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AUSTIN, TEXAS  
artists  
on the  
CD!

**MONSTER magnet**

powertrip to roadtrip to headtrip

**john FRUSCIANTE**

still crazy after all these years

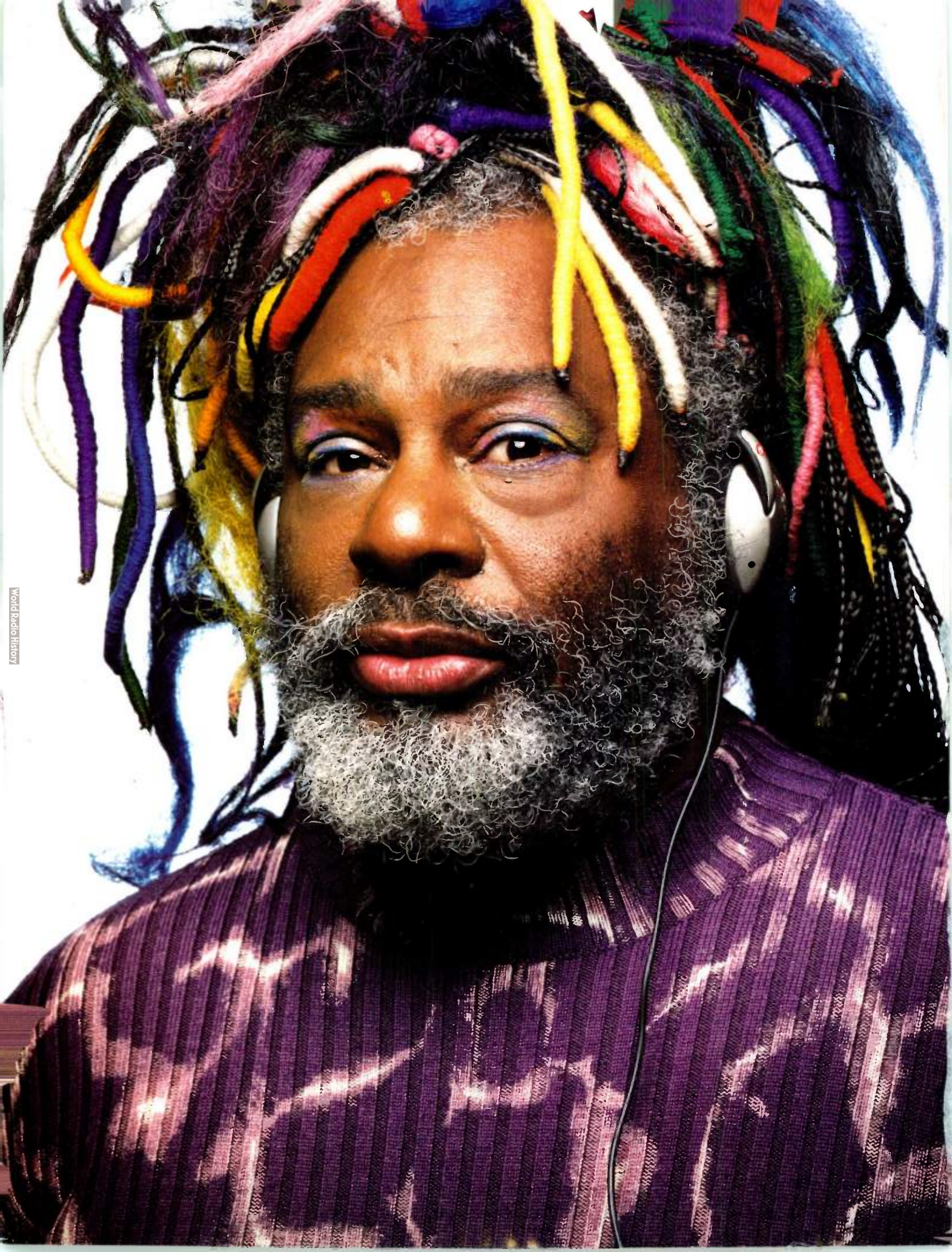
**STEPHEN  
malkmus**

all he wants is a Cobb salad

March 2001  
\$5.98 US \$6.98 CAN  
ISSUE NO. 91  
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## DAFT PUNK 54

In an era when everybody knows everything about everybody, how can Daft Punk sell millions of innovative techno albums and remain anonymous? Sara Scribner uncovers the men in the machines.

## ACEYALONE 38

A graduate of the new school with a degree in old school, Aceyalone's curriculum of rhyme spans from the silly to the sublime. Jonathan Palmer takes a lesson.

## ELIZA CARTHY 40

How do you rebel when your parents are English folk royalty? Meredith Ochs searches the castle for a clue.

## JIM WHITE 42

He's been a male model and a film director, but most of all, this off-kilter cowboy has been an uneasy rider ever since his conception on a cross-country getaway. Tom Lanham drives it home.

## THE NEW DEAL 44

Funkadelic once asked, "Who says a funk band can't play rock?" The New Deal wonders, "Why can't a jam band play techno?" Adrienne Day tests their funkentelechy.

## THE BEATNUTS 46

They've been conned by contracts, kicked out of their crib and still need to feed their kids—needless to say, the Beatnuts are more than nuts, they're pissed. Aliya S. King shrinks these hip-hop heads.

## MONSTER MAGNET 50

You think war is hell? Try a tour of duty with sludge-rock soldiers Monster Magnet. The LSD rations and *Apocalypse Now* references will leave you whimpering in the foxhole. Lorne Behrman loves the smell of lip balm in the morning.

## ON THE CD 91

Attack of the Austin locals: Texans Spoon, Bob Schneider, Subset, Schatzi and Silver Scooter join Klint, Stephen Malkmus, Swag, Matthew Good Band, Hardcore Superstar, Downer, X-ecutioners, Steve Fisk, Mirwais, Drums And Tuba, Dropkick Murphys, Kristin Hersh, Topsy, the Causey Way and the New Pornographers.



# RES

COVER: DAFT PUNK PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAFT ART

DIGITAL IMAGING BY ERIC ALTENBURGER

THIS PAGE: ACEYALONE PHOTOGRAPHED BY JUSTIN STEPHENS



104 50

## QUICK FIX 12

Stephen Malkmus pounds the Pavement in search of a solo career; John Frusciante thinks spirits are peppers too; Kristin Hersh throws muses about her *Little House On The Prairie*; Drums And Tuba rum-pa-pom-poms over Ani DiFranco; and indie-rock supergroups—newer than ever.

## ON THE VERGE 33

Magically delicious: Nicky Love, MJ Cole, the Causey Way, Buck 65 and Sixtoo.

## THE SCENE IS NOW 80

Gag me with a tune: The '80s bounce back.

## LIFE/STYLE 93

Electronic music hasn't only revolutionized the dancefloor, but also curators who don't want museums to be a snore.

## CRUISIN' FOR A BRUISIN' 95

Style on a roll.

## IN MY LIFE 97

Sick Of It All bassist Craig Setari wants to fight. You gotta problem with that?

## BOOKS 98

The ballad of the barrio in black and white.



## FILM 99

What do you get when you cross a male model with a superhero? *Hit And Runway*.

## GAMING 100

Praise Lord Odin for an action-adventure game that will make you feel like you're in Valhalla.

## LIGHTREADING 102

A red-letter day for the Green Lantern.

## LOCALZINE 104

Austin, Texas—live music capital of the world or Wannabee central?

## GEEK LOVE 106

With the Bay City Rollers, every day is S-A-T-U-R-D-A-Y night.

## REVIEWS, CHARTS SERVICES

BEST NEW MUSIC 29

REVIEWS 60

TOP 75 82

METAL 83

DANCE 84

HIP-HOP 85

SINGLES 86

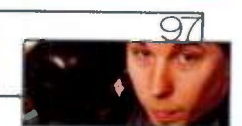
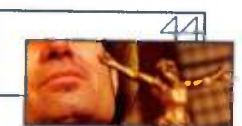
FLASHBACK 87

JUST OUT 88

DIRECTORY/INDEX 89

FEEDBACK 92

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World Radio History

## BURNING THE FLAG AT I-WU JIMA

Hello. I am a 16-year-old boy from New Jersey. I recently saw the cover of your magazine and I was extremely offended by the action of the people on the cover. The fact that they would even take rappers or whatever and repose the famous photo of the Easy Company Unit of the Marines digging the U.S. Flag into the soil of Iwo Jima is an insult. The men who took place in the battle of Iwo Jima and who were the flag-raisers on the Suribachi mountain need a little more respect than that of some thugs trying to look "cool." Maybe if there was any sense of respect for the men who fought and died to keep this country alive this would never be. Thanks for your time.

**Dan** (Manahawkin, New Jersey)

*I'd argue that a group of young men might express their unity and belief in their actions by recreating the famous World War II memorial as a form of respect. It's a matter of this thing we call perspective. To a budding jingoist in deepest New Jersey, the young men on the cover are thugs not worthy to ape the pose of the men who fought for their country on Iwo Jima. The members of the Wu-Tang Clan, however, are also suggesting a brotherhood created in what, from their perspective, is a campaign not unlike a war. To a degree, imitation is a sincere form of flattery. But we, you know, just thought it looked dope. —ed.*

## MUSTANG CHALET

As I sit here gazing into the beaming, naïve eyes of Reinhold I think of how wonderful life is here in the chalet and how horrible it must be to spend countless hours in dark New York bars, listening to sub-par music. That is why I altruistically offer a poem:

### BLISS

All bliss  
Consists in this,  
To do as Adam did:  
And not know those superficial toys  
Which in the garden once were hid,  
Those little new invented things.  
Cups, saddles, crowns are childish joys.  
So ribbons are and rings.  
Which all our happiness destroys.  
Nor God  
In his abode  
Nor saints nor little boys  
Nor angels made them; only foolish men,  
Grown mad with custom, on those toys  
Which more increase their wants, do date.  
And when they older are do then  
Those baubles cheffily note  
With greedier eyes, more boys tho men.  
—Thomas Traherne

**William Rappaport III**

*Seventeenth century Anglican poet Traherne is known for his "poems of felicity," meditations on the*

*"highest bliss." For those of you plebeians who failed to realize it, Felicity (that "she was cute until she cut her hair" show) is the WB's blissful homage. Note this touching bit of verse from episode 207... Lucky:*

*"I've... slept with, um... one other person before and it—it was only one time. I mean, I barely even knew him. I've—I've never done it with someone I've cared about. It would have been my first time if we would have." —ed.*

## SPREAD YOUR TINY WINGS AND FLY AWAY

I's lookin' around the other day and I seen a hawk. That hawk was bein' chased by a li'l pussy-ass bird. Another day I's lookin around and I seen the same thing 'cept this time the hawk got FED UP and turn around and kilt that bird. Now that's what they call an aynalogy. That hawk is me and that lil pussy-ass bird is you, SF. You besahad watch yourself, SF.

**Crazy Ed**

*Me and Crazy Ed go way back. I first incurred his ire when, as a college DJ back in those heady late-'80s days in central Jersey, I refused to play his request for Charlene's "I've Never Been To Me" on the basis that the lyric "I've been undressed by Kings/ And seen some things/ A woman ain't supposed to see" implied that she'd been undressed by more than one king, which always freaked me out. But we've toughed it out through the rough spots in the relationship, like when I had to explain that Molly Hatchet wasn't the mean sister of the Revolutionary War heroine for which the Jersey Turnpike dedicated a rest stop. Sigh... so true: Eds are from Mars, Crazy Eds are from Venus. —ed.*

## LIVING THE TABLEAU OF DETACHMENT AND DRY MARTINIS

Music, like non-chaotic time, is cyclical. The existentialist Nomad generation (Nirvana, Dinosaur Jr.) is followed by the social Hero generation (Backstreet Boys, Britney Spears). The Hero generation is followed by the wise Prophet generation (Bob Dylan, Van Morrison). The Prophet generation is followed by the high-spirited Artist generation (Paul Westerberg, Big Star). Of course, there are transitional musicians/bands like Korn exhibiting the ostensive paradox of both existentialism and social unity. Differences in the overall theme of popular music occur when the musicians acknowledge the mistakes of the previous generation, but are blind to their own. Apathy and self-pity are replaced by unity. Phoniness and what Beaudriard called the "hyper real" are replaced by wisdom. Uncaring detachment is replaced by lofty feeling. Lack of understanding is replaced by a primacy of the

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self. Repeat. Within the loop can also be found Wittgenstein, who shows us these are all false paradigms and oversimplifications, conceived by an overly rational mind. Viva La Empiricism!

**Michael Wattenford**

*Look very closely at the grammar and diction of the previous three letters. Because all of these came from the same email address (powerwatt5000@hotmail.com), I suspect Michael is the author of not only this letter (under what I presume is his own name) but also the "William Rappaport" and "Reinhold" letters from the January issue, as well as "Crazy Ed" above. Now if only he'd subscribe for each of his personalities. —ed.*

**Correction:** In the February issue, Kittie was photographed live by Jessica Zakowski.



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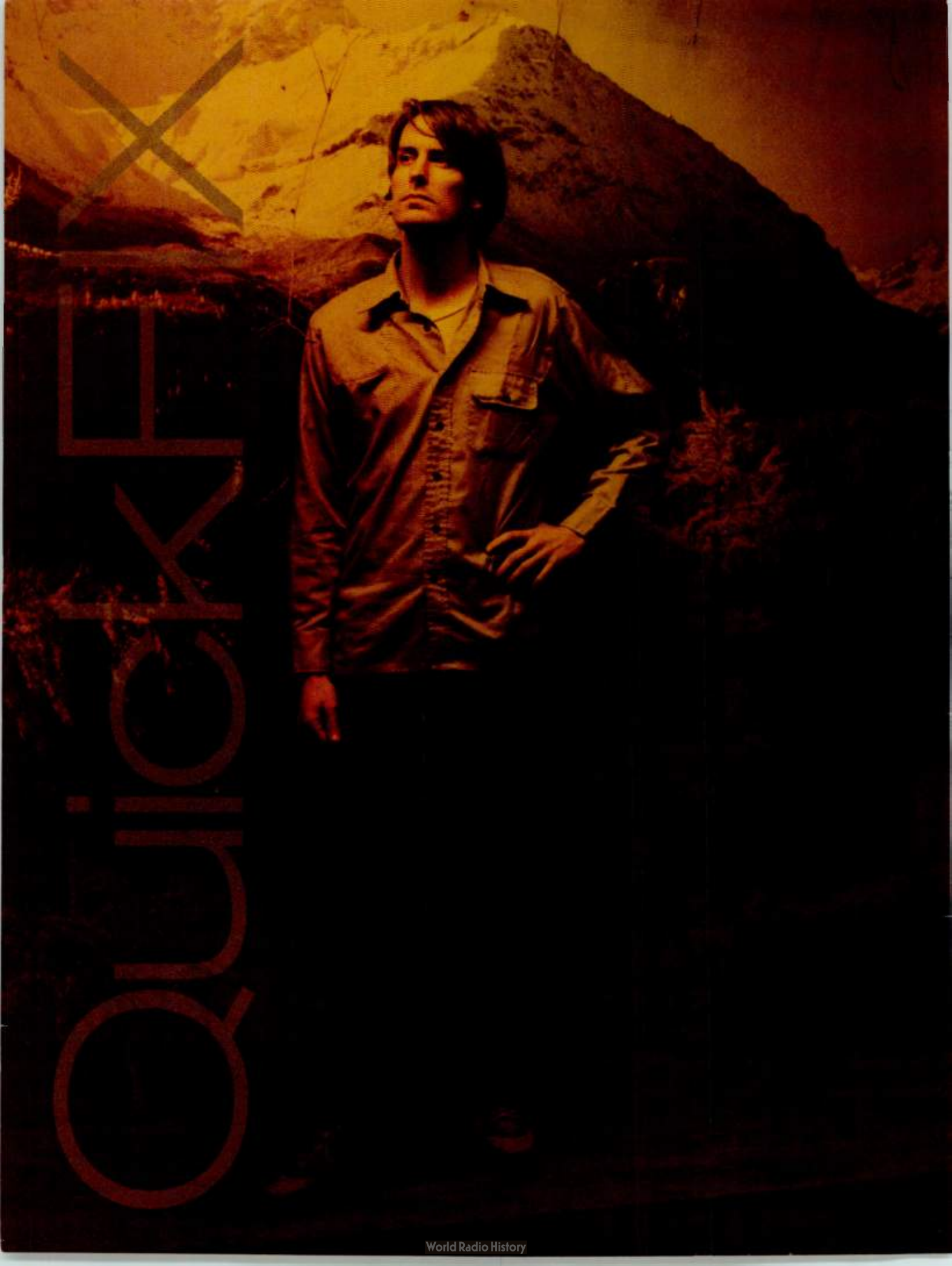
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World Radio History



# bring on -the minor leagues

Stephen Malkmus goes it alone. Sort of.

STORY: DOUGLAS WOLK PHOTO: JASON TODD

**Y**ou could easily mistake Stephen Malkmus's first solo record for a Pavement album—the tender electric choogle that cracks open into an elegant guitar solo, the hyper-literate commentary and a voice that might be sarcastic or perfectly serious—so what, exactly, makes it different?

Malkmus, slumping under a dark wood conference room table, looks down. "If those guys had made this record... well, it would've taken a lot longer, for one thing. Being in Pavement was very good to me. But I always wanted it to be a real band, and it wasn't becoming that. You know, something with a band sound, where people contribute ideas and jam together..."

That's a curious description of a group with one of the most immediately recognizable and widely imitated sounds of the last decade, but Malkmus makes it clear that he wanted something distinct from his own personal style. "With all of us living in different places, it was always really hard to collaborate." Is the new group of musicians he assembled to record his new self-titled debut more like a real band?

Malkmus thinks for a moment. "No. Not yet, anyway." With his dry wit and aristocratic good looks untouched by 10 years of touring, Malkmus could be an indie-rock Dorian Gray. Today, though, he's on the verge of crumpling. He has the air of a man who's been interrogated about the same thing by 30 different reporters over the course of a week, and has been denied a Cobb salad, the only thing he truly wants. (The salad arrives mid-interview, thankfully.)

The answer to the Big Question is yes: Pavement is over, in fact if not in effect. Fans have been struggling to find ironic intent in omens like Malkmus announcing from the stage, "This is our last show," but these days he's talking about '90s indie rock's bellwether band in the past tense, with fondness and more than a little relief.

Now living in Portland, Oregon, he recorded *Stephen Malkmus* (Matador) last year with Joanna Bolme and John Moen, both longtime Portland scenesters. Living in the same place as his bandmates is nearly a first for Malkmus—by the time Pavement turned from a tape-trading project into a touring group, its members were already scattering across the country. Now, for the first time in a long time, Malkmus's career is rooted in a place he likes, and he's writing and playing for pleasure.

The new album offers some of his funniest, most charming songs ever—he sings about being a pirate, about being Yul Brynner, about a failed April-to-June hipster romance, and mostly pulls off a lyrical tone that's mocking and big-hearted at once. "If anything," he says, "I was trying to show off a little, to impress John and Joanna."

The original plan was for Malkmus and the duo that backs him to be called the Jicks (the same lineup will be touring in the spring, possibly with a fourth musician), but somehow their recording turned into Malkmus's first solo album. "I guess because it turned out well, I was encouraged to put my name on the cover. You know, people have heard of me. I'm 'cute,'" he sighs, and sinks a little lower in his chair. **MM**



ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD

# saved by the babe

**Drums And Tuba** remained alive with patronage from that righteous babe, Ani DiFranco.

**W**e had no idea how it'd happened," admits Tony Nozero, the drums of Drums And Tuba, when asked how his instrumental outfit ended up opening for Ani DiFranco on her recent tour. "We figured that if we asked, they would realize it had been a big misunderstanding," continues Nozero, amid laughter from tuba player Brian Wolff and guitarist Neil McKeeby.

There was no mistake, and DiFranco ended up being a much better friend than the band could have expected. The singer/songwriter happened on one of Drums And Tuba's old albums while hanging out in the trio's onetime hometown of Austin, Texas, and later offered them the tour. By that point, Nozero had moved to Chicago, the other two to New York City, and the band was on the verge of splitting up. DiFranco's invitation kept them together. And, as befits her fairy-godmother role in the band's story, DiFranco's Righteous Babe label took Drums And Tuba on board to release their new album, *Vinyl Killer*.

The band's jazz-meets-post-rock sound is a far cry from the straight-up New Orleans-style jazz/funk ensemble Nozero and Wolff had in mind when they formed the band (they annexed McKeeby and his six-string only after failing to find another horn player). They develop their exuberant abstractions and soundscapes from lengthy jam sessions with repetitive parts that almost sound like loops.

"The only way that our music is going to work is if we play all the time," Wolff explains. "That's why we're constantly out on tour. I mean," he continues, "we're finally all living in the same place again [New York City], and the goal is to spend as little time here as possible. I guess you could say the one place we really feel at home is on the road." >>>MAYA SINGER

BRENDAN MORAN

★ ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD



## WEIRD RECORD *Riders On The Storm: The Doors Concerto*

**S**ince the death of Jim Morrison in 1971, Doors fans have been trying, with limited success, to contact the spirit of the late rock legend through Parker Brothers' vessel of clairvoyance, the Ouija Board. But classical composer and arranger Jaz Coleman has

set out to stir up Mr. Morrison's spirit through a new instrument—the violin. Coleman explains in the disc's liner notes, "I decided that, in order to reincarnate the soul of Morrison in a single string instrument, the entire violin concerto should be written for a virtuoso who, like Jimbo, would understand the rites of Dionysian

mysteries!" So Coleman hand-picked Kennedy (formerly known as Nigel Kennedy, the maestro behind *The Kennedy Experience*, a disc of Jimi Hendrix songs reinterpreted as classical romps), and *Riders On The Storm: The Doors Concerto* was born. But how would Jimbo himself receive this symphonic version of the Doors' greatest hits, where the heavy narcotics and creepy keyboards are replaced by the Prague Symphony Orchestra? Upon first listen, Doors guitarist Robby Krieger reportedly proclaimed, "I know Jim would have loved it and I wish he was here to hear it." Only the Ouija Board knows what could be next for Coleman and Kennedy. *The Great Elvis Opus: A Blue Suede Sonata? Bob Dylan's Freewheelin' Orchestra?* >>>KARA ZUARO

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## IN MY ROOM

### Dining in Manchester with Rae & Christian

**S**teve Christian began classical piano training at age seven and eventually became a sought-after studio producer; Mark Rae "avoided all instruments, as they were too much hard work," before becoming a DJ. As Rae & Christian, they've just released *Sleepwalking* (Studio K7), an album that ranges from hip-hop to soul to electronic experimentation, and includes guest spots from the Pharcyde and singer Bobby Womack. Here, Rae discusses his dining room. "It's in Chorlton, in Manchester, England, near Wally Range, where the Smiths got a lot of their writing inspiration." >>>B. WERDE

#### 1930s wooden clothes dryer

It hangs from the ceiling. You put your socks on it and move it up and down. Which is just extra fun at dinnertime. You can lower the socks into the food.

#### Paraphernalia

I collected these small clay pipes as a child, from the fields. People used to smoke tobacco using old pottery, and farmers threw them in the field, then revealed them when they plowed. The pots are just bigger than your big toe. I have one with a dog's head on top of it, and one with a rose made of clay.

#### Beth Orton's Central Reservation (Deconstruction-Arista)

I just went into a record shop and it was on. I thought it was brilliant. Being a hip-hop club DJ, it's the kind of thing you don't bother checking out unless someone shoves it down your throat.

#### World War II air raid shelter

It's bricked-up now. But it's in the garden, which is connected to the dining room. I think I might open it up so that when you've eaten lots of food, you can go lie in the air-raid shelter and digest it. It's about two peoples' shoulders wide and about six feet tall, with three feet of concrete on top and double bricks on each side. It's completely useless, really. All you can do is hide from bombs in it.

## ANALYZE THIS

Persnickety cookiefuckers (like us) have been saying it for years: Today's music just rehashes classic albums. Here's our guide to the latest batch of legendary records being retread like Firestones. >>>STEVE GDULA

### THEN



#### The Eagles, *Hotel California*

The rock 'n' roll version of *A Star Is Born* features a narrative easily summarized as "My stash is gone." Don Henley and Joe Walsh's coke binges keep them running from that awful truth: "Everybody must get old."



#### 2 Live Crew, *As Nasty As They Wanna Be*

Luther Campbell and company piss off the censors while busting out rhymes about bitches, booty and Abe Lincoln's "business."



#### The Knack, *Get The Knack*

Thanks to the power-pop prowess of Doug Fieger and his barely legal fantasies, face-sitting, premature ejaculation and "My Sharona" are guilty pleasures you can sing about in front of your mom.



#### Pizzicato Five, *Five By Five*

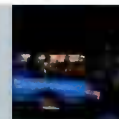
America's introduction to the strange and delightful sounds of a curious Japanese duo with penchant for '60s pop and kneesocks. Knock-out diva Nomiya Maki defines "kicky yet elegant" for a whole new generation.



#### The Beatles, *Magical Mystery Tour*

John, Paul, George and Ringo obviously got a little help from some "friends" in the pharmaceutical industry to help turn John into "The Walrus."

### NOW



#### Acetone, *York Blvd.*

"Tune in, turn on, and fuzz out" is the mantra as these weary Leary types muse about dead-end destinations and that other age-old truth: "Everybody must get stoned."



#### Smut Peddlers, *Porn Again*

The trio goes for the longest verbal money-shot ever by busting out rhymes about a twisted sister who uses a broom handle to get her "business" done.



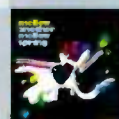
#### Gwenmars, *Driving A Million*

Thanks to singer Mike Thrasher's Mrs. Robinson obsessions about one Mrs. Gwen Mars, there's plenty of fuzzy pop about wet dreams and contagious choruses more delicious than a hit of E washed back with root beer.



#### Hi-Posi, *4n5*

Meet Japan's Miho Moribayashi, whose Nikon-a-go-go world of techno pop, new wave, disco and pouting vocals—and peculiar taste in headwear—can only lead one to guess that she wasn't laughed at nearly enough as a child.



#### Mellow, *Another Mellow Spring*

This Parisian trio takes the listener on a different type of tour de France with spacey synths, trippy trombones and gorgeous melodies. Strap on your helmet and fire up the hookah.

## LABEL PROFILE Parlez-vous Post-Parlo?

If you could take indie-rock cred to the bank, Ben Dickey could quit his day job. As it is, however, the recent University Of Texas dropout is keeping his Austin-based Post-Parlo Records afloat with a graphics arts gig. "Post-Parlo survives on the money from my full-time job that doesn't go to rent, food or Advil," says Dickey, 19, whose two-year-old label hosts a roster including Austin indie punkers and popsters like Subset, Those Peabodys, Ann Arbor Canasta Fix and the Olive Group, and fills the void left when legendary local label Trance Syndicate shuttered in 1998. "Austin bands shouldn't have to go all the way to Merge or Sub Pop to get the kind support they need," he opines. Dickey makes a concession to some non-Texans with his 10-disc split-CD series, which features Bright Eyes, Paul Newman, ...And You Will Know Us By Trail Of Dead, Damien Jurado, Pavo and members of Kind Of Like Spitting; four installments are already out. "It's the opportunity to go out to... bands that I've always loved and say, 'I realize you're not going to put out a full-length with us, but can I accomplish my dream and put out one of your records?'" >>>ANDY LANGER



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## The Sample Life: Sample free with Reverend Run

**A**s one-third of Run-DMC, Joseph Simmons (a.k.a. Run) helped create the foundation of hard-edged, rock-influenced rap with such seminal jams as "Rock Box" and a hit cover of Aerosmith's "Walk This Way." Now ordained, the Reverend Run has grown into one of rap's wise elders, even writing an autobiography that doubles as a self-help volume, *It's Like That: A Spiritual Memoir* (St. Martin's Press). Here's a three-step lesson on finding, scratching and looping beats, Run-DMC style. >>>PETER ORLOV

### Kings Of Rock Crates

In the late '70s, the disco sound didn't interest the members of Run-DMC as much as a tough beat did. "In rock, the beginnings and the breaks during which the drummer would get his chance to do his thing was interesting enough and hard enough," remembers Run. "We didn't want to scratch up a George Clinton record or 'Disco Fever,' but we did want to find something hard and big-sounding and cool... I remember my crate at 15 years old—half of it was [jazz composer] Bob James, the other half was the Billy Squier/Aerosmith type of thing. I didn't even know the name of the group was Aerosmith—I thought the name of the group was Toys In The Attic. When I finally met 'em, I was like 'Cool, Toys In The Attic is here.'"

### Scratchin' For Suckers

"There were some beats that everybody knew that you ran to in order to make life good," recalls Run. "There was one called 'Paradise,' ['Poverty's Paradise' by 24-Carat Black] and that was an incredible beat to learn how to scratch on. At other times, the beat to go to was 'Mardi Gras' ['Take Me To The Mardi Gras' by Bob James], or 'Seven Minutes Of Funk' [Tyronne Thomas & The Whole Darn Family]. In '83, [Run-DMC] only had two records out ['Sucker MCs' and 'It's Like That'], but had to do shows. So [we] freestyled over tracks such as Billy Squier's 'The Big Beat,' creating the tune 'Here We Go,' which is collected onto the compilation *Live At The Funhouse*."

### It's Tricky: Sampling Ol'-School Style

"My Sharona' on 'It's Tricky' wasn't sampled; we never sampled when we made records—we took the beat," recalls Run. "We'd put the drumbeat down, and the drumbeat would be playing, and Jay would come in with a turntable and start scratching a piece of this



music onto the tape. Then we'd stop tape, roll it back and put another piece on tape until we finally created something with the turntables, not with sampling machines. We did this so long ago that people didn't even attack us [for using their music]—Run-DMC didn't get attacked for sampling any of these records because nobody cared about it at that moment and because we weren't really sampling. And then it got outta hand..."



**W**hat happens when punk meets the godfather of corporate CD clubs? In 1993, NYU philosophy grad and grunge-band veteran Chris Wilcha took an entry level job in the marketing department of Columbia House, just as the alternative typhoon

## SMELLS LIKE CORPORATE SPIRIT OUTING COLUMBIA HOUSE'S ALT-EXPLOITATION

was about to hit the pop charts and the old guard was searching for a young gun to decode the anti-mainstream X-generation. Wilcha brought his insubordinate attitude and a Hi8 camera that he used to videotape his first year among the gray flannel suits (why they let him is a mystery). As Kurt Cobain submerged into shotgun-swallowing depression, Columbia House surfed the alterna-wave with a snide catalog masterminded by Wilcha—one that quietly critiqued its own corporate status. "We felt [that] on this really micro scale we were getting away with something and we were pulling something over on this large corporation," says Wilcha of his work at Columbia House. "To us it was the

height of hysteria and subversion, but it wasn't that subversive at all." However, the documentary that resulted from Wilcha's footage, *The Target Shoots First*, captures the filmmaker as he struggles to maintain his lefty beliefs working within the stodgy establishment. Although the film has been making festival rounds for a few years now, Cinemax is set to broadcast it for the first time in February and will rerun it throughout March. As for Wilcha, he's currently working on MTV's *First Year* reality program. Does working inside the MTV machine also compromise his radical leanings? "I'm still trying to resolve some of these contradictions," admits Wilcha. "I struggle with it to this day." >>>NEIL GLADSTONE

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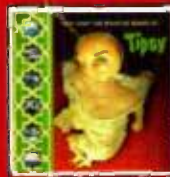
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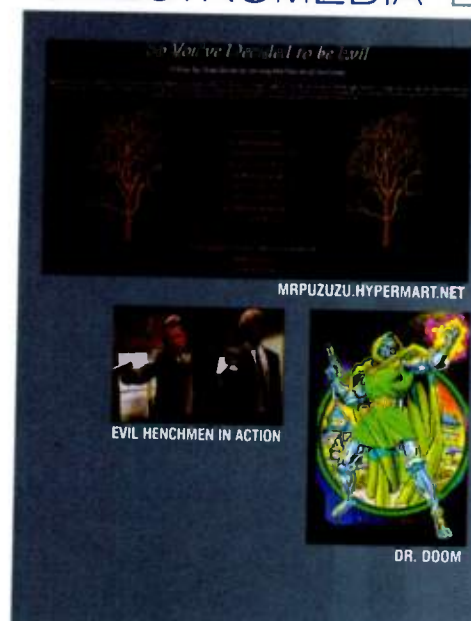
# TOYS IN THE ATTIC

## Plastiq Phantom hides his mini-mic

**K**raftwerk may have written the song "Computer Love," but Darrin Wiener, a.k.a. Plastiq Phantom, redefines that term in the liner notes of his CD, *Enjoy The Art Of Lying Down* (Sweet Mother). "I figured I should [thank my equipment]," Wiener says, "because it all worked!" His beloved sampler, the ASR-10 ("That's my baby"), and the QY-70 sequencer shaped the CD's neo-classical, Philip Glass-like symphonics, but it was a tiny spy microphone, the Sennheiser MKE-1Z, that gave Wiener's debut its Steve Reich edge and its most unexpected sample: Wiener was listening to a tape of creaking floor boards that he'd made while hiding underneath the dancefloor of Seattle's ARO.space club, when the playback revealed a woman exclaiming, "I'm all wet again!" "I was like, 'What the hell is this?'" Wiener recalls—but true to his phantom moniker, he won't disclose her identity. "I didn't clear [the sample] through her, so [let's] just say 'some celebrity.'" The mystery sample can be heard loud and clear on "Birds"—discerning listeners might be able to put a name to the voice. >>>STEVE GDULA



## ELECTROMEDIA E-friendly E-vil



**P**eople say the Web breeds immorality, but it can be surprisingly difficult to corrupt yourself if you don't know where to look—Wicked.com is a dance music site, Malevolent.com is a design firm and Evil.com is nothing but a picture of a sweet little daisy. Fortunately, **So You've Decided To Be Evil** (mrpuzuzu.hypemart.net) has some solid advice for the prospective villain ("Warning: do not let Bruce Willis learn of your plans, or your scheme is doomed") It includes tips on lair location and pointers on selecting evil henchmen—though you might be better off with the frighteningly comprehensive **Evil Henchman's Guide** (users4.50megs.com/enphilistor/henchman.htm). Should you advance through the ranks of malevolence, be sure to consult Peter Anspach's classic list of **Things I'd Do If I Ever Became An Evil Overlord** (www.evilovertlord.com), e.g. "My

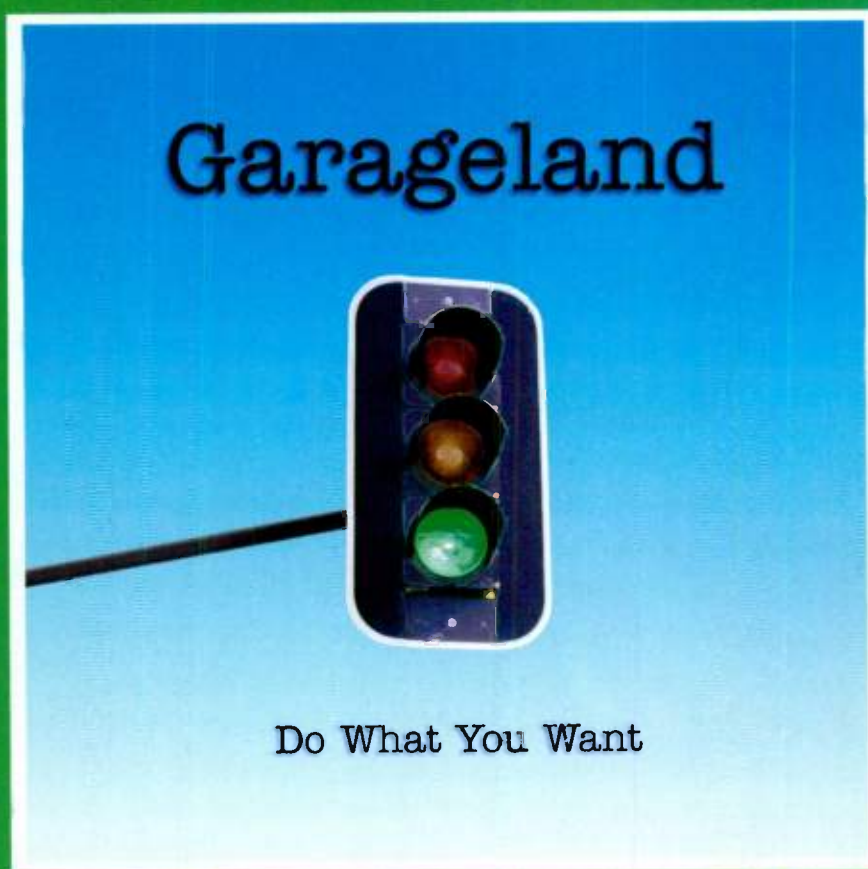
ventilation ducts would be too small to crawl through." If you feel that active evil is too much of a hassle, you might as well get the best price you can for your soul anyway—and since eBay no longer accepts souls (see migraine industries.tripod.com/mysoul.html), the wisest thing to do is go for a solid trade-in deal. That's where **SoulXchange.com** comes in; they bill themselves as "The World's First Soul2Soul Marketplace!" You can register your soul along with its attributes (from physical details to jobs to religious and philosophical affiliations), then trade it for other souls. The soul market is an unstable one, though, and SoulXchange prints relevant news stories along with how they make particular types of souls rise and fall; updates and adjustments are made by the site's administrator, one Louis Cypher. Now where have we heard that name before? >>>DOUGLAS WOLK

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# THE NEW NEW THING

**W**hat do indie rockers do when the time comes to name their supergroup? They assure fans that what they're hearing isn't some tired rehash (which, let's face it, it often is) by adding the age-old advertising standby—*new*. The trend began several years ago with New Wet Kojak, but recently, rock's been looking a lot like a QVC commercial. Here's your "new" crib sheet.

## Old Acquaintances

## The New Deal

## Future Potential

### THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS



Zumpano's Carl Newman and Limblifter's Kurt Dahle team up with Blaine Thurier (director of *Low Self Esteem Girl*) and alt-country powerhouse Neko Case.

Their new album, *Mass Romantic* (Mint), is uptempo Vancouver pop at its most eclectic; imagine the Knack and Sloan rocking the crowd at a Maple Leafs halftime.

Looking good. Neko Case was only planning to record with the group, but like us, she couldn't get these damn songs out of her head, so she's decided to tour with the band.

### THE NEW YEAR



Bedhead's Matt and Bubba Kadane join forces with Chris Brokaw of Come and Codeine and Saturnine's Mike Donofrio, with a debut "recorded" by Steve Albini.

*Newness Ends* (Touch And Go) takes the soporific vocals and looping, complex guitar lines that Bedhead made famous and keys them up for cabinet-shaking intensity.

Ask again later. Since the bandmembers live in several different time zones, they might not recognize each other when they finally meet for a tour.

### THE NEW AMSTERDAMS



Okay, they're not *exactly* a supergroup, but frontman Matthew Pryor and bassist Robert Pope are full-time Get Up Kids, and they think drummer Jake Cardwell and guitarist Alex Bahl are just super.

Moments of the New Amsterdams' debut, *Never You Mind* (Vagrant) remind you of the Kids' emo king-pin status, but here, Pryor's lovey-dovey lyrics are sprinkled over unspectacular acoustic accompaniment.

Limited. Without the other Kids, the infectious, bouncy fun is completely washed out of Pryor's songs. This one's for die-hard Kids fans only.

### NEW WET KOJAK



Aged over five years, this "new" supergroup features a complex blend of Girls Against Boys members Scott McCloud and Johnny Temple and one-time Edsel drummer Nick Pelleciotto.

Even a sip from the band's third album, *Do Things* (Beggars Banquet), will reveal its post-noir overtones, murmuring vocal intonations, heavy accents and swirling instrumentation with a slightly acidic finish.

Very low-key. They've been cult favorites for a while now—try to catch one of their occasional appearances and it might even remind you why post-grunge mattered.

### NEW YORK SKA JAZZ ENSEMBLE



This not-so-new ska supergroup has been recording since 1995. Current members have played with the Toasters, the Scofflaws and Bim Skala Bim.

With a mix of originals and standards, the NYSJE explores the traditional roots of ska. While they call NYC home, their last record, *Live In Europe* (Grover) documented them skanking across the Continent.

Outlook hazy. With the recent closure of their American label, Moon Ska, the band is currently homeless. Fear not, there's always an inscrutable following of rude boys keeping the skank alive.

Ken Burns, director of the documentary *Jazz*, on discovering the genius of Louis Armstrong:

"I knew that he was important, but I had no idea of his centrality to jazz. And how he took solos to an art form by the way he played. No one had played quite the way he did, and everybody recognized it. Then he sang. He's like Beethoven and Cezanne in one person."

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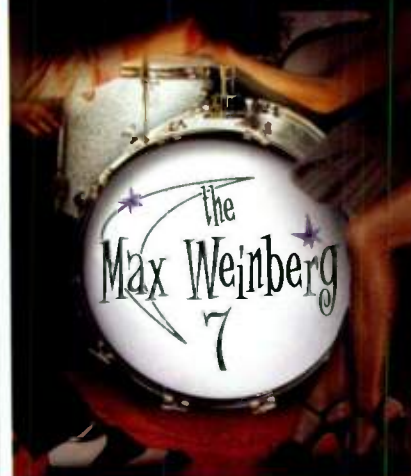


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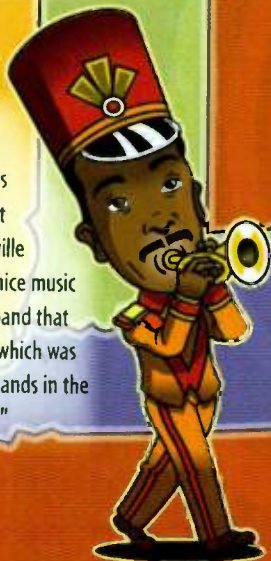
World Radio History

# THE World According to DARA

**THE MUSIC ON OLU DARA'S ALBUMS**, *In The World: From Natchez To New York and Neighborhoods* (both on Atlantic) blend jazz, delta blues, R&B, Caribbean and African influences while the lyrics tell of the songwriter's journey from his childhood in rural Natchez, Mississippi to modern day New York, where he fathered multi-platinum rapper Nas. Take a spin around the map of Olu's world. >>>Tad Hendrickson

## Nashville, Tennessee →

In "Natchez Shopping Blues," Dara says he found his heart in Nashville. "I went to Tennessee State University in Nashville because it had a hell of a band and a nice music department. They had this marching band that played Miles Davis and stuff like that, which was innovative at the time because most bands in the country only played John Philip Sousa."



## Brooklyn, New York →

The title track from *Neighborhoods* is about being "Stranded in Brooklyn" in the mid-'60s. "I was discharged in New York and ran out of money," Dara explains. "Now when I look at it, it's the best thing that could have happened. I had no plans anyway... I found a neighborhood full of musicians I had admired on records."



## Harlem, New York ↗

Dara has written several tunes such as "Harlem Country Girl" based on his neighborhood of the last 20 years—the Hamilton Terrace section of Harlem. While New York Dara admits New York can be intimidating and unfriendly, "Harlem is very vibrant and very friendly."

## The Blue Coronet Bar, Brooklyn ↗

In the title track from *Neighborhoods*, Dara namechecks a number of Brooklyn venues where he used to go for music, including The Blue Coronet: "That's where everybody came. If musicians wanted to be introduced in town, they would meet the older musicians, who would hook them up with a gig."

## ← Natchez, Mississippi

In the song, "Movie Show," Dara wistfully recalls his World War II-era childhood, where kids spent Saturdays at the movies seeing Bojangles dancing and Shirley Temple prancing. "Natchez is like a large village," explains Dara. "It probably looks the same as it did 100 years ago."



## Living Abroad →

"After two years at TSU, I decided that I didn't want to become a doctor and I studied music. I was really advanced at music and didn't figure that my father should waste his money on sending me to school. I went into the Navy and played music for four years. I traveled the world and they paid me to play music." On *Neighborhoods*, Dara plays Joseph Spence's old sea shanty "Out On The Rolling Sea."



Veryo-rik. o-ma-ne-a -nya\ is a kind of mania in which the passion for music becomes so strong as to derange the intellectual faculties.

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## ?&A: JOHN FRUSCIANTE

FROM *MOTHER'S MILK* TO *SOY MILK*

**J**ohn Frusciante is the only one of the Red Hot Chili Peppers' seven guitarists to join the band twice. The 30-year-old hippie-punk-funky-monk left for five years to withdraw into himself, heroin and painting. He returned sober, spiritual and centered: "I'm somebody who's taken that chance of throwing a lot of earthly things away to get to a point where I can show people a world they can only see through music and paintings." His third solo disc, *To Record Only Water For Ten Days* (Warner) is a collection of rainy-day pop songs orchestrated with synths and strum-and-pluck guitar. >>>LORNE BEHRMAN

**There's an extremely hermetic feeling to your record, with titles like "Going Inside" and "Invisible Movement." Where are you now?**

I dedicated years to getting inside this energy, but couldn't do anything with it because there were certain blocks in my brain and I had given up playing music. Now I've gotten my skills as a songwriter and musician to where spirits give me energies, feelings, colors and shapes and I can turn them into songs.

**Could you describe the spirits?**

I think when you love somebody, you're seeing something in their eyes your conscious

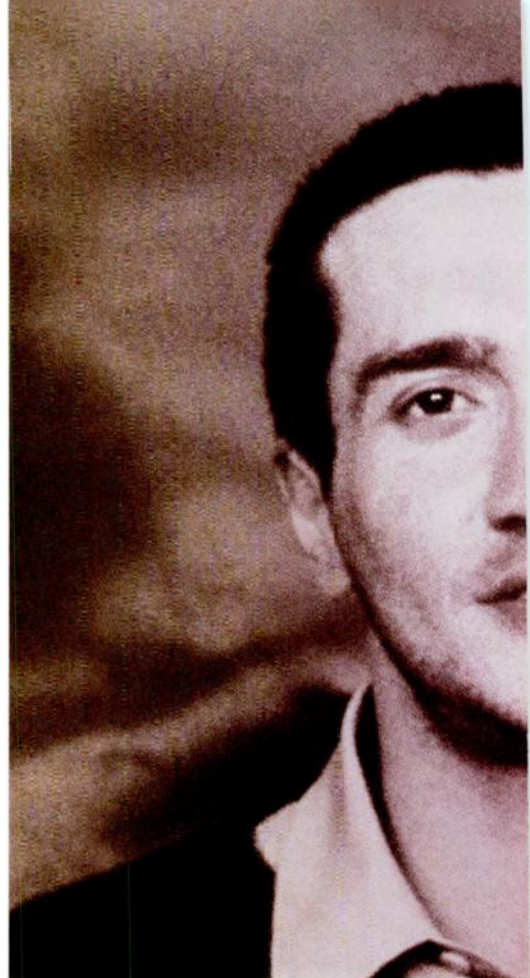
brain isn't trained to understand. Say, for instance, you love certain movie stars like I love Humphrey Bogart, Joe Delasandro and Andrea Feldman... If I love those people, that means they have spirits inside them who are friends with me. These spirits connect all of us because they could be in one person one second and another person the next—they go around helping people out and we help them by being creative.

**Why did you leave the Chili Peppers?**

I had a strong belief in these dimensions, but I didn't understand how I could properly translate that into a way of living—I felt very close to dying. Through the years I spent learning about the painters I love, as well as tripping out and communicating with spirits in different ways... I've come out where I saw when I joined the band this last time how I could use this belief on earth.

**This record is lush, more cohesive and accessible than your previous solo efforts. What would you attribute that to?**

When I was 21, I would sometimes have a few words, improvise [music] and just record that. But that's not enough anymore. If a song comes to me, I want to see it through and make it live the best life it can. And in the last couple of years, the main thing that has made me happy is Depeche Mode, New Order and Orchestral Maneuvers In The Dark. I realized before I knew how to use a synthesizer or how to program drums that that was going to be the way I could take my songs and turn them into fully orchestrated pieces.



**How have you changed your health habits?**

I do a pretty intense type of yoga, I quit smoking and caffeine, and I take lots of herbs and eat health foods only.

**Any regrets?**

Definitely not—I can see other ways it could have gone, but a man who is as happy as me cannot possibly have regrets.



## IN MY ROOM: Kristin Hersh on lust and fertility

**L**ike the perennial flower that lends Kristin Hersh's fifth solo album its title, *Sunny Border Blue* (4AD-Beggars Banquet) is beautiful and bristly. "This one's really special to me," says Hersh. "The songs scared me for the first time in many years, and I didn't gentle them up at all." The former Throwing Muses leader recently moved back to her home state of Rhode Island after a two-year residence in the desert town of Joshua Tree, California. Here, she gives us a tour of the house she shares with her husband/manager Billy O'Connell and their three children, Ryder, Dylan and Wyatt. >>>PETER TERZIAN

### Changing faces

We have a Balinese wedding mask above our bed that I got for Billy, or he bought for me, when we were first together. It's a mask where the man's face turns into the woman's, and vice versa. We're afraid it might be a fertility mask, because I can't seem to stay unpregnant.

### Frontier primer

I have a *Little House On The Prairie* book next to my bed because I promised my son Ryder that if he read it, I would read it too. I know how to churn butter now, and I could also build a house underground if I needed to.

### Acid folk

Because I just got out of the studio, I'm taking time off from all music, but I have Vic Chesnutt's new CD, [*Merriment*], in the player right now. It's really fucked up. These two piano teachers gave him their music and said "write songs to it!" And it's like he invented a new kind of music. It sounds like T-Rex at the circus on acid.

### Mug-lust

We have this thing... if you can have your hot drink in the correct vessel, then your life will be perfect. So our cabinets are filled to bursting with our attempts at the right mug. We have hundreds and hundreds of them. Our lives aren't perfect yet, so we're still on the search.



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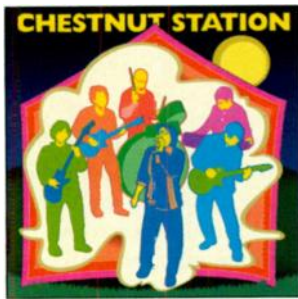


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## CHESTNUT STATION

**In Your Living Room**

Drag City

The Chestnut Station lineup reads like a roll-call of Chicago indie-rock heavyweights: The group's two principals are guitarist Rick Rizzo, who plays in Eleventh Dream Day, and singer Rian Murphy, who's played with Plush, Royal Trux and Will Oldham. But rather than buying into the ironic detachment and arty self-consciousness that's defined so much of the Chicago underground over the past decade, Chestnut Station has taken a different route. The band's self-titled 1998 debut was an amusing concept EP featuring songs based on movie titles, and the new *In Your Living Room* is a rollicking mostly-live album devoted exclusively to obscure and often goofy covers. The band lays siege to '70s bubblegum hits (an energetic, horn-heavy version of the Fun And Games' "Elephant Candy"), classic rock obscurities (a messy but willing take on the Kinks' "Sitting On My Sofa"), and assorted extras (including spirited versions of R&B great Don Covay's "Fat Man" and "The Boomerang"). There may be touch of self-consciousness in the group's fevered embrace of '70s AM rock, but there isn't a hint of Urge Overkill-type detachment or affect. The result is some of the finest, sweatiest good-natured garage rock in recent memory. >>>ALLISON STEWART

Out

January 22

File Under

'70s throwbacks

R.I.Y.L.

NRBQ, Young Fresh Fellows,  
Guided By Voices



## BURNT FRIEDMAN

**Plays Love Songs**

Nonplace

Like many producers brought up on pause-button tape-recording technology, Burnt Friedman's sound is willfully eccentric. It's a twisted form of techno collage, where surf guitars wrap themselves around sonar bleeps, conga drums and wobbly synth riffs. You could say it sounds like Aphex Twin if he was jamming with Dick Dale at the Buena Vista Social Club, but beating at the heart of this German's sound is a studied shapelessness, a rejection of identity. Friedman strives to be as amorphous as possible—the result is music that sifts through the back catalog of 20th-century pop and mashes up the weird bits into an aromatic techno-flavored stew. On "I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm," dislocated voices burst out of the air like chattering fairies, while on "I Go With You," a soothing diva's voice harmonizes over a distorted dub rumble. "Tongs Of Love" features a sailor waxing lyrical about freedom and love over lapping waves and gently caressing guitars—in the hands of a lesser producer, this could be the height of pretentiousness, but Friedman makes it sound like the most beautiful thing in the world. These are love songs alright—for the sick and twisted. It's a Valentine soundtrack for 2001 and beyond. >>>KIERAN WYATT

Out

January 30

File Under

Amorphous and amorous electronic collage

R.I.Y.L.

Jazzanova, DJ Food,  
Matthew Herbert



## ANNIE HAYDEN

**The Rub**

Merge

Virtually unheard from since her band Spent released its last album in 1996, Annie Hayden has resurfaced with a remarkably strong solo debut that effervesces with feminine wit and sharply devised melodies unlike anything since Liz Phair's *Exile In Guyville*. Though Hayden's not as thematically ambitious as Phair, her songs reflect a similar mix of intelligence and attitude. Spent's Ed Radich (drums) and John King (production) help out, but Hayden relies less on the rhythmic punch of her band than on subtler sonic touches, like the jazzy guitar chords in two of the disc's four charming instrumentals ("The Land Of Nod" and "Guitar Lessons"). As a singer, Hayden shows considerable range, slipping into a near-falsetto to accentuate a lyric in "Red Lines," singing mellifluously on the breezy "Sign Of Your Love," and pushing her voice into torch territory on the closing ballad, "Lovely To See." And her lyrics are thoughtful and direct, as in the quick rhyme which seems to sum up her down-to-Earth philosophy: "Well I don't know what to say/ Other than that life is overrated anyway." The emotional crest comes in the vibrant, winding love song "Wood And Glue," where a hook develops on trumpet and guitar, then expands with the addition of piano and mellotron, supporting without overshadowing the integral vocal melody. >>>RICHARD A. MARTIN

Out

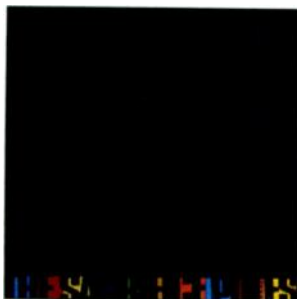
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Spent's Phair lady

R.I.Y.L.

Liz Phair, Julie Doiron,  
Yo La Tengo



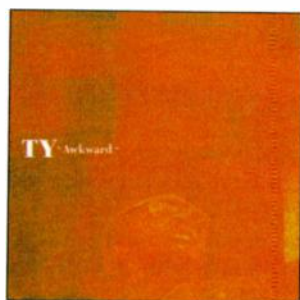
## THE SACRIFICE POLES

The Sacrifice Poles

Robodog

It's one thing for a hard-rock band to make demos of its rehearsal jams, but it's another thing to throw them together and call it a new product—as the Smashing Pumpkins once proved on a tedious half-hour B-side. Renaming itself after a figment of contemporary horror novelist Iain Banks's imagination, the upstart Boston art-rock quartet Cave In recorded this disc live to 4-track during sessions for its latest release, the much-buzzed-about *Jupiter*. The roots of that album are apparent in this one's droning guitar orgies, one of which, "Brain Candle Waltz," eventually made it onto *Jupiter* in altered form. But *The Sacrifice Poles* is more than just an archeological study. The band shows off a bunch of its multiple personalities here, moving from Glen Branca-era Sonic Youth shimmer on the opening "Guitarmegeddon" to uplifting campfire chime on "Neon Glow" to stoner-rock lurch on "Chow Foon The Moon." Cave In heads into Spiritualized territory on some of the longer pieces, then breaks up the drone with noisy little experiments like "Chewable Robots." Spliced together with the studied nonchalance of an early Lou Barlow bedroom exercise, the disc is an intriguing look inside the mind of one of the most exciting young bands in the country. >>>SEAN RICHARDSON

Out  
December 5  
File Under  
Space-rock outtakes  
R.I.Y.L.  
Cave In, Radiohead,  
Sonic Youth



## TY Awkward

Big Dada

U.K. hip-hop has admittedly done little to set the world alight, certainly not in the same way that something like hip-hop-derived British drum 'n' bass has. But every once in a while someone emerges from the U.K. hip-hop underground to fan the flames of excitement, and this time that certain someone is Ty. His delivery is uniquely British but global at the same time—think Roots Manuva with hefty dollops of Hubert Laws and Stevie Wonder. He's smooth and seductive, quickly drawing you into his idiosyncratic, lyrically dense realities. "The Tale" is the killer cut, with muted congas and dizzy keyboards scoring Ty's hypnotic pitter patter. "Hercules" is a heart-on-the-sleeve spoken-word odyssey about bullying at school, while the jazzmatronic rhythm thing "Break The Lock" works around an insurgent beat. The album title says it all really: Ty openly displays his uncomfortable relationship with himself, his music and the people around him and in doing so, comes through with an album that is bursting with honesty. What he does best is to move way beyond the usual shouty call-and-response nonsense that passes for mainstream rapping these days and dare to treat listeners like they have an IQ that cracks three digits. A measured yet impressive debut. >>>KIERAN WYATT

Out  
March 6  
File Under  
Sophisticated U.K. hip-hop  
R.I.Y.L.  
Roots Manuva, MC Solaar,  
De La Soul



## WAGON CHRIST

Musipal

Ninja Tune

Musipal is so damned vibrant and playful that you almost expect a friendly cartoon dolphin to spring out of the speakers at any second—and then sprout fangs and nip your arm. Because although mastermind Luke Vibert is often lumped in with the head-nodding set, the fourth Wagon Christ album bristles with far too many kinks and curveballs to jive with bong-toting passivity. Although his palette draws heavily from the eye-popping timbres of the video-game-and-cartoons generation, Vibert's compositions also extensively tap what must be a far-ranging record (or MP3) collection. "Thick Stew" anchors jungle calls and bouncing ping pong balls with a solitary penetrating bass note, weaving jazzy piano in and out during a nearly eight-minute gambol, while the title track feeds Barry White, a harp and some tap-dance instruction discs through a Play-Doh press to form a star-shaped tube. Vibert comes from the same Cornwall region that spawned Richard James (Aphex Twin) and Mike Paradinas (µ-Ziq), but his work is neither as obtuse as the former nor as baroque as the latter: His licks are melodically concise and catchy, and wicked dance-floor pastiches like "Receiver" (complete with James Brown-style grunts, dramatic strings and soulful exhortations to "keep the fire burning") and the giddy Daft-Punk-meets-Roy-Ayers collision "Boney L" underscore his obvious affection for pop culture. >>>KURT B. REIGHLEY

Out  
March 20  
File Under  
Kooky but catchy electronica  
R.I.Y.L.  
Coldcut, DJ Shadow,  
Plaid, Plone

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## NICKY LOVE

**N**icole Love (yes, that's her real name) could be on a Paris runway right now. She could also be "a bit of fluff in a short skirt" as she says, covering someone else's material. Several years ago though, the leggy Australian woke up from an "outrageous" party lifestyle to realize the moderate success she'd enjoyed as a model and backup singer had passed. Also, while she'd been traveling and partying, her father and grandparents had died and a close friend committed suicide. Battling deep depression, she took a miserable job waitressing in a casino to fund her music. Then came a very fortunate encounter with DreamWorks A&R man Robbie Robertson (*that* Robbie Robertson), who understood how her varied influences (from Tricky to Dr. Dre to Led Zeppelin) could work together. "It took someone who was an artist himself to understand what I was trying to do," she says. With the help of producer Marius de Vries (Björk, PJ Harvey), Love created *Honeyvision*, a debut that ranges from Courtney Love-style (no relation) aggression to soothing psychedelia. Now she says the hard times were worth it: "All the difficulties focused me into what I was trying to say and who I really was." >>>CHRISTY DAMIO

MJ COLE

**D**rum 'n' bass heads may take credit for inspiring the erratic rhythms of U.K. two-step, but MJ Cole admits that the jerky, southern-fried R&B has had a direct effect on his bouncy brand of garage music. "When the Missy [Elliott] and Timbaland stuff started to come over, it was an incredible influence on the advancement of two-step as a whole," says the 27-year-old producer. "There was a time when [vocal dance music] was based solely around the four-to-the floor beat of house. If it wasn't for the bits that were coming over from the States at that time, then I don't think two-step would have happened." On *Sincere* (Talkin' Loud), the Londoner injects luxurious string orchestrations and ragga into the age-old dance-diva format along with guest MC Danny Vicious and singer Elisabeth Cole—a recipe which earned him a Mercury Prize nom last year. Will America embrace its wayward child repackaged as a U.K. phenom? Cole's hopes are high. "If all the 16-year-olds in London are walking around playing it on their mini-discs, then that's a pretty good sign it can happen everywhere." He adds, "You [Americans] started the whole thing, really—we're just playing a bit of international music tennis."

>>>M. TYE COMER



TREVOR RAY HART

FROM LEFT: DANNY VICIOUS, ELISABETH TROY, MJ COLE



## THE CAUSEY WAY

**S**ome see a white light at the end of a tunnel. When Scott Stanton nearly died after a skateboarding accident, he envisioned the Causey Way, a rock 'n' roll religion—some might say cult—based in a Gainesville, Florida compound. Stanton, the group's spiritual leader, admits that the kids at the compound love to hear his "war" stories. "Like when I would hang out with Tony Hawk, pro skateboarder," he recalls. "Let me tell you, it was not a video game." These days Stanton and his followers record

souped-up new-wave surf-punk "hymns" that can be heard on albums such as the new *Causey Vs. Everything* (Alternative Tentacles). The Causey Way performs "250 secular services a year," but mistakenly suggest that the band merely "plays" and you'll get a stern sermon: "I spend all kinds of time on the road spreading the good word and then some clown like you always comes up and asks about how many times we 'play.'" Although there's little text explaining the Causey Way gospels, Stanton assures: "When one is deemed Causey, all the answers will be right in their face... *their face!*" Amen. >>>BRIAN HOWARD

## BUCK 65 AND SIXTOO

**W**hen you're in a small city, you're not afraid to experiment," says rapper and Halifax native Sixtoo. In '96, when he first started working with rapper/producer Buck 65, the duo (under the name Sebutones) recorded tracks about sci-fi, paranoia and voodoo. Since then, these rogue Canadians have crafted a strange brew that stretches hip-hop in far-fetched, almost implausible directions. Considering Halifax is a good 12 hours from any major city, it's given birth to an eclectic scene. Jokes Buck 65: "We're making hip-hop records out of dog shit, lobster traps, a five Iron and a roll of tube socks." That may be so, but these unusual accents give their music a uniquely intimate feel; their sound is confessional, familiar and disturbing all at once. Their two new solo releases, Buck 65's *Man Overboard* and Sixtoo's *Songs I Hate (And Other People Moments)* will both be released through Anticon, a label responsible for a flurry of recent outfield hip-hop albums. "We've all opened this floodgate," remarks Sixtoo. "And now we're starting to see the first generation of people that we influenced. They're like us, but even weirder." >>>JON CARAMANICA

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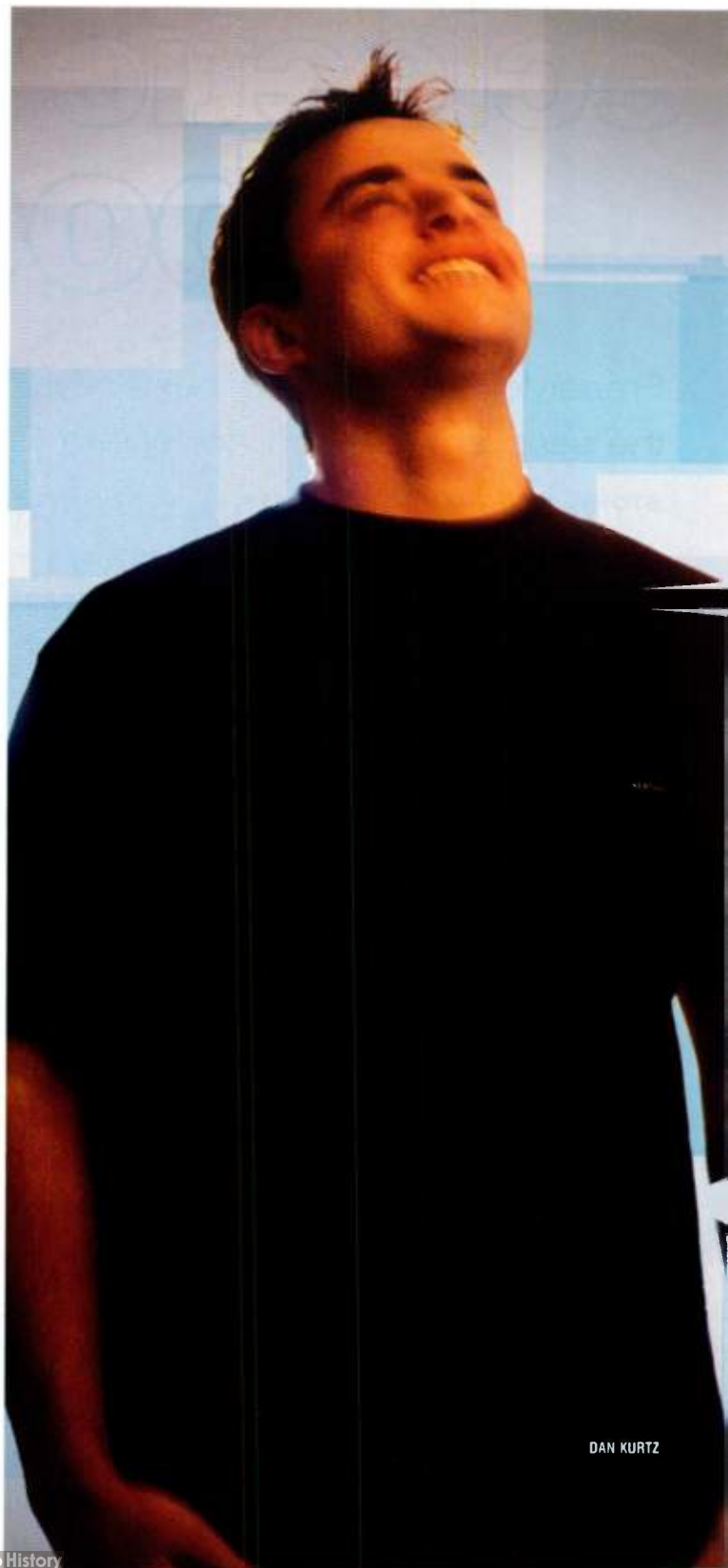


**BURLY BEAR NETWORK**

# Techless Techno?



JAMIE SHIELDS



DAN KURTZ

## Can the **New Deal** build a bridge between jam bands and electronic music?

STORY: ADRIENNE DAY PHOTOS: BRENDAN MORAN

**S**ome folks might find it easier to envision peace in the Middle East than a truce between lovers of DJ-driven dance music and live bands. But the hope for a settlement might lie with house-music outfit the New Deal, a trio that whips together a house-music frenzy with the same instruments carted about by the likes of Medeski Martin And Wood. To jam out a live improv set that kicks like a jazzy house DJ—replete with warbly synths and throbbing basslines—this Toronto-based drums-bass-and-keyboard band relies on a complex system of hand-signals, lightening-quick chord changes and, most importantly, each other. “We’re way better as live musicians than we are in the studio developing stuff,” admits bassist Dan Kurtz. “But it’s also a response to crowds who want to dance—the key ingredient missing from a lot of live music.”

What kind of esthetic apocalypse is this, you ask? Could there be new wave without synths? Techno without a 909? House with no samples? For lovers of both electronic music and traditional instruments, the reconciliation of these polarized camps—whose differences arguably date back to musique concrete—has been a long time coming.

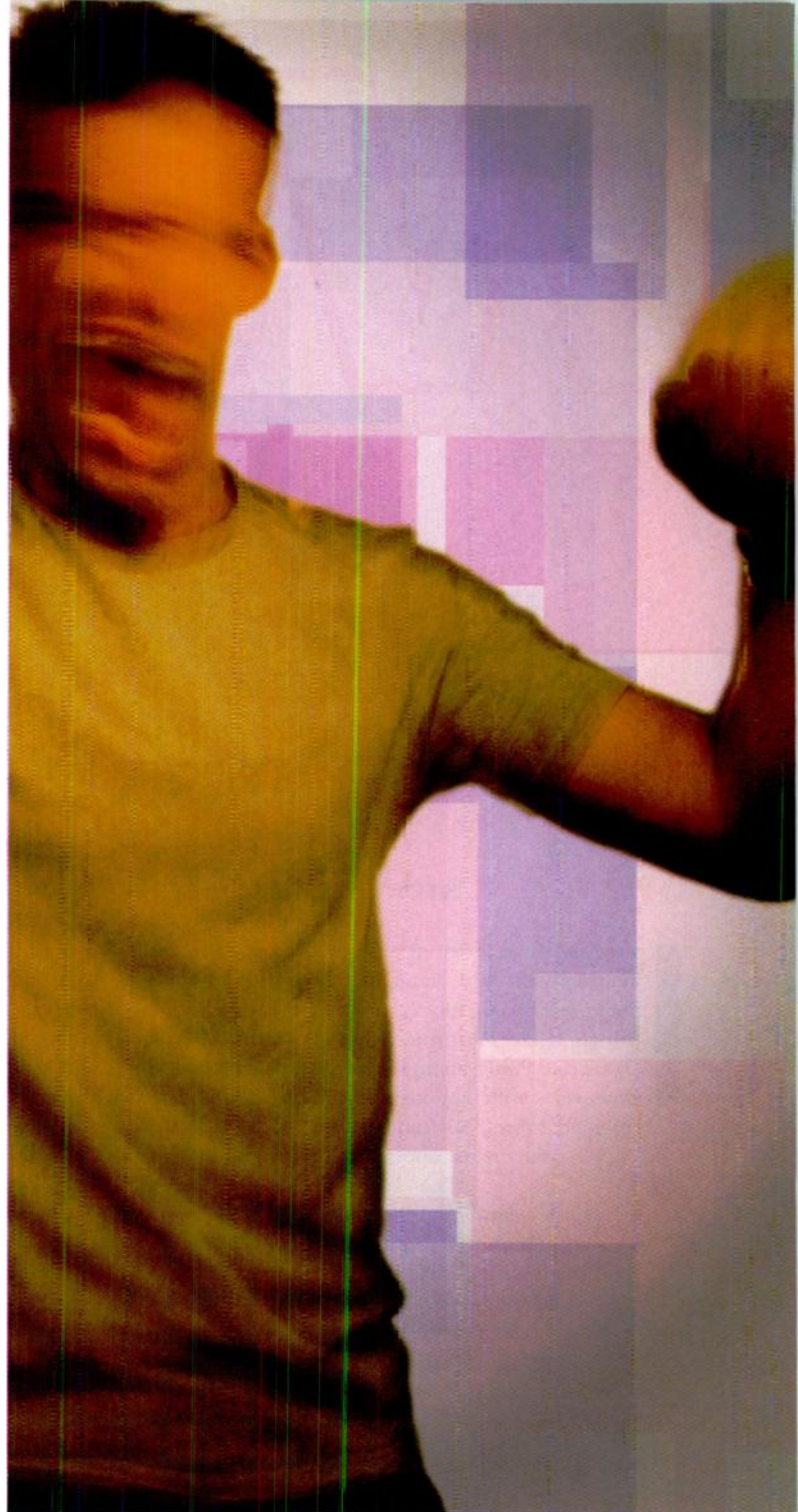
“I strive to emulate exactly what a drum machine sounds like, to capture the raw four-on-the-floor energy, but give it my own twist,” explains drummer-cum-beatbox Darren Shearer. Keyboardist Jamie Shields outlines his role: “With one hand I’ll play a loop over and over; with the other I play a melody or chords.” (“It’s like he has four mouths

“It’s really amazing  
the minivans we  
can rent now—they  
have spoilers and  
everything!”

and they all talk at the same time,” laughs Kurtz.)

As undergrads at Montreal’s McGill University, Kurtz and Shields fell in love with the Orb and other seminal ambient/techno groups. Later, in Toronto, the group was hired to play “acid jazz” at a local dive where they could cut loose and do as they pleased. One session led to another, and the members decided to record and release the results on their Sound And Light label. “We had a CD before we had a band,” jokes Shields.

The New Deal has found a nascent following at raves throughout the country as well as at the Wetlands, a rootsy club in downtown Manhattan that once played home to such acts as the Spin Doctors and Blues Traveler. So, appropriately enough, this “Petrie dish” of New Dealism (as dubbed by Kurtz) might be



DARREN SHEARER

just the social milieu needed to foster the growth of a Garcia-less U.S. fanbase. It was a live set there that first captured the attention of A&R folks at Jive Electro, a set they’re planning on recreating for their debut Jive release early this summer. “We’ve rented a farmhouse an hour and a half north of Toronto, and we’re installing a studio there,” says Kurtz. “Being in a sterile, sound-proof room with no windows is not exactly the best way to be creative.”

How do they feel about being signed to Britney Spears’s sister label? “I think we add tremendous legitimacy to her whole thing,” deadpans Shields. Shearer jokes, “It’s really amazing the minivans we can rent now—they have spoilers and everything!” **NMM**

# Wark prince

Eliza Carthy may be  
English folk royalty, but she's also a  
rebel against the regime.

STORY: MEREDITH OCHS PHOTO: TOM HOWARD

was never interested in being a droopy, folk-singing waif who can't hold a guitar properly," declares Eliza Carthy. As the daughter of legendary British folkie Martin Carthy, who influenced Bob Dylan and Paul Simon, she might have become one. However, with cotton-candy-colored hair and a pierced labret, it's unlikely that Carthy will be seen as just another Lilith fairy.

The lush folk-pop and programmed beats of her new album, *Angels & Cigarettes* (Warner Bros.), are cut with blunt lyrics about life's more brutal moments. On "The Company Of Men," a 25-piece string section provides the backdrop for the unsentimental recollection: "I've given blowjobs on couches/ To men who didn't want me anymore." A "Beautiful Girl" awaits a gloomy fate in the song of the same name: "The fun never ends/ And her friends say she's oh such a lovely lass/ Wait 'til she ages and maybe they'll say how she's losing all her class."

Although you might never have heard Carthy's name before, she's practically a folk princess in England, and not only because the 25-year-old grew up performing with her famous family (which also includes mother Norma Waterson). Carthy has also topped U.K. charts and garnered a Mercury Prize nomination (England's Grammy) for her second album, *Red Rice*.

Until now, she's made her name interpreting mostly traditional music, but on *Angels*, Carthy comes into her own as a songwriter with nine original compositions (and a cover of Paul Weller's "Wildwood"). Her current tastes run closer to Eminem and Fatboy Slim than baroque ballads, yet she's still enamored of the traditional songs her parents play and will likely make another folk album at some point.

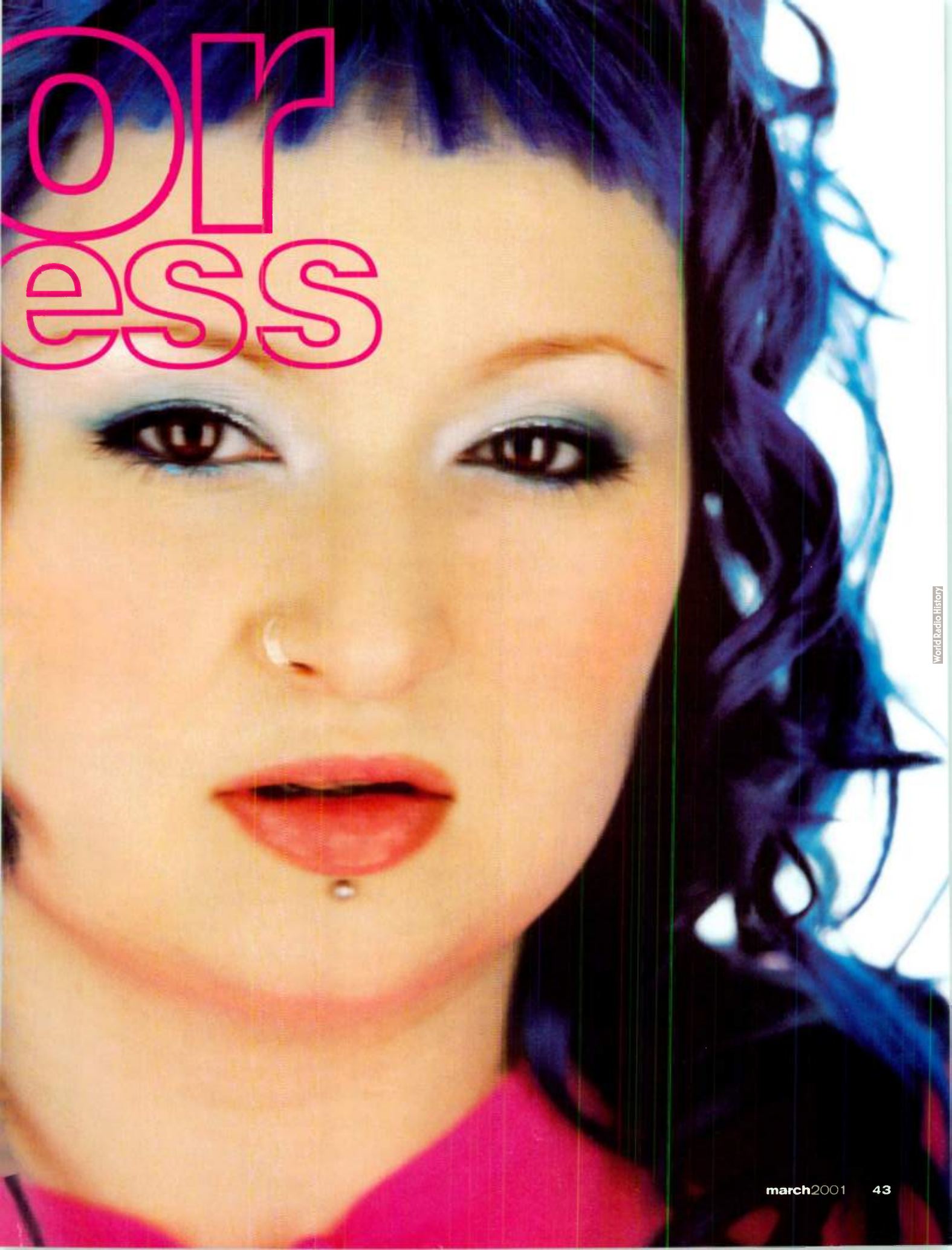
"I've gone from the top of my field as a folk singer to the bottom in the rock and pop scene," she admits. "But I want to be different every time you see me. I like to surprise people."

Some might see *Angels & Cigarettes* as a rebellion against parents who wouldn't let their daughter watch *The A-Team* as a child, but Carthy doesn't consider her strum 'n' bass as much different from ol' school folk. "Traditional music is a blank page," she opines, "You can never imagine what the person who sang an old song originally sounded like, but interpreting it is not that academic a process. Once the song is in your mouth, it's just going to come out the way you are."

While Carthy's brazen attitude might bring to mind Ani DiFranco, her dulcet singing voice is reminiscent of the late Sandy Denny. Listen to the fiddle and acoustic guitar of "Whispers Of Summer" and you'll likely be transported to the wide-open North Yorkshire moors where her family settled during Carthy's childhood.

At the moment, however, she's more preoccupied with a bit of shopping she's done for a friend at Bristol, England's Toys-R-Us, where she found TLC keyrings that play the melody to "No Scrubs."

"I bought myself a singing Britney Spears doll; I shall make a shrine to good looks," she laughs sarcastically. **NMM**



Or  
ess





# born to ride

Jim White has been on  
a long, strange trip since  
before he was born.

STORY: TOM LANHAM PHOTO: DANIEL LINCOLN

**H**alfway through his huevos rancheros at a Burbank taqueria, folk-rock raconteur Jim White begins spinning a yarn that leaves the food cooling on his plate for a good 15 minutes. Like most of the whimsical, sometimes Gothic, anecdotes on his sophomore album, *No Such Place* (Luaka Bop), it's a tale of serendipity.

Right after describing how he once spelunked beneath the city to film its fabled "mole people"—and before he elaborates on the feature-length script he's writing, White, 43, offhandedly mentions, "Oh, by the way—did I tell you I was conceived on a cross-country trip?"

"The family was on this trip, they were in this restaurant at a Columbus, Ohio motel—because back then you always used to eat at the motel restaurant where you stayed—and three Catholic priests were sitting across from them. And my father was a really strict, military-man disciplinarian, so my four sisters all sat bolt upright in their seats, scared to say a word or do anything.

"Seeing this, the Catholic priests thought, 'This is a wonderful Catholic family!'—which they weren't—and they sent over a round of drinks, with their compliments, to these two 30-year-olds with four kids. And I guess they toasted the Pope or something, and drank whatever it was—mai tais, margaritas, something that started with an 'm.' But they ended up being Molotov cocktails—after four more drinks, my folks wound up going back to the motel room and conceiving me.

"And the, er, frequency of their intimacies," White winks, "was such that they could pinpoint the exact night. And I always think about the fact that they got in the car the next morning and were soon going 60 miles an hour—all my life I've been obsessed with religion and cars and travel, and not travel like, 'Hey, I'm going to Cancun!,' I mean like *driving*. Really lonely rides. I feel like

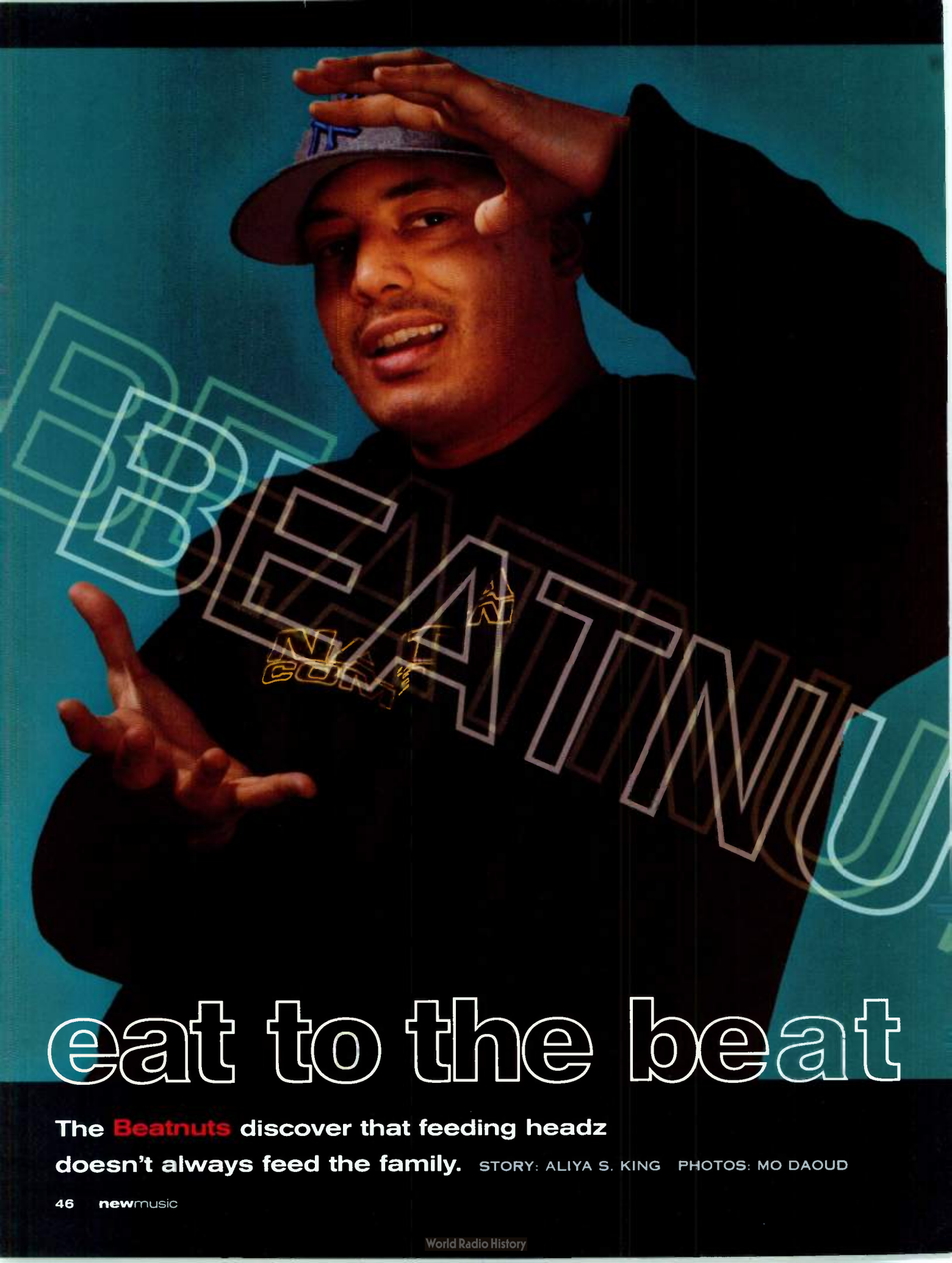
my identity was forged in that one emblematic experience."

By 23, White had already worn out six sturdy automobiles and motored from coast to coast eight parent-alarming times. Soon the Pensacola, Florida native would bounce across Europe for a short-lived modeling career, then relocate to New York for film school, which he paid for by driving a cab (and don't get him started on those stories).

"I couldn't help it—I was just a restless, restless soul," he shrugs. That nomadic spirit—as well as some mighty tall tales—are the backbone of *No Such Place*, which couples his keening backwoods wail with a tinny acoustic/electric take on country R&B and a lyrical vernacular so Southern-steeped it'd give Cormack McCarthy the creeps.

Intriguing titles like "Handcuffed To A Fence In Mississippi," "10 Miles To Go On A 9 Mile Road" and "God Was Drunk When He Made Me" were whittled down from 70 selections.

Since the birth of his daughter, Tiki-Bird, two years ago, the artist is "returning to the world of life, I'm happy to report. I walk around with her in my arms and I look at other kids and parents and I just wanna cry, I feel so alive." And yes, White has plenty of baby pictures, and of course, plenty of touching stories. "I almost brought her today, but we would've never been able to chat," he concludes, returning to his now-congealed meal. "Because every time I start saying something, she puts her hand over my mouth and says, 'Daddy.... don't talk!'" **NMM**



# eat to the beat

The **Beatnuts** discover that feeding headz  
doesn't always feed the family.

STORY: ALIYA S. KING PHOTOS: MO DAOUD



Beat

**E**ven with a baseball cap slung low over Lester "Psycho Les" Fernandez's forehead and a pair of impenetrable Ray-Bans soldered to Jerry "JuJu" Tineo's face, the Beatnuts look drained, frustrated and one bad-news phone call away from being thoroughly beaten. The duo has a right to be peeved on this blustery

morning—most of all, at themselves. Even though the Beatnuts have sold hundreds of thousands of records, they've also made a string of bad business decisions, leaving them virtually broke.

"I ain't gonna front," admits Tineo. "We have been the most irresponsible niggas as far as attorneys and managers are concerned." Although the duo's last album, '99's *Musical Massacre* (Relativity), sold a respectable 200,000 copies according to SoundScan, the members swear they received next to nothing in royalties. "We had an attorney listing himself as the executive producer for *Musical Massacre*!" Tineo hollers, still a bit shocked by the wrangling that went on behind their backs in between the time the music was recorded and released.

As the hyperkinetic half of the producer/artist duo, Tineo is generally the merrymaker—and, by some accounts, the troublemaker. "We had money being taken out of our mechanical royalties, which is almost always guaranteed money for the artist," he adds, pounding his fist on the table for emphasis, causing his half-eaten slice of pizza to vibrate on a greasy paper plate. After the Beatnuts realized their contract left them with next to no cash flow, the rappers dropped some science on their onetime representatives, chewing some out and firing others. Eventually, contracts were renegotiated.

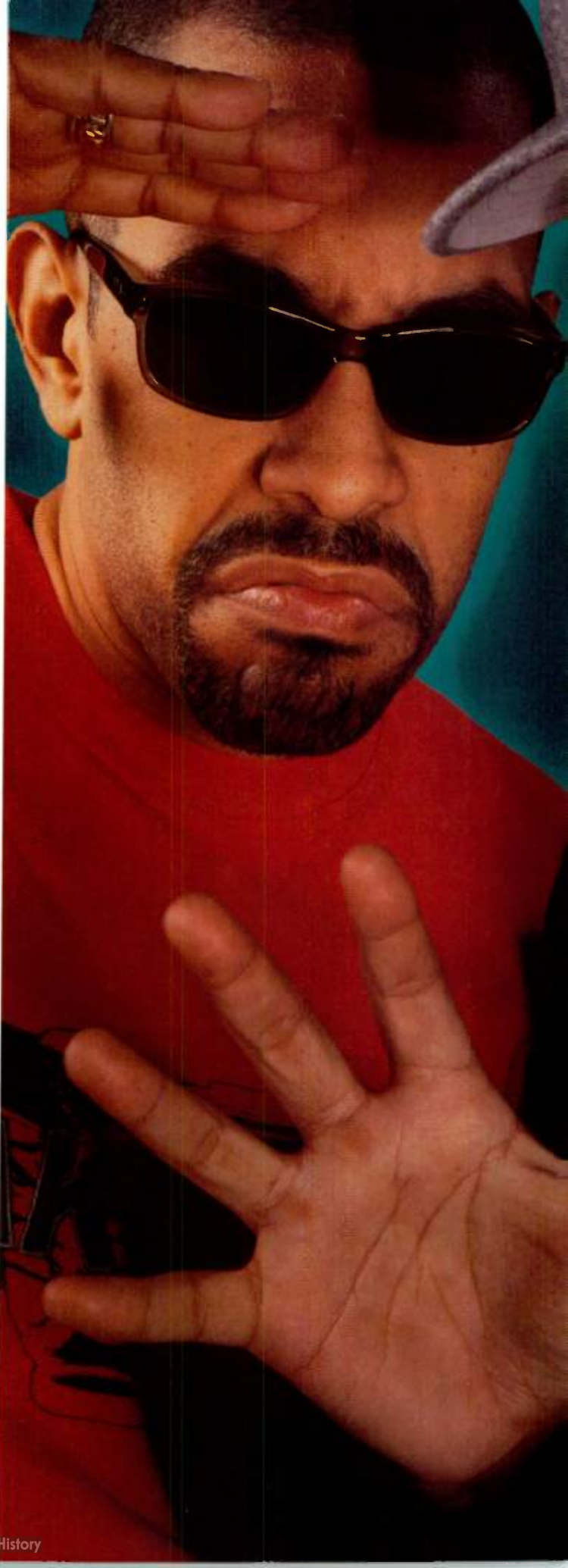
So even considering the Beatnuts' improved sales figures from album to album, a lot is riding on the success of the new record, *Take It Or Squeeze It*, the group's fourth overall and the first for a newly adopted label, Loud Records (who inherited the Beatnuts when the company absorbed Relativity Records). That's a lot of pressure, especially since last year, Tineo's personal drama affected the amount of time and energy he could devote to the album. When his landlord kicked him out of his apartment on short notice—the landlord wanted the apartment for himself—Tineo moved back to his mother's house and put his records in storage. "I had to send my wife and kids to Florida and bounce around for four months," he recalls. "I was beyond stressed. And it shows in the music. I could just hear something on the radio and then write a song about how pissed off I was."

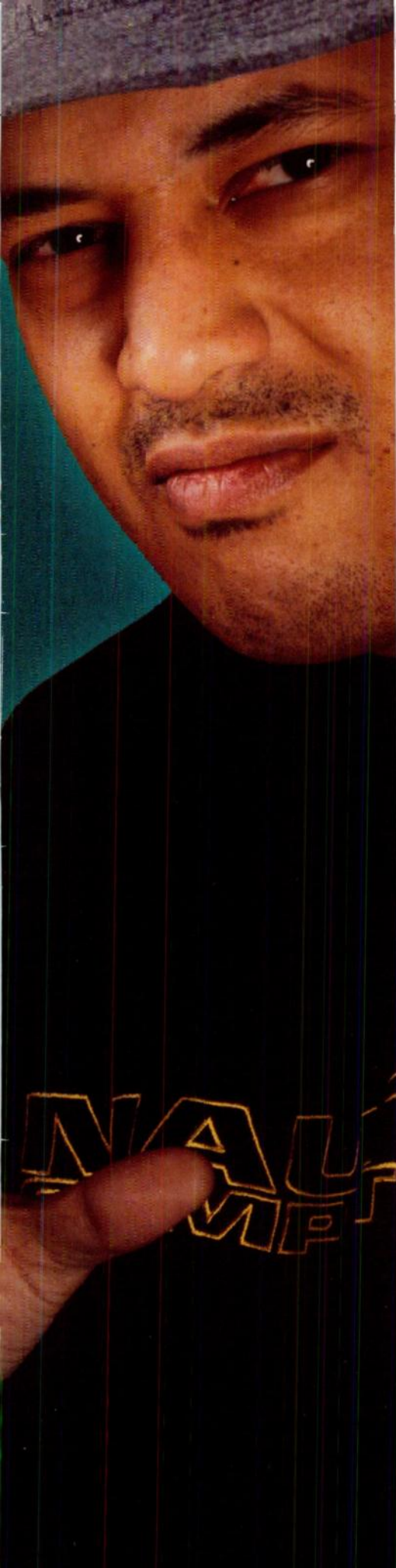
Across the table, Fernandez drums his fingers, his eyebrows furrowed. Always the more subdued member of the group, he co-signs most of Tineo's comments on the difficulties of making *Take It Or Squeeze It*, yet his responses are restrained and concise. After a moment of silence, Fernandez offers: "If it wasn't for producing and live shows, we'd starve. We can't be preoccupied with the money, 'cause then we wouldn't be as nice as we are, musically. But we have kids now, and they gotta eat."

With his hands tightly folded around his ample frame, Fernandez scrunches his face up and gives his full attention back to his Snapple. Tineo, who usually handles the bulk of the Beatnuts' production, readily admits that Fernandez was forced to take on more responsibility while Tineo spent time trying to get his home life together. The direction of the project was firmly in Fernandez's hands, but even with the pressure for commercial success, he didn't go straight for an obvious, radio-friendly hit. "Nowadays, you don't have to make something for the radio," insists Fernandez. "You got people like M.O.P. getting airplay. You got Common going gold. You got a lot of underground artists coming up right now. Our music might be seen as commercial, but it's still the raw Beatnuts."

The raw Beatnuts got their start in Corona, Queens. In 1988, Tineo was living at home, and like most wannabe DJs, he lived for music. After high-school administrators kicked him out for fighting just one year shy of graduation, Tineo spent his days trying to pick up pocket change for records. In the late '80s, it wasn't enough to just be up on the newest record; a true music freak knew how to make beats, not just bob heads to 'em.

That same year, Tineo met Fernandez through a mutual friend. After hanging out on the party circuit, the two lost touch temporarily. Then Fernandez, who had dropped out of high school to get a job,





decided to go back to earn his GED. He called Tineo and told him to pack a book bag and meet him at the school. "They started calling us the Beat Kings, cause we always was coming to school with a new beat," says Fernandez, more to himself than anyone else. "But after we met up with the Jungle Brothers and they heard our crazy sounds, they renamed us the Beatnuts, and it just stuck. By the time we finished school, it was on."

They also added a third member, Kool Fashion, who later converted to Islam and left the group. After producing gems for Monie Love, the Jungle Brothers and Common, the Beatnuts caught the attention of Violator Records' Chris Lighty, who tossed them enough production and songwriting work to get them signed to both a production deal and a recording contract.

From their first release, the tremendously appealing *Intoxicated Demons* EP, the beats have been, well, nuts. And that raw Beatnuts sound has come to mean barely identifiable samples from obscure funk records, hardcore scratching and light, melodic lyrical delivery stuffed with double meanings that often joke about smoking, drinking and wannabe gangsters. Their self-titled full-length debut introduced a now-requisite

tingly flute instrumentation that popped on the tracks "Off The Books" (from '97's *Stone Crazy*) and "Watch Out Now" (from '99's *Musical Massacre*) and continues with the trippy "Prendelo (Light It Up)," the warm-up first single from the new album. While *Musical Massacre* featured notable guest appearances from Biz Markie, Common, Dead Prez and R&B crooner Carl Thomas, the cameos on *Take It Or Squeeze It* are more focused on newcomers.

"Yeah, we had a lot of big names on [*Massacre*]," offers Tineo. "But this time around, we're keeping it all in-house." Except for a remix featuring Method Man and a Tony Touch appearance, the other names—Al Tariq, Fatman Scoop, Tripleface—aren't high on the radar. Fernandez and Tineo underscore that several of the guest appearances on the album are from artists they're producing, including Miss Loca and Willie Stubbs. In fact, with the skills the Beatnuts possess behind the mixing boards, one wonders why they continue to deal with the drama associated with recording. Couldn't they make just as much money, or more, as producers? "We would do that if we could," says Fernandez, a little annoyed. "But putting out an album is the best way for people to hear our shit. People ain't calling us to get beats. They're calling the Neptunes and Timbaland. Our albums are our calling cards to the industry. And we're not trying to be the flavor of the month. We make classics."

Before facing a photographer with more ice-grills and bad-boy stares, Fernandez and Tineo dismiss any doubts that the pair can remain relevant to the youth movement of hip-hop, even though they're grown men with wives and kids. "No matter what happens with this album, we're going to make music forever," assures Tineo. Fernandez concurs, flashing an all-too-rare smile. "Shit, I just came back from Germany and saw Grandmaster Flash performing live, still making cash. No matter what happens, we'll be making music for our fans 'til we die." **NMM**

"Our albums are our calling cards to the industry. And we're not trying to be the flavor of the month. We make classics."



# the

# war within

After a year on the road turning **Monster Magnet's** last album gold, Dave Wyndorf returned from his tour of duty shellshocked and in search of himself.

STORY: LORNE BEHRMAN PHOTOS: DALE MAY

In the opening scene of Francis Ford Coppola's 1979 Vietnam nightmare *Apocalypse Now*, Captain Willard (played by Martin Sheen) waits in his Saigon hotel room for word on a search-and-destroy mission. Willard already fulfilled his Uncle Sam obligations, but after returning to civilian life, he realized all he knew was jungle life—the jungle of Vietnam and the inner jungle of war. Drunk and beyond the place where impatience becomes agony, he punches a mirror, shattering it along with his mental stability, then collapses at the foot of the bed, crying and rubbing the blood from his hand all over his chest.

Sheen's narration whispers in an unsettling rasp: "Everyone gets everything he wants. I wanted a mission, and for my sins they gave me one—brought it up to my room like room service."

More than 30 years later, on the other side of the world—Manhattan's Upper East Side—hotels with Rococo decor promise fine cuisine, but Monster Magnet mainman Dave Wyndorf opts for the blandest place on the block, a corner diner. "There, normal. I like normal," he says, pointing at the glass doors. Inside, there's wood paneling, Formica tables, afternoon specials displayed hermetically sealed in Saran wrap; '80s pop rock lite—Madonna, Gloria Estefan and Richard Marx—blasts from trebly speakers.

As the theme from *Flashdance* rocks in the background, Wyndorf's thoughts drift toward Coppola's classic: "Martin Sheen says in *Apocalypse Now*, 'Whenever I was on tour in Vietnam all I could think about was going home, but every time I was home, all I could think about was getting back in the jungle.' That's what happens when

you're on tour. It wears you down. You can't make any new relationships, all you can make is really superficial relationships, so you start to distrust what people say to you."

Wyndorf looks more like he walked off of the set of *Easy Rider* than *Apocalypse Now*—he has that Glenn Danzig short-and-beefy build, a meticulously groomed Satan goatee, the leather pants with the lace-up crotch, and a tanktop that reveals thick biceps. One glance at him and all the mythic tales of debauchery make sense.

Although it was hardly 'Nam in '67, in Las Vegas in '97 Wyndorf faced his own personal demons and fear of civilian life in a hotel room much like Captain Willard's. The first two of his quintet's major-label albums had been serious sales disappointments, and Wyndorf sequestered himself there to write a hit record. What the devil's little helpers brought to Wyndorf's hotel room (like room service) was *Powertrip* (A&M). The work of a world-class rock 'n' roll band from Red Bank, New Jersey playing blatant hooks with priapic bombast, it was the perfect bridge

between commercial over-accessibility and indie metal's retro insularity. When *Powertrip* hit the street in '98, the sheen of electronica was creating an atmosphere of playful, plastic indulgence, epitomized by Marilyn Manson's trashy pop-

metal masterpiece, *Mechanical Animals*. The stoner-rock underground was poised to surface, and Monster Magnet had been riding that wave since their heshier-classic '91 debut, *Spine Of God*.

Led by the MTV-approved "Space Lord" (the tune's raunchy rap-styled video was a network mainstay), the album went gold. "I wanted it, I got it," Wyndorf admits of his quest up the river for metallurgic glory. However, he wrote *Powertrip* hoping it would mean he'd never have to "work another day" in his life. But he "wound up working every day" of his life after its release.

Wyndorf calls Monster Magnet's followup, *God Says No* (A&M), "*Powertrip* meltdown." They toured for 15 months straight, by themselves and with Marilyn Manson, Metallica, Aerosmith, Rob Zombie and Kid Rock. Nearly two years on any rock 'n' roll tour, let alone a Monster Magnet tour, and there is no turning back; the road leaves its tooth-marks in your soul. This disc is the wasteland of barbaric excess—shivery ballads, paranoid blues tunes, shellshocked rock 'n' roll with dark passages that tunnel through the musical underbrush.

Wyndorf wanted to record *God Says No* in Vietnam, but records from previous drug charges reportedly kept him Stateside. In 1992, he tricked a Monster Magnet audience into tripping by spiking their drinks with LSD. His memories from the *Powertrip* tour are all onstage arrests, dildos and Las Vegas strippers. "Two years on a trip and it's like Vietnam. A very pussy Vietnam compared to real war, but it is psychologically altering," Wyndorf says wearily.

On *God Says No*'s majestically eerie opus, "Cry," which features haunting church organs and cold-water-running-through-your-veins sitar, Wyndorf sings, "The only time that it's real is when you cry." The lyrics refer to a period on tour when Wyndorf's hobby was searching for deep emotions in surface relationships. "Basically, 'Cry' is about getting to a point where I would only believe someone was being truthful with me when they cried. I'd size them up, figure out where they were

damaged in life, gain their trust and take advantage of them until they started crying," he pauses, grinning. "Don't ask me where this comes from—I had a great childhood. Nobody beat me."

*Apocalypse Now* nearly killed Martin Sheen; he ended up having a heart attack and missing two months of filming. In the 1991 documentary *Hearts Of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse*, which chronicles the making of *Apocalypse Now*, Sam Bottoms, who plays the stoner soldier Lance, says Martin Sheen broke down because his good heartedness was at odds with his character's heart of darkness—he was struggling with confronting the monster inside.

Even if Wyndorf is munching on a chef's salad and grooving to "The Heat Is On" from the *Beverly Hills Cop* soundtrack, there are parallels. He comes off as a big softie—he loves comic books, he cracks sweet jokes to the waitress, and he obligingly over-explains things (he does have an eight-year-old daughter). Wyndorf is 40 and he's been immersed in the rock life since he was a teenager—the only way to

survive that many years in rock 'n' roll is to confront the complexities of the pose and find humor and humanness in its contradictions.

"Make no mistake, as many times as I'm 'Lord Dave' in the back of the bus, half the time I'm reading a *Fantastic Four*

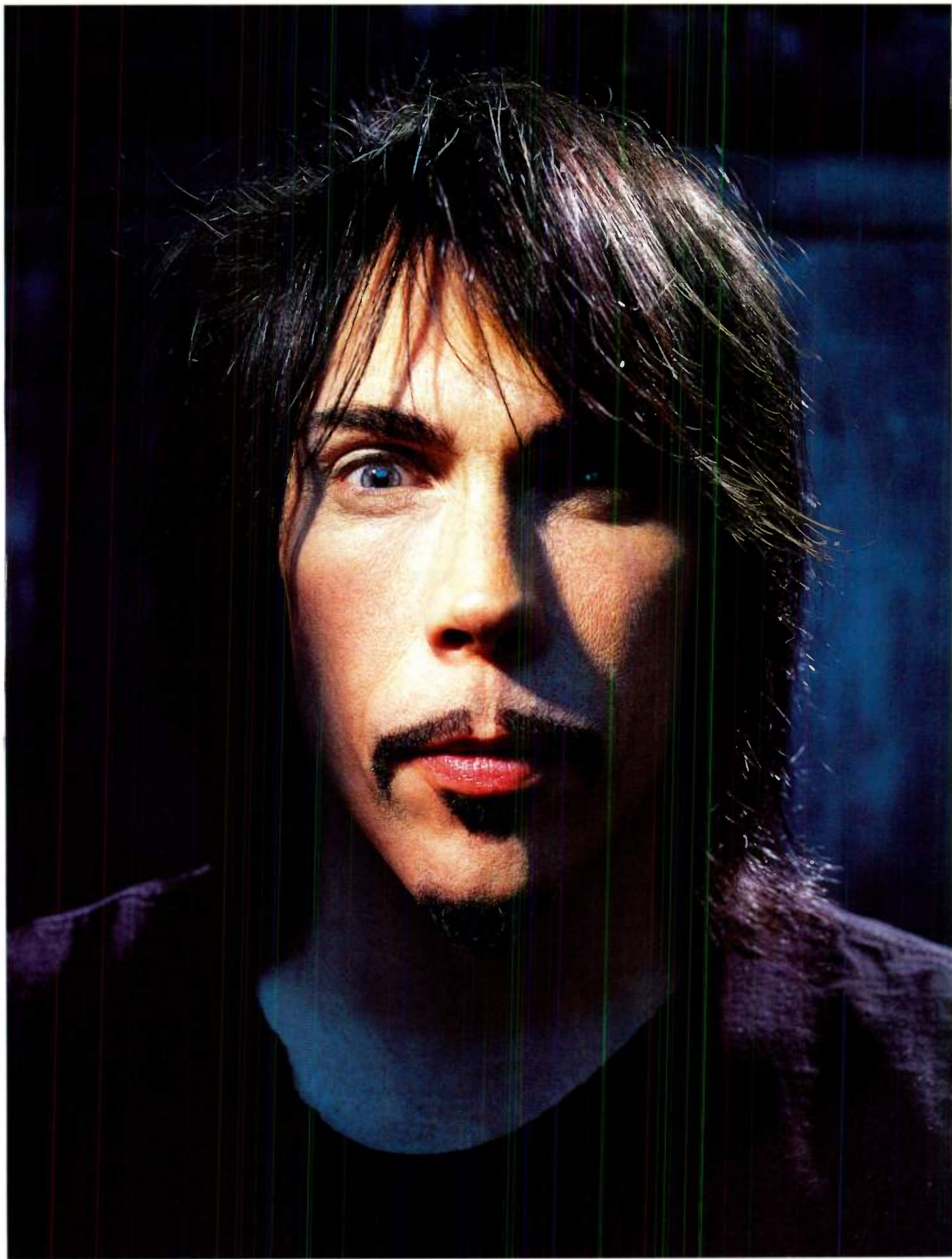
comic book and wanting to go get Triskets," he reveals. "There have been times girls come and on the bus and go, 'You're that badass dude from Monster Magnet?' and I'm sitting there with sneakers on and army pants, eating peanut butter with a spoon," he explains with a sly smile. "We thought you were bigger—it's because I was standing on a 15-foot stage. We thought you were, like, the mean guy, but you're, like, all goofy." And they're really seriously disappointed in me, hard chicks all pierced... they were looking for Danzig or something. At the last minute I was like, 'You want the mean guy?! I'll give you the fuckin' mean guy'... Grab them by the fuckin' hair, throw them in the back of the bus, shackle them up against the TV set and start whaling away. They wanted a show, I gave it to them—I'm an entertainer. You want the show, I'll give you a fucking show."

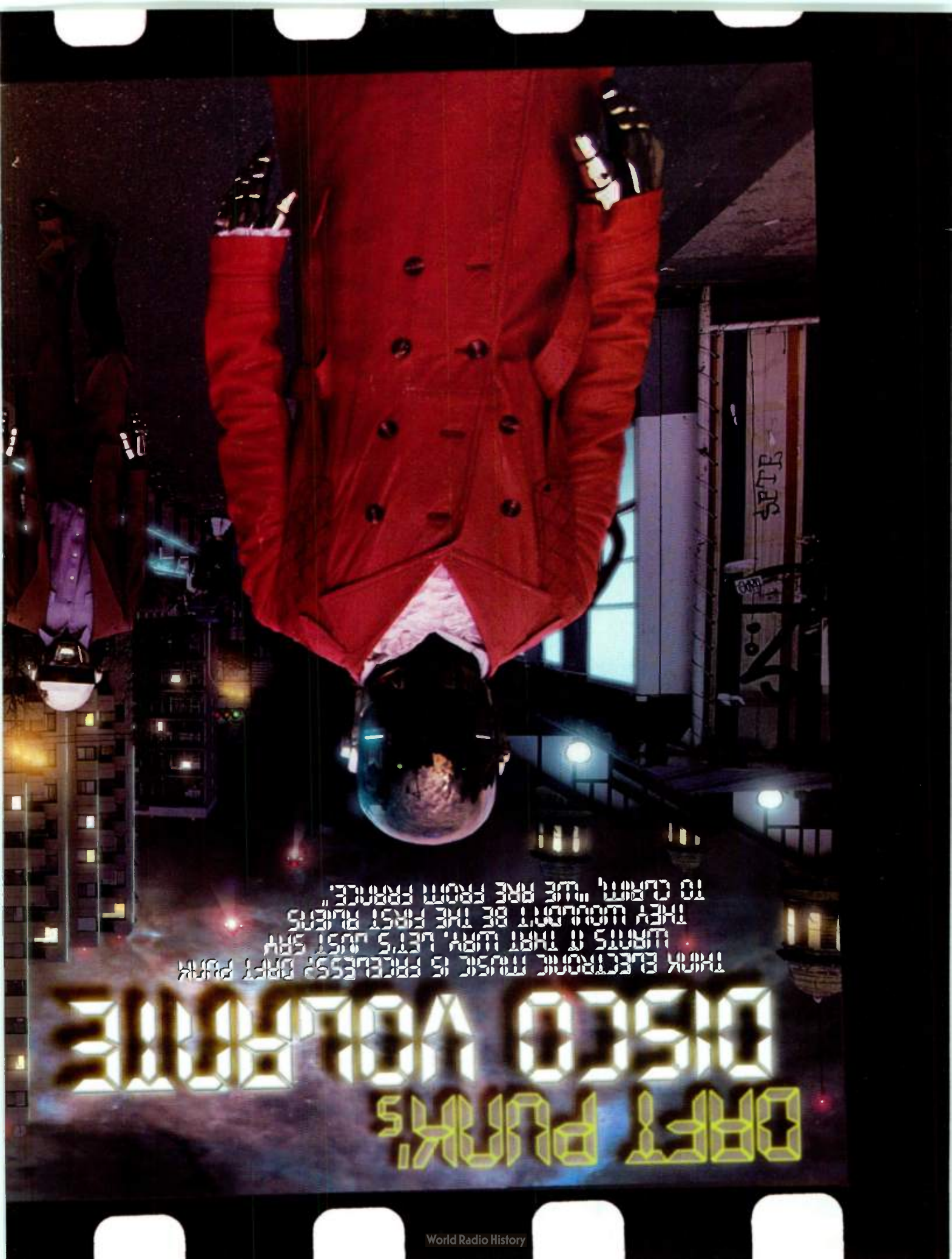
Imagine Brando's corrupt cult leader, Colonel Kurtz, squaring off with the confused yet truth-seeking Sheen, and you might get near the dichotomy. Sometimes, egomaniacal Wyndorf acts out and embarrasses mature Wyndorf in front of his family. "They're really cool and they forgive me for a lot of stuff, but I put them on when I start doing quotes like, 'One minute I'm playing with my eight-year-old daughter and the next minute I'm plowing some Danish whore.'" He cracks up. "When that kind of stuff comes out, the cringing begins."

Wyndorf has been sober since 1995, and although the rest of the band isn't sober, he says drugs don't bother him as long as they don't affect the guys' "work." *Powertrip* might have been written with the mindset, "I'm never gonna work again," but Wyndorf refrained from following it up with "I'm still never gonna work—again." *God Says No* is the exact opposite of *Powertrip*; its nuances are almost fragile.

"There's only one thing worse than selling out," explains Wyndorf. "That's trying to sell out and failing—like, here's 'Space Lord 2,'" he jokes. If only Kurtz and Captain Willard had been able to step back from the edge and survey the landscape so thoughtfully. **MMM**

"Two years on a trip and it's like Vietnam. A very pussy Vietnam compared to real war, but it is psychologically altering."






THINK ELECTRONIC MUSIC IS FOREVER? DRIFT PUNK  
WANTS A THAT WAY, LET'S JUST SAY  
THEY WOULDN'T BE THE FIRST PUNKS  
TO CRY, "WE ARE FROM FRANCE."

# DRIFT PUNK'S DISCO VOLUME





n a media-saturated information blizzard fixated on celebrity, personality is premium and secrets are rare. The showers of gossip revolve around how Britney exposes her bellybutton, how Jennifer Lopez reveals her cleavage, how Fred Durst confesses his rage. With a brittle mixture of rock and electronics, Daft Punk has avoided modern America's cult-of-personality storm and become one of the world's most successful dance acts, selling more than a half-million records just in the U.S., and millions more worldwide.

For many listeners, the production duo remains a conundrum, a non-group of lock-box mystery, media evasiveness and hush-hush intrigue. The electronic collaboration of Thomas Bangalter and Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo first infiltrated America in '97, right around the time rock-persona-schooled music critics first became worried about how to tackle the new electronica. They complained that it was a faceless medium, the domain of egghead knob-twiddlers—and Daft was exactly what they were not looking for.

In early '97, Prodigy's *The Fat Of The Land* answered critics' prayers and calmed fears with a mohawked, Sid Vicious-like singer, a flame of ego and familiar rock iconography of rebel hijinks. Later in the year came Daft, with their brazen Chicago house-influenced style. Beneath the funk and fun seemed an unfathomable philosophy, something beyond the typical dance-as-social-movement rallying cry—dance music as a punkish proletariat uprising against the French police and government who harassed rave kids and party organizers, unlike the mostly decorative musical style that Paris made its name on.

Now Daft Punk is preparing for round two of their American invasion, and they're doing it in their typical top-secret way. This December morning one-half of Daft Punk, Thomas Bangalter, has agreed to a clandestine meeting in an orange and brown anteroom of the Beverly Hills office of Virgin Records. Sitting on squat, sunken, Mission-style furniture, wearing shrunken, faded jeans that accentuate his toothpick frame and scuffed all-white Nikes that scream bad-'70s, he keeps a Spalding basketball briefcase (pebbled for effect) nearby. He looks like a teenager who's been shut off in his parents' slightly shabby mountain cabin for the holidays. Bangalter and de Homem-Christo have spent a good percentage of the past year in the indie-rock mecca of Los Angeles's Silver Lake neighborhood, concentrating on a super-secret project involving art and the Web.

Despite Bangalter's hyper-geek guise, he's a smart conversationalist with a sly, self-deprecating wit. Asked what the strangest reaction to the masks has been, he quips in stilted English: "I think people understand. When they see our face, they agree."

Noshing on cheese and apples, he talks about how he and de Homem-Christo are taking everything that they did with *Homework* even further on their new record, *Discovery*. Though Bangalter says that this record is even more rock-oriented than the last one, it is far more atmospheric and less hard and pummeling. The disco-phobic listener won over by the punk edge and snide defiance of *Homework* may find *Discovery* too ethereal and conceptual.

"On a musical level, we are trying to [cheer] things up in a very naïve way." If there's one thing that Daft Punk wants to get across, it's that this record is fun, and that it's not just dance music. Their favorite artists these days aren't dance pioneers but OutKast, Radiohead, Jimi Hendrix and Queen, and the instruments used to make the album were ostensibly the same as ones used to create most albums these days: keyboards, bass, guitars, samplers, drum machines, vocals and

effects. "The only thing we can say is that we used [everything] from the latest technology around to the oldest one, so none of this is just done with the latest thing that came out.

"A lot of *Homework* was done with '80s synthesizers and drum machines. On this album, there is equipment from the '50s to the '60s to the '70s. There's a lot of vintage acoustic and electric instruments." Pressed for further detail of his instrumental dossier and approach to creating music, he reveals nothing.

However, there are other clues to be considered. In addition to the new sound, the band also has a new look and narrative. They chucked the rubber masks that were used in promo pictures for *Homework* and now don protective helmets reminiscent of '80s science fiction à la *Buck Rogers* and *Robocop*. They've even created new, non-human identities for themselves as robots.

"We're taking off the masks and showing our new robot skin," Bangalter says, straight-faced, about the evolution of the group. "Now we are robots, and so our faces are made of steel and gold." He goes on to explain the "legend," the story of how Daft Punk became robots. "On the 9th of September, 1999, there was a small bug that was supposed to be a millennium bug. Our sampler crashed in the studio when we were making music. There was an explosion and we had to do a surgery and that surgery involved some mechanical changes that transformed us into robots."

As robots, they are even more secretive than before. Cracking the codes of their personalities seems impossible. Bangalter smiles ironically and never lets you in on the joke. De Homem-Christo, on the phone from Paris, is a master deflector. When asked a question about what their image says about them, he responds: "I was not programmed to answer that."

When they settled down to compose the followup to *Homework*, Bangalter says the duo hardly felt like electronic music veterans. "A good thing was that we started back from scratch, forgetting everything that had happened, not taking anything for granted or saying, 'Okay, we've been doing the first album and now we can go from there to there to there to there.'"

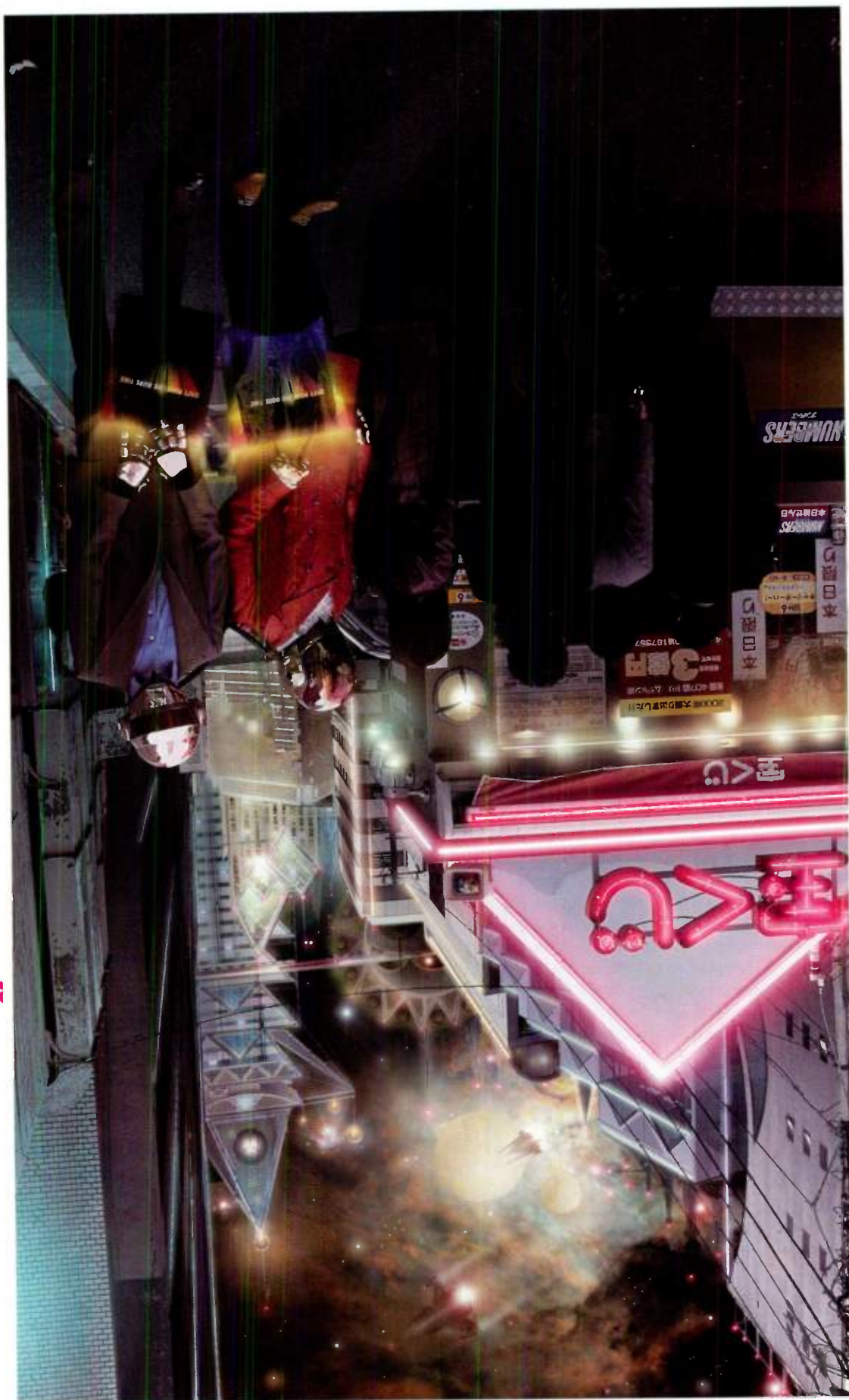
And the decision to elude the personality machine and hide their faces played perfectly into that strategy. The residue of fame was easily brushed off. "After finishing the concerts, after stopping touring, we had no hint in our everyday life [that anything had happened], no changes except some slightly different material changes. There had been no changes, from walking in the streets to just forgetting about the impact that the music had had—or had not."

Perhaps the other reason these two needed shiny robot skins was to prepare themselves for a risky venture. Where *Homework* was French-flavored Chicago-style house that turned rock fans on to dance, *Discovery* is a far more mixed brew. Fans who've only heard a taste of the familiar-sounding first single, "One More Time," are already concerned that Daft Punk is forgoing invention for straight-up disco. On other tracks, strong tendencies toward kitschy '70s chamber-synth, funk and disco alternate with definite nods to Air (the ethereal "Night Vision" and "Voyager"), Radiohead (the computer-sex mantra "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger") and Prince.

The record reflects the group's desire to make music that will venture into territories beyond club dancefloors. "Making people dance was maybe more of what interested us on the first album," says Bangalter. And with *Discovery* they wanted to "experiment more and also [go] into much more variety of different things and different ways of doing music, and expressing different moods and emotions."

"The first one was more body-oriented," says de Homem-Christo. "This new one [is] more beat-oriented but also rides on more emotions and different feelings." The group was collective-minded the first time around—they were up against a hostile environment of rave raids. "For the first record, [rave] music generally

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THAT SURGERY  
INVOLVED SOME  
MECHANICALLY  
CHARGES THAT  
TRANSFORMED  
US INTO  
ROBOTS."



was not accepted in France. The feeling we had was more close to the partying itself and the trouble that it made."

"I'm not going that much to clubs anymore," Bangalter, who is 25, continues. "Probably because I am older also and I don't fancy that all the time, the conception of the music we have gets wider and wider from just being purely dance music or club music. That doesn't mean that I don't like it anymore, but I want to grow from that. And that doesn't mean that it's just living-room music now."

It is a more interesting, mixed-up record, and it's also more positive, echoing a lot of the wee-hours freedom calls of latter-day disco. The straight, unabashed disco flavor has been seen as ironic, but Bangalter considers it "very sincere." Although that may seem sarcastic, keep in mind his father was a '70s disco producer who wrote the Gibson Brothers' "Cuba" and Ottawa's "D.I.S.C.O."

Bangalter and de Homem-Christo met when they were school kids in their early teens—and they connected, like so many kids, through pop culture. They formed a rock band called Darlin', a short-lived trio named after a Beach Boys song that they covered, producing only four songs and one 1992 single (on Stereolab's label, Duophonic), which was dismissed as "daft punk" by the now-defunct British magazine *Melody Maker*.

Bored by rock and turned on by the music and outlaw flavor of the Paris dance scene—which also included Etienne de Crecy, Dimitri From Paris, Air and Cassius—the two started making music. "The good thing is that in electronic music, the foundation of it requires only a small sampler or a small drum machine, maybe \$100," says Bangalter. "So it doesn't require any means at that level. One of the things we liked about producing was this access—anybody could do it."

Not just anybody could make *Homework* (which got its name because it was made in Bangalter's bedroom), celebrated as a revelation in electronic music, touted as an eloquent summation of 10 years of house music. An album that could catch the refined, beat-wise ears of the Chemical Brothers, who latched onto the Daft single "Da Funk," a song inspired by a dirty-sounding Dr. Dre groove. It became a club smash, and record companies soon came sniffing around. The group quickly signed with the un-indie Virgin Records, an unusual move in a world where boutique indie labels generally give a group the stamp of cool cred and clubby approval. *Melody Maker*, the magazine that gave them their moniker, now dubbed the Daft Punk venture "frighteningly fucking exciting."

Were they ever worried that people would say they had sold out? "What we had in mind was to change the customary way things happen from the inside," says Bangalter. "It's worked out, and the record company has been generous in letting us be creative and giving us a lot of control."

"At the same time," he continues, "we have been sometimes very disappointed by the independent record label scene, which I thought had this strong integrity and sometimes does not have that. Selling out is when you are compromising and giving away your principles... But we don't feel that we're doing that." In support of this ethic, Bangalter has maintained a steady stream of quality house 12-inches on his own independent Roule label, even venturing out of Daft territory to record last year's massive club hit "Music Sounds Better With You" under the name Stardust.

Speaking in the hushed tones of a top-secret communiqué, Bangalter describes the unconventional marketing setup they've been plotting for *Discovery*. Each CD is outfitted with special software and will come with a Daft club card, with individual numbers like a credit card. By inputting the numbers on the Web, listeners will be able to access tracks that are not on the album. Explaining all this, Bangalter flips open his laptop to reveal the software visuals. He is

"WE STARTED BACK FROM SCRATCH, NOT TAKING ANYTHING FOR GRANTED OR SAYING OKAY WE'VE BEEN DOING THE FIRST ALBUM AND NOW WE CAN GO FROM THERE TO THERE TO THERE TO THERE."

turned on by the new technology as much as he is excited about the music on the new record.

It's these side projects that illustrate that Daft are more than producers, they're a multimedia intelligence agency. Early on, their touchstone references were films of the '60s and '70s, American pop like *Easy Rider*. Now they run down a list ranging from Kubrick to Truffaut, Chaplin to Bunuel. In fact, film images have factored strongly in their multi-jointed esthetic. Their famous video for "Da Funk" was directed by Spike Jonze years before his breakthrough film, *Being John Malkovich*. It was groundbreaking: not so much a video as a short film dappled with stop-start music, its protagonist a guy with a dog-head mask who wanders through New York with a boombox.

"Today we are really in an audio-visual era," says Bangalter, who has also helped direct Daft Punk videos, "so the visual side is really something that's important to us in the creation. It's the same point: We've been trying to do new, surprising stuff on the image level that goes along with the music, just playing with the clichés to make something which is cool."

And we might see more in the way of visuals from them in the future. "What I tend to realize more and more," says Bangalter, "is that I can see music as a very entertaining medium, but I think that movies are interesting whether they're entertaining or not. I like the idea of watching a movie and not being able to think, 'Was it entertaining or not? Do I like this or not? Is it something that is giving me pleasure or is it something that is making me think?' Movies can have this dimension like a book, where it's not just entertaining. Right now we're having fun with music and raising questions about things. The movie side is more serious."

The man who sings the hook for "One More Time," Romanthony, says he connected with the duo's unconventional mindset even before he ran into them at the 1996 Winter Music Conference in Miami. "Their first record excited me so much, taking it to the next level with the vision, the visuals—the genius. Since I met them I knew nothing would be the same. You meet someone and you don't really know how it's going to go; this is a continuation of that excitement. Everyone else is trying to come into our little family now—you have to be careful. I just want to hang with them for a minute."

Who wouldn't be protective of the Daft Punk star chamber? While circumventing the hype, it also creates a very exclusive sensibility where only certain singers and photographers and directors are allowed to visit. However, you would also think that the members of this select circle feel that they're missing out on the perks of celebrity. Doesn't a part of them want to enjoy their success as music stars in a star-driven culture? "I think that you should ask the opposite idea—why don't people do it more often?" says de Homem-Christo. "If you make music, you must be known as a person, but a painter or another artist doesn't have to be this way. I think entertainers or singers would like to [have anonymity]. There's a demand for that right now." **MMM**

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## ACEYALONE

**Accepted Eclectic** Project Blowed-Nu Gruv

Rapping over odd-meter beats, sampling Ornette Coleman and reciting *Jabberwocky*, Aceyalone has carved out a rep as a left-of-center boho rapper since his debut with the Freestyle Fellowship in 1991. The L.A.-based MC continues that tradition on his stunning third album, *Accepted Eclectic*, which features Tchaikovsky-inspired beat-science, odes to claustrophobia and meditations on hardship and pain. In the hands of a lesser MC, Aceyalone's prematurely cynical and weary worldview might be tiring, but he is one of hip-hop's most original and engaging voices—his

elastic wordplay and tumbling verses weave a dense spider web around beats that range from syrupy to sprightly. Aceyalone's been lounging in L.A.'s insular underground scene since his deal with Capitol faltered in the wake of '95's *All Balls Don't Bounce*, and maybe that's why he sounds so damn bitter, kicking girlfriends out the house ("Bounce"), adopting a fatalist philosophy ("Hardship") and spending his time "trooping through the streets trying to dodge the rain" ("I Can't Complain"). Aceyalone still snaps necks on blazing battle tracks like "Golden Mic," and he skewers overeager blunt-smokers on the hilarious "Master Your High." But the dark-hued and moody atmosphere of the album is better summed up by tracks like "Down Right Dirty," where Aceyalone dryly intones, "Life ain't a bowl of cherries/ Sometimes it's just sour milk." >>>MICHAEL ENDELMAN

Out

March 6

File Under

West Coast hip-hop eclecticism

R.I.Y.L.

Freestyle Fellowship, Mos Def,

Blackalicious



## AMERICAN HI-FI

**American Hi-Fi** Island

Stacy Jones and his cohorts have sacrificed at the altar of guitar pop and the gods have been generous. With his new project, Jones (late of Veruca Salt and Letters To Cleo) steps out from behind the drums to sing and coax big rock riffs from his guitar, redefining the sonic attack of the Foo Fighters or Everclear with more conscious nods to pop's past. That means the Raspberries channeled through Oasis for the bitter-sweet teen hooks of "Flavor Of The Weak" as well as Nirvana-like mood-swung dynamics, particularly on "Safer On The Outside," to leaven the dense,

rich production. The influences are not always completely blended in, but that can be part of the fun (catch the "Sympathy For The Devil" vocals on "Blue Day"), as Jones's bratty snarl cuts through and updates the mix, much like Letters To Cleo's Kay Hanley did. Overall, this combination has more obvious six-string heft than the Cleos, thanks in large part to guitarist Jamie Arentzen's meaty attack (notably on "A Bigger Mood"), and that bodes well. When these two mesh on top of a high-energy rhythm—provided by fellow Bostonians Drew Parsons and Brian Nolan—the result is both radio-friendly and smart. This is ear candy for adults—a great, juicy Starburst of pop sound. >>>CLEA SIMON

Out

February 27

File Under

That '70s sound  
(more Fez than Hyde)

R.I.Y.L.

Oasis, Foo Fighters,  
the Raspberries





## THE ANOMOANON

The Anomoanon Palace

Unlike his brother Will, who has assumed more aliases than an on-the-lam mobster, Ned Oldham settled on a bandname and stuck to it. He's also held to an obtuseness that rivals Will's, leading his loosely configured ensemble the Anomoanon through two releases that have interpreted nursery rhymes: first, a song cycle based on Mother Goose, then a set that matched flinching, bluesy music with the words to Robert Louis Stevenson's *A Child's Garden Of Verses*. Now, Ned and brothers Will and Paul assume a more serious pose, grinding out heavily punctuated folk-rock that crosses On

Out  
February 20  
File Under  
Obtuse indie-rock readings of  
children's literature? Sign me up!  
R.I.Y.L.  
Palace, Bonnie Prince Billy,  
Neil Young

*The Beach*-era Neil Young with pastoral musings that bring to mind a less sardonic Silver Jews. In fact, *The Anomoanon* features the most straightforward songs ever to emanate from within the Palace walls. "Flock" scares up a Southern-rock groove; "Baby It's You" is a love song fleshed out with warm electric piano and breezy acoustic guitar that exposes a '70s AM radio sensibility; and the jaunty "Going To The Sea" bounces between boogie-inflected, harmonized verses and insistent guitar-led instrumental jams. On the finale, "On The Beach," Ned sings intently over acoustic guitar before the song builds to an electrified crescendo with the Oldhams warbling in unison like it's some sort of drunken campfire sing-along in a dark, menacing forest. >>>RICHARD A. MARTIN



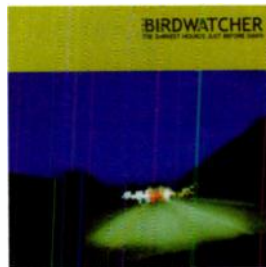
## THE BEAUTY SHOP

Yr Money Or Yr Life Mud-Parasol

John Hoeffleur has what might be called the voice of the everyman. It's modest, plainspoken and unfancy, with a hint of twang. Except, unlike most, he can twist it to sound like Steve Earle's long lost brother, or Son Volt principal Jay Farrar's nocturnal twin. He likes to use the voice to spout daily affirmations that are slightly less than wholesome. "I never dreamed that I could get so high," he sings in the delicately sad "Denver," only to follow it with "I wrote 'fuck' on all my clothes" in the appropriately titled and spirited anti-anthem "I Got Issues." For its debut album (which contains tracks from the self-released EP

Out  
January 9  
File Under  
Backwoods country folk (with  
bonus suicidal ideation)  
R.I.Y.L.  
Son Volt, Violent Femmes,  
Johnny Dowd

Grief), this young Champaign-Urbana, Illinois trio uses a minimum of garnish—mostly expertly finger-picked acoustic guitars, drums and bass, with a pluck of banjo and a swish of tremolo-touched electric—to frame countrified tales of woe. While there are sinister moments that reflect the grotesque dolls and freaks of the album's artwork, Hoeffleur also finds time to wear his heart on his sleeve, and the cut-to-the-chase admission "I'm lonelier than ever" of the love-as-illusion song "Shell Game" resonates long after the last note fades. >>>ROB O'CONNOR



## THE BIRDWATCHER

The Darkest Hour Is Just Before The Dawn

Arena Rock

As a member of Windsor For The Derby, Dan Matz has dabbled convincingly in narcotic rock, ambient soundscapes, and the sort of complex electronic beats now referred to as intelligent dance music. So it's no surprise that he's venturing in another direction with the Birdwatcher, a side project he started after moving to New York from Austin a few years back. Along with friends from the bands Home and Jets To Brazil, Matz summons unearthly noises to add detail to his slow-burning guitar- and organ-based compositions. When he steps forward to sing, he's tentative—his voice is a near-

Out  
November 28  
File Under  
The wee small hours of the  
sparse indie pop  
R.I.Y.L.  
American Analog Set,  
Labradford, L'Altra

whisper that's well suited to the playful, elliptical lyrics that make up songs like "Bound To Collide," and the poppier, Red House Painters-like "The Hunt." What is a surprise here is the brevity of such tracks. Most come in at under six minutes—a rarity for this type of venture—and when two songs cross the 10-minute mark, they're trimmed of any fat. "First Bright Light" plugs along after a meandering two-guitar intro, eventually picking up enough speed to become a full-fledged rave-up, while the minimalist "Dawn" strives for a psychedelic jam feel. Both tracks play into Matz's loose concept to evoke the morning on this disc, and to follow up with two more volumes suggesting the afternoon and night. Given the way he succeeds here, the complete picture's something to look forward to. >>>RICHARD A. MARTIN



## BLUE MOUNTAIN

Roots Blue Mountain-Black Dog

Blue Mountain have long drunk from the deep well of American roots music, incorporating banjo and mandolin into their raucous electric stomp, and covering spooky, long-dead blues legends such as Skip James ("Special Rider Blues") and Robert Johnson ("If I Had Possession Over Judgement Day"). So it's fitting that the Oxford, Mississippi quartet's fourth album (sixth if you count their self-titled, self-released debut and one recorded earlier under the name the Hilltops) is comprised entirely of traditional songs and covers. The band traces its roots here through

Out  
February 27  
File Under  
Summer of 1869  
R.I.Y.L.  
Billy Bragg, Wilco,  
Ramblin' Jack Elliott,  
Uncle Tupelo

the South, up into the Virginia mountains and even back to the British Isles, revealing faint Celtic inflections in singer/multi-instrumentalist Cary Hudson's fiddling. It all comes together on songs like "Rye Whiskey": "If the ocean was whiskey and I was a duck/ I'd drop to the bottom and drink my way up." But throughout the acoustic ballads and brassy, high-lonesome harmonies, Blue Mountain never forsake their rock 'n' roll heart. Hudson's Neil Young-influenced electric guitar twangs over the love/murder tale "Rain And Snow" ("So I shot her in the head/ And I laid her on the bed"), and he translates blues yodeler Cliff Carlisle's sweet National lap steel into wicked bottle-neck slide on "Nasty Swing." >>>MEREDITH OCHS



## DJ CRAZE

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Zoo York

## DJ CRAZE

United DJs Of America Volume 16 DMC-Mixer

Out

December 19

File Under

Skills and chills

R.I.Y.L.

Invisibl Skratch Piklz,  
the Allies



Out

October 24

File Under

Mix and match

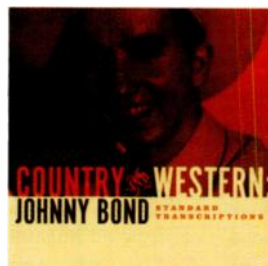
R.I.Y.L.

Decoder, Ed Rush & Optical,  
Usual Suspects

On *Obsessive Compulsive Disorder*, his second solo project, Craze brings the bass out of its hibernation, especially on "Blood," which is as close as Craze has yet come to producing a pure drum 'n' bass track. With tight, doubled-up cymbals, voluminous bass and liberally sprinkled ODB samples (again), it proves that Craze is no jungle slummer. But he doesn't abandon his disruption roots: "Chain Reaction" is straight sound manipulation, the hidden fifth track recalls the "scratch sentences" from his first album, and "Nothing" explores the scratch as percussive tool—keeping the beat while simultaneously dancing around it—and lets Craze juggle slap-silly snares into breakneck breaks.

On *Obsessive Compulsive Disorder*, his second solo project, Craze brings the bass out of its hibernation, especially on "Blood," which is as close as Craze has yet come to producing a pure drum 'n' bass track. With tight, doubled-up cymbals, voluminous bass and liberally sprinkled ODB samples (again), it proves that Craze is no jungle slummer. But he doesn't abandon his disruption roots: "Chain Reaction" is straight sound manipulation, the hidden fifth track recalls the "scratch sentences" from his first album, and "Nothing" explores the scratch as percussive tool—keeping the beat while simultaneously dancing around it—and lets Craze juggle slap-silly snares into breakneck breaks.

"Nothing" makes an encore appearance at the end of Craze's first mix CD, *Volume 16* of the *United DJs Of America* series. Here, Craze offers a lesson in taste as opposed to one in skills. His inclinations run to the darker, more mechanical wing of jungle, where electro (Miami-style) and funk get rammed together at exponentially increasing speeds. Here, he collects stunning tracks like Total Science's sliding funk session "Peacemaker," the demolition-derby styles of Usual Suspects on "Killa Bee," and the dizzying wormhole that is "Rubbery," by Decoder-Substance. Although there's the occasional deft scratch routine, Craze knows that when the music speaks for itself, it's best to leave well enough alone. Just like at the DMCs, silence can speak volumes. >>>JON CARAMANICA



## JOHNNY BOND

Country And Western Bloodshot Revival

Out

January 16

File Under

Early countrypolitan

R.I.Y.L.

Bob Wills, Tex Ritter,  
the Sons Of The Pioneers

It's unimaginable today, but in radio's early years, commercial record companies saw broadcasting not as a sales tool, but as direct competition. Hence the existence of radio-only "electrical transcriptions" like these 31 previously unreleased cuts, recorded by Western swing architect Johnny Bond in the mid-'40s. Despite authentically Okie roots, the nearly forgotten Bond leaned toward a Hollywoodized version of early country, penning hits for Bob Wills and Ernest Tubb, and riding alongside Gene Autry in several "singing cowboy" flicks. Bond's artistry may not be as deep or desperate as that of Jimmie Rodgers or Hank Williams (who was just getting started at this juncture), but his easygoing baritone is undeniably comforting. The backing by Bond's usual trio, plus studio hands Wesley Tuttle (guitar) and Paul Sells (accordion) is even more impressive—several tunes feature choice jump-blues solos, and the vocal support by Dick Reinhart and Jimmy Wakely is excellent throughout. With material ranging from "Have I Stayed Away Too Long" (by *Guys And Dolls* composer Frank Loesser) to Woody Guthrie's "Oklahoma Hills," not to mention 13 Bond originals, this collection is an intriguing reminder that Bond and his ilk crossbred country with urban pop decades before fellow Oklahoman Garth Brooks took his first course in marketing. >>>FRANKLIN BRUNO

## \*Essential Mix

Mixed By Boy George



Out

February 20

File Under

Pharma chameleon

R.I.Y.L.

Danny Tenaglia, Culture Club,  
Groove Armada's *Back To Mine*

## BOY GEORGE

Essential Mix London-Sire

Boy George could have pursued the aging pop-star route. He could have dragged it out until the bitter end, appearing in hapless B movies and corny, overproduced solo tours. Instead, he maintains his dignity by opting for an anonymity of sorts, both as a DJ and by going back to his roots—the underground London club scene. Now nearly 40, he of the perfect eyebrows and divine reggae-soul voice spends his time playing the club circuit and producing dance tracks for his More Protein label. And although we no longer see the Karma Chameleon parading his glamorous garb on MTV, listeners will get a very good sense of who the artist is today through the esthetics on this latest mix CD. The tracks represent a journey through Boy's favorite dance genres, beginning with U.K. garage, London's newest genre bastardization experiment, and ending with house. George turns up the sexiness meter with the garage remix of Baby D Vs. Trick Or Treat's "Let Me Be Your Fantasy," and then heads over to deep disco house with Kinky Roland's campy "Born Funky." Dark Globe's superb "Some Say She's Retro" spans across electro, breakbeat and acid house, but the vibe sags a bit when the mix heads toward progressive house and trance. The disc isn't perfect, but it does consist of a solid handful of good dance grooves. Here the Boy diva proves that the underground is where his true heart lies. >>>AMANDA NOWINSKI





# ***mike clark***

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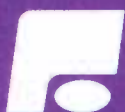
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## ELECTRIC WIZARD

**Dopethrone** The Music Cartel

The Sex Pistols may have gotten there first with "God Save The Queen," but that legendary "no future, no future, no future for you" taunt really belongs in an Electric Wizard song. Throughout *Dopethrone*, the trio's guitarist/vocalist Jus Oborn sings with a desensitized groan about black planets, black drugs, black gods, black nebulas and black asteroids. The slow and mighty rumble the band generates brings to mind Godzilla playing the low end on sagging telephone lines and stomping buildings for the occasional rhythmic accent. This stuff is for true fans of

doom metal, people who don't think "Iron Man" rip-off" every time they hear detuned chromatic guitar riffs. The album's centerpiece is "Weird Tales," a three-part sludge opera that, over the span of 15 minutes, begins with what sounds like a slowed-down recording of an atomic bomb explosion and ends amid eerie sheets of ambient sound. On the opposite extreme, in every sense, is the 37-second low-key blues jam "The Hills Have Eyes," with its acid-blues leads played over an earthquake-heavy bass ostinato. "Dopethrone" and "We Hate You" compete for the album's gnarliest lyrics—"Dopethrone three wizards crowned with weed" (from "Dopethrone") and "Black nebula, seething in my brain" (from "We Hate You") are sure to be big catchphrases at future Dungeons & Dragons parties. >>>LORNE BEHRMAN



## EXOS

**Strength** Force Inc.

On previous releases for Force Inc. and Thule, Iceland's Exos (a.k.a. Arnvidur Snorrason) proved himself a master of slinky, coolly percussive techno in the vein of Chain Reaction. And while hard, minimal techno has become increasingly influenced by house and Oval-esque "glitch" stylistics, Exos keeps it old school on *Strength*, infusing his own style with the force of hard techno purists Surgeon and Oliver Ho. Exos couldn't care less about a track's development: For the most part, he launches in full-bore, exploring only the subtlest nuances of phase and shading. The way

that many tracks simply stop dead mid-measure suggests that they are tailored for a DJ set. But it's not all bombast: After the rough-and-tumble techno purist call-to-arms of "2nd" and the equally unforgiving "Reds," tracks like the undulating "Where Is" fall back on sparer rhythms that allow the subtlest hints of tonality to bleed through—an effect magnified in the airy pads of "Survivor," the dubbed inflections of "In Front Of," and the seductive claustrophobia of "At The End." Exos's track titles also spotlight this elusive, suggestive nature: With names like "Where Is," "In The," and "With The," he's left the names open to interpretation, awaiting the deferred closure of the DJ's mix. The next phase of techno may not be clear, but *Strength* at least offers a teasing snapshot. >>>PHILIP SHERBURNE

Out

January 16

File Under

A deep and mighty rumble

R.I.Y.L.

Black Sabbath, Blue Cheer,

Kyuss

Out

February 20

File Under

Checkpoint Charlie techno

R.I.Y.L.

Surgeon, Auch, Twerk

## THE COMP FILE (Our guide to compilation CDs)



**TITLE** Rarewerks (Astralwerks)



**TITLE** Dracula 2000 (DVG-Columbia)



**TITLE** Planet Chant (Triloka-Gold Circle)



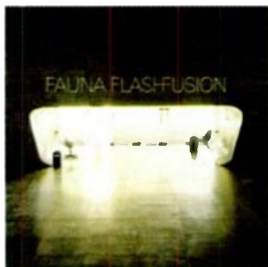
**TITLE** Life On Another Planet (Triple Crown)



**TITLE** The Essential Pebbles Collection (AIP)

CONCEPT	Unreleased beats from the Astralwerks vaults	Back from the grave, with a taste for human flesh!	"Evocative chants" meant to produce "transcendental states of consciousness"	Sixteen classic New York hardcore gems.	European garage from back when "garage" meant "rock"
TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC	Big-beat completists	Goth mallrats who sleep in fresh earth (or wish they did)	Those who regularly indulge in altered states of consciousness	You saw Warzone in '91 and have the scars to prove it	New- and old-school mods
NAMES TO DROP	Chemical Brothers, Phitek, Basement Jaxx	Godhead, Static-X, Linkin Park	Sheila Chandra, Jim Donovan, Ladysmith Black Mambazo	Murphy's Law, Cro-Mags, Crown Of Thornz	Phantoms, Meteors, Shakers
SUMS IT UP	"How Can You Hear Us?" (Fatboy Slim)	"Avoid The Light" (Pantera)	"Lament" (Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan & Michael Brook)	"Militant" (Both Worlds)	"To Masturbate" (Mad Sound)
VERDICT	Packed with perfect booty-quakin' material, it's a wonder these tracks were never released.	It's a damn shame to see the mighty Slayer and Pantera sullying themselves by appearing on this collection of (mostly) limp nü-metal schlock.	Bordering on Enya-dom, these are smooth, chill-out grooves suitable for meditation—if nothing else.	Brimming with pummeling double kick and shredded-vocal-chords roars, this mix is for diehard old-school hardcore fans only.	The perfect soundtrack to an all-night floppy-haired dance party.





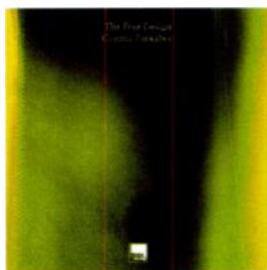
## FAUNA FLASH

**Fusion Compost**

Fauna Flash is a Munich-based duo that still revels in drum 'n' bass, albeit with a worldly twist. Like many of their Compost compatriots, they use Brazilian rhythms and Latin riffs, not bone-shaking bass hits that cause the dancefloor equivalent of epileptic seizures. Their second album is clean, disarming and danceable, and those familiar with their work with both Rainer Trüby (in the Rainer Trüby Trio) and loungey beatmeister Peter Kruder (in his side project Voom: Voom), will know just what kind of painfully hip "lifestyle" music this can be.

**Out**  
**February 28**  
**File Under**  
**Exotica drum 'n' bass**  
**R.I.Y.L.**  
**Kruder & Dorfmeister,**  
**Rainer Trüby Trio, Voom: Voom**

"Percussion" is the most energetic song of the bunch, a jump-up pleaser that unleashes waves of hand drums, timbales and other percussive flavors not usually heard in drum 'n' bass, and both "Tel Aviv" and "Alone Again" are sinewy downtempo affairs with more shimmy than shake. Like many of their European counterparts, Fauna Flash insists on doing it all, and they bookend their album with two songs, "Mother Nature" and "Questions," that dilute the genres—in this case, raga-dub and hip-hop—they originally aim to fete. Everything else in between, meanwhile, is well enough, in that let's-go-shoe-shopping sort of way. >>>JOSEPH PATEL



## THE FREE DESIGN

**Cosmic Peekaboo** Marina

Before Stereolab wrote a song called "The Free Design," there was a band who went by that name—a never-really-well-known '60s outfit, remembered only for one minor hit, the light, bubble-gummy "Kites Are Fun," if at all. Then Stereolab namechecked them, Cornelius reissued them, and Saint Etienne mentioned them in interviews. Suddenly, this obscure band was popular enough to reunite with its original lineup. (Guess we should all be grateful that Stereolab didn't write a song called "Bo Donaldson & The Heywoods.") Since the Free Design haven't been an active

**Out**  
**March 6**  
**File Under**  
**Pure pop for retro people**  
**R.I.Y.L.**  
**Stereolab, Cornelius,**  
**High Llamas**

band for 30-plus years, their sound seems totally unchanged by time: Only the sharper recording quality distinguishes *Cosmic Peekaboo* from the albums they made three decades ago. Never really a rock band, the Free Design still does pop in the purest sense—with lots of breezy male/female harmonies, sighing strings, horns out of a Bacharach soundtrack, and an elegant, bachelor-pad feel. It's easy to hear why Stereolab loves them. And it's also no mystery why the Free Design was so irrelevant in 1967, when this kind of warm fluff was the last thing anybody hip wanted to hear. But it sure sounds current right now, and the tongue-in-cheek "The Hook" sounds like a college radio shoe-in. Take this as proof that Huey Lewis was right: It's hip to be square. >>>BRETT MILANO

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## FRIENDS OF SOUND

**Rock-Ola** Hidden Agenda

Reverb can be a treacherous effect when used to mask a guitarist's lack of proficiency, but added to the requisite solid songwriting, it enlivens even the simplest of melodies. On Friends Of Sound's debut, Reed Lochamy gets it right, bathing his three-chord riffs in an affable retro sound. Good thing, too, because this Birmingham, Alabama duo skirts along the exceedingly thin line between cloying twee and intelligent pop, especially when lifting lines from *Sesame Street* (the cutesy "Dressed For Tea") or borrowing lyrics written by a nine-year-old cousin ("So Mean"). On

most other tracks, Reed and his partner Leslie Lochamy settle into a safer territory, summoning a quaint atmospheric pace and peppering the lyrics with hopeful upbeat sentiments—like "Lovers in the movie never really go away/ Why can't we be like them?/ Won't you ask me to stay?"—seemingly written while holed up inside on a rainy Sunday. Aside from the echoing guitar, the duo augments the midtempo sway with banjo, toy percussion and a standard bass/drum/keyboard foundation. It's all pleasantly reminiscent of early Galaxie 500 or the Magnetic Fields, though it never falls into outright mimicry. Chalk this up to the Lochamys' unfettered vocals, and a mild yen for pop experimentation that renders *Rock-Ola* as playful as its name suggests. >>>RICHARD A. MARTIN

Out

January 9

File Under

Post-twee indie pop

R.I.Y.L.

Heavenly, Galaxie 500,  
the Cannanes, Butterglory



Out

February 6

File Under

Techno thru a free-jazz sieve

R.I.Y.L.

Carl Craig, Recloose,  
Derrick May

techno funk by Agent X himself, the set's workouts focus more on the brain than on the body. The scorching, stuttering synth of rising star Recloose's "Can't Take It" made it one of the hottest, yet most subdued, house tracks of 2000, although its energy flash is counterbalanced by an uninspired Moodymann remix that turns Craig's version of "People Make The World Go 'Round" into a spaced-out jazz carnival. Likewise, LFO cofounder Mark Bell's genre-bending 1995 track "Jak To Basics" sounds surprisingly current, while an "unreleased mix" of "Steam," a banging Craig cut from the same time, loses much of the original's momentum. But *Geology 2* does deserve credit for digging deep in techno soil, even if every rock it unearths isn't a gem. >>>ERIC DEMBY

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

**G2: Geology 2, A Subjective Study of Planet E** Planet E

On Carl Craig's Planet E label, musical worlds don't so much collide as coexist. *Geology 2*, the second entry in the label's compilation series, drives that point home yet again, its relentless diversity a delight and liability both. Not so much mixed as pasted together by Detroit vet Mike "Agent X" Clark, it's not until seven tracks into the mix—with the tense reverberating chime and tribal thump of Ibex's "Bok Choy"—that *Geology 2* gets a typical Motor City groove on. And aside from "In The Morning," a gritty chunk of filtered



## THE FROGS

**Hopscotch Lollipop Sunday Surprise** Scratchie

"For all those who say... 'entertain me'/ I've only this to say," the Frogs' Jimmy Flemion purrs over tender acoustic guitar, "Fuck off/ Get out of my sight/ 'Cause I don't need your B.S. tonight." That's the essence of the Frogs right there: the elegant classic-rock arrangements and melodies, the over-the-top offensiveness directed at absolutely everyone, the baffling self-contradiction (why "B.S." if they've already said "fuck off"?), the refusal to take anything seriously, which is really the only thing between them and the rock 'n' roll godhead they've been climbing toward

Out

February 6

File Under

Cruel intentions

R.I.Y.L.

Early Bowie, early Randy  
Newman, late Ween

like Sisyphus for the last 20 years. They're what you call a band's band: Despite their professional affiliations with the likes of Pearl Jam, Smashing Pumpkins, Beck and the Breeders, as well as a rather enormous discography (especially if you count their dozens of home-made tapes), they've never actually released a studio-recorded album before this one. It's not quite the rock extravaganza it might've been—a lot of their recording budget appears to have gone toward strings and horns for the heartfelt ballads "Bad Daddy" and "Bad Mommy," and songs they've been playing live since they were taking the piss out of the new grunge fad have been softened and sparkled up for the new millennium. Still, it's great to hear them with full-throttle production, splitting the difference between the Spiders From Mars and Spinal Tap. >>>DOUGLAS WOLK



Out

November 6

File Under

Sominex chamber pop

R.I.Y.L.

Belle & Sebastian, Birdie,  
the Essex Green

exception of the Nancy Sinatra-ish go-go cheese of "Sisterwoman," the material could use a tad more vigor and a trifle less restraint. There are some exceptionally lovely moments here—the harpsichord-embroidered "Falling From Grace"; the glistening guitar figure and featherbed percussion that drives "Loretta Young"—but too many of these somnolent drawing-room dramas sound like aural wallpaper. The songs, done up in baroque patterns of glockenspiel and violin, are pleasant to listen to, but there just doesn't seem to be any real people inhabiting them. Slight melodies tend to evaporate before they've fully materialized—part of the point, perhaps. But despite her often stirring lyrics about finding or losing true love, Campbell's voice barely rises above a fey whisper. She simply doesn't sound moved by anything she's saying. >>>JONATHAN PERRY

## THE GENTLE WAVES

**Swansong For You** Jeepster

Glasgow chamber-pop outfit Belle & Sebastian are impeccable purveyors of the ephemeral: Their scrupulously crafted songs are all about the fleeting glance, the secret encounter, and the disaffected days of adolescence. B&S cellist Isobel Campbell also leads her own similarly inclined group, the Gentle Waves, a collective given to soft strings, muted brass, pastoral song arrangements and a refined sense of ennui. Everything about the Gentle Waves is meant to suggest taste and good breeding. The problem with the group's second album is that, with the



**GOB****The World According To Gob** Nettwerk

Canadian rock-radio fave Gob aims its big hooks south of the border (as in California) on this infectious collection of guitar-heavy love songs. Like Blink-182, the band has two lead singers and rotten luck with girls, but these guys have grown out of their love for toilet humor and the hardcore beat. They're not much for sonic frills, either: With its spare harmonies, wistful lyrics and elementary guitar solo, first single "I Hear You Calling" is emblematic of the band's approach. But the group's songwriting is nuanced enough that its formula seems more

classic than derivative. "Pinto" uses a beat-up car analogy to illustrate undying love; "Desktop Breaking" is Blink's "Going Away To College" sung from the girl's perspective. NOFX-style pseudo-metal is not really on the band's agenda, despite the "Brain Stew" guitars on "Ex-Shuffle" and gruff vocals on "That's The Way." Gob is at its sweetest on "144," a cuddly tune that ends with the guys cooing "I want to be with you" like they were Mandy Moore or something. Pop-punk wackiness finally rears its ugly head on the Spanish-sung acoustic hidden track, but it's too late—the group's songs have already made too strong a choice for sentimentality over silliness. >>>SEAN RICHARDSON

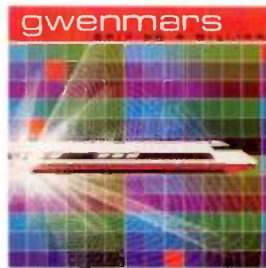
Out

January 23

File Under

Pop punk—but mostly pop

R.I.Y.L.

Green Day, Blink-182,  
the Mr. T Experience**GWENMARS****Driving A Million** See-Thru Broadcasting

L.A. rockers Gwenmars make much of their Big '80s roots, but on their third full-length, this amounts to the occasional deployment of sonic devices first heard in Cure and Echo & The Bunnymen songs. To wit: The mix of acoustic strumming, chorused lead-work and string pads that open "She Hung The Moon" derive directly from the Bunnymen's "The Killing Moon," lunar references and all. More often, Gwenmars judiciously filters such influences through exceedingly mainstream modern-rock production, with results recalling a less inventive

version of hit-era Smashing Pumpkins. (Frontman Mike Thrasher's Brit-affected sneer of a voice doesn't help any.) While it would be stretching to call this approach original, a few bursts of freshness, or at least pleasure, manage to cut through the requisite creamy distortion and sudden dynamic spikes. The gnarled synth lead of "Venus" spirals out of control (a good thing), while "Train Song" and "Strawberry Ice" almost manage to light a fire under the album's second half. It's not enough: Each unexpected early-Who rhythm break and nagging chorus ("You're all very nice to me/ I'm all very nice to you," sung with apposite insincerity) is canceled out by a competent mid-tempo plodder ("Radio Gun," "Hurry Up"). Whatever *Driving A Million* is supposed to mean, it's apparently not synonymous with "batting a thousand." >>>FRANKLIN BRUNO

Out

March 6

File Under

Mildly glammy alt-rock

R.I.Y.L.

Smashing Pumpkins,  
Matchbox Twenty, the Rentals

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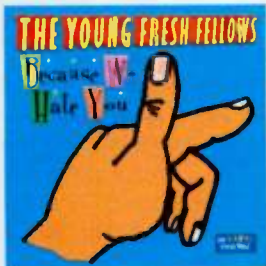
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Out

February 27

File Under

Like grunge never happened

R.I.Y.L.

The Replacements,  
the Fastbacks, the Presidents



Out

February 27

File Under

30-something symphonies

to death

R.I.Y.L.

Brian Wilson, the Posies,  
Neutral Milk Hotel

Grant"? "Good Times Rock & Roll," a tour vignette, might have been penned in the green room, while class clown Tad Hutchinson's "My Drum Set" consists of snare rolls interrupted by sitar breaks. It's all good fun, but the only tracks guilty of ambition are "Worthless" (a yearning ballad) and "The Ballad Of Only You & The Can Prevent Forest Fires," which charts the rise and fall of a fictional '70s band from the Smothers Brothers to "Where are they now?"

The Fellows' lack of envelope-pushing could be annoying if the Minus 5's companion piece didn't overcompensate. With sidemen from Los Lobos saxophonist Steve Berlin to High Llama Sean O'Hagan assisting McCaughey and Buck, the best of *Let The War Against Music Begin* combines elaborate '60s-grounded arrangements with thoughtful (but unpretentious) lyrics. "Got You" and "Desperate For Someone" are inventive, nuanced love songs, while "Great News Around You" cuts *Pet Sounds* sweetness with the worldview of someone who spends a lot of time around guitar amps: "You're the buzz without a ground/ No one wants to screw you down." This serio-comic balance wobbles only on the closing "Your Day Will Come," a jaunty reminder of mortality recalling the musical portions of *Monty Python's The Meaning Of Life*. The song ends with the collegiate equivalent of a guest-MC spot, with Robyn Hitchcock delivering a predictably surreal spiel on the afterlife (a.k.a. "the intestines of God"). The whimsy quotient gets a little high here, but given McCaughey's stated aim of making "a concept album about death, but with sleigh bells on every song," it's a fitting anticlimax. So who wins? Who cares? Listening to these discs side by side is less like witnessing a battle of the bands than watching someone challenge himself to an arm-wrestling match. >>>FRANKLIN BRUNO

## THE YOUNG FRESH FELLOWS

Because We Hate You Mammoth

## THE MINUS 5

Let The War Against Music Begin Mammoth

The Young Fresh Fellows: Long-standing "rock band" with a near-constant lineup over an 18-year career. The Minus 5: Sporadic "pop project" convened when the careers of members of Wilco, the Posies and even Ministry have allowed. The connective tissue: Scott McCaughey, who co-writes and sings the bulk of both bands' material. (He's also spent the past decade as R.E.M.'s unofficial fifth member, with Peter Buck returning the favor as the Minus 5's only near-constant.) So how does a journeyman par excellence mark his third decade of activity? With a disc of new material by each concern, packaged as a competition between the two.

Like any YFF release, *Because We Hate You* combines the beery grace of a great frat-party band with a broad rock-historical palette, from "Lonely Spartanburg Flower Stall" (bubblegum à la "Sugar Shack") to "Your Truth Our Lies" (mock-earnest hardcore). The band's love of self-referential throw-aways also remains—remember "Amy Grant"? "Good Times Rock & Roll," a tour vignette, might have been penned in the green room, while class clown Tad Hutchinson's "My Drum Set" consists of snare rolls interrupted by sitar breaks. It's all good fun, but the only tracks guilty of ambition are "Worthless" (a yearning ballad) and "The Ballad Of Only You & The Can Prevent Forest Fires," which charts the rise and fall of a fictional '70s band from the Smothers Brothers to "Where are they now?"



Out

March 13

File Under

Swedish cock rock

R.I.Y.L.

Buckcherry, Backyard Babies,  
the Hellacopters,  
Behind The Music

screams power ballad and treats the often ridiculed metal subgenre as if it had the legitimacy of delta blues. "Have You Been Around" has an indelibly hummable new wave-meets-Poison's C.C. Deville lead-guitar melody and an over-the-top vocal performance that will have you singing along about selling your own soul to rock 'n' roll before too long. And, for all its metallic associations, "Someone Special" sports a chorus so full of melody that it could go head-to-head with Oasis's "Wonderwall" any day of the week. The rest of *Bad Sneakers And A Piña Colada* is pouty fluff, full of the expected ban-shiee wails, slashing riffs and meaningless lyrics. Hardcore Superstar probably won't live the Cinderella *Behind The Music* fairytale, but they should keep Hellacopters fans happy until the next Backyard Babies disc. >>>LORNE BEHRMAN



Out

January 30

File Under

Japanese kitsch pop

R.I.Y.L.

Kahimi Karie, Pizzicato Five,  
Fantastic Plastic Machine

glistening dream-pop guitars. Moribayashi's high, often whispered vocals—she sings in Japanese, but Chinese-menu-style translations are provided—recall Karie's girlish delivery, but the lyric sheet reveals Hi-Posi to be anything but a lash-batting flirt. On the bouncy, guitar-centric "Experimental Girl," she expresses her desire to play different roles, and in whispered vocals over electronic dance beats, she asserts her position in a relationship on the frank confessional "I Never Came 1'nce." But those who don't understand the language will be more likely to notice the sense of sonic abandon. "The Computer No. 3" recasts a ska beat in the post-sampler age; "I'll Never Whistle" counters girl group-ish vocals with buzzing beats and bits of rapping; and "The Fragile Glass" reveals a fondness for gauzy, shoegazer guitar effects. >>>LYDIA VANDERLOO

## HI-POSI

4n5 Tokyo pop

The fusionary pop coming out of Tokyo's Shibuya-kei district—at its height, Cornelius and Kahimi Karie were the scene's king and queen—has evolved into its own spirited genre where anything goes. Like Hello Kitty tchotchkes and Mr. Friendly bags, albums by Shibuya-kei artists are as smart as they are cute, as their makers reinterpret Western styles without regard to their original contexts. On 4n5, Hi-Posi, the recording name of Miho Moribayashi, joins the growing list of Japanese artists with a keen ear for assembling peppy dance beats, clever samples and



Out

January 30

File Under

Honey, the dog has beetles!

R.I.Y.L.

Wilco, the Jayhawks,

Lennon/McCartney

## THE HONEYDOGS

Here's Luck Palm

Like the Jayhawks, this Minneapolis-based band has moved gradually but definitively away from the alt-country with which it's most often still associated, and toward classically crafted guitar pop. And, like the 'Hawks, the Honeydogs enjoy tossing truncated guitar-hero solos in the middle of its catchiest four-minute-and-under gems. But while the Jayhawks have come to count Brian Wilson, Big Star and the Byrds among their many influences, for the Honeydogs, it's really all about the Beatles, who have hovered over this band's shoulder all along. On *Here's*

*Luck*, the fourth Honeydogs CD, the group completely succumbs to its Fab Four jones, pillaging everything from *Rubber Soul* to John Lennon's solo work. "Red Dye #40" rings with sitar sounds that can't help but bring to mind pictures of the fully bearded George Harrison in the Far East. The bittersweet "For The Tears" is "Good Day Sunshine" with a dose of Wings-style soaring guitars. And "Wilson Blvd." and "Stonewall" (an ode to a dead drag queen who piques a straight kid's curiosity: "They have a secret code/ They have a secret kiss/ That I want to know") both take their cues from the orchestral pop of Sgt. Pepper's. There's also a little ELO in "The Crown," and some Cheap Trick power-pop in "Losing Transmission," all of which adds up to a kind of roots rock, just not the kind people tend to expect from a band like the Honeydogs. >>>MEREDITH OCHS



Out

February 13

File Under

Melancholy guitar pop

R.I.Y.L.

Big Star's *Third: Sister Lovers*,  
Tommy Keene, Freedy Johnston

## NEILSON HUBBARD

Why Men Fail Anhedonia-Parasol

On his 1997 solo debut, *The Slide Project*, Mississippi native Neilson Hubbard pulled off the nifty trick of breathing new life into the textbook power-pop formula. Hubbard mimics the trajectory of genre standard-bearers Big Star with his sophomore outing, jettisoning meat-and-potatoes rave-ups for melancholy after-hours strumming. The few remaining rockers (including the standout "Surrounded") sound vaguely misplaced, as the intimate stylings of *Why Men Fail* focus attention on Hubbard's plaintive tenor and introspective lyrics. His gift for hooks hasn't abandoned him, though Hubbard now

dispenses them via an economical string section or the keyboards of pop mainstay Peter Holsapple. "I'm ashamed of all my weakness," Hubbard laments on the somber "The Girl That Killed September," somehow still summoning the nerve to parade those foibles to powerful effect. Hubbard captures the spirit of a sensitive recluse pining for the girl that got away, whether or not he was ever really in the hunt. Left unchecked, his warble and unguarded high-wire act occasionally veer close to self-pity and mawkish balladry. Fortunately, longtime cohort Garrison Starr's sweet vocals provide the perfect foil, anchoring several songs and leaving the sense that the majestically sad "Wonderful Pain" would have made an apt title track. *Why Men Fail* is a flawed but often brilliant album, and Hubbard deserves credit for venturing onto an emotional ledge. >>>GLEN SARVADY

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## KING BRITT PRESENTS SYLK 130

Re-Members Only *Six Degrees*

The second installment of King Britt's funk nostalgia trilogy, *Re-Members Only*, is a musical journey through the '80s, and like the first album the bespectacled Philadelphia DJ orchestrated for his outfit Sylk 130, the "70s-inspired *When The Funk Hits The Fan*, this one plays like a collection of lost R&B and soul hits from a past decade. Indeed, Britt frames the album as if it were an early Reagan-era radio show and he was spinning modern classics. "Rising" is one of those mid-'80s "inspirational" R&B songs ("Never gonna

stop, never gonna give up...") sung by Philly native (Sister) Kathy Sledge. Complete with synthesized strings and drum machine digi-rolls, the song underscores Britt's attempt at faithfully recreating the sonic esthetic of the day through subtle production tweaks, cover songs (a reworking of Nu Shooz's "I Can't Wait") and guest stars (Alison Moyet, Grover Washington Jr.). A large chunk of the decade's styles are given tribute, including new wave (ABC's Martin Fry on "One And Only"), proto techno ("Beauty Of Machines" is Kraftwerk with an afro pick) and of course, hip-hop (the B-boy party vibe of "All The Way Live" and De La Soul's "Cobbs Creek"). Britt's concept is cleverly constructed (even down to its fashion-conscious album title), and in a very superficial way, he makes the decade seem romantic without resorting to shtick. >>>JOSEPH PATEL



## MARIA MARQUEZ

Once Cuentos De Amor (Eleven Love Stories) *Hannibal*

Updating the traditional sounds of Venezuela on her second solo CD, Caracas-born Maria Marquez pushes the music of her youth into contemporary cabaret. On these 11 tracks, all indeed about love, the throaty alto takes songs by her compatriots and reinterprets them as personal, vulnerable intimacies. Breathily, with a wide, fragile vibrato that recalls Edith Piaf, she throws a plaintive note into Guillermo Castillo's 50-year-old "Escribeme" (Write To Me), revealing a sweet frailty echoed by the reverb-heavy production of even

the quietest numbers. This same supersensitive handling cools down the meringue beat underlying "Mi Alma Y Yo" (My Soul And I), and here Marquez recalls Nina Simone in the blues tone, if not blue notes, she finds. A lovely singer, if anything she gets caught up in the device of the album: These are mostly Venezuelan pop standards, and although they draw on classical styles, they rarely rise above the pleasant. Gently supported throughout, with touches of vibraphone and marimba (from Gerry Grosz) and Robin Lewis's seven-string guitar, Marquez does dare to be almost exposed. The working-without-a-net feel makes for an approachable and likable album, if not a compelling one. These songs have stood the test of time, and if Marquez hasn't found a new urgency in them, she has found ways to make them refreshing. >>>CLEA SIMON

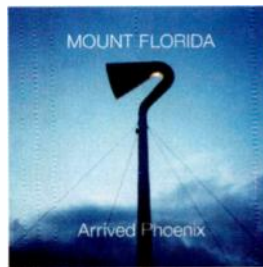


## KING COBB STEELIE

Mayday *Ryklo*

Back in the late '80s and early '90s, before finicky club kids set their musical likes and dislikes in stone, rock wasn't yet banned from the raving and clubbing palette, and Manchester bands like the Stone Roses and the Charlatans U.K. were setting dance-floors afire with their moody fusion of '60s guitar pop and acid-house grooves. A decade later, the Toronto-based King Cobb Steelie—Kevan Byrne, Kevin Lynn and Michael Armstrong—is here to prove that a band can still survive in the realm of dance music, that guitars aren't inherently evil and crude, and

that mixing boards aren't the only place from which compelling grooves emanate. On *Mayday*, their fourth proper album and first for Ryklo, the group melds retro guitar licks, Rhodes keyboards and live drumming with dance-music samples, deranged hip hop beats and an intense kind of dub that is so blatantly mechanized that it sounds like the something from *Brazil* or *Mad Max*. In 1994, the trio worked with fastidious producer Bill Laswell, and this disc's music is as meticulously arranged, employing an obsessive amount of eerie, minor-chord instrumentation and desolate-sounding vocals that are nearly impossible to understand. But that's perfectly okay, because the end result is so satisfyingly warped. >>>AMANDA NOWINSKI



## MOUNT FLORIDA

Arrived Phoenix *Matador*

Mount Florida probably suffered more jokes about their name in the last months of 2000 than any band deserves, but this Glasgow-based duo is removed enough from the world of American politics to handle it. Mount Florida consists of Twitch, a semi-legendary DJ from the British clubs Pure and Optimo who is credited with bringing techno to Scotland, and M.P. Lancaster, whose background is in music for theater and creating sound installations. The act draws on both of its members' respective backgrounds on this unusual and difficult-to-categorize debut album. Add

on the pair's three previous EPs, and each track here seems to take this album in a different direction. It's a primarily electronic-based and instrumental recording, but despite Twitch's history, you won't find much to dance to here—what you will find is vocals interspersed in the form of sound bites and dialog (including Noam Chomsky accompanied by a somber string quartet). One track features biting guitars, booming bass and a wailing organ, but *Arrived Phoenix* is deeply informed by dub, which along with ambient, trance, funk and world music, is just a single element in this constantly mutating musical stew. >>>JEM ASWAD

**MR. DEAD****Metabolics Volume 2: Dawn Of The Dead**

WordSound

From the same label that brought us Prince Paul's Freudian nightmare, *Psychoanalysis: What Is It?*, and the Upper West Side art-hop of MC Paul Barman comes Mr. Dead, a raw and unpolished MC whose day job—he's a makeup artist for B horror flicks—bleeds into his artistic life. The WordSound esthetic of unhinged rhyme schemes, aggressively uncommercial attitudes and lo-fi loop-science is in full effect, as Mr. Dead vents over spooky beats by Dan The Automator, Prince Paul, Scotty Hard and others.

Gothic bell tones, staccato string stabs and an assortment of found sounds (door creaks, heavy breathing, industrial clanks) create a mood somewhere between George Romero and the Gravediggaz. Half of the Crooklyn rap duo Metabolics, Mr. Dead eerily resembles Method Man, complete with whiskey-dusted tenor, apocalyptic lyric shtick, and nonsensical rhymes—"Energetic/ Ready prosthetic/ Undeveloped/ Pathetic limp cripple/ Rejected esoteric," he blurts on "Junk Mode." "It Ain't Going Down Like That," a doomed love story, is the album's only narrative cut, as Mr. Dead favors anti-mainstream missiles ("Dawn Of The Dead"), abstract battle cuts ("Lungevity") and, well, more battle cuts. He might be limited in scope, but when Mr. Dead gets worked up, he could scare the ghost out of the machine. >>>MICHAEL ENDELMAN

Out

January 23

File Under

Dead and loving it

R.I.Y.L.

Method Man, Dr. Octagon,  
the Gravediggaz



Out

February 20

File Under

Working holiday for cult heroes

R.I.Y.L.

Billy Bragg & Wilco,  
Bob Dylan, Neil Young

**ELLIOTT MURPHY & IAIN MATTHEWS****La Terre Commune** Eminent

On the surface, you might expect this cult-hero collaboration to be a stodgy affair. Both Murphy and Matthews made their recording debuts around 30 years ago—Matthews as a founder of Fairport Convention, Murphy as a Lou Reed-influenced singer/songwriter. And neither are known for making upbeat or especially uplifting albums. Along with four songs by each, the tracks here include heavyweight covers like Jesse Colin Young's miserable "Darkness, Darkness" and a Brecht/Weill antiwar treatise, "The Ballad Of The Soldier's Wife." Not exactly a recipe for fun. Surprisingly, though, the two singers sound rejuvenated in each other's company, and this is one of the most accessible discs either has made in a long while. Formerly based in Austin, Matthews brings some of that city's twang to the proceedings: "One Cold Street" even sounds a little bluesy. The rest is mostly acoustic, with enough harmonica to give it an early-'60s Greenwich Village feel. Matthews still has his sweet tenor from the Fairport days, and his romantic streak mixes surprisingly well with Murphy's streetwise approach. And when they turn in back-to-back songs about lusting after unattainable women—Matthews's poppy "She's A Mystery" and Murphy's folksy "I Want To Talk To You"—you can tell they're coming from the same place. >>>BRETT MILANO

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# Reviews



## ORBIT

**XLR8R** Lunch

Alternative rock was nearly out of gas as a major-label marketing concept when Orbit was signed to A&M five years ago. But the Boston-based quartet, now releasing their records via their own Lunch label and [www.orbitband.com](http://www.orbitband.com), continues to prove there's still blood in the music. Equally deft at jagged beauty (the title track) and outright prettiness ("Touch Me"), they blend snappy rhythmic command with the slippery sonics of Jeff Robbins's and Fred Archambault's guitars—which at times bray like Martian cattle, then weave clean chords into Persian-rug textures or spin generous melodies. Orbit is also unabashedly romantic. Robbins's tenor can side-step the irony of his lyrics, making numbers like the premature eulogy "Satellite" radiate hook-laden warmth. There's a delicacy to his phrasing that even beams through rave-ups like "Radio Whore," which may be a slash of the poison pen at Orbit's own days playing promo gigs for every goddamned station from Toledo to Timbuktu while under A&M's wing. Plus, Orbit are masters of the post-Cobain loud/soft thing, known in the pre-alt days by the quaint term "dynamics." And they're not afraid to let violins and horns graze in the same pasture as their feral six-strings. With so many virtues, Orbit has the power to become airborne again. But for bands making their kind of heartfelt pop rock, radio space is a lonely place. >>>TED DROZDOWSKI

Out

February 13

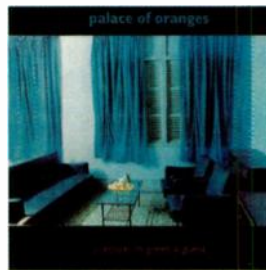
File Under

The path described by one body in its revolution about another

R.I.Y.L.

The Catherine Wheel, U2, Sheila Divine

ous melodies. Orbit is also unabashedly romantic. Robbins's tenor can side-step the irony of his lyrics, making numbers like the premature eulogy "Satellite" radiate hook-laden warmth. There's a delicacy to his phrasing that even beams through rave-ups like "Radio Whore," which may be a slash of the poison pen at Orbit's own days playing promo gigs for every goddamned station from Toledo to Timbuktu while under A&M's wing. Plus, Orbit are masters of the post-Cobain loud/soft thing, known in the pre-alt days by the quaint term "dynamics." And they're not afraid to let violins and horns graze in the same pasture as their feral six-strings. With so many virtues, Orbit has the power to become airborne again. But for bands making their kind of heartfelt pop rock, radio space is a lonely place. >>>TED DROZDOWSKI



Out

January 9

File Under

Psychedelic whirs

R.I.Y.L.

Starflyer 59, Sixteen Deluxe, the Green Pajamas

obviously believes that the secret to achieving any or all of the three E's usually associated with this approach—ecstasy, epiphany, euphoria—lies in a fourth: excess. What is unexpected, however, is how vital this stuff still sounds in the questing, hungry hands of Palace Of Oranges, an outfit already a couple of generations removed from Sunset Strippers like the Dream Syndicate or Rain Parade. There are downshifting guitars that accelerate into your cerebellum, cool Byrds-cum-Velvets downtown guitar jangles, the celestial shimmer and epic roar of "Rind," and a pervading sense of thermonuclear meltdown nearly throughout. Deciphering the lyrics is another matter entirely, but it's not what Palace Of Oranges says that counts. It's how they say it that does. >>>JONATHAN PERRY

Plug into the new generation of Brazilian music.



## PAN SONIC

**Aaltopiiri** Mute

Similar to the way hip-hop DJs recycle the cultural detritus of past recordings, the Finnish duo Pan Sonic (Mika Vainio and Ilpo Vaisanen) makes music out of the dirty noise that most people want removed from their aural environment: static, industrial scrapes, painful frequencies, feedback. Sometimes these sounds crackle and howl atop a rudimentary 808 drumbeat. Usually, though, they're the only elements present in a terrifying minimal formation, organized into sequenced pulses and structures that mimic thematic development. The shorter tracks on *Aaltopiiri*, as brief as

Out

January 16

File Under

Mettle machine music

R.I.Y.L.

Pita, Oval, Pole, Einstürzende Neubauten

35 seconds, could be Eno-like haikus recited by an idiot; the longer ones, up to 9:30, suggest a 100 percent alien form of pop music. Or it all might be some sort of mathematical transmission from outer space. Who knows, really. Even though the sonics Vainio and Vaisanen choke out of their analog synths occasionally sound like various banal phenomena (hair clippers brushing the ear, echoes from the other end of an arena, record/CD skips), they ultimately come from no specific place and go right back to nowhere. It's as nihilistic as the repeated wipeouts of MTV's *Jackass*. The great irony about all this dirty noise, then, is how cleansing it is in the end; failing to break its code, you return to more earthbound music with hypersensitive, even alien ears. >>>KEVIN JOHN



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## DOLLY PARTON

**Little Sparrow** Sugar Hill-Blue Eye

Unlike Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard or Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton didn't lose her awesome vocal abilities when she finally passed her prime and country's new generation politely swept her from center stage. Therefore, she also hasn't had to strip her persona raw to stake a claim to an artistic comeback. Instead, she's just returned to playing her classic role as the sweet-voiced seer of tragic truth, repackaging it to woo the folk/bluegrass crowd that she first successfully courted on her 1999 Sugar Hill-Blue Eye debut, *The Grass Is Blue*. This theme regularly risks a sentimental

excess that Johnny, Merle and Loretta rarely ventured, and if the tasteful and trebly bluegrass settings can underscore the fault, this followup pushes that flaw with genteel folk touches. The settings doom a trad duet with Irish folkies Altan, do nothing to restrain the gothic overkill of "Mountain Angel," and even mar a revisit to her classic Appalachian tragedy, "Down From Dover." Luckily, on about half of these numbers—from Louvin Brothers and Eagles covers to Parton originals old and new—the settings just underscore those awesome vocal abilities, and the tragic truths hang as soft and sad as a Blue Mountain mist. >>>FRANKLIN SOULTS

Out

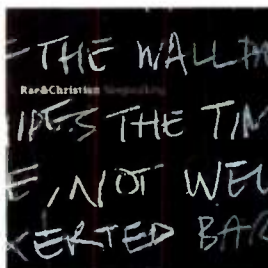
January 23

File Under

Classic country

R.I.Y.L.

Loretta Lynn, Alison Krauss,  
Emmylou Harris



## RAE & CHRISTIAN

**Sleepwalking** Studio K7

Sometime during the mid-'90s, the term "acid jazz" was finally dismissed as a lazy simulacrum of jazz fused with hip-hop and put to rest. But it didn't take long for a new term to pop up in its place: downtempo, one of the most nebulous of all current electronic music subgenres. And on this, the second full-length album from the Manchester-based production duo of Rae & Christian, the problems of superficiality that plagued acid jazz are certainly resurrected. Although some of the instrumentals run like sexy, languid serenades, the album

relies too heavily on watered down hip-hop rhythms; while the B-boy appropriation is technically sound, the tracks generally lack substance. Rae & Christian do their best to keep things interesting by dutifully bringing in some excellent MCs and singers, but it sounds as if the duo simply paid the vocal talent to quickly record a few takes, and then slapped the results down over unremarkable beats and bland tonal loops. The Pharcyde appears on several tracks, lending their weighty name and skills to the album, as does the legendary '70s soul singer Bobby Womack. But venerable guest vocalists simply can't compensate for total lack of passion and immediacy. >>>AMANDA NOWINSKI

Out

February 27

File Under

Depth-defying downtempo

R.I.Y.L.

The Pharcyde, Soul II Soul,  
Jeru The Damaja,  
Kruder & Dorfmeister



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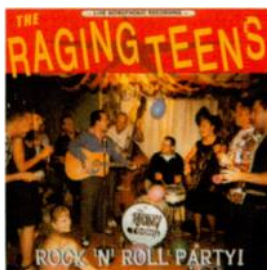
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## THE RAGING TEENS

Rock 'N' Roll Party! **Rubric**

Named for a three-volume series of wild 1950's New England rock 'n' roll, the Teens are one of the brightest lights in a Boston roots-rockabilly scene that's still kicking Sun-style slapback mayhem at the dawn of rock 'n' roll's second half-century. Fronted by a U.K.-born former used-car salesman named Kevin Patey, the Teens have a secret weapon in guitarist Miss Amy Griffin, the rare woman in the rockabilly boys' club. Patey's originals—including "Lies," co-written with his significant other, indie songstress Mary Lou Lord, and "Annabelle," named for the couple's

daughter—bristle with a decidedly un-Puritan hellfire. And the covers here include "Rollin' Pin Mim" by Ricky Coyne And His Guitar Rockers, one of the highlights from the original *Raging Teens* compilations. The best moments on this disc—produced by Untamed Youth leader turned snake-oil C&W showman Deke Dickerson—come when the band strays from neo-rockabilly dogma. Guest pianist Carl "Sonny" Leyland, from Big Sandy And His Fly-Rite Boys, is one of the last men alive who can play authentic, unruly boogie-woogie—and he lets loose on "Let's Drink Some Booze," a wild, key-humping stride blues. Leyland also adds a little Jerry Lee/Little Richard stool-booting, ivory-smashing abandon to the album's best cut, "Snowbound," on which Patey's lyric tumbles from his lips with the same raw snap and high-wire syncopation of Chuck Berry's "Lucille." >>>CARLY CARIOLI

Out

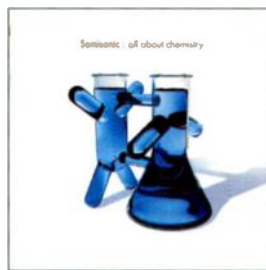
February 19

File Under

Millennial rockabilly

R.I.Y.L.

Deke Dickerson, Kim Lenz,  
Big Sandy And His Fly-Rite Boys



## SEMISONIC

All About Chemistry **MCA**

How you define "classic rock" depends on your age: Is it the boomer-associated FM-radio guitar heroes of the '70s, or is it the eclectic music made by indie pioneers of the '80s who laid the groundwork for the alt-rock era? Semisonic has a foot planted in each camp. Like fellow Minneapolisians the Replacements, Semisonic offers a bruised romanticism that makes for great drinking songs, like their massive hit "Closing Time" a couple years back. Songwriter Dan Wilson even evokes Paul Westerberg, both in his incisive guitar work and his plaintive, weathered voice. *All About Chemistry*, however, pays even greater homage to the earlier classic-rock era, marked by a collaboration with none other than Carole King on "One True Love" and a Derek & The Dominos-style instrumental coda on the epic "I Wish." Sure, Wilson and fellow multi-instrumentalists John Munson and Jacob Slichter make some concessions to the new with some samples and electronic noise-makers, but we're not talking *Kid A* here. This is old-fashioned pop artisanship, from the fatalistic sweep of "She's Got My Number" to the sly goofing of the pro-wanking anthem "Get A Grip" to the gem-like loveliness of "Follow" and "El Matador." Hey, there's a reason they call it "classic." >>>GARY SUSMAN

Out

March 6

File Under

Classic rock, no matter how

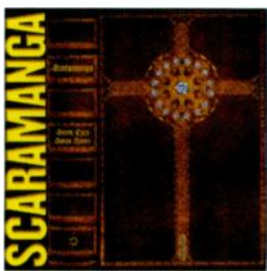
you define it

R.I.Y.L.

Everclear, Third Eye Blind,

Fastball

Chemistry, however, pays even greater homage to the earlier classic-rock era, marked by a collaboration with none other than Carole King on "One True Love" and a Derek & The Dominos-style instrumental coda on the epic "I Wish." Sure, Wilson and fellow multi-instrumentalists John Munson and Jacob Slichter make some concessions to the new with some samples and electronic noise-makers, but we're not talking *Kid A* here. This is old-fashioned pop artisanship, from the fatalistic sweep of "She's Got My Number" to the sly goofing of the pro-wanking anthem "Get A Grip" to the gem-like loveliness of "Follow" and "El Matador." Hey, there's a reason they call it "classic." >>>GARY SUSMAN



## SCARAMANGA

Seven Eyes Seven Horns **Sun Large**

You remember Scaramanga, don't you? Not the villain in the 1974 James Bond flick *The Man With The Golden Gun*, but Sir Menelik, the onetime Rawkus Records golden child and erstwhile Kool Keith sidekick. You may even remember this album, his debut, which is finally seeing a full-scale release after a bungled distribution attempt in early 1999. Scaramanga is a lot like Kool Keith in the way he plays with alter egos, how he delivers rhymes from differing perspectives (e.g. playing the "jiggy" role on songs like "Holdin' New Cards" and "Strip

Club Bait" with little irony), and most importantly, in the way he raps—spitting neverending rhymes in a cryptic, rapid-fire manner, using them more for punctuating effect than lyrical content. Sometimes it's beguiling, like on "S.I.R.," where, over a dastardly chord progression hooked up by Diamond D., he gets you with his everlasting, head-nod flow. The gothic rhapsody delivered by the album's producers—Godfather Don, Showbiz and Scaramanga himself—fits the pseudo-scientific tone of his lyrics well. Only, while Scara's style can move you on three, four, or even six songs, getting through 16 is a major chore. And that's something that's never been said about Kool Keith. >>>JOSEPH PATEL

Out

January 18

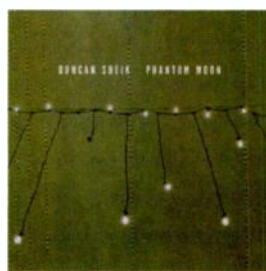
File Under

Pseudo-scientific hip-hop

R.I.Y.L.

Kool Keith, Godfather Don,

Showbiz



## DUNCAN SHEIK

Phantom Moon **Nonesuch**

Any serious music fan knows how a single album can change a person's life. For Duncan Sheik, that album was Nick Drake's *Pink Moon*. He has performed the album live in its entirety with guitarist Gerry Leonard (Spooky Ghost) and has titled his latest effort, *Phantom Moon*, in tribute to it. Sonically, *Phantom Moon* pays homage to the entire Nick Drake catalog, featuring string and woodwind arrangements by Simon Hale (Jamiroquai) that recall the funereal otherworldliness of Drake's arranger, Robert Kirby. (In the case of "The

Out

February 27

File Under

Nocturnal chamber music

R.I.Y.L.

Nick Drake, Colin Blunstone,

Scott Walker

Winds That Blow," the piano accents hark back to Drake's second album, *Bryter Layter*.) But while the influence is upfront, it in no way diminishes the power of these delicate songs. In an unusual move, Sheik collaborates with playwright Steven Sater, who previously worked up a treatment of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* with Laurie Anderson. The marriage works perfectly. Sater handles lyric duties, freeing Sheik to compose and arrange the most melodic music of his career. Whether he's purring quietly ("The Wilderness," "Sad Stephen's Song") or reaching for the end of his range ("Mouth On Fire," "Lo & Behold"), Sheik sounds completely charged up. And that's the best tribute a singer/songwriter can pay to the artist who inspires him. >>>ROB O'CONNOR



## SLOTH

The Voice Of God *The Music Cartel*

While American stoner rock has enjoyed something of a renaissance in the U.S. over the past decade in the hands of the Kyuss/Queens Of The Stone Age guys and bands like Monster Magnet, in England (the grim land that can still claim the ultimate stoner titans, Black Sabbath, as its own), the genre has been surprisingly stagnant. Sloth comes from a long line of British stoner-rock royalty, with members who have shuffled in and out of its lineup from Godzilla and Mourn and a bassist who is the label manager at the celebrated doom

imprint Rise Above. And as you might expect, these cavedudes get down real low and fuzzy on *The Voice Of God*, creating a buzzing metal racket that comes on slow, stoned and primal. Everything moves at a Melvins-like snail's pace here—the album only features seven songs, and all but one of them are more than seven minutes long. "Wishman" and "Casting The Circle" are representative cuts—they're both oppressively down-tuned and downcast. The first-name-only players—Vince, Roland and Will—create a dense, seeping rhythmic bed over which the James Hetfield-sounding Gaz screams out in anguish about heaven, hell and intergalactic mind expansion. It's sludgy, retrograde, no-frills doom metal the way Cathedral used to cook it, which is fine as long as you don't mind being stuck in 1997's version of 1972. >>>MARTIN POPOFF



## SPLIT LIP RAYFIELD

Never Make It Home *Bloodshot*

The name Split Lip Rayfield may conjure images of a creaky old guy discovered by some musicologist on a dilapidated front porch in Tennessee, flailing away on a banjo and drinking from a jug. And that's probably intentional. But Split Lip Rayfield is a band, and flailing is the wrong word for what this quartet does with traditional bluegrass instruments (and a bass made from a 1965 Ford gas tank) on its third release on Chicago's notorious "insurgent country"/redneck revival label. The group crossbreeds old-timey instruments and four-part harmonies with

furious punk intensity, rockist riffs and lyrics that wouldn't make it past the Grand Ol' Opry censors. Sometimes the Split Lips do stagger along a traditional path: The disc's one cover, "Love Please Call Home," is an old chestnut, and mandolinist Wayne Gottstine's title track is a stirring new entry in the honored, centuries-old tradition of murder and prison ballads. And then there's the broken-hearted feller in "Used To Call Me Baby," who drowns his sorrows by playing Donkey Kong, and in "Kiss Of Death," banjo player Eric Mardis gleefully runs through his history of destroyed cars, including the '81 Accord where "Rush sounded good on the stereo." The musicianship is tight even without the drums they don't use (or need), and the harmonies are remarkably sweet and strong for a bunch of Kansas rowdies. >>>BILL KISLIUK

For a quick taste of Hardcore Superstar, crank up "*Someone Special*" on this month's CMJ CD sampler.

**Disclosure:** Play f\*\*kin' loud.  
*Thanks.*

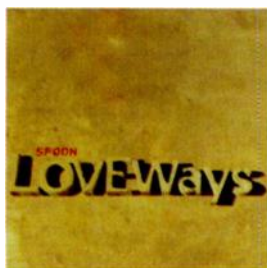
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MUSIC FOR NATIONS

**HARDCORE SUPERSTAR**

*Bad Sneakers and a Piña Colada*  
THE NEW ALBUM

# Reviews



## SPoon ★

Love Ways Merge

Quite simply, anyone who hasn't given Spoon at least a quick listen has no right to lodge any complaints about how alternative guitar rock isn't any good anymore. The Austin trio's heart was always in the right place—their early Matador releases made good use of the band's obvious affinity for both the Pixies and Hüsker Dü—but as they've matured they've become a bit weirder and a lot more grabbing. Following a pair of neglected gems on the trio's largely ignored major-label album, *A Series Of Sneaks*, and the back-to-indie single "The Agony Of

Out  
January 16  
File Under  
Meaty enough to eat with a fork  
R.I.Y.L.  
XTC, Wire, Guided By Voices

Laffite" (about an A&R exec who had done them wrong), this five-track EP includes some of singer/guitarist Britt Daniel's craftiest tunes yet. True to its title, the disc features songs that ponder love from different angles, though usually from the outside looking in. "Change My Life" begins with a 90-second intro that can rival much of Wire's catalog for two-chord tension, and ends with a guitar-shredding finale. Daniel and drummer Jim Eno are now the entire band, so there's less of a straightforward guitar-trio sound—in fact, two songs are keyboard-driven with no discernible guitars. The standout, "Chips And Dip," employs a mellotron, a yearning melody, and Daniel's choked-up vocal to create a feel straight outta early-'70s John Lennon. >>>BRETT MILANO



## TIPSY ★

Uh-Oh! Asphodel

*Uh-Oh!* is the latest album of techno tiki music from the duo of Tim Digulla and Dave Gardner, ending nearly four years of silence from their Topsy project with the aplomb of a 12-step socialite gingerly falling off the wagon. "Papaya Freeway" is a pure party track filled with lazy surf-guitar riffs, sweet nightingale electronic warbles, a multitude of excited voices and punchy brass lines. "Reverse Cowgirl" finds fast-picking guitar skidding into a backdrop filled with assorted electronic gurgles that would work quite well as a soundtrack for a

Out  
March 6  
File Under  
Exotic, erotic and robotic  
R.I.Y.L.  
Xavier Cugat, Carl Stalling,  
Stereolab

Benny Hill skit. It's one of *Uh-Oh!*'s more disquieting tracks, but it's offset by the relatively more pleasant soundscapes of "Swallowtail" and "Moisture Seekers"; the latter places the pheromone-laden electric guitar of a secret-agent theme song next to an orchestra of organ, accordion, piano and trumpet, punctuated by the rhythmic sound of a hacking cough. The overall effect is that of an exotic cartoon world in which prom queens, pterodactyls and retro androids commingle over drinks and cocktail-wiener hors d'oeuvres, with Digulla and Gardner playing the role of the consummate bartenders, shaking and stirring up a mix of tempting highballs and amusing screwballs. >>>MIKE WOODRING

**JEB LOY NICHOLS** just what time it is

Jeb Loy Nichols returns with his debut on Rykodisc/Rough Trade.

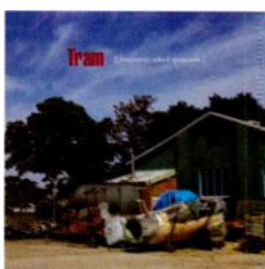
"...sweet and sultry, soulful sounds." — *Time Out*

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## TRAM

Frequently Asked Questions Jetset

No one's ever accused American slow-core bands like Smog, Red House Painters and Low of being particularly cheery. But Great Britain's Tram, under the guidance of Paul Anderson, achieves a lightness of mood that sets *Frequently Asked Questions* apart from other albums that emphasize slow tempos. Tram decelerates their delicate folk pop in the way a driver might slow down to take in some stunning scenery. The standard slowcore accoutrements are here: listless guitar strumming, the swat of a snare drum hit by a brush, echoey leads. But Tram adds delicate shading with tastefully sporadic string interludes and welcome touches like harmonica and muted trumpet. Hints of Chris Isaak's mysterious guitar leads and Spacemen 3's distantly fuzzy vocals seep in, but never overstay their welcome. Anderson possesses a slight yet soulful voice, and with wavering effort, he sings from a point of view that is not isolated by detached longing or barely suppressed despair. His lyrics might observe hard sadness in others, but he generally turns away from it to make a more hopeful observation. With sanguinary charm, Anderson asks, "Why destroy all that is dear to you?" While his tragic American counterparts are providing very articulate answers to that question, Anderson and Tram are looking to get beyond it. >>>LOIS MAFFEO

Out  
February 6  
File Under  
Let it slow, let it slow,  
let it slow  
R.I.Y.L.  
Smog, Low,  
Red House Painters

# Beyond The Ultraworld

NO MORE DANCING IN THE DARK?

There was a time, not so long ago, when being a raver defined my personality. It was who I was, from the JNCO jeans that I wore daily to the bear hugs with which I greeted everyone I met. But one day, things changed. The



main reason I put my glowsticks and pacifier to rest is simple: The responsibilities of adulthood took their ugly hold. Who's got the time for all-night techno orgies when there are deadlines to be met and mountains of bills to be paid? Not to mention that the elephant-leg jeans (or "phat pants") grew too unflattering when combined with a swelling waistline.

Recently, although content with retirement, I began to wonder if the scene still had something to offer an aging technohead. So on Saturday, November 25, I collected a posse of fellow post-ravers and made a five-hour pilgrimage from New York to Washington D.C. for Revolution, the year-2000 version of Ultraworld Productions' annual Thanksgiving weekend rave.

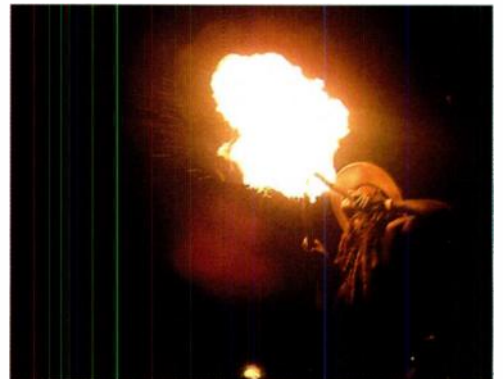
In the mid- to late '90s, Ultraworld was like the Cartier diamond of East Coast rave companies. Masterminded by chief organizer Lonnie Fisher, each Ultraworld party—from huge massives to intimate outdoor sunrise festivals—delivered an unparalleled vibe punctuated by the most pristine sound and lighting system this side of a Pink Floyd concert. Even if the DJ lineup lacked a global superstar, I left each Ultraworld event with a handful of new friends—some of whom had traveled from as far as Chicago and San Francisco—renewed faith in humanity, and my serotonin in severe flux. Ultraworld taught me about PLUR—peace, love, unity, respect—and let me know what techno and E-puddles were all about, so I was thrilled to return to the source of my love for DJ culture.

Walking inside the D.C. Armory was like entering a time warp, as I joined the army of ravers taking off Elmo backpacks and hugging each other hello at the security check. The scenery was almost exactly like I remembered; the elaborate lighting rig pulsed in time to the digital sound pouring from the stacks of speakers, while girls in baby-Ts gyrated next to breakdancing boys in Adidas windbreakers. Even though it was barely 3:00 p.m. (due to Armory restrictions, the Thanksgiving party is always a daytime event), it felt timeless inside the dark cavernous space. By the time D.C.'s Scott Henry kicked the party into high gear with enthusiastic sets of funky, aggressive techno-trance, I was sure the long-dormant raver inside of me would soon be revived from his hibernation, arms outstretched, glowsticks in hand.

Hours later, however, as 10,000 kids threw down around me, my feet still refused to move with an ounce of the intensity they once knew. Although I still lived and breathed techno as much as any of the barely legals around me, I couldn't help feeling as though I had crashed their party. As I watched the elation in their glassy eyes and bouncing bodies, I missed the days when I took that kind of bliss for granted.

Anyone can take a handful of drugs and dance to DJs all night, but the air of freedom via naïveté is what sets raves apart from nightclubs. It's also the ingredient that will ensure that raving remains a pastime reserved for the very young. Eventually, you trade in your PLUR for tense muscles, a jaded disposition and an overbooked planner, and the baggage of age is non-refundable.

As my loss of innocence and jealousy of youth anchored my feet to the floor, a fresh-faced girl of no more than 19 skipped over to me and handed me a



lollipop. "Hi, my name is Star!" Of course it is, I cynically think. "Are you rolling?" she asks. But before I can shoo her away, she reaches into her backpack, whips out a small tub of Vicks and begins rubbing it on my temples. She then taps me on the head with her star-wand, kisses me on the cheek, and skips off into the fray. And my mouth forms a real smile because, for a very brief moment, I remember what it felt like to live in a perfect world.

# THE SCENE IS NOW

## LIKE, OH MY GOD REVENGE OF THE '80S

**A**fter years of threats from fashion designers, the return of pointy stilettos, synth-pop and loud pastels is finally upon us. Not only are radio stations programming all-'80s formats and clubs booking *Flashdance* flashback nights, but artists like King Britt are writing homages to their childhood with breezy, tinny tunes that will have you hurting for a Molly Ringwald movie. Here's a rundown of awesome young artists and killer classic musicians making a rad comeback.



### KING BRITT

**Bitchin' creds:** For the new album *Re-Members Only* (Six Degrees), King Britt dug out his old Juno-106 and Oberheim OB-X synths and his TR-606 drum machine to compose an homage to the '80s with today's mind for mixing. "On the song 'Romeo's Fate,' I used a Roland MKS-50 with PG-300 controller—that was *the* machine in '83. I [found one sound] and altered it a bit into this *Miami Vice* kind of thing, and thought 'Wow, Bowie would have used something like that on "This Is Not America." That sound ties the whole record together."

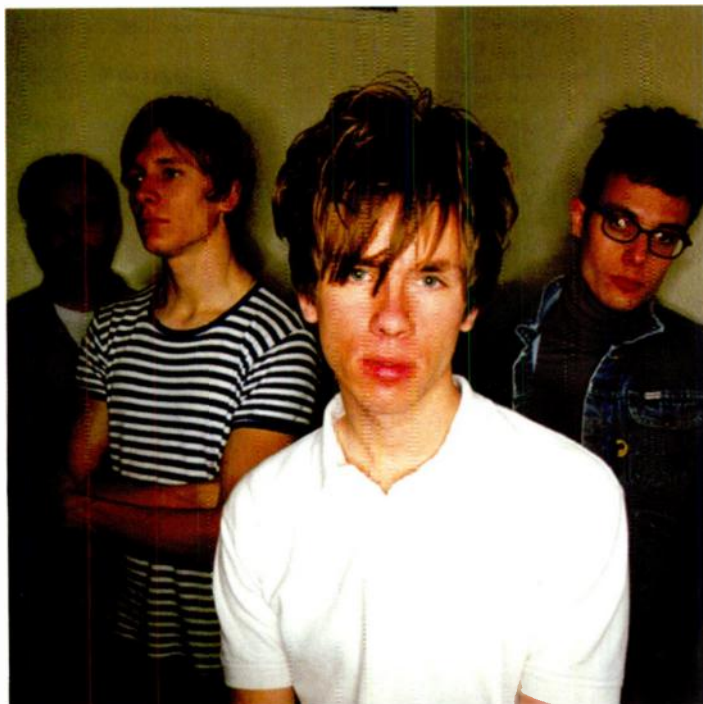
**What made the '80s rad?** Experimentation and cross-pollination: "Everyone was really starting to use the synthesizer and drum machines. You also had a kind of unity between the genres, you had all of your new-wave cats hanging with the hip-hop guy; you had Jean-Michel Basquiat hanging with Blondie, who was hanging with Fab Five Freddie, who was hanging with Grandmaster Flash and Afrika Bambaataa." Also, benefit concerts and albums: "I want to see benefits come back. What happened to Live Aid and Farm Aid, 'We Are The World'? That was the shit. You look at that video and all of your heroes are on there singing together and chillin'. That's what we need."

### SWEDEN

**Bitchin' creds:** Sweden's twin members Leja and Alex Kress grew up obsessed with music, but it wasn't until they revisited *The Hurting* by Tears For Fears that they knew forming a band was their *raison d'être*. Leja: "We were on a bus listening to 'Memories Fade' and it hit us both. We looked at each other and said, 'We're starting a band.'" Alex: "We started out wanting to be a cover band. The first one we did was Alphaville's 'Big In Japan.'" Meeting up with Ian Curtis-wannabe Richard Agerbeek, they crafted their self-titled debut, which makes no bones about loving the glistening, dreamy music that made Jon Cryer want to pogo.

**What made the '80s rad?** Style. Alex: "I look at pictures from the '80s, and I wish we still looked like that." Leja: "I call our style 'goth-lite.' We wore lots of crucifixes and rosaries with black crinoline tutus with striped tights. People called us the Bananarama twins."





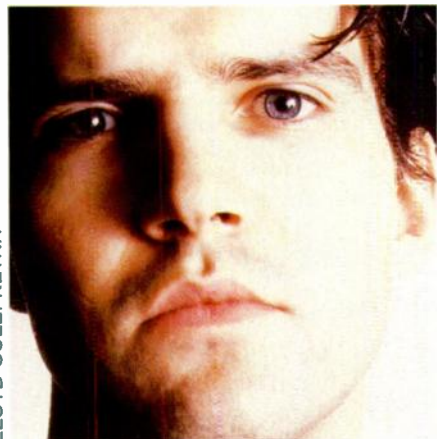
## FINE CHINA

**Bitchin' creds:** Phoenix-based Fine China's debut, *When The World Sings* (Tooth And Nail), draws on everyone from the Smiths to New Order to the Pet Shop Boys. Rob Withim, the singer/songwriter/guitarist for the band, forecasts the current trend swinging back from heavy rock to pop. "If you look at the Backstreet Boys, that's pop music now, in that it's popular music. We came out of the early '90s where it wasn't cool to have big melodies, or have the chorus be up front. Back then, the songwriting style they did was really based around the song."

**What made the '80s rad?** "In the '90s, it wasn't cool to sing beautifully. But I think we're back into the '80s ethic of 'Let's write a big song.' And it's OK not to sing like Eddie Vedder, if you want to sing like Morrissey. It's OK to be emotional."

## LLOYD COLE

**Bitchin' creds:** After several albums of moody torch ballads, Lloyd Cole—the one-time king of literate college rock—returns with a new backing band and a new album, *The Negatives* (March), featuring a batch of tunes that recall the upbeat twangy rave-ups he wrote in the '80s with the Commotions. "I think the last six or seven years of my life I've been open to accepting that I'm more one dimensional than I hoped I was and that my taste in music is still quite similar to what it



LLOYD COLE: RETNA

was in 1983 and 1984," acknowledges Cole. "I think if I had heard Blur in 1984, I would have thought they were great and if the Velvet Underground hadn't existed until 1997, I still would have thought they were better than Yo La Tengo." Even though he strives to make timeless records, he figures there is a new-wave esthetic: "If you grew up with punk rock and enjoyed it... there's going to be a bit of it in you."

**What should be brought back from the '80s?** "I'd quite like to have my figure back."

## TEARS FOR FEARS' CURT SMITH

**Bitchin' creds:** After a decade of not speaking, the duo that once ruled the world with the symphonic synth-pop of "Shout" has started writing and recording songs again (no official release date has been set for new material). Vocalist and bassist Smith says several years of a solo career strengthened his songwriting chops, but when he works with old partner Roland Orzabal, many of the influences are still the same: "I thought it would be different, but no." Although Smith has a hard time describing what the new material sounds like, his wife likens at least one of the tunes to World Party, which makes sense given that the duo left off with the baroque and Beatles-esque tune "The Seeds Of Love." Smith also stars as an English professor in the new independent film *The Private Public* alongside former *Baywatch* babe Traci Bingham. Smith once trained to be a teacher, but isn't thrilled by the idea of watching himself act like one: "I look like an idiot and I sound like an idiot."

**Is there anything you'd bring back from the '80s?** "No. If you're a real musician you should never be stuck in an era, then it's just fashion not music... If I thought the new Tears For Fears record was going to sound like an '80s rehash I'd be out in a nanosecond." **MMM**



# TOP 75



**PJ HARVEY**  
STORIES FROM THE CITY...  
ISLAND

#1

## 5 YEARS AGO

**AMPS**  
PACER (4AD-ELEKTRA)

**SMASHING PUMPKINS**  
MELLON COLLIE AND THE INFIN'TE SADNESS (VIRGIN)

**BOSS HOG**  
BOSS HOG (DGC)

**CORNERSHOP**  
WOMAN'S GOTTA HAVE IT (LUAKA BOP)

**SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE**  
SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE (SUB POP)

## 10 YEARS AGO

**CHARLATANS U.K.**  
SOME FRIENDLY (BEGGARS BANQUET-RCA)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
RED HOT + BLUE (CHRYSALIS)

**THE POGUES**  
HELL'S DITCH (ISLAND)

**THE CURE**  
MIXED UP (ELEKTRA)

**JANE'S ADDICTION**  
RITUAL DE LO HABITUAL (WARNER BROS.)

## ARTIST

## ALBUM

## LABEL

1	PJ HARVEY	Stories From The City, Stories From The Sea	Island
2	JOHNNY CASH	American III	Columbia
3	BLUR	The Best Of	Virgin
4	RADIOHEAD	Kid A	Capitol
5	U2	All That You Can't Leave Behind	Interscope
6	OUTKAST	Stankonia	LaFace-Arista
7	ELYSIAN FIELDS	Queen Of The Meadow	Jetset
8	NEW FOUND GLORY	New Found Glory	Drive Thru-MCA
9	FATBOY SLIM	Halfway Between The Gutter And The Stars	Astralwerks
10	DELTRON 3030	Deltron 3030	75 Ark
11	RONI SIZE & REPAZENT	In The Mode	Island
12	MEDESKI MARTIN AND WOOD	The Dropper	Blue Note
13	SUPERDRAG	In The Valley Of Dying Stars	Arena Rock
14	SOUTHERN CULTURE ON THE SKIDS	Liquored Up And Lacquered Down	TVT
15	PIZZICATO FIVE	The Fifth Release From Matador	Matador
16	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Badlands: A Tribute To Bruce Springsteen's...	Sub Pop
17	PALO ALTO	American	Columbia
18	YO LA TENGO	Danelectro (EP)	Matador
19	DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE	Forbidden Love (EP)	Barsuk
20	POE	Haunted	Atlantic
21	COLDPLAY	Parachutes	Nettwerk-Capitol
22	RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE	Renegades	Epic
23	BADLY DRAWN BOY	The Hour Of Bewilderbeast	XL-Beggars Banquet
24	ADD N TO (X)	Add Insult To Injury	Mute
25	LESS THAN JAKE	Borders & Boundaries	Fat Wreck Chords
26	LOW	Christmas	Chair Kickers' Union-Kranky
27	JOSEPH ARTHUR	Live (EP)	Realworld-Virgin
28	R.L. BURNSIDE	Wish I Was In Heaven Sitting Down	Fat Possum-Epithaph
29	JURASSIC-5	Quality Control/W.O.E. Is Me (EP)	Interscope
30	DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL	Swiss Army Romance	Drive-Thru
31	EUPHONE	Hashin' It Out	Jade Tree
32	SONGS: OHIA	Ghost Tropic	Secretly Canadian
33	GODSPEED YOU BLACK EMPEROR!	Lift Your Skinny Fists Like Antennas To Heaven	Kranky
34	EMILIANA TORRINI	Love In The Time Of Science	Virgin
35	BRATMOBILE	Ladies, Women And Girls	Lookout!
36	GOMEZ	Abandoned Shopping Trolley Hotline	Hut-Virgin
37	ERYKAH BADU	Mama's Gun	Molown
38	KARATE	Unsolved	Southern
39	MOUNTAIN GOATS	The Coroner's Gambit	Absolutely Kosher
40	GREEN DAY	Warning	Reprise
41	TUPAC SHAKUR	The Rose That Grew From Concrete	Amaru-Interscope
42	DOVES	Lost Souls	Astralwerks
43	Q AND NOT U	No Kill No Beep Beep	Dischord
44	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Shanti Project Collection 2	Badman
45	VARIOUS ARTIST	Strait Up	Immortal-Virgin
46	WU-TANG CLAN	The W	Loud-Columbia
47	AT THE DRIVE-IN	Relationship Of Command	Grand Royal
48	GARAGELAND	Do What You Want	Foodchain
49	DRESSY BESSY	The California EP	Kindercore
50	VARIOUS ARTISTS	We Thank You - Kindercore 50	Kindercore
51	NINE INCH NAILS	Things Falling Apart	Nothing-Interscope
52	BLACK EYED PEAS	Bridging The Gap	Interscope
53	GURU'S JAZZMATAZZ	Vol. 3: Streetsoul	Virgin
54	A3	La Peste	Columbia
55	SICK OF IT ALL	Yours Truly	Fat Wreck Chords
56	MAN OF THE YEAR	The Future Is Not Now	Tiny Beat-Loveless
57	ELF POWER	The Winter Is Coming	Elephant Six-Sugar Free
58	EVERCLEAR	Songs From An American Movie, Vol. 2	Capitol
59	HOPEWELL	The Curved Glass	Priapus
60	SINCLAIRE	Attention Teenage Girls	Sonic Unyon
61	BJÖRK	Selmasongs	Elektra
62	JOY ZIPPER	Joy Zipper	Bar/None
63	SUNSHINE	Velvet Suicide	Big Wheel Recreation
64	CATCH 22	Alone In A Crowd	Victory
65	MAGNETOPHONE	I Guess Sometimes I Need To Be Reminded...	4AD
66	TALIB KWELI AND HI-TEK	Reflection Eternal	Rawkus
67	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Take A Bite Outta Rhyme	Republic
68	THE OFFSPRING	Conspiracy Of One	Columbia
69	DWEEZIL ZAPPA	Automatic	Favored Nations
70	MERLE HAGGARD	If I Could Only Fly	Anti-Epithaph
71	HOOVERPHONIC	The Magnificent Tree	Epic
72	COLLIDE	Chasing The Ghost	Noiseplus
73	MEAT PUPPETS	Golden Lies	Breaking-Atlantic
74	ASHTRAY BABYHEAD	Radio	Glue Factory
75	KREIDLER	Kreidler	Wonder-Mute

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

1 CRADLE OF FILTH  
Midian KOCH

2 MORBID ANGEL  
Gateways To Annihilation EARACHE

3 DYING FETUS  
Destroy The Opposition RELAPSE



4 HOPE CONSPIRACY  
Coldblue EQUAL VISION

5 VARIOUS ARTISTS  
Strait Up IMMORTAL-VIRGIN

6 THE HAUNTED  
Made Me Do It EARACHE

7 NEVERMORE  
Dead Heart In A Dead... CENTURY MEDIA

8 BRUJERIA  
Brujerismo ROADRUNNER

9 NEUROSIS  
Sovereign (EP) NEUROT

10 OVERKILL  
Bloodletting METAL-IS-SANCTUARY

11 NILE  
Black Seeds Of Vengeance RELAPSE

12 CANNAE  
Troubleshooting Death EAST COAST EMPIRE

13 CRYPTOPSY  
And Then You'll Beg CENTURY MEDIA

14 VARIOUS ARTISTS  
Dracula 2000 COLUMBIA

15 LINKIN PARK  
Hybrid Theory WARNER BROS.

16 SICK OF IT ALL  
Yours Truly FAT WRECK CHORDS

17 AMEN  
We Have Come For Your... I AM-VIRGIN

18 ENSLAVED  
Mardraum: Beyond The... NECROPOLIS

19 IOMMI  
Iommi DIVINE

20 PRO-PAIN  
Round 6 SPITFIRE

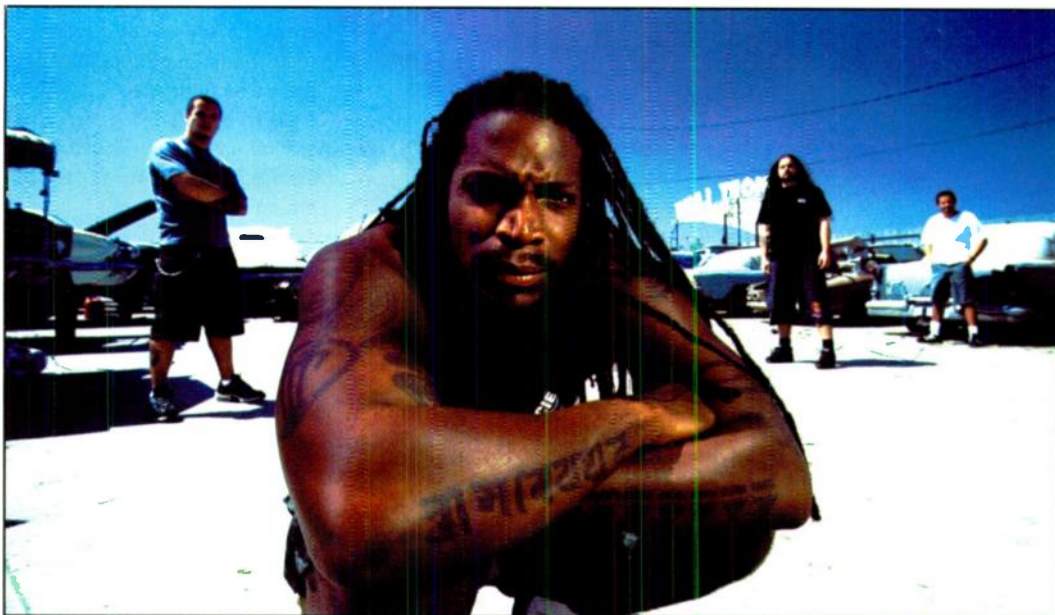
21 DISEMBODIED  
Heretic EDISON

22 SLAVES ON DOPE  
Inches From The Mainline DIVINE

23 BOILER ROOM  
Can't Breathe TOMMY BOY

24 RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE  
Renegades EPIC

25 NONPOINT  
Statement MCA



>>>Can you create a new nation without your founding father? If you're asking metal stalwarts **Sepultura**, it seems so. Following the split with Max "Soufly" Cavalera, the band picked a new president (dreadster Derrick Green), released *Against* in '98, and are now back with *Nation* (Roadrunner). Somewhat of a concept album, *Nation* rides a "world union" theme—appropriate for a band that calls both Brazil and Arizona home, with a frontman who considers New York, Cleveland, Amsterdam and Sao Paulo his places of residence. "It's a very positive album," explains guitarist Andreas Kisser. "The album revolves around one theme, the creation of Sepulnation. The CD booklet will have quotes from some very important people, especially from this last century, like Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Einstein, Mother Theresa of Calcutta, Nelson Mandela, Dalai Lama. This nation will be based on their message and their principles, a nation without borders, without guns, without wars, a nation I think every human being dreams about, but one that we're never able to make happen because of violence." The band's made some innovative moves musically, too—"Like a song with just bass guitars." And Green's vocals reflect more melody, says Kisser: "He has such a beautiful voice when he's not screaming!"

## NEWS



EARTH CRISIS

>>>**Earth Crisis** will release an odds 'n' sods 'n' covers album called *Last Of The Sane* while label cohorts **Snapcase**, later in 2001, release a rarities CD comprising very old to very recent material recorded in the band's own studio. Snapcase's home video (on VHS and DVD) will also drop around the same time... '70s psych-metallers **Captain Beyond** will cap the second year of their reunion with more live dates and a new studio album this year. In other news from 1973, Syl Sylvain from **the New York Dolls** will mount a full tour in the spring (with pick-up bands in each locale), promoting his '98 album (*Sleep*) *Baby Doll*... U.K. stoners **Cathedral** return with their long-awaited LP *Endtyme* (Earache), accompanied by a 7-inch on Southern Lord Recordings... Downer—the Roadrunner buzz band of this year—has had their album release delayed until April to position it for maximum promo. An advance single, "Last Time," went to radio in January... Roy Z. has been tapped as producer for **Trinity** (previous working title: the Three Tremors), a project featuring Rob Halford, Bruce Dickinson and Geoff Tate, slated for a summer release.

## IN THE BINS

**PRIMAL FEAR's** *Nuclear Fire* (Nuclear Blast) is crisp, sterling European power metal with a pedigree. Just the facts, none of the fat.

Stoner rocker's **THE MUSHROOM RIVER BAND's** *Music For The World Beyond* (MeteorCity-People Like U) makes a Kyuss reunion irrelevant.

*Celestial* (Escape Artist) from **ISIS** leaves the listener perplexed and breathless with its panoramic sludge-slide from psychedelia to the heart of irreverent grindcore.



>>>>Intrigued of late by the punktronic stylings and madman rants of Green Velvet or the overt sexuality of DJ Assault? Then check the lengthy techno career of **Blake Baxter**—now that it's over. *Dreamsequence III* (Tresor), two CDs of vintage Baxter that mix stripped-down techno and his raunchy R&B vocals, is his final effort of the subgenre. "All my energy for techno is burned out," he says. The producer, singer and DJ got his start reciting erotic poems in lounges, inspired by the music of Prince and Chicago house pioneer Jamie Principle. He released his first records in the mid-'80s on the seminal Chicago house label DJ International, toured Europe in '91 with Jeff Mills and Mills's subversive Detroit-based Underground Resistance collective, and made the second album released by the German label Tresor. But while he's had some underground successes, Baxter never found the recognition of fellow Detroit pioneers. "I'm not bitter," he says, with calm conviction. "But I was working with Derrick [May] and Kevin Saunderson and Juan [Atkins]. When everything dropped, they wanted the spotlight." Baxter says he plans to travel, and then concentrate on hip-hop and R&B. "I want to put out some house but I'll wait," he says. "I'll leave techno to the experts, like Adam Beyer and Jeff Mills."

## NEWS



CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE

>>>>Self-styled techno esthetes be damned, the trance deluge continues. *Plastic Vol. 4* (Netzwerk) is selling well, *The Global Underground* (GU) series recently dropped a double Nick Warren disc, and *Tranceport 4 Featuring Max Graham* (Kinetic) is due next month. **Christopher Lawrence**, named the top American trance DJ by several UK mags, has just released his latest mix, *United States Of Trance* (Moonshine), which exhibits all the flourish of his U.K. counterparts... Those same self-styled esthetes will be pleased to learn that stalwart U.K. experimental electronic label **Warp** has opened an American office to put out recordings by artists whose international rights belong to Warp, including Boards Of Canada, Plaid and Autechre. One of their first releases will be by **Vincent Gallo**—yes, that Vincent Gallo—who composed much of the ultra-minimalist piano score for the film *Buffalo '66*. Prefuse 73, an alias for the talented Scott Heron (Delarosa & Asora, Savath & Savalas), will release the first artist album for Stateside Warp. It drops in late March and is being described as downtempo hip-hop.

## IN THE BINS

Longtime acid-jazz man and session musician **IAN SIMMONDS** melds dub shadows and cymbal whispers for his smooth (but not too smooth), jazzy *Return To X* (Studio K7).

**JAKE MANDELL** offers a worthy follow-up to last year's *Quondam Current* (Force Inc): the burbling, multi-layered techno peans of *Love Songs For Machines* (Carpark).

**BIG CHIEF ELECTRIC** loops "We don't have any musical talent" in a clever track, but prove otherwise on the electro/IDM romp *Raygun & Bubblegun* (Pagoda).

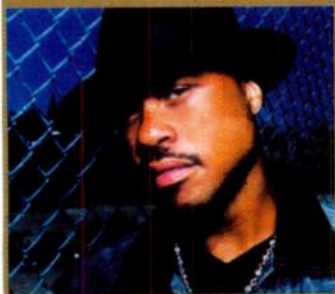
1	FATBOY SLIM Halfway Between The...	ASTRALWERKS
2	RONI SIZE & REPRAZENT In The Mode	ISLAND
3	SUPA DJ DMITRY Scream Of Consciousness	WAX TRAXI-TV
4	VARIOUS ARTISTS Xen Cuts	NINJA TUNE
5	VICTOR DINAIRE Logic Trance 4	LOGIC
6	VARIOUS ARTISTS Gatecrasher	INCREDIBLE-EPIC
7	VARIOUS ARTISTS Cybonetix 2000	DSBF
8	JAZZANOVA Remixes 1997-2000	COMPOST
9	CONVERTER Blast Furnace	ANT-ZEN
10	DIESELBOY The Sixth Session	PALM PICTURES
11	JUNO REACTOR Shango/Pistolero EP	METROPOLIS
12	DOWNLOAD Effector	NETTWERK
13	STATE OF BENGAL Visual Audio	SIX DEGREES
14	GROOVERIDER Essential Rewindz	RENEGADE HARDWARE
15	MOCEAN WORKER Aural & Hearty	PALM PICTURES
16	TIMO MAAS Music For The Maases	KINETIC
17	NIGHTMARES ON WAX DJ Kicks	STUDIO K7
18	PAUL OAKENFOLD Perfecto Presents...	LONDON-SIRE
19	HOCICO Sangre Hitviente	INTERBEAT
20	VARIOUS ARTISTS Plastic Vol. 4	NETTWERK
21	DZIHAN & KAMIEEN Freaks & Icons	SIX DEGREES
22	VARIOUS ARTISTS Hi-Fidelity Lounge: Vol. 2	GUIDANCE
23	VARIOUS ARTISTS Blunted	SHADOW-INSTINCT
24	ANTILOOP Remixed	STOCKHOLM
25	VELVET ACID CHRIST Twisted Thought Generator	METROPOLIS

1 **OUTKAST**  
StanKonia LAFACE-ARISTA

2 **DELTRON 3030**  
Deltren 3030 75 ARK

3 **WU-TANG CLAN**  
The W LOUD-COLUMBIA

4 **GURU'S JAZZMAZZ**  
Vol. 3: Streetsoul VIRGIN



5 **TALIB KWELI AND HI-TEK**  
Reflection Eternal RAWKUS

6 **UN Sung HEROES**  
Unleashed SCENARIO-75 ARK

7 **JAY-Z**  
The Dynasty—Roc... ROC-A-FELLA-DEF JAM

8 **BLACK THOUGHT**  
"Hardware" MCA

9 **THE CREATORS**  
The Weight BAD MAGIC

10 **CAPONE & NOREAGA**  
The Reunion TOMMY BOY

11 **R.A. THE RUGGED MAN**  
What The... PRIORITY

12 **JURASSIC-5**  
Quality Control/W.O.E. Is Me INTERSCOPE

13 **MYSTIKAL**  
Let's Get Ready JIVE

14 **MEMPHIS BLEEK**  
The Understanding ROC-A-FELLA

15 **MICRANOTS**  
Obelisk Movements SUBVERSE

16 **DE LA SOUL**  
Art O'ficial Intelligence TOMMY BOY

17 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
Lyricist Lounge Vol. 2 RAWKUS

18 **BLACK EYED PEAS**  
Bridging The Gap INTERSCOPE

19 **HUSH**  
"Knuckle Up/150 MCs" INTUIT-SOLAR

20 **PRODIGY**  
H.N.I.C. LOUD

21 **M.O.P.**  
Warriorz LOUD

22 **MR. LIF**  
Enters The Colossus METRO CONCEPTS

23 **SLUM VILLAGE**  
Fantastic Vol. 2 GOODVIBE-ATOMIC POP

24 **JA RULE**  
Rule 3:36 MURDER INC.-DEF JAM

25 **R. KELLY**  
TP-2.com JIVE



>>>>The subject line of a recent e-mail from **Anticon Records** head honcho Sole reads: "Anticon is an art-based No Limit ripoff." While that's pretty damn funny, it's also pretty much true. The Anticon label isn't threatening to out-sell or out-ice Master P's hip-hop empire at present, but Sole is trying to corner a market just like P has. With more than a dozen MCs, producers and a DJ or two (Dose One, Jel, Sixtoo, Buck 65, Mayonnaise, Why?, Alias, Sage Francis), most of whom are Bay Area transplants, Anticon has been building steam since '98 (starting with Sole's Deep Puddle Dynamics project), and the new *Giga Single* compilation boasts that more than a dozen of its contributing artists will have full-lengths out on Anticon by 2002. Ranging from the mellow, soul-searching posse manifesto "We Ain't Fessin'" to Buck 65's Dr. Octagon-ish "Pen Thief" and Controller 7's excellent instrumental workout, "Heckles From The Peanut Gallery," Anticon's strength is obviously its range, with a thread of intelligence, humility and imagination running at all times. "What we're doing now is relevant to the average human being, who doesn't go around serving MCs or smacking women," says Sole.

## NEWS



BREAKESTRA

>>>>Underground hip-hop heroes **Company Flow** will sadly no longer be making records together. Having existed for the last year or two without original member Bigg Jus, producer/MC El-P and DJ Mr. Len will remain pals and collaborators, but there will be no follow-up to the group's now-classic '97 debut *Funcrusher Plus* (which sold over 100,000 copies independently). El-P will run his Def Jux label and will stay busy on the production side, working with Cannibal Ox as well as Zack de la Rocha, Dan The Automator and many others. And **Mr. Len's** upcoming solo album, *Pity The Fool*, is due by mid-

2001 on Matador... **The X-ecutioners** are still hard at work on their sophomore turntablist record, *Built From Scratch*, out this spring on Loud, featuring guest appearances by DJ Premier, Dan The Automator, Inspectah Deck, M.O.P., Pharoahe Monch and Triple Threat. Stay tuned to [www.x-ecutioners.com](http://www.x-ecutioners.com)... Upcoming this year on Peanut Butter Wolf's **Stones Throw** label: full-lengths by the Breakestra, producer Madlib's jazz project Yesterday's New Quartet and a compilation of rare funk 45s called *The Funky 16 Corners* (some will also be issued as separate 45s); and singles by even more artists, including Lootpack, Quasimoto, DJ Design, Medaphoar, Kazi and Epitome. Check [www.stonesthrow.com](http://www.stonesthrow.com) for updates.

## IN THE BINS

**CYPRESS HILL** may have achieved crossover success with stoner and schlock-metal fans, but as *Live* (Columbia) illustrates, they still know how to put on a great live hip-hop show.

**BAD AZZ's** *Personal Business* (Priority) is a surprisingly mature and intelligent full-length by a Snoop Dogg protégé who'd rather think and be human than pimp his days away.

One of L.A.'s finest MCs, **ACEYALONE**, returns with *Accepted Eclectic* (Project Blowed-Grounc Control), an airtight followup to his underrated *A Book Of Human Language*.

>>>>They've been settled firmly into their mid-period-Kinks phase for a couple of years, but the **Lilys'** sound was once evolving too fast for some notable parts of it to be captured on disc. With their new *Selected EP* (File 13), they've wrapped up some never-before-recorded loose ends from the early '90s (and thrown in "Touch The Water," an Apples In Stereo cover, which they exploit for its ringing dissonances as much as its tambourine-shaking go-go-boots-dom). The star attraction here is "The Any Several Sundays," where leader Kurt Heasley gets to adopt the Byrds' psychedelic Rickenbacker sound to the point where the song comes out like "Eight Miles High" unraveled to its component threads and then re-knitted, and the band renders the rhythm as a "Tomorrow Never Knows"-style cymbal-splasher. The other keeper is the seven-minute "Won't Make You (Sleepy)," from the circa-'94 period when Heasley synthesized his early fixation with ringing blurs of sound and his growing curiosity about the formal delights of structured pop.

>>>>**The Aislars Set** has been keeping busy on the singles front lately. "Hey Lover" (Slumberland) is singer/songwriter Amy Linton conjuring the mood and sound of early Motown—specifically the Marvelettes—although the lyric is a little more twisted than that (it seems to be an incitement to a *ménage à trois*). A former member of Linton's old band, Henry's Dress, appears on the B-side with his new band, the How, and a song called "Dreaming Of Lily." And if you suspect that there's some remarkably blatant Who worship going on, you're exactly right, down to the mock John Entwistle backing vocals.



Another split single (on Yakamashi) pairs an expanded lineup of the Aislars Set (covering Georgie Fame's '65 hit "Yeh, Yeh" in energetic but slightly less authentic style) with the Fairways' pretty but unnecessary version of Jesse Garon And The Desperadoes' "The Rain Fell Down." Also, Linton and Stewart Anderson's headlong, homemade collaborative single from a few years ago, "Hipsters, Scenesters, Teenstars And Fakers," has just been reissued (on 555) with two newly recorded tracks appended. "The Lights Are Out" finds them chiming, hand-clapping and generally pretending they're a long-lost brigade of the British Invasion, and "Romance, Baby I Don't Care" recalls the scrappy, tape-overloading miniatures of Anderson's days in Boyracer... **Hrvatski's** new single, "Räume" (Tonschacht), maintains his streak as one of the most interesting electronic musicians of the moment. It's an investigation of room-tone that's way more interesting than "an investigation of room-tone" might seem—he appears to have recorded one set of sounds in his bathroom, another in his hallway and a third in his kitchen, then treated the little creaks and cracks of each room as beats and tones, and rearranged them into rhythm tracks with a very definite sense of space. Most fun of the bunch: "Kochen Raum," which puts pots-and-pans percussion to a rather unusual use... **The Cannanes'** "William"/"Miserable" single (555) has tempting titles—could this be the long-running Australian pop band's Smiths tribute? Well, no, but the songs aren't just a consolation prize. "William" turns out to be a sweet little jangler about a depressed young friend, with drunken trumpets darting nervously around Frances Gibson's tender purr. And "Miserable" is its natural companion piece, a big-hearted joke ("Let's be miserable together/ Live in misery!"), elevated by Stephen O'Neil's rocket-swarm of lead guitar.



## A FEW QUICK DROPS OF THE NEEDLE

>>>>**Glass Candy & The Shattered Theatre** have released a second jolt of their post-punk D.I.Y. attack, "Metal Gods" (Glass Candy), backed with a cover of the Screamers' "Hurt." Ida No's voice quavers like vintage Bowie, and the band beats out the goth/disco tattoo like it's 1980 again—does the fact that the single includes a makeup credit tell you anything?... Belle & Sebastian watchers should keep an eye out for **Future Pilot A.K.A.'s** "Darshan" single (Graphic)—not for the A-side, which isn't too noteworthy, but for

the flip, Belle's Stuart Murdoch breathily intoning the traditional mantra "Om Namah Shivaya." The best part is that he sings it as if it were one of his own lyrics about wayward teenagers... **Drunk's** "The Round Couple" (Jagjaguar) is understated even by their standards—all you hear is Rick Alverson's spare guitar plucks and close-miked voice singing about "round old men"—but ripples of organ and vibraphone eventually seep into the song and carry it off, like water rising under a boat.

>>>A new CD sheds light on a little-known corner of **Gram Parsons** lore. In between dropping out of Harvard and joining the Byrds, the late Parsons spent time in Greenwich Village operating as a solo acoustic folkie, playing the same scene that had spawned Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell and Mimi & Richard Fariña a few months earlier. *Another Side Of This Life* (Sundazed) presents remarkable recordings of this mysterious transformational phase of Parsons's early history, capturing (on a friend's reel-to-reel) a true musical visionary in embryonic form. Those who approach this CD expecting to hear Parsons's more famous country-rock "cosmic American music" will be surprised; here the young Parsons is more of an urban folkie following a Bob Dylan/Nick Drake vein, but there's a current of sadness and darkness to his voice that hints of what is to come. And on many songs, Parsons's guitar is in the now-infamous open-tuning later adopted by Keith Richards after the two spent time hanging out together circa 1969. It's not every day you get to hear what an artist as influential as Gram Parsons sounded like early in his career, but you can clearly hear magic and genius here at work in these sparse and haunting recordings.



>>>The great god Pan is alive and well, and one of his most famous musical avatars—the **Doors**—are now more potent and high-profile than ever, thanks to several key CD reissues. The three surviving Doors have set up a label, Bright Midnight Records, with releases only available through their website, [www.thedoors.com](http://www.thedoors.com). The master plan is to eventually release some 30 hours of archival live and studio recordings from the band's vaults. So far, there's *The Bright Midnight Sampler* (14 songs from eight concerts, mostly culled from their mayhem-filled 1970 tour with

the Crazy World Of Arthur Brown opening) and a full-concert *Live In Detroit* double CD. It's obvious now that a big part of the Doors' crowd-drawing mystique was simply that many fans would show up just to see if the lead singer would go completely out of his tree and get crazy that night. The best parts are the screams—Jim Morrison bellows like no one else on Earth, uttering wordless lunatic cries like a soul unhinged trying to make the world wobble on its axis. If nothing else, these live CDs will give a better glimpse of the Dionysian splendor that was the Doors on the road: stinky drunk one night, moody and dark the next, ribald and randy the night after that. It's all part of the traveling circus of mayhem that accompanied the great rock bands of that era when they went on tour.

## IN MY CRATES

### ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT'S PETEY X BREAKS DOWN FIVE FLASHBACK ESSENTIALS



#### ANYTHING ADAM ANT HAS EVER DONE.

"Not only is he a great musician, singer and dancer, but he's an inspiration to do more than play music, but to actually go out and put on a big show."

#### YOU AM I

"This is probably the greatest band I have seen in the past couple of years. Tim Rogers is an amazing songwriter and performer... they are a great band and a driving force to just go out and put on a great show."

#### MÖTLEY CRÜE

"At least up to the *Dr. Feelgood* record. [They're] another example of giving the crowd more show for their buck. The theatrics and showmanship is unmatched in many cases."

#### THE DAMNED, MACHINE GUN ETIQUETTE

"[That's] one of my favorite records of all time. The Damned were definitely one of those bands that helped me get through a couple of the shitty years of growing up."

#### CLINT EASTWOOD

"A personal favorite, and I mean every aspect of the man. His musicianship (he did sing some stunning songs in *Paint Your Wagon*), but mostly for the music he made more famous through his spaghetti Westerns. Especially the music arranged and conducted by Hugo Montenegro and the songs by Hugo Montenegro and his Orchestra."

*Rocket From The Crypt's new Group Sounds is out now on Vagrant Records.*

# JUST OUT

## JANUARY 30

**ADVENTURES IN STEREO** Running *Bobsled*.  
—7-inch and CD single.  
**FRANK BLACK AND THE CATHOLICS** Dog In The Sand *What Are*.  
**THE CHAMBER STRINGS** Make It Through The Summer *Bobsled*.  
—7-inch and CD single.  
**CHICKS ON SPEED/DJ MAUSE** Euro Trash Girl *K*.  
—12-inch.  
**CHICO AND COOLWADDA** Wild In The West *MCA*.  
**GENE FARRIS** Big Doobie *Soma*.  
—12-inch.  
**GARAGELAND** Do What You Want *Flying Nun-Foodchain*.  
**THE HONEYDOGS** Here's Luck *Palm*.  
**INTERNAL/EXTERNAL** Insidetout *K*.  
—12-inch and CD-EP.  
**JOI** We Are Three *Real World*.  
**LALEZAR ENSEMBLE** Music Of The Sultans, Sufis & Seraglio Vol. III: Minority Composers; Vol. IV Ottoman Suite *Traditional Crossroads*.  
**LAMBERT, HENDRICKS, AND ROSS** Sing A Song Of Basie *Verve*.  
—Reissue.  
**LOUDERMILK** *Columbia*.  
**MAD PROFESSOR** Trx Of The Mix *Beatville-Ariwa*.  
**MEAT LOAF** Bat Out Of Hell *Epic Legacy*.  
—Reissue.  
**MOMU** Folktronic *Le Grand Magistery*.  
**JEB LOY NICHOLS** Just What Time It Is *Rykto*.  
**PSYCHEDELIC FURS** Greatest Hits *Columbia Legacy*.  
**CHRISTINA ROSENVINGE** Frozen Pool *Smells Like*.  
**JOHN SCOTFIELD** Works For Me *Verve*.  
**DUNCAN SHEIK** Phantom Moon *Nonesuch*.  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Joe Louis: An American Hero *Rounder*.  
—Count Basie, Cab Calloway and others kick out the jams in honor of boxer Joe Louis.  
**APRIL VERCH** Verchusosity *Rounder*.  
**JOHN WOLFFINGTON** John Wolffington *Smells Like*.

## FEBRUARY 6

**AALIYAH** *Virgin*.  
**NAT ADDERLY** Introducing *Verve*.  
—Reissue.  
**BABYFACE** The Day; For The Cool In You; Lovers; Tender Lover *Epic Legacy*.  
—Remastered, expanded reissues of enough Babyface to make a grown man weep.  
**BIG PUNISHER** Endangered Species *Loud*.  
—Unreleased tracks from the late rapper.  
**BLESSID UNION OF SOULS** The Best Of *V2*.  
**BURNT BY THE SUN** Burnt By The Sun *Relapse*.  
**CALEB** Fear Of Success *Universal*.  
**JACK COSTANZO** Back From Havana *CuBop*.  
**BING CROSBY AND BUDDY BREGMAN** Bing Sings Whilst Bregman Swings *Verve*.  
—Reissue.  
**RODNEY CROWELL** Diamonds And Dirt *Columbia Legacy*.  
—Reissue with bonus tracks.  
**DENGEE** *Beyond*.  
**DJ DIE** Through The Eyes *Full Cycle*.  
—Double CD.  
**BILL DOGGETT** Wow! *Verve*.  
—Reissue.  
**DOWNER** Downer *Roadrunner*.  
**DROPKICK MURPHYS** Sing Loud, Sing Proud *Helicat*.  
**ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN** Annie's Grave *Victory*.  
**ELLA FITZGERALD** Sings Broadway *Verve*.  
—Reissue.  
**GLORIA ESTEFAN** Hits *Epic*.  
**KRISTIN HERSH** Sunny Border Blues *4AD-Beggars Banquet*.  
**THE K.G.B.** The K.G.B. *DreamWorks*.  
**KRIS KRISTOFFERSON** Kristofferson *Columbia Legacy*.  
—Reissue with bonus tracks.  
**LOW** Things We Lost In The Fire *Krany*.  
—Things I lost in the movie: Sticky notes. Ruler. Dignity!  
**MDO** *Columbia*.  
**JOE MAPHIS** Fire On The Strings *Columbia Legacy*.  
—Reissue with bonus tracks.  
**THE ORANGE PEELS** So Far *spinART*.  
**PERCY X** Maintain *Soma*.  
—12-inch.  
**OSCAR PETERSON** On The Town *Verve*.  
—Reissue.

**BUD POWELL** Jazz Giant *Verve*.  
—Reissue.  
**PROJECT PAT** Mista Don't Play *Loud*.  
**PROPAGANDHI** Today's Empires, Tomorrow's Ashes *Fat Wreck Chords*.  
**P'TAAH** Decompressed Ubiquity.  
**RAISED FIST** Ignoring The Guidelines *Burning Heart*.  
**CHARLIE RICH** Behind Closed Doors *Epic Legacy*.  
—Reissue with bonus tracks.  
**ROBERT SCOTT** The Creeping Unknown *Thirsty Ear*.  
**THE SHINS** Sub Pop.  
—7-inch.  
**SO PLUSH** *Epic*.  
**STETASONIC** On Fire; In Full Gear *Tommy Boy*.  
**TENTH PLANET** Ghosts Remix *Tommy Boy Silver*.  
—12-inch.  
**TRICKY** Mission Accomplished *Anti*.  
—EP.  
**WAGON CHRIST** Receiver *Ninja Tune*.  
—12-inch and CD single.

## FEBRUARY 12

**GEOFF FARINA** Reverse Eclipse *Southern*.  
—Solo effort from Karate's singer/guitarist.  
**DAVE FISCHOFF** The Ox And The Rainbow *Secretly Canadian*.

## FEBRUARY 13

**ALCHEMIST** Organasm *Relapse-Displeased*.  
**AK1200** Mixed Live: AK1200 With MC Navigator *Moonshine*.  
**ATOURE DE LUCIE** Faux Movement *Nettwerk*.  
**BARE JR.** Brainwasher *Virgin*.  
**SHIRLEY BASSEY** Diamonds Are Forever: The Remix Album *Nettwerk*.  
**SHIRLEY BASSEY** Greatest Hits *EMI-Capitol*.  
**BLACK STAR LINER** Yemen Cutta Connection *Echo Beach*.  
**DJINJI BROWN** State Of Stagnation *7 Heads-Nu Gruv*.  
—12-inch.  
**DAVE BRUBECK** Vocal Encounters; Red, Hot & Cool *Columbia-Legacy*.  
—Reissues.  
**DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET** Jazz Impressions of Japan *Columbia-Legacy*.  
—Reissue.  
**DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET** Dave Brubeck Quartet at Carnegie Hall *Columbia-Legacy*.  
—Two-CD set.  
**JOHN CALE** Vintage Violence *Columbia Legacy*.  
—Expanded reissue.  
**DJ DIE** Through The Eyes *Full Cycle*.  
—Double CD.  
**EARTH, WIND & FIRE** Spirit; Open Our Eyes *Columbia Legacy*.  
—Reissues.  
**ELEMENT 101** Stereo Girl *Tooth And Nail*.  
**ENDO** Evolve *Columbia*.  
**DAN FOGELBERG** The Very Best Of Dan Fogelberg *Epic Legacy*.  
**JOHN FRUSCIANTE** To Record Only Water For Ten Days *Warner Bros*.  
—Solo album from the Red Hot Chili Peppers' guitarist.  
**HESHER** Self-Titled Debut *Warner Bros*.  
**JAHEIM** Ghetto Love *Warner Bros*.  
**BESSIE JONES** Put Your Hand On Your Hip, And Let Your Backbone Slip *Rounder*.  
**LADYTRON** 604 *Emperor Norton*.  
**RILEY LEE** Buddha's Dream *Narada*.  
**STEPHEN MALKMUS** Stephen Malkmus *Matador*.  
—First solo album from the former Pavement frontman.  
**MISSSTRESS BARBARA** Relentless Beats *Moonshine*.  
**THELONIOUS MONK** Live At The Jazz Workshop: Complete; Monk In Tokyo *Columbia-Legacy*.  
—Two-CD sets.  
**NATARAJXT** Tandava *Nettwerk*.  
**THE O'JAYS** The Ultimate O'Jays *Epic Legacy*.  
—Reissue.  
**PREFAB SPROUT** The Collection *Columbia Legacy*.  
**FLORA PURIM** Perpetual Emotion *Narada Jazz*.  
**KIM ROBERTSON** Dance To Your Shadow *Narada*.  
**ROCKPILE** Seconds Of Pleasure *Columbia Legacy*.  
—Reissue. That's what you'll get if you go to Merv's House O' Love, girl.  
**MICHAEL ROSE** Never Give It Up *Heartbeat*.  
**SMUT PEDDLERS** Porn Again *Rawkus*.

**SOUNDTRACK** Pollock *Unitone*.  
—Featuring a score by Jeff Bel and the previously unreleased Tom Waits song "World Keeps Turning."  
**TANK** Force Of Nature *Virgin*.  
**TANTRIC** Tantric *Maverick*.  
—Featuring former members of Days Of The New.  
**TRAIN** Something More *Columbia*.  
**THE TROUBLEMAKERS** Doubts And Convictions *Guidance*.  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** The Art Of Traditional Fiddle *Rounder*.  
—Hot fiddle from the Rounder Heritage Series, featuring bargin' jeep beats like "Dance All Night With A Gal With A Hole In Her Stocking."  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Keep It Rollin' *Rounder*.  
—Blues piano from James Booker, Booker T. Laury, Tuts Washington and more.  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Mardi Gras In New Orleans *Rounder*.  
—All the sounds of New Orleans at Mardi Gras time (without the bare breasts and heroin).  
**JIM WHITE** No Such Place *Luaka Bop*.  
**MAURICE WHITE** Maurice White *Columbia Legacy*.  
—Reissue.  
**X-CON** Elektra.

## FEBRUARY 19

**HALF JAPANESE** Home *Alternative Tentacles*.

## FEBRUARY 20

**2ND GEN** Irony Is *Mute*.  
**A1 PEOPLE** The Visit *Hydrogen Dukebox*.  
—CD-EP.  
**BARRY ADAMSON** *Mute*.  
**THE ANOMOANON** The Anomoanon *Palace*.  
**ANYONE** Is You *Roadrunner*.  
**BACKFIRE** Still Dedicated *Victory*.  
**BANTAM ROOSTER** I Gemini *Estrus*.  
—7-inch.  
**BEDHEAD** Beheaded; Transaction De Novo; What Fun Life Was *Touch And Go*.  
—Reissues.  
**BIS** Music For A Stranger World *Lookout!*  
**THE BLOW UP** Microscope *Estrus*.  
—7-inch.  
**BOBBY CONN** Thrill Jockey.  
**BOY GEORGE** Essential Mix *London-Sire*.  
**CRASH TEST DUDE** Brad Roberts Live *Cha-Ching*.  
**CROOKED FINGERS** Bring On The Snakes *Warm*.  
**DISLOCATED STYLES** Pin The Tail On The Honky Roadrunner.  
**FATAL FLYING GUILLOTINES** The New Sound For New Diaboliks *Estrus*.  
**ANNIE HAYDEN** The Rub *Merge*.  
**JAPANESE** The Sleepy Strange *Kindercore*.  
**JOSH KEATON** *RCA*.  
**KLEENEX/LILIPUT** Kill Rock Stars.  
—Double CD.  
**LADYVIPB** Yesterday Has Gone *Nuphonic*.  
—12-inch.  
**MARIA FERNANDA MARQUEZ** Eleven Love Stories *Rykto-Palm*.  
**THE NEW YEAR** Newness Ends *Touch And Go*.  
—Features Bubba and Matt Kadane of Bedhead, Chris Brokaw of Come and Codeine and Saturnine's Mike Donofrio.  
**NEXT DOOR** *RCA*.  
**OHGR** Welt Spitfire.  
—New project from former Skinny Puppy frontman OGRE.  
**OSKAR** Idle Will Kill *Epitaph*.  
**FINLEY QUAYE** *Epic*.  
**THE QUEERS** Today Lookout!  
**RAPNEXX** Deliverance *Beyond*.  
—The hip-hopera based on the 1974 film is finally here. Features "Boy, You Got A Purdy Mouth," "Squeal Like A Pig!" and the powerful "Get Them Britches Down."  
**RAPTURE** Futile *Relapse-Spikefarm*.  
**RITON** Take Control *Grand Central*.  
—12-inch.  
**HENRY ROLLINS** A Rollins In Wry *Quarterstick*.  
—Spoken word disc.  
**ROSABEL** The Power (Feat. Jeanie Tracy) *Tommy Boy Silver*.  
**SAINT ETIENNE** Interlude *Sub Pop*.  
—CD-EP.  
**SAVATAGE** Poets & Madmen *Nuclear Blast*.  
**SHAPE OF DESPAIR** Shades Of... *Relapse-Spikefarm*.

**SILVER SCOOTER** The Blue Law *Peek-A-Boo*.  
**THE SLACKERS** Wasted Days *Helicat*.  
**SPLIT LIP RAYFIELD** Never Make It Home *Bloodshot*.  
**SPOON** Girls Can Tell *Merge*.  
**SYLK 130** Re-member's Only *Six Degrees*.  
**NOBUKAZU TAKEMURA** Sign *Thrill Jockey*.  
**TENTH PLANET** Ghosts *Tommy Boy Silver*.  
—12-inch and CD single.  
**DAVID THOMAS AND TWO PALE BOYS** Surf's Up *Thrifty Ear*.  
**TORTOISE** Standards *Thrill Jockey*.  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Nor-Tec Collective *Rykto-Palm*.  
—A collection showcasing Nortec, which blends traditional norteño music with electronic beats and textures.  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** New York Takeover Volume 2 *Victory*.  
—Live hardcore from Skarhead, Buried Alive and the River City Rebels.  
**TARSHA VEGA** Diamonds And Monsters *RCA*.  
**MORENO VELOSO** Music Typewriter *Rykto-Palm*.  
**VERT** Moremooseicorne *Sonig*.  
**SNUFFY WALDEN** Love Unspoken *RCA*.  
—Keep it that way, girl... Words can only complicate the love we have. 'N shit.  
**WILLARD GRANT CONSPIRACY** Everything's Fine *Slow River-Rykodisc*.  
**LED YOUNG** Tummy Touch.  
—12-inch.

## FEBRUARY 26

**CROATAN** Curse Of The Red Queen *Man's Ruin*.  
**DOZER** Madre De Dios *Man's Ruin*.

## FEBRUARY 27

**ARAB STRAP** The Red Thread *Matador*.  
**BATTLEFIELD BAND** Happy Daze *Temple*.  
**BEATNUTS** Take It Or Squeeze It *Loud*.  
—Insert! juvenile comment here.  
**BIOWIRE** Disparation *Kindercore-EWB*.  
**BOMFUNK MCS** *Epic*.  
**CAKE** *Columbia*.  
**SLIMM CALHOUN** The Skinny *Elektra*.  
**CALIBRE** Jane's Twitch3am *Thermal-Nu Gruv*.  
—12-inch.  
**CAPPADONNA** *Epic*.  
**THE CHAMBER STRINGS** Month Of Sundays *Bobsled*.  
**CRAIG'S BROTHER** Lost At Sea *Tooth And Nail*.  
**CRYSTAL SIERRA** Morena *Virgin*.  
**DJ DESIGN** Hookie And Baba Flakes Breaks *Replicant-Nu Gruv*.  
—12-inch.  
**FUG** Widescreen *Nuphonic*.  
**FUNK D'VOID** Desperado *Soma*.  
—12-inch.  
**GEORGIA MIDDLEMAN** Endless Possibilities *Giant Nashville*.  
**JOHN HAMMOND** Wicked Grin *Virgin*.  
**SHIRLEY HORN** You're My Thrill *Verve*.  
**JAY DEE** Welcome To Detroit *BBE*.  
**JET SET SATELLITE** Blueprint *Nettwerk*.  
**SHARON KENNEDY** More Irish Folk Tales For Children *Rounder Kids*.  
**DAVE MATTHEWS BAND** *RCA*.  
**THE MOTHER HIPPS** Green Hills Of Earth *Future Farmer*.  
**ORBIT** XLR8R *Lunch*.  
**OUTSIDERZ 4 LIFE** Outsiderz 4 Life *Virgin*.  
**PEARL JAM** Domestic Bootlegs (Set 1) *Epic*.  
**POWDER PRODUCTIONS** Glasgow Underground.  
**RAE & CHRISTIAN** Sleepwalking *Studio K7*.  
**RETINA** Volcano Waves 1-8 *Hefty*.  
**DUNCAN SHEIK** Phantom Moon *Atlantic*.  
**DJ SIFU** Solenoid *Thermal-Nu Gruv*.  
—12-inch.  
**SLAM VS UNKLE** Soma 100 *Soma*.  
—12-inch.  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** World Library: Romania *Rounder*.  
—From the Alan Lomax Collection, a CD of Romanian peasant music from the 1930s-50s.  
**VARIOUS ARTISTS** World Library: Yugoslavia *Rounder*.  
—A double CD taped at a Yugoslavian folk festival in 1951.  
**VOODOO CHETONOMICS** We Are All Doomed *Whoa?whatsit*.  
**ZAO** Zao *Solid State*

**Aceyalone** (Project Blowed-Nu Gruv) Feature p. 38.  
**Hip-Hop** p. 85. Review p. 60 [www.b-boyingkingdom.com](http://www.b-boyingkingdom.com)  
**The Aislers Set** (Slumberland) Singles p. 86  
[www.aislersset.com](http://www.aislersset.com)  
**American Hi-Fi** (Island) Review p. 60  
[www.americanhi-fi.com](http://www.americanhi-fi.com)  
**The Anomoanon** (Palace) Review p. 61  
**Bad Azz** (Priority) Hip-Hop p. 85  
**Bay City Rollers** (Arista) Geek Love p. 106  
[www.baycityrollers.com](http://www.baycityrollers.com)  
**The Beatnuts** (Loud) Feature p. 46  
**The Beauty Shop** (Mud) Review p. 61  
**The Birdwatcher** (Arena Rock) Review p. 61  
**Blue Mountain** (Blue Mountain-Black Dog) Review p. 61  
[www.bluemountainmusic.com](http://www.bluemountainmusic.com)  
**Johnny Bond** (Bloodshot) Review p. 62  
**Boy George** (London-Sire) Review p. 62  
[www.boy.george.net](http://www.boy.george.net)  
**Buck 65** (Anticon) On The Verge p. 36  
[www.buck65.com](http://www.buck65.com)  
**The Cannanes** (555) Singles p. 86  
[www.dar.net/~cannanes](http://www.dar.net/~cannanes)  
**Eliza Carthy** (Warner Bros.) Feature p. 40, Review p. 65  
[www.elizacarth.com](http://www.elizacarth.com)  
**The Causey Way** (Alternative Tentacles) On The Verge p. 35, On The CD p. 91 [www.thecauseyway.com](http://www.thecauseyway.com)  
**Chestnut Station** (Drag City) Best New Music p. 29  
**Leonard Cohen** (Columbia) Review p. 65  
[www.leonardcohen.com](http://www.leonardcohen.com)  
**MJ Cole** (Island) On The Verge p. 34  
[www.mjcole.com](http://www.mjcole.com)  
**DJ Craze** (DMC, Zoo York) Review p. 62  
**Cypress Hill** (Columbia) Hip-Hop p. 85  
[www.cypresshill.com](http://www.cypresshill.com)  
**Daft Punk** (Virgin) Feature p. 54 [www.daftpunk.com](http://www.daftpunk.com)  
**Olu Dara** (Atlantic) Quick Fix p. 24  
**Death By Chocolate** (Jetset) Review p. 65  
**The Doors** (Bright Midnight) Flashback p. 87  
[www.thedoors.com](http://www.thedoors.com)  
**Downer** (Roadrunner) On The CD p. 91  
[www.downermusic.com](http://www.downermusic.com)  
**Dropkick Murphys** (Hellcat-Epithaph) On The CD p. 91  
[www.dropkickmurphys.com](http://www.dropkickmurphys.com)  
**Drums And Tuba** (Righteous Babe) Quick Fix p. 14,  
 On The CD p. 91 [www.drumsandtuba.com](http://www.drumsandtuba.com)  
**Ekova** (Six Degrees) Review p. 65  
**Electric Wizard** (Music Cartel) Review p. 66  
[www.saunalahti.fi/~lugos/ewiz](http://www.saunalahti.fi/~lugos/ewiz)  
**Exos** (Force Inc.) Review p. 66  
**Fauna Flash** (Compost) Review p. 67  
**Steve Fisk** (Sub Pop) On The CD p. 91  
[www.stevefisk.com](http://www.stevefisk.com)  
**The Free Design** (Marina) Review p. 67  
[www.rcb.easynet.co.uk/light/freedesign](http://www.rcb.easynet.co.uk/light/freedesign)  
**Burnt Friedman** (Nonplace) Best New Music p. 29  
**Friends Of Sound** (Hidden Agenda) Review p. 68  
**The Frogs** (Scratchie) Review p. 68 [www.thefrogs.net](http://www.thefrogs.net)  
**John Frusciante** (Warner Bros.) Q&A p. 26  
[www.johnfrusciante.com](http://www.johnfrusciante.com)  
**The Gentle Waves** (Jeepster) Review p. 68  
[www.jeepster.co.uk/thegentlewaves](http://www.jeepster.co.uk/thegentlewaves)  
**Gob** (Netzwerk) Review p. 69 [www.gob.net](http://www.gob.net)  
**Matthew Good Band** (Atlantic) On The CD p. 91  
[www.matthewgoodband.com](http://www.matthewgoodband.com)  
**Gwenmars** (SeeThru) Review p. 69  
[www.gwenmars.com](http://www.gwenmars.com)  
**Hardcore Superstar** (Koch) Review p. 70, On The CD  
 p. 91 [www.hardcoresuperstar.com](http://www.hardcoresuperstar.com)  
**Annie Hayden** (Merge) Best New Music p. 29  
**Kristin Hersh** (4AD-Beggars Banquet) In My Room p.  
 26, On The CD p. 91 [www.throwingmusic.com](http://www.throwingmusic.com)  
**Hi-Posi** (TokyoPop) Review p. 70  
**The Honeydogs** (Palm) Review p. 71  
[www.honeydogs.com](http://www.honeydogs.com)  
**Hrvatski** (Tonschacht) Singles p. 86  
**Neilson Hubbard** (Parasol) Review p. 71  
[www.neilsonhubbard.com](http://www.neilsonhubbard.com)  
**Isis** (Escape Artist) Metal p. 83  
[www.hydrahead.com/isis](http://www.hydrahead.com/isis)  
**King Britt** (Six Degrees) Review p. 72, The Scene Is  
 Now p. 80 [www.kingbritt.com](http://www.kingbritt.com)

**King Cobb Steelie** (Rykko) Review p. 72  
[www.kingcobbsteelie.com](http://www.kingcobbsteelie.com)  
**Kliment** (TVT) On The CD p. 91  
**The Lilys** (File 13) Singles p. 86  
**Nicky Love** (DreamWorks) On The Verge p. 33  
[www.nickylove.com](http://www.nickylove.com)  
**Stephen Malkmus** (Matador) Quick Fix p. 12, On The  
 CD p. 91 [www.stephenmalkmus.com](http://www.stephenmalkmus.com)  
**Maria Marquez** (Hannibal) Review p. 72  
**The Minus 5** (Mammoth) Review p. 70  
**Mirwais** (Epic) On The CD p. 91  
[www.mirwaisonline.com](http://www.mirwaisonline.com)  
**Monster Magnet** (A&M) Feature p. 50  
[www.monstermagnet.net](http://www.monstermagnet.net)  
**Mount Florida** (Matador) Review p. 72  
**Mr. Dead** (WordSound) Review p. 73  
**Elliott Murphy and Iain Matthews** (Eminent) Review  
 p. 73 [www.elliottmurphy.com](http://www.elliottmurphy.com)  
**The Mushroom River Band** (MeteorCity) Metal p. 83  
[www.stonerock.com/mushroom](http://www.stonerock.com/mushroom)  
**The New Deal** (Jive Electro) Feature p. 44  
[www.sound-and-light.com](http://www.sound-and-light.com)  
**The New Pornographers** (Mint) Quick Fix p. 22, On  
 The CD p. 91  
**Orbit** (Lunch) Review p. 74 [www.orbitband.com](http://www.orbitband.com)  
**Oval** (Thrill Jockey) Life/Style p. 93  
**Palace Of Oranges** (Rubric) Review p. 74  
**Pan Sonic** (Mute) Life/Style p. 93, Review p. 74  
[www.sci.fi/~phinnweb/panasonic](http://www.sci.fi/~phinnweb/panasonic)  
**Gram Parsons** (Sundazed) Flashback p. 87  
[www.gramparsons.com](http://www.gramparsons.com)  
**Dolly Parton** (Sugar Hill) Review p. 75 [www.dolly.net](http://www.dolly.net)  
**Plastiq Phantom** (Sweet Mother) Quick Fix p. 20  
[www.plastiqphantom.com](http://www.plastiqphantom.com)  
**Primal Fear** (Nuclear Blast) Metal p. 83  
[primalfear.rocks.de](http://primalfear.rocks.de)  
**Rae & Christian** (Stud'o K7) Review p. 75  
**Raging Teens** (Rubric) Review p. 76  
[www.rockabilly.net/ragingteens](http://www.rockabilly.net/ragingteens)  
**Rocket From The Crypt** (Vagrant) In My Crates p. 87  
[www.imputor.com/rtfc](http://www.imputor.com/rtfc)  
**Run-DMC** (Arista) Quick Fix p. 18  
[thadweb.com/rundmc](http://thadweb.com/rundmc)  
**The Sacrifice Poles** (RoboDog) Best New Music p. 30  
**Scaramanga** (Sun Large) Review p. 76  
**Schatzi** (Choosy) Localzine p. 104, On The CD p. 91  
[www.schatzi.net](http://www.schatzi.net)  
**Bob Schneider** (Universal) Localzine p. 104, On The  
 CD p. 91 [www.bobschneidermusic.com](http://www.bobschneidermusic.com)  
**Semisonic** (MCA) Review p. 76 [www.semisonic.com](http://www.semisonic.com)  
**Seputura** (Roadrunner) Metal p. 83  
[www.seputura.com.br](http://www.seputura.com.br)  
**Duncan Sheik** (Nonesuch) Review p. 76  
[www.duncansheik.com](http://www.duncansheik.com)  
**Sick Of It All** (Fat Wreck Chords) In My Life p. 97  
[www.sickoffitall.com](http://www.sickoffitall.com)  
**Silver Scooter** (Peek-A-Boo) Localzine p. 104, On The  
 CD p. 91 [www.peakaboorecords.com/bands/silver](http://www.peakaboorecords.com/bands/silver)  
**Sixtoo** (Anticon) On The Verge p. 36 [www.sixtoo.com](http://www.sixtoo.com)  
**Sloth** (The Music Cartel) Review p. 77  
[www.feist.com/~mindy/splitt.htm](http://www.feist.com/~mindy/splitt.htm)  
**Split Lip Rayfield** (Bloodshot) Review p. 77  
[www.feist.com/~mindy/splitt.htm](http://www.feist.com/~mindy/splitt.htm)  
**Spoon** (Merge) Review p. 78, On The CD p. 91  
[www.reed.edu/~marzbane](http://www.reed.edu/~marzbane)  
**Subset** (Post-Parlo) Localzine p. 104, On The CD p.  
 91 [www.commoner.com/subset](http://www.commoner.com/subset)  
**Swag** (Yep Roc) On The CD p. 91 [www.swagweb.com](http://www.swagweb.com)  
**Tipsy** (Asphodel) Review p. 78, On The CD p. 91  
**Tram** (Jetset) Review p. 78 [www.thetram.cjb.net](http://www.thetram.cjb.net)  
**Ty** (Big Dada) Best New Music p. 30  
**Wagon Christ** (Ninja Tune) Best New Music p. 30  
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**Jim White** (Luaka Bop) Feature p. 42  
[www.jimwhite.net](http://www.jimwhite.net)  
**X-ecutioners** (Loud) On The CD p. 91  
[www.x-ecutioners.com](http://www.x-ecutioners.com)  
**The Young Fresh Fellows** (Mammoth) Review p. 70

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# The Art of Noise



Musicians  
**Pan Sonic, Oval**  
and **Jim O'Rourke**  
are giving galleries a  
little conceptual  
thump this spring.

STORY: ADRIENNE DAY  
PHOTO: DEAN BELCHER/RETNA

**M**ore than 25 years ago, Lou Reed's sonata of feedback squall, *Metal Machine Music*, pissed off more critics than Britney Spears and the Backstreet Boys combined. Perhaps Reed should have just shelved the concept for a couple of decades—nowadays, with some video projections and a little tongue-in-cheek conceptualism, he might've squeaked into a group show at MOMA.

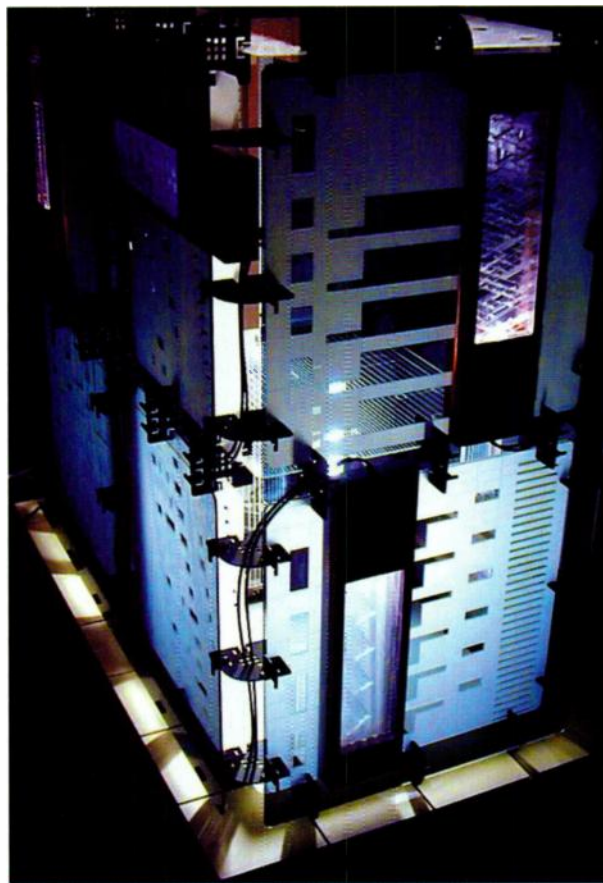
Today, artists like Pan Sonic, Oval and Ultra-red mine similar fields of sonic and visual experimentalism with much more acceptance and arguably, a greater deal of creative success. Using everything from the amplified acidic churning of the stomach to the "music" created by Internet connections, several of these sound artists are exhibiting their work this spring at large shows in the U.S., while Pan Sonic plans to bring some of their art on tour in support of their new album, *Aaltopiiri* (Mute).

David Toop, the noted sonic scientist and music writer who curated the recent *Sonic Boom* show at London's Hayward Gallery, figures the rising interest in sound art relates to the greater acceptance of electronic music.

"Club culture has changed people's conception of what's possible," claims Toop. "It's created a shift of expectations for what hearing music live is all about. And environment has become very important to the nature of music."

This past year, German experimental electronic producer Oval (a.k.a. Markus Popp) graced galleries in L.A., New York and Tokyo with his Skotodesk installation. Built with the help of an architectural company, Popp's 3-by-5-foot Lucite-paneled cube boasts a Macintosh G4 for a brain, a brightly colored LCD screen on the topside and an exterior that glows like *Dr. Who's* Tardis control station. Seven years ago, Popp helped introduce the world to the concept of the musical "glitch"—manually "scarifying" CDs to intentionally produce that irritating skipping effect—but layered with soothing, subtle melodies and other special effects. The Skotodesk enables users to explore Popp's sound-processing software by moving rows of colored blocks that represent Oval samples onto a slowly scrolling field (a bit like a postmodern player piano). Thin bars roll over the samples and create a variety of processed humming, ticking and skipping sounds.

*Ping*, one of several pieces to be exhibited at San Francisco MOMA's upcoming exhibition, *010101: Art In Technological Times*, measures the speed of an Internet connection and translates that speed into sound. Sure, *Ping* may look like a lost stage set from *Stonehenge: A Space Odyssey*, but as each of eight luminous columns hum and blink, they also trigger pitches with each connection—the slower the connection, the deeper the sound (T3 equals high-pitched squeal, 56K modem equals distant subway rumble, etc.). A wheel in the center can be used to "deflect" the tones and flashing lights to any one of the other columns. Greg Niemeyer, one of the artists



SKOTODESK

working on *Ping*, says the instrument is an attempt "to build a prosthesis of sorts, to help us sense the complexity of networking." (*Ping* appears at the San Francisco MOMA beginning March 3.)

Not to be left in the Stone Age, the Whitney Museum in New York City is gettin' diggy wit *Bitstreams*, starting March 22. This show brings together some 30 digital artists, with sound artists like Elliott Sharp and Jim O'Rourke creating works accessed through headphones at listening stations. Some of the work is pure computer manipulation of various musical scores, while other pieces are "glitchwerks" (based on the Oval methodology).

At concerts, the Finnish experimental electronic music duo Pan Sonic likes to synch a real-time video oscilloscope with their music. "The sounds come through the machine, and the line moves," explains Pan Sonic's Ilpo Väisänen. "We try to make the line move a certain way. Sound is image. The image happens .01 seconds later." Their music appropriately reflects the inner workings of some fragile antique machines: Clicks and whirs that seem to connect via delicate fibers that vibrate as gently as butterfly wings, engaging in patterns that occasionally coalesce into something approximating a rhythm.

But one thing that sets Pan Sonic apart from a lot of sound artists is a preference for homemade analog equipment over the latest digital gadgets.

David Toop compares their esthetic with electronics and physics experiments of the '60s: "We like [analog] better than digital," comments Pan Sonic's Mika Vainio, "It's more organic, deeper." Väisänen, adds, "I don't use computers very much because I don't like the way they work—they're not designed for humans."

One early "installation" of theirs involved a recruit swallowing a microphone and running into walls so that they could amplify the sounds. They've also created installations for such prestigious institutions as the Walker Museum in Minneapolis and London's Hayward Gallery, for a group show curated by Toop. "We [chose] a Leslie cabinet—a speaker used mainly in old electric organs like the Hammond—because it creates a vibrating sound due to a rotating speaker inside of it," explains Väisänen. "Then we set two sine-wave tones close to each other in pitch to create a cycle that was close to that of the Leslie cabinet. The end result was two vibrations that were sliding in and out of phase." Toop notes that not everyone appreciated Pan Sonic's art: "It was so constant and pervasive, it drove a lot of people absolutely insane." **NMM**



PING

## CRUISIN' FOR A BRUISIN'

### WHERE IT'S AT:

Sunday at Key Skating Center in the South Bronx or Emplre Roller Disco in Brooklyn, Wednesday at the Roxy in Manhattan, or any night/anywhere with a smooth floor and a ghetto blaster.

### WHAT TO WEAR:

Tiiiiight-ass jeans, air-brushed anything, leotards, gold teeth, floppy hats, Aqua-Net, liberal amounts of aftershave, rainbow strobe-lights on your back wheels, bangs, seafoam-green nail polish.

### WHAT'S TO LOVE:

R&B, hip-hop and classics provide the soundtrack, old school skates carry the clout, and Cherry 7Up curbs the thirst. These places are more *Boogie Nights* than bladers-on-Broadway, so slide on those satin pants and remember: Get down—or get out of the way.



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Age: 32  
Occupation: Roller convention expert  
Time on wheels: three years  
Style inspiration: Her friends



Name: Sherry Galvin  
Age: Who knows, who cares?  
Occupation: Interior designer specializing in faux wood... and fashion maven  
Time on wheels: 35 years  
Style inspiration: Taking her son skating when he was three months old



Name: Kulpa  
Age: 21  
Occupation: Student  
Time on wheels: Since she was a kid  
Style inspiration: Madonna

Name: Saraka  
Age: 22  
Occupation: Publishing  
Time on wheels: 10 minutes  
Style inspiration: Jennifer Lopez



Name: Roger G.  
Age: "42 years young"  
Occupation: Entertainer/teacher/head of hip-hop group Uneek Force  
Time on wheels: 32 years  
Style inspiration: Hip-hop and everything that goes with it

# Shopping for Sport

BY TOBEY I. GRUMET

## THINK Bike Fun

We can't all be Paola Pezzo (everyone's fave Italian mountain biker). So if you need that extra push or you just feel like putting your feet up for a few minutes on your ride, try the seven-speed THINK Bike Fun, an electric bike with a pedal-to-motor drive that can go about 20 mph and makes it about 22 miles before recharging. (\$995; [www.thinkmobility.com](http://www.thinkmobility.com))



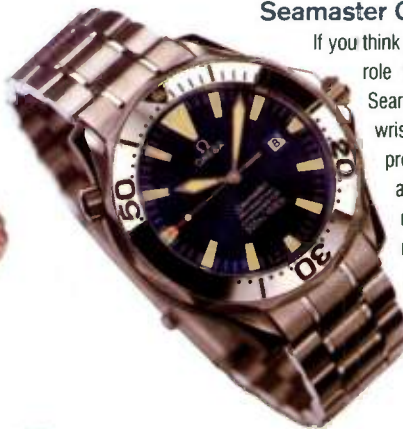
## SummerSled

We all know about your various adventures on grass—but have you ever sledded on it? The SummerSled is a plastic glider with seven sturdy wheels constructed for warm-weather sledding. (\$69.95; [www.summersled.com](http://www.summersled.com))



## Seamaster Chrono Watch

If you think you can do a better job taking over Sean Connery's role than Pierce Brosnan did, you'll dig the Omega Seamaster Chrono watch—which appeared on 007's wrist in *The World Is Not Enough*. Apart from being pretty nice to look at, the Seamaster features a domed, anti-reflective sapphire crystal and glowing hour markers. For the diver in you, the Seamaster is water resistant up to 300 meters and has a helium escape valve. (\$3395; [www.omegawatches.com](http://www.omegawatches.com))



## Uproar

The new Sprint PCS Phone-Samsung Uproar gives you plenty of better things to do than talk: Download music (via your PC), record your voice digitally and surf the Web. A headset remote is also included for on-the-go listening. (\$399.99; [www.sprintpcs.com](http://www.sprintpcs.com))



## Sparrow

Tired of all that exhaust leaking into the atmosphere? Consider the Sparrow, a new three-wheeled electric car by Corbin Motors. Just four feet wide and eight feet long, the Sparrow stands 60 inches tall and runs on 13 deep-cycle batteries. (\$14,900; [www.corbinmotors.com](http://www.corbinmotors.com))



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**KID DYNAMITE**

GLOVE-TO-GLOVE COMBAT WITH SICK OF IT ALL'S CRAIG SETARI



EVAN KAFKA

**S**ome artists relax with yoga, but Sick Of It All bassist Craig Setari unwinds in the boxing ring, where he dons overstuffed gloves and lays on a good ass-whooping. "It makes me feel confident—not in the sense that I could beat someone up, but in the sense that I could achieve something so demanding," explains Setari.

His penchant to punch formed at age 15, when a friend's dad hooked him up with tickets to New York's Felt Forum, where he caught pros like Glenwood Brown. Soon, Setari himself was sparring at a Queens Police Athletic League. While constant touring (he played in Agnostic Front before SOIA) has kept the 31-year-old from formally competing, he shadowboxes to warm up for shows and on occasion

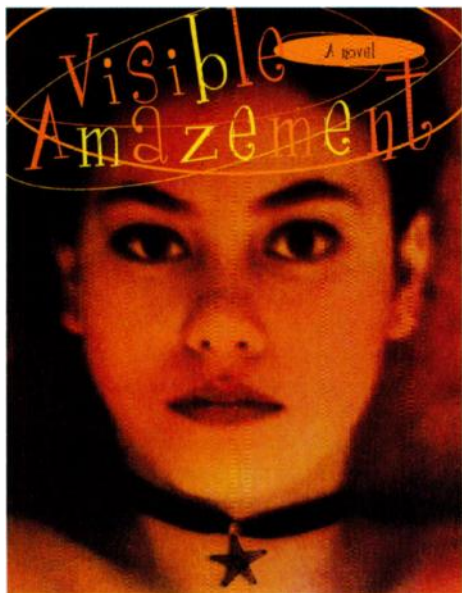
trades blows with professional boxers at the gym. One of his most memorable matchups was with a heavyweight known as the Punching Painter—"He rang my bell pretty good," he remembers. Although he's known in the hardcore scene as Craig Ahead, Setari's never been given a boxing nickname; he most often gets called "the bass player guy," which is fine with him—his thoughts ultimately return to his four-string anyway. "I enjoy boxing and I'm competent at it," he concedes, "but my first love is the band." >>> DYLAN P. GADINO

## POSTCARDS FROM GANGSTA'S PARADISE



**T**he opening black and white portrait in **East Side Stories: Gang Life In East L.A.** (PowerHouse Books) captures Chivo, a gangmember who's just escaped a fourth attempted hit, teaching his baby daughter how to hold a .32 caliber pistol while her mother looks on. From 1992 to 1995, photographer

Joseph Rodriguez chilled in the neighborhoods of South Central and East L.A.—waiting for drive-bys in the living room, watching homegirls turn on to coke and just breaking bread in the barrio. His resulting book juxtaposes serene family snapshots with cholos mugging with semi-automatics in a sobering display of gangsta life.



>>>With a legion of teens clawing to be superstars, how much savvy manipulation, self-exploitation and dumb luck plays into those rare success stories? Chances are it's a nauseating cocktail of all three—for those who can't wait for the VH-1 special, Jaime Clarke's **We're So Famous** (Bloomsbury) imagines the tale of three Bananarama-worshipping teens with a predilection for McDonald's apple pies and Hollywood murder tales who teeter through a cast of heroin-addicted pinups and bloodthirsty moguls on their wide-eyed way to fame. For a wiser and more penetrating view into the 14-year-old psyche, pick up Gale Zoe Garnett's **Visible AmazeMENT** (Simon & Schuster). Protagonist Roanne Chappell overflows with precocious, hypocritical and believable notions. When she loses her virginity to a 34-year-old professor at the school where her mom teaches art—and then

her mom unknowingly shags the same guy—Roanne bites Mom on the bum for revenge. "I know that what I did was violent and wrong," reflects Roanne. "That I did an injury to somebody who loves me for someone who did not. When I play it back, though, which I do all the time, I cannot see myself doing anything other than what I did." Those searching for a more exotic trip through flowering womanhood can amble through Ruth Knafo Setton's **The Road To Fez** (Counterpoint), in which 18-year-old Brit Lek returns to Morocco in search of the truth about the martyr Suleika, a 17-year-old girl murdered because she wouldn't refute her Jewish heritage. At times, the dry prose underplays the enigmatic environs and Lek's flush emotions for her young uncle, but Setton still animates the racial tensions of a seldom-discussed subculture.

## BIFF! BANG! POSE!

WHO WILL SAVE THE BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE? *HIT AND RUNWAY'S* CRIME-FIGHTING MALE SUPERMODEL.

What happens when a neurotic gay playwright teams with an untalented straight screenwriter to write a film about a crime-fighting male supermodel? *Hit And Runway* takes the conventional odd-couple premise and gives it a new spin with some pleasantly refreshing results.

Alex (Michael Parducci) is the enthusiastic, movie-loving aspiring writer, stuck working in his father's Greenwich Village cafe, dreaming of Hollywood power lunches. He concocts the sorry-ass idea for a screenplay and successfully pitches it to his movie-producer uncle, then enlists the help of Elliot (Peter Jacobson) to create his movie, cleverly titled *Hit And Runway*. Although Elliot is appalled by the cheesy premise and unsure of his unlikely partner, he eventually agrees. Co-writing a script, Elliot says, is "kind of like a marriage, only the two people actually have to talk to each other."

First-time director Christopher Livingston (a movie-loving, aspiring young screenwriter) wrote the comedy with his longtime friend Jaffe Cohen (surprise, a gay playwright). The pair's many years working together provided plenty of comedic fodder. To wit: "Jaffe is definitely neurotic," Livingston says, reflecting on the various autobiographical elements folded into the film's characters. "He's on the phone a lot with people that he's dating and driving me crazy in the background."

Given their unique perspectives, *Hit And*



*Runway* avoids the usual gay clichés that often inhabit popular entertainment. "Elliot is not a stereotypical gay character. A lot of films and TV sitcoms make fun of flamboyantly gay characters. We created Elliot as a unique, well-rounded character," Livingston says. "We

just wanted to make a movie about two people trying to find common ground. *Hit And Runway* is an attempt to explore what it is to be creative and what it is to be exploited. Do you cater to yourself or do you cater to what you think people will want from you?"



most Manhattan apartments). He later turns detective to help track down the killer of his drifter friend. However daffy in spots, *The Caveman's Valentine* remains an unusual, absorbing movie

>>>>Billed as a neo-Gothic thriller, **The Caveman's Valentine** (Universal Focus) has Samuel L. Jackson playing a Juilliard-trained pianist whose paranoia drove him to abandon his family and move into a cave in a Manhattan park (albeit a cave roomier than

sure to draw attention for Jackson's fervent performance. The supporting cast includes Ann Magnuson and—welcome back, dude—Anthony Michael Hall... Acclaimed Hong Kong-based filmmaker Wong Kar-wai, notable Stateside for *Chungking Express* and *Happy Together*, among others, returns with the gorgeous romantic drama **In The Mood For Love** (USA). While living in 1962 Hong Kong, two neighbors—a man (Tony Leung) and a woman (Maggie Cheung)—discover that their respective spouses are having an affair... **The Widow Of St. Pierre** (Lions Gate), the latest from French director Patrice Leconte (*The Girl On The Bridge*), is set in 1850 in Saint-Pierre, a French territory off the Canadian coast. This passion-filled epic examines the impact the island's first murder has on its citizens, most notably the military commandant's wife, Juliette Binoche—who is reason alone to go see this.



## Driver 2 (Infogrames) PS One

If you ever thought about shifting it into high gear after seeing the flashing red-and-blue in your rearview mirror, *Driver 2* is your game. In this sequel to 1999's bestselling PSX title, you return as the undercover cop Tanner, hoping to show the mob that you've got what it takes behind the wheel in hijackings, getaways and other chase-related missions. The cars in *Driver 2* retain the weighty feel of the original title and the highly detailed locales (Chicago, Rio, Havana and Vegas) include everything from expressway ramps to baseball stadiums. When the undercover jobs start getting to you (and they will after your 30th unsuccessful try at the same mission), you can hijack a bus or fire truck and use the "Take A Ride" mode for a spin around town. >>>AARON CLOW



## Game Theater XP (Hercules) PC

**PC** gaming enthusiasts now have another alternative to Creative Labs when looking for an audio card. Known mostly for their excellent video-card offerings, Hercules enters the audio scene with its all-purpose Game Theater XP sound card, which comes complete with a breakout box that allows you to remotely plug and unplug all manner of peripherals into your PC. Featuring a front-connected microphone pre-amp, headphone jack, stereo line-in, two USB ports and one gaming controller port on the front of the box, the XP has the most often-used audio connections covered in easy reach. On the back, you'll find two more USB ports, Dolby Digital 5.1 output, digital audio out

(coax and optical) and MIDI in and out. The actual sound chip on the card portion of the unit is basically a budget chip, but it decodes Dolby Digital and DTS (the two main DVD surround-sound encoding protocols) and has all major positional/environmental gaming audio protocols covered as well (A3D/EAX). It also handles MP3s, so you'll hear no pauses or skipping when listening to your favorite tunes. The Game Theater XP might not have the cajones to replace your high-end multi-track audio card (and the headphone jack could sure use a little more gain), but at \$149.99, the Game Theater XP is a pretty **sweet all-in-one audio workhorse for your PC.** >>>a.c.



## Mobile Monitor

(InterAct Accessories) PS One

Talk about a pint-sized powerhouse—this superb, portable LCD screen essentially redefines the term “handheld entertainment.” A visit to Granny’s ain’t no big deal when you’re packin’ the perfect companion for gamers on the go, since you can take it just about anywhere. Comfortably and ergonomically attachable to Sony’s PS One, the lightweight unit guarantees players will never pine for their true loved ones. With crisp colors and robust picture tuning features, the *Mobile Monitor*’s future looks bright indeed. Although a car adapter or power outlet is required for play, InterAct promises a battery pack will soon be forthcoming. So we can finally make Mom happy and go outdoors every so often. >>>SCOTT STEINBERG

## QUICK BYTES

Will Voodoo be reborn? Is the 3dfx Voodoo brand dead? In the midst of a heated battle with rival chip-maker Nvidia, 3dfx decided to substitute a product cycle’s worth of development cash for a marketing blitz, under the mistaken impression that computer gamers could be convinced the Voodoo’s features were still cutting-edge. Now that 3dfx’s stock is in the toilet, Nvidia has purchased their old competitor’s assets, while the other longtime player in the graphics chip market, S3 (now renamed SONICblue), has essentially dropped out of the scene. That leaves ATI as Nvidia’s main competition, with Matrox holding a niche market in multiple-display-in-one cards. Will the N-monster create a newer, badder Voodoo now that it owns 3dfx? Will it still feel the need to introduce one killer chip after another to the retail market?... Spin Award Of The Month: In an attempt to counter the phenomenal success of Infogames’ *Unreal Tournament*, Activision is releasing **Quake III: Team Arena**, a “mission pack” for *Quake III Arena*. It includes a totally reworked interface, a couple extra game modes and some new weapons, which basically means it’s the game that *Quake III Arena* should’ve been out of the gate. It’ll cost you 30 bucks. >>>A.C.



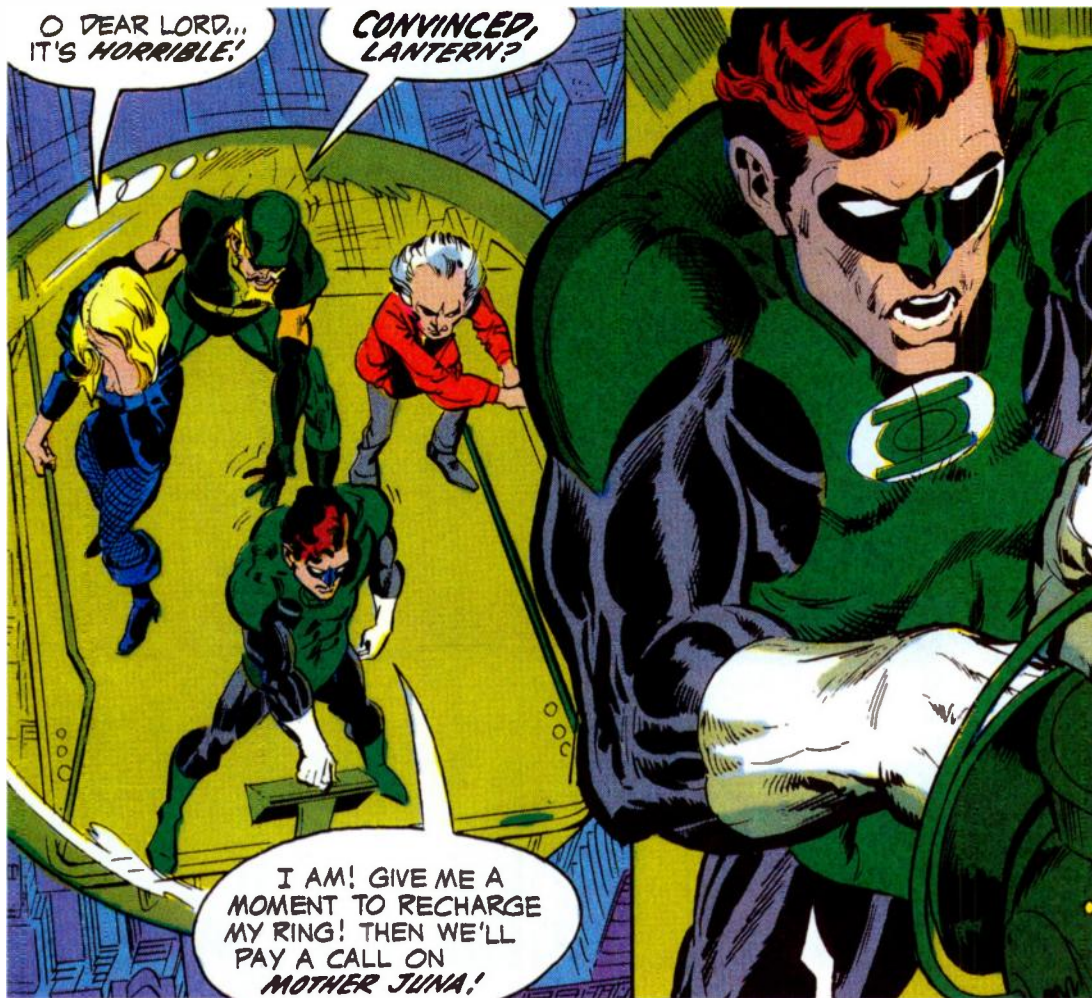
## Rune

(Gathering Of Developers) PC

Praise Lord Odin, this brutal Norse action-adventure ponies up a melee of combat that would be a Viking’s wet dream. Musclebound galoot Ragnar stars in a tale of vengeance turned obsession. Unfortunately, the programmers may have taken one too many shots to the helmet; while the exploits get downright vicious, they’re never intellectually stimulating. Wimpy puzzles distract our hero from loftier pursuits, such as vicious duels with skeletons, dwarves and Yeti imposters. Armchair Vikings will nonetheless dig the available armaments, which range from broadswords to battleaxes for turning foes into bloody gibbets. While the game ain’t Valhalla, you could do a lot worse. >>>S.S.



## RAISE THE GREEN LANTERN



From 1970 to 1972, the **Green Lantern/Green Arrow** series was

Where It's At, Man for comics readers. The classic 13-issues-and-change run by writer Dennis O'Neil and artist Neal Adams has just been reprinted in a single volume (DC), and its virtues now are very different from its virtues at the time. The "social relevance" that made it famous—the commentary on overpopulation, drug addiction and Black Power that was new to the comics mainstream—seems vaguely Afterschool Special-ish now. Still, it looks beautiful: Adams's synthesis of photo-realism and psychedelic pop art holds up amazingly well. And the engine that drove the stories was the constant ideological conflict between its two heroes, one a conservative soldier of the old hierarchy, the other an angry anarchist who'd rejected his upper-class roots; their dialog is corny, but the characters still ring true.



>>>>Jordan Crane's "picto-novella" **The Last Lonely Saturday** (Red Ink) isn't quite what you'd call a graphic novel—it's only got 126 panels, most of them wordless—but it's a beautiful little piece of two-tone design, and a three-hanky tearjerker of a story about death, longing and love. Crane's illustrations are sparse, clean and elegant, like old magazine cartoons, evoking the departed world his

characters belong to... Yvonne Mojica deserves some kind of "most improved" award for **Bathroom Girls** (Modern Comics), which has gone from a scatterbrained, scribbly mini-comic to a spazzy but cute series with nifty graphic design in just five issues so far. Mojica's characters are the nasty girls who hung out in the bathroom in high school; most of their stories revolve around getting high, stealing stuff and taking revenge on everyone they don't like, and they're punctuated every page or two by pot brownie recipes, drinking games, Christmas tree ornament cut-outs, that kind of thing... Since

the early '70s, Steve Englehart has appeared every five or six years to write a few smart, idiosyncratic, intricately plotted comics. On the surface, his latest, **Fantastic Four: Big Town** (Marvel), looks like a straight superhero action piece, but it's actually a lot weirder—a story about the way technology affects cities and the people who live in them, told in dialogue that's sometimes as telegraphic as a Harold Pinter play... Julie Doucet hasn't done a *Dirty Plotte* comic in a while, but her new graphic album, **The Madame Paul Affair** (Drawn & Quarterly), makes up for it. It's a deliciously gnarly autobiographical story about a rooming house's mysterious janitor and the web of strangeness she draws Doucet into, though the pleasure of it is really in Doucet's energetic Francophone English and frenetic drawings, crammed full of urban clutter.



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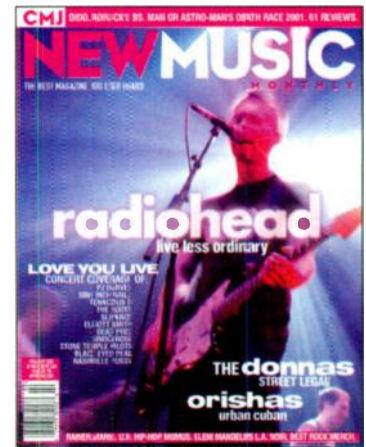
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## AUSTIN, TEXAS



Austin, Texas is a town of two slogans. First, there's the official city slogan that graces every piece of municipal letterhead: *Live Music Capital Of The World*. Less inviting is the one made famous by local pop-punk mainstays the Wannabees: *Don't Move Here*, their T-shirts once begged. With 35,000 people a year dismissing their instructions, Austin's high-tech, new-money renaissance has yielded a city where the PalmPilot has surpassed the Les Paul as the accessory you can't live without, where brew pubs and shot bars pop up where live music venues used to be, and where *Slacker* has become a nostalgic rental more than a handbook for Austin life. And yet the sound of music still manages to drown out the whining of the locals; Austin's still the only place in the Southwest you'd want to live as a music fan, and it's estimated that there are still more than 1500 artists

playing in more than 100 venues that cater to original music.

Spotting local celebs like Sandra Bullock, Willie Nelson, Mike Judge or Lance Armstrong at Waterloo Records (600 N. Lamar, 474-2500), an indie shop with a huge local music selection and frequent live in-store shows, is still always good for a stop 'n' stare moment, but what most out-of-towners tend to notice is how spoiled locals are when it comes to seeing bands audiences elsewhere are more used to reading about, like the Meat Puppets and Junior Brown or artists like Joe Ely, Daniel Johnston and Alejandro Escovedo. And yet, even with an influx of similarly jaded industry weasels each March for South By Southwest, where 1000 artists perform in four days, there are still few music markets as perennially vibrant, resilient, or self-sufficient. The Live Music Capital Of The World? Very likely. Enough live music options to more than fill a PalmPilot? No question.



FUCKIN' YEAH



STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN WUZ HERE.



THE CONRADS

## OUT WITH THE IN CROWD

Where notable Austiners slack

### KYLE ELLISON (MEAT PUPPETS)

To me, the **Ritz Lounge** (320 E. Sixth, 474-9574) represents "Old Austin," and it's great that it's in the middle of Sixth Street's string of shot bars and theme clubs. It's an old theatre with lots of history. The original round of Butthole Surfers shows were played there.

### BEAVER NELSON

I like to bring friends to **Hoover's Cooking** (2002 Manor Rd., 479-5006), an underrated stop for chicken-fried steak, barbecue and cream spinach. Nothing's bland and they're definitely not catering to the heart-healthy. They're not afraid of jalapeños, salt and pepper.

### MARK MORRIS (DYNAMITE HACK)

**Casino El Camino** (517 E Sixth, 469-9330) is a bar, but it's got the single best burgers in Austin. They're Black Angus beef burgers made so thick you can barely get your hands around them. It's also where you can drink like a barfly in the mid-afternoon and see some of Austin's most eccentric nightlife hanging out later.

### KACY CROWLEY

My neighborhood coffee shop, **La Dolce Vita** (4222 Duval, 323-2686), has its own 75-year-old resident poet and \$1 bottomless cups of coffee. I go there to pretend I'm in Europe.

## SXSW DANCE CARD

5 must-see Austin acts

★ **SCHATZI:** After eight years of playing to empty rooms, recent local radio play has turned Schatzi into the Austin underground's next big thing; the similarly Weezer-devoted boys in Dynamite Hack funded the recording of Schatzi's debut EP, *The Death Of The Alphabet*.

★ **SUBSET:** Subset initially sounded a lot like a lo-fi Spoon (not a bad thing), but the trio's *Overpass* (Post-Parlo) has more than enough solid hooks and sharp melodies to stand on its own.

**KISSINGER:** Former Vertical Horizon bassist Choppper (yep, that's right) is a six-foot-five conductor for high-voltage pop that recalls the Cars, the Pixies and AC/DC. Their debut, *Charm*, was produced by John Crolin (Pavement, GBV), and many of its hooks are so instantly memorable they won't stay indie for long.

**JEFF KLEIN:** Local audiences have been willing to overlook this NYC expat's Yankee past and focus on his dry, Richard Buckner-meets-Pedro The Lion brand of singer/songwriting; like his latest album's title, *You'll Never Get To Heaven If You Break My Heart*, he's all about wit, unsmiling drama and self-loathing angst.

★ **SILVER SCOOTER:** Singer/guitarist Scott Garred is a meticulous student of pop structure and texture whose eerie, complex tunes draw as much from Stephen Malkmus as Syd Barrett. Pick up any of their three Peek-A-Boo releases as primers.

## VENUE MENU

A taste of Austin's offerings

**ANTONE'S** (213 W. Fifth, 474-5314) may be the country's best blues bar and the house that Stevie Ray Vaughan built, but it's also where you'll find roadshows from KRS-One to Maceo Parker and local major-label talents like Vallejo.

**EMO'S** (603 Red River, 477-EMOS) is still the Southwest's finest lo-frills all-ages punk club, and you're just as likely to see the Old 97's or yodeler Don Walser there as L7 or the local ...And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead.

**THE CONTINENTAL CLUB** (1315 S. Congress, 441-2444) offers an intimate performance space, and is your best bet for alt-country acts like the Derailers and Dale Watson and singer/songwriters like Beaver Nelson and Jon Dee Graham.

**HOLE IN THE WALL** (2538 Guadalupe, 472-5599), another small space, is a punk 'n' pop-leaning standby that still gets thank-you shows from famed Austiners like Fastball and David Garza.

Rave kids catch miscellaneous DJs at the **CAUCUS CLUB** (912 Red River, 472-2873), while the college crowd checks out various honky-tonkers at the legendary **BROKEN SPOKE** (3201 S. Lamar, 442-6189).

All phone numbers are in the 512 area code.

## BAY CITY ROLLERS

STORY: CAROLINE SULLIVAN ILLUSTRATION: NICHOLAS MEOLA

I turned a corner the day I threw out my Roller scrapbooks. There was a time when I would have happily walked naked down Broadway before I'd have abandoned those scrapbooks, no problem. But now it was October 1996, and their mysterious power over me had waned to the point where I no longer needed their leatherette links to the past. But before I dispatched them to the incinerator in my mother's Manhattan apartment building, I flapped through them for a last look at the detritus—newspaper cuttings, half-smoked cigarettes and whatnot—I'd accumulated between discovering them in 1975 and deciding I was too old for this sort of thing, around 1979.

I'm usually vague about the latter date because no one with even an iota of credibility admits to having been into the Rollers as late as '79. Elvis Costello, sure, or the Police or even the Bee Gees, but owning up to fancying the Rollers that late in the day is tantamount to announcing you were a friendless sociopath.

Even in their heyday, 1974 to 1976, they were hideously uncool among everyone but 14-year-old girls. It wasn't just their feeble teeny-pop music but their puritanical image, epitomized by their habit of drinking milk at press conferences. It later emerged that their manager forced them to, but the damage was done.

No, poor scrawny Leslie, Eric, Woody, Alan and Derek were never cool. Even the '70s revival that has made bands like Abba and Hot Chocolate kitschily hip again has overlooked them. To add insult to injury, my own best Roller buddies, Sue P, Sue J, Emma and Cathy, have gone revisionist and now pretend they never liked them. When I called Emma to tell her I was writing a book about them, her response was swift: "You'd better change my name."

But some of us don't mind coming out of the closet about the Rollers. Not that I was ever really in it. I loved them desperately. For four years I lived for them. It's not a pretty story... The freezing afternoons—it always seemed to be winter—hanging around outside hotel rooms for a 10-second glimpse as they dashed into waiting limousines. The hours spent poring over magazines, cutting out the smallest mentions to ceremonially glue into five brimming scrapbooks. The fake Scottish accent adopted to convince airline booking clerks I was a



No one with even an iota of credibility admits to having been into the Rollers as late as '79. Owning up to fancying them that late in the day is tantamount to announcing you were a friendless sociopath.

Roller employee, and could they please remind me what flight the band were on again? The absences from work to go to every gig, every TV show. The Saturday night strategy meetings with equally tragic friends.

The Internet produces 839 search results for "Bay City Rollers." Among them are Kjunkie's Bay City Rollers Ring Page and Gerd Büskin's Home Page, the latter featuring a picture of a bespectacled fellow I take to be Gerd next to the old Roller logo. He claims his site has had over 60,000 visits, and the guestbook is full of warm reminiscences from women my age. Many of them say that their own children are going through the teen-idol stage, the consensus being

that the Backstreet Boys are the top faves.

So people still care. The Rollers and their era still evoke enough emotion that some American devotees even stage a Rollerfest every August—this year's was in Philadelphia. Apparently, it always sells out well in advance. It's got nothing to do with me (honestly), but if I was ever in the neighborhood, I'd go. The chance to be 17 again would be too lovely to resist...

I feel sufficiently distanced to laugh at them now. Or so I tell myself. But one night not long ago I was in the kitchen, half-listening to the radio as I made dinner, and suddenly recognized a tinny guitar chord, followed by a feather-light voice piping the words, "If you hate me after what I say... ah-ahhhh... can't put it off any more... just gotta tell her anyway..."

"Oh, my God, it's 'Bye Bye Baby!'" I gasped. "They never play this on the radio!" My boyfriend came into the kitchen and tolerantly put an arm around me. I squirmed free to turn up the volume, and shooed him away, flapping my arms to the music.

"Can't I share this with you?" he asked, trying to humor the lunatic. "No," I said with the painful wisdom of two decades of

Rollerluv everlasting. "You just wouldn't understand."

*Caroline Sullivan's complete tragic love affair with the boys of S-A-T-U-R-D-A-Y night is willingly exposed in the new memoir Bye Bye Baby (Bloomsbury). The above is an excerpt.*



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