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World Radio History



ON THE COVER:

Joshua Todd from Buckcherry
photographed by
Gene Kirkland (top) and
Chapman Baehler (bottom).
Photo styling by merv.

ON THE COVER

BUCKCHERRY: LA CONSEQUENTIAL 32

"I think maybe the industry people have gotten sick of all these artists who didn't want to be stars, didn't want to tour before their record, didn't want to meet them, didn't want to do interviews, didn't want to have a good time. That's bullshit. They should stay home." Does the warm reception for Buckcherry's good, greasy rock 'n' roll herald the resurgence of the LA rock we all hold dear? Katherine Turman investigates.

FEATURES

FOLK IMPLOSION 24

"The grunge rock thing was fine, but there was a real hatred of introspection at the time. It was all about Jon Spencer, Pussy Galore, as if a band is only good if it hates each other. What's more radical—that, or singing into a tape recorder?" Lou Barlow and fellow home recorder John Davis have made a true follow-up to their surprise smash "Natural One." Only thing is, Lou's not talking about it. Story by Jennifer Vineyard.

DEATH IN VEGAS 26

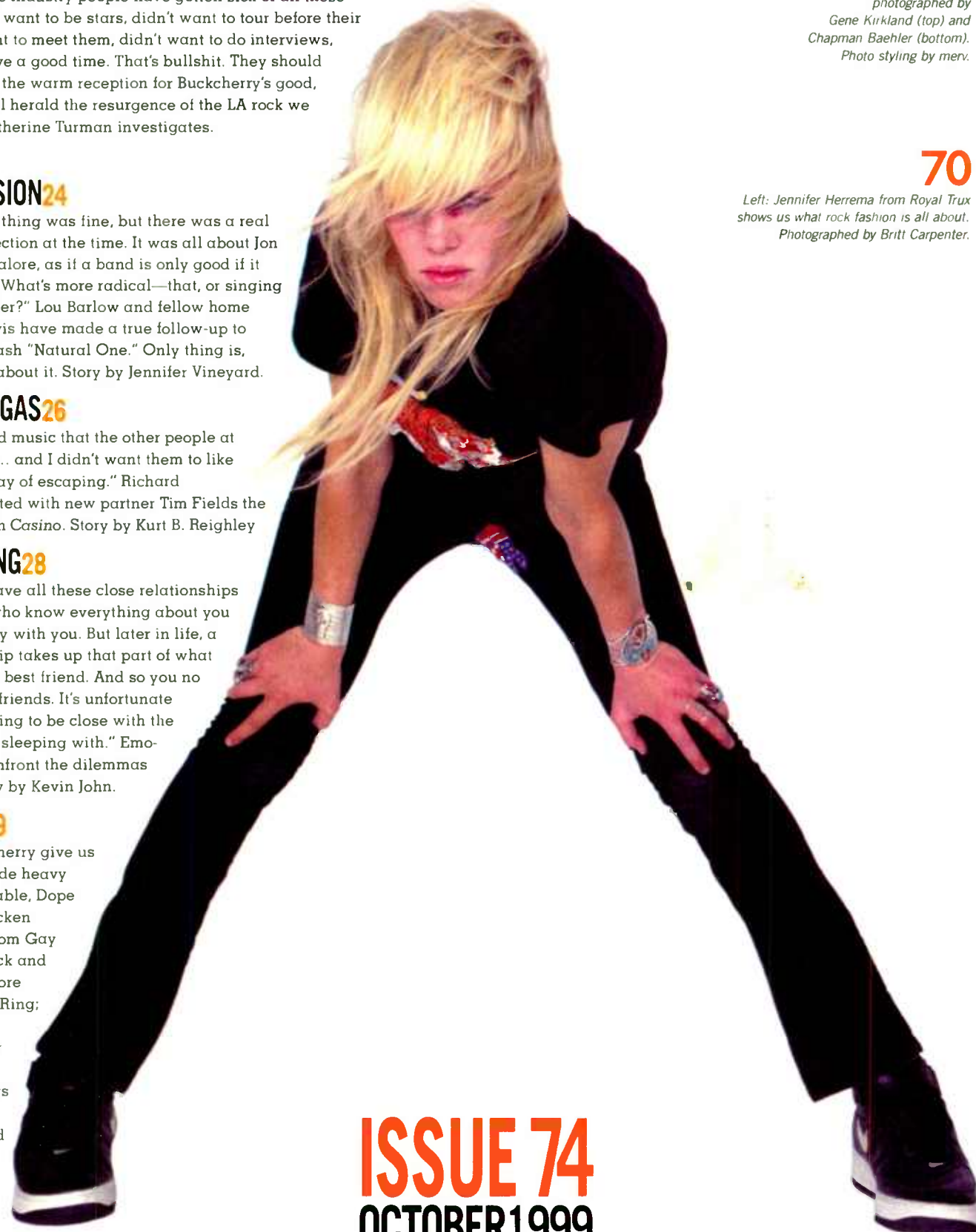
"[At school,] I liked music that the other people at school didn't like... and I didn't want them to like it. Music was a way of escaping." Richard Fearless has created with new partner Tim Fields the ultimate escape in *Casino*. Story by Kurt B. Reighley

PROMISE RING 28

"As a teen, you have all these close relationships with boys, boys who know everything about you and can talk or cry with you. But later in life, a steady relationship takes up that part of what you got from your best friend. And so you no longer have best friends. It's unfortunate that you're not going to be close with the people you're not sleeping with." Emo-core stalwarts confront the dilemmas of manhood. Story by Kevin John.

ON THE CD 79

Coverboys Buckcherry give us the rawk, alongside heavy sounds from Portable, Dope and Jimmie's Chicken Shack; Brit-pop from Gay Dad, Gomez, Shack and Delirious?; emo-core from the Promise Ring; electronica from Leftfield; singular tunes from singer/songwriters Ben Harper and Johnny Dowd; and Latino soul from Los Lobos.



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Left: Jennifer Herrema from Royal Trux shows us what rock fashion is all about. Photographed by Britt Carpenter.

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c o n t e n t s (continued)

DEPARTMENTS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

QUICK FIX

Soundgarden vocalist Chris Cornell is out of touch, and loving it, Gay Dad records its masterpiece, two estranged brothers reunite and form Dope, raconteur Johnny Dowd releases his second, creepy record, and Ronnie Spector—she of Ronettes renown—offers beauty tips.

ON THE VERGE

Listen here: Get Up Kids, Portable, and Muse.

THE SCENE IS NOW

Dean Wareham of Luna examines the work of Lee Hazlewood.

GEEK LOVE

Cartoonist Karl Heitmueller unveils his love for Spider Man.

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JUST OUT

LOCALZINE

Paris, France, par chanteur Louis Philippe.

LIFE/STYLE

HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

The off-Broadway rock musical goes global. Gaylord Fields gets the scoop on the men who created the transgendered Teutonic glam-rocker that's become all the rage.

FILM

Alison Anders recruits more rock stars for the big screen—interview by John Elsasser; plus the erotically charged French drama *Romance*, '30s-style screwball comedy *Splendor*, and the memoir-inspired *West Beirut*.

BOOKS

Novelist/journalist Dennis Cooper releases a tome of essays—interview by Kurt B. Reighley; plus *Inside Tracks*, a chronicle of influential record producers, and *Techno Rebels*, a book about techno.

LIGHT READING

Greasy Kid Stuff: Comics for kids. Sort of. By Douglas Wolk.

ELECTROMEDIA

Way Too Much Time On Their Hands: Websites we didn't believe could exist. Until now. By Douglas Wolk.

FASHION PIECE

Rockin' In The USA: Jennifer Herrema of Royal Trux and Ryan Anderson of Millbastards model some glam, punk and classic rock duds.

GAMING

A few more things to leave you tired and blurry-eyed: *Kingpin: Life Of Crime*, *Unreal Mission Pack: Return To Na Pali*, *Alien Vs. Predator*, and *Descent 3*.

IN MY LIFE

Scanner: Sound Polaroids. Photo by Cristina Velia Forcina.

REVIEWS

BEST NEW MUSIC

Gomez, Magnetic Fields, Breakbeat Era, Stereolab, Aluminum Group, and Cobra Verde.

REVIEWS

From Marc Almond to Wheat: Tastes great, less filling!

MIXED SIGNALS

METAL

HIP-HOP

DANCE

SINGLES

FLASHBACK

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Beating the Rap

Okay, enough's enough. I've been a subscriber for five years, give or take, seething for most of them, but recent events necessitate my taking stern action. This magazine is terrible. I could spend a lot of time and energy telling you why, but I think you already know. Expect future examinations of your failings in greater detail. However, for the time being, you folks seem to be losing this "vision thing." So as a parting shot (I mean tip), consider this: The next time you feel the need to put some half-retarded-porn-star-looking trollop on your magazine cover, and masquerade it as New Music, just get up off your asses and get girlfriends. Don't tell me that you have them.

Josh Boer (Glenside, PA)

Usually, the personal accusations that come with letters like these are way off base, but Josh has a point here: the writer of the DJ Rap cover story (June issue) has never had a girlfriend in his life. It's something that those who read the story likely figured out by the first paragraph, but let's not let actual content get in the way of a strong opinion. So while the ladies of Glenside are no doubt swooning over our seething pal Josh, I'll not rise to the who's-fucking-whom bait, as I fear that the staff's eyes would roll so hard at another Ed.-as-collegiate-lothario story that it would compromise their editing abilities. —Ed.

Learning Curves

Okay, let me see if I have this straight. DJ Rap works for ten years building up a rep and putting self-produced hits on the charts. She runs her own label, sells 80,000 records without a contract, and she's one of the few female artists in a completely male-dominated genre, and she's a perfectionist who even does her own vocals because that's the only way she's satisfied. Now she makes the cover of *New Music Monthly* but—uh oh!—she's pretty, blonde, and makes the mistake of wearing a low-cut shirt. As a result, according to the letters last month, she's "repulsive" and not a "real artist." And, according to some indie-than-thou twit, she's a "Slut with (a) turntable" who's "not about melodies and talent." Are you fucking kidding me? DJ Rap is a Lady Schick and a genre change away from being Ani Goddamned DiFranco, who ironically leaves little to the imagination with that tank-top pic in the ad for her new album. Where are the letters condemning her for being a slut because she has a nice body? Hmm? Where are the titty police now? You know, now that indie rock fans are this smug, humorless, and anti-sex, I don't feel nearly as bad about loving Hanson.

Patrick Bullion (pbullion@rocmoke.edu)

No, feel bad about singing "Uncle Fucker" from the South Park movie in line at the grocery store. —Ed.

Two, two, two standards in one.

I find it hysterical and just a little pathetic that many of the people chastising you for sexism because of your DJ Rap cover reveal even greater sexism by implying that just because a woman is attractive with a rather nice body, she must therefore be a no-talent coasting on her appearance. Real enlightened thinking going on there. And a further thought: Would it be sexist if *New Music Monthly* featured a shirtless Anthony Keidis or Henry Rollins on the cover? Just wondering.

Brad Reno (wire154@primary.net)

1-900-CMJ-STUD

To all of you whiners/slackers out there who complain about DJ Rap's cleavage: I have been a subscriber of *New Music Monthly* for more than four years. In that time I have watched the format change from small and cute to large and glossy. I have watched bands like the Smashing Pumpkins and Marilyn Manson grace the cover more than once, and I have read each and every "Letters to the Editor" complaining about this or that. I have one thing to say to everyone who ever wrote in to complain: It's a damn good magazine. No matter whose breasts are on the cover, CMJ never fails to write about artists that are thankfully outside of the mainstream. You don't see the Backstreet Boys on the cover, thank god. Because of CMJ, my musical tastes have grown from a pitiful interest in radio-ready pop to a wide variety of likes that now includes ska, jazz, techno, punk rock, world music, and folk. No matter who is on the cover, I always find at least one song on each CD that I am in love with, and I'm sure the same can be said for all of you out there who feel guilty because you were aroused by a music magazine. Music is sexy and *New Music Monthly* is one hot stud. Get over yourself; it's a magazine and it can't cater to everyone's taste 100% of the time. Ninety-nine percent of the time it's fucking amazing.

Nora F. (Philadelphia, PA)

And they all laughed when I started editing wearing only a pair of black trousers, a black bow tie and white tab collar. —Ed.

Corrections: The photograph of the Arsonists in the August issue (#72) was taken by Daniel Hastings; the photograph of Powerman 5000 in the September issue (#73) was taken by Chapman Baehler and the photograph of Drain Sth was taken by Mikael Eriksson. Our apologies for the errors.

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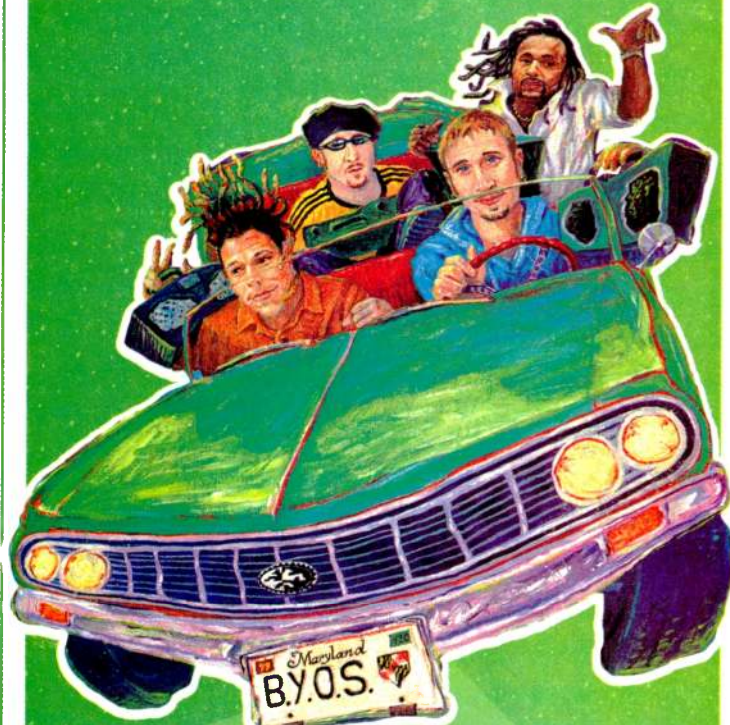
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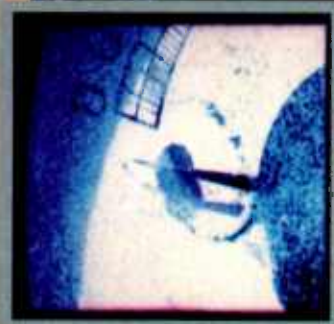


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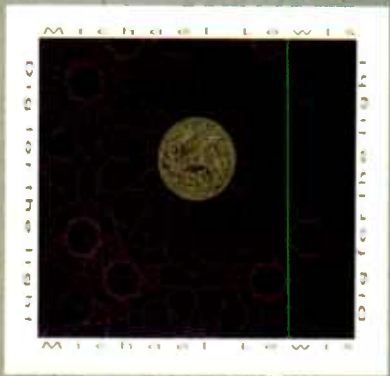
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World Radio History

THE MORNING AFTER

CHRIS CORNELL, the sun having set on Soundgarden, goes solo with *Euphoria Morning*.

STORY: TOM LANHAM PHOTO: OLAF HEINE

His long limbs stretched out like a king crab's across a velour sofa in a posh Beverly Hills hotel, his recently-nappy hair now drooped into an Oscar Wilde shag that compliments his new Musketeer-thin Van Dyke, Chris Cornell looks regal, poised. His mood, though, is immediately playful. Mention that fans were universally stunned by the '97 breakup of his band Soundgarden, and a cryptic grin curls those pointed moustache tips. "Were they?" gasps the singer, whose haunted howling had become the group's trademark. "Well, I think it was very sweet of 'em." And he adopts the concerned tone of a typical well-wisher: "'Oh my gawd! Oh my gawd! Didn't he just cut his hair? And now *this*?! We'd better send him a card!'" Cornell chuckles softly to himself, takes a long drag on his filter-mounted cigarette, and blows smoke rings at the stucco ceiling. He can afford to laugh these days.

Only a couple of years on, Cornell, 35, has emerged from the post-'Garden trenches with an elegiac—and texturally adventurous—solo album, bearing the cheery title of *Euphoria Morning* (A&M). The kickoff single is a sonic surprise: "Can't Change Me" melds a military rhythm with blossoming tendrils of Middle Eastern guitar (courtesy of some longtime pals from the band Eleven) and Cornell's luxurious, firmly reined crooning: "Suddenly I can see everything that's wrong

(continued on page 12)



CHRIS CORNELL (continued from page 11)

with me/But what can I do?/I'm the only thing I really have at all." A sunny, sensitive side? Forget it, bub. The sucker-punch ballad "Preaching The End Of The World" turns Armageddon into a droll personal ad: "If your intentions are pure/I'm seeking a friend for the end of the world." And the bluesy "When I'm Down" turns the humor blacker—"I only love you when I'm down," he laments, "But one thing for you to keep in mind/You know I'm down all the time."

Soundgarden, its former mouthpiece sighs, "had been a band for a really long time, and had done everything right and true to ourselves in an amazing piece of history that we created. But if you look at that, and then look at these times, I don't know if we could do that right now if we were starting over."

"These times." That's all it takes—one small phrase—to send Cornell careening into the murky abyss again. In song after Soundgarden song (and on into "Preaching" and the Jeff Buckley-inspired "Wave Goodbye") he's always romanticized the end, the finale, the apocalyptic aloha. It's not pessimism, he counters. "It's more like common sense, more like *math*. And it's not as though I want things to end badly. I want the world to keep going on and to be able to experience it and to have reincarnation exist and come back 50 times and go to places I haven't been yet, 'cause life is only so long." Puff. Frown. "But there are just a certain amount of obvious factors and irreversible problems, and I'm not seeing any tendencies in people to really embrace the kind of serious, drastic changes that we need to embrace for the planet to be able to sustain people,

itself and other important things, like plants. It's difficult, if you really start thinking about where we stand, to not have the feeling that we can't go on. Because we can't—things are already deteriorating. And it's so easy for a young person now to not really be involved with these ideas, because there's so much going on that's distracting. I think when a problem appears to be so monumental that you as an individual don't feel like you can really affect much change, then the option is to kind of ignore it. And that could be a big part of why movies, media, the Internet, television, magazines—why all these markets keep growing. Everyone inherently knows that things are not going so well, and they're frustrated, so they want to disappear into whatever else is going in to distract them."

A rich irony: All the brooding anxiety Soundgarden once encompassed is now coloring our pre-millennial society. But there's a faint glimmer of hope, Cornell allows. During the Gulf War, he decided—given the skirmish's oil-based interests—to ride a bicycle every day instead of driving. He believes that similar choices are available to everyone. "If you really think about the day-to-day aspects of how you live, and what parts of that are actually supporting an ecological demise, then you can change those things. Then trust that, by example, you might affect a few other people."


So is Cornell perfect for these tense times? A smile slithers in again. "I think I feel so far out of step that it's become interesting," he deadpans. "Like, rather than feeling like I don't belong or foreign, it's more like I'm actually enjoying how intriguing the separation is."


FROM PLATINUM DISCS TO THE SILVER SCREEN


Just as all actors really want to direct, all singers want to act (and date models, who also want to act, which means they want to direct). Allison Anders's new film *Sugar Town* stars a cast whose first exposure to the spotlight came in bands like Duran Duran, X and Spandau Ballet (see Film, p. 66). Nothing beats pop stars who essentially play themselves—Elvis, Prince—but what can we learn from those singers-turned-screen stars who won't rest until their thespian abilities are taken seriously?




FRANK SINATRA

 Name your poison: The timeless standards of *Songs For Swingin' Lovers!* still pack a wallop 44 years later, while *Only The Lonely* remains the quintessential wee small hours sob-fest.


 Based on the sorry trajectory of the first two *Duets* CDs, Alanis Morissette, Mase and Jesse Camp probably would've been candidates for number three.


 *The Manchurian Candidate* and *The Man With The Golden Arm* are disturbing masterpieces, but *From Here To Eternity* rescued Sinatra from the "Where Are They Now?" file after his musical career hit Skidville.


 Why does Marlon Brando do all the singing in 1955's *Guys And Dolls*?


VERDICT: At his best, Ol' Blue Eyes' on-screen performances are as compelling, and believable, as his finest musical moments.

MADONNA

 She's essentially a singles artist, and 1989's *Like A Prayer* remains the Material Girl's most artistically ambitious and musically successful full-length.


 You thought *Dick Tracy* the movie was wretched? When was the last time you slapped on "I'm Breathless" (*Music From And Inspired By The Film*)


 Not even her twirl as Eva Peron surpasses her gum-crackin' debut in *Desperately Seeking Susan*.


 The very un-funny *Shanghai Surprise* narrowly beats out *Body Of Evidence*, which at least has a man who played Jesus (Willem Dafoe) getting drizzled with melted wax.


VERDICT: She'll be perfect for the forthcoming film adaptation of *Chicago*, but that ridiculous British accent is the first sign that her megalomania is metastasizing Streisand-style.

CHER

 "Believe" may be the best-selling single by a female artist in England, but her early '70s wanton-woman singles—"Gypsies, Tramps & Thieves," "Dark Lady," "Half-Breed"—remain the definitive slices of solo Cher.


 In the '80s. Remember her "new wave" album *I Paralyze*?

 She won the Oscar for *Moonstruck*, but she took the Best Actress award for *Mask* at Cannes, and who are we to quarrel with the French?


 Does the cannon-straddling video for "If I Could Turn Back Time" count? The infomercial? The former Mrs. Bono should still be kicking herself for passing up *Thelma And Louise* to star in *Mermads*.


VERDICT: Her years on the *Sonny & Cher Comedy Hour* prepared her to play any number of tall, skinny characters.

COURTNEY LOVE

 The visceral thrills of *Live Through This* were a bracing slap in the face of the bleak sameness of mid-'90s alt-rock.


 Have you ever been to a Hole live show?


 Hollywood embraced Love after *The People Vs. Larry Flynt*, even though playing a drug-addled ex-stripper didn't push her acting range much.


 As the ethereal free spirit Big Pink in the '80s bio-pic *Basquiat*, Love is especially irritating. In a bad way.

VERDICT: She's a better actress as a rock star, and vice versa.

ICE-T

 The double-length *D.G. Original Gangster* set an early standard for '90s West Coast hip-hop.

 The only thing on the mark about Body Count's *Born Dead* is its title.

 In Mario Van Peebles's '91 neo-blaxploitation epic *New Jack City*, T tosses off bon mots like "I wanna shoot you so bad, my dick's hard!"

 After all those long, hot hours stuffed in the kangaroo suit, his turn as the evil marsupial T-Saint in *Tank Girl* went straight to Blockbuster.

VERDICT: With movies going direct to video and his new album being released on the Internet, Ice-T is either seizing the means of production, or, following "Cop Killer," failing to get arrested in Hollywood.

PAPA DON'T PREACH



GAY DAD is the latest British export riding a huge wave of press hype. But this time, the band is fronted by one of the music press's own. 

Most Americans have no idea who Gay Dad is, and frontman Cliff Jones wouldn't have it any other way. "I wouldn't want to go through what we faced in the UK ever again," Jones laments via phone from a friend's London flat. At home in London, Gay Dad is dealing with the aftershocks of massive hype. When the quintet's demo circulated among British record labels, rumors spread that vocalist/guitarist Jones, a former music journalist for *The Face* and *Mojo*, was leading a spoof band so he could write an exposé about the gullibility of the music industry. When the band's infectious first single, "To Earth With Love," debuted in the top 10, the rumor followed that Gay Dad was a manufactured group created by a record company marketing executive. The band's pop culture commentary—its thought-provoking name and its iconic logo, a strolling pedestrian—probably didn't help matters.

Jones laughs at the notion that he and his four bandmates were a music industry executive's wet dream. "We're probably the most unmanufactured band in the world. We've never been to our record company offices, we traded off a huge sum of money as an advance so we'd have total artistic control, we don't do anything we don't want to do," he says emphatically. "Being a journalist has hindered me rather than helped me, because people assume that I'm some fucking Wizard of Oz behind the curtain, and it's all puppets, and our records are made by crack-smoking beagles. It just doesn't work that way."

Jones was actually a musician before he was a music writer, and he and Gay Dad drummer Nicholas "Baz" Crowe have played together in various bands since the age of 12. Those years of practice have paid off on Gay Dad's debut album, *Leisure Noise* (London), which is impressively confident and polished. The group's bombastic rock sounds at once classic and modern—Jones says they're inspired by everyone from Queen and Kraftwerk to Roxy Music and Pink Floyd.

Listening to Jones, it sounds like he's ready to put Gay Dad in the same league as those greats. "We never doubted that Gay Dad would be big because we believed in the music," he boasts. Yet, surprisingly, his gushing sounds more like enthusiasm and belief in himself and his band than yet another incredible ego. "I still sit there thinking Gay Dad is the best fucking band in the world, and I know that's naive, 'cause there are loads of great bands," Jones says.

"But that's what you have to feel like if you're going to be any good," he continues. "I hope in the years to come that there are 20 Gay Dad records, and we've got an amazing catalog—that's the stuff that will live on, long after all this hype bullshit has died away." >>>Wendy Mitchell

LABEL PROFILE



INDIES' 10TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

The year was 1989, and although Debbie Gibson, Richard Marx and White Lion were topping the charts, a few music lovers took matters into their own hands, starting three influential independent labels—Matador, Merge and Warp—that are now celebrating their tenth anniversaries.

Record store owners Steve Beckett and Rob Mitchell started the Warp label in Sheffield, England; Mitchell has said that the town's industrial backdrop subliminally influenced the label's electronic sounds. Warp launched with minimal techno cuts from LFO, Forgemasters and Sweet Exorcist, soon followed by the first installment in its *Artificial Intelligence* series of "electronic music for the mind." In addition to being the home of the wildly influential Aphex Twin (and several of his alter-egos), Warp's roster also includes Autechre, Squarepusher, Plaid, Nightmares On Wax, Boards Of Canada and others. Before you pigeonhole the roster as only "armchair electronica," listen to the idiosyncratic, funky Finnish keyboardist Jimi Tenor. Warp is celebrating its decade with a three-day party in London and a compilation album, still in the planning stages.

Meanwhile, halfway across the world, Mac McCaughan and Laura Ballance founded Merge in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, as an outlet to release music from their friends and also their own band, Superchunk. Merge started small with cassette tapes and 7"s by mostly local bands, but they soon moved to full-length albums by the likes of Polvo, Lambchop, the Magnetic Fields, Neutral Milk Hotel, Cornershop and Seaweed. If you couldn't make it to Merge's July celebration in NC, its anniversary compilation *Oh, Merge* is a great starting place to discover these bands.

Matador, coincidentally Superchunk's home before Merge, was rightly known as the powerhouse of "indie rock" in the '90s—thanks to near-legendary releases by Liz Phair, the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Guided By Voices, Pavement and others. Now, the increasingly diverse label is home to international acts (Pizzicato Five, Solex, Cornelius, Belle And Sebastian), hip-hop artists (Arsonists, Non Phixion), and electronic musicians (Khan, Pole, Burger/Ink). Celebrate the company's decade with "Matador Is Nice" concerts in New York (September 23-25) and London (September 3-5), the *Video Is Nice* VHS and DVD collection, *Music Is Nice* triple-CD/LP compilation, and a new line of budget titles from the label's vaults.

Matador Co-President Gerard Cosloy sums up the label's existence simply: "We've helped some talented artists reach more people than they might've otherwise. We've tried to go about in the whole record label thing in a way that respects the creators as people, not as 'content providers.'" Over the past decade, Matador and its peers at Merge and Warp have been putting the "music" back in music industry. Now *that's* something to celebrate. >>>Wendy Mitchell



"JOY" BY GAY DAD APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD.

World Radio History

WEIRD RECORD OF THE MONTH

If you're an American twenty-something, cartoon scores created outside the Disney and Warner Bros. studios probably mean one thing: Hanna-Barbera. Inspired by the misadventures of Signor Rossi, a bow-tied little tramp, and his dog pal Gastone, Franco Godi's richly orchestrated music for the '70s Italian-German cartoon transcends that wan bubble gum and soars into lunacy. **Signor Rossi: Original Music From The Classic Animation Series** (Crippled Dick Hot Wax!) is a vaudevillian carnival of, among other things, Romance language scatting, demented yodeling, spirituals, and the cha-cha that's not too far removed from the musical comedy of *The Muppet Show*. But the wackiness never outshines Godi's impressive arranging talents. The highlight is "Viva La Felicità!"—Signor's theme song—which channels Os Mutantes, Sergio Mendez and Brasil '66. If you want to one-up the hipsters currently fetishizing German porn soundtracks and French torch songs, sporting *Signor Rossi* in your vintage airline tote will do the job



>>>Carlene Bauer

RANDOM QUOTES

"It was a house of whores. Then it became a house of horrors." >>>Cece Deville on cocaine as interior design and life after Poison



"We were violently charged."

>>>A New York State Police Spokesperson on the effect of tongue testing batteries, as well as controlling the riots during Limp Bizkit's Woodstock set

"We're going to go away and pretend we're done, but then in a few minutes we'll come back out and play a couple more songs."

>>>The Offspring's Bryan "Dexter" Holland to a Berkeley, California, audience on the stupefying science of the encore

TOURS WE'D LIKE TO SEE

Extra Starch Tour:

Bread, Bread & Butter, Crust, Pancake Circus, Wonderbread, Rye Coalition, Breadwinner, Tim Wheeler, Wheat, Peetie "The Devil's Son-In-Law" Wheatstraw, Grain, Honky Toast, the Toasters, Muffin Men, the Muffins, Martha And The Muffins, Cracker, Saltine, Archers Of Loaf, Sandwich, Slice, the Upper Crust, Karu Nan, Cereal Box Killers, and, honorable mention... Daryl Hall & John Oates.

FAMILY VALUES



CHAPMAN BAEHLER

Were the two brothers in **DOPE** raised separately for fear that uniting them would unleash this unholy blast of noise? 

Met Simon and Edsel Dope, two brothers separated at the tender ages of seven and four by their parents' divorce. They grew up apart, more like distant cousins than brothers. The elder adored The Cure, while the younger banged his impressionable head to AC/DC. Then this TV-movie-of-the-week plot finds them meeting up as adults and deciding to forge a fraternal bond with Dope, both the cyber-metal band they formed, and the green stuff they took to selling on the streets.

Simon is the quiet smarty-pants who left college one semester away from completing a chemistry degree; Edsel is his candid little bro, more keen on leading a rock 'n' roll lifestyle. Edsel says he and his mother moved from central to South Florida. "Simon and I would see each other when the parents would swap kids," he recalls. "He'd beat the crap out of me."

"I did not!" Simon interjects, and is met with "Dude, you kicked my ass," from Edsel. To which Simon responds, "You lie." They sound like they've been close all their lives.

The brothers eventually established a relationship when Edsel, then 17, was a drifter sleeping on friends' couches. "I was drumming in rock bands in Florida... I was basically a vagabond," he says. Simon was doing the "college thing" in Brooklyn when Edsel paid him a visit. "We hung out as adults," Edsel recalls. "We would speak about our views or watch football and think, 'Hey, you're cool.' We clicked."

They clicked musically, too. Edsel offers, "I was writing songs with drum programming and guitars while [Simon] was DJing, messing around with samples." It took almost two years for the sibs to put the band together. It was then that the two resorted to selling drugs, an experience that inspired the band's looped remake of NWA's "Fuck Tha Police."

The brothers have since added three other members to the Dope show and toured with Orgy, Fear Factory and Static-X. Dope's just-released, tight-fisted debut, *Felons And Revolutionaries* (Flip-Epic), uses every technological means necessary ("why not?" muses Edsel) to fuse Ministry-style industrial with metallic riffage into sheer white-knuckled aggression, but the idea was always to take it to the stage.

"[I want] to make fans think 'I can't wait to see this live,'" Edsel says, "rather than 'How the hell are they gonna pull this off live?'"

>>>Amy Sclarretto

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IN MY ROOM

EAST RIVER PIPE
F.M. Cornog

Johnny Cash - At
Folsom Prison and
San Quentin



(movie) *Buffalo '66*

Eric Bogosian
Pounding Nails In The Floor With My
Forehead

(magazine) *Modern Painters*

Gas - Konigsforst

DAN NAKAMURA
a.k.a. Dan The Automator

Life-size Alf telephone
"I've only seen two ever."



Can - Ege Bamyasi
"I did some stuff for
Depeche Mode and I
told them they had to
give me every Can record ever
made."

Drigins Pulse Point stress-relief balm
"It's an aromatherapy thing. It keeps
me very handsome."

Satchel - The Family

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guide series - "Above all, food is
more important than music. Well,
no: as important."

HERBALISER
Jake Wherry



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this around. All the
power of my studio Mac, on my lap!"

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standing favorite games, and this
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White Rhino Weed
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(book) *Pimp by Iceberg Slim*
"Original story from a pimp's view in
the late '60s. This is where Ice-T
got his name... essential piece of
black American literature."

For The Funk
The Incredible Fat Buds
"A new white label 7" circulating
the UK right now. These guys want
to bring back the funk, and this
record sounds like it came out of a
Richard Roundtree film."

LOVE HURTS



KAT DALTON

JOHNNY DOWD moves furniture by day, writes murder ballads by night. ★

"They came out and sang their songs. And then Aretha comes out and just levels the place." Johnny Dowd seems to take pleasure in describing VHI's *Divas Live* program, featuring Mariah Carey, Celine Dion, Whitney Houston and others. "It was unbelievable," he laughs. "She was brutal about it, too. There was no question she was out to show 'em what was what. She turns this plastic event into the church. Everybody's on their feet, it's like a gospel meeting, and all these other poor women are just like—it just seems like it'd be a nightmare."

Dowd's new record, *Pictures From Life's Other Side* (Koch) is a raw, brutal glimpse at such humiliation, though it's less about being upstaged and more about love, sex, murder and suicide. It follows his roaring debut, *Wrong Side Of Memphis*, a modern-day field recording cut in the office of his moving company, self-released (though eventually re-released by Checkered Past) and self-destructive. In contrast, *Life's Other Side* was recorded in a studio, and Dowd takes full advantage of the extra musicians to paint a more detailed picture. "I was wanting to hear some other people's takes on what I do. I have a real strong thing that I do; regardless of who I play with, it kind of comes through enough. It's weird, no matter how good the people who I play with are, by the end of two songs, all has turned into chaos. I seem to be able to bring that into any situation."

Like *Memphis*, which touched upon the blues, rock and country without being derivative, *Life's Other Side* has a similar feel, but wanders closer to flat-out rock, with a dark carnival-esque atmosphere. Dowd's bleak vision bleeds through: His scraggly voice transforms an otherwise romantic sentiment—"I got your picture in my wallet"—into the essence of creepy obsession (especially when he follows the line with "I've got your picture on my wall"). "The Ballad Of Lonnie Wolf" describes a blundered suicide with wrenching detail: "He did not die/He was paralyzed/Can't even wipe the tears from his eyes."

Dowd's singular vision is immediately recognizable, regardless of recording quality, and he says he looks for the same in his musical inspirations. "It's hard to say when people ask 'what are your influences?' I'd hate to say Sun Ra because that sounds so pretentious. But I saw him live a couple of times, and I wouldn't only say that it was an 'influence.' Instead, he was just such an inspiration. Mainly because Sun Ra's Sun Ra. And if I ever achieved anything—if Johnny Dowd became Johnny Dowd—then that would be enough. Sun Ra's Sun Ra. Link Ray's Link Ray. I'm just trying to become myself."

>>>Randall Roberts



Q & A RONNIE SPECTOR



Some say that '60s girl groups contributed only "voices" to the Brill Building songwriters' classic tunes. But when the voice belongs to Ronnie Spector, with her Spanish Harlem accent and her trademark "oh oh's," it's clear that her singing is as pure a piece of artistry as any chords set down in "Be My Baby" or "Walking In The Rain." Her new EP on Kill Rock Stars, which includes covers of Joey Ramone's "She Talks To Rainbows" and Brian Wilson's classic "Don't Worry Baby," illuminates a magical voice that has as much guts and sass as that of any gal on her new label's roster of grrrl rockers. >>>Lois Maffeo

Q: Why did you decide to record again?

A: Because it's in my blood, it's in my bones. I love performing and singing to people, and in order to do that, I have to make records! It's funny, but it's true. It's the greatest feeling to see people smiling and applauding. I'm floating out there and when I come off stage it takes me, like, two days to come down.

Q: When you and Joey Ramone duet on "Bye Bye Baby," your voices totally complement one another. Do you think there is such a thing as a New York voice?

A: You know how they had those groups in the '70s, those heavy metal bands? They had to start putting lyrics on the back of records because people couldn't understand what they were saying! I think with Joey's voice and my kind of voice, you can hear and understand the lyrics. Plus, if you're from New York you have an accent. A very definite accent!

Q: Why did you choose the Beach Boys' song, "Don't Worry Baby"?

A: Brian Wilson freaked out over my voice when he heard my first number one record, "Be My Baby." He immediately went home and wrote "Don't Worry Baby" for me. But Phil Spector, at the time, wanted to write all my songs so he could make money off the publishing. I never knew about things like that. I always thought a good song was a good song. So 30 years later it is such a thrill to be able to sing it.

Q: Your old friend Cher has a big hit right now. What do you think of that?

A: I think it's great. She's so strong to go out there and continue to do what she loves. We're finally recognizing that women have this strength. We always had it, but in the '60s you had to have this man in front of you. Cher had Sonny. Tina had Ike. I had Phil. It was only through the guys that you made it. I knew I was capable of becoming a solo artist, but instead of recording and promoting me and making me into a star, Phil Spector made me into this perfect Beverly Hills housewife. But look at Cher—she has a hit record and Sonny's dead!

Q: What do you miss about being a Ronette?

A: It was so much fun! We got to dress up and wear purple lipstick and huge black eyeliner. We started out as dancers, really. We were called Murray The K's Dancing Girls. One time we were in line outside of the Peppermint Lounge, waiting to get in, and the owner thought we were one of the groups they were expecting and pulled us off the line. We went right on stage and started doing the Twist. One of the Starlighters handed me a microphone and I just started belting it out. They hired us that night. We each got ten dollars a night and still had to get up early in the morning to go to high school.

Q: How many bottles of black eyeliner have you used up in your lifetime?

A: Oh my God! A lot. I'd say at least a thousand!

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Solomon Burke
Cry To Me
Blur
Battle
Mekons
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Mercury Rev
Isolation

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The Fall
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UNKLE
Rabbit In Your Headlights
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World Radio History

GOMEZ 
Liquid Skin

Virgin

What do you do when your debut album, essentially a demo recorded in various garages, claims the UK's prestigious Mercury Prize? Smartly, Gomez doesn't try to radically reinvent itself on this sophomore effort; instead the band builds on the magical hodgepodge of its first release. The English band creates rootsy Americana with a millennial update—shifty song structures that showcase anything from acoustic guitars and bongos to sitars and strings to scratchy samples and drum machines. While much of *Liquid Skin* is in a similar vein as *Bring It On*, there is certainly advancement and development here. Firstly, the 24-track recording creates a warmer, richer sound. Gomez's lyrics also take a jump forward, becoming weightier and more straightforward. Ben Ottewell exercises a bit more control with his wonderfully gravely vocals, and the whole gang sounds more at ease with singing—there's lots of interwoven vocal parts and Grateful Dead-style harmonizing. In the hands of lesser artists, these patchworks of sounds could turn to shambles, but Gomez holds it all together beautifully (except when it pushes things too far with the carnival-esque organ on "Las Vegas Dealer"). Plug in your headphones and contemplate the interesting juxtapositions, laugh along with clever lyrics like "Been sleeping all my life/Picking up girls and diseases/That burn me up, burn me up," or throw this on at your next party and just boogie along. Gomez scores with another instant classic.

>>>Wendy Mitchell



OUT:

September 21

FILE UNDER:

Brit-made Americana for the 21st Century.

R.I.Y.L.:

Grateful Dead, Beck, A3, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young.

MAGNETIC FIELDS

69 Love Songs

Merge

Who wrote "The Book Of Love"? Stephin Merritt just did. The Magnetic Fields' album is literally *69 Love Songs*: three hour-long CDs of 23 songs each, from "Absolutely Cuckoo" to "Zebra," all about love in its many forms, infatuation to disillusionment, gay and straight, "divine" and "asinine," written by Merritt, indie-rock's witty Cole Porter, and sung in his sadsack baritone and by four other vocalists (who each sing two songs per disc). Merritt deconstructs 69 in song: "The book of love has music in it/In fact that's where music comes from/Some of it is just transcendental/Some of it is just really dumb." But these are no silly love songs (well, maybe "Let's Pretend We're Bunny Rabbits" is); they'll hold up in the musical revue that Merritt's imagined for them, and their cumulative effect and the consistent verbal and melodic brilliance makes even the "dumb" ones transcendental. You'll laugh out loud. Often. While there's plenty of trademark ABBA-esque synth pop and memorable guitar balladry, *69* touches on show tunes, waltzes, country road songs, ukulele and banjo ditties, "Punk Love," "Experimental Music Love," and "World Love." Sure, like a desperate love affair, *69 Love Songs* offers more than anyone needs (and more than I can summarize here), but it's everything you could want: It's a tour de force of love.

>>>Steve Klinge



OUT:

September 7.

FILE UNDER:

Love, from A to Z.

R.I.Y.L.:

Momus, East River Pipe, Cole Porter, ABBA, Elvis Costello.

BREAKBEAT ERA

Ultra Obscene

XL/1500-A&M

When Roni Size & Reprazent released its 1997 debut album *New Forms*, it established Size as a savvy pioneer on a then-fertile drum 'n' bass scene. Now as the genre stagnates in a swamp of sterile looped beats, Size—plotting alongside DJ Die and enigmatic frontwoman Leonie Laws—seeks to hoist this flagging sound to a higher ground. Where *Forms* successfully championed jazzy interludes, Breakbeat Era's focus is Laws's prowling, staccato voice. Her bluesy hiss, punk attitude and feisty lyrics—e.g. "a maniac's loose and she's wearing my skin"—make potentially alien blips, samples and hardcore breaks more palatable, moving drum 'n' bass back to a more traditional song-based structure. The sheer range of Laws's vocals astounds, as her voice dips and soars, skipping aggressively over the tantalizing beats. Amidst the multi-textured atmospherics of "Time 4 Breaks," her singing is haunting, clear and human; on the excellent UK hit "Breakbeat Era," her jazzy, android warblings shadowbox with a beefy elusive bass line. There are times, though, when the throbbing breaks drag on and Laws's helter-skelter voice flattens into a less engaging monotone. But *Ultra Obscene*, which proclaims itself to be the future, stands as a landmark to new punk/funk drum 'n' bass and will dumbfound those who reasoned the genre had hit a wall. Which is what albums that proclaim to be the future are supposed to do.

>>>Sarah Pratt



OUT:

September 21

FILE UNDER:

Pop goes the jungle.

R.I.Y.L.:

Roni Size's *New Forms*, Grooverider, Adam F, Goldie's *Saturnzreturn*.



ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD

World Radio History

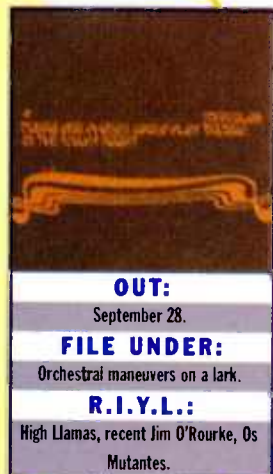
STEREOLAB

Cobra And Phases Group Play Voltage In The Milky Night

Elektra

Stereolab has always seemed like a collective. Its songs are made of intricately interlocking, evenly mixed parts that form not so much a wall, but a swaying beaded curtain of sound that radiates Krautrock and '60s pop influences. In this Stereolab is allied with Sean O'Hagan of the High Llamas, who's now a full-on member of the band, and a Chicago-centered group of producers and players that includes Jim O'Rourke, Rob Mazurek of Isotope 217, and John McEntire, who co-produced the band's last two records. So what would happen if this whole cabal collaborated on one album? Stereolab was brave enough to find out. *Cobra And Phases* is an orchestration of orchestrators, with all the variety, depth, and incoherence that that implies. "Fuses," possibly the most up-tempo Stereolab song since "John Cage Bubblegum," bops along on jazzy blasts of brass. "People Do It All the Time" takes more of a *Sgt. Pepper* approach, adorning the vocal melody with fillips of cornet and organ. The dissonant hammering of keyboards on "Caleidoscopic Gaze" and "Strobo Acceleration" evoke Steve Reich; Burt Bacharach shows up in the slightly swinging, keyboard-based melody of "Op Hop Detonation." With so many aesthetic agendas at this picnic, only the consistently buoyant yet restrained playing of the band itself can pull things together. On *Dots And Loops* this restraint felt sterile; here, it's a saving grace.

>>>Andrea Moed



OUT:

September 28.

FILE UNDER:

Orchestral maneuvers on a lark.

R.I.Y.L.:

High Llamas, recent Jim O'Rourke, Os Mutantes.

ALUMINUM GROUP

Pedals

Minty Fresh

It's no surprise that the Aluminum Group chose to begin its new CD *Pedals* with a ten-minute tribute to Marcel Duchamp. They're artistic kin: Both the painter and the Chicago pop duo are revered for one aspect of their body of work taken out of context. For Duchamp, it's his "ready-mades," found objects, installed in galleries as art (e.g. a urinal exhibited as "The Fountain"). For the Aluminum Group, the pigeonhole is its "lounge sound," a slick combination of sultry vocals, elaborate arrangements and love-struck romanticism recalling the likes of Spandau Ballet, Magnetic Fields and the Association. Pop lovers will enjoy *Pedals* for its debt to such artists, but the album's best moments transcend mere lounge-pop mimicry. Producer Jim O'Rourke's backdrop collage of conflicting sounds is hyper-modern and highlights the complexity of these deceptively catchy songs. From the first note of "Rose Selavy's Valise," the Duchamp tribute, rustic banjo, slick sax, harpsichord, synthesizer, and acoustic and synthetic percussion wrestle for control. The aural reference points shift dramatically minute by minute to include the ornamental orchestration of Van Dyke Parks, the bombastic flourish of G.E. Smith, and even the homespun plucking of the Carter Family. Still, each detail is artfully and lovingly melded to create a fresh sound. "Miss Tate" casts Edith Frost and Sally Timms as angels, and as always, the deadpanned vocals of twin-brother crooners Frank and John Navin betray their valentine intentions.

>>>Jenny Toomey



OUT:

September 28.

FILE UNDER:

Lounge-influenced soft rock.

R.I.Y.L.:

Magnetic Fields, Burt Bacharach, Pet Shop Boys, recent Jim O'Rourke.

COBRA VERDE

Nightlife

Motel

There's a little secret about Cobra Verde: It's really a pop band. Despite all its attempts to convince you otherwise through its hard-rocking riffs and affinity for the seedier side of just about everything, this is pop music they're playing. Loud as hell and all about guitars, Cobra Verde cracks out dark, pounding rock music that builds its strengths more on hooks than most bands of similar "tough guy" posturing. Not that singer/songwriter John Petkovic is a tough guy per se, but he's got a pretty big bark. Couched in titles like "Don't Burden Me With Your Dreams" and "Heaven In The Gutter" are straight-up pop-rock songs laden with nearly impenetrable theatrics. And they work. "Crashing In A Plane" seems to borrow from the Buzzcocks' "Something's Gone Wrong Again," while the rest of the album runs the heavy rock gamut with Petkovic himself sounding variously like Ian McCulloch, The Cult's Ian Astbury, and Jimmy from the Frogs. Diverse (there's a ballad! there's piano!) yet as heavy-hitting as Cobra Verde's previous offerings, *Nightlife* is as inscrutable as it is loud, and in some ways it's a little confusing. Petkovic has more ideas than most anyone, and some of them fall by the wayside of, well, his other ideas. Even so, it's a worthwhile, and intriguing, loud rock (and pop) fix for people that may be surprised that they like this band.

>>>Liz Clayton



OUT:

August 24.

FILE UNDER:

The seedy underbelly of pop music.

R.I.Y.L.:

Guided By Voices, Iggy Pop, Mott The Hoople.

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CHEVELLE

Point #1

This Chicago trio's debut album was produced by Steve Albini (Nirvana, Bush). Check out their animated video for "Mia" on MTV, M2, and The Box.



MING & FS

Hell's Kitchen

This record showcases their signature "junk yard" sound. Fusing progressive hip-hop with drum & bass, turntable battle breaks, and lush, live instrumentation, Ming & FS bring a funky new sound sure to get heads bobbing and feet moving.



DJ RAYMOND ROKER

Altered States Of Drum & Bass

Urb Magazine's editor and creative director, Raymond Roker, has been mixing up the deep and dark tracks at West Coast stronghold "Science" for years. This is his first mixed CD; a lush collection of premier UK drum & bass tracks sure to send all beat fans into a frenzy.



TARWATER

Silur

From hip-hop to post rock, classical to electronic, Tarwater are one of the few who cannot be easily classified. This German duo has been making music together since 1995. One member, Ranzel Lippok, is also in To Rococo Rot.

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ENJOY THE SILENCE

THE FOLK IMPLOSION'S Lou Barlow—for once—*isn't* talking about what's behind his new batch of songs, *One Part Lullaby*.

STORY: JENNIFER VINEYARD PHOTOS: CHAPMAN BAEHLER

Lou Barlow, one of the more iconic figures in indie rock, is splayed on his couch with a guitar in his living room in Silver Lake, California. His Folk Implosion songwriting partner, cassette-underground stalwart John Davis, is slumped in a chair to his left. Ostensibly, they've gathered together to chat about the new Folk Implosion record, *One Part Lullaby*, but Barlow is determined to handle the seemingly contemptible task of promoting an album by not promoting it at all. Perhaps wary of the backlash inherent in scoring a top 40 hit (as the duo did in 1995 with "Natural One" off the *Kids* soundtrack) and signing to a major label (Interscope), Folk Implosion doesn't want to appear too enamored of the whole process. So Barlow and Davis have decided not to tour, declaring its 1997 outing a complete disaster. But the key thing is, where Barlow would normally spill his guts about the whys and hows of every song he's ever written, he's keeping mum. Gleeefully mum.

"No one knows what happened in the last year and a half," he says, smiling. "Usually, after a record comes out, I clarify what happened, how the songs came about—'Oh, this is the record where I split up with Kathleen.' She says, 'Oh, go ahead, tell people, it makes it more interesting,' but I chose not to this time. These were the most fucked up years of my life, the most tumultuous, crazy, anguish-filled years, and I'm not going to tell."

What he will tell about the last year-and-a-half is this: He and his wife, Kathleen Billus—his muse, confidant, and often the main subject of his songs—moved to Los Angeles. His one-room apartment in Boston was too claustrophobic, he was getting too antsy, so he bought this house in Silver Lake, sight unseen. Sebadoh slept here while recording its last album, while Folk Implosion turned the place into a studio of sorts. Barlow slipped into a Brian Wilson phase, wearing his bathrobe for days on end, recording vocals in the upstairs bathroom. A litter of kittens lived there, too. After Folk Implosion recorded, Sebadoh came back to mix, and for five or six months, there was a constant flow of guests due to Barlow's various musical projects. Thus, "both the Sebadoh and Folk Implosion records are about that hard period," he says. "And everyone who came to this house knew about it."

No one knows, everyone knows. If the story is in the songs, then these, too, are full of contradictions. The title track recants the Folk Implosion's past success with the lyric, "I'm not a rebel or the natural one." Throbbing bass lines, subtle dance pop, and sampled percussion submerge lullaby-like melodies, giving lines like "I'm happy to be here/When can I leave?" a sweet undertone. Some tunes ("Free To Go," "Gravity") could almost be Sebadoh material for their power-pop propulsion, but the insular beats win out. More delicate than funky, the album is painfully self-conscious, less a diary than a confession of inhibition and ambivalence, simultaneously

celebrating and mourning ambiguity in relationships and language.

This kind of songwriting is what's made Barlow practically the patron saint of indie rock. The central and contradicting things in his approach, his very confusion, is what appeals to the prototypical college radio geek guy (not that there's anything wrong with that). He captures the feelings of heartbreak and loss, giving him credence as a loser or a loner, but he's been married for five years. His hurt, the seemingly endless well he draws from, gives him occasion both to thrash about angrily (and be very male) and to shut himself up in his room (and be very sensitive). He churns out song after song in project after project—Sebadoh, Sentridoh, Folk Implosion, Deluxx Folk Implosion—a gushing stream that only an ardent collector could keep track of. Problem is, though some of it approaches the near genius level, much of the rest is downright unlistenable. It's as if Barlow doesn't know his wheat from his chaff, or doesn't care.

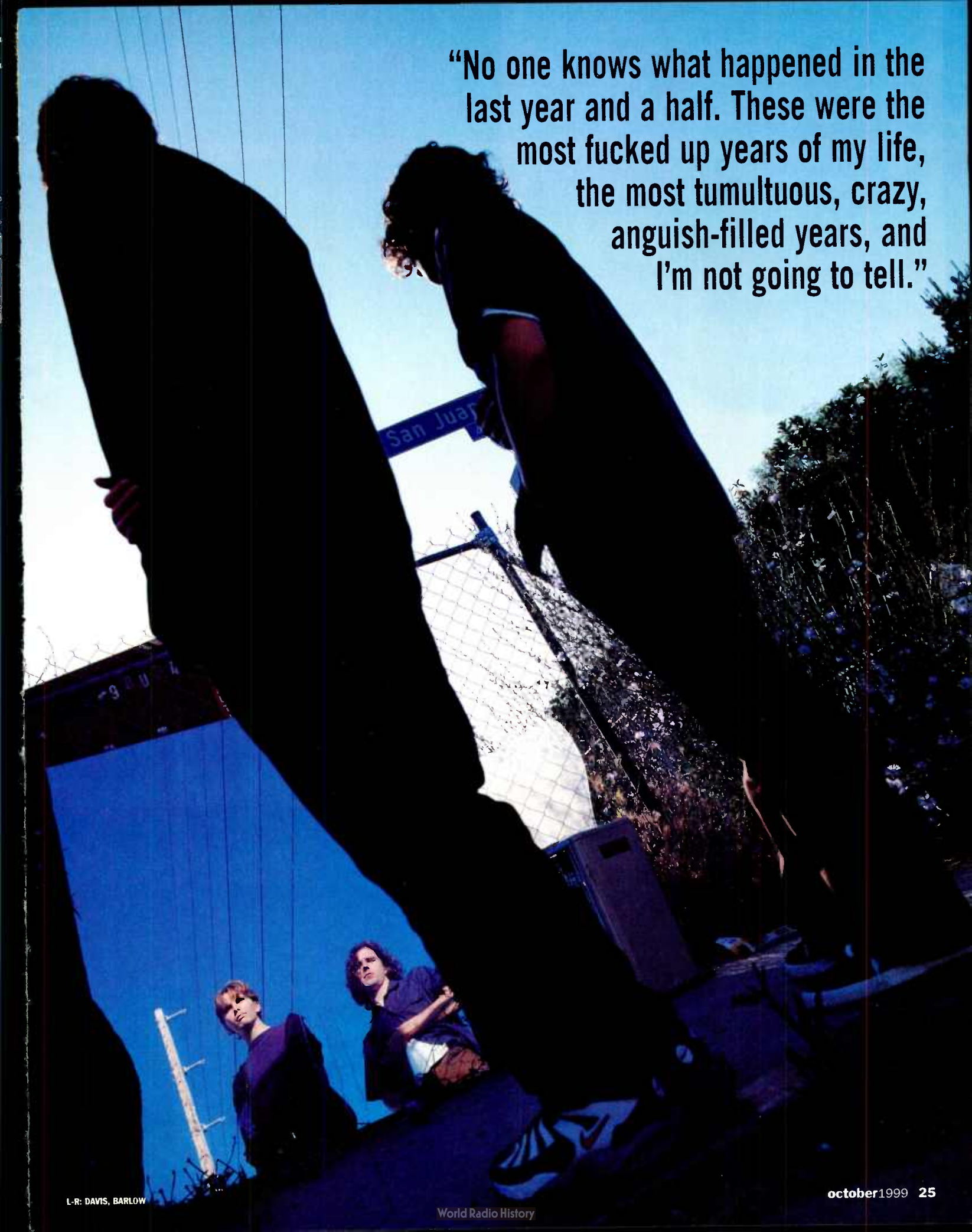
Sloppy on purpose, most of his work has been recorded with rudimentary production values. His lo-fi technique—he records much of his material on a four-track unit—was considered by some to be the beginnings of a movement, though he laughs at that now. If Barlow was starting a movement, it wasn't one of recording techniques, but one of emotional honesty, a reworking of confessional songwriting that fought against the Sturm und Drang of loud, heavy, guitar rock—though he often uses loud, heavy guitars to offset the quieter moments. And he's not about to confess anything else anytime soon.

"The grunge rock thing was fine," Barlow says, "but there was a real hatred of introspection at the time. It was all about Jon Spencer, Pussy Galore, as if a band is only good if it hates each other. What's more radical—that, or singing into a tape recorder? It was far more radical to say what you thought. To be acoustic was considered self-indulgent, but meanwhile, they were making the most self-indulgent music on earth, but they thought it was somehow less indulgent because it was electric. You can spend time screaming, that's fine, bands will do that forever, and it will always seem new. But the most angry, heavy-sounding recording will sound like a marshmallow two years later. That's the nature of dance music, hate music. It's incredibly transient. Unless you attach lyrics that are about what people feel, the song doesn't last, for me."

As a reaction against Jon Spencer, among others, then, Barlow concerns himself with collapsing forms. In Spencer's hands, blues might explode, but in Barlow's neo-folk, when it's stripped of deadening clichés and updated with some irony, it implodes and becomes something new, and even danceable. But why analyze it? "When fruit comes from the tree," Davis adds, "the point isn't to put the fruit back into the tree. The point is to eat it."

NMM





“No one knows what happened in the last year and a half. These were the most fucked up years of my life, the most tumultuous, crazy, anguish-filled years, and I’m not going to tell.”

CASINO ROYALE

DEATH IN VEGAS puts all its chips on black, shedding Big Beat for a deeper, darker new sound.

STORY: **KURT B. REIGHLEY** PHOTOS: **KIM APLEY**

Great music doesn't stop at your ears; it permeates your entire being, overriding individual will entirely. It can make you dance until dawn, or hold your breath in suspense for the final tragic notes of an aria. But very few records can sustain this transcendental power over the course of a whole album.

Casino, the second full-length from UK duo Death In Vegas (Concrete-Time Bomb), is a welcome exception, falling between self-hypnosis and demonic possession on the spectrum of out-of-body experiences. This record makes one understand how serial killers can claim voices on the radio told them to commit heinous crimes. As the opening track "Dirge" unfolds with an eerie refrain of la-la-la's (courtesy of former One Dove canary Dot Allison) and a menacing bass riff à la Second Edition-era Public Image Ltd., the real world dissolves and a darker, more dangerous one rises up in your mind. It isn't difficult to imagine waking up someplace completely unknown when the final notes of "Neptune City" fade into silence.

Chief instigator Richard Fearless respects the ability of a record to transport the listener to another place. "I didn't enjoy a brilliant childhood, because I was sent away to boarding school," he explains, shifting nervously in his chair. "I liked music that the other people at school didn't like... and I didn't want them to like it. Music was a way of escaping."

Death In Vegas's 1997 debut *Dead Elvis* offered escape via the physical release of heavy dance grooves. Audiences responded, cranking up the single "Dirt" on the radio, and turning up to see the group on tour, opening for the Chemical Brothers (old pals from the Heavenly Sunday Social, where Fearless was also a resident DJ). But according to Fearless, *Casino* is deliberately a more sinister affair.

"There was a conscious effort to try to make this album as different as possible," he admits. Frustrated at being lumped in with so-called Big Beat artists like Fatboy Slim, Monkey Mafia and the aforementioned Chemicals ("even though I never thought we had anything to do with that"), Fearless steered in a completely different direction. "The whole album is inspired by pure West Coast psychedelic and Krautrock," he confesses, citing the 13th Floor Elevators, Chocolate Watchband, and Can. There's also more than a little classic rock swagger, à la vintage Stones.

"The sound is lot darker," adds partner Tim Holmes. "There's nothing very pleasant about it."





While *Dead Elvis* took shape over three years, *Casino*'s gestation period was closer to that of the average human. "This one was done in nine months," says Fearless. "The recording was a lot more intense. And the album's less meandering over the musical styles, less eclectic."

"I couldn't even listen to the last album," he confesses. "This one I can. I'm proud of it."

Casino also benefited from a healthier collaborative dynamic. "I didn't put as much into the last one because I was working with someone I didn't have a good relationship with," Fearless admits. He'd begun working with former partner Steve Hellier on a lark. "He had a studio in his house, and I went with the girl who lived next door. We did a track together. [We] got signed. Before I knew it, I was in a marriage—a record deal—with someone who I didn't really get on well with."

When Holmes stepped in as replacement, both parties already knew whom they were getting into bed with. "I've been involved with *Death In Vegas* since day one, having mixed their very first single, and even knowing Rich from before then," the engineer recounts. They'd worked closely on remixes, too, and even begun working on tracks together. "*Dirge*" was started six months before we decided to work together as *Death In Vegas*," he admits.

"I couldn't even listen to the last album. This one I'm proud of."

The boys also roped in outside talent to lend their voice to several tracks. In addition to Allison, Bobby Gillespie (*Primal Scream*) and Jim Reid (the *Jesus & Mary Chain*) lent their distinctive delivery to the tunes "*Soul Auctioneer*" and "*Broken Little Sister*," respectively. DIV even worked up the nerve to send an unsolicited tape to Iggy Pop, who sings the creepy "*Aisha*."

But the strangest contribution, "*Aladdin's Story*," sprang from an even more famous source. "It's a bootleg I'd had for years of an instrumental," says Fearless. He wrote a vocal line, inspired by a Mahalia Jackson record, and Allison helped arrange the tune for the London Community Gospel Choir. Then they discovered the track was a creation of the Glimmer Twins, an unknown Mick Jagger/Keith Richards obscurity.

Fortunately, Fearless and Holmes got off a lot easier with their appropriation than *The Verve* did. If you hear *Death In Vegas* in a Nike ad any day soon, the money won't be going into somebody else's already well-lined pockets. It seems the song was written solely as a try-out for Mick Taylor. "They cut a few acetates, took it to a nightclub... and one of them got stolen."

So what happened when the inadvertent cover was brought to the authorities attention? Fearless smiles, savoring the moment. "They'd never registered it." RHM

MILWAUKEE'S

THE PROMISE RING is a bundle of dichotomies. But they still rock.

STORY: KEVIN JOHN PHOTOS: KIM APLEY

The line on the Promise Ring is that the Milwaukee foursome fuses the dick-headed energy of hardcore punk with introspective, sometimes sappy verse and yearning-not-yelping vocals. With three albums in as many years—each better than the last—as evidence, the reality is somewhat less intense than that summation. Nevertheless, the band has come to epitomize this dichotomy so completely that it's currently the reluctant poster-boy for emo-core (a genre to which that dichotomy is supposedly central), kicking off the new *Nowcore!*—*The Punk Rock Evolution*, a compilation of Iron John-meets-Iron-Fist congregations like Texas Is The Reason, Burning Airlines and fellow Milwaukee denizens Compound Red (on K-Tel, no less!). Straddling the worlds of indie rock and punk, the Promise Ring is, to paraphrase the last song on its latest disc, *Very Emergency!* (Jade Tree), nothing but in between all of their everythings, at the intersection of many seemingly conflicting impulses.

It should come as no surprise, then, to learn that the group has a lead singer who embodies an in-



BEST

L-R DIDIER GNEWIKOW SCHOENBECK VON BOHLEN



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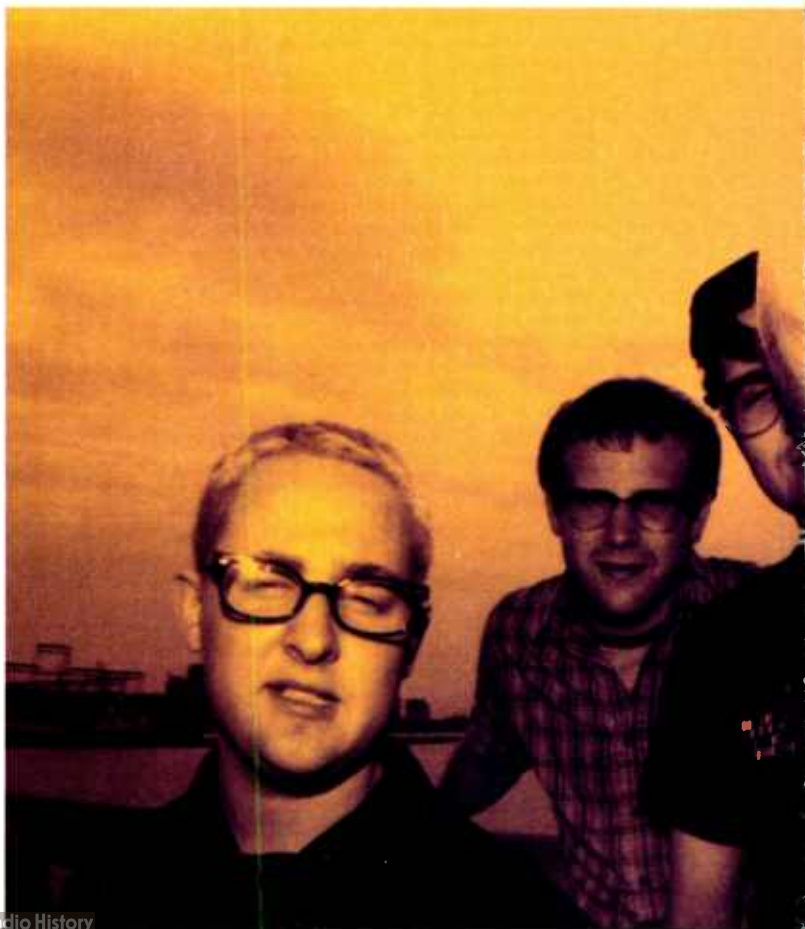
between-ness that could bubble up only from the Midwest. "I've got my body and my mind on the same page," gushes Davey Von Bohlen on "Happiness Is All The Rage," the album's brawny first cut. Not a sentiment typically heard from indie types whose minds are usually several chapters ahead of their bodies. But that only makes Von Bohlen all the more intriguing. Surfing on the crest of ageless mind/body dualities, he's a jock—the secret nemesis of the cardigans-and-Keds set—in a compact, indie boy package.

This isn't necessarily an easy fit. "For about three or four years, I didn't know a soul who would play sports with me that wasn't my cousin," he confesses. Drummer Dan Didier obliges him now and then, but it's still enough of an issue to address the topic in "Happiness Is All The Rage": "We could do more outdoor things/If we weren't so busy getting busy." Yet despite the fact that moving in rock circles does little for your lower abs, Davey's proud of his body and talks about it frequently. "Check this out—my arms totally peeled yesterday but I'm still tan."

The "mind" half of the equation—emo's inherent sensitivity—is easier to suss out. Like L7's views on "women in rock," it's the genre's news peg, an obvious topic that interviewers needlessly return to. Aggressively common, Von Bohlen seems to have a thing for middlebrow actresses like Mary Stuart Masterson and Jennifer Love Hewitt (he owns three or four of her albums, including the Japanese-only release *Let's Go Bang*). He also has a knack for picking out their doppelgangers: "No one thought this girl at the Palace show last night looked like Lea Thompson and I thought it was totally her," or "Doesn't Britney Spears look like Katie Holmes from *Dawson's Creek*?"

He's also quite courteous—as our interview at a local restaurant passed the one-hour mark, he suggested that "we should leave and let other people have our table." And he doesn't shy away from his all-important sensitive side. "I pretty much wear my private life on my public sleeve. I tell every one of my friends pretty much everything. I mean, I spare people. I won't say something I know will make them feel awkward. But I think I'm open."

That much is evident on *Very Emergency!*. This is a man who talks to you about talking to you (in "Living Around") and finds himself shaking (as in trembling, not twitching Jerry Lee-like) in at least two

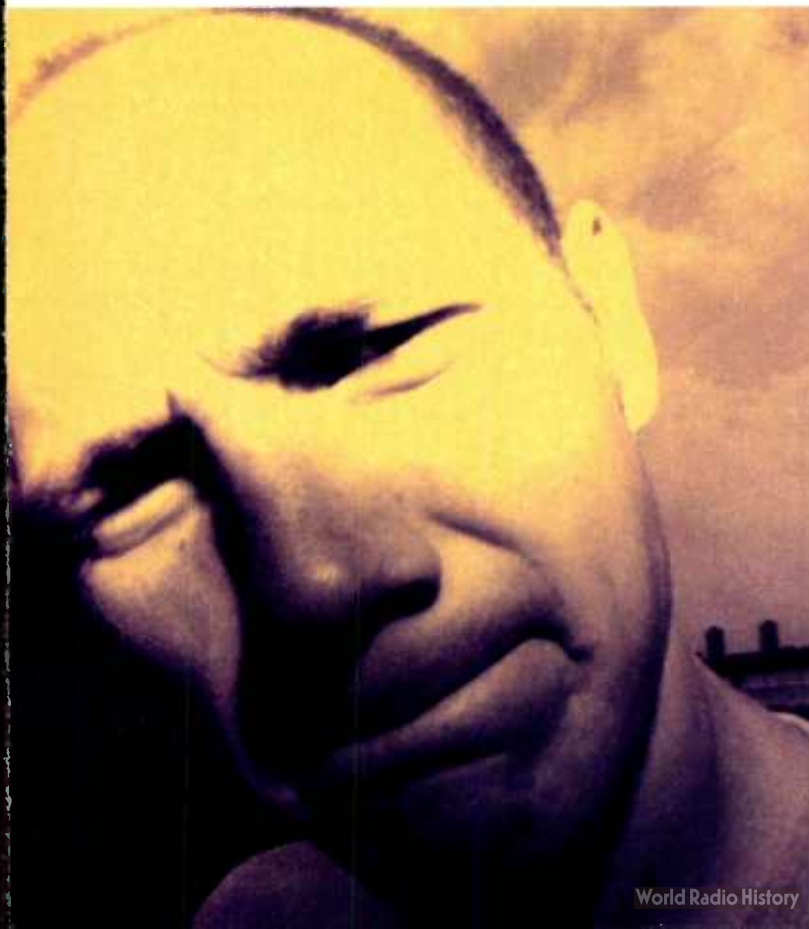


songs. Yet whiny, self-absorption never enters the mix. Von Bohlen is as willing to share his clothes with you as he is his thoughts. Ever tentative in his singing style (check out how very un-emergency it gets towards the end of the chorus in "Deep South"), he avoids the trap of turning his sensitivity into an aggressive stance.

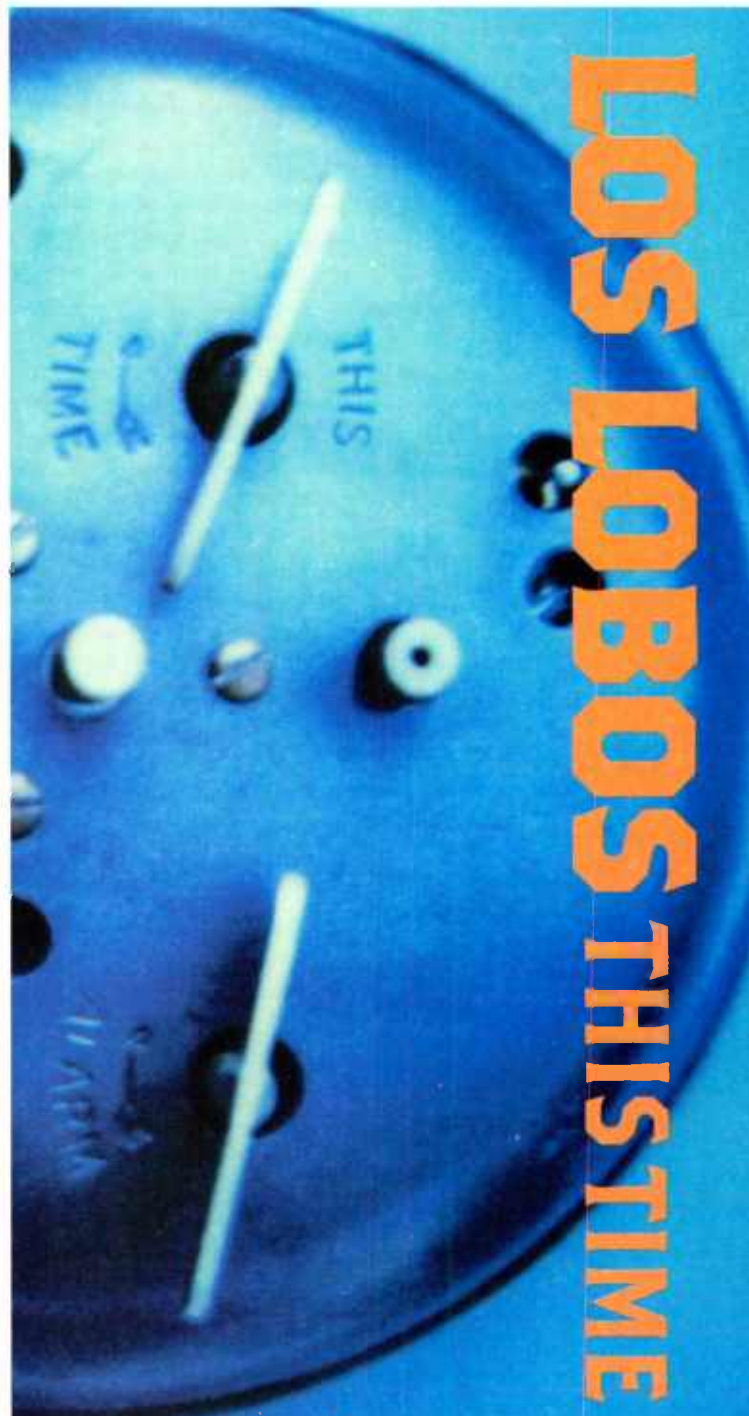
So there's a hard-working sporto side to Davey that reveals his lower middle class roots and a more inward looking side that bespeaks his chosen bohemian milieu. Where the two come together most enticingly is in his workings with the band—and you don't have to have lunch with them to see it in action. Singing in his role as the Promise Ring-master, Davey spouts off post-slackerisms like "If it came too easy, then it wouldn't be worth all the time it took" ("Things Just Getting Good"). That might come off as heavy-handed and oppressive from a straight-edge purist. But although Davey believes what he says, his gentle vocals, coupled with the music's stately feel, have a more paternal touch. Things are just getting good for the Promise Ring, and Davey has taken it upon himself to make sure he and his band keep their heads above the media blitz.

And so, the most heart-tugging moment of the quartet's career occurs at the end of the song when he calls out to each band member by name, starting with himself: "Davey, oh Davey, don't tell me that you're crazy/And Jason, oh Jason, look now what you've been chasin'/DJ, yeah DJ, you can't spend all day in your PJs/Scott Schoenbeck, yes, Scott Schoenbeck, his head feels like a train wreck tonight." How often do we get such an endearingly naked instance of boys singing to other boys? Not often enough, and guitarist Jason Gnewikow suggests why that might be: "As a teen, you have all these close relationships with boys, boys who know everything about you and can talk or cry with you. But later in life, a steady relationship takes up that part of what you got from your best friend. And so you no longer have best friends. It's unfortunate that you're not going to be close with the people you're not sleeping with."

Very Emergency! aims to reanimate that part of a boy's psyche resistant to coffee klatches with no loss to more traditional manifestations of masculinity. In an era when Nirvana has given way to the nookie, the nookie, and techno is becoming the province of beer-guzzling swellheads, it's a beautiful aim indeed. **NMM**



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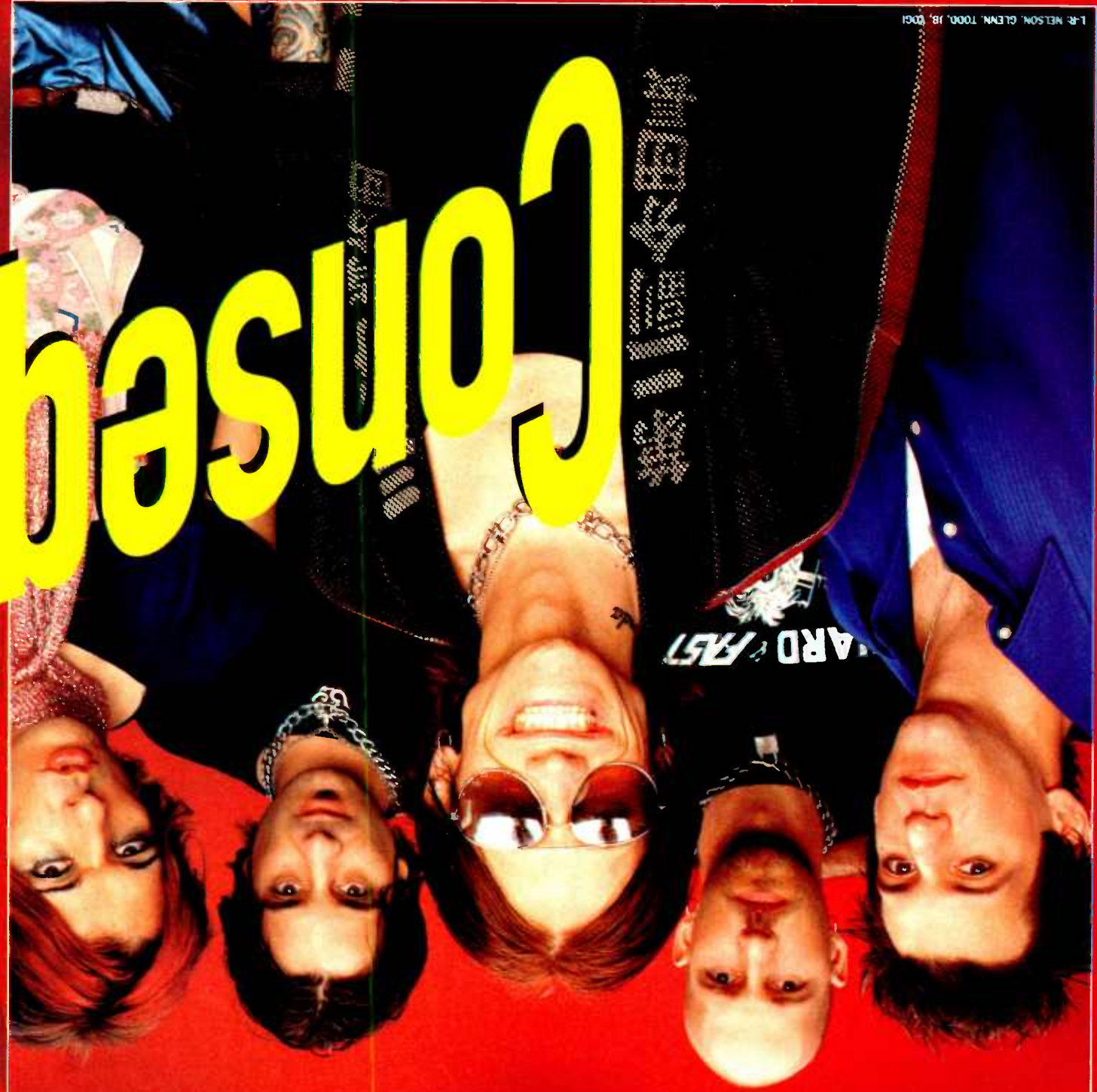


FOR THE MOVIES BY BUCKCHERRY APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD

L-R: NELSON, GLENN, TROTT, J.B., DODD

BUCKCHERRY

Conserved



Drugs, booze and tattoos. Big guitars and cockrock swagger. Bands like Buckcherry are eternal. They give the culture cops fits. They give the underground something to be under. They give rock fans reason to live. And **LOS Angeles**, with its seedy street life festering in the middle of sun-bleached perfection, has long been the breeding ground..
Dig the new breed.

STORY: KATHERINE TURMAN PHOTOS: CHAPMAN BAEHLER

"These guys are so LA they might as well have Aaron Spelling on that bus with them!" bemoaned one San Francisco music fan when a close encounter with Buckcherry's raucous rock left him cold.

Buckcherry begs to differ. Unless, of course, you're talking about the grimy Van Nuys industrial area that houses the band's rehearsal space, the drug dealers and hookers a few miles east of the Viper Room and the telemarketing boiler-room hell where hungover musicians sell copy-machine toner on a commission-only basis to keep themselves in Top Ramen.

"Anyway, isn't an LA band really a swing band now?" offers guitarist Keith Nelson with a laugh.

"Or rap-rock," adds vocalist Joshua Todd in a slightly effeminate yet husky voice that turns growly and passionate when he sings "Lit Up," the single boasting the now-infamous chorus "I love the cocaine"—or, if you're a VH1 watcher, "I love the... [curious silence]."

By virtue of its rollicking self-titled debut, Buckcherry may be at the forefront of a return to blues-drenched, guitar-driven testosterone rock in the tradition of bands such as AC/DC. Yet only two of Buckcherry's members—singer Todd and new guitarist Yogi—are from the City of Angels, the band is not "metal" per se, and the guys in Buckcherry, rounded out by bassist Jonathan Brightman and drummer Devon Glenn, aren't sure they're part of any national "rock" trend. Still, musician-wanted ads in Los Angeles publications are already citing Buckcherry as an influence—always a sign of things to come. And bands will be snapped up in no time, if the industry follows its usual "sign everything that sounds like Current Hit Band" m.o.

"When the band was coming up, in the early days, under another name [Sparrow], we were so 'un' what was going on," recalls Nelson.

an affable Pennsylvania native who moved to LA in the early '90s seeking his musical fortune. "We weren't an LA band. I mean, yeah, we lived here, but we weren't a sample of what was going on."

Bobby Carlton, a former A&R man-turned-manager, notes "the climate is changing. I don't know if people were receptive to rock bands a few years ago. When I was at [music industry conference] SXSW this year, everybody was talking about 'rock.' But it's never fucking gone away."

Carlton manages American Pearl, which shares Buckcherry's rehearsal room, as well as its aggressive, tattooed, macho 'n' melodic blues-rock vibe. In fact, American Pearl guitarist Kevin Quinn

"Lit Up" was about my first cocaine experience when I was 16. It was really magical for me, because I found a way I could drink more. Drinking was really the main goal. It was the combination I used for quite a while."

>>>Joshua Todd, Buckcherry

tattooed Todd's impressive back piece and played a hand in introducing two members of Buckcherry. Now AP also has a record deal, with Wind-up, home to neo-grunge rockers Creed.

American Pearl frontman Kevin Roentgen, a veteran of the LA scene, is relieved. "You don't have to be afraid to say you're in a rock band anymore," he says. "Me and everybody I know have always played rock, though some steered off to the side. But I was always stubborn and kept rocking. And it's come around to us."

Still, two bands do not a scene make. It's certainly not the Hollywood heyday of like-minded lineups including Junkyard, Little Caesar, the Hangmen, Faster Pussycat and their ilk, though apparently the first three of the aforementioned have reformed, while Pussycat frontman Taimé Downe hosts a hopping Wednesday night rock club, Pretty Ugly, at Hollywood's Dragonfly.

Other new rock signings or buzzes around LA include Liars Inc., Professional Murder Music, Hero and a spate of other aggressive bands that don't quite fit into the rock-rap Korn/Limp Bizkit genre. "Buckcherry has certainly helped," Carlton says of the local scene, "and Korn opened everybody's eyes to the fact that loud bands with guitars can sell music."

For a while, Buckcherry frontman Todd wasn't sure he could sell music, except maybe at a record store. Born in LA, but raised in the conservative yet punk-rock bastion of Orange County, California, he moved back to LA after high school, surviving by detailing cars, delivering pizzas, and doing the ubiquitous sleazy toner sales gig. For Todd and his then-band Slamhound, the brass ring was woefully out of reach.

"I was very bitter. I had a very big resentment toward a lot of things," begins the wiry singer, who, sans eyeliner and bandanna, is less menacing than he appears onstage or on video, though his persona remains vaguely indifferent and slightly hostile. "I thought I was jinxed, actually. I thought I would never be able to put out a record, and that's all I wanted. When Keith and I got together [in 1995], I said, 'I just



want to put out a record.' I wanted something wrapped up. If [success] never happened, I just wanted something to show for something, you know?"

Right up until Buckcherry was signed to DreamWorks by A&R man Michael Goldstone (who'd signed both Pearl Jam and Rage Against The Machine to Epic), Todd fretted. "The night before we were to sign our deal," Nelson recalls, "we were all at dinner with our attorney, and Josh said, 'So if this doesn't happen, we'll still be able to get a deal with an independent record label or something, right?'"

In hindsight, Todd realizes it was no jinx that found him existing on the cusp for the better part of a decade. "I felt I was cursed, but really there were a lot of other problems going on with me," he admits. "That was the major problem. So as soon as I dealt with that, everything kind of worked itself out."

The "major problem" isn't stated, though the lyrics to their the band's single hint at what it might be. "Lit Up" was about my first cocaine experience when I was 16," Todd states. "It was really magical for me, because I found a way I could drink more. Drinking was really the main goal. It was the combination I used for quite a while."

Note the use of the past tense, though Todd does not openly talk about sobriety or a lack thereof, except to note that "Coke does not work on the road, singing. You'll last maybe three days, and then you're done."

"I think we always retain the right to be as private as we want to be," furthers Nelson. "There's nothing that turns my stomach more than some idiot spewing about their sobriety or lack of sobriety. And acting in completely contrary actions to that."

"I've seen a lot of people eaten up by the jungle, drug habits or whatever," furthers Todd, who by all accounts, is not a partier on the road.

"You don't always avoid it," Nelson notes. "You just hope you end up on the other side."

So any *Behind The Music*-style tragedy isn't public knowledge? "When it's time to talk about that kind of stuff, we can pull some colorful stories out of our past," acknowledges Todd, who snorts at Shaina Twain for having her "tragic story" as the "foundation" of her career.

Buckcherry's story is more magic than tragic, despite detractors who wrongly dismiss the tattoos and hard rock vibe the quintet purveys as metal posing. In fact, the band has more in common with the Rolling Stones than Mötley Crüe and is more akin to the sloppy attitudinal punk of the New York Dolls. Plus, Buckcherry writes



memorable pop hooks, as evidenced by "Lawless And Lulu" and the almost Radiohead feel to its second single, "From The Movies."

Thus far, the public concurs. At press time, Buckcherry had sold more than 220,000 records, 17,000 of those in the one week before the quintet played Woodstock. Buckcherry sold more in one week than the new album from another heavy LA-based band, W.A.S.P., sold in two months. Another regional favorite, Korn, without a new record or tour, was SoundScanning about 20,000 copies a week of *Follow The Leader*, while Kid Rock, in the middle of a full court press on his new disc, sold 95,000 in that same week.

Buckcherry's success is no accident. The machine, which has

"'Fuck' is one of the most beautiful words in the English language."

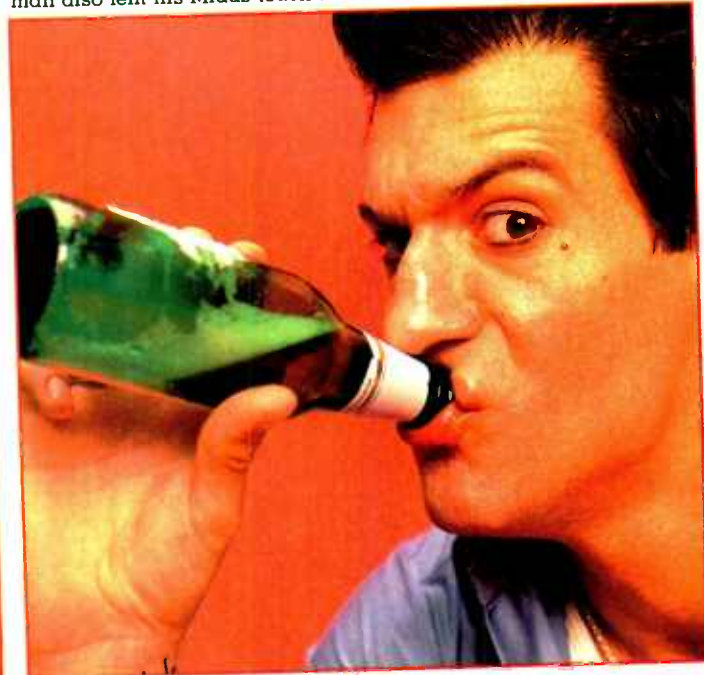
>>>Joshua Todd, Buckcherry

included indie radio promotion, manager Scott McGhee and booking giant CAA, is working for the band, which is not to say Buckcherry hasn't paid its dues. Learning to book tours, Todd would call up a Warehouse record store in a particular city and ask the kid working there where the coolest club was. Buckcherry would send a package, book a gig, hop in a van and go. Tours and demos helped build a buzz, which turned deafening, with word on the street pegging Todd, with his skinny Iggy-meets-Dead Boys vibe, a star.

According to former Geffen A&R scout Del James, though, there are new rules to finding new bands. These days, he believes, "more unsigned bands have lawyers pushing demo tapes to record labels, so the need to create one's own buzz ain't what it used to be. Buckcherry didn't have a massive following of kids," he notes, "but they had every label and every manager hovering over them for fear the next guy would get 'em."

The guy who got them, Goldstone, wasn't heavy-handed when courting the band, Todd recalls, playing with the peeling vinyl on the couch as he speaks. "He came to a rehearsal; he was the only guy who came down. We don't like doing that. Initially, I don't think he was that moved by it," the singer says, unperturbed. "We didn't hear from him. We did another show and he wasn't there. Then he came down to a show at the Viper Room and one at the Whisky, where we opened for Reef and Rule 62. That night we walked out of the Whisky with him and he said, 'I was wondering if you guys would like to make a record.' We were like, 'Are you kidding me?'" Todd remembers, smiling at the memory. "It was magical."

Buckcherry had what Goldstone wanted, but the creative A&R man also lent his Midas touch to the band, which included adding a



second guitarist, Yogi, and getting Terry Date (Soundgarden) and Sex Pistol Steve Jones involved with the record.

"He was able to take our vision and champion that and really help us to get there," Todd relates of Goldstone's involvement. "It's hard to direct and develop a band and get them through changes. It's all a really sensitive issue, because it's your stuff, and you get some new family members, really, and he was sensitive to that. We had a lot of battles. But we always got over the top."

Surprisingly, releasing "Lit Up" as the first radio track wasn't a battle. "DreamWorks totally understand the nature of the beast, of Buckcherry, and if we didn't come out with what we're all about, which is... something rocking and something with a little shock value, it wouldn't be on a street level," says Todd, seemingly ready to jump on the defensive if need be. "We wanted to make sure it was on the street level even if we didn't get the big fucking cheese or apple, whatever fucking thing."

"We based our whole thinking on, 'We have to expect no radio and no MTV,'" the vocalist continues. "So we really based everything on performance, live shows and touring. We have to make sure we stay on the road in front of people, and this thing will eventually get everything it's got coming to it."

For Buckcherry, it seems to be happening sooner than later. The ball started rolling via a European stadium tour with KISS before Buckcherry's CD was even released. "Gene and Paul came up to us and they'd heard our record... and it didn't hurt that their manager and our manager are brothers," Todd confesses. "That's how they heard the music so early. But they just wanted us on, they thought it would be a good bill."

The vocalist, a Gene Simmons worshipper as a youth, found the bassist genial and not patronizing. What stuck with Todd was a typical bit of Simmons pith, delivered as only the KISS man can: "This is all about pussy and money," he told his younger brethren of the rock biz.

Todd grins slowly and nods at the recollection. Indeed Buckcherry, Todd in particular, has that sunken-cheek sexiness and

"I think we always retain the right to be as private as we want to be. There's nothing that turns my stomach more than some idiot spewing about their sobriety or lack of sobriety. And acting in completely contrary actions to that."

>>>Keith Nelson, Buckcherry

dirty-boy danger the little girls understand and buy, even if the powers-that-be at Walmart and Kmart don't.

"There's three songs on a 12-song record where there's 'fuck.' That's it," Todd laments, in an argument he's not the first to make. "And they carry the movie *Scarface*. 'Fuck' is one of the most beautiful words in the English language." Though Walmart didn't agree, a different version of the record, sans some offensive tuneage, is available at the chains.

And controversy sells, as does mystique, as Todd is very well



aware. "We like to create desire," he notes, as bassist JB pulls up and heads for a back room in the rehearsal space. "If you give it away right away, it's not as exciting. I always reflect back to when music was influencing me the most, which was junior high and high school. I loved knowing something about a band that no one else does."

For instance, the full album lyrics are not in the booklet, but can be found on the Internet. "I think that's a lot more fun than buying the record and it's all laid out for you," Todd says, warming up. "That's like fucking somebody and going, 'Okay, we're going to cum in 10 minutes.' And then it's over. All right, I'd rather find out what made you cum."

"Every band I've ever fucking loved had some mystique," the somewhat recalcitrant singer furthers. "I remember Prince never did an interview for the longest time and I was like, 'What's that guy

"This is all about pussy and money."

>>>Gene Simmons, KISS

about? I bet he's a total sex fiend.' If you really know what he's about, it might be he's just a regular guy who eats, sleeps and shits just like everybody else. That sucks."

But how do you strategize without becoming too contrived or precious?

"You keep it organic by still being who you are and keeping it real about what you do," says Nelson, his All-American good looks and hometown attitude belied by his aggressive playing, which recently resulted in a broken nose via his flying headstock.

"That's in your heart," Todd says, his silver-ringed fingers combing through his hair. "If you want to create something, it's all about the creation. I don't think that's contrived. It's as contrived as saying the lyrics have to be on the record because this person did it."

More talent and luck than contrivance played a part in the band's breakthrough. Buckcherry played an industry convention in New Orleans, certainly a typical move for a band trying to break. But the results certainly weren't typical.

"Every time we do a big industry show we treat it like any other, and people got excited, then we talked to them after, and people really wanted to be a part of it," says Todd. Cool, except it's usually glad-handing. Not this time.

"VH1 happened right after that night," he adds. "I talked to one of the VH1 guys and like two weeks later, we were on the *Rock Show* [midnight on VH1] every night, and they were talking about us, and talking about a personal conversation he had with me! I'd met so many people that night I was like, 'Okay, I met him, right?' Even all the MTV people had seen us in New York."

In Buckcherry, the powers-that-be see what's there: a band with songs and an attitude, that's willing to work hard and hungry to be stars, yet willing to make reasonable compromises, such as VH1 censoring "Lit Up."

"We could have said, 'No, don't edit our song,' but we should just stay home then, if we don't want to be marketable," Nelson says. Todd



concur, though he adds wryly, "It's kind of hard when they take out a whole hook of your song."

Two stations in LA have been playing the band—alternative giant KROQ and classic rock-leaning KLOS. The first time the latter spun "Lit Up," "phones were great," recalls station PD Jim Villanueva. "Typical calls like, 'Who are these guys?' and 'Is he really saying 'I love the cocaine?' I'd hate to say it's another wave [of harder rock], but the labels are supporting this stuff."

Buckcherry will take all the support they can get, but will also give as good as it gets. "I think maybe the industry people have kind of gotten sick of all these artists who didn't want to be stars, who didn't want to tour before their record, who didn't want to meet them, didn't want to do interviews, didn't want to have a good time. That's bullshit," Nelson snorts. "They should stay home."

As for the future of Buckcherry and balls-to-the wall rock, it seems fairly promising. "For every musical creation, there is an equal and opposite reaction," says Columbia A&R man Tim Devine, who signed LA's Liars Inc., and had followed its singer, Raile, from his previous band. "Any time you get a teen pop phenomenon, the rock element generally is not far behind."

Raile concurs, though he tempers the "rock is back" statement. "I don't think everybody between the Coasts has moved from the rock... It takes more than some dumb catchy lyric to get people motivated to spend hard-earned money."

At this point, someone's hard-earned money is flying out the door into Ricky Martin's pocket. But if there's a backlash to cute confectionery pop, Buckcherry's decadent appeal is it. Of course, Buckcherry is not a household name, but then again, neither was another LA band who once emerged from the "jungle" of Hollywood.

"GN'R did a lot," Todd acknowledges somewhat dismissively of the inevitable comparisons his band gets to the tattooed LA

"You don't have to be afraid to say you're in a rock band anymore. I was always stubborn and kept rocking. And it's come around to us."

>>>Kevin Roentgen, American Pearl

tunesmiths. "And they put out a great record. Whatever. They've got to compare you to something until you fucking put a notch... until you have a history. And we don't have one. We have one record and one song out. That's what we got a deal with."

"Hey," concludes Nelson, his singer's perfect foil, "as long as they're not comparing us to Weezer!"

NMM



LOOKS THAT KILL

IMAGES JASON VAN FLEET

THE SOUNDS—AND STYLE—OF CLASSIC METAL ARE ONCE AGAIN THRIVING IN THEIR NATURAL HABITAT: THE LA CLUB SCENE.

Welcome to Highway To Hell, a special one-night event of "Pure Heavy Metal" being put on by the immensely popular, once-a-month LA club Makeup, a place where rock 'n' roll debauchery and sexscapades are on full display, attracting some of the city's most interesting creatures of the night.

Devised earlier this year by promoters Jason Lavitt and Joseph Brooks and Psychotica frontman Pat Briggs, Makeup has quickly become the de rigueur hangout for drag queens and rock 'n' rollers alike. Around midnight, as Highway To Hell is in full swing, the house band—the Gutter Gangsters—tears into Whitesnake's "Still Of The Night," and is then joined by drag star Alexis Arquette and actual Ratt members Bobby Blotzer and Warren De Martini for a rousing version of "Round And Round." Those who couldn't make it to this special night are up at the Reseda Country Club, gettin' down with a Ratt tribute band, Ratt N Roll.

Yep folks, it's time to break out that bullet belt and open up and say "ahh!" once again, because heavy metal is alive and

"On any given weekend, tribute bands named Ratt N Roll, Atomic Punks, Back In Black, Rocks, and Blizzard Of Ozz are packin' 'em in."

kicking, at least in LA. Superannuated headbangers Warrant, Great White, Poison, Ratt and Quiet Riot are all either touring or have new albums in the shops. Guns N' Roses are threatening to emerge from exile. The Cult, which relocated to LA and started churning out greasy riff-rock albums after lackluster sales in its artistically richer Goth rock period, is reforming for five sold-out shows at the LA House Of Blues. Those evil beasts who kick-started the whole thing, Mötley Crüe, are also on tour and have just reissued their entire catalog. And proving that even '80s hair band fiends can learn a few new tricks, former Faster Pussycat leader Taime Downe's latest concoction, the Newlydeads, focuses on the darker side of metal with a generous dose of industrial and darkwave influences. Similarly, Briggs's Psychotica is releasing its third album, *Pandemic*, later this year on Red Ant

Downe's own club, the Pretty Ugly Club, is considered at the epicenter of this new renaissance. It's a midweek haunt held at Hollywood's Dragonfly, where goths mix it up with porno-blondes (the new street slang term for the bleached-blonde look) while local and touring acts kick rock 'n' roll ass onstage.

In the spandex-infested San Fernando Valley, a whole new crop of hair farmer havens has started putting on "metal nights." And the tribute band assault at these clubs is mind-blowing: Bands named Ratt N Roll, Atomic Punks, Back In Black, Rocks, and Blizzard Of Ozz are packin' 'em in as they mimic the moves and pay tribute to metal heroes of days gone by. Even Gazzarri's, the ultimate '80s Sunset Strip hangout, has been reborn in its old space: The location's new tenant, Billboard Live/Key Club, now hosts a "Gazzari's Night," where bands such as Bang Tango can reclaim their territory (at least for 45 minutes).

You could say it's a "Rock 'N' Roll Resurrection," but Hollywood's self-proclaimed "porno rockers" SeXyXrist (pronounced "sexy Christ") already did, using that prophetic phrase as the title of its debut CD. Make no mistake: The sound that launched thousands of cans of Aquanet is back with a vengeance, and this time you've been warned.





MARC ALMOND

Open All Night

Instinct

OUT:

September 28.

FILE UNDER:

Noir pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Nick Cave, Portishead, Jacques Brel.

the lonely go-go dancer. Yet despite the desolate terrain, the album crests on a feel-good dance vibe—spiced up with Brazilian percussion and Egyptian effects. “Threat Of Love”—guest starring Siouxsie Sioux and cohort Budgie weaving a web of Eastern rhythms—reeks of so much gentlemanly intrigue it shrieks to be on a James Bond soundtrack. On “Almost Diamonds,” featuring former Sneaker Pimps vocalist Kelly Ali, Almond toys with trip-hop—only he employed grandiose arrangements and eerie atmospherics before the Bristol posse was even born. *Open All Night* finds Almond more decadent, melancholy, and sardonic than ever. He’s the only ’80s new wave star who could still sing lines like “My love/Wakes up on vodka/Beds down on valium/Sleeps on the floor” with a palpable smirk in his voice. >>>Sarah Pratt



BROTHER JT

Way To Go

Drag City

OUT:

September 21.

FILE UNDER:

Electric guitar confidential.

R.I.Y.L.:

Classic Hendrix, Original Sins, Royal Trux, early Dream Syndicate.

long, skewed solo one moment and a magical melody the next. *Way To Go* is hard JT compacted. Using only bass, guitar, drums and various percussive bells and triangles, he constructs solid songs that weigh a goddamn ton. A rhythm section will set in stone a mantra, JT will start his guitar a-moaning, then his voice a-mumbling. From there the songs meander in any number of directions, and usually go in all of them simultaneously, as JT the guitar god wails on his instrument. Psychedelic? Sure, but not any of that pansy psychedelia—though there is a choice Skip Spence-esque bummer, “Throwaway.” Rather, this is pissed off psych, the stuff you imagine strobe lights pounding along to, the kind that’ll give you a bad trip. >>>Randall Roberts



BARDO POND

Set And Setting

Matador

OUT:

August 10.

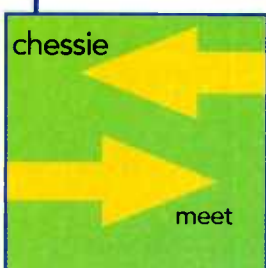
FILE UNDER:

Thick 'n' chunky drone-rock.

R.I.Y.L.:

Spacemen 3, early Sonic Youth, Hovercraft.

extrudes from their amps. Joe Culver’s drums move things along at a heavy and glacial pace, leaving singer and flutist Isobel Sollenberger to try to make her presence felt at the extreme treble end of the spectrum—although on many songs she barely registers, drowned out by the rest of the din. *Set And Setting* rightly positions Bardo Pond among today’s space-rock luminaries, but it also sees the band on a different course from some of its drone-rock colleagues hailing from pastoral Brit or Kiwi locales. Where bands like Flying Saucer Attack work a decidedly celestial groove, as Bardo Pond has evolved, its grooves have become more low-end and scuzzy, vaguely blues-inspired and covered with a sticky layer of big-city grime, creosote and resin. It’s space-rock at its stoned and sludgy best. >>>David Jarman



CHESSIE

Meet

Drop Beat

OUT:

September 16.

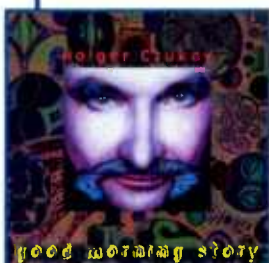
FILE UNDER:

Abstract techno.

R.I.Y.L.:

Autechre, Oval, Tangerine Dream.

often separating the beats from the guitar and sometimes edging into soundscape territory, with burbles and murmurs barely resolving themselves into identifiable structures, as on “Ivy City Interlocking,” which moves from echoey, clangorous samples to a three-note loop and back. Other tracks, such as “Brake Test” and the Cocteau Twins-like “3rd Trick,” feature shimmering guitars and circling melodies that almost, but not quite, come into clear focus, following an arc of motion. It’s all very abstract and spacey, and best absorbed as a whole, when the patterns come and go over the course of an hour. *Meet* may be like a series of interludes without a destination, but that makes for an evocative existential journey: The music’s taking you somewhere, although where is never quite clear. >>>Steve Klinge



HOLGER CZUKAY

Good Morning Story Tone Casualties

Former Can bass player Holger Czukay has trodden a strange path over the years, his work as a solo artist heading into uncharted terrain, where the things you took for granted about music simply don't exist—there are no signposts back to normality. In some ways that's par for the course, considering his career, but *Good Morning Story* takes it several steps further, and in the very best way. The first couple of tracks here are reminiscent of the William Burroughs/Material collaboration on *Seven Souls*, but much stranger—like a cut-up Kafka

novel with musical accompaniment, a sidestep into a parallel universe. And when you get into the epic "Mirage," all 22 minutes of it, time seems to move more slowly, the sounds that seem vaguely familiar turning out to be something else. Elsewhere, the rhythmic figures take on a dazzling complexity, far beyond anything techno or drum 'n' bass has managed to churn up, while guitars stutter and pierce—but very melodically. So we're talking serious art here, disorienting but accessible, the kind of territory Czukay has been exploring for years. He's joined by his former Can bandmates (but it's not a reunion) and Jah Wobble, among others, in creating music that's aptly challenging for the end of the millennium. The adventure starts here.

>>>Chris Nickson

OUT:

August 24.

FILE UNDER:

Challenging but fun art rock.

R.I.Y.L.:

Can, Material, Jeff Greinke.



DREAM CITY FILM CLUB

In The Cold Light Of Morning

Beggars Banquet

Every now and again, you get a CD flying across the transom that's so filthy, corrupt, and corrupting, you feel like taking a shower after your speakers go silent. Meet one such disc, the second release from a UK band so sleazy and dark, it took its name from a notorious members-only cinema that entered British headlines when it and its packed house burned down, the charred corpses apparently still clutching members of another sort. This trio specializes in an abrasive fuck-you

OUT:

September 7.

FILE UNDER:

Filthy murder rock and lullabies.

R.I.Y.L.:

Iggy & The Stooges, Birthday Party, early

Jesus & Mary Chain, early Nick Cave.

noise that suits the ill-mannered temperament of its lyrics, setting sub-Stooges riffs to the sort of dance floor drive and ear-shredding squakery that was the specialty of the early '90s Jesus & Mary Chain records. After a while, the DCFC decides to slow things down and treat listeners to some lovely ballads. The thing is, these sick yakes' idea of balladry is as depraved and homicidal as their rock, so there's no fucking relief in sight. This is mood music for potential Mansons, in the tradition of Nick Cave. The Dream City Film Club has managed to craft one of the ugliest, most claustrophobic and disturbing pieces of work you could ever bang a head to.

>>>Tim Stegall



DERAILERS

Full Western Dress

Sire

The Derailers have to be one of the most schizoid, culturally confused bunches to grasp a Telecaster. Helmed by two X/Ramones fans from Portland, Oregon, they relocated to Austin, Texas, in the early '90s to play hardcore honky-tonk in the mid-'60s Bakersfield tradition of Buck Owens and Merle Haggard. Then they signed to Sire Records, and slipped a twang-rockin' cover of Prince's "Raspberry Beret" into their major label debut. For *Full Western Dress*, their second Sire release—once more expertly produced by former Blasters mainman

Dave Alvin, himself no stranger to the charms of Bakersfield 'tonk—the Derailers still set the Teles to ring and bark, and serve up several more slices of working class barroom shuffles and boppers. They muddy the works a bit with one or two heartbreak tunes that ring like the Beatles circa "I Need You"—had they been bred in the South—put the twang to Phil Spector's immortal "Then He Kissed Me," and close the album with one of Marty Robbins's finest stabs at '50s rock 'n' roll, "Knee Deep In The Blues." With such cut-and-paste cross-referencing abandon, the Derailers just may have jumped rails from the traditionalist country camp and dug a new niche as America's finest roots-rock combo since Alvin's own Blasters, if not the daddy of all roots combos, Creedence Clearwater Revival itself.

>>>Tim Stegall

OUT:

September 21.

FILE UNDER:

Non-traditional honky-tonk.

R.I.Y.L.:

Junior Brown, Merle Haggard, Buck Owens, Blasters, Beat Rodeo.

GENASIDE II .AD FINITE



"...This Is Genaside II - weird, hard, well connected, travelling beyond jungle." - Melody Maker

"Completely Essential." - Jockey Slut

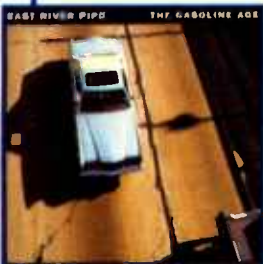
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EAST RIVER PIPE

The Gasoline Age

Merge

Misery may love company but East River Pipe's FM. Cornog doesn't. The reclusive New Jersey resident has been writing and recording songs by himself, barely ever playing them in front of an audience, since 1993. Along the way, Cornog, whose bleakest days were spent living in a Hoboken subway station, has distinguished himself as one of our generation's great, eccentric songwriters. You know the type: He's a down-on-his-luck guy who crafts quiet pop songs whose pretty sounds and clever lyrics force a smile, even when they're part of some of

the saddest tunes you've ever heard. Cornog's fourth long-player, *The Gasoline Age*, retains his usual stylistic hallmarks: The guitars chime like a chorus of bells and the ethereal keyboard parts include lots of sustained notes that wouldn't sound out of place accompanying a church hymn. Lyrically, Cornog continues to use seemingly mundane objects as metaphoric devices. (Remember his song "Ah, Dictaphone"?) The songs on *The Gasoline Age* use cars and driving to deal with the pervasive theme of loneliness. On "Shiny, Shiny Pimpmobile," Cornog sings: "We're all alone, just get inside/We're goin' for a little ride," and on "Down 42nd Street To The Light," "I remember when I said to her/Baby, let me be your passenger." Just beautiful. Now, if only someone could convince him to play a few shows. >>>Jenny Eliscu

OUT:

August 10.

FILE UNDER:

Reclusive pop geniuses.

R.I.Y.L.:

Portastatic, Robyn Hitchcock, Magnetic Fields.



EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL

Temperamental

Atlantic

It's hard work adapting to trends, and even harder following up your best album. But Ben Watt and Tracey Thorn acquit themselves admirably on Everything But The Girl's ninth album, *Temperamental*. They've followed a tough act before: 1996's *Walking Wounded* trailed the fluke hit "Missing," a song that started as classic EBTG mood-pop but was transformed by Todd Terry into an inescapable dance smash. Watt and Thorn rose to Terry's challenge, reinventing themselves on the classy *Wounded* as drum 'n' bass artisans—infusing electronica with heart

OUT:

September 28.

FILE UNDER:

Literate, heartfelt club music.

R.I.Y.L.:

Beth Orton, Roni Size, Air.

two years before Madonna. Having already evolved once, EBTG now simply refines what was revolutionary; *Temperamental* is *Reckoning to Wounded's* *Murmur*. Underpinned by house and smidges of trip-hop, the club-minded *Temperamental* has a simpler goal: to move the body as its predecessor fed the soul. Not spooky enough to be Portishead but too artful to be disposable, EBTG has one toe (Watt's) dipped in clubland, the other (Thorn's) immersed in pop and its heartbreak. It's to Watt's credit that however frenetic his sounds, Thorn's words and voice remain the focus, her rounded koan short-circuiting the technology and slowing the pulse. "The future of the future will still contain the past," she sings on the album's trippy coda, signaling that even a DJ misses his soul like the deserts miss the rain. >>>Chris Molanphy

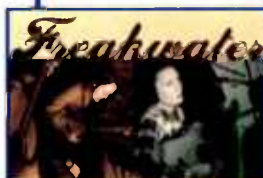
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FREAKWATER

End Time

Thrill Jockey

Celebration is in order. The all-string team of Janet Beveridge Bean, Catherine Ann Irwin and David Wayne Gay has reached its tenth anniversary as a band. For Freakwater's sixth album, the group has added drums, fiddle, pedal steel, Hammond organ, a string section, even an electric guitar. What the devil? Well, you can only do so much with a couple of acoustics, a bass, and two of alt-country's most resonant voices (Bean's and Irwin's, that is). So why not host a modern-day hootenanny? Ah, that's the stuff. The fiddle-and-drinkin' tune "Cheap Watch" gets as

OUT:

September 7.

FILE UNDER:

Modern-day Carter Family.

R.I.Y.L.:

Gillian Welch, Lucinda Williams, Edith Frost.

backwoods authentic as anything can in this technological age. Then there's the spectacular banjo-swathed "Cloak Of Frogs," all classic-sounding with its overlapping choruses, spooky narrative and jugband looseness. The rounded-out band spurs a country-rock mournfulness on "Just Like You" that sounds like the Flying Burrito Brothers fronted by twin sisters. Bean and Irwin revert to Freakwater's minimalist arrangements on a spate of tunes here, highlighting their by turns plaintive, urgent and passionate voices in a folkier context. But the decade-long collaboration pays appropriate tribute to itself with "When The Leaves Begin To Fall," a no-holds-barred pageant of Freakwater's vocal, musical and compositional prowess that weaves strings, pedal steel and organ into a paragon of traditional American music. >>>Richard Martin

**OUT:**

September 7.

FILE UNDER:

Rock, nothing more, nothing less.

R.I.Y.L.:

Stooges, T. Rex, Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels.

THE GO

Whatcha' Doin'

Sub Pop

I've only got 200 words here, so let's not dawdle. *Whatcha Doin'* is the best rock record of the year. Of course, rock is a lonely province these days, but The Go belongs to a time when the above statement actually meant something. *Whatcha Doin'* struts like Marc Bolan, scares you silly like Iggy Pop, bloodies your fingertips like Pete Townshend. Sure, it's all been done before, but I'll be damned if rock hasn't felt this reckless in a turd's age. The fellas in The Go are younger than you'll ever be, but they're also wise beyond their years. They

understand a handclap can be the best weapon in a band's arsenal. They understand that just 'cause you harmonize well, you aren't necessarily a fairy. But above all, they understand the primal art of performance, of capturing a song in its immediate, nascent state. There's nothing fashionable about this fivesome from Detroit (where else?!), nothing au currant or millennial to its equation. But I promise you this: Five years from now when the Beta Band is asking Carter The Unstoppable Sex Machine for career tips, The Go will be, well, if we're lucky it'll be splitsville, having left an exquisite rock 'n' roll corpse of a catalogue in its wake. If we're lucky, that is. >>>Matt Hanks

**OUT:**

September 14.

FILE UNDER:

Bright, economical pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Cowboy Mouth, Ben Folds Five, Crowded House.

GUSTER

Lost And Gone Forever

 Hybrid-Sire

Disclaimer: Guster singers Ryan Miller and Adam Gardner have adenoidal voices that echo Ben Folds's falsetto or, more often, that of (gulp) Extreme's Gary Cherone. Still reading? Second disclaimer: Guster's gimmick is its rhythm section, or lack thereof—percussionist Brian Rosenworcel formed the band with his buddies after teaching himself to play bongos. A band with so cutesy a premise should be painful to hear, but the stunner is how amply melodic and smartly produced this disc sounds. This Boston trio, already popular on the Northeast live

circuit, isn't especially adventurous; Guster's perpetually pleasant sound could fit in on any of those adult alterna-pop stations cluttering your radio. But the quality of the songwriting—approaching the heights of Neil Finn in his Crowded House days—and arranging (via big-time producer Steve Lillywhite) hoists *Lost And Gone Forever* several notches above. The snappy leadoff cuts "What You Wish For" and "Barrel Of A Gun," followed by the ardent ballad "Either Way," show the band's exceptional range. "All The Way Up To Heaven" rests atop the blippy beats of Casio keyboard and, improbably, pulls it off. With few exceptions (the closing "Rainy Day" is a rambling mess), the energy rarely wavers. If you're seeking inventive pop of the post-new wave variety you loved in the '80s, Guster might take you back. >>>Chris Molanphy

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reviews

BEN HARPER ★

Burn To Shine

Virgin



OUT:

September 21.

FILE UNDER:

Acoustic/electric soul rock

R.I.Y.L.:

Cat Stevens, Lenny Kravitz, Jimi Hendrix, Otis Redding.

Ben Harper built a following as the ultra-sensitive singer-songwriter with the gorgeous raspy vocals, but he's never been just a one-trick folkie whiner. Following the radical hard-rock experimentation of 1997's *The Will To Live*, Harper delivers another compelling blend of alternately acoustic and electric rock—with some incredibly unpredictable twists along the way. On *Burn To Shine*, his fourth album, Harper starts with soulful outpourings in "Alone," gets shockingly grungy with the guitar-and-chorus of "Less," only to retreat once again back

into mellowness and tenderness with "Two Hands Of A Prayer." And just when you think you understand his musical range, he goes off the deep end with an old-time jazz arrangement of "Suzie Blue" (replete with horn section), followed by the needlessly silly human beat box in "Steal My Kiss," an otherwise groovy pop song. Even on tracks as disparate as these, Harper is forever grappling with his demons, but nothing's as powerful as Harper the bluesman. The high point on this album: Harper channeling Otis Redding in "Show Me A Little Shame." The song combines everything that makes Harper special: vocals searching for expression in equal moments of scratchiness and falsetto, a building sense of dramatic tension, and a vulnerability that's as sad as it is universal.

>>>James Oliver Cury

MARK LANEGAN

I'll Take Care Of You

Sub Pop

OUT:

September 21.

FILE UNDER:

Tears in your beer.

R.I.Y.L.:

Nick Cave, early Leonard Cohen, Nirvana's Unplugged, Lee Hazlewood.

When Nick Cave released his all-covers album *Kicking Against The Pricks*, it revealed a couple things about the then-nascent solo artist: one, that he was capable of lending new perspective to American blues and folk staples; and two, that he knew where he was coming from and where he was going, both as a singer and a writer. The same could be said of Mark Lanegan and his fourth solo outing, the all-covers *I'll Take Care Of You*. Taking a hiatus from his role as the Screaming Trees' frontman to release his first solo turn in 1990, Lanegan unveiled

the bleak, haunted soul woefully residing in the eye of the Trees' psych-blues hurricane. Here, Lanegan gets at the root of his stark, beautifully forlorn solo work by taking on the work of some of his favorite performers, among them semi-obscure '60s folk icons (Tim Hardin, Fred Neil, Dave Van Ronk), classic blues and soul crooners (Bobby Bland, Eddie Floyd), and a few telling iconoclasts (Jeffrey Lee Pierce, Falling James). It's no surprise that the material is such a perfect fit, given the oh-woe-is-me quality of Lanegan's better-for-wear baritone. With his sympathetically slow, strung-out backing of guitar and organ, Lanegan ones-up Cave by avoiding any sense of irony or melodrama in these interpretations. Like his idols, he's lived it, and the yearning in his low moan proves it.

>>>Colin Helms



JIM LAUDERDALE

Onward Through It All

RCA

Jim Lauderdale and Lucinda Williams are good friends. Like any good friends, they share certain things. They've shared a recording studio and a stage, they've both penned hit songs for some of the highest profile "talent" in country music, and unfortunately for all of us, they've both gone criminally unnoticed for their efforts. Though Lauderdale obviously possesses a keen and deep appreciation for many of country music's bedrock styles—from hardcore honky-tonk, to the Bakersfield sound, to bluegrass—it's these same styles that have fallen out of

favor with the bland tastes that dictate most country radio playlists. In short, Lauderdale, like Williams, is too country for country. It's a rap he's always shouldered, but Lauderdale neither suffers it, nor hides behind it. And that's what distinguishes him from many of his peers. There's plenty of country purists out there—folks like Wayne Hancock or Big Sandy—who put on a great show, but ultimately substitute knee-jerk nostalgia for actual songwriting. Not so for Mr. Lauderdale. *Onward Through It All* is yet another feather in his cap, a collection of instantly classic, thoroughly contemporary compositions. In fact, it's so good you can almost forgive him for collaborating with Dixie Chick Emily Erwin on one track ("Please Be San Antone"). Almost. Lord help us if that's a sign of things to come. >>>Matt Hamks

OUT:

August 10.

FILE UNDER:

Real country.

R.I.Y.L.:

Lucinda Williams, Buck Owens, Dwight Yoakam.



INGER LORRE

Transcendental Medication Triple X

Back in '91 Inger Lorre was the fabulously fucked-up frontwoman of a punkish, slightly gothic hard-rock band, the Nymphs, that left one promising major-label disc behind before everyone checked into rehab or something. Lorre, who had a habit of baring her breasts at Nymphs shows, kept threatening to make a comeback under various guises in the years that followed and eventually she did resurface, dueting with Jeff Buckley on a track he recorded for a Rykodisc Kerouac tribute not long before his death. (He returned the favor here by

lending vocal support on "Thief Without The Take.") If the original Lorre came across as something of a cross between the young Iggy Pop and Axl Rose (a hybrid Nymphs' music readily supported), the new Lorre brings to mind the Iggy who emerged in the mid-'80s—older, weathered, and wiser, but still deeply in touch with an inner wild child. The muddy, metallic production on *Transcendental Medication* favors heavy, layered guitars at the expense of Lorre's vocals. That's too bad, because on an emotional song like "Gibby Haynes Is Next" you really want to be able to hear not just the words and melodies but the contours of her voice. But for all its surface flaws, the album still stands as a compelling survivor's tale from the dark side of the rock 'n' roll dream. >>>Matt Ashare

OUT:

September 14.

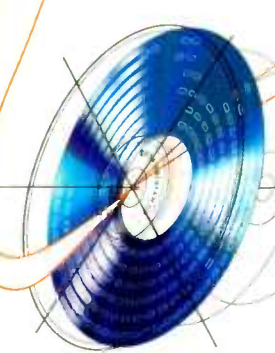
FILE UNDER:

Tales from the dark side.

R.I.Y.L.:

Nymphs, Iggy Pop, Mole.

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MINDERS

Cul-de-Sacs & Dead Ends spinART

Catching Up With The Minders, that's what you could call this one. *Cul-de-Sacs & Dead Ends* compiles singles the band released before last year's debut album, *Hooray For Tuesday*, plus a compilation track and a few new ones; it's a stopgap until next year's second album, but it's a good one, and it demonstrates the rapid trajectory of this Elephant Six band. The album begins in 1996, with short, strummy mid-fi nuggets that show their debt to Syd Barrett-era Pink Floyd pop and Beatles skiffle, then strikes some Kinks chords before the band begins

developing a voice of its own. By the second, more recent, half of the album, the Minders start sounding like the Minders, rather than yet another bunch of '60s revivalists. The band is still susceptible to style over substance—most of these Elephant Six folks know how to sound like their heroes, but they don't always know what to do with those sounds, how to make them meaningful or emotional or individual. But on their best songs, like "Better Things," "Hand Me Downs" or "Waterlooville," the Minders create breezy visions of pop delight. The arrangements become fuller, with "ooh-la-la-la" harmonies, denser production and shared vocals, and the Minders become timeless rather than nostalgic, which bodes well for the future.

>>>Steve Klinge

OUT:
September 7.

FILE UNDER:
More retro-pop from the Elephant Six collective.

R.I.Y.L.:
Apples In Stereo, Bill Fox, Syd Barrett's pop songs, Beulah.



MR. T EXPERIENCE

Alcatraz

Lookout!

Fourteen years after virtually inventing Berkeley-style pop-punk, the Mr. T Experience has finally discovered a new genre, namely, new wave. Throughout *Alcatraz*, lead singer Dr. Frank is still singing about relationships gone wrong, but he's almost entirely traded in the Ramonesian power chords for organ riffs and jangle-pop strumming. Hyperactively catchy songs like "We're Not No One" and "We'll Get By" simultaneously invoke the synth-heavy songwriting of Attractions-era Elvis Costello and the vocal stylings of early

Joe Jackson, with all the clever vitriol made famous by both of those artists. When he's not bemoaning his sad love life, he's critically parodying the lives of others, including music critics (with their self-importance, free CDs, and needlessly wordy vocabularies) and beauty-myth author Naomi Wolf (and her "Wonderbra world of Disney"). To his credit, Dr. Frank—fresh from having released his first solo album earlier this year—is finally singing instead of sputtering his lyrics, and he's slowed down the tempo enough for listeners to hear just how beautiful his melodies can be. It may be far too overproduced and self-consciously melodramatic for old-school MTX fans, but frankly, it's a refreshing relief, even if the band is just borrowing from a different songbook.

>>>James Oliver Cury

OUT:
September 14.

FILE UNDER:
New wave for lovelorn intellectuals.

R.I.Y.L.:
Green Day, early Joe Jackson, Figgs, Smash Mouth.

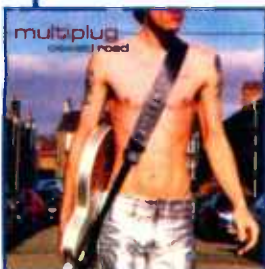
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MULTIPLUG

Oswald Road

A&M

Multiplug frontman Vincent Rocco has one foot firmly planted on each side of the Atlantic. He spent his first nine years in rural Scotland and the last ten in Los Angeles, which helps explain why his music comes across as Britpop with a shot of American adrenaline and a hint of left coast studio sheen. It's less clear how his intervening eight years outside Johannesburg figure into the equation, other than to reconcile Rocco's clearly-British-colony-but-not-quite-Scottish accent. *Oswald Road* efficiently delivers ten tunes in less than 34 minutes, front-

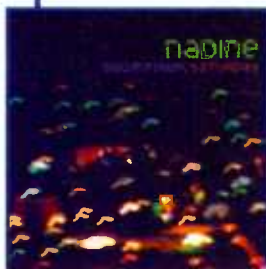
loading the glam-tinged rave-ups before retrenching into high gloss singer/songwriter territory. This second batch seems primed for soundtrack placement backing the cathartic moment of a teen romance. Several of Multiplug's tracks sport a smooth melodic sensibility and a non-threatening brand of aggression that mesh well with modern rock radio airplay. Unfortunately, they're the radio tracks that pass by pleasantly enough without making a real impression. Rocco has an undeniable melodic talent that may find an audience, but on *Oswald Road* Multiplug is stranded midway between the rocking world of its bare-chested, tattooed cover star and an unabashed commercial run at the Bryan Adams audience.

>>>Glen Sarvady

OUT:
August 10.

FILE UNDER:
Radio-ready, Americanized Britpop.

R.I.Y.L.:
Wonder Stuff, Live, Jesus Jones, Mott The Hoople.



NADINE

Downtown, Saturday

Undertow

Glance at the song titles on Nadine's second album—"Closer," "Twilight," "So That I Don't Miss You"—and you pretty much know what to expect: an album of earnest, technically decent country-rock made by a bunch of mopey Midwesterners. *Downtown, Saturday* doesn't disappoint, and it doesn't stray very far from expectations. Lead singer Adam Reichmann wears his influences on his sleeve, alternating between Tom Petty and Neil Young imitations, stretching his voice around syllables and warbling at all the right notes. (Indeed, if

you squint your ears just right, "Out On A Limb" sounds like the poor cousin of "Long May You Run." I was surprised Young didn't get co-songwriting credit.) Still, even if Nadine isn't offering a whole lot that's new, the band does have its appeal. "Shelter" is a loping, drunken waltz that overcomes its lyrical clichés. The piano-led "The Lines Are Down" is the kind of fatalistic number that just begs for a beer to cry in. And the insistent beat of "Leona" sounds like it could have come off a Counting Crows outtakes session, and I mean that in a good way. If you're looking for a dose of originality, best look elsewhere. But if you're in the mood for a handful of pretty, pretty decent alt-country numbers not written by Jeff Tweedy, Nadine just may have your number.

>>>Seth Mnookin

OUT:
July 27.

FILE UNDER:
No Depression rock & twang.

R.I.Y.L.:
Wilco, Whiskeytown, Vic Chesnutt.

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World Radio History

OCTANT
Shock-No-Par

Up

Like several of his Pacific Northwest brethren, Matt Steinke obliterates the stereotype of the slacker indie artist, having worked simultaneously in at least two bands for the past several years. Now that Satisfact has been put to bed, Steinke can narrow his focus to Mocket and Octant, the ambitious multimedia project he built from scratch—literally. Octant's distinguishing trait is that Steinke created robots to play the percussion and noise parts while he overlays keyboards and vocals. Tassany Zimmerman, the other human participant, contributes backing

vocals and operates the Macintosh that sets the robots into motion. For such a high-minded concept, Octant's sound is surprisingly approachable—a vague hybrid of Krautrock and android new wave bolted onto an insistent, danceable backbeat. The churning musical effect is akin to deranged carnival music and the keyboard/drum attack conjures images of Quasi, albeit without the sardonic lyrical wit and some of the melodic spark. *Shock-No-Par* clocks in at a paltry 25 minutes, but also includes two of Steinke's stop-motion animated videos set to the band's music (vinyl aficionados forego the videos but gain two additional tunes as solace). I would go out of my way to see a live Octant performance, but I suspect that *Shock-No-Par* sacrifices a bit too much without its visual, interactive component. >>>Glen Sarvady



OUT:

August 10.

FILE UNDER:

Aural science projects.

R.I.Y.L.:

Mocket, Quasi, Devo, Kraftwerk.

ORANGER

Doorwar To Norway **Amazing Grease**



OUT:

September 21.

FILE UNDER:

Sunshiny grunge pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Foo Fighters, Sugar, Flaming Lips.

You probably know they've invented machines that make it possible for you to step up to a kiosk and download any song onto a CD. Well, they've also created a computer that allows you to morph the best elements of your favorite artists into new music. No, I don't mean just splicing samples together, but actually creating new songs with artificial intelligence. What's my proof? The new album from Oranger. (Actually, it was released on the band's label last year and is now being re-released on Amazing Grease, run by Pavement's Scott Kannberg.) Obviously,

someone clicked on the presets for "angelic Beach Boys harmonies," "Keith Moon splatter drumming," "driving, post-punk bass" and "chunky, Pete Townshend guitar buildups." What does it sound like? Well, that's the scary part. It's surprisingly good. Nothing too inventive, mind you. The leads aren't very intricate. Still, the melodies get into your ears and build little pods in your brain. (The press about Oranger says it's a trio with two former members of Overwhelming Colorfast—bassist Mike Drake and guitarist Matt Harris—don't you believe it.) Beware, the forces of evil are also using this technology. Someone has mixed ingredients of the Beastie Boys with bits of Def Leppard and is making millions off the computer-generated music. I can't say who it is, but trust me, you know them. >>>Neil Gladstone



P.J. OLSSON

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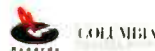
- Boston Phoenix

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**OUT:**

August 30.

FILE UNDER:

Mopey anthems.

R.I.Y.L.:

Seam, Idaho, Neil Young.

JOEL R.L. PHELPS**Blackbird**

PacifiCo

In his days since leaving Silkworm, Joel R.L. Phelps seemed to be on a downward trajectory, steadily moving away from large-scale rawk towards quiet and glum country-inflected mope-rock (it was no coincidence he called his backing band the Downer Trio). So *Blackbird* seems an abrupt about-face, perhaps the product of a big infusion of coffee, what with the steel guitar pushed off to the side and the amps plugged back in with a vengeance. But it's really the best of both worlds: *Blackbird* combines some of Silkworm's

anthemic leanings and skill with dynamics, with the minor-key darkness and lyrical pathos of his previous solo material. The best songs, like "If You're Tired of Living" and "Blessed Salt Lake," in fact combine both elements, erupting out of their pleasantly drowsy vibes into clanging crescendos. Phelps's voice is tremulous and he reaches a little too far with it on some of the more emotive tracks, but the strangled-sounding vocals still seem at home next to the ragged guitar riffs. But more importantly, *Blackbird* sees Phelps taking a big creative leap. He'd previously demonstrated his adeptness at fusing downbeat country with folky rock, but now he has injected an exciting jolt of energy into his sound.

>>>David Jarman

**OUT:**

September 14.

FILE UNDER:

Aging punk testaments.

R.I.Y.L.:

Lou Reed, David Bowie, Leonard Cohen, Patti Smith.

IGGY POP ★**Avenue B**

Virgin

Now that he's in his fifties, Iggy Pop feels old and lonely. He begins *Avenue B* with "No Shit," a spoken word piece explaining that he now wants "to find a balance between joy and dignity," and that "above all" he doesn't "want to take any more shit, not from anybody." After 30 years as a punk provocateur, Iggy wouldn't seem to be one who cared much about shit from anyone, and in the past, that proclamation might have been a prologue to bracingly abusive metallic guitar anthems—but not this time. *Avenue B* is too dignified for that:

Dominated by slow, tense ballads and Iggy's deep croon, and assisted by Don Was's uncluttered production, it's not the Iggy you expect. It's akin to the contemplative Lou Reed of *Berlin* or *Magic And Loss*. On songs like the title track (one of three recorded with Medeski, Martin And Wood), "Long Distance" and "Facade," we glimpse the James Osterberg behind the Iggy Pop pseudonym, and the sincerity works better than do the few misguided rockers (the superfluous cover of "Shakin' All Over," "Ya Yo Habla Espanol"'s exercise in vowel movements). While Iggy's sexual obsessions can be less inclusive than Reed's social ones, *Avenue B* presents a surprisingly mature and sensitive testament from a punk icon. No shit.

>>>Steve Klinger

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reviews

Quasi



OUT:

September 7

FILE UNDER:

Pretty songs for grumpy people.

R.I.Y.L.:

Built To Spill, Badfinger, Wings,
Heatmiser.

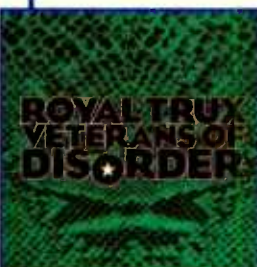
QUASI

Field Studies

Up

Both Sam Coomes and his erstwhile bandmate, Elliott Smith, are in love with the tenets of classic pop songwriting: major/minor chord shifts, precise harmonies, and catchy vocal lines. But while Smith has found a way to take such shtick public, Coomes and his band Quasi play mostly for the type of folk who nod appreciatively to couplets like "I went and sold my soul/So I could pay my rent/I waited by the mail/But the check was never sent." So while the group's semi-official role as Smith's backing band and drummer Janet Weiss's gig as

skinsperson for Sleater-Kinney have kept Quasi's name in print, it's been languishing in the nether world between side project and "real band" over the course of its three previous albums. That should change with *Field Studies*, on which Coomes's songwriting trumps all image problems. The only problem is that Quasi makes it sound like it's easy to write great pop songs—if a keyboard-and-drum combo can hit such heights as this album's "The Star You Left Behind," why can't your average alternative act? The answer seems to be that Quasi, whose members are a little older than most of their peers, view the world with a knowing detachment. "I'm not going to give it up for free anymore," Coomes sings on "All The Same." He then proceeds to do just that over the course of the album. >>>Andrew Beaujon



OUT:

September 7

FILE UNDER:

Junkie blues.

R.I.Y.L.:

1970s Rolling Stones, Jon Spencer
Blues Explosion, Demolition Doll Rods.

ROYAL TRUX

Veterans Of Disorder

Drag City

Two words sum up Royal Trux's decade-long recording career: bullshit and style. Bullshit because the band masks its honest appreciation for boogie rock under specious theories even they don't believe. Guitarist Neil Hagerty claims the band plays "harmolodic rock and roll" inspired by Ornette Coleman, and the Trux are still trying to convince listeners that their last three records were a trilogy encapsulating the sonic tropes of the '60s, '70s, and '80s. Style because the packaging of the band's road act and its records has consistently been junkie-blues beautiful. Vocalist

Jennifer Herzema even made it into a Calvin Klein ad at the height of heroin chic, a look which they continue to run with, although the real damage was evidently done quite a while ago. *Veterans Of Disorder*, the band's eighth album, encapsulates the band's career in meta-rock. Most of the first eight tracks clock in under the three minute mark, each one a blast of post-Glimmer Twin chooglin' hanging on anthemic chants and as clearly articulated as anything in this duo's discography. The next two explore the opiate ramble of their unfathomable double record, *Twin Infinities*, with flutes and whistles cutting through the fog. And the last track, "Blue Is The Frequency" allows Hagerty to show his true colors with an extended seven-minute guitar solo that wouldn't sound out of place on a record of real classic rock. >>>Alec Hanley Bemis



OUT:
September 7.

FILE UNDER:
Grammy/jazzy spoken word.

R.I.Y.L.:
Gil Scott-Heron, Last Poets, Erykah Badu, Roots.

CARL HANCOCK RUX

Rux Revue

550 Music

The debut from Harlem-bred poet, writer and spoken-word conjurer Carl Hancock Rux isn't your average album. It's a daring, personal glimpse into his heart and mind, where one can hear the music, thoughts, joy, pain, anger and love that floats around inside. At times the voyeurism can be too much—there are things said, as seen with first-person tales told on "Miguel" (about a childhood partner in artistic crime) and "Blue Candy" (about a four-year-old Rux witnessing his grandmother's death) which are too self-referential and personal for public consumption. There's nothing

obscene or unholy about them; they're just uninteresting unless they happened to you. Backed by alternating strains of airy jazz-funk, psychedelic soul and raw blues played by a crew including keyboardist Money Mark, legendary bassist Carol Kaye and jazz-funk guitar guru Wah Wah Watson, Rux bares his soul to the world, coating his tales with enough abstract syntax to keep the casual listener at arm's length while rewarding intellectually discursive analysis. He's a compelling, captivating storyteller with a booming voice and style that recalls artistic forefathers Gil Scott-Heron and the Last Poets' Abiodun Oyewole. "Wasted Seed," "Gut Bucket Blues" and the sage and intriguing "No Black Male Show" are all fully engaging, and mark Rux as a talent to watch.

>>>Briam Coleman



OUT:
September 7.

FILE UNDER:
Tortured adult pop.

R.I.Y.L.:
The La's, Beautiful South, Frank And Walters.

SHACK

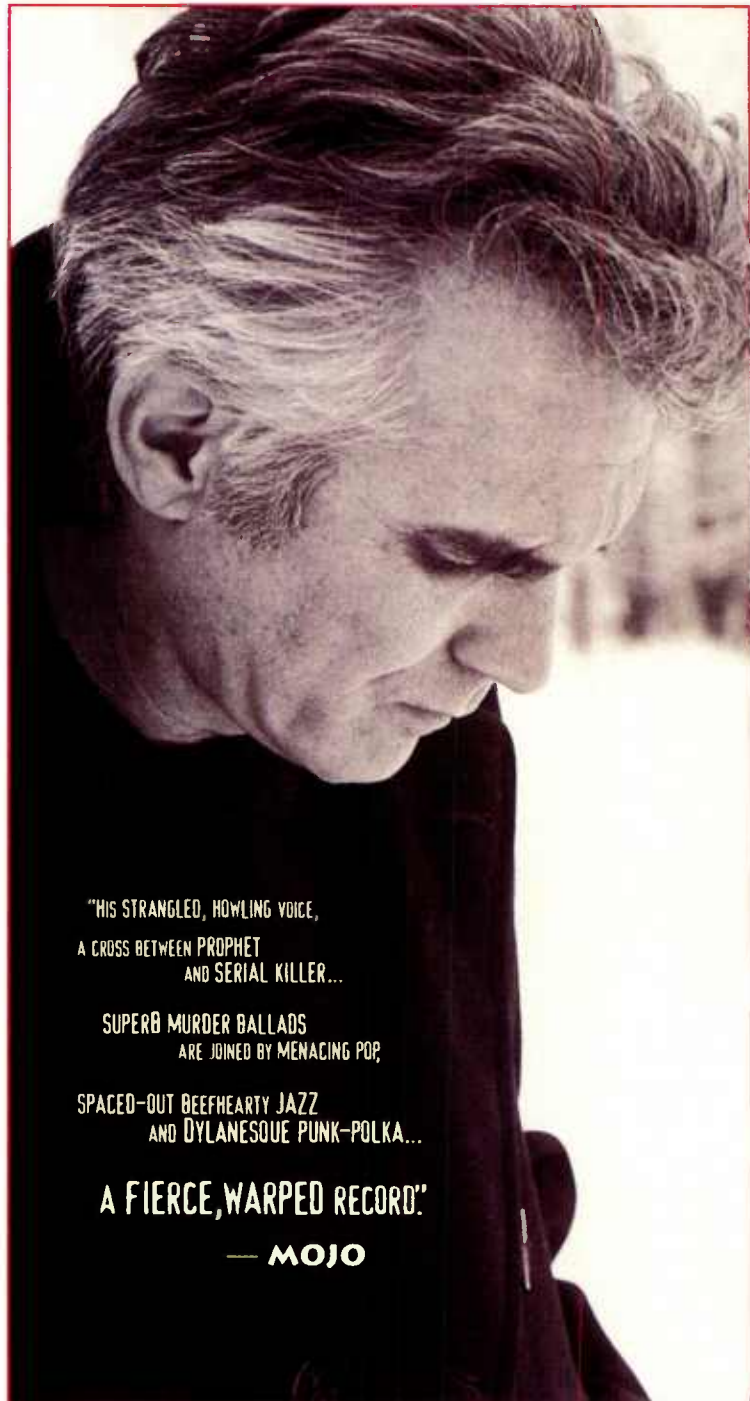
HMS Fable

London

It is arguable that Shack's recent critical success in England owes as much to the band members' tortured history as it does to its new album. From its roots in Toxteth, a notorious Liverpool project, Shack's past includes a long forgotten early incarnation, the Pale Fountains, whose out-of-print albums can now safely be labeled "lost classics," and years of promise surrendered to drug-addiction, terminal illness, sibling rivalry, burnt studios, misplaced master-tapes, and label intrusion. All of which could easily overshadow any album. Underneath all

the drama is *HMS Fable*, Shack's third album of timeless, or at least out-of-time pop songs, for this certainly sounds like a record made by a band that spent most of the '90s unconscious. Musically reminiscent of The La's and Crowded House and lyrically akin to the Beautiful South, Shack crafts songs filled with three-part harmonies, layered hooks, swelling choruses and bitter stories of addiction and thwarted love. In fact, "Lend Some Dough" is the type of song many Beautiful South fans wish Paul Headon would still write. Thrown into the mix is a healthy dose of '60s West Coast psychedelia: "Captain's Table" wouldn't sound out of place on the Byrds' *5D*, while album closer "Daniella" is textbook Love. At its best, Shack has written an album that reminds one of the simple joys of a hook and a melody.

>>>Adam Silverman



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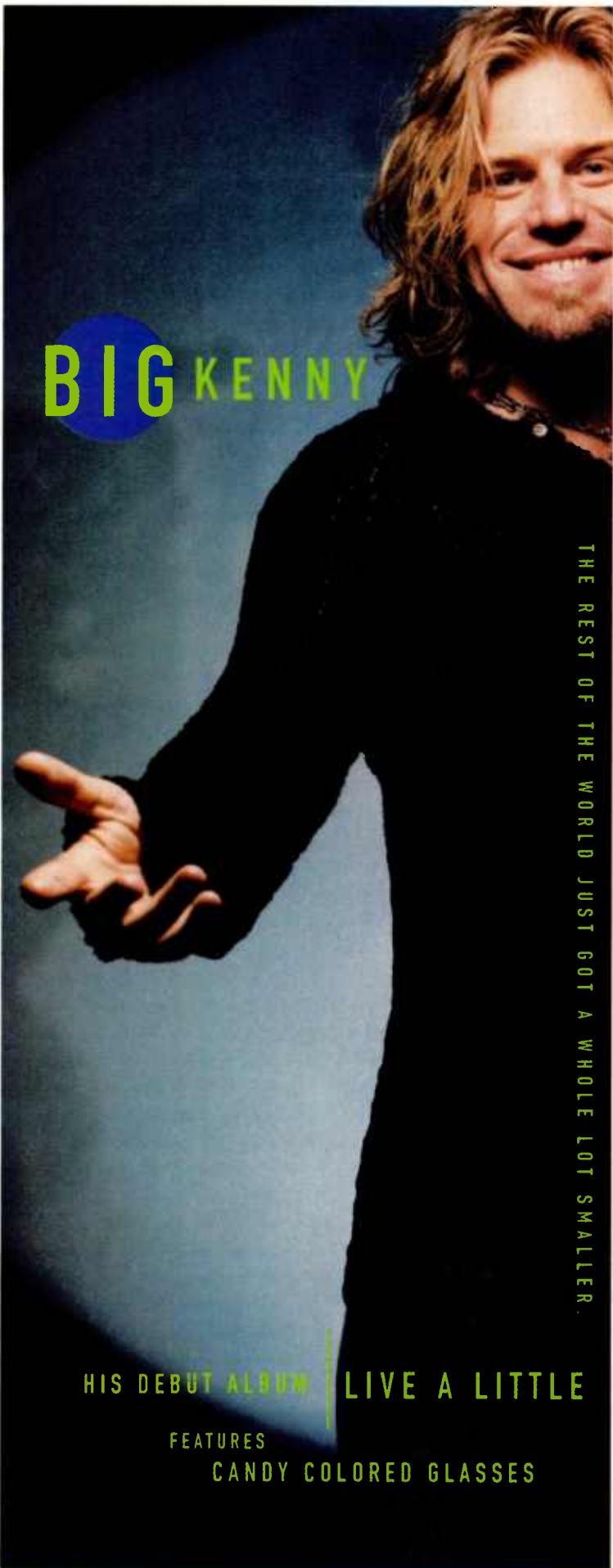
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LUKE SLATER
WIRELESS
OUT:
September 21.
FILE UNDER:
Electro-funk.
R.I.Y.L.:
Early Nitzer Ebb, Kraftwerk, Afrika Bambaataa.

LUKE SLATER
Wireless

NovaMute

Clementine and 7th Plain are just two of the many aliases assumed by techno producer Luke Slater, who's a veteran of the UK circuit. Over the past seven years he's recorded tracks for nearly every important electronic label. Since inking a deal with NovaMute a couple of years ago, he's released consistently good records, though not necessarily his best work. On *Wireless*, he shifts direction entirely, producing his magnum opus, a record whose energy comes from mysterious sources. *Wireless* is a caustic, post-industrial, electro-funk disciplinary

session from someone who's been through the trenches of analog warfare and survived intact. If industrial music is on a life support system, it could do worse than to turn to this record for some moral and aural support. In case you thought Slater wasn't enamored of hip-hop, the opening "In The Pocket" eviscerates a famous Cerrone live sample, used by everyone from Rakim to Mobb Deep. This is immediately followed by the over-tweaked "Sum Tom Tin," which sounds like CJ Bolland recording with Nitzer Ebb and Newcleus circa 1984. Liberal use of the vocoder only strengthens the album's electro textures, particularly on "Body Freefall, Electronic Inform," which opens into a drum program that'll knock the wind out of the most die-hard industrialist.

>>>Tim Haslett



SLICK SIXTY
NIBS AND NABS
OUT:
September 7.
FILE UNDER:
Funky cutting-and-pasting.
R.I.Y.L.:
Thievery Corporation, DJ Vadim, Primal Scream.

SLICK SIXTY
Nibs And Nabs

Mute

Ask one of electronic dance music's many detractors what they find objectionable about it, and most likely you'll hear words like "sterile," "soulless," "cold." It's a fair enough critique, especially considering that much of electronica emanates from the British and Germans—nationalities known to the American imagination more for their brooding than for their booty-shaking aptitudes. Slick Sixty's first album, *Nibs And Nabs*, may not convert the skeptical, but it's nice to be able to offer as a counterexample, showing that some members of the genre (hailing from the UK,

no less) haven't forgotten the funk. Slick Sixty merges its up-tempo big beat sensibilities with a good-vibey turntablist bricolage, slapping together a slew of ideas left over from the '70s and '80s, borrowing from old-school hip-hop and acid-jazz. *Nibs And Nabs* is a collection of Slick Sixty's singles from its first two years of existence. Some of the tracks opt for a more laid-back, vaguely psychedelic lounge-funk approach, but tracks like "The Wrestler" throw everything but the kitchen sink on top of propulsive grooves: Brass samples, raga elements, dated-sounding Moogs and kitschy Vocoder treatments bump into each other in a cross-genre romp. The cheese factor is high throughout, but Slick Sixty applies it with wit and a knowing wink.

>>>David Jarman



SOLEX



PICK UP

OUT:

September 14.

FILE UNDER:

Dutch courage.

R.I.Y.L.:

Komeda, Pizzicato Five, Land Of The Loops.

SOLEX

Pick Up

Matador

High school crushes are always described as innocent and sweet, but in truth they're awkward, filled with stammered dialogue and would-be witticisms that never flow as smoothly as planned. Solex's Elisabeth Esselink probably didn't have such interactions in mind when she titled her second disc *Pick Up*. But the rapid jump-cuts and clipped phrases of her new songs reflect the jittery feeling of a charged encounter, often leaving one with the same exhilaration that comes with youthful rejection or acceptance. A better defined album than her debut, *Pick Up* is

best joined in progress. Halfway through, on the fittingly titled "Superfluity," Solex's samples collide and bounce around like paramecia in a petri dish; Esselink's voice cascades and coos over an evolving palette of guitar, horn, xylophone, drum and synthesized sounds. The first part of the album sets the eccentric but well-practiced tone, with a brilliantly whimsical faux-bossa nova, "That's What You Get With People Like That On Cruises Like These." But the payoff comes later, when Esselink combines piano, percussion and surging horn sounds to spin a postmodern lullaby on "Chris The Birthday Boy," and when she conjures a Breeders-like guitar hook in the bounding "Athens, Oh." By album's end, she sounds as assured in the electronic environment as Björk. Solex is ready to be asked to the prom. >>>Richard Martin

SOUVENIRS

King Of Heartache

Will



OUT:

September 7.

FILE UNDER:

Western beat.

R.I.Y.L.:

Buck Owens, Blasters, Los Lobos, Derailers.

Some styles seem eternal, and provide a timeless structure on which inspired artists can neatly place their fingerprints. The Bakersfield sound of Buck Owens and Merle Haggard is one such style. Over the years everyone from Dwight Yoakam to the Rolling Stones to Los Lobos to Gram Parsons and Uncle Tupelo have adapted the classic electric twang, and all of them have come out sounding like magic. Seattle's Souvenirs harness the sound on *King Of Heartache*, their debut, and approach the twang with a straight face that honors country

music without lapsing into kitsch, as many of the Western beat bands are doing these days. Vocalist Lucky Lawrence—can you think of a better country singer name?—has the brushed-chrome tone of David Hidalgo, with loads of floating texture and attitude; it's a beautiful, dramatic voice, one that shines brighter with each listen. The most impressive aspect of the album, though, is that the reverence the Souvenirs so obviously feel for the music doesn't set their sound in retro-concrete; they're not afraid to distort the guitars when necessary, and pedal steel player Don Pawlack treats his instrument with an aggressiveness that never betrays the instrument's tradition. In all, a marvelous country record.

>>>Randall Roberts

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reviews



THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

Long Tall Weekend

Emusic.com

OUT:

August 10.

FILE UNDER:

Revenge of the nerds

R.I.Y.L.:

Barenaked Ladies, G-rated Ween, Weezer.

"Dark And Metric" all said hello to the world via Dial-A-Song; other numbers, like "Certain People" and "They Got Lost," were written in the *Factory Showcase*-era. Despite the scattered source material, *Long Tall Weekend* is a remarkably coherent album. Recorded with a full band (a technique the Giants only started using in 1994), this album highlights the instrumental virtuosity the group has always hinted at without sacrificing any of the loopy wordplay or absurdist humor that have made the Giants heroes to a generation of college geeks. There are highlights—like the swank chicness of "Reprehensible" with full horn section, the Hammond-fueled delights of "Operators Are Standing By" and the fiddle-stomping chicanery of "Counterfeit Faker"—but there are no weak points.

>>>Seth Mnookin



TRAILER BRIDE

Whine De Lune

Bloodshot

OUT:

August 10.

FILE UNDER:

Twangy alt-country.

R.I.Y.L.:

Tarnation, Handsome Family, Freakwater.

Smooth and lazy though *Whine De Lune* may be, this third album from Chapel Hill, North Carolina's Trailer Bride leaves no doubt that Melissa Swingle could dismantle anyone with a sideways glance. Wielding a sultry, country-perfect voice, a slide guitar, a steely spirit and a bleeding heart, Swingle's songwriting swirls about you with abandon. Lush with the nuts and bolts of country—twang, heartache, honky-tonk, harmonica, good storytelling and a restless soul—Trailer Bride doesn't shy away from its broad capabilities, including its capacity to rock out. There's an overall spaciousness to the sound of *Whine De Lune*—a pristine sound to the recording that really pushes the (already excellent) songwriting to the next level. Simple and skillful, songs like "Felt Like A Sin" and "Dirt Nap" are difficult to wrench from one's head even days later. "Sapphire Jewel" sounds bizarrely like what would happen if Helium wrote a country song. A thoroughly capable, tight ensemble, Trailer Bride can perhaps only be faulted for producing music that's at times so easy and so light that it wafts right by. At best, the band has a prickly grip on all the twilight-lit, highway-driving, kitchen boredom, sultry summer malaise you can drink.

>>>Liz Clayton

UNIT**The Narcoleptic Symphony** Caipirinha

Lots of electronica offers a taste of the epic. In the austerity of simple, reverberating chord progressions or slow and sonorous beats, a track might project dramatic tension or even strong emotion. Pretty soon, though, the rhythm picks up, the DJ starts riffing and embellishing, a reference or two is thrown out, and one is reminded that any associations between digital music and stories of utopia (or dystopia) should by now be considered ironic. On Unit's debut album, that moment strangely fails to happen. He proceeds as if science fiction were true

and as if "real" instruments didn't exist, arranging unambiguously machine-made sounds into adagios and andantes, with the occasional allegro of jungle beats. Occasionally, as on "Haldol (Panacea Mix)," the result suggests a more alienated Jan Hammer, but mostly the gambit works. The two tracks that make up the "Sleep Sequence" could be an alternative soundtrack for the last part of Kubrick's *2001*. They are quiet but sinister compositions, with tiny, animal-like sounds mixed on top of low rumbles and tones like the exhalations of stars. Despite track titles like "Blue/Grey Wallpaper" and "No, I'm Just Bored So I Was Looking At Your Vitamins (Drugstore Jerk)," *Narcoleptic Symphony* is music for virtual kabuki, or maybe the next R-rated video game.

>>>Andrea Moed

OUT:

July 20.

FILE UNDER:Techno that uses *The Force*.**R.I.Y.L.:**

Photek, Third Eye Foundation, Funkstorung.

URSULA 1000**The Now Sound Of Ursula 1000****Eighteenth Street Lounge**

Don't be surprised if the next Gap commercial you see uses Ursula 1000 as its soundtrack. Imagine a team of space age scenesters in horn-rimmed glasses and hip-hugging khakis swiveling to a hybrid of Las Vegas bossa nova and Miami drum 'n' bass. In many ways, Ursula 1000 sounds like it could have been conjured up by a Madison Avenue think tank trying a little too hard to capture the zeitgeist of today. For starters, an overused title like *The Now Sound* should be reserved for compilation records sold

on cable between the hours of 2 and 5 a.m. As for the music, well, if Ursula 1000's album had arrived three years ago, it might have been refreshing fun. The bouncy horns, soul-jazz bass lines and shoulder shaking breakbeats fall together superbly. For those who have never heard Fantastic Plastic Machine, Pizzicato Five or any other Shibuya-kei artist, Ursula 1000 may be a wonderful introduction to that interstellar go-go where the '60s and '90s meet in a cascade of gentle vibraphone, dewy organ and phat beats. Given how many DJs and producers have used similar elements with much more astounding results, however, Ursula just comes off as very fine filler, good enough to keep you boppin' during the breaks in your favorite Gen-X sitcom, but certainly not the first thing you should run out and buy.

>>>Neil Gladstone

**OUT:**

July 20.

FILE UNDER:

Drum 'n' bachelor pad.

R.I.Y.L.:

Fantastic Plastic Machine, Pizzicato Five, Cornelius.

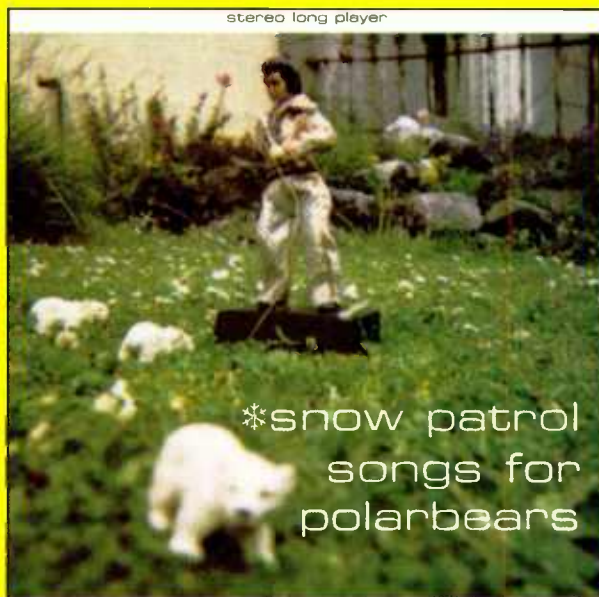
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MIKE VIOLA AND THE CANDY BUTCHERS



MIKE VIOLA AND THE CANDY BUTCHERS

Falling Into Place

RPM-Columbia

OUT:

August 31

FILE UNDER:

Pretty fly for skinny ties.

R.I.Y.L.:

Graham Parker, Fountains Of Wayne, Matthew Sweet.

If you've ever set foot into any of New York City's famed rock clubs, you know that they're not exactly the places to sport your best suit and tie. Credit Mike Viola and his Candy Butchers then for adding a little class to such dives; the band has added sharp dressing to its attack of punchy post-Beatles pop. Closing credit watchers will note Viola's involvement in the pre-fab band flick *That Thing You Do*, but the thrust of the Candy Butchers, while catchy and precise, is rarely so sickly sweet or

empty-headed. The hard, cynical edge of new wave cuts into Viola's best songs, allowing him to make the most of his raspy, smart-ass voice, sounding like Graham Parker with better range. When the band pulls back from its nervy rock, Viola pens a pretty ballad, but as melodically rich as tunes such as "Give Me Some Time" are, the efforts are often mildly disappointing as Viola's pointed sneer fades away. The mellow approach and the string arrangements only make the simple lyrics sound cornier, as if the song were tailor-made for the soundtrack to some Julia Roberts date movie. It also doesn't help that Viola's rasp leans more towards Bryan Adams than Parker on the more tender tracks, as well.

>>>Steve Ciabattoni



WHEAT

Hope And Adams

Sugar Free

OUT:

September 28

FILE UNDER:

Melancholy indie pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Creepers Lagoon, Wilco, Acetone, Elliott Smith.

Adding to the allure of Wheat's stunning 1997 debut album *Medeiros* was the fact that the band was seemingly coming out of nowhere, letting its biography remain a mystery while the music spoke for itself. Even though we now know that Wheat is a group of college pals from Massachusetts, the music is still as attention grabbing. *Hope And Adams'* melancholic folksy pop picks up where *Medeiros* left off, throwing in a few interesting twists—more keyboard drones, spacey atmospherics and noisy samples. Producer Dave Fridmann (Mercury Rev) even cleans up their lo-fi

sound significantly on a few songs, particularly "Body Talk (Part Two)," with its moving combination of acoustic guitar and cello (plus a line nicked from Simon & Garfunkel's "Me And Julio Down By The Schoolyard"). With the exception of only a few tracks, Wheat's growing experimental tendencies don't obscure its uncanny knack for creating powerful melodies and crafting evocative lyrics ("You're asking me to climb down to your treehouse and dance upon the smallest limb"). Wheat can still be hard to peg—there's the elegant and mournful "Don't I Hold You" and, two songs later, the bizarre "San Diego," during which vocalist Scott Levesque yelps "your love is a parking zone" while an organ freaks out behind him. It seems that Wheat still wants to keep us guessing; it's worth it to keep listening until we figure them out.

>>>Wendy Mitchell

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mixed signals

by M. TYE COMER

In 1995, **DJ LARS** became one of the best known DJs in America, despite the fact that hardly anyone in the country had ever heard him spin. The German-born disc jockey was chosen as a cast member of MTV's *The Real World: London* not because of his deck skills, but because of his chiseled good looks and vibrant on-air personality. Although fans of the show knew DJ Lars by sight, they



never knew what or how well he actually played, since MTV overdubbed his underground house tracks with the latest mainstream dance anthem whenever the camera caught him behind the tables. Having practically slept with the enemy in the eyes of many underground purists, Lars found himself in a difficult position post-*Real World*: He'd gained recognition, but not necessarily respect amongst the DJ community. An

appointment as an official "Sm:)e DJ"—a collective of nationally regarded talents (including DJ Dan, Scott Henry, DJ DB, and Jason Jinx) assembled by New York City's Sm:)e Communications label—helped segue Lars's transition from the tube to the real world, and his first mix CD, **Sm:)e Mix Session 4 By DJ Lars** (Sm:)e) will only broaden his reputation as a skilled and respected club jockey. Featuring recent cuts and remixes from artists such as Blue Amazon, Speaker Phreakers, David Hollands and more, the set moves from thumping hard house to more progressive fare, recalling the grooves Lars has been known to ride in clubs the world over. The mix is further highlighted by his formidable deck skills, characterized by his long blending of tracks and intelligent track placement. Time will tell if Lars will ever completely shed his status as "the MTV DJ," but this release brings him one step closer to achieving notoriety for his talent and dedication to the art form...



Philadelphia-by-way-of-Pittsburgh DJ **DIESELBOY** continues to reign as the most popular and most talented drum 'n' bass jockey the US has to offer. Having embraced the genre since its early-'90s hardcore incarnations, Dieselboy earned his biggest accolade in 1998 when he tied with Britain's LTJ Bukem for the title of "Best Drum 'N' Bass DJ" at the Global DJ Mix Awards—a title for which no American DJ had ever been

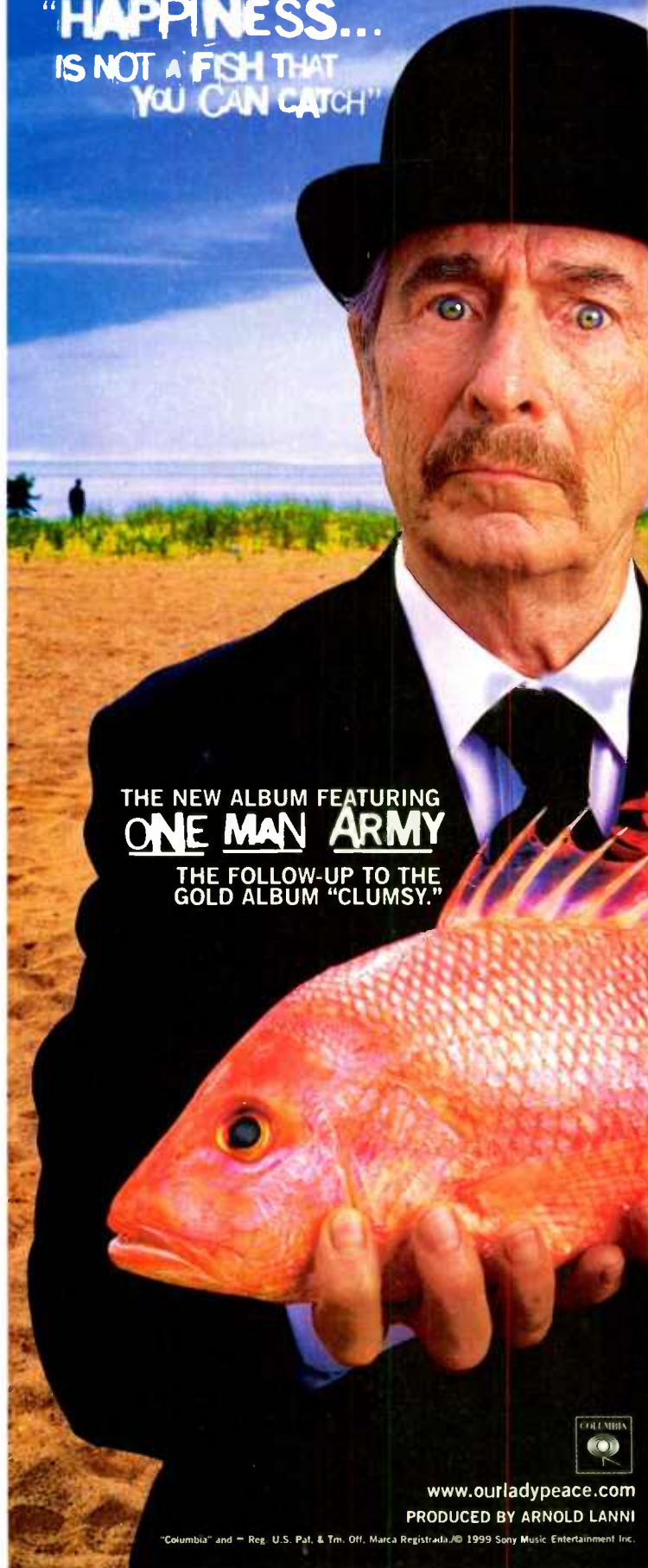
nominated. A string of underground mix tapes and commercial CDs has brought his hard, aggressive brand of mind-blurring drum 'n' bass to more curious ears, and his latest effort, **A Soldier's Story** (Moonshine) stands as his finest release to date. Where past CD-mixes seemed to round off his notably jagged edges, this mix is the truest representation of his deck potential. The complex arrangements and haunting sounds of cuts by Technical Itch, Decoder, Jonny L, Peshay and others provides the meat, but Dieselboy's incomparable mixing and manipulation of the vinyl is the most flavorful aspect of this 70-minute underground drum 'n' bass experience.

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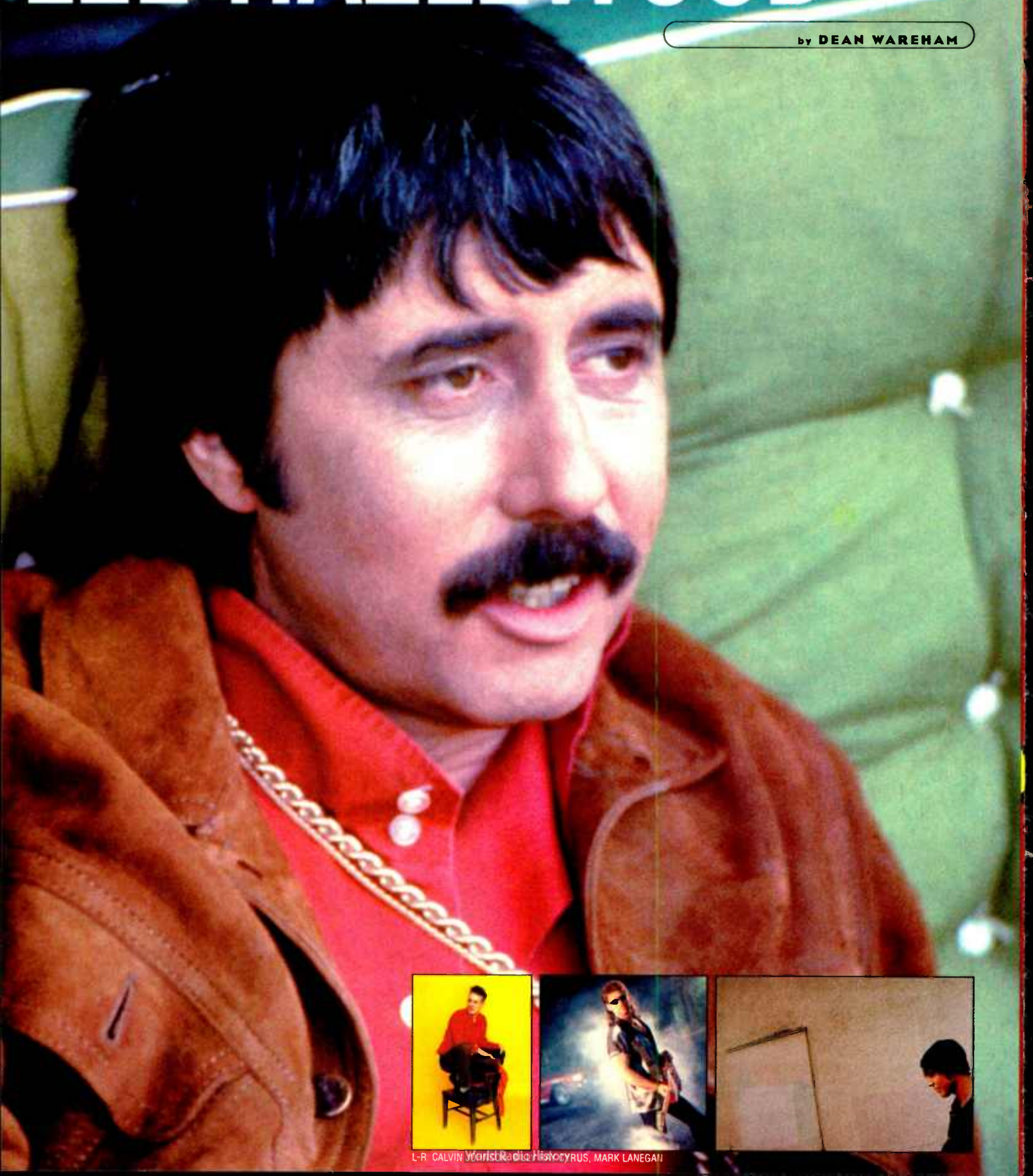


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LEE HAZLEWOOD

by DEAN WAREHAM



L-R CALVIN WARD, Radio History, CYRUS, MARK LANEGAN

I have a friend who works as an art-handler at the Museum of Modern Art. I made him cassettes of my Lee Hazlewood albums, and he got me into the museum for a private viewing of the Jackson Pollock show. "Jackson and Lee," my friend said, "two American originals."

Best known for his work with both Nancy Sinatra (he wrote and produced her biggest hits in the '60s) and Duane Eddy (whom Lee discovered and produced in the '50s), Lee is one of rock music's great pioneering producers. But he is also revered for a series of outstanding solo albums that he recorded in the '60s and '70s, LPs that are long out of print and fetch large sums of money.

Until recently the only official Lee CD available was Rhino's *Nancy And Lee: Fairytales And Fantasies*, which collects the duets the two sang together on Nancy's records. But now, after a spate of haphazard European bootlegs, six of Hazlewood's albums are being released on CD by Smells Like Records, the label run by Sonic Youth's Steve Shelley. Smells Like is also releasing a brand new collection of jazz standards recently recorded by Lee and his favorite guitarist Al Casey, along with a CD compilation of singles and oddities.

I had the privilege of spending an afternoon with Lee at his current home (he moves every year) in Orlando, Florida, drinking wine (his three-gallon jug of Chivas Regal was empty), and smoking a bunch of cigarettes. The lone gold record in evidence is the debut, 10 million-selling album by Billy Ray Cyrus, who covered "These Boots Are Made For Walking." "I used to have walls full of [gold records]," said Lee. "I gave 'em away to people who were thrilled, people who really believe they're solid gold... lawyers in Texas, druggists, just people. I had a place in Phoenix, where I put all the gold singles in the guest bathroom. When you turned the light on, it lit up gold. And people would come out of there with the business still in their hands, saying 'My God.'"

"*Trouble Is A Lonesome Town* [Lee's 1963 debut] is all fiction," says

"Nancy auditioned some really good singers—I can't tell you their names, but some of them were really good. But she had heard me, and she said, 'I'd rather do 'em with you.'"

Lee. "but written about people I remember as a child in Oklahoma and Texas, and then I let my imagination go wild. *NSVIP's* [1965] is the sequel, but it's more cartoonish. It is supposed to be a trilogy, but I never got to the third one."

Indeed, after his third record, *Friday's Child* (a song written for his father), and having already made his fortune as a producer, Lee abruptly retired from the music business.

"I quit for a while. All the English people got in the way. The top 20 was, what, 14 of 'em English. I saved my pennies, sat in my backyard, drank my scotch, watched the bugs swim in my pool, and said the hell with the world."

It was Lee's neighbor and fellow producer Jimmy Bowen who insisted that Lee come out of retirement to produce Nancy Sinatra. They had a string of hits together, most famously "These Boots Are Made For Walking." The duets are collected on *Nancy And Lee*, produced (and usually written) by Hazlewood, and arranged by Billy Strange. "*Nancy And Lee* is our accidental album. Most of the songs can be found on Nancy's albums. I wrote them for her and someone else to do. She auditioned some really good singers—I can't tell you their names, but some of them were really good. But she had heard me, and my bad guitar playing, and she said, 'I'd rather do 'em with you.' That's how my musical career was revived."

Lee acknowledges that the production on these recordings is beautiful (Lee's recording of "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling," for example, makes Phil Spector's version with the Righteous Brothers sound small). And he admits to being "a fair lyricist. My songs were kind of Cadillac lyrics with Model-T melodies... I've written some pretty songs." Songs like "For One Moment," "Your Sweet Love," "Summer Wine," and perhaps his finest moment, "Some Velvet Morning."

Lee's songs mix innocence and sex, humor and pain, bubble gum

and LSD. "The thing I got from him is it's okay to sing goofy and awkward things," says Mark Lanegan, vocalist of the Screaming Trees. "He seems very honest and swings wildly between the aggressive and the sentimental."

"It was nice being a songwriter," Lee reminisces. "I became a producer because no one would record my songs in the beginning. They were right not to." He humbly refers to himself as a "personality singer," but it is his voice that invests his own records with more emotional power than the versions he produced for others. Augmented by echo chamber and reverb ("you keep the presence on the voice, and you echo what comes after—no one takes the time to do that today"), Lee's voice comes at you like the voice of God. "He's a great singer," says Lee's longtime guitarist Al Casey. "Like Frank Sinatra, he makes you listen to the lyrics of the song."

"My writing style is heavily influenced by Lee," says Beat Happening's Calvin Johnson. "His corny sense of humor... He made it okay for me to be me."

The hits kept coming for Nancy and Lee, and Lee recorded a batch of outstanding solo albums, including my own personal favorite, *Love And Other Crimes*, recorded in Paris in 1968, and featuring guitar legend James Burton.

Lee's next album was 1969's *The Cowboy And The Lady*, featuring Lee and Ann Margaret. The original gatefold sleeve opens to reveal the pair naked, save for a gun belt and an umbrella. "What you see there is exactly what we were wearing. I love Ann Margaret to death. She was so easy to work with. I see Ann once in a while. She's something special, left Sweden when she was about four, so her Swedish is as bad as mine. I speak it like a three year old."

Lee up and moved to Sweden in 1970, and spent the better part of five years there, though he frequently returned to the States.

In 1970 he made the excellent *Cowboy In Sweden*, and in 1971 the harrowing but humorous *Requiem For An Almost Lady*. "There's a lady who thinks this is written about her, but it's really written about three different ladies. She imagined it was about her, and told some reporter, but it was never written about just one person." Songs are interspersed with brief monologues to great effect, weaving a tale of love ascending and love lost. I remind Lee of my favorite passage: And you wake up one morning and say, 'I feel good, I can live without her,' and you soon learn—that time will come, but it wasn't that day.

"Well we've all had that happen... Actually I don't think I've ever had that happen... I can have my heart broken, and stomped on..."

"Yeah, but it only lasts about half an hour," interjects Lee's partner Jeanne.

Lee and Nancy reunited for a short tour in 1995, and Lee began to get an inkling of the cult that had developed for his work. "I met young kids, 19 and 20 years old, who know my songs better than I do. They knew the obscure things. They'd ask, 'Why didn't you do this song?' I'd say, 'How the fuck do you know that song?' And that's when I decided, maybe some of these old songs are worth more than I thought they were. I always liked 'em. Not the hits, sure you like the hits, they let your children go to good universities, and they dress okay, and they grow up not to be in prison, and your son's not sellin' dope and your daughter's not walking the streets... These obscure songs I liked a lot, and no one paid much attention to them. Now suddenly people are paying attention, and I think that's a gift, a gift from the spirit. It comes at a time in my life... I don't need a kick or anything, but it makes you happy to see people my grandson's age who like these songs. That has given me something I don't have."

MMM

Dean Wareham plays in the band Luna.

GROOVE LIKE A SPIDER **SPIDER**-MAN

by **KARL HEITMUELLER**

In the latter half of 1972, my third grade teacher passed around a bizarre questionnaire that asked, "Why do you love your parents?" My answer—"Because they buy me comic books"—horrified my teacher, but made perfect sense to me. At that point in my life (and for many years after), my life revolved around comic books.

That same year, I got my first rock 'n' roll record. Kind of. Buddah (sic) Records released *Spider-Man: From Beyond The Grave*, which was listed as "the first in a series of 'Rockcomics.'" It was also the last, but it had a lasting impact on me.

In the story, the 300-lb head of the Magia crime syndicate, the Kingpin, has kidnapped *Daily Bugle* photographer Peter Parker's Aunt May, and threatens to kill her unless Peter "shoots" Spider-Man with a "special camera" that will kill the hero.

Of course, the irony here is that Parker is Spider-Man. So Spidey (voiced by the unsuperheroic actor Rene Auberjonois) debates whether to give up fightin' crime or let Aunt May die (I know she got on my nerves, and maybe her cooking was lousy). Finally, though ripped with angst (perpetually), he realizes, "I can't quit! Sane, Insane, Loved, Hated...it doesn't matter! A MAN might quit...but Spider-Man is MORE than a man!"

I think we've all felt that way from time to time.

The story was punctuated with four songs (and a little bit of "Rock Of Ages" at the end of side one). The wah-wah-fueled Spider-Man Theme actually referred to our hero as a "sex machine who makes all the little girls cry." Other songs included the bubble gum ballad "It's Such A Groove To Be Free" and the Dixieland-tinged team-up battle cry "Goin' Cross Town," which declared, "We got the pow and we got the bam, it's time to get together and stand up to the man!"

I remember feeling very cool that I owned a rock album, and I made a point of playing it for the older neighbor kids to show that I, too, liked the rock 'n' roll. I also remember that they were distinctly unimpressed.

So Spidey teams up with Dr. Strange (Master of the Mystic Arts) to battle the Kingpin. When they find his hideout beneath Times Square, Kingpin spews the hoary villainous chestnut, "So, Spider-Man, we meet again!" Spider-Man's response, however, is a bit of classic dialogue that would make David Mamet proud: "Can the Small Talk, Fat Man, and let's GET IT ON!" Fisticuffs ensue and Spidey's about to lose until Dr. Strange intervenes and, in a scene the comics code authority would probably not have approved, casts a spell that

seemingly sends the Kingpin to HELL in a swirl of fire and brimstone!

The artwork was a gatefold sleeve with comic illustrations. At one point, I decided the art would make great trading cards, so I cut the cover into pieces, leaving the record sleeveless. The poster that came with the record moved from spot to spot on my wall until it disintegrated.

Four years later, America was celebrating its Bicentennial and while I was listening to Top 40 radio by that time, comics were still my consuming passion. So when Lifesong Records put out *Spider-Man: Rock Reflections Of A Superhero*, I begged my parents (whom I still loved because they still bought me comic books) to shell out the five bucks for a copy.

More music than story this time, *Rock Reflections* was narrated by Marvel Comics' Stan Lee in his stuffed-nose, Noo Yawk-accented, hyperbolic "Excelsior!" style. Side one detailed the origin of Spidey, and side two pretty much expounded on how miserable the character was.

The funniest part of this record is the back cover, which depicts other Marvel superheroes as the band. The Hulk plays drums, the Fantastic Four sings backup, the Silver Surfer plays keyboards. Sadly, Captain America and his then-sidekick the Falcon are relegated to tambourine and handclapping, respectively.

Credited to a band called Hero (featuring cheesy sax player David Sanborn), the music on *Rock Reflections* was a bizarre amalgam of Frampton-Barbershop-Glen Campbell-doo-wop-psychedelic-Average White Band. The song "Dr. Octopus" sounded like a cross between Pink Floyd and Cheech & Chong's Alice Bowie from "Earache My Eye."

Apparently *Reflections* didn't have the same impact on me that *From Beyond The Grave* did, since I didn't mutilate that cover. Happily, a few years ago, I found a mint copy of *Grave* (poster included!) in a used record store in Boston. But I still have my original, scratched, sleeveless copy as well.

When Batmania regripped the country a decade ago, a bunch of old Bat-albums from the '60s were reissued. Now that the legal path is cleared for the big budget Spider-Man film, you can bet that someone, somehow will eventually put out at least one of these records on CD.

In the meantime, I'm still searching for a record of the studio music that was used as background in the '60s Spider-Man cartoon. Now *that* was some music to swing by... or at least crawl up walls.

Bitten by a radioactive silverfish, freelance writer/illustrator/cartoonist Karl Heitmueller will periodically don cape and cowl and fight crime in Hoboken NJ. If there's nothing on TV.

metal top 25

- 1 **SLIPKNOT**
Slipknot Roadrunner
- 2 **TESTAMENT**
The Gathering Burnt Offerings-Spitfire
- 3 **MACHINE HEAD**
The Burning Red Roadrunner
- 4 **ORANGE 9MM**
Pretend I'm Human Ng
- 5 **SIX FEET UNDER**
Maximum Violence Metal Blade
- 6 **MERCYFUL FATE**
9 Metal Blade
- 7 **BIOHAZARD**
New World Disorder King/Mercury-IDJMG
- 8 **DRAIN STH**
Freaks Of Nature The Enclave/Mercury-IDJMG
- 9 **LIMP BIZKIT**
Significant Other Flip-Interscope
- 10 **IN FLAMES**
Colony Nuclear Blast America
- 11 **MINISTRY**
Dark Side Of The Spoon Warner Bros.
- 12 **S.O.D.**
Bigger Than The Devil Nuclear Blast America
- 13 **HYPOCRISY**
Hypocrisy Nuclear Blast America
- 14 **NEUROSIS**
Times Of Grace Relapse
- 15 **REVELLE**
Laced Elektra-EEG
- 16 **MORTICIAN**
Chainsaw Dismemberment Relapse
- 17 **ARCH ENEMY**
Burning Bridges Century Media
- 18 **POWERMAN 5000**
Tonight The Stars Revolt! DreamWorks
- 19 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Blackend IV Metal Blade
- 20 **COAL CHAMBER**
"Notion" (CD5) Roadrunner
- 21 **STATIC-X**
Wisconsin Death Trip Warner Bros.
- 22 **BURIED ALIVE**
Death Of Your Perfect World Victory
- 23 **EMPEROR**
IX Equilibrium Century Media
- 24 **ATOMIC BITCHWAX**
The Atomic Bitchwax Tee Pee-MIA
- 25 **35" MUDDER**
Stained 35" Mudder

GODFLESH

Us And Them

Earache



remembered this just in time. *Us And Them* brings us back to the beginning in some ways, drawing out its purpose in long atmospheric dirges. The vocals are off-center and vaporous, allowing the smoggy sustain of guitars to bleed out in long trails over noticeably slowed drum loops. Rather than the lurching stomp of 1992's *Pure*, *Us And Them* calls on trip-hop and slowed jungle. Opener "I, Me, Mine" is an exception, stuttering ahead on now-obligatory chopped, compressed and jittery "Amen" blasts. Start to finish, this is a beautiful, moody and sincere record from a band most thought had milked its last cow. Simultaneous to this, Earache releases three other good-faith efforts. Two are good-time live albums by Entombed and Napalm Death. The other is a rarities collection from Bolt Thrower. It's all a load of honest music from a classic label whose newer signings often struggle to live up to imaginative marketing.

>>> Maybe it's the pinkish hue of the cover, but the **DIMMU BORGIR/OLD MAN'S CHILD** split CD (Hammerheart) strongly recalls another Norwegian team-up issue, the scene-making Emperor/Enslaved joint *Hordane's Land*. This comparison proves Dimmu Borgir and Old Man's Child are not innovators, but both excellent bands when they want to be. On this split they reveal their simple lot in life: They can deftly uplift black metal because they take its basic accords for granted, but they are also susceptible to falling for clichés. Neither band's most annoying traits surface on these old recordings, however. The layered arrangements by Old Man's Child are the high point... How can anyone out-Mortician the mighty **MORTICIAN**? With 28 new songs on *Chainsaw Dismemberment* (Relapse), this extreme Yonkers gang flexes and resets its grip on the sad necks of anyone who would dare play primitive metal badly. The members of Mortician are like barbarians in a spaceship, lifting weights and loading guns with one arm while programming drum sequences and

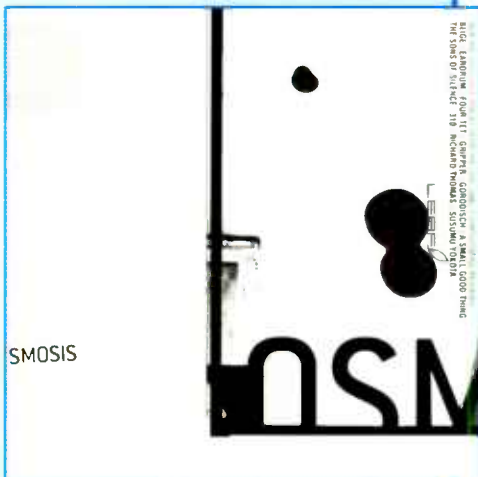
rewinding gore videos with the other. *Chainsaw Dismemberment* backs off of the shocking clarity of its predecessor, *Zombie Apocalypse*, and plants Will Rahmer's sub-bass growl along with the instrumental blur into an unclean version of something faster and deeper than you can believe... The self-titled debut from **HATEWAVE** (Up Jumps The Devil) puts a river of blood and goat's semen between itself and the kissing associations it has to avant guitarist Jim O'Rourke. Master chef Sasha Tai and shred guy Angst, both guitarists, wail and squall their way through ten trebly hardcore-influenced tracks that bridge Death Angel and Cannibal Corpse. Rapid drummer Weasel Walter, despite being covered in toilet paper and pigeon turds, is the one to catch up with in this band. Hatewave raises an interesting technical quandary: What's the point of having a bass player to provide 60Hz tones if you're playing at 5,000 beats per minute? Their answer? "Fuck you."

OSMOSIS

Various Artists

Leaf UK

For the past ten years Tony Morley, one of the more overlooked figures in British music of the '80s and '90s, has been running his Leaf label, releasing music that was just a little too far ahead of its time. Thus, outstanding records by Sons Of Silence, Fourtet, and many others languished in obscurity, particularly in the US. Morley's background is of considerable interest and hope in the often-deplorable story of British youth culture's move into the electronic age. In 1983, he was involved in the proto-industrial group 400 Blows, which established a presence on UK dance floors with a series of floor-slaming singles on the Illuminated imprint, alongside labelmates such as Portion Control and 23 Skidoo. By the mid-'80s, Morley formed the core of the Moody Boys, a dark, deep house crew that made possible a generation of artists on the cult NY label NuGroove, an imprint that opened the space for house's more disturbing excesses. *Osmosis* makes quite clear that Morley has never sacrificed his devotion to the electronic underground. Opening with the guitar fuzz of New York post-electronic outfit 310, whose *Prog-Rock* EP was greeted very warmly on both sides of the Atlantic, the compilation moves to the beautiful pastoral techno of Susumu Yokota's "Morino Gakudan" and the edgy, breakbeat kinetics of "The Sonar Song" by Sons Of Silence. With unreleased tracks by Fourtet, Peter Thomas, and Beige, this dirt-cheap import disc, priced at \$5.99, is worth obtaining immediately.



>>> **KIT CLAYTON** stunned the electronic underground last year with his beautifully orchestrated *Mimic And The Model* EP, arriving with no information except a beautifully drawn abstract expressionist painting on its cover. One could say that it was Clayton's response to the ghosts of '70s Jamaica currently haunting Berlin, only it was inflected with the sort of electronic guitar melancholy not heard since *Dark Side Of The Moon*, wherein David Gilmour's stray guitar chords flew to the dawn's horizon. On Clayton's *Nek Purpalet* EP, he takes his sound to another dimension, while never making the tracks too busy. Comparisons to the KLF's epochal *Chill Out* album and Pole's first two EPs are not out of place, so it's not surprising that it would turn up on Pole's new label, -Scape Records in Berlin. Pole (a.k.a. Stefan Betke), who introduced North Americans to unheard of levels of electronic severity, put the finishing touches on this little gem, and if *Nek Purpalet* is anything to go by, it bodes well for the fledgling label... The Rastermusic label, well known for its interest in minimalist sine-wave, laptop electronic music, came up with an interesting idea: release one CD a month during 1999, each clocking in at

approximately 20 minutes. The series has been a delight so far, having included artists such as Ryoji Ikeda, Senking, and COH. The latest is from the always reliable Cologne composer **THOMAS BRINKMANN**. Recording once again under the Ester Brinkmann guise, he spends 19 minutes carving a track into plastic like a Halloween pumpkin being styled with a scalpel. Brinkmann's precision should not be mistaken for the icy chill of mathematics, though; there's a groove in this track that would keep a dance floor moving for hours, if only listeners could get 'round the slightly unusual time signature upon which the kick drum is founded. It's the almost impossible mixture of coldness and warmth that makes Brinkmann's music so hypnotic. He does not allow listeners to turn their attention elsewhere for one second, lest they miss a subtle percussive change. If all this sounds too much like hard work, it's not. You could lie on a chaise-lounge, sipping a Long Island Iced Tea and wearing headphones, and go into a deep head nod listening to this one. Brinkmann's already done all the work for you.

dance top 25

- 1 **CHEMICAL BROTHERS**
Surrender Astralwerks
- 2 **MOBY**
Play V2
- 3 **ORBITAL**
The Middle Of Nowhere London
- 4 **CARL COX**
Phuture 2000 Moonshine
- 5 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Electro Lounge: Electronic Excursions...
The Right Stuff-Capitol
- 6 **VELVET ACID CHRIST**
Fun With Knives Metropolis
- 7 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
DJ Kicks: Thievery Corporation Studio N7
- 8 **SASHA**
Global Underground: San Francisco Boxed-Thrive
- 9 **NEUROACTIVE**
Parallel Lifeforms A Different Drum
- 10 **BOOM BOOM SATELLITES**
Out Loud Epic
- 11 **PLAID**
Rest Proof Clockwork Nothing-Interscope
- 12 **SPACETIME CONTINUUM**
Double Fine Zone Astralwerks
- 13 **ART OF NOISE**
The Seduction Of Claude Debussy Universal
- 14 **FANTASTIC PLASTIC MACHINE**
International Standard (Luxury Remixes)
Emperor Norton
- 15 **LOOP GURU**
The Fountains Of Paradise Hypnotic-Cleopatra
- 16 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
The New Latinaires Ubiquity
- 17 **THIEVERY CORPORATION**
Abductions And Reconstructions
Eighteenth Street Lounge
- 18 **ANDROID LUST**
Evolution Tinman
- 19 **TO ROCOCO ROT**
The Amateur View Mute
- 20 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Funk: This Is Jungle Sky Vol. 6 Jungle Sky-Liquid Sky
- 21 **TODD TERRY**
Resolutions Astralwerks
- 22 **2 LONE SWORDSMEN**
Stay Down Matador
- 23 **UNDERWORLD**
Beaucoup Fish J80-V2
- 24 **HAUJOB**
Ninetynine Metropolis
- 25 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Om Lounge 2 Om

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

hip-hop top 25

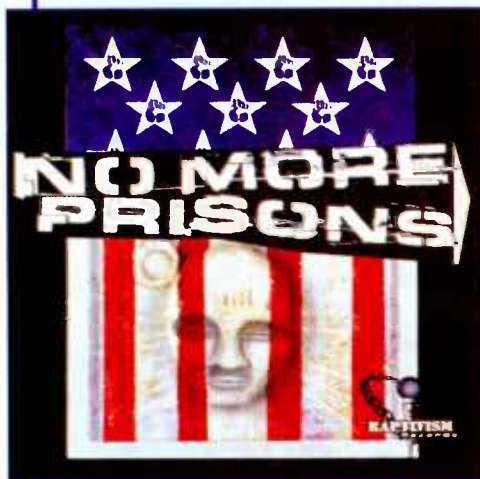
- 1 **HIGH & MIGHTY FEAT. MOS DEF**
B-Boy Document '99 Rawkus
- 2 **GZA/GENIUS**
Breaker Breaker MCA
- 3 **EPMD**
Right Now Def Jam-IDJMG
- 4 **SCREWBALL**
F.A.Y.B.A.N. Tommy Boy
- 5 **O.G.C.**
Shoot To Kill Duck Down-Priority
- 6 **STYLES OF BEYOND**
Easy Back It Up Ideal
- 7 **LAURYN HILL**
Everything Is Everything Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRC
- 8 **SLICK RICK FEAT. OUTKAST**
Street Talkin' Def Jam-IDJMG
- 9 **ROOTS**
The Next Movement MCA
- 10 **RUFF RYDERS FEAT. JAY-Z**
Jigga My Nigga Ruff Ryders-Interscope
- 11 **SPORTY THIEVZ**
No Pigeons Rok-A-Blok/Ruffhouse-Columbia-CRC
- 12 **MEMPHIS BLEEK**
Memphis Bleek Is... Def Jam-IDJMG
- 13 **BEATNUZS**
Watch Out Now Relativity
- 14 **Q-TIP**
Vivrant Thing Def Jam-IDJMG
- 15 **MOODSWINGAZ**
Moodswingaz Anthem Karmis
- 16 **RUFF RYDERS**
What Ya Want Interscope
- 17 **RAHZEL**
All I Know MCA
- 18 **ROYCE THE 5'9"**
I'm The King Game
- 19 **JEDI MIND TRICKS**
Heavenly Divine Superegular
- 20 **THIRSTIN HOWL III**
Brooklyn Hard Rock Rawkus
- 21 **MR. LIF**
Triangular Warfare Brick
- 22 **WESTSIDE CONNECTION**
Let It Reign Priority
- 23 **JA RULE**
Holla Holla Def Jam-IDJMG
- 24 **GANG STARR**
Full Clip Noo Trybe-Virgin
- 25 **SWAY & KING TECH FEAT. DJ REVOLUTION**
The Anthem Interscope

Compiled from *CMJ New Music Report's* weekly Beat Box charts, collected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio reporters.

NO MORE PRISONS

Various Artists

Raptivism



ripple effect they have on people's lives: social conditions that lead to crime, the travails of being locked down, conflicts after release, and the profits being made by private companies running many prisons. The contributors combine different musical methods (hardcore underground, more poppy tracks and spoken word manifestos) and cultural outlooks to make an album that is as great to listen to as it is important to hear. And make sure to check out the companion book by underground urban culture scribe William "Upski" Wimsatt. Highly recommended.

>>> With their debut *Home Field Advantage* (Rawkus), the **HIGH & MIGHTY** step into the full-length world with a bang. While DJ/Producer Mighty Mi and vocalist Mr. Eon are the project's prime movers, most of their tracks feature collaborations with like-minded rappers and producers. Mr. Eon's rapping style is assured and free of pretense, and while he is essential to the album's success, the impressive array of guest rappers makes this one of 1999's most interesting LPs. Check Eminem on "Naughty Rotten Rhymers"; Kool Keith, What What and Bobbito on the hilarious masturbatory ode "Hands On Experience Pt. II"; Pharoahe Monch on "Dirty Decibels"; Wordsworth and Thurstin Howl III on the "Open Mic Night" remix; and Mos Def and Mad Skillz on "B-Boy Document 1999"... As a companion to *Home Field Advantage*, the new **Eastern Conference All Stars** compilation (Eastern Conference-Landspeed) shows the range of the High & The Mighty's own label. One of the most reliably dope imprints of the last several years, Eastern Conference features some of New York's finest indie talents—including Mike Zoot, Cage, El-P, What What, and Mos Def—and some outsiders as well, such as Kool Keith, producer Alchemist and the underrated, Virginia-based Mad Skillz. The dozen tracks include the label's first six singles (with the much-doper original "B-Boy Document," featuring Mike Zoot, Mos Def and El-P), plus two

unreleased cuts... New York City's **ARSONISTS** have waited a painfully long while to release their debut album *As The World Burns* (Matador). They've been bending craniums on the indie scene since '95 with next-shit singles like "The Session," "Seed/Venom" and "Blaze/Geembo's Theme)." *As The World Burns* contains all of the above, and adds soon-to-be-knowns like "Backdraft," "Underground Vandal," "Worlds Collide" and "Rhyme Time Travel." Lyricists Q-Unique, D-Stroy and Freestyle stand out from the six-member core unit, as they balance a glib sense of humor (as displayed on the wacked-out "Pyromaniac" and the spoken word "D-Sturbed Words") with grave seriousness about the hip-hop craft. One of 1999's best hip-hop LPs, *Burns* showcases one of the most interesting new rap collectives on the planet, and one that puts on a dope live show, which you can catch when they tour this fall... East Coasters have it pretty good, but most of us out here lack one important thing: **SWAY & KING TECH's** "Wake Up Show." Chiefly a West Coast radio phenomenon, the syndicated, LA-based hip-hop carnival is one of the most important outlets for classic, current and breaking talent in the world. Their album *This Or That* (Interscope) is an example of how great the show can be, featuring exclusive tracks, current hits, old-school nuggets and crazy freestyles by guests including Chino XL, Kool Keith, the RZA and Big Daddy Kane.

▶ **ALEX CHILTON**'s first record after the original breakup of Big Star was a 7" EP called *Singer Not The Song*. Twenty-two years after



its original release, it's finally back in print.

This improved version on the Spanish label Munster extends the original's snatch of "Summer Time Blues," adds

guitarist/producer John Tiven's "Close My Eyes" and augments "All The Time" with a guitar solo recorded in 1976 by Chris Bell, making it effectively the last collaboration between Big Star's main creative forces. Recorded during a chaotic period in Chilton's life, it's kind of a mess as a record, but it's still got diamond-in-the-rough versions of two excellent songs: "Free Again," the template for a lot of Teenage Fanclub's work, and "Take Me Home And Make Me Like It," where Chilton sounds like he's completely out of control, but that works to the song's advantage.

▶ Dan Treacy, the sole member of **TELEVISION PERSONALITIES** at this point, didn't really disappear, it turns out; he's evidently just decided to stop making music for a while. But his old label Damaged Goods is still raiding the archive for serviceable unreleased TVPs material, most recently "When I Grow Up I Want To Be," a single recorded in 1994 but not released until this year. As you might guess from its title (and the title of the B-side, "The Boy Who Couldn't Stop Dreaming"), the lyrics follow one of the big themes of Treacy's songwriting: the distance between the youthful art-making impulse and the perspective of people who are older, as badly damaged by life as Treacy has been, and frustrated in their dreams. They're both set in his favorite musical mode of this decade: rudimentary mod-rock, finessed with a bit of Pop Art-era sitar.

▶ Matt Elliott's project **THIRD EYE FOUNDATION** has completely reworked "In Bristol With A Pistol" from the recent *You Guys*



Kill Me, and released it as a single

(on Domino), backed with a seven-minute remix of Suncoil Sect's "Counter Culture." 3EF is at its best when it's hybridizing

NINE INCH NAILS

The Day The World Went Away

Nothing

Trent Reznor appears to be incredibly picky about what comes out under the Nine Inch Nails name. With no release date currently announced for his upcoming album, this taster is all we're getting until late in the year, but it's a pretty gutsy move, and a hell of a single. "The Day The World Went Away" isn't an industrial dance hit in the making—in some ways, it's barely even a song. A single line of melody, repeated again and again, accompanied by slow, bad-dream guitar gruel that keeps wobbling like an off-center record, it's an oblique defense of suicide that relies on quietness rather than noise for its harrowing effect. (The "quiet" mix at the end of the single forgoes the guitars for even scarier piano; it comes out a bit like the "quiet" versions of old Depeche Mode tracks like "Fly On The Windscreen" and "Leave In Silence.") But then there's the extra track, "Starfuckers, Inc.," where Reznor pulls out the big beats and bigger guitars—including a sample from Kiss's "Shout It Out Loud." Marilyn Manson's entire career has happened since the last Nine Inch Nails album came out, and there's been some friction lately between mentor and protégé. Reznor doesn't say it explicitly, but this track, probably the harshest attack ever recorded on groupies and the rock bands who exploit them, seems to be aimed at his old student's excesses. As a bonus, it's got the most sinister Carly Simon quote ever committed to tape.



rock and drum 'n' bass—a combination that's harder than you'd think to pull off—and the Suncoil Sect mix is especially well-done, running intersecting loops of instrumental guitar drone alongside a bass line that works either as real-time rock or as half-time dub, and switching off between the drummer's dogged timekeeping and pre-recorded breakbeats' time-splintering. "Bristol" is nicely executed too, spattering the lethargic bob-and-weave of the dance scene associated with Elliott's home city in an acid brew of curdled easy-listening samples, jazz drums and violent scratching.

▶ A few quick drops of the needle: Capitalizing on **LAURYN HILL**'s Grammy win, Ruffhouse-Columbia has finally gotten around to releasing a new commercial single from *The Miseducation*, "Everything Is Everything." Hill fans should check it out for the B-side's version of "Ex-Factor"—it's marked as "A Simple Mix," but it's actually a new re-recording. The bass groove from Wu-Tang Clan's "Can It Be All So Simple" that propelled the original version is almost unrecognizable, Hill has cranked the tempo up, and she's replaced the run-of-the-mill oversinging from the original with a

melismatic reinterpretation that's more wholly hers... The second volume of Diskono's **I'm So Bored With The USA** electronic compilation series is a super-chaotic 7" with six artists on it—it's as nerve-fraying as sipping a triple espresso in a minefield, but Brindle Spork's bugged-out hip-hop radio cut-up "Wild Why" and Kid 606's breakbeats-as-white-noise piece "Luke Vibert Can Kiss My Indiepunk Whiteboy Ass" are gleefully insolent... **FLIN FLON**'s uneasy, economical, herky-jerky groove "Black Bear" originally appeared only on a label sampler a couple of years ago, but it's become a staple of the band's live sets, and it's just re-appeared as a CD single (TeenBeat). The disc also has two versions of their excellent, out-of-print instrumental single "Swift Current," as well as its B-side and a peculiar eight-minute interview with a couple of kids about the Flin Flon show they've just seen... **GUIDED BY VOICES** has returned to the 7" format with the big ballad bam-boom of "Surgical Focus" (TVT), from the band's new *Do The Collapse*. The single boasts a swell (if rather normal sounding, for them) rocker called "Fly Into Ashes," as well as the most spectacular single sleeve I've seen in a while.

LOS ZAFIROS

Bossa Cubana

Nonesuch



Back when the Beatles were going "yeah, yeah, yeah," a different kind of mania was sweeping the tiny, Castro-controlled island of Cuba. Los Zafiros (roughly translated, the Sapphires) swept Cuba like the proverbial fire in the hold. They were Cubans who, like Los Beatles, in 1962 built a fresh sound all their own out of parts of other people's music: the twang of rock 'n' roll electric guitars mixed with the innovations of neighboring Brazilian bossa nova, American soul, calypso and traditional Cuban music. With three strong and complementary singers, including Ignacio Elejalde's divine tenor and Kike Morua's earthy gruff tones, the band was the perfect blend of modern and traditional, and their music still sounds astonishingly spirited today. Musically, the Beatles are not the most instructive

comparison to Los Zafiros' '60s Cuban pop explosion sound (except when they sing in harmony on the ballads). But the photos included with this set of the group disembarking from jet liners in front of cheering crowds, posing, wearing matching silly fur hats or leaning out of hotel rooms illustrate the parallel natures of the two groups. After setting the Cuban musical world on fire, the group proved fractious and difficult to sustain past the late '60s. Like the Beatles, they were perhaps doomed because they were so darned good, and no matter how harmonious their pairing, it was inevitable that such strong players would eventually be pulled apart by the tug of their own individual creativity.

>>> New Waver **KLAUS NOMI** probably had his greatest fleeting moment of fame when he appeared as one of David Bowie's super-weird backup singers on a famous 1979 *Saturday Night Live* TV performance. He sang "Boys Keep Swinging" in mime makeup while an orange-haired Bowie slithered around the stage with a plastic skeleton superimposed on his body. Nomi had a brief but influential solo career, fusing operatic vocals, cabaret and futuristic synthesizer-based rock. And move over Boy George, our man Klaus was out of the closet and acting outrageous long before *Kissing To Be Clever*. Razor & Tie has released *Eclipsed*, a best-of overview of Nomi's music, which, perhaps not unintentionally, also works as its own sort of parody and high camp: the early '80s was an extremely strange time to live through.

>>> Of all the guitarists who have come down the pike, few have been as revolutionary and exciting as **JOHN FAHEY**. In the late '60s, Fahey came out of the folk blues boom and turned the underground upside-down, exploring areas and ideas in music that most people hadn't really ever thought about before. Listening to his work with 30 years of hindsight, it becomes clear that Fahey is the thread that connects the early blues of the first half of the century with

Stockhausen and musique concrète and today's alternative realm, the incredible missing link between Son House and Sonic Youth. *Best Of The Vanguard Years* (Vanguard) collects his two albums for that label from 1967-68. There is simply nothing else on earth like Fahey's composition "The Singing Bridge Of Memphis, Tennessee," which features Fahey playing his guitar in a duet along with—yes, I swear—a bridge outside of Memphis that's famous for making eerie whistling and creaking noises in the blowing winds. It's an indescribably haunting amalgam of Fahey's guitar, some pan-pipes gleaned off an old 78 disc, and the wind howling and clanking through the bridge's cables, a piece that simply must be heard to be believed.

>>> Earlier this summer, Rhino released a five-CD set, **Respect: A Century Of Women In Music**, a massive survey of nine decades' worth of music sung by women. Okay, call me a chauvinist, but I was a little skeptical of such a catch-all concept, just like I would be if somebody asked me to review something called *Macho Man: A Century Of Men's Music*. But after listening to this box set on a lengthy Sunday afternoon, I've decided that there's no other conclusion reachable other than that it's really cool. From sassy Janis Joplin to sensitive Laura

Nyro to the haunted sounds of Patsy Cline or Billie Holiday, it's wonderful to hear the cross-section of attitudes and emotions represented by this rich assortment of music.

>>> Although he wore the well-groomed veneer of a sexy soul singer, make no mistake: **GINO WASHINGTON** was one of the wailing, howling, stone-gone original rockers, in his own way every bit as riotous as Little Richard or Esquerita. For *Out Of This World*, the ever-faithful Norton label has culled the cream of the cuts Washington recorded in his zany early days for such ill-starred homespun Detroit labels as Do De Re, Son Bert, Washpan, and W.I.G. Records. Songs like "Gino Is A Coward" and "Do The Frog" are catchy, kooky, classic slices of stomping R&B. Yow!

>>> When I think of jazz towns, I immediately conjure images of tough musicians scraping by in the Big Apple, or of New Orleans's rain-soaked streets, or of the brotherly love of Philly's snug clubs and cobblestone alleys, or of the laid-back vibes of the San Francisco/Berkeley scene. But Los Angeles has also produced its share of important jazz music, much of which is documented in the recent four-CD box set **Central Avenue Sounds: Jazz In Los Angeles** (Rhino). Beginning in the '20s, the set runs through the R&B-influenced sounds of the '50s and on through the jazz revolution heralded by the arrival of bebop.

>>> I've said it before in these pages, and I'll say it again: thank heaven there's always a guy with a beard around who tapes everything. In this case, I am singing the praises of one Stuart "Dinky" Dawson, legendary soundman and roadie for **FLEETWOOD MAC**. He's just unveiled the first in what promises to be a stunning series of archival live tapes released by Rykodisc, *Shrine '69*, capturing Peter Green and early Fleetwood Mac in all their shaggy, British blues-band glory.

>>> In an innovative marketing move, two famous late '70s country albums have been paired together as a double-CD set. **White Mansions And The Legend Of Jesse James** combines two similar concept albums from the late '70s/early '80s, each featuring a hodgepodge of legendary country and rock performers including Waylon Jennings, Eric Clapton, Johnny Cash, Levon Helm, Emmylou Harris and Charlie Daniels. Heard side by side (although originally recorded two years apart), the two albums form a sort of thematic suite that walks the line between a cornball made-for-network-TV movie and an insightful PBS examination of 19th century American history. (Curiously, *White Mansions* was recorded in England and in Hollywood. Go figure.)

1	FLAMING LIPS	The Soft Bulletin	Warner Bros.
2	CHEMICAL BROTHERS	Surrender	Astralwerks
3	CIBO MATTO	Stereo Type A	Warner Bros.
4	MOBY	Play	V2
5	LUSCIOUS JACKSON	Electric Honey	Grand Royal-Capitol
6	GUIDED BY VOICES	Do The Collapse	TVT
7	BLACK BOX RECORDER	England Made Me	Jetset
8	PAVEMENT	Terror Twilight	Matador
9	DONNAS	Get Skintight	Lookout!
10	APPLES IN STEREO	Her Wallpaper Reverie	spinART
11	BLUE HAWAIIANS	Savage Night	Coolsville-Interscope
12	OS MUTANTES	Everything Is Possible!: The Best Of...	Luaka Bop-WB
13	BETA BAND	The Beta Band	Regal-Astralwerks
14	MR. BUNGLE	California	Warner Bros.
15	BIS	Social Dancing	Grand Royal-Capitol
16	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Oh, Merge	Merge
17	ORBITAL	The Middle Of Nowhere	London
18	ORANGE 9MM	Pretend I'm Human	Ng
19	MUSIC TAPES	1st Imaginary Symphony For Nomad	Merge
20	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Return Of The Grievous Angel	Almo Sounds
21	GUITAR WOLF	Jet Generation	Matador
22	WEEN	Paintin' The Town Brown: Live '90-'98	Elektra-EEG
23	BLINK 182	Enema Of The State	MCA
24	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Short Music For Short People	Fat Wreck Chords
25	LYLE LOVETT	Live In Texas	Curb-MCA
26	MANIC STREET PREACHERS	This Is My Truth Tell Me Yours	Virgin
27	LIMP BIZKIT	Significant Other	Flip-Interscope
28	CARL COX	Phuture 2000	Moonshine
29	KATIES	The Katies	Spongebath/Elektra-EEG
30	CAPTAIN BEEFHEART & HIS MAGIC BAND	Grow Fins	Revenant
31	JUNE OF 44	Anahata	Touch And Go
32	JAMIROQUAI	Synkronized	WORK-Epic
33	MINISTRY	Dark Side Of The Spoo	Warner Bros.
34	KID LOCO	Prelude To A Grand Love Story	Atlantic
35	SPAIN	She Haunts My Dreams	Restless
36	VERBENA	Into The Pink	Capitol
37	LONDON SUEDE	Head Music	Nude/Columbia-CR
38	TO ROCOCO ROT	The Amateur View	Mute
39	ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN	What Are You Going To Do With Your Life?	London
40	RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS	Californication	Warner Bros.
41	PIEBALD	If It Weren't For Venetian Blinds...	Big Wheel Recreation
42	THOSE BASTARD SOULS	Debt & Departure	V2
43	TAKAKO MINEKAWA	Ximer (EP)	Emperor Norton
44	ANGRY SALAD	Angry Salad	Blackbird-Atlantic
45	BOOM BOOM SATELLITES	Out Loud	Epic
46	LUCKSMITHS	Happy Secret	Candle-Drive-In
47	MY FAVORITE	Love At Absolute Zer	Double Agent
48	SUPERCHUNK	Hello Hawk (EP)	Merge
49	MUFFS	Alert Today Alive Tomorrow	Honest Don's
50	SISSY BAR	Songs For Peeps	Mootron
51	TOM WAITS	Mule Variations	Anti-Epiphany
52	SHOWOFF	Showoff	Maverick
53	BELLE AND SEBASTIAN	Tigermilk	Matador
54	ATOMIC FIREBALLS	Torch This Place	Lava-Atlantic
55	DIDO	No Angel	Arista
56	PLAID	Rest Proof Clockwork	Warp-Nothing
57	FANTASTIC PLASTIC MACHINE	International Standard	Emperor Norton
58	SHOOTYZ GROOVE	High Definition	Reprise
59	FROGPOND	Safe Ride Home	C2/Columbia-CRG
60	DELIRIOUS?	Mezzamorphis	Furious?-Virgin
61	BEN FOLDS FIVE	The Unauthorized Biography...	Epic-550
62	RACHEL'S	Selenography	Quarterstick-Touch And Go
63	REVEILLE	Laced	Elektra-EEG
64	ANTEROS BULLET	Dead On	Trust
65	ART OF NOISE	The Seduction Of Claude Debussy	Universal
66	LUNGFISH	The Unanimous Hour	Dischord
67	BRILLIANTINE	My Life And The Beautiful Game	Deep Reverb
68	NOT FROM THERE	Sand On Seven	Kool Arrow
69	SOUNDTRACK	American Pie	Universal
70	FREEDY JOHNSTON	Blue Days Black Nights	Elektra-EEG
71	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Electro Lounge	The Right Stuff-Capitol
72	REGGIE & THE FUL	Greatest Hits '84-'87	Second Nature
73	UNDERWORLD	Beaucoup Fish	V
74	ROBYN HITCHCOCK	Jewels For Sophia	Warner Bros.
75	2 LONE SWORDSMEN	Stay Down	Matador



#1 FLAMING LIPS THE SOFT BULLETIN

FIVE YEARS AGO

1. REVEREND HORTON HEAT

LIQUOR IN THE FRONT (INTERSCOPE)

2. LUSH

SPLIT (4AD-ELEKTRA)

3. BEASTIE BOYS

ILL COMMUNICATION (GRAND ROYAL-CAPITOL)

4. HELMET

BETTY (INTERSCOPE)

5. L7

HUNGRY FOR STINK (SLASH-REPRISE)

TEN YEARS AGO

1. PIXIES

DOOLITTLE (4AD-ELEKTRA)

2. PUBLIC IMAGE LTD.

9 (VIRGIN)

3. B-52'S

COSMIC THING (REPRISE)

4. LOVE AND ROCKETS

LOVE AND ROCKETS (BEGGARS BANQUET-RCA)

5. THE THE

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

HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH: THE DIRECTORS' CUT

STORY: GAYLORD FIELDS PHOTO: BRITT CARPENTER



L-R: MITCHELL, TRASK

A Teutonic would-be pop star with a botched sex-change is this fall's hottest ticket stub. The shocking twist? **JOHN CAMERON MITCHELL** and **STEPHEN TRASK** wrote a musical that's cool.

Hedwig And The Angry Inch is probably the first musical to receive a guitar endorsement. Yes, the plans for *Hedwig's* world domination are in place: a host of theater awards, a slew of sold-out off-Broadway performances, a cast album on Atlantic Records, productions scheduled to open on Los Angeles and London stages later this fall, and a film version set to be lensed for New Line Cinema. Yet the *Hedwig* phenomenon is still a bit odd—as welcome and anticipated as it is—for John Cameron Mitchell and Stephen Trask, the two creative forces of what is

probably the first example of musically, as well as dramatically, successful rock theater. Award-winning Broadway actor/singer Mitchell wrote, directed, and originated the title role of a transgendered Teutonic glam-rocker *manqué*, with Trask, who composed *Hedwig's* music and lyrics and leads fictitious glitter-rock combo the Angry Inch onstage.

"We're getting guitar endorsements [from Gibson], magazine covers, and a major-label deal," says Trask, "yet my real band is still unsigned," referring to his long-struggling Lower East Side-based group Cheater, which

ROMANCE

(Trimark)

The last time we saw this much on-screen nudity, we were in a Times Square video booth. An erotically charged French drama, *Romance* follows Marie, a young schoolteacher. Tired of her husband's bedroom ambivalence, she acts out her erotic impulses with other men, encounters that include S&M sessions with her principal. Throughout this, Marie remains as emotionally detached as her pointed comments: "If you love a guy enough to be faithful, he won't fuck you." Writer-director Catherine Breillat has already stirred porn-or-art debates overseas. Notoriety aside, *Romance* remains an unflinching view of human sexual behavior.

>>>John Elsasser

SPLENDOR

(Samuel Goldwyn Films)

After completing his edgy Teen Apocalypse Trilogy (*Totally F***ed Up*, *The Doom Generation* and *Nowhere*), Gregg Araki has made a '30s-style screwball comedy—no, really—set in contemporary L.A. Veronica (the refreshing Kathleen Robertson, whose Clare Arnold slept with Brandon, Steve and David on *Beverly Hills 90210*) attempts to juggle two boyfriends, a freelance rock critic (Johnathon Schaech) and a punk-rock drummer (Matt Keeslar), with varying success. With a sharp, stylized combination of pop-cultural references and jocular situations, Araki proves that he has more to offer moviegoers than just tales of angst-ridden teens.

>>>John Elsasser

WEST BEIRUT

(Cowboy Booking International)

Set during the first stirrings of military action in 1975 Beirut, this richly detailed drama chronicles a boy's coming of age amid the chaos. Oblivious to the political and religious struggle, budding hipster Tarek uses his newfound free time—school's out indefinitely!—to listen to American pop music (Paul Anka is a favorite), make Super 8 films and fall in love. As expected, though, reality soon sets in. Ziad Doueiri, a former camera operator for Quentin Tarantino, makes his admirable feature debut drawing on his own childhood experiences in Beirut. He even drafted his kid brother Rami for the lead.

>>>John Elsasser

ALLISON'S STARTING TO HAPPEN



Allison Anders's ability to create three-dimensional female characters in *Gas Food Lodging*, *Mi Vida Loca* and *Grace Of My Heart* brought the filmmaker critical acclaim. But with the arrival of *Sugar Town*, a snarky slice-of-life look at the L.A. music industry, she's found a new tag attached to her name. "I'm finally starting to get regarded as a rock filmmaker instead of a chick filmmaker," she says. "And I can't begin to tell you how thrilled I am about that. The chick thing was about to ruin my life."

"I never set out to be a chick filmmaker nor did I set out to be a rock filmmaker," insists the Kentucky native, who also directed Madonna and Ione Skye in *Four Rooms*. "I just go with what I'm interested in."

Anders's interest in music and film reaches back to her very first feature, *Border Radio*, made for \$50,000 in 1989. She wrote and directed the punk-rock odyssey with her classmate Kurt Voss while attending UCLA Film School. Eager to make another inexpensive, studio-free movie, she rejoined Voss for *Sugar Town*, which was written in eight days, filmed in three weeks, and ready for the 1999 Sundance Film Festival less than five months after the first day of shooting.

This L.A. story finds an array of characters looking for love, fame and, as an aspiring singer says, "one Fiona-type song about a rape." Ally Sheedy, Rosanna Arquette and Beverly D'Angelo are joined by an array of musicians, including Martin Kemp (Spandau Ballet), John Doe (X), John Taylor (Duran Duran) and Michael Des Barres. And keep an eye out for cameos by Bijou Phillips and former *Crime & The City Solution* leader Simon Bonney, who also served as the movie's key grip.

Anders, who previously directed Doe in *Border Radio*, his film debut, says she is used to having success with musicians-turned-actors. So much so that she and Voss are busy writing another music-themed movie that will feature Taylor, Liam Gallagher and—keep your fingers crossed—Polly Jean Harvey. "The only problem I've ever had directing a musician? There is this coolness factor present that actors don't have," Anders observes. "No matter how far past they are from their original rock persona, they have this definite line in which they say, 'This is cool. That is not cool.'"

But what about the opposite scenario: Actors who want to be rock stars, like Keanu Reeves (*Dogstar*) and Johnny Depp (P)? "Well, what do you think?" she replies, laughing. "For the most part [those bands] are just terrible. I haven't seen it done well yet."

>>>John Elsasser

DENNIS COOPER

Fans who know Dennis Cooper only through his fiction might expect a conversation with him to be unnerving. Early on, the author's blunt tone and emotionally detached characters drew comparisons to Brett Easton Ellis. His six novels, including *Frisk* and *Closer*, have been alternately praised and derided for their vivid depictions of sex and violence, often between men and young boys. But despite an answering machine greeting delivered in an obscene hiss (purportedly his roommate's doing), his manner is down-to-earth and a little disarming.

Which is why he enjoys frequent success in his magazine interviews with notoriously difficult figures such as Courtney Love and Leonardo DiCaprio. Those are two highlights from Cooper's non-fiction career featured in *All Ears: Cultural Criticism, Essays and Obituaries* (Soft Skull Press). The compact anthology of 16 articles (originally published in *SPIN*, *Artforum*, *Interview* and others) encompasses an array of topics, from William S. Burroughs's paintings to homeless California teens with AIDS.

Although Cooper finds the set formulae of writing magazine articles "like filling in the blanks," he excels at one of the most clichéd conventions: the personality profile. "I try not to have too many preconceptions going into the interview," says Cooper of his knack for gleaning new perspectives. If he holds too strong an opinion of a potential subject, like Marilyn Manson, he's more likely to turn an offer down.

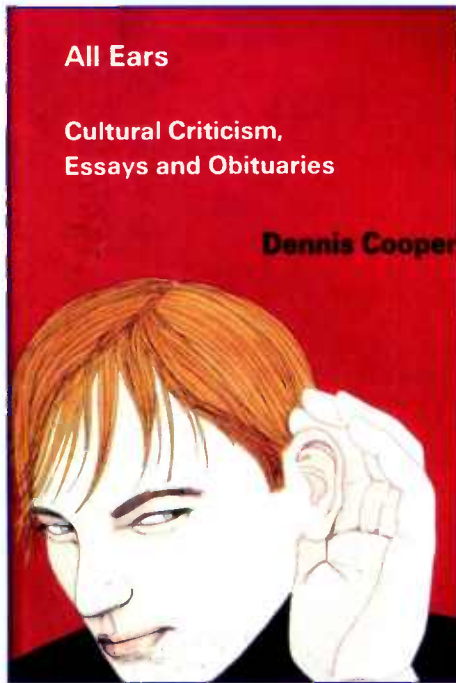
Bands from Hüsker Dü to Slayer pop up in Cooper's prose, but aside from the occasional offer to write about "serial murderers" and such, his two disciplines don't overlap much. Readers who skip to *All Ears'* Q&As with heartthrobs DiCaprio and Keanu Reeves may be disappointed to find they're treated as amusing, sensitive young men, not pieces of teenage meat. It's difficult to objectify somebody, however desirable, when he's sitting across the table from you.

"Brad Renfro was a perfect case," he offers as an example. After mentioning the 17-year-old movie star in one of his novels, a magazine sent him to grill the actor. They didn't get the perverse angle they'd hoped for. "I thought he was an amazing kid," the writer continues. "But then I interviewed him, and he's so fucked up in a lot of ways, in a lot of pain. There's no way you could see him lustily. I felt nothing but sympathy."

Cooper's upcoming projects include a new novel in February and a collaboration with photographer Vincent Fecteau about incest, followed by a more ambitious work of fiction that may be his least dreamlike yet. "I decided to challenge myself and try and write a novel that defines the times in a straightforward narrative way," he claims.

Don't expect him to halt his magazine writing any time soon. "I get more money from my journalism than I do from my fiction," he laughs. But he hasn't pawned his artistic integrity for a briefcase full of Benjamins. "I've turned down a bunch of assignments, like Bijou Phillips, because even though the money was good, I just couldn't get it up. I was supposed to fly to Chicago with The Verve for *SPIN*, go here and there, and hang out with them. And I thought, 'I don't want to spend time with these guys!'"

>>>Kurt B. Reighley



INSIDE TRACKS: A FIRST-HAND HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC FROM THE WORLD'S GREATEST RECORD PRODUCERS AND ENGINEERS

By Richard Buskin
(Spike/Avon)

Inside Tracks highlights the human element of record production. Richard Buskin edits his interviews with producers and engineers into monologues, and organizes them roughly chronologically, moving from Sam Phillips's monaural '50s to Butch Vig's sampled and MIDI-ed '90s. With the exception of Phil Spector, all the big names appear, from George Martin and Lamont Dozier to Arthur Baker and Don Was (production's a boy's world). The raconteurs ramble—Bones Howe leaps from memories of Elvis Presley to Tom Waits, Bill Price from the Sex Pistols to Stevie Wonder—and that's part of the collection's charm. While avoiding gearhead technical details, the reminiscences reveal happy accidents, work habits, claims of lack of credit (especially from the engineers), and, especially, the love of music making.

>>>Steve Klinge

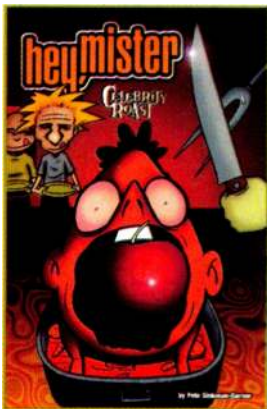
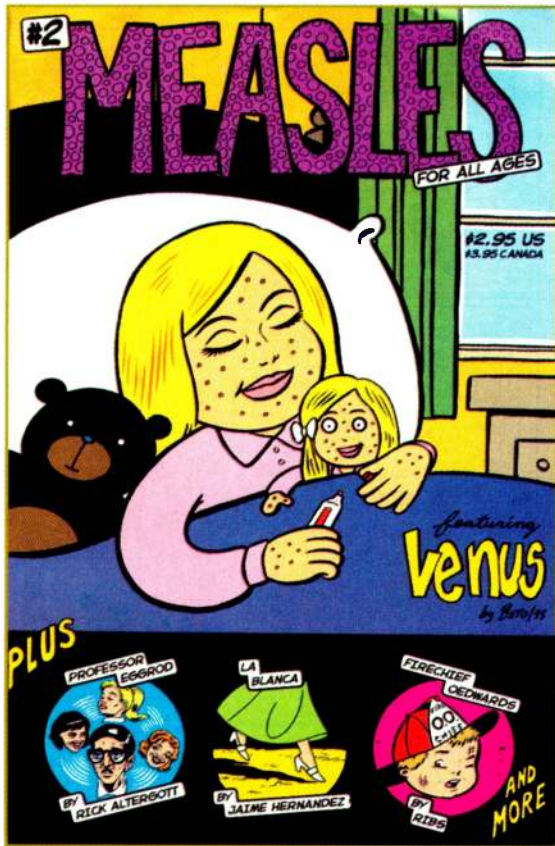
TECHNO REBELS

By Dan Sicko
(Billboard Books)

As longtime techno scribe Dan Sicko writes in the foreword to *Techno Rebels*, "writing about techno is hard." For all the recent interest in academizing, documenting and intellectualizing the electronic music scene (*Generation Ecstasy*, *Altered State*, the film *Modulations*), enthusiasts are far more interested in going out and creating their own history than in reading someone else's version. As meticulous as a minimalist Plastikman track—and sometimes as dry—*Techno Rebels* is a thorough history of techno, and the most substantial work of its kind from an American perspective to date. Sicko speaks with all the right people, and a selected discography makes for a nice appendix, but ultimately, like its brethren in the world of techno commentary, this one's for the diehards.

>>>William Werde

GREASY KID STUFF



Hard as it is to find good comic books for kids, it's even harder to find good comic books *about* kids—it's not often that writers can be cute but not condescending. (The high-water mark of kids-in-comics is still Sheldon Mayer's '50s and '60s series *Sugar And Spike*.) Fantagraphics' anthology series **MEASLES** manages the neat trick of being kid-friendly and right on the mark with its kid characters while maintaining its wry alterna-comix tone. The lead feature in each issue is Gilbert (*Love And Rockets*) Hernandez's splendid "Venus," about a little girl playing soccer, visiting an amusement park and developing crushes; the stories are driven by her discovering the world more than anything particularly plot-like. (As a bonus to longtime readers, the grown-ups in Venus's supporting cast are mostly characters from Hernandez's old porno-comic series *Birdland*, a few years older and with their clothes on; it's a nice gesture to give them lives in a different world.) "Measles" also includes contributions by well-known cartoonists like Jim Woodring and Ariel Bordeaux, and Steven Weissman does a strange but charming serial called "Olaf Oedwards, Kid Firechief," under his '50s-style-cartoon pseudonym "Ribs"—it's got lots of smiling kids with great big heads, and jokes like a hip-hop duo called "D.J. Diaper and M.C. Nu-Born" ("My mom—is da bomb!").

Most of Weissman's work is about kids, but a lot of it isn't exactly *for* kids. See, for instance, **THE LEMON KIDS** (Alternative Comics), an anthology of his strips about a pair of kids who work for "Vic's Chewy Candy Company" and find themselves in one horrible situation after another. The strips' attitude is unflinchingly grim, less in the gruesome violence that sometimes erupts than in the persistent suggestion that anything good that happens in them is the hopeless dream of people whose lives have already gone to hell. And the general adorableness of Weissman's art—instead of a clean-lined "bigfoot" style, he uses thick, rippling lines to suggest chiaroscuro effects and the bold gestures of Japanese *manga*, but everybody's heads are still half the size of their bodies—just underscores the scary parts.

Pete Sickman-Garner's *Hey, Mister* stories fall into the about-but-not-for category and then some. The hopelessly innocent Young Tim, at the center of most of the stories in his new collection **CELEBRITY ROAST**, is drawn like a six-year-old with a little tuft of hair and a single tooth, and though most of the characters keep insisting that he's of age and then some, that's more or less an excuse to get away with some deeply twisted but very funny stuff (let's just say that Chester Brown's infamous "Ed The Happy Clown" turns out to have been just the beginning of the guy-with-talking-penis-that-becomes-famous genre). Rudimentary as Sickman-Garner's drawing sometimes is, these short pieces work mostly on the interaction of his characters (one of whom is actually named Mister), notably Aunt Mary, a mindbendingly cranky cynic with a leather jacket and a perpetual grimace. And his favorite jokes are subtle and situational, or delivered in bone-dry asides: "Oh, he's not a dog. I'm not even sure he's feral."

There's not much left in the way of well-written music 'zines on paper any more, mostly because the average review length has been steadily shrinking—you can't really make much of an interesting argument about any album in 75 words. But John Darnielle (better known for his recording alter ego the Mountain Goats) has made a glorious exception to that rule with his 'zine **LAST PLANE TO JAKARTA**. The third issue (\$2 and some stamps to 1212 Scott Ave., Ames, IA 50014) is 32 pages long; it includes reviews of a single by Monoshock, recent albums by Peanut Butter Wolf and Nigel Bunn, old albums by My Bloody Valentine and Pink Floyd, and the Spandau Ballet catalogue—and that's it. They are *long* reviews. Darnielle's opinions are often contrarian, but they couldn't be stronger, and his critical writing is as thoughtful and occasionally uproarious as his lyrics: "All you can hear in the voice of the singer from Monoshock is the agony of birth. It's not that the words are difficult to understand, it's that it's completely impossible to make sense of a single syllable. There is only wailing that lies somewhere at the center of the gulf between excitement and panic. It's as though we've landed somewhere prior to the beginning of any language, and these guys are from Oakland." The Spandau Ballet essay, "Fragments Of Linear B," is particularly excellent, a close reading of new wave vapidity that turns it into high art, then flies off into a stratosphere of its own rhetoric.

NMM

>>> by douglas work <<<

WAY TOO MUCH FREE TIME ON THEIR HANDS

There are things about the web that are deep and meaningful and will eventually restructure human society and all that, but let's face it: The real fun in web surfing is discovering something so ridiculous it could never have arisen in any other medium.

Of course, two of the most popular destinations on the Web are Star Trek sites and porn sites, and it was only a matter of time until some sicko figured out how to combine them. **Warriors Of The Empire** (www.hotlink.com/warriors/), though, is sicker than most people could have imagined: It's large galleries of X-rated photos of men and women Photoshopped into Klingons. You can also submit your own photo—X-rated or otherwise—and the site's creator will work his digital magic and turn you into a Klingon. It's the hip thing, after all: According to **The Onion** (www.theonion.com/onion3256), Klingon speakers now outnumber Navajo speakers. And if you need a photo of yourself, there's actually a digital camera on the web that will take a snap of you looking into your monitor (www.geocities.com/Heartland/Acres/3072/camera2.html). Well, sort of.

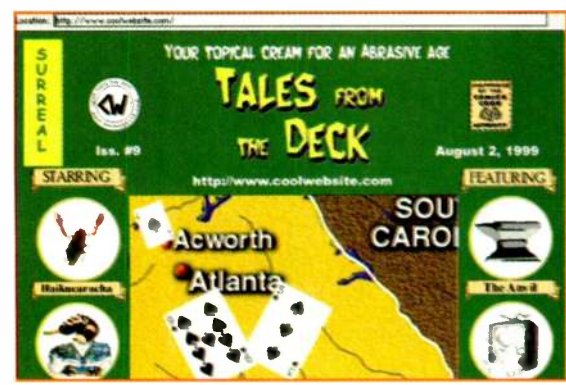
Speaking of digital gadgets, Palm Pilots are becoming more and more ubiquitous, but nobody's done much with the little hand-held computers to solve actual social problems. Until now. The Drunken Monkeys programming collective (drunkenmonkeys.com/palm.html) has invented **Gaydar For Palm**—at last, the ages-old system of co-optable fashion accessories and potentially significant glances has been organized into a scientific program that can check out that cutie and tell if he swings the same way. It can even answer the briefs vs. boxers question without exchanging a single word. The current version of Gaydar doesn't actually communicate with other Pilots' infrared ports—you'd think they'd have thought of that! Drunken Monkeys are also working on some other shareware Palm programs, including "Pocketmonkey," a crack-addicted, anti-social simian virtual pet, and "Self Destruct," a Palm version of the popular thermonuclear devices from adventure movies.

Tina Brown's *Talk* magazine was making a buzz for months before it actually debuted, but it didn't have anything like a web presence. So some smart aleck decided that it ought to have a web page anyway, and came up with www.talkmagazine.net, packed with very, very silly twists on magazine-subscription-solicitation boilerplate. Apparently, it was taken down for fear of legal action, but then reinstated when Brown herself saw it and thought it was funny. There is some justice in the world, the forthcoming historical reenactment of the Jonestown massacre (www.jonestownreenactment.org/) notwithstanding.

In an even more blatant example of celebrity worship, somebody's gone the legendary Spam haiku one better with **I Pity The Haiku**, examples of the classic Japanese poetic form about Mr. T (infinitefish.com/haiku/). "What's with that mohawk?/it must symbolize something/it's just my hair, fool!" goes a typical one. You might also want to check out the *South Park* haiku at beefcake.com/archive/haiku/index.html ("Stan's predicament:/Wendy's looks cause him to barf./Cupid laughing hard"), or the weekly haiku-ification of headlines at www.coolwebsite.com ("this question is posed:/would china attack taiwan?/consult bear in woods"), or the meaningless but rather convincing computer-generated haiku at www.familygames.com/features/humor/haiku.html ("The empty rose sits/As pliant maples contend./Does the quick brook climb?").

Perhaps, at this point, you want to go wake up your brain a little with some classic literature or science fiction, but don't have time to actually sit down and read an entire book. In that case, **Book-A-Minute** (rinkworks.com/bookaminute/) may be the site for you. It "ultra-condenses" everything from *Light In August* to *Ender's Game* into three or four lines of dialogue, with uncanny accuracy. Let's just say that it would be hard to do the complete works of Jane Austen much more justice in the 25 words they get here. The page also inspired the even more laconic **Band-A-Minute** site (members.aol.com/nhennies/bandaminute.html), put together "to humiliate every indie band in existence." On Tortoise: "I like Miles Davis. Buy my 30 different remix records." On Ben Lee: "I screw Claire Danes. Now you hate me even more."

If all of this makes you want to jam a pair of scissors repeatedly into your crotch, you're in luck: Some enterprising person in Canada has put together a full-fledged **Jamming A Pair Of Scissors Repeatedly Into Your Crotch** site (www.armchair.mb.ca/~scissors/). It's got scissor-jamming FAQ files, photos of celebrities including Celine Dion, Francis Ford Coppola and the cast of the original "Star Trek" with strategically placed scissors, and a section on the history of scissor-jamming, as well as the best "under construction" sign we've ever seen. **NMM**



ROCKIN' IN THE USA

Hard rock, glam rock, punk rock, classic rock...
However you like yours, '80s fashion is back.

Feeling a little Pat Benetar? How about Joan Jett, Blondie or Billy Idol? Maybe Whitesnake, Warrant or Poison is more your speed? Our models, Jennifer Herrema of Royal Trux and Ryan Anderson of the Millbastards, show you how to rock the latest updates of some '80s fashion classics. So grab your old concert tees, leather pants, studded denim and metal accessories, and make like a rock star.

STUDED:

Jennifer wears a black sleeveless studded hoodie by UZI (\$36) and flare hood studded jeans by TOMMY JEANS (\$78). Throughout these shots: Silver bracelet, eagle bracelet, lightning bolt ring and eagle ring designed and made by JENNIFER HERREMA.

DEAD CAN DANCE:

Ryan wears a skull 'n' bones vintage concert tee with black vinyl pants by ENERGIE (\$115).

MODELS: JENNIFER HERREMA (royal trux) & RYAN ANDERSON (milibastards) WORDS & STYLING: MICHELLE ZACKS IMAGES: BRITT CARPENTER HAIR & MAKEUP: FRANCESCA MANIACE

CRAZY BABY:

Jennifer wears a vintage Ozzy Osbourne concert T.



ROCKIN' IN THE USA (CONT.)

ROYAL TRUX frontwoman **JENNIFER HERREMA** has been playing good ol' fashioned rock 'n' roll with bandmate Neil Hagerty since 1990. A new Trux record, *Veterans Of Disorder*, is out now on Drag City. Having toured the world, Herrema claims that people really know how to rock in Spain and San Francisco. Herrema also makes and designs her own line of jewelry, samples of which you can see here. To order, email eaglehood@excite.com.

RYAN ANDERSON has been playing with his band, the **MILLBASTARDS**, for two years, cranking out what he calls "Southern swampy rock 'n' roll with a punk influence." Perhaps his Texan roots have made him this way. If you catch the Millbastards live, ask them to play "Mouth Full Of Ash" or "Peeping Tom."

SHREDED:

Jennifer wears a vintage concert tee, a shredded red leather choker/belt by TROY SMITH (\$300), and her own pants and snakeskin boots.

EYE OF THE TIGER:

Jennifer wears a black T-shirt with tiger patch by UZI (\$23) and her own jeans and belt.



STRAY CAT:

Ryan wears a sleeveless purple leopard print hoodie by UZI (\$64) with black vinyl pants by ENERGIE (\$115). White belt with silver eyelets by RED MONKEY DESIGNS BY TORRY PENDERGRASS (\$125).



HEDWIG (continued from page 65)

stood in nightly as the Angry Inch until recently leaving the New York-based production. "It's bizarre to have to play a struggling musician to become successful."

Starting with 1960's *Bye Bye Birdie*, the emphasis in rock 'n' roll musical theater has been more on the theater than on the music, with scant rocking actually taking place. Most stabs at recreating the rock experience on a live stage are, let's face it, rather limp—rock for the "theatre" crowd, definitely spelled with an r-e. Avoiding the appearance of staginess was of primary importance to Mitchell and Trask as they undertook the tragicomic tale of Hedwig (né Hansel) Schmidt, an episcene German lad infatuated with '70s Anglo-American arena rock in wall-bisected Cold War Berlin, who via a botched sex change, finds herself in a Kansas trailer park with just "an angry inch" between her legs. Quite naturally, this story leads to grandiose dramatic and musical possibilities.

But the lack of musical credibility of most rock-oriented theater typically lies in the fact that the songs fail to live up to the bigger-than-life story being proffered on stage or on screen. We're asked to accept third-rate pseudo-rock as the offering of some mythical rock god or goddess. By selecting a real rock band that has experience performing as a unit, and presenting the members as part of the on-stage action, Mitchell and Trask have avoided a problem that they maintain is mainly logistical. In traditional musicals, and even more rock-oriented ones like *Rent*, a pit orchestra situated underneath the stage supplies the "rock." "That just wouldn't do in this circumstance," says Trask. "The best bands have a communal sense that is found only in a group. Having the play being a musical in the form of a rock gig in a concert situation, and having Cheater, a real band, playing the rock band live on stage, solves that problem."

While Mitchell notes that traditionally "producers of rock musical theater may not have the best taste," the *Hedwig* cast album successfully evokes all the requisite '70s glam masters: Queen's Freddie Mercury, Marc Bolan of T. Rex, post-Velvets Lou Reed and, of course, Ziggy Stardust-era Bowie. Other influences lurking amongst the dozen stylistic pastiches range from Beatles sweetness to Stones blues raunch to Sex Pistols sneer; Meat Loaf bombast to country cornpone to Blondie urban swagger.

Trask found the process of writing a showstopper, like *Hedwig's* anthem, "Wig In A Box," as daunting a prospect as creating a hit single. *Hedwig* is Trask's first foray into writing a musical. So unlike writing regular rock songs, he says, "the songs have to move the story along or define a character." He refers to the process of writing songs for characters devised by someone else, in this case his writing partner Mitchell, as "required inspiration."

"One of the things that drew John to me is that I've always employed a three-act structure to my songwriting," Trask says. "I've always used the second verse to move the story along and the last stanza as an epilogue, asking myself, 'What's the dramatic arc of this song?'" Of course, the narrative demands of *Hedwig* are greater, he admits, but he was also mindful of what would make for a balanced album. "We could put in another grungy rocker, or a personality piece here," he says.

Thus Trask and Mitchell kept their ears cocked toward eclecticism when assembling the tracks for the *Hedwig* album. "David Bowie didn't just have outrageous rock songs that were just reverbed Stones shuffles with effects, where he sang about people with weird clothing," elaborates Trask. "He had ballads and what sounded like show tunes, as well." In this regard, an unlikely *Hedwig* inspiration is that famous glam rocker Chuck Berry. "His albums always have one Nat King Cole-like song, one Kansas City jump blues song, a calypso song, some doo-wop. He always had a mix of things. It wasn't just 'dada-da-da-dada-da-da,'" he says, imitating a "Johnny B. Goode"-type staccato guitar riff.

"Lately, eclecticism is frowned upon," laments Mitchell. "It's considered poseur-ish. But everything is a pose. What's important is where you're coming from, and what you're trying to communicate." He adds, "Look at Debbie Harry, for example. She has created a role for herself in Blondie that's different from her real personality. It's as beautifully crafted as any performance by Gena Rowlands."

Roles are an important factor to anyone who labors in art that questions the limits of alternative sexual identities in society. Mitchell (a fan of musical theater who readily admits to his "Judy Garland side") and Trask (who, with Cheater, was active in New York's queercore scene) decry the notion of rockers having it both ways: adopting and adapting gay iconography while furthering the hyper-hetero nature of rock music. Trask points out that "androgyny offers people a cover, whether they're straight or gay. I think that rock has always romanticized otherness."

"To an extent, bands like Cheater were addressing the fact that we were pissed off that sexuality was squelched in rock 'n' roll [in the '90s], with a lot of gay role models pretending and hiding. That pissed us off," says Mitchell. "But I was also angry that rock 'n' roll was denigrated in gay culture. The disco factories annoyed the hell out of us."

He's also noticed a degree of anti-drag prejudice in gay culture. "I'd never done drag before, and people I know were shocked, wondering what kind of scary people would be waiting for me after the show. Well, I have been getting more groupie interest [from being Hedwig] than from anything else I've done. Strangely, it's been mostly from women." But Mitchell points out that, his female groupies notwithstanding, drag in rock for the most part is not usually equated with eroticism. "You wouldn't think of Twisted Sister as being hot."

Mitchell has recently put the finishing touches on the screen adaptation of *Hedwig*, which he will direct, in addition to portraying his special lady creation. Several months ago, he relinquished the role in the New York production to Michael Cerveris, who, oddly enough, had just come off playing the title role in the Broadway adaptation of that ur-rock opera, *The Who's Tommy*. While Mitchell and Trask are performers at heart, they're learning to enjoy stepping back and appreciating the fruits of their labor from a distance. "Watching Michael portray Hedwig brings out the director in me," Mitchell says. "When he sings the final big anthem at the end, he just approaches it so differently, and it always blows me away." But, Mitchell admits, "It's still a little nerve-racking when I see things working, but in a different way. But ultimately it makes me happy to see people laughing and enjoying it around me, not knowing that I wrote it."

Cerveris has been tapped to helm the Los Angeles production, which will open on October 31. As of press time, open auditions are still underway for a suitable LA band to take on the Angry Inch moniker. And in a coals-to-Newcastle move, plans are at work to bring *Hedwig* home to Germany for the first time, with a production in Stuttgart. "I hope to see Hedwigs all over the world, playing simultaneously," Mitchell says, outlining his dream for a franchise of McHedwigs everywhere. "It's kind of punk rock to think that anyone can be Hedwig." **NMM**



DICK DALE & HIS DEL-TONES
"Misirlou"

STEPPEWOLF
FEATURING JOHN KAY
"Born To Be Wild"

CHUCK BERRY
"You Never Can Tell"

THE MARKETTS
"Batman Theme"

BOBBY VINTON
"Blue Velvet"

STEALERS WHEEL
"Stuck In The Middle With You"

HENRY MANCINI
AND HIS ORCHESTRA
"Theme From Charlie's Angels"

MIKE POST
"Theme From Hill Street Blues"

BOB JAMES
"Angela (Theme From Taxi)"

ANGELO BADALAMENTI
"Theme From Twin Peaks -
Fire Walk With Me"

TRANCE ATLANTIC AIR WAVES
"Crockett's Theme"

LALO SCHIFRIN
"Mission Impossible"

THE VENTURES
"Hawaii Five-0"

JOHN BARRY
"The James Bond Theme
From Dr. No"

ISAAC HAYES
"Theme From Shaft"

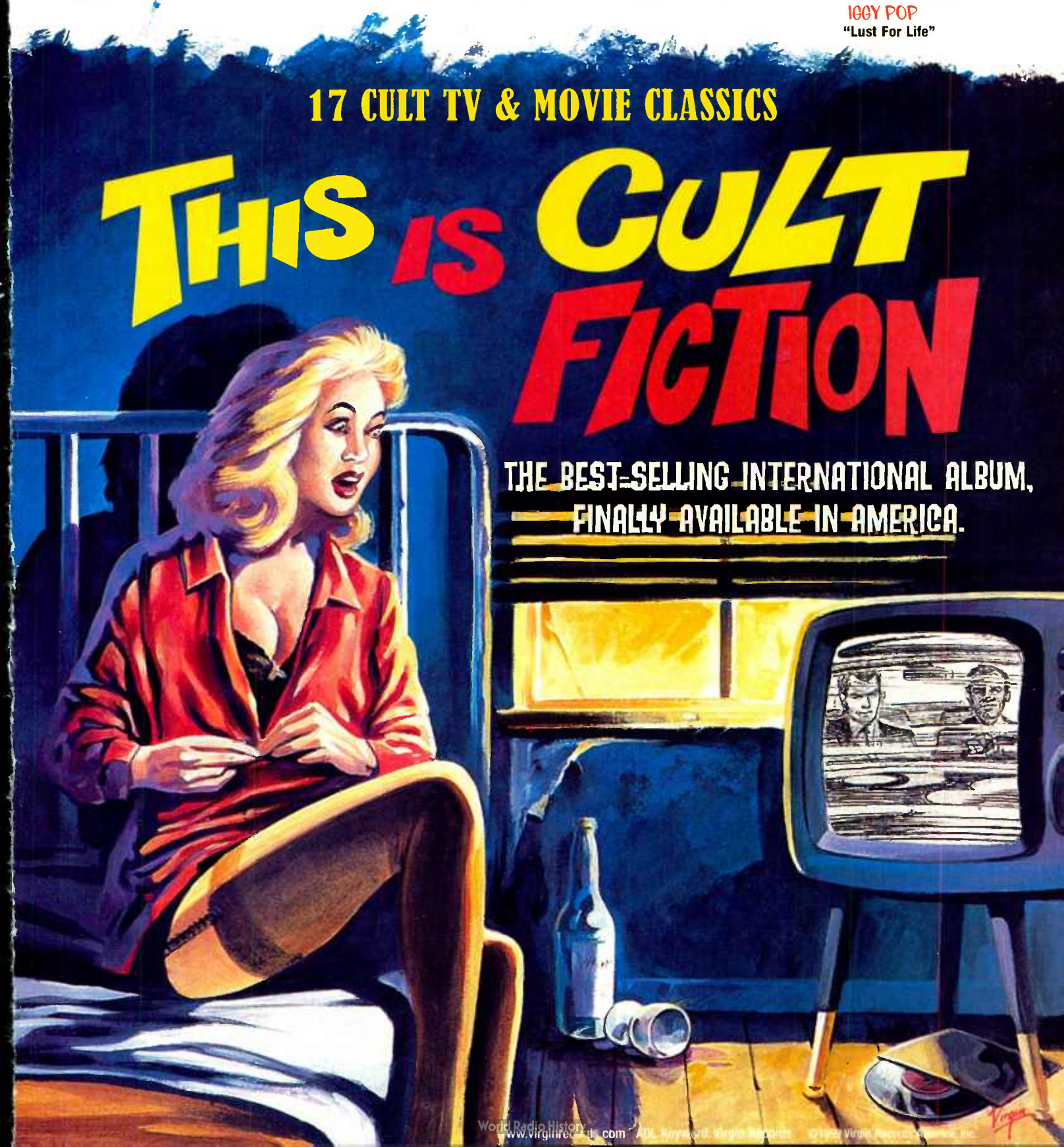
HARRY NILSSON
"Everybody's Talkin'"

IGGY POP
"Lust For Life"

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KINGPIN: LIFE OF CRIME

(Interplay) PC



The gangland shootout *Kingpin* is so excessively violent that if you happen to accidentally view someone playing it, your soul will be damned to Hell, your vocabulary will become laced with obscenities, and you'll have a sudden urge to steal candy from babies. That's what the hype preceding this game would have you believe anyway. Sure, this first-person shooter is covered in blood, shot-off limbs and profanities, but the action so quickly degenerates into hackneyed scenes from [insert your favorite Mafia film here] that the violence still comes off as inherently cartoonish. How many times do you have to hear "fuck" (or a variation thereof) before it doesn't sound like a word anymore? You'll find out within the first ten minutes. But despite its penchant for the cliché, *Kingpin* is a hoot to play and the dirty, graffiti-covered environments (rendered on a modified *Quake II* engine), visually rank at the top of the heap. Limited interaction with other non-player characters makes for an interesting diversion from the typical "shoot-'em-all" fare as well. Don't feel like getting involved in a lead-spraying fight with that thug guarding the warehouse? Just hire those two heavies you met at the local hangout to take care of the dirty work. After all, that's how a real Kingpin would do it, right?

>>>Aaron Clow

"It was tremendously monotonous." >>> 33-year-old Billy Mitchell of Hollywood, Florida, on his record-setting "perfect game" of *Pac-Man*, during the July 4th weekend. It took him more than six hours to clear 256 boards, never missing a blue ghost or piece of fruit, nor losing a single life. His final score? 3,333,360.



UNREAL MISSION PACK: RETURN TO NA PALI

(GT Interactive) PC

Most people who played the original *Unreal* were so caught up in its stunning environments and excellent enemy AI that they could've cared less about critics' complaints of a thin plot. Lack of a story line didn't stop *Quake* and *Quake II* from being bestsellers, did it? Well, now there's an *Unreal* add-on made especially for the naysayers. *Return To Na Pali* picks up right where *Unreal* left off: Your escape pod, drifting in outer space, is picked up by a passing military ship. Your rescuers aren't impressed by your tales of daring-do on planet Na Pali since, according to public record, you're a criminal. Therefore, they give you the option of performing a find-and-salvage mission in return for your freedom. You aren't long on the planet before—surprise, surprise—you realize that the deal is not as cut-and-dry as you first thought it was. Voiceovers between levels keep the story moving and if you thought *Unreal's* level design was amazing, wait until you meet *Return To Na Pali*. You'll need the full version of *Unreal* (or *Unreal Tournament*) to play this mission pack, but what serious computer gamer doesn't already have this essential in his or her library anyway?

>>>Aaron Clow

ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

(Fox Interactive) PC

Looking for a new twist on the first person shooter? *AvP* offers you three species to play, all based on the *Alien* and *Predator* movies. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses, which balances the competition very well. There is no save feature in real life, nor is there one in *AvP*. Luckily, you can download a patch off of Fox's website that will allow you to save during the game, as opposed to only at the end of each episode. If you're playing the marine or the predator, you'll quickly realize why all those colonial marines died in the movies—the *Alien* is so fast and does so much damage you'll want to stay far away. The *Predator* may be a bit slow, but it can cloak, has vision modes to see any species well, and sports heavy armament. As a Marine, you're armed to the teeth, but you move even slower than the *Predator*. And you don't have a chance against an *Alien*, so powder its skull with lead before it reaches you. You'll take a serious pounding in this game, but don't let that scare you away. A fast-paced title with a serious roller-coaster ride of fear built in, *Alien vs. Predator* is something you shouldn't miss.

>>>Piggy

DESCENT 3

(Interplay) PC

Descent has long been the standard by which first person shooters and LAN and sci-fi games are measured. So when a new *Descent* title comes out, enthusiasts line up around the block without any prompting. Each time, *Descent* manages to raise the bar while sticking to its addictive core elements. *Descent 3* drops you back in the cockpit of your trusted fighter, and then throws you into yet another labyrinth space station where a series of challenging levels stands between you and your nemesis. Unlike the lather, rinse, repeat goals found in previous incarnations, this latest chapter introduces new puzzles, missions and timed tests with each level. Enemy AI demonstrates groundbreaking sophistication. Robot ships dodge, use cover and ambush with such personality that you'd think you were playing a network game (which, of course, you could do as well). The new Fusion engine allows you to move freely between the station's interior and open space, seamlessly combining elements of *Descent* and *Descent: Freespace* with convincing lighting, full 360-degree movement and almost flawless rendering. When you've been the market leader in first person, space-age shooters for so many years it would be easy to pass off superficial makeovers as sequels. But Interplay has once again delivered a *Descent* game that could turn heads without any history.

>>>Sam Cannon

SCANNER: SOUND POLAROIDS

PHOTO CRESTINA VELIA FORCINA

"I have always been interested in the relationship between sound and architectural space. For much of my work I tap into the flotsam and jetsam of environmental sound that surrounds us all. Recently I was the lucky recipient of the Imaginaria 99 annual digital art prize at the ICA in London, an award to encourage artists to explore the artistic possibilities of digital media, at a time when the digital is transforming the traditional arts, from art to film, from performance to writing. This 'Sound Polaroid' project I am working on is a movement towards re-mapping a city through sound and vision. Here I am photographed beneath the industrial concrete blocks of the South Bank Arts Centre in London, a revitalized space where one can wander through the book stalls, visit the Wayward Gallery (where I will be exhibiting as part of the 'Sonic Boom' exposition next year) and listen to the boats pass by on the River Thames, a quintessential London image. This light-encrusted tunnel acts like a funnel drawing in the sound of passing bodies, a melancholic echo of contact."

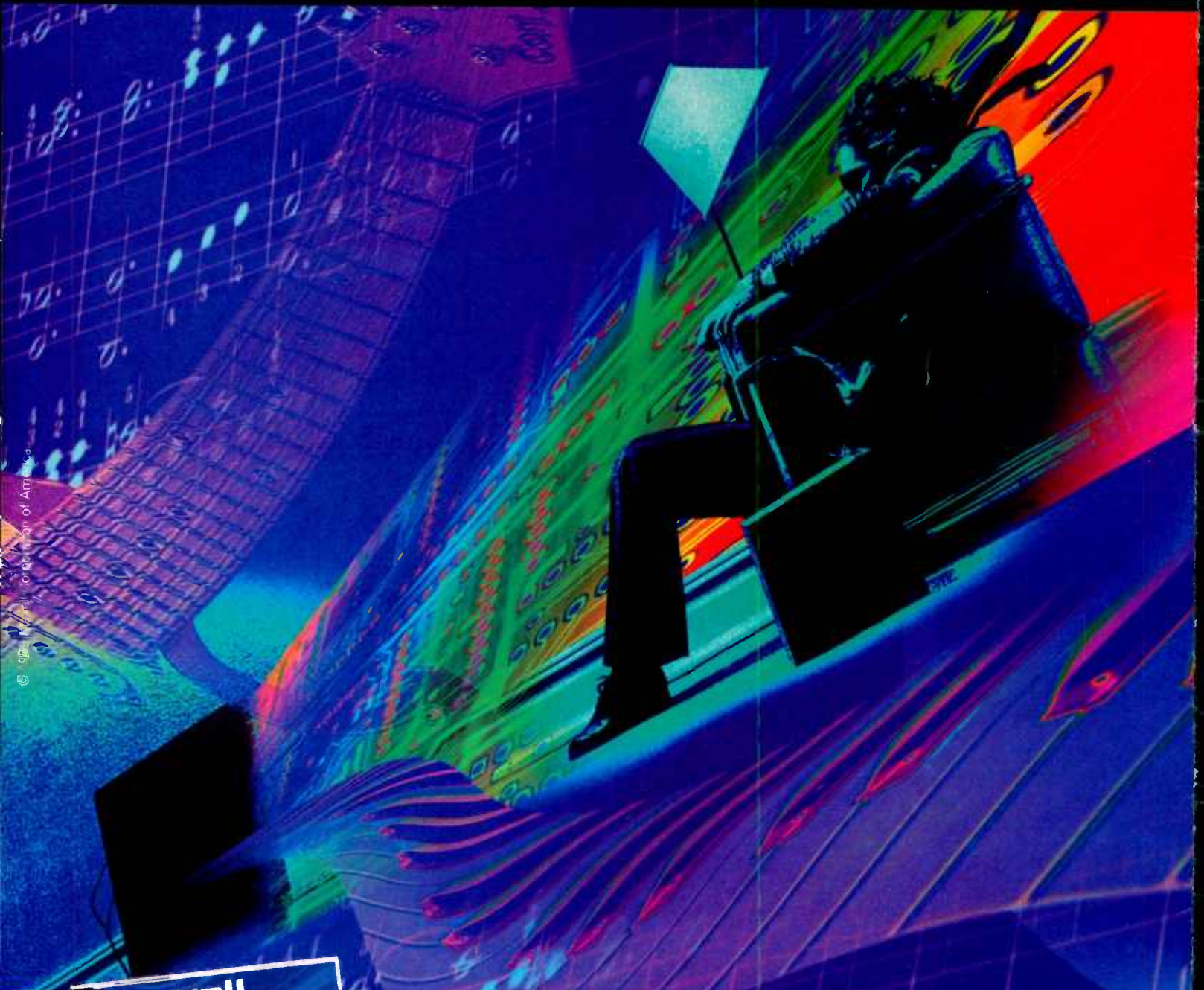
>>>Robin Rimbaud, a.k.a. Scanner



For more info, visit <http://www.crd.ica.ac.uk/scannetonne>. Scanner's latest release is *Lauwarm Instrumentals* (Sultur-Beggars Banquet).

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IGGY POP

15 "I just love music, you know what I'm saying?" gushes songwriter/performer **BEN HARPER**. "When you love music and you love what you do, you can only hope that people will get behind what you're doing. And music don't lie. Music is the truth. You can look into a man's eyes and know, because a man's heart is in his eyes, and music comes from the heart. You can look into a man's eyes and know if he's about music or he's just a pirate." "Burn To Shine" is from his latest album of the same name (Virgin). (See Reviews, p. 42.)

16 "We started out from ground zero, buying drums and guitars, like you do when you're a kid, except we were all about 30," says 49-year-old country noir singer/songwriter **JOHNNY DOWD**. "You've got to look on it as a blessing; look at people my age who've been doing this for ever—they're either all burned out and cynical, or they're retired or dead. That's the positive side of it! I'd like to be more successful, but I wouldn't like to think that I'd done my thing a long time ago." "God Created Woman" is from Dowd's second release, *Pictures From Life's Other Side* (Koch). (See Quick Fix, p. 16.)

17 "This could be our last chance, yeah," said Mick Head, vocalist/guitarist for the British group **SHACK**. "We've had a couple of problems in the last few years. We did a photo session the other week, and I'd just had half me teeth smashed out. In January I broke me wrist, just when we found out we'd got the support slot on the Catatonia tour. But, y'know, I'm always gonna write. So you might have to put up with me until I'm 65." "Natalie's Party" is from Shack's third album, *HMS Fable* (London). (See Reviews p. 49.)

18 "It's just basically frustration with the fact that I had a girlfriend who had no problem telling me about my shortcomings and never really told me anything good," says **JIMMIE'S CHICKEN SHACK** frontman Jimmy HaHa of the track "Do Right" (Radio Mix), from the album *Bring Your Own Stereo* (Rocket-IDJMG). "It was just a three-in-the-morning, five-minute rant. The whole record basically is about my last girlfriend," he says with a laugh. "It's kind of funny."

19 "I grew up listening to absolutely everything: classical, jazz, my older sister's glam records, Iggy, Bowie, Lou Reed," says half of **THE LUCY NATION**, Anna Nystrom, who's from Sweden and has an architecture degree. "I discovered loads about songwriting from my architecture studies. Architecture is about investigating an idea and transforming it into a finished object, which is closely related to the way I work with music." "Alright" is from the band's Maverick debut, *On*.

20 Since the late '60s, **IGGY POP** has been an unparalleled force in rock 'n' roll. This doesn't necessarily mean he's comfortable in his surroundings. "The music industry is like swimming in a toilet filled with sharks," he says. "I realized that music has been bought and the rewards are too large. It's been made into something like golf: just another American sport with an expensive set of apparatus you have to buy in order to play." "Corruption" is from Iggy Pop's latest, *Avenue B* (Virgin). (See Reviews, p. 47.)

1 "What would I like to see happen?" asks **BUCKCHERRY** vocalist Joshua Todd in a recent interview. "All those fuckers who tried to bring me down, all those fucking people who tried to tell me how to live—I just want them to feel it. Feel the Buckcherry wrath. I want them to choke on it. I want to continue making amazing records and hold that up to all those people who made fun of us, those fuckers who say, 'What the fuck are you going to do after music?'" "For The Movies" is from the band's eponymous debut (DreamWorks). (See cover story, p. 32.)



BUCKCHERRY

2 "We're not a traditional English band that can't play, looking at our shoes. We're in the great tradition of British art school rock," says a less-than-modest Cliff Jones, frontman for **GAY DAD**, which has received a lot of immediate attention in its native England. "We're a great rock band. Hype's only hype if there's nothing there at the end of it to justify or deliver. I think Gay Dad really delivers. We've not got one bad review for the album." "Joy" is the first single from the quintet's debut album *Leisure Noise* (London). (See Quick Fix, p. 13.)



GAY DAD

3 "We're from Southport. There's not a whole lot there besides music," admits **GOMEZ** guitarist/singer/harmonica player Ian Ball of his hometown. "I've never said anything bad about Southport. It's just that there are a lot of old people there. Gomez is the sound of being surrounded by old age." Percussionist Oily Peacock agrees: "It's mostly a retirement community for Liverpool. Ian keeps getting into trouble for talking bad about it." "Bring It On" is the first single from the band's second album *Bring It On* (Virgin). (See Best New Music, p. 19.)



GOMEZ

4 **MUSE** has been frequently compared to prog-pop titans Radiohead, but according to lead singer/songwriter Matthew Bellamy, these comparisons are a little too close for comfort. "We obviously can't deny it totally," he said of Radiohead's influence on he and his bandmates (whose average age is a mere 20). "There is a similarity there, but we're much more than just a fill-in until their next album comes out. We're really not in the business of just peddling some lame pastiche. We're Muse, not Radiohead decaf." "Muscle Museum" is from Muse's stateside debut, *Showbiz* (Maverick). (See On The Verge, p. 22.)

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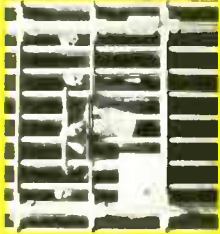
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DOPE



DELIRIOUS?



SKYCYCLE

10 "When you listen to the whole album you can really tell that it's a complete journal of what was happening to us as we wrote it," says Joanna Stevens, half of the British-born duo **SOLAR TWINS** (who now reside in Los Angeles). "Even though we're deeply rooted in dance music, we think of ourselves as songwriters. We can sit down at a piano, I can sing a song and David can play along, and it can work on that level." "Puppet" is from the band's self-titled debut album on Maverick.

11 "We're amazed at how much brilliant music comes out of the States, so we feel it is a privilege to be here," says Martin Smith, lead singer of British band **DELIRIOUS?**. "We really feel like we can make history. Maybe that's kind of naive, but if we don't believe that, how can we expect anyone else to? What Delirious? is about is invading the culture, grabbing it by the scruff of the neck and saying, 'We're here to stay. We feel very much that this is our time.'" "Gravily" is from the band's second album, *Mozzamarphis* (Virgin).

12 Steve Isaacs, frontman for **SKYCYCLE**, seems to be between two worlds: the past and the future. He made a name for himself touring in the title role of *The Who's Tommy*, before getting the band together, how he designs webistes for the likes of Sugar Ray, and created his own at skycycleonline.com. "It's an exciting time," says Isaacs. "Everybody always talks about how great the '60s or '70s were, but there are some really amazing changes taking place—the Internet is really a beautiful frontier." "Last Girl On Earth" is from the band's debut, *Ones And Zeros* (MCA).

13 "It's been a dream of mine to work with Bob [Clearmountain, producer]," says **MIKE VIOLA** of **CANDY BUTCHERS**, who have just released *Falling Into Place* (RPM-Columbia). "So it was a thrill to have him involved with this album. I remember when we were working on 'Killing Floor,' I told him I wanted the disco bass part to sound like the group Chic, and Bob says, 'Oh yeah, I know that bass sound well—I did that record!'" (See Reviews, p. 54.)

14 "It wasn't until we sequenced *This Time* [Hollywood: that the songs all seemed to really fit together]," says percussionist/songwriter Louie Perez of **LOS LOBOS**. "A lot of the record was written when we were recording; even written in the studio, so we didn't spend too much time second-guessing ourselves. With *This Time*, I think we've managed to maintain our sense of enthusiasm without willfully recreating the things we've done before." The song "This Time" is also the album's first single. "It's a classic soul lyric about people's obsession with time," says Perez. (See Best New Music, p. 22, August issue.)

5 Since the mid-'90s, Sebaitoli's Lou Barlow has been collaborating with home-recording maven John Davis as the **FOLK IMPLOSION**. Their latest album is *One Part Lullaby* (Interscope), from which "Free To Go" is taken. "We knew we had hit on something when we did our first record," recalls Barlow. "Everything we talked about when we first got together was like a joint between us that we turned in the backyard and swore by. If we went back and dug up that joint today, I think we'd find we really followed through on those ideas with all we've done since." (See feature, p. 24.)

6 "We like to subliminally attack people by disguising pop songs as really heavy music," says **PORTABLE** frontman Chance. "We think it's much more impactful. Most of our songs you could lash out on an acoustic guitar but we prefer the vehicle of a heavy band. It's sweaty and it's rock 'n' roll. It's what it's supposed to be." Guitarist Gus Cicci agrees: "Energy has always been the focus for us. We have to wear the music, and come across like we're sincere." "Help Yourself" is from the band's debut, *Secret Life* (TVT). (See On The Verge, p. 22.)

7 "Maybe I'm not in college anymore and the artsy part of me isn't working right, but I don't want to write poems right now," says **PROMISE RING** frontman Davey Von Billein. "Those [past] records served their purpose. They gave us the chance to make all the mistakes we needed to. But I don't see those years as charmed or anything. I mean, if you don't despise the past to some extent, there's no real impetus for the future." "Emergency! Emergency!" is from the album *Very Emergency* (Janie Tree). (See feature, p. 28.)

8 "I'm an angry person, angry about a lot of things," says **DOPE** frontman/guitarist Eric Dope. His feelings are matched by the band's post-industrial/metal sound, which comes through on songs like "Sick" from Dope's debut album *Felons And Revolutionaries* (Flop-Epic). "For me on stage—I want the crowd and me to be in that full-on aggressive mode. We live and look what we are and what we sound. I'll always be that white-trash guy, always be about metal and punk and guitars... I don't expect the aggression to disappear on the next album!" (See Quick Fix, p. 14.)

9 Paul Daley—who with partner Neil Barnes comprises the British electronic duo **LEFTFIELD**—isn't always comfortable with the group's celebrity in England. A fan got into a car accident listening to *Leftism*, the duo's last album. "When the bass kicked in," according to Daley, "I don't like a lot of attention from people singing me out to be something, 'cause you have to live up to that. And that's when you stop being yourself." "Africa Slava" is named for featured vocalist Afrika Bambaataa and is taken from Leftfield's new album *Rhythm & Stealth* (Higher Ground/Hard Hands-Columbia).



MUSE



PROMISE RING



PORTABLE

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<input type="checkbox"/>	17. SHACK	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	18. JIMMIE'S CHICKEN SHACK	5	4	3	2	1
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<input type="checkbox"/>	20. IGGY POP	5	4	3	2	1

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portablemusic.com

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www.angelfire.com/vt/thepromising

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members.tripod.com/~Suspiria1/quasi.html

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www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~sarahl/home.htm

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home.westbrabant.net/~raintree/solex

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www.s4all.nl/~slavlab/ThirdEyeFoundation/index.html

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members.aol.com/jaberrock/page.htm

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www.sugarfreerecords.com/wheat.html

LABELS OF ARTISTS WHO APPEAR IN THIS ISSUE

550
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New York, NY 10022
www.epicenter.com/EpicCenter/550/550.cfm

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www.amrecords.com

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Beggars Banquet
580 Broadway
New York, NY 10012
www.beggars.com

Bloodshot
912 W. Addison
Chicago, IL 60613
www.bloodshotrecords.com

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1120 Fifth Ave., #15A
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www.caipirinha.com

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www.columbiarecords.com

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www.deafened.com

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website:lineone.net/~diskono

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Drag City
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www.dragcity.com

DreamWorks
100 Universal Plaza, Rm. 477
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www.dreamworksmc.com

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1501 Powell St., Ste. M
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www.dropbeat.com

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www.fatbeats.com/eastconf.html

Eighteenth Street Lounge
1210 West 18th St., Ste. 200B
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www.esmusic.com

Elektra
75 Rockefeller Plaza
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www.eketra.com

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www.instinct-online.com

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www.interscoperecords.com

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www.kachml.com

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www.mintyfresh.com

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www.moonshine.com

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www.monster-records.com

Mute
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New York, NY 10011
www.mutelibtech.com/mute

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New York, NY 10003
www.radicalmedia.com/~liam/norton

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New York, NY 10019
www.nothingrecords.com

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Seattle, WA 98101

Rastamusic
www.rastamusic.com/index.html

Raptivism
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New York, NY 10003

Rawkus
676 Broadway, 4th Fl.
New York, NY 10012
www.rawkus.com

Razor & Tie
214 Sullivan St., 4th Fl.
New York, NY 10012
www.razorandtie.com

RCA Nashville
1440 Broadway
New York, NY 10018
www.rca.com/labels/rca.html

Relapse
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Millersville, PA 17551
www.relapse.com

Restless
1816 Vista Del Mar Ave.
Hollywood, CA 90028
www.restless.com

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10636 Santa Monica Blvd.
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www.rhino.com

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www.rykodisc.com

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www.sire.com

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www.smithlike.com

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www.sonymusic.com

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www.erols.com/spinart

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www.subpop.com

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www.sugarfreerecords.com

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www.timebombrecordings.com

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www.tonecasualties.com

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www.tvtrerecords.com

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P.O. Box 8718
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www.subpop.com/up

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72 Madison Ave., 8th Fl.
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www.winduprecords.com

SEPTEMBER 7

AGNOSTIC FRONT Riot, Riot, Upstart *Epitaph*
BABY RAY Do I Love America *Thirsty Ear*
BLINKER THE STAR August Everywhere *DreamWorks*
BOMBHELL ROCKS Street Art Gallery *Burning Heart*
BUFFALO DAUGHTER WXBD EP *Grand Royal*
BUZZKILL House Of Bad Tunes *Alternative Tentacles*
FRANCISCO MORA CATLETT World Trade Music *Community Projects-Planet E*
CAUSTIC RESIN Trick Question *Alias*
—Featuring Mike Johnson from Dinosaur Jr
CINEMATIC ORCHESTRA Channel 1 Suite (12") *Ninja Tune*
DISTORTION FELIX Im An Athlete *Alias*
DJ PAUL NICE The Definition Of Nice *Bomb Hip Hop*
—Features DJ Babu of Beat Junkies, AG of Show and Gennessee
FEELERS Supersystem *Sire*
FOLK IMPLSION One Part Lullabye *Interscope*
FREAKWATER Endtime *Thrill Jockey*
GMWA MENS CHORUS Live In Los Angeles *Tommy Boy*
GENE LOVES JEZEBEL Voodoo Dollies *Beggars Banquet*
—Best of compilation
THE GO Whatcha Doin' *Sub Pop*
JUNIOR KIMBROUGH Meet Me In The City *Fat Possum-Epitaph*
MAGNETIC FIELDS 69 Love Songs *Merge*
—Three-CD set featuring—you guessed it—69 songs about love
MEKONS Where Were You—Part 2 *Quarterstick-Touch And Go*
—Second volume of rarities compilation
METABASS The Life And Times Of A Boxer *Bomb Hip Hop*
—A lot of beatboxing, featuring DJ Faust
MINDERS Cut De Sacs And Dead Ends *spinART*
—All of the band's Elephant 6 7" singles plus four new tracks
MURDER CITY DEVILS/GLUCCIFER (double 7") *Sub Pop*
NAKED RAYGUN Basement Screams (EP) *Touch And Go*
—Reissue of Chicago bands' 1983 debut
NO AUTHORITY No Authority *WORK*
P'TAAH VS. CAPRIES (12") *Ubiquity*
—P'taah (a.k.a. Chris Brann of Wamdue Productions) dukes it out with Jonah Sharp (Spacetime Continuum)
PEACE ORCHESTRA Peace Orchestra *Studio K7*
JOHN POPPER Zygote Geffen/A&M-Interscope
—Corpulent Blues Traveler singer goes solo
QUASI Field Studies *Up*
RED STARS THEORY Life In A Bubble Can Be Beautiful *Touch And Go*
ROYAL TRUX Veterans Of Disorder *Drag City*
CARL HANCOCK RUX Rux Revue 550 Music
—Debut album from NYC poet/playwright; produced by Tom Rothrock and the Dust Brothers
SCRITTI POLITTI Anomie And Bonhomie *Virgin*
SHOESTRING Representin' Till The World Ends *Tommy Boy*
SLICK SIXTY Nibs And Nabs *Mute*
SOCIAL DISTORTION 550
SOUNDTRACK The Blue Streak *Epic*
—New material from Jay-Z, Tyrese, Kelly Price, Foxy Brown, Keith Sweat and others
SUKPATCH Tie Down That Shiny Wave *Grand Royal*
SUPERCHUNK Come Pick Me Up *Merge*
—New album produced by Jim O'Rourke
PAUL VAN DYK Avenue Of Stars (CD5) *Mute*
VARIOUS ARTISTS KCRW Morning Becomes Eclectic *Mammoth*
—Live tracks from Joe Henry, PJ Harvey, Pink Martini, Freestylers, Beth Orton and others, recorded for influential radio program
VARIOUS ARTISTS Tektonics *Om*
—Pairs electronic musicians with turntablists
WISEGUYS The Antidote *Ideal/Mammoth*
YAZ Yazoo *Reprise*
—Greatest hits and new remixes, including efforts by Richard Stannard (Spice Girls)
ZEN GUERRILLA Trance States In Tongues *Sub Pop*
—Label debut from San Francisco-based rockers

SEPTEMBER 13

A MINOR FOREST So Were They In Some Sort Of Fight? *My Pal God*
—Two-disc collection of the band's singles, unreleased material and rarities

SEPTEMBER 14

AIR Premiers Symptomes *Astralwerks*
AUX 88 Electro Boogie *Studio K7*
BABY NAMBOOS Ancoats To Zambia *Durban Poison-Palm Pictures*
—Friends and relatives of Tricky's from the Knowle West district of Bristol
PAUL BRADY Nobody Knows: The Best Of Paul Brady *Rykodisc*
—Collection of Irish singer/songwriter's songs, which have been covered by Tina Turner, Phil Collins, Bonnie Raitt, Mary Black, Paul Young, Art Garfunkel, Cher, and others
CHRIS CACAVAS Dwarf Star *Innerstate*
CINEMATIC ORCHESTRA Motion *Ninja Tune*
BRUCE COCKBURN Breakfast In New Orleans, Dinner In Timbuktu *Rykodisc*
—His 25th album includes appearances from Lucinda Williams and Cowboy Junkies' Margo Timmins, who duets with Bruce on a cover of "Blueberry Hill"
DARCHIVES Scenario *Primal Music*
DEATH IN VEGAS Contino Sessions *Concrete-Time Bomb*
—With Dot Allison and Iggy Pop
DJ FAUST Inward Journeys *Bomb*
—Named fifth-best turntablist by SPIN magazine; contributor to Return Of The DJ, Vol. 3 and Metabass' The Life and Times...
DJ Q As We Were/The Latin Qua. *Studio K7*

DJ VADIM U.S.S.R. Life From The Other Side *Ninja Tune*
DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM MEETS JON SPENCER
BLUES EXPLOSION Sideways Soul *K*
DURADELINQUENT Head Over High Heels (7") *K*
LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI A Coney Island State Of Mind *Rykodisc*
—Poet Laureate of San Francisco and publisher of City Lights Press is backed by Morphine's Dana Colley
EVE Ruff Ryders: First Lady *Ruff Ryders-Interscope*
GENASIDE II The Album *Durban Poison-Nevef*
GOMEZ Liquid Kin *Virgin*
GUSTER Lost And Gone Forever *Hybrid-Sire*
—Produced by Steve Lillywhite
WILL HAVEN WHVN *Revelation*
ICE-T 7th Deadly Sin *Atonic Pop*
JACK KEROUAC Reads On The Road *Rykodisc*
—Kerouac reads his most famous work on this long-lost recording session
LAIDBACK LUKE Psyched Up Luke *Sm.e*
INGER LORRE Transcendental Medication *Triple X*
—Solo release from former Nymphs vocalist
MR. T EXPERIENCE Alcatraz *Lookout!*
NON PHIXION (12") *Matador*
—NYC hip-hop group releases fifth Matador 12"; LP forthcoming
PLONE For Beginner Piano *Warp-Matador*
IGGY POP Avenue B *Virgin*
ELVIS PRESLEY The HollyWood Hits (reissue) *RCA*
ROBYNN RAGLAND Robynn Ragland *Red Ant*
RECLOSE Splunking EP *Planet E*
JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION Xtra Acme USA *Matador*
—B Sides and outtakes from the recording of the band's last LP
JOSH ROUSE & KURT WAGNER Chester EP *Slow River*
—Five-song EP was written by Josh Rouse (music) and Kurt Wagner (lyrics), leader of the Nashville collective Lambchop
SOLE Skin Deep *DreamWorks*
SOLEK Pick Up *Matador*
—Dutch musician releases second album
SOUNDTRACK Third World Cop *Palm Pictures*
—Reggae and dancehall soundtrack featuring Sly & Robbie, Beenie Man and others
SOUNDTRACK Three To Tango *Atlantic*
—The movie features Neve Campbell; the soundtrack includes Duncan Sheik
RONNIE SPECTOR She Talks To Rainbows (EP) *Kill Rock Stars*
—Solo release from girl group pioneer; title track is a duet with Joey Ramone
STEREOPHONICS Performance And Cocktails *V2*
STROKE First In Last Out *XL-Interscope*
SUPREME BEINGS OF LEISURE Strange Love Addiction (12") *Palm Pictures*
UNWOUND A Single History 1991-1997 *Kill Rock Stars*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Future Sound Of Jazz 6 *Studio K7*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Impulsively Ellington *Impulse!*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Music Is Nice *Matador*
—Two-CD compilation commemorating the label's tenth anniversary; new material from Yo La Tengo, Pavement, Cat Power, Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Helium, Pizzicato Five, Belle & Sebastian and Guided By Voices
VARIOUS ARTISTS Woodstock 99 *Epic*
—Double disc compiled from live footage of July concert poses the question: Will it cost more or less than a slice of Woodstock pizza?

SEPTEMBER 21

ADVENTURES IN STEREO Monomania *Bobsled*
AMBER Amber *Tommy Boy*
TORI AMOS To Venus And Back *Atlantic*
—Double CD: one of live material from her Plugged tour, the other of new studio material
BIG BAD VOODOO DADDY Coolsville-Interscope
BOMB DJ'S Return Of The DJ, Volume 3 *Bomb*
—Featuring Faust, Shortee, DJ Design, DJ T-Rock, Furious, DJ Talkback, and many more
DAVID BOWIE Hours... *Virgin*
BREAKBEAT ERA Ultra-Obscene *XL/1500-A&M*
BROTHER JT Way To Go *Drag City*
JON BROWN 70 Years Coming *Acid Blues*
—New label from producer Tom Rothrock (Odelay) of Bong Load
BURNSIDE Rollin' Tumblin' EP *Acid Blues*
—A re-release with an additional track
CHRIS CORNELL Euphoria Morning *A&M*
—Long-awaited solo outing from ball Soundgarden frontman
DE LA SOUL Coppa (12") *Tommy Boy*
DERAILERS Full Western Dress *Sire*
DREAM CITY FILM CLUB In The Cold Light Of Morning *Beggars Banquet*
FLYING SAUCER ATTACK Mirror *Drag City*
FRANK AND WALTERS Beauty Becomes More Than Life *Setanta-Red Ink*
FRANKLIN Franklin *Jade Tree*
GAY DAD Leisure Noise *London*
BEN HARPER Burn To Shine *Virgin*
HEFNER The Fidelity Wars *Beggars Banquet*
HOUSE OF WIRES Monogamy *Tooth And Nail*
BRAD JONES Brad Jones *Knitting Factory*
KLEZ 93 Festival *Knitting Factory*
MARK LANEGAN I'll Take Care Of You *Sub Pop*
—An album of covers, including renditions of songs by the Gun Club, Leaving Trains, Bobby Bland, Buck Owens, Eddie Floyd, and others
LEFTFIELD Rhythm And Stealth *Columbia*
JACKIE LEVEN Night Lillies *Thirsty Ear*
LILAC TIME Searching For A Day In The Night *spinART*
—Domestic issue of album from Stephen "Tin Tin" Duffy features extra cuts
MANCE LIPSCOMB Texas Songster Live At The Cabole *Arhoolie*
LONG BEACH DUB ALLSTARS Long Beach Dub Allstars *DreamWorks*

LOVE AS LAUGHTER Destination 2000 *Sub Pop*
—Sain Jayne (formerly of Lync) gathers a new group for the third LAL full-length
MINT CONDITION Life's Aquarium *Elektra*
NEW FLESH FOR OLD Equilibriums *Ninja Tune*
ORANGER Doorway To Norway *Amazing Grease*
—New release from label run by Scott Kannberg of Pavement
PROMISE RING Very Emergency *Jade Tree*
SADIES Pure Diamond Gold *Bloodshot*
—Guest vocals from Catherine Irwin (Freakwater) and Kelly Hogan (ex-Jody Grind/Rock 'A' Teens)
SALAKO Musicality *Jeeper-Nevef*
—Scottish band on the label of Belle & Sebastian in the UK
SKYCYCLE Ones And Zeros *MCA*
SLOAN Between The Bridges *Murderecords-Nevef*
SNOW PATROL Songs For Polar Bears *Jeeper*
SOULWAX Much Against Everyone's Advice *Aino*
T-CISCO The Destructive Eddy *Ubiquity*
—SF Underground producer fuses hip-hop, Latin percussion, soul and experimental electronic flavors on his cut and paste debut
MICK TURNER Marlan Rosa *Drag City*
—Solo album from Dirty Three guitarist
VARIOUS ARTISTS The Funky Precedent *No Mayo-Loosegroove*
—Hip-hop comp featuring Jurassic 5, Styles Of Beyond, Cut Chemist, Ugly Duckling, Breakestra, etc.
VARIOUS ARTISTS Poor Little Knitter In The Road *Bloodshot*
—Tribute to John Doe, Exene Cervenka and Dave Alvin's neo-country group the Knitters featuring Trailer Bride, Kelly Hogan with The Rock 'A' Teens, the Sadies with Catherine Irwin (Freakwater), Ryan Adams (Whiskeytown), the Blacks, John Doe with Old 97's, Neko Case, Robbie Fuiks, the Handsome Family and others
VELVET CRUSH Free Expression *Bobsled*
JERRY JEFF WALKER Five Years Gone *Koch*

SEPTEMBER 28

ARCWELDER Everest *Touch And Go*
—Two CD set of live recordings
BEANFIELD Enchanting Signs *Studio K7*
BLOODHOUND GANG Hooray For Boobies *Geffen-A&M-Interscope*
MEREDITH BROOKS Deconstruction *Capitol*
FRANCISCO MORA CATLETT World Trade Music *Community Projects-Planet E*
COMET GAIN Tigertown Pictures *Kill Rock Stars*
FLASHPOINT On The Verge... *Atomic Pop*
—LA band discovered by Ozzy Osbourne, who included them on Ozfest
GET UP KIDS Something To Write Home About *Vagrant*
GRANDDADDY Signal To Snow Ratio EP *V2*
HANG UPS Second Story *Restless*
HIMSA Ground Breaking Ceremony *Revelation*
HYDROPNOC SOUND SYSTEM Breakneck Speed *Bomb*
LIES Underdogs And Intidels *Kill Rock Stars*
MAP OF WYOMING Round Tip *Innerstate*
MATERIAL Intonarumori *Palm Pictures*
—New release from ongoing Bill Laswell project features Public Enemy's Flavor Flav, Wu Tang Clan's Killah Priest, Kool Keith, Jason Furlow (formerly of New Kingdom), DJ Disk (formerly of Invisibl Skratch Piklz), Lari Carson (former Golden Palominos vocalist) and more
MEDESKI MARTIN AND WOOD Best Of... *Gramavision-Rykodisc*
MY LIFE WITH THE THRILL KILL KULT Dirty Little Secrets: Music To Strip By *Rykodisc*
CYRUS REGO Cyrus Rego *Emperor Jones*
SHORTEE The Dreamer *Bomb Hip Hop*
SOUNDTRACK The Fight Club *Restless*
—Produced by the Dust Brothers
SOUNDTRACK Spawn: The Animated Series *Rykodisc*
STEROLAB Cobra And Phases Group Play Voltage In The Milky Night *Elektra*
—Produced by Jim O'Rourke and John McEntire
STING Geffen/A&M-Interscope
TRAM Heavy Black Frame *Jetset*

SEPTEMBER 30

ALEX GOPHER You, My Baby, And I *V2*

OCTOBER 5

8STOPS7 In Moderation *Reprise*
ANTARCTICA 8301 *File 13*
PAUL BRANDT Shall I Play For You *Reprise-Nashville*
CABBAGEBOY Genetically Modified *Ninja Tune*
—The label's first jazz offering
CROSBY STILLS NASH & YOUNG Heartland *Reprise*
VICTOR CALDERONE E=mc² *Tommy Boy*
HEATHER DUBY Post To Wire *Sub Pop*
GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI Spanish Dance Troop *Beggars Banquet*
BOB LOG III Trike *Fat Possum-Epitaph*
—Another solo outing from Doo Rag member
LIVE The Distance To Here *Radioactive MCA*
PRIMUM Antipop *Geffen/A&M-Interscope*
ROOTS MANUVA Movements *Ninja Tune*
RUXY MUSIC & BRYAN FERRY More Than This *Point Blank-Virgin*
—Combined "best of" & rarities comp
VARIOUS ARTISTS Droppin' The Bomb *Bomb Hip Hop*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Geology: A Subjective Study Of Planet E, Volume 1 *Planet E*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Give 'Em The Boot II *Helicat-Epitaph*
JOE LOUIS WALKER Silverstone Blues *Blue Thumb*
WEDDING PRESENT Singles 1995-1997 *spinART*
MICHAEL WELLS PRESENTS S.O.L.O. Out Is In *Beggars Banquet*

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USE YOUR MIND TRUST YOUR EARS

PARIS, FRANCE

(continued from page 86)

height of the tourist season, do not book from the States. Walk around, trust your luck, and go for these "family hotels" (2-3 stars), which have disappeared from almost every capital city—except Paris. They're dirt-cheap: about 300 francs for two people sharing a room with a shower. That's \$50 for you.

Other suggested walks: the cemetery of the Pere-Lachaise, of course, where you can pay respects to Jim Morrison and Oscar Wilde; Montmartre—but the bit behind the Sacre-Coeur, preferably; alongside the Canal Saint-Martin, for an aperçu of "popular" Paris; Saint-Germain des Pres—but towards the river (see the Place de Furstenberg at night); and the two islands, Ile de la Cité (where Notre-Dame stands) and the very picturesque Ile Saint-Louis, which is home to the best ice-cream shop in the whole of France: Berthillon. Their mango sorbet is something else.

Where To Eat

We're getting serious. If you're skint, go for a "couscous" in a North African restaurant. The **Tanger** on Boulevard des Batignolles is great fun. If you're reasonably prosperous, no question, sample a real Parisian brasserie. My two favorites are **Wepler** (Place de Clichy) for the great seafood platter and the **Terminus-Nord** (opposite the Gare du Nord railway station), which has decent choucroute, though not as nice as Baumann's, and superb seafood again. A good place for a reasonably priced dinner menu is **Chez Jean**, 9 rue Saint Lazare, 9th arrondissement. It has inventive cuisine and decent wines, but book first. Other favorites: a fab wine-bar called **Aux Negociants**, on the east side of Montmartre. The charcuterie is delicious (homemade), and the selection of Loire wines exemplary. More expensive, but pretty good nevertheless, is **Willi's Wine Bar**, rue des Petits-Champs, near the beautiful Palais-Royal. It's run by Englishmen, but who cares?

If you're a vegetarian, my apologies. Parisians eat everything with four legs, except the table. If you're desperate, go to an Indian/Sri Lankan restaurant, but don't expect miracles: The standard is much, much lower than in the UK.

Paris is also the capital of Vietnamese cuisine (old colonial links). I'm not a specialist, but getting lost in the Paris "chinatown" is worth it; stagger to the Gobelins tube station, and follow your nose.

On the other hand, ignore all of the above, and taste a "plat du jour" in a cafe at lunchtime. Trust your instincts, and see how busy the place is. Parisians are not faddish people; what's on their plates is the only thing that matters.

Music

Good listings are provided by the daily *Liberation*, the weekly *Les Inrockuptibles* (the French NME) and the *Officiel des Spectacles*. Paris is a place where you can sometimes see a big band in a club environment. The Pretenders were recently playing at the New Morning, in front of about 400 people. A very popular venue is the **Locomotive**, near Pigalle, which is next to the **MCM** cafe, which is owned by a TV station. Gigs are held every Monday and entrance is free.

The hotspot of Parisian musical life (if you except the clubs, of which I know nothing) is situated at Rue Richer, 9th arrondissement, headquarters of **Tricatel** record company and studios. Headed by producer Bertrand Burgalat (Nick Cave, April March, Count Indigo), Tricatel has become in a matter of months the most talked-about indie label in France. Seriously.

Jazz-wise, the golden days are over. The old clubs have either shut down, or sold out. Sad, but true. For classical, there's the **Opera Bastille**, of course, and prestigious venues like the **Salle Pleyel**. But the tickets are fantabulously expensive.

Cinemas

There's a fantastic choice of theatres, almost everywhere in the city. Check out the **Cinémathèque** (Palais de Chaillot, in the 16th arrondissement), the French "museum of cinema" created by Henri Langlois. Almost every day, it shows incredible stuff. Just check the listings.

Theatres

The last time I went to see a play in Paris was in 1979. With my school.

Shopping

Avoid second-hand record shops, whose hyper-inflated prices are devised for foreign collectors. You may try your luck at the "Puces," the flea markets which are situated on the outskirts of Northern Paris (Clignancourt & Saint-Ouen). For clothes (new), walk around the Saint-Germain/Saint-Sulpice area (6th arrondissement). Otherwise "Les Puces" might do. For textiles, the Marche Saint-Pierre in Montmartre is a dream—great bargains to be had. Paris is also a paradise for haberdashery—and lingerie. **Les Nuits d'Elodie** is expensive, but does some ravishing stuff. The big department stores are also worth checking out, **Le Bon Marché** in particular, in the 6th arrondissement. For books—in English—there are a couple of shops on the Rue de Rivoli, as well as the world-famous **Shakespeare & Co.**, on the Left Bank—James Joyce's refuge when he was in Paris.



Louis Philippe, "an old todger who hates clubbing," recently released *A Kiss In The Funhouse* (Le Grand Magistry).



A word of warning: I might be a "pop" musician, but I absolutely, positively, most-definitely hate clubs and, more generally, any place where I have to scream to get the barman's attention. I'm sure there are some grand places ("boites," as the French call them) in Paris. But ask somebody else, and please forgive me. Let's follow another path.

What To See

Okay, you've done the Louvre, the Tour Eiffel, the Musée d'Orsay, etc. You've been careful to purchase a Tube/museum pass in an Underground station or at a tobacconist, and you feel quite smug, getting everywhere ahead of the queuing tourists. You've also been careful to check that the museum/gallery you wanted to visit was open—many of these are closed on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, depending on who runs them, the state or the City of Paris. And you feel ready for something a bit different.

If you're into heavily symbolic eroticism, head for the **Musée Gustave Moreau** (14 rue de la Rochefoucauld, 9th arrondissement). It's set up in the painter's own "atelier" and is quite fascinating, really. If you like your art refined—just this side of slightly decadent—here are two possibilities: the **Musée Nissim de Camondo** (63 rue de Monceau), which has a superb collection of 18th century furniture, tapestries et al. set in a fabulous palace just off the Parc Monceau; and the **Musée Cognacq-Jay** (8 rue Elzevir), which reminds me of the Frick in New York or the Wallace Collection in London. It's not that big, but is very intimate and has some very beautiful paintings by the likes of Rembrandt, Watteau and Chardin (a personal favorite).

If you're drifting in the Invalides area, do not miss the **Musée**

Rodin (77 rue de Varenne), which is far more than a museum devoted to the sculptures of the great man. The house is complemented by extraordinarily romantic and peaceful grounds, bang in the middle of Paris. Which reminds me: Do not underestimate Paris's parks. Think of Les Buttes-Chaumont, Parc Montsouris, and the Jardins de l'Observatoire, where I was once propositioned by a Romanian poet whose French was so poor I only understood what had happened a whole day later. That saved him a good bollocking.

Where To Walk

Paris is made for walkers. If you've got a car, dump it. The traffic is awful, and the motoring habits of Parisians distasteful. The Tube is safe, clean, and efficient. Only it's the Tube. The bus network is *fantastic*—provided you've studied the itineraries as if you were preparing for your finals. It's worth a try, though. Anyway, you'll walk.

One little "promenade" I always take my friends on is through the "passages" of Paris. These are arcades, or galleries, built during the late 19th century, which are now occupied by a wonderful array of shops selling everything from toys to old cameras to rare books, with the odd café, and secretive residents whose flats overlook the "flaneurs." Head for the **Bourse** (the Paris Stock Exchange), then for the Rue Vivienne. Then enter the labyrinth of the **Galérie Vivienne**, which leads you north through a succession of "passages," until you finally reach daylight and the Boulevard Montmartre.

Note: Hidden at the very end of these passages (Passage des Panoramas, I believe) is a delicious (and cheap) hotel, called the **Hotel Chopin**, one of the quietest in Paris. Booking is advised, though not necessary. Which reminds me: Unless you plan to visit Paris at the

(continued on page 85)

thrill seekers

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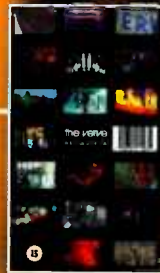
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