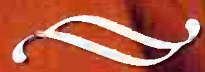
Crowded House, Sonny Rollins, Roxette (really!)

# MUSICIAN

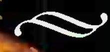
JULY 1991

# Bonnie Raitt's Lucky Slide

## New Record, New Husband, New Life



## The Life & Death of Tim Buckley



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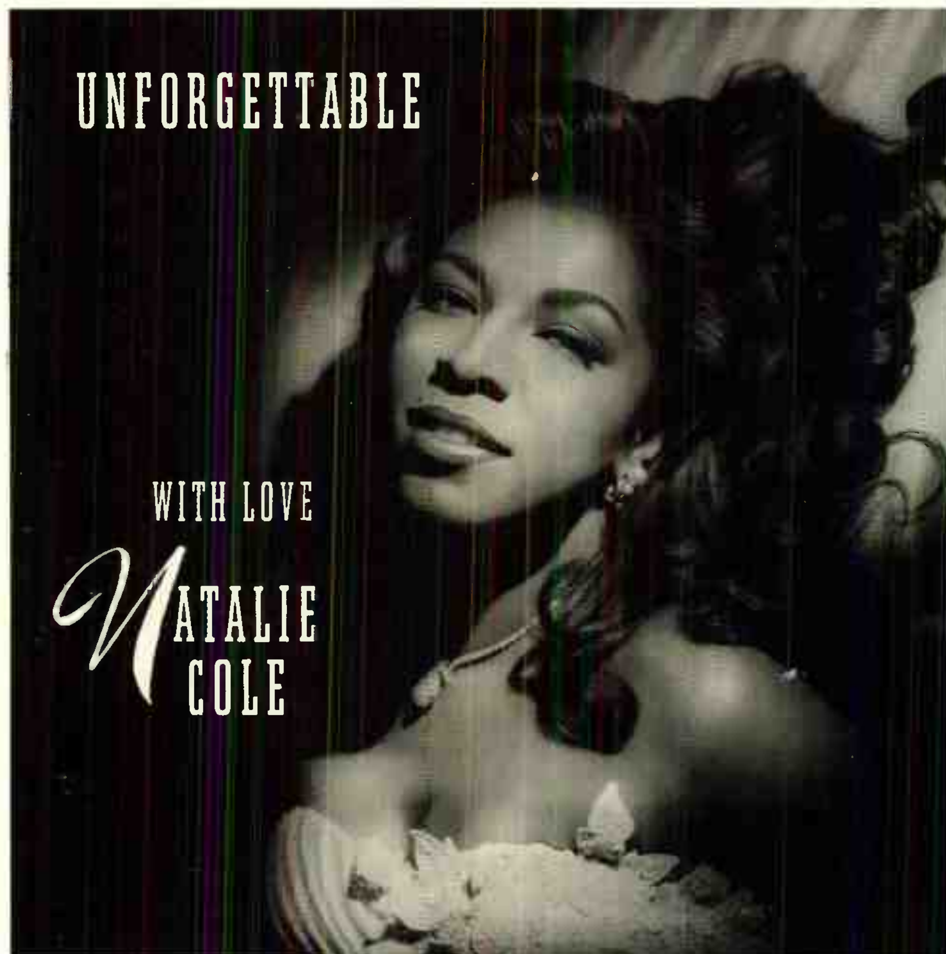

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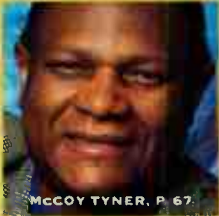
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# Sonny Rollins

*Are you ever put off by the mythical proportions people place on your playing? It must be disconcerting, because I would think part of compelling musicianship is an expression of mortality and frailty.*

Well, I don't know exactly how to respond to that. Wow. Is this really true?

*Your reviewers and record annotators get pretty extreme. You don't read such stuff about people who are alive.*

Yeah, well. that's great, but I try not to read too much of my press. I know that's an easy answer, but I try not to get involved with praise, because I have my own standards. But I don't think there's anything wrong with attributing spiritual, miraculous things to music. An artist should think in these terms. I don't know how often *I* achieve that, but I don't think anything's bad about trying to move music into a higher dimension. In fact, I hope music can in some way affect other areas of life, although I'm getting a little disillusioned about it. I used to think music could change the world and make people tolerant and maybe not be greedy and not pollute the world. [*laughs*] I'm not sure I'll ever be able to do that, although I'm still trying.

*Good music thrives on the possibility of failure. With Blakey gone, there are few consistent mentors to tell a young musician, "Hey, you were lousy up there tonight." Instead of apprenticeship, players who embrace traditional approaches get a record deal at 19 and a week at the Blue Note.*

My generation had a much harder time because there just weren't as many people listening to jazz, so you didn't have these big opportunities. On the other hand, there's a downside to getting some of these breaks. People rise and fall very quickly because the public has a short attention span and they're fickle.

We have to pay attention to tradition. For instance, I can't foresee a period when Louis Armstrong is not relevant in what he's playing, the way he plays it, the style—well, more than the style...the *vigor* of his music. He brings so many things that are really what jazz is all about. On the other hand, if I said, "He played on song forms" or "He played on blues forms," I would be limiting him. What any great player does is really *beyond* the forms, so that although tradition is a given, there's possibilities of new forms being developed. Rhythm can change so much of what's happening musically. There's a lot of world music coming out now, and there's got to be a genuine synthesis between what we know of as jazz and some of these new rhythms. Now, I don't know how this is going to be done. I just can see it happening. People shouldn't feel, "This is jazz. The door is closed on its possibilities and it's got to be very close to a certain tradition." The whole tradition of jazz is very open-ended. Even at my advanced stage in the business, I'm still looking towards incorporating elements that can push jazz—real jazz—further and give young players different ways to go, more options.

"Jazz is open-ended, but I can't foresee a period when Louis Armstrong is not relevant."

*That's quite a responsibility. Do you still practice?*

Yeah. Of course it helps that I happen to love to play my instrument and that I could play alone and fulfill myself. You've heard stories of my playing on the bridge; I mean, I can feel happy playing alone. It's an end in itself. And I look at the big picture. I certainly don't feel I've done everything I can do. [*laughs*] God, I hope that's not true! I'm going back out to my studio now. [*laughs*] No, I won't have time...see, *this* is why practicing is hard. Some days you have to travel, so you're always behind in a way, you know? I'm going to be picked up to go to Boston.

*You could play in the car.*

I could, I'm gonna have my horn in the car, although it's a little hard, because when the car jumps the mouthpiece can mess up your chops. But I *used* to do that. Many years ago, I used to drive and play. Would you believe that? I'd be driving with one hand and holding my neck and my mouthpiece with the other, mainly holding out extended tones, which is good for your embouchure. That's when I used to drive around the country a lot and just needed to have my horn laying out beside me.

*How long ago was this?*

This was in the '60s. Oh yeah, this *would* be the '60s. I was really doing these things. As I said, I would do that now, though it's a little more difficult. The things in my mind that I'd like to do can only come about through practice and time. Like a guy once said, "I never want to *not* be practicing. I want to be there when the angel comes and gives me the message."

*Mythical proportions...*

Right! Yeah, well, that's what you have to do, man, if you want to get this music out.

**—Matt Resnicoff**

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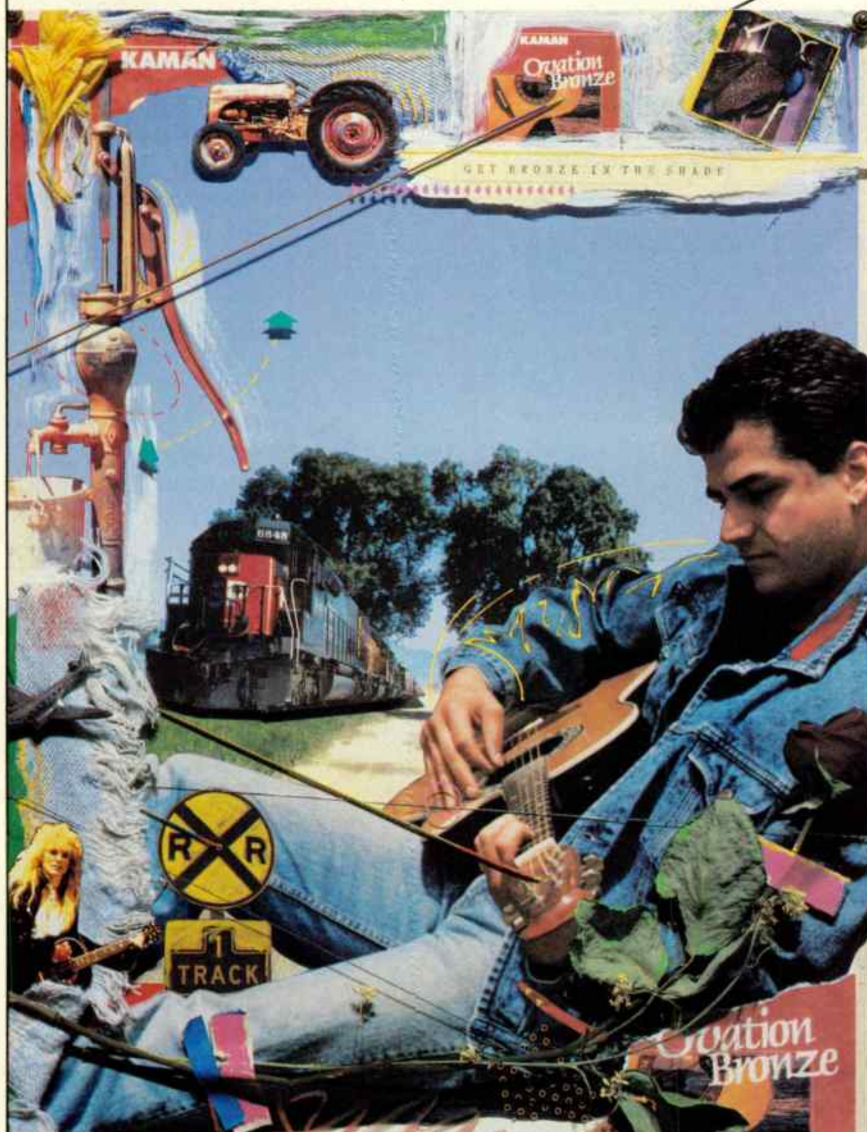




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ADMINISTRATION

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BILL FLANAGAN
EDITOR

MATT RESNICOFF • TONY SCHERMAN
SENIOR EDITORS

MARK ROWLAND
(213) 273-7040
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MAIN OFFICE/PRODUCTION/RETAIL SALES
33 COMMERCIAL ST.
GLOUCESTER, MA 01930
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ADVERTISING/EDITORIAL
1515 BROADWAY, 39TH FL.,
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LAURIE A. GILMAN
CIRCULATION MANAGER

MINDIE ADLER
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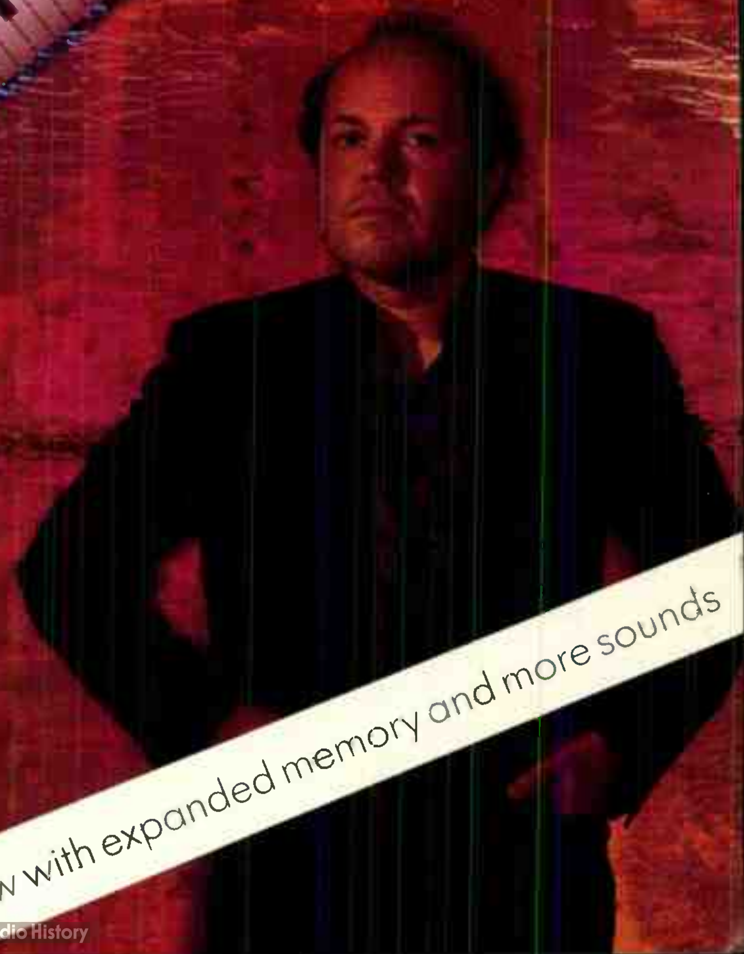


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# LETTERS

## *Light My Satire*

JIM MORRISON (*BACKSIDE*, APRIL '91) was probably the best lyrics writer in our time. The article was an insult to Doors fans. Even if Jim Morrison was alive he wouldn't talk to a feeble-worded writer with a cartoon-character name like Sam Selby. Apologies are in order.

***Mr. Mojo Risin***
Philly, PA

WOW! THANKS FOR THE SCOOP ON JIM Morrison. Just as I was getting sick of every mass-media outlet's tribute to the Lounge Lizard King, you guys come along and interview the real thing. Give Jimbo some Slim-Fast from me and tell him I'm waiting for his collaboration with Robert Goulet.

***Carl Zimring***
Santa Cruz, CA

I AM A BIG DOORS FAN AND THE JIM Morrison story really interested me. But if this man really was Jim Morrison, how come this story isn't front-page news? Needless to say, some of his answers really made me wonder if it was him!

***Jessica Martel***
Palm Bay, FL

*I knew we couldn't fool you.—Ed.*

JIM MORRISON LIVES AND BOY ARE We Sorry" is the worst piece of trash I've read in a long time (and I subscribe to *The Star* and *The National Enquirer*). In Sam Selby's self-serving article he shouts his jealousy. He points out grammar errors. Has Selby read any Shakespeare or e.e. cummings? If he has, no doubt he feels superior to both. (While Shakespeare's errors were unintentional, e.e. cummings' were essential to his art.) He makes vicious ad hominium [*sic*] attacks on drug use and alcohol use. Perhaps we should discard Faulkner and Coleridge for writing most of their best work under the influence of alcohol and drugs. However, Sam Selby really gives himself away by his word choice. He says, "Speaking of publishing, your contribution to the Doors' *biggest hits* was minimal." In other words dollars determine artistic merit of a work of art. Tell that to Emily Dickinson and Van Gogh lovers. What Sam Selby's article proved is that he is what Jim Morrison referred to as a "slave." In other words, slavishly following what society has determined worthwhile—commercial success and status.

***Rosalie Moore***
Playa del Rey, CA

*And they say literary criticism is dead. Indeed!—Ed.*

IN A FAILED ATTEMPT TO BE FUNNY Sam Selby has embraced Oliver Stone's image of Jim Morrison and translated it into an indictment of the Doors' music. Who's next on your dead artist hit list? Last month Buddy Rich, this month Jim Morrison...next month John Lennon? Janis Joplin? Or maybe a living artist that was lucky enough to survive a bout with alcoholism or drug addiction, like Eric Clapton! If this keeps up I'll have to *mis*quote a Doors song: "Cancel my subscription to your publication!"

***Rick Rheaume***
Millis, MA

*Nobody here made fun of Jim Morrison for his drug or alcohol problems. We made fun of his silly songs.—Ed.*

SAM SELBY'S "ALIVE HE BELCHED" was nothing more than a wan imitation of my own work in the *Maryland Musician* magazine. Back in March of '89 I "interviewed" the supposedly dead Paul Kossof, so where's *my* money?

***Adolf Kowalski***
***The Living Legend***
Baltimore, MD

*1) That article had been gathering dust here since 1982. Honest.*
*2) Nobody who writes for a magazine called* Maryland Musician *better talk to us about imitations!*

## REM*ix*

IN YOUR APRIL '91 ISSUE, AN ENTERtainer (God forbid I call him a musician) from R.E.M. said, "I don't play solos." Maybe this is because he took the "Learn to play guitar in seven days" course and figured he knew enough to get by in his simpleminded band. Wake up and take notice of hardworking practicing musicians out there who realize that it takes more than a handful of chords and the right image.

***Greg Meeuwsen***
Zeeland, MI

WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT? I FINALLY found an R.E.M. song listenable ("Losing My Religion"), and then Peter Buck goes and implies that his style is somehow humbler than a "Grateful Deadly" kind of sound. Oh well, once a pop group, always a pop group.

***Sarah Maxx***
Lowell, MA

## *Manage à trois*

I FOUND THE PIECE "WE THREE KINGS: The Top Managers Talk" (April '91) by Bill Flanagan to be a most informative and amusing discussion on the relationship of artists, their managers and the music business. What I would like to see now is an equally informative report on the mysterious relationship between songwriters and publishers. I suspect if you were to put three songwriters and their publishers together in a room, you would have enough material for a book, with film offers to follow, and of course a soundtrack.

***Philip J. Penrose***
Brookfield, MA

THE POSITION THE THREE MANAGERS took on lip-syncing during live performance is nothing but selfish, money-generated *crap*! How many times have these managers thought about bringing legal action against someone because of services not rendered? With that mentality it won't be long before kids are paying 20 bucks to see videos of some "star" on an arena-size screen because that "star" doesn't feel like touring. The next time they'll ask somebody to build a house, I hope they'll get a life-size picture instead!

***Thurston Nalley***
Rock Hill, SC

## *Retaken*

AS ONE WHO DEFINITELY "ACQUIRED [the] taste" for The Crazy World of Arthur Brown (*Short Takes*, April '91), I'd like to mention a couple of salient points omitted from your capsule review.

First, credited as associate producer of the record is Pete Townshend (Brown opened for the Who on several dates in 1968). Second, the drummer is Carl Palmer (later of Emerson, Lake &). It's a great record.

***Richard Freeman***
San Francisco, CA

## *Chuck Young*

FRANKLY, I DIDN'T SUBSCRIBE TO *Musician* to learn about Charles M. Young's middle-class childhood, Presbyterian father or anything else about him (April '91). Why didn't Young just interview himself, and let someone with a less inflated ego do the AC/DC story?

***Mark J. Turner***
San Jose, CA

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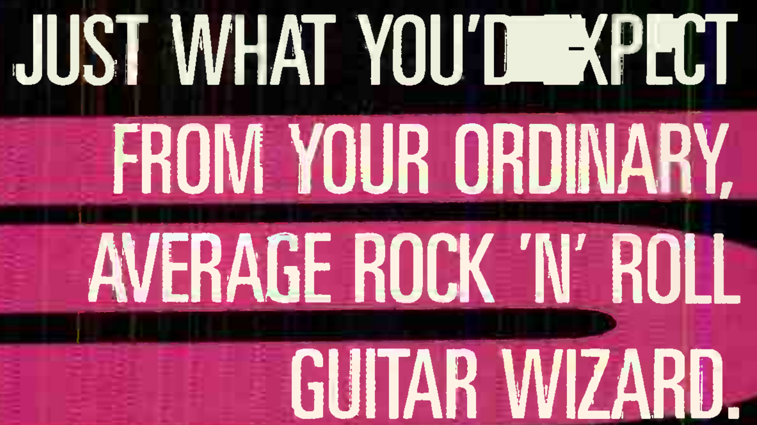


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# FACES

## Curlew

### JAZZ CROSS-POLLINATION

"AS IN BUMBLE," QUIPS GEORGE CARTWRIGHT ABOUT Curlew's latest, Bee. The audience at New York's Knitting Factory chuckles, realizing the saxist/composer is talking about a speedy, buzzing sound, not collective clumsiness. No explanations needed for those who've heard the band—cellist Tom Cora, guitarist Davey Williams, bassist Ann Rupel, percussionist Pippin Barnett and de facto boss Cartwright—pressurize their pop, R&B and free improv sources into what's got to be the most pleasurable prog-rock to come along in a decade. Thoroughly serious but never ponderous, Curlew places immediacy at the heart of its aesthetic; so much so that an exacting piece like "It Must Be a Sign" seems designed to jump up on the bar and strut itself silly—Arnett Cobb blowing over a Henry Cow groove.

Curlew addresses that eclecticism by tagging Bee's kick-off "The March" with the subtitle "(Ornette Went to Miles' House and They Didn't Get Along)." Other bands allude to Prime Time or In a Silent Way, but the glorious tension and audacity in the "didn't get along" part sums up Curlew's pliable-yet-controlled approach. "It's really boring when players imitate sources," says George. "We just kind of work from." Williams agrees: "We always debate about overtness: 'Something stately à la King Crimson, done in the style of the Meters.' We're trying to swing it more, bust it open." Balancing composition and blowing, Bee attains just that. It's cerebral stuff your body can dig, made by an experimentalist ensemble that never, ever has a puss on its face. JIM MACNIE

Curlew (l. to r.): Pippin, Davey, Ann, Tom & George

## Marshall Crenshaw

### PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

ON LIFE'S TOO SHORT, MARSHALL CRENSHAW SERVES UP A FRESH ASsortment of spring-fever themes and melodies, and this time around he's finally found the right guitar player to toughen up his tender tracks. His name is Marshall Crenshaw. "I started to become conscious of my limitations as a guitarist after three years on the road with a three-piece band," he says. "I really wanted to expand my repertoire beyond rock 'n' roll and the stuff I could just cop just by ear."

Between recording and touring, Crenshaw sat down with a guitar teacher. His newfound facility helps turn this record into a six-string field day. "On my first couple of albums there aren't any guitar solos," he says. These days he's tossing off some surprisingly hot licks, but like any good player, Crenshaw realizes it ain't all flash. He's let his exploration of the instrument take his songwriting into new places. "There's a song on my new album called 'Fantastic Planet of Love,' and it contains every chord I learned in guitar lessons," Crenshaw laughs. "That's one of my *jazz* numbers!" PETER CRONIN

*Photographs: Patrick Harbron (top); Linda Covello*



World Radio History

# Chagall Guevara

## NASHVILLE CRUNCH

THINK OF NASHVILLE AND YOU COME UP with images of Roy Acuff convenience stores and Tammy Wynette beauty parlors...not a rock 'n' roll band. But when Los Angeles/New Jersey natives Chagall Guevara drove south, they found themselves right at home. "I'd read a collection of Southern Gothic writers, Flannery O'Connor and the like," says guitarist Dave Perkins. "I thought, 'Geez, this is basically a literary version of what we do.' I don't know if we were influenced by the style or were following that bent anyway, but our life can be a vomit bag. It's that sick."

Chagall's wrenching pop hints at an attic's worth of influences: the Clash, '60s cerebral rockers Spirit, gospel music and even Glenn Miller ("He plays trombone, just like me," says vocalist Steve Taylor).

Recorded in a colonial mansion with producer Matt Wallace (Faith No More, the Replacements), Chagall Guevara avoids the sampled sameness prevalent in current pop. "We wanted to make a record that was wonderfully peculiar," says Perkins. "We passed on gear that has become the mainstay of engineering and mixing. Our music sounds real because it is real: It's us playing in a big old house."

And the name? Sorry, the members are cryptic here. "We're definitely not trying to honor those guys," says Lynn Nichols of artist Marc Chagall and Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara. "If they heard our record, I'm sure they'd agree."

KEN MICALLEF

# JOHN WESLEY HARDING

## NO CHARGE HELD AGAINST HIM COULD BE PROVED

DOES BRITISH singer/songwriter John Wesley Harding hear the Elvis comment a lot? "That I sound like Elvis Costello? Yes, I do," he nods. "And very proudly I encounter it. You know, I'm 25, I'm English, the first single I ever bought was 'Oliver's Army.' But I think the Elvis comparison can get in the way—a lot of people think that this is a cynical record, and it's *not*."

No indeed. Harding's third album, *The Name Above the Title*, unpacks an engaging rogue's gallery of characters and story lines, all placed in solid rock settings with a distinct country tinge. It's even more impressive next to Harding's much-praised 1990 *Here Comes the Groom*. But that voice.... Especially when it's set in front of two members of Elvis C.'s Attractions, drummer Pete Thomas and bassist Bruce Thomas, who also did Harding's last album. Do they say things like, "Man, that was just like *Armed Forces*!"? "Yeah. Yeah, they do. 'Nuff said," Harding laughs.

Harding, "a fan making music," seemed to appear full-grown. He played three songs in Sire president Seymour Stein's office and was signed on the spot. Harding sees himself as part of "that strange tradition of songwriters who wrote songs and had a band in order to get a commercial release and tried to fuse John Prine lyrics with John Sebastian tunes."

But it's not for everyone. "I did 20 interviews yesterday," Harding grouses, "and everybody said, 'God, you really have to *listen* to this album, don't you?' Like it was a sin. Oh, sorry to get in the way of your reviewing technique! And one reviewer said it was 'too varied,' like it's a bad thing. Everything that's *wrong* with the world today is 'cause things are endlessly repeated. Not to pick on Paul Simon or Sting, but it'd be so easy for a reviewer if I said, 'This is my African album,' or 'This is an album about the death of my father.' But to me, each song is about quite a few things, and maybe if it's a good song, only one thing. But the album is about an hour and about nothing else."

JOCK BAIRD



Photograph: Ron Keith (top)

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# TOY MATINEE: WANK VIBING IN PUBLIC

TOY MATINEE IS LIVING PROOF OF the slow-blooming pop success. Released last summer, it took its time on the runway. The first single, "Last Plane Out," taxied sluggishly; the second, "The Ballad of Jenny Ledge" (the true story of a woman who took up with an Elvis impersonator), hit cruising altitude. Success has come knocking, but—apart from co-leaders Kevin Gilbert and Patrick Leonard—the original bandmembers aren't home. On the heels of the delayed airplay, a Leonard-less version of the band played live dates this spring.

Leonard (l.) & Gilbert

Is Toy Matinee even a band? "It was conceived, recorded and rehearsed, and to an extent written and arranged, as a band project," says Gilbert (on board were drummer Brian MacLeod, guitarist Tim Pierce and bassist Guy Pratt). "We're not Tears for Fears; it's not just the two of us brain-hemorrhaging on tape and then calling people in and saying, 'Play it this way.'"

The album was cut in Leonard's home studio and on his dime; as co-producer of Madonna's Like a Prayer he's hit paydirt before. "I had to find the time, and the right mind, to do this album," he says from London, where he's just co-produced Roger Waters' new record. Gilbert says the working process of the album had its share of "what we call 'wank vibing'"—experimental touches and blissful accidents. "We were just playing our instruments and bouncing off each other. We wanted to keep that in, because you don't get to hear it very often.

"We just wanted to make a record," he says, "without gated reverb and Roland 808 cowbell. Now it looks like someone likes the idea." JOSEF WOODARD

# Raindogs CREEDENCE CLEARWATER MEETS PUBLIC ENEMY

IN OUR FEBRUARY 1990 ISSUE *MUSICIAN* RAN an article about four new Boston-area bands signed to Atlantic Records. What became of the Joneses, the Walkers, Young Neal & the Vipers and the Raindogs? The Joneses released one fine hard rock album that was barely promoted and then were dropped. The Walkers and Young Neal never got to release their albums at all. Only the Raindogs, signed to Atlantic's Atco subsidiary, survived. Along the way they fired their manager, split with their first producer, saw the A&R man who signed them get axed and had at least one confrontation with their label over what they perceived to be a lack of promotion. On the plus side, their first album was critically acclaimed, they did national tours with Warren Zevon and Don Henley and established a new rapport with Atco.

Darren Hill, Jimmy Reilly, Emerson Torrey, Mark Cutler and Johnny Cunningham

The Raindogs hooked up with producer Don Gehman (Mellencamp, R.E.M.) for their second album, *Border Drive-In Theatre.* Fans of the Scottish/Irish/American folk-rock of the first LP are in for a shock: This time the Raindogs have laid their guitars and fiddles over hip-hop rhythms, keyboard pads and old movie samples. They brought in guest stars Iggy Pop and Harry Dean Stanton—to rap. The result is a funky aural swamp, a sort of new jack *Wise Blood.*

"It's all folk music," singer/songwriter Mark Cutler says. "Rock 'n' roll is folk music, rap and hip-hop is folk music. There's no reason they shouldn't be together. I wanted to use the studio more than on the last album. Don Gehman was afraid we might be going too far out on a limb, but I figured it was better to go too far than to always wonder if you didn't go far enough. It's only music, it's not like we're jumping out of airplanes without parachutes." Cutler laughs. "All we have to lose is our career."

As he talks Cutler is packing his bag; the Raindogs are going on the road with Bob Dylan. "I was told he picks his opening acts," Cutler says. "I don't know if that's true, but man, do I feel good." BILL FLANAGAN



Photograph: Taylor King (top)

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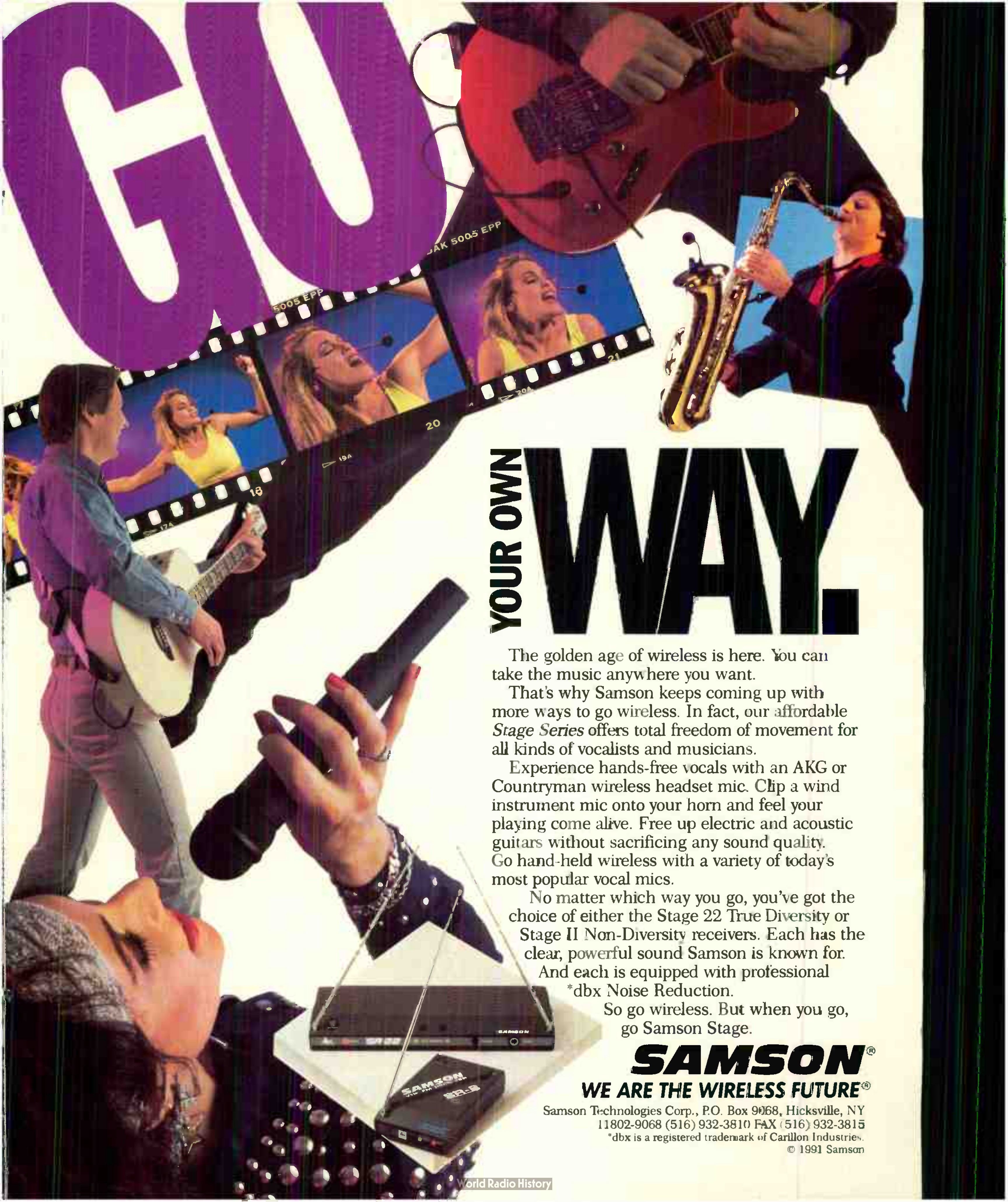

World Radio History

# Top 100 Albums

*The first number indicates the position of the album this month, the second its position last month.*

| This Month | Last Month | Artist | Album/Label |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | **Mariah Carey** | *Mariah Carey*/Columbia |
| 2 | 2 | **C&C Music Factory** | *Gonna Make You Sweat*/Columbia |
| 3 | 27 | **R.E.M.** | *Out of Time*/Warner Bros. |
| 4 | 3 | **Wilson Phillips** | *Wilson Phillips*/SBK |
| 5 | 5 | **The Black Crowes** | *Shake Your Money Maker* Def American |
| 6 | 14 | **Enigma** | *MCMXC A.D.*/Charisma |
| 7 | 7 | **Chris Isaak** | *Heart Shaped World*/Reprise |
| 8 | 9 | **Whitney Houston** | *I'm Your Baby Tonight*/Arista |
| 9 | 12 | **Queensryche** | *Empire*/EMI |
| 10 | 51 | **Soundtrack** | *New Jack City*/Giant |
| 11 | 16 | **Soundtrack** | *The Doors*/Elektra |
| 12 | — | **Rod Stewart** | *Vagabond Heart*/Warner Bros. |
| 13 | 26 | **Another Bad Creation** | *Coolin' at the Playground Ya' Know!* Motown |
| 14 | 8 | **Gloria Estefan** | *Into the Light*/Epic |
| 15 | 4 | **Sting** | *The Soul Cages*/A&M |
| 16 | 13 | **Tesla** | *Five Man Acoustical Jam*/Geffen |
| 17 | 6 | **Vanilla Ice** | *To the Extreme*/SBK |
| 18 | 54 | **Amy Grant** | *Heart in Motion*/Chrysalis |
| 19 | — | **Roxette** | *Joyride*/EMI |
| 20 | 10 | **M.C. Hammer** | *Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em* Capitol |
| 21 | 36 | **Divinyls** | *Divinyls*/Virgin |
| 22 | — | **Rolling Stones** | *Flashpoint*/Columbia |
| 23 | 21 | **L.L. Cool J** | *Mama Said Knock You Out*/Def Jam |
| 24 | 15 | **Madonna** | *The Immaculate Collection*/Sire |
| 25 | 11 | **Bette Midler** | *Some People's Lives*/Atlantic |
| 26 | 42 | **Londonbeat** | *In the Blood*/Radioactive |
| 27 | 19 | **Great White** | *Hooked*/Capitol |
| 28 | 35 | **Nelson** | *After the Rain*/DGC |
| 29 | 23 | **Oleta Adams** | *Circle of One*/Fontana |
| 30 | 20 | **Guy** | *The Future*/Uptown |
| 31 | 18 | **AC/DC** | *The Razors Edge*/Atco |
| 32 | 49 | **Jesus Jones** | *Doubt*/SBK |
| 33 | 25 | **Garth Brooks** | *No Fences*/Capitol |
| 34 | 29 | **Warrant** | *Cherry Pie*/Columbia |
| 35 | 17 | **The Simpsons** | *The Simpsons Sing the Blues*/Geffen |
| 36 | 48 | **The Doors** | *Best of the Doors*/Elektra |
| 37 | 85 | **Rick Astley** | *Free*/RCA |
| 38 | 22 | **INXS** | *X*/Atlantic |
| 39 | — | **Soundtrack** | *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II* SBK |
| 40 | 24 | **Paul Simon** | *Rhythm of the Saints*/Warner Bros. |
| 41 | 39 | **Carreras-Domingo-Pavarotti** | *Carreras-Domingo-Pavarotti in Concert*/London |
| 42 | 65 | **Hi-Five** | *Hi-Five*/Jive |
| 43 | 28 | **Trixter** | *Trixter*/Mechanic |
| 44 | 50 | **Joni Mitchell** | *Night Ride Home*/Geffen |
| 45 | 30 | **Bell Biv DeVoe** | *Poison*/MCA |
| 46 | 37 | **Digital Underground** | *This Is an EP Release*/Tommy Boy |
| 47 | 87 | **DJ Quik** | *Quik Is the Name*/Profile |
| 48 | — | **Lenny Kravitz** | *Mama Said*/Virgin |
| 49 | 64 | **Gerardo** | *Mo' Ritmo*/Interscope |
| 50 | 66 | **Teddy Pendergrass** | *Truly Blessed*/Elektra |
| 51 | 89 | **Soundtrack** | *Dances with Wolves*/Associated |
| 52 | 32 | **Damn Yankees** | *Damn Yankees*/Warner Bros. |
| 53 | 43 | **Clint Black** | *Put Yourself in My Shoes*/RCA |
| 54 | 31 | **Harry Connick, Jr.** | *We Are in Love*/Columbia |
| 55 | 38 | **Poison** | *Flesh and Blood*/Enigma |
| 56 | 33 | **Janet Jackson** | *Janet Jackson's Rhythm Nation*/A&M |
| 57 | — | **Bob Dylan** | *The Bootleg Series*/Columbia |
| 58 | — | **George Strait** | *Chill of an Early Fall*/MCA |
| 59 | — | **Extreme** | *Extreme II Pornograffitti* A&M |
| 60 | — | **The Kentucky Headhunters** | *Electric Barnyard*/Mercury |
| 61 | — | **Dolly Parton** | *Eagle When She Flies*/Columbia |
| 62 | 45 | **Timmy T.** | *Time After Time*/Quality |
| 63 | — | **Pat Benatar** | *True Love*/Chrysalis |
| 64 | 40 | **Queen** | *Innuendo*/Hollywood |
| 65 | 63 | **Tony! Toni! Tone!** | *The Revival*/Wing |
| 66 | 55 | **Steelheart** | *Steelheart*/MCA |
| 67 | 86 | **Firehouse** | *Firehouse*/Epic |
| 68 | 46 | **Cinderella** | *Heartbreak Station*/Mercury |
| 69 | 79 | **Cathy Dennis** | *Move to This*/Polydor |
| 70 | 34 | **Phil Collins** | *Serious Hits...Live!*/Atlantic |
| 71 | 74 | **Reba McEntire** | *Rumor Has It*/MCA |
| 72 | 68 | **Black Box** | *Dreamland*/RCA |
| 73 | 47 | **Ralph Tresvant** | *Ralph Tresvant*/MCA |
| 74 | 41 | **George Michael** | *Listen without Prejudice Vol. 1* Columbia |
| 75 | 53 | **Slaughter** | *Stick It to Ya*/Chrysalis |
| 76 | 56 | **Roger McGuinn** | *Back from Rio*/Arista |
| 77 | — | **Eric Johnson** | *Ah Via Musicom*/Capitol |
| 78 | 44 | **ZZ Top** | *Recycler*/Warner Bros. |
| 79 | 58 | **Jane's Addiction** | *Ritual de lo Habitual* Warner Bros. |
| 80 | 69 | **Rude Boys** | *Rude Awakening*/Atlantic |
| 81 | — | **Chubb Rock** | *Treat 'Em Right*/Select |
| 82 | 95 | **Vince Gill** | *Pocket Full of Gold*/MCA |
| 83 | 52 | **Keith Sweat** | *I'll Give All My Love to You* Vintertainment |
| 84 | — | **White Lion** | *Mane Attraction*/Atlantic |
| 85 | 73 | **Scorpions** | *Crazy World*/Mercury |
| 86 | 57 | **Alexander O'Neal** | *All True Man*/Tabu |
| 87 | — | **Material Issue** | *International Pop Overthrow* Mercury |
| 88 | 59 | **Morrissey** | *Kill Uncle*/Sire |
| 89 | 62 | **Soundtrack** | *Pretty Woman*/EMI |
| 90 | 80 | **George Thorogood & the Destroyers** | *Boogie People*/EMI |
| 91 | 88 | **Yanni** | *Reflections of Passion* Private Music |
| 92 | — | **Soundtrack** | *The Five Heartbeats*/Virgin |
| 93 | — | **Happy Mondays** | *Pills, Thrills & Bellyaches*/Elektra |
| 94 | — | **Yo-Yo** | *Make Way for the Motherlode* East West |
| 95 | 97 | **Drivin' N' Cryin'** | *Fly Me Courageous*/Island |
| 96 | 93 | **BulletBoys** | *Freakshow*/Warner Bros. |
| 97 | 92 | **Garth Brooks** | *Garth Brooks*/Capitol |
| 98 | — | **Kathy Mattea** | *Time Passes By*/Mercury |
| 99 | — | **Bob Marley & the Wailers** | *Legend*/Tuff Gong |
| 100 | — | **Michael Bolton** | *Time, Love and Tenderness* Columbia |

*The Musician album chart is produced by the* Billboard *chart department for* Musician, *and reflects the combined points for all album reports gathered by the* Billboard *computers in the month of April. The record company chart is based on the top 200 albums. The concert chart is based on* Amusement Business Box *Score reports for April 1991. All charts are copyright 1991 by BPI Incorporated.*

# Top Concert Grosses

| Rank | Artist / Venue | Gross |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Grateful Dead, Santana** *Sam Boyd Silver Bowl, Univ. of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV/April 27–28* | $1,856,500 |
| 2 | **ZZ Top, John Mayall & the Bluesbreakers** *The Summit, Houston, TX/April 25–28* | $1,088,612 |
| 3 | **Grateful Dead** *The Omni, Atlanta, GA/April 3–5* | $938,374 |
| 4 | **Grateful Dead** *Orlando Centroplex Arena, Orlando, FL/April 7–9* | $925,596 |
| 5 | **Earth Day: 10,000 Maniacs, Indigo Girls, Jackson Browne, Bruce Hornsby, more** *Foxboro Stadium, Foxborough, MA/April 20* | $700,000 |
| 6 | **New Kids on the Block, Biscuit, Perfect Gentlemen** *Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, MI/April 9* | $625,000 |
| 7 | **Frank Sinatra, Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gorme, Corbett Monica** *Worcester Centrum, Worcester, MA/April 20* | $617,998 |
| 8 | **ZZ Top, John Mayall & the Bluesbreakers** *Reunion Arena, Dallas, TX/April 22–23* | $590,085 |
| 9 | **Paul Simon** *SkyDome, Toronto, Ontario/April 2* | $580,249 |
| 10 | **Frank Sinatra, Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gorme, Corbett Monica** *Providence Civic Center, Providence, RI/April 21* | $561,435 |

# Top Labels

1. Columbia
2. Warner Bros.
3. SBK
4. Capitol
5. A&M
6. Atlantic
7. Elektra
8. EMI
9. Geffen
10. MCA
11. Arista
12. Epic
13. Mercury
14. Virgin
15. RCA
16. Def American
17. Reprise
18. Charisma
19. Giant
20. Atco
21. Motown
22. Sire



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# Crowded House: Four's Company

*By* Mark Rowland

## Brother, can you spare a Finn?

CROWDED HOUSE HAS JUST FINISHED THEIR new album *Woodface*, and as the band members unwind in a well-cushioned leisure area at A&M studios, drummer Nick Hester reflects on the process. "Most musicians will talk about a post-album depression being a fairly standard syndrome," he says. "The only depression we've had is from living together for the last six weeks. We've all been sharing a place, and one of us has had to sleep in the lounge room."

Crowded House is getting more crowded. Joining Hester, bassist Paul Seymour and lead singer/guitarist Neil Finn in the band is Neil's older brother, Tim Finn. It's the family's first musical reunion since the 1985 breakup of the Australian group Split Enz.

Since that time Tim has pursued a solo career. Like Crowded House's *Temple of Low Men*, his most recent album was produced by Mitchell Froom and released on Capitol, to underwhelming response. "Looking at it now, I'm probably lucky their last record wasn't so successful either," Tim laughs. "This way at least I can keep some of my dignity."

In contrast to Neil's youthful mien and clipped, somewhat formal manner, Tim has a tousled, bohemian air. You can sense that difference in their music as well. Both songwriters balance melodic pop with introspective meditations on life and love. But while Neil's Crowded House also leans toward straightforward instrumentation and clean, catchy hooks, Tim—and before that, Split Enz—favors more ornamented, frequently quirky sounds and visions. So perhaps it's fitting that Finn elder, whose main instrument is guitar, will play keyboards with Crowded House. "I think we'll be more edgy and dangerous with Tim on keyboards," Neil suggests. "But we still make a really good noise together. Because we all learned how to play the same way."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: PAUL, NEIL, NICK & TIM

Growing up in New Zealand, Neil was strongly influenced by his older brother. "I think I almost believed I was going to be a musician before he did, 'cause I was so filled with it as a youngster—by Tim's record collection and his playing in bands and hanging out with me. By the time I was 12, nothing else was of any interest."

At age 18 Neil had joined his brother's band as well. Split Enz, which Tim put together in 1974 after moving to Australia, was one of that country's most popular groups, despite their defiance of standard rock formulas. "I suppose we were arrogant," Tim says. "But you have to be, coming from New Zealand, because there's so much apathy and indifference there. Everything was 'copy, copy, copy,' and 'if it's local it must be bad.' To survive you had to have this huge amount of self-belief."

That confidence began to fray, however, after Split Enz released several albums in the U.S. and England that sunk without a ripple. One week in 1981, "I Got You" peaked at number 48 on the charts. "All these A&M guys came down to this L.A. TV studio where we were playing a show called 'Fridays,'" Tim recalls. "I remember [A&M head] Jerry Moss coming up to me and saying something like, 'Well, you lost the bullet, but I guess you've got to pay your dues.' We'd been together seven years by then! We'd paid our dues. And that was our one chance."

Two years later, mourning his band's doomed prospects, Tim quit Split Enz and moved to England. The group folded soon after that. "It was a daunting prospect to keep it going without Tim," Neil explains.

*Photograph: Philip Le Masurier*



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"Paul had just joined, and he and I are about the same age; I began to revel in the idea of having a small group of guys my own age." The result was Crowded House, whose self-titled debut, after stalling on the charts for several months, suddenly took off and launched two hits, "Something So Strong" and the classic ballad "Don't Dream It's Over."

Last year, while awaiting the birth of Neil's second child, the Finn brothers got together for a few hours each day to try writing songs together—something they'd never attempted before. "And we had a fantastic burst unlike anything either of us had known before," Neil says. "We were averaging two songs a day, all the words. There was a real energy about it, a sense of liberation. I think we'd never done it before because we'd had very clear roles as the older and younger brother. I'd felt intimidated by him to some degree."

"I think it was important for Neil to take Crowded House all the way," Tim points out. "And though I didn't have a lot of solo success, I'd lived in a different country and broken from the past, too, which was fundamentally important to me. I don't keep any photographs or diaries," he reveals. "I don't collect memories, 'cause I feel they would probably haunt me. Other people embrace those things. I run away from them."

The Finns wanted to record their new songs immediately, but protocol demanded work on the next Crowded House record instead. The band put together 11 tracks in the studio, "but there was a slightly dissatisfying feeling about the whole thing," according to Neil. "These other songs were sitting in an 'untouchable' basket, and to me it all felt like the same thing. Finally I came to the conclusion that maybe it *should* be the same thing."

Eventually, the rest of the band agreed. "It was hard at first, 'cause it meant the end of Curley, Larry and Moe," Paul Seymour admits. "But once we started working together, it all seemed perfectly normal. Besides," he cracks, "now we have someone to blame if the record stiffs."

Back in the studio, one advantage which quickly became apparent was the number of songs to choose from—24 instead of 14. Eight of the Finn brothers' collaborations made it to the final mix, albeit at times in radically different form. "On 'All I Ask' I was playing chords on a synth, with the tape rolling, and Tim was busking lyrics over it," Neil remembers. "It was so complete that we learned the song by listening to the tape after we were done. It literally came together in three minutes. And now there's 48 strings on it and it's the biggest production job [cont'd on page 26]

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## CROWDED HOUSE

**NEIL FINN** plays a '64 Les Paul gold top through Vox amps and a Yamaha SPX90. He uses a Hotcake distortion pedal. His acoustics include custom models by Stephan Kearney and Danny Ferrington. In the studio he also played vintage electrics—Silvertone, Airline, Hagstrom—"that were real cheap guitars in their day, but sound really distinctive."

**NICK SEYMOUR** thumbs a '57 Precision bass with a single-coil pickup through Ampeg SVT amps. **NICK HESTER** whacks Pearl drums and Zildjian cymbals. **TIM FINN** is slated to play keyboards; he says he doesn't have anything yet, "but I know it won't be anything digital." He also strums Takamine acoustic guitars.



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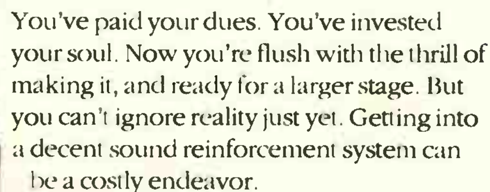

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# John Carter's Last Frontier

By Josef Woodard

## Final reflections by L.A.'s avant jazz patriarch

JOHN CARTER SPOKE THROUGH HIS CLARINET in a language all his own. Creating a musical alchemy with the decorum of classical articulation and the abandon of free jazz, Carter could breathe elegance and ferocity through his licorice stick. Like Ornette Coleman, Carter was a Los Angeleno by way of Fort Worth, Texas. Unlike Coleman, Carter came west to stay, teaching in public schools by day, waging his musical adventures by night and becoming a beacon of exploration in a town often hypnotized by its navel.

When he passed away on March 31 at age 61, from complications of lung cancer which had required the removal of one lung a year before, Carter left a void where innovative West Coast jazz—and jazz, generally—is concerned. But sadness is leavened by a sense of completion. Carter's ambitious five-part "Roots and Folklore" series, addressing the legacy of Afro-American experience, had been finally manifested with the release of 1989's *Shadows on the Wall* (following *Dauwhe*, *Castles of Ghana*, *Dance of the Love Ghosts* and *Fields*). His octet performed *Shadows* at the New Music America festival in New York, and, last September, at the Los Angeles Festival. By the time of his death, Carter had steadily worked his way inward from the jazz fringes where he spent most of his artistic life.

Several weeks before his passing, Carter performed a concert in Santa Barbara which turned out to be his last. The band included kindred players from L.A.'s jazz left—cornetist Bobby Bradford, keyboardist Don Preston, bassist Roberto Miranda and drummer William Jeffries. Though clearly weakened, Carter's lines leapt agilely across registers and into the netherworldly range of overtones. His signature circular-breathed blanket of sound conveyed both vulnerability and profound affirmations.

A few days before that, John Carter spoke about his full, often frustrating, but ultimately rewarding life in music.

**MUSICIAN**: *You explore odd timbres and sounds not common to your instrument. Have you always been a sound pioneer?*

**CARTER**: It was a process, I guess. On the first two or three records that Bob Bradford and I made, I played alto, tenor, flute and clarinet. It occurred to me that I was not happy with what I was producing in a musical way. The real me wasn't getting a chance to peek out. I decided that I had to put all that stuff away and just try the one instrument that related closest to my personality.

And the clarinet was that instrument. It lends itself well to the kinds of things I like to do. It has so many tremendous possibilities that you get hung up in them and before you know it, you're trying to figure out this instrument that you've been playing for 30 years. And you can never control it. That's how it's still going, to tell you the truth.

**MUSICIAN**: *Is it also a matter of trying new techniques?*

**CARTER**: Oh yeah, for me. I think it isn't for the so-called legitimate clarinet player, if there is such an animal. He just works on the classics and isn't seeking to have the instrument do anything else. That person would never venture out into these other areas. I felt the same about bebop. Not that it had been around so long. But the masters of that music had delved into it in such a way that it didn't need too much for anybody else to do. [*laughs*]

**MUSICIAN**: *Did you launch your "Roots and Folklore" series with the idea of creating a magnum opus?*

**CARTER**: I was going to write a piece called *Castles of Ghana: a piece*. That grew into *Dauwhe*. I didn't nearly start off with the idea of writing jazz suites. But it wasn't long before I could see the possibilities. Somewhere along the way, it turned into five of them.

**MUSICIAN**: *Of the albums,* Shadows on the Wall *seems like the most ambitious.*



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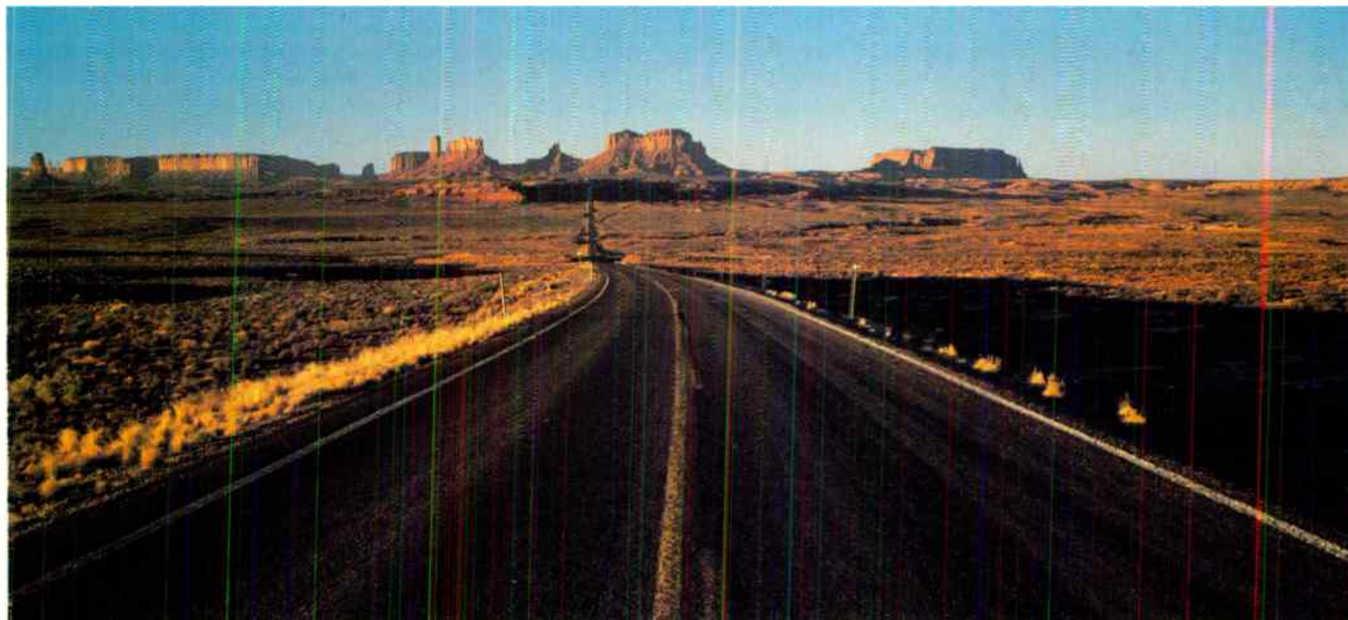

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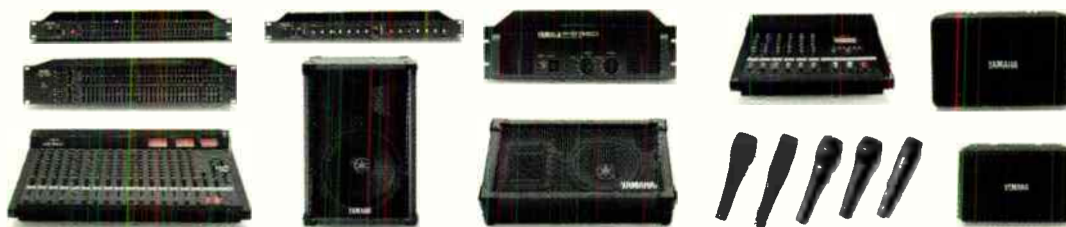

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**CARTER:** Yeah, I think it is very ambitious. There's a piece on there, "Spats," that I couldn't anymore play this morning than I could walk on water. I worked hard on that piece to get it together. It was very demanding.

**MUSICIAN:** *Do you think this represents a new jazz frontier—large-scale works that combine idioms and narrative structure?*

**CARTER:** Our music is traditionally based on the small rhythm section, a horn or two and a line for them to play and then solo off. I don't know if that will continue to be a big enough vehicle to carry all the things that jazz musicians want to say.

The larger works, in some cases, may get to do that. I haven't looked to see if "Roots and Folklore" falls into that category. But it's hard to look at what you do with any sense of objectivity.

**MUSICIAN:** *After such a massive endeavor, do you want to reel in and write shorter tunes, to think small?*

**CARTER:** I think I do. I'm trying to get a ballads album together. It will probably be all original material, probably with a quintet. As you say, it's a matter of getting my feet on the ground again. I do want to write another big piece for jazz ensemble and clarinet. It may really be a solo clarinet piece with ensemble accompaniment. But that's off in the future somewhere.

**MUSICIAN:** *You're involved with a group of musicians—James Newton, Bradford, Vinnie Golia—who make good music despite the scene in L.A., which is not very nurturing of new ideas.*

**CARTER:** I had such high hopes when we were getting ready to move here 30 years ago. There was so much music here at that time. The '50s had been very good for jazz in Los Angeles, you had Central Avenue and that whole scene. Then things just went downhill and seemed to keep going until it's hard to look at this city as a jazz setting.

But it's where I live. Thirty years ago, I was out in the streets, playing all night and going to sessions. Of course, I'm doing very little of that now. I may go out to hear cats play or go to a session every once in a while. But the young-buck period is definitely over. I guess at this point, I'm trying to make some sense and usage out of those things that, hopefully, I did learn.

**MUSICIAN:** *You had one lung removed a year ago. As a wind player, it must have made you contemplate your music and your playing.*

**CARTER:** Bobby Bradford was telling me about a tuba player in the St. Paul Symphony who had one lung. The one lung can do the job. You don't like to think that when you have two. [*laughs*] I can't get out and do the things I was doing; I can't do aikido. But I am told that I will be physically able to do the kinds of musical things that I did before. So I'm going slowly and looking forward to that. In many ways, I'm very happy to get up in the morning and see the sunshine. Ⓜ


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## CROWDED HOUSE

[*cont'd from page 24*] on the record."

"All I ask," Tim Finn sings on that number, "is to live each moment free from the past."

"I never thought I'd be in another band, 'cause I was loyal to the memory of Split Enz," he muses. "And now I'm coming up to 40 and thinking I can be a real adolescent in a band for a few years and have fun. Instead of having all your glory at 22. So maybe it's good to get a slow start." Ⓜ



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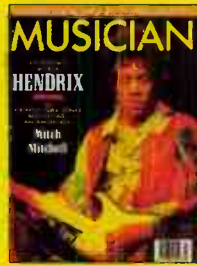

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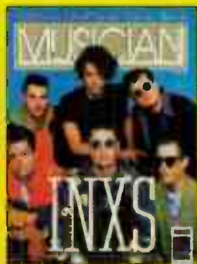

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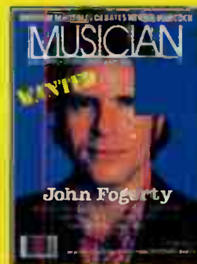

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World Radio History

# Roxette's Got the Hook

By Mark Rowland

## Guilty pleasures are the best kind

WHEN *LOOK SHARP!* ANNOUNCED THE Swedish band Roxette's U.S. debut a couple of years ago, Per Gessle was surprised to see the album receive a full review in the pages of *Musician*. "I thought it would be in J.D.'s short takes," he admits cheerfully. "Something like 'Come back, ABBA—all is forgiven.'"

Gessle can afford to make fun of himself: *Look Sharp!* has since sold about five million copies, thanks to his brigade of diabolically catchy singles. "Listen to Your Heart" and "The Look" hit number one on the *Billboard* pop charts, and "Dangerous" number two; more recently, "It Must Have Been Love," a ballad from Roxette's first album (which was never released here) was transformed into the climactic anthem for the movie *Pretty Woman*, and became a number one hit as well.

But Gessle also has a point: Despite, or perhaps because of their startling success, Roxette, like ABBA, is still a decidedly guilty pleasure for some critics. "We're a very singles-oriented band," he points out. "I think we're into the same thing as Tom Petty and Roger McGuinn, but I'm used to people not thinking like that."

Roxette's third album *Joyride* could change those perceptions. Not because it lacks commercial appeal—the power ballad "Fading Like a Flower," for one, has MTV stamped all over the chorus. But from the rollercoasting title track—"'Magical Mystery Tour' meets Aerosmith," as Gessle puts it—to the closing "Perfect Day," with its echoes of Nordic folk, it's a record full of formal pleasures and subtle twists. You can hear references as diverse as T. Rex, Tom Petty, Def Leppard and Joni Mitchell, arrangements that encompass bluesy harmonica and string quartets. Yet its core remains crunchy, guitar-driven pop, fueled by Gessle's inspired melodicism and the emotional range of his partner, singer Marie Fredriksson.

Sitting over tea together in a West Hollywood hotel, Gessle and Fredriksson present a study in contrasts. Per is a surprisingly big guy, with youthful, McCartney-like facial features and a similar eagerness of manner; the slender, angular Marie, whose command of English is less fluent, retains an air of quiet poise. Onstage, of course, the roles are reversed. "I'm more the hippie in the band, I think, and Per is more the businessman," Marie suggests. "He's like a brother to me, but our personalities are very different."

Per puts it more bluntly: "For Marie there are other things in life besides pop music. For me there is not."

Gessle, 32, grew up in Halmstad, a small city on Sweden's west coast. By the late '70s Halmstad had become the unlikely Liverpool of a Swedish new wave scene: "There were like 130 bands in a town of 70,000," he recalls. "The sound was power pop: Blondie, Nick Lowe, the Romantics. With new wave, it was okay if you hit the wrong note. I think that was the attitude that made you start playing guitar, because you're really not encouraged by your school or parents."

Fredriksson, meanwhile, had grown up listening to jazz, emulating singers like Billie Holiday and especially Ella Fitzgerald, while admiring the improvisations of '70s players like Chick Corea and Henry Cow. She went to music school to study voice, "but it was so boring I decided, 'I want to be a performer.'" By 1976 she'd moved to Halmstad, where she and Gessle shared rehearsal space and became friends.

Within a few years, both became stars in Sweden as well. But while Gessle's band succeeded via witty pop-rock, Fredriksson recorded three solo albums of original songs more suggestive of cool jazz and *Blue*-era Joni Mitchell. Their subsequent decision to create Roxette, both agree, had a lot to do with breaking musical boundaries.

"Jazz and blues is always something I can



Photograph: David Roth

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do later," Fredriksson notes. "But I love really good pop music, and because we know each other so well, I feel I can influence Per, even though he writes most of the material."

"I don't think Roxette would ever have happened if Marie's and my records had been sort of the same," Gessle adds. "Marie had never had that type of song to sing before. And for me it was equally—opposite. I could never sing a song like 'Soul Deep' myself. Now I can write much better, because she can deliver it. So we found our roles."

Writing songs in English, Gessle admits, was also a conscious attempt to expand Roxette's audience. At the same time there's a stream of melancholia coursing through his love songs—and they're all love songs—that's never too far from home.

"Swedish folk music is very similar to Northern England," Gessle observes. "Like the way Mark Knopfler writes, very beautiful and sad. I can remember when I was 18 or so, working as a troubadour playing for old people in hospitals, and we used to play these Swedish folk songs: very pretty, endless verses. And I think when you write music yourself there's a link through that to, like 'Fading Like a Flower.'"

On *Joyride*, however, Gessle broadens Roxette's musical palette. For "Knockin' on Every Door," a hip-hop rhythm meets Burt Bacharach horns; Fredriksson's gorgeous ballad "Watercolours in the Rain" gets embellished by thick string textures reminiscent of acoustic Led Zeppelin; another slow burner, "(Do You Get) Excited?," manages five or six key changes in the course of three minutes. "The first time I played it for our producer," Gessle laughs, "it was like, 'This is your Gentle Giant impersonation?'

"But the trick is not to think too much about it. Try the first thing that pops into your mind, if it makes sense. If it's work, skip it. But if you have lots of different instrumentalists and soloists, it makes the whole album much more interesting."

Though Gessle and Fredriksson are first among equals, Roxette is in fact a real band—guitarist Jonas Isacsson, bassist Anders Herrlin and drummer Pelle Alsing have been performing live and on records since the group came together five years ago. That *Joyride* is geared [cont'd on page 97]

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## LOOK #!

**PER GESSLE** plays Rickenbacker electric and Larrivee acoustic guitars, through Fender amps and Marshall cabinets. **JONAS ISACSSON** plays Telecasters, Les Pauls and (Swedish custom-built) Arvidson guitars, through Riveras and Fenders and a Marshall cab with Celestions. **ANDERS HERRLIN** plays Warwick basses. **PELLE ALSING** uses a Yamaha Power Recording drumkit with Zildjian cymbals. Mikes include an AKG D-112 (for the kick), a Shure SM57 (snare and toms) and an AMS ST-250 (overhead).

Producer **CLARENCE ÖFWERMAN**'s keyboard brigade runs the gamut from a Steinway grand and Hammond organ to the Roland D-70, D-50 and MKS-70, Korg T1 and Wavestation, E-mu Performance and Sequential Circuits Prophet 5: He's got Akai S-1000, E-mu Emax and Ensoniq samplers. Effects consist of two Lexicon 480s, a PCM-70 Eventide H3000SE Ultra-Harmonizer, an AMS harmonizer and reverb and a variety of digital delays. **MARIE FREDRIKSSON** sings through a Neumann U-47 mike.

The band records on an SSL 4000E mixing console with optional Focusrite mike amplifiers/equalizers. They employ 24-track Studer A-800 and 16-track Otari MX-80 tape machines.



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# Bonnie Raitt's Ace of Hearts

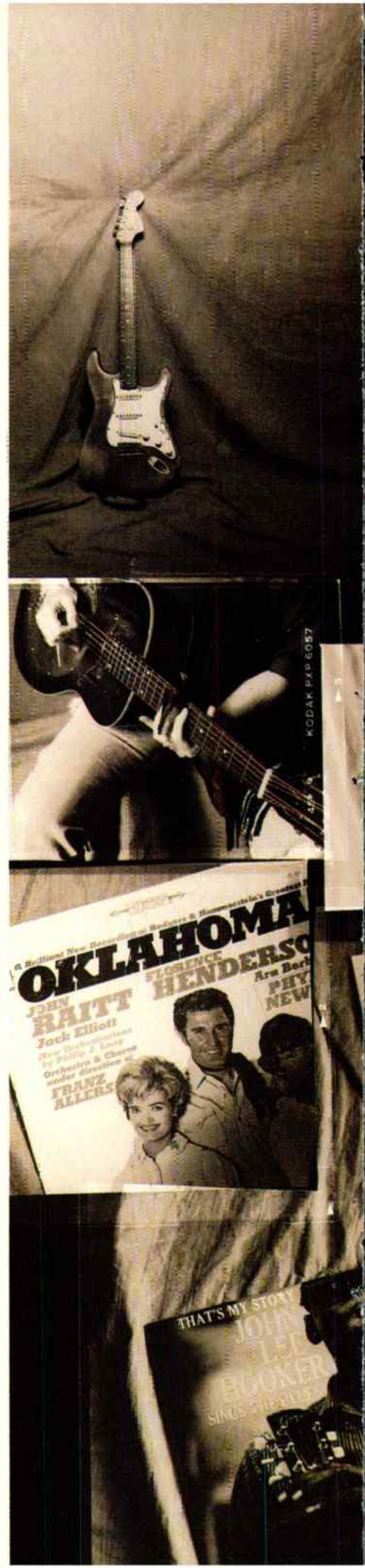
The Nick of Time baby has arrived. "Everyone thought I was singing that song about me," Bonnie Raitt is saying. "But it was happening to my dearest friend. Her husband didn't want her to have a baby and she was going to leave him. She really loved him, and she didn't want to leave, but what a choice..."

Raitt's voice trails off, then comes back strong for the happy ending. "And now they have a baby, three weeks old. We don't know whether it would have been born had we not badgered this man," she laughs. "What I mean is, maybe we gently persuaded him with the song."

Yeah, that seems plausible. Imagine yourself in this guy's place for a second. Your wife wants to have a kid, but you're not so sure. Then your wife's best friend—Bonnie Raitt—writes a song about it. The same Bonnie Raitt who has been on the road for the last 20 years, in and then out of pop fashions, absorbing the


By Mark Rowland

Photography by Darryl Estrine





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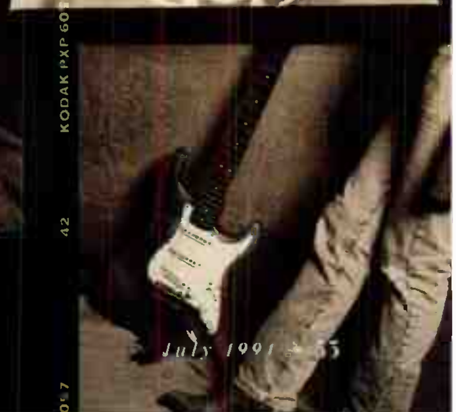
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knocks of romances gone awry and evenings with a bottle, but still putting her heart behind the music night after night. She sings this tune with such tenderness, and the song becomes the title and the symbol of a record which then takes off like nobody can believe and wins four Grammys and sells millions and it's the sweetest Cinderella story in years. And wherever you go you hear "Nick of Time, Nick of Time...." Think you'd take the hint?

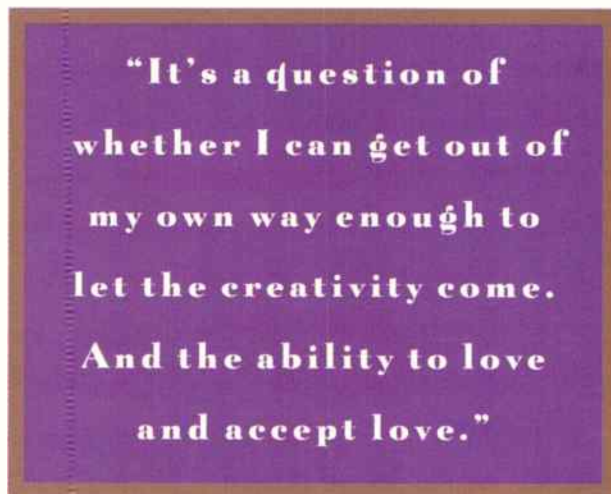
She is sitting by a patio table that overlooks the courtyard of Conway Studios, a green, flowering oasis only blocks removed from East Hollywood grunge. It's a balmy day with a rustling wind. Behind her stands Studio C, where engineer Ed Cherney emerges from time to time to saunter the grounds and puff on a cigarette. "He has to go outside to smoke," Bonnie explains. "Sometimes we all file outside at the same time. Like a low-security prison."

Raitt's dressed for the part, in faded denim jeans and a blue T-shirt inscribed Free The World. But her manner these days feels decidedly liberated. "I don't have to worry about my bills," she says. "I don't have to worry about being loved. I don't have to worry about which producer's gonna be right or which record label's gonna mess me over. I feel confident and I feel grateful and I feel relieved.

"It's absolutely the best time of my life."

She has her reasons. For one, our Scottish lass has fallen hard for an Irish laddie, Michael O'Keefe, who happens to be a handsome actor and a poet. In three weeks they'll be married. Her dad, the Broadway actor John Raitt, will wear a kilt for the occasion and sing; so, from the other side of her musical family tree, will the suave rhythm & blues stylist Charles Brown. It will be a small affair, nothing fancy. "Just friends," she says. "And their agents."

For another, this week marks the completion of her new album, appropriately titled *Luck of the Draw*, co-produced by Raitt with *Nick of Time* helmsman Don Was. She first began seeking songs for the record three years ago. Between cigarette strolls, Cherney is tuning the final mixes.




So you can see why she's so happy. What's weird is that she's so relaxed.

"Yeah, I was noticing that about a month ago," Raitt says. "I would have thought that I would have gotten freaked out about the pressure. It's been a kind of delight to find out that I'm actually further along in terms of my—maturity, I guess." She laughs. "I think I worry less because I'm more, how do you say, recovered? I'm recovering from hangups that I had as a kid, and my need to worry and beat myself up so much.

"I've spent the last couple of years going inside and healing. Back to pleasures like reading a book on the lawn, cutting flowers—reinventing my life in a more childlike and simple way. Michael's a serious Zen student, and I'm opening up to that world, getting in touch with the internal life I've always avoided. And letting music become inspirational to me, where it really hadn't been for a while.

"I wouldn't say I have complete serenity. This process isn't without effort. But once you commit yourself to the relationship you sort of surrender to the current. And once you commit to the songs you want to do, the execution of it is not so much of a problem. Five years ago, I don't think any of these things could have happened. Now it's a question of whether I can get out of my own way enough to let the creativity come. And the ability to love and accept love.

"I'm just trying to take advantage of every minute I have. 'Cause I've wasted so much time."

IT'S STILL HARD TO BELIEVE SHE'S A STAR. NOW PRINCE, THERE'S A star. Sinéad O'Connor. Don Henley, even. But you don't imagine that sort of distance from Bonnie Raitt. She's more like a buddy. Not to take her talent for granted, though we probably have, as in: Sure she's a great slide guitarist and sings definitive versions of nearly every song she touches and has managed to work folk and blues and pop into a style that's true to those roots yet personally distinct—so what else is new? It's an understandable attitude; fact is, Raitt feels about the same.

"There's something to be said about choosing fine songs to interpret and pulling them off emotionally," she says. "There's merit to that. But to compare it to Neil Young would be ridiculous, you know what I'm saying?"

Still, *Nick of Time* and *Luck of the Draw* force you to rethink the equation. "The pattern you see in most artists is that the first three or four years they really galvanize their strengths and have this rapid development," Don Was observes. "Then they spend the next 25 years playing their Greatest Hits. In Bonnie's case, though I certainly love her early records, there's no question that she's gone through artistic growth over the last five years. After 11 albums and 20 years playing gigs, that's pretty unique.

"And it's a growing vision. People think of her as this 'blues girl'—that's so wrong! She has that authenticity, but she's also taken pop songs to some really new places."

Raitt insists that the hoopla of the last two years hasn't changed her life much. She is keeping her wedding date and location a secret, to foil the paparazzi. She gets recognized more often, so sometimes she wears a hat. She's getting a higher financial guarantee on her tour dates this summer. That's about it.

The week *Nick of Time* went to number one, "I was in Europe promoting an unknown person, which was me! 'Cause I'd never done well enough in America before to warrant going there. It was like, 'Who is this person who just won all these awards? We've never heard of her.'"

Grammy night, of course, was another story: "That was just so unexpected," she glows, reliving the moment. "I figured I might win the 'rock female' award, that the record did well enough and people were gonna give me sort of a career nod: 'Alright, Bonnie, you got your shit together. Got a new label, you wrote a song straight, hallelujah, let's give you a prize.' Kind of a pat on the back. But the others were beyond belief. I wasn't even there the rest of the night, after the album won. Ella Fitzgerald was reading my name!" she laughs. "I mean, I'll never get over it as long as I live. And if I do, you can shoot me."

 Lettering: Dennis Ortiz-Lopez

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If Raitt's well-publicized "comeback" seems to possess special resonance for the pop music community, that's probably because a sense of community has always been important to Raitt. After all, the spectacle of artists and celebrities clearing wreckage from their lives and reclaiming the spotlight is far from rare. But even as you watch them shed crocodile tears on a Barbara Walters special, it's not like you ever felt their lives had anything to do with yours.

Young Bonnie with Mississippi Fred McDowell at the 1970 Philadelphia Folk Festival

With Bonnie it's different. Her Quaker upbringing, her apprenticeship with blues figures like Sippie Wallace and Fred McDowell (whom she likens to surrogate grandparents), her generous championing of progressive political causes, her initial success among a close-knit crowd of L.A. singer/songwriters: All suggest communal instincts. So too, her music creates a quilt for such strains of Americana as delta blues, Appalachian folk, Tin Pan Alley, California country and rock 'n' roll. Her performances are vehicles of communication, as opposed to star-tripping, and fans do know the difference.

In that regard, perhaps it's not surprising that Raitt's career took a dip from the late '70s through the '80s, as pop music's infrastructure—specifically, progressive FM radio, more broadly, the '60s counterculture—began to crack at the seams. On the one hand, she'd never strived for celebrity. "I didn't have the drive or the interest to be a star, and you've got to be heavy for that," she says. "I just wanted to make a nice living and be on a bill with Jackson Browne." But the undeniable evidence that her extended families were falling apart, as pop radio increasingly became a corporate preserve and political discourse shifted from "we" to "me," had a jarring effect.

> "First she quits drinking and then she gets married. It's really the end of an era."

"There wasn't room on the radio for you unless you were a classic oldies artist. And I didn't have hits," she points out. "At the same time, I kind of lost touch with myself and my hope. I was probably just dispirited from making so many albums nobody listened to.

"But I never let it get in the way of my music. I never worried about whether I'd have a career or not, even if it was gonna be on some little label in Sweden. 'Cause I could always play acoustic guitar. There's a great deal of security in that."

SOCIAL CURRENTS TEND TO BE PENDULAR; ARTISTIC movements that split like atoms eventually find expression in new, unexpected ways. So it came to pass that Bonnie, dropped after nine records by hometown label Warner Brothers (she was born in Burbank), met Don Was through the auspices of that master cross-pollinator Hal Willner, who brought them together for his Walt Disney tribute LP *Stay Awake.* (You just knew there was a Disney angle to this story somewhere.) Turns out they were all fans of each other's records.

"At that point I couldn't afford to take the band on the road, so I was doing acoustic gigs, just me and Johnnie Lee Schell," Bonnie recalls. "Don came to see me and he said, 'You should make a record really simple like that.' I said, 'The way my career is going, I have to make a record that simple, 'cause I'm broke.'"

No one will ever confuse a Was (Not Was) album with one of Bonnie's, but in fact Was and Raitt share basic musical values, notably a love for blues and R&B: "We're torn between two colors," Was remarks dryly. Was, whose gentle, soft-spoken manner belies his acuity and droll wit, was an early fan, having bought Raitt's first two albums.

"The basic theory that I have about Bonnie, which permeated *Nick of Time* and hopefully this record as well, is that people like her and want to get intimate with her," Was says. "And if you provide them with 45 intimate minutes—not of saxophone solos or great drum sounds, but of intimacy—then they are going to be happy. Whatever the decision that needs making in the studio, I ask that question: Is this making me, as a fan, feel closer to her? If you follow that program, people are going to like it."

Propelled in part by *Nick of Time*'s success, Was has since produced records by Bob Dylan, Elton John, Leonard Cohen, Bob Seger and Iggy Pop, among others. "More than anyone I've ever worked with," he says, "Bonnie has a complete artistic vision. She really knows herself. The cool thing about her is that she's not portraying a character. She'll only sing a song that pertains directly to her life."

The trick with that approach is that Raitt usually relies on other songwriters for the bulk of her material. Consequently, the search for an album's worth of songs to which she feels sufficiently attuned can take years. "We start pretty early looking for them," Was admits. "I try to find songs for her, but it's such a personal thing. It's like trying to pick out her clothes."

For *Nick of Time* and *Luck of the Draw*, Raitt made demos of the songs she was considering, with skeletal acoustic arrangements. It turned out to be a good litmus test. "If it's a great song you can go with an acoustic guitar and make a great record," Was explains. "With a shitty song, you can have Toto and the Duke Ellington band, and all you'll have is a great recording of a shitty song. And before you go into the studio, you have to believe that the songs you have are great. If you don't you'll be lost."

On *Nick of Time*, it all came together without a hitch. The songs were first-rate, recordings went smoothly and, thanks to the company's low-expectations budget, the production was over before there was much time to second-guess it. True to its genesis, the music had an uncluttered, spontaneous feel. Capitol projected about 150,000 sales.

A number one record, two years, three million sales and four Grammys later, expectations for *Luck of the Draw* couldn't help but be heightened. "I'd be a liar if I didn't say that every day was an effort to clear our minds of what had happened before," Was admits. "We



*Photograph: David Gahr*

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didn't want to remake *Nick of Time*. And yet that was a nice, honest portrait of Bonnie. So we didn't want to lose that either. It was a real fine line."

The result is an overtly soulful record, that's without ever harking specifically to the blues. Some arrangements have a distinct gospel feel; background vocalists include Was (Not Was) singers Sweet Pea Atkinson and Sir Harry Bowens (and on one track, Kris Kristofferson). Some of the tunesmiths whose songs graced *Nick of Time*—Bonnie Hayes, John Hiatt, Mike Reid, Larry John McNally—contribute here as well, which Raitt says shouldn't surprise: "We're all about the same age, we're all facing the same issues."

But the songs which give *Luck of the Draw* its unifying theme, and at the same time frequently push her music in surprising directions, are those penned or co-written by Raitt herself. "I was afraid I wasn't gonna be able to come up with something deep enough for people to compare with the song 'Nick of Time,'" she admits. "But I knew that set a standard, and I didn't want to wimp out. Other people can't always say what you want to say, and as an artist you want to express something that's from your heart. So I thought, 'What's the issue in my life right now?'"

The issue was her budding romance with Michael O'Keefe. The pair had met during a benefit event, a music video set in a downtown L.A. park to call attention to America's homeless. A few weeks into the relationship things were getting tense. "One minute I'd act like I really liked him, the next like I couldn't stand him," Raitt remembers. "He wrote this poem when he was mad at me and put it on the bed when I woke up. He said, 'Here.' Later, when he wasn't looking, I wrote music for it."

The result, "One Part Be My Lover," has a wistful, folkish melody, replete with pennywhistle solo. "It's about the point in a relationship where you're both so beat up from before that you're just terrified," she says. "Trying to figure out whether it was really happening or whether we just weren't meant for each other. Because I was scared."

Another Raitt song, "Tangled and Dark," takes an opposite musical tack—Was (Not Was)-styled funk, with a tasty Raitt slide guitar break—to nail a similar problem: "We were close to a year into the relationship, and the thing in the way of moving forward was uncovering these rocks of really scary stuff. Like, what is the scariest thing about you that scares me? What if I can't handle the age difference? What if I can't handle the lifestyle difference? You gotta work on those issues or they'll come back a year into the next relationship: If you can't accept what you look like in the daytime with no clothes on, it's not gonna get any better if you switch guys, you know what I mean? You have to make peace with who you are, and let the person you're loving be themselves. It becomes a leap of faith."

If "Tangled and Dark" and "One Part Be My Lover" set an emotional agenda, the record's other songs reflect it from differing angles. "Something to Talk About" is sweetly flirtatious in a mid-tempo groove, while Womack & Womack's tougher-minded duet "Good Man Good Woman" strikes some roadhouse R&B tension between Bonnie and Delbert McLinton. John Hiatt cranks appropri-


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ately raunchy guitar over his "No Business," while "I Can't Make You Love Me," a classic broken-heart ballad, features an elegant Bruce Hornsby piano solo.

"I couldn't even get through that song," Raitt says. "I kept crying at the line 'I'll close my eyes/So I don't see/The love you don't feel/When you're holding me'—that's the saddest line I've ever heard. Though I'm not one for melodrama," she adds quickly. "I mean, if you lose it, you use another take."

Raitt tries not to be too self-conscious about her singing. "I don't care for my voice much," she says frankly. "Once I make a record I don't listen to it. If I had to think about my singing or guitar playing, I think I'd give it up."

In the old days, she confesses, she used to drink Jim Beam whiskey, hoping it would give her voice "the patina of age." She credits Aretha Franklin ("my hero"), along with Sippie Wallace and Ruth Brown, as inspirational models, for conveying power and self-respect even as they reveal their vulnerability. What's changing for Raitt is the context for that attitude; conspicuous by their absence on *Luck of the Draw* are pure blues, or even songs that convey anger or bitterness. Perhaps as a consequence, "for the first time I found songs that were hard for me to sing."

For all its craft, some of the record fell together by, well, luck. "No Business" was selected only after Hiatt decided not to record it himself. ("I got down on my knees and prayed," Raitt confesses.) The title cut features Richard Thompson's guitar, mostly because Thompson happened to be mixing his latest record in the adjoining studio. "I was thinking, 'We really need somebody like Richard on this,' and as I pulled into the studio parking lot, he pulled in next to me!"

Paul Brady's "Not the Only One" is the record's sole paean to romantic bliss. "I've been wanting to cut that song for the last couple of years," Raitt says. "And it's funny, because I didn't have anyone to sing it about. I used to sit in my car and look at the ocean and listen to that song and the tears would be streaming down my face. Just hoping that I would eventually get it. That the song would come through."

Last Christmas, in the same place where O'Keefe and Raitt had written "One Part Be My Lover," they announced their engagement. "I was never really the marrying type," she reflects. "I always preferred to be Kitty on 'Gunsmoke'—love the sheriff but not give up my independence. But I think there's certain things that you can only get by having this kind of commitment. You have to be monogamous and you have to be into each other. And if in a few years we're not," she cracks, "it's not like we got chained at the neck. But I am really serious or I wouldn't be doing it. And the seriousness of it floors me.

"But boy, the responses I've gotten from different people I've gone out with. You can hear them just shake their head over the phone—'First she quits drinking and then she gets married.'" She laughs. "Like, 'It's really the end of an era.'"

SURVEYING THE LAST FEW YEARS, RAITT SEEMS TORN AT TIMES between her conflicting inclinations to properly savor the moment and


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to empathize with those in less fortunate circumstances. "For anyone who's wondering, I really appreciated it!" she exclaims. "But I have good friends who are without a job, friends who are lonely, friends with terminal illnesses. I'm not some sort of Moonie that got swept away by all this. I have good days and bad days and irritability and fears. When you're in the middle of the good stuff, you remember the bad. And I sing the songs that I sing to remind myself, too."

Farther up the California coast, Raitt has a rustic cabin, with a view of redwoods and a river running toward the sea. Last year, as she was writing songs there, she got the inspiration for "All at Once," about a middle-aged woman who's losing touch with her daughter while caught in a hopeless romance. "To me there's more hearts broken/ Than anyone can see," the woman sings. "Why the angels turn their backs on some/ It's a mystery to me."

"It was a really sad song to write," Raitt says. "The idea came from an 'Angel from Montgomery' type of person. But then the chorus of the song—'all at once I hear your voice and time just slips away'—came from a completely different place. It felt like someone was singing or playing through me. Like, there have been [cont'd on page 95]

## THE RAITT STUFF

For years **BONNIE RAITT** has played '60s Fender Strats with custom necks for slide guitar; more recently the Fender custom shop has replicated those models for her. She'd been playing them through an old Jim Kelly amp and a single 12-inch JBL E120 speaker. She now has two-channel custom-built Jim Demeter guitar heads, a couple of Kelly heads, a Kelly 112 reverb amp, plus a reissue of a '59 Fender Bassman amp, and for non-slide work she plays a '67 sunburst Strat. Her acoustic guitars include a Guild large-body (with Sunrise pickups), custom six-string cutaway Taylor guitars and a Taylor large-body model 815, and a Martin six-string cutaway played through a Demeter TGA3 amp. Her effects consist of an old MXR sustain pedal, an old Boss compression/sustain pedal (for slide playing) and a Boss CE2 chorus. She also plays a 1929 plywood-body dobro. She uses GHS strings and sings through Beyer M88 microphones.

Bonnie's piano rack includes Roland D-50 and Yamaha DX7 synths (on which she wrote "Nick of Time"), a Korg SG1D piano, a Peavey eight-channel mixer and an old Roland 1000 controller with simulated piano action and wood keys. At press time it's uncertain what will be added to that by new members of her touring band **GLEN CLARK** and **DANNY TIMS**. The keyboards will be connected through a Roland D-70 controller, an Akai S1000 sampler and MIDI-capable mixer.

Bassist **"HUTCH" HUTCHINSON** has for many years played fretted and fretless Modulus graphite-neck custom jazz basses with EMG pickups. He's also got a Washburn acoustic/electric fretless AB40 and a Tobias electric five-string. He uses a Samson wireless. His amps include two Gibson GB440s with 410 and 115 speaker cabinets, and tube preamps from Jim Demeter's Innovative Audio. Effects include a Yamaha SPX90 and a Roland SDE 3000. He plays Gibson and GHS strings.

Guitarist **STEVE BRUTON** plays older Teles and Strats and a new Paul Reed Smith guitar with EMG pickups. They're driven through a Paul Rivera custom head and a couple of 212 cabinet speakers. He uses an Ibanez effects unit.

Drummer **RICKY FATAAR** plays Gretsch drums and Sabian and Zildjian cymbals.


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# David Sancious

# ERENADE

## Springsteen, Sting & Gabriel have one musician in common

By Bill Flanagan

David Sancious lives on top of a mountain. He drives out of the village of Woodstock and starts climbing a series of dirt roads that get steeper and steeper until you think, "Oh no, he can't be going to try to drive up *that*." But he does. He parks at the edge of a steep ditch, climbs out and starts ascending the path to his home. Sancious' house is beautiful, modern, sparsely but elegantly furnished, with huge glass windows from which he looks down at the lakes and valleys of the Catskills. It's April. The tall trees around the house are blooming. "I love this place," Sancious says. "I was so excited to get back here two days ago, I've been like a little kid at Christmas." Sancious just got back from Senegal, where he played a concert with Peter Gabriel. He had flown directly to Africa from Los Angeles, leaving only hours after the final show of Sting's U.S. tour. In a week he will fly to England to pick up with Sting again, performing through the U.K., Europe, and North and South America until at least next Christmas. David Sancious doesn't get to spend much time on his mountaintop.

"David is a highly evolved spiritual man," Sting says. "If I believed in reincarnation I would say that David had probably been a Buddhist monk in some other life. He's a



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Photograph by Karen Kuehn

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complete musician, who seems to be able to regard limitations as temporary, because the emotional musician and the technical musician are totally at one in David. In other words, what he can't play today he'll play tomorrow; you'll never get to the end of David Sancious."

"David is one of the most gifted musicians I have ever worked with," Peter Gabriel says. "A great instinctive and soulful player." Throughout his career Sancious has maintained a low profile and a high proficiency. He was the keyboard player on Bruce Springsteen's first two albums (David was, in fact, the one who lived on E Street). He played the organ solo on "Kitty's Back," arranged the strings on "New York City Serenade," even blew a soprano sax on "E Street Shuffle." He left after recording the single "Born to Run," when CBS Records offered him a solo deal. David Sancious and Tone released the first of their three fusion albums in 1975 when David was 21. Fans of the E Street Band were startled to see the studious, classically trained pianist of "New York City Serenade" and "Incident on 57th Street" strapping on a Strat and cutting loose with Hendrix-inspired guitar. (Sancious played on two Stanley Clarke albums then, too.) Billy Cobham produced David's first record, and when Tone broke up Sancious and Cobham joined the 1980 version of the Jack Bruce Band. Stints with Yes' Jon Anderson and with Santana followed, as did a solo piano album on Elektra Records and an LP with Aretha Franklin. In 1986 Sancious joined Peter Gabriel's band for the *So* tour. He remains part of Gabriel's group today; Sancious will get in a couple of days recording with Gabriel in England next week, just before Sting's first British show.

In 1988 Sancious combined his past, present, and future gigs when he joined Gabriel on the Amnesty International Human Rights Now tour, along with Sting and Springsteen. During those concerts he sat in with the E Street Band. What was it like to rejoin in football stadiums a group that had been playing small halls when he quit?

"It was fresh because of that," Sancious smiles. "And that let me be fresh with the music. There were some spontaneous things going on. What was funny in another way was working on Bruce's new album, the record he's still working on. That was really interesting. It was a long time since we'd both been in a studio with him teaching me songs. He wasn't using the band, he had different musicians and the music was different as well. Not that it didn't sound like him, but it sounds like him walking down another street. It's definitely Bruce, but rhythmically and even sonically it didn't have that E Street Band stamp, which I found refreshing."

Sting: "David (far right) once told me there's nothing you can't play, if you break it down into its components, slow it down and practice."

"It's hard for me to take that purist attitude. It's like closing a door in somebody's face. It's passing out handcuffs."

A very young Springsteen and Sancious at the Jersey shore, 1973.

Who knows more about E Street than Sancious? "I grew up on E Street," he explains. "The way I remember the story, it goes something like this: We were coming back from a tour, I think we played in Texas or something. We needed a band name. The sun is up now—it's a Saturday morning, the middle of summer, and we've been in the car for hours. Five guys coming up with band names at the end of this long drive. All kinds of things came up, some of them serious, some not. Finally we got into Belmont, we turned the corner from 12th Avenue onto E Street. There's these little white markers that look like miniature Washington Monuments. Bruce read it and he said, 'E Street, E Street.' He kept saying it over and over. 'E Street Band. Yeah.' It sounded good to him, it had a rhythm to it.

"Those were great times, man. For us in the band, individually and collectively, we just *knew*. Just to watch the guy, you couldn't be anywhere near him and not have this feeling that this really was something special, this was somebody special and something very special was going to happen. You just knew it. And in the meantime we were living a classic kind of rock band life. A bunch of guys in a rental car, all the road mishaps, getting lost, all kinds of nonsense. Really great times."

Sancious was 18 when he first hooked up with Springsteen. His folks had already given up hope of their musician son going to college like his older brothers. ("My mom was happy for me. Around that area Bruce was already the legendary local guitarist.") Sancious' father worked on missile systems for the military. The whole family was musical—Dad's taste was trad jazz, Mom liked classical, one brother liked Motown and avant-garde jazz, the other brought home Ravi Shankar records and Indian classical music. David absorbed it all, developing a big taste for Hendrix on the side. Over dinner in Woodstock, Sancious mentions that his father passed away just a month ago. David was on the *Soul Cages* tour with Sting when he got the news, playing songs inspired by the death of Sting's father.

Sting says, "I knew from the beginning of the project that David had



*Photographs: MTV (top); David Gahr*

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a deep understanding of what I was trying to say in the songs, and when his father died I felt a strong bond develop. I tried to understand my father's death by 'mythologizing' it, and David's sensitivity and experience have enriched that process, helping it to resonate beyond my egocentricity to encompass a wider meaning."

"I knew this tour was going to be great musically," Sancious says, "but I didn't know I'd enjoy it as much as I have. I'm just having such a great time on the personal level as well. We get along really well, we enjoy playing together. It's a pleasure to face the challenge every night."

For all the similarities in what Sting and Peter Gabriel do, it looks from the outside as if Sting would have a very firm notion of how he wanted his songs played and limit compositional input from the other musicians to their solos. Gabriel, one supposes, would be more open to letting all the players shape the composition. Wrong.

"It's just about the reverse," Sancious says with a smile. We're sitting on his porch, avoiding the maneuvers of a phalanx of wasps. "Peter's music is not designed to feature individual soloists as such. It follows either his variation of the song form tradition or it's very classically oriented and structured. In his music there's no 32-bar solos or stretching out, although in the last few years his music has opened up in that way. He's receptive to that, it's just not a main feature of his music. Whereas I think Sting comes from a tradition of playing music that was designed to feature an instrument. There's more physical space in Sting's music to have a solo, and the song structure is more apt to change and mutate in Sting's current situation than in Peter's last situation. It's hard to compare, you're talking about two very different things. Where Peter's thing is probably more flexible, where there's more room for improvisation and stretching out, is in the rhythmic aspect of it. But for keyboard, guitar and bass players, your job is just to come up with a great part that works with the rest of the music and helps the song.

"What I'm finding working with Sting is that he does have a very strong vision about what the song is and where it goes, but he's not locked into that vision. We've gone through several different arrangements of most of the songs, each of which has been good. He's really into finding different ways to compose. I find him very flexible."

Gabriel's vision goes beyond music to include cultural and social cross-pollination. Is it possible to collaborate with him musically without becoming part of his bigger picture? Sancious thinks about that for a long time. "Good question," he says softly. "You can't be a part of the project without being aware of what Peter's point of view is or having some feeling for the depth of his commitment. But his views aren't forced upon anyone. It happens that our viewpoints are pretty similar if not identical about most of these things—environmental, cultural, political. So that's never caused a problem. He's smart enough and sensitive enough to do those types of things in such a way that you don't feel you're being swept away or channeled into something you might in fact not agree with."

## SANCIOUS' TONE

**HIS HOME PIANO is a Yamaha grand. On the road, David says, "I use just one master controller: the KX88. I have a custom-made pedalboard with six stereo analog volume pedals. In my racks I have a Yamaha TX816, a D-50, a Rackmount T1, a Dynacord Digital Leslie, two Peavey DPM V3s, an E-mu Performance Digital Piano Module and an old Yamaha TX812. I use two Ibanez stereo delays, a Yamaha SPX90, a Roland 16-channel mixer and a Mapper, which I couldn't live without. My guitar stuff is one new white Fender Strat with a maple neck, and a black Charvel Strat copy. I play them through a new Yamaha SPX900, a Marshall tube amp, a Carver 200-watt power amp, an Alesis Multiverb, with some Boss pedals (a chorus, a distortion and a delay), and a Vox CryBaby wah-wah. My strings are Dean Markley Blue Steel Cryogenic. My roadie laughs at me when I bring them out because they're wrapped up in what looks like cigarette boxes."**

On Gabriel's *Passion*, Sancious was reunited with another old comrade—Billy Cobham. "You do have these musical relationships," Sancious says, "people you connect with through your life. Billy produced my first album, then we were in the Jack Bruce Band together. Billy and I did a Montreux festival with Allan Holdsworth. Billy's a genius. Any musician who can attain the level he has with his instrument is working on a level beyond fashion. It doesn't matter how it's doing commercially."

Commercially, Cobham has probably suffered from the stigmatizing of fusion by jazz purists. The style that produced *Bitches Brew* and *The Inner Mounting Flame* (and David Sancious and Tone) fell from favor in the late '70s, throwing out the masters along with the posers. It was a musical injustice, and mentioning it gets a rise out of Sancious.

"It's hard for me to take that purist attitude in any genre," Sancious says. "Jazz purist, rock 'n' roll purist, classical purist. It's just like closing a door in somebody's face. It's passing out handcuffs. You shut yourself off from more than you can possibly know; you limit yourself. I don't mean that you have to compromise the music. See, purists think these other instruments pollute the form somehow. I think that kind of negative, down-looking attitude is dangerous. Because it's very unmusical. That's not the attitude you take when you're in the midst of some burst of inspiration or when you've got an instrument in your hands and you're trying to communicate with your fellow musicians!"

Sancious says he faced a musical/spiritual crisis in the early '80s, when the MTV bands were rising. "I was going through a really dark period. I just didn't believe in anything I was hearing anymore. For whatever reason, there was nothing that was really reaching me. When you're going through it you somehow think that it's unique to you. I tried to talk about it with some musicians who looked at me like I was nuts. It makes you not want to speak about it. But I dealt with it. I didn't listen for a while. I completely lost interest in listening to the radio. I would withdraw from one thing and go deeper into some aspect of myself. I immersed myself in piano, but in the end that didn't solve anything, except to tell me without a shadow of a doubt that acoustic piano was not going to be the answer to my problem."

Is there a danger that if you keep playing when you're sick of it, your music will become just craft?

"That is a danger," Sancious says. "But you're going to know that. You're not going to go a hundred miles down the road before you realize that's what's happening. That will make you stop doing that. The answer isn't always getting deeper into the work, the answer sometimes is stepping back from it: to literally stand up, walk away and take as objective a look at it as you possibly can. You may need to spend some time away from it. The answer might be not playing for a week or two. It's different every time."

These days Sancious has found his place, a place where rock is most unembarrassed about its intellect and most open to [*cont'd on page 95*]



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# GOODBYE

## THE TIM BUCKLEY STORY

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The doorbell rang. Judy Buckley was expecting her husband, returning that day from yet another tour. It was Tim, all right, but he wasn't alone. He also didn't seem conscious. He was supported on either side by a man and a woman. Judy didn't know the woman; the man was the Buckleys' friend Richard Keeling—"Cool Richard."

"What's wrong with Timmy?" Judy asked. "He did some stuff," Keeling replied, adding that it wasn't enough to hurt himself. They brought Buckley up to his bedroom. Keeling thought Buckley was up to his old tricks, once again pretending to be more messed up than he was.

A few hours later, Keeling's phone rang. It was Judy Buckley, hysterical. This time Tim wasn't faking. Keeling returned to the Buckleys and called a paramedic. It didn't help. The evening of June 29, 1975, 28-year-old Tim Buckley came home to stay.

# HELLO

BY SCOTT ISLER



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His death ended a decade-long career marked by fits and starts, brilliant bursts of creativity followed by seeming sabbaticals, and serpentine turns in musical direction. Buckley might have been more popular if he'd stuck with one style. But the word "commercial" did not loom large in his vocabulary.

"He had no head for business whatsoever," says his vibes player David Friedman. "He was a true, spontaneous, creative artist—and way ahead of his time, musically."

"He really didn't care about the money part of it," his mother Elaine Buckley says. "He just loved to play music and he loved to sing."

A LOT OF PEOPLE LOVE TO SING; THAT'S WHY SHOWERS were invented. But Buckley's voice was a phenomenon of nature. With no formal training he was a model of diction and phrasing. His warm tenor curled around listeners like mellow pipe smoke. Its throbbing resonance bored into the heart with surgical precision. His upper register segued seamlessly into a falsetto for acrobatic flights of fancy. "He used to laugh and say what he was aiming for was to get the range of Yma Sumac," his friend Daniella Sapriel says.

The technical equipment was a blessing. The uses to which the Los Angeles–based Buckley put it were more self-willed. If he had been born into another generation, he could have been one of the great saloon singers. Friedman remembers Buckley's "fantastic" version of "One for My Baby (and One More for the Road)." Bassist John Balkin recalls that Buckley would "go around singing 'Is That All There Is?' It got to him."

As a baby-boomer, though, Buckley treated the cabaret songs strictly as a sideline. He had too many melodies of his own, tunes that gave form to the inchoate feelings of his audience as well as himself. "What made him such an intense experience," Sapriel says, "is that the music transcended the personal and touched things that all of us longed to express but can't, or feel we can't. That's a lot to ask somebody to carry."

For most people, that was the only Tim Buckley they knew. His friends and associates saw another side. Being with Buckley, John King says, was "like hanging out with Eddie Haskell." He couldn't walk past a pool table in a bar without knocking the balls around; or past a fire alarm in a hotel hallway—in the wee hours of the morning—without setting it off. One of his favorite films was *A Clockwork Orange*.

Keeling remembers one not atypical evening of club-crawling with Buckley. They ended up at a relatively conservative Santa Monica bar featuring a singing pianist on a raised platform. "As always, Timmy wanted to take over the crowd. So he began by heckling the guy. Then he pretended to be so drunk that he fell down; Timmy staggered up and 'passed out,' as if he had fallen asleep on that runway.

"The singer said something like, 'Maybe you'd like to finish this song for me?' Which was exactly the wrong thing to say. Up jumps Timmy, crystal clear, sings this song like the guy could never have sung it, knew all the words, other verses—just kicks the guy's ass musically. That was Timmy, in a nutshell. Then we closed the bar and took the guy out to breakfast at a Denny's nearby. He used to do things like that all the time."

One thing he wasn't was a pop star in the accepted definition of either word. His albums weren't big sellers, even in the relatively scaled-down record business of the late '60s: At the height of his fame he barely cracked *Billboard*'s Top 100. Singles? Forget about it.

But Tim Buckley's importance can't be measured in chart placings or dollar amounts. He lived his life almost in defiance of such standards. If he paid the price for his rebelliousness, he also left an enduring legacy.

Between 1966 and 1975 Buckley released nine albums that could have been recorded by no one else. Buckley put his vocal virtuosity in the service of an artistic vision that showed little consistency beyond a restless searching, an impatience with the present. The sadness in his voice reinforced the heroic futility of his music. His was the sound of defenselessness.

Buckley impressed those who knew him as one of the most remarkable people they'd met. "Certain people in your life," guitarist/"Stick" inventor Emmett Chapman says of Buckley, "you carry them around with you. He's a person like that."

Buckley outlived his friend Jim Morrison by nine months. But while the media keep resurrecting the Lizard King, the equally photogenic Buckley has proven harder to exploit. Score a Pyrrhic victory for Buckley's spiky artistic integrity. (Buckley referred to Morrison, three years his senior, as "the baby" and walked out of a Doors concert in disgust with Jimbo's concept of drunkenness as entertainment.)

"WHEN AN ARTIST FINALLY COMES THROUGH ALL THIS MESS, YOU HEAR A PURE VOICE. WE'RE IN THE HABIT OF EMULATING THOSE PURE VOICES WHEN THEY'RE DEAD."

In early 1965 Buckley was finishing high school by day and working odd jobs at night. His family had just bought a house in Anaheim, crossing over the Los Angeles County line from Bell Gardens. He was already deeply involved in music. When he was 13, in 1960, Buckley caught the folk-music bug. He took banjo lessons and started playing in a folk group with Dan Gordon and a couple of other school friends. "I would love to say our roots were Hank Williams," Gordon says, "but it's just not true. It's all Kingston Trio."

As the '60s unrolled Buckley fell under the sway of the Beatles, but his eclectic taste didn't stop at the pop border. In Anaheim he met fellow student and bassist Jim Fielder and, through Fielder, Larry Beckett. The three used to meet at Beckett's house and listen to Dave Brubeck and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

Having switched to guitar, Buckley was an archetypal '60s folkie. Beckett suggested that they write songs together. Their first efforts, Beckett says, "were extremely conventional simple rock 'n' roll. But right away we both became really experimental."

When Gordon returned from a year in Israel he was amused to find Buckley had reinvented himself for his new high-school crowd. "Bell Gardens enjoyed a reputation of being a tough cowboy/Okie town," Gordon says. "So Tim had made up a lot of shit about playing in country-western bars; he never did. But they bought it. Everybody winked, 'Sure, why not?' Because musically he really was exciting."

With Beckett and Fielder, Buckley formed two bands. The Bohemi-

*Special thanks to Louie Dula.*



*Lettering: Dennis Ortiz-Lopez*

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BUCKLEY AT IZZY YOUNG'S FOLKLORE CENTER, NEW YORK CITY, C. '66-'67

ans concentrated on Top 40 rock 'n' roll. The acoustic Harlequins 3 played folk clubs, alternating music with Kahlil Gibran recitations and monologues swiped from Ken Nordine *Word Jazz* albums.

At the Anaheim studio where he gave guitar lessons Fielder met a drum teacher who also played in the Mothers of Invention: Jimmy Carl Black. Black invited Fielder, Buckley and Beckett to see the Mothers, and introduced them to the band's manager, Herb Cohen.

Cohen's client list has always shown impeccable taste. Besides Frank Zappa and the Mothers, Cohen's handled Lenny Bruce, Fred Neil, Captain Beefheart, Linda Ronstadt and Tom Waits, among others. Fielder recalls Cohen's initial interest in Buckley was as a songwriter. After hearing a couple of demo tapes he arranged for Buckley to play an afternoon audition for him at the Trip. "It was unbelievable," Cohen says. "This voice, so unlike what anybody else was doing at the time. And he knew how to sing!"

Buckley had just graduated high school. That summer he performed regularly at a coffeehouse co-founded by Gordon. "That's really where he began to blossom," Gordon says. "We had packed audiences every Friday and Saturday night."

He was growing up fast, and not just professionally. His senior year in high school he shared a couple of classes with Mary Guibert, a self-described goody-two-shoes.

"Every time I'd walk past his chair he'd bleat like a lamb! One time I confronted him; I was in my cheerleader's outfit and I'd had enough of this insolence. He just gave me a look and said something about my true womanhood and I should be something set apart and not follow along with the crowd. I guess that's all I needed!" Guibert laughs heartily. "Something in me said yes to this young man. He was a very powerful person."

By the end of the school year they ran away, a few days on the lam from parents. By November 1965 Buckley was a college student, an aspiring professional singer—*and* a husband.

Guibert, a year younger than Buckley, was still in high school. Beckett remembers "riding around in a car with them and him saying, 'I just want you to do the laundry and clean house'; and she's saying, 'You don't want a wife, you want a maid!' We were all unbelievably immature."

Buckley dropped out of college in his first year. He saw it as a waste of time as his career began taking off. He was playing Orange County coffeehouses—also a breeding ground for Jackson Browne, Jennifer Warnes and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band—and Monday-night hootenannies at Los Angeles' famed Troubadour. The most exciting development was his signing to Elektra Records.

Jac Holzman was a college student himself when he founded Elektra in 1950. Fifteen years later the label was an established independent specializing in folk music—and just getting its feet wet with the new electric-powered music coming out of Los Angeles.

"I received an audition disc from Herb Cohen of Tim Buckley," Holzman says. "I took one listen and called Herb and said I wanted to sign the artist. I loved the writing, I loved the approach, and I loved the fact that he had both folk roots and rock 'n' roll aspirations." This was exactly what Cohen anticipated. Buckley's music "was an odd category," the

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID GAHR

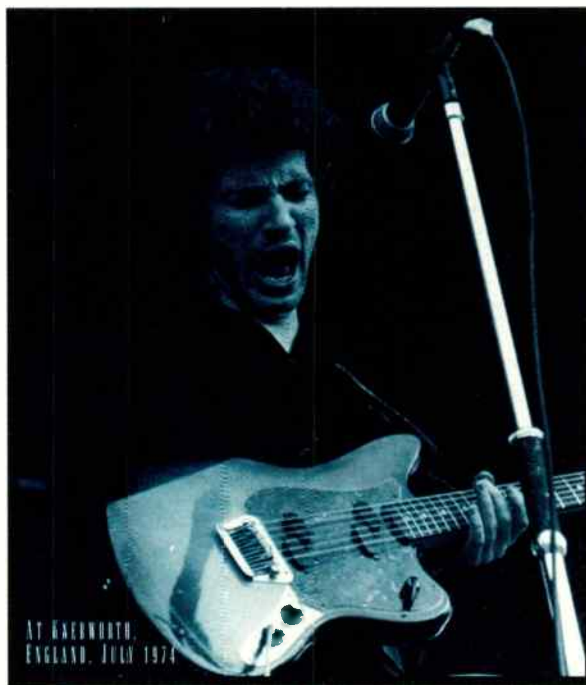


World Radio History

manager admits. "That's why I went to Elektra."

Cohen arranged for Buckley to play the small Night Owl in New York's Greenwich Village in the summer of '66. Buckley rode out there in a VW bug driven by Jane Goldstein, whom he'd met at the Troubadour. Although still married, Buckley was living alone in a dingy Hollywood apartment; Guibert was living with Herb Cohen and his wife. The relationship clearly had more downs than ups. During a rare instance of the latter, Guibert had become pregnant.

The Night Owl gigs marked the beginning of Buckley's association with guitarist Lee Underwood. Both had played at one of the Troubadour's "hoot nights." Underwood remembers a jubilant Beckett coming up to Buckley backstage to inform him of the Elektra contract: "I was really envious because I had hoped to get a contract myself with Elektra."



AT KNEBWORTH, ENGLAND, JULY 1974

Underwood's initial impression of Buckley was of a remarkable voice singing "little high-school love songs" to wimpy effect. He changed his mind upon closer inspection in New York: "Not only did he have a voice and know how to use it, but he wrote extraordinary melodies. And that gentle, loving, wispy quality was extraordinarily powerful in its impact." With Underwood on lead guitar and Fielder on bass, Leadbelly fan Buckley played acoustic 12-string guitar.

That summer he also recorded his debut album. *Tim Buckley* included many of the "high-school love songs" that had underwhelmed Underwood. Jac Holzman and Paul Rothchild received co-producer credit, but Beckett praises Elektra for giving Buckley so much creative control. "If Tim said, 'Hey, I want a cello to play one note through the entire "Song of the Magician,"' the arranger would scratch his head, but that's what they did."

"HE WAS SCARED OF HIS POWER OVER PEOPLE. HE ALMOST SEEMED TO REJECT HIS AUDIENCES FOR LOVING HIM SO MUCH."

BECKETT AND BUCKLEY BELIEVED THAT GOOD FENCES made good collaborators. Beckett was strictly the lyricist, crafting finished poems that he then brought to Buckley for musical glazing. Buckley was more intuitive. "He would get up in the middle of the night," Guibert recalls, "swing his legs over the side of the bed, pick up his guitar—which was always there—and suddenly this complete song would come out." Such was the genesis of "It Happens Every Time," on the first album.

One late addition to the album's line-up was the Buckley-penned "Song for Jainie," dedicated to Goldstein (as she was then spelling her first name). While Buckley and Goldstein were together in New York, Guibert—now six months pregnant—was back to living with her parents. "The idea was that he'd go on tour," Guibert says, "and when he came into L.A. we would look for a little place; he would be there for the baby being born." Buckley was sending her "weird, guilt-ridden letters: 'I wish I could be happy about the baby but I can't keep doing this to you'—cryptic things I didn't know how to interpret. I was deep in denial."

About a month before Jeffrey Scott Buckley was born, Tim and Mary met at a Los Angeles coffee shop and agreed to a divorce. Guibert now can laugh about her selflessness in setting Buckley free: "I didn't have an ounce of recrimination in me for him."

Buckley's first album appeared almost simultaneously with his son. No one involved with it—including Buckley himself, according to his sister Kathleen—seems to have liked it much. But its faults are those of youthful naiveté, not underreaching. "He was breaking in his shoes," Holzman says. "The first album had an air of stridency about it. He really wasn't comfortable in his own musical skin." But "we never signed an artist for one record," Holzman adds.

"What do you say about first novels?" Beckett asks himself. "'It really has potential.'" What he does admire about *Tim Buckley* is the 19-year-old singer's "beautiful tenor voice. Almost always after that he shaded the timbre of his voice, reaching for lower tones. Here he sang the way he'd been driving everybody insane in all these concerts we'd been doing for a year and a half: his unbelievably beautiful pure Irish tenor voice."

Buckley and Beckett threw themselves into preparations for a second album. "We had a zillion songs," Beckett says, but "we were continuing to create at a hectic pace." The producer would be Jerry Yester, then married to another Cohen client, singer Judy Henske; "Herb wanted to keep it in the family," Yester explains.

*Goodbye and Hello* was a quantum leap beyond Buckley's debut. "The times were so intense," Beckett says. "We waited all summer in '66 for Bob Dylan's *Blonde on Blonde* to come out, and played the grooves until they went through the other side. We were trying to be part of it, trying to do the most tasteful or powerful work we could. I don't think we had any idea it would be terribly popular."

Recorded fairly rapidly during the febrile summer of 1967, *Goodbye and Hello* sounds as if all concerned were inspired by *Sgt. Pepper* to create their own overarching statement on pop culture. Buckley's voice ties together the disparate tempi, meters and arrangements: He alternates between a menacingly subtle lower register and melismatic wailing in his near-falsetto, where sound becomes meaning. "It's almost like they had a vision for that



*Photograph: Joe Stevens*

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album was already history. Live, he was playing loosely constructed music that wouldn't be in record stores for a year, even two.

The new songs were written by Buckley alone. "He decided to write everything on his own," Beckett says. "My feeling was—and this is just my stupid opinion—that he was afraid that the success of *Goodbye and Hello* was due to my lyrics. See where he's coming from? He respects me and tends to believe the worst about himself."

Underwood remembers telling Buckley, during the *Goodbye and Hello* sessions, that he should write more of his own lyrics. "His lyrics were so much more natural and flowing than these intellectually stilted, European-oriented works of Larry Beckett. Tim was intimidated by Larry's literary way of doing things."

The new songs were more improvisational, commonly centering on one chord while Buckley took vocal flight. As released on *Happy Sad*, the third album, they marked another striking change in direction.

Once again, Yester produced. (He shares credit with his then-partner Zal Yanovsky, but the latter admits having nothing to do with the record.) Unlike the preceding album, Yester contributed little; Buckley's band, with Underwood reinstated, was now a self-contained unit. Yester's memories of the week of sessions aren't so pleasant:

"His band was saying, 'Now we gotta get this in one take. If you don't get it in one take, that's it. The performance is gone!' I said, 'Let's keep it open, okay?' I love the spirit of jazz, but it's possible that the second take is better sometimes."

Yester feels Buckley was under the influence of his backing musicians. "It was as if someone said, 'You know, that stuff you do is really uncool, man.' And he said, 'Okay,' and dropped it. It was like he felt embarrassed about himself." It didn't help Yester's relationship with the band that he was also producing Pat Boone at the time. (The Boone album included such musicians as Ry Cooder, David Lindley and Clarence White.) "They were like, 'Oh man, what are you doing with Pat Boone's producer?!' I just said, who are these guys? They're good, but this kind of shit is a pain in the ass."

For all the tension, the result is a remarkably seamless dreamscape. *Happy Sad* consists of six Buckley compositions, ranging from the floating "Strange Feelin'," which Underwood has written was indebted to Miles Davis' 1959 "All Blues"; to the melting changes of "Buzzin' Fly"; through "Gypsy Woman," a live tour de force; and alighting with the tender "Sing a Song for You."

"I never heard anyone play electric guitar the way Lee did," Miller states. "It fit in such a weird way with what Tim was doing." Add pointillistic vibes and bass, and *Happy Sad* is chamber music from a Magritte painting. Buckley's voice simmers over it all, guiding the listener through this aural impressionism. It is a fully realized work. Buckley was 21 years old.

In the best tradition of accidental art, one of the album's most hypnotic effects—the pounding surf on "Love from Room 109 at the Islander (on Pacific Coast Highway)"—was unintended. "Bruce Botnick, the engineer, had forgotten to put the Dolbys back into the record mode," Yester says. "It was the old-fashioned Dolbys; you had to operate them mechanically. It was a great take. We said, okay, let's listen to it. Bruce looked over at the Dolbys and went, 'Oops! Oh God,'" he mumbled, "'we've got a problem here.'

"Bruce played it with the Dolbys off and it was real hissy. Buckley liked it. I said, 'Well, there's a problem with the take, Tim. The Dol-


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But I smiled for a second
And for that second, I felt fine"

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bys weren't in record mode, so there's a lot of this noise.' And Tim," Yester laughs, "had a shrieking fit. His voice went up about four octaves. I could understand it; he loved the performance. He went outside and was comforted by his cronies for a little while. Then he came back in and said, 'Is there anything we can do with it?' I said, 'I'll tell you what: I think it's a great take. You're talking about out on [Pacific Coast Highway] anyway. Let's put some surf in the background; it's the same frequency range as the hiss. Chances are it'll cover it right up.'"

Yester's hunch worked. A couple of microphones were strung up outside Buckley's house—now in Malibu, indeed on Pacific Coast Highway—to "record an hour of incredibly good surf environment. We just laid it in there and it covers up the Dolby problem."

Manda Beckett must have been surprised the first time she heard "Love from Room 109": Buckley took some of his lyrics from letters exchanged between the two. "I think it was written to a lot of people, me being one of them," she says. "That was the thing: He would just start playing, and in a couple of hours he would be singing a song. Sometimes it would take weeks; you would hear little pieces, and then a few weeks later there would be more pieces added. Sometimes they would come out just like that."

Pullman feels the wistful "Buzzin' Fly" is about Guibert, while "Strange Feelin'" and the despairing "Sing a Song for You" are about her: "It was right at that time that we were splitting up." She didn't revel in the role of "old lady." She had accompanied him on tours—at Buckley's insistence, and to budget-minded Cohen's consternation—but life on the road was not for her: "It was his movie." So she stayed home while he toured and they grew apart. During one of Buckley's absences a lonely Pullman started seeing someone else. After Buckley returned from the tour Pullman moved out.

Not that he was a model of domestic faithfulness. For his age and occupation, Buckley would have to have been lobbying for sainthood to resist the temptations in his path. There's little evidence that he did. "He had girlfriends everywhere," Manda Beckett says. "People were so attracted to him that he would just fall helplessly into these various relationships. He wasn't really using people. He just didn't have any control."

In New York he had met Hope Ruff, a friend of Danny Fields who wrote out lead sheets for less skilled musicians. "I went over some of his stuff with him but it really intimidated him," Ruff says. "He always thought that I would be better at everything than him. And he really couldn't deal with it."

They became friends, however, and then—after his break-up with Pullman, or so Buckley told Ruff—more than friends. "I was always very wary of getting involved with him," Ruff says. "First, he was living with somebody else. Second, I knew he needed a woman who was subservient, which I certainly wasn't. And he messed around with everybody. It was really stupid of me in a lot of ways, but there's one in everybody's life, and he was definitely it."

*Happy Sad* appeared in April 1969, the year of Buckley's peak popularity. *Goodbye and Hello* may have accumulated the most sales of any of his albums, but *Happy Sad* made the biggest immediate impact, lingering in the pop charts for three months. Elektra's ads quoted the artist: "I play heart music." As for his lyrics: "If people want poems they should read Dylan Thomas."

Buckley's paradoxical appeal continued unabated. *Happy Sad* is striking, even chal-


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lenging music—"I guess it's pretty demanding," Buckley admitted—but he kept his young female following. In March he headlined Philharmonic Hall in New York's Lincoln Center. Among various love objects rendered to the stage, a woman presented him with a red carnation. Buckley picked it up, chewed the petals and spat them out.

"I can see where I'm headed," Buckley stated in an interview a few weeks after that concert, "and it will probably get farther and farther from what people expect of me." *Happy Sad* marked a fortuitous confluence of art and merchandising. But Buckley's implacable muse was about to lead him away from mainstream success.

Pullman says Elektra had complained about the length and/or wordiness of some of *Goodbye and Hello*'s songs. Compared to *Happy Sad*, though, *Goodbye and Hello* was bubblegum—albeit countercultural bubblegum. "Elektra was very good to him, and very flexible; but they applied pressure, just like any record company, to write songs that are going to be accepted by DJs. He really resented that. He was using music as a form of self-expression, and that was the most important thing."

"They kept asking him to make rock records," Manda Beckett says, "and he really wasn't interested in that anymore."

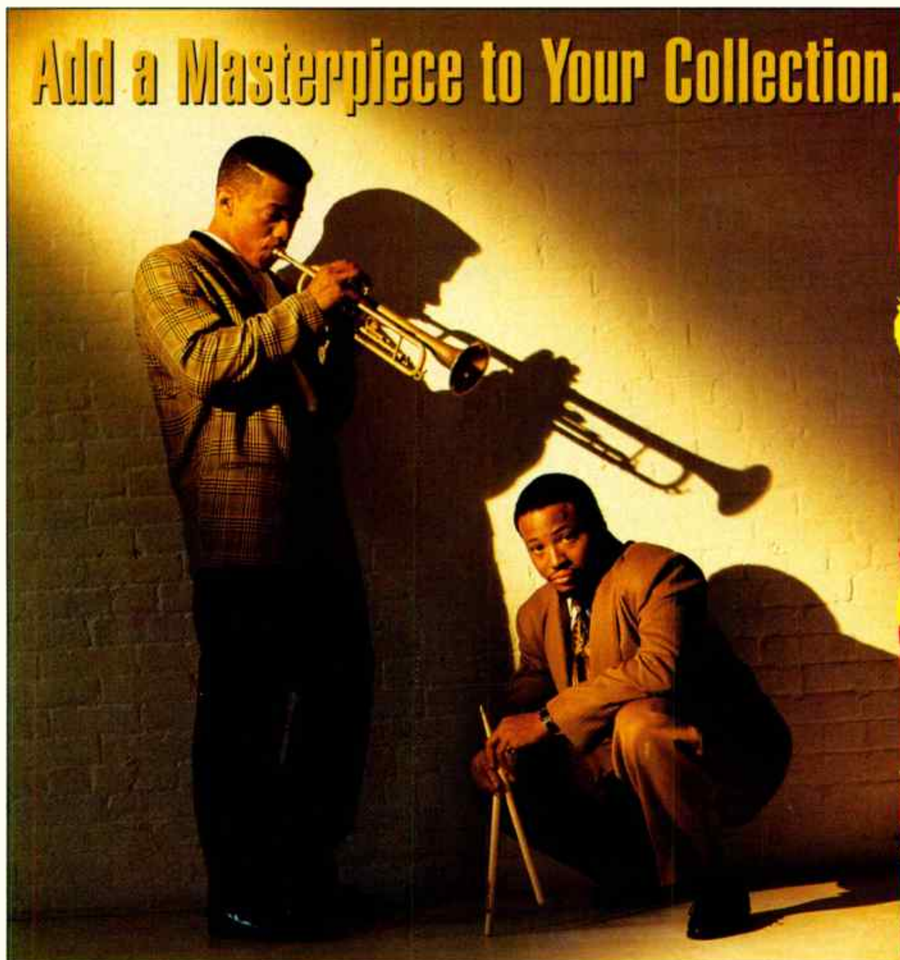
Buckley was firmly on his own, and not just figuratively. In late 1968 Larry Beckett was drafted; he spent a harrowing year in Army mental wards, boot camp and AWOL before getting the "unsuitable" discharge he so richly deserved. Although he and Buckley had stopped writing together, his absence deeply affected the singer. Buckley's anti-war "The Earth Is Broken" addresses "my brother" who's "been taken away." Recorded in concert during a second visit to England in October 1968, it finally appeared on *Dream Letter*, released in 1990. Beckett had never heard it before.

Other Buckley cronies disappeared. Miller was developing a New York–based freelance career; he and Buckley parted amicably. Not so vibist Friedman: "I was starting to make suggestions," he says, "about musical directions. I think Tim felt a little bit threatened by that. Next thing I knew he was playing in Boston without vibes."

Before leaving Buckley, both Miller and Friedman contributed to his next album. *Blue Afternoon* was Buckley's first self-production. Friedman doesn't dislike it, but calls it a "rush job" that lacked the "group feeling" of *Happy Sad*.

The second half of 1969 was a productive period for Buckley. No sooner had he finished *Blue Afternoon* than he launched into another album, *Lorca*, named after the Spanish poet. Since *Happy Sad* Buckley had been moving away from standard song structure; *Lorca* exploded with musical daring. The shortest track is almost six minutes long. The title cut is in an unsettling 5/4 meter. "Anonymous Proposition" dispenses with rhythm entirely, spotlighting Buckley's tightly recorded voice as he draws out the syllables of a winding romantic declamation (beginning "Love me/As if someday you'd hate me").

Buckley's friend Daniella Sapriel went over to his house to hear *Lorca* the day Buckley received the advance tapes. "He was really excited," she says. "It was a big step for him. He really liked it and he really felt he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had pushed through something from the last album to *Lorca*. It was great, but it was also clear that this wasn't what the public was going to find if they were looking for a three-minute hit single for radio!"

"He was really making music for himself at that point," Holzman says. "Which is fine, except to find enough people to listen to it."

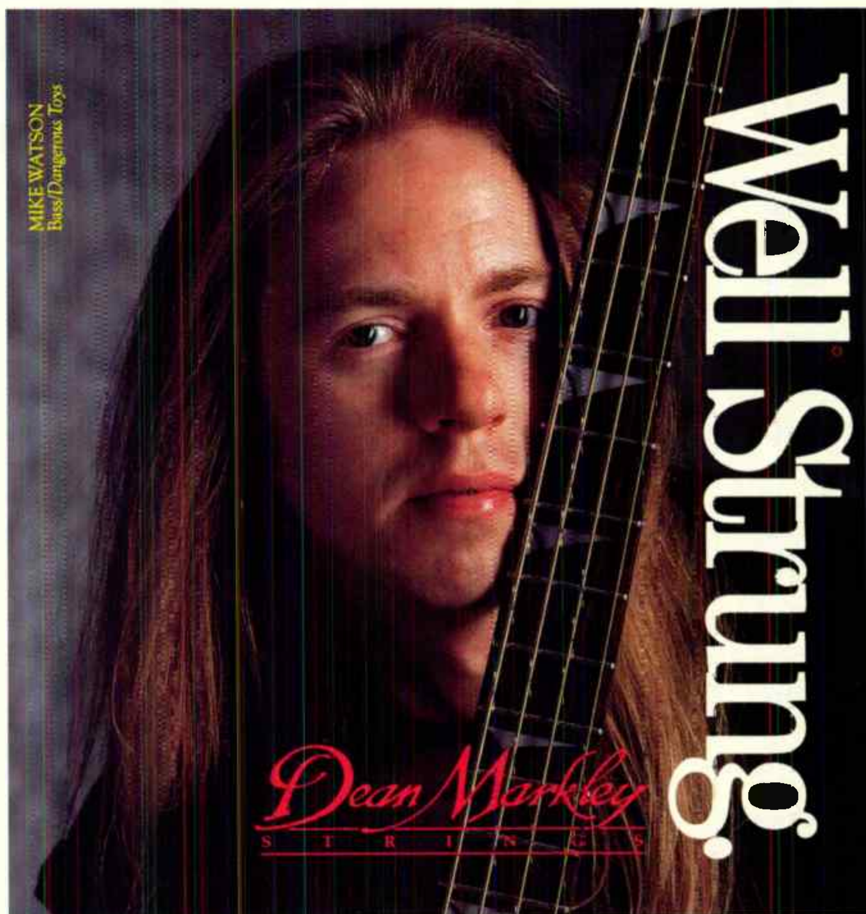
*Lorca* was Buckley's last album for Elektra. It appeared in February 1970—one month after *Blue Afternoon*'s release on manager Cohen's Straight label. Such a dual release could only hurt both records, which were hardly Top 40 fodder to begin with. The comparatively easier-sounding *Blue Afternoon* peaked at #192. *Lorca* never had a chance, and was remaindered with almost indecent haste.

Like a good soldier, Buckley toured college venues to promote these new albums. He faced increasingly bewildered audiences. "People expected of Tim whatever his last album was," Dan Gordon says, "and Tim didn't take requests! He was there to play what he was into at that time, not where he was six months ago. The audience should have been flattered. He expected better of them." When a well-meaning Philadelphia fan yelled out "How about 'Buzzin' Fly'?" Buckley's immediate riposte was "How about horseshit?"

One day Buckley phoned Beckett, suggesting they start writing again. "He was thinking of a project that came out to be *Starsailor*," Beckett says. For their first new collaboration, "I Woke Up," they broke precedent by working on the lyrics together—"testing each other line by line," Beckett says. "I think he was happy enough with that that he said, 'Okay, let's just let it rip. What else have you got?'"

Beckett had "Monterey," "about being in the Army and separated from my lover." He also suggested Buckley finally record "Song to the Siren," which they had written in late 1967—and which Buckley had performed on the Monkees' TV show. (Buckley was friends with Monkee Mickey Dolenz.) Although the solo spot on "The Monkees" is breathtaking, Buckley had dropped the song from his repertoire. The reason? Some ribbing from Judy Henske.

"Buckley always took everything she said to heart," Beckett explains. "One day she was teasing us about the lyrics to 'Song to the Siren,' specifically the line, 'I am puzzled as the oyster.' Buckley didn't defend himself and I just laughed. And after that he stopped singing the song altogether. I noticed and I said, 'What's the deal, Tim? It's one of my best songs.' He said, 'Well, wow, everything she said about that line—I just can't do it!' Once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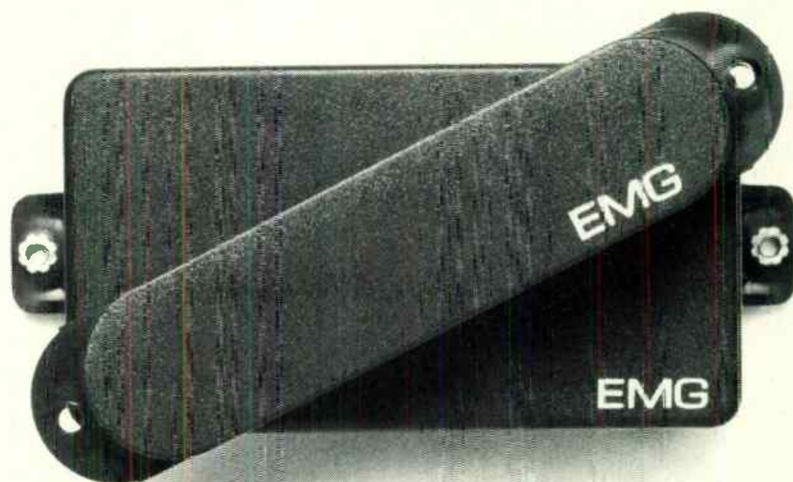


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again, taking a small amount of criticism so profoundly to heart that he can't even perform a song! As the years went by it became clear to us independently that this was our favorite collaboration. So in 1970 he agreed to put it on an album only if we rewrote the 'oyster' line."

Straight/Warner Bros. released *Starsailor* in November 1970. That same month the *New York Times* printed a Buckley essay on Beethoven as part of the bicentennial honoring the composer's birth. The essay says more about Buckley than Beethoven. Buckley wonders "if music is really relevant to people or if it just supports a fashionable movement....I think of our culture like I think of bacteria. Rock 'n' roll keeps the traffic moving to an adolescent pulse."

When Buckley entered his *Starsailor* phase, Cohen says he told his client "that this is not what the record companies are going to want; this will not be endearing to your audience. Maybe other musicians, maybe some people will understand it, but it's the wrong stuff for the wrong people at the wrong time. There would be problems with audiences, with club owners, with record companies. He said, 'That's what I want to do.'"

"Warner Bros. hated it," bassist John Balkin says of *Starsailor*. Emmett Chapman—who considers it Buckley's best album—says the singer received no tour support. The band broke up for lack of work, but Buckley organized a new group with drummer Maury Baker, Chapman and trombonist Glen Ferris. They rehearsed a few times a week, Chapman says, played clubs "maybe once a month," and "couldn't get an agreement to record."

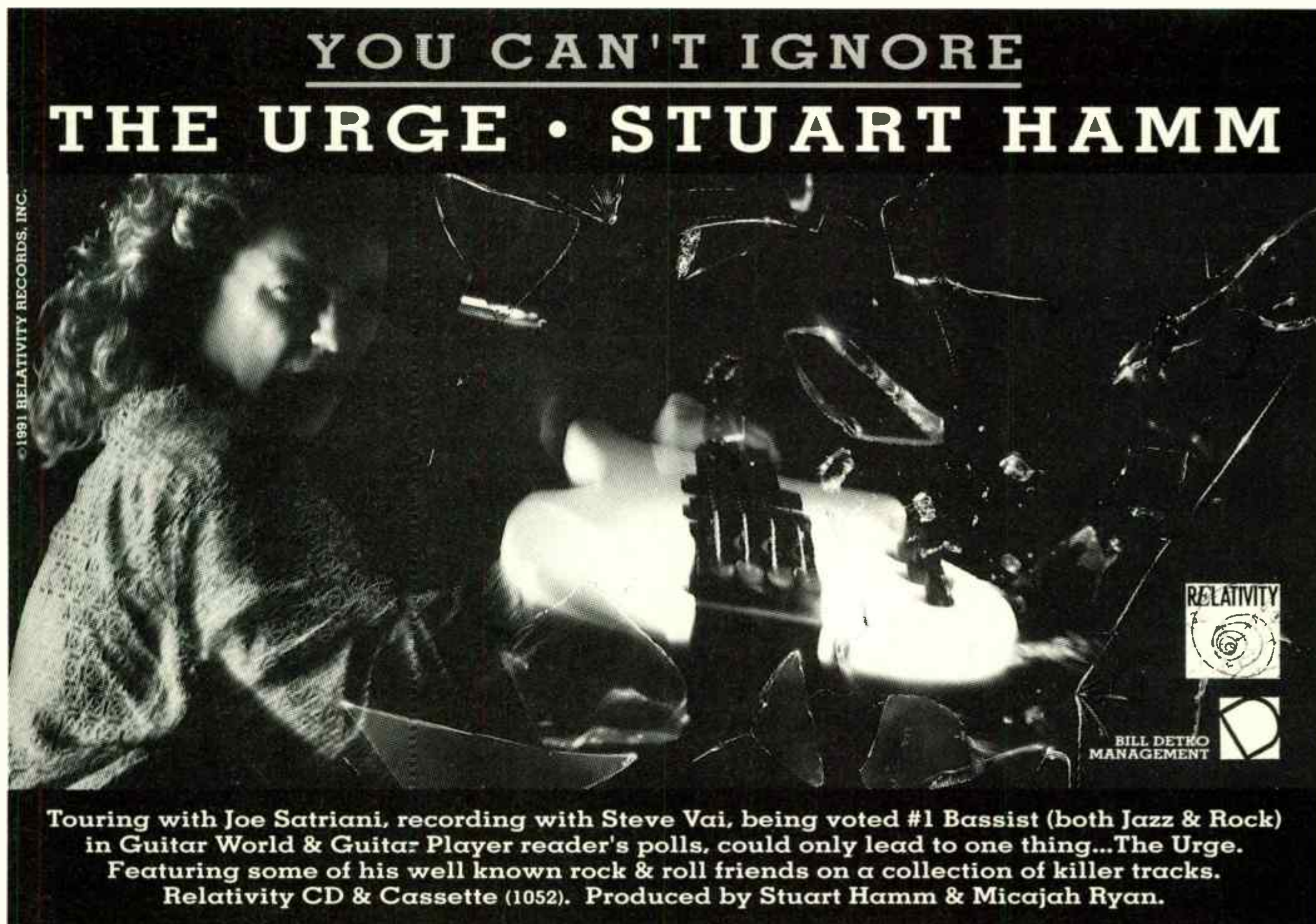
Buckley was now booking his own gigs in small clubs, but he was in high spirits. "The music was extremely creative," Chapman says, "and he had an extreme amount of energy, and fluency within his energy. He would get up on his tip-toes and almost float in the air while he was singing." Also helping his state of mind was his domestic situation: Buckley was again a married man.

One of the best Buckley performances Dan Gordon ever saw—and he saw many—"was in a little roadhouse somewhere south of L.A. He matched Emmett note-for-note with his voice. His artistry as an improvisational musician was boundless. I think he got 200 bucks for the gig. He just wanted to play the music in front of an audience."

"Tim was at his best when a small audience came to hear him," Underwood says. "The honesty he brought to improvisational music was one of his great strengths. What's the point of distancing oneself? Self-preservation? But there's a greater aspiration: creating honest music. And that takes great courage."

His profile was no longer national. Buckley was proud of *Downbeat*'s five-star vindication of *Starsailor*, but he had little else to show for it. Scared about an ebbing musical career, he started writing film scripts with Gordon. The first was a barely fictional black comedy about a struggling musician—to be played by Buckley—and his friend, a (literal) vulture—to be played by an animated cartoon. The script included a scene of Buckley blowing up a theater full of fans calling for old songs; the finale had the vulture carrying Buckley away from earthly care while the singer belted out "My Way." (How did Sid Vicious know...?) Buckley called it "a million-dollar comedy which nobody will finance."

"Tim didn't care about money or fame,"





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Daniella Sapriel says. "He could just about put everything he owned into a duffel bag. But it must have been very difficult for him not to have that reception by the public anymore." On a more mundane level, Buckley now had two sons to support; his wife Judy had an eight-year-old from a former marriage.

"We couldn't make it happen on any kind of well-organized plan," Chapman says. "He would tell me of arguments he would have with the record people, and how frustrating it was, and with Herb Cohen as well. He had a strange kind of pride. Even though he wasn't a very large person, he would insist on carrying heavy things. He didn't complain a lot and he had a certain heroic quality about him. He had a whole different set of values."

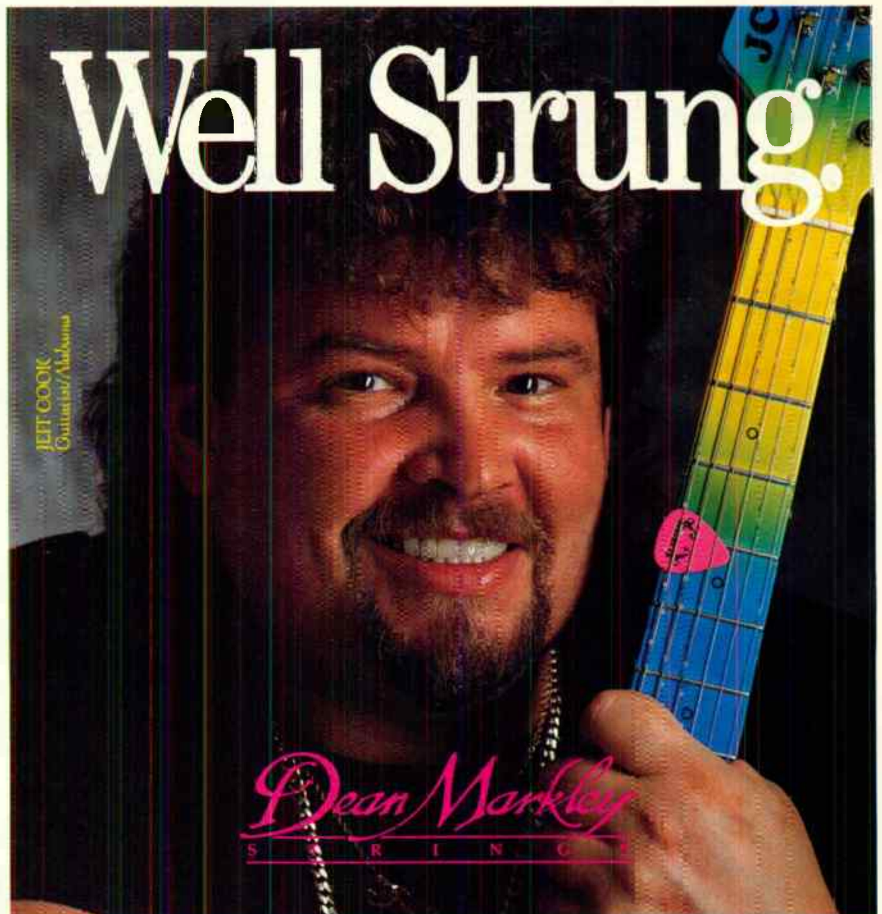
At some point, though, he caved in. He was prevented from recording the music he was playing live. He lost his house at Laguna Beach and moved back to Santa Monica. "There are two aspects in the music business," Balkin says. "One is being a musician, the other is being an artist. A musician works for a living. And that's what he needed to do."

"They said, 'You have to play rock 'n' roll,'" Kathleen Buckley says. "So he said, 'Okay, man, I'll play rock 'n' roll. But fuck you! I'll make you wish I didn't!'"

Two years after *Starsailor, Greetings from L.A.* came out. From the opening line of "Move with Me"'s sex scenario ("I went down to the meat rack tavern") through the concluding "Make It Right"—with its "beat me whip me spank me" chorus—*Greetings from L.A.* has just one thing on its mind. The churning music matches the lyrics' over-the-top sleaze. Beckett calls the album "violently erotic," Kathleen Buckley "total camp"; either way, it was shockingly X-rated for 1972.

"He loved the fact that *Greetings from L.A.* pleased Judy Buckley," Underwood says. For all Buckley's supposed capitulation, *Greetings* is a damn good album. But it still didn't put him back on the charts. "It occurred to me," Buckley said, "that all of the rock 'n' roll sex symbols, like Jagger, Jim Morrison, had never actually said anything sexy. So"—he paused—"I decided to do it."

Beckett was initially appalled by *Greetings*. Then he appreciated it for what it was: a smoking set of songs. Then he got depressed again. "I thought, 'They fucking got him!' He'd always said he was gonna deliver bread if they tried to take his art away. We were dedicated to total creative control and freedom and experimentation. Here they were putting pressure on him, and instead of saying, 'Hey! I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don't need you people,' he knuckles under."

There were no more two-year waits between albums. *Sefronia* came out exactly a year after *Greetings from L.A.* The label was now DiscReet, Cohen's new venture in partnership with Zappa. One dubious first was that five of *Sefronia*'s 11 selections came from neither Buckley nor Beckett. The press bio accompanying *Sefronia*'s release included quotes that sound strikingly ambivalent. "I don't think they'll ever happen again," Buckley says of the folk-boom years. "The comradeship is just not there anymore, and it affects the music." Several months later he commented, "A lot of people prefer the older-type songs, and I'm happy to do them, as long as I can continue to experiment simultaneously." The difference now was that the public didn't get to hear his "experiments."

The Tim Buckley audiences did see and hear was ferocious, grafting powerful and usually expansive vocals atop an equally excessive rock band. In July 1974 he had the thankless task of kicking off a mammoth outdoors British concert for the Allman Brothers, Doobie Brothers and three other acts. He turned in a searing performance whose intensity rarely let up. A week later he was back at New York City's Central Park summer concert series—where he had once headlined—as an opening act. Compounding the irony, Jim Fielder had rejoined Buckley and the headliner was Fielder's previous employer Blood, Sweat and Tears. Buckley played a good hour and a quarter, to the delight of his fans—who were very much in the minority.

Fielder hadn't worked with Buckley for seven years, but he saw little change in his friend. "If anything, he was happier. He was with Judy...he'd settled down a bit." Fielder also cut a few tracks for Buckley's 1974 album *Look at the Fool.*

Buckley was back in charge of writing. The lyrics, though, are casual to the point of parody. "Wanda Lu" is a blatant "Louie Louie" retread; even one of the Beckett-Buckley collaborations, "Freeway Blues," sounds like an Elton John spoof. "That was a ridiculous album," Kathleen Buckley says. "It just seemed that the more down he became, the more desperate" Buckley got.

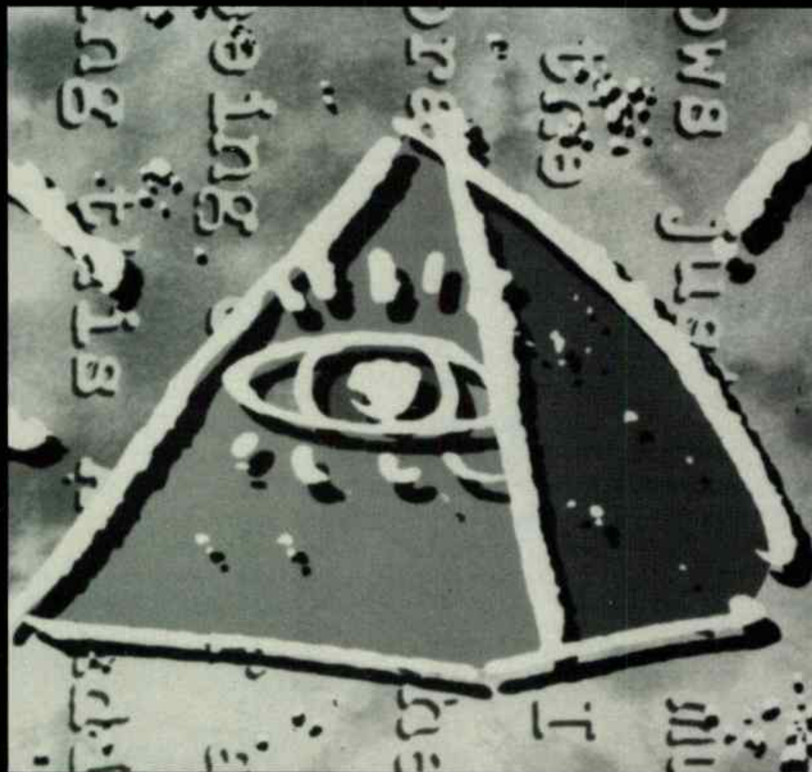
"The Tim who felt so incredibly exhilarated by *Starsailor*," Sapriel says, "was not the same Tim who was singing 'Wanda Lu, woo-woo-woo.'"

"I don't really think his heart was in it," Elaine Buckley says of her son's '70s recordings. "A few times he told me he wasn't satisfied with the music that he was doing."

"When an artist finally comes through all this mess, you hear a pure voice," Buckley said in April 1975. "We're in the habit of emulating, those pure voices when they're dead."

THREE MONTHS LATER BUCKLEY WAS DEAD. THE Los Angeles County coroner's office determined that Buckley was the victim of "acute heroin-morphine and ethanol [i.e., liquor] intoxication." Overdose. Richard Keeling was charged with murder under California law for having allegedly furnished the drugs that caused the death. The drug charge was subsequently dropped and Keeling pleaded guilty to a charge of involuntary manslaughter. He served 120 days.

The death shocked Buckley's friends, family and associates, but the autopsy puzzled them; heroin had never played a big part in his

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diet. The coroner declared that Buckley was no addict. On the contrary, "he was just trying to be incredibly healthy," Judy Buckley says. "Unfortunately I didn't go and pick him up at the airport and he stopped someplace on the way home."

"When he died, all of a sudden Timmy's a saint and I was a black force," Keeling says. "That wasn't our relationship." Keeling and Buckley had been friends since the turn of the decade, when they lived down the street from each other. Keeling was a graduate student in ethnomusicology at UCLA and a self-confessed "wild young man" who liked "the dark side of things." He was not only "extremely handsome, extremely sexy," Underwood's former lover Jennifer Stace recalls, but also "intelligent. And Tim loved people that knew more than he did.... I think he kinda loved Richard."

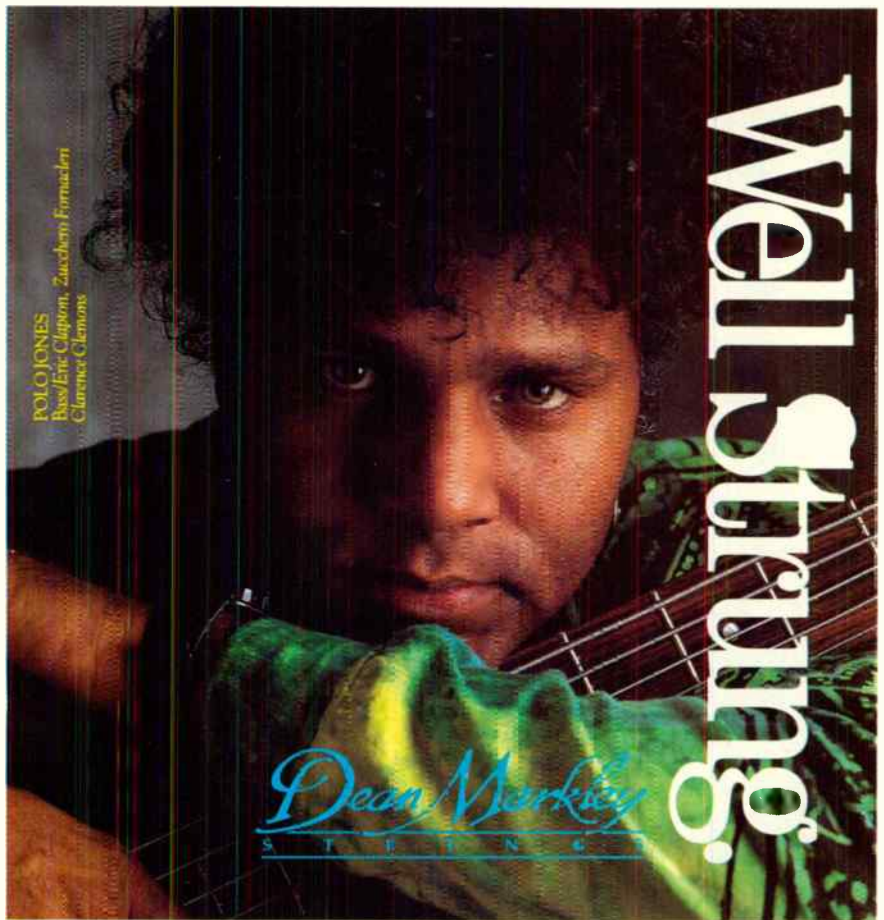
"We were very close," Keeling says. "We would kiss like a man and a woman, and neither of us are homosexuals. All these people were treating him like a little prince and I never would do that. I think that's one of the reasons we could be friends."

Keeling was dealing drugs, but he says he never sold to Buckley. "To me, it was an adventure. I wanted to have my own stuff, and frankly," he laughs, "I couldn't afford to do that as a graduate student without having some kind of business."

On Buckley's last afternoon he invited himself over to Keeling's. When he showed up, Keeling was with Jackie McGuire. The latter testified Buckley "appeared to be intoxicated"; she also saw him take a drink shortly before he snorted a brown powder through a dollar bill. Keeling told McGuire the heroin had been returned to him because it was wet. He is also adamant that he "put down a line nobody could die on! If somebody had to pay 10 or 15 bucks for it they would have balked." Buckley's cleaned-up system—besides the alcohol—may have contributed to his inability to handle the drug.

JUDY BUCKLEY SAYS SHE IS STILL PAYING OFF Tim's debts. History hasn't been too kind to him—so far. Lillian Roxon wrote a glowing tribute to Buckley for her groundbreaking *Rock Encyclopedia* in 1969. When the book was revised in 1978 (after Roxon's own premature death) Buckley's entire entry was eliminated. His albums disappeared from stores.

The 1990 release of the *Dream Letter* concert recording proved that Buckley stands outside the slippery stream of musical fashion. But acclaim is still an uphill [*cont'd on page 95*]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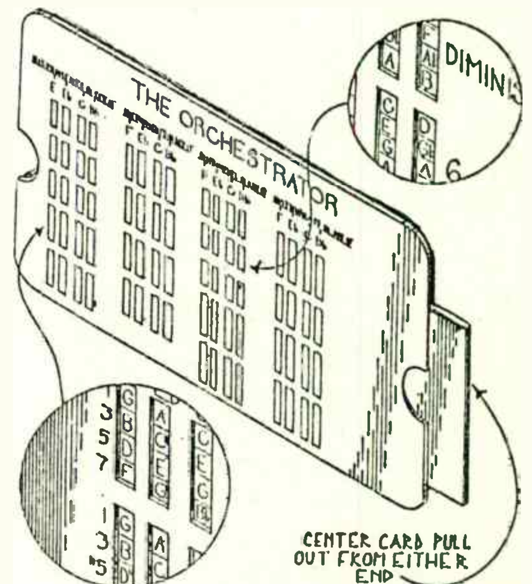





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# WORKING MUSICIAN

PIANO

# McCoy Tyner on Going Solo

## Keyboard giant tells how it all started and how it all works

*By* Alan di Perna

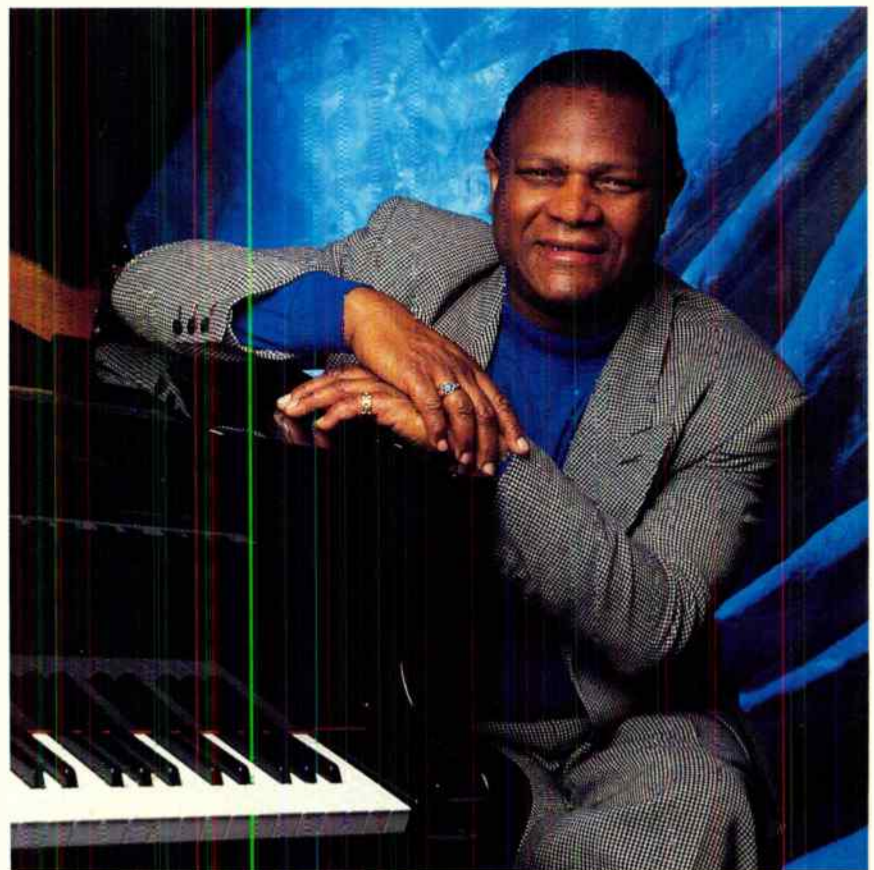
McCoy Tyner attributes the whole thing to Art Blakey. "I was in Japan in 1966 with Art, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, Wayne Shorter and some others. This was right after my period with John Coltrane. After one concert, I was in the hotel lobby playing piano by myself. So the next night, Art introduced me by saying, 'Ladies and gentlemen, now McCoy Tyner is going to do a solo piece.' 'Oh really?' I said to myself. That was the first I'd heard of it. But ever since then, I've really grown to love playing solo piano."

Tyner tries a few chords on the ebony grand at L.A.'s Catalina Bar and Grill, where he's to appear tonight. A tall, broad-shouldered man, looking younger than his 52 years in a natty checked suit and short ponytail. he closes his eyes, lost for a moment in the instrument's tone. Although Tyner has always played solo—he'd sometimes open 'Trane's sets on his own—solo piano has recently come to occupy a central place in his career. starting with 1989's *Revelations* and its 1990 followup, *Things Ain't What They Used to Be*. A third solo disc is on the way, along with a trio of releases in various group contexts. Given McCoy's legendarily mighty left hand, solo piano seems a natural direction.

"You have total freedom in terms of tempo and mood. There's a certain command you have to have of the instrument. But that doesn't mean you have to play flurries of notes. You don't have to be a virtuoso to play solo piano—it's more a frame of mind. The inflections are what counts. The solo pianist has a lot to imply. You can hear a bit of the bass and the drums even though they're not there. In ragtime, you can hear a bit of the tuba."

Indeed, traditional styles like ragtime and stride have been especially influential and discernible in McCoy's solo playing. "I had a chance to meet Eubie Blake," he says with great enthusiasm, "along with some other people from that period who could *really* play stride. Then I started hearing what Art Tatum was doing with stride—different harmonic, rhythmic things to make it more interesting. The rhythmic concept began to change a bit. And sometimes I play a little of it, even though I'm not a master of stride. I don't want to be. I wasn't born in 1918 or anything."

Which means that Tyner's hardly forgotten



Photograph: Karen Miller



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his mind-boggling avant garde work during the Coltrane years and after—years when he defied the boundaries of Western harmonies with two bare hands and emerged the winner. "A lot of things I was playing with John were very dense," is how he puts it. "In fact I was often criticized for playing too much. Now I'm using all that more sparingly. Even though I'm not playing John's music per se, I was so inspired by it in my own concept that I'm still using things I learned with him—when I think they're necessary."

A perfect case in point is the title track of *Things Ain't What They Used to Be*. While McCoy's right hand faithfully states Mercer Ellington's familiar, bluesy melody, his left-hand chording and bumptious bass notes wander way beyond simple pentatonic. "Sometimes I move chromatically," he explains. "I've found that all the keys are important. All these passing chords add a lot of coloration. Maybe by themselves they don't make sense, but it's how they resolve that matters."

Further evidence of Tyner's harmonic adventurousness emerges on his composition, "Search for Peace," which he recorded on 1967's *The Real McCoy* and as a solo on *Things Ain't What They Used to Be*. Meshing ethereal whole-tone scales with earthy stride moves, the piece is a pianistic tour de force. It takes a little gentle prodding to get McCoy to walk through the first few bars, breaking them down as he goes.

"The first chord's an A minor with a flat five. Or, if you want, a C minor with an A in the bass. I like a lot of open-sounding things. A lot of my melodies are very simple, but there are so many things you can do with a simple melody line. Even though that's an A minor, you can alter the harmonics so you have different colors happening." Here Tyner plays several inversions of the chord, voicing it with 6ths, dominant 7ths, major 7ths and so forth. "You don't necessarily have to go directly to a chord that's stated as the next chord. You can resolve it in different ways. Linger a little bit on certain things."

Tyner's dabbled with everything from congas to koto. He brings all this to the piano, which he calls the "mother instrument. If you don't breathe with it, just playing a lot of notes doesn't make any sense. I play it not only as a percussion instrument; I'm also aware of the fact that it's got strings, and that it can sound like a lot of different things. It's a very natural instrument. It can emulate nature. That's what it's all about, really." Ⓜ

B A S S

# Jonas Hellborg Unplugged

## Punk/jazz bass hero swaps McLaughlin for strings

*By* Joshua Rosenbaum

**F**OR THOSE EXPECTING THE shaved-head young punk jazzer of years past, attacking his bass guitar with astounding speed and ferocious slapping, Jonas Hellborg's new music and appearance are a revelation. He's grown a beard and a long ponytail and exchanged his doubleneck Wal electric for a custom Wechter acoustic bass guitar. Hellborg's new album *The Word* features only his lyrical, unamplified bass, the virtuoso drumming of Tony Williams and the accompaniment of the Soldier String Quartet. With the woody sound of the acoustic, Middle Eastern tonalities and rich, rhythmic string arrangements reminiscent of Béla Bartók's quartets, the project seems a radical departure for a musician who cites Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath as influences. For Hellborg it's just part of a natural progression: "This is the closest music to what I am," he says, "that I have ever made."

*The Word* came about through Hellborg's association with producer Bill Laswell, who was inspired by the sound of Jonas' Wechter on a Ginger Baker album. Laswell also recommended Williams—"just about the only

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drummer who could play on such a record," says Jonas. "His playing has a poetic quality most drummers don't go for."

Despite Hellborg's work with jazz greats—he burst out with Mahavishnu—he doesn't consider himself a jazz musician. Though he's transcribed jazz solos, he's been influenced more by classical music—Bartók, Schoenberg, Stravinsky—and by classical theory, harmony and counterpoint. His chord technique resulted from those studies. "I didn't have access to a keyboard or guitar, so I had to play it on the bass. That's how I got to learn inversions of chords and what the different colorations sounded like. I invented every inversion possible by seeing what notes were in the chord and figuring out how to finger them."

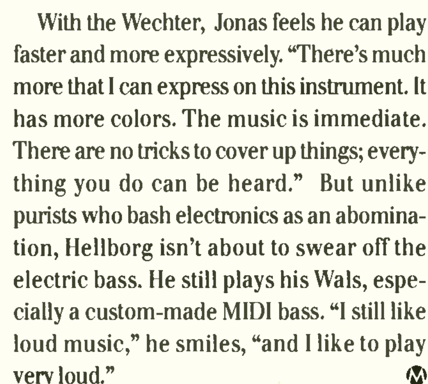
This led to some unorthodox fingerings: using his thumb, for instance, to span as many as eight frets. The limitations of a four-stringed instrument also forced him to decide "which notes I could omit and still keep the color of the chords." You don't have to play full chords to exploit their harmony, he claims: "Playing just two notes in succession can evoke a chord."

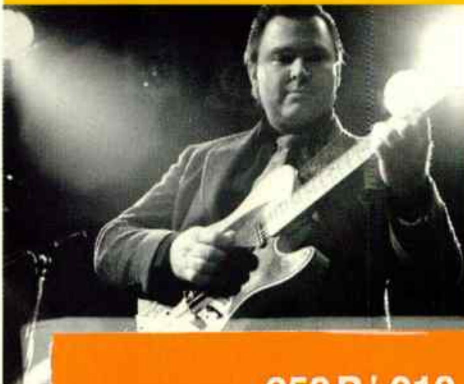
In traditional harmony (and most standard jazz progressions), the third determines a chord's function. "The third always implies that you want to move a fourth up chordally," he says, pointing to the standard II-V-I progression as an example. But he prefers to avoid the third in his chords, instead using chords built on the fourth and often adding fifths, sevenths and ninths. John Coltrane and McCoy Tyner were key influences on this approach. Avoiding thirds, Jonas says, makes his harmonies "less directional. Since each chord is more multifunctional, the progressions aren't so predictable. It gives the music a more open quality."

A longtime player of Wal electrics, Hellborg concluded that one sound he was after was always acoustic. He checked out the available models but "couldn't even consider them instruments. They sound boomy and boxy. They don't have any character or any range." So he turned to McLaughlin's luthier Abe Wechter. "We discussed ideas of sound, every technical aspect," Hellborg recalls. The instrument took three years to finish.

While the scale and tuning are identical to Hellborg's Wal basses, the acoustic took some getting used to. "When you play electric you're dependent on the amplifier and the speakers. That determines your technique—how you make the sound come out of the speakers. This is a whole different situation, where you make the *instrument* sound." He can hear the difference from his first recordings with the Wechter—the tone has become less harsh and he's gotten sensitive to the effect of subtle shifts in hand placement and pressure. Chords sound much better on the acoustic, as does the occasional tuning down of his low E string. He plays through a mike on gigs: "The sound I like is what comes out of the instrument and exists in the room."

With the Wechter, Jonas feels he can play faster and more expressively. "There's much more that I can express on this instrument. It has more colors. The music is immediate. There are no tricks to cover up things; everything you do can be heard." But unlike purists who bash electronics as an abomination, Hellborg isn't about to swear off the electric bass. He still plays his Wals, especially a custom-made MIDI bass. "I still like loud music," he smiles, "and I like to play very loud."







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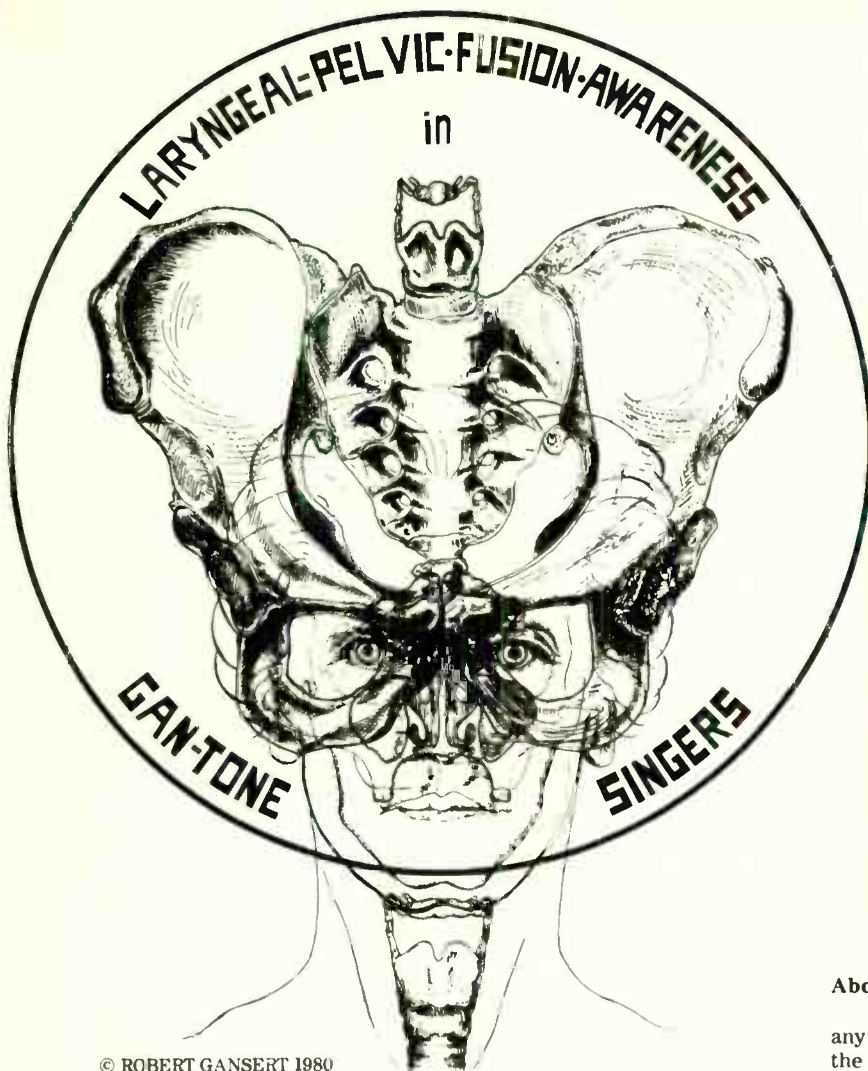


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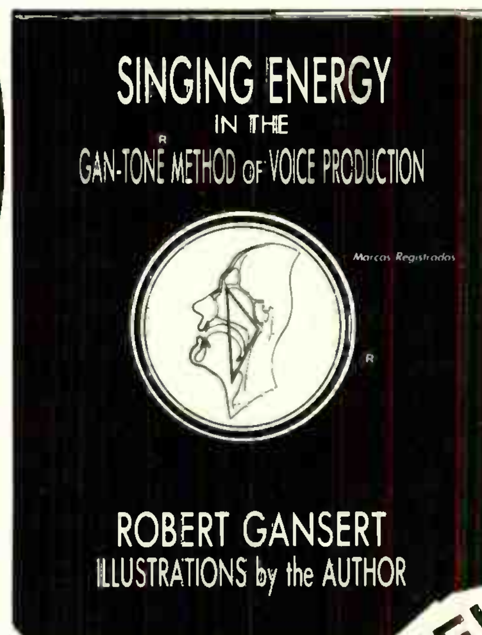


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DRUMS

# DRUM PROGRAMMERS' SUMMIT

## Man *vs.* machine: Does the music suffer?

*By* Michael Golub

JIMMY BRALOWER AND SAMmy Merendino are drummers who gravitated to drum programming and have parlayed that ability into careers, amassing credits from major movies and commercials to Hall and Oates, Bryan Ferry, Billy Joel, Winwood and Clapton. With drumsticks in hand by age 12, each switched gradually to a new type of kit—machines. Using samples, computers, sync gear and processing, the programmer strives and delivers formally unattainable grooves in syncopated rhythm. *Musician* brought Jimmy and Sammy together.

"It was the summer of '82," recalls Merendino. "I was just getting off the road and not making any money. All the great drummers were working for the same price, so why would anybody hire the new kid in town over Steve Gadd? I bought a machine just to practice with, to get my time together. It eventually took on a life of its own.

"I always felt my acoustic drums to be limited: I kept hearing a sound in my head that was different from the sound of my kit. As it turns out, I was hearing the big ambient sounds of a Power Station or Atlantic Studios. The machine made those sounds accessible."

BRALOWER (L.) & MERENDINO

Bralower was drumming with rapper Kurtis Blow, "one of the first people to embrace the drum machine as an instrument. He would come in with a Roland 808 playing 16th-note bass drums against complex hi-hat patterns and ask me if I could play this. For a human being to even attempt that would be insane.

"Multitrack recording made it possible for people to isolate elements of sounds where you never could before," says Jimmy. "You used to record everything at once: You were buying a performance. Once you could go back and solo the bass drum against the bass and microscope stuff, the idea of an acceptable take began to change."

This process meant music would undergo intense scrutiny in the studio. To ensure accuracy of these elements and rhythms, a click track or metronomic device was used to lock in the musicians. "People became obsessed with rigid, metronomic time," Bralower laughs. "So I said, 'Get me a drum machine,' because I'd play eight minutes of the same beat and someone'd say, 'You gotta do it again because a few beats don't match up with the click'—this thing that doesn't even appear on the record! That's still going on. People have to ask themselves: What is acceptable performance? Are the parts working individually or is it some conglomeration of sounds that feel good together?"

"Perfect metronomic time doesn't really mean perfect time," says Sammy. "When machines came out and gave perfect time they said, 'Well, that doesn't feel right.' They want real guys to sound like machines, and machines to sound like real guys."

It taps right into drummers' fears of obsolescence: Can a machine sound like a real drummer?

"Both of us have gone into situations where we've had to replace live drums and make it sound real," says Bralower. "On an Eric Clapton record, I had to replace live drums that weren't done to a click. Eric and his producer felt they needed more control over the sound of the drums to make a particular song work. It's certainly a part of what I do."

"If he was just another drummer and called in to play live drums on that track, nobody would say anything," says Merendino. "But because it's a machine, people feel like we're taking jobs. We are still drummers and musicians: What's the difference?"

Bralower agrees: "There's room for all of us. People have no complaints about auto-



Photograph: James McGoon

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mated things in their house or their car. It's a reflection of the times. People don't care if a record has a machine on it as long as the music moves them. It's just that our instrument is now a machine. Ultimately, style is the only thing people have over the machine. If you're trying to beat it, hit for hit, you lose. A good song is the real focal point. My biggest successes have been two-bar programs on good songs that feel right.

"Some drummers," Jimmy continues, "are so conditioned to beating the crap out of their drum every time they hit it. A guy like Phil Collins, his snare drum is dancing between the backbeats. A lot of guys don't know how to play with dynamics. It's a real power thing out there now; it's missing nuance." "The little things between the big backbeats," adds Sammy, "that's what feel is, that's groove. It's what's inside that makes music work."

Another appeal for programmers is that drum sounds which represented incalculable man-hours for a studio staff and engineer can now be called up instantly on a disk. A huge variety of sounds exists, from the mundane to the exotic; Jimmy and Sammy make their own, but also have vast collections.

"Winwood told me there's a digital tape of my sounds circulating England," Bralower says. "But I figure if they're sounds I've already utilized on record, it's time to move on anyway. You've got to be creative enough to come up with new sounds."

"We work to make these things sound right," says Sammy. "I don't just want to give them away. If I had a nickel for every time I heard my Cameo snare drum, I could retire."

"Sampling is a two-way street," says Bralower. "You give and receive. I don't get my back up about theft as long as it's not done blatantly or under false pretenses. To some people, the end in itself is collecting samples."

The drum machines on the market offer effective, simple ways to program. In the early days musicians and engineers attempted desperately to make the units work. "We were all beta testers then," Bralower says, "but what Roger Linn saw in the 9000—a sequencer *and* drum machine—was so far ahead of its time, it might have cost him his company."

"When the company folded and he left for Akai," says Merendino, "I thought I might be stuck with a very expensive Linn doorstop. Luckily, Forat Brothers fixed it."

"I stayed in touch with Roger," Bralower says. "I was challenged by certain features of the Akai MPC 60. It's convenient, it's fast and it can be used for a sound [cont'd on page 97]



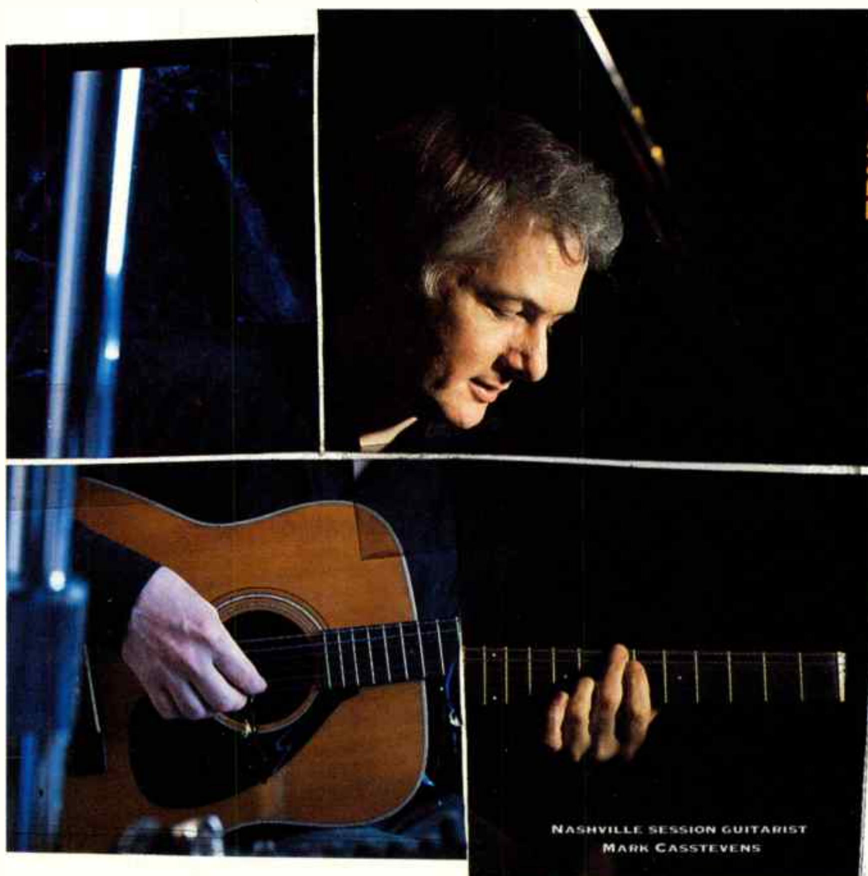
# The Magical High-Strung Guitar

## Sweetening the mix with "angel hair"

*By* Peter Cronin

THE SONGWRITER SITS IN HIS home studio, acoustic guitar in hand, and boy, is he frustrated. His song cries out for the kind of steel-string ring the Rolling Stones got on "Wild Horses." He's tried doubling the guitar part with and without a capo. He's even borrowed a 12-string, with results ranging from muddy to mediocre. With all that signal-processing gear piled up in his rack, he wishes for some button to push to get that shimmering sound on his demos, but it's not there. The solution is a lot cheaper anyway. For the price of four thin strings you've got one of the best track sweeteners around: a high-strung guitar.

It's a trick that producer Jim Dickinson has been using for years. He was at Muscle Shoals Studios in December 1969 when the Stones recorded "Wild Horses." Dickinson played piano on the song. "At that session Keith tried to use his old Stella 12-string, the one he used on 'You Got to Move,'" he recalls, "but that guitar just would not stay in tune, so they went with [studio guitarist] Tippy Armstrong's high-strung and the rest is history. I used it on a Replacements song


NASHVILLE SESSION GUITARIST MARK CASSTEVENS



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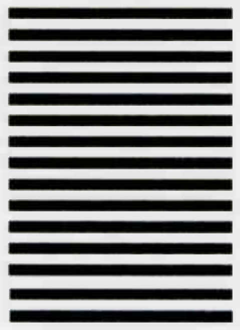


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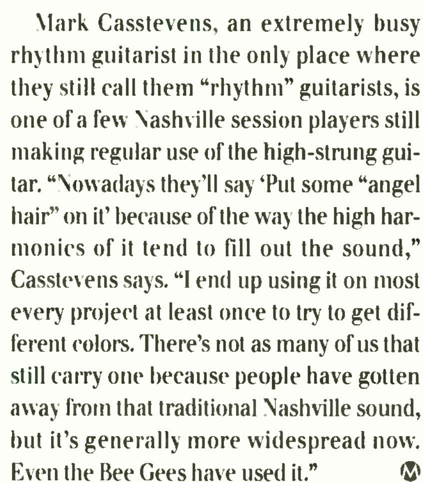
World Radio History

called 'Skyway' and it *is* a different sound than the 12-string. It's usually used in conjunction with a regular acoustic to make inverted chords. The whole middle of the sound just opens up."

Chet Atkins is credited with giving birth to the idea in a mid-'50s Nashville studio, when he replaced the G string on his electric with a high E string and tuned it up (very carefully), putting an octave-higher G in the middle and coining the term "high third" to describe the resulting tonal effect. Back then the curious onlooker was Ray Edenton, a road vet who was developing into Nashville's first-call rhythm guitarist. "I just strung the G string on my Martin like Chet," Edenton recalls. "The first big sessions I used it on were for the Everly Brothers. Don tuned to an open G chord with his low E tuned down to a D, I played the high third and it made a real wide sound. It was either Grady Martin or Hank Garland that first handed me a guitar with all four low strings tuned up high." After playing "high third" guitar on all those Everly Brothers hits, Edenton made "high-strung" guitar an integral part of the Nashville sound that dominated country music into the mid-'60s. "There weren't any strings that were sized back then," Edenton laughs. "So you improvised with tenor guitar, banjo strings, whatever."

To make your own high-strung history, any old acoustic will do. A quick way is to take a 12-string set and use only the thin string from each pair, but a cheaper and more precise method is to buy the strings individually. String your high E and B strings as you normally would. The gauges going down from there would be approximately .009 for the G, .011 for the D, and for the wound strings, a .020 for the A and a .028 for the low E.



Mark Casstevens, an extremely busy rhythm guitarist in the only place where they still call them "rhythm" guitarists, is one of a few Nashville session players still making regular use of the high-strung guitar. "Nowadays they'll say 'Put some "angel hair" on it' because of the way the high harmonics of it tend to fill out the sound," Casstevens says. "I end up using it on most every project at least once to try to get different colors. There's not as many of us that still carry one because people have gotten away from that traditional Nashville sound, but it's generally more widespread now. Even the Bee Gees have used it."

PERFORMANCE

# Don Cherry, Straight Up

*By* Matt Resnicoff

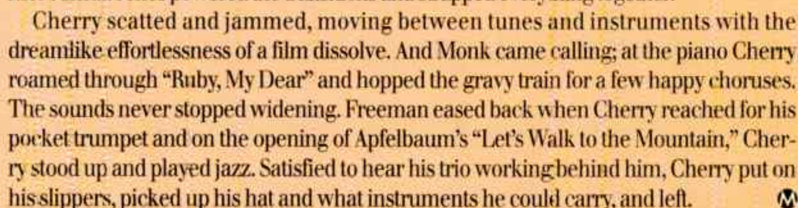
SURROUNDED BY INSTRUMENTS THAT LOOKED LIKE BOOMERANGS AND BELLS, DON CHERRY appeared just about ready to float away on a cloud of reggae fairydust by the time he'd closed his headlining set on the New Jazz Network tour. Cherry's Multikulti brought out the kitchen sink, leaving tradition as less than an afterthought. If the Council on the Arts were looking to produce a more aptly selected Not Just Jazz program this year, they'd have booked the Ramones.

WHO
*New Jazz Network Tour*
WHERE
*The Town Hall, New York, NY*
WHEN
*April 5, 1991*

And if Monk were around for this one, that may be how he would have wanted it, at least in spirit. Though they've represented Monk heavily on record, the Fort Apache band suspended any overt references, perhaps in service to the not-just-jazz factor. Jerry Gonzalez and band took the concept at face value, shifting idioms not only from piece to piece, but from bar to bar. A samba might flash into a straight-eight swing—sort of like having a good Cuban dinner repeat on you while you're listening to a Wayne Shorter album. As Gonzalez soloed on trumpet, Larry Willis jabbed piano counterrhythms; Steve Berrios, leaping between cowbell and ride cymbal, returned the favor for Carter Jefferson's tenor. Conga segues by the leader unified the set into one long song that balanced intensity and melody, sometimes mashing the two together.

Dewey Redman joined pianist Geri Allen for some (often too) spacious duets, pitting the tenorist's subversions against support that was elegant almost to the point of overrefinement. Allen's attack hints at irreverence, and when she started to roll they locked up briefly. For her lush solos Dewey would comp with a note here, gnash at a phrase there, but what lacked was conviction behind the ideas to fortify the interplay between them. Maybe it was just a bad night for Dewey. Only at moments did he sound like Dewey Redman; most others he simply sounded his horn.

But there was Cherry on his platform, looking like a crossbreed of Yoda and Lena Horne and grinning like a child prodigy who can do anything but wears it in the most endearing way imaginable. After a few flourishes on his synth that seemed to bore him, Cherry cupped his chin in his hand and sang a theme that the band played back verbatim. He picked up a melodica to chat with Peter Apfelbaum's tenor, but before they could finish the band was into a flying R&B and Don began dancing through his music, his life. The docket was not just Cherry the multi-instrumentalist, because when the guy gets down, idiom gets out of the way. The vibe was global: Indian in the way he sat, funk in the way spaces simmered, '70s rock in Bo Freeman's big bass riffs, free improv in the way Freeman and drummer Joshua Jones powered the transitions and strapped everything together.



Cherry scatted and jammed, moving between tunes and instruments with the dreamlike effortlessness of a film dissolve. And Monk came calling; at the piano Cherry roamed through "Ruby, My Dear" and hopped the gravy train for a few happy choruses. The sounds never stopped widening. Freeman eased back when Cherry reached for his pocket trumpet and on the opening of Apfelbaum's "Let's Walk to the Mountain," Cherry stood up and played jazz. Satisfied to hear his trio working behind him, Cherry put on his slippers, picked up his hat and what instruments he could carry, and left.



*Photograph: Enid Farber*

World Radio History

# SOUNDOFF!

## MUSICIANS AGAINST CENSORSHIP

"...Elites seek to rule and impose social stability by the application of 'traditional values'—of authority, profit, family hierarchy, moral rigidity and class domination."

*The Nation*, February 11, 1991

Parents for Rock and Rap was formed as a counter-force to Parents Music Resource Center and some of the fundamentalists who attempt to control people's lives. In the United States, freedom is guaranteed to every citizen by the first amendment. As one of our members wrote when he joined (a father, a U.S. Army sergeant, stationed in Berlin), "The first amendment is not negotiable." PFRR works for freedom of expression for artists in the music industry, but we cross over into all of the arts if and when necessary. Our organization includes not just parents, but anyone interested in fighting censorship and repression of musicians. Music censorship consists of record labeling, either self-imposed or legally mandated, communities regulating which artists may or may not perform, age restrictions on concert goers and record buyers, and record stores refusing to store certain "objectionable" albums.

Censorship is on the rise. Contradictory to what the far right says, the majority of Americans want their arts to be free. PFRR members include: students of all ages, parents, grandparents, college professors, representatives of news media, lawyers, veterans, artists in the music industry, rock, rap and metal, writers, editors, ad infinitum. PFRR is beginning to have power and clout because at the present time we have hundreds of active members in the United States, Canada, England, Germany and even one member from Nigeria. We keep growing.

The purpose of our organization is to target any censorship of artists in the music industry. We work as a total organization, or the seventeen regional representatives work with their members, or we work individually. We call Congresspeople, governors, assembly people, record chains, write letters when there is censorship. When something happens in your area you have many options. If the problem is a city board regulating who can and cannot view a concert, or which groups can or cannot perform in your community, attend board meetings and protest (call your municipal building to find out when and where they are held). If there is police harassment during or after a concert you can call the chief of police to protest, contact the mayor of the community, write letters to the editors of the local papers. If you think your state legislature or Congress is attempting to censor, the Congress opinion number is (202) 224-3121; ask the operator for a specific Senator or Representative. You have a state assembly person representing the area where you live. Find out who it is and contact them with your opinion. Type up a petition, get signatures, send it to the person or persons involved. Write and call record store owners and owners of other chains and tell them you will boycott their shops if they continue to practice censorship. Write record company presidents who attempt to censor their own artists.

I must mention my great disappointment with record companies and artists who have succumbed to the pressure of censorship. Not all! The owners of record companies have enough money and clout that they could have fought the labeling and won, especially since they have the first amendment on their side.

This brings us around to parents. Parents, not the government nor outside forces, should help their children make decisions. Parents have to realize that they don't belong to the generation their children have joined, just as they were different from their parents' generation. They can listen to their children's albums and discuss the lyrics if they don't approve. Many parents would not think of interfering in their young person's choice of music. They look upon music as a good outlet. Parents should love their children, give them what advice they can and set them free. If they falter be there for them. Parental neglect and abuse is a far worse and damaging problem for young people.

I want to at least mention the racism that has always entered the picture when Afro-Americans are involved. Those who are white, bigoted parents resent their young enjoying the music of Afro-Americans. The negativism against rap was and is pure racism. Look at the clone someone came up with to counter the influence of those who would bring social issues before the American public.

You don't have to be a teenager to be alarmed by music censorship. I am 67 years old and the mother of a rock musician. I do not have money nor am I famous but I am never frightened of any opposition. I believe an artist is not an artist if he or she is not free to express herself or himself in an art. Whether we enjoy rap or rock, reggae or even country music, as Americans, if we are to be free, we have to fight against censorship and to uphold the first amendment.

Peace

Mary Morello
Parents for Rock and Rap
PO Box 53
Libertyville, IL 60048

MUSICIAN

Where the Players Do the Talking

World Radio History

# Nine Unspoken Rules of Rock 'n' Roll

## Don't touch that dial, take that butt or forget those socks

*By* Cub Koda

Nobody said anything has to be fair.

The check that arrived two weeks after they shut off the phone (that you were going to pay for with *that* check). The tire that blew up on the truck when you were only 10 miles from home. The gig that was canceled while you were en route. The "big-time" promoter who turned out to be a sleazeball and reneged on the contract. The pressing plant that took your 24-track master and made it sound like somebody's answering machine. The bass player who wants to quit and go home in the middle of the tour. The roadie who gave away 50 T-shirts to friends and *then* got mad at you when you informed him that he blew the gas money to the next gig. The manager who shows you his new Corvette while you're clearing 50 bucks a week because there's still 27 more P.A. payments to be made. All of these and a thousand more have made a lot of folks quit show biz for good. But if you keep repeating the above rule to yourself over and over, you *will* survive, trudging ever onward, bloody but unbowed.

**Never refuse to sign an autograph.**

I've always considered being asked to put your John Hancock on something one of the nicer perks of this business. Over the years I've signed just about everything: 8x10s, posters, album jackets, T-shirts, shoes, car doors and enough soggy cocktail napkins to keep any bar in business for a hundred years. It doesn't really matter if they're gonna sell it (as long as I get my cut) or throw it away five minutes later. No, the thing to remember is that for one special moment you were important enough to that person that they got up enough gumption to ask you for your signature. That doesn't mean you're always gonna get asked at just the right moment. I've had my privacy invaded at fancy restaurants, baseball games, attending a cousin's wedding and standing in line at McDonald's, and in all these situations, I've never refused. But the line has to be drawn somewhere. The urinal is it.

**Never give a roadie anything of value.**

God knows I love 'em; some of my ex's are still my best buddies and the real pros go for big bucks, but expect them to act like demented apes with big hearts and you won't be disappointed. This means don't give 'em the keys to anything unless you got spares inside your wallet and don't give 'em your wallet to hold *ever*. Demand receipts for everything if you give them money that ain't their paycheck and never, by any means, entrust one of them, no matter how well meaning their intentions, with something you cherish and expect to see it again in its original state. In my kitchen cupboard I have a large box of toothpicks that used to be a 1953 Les Paul.

**Never turn a hotel TV set off.**

Getting that baby flipped on and checking out the local bill of fare should be priority one when you check in, even before unpacking or putting tin foil on the windows to block any and all harmful sun rays. Those in the know praise hotel TVs as the working road dog's best friend. Keep them on full blast while you're out playing the gig to keep the burglars decoyed. Turn the sound off with the picture still illuminating the room for those midnight trips to the can. If you wake up bleary-eyed to "The Today Show," you know you got at least two to four hours to check-out time. If Bob Barker is asking you to have your pet neutered, you know you slept in too late, etc.



Illustration: Barry Blitt

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**When you go on the road, always bring plenty of socks.**
I know it doesn't seem fair, but no matter how good you sing, write, play your instrument or entertain the audience, having "the stinkiest feet on earth" may be your lasting legacy if you try and stretch out a pair of funky socks for a day or two longer than is humanly endurable by your road brethren. Rock 'n' rollers sweat. Don't end up being the stinky guy in the band. Go to K-Mart, they probably got a sale.

**Never, never take a person's last cigarette.**
Three on a match. Whistling in a theater. Walking under a ladder. Aces and eights. A soundcheck where everything goes right. Listening to Julio Iglesias and thinking about adding some ballads to the act. I don't care if you smoke four packs a day and you're in the middle of a nicotine *fit*, you don't take that cigarette; it's a goocher.

**Some white people can't dance at all.**
God knows they try, they really do. I have a friend who dances just like Rick Moranis in *Ghostbusters*, and he *loves* to dance; a lot of white folks do, no matter how asinine they look doing it. This, according to the Rules of Rock 'n' Roll, makes them the arhythmic slobs who end up requesting the majority of tunes that musicians play for dancing. If you've got a whole room full of them, for God's sake don't ask them to clap their hands; you're just asking for trouble. Same rules apply for asking them to sing along. If they can't find two and four out of four possible beats, when you ask them to say "yeah" louder, they're more than likely to shout out, *"Yeah louder."*

**You're not really a bar band unless you have a logo that nobody can read.**
Maybe it all started back in the days of lava lamps, black lights and lousy poetry by Rod McKuen. Maybe *that* was part of the "trip," trying to figure out what the name of the damn band was amidst this psychedelic backdrop of gobbledygook. Unfortunately it is a trend that has trudged on mightily, fueled by the artistic dreams of folks who spent most of high school doing loopdy-loops in their notebooks. (Do not confuse these people with folks at graphic places who get paid for their loopdy-loops.) Besides, if you're a bunch of ham-and-eggers playing Top 40 and Led Zeppelin on a Friday night, you don't want a pro to design your band logo. You want the drummer's girlfriend, who makes photo collages of the band. If her (or the drummer's cousin's, who "draws good") logo is unreadable enough, it's almost a sure bet that she'll wind up designing your first album cover.

**Never go to New York City unless you have enough money to get out.**
No matter how long you've been playing or how many gigs you've played, how many road trips you've made or how many states you've traveled to, how many times you've headlined, made records, done radio interviews, the whole nine yards—none of it really matters. Simply because 15 minutes of the wrong kind of New York hospitality can make even the most seasoned road veteran feel like a rube straight off the farm. This is no time to be giving your wallet to *anybody*.

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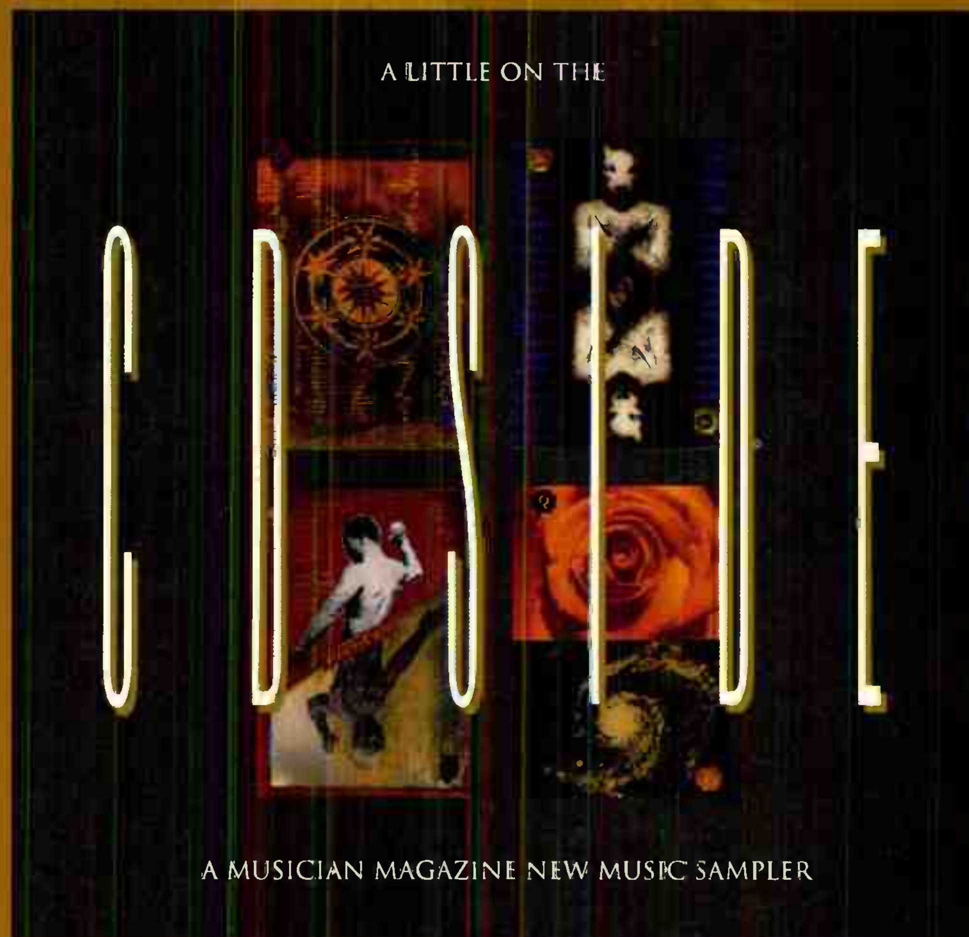


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DEVELOPMENTS

# Yamaha's AES 1500

## HOLLOW BUT TOUGH

IF YOUR SOLE IDEA OF "MODERN ROCK" IS SOME MOOK IN SPANDEX PULLing on his wang bar, then you'll probably disagree with the proposition that the Yamaha AES 1500 is a great modern rock guitar. But if your sense of current R&R is a bit broader, you're likely to fall in love with the broader range of rockin' tones obtainable from a hollowbody instrument like the 1500. I know I have. The flame orange beauty I brought home from Yamaha's custom shop is an object worthy of love: a body like a Gretsch, but with a Gibson-style tailpiece and a Tune-O-Matic bridge.

Unwanted feedback was the biggest factor that drove hollowbody guitars out of rock as amps got bigger during the '70s. But the 1500's designers seem to have beat that problem by means of a non-traditional bracing scheme. X-ray the 1500 and you'll see two wooden braces running on either side of the pickups, perpendicular to the neck and terminating at the bridge. Result: The top still resonates like a hollowbody should, but with more stability. Goodbye wolf tones.

See, that big resonant hollow body means lots of warmth and presence in the lower midrange. As on all hollowbody guitars, the 1500 begins to lose some energy and sustain when you get up on the high strings, but not to an unreasonable degree. The neck—which seems to contribute quite a bit to the 1500's rich twangy tone—is extremely playable, not at all "clunky" like some old Gretsches. And the flat ebony fretboard is built for comfort as well as speed.

Let's get one thing straight: The AES 1500 is not a retro guitar. Yes, I *did* spend my first week with it pretending I'd been reincarnated as George Harrison in 1965. But then I started discovering all the other things the 1500 could do—thanks, in large measure, to its pickups. They're Yamaha Q-100s: a humbucking spinoff of the P-90 that can also be run single-coil just by pressing on the AES 1500's push-pull tone pots. By working the combinations, you can get anything from near-Tele single-coil treble to the fuzzy oomph of a dual-humbucker blues sound.

This is one hollowbody electric that's not just for suits and jazzbos. Kudos to Yamaha for breaking metal's longstanding stranglehold on modern rock guitar design.

**ALAN DI PERNA**

# Roland CR-60: Human Rhythm Player

THE ROLAND CR-80 IS LESS A DRUMMER'S, OR EVEN A SONGWRITER'S, TOOL THAN A SORT OF KITCHEN-SINK, IDIOT-PROOF RHYTHM OMNIBUS to play along with. It's for giggers who need a rhythm track, for home practice—for anyone, in short, who doesn't want to build drum patterns from the ground up. As such, it's pretty neat; to me, the only sobering aspect is the $750 list price.

The box comes with 36 "rhythm styles" of various lengths—one, two or four bars—from polka to house. Each style's got four different variations, fills, breaks, intros and endings: a virtual infinity of chainable combinations (especially if you add Roland's 14 different "style cards" at $75 per four-style card). You've got room for four 500-bar "songs." Chaining one-bar patterns together is loadsa fun: Outdo John Zorn, if you're of a subversive bent, with your own lightning-fast segues and nutty stylistic pastiches. Six faders let you raise and lower individual drums' volumes; a seventh "feel" fader makes cymbals and hi-hats somewhat punchier and more vibrant. The 16-bit sound is excellent.

What you can't do is program your own stuff. The CR-80 has pads you can tap to play eight drum sounds and eight "sound effects" in real time. Seven different kits, each with eight sounds, can be assigned to the pads. (You can use external controllers to trigger sounds via MIDI as well.) But the only way to record your own patterns with the pad sounds is to use an external MIDI sequencer. The pads, in other words, are more lagniappe than working feature.

So whatcha got here is a sleek, hyper-efficient, all-purpose kitchen aid, highly useful if you're looking to cook by recipe. But you won't be baking from scratch.

TONY SCHERMAN



Photographs: Susan Goines

World Radio History

# Your Music on National Radio

## Guide Wire Radio means national radio exposure for unsigned bands and recording artists

Every week, five bands have their music heard by thousands of aggressive music listeners. Produced by the Independent Music Network in association with Musician Magazine, Guide Wire Radio sends everything from rock to pop, reggae, jazz and punk via satellite and tape to radio stations all over the continent.

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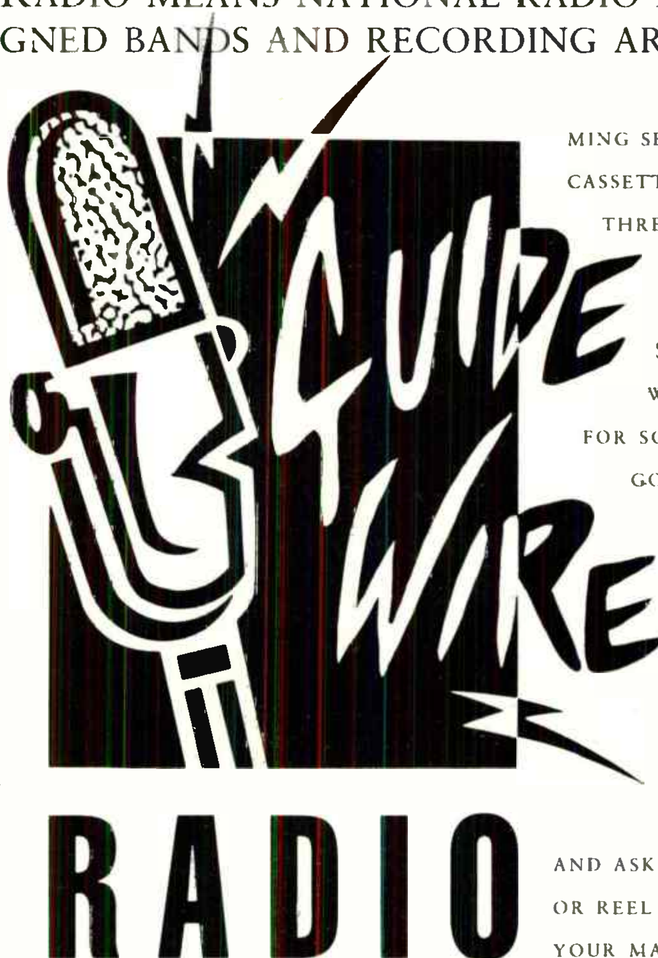


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DEVELOPMENTS

ADVANCES

# Tap Set

THE SYNTHESIST IN BANJOIST BÉLA FLECK'S FLECKTONES plays guitar through an electronic drumkit. No, make that acoustic drums through a digital guitar.

Let's clarify for the faint of heart: "Future Man," a drummer, uses a SynthAxe guitar controller to trigger drum samples from his Dynacord Advanced Digital Drum units. The SynthAxe—used exploratorily by Allan Holdsworth, dubbed by J. Page "the Martian's handbag"—creates no sound of its own, but when linked to the drum computers via a Simmons TM1 MIDI interface, it can manipulate samples at the tap of a finger. Future Man (Ray Wooten) has added to the fretboard several touch-sensitive membranes, and by assigning each hand a complete set of samples, can create convincing rhythms, flams and fills. Ray's current setup includes an SPX90, BGW 500D power amps and several Bold Concepts cabs (loaded with tweeters), but it's in flux. He wants to continue modifying the Axe until he can control pitched drums and play melodically. "Companies aren't listening," he shrugs. Take a byte, tekkies.

MATT RESNICOFF

# Mike Hunt

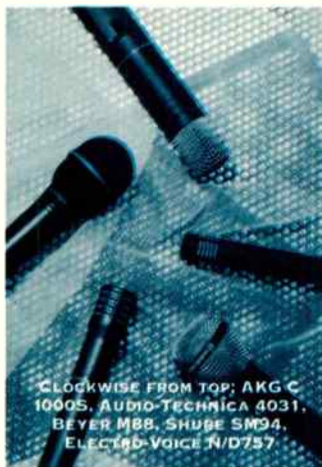
## LET YOURSELF BE HEARD

OUR BIGGEST HOME RECORDING PROBLEM MIGHT BE RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSE. AFTER GLADLY spending mega-bucks on all those miraculous machines in your home studio, don't even consider plugging in the spit-rusty old mike that you've been gigging with for the past 15 years. No wonder your tapes sound like everything's got a stuffy nose! A recent jingle-singing job in a "real" studio showed me that a lot of obnoxious home studio problems can be solved by a good microphone. Problem is, the kind of high-quality condenser mikes I sang that commercial through are up there in the $1000-1500 range. Ouch!

If you don't want to make that kind of investment, you've got a couple of choices. Many less expensive condenser mikes offer the fidelity (and the fragility) only a condenser can. In that department the Audio-Technica 4031, with its extremely low noise and high output, and AKG's C 1000S, which comes close in warmth and clarity to their legendary 414, are great all-around home studio-mikes, and the AKG is a surprisingly durable little mother.

If you're planning to use just one mike at home and on the gig, look into the more sturdy, mid-price dynamics. Electro-Voice's battery-powered N/D757 will give you the high-gain/low-feedback combination that makes an excellent stage microphone, with a transparency that will really improve your demos. Shure's SM94 is an extremely smooth-sounding, flat-response dynamic mike, easy to use on instruments and vocals. And the M88 from Beyer, while applicable in any studio situation, has the low-frequency response that's perfect for miking electric guitars. The Shure and the Beyer are also equally comfortable onstage and in the bedroom. The best part is you can pick up any of these mikes, and clear your studio's sinuses, for under $300. Then you can start sniffing out the next problem.

PETER CRONIN



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: AKG C 1000S, AUDIO-TECHNICA 4031, BEYER M88, SHURE SM94, ELECTRO-VOICE N/D757

SOUND BITES

The world is full of keyboards that offer sampled Hammond B-3 sounds. But now Hammond has gotten into the act themselves with the new XB-2, a keyboard based around B-3 samples. Naturally they've made every effort to finesse the details of a real B-3: things like key clicks in a number of different, randomly generated pitches and flute voices that double back on themselves at either end of the keyboard. Real B-3 players will also appreciate the XB-2's standard 11-pin Leslie plug. But at the same time, the XB-2 can also operate as a modem, touch-sensitive MIDI keyboard controller.... Meanwhile, Hammond's parent company Suzuki has made a move on the mouth-organ market with a full line of new harmonicas. There's the reedy, Marine-Bandish Folkmaster, the mellower Promaster V, a chromatic model called the Leghorn and a dual-hole model called the Two-Timer.... High-end bass builder Warwick has come out with a new affordable bass, the Dolphin Pro II. Materials are the main key to the instrument's more accessible price. There's a two-piece ash body and a bolt-on maple neck. But to preserve that Warwick feel, the fingerboard is still made of wenge wood, with 24 jumbo frets. You get a two-piece Warwick bridge in chrome and two MEC J-style active pickups.... How to improve on the humble power amp? Dynacord has added a built-in processor and limiter to their new DCA Series power amps. They claim this extra processing can improve the performance of any compact speaker system. The built-in goodies are part of a package that also includes a Thermal Brain Circuit for speaker protection. DCA Series amps are available in stereo 250-watts-per-side and 400-watts-per-side models. There's also a four-channel model that can be bridged for stereo 1000-watts-per-side action.



Photograph: Michelle Andonian (top); Jonnie Miles

World Radio History

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Now research at a leading university has new proof. Using carefully selected test subjects and controls, statistics have been compiled which *independently* back up Burge's phenomenal success rate.

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A vocalist envisions an entire ensemble whose members have taken Burge's course: "Imagine the perfect intonation and not having to give starting pitches. Thanks!"[j]

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[a] Rush, M.A. *"An experimental investigation of the effectiveness of training on absolute pitch in adult musicians,"* The Ohio State University, p. 298; [b] p. 196; [c] p. 212; [d,e,f] p. 400; [g] p. 397; [h] p. 399; [i] p. 404; [j] p. 399.

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If I choose to keep the Course and continue my ear-training, I may listen to the remaining three tapes (included) for additional instructions.

**FREE BONUS TAPE**: Also send me Burge's 90-minute companion cassette on Relative Pitch as a FREE BONUS (a $14.95 value). This tape is *mine to keep*, even if I decide to return my **Perfect Pitch® SuperCourse** for a full refund.

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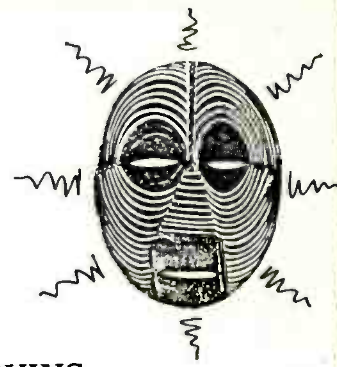
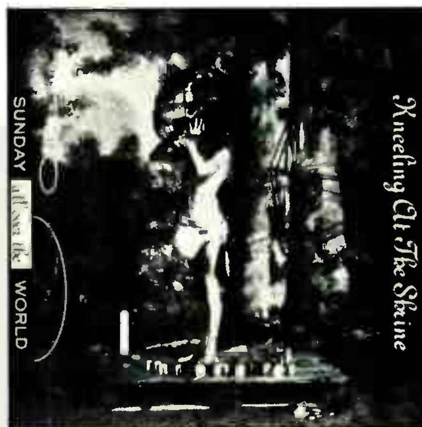


**SMASHING PUMPKINS**
gish

*'Crushed velvet apocalypse'*

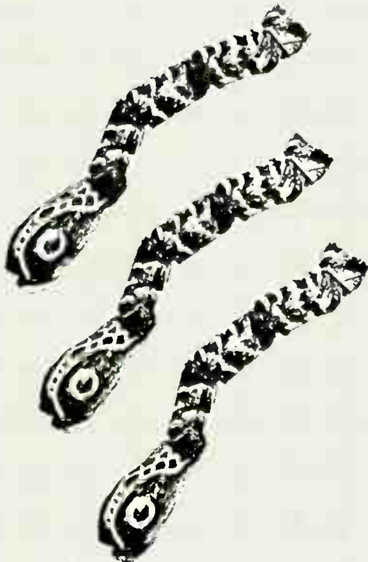
springhouse
LAND FALLS

*'The gentle revolution for a new decade'*



SUNDAY all over the WORLD
Kneeling At The Shrine

*'The magic of Robert Fripp — a new chapter'*



**CHUCK TREECE**
**DREAM'N**

*'HARDER THAN YOUR AVERAGE BOARD'*

SHA LA LA LA...

**CAROLINE**

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World Radio History

from the 'De la Soul' is DEAD Session – Raleigh, North Carolina

# De La Soul's Serious Fun

*De La Soul Is Dead*
(Tommy Boy)

TIRED OF RAP ACTS THAT LOOKED THE SAME, SOUNDED THE same and thought the same, De La Soul first countered conformity with an album that emphasized de inner sound (y'all): *3 Feet High & Rising*, an ode to individuality that was not only a big hit but a moment of revelation for many rap fans. But as that album grew in popularity, its message became increasingly misunderstood. Instead of thinking "I gotta be me," a growing number of fans began chanting, "We gotta be you!" and De La Soul—the anti-fashion rap band—became a fashion unto itself. Faced with a monster of their own making, the group realized that there was only one way out: De La Soul must die.

Well, maybe. But if *De La Soul Is Dead* was conceived as a means of undoing their hip-hop hippie image, it certainly has an odd way of going about it. Even as its raps, sound bites and sketches make a show of puncturing the patina of peace and love, what the album ends up saying—that it's hard to maintain a sense of idealism in a less-than-ideal world—veers far closer to that mentality than the De La Soulsters let on.



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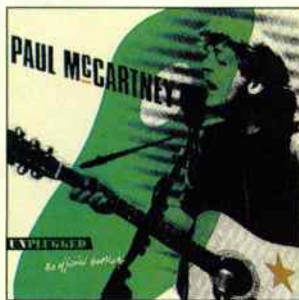
There's a difference, of course, between image and mentality, and "image" is this record's favorite target. As satirists, De La Soul can be merciless; "Rap De Rap Show," for instance, skewers rap radio's "celebrity IDs." They can also be downright silly, as the song-framing skits and the anti-gangsta rap "Shwingalokate" make plain.

Mostly, though, De La Soul is wonderfully sly. "Bitties in the BK Lounge" begins as a send-up of celebrity—crazed counter help at a burger joint ("Say, aren't you that guy? De La Soul, right?" "No, Tracy Chapman"), then flips its point of view as easily as its groove to show how the same bittie would treat our hero were he just a lowly counter clerk. Similar juxtapositions of music and narrative tap-dance their way through "Pease Porridge."

All that sonic sleight of hand makes it easy to miss the real point. *De La Soul Is Dead* isn't simply about the Soulsters' aversion to image, it's about learning to deal with reality—whether that's things not being the way they seem (as in "Millie Pulled a Pistol on Santa"), or not being seen for who you are ("Ring Ring Ring," among others). On that front, De La Soul is all the way live. **—J.D. Considine**




## Paul McCartney

*Unplugged—The Official Bootleg*
(Capitol)

THERE WAS A MOMENT IN 1968 WHEN PAUL McCartney got in touch with his dark side. It was when he sang the lead vocal on "Helter Skelter," surely the most bleakly brilliant performance of his career. But McCartney quickly snapped the lid shut on that Pandora's box, and it's been a steady diet of silly love songs ever since.

Rock-lite is pretty much what we get from McCartney on this live album, an acoustic set originally performed for the MTV show "Unplugged." However, the record is not without pleasant surprises. Chief among them is that McCartney wisely chose not to perform any of his signature songs—"Michelle," "Yesterday," "Hey Jude"—could we face yet another version of those overworked classics? Instead, he dipped into the Beatles' song bag and made six reasonably interesting selections, including "Here, There and Everywhere," a stunningly beautiful song that shows him at the peak of his powers as a composer, and a starkly poetic version of "Blackbird" (which he refers to as "Blackboard"—what a clown). The four remaining Beatles tunes—"We Can Work It Out" and "I've Just Seen a Face" among them—feel perfunctory, as if McCartney hadn't had a new musical thought about them in 20 years. Compared with the way Dylan relentlessly reworks his material, McCartney's treatment of his back pages seems uninspired.

A third of the album is given over to vintage covers that include rockabilly, country and R&B. He acquits himself well on "Be-Bop-A-Lula" and turns in a sweetly appealing vocal on "Blue Moon of Kentucky." As for his cover of "Hi-Heel Sneakers," McCartney hasn't a funky bone in his body and he's simply incapable of speaking of wig hats with authority. Listening to this, I was struck by his limits as a singer. Yes, he has great pitch—the guy never blows a note in that respect—but his phrasing is unimaginative, and instead of trying to build to a dramatic moment in a song, he prefers to come off as adorable. He's the A.A. Milne of rock.

You'll probably find yourself fast-forwarding past McCartney's between-song patter. His attempts at humor are strained, and one feels uncomfortable hearing them (though they're also oddly touching). It's amazing that he's still so ill at ease with his audience. It's also amazing how those Beatles tunes have permeated contemporary life to the core. You may not have thought about some of them in years, but when you hear McCartney singing on *Unplugged*, you'll discover that you know every word by heart. **—Kristine McKenna**

## World Saxophone Quartet and African Drums

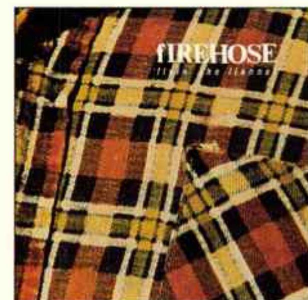
*Metamorphosis*
(Elektra Nonesuch)

THEN AGAIN, THE DRUMS WERE THERE ALL along.

Internally, of course: The World Saxophone Quartet has spent years reconfiguring Ellington, swing and R&B to its own rather twisted specifications, most often without the benefit of a rhythm section. In the process, saxophonists David Murray, Oliver Lake, Hamiett Bluiett and new member Arthur Blythe (replacing Julius Hemphill, who left to explore opera, among other things) have developed talents they don't use on other gigs. Like basketball's fast-break specialists, they coordinate without orchestrating parts beforehand. Like a frantic relay team, they divide up the timekeeping chores to allow each soloist his rhythmic spirit. What happens when they all want the baton at the same time? Moments of jabbering argumentation in which each individual's testimony adds steam to an already careening romp. Alone and collectively, these guys put it where they want it, skittering ahead of the internalized beat, lagging behind it, futzing every way possible with the tyranny of "common time."

So there was a risk that adding drums—even African hand drums, played with a staccato agility that defies nomenclature—to the already rhythmic honking might make things too literal. Sure enough, on Murray's lone indulgence, "Ballad for the Black Man," which features far too much tenor noodling over predictable harmonic patterns, these collaborators—Mor Thiam, Chief Bey and Mar Gueye—sound as though they're merely shadowing the action.

But most of *Metamorphosis* is celebratory; guttural squawks and somber prayers and parading riffs that suggest music can join the pelvis with the inner temple of the soul. The drums seize upon the internalized rhythms of each saxophonist—enhancing and expanding fleetingly implied off-beats, engaging in the same type of cross-sectional interplay that happens in great salsa. The rolling 6/8 passages of "Africa," the tender, Abdullah Ibrahim–influenced melody "Love Like Sisters," the Basie riff "Metamorphosis"—all show that the WSQ didn't have to cross oceans to fit these drummers (and these grooves) into their scheme. But there's a mutual respect that drives experiments such as the Latinized "Feed the People," which starts with a saxophone montuño and receives a rocket-sized boost when the percussion enters. The WSQ horns help the drums communicate rather than just keep time. The drums help the horns sustain genuinely engrossing patterns rather than brainy abstractions. It's a match. **—Tom Moon**




## Firehose

*flyin' the flannel*
(Columbia)

HAVE THE CHAMPIONS OF THE AMERICAN rock underground finally sold out? Or as their predecessors the Minutemen



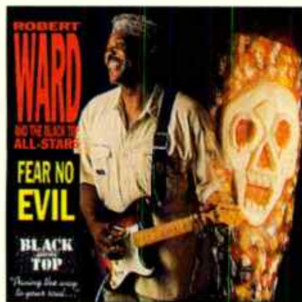
World Radio History

would've put it, have the "corndogs from Pedro" gone "mersh"? That question was likely on the minds of long-time fans when Firehose signed with Columbia Records, home of C + C Music Factory and Mariah Carey. But like one-time SST labelmates Sonic Youth, the 'Hose have made the move to the majors with integrity and genitalia intact. That much becomes apparent on this record's opening blast "Down with the Bass." Over Mike Watt's thundering bass line, singer/guitarist Ed Crawford lets loose with what could be the trio's credo: "A bass in your face with a sign for your mind."

This is Firehose's fourth album, but Watt and drummer George Hurley haven't forgotten the lessons they practiced with the Minutemen, so named for the brevity of their songs. In "Up Finnegan's Ladder" Crawford shouts "make it econo," as if he had to verbalize it. On the title tune, Crawford moves from delicate fingerpicking to power chords and back again in the time it takes most prog-rock outfits to get past the intro. Only three of the album's 16 tracks clock in at more than three minutes.

The most potent tunes are those that feature the 'Hose's trademark tempo and tone shifts, such as the Gang of Four–meets–Stanley Jordan "Anti-Misogyny Maneuver," and the scorching ode to their neighborhood "O'er the Town of Pedro." It's a solid, sometimes thrilling sound. But with the scene that spawned the band virtually dead, and underground fans turning their attention to Seattle grunge-rock from the likes of Mudhoney and Tad, one question remains. Is anybody listening?

—Craig Rosen




## Robert Ward and the Black Top All-Stars

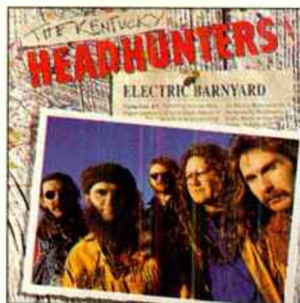
*Fear No Evil*
(Black Top/Rounder)

UNTIL RECENTLY, BLACK TOP PRODUCER Hammond Scott admits in his liner notes, Robert Ward was but "a strikingly original and totally mysterious sound on a handful of records in my collection." A native Georgian who played sui generis guitar throughout the Midwest during the '60s, eventually working in the studio at Motown and on the road with people like Wilson Pickett, Ward now lives back near Macon in a town called Dry Branch. He phoned Hammond from there last year: "I heard you've been looking for me." *Fear No Evil* is the result.

Ward's originality becomes apparent at once: After an opening bunch of snaky fifths, he plays in front of, behind and through the cordial groove of "Your Love Is Amazing," his guitar offering a rhythmically jagged counterpoint to his smooth singing. Plugged into the old Magnatone amps he treasures, Ward understands the crucial place of sound in music as solidly as, say, Duane Eddy. And he loves the novel riff. "When I first heard him play," Lonnie Mack remembers in another liner note here, "he was doing those backward kinds of runs that no other guitar player that I knew of was doing until Jimi Hendrix came along."

Recharging the melodic conventions of old soul and (far less successfully) the shuffling expanses of trad blues, the rest of the record pursues this mix of relaxation and flash. Standouts include "Trying My Best (Not to Never Do Wrong)," which ignites a subtle but mighty fire reminiscent of Womack & Womack, and the beautifully titled and chorused pledge of love "Strictly Reserved for You." This is an album worth adding to anyone's soulful collection.

—James Hunter




## The Kentucky Headhunters

*Electric Barnyard*
(Mercury/PG)

THESE HELLIONS ARE NOT TO BE CONFUSED with the string of pretty boys with guitars that usually hog the country charts. The Kentucky Headhunters may be ugly, but they sure can pick.

They also have a sense of humor and surprising range. *Electric Barnyard* lopes through western swing, romantic pop and country while resurrecting a ferocious strain of Southern rock 'n' roll not heard in these parts since the days of Lynyrd Skynyrd and the Outlaws.

As on their debut, *Pickin' on Nashville*, the Headhunters attract attention with eyebrow-raising remakes—"The Ballad of Davy Crockett" and "Spirit in the Sky." Both are delivered without condescension and in a way that celebrates their infectious choruses. After charging through the oft-covered "Only Daddy That'll Walk the Line," they shift gears with "Dianne," a pop-rock original that manages to put across a kind of redneck sentimentality. And in that vein, what horny backwoods country boy can't identify with the lascivious "16 and Single"? Eclectic they may be, but the Headhunters are true to their roots.

More than their debut, this self-produced album has the tight but raucous feel of a record made to suit themselves. It's not a formula likely to run those hunks with hats out of town, but it do make your feet shuffle around.

—Ray Waddell

## Dr. Michael White

*Crescent City Serenade*
(Antilles)

## George Lewis & His Ragtime Band

*Hot Creole Jazz—1953*
(DCC Jazz)

REGARDLESS OF CURRENT EVENTS, WHICH statement strikes you as *least* probable?
(a) The Berlin Wall comes down.
(b) The Soviet Union renounces communism.
(c) The U.S. wins a war.
(d) Traditional New Orleans jazz becomes hip.

The answer, of course, is (d). The Rockies may crumble, Gibraltar may tumble, but fans of the earliest documented jazz style (*don't* call it Dixieland) could always depend on one thing: They'd forever be looked on as oddballs.

Until recently, that is. Once Wynton Marsalis led the charge back to jazz fundamentalism, how could he (and others) ignore the source? He couldn't, and Marsalis makes a guest appearance on clarinetist Dr. Michael White's *Crescent City Serenade*, a pleasurable 65-minute romp through the repertoire.

Dr. White surrounds himself with a variety of fellow New Orleansians, including Marsalis' bassist Reginald Veal and drummer Herlin Riley, and veteran trumpeter Teddy Riley. Mostly, though, the musicians come from the good doctor's thirtysomething generation of N.O. revivalists. Considering that 20 years ago this music faced extinction, that may be the best news of all. The doc's influences are obvious; he plays a spiritual à la George Lewis, while his original "Chant of Bechet" owes a lot to Sidney Bechet's "Egyptian Fantasy" (itself a rewrite of "Song of the Medina"). But the doctor's fluid legato phrasing and lower-register tone are his alone. There may be too many solos for some tastes–this music is about polyphony as much as anything else—but not on the concluding "Caribbean Girl," another Dr. White composition. [cont'd on page 94]



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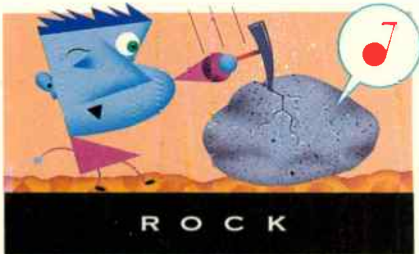
# SHORT TAKES




BY J. D. CONSIDINE

**EMF**
*Schubert Dio* [EMI]

When presented with a band as totally trendy as EMF, it's tempting to take Public Enemy's advice and disbelieve the hype. Big mistake. Unlike Happy Mondays, EMF doesn't simply graft dance rhythms onto rock; their songs are true hybrids, meshing rock riffs and house beats so completely it's hard to tell where one influence ends and another begins. Even better, EMF are eminently melodic, so that even if the fusion of groove and grunge doesn't snare you, the hooks will. Unbelievable? You haven't heard the half of it.

**LUTHER VANDROSS**
*Power of Love* [Columbia]

Now that satin-voiced soul men are practically a dime a dozen on the R&B charts, you'd think there'd be less reason to wax ecstatic over Luther Vandross. Quite the contrary. After enduring the ostentatious ornamentation of Freddy, Jeffrey, Keith and Will, Luther's lithe, lean lines and effortless exultation are a breath of fresh air. It doesn't hurt that he writes as well as he sings, or that his taste in covers runs to classics like "I Who Have Nothing," presented here as a smoldering duet with Martha Wash.

**MICHAEL BOLTON**
*Time, Love & Tenderness* [Columbia]

Speaking of soul men, would somebody tell this guy there's more to R&B than sounding like you just herniated yourself?

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**
*Temple of the Dog* [A&M]

Drug deaths rarely help the rock community, and Andrew Wood's OD last year was no exception. But this energetic eulogy is an inadvertent benefit. With two of Wood's mates from Mother Love Bone joined by two pals from Soundgarden, *Temple of the Dog* offers a potent distillation of Seattle's sonic sludge, with plenty of slow-mo riffing and louder-than-life guitar. It backs that sound with songs so potent and emotional that they tower over most of today's hard rock. Well worth hearing.

**TERMINATOR X**
*Terminator X and the Valley of the Jeep Beats* [RAL Columbia]

Though Chuck D may be Public Enemy's monarch and Flavor Flav its court jester, Terminator X is the power behind the throne. Cue up "Buck Whylin'," and what ignites your sound system isn't the lyrics' call to arms but the Terminator's slice-and-dice approach to sound, one which combines savvy samples, bumpin' beats and lethal amounts of bass to create an absolutely killer groove. This isn't all just rhythmic muscle, either. The best of these raps include anything from reggae to the blues. Boom on!

**YES**
*Union* [Arista]

Take the better part of an Anderson, Wakeman, Bruford and Howe album, add a few Trevor Rabin/Chris Squire tracks (with Anderson vocals for the sake of consistency), and what have you got? The marketing opportunity of a lifetime.

**MARC COHN**
*Marc Cohn* [Atlantic]

Cohn is a singer/songwriter of the old school, far more interested in turning the universal into the personal than the other way around. Yet no matter how solipsistic his songs become, there's something about his bluesy, careworn voice and jazzy piano asides that draws you in, until even the stories you don't entirely understand have you hanging on every verse.

**FISHBONE**
*The Reality of My Surroundings* [Columbia]

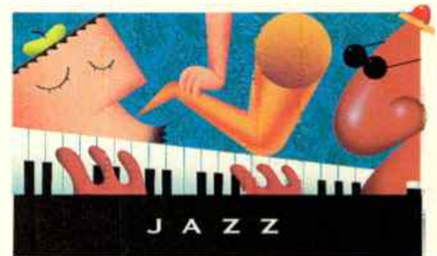
Forget the conceptual stuff—the confused-kids rap of "So Many Millions," the social sarcasm of "Behavior Control Technician"—and focus on the music, because that's where these guys truly shock and amaze. It isn't just the energy level—thrash bands have energy too, and few of them could toss off the lightning licks and tricky time changes of "Fight the Youth" half as well. This band isn't as good as they say: It's better.

**DESMOND CHILD**
*Discipline* [Elektra]

As a rock critic, I should hate this just on principle, Child being one of the most successful hits-on-demand songwriters around. But fact is, there's a lot to like about *Discipline*. The songs are nicely written, with little of the anthemic overkill that reduces so much corporate rock to rubble, while Child's voice adds enough vulnerability to make his lyrics almost touching. So, yeah, this is a favorable review. Just don't tell my colleagues, okay?

**VICTORIA WILSON-JAMES**
*Perseverance* [Epic]

Produced by Jazzie B and featuring the voice of "A Dream's a Dream," this sounds at first like another Soul II Soul spinoff. Yet even though the bass-driven beat is similar, the feel isn't, for by letting Wilson-James' jazzy, idiomatic phrasing shape the groove, Jazzie B manages to reinvent his own sound. One more reason perseverance pays off.




BY CHIP STERN

**MICK GOODRICK**
*Biorhythms* [GMP]

A spectacular modern jazz power trio. Goodrick's a master guitarist with a unique chord/melody style and a lithe, bluesy kind of swing full of supple surprises. He's manned the guitar chair for everyone from Gary Burton to Jack DeJohnette, and his solo on "Unfinished Sympathy" from Burton's *Ring* is a masterpiece of sus-



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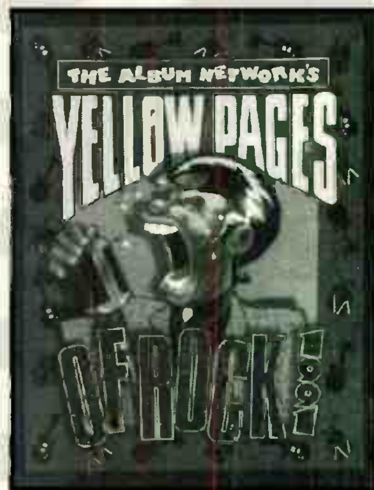


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tained tension over an odd-metered cycle. With *Biorhythms* he's defined a trio context that extends that kind of rhythmic interplay. Bassist Harvie Swartz has always had a beautiful conception, and here he sounds positively driven. But for me, *Biorhythms* is a coming-out part for drummer Gary Chafee, a rhythmic innovator with a round punchy sound and a sweet melodic touch. He comes in and out of time(s) in the funkiest, least mannered ways imaginable (a lot of what you hear people like Vinnie Colaiuta, Dave Weckl and Terry Bozzio stylizing, Gary Chafee threw down first, as a Boston-area teacher and in a series of influential books). Together, these are formidable improvisers, and this all-digital recording is dry, detailed and mercifully free of reverb.

### DUKE ELLINGTON

*Duke Ellington & His Famous Orchestra/Fargo, ND, November 7, 1940* [Vintage Jazz Classics]

All the majesty of Duke Ellington's greatest ensemble in a one-night stand in North Dakota (!). You can *feel* Sonny Greer's percussive presence in a way that didn't translate to the recording studios of that time. Thanks to digital remastering guru Jack Towers, who actually recorded the entire date on a portable acetate machine, it's remarkably full and clean. There's over two-and-a-half hours of music on two discs, with newcomers Jimmy Blanton and Ben Webster at the peak of their powers, and Ray Nance making his first date with the band. Electrifying.

### BÉLA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES

*Flight of the Cosmic Hippo* [Warner Bros.]

The music and ensemble conception of this five-string banjo master are rising to take their place at the table with his unprecedented virtuosity. It seems a shame to call it fusion or contemporary jazz, because *Flight of the Cosmic Hippo* is the sum of Fleck's inspirations and aspirations. Ditto for his gifted cohorts Howard Levy and the Wooten Brothers, Victor and Roy. From the going-down-slow New Orleans hump of the title tune, to the Pat Martino-*cum*-Ravi Shankar clusters of "Blu-Bop," Fleck's jazz pedigree is impeccable—and his sparkling arpeggios, popping rolls and daring counterpoint are something else again. That and the beautiful blend of funky folk rhythms that pepper these arrangements make for a powerful conversational group music that is user-friendly without condescension.

### RAY DRUMMOND/ HANK JONES/BILLY HIGGINS

*The Essence* [GMP]

What happens when three perfect musicians enjoy an impeccable rapport under optimum recording conditions? This acoustic piano trio is keyed by bassist Ray Drummond's sublime rhythmic intuition and freewheeling lyrical notions. His gently rounded, pastel tone belies the robust power and projection of his beat—he melts into the piano's overtones without ever washing out. Pianist Hank Jones has one of the most beautiful harmonic conceptions in all of jazz, while drummer Billy Higgins epitomizes all that is graceful and swinging about the drumkit. What they all share is an understanding about how to blow hot without ever losing a sense of cool. Classy and enduring.

### JAN GARBAREK

*I Took Up the Runes* [ECM]

After a decade spent exploring the whys and wherefores of American jazz and Indian raga forms, the Scandinavian saxophone master returns to his Nordic roots with a powerful suite of folk-inflected moods. The percussion section of Nana Vasconcelos *and* Manu Katché (best known for his work with Sting and Peter Gabriel) gives *I Took Up the Runes* a funky percolating edge that brings out, if not whimsy, a dancing, celebratory quality in Garbarek's solos. Eberhard Weber and Rainer Bruninghaus flesh out these pan-ethnic arrangements with their own brand of ruminative Germanic gravity.

### CHARLIE HADEN CARLOS PAREDES

*Dialogue* [Antilles]

Comrades in arms dating back to the '70s, when both men were jailed in Portugal for speaking out against the fascist dictatorship, Haden and Paredes conjure riveting romantic revelations over a broad harmonic palette. Paredes is the master of the 12-string Portuguese guitar, and his crystalline eruptions of melody suggest gypsy mystery and intrigue. Haden responds with his most forceful, song-like counterpoint.

### MICHAEL FORMANEK

*Wide Open Spaces* [Enja]

Here's a marvelous, young (i.e. you haven't heard of him yet even though he's been around for years) bassist who can sound like Jack Bruce one minute and all of the Miles/Ornette/Coltrane school of bassists the next. This is a freewheeling date that mixes ballads, vamps and free polyphony to telling effect. Formanek can sit right on the time or let it open up in the post-La Faro mode, without taking the other players on a wild goose chase. But it's his quintet writing for violin-saxophone-electric guitar-bass-drums that takes *Wide Open Spaces* beyond your run-of-the-mill modern blowing sessions. Fresh.

### SLAUGHTER

*Slaughter from the Beginning* [Chrysalis]

Partly to be sociable, partly out of curiosity since I'm a progressive stereotype-breaking metal fan, one of my buds agreed recently to view this home video with me. When Slaughter rushed into a crowd of screaming teenaged women at a record store, my friend laughed as the roving camera lingered at the section marked the Beatles. "They think they're the Beatles," he said, to which I replied that "Up All Night," "Fly to the Angels" and "Spend My Life" affect me more than any Beatles song. Okay, there's too much, or too much clichéd, "personal footage" here. But musicians can relate to the problems Dana Strum had producing his bandmates and a corny but hilarious scene in the Las Vegas guitar store (where Mark Slaughter once taught 272 students per month). For fans and could-bes.—*Jill Blardinelli*

### SUN RA

*Sun Song* [Delmark]

Sun Ra's first album, recorded in July '56, is both a rousing period piece and an intriguing display of the great conceptualizer's singular vision in its incipient phase. Its component parts are good old mid-'50s hard bop (with such master practitioners of the form as tenor saxist John Gilmore and trombonist Julian Priester), swinging big band charts (lotsa riffs), moody modality, pre-Ornette frontier-stretching via arrangemental surprise—weird brass accents ("Brainville"), rolling tympani ("Call for All Demons," "Street Named Hell"), insistent cowbell ("Transition")—and kitsch (the syrupy "New Horizons," the both mawkish and bizarre title cut). Sun's space shtick, already in full swing here, was among other things a canny co-opting of traditionalist ridicule (cf. Earl Hines' irritated labeling of bebop as "Chinese music"), but it would be a few years before the music fully matched the outré trimmings. Obviously, though, a must for Ra fans, and a good place to start for those who might want to ease into later, monumental works like *The Magic City* or *Heliocentric Worlds*. (4243 North Lincoln, Chicago, IL 60618)—*Richard C. Walls*

### NICO

*The Marble Index* [Elektra]

Not just another "Super Saver" reissue, this harrowing classic has received elite treatment from Elektra: a 16-page booklet with a new essay and photos, and two previously unreleased selections eking out the original half-hour album. The 1969 release is as much the work of John Cale as Nico; the latter's words squirm free of meaning, the former's skeletal arrangements provide creepy resonance. The result is as effective as ever. Don't play it in the dark!—*Scott Isler*

### SONNY ROLLINS

*On the Outside* [BMG/Bluebird]

Sonny Rollins *is* jazz. Finally back in print here after generations as a French RCA import, *On the Outside* captures Sonny Rollins at his most abstract and death-defying best. Turning the beat inside out, dicing and cubing his phrases until they burst on the canvas like Picasso's *Three Musicians*, he races through bar lines and chords with magisterial indifference for everything except his personal song. Three brief studio outings with the great Henry Grimes and Billy Higgins (and breathless foil Don Cherry) show how far he can stretch that song without making it or breaking it—Bird would have been proud. Then there's the three rip-roaring live improvisations from the Village Gate with Bob Cranshaw on bass (originally released as *Our Man in Jazz*). While it has been a



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popular parlor game to connote how much Sonny was influenced by Ornette and Coltrane, his famous solo on "Oleo" indicates how much influence he exerted on them, as well as on Albert Ayler and Archie Shepp.
—*Chip Stern*

GARY STEWART
*Out of Hand* [Hightone]
When it first appeared in the late '70s, this honky-tonk classic was a much-needed shot of cigarette smoke and stale whiskey among the Milsap-iness then dominating the country charts, and its long-overdue reissue is as welcome today. Unlike a lot of today's Straits and Garths and Travises, Stewart actually sounds like he's seen the inside (and the underside) of more than a few barrooms. Hank Williams collides head-on with the Allman Brothers in such Stewart classics as "Drinkin' Thing," "She's Actin' Single (I'm Drinkin' Doubles)" and the title song. This is the real thing.—*Peter Cronin*

DAVID SCHNAUFER
*Dulcimer Player Deluxe* [S.F.L.]
If there are limits to what you can do with a dulcimer, David Schnaufer doesn't know about them. Like dobroist Jerry Douglas and banjoist Béla Fleck before him, Schnaufer has created a demand for himself as a Nashville session player by routinely breaking the boundaries usually associated with his instrument. On this over-generous 26-song collection, he moves easily from meditative solo pieces to full band bluegrass breakdowns. Because he can, Schnaufer travels all over the stylistic map. But when he keeps things closer to the dulcimer's mountain home, his music really shines. (S.F.L. Discs & Tapes, Box 120316, Nashville, TN)—*Peter Cronin*

KUDSI & SÜLEYMAN ERGUNER
*Sufi Music of Turkey* [CMP]
Kudsi and younger brother Süleyman are the latest in a long line of musical Erguners; their father Ulvi was almost singlehandedly responsible for preserving the Turkish classical music tradition after the collapse of the Ottomans in 1923. Both brothers are well-known ney players in their native land, and these eight tracks demonstrate the subtle power of their instrument, creating a contemplative, trancelike atmosphere that's quietly intense. At first, compared to the ecstatic Sufi music of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and the Qawwali Party, the Erguners seem cool and detached, but don't be deceived by first impressions, especially with music this deep. (155 W. 72nd St. #704, New York NY 10023)—*Mac Randall*

THE GOO GOO DOLLS
*Hold Me Up* [Metal Blade]
Seven reasons to love this band even if you're bored with most indie pop like I am: 1) George Goo, an

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avowed Public Enemy/NWA fan with a baseball cap he forgets to wear backwards, drums very sneakily, so that *Hold Me Up*'s way funkier than the entire Limbomaniacs album. 2) Johnny, the heartthrob crooner, had burgundy hair at one gig, jazzy orange a few months later, which my roommate would say is a lot like me. 3) He crooned this real personal fed-up-with-ex-girlfriend song, "Two Days in February," but recorded it out in the street, dedicating it to the next-door neighbors. 4) Robby, the singer with the heartthrob rasp like Dave Pirner with a few voice lessons, grins and "poses" with his guitar live. But it's not heavy-metal parody; it's a fantasy realized and continually feeding upon the audience's energy. 5) They made the Replacements look damn lame in a recent college town gig. 6) They know how to play their guitars. 7) For naming themselves Goo Goo Dolls, they now can have "Just Goo It" T-shirts! (15456 Ventura Blvd. #302, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403)

—*Jill Blardinelli*

### PIGFACE

*GUB* [Invisible]

The surreal sonic constructions that seethe throughout this one-off project feature some of the industrial noise genre's finest artists, including members of Killing Joke, Ministry, Scratch Acid, Skinny Puppy, the Revolting Cocks, Nine Inch Nails and KMFDM. The tracks range from acrid dance abstractions fueled by the dual drumming of Martin Atkins (ex-Public Image Limited, Killing Joke) and William Rieflin (Ministry, Revolting Cocks) to fascinating electronic studies in random noise that employ everything from oscillators and tape recorders to cameras, Doritos bags and a Howard Johnson's hotel room. Careful orchestration by producer/engineer Steve Albini keeps the shifting sounds and ideas in focus. For variations on a few of these themes, four of the tracks are available in remixed form as the *Spoon Breakfast EP*. (Box 16008, Chicago, IL 60616)—*Sandy Masuo*

### PAGAN BABIES

*Wild Root Remedy* [Marketplace]

Pagan Babies...the words were murmured like a mantra among West Coast world beatniks in the mid-'80s, their cassettes sought after and treasured. The group's uncanny renderings of various globalist grooves—from Zimbabwean *chimurenga* to bauxite-heavy dub—are accurate and unpretentious. Yet the tunes are blended well enough with rock and jazz elements that the resultant fusion is far from neocolonial. *Wild Root Remedy* signals the Hawaiian sextet's long-overdue entry into the commercial realm. Well-harmonized, straightforward vocals (no bogus patois here) weave mini-soap operas and wry social commentary among the salsa, *soukous*, reggae, Afrobeat and other worldly rhythms. If you're "in need of a celebration to fight this inebriation" like the emotionally adrift narrator on the soca-fueled "Where's the Party?" the Pagan Babies' one-world sounds may be the answer. (Box 10657, Honolulu, HI 96816)

—*Tom Cheyney*


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## RECORDINGS

[*cont'd from page 89*] Here a full-throated lineup plays one rousing chorus after another, almost wraps things up, then launches into a further five choruses before a fade-out cheats the listener of more.

To compare Dr. White and George Lewis isn't quite fair. The latter never got his doctorate but was the most revered of traditional clarinetists from his "rediscovery" in the early '40s until his death in 1968. The recordings reissued on *Hot Creole Jazz—1953* were probably just another gig to Lewis and his steady working band. But what a sound: The band roars out of the loudspeakers, unbalances your picture frames, steps all over your furniture, kills your pet goldfish and makes you like it. Where Dr. White's group favors easygoing rhythms, Lewis' Ragtime Band is out for blood. Purists may dispute the authenticity of the band's hyperdrive; the effect, though, is undeniably exhilarating, if not actually exhausting. *Hot Creole Jazz—1953* is in mono and it's only 35 minutes long. It's worth every note. **—Scott Isler**

### Tim Berne's Caos Totale

■

*Pace Yourself*

(JMT)

Caos totale is Italian for just what you'd think. It also describes the brink alto saxophonist Tim Berne's latest group skates along with considerable finesse and wit. Inspired by the AACM's expanded sonic palette and idiom-stretching, Berne scrambles boppish heads, offbeat harmonies, dangling meters, *noir*ish atmospherics, raucous blowouts and worldbeat patches. The subtle backing riffs and textures—Berne likes goosing his soloists and matching unlikely instruments—at once buttress and contrast with the improvising. Even the solo sections twist mainstream expectations. The result: It's a language that reflects the leader's own wryly hip sensibility along with the hyperventilating perspective shifts that define life and culture in our time.

Lately the mainstream press has been trumpeting jazz's return from the grave via young neoboppers. But Berne reminds us that jazz didn't die or stop evolving. Looking around with a lopsided but knowing grin, he orchestrates post-free-era jazz with a focused compositional eye and a cartoonist's catchy sense of caricature (his last album was called *Fractured Fairy Tales*). In the process, he's created a late-twentieth-century soundscape that is ominous and ironic, unexpectedly funny and brutally assaultive, yet coherent. The soloists personalize that imagery—guitarist Marc Ducret's scrabbling skids and lunges, omnibrassman Herb Robertson's brilliant comic yawps and stuttering speechifying, drummer Bobby Previte's precise rhythmic and coloristic sense, bassist Mark Dresser's sonic agility, trombonist Steve Swell's smears-to-silken moves, Berne's slippery-to-edgy-to-raging alto. Skirting total chaos as they conjure its abyss, their voices fill *Pace Yourself* with a resonance that lets us recognize ourselves in the whirl. **—Gene Santoro**

### The Windbreakers

■

*Electric Landlady*

(DB Recs)

The Windbreakers (a.k.a. Tim Lee and Bobby Sutliffe) are the latest heirs of the South's fine tradition of great, ignored guitar-pop bands. Like their forefathers, from the Gentrys to the dB's, these guys have a way with a hook, a way with a harmony and a mighty fine guitar sound. In fact, Tim and Bobby have been delivering quality goods on over *twenty* records between them, released on indie labels here and abroad. Here's hoping they grab the brass ring before long instead of ending up on some *Long Forgotten Indie Heroes, Vol. 90* compilation.

*Electric Landlady* sounds like their best bet. From the dinosaur-stomp of "Tell Me Something" to the Syd Barrettisms of "Elayne Lies Looking at the Sky" to the shimmering pop perfection of "The Girl from Washington," these guys make nary a false compositional move. Together, they generate enough guitar power to light up Toledo with vocal harmonies that recall *Younger Than Yesterday*. And producer/kindred spirit Russ Tolman gives that sound enough gloss



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to make it radio accessible, even to mall-heads.

Rootsy without being self-conscious (the title notwithstanding), meat-and-potatoes without condescending into bone-headedness, *Electric Landlady* is one consistently terrific album. Do 'em a favor and help save these guys from Nuggetdom.

**—Thomas Anderson**

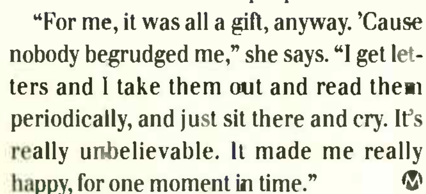
## RAITT

[cont'd from page 40] times when I've held a note on guitar and felt like Lowell George or Fred McDowell was with me. Times during the summer when Stevie Ray was around. So I would just sit there and play this chorus like a mantra or something. And the two parts came together—a woman who's very dejected and yet very hopeful."

In a way, the song also seems to reflect the surrealism of Raitt's recent experiences. "It really is the luck of the draw," she says. "I have no idea why things happen—'why the angels turn their backs on some.' People with young children who get stricken with diseases. Here, I'll take half your disease and you can have two of my Grammys, you know?" She smiles helplessly. "I'll be glad to share this good fortune. You really do have to give it away. It's the only way you can handle it."

The biggest thrill about her success, she says, is that it's allowed her such luxuries as touring with Charles Brown, raising more funds for political issues, elevating the profile of worthy organizations like the Rhythm and Blues Foundation. Within the pop community, of course, it's reopened doors for musicians who can now look A&R men straight in the eye and say they'd like to make a record like Bonnie Raitt's.

Last year, she returned to Boston with Michael O'Keefe, who was working on a TV show there, and took an apartment not far from the Cambridge Common, where Raitt first attracted local attention singing with an acoustic guitar 20 years ago. "It was so great," she says. "I got to reconnect with Peter Johnson, Reeve Little, Chris Smither, all those people. Spider John Koerner was there playing gigs. That community is in full circle now. And my record was a real shot in the arm to a lot of people.

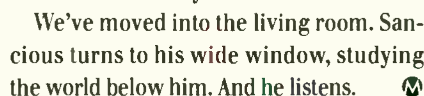


"For me, it was all a gift, anyway. 'Cause nobody begrudged me," she says. "I get letters and I take them out and read them periodically, and just sit there and cry. It's really unbelievable. It made me really happy, for one moment in time." Ⓜ

## SANCIOUS

[cont'd from page 48] dipping into jazz and other pools. He moved into the producer's chair for Youssou N'Dour's *The Lion*. From Youssou to Sting to Aretha, Sancious has worked with some of pop's most distinctive singers, and on his own work with Tone used choral voicings and textures in a manner close to Gabriel's use of chants and chorales on *Passion*. Gabriel says of Sancious: "I think we both respond to the sound of the voice and its use in building up emotional colors."

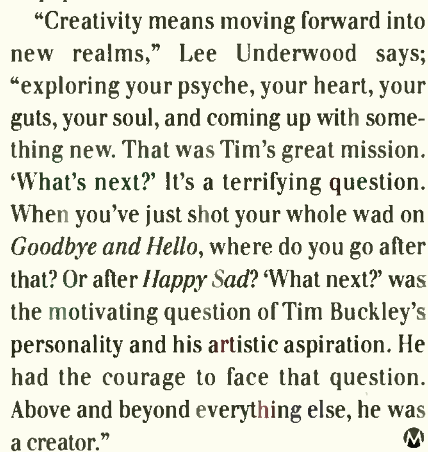
"I enjoy singing in an ensemble and I enjoy hearing the voice in an ensemble way," Sancious says, "sometimes more than I do just as one lone voice in a linear way—language over music. I've always enjoyed singing. I do more of it as the years go by. I've always loved the sound of the human voice. I've liked the way it's used in an orchestral setting even more, in some ways, than in pop music or rock 'n' roll. It has an immediate effect on you. It's just something about the sound of a human voice coming into another human body. It feels so right, so primal, so natural. It's almost otherworldly."



We've moved into the living room. Sancious turns to his wide window, studying the world below him. And he listens. Ⓜ

## BUCKLEY

[cont'd from page 65] battle; in the hype-heavy record business a dead artist is usually a dead artist. Buckley himself was uncomfortable with fame, and created in spite of it. His insistence on being true to himself insured the permanence of his most striking recordings. And even when he caved in, he couldn't sell out enough to extinguish his distinctive spark—or, for that matter, to be popular.



"Creativity means moving forward into new realms," Lee Underwood says; "exploring your psyche, your heart, your guts, your soul, and coming up with something new. That was Tim's great mission. 'What's next?' It's a terrifying question. When you've just shot your whole wad on *Goodbye and Hello*, where do you go after that? Or after *Happy Sad*? 'What next?' was the motivating question of Tim Buckley's personality and his artistic aspiration. He had the courage to face that question. Above and beyond everything else, he was a creator." Ⓜ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| September 91 | July 8 |
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## ROXETTE

[cont'd from page 30] toward live performance—without drum machines and tape loops, that is—makes Roxette increasingly anomalous among the current gaggle of pop video stars.

"In England we were doing an awards show and we were the only band with guitars!" Per exclaims. "It was all hip-hop music and choreography. We were raised on band music and people playing together. Kids today, if they're into music, sit at home with an Atari machine, which is totally different—and so is the end result. Maybe we're a dying breed," he muses.

"But it's just as strange to discover that there are 12-year-old kids who want to hang our posters on their wall. 'Cause we're 32 years old. And I went through all this before, when I was 20, you know—people sleeping outside your door and stealing your car plates...so anything can happen." He sighs happily. "And it's wonderful. Because when you hear a good pop song, the world stops for a second."

## DRUM PROGRAMMERS

[cont'd from page 74] source as well." For Merendino, the Linn 9000 "is like an old Strat. I know the 9000 so well I use it for a controller, since all my sounds are in my Emulator."

"As a drummer I would play my part and that was it," says Jimmy. "But with the machine, I get to work with the artists. I would sit and write head-to-head with guys like Winwood. As a drummer, I was usually baffled off with headphones, watching lips move in the control room after a take. The machine put me in the control room, made me more a part of the procedure. If I spend a day on a song, by the end of that day people know they've checked out all of what their song could be.

"People change their mind constantly. That can mean re-recording the entire kit to fix a fill in the third verse. Now if you want to change your mind it's easy—a machine remembers."

Though Merendino says he likes kit drums and machines, "to be honest I miss the physical sensation of hitting drums. It's that sense of release after exercise or any physical exertion. I miss the spontaneity that comes from interaction with musicians. But ultimately machines are making drummers better because they're forced to play all these new beats."

"This is about ideas," Bralower concludes. "Enough songs have been written where the very first concept was a beat out of a machine. The drum machine is just a palette larger than two hands and two feet. It allows you to chisel a great groove or a great idea forever."

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Have the rest of you noticed how many songs are out now that meditate on the myth of Elvis Presley? We don't mean corny tribute tunes or personal reminiscences by Presley pals like Johnny Cash and Carl Perkins. We mean songs referring to Elvis the icon, songs that evoke the mythos that has built up around the idea of Elvis. Somewhere between John Lennon's 1970 "I don't believe in Elvis" and U2's 1984 "Elvis Presley and America," a whole new genre emerged. It includes "Graceland" by Paul Simon, "Me and Elvis" by Human Radio and a hundred other songs. The *Musician* Drama Society has taken some of our favorite lyrics about Elvis and arranged them into a one-act, two-character play with footnotes. We call it...

# Waiting for Colonel

Gogo: Tabloids scream, "Elvis Seen at Shopping Mall."[1]
Didi: I was flying back from Lubbock I saw Jesus on the plane.
Or maybe it was Elvis. You know, they kind of look the same.[2]
Gogo: Elvis is everywhere.[3]
Didi: We landed in Memphis like original sin. Elvis Presley
Boulevard to the Graceland gates. We were looking
for a Cadillac with Tennessee plates.[4]
Gogo: You think I should buy you a car? Why? Because Elvis did?
Because Elvis gave them cars you think I'm cheap.[5]
Didi: The man on the radio said Elvis Presley died.[6]
Gogo: Elvis did not come in without those wireless knobs.[7]
Didi: Sometimes you gotta do like Elvis did and
shoot the damn thing out.[8]
Gogo: I bought a .44 Magnum with a solid steel cast.
In the blessed name of Elvis I let it blast.[9]
Didi: Alas, poor Elvis, they made us know you well.[1]
Gogo: Can you imagine digging up the king? Asking him to sing.[10]
Didi: Picture a zombie Elvis in a tacky white jump suit.
Just imagine a rotting Elvis shopping for fresh fruit.[1]
Gogo: Elvis just shows up when he's hungry.[11]
Didi: God, please save his soul. He was the king of rock 'n' roll.[12] Ⓜ

1. "ELVIS IS DEAD" BY LIVING COLOUR 2. "IF DIRT WERE DOLLARS" BY DON HENLEY 3. "ELVIS IS EVERYWHERE" BY MOJO NIXON 4. "TENNESSEE PLATES" BY JOHN HIATT 5. "THE WINDFALL" BY JONI MITCHELL 6. "JOHNNY BYE BYE" BY BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN 7. "IN THE DAYS BEFORE ROCK 'N' ROLL" BY VAN MORRISON 8. "TV TALKIN' SONG" BY BOB DYLAN 9. "57 CHANNELS" BY BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN 10. "JESUS MENTIONED" BY WARREN ZEVON 11. "WEEPING STATUES" BY GRAHAM PARKER 12. "AMERICAN ROULETTE" BY ROBBIE ROBERTSON



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