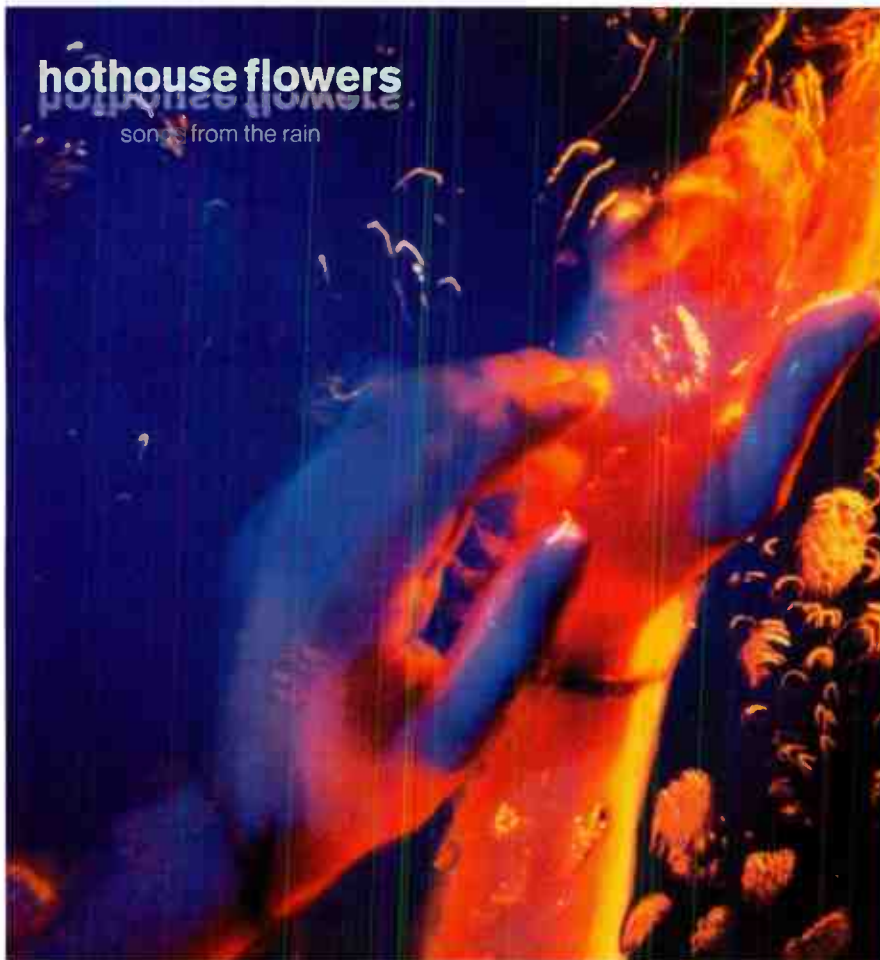
LINDA COVELLO

(Willis Reed, Fontella Bass and *Sassy* all get name-dropped along the way) with metaphors (preachers and prostitutes go head-to-head), the writing matches the gusto of the performance.

The handful of cavalier live dates confirm the tacit Gutter-

ball credo: fooling around helps facilitate their collective inspiration. Wynn: "Some people get together with their buddies and go bowling, or play poker, or go to the bar. This band is our social event. We converse through BTO covers."

JIM MACNIE



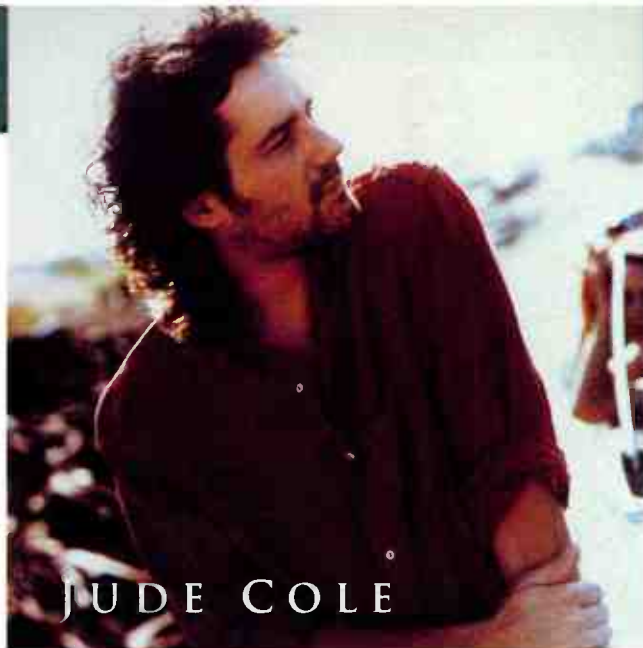
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JUDE COLE

“My father’s a gambler. Always has been, probably always will be. That’s the way he’s made his living, first as a pool hustler and then as a poker player,” says Jude Cole, strumming his guitar as we talk

about “First Your Money (Then Your Clothes),” a song from his new Reprise album *Start the Car*. “He’d come home from playing cards and when he’d win, we’d go to the music store—I was 14 years old and had a Les Paul and a Mar-

Rambling Gambling Man

shall stack. When he’d lose, he’d pull out his pants pocket and say, ‘Well, that’s the way it goes. First your money and then your clothes.’”

Cole, who was born and grew up in a small Midwestern town, never had any doubts about becoming a musician or his lust for big cities. “At 18, I figured I’d had enough cold weather, so I took my first plane ride, to L.A., and got lucky.”

Cole landed an immediate job as lead guitarist and backup singer with Moon Martin and the Ravens. “If it weren’t for Moon, I don’t think I’d be a songwriter,” he says. “I wrote ‘Paula Meet Jeanne’ and Dave Edmunds recorded

it. I owe a lot to Moon.”

Start the Car is filled with good songs: the title tune (about a love-hate relationship with Los Angeles), a California-rock anthem “probably inspired by Jackson Browne and Bob Seger” called “Open Road” and “Just Another Night” (based on the Arturo Bandini character in John Fante’s novels), a song to which all ink-stained scribes can ruefully relate.

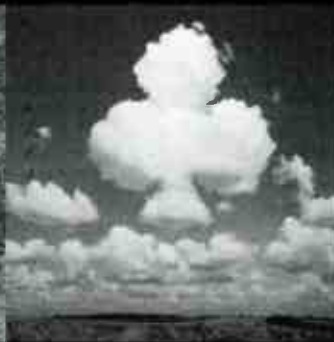
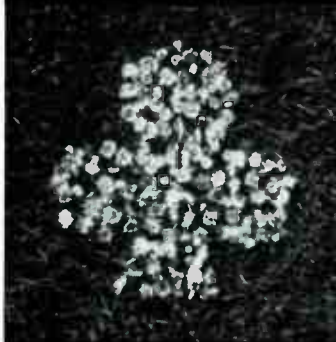
“Me, I’m a poor pool player. That’s what I do in my spare time. I play every day and I gamble every day, and the parallels are kind of uncanny. It’s taught me quite a few lessons—about life and about gambling.”



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BRAD
Heart of Stone

Stone Gossard wants to make one thing perfectly clear: Brad, the Seattle guitarist's first outside project since Pearl Jam skyrocketed into the superstar stratosphere, is a group effort. "It's not my solo ego trip, it's not 'Stone Alone,'" he says. Gossard, who cropped his shoulder-length locks, dyed the rest of his hair blonde, and now resembles Perry Farrell crossed with mid-period Lou Reed (sans the black nail polish), hooked up with three buddies to knock off the loose and limber *Shame* in just two weeks.

Shame may surprise fans of Ten's proto-power grunge attack, and Gossard admits that the

album's overall tone is "somber." The darkly elegant lead track "Buttercup" signals a gentle groove, as minor chords back the soulful vocals of Shawn Smith, who's apparently well acquainted with Lionel Richie's days as head Commodore. Other tracks, like the mega-flanged "My Fingers" and the sustain-laden "Screen," spotlight Gossard's previously downplayed soloing prowess. Additionally, some studio clowning made the final cut, like Smith's funky smarm on "Rockstar" and his robotic Archie Bunker-meets-Andrew Dice Clay tirade following "We."

Much of *Shame's* vibe evolved from in-studio jamming. "This



(L TO R) JEREMY TOBACK,
SHAWN SMITH, STONE
GOSSARD, REGAN HAGAR

LANCIE MERCER

may sound peculiar," relates drummer Regan Hagar, "but we knew to record the moodier songs after we drank wine and ate dinner at a nearby pasta place. That made us a lot more relaxed during evening recording."

While the specter of Pearl Jam's upcoming sophomore album hovered over the project,

Gossard enjoyed the generally pressure-free atmosphere of the Brad sessions. "What a refreshing way to make a record," he says. And that freedom, Hagar adds, also led to Brad's establishing a clear identity. "We didn't feel we had to write Stoneyish songs," he says, "to please Stoneyish fans."

MIKE METTLER

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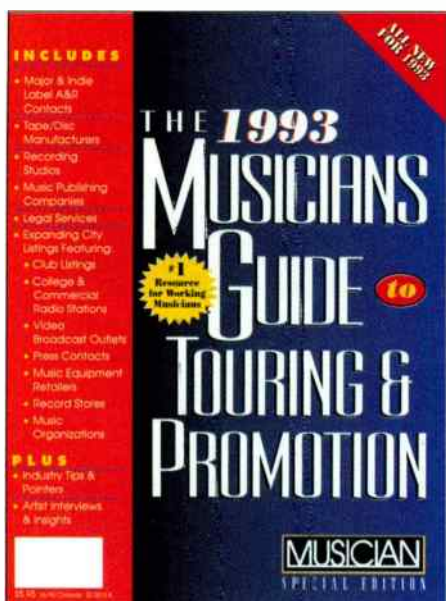
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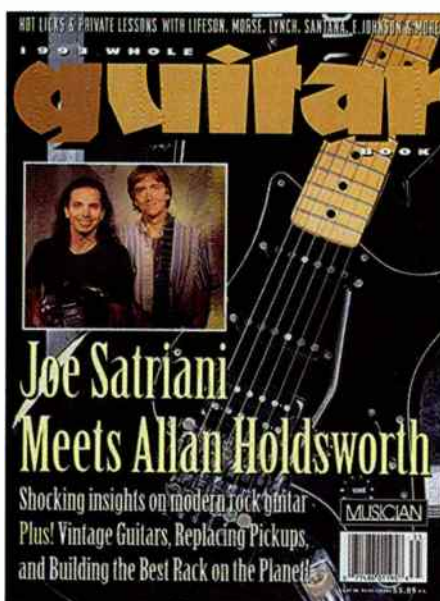
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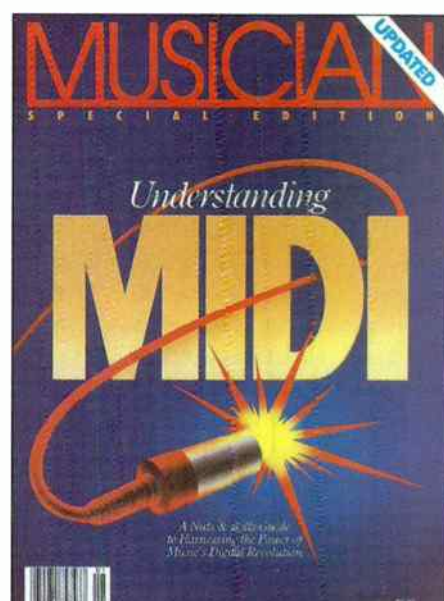
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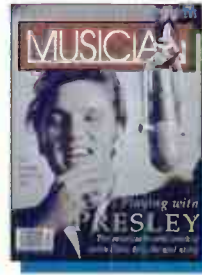
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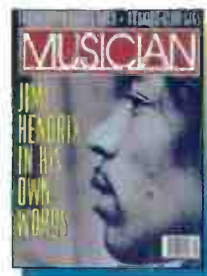
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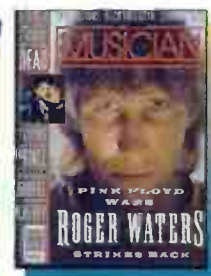
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ON STAGE



PAUL MCCARTNEY

THE WEEKEND STARTS HERE," beamed a well-preserved Paul McCartney, surveying the friendly crowd at London's Docklands Arena one dank Friday night in February. Say what you will about the variable quality of the former Beatle's solo output, but the man sure can put on a show. Cramping nearly two dozen tunes into 90 brisk minutes, Paul and a punchy ensemble did some old favorites proud and added an extra zing to the best songs from his new *Off the Ground* LP. Life begins at 50?

Though McCartney frequently reminded the audience of press and invited guests that the gig was meant as a rehearsal for his up-

coming world tour, there wasn't a ragged edge in sight. Backed by the same efficient crew that made the 1989-90 global trek, except for the addition of ex-Pretender Blair Cunningham on drums, he breezed through classic after classic with the easy confidence of someone who no longer feels the need to prove himself. "Lady Madonna" and "Drive My Car" crackled like they should; a loose acoustic interlude highlighted by "Good Rockin' Tonight" and the still-compelling "We Can Work It Out" breathed fresh air into what could have become a stiff recital. Indeed, although McCartney didn't offer any radical revisions, he tweaked the material enough to avoid suggesting a rote oldies act. "I Wanna Be Your Man" became a chunky bump 'n' grind à la Bo Diddley, while "And I Love Her" slowed to an almost funeral pace, adding a strange streak of dread to the expected tenderness.

Otherwise, McCartney still doesn't show much interest in the dark side, which has inspired plenty of criticism over the years. On-stage, however, this chronic sunniness became an asset—when someone enjoys performing so much, it's hard not to smile back. Part of his pleasure clearly came from being part of a strong band. Lead guitarist Robbie McIntosh, the other Pretenders alumnus in the fold, cooked fiercely without violating the melodies, and McCartney and Cunningham made a mighty rhythm section. In fact, the

*The man sure can
put on a show.*

evening's biggest letdown came halfway through the show, when Paul relinquished bass duties to Hamish Stuart and became rhythm guitarist.

So the performance showed that McCartney has come to grips with the awesome legacy of the Beatles, at least as much as anyone could. What it said about his view of the post-Fabs era was less clear. Except for the new album, all but one of the solo songs came from the early to mid-'70s, wrongly implying that the last 15 years didn't produce any music worth preserving. "My Love" and "Coming Up" (funkier than remembered) held up surprisingly well; "Every Night" and a sluggish "Let Me Roll It" raised the usual questions about his artistic judgment. Vibrant new tunes like "Hope of Deliverance" and "Get Out of My Way" made a compelling argument for *Off the Ground* as McCartney's best work in some time. Too bad he'll probably file 'em and forget 'em a year from now.

Given his accomplishments, both artistic and financial, it's tempting to ask why Paul McCartney continues to make the effort. A spirited version of the absurd "Live and Let Die," which he introduced with a reference to the recent Guns N' Roses cover, supplied the answer: Though it's easily one of the silliest things he's ever recorded, McCartney's rousing rendition, punctuated by smoke bombs and noisy crescendoes, spells good old-fashioned fun. The lad's an entertainer, and he gets the job done.

—JON YOUNG

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books, various solo and collaborative projects, ceaseless touring.

He is also doing A&R work for a new label, One, with Def American's mastermind Rick Rubin, buying out-of-print albums and picking up foreign releases for American distribution. "In two notes I can tell a good band," he says. "I'm never wrong. It's total smell. When I hear the real thing, my ears prick right up, always. I never miss. There's no bad records in my record collection."

And when he's not involved with music, Rollins runs the publishing company (or, as he calls it, his "book label"), works out or gets more tattoos. "They're just like freckles, they're just on me," he says.

For his fans, Rollins is a voice of rage and consolation, howling about pain and defiance and insisting that there's a way to get through, in songs like "Grip": "You'll see how hard they shove you/Hate your guts and tell you they love you/Get a grip right now." His books are full of workaday drones who, one day, explode in fits of violent anger, spraying bullets or doing themselves in.

But Rollins is hardly a one-dimensional rant. In his solo spoken-word shows, he moves from stand-up jokes about hating Edie Brickell to harrowing true stories, addressing his own troubled childhood or the shooting death of his friend and roommate Joe Cole (who's also the subject of Sonic Youth's "J.C.").

Put Rollins on MTV, and he advises young viewers to check out their parents' record collections for good stuff. Get to talking about music, and he'll cite favorites from Lightnin' Hopkins to Public Enemy to Jane's Addiction and talk about what a thrill it was meeting King Sunny Adé in a hotel lobby. Ask about Black Flag, and he explains that he kept every poster, every flier, every announcement, tucked into envelopes and neatly labeled. He also remembers every gig. "That show you saw at L'Amour in Brooklyn, with the Minutemen..." he says. "I was down rolling on the ground at that one."

Black Flag was playing slow grinds and shaking its long hair back when the hardcore underground preferred herky-jerky speed and shaven heads. Sim Cain, the Rollins Band's drummer, played in the trio Gone with Greg Ginn, Black Flag's guitarist; he says Black Flag brought a new sense of rhythm to rock. "Ginn was into this block rhythm kind of thing, where notes got real full value," Cain says.

"He didn't do what he called beat-cheating. He and Bill Stevenson, Black Flag's bassist, would be wearing airport headphones, and they would play real slow and solid for hours, lining up the low end. They came up with grooves without the accents, where you'd hit the kick

drum on the one as strong as the snare on the two. Each note is this big old fat round thing, all equal—it's the socialist groove. It took the swing out of the music but had a certain quality of its own."

In hindsight, Black Flag seems to have prophesied half of alternative rock, from the Melvins to Helmet. The Rollins Band has kept Black Flag's abrasiveness while adding musicianly flourishes, in songs that whipsaw from Crimsonsque dissonances to brute-force stomps. The music bolsters Rollins' rage with sheer precision; songs jump in and out of odd meters and switch instantaneously from bulldozer riffs to an almost jazzy intricacy.

As a musician, Rollins considers himself an ignoramus. "I don't play an instrument," he says. "I don't even know what a chord is, I don't know what a note is. I really don't. I never picked up an instrument—well, I've carried 'em, I've loaded them in. And I've hit a cymbal a few times, horribly out of time, of course."

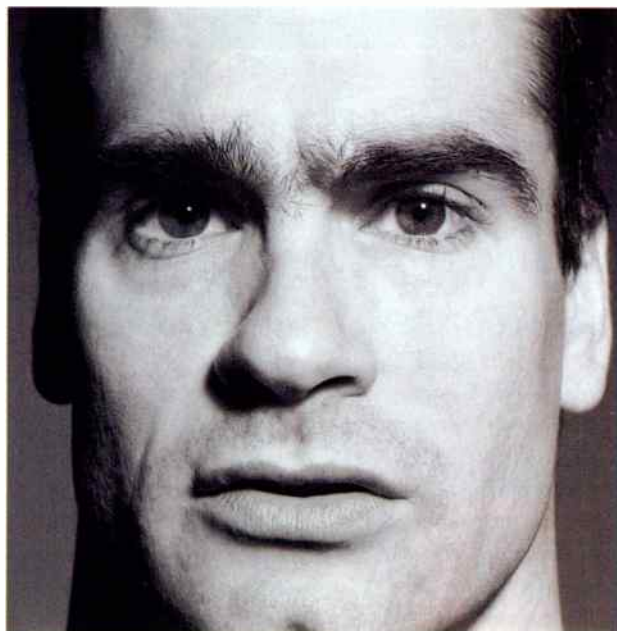
But he does contribute to the band's tunes while writing all the lyrics. "I do know what a riff is. I can hum tunes that I like, or that I come up with, and give them to the guys in the band. On every record there's at least one thing I've come up with. I have a melodic sense, I've come up with bridge sections. And we've got all kinds of riffs that I've come up with, a stockpile."

His main job, though, is to blurt the truth to strangers: in songs, alone onstage doing spoken-word shows, in interviews. And for all his output, he says, he strains to write even a dozen songs a year. "It's hard for me to write a lyric I can't care about all the way," he says. "I've got to be willing to die for these songs. I know it sounds a little dramatic, but I couldn't write a lyric where I went, 'Girl, girl, girl,' blah blah blah. I hear a lot of records, and I think, 'How can you stand up for that, how can you stand next to that and go, "That's me"?"

"When I write these songs, it's gotta be like blood, like, 'That's my man.' And I've got to be able to say, 'Yeah, I'm gonna live with that song for a year and a half and then for the rest of my life.'"

ROLLINS GREW UP in Washington, D.C., where he was friends with Ian MacKaye, later to shake up hardcore with Minor Threat and Fugazi. He was never one for half-measures. "Me and Ian, if we were into something, we were living it," Rollins recalls. "Skateboards, 24 hours a day. Bikes. Whatever we were doing. I worked at a pet shop, I ran the reptile department, inventoried, ordered, did everything. Anything I was into I would just land on and totally take over, I'd want to do 80 hours a day.

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lights were going on and off—and then I realized, the line was a line of shit. Somebody had taken a piece of shit and dragged it along the wall. [laughter] Now this was way before Ice had his corporate problems. But it may have been kind of a premonition.

MUSICIAN: *When you perform, how much does the audience or the mood of the place determine what you play?*

BUCK: What we owe the audience is the best we can give them. It's not necessarily the hit songs. Some nights I'll put in all five of our semi-hit singles. But you know, that's cheating! What we need to do is what we feel real strongly about. Nothing against the hits. But what I feel I have to do for the audience is show up on time and play to the best of my abilities. It's not necessarily the songs they want to hear.

I do a set list every night but over the course of our last tour I'd say we did about 100 songs, and we do about 25 a night. Only once in our entire career have we gone from the first song to the last according to the set list. The road crew had that one framed for about a month.

MUSICIAN: *Were your solo selections last night predetermined or improvised on the spot?*

YOUNG: Well, for the camera guys I made an acoustic set list. And I stuck to it, mostly. When I started playing out acoustic again a year ago January, I had a set list. I had 15 songs and 11 of them were new, and I didn't even know the songs that well. But after I proved to myself that I could do that, it didn't hold the same kind of challenge. Then it didn't matter anymore, so I started chucking the list and doing it the way I did a long time ago, where it didn't matter if they were old or new songs. That's generally the way I do it. Which is probably the way I appeared last night, even though in reality I sat down and thought about it. 'Cause I had the band there, and all the new songs that I would do acoustically at random I had to compartmentalize and think about, "Well, should the band play this song first so if they play that one well they'll be confident when the one they don't know that well comes along, and they'll think that they're great and they might play it well without thinking about it?" [laughter] All these things that you have to think about are extra when you're dealing with a band that may or may not know the material.

So I picked the two *Trans* songs first. 'Cause if they were as into the groove as I was, or in the same way that I was, then it would have been a really great transition. David Briggs and I were talking about the show last night. And we feel it was like, we went up, we flew and we landed it. But the thing never should have left the hangar. There were things ready to fall off everywhere and we could have crashed very easily. [laughs] But we got enough so that on the report card it looks very good.

MUSICIAN: *Do you think the performance was altered by the fact of being a TV production?*

YOUNG: I don't think so. I think that particular venue for playing

music and the way it was in there was as good as it can get. It was like a beautiful thing.

BUCK: That's why "Unplugged" is kind of pleasant, because it actually mimics a live show. So much other TV has nothing to do about anything except what goes on this little screen and comes out of this three-inch speaker. I hate to sound like Gloria Swanson in *Sunset Boulevard* but you've got a guy juggling plates and a guy teaching a bear to dance and Oprah over here and you're in the middle, and it kind of reduces you to that level. When we did "Saturday Night Live" I saw the show and it was like, "Oh, I'm not in that song, am I?" Kate Pierson was singing, and she's a great singer, dressed real nice, and there's one second where the camera pans past her and you see the back of this guy's head—that's me!

We did all these European TV shows where it's local and there's a Belgian synth pop duo and then some little kids singing a song about going to the beach and then a dance contest and then us. Just like amateur hour. I remember one show where they had to supply the drums and there were no cymbals. The guy said, well, you only said you wanted drums. [laughter]

MUSICIAN: *Is your opposition to current digital technology related to the fact that several of your records have yet to be released as CDs?*

YOUNG: No, it's not connected. The records that haven't come out on CD haven't because the record company doesn't want to put them out, usually. In the case of Geffen it's not worth the money to them. But we've mastered them all recently. And it keeps changing too, every three or four months there's a better way to master digitally. To get a little closer to the original sound. But digital is completely fucked anyway. We're in the dark ages of recorded sound. And there's no solution other than changing to a different thing that hasn't been

invented yet, some kind of chemical-based computer, instead of being based on precious metals. Maybe a kind of chemical gas that does the same thing but has more variability in its computation so you get more colors. 'Cause we're not listening to music, we're listening to a reconstituted replica clone of music. We don't hear it anymore. Since '82 it's been gone. That's how I feel about it.

But I could go on about that for a long time. And if they ever put me in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame they'll regret it, 'cause I will not stop talking about it, it'll go on all fucking night. So let that be a warning to all you assholes with your tuxedos.

MUSICIAN: *So what do you think about the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame?*

BUCK: Maybe when I'm 45 I'll dig it. It does kind of smack of this older rich boy's club. But for people who haven't seen that kind of financial reward, the Ruth Browns and Etta Jameses, it's a great thing. I went to the Grammys one time, and the Grammy show itself is a stultifyingly boring piece of shit. But if you go in the afternoon

"I think they ought to close the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. I think it's full."—Young

when it's not televised, and they give out the gospel and blues awards, for them it's often like a validation of their life. It's very moving, and people break down and cry...and it's beautiful. It's the real thing. So for that alone they should have the rock and roll hall, for the pioneers, the rhythm and blues folks. And maybe when we're eligible I'll like it. I've figured it out, that's in 2006 or 2007, depending if they count our first single. But right now the '70s are coming up. That's pretty grim.

It's pretty funny that they still haven't broken ground yet. It's like some really long joke where you keep waiting for the punch line. Maybe Andy Kaufman will dig the first spoonful.

YOUNG: You know, I think the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame was a great idea when it started out. But I think they ought to close the hall. I think it's full. I think it's too early for a lot of the people who are going in now, and they're just looking for people to go in because they're out of people! Okay? They've got this thing going but let's face it—they've had the whole past to draw on for the first two or three years, and then they took all of that, what really is the hall of fame stuff. And now, they've got to come up with new stuff every year: "Let's see, what

happened in 1968?" Before they had 50 years to draw from.

So they should close and reopen it. It just came to me. Closed "for renovations and repairs." Due to lack of interest. I think they can say they have enough people in for the foundation. Now they should wait 20 years. Or close it now and call it the "Original Rock and Roll Hall of Fame." Then they could have a grand re-opening.

And I say that in all sincerity. Close the doors. I think I'm developing an attitude about it.



THE ONES THEY LOVE

Old NEIL put digital down: When he plugs in either of two '53 Les Pauls, he goes nearly all analog. The guitars, with well-lubed Bigsby vibratos, stock P90s in the neck position and chrome Firebird pickups in the bridge, hit an old Fender reverb unit and, if desired, go straight into his main sound source, a '59 tweed Deluxe. On top of the amp sits a "Whizzer," which actually turns the knobs on the Deluxe to any of four presets called up by a footswitch. There's an Echoplex if desired, a (digital!) Microverb, an MXR analog delay and a Mutron octaver. The speaker output of the Deluxe goes through a Magnatone stereo vibrato amp and a Baldwin Exterminator with two 15s, two 12s and two 10s. The electrics are strung with Dean Markley SLPs, which are high in iron content for max output. Neil's longtime tech Larry Cragg dislikes wireless for its tone degradation; Neil plugs his own acoustics, all equipped with stereo FRAP pickups and varying gauges of D'Angelico 8020 strings depending on the tuning, into a FRAP preamp under his stage seat (Cragg, incidentally, is *the FRAPman*—415-453-3336). Neil's got a '67 Martin D-45, a herringbone D-28 which belonged to Hank Williams, a pre-war D-18 and another 28 for D modal tuning, two Taylor 12-strings and a high-strung '27 Mastertone ball-bearing-loaded banjo. On "Unknown Legend" from *Harvest Moon*, Neil doubled an old Esquire with Cragg's custom baritone Silvertone. Also on hand are Gretsch White and Black Falcons, a Roundup and a 6120.

Equipment-happy PETER BUCK plays a Rick 360 with heavy Dunlop picks and Markley .013s through a Vox AC30.

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World Radio History

*How Fusion Drumming's
Father Ditched the Ratrace for
the Globetrot*

WHERE'S BILLY COBHAM

THE YORUBA LANGUAGE HAS THE UNUSUAL, HIGHLY POETIC property of letting a speaker telescope whole phrases into one word; conversely, a word can be unpacked into a number of possible phrases. "Iya," the word for mother, unfolds into "the one who draws my picture"; Socrates, the pet monkey of a German academic who often visits Nigeria, was renamed by

the scholar's Yoruba friends "Sokoti," or "blacksmith of heaven." The professor, noticing his good friend Bill Cobham's affection for Yoruba music, decided to give Cobham a little present. He asked two Yoruba musicians: Could they think of a phrase that could be reduced to a word sounding just like "Cobham"? The pair, after a long huddle, announced that the only possible candidate was a phrase that means "a descendant of the god of drumming."

BILLY COBHAM, who may or may not be descended from the Great Drummer in the Sky, sat

in his lawyer's apartment recalling his more immediate forebears. Forty-eight and a grandfather, he might be 38. He has at least three voices: boyish-excited, Afro-street and formal-stilted; a West Indian lilt fitfully announces itself. The dominant physical characteristic is a frighteningly massive, knotty pair of arms. Musicians, for some reason, tend to offer limp handshakes; Cobham's induces limpness.

Although most of his life has been lived outside it, Billy Cobham's short stay in the American public eye—roughly, the 1970s—was sufficient for him to cast a very long shadow. In the late 1960s, well-trained young jazz musicians, infected with the spirit

BY TONY SCHERMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT LEWIS

of rebelliousness, began investigating rock. One, a 25-year-old New Yorker named Billy Cobham, Jr., played drums for a band called Dreams the way Jim Brown had played football until a few years before—without mercy. If one spirit can be said to have presided over the marriage of jazz and rock drumming, it is Cobham's. Tony Williams played rock-loud, but his exploratory figures were a jazzman's. Cobham played real rock and funk beats of unbelievable speed and force, their precision rooted in his drum-corps background. With the Mahavishnu Orchestra, a comet that flamed out in five years (Cobham was gone in three), and solo albums like the bruising *Spectrum* (a '70s friend of mine liked to blast it at his noisy upstairs neighbors), Cobham's impact was huge. A new drumming generation arose, adept at mixing rock heaviness with polyrhythmic smarts: Dennis Chambers, Simon Phillips, Living Colour's Will Calhoun. The drumming god from whom they descend is Billy Cobham. "The first time I saw Cobham," says Will Calhoun, "I froze. I had been hit. Everything became practice, practice, practice, work on this, work on that—anything to get to his level. Suddenly I was a different kid."

But Cobham, meanwhile, had vanished, taken his bad self to Europe, sick of fighting the American odds against even well-known jazz musicians. That he chooses to live outside the U.S.A. constitutes a nice symmetry—he wasn't born here, either. "I never considered the United States the end-all," he said in Manhattan recently, bound for Switzerland in the morning. He's a mongrel, an exotic, shaped from the start by the whole world's sounds.

"MY FAMILY LIVED IN Barbados and St. Lucia—St. Vincent. My mother is rooted out of a family called the Walcott family, from Barbados. My father's father left St. Lucia—St. Vincent for Panama to work on the canal, and that's where he stayed. I was born in Gatun, Panama in 1944.

"In 1948 we came up to New York on a boat called the *Cristobal*. We went first to Harlem, then Brooklyn. Bedford Stuyvesant. When I was 11 we moved to South Jamaica, Queens, and from 1959 to 1962 I went to Music and Art High School in Manhattan.

"I was pretty much into playin' ball, playin' drums and playin' ball. I got my first set of drums probably at about four. My real foundation was the drum corps, the Marching and Maneuvering, M&M, Corps. Now, this was a way for me to actually learn how to play the drums; how to play rudiments and read music. Catholic churches promoted the bands, and if your band was really good there were contests to enter. Offseason were the 'individuals,' weekend contests to keep us practicing. I was in two corps, St. Catherine's Queensmen out of Albany and the Mineola Sunrisers. The corps wasn't an especially black thing; in fact, they were mostly white.

"New York State-wide, there were hundreds of corps in the '50s.

Steve Gadd came out of one, I think the Gray Knights, of Rochester. Major, major, very, very good ones, there were maybe about 20. The bands are still going today, it's a quietly done thing with tremendous interest. I went back to watch the Sunrisers practice 18 years after I left, things had changed a *lot*." ("Things," which I expected from his grave tones to be major socio-musical changes—the corps were two-thirds women in bikinis and featured a rapper—turned out to be extremely technical details, such as what yard-line the marchers now start from. Cobham's absorption in these minutiae revealed, a little touchingly, a mind in love with order.)

"When we lived in Queens...aw, that was a beautiful time! Drum corps took the place in my life of parties and hangin' out, I was never good at hanging out, it seemed like a waste of time: girls, and trying to take on this macho existence. I was an aberration. Music was available, and in a very disciplined way. I remember sitting in my room, a phone book under each arm to make me work my wrists and fingers harder, playing rudiments on a pillow for hours.

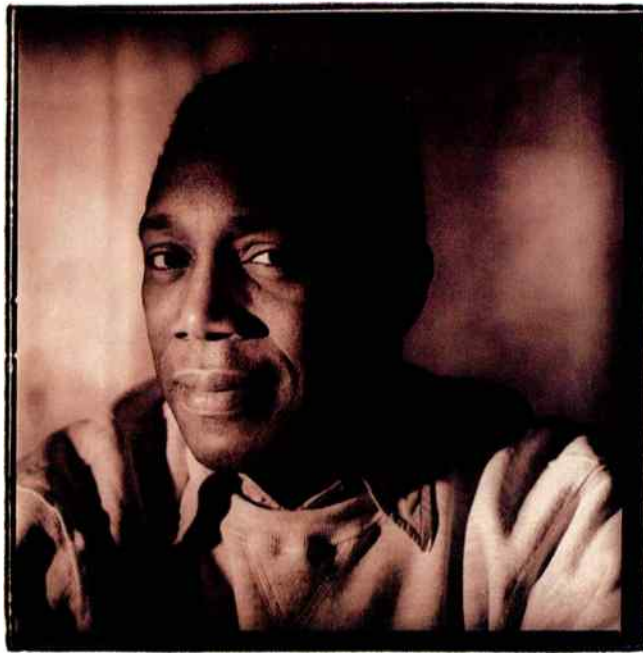
"But my happiest time growing up was Music and Art. There were some, I mean, inspiring young players, Leo Mitchell and Al Foster, Larry Rosen (he was before us), Larry Willis, Bobby Colomby, Jimmy Owens, George Cables, in *high* school, at the same time! All we talked about was Monk, Miles. That environment was so, so great, 'cause you learned from your peers. Teachers tell you something, you say, 'Aw, go fly a kite.' But kids like Leo Mitchell, Leo was a drummer, he'd come in: 'Damn, I been practicing my paradiddles. How fast can *you* play?' You play 'em and Leo come in: 'Brrrrrrrr.' You go 'Woww!' You can't let that happen to you, not if you're serious. So you get him to sit

down: 'How'd you do that?' 'I did such and such.' 'Hmm! Really!' You go home and practice, couple days later you whip his butt. It's competition. You got a *reason* to get better. Today they have no time for that, it's Nintendo time. But we did all kinds of crazy things. You got a quarter?"

"Let me look.... Nope."

"Okay, gimme a dime." Cobham placed the coin on a coffee table. "The object is to play rolls on a coin, like so, keeping the sticks out of each other's way," which he proceeded to do, talking the whole time. "Coin's not allowed to budge. We'd have contests: Put a 50-cent piece on the wall and try to keep it up there by playing a roll on it. Takes concentration. Or get a cup, fill it to the brim and play a roll on the water without spilling any. Kids came up with these things, 'Hey, lookit what I can do!,' and they made sense.

"Then this kid named Donnie Perrillo, only one of us who could afford drum lessons, took me downtown to see his teacher, Charli Per-



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hasn't worked with just one of them, he's worked with all of them. And you could add a list of others that would seem beyond belief. Although he has worked with many great musicians over the years, one constant has remained...his instrument of choice, Pearl Drums.



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sip, in a big-band session. It was *The Jazz Soul of Porgy and Bess* [reissued last year as a Capitol CD]. Incredible lineup of guys, they had six hours to cut the whole thing and it was a lot of music; they're all talkin' yah yah yah, 'Okay—one, two, one-two-three-four' BAM! Laughin' and talkin' right to the moment they play and it's perfect, first take. They never even saw the music before! I went 'Waaaaahh!' I was scared! Charli came in late, he's under the extra pressure of setting up, checking out the music and he hits it, man. Knocked me out. There's tunes on that album they only played once. I'll

always remember that day, it made me want to become a studio player."

First came the Army, "the only time I ever really, really woodshedded. I enlisted in 1965. If I'd been drafted I'm not sure I'd be here talking to you. They sent me down to the Naval School of Music in Norfolk, Virginia. Friday afternoons I'd take a stack of 30 or 40 albums into a practice room and write out the drum parts for every song on every album. So I had like piles of music to play. Basie, Bobby Darin. They'd close the building down and wouldn't hear me from the outside, I wouldn't

realize time was passing, so I'd get locked in for the whole weekend. I never went outside at all for a couple of days. Didn't even remember 'bout eating. Honest truth. I was into it. When they opened the door the guys said, 'Jesus, there's a cloud in here, it smells awful.' I was AWOL even though I was on base; got in trouble for it, too. But they kept that stuff I wrote and they still use it today."

Out of the service in 1968, he leapt into Manhattan's jazz scene, joining Jimmy Owens and Ron Carter in something called the New York Jazz Sextet. Touring with Horace Silver's group, he met 19-year-old Randy Brecker. "I got involved with a sort of school of thought that worked at Bank Street Recording: Joe Zawinul, Wayne Shorter, Miroslav Vitous, John McLaughlin, Larry Coryell, Chick Corea. I played on Larry's *Spaces* and Miroslav's *Purple*." He broke into studio work—George Benson's *Giblet Gravy*, James Brown's "King Heroin"—and played timbales at Latin dances uptown. When trombonist Barry Rogers, whom he'd met playing salsa, started a rock-band-with-horns, they asked Cobham in.

The band was called *Dreams*, and it was where the world first heard Cobham, a rock drummer who terrified rock drummers. The group itself was frightening, an embryonic fusion Who's Who: Randy Brecker, by now a refugee from Blood, Sweat and Tears; his 19-year-old brother Michael; John Abercrombie; Cobham. The great forgotten band of jazz-rock's first wave (the term "fusion" didn't exist), *Dreams* managed to screw up its potential, crapping out after two albums. The first (*Dreams*, just reissued on CD) still sounds wonderful; the second (*Imagine My Surprise*) has its moments.

"The problem was *Dreams* had no real leader," said Cobham, "which was a vacuum created by paranoia. Barry Rogers [who died last year] didn't want to acknowledge that he was the leader; on the other hand, he didn't want anyone else to take that step. Randy and Michael just wanted to play; if you asked them a question, you'd get, 'I dunno, man, yeah, okay.' Jeff Kent and Doug Lubahn had wonderful material and, looking back, appear not to have had a direction. Everything had to be discussed. Factions broke out. Eventually it all fell apart.

"I always felt like an outsider. The other members of the band tended to stick together, especially the horn section. It wasn't race; it was that I wanted to get some business done and these guys didn't want to do that.

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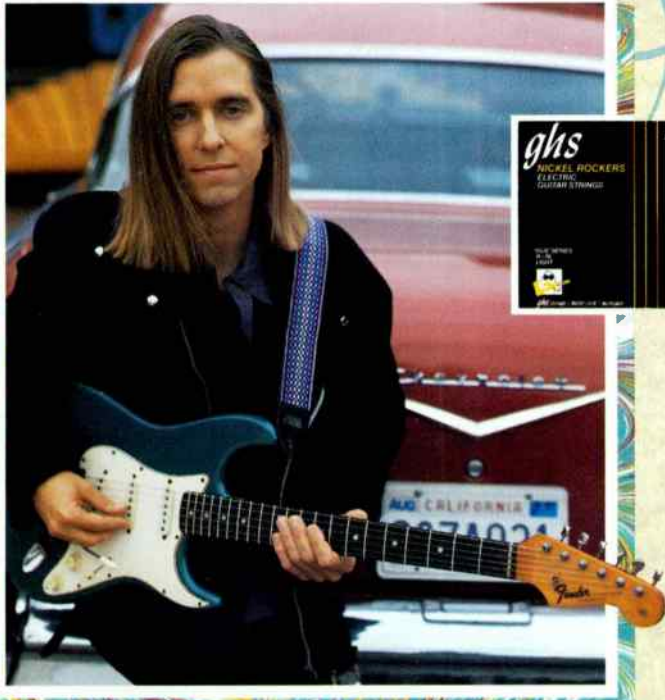


Photo by Sandra Johnson.

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"I don't know how much the first album sold. We didn't make anything. By the second album Will Lee and Don Grolnick were in the band, and I felt even more excluded. I was trying to be road manager at the same time I was playing, and I ran into a tremendous amount of static around that. It was a quote cooperative unquote band where nobody cooperated, you know? On one tune—and I never experienced this in my life, before or since—we did a hundred some takes and ended up using the first take. I just went, 'Oh, this is incorrect.' There was a point where it became horrors, man, a week at the Jersey shore when I was depressed for seven straight days. I ran away. Didn't want nothin' more to do with them. They hired another drummer. Hired a bunch of drummers—they never *could* make decisions!

"Yet this band stood off by itself, it had the potential to be eons beyond anything else. 'Try Me,' 'New York City,' that stuff hold up right now, no problem. Barry could put those horn charts together, that's the interesting thing. It just seems...it's so difficult to talk about what happened, it is so much, *much* more complicated than words can present.

"I don't miss Dreams, no. I'd rather have looked towards the Orchestra staying together. The Orchestra had more lasting power." Cobham's stint with John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra is well documented (less so is the fact that Miles called often; Cobham is on *Bitches Brew* [uncredited], *Jack Johnson*, *Live Evil*—eight Davis albums in all). The Mahavishnu years were Cobham's heroic period, when he made his reputation for life. Assembled a year after Weather Report, the Orchestra steamed past Zawinul/Shorter to become fusion's earliest supergroup (*Birds of Fire* hit *Billboard's* #15 in 1973), its tortured lyricism frying the brains of intellectually striving hippies everywhere. McLaughlin's mysticism notwithstanding, Cobham says John was no egalitarian. "The Orchestra was not a cooperative band. John McLaughlin was the leader. We were employees. Oh *yeah*, for sure. That was why we broke up, because the band received very, very little acknowledgment from John McLaughlin, on a business level."

Cobham released three viciously tight, muscular and extremely popular fusion records, *Spectrum* (#26 in *Billboard*), *Crosswinds* (#23) and *Total Eclipse* (#36); *Spectrum*, just issued on CD, has sold 600,000 copies worldwide. "The earlier solo stuff had a really strong musical motive, saying something on my own, breaking free of

the constraints I'd felt in Mahavishnu. Whereas the later stuff, some of that was just for survival." He became a boss himself, with the attendant nightmares. Though he had a nose for talent (Tommy Bolin, John Scofield, Sheila E.), though he was one of a half-dozen Supreme Drum Gods, he was getting stale and knew it. His marriage broke up, he hid in busywork (commercials, the "Saturday Night Live" band); he became, as he puts it, "anal retentive," going on aimless shopping sprees. "Everything just seemed real dead."

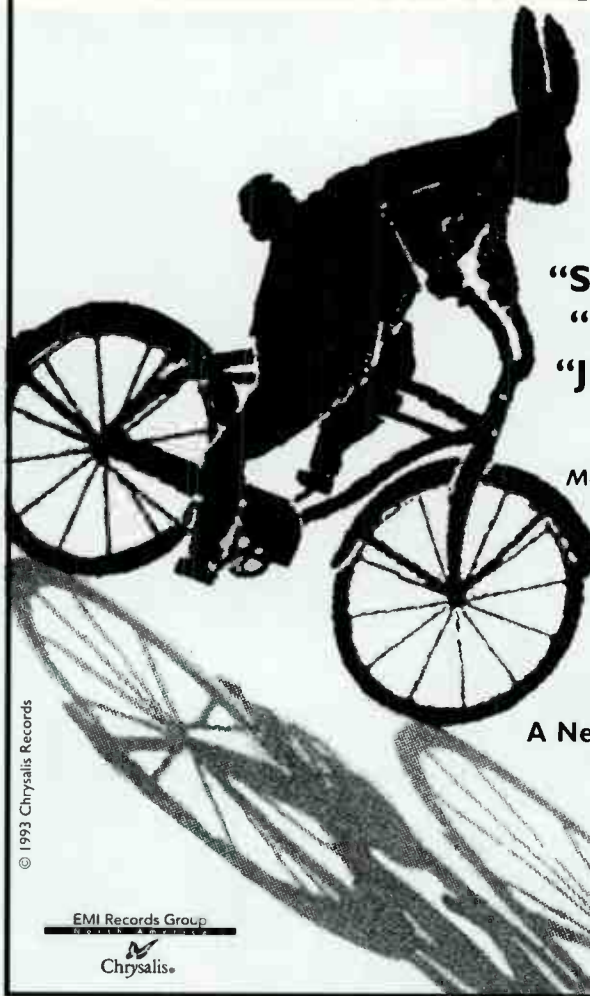
In early '81, touring Europe, he saw some-

thing "that blew me away. I watched Reagan get shot on TV, but from about five perspectives on five different countries' TV stations, all at once. You saw five different things happening and I realized, 'Holy shit, it's a big world out here. French got one angle, Germans got another, Italians got another...wonder what it'd be like to stay here for a while?'" As if in an existential novel, he closed down one life and opened another, just like that, pulling in off the fast track...in Zürich, where the pace was slow and he could decompress.

For five years he hardly played in the States.

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Early Saturday morning at the "Karaoke for Profit" seminar in the Capistrano Room of the Disneyland Hilton, they introduce this panel of guys who come at the topic from a variety of perspectives ("Bob introduced karaoke to cruise lines") and the audience of about 200 music store managers all flare their nostrils, trying to decide if that's money they smell or bullshit.

Founded two years ago, the Karaoke International Sing-Along Association (KISA: "Commitment to Sing-Along") has discerned two types of karaoke consumers: drunks who wish to emote to pre-recorded music in saloons, and serious competitors who actually take lessons and practice at home in hopes of impressing their friends. The drunks will be a market forever, and the serious competitors are a burgeoning demographic, according to KISA. Hence today's subtext: KARAOKE IS NOT A FAD!!!! Hence the smart entrepreneur will cater to his customers directly through in-store displays of hardware

The Glam of NAMM

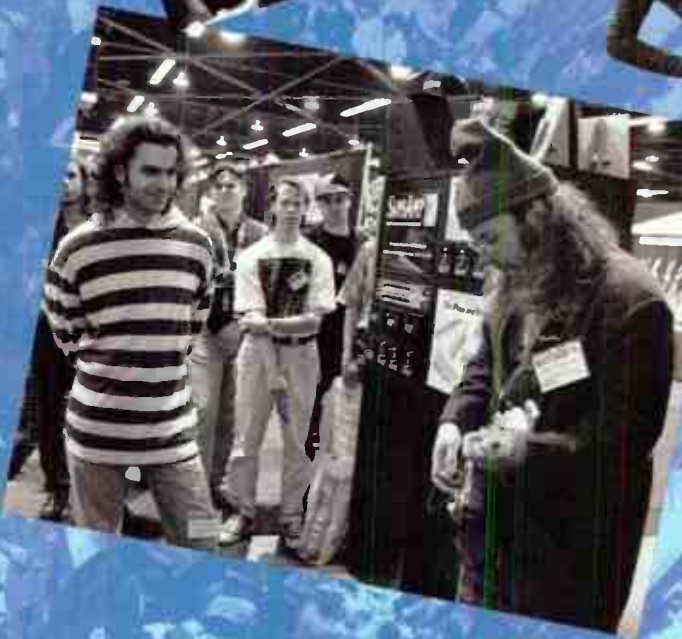
and software, and indirectly through mobile KJs (karaoke jocks) who do weddings and parties in any of five formats: cassette, CD, VHS, CD graphic and CD-ROM.

This is the sort of information that makes your eyes snap open after a long night of party-hopping at the National Association of

Music Merchants' annual convention: 799 booths spread over 800,000 square feet with 46,281 officially registered attendees, every last one drooling with equipment lust. Some of them are drooling with just plain lust—karaoke manufacturers seem especially intent on associating their product with babes—although NAMM veterans claim the bimbo

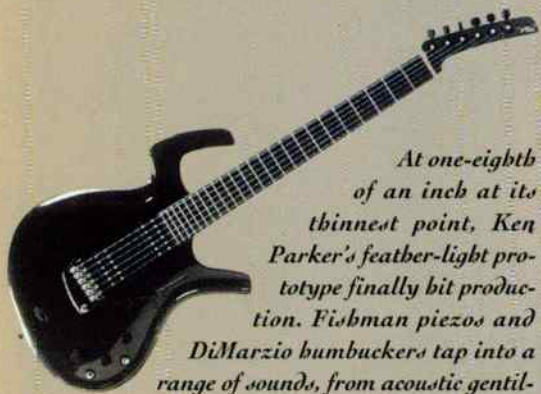
quotient has fallen drastically from previous years. The celebrities make up for it. Jeff Ament of Pearl Jam sits at the Dean Markley booth under a poster of himself, commenting, "I guess that's me"; Glenn Frey, Rick Nielsen, Lemmy Kilmister, Chuck Rainey, Michael Manning and a host of first- and other-rate musicians sign autographs

BY CHARLES M. YOUNG, MATT RESNICOFF & PETER CRONIN



PHOTOS BY KAREN MILLER

World Radio History



At one-eighth of an inch at its thinnest point, Ken Parker's feather-light prototype finally bit production. Fishman piezos and DiMarzio humbuckers tap into a range of sounds, from acoustic gentility to full-on crunch.



The much-copied folks from Mackie continue to offer lots of features for not much money. Their cool new eight-bus mixers are available in 16-, 24- (pictured) and 32-channel versions.



Peavey's expansion into the world of keyboards and samplers continues with the SX II, a nice-priced stereo version of last year's SX sample expander.



High-end amp analysts have begun to agree—the power amp is a crucial stage in the move toward serious tone. VHT's Classic is the step after the 2150, with EL34 power, half-power and triode/pentode operation. The amp also has a voicing option for further vintage-ization.

the student/hobbyist, and makes life vastly easier for the non-keyboard-playing home recordist as well.

If you're into the serious stuff, Roland's got the JV-1000 Music Production System, a 76-key, souped-up version of their JV80 with an MC50 40,000-note, eight-track sequencer. It also reads and writes smart FSK, washes dishes, mows lawns and changes the cat box. Another do-it-all keyboard is the Alesis Quadrasynth. With 64-voice multitimbral capability and ADAT compatibility, this one packs a load of promise—if they can get it out of the display case and into the players' hands. Also still under glass at Alesis was the QuadraTrack eight-channel, four-track recorder with built-in digital reverb and Dolby S noise reduction. With those features and a price of \$695, it has the potential to set the standard for four-track cassette machines—when they get it into production.

Yamaha introduced an eight-track cassette recorder/mixer, the MT8X—a lightweight, portastudio-style machine with a 13-input mixer, three-motor drive and dbx sound reduction. And it's the best-looking multitracker we've seen in a while. But Yamaha's big news was the CBX D5. With support from Mark of the Unicorn, Steinberg/Jones and Dynatek, Yamaha developed this four-track hard-disk recorder with an onboard processor that frees the computer from having to deal with both MIDI and digital audio processing. That's cool because you can get into digital recording with a smaller computer like a Mac Classic II or SE30 or an Atari ST. Its built-in stereo digital effects can be automated using Mark of the Unicorn's Digital Performer. Cost: \$5000.

The Akai booth offers plenty of evidence that the age of the digital bedroom studio has arrived. Their DR4d is a four-track hard-disk recorder that works just like a tape deck and costs less than \$2000. Spend another \$500 on a decent hard drive and you're ready to go. That price, combined with terrific fidelity and editing capability, may make this the real ADAT killer.

Speaking of which, Tascam formally introduced their 8mm-format DA88 digital eight-track recorder. And Fostex gave us a backroom peek at their upcoming ADAT machine. Due around mid-year (they hope), this eight-track digital machine will be similar to Alesis' entry, with improved time-code capability.

Digidesign induced many swoons with their Session 8, an integrated digital recording system that runs on Windows and the Mac. Combined with the optional R1 controller, the Session 8 neatly takes care of all routing, mixing and editing chores and brings CD quality to the home studio.

Even high-tech companies have to look back now and then. Opcode introduced *Looking into Vision*, an instructional video for their popular sequencing program for the Mac. It's designed not only for the beginner, but for the experienced user who wants to get deeper into this bottomless program.

The digital recording market is heating up faster than anyone could have imagined a few years ago. ART, a company chiefly known for signal-processing gear, displayed a prototype of a "non-tape" digital recording system they're developing.

For music journalists, or anyone who records interviews and speeches, Sony's NT-1 is one useful unit. Up to 120 minutes of info can be digitally recorded onto its cool little postage stamp-size cassettes. The NT-1 is about half as big as a Walkman and sells for \$1000. Which, come to think of it, pretty much excludes music journalists.

We stumble over to Trace Elliot just in time to see John Entwistle plug his ears and run from some mook's screaming guitar solo. Hey, if you can't take the heat, get out of the sound booth. We stick it





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out long enough to plug into Trace Elliot's new BLX-80 bass amp. At \$896, this little 80-watt room-shaker packs a lot of boom for the buck. When that guitarist finally gets unbearable, we wander over to Ibanez, where Ned Steinberger is admiring Rich Lasner's new whammy bar for acoustic guitar, essentially a Strat block on springs. Lasner was once a designer for Ibanez, before defecting to Yamaha and subsequently launching his own design firm.

"Basically it's a knife-edged tremolo," Ned explains, peering inside the instrument. "David Torn's been bugging me about a TransTrem for acoustic, but there's no real existing market. It's hard to get people wound up about a TransTrem for acoustic guitar."

Hands thrust in his pockets, Ned had walked over from Gibson, the company that bought him out several years ago. One of the most significant and radical guitar designers to emerge in the last 25 years, Steinberger recently shut down his factory at the behest of Gibson and had a small, undecorated corner at the Gibson pavilion amidst a vast display of some of the most beautiful guitars ever made...before 1960. As Ned checked out Lasner's innovations, a Gibson rep brandished an unfinished Les Paul body dotted with technician's markings to show how last year's neck joint was just millimeters smaller than the specs of 20 years ago. The company plainly hears "Why can't you make them like you used to?" louder than "What have you done for me lately?" Even the new Nighthawk, a Paul-meets-Tele amalgamation, available with two or three pickups, sat in back—an afterthought to the Antique Brigade. Then again, you can't argue with a '56 gold-top, a '59 flametop, the Tal Farlow or the \$17,000 Citation.

Seymour Duncan's new pickups include Vintage Rails to emulate a '57 Strat, and a revamped JB humbucker to fit into a single-coil rout. They're based on Hot Rails, but with adjustable polepieces for string balance with tailoring for bright harmonics. Duncan also has a five-string bass pickup with a wide surface, which can be operated passively or actively. Their Sadducer is a new acoustic saddle transducer. At the other pickup superpower headquarters, Steve Blucher shows off DiMarzio's Evolution pickup, designed in conjunction with Steve Vai to accent the *low* low and bring up the low midrange—slightly hotter than their PAF Pros. Paul Rivera showed us his new line of amps. Simple, light and capable of producing a wide variety of tones, these great new combos come in 30-, 50- and 100-watt sizes. The smaller two-channel amps have a boost in each side for four sounds activated by footswitch, and an active effects loop with variable send and return. The more complicated 4x10 has a manual practically mounted on top of the housing to prevent confusion.

A high-end amp company, Bedrock is looking to expand with some excellent affordable units. The 621 is an all-tube 25-watt combo with a tight Marshall or Deluxe sound and switchable effects loop. The three-channel 1050 50-watt head sounds as nice as a plexi Marshall or a Twin—that's serious range. The BC75 is an old-style 2x12 AC30 mockup, with a sweet A/B setup and master volume for playing in the vicinity of other humans.

For the play-by-numbers crowd, Fretlight Guitars offers an axe that lights up on the neck where you're supposed to play, and changes to display different scale fingerings. Lyruss has another instructional variation that has guitar hero Steve Morse getting tomatoes thrown at him because he can't play fast enough. A program called Tour, accessed through a suction-cup pickup on Steve's guitar, calls for, say, D₅ on the G string. If he hits it accurately and quickly, he gets cheers from the computer. If he hits it wrong or too slowly, the crowd throws rotten vegetables. This program (part of a full system of

instructional software) could be a revolutionary tool in teaching a whole library of licks, coaxing the student to sight-read, analyze chords and visualize the fingerboard. It also opens the possibility of *betting* on a player's ability to get through a song or riff without making a mistake. Thus do the ambitions of the Berklee College of Music converge with those of Jimmy the Greek.

Less interactive, but no less instructive, REH Videos have released a host of new tapes, the most anticipated of which is by Allan Holdsworth. Other fine tutorials include those by Paul Gilbert, Robben Ford, Scott Henderson and Gregg Bissonette. The more acoustically oriented Homespun boasts very useful tapes by Doc Watson, Rory Block, Dr. John, Jack DeJohnette, Bill Monroe, Pete Seeger and Vassar Clements.

Paul Reed Smith introduced his first lefty, and an upgrade of the Artist Series guitar with a bound neck and headstock, gold hardware and ornate truss rod cover. Paul calls the response "outsite" for his new 22-fret guitars. His Dragon series features an ornate inlay on the neck with 217 pieces of mother-of-pearl, turquoise, coral and abalone. That \$11,000 dragon also features gold claws and PRS signature.

The Fender Custom Shop topped the one-of-a-kind high-end market with the hand-carved, \$25,000 Phoenix Stratocaster; otherwise Fender also seems to be hearing the call of "Make it old, but make it new." They introduced the Deluxe 112 and Stage 112SE "tube emulation" amps, designed to give you that old Fender sound with modern distortion and effects without the hassle and expense of tubes. Since the amps have that classic Fender "black face," the audience doesn't have to know. If you want real tubes with updated circuitry, check out the Vibro King, made in Fender's Custom Shop, with three 10-inch speakers. You'll swear you had one 30 years ago, but it's new for '93. The big news in the Fender bass department is the Stu Hamm model, designed (again) to feel old but sound new, with a lightweight, deep-cutaway body and a combination of one P- and two J-Bass pickups and active electronics.

As long as we're on the subject of basses, SWR has its 900 on prominent display. At 900 watts, featuring two separately EQed channels and a manual that shows you how to dial up any classic bass tone, this could be the next industry standard. They also have a unique, compact 8x10 cabinet.

The Zon booth is drawing huge crowds as Michael Manring plays their Hyper Bass, specially equipped with Extender tuning knobs. Their graphite necks appear to be just the ticket for the bassist looking for a high-end instrument that won't warp in varying weather conditions on the road.

Over in the Korg suite, Marshall has a prototype of its High Dynamics bass amp, rated at 400 watts (but with 400C watts peak power). It's their attempt to revive a justly low low-end reputation. A limiter supposedly makes it impossible to blow out your speakers with all that power—it's there for greater punch and clarity—but the version we heard still had some bugs (i.e. static) to work out. Watch for the final version this fall.

Korg's Mitch Colby came up and handed us a guitar that weighs five pounds, then took it back and handed us one that weighs half that. The Parker guitar is 98 percent wood; the first production model is, at its thinnest, one-eighth of an inch. Stainless steel frets (read: indestructible) are stuck with a space-age glue right onto the fingerboard. A piezo element built into the bridge gives the guitar a clean, beautiful acoustic tone, which can be mixed with its specially designed DiMarzio humbuckers to produce a crunch that rivals most standard solidbodies. Also at Korg is the A4, a multieffects unit with lots of

goodies: a tuner, distortion, quiet response, seven overdrive modes and delay which feeds back subtly into the next program when a patch is switched. The simpler G3 looks like an old home video game console, but it's a promising pile of wires, with three modes (lead, crunch and clean), a three-color LED for bank ID and a real nice price. They've also got a *real* reissue of Vox's classic AC30 amp, with a 15-watt alnico speaker and accurate detailing based on the original schematics.

There's Gene Simmons at the GHS booth signing string packs. Does the infamous Bat Lizard of Kiss have any wisdom to share on the subject of strings?


"No matter what anybody says, just use your ears," he says, pausing between autographs for a surging crowd. "Forget all this crap about 'Here's why this movie is good.' Or 'Monsieur, here's why you should like thees deesh.' *Forget* that. You either like it or you don't."

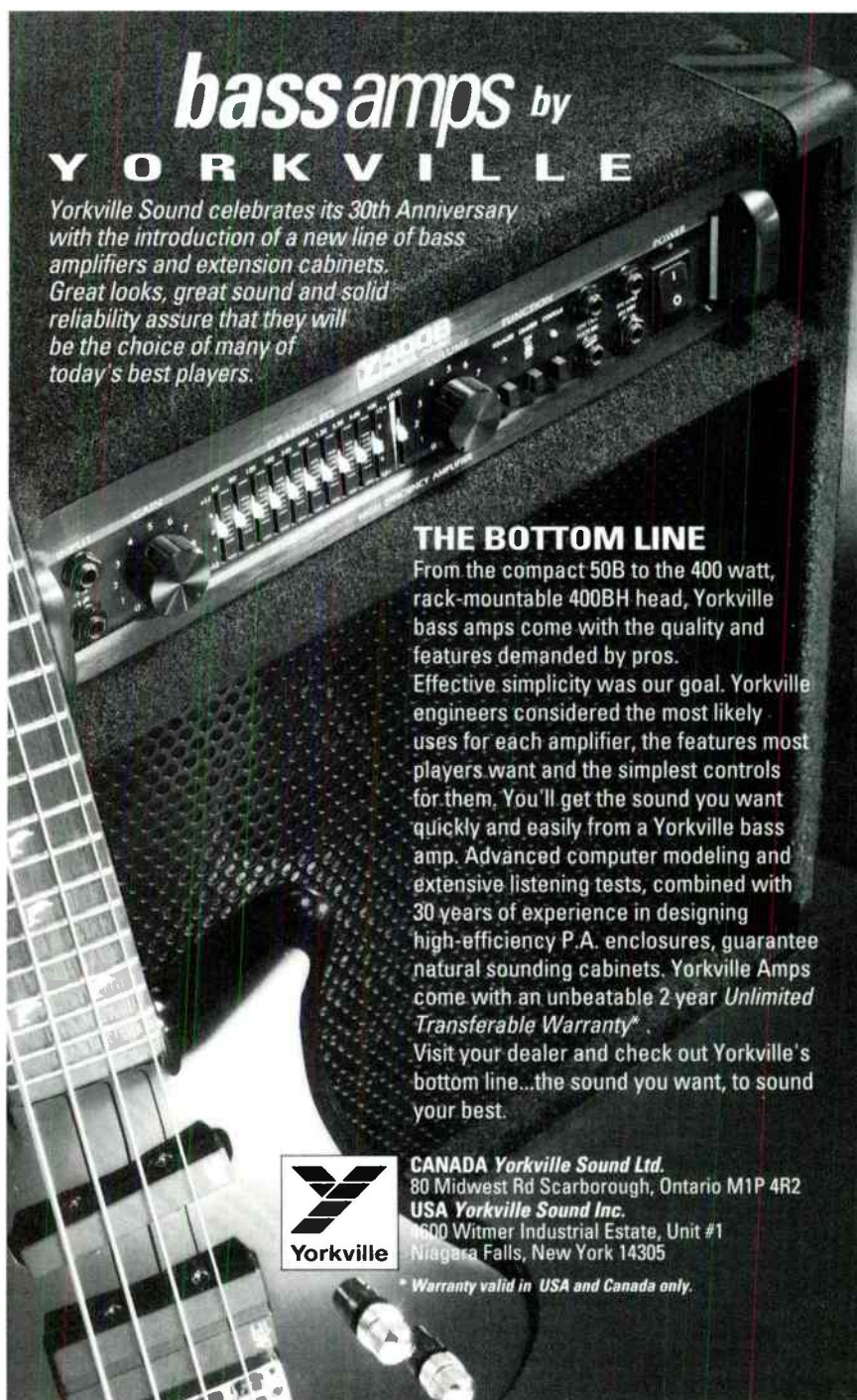
Musically speaking, there's plenty to like at this year's show. Reflecting the surge in acoustic sales, the pickers this year share equal space with the shredders at product demos. Country blues duo Cephas & Wiggins turned one end of the Hohner booth into their back porch and attracted heavy metal-sized crowds. Over at the Taylor booth, you could pick up any one of their entirely new line of acoustics and actually hear yourself play; their 612 cutaway and the ornate 900 series are especially nice pieces. Santa Cruz show their environmentally correct "Golden State" acoustic, which sounds real good without using any tropical rain forest woods. Charvel has a new Sadowsky-style acoustic-electric with a built-in, three-band EQ and Fishman transducer.

About a half a mile and a short escalator ride away, we find ourselves in Hall E, the outpost for some of NAMM's more far-flung entrepreneurial attractions. While the blips and beeps from Digidesign's demo mix with the National steel guitar licks of old-timey slide-whiz Bob Brozman and screams from the Bogner amp booth, we stop to talk to MIT graduates Omar Green and Mohamed Eissa. They founded the IXDT company to market their Janus Machine, a small black box that plays music backwards in real time. So if you want a backmasking effect, you can get it live instead of paying for a studio and going through all the rigmarole of reversing a reel-to-reel tape. Down the aisle sits Ken Purcell in a flannel shirt. With his full beard and jolly expression, he resem-

bles Santa Claus, and he is easily the most impressive visual in his display, which consists of a vase of flowers and a cardboard sign. From Lake Minchumina, Alaska, a trapping community of 30 inhabitants, Purcell got sick of breaking his nails while fingerpicking and invented a new design for fingerpicks that notch over your nail. Standard fingerpicks go up from under the tip of the finger, depriving guitarists of feel. Classical players and folkies who spend their lives worrying about breaking a nail now have a viable alternative (marketed as aLaska Pik) that feels like

your nail when you pluck. "I left my family behind a month ago," says Purcell. "We first got these things manufactured a week ago. I just rented this stall and here I am."


Finally, with feet aching, ears ringing and vision blurring, we manage to find an exit sign. After having our valises checked by the convention center's crack security force (none under age 70), we make our way back to the Marriott to rest up for the night's festivities. Our only regret is that we never got to see the woman with the goldfish swimming in her guitar. Oh well, there's always next year. 



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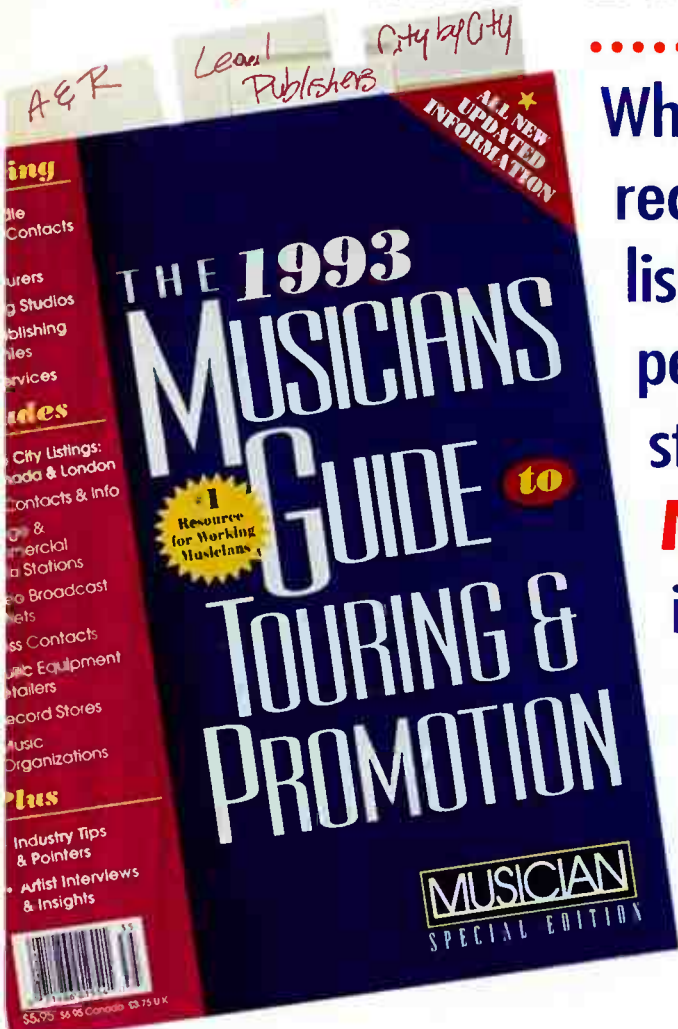
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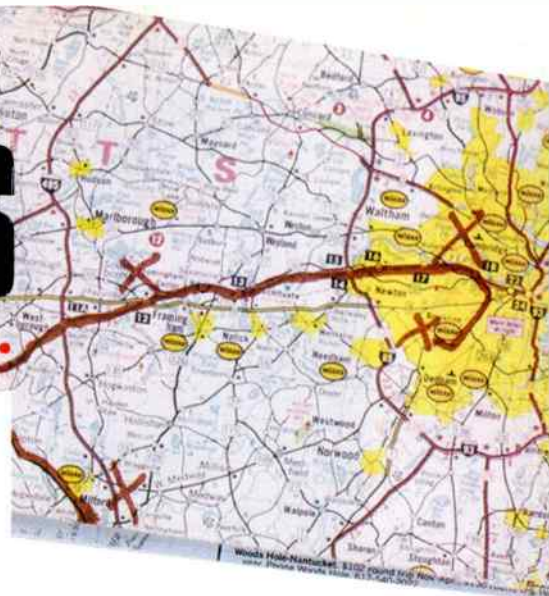
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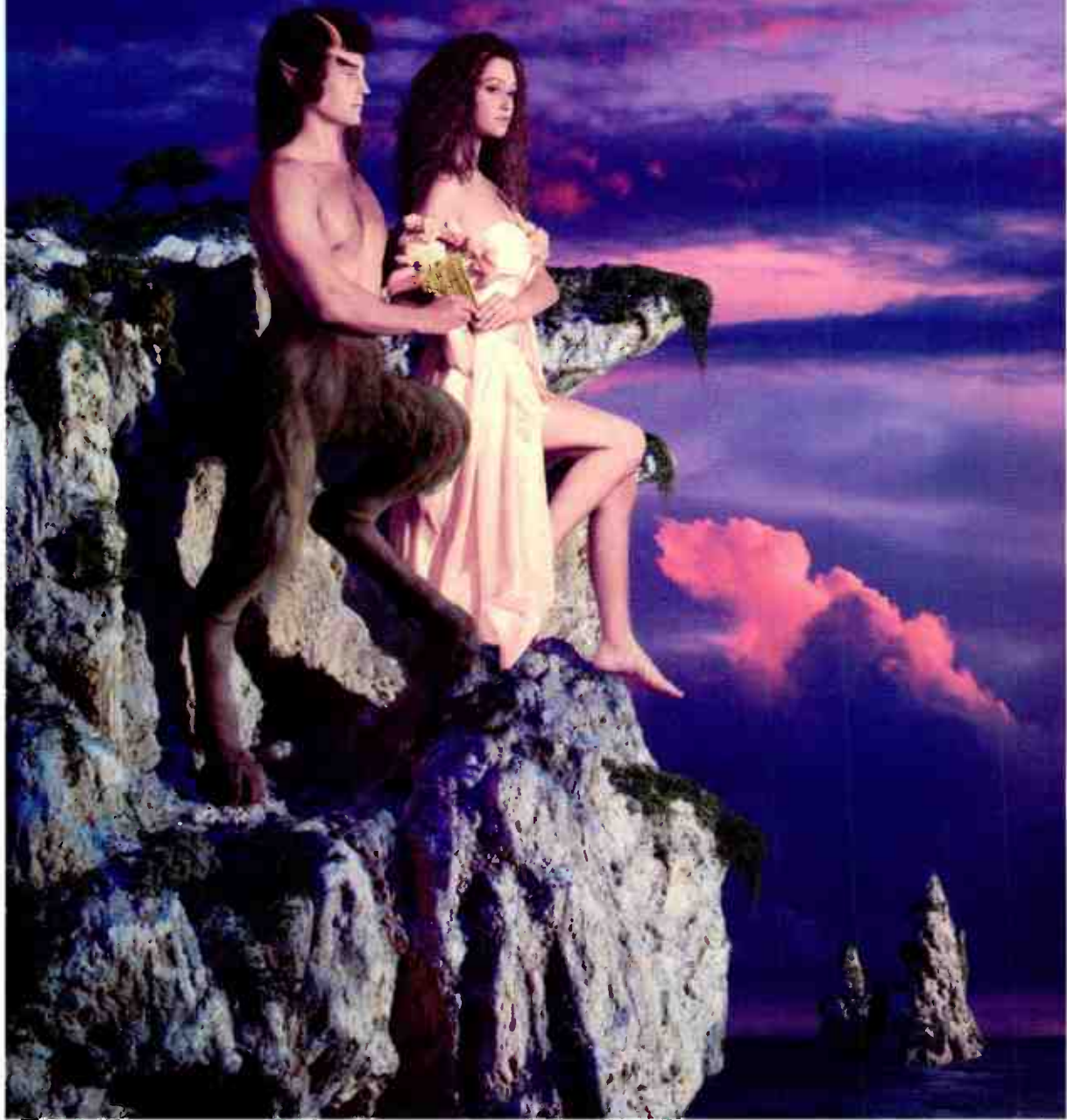
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Big Fat Bass

Notes

Willie Weeks
gets fat

by RICK MATTINGLY



Sometimes I listen to a song that someone else played bass on and I think, 'I'm glad he played it because it's perfect,' says Willie Weeks with typical self-effacement. "But when I listen to Wynonna's 'She Is His Only Need,' I'm glad I played on that because it needed no more and no less."

Sitting on a sofa in his suburban Nashville home, Weeks reaches for his five-string Ripley bass and plays the pattern from the aforementioned song. He mostly plays whole notes on the roots of the chords, letting each one ring out for its full value.

"I've always gone for a big sound," Weeks comments. "I used to imagine a big, soft, rubber ball bouncing slowly down the road. That's how I wanted my notes to be. Whenever I start playing, my right hand automatically finds that sweet spot where the note lives. Often, it's just above the pickup closest to the neck, but it can vary from instrument to instrument."

"With my left hand, I like to get a firm grip with my thumb pressed against the back of the neck and put some real solid pressure just behind the fret. I squeeze it until the note is finished doing what it wants to do. With my right hand, I play with the meat of my first and second fingers."

Weeks plays the part to "She Is His Only Need" again, and his right-hand fingers

glide over the strings in such a way that there is little sense of the notes being plucked. The notes emerge almost as if being bowed. Each one is so fat that a drummer could play behind, right on or ahead of the beat and still be locked in with Willie.

"If a drummer plays a little ahead," Weeks says, "I'll play back to balance it and make it fat. If he plays behind, I try to be on top. Eddie Bayers [drummer on the *Wynonna* album] plays in the center, and that's where I'm most comfortable."

Willie says that in country music, the bass and bass drum must function as though they are one instrument. "The bass drum provides the impact, and the bass makes the note long or short. That gives the music a really solid foundation."

When the music calls for more rhythmic activity from the bass, Weeks will switch to his right-hand thumb to give the note a bit more attack, and he uses a pick on occasion. "We were cutting Wynonna's new album last week," he says, "and on one song I used a pick to give the note a focus, but at the same time I smothered the string with the palm of my right hand." Weeks plays the pattern, and the combination of pick and muted string gives each note a pointed thud, not unlike a bass drum packed with a pillow.

"On 'No One Else on Earth' from Wynonna's first album, I played some of it like this," he says, flicking his wrist so that his right-hand thumb bounces off the string, slapping it against the neck. He alternates staccato notes with longer tones in a syncopated pattern, but his left hand isn't doing much more than it did on the slow song he played earlier—holding root notes for the length of a measure.

"When we first played the song," Weeks says, "I started out playing whole-note roots. I wanted to stay simple, so I put the action back here," he says, indicating his right hand, "and kept the left hand straight. I do that a lot. Sometimes I underplay, but I can't help it. That's just the way I feel music."

Drummer Andy Newmark, who played with Weeks on numerous albums during the '70s, echoes that sentiment. "Willie's simplicity is not an intellectual decision," Newmark says. "The notes go from his soul into his [cont'd on page 77]"

Finding New Life in Four-Track

Getting the most
out of your home studio
by SCOTT MARSHALL



MOST HOME RECORDISTS HAVE BARELY scratched the surface of what their old machines can do. Without enough help from the people who sold you the machine in the first place, it's easy to be dissatisfied with the quality of the first few recordings you make and then assume the format just can't cut it. This isn't necessarily so. With the exception of a few machines at the absolute bottom of the barrel, a cassette four-track in good working order can produce a demo of a song or band that is of sufficient sound quality to send confidently to any publisher or record company. A recording of this quality is not likely to be produced the first day—or month—you take the machine out of the box. The art of recording is every bit as difficult as writing, playing and singing, and requires nearly as much time and practice to master.

These are basic everyday tips people ignore all the time (I sold these machines for many years—and like Santa, I know when you've been bad or good), along with some quite sophisticated tricks I've learned from my customers and from my own studio career.

Keepin' It Clean The most common "consultation" about a cassette four-track goes like this:

CUSTOMER: Tracks three and four don't record right. When I record the meters go way up, but when I play back there's hardly anything on the tape.

REPAIR PERSON: Do you clean your heads?

CUSTOMER: Sure, once a year, whether they need it or not.

At our shop, we would take the customer to the bench and clean the machine right then, and almost always end up with a Q-tip covered with nasty brown oxide and the four-track right back to factory spec. Cassette tape sheds oxide just as easily as the large tape formats. Clean your heads every time you turn your machine on, and again every couple of hours that you use it. Use a solution from one of the major manufacturers, or pure solvent alcohol from the hardware store; rubbing alcohol contains oils good for your skin but bad for your tape. Swab with a Q-tip both the erase and the record/play head in the direction the tape travels. Dry up with the other end of the Q-tip and go back to work.

Every 10 hours or so, clean the capstan and pinch roller with a special solution that is kind to rubber (alcohol dries and cracks the pinch roller), and demagnetize the heads, capstan and tape guides with a good degausser—the all-time studio favorite is the Annis Han-D-Mag. A good demagnetizer will pick your keys right up off the table. The cheesy little cassette kind don't do squat that I can see.

Don't Be Tight If you spend half a grand on a home studio, does it make sense to try to save a buck on tape? All the major manufacturers recommend Maxell UD XLII. The difference between the tape at the supermarket checkout counter and UD XLII is about the same as the difference between the *Weekly World News* and the *New York Times*.

A Chain and Its Weakest Link Every home studio must have at least two recorders—the four-track and another machine to mix down to. The second machine's quality is as important as the first, especially if you will be making copies of your tape from that machine to a third. Mixing to a portable

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machine (which will almost certainly have automatic level control) is bad for your sound: No matter how carefully you recorded your multitrack, the automatic level control will turn itself all the way up before your song begins, giving you a few seconds of loud hiss followed by a loud first note and then a big drop in level as the ALC adjusts itself.

If you want to master to cassette, get a deck that has manual level controls and a large display to show your record levels as you mix. Each manufacturer makes a low-budget model in the \$100 price zone, and most are good enough to

make a clean, bright master that reflects how carefully you recorded in the first place.

I have been surprised to learn how many home recordists own Hi-Fi VCRs and don't realize what great mastering recorders they are. These machines have stereo inputs and outputs and, in audio record mode, have specs which rival the best digital recorders. Despite the slow rewind and fast forward, that makes it worth the effort.

The digital audio tape or DAT recorder is the absolute best format for mastering—perfect sound reproduction and convenience. And the music is in the digital format, which can be

more or less directly transferred to a CD.

Even those who can't afford a DAT can benefit from the technology, as the advent of the DAT recorder has brought down the price of used reel-to-reel two-tracks. Although these machines are large, and reel-to-reel is inconvenient, they sound great and last forever.

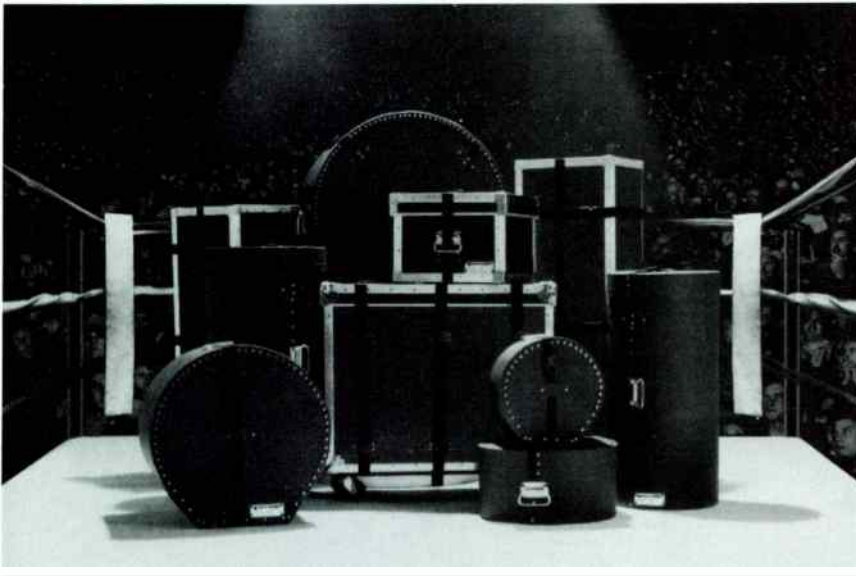
Fly, Don't Bounce Most four-trackers want to record more than four tracks, and quickly learn that it is easy on most recorders to consolidate material (i.e., drums, bass and piano) recorded on tracks one, two and three by recording them to track four. Then more instruments or vocals can be put on tracks one, two and three. This is called "bouncing," and works great. But:

If you have a good-quality second recorder, you can fly instead: Fill up all four tracks, then mix all four to the second machine on just one channel. Then fast-forward the multitrack machine to a blank section and transfer that mix to one track nice and hot and bright. The advantages: You get an extra track, and you don't have to erase your original basic. If you later decide you didn't put enough drums on the basic mix, you can go back to the second step instead of starting all over.

Better Bounces Through Science Most recorders allow you to bounce tracks internally, without external cables. But what if you did it the hard way on purpose, running a cable from the left output of the mixer section to the input of track four? Then you could put an equalizer or a reverb or a compressor or an exciter on your bounce and *improve* the sound as it bounces.

That Sync-ing Feeling The number-one-all-time improvement to a four-track setup is the addition of a sequencer and a multitrack synthesizer with a sync box. You give up track four as a recording track and use it to keep any number of keyboard sounds and drum machine patterns playing along with your tape in perfect sync. The advantages: Clearer sound on all drums and keyboards; you can change sounds right up to the last moment; you can fix performances after you play them.

Double Your Pleasure Let's say you have an acoustic guitar on track three and in the final mix you want that guitar sound to stand out. Take the direct out of track three and run it into a digital delay. On the back of the delay you'll find two outputs, one "dry" or "direct," the other "mixed" or "delay." Run the dry out to the input of channel three on the four-track. Now set the delay to do a very quick delay—around 60–80 milliseconds—and set the balance. Run the "mixed" output to either an extra channel (if your machine has more channels than tracks, like a Tascam Porta 2) or to your effect return. Pan channel three all the way to the left and the delay return all the way to



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the right, and set their levels equally. Wow—stereo acoustic guitar using up only one track. Also works on vocals (ask Robert Plant).

Finding the Time Setting delay time on a digital delay is often hit or miss when it doesn't have to be. Most delays now read out delay times in milliseconds (or thousandths of a second); all you need to do is set a stopwatch and click "start" and "stop" along with the music. For instance, at 120 beats per minute you'll find your stopwatch reading about 50 hundredths of a second. This means that to set your delay to do a quarter note, you set it to 500 milliseconds; for an eighth note, set the delay for 250 milliseconds. When you get the delay time right, the effect helps the groove.

Pre-Delay Your Reverb A nice trick from the big leagues is separating the reverb sound from its source with a delay. Many modern multi-effect units have this programmed in, but you can use older units. Here's how it used to be done.

Run your effect send to the input of a digital delay. Set the balance to all delay. Set the delay time to roughly an eighth note, with no regeneration. Run the delay output to the input of the reverb and return the reverb output to an effect return as you would using reverb alone. When you bring up the effect, the source track sounds clearer because the reverb doesn't start until after the source sound. This effect is used often on vocals, and with shorter pre-delays on drums.

Practice Pays Off Just as in playing, recording is improved by *doing*. Even if you don't have a new original song to record, don't let your equipment sit idle. Record a cover song, or even a piece of one, just to see how close you can get to the original. You'll often surprise yourself. Don't fall prey to "If only I had...", where you don't try to record anything while you wait for the next piece of wazoo gear. Dig in and do it! 

WEEKS

[cont'd from page 73] fingers, without going through the brain first, as opposed to neurotic white guys like me who analyze every note."

Weeks credits much of his style to the gospel music he heard growing up in North Carolina. "The first time I saw a gospel bass player, I wanted to be like that," he says. "And James Jamerson and Ray Brown both had a big effect on me. They both had a big sound."

Willie first gained notoriety with Donny Hathaway. A chance meeting with Newmark led to Weeks being hired to play on Ron Wood's *I've Got My Own Album to Do*, which featured Keith Richards, George Harrison and Rod Stewart. Harrison hired Weeks and Newmark for his *Dark Horse* album and tour. After moving to L.A. and doing session work for


three years, the Doobie Brothers called, and Weeks went with them until their breakup in '83. The following year he moved to Nashville.

"I listened to country stations to get the flow,"

WILLIE'S WORKS

Other than his Fender '62 reissue Jazz Bass, all of WILLIE WEEKS' basses are five-string models: a Ripley, a Yamaha TRB and a Tobias KB, which he favors for live work. His amplifier is an SWR.

Weeks says, "and it was just a matter of finding out where the pocket is and learning not to play the fifth of the I chord to lead into the IV. I started out with gospel and R&B, and all of a sudden here I am rocking with Keith Richards. I'd ask myself, 'Man, are you really a rocker?' Now, I sometimes question how genuine my country bass playing sounds, but I'll put something on that I played and think, 'That sounds good.'

"It's just a matter of throwing yourself into whatever you're doing and becoming that. There's nothing to it but doing it—getting in with the moment." 

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Flatpicking and Finger Pulling

Steve Ferguson
gets nasty

by RICK MATTINGLY



I have the right hand of a country guitar player and the left hand of a blues player," says former NRBQ guitarist Steve Ferguson, who has spent the past several years pursuing a solo career and contributing to pianist Johnnie Johnson's album. "The result is a rural style of rhythm & blues, and this is the lick that made me aware of that kind of playing."

Pulling his guitar from its case, Ferguson plays the one-bar break from the Joe Tex classic "Skinny Legs and All." It starts on a B, which Steve gets by pushing a third-string A up a whole step. As his right hand plays the syncopated rhythmic figure, his left hand lets the note drop back to an A.

"That had a major effect on my playing, because to do that lick right you have to use your [right hand] second finger to pop the string and then slap the pick against the same note. That gives the second note a stronger click. Then, with your left hand, gradually let the pressure off the string while you're doing it. The note drops as smooth as if you used a pedal.

"And the end result is 'Filthy McNasty,'" laughs Ferguson as he plays the lick again. "I wish I knew who the guitar player was on that record. He had obviously been listening to Nashville guitar players. In the early '60s, Lloyd Green and those Nashville pedal-steel players used that very lick in some of the early Buck Owens and George Jones things. He's obviously got his chops together, because it takes a little bit of coordination to pull off the lick. But the combination of that technique and the dirty tone brings out this *rural* kind of rhythm & blues.

"I prefer the term 'rural' to 'country,'" Ferguson explains. "Country is a predominantly white culture. You can be rural and live in a cabin and eat possum, but not necessarily be country."

Not that Ferguson's from the woods. He was born in an inner-city housing project in Louisville, Kentucky ("In the project," Ferguson stresses, "not in a hospital") and grew up in the city's predominantly black West End. "When I started wanting to play at about 12 years old," he recalls, "some black guys up the street were always

playing me stuff by James Moody, Charlie Parker and Miles Davis. So I listened to horn players before I ever listened to guitar players. And for the first couple of years, I didn't know any chords. I just learned scales that I could improvise with.

"If you think about it, I sound like a horn player on a lot of things. It's almost like blowing sax, but you have to have the finger and flatpicking action like in the 'Skinny Legs and All' lick to be able to do that. It's like the quick staccato of a horn player's tongue.

"I often use a combination of flatpicking and finger pulls on slow blues," Ferguson says, improvising a solo not unlike the one he plays on "Blues #572" on Johnson's *Johnnie B. Bad*. He doesn't always alternate the finger and pick action, however. Often he entirely flatpicks quick runs and uses finger pulls for notes that he's bending with his left hand. The right-hand finger pops make many of the notes sound as if they are being spit out of the guitar.

"To develop the flatpicking part," Ferguson suggests, "it's best to play in an open key such as E. To begin, double-stroke 16th-notes on a single string for as long as you can stand it to get your right hand loosened up. Then, start fretting different notes with your left hand."

Ferguson plays rolling 16ths on the high E, randomly fretting Gs and As, usually letting the open E ring between each one. "Once you can do that, the next step is to be able to switch strings without breaking the flow. You can also stop the pick now and then to start developing phrases."

This time, Ferguson plays random Gs, As and open Es as before for the first three beats of a bar, sliding his left hand up to a B on beat four. For the next bar he again plays Gs, As and Es for 12 16ths, but this time drops to a second-string D for the fourth beat. He repeats that two-bar phrase a couple of times, and then gradually starts incorporating more notes and strings. His right hand keeps a continuous flow, comparable to a bluegrass banjo player's finger roll, but the 7ths and bent notes give it a bluesier sound.

"I did some of that on 'Flat Foot Flewzy,'" Ferguson says,



PETER'S PAGE

By Peter C. Knickles, Seminar Instructor - Doing Music & Nothing Else

Dear Peter,

I have been thinking of releasing my own recording to sell at my gigs. Any hints to make the release really successful?

Mr. Red, Portland, OR

Good question. There are a lot of things you can do to make sure your release doesn't stiff. Let's take a look at a few.

It all begins with the songs. Pick the best you have. Don't record a full album's worth of material if all you have is 4 really great songs and dozens of tunes that need work. Remember, a career consists of many releases. There is nothing wrong with doing a 4-cut release for your first product.

Next, I would make absolutely sure you use a producer - not an engineer who doubles as a producer AND DEFINITELY DO NOT TRY TO PRODUCE IT YOURSELF! You need the best recording you can get. You need someone to guide you through the process of creating that recording.

Let me tell you, as the Publisher of The A&R Tip Sheet and as the DOING MUSIC & NOTHING ELSE Instructor, I get thousands of tapes and CDs every year. The biggest problem with most of them? Almost every single act that didn't use a producer turned in a recording of little more than an amateur effort. It didn't sound like a professional "release". It had no style - no unique sound, raw or polished. It was just short of a mirror of a live performance.

A good producer gets to know you...spends some time with you at rehearsals and gigs. Talks to you about what it is you are trying to get across musically and otherwise. Then uses his (or her) skills to capture that song on tape. You owe it to yourself to use a producer! Don't let your ego ruin it.

* TIP OF THE MONTH *

Releasing your own music is an important step in your career. And to do it right is to master dozens of details. If you've never done it before **you are going to need some help!** I suggest you check out the new book **How To Make & Sell Your Own Recording** by Diane Sward Rapaport. This is actually the 4th edition of what has become known as the "Bible" of this subject. It's published by Prentice Hall and is available at most bookstores. If you have trouble finding it call my office.

Where to find a producer? Network with the acts and studios in your area. Check out **Mix Magazine's Annual Master Directory (800) 233-9604**. It lists many producers broken down by locations. Listen to at least 3 producers' portfolios. Look for someone who can add knowledge and skills beyond your abilities.

Next concern in releasing the product would be promotion. We don't want you to have the "Millionseller" that thousands of people have every year. What is a "Millionseller"? It's when you have enough money to record and press but no money to promote the release...Thus you have a "million-" copies sitting in your "-cellar" and no one knows about it. The facts are that **you need at least \$3 for promotion to match every \$1 in production for a successful project!** And of course you need a powerful marketing plan! Consider attending my seminar to learn which marketing tactics work and which are a waste.

Now, for the packaging. Make absolutely sure that you wrap that sucker in the most eye-catching, professional looking package possible. Reject any ideas of saving bucks here! You need a professional graphic artist to do it right! Believe me when I say you are looking at mainly impulse sales when placing your product in the marketplace. If it doesn't visually stand up to the competition it is very easy for someone to make the judgement that what's inside won't either.

Consider releasing your product in both CD and Cassette formats. Vinyl is just a gimmick at this point. DAT, MD, and DCC are not acceptable. I would suggest a good first run would be 500 CDs and 500 Cassettes for sales and 100 of both formats for promotion.

Remember to put a catalog number on your package for inventory control. It's not so much for you but any stores or distributors that might pick it up. You will also need a UPC number. **LISTEN UP!** If you neglect to put these two things on your release, you have pretty much wiped out your chances of moving a significant amount of stock through retail! Base your catalog number on the 6-8 digits; the first 3-4 an abbreviation of your label's name and the last 3-4 the release number. For a UPC number contact **The Uniform Code Council, INC.** at (513) 435-3870. The registration & UPC number will run you about \$300.

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referring to a track from the *Carl Perkins and NRBQ* album, on which you can also hear Fergie quote the "Skinny Legs" lick. "But playing that way all the time would get monotonous, so I only use it for short runs and phrases.

"There's also a thing James Burton did on a Ricky Nelson record called 'Milk Cow Blues' that combines picking and finger pulling. Play a

rolling 7th chord where you pick the lower two notes and pull one of the upper notes with your third finger." Ferguson holds a G7 at the 8th fret—voiced G, B, F, G—picking the low G and B and pulling the F, then picking the low G and B again and pulling the high G. He keeps the pattern going over 15 16th-notes of a measure, then starts over on the next downbeat. While he's doing that, his left hand is shaking the strings vigorously, giving a tremolo effect.

"Terry Adams said that reminded him of a blues lap-slide player named Freddie Roulette who did some records with Big Moose Walker years ago." Ferguson used the lick on "Baby What's Wrong" on the Johnnie Johnson album, and on his own recent *Jack Salmon & Derby Sauce*, on "Hot Walker Blues." In both cases, the finger-pulled notes dominate, with the picked notes almost inaudible.

Combining techniques from different genres has taken some planning. "I try to think with feeling and feel with thought," Ferguson agrees. "If you're just doing one or the other, you're not making full use of your person. I'm happiest with my playing when I'm thinking and feeling at the same time."

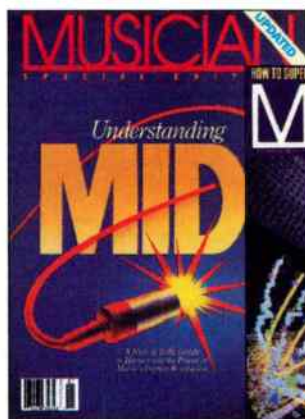
FERGIE'S FURNISHINGS

STEVE FERGUSON plays a red Fender 1962 reissue Custom Telecaster with white binding. "It's not quite as solidbody-sounding as Teles I've used before," he says. "The tone has a little more roundness." He uses GHS strings, .010, .013, .017, .026, .036 and .046, and a Fender extra-heavy pick, which he plays on the side, not on the point. His amp is a Fender Power Chorus. He uses no pedals. "Just vibrato on a couple of tunes and a lot of reverb," he says. "In the studio, engineers try to get me to turn the reverb down, but I whine and moan until they let me keep it up."

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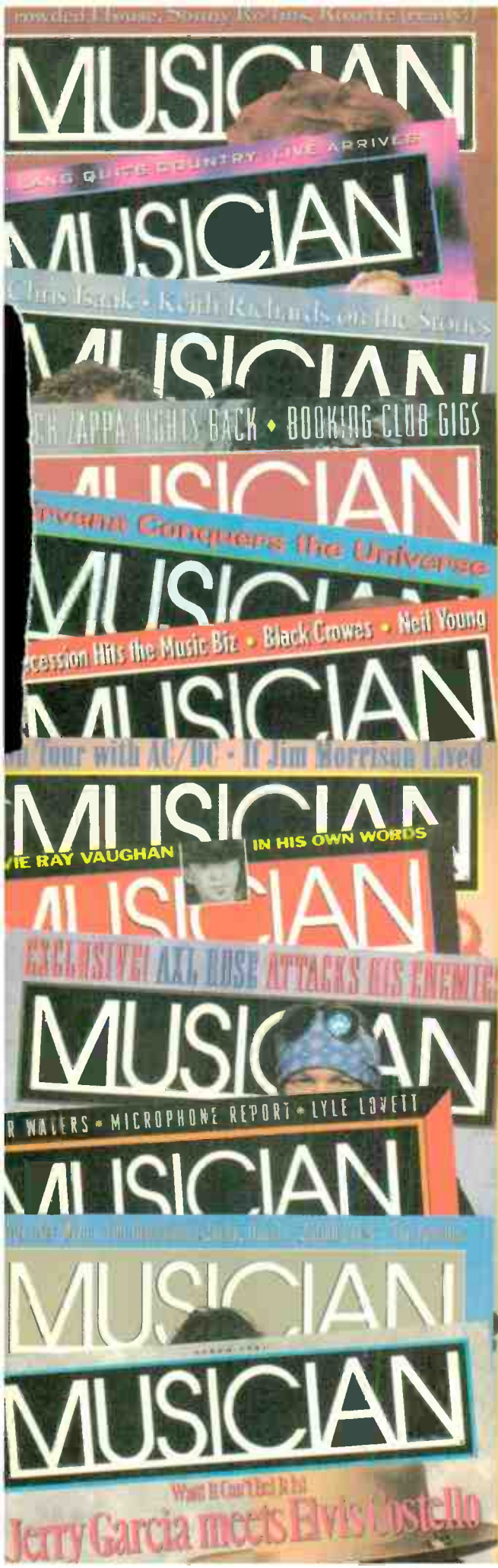
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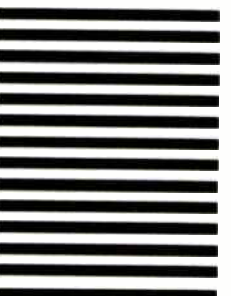
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LENNY KRAVITZ
ARE YOU GONNA GO
MY WAY
(VIRGIN)

LET GROOVES RULE

In the middle of Lenny Kravitz's third album, there's a ricochet of cold, rhythmic guitars and warm, phasey vocal harmonies that wonder, "Is There Any Love in Your Heart." This is an accusatory love tune, and Kravitz plays his '90s version of a '60s/'70s rock-soul dude to the hilt: She's blowing "all my bread" while "fucking all my friends." He

makes some other charges, too, then finally spews out his crowning complaint: "You're just the kind that's up on all the latest trends." Now *there's* the ultimate Lenny Kravitz kiss-off.

Are You Gonna Go My Way is the strongest statement yet of Kravitz's style and sensibility, an encapsulation of a '90s view of the rock-soul past bounded by neither

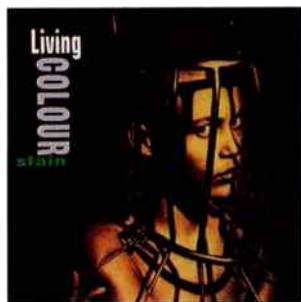
the assumptions of Elvis or Dylan, on the one hand, nor punk on the other. It's consciously deaf to the latest trends yet, as a trend itself, isn't textbook retro. Beginning the album with his Hendrix title rocker, Kravitz identifies himself as the messianic MVP of "a game"; a kind of neo-hippie classicist, his credo stems from his own convictions about love, transcendence, beauty—

and recording consoles. What's most impressive about this album is how much he makes of them.

A fantastically alive work of High Analog, *Are You Gonna Go My Way* isn't content with the perfect floral blazers that Kravitz recently designed for Vanessa Paradis and, in the past, for himself. Instead, he orchestrates moods with a freer yet concise hand. "Come On and Love Me" is sexual eagerness '90s-style, communicated with the guitars and percussive rhythms of funk. On climactic pieces like "Sister" and "Eleutheria" his soundscapes are woven out of compassion and religious hope. His orchestral values are such that he might choose a particularly resonant bit of tape noise over a viola, while distortion—the kind of thing that panics pre-Sonic Youth producers—is confidently treated by Kravitz as though it were a mainstream convention. His point of view suggests a contemplative, romantic alternative to the theoretical hip-hoppers and slack-happy Nirvanaites who comprise the rest of the twentysomething nation.

Kravitz doesn't shy from balladry either; songs such as "Just Be a Woman" and "Black Girl" make positive use of his sensitivity and ears, and with the amazing "Sugar" he rolls out a pop-soul stunner that should form part of the soundtrack of the upcoming summer. On "Believe," a mid-tempo song about faith, Kravitz alternates hugely dramatic verses with choruses made out of Beatles-brand ice-cream minus that Beatlehead after-taste. The song ends with cathedral-worthy guitar passages that are as good as the finest of Boston (the group). You could dismiss such pop as all calculation and borrowings. Or you could praise it as a brilliant balance of selection, re-writing, execution, feeling and recording consoles. I think it's that.

—James Hunter



LIVING COLOUR

Stain
(EPIC)

BASS LOVERS OF THE WORLD, THIS one's for you. Every track on *Stain*, Living Colour's third record, is a journey to the deepest ends of the groove. New partner Doug

Wimbish's performance marks his graduation from session vet to superstar; the sheer size and elasticity of his sound frees Vernon Reid—that rare heavy rocker who can think and play at the same time—and Will Calhoun (ditto) to defy the traditional frustrations of progressive power trios from Cream to Rush.

As Wimbish rumbles and jiffy pops as if all gods of thunder should just blow away, Living Colour's songs revel in their disparate feels, including rechromed Metallica ("Go Away"), reinflated Zeppelin ("Never Satisfied"), hyped hip-hop ("WTF") and alternative void ("Nothingness"). Given the Prince-ly "Bi"'s come-on, you might think the cult-of-personality creators are now coming out for gay as well as black power, but the lyric "everybody loves you when you're bi" refers to a woman who's two-timing her man with the girl *he's* "been seeing on the side." This tongue-in-cheek take on modern sexual politics slyly continues the attack on social and industry conventions Living Colour launched with their revolutionary platinum debut, a commercial feat neither they nor any other black rock band have yet been able to replicate.

Pumped by Wimbish, Reid gets wilder, Calhoun gets rock steadier and vocalist Corey Glover gets a little lost. Perhaps in attempting to celebrate rather than intellectualize the music, leader Reid didn't realize that the melodies and vocal arrangements (never mind the lyrics) got shorter stick than the riffs, for there are times when Glover becomes the odd man out while the virtuosos wail. That caveat aside, which, given most of the major obstacles this band has been forced to confront, must be considered small, *Stain* continues to uphold Living Colour's status as musical visionaries. May success follow.

—Deborah Frost



SUN RA

Visits Planet Earth/Interstellar Low Ways
We Travel the Space Ways/
Bad and Beautiful
Other Planes of There
Cosmic Tones for Mental Therapy/

Art Forms of Dimensions Tomorrow
My Brother the Wind Volume II
(EVIDENCE)

JAZZ AVANT-GARDIST SUN RA HAS recorded so prodigiously and idiosyncratically during the past 40 years of his career as a keyboardist/composer/band leader that neophytes often can't know quite what they're buying. Those in search of something wonderfully weird might find that they've purchased a muddily recorded swing/bop set with a few admittedly odd percussion touches and eccentric chord changes (so what's the big fuss?). Knowing the recording dates doesn't necessarily help, either—a relatively earthbound set might occur on the Sun Ra timeline *after* one of soaring experimentation.

This latest clump of reissues on Evidence, two albums per CD, again runs the gamut, though this batch tilts toward the more outré and timeless Ra. For example, *Cosmic Tones/Art Forms*, recorded '61-'63: Note the poly-rhythmic ruminations foreshadowing the Art Ensemble of Chicago. Marvel at the spacey electric textures and far-out echo effects anticipating Pink Floyd at their druggiest. Savor the more subtle progressive pleasures of John Gilmore's fearlessly free tenor solo on "The Other Heaven," with its ghostly premonition of vintage Wayne Shorter.

Other Planes of There ('64) is also on the outside tip, especially during the long title cut. Ra eschews full orchestration for a series of chamberish encounters between the players; each outburst is an earned respite from the introspective intentions of the overall piece. The second half of *My Brother* is even more dauntingly unanchored—a collection of solo synth sketches, each prodding a specific idea or modulation before returning to silence. Cryptic and bleak, Ra the prophet and intrepid explorer makes music of essential seriousness, angst-tones that hang in the unmerciful void. His work is as much a modernist milestone as Schoenberg, Beckett or Pollock.

Meanwhile, there's the somewhat more conventional, though always pleasingly eccentric Ra. On *Brother's* first half he plays coolly funky if slightly depressed organ; *Visits/Interstellar* ('56-'60) is typical Ra big-band stuff of that time, occasionally wacky ("Interplanetary Music"), more often nodding toward the tradition while making some surprising formalist adjustments; while *We Travel/Bad* ('56-'60) may have one too many near-stock arrangements, though the full-blown colors he gets from a mere sextet remain impressive. But all this is caviar for devotees. Newcomers are directed to *Cosmic*

Tones; after 30 years it still sounds like an intriguing tomorrow. —Richard C. Walls



GARY THOMAS

Till We Have Faces
(JMT)

FOR THIS UNEXPECTED AND EAR-SEIZING session, saxophonist Gary Thomas and guitarist Pat Metheny veered off of their regular, respective courses and met halfway. And it's an inspired meeting of remarkable musicians.

Thomas has been busy producing some of the more meaningful funk-driven M-BASE material around. Metheny has been tilling his trademark lyricism (verging on soupiness on last year's *Secret Story*). Together—at last?—the beast and the beauty find a loose, collective groove which is simultaneously ferocious and flexible. More than a casual date, this album bristles with the kind of energy born of a common purpose and forceful personalities.

The subject is standards, but the treatment thereof is anything but straight. Thomas unleashes an edgy Sonny Rollins-like lava flow of modal improvisation on the extended intros to "Angel Eyes" and "It's You or No One." "Lush Life" is musky and spare, with Thomas' tenor slithering atop Metheny's rumbly low-end acoustic guitar chordal bed. "Lament" is reborn as a fiery swing thing, with Thomas' elliptical, Shorter-esque soprano punctuated by some nervous, dissonant urgings from Metheny. Along the way, the rhythm section is more than game. Bassist Anthony Cox locks in and checks out at regular intervals. Most impressively, Terri Lyne Carrington keeps her drums in perpetual, interactive motion, propelling the machine and constantly peppering the dialogue.

There is ample evidence of why Thomas is among the most compelling saxists now out there and doing it, but a greater revelation on this album is Metheny's handiwork. Still one of the most masterful players around, Metheny refuses to be typecast by his "hits," and is a man unleashed here, with a grittier tone and a more volatile sense of phrasing than he usually com-

mits to tape. Raw is the word. Metheny blows his brains out in a most wonderful and cathartic way over a 7/4, quasi-samba version of "You Don't Know What Love Is." Control and abandon seem to be wrestling for the spotlight, as Metheny scampers from polite adherence to the chord changes to flinging himself into wild atonal fits. This is a man with some angst to vent and a rife vehicle in which to do it.

Jazz albums of this magnitude aren't grown on trees or in corporate boardrooms. This one gets under your skin in the most delightful way.

—Josef Woodard



GOO GOO DOLLS

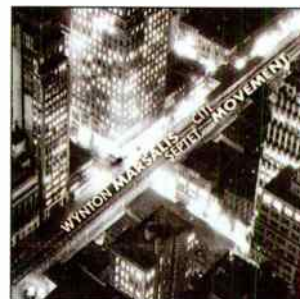
Superstar Carwash
(METAL BLADE/WARNER BROS.)

THE GOO GOO DOLLS ARE THE BEST thing to happen to pop culture from Buffalo since Cookie Gilchrist. Blue-collar down to their Polish surnames and old-fashioned working-class ethic, bassist/vocalist Robby Takac, guitarist/vocalist Johnny Rzenzik and drummer George Tutuska owe their sound in equal parts to the Buzzcocks' succinct powerpop feedback, Hüsker Dü's buzzsaw wall-of-noise and the dreamy adolescent angst of the group they're most often compared to, the Replacements. But like all great pop, the Goo Goos stand clichés on their head, while the magnetic hooks suck you in and make it all sound new again—teenage existential angst with a wink and a shrug. As they sing in the album's centerpiece, "We Are the Normal" (whose lyrics were penned by pal Paul Westerberg), "You say that it's all been said before/Now I found that there's something I don't know."

Superstar Carwash sums up the group's sky-above-mud-below ethic...the lads have stars in their eyes, suds in their duds and dirt underneath their fingernails. This is the band's fourth album and marks a quantum leap over their thrash beginnings, a move akin to the 'Mats' breakthrough record *Let It Be*. What gives the Goos an edge over the neo-power pop pack are guitar-slinger Rzenzik's skittery metallic leads, which are never just flash for flash's sake, but extend the melodies with

emotional wallop, from the Dolls-by-way-of-Chuck Berry churn of "Fallin' Down" to the wah-wah crunch of "String of Lies" and the Fogerty/Robertson precision of "Already There," which nails the loss of innocence by punctuating the line "My friends are growing old before my eyes."

For a band with impeccable post-modern credentials, the Goos pay heed to their forebears; on previous records, they've covered such chestnuts as Prince's "Never Take the Place of Your Man," the Plimsouls' "Million Miles Away" and Creedence's "Down on the Corner." It's just that pop-ulum which could well have classic-rock prog muso geeks joining the heavy metal and post-grunge Generation X crowd in sending the Goo Goo Dolls into sales Nirvana. A long shot, maybe, but no less than the idea of Bill Clinton being elected President was eight months ago. With any luck, we'll hear the Goos at the *next* inauguration. —Roy Trakin



WYNTON MARSALIS

Citi Movement
(COLUMBIA)

DURING THE MAKING OF *THE DEAD*, John Huston commented that he was investigating a different kind of action film, one that was a bit old-fashioned; all the commotion and thrills were to be found in the cascading flow of provocative dialogue. On the astounding *Citi Movement*, Wynton Marsalis offers us the most adventurously intricate ensemble writing of his career, music that parallels Huston's notion of consequential discourse. With a wide perspective fueled by a personalized sense of inclusion, is it any wonder that the result is cinematic?

The trumpeter's jazz, which has gained enormous compositional ground since he boosted his ensemble to a septet back in '89, reached a high-water mark with '91's eloquent *Soul Gestures* trilogy. Last year's *Blue Interlude* ambitiously addressed extended composition, but faltered in the segues; its nods to specific jazz epochs were heard more as allusions. Therein lies *Citi Movement's* achievement. Enormous—over 120 minutes on two discs—its true breakthrough is the

focus that the leader applies to his themes. Marsalis is nothing if not discerning, and in his hands scrutiny is an agent of fortification. The record continuously heralds jazz's pluralism, which optimists might perceive as a promising creative symbol for America's multi-culti friction.

Composed for Garth Fagan's dance troupe, *Citi Movement* concentrates on flow; the action is juiced by the hectic character of urban living. Though swing's inherent poise is never neglected, a more kinetic feel dominates, allowing each terse solo to take on dazzling proportions. The leader's horn is especially lyrical. Whether he's toasting

Buddy Bolden with blues pronouncements or beating Lester Bowie at the old peck 'n' smear game, Marsalis is teeming with sumptuous ideas.

Fueled by the rousing conflict of polyphony, the bittersweet intimacy of the blues, reassuring humor (yup, Wynton's learned how to laugh) and in whomping amounts the brash dignity of certitude, this is music impossible to dislike, largely because its sophistication never winds up sparring with its gregariousness. Marsalis—hands-down the man to beat in jazz these days—has come up with a masterwork whose details only contribute to its sense of panorama. —Jim Macnie

ROBYN HITCHCOCK & THE EGYPTIANS

Respect
(A & M)

IT'S DIFFICULT TO THINK OF ROBYN Hitchcock as anything other than the ginchiest, what with his near-sainthood decreed by college-radio types, his ultraswift Soft Boys catalog reissued by a loving Rykodisc, his impeccable taste in perfectly chosen cover versions (not one but *two* songs from Van Morrison's *Veedon Fleece*), his buddy-buddyness with alterno-popes R.E.M., and, what the heck, his actual music. That, however, has been in decline since 1986's near-peak *Element of Light*—or more specifically ever since Hitchcock's lyrics began taking a back seat to his forced persona of *weirdness*, a blind alley you'd think someone so smart would avoid. Peak bad time for me came when I saw him solo, hoped for an acoustic version of his near-ultimate "Fifty Two Stations" and watched him devote most of the night to surrealistic monologues about insects, sex, death and balloon men, as the audience whooped in encouragement. Occasionally, he sang. From that point on—at least to me—what once seemed artful and interestingly skewed felt gimmicky, workmanlike and fake.

But Hitchcock's no dummy—and he knew it was a trap. "I'm not trying to produce anything that makes people go, 'Oh wow, that was clever,'" he says, revealingly, in the bio of the new, appropriately named *Respect*. "A lot of the old songs have words as foliage, verbiage, a screen of words. There was a big gap between expression and communication. But I've got more confidence in my songs now."

Sounds like it. *Respect* is the best album Hitchcock's made since signing with A&M in '88. In practice, his new, no-bullshit resolve means fewer (but more meaningful) words, reduced science-fiction imagery—or whatever you call songs about tropical flesh mandalas, globes of frogs and madonnas of the wasps—and, not to forget, catchier tunes. *Respect's* opener "The Yip Song" sounds more like the Soft Boys than anything he's done in years. Throw in tracks like "The Wreck of the Arthur Lee"—with its *Forever Changes*/Herb Alpertesque trumpet blares impeccably placed—and it's scary, but obvious: Hitchcock—who digs Love, who's covered Morrison, Barrett and the Byrds—would've ended up a rock critic, if he weren't a skilled musician. He—and we—can be grateful for such favors.

—Dave DiMartino

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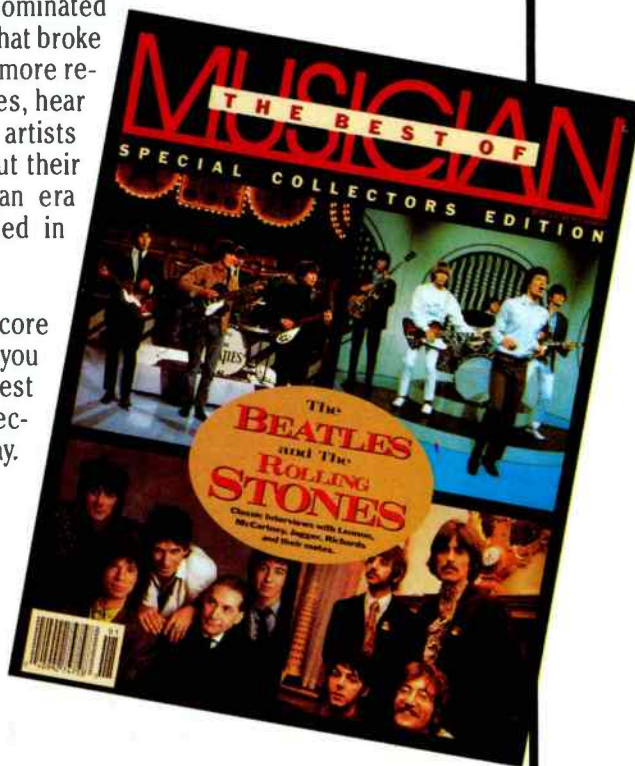
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World Radio History

JAZZ

BY CHIP STERN

JULIUS HEMPHILL TRIO
Julius Hemphill Trio
 (MUSIC & ARTS)

JULIUS HEMPHILL TRIO is vigorous avant-garde blues music with the kind of dangerous give and take too often lacking in today's lockstep ensembles. Everyone knows what a great composer he is, but this is a rare snapshot of Hemphill in a rhythm format, and his gritty tone, fervent backpedaling melodies and rhythmic audacity mark him as a singular jazz improviser. Cellist Abdul Wadud's quirky harmonic variations and quicksilver approach to time give this ensemble an airborne, elliptical contour, and where his unfettered interplay with Hemphill would send most drummers howling to intensive care, Joe Bonadio accepts Wadud and Hemphill's duality as an existential challenge: to engage, propel, assert, yet stay the hell out of the way. No drummer has ever made "Dogon A.D." swing like this, and precious few could complement their elegiac chamber nuances on "Testament #5" with such subtle dynamics. A formidable band in the making. (Box 771, Berkeley, CA 94701, 510-525-4583)

**CINDY BLACKMAN/
 SANTI DEBRIANO/
 DAVE FIUCZYNSKI**

Trio + Two

(FREE LANCE/QUALITON IMPORTS)

THIS IS DEBRIANO'S date, and his lithe, richly colored basslines move translucently between springy swing and freely inflected vamps. He has a nice ear for melody and the timely dissonance, and the way he hooks up with powerhouse drummer Cindy Blackman suggests something of the Tony Williams Lifetime. Greg Osby and Jerry Gonzalez make strong cameos, but the real star of *Trio + Two* is Dave Fiuczynski, a rising star in a galaxy overrun by technosnore guitarists. Combining the lookma-all-hands abandon of Allan Holdsworth with the elliptical quirkiness of Wild Bill Frisell, Fiuczynski's feel for lines, chords and the whang bar is full of surprises. Watch out.

BUELL NEIDLINGER QUARTET
Big Drum

(K282 RECORDS)

BASSIST BUELL NEIDLINGER has the kind of woody, low-end sensibility that made Wilbur Ware and Oscar Pettiford so satisfying. This latest offering is dedicated to piano innovator Herbie Nichols—though there isn't one Nichols tune here. Instead

drummer Vinnie Colaiuta brings a nervous, hyperkinetic energy to unfamiliar swing terrain with some of his loosest free associations since he was blowing "Canarsie" back with Frank Zappa. Neidlinger gives him a steady anchor, while tenor virtuoso Marty Krystall and trumpeter Hugh Schick feed off of his animated parries and thrusts. (1748 Roosevelt Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90006-5219)

LOUIS ARMSTRONG/KING OLIVER
Louis Armstrong/King Oliver
 (MILESTONE)

JELLY ROLL MORTON
Jelly Roll Morton
 (MILESTONE)

FOR THOSE TOUCHED by Wynton Marsalis' exemplary evocations of the New Orleans tradition, these early-'20s masterpieces aren't optional purchases. Armstrong seems about ready to bust out, suspended between the polyphonic interplay of the New Orleans ensemble and his love for role model Joe Oliver (it's often challenging to tell who's who), with teasing intimations of the solo breakthroughs to come. In Morton's solo piano and his extraordinary duets with Oliver, with their rumbling, rolling rhythms, cunning breaks and sophisticated harmonies, you can hear the roots of his own ensemble breakthroughs, and of big band swing to come. Joyous.

JOE HENDERSON
So Near, So Far (Musings for Miles)
 (VERVE)

JOHNNY GRIFFIN
Dance of Passion
 (ANTILLES)

ALRIGHT, THE NEW President is a tenor player, but who is the new President of the tenor? Here are a couple of leading candidates, with two of the most fervent tenor dates in recent memory, deeply felt and beautifully orchestrated, with a soft furry burnish that invites repeated listenings. *So Near, So Far*, Joe Henderson's tribute to Miles, employs late electric Miles sidemen (Dave Holland, Al Foster, John Scofield) to explore pre-*Bitches Brew* chestnuts, with one funky ("Side Car") dance for good measure. The result is every inch as potent as his heralded tribute to Billy Strayhorn. Henderson is so cool and painterly and heroically laid-back you're like to burst, while Al Foster's crystalline Paiste colors and pianistic snare-tom-bass counterpoint suggest a Bill Evans-Thelonious Monk level of involvement. Johnny Griffin's use of a tuba-trombone-French horn front line echoes *The Birth of the Cool*, but it's Monk's friendly shadow which hovers on the periphery of *Dance of Passion* (particularly on the bluesy "You've Never Been There"). The record

highlights Griffin's superb writing, and pianist Michael Weiss shares arranging chores, lending a rich Mid-Eastern cushion to the title tune, while the touching "Make Up Your Mind" comes off like Ben Webster meets Monk. The rich brass colors enliven the Little Giant's voluminous harmonic flights, and Steve Turre's growling, playful trombone is the perfect melodic foil.

INDIES

ABANA BA NASERY
Nursery Boys Go Ahead
 (GREEN LINNET)

IT MAKES PERFECT sense that one of the first releases from Green Linnet's new Xenophile world-music imprint would contain tunes that can best be described as "Afro-Celtic." Abana Ba Nasery, or the Nursery Boys, are a West Kenyan trio many decades out of the playpen whose twin single-note acoustic guitars, scraped *guiro*-like Fanta bottle, church-inspired harmonies and reality-based lyrics have captivated audiences in their homeland for some 25 years. They're joined by members of the Oyster Band and 3 Mustaphas 3 as well as Irish uilleann piper Tomás Lynch and multi-instrumental trouble-maker Ron Kavana. While the Boys shine alone on "Esiesi Siolle" and "Mabingwa," the inspired cultural collisions of "Esimiti Khusilenje" and "Abandu Bandi" offer good-hearted proof of music's universality. (43 Beaver Brook Rd., Danbury, CT 06810)—*Tom Cheyney*

KENNY NEAL
Bayou Blood
 (ALLIGATOR)

HE PROUDLY HAILS from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but the thirtysomething Kenny Neal is an all-American bluesman who plays in the direction of Texas and Chicago blues traditions as well as sweet home Louisiana. Neal's fourth album on Alligator finds him in fine form, with a warm gruffness in his voice, a sharp and assured sense of guitar riffing and a certain suavity in his harmonica chops. Versatility within the blues spectrum is Neal's speciality, as he shifts easily from urban turfs to the acoustic delta of "Going to the Country." Echoes of Robert Cray resonate in Neal's stinging, economical solos, and on material like the minor blues tune "Smoke Signal." But Neal is less of a smoothie than Cray. He lays into the blues like nothing can stop him, or tame him.—*Josef Woodard*

COUPÉ CLOUÉ
Maximum Compas from Haiti
 (EARTHWORKS/CAROLINE)

FOR MORE THAN 20 years, Haitians have checked Jean-Gesner "Coupé Cloué" Henry for his humor-

ous, off-color take on matters of the heart and libido. His populist brand of *compas* hints at Dominican *merengue* in its rhythmic drive and Congolese *rhumba* in the three-way guitar mixup, led by scion Bellerive Dorcelien's thumb-plucked riffing. Cloué's scat-singing peppers the smooth frenzy of "Kiliboi," while the deceptively languid tempo of "Net Al Cole" (All the Way) creeps up on your head like the last glass of Barbancourt rum. (114 W. 26th, New York, NY 10001)—*Tom Cheyney*

SKY HIGH AND THE MAU MAU
Marcus Garvey Chant
(RAS)

MARCUS GARVEY WAS pissing off the white establishment and offering hope to those with African roots long before Malcolm X came on the scene. It's only fitting that large segments of one of the Jamaican-born Pan-Africanist's seminal speeches would be sampled in the context of Nyahbinghi riddims, since reggae's canon has done the most to honor his legacy. This album can be divided into two parts: three tracks carrying Garvey's words and harmonies by producer Hartnel "Sky High" Henry and his Mau Mau crew, and five cuts by var-

ious singers and toasters (including young Rasta firebrands Tony Rebel and Yami Bolo) honoring the prophet's message in a fresh dancehall style. One question remains: When is the epic bio film of the man who said, "You cannot shackle or imprison the minds of men" going to be made? (Box 42517, Washington, DC 20015)—*Tom Cheyney*

HEAVENLY
Le Jardin de Heavenly
(K)

THESE INSTANTLY APPEALING songs make naiveté an asset, and vocalist Amelia Fletcher, whose fetching lilt makes Juliana Hatfield sound like Janis Joplin, knows exactly where to file the cutesy artifice: somewhere near the middle of their bottomless bag of hooks. At a time when caterwauling represents emotionalism, Heavenly turns cooing into a most fervent form of sensitivity.—*Jim Macnie*

LE MYSTERE DES VOIX BULGARES
From Bulgaria with Love
(MESA)

COLLECTORS OF THE extraordinary Bulgarian Voices recordings may gasp in horror at this "pop"

project. With a variety of producers, the settings that frame the all-female choir's eerily breathtaking harmonies range from Vangelis-like new age to hip-hop rhythms. The results are rather uneven, but several numbers are surprisingly engaging, especially "Pipero," which is hilariously kitschy. While the album is sure to alienate strict "ethnic music" purists, it should interest people who believe that "world music" should be defined as music where ethnic sounds *mix*.—*Geoffrey Welchman*

BONE CLUB
Beautiful EP
(IMAGO)

COMING ON LIKE Alice in Chains on speed, Bone Club sounds like a band still searching for its own sound. *Beautiful*, a five-song EP, is hampered by perfunctory wah-wah soloing and a not-too-steady drummer (since replaced), but the band makes up for its limitations with fiery hooks, clever time-stops and some catchy choruses. Singer Andrew Arashiba adds authority and a touch of charisma to the band. Provided they come up with a few new melodies, their first album should be interesting.—*Geoffrey Welchman*



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ANTENNA
Hideout
(MAMMOTH)

FOR EX-BLAKE BABIES John Strohm and Freda Love, Antenna's second release, *Hideout*, casually affirms their commitment to life after Juliana Hatfield. More focused than their debut, *Hideout* pulls the standard "alternative" trick of layering guitars over half-realized vocals. Not such a big deal, since Strohm admits his lyrics are "not much for storyline or linear thought." Besides, it's the lush wall of guitar atmospherics that delivers satisfaction.—*Rob O'Connor*

FUDGE

The Ferocious Rhythm of Precise Laziness...
(CAROLINE)

RECORDED IN "MID-SUMMER" Richmond, Virginia and it sounds like it: Not only lazy, hazy and crazy, but hippie, trippy and dippy. Apart from a whiteboy dub cut that (almost) makes the Clash sound good, *The Ferocious Rhythm* sails along, as seductive and relevant as a sunny day. Maybe the song titles even mean something; after repeated listenings this reviewer still couldn't concentrate on the lyrics. Praise enough?—*Scott Isler*

CARL STONE
Mom's
(NEW ALBION)

CALIFORNIA COMPOSER STONE samples and snips his way into rich creations, alternately balmy and disturbing. A phrase is stated, reiterated, elongated, with additional sonic values picked up at each juncture. This ceaseless enhancement renders moot the mechanical aspects of the process; his capacity to turn machine lingo into the kinetic language of flesh and blood is uncanny. To wit: "Shing Kee," which frags a Schubert lieder and then stretches it like taffy. When the vivid flourish emerges from all the incremental repetition, you know that Stone has had a magnificent destination in mind from the get-go. Gorgeous.—*Jim Macnie*

REISSUES

RICHARD AND LINDA THOMPSON

Sunnyvista
Strict Tempo!

(HANNIBAL/RYKOOISC)

AMONG THEIR LESSER-KNOWN efforts, *Sunnyvista* finds the Thompsons doing the Ray Davies

twentieth-century displacement thing, with highlights including "Civilization"'s gleeful celebration of xenophobia, hard-rock anthems like "Borrowed Time" and a bonus remake of "Georgie on a Spree." Seldom was their sound brighter or their wit blacker. The huge cast includes most of Fairport, the McGarrigles and Gerry Rafferty. The all-instrumental *Strict Tempo!*, on the other hand, has no back-up (not even Linda) save drummer Dave Mattacks. Though inexplicably mastered off an LP, this reissue does restore Thompson's extensive liner notes, and where else are you gonna hear his formidable guitar chops on classics like "The New Fangled Flogging Reel"?—*Thomas Anderson*

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Rockin' in the Farmhouse: Original Rockabilly and Chicken Bop, Volume 2
(HOLLOWBODY)

SOME ALBUMS APPEAR to have been designed to answer obscure musical trivia questions, and this compilation of 1957-60 recordings by the second-string rockabilly label Roulette and its subsidiaries is certainly one of those. The good news is that several tunes transcend mere humor: Don "Red" Roberts' "Only One" is relentless, near-chaotic rock, Jimmy Lloyd's "Rocket in My Pocket" has a marvelous swagger and Roc LaRue & the 3 Pals' "Rockabilly Yodel" defies description. Primal guitar displays and vocal hiccupps are in abundance throughout. (Sundazed Music, Box 85, Coxsackie, NY 12051)—*Mac Randall*

VARIOUS ARTISTS

The Monterey International Pop Festival
(RHINO)

NEARLY FIVE HOURS of sounds from the mother of all pop festivals, this lavish four-CD package constitutes an extremely mixed bag, artistically speaking. You've already heard the best sets—Jimi Hendrix and Otis Redding—though the Who's giddy blend of pop and chaos doesn't trail by much. Guess you hadda be there to dig some of the others, including the painfully ragged Byrds, spirited but nondescript Steve Miller and Mike Bloomfield's drab Electric Flag. Still, pleasures abound, among them Lou Rawls' uptown cool, Steve Cropper's minimalist licks and Elvin Bishop's wailin' axe. Whatever its flaws, *Monterey* offers a fascinating map of the intersections between black and white cultures, circa 1967: White rockers celebrate the blues, Redding dazzles a new audience simply by being himself and Hendrix reinvents electric guitar. This big ol' box also provides a valuable reminder that the peace and love thang once seemed like a viable option, instead of a foolish cliché. (Sigh.) Throw in a fat, handsome book of photos and quotes from the principals, and nostalgia pang become unavoidable.—*Jon Young*

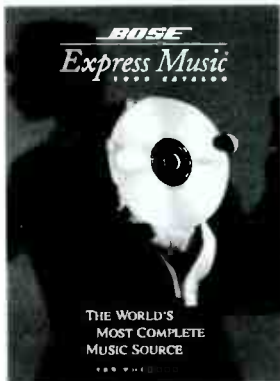
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THE COASTERS
50 Coastin' Classics
 (RHINO/ATLANTIC)

DON'T MISTAKE 'EM for puppets performing disposable novelty tunes—the Coasters were a stellar R&B group whose output included an astonishingly high number of gems. From Leiber and Stoller's sly songwriting and cagey production to the solid support of King Curtis, Barney Kessel et al., to the robust vocals of Billy Guy, Bobby Nunn and the gang, all the pieces fit together beautifully. Along with obvious hits like "Charlie Brown" and "Yakety Yak," *50 Coastin' Classics* (51, actually) unearths such relative obscurities as "The Slime" and "What About Us," each a true delight. Pains-takingly constructed, these glorious mono tracks refute the notion that great rock 'n' roll has to be a spontaneous event.—Jon Young

BESSIE SMITH
The Complete Bessie Smith
Recordings, Volume 3
 (COLUMBIA/LEGACY)

WITH THE AMAZING success of the Robert Johnson recordings and a feverish unearthing of Columbia's vast treasure trove of back catalog, *The Complete Bessie Smith Recordings* are clearly the pick of the litter. *Volume 3* finds her at the peak of her powers and popularity, featuring her work with Fletcher Henderson, her voice in full throttle, putting down the real funk like God's own gutbucket diva. Lawrence Cohn's painstaking production and Chris Albertson's richly detailed, authoritative notes make this collection a true no-brainer for anyone interested in jazz, blues and soul.—Chip Stern

WASHBOARD SAM
Rockin' My Blues Away
 (BMG/BLUEBIRD)

WRY, SARDONIC, FOLKSY blues stylings that walk the line between the South Side and Highway 61. Sam's washboard gives each tune a chugging kind of groove, while Big Bill Broonzy and Memphis Slim add plenty of blues hot sauce to this collection.—Chip Stern

PINK FLOYD
Shine On
 (SONY MUSIC)

EVER THE AUTEURS, Dave Gilmour and Nick Mason steered clear of greatest-hits rudiments for this box and ordered the remastering of seven entire albums—*A Saucerful of Secrets*, *Meddle*, *Animals*, *Wish You Were Here*, *The Dark Side of the Moon*, *The Wall*, *A Momentary Lapse of Reason*—to be heard the way they were intended to be heard. They do sound better here, and if that improvement merely outstrips the original CD issues, this package

obliterates them, and repositions Pink Floyd at the vanguard of the movement for sound as experience. Nine-disc sets like the Bill Evans and Stax collections use LP-sized boxes and booklets, but *Shine On*, true to Floyd proportions, is the biggest, most lavish creation on either side of the Thames. Custom black jewel boxes, laser-decorated discs, collector's postcards and a hardcover book detailing the conception of the music and graphics all sit within a huge case anointed with new, typically abstruse commemorative artwork. A ninth disc presents Syd Barrett—era singles like "See Emily Play" and "Arnold Layne," but is light on real rarities, emphasizing *Shine On's* one liability: no unreleased demos, no outtakes, no flaws. Roger Waters got outvoted quite a bit during the selection process, but his remarkable work is well-tended; owing much to Dave, it's never sounded better.—Matt Resnicoff

RCA VICTOR JAZZ
The First Half-Century: The Twenties
Through the Sixties
 (BMG/BLUEBIRD)

A MOST ATTRACTIVE jazz compilation, full of treats for true believers and converts alike, but ideally a fine introduction to the art of jazz. Like the title says, from the 1920s through the '60s, with names like Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, Coleman Hawkins, Lionel Hampton, Artie Shaw, Tommy Dorsey, Dizzy Gillespie and Sonny Rollins, RCA Victor and Bluebird helped shape jazz as a popular art.—Chip Stern

GILBERTO GIL & JORGE BEN
Gilberto Gil & Jorge Ben
 (VERVE)

GIL IS THE Brazilian master who appeals to rock fans who hear too much sky and not enough earth in Caetano Veloso; Ben is a meticulous Rio record-maker who opened David Byrne's 1989 *Brazil Classics* set with a big bang. Together, they made this record one night in 1975 with only a bassist, a percussionist and their own voices and guitars. And they left on tape as moving a realization of the resonant spaces and gaits of an all-acoustic groove album as you'll discover. At almost 80 minutes, the songs work themselves into frenzies or take their sweet time, always more concerned with feel than accuracy. The superb singers' pitch infelicities aside, though, rhythmic accuracy for Gil and Ben comes naturally anyway. And the particular feel they indulge is extraordinary: They drench their respective Brazilian pop styles in African sources and offshoots, then move along through their bold jams with all the elegant inevitability of prime bossa. This album offers acoustic music devoid of the usual ponderousness or self-satisfaction, cer-

tainly without any of the stiffness. Songs like "Nega" and "Filhos de Gandhi" make ecstasies sound conversational.—James Hunter

THE METERS
Uptown Rulers!
 (RHINO)

THE METERS' DISDAIN for the One is exceeded only by their respect for the booty, and this is a treatise on why old farts get nostalgic for "real" R&B. Fierce, jagged funk, all rhythms and movement, that transforms even the dreariest pop covers into syncopated Crescent City celebrations. Drummer Ziggy Modeliste and bassist George Porter make today's click track—happy rhythm sections cower in shame, and when the band chooses to improvise a taste, the groove's energy never wavers.—Chip Stern

THE BONZO DOG BAND
Cornology
 (UK EMI)

EVERYONE ELSE GETS a multiple-CD anthology, so why not the Bonzos? Three fully packed discs in a slipcase contain the viciously funny group's five albums, hard-to-find singles and a sampling of early solo work (including Eric Clapton, not on ukelele). Perhaps only the swinging London of the '60s could have encouraged such inspired lunacy: Veering in and out of '20s jazz, the Bonzo Dog Band was the real rock 'n' roll circus. Listen, laugh and be awed.—Scott Isler

CHRIS SPEDDING
Cafe Days
 (MOBILE FIDELITY SOUND LAB)

THIS COULDN'T HAVE been released for audiophile purposes, normally Mobile Fidelity's priority. Still, it's about time we had a domestic (and expanded) version of the 1991 *Cafe Days*, the most recent recording from the Great Lost British Guitar Hero. In keeping with his reputation, Spedding's nicotine-stained vocals range from a whisper to a croak. His songwriting, however, is tuneful—that's how you tell the originals from the next-generation '60s revivalists—and his guitar exudes confidence with every well-placed note. Simply but effectively produced, *Cafe Days* is one guilty pleasure about which no one need feel guilty.—Scott Isler

MUDDY WATERS
Live at Mr. Kelly's

HOWLIN' WOLF
Live and Cookin' at Alice's Revisited

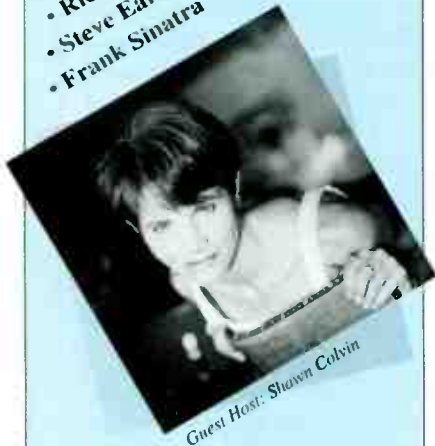
ETTA JAMES
Rocks the House
 (MCA)

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MUSICIAN

SHORT TAKES

excellent liner notes. Etta James tears up a Nashville joint circa 1963 with a mix of hits ("Something's Got a Hold on Me") and covers ranging from Ray Charles to Robert Nighthawk. Wolf was getting a bit long in the tooth when captured at this hipster coffeehouse gig in 1972; instead of the hits he gives them classic sleepers like "Don't Laugh at Me," plus some strong harp. Best is the 1971 Muddy set, full of stinging slide and commanding vocals on favorites like "She's Nineteen Years Old" and "Long Distance Call." Like the others, it's ample evidence why the blues never die.—*Thomas Anderson*

BOOKS

AFRO CUBAN RHYTHMS

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Frank Malabe & Bob Weiner

(DRUMMER'S COLLECTIVE SERIES/
MANHATTAN MUSIC PUBLICATIONS)

GREAT ROCK DRUMMERS OF

THE SIXTIES

Bob Cianci

(HAL LEDNARD)

REACHING OUT FOR a pricey helping of information, drummers too often are promised chicken salad but served chickenshit. Herein a helping of each. From the essentials of the clave to the elusive multi-directional syncopations of the music's most important beats, Latin music mainstays Frankie Malabe and Bob Weiner have devised a splendidly clear study, breaking down the basics of this most American tradition in terms of both the music and (in passing) its folkloric heritage. There are dozens of practical recorded examples (which could have gone on longer) to give neophytes a foothold in this joyous music—a must for drummers who want to grasp the full extent of the Latin tinge in popular music and jazz. Alas for rock drummers, music-biz wannabe Cianci's sampling of stylists is an inept term paper, superficially annotated and dreadfully written. Culled primarily from second-hand sources, there are mounds of mistakes and mis-information, mostly self-inflated opinion masquerading as fact.—*Chip Stern*

THE JAZZ PEOPLE OF

NEW ORLEANS

Lee Friedlander

(PANTHEDON)

TALKING JAZZ

Ben Sidran

(POMEGRANATE)

THESE TWO COFFEE-TABLE books effectively cover the alpha and omega of jazz in distinct fashion. Friedlander, who needs no introduction to photography buffs, combined his passions for the camera and New Orleans jazz with these touching

black-and-white portraits (taken between 1957 and 1974) and lively marching-band scenes. Although Friedlander doesn't identify his subjects beyond naming them, his images pack enough atmosphere to seduce even those unfamiliar with the music. An afterword by Whitney Balliett adds verbal seasoning to the visual gumbo.

The weightier *Talking Jazz* collects 50 of Ben Sidran's radio interviews from his 1985-90 NPR series "Sidran on Record." He covers virtually all stylistic twists since bebop, from cornerstones (Miles and Diz) to Young Turks (Wynton/Branford)—even less obvious choices like Donald Fagen, Charles Brown and Steve Gadd. Conversations are relaxed and illuminating.—*Scott Isler*

VIDEO

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Kings of Independence

(VIDEO MUSIC INC.)

JUST RELEASED IN THE U.S., this 37-minute live video of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, Crime and the City Solution and the Swans captures an eerie deliverance of decadent squalor as it happened at Knopf's Music Hall, Hamburg, August 15, 1987. The lighting is dim, the atmosphere smoky, the sound muddy, the performances commanding. Nick Cave sputters through "Saint Huck," Crime rattle through a Doors-ian set, but Michael Gira steals the show—groveling in his misery, droning excessively into wordless moans. (Box 1128, Norristown, PA 19404)—*Rob O'Connor*

MULESKINNER

Muleskinner Live—The Video

(SIERRA HOME VIDEO)

CLARENCE WHITE, RICHARD GREENE, Peter Rowan, David Grisman and Bill Keith were asked to back bluegrass legend Bill Monroe on a February 1973 PBS television special. Monroe never made it to the TV studio because his bus broke down, but in the spirit of showmanship and with only three hours to rehearse, the musicians went on with the show. Tunes like "Dark Hollow" and "Land of the Navajo" sparkle as former-Byrd Clarence White weaves beautifully syncopated runs and fills. On the fiddle tour de force "Orange Blossom Special," Greene's stellar playing lends the tune a new fiery dimension supported by Grisman's manic mandolin and White's offbeat jazz chordings. (Box 5853, Pasadena, CA 91117-0181)—*Rick Petreyck*

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Wild Style

(POW WOW PRODUCTIONS)

WHAT HAS BEEN called hip-hop's "first and best" film doesn't supply much storyline, and the pro-

duction values are so low that if it weren't for the goofy dialogue you might think you were watching a documentary. *Wild Style's* significance is that not many people were filming when old-school rap legends Busy Bee, the Cold Crush Four, Grandmaster Flash and others pioneered a new popular music form in the South Bronx of the early '80s; footage of Flash doing theretofore unheard-of things to three turntables is alone worth the video price. Director, writer and producer Charles Ahearn provides a fictionalized account of hip-hop culture's spread to the Downtown art scene in the person of a graffiti artist named Raymond. The movie culminates with a huge party in Alphabet City; in real life, we got Marky Mark on MTV...but that's another story. (\$29.95, Pow Wow Productions, P.O. Box 892, Times Square Station, New York, NY 10036)

—Nathan Brackett

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Good Mornin' Blues

(YAZOO)

NARRATED BY B.B. King, this 1978 documentary is a worthy attempt at tracing the evolution of the blues from century-old field hollers to today. Along the way you get footage of the Dockery Plantation where originators like Charlie Patton lived, and live performances by everyone from former Mississippi Sheik Sam Chatmon to Johnny Shines. The occasionally dour tone of the proceedings is relieved by a rambunctious set by Big Joe Williams, and an amazing final sequence where a very old and bedraggled Sam Chatmon delivers a defiant "Sitting on Top of the World."

—Thomas Anderson

CLASSICAL

CAPELLA ALAMIRE

Motets: Busnoys, Josquin, Gombert

(TITANIC)

THREE GENERATIONS (ROUGHLY) of Franco-Flemish Renaissance composers are represented on this album of choral music. Antoine Busnoys, Josquin DesPrez and Nicolas Gombert were all regarded as masters in their time; Busnoys, the earliest, appears to have had a sizable influence on the other two. Though these 11 pieces are called motets, not all of them are based on religious texts. Busnoys' "In hydraulis," dedicated to fellow composer Johannes Ockeghem, is a short treatise on music theory and Pythagoras' "harmonic science," with mathematical vocal counterpoint to match. Most interesting are Gombert's three pieces, which continually flirt with dissonance—his "Sancta

Maria" is positively polytonal, and over 400 years before Hindemith or Milhaud. Capella Alamire generally perform these pieces with a canny mixture of passion and detachment, but on Busnoys' "Victimae paschali laudes," they leave caution behind, giving the swiftly moving imitative lines an urgency and momentum that make for compelling listening. (Box 204, Somerville, MA 02144-0204)

—Mac Randall

MITSUKO UCHIDA

Mozart Piano Concertos Nos. 8 & 9

(PHILIPS)

PIANIST UCHIDA COMES near to concluding her complete Mozart piano concerto cycle with this offering, the negligible eighth and the turning-point ninth—the latter being the earliest of the composer's piano concertos to remain a mainstay in the current repertoire. Uchida's great talent is a combination of impressive facility with a sensitivity to the often subtle fluctuations of Mozart's narrative. It's this poised alertness which prevents the operatic languidness of the ninth's second movement from dissolving into a pretty soup, and sees that the third movement never totally succumbs to its youthful exuberance as the mood swings from frolicking to a gently ironic *minuetto* respite, some brave-faced sadness, then back to the party. A definitive interpretation, with Jeffrey Tate and the English Chamber Orchestra providing simpatico support.—Richard C. Walls

JOHN BELL/

CONSTANCE KEENE

Piano Music of Friedrich Nietzsche

(NEWPORT CLASSIC)

MUCH OF THIS is juvenalia—13 of the 16 pieces here were composed before Nietzsche was 20—and probably would have remained forgotten if the composer hadn't become one of the most original and controversial philosophers of the nineteenth century. Eleven of the pieces are the slightest of songs, averaging about a minute-and-a-half, and a surprising number of these are utterly charming, a word one doesn't normally associate with this particular iconoclast. Interesting that the fiercely penetrating aphorist started out as a musical sentimentalist (and perhaps remained so—after rejecting the lofty Wagner, he sang the praises of Bizet's *Carmen*). The longer pieces—two are just over 15 minutes—sound more dutifully "Germanic" than inspired, as clichéd purple interludes lead to assertive anti-climaxes (one of these mini-epics reportedly reduced Wagner to convulsions of laughter). Still, in his less ambitious moods, the boy had a knack.

—Richard C. Walls

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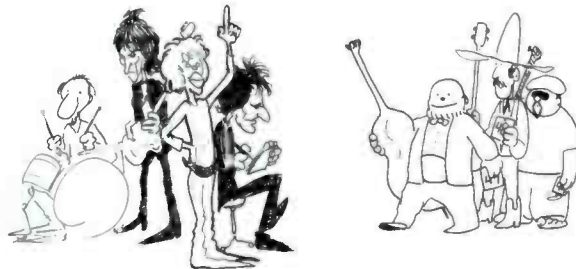
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The Bookies' Guide to Picking the Stones' New Bassist



Charlie Drayton

Ex-bassist with Keith Richards' X-Pensive Winos. Drayton left Keith's band on New Year's to pursue his own career, but moving up to the Stones might be irresistible.

Odds: 5-1

Doug Wimbish

Played on Jagger's solo work. This top gun would be the number-one contender if he had not just joined Living Colour. Wimbish says that if nominated he will not run. However, Mick helped Living Colour get signed, produced their first hit and gave them the opening slot on the *Steel Wheels* tour. They owe him one.

5-1

Steve Jordan

Right, he's a drummer—but he plays solid bass, too. More important, Jordan has become Keith Richards' main sidekick (look what that did for Woody in '75) and musical collaborator. Jordan played on the Stones' *Dirty Work* album.

5-1

Ron Wood

Woody might not want to move to bass, but as Mick's talking about the possibility, he better watch out. Many rock fans rank Woody the bassist (Jeff Beck Group) above Woody the guitarist, and he has handled the bottom on Stones records on more occasions than Bill Wyman might care to admit. Problem: His bass playing might be too busy for the Stones. Solution: Tell him to calm down.

10-1

Joey Spampinato

Not the ass-kicker Mick says he wants, but a terrific R&B player who shares the Stones' roots, sings well and would look very much like Bill Wyman from beyond the tenth row. Played in Keith's band for the Chuck Berry documentary *Hail! Hail! Rock & Roll*.

20-1

Flea

Excellent young bassist who plays on Jagger's new album. But would Flea give up the young, hot Chili Peppers for the old, hot Rolling Stones? And what would Charlie make of him?

30-1

John Entwistle

This has been promoted by people who listen to Classic Hits Radio and

think all '60s British rock legends sleep over at each other's houses. But Entwistle is a mighty busy bassist for the Stones and he has a beard and wears bad pants.

50-1

Busta Cherry Jones

When Wyman made noises about quitting in the early '80s, Busta was waiting in the wings to take over. Unfortunately, he told everybody.

50-1

Peavey Bass Module

Not much to look at, but neither was Wyman—and at least it wouldn't quit.

70-1

Sting

He's a good bassist, young enough to give the band some pizzazz but old enough to fit in, and he's English—which has meant a lot to the Stones in the past. But he might encourage Charlie's jazz ambitions, in which case Keith would have to shoot him.

100-1

Paul McCartney

A fine bass player with similar pro experience to the Stones, he wrote "I Wanna Be Your Man," the Stones' second British hit. But Mick has in the past made fun of Paul for having "his old lady onstage," which might limit the chances of Macca accepting the gig.

200-1

Ray Manzarek's Left Hand

Hey, it was good enough for the Doors.

300-1

Danny Bonaduce

His chops have gotten a little rusty since his days pumping bottom with the P-Family, but his substance abuse problems and scuffles with the fuzz make him prime Stones material.

400-1

Tina Weymouth

Under their thumb? More like "She's the Boss." Not bloody likely, mate.

500-1

Tom Hamilton

Too tall.

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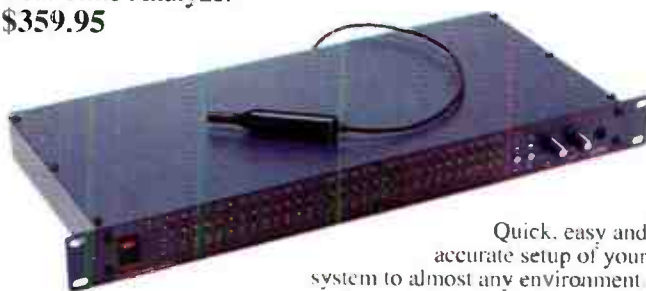
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