

CMJ

NEW MUSIC
MONTHLY

menswear
laika
gastr del sol

rocket *from the* *crypt*

BEST NEW MUSIC

Pharcyde

The Secret Museum Of Mankind

Salif Keita

Sunny Day Real Estate

Dan Zanes

\$4.99 U.S. / \$7.99 CAN. JAN. 1996



36 reviews including:

Brian Eno and Jah Wobble + Tears For Fears + Magnetic
Fields + Tom Petty box + Bush Tetras + Soul Train box

the pharcyde

LABCABIN CALIFORNIA



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Executive Producer: Michael Ross

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World Radio History



CMJ

NEW MUSIC
MONTHLY

4 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters from you without lengthy responses from us. Imagine that!

6 QUICK FIX

Menswe@r, Emmylou Harris, Bobby Byrd, War Child and lots of other cool little things.

12 BEST NEW MUSIC

January's best: new albums from hip hoppers the Pharcyde, Afropop king Salif Keita, Northwestern emo-rockers Sunny Day Real Estate, and former Del Fuegos frontman Dan Zanes, as well as the *Secret Museum Of Mankind* compilation of historic ethnic recordings.

25 REVIEWS

Yeah, you'd like that one. Maybe not that one so much. Oh, wow, check this out, you gotta hear this one!

46 ON THE VERGE

An early glimpse at Ditch Croaker, Jonny Polonsky, Super Junky Monkey and Brainiac.

47 TECH

Just how badly does the world need Digital Video Disc?

48 METAL

January's Pick: Swordmaster.

49 SINGLES

January's Pick: Shiva Speedway.

50 DANCE

January's Pick: Goldie.

51 HIP-HOP

January's Pick: Cypress Hill.

52 FLASHBACK

January's Pick: *The First Ten Years Of Def Jam Classics*.

53 JUST OUT/DIRECTORY

A list of forthcoming releases, and addresses of labels whose records appear in this issue.

54 MIXED MEDIA

Vampires, Times Square, pulp detectives, X-rated comics and, uh, Cleveland.

56 FEEDBACK

Mail, fax or email and let us know your opinion.

57 ON THE CD

Background for the music, pictures of the bands—the yin to the CD's yang.

59 TOP 75

Alternative radio by the numbers.



THIS MONTH'S MODEL

14

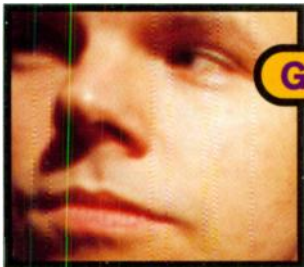
Laika's spaced-out ideas and down-to-earth work ethic. Interview by Douglas Wolk.



16

ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT

Tattooed, taut, touring and trapped in a van with our man Kurt B. Reighley.



GASTR DEL SOL

22

Jim O'Rourke and David Grubbs treat music as a language. Interview by Franklin Bruno.



61

LOCALZINE

There's a Seattle beyond grunge, and Danny Housman shows us around.

LETTERS

Let us know what you're thinking, by mail, fax (516-466-7159) or email (cmj@cmjmusic.com).

More Punk Riffs

I think a major source of much of the college-rock infighting is that some music fans build up these impenetrable cliques, whether they be straight-edge, industrial, goth, indie pop, indie rock, alternametal, etc. It seems some people determine themselves to only enjoy performers who fall within strictly defined boundaries. Once a band finds its place within one of these sub-cultures, it tends to stick with the same old formula. Rarely do most bands ever try something new. Worse yet are the scores of bands who emerge, desperately seeking to be their clan's new-found fave. The moral I am trying to illustrate is something that I think most of us already know: good music always prevails. Maybe not commercially, and perhaps not all excellent music reaches its target audience, but quality has a way of escaping the tethers of indie-clique hell.

When music can stand alone, it obtains an immortality of a kind in that it never ages. Bands like the Smiths, Velvet Underground, or the Damned fit in as well with other things I listen to as they did 10 years ago. Bands of today that I like include Luna, Chocolate USA, London Suede and Rosewater Elizabeth. They all come from separate little scenes, but in my collection or that of any fan, it can all fit together so well. I wish all records I own never seemed to be out-dated, but they do. Why is that so? Well, no names named, but in each case, they are usually records that are done to match a certain crowd or trend. And that is what I think about the "punk revival." What we need now is a pop revival, but that probably would never happen in this nation of "rock" we live in.

Greg Dean "Mope" Schmitz

OK, I think it's about time that all of these little indie-rock snobs get their noses out of the air and try to humble themselves just a little. For years now I have been listening to all too many people whine and bitch about how corporate and trendy most mainstream or radio-friendly music is and how they are just so much more punk than others (please bear with me here, I do have a point.)

In [the October] issue of CMJ, I was appalled to read a letter that trashed Keith Morris and the Circle Jerks for signing on with a major label and actually making some money with their talents. Any band with as much talent as they do deserves to be turning a profit. If you were to spend your entire life doing something that you were good at and not make any money, what is that if not just a shitty business decision? They were kickin' it in the '80s and they have shown us that they still have it in them!

Oh yeah, can we please be spared the lectures on who is punk and who is not, and what punk is and isn't. I'm really tired of hearing how it's all about changing the political agenda and not conforming to what everyone else is doing. Come on! I know very few "punks" today

that know anything at all about politics or could even tell you what an agenda is. And let me tell you something, folks, even a few people doing the same thing or wearing the same kind of clothes or listing to the same kind of music is conformity. Sorry, that's just the way it is.

To me at least, punk is not about clothes or music or how much money you don't make or beating on Jello Biafra (what the fuck was that all about, kids?) It's a state of mind that is always expanding and looking for a new and better direction. It's about struggle and perseverance. It's about making an impact and a difference no matter who you are.

E.B.

Jackson Hole, Wyoming

A Heartwarming Holiday Story

Thanks for the great sounds and words that you brought to my bare-boned home. My sister got me CMJ for Christmas last year. Now all my friends wonder where in the hell I get all this music that they hear on the radio about three weeks after it thunders from my stereo. I really enjoy hearing new music along with the good ol' bands while shuffling through countless new groups and interviews with just enough of the entertainment world.

PS. I heard on MTV that some band just released its first album but they were killed in an automobile accident a couple of days after. Could you give me the name of the band and maybe an overview? My regards to the members and their families.

Loren Mendenhall
Bowling Green, OH

Two members of For Squirrels were killed in an accident about a month before the release of the band's debut, Example. A song from the album, "Mighty K.C.," appears on this month's CD. By the way, the word is that the remaining members of the band intend to continue as For Squirrels, and will be touring in a few months.

Calypto Is Like What?!

You folks sure know how to disappoint a guy. I'm glancing through your November issue, and on page 9 I spot the picture of Robert Mitchum's calypso album. And right next to it, some lyrics that run, "You seem cool for a naked chick in a booth..." Right away, I'm thinking, "whoa, cool!" imagining Robert Mitchum's voice murmuring those lines over whacked-out calypso beats... I'm all ready to go buy the CD when I see that, no, Robert Mitchum has not a damned thing to do with those lines—only the annoying Presidents of the United States of America (and what is it with bald guys in suits these days?).

Well, maybe somebody'll get Robert Mitchum to record that song in a calypso arrangement.

Jeffrey Norman
Milwaukee, WI

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World Radio History

QUICK FIX

MENSWEAR

WEARING THIN?

Call it cunning or call it kismet. But Brit-pop brat Menswear is only a year old, and what a year it's been. Bowie-stanced singer Johnny Dean, 24, formed the group with four of his club-hopping pals, then—after shrewdly analyzing the music market—gave kids exactly what they seemed to be craving: terrier-perky chime-rock with slangy vocals and Telecaster hooks galore. Literally two gigs later, the band was inked, which naturally made it cover-story fodder for the hungry U.K. rock press (Dean's high-cheekboned good looks didn't hurt, either). By the time Menswear's debut, *Nuisance* (London), hit this October, naysayers were already slagging it as a flash in the pan, a case of too much too soon.

Dean will hear none of it. "All this in only a year—isn't that exciting?" he purrs, flipping his lopsided Oscar Wilde locks out of his eyes. "Isn't it inspiring for young people to see that? These five young upstarts, the same age as their audience, have gone from being penniless and homeless—because I was sleeping on people's floors for six months and have even slept on a park bench—gone from that to jet-setting around the world! And that's what I always thought pop music was about: making people respond to something, so they can escape for just 45 minutes when they put an album on."

Dean talks like a star, and looks the part as well. Usually, he sports nifty sharkskin suits on stage. Today he's underdressed in a psychedelic silk shirt, skintight trousers and pointy Beatle boots as he outlines Menswear's success strategy with steely confidence. "We played the media at their own game," he smirks. "You've got to dissect your opponent and play them back at their own game, and we did it by being a nuisance [hence the CD title], making a complete nuisance of ourselves and annoying all the right people. There's this thing about A&R men that's like a big game of Chinese Whispers—if you go up to them and say 'Hey, have you



heard of this band Menswear, who are really great?' they'll all start ringing each other up, wanting to know more. Then when you have your first show, they'll all be there, which was exactly what happened."

Brash? Definitely. But *Nuisance* backs it up, with snippy slacker anthems like "Sleeping In," "Hollywood Girl," "125 West 3rd Street" (where Dean attended his first American beer bash a year ago), and the thoroughly believable "I'll Manage Somehow." According to Dean, Menswear's purpose is to "write good pop songs and not get too heavy with people, not get too deep about things. I'm not interested in the 'sensitive artists' thing in any way whatsoever." He stares at his sharp boots and snickers. "When I'm wearing Jesus sandals, maybe..."

—Tom Lanham

Inspirational Verse: "I may not know karate/
But I know c-razy" —James Brown, "The Payback"

IN MY ROOM

ARTISTS' PERSONAL PICKS

BLAKE SMITH

FIGDISH

Menthol
Menthol

Triple Fast Action
(demo)

Book: *The Tin Drum*
Gunter Grass

Poster: *Children*
Daisy Chain Reaction

The Muffs
Blonder And Blonder



NIGHTCLUBBING

DISCO REISSUES AND BEYOND

If John Travolta can be rehabilitated, so can disco. Take a lot of disco records out of their horrible mass-culture context (polyester, cocaine, the complete recorded works of Meco), and they're amazing stuff: well-written, beautifully produced, compelling dance music. Rhino has just added the sixth and seventh volumes to its *The Disco Years* series. Like the earlier volumes, *Everybody Dance* is a little obsessive about Chic and the records they produced, but that's fine: the disc digs up a couple of forgotten Chic Organization classics, like Sheila & B. Devotion's wild "Mayday," as well as some solid hits from elsewhere—Taana Gardner's "Heartbeat" still sounds great 14 years on, maybe even better than it did the first time around. Its companion *The Best Disco In Town* focuses more on Eurodisco, leading off with the insane novelty "Don Quichotte" by Magazine 60 (the requisite hits are "Fly, Robin, Fly" and "It's Raining Men"). K-Tel has jumped into the disco reissue game, too, figuring that if back-to-back hits and eye-wounding graphics worked the first time, maybe their time has come around again (one is seen at left). Motown likes to pretend that it didn't get much into the disco game, but the two volumes of *Funkology* liberally pepper genuine hardcore funk ("Brick House") with some pretty solid disco stuff—the first volume kicks off with 12 glorious minutes of Marvin Gaye's party-time "Got To Give It Up."

There was other stuff going on on the dancefloors of the '70s and early '80s, too. Rhino's three-volume *Give Your Body Up* set chronicles the rougher, more underground non-disco club music that led toward house (and thence techno), from Cymande's 1972 "Bra" to Jocelyn Brown's 1984 "Somebody Else's Guy." Try Vol. 3 for Phreek's glorious "Weekend" (later remade by the Todd Terry Project). And Oglio has graced us with two volumes of *Hit That Perfect Beat*—new wave hits by the likes of the Belle Stars, Peter Schilling and Yaz, all presented in their original extended club mixes. Wait, we're starting to get bad flashbacks again.

—Douglas Wolk

Random fact:

Since Golden Smog is made up of musicians in other bands signed exclusively to other labels, everyone appearing on *Down By The Old Main Stream* (Rykodisc) does so under a pseudonym comprised of his middle name and the street of an old childhood address, a trick known as making "soap opera names." (For example, the code-names for this magazine's editorial and art staffs would be, in masthead order, Alan Cohawkin, David Roseland, Jane Hathaway and... Robin 223rd.)

Virgin

PLANT SERIES

This month Virgin presents the

Pyramidal Bugle

Color

The Pyramidal Bugle is the color of blue paint

Fragrance

It smells like blue paint.

Habitat

Freshly painted windows.

Uses

To test the color-fastness and weather-resistance of newly-developed paints



Blur The Great Escape



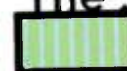
featuring
"Country House"
and "Charmless Man"
US Tour starts in January

Lenny Kravitz



Circus
featuring "Rock And Roll Is Dead" and "Circus"
US Tour starts in late December

The Smashing Pumpkins



Mellon Collie and The Infinite Sadness featuring
"Bullet With Butterfly Wings"

Virgin

QUICK FIX

BOBBY BYRD

KEEPS ON DOIN' WHAT HE'S DOIN'

After more than four decades in show business, Bobby Byrd is still on the move. The soul shouter has just released a terrific compilation of the '60s and '70s R&B and funk singles he made as James Brown's #1 sideman, *Bobby Byrd Got Soul* (Chronicles-Polydor). He's also touring the U.S. and, especially, Europe with his family behind him: his daughters sing, his sons include his drummer and band director, his brothers are in the horn section, and the other featured vocalist is his wife, fellow Brown-alum Vicki Anderson. That is, when he's not engineering recordings of gospel choirs. Or leading his own church choir. Or working on new albums by Vicki Anderson And The Byrd Family Ensemble, and the reunited Famous Flames—the band that he started in Toccoa, Georgia, back in the '50s, and that a young singer nicknamed "Music Box" joined and parlayed into the greatest soul revue ever.

Byrd is a big, vibrant man in his sixties, with a deep Georgian chuckle of a voice. He radiates the confidence of a patriarch, and his family is constantly darting around him, seeking his guidance on one thing or another. On a recent trip to New York, he reminisced about the beginning of his career:

"I remember the first rhythm and blues show I ever saw. At that time, the Flames were the Gospel Starliners, and we went to see the show. I'm talkin' 'bout it was fan-tastic. As far as gospel music, that was it. We renamed ourselves the Brass Birds. We had a lot of names. But that music we heard! We stayed up all night long and said 'We're gonna do this, we're gonna do this, we're gonna do it!'"

"But no big-time record producers ever came through Toccoa—at least, we never saw anybody—and the only big stars we had ever seen during that time was the Drifters, and the only reason we saw them was they had a flat tire. We even helped 'em fix the tire."

The Flames' break came when Little Richard played in Toccoa one night. "He didn't change from local to a big star, 'cause he was always flashy, even doing local music on the chitlin circuit. But he let us play during intermission. And intermission, that night, everybody stood there and watched us, and he came out of the dressing room and called his manager. Everybody got their own opinion about how we started, but we were determined to do it after we saw that show."

"It was some hard times, believe me. You know how it was in the South at that time. Boarding houses and service stations. If you couldn't find no boarding house, you'd set out maybe a block from the service station. Then you'd come to the service station and clean up real quickly. Get in the car, go to the gig. We'd have



to get out of town every time. No place to stay."

That was true even after James Brown and the Famous Flames started to hit it big. "An interesting thing happened. We had [white pop group] Jay & The Americans, Glen Barry and us, and we had Diana Ross and the Supremes and Marvin Gaye. We were in Jackson, Mississippi. So Gertie, the wardrobe mistress, goes in to get the room. Noooo, can't stay here. So we say okay. We'll go find another place. But Jay said 'hold up.' Got off the bus, he went inside. A few minutes later, he comes back with all these keys. We get out of the bus and go into the lobby. People was havin' a fit. They was havin' a fit. But they'd given us the keys then, and they couldn't very well, y'know, tell us to go. We had three white groups in front of us. They threw us out, they had to throw them out too. They called the police, and the police stayed there from the time we checked in, till we went to the show, and we came back and they stayed there all night. When we left, they escorted us out of the city."

"My kids don't believe a lot of this happened... I told them, we've made it better for you."

—Douglas Wolk

IN MY ROOM

ARTISTS' PERSONAL PICKS

JOAN OSBORNE

Dr. Bethenia Ross feat. The Holmes Bros.

"Unmixed masters of a gospel album I'm privileged to be co-producing"

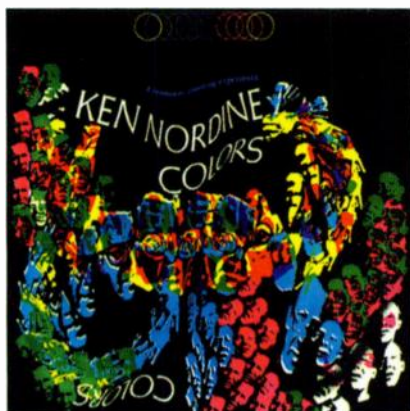
Book: *The Madwoman's Underclothes*
Germaine Greer

Chris Whitley
Din Of Ecstasy

Zap Mama
Adventures In Afropea I

Hole
Live Through This

INSPIRATIONAL VERSE: "When your golden loneliness is/Heavier than stone/You can call me up and say/'My God, I'm all alone.../All alone...'" —Magnetic Fields, "When You're Old And Lonely"



WEIRD RECORD OF THE MONTH

Ken Nordine is probably the only great jazz voice who doesn't actually sing—he's spoken "Word Jazz" technique combines carefully inflected delivery with amazing verbal/conceptual riffing. *Colors*, a mid-'60s album newly reissued on Asphodel, is one of his high-water marks: 90-second spiels inspired by 34 different colors ("Burgundy," he intones sepulchraly, "is fat. Sorry to be so blunt... but that's burgundy"), backed by very peculiar, mostly improvised sounds. There's no other record like it.

🎧 "OLIVE" BY KEN NORDINE APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD

Tours We'd Like To See

G-MEN: g//z/r, GZA, GBH, GTR and G. Love and Special Sauce.

MUSIC VIDEOS

SAME AS IT EVER WAS

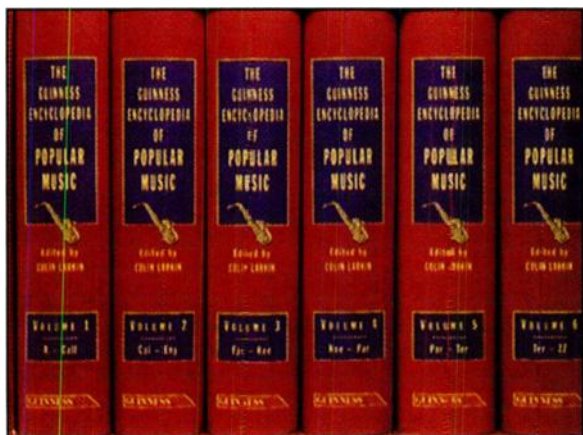
Without the financial backing (or, often, the desire) to replicate the slick, cut 'n' paste big-budget flash of your average MTV music video, many independent labels and independently-minded artists are finding new ways to make their three-and-a-half-minute contribution to the visual world both entertaining and affordable. Two of this year's best are dead-on parodies of MTV '80s classics: Portastatic's "San Andreas" takes on the Talking Head's "Once In A Lifetime," and the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion's "Flavor" references the legendary Run-D.M.C./Aerosmith teaming "Walk This Way."

Mac McCaughan's performance in "San Andreas" is absolutely genius, nailing David Byrne's immortal herky-jerky dance moves—while wearing a Black Flag *Slip It In* t-shirt, no less—to a tee, while directors Phil Morrison and Joe Klotz employ all the same cheap bluescreen effects that made the original such an instant classic. The Blues Explosion clip, while not a complete spoof, is priceless just to see the trio dressed in laceless Adidas shelltoes, gold chains and black denim. Cameos from Beastie Boy Mike D. and Beck (playing the Aerosmith role in the famous bash-through-the-noisy-neighbor's-wall scene) round out the action-packed piece.

Neither video will probably get much national airplay, so check out your local cable access video show for these and other fun clips. If you don't think there's one in your area, you may just be uninformed. Write us (attention: Colin Helms), and we'll tell you where you can catch all the stuff the big boys are afraid to touch.

—Colin Helms

INSPIRATIONAL VERSE: "You get up in the morning to join the common herd/
Your lot is a hard one, or so I have heard/I know how hard it is to bust one's ass/
'Cause I'm a friend of a friend of the working class"
—The Upper Crust, "Friend Of A Friend Of The Working Class"



PAUL, LES... PAUPERS... PAVAGEAU, ALCIDE "SLOW DRAG"... PAVEMENT

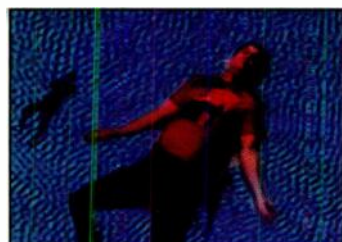
Forget about the *Spin Alternative Record Guide*: the second edition of the *Guinness Encyclopedia Of Popular Music* (Grove) has just been published, checking in at a mammoth six volumes, 4991 pages and 15,000 entries. It covers the history of 20th century pop, jazz and rock in stunning detail. Though there are a handful of significant omissions and mistakes (Elvis Presley's middle name, for instance, was "Aron," not "Aaron"), and a certain British bias (from the entry for Oasis: "No band since the Beatles has received such universal acclaim. Sadly our expectation of them is already immense"—maybe somebody forgot to tell us on this side of the pond), no more comprehensive reference work for pop exists. (Although it has no entry for CMJ, it does include several mentions of our Editorial Assistant's grandfather and an extensive entry for our Managing Editor's roommate.) We spoke recently with editor Colin Larkin, and asked him how he chose what was included in the book.

"It's a question of when we can get 'round to doing [each artist]—to get the biography, to make sure we get enough material. We have a further 26,000 entries to go, and we actually feel those others will be included as long as we live long enough.

There are almost 5000 new entries to be done, added to the list since the first edition. That's just the new talent that's come along in the last three years, which has been a particularly rich period for popular music—the best since '67, '68, '69."

Larkin has a special love for the music of that period: his favorite records are Love's *Forever Changes* and the first Moby Grape album. "But," he adds, "just get the complete works of the Beatles, and then you can start out on a journey backwards and forwards." His recent favorites include Ruby, Heavy Stereo and Ash. "It's nice to see something like Alanis Morissette on the top of the Billboard charts," he says. "That's quite an adventurous thing, rather than something like Kenny G."

Since Larkin has, probably, a greater grasp on the scope of this century's popular music than anyone else, we asked him where he thought pop was headed. "We've got a wonderful cycle that comes round," he says; "we're about to have the spirit of the Beatles all over again. It's fair to say that we've had that spirit building for about a year with Oasis and Blur and Swervedriver, bands that have that spirit in quality pop. In the long term, I would like to see it just go like fashion: I would like to see a wave of black R&B from the '50s and '60s come around again. I'd like to see big bands come around again. It'd be nice to see these cycles go on and on for the next 200 years. I would never have come to blues had I not heard the Yardbirds and the Rolling Stones; I'd like to thank them for making me listen to Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf. If you listen to Oasis and Blur, it'll bring you around to listening to the Beatles and the Kinks and the Small Faces." —Douglas Wolk



IN MY ROOM ARTISTS' PERSONAL PICKS

RAY CAPO SHELTER

Bad Brains
Rock For Light

Oasis
Definitely Maybe

Book: Mahabharata
translated by Kamala
Subramaniam

Pantera
Cowboys From Hell

Baby Gopal
"Shiva" 7"

QUICK FIX

EMMYLOU HARRIS

IT'S A MATTER OF THE SONGS FINDING YOU

Whether inventing a new direction in country music with Gram Parsons in the early '70s, or recording traditional country at just the time when it was most commercially unfashionable in the '80s, Emmylou Harris has always followed her own path. The latest wrinkle in her career is the album *Wrecking Ball*, which places her unmistakable, haunting voice in a new setting: the atmospheric pop sounds of producer Daniel Lanois. "I tried to zig when everybody else is zagging," she says with a southern lilt still discernible in her voice.

"It's just a matter of the songs kind of finding you," she says of picking *Wrecking Ball*'s twelve tunes. "When I first met Daniel, I had a tape of songs that were intriguing me at this particular time, and some of the songs actually made the album—like 'Orphan Girl' and 'Going Back To Harlan,' 'All My Tears'—and I think he got an idea of the type of songs I was looking for. And even though those songs might seem really different, or from different areas, they seemed to have a theme for me, a poetic theme. And that's always actually more important to me than the kind of musical theme. Trying to unlock something in the song that will make it shimmer and bring something emotional to it."

On *Wrecking Ball* she covers "Every Grain Of Sand," a seldom-heard Bob Dylan song. But a question about Dylan quickly leads to a mention of Dylan's most recent song, "Dignity," from his *Greatest Hits Volume 3*. "It's funny, I just made a birthday tape for a songwriter friend of mine—this guy Jamie O'Hara, he's a great songwriter. He did a wonderful country album a few years ago that just absolutely got stonewalled at country radio. He was half of the O'Kanes, which was two people who made three of the most interesting records to come out of Nashville...ever! And ['Dignity'] was on there, in fact I think it opened up the tape," Emmylou continues. "And it immediately went into Marvin Gaye doing... I want to say 'Working Man Blues,' but that's a Merle Haggard tune...it was 'Inner City Blues.' And Leonard Cohen's 'Tower Of Song.' It's got that great verse in there, 'I asked Hank Williams how lonely does it get/Hank Williams hasn't answered me yet/But I hear him coughing all night long/A hundred floors above me in the Tower of Song...' Oh, so good!" she says, relishing the lyric. "He's a writer to conjure with. Not for the squeamish. I also had on there, from Neil Young's first album, there's this



PHOTO BY CAROLINE GREYSHOCK

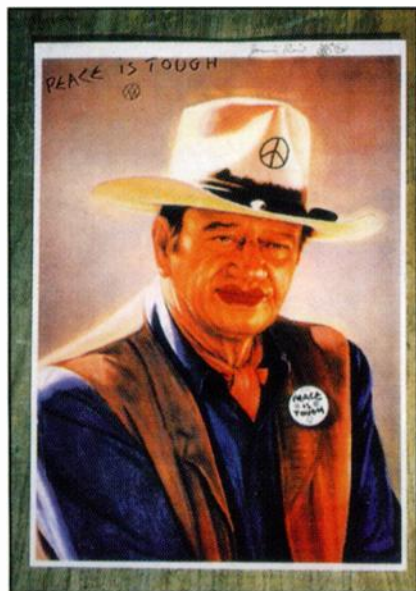
wonderful instrumental song called 'Emperor Of Wyoming.' And oh, that little piece of music just has something that makes me feel so good. I listen to it and I think, y'know, this is where country music should have been headed, and somehow it just got completely left out."—James Lien

MIX TAPE

Jamie O'Hara's Birthday Tape — Emmylou Harris

Bob Dylan "Dignity"
Marvin Gaye "Inner City Blues"
Innocence Mission "Bright As Yellow"
Nick Cave "Nobody's Baby Now"
Peter Gabriel "Blood Of Eden"
Sinead O'Connor "In This Heart"
Dwight Yoakam "She Wore Red Dresses"
Kate and Anna McGarrigle "Kitty Come Home"
Los Lobos "Little King Of Everything"
Vulgar Boatmen "You Don't Love Me Yet"
Buddy Miller "I Don't Mean Maybe"
The Soul Stirrers "Jesus Gave Me Water"
Leonard Cohen "Tower Of Song"
Ali Farka Toure and Ry Cooder "Soukora"
Tammy Rogers and Dan Heffington "Psalms"
Sean Colvin "Ragged Rugged Road"
Neil Young "Emperor Of Wyoming"

Made a good mix tape lately? Tell us about it. In every issue, we will feature a mix tape made by one of us (the editors), one of you (the readers), or a former duet partner of Gram Parsons. Just mail or fax us the track listing, and we'll pick out one we think is interesting for a future issue.



WAR CHILD

War Child, an organization funded by events put together by British pop musicians and their friends, is helping to provide relief for Bosnia's children. In recent months, it has sponsored and arranged dozens of relief programs in Bosnia, including mobile clinics and bakeries, mine clearances, artificial limbs, other medical aid, and the development of the Mostar Children's Music Center, which will provide music therapy.

The first major War Child event was the "Little Pieces From Big Stars" art auction, held in September, 1994. Brian Eno curated an auction of small artworks by British pop figures ranging from Pete Townshend to Boy George to Jamie Reid (seen at left). It was followed last summer by "Pagan Funwear," an auction of fashion designed by musicians: Scott Walker came up with a flak jacket based on a Bosnian original, and Lou Reed designed a leather and silk handkerchief/holder, for instance.

The biggest War Child project to date, though, is the *Help* compilation album, which has just been released in the U.S. It became the fastest-selling album in Britain ever when it was released there on September 9; the startling part is that the entire album had been recorded on September 4, and assembled the next day by Eno. It includes tracks by British pop stars from Paul Weller (who covers "Come Together" with a hand from Paul McCartney) to Massive Attack (remaking "Karmacoma" with Eno) to Oasis (whose track features Johnny Depp on lead guitar).

War Child's work will continue in America, starting with another "Little Pieces From Big Stars" auction in January, this time curated by Laurie Anderson, and a recording in March of Luciano Pavarotti's benefit concert for the children of Bosnia.—Douglas Wolk

dog's eye view



dog's eye view is a band and it's frontman
Peter Stuart's musical take on the world:

Q: What does the band name, dog's eye view, mean?

A: I lived in a basement apartment in Chicago and all I could see were fire hydrants and feet walking by...so I decided that I had a dog's eye view of the world.

Q: What is "happy nowhere," the title of your debut album, about?

A: It's a dual meaning. I've spent a lot of the last two years on the road & on one hand I've been happy to be nowhere at all, and on the other hand you can be miserable anywhere.

Q: Peter, tell us about recording "happy nowhere."

A: The band tried to make it indicative of the solo thing I'd been doing for the last two years (supporting Counting Crows, Cracker & Tori Amos). We rented a house & recorded live.

Q: What is in the immediate future for dog's eye view?

A: The album is in stores now and it looks like we'll be on tour forever.



<http://www.music.sony.com/Music/ArtistInfo/DogsEyeView/index.html>

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COLUMBIA

BEST NEW MUSIC

PHARCYDE Labcabincalifornia Delicious Vinyl



If P.M. Dawn decided to rebuild its credibility with hardcore rap gurus, it might produce something like the Pharcyde track "Runnin'." Riding along on a bed of clickety-clack beats and an acoustic guitar strumming an ambient figure, the song blends a sing-songy hook ("Can't keep runnin' away") with a rap about a young G coming into his own, learning to *look* like a tough, if not actually be one. Such is the Pharcyde's skill on *Labcabincalifornia*, fashioning "real" rap from copious wordplay and sounds that come back in style once every De La Soul or Tribe Called Quest album; keyboards soothe, not squonk; samples decorate, not dominate; rhymes have cadences that suggest a tune (none of this Nate Dogg/L.V. save-the-croon-for-the-chorus shit). But despite the group's studio-bred eccentricities, last seen on the 1993 gem "Passin' Me By," the same survival credos are preached in Illtown and South Central—guard your grill, but let's not commit mass gangsta suicide. Hearing *Labcabincalifornia*'s boogie-down rhythms, one would be mistaken to accuse the Pharcyde of pandering to that cerebral-hip-hop crowd. The truest moment on the album is "Little D," a bit of studio chatter in which somebody's visiting six-year-old brother is taught to rap hard into the mic, "Shut yo' bitch-ass up!" This would be depressing if you didn't get the sense that they're also showing the kid how the buttons and knobs work.

—Chris Molanphy

DATALOG: Released Nov. 7. First single "Runnin'."

FILE UNDER: Hip-hop, realer than "real."

R.I.Y.L.: A Tribe Called Quest, De La Soul, Nas.

VARIOUS ARTISTS The Secret Museum Of Mankind, Vols. 1 & 2 Yazoo-Shanachie



What can you say after a title like *Secret Museum Of Mankind*? It promises something amazing and delivers. These two CDs document indigenous music from all corners of the world made by intrepid ethnographers, folklorists, and musicologists in the years 1925-1948. Each disc has over 20 short recordings from locales such as New Caledonia, Kenya, Corsica, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Trinidad, Crete, Kenya, India, Poland and Rapa Nui. Each track has at least a couple lines describing the cultural context and what is known of the artist(s). The recordings are not bad at all, especially considering many were restored from incredibly rare, dusty 78s that may have disintegrated upon being played. When you first play *TSMOM*, don't divert your attention until your ear has picked out each piece's distinctive tones under the slight hiss. Producer Pat Conte explains in detail what processes were used to restore the sound, but his Indiana Jones-style prose is more evocative: "The [recordings] may rest in a NYC basement warehouse, or at a bazaar in Marrakesh or Uzbekistan. What few of these documents have survived the ravages of revolutions (many kinds!), wars, trash hoppers and decay in general may startle alien ears and minds." This from a guy who describes the '20s as "the most marvelous decade of recorded music." And while many of the traditions and styles represented here are still thriving, Conte makes a convincing case that these earlier documents—made by explorers and mercenaries born in another century—contain an unparalleled aural portrait of the second and third worlds, as the first was violently erupting into modernity. Scratchy and foreign at first, these CDs, like the Robert Johnson reissues, have the potential to explode in your imagination if you let them in.

—Danny Housman

DATALOG: Released Oct. 25.

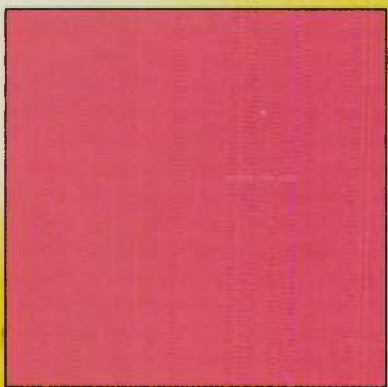
FILE UNDER: Music for the Paul Gauguin in you.

R.I.Y.L.: Library Of Congress, Smithsonian Institute or Ellipsis Arts packages (The Big Bang, Planet Soup).

SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE

Sunny Day Real Estate

Sub Pop



They broke up. No, they're still together. No, *really*, they did break up. Sunny Day Real Estate has been haunted by this debate over the past year, and as much as it pains us to admit it, yes, the band is *ka-put*. Its rhythm section defected to the Foo Fighters after the band was splintered by artistic differences. It's sad, because SDRE was so promising and so passionate, but even sadder because this self-titled posthumous release is a clear affirmation of the promise offered by last year's *Diary*. As on that record, singer Jeremy Enigk's fervent howl is akin to a thermometer's rising mercury in a heatwave: it climbs higher and higher until you think it has reached its most impassioned, and as he pushes past that point, his voice sounds like it will burst out of his chest and onto the floor, breaking into a million little pieces, rolling to all corners of the room. But Enigk's feverish vocals are held together by the combination of a really great rhythm section (Dave Grohl's got a lot to be proud of) and heavy, manic guitar lines. There is no quick-and-easy formula here; layers of furiously delivered sound combine to form songs that are extremely affecting. What makes it work is that on top of it all is a passion so great that the band crumbled under its weight.

—Jenny Eliscu

DATALOG: Released Nov. 7.

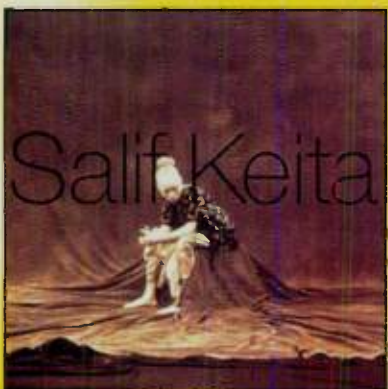
FILE UNDER: Impassioned post-punk.

R.I.Y.L.: Jawbox, Afghan Whigs, Rites Of Spring.

SALIF KEITA

"Folon"...The Past

Mango-Island



Folon is an assembly of stylistically diverse samples of sophisticated Afro-pop from a rising international world music star. Keita, a Malian chanteur descended from the ancient Malian emperor Sundiata, has become a singer of worldwide stature in recent years, going so far as to have graced the cover of the *New York Times* Sunday magazine—a feat unthinkable for most popular American musicians, let alone for a musician from a country most Americans could not identify on a world map. *Folon* samples musical styles from all over Africa, mixing them with elements of American pop and jazz; songs like "Tekere" and "Africa" have the driving rhythm, bouncing bassline, slippery guitar licks and party vibe of Zairian kwasa kwasa, while "Mandjou" and "Sumun" lean more towards the Afro-jazz of Manu Dibango or Fela, with sharp horn lines and segments of structured improvisation. Keita even provides some reggae flavor on "Dakan-Fe." "Nyanyama," "Seydou" and "Folon" are slower songs with little more instrumentation than kora, guitars, and percussion, and Keita wails of the ancient cities of red mud-brick of his ancestors. It is on these more mournful, unembellished songs that Keita shines brightest, because these tracks highlight the album's greatest gift: Keita's high, haunting voice, billowing and soaring like wind sweeping across the Sahara, an emotional cry that is moving even if its words are undecipherable. For that alone, *Folon* is a triumph.

—Philippe Wamba

DATALOG: Released Nov. 7.

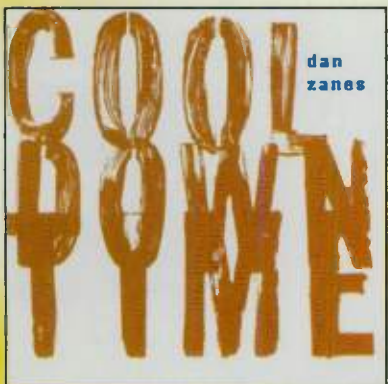
FILE UNDER: The voice of Afro-pop.

R.I.Y.L.: Youssou N'Dour, Fela, Manu Dibango.

DAN ZANES

Cool Down Time

Private Music



One can lead a moderately successful rock band only so long before retreating into seclusion to figure out what it all means. For Dan Zanes and the Del Fuegos, it was about seven years. Good notices on the Amer-indie roots rock circuit, four albums and the odd beer commercial weren't enough to stave off existential dilemmas, and Zanes hightailed it to upstate New York for a few years. *Cool Down Time*, a distillation of those years, was recorded in 12 days with production idol Mitchell Froom, and the disc bears the stamp of both Zanes' sequestration and Froom's way with a mixing board. Simultaneously stark and warm, the record never really sounds like much more than Zanes and an electric guitar through a battered amp, but still seems to fill the room with all manner of wheezing keyboards and hall-closet percussion. Froom's treatments evoke the soulful best from the erstwhile Del Fuego, allowing his pale themes to shimmer in the dim light. His reedy voice wraps its way around a soulful country amble, recounting backporch imagery and self-revelation. Zanes is no archaeology experiment: Cast free from his bar-band moorings, *Cool Down Time* is where he was rightfully headed all along, and proof that his artistry has hit its stride.

—Scott Frampton

DATALOG: Released Sep. 19.

FILE UNDER: Spare country/R&B.

R.I.Y.L.: John Prine, Latin Playboys, John Doe, Blue Rodeo.



DOGS IN SPACE

LAIKA

More than any other band, the transcontinental group Laika uses high technology to make music with groove, spirit and soul. Singer Margaret Fiedler often seems to be almost in a trance on stage, and she brings the audience with her: chanting, murmuring and incanting, and occasionally letting loose with bolts of withering noise-guitar. Laika's rhythm section is live and loud, with deep dub basslines, a drummer and an extra percussionist playing exceptionally tricky rhythms (ever danced in 7/4 time? Go to a Laika show and you will). The group's lead instrument, though, is a sampler, usually played live by Fiedler's partner and creative collaborator, Guy Fixsen—the sampler they use on stage has two keyboards, one for each of them.

As a producer and engineer, Fixsen has worked with everyone from Air Miami to Dog Faced Hermans, but he's probably best known for working on My Bloody Valentine's epic *Loveless*. "Just the odd 18 months of it, yeah... I went down to their new studio a while ago to help them christen it and do their first track there, which was actually a John Barry cover ["All The Time In The World," on the *Peace Together* compilation]. They said 'come down for a weekend,' and I was there for two and a half weeks. Some things never change." He met Fiedler when he engineered her group Moonshake's first record, and ended up being the group's engineer for the next few years.

The American-born Fiedler (she grew up in Chicago) had been making her own music for years, on a four-track and with friends. "I just saw the tape I did with Moby... Moby and I go way back—we used to play in a band together. We were like 16, in Connecticut. First we were Child's Play, then we were Caeli Seoul. We sounded kind of like Joy Division crossed with the Smiths or something." She continued to play bass and guitar in a bunch of bands (including a brief stint in Ultra Vivid Scene), before ending up in England, as one of the two frontpeople in Moonshake, along with the Wolfhounds' Dave Callahan. That lineup (which also included dub bassist John Frenett and a tough, clever drummer known only as Mig) made a series of outstanding EPs and one album, *Eva Luna*. As time passed, though, it became clear that Fiedler and Callahan had very different ideas of what Moonshake was, and the band split in half. Callahan and Mig have continued as Moonshake, and Fiedler and Frenett started a new band with Fixsen.

They ended up naming the group after Laika, the Soviet dog who was the first living creature in space. Fiedler and Fixsen have cottoned to the name: Their production company is called DiSco™, for Dogs In Space Co. A lot of band-name suggestions that didn't quite make it, though, came from a competition in the British music weekly *Melody Maker*. Margaret explains: "This reporter called me up—he'd heard I was out of Moonshake, and

they had this competition—'give Margaret's band a name.' Somebody suggested 'Sunquake.' I think our favorite was 'Anal Chicken Cannibal Rectum Grinder.' Actually it was two names—there was 'Anal Chicken' and 'Cannibal Rectum Grinder,' but I thought as one name it was probably quite stunning."

Fiedler and Fixsen recorded almost all of Laika's debut, *Silver Apples Of The Moon* (Too Pure-American), at home with a sampler and a computer. It's their favorite way of working; at the time of the interview, they were preparing to record basic tracks for their next record in a friend's New York apartment. "Some of the things I'd actually started on for the next Moonshake record, and then a couple of things Guy had started on his own, 'cause we had the sequencer and the sampler at home," Fiedler says. "We started out quite programmed, with a lot of loops and a lot of samples, and then we found that's really constraining: when you have a drum loop, there's not really much you can do. Ultimately, we do want to have verses and choruses, and loops are very anti-that. When you have this one groove, you can't separate it or change chords—it does what it does and that's it."

"You can if you actually really get into it..." Guy says, frowning.

"Guy spends days messing around with things. That's kinda what we're into. A lot of bands don't really do that. They don't really have any capacity to edit themselves—they just think okay, let's put it out, it's done... It's good to explore all the possibilities and then come back and say 'yeah, that was the right thing.' You know you're right then." She laughs.

"You say that," Fixsen responds, "and it conjures up an image of being very precious and into it for its own sake, but it's very important for us to get spontaneity into things. Kevin [Shields, of My Bloody Valentine] is kind of interesting: he spends hours and hours doing stuff, but then doing a guitar part, he'll always do a first take, he won't do a second take. You have to keep that element in there somewhere—keep the right mistakes."

Margaret nods. "For the flute and percussion [on *Silver Apples*], we'd get the tape running, get them just doing whatever, and then Guy and I would edit it later. Which sometimes meant sampling sections, dropping them into other sections, which could take a week when you got into it. We actually had a lot of flute parts we'd written [in advance], and none of those got used."

For all its studio meticulousness, though, Laika has made its name as a live band—a five-piece ensemble that's been on the road for most of the last year, including stints on Lollapalooza's second stage and supporting Tricky. And they really do play everything live, using a sampler to expand the timbres of the songs rather than to drive them. "We don't use any sequencers or tapes," Margaret explains. "All the samples are triggered live—Guy triggers them. If there's a loop, Guy holds it down with his finger. With Moonshake, by the end, we were doing about half the set to a sequencer, and I was bored—half the songs I had something to do and the other half I didn't."

"And when it goes wrong it goes wrong worse..."

"It's horrible! When you go out with a sequencer, everyone has to stop and figure out where you are and then start up again, or you just have to stop the song full stop, which we did on quite a few occasions. You're out or you're in: there's no feel involved, and you're struggling to tread water. And Mig was wearing headphones, and it was just like 'fuck that'..."

With its freedom from sequencers, Laika can play organically with its samples, subtly changing the songs from night to night—most of the songs have gradually become very different over the course of the year, to the point where the band was surprised when they went back and listened to the album recently. A lot of that also has to do with the band's inventive, supple rhythm section. The double-percussion effect was a happy accident, as it turns out. Lou Ciccotelli played drums and percussion on *Silver Apples*; when he had to go home to Chicago a few weeks before Laika's first performance, they enlisted Rob Ellis, formerly of PJ Harvey. The day of the show, though, Ciccotelli came back, and ended up playing additional percussion on stage. "That's been our lineup ever since. When we heard the dual rhythms, we realized we just had to have that."

this month's model

Recently, Frenett has been replaced, amicably, by bassist Colin Cairns. "What happened with John was that a little bit before we went to America, he said that he wanted to leave the band," Guy explains. "He has a job French polishing, which is very well paid. It's like a very high-quality wood-polishing process. I think they actually use crushed bugs or something in it."

"Beetle dung," Margaret jumps in. "It's these special kinds of wood beetles, and they eat wood and then they shit it. So that's what they use: it's completely organic wood concentrate, basically. They do really expensive antiques and stuff like that, or when people have wood-paneled houses."

Guy picks up the thread again—the two of them complete each other's thoughts and sentences all the time. "So John was going through this phase where he was walking past doors and going 'hmm... nice bit of wood...' He had a baby with his girlfriend 16 months ago, and now another one's on the way, so he's got so many things pulling him to stay in London..."

"...And we're touring more and more," Margaret finishes. Fortunately, a friend of the band recommended Cairns. "He'd done percussion-type bass with Dead Can Dance and more dubby stuff with A.R. Kane. I wouldn't say I love either of those bands, but I could see that somebody who'd played in both of them could slide into us quite quickly."

Though Laika's songs have a consistent feel that's entirely their own, the album reveals a broad range of styles and ideas. "We can't be dogmatic and go 'yeah, we've got message songs,'" Fiedler says, "but we do. We've also got songs that are complete space-hippie drive! And both are fine in the context of that—that's us as people, we're not one thing or the other. That's all making records is: this is our taste, this is what we like. So many people's records are so flat and so one-dimensional. This is your chance to express yourself, and that's it? Punk rock?" She giggles again. "It's like, whenever you see musicians' top ten records you think 'that's great'—everybody's got the most brilliant taste, and then you hear what they make and it's maybe one out of those ten, but to the tee! Making records is your only chance to make your mark, to say 'this is who I am, and I am actually different.' Most people go 'oh, here's my record, I'm actually like everybody else!'" **(END)**



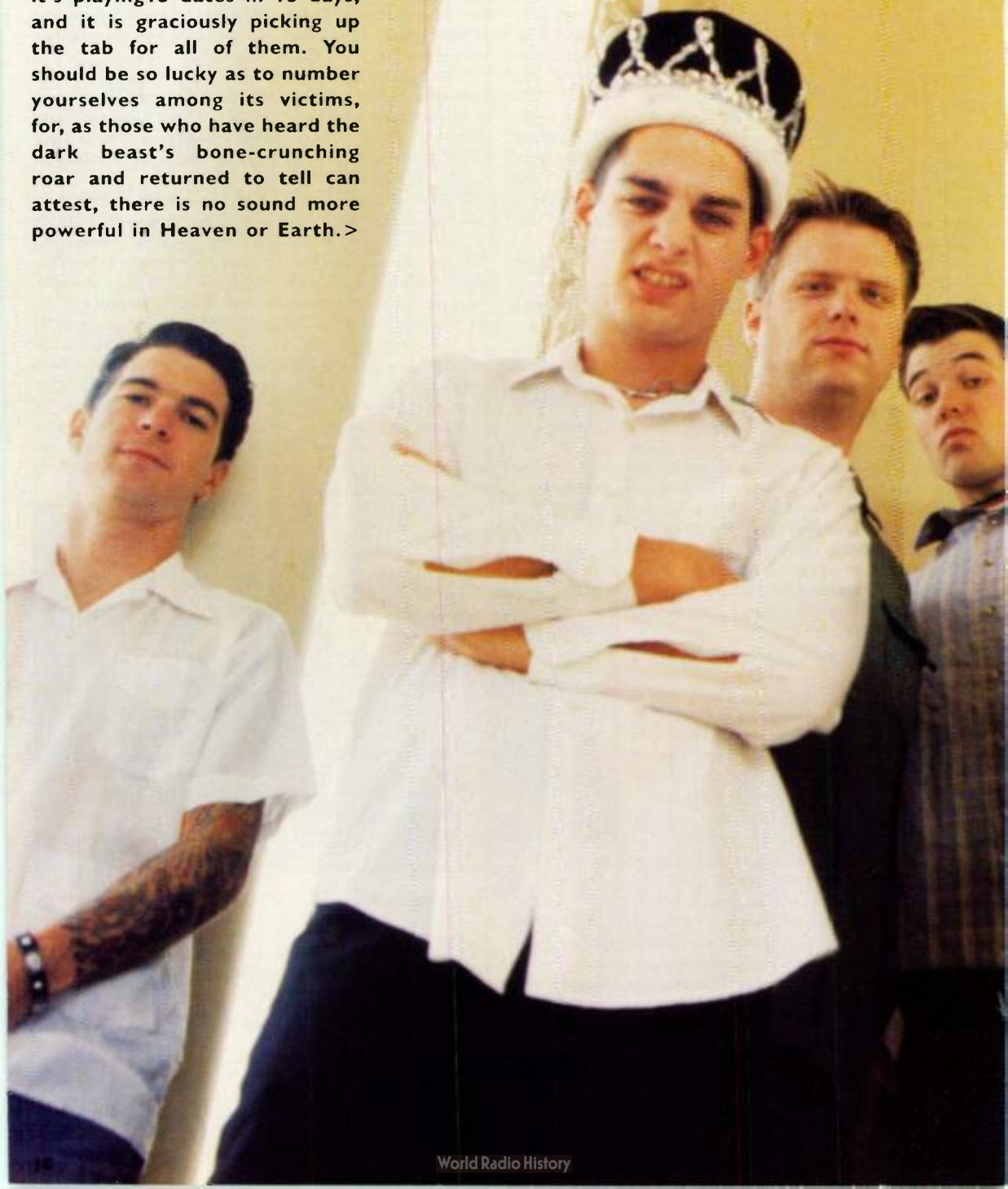
DISCOGRAPHY

Antenna EP (Too Pure (UK))
Silver Apples Of The Moon (Too Pure-American)
 "Lower Than Stars" on *Volume Ten* (Volume (UK))
 "If You Miss (remix)" on *Macro Dub Infection* (Caroline)

Margaret Fiedler and Guy Fixsen with Moonshake:
First EP (Creation (UK))
 "Secondhand Clothes" (Too Pure (UK))—included on American edition of *Eva Luna*
 "Beautiful Pigeon" (Too Pure (UK))
Eva Luna (Matador)
Big Good Angel EP (Matador)

ROCKET FROM CRYPT

What has twelve arms, six heads and, when unleashed from the confines of safety, makes a racket like a herd of berserk elephants covering Del Shannon's "Runaway?" Do not recoil from the hideous misfit. Rather, marvel at the fact that it's playing 13 dates in 15 days, and it is graciously picking up the tab for all of them. You should be so lucky as to number yourselves among its victims, for, as those who have heard the dark beast's bone-crunching roar and returned to tell can attest, there is no sound more powerful in Heaven or Earth.>



M THE

The State Of The Art Is On Fire!

BY KURT B. REIGHLEY



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS CUFFARO

And certainly not in Columbia, Missouri, where San Diego sextet Rocket From The Crypt has landed for the second-to-last date of its two-week "Free Charity" tour. Riding the crest of a surging wave of new product—climaxing with *Scream*, *Dracula*, *Scream!* (Interscope)—the men of Rocket have opted to warm up for the year of touring the globe that lies before them by cutting a quick swath through America's heartland, spreading the gospel of rock, free of charge. Yet the audience of mainly college students tonight doesn't seem to know what to make of the meaty helping of punk rock these boys, resplendent in their matching red shirts and black trousers, are burying it beneath. Some people don't know what's good for them.

All told, nine members of the Rocket crew have squeezed into two vans full of equipment for the past week and a half. Lead singer/guitarist Speedo leads the charge, flanked by N.D. on guitar, Atom on drums, Apollo 9 on saxophone, Petey X (he of the sexy Lauren Bacall dental gap) on bass, and J.C. 2000 on trumpet, aided and abetted by Max the road manager, genial soundman Santa, and their trusty driver, Dirty. Long, boring drives and colorless meals are laced with in-jokes and punctuated by unscheduled mischief (including a rousing rest stop game of whiffleball and a 4 a.m. fireworks display in Missouri), all in pursuit of the adrenaline kicks of each night's aural attack. The atmosphere is one of a delinquent boy's club; the Dead End Kids with matching, stolen band uniforms.

Since Speedo formed the band in 1989, in reaction to experiences with hardcore outfit Pitchfork, Rocket From The Crypt have been challenging the dog-eared traditions of rock while mining musical virtues typically eschewed in punk. *Scream*, *Dracula*, *Scream!* (named after a frequent exclamation of their pal, 300 lb. schizophrenic Chicago underground legend Wesley Willis) is the culmination of Speedo's appreciation of calculated production values, and the now seamless integration of horns into the dense Rocket sound, fueled by a group case of musical blueballs after a long period of Rocket celibacy while Speedo worked with his other love, Drive Like Jehu. The resulting release, when practices resumed, yielded enough material for far more than one album. "We didn't want to be held to just 'okay, let's come up with twelve songs, record them and go tour,'" says Speedo as he flosses his teeth in the cramped van, somewhere on the highway near the Kansas border.

Having spawned such a large quantity of songs, and appreciating that the corporate mechanics of a major label would slow the momentum of their return to the fray, the band opted to stagger the new material over several releases, buying time to experiment before recording the Interscope CD. First up was the 10" EP *The State Of Art Is On Fire* (Sympathy For The Record Industry) last April. "We wrote those songs and it took like a week, went and recorded them in three days," explains Speedo. "That thing was out a month and a half after we recorded it. In the past, we've always recorded lots of 7"s, and that's always an immediate way of getting out your music, letting people know where you're at, right now."

With a ravenous public temporarily sated, they returned to sifting through the new material. Determined to make *Scream!* "the best thing we'd ever done... a record that totally sums up what the band is about," songs that didn't fit that agenda were relegated to the loving foster home of *Hot Charity* (on the band's own Perfect Sound label). "There were some songs we thought were cool, but for whatever reason—maybe they didn't click as much live—seemed like things that would be best suited on a different record." But when they sat down with that finished LP, they made a sobering discovery. "We didn't like the way it sounded," admits Speedo. "So we threw it all away, after mixing it and everything." After stewing in self-pity for a while, they decided to rebuild the monster, and after stripping out a few songs, and adding the fresh "My Arrow's Aim," re-recorded it in half the time initially spent.

With an EP and an LP (plus two singles) under their belts, they were as ready as they'd ever be for the big test. They started with live recordings to 4-track masters at Gold Star Studios, a favorite of Elvis and Phil Spector, home to Beach Boys and Sinatra sessions; it was the fulfillment of a fantasy of Speedo's. "Everything was at our disposal," he



Those indie purists who think they smell a "major label sellout" when they hear talk of horns and strings may excuse themselves now.

enthusies. "The most intense mic collection in the world. Prototypes of models that were never even manufactured. Basically, all the crap that you like to think that you're into but that you never get the opportunity to work with."

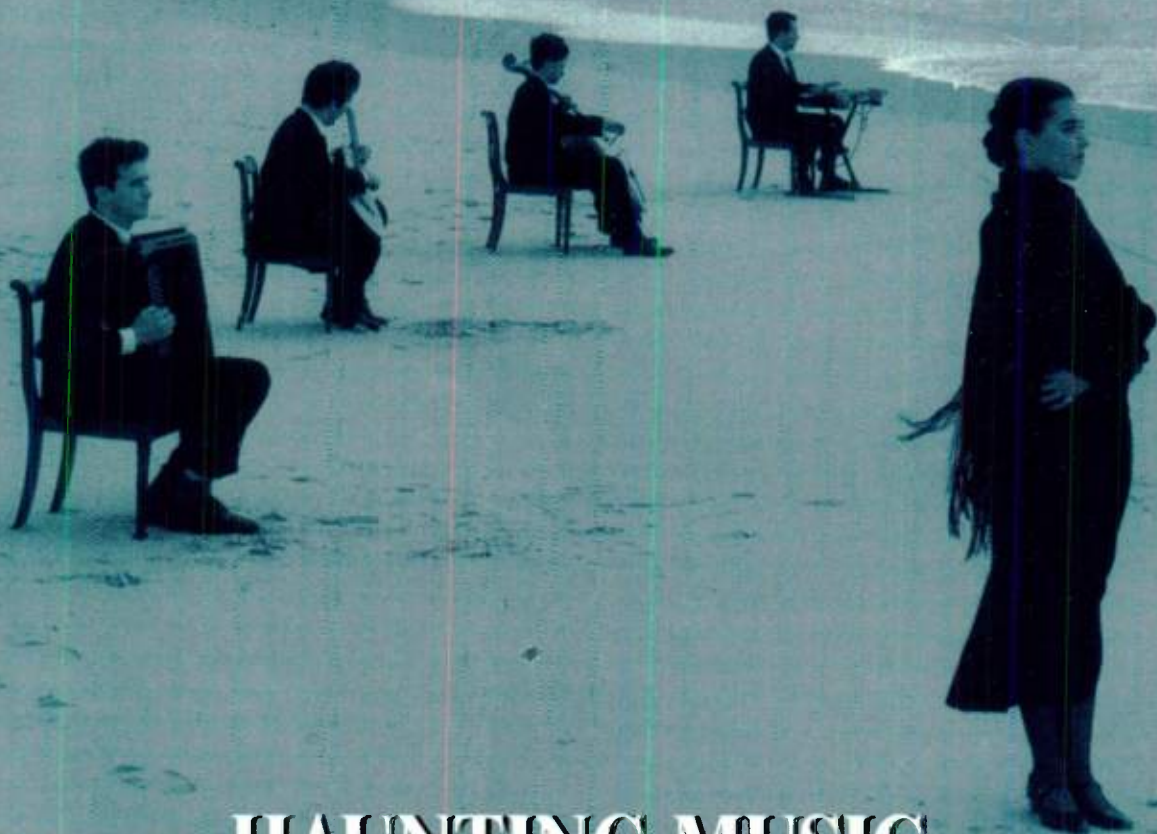
With so many resources at their disposal, they hit on the closest recorded embodiment of their concert sound yet. "We were able to record it almost completely live, with the exception of some vocals and some horns here and there, back-up vocals and stuff. And we were able to do cool stuff." Like bringing in his own dad to play accordion on a cut ("Used"), and adding strings.

Those indie purists who think they smell a "major label sellout" when they hear talk of horns and strings may excuse themselves now. "These are things we would have done from the very get-go as a band, but we never had the resources to do it," insists Speedo. "These aren't Rocket saying 'Hey, there's not enough crap in this song.' Or 'Let's just do it just to do it, for no other reason.' We're not like that. Even our first record, everything was completely orchestrated to the point of 'This is what's gonna happen here.' In terms of performances and all these little parts, everything was completely mapped out before we went into the studio."

As rousing as new songs like "Bad Livers," "Born In '69" (for which Dirty hops on stage to sing back-up, in a red shirt, of course) and "On A Rope" are, it's the incredibly concentrated sound of the six that gives their music so much wallop. Much of the foundation for that stems from the brass-work of Apollo 9 and J.C. 2000. "The

continued on page 20

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whole horn section, in the context of our music, is really natural," says Speedo. "It fits like a glove. No one ever uses horns for anything except a solo here or there, or a ska or jazz thing. You never just hear a steamroller of locomotion coming at you fueled by just the barrelling sound of fucked-up horns, creating that sonic width and density, and just flattening it out. And the better they become at their instruments, and the better we become as a band, the better the songs we're writing. Because now, instead of adding them into what's going on, they're completely taken into account. In a lot of ways, they generate the initial spark that starts a song."

"We're about density of sound, so there's not a lot of room for dynamics. And so you have to create dynamics within a really small amount of space. So when you put together the songs, you have to take that into account, and put some sort of space in there. A little bit of breathing room. Because if you're getting hit over the head all the time, pretty soon you're not getting hit over the head any more; you just become numb, and it loses any kind of impact."

If the addition of Apollo 9 after 1991's *Paint As A Fragrance* started this evolution, new member J.C. 2000 got the beast walking on land. Brought into the Rocket circle by Dirty, J.C. was

"I like to let them know that those clichés—like last night somebody was yelling 'Freebird'—aren't funny."

tours like this have always appealed to Rocket. "I like the breaks," he continues, "because it gives you time to do something new, rather than getting caught in routines. Working on different songs, so every time you play a town it's not the same exact thing. I hate seeing bands do the same show twice." Fans who follow the band, as a few will to the next show in Lawrence, Kansas, know that Speedo and company shake the set up. While the Columbia gig relies heavily on material from earlier singles and albums, in Lawrence they dip deeper into the recent riches. "My voice has been kinda hacked, and the older songs are a little bit easier to sing," claims Speedo the next afternoon. "But I'm in fine form today."

Hopefully the audience will be, too. "It was a weird thing," he reflects on the lukewarm reception in Missouri. "You don't want to get caught up into the thing of 'Oh shit, people aren't having a good time,' because the bottom line is yes, we're just doing this because we like to do it and it's fun. But if we were doing it just for ourselves, we'd stay home and do it for ourselves. And last night, when I was getting the sense that we were not entertaining people, I got a little bit bitter. I'm a little bit bitter all the time. I always like to challenge people, and let them know that those clichés—like last night somebody was yelling 'Freebird'—aren't funny."

Despite some audience mayhem that ultimately cuts the show short, the gig in Lawrence meets with a much better reception than the night before. In terms of audience participation it doesn't match the band's recollection of the show from two nights ago, in Iowa City, where one young man insisted on shouting for the band to play "punk rock."

"How much would you pay for punk rock?" sneered Speedo.

"I paid a shitload," rebuked the fan.

"Then you're our target audience," came the response. When the young man went to make a pass at stage diving (a practice Rocket despises) later, Speedo intercepted him and insisted he drop his pants. And mere buttocks would not suffice. "If you go up to anyone like this..." says Speedo, seizing my arm in a vice-like grip and glaring into my eyes, "you can tell them to do whatever you want 'em to do, if you have a guitar in your hand, and a red shirt. You say—off the mic—'Sir, we're gonna have to see some frontal nudity. Take off your pants....'" and voila! The boy barely had time to buckle up his pants before they shoved him back into the crowd.

"And then he went and bought \$30.00 worth of merchandise," laughs Speedo. "So I guess he really did pay a shitload." **END**



driven by unseen forces to take up the horn. "I really wanted to play trumpet for a long time," he confesses from the back seat. "I pleaded with my parents to give me one and they never would. It got to the point where I almost ripped one off from the swap meet. I was in tears, and I wanted to grab it. I felt like a had to play it for some reason. I eventually did rip one off, but it was from a friend. He still doesn't know that I have it." He spent the next three years teaching himself to play the damn thing, following in the tradition of Apollo before him. "I really didn't know how to play," says Apollo of his sax background prior to Rocket. "I'd taken it six years before, in junior high."

One respect in which J.C. differs from the rest of the band is his absence of the Rocket From The Crypt tattoo borne by each of his fellow members, and a handful of the band's fans. Yet where once the boys discussed the adornment with vigor, they downplay that aspect of their mystique these days. "We don't encourage it anymore," admits Speedo. "It's reached that point where we're really comfortable with the amount of people who have them now, and it's a cheesy thing to say, but it's at a level where we can actually do things that are special for these people, instead of a diluted version of things that are special." Not only do tattoo-bearers gain free admission to the shows, but they were also the only recipients of the recent single "Tattoo," a one-sided surf instrumental on a silk-screened clear 7".

It's that combination of attention to detail and carefully orchestrated image that elevate Rocket out of the ordinary: the matching outfits, rock-star monikers (oh, c'mon—you didn't really think his mother named him "Speedo," did you?), special treats, and carefully selected design elements. "You've just got to see it through," nods Speedo. "You start it, and you've got to see it through to the end. And it's hard to keep it consistent sometimes, when you're touring constantly, and you don't have a break. But it's more important for everything to be generated by that band than have something out there that looks terrible."

"There's no real logic," claims Speedo of the decision to hit the road for free, at the band's expense. "It seemed like it would be really fun to do." Short

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Paint As A Fragrance (Headhunter-Cargo)

Circa: Now! (Headhunter-Cargo)

The State Of The Art Is On Fire (10" EP) (Sympathy For

The Record Industry)

Hot Charity (Perfect Sound)

Scream, Dracula, Scream! (Interscope)

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Gastr Del Sol

by Franklin Bruno

"Kinds of music are like languages, and I'm interested in what language does," says Jim O'Rourke, the innovative composer-improviser who, along with David Grubbs, makes up the core of Chicago's Gastr Del Sol. "A lot of music is manipulative," O'Rourke continues, "and I'm often interested in exaggerating those manipulations to see how they work." Gastr Del Sol's challenging, often densely textured music can be understood as an attempt to get beyond these manipulations by juxtaposing musical genres which have very different languages or rules: instrumental and vocal; notated and improvised; constructed-on-tape and live-in-studio; guitar-based rock and contemporary classical. Gastr's current release, *The Harp Factory On Lake Street* (Avant), is its least rock-derived and most ambitious yet, a single, 17-minute track supplemented by nine other musicians.

Given their previous musical endeavors, it's surprising that Grubbs and O'Rourke could unearth any common musical ground at all. O'Rourke is active on the European free-improvisation scene, constructs and plays all manner of prepared guitars, and has released several discs of his tape compositions in the realm of "serious" electro-acoustic music. Grubbs, meanwhile, was a founding member of indie-rock legend Squirrel Bait and the thornier Bastro. Though each is an accomplished guitarist, their collaboration is fueled less by a fascination with virtuosity than by curiosity about one another's musical worlds and a joint willingness to explore new forms. O'Rourke, especially, comments that "a lot of improvisers really enjoy *playing* their instrument, which I don't."

The band's first incarnation resulted from Grubbs' and Bastro bassist Bundy Brown's dissatisfaction with the limitations of Bastro's "heavy" rock. "A lot of that was material that Bastro was playing on its last tour. Coming off of that, I think we both wanted to play music that sounded more like the sound coming off of amplifiers and strings, and not so much the sound coming off of the P.A... Bundy and I squared off and sat in chairs and faced each other and kept playing those things until we got acclimated to hearing them without percussion, without a lot of volume." The result, 1993's *The Serpentine Similar*, is an engaging set of largely

LEARNING TO SPEAK MUSIC

drumless once-rock songs, emphasising rich, open guitar voicings, and precise, contemplative performances.

Enter O'Rourke. "Jim gave me a call about this time, and he had the idea to form a rock band—he thought I was an expert on heavy rock. The two of us played with a bass player and drummer a few times, which didn't work at all, but I liked the first 'practice,' which basically was him bringing a big stack of records and us going through them and pointing out this backwards cymbal thing off the first Art Bears record or this organ riff on this Miles Davis cut."

O'Rourke shares this dim view of their early false starts. "Sometimes I like to listen to rock music, but that doesn't mean I feel the need to play it. After a couple of hours of playing that way, I was done." With his impulse to rock (later given vent in *Brise-Glace*) out of the way and Brown joining Tortoise, O'Rourke and Grubbs have since applied the Gastr Del Sol name to their varied joint collaborations. "Gastr Del Sol is slightly separate from the rest of my work in that it's really work with Dave. It's what happens when Dave and I work together."

The signature sound of Gastr, heard on 1994's *Croakt, Or Fly and Mirror Repair*, is that of two guitars (electric or acoustic) playing tense, angular unison figures. On tracks like "Work From Smoke" and "Dictionary Of Handwriting," these repetitive figures, themselves broken by harmonic and dynamic shifts, act as a "ground," a worked surface that other musical events interrupt, intrude upon, or even replace. Halfway through the former piece, these guitars crossfade into unidentifiable bell-like sonorities that could be either a heavily treated organ or one of O'Rourke's prepared instruments. In the latter, the two are sporadically joined by the propulsive drumming of Tortoise/Sea And Cake mastermind John McEntire, only to ruthlessly cut him off in the brief interval between strokes of a snare roll, leaving nothing but an overtone from a previous guitar track in the space. Anyone seeking rock-as-release will not find it here.

Harp Factory (a reference to the Lyon-Healey building on Chicago's South Side, one of a handful of American harp manufacturers) dispenses with the rock-band format altogether. A quiet acoustic figure introduces the piece, only to be drowned out by a sustained orchestral blast from the entire ensemble, which includes, among others, bass clarinetist Gene Coleman, Shellac bassist Bob



Weston (on trumpet), and McEntire again, this time playing synth. Through overdubbing, just nine individual musicians perform up to 60 parts during these sections.

Although most of this music is composed ("If I want to improvise, I can go play at the bookstore around the corner," says O'Rourke), "composition" here has a wider meaning than the European classical tradition would allow. "Some composed sections have pretty loose parameters," explains Grubbs. "We'll sit on these chords or choose between a couple of chords, or improvise using these several pitches for x amount of time... I tend to write out instructions for myself. People have said, 'I'd love to see your graphic scores,' and they're these little junior legal pads." O'Rourke concurs: "Traditional notation is nothing. I could spend hours notating every detail of a part, or I could just tell someone like [bass clarinetist and

frequent sideman] Gene Coleman, and he'll get exactly the same thing faster, and he'll probably play it better. The people that I write for, I know how they play, and they know how I write."

These "compositions," in their ultimate recorded form, may also involve extensive cutting and mixing from various performance sources. "At Night Or At Night" offers an extreme example of this method of working. "Jim was overseas, and the deadline for the track was drawing close, so I said I'd do something with John and Bundy, and Jim said he wanted to contribute to it. So he and [electronic musician] Christof Heeman sent us a tape that had 20 short pieces of music on it and said 'use whatever you like.' So I used one guitar improvisation as the basis for a guitar part that I played myself, and used about 15 seconds

group... We write 15-minute pieces of music, but that's not to be fleshed out with eight verses and choruses. Gastr would be a significantly different project if we had decided that there would be no words. It would seem inarticulate to me."

Grubbs' lyrics demonstrate and question the various uses to which language itself may be put, as well as asking what "counts" as language. References to various verbal (signatures, letters) and non-verbal (alarms, timecards) modes of communication abound. In Crookt's "Wedding In The Park," the narrator arrives late for the title's ceremony, only to find that the participants "had already taken one another's name/and fixed them in solution." On "Eight Corners," the lyrics merely consist of a list of Chicago street names, an invocation Grubbs describes as "deictic," a term



L-R: Grubbs, McEntire, O'Rourke

of another at the end of the piece. And then the first half is a piece of music that Christof did, and I overlaid a couple of things on it." The track closes with dozens of cymbal crashes spliced into silence during their decay, all superimposed onto a bed consisting of a single cymbal, slowed down and run backwards.

Further changes take place in the translation to performance. "Some of the short pieces could be dropped into other things—we tend to do that a lot live," Grubbs explains. Live, Gastr has played as a guitar duo, an almost-rock band with McEntire, and an extended ensemble. "The first show we did in Chicago after recording *Harp Factory*, we played with a seven-piece group, mostly of people who played on it, and we did that and an arrangement of 'Eight Corners' [a lovely, piano-based piece from *Mirror Repair*]... The piece has these little windows onto the sound, and that was just organized for the group instead of overdubbing bass clarinet and electronics."

Another Gastr trademark, and another point of entry for the uninitiated, is Grubbs' vocals. "I think it's tremendously significant that a lot of this is vocal music. Maybe that's because I really care about the lyrics, which are one of my responsibilities in the

from the philosophy of language meaning "pointing." Nothing is being said about these streets, no description is being attached to them, they are merely named in *absentia*.

In addition to their work as Gastr Del Sol, both O'Rourke and Grubbs have lent their talents to the current of Mayo Thompson's Red Krayola, as well as to *Slapping Pythagoras*, the long-awaited reconstruction of "dream music" by trance-rock composer/Faust collaborator Tony Conrad. After a brief fall tour with McEntire, the group is returning to work on its next: album-length project. "Each record has to be better than the last one," says O'Rourke, "that's our only rule." So far, so good. **END**

DISCOGRAPHY

- The Serpentine Similar* (EP) (TeenBeat)
- 20 Songs Less* (7" EP) (TeenBeat)
- Crookt. Crockt Or Fly* (Drag City)
- Mirror Repair* (EP) (Drag City)
- "At Night Or At Night" on *Hey Drag City* compilation (Drag City)
- "Quietly Approaching" on *Red Hot + Bothered* compilation (Red Hot+Reprise)
- The Harp Factory On Lake Street* (Avant)

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2 FOOT FLAME 2 Foot Flame Matador

Jean Smith, she of the milk-curdling voice that dominates Mecca Normal, may have met her musical equals in New Zealanders Michael Morley and Peter Jefferies, whose various projects (Dead C, Gate, This Kind Of Punishment) have always played brinkmanship with the experimental. The amalgamation is 2 Foot Flame, where Smith's vocals flow like molten lead over a seared soundscape. Morley's guitar barely surfaces from its own feedback scuzz, while the piano Jeffries adds to a few songs makes for anachronistic color in this futuristic industrial gray-wash. Backed by ritualistic percussion, Smith's voice carries the robotic harshness of Nina Hagen, but her lyrics add lifeblood. In "Cordoned Off" she breaks off her description of a frozen apocalypse by saying, "Actually, why don't we do this another time? I've been away now... you know how it is, it was a long time ago... I don't really remember... I can't really say for sure." Briefly lulled, the song then redoubles its intensity. Though Smith's vocals overwhelm most of these songs with artistic torment, a few tracks lapse into a tranquil beauty, especially "Compass," where her voice is smoothed over by soothing piano. It's Morley's omnipresent fuzz that really controls the mood, however, and the entire record seethes with a lightless, heartless flame.

—Megan McCarthy

DATALOG: Released Oct. 24. Mecca Normal's new single also features Jefferies playing drums.

FILE UNDER: Human noise.

R.I.Y.L.: Dead C, early Cabaret Voltaire.



AMOEbic ENSEMBLE Limbic Rage Over The Counter

Rhode Island's Amoebic Ensemble has unleashed a scrap-metal sonic beast called *Limbic Rage*. Accordion, bassoon, bouzouki, violin, hurdy gurdy, horns and a percussion section made of pots, pans and cans are the backbone, teeth and wild, flailing limbs of this oddly entertaining record (few melodies, no lyrics). *Limbic Rage* sounds alternately sinister and silly. An accordion's bellows will ooze open, pouring out some cavernous chord signifying the end of mankind only to be cheered up by a bubbling bassoon, which, in turn, gets kicked in the head by some scraping guitar work or a crashing pie pan. This octet knows how to squeeze the right notes out of these notoriously unsoothing instruments. It's chaos, but it's a good kind of chaos, one that easily conjures images of the radical black-and-white cartoons of the late, great Fleischer Brothers. Even if you're not an animation junkie, *Limbic Rage* sparks the imagination, forcing listeners to come up with their own twisted short stories to go along with tracks like "Mayday In The Tunnel," "The Circus Has Been Cancelled" and "Owls Are Actually Very Stupid." The record's a kick, but I'm eager to see the band live just to see whom the chicks in the crowd go wild for, the bassoonist or the accordionist.

—Steve Ciabattini

DATALOG: Released Oct. 3.

FILE UNDER: Entertaining entropy.

R.I.Y.L.: John Zorn's Naked City, Guy Klucsevsek, Raymond Scott's cartoon scores.



AZTEC CAMERA Frestonia Reprise

On his last two albums, Aztec Camera's Roddy Frame has traded in his old, familiar jangle guitar for high production values and lush, orchestral pop tunes, an intentional dip into a brightly colored, beautiful, well-produced room in his head. It's not really a bad detour, and Frame can carry it off, but occasionally *Frestonia*, unlike 1994's *Dreamland*, slips into a sameness neither comforting nor warm. There is no denying its prettiness—from the opener "Rainy Season" to the Liberace-like piano flourishes that quickly meld into gentle acoustic guitar solos to the instantly catchy simplicity of "Beautiful Girl." Frame's occasionally soaring, often gritty and thick vocals add a necessary edge to songs like "Imperfectly," which might come across as saccharine handled with a purer voice. But even with this twist, Aztec Camera has a disquieting ability to write songs that sound like you've heard them somewhere before, and several tunes on *Frestonia* have an odd sing-song quality, reminiscent in places of A Taste Of Honey's "Sukiyaki," as on "On The Avenue." Still, one could do a lot worse than having Aztec Camera crooning pop songs in the ear, because a recycled Aztec Camera song is still several times better than just about anyone else's out there.

—Rande Dawn

DATALOG: Released Nov. 14.

FILE UNDER: Pretty pop.

R.I.Y.L.: Edwyn Collins, Auteurs, Boo Radleys.

BEAU HUNKS *On To The Show!: The Beau Hunks Play More Little Rascals Music* KOCH Screen

Beau Hunks' spiritual advisor Piet Schreuders describes the Dutch jazz band as a "documentary orchestra," devoted to "restructuring and performing the works of unjustly forgotten composers." If that strikes you as a tad too eggheaded, fear not, friend: the Beau Hunks are a hoot, enjoyable even for thrill-seeking lowest common denominators like you and myself. On this, their second CD of Leroy Shield compositions originally intended largely for Hal Roach's Little Rascals shorts, the crazed Dutchmen once again pay tribute to Shield by poring over hundreds of Hal Roach shorts (Little Rascals, Laurel & Hardy, and the lesser known Boy Friends), splicing Shield's brilliant themes together from the bits used to score the films, and then transcribing them for a 14-18 piece orchestra playing period instruments. (None of Shield's music was released on record, although the Hunks did discover sheet music for a few Shield pieces prior to recording.) Obsessive? Yes. Frightening, even? Perhaps. Worth the time and effort? Absotively. Shield's music is so beautifully and authentically recreated by the Beau Hunks that if you grew up watching the Rascals and Our Gang, you'll find yourself helpless as images, whole sections of dialogue, and bizarre Stymie non-sequiturs that you thought were forgotten fill your head. The only sounds missing are the pops and hisses from the tattered film and your Mom telling you to go do your homework.

—Steve McGuirl

DATALOG: Released Sep. 19. The first Hunks/Rascals CD and the new one will be available as a specially-priced 2-CD set called *Complete Little Rascals Music*.

FILE UNDER: Celluloid heroes.

R.I.Y.L.: Raymond Scott, The Carl Stalling Project, Squirrel Nut Zippers.

BELLATRIX *Stranger Tales* *Bad Taste USA*

The Sugarcubes were just the tip of the iceberg of Icelandic rock. Bellatrix, known in its homeland as something much longer and unpronounceable, is the toast of Iceland's alternative-rock scene; *Stranger Tales* is its first American release, with a few of its hits translated into English, a few still in Icelandic, and a handful of new songs. Though these four women (plus a male drummer) share some surface similarities with Bjork's old group (pop melodies that careen off in unexpected directions, a remarkably versatile vocalist), they're actually better at playing together. They've been a band for years, and they lock into tough, buoyant grooves at the drop of a beat; they lock their voices into sweetly dissonant harmonies just as easily, and the violin that joins the mix gives it just the right tang. Singer Eliza is more expressive in Icelandic than in English, unsurprisingly (though the accent is just right for the boppy "(You Die) Today"), but let her loose and she'll pull off something like the startling two-octave leap in the chorus of "My Friend The Cow (Beljan Min)." Occasionally, Bellatrix does something that betrays its folkie roots, like the acoustic interlude "Anna"; most often, though, its songs stride cheerfully to one electric peak after another. A delightful kick of an album.

—Douglas Wolk

DATALOG: Released Oct. 31.

FILE UNDER: Playful Icelandic pop.

R.I.Y.L.: Sugarcubes, Jale, Unrest.

BIG COUNTRY *Why The Long Face* *Pure*

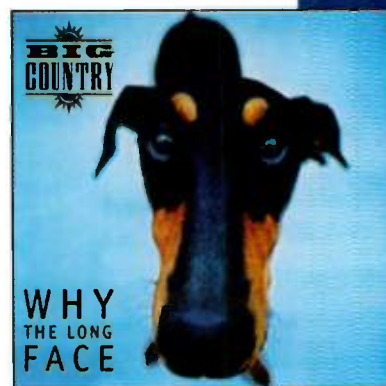
Stuart Adamson's scrappy Scottish combo is over a decade old, but it's still got pop chops galore, the kind of big, brainy hooks you rarely hear in today's wall of grunge. (For those of you who picked up '93's inspired *The Buffalo Skinners*, this comeback will come as no great surprise.) From the sweeping opener, "You Dreamer," it's clear that Big Country means business—there's that old familiar E-bow chime, Adamson's perpetual guitar sustain that always seems to echo a clutch of bagpipes wheezing from some Highland crag. Then his raspy, whiskeyed voice sidles in, familiar as an old friend, as if *The Crossing* had been recorded only yesterday. When it straddles the axework for an anthemic chorus, the effect is almost magical, uplifting, a bright ray of hope in a dark sea of slacker ennui. Adamson spends part of each year in Florida, so much of this material is lyrically skewed toward the American socio-political situation, which he neither cares for nor understands (the cynical "Post Nuclear Talking Blues," for example). But with the whole bell-tolling feel of the disc, it's easy to overlook his vest-pocket politics and simply get lost in the mighty mix. If you're willing to forget that '80s stigma that surrounds Big Country, you'll find the band ready for the millennium.

—Tom Lanham

DATALOG: Released Sep. 5.

FILE UNDER: Anthemic pop rock.

R.I.Y.L.: Old Big Country, Toad The Wet Sprocket, Sponge.





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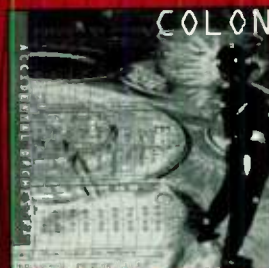
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BUSH TETRAS *Boom In The Night* ROIR

From 1980 to 1983, the Bush Tetras were just about the biggest thing in the then-barely-existent world of American underground rock. Firmly rooted in the New York City no-wave scene (guitarist Pat Place had been in the Contortions), they mated that movement's impulses toward spasm, noise and darkness with head-bobbing, just-behind-the-beat dance grooves. They toured America and Europe, they released two singles and an EP, all of which sold incredibly well for records on independent labels, and they never quite got around to making an album. To coincide with the band's recent reunion, its complete-studio-recordings cassette *Better Late Than Never* has been reissued as the first Bush Tetras CD, *Boom In The Night*. 15 years later, this stuff still sounds like the music of the future. The band's ideas of what constituted "funk" and "tropical" music were way off the mark, and what a happy mistake it was. "Das Ah Riot" is sort of a failed attempt at reggae, but it's also great and not like anything else, with low-end theorist Laura Kennedy sticking to the deepest notes her bass can hit, drummer Dee Pop dropping one post-punk bomb after another, and Place doing something very weird with her guitar. Place, in fact, is these songs' secret weapon—her playing is basically lots of space punctuated by notes and sounds that nobody else would think of playing but that sound great anyway.

—Douglas Wolk

DATALOG: Released Oct. 24.**FILE UNDER:** New York post-punk.**R.I.Y.L.:** Gang Of Four, Delta 5, Blondie's weirder moments.**CLUSONE TRIO** *I Am An Indian* Gramavision

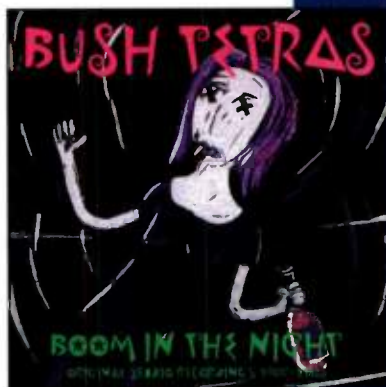
If the term "European free improvisation" conjures up an aural image of dour, inaccessible "blowing" sessions, this document of the Clusone Trio's '93 tour of Europe and Canada will set you straight. Dutchmen Ernst Reijseger (cello) and Han Bennink (drums), along with American expatriate Michael Moore (reeds) are all wildly versatile musicians, equally adept at almost archaically tight swing and what Derek Bailey has called "non-idiomatic" improvisation—free playing that is more about sonority and tonal contrast than tune and rhythm. Thus, the frenzied bowing and "voiced" sax honking of the intro to "Wigwam" can give way to a mildly comical melodic section (with roughly the same degree of Native American content as the *F Troop* theme), and then, seamlessly, a gentle version of Duke Ellington's relatively obscure "Angelica (Purple Gazelle)." Moore's clarinet solos have a supple, conversational quality that inches toward schmaltz before being pulled back to Earth by Reijseger's acerbic string punctuations. Anchoring it all is Bennink, who can swing like Krupa with snare and brushes, or rattle the whole kit like a playpen toy. The Clusone Trio gets two messages across: rigorous restrictions on what improvised music "should" include or exclude will always fail in the face of what works; and beauty is nothing to fear.

—Franklin Bruno

DATALOG: Released Oct. 17. *Soft Lights And Sweet Music* (hatART) available as an import.**FILE UNDER:** Sonorous free improvisation.**R.I.Y.L.:** Willem Breuker, Peter Brotzmann, Marc Ribot, the Coctails.**COMET GAIN** *Casino Classics* Wiiija-X-mas

Comet Gain is not a retro-Mod band. Don't be fooled by David Christian's haircut, 3-button blazer and the *On The Soul Side* compilation displayed prominently on the cover of *Casino Classics*. Go on, take a closer look. There, on the young lady's lap, a Petula Clark LP! That's more like it! Comet Gain has a hell of a lot more in common with Ms. Clark's pop than it does with the pill-popping, R&B-obsessed mods like the Small Faces, or the Who. Instead, taking inspiration from crafty '60s songwriting teams like Goffin/King, Bacharach/David, et al., the jangle-strum of New Zealand, the Byrds, a little early Who/Kinks, and a healthy D.I.Y. attitude, Comet Gain has come up with an eclectic debut record that runs from punk to la-la indie-pop. It's refreshing to hear such a varied record, though the group's eclecticism proves a wee bit ambitious—it has difficulty pulling off the harder stuff ("Footstompers," for example, does not deliver its title's promise). Eventually, though, Comet Gain's confidence will hopefully catch up to its ability to craft hooks, and it'll grow to find a sound more distinctly its own.

—Steve McGuirl

DATALOG: Released Oct. 24.**FILE UNDER:** Indie Brit-pop.**R.I.Y.L.:** Cannanes, the Brill Building Box, Teenage Fanclub, Velvet Crush, Pastels.

"It seems that Supergrass bassist Mickey Quinn departed the U.S. tour. This scenario is unusual even in Supergrass lore, as drummer Danny Goffey is the member who is known to come up missing. Once Goffey was nowhere to be found; an extensive search ensued throughout Oxford and someone happened to recognize the drummer walking down the street in disguise, complete with fake mustache." —from a press release



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EDSEL Techniques Of Speed Hypnosis *Relativity*

Take a good look at the six-year history of Edsel, and you might think you're viewing the alt-rock version of *Zelig*. The band began as a tape-looping experiment, evolved into San Diego-meets-Chapel Hill indie rock, and slowly found itself as (outdoor) miners of the post-punk veins left by Wire, The Fall and Mission Of Burma. Then there's the fact that the Washington, DC-based group has preferred intrigue over rage in its musical expression, a choice that has unwittingly pitted it against the palates of so many in its hometown and elsewhere. And the lyrics of Sohrab Habibian and Steve Raskin, as detached as they are enrapturing, waver between T.S. Eliot-styled odes and CIA-inspired cryptology. All of this comes into focus on *Techniques*, which finds the band working with a production team that brings out Edsel's latent Anglo-pop tendencies. While the new album still sports the band's weird inter-song sonic tangents, now they flow together to accentuate the mood rather than interrupt it. "Glazed By The Cold Front" and "Laugh Him To Scorn" suggest a Pavement glued together with super space-age polymer, while the heavy metal "I Am The Walrus" intro of "Parched" and the yeah-yeah-yeahs of "Number Five Recitative" might clue the listener to Edsel's subtle sense of irony in recording the album in the Beatles' hometown.

—Eric Gladstone

DATALOG: Released Oct. 10.**FILE UNDER:** Cryptic noise-rock.**R.I.Y.L.:** Jawbox, Fugazi, Seaweed.**EMBARASSMENT Heyday (1979-1983)** *Bar/None*

This record is a public service. If the Embarassment had released its first single ("Sex Drive"/"Patio Set") yesterday instead of in 1979, it would still be the record of the year. Combining car, girl, libido and lawnchair in ways Bruce Springsteen never imagined, it was an unflinching document of Midwestern geek-rage. *Heyday* is a 2-CD set that collects all the official recordings by Wichita, Kansas' finest sons, and a generous sampling of live and unreleased recordings. If the set has a flaw, it's that it's too generous for a listener with no previous exposure to the band; crafty hooks poke out of songs like handholds, but this is still a 42-track cliff face of structurally, lyrically dense proto-indie-rock. But the initiated will marvel that Bill Goffrier can reproduce the inverted guitar-logic of "Special Eyes" in a live setting, and acolytes will rejoice at the unearthing of such nuggets as a frenetic live version of The Gloved One's "Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough." Meanwhile, newcomers should digest a few of the studio recordings at a time, the better to savor mysteries both verbal (What is "mau-mau effrontery?") and musical (Why does "Wellsville" have five verses before the first chorus?) You may well be exhausted by the time Disc One ends, with the Transcendental "Woods Of Love," not to mention Disc Two's deeply alienated "She's One Of The Other Kind," from the band's last, unfinished session, but the trip is worth it.

—Franklin Bruno

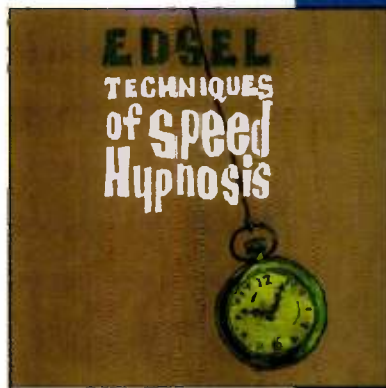
DATALOG: Released Nov. 21.**FILE UNDER:** Proto-indie-rock.**R.I.Y.L.:** Christmas, Volcano Suns, Wedding Present, early Talking Heads.**BRIAN ENO AND JAH WOBBLE Spinner** *Gyroscope-Caroline*

Brian Eno should need no introduction. If you've seen "Eno Is God" written on a bathroom wall, you know the basics already. He defined ambient music in mid-'70s works like *Music For Airports*—"music that could be listened to and yet could be ignored." Instead of asking listeners to meditate on his sleepy masterpieces, he encouraged low volume levels and inattention. But Eno's fantasy of interminable tone sequences is reality now: generated, sampled, processed, massaged and memorized by computer, to be played as loud as possible in urban dance halls. All his technical innovations are ancient history, and he's fallen back on his musical talent. Luckily, it's considerable, and Jah Wobble, who's been clocking some hours in Bill Laswell's "ambient dub" factory, is an ideal partner. Beginning slowly in a deep minor key with Eno's gently reverberating piano, the tunes add layers of drums, noise and tuned percussion (gamelan, tabla, you name it) with patient inevitability, building to powerful melodies. In interest and complexity, this puts most contemporary ambient music to shame.

—Nell Zink

DATALOG: Released Oct. 24.**FILE UNDER:** Grade A Extra Large USDA Choice ambient.**R.I.Y.L.:** Barry Adamson, Divination, Faure.

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



"Cobain was interested in President Nixon, either admiring him or perhaps admiring certain things." —Nixon Presidential Library Assistant Curator Olivia Anastadiadis, explaining the inclusion of a photograph of Kurt Cobain with a "Nixon Now" sticker on his acoustic guitar in the library's "Rockin' The White House" exhibition. from BAM

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- D COCTEAU TWINS** Twinlights (EP) Capitol
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VARIOUS ARTISTS *Excursions In Ambience: The Fourth Frontier* Astralwerks-Caroline

Ambient music doesn't make demands. Its performers are untouched by boredom and vanity, the scourges of rock and classical music—after all, they're machines. When you put on an ambient CD before sitting down to write a paper, you know you won't find yourself thinking "If I had paid more attention to the first movement, this adagio's insistent melancholy would have a meaningful context," or worse yet, "I am Iron Man." There's nothing to follow, and nothing to sing along to—it's music that permits mental activity. On the other hand, most compilations demand not only attention but intense annoyance as loathsome songs follow excellent ones in cruelly random series. *Excursions In Ambience* avoids both pitfalls. It's a varied assortment, from the deep dance beats of Far Out Son Of A Lung to the gorgeous organic variations of Single Cell Orchestra and Labradford's distorted synth-washes, but there's nothing jarring. If you choose to pay attention, you'll hear emergent melodies in the subtle tone changes as the artists modestly turn their knobs up to pre-amp clip level and back down again. If you don't, you can still reap the health benefits of electronic disco music—an elevated heart rate and energy level as your brain-waves dip to the beat.

—Nell Zink

**DATALOG:** Released Nov. 7.**FILE UNDER:** Ambient electronic music.**R.I.Y.L.:** Throbbing Gristle, The Orb, Aphex Twin.**GLANDS OF EXTERNAL SECRETION** *Northern Exposure Will Be Right Back* Starlight Furniture Co.

The S.F. Seals' Barbara Manning, though she's best known as a singer and writer of genuine song-type songs, has always had an interest in more abstract noise. On the Seals' *Nowhere*, endless noise interludes got in the way of enjoying the band. Here, though, on the first full-length album by her duo with *Bananafish* editor Seymour Glass, they essentially use pop as a fairly important component of sound collage—music interrupting noise—and it totally works. *Northern Exposure* is assembled from 15 years' worth of both members' recordings, usually played simultaneously (the earliest is Barbara and her sister Terri singing a Bee Gees song in junior high school). In 45 minutes, we get leisurely, overlapping passages of college radio shows, bongo drums being played with cranberry muffins, a free clarinet solo, a malfunctioning fridge, some hilariously bad teenage hardcore, a manipulated tape of an unwell cat, "I've Been Workin' On The Railroad," complaints about Switzerland and a couple of actual tunes, as if that mattered. The whole thing is rescued from archness and randomness by how real and human it is: All the sounds come from moments in Manning and Glass's lives, and the album comes off as a bizarre scrapbook of their history and their friendship.

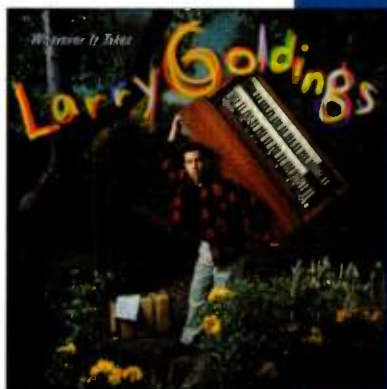
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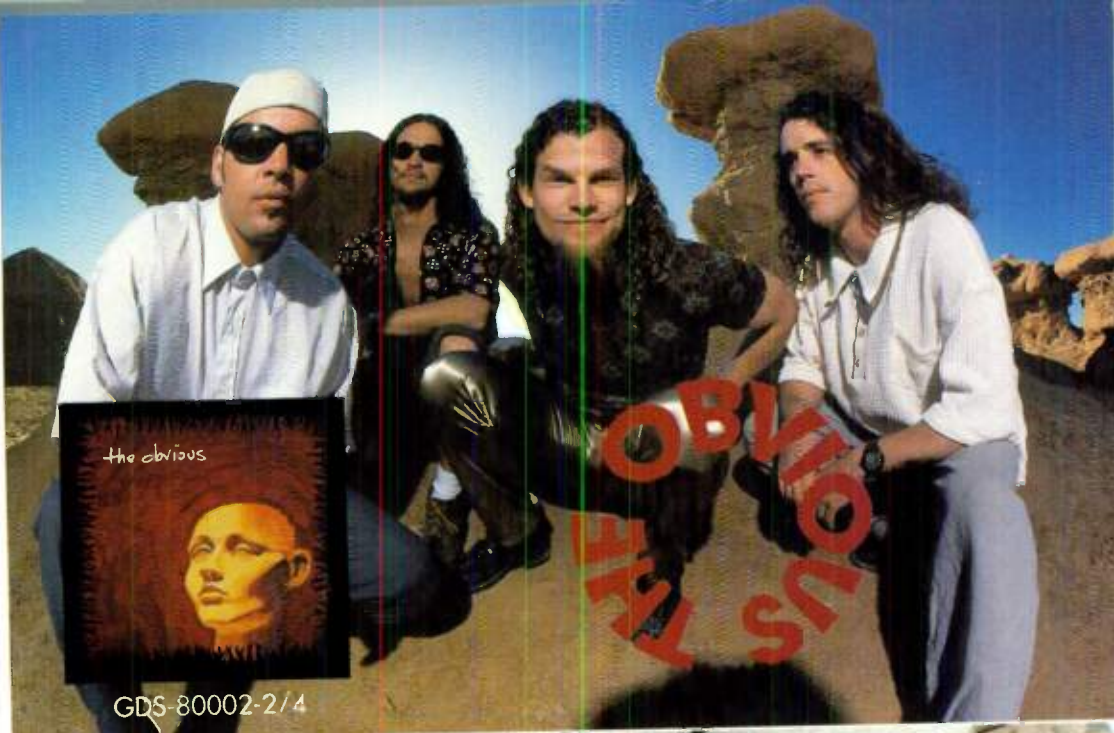
**DATALOG:** Released Nov. 13. A series of one-sided singles of the Glands doing Captain Beefheart covers is rumored for later in 1996.**FILE UNDER:** Humanized noise.**R.I.Y.L.:** Swell Maps, Boredoms, S.F. Seals.**LARRY GOLDINGS** *Whatever It Takes* Warner Bros.

For a spell in the '50s and '60s, the Hammond B-3 organ was considered the mack instrument to front a jazz combo, as cats like Jimmy Smith pumped the pedals and wreaked havoc on the two-keyboard box. You've got to have sympathy for the organ man, though, having to lug that big 500-pound mother around after the show while the other guys just pop the clutches on their instrument cases and hail a cab home. That's where *Whatever It Takes* fits in, right down to its hilarious cover shot showing Larry schlepping his B-3 through an Amazonian rain forest. After a stint with funk hornman Maceo Parker, B-3 expert Larry Goldings has kept the flames of gutbucket organ blues and Hammond jazz-funk flaming. He's the maestro here, with a tight trio (Bill Stewart on trap drums, Peter Bernstein on tasty, Wes Montgomery-esque guitar) and guest slots from Maceo Parker, Fred Wesley and Joshua Redman. Goldings pulls off some sweet moves, including jazz-funk renderings of Sly Stone's "If You Want Me To Stay" and Stevie Wonder's "Boogie On Reggae Woman." You got your acid jazz, you got your funk revival, you got your US3; what makes Goldings special is that he's definitely done it up right, and in doing so has paid a tribute of sorts to the groovy sounds of the B-3's main men. A classic in its class.

—James Lien

"Somewhere in the middle of all this I became involved with The Pogues, who were also known to do things to acoustic instruments... After that, I pretty much gave up producing other people's records. You can only marry the bass player once." —Eliis Costello, from the liner notes to *King Of America* (Rykodisc)

**DATALOG:** Released Oct. 31.**FILE UNDER:** Old-school Hammond B-3 platters.**R.I.Y.L.:** Jimmy Smith, Charlie Hunter Trio, Medeski, Martin & Wood.



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g/z/r Plastic Planet TVT

What is this that stands before me? Why, it's the return of Geezer Butler, the bassist from Black Sabbath's early '70s salad days, and the man who gave us such great musical moments as the bass intro to "N.I.B." All that seems to be in the past, however. *Plastic Planet* is not so much a slab of pure Black Sab as it is a textbook example of metal as it is practiced today in the post-*Headbanger's Ball* era. Wisely, blistering fingertapped solos have been replaced by raw, chunka-chunka riffage, the reliable 4/4 has been replaced with stop/start pummeling and spastic meters, and screechy sword-and-sorcerer imagery has fallen in favor of sore-throat delcations of societal breakdown. But Butler's savviest decision seems to have been the recruiting of Fear Factory's formidable throat, Burtal Bell, as g/z/r vocalist; Bell seems freer here to veer fluidly between guttural grindcore gurgling and Layne Staley-ish anthemic choruses than he does amidst Fear Factory's apocalyptic settings. With Bell's vocals, g/z/r succeeds as a band, not just a celebrity bassist and friends (except for a few flange-soaked bass intros, Butler remains brooding in the background.) The end result does little to redefine metal in the mid-'90s, but, on the other hand, compared with whatever else has come in the last couple decades from other Black Sabbath veterans, it's stellar.

—David Jarman

DATALOG: Released Oct. 17.

FILE UNDER: Modern metal.

R.I.Y.L: Sepultura, Faith No More, Fear Factory.

MICK HARVEY Intoxicated Man Mute

Funny, isn't it, how many destroy-all-music types eventually find their way towards (s)leazy listening? Harvey's ex-Birthday Party mate Nick Cave is only the most famous example. The years have also seen another B-Party alumnus, Rowland S. Howard, playing Lee Hazlewood to Lydia Lunch's Nancy Sinatra on a version of "Some Velvet Morning," Einstürzende Neubauten deconstructing another Nancy-and-Lee classic ("Sand"), and countless others with wardrobes of black and destructive attitudes towards both themselves and their instruments dipping into the gene pool of Hazlewood, Scott Walker and the like. Now we get Harvey translating and paying tribute to one of the biggest bastards this style has seen, Serge Gainsbourg, best known for a scandalous Top Ten bit of heavy breathing calle "Je T'Aime... Moi Non Plus" (not included here). With long-time collaboratrix Anita Lane handling the parts Gainsbourg wrote for female leads like Brigitte Bardot, Jane Birkin and Juliette Greco, Harvey faithfully captures and interprets the flavor of the originals, with their queasy strings, biker-film rock instrumentation and mordant tone. If purgatory has elevators, this is what'll be piped over the speakers. Up here on Earth, however, *Intoxicated Man* creates a nocturnal soundtrack that's edgy as fuck without upsetting whatever mood might be stirred by tumblers of bourbon, Gauloises, black turtleneck sweaters, flashes of stockinged thigh and Chanel No. 5.

—Tim Stegall

DATALOG: Released Nov. 7.

FILE UNDER: Really mood(y) music.

R.I.Y.L: Gainsbourg, Walker, Nancy & Lee, Jimmy Webb, Nick Cave, Tom Waits.

VARIOUS ARTISTS A History Of Dub: The Golden Age Munich Records America

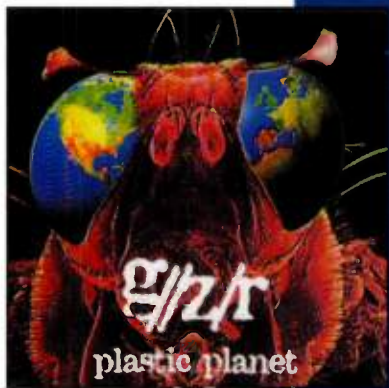
"Reggae is a synonym for life," Rancid guitarist Lars Friedrichsen told a *Spin* magazine reporter. Of course, considering how Friedrichsen is Mick Jones to Tim Armstrong's Joe Strummer, he's almost required by law to make such statements. Then again, so many people these days are humming praise for ancient rasta roots stuff, especially heartbeat dub, you've gotta wonder if an adaptation of Lester Bangs' old *White Light/White Heat* test is necessary: Barge into friends' apartments, head straight for their Lee Perry records, pull out *Super Ape*, and check to see if the fucker's actually been *played*. Whatever. Friedrichsen's right, in that dub's unbelievably deep bass, ridiculously tweaked echo, pulse-like drumming, and endless sense of space does seem as essential as (to cop a classic reggae title) blood and fire. If you've never downshifted to the dub, *A History Of Dub* does make for a nice introduction, almost serving as a good companion to Mango's two-year-old *Tougher Than Tough: The Story Of Jamaican Music* box set. Most of the principals—Perry, Keith Hudson, Yabba U, Scientist, King Tubby—appear, and the track selection seems flawless. To be discovered are not only the roots of modern remix culture, but possibly the sexiest, spiciest, most psychedelic dance music invented. Deep, soothing, and challenging, all at once.

—Tim Stegall

DATALOG: Released Oct. 17.

FILE UNDER: Essential dub.

R.I.Y.L: Rockers Hi-Fi, The Orb, the Clash, Bob Marley.



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World Radio History

HUNGRY GHOST Sugar Skulls *Tone Casualties*

On the books-by-their-covers scale, *Sugar Skulls* rates as pretty accurate. The phrase "Hungry Ghost" comes from Tibetan Buddhist texts and refers to a restless soul, a person with neurotic needs for knowledge and experience. *Sugar Skulls* is named for the ubiquitous Day Of The Dead ornaments. Taken as an equation, the names of the band and CD add up to the idea that the music contained therein is dark, moody and taken with mystical and ethnic influences, which is pretty much what this disc is about. With its layers of acoustic percussion (tablas, dumbeks), found noise, washes of light keyboards and looped, ghostly voice samples, and the cinematic bent of this moody pastiche, *Sugar Skulls* certainly qualifies as an ambient experience, but it's largely without the endless electronic noodling and frequent somnolence that so often characterizes the genre bearing the name. Moreover, the best thing about the record is an inexplicable "live" feel to the proceedings—like this the band is jamming rather than programming it all into a big silicon brain—that makes it, in a way, exciting to listen to. *Sugar Skulls* is all artsy tribal ritual, filled with lovely drum sounds, shimmering noise and the good sense to not let its artifice get in the way of your drifting through it.

—Frank Mansfield

DATALOG: Released Oct. 31.

FILE UNDER: Creepy, ethnic ambient.

R.I.Y.L.: Future Sound Of London, Banco De Gaia, In The Nursery, Saqqara Dogs.

VARIOUS ARTISTS Inna Rub A Dub Style *Down Sound-The Right Stuff*

The three-CD series *Inna Rub A Dub Style* is a diverse collection of new reggae tracks arranged into a richly textured soundscape that borrows from hip-hop, house and techno, though it never strays far from its dub and roots-rockers sensibility. The first disc ("numba 1") is produced by dub experimentalist Dread Flimstone, and is the most dub-oriented of the three; with characteristic audio innovation, Flimstone reworks standard reggae rhythms, adding new breakbeats and keyboard riffs, scratches, echoes and other sound effects, to create a musical collage in the tradition of techno-dub scientist Jah Shaka. The other two CDs, co-produced by Johnny Rivers and Andrew Prendergast, are almost exclusively dancehall, but with a twist; on these tracks, clichéd dancehall riddims gain new freshness from hip hop and house-flavored embellishments provided by the ambitious production team. Dancehall vocalists like Nitty Kutchie (a Dennis Brown-style singer) and Lukie D sing and chat atop a familiar reggae bassline while screeches, bleats and hip hop noise simmer in the background in a musical melange reminiscent of Cypress Hill's more reggaefied offerings. Though the series' real gift is its impeccable and creative production, performances by established reggae veterans like Pinchers (who warbles with his usual elegance on "Riding East"), Sanchez ("You Play Rub A Dub So True" and "Moonlight Lover"), Frankie Paul ("Watch The Dub"), Bounti Killa and General TK enhance this satisfying listening experience.

—Philippe Wamba

DATALOG: Released Sep. 12.

FILE UNDER: Dub reggae.

R.I.Y.L.: Respect To Studio One, Lee "Scratch" Perry, Dub Syndicate.

KARP Suplex *K*

There's something profoundly weird about Karp: It has all the makings of a Melvins sound-a-like, but adds a strange twist to its sludge-core. On its second long-player, the Tumwater, WA trio (yes, that's the same town that spawned Unwound) prances around gaily in a muddy pool of sound. The familiar elements are there: chugga-chugga-chugga guitar lines, dirge-y tempos and bass-lines that make your woofers tremble furiously. But Karp dislodges itself from overwhelming muckiness by putting speedy, maniacal vocals at the forefront of its songs. This is where things get wacky—the high-range sing-speak that leads these songs is like nothing I've heard. The even, hacking delivery makes the songs' lyrics sound way quirkier than they would ordinarily, but even so, "Kids can learn from pie/It's Scientifantastic" is already pretty peculiar. Underneath the ranting is layer upon layer of sumpy chords and slowly pounding rhythms that'll make your head spin. Perhaps you'll be confounded at first, but Karp will easily win you over because it's so damn good at what it does—pile-driving with strange, muddy fits and starts of noise.

—Jenny Elisuc

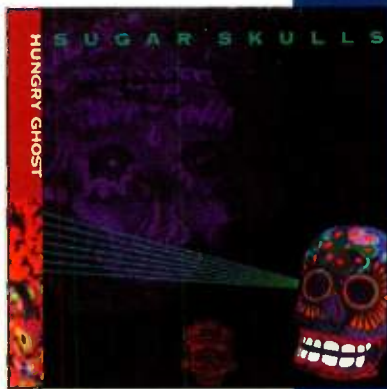
DATALOG: Released Oct. 10.

FILE UNDER: Sludgy noise-core.

R.I.Y.L.: Melvins, Engine Kid, Unwound.

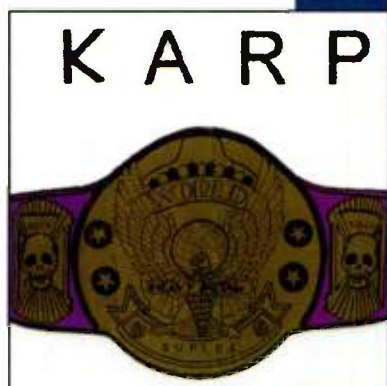
R.I.Y.L.: RECOMMENDED IF YOU LIKE

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MAGNETIC FIELDS *Get Lost* Merge

Get Lost is more than just a great introduction to one of the most prolific and polished tunesmiths of the past few years: It's probably the Magnetic Fields' best album, and that's saying a lot. The Magnetic Fields are a pop band first and foremost, and that's meant in the most stylistically classic sense of the word. Songwriter Stephen Merritt's songs are near-perfect compositions, nodding to everything from the lush dancefloor pathways of Abba to the delicate beauty of masters like Cole Porter. Merritt's trademark—aside from his piercingly dry wit and morose observations on relationships and the world—is his detailed synth-pop arrangements, characterized by the synthetic hum and snap of keyboards and drum machines. Combined with his deep, slow-moving voice, these tunes convey a richly complex world where sadness, lust, humor and timeless beauty all find companionship in one another, lurking around the edges of every word and note that Merritt creates. "I dedicate this song to you for all the desperate things you made me do/I'd like to beat you black and blue for all the agony you have put me through," he broods in one *Get Lost* tune, his sarcasm hidden in the song's bubbling synths and minor-key melody.

—Colin Helms

DATALOG: Released Oct. 24.

FILE UNDER: Sad-eyed synth-pop.

R.I.Y.L.: Pet Shop Boys, Leonard Cohen, early Depeche Mode.

TOM PETTY AND THE HEARTBREAKERS *Playback* MCA

Although these guys should still be pistol-whipped for having claim-jumped a band name rightfully the property of Johnny Thunders, it's hard to deny their potency. Petty learned all the right lessons from the Dylan/Byrds/Stones mid-'60s—the value of tough-but-tender songwriting and instrumental attack—and brought them unblemished into the present, rendering those elements totally free of nostalgia. This six-disc anthological proof is interesting, in that its meat is not the first three discs' worth of Petty classics. A full half of it is unheard music, including demos from the larval stage of the Heartbreakers, Mudcrutch (interesting if only to hear how little their basic gameplan has changed, not to mention finding out how old "Don't Do Me Like That" is) and a disc's worth of B-sides that prove how goofy these guys can get if they think no one's listening ("Heartbreakers Beach Party," anyone?). But the cool stuff is on Disc Six, a clutch of unreleased songs strong enough to be an LP itself, despite the inclusion of a pair of fun-but-disposable Elvis covers. Tracks like the Bo Diddling "I Got My Mind Made Up" or "Ways To Be Wicked" (a hit for Lone Justice) definitely beg questioning why they remained in the can 'til now. They also might be reason enough to purchase the whole box, outside of not having to wait around your radio to hear whatever your fave Petty hit might be.—Tim Stegall

DATALOG: Released Nov. 21.

FILE UNDER: Classic rock that deserves the title.

R.I.Y.L.: Er...Tom Petty?

RUGBURNS *Taking The World By Donkey* Priority

With bands like The Presidents Of The United States Of America working it like crazy, it would seem the perfect time for the Rugburns, who practice the same sort of goofily good-natured frat-boy pop. The Rugburns already have a few minor novelty hits ("Gold's Gym Guy") under their belts, and with the determinedly offbeat and frequently inspired *Taking The World By Donkey* they seem to be trying hard to be seen as a Serious Band. They take some ill-advised stabs at social commentary ("War," "Your Ghost"), and try desperately to find things that rhyme with "Richard Nixon." The band's novelty numbers have always played to its strengths, though, and the Rugburns wisely don't abandon them entirely: Even their love songs are quirky, even numbers about the futility of war are all in good fun. They're never frivolous to the point of irrelevancy; they never pretend to be anything more than a serviceable, medium-weight band with an erratic sense of humor. Musically, they haven't evolved much beyond three-chord, acoustic-based rock (at times, they bear an uncanny resemblance to an edgier Gin Blossoms) but they manage to stay on the right side of the line between loopy and dopey—always a tough call—and make it seem like it didn't take any effort at all. —Allison Stewart

DATALOG: Released Oct. 31.

FILE UNDER: Loopy, appealing pop.

R.I.Y.L.: The Presidents Of The United States Of America, Dishwalla, Tim-era Replacements.

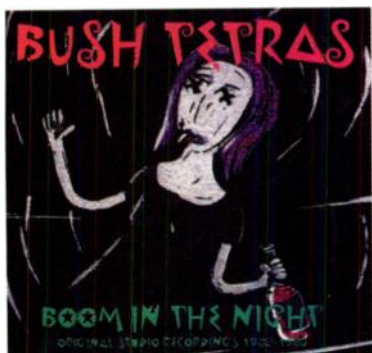
R.I.Y.L.: RECOMMENDED IF YOU LIKE



"All of American culture should be about making sure 10-year-olds have appropriate [entertainment]." —John Podhoretz, deputy editor of Rupert Murdoch's political magazine, *The Standard*, on The McLaughlin Group



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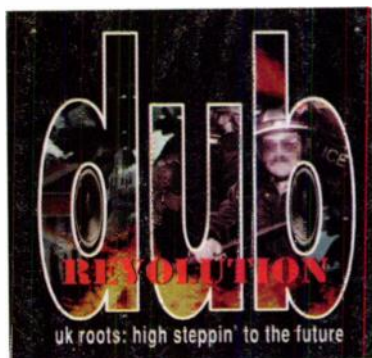
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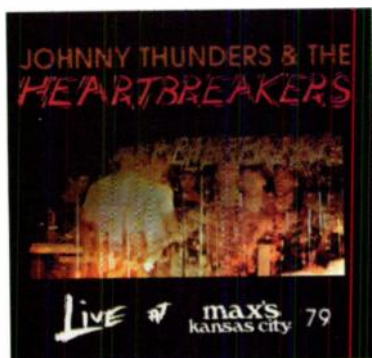
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SAMARAI CELESTIAL *Isis Sun* *Carrot Top*

Tributes to Sun Ra were well underway before he even died. Past and present members of the ever-expansive Arkestra put out records and played concerts structured around Ra's songs or Arkestra-style improvisation. These loving, living tributes brought attention to the master composer/keyboardist; they also may have brought in an audience not conversant with the dozens of Arkestra members' names. And, while Sun Ra frequently led lavish, Herculean displays of music and improv for 40 or 50 people in the '70s, he would doubtless have found a new audience of hipsters had he survived further into the '90s. Comes now the first solo venture by Samarai Celestial, percussionist with the (deep breath) Sun Ra Intergalactic Cosmo Love Adventure Arkestra from 1979 to 1989. While on tour with the Arkestra, SC picked up keyboard chops and Ra's "intergalactic perspective on life, rhythm, space and transdimensional music." What that means for *Isis Sun* is that SC lays down a fairly potent crossfire of beats, bass, chimes, organs, and squealing, spacey keyboards. SC's brother plays flute about half the time—not masterfully, but he does the trick. The chants ("Ra! Ra! Sun Ra!") are a bit too familiar, and some of the loops become wearying, but the music balances menace with playfulness in a techno-fired bitches' brew.

—Danny Housman

DATALOG: Released Sep. 5.

FILE UNDER: Spacey instrumental funk.

R.I.Y.L.: Sun Ra's '70s output, Ornette Coleman's *Prime Time*, recent *Last Poets*.

THE SCENE IS NOW *The Oily Years (1983-1993)* *Bar/None*

The Scene Is Now wasn't a joke band, despite this comp's groaner of a title and songs about coconuts, Dinah Shore, and what makes a good pickle ("It's just 24 hours from vine to brine/But you gotta let 'em soak for a long long time"). Nor was it a secretly seminal '80s band on the verge of being rediscovered. Chris Nelson's brave combo cut a swath through the post-punk world all its own, deriving inspiration from Pere Ubu, Sun Ra's Arkestra, and other strange ensembles, and lyrics from Shakespeare, Aristophanes, and Chairman Mao. With tracks off each of the band's four self-released recordings, plus some unreleased stuff, *The Oily Years* is a satisfying recap of TSIN's eclectic journey. Early tunes like "1150 Lbs." and "Two Spoonfuls" feature infectious choruses foiled by abrupt chord changes, while instrumentals like "Sartre's Acid Trip" subject Ubu-type carnival music to the rigors of popcraft. Later material gains weight and complexity from the keyboard work of Ubu's own Tony Maimone. However, no track is as memorable as 1985's "Yellow Sarong" (covered by Yo La Tengo), with its easy hooks and confounding lyrics. With TSIN, deliberate strangeness comes as no surprise. It's the normal songs that make you wonder.

—Andrea Moed

DATALOG: Released Nov. 28.

FILE UNDER: Post-punk oddballs.

R.I.Y.L.: Pere Ubu, *My Dad Is Dead*, *They Might Be Giants*.

MIKE SCOTT *Bring 'Em All In* *Chrysalis-EMI*

Ex-Waterboy Mike Scott, fresh from an eye-opening stint on a DIY commune, has decided to strip all pretense away from his music and finally surrender to the Dylan muse. It's safe to call his literate new acoustic disc, *Bring 'Em All In*, a sort of Waterboys Unplugged. Same sandpapery, emotive vocals, same Celtic-framed melodies, same coarse acoustic strumming, same lofty imagery—"Iona's Song," for example: "Lace upon the window, patterns on the sheets/Three ships in the distance, horsemen in the street." But there are a few subtle differences here. The man has grown reflective of late, and spends much of the record microscopically studying himself, his career, his motives, even his relationship with God. This may make a few newcomers uncomfortable, but longtime fans will see it as a window into Scott's soul that wasn't really there before. When he stares out at Scotland's Findhorn community in "Long Way To The Light," he sees "Blue skies and sailing boats like a picture in a book/I can't believe I got here or how long it took." His mission there? "Healing on my mind," reveals the chorus, flatly. Obviously, Scott has found some serenity, a new outlook on life that, ironically, isn't part and parcel of the rock 'n' roll lifestyle. And he's mature enough to chuckle, in the piano roustabout "City Full Of Ghosts (Dublin)," "Dublin is a city full of buskers/Playing old Waterboys hits."

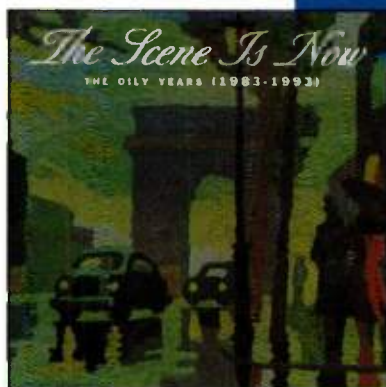
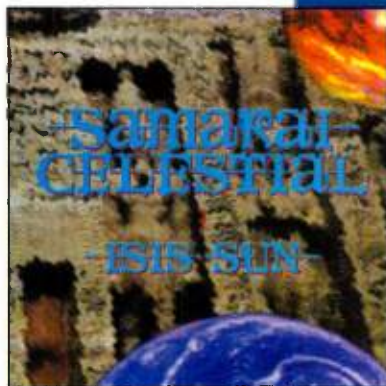
—Tom Lanham

DATALOG: Released Oct. 24.

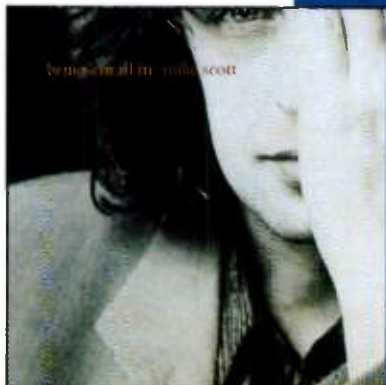
FILE UNDER: Self-revelatory Celtic folk.

R.I.Y.L.: Luka Bloom, David Gray, James McMurtry.

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VARIOUS ARTISTS **Soul Train 25th Anniversary** MCA

Was *Soul Train* correctly named? Debuting at the dawn of what critic Nelson George dubbed "The Post-Soul Era," Don Cornelius's syndicated television bandstand filled a void at a time when R&B was increasingly about *rhythm* and *blues* more than soul. Now celebrating its 25th anniversary, the show is commemorated by this three-volume boxed set, which shows the glorious diversity, and the wearying strain, of the last three decades of black pop. No matter how you feel about polyester or afros, the '70s were arguably a better time for black music than the Motown/Stax/JB-dominated '60s. The *Soul Train* box proves it: Curtis Mayfield's "Pusherman," Stevie Wonder's "Superstition," McFadden and Whitehead's "Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now," and even David Bowie's crossover smash "Fame" (his *Soul Train* appearance was the show's most pleasantly surreal moment) showcase the all-encompassing power of black music in the decade when album rock balkanized itself. This potent stew of proto-disco, sexy balladry, and funk, funk, funk argues more convincingly for the existence of a Soul Culture than the half-hearted handful of pre-*Train* classics that open Disc 1: Jackie Wilson and Aretha are pioneers, but why is James Brown represented only by the soulful but wrongheaded "It's A Man's Man's Man's World?" And Chuck Berry, while a key black performer, is left to dangle with the inclusion of "Johnny B. Goode." The only later artist with any interest in strong guitars is Rufus ("Tell Me Something Good"), and that band was aping Bootsy, not Berry. The *Soul Train* box's lack of definitiveness becomes even more stark as it moves into the '80s and '90s. The instant the collection shifts into sugary ballads like James Ingram's "Just Once," it loses what little focus it had. One can only partly blame the box's compilers—R&B indeed got pretty schizo after 1980, as black artists made an uncomfortable truce with crossover pop and the synthesizer. Rappers, of course, had no problem with technology, and it's depressing that hip-hop is almost completely ignored here; only Herbie Hancock's electric boogaloo "Rockit," a jazzman's holiday, and Soul II Soul's classic "Keep On Movin'" hint at the gathering revolution. George Clinton and P-Funk are completely absent; "Atomic Dog" would have been a worthy inclusion. Some song choices are interesting, like Rick James' chilly synth workout "Cold Blooded" over "Superfreak." But many of the selections (Michael Jackson's "Baby Be Mine"?) bespeak song-licensing problems, not bold statements. America needed *Soul Train*—a big tent beneath which an increasingly disparate black musical culture could come to roost. But like the Donna Summer chestnut that ends the set—Boyz II Men's soporific "I'll Make Love To You" just couldn't carry it—the *Soul Train* box can only look backward. For a show that once defined the zeitgeist, *Soul Train* offers a blurry outlook for a culture it all but invented.

—Chris Molanphy

DATALOG: Released Nov. 7.

FILE UNDER: Jump back, wanna kiss ourselves.

R.I.Y.L.: The Motown boxed set, Rhino's *Didn't It Blow Your Mind?* series.

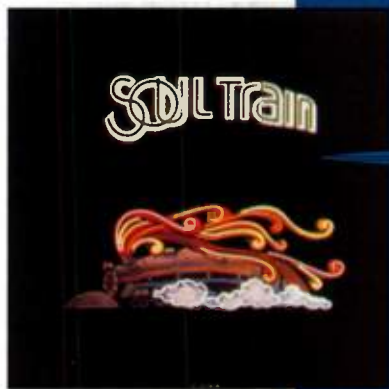
VARIOUS ARTISTS **Super Fantastic Mega Smash Hits!** Pravda-Backyard

Over the past four years, Chicago-based indie Pravda has released three *Star Power!* compilation records, on which contemporary artists redo '70s K-Tel numbers like "Still The One," "The Night The Lights Went Out In Georgia," etc., etc. The Pravda collections have become almost infamous for their bighearted, indiscriminating cheesiness, filled equally with really obscure indie acts (Cheer-Accident), semi-obscure indie acts (the New Duncan Imperials) and won't-be-obscure-for-long indie acts (a pre-Siamese Dream Smashing Pumpkins). *Super Fantastic...!* whittles the first three compilations down to one sort of "Best Of" collection comprised almost totally of the better-known acts, with some of the finer, though more obscure, numbers getting lost in the shuffle. Leaving out the Young Fresh Fellows' "Black Betty" seems almost cruel, ditto the all-male Big Fish Ensemble's heartbreakingly empathetic rendition of "I Am Woman?" Most of the collection's definitive moments survive: Uncle Tupelo's to-a-note faithful "Movin' On"; Vic Chesnutt's slightly creepy "The Night The Lights Went Out In Georgia"; Fig Dish's perfect "Kung Fu Fighting." *Super Fantastic...!* is, like all of the Pravda collections, pretty irresistible—so what if they consistently overestimate our enthusiasm for '70s nostalgia? —Allison Stewart

DATALOG: Released Oct. 2.

FILE UNDER: Cheesy '70s rock with an all too '90s feel.

R.I.Y.L.: Smashing Pumpkins, Rhino's *Have A Nice Day!* series.



"Chris Williams... had come to Australia on R&R from Vietnam and decided to move here to pursue his career. After DJing in various clubs and appearing on *Sounds Unlimited*, he saved some money to record a single... Eventually he got around to recording a real disco album called *Keep On Dancing*, in which he appears in a white wig and a suit with 'SEX' written on it. Where are you Chris? Now is your time." —from the liner notes to the compilation *Heading In The Right Direction: Soul Jazz From Australia 1973-77 (Luv N Haight)*

TEARS FOR FEARS



+ RAUL AND THE KINGS OF SPAIN +

TEARS FOR FEARS Raoul And The Kings Of Spain Epic

Yes, they're still around. Of course, Tears for Fears these days is just Roland Orzabal and his hired musicians, Curt Smith having flown the coop. And Orzabal, with his legion of fanatics, can safely settle back and write what he likes, knowing it will sell moderately well. That knowledge can be the only excuse for an egoistic, overproduced, pretentious collection of songs like this. The concept, while high-flown, could have worked—using your own genealogy as a way to explore the relationships between men and women—but the simplistic execution belies any intelligent intent. Every song, from the title track through "Don't Drink the Water," bombards the ears with heavy-handed dynamics and rhyming dictionary lyrics. Someone should have pointed out to Orzabal that rhyming chain, Spain, sane and gain doesn't come off as a dark delving into the soul. "Secrets" and "Sketches of Pain," folksy, introspective tunes sans electronic clutter and cheesy '80s guitar riffs, do better. Late in the record, "Me And My Big Ideas," a duet with Oleta Adams, who was featured on the last Smith/Orzabal Tears for Fears album, *The Seeds of Love*, only serves to show the real shortcomings of the album—Adams has a beautiful, bold vocal style, giving the track a film-like dream quality. Unfortunately, most of *Raoul* is overdone, a shot at writing a smart, deep, concept record which, in the end, is only as good as its creator. —Rande Dawn

DATALOG: Released Oct. 10. First single "God's Mistake."

FILE UNDER: The arrogance of Kings.

R.I.Y.L.: Sting, Phil Collins.

THIRTY OUGHT SIX Hag Seed Mute

Thirty Ought Six (whose alternate "spelling," 30.06, refers to a very loud rifle cartridge) exhibits the chemistry of the best rock trios: making each of its instruments distinctive while adding up to a whole more powerful than the sum of its spare parts. Ryan Paravecchio's drums recall the jazz leanings of Smashing Pumpkins' Jimmy Chamberlin, David Blunk's guitars bring to mind textural stalwarts of both Seattle (Mudhoney, Seaweed) and Washington, DC (Fugazi, Pitchblende), and Sean Roberts' heavy/lyrical bass and harmonically raging vocals encircle the package with the obvious comparisons to Husker Du. Taken as a whole, the Portland group, which has already released a handful of singles, comp tracks and a first album in its three-year history, encapsulates almost all of the best qualities of the species "indie rock"—how many bands can sound like Jawbox one minute and Slint the next? With an admirable attempt at variety over these 12 tracks, produced by John Goodmanson (Geraldine Fibbers, Bikini Kill, Unwound), only "Governor" and "Tourmaline," which features Jeremy of Sunny Day Real Estate on guest vocals, beg repeat listening. But there are enough elements at work here to suggest the rest of the album is a grower. —Eric Gladstone

DATALOG: Released Nov. 7.

FILE UNDER: Dissonant punk rock.

R.I.Y.L.: Sunny Day Real Estate, Jawbox, Slint.



after all
bel canto
brainbox
cam
chris and cosey
consolidated
delerium
falling joys
ginger
the grapes of wrath
the grassy knoll
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lava hay
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single gun theory
skinny puppy
spk
taste of joy
the tear garden
the water walk
wild strawberries



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on the verge

UP-AND-COMING ARTISTS

compiled by *iydia anderson*

Brainiac

Brainiac is accustomed to being received by confused glares: Over the past couple of years, opening slots for big acts like Jesus Lizard, Shudder To Think and the Breeders have left a trail of baffled audiences all across the country—folks just didn't "get it." But Brainiac should brace itself for a big change, because the band's latest recording, the "Internationale" EP (Touch And Go), is like a white-hot light shining into the eyes of the sleeping masses. And even though the band's numerous earlier recordings, including two full-lengths and a fistful of singles, were also delightfully weird, it's only now that the time is just right for Brainiac to *really* catch on. The quartet combines snarly sleaze-rock (a la Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Chrome Cranks, et al.) with Devo-style Moog-core, so with bands like Six Finger Satellite beginning to turn heads, Brainiac is likely to move out of rock's blind spot and into its focal point. —*Jenny Eliscu*



PHOTO BY JUSTIN DE METRICK

Ditch Croaker

📍 Hoboken, New Jersey-based trio Ditch Croaker does just about everything the old fashioned way: on its own. A mainstay of the NYC-area club circuit, the energetic trio books its own tours and has released several of its own singles and two CDs, *Chimpfactor* last March and the upcoming *Secrets Of The Mule*, set for release in March, on its own Fine Corinthian label. While Ditch Croaker's early material revealed a band heavily influenced by the current crop of indie bands, its newest disc sees the trio assuming more confidence and personality. Frontman Tim Newman still evokes the tense sensitivity of Lou Barlow, but he does so on his own terms, while the band's carefully crafted, even hummable songs have scruffy edges in all the right places. This band's done such a good job overseeing all aspects of its career that it's questionable whether someone else could do it better, but all bets are on that the band is fending off offers from music biz types with loaded pockets. (LA)



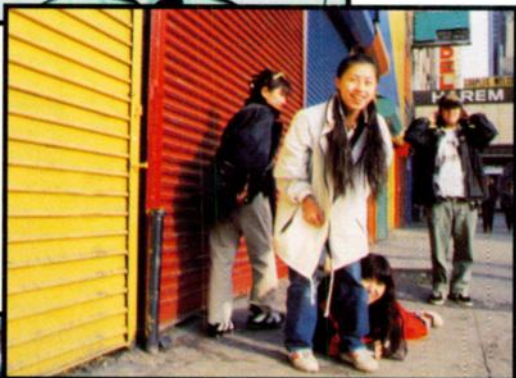
Jonny Polonsky

The crisp pop written and played by 22-year-old Chicagoan Jonny Polonsky caught the ear of former chief Pixie Frank Black, and it's no wonder: His songs sound as if they were born whole, with very little need for further refinement, and their crunchy, FM-radio-ready sound practically screams to be put on your next mix-tape. Some of the songs on his self-produced, self-titled debut, to be released in late January by American, bristle with an Elvis Costello-like knack for a hummable tune, but they're just a little bit off, in a Blackian spirit. Like the way his voice crackles as he sings "I am unable to resist your scurvy love" while he tinkles the ivories on a barhouse-sounding piano, or the enigmatic post-lawnmower disaster tale of "Uh-Oh." "Truly Ugly And Dead Too" (also Polonsky's debut 7" on Rapid Records) has a truly groovy, Roky Erickson vibe, while others, like "In My Mind," are irresistibly chiming pop. The 10



PHOTO BY MICHAEL HALSBAND

tunes on his album breeze by in less than 25 minutes, whetting our appetites to hear more from this talented young artisan. (LA)



Super Junky Monkey

Believe it or not, there is such a thing as a great, original funk-metal band—you may just have to go to Japan to find it. The four young women of Super Junky Monkey won the CMJ Japan Battle Of The Bands a few years ago; following a Japanese live album that came out back then, the group has released its studio debut, *Screw Up*, in America (TriStar-Sony), and it *whomps*. Singer Mutsumi springs around the stage with murder in her eyes; guitarist Keiko's playing is inventive, non-intuitive, and loud as hell; and they've got a rhythm section behind them that must wear out an awful lot of drumskins and bass strings. And SJM can sustain both a groove (lightness, stasis and swing) and heaviness (unstoppable movement, volume and force) at the same time. You have to see them live to get the full picture, but *Screw Up*'s "Bakabata" and "Buckin' The Bolts" should tide you over until they tour here in a few months.

—*Douglas Walk*

by Gabriel Levy



Digital Video Disc:

By Any Means Necessary—Or Unnecessary?

It's finally here—yet another digital medium sure to render its predecessors entirely obsolete! It's Digital Video Disc (DVD), it's official, and it's the greatest thing since interactive sliced bread.

Well, sort of. We all know the hype: Sony/Philips and Time/Toshiba, after eight months of giving each other the cold shoulder, finally sat down to lunch and agreed on a joint standard for this new high-density compact disc thing. Specifications for the technology are not available yet, but speculation has it that the disc can hold up to 3.7 gigabytes of memory—a two-hour film, for example—and will be available as soon as fall 1996. And yes, like all the other compact disc products out there, you can smear it with super-chunky peanut butter and it still won't skip a beat.

Seriously, though: DVD is going to be some pretty cool stuff, but before we reach that relatively easy conclusion, let's just put a few digital things in perspective. First of all, do we really want another digital platform? From the consumer's perspective, there are really two issues at hand with new technology: Coolness vs. Cashlessness. Yes, we all want the latest, greatest stuff. But none of us want the costliness that's associated with purchasing it. It's a classic risk vs. reward scenario. Ultimately, consumers are willing to pay more now for new technology because they have faith that inflated pricing will drop later: "yes, today in 1985, by buying this new CD player thing I'll have to shell out twice as much to get that Quiet Riot album, but tomorrow—as the competition sets in and the newness of the technology wears off—*Quiet Riot on CD will cost less than Quiet Riot on vinyl!* So, Cum On Ring It Up!" Remember that deal?

The reason why Quiet Riot on CD today costs about the same as it did ten years ago (except for those collectors' editions of *Metal Health* where "...girls rock your boys!" enjoyed an alternative lyric) is because the last ten years have seen an excess of digital audio player platforms. You'd think that as newer technology came in, you'd get cheaper pricing on the older stuff. But with the advent of so many new platforms, consumers have only been paying increasingly higher prices for "older" new technology while wasting money on "newer" new technology that ends up being supported for, like, three hours. Just when CD technology had finally gotten going and a price drop seemed imminent, digital audio tape (DAT) reared its ugly, expensive head. Did CD pricing abate? Of course not—suddenly, compact disc technology was cheap compared to the inflated DAT price point. Suddenly, we were all getting a "deal" and saving money by buying CDs. Then Digital Compact Cassette (DCC) walked on and off the scene. And then MiniDisc came along recently (did I skip anything in

between?). More hardware is sure to arrive tomorrow. And so the new tech deflation myth continues.

This is why we buckless voyagers among the unknown products of new technology have to be a little bit skeptical of DVD. DVD, like the other digital platforms that have arrived lately, threatens to keep pricing high within the music, video and PC worlds by rendering current new and expensive technology definitively useless, and less expensive but still expensive. Just when CD-ROM players have finally caught on, DVD promises to be able to bundle four or five software programs on a single disc—better replace it with a DVD disc drive. And scrap that laser disc player: no more tiresome treks across the living-room carpet to flip that disc, since DVD keeps the movie going for two hours straight. Hell, why keep a CD player around any more when you can rock out to five, count 'em, five *Quiet Riot albums on a single DVD disc?*

The long and the short of it is that everybody is going to have to get a DVD player. DVD will make you feel happy. DVD is the future. And how much are we going to pay for this happy future? Nobody will be held to the rumors, but it's speculated that a DVD player will come in at a *minimum* of \$500. It's unclear how much individual DVD discs will cost, but people, let's do the math: A DVD holds about 5.5 times the information volume of a standard CD. A CD costs about \$10-15. Hmmm...

Regardless of any cashlessness that may follow in the wake of DVD's arrival next year, its conspicuous coolness will probably make all those soon-to-be-washed-up machines worth it. Pick your interest: Music? No problem. Get a whole series of recordings all on one single disc, all recorded in 20-24 bit audio, all with videos, biographies and liner notes. Film? Enjoy a full-length, fully digitized feature film on one single disc which provides rare interviews and behind-the-scenes commentary from the director and actors about any given scene at the click of a button. Games? Get *DOOM 666* with six hundred and sixty-six levels of shoot 'em up hell, with the PC, Sega Saturn and Sony Playstation versions of the game all bundled on the same disc. Multimedia? Get next year's film, *Batman Vs. Rain Man*, its video game, its soundtrack and its clothes-washing personal digital accessory all in one interactive purchase. In short, the sky's the limit with DVD's astronomical memory real estate. Rumor has it that even Quiet Riot is planning to exploit DVD's potential with a planned debut interactive music title release—*Quiet Byte: Decade Of Ones And Zeros*. Coolness.

SWORDMASTER

Wraths Of Time

Full Moon Productions

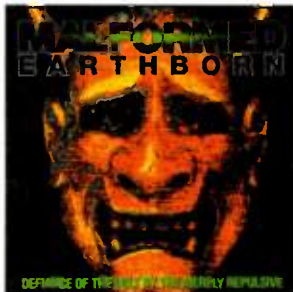


Swordmaster vocalist Whiplasher has managed to invent a new way to demonstrate black metal madness: flip up your middle fingers, cross your arms, and stick out your tongue. (He's seen in that pose on the CD's back cover.) On its new CD, this zesty Swedish foursome combines a fierce rhythmic battery with more melodic guitar work than is typical of corpse-painted Scandinavians. These wicked offspring of Bathory are wise beyond their young years. You can hear the overtones of Emperor and Immortal influences, but Swordmaster has a non-formulaic approach approach to metallic war-making. The band expresses itself colorfully, pulling references from all the way back to the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal. The production is dirty and appropriately bad—when a sound-effect bomb explodes, it saturates the tape and obliterates the band. With the bandwagon for evil clown music running so wildly out of control, it's good to hear Swordmaster sound so excited and sincerely raw.



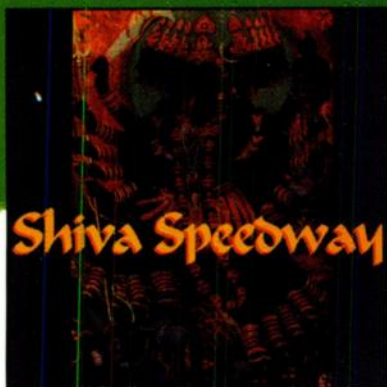
RIFFS

If it's possible to appreciate a death knell, **SKEPTICISM** is a thoroughly enjoyable depressing band. The Finnish trio's *Stormcrowfleet* (Red Stream) is an experiment in extreme melancholia, with millenium-long guitar riffs, morbid undertaker synth, slo-o-o-ow fatal beats, and dire growling vocals said to be inspired by primitive man. All the pieces fit together fabulously, creating a truly great monument to heaviness that makes Joy Division sound like a bunch of cheerleaders... The crazytalkers in **EXIT-13** have a new release of old material. Starting with a skateboard-graphics-style "stoned" adaptation of a classic Venom album cover, *...Just A Few More Hits* (Relapse) is a grind party album for fans of information density. The band revisits a couple of its thrashing confusion anthems, then tosses off the 22-minute *musique concrete* composition "Snakes And Alligators"... Dan Lilker of Brutal Truth and his former bandmate Scott Lewis both lend rhythm support to Exit-13; the ever-expanding pair joins bassist Shane Embury of Napalm Death to concoct *Defiance Of The Ugly By The Merely Repulsive* (Release) under the name **MALFORMED EARTHBORE**. The result is an impressively limber studio escapade with heavy dub rhythms, spiraling digital loops, and destroyed sheets of distorted guitar scrapple. These guys probably got their new wave influences via Skinny Puppy, but the disco beats and techno melodies are undeniable all the same. The vocals are Ogre-like to the point of being awful, but the music is hard, danceable and exotic... In the exorbitantly wild third issue of *Morbid Commentary* (2214 B Glyndon, Venice, CA 90291), ambitious young fanzine editor Per Malloch seeks to reduce discussion of metal music to a useful set of unified terms. Among his discoveries: open E-string riffing as a hallmark of the music's limited emotional range. On subsequent pages, Per embarks on many lengthy, complicated and humorous album reviews of records by artists from the likes of Casper Brötzmann to Marduk and Hades, adorned by tons of his way-out fantastickal and demonic drawings.



- 1 DOWN
Nola
EastWest-EEG
- 2 ANTHRAX
Stomp 442
Elektra-EEG
- 3 LIFE OF AGONY
Ugly
Roadrunner
- 4 DEFTONES
Adrenaline
Maverick-WB
- 5 SIX FEET UNDER
Haunted
Metal Blade
- 6 GWAR
Rag Na Rok
Metal Blade
- 7 FEAR FACTORY
Demanufacture
Roadrunner
- 8 CATHEDRAL
The Carnival Bizarre
Earache
- 9 INTO ANOTHER
Seamless
Hollywood
- 10 SKUNK ANANSIE
Paranoid & Sunburnt
Epic
- 11 BELLADONNA
Belladonna
Mausoleum
- 12 BRUJERIA
Raza Odiada
Roadrunner
- 13 IRON MAIDEN
The X Factor
CMC
- 14 NATURE
Nature
Zoo
- 15 OZZY OSBOURNE
"Perry Mason" (5")
Epic
- 16 G/Z/R
Plastic Planet
TVT
- 17 SHELTER
Mantra
Supersoul-Roadrunner
- 18 INTERNAL BLEEDING
Voracious Contempt
Pavement
- 19 KREATOR
Cause For Conflict
Noise
- 20 MESHUGGAH
Destroy Erase Improve
Nuclear Blast
- 21 NAILBOMB
Proud To Commit Commercial
Suicide
Roadrunner
- 22 SNAPCASE
Steps (EP)
Victory
- 23 DISMEMBER
Massive Killing Capacity
Nuclear Blast
- 24 MY DYING BRIDE
Trinity
Fierce-FLG
- 25 MOTORHEAD
Sacrifice
CMC

Compiled from the CMJ New Music Report's weekly Liquid Rock charts, collected from CMJ's panel of progressive radio reporters.



SINGLES

BY DOUGLAS WOLK

SHIVA SPEEDWAY 🇺🇸

"Twister"

Fire Eater

Every so often, a first single pops up and gives us new hope for old-fashioned loud guitar rock. A few years ago, it was Mudhoney's "Touch Me I'm Sick"; this time, it's Boston trio Shiva Speedway's "Twister," which shares the former song's super-fuzz guitar sound and lyrical conceit—"It makes me sick, then I feel gooooooood," Dezaray

DeCarlo snarls. Even better, Shiva Speedway knows what to do when nobody's singing. "Twister" is built on a pounce-and-halt dual-guitar riff behind its shout-along words, but between verses, DeCarlo and

Heidi Saperstein's guitars twine and bristle around each other like the fibers in a hangman's noose.

Awesome. The other side's "Hell" is awkward enough to remind us that this really is a first single (except for a split with Quivver a year or so ago),

but it's awkward like the Frankenstein monster—

the band is only knocking things over because it doesn't

know its own strength. And again, it peaks in a long instrumental passage with both guitars set to "needle-gun."

two songs on their delightful posthumous single "China Town" (Amarillo) were recorded live at one of their final shows, and reveal what a shame it is that they're not around any more—they played with enthusiasm, wit and reverence for the culture they were dipping into. The B-side "Jan Pehechan Ho," with its bouncy trombone part, is the winner by a nose here, but both songs are completely charming and completely unlike any other American single you'll hear this year.

Another Bay Area resident, **MISS MURGATROID**, is locally well-known for her solo accordion dreampop shows—an idea that's much better than it sounds. "Time Theory 11:11" (RGI Industries), her first single, is very beautiful and very unsettling, a long piece with effects-laden accordion lines echoing and decaying in waves, and Miss M. singing something that sounds mournful but can't quite be made out. On the other side, a wheezing, shimmering instrumental piece called "Railroad To Kali," she's assisted by the superb Seattle multi-instrumentalist Alan Bishop, who takes over halfway through with an overlay of what sounds like a Balinese dance for a ritual sacrifice. Seek it out for its extraordinary letterpress packaging, too.

RUN ON's "Miscalculation" single (Matador) is very short—the A-side runs a princely 1:33—but it illustrates nicely the peculiar everything-at-once dynamics of this New York City quartet. On "Miscalculation," Sue Garner is singing a neat little pop melody, but the guitar is screeching like it's on loan from a free-improv piece, the keyboards buzz like an appliance that's been on too long, and the drum riff that drives the song seems to be in a different time signature from everything else. Of course, it all works. The other side's more subdued "A To Z" finds guitarist Alan Licht singing and somebody playing some lovely vibraphone.

A few quick notes. *The Wheel Method* compilation 7" is the first release on Pottery Records; it has a nice little song by the Mountain Goats (life has been better since there was an ordinance passed that the Mountain Goats had to be on every compilation 7"), a very peculiar little country tune (with multiple vibraphones and detuned guitar) by U.S. Saucer, and three other tracks that, to put it kindly, appear to be documenting something... **SUPERDRAG's** new one, "N.A. Kicker," is the first release on another new label, Arena Rock. The A-side is another short, gritty, happy, impossibly catchy little pop song of the kind they do so well; it's backed with a pleasingly loud but absolutely pointless cover of Husker Du's "Diane"... **GEROGEROGEGERE's** "No Sound" (Way Out Sound) has one side that sounds like somebody wrecking an entire high school auditorium chair by chair and another side of somebody playing with a huge quantity of coins—sometimes stirring them in waves, sometimes letting a few individual coins fall. Very pretty and very unusual.

In response to all the bands picking up on what Wire did over 15 years ago and parlaying it into hit singles (Elastica, Menswe@r, etc.), **FLYING SAUCER ATTACK** has up and made a single of an actual Wire song, the exquisite miniature "Outdoor Miner" (Domino (UK)). Though FSA's breathy, dreamy reading of the lyric doesn't quite work, a dazed, noodly little guitar solo near the end redeems it, and the giant pillowy clouds of blown-amp feedback that are the band's trademark are always comforting to hear. The instrumental B-side, "Psychic Driving," is an unqualified success, though, with a short, atonal riff pitted against a racheting guitar part that's much faster and way out of synch, eventually joined by more layers of creepy keyboards until it sounds like you're in the middle of an invasion of alien locusts.

Wire's **BRUCE GILBERT**, in the meantime, has been working as a DJ under the name The Beekeeper—"playing" records in unusual ways from inside a metal shed. His "Instant Shed Vol. 1" single doesn't exactly try to capitalize on his past; in fact, it may be the weirdest thing Sub Pop has ever released. Side one is a single note, ping-ponging between the speakers with almost no variation, and side two (the two sides are supposed to be played simultaneously) is a set of tape-manipulated record-scratching noises. That's it. Very, uh, high-concept. If not something you'd actually want to listen to at home.

HEAVENLY TEN STEMS was a short-lived Bay Area "supergroup" (with members of Thinking Fellers Union Local 282, World Of Pooh and Three Day Stubble, among others), devoted to covering Asian film music—there was a revealing article in the 'zine *Rollerderby* a few years ago about the controversy that forced them to break up. The

GOLDIE

Timeless

ffrr-I.L.S.



As the British music called jungle continues to revive at least four distinct musical genres—house, techno, hip-hop, and jazz—its practitioners are becoming more and more conversant in dance musical hybridity. Thus 24-year-old London producer Goldie steps into the fray with an album that completely remaps the terrain on which jungle is now located.

Timeless refuses distinctions between ambient music, house, breakbeats, drum-and-bass and virtually any other form you care to mention, including r&b. The stunning vocals of "Inner City Life," the album's first single (part of the 21-minute title suite), glide across the subterranean, seismic bass pulses and rattling percussion.

"Angel" also employs melancholy female vocals to the accompaniment of a barreling percussive melee. Goldie is head of the resolutely progressive Metalheadz jungle label in London, an organization that has been issuing some of the most tearing singles to come down the pike in the last year or two (including music by Alex Reece and Dillinja). His production standards are probably higher than Quincy Jones', but they retain an unmistakably underground edge. And the influences here are found in innumerable traces.

The gorgeous "Sea Of Tears" samples the harsh drum break from the Commodores' "Assembly Line" over an impossibly deep bassline which threatens to engulf the track's every element, including minor-key piano chords and submerged, angelic choir effects. Each of the tracks here is cushioned by enormous, ballooning basslines which equal those of the most committed trance artists. I could go on, but suffice it to say that *Timeless* is the most exquisitely rendered post-dancefloor album to date.



BORDER CROSSINGS

Goldie's debut album emerges at a time when dance music is in a state of violent flux, where once stable categories are undermined week by week. There's no doubt that the movement towards the lower end of the beats-per-minute scale is inexorably underway. The first U.S. album by **WAGON CHRIST**, *Throbbing Pouch* (Rising High USA), will come as a real shock to the censorious techno police. Wagon Christ is the alter ego of Luke Vibert, a studio prankster whose deviations from techno's linear path have resulted in some of the most spellbinding electronic music of the last 18 months. With his debut album, Vibert never lets the speed reach that of even a slow house record. Vibert came to maturity under the aegis of the Hypnotist (a.k.a. Caspar Pound), whose adventurous Rising High label has set up shop in the U.S. in order to release such ambitious electronic symphonies as this. *Throbbing Pouch* is as much a dense melange of headnodding beats as it is a dancefloor record, and as such resembles hip-hop's current predilection for downtempo grooves. (Vibert's recent *Polished Solid* EP was heavily influenced by hip-hop.) The breathtaking "Night Owls" ushers in a whistling sax riff in perfect counterpoint to the steady, chugging breakbeat. The title track is a humid, glowering exercise with a menacing bass line and swishing percussive jolts. *Throbbing Pouch* does not so much subsume its influences as traverse them with considerable beauty and agility... Another of the more imaginative border crossers is British producer Mike Paradinas, whose work under the pseudonyms **μ-ZIQ** and **JAKE SLAZENGER** have provided a blueprint for post-techno explorers. He's recently recorded two full-length albums for American labels. One of these outings is *In Pine Effect* by μ-Ziq (Astralwerks-Caroline), perhaps his magnum opus, a sprawling, ambitious album which moves from the stark melancholia of "Melancho" to the off-center "Funky Pipecleaner." μ-Ziq has never been one for straightforward 4/4 jams, and this superb collection of tracks is no exception... Paradinas' other new project is the *Spatula Freak* album, recorded under the name **KID SPATULA** (Reflective). This album is quite a departure for Paradinas, though tracks such as "Trunk" and "Metal Thing #1" are certainly stylistically indebted to the electro-revival work he recorded as Jake Slazenger, with its percolating analog synth sounds and blurred fuzzy basslines. At other times, Paradinas takes his cue from the desolate, spare piano work of early Durutti Column, particularly on the lonely "Chisholm." *Spatula Freak* is as much about the space between sounds as the sounds themselves, and its violent and contemplative qualities coexist with an uneasy tension.



- 1 **CHEMICAL BROTHERS**
Exit Planet Dust
Astralwerks-Caroline
- 2 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Trance Europe Express 4
Volume (UK)
- 3 **MOUSE ON MARS**
Iaora Tahiti
Too Pure-American
- 4 **LOOP GURU**
Duniya
Waveform
- 5 **SKYLAB**
#1
Astralwerks-Caroline
- 6 **LEFTFIELD**
Leftism
Columbia-CRG
- 7 **HANZEL UND GRETYL**
Ausgefloppt
Energy
- 8 **BANCO DE GAIA**
Last Train To Lhasa
Planet Dog-Mammoth
- 9 **GOLDIE**
Timeless
ffrr-London
- 10 **EAT STATIC**
Epsilon
Planet Dog-Mammoth
- 11 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Macro Dub Infection
Caroline
- 12 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Concept In Dance 2
XL-Moonshine
- 13 **WAGON CHRIST**
Throbbing Pouch
Rising High
- 14 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Ibiza Afterhours 2
Moonshine
- 15 **EBN**
Telecommunication Breakdown
TVT
- 16 **JOEY BELTRAM**
"Game Form" (12")
Logic
- 17 **ESSENTIAL CHROME**
"Us & Them" (12")
Save The Vinyl-Logic
- 18 **APHEX TWIN**
I Care Because You Do/
Donkey Rhubarb (EP)
Sire-EEG
- 19 **ZEN COWBOYS**
Electric Mistress
Moonshine
- 20 **KOXBBOX**
Forever After
Harthouse-Eye Q
- 21 **AIR LIQUIDE**
Red
sm:je
- 22 **PROTOTYPE 909**
Live '93-'95
Instinct
- 23 **UNITED STATES**
INFORMATION AGENCY
Freedom! (EP)
Suburban
- 24 **A POSITIVE LIFE**
Synaesthetic
Waveform
- 25 **EAT STATIC**
Implant
Planet Dog-Mammoth

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

25



HIP-HOP

BY GLEN SANSONE

CYPRESS HILL

III (Temple Of Boom)

Ruffhouse-Columbia

Cypress Hill's eponymous debut had an explosive effect on hip-hop when it hit in the summer of 1991. The thick, tightly-looped beats created by DJ Muggs (formerly of 7A3) and the blunted ramblings of MCs B-Real and Sen Dog had us believing that the future of hip-hop was staring at us through dazed, bloodshot eyes. Although its follow-up, *Black Sunday*, had moments ("Insane In The Brain"), it wasn't nearly as potent or inventive, and the group later admitted that it was rushed, recorded in just two months to meet label demands. Instead of trying to recapture its past, Cypress Hill has boldly pushed itself forward on *III*..., taking its music and followers to a new place that is at once fresh and familiar. Simply put, *Temple Of Boom* makes *Black Sunday* look like a bad high. It's smoked-out production is still familiar ("Throw Your Set In The Air"), while a journey down its dark, murky halls of funk will be the most terrifying and mind-expanding trip you'll take all year (except for maybe Tricky's *Maxinquaye*). DJ Muggs' beats go above and beyond anything he's ever done before. His grooves envelope the cannon-fire funk that has come to define the Cypress sound ("Boom Biddy Bye Bye"), while many of the music's supplementary ingredients sound more influenced by groups like Portishead than by P-Funk. Listen to the angelic samples on "Stoned Raiders" and the spaced-out paranoia trip "Illusions," which mixes vibes and creepy guitar samples with B-Real's nasally musings, for a hit of the reinvented and super-dope Cypress Hill. Better than a phat bag of buddah, the Cypress tribe has established itself as more than a trio of baked beatheads, but a group that's still redefining the rules of hip-hop.

BONUS BEATS



KRS ONE has been personifying Bronx hip-hop for ten years. Every rhyme that rolls from Kris Parker's colorfully animated repertoire of logical and not-so-logical viewpoints provides listeners with a unique view of the total hip-hop experience. From the vivid detail of 1987's "South Bronx" to his latest opinion piece, "MCs Act Like They Don't Know," KRS has asserted his role as a teacher and hip-hop philosopher in an age always looking to identify its leaders. With his authoritative tone and trademark confidence, KRS remains the ultimate hip-hop chieftain on his second post-Boogie Down Productions self-titled release (Jive). KRS stresses the importance of MC skills on "Wannabemcee" (featuring dancehall spark plug, Mad Lion), "Represent The Real Hip-Hop" and "Build Ya Skillz" (featuring Busta Rhymes), while he stands cocked and loaded, ready to blast his competition if they fail to heed his words. Like any KRS One release, his now-famous political discourse ignites the self-produced "Free Mumia" and "The Truth," on which KRS questions Biblical history with a tenacious sense of purpose... Although over a year has passed since his first single "Shit's Real," the underground hip-hop community hasn't forgotten Queens, New York's **MIC GERONIMO**. Following two successful singles (the second was "Masta I.C."), Geronimo has assembled *The Natural* (Blunt-TVT), a debut album full of distinctly-delivered rhymes fueled by his everyday life encounters. The record is more appealing when he's building mental workouts, as on "Lifecheck" and "Time To Build," instead of the shallower, less-challenging notions of getting high and paid, as with "Man Of My Own." Although the album's beats anchor his words nicely, they tend to lack enough cadence changes and dynamics. Mic has a steady, rugged flow similar to Nas that should only get better the longer he survives the rap game... He's already an underground icon, and **KOOL G RAP**'s latest album, 4,5,6 (Cold Chillin'-Epic), couldn't have come at a better time. The larger-than-life storytelling of Kool G Rap has influenced artists like Notorious B.I.G., Treach and countless others. G Rap's lyrics burrow through the underworld where fast women, dirty money and smoking guns are commonplace ("Fuck what ya heard, crime pays!"). The first single, "It's A Shame," updates the sentiments of Marvin Gaye's "Inner City Blues (Make Me Wanna Holler)" for the violence-happy '90s, while G Rap's rhymes splatter with vivid imagery ("Ghetto Knows") and some of the most apocalyptic mental pictures since the Wu-Tang Clan's debut. Word out.

- 1 KRS ONE
KRS One
Jive
- 2 RAEKWON
Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...
Loud-RCA
- 3 PHARCYDE
"Runnin'" (12")
Delicious Vinyl-Capitol
- 4 GENIUS/GZA
"Liquid Swords" (12")
Geffen
- 5 KOOL G RAP
4,5,6
Cold Chillin'/Epic Street-CRG
- 6 DAS EFX
Hold It Down
EastWest-EEG
- 7 ERICK SERMON
"Bomdigi" (12")
RAL-Island
- 8 BLAHZAY BLAHZAY
"Danger" (12")
Mercury
- 9 SMIF-N-WESSUN
Dah Shinin'
Wreck-Nervous
- 10 CYPRESS HILL
"Throw Your Set In The Air" (12")
Ruffhouse-Columbia
- 11 GROUP HOME
"Livin' Proof" (12")
Payday/frr-Island
- 12 MAD SKILLZ
"The Nod Factor" (12")
Big Beat
- 13 AZ
Doe Or Die
EMI
- 14 GURU
Jazzmatazz II: The New Reality
Chrysalis-EMI
- 15 ACEYALONE
All Balls Don't Bounce
Capitol
- 16 GOODIE MOB
"Cell Therapy" (12")
LaFace-Arista
- 17 JURASSIC 5
Unified Rebelution
Blunt-TVT
- 18 FUNKMASTER FLEX &
THE GHETTO CELEBS
"Safe Sex, No Freaks" (12")
Wreck-Nervous
- 19 SOUNDTRACK
Clockers
MCA
- 20 MOBB DEEP
The Infamous
Loud-RCA
- 21 MARIAH CAREY
Daydream
Columbia-CRG
- 22 SOUNDTRACK
The Show
Def Jam/RAL-Island
- 23 METHOD MAN
"The Riddler" (12")
Atlantic
- 24 W.C. & THE MAAD CIRCLE
Curb Servin'
Payday/frr-London
- 25 LORD FINESSE
Hip to the Game (12")
Penalty

Compiled from the *Billboard* New Music Report's weekly Best Box charts, collected from CPM's pool of progressive radio returns.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

The First Ten Years Of Def Jam Classics (Def Jam)



Founded in the mid-'80s by Russell Simmons with help from Rick Rubin, the Def Jam label quickly picked up the pace from earlier independent hip-hop labels like Sugar Hill and Enjoy, in a lot of ways marking the transition of modern hip-hop out of the old-school vibe of gold chains and warm-up suits into the modern era. This whumping all-hits four-CD box is not an integral item (if it had more of the label's less familiar, early singles it would be), but it's a lot of fun. It compiles four CDs' worth of classic Def Jam 12-inches, from L.L. Cool J's

"Radio" and "Mama Said Knock You Out" to Public Enemy's "Bring The Noise" and "Fight The Power" to the label's more recent hits by groups like Onyx. In short, it's a lot of classic rap from the label's heyday in the late '80s. The fact that it's not presented in anything resembling chronological order makes things a bit schizophrenic—it'd probably have been cooler to run them chronologically to showcase the label's role in the flow of hip-hop over ten years, rather than jumble them up in party-mix style. To those who were in on it the first time, it's a blast—there's nothing quite like the thrill of hearing L.L. throw out an old-school line and knowing what the punchline is going to be in the next.

To newcomers, it's an almost-essential step in hip-hop schooling. Still, there's no sign of Rick Rubin's imprint on the early label—if the long-proposed *Maroon Singles* compilation ever comes out on Rubin's Infinite Zero-American imprint, you'll be able to put the two together and get a pretty full picture of what made hip-hop tick circa '84. These days, those individuals walking around with black and silver Def Jam promotional varsity jackets given out to friends and employees back in the day (even better, the earlier maroon and white jackets) bear the mark of having been in a cool place at a very cool time. This box set tells that story. **END**

IN THE BINS

ELVIS WAS A HERO TO MOST: We were secretly kind of hoping that maybe the Elvis '70s box set would present some sort of esoteric explanation of the King's final years, somehow coherently explaining all the karate moves, Louis XIV Sun King imagery, labyrinthine Mayan codices embroidered on suits, eagle feathers, ostrich scarves, lightning bolts, and the ubiquitous T-C-B lightning bolt logo, and that the King would rightly return to his exalted position as one of America's most truly bizarre pieces of work. That's the biggest letdown in **ELVIS PRESLEY's** *Walk A Mile In My Shoes: The Essential '70s Masters*: Rather than revel in his gluttonous and utterly bizarre (and artistically stunning, if you view dilapidation and camp performance as high art) final period, it just presents the same old misty housewives' view of Elvis. In the liner notes, longtime Elvis producer Felton Jarvis reckons, country-simple, "For the last couple of years, all he really wanted to do was ballads. I guess that was 'cause he was down over his divorce or something, and ballads were closer to what he was feeling." Hello!!! Could it have possibly been because he was on barbiturates? Most of the recordings come from '70 and '71, although hearing Elvis fumble through "Lady Madonna" and Dylan's

"Don't Think Twice, It's Alright" is a lot of fun ("Say, any of you guys hungry?" he asks after "Madonna" grinds to a halt). The live CD is inexplicably missing the sublime absurdity of Elvis' signature "Also Spoke Zarathustra" intro; plus, the live tapes are mostly miked from the stage, so you can't hear the ecstatic revels of the fans. Where's "Love Me, Love My Life"? Where is Elvis' brilliantly-juxtaposed, some would say nonsensical, medley of "I Got A Woman/Amen"? Where are the tracks from *Having Fun With*



Elvis Onstage, his legendary album of rambling monologues and onstage banter? Where's Elvis doing the "Hawaiian Wedding Song" live at the Rushmore Civic Center in Rapid City, SD? It's indisputably incongruous moments like those that made Elvis the King.

Due to a harried columnist, the label for Brasil: A Century Of Song in November's *Flashback* was misidentified as Blue Note. The correct label is Blue Jackel (322 Hicksville Road, Bethpage, NY 11714). CMJ regrets the error, as does the beleaguered columnist.

DIRECTORY

A LISTING OF LABELS WHOSE ARTISTS APPEAR IN THIS ISSUE

4AD
8533 Melrose Ave., Ste. B
Los Angeles, CA 90069

Columbia/550-Epic
550 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10022

A&M
1416 N. La Brea Ave.
Hollywood, CA 90028

Amarillo
P.O. Box 24433
San Francisco, CA 94124

American
3500 W. Olive Ave. #1550
Burbank, CA 91505

Atlantic
75 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10019

Bad Taste
P.O. Box 148428
Chicago, IL 60614

Bar/None
P.O. Box 1704
Hoboken, NJ 07030

Beggars Banquet
580 Broadway
New York, NY 10012

Big Cat
580 Broadway, Ste. 900
New York, NY 10012

Blue Note
1290 Ave. Of The Americas
35th Fl.
New York, NY 10104

Capitol/The Right Stuff
1750 N. Mine St.
Hollywood, CA 90028

Caroline
114 W. 26th St., 11th Fl.
New York, NY 10001

Carrot Top
2438 N. Lincoln Ave., 3rd Fl.
Chicago, IL 60614

Darla
625 Scott St. #303
San Francisco, CA 94117

Def Jam
160 Varick St., 12th Fl.
New York, NY 10013

Domino
P.O. Box 4029
London SW1S 2XR, U.K.

Drag City
P.O. Box 476867
Chicago, IL 60647

EMI
1290 Ave. Of The Americas
42nd Fl.
New York, NY 10104

Feel Good All Over
P.O. Box 148428
Chicago, IL 60614

Fine Corinthian
P.O. Box 1145
Hoboken, NJ 07030

Fire Eater
P.O. Box 390643
Cambridge, MA 02139

Full Moon Productions
948 Callahan Court
Lakeland, FL 33801

Gramavision
Shetland Park
27 Congress St.
Salem, MA 01970

Grindstone
447 S. Robertson Blvd.
Ste. 201
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

Interscope
10900 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1230
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Jive
1137-139 W. 25th St.
New York, NY 10001

K
P.O. Box 7154
Olympia, WA 98507

KOCH
2 Tri-Harbor Court
Port Washington, NY 11050

London/I.L.S./Mango
825 Eighth Ave.
New York, NY 10019

Matador
676 Broadway, 4th Fl.
New York, NY 10012

MCA
70 Universal City Plaza
Universal City, CA 91608

Merge
P.O. Box 1235
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Munich
c/o Stewart-Meyers Music
P.O. Box 2242
Austin, TX 78768

Mute
140 W. 22nd St., Ste. 10A
New York, NY 10011

Nonesuch
590 Fifth Ave., 16th Fl.
New York, NY 10036

Orchard Music Group
41B Duesenberg Drive
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

Over The Counter
P.O. Box 232
Providence, RI 02901

Pravda
3823 N. Southport
Chicago, IL 60613

Priority
6430 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 900
Hollywood, CA 90028

iPrivate
9014 Melrose Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90069

Prospect
41B Duesenberg Drive
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

Pure
79 Farviewfarm Rd.
Redding, CT 06896

Queenie
P.O. Box 2621
Suyvesant Stn.
New York, NY 10014

Rapid
2101 N. Ivar Ave. #2
Los Angeles, CA 90068

RCA
1540 Broadway, Times Sq.
New York, NY 10036

Reflective
759 Harrison St.
San Francisco, CA 94107

Relapse
P.O. Box 251
Millersville, PA 17551

Relativity
79 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10003

RGI Industries
416 E. Harrison St.
Seattle, WA 98102

Rising High
8525 Santa Monica Blvd.
W. Hollywood, CA 90069

ROIR
611 Broadway, Ste. 411
New York, NY 10012

Rough Trade
66 Gelborne Rd.
London W10 5PS, U.K.

Rykodisc
Shetland Park
27 Congress St.
Salem, MA 01970

Starlight Furniture Co.
290-C Napoleon
San Francisco, CA 94124

Sub Pop
1932 First Ave.
Seattle, WA 98101

Tone Casualties
1258 N. Highland Ave.
Hollywood, CA 90038

Touch And Go
P.O. Box 25520
Chicago, IL 60625

TVT
23 E. 4th St.
New York, NY 10003

Warner Bros./Reprise
3300 Warner Blvd.
Burbank, CA 91505

Way Out Sound
P.O. Box 8623
Chula Vista, CA 91912

X-Mas
1040 N. Fairfax Ave. #303
Los Angeles, CA 90041

Yazoo
13 Laight St., 6th Fl.
New York, NY 10013



NEW RELEASES JANUARY 1996

JANUARY 9

POSSUM DIXON Star Maps (Interscope)

XAVIER The X-Factor (Interscope)

RUST (Atlantic)

JANUARY 16

SOUNDTRACK Screwed (Amphetamine Reptile)

SKIPLOADER From Can Through String (DGC)

BEST KISSERS IN THE WORLD Yellow Brick Road Kill (MCA)

DIMESTORE HOODS Dimestore Hoods (MCA)

SEAN TYRELL Cry Of A Dreamer (Hannibal-Rykodisc)

GOLDEN SMOG Down By The Old Mainstream (Rykodisc)

JACK LOGAN Mood Elevator (Medium Cool-Restless)

SHIVERS The Buried Life (Restless)

GROUND AFX (Columbia)

WYNTON MARSALIS (Columbia)

DEAD MAN WALKING (Columbia)

MILES DAVIS & GIL EVANS Highlights (Columbia)

MASTERS OF REALITY (Epic)

GREG ALLMAN (550)

MARRY ME JANE (550)

SANDY DIRT (K)

LOVE AS LAUGHTER The Greks Bring Gifts (K)

HALO BENDERS Don't Tell Me Now (K)

MINISTRY Filth Pig (Warner Bros.)

CIBO MATTO Viva La Woman (Warner Bros.)

JANUARY 23

WALLFLOWERS Bringing Down The Horse (Interscope)

ERICK SERMON Insomnia (Interscope)

LIFTER Melinda (Interscope)

THE GYPSY 3 Going To The USA (Columbia)

STABBING WESTWARD Wither, Blister, Burn And Peel (Columbia)

VARIOUS ARTISTS Siresong (Epic)

DIRT MERCHANTS Scarified (Epic)

NICK HEYWARD (Epic)

TORI AMOS (Atlantic)

BLAMELESS (Atlantic)

DAKODA MOTOR CO. (Atlantic)

GAVIN FRIDAY Shag Tobacco (Island)

JANUARY 30

AIMEE MANN I'm With Stupid (DGC)

REMY ZERO Remy Zero (DGC)

TERANCE BLANCHARD The Heart Speaks (Columbia)

LEONARD PELTIER BENEFIT Exiled In The Land Of The Free (Columbia)

RUBY Salt Peter (WORK-Columbia)

REEF Replenish (Epic)

STANLEY CLARK The Bass-Ic Collection (Epic)

MIND SCIENCE OF THE MIND (Epic)

REV DADDY LOVE (550)

XC-NN Lifted (550)

MILES DAVIS Ballads & Blues (Capitol)

VARIOUS ARTISTS Ultra Lounge Series (6-CD Series) (Capitol)

COCTEAU TWINS Milk & Kisses (Capitol)

THERAPY? Infernal Love (A&M)

MEKONS (WITH KATHY ACKER) Pussy, King Of The Pirates

(1/4 Stick-Touch And Go)

DEAD VOICES ON AIR Shap (Invisible)

LAMBCHOP How I Quit Smoking (Merge)

TRANS AM Trans Am (Thrill Jockey)

TORTOISE Millions Now Living Will Never Die (Thrill Jockey)

SOUNDTRACK Don't Be A Menace To South Central... (Island)

BASS IS BASE Memories Of The Soulshack Survivors (Loose Cannon-I.L.S.)

SKIN DEEP (Loose Cannon-I.L.S.)

NEW KINGDOM (Gee Street-I.L.S.)

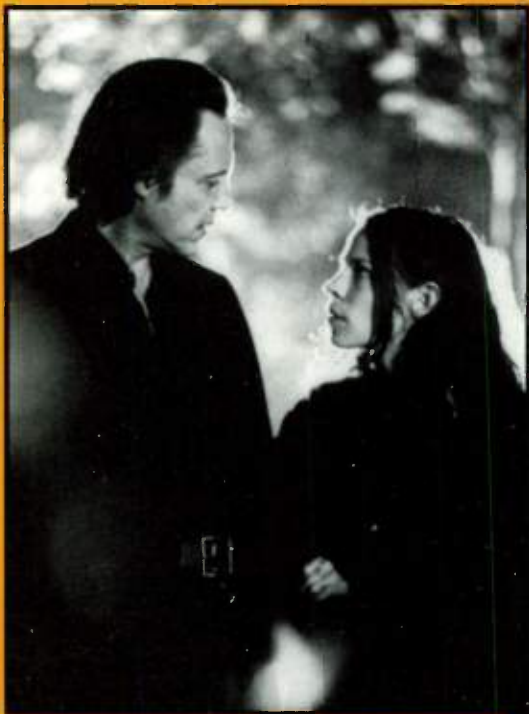
ROLLERSKATE SKINNY Horse-Drawn Wishes (Warner Bros.)

GEGGY TAH (Warner Bros.)

MOJAVE 3 Ask Me Tomorrow (4AD)

All dates subject to change, so don't blame us.

mixed media



FLICKS

THE ADDICTION (October Films)

"There are more things in Heaven and Earth that are dreamt of in your philosophy," so goes Hamlet's graveyard admonishment to Horatio. And that's the ponderous angle *Bad Lieutenant* director Abel Ferrara takes in his grim new morality play, *The Addiction*: what if a by-the-numbers philosophy student (Lili Taylor) is suddenly stricken with the ultimate degenerative disease, vampirism? How can Kierkegaard oust her from this demonic swan dive? And, above all else, how will it affect her grade point average?

Folks may grouse about the slow denouement of Nicholas St. John's script, how it takes Taylor's coed character several drawn-out scenes to finally realize, post-bite, what she's become, but they're missing the point. Humor (dark, to be sure) is buried everywhere in *The Addiction*, as a mousy college kid is gradually transformed into a cunning, bloodthirsty hunter who sports Ray-Bans by day and readily quotes Nietzsche to her baffled victims by night. Ferrara uses shadows like a *noir* master, especially in the gorgeous opening scene where undead vamp Annabella Sciorra drags Taylor into an eerily lit alley and asks her to "Tell me to go away—tell me like you mean it." As her prey slumps to the ground, spurting blood, Sciorra slinks away, hissing "Collaborator! You wait and see what happens next!"

Ferrara has sculpted the human comedy in microcosm. Ultimately, all texts, dogma and philosophies fail this tragic figure (clarified for her via a wicked walk-on from Christopher Walken, as a seasoned, no-nonsense fiend). Taylor plays the subtle changes well, like the evening she spends sneering at chamber music with her aroused, but wary, professor. It's there in the calm smirk on her face—within the hour, she'll be drinking his blood, hurtled from her textbooks into a new hands-on learning system. And without giving away too much of the plot, it's safe to tell you this much: She definitely gets her Doctorate. *The Addiction* has instant cult film appeal—it's smart, unconventional and, despite its corrosive rap soundtrack, a great look at society in millennial disarray.

—Tom Lanham

'ZINES

CLE (\$11.50 from P.O. Box 16613, Cleveland, OH 44116)

Between 1977 and 1981, *Cle* was the fanzine voice of the Cleveland rock scene. 14 years later, it's reappeared with a new issue, #3X (uh, whatever). The new issue's features include interviews with the Mirrors, Robert Griffin of Scat Records and Prisonshake (a Cleveland native who's relocated to St. Louis), and the Vivians. There's also a history of Pere Ubu, a family tree of the early-'80s Cleveland/Kent scene, a great article on the legendary Cleveland DJ Mad Daddy, and some pointless fiction (rarely a good idea in music 'zines). The hefty price includes a great 20-track CD of Cleveland music. Besides previously unreleased tracks from Gem, My Dad Is Dead and the Electric Eels, it's got some vintage Mad Daddy raps, a couple of songs from the will-it-ever-see-the-light-of-day? Pere Ubu tribute album, and Ubu themselves doing a stellar version of "Heart Of Darkness" from a 1977 live show.

—Douglas Wolk



HAPPYLAND (137 Emerson Place, Brooklyn, NY 11205)

Happyland is a sewer-rat's-eye view of New York's vanishing porn playground, Times Square. It is as much a homage as a practical guide, so its potential value to historians of the not-too-distant future is no reason to let it gather dust now. Neither an *Answer Me!*-style gross-out nor a *Pure-ient* skin mag, Selwyn Harris's zine isn't shocking because the subject matter is explicit, but because the writing itself is. It's no surprise that someone so obviously obsessed with the carnal should so excel at exhibitionism, and self-revelation of the look-at-me-I'm-a-screw-up variety is not exactly rare in the 'zine world. Setting Harris apart from the crowd (indeed, the crowd would be wise to run for cover) is the strange joy and certain skill that goes into Harris's self-examinations; issue #9, newly released, covers his return to New York from the world of Larry Flynt's publications. Contributions from top-notch artists like Peter Bagge and Tony Millionaire, and guest columns like "Young Lesb, First Lesb" keep *Happyland* from being a one-man show, but there is no doubt as to who gets top billing at this particular peepshow. Whether it's the blow-by-low-blow account of his stalking of Christina Kelly or the comparatively cerebral heights of his lap-dancing-venue reviews, Harris's *Happyland* is perceptive, hilarious and unflinching. From William Blake to Jim Carroll, popular culture has tended to find something noble, maybe even beautiful, about a fiery descent into wretchedness. In most of these stories, it's the possibility of redemptions that gives even a grotesquerie like *Bad Lieutenant* some kind of ante in the family-values bidding war. I'm pleased to report that *Happyland* has no redeeming qualities whatsoever. —Ana Marie Cox

READS

**STORIES AND EARLY NOVELS
and LATER NOVELS AND OTHER WRITINGS**
by Raymond Chandler (Library Of America)

Though Raymond Chandler has never exactly been dismissed as an important writer, the inclusion of his works in the Library of America series, right next to Hawthorne and Melville, is something of a shock. It's rather like finding a Sonic Youth CD in the jazz section of a music store or discovering an R. Crumb retrospective at the Smithsonian. Representatives of the Library explain their decision to include Chandler, the first modern writer to be so honored, by alluding to the "poet's sensitivity" with which he details the mean streets and even meaner characters of '30s L.A. In the light of such tony praise, new readers might be startled by the grittiness of Chandler's early pulp stories, just as the arch wittiness of his later essays will surprise those who know only the casual violence and low-key irony of Philip Marlowe. In any case, this handsome two-volume set, which includes his *Double Indemnity* screenplay as well as letters and out-of-print pulp stories, is a must for any fan of the hard-boiled. Relatively portable but weighty nonetheless (at over a thousand pages each), either volume's usefulness as a blunt object is also worth noting. —Ana Marie Cox



FUNNIES

LOST GIRLS by Alan Moore and Melinda Gebbie (Kitchen Sink)

On the eve of World War I, three women from very different backgrounds meet at a hotel in Switzerland and get to talking. They discover that they each had early sexual experiences that changed their lives, and around which they've constructed elaborate fantasy worlds that they've never told anyone about before. The women, it gradually becomes clear, are Alice from *Alice's Adventures In Wonderland*, Wendy from *Peter Pan* and Dorothy from *The Wizard Of Oz*, and their story is *Lost Girls*, a marvelous, challenging reinvention of pornography. Created by every-award-in-the-book-winning writer Alan Moore (*Watchmen*, *From Hell*) and illustrated in a gorgeous Art Deco-influenced style by American underground cartoonist Melinda Gebbie (*Wet Satin*), its first few chapters were serialized in the late, great comics anthology *Taboo* a few years ago. Now it's finally appearing as a quarterly mini-series—the delay was mostly due to how long it takes Gebbie to paint each page. Moore has mentioned in interviews that he tried to make sure that at least half of each chapter was sex, but that he kept being distracted by the rest of the story; while the sex scenes are very explicit and affecting, they're only a part of *Lost Girls'* meditation on the transformative power of the erotic imagination. —Douglas Walk



FEEDBACK

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- ☐ Jan '95 Throwing Muses
- ☐ Feb '95 Veruca Salt/Elastica
- ☐ Mar '95 Belly
- ☐ Apr '95 Faith No More
- ☐ May '95 Juliana Hatfield
- ☐ June '95 Chris Isaak
- ☐ July '95 Soul Asylum
- ☐ Aug '95 Primus
- ☐ Sep '95 Urge Overkill
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<input type="checkbox"/>	8. GENE	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. MADREDEUS	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	10. HUNGRY GHOST	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	11. BUSH TETRAS	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	12. the cat MARY	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	13. LIME SHY	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	14. 29 DIED	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	15. SUEDE (from Help)	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	16. KEN NORDINE	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	17. SHIVA SPEEDWAY	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	18. HOLIDAY	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	19. DITCH CROAKER	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	20. COMET GAIN	5	4	3	2	1

1. Are you...?

- ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. How old are you?

- ☐ under 18 ☐ 35-44
☐ 18-24 ☐ 45+
☐ 25-34 ☐ What's it to you?

3. Where did you buy this magazine?

- ☐ subscription ☐ newsstand
☐ record store ☐ bookstore
☐ other _____

4. How many CDs do you buy per month?

- ☐ 0-2 ☐ 6-10
☐ 3-5 ☐ more than 10

5. Where do you usually buy your tapes/CDs?

Store _____

City _____

State _____

6. What radio station(s) do you usually listen to?

Call Letters _____

City _____

State _____

1/96

TOP 75

ALTERNATIVE RADIO AIRPLAY



ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT

ARTIST	ALBUM TITLE	LABEL
1 ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT	Scream. Dracula. Scream!	Interscope
2 SONIC YOUTH	Washing Machine	DGC
3 AIR MIAMI	Me. Me. Me.	Teen Beat-4AD
4 SUPERCHUNK	Here's Where The Strings Come In	Merge
5 FLAMING LIPS	Clouds Taste Metallic	Warner Bros.
6 SON VOLT	Trace	Warner Bros.
7 BOSS HOG	Boss Hog	DGC
8 RANCID	...And Out Come The Wolves	Epitaph
9 MERCURY REV	See You On The Other Side	WORK
10 VARIOUS ARTISTS	Red Hot + Bothered	Kinetic/Red Hot-Reprise
11 STEREO LAB	Refried Ectoplasm (Switched On Volume 2)	Drag City
12 BLONDE REDHEAD	La Mia Vita Violenta	Smells Like
13 OASIS	(What's The Story) Morning Glory?	Epic
14 RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS	One Hot Minute	Warner Bros.
15 INTO ANOTHER	Seamless	Hollywood
16 GARBAGE	Garbage	Almo Sounds
17 BLUR	The Great Escape	Food/Parlophone-Virgin
18 MEAT PUPPETS	No Joke	London
19 VARIOUS ARTISTS	A Means To An End: The Music Of Joy Division	Virgin
20 ECHOBELLY	On	Faust/Rhythm King-550
21 JAWBREAKER	Dear You	DGC
22 CAMPFIRE GIRLS	Mood Enhancer (EP)	Boy's Life-Interscope
23 PAPAS FRITAS	Papas Fritas	Minty Fresh
24 DAVID BOWIE	Outside	Virgin
25 ASH	Trailer	Reprise
26 G. LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE	Coast To Coast Motel	OKeh-Epic
27 MY LIFE WITH THE THRILL KILL KULT	Hit & Run Holiday	Interscope
28 EDEL	Techniques Of Speed Hypnosis	Relativity
29 BRAINIAC	"Internationale" (5")	Touch And Go
30 GOD IS MY CO-PILOT	Puss 02	The Making Of Americans
31 SEAWEEED	Spanaway	Hollywood
32 TUSCADERO	Step Into My Wiggle Room (EP)	Teen Beat
33 HEAVY VEGETABLE	Frisbie	Headhunter-Cargo
34 CHEMICAL BROTHERS	Exit Planet Dust	Astralwerks-Caroline
35 SPARKLEHORSE	Vivadixiesubmarinetransmissionplot	Capitol
36 JESUS & MARY CHAIN	Hate Rock 'N' Roll	American
37 URGE OVERKILL	Exit The Dragon	Geffen
38 YO LA TENGO	Camp Yo La Tengo (EP)	Matador
39 ANI DI FRANCO	Not A Pretty Girl	Righteous Babe
40 SIVE STYLE	Sive Style	Sub Pop
41 VARIOUS ARTISTS	Notes From The Underground I & 2	Priority
42 PRAM	Sargasso Sea	Too Pure-American
43 RENTALS	Return Of The Rentals	Maverick-Reprise
44 GARDEN VARIETY	Knocking The Skill Level	Headhunter-Cargo
45 GREEN DAY	Insomniac	Reprise
46 SOUNDTRACK	Kids	London
47 PALACE MUSIC	Viva Last Blues	Palace-Drag City
48 VARIOUS ARTISTS	500 Miles To Glory	Red Devil
49 SF SEALS	Truth Walks In Sleepy Shadows	Matador
50 BLACK GRAPE	It's Great When You're Straight...Yeah	Radioactive
51 DEFTONES	Adrenaline	Maverick-WB
52 VARIOUS ARTISTS	It's Hard To Believe: The Amazing World Of Joe Meek	Razor & Tie
53 DON CABALLERO	2	Touch And Go
54 CHARLATANS UK	The Charlatans UK	Beggars Banquet-Atlantic
55 VARIOUS ARTISTS	A Slice Of Lemon	Lookout!-Kill Rock Stars
56 LENNY KRAVITZ	Circus	Virgin
57 MACHINES OF LOVING GRACE	Gilt	Mammoth-Atlantic
58 EVE'S PLUM	Cherry Alive	550
59 SOFTIES	It's Love	K
60 SEA AND CAKE	The Biz	Thrill Jockey
61 KING KONG	Me Hungry	Drag City
62 SMALL	Silver Gleaming Death Machine	Alias
63 KEN NORDINE	Colors	Asphodel
64 COCTEAU TWINS	Twinlights (EP)	Capitol
65 SMASHING PUMPKINS	"Bullet With Butterfly Wings" (5")	Virgin
66 PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Presidents Of The United States Of America	PopLlama-Columbia
67 ELECTRAFIXION	Burned	Sire-EEG
68 SOUTHERN CULTURE ON THE SKIDS	Dirt Track Date	DGC
69 EMMYLOU HARRIS	Wrecking Ball	Asylum/Elektra-EEG
70 MR. BUNGLE	Disco Volante	Warner Bros.
71 MEDICINE	Her Highness	American
72 BATS	Couchmaster	Mammoth
73 7SECONDS	The Music, The Message	Immortal-Epic
74 311	311	Capricorn
75 LUNA	Penthouse	Elektra-EEG

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

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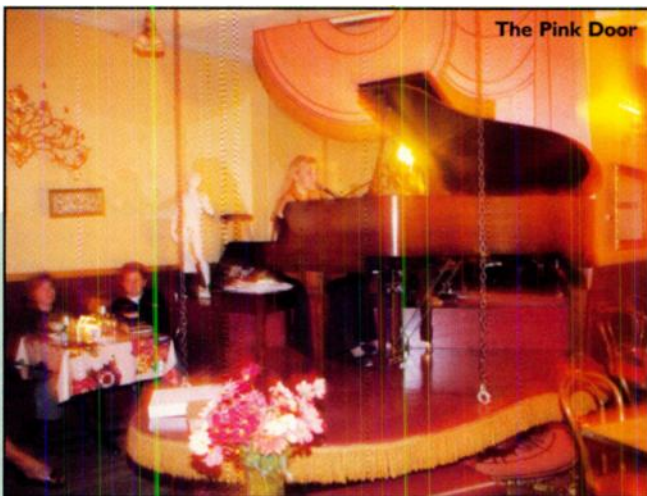
BY DANNY HOUSEMAN

A GRUNGELESS SEATTLE

Maybe you were here back in '90 and caught all the cool shows at the Off Ramp and Vogue with Nirvana, Screaming Trees and Soundgarden. Maybe you saw Alice in Chains when they had bigger hair, Pearl Jam when they were Mookie Blaylock, Green Apple Quick Step when they were Inspector Luv and the Ride Me Babies, and Sweet Water when they were—never mind. Maybe you tapped some of the first microbrews in the early '90s at the Rockcandy and Crocodile when Sub Pop acts like the Reverend Horton Heat and Afghan Whigs checked in for club shows. Maybe you even (gasp) pogoed to the Fastbacks and Young Fresh Fellows back in the mid-'80s at the Central Tavern. But Seattle in 1995 is a different story, with other kinds of music coming to the fore, and the city's strong neighborhood character nurturing different lifestyles.

Jazz in Seattle has a richer history than people realize, and it belies our still-fledgling attempts to revive it and get a "scene" going. The publication last year of Paul de Barros' *Jackson Street After Hours* received unanimous acclaim, as the city once again embraced its rich pre- and post-war legacy of hot spots, dancing, and legendary local characters. The venues for this year's annual fall Earshot Jazz Festival were decorated with gorgeous photos from Jackson Street, and audiences were surprised at how many names were familiar to them—Quincy Jones, bandleader Bumps Blackwell and tenor saxophonist Jabo Ward, for example, first made their names in Seattle. The other annual festival, which just celebrated its tenth anniversary, is the deliciously outre **Seattle Festival of Improvised Music**. Anything goes over the five-day performance series—as long as it's wholly improvised—with the 30-acts spanning free jazz electronic gadgetry, industrial noise art, string instrument jousts and orchestral cacophony.

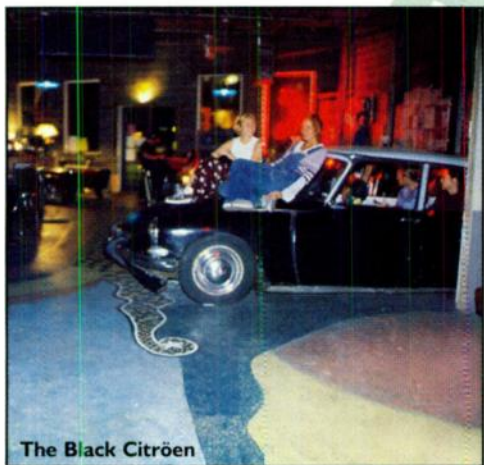
For year-round jazz in this town, keep tuned to the **OK Hotel** (212 Alaskan Way S.). The recently remodeled bar/restaurant/cafe features a stage in the bar, as well as an intimate ballroom. Several nights a week, the city's better jazzbos jam in the bar for no cover. While the women in the Billy Tipton Memorial Saxophone Quartet headline the ballroom, they'll ply their side-projects in the bar. The OK can also boast



some of the city's only sold-out jazz and new music nights: Wayne Horvitz (sometimes with his group Piggpen), the Young Composers Collective, pianist Robin Holcomb and guitarist Bill Frisell. Topping the OK bar's all-star list are Botallica (with Skerik, saxophonist from Critters Buggin'), the Black Cat Orchestra (tangos, polkas, klezmer; the BCO also includes Lori Goldston, who played cello with Nirvana), the African-influenced improvising of Freestyle Candela, and sax-organ-drums trio Combo Craig.

Jazz Alley (2033 6th Ave.) is the city's old-guard club. Cover charges range from \$11 to \$14, and diehards can come early and stay for both sets (also, half-price tickets are often available the day of the show from Ticket/Ticket). Like a small concert hall, the room has excellent acoustics and sight lines. National acts usually play from Tuesday through Sunday, and local groups get Mondays. Jazz Alley often gets greats like Max Roach, Jimmy Scott, Eartha Kitt, Tito Puente, Pharoah Sanders and Cassandra Wilson. When booking is good, the crowd is integrated across many lines—African-Americans, hipsters, older bohos, Microsofties—not always common in this town.

Cornish College of the Arts has produced some fantastically promising graduates who are constantly forming new groups and experimenting at different mixed-media performance venues around town, and are likely to turn up wherever there's a paying gig. I remember stumbling upon violinist Eyvind Kang—a local phenom who's toured with John Zorn and Bill Frisell—playing in a Pioneer Square Starbucks. The 15-member Young Composers Collective mixes the schooled and unschooled in attempting to present original works. Lots of Seattle clubs, restaurants, and cafes dabble in jazz. If you're prepared to mix in different crowds and try music of different stripes, there are plenty of other places across town to hear fine



PHOTOS BY ERIKA LANGLEY

local jazz groups and singers. The newly-opened **Art Bar** (1516 Second Ave.) has jazz groups alternating with cabaret, open mics, songwriters, and funk DJs. **The Lighthouse Roasters** (400 N. 43rd) and **Brad's Swingside Cafe** (4212 Fremont Ave N.) can hold about two dozen people each, but both have booked fine sit-down jazz groups. Back down in Pike Place Market, the **Pink Door** (1919 Post Alley) has great cocktails and appetizers with campy lounge acts, or old-world accordion players; the cozy **Patti Summers' Cabaret** (First & Pike) has occasional big bands, and Ms. Summers, owner, cook, and lead performer, keeps the not-so-standards quite entertaining.



D.J. Masa at Exotique

Club Moe (a.k.a. Moe's Mo'Roc'can Cafe) has been Seattle's most successful all-purpose venue since it opened a year and a half ago. While it snags the sharpest share of national touring acts and, with the Crocodile, is one of the two best rooms for local rock bands to play, Moe also takes pains to present live jazz—during happy hour on Thursdays for no cover in the bar, and upstairs on Sundays during "Spice," its acid-jazz dance night.

Fremont is a good-vibe neighborhood Seattleites love and love to make fun of (it had five places to buy used Levis and vintage Van Heusens before it had a single bank machine). With a genuine Soviet statue of Lenin (huge!), a gigantic car-eating troll (a climbable sculpture) under the neighborhood bridge, a passel of pubs, and the Redhook Brewery, Fremont is one of the best neighborhoods to walk and browse around. Hardly any live music happens in Fremont, but the recently-opened **Black Citron** (513 N. 36th) is trying, turning an old garage into a funky, airy club. Ambient techno lovers have wasted no time making Wednesdays ("Lotus") the club's most successful night. A local posse of DJs, designers and scene supporters started the **Ambient Temple of I Magi Nation** (860-5219), to put on smaller, cheaper parties with local DJs mixing ambient, trip-hop and tribal trance. Lotus gives the ATOI regulars a place to work out, and the dancers a consistent, cheap spot to boogie. A few of the other dance clubs present top regional DJs between the regular fare, but the best dancing and music seems to happen at more out-of-the-way places with smaller, more "vibey" crowds.

Still, small parties can be hard to find, so follow these DJs: Riz, Kamikaze Dervish Masa, Michael Manahan, Donald Glaude, Hebegebe and Nasir. **Exotique Imports** (2400 Third Ave.) is where all they all stock up on vinyl, along with quite a few non-pros who shell out for the latest arrivals from London and Japan. Masa is the store manager, and will special order anything that's ever been waxed; DJs can resell their sides at Exotique on consignment, so the place is a veritable treasure trove for dance-music fiends. **Wall Of Sound** (2237 Second Ave.) is the other place where it's worth it to spend a couple of dollars more: the staff puts in overtime searching out, and helping customers find all kinds of world music, ambient, experimental, and progressive jazz. And you can listen to anything first, an invaluable service.

KCMU (90.3 FM) is a UW-operated, community-funded variety-format radio station (400 watts). Though an ugly battle for control resulted in firings and walkouts in '92, the station has slowly earned back its broad-based support and reinstated some challenging programming. If you're sleepless in Seattle (sorry) tune into **KIXI** (880 AM), but don't call them oldies—the nostalgia channel has too many young fans.

Speaking of the hits of yesteryear, for a twist on the usual karaoke bars, check out the **Moonlight Cafe** (1919 S. Jackson)

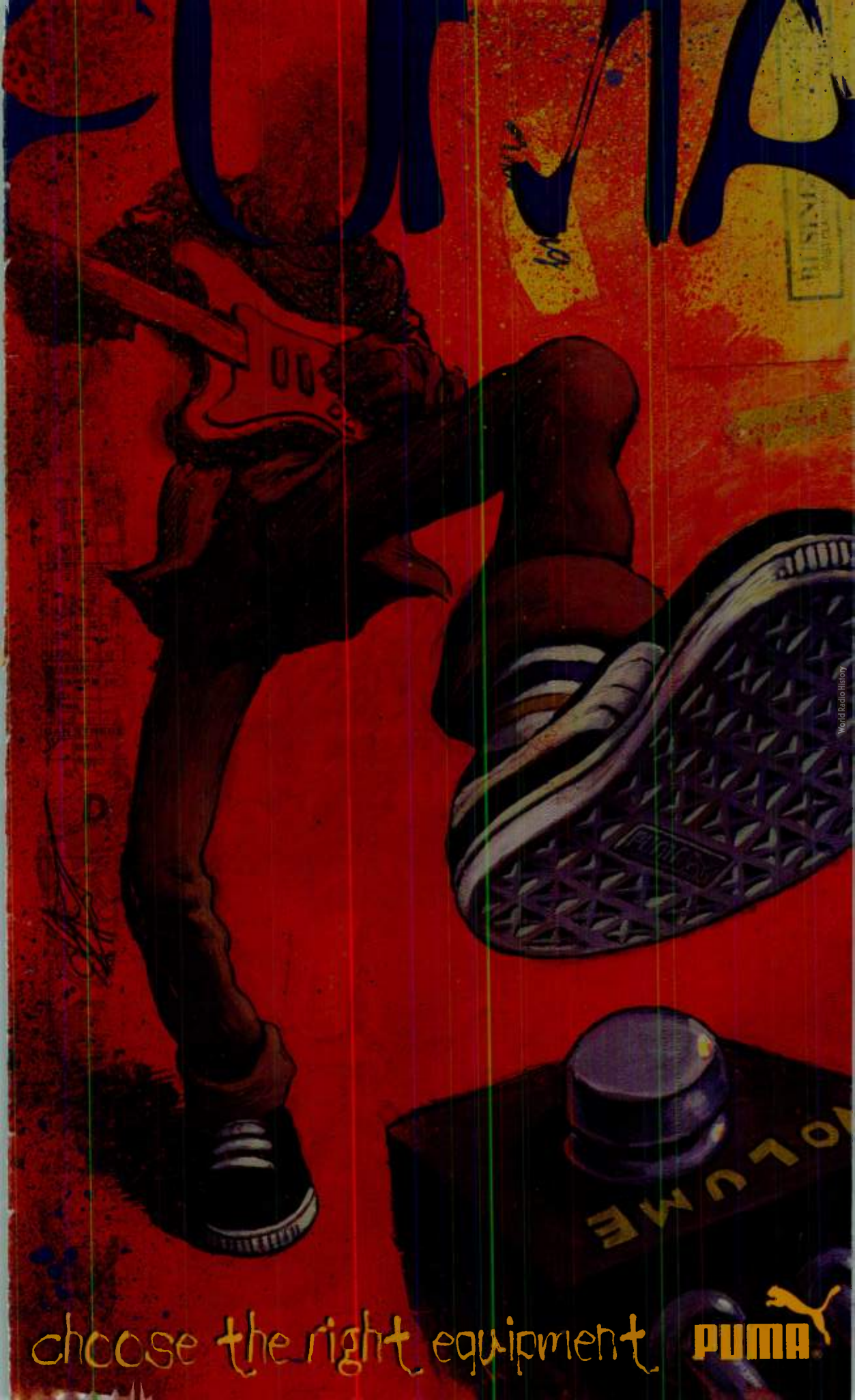
in the International District. Seattle has a diverse Asian culture—the Vietnamese and Thai presences are strongest, and the ID offers excellent dining for the intrepid. The **Moonlight** is a modern establishment with some of the city's best authentic Vietnamese (sugar-cane prawns, anyone?) and a huge, affordable selection. The karaoke is a mix of English and Vietnamese. Anyone who likes to sing or enjoy the spontaneous interaction in a room is directed to **Sorry Charlie's** (529 Queen Anne Ave. N.). After a filling, fair-priced meal of rib-eye steak, breaded veal, or liver and onions, sit back with some tapioca pudding among the old-timers (the hipsters come in later) and you'll get a lesson in song. Pianist Howard Bulson, an ageless Missouri native, has a repertoire of literally thousands of songs, classical to modern, and one by one the crowd becomes the show. While the Seattle Opera players have been known to warm up there, it's the warm-throated amateurs that make this place fun.

Film buffs pack out the annual Seattle International Film Festival, and rent movies at **Scarecrow Video** (5030 Roosevelt Way NE), a locally-owned store with a visionary selection, friendly policies, and all the NC-17/unrated films Blockbuster won't carry. The owners also hunt down and license obscure gems from around the world, and show them in the store's cozy screening room upstairs. With shelves devoted to film buffs' favorite directors, and genres you didn't know existed, Scarecrow is the best one-word answer to how Seattleites survive the rainy season.

The really adventurous should head down to the Boeing Surplus Store in Kent (20651 84th St.) for the latest in industrial decoration ideas, innumerable doohickeys and bizarre fabrics. And finally, when you need a cheap date, and a beautiful view, climb Queen Anne Hill to **Kerry Park** (W. Highland), a gorgeous panorama with the Cascades off to the east, and the Olympics off to the west. Or is that the other way around? Well, whatever, time for some music. **END**



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