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# NEW MUSIC

MONTHLY

## smashing pumpkins



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*SLAYER*  
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On the cover: Smashing Pumpkins  
photographed by Yelena Yemchuck  
Here: Rocket From The Crypt  
photographed by Michael Halsharid



## SPECIAL FIFTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!

### 18 SIX DEGREES OF PUBLICATION

A look back at some of *New Music Monthly's* milestones.

### 19 ON THE VERGE...?

For five years, we've been forecasting tomorrow's stars. A glance at our On The Verge column's pitfalls and prognostications.

## 67 on the cd

This month's disc includes glammy punk from San Diego's **Rocket From The Crypt**, techno from Wink and DJ? **Acucrack**, hard-edged rock from **Slayer**, **Monster Magnet**, **Flight 16** and the **Mayfield Four**, cool downtown jazz from the **Lounge Lizards**, introspective rock from **Grant Lee Buffalo** and **Richard Buckner**, Cajun pop from **Steve Riley & The Mamou Playboys**, and groovy Brit pop from **Drugstore** and **Skinny**.

## contents

AUGUST 1998 ISSUE 60

ON THE COVER

### 34 smashing pumpkins

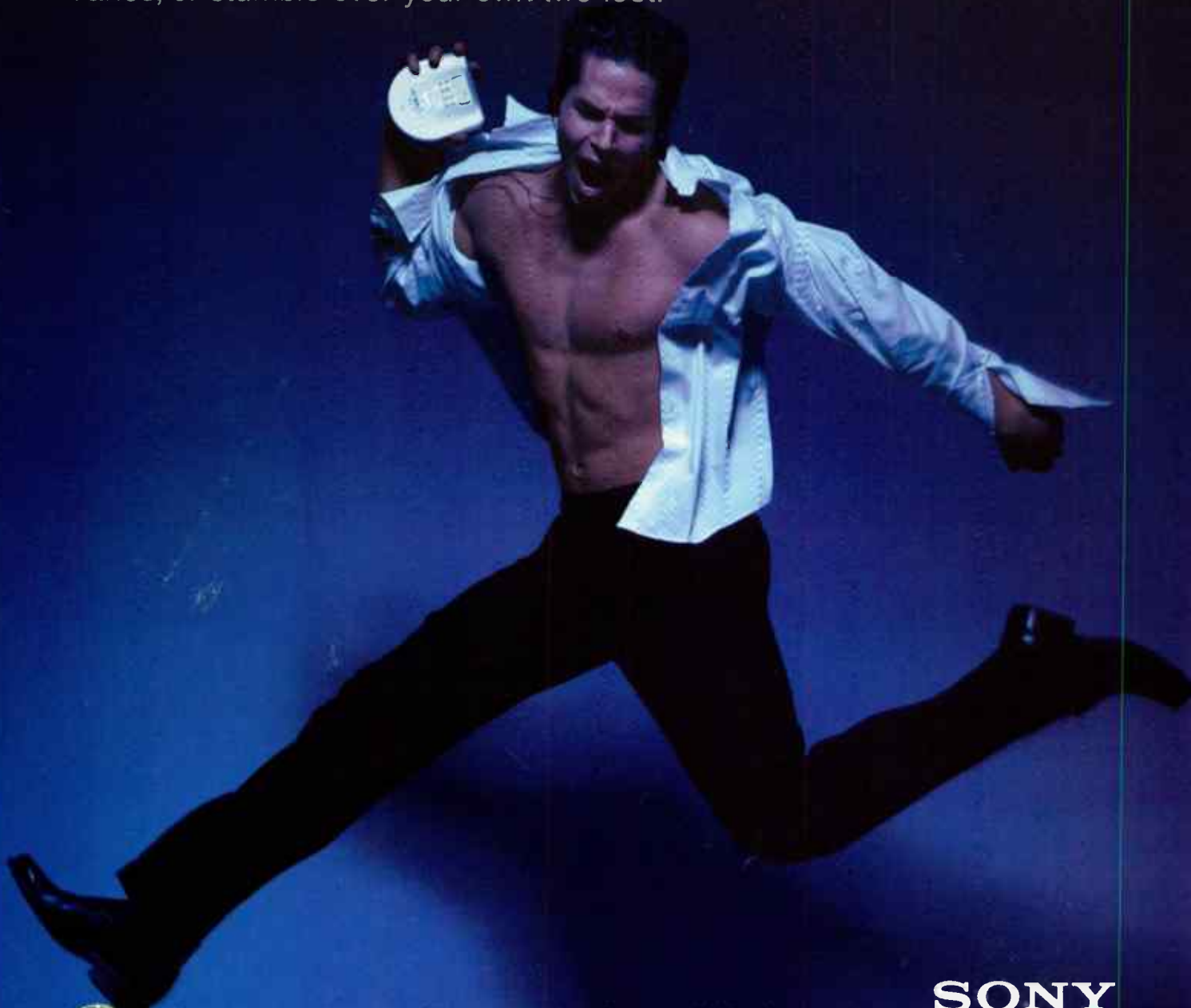
"In my mid-twenties confusion I felt the need to point arrows at myself and distinguish myself from the band in a way that was kind of childish." Humbled by death and experience, Billy Corgan and his pared-down band emerge with the triumphant pop album *Adore*. Tom Lanham digs into his psyche.

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**SONY**

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## FEATURES

### 20 the spinanes

"The power of music and the power of ritual religion are coming from very similar places." Matt Hanks takes Spinane-ga. Rebecca Gates to church—Rev. Al Green's church.

### 24 lounge lizards

"The big difference between movie scores and Lounge Lizards stuff is that Lounge Lizards stuff I write with my eyes closed, and the movie stuff I write with my eyes open." Downtown NYC Lizard John Lurie lounges with Scott Frampton.

### 25 komeda

"We're a 'now' band. It's a romantic fascination with all these futuristic movies and futuristic theories and utopias. Pop music could be something for the future." Ken Micallef peeks into the future with Swedish popsters Komeda.

### 27 slayer

"I think it's all about integrity, and we've got the most integrity of any heavy band that's out there." Ian Christie chows down with metal's fiercest four at their favorite haunt.

### 28 solex

"Solex is the main character in every song, but it's not necessarily me. I can put myself in lots of different characters. For me it's very understandable what someone else will think or do. I studied clinical psychology, so nothing is too weird." Andrea Moed gets the skinny on Amsterdam's Solex, a.k.a. Elisabeth Esselink.

### 30 monster magnet

"I'm a lot more comfortable being the gas station guy than some psueco-intellectual fanzine guy. I can be the white trash guy with a hard-on drinking a soda at the gas station. And that's what I decided to be." Scott Frampton watches as Dave Wyndorf tickles the seedy underbelly of his band's new album, *Powertrip*.

### 32 rocket from the crypt

"For me, the MC5 was the biggest influence on this band. You listen to their live stuff and you'll hear a lot of what we do—the 'ramalama fa fa' stuff, the thanking the audience, and everything." Matt Ashare checks in with San Diego's best-dressed rock ensemble.

## DEPARTMENTS

### 6 LETTERS FROM THE EDITOR

### 8 QUICK FIX

Sonic Youth, Plastikman, Cedell Davis, 12 Rounds and all that tiny fun stuff.

### 14 ON THE VERGE

In five more years, Drugstore, Ozomatli or DJ? Acurack just might be on the cover.

### 16 THE SCENE IS NOW

Japan's Shibuya-kei scene is stirring up dust in the US.

### 56 GEEK LOVE

How the Violent Femmes' debut made growing up male a little easier.

### 62 MIXED MEDIA

The film  $\pi$ , the fanzine *My Evil Twin Sister*, a biography of Folkways Records founder Moe Asch, a Doug Henning website and more.

### 65 TOP 75

### 69 DIRECTORY/INDEX



pg. 20



pg. 27

### 70 JUST OUT

### 74 LOCALZINE

A trip to our nation's capitol, Washington, DC.

## REVIEWS

### 12 BEST NEW MUSIC

Billy Bragg & Wilco, Richard Buckner, Medeski Martin And Wood, Rancid, Smashing Pumpkins and Lucinda Williams.

### 40 REVIEWS

We're stuck somewhere between Barry Adamson and Josh Wink.

### 53 MIXED SIGNALS

### 57 METAL

### 58 DANCE

### 59 HIP-HOP

### 60 SINGLES

### 61 FLASHBACK



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**COVER SONG**

It's shiny, it's smooth, *CMJ New Music Monthly* is moving up in the world. Yet I was concerned; how was it going to affect my ongoing recycling efforts? In the bathroom, it just didn't seem to work as well (as if you've never heard that comment before). Sure, it is smooth against the skin, but the absorptive properties just aren't there. Sitting and pondering the problem, it came to me. A little Elmer's glue and viola: underwear. It has the same smooth silky feel, it is shiny, it seems to have all the qualities needed. Best of all it doesn't chafe and is virtually wedgie proof. You don't even have to worry about washing it, just throw it away after a week. Thankfully I don't have to cancel my subscription to *CMJ New Music Monthly* out of concern for the environment. This new use for the magazine fulfills my ongoing effort to help the environment. Now I just have to figure out how to deal with those staples.

Tim Cada  
British Columbia, Canada

*Yes, I do feel my wisenheimer responses are responsible for letters like this. Why do you ask?*  
>>> Ed.

**just a hunch**

In your May issue, writer Matt Hanks managed to do more mangling of the truth in the two brief paragraphs of his review of Hasil Adkins' new CD than Matt Drudge can do in a whole day's worth of html code. First of all, Hasil Adkins and Jesco White live on opposite sides of Boone County. Boone County is country, to be sure, but hardly third world. Actually, due to high paying coal industry jobs, Boone usually has the highest per capita income of any county in West Virginia, which, granted, may not be saying much. Hanks calls Hasil's new CD the first recording in a decade, which is way off. There have been several CDs, both studio and live recordings. I'm from Boone County and I've known Hasil most of my life. I've never heard him referred to as The Hunch. We get our share of daytrippers here in the summer who jump out of their Volvos and Saabs and snap a picture of Hasil's yard or Jesco's trailer and speed away giggling until they can get back to Starbucks to show off their Kodak moment. If Hanks is truly interested in visiting Boone County (and there is definitely some wild stuff to do and see) I hope he brings plenty of film.

Mark Ferrell  
Charleston, WV

*Matt Hanks reponds: My admiration for Jesco White dates back further than my newfound respect for Hasil Adkins. A friend once told me that Jesco and Hasil are neighbors, but since I've*

*never been to Boone County (which I stated in my review), I wrote that they are rumored to be neighbors. Calling it a "third-world country" was probably unfair. Please convey my apologies to the local aristocracy. As for the "Hunch" remark, Jerry Lee Lewis's personal friends may not call him Killer either, but that doesn't make that handle any less synonymous with his persona. For all of us non-Boone County residents, Hasil=Hunch. While Norton did release a new album, Achy Breaky Ha Ha Ha, in 1994, the last decade has been dominated by reissues and archival releases. As for your remark about daytrippers, well, you're right, I do drive a Volvo—15 years old with broken door handles, but a Volvo nonetheless. Thankfully, I could drive it a couple hours in any direction from my home in Memphis and I still wouldn't pass a Starbucks. Go put that in your cappuccino-maker and froth it.*

**breaking the curve**

I know my ska, how about you? It became obvious to me that you didn't after reading Issue #57 and the part called "Ska-lastic Aptitude." While I will admit you pretty much understand the concepts between pure ska and ska-influenced music, some of your observations were absolutely wrong. The Stubborn All-Stars have no place with the Skatalites in Pure ska, and neither does Hepcat. The Two-Tone category was right on the mark, as well as the Third Wave category. However, you ran into trouble in the ska-core category. Mighty Mighty Bosstones set the stage for ska-metal in the past decade, and even though Mephiskapheles belongs in this category with them, Five Iron Frenzy does not. As a Denver Christian ska band, they have no place in a category with a band whose motto is, "Satanic ska for the whole family." And with Goldfinger's lack of a staple horn section, they fit more into Ska-Alternative rock with the other wanna-be's than in Ska-Pop with Save Ferris. It became clear you did your homework with the Ska-Punk category, but you forgot an increasingly important band that opened a path for women in this school. Despite their current video on MTV, Dance Hall Crashers remain a reigning force in the attempt to keep ska underground and from "selling-out." It's just a shame that your magazine copied the notes from someone else in their class, and then cheated on the exam.

Brittany Conklin  
KUCB DJ  
University of Colorado  
conklin@colorado.edu

*Ska graph out of line  
Colorado DJ gripes  
We are ska-scolded*

>>> Ed.

**PUBLISHER:** Robert K. Haber  
**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:** Scott Frampton  
**ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER:** Marianne P. Stone  
**ART DIRECTOR:** Joe Mitch  
**MANAGING EDITOR:** Lydia Vanderloo  
**ASSISTANT EDITOR:** Jenny Eliscu  
**COPY EDITOR:** William Werde  
**EDITOR-AT-LARGE:** Kurt B. Reighley  
**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:**  
Ian Christie, Brian Coleman, Tim Haslett,  
James Lien, Douglas Wolk  
**SENIOR DIRECTOR OF SALES & MARKETING:**  
Megan Frampton  
**SALES OPERATIONS MANAGER:** Hayley Lawson  
**DIRECTOR OF SALES, CONSUMER PRODUCTS:**  
Chris Kline  
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Ron Goodman  
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**EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT:** Darlene London  
**ASSISTANT TO THE ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER:**  
Melissa Kay

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**PRESIDENT:** Robert K. Haber

**EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENTS:**

Joanne Abbot Green, Diane Turofsky

**GENERAL COUNSEL & CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER:**  
Alex Ellerson

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**WRITE:** CMJ New Music Monthly  
P.O. Box 57414  
Boulder, CO 80322-7414  
**EMAIL:** cmjmusic@neodata.com

**ON THE WEB:**

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**EDITORIAL COMMENT**

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## ISLANDLIFE

No man is an Island, except maybe Chris Blackwell. Blackwell founded Island Records 40 years ago, and has recently launched a new company, Islandlife, which will deal in music, film, publishing and property. "I'm happy to be back operating as an independent," says Blackwell, who sold Island to PolyGram in 1989 and left the company altogether last year. "Islandlife accomplishes for me my ambition to integrate all entertainment under one common roof. This period in time is the most exciting I have seen, particularly because of new and emerging technologies, delivery systems, etc. I want Islandlife and Palm Pictures to be on the cutting edge of those technologies as they relate to entertainment." While Palm Pictures will handle music and film, other divisions of Islandlife include the publishing company Blue Mountain Music; Bob Marley Music, which will administer the legendary reggae star's image and name, and Island Outpost, a hotel and recording studio division. Palm Pictures' first two albums will be from Jamaican jazz guitarist Ernest Ranglin and Senegalese pop star Baaba Maal. Information on all of these ventures can be found on the Internet at [www.islandlife.com](http://www.islandlife.com).



ISLANDLIFE

If you love the noise your refrigerator makes but you're bummed that it isn't a lot louder, Disinformation's *R&D2* (Ash International) is the album for you. An extensive collection of "radio frequency atmospherics and interference," it kicks off with 13 minutes of AC electrical noise modified through a pitch-shifter, and that's only the beginning of its complete absence of rock. It's also got hits including "magnetospheric/near-space doppler-shifted lightning impulse reflections," a couple of tracks of broadcast noise, six minutes of solar radio emissions (originally released as a 12" single—we are not making this up), and the like. It can be oddly soothing or deeply annoying, depending on your mood; for a fun trick, turn it up really loud and walk around listening to the overtones it makes at the back of your brain. Oh, and if that's not enough for you, Disinformation also released a double-CD set last year called *Antiphony*, with various experimental-music types remixing their recordings.



>>> Douglas Wolk



## 12 POUNDS LA PETITE MORT

As she licks cappuccino foam from her index finger, Claudia Sarne is talking about how the pursuit of pleasure is repeatedly stifled by social stigmatization. "It's a collective unconscious concept that we just don't do certain things," she murmurs. "I don't do certain things. I don't raise my voice in a restaurant loud enough for other people to hear me, and when I go to the bathroom, I wait for everyone to leave so they don't hear me pee, for crissakes. And just the other morning," she adds, pointing across the patio at her imposing Hollywood hotel, the Chateau Marmont, "I wanted something from housekeeping, but I was too embarrassed to say what it was that I wanted for whatever reasons, whatever the society that I've been raised in dictates."

And the housekeeping item in question? Sarne's voice lowers to a secretive whisper: "Err, um, women's stuff. See? That's exactly what I mean! I'm not saying that I'm like some heat-seeking pleasure missile—I'm not. But you reach that kind of maturity at some point in your twenties, and you realize that life isn't just about pleasure, about you seeking it. And it's a fucking disgusting realization."

Sarne found a rather unusual way of

dealing with all that frustration. With Atticus Ross, she created 12 Rounds, which has just released *My Big Hero* (Nothing-Interscope). While the group's synthesizers and industrial guitars roil and grind, Sarne croons lascivious thoughts in a come-hither voice a few suggestive degrees away from Jennifer Tilly's breathy performance in *Bound*.

"I think the music complements what she's saying, but not in a traditional sense," reasons Ross. "On some occasions, it complements the music because it goes against it. For instance, there are some quite seductive passages of music which are offset by these unsettling lyrics." Unsettling, indeed. Sarne, a confessed "escapism freak," sketches an S&M scenario in the song "2 Miles" that's worthy of the Marquis De Sade himself. "It's about literally seducing someone," she notes, "and they're enjoying it so much you're killing them with this love you're giving them. But they love it, and they don't care that what you're doing is killing them. Everyone has X amount of fantasies, and I don't necessarily think it's bad to indulge them." But death by Miss Adventure? Sarne smiles, twirling her finger through the chocolate-speckled foam again. "What can I say? I'm a charming girl!"

>>> Tom Lanham





## PLASTIKMAN LESS IS MORE

Generally easy going, Richie Hawtin is a little perturbed. Sitting in the rooftop cafe of New York City's Dia Center for the Arts, where he's come to view the Dan Flavin and Richard Serra exhibits, Hawtin, a.k.a. Plastikman, runs a spoon listlessly through his latte. "If I'd wanted a cup of foam," he laments, "I'd have ordered one." Perhaps electronic music's foremost minimalist, Hawtin even likes his steamed milk sparse.

Coffee issues aside, Hawtin, 31, is pleased that his visit to New York to promote his new album, *Consumed* (NovaMute), coincides with the Flavin and Serra exhibits. Flavin's site-specific work stretches from the first floor to the roof of the Dia, and consists of blue and green fluorescent lights at varying angles. Serra's large-scale industrial sculptures reveal a greater interest in shaping spaces than in the material from which the pieces are made. Hawtin finds solace in these more-than-meets-the-eye art forms, and perhaps a greater understanding of his own work.

"I don't think a lot of people want to be challenged by their art," he says. "They are so used to having it all handed to them on a silver platter—what you see is what you get. I think it can be a lot more interesting than that." It is clear that Hawtin has wrestled with "what is art" questions before. Electronic music is crowded with obvious, four-by-

four house rhythms and vocal samples, and he knows there are some who think his music is boring. "Sometimes [with] music and art, maybe you don't want to think too much," Hawtin muses. "If you have something that's just literal, it can be great for a bit. Whether you *want* to read more into it doesn't matter. If you get to that point, and you want it, there should be more there."

"Miles Davis had a great concept about constructing melodies and actually leaving notes out, and letting the people that listened to the music put the notes back in, in their head," says Hawtin. "He was actually more interested in the space *between* notes. That's where *Consumed* came from. With past albums, it was more adding sounds together until I thought it was enough, and then that was it. This album is more built on putting a number of sounds together to form a texture, paying close attention to what came before and after those sounds, and then subtracting a couple of pieces of information. Taking out maybe the fundamental sound and leaving its image all around it, and then focusing on the space."

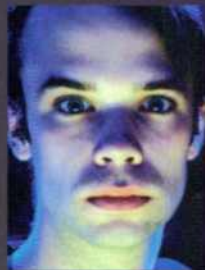
Hawtin is embracing his "less is more" aesthetic. "You want to travel along that border where it's nearly getting boring. But then, maybe it's only boring if you aren't really listening."

>>> William Werde

IN MY ROOM

## TRANS AM

Philip Manley



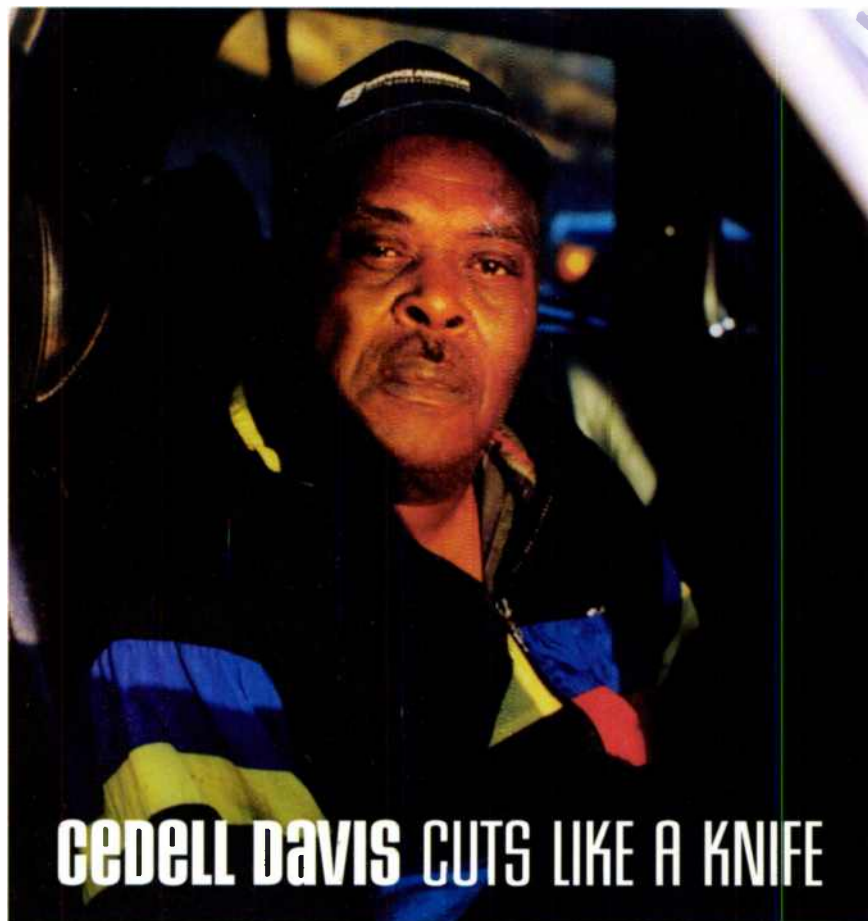
- **Low Numbers**  
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- **Jellyfish**  
Spilt Milk
- **South Park**
- **Aretha Franklin**  
Greatest Hits
- **Pocket solitaire**  
(travel game)
- **Parappa The Rapper**  
(Sony PlayStation game)



## CEDPELL DAVIS CUTS LIKE A KNIFE

In the smoke-filled near dark of a dimly lit recording studio, Cedell Davis leans forward in his wheelchair. It's past 1 a.m., but following a gig at a bar in Oxford, Mississippi, Davis announced his desire to embark on an impromptu late-night recording session back at the Fat Possum recording studio, situated in a former auto-repair and body shop. "I'm gonna do some of that old levee camp shit," he utters, as eerie sliding tones and bent notes emerge from his guitar and ricochet off the concrete floors and reverberate into the air.

The tunes he cut that late and liquor-filled night have finally emerged on Davis's latest disc, *The Horror Of It All* (Fat Possum). Stricken by polio as a boy, Davis learned to play guitar using a butter knife for a slide, and the result is his own idiosyncratic style. To some listeners, his guitar is simply out of tune, but its dissonance and angularity are an integral part of his charm. Lyrically, Davis strings together verse after verse after verse, on rambling topical songs like "The Horror," the WWII blues "Tojo Told Hitler" and "Coon Can Mattie Told Dollar Bob."

"That was a levee camp song," Davis says of the last title in a raspy croak. "Where we lived, growing up out there by Tunica,

Mississippi, there was a levee camp," he explains, referring to the days before earthworking machinery, when hundreds of men would be employed to build and maintain the river's levee system, usually under grueling conditions. "They used to sing many songs on those levee camps, and I remembered that song from that time on. Guys would be working and singing, and one guy would put a few words together. They'd never get recorded, just passed down from plantations to the levee camps and then log camps and stuff."

Growing up, Davis learned to play guitar in some unusual places, mainly because his strict mother didn't allow him to play it in the house. "She didn't want that in the house. I'd go in the restroom—the 'outback house' they called it, the outhouse. She'd run me out of there, so I'd get out on the woodpile and play, with the cord wood piled up for cooking and heating. She said the devil would get me. My stepfather, he didn't mind it. He'd tell her to leave me be. 'One day that boy will learn how to make a living like that.' He sees a cat with polio, how's he going to make a living? He's gonna have a hard way to go, but maybe he can make a living with it. That's true."

>>> James Lien

TODAY WE'D LIKE TO SEE

## GLOBAL SUMMIT

USA, America, Spain, Holland, Japan, Asia, French; English Beat, Turkish Delight, Mike Ireland, Boards Of Canada, African Head Charge, Brazil 66, China Drum, China Crisis.

BUZZWORD

## BIG BEAT

The Chemical Brothers were spinning big beat before the style had a name, but it wasn't until the man behind Fatboy Slim, Norman Cook, began DJ-ing at the Big Beat Boutique in Brighton, England, that the subgenre earned its own moniker. The name is perfectly descriptive: Based around a huge, thudding breakbeat, big beat typically combines elements of electronica, hip-hop and rock into one of techno's most danceable forms. Pagan Records recently released the compilation *Big Beat Conspiracy*, which features ass-shakin' tracks from Bentley Rhythm Ace, Fatboy Slim, Chemical Brothers, Underworld and Death In Vegas.



# SONIC YOUTH

## Q&A

Sixteen years into its recording career, Sonic Youth has just released its fifth major label album, *A Thousand Leaves* (DGC), along with a series of instrumental EPs issued through the band's own SYR label. We chatted with drummer Steve Shelley about the EPs and with guitarist Lee Ranaldo about his extra-band activities.

>>> Lydia Vanderloo

**Q: Do you think you'll make more instrumental EPs?**

**A: Steve Shelley:** I think so, but probably not until the end of the year at the soonest. We're putting out a drone record that was recorded in the studio at the same time as the album. We're putting it out in memory of Jason Knuth. He was the music director at [influential University of San Francisco station] KUSF. He committed suicide this spring. It was sort of weird for us, 'cause we didn't really know him. Apparently he was a really big Sonic Youth fan. His friends played "Diamond Sea" at his funeral. It just really hit us. This guy that we didn't know, and what an affect we had on each other's lives. His nickname at the station was Sonic Knuth. It's going to be another SYR release, although it won't be a part of the series. We're going to do it for Jason, and it's going to be a benefit record, to benefit a suicide hotline in San Francisco. It's these really nice drum pieces that happened one night. It's not going to appeal to everyone by any means. But it's really nice guitar hum drone, and I just felt bad. Like Jason wanted to hear this. So as much fun as it is to do something for someone else, I would have liked the guy to have been around to hear it.

**Q: What kind of projects have you been working on outside of the band?**

**A: Lee Ranaldo:** I had two records that just recently came out. One's called *Amarillo Ramp*, that came out in January or February, and that's mostly a solo guitar piece. And then the same month I had a record come out with this jazz drummer, William Hooker, that I play with, and that's called *Clouds* and that has Jim O'Rourke on it as well. I've been doing writing over the last few years, publishing these small, independent books, and I had one that came out late last year that was a very short excerpt from what we hope to turn into a longer book. It was about traveling to Morocco and hanging out with the Master Musicians Of Joujouka, playing with them up in their little village. That was pretty exciting. I wrote stuff about that, and it became published as a little book. It was also published in some music magazines. I'm hoping to expand on that later in the year and put out a whole book of writing and photos about travel in Morocco.

RANALDO, FAR LEFT; SHELLEY, SECOND FROM RIGHT



JOSEPH CULTICE

# The Maxell Mix Tape

We all MAKE UP TAPES of our favorite songs. They're driving companions, records of ill-spent summers, letters to girlfriends or boyfriends, whatever. What's your favorite mix? **Tell Us.** and if we pick your entry, the kind folks at Maxell will send you a bunch of goodies.

This Month's Winner is

**Steven Venn !!**

Richmond Hill, Ontario

### SIDE ONE:

Friends Of Dean Martinez  
In Good Time  
Lambchop  
Cowboy On The Moon  
Tindersticks  
Desperate Man  
Edith Frost  
Pony Song  
Ry Cooder  
Paris, Texas theme  
Cowboy Junkies  
I Don't Get It  
Dirty Three  
Obvious Is Obvious  
Oh Susanna  
Missoula  
Yo La Tengo  
Green Arrow  
Bedhead  
Roman Candle  
Soud Mountain Boys  
A Ride  
Mojave 3  
Tomorrow's Taken

### SIDE TWO:

Mazy Star  
Balah  
OP8  
Sand  
Jim White  
Sleep-Town  
Tarnation  
Big O Motel  
Vic Chesnutt  
New Town  
Red House Painters  
Have You Forgotten How To Love Yourself?  
Rex  
Clean  
Songs: Ohia  
Cabwa, Lingo  
Low  
Lazy  
Cramps  
Lonesome Town  
Elvis Presley  
Mystery Train  
Galaxico  
Stinging Nettle

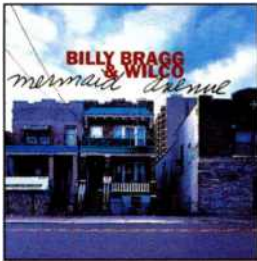
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Mix it up!

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maxell



**RELEASE DATE:**  
JUNE 23.  
**FILE UNDER:**  
FOLK ROCK, '90S-STYLE.  
**R.I.Y.L.:**  
EARLY BOB DYLAN,  
PALACE, UNCLE TUPELO.

## BILLY BRAGG & WILCO

### Mermaid Avenue

**Elektra**

Whether you worship Woody Guthrie or are indifferent to his music, the idea behind *Mermaid Avenue* sounds too earnest to be good. Guthrie's daughter Nora anointed two current artists—Brit folk activist Billy Bragg and rootsy American band Wilco—to write songs around some of her dad's lyrics, penned a half-century ago but never set to music. Cynics, take heart: Not only do Bragg and Wilco rise to the daunting challenge, they produce some of the best music of their respective careers. Named after the Coney Island street where Guthrie wrote his proletariat classics, *Mermaid Avenue* is not a political album, but a warm, varied collection indebted to Guthrie's spirit but not beholden to his idiom. Bragg and Wilco eschew folk for sounds that would've gotten them booed offstage with Dylan in '65—electric guitar, bass and organ join fiddle and piano. The old Guthrie trope of repetition ("Union song, Union battled"; "Hoodoo voodoo"), and his political bent ("The Unwelcome Guest," "Christ For President") are here. But Bragg and Wilco are equally inspired by Guthrie's romantic or introspective sides ("She Came Along To Me," "At My Window Sad And Lonely"). All of the players are at their best, including guest Natalie Merchant—teaming her with Bragg could be a recipe for strident agitprop, but she sings beautifully on two songs, a fitting female counterpoint to the great man's words.

>>> *Chris Molanphy*



**RELEASE DATE:**  
AUGUST 11.  
**FILE UNDER:**  
ALT-COUNTRY.  
**R.I.Y.L.:**  
SON VOLT, CALEXICO,  
CHRIS WHITLEY.

## RICHARD BUCKNER

### Since

**MCA**

Contemplating shadows, grasping at ghosts, laying alone awake at night: These are a few of the unsettling ways California singer/songwriter Richard Buckner likes to spend his time. A classic Southwestern romantic with a desert-dry voice, a sand-bitten soul, and a heavy yet hopeful heart, Buckner finds a kind of intense, fleeting beauty in the melancholy moment when losing someone or something suddenly makes you painfully aware of what it is you once had. The songs on *Since*, Buckner's third album, take nothing for granted, except, perhaps, the willingness of the listener to make sense of the fragmentary details and frayed emotions that lay scattered about the spare, rootsy backdrops of earthy acoustic guitar, gorgeous pedal steel, and muted bass and drums. Poignant images—"Strike another promise and watch it burn" ("Faithful Shooter")—surface from time to time, as do telling little details like the Econolodge in "Brief & Boundless," the poem in "Ariel Ramirez," and the dream about a drunk couple slow dancing in "Once." But Buckner's delivery—the way he makes the flaws in his voice work for him—communicates more than the sum of the skeletal lyrics—a passing mood, an exquisite tension, or just the sense that there are things we never really appreciate until they've slipped away.

>>> *Matt Ashare*



**RELEASE DATE:**  
JUNE 2.  
**FILE UNDER:**  
ELECTRIFIED, PERSONAL  
POP.  
**R.I.Y.L.:**  
JOY DIVISION,  
RADIOHEAD, THE CURE.

## SMASHING PUMPKINS

### Adore

**Virgin**

Billy Corgan has complained for so long that Smashing Pumpkins aren't grunge that you wished he'd shut up and do a total pop album already—lose the Sabbath overtones and move further in the direction of singles like "Disarm" and "1979." *Adore* is as close as he's gotten, and it's a revelation. If *Siamese Dream* hadn't been so good as grunge-era music goes, you'd almost wish this had been the Pumpkins' sound all along: moody pop evocative of The Cure or Joy Division. Just as those bands produced organic songs with electronic sounds, Corgan works with electro-pop producer Flood to create an acoustic-based album that's very plugged in. The slow songs ("Shame," "Behold! The Night Mare") pair sweet melodies with techno beats and synth whooshes, while the faster ones ("Ada Adore," "Appels + Oranjes") throb with catchy tunes framed by brooding lyrics. With his famously tortured voice, Corgan sounds right at home in the dreamy "Daphne Descends" and "For Martha." The latter—a spare, piano-based ballad that gives way to a crescendo of electric guitar—could sum up the whole album. At the risk of being unfair to bandmates James Iha and D'Arcy Wretzky *Adore* is Corgan's show, much as *Siamese* was, especially in its pastoral, seemingly personal lyrics; it may bode well for that solo project he's been planning.

>>> *Chris Molanphy*



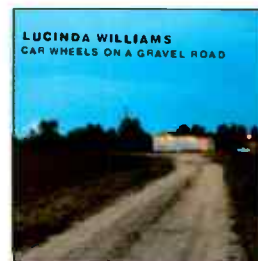
## LUCINDA WILLIAMS

### Car Wheels On A Gravel Road

Mercury

Few are the singer/songwriters who build upon, but ultimately transcend, the genres on which they draw. Bob Dylan is one. Lucinda Williams is another. *Car Wheels On A Gravel Road*, only her fifth album in a 20-plus-year career, is her most fully realized collection, fusing her long-held passion for blues, country and other traditional styles with gorgeous, timeless melodies. Bringing her tunes to life is Williams's raw, silken voice, which can summon the heartbreak of Patsy Cline or the purity of Emmylou Harris (who appears here on "Greenville"), but in a timber that's distinctively her own. Williams's voice is matched by her poetic ability, each song telling a well-worded story of love, longing or loss. For example, the disc's opener, a mellow pop number called "Right In Time," delicately describes a sexual encounter with a lover without ever summoning a dirty word; instead, Williams sighs, "Think about you and that long ride/About my nails, I get weak inside/Reach over and turn off the light/Oh, baby...." This is the woman, after all, whose supple voice caressed the word "casserole" in 1992's "Hot Blood" with a delivery so sultry it left fans short of breath. Such emotions are rarely expressed so gracefully, but that's what makes Lucinda Williams such a rare talent.

>>> Lydia Vanderloo



RELEASE DATE:  
JUNE 30.  
FILE UNDER:  
CLASSIC, ROOTS-BASED  
SINGER/SONGWriters.  
R.I.Y.L.S:  
TOWNES VAN ZANDT,  
EMMYLOU HARRIS.

## RANCID

### Life Won't Wait

Epitaph

Having made their *London Calling*, those Clash-loving punk classicists in Rancid now offer their *Sandanista!*, a sprawling, throw-it-at-the-wall-and-see-if-it-sticks album with little focus but a lot of heart. The 65-minute opus represents Rancid's frantic attempt to catch up, three years after the NoCal band's breakthrough, *...And Out Come the Wolves*, presaged the ska-pop explosion. On *Life Won't Wait*, punk true-believers Tim Armstrong and Lars Frederiksen hurtle away from the easy hooks of *Wolves'* best songs ("Time Bomb," "Ruby Soho") toward a polyglot synthesis of ska, dancehall, balls-out punk and all-American rock. If that sounds studious, rest assured that *Life Won't Wait* may be the *fastest* 22-song album ever. "New Dress" submerges its tale of a mother in a third-world ghetto beneath a punchy beat and a Ramones-esque guitar riff. The title track sports toasting from dancehall king Buju Banton and a chanted chorus ("Division is a new world order") that's too catchy to be political. Armstrong even does a little toasting of his own, picking up the white patois The Clash's Joe Strummer patented years ago. It's fairly over-the-top, yet bracing. Like the gluttonous two-CD releases that have become common in the rap world lately and posit hip-hop as life, on *Life Won't Wait*, Rancid imagines punk as salvation.

>>> Chris Molanphy



RELEASE DATE:  
JUNE 30.  
FILE UNDER:  
RUDER BOYS.  
R.I.Y.L.S:  
THE CLASH, NOFX, BAD  
BRAINS, SUBLIME.

## MEDESKI, MARTIN AND WOOD

### Combustication

Blue Note

You just gotta say it, just get it over with. Because, whether they like it or not, Medeski, Martin And Wood rely on one simple concept and bounce all their music around it: *groove*. It steers the car, fuels the engine and flows through the windows of *Combustication*. It's every song's skeleton, inherent in the structure. Although it's hard not to, you can't dwell on *groove*, though, or you'll miss the universal magic that clings to MMW and gets stronger with every release, a magic that crosses genres and age groups, attracts deadheads, post rockers, funksters, and acid and trad jazzophiles alike—a claim only this group can make. Pinpointing the sorcery of MMW on *Combustication*, their most accomplished release, is tough, but lies in the fact that they ignore musical signifiers, concentrating on a hypnotic, uniquely American rhythm and orbiting around it a flurry of Hammond B3 (and the wonderful addition of scratchin', courtesy of DJ Logic). Even if you're so used to staring at lame-o rock boys pouting on stage that you don't really know how to move your ass, ankles and arms in rhythm, MMW propels you along, freeing your ass till your mind doesn't matter.

>>> Randall Roberts



RELEASE DATE:  
AUGUST 11.  
FILE UNDER:  
INVENTIVE, INTRICATE  
GROOVE MACHINE.  
R.I.Y.L.S:  
METERS, JIMMY SMITH,  
DJ SHADOW, 5IVE STYLE.



## DRUGSTORE ★

Drugstore could have closed up shop in 1995, after its self-titled debut failed to elicit anything more than a heap of critical praise from a fawning British press. A slot on Radiohead's first Stateside tour the same year sparked little but a realization that American audiences are more interested in buzz-bin selections like "Creep" than the type of brooding, edgy pop that Drugstore kept on its shelves. Undaunted, Brazilian bassist/vocalist Isabel Monteiro, American drummer Mike Chylinski and British vocalist Daron Robinson returned to the studio and crafted a gorgeously orchestrated follow-up, the just-released *White Magic For Lovers* (Roadrunner). With cellist Ian Burdge in the fold, the London quartet has expanded its range exponentially. "Say Hello" features a mariachi band and Monteiro's assertively sultry alto; "Never Come Down" is a blast of buoyant Brit-pop; and "The Funeral" is the best illustration yet of Drugstore's sinister-with-a-smile approach. "El Presidente," the acoustic single and video—and a stunning duet with Monteiro and Radiohead's Thom Yorke—has opened the door to the band's second American tour, which starts in July. >>> *Richard Martin*

JESSE CHORHESKY



## OZOMATLI ★

Ozomatli doesn't filter out from some backstage dressing area to begin its shows; the 11-piece LA band takes the stage by snaking through the audience, blowing whistles, chanting and drumming on congas and bongos. The rhythmic pulse continues through songs that are varied combinations of hip-hop, salsa, ska and funk. Described as the "quintessential Los Angeles band," Ozomatli is a product of that city's diverse cultures and with a lineup that looks like an East LA Rainbow Coalition, comes by its eclecticism naturally. The group's secret weapon is its DJ, Cut Chemist, whose turntable work has already been featured on two solo CDs, and whose scratching in the tejano-flavored "La Misma Cancion" has to be seen (as well as heard) to be believed. At the end of its sweaty set, Ozomatli jumps off the stage, once again winding its way through the crowd until it forms a tight circle on the floor, careful not to ensnare any audience members, but drawing them in just the same. >>> *Scott Frampton*



## DJ? ACUCRACK ★

Chicago's DJ? Acucrack—a DJ duo comprised of Jason Novack and Jamie Duffy—seems to have taken the old adage to heart and "built a better mousetrap." Longtime aficionados of the hard-edged Chicago/Detroit techno scene, the duo started Acucrack less than a year ago. When the pair released its debut album, *Mutants Of Sound* (Slipdisc), a blend of trancey techno and breakbeat, it wasn't intended for widespread distribution. But word of Acucrack's furious grooves spread, and college music directors came calling; in a mere six weeks, the album had climbed to the top of the RPM chart in *CMJ New Music Report*, a barometer of college radio airplay. Novack and Duffy are also part of the popular industrial group Acumen Nation, and that fan base has only helped Acucrack broaden its reach. Industrial rockers by day, electronic DJs by night, Novack and Duffy are riding the wave of artists who are blurring the lines between electronic and industrial music. The duo is touring this summer tour with Cubanate, affording it the perfect opportunity to show off its new invention. >>> *William Werde*





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# japan's shibuya-kei scene invades america

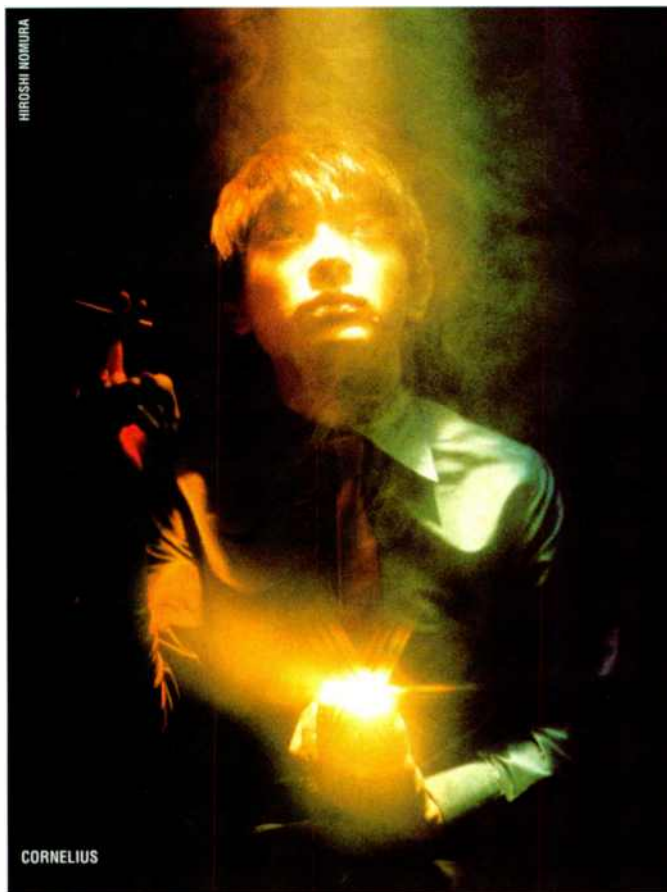
FOR A MOMENT OUTSIDE AUSTIN'S ELECTRIC LOUNGE, TEXAS FEELS A LITTLE LIKE TOKYO. AS THE LINE STRETCHES DOWN THE BLOCK FOR CORNELIUS'S FIRST-EVER US SHOW (DURING THE SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE), THE SOUND AVATAR SOME COMPARE TO BRIAN WILSON IS POSING FOR A MEMORABLE PHOTO WITH FELLOW JAPANESE MUSICIANS FROM CIBO MATTO, BUFFALO DAUGHTER AND SEAGULL SCREAMING KISS HER KISS HER OUTSIDE THE TINY TEXAS DIVE. ¶ IF THEY WERE HOME IN JAPAN, THEY'D BE PLAYING STADIUMS. CORNELIUS'S SOLD-OUT JAPANESE TOUR EARLIER THIS YEAR CULMINATED IN A CRAZED SHOW AT TOKYO'S BUDOKAN STADIUM, COMPLETE WITH DANCERS IN APE COSTUMES, AN EPILEPTIC FIT-INDUCING LIGHT SHOW AND A LOCAL RADIO STATION BROADCASTING AN EXTRA RHYTHM TRACK THAT CONCERT-GOERS PICKED UP ON THEIR WALKMANS.

"These are our buddies. We had to get everybody together for a picture in Texas," explains Cornelius, whose real name is Keigo Oyamada, over lunch the next day. "Everybody seems to be facing the same direction right now. We're moving in a similar field, even though we're all doing what we do independently. There's not really any kind of scene. It just seems like all these bands are facing the same way, that they all have something going right now."

Japanese pop isn't just about Shonen Knife anymore. The Shibuya-kei scene is invading America in a big way. Cornelius's *Fantasma* (Matador) introduces Americans to his gleeful blend of post-My Bloody Valentine guitar noise and sprawling Brian Wilson-styled pop. His queen of the Shibuya district, Kahimi Karie, makes her US debut this fall with Cornelius producing, and will tour here with tender pervert Momus, a cult hero here and in Europe but a smash songwriting success with Karie in Japan.

Add to that the second solo record from Towa Tei (ex-Deee-lite), *Sound Museum* (Elektra), which could give the burgeoning Jap-pop USA movement its first cross over hit, Buffalo Daughter's recent *New Rock* (Grand Royal), and albums coming later this year from Fantastic Plastic Machine and Takako Minekawa. And don't forget the US- and UK-influenced indie-pop of Sunnychar, Peatmos, 800 Cherries and Kactus, that fill compilations like *Pop Jingu* (Sonorama), or the sophisticated club-pop stylings from the likes of Mari, Havana Exotica and Hiroshi Takono available on compilations like *Sushi 3003* (Bungalow).

"One thing that's pretty common to all these bands is they're all



futuristic in a sense," says Oyamada. "Not futuristic as in sci-fi futuristic, but something new, something fresh. Even a band like Guitar Wolf. There's nothing really new about what they're doing, but it still sounds so new. As to why it's happening now, I don't know if I can explain it. There have been bands like this in Japan in the past. All these bands have been doing their thing. But it's like a fine wine that's ready to drink right now. These bands have refined themselves and really gotten on top of what they do."

Shibuya-kei takes its name from West Tokyo's Shibuya district, the bright, youth-mad trend center, compared to New York's Greenwich Village or London's Camden Town, loaded with clubs and shops. It's where Japanese style starts spreading into the commercial culture. "Teenage girls rule Shibuya. They come in from the suburbs, change into their outlandish Space Lolita costumes in the toilets at Shibuya station and walk the streets, spending money on pink gadgets, babyish clothes, records by Cornelius and Citrus. And speaking

their own arcane slang which the businessmen queuing up to buy their underwear can't understand," writes Momus (the recording alias of Nick Currie) in the liner notes for his "Anthem Of Shibuya."

Shibuya spawned the bubble-gum pop scene from which Pizzicato Five emerged in the mid-'90s, but the scene's king and queen—at least in the Shibuya-kei circa '95, the period that's just now invading America—are Cornelius and Karie.

Oyamada, 27, once played in Flipper's Guitar with Kenji Ozawa. But he attracted more attention as a solo artist, as a producer of Pizzicato Five and Karie, and with his label Trattoria. In addition to Japanese acts,



Trattoria is an overseas home for Oyamada's favorite bands, including the Apples In Stereo (who guest on *Fantasma*), Papas Fritas and Free Design, a '60s psych-pop band whose records the label has reissued. Karie is a chart-topping chanteuse with a little-girl sex-kitten purr, squeaking out come-on songs like "Lolipop Dollhouse" and "Good Morning World."

Both of those hits were penned by Currie, whose '80s albums on *el Records* achieved their widest popularity in Japan. When Momus toured Japan in the early-'90s, Karie, Oyamada and others proposed collaborating with him. Since then he has worked with most of the bands at the heart of Shibuya, including Mari Hamada, the Poison Girlfriend and Ken Morioka.

"I try to keep in touch, and aim to be the Hogarth of the Shibuya scene, selling my parodies of its sensibility in such a cunning way that they pass for the real thing," quips Currie. "I would say someone like Keigo Oyamada of Cornelius is a real taste-maker. He's always coming up with unexpected gestures, like releasing a video of vector graphics TV commercials from the early '80s. Things like that redefine the sensibility of the whole scene, and you see ripples in graphic design and music for months."

Shibuya styles shift quickly—trends change and disappear even faster than Japanese prime ministers—so defining the sound is very slippery. "The real star is the scene itself, and the sensibility, which is so hard to define," says Currie. "Study *Kutie* magazine, study *Studio Voice*, and you'll get the gist."

What everyone seems to share, however, is a high degree of fashion consciousness and a well-honed awareness of pop's disposability and kitsch sense. Fantastic Plastic Machine's effervescent *The Fantastic Plastic Machine* (Bungalow) has a bubbly, lounge vibe reminiscent of Martin Denny. The *Sushi 3003* bands shake-and-stir Stereolab's cocktail pop—call it Space-age Bubble-gum Bachelor Pad Music. Towa Tei's *Sound Museum* collects sounds from the past and present listening; the former Deee-lite man says he's happiest about vocal contributions from Biz Markie and Kylie Minogue, his straight cover of Hall & Oates' "Private Eyes," and the drum 'n' bass vibe along with his usual sample-heavy audio engineering.

"I was so into the lounge-y stuff when I finished *Future Listening* [his debut solo release] in 1994," Tei explains. "This time I had the desire to go back to my roots, which is more danceable. Then dance was everywhere, and drum 'n' bass. The first time I started getting into that, I didn't know how they did it. I didn't want to show my learning process. Now," he says, beaming broadly, "I know how they did it."

Karie borrows just as broadly. Her US label Minty Fresh describes her Stateside debut as "a pastiche of almost every pop influence in contemporary music." Perhaps she borrows too broadly—the samples and various audio-bites in her songs have caused clearance problems here, as American copyright laws are much more stringent than Japan's. Legal problems almost entirely resolved, the label expects to have the album out in September. With Cornelius as executive producer, the self-titled album



KAHIMI KARIE



TOWA TEI



FANTASTIC PLASTIC MACHINE

will compile Karie's biggest hits to introduce her perky pop pastiche to the West.

Minckawa has already reached a mass audience here—even if nobody realizes it yet. That's her voice at the end of those Sony PlayStation commercials. The 28-year-old is quirkier than Karie; her inventive pop favors melodies with lots of bleeps and blurts, angular dance rhythms, plenty of knob twiddling, and a mild obsession with cats. It's music wonderfully suited for remixing, and appropriately enough, a remix EP is due this summer, with members of Trans Am, Land Of The Loops, Pulsars, Sukia, Portastatic and Buffalo Daughter in the producer's chair. Then her follow-up to *Roomie Cube* (March) will surface this autumn, called *Cloudy Cloud Calculator* (March-Emperor Norton).

Indeed, Emperor Norton may become Shibuya's American home. The label will also be issuing Fantastic Plastic Machine's album domestically this September. Like Cornelius and Towa Tei, FPM conceptualizer Tomoyuki Tanaka is a one-man studio whiz surrounding himself with DJs, guest vocalists like Pizzicato Five's Maki Nomiya, and hip remixers. Tanaka likes the fluid cocktail vibe, breezy, bubbly tunes borrowing from the effervescence of old-school French pop, Stereolab's overdriven drone, and Esquivel-ian exotica.

"They've championed the more pop-oriented stuff, while kids here still want that biting, macho music and can't figure out pretty melodies unless they're buried under a Green Day song," says Emperor Norton/March mastermind John McFadden. American indie-pop bands like the Apples, Rocketship and Ciao Bella are much more popular in Japan than here, as well, McFadden observes. In addition to Trattoria, he recommends watching Japanese labels like L'appareil Photo, Flavour Of Sound, Quattro and Bente.

Some Japanese worry that Shibuya has been taken over, that the Japanese music industry recognized the marketing possibilities, re-centered there, established pseudo-indie labels, and aggressively went after the Shibuya kids. Others note the quickness with which Japanese trends change and develop, and suggest there will always be a rich Japanese underground.

"Trendy Japanese are some of the most creative people in the world," says Currie. "The typefaces, the gadgets, the style revivals—everything moves much more quickly than they do in the West."

Still, Towa Tei says he's grown bored with Japan just as it seems to be at its most vibrant to outsiders. "To be honest, I'm really not that excited about Japanese music these days," he says. "Some of the people should be known here, not just in Japan. To be listened to just in Japan would make me nuts. Still there's not a lot that I want to listen to that seems like a special thing. But, I think for the US market, it's good. The US market is so boring now. You should listen to something new that's not just from the UK."

end



# six degrees of publication



july 1993



september 1994



november 1995



august 1996



october 1997



june 1998

issue number 1

july 1993

## cover star: primus

**Random Facts:** The magazine's first issue was distributed largely at dusty Lollapaloozas where its writers (none of whom were permanent staff members) stood around handing out copies. Future Editor-In-Chief Scott Frampton wrote a column on music video, which was quickly discontinued after his appointment as head editorial honcho a few months later. When the magazine began, it offered membership in the "CMJ New Music Network," which was basically just a subscription with a snazzy membership card. The narrow space allotted for the cover photo led to many unintentionally humorous covers, where some of the day's finest alternative artists (Soundgarden, Rollins Band, Beastie Boys) were stretched out like TV broadcasts of the opening credits of Panavision movies.

issue number 13

september 1994

## cover star: velocity girl

**Random Facts:** The September '94 issue marked the magazine's first redesign. In October, Quick Fix was added; in November, Letters To The Editor. Eddie Vedder's mug also graced the cover, but there was no interview with the tight-lipped Pearl Jam-mer

inside. Little did we know that three and a half years later, we'd land Vedder for the cover of our special Q&A issue. And until that interview was conducted, we never knew quite how short he is. And we mean short.

issue number 27

november 1995

## cover star: sonic youth

**Random Facts:** Quick Fix was redesigned for the second time with the November '95 issue. Localzine, Dance, Metal, Hip-Hop, Singles and Flashback had all been redesigned for the July issue. This was Sonic Youth's second cover appearance (the band's first was in April of '94) and followed its summer as a Lollapalooza headliner. Note the reappearance of a cover star with outstretched arms. They love us *this* much.

issue number 36

august 1996

## cover star: d-generation special new york rock issue

**Random Facts:** The whole magazine was redesigned again, to coincide with what, at the time, seemed like a brilliant idea for a

special issue focusing on New York City's rock scene. We thought D-Gen would be big stars. Okay, so we were wrong. But in September we reasserted our predictive skills with the second "Next Big Thing" cover, which featured everybody's favorite bad, bad girl, Fiona Apple.

issue number 50

october 1997

## cover star: trent reznor

**Random Facts:** The October '97 issue marked a "re-launch" of the magazine and its "New Look. New Size. New Features." New art director, too. We threw a big party to celebrate, and the Editor got drunk, was burned by a cigarette and blathered at Marilyn Manson. The Scene Is Now and Geek Love began with this issue. This has been our best-selling issue so far.

issue number 58

june 1998

## cover star: garbage

**Random Facts:** New art director (yes, another one) Joe Mitch makes additional design refinements, starting with the May '98 issue. The June cover is our first glossy one—perfect to accentuate the highlights in lovely Shirley Manson's hair. We also lost the plastic wrap over newsstand copies.



# on the verge . . . ?

For five years, we've been forecasting tomorrow's stars. Here's a look at some of our best and worst predictions.

ASCENDANT	PREDICTED	STAR SIGN	ACCURACY
<b>Crystal Method</b>	August '97	"Busy Child" leapt from underground rave hit to Gap commercial soundtrack.	<b>A</b>
<b>Atari Teenage Riot</b>	December '96	Launched the sound named for its label, Digital Hardcore, which recently signed a distribution deal with Elektra.	<b>A-</b>
<b>David S. Ware</b>	June '96	Branford Marsalis's first jazz signing for Columbia.	<b>B</b>
<b>Whiskeytown</b>	June '96	Appeared on <i>Austin City Limits</i> and is one of today's most important y'all-ternative artists.	<b>A</b>
<b>Cardigans</b>	May '96	Do the words "Love me, love me, say that you love me" mean anything to you?	<b>A+</b>
<b>Jonathan Fire*Eater</b>	December '95	Signed to DreamWorks for a large hunk of cash.	<b>A-</b>
<b>Elliott Smith</b>	November '95	He was that guy in the snazzy white suit who played before the skinny Canadian chick at the Oscars.	<b>A+</b>
<b>Tortoise</b>	September '95	Post-rock pioneer.	<b>A</b>
<b>Presidents Of The USA</b>	July '95	Even after their break-up, "Lump" is still in my head.	<b>A-</b>
<b>µ-ziq</b>	May '95	One-man electronica powerhouse.	<b>B+</b>
<b>Squirrel Nut Zippers</b>	March '95	First EP helped launch swing revival. Second album was certified gold.	<b>A</b>
<b>Team Dresch</b>	November '94	Continues to be the single most important dyke-rock band to date.	<b>B+</b>
<b>Offspring</b>	September '94	<i>Smash</i> sold four million copies. Don't ask about <i>Ixnay On The Hombre</i> .	<b>B+</b>
<b>Veruca Salt</b>	June '94	Released in October '94, <i>American Thighs</i> sold over half a million copies. We don't know what happened after that.	<b>B</b>
<b>Mary Lou Lord</b>	March '94	Signed to WORK and after much anticipation released first full-length earlier this year and graced the cover of our January issue.	<b>B+</b>
<b>Combustible Edison</b>	February '94	Launched lounge-core movement.	<b>A</b>
RETROGRADE	PREDICTED	STAR-CROSSED	ACCURACY
<b>Monorchid</b>	December '97	Broke up before issue hit newsstands.	<b>C</b>
<b>Haynes Boys</b>	October '96	Even alt. country purists don't know who they are.	<b>C-</b>
<b>Juicy</b>	August '96	NYC pop band that went dry.	<b>D+</b>
<b>Limblifter</b>	February '96	Mercury dropping, is more like it.	<b>F</b>
<b>Ditch Croaker</b>	January '96	Signed to Reprise but was dropped after one album.	<b>D</b>
<b>Jonny Polonsky</b>	January '96	Frank Black's do-little protégé was—you guessed it—dropped by American.	<b>F</b>
<b>Inbreds</b>	October '95	It turns out that the Canadian duo only gets love from its brethren.	<b>F</b>
<b>Capsize 7</b>	August '95	Dropped by Caroline. No known survivors.	<b>D-</b>
<b>Hardship Post</b>	February '95	Its name turned out to be more predictive than our high hopes.	<b>D-</b>
<b>Caterpillar</b>	January '95	What were we thinking?	<b>F</b>
<b>Balloon Guy</b>	November '94	Signed. Broke up. End of story.	<b>C-</b>
<b>Echobelly</b>	November '94	Not even Brits like this Brit-pop band.	<b>C</b>



the spinanes  
the gospel truth





truth  
 writer: **5** matt hanks  
 band: **the spinanes**  
 photo: jim newberry  
 the gospel tr  
 writer: matt hanks  
 photo: jim

Brothers and sisters, the Reverend Al Green: "How many people in this room are blessed by the Lord? Let me see your hands. It's time to live. Let's stir up the gift! Stir... up... the... gift!" As Rev. Green's mantra trails off, spiritual insanity ensues. His backing band—a tight and funky four-piece with two guitars, bass and drums—pulls a groove out of the vapor, wraps it around Green's words and sends them spinning off to the heavens. To Green's right, a portly man in a purple suit dances in circles and flails his hands in the air. To his left, a woman rocks back and forth like a metronome, screaming "Yes, Lord, thank ya! Yes, Lord, thank ya!" Rev. Green smiles on the chaos with a wild eye. "Don't worry," he assures, "When somebody looks at us funny we say 'Hallelujah.' I'm as sober as a judge, but I can't help myself. I got ta stir up the gift!"

It's Sunday morning at the Full Gospel Tabernacle in Memphis. Rebecca Gates and I are seated halfway back in this modest little church whose ushers double as hospital orderlies and whose minister doubles as a Rock 'N' Roll Hall of Fame inductee. Behind us, a huge painting depicting the Day of Judgment hangs from the wall. It shows a city skyline with cars strewn all over the road, and angels ascending out of them. Above all the machinery and pavement and death, Jesus levitates on a cloud with arms outstretched.

Rev. Green manages to calm the audience long enough to squeeze in a few more inspired words. His sermon is more rhetoric than testimony, but rhetoric never sounded so good. "Now some people want to follow these dope-shootin' rock artists. That's the God they serve. You don't want to serve that God. It's a shameful way to be." A chorus of amins affirms Green's every word, and with little warning, the church once again erupts with cathartic praise.

At the end of our pew, a young girl, maybe ten years old, wrings her hands and stomps her feet. Either exhausted or simply overcome, she takes a seat right next to Gates. With head bowed, the young girl begins to sway, and for a moment, it appears as though she may faint. Gates looks at her with wonder and concern. But before she can offer assistance, two ushers come pick the young girl up and carry her to the front of the assembly.

And on and on for three hours.

After services I ask Gates—a gospel music fanatic and seasoned Pentecostal observer—for her impressions. "I thought it was incredible. I have a lot of trouble with organized religions, but if there's a case to be made for Christianity, they make a pretty good argument. The thing that I loved was that split second when you walk into the room, look up at the pulpit and realize, 'Oh my God, that's fucking Al Green.' It's riveting. But I became consumed by his role as minister very quickly. I don't mean to sound blasphemous, but the power of music and the power of ritual religion are coming from very similar places. That's what's interesting about what [the Pentecostal church] does. They recognize those similarities and see the power in both."

And what about the young girl? "She was definitely feeling something, and I didn't know whether to try and help her or what. Then I started watching her a little more closely." Gates, who was raised in the Jewish faith, pauses and then laughs. "I couldn't help but think, 'This would never happen in Tabernacle.'" Shalom, y'all.

In time honored Southern tradition, Gates and I decide to top off our day of churchin' with a few drinks. We convene at the Lamplighter, a well-worn midtown Memphis dive. As Rod Stewart's "Young Turks" blares from the jukebox we cozy up to a booth and roll tape. Initially, conversation ranges from serial killers ("Ted Bundy was very X-Files, wasn't he?") to the Lamplighter's curious choice of place mats ("Who are they trying to fool? These are carpet swatches").

This is small talk with an agenda. Only a few spare weeks have passed since the new Spinanes album, *Arches And Aisles* (Sub Pop), was completed, and she confesses that, "I still don't have any perspective on it." Gates doesn't seem nervous—she never does—but I get the distinct feeling that there's a lot of things she'd sooner talk about than her new record. "I just got an advance [copy of the new album] yesterday, and I tried listening to it in the car." She cracks a modest smile. "It sounded pretty good."

>>> Continued on page 23

writer: photo:

and writer: **the spinanes**

photo **5** new

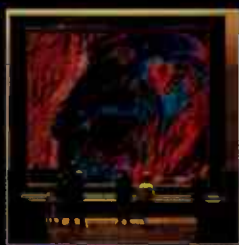


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Method 51  
"Brutal, punishing riffs, and no  
nonsense, punch to the gut vocals"  
- Album Network

World Radio History





anks

photo:

jim newberry

anks

>>> Continued from page 21

Five years ago the Spinanes released *Manos*, a stunning, and stunningly successful, debut, and a linchpin release for the Sub Pop label. The novelty of the band's two-pronged attack—Gates on vocals and guitar, Scott Plouf on drums—provided a natural publicity angle, but it was hardly the point. The fact was, the Spinanes didn't need no stinking bassist. They rocked sturdily and confidently without one. They also introduced tenets like melody and economy to a legion of grunge loyalists, effectively liberating Sub Pop from its one-trick-pony identity crisis. In Gates's words, "[*Manos*] is a very pure record. Very innocent. But I'll never be able to make a record like that again."

And she hasn't. With its subtler, more textural arrangements, and at times painfully personal content, the Spinanes' second album, *Strand*, gathered no moss. Still, there was one problem. "I developed an attitude," admits Gates. "There was just so much bullshit going on at that time, whether it was dealing with people's expectations, or other business stuff. I almost decided it wasn't worth it."

The problems didn't end when *Strand* was completed. Shortly after the album's release, Plouf jumped ship to play drums for Built To Spill. Gates insists that the parting was amicable, but the new autonomy took some getting used to, especially when it came time to write material for a new album. She continues: "At one point [while writing the songs for *Arches And Aisles*] my confidence was totally shot. I didn't trust my ears, I didn't know what was going on. The song that really pulled me through was '[Greetings

From The] Sugar Lick.' That was the song that made me realize, 'Wait a minute, I do know what's going on.'"

Stopping just short of total reinvention, "Greetings From The Sugar Lick" makes good on Gates's desire to "record a pop song, based in pop songwriting, but with the feel of a Gene Ammons record." "Sugar Lick" pulses rather than pounds, implies rather than confesses. Like *Arches And Aisles* on the whole, it is a highly literate and confident piece of work.

"Reach Vs. Speed" is another of the album's highlights. With its pristine vocal harmonies, gently strident drum pattern and wide-stroke guitar lines, it's a serious contender for the Spinanes' best song to date. Gates concurs, "'Reach Vs. Speed' turned out exactly how I heard it in my head."

"With this record I decided, 'You don't have to fly the middle finger quite so much. It doesn't have to be so big.' It had become like one of those sports-fan hands you see at ball games, you know? Imagine one of those hands flippin' the bird."

With one middle finger around a beer and the other cradling a cigarette, Gates recalls one day from the *Arches And Aisles* sessions that shows just how much the Spinanes have evolved. "I remember getting really frustrated one day. I realized I had all these ideas, but I didn't have the knowledge to get the sounds I wanted. Doug [Easley, co-owner of Easley Studios, where *Strand* and *Arches And Aisles* were recorded] turned to me and said, 'So, make another album.' Suddenly, a lot more things made sense."

Gates cracks a smile and tips her beer. "That's exactly what I'm gonna do." end



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band: lounge lizards

5 writer: scott frampton title: dishing with john

writer: scott frampton photo: title: dishing with john



"Have I met you before? No? Well, I'm very handsome."

It was impossible to tell through the phone line and John Lurie's nasal croak if his sign-off was deadpan humor or uncanny self-possession. Either seemed likely to fit the man, who as leader of the "punk jazz" ensemble Lounge Lizards and a sometime actor, had become a paragon of downtown cool.

"But I'm not cool. I'm not. I'm a nervous wreck. That used to be me some 15 years ago, but not anymore."

Chewing on an éclair at a Greenwich Village café a week later, Lurie is less concerned with his image than with the mounting responsibilities associated with the first Lounge Lizards record in nine years, *Queen Of All Ears*, and the record label he started to release it, Strange & Beautiful Music. In the midst of this, he's also finalizing preparations on his new television show, *Fishing With John*, soon to appear on Bravo and the Independent Film Channel.

"I'm sorry. I'm just so—I've got so many things going at the same time, and each thing creates... even if only ten percent of each thing goes wrong on each thing, it's like aaah!

"What happened? What happened? Is it just modern times? Or once you hit 45 does your life automatically become a drag? As an artist, what I really want to do is to make things slow down for people. Or make things at least real and whole and kind of pure. But there I become as guilty. For example, I did this eyeglass ad for Yamamoto. I don't believe in this stuff. I think fashion is dangerous and it has too much power and I think what's religious and cultural is gone from our society. But I'm doing this eyeglass ad because they're going to say 'John Lurie, founder of the Strange & Beautiful Music Label with upcoming releases...' So I'm doing it for a reason. I mean, I like this music. I play this music and I feel that it comes from my heart and it's like a prayer and then all this stuff gets piled on top of it. Okay, you can't get a deal, so you start your own record company so you invest all your money so then it's scary. So then you're doing more and more tackier and tackier things to promote the music. It also becomes your career rather than your calling."

Lurie keeps gesticulating toward a videotape of the recited trailer for *Fishing With John*, held by a straining rubber band to a stack of manila folders and other business miscellany. The show is exactly as its title suggests, Lurie on fishing expeditions with the likes of Dennis Hopper, Willem Dafoe and Tom Waits, and the results are often hilarious. In addition to writing, producing and directing the series, Lurie composed the soundtrack (also available on Strange & Beautiful). It's work he's done before; having scored films for Jim Jarmusch, as well as more mainstream fare like *Get Shorty*, the work represents the other side of Lurie's creative life.

>>> Continued on page 54

ing with john photo: scott frampton photo:

★ "QUEEN OF ALL EARS" BY THE LOUNGE LIZARDS APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD





L-R: JONAS, MARCUS, LENA, MATTIAS

KCD

band: komeda

band 5  
title 5

title: scandanavian design

Komeda's Marcus Holmberg and Lena Karlsson are the kind of cute young things that make you want to hop a jet to their native Sweden, fabled land of blondes, Saabs and sleekly designed furniture. Displaying their own modern sense of style, Marcus and Lena, along with bandmates Jonas Holmberg and Mattias Norlander, often dress in white jumpsuits while performing their Kraftwerk-styled bossa nova future-pop.

"We don't smash up guitars and burn things," says Marcus. "So we wish to look good. It would give me a surrealistic experience to see a band dressed up like us. Not many bands care anymore—'just put on your T-shirt.' But you can create your personality. You can create your own art."

On Komeda's US debut, *The Genius Of Komeda*, the quartet meshed darting, off-kilter rhythms with zippy, oddly hummable melodies. The group produced a kind of thrillingly streamlined robo-pop that depicted solid citizens working in a perfect future, with ethics perhaps taken from an imaginary manifesto called "The Party's Rules On Living." This is a band of socialists, with its message that government should benefit the People, not the coffers of transglobal corporations. In "Happyment," from the newly released *What Makes It Go?* (Minty Fresh), Lena sings of a "wheel of fortune that doesn't exist," and how "if you had a fortune you would be a better man." Lena's criticisms could be aimed at the American dream.

"That song is a criticism of capitalism and those TV game shows," says Lena, her English weak but pointed. "You turn on the other channels and you see all these poor people. It's the same in Sweden. You think you will be a better man if you have a lot of money, then you could give things away, but people don't do that."

Musically, *What Makes It Go?* is frothy and riveting, full of unusual rhythmic counterpoint (a little rock 'n' roll pummel for good measure) and urgent Moog synthesizers cooing their hypnotic song. Sophisticated? Damn straight. Influenced by its namesake, '60s Polish film composer Krystof Komeda (*Rosemary's Baby*), plus Swedish jazzers like

writer: ken micallef

photo: johan gumseus

World Radio History

august1998 25

title:

# dutch treat

5

band: solex

title:

producer: andrea moed  
writer: andrea moed

photo: patrick haley

photo: patrick haley

photo: patrick haley

If Elisabeth Esselink's story were one of her songs, it might be called "Solex, Sight Unseen." Here it is: A Dutch secondhand record store owner and erstwhile guitar rocker buys an old eight-track recorder at an auction. She takes it home and fools around with it, composing winsome little melodies to sing into it and sampling rhythm tracks from a stack of her store's unsellable CDs. Without telling her friends or ex-bandmates, she assembles an album's worth of music and sends it around to British and American record labels, calling herself Solex. "I thought maybe I'd get one reaction," she recalls. Five labels immediately express interest. One A&R man even publishes a rave review of a fictitious Solex single in a magazine, hoping she'll call. Suddenly, there are people on both sides of the Atlantic wondering, "Who is Solex?"

Several months later, Solex sits in the New York offices of Matador Records, the label she finally signed with. What was once her demo tape is now her first album, titled *Solex Vs. The Hitmeister*. Esselink's classically beautiful face peers out from its cover, wearing a subtle Mona Lisa smile. Having been summoned from her home in Amsterdam by Matador, she has met her benefactors, had her promo pictures taken, and made her American debut at the South By Southwest music industry convention.

For all the publicity undertaken, the true soul of Solex remains hard to pin down. On its surface, her album appears slavishly biographical, with song titles like "Waking Up With Solex," "When Solex Just Stood There" and the promotional-sounding "Rolex By Solex." But each song reveals someone different: a boy or a girl, a shy type who doesn't "feel at ease so easily" or a libertine "smooching for hours in the back seat of his car." The sound of Solex is equally uncategorizable. Her pointedly lo-fi sampling and recording techniques inspire comparisons to Dub Narcotic or Land Of The Loops, but what holds the songs together are her affecting lyrics, which create the feeling of distance and familiarity at once. The words spool out without much regard to verse and chorus, like the phantom pieces of conversation you hear when the telephone wires get crossed.

She has already gotten used to explaining herself to the press. "Solex is the main character in every song, but it's not necessarily me," Esselink says. "It's more like some sort of liquid comic strip figure." The titles are a throwback to the serial adventure books of her youth, the kind that launch the intrepid hero on a new exploit each episode. She finds it natural to adopt a different point of view each time. "I can put myself in lots of different characters," she notes. "For me it's very understandable what someone else will think or do. I studied clinical psychology, so nothing is too weird."

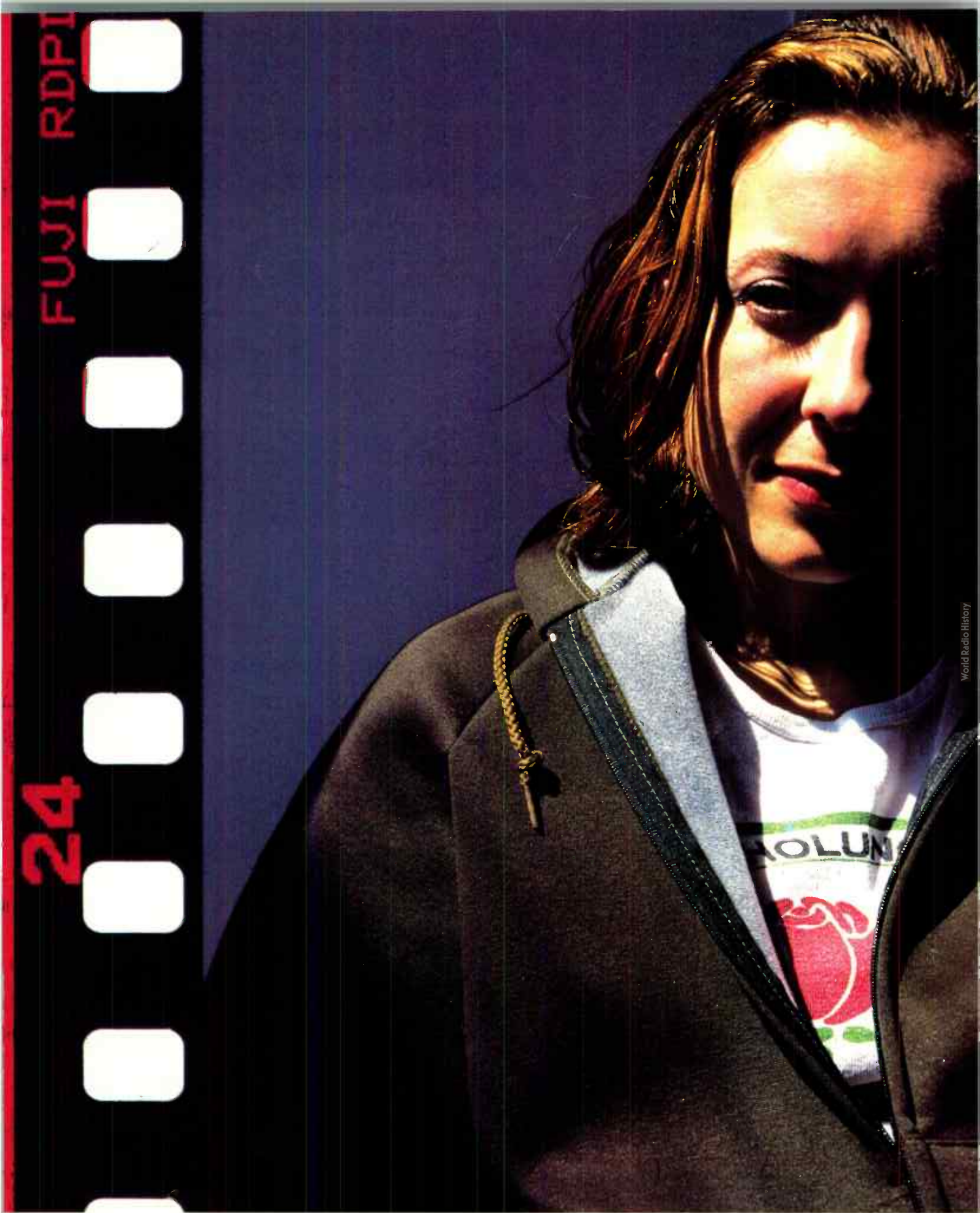
Though Esselink is a longtime veteran of her local rock scene, it was only when she purchased the eight-track recorder that her alter ego was born. Writing at home, playing all the parts herself, inspired her in a way that being in bands never had. "I was in a guitar band from age 18. All my friends are in guitar bands. But right now I feel more connected with the people who make dance music because they can work at their own places, by themselves. You can make all the decisions, and you don't have to compromise on anything, and that's mostly what takes a lot of energy when you're in a band."

In composing and mixing her songs, Esselink seems to take each of these decisions to heart. It helps that her sampler is an old one, with few of the features that modern ones have. "When you buy a new sampler now, it takes about a month to figure out how it works, because you've got many options," she says. "But I've got a sampler from the '70s, and you've got only about five dots to press, so, well, you cannot miss. You can reverse the sample, you can stretch it, pitch it up, pitch it down." Then there is the choice of the samples—the self-imposed challenge of finding "a very good fragment from a very bad CD." To avoid the hassles of rights clearance, she re-recorded all the samples for the album.

Since the album came out, Solex has been touring with a guitarist and drummer, getting reacquainted with the joys of playing live. But Esselink admits that she looks forward to being back home with the eight-track, mixing new songs. "The next album won't be like *Hitmeister*," she reveals. "I've got some weird ideas, but I'm not going to tell you!"

end





World Radio History









JOE CALANDRA



JOHN KLEIMAN

band: monster magnet  
 title: seething las vegas  
 photo: john kleiman  
 writer: scott frampton  
 photographer: john eder

monster

magnet

title: seething las vegas

"I've had some complaints from my friends that really love psychedelic music," Dave Wyndorf says of his band Monster Magnet's new *Powertrip* (A&M). "What's with the aggro?" "Well, I haven't felt very fuckin' psychedelic this year in case you haven't noticed, goddamn it!"

"When I went to write this record, I had just about quit," he continues. "I came back from touring the world, where I was having a great time, and it was like 'this sucks.' I was looking at a stack of bills—being in rock 'n' roll is expensive—and had absolutely no enthusiasm because of radio and just what was going on [culturally in America]. And the whole thing turned very sour very quick for me."

The thing is, he's not complaining, really. In fact, a smile is curling the edges of the goatee clinging to his chin. Maybe it's gallows humor, but Wyndorf seems about as comfortable as a guy wearing leather pants on a warm day, talking about his band's limited potential can be. "It's an uphill battle," he offers. "Nobody gets Monster Magnet in America. They're not going to get it. They don't understand. The stereotype is understood fully by us. We like the stereotype. We like it. It's a lot more complicated than people would imagine."

As is Wyndorf. The headlong dive into rock excess that is Monster Magnet has made him into the human crop circle the first track of *Powertrip* describes: Whether he's the product of forces from outer space or an elaborate fraud, he's a fascinating phenomenon either way.

"I lost any hope for people understanding the innuendo in this thing a long time ago. This whole band was built on innuendo. It was built on double meanings. A total fashion comment. A white trash comment. All the stuff that I grew up with that I thought was really funny and horrible but somehow incredibly attractive. And it's also something I can claim as mine. I did work at gas station, and I can be that white trash guy. I'm a lot more comfortable being the gas station guy than some pseudo-intellectual fanzine guy. I would fail at that, but I can be the white trash guy with a hard-on drinking a soda at the gas station. And that's what I decided to be.

"Sometimes you're influenced more by things you disagree with morally, tastefully, everything.

>>> Continued on page 54

writer: scott frampton photos: john eder

★ "SPACE LORD" BY MONSTER MAGNET APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD





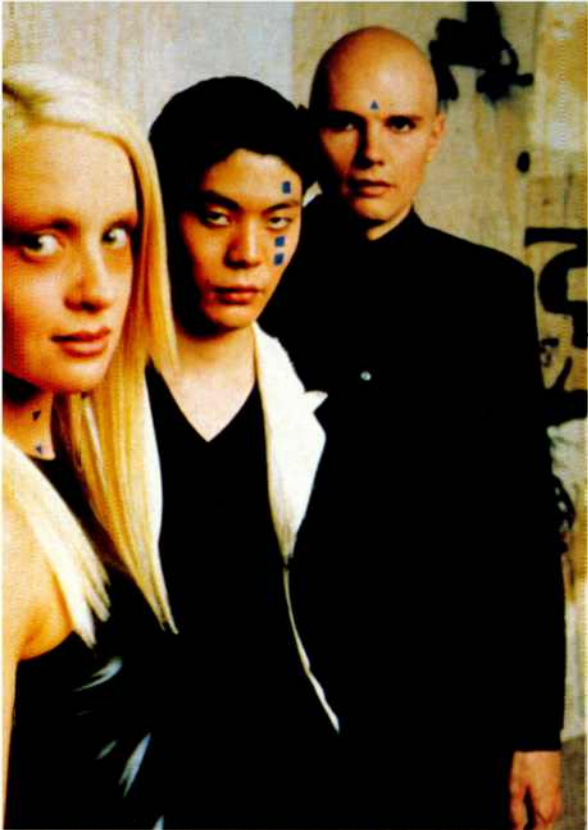
THIS ONE GOES  
OUT TO THE ONE I

**LOVE**

SMASHING  
PUMPKINS

WRITER TOM LANHAM PHOTOS YELENA YEMCHUCK

LO



# HAVING ENDURED A SERIES OF DEATHS IN THE FAMILY—SOME SPIRITUAL, SOME LITERAL—BILLY CORGAN HAS EMERGED WITH A NEW APPRECIATION FOR LIFE AND THE PLACE THE SMASHING PUMPKINS HOLD IN IT.

## IT'S EASY TO GET THE WRONG IMPRESSION.

Scan through recent Smashing Pumpkins headlines, and the news looks bleak: the heroin-overdose death of tour keyboardist Jonathan Melvoin, which led to the arrest and subsequent firing of Pumpkin drummer Jimmy Chamberlin; the potential involvement, or non-involvement, of bandleader Billy Corgan in the latest Hole recording sessions; the Pumpkin's label, Virgin, suing the band for breach of contract when they announced plans to leave after delivering only three of a stipulated seven albums. The good news, such as Chamberlin undergoing court-ordered drug treatment, a feud-ending renegotiation of the Virgin deal, a slot opening for Pumpkin heroes Cheap Trick, naturally gets less play than the dishy gossip. Corgan chalks it up to an "on-line mentality—we're all on-line now, even when we're not, and the information we get is just never enough."

You can wallow in the tabloid dirt if you choose, but you'll probably miss the plaintive point of *Adore*. You might not notice any difference at first in, say, a song like "Once Upon A Time." While its gentle pace fulfills Corgan's promise for a new, different Pumpkins sound, it has all of the band's signature elements. Lissome, chiming guitar notes from James Iha tumble over bassist D'arcy Wretzky's supple rhythms, leaving plenty of room for Corgan's trademark nasal pneumatics, which make him one of modern rock's most identifiable voices. And so the track proceeds, lazily drifting by.

Listen closely to what Corgan is singing, however, and the honest, personal tone of his window-on-the-soul poetry becomes startling: "Mother I'm tired/Come surrender my son/Time has ravaged on my soul/No plans to leave but still I go." A sunny chorus cuts in, as crisp as an autumn school day from childhood—"Fallin' with the leaves/Fallin' out of sleep/To the last goodbyes"—and then segues into a poignant coda: "Mother I hope you know/That I miss you so." A year and a half ago, Corgan's mother passed away after a protracted illness, and now her son has used his craft, and most of *Adore*, to deal with the tragedy, to confront death head-on and somehow make sense of it all. It's a mature move not usually associated with the arrested-adolescent self-absorption of pop stars. But Corgan, despite a media profile he jokingly refers to as "your usual doomsayer," is not a typical pop star. No matter what the papers might say.

In the muffled, Gothic-toned "Tear," Corgan shakes his fist at the great beyond, at an imagined foe who robbed him of his loved one—"Heaven

seemed insane for taking you away/Cause heaven is to blame for taking you away." A metronome-simple backbeat and the plush, feathered piano in "Crestfallen" allow the bereaved to question the selfish motives that invariably surface with grief: "Who am I to need you now... to deserve your sympathy/You were never meant to belong to me." In the sweeping "Behold! The Nightmare," Corgan shouts into the ether "You're so cruel in all you do/But still I believe, I believe in you/So may you come with your own knives/You'll never take me alive." And finally, the eight-minute suite "For Martha" puts the issue to rest—"Your picture out of time/Left aching in my mind.... If you have to go I will get by/I will follow you and see you on the other side."

This is not to say, however, that *Adore* is one big variation on a lachrymose theme. Elsewhere, in "Pug," "Perfect," "Appels + Oranjes" and the arena-huge single "Ava Adore," Corgan—who wrote and produced or co-produced every composition—takes stock of his existence, adds up all the good things that remain, and comes to a clearheaded conclusion with the closing "Blank Page."

Muse on mortality long enough and you'll emerge with some essential, and remarkably optimistic, truths. Or, as Corgan quietly puts it, "You take the opportunity to really examine what's important and what's not important. And in the big picture of life, of *my* life, my mother was a *very* important person. James, D'arcy and Jimmy are more important to me than the Smashing Pumpkins. So if you examine all these things, that's why Jimmy's no longer in the Pumpkins. And that's why my mother stood behind me all those years when I was taking a lot of shit for being a freak and gave me the courage to be myself. And this is not an attempt to trivialize her death, but in a weird kind of way, her passing told me that if you're not going to do what you really want to do with your life *now*, you're never going to do it. And there's no better time than now to examine what's important, what your value system is."

Outside, on the outskirts of Chicago, it's a gorgeously clear day. Inside the Smashing Pumpkins' rehearsal studio, it's curtained, dark and vaguely oppressive. It suggests the smoky drawing room of an 18th century aristocrat, complete with a pampered poodle reclining on exotic Oriental rug. On a long, comfortable couch sit a track-suited Wretzky and a shag-haired Iha, decked out in denim. Draped over a Sidney-Greenstreet-sized leather chair is the tall, spider-limbed Corgan, head cleanly shaven, wearing



all black—black silk shirt, vintage black Sans-A-Bell dress trousers and black clodhopper boots. He controls the interview in much the same way it's been suggested he controls the band; naturally, he appears to have the most to say about his own cathartic input to *Adore*. "Once Upon A Time," he says, is not a bad starting point.

"I think as we get older, we evolve in our relationships with our parents," Corgan notes calmly, hands folded in his lap. "Where they're not so much your parents anymore. They become almost like friends. And in the case of my mother, her becoming sick, in some ways I became the parent in the situation for a brief time. And it's like I've always tried to do—I can take specific situations in my life, but I'm trying to reach a bigger frame of the picture. I can't be specific about what I was trying to say in that song, but what I *am* trying to say is, you have to see things for what they really are." He makes the first of several pauses to ensure that the message is getting across. "I mean, I used rock 'n' roll to crawl out of my self-perceived hole. And at the end of the day, they can bury me with the Pumpkins CDs, but it ain't gonna make a whole lot of fucking difference, if you know what I mean. And I've *really* started to think about what's important.

"Like, I have no problem with being a musician, with being a public person," Corgan continues. "I actually quite enjoy it. But it's what's important in that for me. And I think we, as a band, have done a pretty good job of sticking to our guns. So, if anything, my mother's death gave me the courage to stick to my guns even more. In light of her passing, I looked at it and said, 'If you don't have the courage to just do and be what you want to, then what the fuck are you? You're not a man, that's for sure.' And there are plenty of parables in there, as well. We experienced a death on tour, even though it was somebody we weren't very close to. We experienced a death of sorts with Jimmy leaving the band, because it was basically the end of the Pumpkins as we knew the Pumpkins. And right before that, Jimmy's father had died. So we're talking Jonathan dying, Jimmy's father dying, Jimmy leaving the band, my mother dying, and me getting a divorce, in roughly the same time period. So you're talking about a *lot* of death, both real and symbolic. And to be even more trite, the death of grunge, the death of a movement, the death of a time frame. Even with that, there's a certain mourning that you go through."

All of which might account for the less-urgent feel of *Adore*. The Pumpkins' previous double-disc, 1995's *Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness*, volleyed so many diffuse, disparate thoughts over the course of 28 songs that it took several listens to get any sense of cohesion. Heavy on keyboards and bubbly programming (courtesy of Nitzer Ebb alum Bon Harris), *Adore* goes a converse route. By focusing on the meanings of life and death, Corgan has scripted a diary-personal chapter in Pumpkins history that illuminates, more than its sorrowful subject matter, the very soul of its creator. And the songs, which beam flickering light from a despairing darkness, feel almost like gospel. "I've used that word when we were recording," Corgan nods. "There's a certain kind of vibrancy that's in the music that I like a lot. But most art is born from a darkness. Some artists choose to take you to extremes and show you the worms and the maggots. Other artists try and create a contrast, and other artists, well, their darkness is a complete *denial* of darkness. That's what makes some of these airbrushed divas so sinister—it's like they're living some kind of space-age dream.

"But I've always tried to stand right on the Mason-Dixon line of it. And I think that's what maybe confuses people about the Pumpkins' music and the Pumpkins as people. We've always tried, musically and emotionally, to straddle the line between good and bad, light and dark. That's where we see the truth in it. We could dress up and be scary or we could clean up our image. We could do a lot of things, but it's not who we are. It's not the lives that we've led. We've always tried to represent where we stand, and it doesn't always make for good rock star fodder. But we think it makes for compelling music." Corgan pounds his fist on the chair armrest to emphasize his words. "We're willing to basically stand there in the middle of the fire. And lose ourselves in it."

Iha clears his throat. "In the beginning of the band," he nearly whispers, "we used to travel so much and tour so much. And the more we keep traveling, the more I become aware of our mortality. The more plane trips we make, the more insane tours we do—it all makes me *very* aware of my own mortality. I don't know if that's paranoid or not. But you hear about so many tragic things happening every day, and it just makes you more and more aware."

Corgan, only 30, nods in agreement with Iha and continues the thought. "But when you're 22, how many people do you know who've died that are of your generation? Now that we've gotten to

this age, it's like, everywhere we turn, overdoses, suicides or spiritual deaths, where people have just basically given up. I mean, they're just dead inside. When you're 22, 23, there's a lot of idealism. And they can support that idealism because they haven't had a chance to fuck it up yet." Cut to scenes a few years down the pike, he adds, "and the world's hammered 'em down, and the fact that they were gonna go be a *National Geographic* photographer, well, that's not really panning out and they're working at the new custom Arby's or something. The reality is setting in and you see people having to really fight against it. And just to reframe the album, *that's* the kinda stuff I'm trying to get at.

"And sure, there's a certain percentage of things [on *Adore*] seen through someone who's on a weird kind of mountain. I can't pretend that I am always of the sheep, that's not the life I lead. But I do try and speak a lot about what's important to most people. Because when you meet somebody, nothing breaks my heart more—and I've said this before, I'll say it again—than when somebody comes up to me, apologizing for working in an ice cream shop. They say 'Oh, I'm just a lowly ice cream employee.' And in their mind, they're already failing. I mean, so what? Does your family love you? Are you having a good time? Are you finding something in life for you? That's all that really matters. I mean, we can play rock, we can look funny, we can digress into the seventh ring of indie heaven, but at the end of the day, it's all just a bunch of muckup. It's not what you, leave this world with. I don't think God asks you 'Hey, how was that gig in Hoboken back in '91?' You know what I mean?"

Wretzky and Iha are both chuckling softly to themselves. They know what Corgan means. In fact, they know pretty much all there is to know about the man—his foibles, his weaknesses, even his old habits of downplaying their Pumpkins roles in the press. They probably even know the secret to why he shaved his head. And they've chosen to stick with him. When it's mentioned that one of the key components of *Adore* is his newfound appreciation for his two cohorts, Corgan actually falters for a minute, a lump forming in his throat. "I *do* appreciate them," he manages.

"And you definitely pass that life with people. I mean, we've been together ten years, and we've passed the line where it seems like it's all going to go away at any minute. It kind of becomes more like, it's there because you want it to be. And I'm a little embarrassed about the whole subject, because in my mid-twenties confusion I felt the need to point arrows at myself and distinguish myself from the band in a way that was kind of childish. Which, at



"WE'VE ALWAYS TRIED TO STRADDLE THE LINE BETWEEN GOOD AND BAD, LIGHT AND DARK. IT DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE FOR GOOD ROCK STAR FODDER, BUT WE THINK IT MAKES FOR COMPELLING MUSIC."

the time, was underestimating the situation. And we get questions all the time, especially from international journalists." Corgan adopts a hokey French accent to illustrate this: "What iz zee ree-lay-shon-sheep? Are you zee deek-tay-tor?" But you can never underestimate the karmic chemistry certain people have together—it doesn't matter who does what."

Growing numb to the relationships, around you, frowns Wretzky, "is way too easy to do. It's really easy to take things for granted. And as far as money or anything material goes, well, I think that's the least important thing to all of us. We really try not to take our situation for granted."

"And to take it back to the record again," Corgan interjects, "a lot of what the record was about was an attempt to go back to what's important at a musical core and build it outward. It's hard to put it into terms that most people can understand, because people can take it so negatively. If you say, 'Okay, we're jaded,' people go, 'Yeah—I wish I had a million fuckin' dollars, too!' But you do get alienated. And the reason that you got into music is the thing that you end up being alienated from. Because the business, the politics, the life of it just starts to draw you away from the idea 'Oh yeah—we play music!' And sometimes music seems to be the least important thing in the world that surrounds you. You pick up an album review, you read about politics. You pick up an article, you read about who they're fucking. You don't read a lot about *music*."

A recent tabloid item identified Corgan on the arm of a certain supermodel, in line to attend a hot-ticket concert. "But they failed to mention that I was with my girlfriend of two-and-a-half years at the time," he growls. Iha reports that he got strangely similar treatment at his tenth anniversary high school reunion. Everyone knew what he did for a living, but when he inquired about his former classmates' occupations, "They'd go, 'Oh, I don't do anything.' Most of 'em were making good money with computers or they worked at some big corporation, but they just didn't think

it was good enough to tell me because I have this supposedly 'glamorous lifestyle.'"

"Ha!" Wretzky guffaws. "Tell me about it! If just *one* of 'em could—"

Corgan hastily cuts in. "No, no, nooooo. Let's not go there, or we'll be talking for hours about the 'how hard it is to be a rock star' bit."

Wretzky shrugs, admits defeat. "Yeah, yeah. You're right. Forget it."

"We're 'of the people!'" Corgan cackles. "Can't you tell?"

A joke. But probably more on the money than the Pumpkins themselves have even guessed. When asked why more performers don't use their work to map out life's larger mysteries, Corgan sighs. "I think where a lot of people get tripped up is, their ego gets in the way of their kind of... of... spiritual duty." Corgan pauses again, letting the term echo through the cavernous rehearsal studio. "This is a very unpopular way to put it, but if you believe in God and you believe that God is the entity that empowers everyone to do things, then if you're given the talent to do something on a high level, like music, and you're given the ability to reach a lot of people, you have almost a responsibility to be a conveyor of something. It doesn't mean you have to be a conveyor of God's message. But you have a responsibility to always recognize that *you* are a servant to the music, the music does not serve you. And I think that's a very important lesson for people to learn, because when you look at it that way, then everything else falls into perspective."

And yes, Corgan confesses, "Once Upon A Time" and its elegiac *Adore* companion pieces are coping mechanisms, of a sort. "But that's the thing—the best way to deal with death is to live. If you really think about it, it's the most respectful thing you can do in somebody's memory. Curling up is not going to do any good. But living, actually living in that person's memory and in that person's spirit... well, there's really no better tribute."

end

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## BARRY ADAMSON

**As Above So Below**  
Mute

There's a joke that when God invented men, external genitalia were added in post-production, after the circulatory system was finished; that's why we can't engage our brains and members simultaneously. But Barry Adamson's always had a spare pint of plasma coursing through the veins of his cinematic pop noir, invigorating it with both sensuality and savvy smarts. His sixth solo full-length moves away from the sprawling grandeur of last year's largely collaborative *Oedipus Schmoedipus*, opting instead to stir up the stylized jazz-funk of 1993's *The Negro Inside Me* with the claustrophobic intimacy of 1989's *Moss Side Story*. Lyrically fixating on ideas of mortality and the eternal return, *As Above So Below* moves through a series of stages. On "Can't Get Loose" and "Come Hell Or High Water," Adamson is an addled crooner, affecting a delivery between Iggy Pop, Mel Tormé and Edwyn Collins. The album's pinnacle comes halfway through with the lascivious fable "Jazz Devil," which playfully addresses the sticky business of being caught between heaven and hell. From there, chaos and cacophony encroaches, in the escalating rage of "Still I Rise," a disquieting interpretation of Suicide's "Girl," and the railing "The Monkey Speaks His Mind."



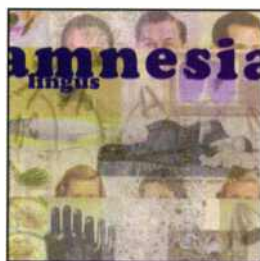
RELEASE DATE:  
**JUNE 23.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**JAZZ ALLEY MEETS THE TWILIGHT ZONE.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**EDWYN COLLINS, NICK CAVE, JOHN ZORN'S SPILLANE.**

>>> Kurt B. Reighley

## AMNESIA

**Lingus**  
Supreme-Island

Keeping up with workaholic pop wizard Brad Laner is a chore. In addition to Amnesia's *Lingus*, the follow-up to last year's *Cherry Flavor Night Time*, Laner recently unleashed his third album as the Electric Company and collaborated in Lusk (with members of Failure, Tool and the Replicants). A former member of Savage Republic and founder of Medicine, the prolific Laner is obviously purging; luckily, the quantity of his output hasn't adversely affected its quality. On *Lingus*, Laner's seemingly opposed guises (Electric Company shades toward electro; Amnesia toward pop) co-exist exquisitely in a successful 14-track marriage of form and content. A typically Lanerian moment: the dubby, drony "Let You Down Again," where squiggly noise battles ethereal textures to a tie. *Lingus*'s heady concoctions blend interpretations of traditional progressive styles (Eno/Fripp) with this year's prog redux (beats and bass), and fashion curious sonic quilts by juxtaposing melodicism and noise, light and darkness. Laner is in charge all the way, but gets confident assistance from his brother Josh on drums, deconstructs the blues with Beck ("Drop Down") and explores abstractions with Beck's dad, David Campbell, who leads the chamber orchestra providing lush accompaniment to "Swimming Lessons," "Leaving" and "Train Try."



RELEASE DATE:  
**JULY 14.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**ABSTRACT NOISE POP.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**MY BLOODY VALENTINE, MEDICINE, BJÖRK'S HOMOGENIC.**

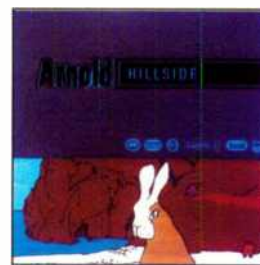
>>> Mark Woodlief

## ARNOLD

**Hillside**  
Creation-Columbia

London-based trio Arnold will certainly appeal to those steeped in the archetypal sounds of Britain's Creation Records label (Boo Radleys, Eggman, Teenage Fanclub, etc.) and to those with a love for touchstone '70s pop bands like Badfinger, Big Star or Emmitt Rhodes. Arnold plays a dreamy, modern take on classic Anglo pop with just a whiff of folk—clear, ringing guitars, soaring, sad melody lines and fragile, wounded-boy vocals that can be alternately light and lovely or dark and brooding. It's not quite as *Revolver-y* as Oasis, not quite as awash in weird sounds as Radiohead, but this trio would still fit nicely on a bill with, say, Teenage Fanclub opening for a rare Scott Walker club appearance. When the music succeeds, it's a joy, particularly Phil Morris's high, keening vocals, which can send a chill down the spine that's so real you can picture his scarf blowing behind him as he walks up a windy street on a cold lamp-lit night. But when the album falls short, which is about a third of the time, it's rather like the Hollies or Herman's Hermits compared to the almighty Beatles or Badfinger.

>>> James Lien



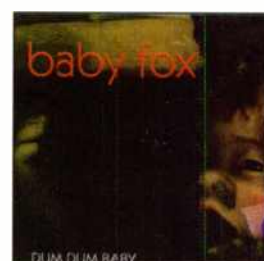
RELEASE DATE:  
**JULY 7.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**COULD HAVE BEEN ON APPLE RECORDS.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**ELIJOTT SMITH, CHRIS BELL, BOO RADLEYS.**

## BABY FOX

**Dum Dum Baby**  
Roadrunner

Authenticity in trip-hop is almost as important as the beats and samples; you've got a lot of catching up to do if you're not on one of the genre's "respected" labels, or from Bristol. Those not meeting these prerequisites are cast as coattail surfers, trend-tramps trying to cash in on the current signing frenzy. Baby Fox is one such group fighting an uphill battle for legitimacy, and with *Dum Dum Baby*, its second release, the trio constructs a capable groove-oriented dance record. The beats, the rhythms, the personality, the samples—they're all marvelous and convincing. But in this atmosphere, creating perfectly capable cuts just ain't good enough; you gotta be groundbreaking and breathtaking. Vocalist Christine Ann Leach's breathy chanteuse style works in the context of these songs, but to pick it out of a line-up would be a task. The pace and structures of the songs flow as they should, based on what we've heard on other successful genre albums, but there's not one moment on *Dum Dum Baby* that's a knock-you-on-your-ass gust. You can pop the record on when you're in the mood for a smooth groove and a rhythmic fit and be content, but little on *Dum Dum Baby* distinguishes it as something you've just gotta hear immediately.

>>> Randall Roberts



RELEASE DATE:  
**JUNE 23.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**BY-THE-BOOK TRIP-HOP.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**MORCHEEBA, SNEAKER PIMPS, MULU.**



## BANGS

**Tiger Beat**  
Kill Rock Stars

The last band to call themselves the Bangs—a name that's a little cute but also a little sexual—ended up changing it to the Bangles, but these Bangs are from a new generation of young West Coast women in rock. Specifically, they're descendants of riot grrrl, whose foremothers include not just Bratmobile (whose drummer is the sister of Bangs bassist/singer Maggie Vail) and Bikini Kill, but Team Dresch and, especially, Sleater-Kinney, whose minor-key riffs and two-note melodies they've picked up, along with a knack for stylized harmonies. They've got a sense of rock 'n' roll fun, though—"I'm gonna start a rumor milkshake/I'm gonna spread it all over town," they sing, and that "milkshake" is the difference between cliché and inspiration. Their lyrics are concerned with the way women struggle to live up to media images, but they also tease skeezy guys more than they seriously complain about them. And Sarah Utter is a guitar heroine in training, soloing all over the place like she's been listening to AOR her whole life and cranking up the distortion like she's happy punk rock kicked it out of Olympia, Washington. At under half an hour, *Tiger Beat* still isn't too short—its ten songs cover a small patch of territory exhaustively—but it's kicky, tight and totally charming. >>> Douglas Wolk

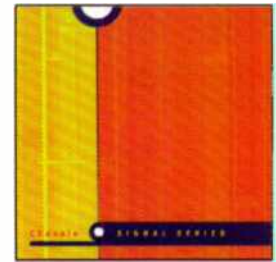


**RELEASE DATE:**  
APRIL 25.  
**FILE UNDER:**  
GRRRL-POWERED POP-PUNK.  
**R.I.Y.L.:**  
SLEATER-KINNEY, COLD COLD HEARTS, RUNAWAYS.

## CHESSIE

**Signal Series**  
Dropbeat

If the creators of *Koyaanisqatsi* ever decide to make a spy flick, they should have Chessie write the score. Like that time-lapse cult classic film, Chessie's *Signal Series* is filled with swirling rhythms and hypnotic pastiche. But there's also nail-biting tension, romance humor and comedic relief. Former Lorelei bassist Stephen Gardner, the one man band behind Chessie, intercuts splattering rhythms with playful riffs to create dramatic valleys and peaks. A flamenco strum tumbles into a drum 'n' bass beat. A creeping bass line raises the hairs on your neck, as if you're watching 007 speed through hairpin turns and off the side of a bridge. All of a sudden you're submerged under water listening to hull rattles and radar bleeps. A brassy passage unfolds and implodes, like it's being played on a trumpet made out of Flubber. You're drifting in and out of consciousness as finger pianos and sleigh bells materialize and disappear. You pull yourself together, get back on land and in the distance hear an accordion player strolling down a lonely street. Trouble ahead. A chase ensues. Conga drums rattle and thump. When the dewy keyboard breaks into a bossa nova tune, you know you're safe for a while, but it's an uneasy peace. *Signal Series* might not be a blockbuster hit, but it's a very fine sleeper. >>> Neil Gladstone

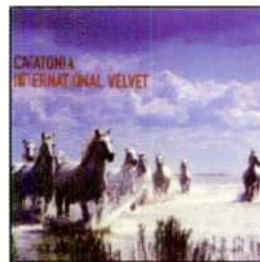


**RELEASE DATE:**  
MAY 15.  
**FILE UNDER:**  
AMBIENT, INSTRUMENTAL SOUNDSCAPES.  
**R.I.Y.L.:**  
THIRD EYE FOUNDATION, LOOP GURU, FLYING SAUCER ATTACK.

## CATATONIA

**International Velvet**  
Vapor-Warner Bros.

Is it more compelling to hear a song called "Why I Can't Stand One Night Stands" sung by a bloke or a bird? For better or worse, in the (still) phallo-centric climate of mainstream rock, there are countless sentiments that seem more refreshing when attacked from a woman's point of view. Musically, *International Velvet* hews closely to the sound that typified UK indie rock a few years ago, all big guitars and hearty choruses, the whole affair enlivened by the occasional surprise—the arid hip-hop beats and ambient pulses of "Goldfish And Paracetamol," for example. But singer Cerys Matthews commands the spotlight, switching from a ragged-edged alto that shakes phrases by the nape of the neck to a chiming Sundayesque coo ("Johnny Come Lately") as the mood of the material dictates. Every now and then she leans on her Welsh brogue for added impact, barreling over the R's in "Road Rage" like a school bus hitting a speed bump. Through a dozen gripping selections, Matthews's concise lyrics examine love, sex and other sticky interpersonal relationships from virtually every angle imaginable ("Part Of The Furniture" will tickle interior design fans). There's still a wide stretch of highway between girl power and grrrl power, and Matthews prowls it with the relentless, predatory grace of a big jungle cat. >>> Kurt B. Reighley



**RELEASE DATE:**  
JULY 7.  
**FILE UNDER:**  
GIRLS WHO LIKE BOYS WHO LIKE BOYS TO BE GIRLS...  
**R.I.Y.L.:**  
BLUR, ELASTICA, SLEEPER, CRANBERRIES.

## CHOCOLATE GENIUS

**Black Music**  
V2

Don't let Marc Anthony Thompson's dreadlocked, urban-soul man likeness lead you to believe that Chocolate Genius is another Lenny Kravitz rip-off (besides, what fun is an imitation of an imitation, anyway?). Thompson's actually been around for quite awhile and turns out to be an insightful New York songwriter who sings like a damned angel. Accompanied by a veteran line-up, including Marc Ribot, Melvin Gibbs, Dougie Bowne and John Medeski, Thompson shares a uniquely personal and intelligent vision. While his overall mood is extremely dark (hence *Black Music*, dig?), the songs are not without humor. He examines hangovers number five and nine with equal enthusiasm and lends a distinct perspective to each event. His gentle croon on "Stupid Again" practically cries out for compassion and "Half A Man" reveals an extremely vulnerable visage. Thompson's subject matter is particularly poignant on "My Mom" where a visit back home leads through a few pleasant memories before confronting the sad reality that "she can't remember my name." Traversing a mellow, jazzified rock vibe to his this-is-Barry-White-on-drugs soul theme and beyond, Marc Anthony Thompson sings better than just about any adult contemporary artist. Talented, tortured, and tender, he's a Renaissance man stuck between rock music and a hard place. >>> Mitch Myers



**RELEASE DATE:**  
JULY 14.  
**FILE UNDER:**  
INTROSPECTIVE URBAN LULLABIES.  
**R.I.Y.L.:**  
BOBBY WOMACK, DAVID RYAN HARRIS, VERNON REID.

## DIAMANDA GALÁS

**Malediction And Prayer**  
Asphodel

When Diamanda Galás gets the blues, it becomes a biblical catastrophe. Cathartic, violent and frightening, she's truly a genre all to herself. Continuing her exploration of the traditional pop songs which she began a few albums ago, *Maledictions And Prayer* captures her live show of the same name, as Galás accompanies her four-octave banshee wails with her amazing piano virtuosity. It would be easy to dismiss Galás as an over-the-top grandstander if she didn't prove her honesty with unflinching emotion and raw virtuosity. Every song mines a motherlode of pain and suffering. The material includes blues from Willie Dixon and Son House, and Galás's own settings of poems by Baudelaire, Pasolini and Miguel Mixco. The real fascination is how she transforms familiar material. "The Thrill Is Gone," best known from its BB King version, starts with a sort of Scriabin-esque piano intro, slides into some of her patented wails, before becoming a frantic waltz. Galás renders "My World is Empty," once performed by the Supremes, a supplication, expressing need and sorrow. But she also knows the power of holding back, as shown by the understated ending of "25 Minutes To Go." *Malediction And Prayer* is hard to listen to, but it's harder to forget.

>>> Heidi McDonald



RELEASE DATE:  
**AUGUST 11.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**AVANT GARDE TERROR  
BLUES.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**LYDIA LUNCH, DEAD CAN  
DANCE, IANNIS  
XENNAKIS.**

## PATTY GRIFFIN

**Flaming Red**  
A&M

It starts with a bang, the electric cacophony of the title track, and ends, well, with a whimper, on the piano and strings ballad "Peter Pan." But along the way Patty Griffin goes a long way toward shrugging off the sensitive singer/songwriter, girl-with-a-guitar image that seemed to summarize her first record. She can write good songs—"One Big Love" is sensuous summer pop music and "Christina" is sentimental without the meter ever hitting maudlin—and she has a great voice, which veers sexily from a Chrissie Hynde come-on to little girl coyness. And this time out Griffin also proves she can rock, not just on "Flaming Red," but on the fairly sublime "Blue Sky," the record's standout track. It's not without its "adult alternative" leanings (most specifically "Carry Me"), but Griffin seems to be loudly resisting the impulse to become part of that pack, and more power to her; Sheryl Crow could never make a record this good. Part of the credit for *Flaming Red* must go to producer Jay Joyce (formerly of the underrated In Pursuit), who plays to Griffin's strengths and doesn't let up the heat. Flaming, red, and feisty.

>>> Chris Nickson



RELEASE DATE:  
**JUNE 23.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**REVVED-UP FOLK ROCK.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**SHERYL CROW, TANYA  
DONNELLY, GARRISON  
STARR, BONNIE RAITT.**

## GOLDEN DELICIOUS/ PETE KREBS

**Golden Delicious/  
Pete Krebs**  
Cavity Search

Though its place in the history of country music is often overlooked, the Pacific Northwest's contribution to the genre includes two of its most hallowed names: Buck Owens and the Holy Modal Rounders. One of the members of the latter act, bassist David Reisch, has found new life with Golden Delicious, a three-year-old outfit that crafts spirited versions of traditionals and worthwhile originals with speedy banjo picking, feverish gee-tar strumming, off-kilter harmonizing and snare 'n' washboard percussion. On this split-CD with Golden Delicious's guitarist and vocalist (and ex-Hazel frontman) Pete Krebs, the band reverently interprets the classic "House Carpenter" and a Lost City Ramblers' chestnut, "I Truly Understand," and tosses in snappy tunes penned by Reisch and his younger cohorts. Krebs's four songs improve on the ol' time folk sound he exhibited on two earlier solo CDs. Here he's moved onto a poignant backwoods aesthetic that allows for both romantic introspection ("Dressed To The Nines," "We Never Sleep") and uptempo Americana ("Ashes Back To Vegas," "America"). He and Golden Delicious carry on a regional storytelling tradition worthy of their forebears.

>>> Richard Martin



RELEASE DATE:  
**APRIL 7.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**BACK-PORCH STRUMMIN'  
AND PICKIN'.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**FLATT AND SCRUGGS,  
SCUD MOUNTAIN BOYS,  
BLUE RAGS.**

## HI FI KILLERS

**Possession**  
Loosegroove

Seattle's Hi Fi Killers clearly weren't looking to break any new ground with their 1997 debut *Loaded*, a funk-noir pastiche of hip-hop beats, sleazy wah-wah guitar, punchy JB horns, and snippets of police radio transmissions and B-movie dialogue that brought to mind any number of reference points, from the Beastie Boys to former Bad Seed Barry Adamson's solo work to the cut-and-paste beat science of Ninja Tune ninjas like the Herbaliser. And not a lot has changed on *Possession*, which continues the cop-show fascination of *Loaded*'s "Kojak Cries" by opening with "A.P.B.," a tune that juxtaposes what sounds like a real tape of a police report against a noir-ish electronic backdrop. "Family Stones" would seem to be an allusion, both in terms of its title and its funk-inflected groove, to Sly And The Family Stone, and sample specialists will probably recognize a dozen or so other blatant cops, none of which is particularly surprising in the digital age. And none of which is particularly memorable either. Like too much instrumental electronic pop, *Possession* simply goes down smooth and funky without leaving much of an impression.

>>> Matt Ashare



RELEASE DATE:  
**JUNE 9.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**SAMPLE-HAPPY RETRO-  
TECHNO.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**BARRY ADAMSON,  
MOBY'S "JAMES BOND  
THEME," THE  
HERBALISER.**



R.I.Y.L.=RECOMMENDED IF YOU LIKE

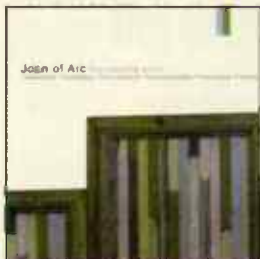
## JOAN OF ARC

### How Memory Works

Jade Tree

A few words of advice to Joan Of Arc: Lose the vocals. There are a lot of cool sounds— weird blips, pulsing noises, whizzes and whirrs—on the Chicago quintet's second long-player, *How Memory Works*, but the voice of singer/guitarist Tim Kinsella is not one of them. The group clearly takes a number of cues from its hometown's avant-rock tradition, making the songs that lay beneath Kinsella's stridently adenoidal vocals very interesting. "A Pale Orange" strikes the right balance by using the vocal melody as merely another sound texture woven through a skein of other noises: When the melody ends, the song breaks into an electronically-produced beat that sounds like the smashing of garbage cans accompanied by a spastic keyboard part. Then it all gives way to a series of undulating beats that blend into one another until they seem to match your own heart-rhythm. Wherever Kinsella's strangulated yelps appear, however, they inevitably divert attention away from all that good stuff. Even references to bell hooks and T.S. Eliot won't keep the nonsensical lyrics (by all indications, "This Life Cumulative" is about Fiona Apple) and Kinsella's shrieky voice from driving you batty.

>>> Jenny Eliscu



RELEASE DATE:  
MAY 19.  
FILE UNDER:  
ART-DAMAGED  
NOISE-POP.  
R.I.Y.L.:  
TORTOISE, THE SEA AND  
CAKE, MODEST MOUSE.

## EYVIND KANG

### Theater Of Mineral NADES

Tzadik

A recording that defines its own space and offers a clear vision into the mind of the composer is a marvelous, revelatory experience, and Eyvind Kang's *Theater Of Mineral NADES* is one such creation. Moving from Japanese folk ballads to David Lynchian rhythmic churnings to deep, bellowing dub, Kang's second release for John Zorn's Tzadik label is a peek inside the mind of a violinist who has worked in groups ranging from the Bill Frisell Quartet to the Sun City Girls. On *Theater*, Kang creates both minimal glimpses and lush portraits, blending seemingly disparate musics; mandolins and tablas intertwine, harmoniums, violins, synthesizers and cellos flutter simultaneously. Experienced as a whole, *Theater Of Mineral NADES* runs like one long quasi-cinematic experience, as though a narrative is running underneath the music and telling its own story. The flow of this unspoken story transforms one group of sounds into another, merges genres into a fluid mass that repeatedly assumes other forms until what's ultimately created is not any sort of genre jigsaw puzzle, but a luscious amalgam of beauty, a singular, visionary creation.

>>> Randall Roberts

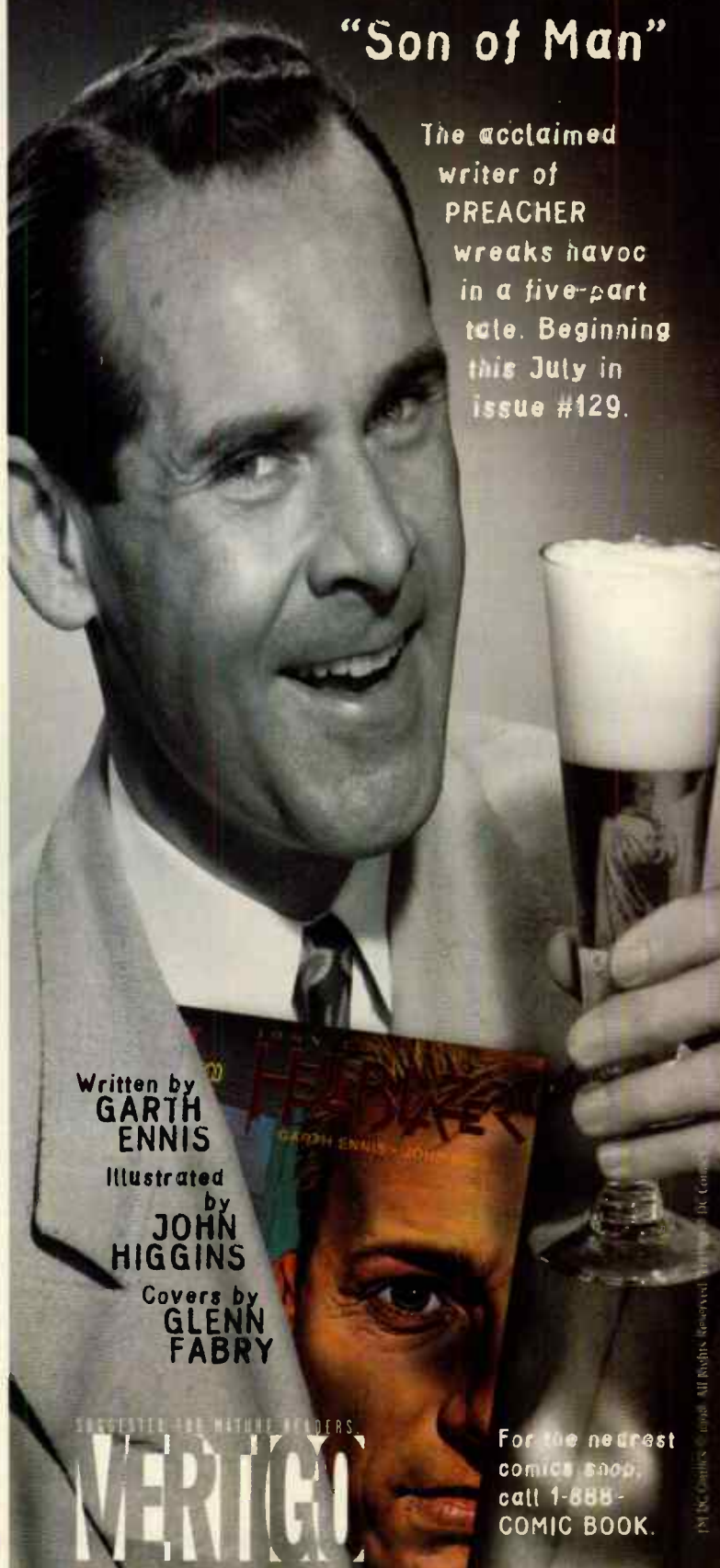


RELEASE DATE:  
MAY 12.  
FILE UNDER:  
EXPERIMENTAL VIOLIN  
VISIONARY.  
R.I.Y.L.:  
BILL FRISELL QUARTET,  
TORU TAKEMITSU'S  
SOUNDTRACKS, SUN CITY  
GIRLS' 330,003  
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# REVIEWS

## ERNEST RANGLIN

### In Search Of The Lost Riddim

Palm Pictures

There are few greater unsung musical heroes than Jamaican guitarist Ernest Ranglin, who has played on countless reggae, ska and rock-steady recordings sessions since the late '50s, and who is a real pioneer of the pinched, chink-a chink-a guitar style that's gone on to make the island's music so universally recognizable. After years of fairly anonymous craftsmanship, Ranglin emerged in 1996 with *Below The Bassline*, an extraordinary exploration of the links between reggae and jazz. Last year he released *Memories Of Barber Mack*, and now returns with still another remarkable record. *In Search Of The Lost Riddim* is the culmination of a journey Ranglin took to Senegal to record with African musicians and singers, forging a link between the old world and the new. He teamed up with some of Senegal's finest musical talents, ranging from famous African greats such as Baaba Maal and Mansour Seck, to relative unknowns like Alioune Mbaye Nider and the 14-year-old female singer Cisse Diamba Kanoute. The results are a striking blend—lilting easygoing rhythms and lovely African melodies, with Ranglin's bubbling, plinking reggaefied guitar omnipresent throughout.

>>> James Lien



RELEASE DATE:

JULY 14.

FILE UNDER:

THE RIGHT KIND OF GLOBAL WARMING.

R.I.Y.L.:

ALI FARKA TOURE & RY COODER, KING SUNNY ADE, TQOTS & THE MAYTALS.

## MARC RIBOT ★

### Marc Ribot Y Los Cubanos Postizos

Atlantic

Marc Ribot's guitar sound, found on recordings by Elvis Costello, Tom Waits and John Zorn (to name a few), possesses an in-ner-face, plucky clumsiness, a deliberate rhythmic ambiguity that's predisposed to fly into fits from time to time. It's *his* sound, and even when he manipulates and confuses it, you can finger it immediately. On *Marc Ribot Y Los Cubanos Postizos*, original Lounge Lizard Ribot strays from his American avant jazz roots to attack the music of the late Cuban composer Arsenio Rodriguez, and creates a magical collection of guitar-based adaptations that meld jazz and Latin percussion. The glorious success of *Los Cubanos Postizos* lies in Ribot's rhythmic approach to the project; rather than performing tangy solos above the bongos and miscellaneous percussion, he treats his guitar as though it too were a percussion instrument, banging on his strings and frets to create his own complimentary, wholly unique sounding drum patterns that battle and compliment the other rhythms. And if that were all to the record, it'd be fantastic; what lifts it to the realm of sublime are the ballads and delicate guitar lilt that pepper *Los Cubanos Postizos* with a weepy gentleness. Combined, *Marc Ribot Y Lost Cubanos Postizos* is a scorching record, one that deserves to be heard by Latin purists, guitar freaks and jazz geeks alike.

>>> Randall Roberts



RELEASE DATE:

JUNE 16.

FILE UNDER:

CUBAN DOWNTOWN JAZZ.

R.I.Y.L.:

AFRO-CUBAN ALL STARS, BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB, LOUNGE LIZARDS.



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## BIC RUNGA

Drive  
Columbia

Bic Runga's *Drive* is an impressive first album on a number of counts: She not only wrote all the songs, but produced the record and plays most of the instruments as well. Debuting at number one on the album charts in her native New Zealand, *Drive* established Runga as the country's biggest selling native female artist—ever. Not bad for a 22-year-old. Chock-full of melancholy ballads cloaked in Runga's luminous vocals, *Drive* is now aiming for the attentions of the rest of the world. On refreshing, delicate tracks such as "Bursting Through" and "Delight," sparse drum, strings and keyboard flourishes intensify the clear, intimate tone of her vocals. Even on the stirring "Hey" and "Swim," where she erupts from Beth Orton sweetness to Alanis Morissette-like angst, the raw production keeps the songs' electronic atmospherics both dynamic and stark. While failed romances are her lyrical staple, Runga foregoes clichés. Instead, as on "Without You," breakups are detailed with pained understatement: "Walk around the bathroom and fill the sink/Wander 'round the kitchen and make a drink...I've rearranged the magnets on my fridge/Without you now." *Drive* is brooding pop at its most engaging.

>>> Sarah Pratt



RELEASE DATE:  
JULY 21.

FILE UNDER  
INGENUER POP.

R.I.Y.L.  
FIONA APPLE, NATALIE  
IMBRUGLIA, ALANIS  
MORISSETTE, BETH  
ORTON.

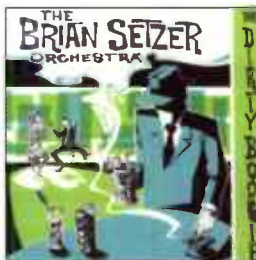
## BRIAN SETZER ORCHESTRA

The Dirty Boogie  
Interscope

Brian Setzer and his orchestra add some much-needed edge to post-Swingers-era swing. Setzer's rockabilly-style guitar and growling vocals sound just as potent as when he fronted the Stray Cats, and he also distinguishes himself by not cutting corners—his sound is filled out by a 17-piece orchestra that boasts five saxes, four trombones and four trumpets. The use of a slap bass—something new on *The Dirty Boogie*, the orchestra's third album—is a great success, adding a jumpy rhythm to the title track, "This Cat's On A Hot Tin Roof,"

"Let's Live It Up" and "Nosey Joe." The most memorable tracks here are the covers, but Setzer's originals also hold their own. (The exception is the film noir-ish "Hollywood Nocturne," which sounds like a sluggish version of Barry Manilow's "Copacabana.") He doesn't take the easy road with his selection of covers, either. A revisit of the Stray Cats' "Rock This Town" was a risky move, but the added instrumentation gives the song renewed energy and more swing. Even riskier is Setzer's attempt at genuine crooning on the Skyliners' classic "Since I Don't Have You"; his high notes sound a bit like stray cats howling, but his charisma makes the attempt endearing. Another standout cover is his duet with No Doubt's Gwen Stefani on "You're The Boss," which exudes even more flirtatious chemistry than Elvis and Ann-Margret on their version.

>>> Wendy Mitchell



RELEASE DATE:  
JUNE 23.

FILE UNDER  
ROCKABILLY SWING.

R.I.Y.L.  
ROYAL CROWN REVUE,  
STRAY CATS, BIG BAD  
VOODOO DADDY.

NADA ES VERDAD. [NOTHING IS REAL]

# MARC RIBOT

(THE PROSTHETIC CUBANS)

## Y LOS CUBANOS POSTIZOS



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"This guitar god's sublime new take may turn the genius into a star."

TIME OUT NEW YORK

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## SHONEN KNIFE

**Happy Hour**  
Big Deal

Nightmarishly perky or irresistibly peppy depending on the point of view, Shonen Knife is a semi-underground pop-music phenom, beloved for its seemingly guileless take on pop music and culture. As they've frequently done since forming the band in 1982, the three Japanese women comprising Shonen Knife lean toward the edible on *Happy Hour*, delivering sugary tunes such as "Cookie Day," "Hot Chocolate" and "Banana Chips" in heavily accented English. Their irrepressible pop recalls the Banana Splits (the band) and the Monkees (they cover "Daydream Believer"), with the melodic-punk edge of the Ramones or Nirvana peeking through. To the jaded, Shonen Knife might appear as calculated as the Spice Girls, but to fans, the band's a Technicolor dream, a musical blast of cavity-creating ear candy. The songs are smart and fun, and a tour with Nirvana explains the slightly grungy, familiar guitar line in "Hot Chocolate." While "Dolly" borders on the saccharine, despite a pleasingly simple acoustic guitar, "Catch Your Bus" is edgy, upbeat and unaffected, making it the real rollicking winner on *Happy Hour*. *Godzilla* might be the biggest Japanese import this summer, but Shonen Knife will certainly be the sweetest.



RELEASE DATE:  
**JUNE 23.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**KITSCHY POWER POP.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**THE GO-GO'S,  
PRESIDENTS OF THE USA,  
RAMONES.**

>>> Katherine Turman

## SURFERS ★

**Songs From The Pipe**  
Epic

The Surfers ain't frontin'—they are surfers. In fact, Kelly Slater, Peter King and Rob Machado are world-renowned professionals (Slater was the world pro surf champ in four of the last six years). Their music is decent enough, though the tepid songs and limited vocal capabilities rarely propel *Songs From The Pipe* beyond the arena of interesting side-projects by talented, good-looking famous young people. T-Bone Burnett's tasteful production is the star of the show, but all the ringing pedal steel, wavering organ, shimmering reverberated guitar chordings, vocals sent through distortion cannot make up for lackluster material. "Going" sounds like Chris Isaak if he lost his voice entirely. "Hawaii" has the lyrics "Black sand on the beaches/White wave on the water/And I think of you," which are about as deep as things get here. Naturally, there are twangy guitars all over the place, a slick simulacrum of surf music. From Jan & Dean to "Wipeout" to the Surf Punks, surf music has been an established part of rock history. But the Surfers' music isn't surf music, it's just exceptionally-produced straight-ahead rock.



RELEASE DATE:  
**JULY 21.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**PRO SURFERS MAKE  
PRO-SOUNDING ADULT  
ALTERNATIVE POP MUSIC.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**WALLFLOWERS, DAYS OF  
THE NEW, ATHENAUM.**

>>> Mike McGonigal

## SKINNY ★

**The Weekend**  
Cheeky-London

At one time, London's Cheeky label was home to the most wonderfully over-done, mammoth orchestral dance records committed to wax, full of operatic flourishes and grandiose synth stabs. With the release of the debut record by Skinny, things have moved much further down the BPM scale, straight into the realm of downtempo, British bedsit-blues pop, which forgoes the earlier records' sense of euphoria for the suggestion that not only are things not going to get any better, but in fact are going to get a lot worse. The sound of rainfall pervades *The Weekend*, lending it a late Sunday afternoon depressive temperament that can't be shaken. "London Tonight" has distant, minor-key strings, overrun by wide bass pulses and lonely vocals. The single, "Failure," is certainly one of the standouts, with its nearly suicidal lyrical concerns accompanied by a bass line and vocal sample that won't leave your head. "Friday Part I" and its funkier instrumental successor are animated by lithe bass, pints of echo and reverb, and alternately sluggish and galloping live drums. "Friday Part II" sounds like the O'Jays and Barry White's Love Unlimited Orchestra in the studio with Suede. This record will provide perfect comfort for when you feel that the sun may never show its face again and that music is the only antidote.



RELEASE DATE:  
**JULY 21.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**DOWNTEMPO VOCAL  
TRIP-POP.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**MASSIVE ATTACK, EDWYN  
COLLINS.**

>>> Tim Haslett

## SYMPOSIUM

**On The Outside**  
Red Ant

Late last year England's Symposium released an EP that seemed to promise that the band was poised to do with Green Day's revved-up power pop what Bush did with Nirvana's pop-grunge, namely forge a well-executed imitation, right down to the gleeful sneer in Ross Cummins's voice. Fortunately, Cummins and his four pals have already diversified and refined their sonic assault. *On The Outside* opens with a sugary blast of anti-social punk titled "The Answer To Why I Hate You" that brings to mind Supergrass, then slows down to deliver a mosh-friendly love tune (sample lyric: "I'm alone without you even when I'm with you"), replete with a gentle falsetto refrain and explosive choruses of "Why don't you love me," and goes on to reference the Damned (the chamber punk of "Natural"), and indulge in a little trendy ska-punk crossbreeding on "Puddles." Veteran British producers Clive Langer and Alan Winstanley (Elvis Costello, Madness, Bush) help insure that everything, especially Hagop Tchapanian's and William McGonagle's growling power chords, sounds appropriately huge, if somewhat sterile. Still, back at home Symposium has been hailed "The Best Live Band In Britain." Of course, it's worth remembering that this group comes from a place where Oasis has more or less set the standard for everything rock in the '90s.



RELEASE DATE:  
**MAY 19.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**PUNK-POP.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**GREEN DAY, THE  
DAMNED, SUPERGRASS.**

>>> Matt Ashare

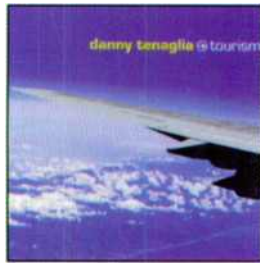


## DANNY TENAGLIA

**Tourism**  
Twisted

Danny Tenaglia is the king of New York house music, the DJ whose nights at the Tunnel have Chelsea boys and bridge-and-tunnelers alike dancing all night. *Tourism* is his showcase as a producer, and unsurprisingly, it's exactly the kind of thing he plays: extended, banging house grooves, with cartoonishly simple sounds and fragments of sexed-up diva vocals providing title hooks and usually not much else. "Do You Remember" has some flashes of Latin-jazz piano, and that's about as much variety as we get. When Tenaglia does veer into song structure on "Headhunter," though, it sounds like bad Depeche Mode—the point isn't the tune, it's the groove. The album's title comes from "Elements," a "Memphis Soul Stew"-type narrated guide to what goes into a house track, bit by bit. The routine's been done before (almost identically by Frankie Goes To Hollywood's "Rage Hard," ten years ago), and it also points up how depressingly little innovation there's been in house in the last ten years: Tenaglia makes his tracks with the same sounds house producers have always used, with the same rhythms and 120 BPM bump. It makes for unimpeachable driving music, and it makes club-goers sweat for sure, but isn't it time somebody found another way?

>>> Douglas Wolk



RELEASE DATE:  
**MAY 19.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**OLD-FASHIONED HOUSE MUSIC.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**RECENT TODD TERRY, PET SHOP BOYS' BILINGUAL.**

## ULTRABABYFAT

**Silver Tones Smile**  
Velvet

It's hardly a new tactic, but Atlanta's Ultrababyfat deploys its secret weapon rather well. Neither of the two co-frontwomen, Shonali Bhowmik or Michelle DuBois, possesses a particularly distinctive voice, and together they're building from a foundation of merely passable fuzzy angst rock. But when their vocals lock together, the intermingling of raspy and sweet verges on the magical. Their harmonies make singing along to lines like "I like a man who's bent on self-destruction" perversely catchy. Unfortunately, Ultrababyfat seems intent on fully exploiting the disc's capabilities, and the album's 58-minute length could easily have been trimmed by a third. The band downshifts into gentler material with reasonable success, but other style hopping proves painful. The duo's funk turn on "Jonesin" sounds like Ultrababyfat rummaged through Easley Studios during its sessions and unearthed the keyboard used on that bad retro track from the last Grifters record. And the inclusion of sitars and Indian chanting on "Peacock Throne" telegraphs that the band has been listening to Cornershop rather than that it's developed meaningful uses for the components. Bhowmik and DuBois have a definite selling point, but they haven't applied it to full advantage on *Silver Tones Smile*.

>>> Glen Savvady



RELEASE DATE:  
**JULY 7.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**ROUGH-HEWN GIRL POP.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**BREEDERS, TUSCADERO, SCRAWL.**

## TRANSGLOBAL UNDERGROUND

**Rejoice, Rejoice**  
MCA

Some media critics trumpet the rise of cultural imperialism, where American hegemony is enforced not through the gunboats of old but by culture-industry conglomerates armed with *Baywatch* satellite downloads and planeloads of Michael Jackson CDs. Transglobal Underground and its ethno-techno brethren, however, give us some hope that the media flow isn't entirely a one-way process, enfolding a whole planet's worth of indigenous musics into their Westernized product. Transglobal Underground's latest, *Rejoice, Rejoice*, is aptly named, a slaphappy mishmash of world beat stylings and electronic beats. Instead of focusing on one regional music at a time, the band takes the kitchen sink approach to global consciousness, piling disparate samples and guest artists together into a surprisingly harmonious whole. "Delta Disco" is a case in point: It's basically what the name implies, starting with a swaggering hip-hop beat, then laying down some harmonica, sampled gospel choirs, reggae toasting, and instead of slide guitar, some North African-sounding strings. Want rai? Dub? Tablas? Amazonian Indian chants? Tuvan throat singers? They're all present, topped off with a track featuring the terrific warblings of vocalist Natacha Atlas. It's mega-disorganized, with no ethnomusicological elitism to it; instead, it's all joyful pilfering and pastiche, with no goals beyond creating a smiley global equilibrium.

>>> David Jarman

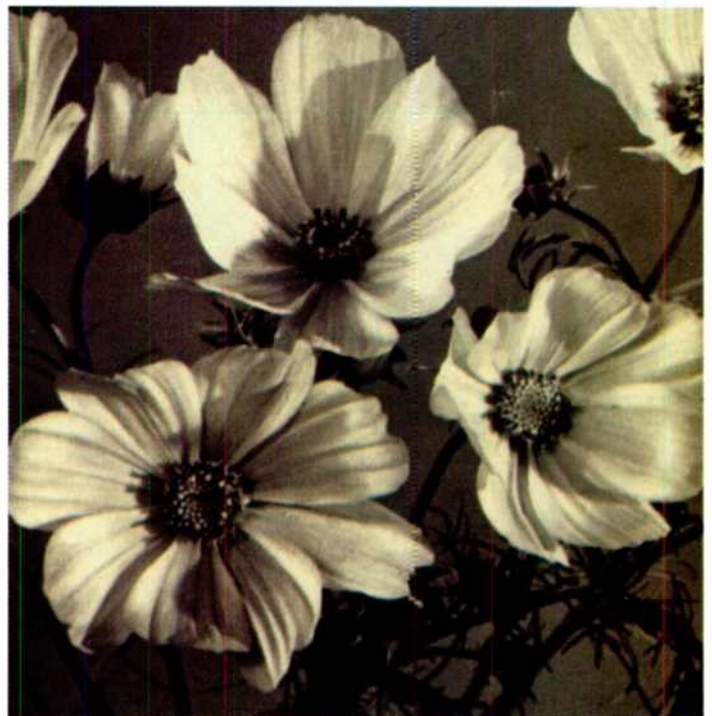


RELEASE DATE:  
**JUNE 30.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**ETHNO-TECHNO.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**LOOP GURU, TALVIN SINGH, DEEP FOREST.**

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# REVIEWS

## USA

**Little Birds**  
Drag City

With meandering, off-key vocals and twanging guitars, USA has endured many a comparison to Pavement, a band which ranks among Drag City's earliest stars. But USA's first full-length, *Little Birds*, shows that the Chicago foursome has much more up its sleeve than easy rips of indie legends. Make no mistake—a warbler like "Tsk Not (And Fade Out)" would be right at home on *Perfect Sound Forever*. But most of the record defies such obvious reference. With keyboards a-plenty, USA pours '60s psychedelia and '70s art-rock through a filter of '90s indie-pop, sometimes all in one perambulating song—like "Choir 47," a seven-minute musical odyssey. Despite USA's artsy bent, the record is pretension-free and entirely fun, thanks to drummer Corre Dilworth, whose clean percussion gives each song a minimalist bounce. Dilworth earns bonus points for her graceful backing vocals on "No More Superstitions," which is likely the prettiest song you'll ever find on a Drag City record. Other standouts include "He Hath Comet," whose slender tinkling balloons into full-fledged melody, and "Egypt," a faux-Beefheart number about the ancient practice of divining celestial messages from the entrails of birds. Indeed, if you believe in auspices, the innards of *Little Birds* forecast a bright future for USA.

>>> Megan McCarthy



RELEASE DATE:  
**APRIL 21.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**ART-ROCK MINIMALISTS.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**PAVEMENT, THINKING  
FELLERS UNION LOCAL  
282, RED KRAYOLA.**

## VELVET CRUSH

**Heavy Changes**  
Action Musik

How does that Flying Burrito Brothers song go? "The older guys tell me what it's all about/The older guys really got it all worked out." Something like that. Velvet Crush has been working it out for over a decade now, and after a lengthy hiatus accompanied by the usual rumors of soured business deals (which were true) and a break-up (which obviously weren't), these older (but hardly old) guys are back with *Heavy Changes*, their first album since 1994's *Teenage Symphonies To God*. Though the title suggests otherwise, *Heavy Changes* is pretty loyal to the band's established m.o. Like previous Velvet Crush efforts, the album's strength lies in its contradictions: rocking yet vulnerable songs that are informed by, but never reliant on, the three B's (Beatles/Beach Boys/Byrds) of pop songcraft. This time around, the countrypolitan stylings that the band flirted with on *Teenage Symphonies* have given way to a leaner power pop dynamic. To wit: one of *Heavy Changes* best tracks, "Fear Of Flying," sounds like "Bell-Bottom Blues" substituting wisdom for the latter's sappy pleading. And isn't that what getting older's all about? Well, that and one other thing. In that same Burrito Brothers song, Gram Parsons observes that "The older guys get the ladies with all the style." Maybe Velvet Crush is onto something here.

>>> Matt Hanks



RELEASE DATE:  
**APRIL 7.**  
FILE UNDER:  
**POWER POP, IN A GOOD  
WAY.**  
R.I.Y.L.:  
**BADFINGER, RECENT  
TEENAGE FANCLUB.**

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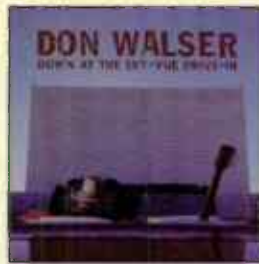


**DON WALSER**

**Down At The Sky-Vue Drive-In**  
Watermelon-Sire

Did you ever notice how the old folks at weddings seem to have a lot more fun than the young people? Who's done the most rug-cutting at night's end? Something about Don Walser's *Down At The Sky-Vue Drive-In* calls that thought to mind. Mainly, it's because Walser seems to be having such a grand old time playing gentle, good-time country swing. (The album is also dedicated to Walser's wife of 46 years.) Whether it's tunes that Walser wrote himself or hits from what Walser calls "the poodle skirt era," the whole album is one big helping of classic country yodeling, fiddling, crooning and sobbing pedal-steel, with a gently stomping rhythm that's perfect for dancing in boots. An excellent example of Walser's seasoned exuberance comes during "Hot Rod Mercury," where the pedal steel guitar player uses his slide to do an impeccable impersonation of a muscle car revving its engine—pedal steel players have been pulling out this trick nightly for eons, but it's still a total hoot when Walser uses it here. It's not the old-folks boogie—after all, one track here teams Walser with the avant-garde string stylings of the Kronos Quartet—it's just the sound of somebody kicking back and having fun, and that's what makes this record so sweet.

&gt;&gt;&gt; James Lien



RELEASE DATE:

APRIL 28.

FILE UNDER:

VINTAGE AMERICAN TREASURES.

R.I.Y.L.:

HANK WILLIAMS, SR.,  
HANK SNOW, HACKBERRY RAMBLERS.**WARM JETS**

**Future Signs**  
This Way Up-Island

You'd think a band that names itself after one of the more enduring albums of the past 25 years would bear some resemblance to its reference point. But you'd be wrong. The only similarity between this London four-piece and Brian Eno is that they're both unmistakably British. The Warm Jets play melodic guitar rock with a vaguely '80s retro tinge. Anglophiles willing to stretch may find similarities to Pulp; Warm Jets lack Jarvis Cocker's sardonic wit, but compensate with a bit more musical testosterone. In calmer moments singer Louis Jones bears a passing resemblance to Ziggy-era Bowie, but more often his vocals take a back seat to the churning guitars. Any number of these 12 concise tracks would be welcome diversions on the radio, though they probably wouldn't shake you enough to scratch down the band's name on a pad of paper. The disc includes the Warm Jets' four previous UK singles, which anchor the set's visceral pop but also create a jukebox-like aura rather than a coherent flow. *Future Signs* packs enough exuberance and distinctive melodies to provide a pleasant ride so long as the listener isn't looking for a life altering experience.

&gt;&gt;&gt; Glen Savady



RELEASE DATE:

JULY 14.

FILE UNDER:

MELODIC BRITISH GUITAR POP.

R.I.Y.L.:

JESUS JONES, THAT PETROL EMOTION, PULP.

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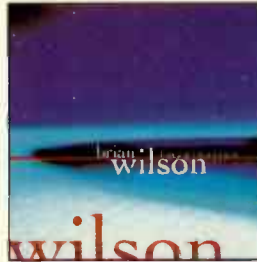


## BRIAN WILSON

### Imagination

Giant-Warner Brothers

It's been 32 years since, at the age of 24, Brian Wilson masterminded *Pet Sounds*, perhaps the most-cited standard for today's melodic indie-pop. *Imagination* doesn't aim to out-do all the High Llamas and Apples In Stereo; it doesn't up the ante or challenge the youngsters like Dylan's *Time Out Of Mind* (now that could have been a good title for a Brian Wilson album!) or Johnny Cash's *American Recordings*. *Imagination* does, however, offer a set of sunny, bittersweet middle-aged symphonies to God, masterfully multi-tracked, with lots of truly captivating musical moments, from the orchestral touches of "She Says That She Needs Me" to the childlike pleasure of the "Sunshine" melody. Unfortunately, Wilson often relies on lyricists-for-hire, and sometimes the beauty and craft become much ado about nothing when the lyrics are as dumb as on the Jimmy Buffett-penned "South American." That aside, this is Wilson's most satisfying solo project: It captures the imagination of Brian Wilson at work, and of the listener. The sound—the harmonies, the layers of acoustic instruments, the arcing melodies—echoes Wilson's watershed work from the late-'60s, but that work is central to so much music in the late-'90s that it's almost redundant to assert that Brian Wilson's *Imagination* seems timeless. >>> Steve Klinge



RELEASE DATE:  
JUNE 16.  
FILE UNDER:  
SUNNY NOSTALGIA.  
R.I.Y.L.+:  
BEACH BOYS, HIGH  
LLAMAS, VAN DYKE  
PARKS.

## WINK ★

### HereHear

Ovum-Ruffhouse/Columbia

When you're Philadelphia's Josh Wink, and you've co-founded a fertile record label (Ovum, with King Britt of Sylk 130) and become one of the first international stars of a burgeoning electronic movement, more is expected from you than a hit-and-miss collection of electronic experimentation. On *HereHear*, the misses resonate louder than the hits. In "Black Bomb," featuring Trent Reznor, Wink injects a minute-plus alarm-clock siren, interrupting what could be a perfectly average NIN song. And the cacophony of horns that erupts in "Hard Hit" sounds merely like a hit-and-run by an unruly New Year's Eve party. When Wink stays within his familiar confines of acid house and techno, he delivers credible grooves: "Sixth Sense" is a classic rave track with spongy, Roland 303 bass lines and excellent use of diva Ursula Rucker's vocal samples, and "Ah Git Up" and "Track 9," with heavy, driving rhythms and dramatic builds and breaks, would be welcome additions to most 4 a.m. dancefloors. But tellingly, the album's best track is the wicked anthem "Are You There"—more than two years old and included on last year's MTV Amp compilation. The otherwise passable *HereHear* is disappointing only when held against the light of Wink's promise as a global dance floor innovator. >>> William Werde



RELEASE DATE:  
JUNE 16.  
FILE UNDER:  
UNDERACHIEVING RAVE  
GOD.  
R.I.Y.L.+:  
HARDFLOOR, CRYSTAL  
METHOD.

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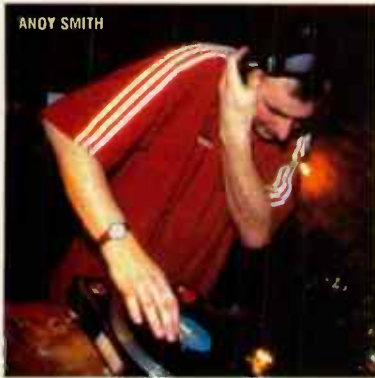
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# MIXED SIGNALS

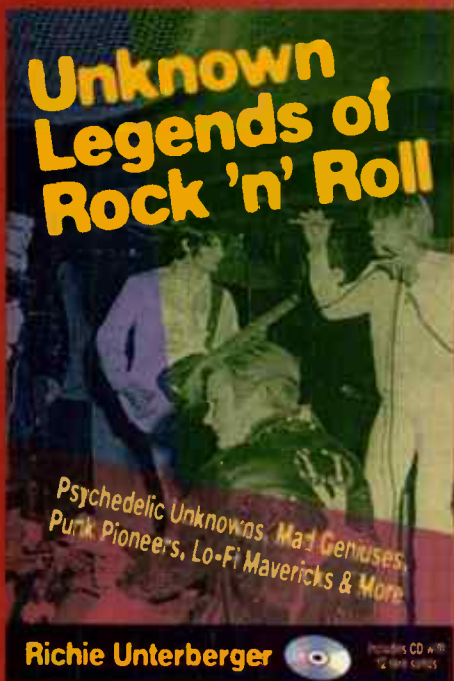


For a few years now, ANDY SMITH has hid in Portishead's shadow, following the Bristol trip-hop troupe from city to city, humbly hitting the decks every night as the band's opening entertainment. But what this extraordinary DJ does on the tables is anything *but* humble. Listening to Smith spin is a dizzying affair as he continuously slices and sutures his tracks like a surgeon, cutting, scratching and mixing hip-hop, funk, rock and soul classics with remarkable finesse. On *The Document* (ffrr-London), Smith excels where most DJs fall short: It's not just the tracks he chooses, but how he works them on the decks, which makes the set so compelling. Smith constantly juggles beats, scratches in samples and drops tricks of DJ-battle caliber that only a handful of people on the planet can duplicate. Acrobatics aside, this 15-track disc is an erratic fusion of funky rock, hip-hop, and soul jams—it's as if the Jungle Brothers, the Meters, Tom Jones, the James Gang and Barry White/Love Unlimited all attended the same party and Smith was the liquor in the punch. Under his guidance, even an unlikely pair such as Grandmaster Flash and Peggy Lee drop their guards and get it on (you won't believe how smoothly and logically "The Adventures Of Grandmaster Flash On The Wheels Of Steel" eases into her version of "(I'm Sittin' On The) Dock Of The Bay"). *The Document* is a truly adventurous offering quite unlike any other DJ mix out there... MARK FARINA is one DJ who has definitely paid his dues. After 15 years on the circuit, this Chicago/San Francisco deck magician has cemented his reputation as a sure-fire crowd pleaser, known for dropping soulful vibes ranging from louny acid-jazz to thumping, melodic house. His addition to the *United DJs Of America* (Mixmag-Moonshine) camp is one more feather in his heavily decorated cap. Volume 9 of the series finds Farina on the deep house tip, skillfully assembling a set of loose, languid grooves and lazy melodies designed for the sunrise. But if you find Farina's fare a tad too mellow, hop over to *Terry's Café* (Plastic City-UCMG), the 16-track mix by Germany's TERRY LEE BROWN JR. The soul flows just as deep on this 78-minute set, but Brown's energizing tech-house textures and bouncy bass lines raise the stakes just a touch. This intelligent mix does much to explain why Brown is the house producer/DJ of the moment.

>>> M. Tye Comer

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CMJ8



# lounge lizards

>>> Continued from page 24

"The big difference between movie scores and Lounge Lizards stuff is that Lounge Lizards stuff I write with my eyes closed, and the movie stuff I write with my eyes open. But this—the *Fishing With John* stuff—falls somewhere between the two."

Even with the *Fishing* show still spawning loose ends, and his nine-piece band assembling the next week to work new material, it's *Queen*

*Of All Ears* that has Lurie preoccupied. Recorded a year and a half ago, *Queen* was originally to come out on David Byrne's Luaka Bop label, but the relationship descended into what Lurie calls "nightmare upon nightmare." After a yearlong fight for the record, he determined "if it only means starting a record company to get it out, [then I'll] get it out. Because the record is great and I had to save it. I couldn't just let it go—there's too much blood in it."

"The Lounge Lizards record is for real. It's really for real. I don't know quite what that will mean to anybody reading it, but it is really what it is. It's not a band that put together x, y and z so that they could do this. It's something that would happen even if we weren't paid to do this. It happens out of necessity rather than out of career thoughts."

Still, the career thoughts, and the desire



to be free of them, get in the way.

"Our website [www.strangeandbeautiful.com](http://www.strangeandbeautiful.com)—I have to mention that. Tomorrow we're actually supposed to get it all together, which is the last thing I want to do. I want to just walk around and buy sneakers and look at girls' asses for the spring."

end

# slayer

>>> Continued from page 27

These days, the musical threat to impressionable minds is Marilyn Manson, who prances with the devil while Slayer simply stands its ground.

King: I like them. But I can do without the gay tendencies going on.

Hanneman: They've got what, two good songs per album?

King: I'd probably like them better if they weren't so Halloween-ed out, but I can definitely do without the dick-sucking, too.

Araya: You mentioned that once before.

It's easy to forget that, in the beginning, Slayer was itself a band of shock rockers, who wore studded leather chokers and spiked armbands.

Araya: We dumped the blood after our very first promo picture, kept the raccoon eyes. At the time, we knew nothing but LA.

Hanneman: All the bands like Mötley Crüe were wearing make-up, but it was girly. We wanted to look like men, so we looked like football players!

On that Monday night in New York, they do resemble off-duty jocks, washing down yellow chicken fingers with Diet Cokes and Bud Lights at T.G.I. Friday's. Apparently, the band regularly hangs out at the chapter of T.G.I. Friday's near its practice space in Anaheim, California.

King: Like I don't know this fucking menu anyway. I eat here five nights a week.

A week later, I have forgotten all about late night TV antics and new records by bands whose innovations I now take for granted. Walking across East Berlin's Alexanderplatz, though, I see Satan's outpost in post-communist Europe; as jarring and out-of-step as an atonal Kerry King guitar solo, there stands a T.G.I. Friday's. In this world, evil has no boundaries.

end

# monster magnet

>>> Continued from page 31

They're in your head, and you gotta deal with 'em some way or another. And it's very strange and makes you question yourself all the time. Sensitive people do that practically their whole life. Because they know, they have the power to envision how different things will work out. You're not lucky like the dumb beer-drinking schmo that just watches the Giants game and—"Weekend, yeah!"—everything's fine. I'm jealous of those people. I'd love to be that person. Monster Magnet has constantly been me trying to become one of those people. For a time, I can actually believe it's true. We're on stage and the flashpots are going and the women are taking their tops off and I'm fucking rocking with the guitar and I'm fuckin' *there*. That's a great place to live."

Which brings us to the aggressive *Powertrip*. Heavier than Natalie Imbruglia's eyelids, it's a hailstorm of Stooges-inspired mayhem filled with lyrical gems like "If you're looking for someone to spank your demons and make them pay, baby I'm your man of the hour" ("Bummer").

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"When I wrote the record I was mad. I'm not mad anymore. It's not like 'This is my manifesto!' What it is, is like a psycho diary of two weeks in Vegas." Looking at that stack of bills and with his feelings about writing and recording another album summarized by "Fuck it. I'm not even gonna," Wyndorf bowed to some slight pressure from the record company ("don't be crazy") and headed to "the one place where I don't feel guilty," Las Vegas. "You don't feel guilty in Vegas. There's always some poor bastard who's worse off than you."

"It was like, 'This is something I can understand: mindless greed.' It was great. I just walked around and watched naked women and watched people lose all their money. Vegas is most fucked-up place, but at the same time very pure. And I just started writing like crazy."

"I'm of limited talent, which kind of makes it easier for me because I know when I pick up a guitar to write a song, I'm not going to go Beethoven on 'em. My theory, especially on this record, was to write a song as fast as I possibly could."

Recording was undertaken the same way, with Wyndorf torturing himself less, and his bandmates more. "Wrote it quick, recorded it quick," he sums up. "There's something about being immediate, physical that's so much more gratifying than trying to be a brain surgeon. It should be a celebration. It shouldn't be just whining. I wanted to have fun doing the record and I did have fun because it was so fast. *Dopes To Infinity* was not fun. It was me going anal insane tuning every drum. This one was just attack, attack, attack."

"There are places where I used to jam,

but there's no more jamming. The [guitar] leads are insane. Ed [Mundell, lead guitarist] was like, 'What are we going to do about the leads?' 'Ed, just stand up there and fuckin' play and I'll tell you when it's all right!' Ed's a really nice, mellow guy and I'm just scaring him—'Goddamn it, just play!' And he'd fuck it up and it would be the perfect lead. I had a strobe light on and porno all around him. That was the kind of vibe and he was just amazing, like some guy who read *Guitar World* upside down. I was howling in the studio laughing.

"It was just what I wanted."

end

## rocket from the crypt

>>> *Continued from page 33*

from some of the same places that other people have. I mean, we get compared to Rockpile, and I've never listened to them. And we get compared to Bruce Springsteen, and I don't listen to that either."

But more than sounding like any one artist, Rocket From The Crypt comes across as the rightful heir to a proto-punk legacy that encompasses everyone from British pub rockers like Rockpile and Joe Strummer's pre-Clash R&B-styled 101ers, to American misfits like the Stooges, the Dolls, the MC5 and any of the bands on the *Nuggets* compilations dedicated to '60s "punk"—bands whose mission it was to keep rock hard, sweaty fun and untamed. Especially, as Reis emphasizes, the MC5.

"For me, the MC5 was the biggest

influence on this band. People don't always see it, but we've taken inspiration from them in terms of standing for something but at the same time never neglecting the importance of having a good time. We're not as apocalyptic as they were. But you listen to their live stuff and you'll hear a lot of what we do—the 'ramalama fa fa' stuff, the thanking the audience, and everything. I think MC5 represented so many things. I found out about soul music and jazz because of MC5—Detroit soul music and Motown, all of that."

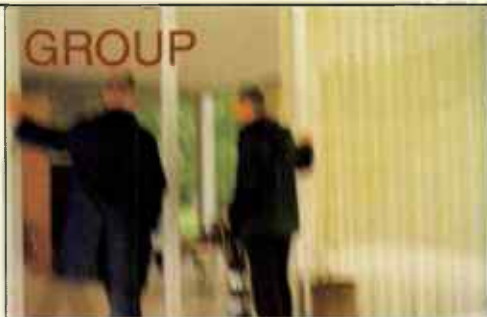
Musically, there was probably more of a similarity between the twin guitar improvisations of Reis's other band, the avant-rock Drive Like Jehu, and the Chuck Berry-meets-John Coltrane fusions of Wayne Kramer and Fred "Sonic" Smith that distinguished the MC5 from other Motor City madmen. But Jehu has called it quits, and Rocket From The Crypt has become Reis's main outlet for spreading the rock gospel.

"Things got a little bit weighted with Jehu when it came to the band's appetite for touring and the rigors of going out and doing the missionary work of playing to people every night and meeting people. Drive Like Jehu didn't want any part of that. For Rocket From The Crypt, the only way we can sell records is to go out there and do the missionary work. Basically, I think that all that should be asked of a band is that they make a great record, tour their asses off, and play great shows every night. I think that should be enough to have success with a band. Therefore, that's what we do. And we think that we do it better than anyone else out there."

end



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## AMON TOBIN

### Permutation

Ninja Tune

It's clear now that drum 'n' bass has moved across the Western hemisphere with a speed that couldn't have been predicted even five years ago. The fact that it's been taken to heart by classically trained Brazilian musician Amon Tobin is proof of its wide-ranging effects. Tobin's new album, *Permutation*, is a far-reaching exercise in electronic experimentation that retools d'n'b's basic structures to a practically surreal extent, turning that genre's conventions on their head. The result is an immensely complex record driven by a sense of groove that won't quit. The opener, "Regular Chickens," is frankly one of the oddest, most angular drum 'n' bass tracks on wax; the song is supported by live bass and shuddering Moog chords, which at first seem at odds with percussion that moves with the obsessive speed of a hummingbird. It ends up sounding like an

uneasy soundtrack to an evening in a cocktail bar somewhere beyond this planet, but it works. What distinguishes this record from many others that get called drum 'n' bass is that all the playing is live. Tobin's bossa nova sensibilities and percussive finesse are delicate but powerful, particularly on the noisy "Sordid," which introduces all manner of off-balance sounds and dissonance to what begins as a complacent lounge track. As both an important document of drum 'n' bass's proliferation and an impressive piece of artistry, *Permutation* is an essential offering from a talent you'll be hearing a lot from in the future.



Every now and then, one is confronted with a record of such sublime force and majesty, that describing it in words seems a Herculean task. Such is the case with RHYTHM & SOUND's "Mango Drive" single (Rhythm & Sound (Germany)). Mark Ernestus and Moritz von Oswald (collectively known as Maurizio) run the Hard Wax record shop in Berlin, which is the home to such esteemed minimal techno labels as Basic Channel, Din and Chain Reaction. The latest venture from Ernestus and von Oswald is "Mango Drive," which updates "Mango Walk" by the Chosen Brothers & Bullwackie's All-Stars, the highly regarded Jamaican dub collective. Utilizing dub's spooky, spectral effects and wavering sonar pulses, Rhythm & Sound drive the Bullwackie's record through the cold, faltering sine waves of the Basic Channel aesthetic. The grandeur and sweep of the track forces you to reconsider your conceptions about electronic music. This is a marriage made in heaven, dub's echo and reverb teased out to the sonic horizon and Maurizio's extreme minimalism taken to another level. The best single of 1998 by far... Peter Rose and Rob Smith comprise the MORE ROCKERS collective, folks who have been instrumental in establishing Bristol as the city of record for downtempo innovation over the past ten years. (Smith is also one half of Smith & Mighty.) Their latest collection, *Selection Two* (Alternation (Germany)), is a deeply reggae-inflected drum 'n' bass outing that assures their preeminent status among groove aficionados of all stripes. On tracks such as "Rwanda" and "Million Trillion," More Rockers build towering sound sculptures on top of bass lines that threaten to topple like a house of cards, but finally sustain the enormous weight placed upon them.



## dance

tgg

- 1 **MASSIVE ATTACK**  
Mezzanine Circa-Virgin
- 2 **DJ? ACUCRACK**  
Mutants Of Sound Lost In Bass-Slipdisc
- 3 **JAMIE MYERSON**  
The Listen Project  
Ovum Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
- 4 **FREAKY CHAKRA**  
Blacklight Fantasy Astralwerks-Caroline
- 5 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
Metalheadz Presents Platinum Breaks II  
ffrr-London
- 6 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
Funkufusion Ninja Tune
- 7 **CUBANATE**  
Interference Wax Trax!-TVT
- 8 **HYPERDEX 1 SECT**  
Metachrome 21st Circuitry
- 9 **PROPELLERHEADS**  
Decksandrumsandrockandroll DreamWorks
- 10 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
V Classic Volume II Konkrete Jungle-Ultra
- 11 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
Rock & Roll: This Is Jungle Sky Vol. 5  
Jungle Sky-Liquid Sky
- 12 **HEXEDENE**  
Choking On Lilies Re-Constriction-Cargo
- 13 **μ-ZIQ**  
Brace Yourself (EP) Astralwerks-Caroline
- 14 **DJ FAUST**  
Man Of Myth? Bomb Hip-Hop
- 15 **PISTEL**  
Pistel Baraka Foundation
- 16 **EVILS TOY**  
Illusion Metropolis
- 17 **BIOPSY**  
Cervix State Sequences DSBP
- 18 **PERFUME TREE**  
Feeler World Domination
- 19 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
The United States Of Drum And Bass Evil Teen
- 20 **STEVE STOLL**  
The Blunted Boy Wonder NovaMute-Mute
- 21 **CORNELIUS**  
Fantasma Matador
- 22 **DIE FORM**  
Quality Metropolis
- 23 **DJ CAM**  
The Beat Assassinated  
Inflammable Globetrotter-Sony
- 24 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
Digital:6::Focus:A DSBP
- 25 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
Pacific State Deviant

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



BY BRIAN COLEMAN

## hip-hop

tgg

- 1 **BIG PUNISHER**  
"Still Not A Player" Loud/RCA
- 2 **DJ HONDA**  
"On The Mic" Relativity
- 3 **GANG STARR**  
"Royalty" Noo Trybe/Virgin
- 4 **FUBLIC ENEMY**  
"He Got Game" Def Jam/Polygram
- 5 **CANIBUS**  
"Second Round Knockout" Universal
- 6 **CAM'RON**  
"357" Unlntertainment/Epic
- 7 **JOHN FORTE**  
"Ninety Nine (Flash The Message)"  
Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
- 8 **ALL CITY**  
"The Actual" Geffen
- 9 **DEF SQUAD**  
"Full Cooperation" Def Jam/Polygram
- 10 **CHANNEL LIVE**  
"Red Rum" 3-2-1-Zero Hour
- 11 **LL COOL J & DR. DRE**  
"Zoom" Interscope
- 12 **GOODIE MOB**  
"They Don't Dance No More"  
LaFace Artists
- 13 **SUNZ OF MAN**  
"Shining Star" Red Ant
- 14 **NOREAGA**  
"N D R E" Penalty
- 15 **PRAS MICHEL**  
"Ghetto Superstar" Interscope
- 16 **COCOA BROVAZ**  
"Black Trurep" Priority
- 17 **JIVE ALL-STARS**  
"No Stoppin'" Jive
- 18 **RASHEED & ILL ADVISED**  
"1.9.8.6." Quake City
- 19 **CHARLI BALTIMORE**  
"Money" Unlntertainment/Epic
- 20 **FAT JOE**  
"Misery Needs Company"  
Mystic Big Beat/Atlantic
- 21 **DMX**  
"Get Me A Dog" Def Jam/Polygram
- 22 **RAS KASS**  
"Understandable Smooth Shit" Patchwerks
- 23 **DILATED PEOPLES**  
"Work The Angles" A&R
- 24 **BLACK EYED PEAS**  
"Fallin' Up" Interscope
- 25 **BUSTA RHYMES**  
"Turn It Up (Remix)" Elektra-EEG

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## RASCO

### Time Waits For No Man

Stone's Throw

California's Bay Area has been blazing new paths in the down-low hip-hop world for years now, but 1998 should be the year that the scene will finally gain some of the national, above-ground respect that it deserves. And amid serious competition from the Hieroglyphics, Invisibl Skratch Piklz and the A&B label crew (including Defari and the Dilated Peoples), Rasco is the chosen one who could very well make the most noise. After hitting hard in 1997 with the brutal, Fanatik-produced single "The Unassisted," the stoic, iron-voiced lyricist has now unleashed his full-length debut, and it's every bit as powerful as you might expect. Rasco's flow is calm, controlled and commanding—Rakim is more than a slight influence—and he works well in any tempo and over any style of track he's handed. This is shown clearly in the mix he is given here by an array of top-notch underground producers from up and down the Left Coast. One listen to "Me & My Crew," "What It's All About," "Suckas Don't Respect It," "Major League" and "Take It Back Home" and there will be no denying this hot new MC. *Time Waits For No Man* is the debut of a very major new talent and will likely be one of the strongest debuts we'll see in '98.



The range and quality of underground compilations these days are at an all-time high. First case in point: the new **BLACK WHOLESTYLES** (Big Dada-Ninja Tune) collection, an excellent opportunity to peep the best hip-hop label out of the UK. The cuts compiled here make up some of the best intelligent, abstract hip-hop from around the world, focusing on UK kingpins like Part 2 & Juice Aleem (who flex here with "Nanotech Pilots," the amazing "Triple Intruder" and "Misanthropic"), Roots Manuva and Asylum. There are also important excursions into Los Angeles's abstract subterranea with Abstract Rude & Tribe Unique and New York's #1 new rap poet, Saul Williams... On a less abstract vibe, two new comps from the Northwestern territory—**CLASSIC ELEMENTS** (Impact-K) and **WALKMAN ROTATION** (Conception)—remind us that



great beats and rhymes can come from anywhere, and that Washington state has been seriously slept on for too long. *Classic Elements* follows in a similar path to previous collections such as *Do The Math* (Tribal) and *14 Fathoms Deep* (Loosegroove), showcasing the overflowing talent of the region in artists like the Ghetto Children, Jaleel, Sinsemilla, Black Anger and Soulstice. Treading in a generally jazzy vibe, this is a solid listen all the way through. *Walkman Rotation* is more like a taste of the future for the Conception label, which obviously has big plans in store. Mixed by wax destroyer J-Rocc of the Beat Junkies, artists like Eclipse, Diamond

Mercenaries, Kutfather, Jake One, Third Degree and Samson & Swift will make you crave for more... And on a seriously underground tip, the **ALL UP IN YA** collection, which flaunts the styles of Brooklyn's Nexx Level roster (including Smoothe Da Hustler, Trigger Tha Gambler, DV Alias Khrist and the up-and-coming Rhyme Recka) is a very pleasant surprise. Produced by D/R Period, *All Up In Ya* includes the amazing "Smith Brothers" single from '97 and new cuts and exclusive freestyles from the aforementioned mic manipulators, making it a platter worth tracking down.



Ridiculousness is kind of a way of life for the **CREAMS**, so the long-running and very English band of eccentrics' latest release is in about the most ludicrous format imaginable: a 14-song double three-inch CD set. Frontman Alan Jenkins and his compatriots, including one who calls himself Blodwyn P. Teabag, have a very weird sense of humor—there are four abstract instrumentals called

"Nasty Soap For Dogs," and the prettiest tune here is called "Mostly Crap"—but they've also got a great sense of pop, and their keyboard-driven songs are unfailingly melodic, though the words that stick in your head can be pretty peculiar. They also cover Guided By Voices' "Echos Myron" (with a horn section and dotty-uncle vocals), and do a little Muzak-organ instrumental called "Red Dwarf" that owes more than a bit to "Fun, Fun, Fun."

## hiss & crackle

The man who calls himself **HOLLAND**, or rather hollAnd, seems torn between the impulse to play his gorgeous, droning, synth-backed pop songs straight and to screw with his audience's expectations. At one of his rare live performances, he sat at a computer, playing most of his album *Your Orgasm* straight from hard disk, speeding it up, slowing it down and inserting passages of white noise. His follow-up, a CD single called "Beep, Kiss" (Audio Information Phenomena), inserts one perfectly extraneous note smack into the middle, for an effect not unlike the spoken-word interlude in New Order's "Bizarre Love Triangle" video. The other song, "Coughing Up Stars," begins "After your orgasm/There's some high laughter," and ends up diverging into some Stereolab-ish computer-play.

**HEFNER** is a new Scottish band that seems to have been listening to more



than a bit of Belle And Sebastian—their debut, the 10" EP *The Hefner Soul* (Too Pure (UK)), even has B&S's Stuart Murdoch playing organ on "More Christian Girls." It's not quite at the same level yet—the lead track "Flowers," about men's obsession with female virginity, is more than a little heavy-handed, and songwriter Darren Hayman's voice seems to be straining for every note. Hefner does have an

intriguing sense of sonic variation, though (all five of these songs sound very different, and the non-song-like segues between the songs are more than filler), and the band's moderate, lurching rhythms go well with the gradual unspooling of Hayman's melodies.

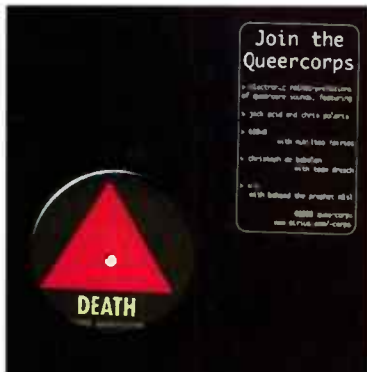
A few quick drops of the needle: The defunct noisecore band **HARRY**

# JOIN THE QUEERCORPS

Various Artists

Queercorps

Matt Wobensmith folded his long-running gay punk label Outpunk last year, but that wasn't the end of his record-releasing endeavors. He's founded a new label, Queercorps, to focus on the digital hardcore, hip-hop and other kinds of music he's finding more interesting these days. The label's first release is this 12" compilation, which bridges the gap between the old label and the new with a few



remixed classics and one new gem, the Meat Beat Manifesto-ish title track by Jack Acid and Chris Polaris. The cannily named 680x0 (given Wobensmith's professed interest in Macintosh sound-manipulation, something suggests that it's actually him) gives an extra digital thump to Mukilteo Fairies' "XXXXX," and tacks on

a snatch of the rather apropos "Balls To The Wall." Christoph De Babylon works fragments of Team Dresch's "Deattached" into a track of overdriven rhythm-box chaos, and a turbulent little riff from Behead The Prophet No Lord Shall Live's "Lewd Lewd Lewd" gets looped into the core of a scratch-and-bash mix by K.O. The electronic underground is, in a lot of ways, the new music of rebellion; it's the most effective medium for music that wants to get in your face for political reasons.

**PUSSY** seems to be seeing how many posthumous releases with different recordings of exactly the same songs it can get away with. This time, relatively clear, giggly takes on four numbers it's released at least five times each turn up on a split single (Menlo Park), with **FROSTY** doing a devolved version of Devo's already-devolved-by-definition "Mongoloid" on the other side... Also in the world of split singles by prolific, noisy bands fronted by screechy-voiced women on one side and odd covers on the other, **MELT-BANANA**'s "Wrest The Fist (Just For Reflection)" (Rodel (Germany)), a bullet-train-velocity number with some of their heaviest studio manipulation to date and a repeated bit of shrieking by Yasuko O. that's practically a hook, is backed by **KILLOUT TRASH**'s body-slammng industrial interpretation of Minor Threat's "Straight Edge."... The last five years have seen a lot of changes in what a "single" means, from the boom and bust of the independent vinyl 7" to the rise of new electronic-rock hybrid forms that work best in small doses and the resurgence of the 12-inch. Thanks to *New Music Monthly* for giving me the opportunity to follow underground music's brightest, briefest flashes.



BY JAMES LIEN

In the years since the first groundbreaking KING CRIMSON box set, Robert Fripp has turned his stash of archival live recordings into a veritable cottage industry documenting the great, oft-misunderstood art-rock band. The latest volume in the Discipline Global Mobile series of live Crim CDs, *Absent Lovers*, documents the final live performance, recorded in Montreal in July of 1984, by the popular '80s incarnation of the group, a lineup that featured guitarist Fripp, bassist Tony Levin, drummer Bill Bruford and wiggly lead guitarist and singer Adrian Belew. At this point, the group was playing clever, articulate, thinking-man's rock for the neurotic 1980s, equal parts Talking Heads, Police and Roxy Music. Once again, however, just as in the '70s, the group proved itself to be too intelligent or too obtuse for its times, and unlike the Heads, Police or Roxy Music (or, for that matter, the radio-friendly '80s versions of their '70s prog colleagues such as Genesis and Rush), KC never achieved a major hit. The set list on *Absent Lovers* reads like a best-of compilation of the group's '80s work, plus ripping versions of "Red" and "Larks' Tongues In Aspic" just to please the few grizzled beards and torn jeans that might have crawled out of the woodwork and shown up for the

## inthebins

gig. Also, diehard '80s Crim-heads should keep an eye out for not one but two Fripp-authorized live concert videos, *The Noise* and *Three Of A Perfect Pair: Live In Japan*.

Just out from Warner Archives is the incredible collaboration between FRANK SINATRA & ANTONIO CARLOS JOBIM, which teams together two of the most suave men on the planet at the height of their powers, in the late '60s. Everything about this 1967 date oozes elegance and good taste, just as you'd expect when the late, revered Chairman Of The Board teams up with the greatest Brazilian composer/arranger who ever lived. It's a simmering, buoyant, Brazilian-styled easy-listening album that will strike a chord with cocktail connoisseurs the world over.



Blue Note has dug deep into its vaults and pulled out some real winners: a series of reissues of seminal West Coast classics, '50s "cool" jazz sides from the Pacific Jazz catalog. Other than the CHET BAKER QUINTET, some of the artists are not household names—do BILL PERKINS, BUD SHANK, JACK MONTROSE, CY TOUFF and RUSS FREEMAN ring any bells?—but if you want cool music to chill out and wear shades to, slip any of these into your hi-fi. There's also a bit of deep trivia surrounding JACK SHELDON's *The*

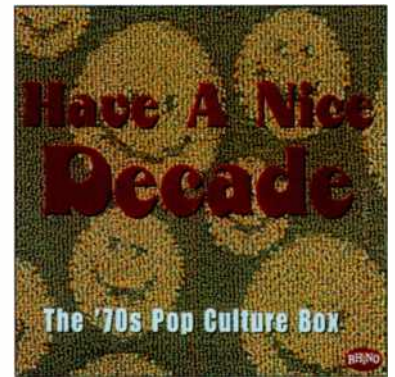


# HAVE A NICE DECADE

Various Artists

Rhino

Growing up as a little kid in the '70s had its own peculiar zeitgeist; for one thing, in the era before consultants and computers and music video, the radio was still really terrific. While parents wasted away in Margaritaville or checked into the Hotel California, kids could still buy 45 rpm 7" singles of Blues Image's "Ride Captain Ride" or "It Never Rains In Southern California" and sing along as they spun on the family record player. Rhino's box set *Have A Nice Decade* summons up much of the AM radio world on which latch-key children were weaned: Judy Blume and the *After School Special*, a musical world where tunes like Three Dog Night's "Joy To The World" or Labelle's "Lady Marmalade" were subjected to repeated listenings. This outrageously-packaged multi-CD box set is chock full of the era's AM radio hits and soul gems. And what's really great about the box (and Rhino Records in general) is that it doesn't have any of the heavy hitters—no Stones, Black Sabbath, Elton John or solo Beatles tunes to weigh it down. It's just all the *other* stuff that made up the charts of the "dazed 'n' confused" decade. (Kitsch connoisseurs might remember Rhino's acclaimed series *Have A Nice Day* and *Didn't It Blow Your Mind*, which provided the blueprint for this box set.) This is one of the most inconsequential yet wonderful releases of the summer. Just pull out these discs at a backyard barbecue, and watch people start doing the hustle.



*Quartet & The Quintet*: Think back to Saturday mornings and *Schoolhouse Rock!*. Remember the Bill on Capitol Hill who was hoping and praying to one day be a law? The voice was Sheldon's. Blue Note has also recently reissued a beautiful edition of MILES DAVIS's *The Complete Birth Of The Cool*, featuring all the classic recordings.

Jazz saxophonist PHAROAH SANDERS played alongside John Coltrane at the end of his life, and subsequently embarked on a jazz odyssey exploring a spiritual realm of music that continues to this day. *Thembi*, one of his best albums from the turn of the '70s, has just been reissued on Impulse!-GRP. Play this record on a sunny day and feel the warmth of the Creator in your life. It might even have healing powers, it feels so restorative. Impulse! has also reissued Sanders's *Jewels Of Thought*, a heady collaboration with vocalist Leon Thomas that's basically two summery 20-minute long jams.



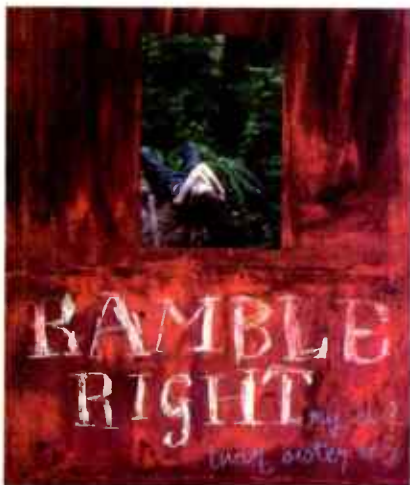
MOVIES

$\pi$

(Artisan Entertainment)

Filed in grainy black-and-white for what looks to be a budget of around \$6.58 and a slightly stale Hostess cherry pie,  $\pi$ —the directorial debut of Darren Aronofsky—is the darker flip side of *Good Will Hunting*, and the rare on-the-cheap film that could only be lessened with higher production values. Sean Gullette stars as a single-minded mathematician, obsessed with his theories and computers, who discovers a number that could be the secret of, well, everything. Wall Street wants it as the key to the stock market, a group of Kabbalistic Hassidim want it as the key to the identity of God, nobody cares much about his life as long as they have the number, and he's too busy running for his life—and shutting himself off from the outside world—to think much about what he should do. The atmosphere of the movie, claustrophobic from the beginning, constricts like a snake—a series of chase scenes in the New York City subways are especially terrifying—and the ending is cryptic, disturbing and beautifully handled. Numerically minded viewers may want to watch for a number of mathematical in-jokes, including a long series of indirect references to the Golden Mean. >>> DW

MIXED MEDIA



MY EVIL TWIN SISTER

Amber Gayle and Stacy Wakefield are actual identical twin sisters who put incredible care into their annual zine *My Evil Twin Sister*. The third and most recent issue, subtitled "Ramble Right," is one of the most physically gorgeous zines I've ever seen: a 160-page paperback, devoted to Gayle's account of an uneventful-but-eventful spring she spent in Germany in 1990. Gayle is a thoughtful observer of the people and world around her—she's also published a zine devoted to wild cascadia salmon—and she charts the psychological subtleties of the interaction among her circle of friends, and the words spoken and unspoken in a love affair, with care and understatement. It's illustrated with Wakefield's photographs, which likewise work by implication: You see a fragment of a cathedral, the back of a hay-carrying woman's shoulder, a dog on an immense, empty European beach. Her design is exquisite, too—everything from the antique drawings of plants that decorate the text to the green-and-black printing on recycled paper makes *My Evil Twin Sister* look and feel elegant. (Evil Twin Publications, P.O. Box 12124, Seattle, WA 98102) >>> DW

NET STUFF

H.E.A.R.  
www.hearnet.com

More than 50 million people experience some form of tinnitus, but only about 12 million seek medical advice. If you've been leaving concerts with a ringing in your ears, a visit to [www.hearnet.com](http://www.hearnet.com) could be just the remedy. The site is the online presence of the non-profit organization H.E.A.R. (Hearing Education and Awareness for Rockers) and provides an, um, earful of information about hearing loss and tinnitus, such as its causes and how to prevent it. There's also an online souvenir stand for goodies ranging from T-shirts to earplugs, and an "affiliates" link, listing audiologists in more than 20 states, Canada and Australia. The info here is vital to almost any music fan, and the site stays as cool as a public service announcement can by pulling support (and quotes and pictures) from rockers like Joey Ramone, Pete Townshend and Lars Ulrich. >>> William Werde







## MUKTUK WOLFSBREATH, HARD-BOILED SHAMAN

by Terry LaBan (Vertigo)

Terry LaBan's independent anthology series *Cud* was rather hit-or-miss, but occasionally he'd hit on a brilliantly funny idea, and the best one now has its own miniseries. *Muktuk Wolfsbreath, Hard-Boiled Shaman* is exactly what it sounds like: the basic conventions of hard-boiled detective fiction transplanted to a story about a prehistoric Siberian shaman. LaBan has fun playing with the idea—Wolfsbreath's sidekick is his spirit familiar, a weasel who's addicted to fermented reindeer milk, and the ex-lover who entices him into the case is a shamaness who's become one with the Great Mother—but at heart, he's serious about it. The story works as a mystery, as a parody of a mystery, and as a very weird but meticulously researched look at ancient Inuit culture. LaBan's drawing style has tightened up a lot since the *Cud* days, and his scratchy, cartoony figures suggest both woodcuts and cave drawings at times. *Wolfsbreath* is a delight, if an unusual one: a comic where the hero's as likely to solve a mystery by downing a few psychedelic mushrooms and having a mystical vision as by old-fashioned ratiocination.

>>> DW

BOOKS

## MAKING PEOPLE'S MUSIC: MOE ASCH AND FOLKWAYS RECORDS

by Peter D. Goldsmith (Smithsonian Institution Press)

Moe Asch was one of a handful of behind-the-scenes visionaries who shaped 20th century music. His legacy is mind-blowing: early experiments in the '30s with amplification; seminal releases by Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, Coleman Hawkins, Joseph Spence, John Cage, Charles Ives and countless equally important others; landmark releases of electronic and world music; obscure recordings of junkyards and auto races. Peter D. Goldsmith's new biography of Asch comes in honor of the 50th anniversary of Asch's Folkways Records. It tells the story of a man blind to race and genre who created a record label on which jazz, calypso, leftist folk, experimental music and field hollers were treated with wonderful equanimity. Goldsmith's book, though it's short on style—its strictly chronological layout lacks energy—is long on stories and anecdotes, and while the chapters dedicated to Asch's formative years are a bit tedious, the book gathers steam as he becomes a cultural hub. His career reached its pinnacle with the folk revival of the '50s and '60s, an uprising that was arguably sparked by Folkways' release of the much-lauded *Anthology of American Folk Music*. Taken as a whole, *Making People's Music* strongly validates Moe Asch's profound vision, one that shaped the century by documenting some of its most influential musical minds.

>>> Randall Roberts

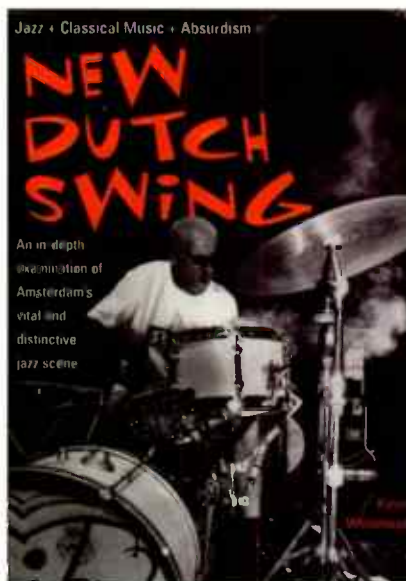


## NEW DUTCH SWING

by Kevin Whitehead (Billboard Books)

What the Dutch have done with American jazz is among the most fruitful musical mistranslations of our half-century. Unconstrained by stodgy views about jazz tradition, and crossbred with everything from modern classical composition to the Caribbean-flavored music of former Dutch possession Suriname, Holland's version of free improvisation is fun and un-dogmatic. The scene's best-known names (Willem Breuker Kollektief, Misha Mengelberg, Clusone 3) have a smattering of US releases, but it's been hard for Americans to grasp the big picture. *New Dutch Swing* is a big help in that regard. Author Kevin Whitehead is a bit like drummer Han Bennink (a key figure here); he's often all over his kit, doing several things at once. There's a potted history of Amsterdam, bureaucratic details of Dutch arts funding, scads of oral history from the musicians, and perceptive comments on three decades' worth of recordings. It can be a daunting read for the jazz novice; if you've never heard Ike Quebec, comparing his and Hans Dulfer's sax sounds won't mean much. But Whitehead does take serious stabs at describing how the music *sounds*, and his enthusiasm for his subject is infectious, if dangerous—the reader who gets a taste for this stuff could spend many months (and dollars) tracking down the items in the book's extensive discography.

>>> Franklin Bruno



Jazz • Classical Music • Absurdism

An in-depth examination of Amsterdam's vital and distinctive jazz scene

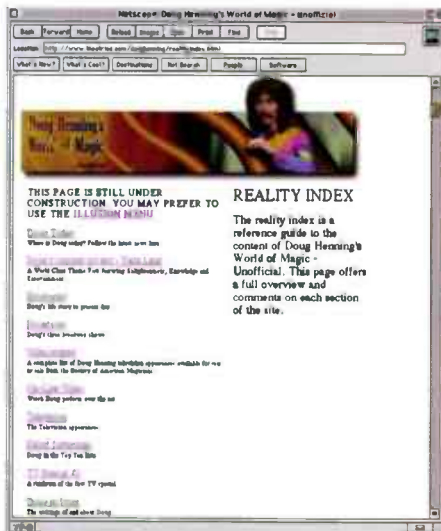
## BAR-B-QUE SOUL-A-BRATION! (Rhino)

Summer's here, and the time is right for putting together big silly parties. *Bar-B-Que Soul-A-Bration!* is a party planner in a single box: charcoal grill recipes (vegetarians need not apply), coupons for fixings, invitation designs, instructions for "Soul Charades," directions on how to do the Funky Chicken (though if you don't know how already, it's maybe not a good idea to learn from a book), and the like. But the point of the whole exercise is the two ingenious CDs at the package's center: two hours' worth of soul songs *about barbecue*, more or less. You get songs called "Soul Food" by both Albert Collins and the Asylum Choir, Mongo Santamaria's "Watermelon Man," Willie Bobo's "Fried Neck Bones," and on and on. It's essentially the perfect cookout mix tape, pre-compiled on CD. >>> DW



**KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR...**  
 THE TELETUBBYLAND WEB SITE (WWW.TELETUBBY.CO.UK/TELETUBBYLAND.HTML), WHICH IS, UH, *NOT* DEDICATED TO THE BRIGHTLY COLORED KIDS' CHARACTERS WITH TYS IN THEIR BELLIES; WE WON'T SPOIL THE SURPRISE...THE NEWLY RELEASED VIDEOTAPES OF THE WEEK OF THE MIKE DOUGLAS SHOW CO-HOSTED BY JOHN LENNON AND YOKO ONO IN 1972 (RHINO), GUEST-STARRING A WILD VARIETY OF ROCKERS, COUNTER-CULTURE TYPES AND ODDBALLS. YOU HAVEN'T LIVED UNTIL YOU'VE SEEN CHUCK BERRY MAKING MACROBIOTIC FOOD... VIDEO DIRECTOR (AND FORMER LEMONHEAD) JESSE PERETZ'S UPCOMING DEBUT FEATURE *FIRST LOVE, LAST RITES*, WITH A SOUNDTRACK FEATURING SONGS WRITTEN BY SHUDDER TO THINK, MOSTLY IN '50S AND '60S POP STYLES, AND PERFORMED BY LIZ PHAIR, BILLY CORGAN AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE-ROCK TYPES.

# MIXED MEDIA



## DOUG HENNING'S WORLD OF MAGIC

[www.theatrics.com/doughenning](http://www.theatrics.com/doughenning)

It's everyone's favorite squirrely Canadian, Doug Henning! The big-eyed, elegantly goofy magician who once cavorted with the Muppets is happily preserved for the Doug enthusiast in all of us, even the borderline nutbags who've made a Doug Henning action figure or two in their time. (Or is that just me?) This is no *Breaking The Code*, designed to undermine the childlike wonder Henning both creates and floats through life with. The site has fan letters and testimonials from other magicians, as well as several video clips of his performances, showcasing the "Up With People" eagerness of his stage persona. There's more than the glow of nostalgia here, though. The "Doug Today" section features Henning's very own comments on the site, and yes, he is still working on his illusion theme park dedicated to His Holiness, Yogi Maharishi Mahesh. The best part of the site, however, is "The Game," which is essentially Concentration, elevated by its hilarious assortment of Doug cards that perfectly capture the simultaneously manic and vacant look in his eyes. >>> Anne Marie Cruz



## THE VIRTUAL BAR

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

Unlike other "bar" sites with lesser databases and more distractions (like enormous quantities of off-color bar jokes or brainless toasts for every conceivable category), The Virtual Bar serves only one purpose: to be an online bartender's guide. Next time you're having a party, or want to figure out what to order with whiskey besides a sour, utilize the 3962 alcoholic and non-alcoholic recipes in the Virtual Bar's interactive database. You can type in whatever ingredients you have on hand, and get a list of possible drink recipes. There's also a voting function that lets you approve or disapprove of drinks as you try them, maintaining a top ten list of the most popular drinks among the site's users, and a percentage approval rating for all drinks. >>> William Werde





## FIVE YEARS AGO

ARTIST	1. PORNO FOR PYROS	
TITLE	PORNO FOR PYROS	WARNER BROS.
ARTIST	2. PRIMUS	
TITLE	PORK SODA	INTERSCOPE
ARTIST	3. PJ HARVEY	
TITLE	RID OF ME	ISLAND-PLG
ARTIST	4. SEBADOH	
TITLE	BUBBLE & SCRAPE	SUB POP
ARTIST	5. FRANK BLACK	
TITLE	FRANK BLACK	4AD-ELEKTRA

## TEN YEARS AGO

ARTIST	1. MORRISSEY	
TITLE	VIVA HATE	SIRE-REPRISE
ARTIST	2. SMITHEREENS	
TITLE	GREEN THOUGHTS	ENIGMA/CAPITOL
ARTIST	3. TALKING HEADS	
TITLE	NAKED	FLY/SIRE-WB
ARTIST	4. ZIGGY MARLEY	
TITLE	CONSCIOUS PARTY	VIRGIN
ARTIST	5. MIGHTY LEMON DROPS	
TITLE	WORLD WITHOUT END	SIRE-WB

Chart data culled from *CMJ New Music Report's* weekly Top 200 radio chart, based on combined airplay of approximately 500 college, non-commercial and commercial radio stations reporting their top 30 most played releases that week.

1	SONIC YOUTH	A Thousand Leaves	DGC
2	MASSIVE ATTACK	Mezzanine	Circa-Virgin
3	FIREWATER	The Ponzi Scheme	Jetset
4	SEAN LENNON	Into The Sun	Grand Royal-Capitol
5	ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT	RFTC	Interscope
6	FUGAZI	End Hits	Dischord
7	BAD RELIGION	No Substance	Atlantic
8	JESUS LIZARD	Blue	Capitol
9	PULP	This Is Hardcore	Island
10	SPOON	A Series Of Sneaks	Elektra-EEG
11	TORI AMOS	From The Choirgirl Hotel	Atlantic
12	QUASI	Featuring "Birds"	Up
13	VERSUS	Two Cents Plus Tax	Caroline
14	CORNELIUS	Fantasma	Matador
15	JOAN OF ARC	How Memory Works	Jade Tree
16	REVEREND HORTON HEAT	Space Heater	Interscope
17	SUICIDE MACHINES	Battle Hymns	Hollywood
18	PROPELLERHEADS	Decksandrumsandrockandroll	DreamWorks
19	GANG STARR	Moment Of Truth	Noo Trybe-Virgin
20	BERNARD BUTLER	People Move On	Creation/Columbia-CRG
21	PERE UBU	Pennsylvania	Tim/Kerr
22	PUBLIC ENEMY	He Got Game	Def Jam-Polygram
23	MONEY MARK	Push The Button	Mo Wax/frfr-London
24	DIRTY THREE	Ocean Songs	Touch And Go
25	YO LA TENGO	Little Honda (EP)	Matador
26	LENNY KRAVITZ	5	Virgin
27	CLUTCH	The Elephant Riders	Columbia-CRG
28	GARBAGE	Version 2.0	Almo Sounds
29	MORCHEEBA	Big Calm	China-Sire
30	CHIXDIGGIT!	Born On The First Of July	Honest Don's
31	UNWRITTEN LAW	Unwritten Law	Interscope
32	CONNELLS	Still Life	TVT
33	SCRAWL	Nature Film	Elektra-EEG
34	DEFTONES	Around The Fur	Maverick-WB
35	NEGATIVLAND	Happy Heroes	Seeland
36	CALEXICO	The Black Light	Quarterstick
37	µ-ZIQ	Brace Yourself	Astralwerks-Caroline
38	VAST	Visual Audio Sensory Theater	Elektra-EEG
39	TORTOISE	TNT	Thrill Jockey
40	DJ HONDA	HII	Relativity
41	AVAIL	Over The James	Lookout!
42	DAVE MATTHEWS BAND	Before These Crowded Streets	RCA
43	CREEPER LAGOON	I Become Small And Go	NickelBag
44	SPRUNG MONKEY	Mr. Funny Face	Surfdog-Hollywood
45	ADD N TO X	On The Wires Of Our Nerves	Satellite-Mute
46	BEVIS FROND	North Circular	Flydaddy
47	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Selector Dub Narcotic	K
48	TUSCADERO	My Way Or The Highway	Elektra-EEG
49	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Super Bad... A Tribute To James Brown	Zero Hour
50	PRISSTEENS	Scandal, Controversy & Romance	Almo Sounds
51	HAYDEN	The Closer I Get	Outpost
52	BANGS	Tiger Beat	Kill Rock Stars
53	BUFFALO DAUGHTER	New Rock	Grand Royal
54	BIG BAD VOODOO DADDY	Big Bad Voodoo Daddy	Coolsville-EMI
55	CALIFONE	Califone	Flydaddy
56	BUCK-O-NINE	Pass The Dutchie (EP)	TVT
57	BONNIE RAITT	Fundamental	Capitol
58	NEW BOMB TURKS	At Rope's End	Epitaph
59	BILL FOX	Transit Byzantium	Cherry Pop-spinArt
60	PERNICE BROTHERS	Overcome By Happiness	Sub Pop
61	DAVID GARZA	This Euphoria	Lava-Atlantic
62	DAMON & NAOMI	Playback Singers	Sub Pop
63	GRASSY KNOLL	III	Antilles-Verve
64	CATATONIA	International Velvet	Vapor
65	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Teleconned: We Want The Airwaves	No Alternative-TRG
66	JOHN SCOFIELD	A Go Go	Verve
67	LONG FIN KILLIE	Amelia	Too Pure-Beggars Banquet
68	SUPERGENIUS	Star Wars Breakbeats	Suckadelic
69	SPECIALS	Guilty 'Til Proved Innocent!	Way Cool-MCA
70	GIRLS AGAINST BOYS	Freak * On * Ica	DGC
71	THE URGE	Master Of Style	Immortal-Epic
72	UI	Lifelike	Southern
73	LOU REED	Perfect Night Live In London	Reprise
74	ANI DIFRANCO	Little Plastic Castle	Righteous Babe
75	NATALIE MERCHANT	Ophelia	Elektra-EEG



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World Radio History



Key: Artist (label) where covered, website

12 Rounds (Nothing-Interscope) Quick Fix pg. 8  
 Barry Adamson (Mute) Reviews pg. 40  
 Agents Of Satan (Deaf American Recordings) Metal pg. 57  
 All Up In Ya (Nexx Level) Hip-Hop pg. 59  
 Amnesia (Supreme-Island) Reviews pg. 40  
 Arnold (Creation-Columbia) Reviews pg. 40  
 Baby Fox (Roadrunner) Reviews pg. 40  
[www.roadrun.com/artists/babyfox/homepage.htm](http://www.roadrun.com/artists/babyfox/homepage.htm)  
 Bangs (Kill Rock Stars) Reviews pg. 41  
 Barenaked Ladies (Reprise) Dn The CD pg. 67  
[home.ica.net/~mejaskin/bnl/index.html](http://home.ica.net/~mejaskin/bnl/index.html)  
 Bethlehem (Red Stream) Metal pg. 57  
 Billy Bragg/Wilco (Elektra) Best New Music pg. 12  
[www.billybragg.co.uk](http://www.billybragg.co.uk), [www.wilcoweb.com](http://www.wilcoweb.com)  
 Terry Lee Brown Jr. (Plastic City-UCMG) Mixed Signals pg. 53  
 Richard Buckner (MCA) Best New Music pg. 12, Dn The CD pg. 67  
[home.earthlink.net/~doubters/buckner.html](http://home.earthlink.net/~doubters/buckner.html)  
 Burn The Priest (Deaf American Recordings) Metal pg. 57  
 Catalonia (Vapor-Warner Bros.) Reviews pg. 41  
[easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~durandal/catalonia/index.htm](http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~durandal/catalonia/index.htm)  
 Chessie (Dropbeat) Reviews pg. 41  
 Chocolate Genius (V2) Reviews pg. 41  
 Cornellius (Matador) The Scene Is Now pg. 16  
 Creams (Jarmusic) Singles pg. 60  
 Cedell Davis (Fat Possum-Epithaph) Quick Fix pg. 10  
 Disinformation (Ash International) Quick Fix pg. 8  
 DJ? Acucrack (Slipdisc) Dn The Verge pg. 14, Dn The CD pg. 68  
 Drugstore (Roadrunner) Dn The Verge pg. 14, Dn The CD pg. 67  
[www.drugstore-vooodoo.co.uk](http://www.drugstore-vooodoo.co.uk)  
 Emmet Swimming (Epic) Dn The CD pg. 68  
[www.emmettswimming.com](http://www.emmettswimming.com)  
 Mark Farina (Mixmag-London) Mixed Signals pg. 53  
 Flight 16 (Epic) Dn The CD pg. 67  
 Frosty (Menlo Park) Singles pg. 60  
 Diamanda Galás (Asphodel) Reviews pg. 42  
[www.brainwashed.com/diamanda](http://www.brainwashed.com/diamanda)  
 Golden Delicious/Pete Krebs (Cavity Search) Reviews pg. 42  
 Grant Lee Buffalo (Warner Bros.) Dn The CD pg. 67  
[www.uq.net.au/~zssmiffs/GLB/grant.html](http://www.uq.net.au/~zssmiffs/GLB/grant.html)  
 Patty Griffin (A&M) Reviews pg. 42  
[nw3.nai.net/~zigmont/](http://nw3.nai.net/~zigmont/)  
 Harry Pussy (Menlo Park) Singles pg. 60  
 Hefner (Too Pure (UK)) Singles pg. 60  
 Hi Fi Killers (Loosegroove) Reviews pg. 42  
 Holland (Audio Information Phenomena) Singles pg. 60  
 Impaled Nazarene (Osmose) Metal pg. 57  
 Joan Of Arc (Jade Tree) Reviews pg. 43  
[www.geocities.com/Nashville/3098](http://www.geocities.com/Nashville/3098)  
 Evynd Kang (Tzadik) Reviews pg. 43  
 Kahimi Karie (Minty Fresh) The Scene Is Now pg. 16  
 Killout Trash (Rodel (Germany)) Singles pg. 60  
 King Crimson (Discipline Global Mobile) Flashback pg. 61  
 Komeda (Minty Fresh) Feature pg. 25  
 Mark Lanegan (Sub Pop) Reviews pg. 44  
 Lionrock (Time Bomb) Reviews pg. 44  
[www.galstar.com/~english/lionrock](http://www.galstar.com/~english/lionrock)  
 Lounge Lizards (Strange & Beautiful Music) Feature pg. 24, Dn The CD pg. 68  
[www.inch.com/~lagarto](http://www.inch.com/~lagarto)  
 Lord Wind (Raven Claw) Metal pg. 57  
 Mayfield Four (Epic) Dn The CD pg. 67  
 Medeski Martin And Wood (Blue Note) Best New Music pg. 13  
[www.mmw.net](http://www.mmw.net)

Melt-Banana (Rodel (Germany)) Singles pg. 60  
 Mono Puff (Bar/None) Reviews pg. 44  
[www.monopuff.org](http://www.monopuff.org)  
 Monster Magnet (A&M) Feature pg. 30, Dn The CD pg. 67  
[www.utu.fi/~mikkoski/rock/moma](http://www.utu.fi/~mikkoski/rock/moma)  
 More Rockers (Alternation (Germany)) Dance pg. 58  
 MixPx (A&M) Reviews pg. 44  
[www.mpx.com](http://www.mpx.com)  
 Heather Nova (WDRK) Reviews pg. 45  
[www.heathernova.org](http://www.heathernova.org)  
 Ozomatli (Almo Sounds) Dn The Verge pg. 14, Dn The CD pg. 68  
 Plastikman (NovaMute) Quick Fix pg. 9  
 Plastilina Mosh (Capitol) Reviews pg. 45  
 Rancid (Epithaph) Best New Music pg. 13  
[www.spacestar.net/users/medwyn/rancid/rancidindex.html](http://www.spacestar.net/users/medwyn/rancid/rancidindex.html)  
 Ernest Ranglin (Palm Pictures) Reviews pg. 46  
 Rasco (Stone's Throw) Hip-Hop pg. 59  
 Rhythm & Sound (Rhythm & Sound (Germany)) Dance pg. 58  
 Marc Ribot (Atlantic) Reviews pg. 46, Dn The CD pg. 68  
 Steve Riley And The Mamou Playboys (Rounder) Dn The CD pg. 67  
 Rocket From the Crypt (Interscope) Feature pg. 32, Dn The CD pg. 67  
[www.rfc.com](http://www.rfc.com)  
 Bic Runga (Columbia) Reviews pg. 47  
[www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Palladium/9072/BKmain.html](http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Palladium/9072/BKmain.html)  
 Pharoah Sanders (Impulse-GRP) Flashback pg. 61  
 Brian Setzer Orchestra (Interscope) Reviews pg. 47  
 Seymores (Vernon Yard-Caroline) Dn The CD pg. 68  
 Shonen Knife (Big Deal) Reviews pg. 48  
[www.physics.brown.edu/people/ga/play/shonen/shonen.html](http://www.physics.brown.edu/people/ga/play/shonen/shonen.html)  
 Frank Sinatra & Antonio Carlos Jobim (Warner Bros.) Flashback pg. 61  
[www.vex.net/~buff/sinatra/index.html](http://www.vex.net/~buff/sinatra/index.html)  
 Skinny (Cheeky-London) Reviews pg. 48, Dn The CD pg. 68  
 Slayer (American-Columbia) Feature pg. 27, Dn The CD pg. 67  
[www.slaytanic.com](http://www.slaytanic.com)  
 Smashing Pumpkins (Virgin) Cover Story pg. 34, Best New Music pg. 12  
[www.smashing-pumpkins.net](http://www.smashing-pumpkins.net)  
 Andy Smith (ftr-London) Mixed Signals pg. 53  
 Solex (Matador) Feature pg. 28  
 Sonic Youth (DGC) Quick Fix pg. 11  
[www.total.net/~mtrembla/](http://www.total.net/~mtrembla/)  
 Spinanes (Sub Pop) Feature pg. 20  
[www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Mezzanine/1663](http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Mezzanine/1663)  
 Surfers (Epic) Reviews pg. 48, Dn The CD pg. 68  
 Symposium (Red Ant) Reviews pg. 48  
[www.symphomania.com](http://www.symphomania.com)  
 Towa Tei (Elektra) The Scene Is Now pg. 16  
 Danny Tenaglia (Twisted) Reviews pg. 49  
 Amon Tobin (Ninja Tune) Dance pg. 58  
 Transglobal Underground (MCA) Reviews pg. 49  
 Ultrababyrat (Velvet) Reviews pg. 49  
 USA (Drag City) Reviews pg. 50  
 Vader (Pavement) Metal pg. 57  
 Velvet Crush (Action Musik) Reviews pg. 50  
 Violent Femmes Geek Love pg. 56  
[www.vfemmes.com](http://www.vfemmes.com)  
 Don Walsler (Watermelon-Sire) Reviews pg. 51  
 Warm Jets (Island) Reviews pg. 51  
 Lucinda Williams (Mercury) Best New Music pg. 13  
[www.lonestarwebstation.com/lucinda.html](http://www.lonestarwebstation.com/lucinda.html)  
 Brian Wilson (Revolution) Reviews pg. 52  
[www.cabinessence.com/brian/main.html](http://www.cabinessence.com/brian/main.html)  
 Wink (Ovum/Ruffhouse-Columbia) Reviews pg. 52, Dn The CD pg. 68

## LABELS OF ARTISTS WHO APPEAR IN THIS ISSUE

**A&M**  
 1416 N. La Brea Ave.  
 Hollywood, CA 90028  
[www.amrecords.com](http://www.amrecords.com)

**Action Musik**  
 P.O. Box 2227  
 Toluca Lake, CA 91610  
[www.indies.com/actionmusik](http://www.indies.com/actionmusik)

**Almo Sounds**  
 360 N. La Cienega Blvd.  
 Los Angeles, CA 90048  
[www.gaffer.com/almo](http://www.gaffer.com/almo)

**Alternation**  
 c/o Intercoad  
 Alzheimer Strasse 26  
 D-70679 Stuttgart, Germany

**Ash International**  
 13 Oswald Road  
 London SW17 7SS, UK

**Asphodel**  
 P.O. Box 51, Chelsea Sta.  
 New York, NY 10113  
[www.asphodel.com](http://www.asphodel.com)

**Atlantic**  
 1290 Ave. of the Americas  
 New York, NY 10104  
[www.atlantic-records.com](http://www.atlantic-records.com)

**Audio Information Phenomena**  
 1625 Oakwood Dr.  
 San Mateo, CA 94403

**Bar/None**  
 P.O. Box 1704  
 Hoboken, NJ 07330  
[www.bar-none.com](http://www.bar-none.com)

**Big Deal**  
 P.O. Box 2072, Stuyvesant Sta.  
 New York, NY 10009

**Blue Note**  
 810 Seventh Ave., 4th Fl.  
 New York, NY 10019  
[www.bluenote.com](http://www.bluenote.com)

**Capitol**  
 1750 North Vine St.  
 Hollywood, CA 90028  
[www.hollywoodandvine.com](http://www.hollywoodandvine.com)

**Caroline**  
 114 West 26th St.  
 New York, NY 10001  
[www.caroline.com](http://www.caroline.com)

**Cavity Search**  
 P.O. Box 42246  
 Portland, OR 97242  
[www.teleport.com/~csr](http://www.teleport.com/~csr)

**Columbia**  
 550 Madison Ave.  
 New York, NY 10022  
[www.sonymusic.com/Music/WireTap/columbia](http://www.sonymusic.com/Music/WireTap/columbia)

**Conception**  
 1605 Boyston Ave., Top Floor  
 Seattle, WA 98122  
[www.conceptionrecords.com](http://www.conceptionrecords.com)

**Deaf American Recordings**  
 #3 Bethel Church Road  
 Dillsburg, PA 17019

**DGC**  
 9130 Sunset Blvd.  
 Los Angeles, CA 90069  
[www.getten.com](http://www.getten.com)

**Discipline Global Mobile**  
 P.O. Box 1533, Salisbury  
 Wiltshire, SP5 5ER, UK  
[www.discipline.co.uk](http://www.discipline.co.uk)

**Drag City**  
 P.O. Box 476867  
 Chicago, IL 60647  
[www.dragcity.com](http://www.dragcity.com)

**Dropbeat**  
 1507 Povall St., Ste. M  
 Emeryville, CA 94608  
[www.dropbeat.com](http://www.dropbeat.com)

**Elektra**  
 75 Rockefeller Plaza  
 New York, NY 10019  
[www.elektra.com](http://www.elektra.com)

**Epic**  
 550 Madison Ave.  
 New York, NY 10022  
[www.epiccenter.com](http://www.epiccenter.com)

**Epithaph**  
 2789 Sunset Blvd.  
 Los Angeles, CA 90026  
[www.epithaph.com](http://www.epithaph.com)

**Fat Possum**  
 P.O. Box 1923  
 Oxford, MS 38655  
[www.fatpossum.com](http://www.fatpossum.com)

**Impulse/GRP**  
 555 West 57th St., 10th Fl.  
 New York, NY 10019  
[www.impulsererecords.com](http://www.impulsererecords.com)

**Interscope**  
 10900 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1230  
 Los Angeles, CA 90024  
[www.interscoperecords.com](http://www.interscoperecords.com)

**Island**  
 825 Eighth Ave., 24th Fl.  
 New York, NY 10019  
[www.island40th.com](http://www.island40th.com)

**Jade Tree**  
 2310 Kenwyn Road  
 Wilmington, DE 19810  
[www.jadetreec.com](http://www.jadetreec.com)

**Jarmusic**  
 29439 Luchow-Jabel 6  
 Germany

**K**  
 P.O. Box 7154  
 Olympia, WA 98507  
[www.kpunk.com](http://www.kpunk.com)

**Kill Rock Stars**  
 120 NE State Ave., #418  
 Olympia, WA 98501  
[www.geocities.com/heartland/Frairie/8543/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/heartland/Frairie/8543/index.html)

**London**  
 825 Eighth Ave.  
 New York, NY 10019  
[www.londonrecords.com](http://www.londonrecords.com)

**Loosegroove**  
 417 Denny Way, Ste. 200  
 Seattle, WA 98109  
[www.loosegroove.com](http://www.loosegroove.com)

**Matador**  
 625 Broadway, 12th Fl.  
 New York, NY 10012  
[www.matador.recs.com](http://www.matador.recs.com)

**MCA**  
 70 Universal City Plaza  
 Universal City, CA 91608  
[www.mca.com/mca\\_records](http://www.mca.com/mca_records)

**Menlo Park**  
 P. O. Box 1652, Cooper Sta.  
 New York, NY 10276

**Mercury**  
 825 Eighth Ave.  
 New York, NY 10019  
[www.mercuryrecords.com](http://www.mercuryrecords.com)

**Minty Fresh**  
 P.O. Box 57740  
 Chicago, IL 60657  
[www.mintyfresh.com](http://www.mintyfresh.com)

**Mute/NovaMute**  
 140 West 22nd St., Ste. 10A  
 New York, NY 10011  
[www.mutelibtech.com/mute](http://www.mutelibtech.com/mute)

**Nexx Level**  
 25 S. Portland Ave.  
 Brooklyn, NY 11217

**Ninja Tune**  
 PO Box 373, Westmount Sta.  
 Montreal, QUE H3Z 2T5, Canada  
[www.obsolete.com/pipe/ninja](http://www.obsolete.com/pipe/ninja)

**Osmose**  
 4470 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 6  
 Los Angeles, CA 90027

**Palm Pictures**  
 4 Columbus Cr., 5th Fl.  
 New York, NY 10019  
[www.islandlife.com](http://www.islandlife.com)

**Pavement**  
 P.O. Box 50550  
 Phoenix, AZ 85076  
[www.pavementmusic.com](http://www.pavementmusic.com)

**Plastic City/UCMG**  
 622 Broadway #3B  
 New York, NY 10012  
[www.ucmg.com](http://www.ucmg.com)

**Queercore**  
 c/o Chainsaw Records  
 Dept. M, PO Box 1151  
 Olympia, WA 98507-1151  
[www.sirus.com/~corps](http://www.sirus.com/~corps)

**Raven Claw**  
 2039 Roxburgh Ct.  
 Lakeland, FL 33813

**Red Ant**  
 9720 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 400  
 Beverly Hills, CA 90212

**Red Stream**  
 Box 342  
 Camp Hill, PA 17001  
[www.rstream.com](http://www.rstream.com)

**Reprise**  
 3300 Warner Blvd.  
 Burbank, CA 91505  
[www.repriserec.com](http://www.repriserec.com)

**Revolution**  
 8900 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 200  
 Beverly Hills, CA 90211  
[www.revolution-online.com](http://www.revolution-online.com)

**Rhino**  
 70636 Santa Monica Blvd.  
 Los Angeles, CA 90025  
[www.rhino.com](http://www.rhino.com)

**Rhythm & Sound**  
 c/o Hard Wax Records  
 Paul Lincke Ufer 44A  
 Berlin 10999, Germany

**Roadrunner**  
 536 Broadway, 4th Fl.  
 New York, NY 10012  
[www.roadrun.com/index.html-ssi](http://www.roadrun.com/index.html-ssi)

**Rodel**  
 3rd Fl., Kochhannst. 28, IN  
 Berlin 10249, Germany

**Rounder**  
 1 Camp St.  
 Cambridge, MA 02140  
[www.rounder.com](http://www.rounder.com)

**Sire**  
 2034 Broadway  
 Santa Monica, CA 90404

**Slipdisc**  
 101 West Grand Ave., 6th Fl.  
 Chicago, IL 60610  
[www.slipdisc.com](http://www.slipdisc.com)

**Stone's Throw**  
 3555 El Camino Real #320  
 San Mateo, CA 94403  
[www.stonesthrow.com](http://www.stonesthrow.com)

**Strange & Beautiful Music**  
 P.O. Box 220, Prince Street Sta.  
 New York, NY 10012  
[www.strangeandbeautiful.com](http://www.strangeandbeautiful.com)

**Sub Pop**  
 1932 First Ave., Ste. 1103  
 Seattle, WA 98101  
[www.subpop.com](http://www.subpop.com)

**Time Bomb**  
 31652 Second Ave.  
 Laguna Beach, CA 92677  
[www.timebombrecordings.com](http://www.timebombrecordings.com)

**Too Pure**  
 3A Highbury Crescent  
 London, N5 1RN, UK  
[www.toopure.com](http://www.toopure.com)

**Tribal**  
 2306 E. Madison St., Ste. 124  
 Seattle, WA 98122  
[www.tribalmusic.com](http://www.tribalmusic.com)

**Tzadik**  
 61 E. 8th St., Ste. 126  
 New York, NY 10003  
[www.tzadik.com](http://www.tzadik.com)

**V2**  
 14 East 4th St., 3rd Fl.  
 New York, NY 10012

**Velvet**  
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 New York, NY 10003

**Virgin**  
 338 North Foothill Road  
 Beverly Hills, CA 90210  
[www.virginrecords.com](http://www.virginrecords.com)

**Warner Bros**  
 3300 Warner Blvd.  
 Burbank, CA 91505  
[www.wbr.com](http://www.wbr.com)

**WORK**  
 2100 Colorado Ave.  
 Los Angeles, CA 90404  
[www.epiccenter.com/EpicCenter/work/index.ar](http://www.epiccenter.com/EpicCenter/work/index.ar)



## JULY 7

BARENAKED LADIES *Stunt* Reprise  
*Canadian band's fifth album coincides with its appearance on this summer's H.O.R.D.E. Festival*

BIG HATE *You're Soaking In It* A&M

BIRCH STREET MAFA *Armageddon* Private-J-Mercury

CLEOPATRA *Comin' Atcha!* Maverick-Warner Bros.

CRUMB *Seconds, Minutes, Hours* Red Ant-Mercury

TERRA DEVA *Pulled Apart* Om

FLIGHT 16 *Flight 16* 550 Music

ARNOLD *Hillside* Creation-Columbia

EBLING HUGHES *Transfigured* Zero Hour

LIDA HUSIK *Faith In Space* Alias  
*Features Beaumont Hannaat*

CANDYE KANE *Swango* Sire

BADAR ALI KHAN *Lost In Dawwali 2* Triloka-Mercury

LEGENDARY JIM RUIZ GROUP *Sniff* Minty Fresh  
*Second long-player by Minneapolis lounge septet*

LES THUGS *Nineteen Something* Sub Pop  
*French punk rock outfit's ninth album in ten years*

LOOPER *Impossible Things 7"* Sub Pop  
*Stuart David from Belle And Sebastian*

JOHN MARTYN *The Church With One Bell* Thirsty Ear

TAKAKO MINEKAWA *Recubed* March-Emperor Norton  
*Remixes of Minekawa's debut album, Roomie Cube, by Land Of The Loops, Trans Am, Sukia and more.*

NEW YORK SKA JAZZ ENSEMBLE *Get This* Moon Ska

PILOT *Stranger's Waltz* Thirsty Ear-Mercury

SOUNDTRACK *The Avengers* Atlantic

SUPER 400 *Super 400* Island

TRIPPING DAISY *Jesus Hits Like The Atom Bomb* Island

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Ten Year Anniversary Singles Club Compilation* Sub Pop

VARNALINE *Sweet Life* Zero Hour

VIOLENT GREEN *Hangovers* Up

## JULY 14

A TRIBE CALLED QUEST *The Love Movement* Jive  
*Fifth record from Queens Tribe*

AGNOSTIC FRONT *Something's Gotta Give* Epitaph

AMNESIA *Lings* Supreme-Island

BAHA MEN *Doong Spank* Mercury

BEASTIE BOYS *Hello Nasty* Grand Royal-Capitol  
*The title is what you hear when you call the band's publicists*

BIG SANDY *Dedicated To You* HighTone-Rhino

BR5-49 *Big Backyard Beat Show* Arista

DONALD BYRD *Landmarks* 32 Jazz

CHOCOLATE GENIUS *Black Music* V2  
*New release from downtown NYC musician Marc Anthony Thompson*

COUNTING CRICWS *Across A Wire—Live In New York* DGC

DARIO G. *Sunmachine* Kinetic-Reprise  
*LP by DJ who remixed "Life In A Northern Town" into a dancefloor hit*

DES'REE *Supernatural* 550 Music

FEAR FACTORY *Obsolete* Roadrunner

THE FIXX *1011 Woodland* CMC Int'l

GASPARYAN-MICHAEL BROOK *Real World*-Caroline

HARDAMAN *Scream!* Epic

HI FI AND THE ROADBURNERS *The Flat Iron Years* Victory

HOOVERPHONIC *Blue Wonder Powder Milk* Epic

HOWARD JONES *People* Ark 21

TOMMY KEENE *Songs From The Film* (reissue) Geffen

THE KNACK *Zoom* Rhino

MICHELLE LEWIS *Little Leviathan* Revolution

BAABA MAAL *Nomad Soul* Palm Pictures

JOHN MCCUTCHEON *Four Seasons: Autumn*songs Rounder

MIDGET *Jukebox* Sire

NAT ADDERLY QUINTET *Talkin' About You* 32 Jazz

P.A. *Straight. No Chase* Dreamworks

PRIMUS *Rhinoplasty* Interscope

ERNEST RAMGLIN *In Search Of The Lost Riddim* Palm Pictures

SEX MOB *Din Of Inequity* Knitting Factory-Columbia

SISTER SOLEIL *Soularium* Universal

SOUNDTRACK *BASEketball* Mojo-Universal  
*Soundtrack to movie starring South Park creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone*

SOUNDTRACK *Small Soldiers* Dreamworks

SOUNDTRACK *Wicked City* Gypsy-Velvet  
*With Orange 9mm, CIV, Sweet Diesel*

STRAIGHT FACED *Conditioned* Epitaph

SUNCATCHER *The Girl That God Forgot* Restless

TRAGICALLY HIP *Phantom Power* Sire

ULTRABABYFAT *Silver Tones Smile* Velvet

VARIOUS ARTISTS *The Alan Lomax Collection* Rounder

VARIOUS ARTISTS *MTV's Amp 2* Astralwerks

VEHICLE BIRTH *Tragedy* Crank!

VOODOO GLOW SKULLS *The Band Geek Mafia* Epitaph

WADE *Odd Man Out* Interscope

WARM JETS *Future Signs* Island

GILLIAN WELCH *Gillian Welch* Almo Sounds

## JULY 21

764-HERO/MODEST MOUSE *"Whenever You See Fit" (12")* Up  
*The two bands play together on this single*

ALUMINUM GROUP *Plano* Minty Fresh

BIO RITMO *Rumba Baby Rumba* Triloka-Mercury

CANDLEBOX *Happy Pills* Warner Bros.

CHOCOLATE OVERDOSE *Whatever* Bar/None

ECHOBELLY *Lustra* Epic

FLYING LUTTENBACHERS *Destroy All Music* Skin Craft

GANGER *Hammock Style* Merge  
*Scottish post-rock group's first release on Merge*

GLANDS *Double Thriller* Bar/None

GREY EYE GLANCES *Painted Pictures* Mercury

NANCI GRIFFITH *Other Voices, Too* Elektra

MARK LANEGAN *Scraps at Midnight* Sub Pop  
*Third solo album from former Screaming Trees vocalist.*

YUSEF LATEEF *Before Dawn* Verve

LOVE IN REVERSE *Words Become Worms* Reprise

MAGNETIC FIELDS *"I Don't Believe You" (7")* Merge

MAVIS PIGGOTT *In A Dark Suit* Flydaddy

MONROE MUSTANG *Plain Sweeping Themes For The Unprepared* Trance Syndicate

MOUSE ON MARS *Glam* Sonig-Thrill Jockey  
*Soundtrack to a Tony Danza movie that was never released*

THE NEED *Vaseline/The Trots 10"* Up

PRAM *North Pole Radio Station* Merge

RASPUTINA *How We Quit The Forest* Columbia  
*Second album by corset-wearing, violin-playing rock ensemble*

RED TELEPHONE *The Red Telephone* Warner Bros.

BIC RUNGA *Drive* Columbia

SEVEN MARY THREE *Orange Avenue* Mammoth-Atlantic

SILKWORM *Blueblood* Touch And Go

SKINNY *The Weekend* Cheeky-Island

SOUNDTRACK *The Wedding Singer II* Warner Bros.  
*Another volume of '80s tunes from the Adam Sandler movie*

SPLIT LIP RAYFIELD *Split Lip Rayfield* Bloodshot

SPRING HEELED JACK *Songs From Suburbia* Ignition-Tommy Boy  
*Latest album from ska-punk outfit whose name is dangerously close to electronica duo Spring Heel Jack*

SUFFERS *Songs From The Pipe* Epic

TINA & THE B-SIDES *It's All Just the Same* Sire

TOFTOISE *Derrick Carter Remix 12"* Thrill Jockey  
*First a series of remix singles from TNT*

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Trip Hop & Acid Jazz 4* Instinct

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Pure Abstrakt: Adventures In Dub* Shadow

## JULY 28

12 RODE *Split Personalities* V2

ADAM COHEN *Vague Assumption* Columbia  
*Debut album by son of Leonard Cohen*

CONSUMED *Breakfast At Pappa's* Fat Wreck Chords

CUCKOO *Breathing Lessons* Geffen

DELINQUENT HABITS *Here Come The Horns* RCA

EMBRACE *The Good Will Out* DGC

EOL *Elements Of Life* RCA

EVINRUDES *Somebody Has To Be Pat Boone* DAS-Mercury

GEARWHORE *Drive* Astralwerks-Caroline

HOLLOWBODIES *Viva La Dregs* Polydor-A&M

LAUGHING US *Foxy Universe* Risk

MC LYTE *Seven & Seven* EastWest

MIX MASTER MIKE *Anti-Thelt Device* Asphodel  
*Debut album by DJ who's spinning behind the Beastie Boys on their summer tour*

LEWIS PARKER *Masquerades And Silhouettes* Melankolic  
*British a/c-hop guy on Massive Attack's label*

PHANTOM PLANET *Phantom Planet* Geffen

STEPHEN PRINA *Push Comes To Love* Drag City

RED KRAYOLA *Live In The 1960's* Drag City  
*Previously: unreleased live recordings*

RED KRAYOLA *"Father Abraham" Remixes 12"* Drag City  
*Remixes by Tranquility Bass and Albert Oehlen*

SLAPP HAPPY *Ca Va* V2  
*First new record from German art-rock band in 20 years*

SLOAN *Navy Blues* Murderrecords

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Owl: Remixed Low* Vernon Yard-Caroline  
*Remixes of Low songs by Neotropic, Tranquility Bass, Jimmy Somerville*

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Ska United: A Global Sampler* Moon Ska

VISION OF DISORDER *Imprint* Roadrunner

## AUGUST 4

TIM CARROLL *Five Year Town* Sire

SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS *Perennial Favorites* Mammoth  
*Third long-player from North Carolina swing outfit*

VARIOUS ARTISTS *For The Masses* A&M  
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# washington, dc

>>> Continued from page 74

which has acquired a rep for being the place to be seen in DC, but it's often hard even to get admitted. But if you like to blow a week's wages on a couple of frothy pink drinks with umbrellas in them, and frug to organ groove jazz on a dancefloor the size of a rat's head, then this is certainly the spot to be.

Head east from these places, past the palatial Masonic Temple (but don't get curious and try to peek in the windows, as some friends of mine did this and got mugged in the alley by a dwarf—no lie), and you'll come to the historic U Street district. It was once home to the finest jazz clubs in the area and live music still runs rampant. The Black Cat (1831 14th St., NW, 667-4490) was once the only young turk on the block, but has since taken up the mantle of local music protector, since the once crucial 9:30 Club (815 V St., NW, 393-0930) moved in to the area and turned into more of a rock behemoth. The Cat happily took up the reins with local pop gods such as Tuscadero, the Make-Up, Trans Am, Deep Lust, Foodchain, Jetlag and practically everyone on the Dischord roster showing their faces and, on occasion, their asses. National acts also make appearances, with Bad Religion, Suicide Machines, Blonde Redhead and Tindersticks being among the venue's recent visitors.

Head south a tad and you'll come across The Metro (1522 14th St., NW, 518-7900), a relative newcomer, and another champion of the local scene, with such notables as Tone, 3LG, Anne Summers and many more treading the boards. It's a pleasant room in which to see a band, cut a rug, and maybe burn a loved ones name onto your arm with a cigarette. After the show, wander up the street and pop in to Ben's Chili Bowl (1213 U St., NW, 667-0909), a Washington landmark since it opened its doors in 1958. Here you'll find incredible chili, both veggie and meat-filled, and veggie burgers that are heaven-sent. Sit and eat while checking numerous pictures of Bill Cosby and Mayor Marion Barry, looking casual and enjoying the eats as much as you are.

Looking for something less guilt- and cholesterol-ridden? Then nip over the street to Polly's Cafe (1342 U St., NW, 265-8385), where the treats won't have you staring teary-eyed at Sarah Ferguson's Weight Watchers commercial the next day. They also have live, usually acoustic, musical guests. If you're lucky you'll catch the awesome Hidden Persuaders, frequent and popular performers. Request "Plastic Palace People," as they do an amazing version of the old Scott Walker number.

If you're crashing on someone's floor in DC, you'll probably be in the Mount Pleasant area, which doesn't have a great deal to offer in the way of live entertainment, but there's plenty of great El Salvadorian food there. And then there's always the Raven (3125 Mt. Pleasant St., NW, 588-3211). You'll always end up there—it's just one of those bars. It has a jukebox filled with weird, warped 45s and the TV's always on, usually tuned to *Jeopardy*, which has the bartender screaming answers while you're trying to order a Bloody Mary. Some guy at the bar will sing you a lullaby and then try to fight you. I once asked for a Greyhound there and was told they didn't serve "fancy drinks," so I asked for a gin and orange, to be told once again, "We don't serve fancy drinks." So I got an MGD. A fitting way to sum up the DC experience: a little shabby sometimes, with a slight threat behind it, but always entertaining.



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# washington, dc

WASHINGTON, DC, IS A SCHIZOPHRENIC PLACE, BUILT ON A SWAMP, HOME TO THE MOST POWERFUL PEOPLE ON THE PLANET, DIRT POOR IN MANY PLACES, FULL OF BITTER, TRANSPLANTED GOVERNMENT WORKERS, PSYCHO COPS AND THE CONFUSED. IT HAS A DEFINITE EUROPEAN FEEL, WITH A BIT OF THE GAZA STRIP THROWN IN. AT ONE TIME IT WAS BOTH THE COUNTRY MUSIC AND JAZZ MECCA OF THE LAND. IT WENT ON TO INVENT ITS OWN MUSICAL STYLE, GO-GO, WHICH STILL THRIVES TODAY. THE HARDCORE SCENE EXPLODED IN THE EARLY '80S, REVOLVING AROUND THE DISCHORD RECORDS AXIS, AND THE SUBSEQUENT FALLOUT STILL INFLUENCES THE SOUND OF THE CITY TODAY. ALL THIS POWER AND PUNK MAKE DC A FUN PLACE TO BE, EVEN IF YOU GET THE FEELING THAT THE RAPTURE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER.



PHARMACY BAR. ALL PHOTOS BY: ANTONIA TRICARICO



THE RAVEN

Most of your fun in the District is going to be found in the Northwest quadrant, home to most of the action and peppered with historic neighborhoods, each with its high- and low-points. The ethnically diverse Adams Morgan neighborhood is famed for having a weird name and being full of beery jocks on the weekend, but it's slowly growing out of those confines. Flagrantly ignoring the "no decent place to buy a record" law imposed by the Federal government, DCCD (2423 18th St., NW, 588-1810) popped up from nowhere and started the kids drooling from the get-go. DC was crying out for a place to get cool new stuff, vinyl reissues, and whatnot, without having to face the suburbs. This store shows a definite bias towards local artists, and hosts many in-store performances with area acts, including Stigmatics, Heartworms and Casaway Stones.

Visiting the Pharmacy Bar (2337 18th St., NW, 483-1200) just down the street is like touching down on planet swank; everything is silvery in that '50s vision-of-the-future way. Though pretty new, the Pharmacy's reputation is snowballing, partly because people enjoy hanging out in a place that resembles the inside of a Christmas ornament, and also because it has a sweet atmosphere. You'll rarely see inebriated civil servants trying to dance to Beck and then crying into their beer, which is not a given at most watering holes in this city.

Just a hop, skip and a spit away, you'll find Dupont Circle, which is kind of a makeshift cultural heart of city. Food For Thought (1738 Connecticut Ave., NW) has always been a DC standby—it seems that over the years, almost every one of the city's many punk rockers has worked here at some time or other. Nowadays, it's less of a classic punk hang, but it's fairly cheap and has okay vegan food and sufficient ambiance. There's also live entertainment most nights, though this can be a blessing or a curse. Open mic night, for instance, can sometimes be hilarious, for all the wrong reasons.

Once you've beaten your way through the tourists, Scientologists and bike messengers that populate the Circle itself, you'd be a fool not to explore Club Red (1802 Jefferson Pl., NW, 466-3475)—particularly on Fridays, when "The Living Room" takes over. Strangely, it alternates between a '60s garage rock night and '80s indie shindig, my preference being the former, but it's worth checking out either, especially since it's free. (Though beware the bar, where they charge an outrageous \$6 for a can of Boddingtons.) It's certainly less of an ordeal there than at the nearby 18th Street Lounge (1212 18th St., NW, 466-3922),

>>> Continued on page 73







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