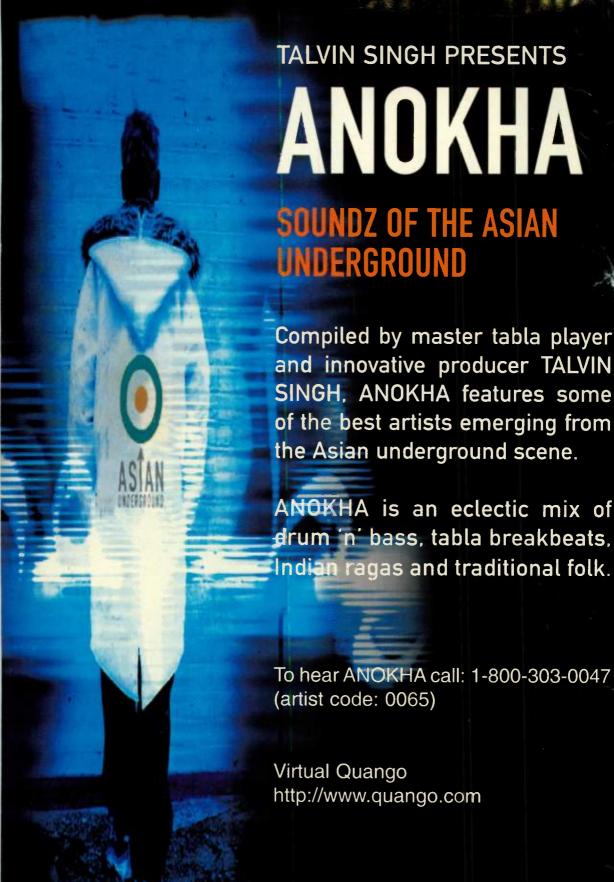


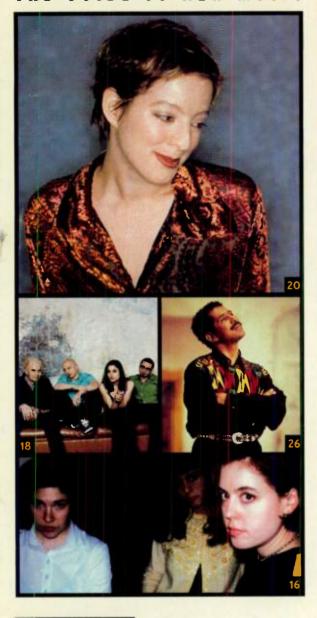


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# CNU MUSIC U

AUGUST 1997 NUMBER 48

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### LETTERS

#### Call me Mr. Rourke

Thank you, oh thank you for making a wish come true. I have, for quite some time, wanted to see a compilation that had Orb, Orbit, and Orbital tracks on it [May '97]. You made this mystical and hitherto mythic triumvirate a reality.

Gary Ruisinger

#### Planet Rock

CMI's influence on the world around it has been growing exponentially. The people who choose what videos get airplay on MTV read CMJ, as well as the producers of the Beavis and Butt-Head spin-off, Daria. With this fact in mind, I believe the choice to put no less than five tracks from Chris Rock on the May CD is an abuse of power. I do like Chris Rock as a comedian, but he just doesn't belong on this disc.

> Douglas Kovatch Scranton, PA

Having my assistant address and mail 150 of my Christmas cards-that was an abuse of power. This was just us trying something new, and we thought five short cuts would be more fun than one long one. For the record, the reaction has been mixed, with a slight majority coming out against the incursion of comedy on the disc .- ed.

#### Rock and prole

How come you put Chris Rock's piece about blacks hating "niggas" on the disc, but you haven't mentioned my BOOK that I sent you two months ago? Why not? Because I'm NOBODY!!!!!

Thomas Cipullo

There are many reasons why we ran Chris Rock's piece on racial intra-relations, and nothing on Mr. Cipullo's self-published tome, Take It And Like It ("an account of the private life of an angry white male"). Mostly, we just wanted to increase his sense of paranoia. What good's unchecked power if you can't enjoy it once in a while? -ed.

Something's kinda Spookey around here What's up with the June '97 CMJ having so much in common with the one from December '95? Now, if you look carefully: December (is the 12th month) and June (is the 6th month of the year). David Bowie was on both of these CD's. On the December '95 issue, he was on track #2 with the song "The Hearts Filthy Lesson," and on the June '97 issue he's on track #11 with "Dead Man Walking." Now, if you look at it, if you add 1+1 then you get 2. So what you

may ask? Well, in June '97 he's track #11, so if you add the two I's in the track, you get 2. That 2 would be the track he was on in the December '95 issue. That's not all! Spookey Ruben is on those same two CD's, but with the same song. What's up with that? Yes, it's a good song, but it's not so good that I would go and put it on the CD twice. Now, is it me, or does it seem like I have too much time on my hands?

Dan Gaynor

Yes, Dan, you do, but that's all part of our plan. By repeating the Spookey Ruben track, we've filled CMI New Music Monthly readers all over North America with a sense of urgency and expectation, like Richard Drevfus building a mud mountain on his dining room table in Close Encounters Of The Third Kind. except they've written letters to the editor instead. I only have two words: Phase One. -ed.

#### Look what we gone done did

How dare you call Cheap Trick dinosaurs! I won't be renewing my subscription.

No name given

Has The Lost World's 80-million-dollar opening weekend gross taught you nothing about dinosaurs? Have you not heard how they were possibly warmblooded, nurtured their young and continued to rock into middle age? If you cut Barney, does he not bleed? For the sake of the children, please let one extended metaphor in May's singles column go by without casting aspersions on dinosaurs and the people who love them. -ed.

#### We're all getting kinda tired about now

I've been getting your magazine since its inception and I'm kinda tired of people getting violently upset about any little error that finds its way into print. I've found no other magazine that does what you do so well and, having studied journalism publishing, I know it is impossible to check up on absolutely every detail before the magazine goes to print. So everyone should just chill out and enjoy the benefits of the magazine instead of trying to tear it apart

Jen Schulties New York, NY

Thanks for the kind letter, Jen. I just turned 30-try to make me feel better about that .-ed.

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CMU NEW MESIC MONTHLY

#### **UB40** "GUNS IN THE GHETTO"

the new album featuring "Tell Me Is It True"



#### ON TOUR

July Hampton Beach NH

18 Wallingford CT

Holmdel NJ Wantagh NY 19 20

Philadelphia PA

Washington DC

22 24 25 26 27 Chautauqua NY Detroit MI

Chicago IL

Denver CO Salt Lake City UT 29

Paso Robles CA

August 1 Irvine CA

San Diego CA

Los Angeles CA

6 Les Angeles CA

San Francisco CA

Sacramento CA Concord CA

13 Reno NV 15 Seattle V

Seattle WA

16 St. Paul OR Vancouver BC

17 18 22 23 Boise ID

Las Vegas NV

Mesa AZ

24 Santa Fe NM

26 Dallas TX

27 29

Houston TX Kansas City MO

30 St. Louis MO

31 Memphis TN

Sept Atlanta GA

Nashville TN 5

6

Cincinatti OH Indianapolis IN

Columbus OH

### $\Diamond$ $\Diamond$ $\Diamond$ PLAYERS' GUIDE

#### COTTONMOUTH, TEXAS "ANTI-SOCÍAL BUTTERFLY'

the new album featuring "Hoops", "Stripper" and "Three Dimes"



#### GERALDINE FIBBERS "BUTCH" the new album featuring

THE

"California Tuffy"



#### ON TOUR

IN THE BRAIN FOREST AT LOLLAPALOOZA

July 18 Cleveland OH

19 Pittsburgh PA

20 Columbus OH

22 23 25 Cincinnati OH

Indianapolis IN

Chicago IL Grand Rapids MI E. Troy MI 26

27

29 Kansas City KS

30 St. Louis MO

31 Nashville TN

August 2 Dallas TX

Corpus Christi TX

Phoenix AZ

Salt Lake City UT

10

Denver CO Seattle WA 13

Concord WA 15

16

San Jose CA Los Angeles CA 17

#### ROLES OF "THE GAME" continued

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And the show-down

Progressive Jackpots This like year 55 higher except than health a Player have a processful opening hand. If the may garner additional is project from a size of the shoring hand feet autice field to be up a feet of the property of the

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## QUICK FIX



OLD 97's ®

We're An American Band

In his own dry-witted, roundabout fashion, 26-year-old twangsmith Rhett Miller is trying to make a point about his Dallas cowpunk combo, the Old 97's. "The other night we all wore Oasis T-shirts onstage," he declares proudly. "And I announced that 'Tonight we're a modern art project entitled "Will The Last American Band To Get Played On The Radio Please Turn Out The Lights," which is an X line. And I thought it was kinda cool, because nobody could figure out why an alternative country band from Texas would all be wearing matching Oasis T-shirts. 'Is it a joke? Do they like Oasis?" Sure, he snickers. "It was both. Oasis are awesome!"

And the point Miller was getting at? Just don't try to fence him in. Fresh out of high school, he released his first cheesy solo album, "a folk record, real pretty—I was listening to a lot of Bowie and T. Rex, and consequently I sang with a slightly British inflection. But because I was young, Seventeen magazine heard about it, latched onto it, and ran a little feature." In short order, he splashed into pop, then punk, then came full circle back to the music

he'd absorbed as a kid. "No matter where you are in Texas," Miller sighs, "all you hear is Patsy Cline and Hank." On *Too Far To Care* (Elektra), the band's third album, Miller warbles in a rich, honeyed drawl, over booming Duane Eddy guitar lines and obsessive shedone-me-wrong lyrics that, he confesses, were all written about one particular ex-girlfriend.

Miller is a frail lad, all lanky limbs, horn-rimmed spectacles and-despite his wicked sense of humor-an almost awkward shyness. "You know that movie Bottle Rocket? The guys that made that movie were in my school, and they were the ones who used to kick my ass, them and their friends. They're a bunch of jerks. And I know that movie's all right and people like it, but I can't watch it." Shiver. Pause. "Actually, if it weren't for them, I wouldn't have started being a musician, because it was about not hanging out with the high school people, going down to Deep Ellum and hanging out with musicians instead. And the rest of the time, I'd stay home, eat Oreos, get chubby and read books. I read a lot as a kid. I was a dork."

Relationships didn't exactly work out, either. So Miller wasn't surprised when his girlfriend of four years left him for the bright lights of New York City. But she did provide an albumful of great tearjerking material. Not a bad deal, all told. Besides, Miller says, he's finally found the perfect girl—Lara Croft, that sex-kitten, computeranimation explorer from the Tomb Raider game. "We played Tomb Raider the entire time we were recording," he pants. "And is she fine, or what? She is so hot, and when you get those closeups of her... whew!" TOM LANHAM



in my room artists' personal picks

SUPERCHUNK Mac McCaughan

> Sam Rivers Concept

Yo La Tengo I Can Hear The Heart Beating As One

> Elliott Smith Either/Or

Mouse On Mars

Cecil Taylor/Max Roach Live At Columbia University, 1979

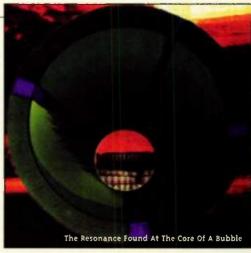
< QUOTE >

"Just imagine, if the prominent Rap Star, B.I.G. (Biggie Smalls) had been driving an Armet Suburban Armored Vehicle, he could very well have been alive to tell the tale. With Armet's experience in vehicle armoring, utilizing our clients knowledge of their industrial environment, we at Armet will provide our client with an armored vehicle that is surely SECOND TO NONE." -from a press release sent out to various record companies following the shooting of Notorious B.I.G., from Armet Armored Vehicles, Ltd.

#### LABEL PROFILE

**Bubble Core** 

Adam Pierce founded Bubble Core to document a scene of which he's a part—he's a solo artist, and has also recorded with the Swirlies, Iris, the Philistines Jr. and others—but the label is branching out into a broad range of ambient, electronic and other music. Recent releases include the compilation *The Resonance Found At The Core Of A Bubble* and split records by Him and the Dylan Group, and by Me & Dave and Planet T.R. This fall, Bubble Core will release a benefit for School Of Sound, a Colorado organization that works with ambient music to help people with stress-related illnesses. Contributors to the compilation will include Moby, Oval, Mouse On Mars, Seefeel and E.A.R. There will also be a full-length Dylan Group album in September, and possibly a Me & Dave album. (Bubble Core, 250 Milton Rd., Rye, NY 10580; www.bubblecore.com)



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## UJCK FIX



#### **SUPERGRASS**

Hey, Hey, We're In It For The Money

Gaz Coombes sure is one cool customer. Sipping a beer in a London bistro, he casually relates a tale that would send an average musician into hysterics. Flown to Los Angeles with his Oxford pop outfit Supergrass, chauffeured over to the DreamWorks building, "we walked into a room, and there were David Geffen, Steven Spielberg and Jeffrey Katzenberg, all sitting there talking. And I was like 'Hey, I'm Gaz-you might be seeing a lot more of me in the future!"

Spielberg was considering casting Coombes, the boyish-looking bassist Mickey Quinn, and the manic, partyanimal drummer Danny Goffey in a new Monkees-style sitcom. "He liked the different sides of us," continues Coombes, 20. "It was really nice, an amazing sort of compliment. And the other DreamWorks part of it was a label deal as well-they said, 'If things don't work out, we're quite into signing you.' And they were a really good label with loads of money behind 'em and only about five acts. I mean, George Michael was on DreamWorks-that's a pretty good sign. And Spielberg was a really

normal guy. He didn't pressure us, he just said, 'If you were going to do this, I wouldn't want any of it to get in the way of your music." Coombes eventually said no thanks, and headed home to finish recording the second Supergrass album, with the painfully ironic title of In It For The Money. "We're not actors or anything," he sighs. "We're good at playing in a band."

In It For The Money was selfproduced by Supergrass, and they pulled out all the sonic stops, even tossing in Theremin and four-piece horn charts. There's a Farfisa-driven raveup called "Cheapskate," sneering Raspberries/Black Sabbath hybrid of "Richard III," and countless wall-of-hooks surprises. "We just took control of the album ourselves," explains Coombes. "And we weren't going for anything, exactly-we were going for what the songs dictated, because I think our songs kind of dictate their own sound, in a way."

Outside the restaurant, four teenage girls have gathered. They recognized Coombes-even though his trademark whiskers have now melded into a scraggly beard—on his way in for lunch, and they've been waiting for him for two hours. When he finally emerges, they squeal; he signs autographs. Quinn, overlooked in the scramble to reach his partner, merely rolls his eyes. "We were into doing that Spielberg thing," he concludes. "But we got busy doing this album and stuff, and we... wanted to make sure the public perception of it was how we wanted before we started doing something like that. Because as soon as you [decide to do a TV show], we could end up with the band being seen quite differently than how we want it to.

And who would Quinn have played if Spielberg had actually gotten his Supergrass cameras rolling? He frowns, watching a nubile-swarmed Coombes. "Obviously, I'd be the boring one." TOM LANHAM

#### in my room artists' personal picks

#### **DESCENDENTS** Milo Auckerman

Hagfish Rocks Your Lame Ass

**Red Aunts** 

Scrawl Travel On, Rider

Toots And The Maytals **Funky Kingston** 

Screaming Trees

#### THE BIZ

music industry parlance, explained

"street date violations"

Since labels can't send new releases so that they arrive everywhere at the same time, they set "street dates" for new albums-official release dates, so that everyone will have an equal opportunity to sell the new releases. When a store cheats and puts a record on sale early, that's a street date violation; that's also why a few albums (like recent ones by Notorious B.I.G. and the Chemical Brothers) show up on charts before their release date.

#### tours we'd like to see

Taking The Lid Off: Yamantaka Eye, Third Eye Foundation, Third Eye Blind, Eyehategod, Vision Of Disorder, Seefeel, Class Eve. Eyeless In Gaza and the Residents

#### IVOR CUTLER

The Tastiest Suck In Sight

At the age of 74, British poet/songwriter/playwright/national treasure Ivor Cutler has just released two splendid CDs (both on Creation). A Wet Handle is a new collection of 83 very, very short stories, read in his adorable old-man Scots accent, and interspersed with even shorter harmonium improvisations. Ludo is actually a reissue of a rare album produced by George Martin and originally released in 1967, when Cutler appeared in the Beatles' Magical Mystery Tour film. It's got a few stories and poems, but it's mostly devoted to his songs, which are as simple as children's sing-alongs but hilariously twisted ("It tastes lovely in the daytime/But it tastes even better at night/So who wants a suck of my thumb?/It's the tastiest suck in sight!").





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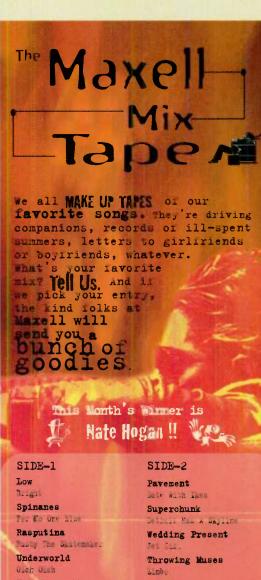
#### THE HOLMES BROTHERS

They'll Take You There

Chances are, if you ask people to name their favorite soul artists, they'll name people like Otis Redding, the Staple Singers, Sam Cooke or Marvin Gaye. And if you ask them to name their favorite soul records, they'll name album titles that are 20 or 30 years old. That's what makes the Holmes Brothers (Wendell and Sherman Holmes, along with longtime drummer Popsy Dixon) so special: they're a real down-home soul band rooted in gospel and soaked with the blues. Not only do they cover great songs in drop-dead fashion, but they write their own original material that's every bit as timeless as anything from soul music's heyday.

In fact, their sound is so authentic, that if you don't know any better, it's sometimes almost impossible to tell the obscure Don Covay and Isley Brothers covers from the Holmes' original songs. "It comes from doing it our way," says Wendell Holmes. "We don't tell anybody what to play," he says of their simple, sturdy guitar-bass-and-drums arrangements. He smiles when it's suggested that most of the great soul bands, such as those at Stax and Motown, figured out their parts the same way, each instrumentalist working out his part individually.

A year or two back, the Holmes Brothers also appeared in the film Lotto Land (recently out on video), with Wendell taking a prominent acting role, and they've recently performed as special guests of the First Family in Washington, DC. That's quite a long way from where they've spent most of their career together. In fact, before all the attention of the last eight or nine years, they spent years slugging it out in clubs that most of the world has never even heard of. "It always seems kinda cruddy backstage, even in the best of 'em," Wendell sighs good-naturedly. "The White House was nice, though," he laughs. He's philosophic about all the time spent hanging around backstage waiting to play. "You make the best of it. You get so used to it, it seems like home." JAMES LIEN



Vic Chesnutt

Davina Williams

P.J. Harvey C mury 31117

DJ Shadow

June June

Lydia Lunch

Bunta, Black (Lum Tack

Ellias libate rolla)

Radiohead Tuke Pinstic Trees

Tricky

Surfacetted Laws

Massy Star

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wing Your Troubles in Ironne

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Robyn Hitchcock

Light of the ways

Patti Smith

samar. Jarrabala

Archers Of Loaf so T. & Pastalla

Ben Folds Five

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Samples 34 744

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maxe

## **QUICK FIX**



#### SLIDER .

Hits The Skids

There he is in the CD booklet spread, all hollow-eyed, sunken-cheekboned, a messy mop of hair framing features so gaunt they'd give Keith Richards the creeps. But bear this in mind—that shot of Slider frontman Matt Winegar, from the group's long-delayed debut Sudden Fun (A&M), was taken after the guy kicked a five-year coke-and-heroin habit. After he gained 50 pounds.

"I weighed 113 pounds at one time—seriously," he sighs. "Old girlfriends would run into me on the street and tears would be streaming down their face, and I'd be thinking 'What the fuck are they cryin' for?' I had no idea, no clue. All my pants would fall down when I'd be walking down the street and my shoes didn't fit anymore, I got so fucking small." How did he tumble into such a hellish nightmare? Winegar isn't sure. "At the beginning of my heroin abuse, I was like 'This solves all my problems! I'm cured! I'm finally the

complete human being I always wanted to be!' And it actually did me some good for awhile, maybe the first couple of months I was on it." He coughs and clears his throat. "Then I just tailspinned into a total fucking mess. It was just the most pathetic, stupid lifestyle."

Along the way, Winegar, 27, sold everything he owned-his guitars, his television, even most of his clothes. And Sudden Fun, set for release almost two years ago, was suddenly shelved by a concerned A&M. They handed Winegar an ultimatum: Get clean or beat it. The Slider album, they promised, would only come out when Slider was physically and mentally able to promote it. A sound business decision, and a humane one-it probably saved Winegar's life. He moved in with his family in Salt Lake City, and enrolled in addiction counseling as well as a methadone maintenance program. "And all of a sudden, my life was back-I was going swimming, I was waking up early every day. I was showering."

The vortex can suck just about anybody in, Winegar believes. "Only people who've gone through it know exactly how it feels. Then there are the people who have no idea how it feels. but they think they do, and they fuckin' lecture you. And it doesn't help. It only made me more depressed when people said 'Man, I really wanna help.' And I was like, 'Dude, I really wanna help myself, but there's nothing you can say that will do anything for me now.' I had to help myself in my own way and on my own terms, had to really take the time to get well. That knight-in-shiningarmor shit is nowhere. If you don't decide to do it yourself, it'll never happen." TOM LANHAM

### in my room artists' personal picks

#### BEN HARPER

Rolling Stones Sticky Fingers

Beatles Rubber Soul

Muddy Waters
The Real Folk Blues

Pearl Jam

Marvin Gaye "Everything."

< QUOTE >

"It's not even worth calling Bush fake Nirvana. Nirvana were the Beatles. Bush Monkees-disposable pop music for kids that's very well done. Bush are Flock Of Seagulls and Nirvana are Joy Division, or something like that. They want verses, they want choruses. They're looking for a certain kind of guitar sound." -Steve Fisk of Pigeonhed (also Pell Mell and numerous producer credits, including Soundgarden, Screaming Trees and Nirvana), on the state of alternative music

< QUOTE >



#### WEIRD RECORD OF THE MONTH

For no particular reason, the tiny British label Guided Missile has released A "Guided" Tour, a 7" narrated in a '50s public-service-announcement voice by one "Chester Chesterson," all about how listening to Guided Missile's (jittery, abrasive punk) records can relax your mind and improve your love life. On top of that, the single features short, deadpan, mostly drunken "radio jingles" created for the label by a handful of its bands, including the Yummy Fur, Donkey, Lung Leg and Mick from Prolapse. "I want a label that's just gonna be right for me, like a Guided Missile..." one of them goes. "They've got singles and albums by people I don't even know/And I heard them on John Peel's show!" (Guided Missile, P.O. Box 11413, London N19 4DD, U.K.)



#### ROB CROW

#### Running Around On Fire

For a man who says he's not entirely sure what notes most of the strings on his guitar are tuned to, Rob Crow sure writes a hell of a lot of songs. The self-taught musician writes up to ten a week, and when you're that prolific, you need a lot of outlets for your material. Like half a dozen bands.

Crow and his ex-girlfriend Eléa Tenuta's former band, the charming, hyperactive quartet Heavy Vegetable, ended when its bass player and drummer both quit after a tour. "I never wanted the Veg to end, so I kept trying to write and look for people who were competent enough to play that fast but had the same spirit I was looking for. And I totally scored." Crow and Tenuta's new band, Thingy, debuted its high-speed, high-precision lineup on Songs About Angels, Evil And Running Around On Fire (Headhunter-Cargo). Bassist Jason Soares has played for years with Crow in Physics, a project whose "whole idea is to play one chord as many different ways as possible and as long as possible." (A Physics CD is due out later this year.)

The Thingy album was released simultaneously with Spotlight On... Optiganally Yours, Crow's collaboration with keyboardist Pea Hix. "I moved in with him, and he'd just gotten a couple of Optigans"—a bizarre keyboard from the early '70s that produces full-band renditions of whatever note you play, read from optical discs. The album's songs were written around the Optigan's pre-existing arrangements; now, they're going even further. "Pea got ahold of this guy who conducted all the Optigan recording sessions, and he went up there and got all the master tapes that were ever recorded—most of the stuff was never put out on a disc." The next album's instrumental parts will be constructed from samples of unreleased Optigan discs.

But that's not enough to keep Crow busy. "I like to record as much solo stuff as I can," he says, and so far he's released an album and a half of solo four-track pieces. "There's also the thing I do with Jason and Matt Lorenz called Fantasy Mission Force—it's really, really mellow." He corrects himself: "No, that's Remote Action Sequence Project. Fantasy Mission Force is where I sit at home with a cheap tape recorder and I make up a riff, press record and turn it off, until I get about 20 riffs. Then [drummer] Tim Semple and I listen to the thing, make up a song, and record it before we learn it. I make up the vocals as I go along and try to double them. And then Pea comes in and uses whatever kind of fucked-up synthesizers are around to do the bassline on."

Anything else? "Me and Glen Galloway from Soul-Junk might do a hip-hop project." Uh, anything else besides music? "Not really. I have a really hard time finding work, since I don't drive." DOUGLAS WOLK



# best music point of the five best releases this month of the set of the five best releases this month of the set of the five best releases this month of the set of the five best releases this month of the set of the set



#### DEREK BAILEY / PAT METHENY / GREGG BENDIAN / PAUL WERTICO / The Sign Of 4 / Knitting Factory Works

This three-disc uber-release records the work of an unlikely improve supergroup. Pat Metheny is the prince of the easy-listening fusion guitar scene who has leavened his commercially-oriented reputation with high-profile forays into noise; Derek Bailey is a supremely idiosyncratic guitarist who has so far seemed allergic to anything commercial. This meeting of the restless minds is augmented by percussionists Gregg Bendian, leader of the eclectic West Coast group Interzone, and Paul Wertico. On the set's two live discs, the attention-grabber is "A Study In Scarlet," the tumultuous 63-minute track that makes up Disc 1. Metheny is predictably the showier

DATALOG: Released May 20.
FILE UNDER: Titans of improv.
R.I.Y.L.: Sonny Sharrock Band, Blue Humans, Evan Parker.

of the two guitarists, needling the upper registers in flurries of slide acrobatics. Bailey can sometimes be overwhelmed; you may find yourself periodically drifting over to the right speaker (whence he and Wertico emanate) to

make sure he is still playing. The trip is worth it: Bailey's rough, resonating chords are a perfect foil for the free-tumbling rhythm section. The studio material has a different dynamic altogether: Metheny is as skittery as ever, but he seems to have borrowed Bailey's sense of timing, playing in intriguing fits and starts. With enough empty space to hear each of the four players clearly, they sound remarkably tight and responsive—just the opposite of what you'd expect from a supergroup. ANDREA MOED



#### CHLIG / Metalon / Alias @

DATALOC: Released Apr. 22.

FILE UNDER: Twitchy guitar-rock.

R.I.Y.L.: 3D's, Television, Th' Faith Healers.

The 3D's were New Zealand's tautest, tensest rock band, and cult favorites in America, until they reportedly split a few months ago, following the disappointingly slack *Strange News From The Angels*. 3D's guitarist David Mitchell was apparently saving his best stuff for his other band, Chug, a long-running but little-known partnership with a few other NZ rock vets (singer/guitarist Norma O'Malley of Look Blue Go Purple, and bassist Alf Danielson of Stephen). The essence of Chug is the friction between its tight, charging, unflashy rhythm section and Mitchell's caffeine-jittery leads, which spiral out of his fingers almost continuously. When they join up for a few brief passages in every song, they're an unstoppable force;

when they don't, they're a fascinating conflict. (A couple of experiments, like the drum-machine lope of "Easy Beat" and the metalloid "Blue Rider," work nicely too.) Mitchell likes to play off O'Malley's singing, doubling her voice with

noodlier versions of her melodies or playing call-and-response with little shrieks and tweets of feedback. Without the band's instrumental prowess, in fact, her vocals would do fine as the focus of *Metalon*—the tunes are mostly memorable on their own, but they're overshadowed by the songs' spastic riffs. *DOUGLAS WOLK* 

World Radio History

12



#### GERALDINE FIBBERS / Butch / Virgin @

The Geraldine Fibbers' second album doesn't rely so much on the musical traditions of country as it does on its historical conventions: sir and redemption, spiritual and emotional catharsis, and the plain ol whiskey-soaked heartache that triggers all of the above. Like 1995's Los Somewhere Between The Earth And My Home, Butch is primarily a rockrecording, full of some truly harrowing noise and rhythm. Carle Bozulich's fiery throat, in harmony with guitar, stand-up bass, drums violin and viola, seems to be channeling spirits from some inner hell and it's the combined power of her delivery (both sweet and unrelentingly horrific) and lyrics that makes Butch such a startlingly

DATALOG: Released Jul. 1.
FILE UNDER: Devilish country punk.
R.I.Y.L.: Patti Smith, PJ Harvey, X.

immediate, and at times frightening experience. The more honky-tonk "Folks Like Me" and the old-timey "Pet Angel" sound lilting and pretty on the surface, but listen below the sawing violin and gentle sway in Bozulich's

voice, and there's both tragedy and dark humor. "I Killed The Cuckoo" is two minutes of pure gut-wrenching tension, Bozulich's hair-raising screams stoked by a gnarled, skittering guitar rhythm, while "Trashman In Furs" carefully builds its guitar and string arrangement into a simmering, beautiful song that seems much older and more poignant than its lyrics at first suggest. COLIN HELMS



#### TINDERSTICKS / Curtains / This Way Up-London

DATALOG: Released Jun. 24.

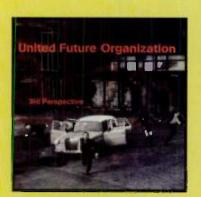
FILE UNDER: Sophisticated, elegant pop.

R.I.Y.L.: Nick Cave's last album, Belle & Sebastian, Scott Walker, Lotte Lenya.

It's time to get in touch with the cravat-wearing, brandy-warming region of our cultural makeup and annex a little sophistication, with Tindersticks records under our arms and false moustaches under our noses. The band's touch-points—Van Dyke Parks, Jacques Brel, Lee Hazlewood—barely resonate with their own English countrymen; here they ping against the hull of modern rock with the smallest of sounds It almost takes a European sensibility to appreciate the Berlin-in-the-'20s vibe here, but even those of us who've never made eye contact over a baccarat table can dig the swelling strings and castanets of "Rented Rooms." Which is a long way of saying that Curtains is the best of this

band's three albums. It's not a departure from form, but an assertion of territory. This is no Combustible Edison-style kitschfest. Stuart Staples's stolid voice still carries the sadness of a thousand lonely nights, but he's obviously

having a little fun with the idea of the band's Weimar Republic image in "Ballad Of Tindersticks," an account of a day-in-the-life of, well, Tindersticks as they jet-set and get tight in New York, Los Angeles, and London. It's almost suicidal for a group to parody its reputation this much, but when they duet with the likes of Ann Magnuson and Isabella Rosselini, it's pretty hard to resist their intentions. ANDREW BEAUJON



#### UNITED FUTURE ORGANIZATION / 3rd Perspective / Antilles-Verve

United Future Organization specializes in a kind of duty-free funk, an international mix of acid jazz, trip-hop, sambas, spy movie themes and all manner of other suave sounds redolent of club life. Generally, this sort of thing sounds better on paper than on disc, but the reason most hot club scenes fail to translate into successful musical genres is exactly what makes UFO so exemplary: Recreating the atmosphere of a good night out isn't the same as beckoning it. 3rd Perspective metes out exotica and invention in equal portions, creating a cool for itself—cool in than perfect, indescribable way, where you just know—that's also inviting. You're in with this in crowd just by listening. The imaginative among us

can easily slip into the thick taiko drum groove of "Planet Plan" and be easily whisked away by the manic piano line and swirling Mancini horns into any number of scenes of narrow-

lapel sophistication. And while other tracks invoke different moods, with nods to Shirley Bassey brio, Martin Denny's sensualized ethnomusicology, and particular jazz and funk motifs, the combinations are always ingenious, which makes the suspensive of the suspens

DATALOG: Released Jun. 24.
FILE UNDER: Jet set party music.
R.I.Y.L.: Galliano, Esquivel, Lounge Lizards.

#### HANZEL UND GRETYL

Call New York City's Hanzel Und Gretyl "industrial" if you must. After all, growling, distorted vocals, heavy guitar riffs, and demonic sounding electronics appear at every turn on the quartet's latest full-length,

Transmissions From Uranus (Energy). But listen a little deeper and you'll hear things you probably aren't expecting: experiments with diverse drum rhythms, ranging from slow, hip-hop kicks to hyperactive breakbeat attacks; beautiful, exquisitely executed intros and breakdowns that would



fit alongside any Orb track; heavenly Middle Eastern grooves floating above a barrage of beats and electronic dissonance. Hanzel Und Gretyl aren't afraid to push musical boundaries, and that courage has led to one of the most exciting industrial dance records since Ministry went metal. The band attributes its odd and unforgettable sound to the fact that vocalist/guitarist Vas Kallas is a Cancer and guitarist/programmer Lupie is a Gemini. Stars are definitely in this troupe's future—catch them on their coast-to-coast tour of the States this summer. M. TYE COMER

#### JOAN OF ARC

Once you've heard Joan Of Arc's debut album, A Portable Model Of (Jade Tree), you won't be surprised to learn that, before the band's formation last year, each of its four members was used to playing a different instrument. It's not that they sound like novices, but rather that each



takes an amazingly fresh approach to his instrument: These guys devise inventive combinations of sound, and create distinctively original songs. The band's pop songs sound a bit like Modest Mouse's (vocalist Tim Kinsella has one of those high-pitched nasal voices

that you'll either love or hate), but Joan's are less structured and a bit more tranquil. Scattered throughout the album are serene instrumental segments that shine a spotlight on Kinsella's beautiful guitar playing, and every so often there's a two-minute noise track that's filled with only strange samples and random buzzing, whirring and clicking. The band will be touring for most of the summer. JENNY ELISCU

#### POLAR BEAR

Polar Bear is something of a local super-group: Former Jane's Addiction bassist Eric Avery and Biff Sanders, who once handled drum and sampler duties for L.A. industrial act Ethyl Meatplow, met through Carla Bozulich, a former bandmate of Sanders' who now fronts the Geraldine Fibbers. The resulting trio (rounded out by guitarist Thomas Von Wendt) rides

a heavy rhythmic tide, drawing on both Jane's' ability to conjure moody, seductive atmospheres and Ethyl Meatplow's knack for building



chunky, textured rhythms. After releasing a vinylonly 12" on Man's Ruin and contributing a track to the Wire tribute, Whore, Polar Bear issued a five-song, self-titled CD on the low-key indie Dry Hump. Its five tracks use dense rhythms, rather than spry melodies, as a foundation, over which Von Wendt's electrifying, sometimes swooning guitar playing, various additional sonics (piano, horns, etc.), and some heavy, processed vocals build intrigue. With all this West Coast buzz, don't expect Polar Bear to remain in the indie ranks long—a sound as big as a tidal wave isn't likely to remain contained on small shores. (LA)

#### CRYSTAL METHOD (1)

The electronic dance artists breaking big in the American mainstream mostly carry U.K. passports, but the Crystal Method is set to ensure that U.S. artists also get recognition during the rise of the burgeoning culture. The Los Angeles duo began their



partnership as
DJs in a Las Vegas
strip club before
unleashing "Now
Is The Time," the
d r i v i n g,
b r e a k b e a t
monster that

began the buzz. The group has often been labeled "the American Chemical Brothers" (they opened for the Brothers back in '95), and the release of "There Is Hope," which boasts a vocal sample of Jesse Jackson as its centerpiece, made the pair an underground sensation. Owing more to Led Zeppelin and Stevie Wonder than to the Aphex Twin or Orbital, the Crystal Method constructs tweaked-out, electro-breakbeat floorfillers with a rock 'n' roll mentality, adding more recognizable song-structure and melody to its synthesized attack. Watch for its debut release Vegas (Outpost), which hits shelves this month. M. TYE COMER

CRYSTAL METHOD'S "BUSY CHILD" APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD



The first single and video from the debut album
"Under These Rocks And Stones"

"Music you"ll be hearing a lot about...a voice that's pure, sure, and redolent with ache."

Interview, May 1997



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COLUMBIA

World Radio History

## SLEATER-By Kurt B. Reighley KINNEY

Think of it as a perverse word problem from a Music Biz 01 textbook: "If Fortland, Oregon, trio Slea er-Kinney goes through the initial pressing of 0,000 copies of its third album, Dig Me Out, on the first day of release, surpassing total sales from its previous, critically acclaimed full-length Call The Doctor, and all its releases to date have appeared on independent labes, how large in advance would be required to lure the band to a major label?"

Put down your checkbook, Einstein, because that scenario is strictly a pipe cream. "The appeal of major labels has been so tainted or me that I can't really be objective about [signing to one]," confesses guitarist/singer Carrie Brownstein. "Obviously, if you look at it completely in black and white, in terms of just seeing a major label as

a bank, the financial backing seems appealing. But I don't want to use the labels that we're dealing with, I want to work with them and cellaborate, and that's exactly why we're not working with a major label."

Screw the champagne and caviar: and her cohorts, singer/guitarist Corin Tucker and drummer Janet Weiss, aren't about to sacrifice the obvious advantages of their current situation. Chalk that sentiment up to their long-term involvement in the vital indic scenes Pertland and O ympia, Washington, where, according to Brownstein, "things have been made accessible to people, and a lot of things—like the recording process and the process of putting out a record—have been demystified."

The roots of Sleater-Kinney, musically and philosophically, also

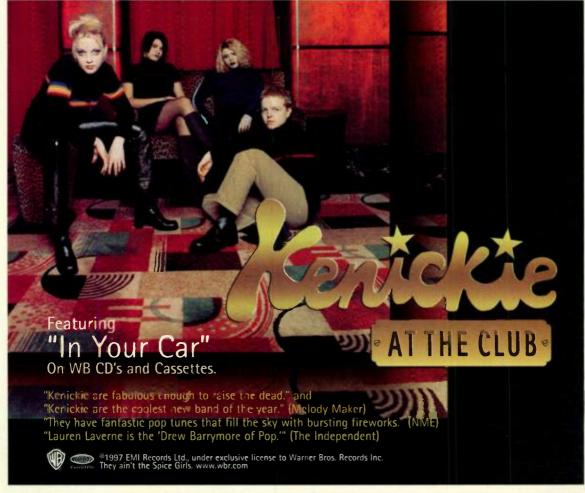
owe much to the Pacific Northwest Riot Grrrl scene of the early '90s: Tucker was half of Heavens To Betsy, while Brownstein played in Excuse 17. Shot through with the same hook-laden melodies and interwoven gu tar and vocal lines that made Call The Doctor and the

band's self-titled 1995 debut so immediately engaging. Dig Me Cut also furrows deeper into the rhythmic trenches, thanks to newest member Janet Weiss, who joined the fold last year.

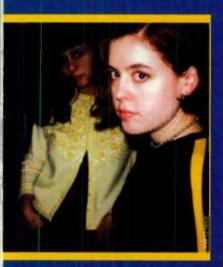
Weiss (who a so played in Junior High, and continues to drum for Quasi)

had lorg admired Sleater-Kinney's tight musicianship and composition, but wasn't prepared for how quickly she'd click with the





### Digging Their Scene



L-R: Carrie Brownstein, Janet Weiss, Corin Tucker

partners' dynamic. "I was amazed at the speed at which we would come up with a song, develop our parts, put it all together and boom! It was just there," she chuckles. "It's almost like [the song] was there to start with, and we just sort of discovered it. That was what was surprising to me, and still is."

"We re not necessarily precise when we write, but we always have a sonic vision that we try and implement," says Tucker. "A lot of people are surprised at how sparse our writing is. But I think that one of our talents as songwriters is that we use that aesthetic from punk. Sparseness and simplicity can make really good songs that have a let of tension in them, and can draw people in because they are simple."

"When I first began playing guitar, I wanted to emulate what seemed very accessible," concurs Brownstein. She drew inspiration from listening to The Jam or Beat Happening and realizing that strumming along wasn't an insurm untable task. Hopefully, through its music and actions, Sleater-Kinn y offers similar

inspiration to a fresh slew of listeners. But while new songs like "Lit le Babies" and "Words And Guitar" touch on the band's feelings toward its very devoted fans, or the empowering nature of playing music, the Spartan vries also leave ample room for individual interpretation.

For all the high-minded discourse spewed by others in its wake, though, Sleater-Kinney isn't too concerned about what's written about it, even if it doesn't always do the band justice. "A lot of the writer

"Sparseness and simplicity can make really good songs that have a lot of tension in them."

usually comes through in an article or magazine, which can be even more unfortunate," notes Tucker apropos of that slippery beast, perspective. "[Press] is really secondary to what's important to us. We try to take it with a grain of salt. If we get too upset about it, we'll just go crazy."

(IT'S ENOUGH" BY SLEATER-KINNEY APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD

"ALBUM OF THE YEAR"-SOAP OPERA DIGEST
"ALBUM OF THE YEAR"-GUNS & AMMO
"ALBUM OF THE YEAR"-MARTHA STEWART LIVING
"ALBUM OF THE YEAR"-PRISON LIFE
"ALBUM OF THE YEAR"-NATIONAL CATHOLIC REGISTER
"ALBUM OF THE YEAR"-HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW
"ALBUM OF THE YEAR"-MODERN BRIDE
"ALBUM OF THE YEAR"-WWF MAGAZINE
"ALBUM OF THE YEAR"-HOCKEY DIGEST

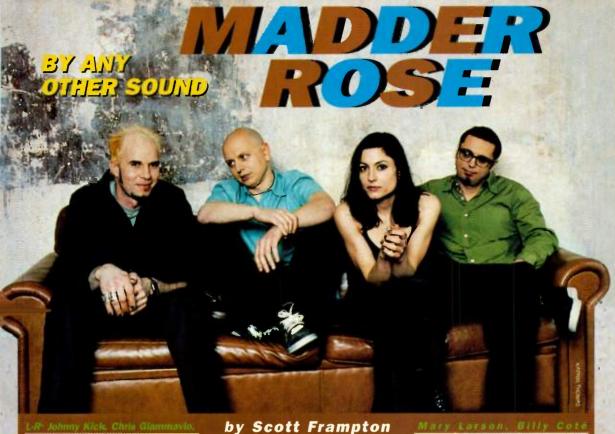


Well, it just happens to be the name of the album, ok?

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

featuring the single

LAST CUP OF SORROW (look for the new, cool weird video)
US Tour kicks off this fall!



exposed ducts and flat black walls, London's Electric Ballroom looks less like a rock club than a Hollywood set designer's idea of one. The scene adds an ironic note as Madder Rose steps onto the worn stage to play its first U.K. show in three years, because rock isn't really something that Madder Rose does anymore

"When we were opening for Hole in '94 or whatever it was," says the band's guitarist and songwriter, Billy Coté, "we were playing a lot of our faster songs, a lot of our rock songs, and I remember standing up there on stage and going like, 'Man, I don't even listen to this kind of music. Why the fuck am I playing it?' And I said to myself, 'We're not going to be a rock band anymore. We're just not. I can't deal with it.' There are so many more interesting ways to produce a pop song than just guitars."

Coté's guitar is still in evidence as the band unveils songs from its new alburn Tragic Magic (Atlantic) for the British audiences who embraced Madder Rose before it managed any kind of following at home. The emphasis has shifted, owever, from the dynamic tension between singer Mary orson's girlish vocals and Coté's distorted washes to a torpid,

#### by Scott Frampton

atmospheric sound rooted in Moogs, electronic beats and classic pop songwriting.

'I've interested in bands who do different things and who aren't scared to just change styles every couple of records. I think it's important in keeping the band interesting for the players," Coté continues, gesticulating with a cigarette in the direction of

#### "We're not going to be a rock band anymore."

drummer Johnny Kick (Rick Kubic to his folks) and bassist Chris Giammaivo. conceptually. You know, we did a certain kind of thing on the first two albums, and I think we did it well, as well as we could, and it was just time to do something that reflected to the music we listened to. It also kind of links back to the first singles we put out, which were like drum loops and singing, because we didn't have a band yet. And I always thought that was a real intriguing thing to do, and we wanted to get back to that."

Lorson, who on a Sunday morning in a hotel coffee shop is as animated and sunny as her early vocals were monotonal and ghost-like, interjects, "I think that

it's interesting, because it feels really new and kind of modern, and there's a whole lot of freedom involved in what the technology allows you to do, but

rhythmically, it brings you back stuff you enjoyed when you were a kid. Filly and I both like Motown stuff, and Chris is a real student of those kinds of bass

players, like James Jamerson." "Plus, goofing around, two or three of us would be jamming and trying to remember songs from 1964 and trying to play offers.

picking up the conversational cue. "And we felt like it was something we physically could do, as we'l. It wasn't going to be this whole process of everyone trying to karn a new thing.

Coté continues: "Yeah, we used some modern technology, but it's just pop songs. We just tried to find a different ambiance for them. As a matter of fact, the song 'Scenes From Starbright' was my attempt to write a Motown song."

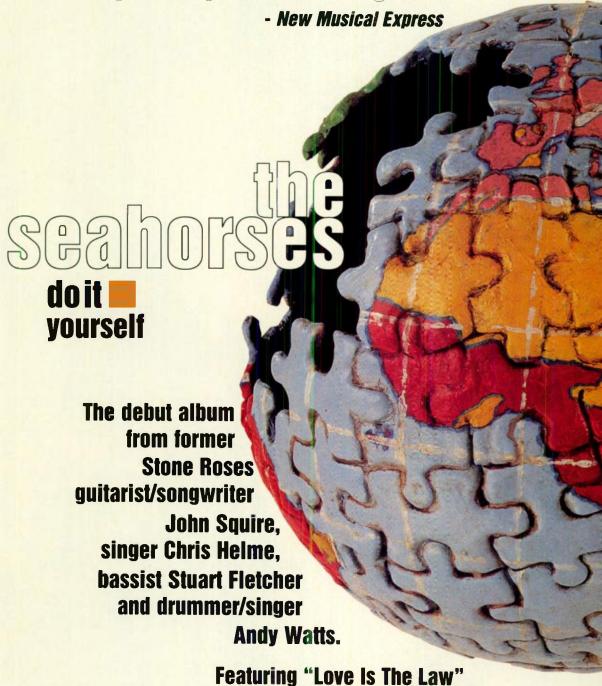
But that's a rock song," Lorson interrup**i**s, continuing their on-

stage push and pull.
"Well, that's how it came out.
But that's what I was thinking about: a Motown song about taking ecstasy.

'Oh, that's what that's about."

"...Seahorses music is surrounded by the intangible aura of something strikingly new..."-select

"... Unique and just a little magical"





Produced by Tony Visconti Recorded and Mixed by Rob Jacobs Assistant Engineer: Jeff Thomas

and "Blinded By The Sun"



S arah McLachlan's last full-length album, Fumbling Towards Ecstasy, came out in 1994. It's since sold over 1.4 million copies in the

United States alone, but it also kept

block, followed by a self-imposed

exile of six months, she's finally

completed her fourth studio album, Surfacing (Nettwerk-Arista). Meanwhile, she saw the

revolutionary Lilith Fair, a summer

# Sarah McLachlan In The Garden

her on the road for over two and a line-up—and a nightly headline half years. Now, after a spot for McLachlan—from debilitating bout with writer's daydream to reality. Oh, and she

spot for McLachlan—from daydream to reality. Oh, and she got married. And all this without the benefit of bionic powers...

### By Kurt B. Reighley

Photography by Dennis Keeley and Mark Van S.

World Radio History

Pause for a moment and sift through your impressions of Canadian singer/ songwriter Sarah McLachlan. She's a charismatic performer, blessed with an dexterous expressive, voice impressive facility on both the guitar and piano. She has a gift for composing songs that top the pop charts without compromising her bracing honesty and frank perspective. And she's a beautiful woman, with a lithe figure, casual manner and flaxen hair. So whom do you reckon young Sarah admired as a girl? Who were her role models? Carole King? Try again. Anne Murray? Puh-leeze.

From the comfort of her temporary home in Montreal, McLachlan slowly scrolls off the short list of answers. In light of her musical trajectory over the course of the last decade, the first heroine makes sense: Kate Bush. And considering that McLachlan turns 30 next year, and got her start fronting a new wave band in the mid-'80s, the next two—Pat Benatar and Blondie's Debbie Harry—are pretty obvious (in hindsight), too.



# "I thought Fumbling Towards Ecstasy was my swan song—I'd never make another record ever again."

Suddenly McLachlan perks up. "Oh, and there was Lindsey Wagner!" she exclaims. "She was pretty hot." Somewhere in TV land, Jamie Sommers's bionic ear is burning.

Sarah may not have battled any beautiful androids or Eastern Bloc spies, but just like the heroic Jamie in her weekly television exploits, McLachlan had to meet her share of arduous challenges in order to complete *Surfacing*. And scariest of all, an insider had set most of the obstacles blocking her path.

hen Sarah released her debut album *Touch* in 1988, she stepped onto a merry-go-round that's just kept building up momentum with each passing year. Buoyed up by the success of her single "Vox," McLachlan quickly became a star in her native country. Her subsequent album, 1991's *Solace*, addressed some of the consequences of losing your innocence to the limelight. She might have been feeling victimized, but that didn't stop her from growing artistically, and new songs like "Into The Fire" and "Drawn To The Rhythm" displayed a maturity missing from many of her earlier offerings. Fans south of the (Canadian) border and on distant shores began to take notice, and Sarah found herself touring for 14 months.

After that journey wrapped up, she embarked on another, accepting an invitation from World Vision to host a documentary on Cambodia and Thailand. Unsure of what lay ahead, she soon found herself in

brothels, concentration camps, women's shelters, even the killing fields. Afterwards, she took a much-needed vacation in a more luxurious region of Thailand, and began sorting through what she'd seen and felt these many months. When she returned to Canada, she moved out on her own for the first time, and began composing the songs that would form Fumbling Towards Ecstasy (as well as its companion disc of alternate versions, The Freedom Sessions).

First "Hold On," a moving confrontation of a loved one's mortality, appeared on the Red Hot Organization's No Alternative compilation. Then came the finished album, an outpouring of emotions in all shapes and sizes: "Ice" examined the complexities of drug addiction; "Possession" pushed a devotional love song into stalker territory; the title cut celebrated Sarah's increasing confidence as an artist and an individual. She hit the road in support of Fumbling—and the returns, in the form of increased album and ticket sales, slowly began piling up. So she stayed on tour. And stayed.

"The thing about being on the road is that often you might have only 15 minutes to yourself in the day," McLachlan notes. "And my problem is I forgot to give myself that time. That's sort of the story of my life. So the more I wasn't alone, the harder it was to tell myself to be alone.

"The trouble is you book tours six months in advance," she adds. So if she felt a nervous breakdown breathing down her neck, she just beat the beast back into whatever cave it sprang from, since the alternative meant wrestling with it through half a year's worth of sold-out crowds and lonely hotel rooms. And regardless of how lengthy her itinerary is, Sarah claims touring is always an "all or nothing" undertaking. "I can't write, I can't even really

think much when I'm on the road, because I'm too full of input all the time. So I just chock experiences away, and deal with them later. That's why I need the down-time [afterwards] so much. Just to go back and sort through where I was, and how I felt, and what happened to me-and become centered again. And then, from that point, it's easier to write."

Her travels finally wrapped up in January of 1996. But after two and a half years of being uprooted and constantly performing, her "Deal With It Later" file was stuffed to the gills. That April, she was scheduled to commence writing and recording a follow-up album. But she hadn't even begun to decompress.

"When I got off the road, I thought Fumbling was my swan song, [and] I'd never make another record ever again. I felt so dried up, I couldn't imagine writing another song in my life. I had a huge psychological block for a long time." On a huge chalkboard in her mind, Sarah had scrawled a theorem that read "Making Record = Touring, Therefore Never Make Record.'

But she couldn't bite the hand that fed her. The market might not wait for the muse to recuperate. She entered the studio, and tried in vain to eke out new material, but the well was bone dry. "I was there going 'Fuck, what am I doing here? I don't know what I'm doing with my life-why am I hating this?" She knew in her heart that she couldn't write until she'd resolved all the accumulated experience from the tour, but found it nearly impossible to reconcile the need for time off with her guilt about taking it.

"After I had my terrible spell of going 'I'm supposed to be writing, but everything I'm writing is shit, because I don't want to be writing,' I finally just said 'so don't write, it's okay.' Which was really hard for me to tell myself, but it was the best thing I could do." McLachlan feared that if she didn't climb right back on the horse, her blue-ribbon days would draw to a close. "You're like, 'oh God, this is my art, it's my passion, I'm supposed to be living

and breathing this all the time.'

"Well, that's just not the case with me," she finally concluded. "I need to do other things as well. And my life had been focused for so long on the music and on touring, that everything else-my own life, my own development-took a real side turn."

"I felt about ten years old, I felt so out of control of my own life. And so many times I just felt like I was this little flea, just trying to hold on for dear life to the ragged coat of this dog running like crazy." Finally she summoned up the courage to call her manager and admit thing's weren't working in the studio. "And he just said 'Well, come home then." And I was like 'Really? It's that easy?"

She sighs now at the recollection. "It's really sad that I needed to get the permission from him, as opposed to just going 'Fuck this, I want to go home!' I knew instinctively what I needed; I was just denying myself it. I wasn't allowing myself the freedom to say 'I don't want to be here." So she left the Montreal region where her longtime producer and collaborator Pierre Marchand is based, and returned home to Vancouver. "That

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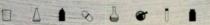
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"I felt so dried up, I couldn't imagine writing another song in my life."

was a real step in healing myself, that empowering thing of going 'I'm going home. I don't want to be here, and I'm making this decision for myself."

"I took six months off and just did nothing but planted vegetables and made a garden," she admits. She and her sweetheart, drummer Ashwin Sood, bought a puppy and settled in for a long spell of domestic bliss. (The couple tied the knot in March, after eloping to Jamaica.) And slowly, she began to feel comfortable in her own skin again. The creative process of digging in the dirt ("to quote Peter Gabriel")—"getting into myself, pulling myself inside out, and seeing what's there, what's hiding"—slowly

began to unfold.

Although she repeatedly stresses that what she uncovered in her psyche seemed disturbing and difficult to embrace, McLachlan is reticent to name her individual demons. "We're all fucked up in some ways," she hints. "I'm as fucked up as the next person, and I've got a lot of work to do on myself. When you're putting yourself out there, completely vulnerable and naked every night, you're really letting yourself open to a lot of beautiful and fantastic things—and a lot of shit. My whole struggle has been 'Okay, build up a wall to protect yourself, but don't let that wall affect your performing.' You have to keep honest."

With the help of various tools, including a psychotherapist and the popular book *The Artist's Way* (a guide to unblocking creativity), Sarah began regaining her sense of self-control, learning to confront her problems more directly. Her therapist taught her the shortest distance between two points is often divined from a few simple questions. "Basically, most problems tend to spur from relationships, whether that's with a friend or lover or

parents, whatever. Because they're this mirror. Every time somebody pisses you off, they're giving you a gift. If you're pissed off at something that [someone] said, that's because there's something you need to deal with in yourself. Ask yourself, 'Why am I feeling this way? When was the first time I felt this way?' And remember that place where you felt worthless and insecure and useless, and your mother was yelling at you, whatever, and go to that place and give that little kid what she needs. It sounds corny when I reiterate it, but it's really powerful stuff."

Ultimately, learning to confront that "powerful stuff" fortified her artistry. "These [lyrics] are a little more straight-ahead, a little more concrete in their content," she says of the ten new songs on Surfacing.

"The way I work through things [now] is really different from the way I did a year or two ago. My thought processes are different, and I'm writing less from [the point of view of] 'oh, poor me.' When I was writing about me before, and didn't feel comfortable, I put myself into characters." Now she's more willing to expose her weak spots; if an impulse feels honest but unpleasant, she'll admit "this is ugly, and I'm not hiding from it."

When McLachlan resumed writing the music that would ultimately form Surfacing, she completely disregarded all the material from the first, fruitless sessions. She concedes there may have been some melodies worth salvaging, but the lyrics were "coming from this terrified little girl who had her head stuck so far up her ass she didn't know which end was up." The writing for the new album kicked in for real with "Angel," one of its most affecting cuts. "That was one of the first ones I wrote, and it was a real joyous occasion," she admits. "I really loved it, it came out easily, and that just solidified my faith again. I still have stuff to say and there's still stuff that I can write that's good."

"Angel" deals with why people in the limelight turn to drugs for solace. "I hate to pinpoint it like that," McLachlan dissents. But the inspiration did stem from reading a "series of Rolling Stone articles over the past year and a half, typically about heroin in the music industry, and all these people who, one by one, are getting picked off by it. And I just felt a really great empathy in some way for these people. I've been in that place where you're so fucked up and you're so lost that you don't know who you are anymore, and you're miserable—and here's this escape route. I've never done heroin, but I've done plenty of other things to escape."

The only other song on Surfacing that came relatively easily, the captivating "Building A Mystery," is also the album's first single. She was playing a little guitar riff one evening back in Montreal, and Marchand strolled in, pronounced it a keeper, and immediately pulled out some lyrics he'd been sitting on. "And then we just sat at the computer the next day, thought up a bunch of crazy lines, and the song was born pretty darn quickly. And it was fun. There was no 'Oh my God, we have to write a single!' It was so boneheaded, it was quite liberating." Although her acute personal observations of emotion are one of McLachlan's

most distinctive trademarks, she doesn't find singing Marchand's lyrics now and then uncomfortable. "I'm pretty close to unconditional love with him," she claims. (In addition to "Building A Mystery," the pair also collaborated on two other songs, "Witness" and "Adia.")

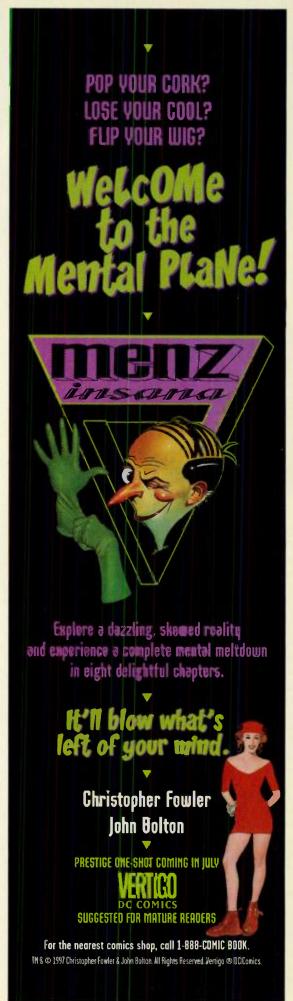
the completion of Surfacing means that McLachlan must once again confront the evil "Making Record = Touring" equation. But this time, the odds are stacked a little differently. A couple years ago, after countless confrontations from promoters who discouraged her from engaging opening acts like Paula Cole, because ostensibly audiences didn't want to see two women artists back to back, Sarah began envisioning a concert tour composed exclusively of female performers. Last summer, McLachlan recruited Cole, Suzanne Vega, Patti Smith, Lisa Loeb and others for four shows, just as a dry run, "and they were hugely successful." So she turned to her manager, her agent and her tour manager, gave them a wish-list of artists from Queen Latifah to Emmylou Harris to The Cardigans, and dispatched the team to pull her dream tour together.

She christened it the Lilith Fair, in honor of the first truly independent woman in mythology, Adam's wife before Eve, Lilith, who wouldn't lie with him in sin and split Eden for good, only to be demonized (or ignored, depending on your faith) by the Christian patriarchy. Boasting a rotating line-up of local and international talent, the Lilith Fair kicks off July 5th in Seattle, with Jewel, Vega, Tracy Chapman and Aimee Mann rounding out the bill. In keeping with McLachlan's innovative spin on the Lollapalooza paradigm, corporate sponsorships have been downplayed (and those that did sign on had to promise to give back to host communities via charitable donations), and the arts and merchandise mall promises to boast more than just tie-dyed shirts and fried dough.

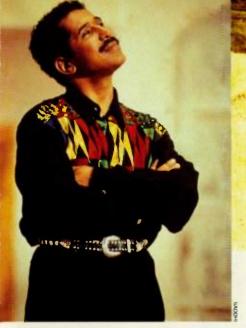
## "Lilith Fair is simply about celebrating women."

But quit scrambling to cover your family jewels, fellas. "I want to let people know that this is not a hardcore feminist, man-hating tour," McLachlan emphasizes. "This is simply about celebrating women. Men are more than welcome; I totally want them to be there. They should want to celebrate women as much as anybody does. What would they be doing without us? They'd be dead in a hundred years," she adds with a robust laugh.

After Lilith she'll continue with a solo tour, but Sarah swears she has "basically put a ceiling of a year on touring." And she plans to stick to that commitment. "I have much better control skills now. I worked on myself long and hard these past months, and it's definitely paid off. I've found my center again."



# KHALED No Borders Here



CHICAL MARGELING

#### by Chris Nickson

They call Khaled the king of rai. Really—he was crowned that in 1985 at the first ever rai festival in Oran, his Algerian hometown. And they call rai the Algerian blues, as close a term as you can get for the raw, street sounds the music conjures up.

Since then, the king has moved to France, and become more or less an emperor. His last two albums, Didi and N'ssi N'ssi, made some American inroads for rai. But it's the new one, Sahra, that might crack the nut. The songs expand the possibilities of rai, ranging from raw tracks like "Sahra," dedicated to his daughter, to reggae collaborations ("Ouelli El Darek") and the spare and stunning "Oran Marseille," where rai and hiphop perform a mind meld.

"I wanted to do this track on the last album," Khaled says. "I was born in Oran, and I lived in Marseille. The two cities have a lot in common. I wanted to pay respect to the people there, especially the kids, which is why I used IAM, who are kids from Marseille, to do the raps. It's a mix of Oriental and Western influences. I want to stay open to other cultures, having things work together. But that has to be done with sensitivity to make sure they work. I don't like the term 'world music,' but I think artists should be able to mix up different ideas. Music shouldn't have any borders. It should fight against closed minds."

Admirable sentiments, and ones he's employed throughout the record. It has fewer of the Don Was productions of earlier albums, which tended to take Khaled into an area you might generously call white-bread funk, and more of a sense of challenge, of spreading his wings a little.

"I love working with Don," he explains, "but I wanted to work with other people and try different things, keep my options open." One of the most interesting of those options is "Ouelli El Darek," which includes backing vocals from the I-Threes. "The idea was there on the Didi album, although it hadn't worked well. But I knew there was a close connection between the reggae and rai rhythms. The way to make it work was to go to Jamaica and record there. We recorded it im Bob Marley's studio, and I formed some close relationships with the people there. Marley was such an important artist, even in Algeria. He had an influence on me And people traveled, they planted musical seeds in different fields. I want to collect those, to try and have more of these collaborations and exchanges."

Sahra also contains what has more or less been the single of the year in France, a slab of Arab-tinged pop called "Aicha," which has sold more than 250,000 copies. "It was co-written with Jean-Jacques Goldman, and it's about Arabs and Jews working together. It's an extension of the 'no borders here' theory. That it's been so well accepted makes me very happy."

One of the most gratifying things about Sahra is that so much of it has a rootsy feel, a rawness that sometimes make you feel as if the sand is gritting in your eyes. "Sometimes it's important for me to go back to my roots," Khaled says. "Sahra' means both desert and liberty; it's an unpolluted place in the world. I like to be able to go back there, to my real self. I need to go in that direction from time to time."

Only in his music, though. Since 1990, Khaled hasn't been able to return to Algeria because "they shoot at anybody who's known. I don't know who's shooting, and I'm not going to go there and make myself an easy target. There's still rai music, which is party music, there, but it's not the right time to play it, during a civil war."

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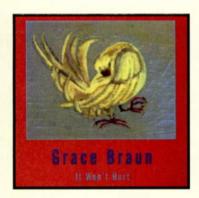
# reviews

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

"If the feeling in America in 1979 was that you were in the center of the universe, then Manhattan was the center of the center, Studio 54 was the center of the center." — Mike Myers, on Studio 54 co-founder

Steve Rubell, whom he will play in the upcoming film called 54.

GRACE BRAUN / It Won't Hurt / Slow River CAKE LIKE / Bruiser Queen / Vapor THE CHARLATANS UK / Tellin' Stories / Beggars Banquet CINNAMON / The Courier / Island DEL AMITRI / Some Other Sucker's Parade / ASM MAGGIE ESTEP / Love Is A Dog Brom Hell / Mouth Almighty-Mercury HIM/THE DYLAN CROUP / HIM/The Dylan Group / Bubble Core LIDA HUSIK / Fly Sterephonic / Alias 📵 RICKIE LEE JONES / Chostyhead / Reprise KENICKIE / At The Club / Warner Bro LARD / Pure Chewing Satisfaction / Alternative Tentacles LINOLEUM / Dissent / DCC P.W. LONG'S REELFOOT / We Didn't See You On Sunday / Touch And Go LUNA / Pup Tent / Elektra MANSUN / Attack Of The Grey Lantern / Epic JAMES MCMURTRY / It Had To Happen / Sugar Hill 🐵 MOUNTAIN GOATS / Full Force Galespurg / Emperor Jones NEW BAD THINGS / Ennui Go! / Pop Secret PRIMAL SCREAM / Vanishing Foint / Reprise 📵 RON SEXSMITH / Other Songs / Interscope SMOG / Red Apple Falls / Drag City SPEEDY J / Public Energy No. : J Plus & SPIRITUALIZED / Ladies And Gentlemen We Are Floating In Space / Dedicated @ SUBROSA / Never Bet The Devil Your Head / 550-Epic (1) VARIOUS ARTISTS / Those Were Different Times / Scat TIGER / Shining In The Wood (EP) / Bar/None TINY LIGHTS / The Smaller The Crape The Sweeter The Wine / Bar/None WORLD PARTY / Egyptology / The Enclave WUHLING / Extra 6 / Touch And Go



#### GRACE BRAUN / It Won't Hurt / Slow River

Hooting, hollering, keening, yodeling, or drawling out lullabies, Grace Braun's commanding and unmistakable voice made her band DQE the most distinctive-sounding proponent of indie rock's roots revival. Accompanied by her husband Dugan Trodglen on drums and by a rotating cast of others, Braun writes, sings and plays in a style that's old-timey and edgy at the same time, Mae West by way of PJ Harvey. For It Won't Hurt, the band has exchanged its old name for Braun's, brought in an expanded crew of worthy instrumentalists, and polished up its somewhat grainy guitar sound. Best of all, Braun has written and chosen some of her best material in years. The stomping "Do Right" lets her belt out the steamy blues; on "Mermaid And

The Sailor," she sings a fairy tale set to a great fiddle jig. "It Won't Hurt" is a gut-wrenching love ballad worthy of Nashville, while "Lullaby" is just that, a song about "duckies and bunnies" to lull a sleepy kid. Almost every song sounds like it could be ages old—one, "What Wondrous Love Is

This," is in fact a cover of a traditional hymn. Braun lights a fire under each of them, imbuing them with tenderness, eroticism, and spirit. ANDREA MOED

DATALOG: Released Jun. 10.
FILE UNDER: Original revivalists.
R.I.Y.L.: Half Japanese, Victoria Williams, PJ Harvey.



#### DATALOG: Released May 20. FILE UNDER: Art-damaged post-punk. R.I.Y.L.: Shudder To Think, Raincoats, Au Pairs, Babes In Toyland.

#### CAKE LIKE / Bruiser Queen / Vapor

Inspired amateurism has an unfortunate tendency to sound, well, less inspired the second time around then it does the first. That puts Cake Like in a bit of a bind. The NYC trio's debut, 1994's *Delicious*, was a Japanese import-only CD that bristled with barbed guitars and enough joyful urgency to overcome the group's novice sensibility. It also balanced its implied sociopolitical agenda with a strong sense of humor, thanks in part to singer/bassist Kerri Kenney (of MTV's absurdist comedy troupe *The State* and now Comedy Central's *Viva Variety*). "Your dad works for my dad," went one refrain on *Delicious. Bruiser Queen* picks up where that playground brawl left off, with Kenney leveling the mock-vicious taunt "I heard you're

adopted" against a more abrasive variation of the B-52's' quirk-pop on "The New Girl." But this time the influence of Shudder To Think's Craig Wedren, who co-produced both Cake Like discs, is more pronounced, especially in the show-tune-like call-and-response vocals and non-linear

arrangements. (Imagine if Freddie Mercury had taken the Babes In Toyland under his wing early on and you'll get the picture.) Kenney, guitarist Nina Hellman, and drummer Jody Seifert still rock like the dickens, but they've traded some of the charming naïveté of *Delicious* for instrumental prowess, broader dynamic range, and a musical depth that makes novelty tunes like the Freudian "Mr. Fireman" seem a little forced. MATT ASHARE



DATALOG: Release date: Jun. 17.

FILE UNDER: Second-tier British long-haulers.
R.I.Y.L.: Black Grape, the Soup Dragons, Collective Soul.

#### THE CHARLATANS UK / Tellin' Stories / Beggars Banquet

The Charlatans have been second banana to two major movements in British popular music over the last eight years, and weathered the death of keyboardist Rob Collins last year, yet they've always chugged along, just popular enough that they've achieved institution status. *Tellin' Stories* opens with two just-flippin'-fantastic songs, "With No Shoes" and the single-anda-half "North Country Boy" (which exhibits the delights of a Northern English accent—"If I had a soon I'd be good to my daddy"), and then settles into a middle ground that, unfortunately, shows why this band is always going to be the Avis of Britpop. The rest of the album seems like an afterthought, including a couple of uninspired instrumentals and a lighter-

lifter ("Get On It") whose Dylanisms could be excused if the words made any sense. It's this maddening tendency on singer Tim Burgess's part not to communicate anything other than babble or cliché ("A side of beef should see you off to sleep"; "I see your heart is empty/l've got plenty") that

helps ensure that no one's going to be copying the Charlatans' lyrics on the inside covers of high school notebooks anytime soon. Which is too bad, because as the beginning of *Tellin' Stories* shows, the potential for this band to take over the world has always been there. *ANDREW BEAUJON* 

# CINTAGENION THE COURSER

DATALOC: Released May 6.
FILE UNDER: Rich, jazzy pop.
R.I.Y.L.: Edwyn Collins, Eric Matthews, Weekend.

#### CINNAMON / The Gourier / Island

Cinnamon comes from Stockholm, but likening this duo to the Cardigans isn't quite fair: The only obvious stylistic reference point the two polished pop bands share is the Swedish jazz scene of the '60s, when many top players could be found recording tunes for children's television. Cinnamon most often comes off sounding like a late '80s U.K. faux-jazz ensemble, with singer Frida Diesen approximating the girlish timbre and mushy diction of Altered Images' Claire Grogan. Fortunately, the band's distinctive songs aren't as willfully eccentric as that implies. The transition between verse-chorus-bridge on ditties like "Heavenly Option" is rarely a straight shot, yet the material bursts with sufficient hooks (like the wordless refrain of

"Hopeless Case") to lure you back. Thoughtful production (with assists from Ted Nicely and the Cars' Elliot Easton), complemented by instrumental flourishes like the vibraphone doodles on "The Promenade," sets a mood that feels playful yet never infantile. As in the best work of the

duo's admitted influences Momus and Orange Juice (Diesen even seems to ape Edwyn Collins's delivery on "Suddenly Clarity"), the ingenuity and charm of *The Courier* aren't immediately apparent, but sophisticated pop fans willing to commit to the multiple listens required to fully appreciate it will consider it time well spent. KURT B. REIGHLEY



DATALOG: Released Jun. 24.
FILE UNDER: Mature, well-exectuted pop.
R.I.Y.L.: Squeeze, Badfinger, Crowded House.

#### DEL AMITRI / Some Other Sucker's Parade / A&M 🍛

After three albums, Glasgow's Del Amitri was selling records, but it seemed that no one would ever actually take notice. Then, in 1995, the band released Twisted, and its brisk single "Roll To Me" flooded pop radio. Much of Twisted showed the group blossoming from faceless rockers into grown-up popsters. Some Other Sucker's Parade continues the trend nicely, stringing the listener along with alternately bitter and sweet sing-alongs. Songwriter/vocalist Justin Currie's voice is one of Del Amitri's greatest assets—a bit too dark to make it a "feel good" band and much too knowing to sing songs about absolutely nothing. But although the band often tosses an edgy guitar into the gears of its songs, Del Amitri, like Crowded House, is at its best when it

doesn't try to rock too hard. There's no shame in writing compact, poetic and hummable tunes. Pretty, but never sticky-sweet, songs like "Through All That Nothing" are rare finds today for fans of eloquent pop. The album opener, "Not Where It's At," is a smart update on Beatles wit, Byrds jangle

and Beach Boys harmony, suggesting that life would be more bearable if Del Amitri had done the *Friends* theme. STEVE CIABATTONI

#### reviews }



DATALOG: Released July 1.

FILE UNDER: Return of Echo.

R.I.Y.L.: Oasis, Stone Roses, the London Suede.

#### ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN / Evergreen / London •

Listening to Evergreen, it feels like everything issued by various members of Echo & The Bunnymen since their 1988 split was intended solely to highlight what made their initial output so appealing. While Evergreen—featuring the surviving three-quarters of their original line-up—surpassen neither the visceral impact of Porcupine nor the dramatic sweep of Ocean Rain, the new album does restore the essential balance absent from guitarist Will Sergeant and singer lan McCulloch's Electrafixion mishap. Here Sergeant eschews the heavy-handed squalor of that band in favor of his earlier, ringing style, once again providing a near-perfect foil for McCulloch's weathered vocals; discrete orchestral ornamentation further sweetens the mix. At best, "Don't Let It Get

You Down," "Baseball Bill" and the title tune indicate that Echo & The Bunnymen can craft worthwhile new repertory on par with their classics; in weaker moments, the Sergeant/McCullough dynamic sufficiently sustains interest. No longer mistakenly trying to distance themselves from their

best work, Echo & The Bunnymen have fashioned a likeable return to form, affirming that just because you can't teach an old dog new tricks doesn't necessarily mean poor Fido must be put to sleep. KURT B. REIGHLEY

# MAGGIE ESTEP LOVE IS À DOG FROM HELL

DATALOG: Release date: Jul. 1.
FILE UNDER: Witty spoken-word.
R.I.Y.L.: Laurie Anderson, King Missile, Ann Magnuson.

#### MAGGIE ESTEP / Love Is A Dog From Hell / Mouth Almighty-Mercury

New York poet Maggie Estep has thankfully stepped back a bit from the racket her old band, I Love Everybody, made when touring with Hole a few years ago and on her first record, 1994's No More Mr. Nice Girl. This time out, Estep—who also just released her first novel, Diary Of An Emotional Idiot—experiments with techno beats, ambient sounds, and quieter moments to better effect. "Jenny's Shirt," for example, is a noir-like story of a girl's trip to Paris and a strange sexual encounter that's much more dramatic than pieces like "Welcome To The Monkey House," which sounds like third-rate Nirvana. There are nice touches here—bedsprings as percussion on "Jenny's Shirt," and very elemental techno elsewhere—that make the words stand out.

Sometimes Estep sounds like other New York poets with musical sides; she's all John S. Hall on "I Want Mangos" as she lists all the things she wants, and "Emotional Idiot" has a pacing that recalls Laurie Anderson, but she's better when forging her own voice, usually that of an emotional basket

case obsessing about old boyfriends ("Master Of Lunacy") or inviting new ones ("Stalk Me"). "Fireater" is the best moment here, a quiet, thoughtful track that finds Estep musing on the Coney Island freak show and Katherine Dunn's fantastic novel *Geek Love*. Estep sounds more at home in this environment than making all that pseudo-metal noise. *TOM ROE* 



DATALOG: Released May 20.

FILE UNDER: Dub-influenced experimental instrumentals.

R.I.Y.L.: Tortoise, The Sea And Cake, Ui.

#### HIM/THE DYLAN GROUP / HIM/The Dylan Group / Bubble Core

On this seven-cut split CD from HIM (alias Doug Scharin of Rex/ex-Codeine) and the Dylan Group (Adam Pierce and Dylan Cristy), two instrumental outfits explore similar stylistic vistas, favoring tracks constructed around languid beats, studio effects, and tone colors instead of conventional melodic and harmonic ideas. The collection opens with HIM's "Stimulation (Alternate Reality Mix)," an experimental dub workout, reminiscent of moments on Public Image Ltd.'s Second Edition, that stretches a slowly evolving array of discrete sounds across repeated bass figures for over 11 minutes. The Dylan Group mates complex, overlapping rhythms with an eclectic variety of percussive timbres on the next two tunes, "An Indolent Appreciation Of What

You Left Behind" and "All That's Left." Pierce and Cristy also contribute the inventive three-part suite "Adventures In Lying Down" (complete with jarring brass punctuation), while HIM's rhythmic rumblings grow progressively more ominous in feel. As linear listening affairs go, this meandering disc

makes most "post-rock" seem straightforward, but for patient ears enamored of such fare, both bands merit investigation. KURT B. REIGHLEY



#### LIDA HUSIK / Fly Sterephonic / Alias .

She's done stints in the past as Kramer's Princess of Drenched Sound and Beaumont Hannant's Diva of Dirt-Free Electronic Beats, but Lida Husik is an island. She's not part of any particular school or movement, standing instead on a sturdy stage of her own construction. But where she used to rely on echo and reverb to provide the backing density, on Fly Stereophonic she opens the chamber and fills it with more concrete instrumentation. She's still addicted to echo, but she colors her hard, textured pop songs with maracas, horns, wood blocks, bells, organs, and the standard bass, drum, and fuzzy electric guitar. Fly Stereophonic is perhaps Husik's most solid and structured record to date, robust and filled with compact yet expansive

songs sung with her lush, incredibly sexy drone. Her voice is both powerful and graceful; it lilts and moans, and it's the perfect compliment to the dense music underneath. Fly Stereophonic has everything your basic rock record should have: texture, variety, a bit of a bounce, a thickness of

production, and a nearly perfect set of vocal chords to sing wonderful songs.
What more do you want? RANDALL ROBERTS

DATALOC: Released Jun. 24.
FILE UNDER: Grace, fuzz and echo.
R.I.Y.L.: Yo La Tengo, Liz Phair, Throwing Muses.

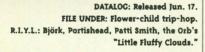
# RicKie Lee Jones

#### RICKIE LEE JONES / Ghostyhead / Reprise

Rickie Lee Jones's records have always floated halfway between childlike play and occasional self-indulgent artiness, but on this markedly strange album, she comes closer than ever to blowing away completely. Jones's tendency to gravitate toward Never-Never Land has usually been checked by the jazzy precision and soft-rock production values of the L.A. studio mafia. But *Ghostyhead* is built almost entirely around Jones's and co-producer Rick Boston's studio experimentation. Head trips like "Little Yellow Town" and "Cloud Of Unknowing" aren't held together by choruses or hooks but by subdued electronic percussion, which barely pins down Jones' webs of acoustic guitar and multitracked vocals, drifting in and out of sync. Of course,

her elastic voice and loopy poetry are still in place, though their effect in this *moderne* setting is somewhat odd—the way a line like "those shining faces hit you like a bus" pops out, you'd think she'd just heard the first Sugarcubes album. Befitting their ethereal settings, Jones's lyrics here concern

apparitions, visions and other edge-of-consciousness phenomena. Some of this works (the title track's gentle invocation), but "Howard," in which the spirits of a woman's abortions live on in her furniture, takes pantheism to unpalatable extremes. Though it's intriguing, Ghostyhead may date badly, as an attempt to put a contemporary gloss on a singular voice that won't be reined in, even by drum machines. FRANKLIN BRUNO



# Menicki.

#### KENICKIE / At The Club / Warner Bros.

It's a biological fact: Girls mature faster than boys. Small wonder, then, that Kenickie's members were not only younger than Ash or Northern Uproar when they recorded their first single, but a sight more savvy to boot. On its debut full-length, this U.K. quartet whizzes around the track with a speed and grace that could turn an Andretti three shades of green, shifting gears with seasoned finesse. These teens (okay, drummer Johnny is 20) spit out brash pop confections with a surplus of enthusiasm, but unlike their Scottish compatriots Bis, that's not their sole impetus for making music. And as they declare in the rousing "Punka," indie elitism doesn't figure into their agenda either. At The Club opens with "In Your Car," a bracing slice of auto-eroticism

fueled by, count 'em, 72 "yeahs!" and a blatant tip to the Shangri-Las. Singer Lauren Laverne has a knack for changing POV to match her band's musical grab bag: "Robot Song" betrays the band's affinity for Gary Numan-esque detachment; "Private Bukowski" offers a first-person

narrative from an obsessive stalker. These songs are witty, but not so fussy that you can hear the pages of a rhyming dictionary rustling. Kenickie will wash Shampoo right outta your hair, and could kick Fluffy from here right back to whatever pet store they escaped from. KURT B. REIGHLEY

World Radio History

# back

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for music



DATALOG: Released May 13.
FILE UNDER: Aggro jokesters.
R.I.Y.L.: Dead Kennedys, Ministry, Revolting Cocks.

#### LARD / Pure Chewing Satisfaction / Alternative Tentacles

If there's one band it was reasonable to expect not to hear from again, it was probably Lard. Its only previous LP, 1990's *The Last Temptation Of Reid*, was a massive sonic juggernaut that took industro-metal rage and paranoia to new heights, but it had all the hallmarks of a one-off studio collaboration between erratic geniuses, Jello Biafra (ex-Dead Kennedys) and Al Jourgensen (Ministry). Given that recently Ministry has veered closer than ever to self-parody with *Filth Pig*, and that the formerly prolific Biafra had lapsed into uncharacteristic silence in the years following his near-fatal beating, it's especially surprising, and welcome, to see them leap back into the ring. *Pure Chewing Satisfaction*, however, isn't quite a triumphant return to form; it's a

hodge-podge of outtakes from the last session (with the long-since-dead Jeff Ward on drums) that were outtakes for good reason, and new tracks that lack some of that characteristic fire in the belly. Jourgensen's production gives a lot of oomph to his seemingly leftover riffs, and while

Biafra, with his inimitable style, could get a lot of mileage out of singing newspaper headlines, here his lyrics seem to settle for being cryptic instead of funny or illuminating (although "Faith, Hope And Treachery" catches him at his most trenchant). Still, any DK or Ministry fan—or any rivethead interested in cogent, smart indignation instead of puerile shock theatrics—will want to give this a spin. DAVID JARMAN

DATALOG: Released Jun. 17.

FILE UNDER: Arty mod pop.

R.I.Y.L.: Sonic Youth (when Kim sings), Drugstore, Curve.

#### LINOLEUM / Dissent / DGC

Describe a band as being "heavily influenced by Sonic Youth," and the mental image called up will probably involve chilly minimalism, pinging harmonics, desolate feedback vistas, mumbled male vocals—the template established on Evol, basically. With its debut album, the U.K.'s Linoleum makes no bones about trespassing on Sonic Youth's intellectual property, but from a totally unexpected angle; it seems this young band has learned mostly from Goo and other '90s SY releases. Guitarist Paul Jones strikes an accessible balance between angular chords, contrapuntal melodies, pop-savvy structures, and catchy hooks, harnessing guitar noise without watering it down. But Caroline Finch is the real soul of the band; she appropriates Kim Gordon's throaty, nonchalant sing-speak

and dramatically improves on it, adding to it more winsome and sexy frills and a delicious English accent. Finch isn't locked into too-cool patter, though; when the time comes for the band to stretch out in drowsy, Velvetsy style, she easily shifts into Hope Sandoval/Isabel Monteiro dusky crooner

mode. The big surprise, though, is that the band sounds best when it's most obviously cribbing from "Kool Thing" and "Tunic"—every art-damaged chord and breathy hiccup of "She's Sick" and "On A Tuesday" sounds familiar, but still sounds urgent and fresh as well. DAVID JARMAN



DATALOG: Released Jul. 8.
FILE UNDER: Backporch blues.
R.I.Y.L.: Lightnin' Hopkins, Muddy Waters, Mule.

#### P.W. LONG'S REELFOOT / We Didn't See You On Sunday / Touch And Go

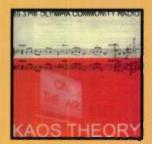
Uh-oh, another badass punk rocker who's discovered the majestic power of bare-bones blues? Fear not, heathens: Former Mule frontman P.W. Long remains unrepentant even when his music makes it sound like he's ready to testify. "The Shakin' Fears" finds him pleading for the midnight mercy of the bottle before getting a job "first thing in the morning." On the sinner's psalm "Oleander," he moans, "If you find me drunk and my tales too tall/Could you leave me lay, Lord, if you find me at all." So don't think that his backporch plucking and soul-searching wail means Long is coming to terms with his maker. He's just getting in touch with the music his kind has been playing since the turn of the century. The members of his backing band, Reelfoot, ain't exactly

a bunch of choirboys, either. Former Jesus Lizard drummer Mac McNeilly, lights a fire under several of the tracks, and Jeremy Jacobsen, a k a The Lonesome Organist, plays the heavenly Hammond whilst Long wrestles with his own personal hell. True, this brand of gritty blues-punk has been

done before and probably better, but most of We Didn't See You On Sunday proves that Reelfoot can hold its own up against its heroes. NEIL GLADSTONE

#### various artists

KAOS Theory (Cottleston Pie/Mayonnaise-K) collects 21 performances from Evergreen State College's radio station KAOS, in Olympia, Washington. It's almost all Northwestern bands, though a few out-of-towners—Philadelphia's Un, Florida's Harry Pussy—turn up. A couple of tracks represent everything that people hate about "underground pop" (the Calvin Johnson Has Ruined Rock For An Entire Generation syndrome), but



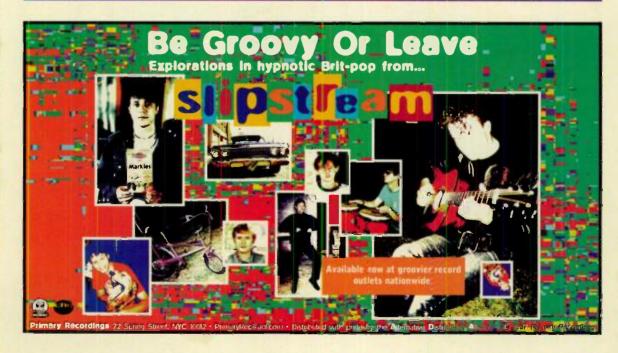
there are a few finds, notably singer/cellist Madigan, who's backed up on her track by Lora McFarlane (of Sleater-Kinney and 99)—on xylophone!... The soundtrack to Speed 2 (Virgin) illustrates one of the scariest trends in soundtracks over the last few years: new remakes of old hits. Is it really necessary for Leah Andreone to do "I Feel The Earth Move"? For Betty Wright to do a slow-jam version of "Every Breath You Take"? For Maxi Priest to do "The Tide Is High"? For, God forbid, Jimmy Cliff to remake "You Can Get It If You Really Want"? Is this kind of logic the reason there is a

Speed 2?... Arf! Arf! has released two volumes of psychedelic rarities from the late '60s, A Heavy Dose Of Lite Psych and An Overdose Of Heavy Psych, both full of bands you'll never hear anywhere else—almost everything on them appeared on small local labels, and nothing was even vaguely a hit. The former is

worth hearing for a deranged flip-out on "Baby Please Don't Go," the latter for a selection of ultra-heavy, ultra-stupid tracks by an I.A. band variously known as the Firebirds and the 31 Flavors... Second Semi-Annual Report is a Scat Records catalogue, a long essay about the current state of music written by Scat-guy Robert Griffin, and a CD with familiar, unreleased, and demo tracks by 13 Scat-related bands: the Electric Eels, Guided By Voices, Nothing Painted Blue, Cobra Verde, and others (plus biographical info about all the bands). If you want one, send five bucks to Scat's address (see Directory)...



MTV's Amp (Astralwerks-Caroline) is that rarity, a TV tie-in CD that's actually really good. It's a solid survey of current and recent electronic hits—Aphex Twin's "Girl/Boy Song," Orbital's "The Box," the Chemical Brothers' "Block Rockin' Beats," Future Sound Of London's "We Have Explosive," and a bunch of others. If you haven't heard much electronica and want an introduction to what's popular, this is as good as you're going to find right now, and it's the party disc of the month, too. DOUGLAS WOLK



#### reviews }



DATALOG: Release date: Jul. 28. FILE UNDER: Drone-pop. R.I.Y.L.: Mercury Rev, early Velvet Underground, The Sea & Cake.

#### LUNA / Pup Tent / Elektra

When singer Dean Wareham left Galaxie 500 and formed Luna, it seemed as if he wanted to be the charismatic leader of something that was more like a rock band. Three albums later, Luna's melodies have grown ever sparser and its mix of instruments and sounds denser and more involved. The band's reappropriating the atmospheric sound that was Galaxie's signature, as filtered through Ui, The Sea & Cake, and other more recent groups. Luna's latest album is newly hard-edged, with surfy guitar lines sliding into drone like a drunk off a bar stool. Where earlier Luna records had a poppy, shimmery sound, this one is a thick confection of distortion and pedal-warped guitars. Wareham's loose-limbed approach to songwriting has changed little over the years. Half the time,

he's trying to out-deadpan himself. "You're no Cary Grant," he proposes on the title track, "but then again, who is?" The rest of the time, he's grasping one simple hook for all it's worth, as on the confessional "Bobby Peru." Either way, he seems to sense that his function as a singer is to whisper secrets in our

ears and to be the island of intimacy amid Luna's waves of buzz. Which is about the figure he cut in Galaxie 500. ANDREA MOED

#### JOHN LYDON / Psycho's Path / Virgin

DATALOG: Released Jun. 17.

DATALOG: Released Jun. 24.

FILE UNDER: Orchestral pop with a side of melodrama.

R.I.Y.L.: The London Suede, The Charlatans U.K., My Life Story.

FILE UNDER: Twisted techno-pop.

R.I.Y.L.: Public Image Ltd., Leftfield.

After his regression into Rottenhood last summer for an amusing Sex Pistols reunion, it's easy to forget that John Lydon's always had a Bowie-like knack for being one or two steps ahead of incoming trends on the cultural curve, from art-damaged drones to rap-rock fusion—and, of course, he was already singing about Seattle in 1987. If it weren't for the Pistols' 20th anniversary tour, Rotten might have even beaten the great techno hype of '97 to the punch with *Psycho's Path*, a sampler-heavy, beatbox-driven affair featuring remixes by Moby, the Chemical Brothers, and Leftfield, whose 1995 *Leftism* was graced with a Lydon vocal track. It's Lydon's first-ever solo effort, which doesn't mean much, since he was the only permanent member of PiL's ever-shifting line-up.

But it does find the self-proclaimed "bad musician" taking a more active role in the music (he plays some rather bad accordion on "Sun" and creates his own samples throughout) and singing in a softer, more confessional manner on the Bosnian war-inspired "Grave Ride." It's still hard not to hear

Psycho's Path as the aging rock warrior awkwardly trying to fit in with what the kids are digging these days. But awkwardness has always been part of Lydon's prickly charm, and with the Prodigy sporting a cheap Rotten imitation of a frontguy, it's nice to hear the real thing baring his discolored incisors on a techno-rant like "Dog." MATT ASHARE



#### MANSUN / Attack Of The Grey Lantern / Epic

British pop is distinguished by an unusual stylistic link absent from our American heritage: the bizarre intersection of rock and cabaret music. This accounts for such phenomena as Scott Walker, the strong similarities between Anthony Newley and early David Bowie, and the way a band as willfully over-the-top as Mansun can hit the charts. Building on the promise of four previous singles, this U.K. quartet packs its first album with juicy chord changes, swelling strings, and pipe organs, as frontman Paul Draper conducts the delirious proceedings with melodramatic grandeur. From the sweeping James Bond homage "The Chad Who Loved Me" to the eight-plusminute closer "Dark Mavis," Attack Of The Grey Lantern is presented in wide-

screen Sensurround. "Take It Easy, Chicken" recalls the pomposity of The Cult; "Taxloss" stitches swatches torn from the Beatles' "Taxman" and the Stones' "We Love You" together with a Casio riff and intoxicating disco flourishes. Thoroughly glamorous, yet rarely glam, Mansun may

stumble ("Disgusting" wouldn't be out of place on a Tears For Fears album) but never falls, staying aloft on its tightrope for 55 uninterrupted minutes guaranteed to free your inner drama queen. KURT B. REIGHLEY

World Radio History

### mixed signals

MCing has been associated with the DJ movement since rappers began freestyling rhymes over a block-rockin' turntable mix. So why don't more mix CDs feature MCs? Because while a great lyricist can take a mix to new heights, a less than perfect MC will only get in the way, tripping and falling over his own



words, dragging the unquestionably irritated DJ down with him. Even when the feat is accomplished live, it's almost always ineffective on playback. So when

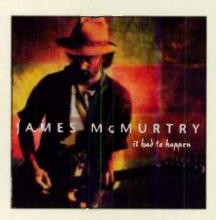
someone does make it work, you sure as hell better pay some respect. That's why DJ Kicks: The Black Album featuring Farda P (!K7) is such an adventurous, entertaining, and mesmerizing record. While the disc highlights the turntable skills of the U.K. duo Rockers Hi-Fi, Farda P is actually the man behind this madness a ringmaster guiding your mind through a gorgeous three-ring circus of obscure listening music, experimental drum 'n' bass, and more dub than you'll know what to do with. His low, menacing ragga moan rattles off lyrics specially penned for the Rockers' mix, and results in a recording that works on so many different levels, you'll need to listen to it a few times just to take everything in... DJ Dara was obviously up to the challenge of mixing the 20 tracks for the Renegado Continuum collection (Renegade-Rawkus), as the New York City hardstep-jungle master has been spinning the majority of these cuts for years anyway. The two-disc set marks the first time that any tracks from the U.K.'s influential (and arguably best) drum 'n' bass label, Renegade, will be available on domestic shores sans ridiculous import tax. Disc one drops nine tracks from the label's hardstep imprint, Renegade Hardware. Dark, devious, and evil beyond the call of duty, these are the tracks Dara has centered his career on-cuts like Future Forces' "Neitherworld" and "Flash Cordon," Paradox's "A Certain Sound" and six others quaranteed to wake the dead at even at the lowest of volumes. Disc two represents the Renegade Recordings imprint, focusing on the jazzier side of jungle with standouts like Merlin's "Moving Down The Line," Shogun's "Just For You" and Mastermind's "Jazz Moods." This is an excellent look at two sides of the blooming drum 'n' bass movement. M. TYE COMER

#### "For All I Know"

From The New Album By

### **James McMurtry**

It Had To Happen



"McMurtry can compel you to boogie while you consider the plight of his characters." – Rolling Stone

"It Had To Happen" is the best album James McMurtry has done — and that's saying something. His singing, music and lyrics have all deepened — no gesture is wasted, none of the effort shows. The intelligence was always there, but these are wiser songs." — Anthony DeCurtis, Contributing Editor, Rolling Stone

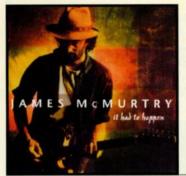
"Singer/songwriter McMurtry is a sort of Texan Lou Reed...he can lay a thumping beat beneath his cinematic lyrics." – Entertainment Weekly



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#### reviews }



DATALOG: Released Jun. 17.

FILE UNDER: A songwriter's songwriter, getting older
and worrying about it.

R.I.Y.L.: Townes Van Zandt, John Hiatt, Joe Henry.

#### JAMES MCMURTRY / It Had To Happen / Sugar Hill .

On his fourth record, the gruff-voiced James McMurtry is obsessively concerned with change, personal and cultural, and its inevitability—hence the title. Both the opening "Paris" and the closing "Jaws Of Life" explore that least rock 'n' roll of themes: middle age. In the former, an ex-Don Juan visits the City of Lights to discover that his receding hairline and middle-age spread have made him invisible: "You pose no danger/And man they can tell." These songs color everything in between, from the well-observed reminiscence of "12 O'Clock Whistle" ("Granny had her saccharine/she was putting it in her tea") to the witty "Sixty Acres," in which the narrator wonders what to do with a parcel of land he's inherited. McMurtry's light

touch fails him only on "No More Buffalo," which lays on the connections between natural and personal destruction a bit thickly. If all this sounds like a review of a collection of short fiction rather than of a record, it can't be helped; there's little to say about McMurtry and his band's music,

which is tasteful, appropriately "mature" roots-rock (though drummer Chris Searles plays a bit too cleverly for the genre). It's fine music, not distractingly slick (except for a few solos), but it ultimately exists largely to support McMurtry's writer's eye and smart mouth. FRANKLIN BRUNO

## FULL FORCE GALESBURG. the Mountain Goats. 16 new songs. Spring and Summer 1997. HI, Joel.

DATALOG: Released Jun. 3.

FILE UNDER: Encyclopedic troubadors.
R.I.Y.L.: Simon lovner, Barbara Manning.

#### MOUNTAIN GOATS / Full Force Galesburg / Emperor Jones-Trance Syndicate

The first thing to notice about Full Force Galesburg is that it has no "Going to..." songs. Such songs had been a Mountain Goats staple up until now; the track listing of last year's Nothing For Juice included "Going To Bogota," Kansas, Rekjavik, Scotland, and even Catalina. The songs on the new album are mostly about being there already: "Evening In Stalingrad," for example, and "It's All Here In Brownsville." This is especially curious given how much travelling singer/songwriter John Darnielle has done lately: he notes that the album was recorded in Iowa, California, and New Zealand. Not to read too much into it, but maybe Darnielle is acknowledging in those titles that he's in danger of running out of places to go. Like most previous Mountain Goats songs, each

song on *Galesburg* is a site-specific reverie that pieces together a bit of scenery, a message, a man's expression, a woman's voice, all to encapsulate some moment of great love, or doubt, or of being overcome, that is as unique as the chord progressions are repetitive. Darnielle's world is one of a

million isolated precincts whose borders never touch. Still, listening to his stories makes it seem unlikely that he will ever run out of space to fill. "I thought I knew what my weaknesses were, anyway/And then the orange tree blossomed last Saturday," Darnielle sings on "Ontario." His talent lies in giving us a taste of that feeling, without diminishing its distance. ANDREA MOED

## ENNUL GO NEW BAD THINGS

DATALOG: Released May 15. On tour through the summer.
FILE UNDER: Post-collegiate basement fun.
R.I.Y.L.: Early Camper Van Beethoven, Eggs, Neutral Milk Hotel.

#### NEW BAD THINGS / Ennui Go! / Pop Secret

New Bad Things are a huge, unruly band from Portland, Oregon—six or seven of them showed up to the on-the-fly, on-the-cheap recording sessions for *Ennui Gol*, their third album. Lots of guitars, various kinds of percussion (including a newly acquired drum machine), horns, weird blippy synth noises and plenty of amateur but enthusiastic singers get in on the fun. Everybody gets a crack at the microphone, whether to jump in with a verse, sing along on the choruses, or add off-key "whoo-whoo"s for no particular reason. (Saxophonist C. Denkewalter's game try at singing lead on "Concentrate" is especially charming.) Every song is packed with tape-muffled instrumentation—the idea is that there's no such thing as a bad overdub. This could turn into a real mess

if the songs weren't so good and so casual, full of dumb, happy choruses (like the one where everyone cheerfully harmonizes on "I hate everyone/And I hate you"). "Misgiving" is a classically simple three-chorder with an equally simple lyric; when the NBTs play it, it sounds like they're taking a first-take

crack at an old Dylan tune or something, except of course that it's their own song. They've got brevity and variety on their side, too: *Ennui Go!* plays like half an hour of a really good radio show. *DOUGLAS WOLK* 

#### NEW WET KOJAK / Nasty International / Touch And Go



The second album from Girls Against Boys sideproject New Wet Kojak resumes where its eponymous 1995 debut left off. Scott McCloud and Johnny Temple are once again joined by Nick Pellicciatto (Edsel), Jeff Turner (Gray Matter), Washington, DC, sax virtuoso Charles

DATALOG: Released June 10.
FILE UNDER: Sex beat concrète.
R.I.Y.L.: Girls Against Boys, Morphine.

Bennington, and the enigmatic but alluring Queen

Dynasty. Although McCloud's sexy grumble and Temple's murky, low-end bass remain constant, there are definitely elements of the New Wet Kojak sound that distinguish them from GVSB. Hopped up on angular jazz and brooding dub ("Hot Sparks"), white noise and black asphalt, Nasty International feels intoxicating but caustic-like getting drunk on the well brand, or having sex against a brick wall. While tracks by McCloud and Temple's primary unit typically leap out of the speakers and throttle the living daylights out of a victim, NWK ditties dance an oily, drunken tango around their intended. The new "Love & A Sick Beat" suggests "Disco Six Six Six" from House Of GVSB, but instead of exploding into a sonic orgy, this outing settles into a raunchy lounge vibe. There are definitely superfluous moments here, such as the amateurish musique concrète of "Sugar X," but Nasty International provides a satisfying distraction for fans ardently awaiting GVSB's major-label debut. KURT B. REIGHLEY

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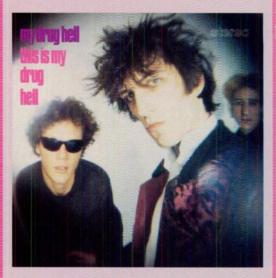
"Maurice and Robin are sort of two people, but not really"
—the Bee Gees' Barry Gibb, on his twin brothers.

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## my drug hell

The album

"this is my drug hell"
features 11 naked
rock songs including
the slower hit "Girl at
The Bus Stop" and
the faster "Don't Say
Goodbye", "2 AM" and
"Jinx's Hole".



"Stunning from first to last, not a wasted second" - Melody Maker

"Oasis's days as top pop export could be numbered" - Boston Phoenix

"If Morrison, Jagger and Dylan had a dinner party, My Drug Hell would be their musical guests" - Virtually Alternative

"It doesn't get much better than this" - Indie Street

"So damn authentic, you'd swear it was some undiscovered nugget from '65" - Flipside

"Memories of The Kinks and The Beatles dance around in your head, you have little choice but to become utterly addicted" - Live Wire Magazine

The most requested record on Jersey Shore radio (WHTG) for 9 weeks (and still counting).

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#### reviews }



DATALOG: Release date: Jul. 15.
FILE UNDER: The never-ending rave.
R.I.Y.L.: Underworld, Charlatans U.K., Happy Mondays.

#### PRIMAL SCREAM / Vanishing Point / Reprise •

Theoretically, now should be an ideal time for Primal Scream. Well before the major media developed their fascination with ambient music, these preand post-Manchester survivors produced albums of electrified hippie anthems ("Rocks," "Movin' On Up") paired with spaced-out instrumentals (their 1991 dance hit, "Loaded"). Vanishing Point doesn't stray far from the formula Primal Scream established with Screamadelica, either in form or quality—it's bracingly eclectic, but maddeningly inconsistent. "Star" is a passable sequel to "Come Together," as vocalist Bobby Gillespie drifts off to whatever place he goes when that soulful rock beat builds around him; and "Out Of The Void" is this year's "Higher Than The Sun"—sitar-laden, tripped

out, blissful. Gillespie and co. get more adventurous on the instrumentals and ambient cuts: "Stuka" is a refreshing experiment, with a clattery beat, fluttery flute samples and a vocoderized vocal that's nearly impossible to decipher. (And why would you want to?) "Trainspotting" provokes the same

reaction it did when it appeared on last year's hit U.K. soundtrack: too long, but invigorating and powerfully heavy. So Primal Scream hasn't progressed much at all this decade—on *Vanishing Point*'s best rock song, Gillespie sings, "Gimme medication to kill this hole." The line is so '89, but the fuzzed-out groove is too cool for you to care. It's that kind of album. CHRIS MOLANPHY

# ron sexsmith

DATALOG: Released Jun. 17.
FILE UNDER: Songwriter's songwriters.
R.I.Y.L.: Chilton, Nilsson and Wilson.

#### **RON SEXSMITH / Other Songs / Interscope**

These 14 songs follow Ron Sexsmith's self-titled debut, which graced many "best of" lists from 1995. Sexsmith hadn't invented a new style of music that blew critics (and touring mate Elvis Costello) away, he just wrote wise old songs and sang them with an innocent voice. The quality of Sexsmith's vocals isn't measured in the notes he can reach, but in the way his meek voice corners irony, oddity and compassion in its limited range. With help from producers Mitchell Froom and Tchad Blake (Costello, Suzanne Vega, Los Lobos), Sexsmith never allows these tender songs to become precious. While some songs are whimsically upbeat ("Clown In Broad Daylight" and "Average Joe"), others are mostly quiet, reflective and distinct. Costello twists a phrase

to make a caustic point, but Sexsmith's wordplay always reveals more character than cleverness. "All this worrying is getting us nowhere/Let's go somewhere instead," goes "Thinking Out Loud." Sexsmith says a lot with just a few words, quick stories and conversations. "Strawberry Blonde"

follows the turns in the life of a neighborhood girl, now with her own daughter. And "Pretty Little Cemetery" puts everything into perspective when the little boy on the bus turns to an old couple and says, "This is where you go to when you die." "Yes," the old man says, "we know." STEVE CIABATTONI



DATALOG: Released Jun. 3
FILE UNDER: Introspective, despondent folk.
R.I.Y.L.: Palace, Edith Frost, Syd Barrett.

#### SMOG / Red Apple Falls / Drag City

Smog's Bill Callahan is one creepy customer. As the lone permanent guy behind the moniker, he's been buying into the myth of the tortured romantic poet for the better part of the past decade, first on home-recorded cassettes and then on a series of progressively more produced CDs for Drag City. What gives Smog its unsettling spark is the tension between his artlessly innocent, these days even polite, delivery, and the underlying sense that he could snap any minute and pull a gun on the woman behind the counter. On *Red Apple Falls*, his sixth full-length in seven years, he even imagines being a criminal psychopath. "In the grocery store/In line behind a mother and child/I'm going to take that child," he sings in "Ex-Con,"

against an ironic and uncharacteristically cheery (for Smog) backdrop of chugging electric guitar, trumpet, synth washes, and up-tempo drums. Elsewhere, whiny pedal steel and rudimentary piano chords complement Callahan's three d's—despair, distrust, and disillusionment—until he

finally admits, on the disc's closing number ("Finer Days"), "I find myself isolated in these fine, fine days." MATT ASHARE



#### SPEEDY J / Public Energy No. 1 / Plus 8-Never

For all of the kinetic promise of the title, it takes a little while for *Public Energy No. 1* to take off. The album's first track, "Tuning In," begins with the ticking sound of a spaceship hovering several blocks away. "Patterns" interrupts this foreboding landscape with trickling paradiddles that recall the old video game *Centipede*. That bit of kitsch gives way to waves of breathy, synthesized flute and an electronic bass drum hammering erratically through layers of pristine harmonies. "In-formation" proves that Speedy J is at his best when injecting elements of ethnic music into his stratospheric synthesis. Here he employs a hopped-up Latin rhythm to great effect. "Pure Energy" lets the static do the talking, with looped, jackhammer

crunching and cracks of lightning. But it's only as the album is winding down that the tracks sound most complete. On "Canola" and "As The Bubble Expands," Speedy J works with textures that suggest Asian percussion. Tuned metallic beats drip with a contemplative air, bells ring out hypnotically and

a lurching, seductive rhythm eventually overtakes the solemnity. When the heroic gongs give way to a field of mechanical crickets, there is a resolution that connects to "Tuning In." Not all of *Public Energy No. 1* is quite as rewarding, but enough to make it an interesting listen. *NEIL GLADSTONE* 

### DATALOG: Released Apr. 28. FILE UNDER: Haunting, epic techno. R.I.Y.L.: Carl Craig, Future Sound Of London.

## Spiritualized (9) Under and jurithmen de its Bijdengur spule - tulded 10 min

#### SPIRITUALIZED / Ladies And Gentlemen We Are Floating In Space / Dedicated-Arista 👁

There's a bit of a micro-renaissance of excellent drug records being made right now, what with Spiritualized, Tranquility Bass and Tricky all filling the bins with heavy, spaced-out new platters. From the lineage of bedroom drone-masters Spacemen 3, Jason Pierce has taken Spiritualized to the point where it's one of the premier headphone bands of his generation. While the earlier Spacemen/Spiritualized records were actually pretty spare, drony affairs, Ladies And Gentlemen is lush and layered, full of little details that emerge over repeated listenings (according to one story, Pierce took two weeks to record the album and a further two years of work to achieve a satisfactory mix). Of course, to be curmudgeonly for a moment, there must

be something about drugs that makes people want to recycle the most mundanely popular classical music schtick: For the last 20 years, psychedelic musical visionaries have ripped off the most blatantly obvious chords and riffs from Bach, Pachelbel and Beethoven (here Pierce nicks the chords from

Pachelbel's Canon in D). Then again, it's no surprise, since most drugs usually amplify what's already there rather than leading to the creation of something new. With its pseudo-symphonic structures, otherwordly Farfisa organs, and lysergic orchestral sections interspersed amidst crazed rock freakouts, Ladies And Gentlemen We Are Floating In Space does achieve a weightlessness of sorts. JAMES LIEN

SUBROSA / Never Bet The Devil Your Head / 550-Epic •

DATALOG: Released Jul. 1.
FILE UNDER: Lush drug-rock.

R.I.Y.L.: Primal Scream, Lusk, Spacemen 3.

"Grunge is dead/It's buried next to God," sings Subrosa's Travis Tooke. He can't mean that. How else to describe the muddy rock that permeates so much of this record? But Tooke knows about death, all right: Subrosa is composed of members of For Squirrels, a band that lost its lead singer, bassist and tour manager in a van accident in 1995. Rising from those fairly deep ashes, guitarist-turned-singer Tooke and

DATALOG: Release date: Jul. 29. FILE UNDER: Muddy rock. R.I.Y.L.: Everclear, Soundgarden, Shudder To Think. drummer Jack Greigo soldier on with a new bassist on Never Bet The Devil Your Head. They're casting about for a new direction, but blessed with a few strengths. Subrosa sports a harder, more bashed-out sound than For Squirrels—"grunge" is a fairly accurate description,

although the band's knack for off-kilter time signatures and dynamics makes it too limiting a term. The spooky waltz "Madness Is Genius By Design" has elements of both Trent Reznor and Mudhoney, while the biting "The Life Inside Me Killed This Song" lurches from melodious verse to thrusting chorus like a less ornate Shudder To Think. Greigo is the anchor, managing shifts in tone that the screaming Tooke—whose vocals run a gamut from cynical to pissed-off—still needs to learn. Look beyond Subrosa's past, and they have the potential to rock on through the future, darkly. CHRIS MOLANPHY

#### reviews }



#### VARIOUS ARTISTS / These Were Different Times / Scat

"What's up with Ohio?" has been one of the punk rock questions of the '90s. Seemingly out of nowhere, a brash batch of degenerates—the New Bomb Turks, Gaunt, Prisonshake, etc.—have been producing raucous, smart rock 'n' roll. Those Were Different Times, which collects previously unreleased songs by three interrelated Cleveland bands of the early-to-mid-'70s, the Mirrors, Electric Eels, and Styrenes, provides answers by giving the region some much needed context, and, more importantly, fills holes in the history of punk. Among other things, it reminds us that a) the musical zeitgeist that spawned the Stooges, New York Dolls, and Modern Lovers had some equally vital components in Cleveland; and b) Ron House of Thomas Jefferson Slave Apartments owes his

DATALOG: Release date: Jul. 14.

FILE UNDER: Unsung heroes of rock 'n' roll.

R.I.Y.L.: Pere Ubu, Anyway Records,

Thomas Jefferson Slave Apartments.

vocal "style" almost exclusively to Brian McMahon of the Electric Eels. *Those Were Different Times* grants equal time to three bands that have been circumstantially (and I'd say criminally) forgotten. None of the three has the monster kick of the Stooges or personality of the Modern Lovers, but in

their own way, they set the tone for their direct descendants—Pere Ubu, the Cramps, and Devo—and beyond. RANDALL ROBERTS

# TIGER

#### TIGER / Shining In The Wood (EP) / Bar/None

The current generation of Scottish guitar bands tends, as a group, to be both harder and looser than its British counterparts. Tiger seems to be no exception, though its vision of pop owes more to such Fall-derived U.K. obscurities as the Janitors and Yeah Yeah Noh than to Bis's warmed-over love-rock or Yatsura's hammy glam. In particular, there's something Wonderful And Frightening about "Bicycle," with its Craig Scanlon-esque uniriff and none-too-coherent lyric rant. This song, as well as the title track, based on a riff a hairsbreadth away from "Roadrunner" and male-female call-and-response vocals, uses '80s-sounding electronic percussion to good effect. "Where's The Love?" opens with a dull collage of overmodulated keyboards and microcassette-quality vocals, but

eventually resolves into an appealing melodic fragment. The brief "I'm In Love With RAF Nurse" closes the EP with a similar evocation of Pete Shelley's vocal style at its snottiest. If all this sounds like a game of spot-the-influence, you're not far off—even "Time Tunnel Cellar," the most fully realized song

here, has a lyric conceit that seems lifted from the Television Personalities. On the evidence of this enigmatic, casual EP, no one could accuse Tiger of taking itself too seriously, but it still has some distance to go to become more than the sum of its (admittedly cool) influences. FRANKLIN BRUNO

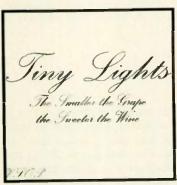
DATALOG: Release date: Jun. 17.
FILE UNDER: Low-pretense, highly derivative Scot-pop.
R.I.Y.L: Beatnik Filmstars, Boyracer, The Fall.

### TINY LIGHTS / The Smaller The Grape The Sweeter The Wine / Bar/None

After Francis Albert Sinatra, Tiny Lights are among Hoboken, New Jersey's most priceless musical gifts. For more than a dozen years, this infinitely unpretentious band has been getting away with some deviant (if not pretentious) efforts tempered perfectly by an off-the-cuff delivery. With trombone, trumpet and sax in tow, Tiny Lights are masters at flipping song styles inside out. The Smaller The Grape..., the band's seventh studio recording, tinkers with '70s pop-rock and mellow white-soul grooves. "Maybe You Will Listen" is a dreamy, effortless gem with casual harmonies from lead singer Donna Croughn and guitarist John Hamilton, all of it lushly accented by those Hoboken horns. The

completely cheesy, yet irresistable "Who's That Whispering" combines Motown with bubblegum pop so expertly it's a shame Tiny Lights weren't tapped for the Grace Of My Heart soundtrack. Lyrics like "everything is real cool, blue marbles and catfish and doggy-do" (from

"Would You Like To Float") hint at the depth of the subject matter here, but the Lights' harmless inanity adds something arguably worthwhile to some clever pop. STEVE CIABATTONI



DATALOG: Release date: Jun. 17. Also recommended: The Young
Person's Guide To Tiny Lights, which covers previous releases.

FILE UNDER: Sweetly inside-out pop-rock.

R.I.Y.L.: Schoolhouse Rock Rocks!, '70s Fleetwood Mac, Goffin & King.

### second thoughts

#### NINETY-NINE / 99 / Endearing

With all the (well-deserved) hype over Sleater-Kinney focusing on the band's guitar-wielding frontwomen, it's easy to forget that they're on their second drummer. Until the recent Dig Me Out, Sleater's skins were pounded by one Lora (or



Laura) MacFarlane, a young Australian woman whose extended residence Olympia, Washington was one of the major catalysts for the band's

formation. MacFarlane's inventive and skilled drumming was a large part of what made it possible for Carrie Brownstein and Corin Tucker to move beyond the limitations of their previous, less compelling bands. (Early Sleater-Kinney shows even included some instrument trading, with MacFarlane coming up front for a selfpenned song or two.) This album documents what she's been up to since her return home. though two songs were recorded earlier in Portland, Oregon. Rest assured, this isn't The Pete Best Tapes-MacFarlane is Ninety-Nine, writing everything on this record, and playing nearly all the instruments. Songs range from the rocking numbers (the hooky "I Am Not American" and the Wire-ish guitar of "Tim Tam") that sound much more band-like than most solo recordings to the quietly tense "Eraser," with its multiple overdubbed violas. Vocally, MacFarlane couldn't be farther from the incendiary wail of her old bandmates-she has a rich alto with an attractive vibrato, and her singing is more about seduction than confrontation. Lyrics tend to get buried in the mix, and the recording quality is servicable at best, but the creativity and personality here come through loud and clear. None of this is to take anything away from Brownstein, Tucker, or current S-K drummer Janet Weiss, but anyone who felt the fire in Call The Doctor should keep in mind that one-third of the fuel came from MacFarlane. FRANKLIN BRUNO





### DATALOG: Released Jun. 17. FILE UNDER: The Fab Four, now in handy wallet size! R.I.Y.L.: Beatles, Paul Weller, Oasis.

#### **WORLD PARTY / Egyptology / The Enclave**

World Party leader Karl Wallinger has spent the decade since leaving the Waterboys under the shadow of the Fab Four. It's an association most acts would rather not encourage; Wallinger courts it. On past albums, he's borrowed liberally from hippie-era acts like the Stones (Rolling and Sly), but Pepper-isms overwhelm all of his influences on Egyptology, down to the smallest details: Halfway through one tune, Wallinger picks up a bit of radio static, recalling "I Am the Walrus"; at the close of another, he babbles just like Lennon at the end of "I'm So Tired." Of course, pointing fingers at him for aping old styles doesn't give him credit for how expertly he can pay homage to his heroes. "Vanity Fair" is a moody ballad George Harrison could have

written for the White Album, and the piano-based "She's The One"—written for the Ed Burns movie but scrapped when Tom Petty offered up an entire album—is, melodically at least, the followup to "Imagine" that Lennon never wrote. A better title for the album might have been Crazy Piano Bits,

a phrase Wallinger coins in the bridge of the McCartney-esque "Call Me Up": "Whatever happened to those bits in the middle/You know, those crazy piano bits?" And with that, he offers one. CHRIS MOLANPHY

## EXTRA B

DATALOG: Released Apr. 22.
FILE UNDER: Low-key, fragile minimalism.
R.I.Y.L.: 18th Dye, early Sonic Youth, Bettie Serveert.

#### WUHLING / Extra 6 / Touch And Go

Take a deep breath and think back to the summer of 1995; for a brief moment, a German trio called 18th Dye was the Great Teutonic Hope, charged with the task of steering indie-rock away from confessional romanticism back to its dissonant, cerebral roots. 18th Dye disappeared into the mists of time, but it's resurfaced in reconfigured form. Handling the vocal duties now is bassist Heike Marie Radeker (whose lyrics are entirely in German); otherwise, Wuhling picks up right where the old band left off. Like 18th Dye's recordings, Extra 6 is distinguished by clanging minor chords, bell-like harmonics, and complicated arrangements rendered with a sort of clinical detachment. If there's a weak link in Wuhling's chain, it's

Radeker's vocals; she has a vulnerable, high-pitched voice which doesn't exactly survive Steve Albini's abrasive and flat recording. Her vocal melodies are pleasantly sweet and catchy, and could potentially guide the listener through the atonal background, but they get muscled aside on most

tracks by the colliding guitars and crashing snare drum ("Roberta" is a charming exception). As such, it's an interesting listen but not a very satisfyingly stick-to-the-ribs album; you can sit transfixed as you puzzle through the jagged interplay, but you won't walk away from it humming or even remembering any of the tunes. DAVID JARMAN



#### A LISTING OF LABELS WHOSE ARTISTS APPEAR IN THIS ISSUE

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## JUST OUT

#### JULY 8

GREG GARING Alone Revolution SUPER DELUXE Via Satellite Revolution PIPE Slow Boy Merge WEAKLINGS Remarkably Good Crane Mountain VARIOUS ARTISTS Ska: Cover It Up! Beloved LOWERCASE Kill The Lights Amphetamine Reptile COMMANDER VENUS The Uneventful Vacation Thick SOUNDTRACK Tromeo & Juliet Thick VIOLENT GREEN From Cycles Of Heat Up BANCO DE GAIA Big Men Cry Planet Dog-Mammoth MAYPOLE Product Work

#### JULY 15

ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN Evergreen London BIG 5 In Yer Face Pineapple-Triple X ANGELA STREHLI Deja Blues Antone's-Discovery PEEP The Joy Of Being Knitting Factory Works HIGH LLAMAS Hawaii V2 SOUNDTRACK Godmoney V2 CHARLATANS UK Telling Stories MCA MELONY Satisfaction DGC
KIM FOX Moon Hut Dreamworks ROBERTO GOYENECHE Tangos Del Sur Milan Latino BLUE MOUNTAIN Home Grown Roadrunner DEPARTMENT OF CROOKS Plan 9 From Las Vegas Risk LEE PERRY Arkology Island Jamaica BAYETE AND JABU KHANYILE Africa Unite Mango-Island VARIOUS ARTISTS Dimension In Ambience 2 Quango-Island DJ CAM Substances Medicine KENISHII Jelly Tones Medicine KIM WILSON AND THE FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS High Water High Street SISTER MACHINE GUN Metropolis WaxTrax!-TVT JUNO REACTOR Bible Of Dreams WaxTrax!-TVT

#### JULY 22

DAVID RYAN HARRIS David Rvan Harris Columbia PATTI SMITH Spoken Word Tim/Kerr ANDI SEXGANG Gabriel And The Golden Horn Hollow Hills-Triple X VARIOUS ARTISTS Ska: The Instrumentals Beloved VARIOUS ARTISTS Ska: Punk It Up! Beloved
PAUL SCHUTZE Organ & Percussion Tone Casualties INNERMEANS Innermeans Tooth & Nail

#### JULY 29

VARIOUS ARTISTS Sweet Sweet Ska Pinneapple-Triple X SOUNDTRACK Bandwagon Milan PSYCHOREALM Psychorealm Ruffhouse-Columbia BLUE RAGS Rag N Roll Sub Pop RESERVOIR Pink Machine Zero Hour BROWNSIDE Eastside Drama Triple X TEENAGE FANCLUB Songs From Northern Britain Creation-Columbia DELTA HAYMAX Delta Haymax Tooth & Nail PASTELS Unfair Kind Of Game Up ANDREW DORFF Hint Of Mess Work

#### AUGUST 12

SELECTER The Very Best Of Triple X LISA LOEB Firecracker Geffen KILLAH PRIEST Geffen YOUNG AMERICAN PRIMITIVE African Cosmopolitan Geffen JONATHAN FIRE EATER Dream Works JAMIE MEYERSON Listen Ovum Ruffhouse-Columbia RALF HILDENBEUTEL Hommage A Noir Zero Hour GENEVA Further Work

BILL LASWELL Panthalassa: The Music Of Miles Davis Columbia

ADOLESCENTS Return To The Blackhole Amsterdamned-Triple X

All dates subject to change so den i blame us

## **TOP 75**

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	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	YO LA TENGO	I Can Hear The Heart Beating As One	Mitidor
2	SLEATER-KINNEY		Kill Rock Stars
3	FOLK IMPLOSION	Dare To Be Surprised	Communion
4	CHEMICAL BROTHERS	Ing four Own note	Astralwerks-Caroline
5	BIS	New Transistor Heroes	Grand Royal-Capitol
6	PRIMUS	Brown Album	Interscope
7	SON VOLT	Straightaways	Warner Bros.
8	BELLE AND SEBASTIAN	If You're Feeling Sinister	The Enclave Digital Hardcore-Grand Royal
9	ATARI TEENAGE RIOT	Burn, Berlin, Burn!	Bulk-DreamWorks
10	DR. OCTAGON	Dr. Octagonecologyst In It For The Money	Capitol
11	SUPERGRASS	Retreat From The Sun	DGC
12	THAT DOG MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO	Original Fire (EP)	Nothing-Interscope
13	CHARLATANS UK	Tellin' Stories	MCA
14	PAPAS FRITAS	Helioself	Minty Fresh
16	BLUR	Blur	Virgin
17	BETTIE SERVEER1	Dust Bunnics	Matador-Capitol
18	CAN	Sacrilege	Mute
19	BEN LEE	Something To Remember Me By	Grand Royal
20	MARK EITZEL	West	Warner Bros. Righteous Babe
21	ANI DIFRANCO	Living In Clip	Nude/Columbia-CRG
22	LONDON SUEDE	Coming Up	Virgin
23	DAFT PUNK	Homework Developer	Matador
24	SILKWORM	Dude Ranch	Cargo-MCA
25	BLINK 182	Polydistortion	4AD
26	GUSGUS POLARA	C'est La Vie	Interscope
27 28	HELIUM	No Guitars (EP)	Matador
29	BUCK-O-NINE	Twenty-Eight Teeth	TVT
30	SOUNDIRACK	Austin Powers	Hollywood
31	PENNYWISE	Full Circle	Epitaph
32	GALAXIE 500	Copenhagen	Rykodisc
33	MAN OR ASTRO-MAN?	1000X	Touch And Go
34	PALACE MUSIC	Lost Blues And Other Songs	Drag City
35	POSTER CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL	RTFM	Reprise Fontana-Mercury
36	LAMB	Lamb	Zoo-Volcano
37	MATTHEW SWEET	Blue Sky On Mars Universal	BIB
38	BIM SKALA BIM	Sound Of Lies	American
39 40	JAYHAWKS WE	As Is	Asphodel
41	BETH ORTON	Trailer Park	Heavenly-Dedicated
42	MAD CADDIES	Quality Soft Core	Honest Don's
43	BEN FOLDS FIVE	Whatever And Ever Amen	Caroline-550
44	DINOSAUR JR	Hand It Over	Reprise
45	FUTURE BIBLE HEROES	Memories Of Love	Slow River
46	THIRD EYE FOUNDATION	Ghost	Merge
47	VOODOO GLOW SKULLS	Baile De Los Locos	Epitaph Roswell-Capitol
48	FOO FIGHTERS	The Colour And The Shape	Epic
49	INDIGO GIRLS	Shaming Of The Sun Son Of Walter	Flydaddy
50	BEVIS FROND	Drop The Break	Moonshine
51	CIRRUS	Like Swimming	Rykodisc-DreamWorks
52	MORPHINE	The Fawn	Thrill Jockey
53 54	SEA AND CAKE EDITH FROST	Calling Over Time	Drag City
55	MOGWAI	Ten Rapid (Collected Recordings 1996-1997)	Jetset
56	THIRD EVE BLIND	Third Eye Blind	Elektra-EFG
57	SUMMERCAMP	Pure Juice	Maverick-Reprise
58	MINUS 5	The Lonesome Death Of Buck McCoy	Malt-Hollywood
59	TARNATION	Mirador	Reprise
60	PAVEMENT	Brighten The Corners	Matador-Capitol
61	BRAINIAC	Electro Shock For President	Touch And Go Scratchie
62	FROGS	Starjob (EP)	Llektra-LEG
63	COWARD	Coward	Kill Rock Stars
64	COLD COLD HEARTS	Cold Cold Hearts The Tourbus Point Master Plan	MCA
65	BOBGOBLIN	The Twelve-Point Master Plan	Interscope
66	CLAW HAMMER	Hold Your Tongue (And Say Apple) Fake Can Be Just As Good	Touch And Go
67	BLONDE REDHEAD	A New Stereophonic Sound Spectacular	Epic
68	HOOVERPHONIC	Maybe It's Me	RCA
69	TREBLE CHARGER PIZZICATO FIVE	Sister Freedom Tapes (EP)	Matador
70 71	HANZEL UND GRETYL	Transmissions From Uranus	Energy
71 72	MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES	Let's Face It	Mercury
73	BABY CHAOS	Love Your Self Abuse	Atlantic
74	LILYS	Services (For The Soon To Be Departed) (EP	
75	SMOG	Red Apple Falls	Drag City

Chart data culled from CMJ New Music Reports weekly Top 200 radio chart, based on combined airplay of approximately 500 college, non-commercial and commercial radio stations reporting their top 30 ment-played relea es that week



#### **LEE PERRY**

**Arkology** 

Island Jamaica

Here's three CDs of crazy, cackling Lee Perry, the jokester, the trickster, the court jester of reggae music who actually rules just as much as the king. Beyond being a primary shaper of reggae music (and dub in particular), Lee "Scratch" Perry is a cosmic musical figure of our age, shaping music through sound and tone, taking pre-existing musical idioms and blasting them into the stratosphere. He's reinvented himself many times, confounding his critics and fans alike, and he's often teetered very close to the brink of lunacy. Perry is famous for such studio antics as dressing up in a tree costume and wrapping up his entire body in unspooled recording tape; the era of his mid-'70s Black Ark Studio, chronicled here through his solo work and productions of some of Jamaica's biggest hits and weirdest records, ended when he allegedly burned it down. But while Perry was cackling, crooning, babbling, and cranking the echo up to infinity, he was also commenting on politics, racism and economic injustice. If he said he was putting on a metal shirt and battling with the devil in outer space, he was probably actually talking about something here on Earth, and it's up to us Earthlings to figure out what he meant.

## flashback

IN THE BINS

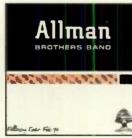
Wow! Rhino has just released *Beg, Scream & Shout: The Big Ol' Box Of '60s Soul*, a sprawling six-disc compendium. The generally awesome track selection spans the gamut from the well-worn tracks you'll probably skip over ("When A Man Loves A Woman") to soul essentials (Otis Redding, Ray Charles, Johnnie Taylor) to the delightfully obscure (the Soul Clan, Mel & Tim, Brenton Wood's "Oogum Boogum Song"). And when you listen to this set chronologically, along about every fourth song somebody hatches a new dance craze: the Monkey, the Horse, the Tighten Up, Alvin Cash & The Crawlers' "Twine Time". It's a huge task to tackle, but this set is darn near definitive. Got a long summer Sunday afternoon with nothing to listen to? Need something spectacular to send that awesome beach tape over the top? This set will fill those needs, and make a substantial addition to any soul fan's shelf.

Folks whose ears were piqued by the oldtimey sounds of the Squirrel Nut Zippers might want to check out a recent release on the Tradition imprint, entitled Jazz Funeral In New Orleans. Contrary to its rather grim title, Jazz Funeral is not an actual interment ceremony, nor is it Dixieland of the rootytooty, goofy, pinstripe-suit variety, but some serious dynamite vintage New Orleans jazz, led by clarinetist and



bandleader **George Lewis**, one of the all-time greats. It swings, it struts, and it's a real hoot. The sessions were also recorded in the late '50s, recently enough that it doesn't have that tinny '20s feeling of listening to music that's squawking through a paper cone.

Another modest archival release not to be missed is the **Allman Brothers Band**'s bootleg-ish *Fillmore East 2/70* (Grateful Dead). With a similar set list to the Allmans' more famous *Live At The* 



Fillmore East album, but recorded a year earlier, it's basically a dress rehearsal of sorts for that great live album. As interesting as the music itself are the circumstances surrounding its release. The Grateful Dead's soundman taped the Allmans' set when the two bands played together; years later, the Dead's tape archivist discovered these tapes of the Allmans in his vault, called up the band in

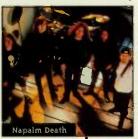
Macon, Georgia, and next thing you know, we have this no-frills, low-price CD on the Dead's independent label, free from the hassles of managers, big record companies, fancy remixers and other ill-intentioned interlopers.

If you look closely at the liner notes to the Rolling Stones' *Sticky Fingers*, you'll notice a thank-you credit given to "everyone who had the patience to sit through this for two million hours." It's a curious credit, but it reveals a little-known secret about the Stones: for every great moment on tape, there was also an awful, awful lot of sitting around, tuning up, waiting, jamming, and nodding out. One night in the '60s, while waiting for Keith Richards to wake up, the other Stones, along with sidemen Nicky Hopkins and Ry Cooder, cut this rambling, off-the-cuff acid blues jam. Hopkins then drew a nice little humorous cartoon and *Jamming With Edward* (Pointblank-Virgin) soon arrived in stores. Most people consider it pretty marginal, and it may be the Stones at their worst, but I've always loved its gritty, basement sound.

## metal

#### RIFFS

If there's been a problem with the French label Osmose lately, it's that import prices make it hard to sample excellent new albums from Enslaved, Immortal, Absu, Vital Remains, Bewitched, Mystifier, and Necromantia. For about \$12, the double-CD sampler World Domination II fixes this situation. While America's metal independents are mostly diversifying and finding more commercially palatable crossover acts, Osmose is investing in weird and interesting extreme metal. Besides the above, this budget compilation includes the folk- and industrial-tinged sounds of Impaled Nazarene, Tsatthoggua, Sadistik Exekution, Dark Tranquility, and Demoniac, plus new music from Swordmaster and Conqueror. This is the definitive picture of current musical developments in the international metal scene... Eyehategod and Anal Cunt split the 7" single In These Black Days: A Tribute To Black Subbath Vol. 1 (Hidra Head). Metal nerds Anal Cunt deliver numb-nuts comedy: Bill Ward's "It's Allright" from Technical Ecstasy, the exit groove from Sabotage, a singalong of "Sabra Cadabra" to the Steve Miller Band, and "Killing Yourself To Live" (the "edited Live At Last version," of course). Eyehategod pours out a mammoth medley of "Hand Of Doom" and "Behind The Wall Of Sleep" that uses every decibel of dynamic range this



high-quality vinyl pressing offers. With singer Michael Williams only inserting his rat's snarl at the climactic moment, it makes some great Sabbath karaoke to boot... Hey, everybody, Napalm Death is having a contest! "Bands who are not under a recording contract are invited to submit their cover versions of Napalm Death songs on DAT tape, with the entries to be judged by the band themselves. The lucky winner will

have their cover song appear on the Napalm Death EP scheduled to be released this fall." The deadline is August 31; entry forms are available from Earache Records [see Directory]. Given their eclectic tastes, the Napalm fellows can be expected to be receptive to the even the most radical reinterpretations of their progressive death metal.

#### METAL TOP 25

- 1 SEVENDUST MACHINE HEAD
- 3 VARIOUS ARTISTS
- 4 ROLLINS BAND
- 5 OBITUARY
- 6 FEAR FACTORY
- SNAPCASE
- 8 GWAR
- MISERIS
- 10 W.A.S.P.
- II KISS IT GOODBYL
- 12 VARIOUS ARTISTS 13 GRIP INC.
- 14 EDGE OF SANITY 15 SLO BURN
- 16 FORBIDDEN
- 17 CRADLE OF FILTH
- 18 PRIMUS
- 19 COAL CHAMBER
- 20 HELMET
- 21 MIGADETH
- 22 HANDSOME
- 23 SICK OF IT ALL 24 TATES WARNING

- Sevendust
- The More Things Change ...
- Ozz-lest Live
- Come In And Burn
- Back I rom The Dead
- Remanufacture (Cloning Technology) Roadrunner
- Progression Through Unlearning Victory
- Carnival Of Chaos
- American Psycho
- She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not Death...Is Just The Beginning IV
- Nemesis
- Infernal
- Amusing The Amazing (FP)
- Dusk And Her I mbrace
- Brown Album
- Coal Chamber
- Aftertaste "Trust" (5")
- Handsome
- Built To Last
- A Pleasant Shade Of Gray
- 25 HANZEL UND GRETYL Transmissions From Uranus

- Roadrunner Ozz-Red Ant
- **DreamWorks**
- Roadrunner

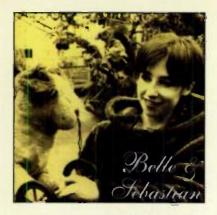
- Metal Blade
- Geffen
- Castle
- Revelation
- Nuclear Blast America
- Metal Blade
- Black Mark (North America)
- Malicious Vinyl-Red Ant
- Pavement
- Mayhem-Fierce
- Interscope
- Roadrunner
- Interscope
- Capitol
- LastWest-IEG
- Metal Blade
- Lnergy



#### **VARIOUS ARTISTS**

Awakening—Females In Extreme Music

Tiny underground metal label Dwell Records (a subsidiary of bluegrass distributor CMH) serves up this sampler of metal bands featuring women. Running the gamut from California's sludgy Noothgrush to Norway's slick black metallers Gehenna, Awakening is a great cross-section of mostly young bands plying familiar styles. The raw death metal bands Acrosticon and Demonic Christ use female vocals to devastating effect. Eccentric Italian outfit Opera IX stands out with its doomy, progressive slant and operatic vocals by Cadaveria. Also appearing are the typically Swedish Deathwitch, all-girl French Canadian trio November Grief, French thrash veterans Witches. and enthusiastic newcomers Ebonsight and Damad. Liner notes by Norwegian witch Andrea Haugen (ex-Aghast) play up the importance of goddesses, girl magick, and fertility power, but with all due respect, the women of Awakening are holding their own on the Earthly plane. As championed in the pages of women-run zines like Metal Maniacs and Endemoniada, women have already influenced the course of underground metal via Znowhite, Nuclear Death, Bolt Thrower, Fear Of God, Ancient, and 13. The stereotype of metal as a bastion of suburban white males is obviously outmoded-laurels to Rayshele Tiege and Raul Caballero at Dwell for providing the proof.



#### BELLE & SEBASTIAN

"Dog On Wheels"

Jeepster

Belle & Sebastian make a big point out of not wanting to make their band their main occupation-they hardly ever play live, and try to do everything in a non-rock way. So it's a little surprising that in well under a year they've produced two full albums and this new four-song single. "Dog On Wheels" doesn't have the majestic sweep of If You're Feeling Sinister, but it's full of lush little production touches: a Tijuana Brass-ish trumpet solo, what sounds like a Moog bleeping out a break in "String Bean Jean," stately pianos quietly playing chords alongside full-on drumming. Stuart Murdoch's voice rarely rises above a dry murmur, but when it does, it's got a delightfully sweet, shy clarity. And the songs are gorgeously audacious, funny and sad, melodramatic but understated, full of longing and wry jokes, very much like a softer, more orchestrated version of the Smiths. "The State I Am In" is a bald-faced enough song title on its own, but it turns out to be the title of a novel written by the narrator's confessor; this is followed by "I gave myself to Cod/There was a pregnant pause before he said okay." Not to mention a song called "Belle And Sebastian," with lyrics unrelated to either the band or the cartoon that gave it its name.

## singles

HISS & CRACKLE

The debut single by Lake Of Dracula—the Chicago neo-no-wave supergroup including members of Couch, the Flying Luttenbachers, and a few other bands—is wrapped in a peculiar joke: it purports to be not on Skin Grafi (which is releasing an album by the band soon), but by a bootleg label from Norway called Sin Raft (by some kind of twisted tradition, punk bootlegs usually claim to be Norwegian exports). Um, whatever. The single itself is messy and fun, three chaotic live tracks with very simple rhythms, vocals that sound like they were coerced under torture, and spasms of noise flying off them like water drops off a wet dog's fur.

Two different 7" versions of the **Jon Spencer Blues Explosion**'s awesome "Wail" have surfaced on Mute U.K. Both have a Mario Caldato remix of "Wail" that doesn't add much to the song besides a little more percussion and a synth solo in one of the breaks. The B-sides are the treat here: one contains a live version of "Flavor" that'll give you an idea of how incandescent they are on stage if you don't make it to Lollapalooza this



summer, and the other has the two goofy toss-offs "Judah Love Theme," with Jon testifying about the power of his guitarist Judah Bauer, and a "Radio Spot" patterned on '60s-style radio ads for groovy new LPs.

The legendary guitarist **John Fahey** has been doing lots of weird, small-scale projects lately, the most recent of which is a double-7", *The Mill Pond* (Little Brother). It's a collaboration with Jeff Allman, who plays electronics that appear on most of the set and take over side two, "Garbage," almost altogether, and Scott Colburn, the producer/mixer/editor whose dense, alien sound is all over these records. Fahey, playing acoustic, electric, and slide, is as impossibly sure-handed as ever, and on a couple of the pieces he even sings, or rather vocalizes: throatnoises that sound like they've been someplace very scary and come back permanently damaged by it. Creepy.

Adventures In Stereo's first three EPs are about the most collectible singles released in the last year, and among the most entertaining. A.I.S. includes two former members of Spirea-X, putting together tiny, lovely songlets out of looped samples of old records and gentle, Stereolab-ish melody fragments. (They have two self-titled, nearly identical-looking CDs out; the one with the blue cover collects the early EPs, and it's the one to go for.) "Waves On" is their side of a split single with the much more rock, much less interesting **Leopards** (Creeping Bent), and one of the few times they've cracked the 2 1/2-minute mark. It's a more ambitious song than A.I.S. has attempted before, and it bodes well for the band's willingness to stretch out beyond its great but limiting formula.

A few quick drops of the needle: **The Male Nurse**'s "G.D.R." is described by its label, Guided Missile, as "early Fall meets late Fall round at Mark E. Smith's house (in Edinburgh)," and that's almost totally true (though it's not as abrasive as that implies), but not a bad thing at all... Also in the Scottish-Fall-fans category is **Stoor**, whose "Repetition" single (title and aesthetic courtesy of The Fall, song not) is notable for a great, prickly lead guitar sound and a rhythm section that's doing its damnedest to break out of the cardboard box it sounds like it's being recorded in. It's on Chute Records, run by Spare Snare's Jan Burnett, a solidly reliable source for interesting young Scottish guitar-rock bands... **Plankton**'s "Headless Chicken" (Ochre) is a curious attempt to hybridize high-speed clickety-clackety rock with drum 'n' bass beats (provided on a remix here by the Bass Cadets). It doesn't actually work very well, but the way that it fails to work is still pretty interesting to hear.

## dance

#### BRISTOLIAN RENAISSANCE

The amount of inventive and exciting music emerging from Bristol right now nearly rivals the prodigious output of the Jamaican music biz. Bristol is where roots dub provides the point of entry into a bewildering range of musical styles. One example is the Ratman's Hitting A Raw Nerve EP (Cup Of Tea). This record is where the jazzy hardstep sensibilities of folks like Flynn & Flora, Roni Size and DJ Die (more on him below) meet the woofer-destroying sub-bass calisthenics of Smith & Mighty and the More Rockers crew. "Flute Dreams" may be the most successful integration of deep roots dub and drum-and-bass ever committed to wax. Overflowing with reverbed melodica and piano chords to the accompaniment of a ribcage-shaking bass line and a flurry of percussive drops and rolls, this is a mandatory slice of drum-and-bass '97 style. And the remaining tracks, "Sole Sentiment," "Raucous Grin" and "Storm," are nothing to laugh at... Though the V-Recordings imprint established its headquarters in London, the label is closely allied with the active Bristol drum-and-bass scene. The release of the V Classics double-LP brings together some of the label's most soughtafter singles, as well as an album of new tracks from the likes of Roni Size, DJ Krust, and DJ Die. Tracks such as "Stoned Love" and Die's "Reincarnations" effect a nearly perfect synthesis of Alex Reece/Wax Doctor-esque jazzstep and the rumbling hardstep styles exemplified by outfits like DJ Recordings and Renegade Hardware. The sense of suspense and mystery here is almost intolerable... The hardstep drum-and-bassists among you will be pleased to learn that the aforementioned Renegade Hardware label, as well as its harder imprint, Trouble On Vinyl, have now arranged for U.S. release of all their singles, including the reissued, self-titled Future Forces EP (Renegade/Primitive-Rawkus), which is a profoundly important moment in the history of hardstep.

#### DANCE TOP 25

1	CHEMICAL BROTHERS	Dig Your Own Hole	Astralwerks-Caroline
2	DAFT PUNK	Homework	Virgin
3	ORB	Orblivion	Island
4	WI	As Is	Asphodel
5	CIRRUS	Drop The Break	Moonshine
6	SPLEDY J	Public Energy No. 1	Plus 8-Never
7	CAN	Sacrilege	Mute
8	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Deep Concentration	Om
9	MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO	Original Fire (EP)	Nothing-Interscope
10	HANZEL UND GRETYL	Transmissions from Uranus	Energy
1	1 CARL CRAIG	More Sough About Food And Revolutionary Art	Planet E
1.	2 JOEY BELTRAM	Live Mix	Logic
1.	3 VARIOUS ARTISTS	Sunshine State Of Mind	ffrr-London
1	4 VARIOUS ARTISTS	This Is Home Entertainment III	Home Intertainment-Liquid Sky
1	5 SPAHN RANCH	Architecture	Cleopatra
10	6 ATARI TEFNAGE RIOT	Burn, Berlin, Burn!	Digital Hardcore-Grand Royal
1	7 HEAVY WATER FACTORY	Author Of Pain	Inergy
13	B VARIOUS ARTISTS	Trance Europe Express 5	Volume (UK)
1	9 VARIOUS ARTISTS	Artcore 3	React America
2	O THIEVERY CORPORATION	Sounds from The Thievery Hi-Fi	Lighteenth Street Lounge
2	I DEATHLINE INT'L	Arashi Syndrom	COP International
2	2 VARIOUS ARTISTS	Legally Storeth A New High In Dram & Sans	Mutant Sound System
2	3 THIRD FYE FOUNDATION	Ghost	Merge
2	4 TRANQUILITY BASS	Let The Freak Flug Fly	Astralwerks-Caroline
2	5 VARIOUS ARTISTS	Made On Farth	Blue Room



## VARIOUS ARTISTS A New Breed Of Dub Dubbead-Septhern

With the flurry of licensing activity underway as "electronica" continues its movement across the American landscape, there are gaps and silences around certain genres, new roots dub being the most obvious. Its following in England is tremendous, with new dub nights increasingly surfacing alongside drum-and-bass events, but due to inadequate radio exposure and poor distribution, the innovative and exciting new wave of British roots dub is reaching only a tiny audience in the U.S. This compilation should serve as a corrective to that unfortunate situation. The artists represented here stand at the crossroads of digidub, abstract beats, techno, and hip-hop. One name occurs here repeatedly: Doug Wardrop, who works under the names Jah Warrior, Dub Specialists and Bush Chemists, to name only a few. His tracks are towering exercises in echo and reverb in a thoroughly contemporary mode, shot through with traces of Detroit, London and New York. Wardrop retains the wonderfully durable minor-key melancholic effects of producers such as King Tubby, Jah Shaka and the Mad Professor, but supplements them with acid effects, lithe house bass lines and Biz Markie samples. And don't overlook the gorgeous, operatic tracks by the Disciples on this splendid collection.



#### **ROB SWIFT** Soulful Fruit Stone's Throw

The art of the mix tape has been an essential component of hip-hop culture for more than a decade ncw. "Tape kings" on both coasts have perfected the art of mad cutand-scratch scenarios, exclusive freestyles and underground as well as overground rap hits to the point where these DJs have become as famous on the streets as the rap artists on their tapes. Rob Swift, a member of New York's X-Men DI crew (which also includes Roc Raida, Mista Sinista and Eclipse), shows us on Soulful Fruit just how far things have progressed. This cassette-only release from last year, finally available on disc, is a mind-boggling musical odyssey that shows the compositional genius marking much of the X-Men's best work. Balancing obscure funk gems with classic breaks and more deck wizardry than you can shake a stick at, tracks like "A Turntable Xperience," "A Scratch Is A Musical Note" and "Who Is It? Mista Sinista" will make your head spin. And the 14-minute epic "Rob Swift Versus Rhazel" is one of the craziest live hip-hop experiences ever put on wax. This is hip-hop in its purest form, and it succeeds in advancing instrumental music to the next level.

## hip-hop

#### BONUS BEA

Mike Ladd's work presents the thinking hip-hop listener with a mild dilemma: Is he a rapper, or a poet, or both? Listening to his debut album, Easy Listening For Armageddon (Scratchie-Mercury), you'll likely opt for the latter classification. Not that such a distinction necessarily needs to

be made, but this is 1997, the golden age of the wack-ass-MC-as-platinum-sellingartist, after all. Stacked up against what most people think a rapper should be today, he doesn't really fit the mold. But that's the point. From the perspective of the influence that artists like the Last Poets and Gil Scott-Heron have had on the lyricists of today, Ladd makes perfect sense. His claustrophobic, philosophical,



and at times deeply sentimental tunes seep under your skin and stay with you for days. Musically, songs like "The Tragic Mulatto" and "Maniac" are likely to please hip-hoppers, but more pensive tracks like "Bush League Junkies" and "Ockrakoke" will also draw you in with



their smoky, poetic soul. Ladd is an important new voice in the rap world, and possibly a glimpse into the future of hiphop... New Orleans has finally represented the rap world, and it's appropriate that Coolbone does the honors. The marriage of the ultra-funky madness of the Crescent City's brass band scene with a hip-hop sensibility is accomplished to great effect the group's new Brass on

(Hollywood). Rapper Eric "Cash-Us" Clay's lyrics ride over the funkyass party struts laid down by his horn-heavy compatriots, and songs here range from the throw-down party feel of "The Rescue" to the slow beat and street reality lyrics of "Nothin' But Strife." Much like the city of New Orleans itself, there is both joy and pain seen in Coolbone's lyrics and attitude, but there's a party going on either way.

#### HIP HOP TOP 25

1 1	KR	S-	O	VE
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WU-TANG CLAN

3 THA ALKAHOLIKS

II NGLE BROTHERS

5 NOTORIOUS B.I.G.

6 GP WU

7 JAY-Z

8 O.C.

9 BOOGIEMONSTERS

10 BOOT CAMP CL K

11 CRU

12 MR. COMPLEX

13 LADY OF RAGE

14 REDMAN

15 DR. OCTAGON

16 WHORIDAS

17 CAMP LO

18 SUGA FREE

19 DJ CAM

20 SAUCE MONEY

21 GHOSTFACE KILLAH

22 DEFARI

23 SOUL ASSASSING

24 RAMPAGE THE LAST BUY SCOUT

25 RASCO

"Step Into A World" I Got Next

"Iriumph" "Hip Hop Drunkies"

"How Ya Want It" Raw Deluxe Gee Street-V2

"Hypnotize" Life After Death Bad Boy-Arista

"Black On Black Crime"

"Who You Wit" Sprung

"My World"

"The Beginning Of The Ind" "He d: Are Reddee P. II" For The Pople

"Pronto"

"Visualize"

"Sho Shot" Gridlock'd

"Whateva Man" Muddy Waters "Blue Flowers" Dr. Octagonerologyst

"Taxin"

"Luchini (This Is It)"

"If U Stay Ready"

Mad Blunted Jazz

"Action"

"Iron Maiden" Ironman

Change and Switch "Third World" DJ Menny Presents The South

"Wild For Da Night"

"Unassisted"

Loud-RCA

MCA Qwest-WB

Payday firr-London

Pendulum-I MI

Duck Down Boot Camp Priority

Def Jam Vielstor-Pelygram

Raw Shack

Death Roy-Interscope Def Jam/RAL-Mercury

Bul c-Dre mWork

Southpaw-Delicious Vinyl

Profile Island

Shadow

Roc-A-Fella-Geffen

Razor Sharp-Ppic S reet

Columbi - CRG

Hestr-HG

Stone's Throw

## MIXED MEDIA

MOVIES

FIRE (Zeitgelst Films)

Riots erupted at a screening of Fire in India—not because writer/director Deepa Mehta's extraordinarily acted film about the end of tradition in that country breaks local filmic taboos (although it does), but because so many people were trying to get in. Shabana Azmi, "the Meryl Streep of India," plays Radha, a woman constrained by duty to a suffocating, celibate marriage; the incredibly beautiful Nandita Das plays Sita, who shares a house with Radha and a loveless marriage of her own to Radha's brother-in-law, and helps to care for the mute, stricken ancient materfamilias, Biji (the latter's screen credit is given as "introducing Kushal Rekhi"). Fire has the gauzy visual style of a Merchant/lvory movie (Mehta doesn't miss a chance to include the Taj Mahal in a shot); it also obeys the dictum that any independent movie released in 1997 has to include a lesbian love scene. Mostly, though, the film concerns itself with the tension between three generations of Indian culture: the old, devoutly religious ways, represented by the helpless rage of Biji; the generation of Radha and her husband, trying to suppress their desires and to balance tradition with the demands of the outside world and the capitalistic impulse; and younger people like Sita, tentatively reaching for independence and modernity at the cost of their ties to the world they came out of. DOUGLAS WOLK



STEEL (DC)

Steel, a Superman spinoff with an African-American cast, used to be pretty disastrous, plagued with musical-chairs creative teams, a hero with powers none of his many writers could keep straight, iconography that was a confused mix of Superman, Iron Man and John Henry, and a supporting cast straight out of the Funnybook Clichés 101 textbook. With a Steel live-action movie planned for this year, it was time to get it right, and the comic has been rescued by new writer Christopher Priest, who's ditched most of its baggage, relocated the action to Jersey City, NI, and shifted the focus to the series' most interesting character, Steel's smart-mouthed 16year-old niece. Priest, a very clever and deeply idiosyncratic writer (he tends to kill off major characters as ingloriously as possible) has gotten some attention in the last few years for long, peculiar runs on The Ray and Justice League Task Force. Though his main plots in Steel explore his familiar themes of good people forced into moral compromise, his kicky, vernacular teenage dialogue-"Like, what's my name? My name is not 'Feeds Crack Fiends.' Do you see 'Feeds Crack Fiends' written on my mailbox?"— is always fun to read. (DW)

COMIC



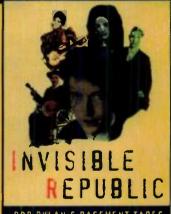
#### SIGHT UNSEEN by James Sturm (Fantagraphics)

There are a stableful of comics featuring social satire delivered by funny animals, but few as well-conceived as James Sturm's Cereal Killers, a surreal comic noir about breakfast cereal mascots gone to seed. Sturm's Sight Unseen, which previously appeared as a series of newspaper strips, is sparser on the critters, but displays an equally dark and biting sense of humor. The story assembles a strange ecosystem full of characters, each differently delusional. An unnamed man-onthe-street discovers an injured friend and sets out to save him, only to be thwarted by a band of cultists with a parade float, then distracted by a bump on the head that makes him think he's found enlightenment. A baseball-wielding brat is on a mission to avenge the loss of his future Social Security payments; a floating cyclops declares itself to be God during a spoken-word performance attended by the first man's high school crush. Like Jim Woodring, Sturm likes to spring sudden contextual shifts on his characters. Just as they seem headed toward a dead end, they are inexplicably somewhere else This dreamlike logic gets a bit random, but by its end, the book feels oddly rewarding. ANDREA MOED

#### INVISIBLE REPUBLIC by Greil Marcos (Hearly Helt)

In 1967, Bob Dylan and The Band holed up in a house in upstate New York and recorded "the basement tapes," about 90 different original songs and covers that seemed weirdly timeless. They became the stuff of legend and rumor; a few dozen of them snuck out over time in various official forms, and the rest on bootlegs. When a Basement Tapes double-album came out in 1975, Greil Marcus wrote the liner notes; 22 years later, he's returned to the tapes for this book-length examination of the strange ways they fit into the American folk tradition. Invisible Republic isn't as grandly scaled as Lipstick Traces, but Marcus makes the same kind of audacious intellectual leaps that he did in that book, from Dylan to filmmaker/music anthologist Harry Smith to folksinger Dock Boggs and beyond. When Marcus lapses into a quasi-fictional fantasia on the basement tapes' characters and themes, Invisible Republic nearly stops dead, but the first section's reportage on Dylan's 1966 tour and the controversies surrounding it is compelling, and as a deeply considered assessment of a relatively small body of work, the book is an extraordinary piece of music criticism. (DW)

#### OOKS 6 REIL MARCUS



BDB DYLAN'S BASEMENT TAPES



#### BADABOOM GRAMOPHONE (\$5.00 from P.O. Box 204, Leonia, NJ 07695)

Ben Goldberg runs the Ba Da Bing! label, and occasionally publishes Badaboom Gramophone, a strange cross between the casual eclecticism of a 'zine and the formality of an academic journal, covering a very wide range of music and a certain amount of other, unrelated stuff. Issue #2 is a 128-page monster, leading off with an extensive interview with Petr Kotik, director of the experimental classical group S.E.M. Ensemble. It also includes a piece on music-philosopher Jacques Attali, a neat interview with Silkworm's Andy Cohen, a brief and fairly vague history of the New Zealand underground rock scene, and CMJ contributor Franklin Bruno's densely written but interesting examination of recording and representation in pop. The non-music content is less consistent and sometimes a little pointless, though an analysis of plot holes and the arm-being-chopped-off motif in the Star Wars trilogy is fun. The issue comes with a CD, including tracks by Kotik Poem Rocket, Crawling With Tarts, the Azusa Plane and others. DW

'ZINES

## MULTI-MEDIA

#### BALLBLAZER CHAMPIONS

(LucasArts)

LucasArts has recently made its excellent PC-based Star Wars games Rebel Assault II: The Hidden Empire and Dark Forces available for the Sony PlayStation platform. And while those games are well translated for PlayStation, with excellent graphics and the irresistible allure of shooting at storm troopers, they both involve strategy, skill and attention span, which is great for gamesmanship, but not so much for instant gratification. Enter the third of LucasArts' Playstation titles, BallBlazer Champions, where the battles of the "Second Galactic War" have been replaced by a single warrior combat game combining indoor soccer, Rollerball and the Knicks-Heat playoff series. The object is to launch the "plasmorb" into a (sometimes moving) goal, while avoiding your opponent and his or her armaments and not draining your "rotofoil" of its

energy. In order to play the game well, you will have to devise strategies for appitalizing on your chosen characters' inherent abilities, navigating the terrain of various stadiums and using the eight different weapons available. Or you can just blast your opponent with a homing missile to make up for life's inequities. It's fun either way. SCOTT FRAMPION



#### SMOKE DAMAGE

(ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/WarrenEllis/)

By now comics fans must have stopped asking why it seems that writers from the British Isles get away with writing the most challenging comics. Since Alan Moore

SMOKE DAMAGE

got the ball rolling, Neil Gaiman, Grant Morrison and Peter Milligan have all picked it up and run with it, and, of late, Garth Ennis and Warren Ellis have done some damage on their own. But the vitriolic Ellis has something that none of the others do: his very own web page! As the author of more than a few of the only readable Marvel comics of the past five years (including Hellstorm and Ruins), and DV8 and Stormwatch from Image. Ellis is known as a writer who pulls no punches. "Smoke Damage" doesn't disappoint. Along with previews of his upcoming work (the SFseries Transmetropolitan looks very cool), Ellis presents various essays, some reprinted from British comics fanzines, others new. Walking into London's Forbidden Planet comies shop he observes

"Comics are ugly, aren't they?" Another essay cogently points out why American comics can ape the mannerisms of Japanese manga without understanding what makes them work as stories. The site is a treat among the generally sycophantic tone of most comics web pages. HEIDI MACDONALD

#### JUST ASK JERRY

fwww.bca-pool.com/instruction/askjerry.htm)

Sure, it seems to be about pool, but "Just Ask Jerry," the Q&A portion of the Billiards Congress of America's official web site, is so much more. Never mind that reading about

playing pool is like watching TV about poetry. While Jerry gives you good advice on topics such as English, follow-through, cue storage and other nitty-gritty aspects of the hustler's life, it's his inscrutable bluntness that makes him the guru he is. In reply to a 20-year-old who just can't get to the next level. Jerry barks, "You said that your friends are getting better and you sound like you are at a plateau. Many people reach a plateau and don't seem to get better. This is when they need to see a certified instructor-providing you are playing enough." Tell it like it is, man. I hope this slacker does the manly thing instead of whining like a cry-baby into his pool hall beer. Or ponder this advice to someone who finds himself in a slump: "Some players play out of their slumps, others find it easier to get out of a slump if they take a break. Find out which works best for you." If we could all "Just Ask

on a coming and ( on restrict published ) should also to have I their on one pursue are single on believes or the

**World Radio History** 

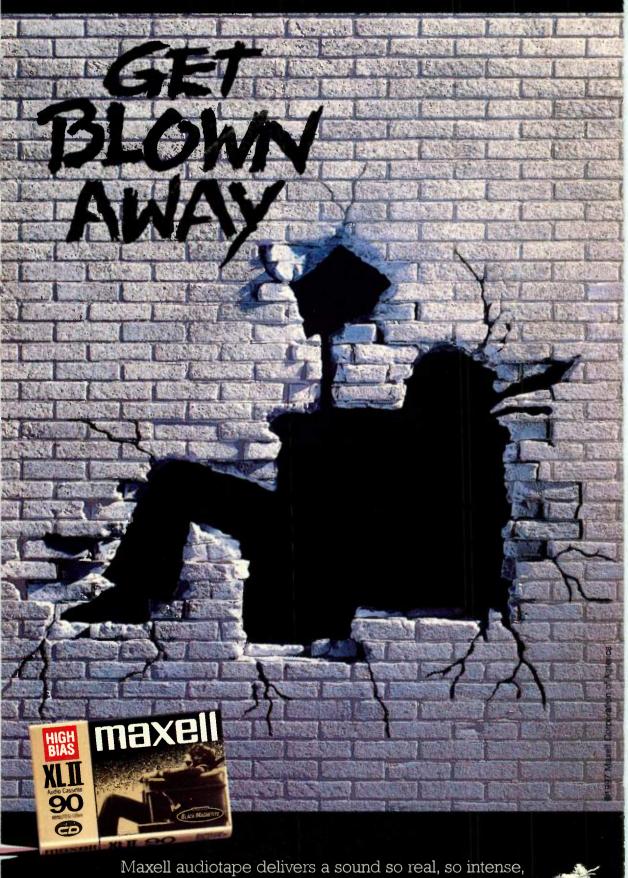
Jerry," the field of licensed psychotherapists would wither into nothingness. HEIDIMACDONALD

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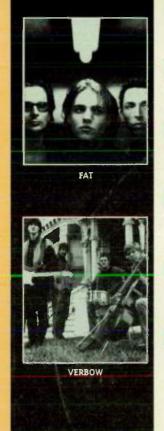
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World Radio History



They have gone straight to the heart of the territory that spawned their most innovative work in Screamadelicu—that murky, filthy fucker of a love & warsone between dance and rock 'n' roll,' says writer Irvine Welsh, describing PRIMAL SCREAM. Last year, the band appeared on the soundtrack to Welsh's movie Train-painting and it's just released Vanishing Print (Reprise), whose title track is heard here. (See review, pg. 40.)

There is such a small-town metality on England eight non," are FAT basist Paul Andrews, explaining why the hand left its home country last year. You have to be easily categorized to be accepted. We take elements of rock, techno rap and classic pop and much them all together, and the resulty confined [the English]." After relocating to New York City, the trio recorded its self-titled debut shum (DV8-A&M), whose first single is "Downtime."

Den't be surprised i "Holiday" reminds you of a Sugar song VERBOWS second album fits major-label debut! Chrimicles (550) was produced by Bob Mould, who has been a stauneh supporter of the Chicago band for a number of years. It was great working with Bob saw socialist guitarist Jason Nardury. At first we were nervous about working with one of our heroes. As it turned out, we were completely on the same page of each other, and it made the recording process very exiting.

CHUG's first single "Flowers" was used as background muste on The Adventure Of Price & Pere, but the group is actually from New Zealand with atrong links to the legendary 3D. Chug singer Norma O Malley used to sing in Lock Blue Go Purple with Dentie Roughan of the 3D a basisty co-rocalist Alf Danielson played in band, with other members of the 3D and guitarist David Mitchell was in the 3D's. "Watertorture" comes from the new album Metalon (Alias). (See Best New Music pp. 12.)

SLEATER-KINNEY has captured the heart of America rock and recognition of the properties of the America rock and recognition of the Boundary of the Carte Brownstein and Corn Tucker cut their teeth in riot greef band—Excus 17 and Heavens To Betty, respectively—but, combined first with Lora Mackarlane (now of 99) and more recently with Lora Weiss (of Quasi) on drums, they re in and scent rockers. Don't miss them live (See interview, pg. 16)

OPTIGANALLY YOURS is a collaboration between Rob Crow (of Things and, formerly, Heavy Vegetable) and fellow San Diego musician Pea Hix, with a lot of help from the Optigan—a Mattel-made organ from the mid-70s that reads notes, chords and rhythms off interchangeable optical discs of full bands playing them. "Mr. Wilson" comes from the duo debut. Speak ht On. Opin anally Yours (Headhunter-Cargo) (See Quick Fix. ps. 10)

## CM NEW MUSIC

#### **VOLUME 48 • AUGUST 1997**

Surfaces (Nettwerk-Arista) "is about me finally growing up and facing ugly things about myself" says Vancouver's SARAH Mcl ACHLAN discussion the theme behind her fourth album. "We all have a dark side, it's builshit to say that we don't At some point we're going to have to face that." Tracks like "Building A Mystery" exemplify McLachlan's talent for composing strong, poignant, disturbinely honest pop masterpieces (See cover story, pg. 20).

Some fun fact, about D. lla. OLD 97'8. The band took its name from a 1900 train week bellad. The Wreek Of the Old 97', singer guitarist Rhett Miller and basisst Murry Hammend played in Killbully, three members of the band have their hair aut by two fingered barber Johnny Santos, in Linuis TX, "Time Bomb" appears on this month's CD, it's taken from the band's major-label debut. Too Far To Care (Tlebura) (See Quick Fix. pg. 6).

THE GERALDINE FIBRERS started out at an L.A. country band with its roots in the industrial acene—singer Carla Bozulich used to be in Ethyl Mentglaw. Those work, partly acoustic recordings appear on a recent compilation called What Fun Of Get Thee Gone Don't You Understand? but the new "official Fibbers album Batch (Virgin) sees them evolving into a straight-up, furious rock and though not without folksy touches like the mandelin on "California Tuffy" (See Bost New Muste, pg 15.)

Gron vershitt Mike Patten's sele release and tour orth M. Bungle keyboardist Roddy Bottum's Imperial Ten project and drummer Mike Bordin's stints with Ozzy Osbourne many thought they diheard the last from FAITH NO MORE. There has been speculation that the band was going to break up ever since our first album says bassist Billy Gould. There have been points every year for the past 10 years where it looked like the band might not go on. It happens once every six weeks. "Last Cup Of Sorrow" is from the unstoppable band's Album Of The War (Reprise) (See Best New Music in July issue, pg. 11.)



OLD 97's



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SUBROSA

Often teenagers show up at our gig with their parents, says NIELDS wocalist guitarist songwriter Nerissa Nields. The kids see in u something really new and fresh, and the parents see us as a throwback to the classic rock groups of the flow We want to be making music that lasts a long time, yet also reflects what's going on now. "Taxi Girl" comes from the Northampton, Massachusetts, quintet's debut, Gotta Get Ner Greta, which was originally released last year and has just been reissued, with three additional tracks, by Guardian.

We've never pretended we didn't want to be in the mainstream' says DIL AMITRI's Justin Currie. "I don't mean in terms of sales, but in terms of everybody should be able to got our music. To me, that's one of the functions of pop music. You bring everybody together in a room to sing along to a catchy tune." With the help of a couple of new members, the Scottish band is on its fifth album, Some Other Sucker's Parade (A&M), on which "Not Where It's At" appears (See review, pg 29).

That SLIPSTREAM's Mark Refoy and Johnny Matlock apent time in both Spacemen 3 and Spiritualized is not something the band likes to emphasize. After all, you'd be hard-pressed to liken the '60s Britpop flat of "You'll Never Catch" from the band's second album, Be Grooty Or Leave (Primary), to the pychedelic drones of their former bands. Or as Refoy puts it, "Slipstream is more song-oriented. Spiritualized was big soundscapes that went on and on and I just not hored shitless, basically."

LIDA HUSIK has always been a free spirit. As a teenager, she learned to play violin, piano, guitar and drums, and began making her own four-track recordings. A solo artist ever since, Husik has played virtually all of the instruments on each of her five albums to date. "Fly Stereophonic" is the title track from Husik's latest long-player (Alias), which finds her returning—after 1985's unusual electronic collaboration with Beaumont Hannant—to sweet, ethercal pop. (See review, ps. 31.)

"We know we're different," says Ken Jorden of the Los Angeles technobreakheat duo, THE CRYSTAL METHOD discussing comparisons to other rising electronic dance artists. We're more song oriented and more melodic That's not to say that [electronic] bands that don't write music that way are doing anything wrong, but this is the way we approach things. There's similarities between us and AC INC too, you know? Hear the difference on "Busy Child," the first single from the Method's debut. Ways (Outpost) (See On The Werse, ps. 14)

On September 8, 1995, I lost my three best friends, says SUBROSA's Travisticoke, explaining the accident that claimed the fives of the tour manager and two members of his old band. For Squirrels. "When something dies, two things happen. The spirit moves on and the body stays. For Squirrels has died and moved on to bliss, the body remains." Tooke's new band has made its first apearance with Never Bet The Devil Your Head (550), a collection of raw, aggressive rock songs, which includes. "Buzzard." (See review, pg. 41.)

SLIDER's Matt Winegar began his musical career behind the soundboard producing eight-track demos for friends and, eventually, Primus's first couple of albums. After deciding that he wanted a band of his own, Winegar moved into a dingy Hollywood apartment and, inspired by the recent break-up with his girlfriend, began writing the songs that appear on his band's debut album, Sudden Fun (A&M). "I Wanna Go" is the first single (See Quick Fix, pg. 8)

Lendons MY DRUG HELL formed in 1991, when frontman Tim Brilla recruited his bandmates by approaching strangers at gips, in clubs and on the street. The band released "Girl At The Bus Stop" as its first single a few years ago, but shortly after the trio recorded This le My Drug Hell, its label stopped trading in the U.K. and the album was left in limbo until last year, when the Unity Label Group finally released it here in the States.

SPIRITUALIZED's Jason Pierce once said that his band makes "music that fills the gaps between all my influences, the gaps in my record collection. It's very easy to sound like the Beach Boys or the Beatles, but it doesn't make for great music. On Ladies And Gentlemen We Are Floating In Space (Dedicated-Arista), the quartet's latest release, Pierce mans the gaps between Suicide, the Velvet Undergraund. Sun Ra. and other far-flung influences. Listen for the echoes of tomorrow on "Electricity." (See review, pg. 41)

FCHO & THE BUNNYMEN's self-titled album, their last with the original lineup, came out exactly ten years ago. Singer lan McCulloch left the band for a solo career, drummer Pete de Frietas was killed in a motorcycle accident, and later McCulloch and guitarist Will Sergeant formed Electrafixion. Now Sergeant, McCulloch and bassist Les Pattinson have reunited for Evergreen (London), and "I Want To Be There (When You Come)" is its first single. (See review, pg. 30.)

The seclusion of the desert forces us to reach inside our elves for inspiration asy SLO BURN vocalist John Garcia (ex-Kyuss) of the band's Palm Springurroundings. The closest thing to a source of inspiration that you if find is Elvinabandened vacution home. So you create—something raw, something real and definitely something loud. The quartet's debut, Armsing The Armaing (Malicious Vinyl-Red Ant), is short (only four songs, including "Pilot The Dune"), but it rocks, plain and simple (See On The Verge in July issue, pg. 12.)

JAMES McMURTRY's parents split up when he was seven, but each passed on a gift that manifests itself on li Had To Happen (Sugar Hill). His mother taught him guitar ( three chords, and the rest I just stole as I went along"), from his father, novelist Larry McMurtry, he learned to tell stories. "Hey, if I wrote straight autobiographical stull, it d be so boring," he says of wry tales like "Sixty Acres" "It's better to just tell the story. (See review, pg. 38).



SLIDER



SPIRITUALIZED



ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN

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## LOCALZINE

#### DAYTON, OH

| by Brian Berger |

Welcome to the Gem City of the Ohio Valley. Once a bustling manufacturing community, Dayton now struggles to redefine itself in an age of information economy, capital flight, and plant closings. A few years ago, the success of Guided By Voices, the Breeders and Brainiac had some folks around here murmuring something about "the next Seattle." And while much of that optimism (if that's what it was) has waned, a tightly knit music scene continues to grow in this sprawling suburbia of 1.2 million people.

#### LOCAL LABELS

Like any do-it-yourself music scene, Dayton has its fair share of independent record labels. What Else? (P.O. Box 3411, Dayton, OH 45401) consistently presses good ska and pop-punk releases from bands like Less

Than Jake, the Barnhills, Don't Call Me Brian, A Ten O'Clock Scholar and the Know Nothings. Olive Records. which puts out solid contributions from bands like the Esoterics, Siren. Shove, does double-time distributing a host of independent labels. Currently looking for a new retail space to call home, Olive has a catalogue of over 1200 indies that's available by mail (2187 Terrylynn Ave., Dayton, OH 45439). Big Beef Records (P.O. Box 303 WBB, Dayton, OH 45409) is the label of choice for many of Davton's rock veterans. Real Lulu, with a little help from the Breeders' Kim Deal and Jim

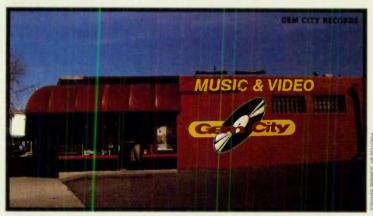
Macpherson, recorded its debut here. So did the Mulchmen, whose theremin-laced, landlocked surf sound lends a muchappreciated diversity to the scene.

#### RADIO STATIONS

It's a good thing that Dayton is a General Motors town, because you definitely need a set of wheels to get around this place. While you're cruising around the Miami Valley, tune into WYSO (91.3 FM) on Friday nights for Gold Sounds and the Around The Fringe show with the Rev. Cool. It's the best thing happening on radio around here. If you're lucky, and the wind is just right, you can pick up 97X (97.7 FM), out of Oxford. Otherwise, you're stuck with stale MTV Buzz Clips, wretched '80s flashbacks. and more country music than you can shake a stick at (hey, I said this was a GM town, didn't 1?). My advice: bring plenty of tapes.

#### **RECORD STORES**

Gem City Records (318 E. Fifth, 223-8011, and 1932 Brown St., 226-9236) is a good place to look for new and used jazz, soul, R&B, hip-hop, and the proverbial gambit of modern rock. The Fifth Street store has an excellent collection of foreign and independent films for rent, while the Brown



Street location specializes in new and quality used wax. While you're there, pick up a free copy of MOO to find out what you've been missing in the Midwest. Once a mandatory stopover for all bands coming through Dayton, Dingleberry's (1002 Miamisburg-Centerville Rd., 434-0284) has relaxed into a friendly mostly-new shop specializing in special orders and rock paraphernalia. Renaissance Music (1924 S. Smithville Rd., 258-1038) is worth checking out for its collection of indie vinyl.

#### **VENUES**

Pick up a copy of the *Dayton Voice* and turn to "Sound Board" for a rundown of the upcoming shows. **Sub Galley** (1155 Brown Street, 223-2929) plays host to a cavalcade of Midwestern punk. Die-hard fans pack into the tiny pizza and sub restaurant for intimate, all-ages shows featuring bands like Oblivion, the Migraines, Ten Foot Pole, Squirt Gun, and Schroeder. **Aardvark Ballroom** recently opened next door to accommodate larger touring acts such as the Reverend Horton Heat, Smoking Popes, Tuscadero, and L7. **Canal Street Tavern** (308 E. First St., 461-9343) has a long and proud tradition of playing host to bands on the verge. Regular events like Songwriters-In-The-Round and the Musician's Co-Op help maintain Dayton's musical diversity and nurture up-

SALIDS SHANOT AB SOLDHAE

and-coming musicians. Canal Street remains a favorite local venue of Guided By Voices and Kim Deal's various bands. Each year, it hosts the Dayton Band Playoffs, whose recent winners include Real Lulu, the Method, Brainiac and Shrug.

#### **RESTAURANTS**

For a quick bite to eat within earshot of most of the action, try the **Diner** (corner of Fourth and St. Clair, 228-2201), which offers contemporary "American gourmet" in a casual chrome-and-neon setting reminiscent of *Miami Vice*. Stop in Mondays for live music, and don't forget to try the Caribbean White Crab Chili. If vegetarian is more your style, the nearby



What You Eat (524 E. Fifth St., 225-3855) offers a variety of vegan and macrobiotic specials, lovingly prepared and served in a soothing environment. If you're desperately seeking sushi, look no further than I-Zu (5252 North Dixie, 277-9596) for some of the finest raw fish around and a serene, traditional atmosphere. Located just east of Downtown, Viet (3939 Linden Ave., 254-9027) serves a nice selection of Vietnamese specialties for under \$6, prepared with the utmost care and respect for authentic ingredients. The spring rolls, both fresh and fried, are not to be missed. If you're looking for food just like mom used to make (provided mom was a hippie), Christopher's Restaurant (2318 E Dorothy Lane, 299-0089) dishes out stylish, homestyle meals with a vegetarian bent. Think Betty Crocker at a Rainbow Gathering. The modest prices and generous portions make this a popular spot for families.

#### **BARS**

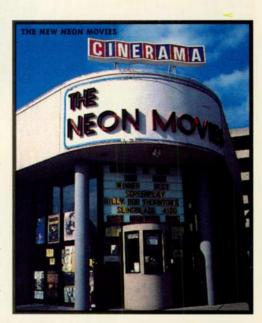
Long the favorite haunt of area musicians, students, and barflies, Walnut Hills (Brown St.) has a good selection of imports and microbrews. But if you can't run with the big dogs, stay on the porch: this place is for closers. On any given night, there are more people here at 2:30 than at 10:30. Feeling a bit too chipper for your own good? Put on some 'tude and amble on down to the Southern Belle (corner of Brown and Green, behind the Oregon District) for copious amounts of Pabst Blue Ribbon and a CD juke that belts out a twisted mix of Tom Waits, George Jones, Sonic Youth, Patsy Cline, Chet Atkins, Frank Zappa, Al Green and the Fugees. Help yourself to the free popcorn and settle back into the gloom. If you like a little conversation with your cocktails, head for the Trolley Stop (530 E. 5th St., 461-1101). The casual neo-beatnik atmosphere, good food, friendly staff, and none-too-loud jukebox appeal to the over-educated/under-employed crowd. For pure beer satisfaction, there's no beating Boston's Bistro (101 E. 2nd, 461-1002). There are literally 99 different bottles of beer on the wall, and always at least nine microbrews and imports on tap. Boston's boasts the largest beer selection in the county, and pours a damn fine pint.

#### DON'T DRINK. DON'T SMOKE. WHAT DO YOU DO?

Dayton is home to the only Cinerama theater in North America. The New Neon Movies (130 E. 5th St., 222-7469) regularly presents This Is Cinerama, Cinerama Holiday, and How The West Was Won in the original three-projector process on their deeply curved screen in seven-track stereo sound. Director Joe Dante recently flew in for a screening, and there is a rumor going

around that Quentin Tarantino is planing a similar visit. Looking for a natural high? Check out the indoor climbing walls at Urban Krag (125 Clay St., 224-KRAG). Built into the frame of a German Evangelical church (the stained-glass windows are still intact), Urban Krag offers over 8,000 square feet of simulated rock face. spanning 56 feet from top to bottom. If you're feeling the creative urge, express yourself at Kil'n Time (416 E. 5th St., 223-7899) in the Oregon District. Dayton's first paint-yourown-pottery studio features over 100 varieties of ready-to-paint pieces,

priced between \$5 and \$50. For a modest fee, Kil'n Time will finish your masterpiece in their on-site kiln. And, of course, there's always the Wright Patterson Air Force Museum (255-3284), the largest such museum in the United States. Folks from all corners of the world come to ooh-and-ahh at the impressive collection of flying machines.



All phone numbers are in area code 937.

Brian Berger writes for The Dayton Voice and is working on his first cookbook. Jeff Berger, who contributed to this story, runs Tree Fort Records, an indie punk label.

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