

KEITH JARRETT



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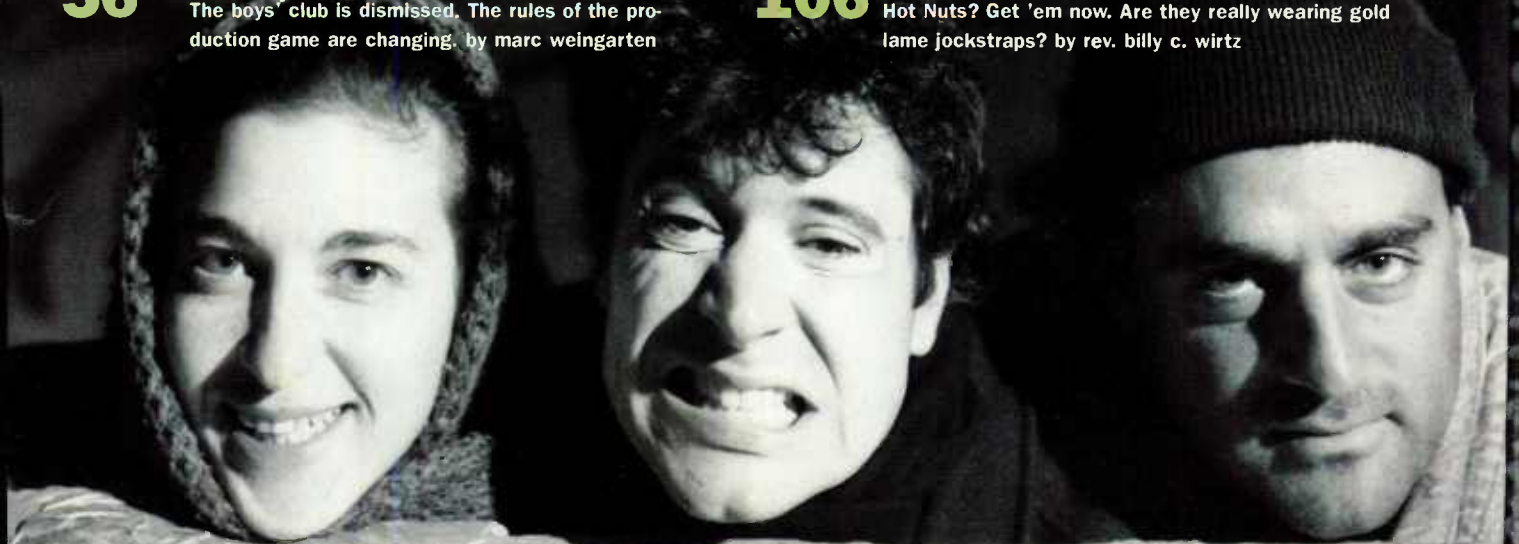
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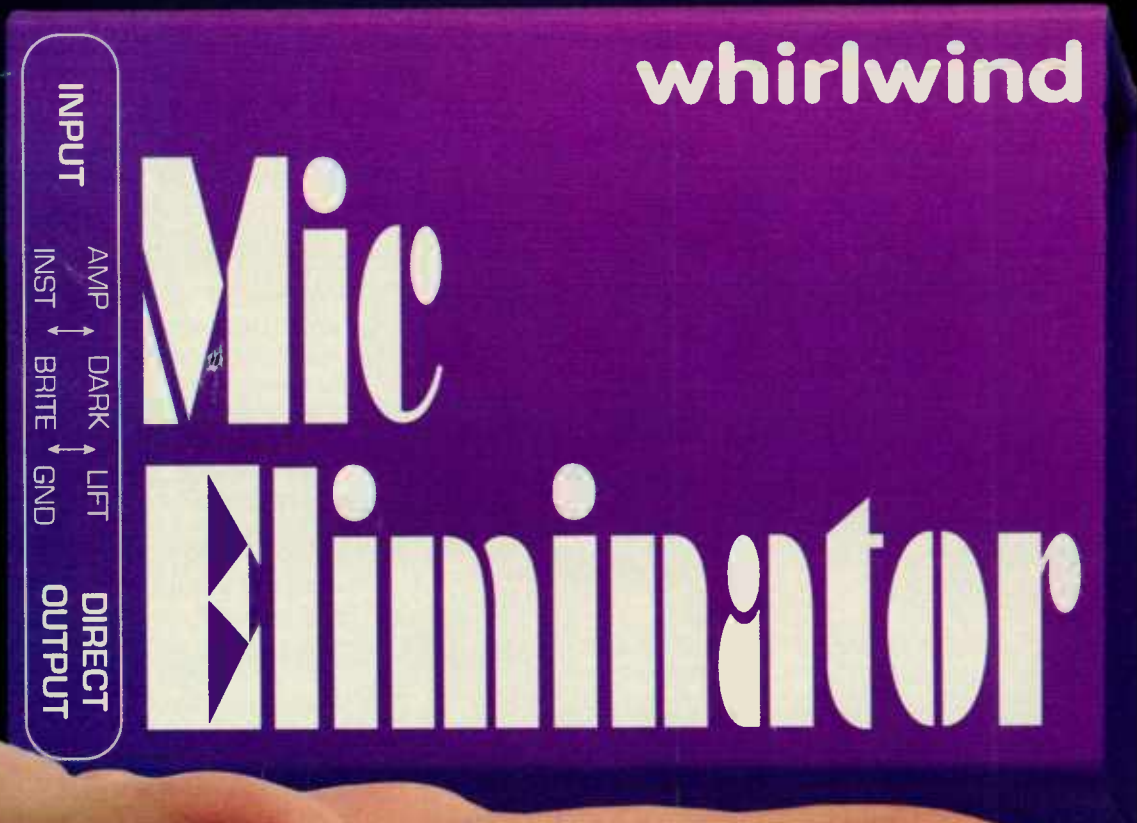
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Big Express, I tuned the guitar to an E chord. The verse of “This World Over” is the same chords as [*Drums and Wires*] “Complicated Game,” but in that different tuning. That was just an inspirational thing. I thought, “Well, I’ll play a few other songs but use this tuning and we’ll see where we go.” And those particular chords were very emotive. It starts with a barred G high up the neck [10th fret], and then you move the notes on the bottom two strings [D and G] down one fret [to C# and F#]. Of course, in open E, it sounds much more exotic.

The stupid thing was, I’d spend ages finding these tunings and chords that I thought I’d invented, and then I’d go to [XTC guitarist] Dave Gregory and say, “Hey, listen to this!” and he’d say, “Yeah, great: A, D and E.” So I’d wound up ’round the shop 100 yards down the road, but I had to get there via Scotland

Your band XTC has been making great pop music for nearly 20 years, but even so, the idea of an XTC tribute album [*Thirsty Ear’s A Testimonial Dinner*] seems strange.

That is an odd one, isn’t it? But I’m chuffed with how it turned out. Sarah McLachlan’s “Dear God” beats ours hands down, and Rubén Blades’ “The Man Who Sailed Around His Soul” is a delight. It’s nice to think that all the stuff you’ve been firing off blindly over the years has actually meant something to people who were armed with a guitar or piano.

Joe Jackson’s “Statue of Liberty” is a riot—the Barry Andrews keyboard quotes are perfect.

He rang me up and apologized for picking such an old basic number. It is kind of lesson one in how to write a song, but he said it was loaded with nostalgia for him so he couldn’t resist. I’m not proud of most of that early stuff. I haven’t listened to any of our first three albums in years. I can’t. And I think of the 400-odd songs that were thrown away before we even made the first album. Jesus, they must have been bad.

Andy Partridge

“If what I play doesn’t surprise me, how the hell can it surprise somebody else?”

What makes you most uncomfortable about that early music?

My incredibly mannered way of singing. I was desperate to make an impression, and I came up with these over-stylized vowel sounds to cut through shitty PAs live. Later on, I felt more comfortable with my plain old voice and old-fashioned concepts like notes, instead of doing seal impressions.

Your more complex progressions suggest you’ve dabbled with alternate tunings.

I used to. For a lot of the songs on *The*

and Finland, walking on my hands.

Did you shy away from standard chord shapes because you didn’t want to be like everyone else?

No, it was just a need to constantly surprise myself. If what I play doesn’t give me that sharp intake of breath, how the hell’s it going to do that for somebody else?

What’s going on with XTC?

At the moment, we’re in a legal deep freeze. For the last two years we’ve been fighting EMI and Virgin to get out of our contract. They want more records from us, but we won’t make any more for them because we don’t like how they’ve been behaving. We’d love to make another album, and we’ve got enough material for two, but right now we’re hamstrung. It’s frustrating. But we haven’t split. I don’t think we’ll ever split. We enjoy doing this too much.

—Mac Randall

Peter Canning

sideman

You do a lot of keyboard dates in Nashville. How do you find a niche for yourself in that competitive town?

Mainly by playing a lot of wacky instruments, like my old Ace Tone and Vox Jaguar organs, Wurlitzer pianos, stuff like that. I can't compete with people like Matt Rollings; he's a monster. So I develop my own thing.

How do you make connections that lead to gigs?

It's really word of mouth. People have to know who you are and that you're available, particularly in this town. But if they get wind of the fact that you're a touring musician, they'll stop calling you for sessions.

Is that because studio and touring

Hammond XB-2 with a Leslie 145, which I've been using for years, or this wonderful Motion Sound Pro 3, which I call the Stovetop Leslie: It's got a rotating horn and an electronically simulated bass in full stereo. It kicks ass, and it weighs just 25 pounds.

You play on the upcoming Mark Knopfler release. Will you be going on the road with him?

"Being a sideman is so much easier than having your own band."

I don't think so. I'm really determined not to go on the road with anybody, now that I've got my own record out [*River of Madness*, D'Ville Record Group, 1310 Clinton St., #215, Nashville, TN 37204].

Do you want to stop playing sessions altogether?

What I really want is to be a solo artist who plays with other people when it works. Being a sideman is so much easier than having your own band, talking to agents, booking the gigs, making sure the musicians are ready, getting all the tunes together. But I've been a songwriter all my life. I love to get up and sing my songs, or just stay home and write them. When I play with someone else, I don't get anything creative out of it. I make a paycheck and I have a good time, but at some point you have to jump out there on your own.

Does having a session career help or hurt when you're trying to launch your own solo act?

I have no idea. Check back in a couple of years and I'll let you know.

—Robert L. Doerschuk

Steve Conn

skills are different?

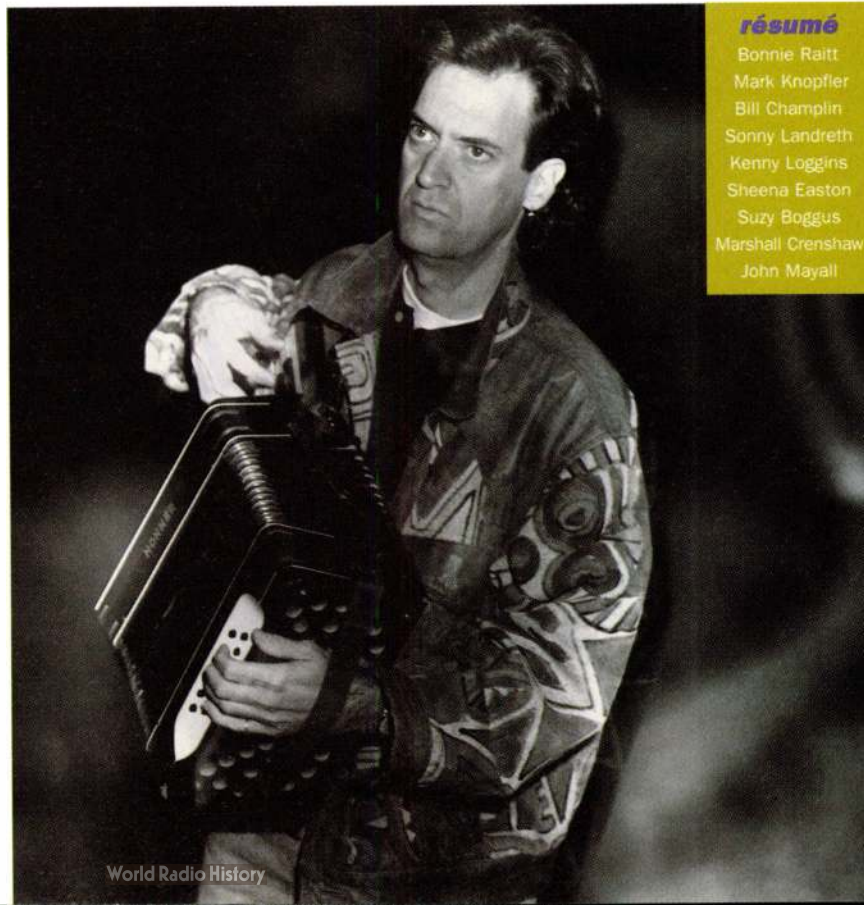
Definitely. A lot of bands have tremendous players, but when you look on their albums it's not the same guys playing on there. Conversely, there aren't many session guys who, for my money, I would want on a live date, because they just don't have the feel.

How do you know what keyboards to bring to a session?

If it's a grand piano thing, I'll check to see what instrument they've got. If they want the wacky keyboards, they'll tell me. But most of my sessions are on accordion, and I always have to find out what kind of accordion they want, because all of mine are tuned differently. I mainly use a musette tuning: There's two or three banks of reeds in each instrument, with one tuned to A440 and the other tuned to, like, A446. The closer you get them to A440, the more it sounds like a French café.

What's your essential stage setup?

A Yamaha KX88 controller with a Kurzweil MicroPiano. I'll also have a



résumé

Bonnie Raitt
Mark Knopfler
Bill Champlin
Sonny Landreth
Kenny Loggins
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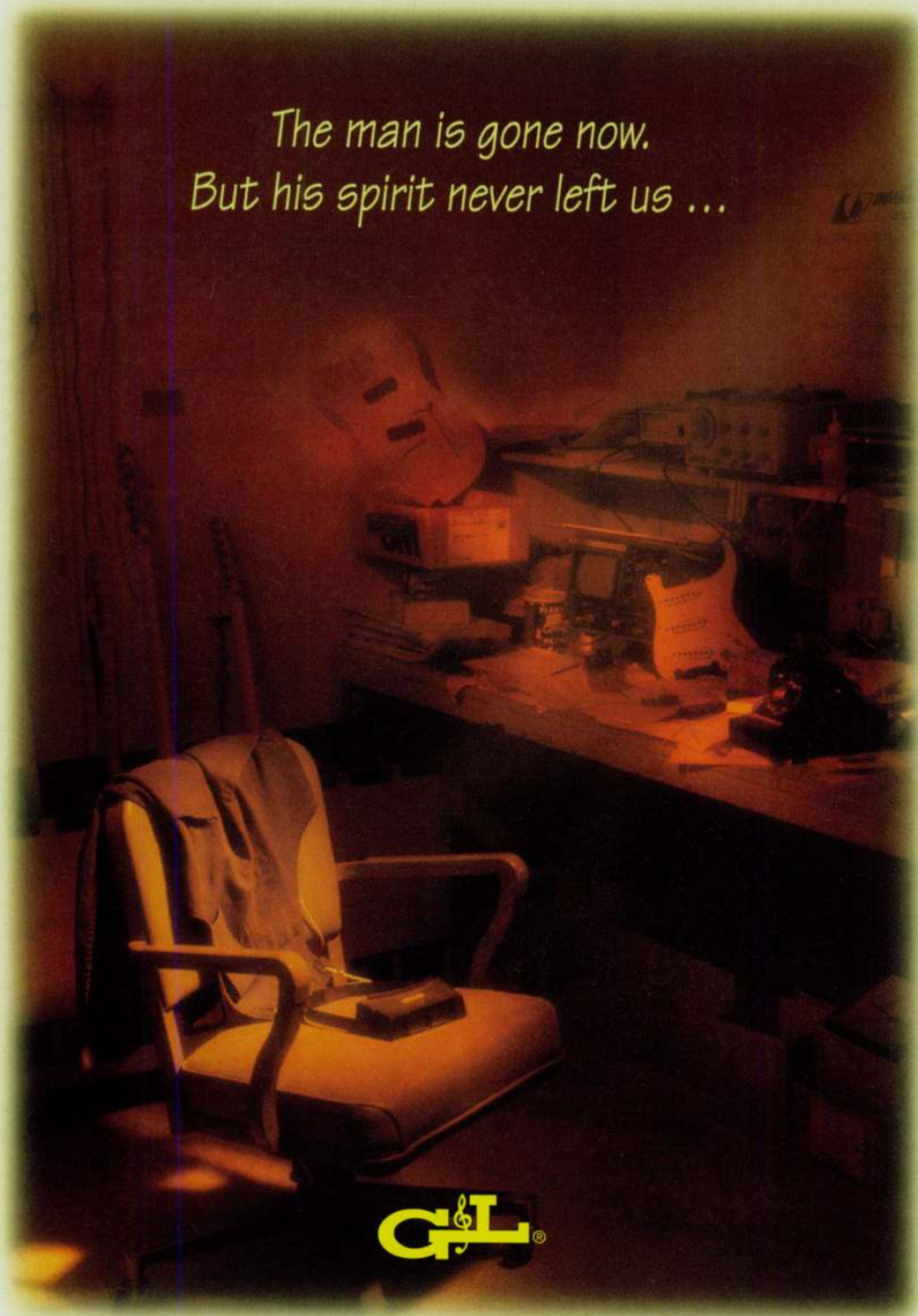
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Thank you so much for putting Sonic Youth on the cover of your December '95 issue! You sold at least one more than you usually do! The article by Mac Randall really did the band justice. The Grateful Dead connection Randall makes is undeniable if only because they've been making spacy, transcendent music and developing a devoted following for a long time now. Just saw SY play in Seattle with Bikini Kill—my only complaint is that they should cut out the goofy Pink Floyd light show. Maybe you'll have Fugazi on the next cover?

Ricardo Wang
rwang@elwha.evergreen.edu

After reading Mac Randall's Sonic Youth article (Dec. '95), I tried to "imagine the last fifteen years without them." I did . . . I felt no sadness whatsoever. You really think they were that important?

John Burrell

jane vs. alanis

I was shocked at the blasphemous comparison to Jane's Addiction Charles M. Young gave Alanis Morissette (Dec. '95). Jane's Addiction is the best thing that has happened to rock 'n' roll since LSD. Morissette's whining lyrics and monotonous melodies in no way live up to the smack-in-the-face message of Jane's Addiction and its erotic arrangement of sound. To call Morissette's band "the second coming of Jane's Addiction" is heresy. Has the music industry become as corrupt as the Church?

Kelly Burke
New York, NY

diy—thanks anyway

I don't wish to discourage your enterprising readers, but running your own record label is an excruciatingly difficult proposition (Jan. '96). Running a label requires a lot of money and manpower. If I had known what I was getting myself into, I probably would never have given it a second thought. Then again, maybe Berry Gordy wouldn't have, either.

Michael R. Fitzgerald
Rimshot Records

jazz this

Excuse my English, but if Stanley Clarke (Dec. '95) thinks there's no integrity to the "Marsalis movement," then why did modern jazz musicians incorporate rock rhythms and riffs into their music in the '70s? Why was that hybrid any purer than

what Marsalis, Joshua Redman, James Carter, Nicolas Payton, Mark Whitfield, and the other "young lions" are doing today? I agree that Marsalis' elitism can be a bit grating, but he is trying to protect the integrity of a genuine American musical phenomenon.

bullski@aol.com

to the readers...

So you think 1995 was a memorable year for the record industry? Believe me, 1895 was at least as important. It was about a century ago that the business of recording, pressing and marketing music took shape. True, decades would pass before the biz as we know it became a fact of cultural life. But all the signs were there in the 1890s, etched in the flat zinc disks invented by Émile Berliner.

Before this German émigré found his alternative to Thomas Edison's cumbersome cylinders, recording was a bizarre deviation from what had always been standard practice. From the beginning of time, music had only been experienced live. You couldn't hear it unless there was a musician and an instrument in the room with you.

Berliner changed all that. His flat disks proved easy to mass-produce. Grooves could be cut deeper into his disks than into cylinders, which meant better-quality sound. And so, around 1895, literally hundreds of record companies burst into existence. Most went out of business, but some dating from that time or even earlier—Columbia and DGG, for example—are with us even now.

Today, records define our relationship to music. We learn how to play, how to listen, even how to conceive of music, from sounds made by people who we don't know, in studios far from where we live. Recordings have done more to change music than anything else in history. Has it all, on balance, been to our benefit or our detriment, as players and lovers of music?

That—and what lies ahead in recording technology—is what this month's cover story is about. Enjoy it; let us know what you think. (And, to our industry friends: Happy Anniversary.)

—Robert L. Doerschuk, Editor

zapped again

I am compelled to point out two errors in your article on Frank Zappa (Oct. '95). The cover painting for *Over-nite Sensation* is attributed to Cal Schenkel; the artist was, in fact, David B. McMacken. Also, I strenuously object to the statement, "Frank evolved from the leader of a ragtag R&B-turned-psychedelic combo to a composer whose works were performed by symphony orchestras." This is very inaccurate. Fundamental to any

basic understanding of Frank Zappa is that he was actively composing, and even occasionally having performed, chamber and orchestral works of "serious" compositions years before the formation of the Mothers of Invention. This is the single most unique aspect of Frank Zappa, which sets him apart from any other musical figure in rock.

Ted Morano
TMORANO@aol.com

where's lover man?

I read with great interest Robert Doerschuk's review of *Keith Jarrett at the Blue Note* on page 94 of the December '95 issue. In his review, Mr. Doerschuk describes Mr. Jarrett's compelling performance of "Lover Man," the Ram Ramirez classic. To my disappointment, I cannot find "Lover Man" among the 40 standards included in the six-disc set that I bought. I wonder if Mr. Doerschuk's set has something mine does not!

Ronald R. Arfin
New York, NY

What album were you reviewing when you wrote about "Lover Man"? This tune is not even on the six-CD set I recorded at the Blue Note. And (interestingly in the very same long paragraph) why is it that my criticism of World Music (an industry acronym for non-ecstatic mimicry or synthetic appliqué) is understood as a criticism of authentic ecstasy as expressed through modes used throughout the world?

Keith Jarrett
Santa Barbara, CA

Robert Doerschuk replies: "Lover Man, oh, where can you be? Mainly in my imagination, apparently. Sorry for free-associating. At least I liked the album, although I still have my doubts about Jarrett's modal reveries on 'You Don't Know What Love Is.'"

irata

In the Dec. '95 gear spread (pp. 68-69), the pickup in the Fender DG-22CE acoustic guitar should be referred to as an Acoustic Matrix, not a Fishman Matrix (even though it is manufactured by Fishman).

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How I Wrote “Wild Thing”

By Chip Taylor

Wild Thing” was an inspired song—inspired in that I had to do it quickly. Jerry Granahan, the producer, called me one day in '65 around noon and asked if I would write a song for Jordan Christopher and the Wild Ones, who he was recording the next day. I started fooling around on my old open-hole Kay guitar, banging away. Nothing much was coming out except this little chorus: “Wild thing, you make my heart sing.” I was groovin’ with that, not really knowing what I had, until I got this thing where I stopped and said, “Wild thing, I think I love you, but I want to know for sure.” I wasn’t sure what that was doing, but by that point it was time for a session I had scheduled for myself at 4:30, so even though I didn’t have the entire concept, I did have some of it finished.

I told my engineer to have the tape running, my stool set up and everything ready to go when I walked in because I

wanted to get this spontaneously out of me. I did the song without knowing the beginning or the end. When I was hesitating on “I want to know for sure, come on and hold me tight, you move me,” that’s because I didn’t know what was coming out. I ended up with these two verses that say a similar thing in almost the same way. It wasn’t even so much a song as somebody talking without really knowing what he was gonna say.

It ran about four-and-a-half minutes because a couple of times, not knowing what else to do, I just played some chords. I decided to edit it down, but before that I overdubbed myself stomping on the floor and beating on something to punctuate those eight bars of straight-ahead B7. Meanwhile, the engineer, Ron Johnson, was whistling along, cupping his hands to make it sound like an ocarina. As we were listening back, I said, “You know, I like that,” and I hummed him a line to play. He tried to pick those notes

out, and that went onto the demo too.

I sent it over to Jerry Granahan the next day, and he said, “I love it! I want to cut it!” I was actually embarrassed by the song, because I had a Catholic upbringing and this was about letting go sexually. But he liked it, so he had this arranger write it up for horns and strings. I don’t want to blame Jerry, because he was locked into this session, but it was a horrible record.

After that, I was even more embarrassed, and I asked the publisher to not play my demo for anyone else. But he did send it with about 40 other tapes to Dick James Music in England. Larry Page was cutting the Troggs at the time, and he gave this whole stack to the group. They went through one by one, discarding everything they heard, but then they came to “Wild Thing,” which they loved. They cut it immediately, as the third song of a three-song session. The boys told me they rehearsed it exactly like the demo and did it all in 15 or 20 minutes, with all the nice little punctuations and drama that the demo had. It was a simple emotional event to begin with, and they captured it.

rou

What’s in a name? In the music business, a band’s name is an important way to communicate a band’s personality and to create recognition in the market. Beyond that, it’s a business asset. Each of the band’s members has an equal, undivided ownership right in its name, just as it would in other assets earned or purchased by the band, like income from performances or royalties on record sales.

But what if the band breaks up? The best way to resolve this problem is to anticipate it. Long before a band splits up, its members should agree on a written series of rules con-

JOHN HERBEY

CD-ROM: The Next Big Hype?

by Michael Gelfand

It's been over a year since my band Models of Perfection finished its CD-ROM demo, and although we're lucky to have it, I sometimes feel that it's only a shiny cocktail coaster in disguise. A local software company approached us about doing the project, and we agreed to it because we felt it would help generate an "industry buzz"—after all, there aren't many unsigned acts (or signed ones, for that matter) with a CD-ROM on their resume.

But there were some important issues we didn't consider until it was too late. For instance, does anyone really want to look at a CD-ROM to gauge a band's talent? Cassette tapes and glossy 8x10s are still de rigueur for shopping a band, and most of the A&R reps we spoke with were used to more traditional methods of finding new talent (tapes and live shows). You'd think



that a CD-ROM's inherent uniqueness would draw added attention to your band and help get you to the top of the pile of bands to be listened to. But in fact, many people still look at CD-ROMs as something that'll take a month to deal with. If that's the case, your music's never going to get heard,

and that's not terribly cost-efficient, is it?

All the label reps I talked with were fascinated by the idea of receiving a demo with real-time video, animation, and CD-quality audio. Unfortunately, most of them were ill-equipped to deal with the technical side of using a CD-ROM. Some of them didn't even know what I was talking about when I asked if they had the minimum hardware required to deal with our CD-ROM.

Sure, it's not their job to operate computers—yet— [cont'd on page 102]

ugh mix

cerating rights to the name. A partnership agreement would state, for example, that the group as a whole owns the name. A provision would stipulate that if any member leaves the group, voluntarily or otherwise, that member surrenders the right to use the band name, which stays with the remaining members of the group, subject to any buy-out rights of the departing member. An incoming member would have to acknowledge in writing that the name of the band belongs to the partnership and that the

new member does not own any rights in the band's name, except to the extent that he or she acquires a partnership interest.

If the group completely disbands, a good approach would be

members could not agree on a value among themselves. Obviously it's a good idea to try to avoid having rights in the band name become vested in the record label or in the management company. Remember, the name of your band is

your property, and important property at that

Ned Hearn is an attorney in

the San Francisco area with an extensive practice in entertainment law. Send your questions to Ned Hearn c/o Musician for possible discussion in future installments of Your Music.



your music and the law

for one member to buy the interests in the name shared by the other members. The agreement could provide a formula for the buy out, or leave it to binding arbitration with expert testimony if the



private lesson

Shedding With Robben Ford

by Matt Resnicoff

Robben Ford's playing lately is so fluent and in the pocket, and his sense of abandon so intense, it's tough to believe he ever has a bad gig. "Oh man," he laughed after two scorching sets at New York's Bottom Line. "I have nights where I should have stayed home. I've experienced *tremen-*

dous grief about my tone. But you have to go out there into the lack of security. It's always uncertain to some degree."

By channeling stress energy into pure expression, Ford sets a calming, almost sagely example. The performances on his recent *Handful of Blues* (Stretch/Blue Thumb), with drummer Tom Brechtlein and bassist Roscoe Beck, are built on beefy tone and strong material, but more

directly reflect a focus that may be missing in conflicted younger players. "Musicians tend to wait too long before making music with other musicians," Robben said. "I see this all the time. Play crummy gigs—*act* like a professional musician, even if you're not making money! It's good on all levels: You play with people, which is the most important thing, and you learn about the nuts and bolts of making a living.

"But for some people," he continued, "'being onstage' is more important than the real reason for playing: a desire to communicate in an exposed way. There's a lot of aggression in rock music now. I certainly understand it, but it throws the music that much further away. People need to care who Ellington, who Lightnin' Hopkins was. That lineage had something inspired to offer."

Apart from a reverent sense of history, one of Ford's weapons is the diminished scale's second mode, an eight-note series that ascends symmetrically in a half-step, whole-step pattern (see example). Over, say, a G7, the scale adds a flat nine (*Ab*), a sharp nine (*Bb*), a flat five (*Db*) and a six (*E*) to the dominant tonality, making it a subtle segue—Robben likes it as a link from the I to the IV chord in blues—and a source for chromatic ideas.

Robben said he never practiced; he literally taught himself bebop on the bandstand in the early '70s, and worked to refine his inner voice. "The whole thing is, what does a note sound like, and what does it sound like next to another note? And then, just having a sense of the phrasing of the giants. I listened to a lot of Miles, Albert King, Billie Holiday . . . like, you've heard this solo by Ben Webster so many times, you can sing right along with it. 'Technical' is second. You have to know where the notes are, and what to hit to hear which note, but that's ear training. It's singing: That's what you play. And that's being connected to your heart."

G "Symmetrical" Diminished Scale



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1. Including Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, Kiss, Buddy Guy, and more recently, his work with other Mackie mixer owners: Sting, David Abbruzzese, Vinnie Colaiuta, Stanley Clarke, Tony Williams, Steve Vai, and Carlos Santana.

2. He hates the location of the 8•Bus' talkback button.
3. According to Eddie, Eric Shenkman (Spin Doctors), Little Red Wagon Mobile Recording Studio, Bootsy Collins and John McEnroe have purchased 8•Bus consoles at his urging.

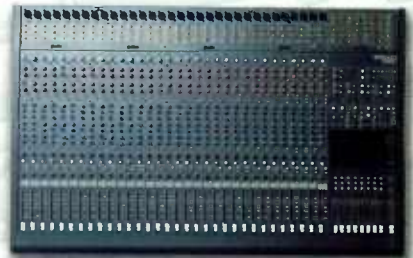


A console he says he likes for its "...sweet EQ, dynamic range, and cleanliness."

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new signings



The melodies are twisted and nightmarish, the whispery vocals are re-EQ'd for a megaphone-like timbre, and the sonic backdrop is a cacophony of warped guitars, random circus side-show organs, melancholy banjos, answering machine messages, blown-out amplifiers, whirling engines and stray room sounds. Nope, Sparklehorse's recent debut release, *Vivadixiesubmarinetransmissionplot*, is not your typical major-label fare. So how did they ever get signed to Capitol Records? The answer lies in the strong songwriting skills, home recording savvy and industry connections of the band's sole member, Mark Linkous. And when you consider that not long ago he was sweeping chimneys for a living, the story of Sparklehorse becomes all the more inspiring.

Linkous, a descendant of three generations of Southwestern Virginia coal

miners, used to play in a band called the Dancing Hoods. After four years of toiling in New York clubs, the Hoods headed to L.A.; two years and one release on Relativity Records later, they broke up. Within six months, Linkous was living in a van and had reached muck bottom. He moved back to Virginia and worked at menial jobs: chimney sweeping, dish-washing, house painting.

What happened next is the stuff of legend: Linkous came to the sudden realization that he didn't need a band. "I live in the middle of nowhere," Linkous says, "so I'm isolated from other musicians. I basically had to do everything

myself out of necessity." With the mother of invention on his side, he produced a brilliant tape on his home 4-track.

A big fan of Camper Van Beethoven, Linkous had befriended CVB's leader David Lowery (now of Cracker) and their producer David Herring in L.A. when the Dancing Hoods opened for Camper. Herring later called Linkous in Virginia with an offer to play guitar on former Bangle Susanna Hoffs' solo record. During the sessions, Herring introduced Linkous, and his tape, to Deanna Cohen at the mega-music publishing company Warner/Chappell. "I went into her office with my guitar," Linkous recalls, "and played all these songs for her. She started the ball rolling, and she turned me on to Dave Ayers, who at the time managed Ween and Helmet."

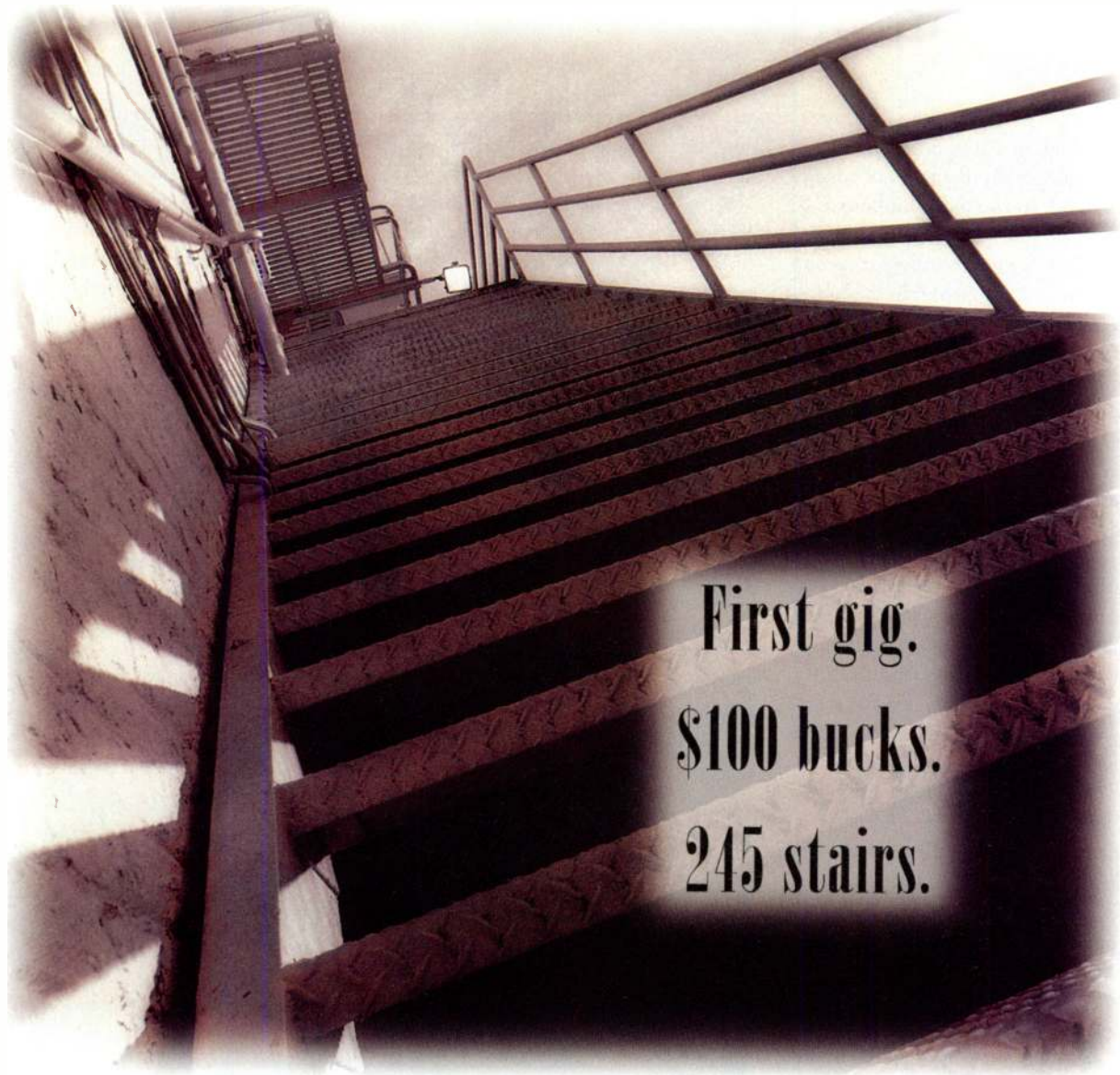
Ayers ended up managing Sparklehorse as well. "There was this strong

SPARKLEHORSE

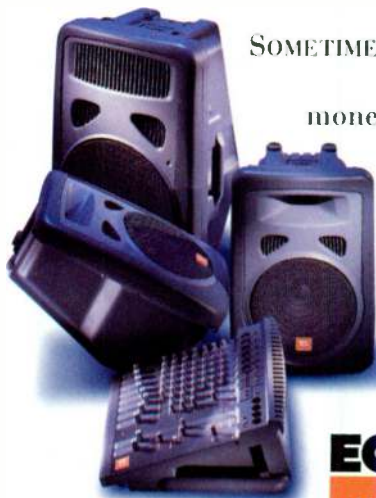
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S O U N D T H A T C A R R I E S

pop instinct in Mark's writing," he says. "In his 4-track stuff it's buried under a bunch of sludge, but that's part of what I like about it." Ayers landed Linkous a publishing deal at Warner/Chappell. "That deal allowed us to make the record without a record company," he explains. "I wanted to have a publishing deal done so Mark could make a living and not feel pressured to make a record in haste."

The record took about a year and cost around \$15,000, a pittance by industry standards. David Lowery produced and played on two-thirds of the songs at his Sound of Music Studio in Richmond (he's listed as David Charles on the album). The other third Linkous recorded at home. Some songs were culled from his original 4-track tape. "I guess a lot of it was just static," Linkous says. "It's hard to articulate the feeling I wanted to get across with the music. It feels alien, yet it still generates a sense of place in a different way than sounds you're accustomed to." Notable players on the record include Bob Rupe from the Silos and Cracker, Johnny Hott of House of Freaks, and Armstead Wellford of Love Tractor and Gutterball. "Mark, David and I worked together for a year," recalls Ayers, "them in Virginia and me in New York. Sending tapes back and forth. Talking about it every day on and off for a long time. And then we started playing it for record companies."

The tape shopping had barely begun when Capitol A&R director Julie Panebianco inked a deal. "I heard four songs, and I really loved what I'd heard," Panebianco remembers. "I think it was 'Homecoming Queen,' 'Weird Sisters,' 'Tears on Fresh Fruit' and 'Heart of Darkness.' I went down with Dave Ayers to see them record. When I got down there I heard some more stuff I hadn't heard yet, like 'Someday' and 'Cow,' and I flipped." With Capitol in the midst of a major roster revamp initiated by president Gary Gersh, the way was clear for music like Linkous'. So without ever playing a single note live, or prostrating themselves at some contrived label show-

case, or suffering through demeaning form-letter rejections, Sparklehorse signed a major label deal in January 1995.

What's significant about Linkous' signing experience is that first, he did it alone with his 4-track. Second, he was able to use connections he had established during his previous time in a band. Third, he got a publishing deal before getting a label

deal, allowing him both time and autonomy to record without pressure from a label. Asked for words of wisdom for struggling bands, Linkous replies, "Buy a 4-track and find someone that's connected. There's so much luck involved. Just think of how many great songwriters and bands we'll never hear." Here's one we will.—*Andy Gensler*

talent

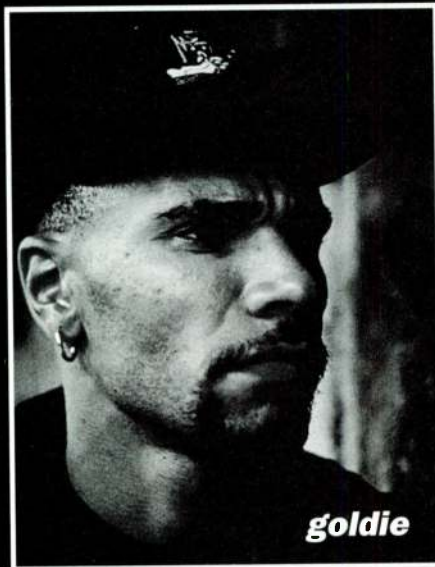
goldie As the first artist to inject some soul into "Jungle"—the brisk, percussive, bass-and-drums-heavy style of techno that's emerged from the pirate radio stations and urban dance clubs of London—Goldie has become its ambassador to the popular music world. On his full-length debut, *Timeless* (FFRR), ocean sounds and honey-voiced divas brush against the likes of

them even realizing it's their sound." The credits on *Timeless* reveal just one cleared sample. "That's one that you know of," Goldie smiles. "And that was just out of respect for that tune."

Isn't that stealing? "The Recording Arts Society [the British performing rights organization] are listening to it and saying, 'Nope, don't see anything there,'" Goldie responds.

"Because technology is allowing us to dissect things like never before. It's different from the rap/hip-hop things a few years ago where they were using whole break-beats and riffs."

One of the tracks sounds like Weather Report. "Oh yeah," Goldie enthuses. "Weather Report, Metheny, Yellowjackets, Miles—that's my inspiration. But I didn't sample them anywhere." He flashes a mischievous grin. "Next album," he winks, "I'll sneak some Weather Report in there for ya."—*Dev Sherlock*



dance, R&B, ambient and '70s prog-jazz.

But the real story is his production. "The rules have changed," states Goldie, acknowledging techno's penchant for sampling artists without their knowing it (much less getting paid). "We especially like to sample artists who criticize 'techno,' taking their stuff and sticking it right back in their faces without

edsel The DC hardcore sound is typified by whipsawing drums, grisly guitars and turbulent vocals, but veteran group Edsel is tilting that axis. With their fourth record, *Techniques of Speed Hypnosis* (Relativity), the quartet stirs diverse British influences (Boo Radleys, Laika, Stereolab, Wire) and odd instrumentation into a softcore broth. Sitar, a Moog, Hammond B3, violins and the addition of the Kick Horns create an unusually broad punk palette.

"DC has a very supportive punk scene with an artistic sensibility," explains bassist Geoff

talent

Sanoff. "People brought ideas from literature, painting and art theory to their music. But if the music is going in a certain direction one of us will always undercut it," he adds. "That's our rational bent and part of our nature, to play with convention without fully embracing it."—Ken Micallef

francis dunnery In 1994, Francis Dunnery was another long-haired English rocker, hoping to hit it big with his quirky but gruff Atlantic debut, *Fearless*. A year later, he

returned with *Tall Blond Helicopter*, and talk about your Jekyll-and-Hyde transformations! The guy shaved off his tresses, moved from

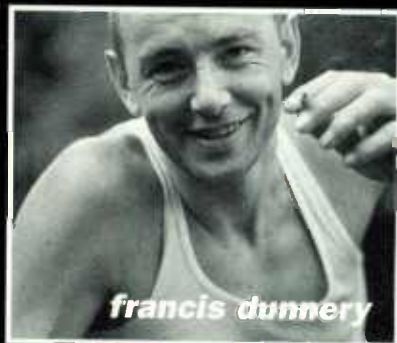
London to New York, dusted off his old acoustic, and took up Tuesday night residency at the chi-chi Fez club, where he busked (and buffed) his new material. "I changed absolutely

everything about my life," asserts Dunnery. "Physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually—you name it, I've changed it. And I prefer the new me, because I got it wrong the first time."

Hence such folk-strummed ditties as "I Believe I Can Change My World" and the self-explanatory "I Don't Want To Be Alternative." Besides 6-string, spiked with pertinent electric breaks, the main instrument is Dunnery's voice, all



Chris Tolliver



Sharon Abouf

rumped and rustic and reminiscent of Peter Gabriel's. It's definitely *not* alternative, says the singer, "and that's a start—finding out what I *don't* wanna be. These tracks are the same as my haircut: something less to hide behind. I'm trying to get to the point where I can look at myself in the mirror and know who I am and why I do things."

Dunnery adds one other thing: "Tell the truth. Somebody told me a few years ago that as long as I tell the truth, everything will be all right."—Tom Lanham

MUSICIAN 1996 BEST UNSIGNED BAND COMPETITION

UPDATE

We are currently listening to the thousands of tapes we received. Watch for the first round of semi-finalists to be announced in the April issue (on sale February 20).





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TRK 3
TRK 4

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Acid Jazz in Orlando

By Tony Green



To get a feel for the underground acid jazz scene in Orlando, Florida, you have to know where to go, what to do and when to do it.

One wrong turn and you might find yourself sucking Ice beer and singing “Louie, Louie” with a Bruce Willis look-alike, or wandering aimlessly through souvenir-jonesing tourists at Disney.

Even if you know where to go, you have to look sharp. It’s easy to miss Bad Mood Records, which is housed in an institutional-looking white brick building downtown, right across from the post office, with only a cartooned lightning cloud to let you know you’re in the right place. Unassuming, yes, but it’s as close to an epicenter as this scene is going to get. Bad Mood is home to downtown’s main source of acid jazz vinyl and CD, as well as Eighth Dimension, a local label that puts out compilations featuring local DJs and mixologists.

Orlando’s scene is typical in many ways of what you’ll find in other cities. Blues, rock ‘n’ roll, and modern rock all exist in pretty sizable doses. But there’s also a huge dance culture in Orlando; house and techno are big, and raves are commonplace.

While not nearly as popular as main-

stream club music, acid jazz has established a solid foothold in the area. According to Gerard Mitchell, the 26-year-old president of Eighth Dimension, part of the appeal of acid jazz is its less frenetic pace. For someone hot-wired on techno, acid jazz is a

wise be welcome. Walk into the Sapphire Supper Club during its “Phat ‘n’ Jazzy” acid jazz night, and you’ll find yourself surrounded by solidly middle-class twentysomethings, mixed by Florida’s segregated standards but largely white. Folks mill around the bar. Some hit the dance floor and writhe to the gooey funk of Kruder & Dorfmeister or Baby Buddha Heads. In its DJ-powered club incarnation, acid jazz doesn’t differ substantially from the music of A Tribe Called Quest or the Roots, to name two examples. But, says DJ Matt Gorney, calling it hip-hop is the kiss of death if you’re looking to book a show or music night.

“Acid jazz incorporates break beats and all that. But before the name ‘acid jazz’ came along, you could never get a gig in downtown Orlando playing that music. The term ‘hip-hop’ has so much baggage in the minds of so many people. Acid jazz doesn’t have that baggage.”

The baggage, Gorney says, is familiar to hip-hoppers who try to book live shows. It’s the unspoken fear of black kids “causing trouble” without even having the courtesy to run up a decent bar tab. So it’s no surprise that clubs that would blanch at putting on a live hip-hop



bad mood records’ michael donaldson

pleasantly funky alternative. “Also,” snickers Michael Donaldson, owner of Bad Mood, “kids are taking different drugs than they were before.”

Image helps too. Acid jazz, in many ways, runs interference for hip-hop culture into areas where it might not other-

PHOTOS BY TAMARA RAEKIN





dj bmf and mike abeyta at the sapphire

night are perfectly happy booking its kissin' cousin, acid jazz.

The Sapphire, which is pretty much the place to be, is in the "cool" part of downtown, on North Orange Street. Barbarella and the Zuma Beach Club, two dance clubs, flank the Sapphire. A block's walk will put you at the neo-beatnikish Yab Yum Cafe and the Go Lounge. Recently, clubs like the Edge, the Renaissance and Barbarella have been throwing acid jazz into their mixes. Guest spinners like DJ Smash have deejayed at Barbarella, while DJ BMF (Greg Lentz) and Pimp Daddy Nash (John Curtis) spin hard funk and Latin jazz weekends at the nearby Cafe 11.

Among Orlando's crop of young players, Sam Rivers stands out as the unlikely local hero. The 72-year-old saxman, long a leading figure in the avant-garde, makes his home in the area. Acid

scenesters revere Rivers, but his take on the movement is matter-of-fact. "All this music is, is heavy funk. Blues, jazz, R&B, rock 'n' roll, it's all the same music. It's just a new label. I came up playing with B. B. King, T-Bone Walker, Miles Davis, and Jimmy Witherspoon. So I know all about that music."

Though avant-garde is a hard sell, even in jazz meccas, Rivers not only gigs frequently around Orlando, he gigs to crowds. On a good night, he'll squeeze his 19-piece free funk band (complete with DJ) into the 30'-by-6' stage at the Sapphire. The big band gives him the best of both worlds: a heavy dance beat for kids to latch onto, and enough harmonic sophistication and freedom to make exploration worth the time.

"That's basically what Miles did," he says. "Using the beat as a way to freedom. Once you have the beat established, you have the freedom to dance around it."

Two local stations are putting acid jazz on the air. WVCF music director Wayne Parkins thinks it's the greatest thing since sliced bread. At an acid jazz panel at the *Jazz Times* convention in New York, he gushed about the reaction to the music, broadcast from three till six in the afternoon on his mostly straight-ahead station.

But underground acid jazzers like Donaldson and Mitchell generally turn up their noses at the mere mention of 'VCF. Too mainstream and commercial, they say. ("They play stuff like the Jazzhole," sniffs Donaldson.) Their choice is WPRK, affiliated with nearby Rollins College. 'PRK is a free-form station, with just one acid jazz show, but there is so much over-

lap that you can hear something that resembles acid jazz almost any time of day, says music director Lisa Blanning.

The split in tastes and allegiances demonstrates the breadth of the style and the amount of room there is for individual niches. Where do you draw the line between the Brand New Heavies, Brooklyn Funk Essentials and the Jazzhole? Adrian Sherwood, Scratch



eugene snowden and joshua cravens at the yab yum

Perry and Tricky? DJ Premier and DJ Krush? The overarching Afro-diasporic aesthetic makes delineation extremely difficult. Driving back home on I4, I reflect on the peculiarity of the situation: twentysomethings arguing about jazz. Then I let the passenger's seat down, start to hum Charles Earland's "The Mighty Burner," and eventually realize how foolish it is to be surprised by it all.

Best of Orlando's Acid Jazz Scene

Best Live/Radio DJs: BMF, whose mixing and scratching skills win as much respect as his collection. BMF also spins from 3 to 5 each Thursday afternoon on WPRK.

Best Club Sound System: Barbarella, Orange at Washington.

Best Live Sound System: The Sapphire, 54 N. Orange.

Best Late-Night Hangouts: Cafe 11, 68 E. Pine St., about two blocks down from the Sapphire. Also, the Go Lounge, 25 Wall St., which features 79 types of beer (not to mention TNT hard cider, served in a dynamite-shaped can), and the

Yab Yum Cafe, also at 25 Wall St.

Best Record Store: Bad Mood, 225 N. Magnolia. After hearing Massive Attack at S.O.B.'s in New York in '91, owner Michael Donaldson made sure that when he opened his store in '93 it was stocked with acid jazz, funk and breakbeat, on vinyl and CD.

Best Record Label: Eighth Dimension, Box 1909, Orlando, FL 32802. Artists work out of a one-room recording studio in the back. The best example of local talent is on the *Mixed Emotions* collection.

Photography by Danny Clinch

By Jon Young

Happin Through Rejection

It seemed like a sweet deal. After two inventive albums for Virgin's faux-indie label Caroline, Walt Mink landed a six-record contract with Columbia, apparently with no strings attached.

"When we signed with them, they said, 'We're not gonna fuck with you. We'll let you do your thing,'" recalls singer-guitarist John Kimbrough wryly as he sips hot potato soup at Ratner's, a funky Jewish deli on Manhattan's lower east side, joined by bandmates Candace Belanoff (bass) and Orestes Morfín (drums). "It was a credibility thing for them, 'cause they didn't have an act like us. But the way the company is structured, there's no room for a band to do what it wants to do.

Translation: When the power structure at Columbia changed, the band found itself in the hands of folks who disliked the music and wanted to remold their

How Walt Mink Survived Major-Label Politics



ASS

and Lived Happily Ever After

(So Far)

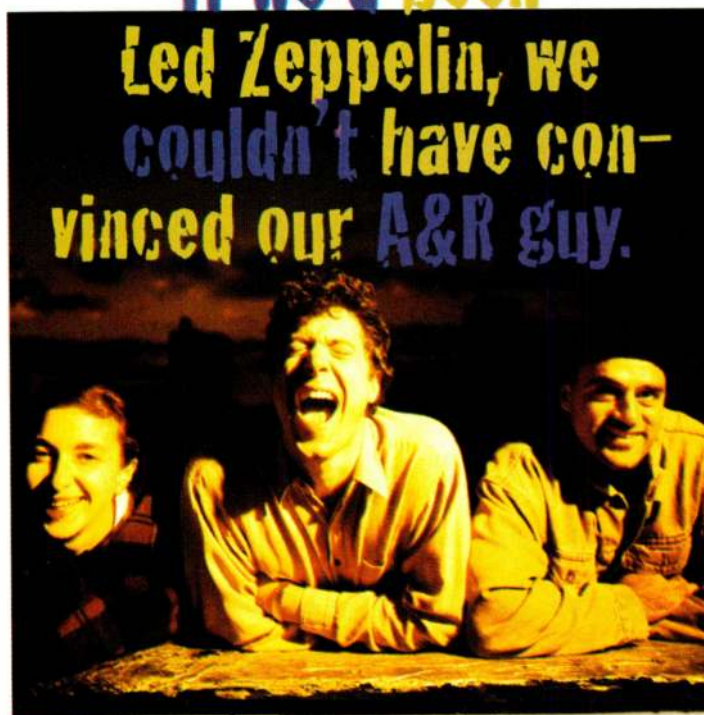
sound. ("They wanted hits, and we're not hits," Kimbrough sighs.) The ensuing political shenanigans were a rude awakening.

Until the Columbia debacle, Walt Mink had led a sheltered existence. Formed at Macalaster College by Kimbrough, Belanoff and drummer Joey Waronker, the group named itself after one of the school's professors, paying dues on the Minneapolis club scene in the early '90s.

"We used to perform three sets of 40 minutes a night," remembers Belanoff. "We'd play everything we knew—twice."

"We'd get paid 50 bucks by the bar," adds Kimbrough, "then pass the hat and come away with maybe 100 dollars in cash. We were so clueless, we thought we were making a killing."

In the process, Walt Mink forged a rich, unique style, specializing in tense, unpredictable pop tunes highlighted by Kimbrough's big guitars and appealing upper-register vocals. Their 1992 debut *Miss*



Happiness and 1993's *Bareback Ride* [both on Caroline] promised even greater things, garnering upbeat reviews and attracting the attention of—ulp—the big labels.

The whole Columbia misadventure was "a domino effect," explains Kimbrough. "We signed, there were personnel turnovers at the label, and then Joey left the band in June '94, three weeks before we

were supposed to make a record. Thanks for nothing!" So instead of recording, the remaining Minks, now based in New York, looked for a new stickman. "It was exhausting," says Kimbrough. "When we started searching, we made up a short list of three drummers, and Orestes was number three, but he was a long shot, 'cause he was living in the woods in Colorado with his dog. Nobody could find him."

Finally, in September, a mutual friend put the two sides in touch. "I didn't need much persuading once I got the tapes, though," notes Morfin.

The new guy probably had second thoughts about the gig after discovering what he'd stepped into. Remembers Kimbrough, "We were going to tour for two weeks to get ready, then go into the studio in November '94 to cut a record. By this time our manager and A&R person had split. We had to prove ourselves to the new head of A&R and our new A&R guy with one show at Maxwell's. If we'd been fuckin' Led Zeppelin on a good

tools of production

JOHAN KIMBROUGH'S main guitar is a '57 Stratocaster, but it's hardly the priceless artifact you might think. "It was gutted when I bought it," he explains. "Somebody had routed out a hole in the back for a Carvin M22 humbucker, so it's actually not that valuable. There's no real fanciness to it, but it is an old guitar and I love it. I've played it for ten years. I've got other guitars—a Sears Silvertone, a '63 Fender Jaguar, a couple of Strats—but it's the one that sounds best." He's got a '57 Japanese copy for backup. "I finally found this Japanese reissue Strat with a Seymour Duncan Hot Stax pickup, and was able to get a very similar sound to the other guitar.

"I use two amps, a Marshall half stack [JMP-100 head, 4x12 cabinet] and an Orange half stack [OD 120 head, 4x12 cabinet], which are connected. I love my Octavia pedal and the Dunlop

Crybaby wah-wah, but I only use them occasionally. I pretty much step on a distortion box [Boss ROD-10 Overdrive/Distortion] and that's it." Kimbrough's other accessories include a Rapco AB box, a Boss TU-12 tuner, Dean Markley Blue Steel .009 strings, and Fender medium picks.

CANDACE BELANOFF uses '69 and '72 Fender Precision basses "cause I like that late '60s and early '70s sound. I was attracted to the old Motown feel, that deep round thudding sound. In the same spirit, I'm using an Ampeg SVT bass amp with two regular old Ampeg 4x10 cabinets. I might want to move into something a little more techno-weenie to have more presence onstage." Belanoff also employs a Boss TU-12 tuner and Dean Markley Blue Steel roundwound medium gauge strings.

Drummer ORESTES MORFIN raves, "I waited my entire life to have my Yamaha Custom

Recording Series drums. I'm not kidding. When it comes to wood, Yamaha is it." Specifically, he's got a 24"x30" bass drum, a 16" floor tom, a 14" rack, a 13" rack, and an 8 1/2" snare.

"I originally got into chain drive pedals, and DW [5000] was one of the first. I prefer top-heavy sticks [Vic Firth Wood Tip American, Classic Rock] and thin cymbals [Zildjian New Beats hi-hats, two Zildjian crashes, thin and medium, and Zildjian china]. I have one of the first Sabian [22 ride] cymbals from the time when the Zildjian brothers split up, and Sabian took all the original Turkish hand-hammering guys with him up to Canada. That cymbal is 10 or 12 years old, a work of art. It's hand-hammered by this Turkish guy and signed on the back. It weighs a ton!"

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night, we couldn't have convinced these guys. It was a setup—the crowd loved us, but they didn't give a shit. Then I found out they'd cancelled our studio time two weeks before we even hit the road. They'd shitcanned our record and we had no idea! There was a lot of dishonesty and a lot of ulterior motives."

After much pleading, Columbia liberated the band, which promptly followed former manager Janet Billig to Atlantic, where she's now a senior vice-president. Says Kimbrough, "From the time of getting dropped to going into the studio was four months, which isn't long, but it seemed like an eternity. We were sitting around apologizing to Orestes the whole time."

"I was wondering why I ever crawled out of the mountains," the drummer laughs.

Last April, Walt Mink finally entered Woodstock's Dreamland studio for two weeks of recording basic tracks, co-producing with John Agnello (Breeders, Dinosaur Jr). Two weeks of overdubs at Water Music in Hoboken were followed

by another two of mixing in Chicago with Keith Cleversley, chosen because of his work with Kimbrough's favorite band, the Flaming Lips. The Mink ended up having Agnello oversee the final mixes last September. Finally, their third effort, *El Producto*, was ready for release.

Kimbrough admits that making sense of *El Producto's* dense tracks was a big challenge. "'Stood Up' was a total nightmare to mix, because there was so much stuff on tape. With all 24 tracks packed, there's tons of track sharing, and as soon as one thing would disappear on the track, another would take over—a guitar might be followed by tambourine, then handclaps."

He may worry about sonic overkill, but when it comes to composing, Kimbrough feels he's too restrained. "I'm really slow—I'm not prolific. I think the people who write the best music are in the zone of finding the right notes and not being too careful. If you wanna surprise yourself it can be hard."

Though he strives for originality,

Kimbrough readily acknowledges sources, such as the Zeppelin element in "Overgrown," among other tracks. "Sure, we're rip-off artists, but everybody is. You take what you can get."

"But rip-off has such a pejorative sense," objects Belanoff.

"I'm with her. You can't say that," protests Morfin.

In any case, the Mink's music remains exotically uncategorizable. Lyrically, it's not so wacky. "I wish I could be mystical, but most of the time I'm singing about what I had for breakfast." Indeed, when Kimbrough runs down the songs on *El Producto*, subjects like girlfriend troubles and faithless ex-band members dominate the agenda. As for the album's title, Kimbrough notes, "If I say it's a cigar thing, we're gonna get sued. In fact, we may get sued anyway. Just say it's my jaded take on record business product, dude."

Comparisons to Rush, because of his Geddy Lee-like voice and the band's instrumental prowess, remain a thorn in Kimbrough's side. "I don't want that spin placed on us of being a musician's band like Primus or Rush, because then you miss the point of what we're trying to do, which is write interesting songs and compile them into interesting records. I would never want to be thought of as a technical thing, as opposed to a spiritual or visceral thing."

So where does Walt Mink fit in? They're not progressive and don't fit comfortably into the trendy alternative scene, which he rightly observes has "produced some of the worst music going right now." He laughs sardonically, "I'm just trying to make something the kids will love."

Though Kimbrough feels it's impossible to control public images, he admits feeling uneasy witnessing cuter, more packaged bands take the spotlight. "It doesn't bother me, except that the current state of the record business is such that you don't have a lot of time to stick around and do your thing. If you don't sell a certain number of records, you get dropped, and that's troublesome, 'cause we're not doing something that's straight up the middle.

"I don't know what's next on the horizon. It all makes me a little afraid of the future."

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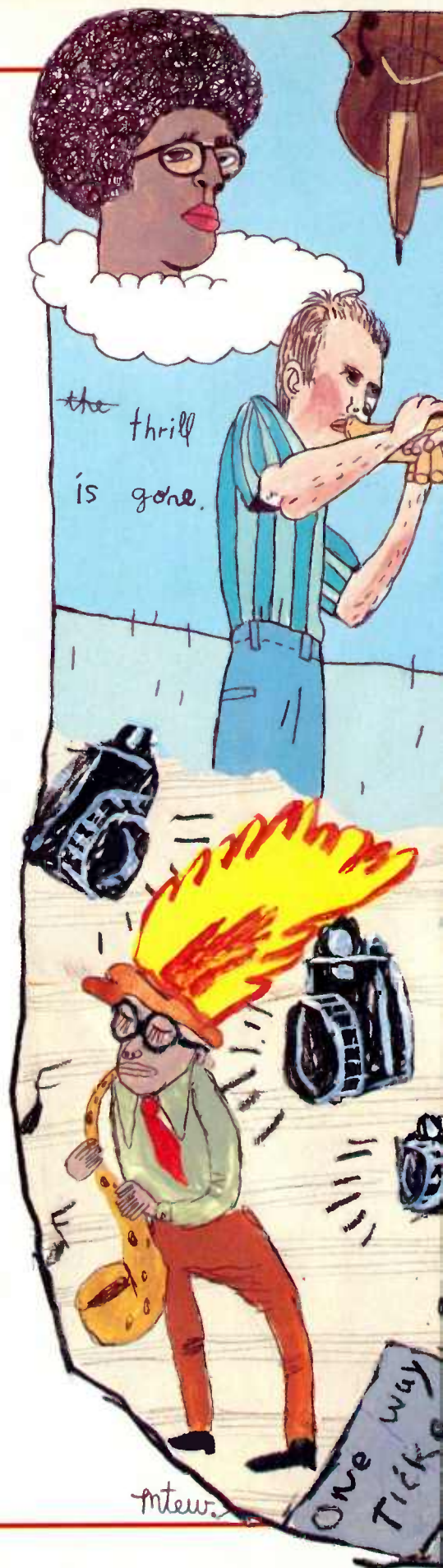
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Jazz

age

by Keith Jarrett





A Survival Manual

K

Keith Jarrett—epochal improviser, provocative interpreter of Bach, Shostakovich, and standards, essayist, even sometime . . . critic—has his doubts about those sober-suited young guardians of “pure” jazz. He’s made as much clear in interviews and in his own writings, which include a critique in the *New York Times* of what’s now loosely perceived as the gospel of Wynton Marsalis. Several months ago, intrigued by Jarrett’s powers of expression, we invited Keith to write a piece for us, not on what’s wrong with jazz but what can be done to undo the damage done by the (perhaps oxymoronic) retro vanguard. He was nice enough to oblige with the following meditation.

illustration by
Mark Todd
and Esther Watson

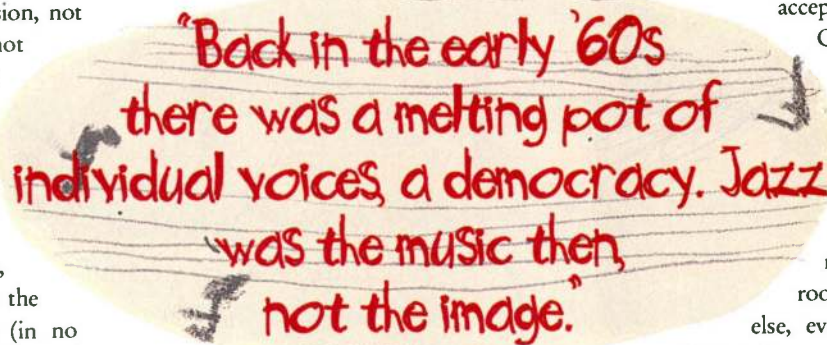
"Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the wise: Seek what they sought." —*Basho*

When did jazz become a theory—a thing, not a process; a package, not an experience? When did the players begin to love their image so much that they forgot it was supposed to be about the validity of their own ongoing personal expression? Real jazz is never generic; it can only thrive on individuality and independence.

Jazz is nothing without the players. It's not jazz on paper, only in the air. Jazz is not a commodity, it's a process of self-discovery and revelation. It's about ecstasy, not greed; heart, not attitude; musical validity, not race; inclusion, not regression; struggle, not coasting; content, not virtuosity; practice, not theory; risk, not safety; motion, not stagnation; original voices, not mimicry.

In the early '60s, when I was a teenager, the following jazz players (in no particular order) were all actively creative and all completely different from each other: Miles Davis, Gerry Mulligan, Lee Konitz, Bill Evans, John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, Wynton Kelly, Sonny Rollins, Coleman Hawkins, Sun Ra, Archie Shepp, Albert Ayler, Phil Woods, Paul Bley, Gary Peacock, Jack DeJohnette, Herbie Hancock, Tony Williams, Jaki Byard, Charles Mingus, Charlie Haden, Ed Blackwell, Don Cherry, Percy Heath, Wayne Shorter, Jimmy Giuffre, Stan Getz, Pete LaRoca, Max Roach, Paul Motian, Art Pepper, Chet Baker, Lennie Tristano, George Russell, Cannonball Adderley, Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard, Paul Chambers, Art Taylor, Ahmad Jamal, Bob Brookmeyer, Mel Lewis, Hank Jones, Tommy Flanagan, Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk, Randy Weston, Jimmy Garrison, McCoy Tyner, Elvin Jones, Cecil McBee, Ron Carter, Jimmy Cobb, Dollar Brand, Roswell Rudd, Beaver Harris, Art Farmer, Jim Hall, Steve Kuhn, Steve Swallow, Hampton Hawes, Sunny Murray, Warne Marsh, Dave Izenon, Bud Powell, John Lewis, J. J. Johnson, Dizzy Gillespie,

Pharoah Sanders, Andrew Hill, Eric Dolphy, Sam Rivers, Sam Brown, Milford Graves, Lowell Davidson, Milt Jackson, Joe Chambers, Pepper Adams, Reggie Johnson, Jimmy Knepper, Johnny Coles, Blue Mitchell, Booker Little, Herb Pomeroy, Henry Grimes, Red Mitchell, Carla Bley, Jim Pepper, Roscoe Mitchell, Lester Bowie, Ran Blake, Jimmy Lyons, Alan Shorter, Ralph Towner, Glen Moore, Dave Holland, Louis Hayes, Vernell Fournier, Connie Kay, Billy Higgins, Horace Silver, Kenny Dorham, Eddie Gomez, Jimmie Woods, Shelley Manne, Israel Crosby, Hank Mobley, Red Garland, Gene Stone, Bobby Timmons, Albert



"Back in the early '60s there was a melting pot of individual voices, a democracy. Jazz was the music then, not the image."

Stinson, Eddie Marshall, Victor Feldman, Roy Haynes, Harold Land, Giuseppe Logan, Billy Hart, Leroy Vinegar, Mal Waldron, Philly Joe Jones, Paul Desmond, Steve Lacy and many more.

I would guess that about 30 of these names could have claimed ascendancy to the jazz throne more legitimately than Wynton Marsalis.

The incredible breadth of musical styles represented by these names means that jazz was what it was supposed to be: a melting pot of truly original voices. Of course, in an age of insane fascination with technical achievement (never mind to what goal), elevating a mere technician to godhead is, finally, possible and, hey, why not? But don't call it genius.

What would the corporate media/marketplace do with any of these guys today? (After all, they were just guys, not schools.) Mass advertising needs predictability and conformity, but this was democracy, not monopoly.

When I heard these players, I was influenced most by their individuality, not their

virtuosity or even their competence. They each showed me something of the potential that jazz is. This is important. They weren't scared of not being accepted, and they hadn't sold out. (By contrast, today's Young Lions can stand in for each other because they've chosen the rules and they're doing the same basic imitations.)

Now we're told it's a new jazz age by the same blind media industries who, along with a bunch of opportunistic critics, lackeys, panderers, cronies, and hangers-on, bought the Young Lions in the first place. It's easy to handle them because they're ultra-conservative, not risktakers and easy to track. But jazz is about risking everything to your personal muse and accepting the consequences.

Otherwise you don't get to sing your song. The young and old players in the '60s were singing their own songs. But today we have the Lions' Club, and the media seem to have no room or interest in anything else, even though real jazz is always alive somewhere.

I'm supposed to have something constructive to say about what to do now if what I said is true. It's really not about doing something. It's about how much we would risk to get the right something. If you're a young player, my advice is: Don't buy a ticket to the club. You don't want to be another prisoner in the lion cage; you want to be free.

If you're a consumer, stop consuming what you see in the pictures and listen to the music first. It should move you (or disturb you) if it comes from the heart, assuming your heart is intact. It shouldn't move you from A to -A; it should place you in a more intensely real world, not in the middle of a virtual world. But in the age of virtual reality there are bound to be virtual artists and virtual educators. And they will be the most visible.

There's an old Bulgarian proverb: "If you wish to drown, don't torture yourself with shallow water."

Jazz is about ecstasy, and ecstasy depends on connectedness, and connectedness depends on *[cont'd on page 102]*

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World Radio History

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FOR MUSIC?

BY COLIN ESCOTT



Eric Sutherland

music will be put on records forever.

thought that so much hidden

have developed, and testified at the

wonderful form you

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- CHEATIN' -

Thomas Edison's phonograph was enjoying its first wave of popularity in 1888, a decade after its invention. It was called "the talking machine," and from this distance we can't even begin to understand the revolution embraced in that phrase. Machines had revolutionized every aspect of life by the late nineteenth century, but a prerecorded, disembodied voice had never come from a machine.

sampling, and other acts of aural ledgerdmain, put virtuosity within reach. The machine taketh away, the machine giveth—by challenging the very notion of what constitutes a performance.

In Oct. '95 a *Billboard* cover story declared that a new generation of high-quality, low-cost recording equipment was changing the process of making music. Anyone could now make pro-

made—Brahms apparently recorded himself in 1888—but there was little point because the recordings themselves could not be duplicated. Every one was unique. And, equally significant, access to the equipment was limited to society's grandees, like Brahms.

By the early 1890s the novelty of the talking machine was waning. If Edison hadn't needed to mass-produce cylinders for his coin-operated phonographs, which were in effect the first jukeboxes, his invention might have lay dormant for a while. But then Emile Berliner, a German immigrant to America who had become wealthy improving the transmission quality of Alexander Graham Bell's telephone, turned his attention to Edison's invention. Berliner saw that flat discs were preferable as a recording medium to the cylinders used by Edison; equally important, he figured out that discs must be reproducible. Thanks to Berliner, by the late 1890s it was possible to manufacture multiple copies of records. It was only then, some 20 years after Edison invented the phonograph, that the record industry was born.

In its infancy, the record business was the preserve of inventors and wild-cat operators who jealously guarded the patents on their phonographs and issued records that could run only on their own machines. Music publishers could have jumped at this new medium for exploiting their catalogs, but none of them had the obvious idea of starting their own record company. In fact, they didn't even think of collecting royalties on recorded material for several years. Perhaps they thought that nothing would supplant the family gathered 'round the pianoforte singing love's old sweet song. In any event, they failed to see the potential hidden beneath the surface noise of recording. Instead, technology advanced hand-in-hand with public acceptance of the phonograph, to the point that the World War I hit, "Over There," sold two million copies as sheet music and one million copies on record.

Scores and sheet music give us an idea of how most forms of music sound-



AMERICAN INDIANS PERFORMING WAR SONGS IN FRONT OF GRAMOPHONE, 1913.

When the phonograph was unveiled, it was as if a machine had developed a soul. Sir Arthur Sullivan had the foresight to see that the phonograph would soon be indiscriminately preserving music, but it would have taken more vision than he or Edison possessed to calculate its effect, which would prove bigger than anything since systems of notation were codified in the Middle Ages.

The phonograph hastened the modification of music by drawing a line between performer and listener. It helped transform music into a passive, even solitary experience. It offered discouraging enlightenment to amateurs by providing proof that someone else could play better. Before the phonograph, the only point of comparison was memory of something heard weeks, months, or years earlier. Eventually, recording technology would come to the aid of the performer and, through sequencing,

quality recordings with \$6000 worth of equipment. The late 20th century's contributions to Edison's creation need not be a deep six-figure studio budget, as it once appeared, but instead an almost populist vision in which anyone can enshrine his or her work for posterity. Edison was fond of talking about the phonograph "seizing the palpating air," and now anyone can seize his or her own palpating air—and, through sampling, anyone else's.

But a century ago, this marriage—the democratic ideal of making one's music and owning the technology of preserving it—was unconsummated and unimaginable. Recordings could be



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World Radio History

ed before the phonograph. One musicologist, Alan Durant, insists that the influence of the phonograph was nothing more than an extension of the standard system of notation. This, he says, "led to an increasing emphasis upon reproduction as against creative, collaborative performance." He could be right, if we're talking only about music based on European traditions. But the issue gets more complicated when jazz and blues enter the discussion.

The history of recorded jazz is usually dated from 1917, when the Original Dixie Land Jass Band went into the studio for Victor. There's little evidence of what jazz sounded like before the ODJB, or for that matter in live settings after those sessions. Early recorded jazz heavily emphasized ensemble performance, yet there were great unrecorded soloists in the era before Louis Armstrong, including the legendary Buddy Bolden. Jazz, as played at parades, was very percussive, but since percussion recorded badly the pulse was often implied rather than stated on early recordings. There were probably other critical differences between street jazz and studio jazz in those days as well, but they will remain areas more of conjecture than documentation.

By the 1930s the pattern we associate with more modern jazz had been established: An ensemble chorus was followed by solo choruses, then rounded out with a final ensemble chorus. This same pattern could be faithfully captured in the studio, but the three-minute time limit imposed by technology on 78 rpm singles meant that soloists rarely got more than one chorus. This was clearly not the case in live performances. In *Hear Me Talkin' To Ya*, pianist Sammy Price told Nat Shapiro and Nat Hentoff about one jam session at the Subway Club in Kansas City: "I came by... at ten o'clock, then went home to clean up and change my clothes. I came back a little after one o'clock, and they were still playing the same song."

Records, then, spread the sound of jazz around the world even while creating an artificial perception of it.

Recording forced soloists to be so concise—and placed such a heavy negative premium on messing up—that many of them worked out their solos in advance. Their apprehension was understandable: If a soloist flubbed a note, the entire performance would have to begin again. As a result, much of the risk-taking one heard onstage was preserved as passages played back by rote on disc.

We have even vaguer notions of how blues was played outside of the studio. Anecdotal evidence suggests that blues was a much looser, more clearly African-derived style when played in the community than what we hear on early records. In his autobiography, *Father of the Blues*, W. C. Handy mentioned that in 1903 he was traveling through Cleveland, Mississippi, when a trio of musicians, playing guitar, mandolin, and stand-up bass played a blues for him. "They struck up one of those over-and-over strains," recalled Handy. "[It] seemed to have no very clear beginning, and no ending at all. . . . On and on it went, a kind of stuff that has long been associated with cane rows and levee camps." And not with the restricted formats of Handy's domain, sheet music and recording, in which blues was wrapped in a package of I, IV, and V chords.

Why the difference? When record companies started recording blues, they assigned A&R staffers to work with the musicians before their sessions. As a result, the songs were tighter and better rehearsed than they normally would have been. Only the occasional field recording gives a sense of how the blues didn't always have clear story lines, rigid 12-bar patterns, and three-minute time limits. The critical loss may have been that give-and-take between performer

and listener that musicologist William Ferris saw in his account of one oldtime bluesman in Mississippi: "Throughout the evening," he noted in his book *Blues From the Delta*, "there is a constant



Michael Ochs Archives

W.C. HANDY'S BLUES WORK WAS A MILESTONE IN POP RECORDING.

interplay between the singer and his audience. The role of performer shifts repeatedly from the singer to his audience and back to the singer." While some sort of interplay obviously exists today as well, blues players—and listeners—of the recording era factor into a perception, defined largely by recording, of what the music should be. The pure blues, nurtured away from microphones, may already be a lost art.

As the recording phenomenon swept through America and into the rest of the world, something besides the music—the pace of fame—was also dramatically transformed. A reputation, once slowly

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BING CROSBY PERFECTED THE ART OF STUDIO- ORIENTED SINGING.

won, could now be achieved almost overnight. Opera tenor Enrico Caruso was probably the first star made by records. His 1902 sides for the British Gramophone Company were issued on the American parent label, Victor. Heinrich Conreid of the New York Metropolitan Opera reportedly offered him an engagement after hearing one of them. If so, this is the first known case of an artist being hired solely on the basis of his records. Caruso's royalties quite likely topped five million dollars before his death in 1921; this success, in effect, legitimized recording as a serious medium for music. Before, it had been the preserve of monologists, artistic whistlers, and novelty acts. But after Caruso, almost everyone who applied themselves seriously to music had at least one eye on his little pot of gold.

The introduction of microphones, another innovation explored by Berliner, opened the door to electrical recording, which immeasurably improved sound quality. Human hearing can usually pick up a range of ten

octaves, from 16 to 16,000 cycles per second, or Hertz. Acoustic recording could only capture sound within a range of 164Hz to a little more than 2kHz. Thanks to electrical recording, which was perfected in 1924 and widely introduced the following year, a range of from 30Hz to 8kHz was normal by 1934. In practical terms, that meant that string basses could be used instead of tubas, and that drums could be more prominently featured without overwhelming more primitive acoustic tools.

Improvements in microphone technology also changed the way people sing, as well as the public's definition of what constituted good singing. No longer was sheer lung power an essential sign of artistry. Rudy Vallee was perhaps the first to develop a mike-friendly style of crooning, but it was Bing Crosby who perfected it. As critic Martin Williams noted in *Saturday Review*, Crosby carried "music into the electronic age. . . . He was, in effect, overheard by the microphone. He could be as emotionally effective [as he was] because he did not raise his voice." Crosby used the microphone to draw listeners in, to encourage an illusion of physical presence. Technology made it possible for him to sing to, not at, his listeners.

Throughout the '30s, engineers broke ground on stereo, long-playing records, and tape recording, but the Depression-era climate was more about retrenchment than experimentation: RCA tried to introduce the LP in 1931, but it flopped. This backlog of technological developments kept mounting until the end of World War II when, unleashed at last, the dam broke. (The war had accelerated some developments. Engineers at British Decca, for instance, perfected full frequency range recordings to detect the differences between British and German submarine engines.)

The technology for recording on magnetized strips had been discovered in the late 19th century by a Danish

engineer, Vlademar Poulsen, but it wasn't until 1937 that AEG in Germany introduced the tape recorder. The German military coopted the machine during the war to prerecord and distribute propaganda broadcasts. With the end of the war, the Allies seized the machines and shipped them back to the U.S. and England for examination. Ampex, founded by an émigré Russian engineer named Alexander Poniatoff, began work on its own tape recorder, and 3M refined a tape that would record signals of up to 15kHz. One of their first converts was Crosby, who insisted that his radio shows be recorded on 3M's new Scotch tape. By 1950 tape was in common use in recording studios.

Tape offered all kinds of intriguing properties, some of which further challenged the tradition of musical performance. Overdubbing, which had been feasible but costly and time-consuming with disc recordings, was suddenly a breeze; it became easier still with the introduction of multitrack. Editing the best portions of two or more performances into a composite master, which had been next to impossible with disc recordings, now required only a knife, some splicing tape, and a little practice. Pretty soon it was impossible for all but the most trained ears to hear where the knife had been at work.

Columbia introduced the long-playing record in 1948. The first 33rpm discs were used in 1926 to record sound for movies. By the '40s most studio recordings and syndicated radio shows were being cut onto 16" acetate discs that played back at 33rpm, but it wasn't until Columbia introduced the LP that most consumers could enjoy a performance longer than three minutes. Rather than go with the professional 16" disc, Columbia opted for 10" and 12" LPs, the same diameters as pop and classical 78 discs, respectively; this made it easier for stores to stock them. At the launch, Columbia president Edward Wallerstein sold the trade on the new "microgroove platter" by making a pile of LPs 15 inches high—then revealing that the same amount of music on 78s would create an eight-foot



Juliana Hatfield

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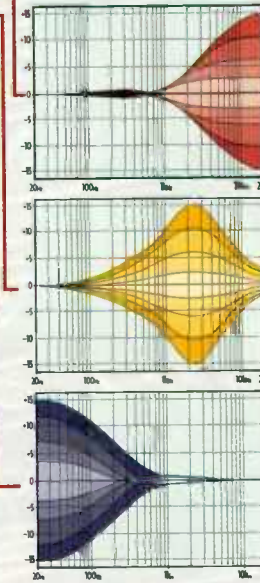
12-LED meter display with Level Set Indicator.

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adds incredible tape monitoring, mixdown and live sound versatility to the MS1402-VLZ. It lets you route any combination of Main Mix, Alt 3-4 bus and Tape Input signals to the Control Room/Phones fader, outputs & LED meters. Tape and Alt 3-4 can also be assigned to the main mix.

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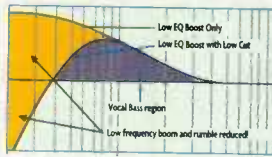
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stack. The 12" LP, which could carry as much as 30 minutes per side, became the standard for the next three decades. (The 10" LP was DOA as 1956 dawned. Classical 78s were finished by 1950, though gospel and some pop 78s were still being pressed a decade later.)

Though RCA attempted to counter Columbia's move by introducing the 45rpm single in 1949, it was the LP that revolutionized recording. One immediate effect was to dramatically increase the variety of music made available to the public. Most of Mozart's later symphonies had been issued on 78s, for example, but his early and middle period works were poorly represented, with just one movement from *Symphony No. 13* on the market. Within five years, every numbered Mozart symphony was on LP. Broadway shows also proliferated in the early LP releases: One million copies of *Oklahoma!* were sold on LP by 1949.

It took a long time for jazz musicians to grasp the freedom offered to them by LPs. Most early jazz LPs still featured three-minute cuts. It wasn't until 1949, when Norman Granz began issuing his *Jazz At The Philharmonic* concerts on 10" LPs, that jazz began adapting to the new reality. JATP albums, issued first on Mercury and then on Granz's own labels, routinely filled entire sides with one tune. By the late '50s, blowing sessions, and occasionally jazz suites, were stretching to similar lengths on LP. And in 1960, taking the idea a step further, Ornette Coleman released *Free Jazz*, a 36-minute "collective improvisation."

Pop artists were slower still to explore the potential of the LP. Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, and other AOR heavyweights tailored albums to fit concepts, but pop music in general was driven by singles until the late '60s. Then, in swift succession, came the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds* (released in May '66), the Beatles' *Revolver* (Aug. '66) and Sgt. Pepper (June '67), and *The Who Sell Out* (Jan. '68); each featured individual songs but invited listeners to appreciate them within contexts defined by the album as a whole. Iron Butterfly's grimly memo-

"BISCUIT DOUGH." A COMPOSITE USED TO MAKE RECORDS, 1940.



UPI/Bettmann

orable *In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida* (1968) also set a precedent, with the title track consuming all of side two. These albums charted the rock album's metamorphosis into something more than a grab-bag of songs. At the same time, they were very much products of the studio, drawn as much from the wizardry of recording as from the ancient lineage of performance. This shift in emphasis, from one side of the glass to the other, was nothing less than revolutionary.

The primacy of the single in rock 'n' roll had made recording more accessible. To cut a Perry Como session in 1953, one needed maybe 40 musicians, a contractor, an army of copyists, and exquisite engineering skills to boil the huge sound down onto single-track tape. The best rock records were often cheaply cut and technically flawed. Most of the classic Sun sessions cost less than \$50 for musicians and tape. A thousand pressings cost less than \$150. Sales to friends and family alone could almost cover recording and pressing costs. In the wake of *Pet Sounds* and *Sgt. Pepper*, studio budgets shot back up as albums supplanted singles as the creative focus. This

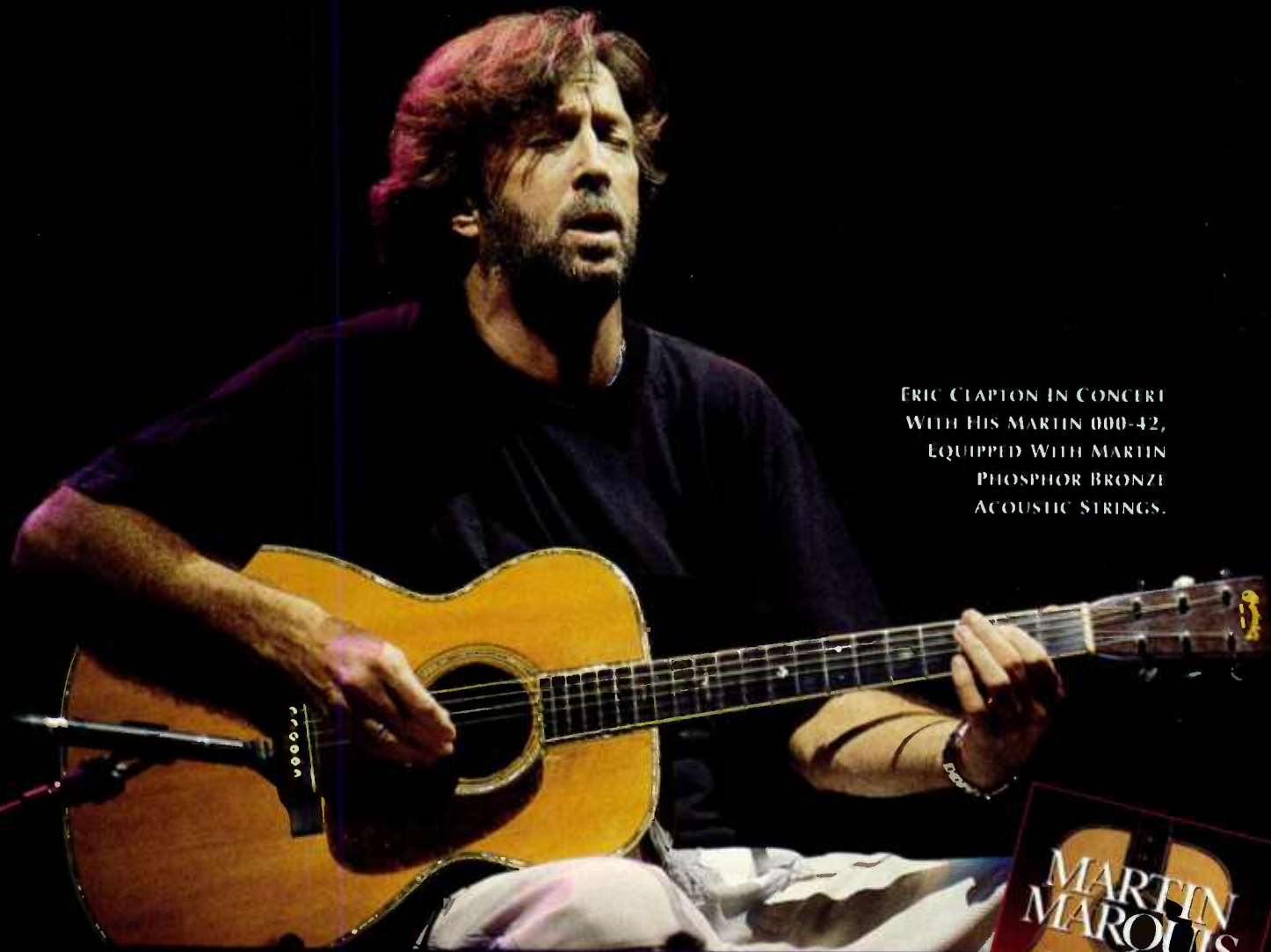
in turn set the stage for punk labels like Stiff to yank rock back on its populist course. Punk was amateurish, singles-oriented, and low-budget—everything that rock had forgotten it stood for.

But even before punk, some industry

observers were beginning to wonder whether sophisticated studio technology was taking a toll on the lifeblood of music. Legendary producer John Hammond, in his book *John Hammond On Record*, recalled that in 1939 he had recorded Count Basie's big band with just one microphone and a machine capable of picking up a range of just 200Hz to 8kHz. Despite these limitations, these recordings still sound fresh and vital. In contrast, Hammond pointed to Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water," for which two 16-track machines had been linked to offer 32 tracks. The record was pieced together note-by-note, track-by-track, over 800 hours of studio time. "Instead of rehearsals and musical balancing," Hammond wrote, "we have prayerful inaction."

Right or wrong, studio recording became an art form in itself, and even those who made full use of it sometimes admitted to mixed feelings. After a brilliant beginning as a concert pianist, Glenn Gould abandoned the stage for the intimacy and control offered by the studio. But even Gould referred to his method of splicing impossibly [cont'd on page 102]

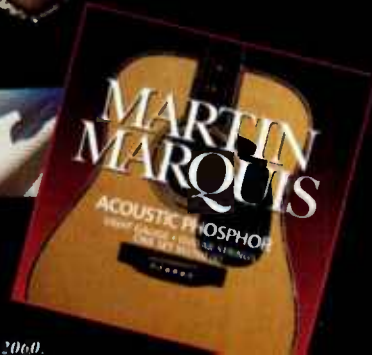
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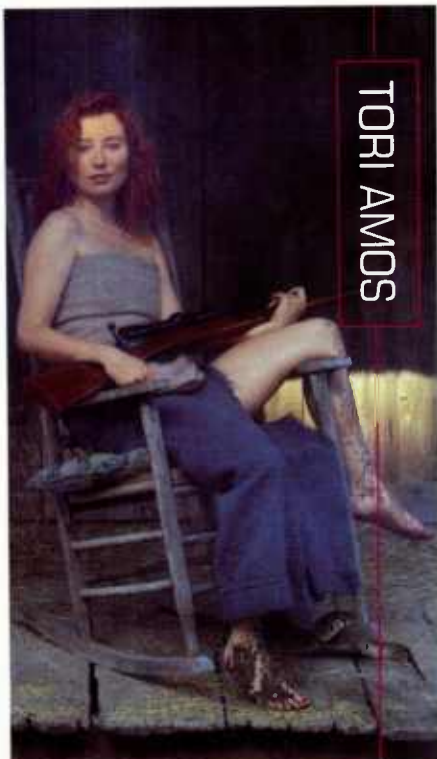
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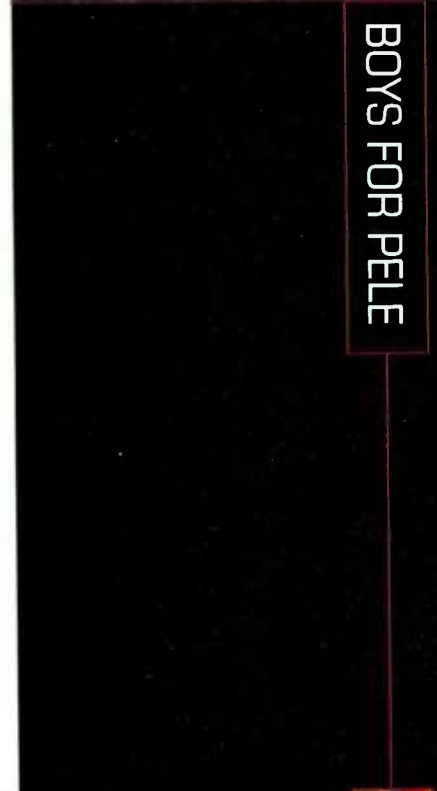
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I THINK TOMORROW IS HERE



BY CRAIG ANDERTON

There's no longer any question about it: A new recording era is underway. Touting superior sound quality, repeatability, ease of duplication, and low cost, digital recording has—in less than five years—taken over the audio world.

It started in earnest with DAT, the consumer digital tape format that turned pro

data. Now Hewlett-Packard's 40201 CD-R will hook up to your computer for under a grand, and Yamaha's latest recordable CD drive is expected to be incorporated in products costing under \$1400.

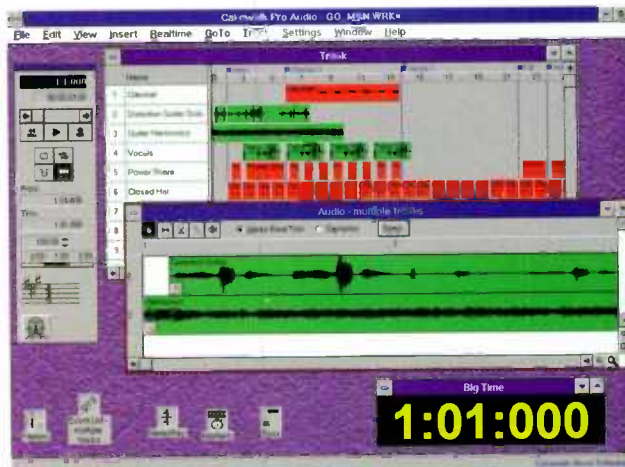
Another two-track optical recorder that records and plays back digital audio, the Sony Minidisc, has met limited success so far in the U.S. But many people feel its acceptance is inevitable, and it has already made significant advances in the broadcast cartridge market. Interestingly, Tascam has been tinkering with a multi-track Minidisc as a replacement for the cassette-based Portastudio. It's not out yet, but if the winds of change start blowing in favor of the Minidisc, they'll be ready.



THE ORIGINAL ALESIS ADAT

as a two-track mastering medium. The latest generation of budget DATs, such as the Tascam DA-30 Mark II and the Fostex D5, show just how cost-effective this technology has become; meanwhile, Panasonic is pushing its 96kHz sample-rate DATs as the next level of sophistication. And there are other ways to upgrade DAT performance. For example, if you don't like the A/D converters that come with your machines, companies from Symetrix to Mytek to Wadia are ready to give you more bits and better sound.

DAT, like most tape-based media, will eventually succumb to optical technology. Some thought magneto-optical cartridges would be the way to go, but CD recorders (CD-R) look like the wave of the (very) near future. They're already being used in many studios to create reference audio CDs, as well as CD-ROMs of archived computer



CAKEWALK PRO AUDIO SEQUENCER

CD-Rs cannot be erased and reused; this is the one significant remaining argument in favor of magneto-optical removable cartridges, and the Minidisc's main selling point. But people love CDs, and at \$5 a pop for bulk orders of blank CDs, it's

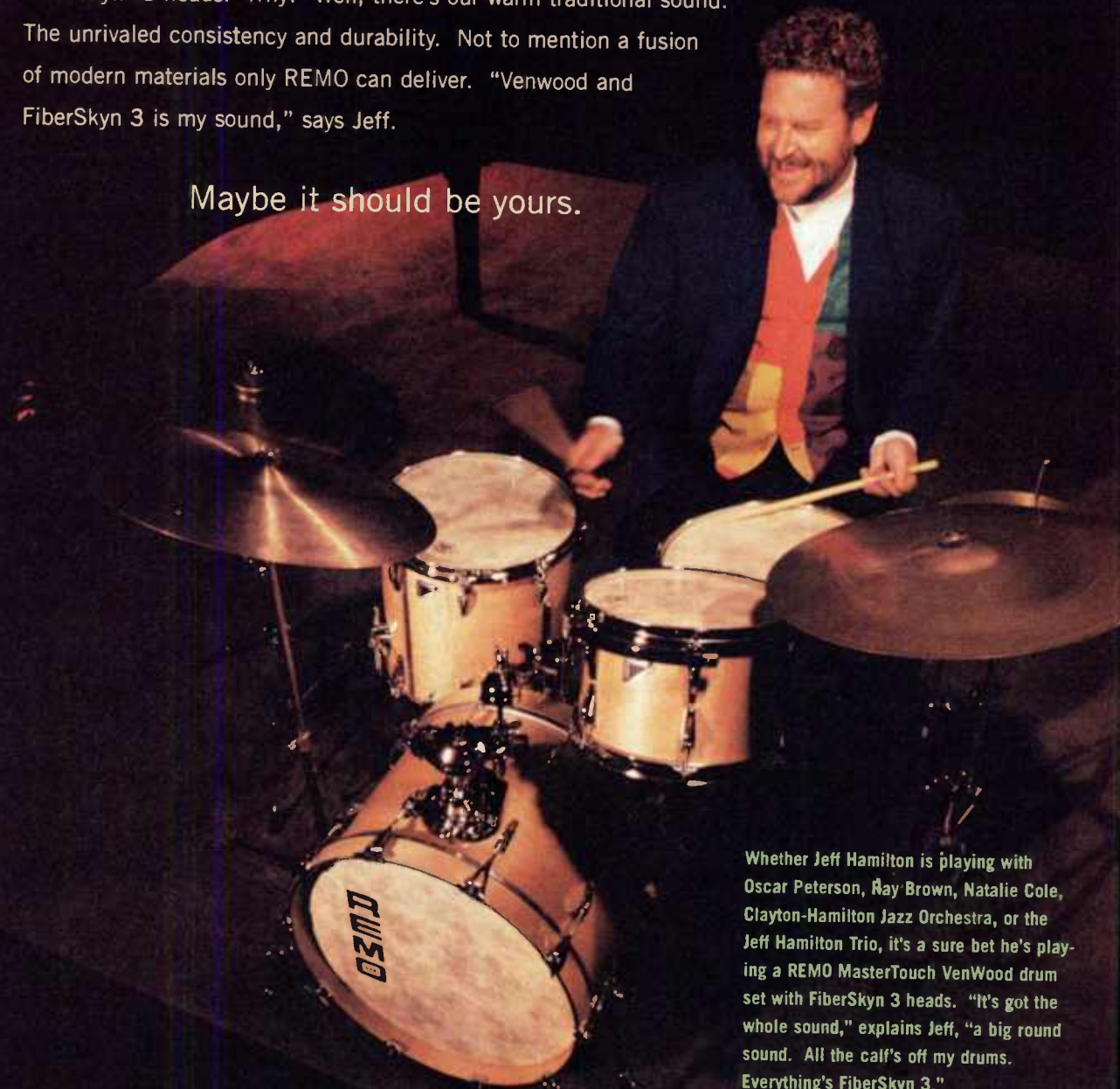
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To say that the Alesis ADAT started a revolution would be an understatement. With more than 65,000 of these suckers out in the world, recording digital audio onto S-VHS tape has become commonplace. The

Tascam DA-88, a similar 8-track recorder based on Hi8 technology, has enjoyed a great deal of success in the world of post-production.

Although many predicted that hard disk recording would supplant digital tape, that hasn't happened so far. Tape remains an inexpensive, self-archiving, user-friendly medium. Besides, several companies



RANE PAQRAT CONVERTERS

have recently upped the ante for digital tape. Countering Sony's introduction of a "pro" version of the DA-88 format, Panasonic has done the same for the ADAT format with their MDA-1. Alesis is shipping the ADAT-XT, which cleans up some loose ends of the ADAT (better onboard metering, faster lockup time and sturdier transport), and Fostex now supports the ADAT format with two machines, the RD8 and the C8.

Clearly, digital multitrack tape will be around a while longer. Even hard disk systems often use ADAT for backup and archiving: Digidesign's Pro Tools and Otari's RADAR both offer hardware interfaces that transfer eight tracks at a time between hard disk and ADAT. And for those who wish they could do better than 16 bits, they can: Rane's PaqRat lets you do 20-bit recording into a standard ADAT or DA-88, although you're limited to four tracks.

HARD DISK RECORDING: MEET THE NEW BOSS

Just about everyone agrees that hard disk recording will eventually become the standard way to record, although there are two knotty problems: the lack of a data interchange standard, and the need for an inexpensive, removable storage format that can compete with tape. Iomega's 1-gigabyte Jaz drive is a step in the right direction, but at \$100 per cartridge, tape remains cheaper.

Still, hard disk recording is where the action is. It's exploding on a number of fronts, starting with Windows machines. Digital Audio Labs (DAL) legitimized audio on the PC with the CardD, which offered much better performance than the usual game-oriented sound cards. Companies like Sonic Foundry took advantage of this improved hardware as an engine for their Sound Forge digital audio editing program, as did Innovative Quality Software with their Saw+ multitrack [cont'd on page 100]

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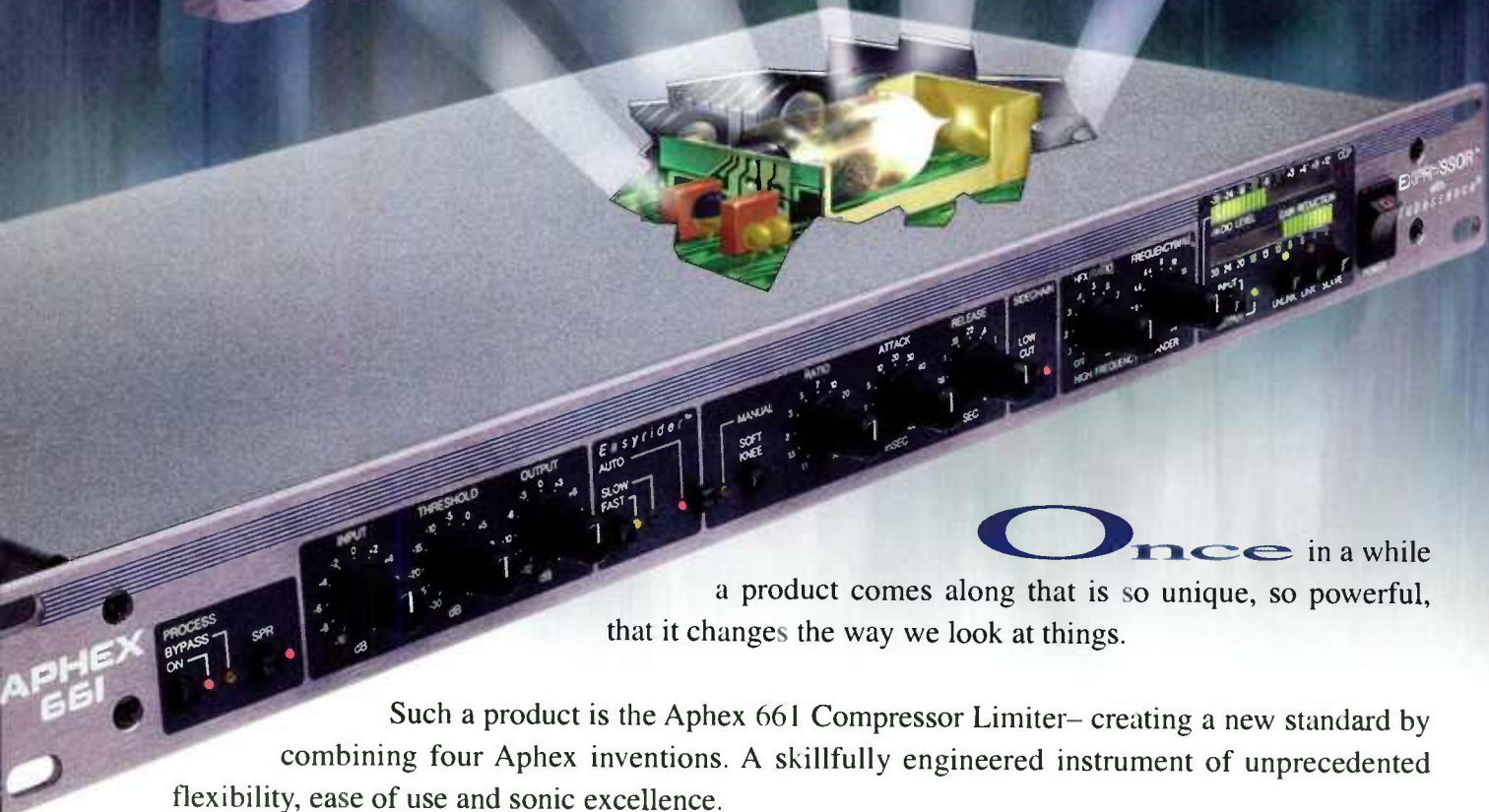
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Come Back

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He played, and kept playing, and kept playing, until, in his words, "They had to ask me to leave at closing time."

He even came back the next day, hoping it wasn't just a one-time feeling, a fluke.

And just to be safe, he even made a point of getting there early.



SUSAN ROGERS

A photograph of Susan Rogers, a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark, short-sleeved, patterned top. She is looking upwards and to the right. A small, white and black dog is sitting on her lap. The background consists of large, leafy trees under bright, natural light.

Chairwomen

FEMALE ENGINEERS AND PRODUCERS ARE

SYLVIA MASSY



of the boards?

BREAKING UP THE BOYS' CLUB...SLOWLY.

*P*roducer Julie Last remembers the first time she tried to land a job at a recording studio. "It was 1978. I had just taken a Greyhound bus from San Francisco to New York with about five dollars in my pocket. I wanted to be an engineer in the worst way. So I went to all of the recording studios in town, and every one of them just sort of patted me on the head and said, 'Well, we do have a nice receptionist job available.'"

For women who choose to forge a career on the production end of the music business, Last's tale has a familiar ring. While attitudes have changed considerably since the days when the only women in recording studios were groupies, only a handful of female engineers has achieved the A-list status of male counterparts like Cliff Norell and Greg Penny, and no female producer has yet scaled the superstar heights of producers like Rick Rubin and Don Was. At a time when women are making significant inroads into the music industry's executive hierarchy, the recording studio remains, for the most part, a boys' club.

For decades the recording studio has been considered a male domain; consequently, engineering and producing jobs were left



JULIE LAST

BY MARC WEINGARTEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN WERNER

to men. The hours are long and irregular, the work is technically oriented, engineers and producers frequently have to deal with artists whose attitudes toward women are hostile at best, the studio fosters a macho locker-room environment . . . for male musicians, women just didn't fit the job description.

"In the '70s there was a lot of serious partying going on in studios, and in some cases the artists felt uncomfortable having a woman in the room," says Last, who has engineered and produced records for Rickie Lee Jones, Shawn Colvin and Joni Mitchell, among others. "I was told by certain artists, 'I'm not comfortable with you here, because I can't swear.' Or there would be groupies coming around. Of course, I didn't give a shit about any of that."

Indeed, for the first quarter-century of the rock era, the business of making records remained an all-male affair, from the lowliest assistants up. Women who weren't performers usually languished as coffee-fetching secretaries. "There were certain studios whose managers had a firm no-women-allowed hiring policy," says engineer Susan Rogers. "It didn't matter how good you were at your job."

Only classical music producer Wilma Fine, whose husband Bob Fine pioneered stereo recording, and engineer Anita Dwight built serious reputations in the field during the late '50s and early '60s.

"Wilma had great ears," says ex-studio owner Susan Planer, who apprenticed under the Fines in the late '50s. "She was a fabulous producer. But Bob and Anita made the first stereo records. They recorded all of those Provocative Percussion and Enoch Light records for Mercury during the late '50s."

In the early '70s, concurrent with the feminist movement, women began to get production jobs, albeit in relatively minuscule numbers. One of those few was Leslie Jones, an ex-folkie turned engineer. "I was a singer/songwriter in a folk band, but I wound up working the P.A. because I paid for it," says Jones, currently a staff engineer at Hollywood's Capitol Studios. "Then I became more interested in the sound aspect of music, and I eventually got a job at this studio called the Automat, which was a unique place at the time because they actual-

ly had three women who were assistant engineers. Mind you, that's *still* rare."

As co-owner of Media Sound, one of the most popular New York studios of the '70s, Susan Planer was one of the first women to achieve real power within the industry's patriarchal structure; by hiring women as assistant engineers, she helped bust that bastion of male hegemony as well. "When I hired those three female assistants, believe me, there was a lot of resistance," says Planer. "They just didn't want to work with a woman."

Planer's hiring policy didn't exactly open the floodgates, but it did embolden some women to challenge the male monopoly on studio jobs. "When I started looking for work as an engineer, people were either very

er. But female seconds often have to clock considerably more time as assistants than male colleagues before making the leap to first engineer. "I had to toil for ten years as a second before I started getting engineering jobs, where it usually takes a man only a few years to make that jump," says Last. "It can get frustrating when you see men who are less talented than you get jobs you feel you should be getting."

"The production business usually works on a buddy system," observes Susan Rogers, who engineered every Prince album from *Purple Rain* to *Sign O' the Times*. "You need a mentor who will nurture you and pass along the tricks of the trade. But often those same engineers want you to stay put, because they feel threatened. When they say, 'Oh, she takes good notes,' what they really mean is, 'She's not a threat.'"

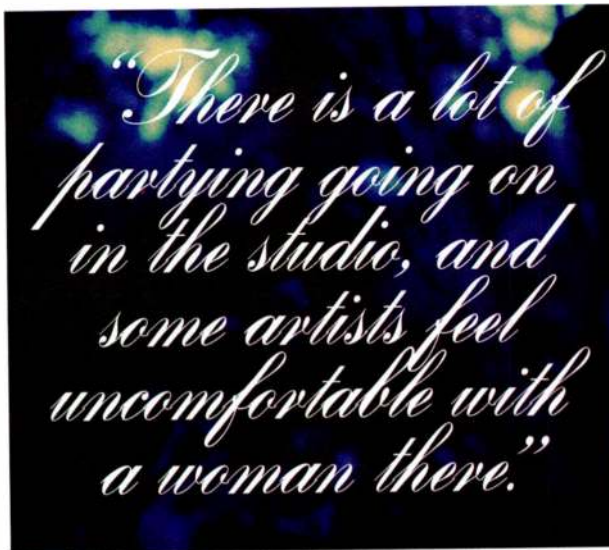
"I know a lot of engineers who prefer to work with women because we tend to work harder than men," says assistant engineer Jennifer Monnar. "Even if some of the male seconds slack off on things, it doesn't matter, because they're gonna get the gigs anyway."

Then there's the "women are not as technical as men" argument, which Rogers would like to debunk: "Men and women get into engineering because they're passionate about music. It's really more important to treat the board

as a musical instrument. You've got to be an artist more than anything else."

Epitaph Records head Brett Gurewitz, who has hired women as producers and engineers, believes it boils down to one basic problem: "It's a sexist industry. Most of the bands are dudes. They like to have other dudes around, so they hire dudes to make their albums. It's very difficult for a woman to get any respect." Judy Clapp suggests that such sexism isn't practiced by men only: "I've encountered a lot more competition and sexism from women. I was once offered a job to work with a female artist, but she didn't want another woman around. She wanted to be the star of the show. You would think that women would be more supportive [of each other], but it doesn't always work that way."

It's another uphill battle for female pro-



"There is a lot of partying going on in the studio, and some artists feel uncomfortable with a woman there."

amused or they just couldn't conceive of the idea," says Julie Last. "When I got my first job as runner at the Record Plant in New York, I think they were expecting me to run with my tail between my legs within a week. That just made me more determined to stay."

Judy Clapp, whose decade-long career includes engineering for the Meat Puppets and the Red Hot Chili Peppers, encountered resistance from some studio managers. "I was told by studios that they start people as gofers—but they don't hire women to be gofers. I was told that flat out," she says.

Once Clapp and Last finally nudged their way into studios, they endured an arduous regimen familiar to any veteran engineer: Bust your chops as a runner, work your way up to second engineer, eventually cross the threshold to first engineer and then maybe, just maybe, fulfill your destiny as a produc-

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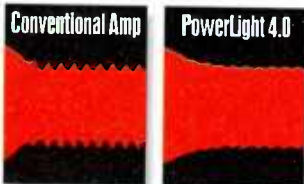
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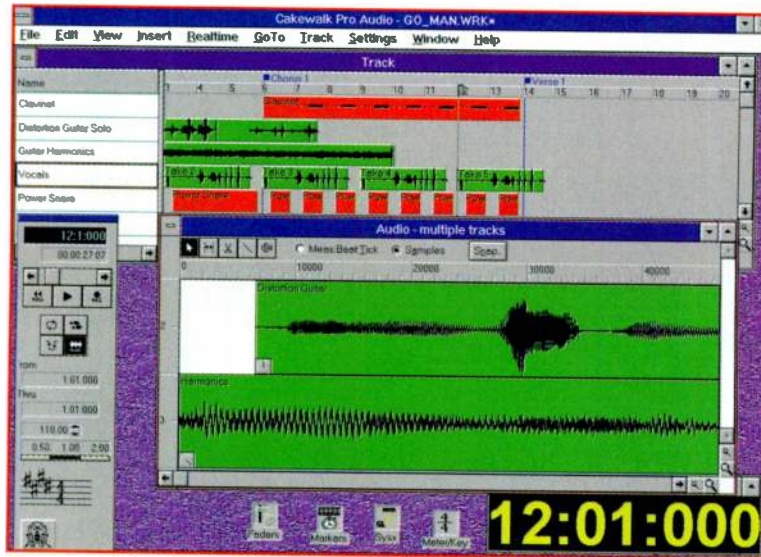


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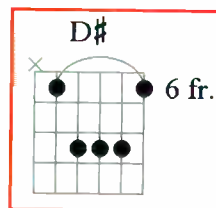
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ducers to get noticed by the label representatives who dole out many prime assignments. "I've talked to female artists who want to work with a female producer, but it's hard to find them [i.e., female producers]," points out Elektra A&R vice-president Nancy Jeffries. "It's not really a question of competence; I don't think there are enough women out there doing this line of work."

At this point, any woman who's managed to break into production may be the only female in a control booth full of men. For Julie Last, this often causes a disruptive undercurrent of sexual tension. "When you're working on a project with someone for 12 to 16 hours a day, that becomes your life," she says. "Sometimes bonds can develop, so you

have to be careful about not getting carried away with those feelings."

"Unfortunately for women, there's a testosterone issue that comes into play," says über-producer Don Was, who has worked with Last and with Judy Clapp. "If a woman has to spend long hours in a studio, there's a lot of stuff that she has to ignore. Engineers get enough abuse; it's not for the faint of heart."

In any event, women engineers and producers face decisions about relationships and family life that men seldom confront. Work is erratic, and exhausting schedules leave little room for a life away from the studio. "If I had married and had kids, I wouldn't be doing this," says Susan Rogers. "When you're in your 20s, you think you can have it

10 steps to be an engineer

(FOR WOMEN AND MEN ONLY)

1. Get your foot in the door at a studio. There's no better classroom than a control booth. Even if it means sharpening pencils, you'll be making valuable contacts. Be ready to work for free.
2. Learn the tools of the trade. If you have no access to a professional studio, engineering schools provide an alternative source of hands-on experience.
3. Find a mentor. The recording business often works on an apprenticeship system, in which engineers groom assistants to eventually make the leap to first engineer. Find an engineer and try to keep working with him or her; it may lead to your big break.
4. Do the Hustle. You may be the reincarnation of George Massenburg, but you're not gonna get gigs if nobody knows you. Get your name out there to as many people as possible.
5. Work your butt off. An obvious but often neglected tenet: Good things come to those who sweat. People recognize and reward hard work.
6. Never say never. The road from second assistant to engineer or producer can be a long one, and tenacity separates the pros from the wannabes. It may take you as little as six months or, as in Julie Last's case, ten years to make the jump to engineer, but stick with it.
7. Keep your eyes and ears open. A job at a studio can lead to big things, but you've got to prove yourself. Be aware of everything going on, and keep your creative juices boiling; you just may get the call to tweak that track when you least expect it.
8. Buy yourself a basic four-track tape machine and familiarize yourself with the recording process. You'd be amazed at how many producers and engineers started that way.
9. Be careful what you wish for. Studio work is incredibly time-consuming, and if you're not passionate about it, you won't rise to the top.
10. Be sure that engineering—not performing, writing, or marketing—is what you want to do with your life, 'cause you will spend most of your life doing it.

all. Once reality steps in, it really comes down to an either/or proposition." Judy Clapp concurs: "Kids are great, but I also love working, and I'm not sure I'd like what a family would do to my ability to work."

Jennifer Monnar suggests that the work/family conflict is another manifestation of the classic double standard: "Men can work all night, because they'll have their wives or girlfriends at home taking care of everything. It's okay for men to not be around as much as women."

One solution to this dilemma is finding a partner who shares the same line of work. But relationships that blur distinctions between personal and professional life create problems too. Clapp, who mixed Dwight Yoakam's latest album *Gone* under the auspices of her producer and husband Pete Anderson, recalls moments when she and Anderson ventured into awkward territory: "If you're working with your spouse, it can get dicey sometimes."

"I wanted to 'have it all,' so I had a boyfriend who also worked in the industry," says producer Sylvia Massy. "It didn't work, though. Mixing your personal life with business is definitely not the way to do it. It's just as hard for men who want to have families."

Massy is among a handful of major female producers, a short list that includes Sally Browder (Wayne Kramer's *The Hard Stuff*) and Judith Sherman (all of the Kronos Quartet's Nonesuch albums). After learning the ropes as a college radio DJ, wannabe rock star and studio apprentice, the San Francisco native branched out into producing punk and metal bands for small indie labels, bypassing the studio star-making machinery. In ten years Massy has produced Tool, Machines of Loving Grace, the Beatnigs, Mojo Nixon and Green Jelly's multiplatinum debut, among others. "Even though I've worked with a bunch of head-bangers and punk bands, they all accepted me and I never had a problem," says Massy. "Maybe it's because I'm crass. I can drink with the best of 'em."

In fact, Massy believes that her gender has been an asset rather than a liability. "Musicians feel very comfortable around me," she says. "And I can pull emotions around me, that a guy might not be able to."

R&B and rap engineer Angela Piva agrees. "People have been really supportive," says


Piva, whose credits include Naughty By Nature, Heavy D and En Vogue. "If anything, they were excited about working with me. It was like, 'A girl? That's great!' They didn't take it as anything out of the ordinary."

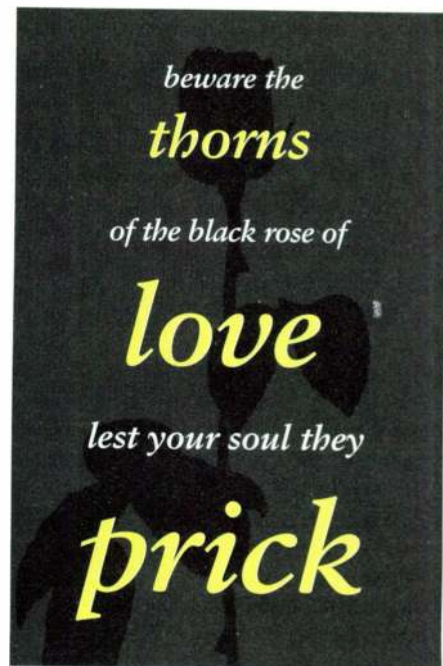
Piva feels that the success-to-failure ratio is no different for women than it is for men; it's simply a matter of numbers. "Remember that, with women, you're looking at a really small percentage of engineers," she points out. "If you think about how many men are in the business, you realize that a lot of them don't make it either."

Leslie Jones suggests technical advantages. "We hear things differently," she says, "particularly female voices. Men tend to hear women's voices with lot more midrange than women do. There's also none of that macho posturing when a woman is running a session. It's not so dictatorial."

For her self-produced album *Traffic From Paradise*, Rickie Lee Jones enlisted Julie Last as her knob-tweaking assistant. The result was a refreshing esprit de corps that she hadn't experienced before. Explains Jones, "Julie allowed a musical atmosphere to develop without the complications that most studio engineers create because they are afraid that these situations will get away from them. Julie was always very cool, very affable, truly in contrast with most studio inhabitants. And she certainly helped me to understand that to make a good record it's not necessary to be bossy. It was wonderful to be in the studio with that female presence."

According to the women interviewed for this article, the pay scale for female engineers is on par with what men earn. But women still make up only about 20 percent of applicants at most engineering schools. Still, Susan Rogers theorizes that a proliferation of female producers will eventually obliterate the barriers in the field.

"I think that ten years from now there will be a lot more women engineers and producers," she predicts. "For men, rock 'n' roll and everything that goes along with it has been alive since the '50s. But for women, it's really only been legitimate since the '80s. That's when a lot of women started making real headway into the business. Young girls watching MTV now see all-female bands like L7 and the Breeders. So women who want to get into music now have more options. They might think, 'I can be a musician, or a songwriter . . . or maybe, even a producer.'" 

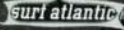




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2 dolby fax system

Seems like everybody's talking about ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network), that crazy new technology that allows you to send audio over high-speed phone lines. If you've been itching to check out the network, Dolby's latest version of its Dolby Fax ISDN system (\$9425) may be your entry ticket. With Dolby's improved Windows interface, you can control the system from your PC. AES/EBU, SPDIF, 18-bit ADC, 20-bit DAC and mono/stereo formats are all included, along with a multiband inverse multiplexer for enhanced audio performance. • Dolby Labs, 100 Potrero Ave., San Francisco, CA 94103-4813; voice (415) 558-0200, fax (415) 863-1373.

3 technics sx-wsa1

The latest combatant in the modeling synthesis wars is Technics, whose SX-WSA1 digital workstation (\$3395) combines sound sampling realism with the feel of acoustic instruments. Besides the 256 presets, there are 128 patches that combine different sounds. All can be customized, which means you can create theoretical



2



6

5



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Piano



instruments—a violin with a snare drum attack, for example. Digital drawbars, a 47,000-note sequencer, and real-time sound editing controls are among the other nifty features. • Technics, One Panasonic Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094; voice (201) 348-7000, fax (201) 348-7484.

4 morley abc switch

Switching trouble? Don't panic. With Morley's ABC switch (\$75), you can hook one guitar to three amplifiers, or three guitars to one amp. Multi-instrumentalists may find it handy as a live setup simplifier, and home studioites will appreciate switching between DI and amp without having to reconnect cables. • Morley/Sound Enhancements, Inc., 185 Detroit St., Cary, IL 60013; voice (708) 639-4646, fax (708) 639-4723.

5 aphex 661 compressor

Hard knee, soft knee, no knee... Today we sing of the three types of compression curves available on Aphex's Model 661 single-channel compressor/limiter (\$749). Exclusive "Tubessence" circuitry provides a tube sound without transformers, high heat or sonic variability, while an expander control automatically decompresses high frequencies up to a maximum of 6dB, squelching the usual compressor dullness syndrome (CDS). And the spectral phase refractor makes the ear perceive fuller bass range without actually boosting bass levels. • Aphex, 11068 Randall St., Sun Valley, CA 91352; voice (818) 767-2929, fax (818) 767-2641.

6 taylor 450 12-string

In response to demands for a dreadnought 12-string, Taylor introduces the 450 (\$1398). The basic rundown: African mahogany back and sides, Sitka spruce top, mahogany neck with ebony fingerboard, chrome-plated Grover tuning machines, adjustable truss rod, satin low-gloss finish. Other new 12-strings include the 655 jumbo (maple back and sides) and the 955 jumbo Indian rosewood back and sides). • Taylor, 1948 Gillespie Way, El Cajon, CA 92020; voice (619) 258-1207, fax (619) 258-1623.



fast forward

Master Your Destiny

by **howard massey**

Here's a common scenario: Your band's been recording demos for some time, and you've amassed more than a few tapes and DATs. You realize that the cassette copies you've been distributing to record companies, promoters, and friends don't sound nearly as good as the master tapes, but you feel that's a necessary compromise. Not anymore. With Digidesign's new MasterList CD software (which lists for \$995), technology has advanced to the point where a relatively modest investment—perhaps as little as \$5000—can give you all you need to turn your pile of tapes into a CD. And not just a reference CD for casual listening, but a professional-quality master suitable for duping thousands of distributable audio CDs—each of which will sound just as good as your originals. Of course, no piece of software can take the place of a skilled mastering engineer, but if you've got decent ears, MasterList CD can do the job efficiently and accurately.

MasterList CD is written for the Macintosh, which, despite (or maybe

because of) endless TV appearances by the Rolling Stones singing "Start Me Up," continues to be the computer of choice for musicians. Minimum requirement is the Mac IIci, but it also runs on Centrises, Quadras, and all Nubus slot-equipped Power Macs. Your computer will need at least 8 megs of RAM, though additional

under a grand. CD recorders were very expensive just a year ago, but are now available for as little as \$1000. And Digidesign offers a wide range of digital audio systems, from their low-end Audiomedia II (\$1295) to their top-of-the-line Pro Tools III (starting at around \$8000). One of the unexpected bonuses of MasterList CD is that it works even with Digi's older, discontinued systems, such as Audiomedia I or Sound Tools I. You should be able to pick one of these up sec-

editor's pick

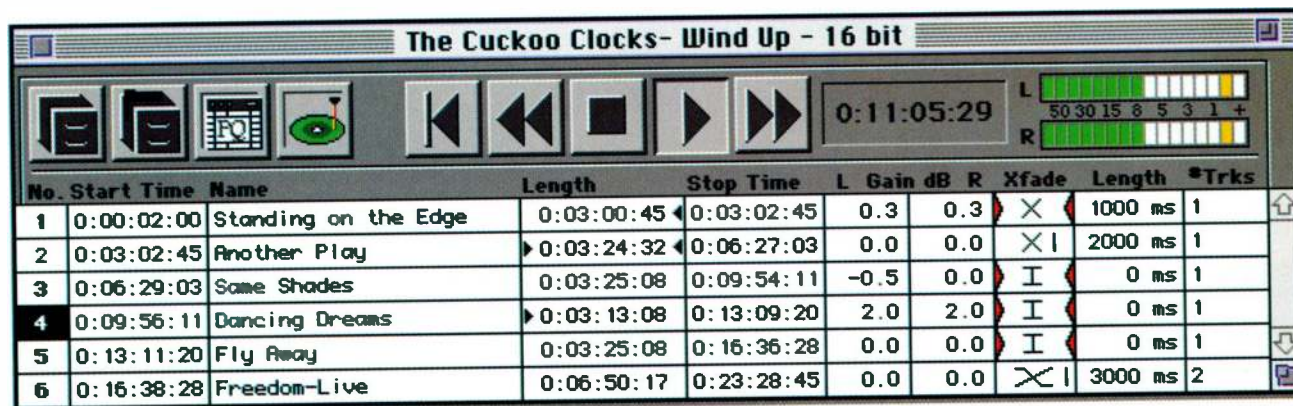
Digidesign's MasterList CD

RAM will come in handy. To this basic computer system, you'll need to add three hardware components: a SCSI AV hard drive, a CD recorder, and one of Digidesign's digital audio systems (consisting of a Nubus card and maybe an external rack unit). To write a full 74-minute CD, the hard drive should be at least a gigabyte in size, though you may want to spring for a 2-gigabyte drive to increase performance with the use of "image files" (more about this below).

External 1-gig AV drives are now going for \$600 or so, while 2-gig models are

onhand for \$500 or so. So, figuring that the going price for a used IIci is in the \$600 range, and factoring in another \$600 for extra memory, you should be able to assemble a workable system for around five grand. Considering that the cost of a single mastering session can easily exceed \$1000, you can see this could pay for itself pretty quickly. Also, once you buy the system, you can use it for other creative endeavors, such as hard disk recording/editing, MIDI sequencing, and playing

▼ **Figure 1: Main MasterList window**



PQ Subcode in The Cuckoo Clocks- Wind Up

Disc Catalog Code: 0000006021969
 Begin Access Offset: 20 CD Frames
 End Access Offset: 15 CD Frames

Trk	Index	Time	Name	Length	Emph	Prot	SCMS	ISRC Code
1	0	0:00:00:00	Standing on the Edge	0:03:00:45		X		UKWMB9500101
	1	0:00:02:00	audio start					
	2	0:02:55:00	Outro					
2	0	0:03:02:45	Another Play	0:03:26:12			X	USBFD9400001
	1	0:03:02:45	audio start					
3	0	0:06:27:03	Same Shades	0:03:27:08				
	1	0:06:29:03	audio start					
4	0	0:09:54:11	Dancing Dreams	0:03:15:08		X		
5	0	0:13:09:20	Fly Away	0:03:27:08		X		USFAB9500301
	1	0:13:11:20	audio start					
6	0	0:16:36:28	Freedom-Live	0:03:58:19				
	1	0:16:38:28	audio start					
7	0	0:20:36:28	Crazy-Live	0:02:52:18				
	1	0:20:36:28	audio start					
AA	1	0:23:28:46	Start of Lead Out					

▲ Figure 2: PQ Subcode window

gets your music out of the studio.

games. It's a good investment for a band; everyone can chip in and the sound guy can be anointed technical guru in charge of driving the (digital) bus. And it's so easy to use, even the drummer could operate it, just kidding, ouch, stop throwing those sticks at me.

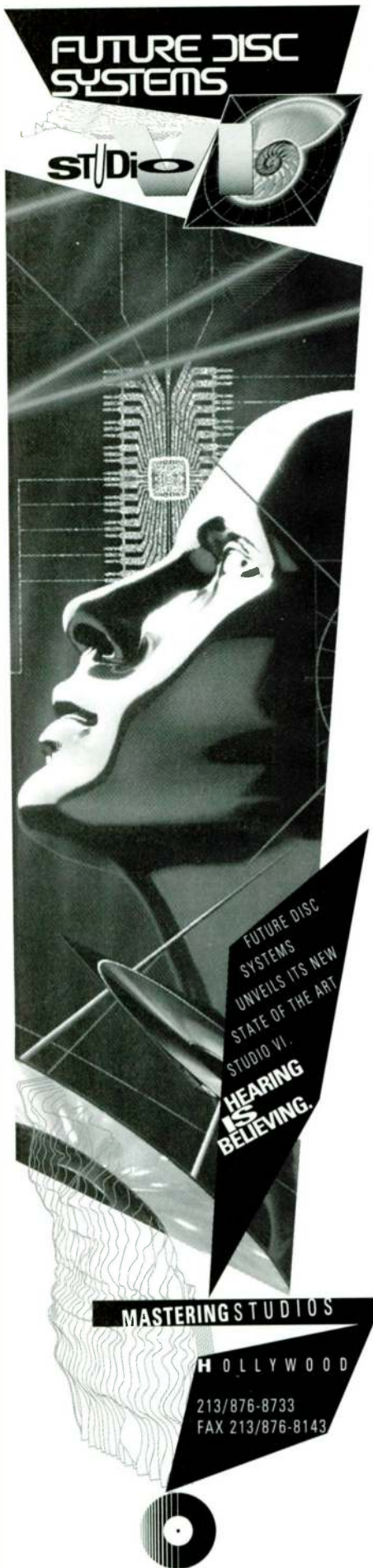
The first step in creating your CD is to get all your tape tracks onto hard disk, using your chosen Digidesign digital audio system. These systems allow audio to be imported in the digital domain, which saves an analog-to-digital conversion process (keeping your audio first-generation), if your master tapes are on DAT and your DAT player has digital outputs. Audiomedia I provides analog inputs and is thus suitable for recording

analog tape tracks (or DAT tracks, via the analog output) to hard disk.

Once all your tracks are on the hard disk, it's time to boot up MasterList CD, and here's where the fun begins. The Main MasterList window (see Fig.1) provides a graphic interface in which you create a list of the files (or sections of files) you want on your CD. Tape recorder-style controls at the top of the window let you audition the entire list or any of the files individually, and you can set up to 100 autolocate points. Tracks can be moved around freely, so you can experiment with different song orders until you find the flow that works best. During playback, a bar graph-style meter shows continuous output levels, same as

the meters on an audio mixer. You can increase or decrease the level of any track to compensate for differences between songs (in fact, you can alter the left and right outputs independently). In addition, you can trim the start and/or end time of individual tracks and adjust the length of silence between tracks.

MasterList CD also lets you take things a step further. Remember the smooth blends between songs that made albums like *Sgt. Pepper* so special? Recording engineers call these crossfades, and MasterList CD allows the construction of no less than 18 different types. While this doesn't guarantee your CD will sell as well as *Sgt. Pepper*, it does help add that polished touch. The cross-



fades' length (that is, the amount of time during which one song fades out while another fades in under it) depends on the amount of RAM in your computer. If you won't be using more than one or two short crossfades (or if you don't want any), you can get by with the minimum 8-meg requirement.

The other edit window in MasterList CD is the PQ Subcode window (see Fig. 2). It allows you to actually edit the non-audio "invisible" data encoded on the CD (such as index information) and also enables the setting of esoteric functions such as emphasis and copy protection. In practice, I found the only time I needed to access this window was to occasionally shift an index point after constructing a long crossfade.

Once everything's set up to your satisfaction, click on the Write Compact Disc icon and you're ready to rock. Blank recordable CDs are relatively inexpensive (usually \$7-\$10 each) but they are write-once media, so if any error occurs during the "burning" process, the CD is wasted (though it can be used as a small frisbee). In order to spare you this frustration, MasterList CD provides a handy test mode that performs all writing operations short of actually turning on the laser in your CD recorder. If there are any errors (say your hard disk is fragmented or too slow), they'll turn up during the test run and you won't waste a disc. In my trials with the program, I found that every successful test run always resulted in a successfully written CD.

Digidesign recommends the use of 2x or 4x CD recording speeds for mastering, though you can create a 1x disk for reference purposes. At 1x speed, it'll take 74 minutes to burn a full 74-minute CD; at 2x speed, it'll be half that time (37 minutes), and at 4x speed, it'll take just 18½ minutes. In any event, this is definitely a go-ahead-and-make-yourself-a-cup-of-coffee process. To record at the highest possible speed, you can create an image file prior to recording. This is an exact copy of what will be written to CD, including all audio, PQ subcode data and

crossfades. Because it's a single complete file instead of a bunch of individual files, mastering time is cut considerably. Keep in mind, though, that an image file requires at least the same amount of file space as all your individual files combined. This is where the extra capacity of a 2-gigabyte hard drive comes in handy.

I created more than a dozen audio CDs with MasterList CD, using a Digidesign Sound Tools II system, two different computers (an unaccelerated IICI and a stock Centris 650) and two different CD recorders (a 2x Dynatek CDM200 and a 4x Dynatek CDM400). All sounded terrific, and, thanks to judicious use of test mode, I didn't make a single frisbee. More importantly, I found the process simple and fun.

As a test, I created seven disks of identical audio tracks, five with MasterList CD and two with the generic software shipped with the CD recorders. These disks were analyzed for me by the engineers at Digidesign in a blind test and the results were eye-opening, to say the least. Although to my reasonably well-trained ears, all seven disks sounded identical, the analyzer showed that the two disks created without MasterList CD had thousands of data errors, including many critical ones which would have caused them to be rejected by a duplication plant. In contrast, all five disks created with MasterList CD were acceptable for use as masters. Significantly, the test also showed that the disks made with the Mac IICI were just as high-quality as those made with the faster and more expensive Centris 650.

The creation of an audio CD is a many-stage process which begins with the musician but, until now, ended with a technician. Digidesign's MasterList CD enables the musician to see the process all the way through—a true example of empowerment by technology. Ya gotta love it.

Special thanks to Wendy Butler at Digidesign and to Michael Nitti at Dynatek for their assistance.

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World Radio History

Rumor on the Net

Don't get taken for a ride on the information highway.

by **barry harrington**

The word spread quickly around the world: Phil Collins had left Genesis and Peter Gabriel was back in the band after twenty years. The only problem was that the word was wrong. The truth is that there has been no change in Genesis' lineup; Gabriel is working on a new album in Africa, as distant from the Phil Collins incarnation of the band geographically as he is musically. Other Genesis-related rumors that have been disproven by *MUSICIAN* (by speaking directly to band management or the artists): Peter Gabriel was never scheduled to be on the John Lennon tribute CD, *Working Class Hero*, and he never planned to release a new CD in October 1995.

Rumor and misinformation have always been a part of the music world, of course. But what makes these particular untruths notable is the way they were spread: over the Internet. Vaunted as the Net is as an information source, it's got a major flaw—its information is somewhere between newsprint and a rumor heard on the street. Individuals can post just like newspapers can publish, but that individual may not have a personal reputation for quality in the way the *Washington Post* or the *New York Times* does. On the Net, rumors can circulate with more ease and speed than ever before.

In the Genesis case, according to Genesis manager Tony Smith, Mike Rutherford gave a 1994 interview to a fan club in Australia, during which he said Genesis were planning to record an album in 1995. When Phil Collins was on tour in Australia in spring 1995, he met the same fan club journalist who quoted Rutherford's comment about recording a

new Genesis album to Collins. Collins jokingly replied, "Well, if they are, it's without me!" The journalist then used the Net to publish the "news" that Genesis was breaking up.

Another instance of misinformation on the Net came courtesy of Elton John's Internet mailing list, which mistakenly posted the wrong date Elton was to appear on Letterman. Individual posts saw this information, thought it was a letter to them individually, and sent an "Is this true?" message to the group posts. Hence, there were two posts (one individuals, one group) now spreading this rumor, and many believed that since they had seen it twice, it could be true. (The Elton John list problems didn't stop there; someone posted that a North Carolina concert was canceled because of a death threat—when the only thing to "substantiate" this rumor was that a few individuals were discussing this possibility. It was

soon confirmed that Elton canceled the show because he was sick.)

The first Elton problem (the Letterman date) was partially due to the technical nature of individual posts vs. digest posts. Someone thought that somebody else had mailed this Elton information to them personally, but what had actually happened was that the sender mailed to a list server address, which in turn mailed it to everyone who subscribed to the non-digest form of the list.

These kinds of rumors don't really hurt anybody, but it's easy to see how something more damaging could quickly get around. Similar inaccuracies exist on various bands' Web sites, which brings up questions about the Internet being the quintessential fact-finding tool. Disclaimers that the Web sites have no affiliation with the bands' management aren't reassuring; in fact, they should flash a red alert that the site may lack credibility.

What can you do to make sure the information you are getting is accurate? Unfortunately, not much (unless you can prove something is blatantly slanderous, in which case legal action can be taken and retractions will be made). It's advisable to be wary of usenet groups. They are the easiest place to start folklore, misinformation and rumors. The technically savvy can make themselves look more credible by



Warren Linn

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using upscale fonts, addresses and sparkling presentations, changing their name, header, or posting anonymously. Yet if someone goes to such efforts not to be traced or identified, how credible can they be?

Also, you should understand the limitations of mailing lists and newsgroups (which—when unmoderated—are simply individuals sending unedited material to a central place). Web sites at least have a system operator (also known as a sysop and/or webmaster) who controls the site, much like the editor-in-chief supervises the outflow of a magazine's content. When information is published as Web pages, the publisher must become an information engineer, taking responsibility for data management and accuracy.

Another way to solve the problem of Internet misinformation is to participate in Web sites' interactive forums, where other readers online can and will question and correct misinformation. Some Web sites, after all, are used by fans *and* professionals—managers, musicians, publishers—and if a rumor starts, the misinformation will eventually be squelched. A safe bet for improving accuracy is to find a site owned by a parent organization (such as Pathfinder, owned by Time-Warner); factual exactitude should follow in the wake of cachet and reputation. There are no regulated checks and balances on the Net, but there are real people behind the technology. In time, you will find people whose opinions you can trust.

Fortunately, a legal precedent has now been set: the court states that publishers are only responsible for the information over which they exercise editorial control or review. In other words, if information just hits a list server and gets sent back out, the publisher is not libel. Of course, all the laws on the books about publishing and ethical responsibility—slander, libel and copyright, liability—will soon have to change to include New Media.

Remember: protect yourself as a reader and user of the Net. Check the sites' sources. Verify "facts" any way you can. In this brave new world, you can't believe everything you read in electronic print. ☺

KORG G5

It's hard to find common ground between tequila-and-Marshalls rocker primitivism and parameter-tweaking computer-geekhood. Korg's G5 "synth bass processor" (\$450) tries to bridge the gap in a glorified stompbox format. It converts bass guitar notes to one of 11 waveforms, with additional controls for filter intensity, range and resonance. The nine presets are mainly wah-y analog-synth and envelope-filter sounds, with some fuzz and octave-divider patches.

The G5 tracks well, though you have to adjust your playing to fit the

envelopes. If you push it beyond its limits—like by trying to play palpitating-sequencer 16th-notes—you'll get a staticky aftertone, but it generally responds to bends, slides and hammer-ons without skittering.

Preset "Red-2," a "what P-Funk riff is that?" envelope-filter tone, sounded great playing a Junior Walker-style groove to KRS-One's "Free Mumia." Slowed down and changed to a sawtooth waveform, it yielded snaky electrofunk textures. Some of the G5's sounds are distinctly gastrointestinal, but it offers a lot of possibilities for adding live bass to hip-hop and techno tracks, and the fuzz-bass sounds are both earthy and unearthly.—*Steve Wishnia*

Fast Times at Comdex

By Howard Massey

Las Vegas is weird enough at the best of times, but for one week every fall the culture shock becomes palpable as the city plays host to a quarter million or so computer industry professionals ("propeller heads," to use the technical term) attending the annual Comdex show.

Though there was no official show theme this year, the hot topic was unquestionably digital video, with literally hundreds of manufacturers showing video capture/playback hardware and/or video editing software. Just as today's audio technology allows a musician to produce finished audio masters in a home studio, these new products will soon make it possible to assemble and produce completed videos on a desktop PC. There will also be yet another form of media soon foisted upon us: the newly standardized digital video disk ("DVD"), which is essentially a double sided high density CD optimized for storage of video data. Look for consumer-level DVD players to be

widely available by the end of 1996.

Another new development was the introduction of a large number of 6x and even 8x speed CD-ROM drives, which effectively make existing 2x or 4x CD-ROM drives even more obsolete than they were the day you bought them. Speaking of built in obsolescence, sound cards are also growing up fast—so fast, in fact, that within a year or so you may not even recognize them. The next generation of sound cards, as previewed at Comdex, will not only include built-in 3D audio effects and RAM for custom sample downloading but will also likely provide video and/or graphic rendering accelerators, fax/modem and/or speech recognition capabilities, and the ability to do your laundry on alternate Tuesdays—at a cost not much higher than your plain vanilla sound card.

Last but by no means least were Sony's twin bombshell announcements that they are (1) getting into the home PC market (perhaps as soon as mid '96) in conjunction with Intel, and (2) starting an Internet online service, in conjunction with Visa. Due to debut in the spring of '96, this service, called Sony Station, will include on demand games, videos, music, and home shopping. Geez, as if Sony weren't a large enough part of your life already. . . .

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After more than 40 years, Fender's P-Bass is still tops.

by **steve wishnia**

If the Les Paul is the Cadillac of guitars, a luxurious behemoth, and the Strat the Corvette, the epitome of '50s highway-star flash, the Fender Precision Bass is the Ford Econoline van—funky and functional, not much cachet, but you wouldn't make the gig without it. Yes, the Rickenbacker and Steinberger designs have their niches, Yamaha and Ibanez have claimed a chunk of the market, and some prefer the snappier sound of the Jazz Bass. But the P-Bass—whose design is largely unchanged since 1957—remains the world standard.



The Lyte Standard lives up to its name.

(Just so you know, a black-and-white '71 has been my main instrument ever since my first CBGB show in 1979.)

One of Fender's favored marketing strategies in this 50th-anniversary year is concocting myriad versions of their old reliables. They now put out 16 kinds of P-Basses (not counting the Squier budget



"Like chocolate": the '51 Precision

line), from the \$409 basic model to a \$2499 left-handed '57 reissue. The two "Deluxe" active-EQ basses (\$1149.99) weren't available yet, but we were able to check out five representative models.

All five appeared well-constructed: The action was playably low without buzzing, the frets didn't stick out of the neck, and any intonation problems were generally smaller than my tuner's margin of error. The only obvious glitch was that the tuning machines on the '51 reissue weren't flush with the headstock.

The Mexican-made **Precision Bass** (\$409.99), cheapest of the company's line, is a generic P-

Bass with poplar body, rosewood fingerboard, and a tone deep enough to move booty and biting enough to drive the most motorheaded riff. The intonation was a bit sharp at the 12th fret, but it looked solid otherwise. The biggest reservation I have about recommending it is political—it's scary that a bass this good can be made at Third World wages. If you can live with the social implications, this

Naftacaster is a bargain.

If you're making union wages, you might prefer the **American Standard** (\$899.99 with case). This also has a poplar body and rosewood fingerboard, plus a graphite-reinforced neck and strings-through-body design. The American Vintage pickup gives it a brighter tone, and the extra money also buys you a more intricately machined bridge and tuning gears. The one draw-

back is its weight: not as heavy as the spine-pretzelizing '70s Jazz Bass owned by a bassist I dug with, but close. The American Standard also comes in fretless (\$969.99) and left-handed (\$1019.99) versions.

The Japanese-made **Lyte Standard** (\$719.99), the cheapest of three "Lyte" models, is significantly different. It's got a Jazz-style

pickup in the bridge position, active EQ (2-band cut and boost), a higher-tech bridge design, enclosed tuning machines, and a 22-fret neck (your search for that elusive third octave will no longer be stalled at E-flat).



The Mexican P-Bass: great tone, not p.c.

Bill Mirine

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We've had the pleasure of using Soundscape for sound editing on 'Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls' and 'The Nutty Professor' and found it to be very smooth, very fast and very reliable. Soundscape is the only intelligent choice for your next digital editing workstation. Odin Benitez, Randall Guth, Dimension Sound (Burbank).

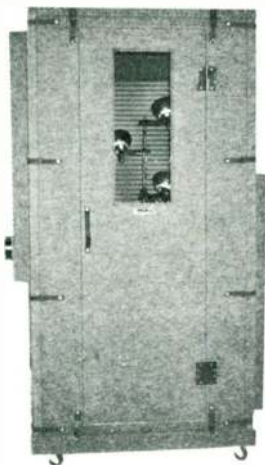
It's affordable-it's modular-it's expandable-it's got crash proof reliability!!! We have 3 x 16 track systems at the studio, and we've used the SSHDR1 on almost every project that's come through the facility. Soundscape is fast becoming one of the top systems around in digital audio post production here as well as around the world. Keep it up. guys!"

Frank Serafina, Sound designer on Star Trek, Virtuosity, Lawnmower man, VR5, Hunt for Red October.



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With an artfully beveled 3-piece basswood body and narrow neck, it's extremely light—about the only basses I've played that weighed less were a Hagstrom hollow-body and a Curbow Petite.

The Lyte Standard plays beautifully, with responsive pickups and lots of pres-



The American Standard is heavy stuff.

ence. However, I had to boost the bass and roll off the high end on both the instrument and the amp to get rid of its metallic twang. Ideal for slappers and steely-clean '80s new-wave sounds, but not necessarily suited for blues or reggae.

To my tastes, Fender's reissues were the most impressive of the lot. The **Vintage '62** (\$1399.99 with case), with an alder body, rosewood fingerboard and American Vintage pickup, is a replica of the "Funk Machine" used by Motown house bassist James Jamerson (so of course, the first riff I played on it was "You Can't Hurry Love"). It's almost as heavy as the American Standard, and the wide, flat neck is a little hard to play on, but it's got lots of natural tone: springy enough for funk—the keyboard player in my blues/R&B band, who spent five years in the Apollo Theater house band, perked up when I plugged it into an envelope filter—and deep enough for reggae and soul. The finger rest on the G-string side could be an inconvenience for pickers, who'll probably want it off the first time they smash their cuticles into it.

To plumb past glories on a lower budget, try the **'51 Precision Bass** (\$739.99). This is a Japanese-made version of Leo Fender's original P-Bass, with a maple neck, single-coil pickup, unusually thin frets, and a Telecaster-style slab of a body. The basswood body is surprisingly light—enough for a scoliotic old geezer like myself to move around with easily. The two-saddle bridge leaves a wide gap between the A and D strings, which is great for doing

D-minor modal drones, but may disconcert some players. Its tone is impressive: slightly brighter than the average P-Bass, but warm enough for jazz and dub and sharp enough for the punk-grunge poetics of my wife's band. "Like chocolate," says our drummer. This is

no small compliment, because we're playing in the East Village's cheapest rehearsal studio, with a bass amp that might have been new

when Henry Rollins auditioned for Black Flag there in 1981. Plugging in stompboxes thins the '51's sound noticeably, but not fatally. It was a sad day in the Wishnia home when we had to send this one back to Fender; if we had more money and a bigger apartment, we'd get his-and-hers models.

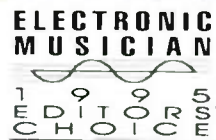
Playing so many different models made



The Jamerson-worthy Vintage '62

me appreciate the P-Bass's protean qualities. It doesn't impose its personality on your music the way some guitars do (for example, could you imagine a metalhead playing a Telecaster?). This means that the difference in sound has to come from your playing style, strings, settings, speakers, and amp. If there's any instrument that can possibly be all things to all people, this is it; I've used the P-Bass in dozens of different playing situations, from free jazz improv to Patsy Cline covers, and it's fit well in every one. As Keith Richards said of the Telecaster, "It's amazing that Leo got it right the first time." 🎸

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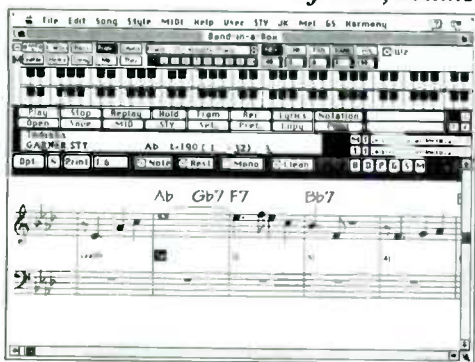
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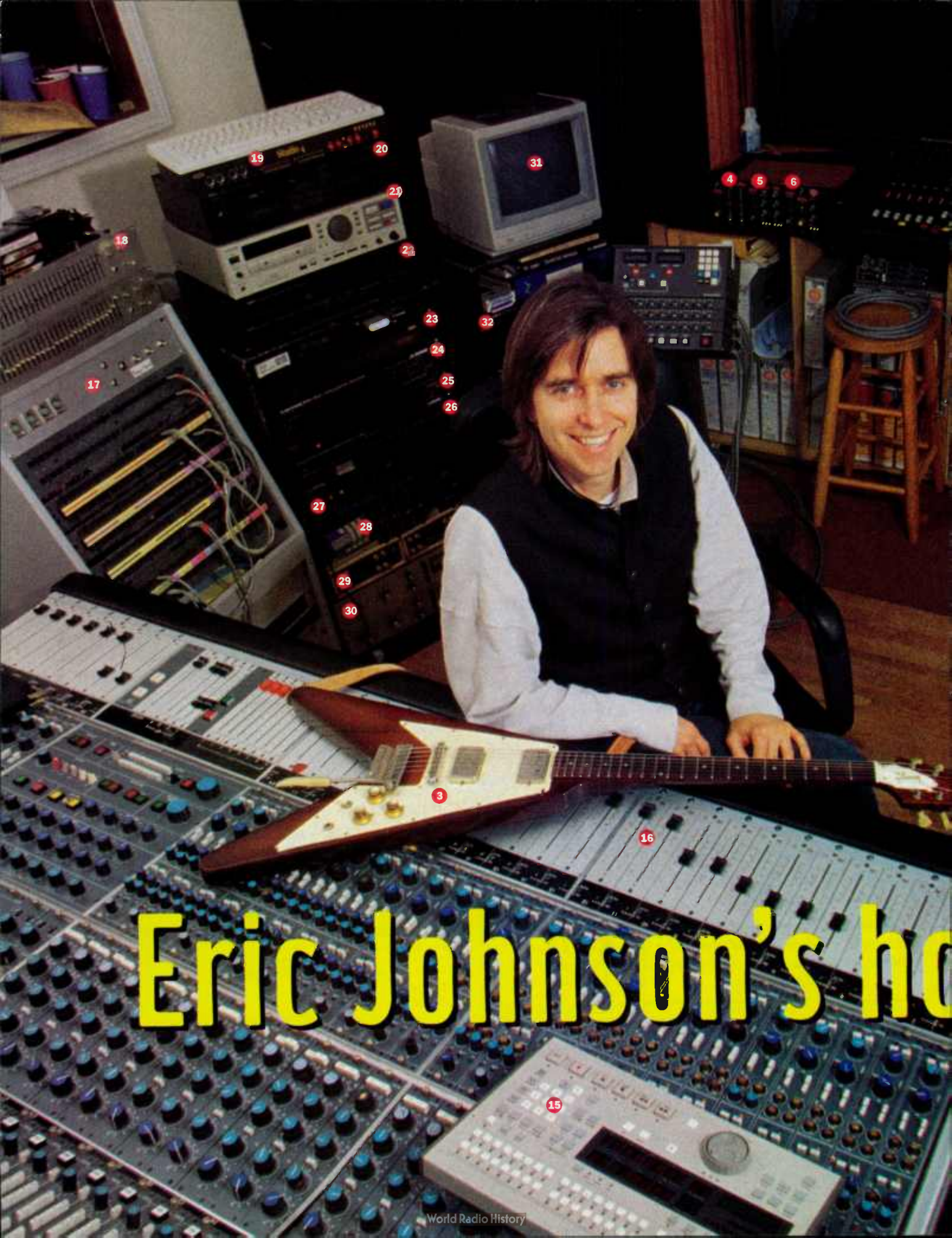
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Eric Johnson's ho

home studio

IF ERIC JOHNSON'S blond hair looks a bit darker than usual, his skin slightly paler, it could be because he didn't spend much time out in the Texas sun last summer—or the summer before that. Or the summer before *that*. For the past two and a half years, Johnson and engineer Richard Mullin have been holed up in Eric's Saucer Sound studio in Austin, working on guitar parts for the follow-up to 1990's *Ah Via Musicom*.

"With this record I was trying to get a different feel," says Johnson, "and it just kept ending up sounding like the last record. It took a long time to get the tracks to where they had a different vibe."

The basic tracks for the CD (tentatively titled *Long Path Meadow*, scheduled for April) were actually finished within the first six to eight months of the project. "The bulk of the tracking was supposed to be done at A&M in L.A.," explains Mullin, "but ultimately we only used three tracks from there. Three or four basics we're using were demo tracks that we did at Eric's rehearsal space; another track was cut at Arlyn [in Austin]; one was live at a gig in Houston; and the remaining three were cut here."

Originally the duo converted Eric's rehearsal space into a makeshift recording studio, but the power station across the street made the guitars hum, so they moved into their current two-room facility, telling the landlord they'd be there about six months. Yeah, sure.

This time out, Johnson reached for his 1965 **Gibson ES-335 1** more often than usual, though he also employed a '54 or '57 **Fender Stratocaster 2** (both maple-necks), a '61 or '65 rosewood-board Strat, 1966 **Gibson Flying V 3**, '59 **ES-335**, mid-'60s **Gretsch Nashville**, a **Fender Bass VI** and a **Takamine** classical.

His famed three-amp setup—incorporating 50- or 100-watt **Marshall** heads, a **Fender Twin** and a **Dumble Odyssey**—sits on the other side of the glass. It was augmented with a blackface Vibroverb with one 15" speaker, a humongous '60s Showman cabinet, and a Marshall rewired to

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fast forward

'66 specs by Bill Ussery.

Generally Eric's clean rhythm parts are miked with an **AKG 414**, while for distorted parts, a **Shure SM 57** is preferred. "We like the old **API 312** preamps **4**," adds Mullin, "with **550A** EQs **5** for dirty sounds or **560** graphics **6** for clean." All three are in two identical rows on both sides of

the 10-channel **Ramsa WR-8210A** console **7**, which is being used as yet another preamp. Recording vocals, Johnson fell in love with an early-'60s tube **Neumann U67** ("like the Beatles used"), although he also uses the more affordable 414.

Gadget addict Johnson's stomptboxes include an original **Dallas-Arbitrator Fuzz Face** **8** or two, a


t.c. electronics EQ/sustain **9**, an old **Cry Baby** wah-wah **10** (made by Vox), a **Seamoon Fresh Fuzz** **11** and **Prescription Electronics Experience** pedal **12**, which he describes as "kind of like a Fuzz Face, but with more distortion."

Some 50 reels of **Ampex 456 2"** tape **13** have been threaded through the **MCI JH24** 24-track machine **14**. Says Mullin, "The **Tascam DA-88** [not shown, although its **RC-848** remote controller **15** is] comes in handy too because, even though we're on slave tapes, we occasionally run out of tracks. So we'll do a sub-mix down to a couple of tracks on the 8-track."

Johnson's mid-'70s **Neve 8068** console **16** (32x16) is typical of the type used in English radio stations. Atop the no-name **patch bay** **17** sits a pair of equally weathered **Urei 527-A** graphic equalizers **18**, used in conjunction with the studio's larger monitors, **Electro-Voice Sentry 500s**, although for overdubs Johnson mainly uses **Yamaha NS-10Ms**. A **QSC MX1500** amp powers the EVs, a **BGW 750** fires the Yamaha, and headphone amps are a **Crown DC300** and **DC150**.

The rack next to the patch bay houses an **Opcode Studio 4** interface **19** for sequencer programs, **Yamaha** cassette deck **20**, **Panasonic SV-3700 DAT** **21**, **Yamaha** CD player **22**, **Korg DRV-3000** processor **23**, **t.c. electronics 2290** **24** for delay, **Roland SRV-2000** **25** for "cheap reverb," **t.c. electronics 1210** spatial expander **26**, **Lexicon PCM-70** **27** for main reverb, **dbx 900** rack **28** with two 902 de-essers and two 903 compressors, two **Valley Audio** gates **29**, and two **Urei 1176** compressor/limiters **30**.

The **Atari SCI224** computer monitor **31** is hooked up to the **Roland S-770** sampler **32**. "One song had a bunch of backwards guitar parts," Mullin details, "so rather than flipping the tape over again and again, we just sampled the parts and put all the samples in the Roland." Under the sampler is a **Roland JV-880** synth module, a couple of **Urei 530** EQs and one **535**, and a **Dietz** parametric EQ.

Johnson's obsessive attention to detail at every stage of the creative process leads one to wonder how much is art and how much is voodoo. Such a seemingly small matter as the polarity of a cable can be agonized over for hours. And if that much attention is paid to a patch cord, it only stands to reason that elements like melody and rhythm would loom even larger. "On at least half of the songs," Eric says, "once I get into the studio and put the parts on, I end up rewriting them. I spend a lot of time trying to make each song better." 



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World Radio History

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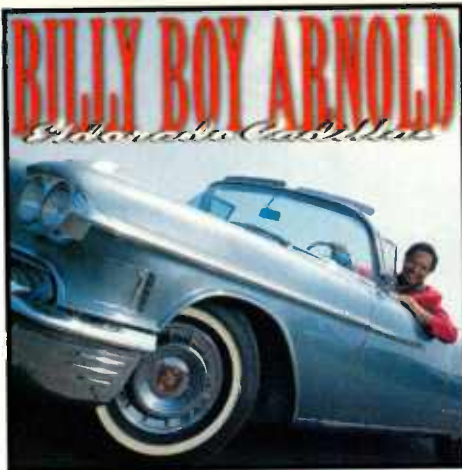
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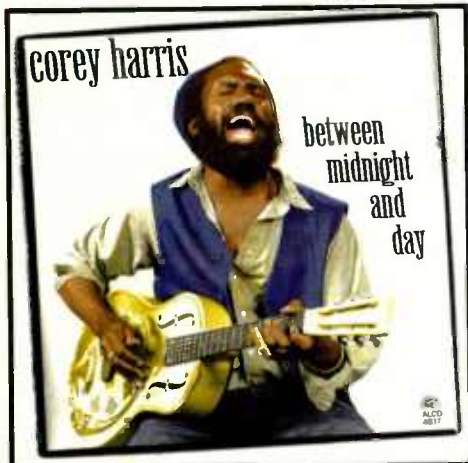
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Tori in Excelsis

Tori Amos

Boys For Pele
(Atlantic)

They said it couldn't be done, but Tori Amos proved them wrong: Here is an album even more intimate, more infuriating or entrancing, than her preceding efforts, *Little Earthquakes* and *Under the Pink*. Everything on *Boys* challenges the listener to accept the artist on her terms, as she speaks in her own poetic language and follows her muse through territory both familiar and vaguely forbidding.

Amos's instrumental performance is critical to the life of her songs, and throughout *Boys* her playing is powerful. The opening cut, "Horses," begins with a single note repeated beneath a whispery vocal motif; the funereal effect fits neatly into Tori's *Carrie*-like theology. Then, after a short silence, comes the freely arpeggiated, linear piano that has become her trademark. Her figures flow up and down the keyboard, build and dissolve, framing the melody beautifully and following it, now like the tinkle of an ice cream truck, now like the tread of a stalker. No other singer/songwriter plays self-accompaniment as evocatively as Tori Amos.

The same applies to her work on harpsichord, heard for the first time here. On "Blood Roses," a Gothic psycho-sexual exercise (complete with real doomsday bells this time), she moves from prickly figurations to a hammering that makes the delicate instrument literally snarl. "Professional Widow" goes further, with a parallel-fourths riff that's lifted straight from the power guitar primer.

Other textures flavor *Boys for Pele*: a string arrangement on "Marianne" that recalls similarly tasteful charts on her other albums, a sequenced drum pattern thumping incongruously behind the harpsichord on "Caught a Lite Sneeze," electronic noises on "Little Amsterdam" that somehow suggest a dark night in the Deep South, a choir that comes out of nowhere at the end of "Way Down," a brass ensemble that spills a silvery sheen over "Mr. Zebra." On most of these tracks, Amos's playing is the vital element. Take it away, and you're left with something much less compelling.

Which leads us to the lyrics. Two problems: They can be hard to decipher, due often to Amos's delivery. Given her extraordinary control as a singer, this can only be intentional. But beyond that, even when you can understand the words . . . sometimes you can't understand them. Amos writes in a kind of poetic code, in which meaning is suggested rather than spelled out. She can be stark, as with her weird twist on *Peanuts* iconography in "Not the Red Baron," but she can also sound graceless: Lines like "I need a big loan from the girl zone" feel like attempts to coin a phrase and make a rhyme. Coupled with the eccentricity of her delivery—a demented chant of "come



on" in "Blood Roses," the slurred pronunciation of the word "side" on "Doughnut Song"—they can be hard to tolerate, even for those raised on conventional rock and roll yowling.

Anything less, though, would be less of who Tori Amos is. *Boys* demands that we give her room to say it her way. If idiosyncrasy isn't acceptable to you, you're free to move on. Tori's fans—they know who they are—will line up to take your place.—Robert L. Doerschuk

The Beatles

Anthology 1
(Capitol)

So says the Zen master: You can't stick your hand in the same river twice. So says the vice president of marketing research: You can make a lot of money off people who want to stick their hand in the same river twice. So say I: Heed both.

Before the Beatles, the boundaries of male heroism in the U.S. were defined by John Wayne, James Bond and Vince Lombardi. After the Beatles, there was this new possibility. We were surprised by joy, to borrow a term from C.S. Lewis. Indeed, the very moment I was surprised by joy in the midst of otherwise unrelieved misery in junior high is recorded right here on track 9 of disc 2 on *The Beatles Anthology 1*. On February 9, 1964, three days after my thirteenth birthday, the Beatles played "All My Loving" on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Hearing that version of that song three decades later makes me surprised by tears in my eyes. I don't care if the river has moved on.

Before the Beatles, genius was generally understood



Starfile

as a solitary affair. Mozart, Beethoven, Einstein, Shakespeare—they all had supporting casts, but they were basically alone in the act of creation. The Beatles were clearly collective genius. Together they created a whole vastly greater than the sum of the parts. As solo artists, they did valid work but never hit the same peaks.

The fun of *Anthology 1* comes in watching their genius develop. The first piece of the puzzle to fit was John Lennon's voice. It cuts through everything, even surface noise, when they were recording as the Quarrymen. John was born to sing rock 'n' roll. Paul McCartney's voice didn't come into its own until he started working with George Martin. George Harrison was a remarkably clever and articulate guitarist right from the start of their recording. He understood the exuberant side of Chuck Berry, where the Stones picked up on his leering, sexual side.

In my junior high, I once heard two kids get into a

ferocious argument about whether Ringo's IQ was 62 or 64 (they'd read different fanzines, apparently), which was the beginning of the drummer-as-dumb-guy myth. Beyond that, I never heard anyone wonder what Ringo was really like. But, damn, he was a great drummer. Knew where the backbeat was better than anyone with the possible exception of Charlie Watts. His cymbal wash during the five songs taken from a live Swedish radio broadcast is a wonder to behold.

The Beatles understood rock 'n' roll as satire of the adult world. They nailed Leiber & Stoller ("Searchin'" and "Three Cool Cats") and in over-the-top cover versions ("You'll Be Mine") they planted a little seedling of goofiness that would in later years grow into a whole garden of whimsical absurdity. They "played" rock 'n' roll, didn't work it.

Personally, I'd pay the price of this album just for the legendary Royal Command Performance on No-

Head for the Woods: Pere Ubu's *Ray Gun Method*

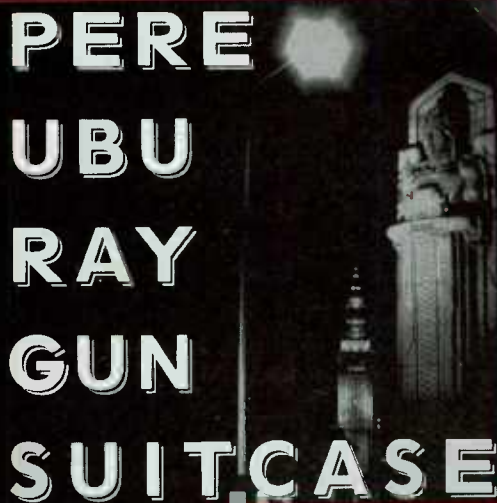
"Everyone knows about method acting," says Pere Ubu's singer/lyricist/theoretician David Thomas. "Well, I wanted to do method recording." So Thomas sent guitarist Jim Jones into the Ohio woods surrounding Suma Studios to record several parts for Ubu's latest release, *Ray Gun Suitcase* (Tim/Kerr). "That's why you can hear crickets all over the album, because we were running cables outdoors. Jim was saying, 'There are mosquitoes out here. They're biting me.' I said, 'Just get your part right and then you can come in.' And he got it right. Under those circumstances, you tend to be focused."

Focusing his handmates was a major concern for Thomas, who took the producer's chair for the first time in Ubu's 20-year career. "This band's never had much patience in the studio," he explains. "So I figured the best way to record was to spend as little time as possible actually playing and as much

time as possible working on the sound environment." Frequently, that environment was located outside the studio. "Sometimes when you're recording you can't get far enough away from the sound of

the instrument," Thomas says. "I needed that extra distance, so we set people up in the woods." Because of such "method recording" tactics, most of the performances on *Ray Gun Suitcase* are first or second takes.

Many of those performances were captured by mikes specially built by Thomas and engineer Paul Hamann—out of wood. "Anything that vibrates can be a microphone," Thomas says. "I'd always wanted to experiment with making microphones, so we put magnetic drivers in a bunch of different vessels. Most of them sounded terrible, but the wooden ones were great, and we ended up using them on a lot of the record, both for vocals and instruments." Pressed for details about the construction of these wooden vessels, Thomas refuses to elaborate. "I don't want people stealing my ideas. The sound's too good to just give away."—Mac Randall



vember 4, 1963. Lennon's intro to "Twist and Shout," directing "the people in the cheaper seats" to clap their hands and everyone else to "rattle their jewelry" is simply one of the best things anybody ever said.

—Charles M. Young

**Van Morrison with
Georgie Fame & Friends**

How Long Has This Been Going On
(Verve)

In one sense, Van Morrison has always been a jazz musician. His early hits copped the feel of Louis Jordan's jump and Atlantic-era rhythm and blues; his recent albums contain standards and R&B gems done up with loving, jazz-informed interpretations. He does play saxophone. But while "Moondance" is pure cocktail-trio à la Brubeck, Morrison's usually been smart enough to use jazz as a resource rather than champion it as a cause.

Until now. On *How Long Has This Been Going On*, Morrison and his longtime collaborator, keyboardist Georgie Fame, are so busy celebrating their jazzism—the hipster scat, the crazy swing—that they rarely act as catalysts for genuine improvisation. They know all the moves, how the rhythms should feel, and they've hired a band of interesting soloists. But the result is music full of whiz-bang vaudeville excitement (now he's scatting! now, a trumpet solo!) and little spontaneity.

Maybe Van the Man wants it that way; even when singing a blues like "Early in the Morning," he's conscious of telling the story. Phrasing with the deliberate moves of an aging crooner, Morrison doesn't stray far from the melodies, and his ad-libs are less memorable for their invention than for the way they envelop the familiar. It's telling that his finest moment is with that sorrowful ballad "Who Can I Turn To?"—here, he offers all the pitch-bending and vocal gymnastics that are missing from the uptempo stuff.

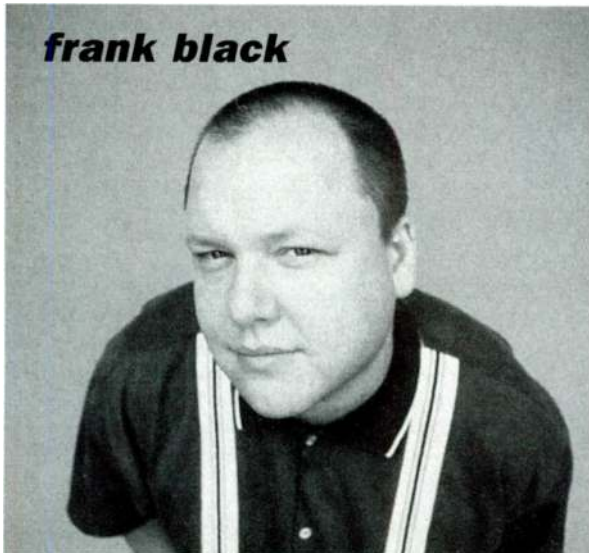
At times the glib, happy-feet style clicks beautifully. Morrison and Fame tear through the Jon Hendricks lyrics to Cannonball Adderley's "Sack O' Woe" in a powerful unison, conjuring its slippery soul-jazz groove as though they've been playing it for years. And Morrison interprets Mose Allison's "Your Mind Is On Vacation" with the offhand easiness of an Allison disciple, cool and cranky. Alas, he applies the same hipster approach to "Moondance," which winds up sounding like a TV-show theme.

Fame's arrangements and the band's relaxed execution make the date, recorded at Ronnie Scott's in London (without an audience), feel smooth: The horn players contribute thoughtful, idiomatically correct solos

that don't upset the taciturn grooves, while the combination of Fame's organ and Robin Aspland's piano creates an elegant cushion for Morrison's musings. And a sax showdown between Morrison and Pee Wee Ellis on "Heathrow Shuffle" reminds that things might have been worse: This incredibly gifted singer could have made an album of saxophone instrumentals. Count those blessings.—Tom Moon

Frank Black

The Cult of Ray
(American)



Andy Vogt

Frank Black is a lot like character actor Crispin Glover. Both began their show-biz careers with sturdy, star-making performances—Glover as the mousy dad in *Back to the Future* and the distressed friend in *River's Edge*, Black with a guitar-fueled juggernaut of releases by his old band, the Pixies. And both, over the years, have gotten weirder and weirder, to the point where only devout disciples appreciate their curious crafts. *The Cult of Ray*, Black's third (and self-produced) solo today, is every bit as eccentric and entertaining as Glover's recent cameo in *Twister*. It's a strange tour de force not meant for myopic masses.

Black, a noted UFO enthusiast, wastes no time jumping into his fave subject. The opening "Marsist" begins with a quasi-Kinks riff, segues into a surf lead, seasons the mix with saturnine guitar squeals, eventually does channel-to-channel battle with surf and feedback, and lyrically notes the nifty pleasures of living on another planet. "Men In Black" expands on the theory: The protagonist has just filmed a saucer with his camcorder, and figures he'll soon be silenced. Appropriately, the vocal identity Black assumes for much of this project is marshmallowy, often buried beneath swamp guitars. Even the most ferocious number—the pun-hyper "Dance War"—waives artistic personality for sheer sonic overload. The guitar reigns supreme here; voices are purely incidental. That contrast is almost palpable on the reverb-happy "Jesus Was Right," the Phil Spector-ish "You Ain't Me," and the classic rock tex-

tures (with surly '50s punctuation) of "Punk Rock City." To paraphrase an old cliché, Black may not know art, but he knows what he likes.

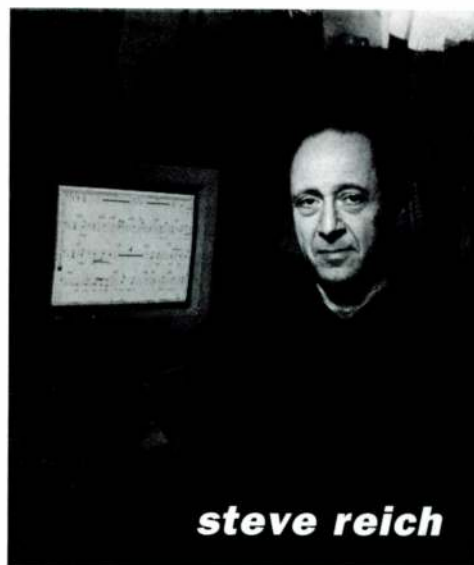
Occasionally, such single-mindedness does Black in—the forgettable, overwrought title cut, for instance. But mostly it's redemptive. Like all oddballs—including Crispin Glover—Black cares so much for his personal causes, from space aliens to the salvation of a good, fuzzi-distorted tube amp, that you wind up being charmed, if not converted, by his visions.—Tom Lanham

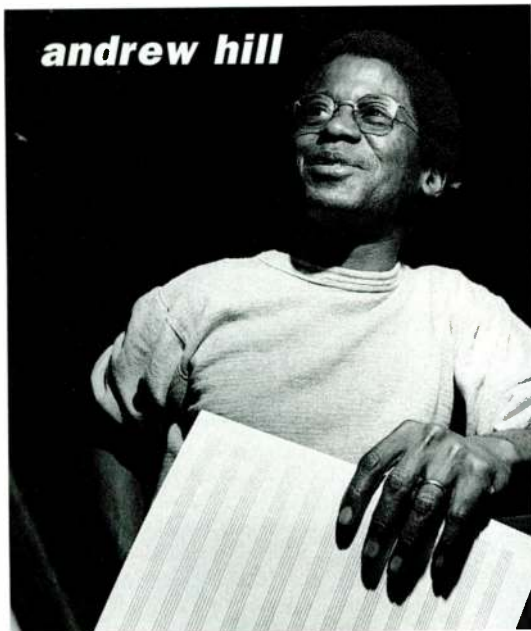
Steve Reich

The Cave
(Elektra/Nono)

The man trying to convince us that "minimalism is indigenous American music" adds to his evidence with the release of the music to *The Cave*. An opera-length collaboration with video artist Beryl Korot, *The Cave* is a "video installation" for chamber orchestra, four vocalists and multiple screens, alternating manipulated taped reminiscences with singing and musical accompaniment. A recasting of the Abraham, Sarah and Hagar *menage à trois* from the Torah, through the Koran, by way of modern Jerusalem and several American cities as well, the "libretto" consists of answers to the questions "Who is Abraham (or Sarah, or Hagar) for You?", posed to various Americans and Middle Easterners. The music here is taut and spare, more accompaniment than focal point. As a drummer, Reich brings an expertise to minimalism—which favors repetition and unison over counterpoint and harmonic experimentation—that other composers fail to achieve. The musical centerpiece, however, is not written by Reich or sung by any of his fine collaborators: It is an affecting and unsettling chant of Surah 3 from the Koran.

The unusual video format of *The Cave* will limit the number of productions the public is likely to see—currently just single performances are scheduled for 1996 and 1997. More's the pity: a highly refined example of Reichian minimalism, *The Cave* joins Meredith Monk's *Atlas*, John Adams' *Nixon in China* and *The Death of*





FRANCIS WOLFF

Klinghoffer and Philip Glass' *Einstein on the Beach* as a dynamic American contribution to contemporary musical theater.—Keith Powers

Leon Russell

Asylum Choir II

Leon Russell

Leon Russell & the Shelter People (The Right Stuff/Capitol)

He was a weird, transitional figure, a slick studio player with Sinatra and Streisand dates on his résumé, who mutated into a white-haired apparition with a Dust Bowl drawl and a ferocious, Holy Roller attack at the piano. At his peak, when he released these three albums in the late '60s and early '70s, Russell teetered on the edge of superstardom. He wrote tunes as sophisticated as those of Bacharach, and delivered them as if possessed. Then came the fall, as he collapsed into self-parody, tried to clamber aboard the progressive country haywagon and more or less disappeared.

These reissues are a study in lost opportunity. *Asylum Choir II*, his collaboration with Marc Benno, documents his response to the electric musical climate of the time. The feel is mid-'60s—dry shuffle drums, thin-toned guitar fills, vocals mixed way up—but Russell pushes against it with his raw Okie articulation. His playing is even more contradictory, wavering between session-like discipline and wild gospel thumping on "Down On the Base." On five previously unreleased tracks, he toes the commercial line, with harmonies and trumpet fills on "Death of the Flowers" that could have fit neatly on a Monkees release. But even here, there's a whiff of change in the air, a promise of tighter focus and concentrated passion.

On *Leon Russell*, released in '69, this promise was fulfilled. From the first track, the classic ballad "A Song for You," Russell achieved what eluded him on *Asylum Choir*: an integration of his two personae. He caressed the melody even while underscoring it with down-

home rasps and scratchy yowls. Velvet and sandpaper, perfectly matched. Having made his point, Russell filled the rest of the album with a kind of ecstasy that's rare even now—especially now—in secular music. On "I Put a Spell On You," "Roll Away the Stone," and "Give Peace a Chance," he ripped his rhythms across the keys, every now and then pulling back, as if to tease listeners for a moment or two before dousing them with another dose of the spirit.

Then came the beginning of the end. The sermonizing vocal break in the opening cut of *Shelter People*, "Stranger in a Strange Land," was what Russell was all about: the pull of the gospel train, the call-and-response over rumbling piano and riffing choir. But these same churchy devices bordered on affectation. "Of Thee I Sing"—Russell tended to "borrow" song titles—seems somewhat campy now, more an imitation of something vital than vital in itself. Much of *Shelter*

People rocks; most of it captures the hair-raising power of his shows back then. The premonitions are in the details: the greater reliance on non-original material, the sense of wheels beginning to spin. We know where Russell went after this album. Listening to these three discs makes us wonder if there were greener musical pastures where he might have gone instead.

—Robert L. Doerschuk

Andrew Hill

The Complete Andrew Hill

Blue Note Sessions (1963-66)

(Mosaic)

If Andrew Hill had forsaken jazz, he would have been the perfect candidate to design *Myst*, the CD-ROM whose logic confounds as it compels. The pianist/composer, now 58 years old, knows the intrigue inherent in labyrinths. This gorgeous consolidation of his mid-'60s work reaffirms his stature as one of jazz's more kaleidoscopic arrangers.

During this most fertile period, Hill gave conventional hard bop a spin that sent it unfurling toward the abstract, a process documented by the assortment of settings Mosaic has assembled. Seven discs account for eight records originally issued, and not one contains the same grouping of players. Two basses mark the heretofore rare (though recently reissued) *Smokestack* session from '63, a polyrhythmic chamber date whose harmonic sophistication and eccentricity set the tone for much of what followed. A year later, during

the *Andrew!!!* recordings, the braided lines of Hill, vibist Bobby Hutcherson and saxophonist John Gilmore provide the aptly titled "Symmetry" with an uncommon composure. Such balance resounds on the classic *Point of Departure*, which expanded Hill's palette with three distinct horn stylists: Kenny Dorham, Eric Dolphy and the leader of Hill's first Blue Note session, Joe Henderson. Hill's poise placed him at odds with some of the day's other progressives, whose attraction to uproar begot a more physical and volatile music. Robust expressionism does crop up in the pianist's work—textural bleats and curious cadences—but the bulk of his canon is essentially a head trip (perhaps one reason why an aggressive '66 session, with titles like "Pain," "Desire," "Lust" and "Violence," was initially shelved).

With elliptical voicings creating a somber, often bittersweet take on the blues, the hard-assed syncopation of the pianist's solos seems intrusive at times. But with supple phrasing, Hill reconciled these elements, creating a music that feels forever molten.—Jim Maenle

Don Caballero

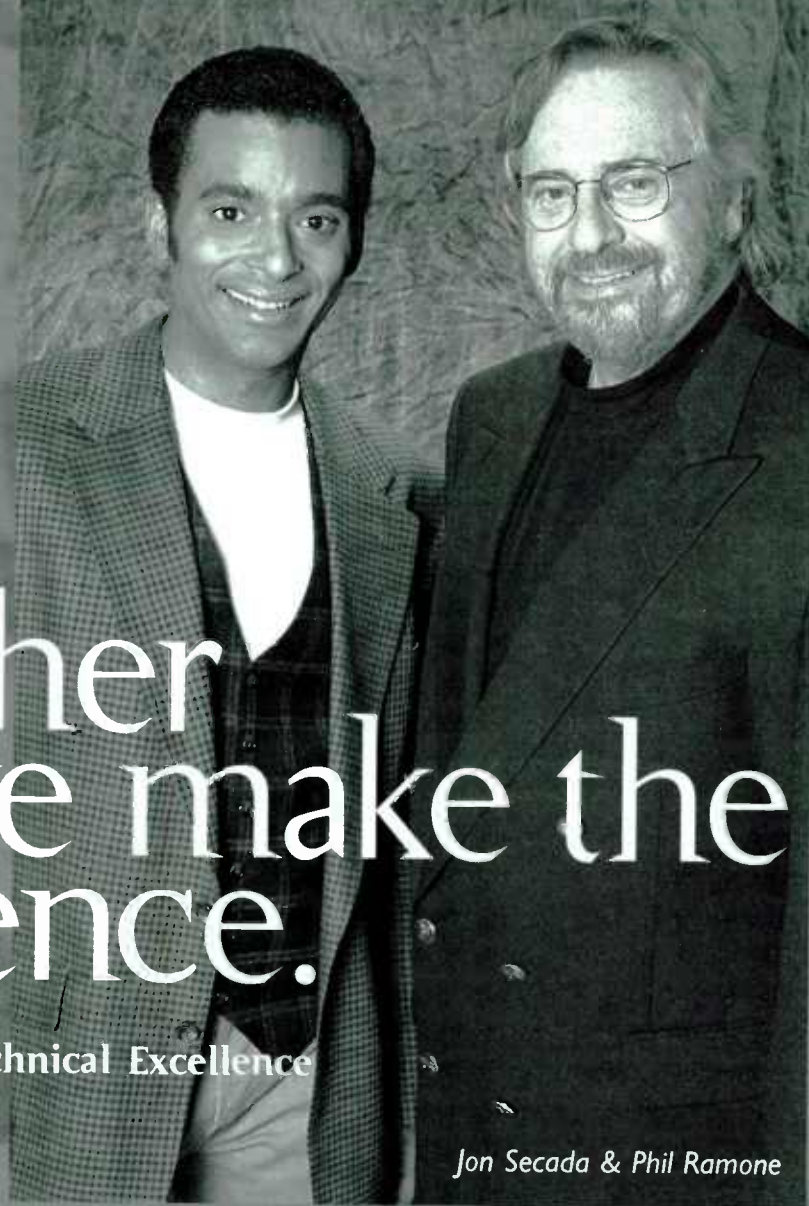
Don Caballero 2

(Touch and Go)

The pundits may call Don Caballero's music instrumental hardcore, but it sure sounds like the second coming of prog to me. By that I mean the intellectual and physical kick that was progressive rock, before it lost its way in a thicket of histrionics and aimless noodling. What we've got here is sheer muscle: fifty-megaton art music played with a controlled savagery that rivals *Larks' Tongues in Aspic*-era King Crimson. The force is pure hardcore, yes, but these boys from Pittsburgh don't just body-slam you; they also mess with your mind.

Usually, they do it metrically. There isn't an uneven time signature Don Cab won't try—the opening "Stupid Puma" shifts meter at least five times, including consecutive sections of 10, 11 and 12/8. Sometimes, though, the mind-messing is of a more purely sonic nature. Check out the ending of "please tokio, please THIS IS TOKIO," which features symphonic layers of feedback and what





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short takes

by j.d. considine

Lyle Lovett

I Love Everybody (Curb/MCA)

Ever the strange duck, Lovett celebrates "Penguins," identifies with "Fat Babies" and warns against "Creeps Like Me"—not exactly the stuff of star turns. But unlike his Large Band albums, this one isn't out to dazzle or amuse; it aims to seduce, and does so by building its songs around acutely observed lyrics (from the heartbreaking "Old Friend" to the comic "They Don't Like Me") and exquisitely nuanced, deceptively quiet arrangements.

Stevie Wonder

Natural Wonder (Motown)

As exciting as its oldies-show aspect may be—the heavenly "You Are the Sunshine of My Life," the intoxicating "Signed, Sealed, Delivered, I'm Yours"—the real kick of this concert recording is the way it brings Wonder's later material to life. Songs that seemed contrived or inconsequential in the studio are here revealed as rich and resonantly complex, from the stunning close-harmony choral hook in "Love's in Need of Love Today" to the lush irony of the orchestral arrangement in "Village Ghetto Land." Even better, the album shows that there's as much genius evident in new material like "Ms. & Mr. Little Ones" and the buoyant "Dancing to the Rhythm" as in such familiar favorites as "Superstition" and "Higher Ground."

Don Henley

Actual Miles: Henley's Greatest Hits (Geffen)

Would you buy a greatest hits collection from this man?

Alex Lifeson

Victor (Atlantic)

Taken as songs, the odds and ends collected here don't really amount to much. Taken as an excuse to stretch out, though, *Victor* is surprisingly successful, allowing Lifeson to indulge in the kind of crankage Rush never seems to have room for (check the way he "does it hard" in "Don't Care"). Now if only he'd granted similar space to guests like Les Claypool. . .

P

P (Capitol)

Johnny Depp's name may be in the credits, but this is no Dogstar. If anything, P is Butthole Surfer Gibby Haynes' band. The Buttholes influence shines brightest through the perverse "Mr. Officer" and the demented "Zing Splash";

there's also a warped 12-bar genre exercise called "White Man Sings the Blues," a credible acid-dub workout called "Jon Glenn (Mega Mix)," and an oddly earnest cover of "Dancing Queen." None of which makes for particularly easy listening, ensuring that there will be relatively few friends of P.

Terry Ellis

Southern Gal (EastWest)

Though she's working with the same production crew as En Vogue, Ellis' solo sound is wholly her own, grounded in Southern soul (check "You Make Me High" or "I Don't Mind") but blessed with enough range to easily manage the sassy sophistication of "She's a Lady." Every diva should be such a gal.

Skunk Anansie

Paranoid and Sunburnt (Epic)

With a sound as hard as it is smart, Skunk Anansie smoulders with a passion that almost sounds anachronistic in the ultra-ironic '90s. Some of that has to do with the semi-metal crunch guitarist Ace and bassist Cass generate, but mostly it's the blend of intensity and delivered by singer Skin. It's one thing to write a song as full of rage and disgust as "Intellectualise My Blackness," something else to deliver every line like a paper cut. A must-hear album.

Boss Hog

Boss Hog (DGC)

You'd think by now that there'd be no new way to reconfigure or recontextualize the blues, yet here's Boss Hog with a new set of variations. Given the band's origins—Christina Martinez and Jon Spencer are both Pussy Galore alums—there's plenty of sexual tension and sonic edge, but the best tracks build from the bottom up; that commitment to deep groove makes Boss Hog's blues uplifting.

Original Soundtrack

Waiting to Exhale (Arista)

Whitney Houston may get top billing, but ultimately this is a Babyface album. Not only did he write all the new songs, but it's his empathy and melodic gift that sets the stage for these performances. Granted, they aren't all star turns. Houston does a great slow build through "Exhale," but Aretha Franklin's falsetto rendering of "It Hurts Like Hell" is far from her finest singing. Overall, though, the album is consistent and evocative enough to leave most listeners hoping for a sequel.

sounds like a cymbal being attacked by an electric drill.

All the while, Don Cab keeps instrumental grandstanding to a minimum. The fiery fusillades on "Rollerblade Success Story" are the only instance where anyone could accuse guitarists Ian Williams and Mike Banfield of overplaying. Tightly interlocking parts everywhere else leave no doubt that they've got the stuff. Even drummer Damon Che—whose dexterity is so formidable that when he breaks into a simple 4/4 backbeat, the shock may leave you gasping—never does anything to show off.

One thing *Don Caballero 2* doesn't have a lot of is melody. What it does have is plenty of heavy riffs, blasted out one after another with little concern for brevity (half of the eight cuts are over nine minutes long). Some of them, such as the vaguely spy-themish middle part of "Cold Knees (in April)," are kinda catchy. Most are simply overwhelming. You can't dance to this music, and even if you could, you probably wouldn't want to. So just revel in the power, the fury and the volume galore.

—Mac Randall

Various Artists

Planet Squeezebox: Accordion Music From Around the World (Ellipsis Arts)

The accordion has always been popular, but these days—championed by Los Lobos, showing up in the arsenals of Bruce Hornsby, Sheryl Crow, k.d. lang and John Mellencamp—it's gotten downright hip. These 52 tracks (on three CDs) prove the instrument's unmatched range, stylistically and emotionally. With a 56-page booklet as travel guide, the emphasis shifts from infectious to hypnotic, as the squeezebox migrates from France to Sumatra, circling the globe in between.

A Whitman's Sampler in the best sense of the term, the set gives you a taste of various artists and schools, tempting you to dig deeper. Highlights include the melodicism of Finland's Maria Kalaniemi, the dissonant but rhythmic sounds of Sweden's Lars Hollmer, jazz pyrotechnician Alice Hall, majestic belly-dance accompaniment from Egypt's Farouk Mohamed Hassan, and markedly different ends of the tango spectrum, courtesy of Trio Porteno and Astor Piazzolla.

Unfortunately, the individual bios are a bit skimpy, which begs the question of who this box is for—devotee or novice? Descriptions of tracks rather than song titles on the outside of the box suggest the latter. On the other hand, seemingly essential artists are conspicuous by their absence. According to producer Michal Shapiro, *conjunto* god Flaco Jimenez and jazz great Art Van Damme were deemed too accessible for inclusion, while licensing problems excluded zydeco king Clifton Chenier. As a result, Zydeco Force and Lynn August offer lukewarm representation of a vital genre. Other glaring omissions—jazz master Tommy Gumina, Cajun pioneer Amedee Ardoin, country fave Pee Wee King, an example of accordion orchestras—may keep this collection from being definitive. Still, for any collector it remains a must-own. —Dan Forte

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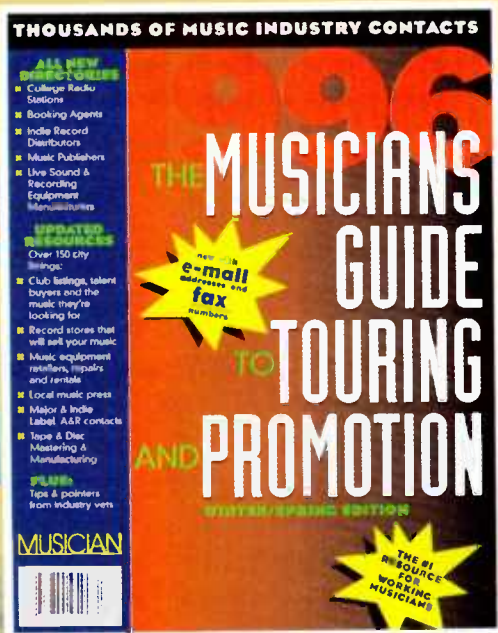
Jack Logan & Liquor Cabinet
Mood Elevator
 (Medium Cool/Restless)

Journalists are understandably sympathetic to odd-ball-makes-good stories, but I'll pass wind in the general direction of those who mythologized the arrival of Jack Logan's debut *Bulk* back in the summer of '94. A disproportionate part of that record's charm was the tale of its creation: the mechanic whose

gargantuan demo diary was condensed to 42 tracks of ratchet wrench 'n spark plug pop. Logan's lo-fi tunage jibed nicely with the prevailing indie aesthetic, and his approximation of vintage genres tickled those left-of-the-dialers who need a bit of classicism from their renegades. But to me those basement tapes had an etch-a-sketch quality that wasn't just a function of empty wallets. Even their creator copped to their decade-long documentation being less of a recording

session than a "social event." No wonder quantity overshadowed quality.

Well, you'll find bulimia right next to bulk in the dictionary, and *Mood Elevator*, clocking in at a mere 17 tunes, is a purge-a-thon compared to its predecessor. Some wags are already carping that Logan must have had writer's block this time around. Me? I think thin is in, to a degree. First off, everything's more formalized here. Logan's band sounds like one, and when it leans forward, its vim gives the tunes a skeleton frame missing from most of *Bulk*. Second, recording in an Indiana cornfield, as compared to ragtag home studios around Athens, seems to have imbued the music with splashes of sunlight missing from its shadowy forebear. There's also more stylistic consistency here: The bumpy rock of "Chinese Lorraine" (a "thanks for digging me even though I'm a bummer" love song) is second cousin of "Neon Tombstone" (a "what a glorious mess I am" proclamation). The tradeoff is a creeping genericism that's begun to replace *Bulk's* strange singularity. ("My New Town" sounded creamy enough to have my decidedly non-indie wife ask from afar, "Is this Hootie?"). But don't worry, zealots. Lyrically, Logan still sounds like a reclusive mole in a hole. Only the company has gotten more gregarious.—*Jim Macnie*



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shorts

Dino Saluzzi
Rios
 (Intuition)

Where is the accordion-like bandoneon a percussion instrument? Where is the acoustic bass a melody instrument? Where does the vibraphone function as a timekeeper? In the dreamy world of *Rios*, a collaboration between Dino Saluzzi, bassist Anthony Cox and mallet wizard David Friedman. Trading solo and accompaniment roles with the fluidity of great string quartets, the three build a conversation from romantic melodies that recall "new tango." The woefully under-recorded Saluzzi alternates between crisp chordal jabs and wheezy, wine-soaked themes; it's his knack for understatement that makes *Rios* an airy, magically subtle masterpiece.—*Tom Moon*

Little Milton
Greatest Hits
 (Malaco)
 Live at Westville Prison
 (Delmark)

Milton Campbell's robust blues style had already been chronicled by Sun, Chess, and Stax when he arrived at Malaco Records to cut his biggest hits. *Greatest Hits* compiles familiar numbers from the early '80s on; while the major smashes here, like the now-ubiquitous concert standard "The Blues Are Alright," are in a soul-blues pocket, there are plenty of straight 12-bar numbers for the purist, including Milton's indelible Stax track "Walking the Back Streets and Crying." In 1983, on the eve of his ascent at Malaco, Milton brought a tough little quintet into Indiana's Westville Correctional Center. That date behind bars yielded Delmark's

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pungent live set, on which the singer/guitarist rouses his captive audience with such highlights as a high-voltage cover of O.V. Wright's "Eight Men, Four Women," a 16-minute medley of hits, and a pointed rundown of B.B. King's "Bad Luck." This 40-year blues vet only improved with age. The proof is here.—*Chris Morris*

Rosemary Clooney

Love
(Reprise)

Never have so many—from Barry Manilow to Pia Zadora to Cybill Shepherd—done so much to add so little to the art of singing America's pop standards. Fact is, living vocalists who do justice to the songs of Irving Berlin or Rodgers & Hart can be counted on one's fingers. And though it may surprise some who know her only for novelty hits like "Come-On-A-My-House"—or as "George Clooney's aunt"—this 1961 session places Rosemary Clooney in the same league with Tony Bennett, Ella Fitzgerald and Mel Tormé. Nelson Riddle's hip arrangements of chestnuts like "Black Coffee" and "Imagination" perfectly complement Rosie's no-nonsense readings.—*Dan Forte*

Various Artists

The Secret Museum of Mankind,
Vols. I & II
(Yazoo)

Subtitled *Ethnic Music Classics: 1925-48*, these two volumes collect field recordings from around the globe waxed at a time when the twentieth century had barely begun to intrude on indigenous musics. The far-flung collection includes vintage 78s of Russian and Rumanian gypsies, a pre-war Japanese Imperial household orchestra, a Tibetan shaman and beautiful a cappella choirs from Mozambique and Fiji. Some tracks sound as familiar as the music of our grandparents' world, others might as well have come from Neptune. All of it sounds pretty remarkable. Extensive liner notes, great photos.—*Thomas Anderson*

David Lindley & Hani Naser

Playing Even Better
(Ploemhead)

This is the second live CD from the eclectic string-master since divorcing himself from record labels, major and independent, and it's even better than the first offering, especially sonically. Mr. Dave sings and plays guitar, acoustic steel, bowed banjo and saz (and doubles as cover cartoonist), while Naser supplies inventive percussion: Talk about low overhead. Three tunes were retrieved from bootleggers' tapes, and you can only get this at Lindley gigs or mail-order (Box 1342, Claremont, CA 91711-1342; 909-625-7999). One can only ponder what this pair could turn out with a budget more in line with their formidable talents; in the meantime, their eerie interpretation of J.J. Cale's "Tijuana" proves that less really is more.—*Dan Forte*

Dale Hawkins

Oh! Suzy Q: The Best of...
(MCA)

Here's a perfect example of primal rockabilly that understood the black music it mined (as opposed to an Elvis imitation). Hawkins' sound, with his swampy yowl and Delta rhythms, evoked the cottonfields as much as the honky-tonk, and he had a powerhouse band that variously featured Roy Buchanan, Scotty Moore and James Burton. Along with the classic title track, you get seventeen rave-ups here ranging from hormone-soaked screamers like "Juanita" to the dementia of "See You Soon, Baboon" (replete with Tarzan yells) and the inscrutable "Little Pig."

—*Thomas Anderson*

UB40

The Best of UB40—Volumes One and Two
(Virgin)

This two-disc best-of collection (sold separately) brings up a couple of interesting points about UB40's tropical-breezy faux-reggae. 1) Only two tracks from the band's crucial early years are included—"Food For Thought" and "One In Ten"—and their sparkling originality contrasts sharply with the countless clinical covers that follow. 2) From 1983's *Labour of Love* on, the band's hits break down to this handful of tuxedoed ditties, usually only a couple per catalog album—not a great batting average. So, in a very literal way, these 20 cuts are the best of UB40, a perfect primer for the curious layman. Connoisseurs, however, will want to dig up A&M's definitive anthology *Best Of UB40—1980-1983*. That was when Ali Campbell and Co. were really cooking.—*Tom Lanham*

Replicants

Replicants
(Zoo)

It sure is a wild and wacky concept: members of Tool, Failure and Eye in Triangle getting together to cut a spinoff album of cover tunes. And what a glorious mess they've made. The Cars' "Just What I Needed" gets its chord progression warped for maximum creepiness, while Paul McCartney's "Silly Love Songs" is taken at molasses tempo and Syd Barrett's "No Good Trying" stops abruptly somewhere in the middle. Other notable twists: the slick alternative sheen of Neil Young's "Cinnamon Girl," an '80s-style synth bass on John Lennon's "How Do You Sleep?," and the noise breakdown at the end of Steely Dan's "Dirty Work." The song that gets the straightest rendition is Gary Numan's "Are 'Friends' Electric?," which should give you an idea where these guys are coming from. A perfect gift for those who don't mind the occasional sacred-cow shoot.—*Mac Randall*

Terry Riley/Zeitgeist

Intuitive Leaps
(Work Music/Harmonia Mundi)

Two pieces, each a half-hour long, where West Coast minimalism meets ambient "jazz." "Salome's Excellent Extension," with three dreamy movements followed by an energetic fourth, which wakes the passengers with a seastorm of marimba and Coltrane-phonks on sax, rides waves of keyboard chromatics but all too frequently ebbs into imitation Jarrett exertions.

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"A Room of Remembrance," a quiet Q&A between marimba and sax for the most part, features the composer's self-deprecating reflections on lounge lizards in the liner notes. All played with generous intelligence by Zeitgeist, a robust Midwest foursome that charges it all with soul and covers the all-too-thin veneer that the music provides. Riley wants the players to "transcend the material of the musical forms"; they do. Easy listening for eggheads.—*Keith Powers*

Mulgrew Miller

Getting to Know You
(Novus)

Pianist Mulgrew Miller covers the waterfront on this oddly conceived compilation: originals, show tunes, dated pop hits, a standard. I expected to hate "I Don't Know How to Love Him," but Miller's sublime voicings rescue the song from its hackneyed associations. The arrangement of the title cut (from *The King and I*) shifts abruptly from a propulsive rhythmic intro to the melody line, a drama that is advanced throughout but seems, contextually, to be sandwiched into the wrong tune. Bassist Richie Goods and drummer Karriem Riggins (young and overfond of the crash cymbal) accompany the maestro; Big Black on congas and Steve Kroon on percussion grace four tracks each, and they are magnificent additions that help bridge the leaps this repertoire proposes.—*Karen Bennett*

Eno/Wobble

Spinner
(Gyroscope/Caroline)

As Brian Eno recently declaimed in the pages of this magazine that he wants his music to be sensual, these tracks with former PiL bassist Jah Wobble may come as a surprise. Composed as soundtrack music, these tone poems, anchored in place by Wobble's bass, are as obtuse as anything on *Another Green World* and as icy as the *Apollo Soundtracks*. The electronic overtones on "Where We Lived" are an interesting innovation, but other than that, it's business as usual. Which isn't bad—Eno fans know exactly what titles like "Garden Recalled" and "Space Diary 1" ought to sound like, and they, at least, won't be disappointed.

—*Thomas Anderson*

Various Artists

The Music of Kentucky, Vols. 1 & 2
(Yazoo)

Maybe names like Ernest Phipps and His Holiness Quartet, Alfred Karnes and Emry Arthur don't ring a bell, but check 'em out anyway. They and many others made the beautiful, archaic music you'll hear on these 70-year-old recordings of this isolated region's string bands, sacred singers and balladeers. Highlights include Karnes' "Where We'll Never Grow Old," played on his double-necked harp guitar, the Carver Boys' "Sleeping Lula," and B.F. Shelton's take on the murder ballad "Pretty Polly." Includes biographical notes and photos. How often do you get to step into another world?

—*Thomas Anderson*

Ed Schuller Group

To Know Where One Is
(GM)

It's brazen, it's blue and it's big—Schuller's third outing as a boss harkens to the kind of rough-and-tumble mini-orchestra stuff with which Mingus made his mark. In fact, one of the sublime ironies here is that "Chazz," a nod to the ever-robust Charles by the leader's dad—academic/composer Gunther—is the most delicate tune on this impressive disc. At the aesthetic center of the record is a 20-mule-team take on hard bop, driven by a front line of Gary Valente's 'bone and Joe Lovano's tenor. Together with Schuller's meaty lines and Billy Hart's splashing, they make a thick, playful sound.

—*Jim Macnie*

Giya Kancheli

Exile
(ECM New Series)

Five works based on texts that explore the theme of exile from the Soviet Georgian, himself an expatriate (by choice) in Belgium, who celebrates his 60th birthday this year. Alert your Gorecki-mode: dreamy soprano, set against spare instrumentation (strings and flutes, some synth and tape) played *pianissimo* at lugubrious tempos, mostly devoid of sharp dynamics, veering toward, then away from, atonality. The music is unspeakably beautiful, as Maacha Deubner's voice sounds out rather than declaims the texts. "Minimalism" here doesn't mean minimal ideas (Yo—Philip!), just minimal interruptions in the silence that surrounds all great music. Exile may not be a relevant theme for escapist America, where cyberspace is the only place to go other than home; freedom's immediate effect for many of the Soviet satellite countries has been instability, allowing great composers the chance to write and perform, but only far from home. From their loss we get great music.—*Keith Powers*

videos

Jim Hall

Master Session
(Starlicks)

Among the pre-eminent guitarists in jazz, Hall discusses soloing, comping, chords and scale harmony during a live performance video with duo, trio and quartet accompaniment. After performing "Subsequently," he cites examples from the tune to showcase how he forms his chordal harmony and scales in relation to the chords, specifically while playing with piano. A bass and guitar duet ("Two's Blues") demonstrates his comping over bass root harmonies, while on "Three," a waltz in trio format, Hall plays the inside melody to complement the piano's melody in octaves. Not for beginners, this is a sophisticated lesson on incorporating technique, history and a personal conception into one's playing.

—*David C. Gross*

Martin Simpson

Acoustic Guitar Instrumentals:
Arrangements in Alternate Tunings
(Homespun)

A virtuoso folkie tinged with classical and bluegrass banjo technique, Martin Simpson has an engaging personality under a veneer of English reserve. It is this capacity for engagement, or empathy, that informs his playing and makes him a fine teacher for fingerstyle guitarists in the intermediate to advanced range. His explanations of intervals and chord shapes as he zips around the neck should help to open up the fingerboard for duffers, and his "frailing"—a method of banging the strings with the back of the nails—should suggest all kinds of cool possibilities for more serious musicians.

You do have to be very serious for the frailing. About ten minutes into the tape, you'll be wondering, "What the hell did that guy do to his nails? It looks like he's got Dracula's fangs growing out of his fingers." Much further in the tape, he explains that he goes to a salon where he has some kind of acrylic solution painted on his nails, which makes them especially hard—a necessity for frailing. Personally speaking, I'm not sure I want to frail that bad. My only other complaint is that when he plays some of his more delirious passages slow, it isn't slow enough. But then, what's that rewind button for, anyway?

P.S. Simpson just released a marvelous acoustic blues album called *Smoke & Mirrors*. The playing is clean but dazzling in best English tradition. Be nice to get another instructional video for a few of these songs.—*Charles M. Young*

books

John McDermott with Billy Cox and Eddie Kramer

Jimi Hendrix: Sessions
(Little, Brown)

Analyzing Hendrix's recording career the way Mark Lewisohn did the Beatles' is a fantastic idea. Too bad this book doesn't carry it off. Although it improves as it goes along (the account of the final months at Electric Lady offers real insight into Hendrix's intriguing mixture of perfectionism and indiscipline), there's a lot missing here. Why, for example, does the Woodstock performance get an entry while the Band of Gypsys' New Year's Eve concert at the Fillmore East, which was the basis for an entire album, doesn't? Worst of all is the sketchy treatment given *Are You Experienced?* Granted, the surviving documentation of Hendrix's sessions is by no means comprehensive. But flip through the CD booklet of the MCA *AYE?* reissue and you'll find several pieces of info mysteriously absent from this



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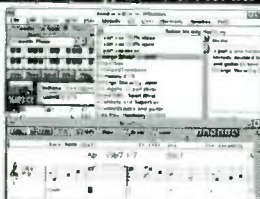
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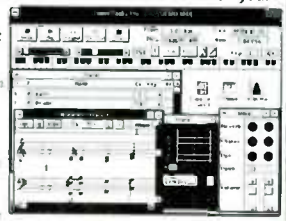
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book—like a detailed discussion of “Love or Confusion,” complete with the day and time when it was recorded. Though McDermott’s research skills are undoubted, such lapses make for a sometimes frustrating read.—*Mac Randall*

Phil Hardy & Dave Laing

*The Da Capo Companion to
20th-Century Popular Music*
(Da Capo Press)

Hardy and Laing’s encyclopedic work is a revision of their 1990 English tome *The Faber & Faber Companion to 20th-Century Popular Music*. It’s a reliable, well-written (if slightly dry) book that stands in the shadow of some other texts that originated in the U.K. It doesn’t contain the breadth of information found in Donald Clarke’s *Penguin Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, but that error-marred 1989 work is in desperate need of updating and correction; it also doesn’t have the item-by-item depth of the concise one-volume edition of the four-volume *Guinness Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, but it’s easier to find and far less pricy. Best, Hardy/Laing II corrects some annoying errors



found in the first edition, and has been brought briskly up-to-date with close to 200 new entries; it’s also solid on non-U.S. and non-U.K. musicians. In all, a serviceable buy for pop students, if not the living end.—*Chris Morris*

Nick Kent

*The Dark Stuff: Selected Writings
on Rock Music 1972–1995*
(Da Capo Press)

Damaged goods is the principal subject of this oft-brutal collection of work (much of it re-edited or rewritten) by English rock journalist Kent, who in his heyday was as notoriously dissolute as his subjects. So we are treated to pointedly observed portraits of such famed waste-cases as Iggy Pop (who contributes a pungent foreword), Brian Wilson, Roky Erickson, Syd Barrett, Brian Jones, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Kurt Cobain, as well as more benign but nonetheless tormented specimens like Morrissey and Roy Orbison. Many of Kent’s sketches are horrific, almost clinical, but none—save a bile-dripping kiss-off on the Sex Pistols’ Sid Vicious, who once attacked the writer with a bike chain—is truly pitiless. At his best, Kent poignantly conveys how the weight of pop-cult fame crashes down destructively on those unprepared to bear it.—*Chris Morris*



ing and digital audio recording are just starting to appear. Cakewalk Music Software’s Cakewalk Pro Audio takes what is probably the most popular PC sequencer and adds an overlay of digital audio functions, with excellent—and user-friendly—results. The PC platform also offers some unusual options, like Soundspiration’s Samplitude software. It includes not just hard disk recording but complex signal processing with real-time previews of how you’re processing the sound. (Other programs often have to crunch numbers before you hear the results of your work.)

Over in Mac-land, they’re into the third generation of programs related to hard disk recording. Much of the excitement revolves around the plug-in concept pioneered by Digidesign. If you’re running a Pro Tools system, you can increase functionality dramatically by loading in the desired plug-ins. Lexicon has a reverb plug-in, Arboretum Software’s Hyperprism puts “virtual multieffects” into your system, and Antares (formerly Jupiter Systems) offers the MDT multiband compressor and JVP-1 voice processor with compression, EQ and delay. You can even get a very hip spectrum analyzer from Intelligent Devices.

What’s more, the integrated hard disk recorder/MIDI sequencer has truly come into its own with Opcode’s Studio Vision Pro 3.0, Emagic’s Logic Audio 2.5, Steinberg’s Cubase Audio 3.0, and Mark of the Unicorn’s Digital Performer 1.6. All offer variations on a theme. Studio Vision can convert digital audio into MIDI data (cool) and then convert it back into audio data that reflects any editing you did to the MIDI data (amazing!), while Digital Performer provides pitch transposition with a sound quality on a par with any dedicated outboard box, and Cubase offers Steinberg’s own family of plug-ins, as well as accepting TDM-compatible plug-ins (the norm for any digital audio-related program these days).

Even more significantly, some companies are using the PowerMac’s onboard sound capabilities to provide multitrack digital audio with no additional hardware. (Earlier computers required dedicated, and expensive, sound cards.) Deck 2.5 from OSC/Macromedia and Digidesign’s Session are just two examples, and even Opcode’s standard MIDI sequencer, Vision, has been given a digital audio facelift courtesy of integration with Apple’s Sound Manager, bolstering the studio-in-a-box concept. With the next generation of Macs featuring S/PDIF digital interfaces right out of the box, the Mac will overcome its biggest existing limitation—those low-cost A/D and D/A converters—and continue to provide higher-quality sound with less external hardware than ever before.

The end result of this orgy of product development is that within a decade, digital recording will be the norm, from the lowest to the highest level applications. Pretty soon, that computer you buy off the shelf from some office supply emporium will have onboard digital audio capabilities on a par with systems that formerly sold for hundreds of thousands of dollars. It’s always hard to predict the future, but consider this: We’ve been in the digital audio mainstream era for only a little more than a decade. Extrapolate this same rate of change to the next ten years, and you can be sure that 2006 will be full of surprises.

Rock Scully and David Dalton

*Living with The Dead: Twenty Years on the Bus
with Garcia and the Grateful Dead*
(Little, Brown)

Noodling it may be, but this is the inspired, consecrated noodling of the gods,” was Rock Scully’s first impression of the Grateful Dead in 1965. The story of his 20 years as their road manager depicts a mix of psychedelic epiphanies and “hey sausagehead, more beer” boorishness, from the Acid Tests to a 1982 New Year’s Eve gig with an astounded Etta James. It also tracks the Dead’s attempt to start their own label—way before SST or Sub Pop—and run a ballroom with a cooperative of San Francisco bands; unlike the “deranged control freak” Bill Graham, they couldn’t take care of the details. Darling—uniquely—to improvise at arena-size shows sustained their careers as preservers of the counterculture, but Jerry Garcia was intensely uncomfortable as an object of worship. Scully paints a portrait of the artist alone in his room on a diet of ice cream, heroin and cigarettes, setting his moccasins on fire each time he nodded out—and still practicing eight hours a day.—*Steve Wisnla*

TOMORROW IS HERE

[cont’d from page 52] hard disk recording system. Now DAL’s about-to-be-released V8 card offers more power for the next generation of digital audio programs.

In many ways the PC is still catching up with the Mac, since programs that incorporate MIDI sequenc-

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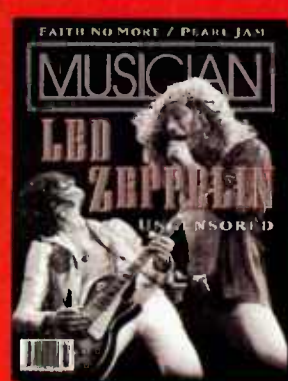
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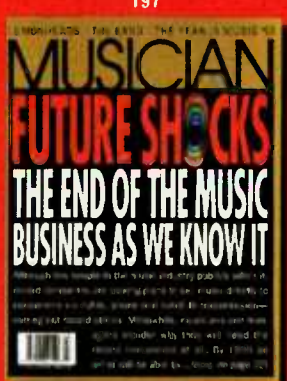
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[cont'd from page 48] perfect performances together as "creative dishonesty."


Serious experimentation with digital sound began in the late '70s as a joint venture between Sony in Japan and Philips in Holland. In 1978 the concept of the CD was first discussed in the media. Hardware and software became available in late 1982, as arguments over digital sound began to rage. For classical and ambitious pop musicians, the CD extended the creative horizon by offering more than 80 minutes of recording without a break. It could render even the quietest passage without noise. For the record industry, it also offered a chance unlike any other since 1948 to sell old wine—reissues—in new bottles.

But the real digital revolution was happening elsewhere. One of the first digital recordings designed for public release was the multi-artist *New Year's Day Concert*, recorded live in Vienna on Jan. 1, 1979 and released on U.K. Decca. Since then, the cost of digital recorders, mixers and outboard gear has fallen precipitously. At the same time, the MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) protocol, established through agreement of leading electronic instrument manufacturers, represented a shift away from the industry's tendency to avoid standardization. Now it was possible to cut tracks at home on digital machines and upload them at pro-quality studios to create finished masters.

Outside the home studio, though, musicians still confront multinational labels whose Kremlin-like bureaucracies won't even consider a tape that hasn't been midwifed by a lawyer. In some ways the times seem ideal for independent labels to flourish. Others believe that the Internet will provide a forum that sidesteps the majors' lock on radio and video airtime. But a new generation of consumers will need to be educated into buying music without packaging.

A hundred years ago, music meant Grandpa playing the fiddle and Grandma playing the banjo. If they lived in Appalachia, they'd sing songs like those brought over from Ireland and Scotland; if Minnesota was their home, they might play Swedish folk songs; if their parents had been slaves, they would sing spirituals, blues or field hollers. In its early years, the phonograph preserved much of this regional music—Edison recorded the cowboys, Columbia recorded the Cajuns—only then to dilute and, arguably, destroy it.

Perhaps the record's most pernicious effect has been to shift the emphasis toward product and away from the act of making music. Nowadays, you can't even be a musician without giving at least some occasional thought to landing a record deal. And so it's been, even from the industry's formative years: In 1927, a Victor A&R man, Ralph Peer, brought portable equipment to Bristol, Tennessee, in hopes of recording some of the local talent. The response was lukewarm until an article in a local paper reported that a record by one of Peer's first acts had earned the artist \$100. "The next day," wrote Peer, "groups of singers who had not visited Bristol in their entire lifetime arrived by bus, horse and buggy, in trains or on foot."

If nothing else, the record business has fulfilled Alfred Lord Tennyson's prophecy, made even before Edison: "Plenty corrupts the melody that made thee famous once." 

[cont'd from page 36] sensitivity, and sensitivity depends on life, and life depends on heart, and this heart is a gift, and this gift can be used wisely or foolishly, too soon or too late, half-heartedly or whole-heartedly. All of our greatest jazz musicians did not question how much to use and to what purpose. Technically competent and virtuoso players of today (genius or otherwise) beware: These waters run deep.

The state of jazz is, as it always has been, dependent on the guts of the players to choose the real discipline, not the virtual one. But it seems it must have been better understood in the past, when more of the world we see and hear every day was real.

Nowadays, if legitimacy is conferred only by the media and not by peers, we can claim to live in a set-piece created by corporate power, where it is unnecessary to corrupt sensibilities because they have already been tampered with. In this scenario we are not fit to choose, we cannot judge, and we will not find our song to sing. In this scenario there is no jazz.

Back in the early '60s there was a melting pot of individual voices, a democracy. There was no single expert on jazz. Jazz was the music then, not the image; the ideas, not the ads; the content, not the hype; and jazz soared in those days whether the media wanted it to or not because there were listeners, each equipped with a pair of real (non-virtual) ears and a real hunger for the real thing.

So who will jazz players of the future be able to use as a beacon from this age of mimicry? There was a comic book series called *Plastic Man*, back when I was a kid, and in the last issue there appeared an exactly identical but fraudulent imitation of Plastic Man who could do everything the original could do: stretch his arms for miles, take the form of any person or object, etc. In this issue there was a dialogue between them that went something like this:

"I am the real Plastic Man." "No, I am the real Plastic Man." "No, you're an imitation." "But plastic is already an imitation." "Yes, but I am really Plastic Man." "How do you know?" "Because you are the imitation Plastic Man." "No, you are!" "But . . . plastic is already an imitation, and we're identical in every way, so I'm as real as you!"


I have two sons who are both musicians, one already a working musician. It is my hope that they can hear great jazz musicians of their day—live, if possible. But if the media become the Mafia and Plastic Man keeps selling, those great musicians will be harder to find.

The hostile takeover of jazz within the media (or the "infotainment telesector," as Benjamin R. Barber calls it in his book *Jihad vs. McWorld*) has happened. Let's hope there will be young players who see this as a new set of prison bars, meant only to be flown through. If you are ready to fly, you don't put on a suit and join a club. You talk to the Birds.

Jazz is probably the only art form whose existence depends on resistance to theories (whether those theories are by blacks or whites). Unlike other kinds of music (and most professions, corporate or otherwise), jazz asks that we speak from our being, not about our expertise in the field. If someone is an

expert on jazz, you can be pretty sure he/she is not a vital jazz musician. Where a young player today can have a long enough apprenticeship (so the being-work can get started before Mr. Sony or Mr. Columbia eats him over a two-martini lunch) is a question I can't answer in the age of McWorld. But it's up to the players to know when to say no. There is no way to demystify jazz except by playing convincingly. It is a mysterious occupation.

And the reason no musicologist, critic, virtual educator or brand-name can get a handle on it is this: Jazz is about closeness to the material, a personal dance with the material, not the material itself. And this personal dance is validated not by the media, not by corporations, not by critics or reviewers (black or white), not by record companies, not by money, but only by other dancers. A virtual dance doesn't count in the real world of jazz.


If the phrase "whatever is the most personal is the most universal" is true, it goes far towards explaining why the true jazz giants up to the present time are who they are: They danced up a storm. 

CD-ROM

[cont'd from page 17] and most record companies still haven't invested in bona fide multimedia departments, but when and if record companies dive in to the CD-ROM medium, A&R reps will have to get up to speed. After all, your CD-ROM should show that your band's already competent within the digital medium, which should help ease the minds of executives intimidated by an unexplored marketplace. If they don't understand the medium, then you both lose.

Another problem is that technology is improving too rapidly. Our CD-ROM took over nine months to complete, and by the time we got it out, the technological envelope had expanded significantly. Our disc was no longer cutting-edge—it was outdated. Unfortunately, that's a chance you have to take. There's always going to be a bigger, better, and faster way, so just dance with the one you came with.

Thankfully, some of the reps we dealt with were able to use our CD-ROM, and they were generally impressed. The disc provided numerous ways to watch us play, something an audio cassette and 10-inch glossy can't do. It also served as material proof of how hard we work to promote our music. In my opinion, it got us in some doors that would've been shut before; mentioning the word "CD-ROM" to labels on cold calls often got their attention and led to reasonably intelligent conversation instead of the usual indifference. But I'm not convinced that CD-ROMs are the "Next Big Thing." The music industry still doesn't seem ready to embrace the technology, and the software companies must learn that high-tech frills should support the music, not smother it. (The company we dealt with was too eager to show off what it could do, going nuts on graphics—sometimes at the expense of sound quality—rather than working to get our music across. Since they paid for it, we felt they should have a say, but it ended up more their calling card than ours.)

My advice: Be wary of integrating your music with new technologies. Innovation and exploration are good. But trying to get the industry to experience music in a different way is like trying to turn around an ocean liner—it won't happen in a hurry. 

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Get 'em from the Peanut Man



Todd Switzer was the coolest guy in ninth grade. He was captain of the jayvee, the class treasurer, and he had a turntable connected to a Silvertone Twin 12. His dad was even cooler: He drove a red 'Vette, openly subscribed to *Playboy* and, according to Todd, had records by a group called the Hot Nuts. Todd swore that next to these guys, "Louie, Louie" was a nursery rhyme, and that they hit the stage clad only in gold jockstraps. He was partly right.

Back in '54, a young drummer named Doug Clark realized that there was money to be made on the college circuit around his hometown of Chapel Hill, North Carolina. His group the Tops did well enough performing hits by the Dominoes, the Platters and others; their most requested song, though, was "Hot Nuts," the ultimate late-night, drunken sing-along, with a chorus that went: "Nuts, hot nuts, get 'em from the peanut man." Barely R-rated by today's standards, in the South of the late '50s it was musical hellbait and real profitable.

So profitable, in fact, that Doug recruited

his brother John, added more risqué material and changed the name of the group to Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts. Of course, any band singing tunes like "Baby Let Me Bang Your Box" is going to provoke the occasional bluenose crusade. The city of Richmond banned them outright. No problem: Their gig was secretly moved to the county fairgrounds, where it sold out instantly.

"Lord," Doug laughs, "if we had actually worn those jockstraps or done half the things we've been accused of, we'd be in jail somewhere!"

It's Saturday night, and the fraternity has rented the Holidome for its 25th reunion, with the Hot Nuts hired as the celebrants' unanimous favorite. Just like they did a quarter-century ago (but minus the togas), the brothers and their wives dance to "Stand By Me," "Under the Boardwalk," and other favorites. Between sips of Purple Jeezus punch, they exchange memories and business cards until finally, just like he did in the fall of 1970, John Clark steps up to the mike and breaks into "Nuts, Hot Nuts, Get 'Em

from the Peanut Man."

Then the crowd goes wild. John points to a real estate heiress in a red dress and sings, "See that woman dressed in red/She got a box as big as my head"; the place is in a shambles. He asks a blushing Virginia Beach councilwoman, "What's the difference between a girl from Virginia Beach and a bowling ball?" She covers her ears as he answers, "You can only fit three fingers in a bowling ball."

On it goes. The frat bros (and a few of their wives) crowd around the stage, offering their own far more obscene verses. Except for the smell of stale beer and a visit from the campus cops, it's Rush Week 1970.

Close to midnight, it's all over. The Holidome has to be set up for a crafts fair in the morning, and the Hot Nuts have to get home for an afternoon mixer at Duke. As the Hot Nuts load their trailer, Switzer, the frat's treasurer, hands the band a certified check. Then, seeking to solve one of life's great mysteries, he pulls Doug aside and asks, "Was that really true about the jockstraps?" —*Rev. Billy C. Wirtz*

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