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Primal Scream • Pulp • Lou Reed • Sleeper • Underworld



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LETTERS

Point, counter-point, cha-cha-cha

Perhaps the worst CD sampler I have ever heard! It is currently on its way to the landfill.

John Kleban
Milwaukee, WI

The music selections are particularly good this month. I'll be buying a lot of CDs in the next few weeks!

Jennifer Hondru
New York, NY

H.R.'s puff and stuff

Is there any tangible reason you felt compelled to print the wit and wisdom of H.R.? [Letters, July] I was literally in awe of his/her ability to proceed apace without using a factual premise as a guiding force.

Nathan Duin
Minneapolis, MN

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind

I like the 51 "Cool Things" for summer, but you didn't mention the cost of the Vornado.

Rich Hammerstrand
Dublin, CA

Vornado fans run from about \$50 for the small ones to about \$100 for the larger floor models. The vintage ones vary by the condition and who's selling it, but I recently purchased a little guy for \$50 at an antiques shop and didn't feel rooked. —ed.

Breakin' the law, breakin' the law

Just wanted to touch on a point that was made on page 31 in the Cool Things For Summer spread of the July '96 CMJ New Music Monthly. "Laser-Copy T-shirts ...But what's to stop you from making a shirt of your favorite record cover, inner sleeve or other rock-type image?" A pesky little thing known as international copyright law.

As a graphic artist, I design things for money. Very much like the people you pay to publish a magazine. Look at the masthead of your own publication, right there at the bottom in tiny print. "CMJ New Music Monthly is copyright 1996 by College Media Inc. All rights reserved; nothing may be reproduced without the consent of publisher..." It goes on to say that this very letter is "...eligible for publication and copyright purposes..." Go ahead, publish it, copyright it if you feel like it. But please respect the rights of others who have taken the time to produce something in order to earn a living.

Edward J. Pelegrino
Fort Myers, Florida

He's right, we're wrong. We checked with our lawyer pals and found that there isn't a home taping-type statute that would cover the copying of copyrighted graphic artwork, as we had wrongly assumed. —ed.

Sucking On Candy

Did Aaron Clow even listen to King's X's *Ear Candy* CD? From the review he wrote, it sure doesn't sound like it!!

Paul Durham
Nashville, TN

We got about 25 of these after someone posted the review on the King's X web site, all of them accusing our reviewer of not listening to the record, or being in a rush to review "some band that just picked up its instruments yesterday," blah blah blah. The problem seems to be that our chosen reviewer is not a rabid fan and has what we in the business call "a life." —ed.

Cut the irony with a knife

I found that the letters published this month were extremely boring and uninformative. Could you please in the future print letters that other people might actually enjoy reading?

Tiffany Haire
via email

Per Ms. Haire's request, letters in future issues will all begin with "I never thought I'd be writing your magazine..." Until then, try this one on for size, Tif. —ed.

Sane, to a fashion

As a fashion commentary I follow styles and fashion. I'd like to report that the styles are going back to the strong and modern look. Today's styles are not stable sometimes they change. But that is O.K. because it gives each generation something to look forward to. The modern look to me has more of a power look because it is solid and stable. The apparel can make a person feel like their [sic] in total control of themselves in any situation their [sic] in. I can also see that styles and fashion changes like the season, but the modern look is as strong today as it was in the 1940's and 1950's. So now a new generation will feel and enjoy the modern look and the feeling of something special and the fashion magazine will have a more glamour look.

Jimmie Breaux
Kaplan, LA

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How do Rob, Paul, John and a guy named Fred
get 40,000 people to jump up and down
and scream like lunatics?



COWBOY MOUTH

ARE YOU WITH ME?

The New Album

Produced By **Michael Wanchic**

Engineered By **David Leonard**

Management: **Stephen Klein Management**

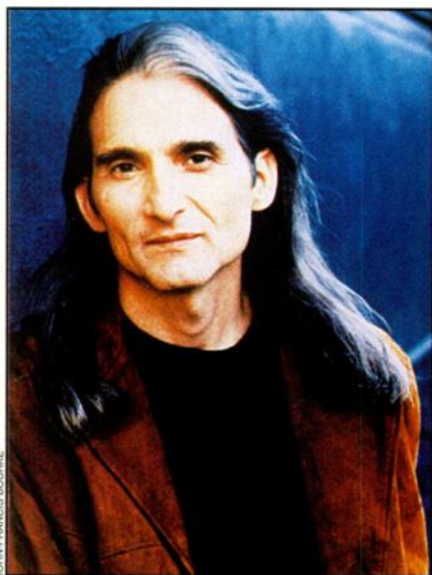


MCA

Get AMPed: http://www.mca.com/mca_records

WGN

QUICK FIX



jimmie dale gilmore

braver, clean and reverent

Jimmie Dale Gilmore is talking on the phone when, suddenly, he stops in mid-sentence. "Well, golly," he says, stretching the second word out for a few seconds. "I just saw two lizards playing on the driveway." He pauses, then gets up to get a better look. "They're beautiful, amazing. I was just looking out the window... I haven't seen anything like that for a long time. Y'know, for a second there, they looked just like birds."

That sense of metamorphosis runs through Gilmore's music—how many other musicians, not to mention country singers, have duetted with both Natalie Merchant and Mudhoney?—but has never been as evident as on his new album, *Braver Newer World* (Elektra). With its starkly elegant songs and sound, it represents the final molting of Jimmie Dale Gilmore, country artist, into his new persona as adult-alternative troubadour.

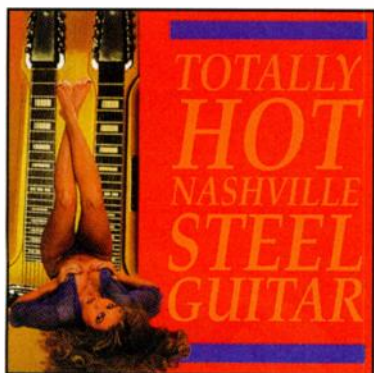
"It's a very odd thing," he says of his

career. "It's been a real extreme dichotomy, of very much being a traditionalist and having a real love for old-time country, folk, jazz and blues, but at the same time having a really deep love of experimental music—change and weirdness and psychedelic music." The genesis of *Braver Newer World*, he says, was attempting to being those elements together.

It almost didn't happen. Gilmore had originally gone into the studio with veteran producer Bones Howe, but something was missing. "It was, in a real sense, too much of a rehash of what I'd already done," he explains. When T-Bone Burnett showed interest in the project, Gilmore responded immediately.

Gilmore and Burnett decided to go into the studio and produce the kind of album Roy Orbison or Elvis would have made in 1996. It succeeds brilliantly, drawing on folk, pop, British Invasion, and early rock 'n' roll styles, with Burnett's shimmering tonal washes cut by Gilmore's high, lonesome vocals. "It's a sonic album," Gilmore says, laughing. "That's what T-Bone used to say: 'We're making a very sonic album.'"

Burnett assembled a core group of musicians—guitarist Greg Leisz, bassist Jerry Scheff and drummer Jim Keltner. The band didn't listen to the earlier version of the album or the demos, instead learning the songs directly from Gilmore. "I'd play them the song on my guitar and they'd pick it up right away." While Gilmore was impressed with all the musicians, he saves his highest praise for Keltner. "He's a very musical drummer," he explains. "He'd listen to my playing and would hear drum patterns in it." In the studio, he became Burnett's *de facto* lieutenant. "He is so observant and so thoughtful; almost every time he made an observation or a suggestion, it was used." Gilmore pauses for a moment. "Whenever I put the album on," he says, "I hear something new." STEVEN MIRKIN



bad cover concept of the month

Ah, the classic country sound of the steel guitar—here represented on versions of the *Star Trek* theme, "Under My Thumb" and the "Blue Danube Waltz"—and supine women in cheap lingerie getting to second base solo... Think about that target demographic for a while.

in my room

artists' personal picks

elvis costello

Oliver Nelson/Eric Dolphy
Straight Ahead

Soundtrack: Kansas City
"Queer Notions"

Anne Sofie Von Otter
Wings In The Night

I Cervelloni
"Big Brains": surreal Italian
game show where inventors
compete."

THE BIZ

music industry
parlance, explained

A&R

Short for "artists and repertoire." These are the people who sign bands to recording contracts and oversee their careers within the company. As the rarely used full form of the name suggests, they are also technically responsible for choosing what songs a band records and releases. Besides "A&R representatives," there are "A&R scouts," who are paid consulting fees to alert higher-ups to bands to watch.

inspirational verse

"Now each Christmas
morning I sit in my
chair/And I look up at the
angels that float through
the air/Some look down
upon me, some come to my
side/And they tell me that
Jesus he said to say hi"
—Lyle Lovett, "Christmas
Morning"

random fact

"The Church Of Kurt Cobain"
purportedly organized in
Portland, Oregon "to find
meaning" in Cobain's
"tragic life," and cited as "a
sign our culture as we know
it is coming to an end" in
Pollstar magazine by
Charles Cross, editor of
Seattle free weekly *The
Rocket*, was in fact, a hoax.

PACKED FOR 1996

Virgin

PLANT SERIES

This month Virgin presents the

Rock Soapwort

Color

The Rock Soapwort is the color of lather.

Fragrance

It smells like those flower-shaped soaps which only guests are supposed to use.

Habitat

It is native to powder rooms in most parts of North America.

Uses

Making guests feel at home in your garden.



Sex Pistols

Filthy Lucre Live



on tour now with Gravity Kills and Goldfinger!



Kristen Barry

the beginning.
the middle. the end.

on tour forever

featuring
"Created"

Virgin

QUICK FIX

mix tape

by Renati Adriani

"Since these are the only songs I can stand in the stifling hot afternoons here (Jakarta, Indonesia), I call the tape 'Tropical Breeze.'"

SIDE ONE

The Chills
Sleeping Giants
The Black Watch
Jaded
C.W. McLennan
Haven't I Been A Fool
The Breeders
Drivin' On 9
Lemonheads
It's About Time
Joyride
Sleep A Little Longer
Tiny Lights
Everybody's In The Park
Alanis Morissette
Ironie
C.W. McLennan
Haunted House
Honeybunch
Arm in Arm
David Kilgour
Shivering
C.W. McLennan
Black Mule
Goo Goo Dolls
Name

SIDE TWO

The Pixies
Ana
Pulp
Babies
The Chills
Doledrums
The Beach Boys
Darlin'
Mega City Four
Anne Bancroft
Sultans Of Ping F.C.
2 Pints Of Rasa
White Town
Hair Like Alain Delon
Throneberry
Green Goddess
Dillon Fence
Lisa Marie
The La's
There She Goes
The Beach Boys
Breakaway
Dillon Fence
I'll Wait
Unrest
Isabel
The Beach Boys
Till I Die

Made a good mix tape lately?
Tell us about it. Just mail, email
or fax us the track listing.

inspirational verse

"It's remarkable like the
Little Rascals, if I'm being
polite, I'm scheming like
Eddie Haskell."
—Rock from Heltah Skeltah,
"Da Wiggly"



the cardigans

sweaters bloody sweaters

The Cardigans' debut album, *Life* (Minty Fresh), has been known to cause toothaches—that's the secret power behind sweet treats. *Life's* sugary melodies, frosted by blonde chanteuse Nina Persson's buttercream vocals, go down so easily you might not notice you'd consumed them, if it weren't for their careful hooks and crafted arrangements. But like the photo of Persson on the album's cover—her adorable light blue ice skating dress with white fluffy trim, heavily frosted eyelids and cute dimples can't hide the dark roots lurking beneath her bleached coif—Sweden's fab five must harbor a dark side. "Yes, there is [an evil side to the Cardigans]," agrees Persson. "I think that people do notice as well."

"I think that that's one side of us when we're on stage, and we have another off stage," explains keyboardist Lars Johansson. "One can really not tell his dark side."

"We do perverted sex games together," jokes Persson.

Does this strain of darkness filter into the band's music? "Yeah, the lyrics are often very dark, as the tunes are happy," suggests Johansson.

Also counterintuitive is the Cardigans' clear affinity for hard rock. Although their music has a smooth retro-cool comparable to that of Pizzicato Five or Saint Etienne, they regularly cover Black Sabbath tunes (possibly the sweetest version ever of "Sabbath Bloody Sabbath" appears on *Life*), and they have more to say about Metallica's new album, *Load*, than anything else. "It's brilliant!" offers drummer Bengt Lagerberg.

"I think they're doing some kind of a

'U2,'" says Johansson, "going from an underground [band] to something, not just one step, but like 10 steps [beyond]. It's really cool in a way."

Would the Cardigans ever attempt a Metallica cover? "No, it's too close [to home] for us," confides Lagerberg, shaking his head sorrowfully.

On their first string of live U.S. dates this past June, the Cardigans hinted at some of their admitted favorites—beefy-sounding acts such as Metallica, Neil Young and Smashing Pumpkins—by rocking out a little harder, albeit with the easy finesse of a soft, worn-in cashmere sweater. Guitarist Peter Svensson, who writes most of the group's music, jumps around like he's in a boots-and-braces hardcore band, but always hits the notes in a classy, musicianly way. And with Persson at the helm, flashing a dimpled smile at the audience as she perfectly, sweetly sings her satiny melodies, it's hard not to be sucked in.

While the Cardigans have nothing but good things to say about America, from the food to the music (Persson counts Weezer and the Presidents Of The United States Of America among her current faves), it's other countries whose dark side disturbs them. "I think the British people, they are eating a lot of weird stuff—kidneys and stomach," notes Sveningsson with a touch of disgust.

"We were in Iceland a few months ago, and they are eating seriously weird food, I tell you," adds Johansson. "At the convenience store, like 7-11 or something, in the freezer, you find a goat's head—frozen goat head! They're eating rotten shark. It's a seriously weird way of eating!" Maybe it's best to stick to sweets.

LYDIA ANDERSON



extra fancy and the evil ronettes

There's a bad joke in the music biz. Q: "How many A&R guys does it take to screw in a light bulb?" A: "I don't know. What do you think?" Having built a devoted following for its intense live shows, Los Angeles quartet Extra Fancy got tired of waiting for the industry to get over the fact that lead singer Brian Grillo was gay. "We'd been together four years, but nobody would pay any attention to us," he recalls. "There were certain people interested, until they found out I was HIV positive, and then those people split."

Finally, a few days after Extra Fancy's CD, *Sinnerman*, came out independently on Diablo Musica, the band was signed to Atlantic, ostensibly as the flagship act for a new "gay" sub-label. But Grillo wasn't having it. "Why do you have to ghettoize us as a gay band?" he yelled. In the end, he

won. Besides, the other three members—drummer Derek O'Brien, bassist D.A. Foster and guitarist Michael Hateley—pray in a different church. Not that it matters. "We were friends before the band, so I knew what he was about, and I wanted to work with him and be the best band in town," notes Foster.

Sinnerman is as diverse stylistically as it is tight musically: the Bo Diddley beat of "Son Of That Man," the faux-Dick Dale twist of "You Surf Like A Porno Star, Sonny," the rowdy chants of "Yes Sir" and "C'mon Louie." Songwriting is a loose, chaotic affair with the band. Its infamous debut single "You Look Like A Movie Star, Honey" began with Grillo pounding around on his 50-gallon oil drum for the first time. "What I Have" started as a folk/country ditty.

The rousing stomp of the current single "Sinnerman" fits in alongside the band's originals well. But who would suspect that the same tune that's doing so well at metal radio is an inspirational song Grillo appropriated as a boy from his mother, who in turn picked it up while learning guitar from her Mormon sister-in-law? Odder still, his mom is also responsible for a soaring cover of the Nymphs' "Imitating Angels" (added to the re-sequenced Atlantic version of the album), since she originally introduced her son to that band's notorious singer Inger Lorre, who contributes vocals on the track, along with Fancy fan Exene Cervenka.

And yes, it's supposed to sound like a Phil Spector wall-of-sound production. The track was mixed by Dave Jerden (of Jane's Addiction notoriety), who just happened to work with the eccentric genius. "When I brought the tape in to him, I said 'I really want it to sound like 'Be My Baby,'" grins Grillo. "I have the two evil Ronettes backing me up." **KURT B. REIGHLEY**



promo item of the month

We're always wary of promo food—ask about the time a label FedExed a sandwich—but a bottle of hot sauce around the office is too handy at lunchtime when you forget to bring your own. (Speaking of which, sharp-eyed readers will recognize the photogenic bottle from July issue's "Cool Things" story.) So, thank you, Island Records and New Kingdom.

in my room

artists' personal picks

JEFF HANNEMAN Slayer

TV: Hockey play-offs

Film: Natural Born Killers

Book: *The Earth Chronicles*:
"Zecharia Sitchin"

Machine Head
Burn My Eyes

Undisputed Attitude
"By you know who"

"Some people write records from their hearts. This one's from our liver." — Sponge singer Vinnie Dombroski, on *Wax Ecstatic*, from an interview in *Hits*.

tours we'd like to see

PRIME 8

Gorilla, Baboon, Orangutang, Ape Hangers, the Blow Monkeys, Super Junky Monkey, King Kong and the Monkees.

inspirational verse

"You are crouched before the fire in a state park by the highway and through the heavy pine trees ten-ton trucks go groaning by. Like the screams of your aunt Barbara who went crazy in the '70s, wrote poems to Jimmy Carter but forgot to feed her kids."
—The Handsome Family, "Lake Geneva"

random fact

Jarvis Cocker estimates 20 people have been in Pulp since its inception in 1981.

QUICK FIX



the blue nile

a new record at last

In his billowy dress shirt, brown slacks and Blunstone boots, with sprigs of grey sprouting from his tousled brown mop of hair, the Blue Nile's songwriter/frontman Paul Buchanan looks more like a visiting Oxford professor than the wandering minstrel that—with no apartment to call home—he currently is. That fits with his enduring profile as a nit-picking perfectionist, which—naysayers contend—has kept the Blue Nile's record release schedule annoyingly sparse: the debut *A Walk Across The Rooftops*, issued in 1983; a followup, *Hats*, six long years after; and now, another seven years on, the new *Peace At Last* (Warner Bros.). Buchanan likes to make jokes about it. "Circumstantially, I guess we made this record in 14 weeks," he titters. "Uh, unfortunately, they weren't consecutive weeks."

The band began work on *Peace At Last* with the most noble of intentions. Almost immediately, things went haywire. A production company the Blue Nile had signed with in its early days ran into some serious legal snafus. Technically, the trio's

contract with them had expired—they weren't obligated to stick around. "But they were still contracted to supply our records, and we didn't want to go and leave them in the lurch, so we just sat it out with them and tried to get it all worked out."

Buchanan waited nearly three years for the dispute to be settled. Then he came up with a novel recording strategy. "When we finally set out to make this album, we decided to preface it by buying some fairly low-tech equipment and taking it with us, then we'd find rooms and sort of work in those rooms." Nice idea. On paper. "We'd get somewhere and think 'This is fine!' but it wouldn't be fine with the neighbors. So we'd get two weeks done, then there'd be six weeks when we couldn't get anywhere to work."

"So time rolled on. Which is ironic, because on this record we were keen to overcome any lingering view of us as being 'studio guys' who sat around doing everything over and over and over again. For some reason, we've ended up being perceived as these mad scientists when actually we're more like the Marx Brothers than anything else." Another sip of tea and a sly smile. "But I suppose the consolation is that we don't put out things that we don't mean."

Folks at the Nile's new label, Warner Bros., have learned not to second-guess a talent like Buchanan. If he wants to mention Jesus in a song, so be it. He has good reasons. "I still care about the same things I've always cared about," Buchanan assesses in his pudding-thick Scottish burr—"my family, my friends, and the same fundamental values that I've always had. And I don't care if I'm not cool. I love my Dad, I love my Mom, and I want to be a good person. And I hope on this record I trot around these things, the disappointment and the good things, all the optimism in life." **TOM LANHAM**

club mekon

The Mekons have been together for 18 years now, and they don't just play music together: they're a full-fledged artistic collective, doing visual art, writing and whatever else strikes their collective fancy. *Mekons United* (ellipsis/Touch And Go) is a super-deluxe catalogue of the Mekons' exhibition at the Polk Museum of Art in Lakeland, Florida. Besides reproductions of a few hundred pieces of Mekons art, in dozens of different styles (often together in the same piece), the book has about a billion different pieces of Mekons-related text: bits of song lyrics, critical analysis from the likes of Lester Bangs and Greil Marcus, some rather dense academic writing, some angry letters from a daughter to a mother, and a handful of selections from the group's eternally-in-progress collaborative novel *Living In Sin*, annotated with pseudo-Freudian comments. An accompanying CD has 23 new pieces of Mekons music, including a handful of electronic experiments and, in the tradition of the country band the Mekons have always kind of wanted to be, an answer song to their 1978 single "Where Were You?" **DOUGLAS WOLK**

in my room

artists' personal picks

brian grillo extra fancy

Stone Fox
Stone Fox

Marvin Gaye
Trouble Man

X
Wild Gift

7 Year Bitch
Gato Negro

Sylvester
Greatest Hits

random fact

An alternate cover to the Butthole Surfers' *Electric Larryland* will be available in some large retail chains. The chains objected to the original's cartoon drawing of a pencil jammed into a bloodied ear, and so a second cover featuring a prairie dog and the band's name spelled B***H*** Surfers has been produced.

random five

With Kiss, Van Halen and the Sex Pistols all re-forming, here's the top five bands we'd like to see get back together:

1. Black Flag
2. Yaz
3. Pussy Galore
4. Pixies
5. Bob Dylan



60 FT DOLLS



james hall

hayden

THE ROOTS
NO FRILLS



White
Zombie



garbage

SAMMY



Pancake Day
Victor DeLorenzo



weezer

THE SUGARPLASTIC
BANG THE EARTH IS ROUND

THE POSIES
FAMOUS DISGRACE

60 FT DOLLS



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ALMO
RECORDS



RECORDINGS



LOS ANGELES
CITY SCHOOLS

WRN

LOS ANGELES
CITY SCHOOLS

best new music

[the five best releases this month]



GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI / *Introducing Gorky's Zygoti Mynçi* / Mercury

Every few summers there's an album that promises to carry the entire season. Oddly enough, I now have two from Welsh groups; the Pooh Sticks' *Great White Wonder* and the one you're reading about. *Introducing* is one of those rock-critic albums—it's heavily indebted to Brian Wilson, it's eclectic as hell, blah blah blah—but unlike, say, the High Llamas, this record is sunny enough for the kids ("The Game of Eyes" has enough Madness to satisfy No Doubt fans) and weird enough for smug record-store clerks ("Kevin Ayers" is named for the leader of Soft Machine). Even better, this collection of singles works better as an album than most of the records you'll hear this year. All the songs veer dangerously between genres and

most have some kind of Pavement-y "koo-koo-koo" chorus. Of course, I could be mistaken about those words as much of the record is sung in Welsh, a trick that probably never even occurred to Hue Pooh. The scholarship of these weirdos

belies their ages; all are reportedly in their early 20s. And that's the most beautiful thing about this most beautiful record: As delightful as its twists and turns are, we can safely look forward to many more years of fun. Ichyd Da, gentle readers. ANDREW BEAUJON

DATALOG: Released Aug. 20.

FILE UNDER: Pure pop from Welsh people.

R.I.Y.L.: Robert Wyatt, Bongwater, The Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds*.



OLIVIA TREMOR CONTROL / *Music From The Unrealized Film Script "Dusk At Cubist Castle"* / Rydaddy ☺

Imagine an alternate universe in which the *Sergeant Pepper*-era Beatles had written all their songs completely collaboratively—in which Paul's salt-of-the-earth pop sensibility, John's edgier, iconoclastic tendencies, and George's flights of compositional weirdness coexisted in the same songs. *Dusk At Cubist Castle*'s songs run in distinct cycles, melted into one another through slippery endings and short instrumental transition tracks. The most clearly defined and elementally fucked-with of these is the nine-song suite "Green Typewriters," a kind of idealized acid trip that opens with the vision of "a hundred typewriters soaked in green paint," then lopes through a succession of mini-songs and odd intervals. Typing and typewriter-bell

sounds lead to cheery pop, which in turn warps into slowed-down spoken words over high spindly feedback and speeded-up backing vocals. Given the trendy overuse of '60s-style keyboard effects lately, one of the most refreshing things

about this record is how strategically they are deployed. The Theremin and other gadgets are there, but subtle, often buried deep in the mix until a single, spacey whirr drops suddenly into the foreground. The latter half of the album largely shows OTC in a rather different, ambient mode. In what is perhaps the biggest surprise, they're not at all shoddy as ambient composers, either. As an over-74-minute whole, the album does have a touch of the meandering mess about it, but like the abrupt endings of the songs, that's part of its charm. ANDREA MOED

DATALOG: Released Jul. 9. Initial copies include a bonus ambient disc.

FILE UNDER: British Invasion, reconsidered.

R.I.Y.L.: Psychedelic Beatles, *Smile*-era Beach Boys, Guided By Voices.



NEW BOMB TURKS / *Scared Straight* / Epitaph

Forget this Van Halen reunion bullshit. If you want the real '90s David Lee Roth experience, just turn your attention to New Bomb Turks' Eric Davidson, and his fucking *awesome* rock 'n' roll yowl. See, for instance, the way he drips charisma all over the first line of "Drop What You're Doin'": "Well the last, the last time I checked I had eyes/'Cause the last time I checked, yeah, I was startin' to cry"—he draws out that "cry" like vintage Diamond Dave. The repetition there is the proof of the instinctive dumbness that's at the heart of a lot of great rock, too. But the Turks all have English degrees and can't quite hide it, which is why they call one three-minute punk-bomb "Cultural Elite Sign-Up Sheet" and another "Jeers Of A Clown." Jim Weber plays guitar like his hair's on fire, and the rhythm section does a blunt but effective double-time Stooges thing; the closest the Turks come to prettying up their four-chord bashes is sticking a few bars of piano into the

DATALOG: Release date: Aug. 20.

FILE UNDER: Punk rock with an M.A.

R.I.Y.L.: Sex Pistols, Gaunt, Gas Huffer, The Saints, Dead Boys.

background of "Professional Againster." If you listen past the band's explosive hurtle to the songs themselves, though, they're little wonders of cut-to-the-chase construction: basically all chorus and climax, whooping and riffing. Then stop analyzing and bang your head. *DOUGLAS WOLK*



LOW AND SWEET ORCHESTRA / *Goodbye To All That* / Interscope

Scratch an old punk cynic and you'll find a sentimental romantic folkie. Or at least you will with the Low And Sweet Orchestra, in which former punks, Irish rockers and a movie star or two turn to Irish folk to express themselves. Dermot Mulroney and his brother Kieran, better known for their acting, wail on the cello and violin, respectively, while the Pogues' James Fearnley plays accordion. But the anchors of the groups are vocalist/lyricist Mike Martt (formerly of Tex And The Horseheads and Thelonious Monster) and the great Zander Schloss (Circle Jerks, Too Free Stooges, *Repo Man*, etc., etc.). The guys in Low And Sweet Orchestra have been around the block, and the songs show it. The most telling one is "I Had

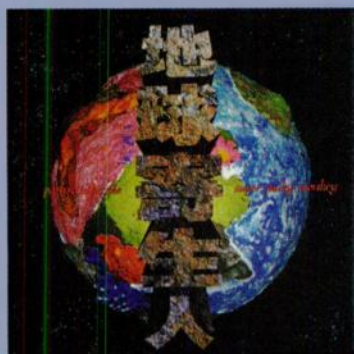
To Leave A Friend Behind," which sums up the feeling of loss and going on in spite of it. There are a lot of dashed hopes and missed chances on *Goodbye To All That*, but the music is anything but hopeless. With its raucous choruses and gay jigs,

this album is all about taking what life deals you and getting up with a smile, even if it's a rueful one. *HEIDI MACDONALD*

DATALOG: Released Aug. 13.

FILE UNDER: Shanty songs of experience.

R.I.Y.L.: The Pogues, Black 47, Wild Colonial.



SUPER JUNKY MONKEY / *Parasitic People* / TriStar

A basic comedy rule: take behavior usually performed by white guys with socks stuffed into their spandex pants and transfer it to Japanese women, and the result will be funny. But don't dismiss Super Junky Monkey as a joke band. They're four Japanese women playing hard-edged funk-metal, but they *mean* it. *Man*, do they mean it. Mix the screaming and razor's edge dissonance of the Boredoms, the funky energy of the Chili Peppers, and the arena rock grandeur of The Who, and you'll begin to get the picture. Don't confuse them with Shonen Knife. The playing is just this side of amazing. (Guitarist Keiko Yamaiwa, in particular, rocks you like a hurricane.) But the best part is the fresh way they mix it up: *Parasitic People*, SJM's second American release, is

a delirious roller-coaster ride that veers from straight-ahead metal-funk on "Start With Makin' A Fire" to helium vocals and pop bass lines on the title cut. It's a world away from the bloated hysterics that their inspirations have fallen prey to.

When at the end of the harrowing 7-minute-plus "See Me, Feel Me," they suddenly break into the familiar chorus from "Tommy," it's a rock 'n' roll epiphany. Super Junky Monkey takes every rock cliché of the last 25 years and puts a cherry on top. Get your lighters ready now. *HEIDI MACDONALD*

DATALOG: Released Jul. 23.

FILE UNDER: Funk punk metal thrash.

R.I.Y.L.: Red Hot Chili Peppers, Rage Against The Machine, Boredoms.

ON THE VERGE

[compiled by Lydia Anderson]

WESTON

If there's any message behind Weston's pop-punk, it's surely something inane. The New Jersey quartet, which refers to itself as "a bunch of half-wits who jump around in their underwear,"



revels in every opportunity for silliness. Its songs are about feet, new shirts, girls and being a loser. The band, "named after [guitarist] Dave's parents, 'cause they were nice enough to let us rehearse in their basement," has been touring the all-ages circuit for years now, playing tunes like "Varsity Sweater" and "Teenage Love Affair" for the kids in church basements, YMCAs, anywhere with some floor space and a P.A. Opening spots for Green Day and Rancid offer some insight into the band's sound, but Weston's pop-inspired "ooh"s, "ah"s and three-part harmonies set it apart from its angstier peers. So even when, on *Got Beat Up* (Go Kart), the band sings "I'll always be the fat kid on the bus" or "I know I'm dull compared to sororities," it does so through an irrepressible smile that quickly spreads to its audience. JENNY ELISCU

SIXTEEN DELUXE

Austin, Texas, has a long musical history stuffed with country crooners and some of the weirdest psychedelic and punk sounds, but that history expanded with an extra bulge when Sixteen Deluxe released its debut album, *Backfeed Magnetbabe*, on local label Trance Syndicate last year. Like the Flaming Lips, Sixteen Deluxe fuses aggressive melodies and rhythms with far-reaching guitar sounds, grounding its songs with an approachable structure without limiting the scope of noises brought into the fold. Sometimes the noise coalesces into crunchy pop songs, as on "Idea" and "Fetus," carried by the twin vocals of guitarists Carrie Clark and Chris Smith; at other times, the band is satisfied to revel in its bright-eyed cacophony. Tying it all together are Clark and Smith's wiry, noisy guitar lines, which mimic tripped-out psychedelia but race through the songs with a definitively punk-fueled abandon. After interest from a variety of labels, the band recently signed with Warner Bros. and should have something new out by the end of the year. (LA)



COMET



Comet is a four-piece from Mesquite, Texas, with a sound that's both familiar and exotic. Musically, the group lies somewhere between the slow-rock sounds of bands like Low and fellow

Texans Bedhead, and the more tangled arrangements of Mercury Rev and Spiritualized, shot through with an emphasis on drone. After a 7" and a 10" EP on local labels Last Beat and Atomic Sound, respectively, Comet signed with British indie Dedicated, which will be releasing the band's first full-length, *Chandelier Musings*, in the U.S. this fall. Produced by Dave Baker (ex-Mercury Rev, Shady), the album incorporates his bands' rambling neo-psychedelia into its ensnaring web of sound, which also benefits from Comet's fiddling with effects and tempos. The band's recordings are clouded with just enough extra noise to add intrigue, but not enough to distort its shapely songs. From the irresistible pulse of "Rocket Flare" to the more exploratory sounds of "Shogun Girl," Comet's *Chandelier Musings* should propel the band onto the nation's sonic map. (LA)

URUSEI YATSURA

Although it's almost impossible for native English speakers to pronounce the Japanese name of this ferocious Scottish quartet with any facility, its guitar-fueled tunes will stick like lead bullets in the memory of anyone within firing distance. After years of generating relatively little commotion on these shores, the band's hometown of Glasgow is percolating with talked-about bands, including Bis and the Delgados, many



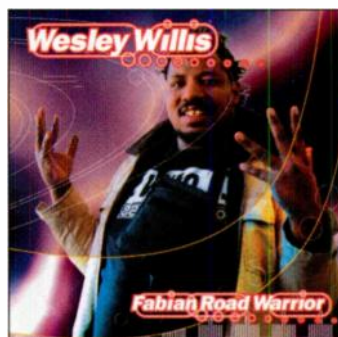
of whom Urusei's Graham Kemp has been chronicling in his nifty 'zine *Kitten Frenzy* and nurturing with his Modern Independents label. But back to those tunes (and you'll surely find yourself returning to them again and again)—they jab and poke in rare fashion,

sounding as prickly sweet as Pavement did in '92. But it's 1996, and it takes a little more to stand out these days, so it's a good thing that *We Are Urusei Yatsura* (Ché-Sire), the band's debut album, boasts a full helping of spastic, memorable songs to make the band stand out. With a little practice, the name gets easier to pronounce. (LA)

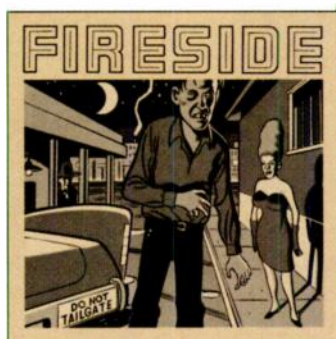
Summer American Style



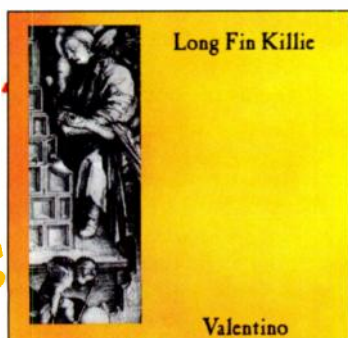
Psychotica
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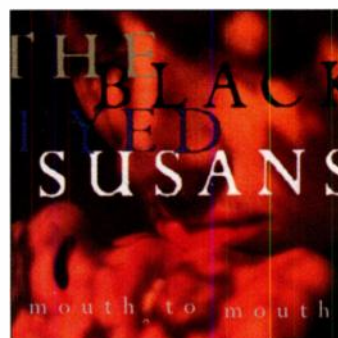
Wesley Willis
Fabian Road Warrior



Fireside
Do Not Tailgate



Long Fin Killie
Valentino



The Blackeyed Susans
Mouth To Mouth

For the latest info about Psychotica, Wesley Willis, Fireside, Long Fin Killie, and The Blackeyed Susans and all other American Recordings artists, contact American Recordings on the Internet at <http://american.recordings.com> or e-mail us at american@american.recordings.com or on America Online Keyword: Warner

literally mindblowing

scarce

by randee dawn

"Wanna feel my scar?" Chick Graning, Scarce's lead singer and songwriter, asks first thing, and will guide the hand of anyone brave enough to reach behind his head and feel a deep V-shaped groove, an indentation where no human being is supposed to have one. The instant intimacy is something both bassist Joyce Raskin and drummer Joe Propatier are enjoying immensely as they sit across the table in a Tribeca pub, grinning slyly. They're used to it.

Because somehow, before even the music comes up, even before the release of their debut album *Deadsexy* gets mentioned, everyone wants to talk about The Aneurysm. "Joe joined our band a day before I went down with my brain hemorrhage," recalls Graning of the day last summer when Raskin, wondering why he was late for practice, found him collapsed on the floor of his Rhode Island apartment. Graning pauses, and deadpans, "It blew my mind."

Used to be, the music came first. Prior to the illness and ensuing dark humor, Scarce was making a name for itself around the Northeast with its raw, punchy, eclectic bag of guitar tricks and blistering live performances, featuring Raskin done up in sparkles and high tops, slinging her bass around, with wild-eyed, suited Graning staring down the audience.

"Gunshy," as Graning put it then, of indies (following court battles in England involving his old band Anastasia Screamed), Scarce signed with A&M and made bigger plans. Raskin took singing lessons. Their old drummer left amicably, and they took in Propatier. Then they had to put everything on hold. Ultimately, Graning was in a coma for 18 days, had brain surgery, and remained in the hospital another two months. In the meantime, Raskin and Propatier

organized acoustic shows around Rhode Island and Boston to raise money to purchase a laptop for him.

"When I told him we were doing it," recalls Raskin, "he went, 'Nobody should have a benefit for me! I'm not sick.' You were all embarrassed."

"I didn't know that," says Graning.

Which was a problem: Graning's memory gaps meant he had to relearn all of his old songs, so he recuperated at his mother's house in Knoxville and felt his way out on the Internet with his new computer. When Graning felt well enough, Scarce picked up right where it left off, and ducked back in the recording studio to rearrange *Deadsexy*, adding five new songs Graning had written before the illness, subtracting some older ones. By the end of last year, Scarce was back on the road again. "I started 1995 touring," he says, "and ended it touring. Just had the hemorrhage in between." He laughs glibly. "I love it."

And now, says Graning, he's ready to move on. "I'm ready to tour with this album, I want to get it released, and then I'll write. Then I'll put it behind me."

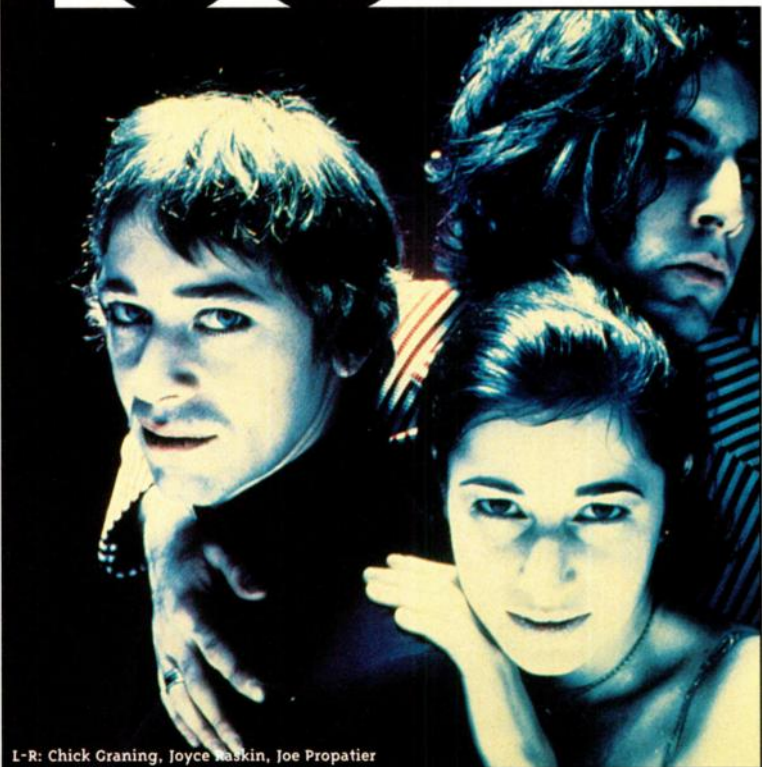
Along with, hopefully, the other events of 1995. Though offhand about his time in the hospital, when pushed Graning admits it hasn't been easy. "It'll take years to know how it affected me. It did seriously change me, and I don't know how yet. But scare me? I'm through that part. I was never scared once I came to. I knew I'd be all right."

Raskin grins at him. "The thing is, Chick is still Chick. He hasn't changed. Nothing changed him, really."

Graning is one of the more indestructible members of the music world; Scarce is named after the nickname of the woman who ran him off the road when he was 17, plunging his car over a cliff. "He should have died," recalls Raskin. Instead, Scarce, and Graning, live to tour another day with a sense of humor and a whipsmart sense of how to get on with being an old-fashioned rock 'n' roll band.

"If you can get through this much shit," says Graning, "and still be a band, then screw it."

"We get to start all over," says Raskin. "We've really only been a band for six months. Now, we get to be a band for real." ★



L-R: Chick Graning, Joyce Raskin, Joe Propatier

CLAY MADSEN

imperial teen



seasick

SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS

TOP HAT AND BUSHY TAILS



THE SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS, CHAPEL HILL, NC'S PREMIERE HOT JAZZ SEXTET, ARE VERY EXCITED ABOUT THEIR VISIT TO THE BIG APPLE. WHY, LAST NIGHT, KEN MOSHER (GUITAR, SAXOPHONES, VOCALS) TIPPED HIS DRIVER FIVE DOLLARS ON A FOUR-DOLLAR FARE. "I GAVE MY BARBER FIVE THIS MORNING BECAUSE I ENJOYED MY HAIRCUT SO MUCH," ADDS JIM MATHUS (VOCALS, GUITAR, TROMBONE).

Yet the Zippers are all a-tingle about something much more invigorating than yellow cabs and good grooming. Oh, sure, they're delighted for the chance to travel and chat up their new album, *Hot* (Mammoth), the follow-up to 1995's swank *The Inevitable*. But their next appointment is far more meaningful. Tom Maxwell (vocals, guitar, baritone sax, clarinet) is about to meet one of his all-time idols: Al Casey, guitarist for legendary jazz organist Fats Waller.

Casey (who met the master while babysitting his children) hooked up with Waller in the mid-'30s, and stuck with him till his death in 1943. "He's a great guitar player, someone I particularly admire and have gotten a lot of inspiration from," Maxwell enthuses. "Everything he played was this amazing synthesis of good taste, class and grooviness." With the exception of Lionel Hampton, he's also the last of the original greats. "They're all dead, all gone," sighs Maxwell.

Waller himself also exerted plenty of influence on Maxwell, as well as the rest of the Zippers. "He wrote almost all of his great songs, 'Ain't Misbehavin' and 'Honeysuckle Rose,' when he was about 29," he continues. "To me, he was the Ray

Charles of his generation. He put together the sacred and the profane. He was accompanying his dad on the street preaching, his mother played church organ. But he was into the devil—jazz—and he ran liquor when he was 15, because he was so fat they could stuff bottles in his coat."

By his own admission, Maxwell could gush about Waller all day; he recently wrote a piece for a Chapel Hill free paper on some of his idols, including Waller and actor William Shatner. "I'm a big, big fan of T.J. Hooker, and I watch it avidly. And I was moved to write an essay, because Bill Shatner's a genius," he confesses. "You think I'm kidding, but I'm not." Hey, everybody deserves a fan.

Lord knows the Squirrel Nut Zippers have acquired a fair share of their own since they first began to coalesce around the nucleus of Mathus and his sweetheart Katherine Whalen (vocals, banjo) back in 1993 (the current line-up also includes Don Raleigh on string bass and Chris Phillips on percussion), and *Hot* promises to win them more. Recorded at Daniel Lanois' Kingsway Studio in New Orleans, the record resonates with that city's rich jazz legacy. The

opening "Got My Own Thing Now" packs a Dixieland swing à la "When The Saints Come Marching In," while "Put A Lid On It" hints at the classic "Hit The Road, Jack." Elsewhere, the raucous "Hell" draws on another of the band's big influences, classic calypso.

The band laid down 12 tracks in seven days, recording as an ensemble live in the studio as much as possible. "It took a couple days to get used to New Orleans," recalls Mosher. "We recorded right after arriving there. For two days we acclimated ourselves, and then from that point on..."

"We started knockin' 'em out," says Maxwell, jumping in. "We set up this deceptively simple idea of recording things live with a minimum of microphones. But nobody had worked with that style for 30, 40 years. So we were basically learning: what kind of mics, where to put them. The first couple of days were a little demoralizing. And then one day, we just started rolling." And Whalen made some discoveries of her own at Kingsway. "When I went in and started doing the vocals on that record, I realized that the year of performing had done this thing to my voice." Instead of a shoddy PA,



L-R: Jim Mathus, Chris Phillips, Don Raleigh, Katherine Whalen, Ken Mosher, Tom Maxwell, Je Widenhouse

she was hearing her pipes in a space with "live" acoustics. "When I got in and started singing in that room, I was able to relax. The room did all the work, which was really neat. It put vibrato on things itself. That was really wonderful."

Whalen's voice is a wonderful thing. But she only recently began to share it with others, having never sung as a child. "I would go into terror at the thought of having to sing 'Happy Birthday' at a party," she recalls. Eventually, though, a crack appeared in her shell. "I remember, when I got to be a teenager, really liking the song 'I Can't Give You Anything But Love' that I had on a Fats Waller tape. And I got to a point that I could ape that version. But I never sang it in front of anybody until I met Jim. And I was able to do it front of him. He heard me sing, and he heard *me*."

"In the whole course of the band, we have never sat down and said 'We want to do X or Y,'" insists Mathus. "We have never had any idea other than that we all brought what we already had to the group. And it all fit together like a puzzle."

They knew they wanted to wear evening clothes to make their gigs

special, but the clothes aren't a gimmick; they're an integral part of the SNZ package. "We don't wear tuxedos all the time because it's too goddamn difficult finding all your studs on the road, but there's something about dressing up," says Maxwell. "It's a ritual that helps assuage my nervousness. It also

"USUALLY AFTER TERRIBLE DURESS, WE PLAY INCREDIBLY WELL," LAUGHS MOSHER.

shows a lot of respect for what we're doing, for the music we're playing, and also for the audience. You're showing respect for them. We try to transform whatever venue we're playing into this other world for them. And when we do it right, it completely works, and people burst into spontaneous conga lines."

"There has not been a show where it hasn't happened," surmises Whalen. "It may not happen the entire performance, it may just be some little part, but it always

happens, always under terrible duress."

"Usually after terrible duress, we play incredibly well," laughs Mosher.

The excitement at a Squirrel Nut Zippers show recalls a bygone era, when making music was a part of a community experience and family life. Mathus grew up playing bluegrass in his household. Music in the home was important to Whalen, too. "We would listen to the radio a lot. When I was really young, my uncle used to play the guitar, sing songs, literally around the wood stove, because we didn't have electric heat."

Naturally, they didn't have a television in the Whalen household either, she admits with a grin. "One time, when I was 11, I walked miles to watch TV, to this other person's house, like 11 miles away. I didn't make it. My dad took pity on me and picked me up. I don't remember [what show it was], it was probably *Charlie's Angels*. If I hear the music to that show now, I get the same feeling—my stomach starts hurting." Mathus looks at her quizzically. "I really wanted to watch it," she sighs. ★

BY KURT B. REIGHLEY

Spreading the word

Jawbox



L-R: Bill Barbot, J. Robbins, Kim Coletta, Zach Barocas

In 1974 Bill Barbot's father took him to his first epic rock event:

Elvis Presley live at Colefield House at the University of Maryland. Though Barbot was only six years old, the King left an indelible impression on him. "I don't remember much about the show, but Elvis during that period of my life was just an enormous influence," he says, planted at one end of a long conference table in a board room at Atlantic Records' Los Angeles digs. "We had a six-record changer, and at the age of four I would put on all of my Elvis records and it would just drop one after the other, flip the stack, let 'em drop again and I would lie under the coffee table singing all the songs at the top of my lungs. It's odd to think of Elvis as being my first icon, because what I do now is almost antithetical to it." Almost, but not quite.

by Sandy Masuo

Twenty-two years later, he plays guitar and sings in Washington, D.C.'s Jawbox. Together with drummer Zach Barocas, singer-guitarist J. Robbins and bassist Kim Coletta, he's generated four albums and an assortment of singles that are equal parts scrappy punk, savvy art and snappy intellect.

A bemused Coletta marvels at her cohort as he works his way through the tale of his metamorphosis from the Elvis-ful days of his childhood to his punk awakening, with junior high band forays and adolescent AC/DC appreciation in between. Eventually, he builds up to the story of how he bought his first guitar for \$13 from a guy in a band called Ransum and conned his mother into buying him his first amp, using the rationale that guitar was just as valid as any other instrument, and if she was willing to invest in, say, a trumpet so he could continue playing in the school band, then there was no reason why she shouldn't invest in

an amp so he could continue playing in rock bands. "So we went out and got this puny little amp that had a saturation knob on it so I could get lots of distortion," he concludes. "And that's how I got started."

"Total boy story," Coletta says, laughing.

Coletta's musical evolution might not have been quite as colorful as Barbot's, but it didn't make any less of an impact on her. Unlike Barbot's parents, who were part of the Presley generation, Coletta's parents were children of the '60s. Born in 1966, she grew up listening to bastions of '60s rock like the Beatles and Creedence Clearwater Revival. Her introduction to punk rock happened during her sophomore year in high school.

"I'm from New Hampshire, I should say, and it kind of figures into it because it's a very conservative state," she explains. "The pivotal point for me was when a guy from Burlington, Vermont, moved to our

town [Nashua], and I saw him one day in our high school principal's office as I was walking by. He had piercings in his ear and his arm was in a cast 'cause he was a skateboarder and he had dyed blonde hair, and *this* was radical for our high school. We were listening to the Vapors and U2—stuff that was cutting-edge for New Hampshire—and he had a Circle Jerks T-shirt on."

It wasn't until her sophomore year in college at Georgetown University that future Gastr Del Sol member David Grubbs encouraged her to take up the bass. "I scraped together all the money that was meant for tuition bills and bought a bass. I didn't start a band until after I graduated. I worked almost full-time while I was in school, and it just wasn't possible. This is my first band. We started Jawbox a year after I graduated and people are like, 'name your other bands,' and I'm like, 'there've been no other bands.' So it's pretty cool." Between their D.I.Y. business sensibility and their unassuming manner, Coletta and Barbot both seem a little out of place in the rather upscale ambience of Atlantic Records, but then bridging gaps seems to be an implicit part of what Jawbox does, musically and philosophically. Though they come from a D.C. scene informed by Fugazi's adamantly indie stance, and Coletta and Barbot in fact run their own small label, DeSoto Records, they have no problem with the majors.

"When you put a record out for sale, you are participating in the world of commerce, whether you [cut] the records yourself with a knife and a slab of wax in your back yard or whether you send them off for production and distribution through WEA," Barbot says. "You're basically putting a product for sale on the market which people are going to

commodify. They're going to treat it like a shirt or a hat or a car. You can't escape capitalism. On the other hand, I've found that the most important thing is to understand that that's the milieu in which you're working, and to accept responsibility for its ramifications. So if we as a band are willing to sign to a major label and undertake the responsibility of handling our band in a manner which we find answerable to the people who buy our records, and we make ourselves accessible enough that we can understand what's going on with our band and try not to hide behind the veil of stardom, then it's worth it for us."

"My theory on this whole thing is we're really kind of geeky people and we have no schtick," Coletta offers. "A lot of bands have schtick, and that works real well for them, 'cause rock 'n' roll is in part about being otherworldly and a spectacle. We definitely don't have that going for us, so I think our only schtick is our accessibility. It has to be. We've made ourselves available to our fans, which is pretty unique at our level. People can e-mail us, they can write—we answer everything. That's our schtick."

"It's not very sexy," suggests Barbot. "But it's worked for us in this odd way," Coletta persists.

Jawbox's latest, self-titled album

is both abrasive and compelling—and more challenging than the power-pop that has come to be regarded as standard for "punk." Yet in its refusal to settle into comfortable structures, Jawbox remains true to the spirit of punk.

"One of the problems in terms of music writing is that there just aren't enough catch phrases and words to describe all the various incarnations of punk. 'Cause I think our music's punk more than anything else, but what a loaded term," Coletta observes. "Like, what does that mean?"

"When someone sees that word on paper next to Jawbox..." Barbot begins.

"...They might think we sound like Green Day," Coletta continues, "from a musical perspective."

"And that has absolutely nothing to do with what we're about," Barbot concludes. What the band is about, he explains, is spreading its word. "Once we're able to get our foot in the door far enough so that we can elbow our way into commercial radio and have someone listen to it and think 'My idea of how a satisfying pop song is made has just been changed a little bit to accommodate a different paradigm'—that's what we're really after. I mean, we're not after fame or money or success or glory or anything. [And yet] as much

as we say we don't care, we kind of do care, because a lot of the reason that we do what we do is so that people will hear it. We don't want to just keep preaching to the converted. We want to find new people who have never heard anything like what we're doing. We did that when we went on the Stone Temple Pilots tour [in 1994]. We had tons of letters after we did that tour. We didn't sell a million records because of that tour, but we had a lot of people write us and say 'I never knew bands like you existed.'"

"It was really interesting," adds Coletta. "I mean, we are never going to be an overnight success story. It's always been this gradual, uphill struggle, and my idea of this new record being successful is like 'Wow, if we could sell twice as many copies.' That would be so exciting to me. If we could sell a hundred thousand copies, that'd be so amazing. So in that I have small—"

"Medium hopes," Barbot cuts in.

"Medium hopes, yeah," Coletta agrees. ★

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4-song 7" EP (DeSoto-Dischord) 1990

Grippe (Dischord) 1991

"Tongues" 7" (Dischord) 1992

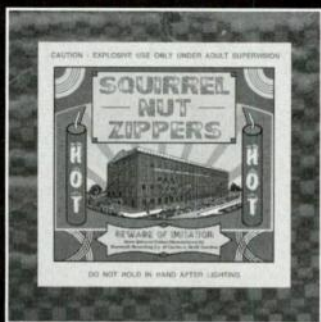
Novelty (Dischord) 1992

"Motorist" 7" (Dischord) 1993

For Your Own Special Sweetheart (Atlantic) 1994

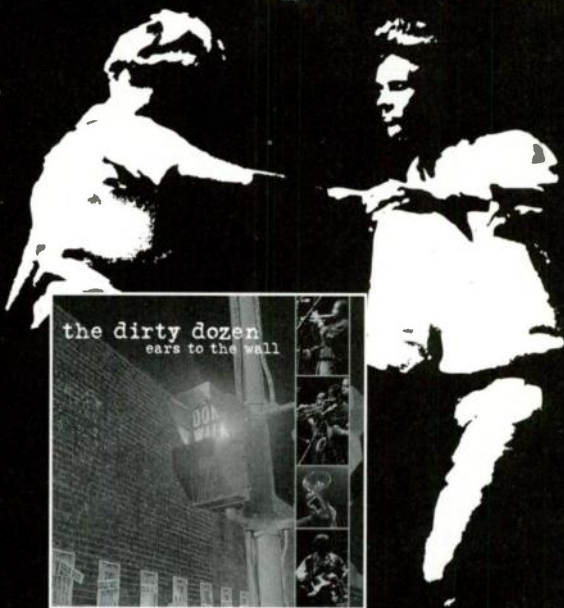
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The Dirty Dozen "Ears to the Wall"

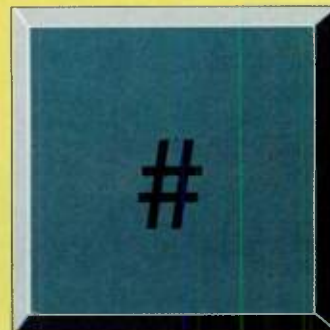
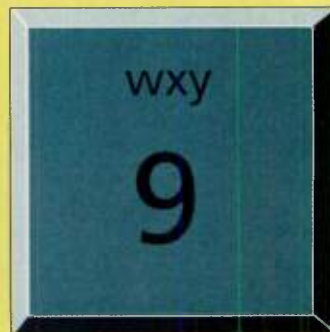
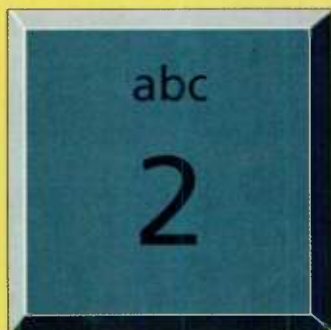
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Make The Connection



TIM BOOTH & ANGELO BADALAMENTI

James
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and the
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peaks

BY TOM LANHAM

They sit together in the bar of their beachfront Santa Monica hotel, arms swaying above their heads, happily singing the "Hold your hands up" chorus of a ditty they've co-written, "Hands In The Rain." They're both dressed all in black, but one—the delicate red-haired chap from England—is whip-thin, 30ish, and vaguely hipster-looking. The other fellow is in his 50s, slightly chubby, and—as his tough accent quickly reveals—definitely from Brooklyn; an almost Godfather-ish figure, you might think at first glance. Curiously, their voices blend into a sugary doo-wop harmony that catches the ear of a couple of waiters, who turn and smile. Still, they've got to wonder: What, exactly, is going on here?

Tim Booth (the Brit) and Angelo Badalamenti (the Brooklynite) don't just croon well together in public, they make some beautiful studio music together too. Booth fronts the intellectual pop combo James; Badalamenti is best known for his stunning, textural soundtracks for David Lynch projects like *Blue Velvet*, *Twin Peaks* and *Wild At Heart*. A more unlikely duo you'll probably never find, but these two disparate talents have meshed perfectly on *Booth And The Bad Angel* (Mercury), one of the most bewitching, pastoral records of this guitar-maniac year.

"And it was a true collaboration," swears Badalamenti. "Because I went into Tim's world and Tim came into mine. And we just got it together. And the timing was right—Tim was doing all these great things with James, but sometimes you just need a relief from something you've been doing all these years. I certainly needed a relief from that *Twin Peaks* thing

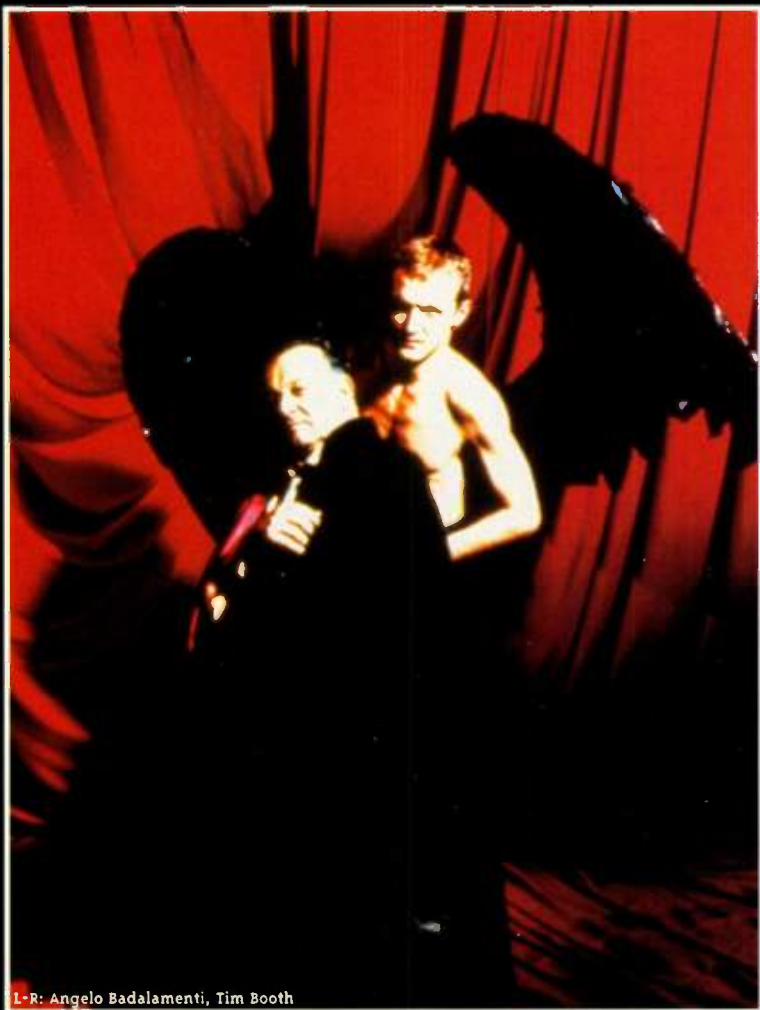
that everyone was on my back over—they wanted more, more, more." How did this hookup take place? Four years ago, a BBC TV program called *Friday Night At The Dome*, famous for pairing musicians from different genres, asked Booth: Were there any artists he'd always dreamed of working with? The answer came in a heartbeat—Badalamenti—and they were put in touch, but the *Dome* duet never materialized. Instead, Booth began faxing ideas to his new friend. Lots of ideas. Finally, Badalamenti, arranging for Paul McCartney in London, caught a James acoustic show and knew the time was right.

Booth wasn't worried. His clairvoyant chums had told him he was fated to work with this American composer. Badalamenti, too, now believes it was "in the cards. And it's a very soulful and spiritual thing when something like this happens, just incredible. When two strangers meet, it's like that old song 'Where Do I

Begin?' How do you do it, because you're so sensitive to the other person and so worried about alienating them. Are you coming on too strong?" He laughs, pats Booth on the back. "But now I know Tim, Tim knows me, so there's total freedom."

Songs like "Butterfly's Dream," "Dance Of The Bad Angels," and the haunting, candle-flickering ballad "Fall In Love With Me" are, in Badalamenti's estimation, "almost like little mini-movies—they paint pictures." Booth admits that "it's hard to write happy songs, like our 'Old Ways.' Not many people can do that and get away with it without it being banal. But the thing about that track is, it's so *catchy*, yet there's not a chorus in the whole number!"

Badalamenti leans forward in his chair, excitedly. "But what about that middle section? It's *recitative*, man! *Total recitative!*" He pauses to collect himself. The secret to "Old Ways"—and, indeed, all of *Bad Angel*, he says, smiling—is that "it just feels right." ★



L-R: Angelo Badalamenti, Tim Booth

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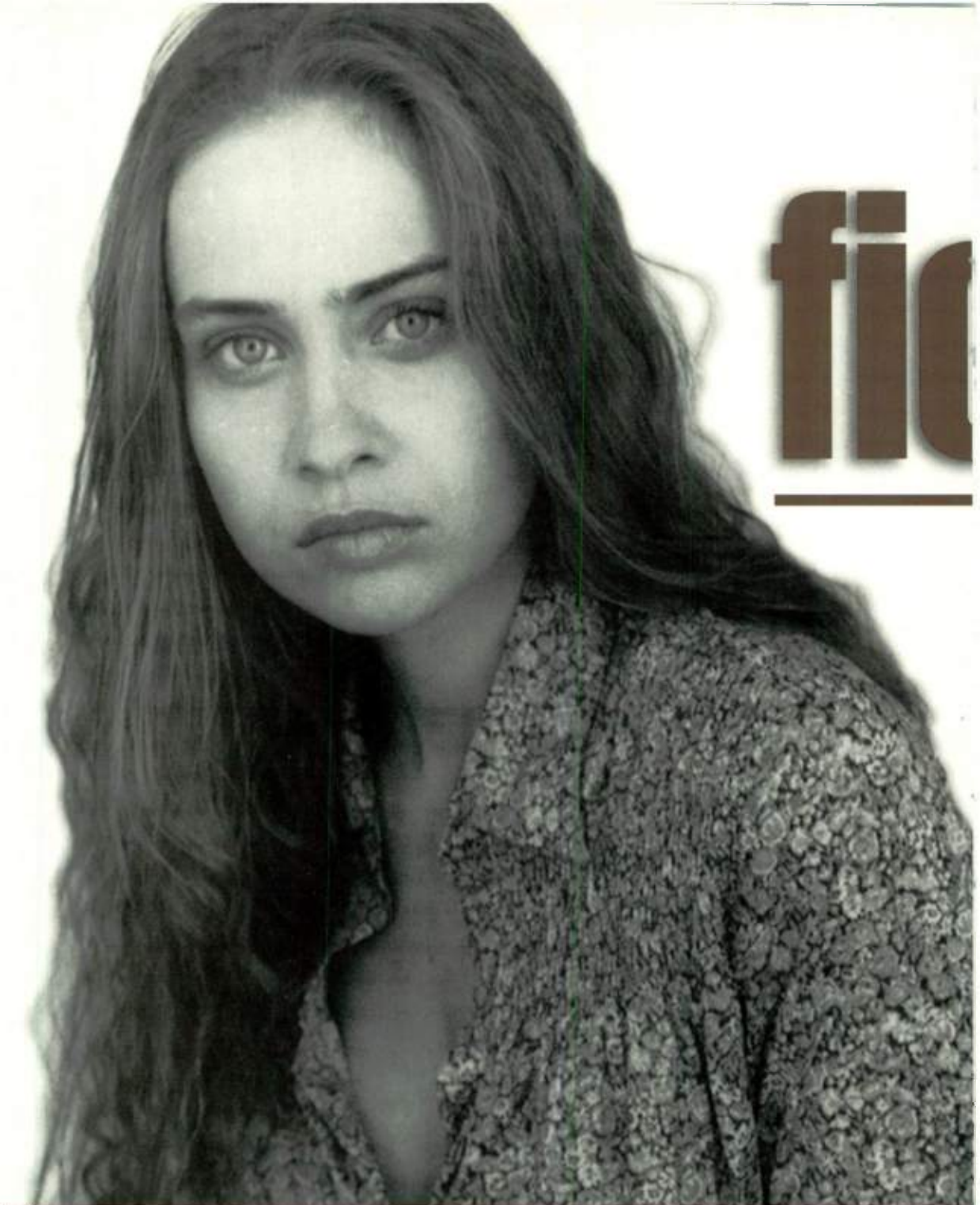
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"It's really strange," Fiona Apple says of the buzz of activity surrounding the impending release of her debut, time, but it's really strange because I'm having a hard time getting excited about stuff just because it feels so

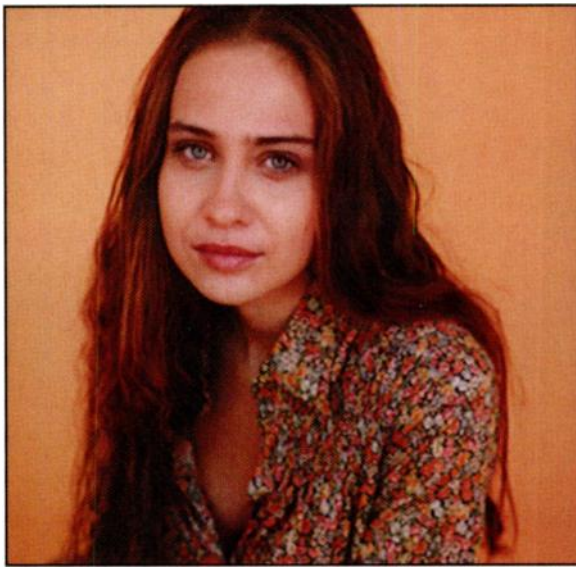
Text by Scott Frampton. Photographs by Chris Cuffaro.

who is Tina Turner apple



Tina Turner. "There's so much shit happening and it's so chaotic most of the
natural. It just feels like the right thing."

Those words may seem terribly blithe coming from an 18-year-old artist who hadn't played a single show before being signed to a recording contract, but there is something that does feel "right" about this early arc to her career. The clamor surrounding the release of her debut is a natural phenomenon of the record business hype ecosystem. Partly, it's her timing: The nine million records sold by Alanis Morissette have opened doors for young women artists of all casts. Partly, it's her talent: The 10 songs of *Tidal*, with their disarming openness, are extraordinarily affecting. And there's Fiona herself: She's equal parts ingenue and old soul, a frail beauty with dark circles under her brilliant blue-green eyes and a voice that's deeply sensual far beyond her years. She's also, for all her willful guilelessness, remarkably aware of



Europe for my birthday, and I didn't know that."

"Andy" is Andrew Slater, a producer whose credits include the R.E.M./Warren Zevon collaboration, Hindu Love Gods, among others, and a manager who has worked with Lenny Kravitz and the Beastie Boys. "Andy is a really big part of things.

amazing the way it happened. I made a demo tape, and I guess normally, when you make the demo tapes, and you don't have a manager or anything, you make a lot of tapes up and you send them out to a lot of people, and that's what I intended to do. I'd just finished school, and we went in and made a demo tape of three songs, and I think I made up like, I think, 78 copies was our order. I was going to go back to New York for Christmas, and then when I came back, that's when I was going to start sending out all the tapes. But I took four or five with me to New York, just on vacation, just to give to my family and stuff. And one of my friends was like 'I babysit, and the woman that I babysit for, she's a public relations person. Do you want me to give her the tape?' And I was like 'oh, sure.' And I just gave her one of the tapes. And this woman had a Christmas

"Women have been rockers forever. It's not a phenomenon, it's just logic. It's business."

herself and her place in a business that's currently building a sensitive young girl who wouldn't top 100 pounds soaking wet into the next big thing.

"There's been a lot of 'little sister to Alanis' kind of questions," she says. "a lot of attention paid to, like, 'how do you feel about being part of this new phenomenon of lady rockers.' It's ridiculous because women have been rockers forever. It's just now they have more opportunity because somebody broke through and was successful, and now record companies are backing them financially. It's not a phenomenon, it's just logic. It's business."

The immediate business of Fiona Apple, the growing cottage industry based on expectations for her career, is more of a mystery to her. "It's so weird. I don't know anything about my future. Everybody else knows what's going on. The plans change every second, and I don't know when things are going to happen. Somebody out there must, but I don't, and I probably won't until the last minute," she admits in a tone that conveys both acceptance and wonder. "I was in Andy's office the other day, and picked up a piece of paper that said 'Fiona Apple Calendar' and it had [entries for] months and months and months from now. I'm going to be in

It's strange. It's perfect. When I met Andy, I didn't have to think about 'do I want this man to be my manager.' And we didn't even know that he was going to be producing at that point. But Andy, honestly, is one of my best friends. I mean, I hang out with him all the time, I talk on the phone with him all the time. I love him so much. It's amazing for me to think about it. It just fits so well. We work so well together. He didn't form me into anything... He just really understands me really well. He understands what I want to sound like and what I want to say... He's the greatest to work with. I can't say anything bad. I'm really good at saying bad things about people, too, and I can't say anything bad about him."

The feeling seems to be mutual, but Slater, for his part, is wary of the "Svengali shit" associated with other producers of young female artists, and hesitates to comment on anything other than *Tidal*'s production, saying only "I thought somebody was playing a joke on me when I got the [demo] tape, because they said 'Listen, I have a tape of a girl 17 years old who wrote these songs,' and when I listened to the lyrics to 'Never Is A Promise,' and I heard her voice, I said 'no way.'"

How he got the tape does seem straight out of a made-for-TV movie. Fiona tells the story: "It's pretty

party, and Andy went to the party, heard it, called me, and then I met him. And I still have 77 tapes that I never gave out."

Of that three-song demo, only "Never Is A Promise," with some strings added by Van Dyke Parks, made it to *Tidal*. The album's other nine songs evolved over the next year, with Slater fleshing out her ideas in the studio. "At the beginning of it, really, I didn't have a specific 'this is what I want my album to sound like.' I didn't have all the instrumentation in my mind. I'm completely musically illiterate. I *still* don't know which drums are which and everything, so it was very hard for me to get in there with a specific idea of 'I want a snare drum right here in this song,' or 'I want lots of strings in this song.' I didn't really know where I wanted to go. I didn't really *want* to know. I just wanted to learn as I went along. I just told Andy what kind of feel I wanted for each song, and he kinda told me which instruments might give me that feel, and we brought them in and just tried everything out. It's basically all trial and error.

"He didn't shape my songs or tell me what to make them sound like," Apple says of Slater, and she seems as surprised as anyone about how few her compromises have been. "I've had so *much* freedom. I mean, when I

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went into this, I went in with the complete New Yorker mind—just looking over my shoulder every which way, thinking ‘I’m going to be taken advantage of, people are going to try to change my image, change my songs, tell me what to write about, tell me how to write’... And everybody that I’m working with is encouraging me to just be me.”

Just being Fiona Apple wasn’t always something she felt free to be, and it’s one of the reasons that the record has such a sense of release. “I spent a lot of my life in therapy, from fifth grade on, through high school—for reasons that were stupid, like that I was really quiet as a kid and I spent a lot of time by myself. My school thought that I was depressed and suicidal, so they put me in therapy and that completely screwed me up. I was fine until everybody started telling me that there was something wrong with me. And I felt really bad and I was made fun of a lot in school. I was really just lonely as a kid and just really misunderstood, and so now I look back on that and I think it had such a big effect on who and I am and everything. I spent so much of my life feeling like I was being dissected by people, that I don’t really have any insecurities about telling people exactly how I feel.”

This openness is one of the most striking things about Fiona, and it’s part of what makes *Tidal* extraordinary. Much of the attention paid to the “phenomenon” of young women in music has been based on the frank expressions of sexuality or anger, but Apple’s willful honesty is another thing. Although they’re often cloaked in metaphor, her emotions are just as raw as the *fêted* histrionics of her contemporaries. What makes her different is that she seems to want listeners to get to know *her* as much as—if not more than—what she’s thinking.

“This one interviewer in Europe said that she felt guilty when she was watching me on stage because she felt like she was hearing something that she wasn’t supposed to be hearing. And that really said to me that I’m doing what I wanted to be doing [with my music]. Not that I wanted to make people feel guilty for listening, but I’m being completely honest and everything... because the whole point is that I felt so misunderstood for so much of my life that I want to get up there and say what I want to say. I want to be understood. I want to make myself heard. Writing it out, writing out how I feel, it gives me satisfaction to express myself that way, but it’s just the ultimate satisfaction for me to



actually get up there and say it all. I think that’s why I brought it to music, because I really feel like a writer more than a musician. I think I just use music as a vehicle so I can sing what I’m saying and have a bigger voice... It’s the act of actually saying it, actually performing it, to people that gives me the satisfaction that I needed for my whole life. Just being able to be ‘this is how I feel, this is who I am. You heard it. That’s it.’ It’s really fun for me.”

Does this mean that she is the “Sullen Girl” that the disc’s second track would imply? “‘Sullen Girl’ is... complicated for me. It’s about a lot of things. It’s about when I was doing the album and everything was happening all at once and I just felt like ‘Oh my God, what’s going on here?’ The second verse is a... I went through a really hard time when I was a very, very cold person. I didn’t like to be near people. When I was 12, I was raped by a stranger, and that’s what that song is basically about, because I felt like everybody in my life thought there was something wrong with me, and it was just my wondering ‘was that what changed me?’ Like the second verse, ‘Is that why they call me the sullen girl?/They don’t know I used to sail the deep and tranquil sea/But he washed ashore and took my pearl and left an empty shell of me,’” she races through the lyric so quickly it’s almost unrecognizable, “and it was really just because I felt

like ‘Well, I used to be a lighthearted person. And I am a lighthearted person, but everyone looks at me and they think I’m all really serious and depressed and sullen. Do I come off that way because of this experience?’ It was something that just caused me a lot of pain, and I just felt like ‘Is that why I’m being misunderstood?’ So that’s when it started getting bad, when people started assuming that things were bad and started labeling me as a sick person.”

Suddenly it’s easy to empathize with that European reporter. But she is quick, after a self-conscious apology for “bringing the conversation down,” to accentuate the positives in her life experience. “It’s part of who I am. I don’t regret it. I’m happy with who I am, so how can I be unhappy with anything that’s happened to me? That was an experience that made me a lot stronger. It taught me a lot about who I am and about life. Things happen and you go through pain. It doesn’t have to be such a big deal. It’s like ‘yeah, I was raped.’ It’s over, though. And I learned from it. It’s sad, but there’s good that comes out of it, too.”

Looking out through loose strands of hair, she wraps her thin arms around her knees, pulling them close to warm herself in the cool early summer breeze. She seems a little uncomfortable and yet exactly where she wants be—that combination of strength and vulnerability that makes *Tidal* so alluring—as she sums up how quickly she’s been collected by the whirlwind around her.

“For a very long time, for I guess my whole life, I wanted to do this, but I didn’t tell anybody, and I didn’t even tell myself—I didn’t admit it. I think back on it, and I can’t really understand why I didn’t admit it to myself, but you know those thoughts of ‘what am I going to do when I grow up, what am I going to do when I get out of school?’ I just avoided those thoughts completely, because I knew what I wanted to do, but I didn’t know if it was possible. I had such a lack of confidence that I didn’t really want to admit to myself that I wanted to do this, because once you admit it, you open yourself up to the possibility of failure. The whole time I was afraid that I was going to be playing gigs for the rest of my life just trying to get something done, and I didn’t want that life, so it seemed like it was impossible for me to do anything. I had this place where I wanted to be in life, but I wasn’t willing to take all the steps to get there, and I *didn’t* have to take any of the steps! I didn’t play one gig before I got signed. I didn’t even play one gig before I got to Paris!” ★

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- J EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL** Walking Wounded *Atlantic*
- I FASTBACKS** New Mansions In Sound *Sub Pop*
- F FIGGS** Banda Macho *Capitol*
- I FISHBONE** Chim Chim's Bad Ass Revenge *Rowdy-Arista*
- G FLUFFER** Ask Me What It Feels Like. *Link*
- H GASTR DEL SOL** Upgrade & Afterlife *Drag City*
- I GRANT LEE BUFFALO** Copperopolis *Slash-Reprise*
- D GROOVIE GHOULES** World Contact Day *Lookout!*
- D IMPERIAL TEEN** Seasick *Slash-London*
- E JALE** So Wound *Sub Pop*
- H JAMES TAYLOR QUARTET** The Money Spyder *Acid Jazz-Hollywood*
- I JAWBOX** Jawbox *TAG*
- J KMFDM** Xtort *Wax Trax!-TVT*
- E KOSTARS** Classics With A "K" *Grand Royal*
- I LAND OF THE LOOPS** Bundle Of Joy *Up*
- J LOVE NUT** Bastards Of Melody *Interscope*
- J MAGNAPOP** Rubbing Doesn't Help *Play It Again Sam-Priority*
- D MAKE-UP** Destination: Love; Live! At Cold Rice *Dischord*
- F MAN OR ASTRO-MAN?** Experiment Zero *Touch And Go*
- J ME'SHELL NDEGEOCELLO** Peace Beyond Passion *Maverick-Reprise*
- L MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO** Subliminal Sandwich *Nothing-Interscope*
- H MELT-BANANA** Scratch Or Stitch *Skin Graft*
- I MOOG COOKBOOK** Moog Cookbook *Restless*
- I NADA SURF** High/Low *Elektra-EEG*
- K ORBITAL** In Sides *Ifrr-London*
- H PALACE MUSIC** Arise Therefore *Drag City*
- J PATTI SMITH** Gone Again *Arista*
- J PAUL WESTERBERG** Eventually *Reprise*
- G POLVO** Exploded Drawing *Touch And Go*
- J PORNO FOR PYROS** Good God's Urge *Warner Bros.*
- F POSIES** Amazing Disgrace *DGC*
- J PRONG** Rude Awakening *Epic*
- H PROPAGANDHI** "Less Talk, More Rock" *Fat Wreck Chords*
- J RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE** Evil Empire *Epic*
- F RAINCOATS** Looking In The Shadows *DGC*
- B RED FIVE** Flash *Interscope*
- J REVEREND HORTON HEAT** It's Martini Time *Interscope*
- G SENSE FIELD** Building *Revelation*
- H SINCOLA** Crash Landing In Teen Heaven *Caroline*
- J SOUNDGARDEN** Down On The Upside *A&M*
- J SOUNDTRACK** I Shot Andy Warhol *TAG*
- H SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS** Hot *Mammoth*
- I STEREO LAB** Emperor Tomato Ketchup *Elektra-EEG*
- J STONE TEMPLE PILOTS** Tiny Music... *Atlantic*
- H STRUNG OUT** Suburban Teenage Wasteland Blues *Fat Wreck Chords*
- F SUICIDE MACHINES** Destruction By Definition *Hollywood*
- H SUPER DELUXE** Famous *Tim/Kerr/Revolution-WB*
- G TEXAS IS THE REASON** Do You Know Who You Are? *Revelation*
- J THE CURE** Wild Mood Swings *Fiction/Elektra-EEG*
- I TUSCADERO** The Pink Album *Elektra-EEG*
- C UNWOUND** Repetition *Kill Rock Stars*
- J VARIOUS ARTISTS** Trip Hop Test Part 3 *Moonshine*
- G VARIOUS ARTISTS** Lounge Ax: Defense & Relocation CD *Touch And Go*
- H VARIOUS ARTISTS** Eyesore: A Stab At The Residents *Vaccination*
- L VARIOUS ARTISTS** Cowabunga!: The Surf Box *Rhino*
- I WALLFLOWERS** Bringing Down The Horse *Interscope*
- E WESTON** Got Beat Up *Go Kart*
- I YUM YUM** Dan Loves Patti *TAG*

reviews

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

"The name of the album is *A Boy Named Goo*. The picture is of a boy covered in goo. What part of the concept are they unclear on?" —*The Goo Goo Dolls' Johnny Reznik, on his band's latest being pulled from Wal-Mart stores because the cover art, which features a boy smeared with blackberry juice, was thought to suggest child abuse.*

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 SCENIC / *Scenic* / Independent Projects-World Domination
 SLUG / *The 3 Man Themes* / PCP
 SWANS / *Die Tur Ist Zu* / Rough Trade (Germany)-Revolver
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 TULLYCRAFT / *Old Standards, New Traditions* / Harriet
 WEEN / *12 Golden Country Greats* / Elektra
 STEVE WYNN / *Melting In The Dark* / Zero Hour
 NEIL YOUNG WITH CRAZY HORSE / *Broken Arrow* / Reprise



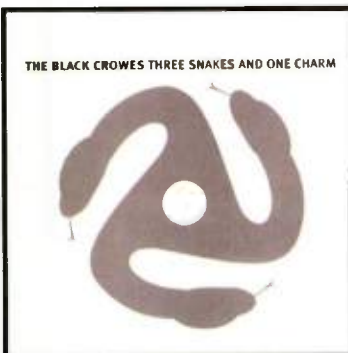
KRISTEN BARRY / *The Beginning The Middle The End* / Virgin

Kristen Barry plied her songs for years in Seattle in various formats, emoting by herself with an acoustic guitar, and working with different bands. And judging by "Gotta Go"—a kiss-off to a guy (and a scene) too into drugs—there's no love lost for the town where her name always seemed to be misspelled in posters ("Kirsten," or "Berry"). So it's perhaps odd that her long-awaited debut is dogged by the sound blamed on Seattle: too much grungy guitar-noise, not enough songwriting and singing. Barry's range isn't huge, and her voice doesn't always grab words with authority. But when given good treatment and material, her dusky singing has a lot of charm. It's only on the fourth song, "Created," after a suitably ominous intro, that the

record begins to flaunt what she can do. The chorus shows off her lush, introspective voice, and the song is moving; the lyrics are worthwhile but fairly standard—hinting at adolescent suicide and child abuse. In the record's better second half, it's clear Barry and producers the Robb Brothers

are successfully capturing powerful vocals and raw, rocking textures. "Seeing Gun" is catchy and topical; "Paralyzed" has strings and a nice mystery to it. Barry has started a journey but not yet found a new home. **DANNY HOUSMAN**

DATALOG: Released Aug. 6.
 FILE UNDER: Murky rock chanteuse.
 R.I.Y.L.: Salt, Veruca Salt, Cranberries.



BLACK CROWES / *Three Snakes And One Charm* / American

In a world where hipsters have desperately turned to German prog-slop and Frog-pop for kicks, and classic-rock plebes have abandoned the millionth spin of "Mississippi Queen" for Bush, the Black Crowes have defiantly clung to FM-radio-ready boogie and ballads. Four records into their career, the Crowes' Stones/Faces/Skynyrd sound is often still a guilty pleasure (like any good singles band, especially on the car radio), but it's quickly growing weary with predictability. In 1989, it was novel to see and hear a band coping Stones blackface routines and taking fashion cues from circa-'73 Ron Wood, but the Crowes have gone from humorlessly coping from their own heroes to humorlessly recycling their own schtick, somehow without creating a sound of their own. The only growth—and it is appreciated—is that Chris Robinson has reined in his pipes with an improved melodic sensibility. Increasingly, his vocals actually drive songs instead of just meandering amorously atop

grooves. *Three Snakes's* more self-consciously song-oriented cuts are pretty limp, but on the songs where grooves and hooks come together (check out "Under A Mountain," for example) the results are undeniable. Hopefully, those tunes will be the singles and you won't have to lay down the long-green for the album to enjoy them. **RILEY PUCKETT**

DATALOG: Released Jul. 23.
 FILE UNDER: Classic-rock die-hards.
 R.I.Y.L.: Faces, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Blues Traveler.

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SHEILA CHANDRA / *ABoneCroneDrone* / RealWorld-Caroline

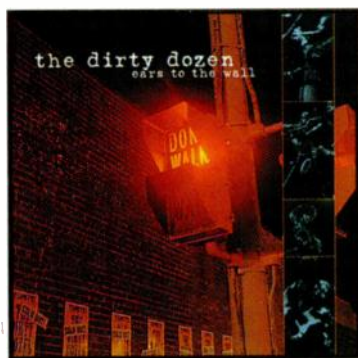
There's a touch of the exotic to Sheila Chandra's persona that makes you expect alien, microtonal wailing—but that's your cultural prejudice. She's just another breathy, ethereal English girl, and she readily admits to employing the European 12-tone scale. But her interest in electronics and mystical self-actualization has led her straight through the territory of LaMonte Young and Boyd Rice to the high plateaus of outer Mongolia. There, the herdsman of Tannu Tuva devote lifetimes to perfecting the skill of their throats and tongues in amplifying their voices' natural harmonics. Singing just one bass note, Tuvan vocalists provoke warbling arias of harmonics. The eerie effect is perfectly audible without electronic boosting. Sheila takes the shortcut—technology puts her harmonics right up front with no effort at all. Pulsating and shimmering, they provide virtually the entire fabric of this record. The six drones vary only slightly: some use guitars or sitars to add rhythm, a few seem to use Chandra's breathing, and "ABoneCroneDrone 6"

DATALOG: Released Jun. 25.

FILE UNDER: Trance.

R.I.Y.L.: Native American chanting, A.C. Marias, Zoviet France.

features the unmistakable sound of waves on the beach. Chanting over a drone is familiar to connoisseurs of law enforcement funerals (I mean the bagpipes, of course!), but that doesn't mean it isn't lovely. Especially with headphones or at high volume, these drones can seduce you to new depths of meditative rapture with their fuzzy digital sheen. **NELL ZINK**



DIRTY DOZEN / *Ears To The Wall* / Mammoth

The qualifier "Brass Band" has been dropped from the Dirty Dozen's name, which begs the question: Are these guys the Lee Marvin and Ernest Borgnine of second line? Since their last recorded work three years back, *Jelly*, they've stripped the drum battery down to a solitary trapsman, added a keyboardist, and occasionally shift the sousaphone over for room for a bassist. Still, when these guys sink their teeth into a groove, they don't let go. *Ears To The Wall* is essentially a funk record, containing 10 slabs of some of the greasiest, nastiest dancefloor gunk alive. This stuff percolates, and it just might be the most organic dance record heard since the '70s; it also might be the first one to be recorded by real people playing real instruments at least since the brief lifetime of go-go. These very real men are also possessed of very real imaginations, as this funk is dosed with touches of reggae here and there (which, after all, is a bastard variant on second line rhythmic thinking) and jazz, without getting the least bit Chick Corea about it. The Dirty Dozen are still one of the few

DATALOG: Released Jul. 6.

FILE UNDER: Gritty, brainy funk.

R.I.Y.L.: The Meters, the Neville Brothers, Allen Toussaint, Dr. John.

elemental pleasures in life, and a pure joy to be around. **TIM STEGALL**



ELECTRONIC / *Raise The Pressure* / Warner Bros.

Electronic pop music is a reflection of, and only as adventurous as, the technology of its time. Hence, you'd never believe five years have passed between Electronic's self-titled debut and the release of its follow-up, *Raise The Pressure*. Either Bernard Sumner (New Order) and Johnny Marr (ex-Smiths) have been boarded up inside a sound-proof studio since 1991, or they simply yearn for the days when nine-inch nails were carpentry tools and EMF was still considered the future sound of London. The gay-disco keyboard arrangements and diva-fueled choruses of "Dark Angel," "Until The End Of Time" and "If You've Got Love" bounce with a campiness that you'd never expect from two bricklayers of the post-punk infrastructure. Guitar-driven tracks like "Forbidden City" and "For You" offer similar paradoxes. The simplicity of the tracks gives little argument against the fact that Sumner and Marr have fallen too far from their celebrated peaks—so why are the tracks finding themselves mysteriously glued on "infinite repeat" in

DATALOG: Released Jul. 9.

FILE UNDER: Bright, uplifting electro/guitar pop.

R.I.Y.L.: New Order, 808 State, Erasure.

my stereo? After helping write the modern rock epic, Electronic is now hard at work on its epilogue: the story of a little pop song that rode in on a rainbow-colored melody and found a celebration of life, love and the pursuit of happiness. Cheesy? You betcha. But at least the boys have been around long enough to differentiate brie from Velveeta. **M. TYE COMER**

second thoughts

Sometimes it takes a while to figure out what a record really means. With this issue, we inaugurate a feature where we'll look back at albums that came out a while ago, now that we've had some time to think about them.

PALACE / Arise Therefore / Drag City

Some Palace records are better than others, and this isn't one of them. Writing that sentence is tantamount to heresy, given current critical consensus on Will Oldham's legendary-before-its-time outfit. Oldham, by accident or design, has managed to set things up so that by this, his fourth full-length release, the faithful will swallow anything as manna, and the unconverted are simply rendered incapable of judging whether this latest collection of chilly singer-songwriter epistles is good Palace (like "Riding," or the songs about Florida) or bad Palace (the nonsensical *Days In The Wake*). One thing is obvious: If these songs were as great as their solemn performances seem to proclaim, they would here find their perfect setting. A rudimentary drum machine (meant to foreground the inauthenticity, or at least modernity, of Oldham's Appalachian balladeer persona, as if one needed reminding) rarely annoys, and Oldham's clear electric strum is nicely framed by his brother Ned's simple bass parts (and wah-wah indulgences) and guest David Grubbs' Satie-fied piano. Unfortunately, this lovely, if static, sound design is too often squandered on shapeless melodies that barely deserve the name and lyrics that blur the line between tantalizingly cryptic and stone impenetrable. Oldham can't resist cluttering his straighter narratives ("No Gold Digger") with inconsistently applied archaisms, like a shoddily translated *Carmina Burana*. Other songs meditate inchoately on resurrection and the flesh (the title track, "Kid Of Harith"), but for every fully realized line ("It isn't an urge, it is more like a duty/To begin to explore again things of this world.") there are three more marred by awkward phrasing and imprecision. Worse, Oldham's voice, here a mannered quaver, treats good and bad lyrics equally—as throwaways. His decisions to sing more in key, or less, from song to song seem conscious, but answer to no discernable logic. Oldham is neither a great poet, nor a great charlatan, but a hit-and-miss mortal, like the rest of us. Even if I'm missing something (a lot?) here, a question stands: Does Palace's already-assumed mantle of 'greatness' free it from the requirement that its records continue being good? FRANKLIN BRUNO

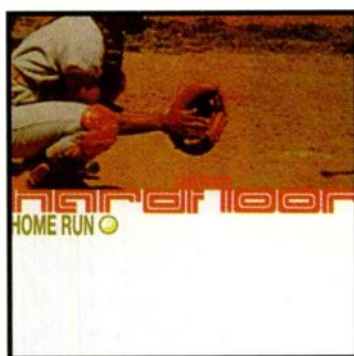




FRENTE / Shape / Mammoth-Atlantic ●

DATALOG: Released Jul. 16.
FILE UNDER: Sweet acoustic pop.
R.I.Y.L.: 10,000 Maniacs, Cardigans.

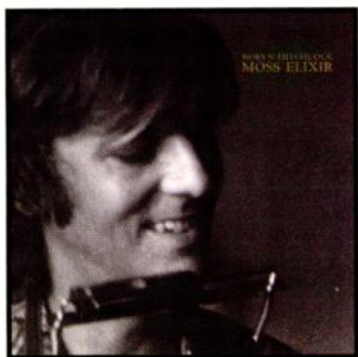
Frente is the cheap Chinese takeout of pop: tasty at the time, ultimately unfulfilling. But face it: the band is working with limitations. Angie Hart's angelic, rich voice strains and bounces, but can't do much more than sound angelic and rich, and although *Shape*, Frente's second full-length album, fights against easy-listening stereotypes brought on by the band's hit version of New Order's "Bizarre Love Triangle," essentially acoustic guitar tunes are what the band does best. Musically, *Shape* is pretty—there's "Goodbye Good Guy," a light, summery-toned tune, and the bouncy, lithe, flute-laced "Jungle." Sometimes, it's gorgeous, as with "We Can Keep Her Safe From You," a catchy piano tune vaguely about some girl needing protection... oh, read the title. Which is the main problem with Frente: the lyrics waver between lack of subtlety ("What's Wrong With The Air" is an environmental song) and extreme inscrutability ("Clue," with lines like "just cross your eyes, all the blood to your brain is in vain"), so the unequivocally pretty music feels that much more insubstantial. There is no shortage of pop bliss: "What's Come Over Me" is top-notch Frente—a dreamily insouciant tremolo guitar, matched with a subdued Hart, makes for the most honest song on the record. But immediately thereafter, the nine-minute "Calmly Kill Me" repeats the same verse/chorus combo over and over again. Overindulgence simply doesn't become Frente. It just ain't pretty. **RANDEE DAWN**



HARDFLOOR / Home Run / Harthouse

DATALOG: Released Jun. 25.
FILE UNDER: The acid-trance revival.
R.I.Y.L.: Early Moby, The Prodigy, Sven Vath.

Hardfloor has a God-given ability to produce a remix that can blow the door off any club and rip the pacifier right out of your mouth (just ask New Order or the Shamen). But the group has a higher agenda: a holy crusade to single-handedly spur a world-wide acid trance revival. *Home Run*, Hardfloor's third full-length release (apparently a concept album about baseball—your guess is as good as mine), is a glorious addition to battles already won. Not wasting any time with superfluous introductions, the disc's first track, "Strike Out," drops you dead center in a familiar 4/4 bass kick and wavery, almost lucid bass line: the trademarks of German acid trance. Hardfloor's secret is a careful mix of simplistic minimalism and grandiose layering. The hyperspeed grooves of "Pitch-Hitter" and "Splitfinger Fastball" and slow burns of "Double Skills And Knuckle Skills" are dense overlays of very simple loops that could be uttered by any old Roland 303. It's easy to get lost in the electronic collage, but even at its most frenzied pitch, the building blocks of each track remain easily identifiable. Please don't interpret Hardfloor as techno-by-numbers, though. This is extreme, advanced stuff whose repetitive nature and hard-acid grooves will simultaneously bore and blow the minds of amateurs. This is one playing field reserved for pros only. **M. TYE COMER**



ROBYN HITCHCOCK / Moss Elixir / Warner Bros.

DATALOG: Release date: Aug. 13. A vinyl-only collection of "outtakes and prototypes," *Mossy Liquor*, released Jul. 23.
FILE UNDER: Pothead pop.
R.I.Y.L.: Epic Soundtracks, Neil Innes, Terry Jones.

Robyn Hitchcock is plain eccentric, and nobody's about to dispute that. But it used to be that he could get away with it. His lyrics had ridiculous ideas and ludicrous rhymes, but he seemed to toss them off effortlessly, and every so often their absurdity would somehow get through to something real and meaningful. And his songs were awfully repetitive, but at least they were catchy, and he usually had the amazing rhythm section of the Soft Boys and, later, the Egyptians to back up his guitar virtuosity and verbal improvisations ("When I see the girl that I love best/I wanna go home and *take off my vest!*"). Now Robyn's on his own, occasionally with a couple of nobodies behind him, and mostly limiting his guitar playing to some perfunctory strumming. The result: his most dismal record since 1982's disastrous *Groovy Decay*. The big problem is that his songwriting muse seems to have mostly deserted him: the jokes seem forced, the melodies go nowhere. There are some okay lines ("I gotta split/It's a quaint old-fashioned way to leave the room"), but none of the imaginative leaps that made Hitchcock great—most of the time he just sounds like a batty old Englishman on autopilot. **DOUGLAS WOLK**

various artists

SOUNDTRACKS, COMPILATIONS, ETC.

The soundtrack to *Trainspotting* (Capitol) is more or less a State Of The Britpop statement with a couple of American interlopers: Iggy Pop (represented by career highlights "Lust For Life" and "Nightclubbing") and Lou Reed. Otherwise, we get new stuff from Primal Scream (a 10-minute electronic groove), Blur's Damon Albarn solo, Pulp, and Sleeper (a dreadful cover of Blondie's "Atomic"), plus oldies, relatively speaking, from the likes of New Order and Elastica... If you like UB40 and don't pick up *Grooving At Studio One* (Heartbeat), it'll be like owning records by Sha Na Na and not Chuck Berry, if you know what I mean. The album basically consists of the original Jamaican versions of most of the songs the British band covered on the two *Labour Of Love* albums. It's a wonderful thing... *Punk Lost And Found* (Shanachie) is a weird but sometimes great collection of late-'70s stuff, mostly from obscure punk predecessors of more familiar bands. You'll never hear Simple Minds the same way again once you hear the single they made as Johnny & The Self Abusers; ditto for Dexy's Midnight Runners and Kevin Rowland's hilariously dreadful early band the Killjoys. The real public service of the album, though, is resuscitating the Freshies' brilliant record-collector paean "I'm In Love With The Girl On The Manchester Virgin Megastore Checkout Desk"... Fans of the New Zealand pop scene should track down a copy of "...but I can write songs okay": *Forty Years Of Dunedin Popular Music* (Yellow Eye). It's a mammoth three-CD set that's exactly what it says it is: a complete history of the scene in a tiny Aotearoan city. The first disc is mostly negligible stuff from '50s talent shows and '60s garage bands, but the other two are solidly great stuff, including lots of rare and unreleased material by the Chills, Straitjacket Fits, Look Blue Go Purple and, best of all, Chris Knox's first band, The Enemy. **DOUGLAS WOLK**



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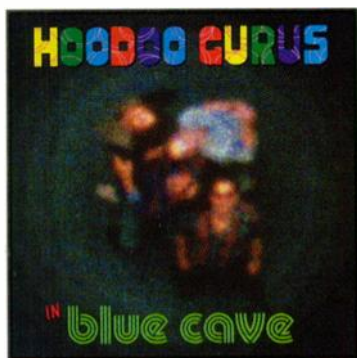
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HOODOO GURUS / Blue Cave / Zoo

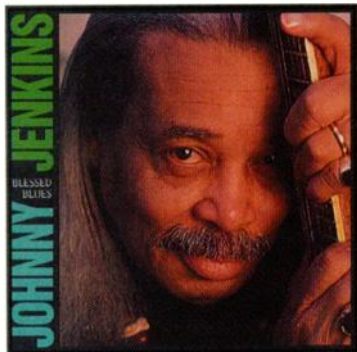
Like a long-rolling stone that gathers others' moss, Australian stalwarts Hoodoo Gurus adapt to a myriad of rock styles without ever finding one to call their own. On their ninth album, *Blue Cave*, they move from the grungy "Down On Me" to the Britpoppy "Waking Up Tired" to the Jethro Tull-ish "Mind The Spider" without batting an eyelash. It sounds like a game of cover-your-bases, but you can't blame them—the Gurus haven't enjoyed much Stateside attention since their late '80s college hits *Mars Needs Guitars!* and *Blow Your Cool*, in which the Aussies concocted a sometimes awkward mix of electric-rock energy and country cool. They were a little tough to pigeonhole then, but they're even more diffuse now—one cut on the new album even sounds like a Green Day outtake. For all that, *Blue Cave* doesn't feel like a cynical album. It sounds more like four maturing musicians honing their chops after 12 years together, and hitting more often than they miss. Most effortlessly enjoyable is "Night Must Fall," a

sumptuous acoustic ballad that the Goo Goo Dolls only wish they had written to follow up "Name." Hoodoo Gurus may not have the youthful cachet of current Aussie rock sensations like Silverchair, but they play a similar populist rock that's faultlessly eager to please. **CHRIS MOLANPHY**

DATALOG: Released Jul. 30.

FILE UNDER: Stalwarts with skills.

R.I.Y.L.: You Am I, Buffalo Tom, Goo Goo Dolls.



JOHNNY JENKINS / Blessed Blues / Capricorn

Johnny Jenkins was a struggling bluesy soul singer from Macon, Georgia, when he auditioned for Stax Records with his band the Pinetoppers. Faced with the proverbial end-of-session question "So what else do you do?," he trotted out his young friend Otis Redding to sing a few tunes of his own... and you know what happened from there. Then, in 1970, Jenkins had another crack at recording. That album, *Ton Ton Macoute*, was the joint: a funky, soulful stew of blues, funk and soul, with some of the best slide guitar playing of Duane Allman's career. And it was on that album that Jenkins' version of "I Walk On Gilded Splinters" began with a slamming, funky beat that became, twenty years later, the backbone of Beck's "Loser." After another 25 years, Jenkins has another shot at avoiding oblivion. Unfortunately, for those who've heard his other, better record, it's kind of a letdown. *Blessed Blues* is basically a by-the-numbers blues album—very good, but a trifle generic. Jenkins is a great guitarist and a striking

vocalist, but here he just lacks a setting. Except for a few of the sloppier cuts, it just doesn't rock. Loath as I am to champion an album that's been out of print for 20 years over a new release, it's just too damn true. **JAMES LIEN**

DATALOG: Release date: Aug. 13.

FILE UNDER: Blues and soul.

R.I.Y.L.: Recent Buddy Guy, Muddy Waters, Holmes Brothers.



KMFDM / Xtort / Wax Trax!-TVT

When it does what it does best, KMFDM is the best at what it does, namely jack-hammer industrial anthems that hit with stunning precision and power, combining Einstürzende Neubauten noise with UFO guitars. On *Xtort*, the band's eighth album, leader Sascha Konietzko opens up the sound and brings in a truckload of guest stars, while co-founder En Esch plays a much diminished role, appearing on only two tracks. People who like KMFDM's trademark blitzkrieg techno bass lines will find few of them, although "Son Of A Gun" is pure old school. But guitars take precedence over keyboards on most of the album; in fact, the most shocking thing about *Xtort* is the sound of a slide guitar. Guest star Chris Connelly (formerly of Ministry and Revolting Cocks)

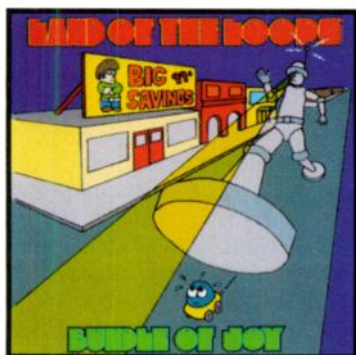
growls "Rules" and "Craze," and spoken-word gadfly Nicole Blackman turns in a strong performance on the blistering "Dogma." Lyrically, the album follows industrial's well-worn path of mocking cynicism: "Leave your angst behind and fly sky high!" urges "Inane." With Ministry gone grindcore,

Skinny Puppy just gone, and Nine Inch Nails a brand name, KMFDM is now the standard bearer of industrial. As Blackman hisses on "Dogma," "We need something to kill the pain of all that nothing inside," and if you're in the mood for being hit with a wrecking ball, *Xtort* will do just fine. **HEIDI MACDONALD**

DATALOG: Released Jul. 25.

FILE UNDER: Industrial drilling and filling.

R.I.Y.L.: Revolting Cocks, Einstürzende Neubauten, Skinny Puppy



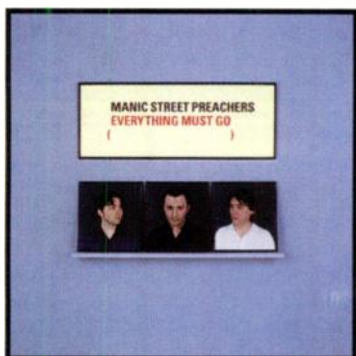
LAND OF THE LOOPS / *Bundle Of Joy* / Up

There are two kinds of sampling: the kind where the idea is that the listeners will be able to identify the sample and therefore get into the song that much more quickly, and the kind where the idea is to bring in sounds that the listener has never heard before, to use the history of recorded sound as a vast bank of possibilities but avoid the preconceptions that come with familiar tunes and riffs. Alan Sutherland, the mastermind behind Land Of The Loops, is squarely in the latter camp: of the billion or so samples that make up *Bundle Of Joy*, not one is recognizable. His constructions are buoyant and tuneful—the loops seem to be circling in mid-air, like pinwheels, with fragmentary vocal samples sprouting up in unexpected places and unfolding into refrains (or at least repeated bits). Some of these tracks are even songs, with guest vocalists including Heather Lewis of Beat Happening (on three songs) and somebody named Meadie Ballenger, who sings the delightful “I Confess” and sounds as if she’s about 10 years old. Sutherland is also a whiz with beats, understating and delaying his rhythms instead of hitting the 4/4 outright, which just makes them funkier. A lot of the dub trickery he indulges in is pretty heady, but the album is utterly listenable, danceable and enjoyable. *DOUGLAS WOLK*

DATALOG: Released Jun. 20.

FILE UNDER: Sample-crazed indie-dance.

R.I.Y.L.: Beats International, the Todd Terry Project, Dub Narcotic Sound System.



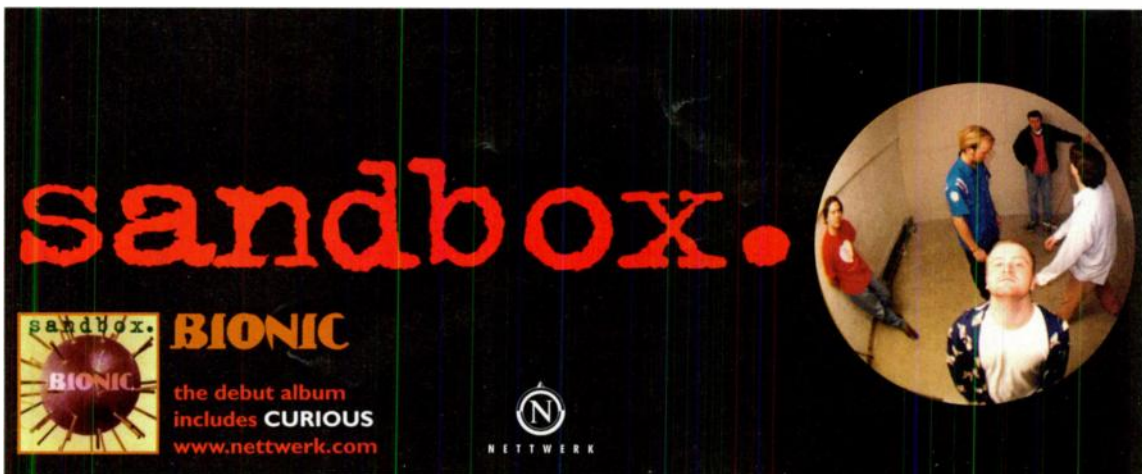
MANIC STREET PREACHERS / *Everything Must Go* / Epic

In a way, nostalgia is what the Manic Street Preachers have always been about. The poppy glam-rock of their first two records to the darker hard-rock of their third, there was always the idea of a long-lost, glorious past in the background of their music. But *Everything Must Go*, their new album, takes this tendency to new extremes. This time, it’s literally a part of them that’s been lost; it’s been over a year since Richey James Edwards, the band’s co-lyricist and its chief stylist and spokesperson, disappeared. And, like a phantom limb, you can feel the missing guitarist aching behind this record’s brave impulse to recover old inspirations and reasons to go on. In the absence of Richey’s glamorous self-destruction, the lyrics are more guarded, but the passion is still there, and the melodies are as edgy and addictive as anything he’s ever taken. The Manics still rock and groove, with the desperate rush of arena-rock on the verge of falling apart. James Dean Bradfield’s voice is big and emotive (imagine Freddy Mercury minus the camp and with added grit), and his guitar playing carries sweet scents of forgotten megahits from the golden ’70s. At times, the majestic production threatens to reach the outer limits of pathos, but behind the lush violins and self-aggrandizing drums, you can always feel the pain of a lost boy looking for the way back home. *MICHAL SAPIR*

DATALOG: Released Aug. 13.

FILE UNDER: Angry post-glam-rock.

R.I.Y.L.: Ziggy Stardust, Suede, The Who’s *Tommy*, Oasis.





MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO / *Subliminal Sandwich* / Nothing-Interscope

After almost almost a decade of creating vicious, beat-heavy anthems that consistently fueled the fire of the electro-dance underground, Meat Beat Manifesto's Jack Dangers redefines his purpose and redirects his energies on *Subliminal Sandwich*, MBM's fifth full-length release and most intriguing piece of work. All but forgotten are the ferocious, industrial rhythms that focused primarily on the sheer intensity and brutality of the beat. Dangers and his partners—Supreme Love Gods' John Wilson and PJ Harvey guitarist Joe Gore—have widened their scope and opted for a subtle, erotic headtrip that swims through a world of swirling beats, offbeat loops and breathy punk raps, Dangers' unmistakable vocal trademark. Clocking in at more than 140 minutes, the two-disc set is a trippy, pulsing excursion into the darkest caverns of trip-hop that occasionally winks at more complex jungle structures ("Nuclear Bomb," "Assasinator"), including a cover of World Domination Enterprises' "Asbestos Lead Asbestos." These tracks, plus "Transmission," "Phone Calls From The Dead," and "Mad Bomber/The Woods," are high points on a downward spiral whose exhausting command of your attention will have you feeling chewed up, spit out and left for dead by the end of disc one. Blessed be the man who can swallow all of *Subliminal Sandwich* in one bite. *M. TYE COMER*

DATALOG: Released Jun. 4.

FILE UNDER: Dark, trippy electronic grooves.

R.I.Y.L.: Chemical Brothers, Prodigy, Future Sound Of London.



NEARLY GOD / *Nearly God* / Durban Poison-Island

When Tricky's debut *Maxinquaye* came out last year, it sounded like it was about as spare as trip-hop could get. It wasn't: this pseudonymous project by him, with guest vocalists including Alison Moyet and the Specials' Terry Hall, probably is. Most of these tracks are so empty they're barely real: the sound of a junkie nodding, of a few notes getting into a locked room under a door. Some are beatless, and others might as well be. About as active as *Nearly God* gets is "Black Coffee," a dazed, stumbling dirge built on an ice-cold piano/drum sample from Elvis Costello's "Pills And Soap." When Tricky himself vocalizes, he sounds more out-of-it than anything else, whispering a few phrases hoarsely, then lapsing into silence again. He's bluffing, of course: Tricky loves to pretend he's less on the ball than he is (witness his deliberate mispronunciations, like "ennyfing" for "anything"). Sometimes, that's a great strategy, allowing these tracks to slip under your skin, like "Yoga," where Bjork does her Bjork thing all over a weirdly arrhythmic sample while Tricky murmurs something unintelligible. Other times, though, it's terribly frustrating that these tracks are so close to danceable but ultimately end up lapsing into torpor instead. *DOUGLAS WOLK*

DATALOG: Released Aug. 13.

FILE UNDER: Nearly catatonic trip-hop.

R.I.Y.L.: Tricky, late Sly Stone, Massive Attack.



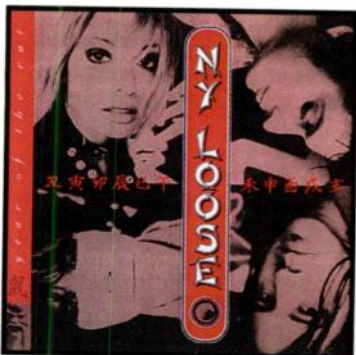
NEW KINGDOM / *Paradise Don't Come Cheap* / Gee Street-Island

Sebastian and Nosaj of New Kingdom are the prodigal sons of rap (which doesn't want them) and rock (which doesn't know what to do with them). That leaves these freakazoid crossbreeds to traverse the aural wasteland that divides King Tee from King Crimson. The Brooklyn duo's second release, *Paradise Don't Come Cheap*, inhabits a dank and dreary empire of lethargic hip-hop beats, psychedelic sheets of noise, and rough, snarling raps that stink of old Colt 45 and scrape across your ears like sandpaper. Although it's worlds darker than the group's 1994 debut, *Heavy Load*, there's nothing alarmingly "new" about the rock 'n' rap connection itself. But instead of following the course paved by the Beasties or Rage Against The Machine, New Kingdom's blunted wickedness sets it on a plane untouched since Cypress Hill met Sonic Youth on '93's *Judgment Night* soundtrack. With introspective visions ranging from the foreboding ("Valhalla Soothsayer") to the cryptic ("Unicorns Were Horses"), it's apparent early on that lyrics play second fiddle to delivery. After all, they can bark about Muppets ("Animal") and still make it sound like the meanest, scariest shit on Earth. *M. TYE COMER*

DATALOG: Released Aug. 6.

FILE UNDER: Rough, apocalyptic rap.

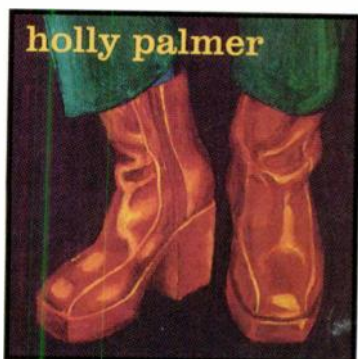
R.I.Y.L.: Cypress Hill, Onyx, Rage Against The Machine.



N.Y. LOOSE / *Year Of The Rat* / Hollywood

What with three of the new New York City punk generation's best getting gobbled up by major labels (D-Generation, the Goops, now N.Y. Loose), it's surprising there haven't been more attempts to parallel the new bands with the old. Actually, there have, now that I think of some of the "N.Y. Loose=Blondie" notices I've read. The thing is, N.Y. Loose *isn't* Blondie: Brijitte West may be a sexy woman with a catch in her voice fronting a punky band with impeccable pop sense, but that's where the coincidences end. For one thing, N.Y. Loose is as tough as the Ramones and the Heartbreakers. For another, West can kick Debbie Harry's ass on guitar. (That Harry never played guitar is irrelevant here.) Besides, anthems like "Pretty Suicide" and "Apathy Is Golden" are far more desperate than "Rip Her To Shreds." But butt-stomping's not all N.Y. Loose is about: Six songs into *Year Of The Rat*, the band downshifts into a "Sunday Morning" that manages to be distinctively N.Y. Loose without obliterating all the Velvets brought to the original, with West's kittenish purr and the raunchy guitar break putting the band's stamp on it more than anything. It's fine as a chocolate egg cream picked up at Gem Spa on the way to Coney Island High. **TIM STEGALL**

DATALOG: Release date: Sep. 10.
FILE UNDER: NYC punk rock, the next generation.
R.I.Y.L.: D-Generation, the Goops, Ramones, Heartbreakers.



HOLLY PALMER / *Holly Palmer* / Reprise

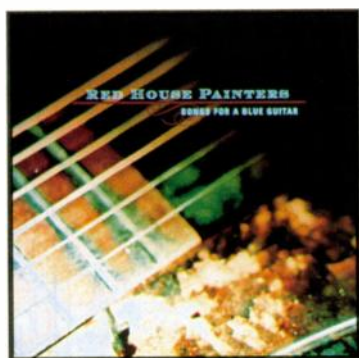
Holly Palmer has the one quality that seems to have eluded nearly every member of the post-Alanis gaggle of starry-eyed female golden throats: soul. Sultriness is Palmer's secret weapon, and her voice's smooth sensuality makes her self-titled debut stand out. At times coquettish and sweet ("Wide Open Spaces," "Come Lie With Me"), at others darkly seductive ("Lickerish Man," "Oxblood 2X4s"), she croons with a confidence and serenity uncommon to early efforts of this kind. On "Scandinavian Ladies," she makes a telling shift from a wispy soprano chorus to muttering slyly, "I bring home the bacon/I fry it up in a pan/I wear that sweet perfume to find myself a better man." Throughout the record, Palmer's keen melodicism is matched by the swaying, bass-heavy, VH-1-ready soul of her band (which, on selected tracks, includes Bill Frisell on guitar and Me'Shell Ndegéocello on bass). While her songs' most immediate appeal is in their catchiness, it's in the bend of a note or the turn of a phrase that the true beauty of Palmer's craft lies. The sense of congenial ease with which she delivers a slight shift in timbre, a bit of a whisper or the slurred repetition of a line makes it easy to think of Palmer as a natural. **JENNY ELISCU**

DATALOG: Released Aug. 6.
FILE UNDER: Soulful singer-lady.
R.I.Y.L.: Me'Shell Ndegéocello, Holly Cole, Sheryl Crow.

PUGS / *Pugs* / Chibari-Tone Casualties

To get what's going on with Pugs, you have to understand that Japan has music scenes that are pretty much diametrically opposed. American listeners are probably most familiar with the underground and experimental scene, but a lot of the acts that are really popular over there are from the *idoru* world—young, mostly female pop idols with airbrushed looks and cotton-candy voices, like a cross between Tiffany and Lolita. Pugs reconcile the two utterly disparate musical worlds, sticking *idoru*-style singer Honey K., purring and gasping her Japanese lyrics, in front of an amp-blowing band that comes mostly from backgrounds in psychedelia and general weirdness (Atsushi Tsuyama, one of Pugs' two bassists, also plays in Omoide Hatoba). Together, they attempt to rock out and swing like a goofy party band at the same time. The group also includes keyboardist Hoppy Kamiyama, essentially Japan's Bill Laswell figure in terms of prolificness and range of interests, and both a drummer and a metal percussionist. It is *loud*. It is *big*. It's also very goofy: Kamiyama, in particular, is a major cut-up, even sneaking in quotes of the keyboard parts from Donna Summer's "I Feel Love" and the Doors' "Touch Me." Pugs are schizoid without a doubt, but they do rock, they are an awful lot of fun, and better they should attempt too much than too little. **DOUGLAS WOLK**

DATALOG: Release date: Aug. 27.
FILE UNDER: Cross-genre silliness, Japanese edition.
R.I.Y.L.: Omoide Hatoba, Blondie, Thinking Fellers Union Local 282.



RED HOUSE PAINTERS / *Songs For A Blue Guitar* / Supreme-Island

One thing certainly hasn't changed about the Red House Painters: Mark Kozelek is still one of the least ironic guys in rock. He still sings passionately and articulately, with poetic phrasing and blunt, honest introspection, about his pains and his loves and especially his ambivalence; he picks his acoustic guitar slowly and prettily; he still writes his songs as long as it takes him to thoroughly achieve his catharsis, even if it means going on for a quarter-hour. One thing that has changed, however, is that Kozelek has discovered the electric socket into which he might plug his guitar. Yes, the Red House Painters, like fellow Cali plod-rockers Idaho, have decided to try rocking out on a few cuts on their new album, in a rather Neil Young-inspired fashion:

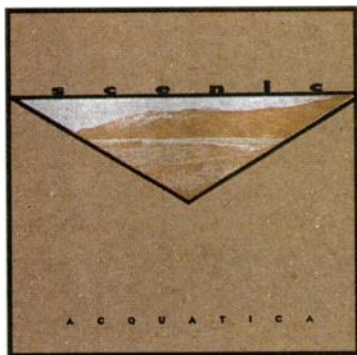
floating tired, yearning vocals on top of leaden drumming and frayed-sounding guitars. Better still are the endings of "All Mixed Up" and of a cover of Paul McCartney's "Silly Love Songs," where the combination of big chords and Kozelek at his most dynamic sees the Painters sounding

truly climactic, instead of just mildly depressed. Throw in a few melancholy, countryish experiments, like the steel-guitar-tinged title track, and you have a beauty of an album, one that sees the Red House Painters still packing an emotional wallop even as they diversify their sound. **DAVID JARMAN**

DATALOG: Released Jul. 23.

FILE UNDER: Folk-rooted mope-rock.

R.I.Y.L.: Mark Eitzel, Idaho, Leonard Cohen, Big Star's *Sister Lovers*.



SCENIC / *Scenic* / Independent Projects-World Domination

Scenic is the all-instrumental brainchild of Bruce Licher (formerly of Savage Republic, unjustly forgotten gloom-rockers from the '80s), and the band's self-titled album moves through arrangements both ominous and majestic, but always constantly unfolding and filled with intricate instrumental interplay. It's a good deal more multi-faceted than Scenic's first effort, 1995's *Incident At Cima*, a decidedly Ennio Morricone-inspired work dominated by stillness and silence but punctuated with harmonica and towering reverb chords. *Scenic* is less dependent on spaghetti-western imagery, but the same sense of spaciousness and solitude prevails throughout; the more song-like tracks are offset by long whooshing, droning passages. The album often,

however, coalesces into uptempo and melodious pieces, led by the tension between ringing guitar lines, periodically allowing keyboards or Native American pipes to come to the forefront; sometimes it verges on jazzy, sometimes it's jagged and goth-y, as if Licher hasn't fully worked Savage

Republic out of his system. It's a diverse enough collection that fans both of ambient guitar droning and of instrumental jamming that's based on pop strategies instead of on prog-rock extrapolation will be pleased to welcome Scenic to the fold. **DAVID JARMAN**

DATALOG: Released Aug. 10.

FILE UNDER: Dark instrumental soundscaping.

R.I.Y.L.: Friends of Dean Martinez, Pell Mell, Savage Republic.



SLUG / *The 3 Man Themes* / PCP

One wonders if this long-running Californian band made a conscious decision to "go post-rock"; calculated or not, *The 3 Man Themes* rules in a way most records by bands of this ilk could only hope to. The Otto Preminger premise of the whole thing could indicate the lamest art-rock trick of all, that of the "soundtrack to an imaginary movie," but Slug is too busy turning film music inside out to worry about an eventual career in Hollywood. The album opens with an inverted Peter Gunn theme of sorts, gliding through some faux Neu! and boring noise before blasting off with "Kalyamba Dance," which gets one's body responding nicely. From then on it's pure gravy: "El Paraiso" and its minutes-long, almost inaudible ending; even the attempted dub of "The Distinct Room" comes off as charming. The album's best moment, though, is "Resonance Man," a 15-minute-strong suite that doesn't even really kick in until the eight-minute mark and then proceeds to finish the job with a mantralike chorus sung by Slug's usual

megaphone-throated singer and the Haden sisters from That Dog. This record is a good long dream, a perfect companion for warm fall nights. Let Slug take you back to school. **ANDREW BEAUJON**

DATALOG: Released Jun. 12.

FILE UNDER: Multifaceted "post-rock."

R.I.Y.L.: Labradford, Yma Sumac, Swans.



SWANS / Die Tür Ist Zu / Rough Trade (Germany)-Revolver

Massive, majestic, orchestral in weight and scope, and with dynamics that build in infinitesimal increments for days, *Die Tür Ist Zu* is a breathtaking return to form for Swans. Aided by a top-flight cast of supporting musicians—ex-American Music Club guitarist Vudi, believe it or not, is among them—core Swans members Michael Gira and Jarboe turn out an album both astonishing and rather unexpected, given the string of disappointing Swans works since 1988's *Children Of God*. By, surprisingly, singing many lyrics in German, Gira et al. let the music (for American ears, at least) shoulder the burden of Swans' expression. And while there are probably plenty of purists out there pissed that there are no lyrics as pithy as those on, say, *Raping A*

Slave, those in that camp miss much. The wideness of the arrangements, as performed by the album's stellar cast, is what makes make *Die Tür Ist Zu*'s evocation of darkness' million shadings work better than the sledgehammer syntax Gira's typically favored. The 20-minute-plus opener, "Ligeti's

Breath/Hiflos Kind", a set-closer on last summer's tour, succeeds in creating a wordless, religious intensity and ecstasy better than anything else Swans have done, which is to say better than about anyone else you'd read about in this magazine, and is absolutely not to be missed. **JON FINE**

DATALOG: Released Jun. 15. Import available at domestic prices.

FILE UNDER: Orchestral *ecce homo*.

R.I.Y.L.: Swans, Ligeti, the Birthday Party.



TALULAH GOSH / Backwash / K

Talulah Gosh were top celebrities only in the international pop underground, in which they were a seminal force. Talulah followed the lead of the Pastels and Beat Happening by refusing to rock out while making rock music, and helped to launch scores of bands by example. This record compiles everything the group ever did and, for hardcore *la-laphiles*, includes two tracks never before available, "Pastels Badge"—a reference to how singers Amelia Fletcher and Elizabeth Price first identified each other as fellow twee kids—from T.G.'s first ever live show, and "Rubber Ball," from a much later London gig. Wimpy as it seems, Talulah Gosh's music is as much paint thinner as it is sugar. Admittedly, sentiments like "I'm looking

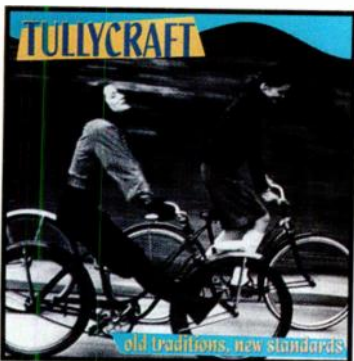
for a rainbow 'cause I love you" might be too sappy for even a Ziggy card; but "Some of my best friends are bastards like you" (from "I Can't Get No Satisfaction (Thank God)") casts doubt on their goofball, Hello Kitty image. For every finger-snapping-perfect moment of "My Boy Says" there's a threat

to "Break Your Face." Hence the Gosh's legacy (most of its members went on to form the even less threatening Heavenly): By making the world safe for the Fat Tulips, they also pre-heated the oven for Riot Grrrl. And even if such history doesn't interest you, this record is an essential 74 minutes of pure joy to anyone with even a small 7" collection. **ANDREW BEAUJON**

DATALOG: Released Jun. 10.

FILE UNDER: Twee pop with a brutal edge.

R.I.Y.L.: Heavenly, Lois, Sleater-Kinney.



TULLYCRAFT / Old Standards, New Traditions / Harriet

It's too bad Sally Field isn't doing the *Gidget* TV show anymore. If she were, Tullycraft could probably score the last three minutes of every episode. The trio's giddy, surf-inspired tunes are easily digestible with none of those twangy riffs to weigh you down. Lyrics like "there goes my Dollywood dream" are sung with enough teenybopper sincerity to get the pigtailed wiggling. Choruses are harmonized by sweetie-pies who probably dab on Love's Baby Soft in between takes. A picture of Debbie Gibson adorning the inside cover assures listeners that the whole cotton-candy romp is done with a knowing wink. Robynn from Cub lends her voice to a track about "Josie" who "wants to be in a punk rock band"; Susan and Chris from

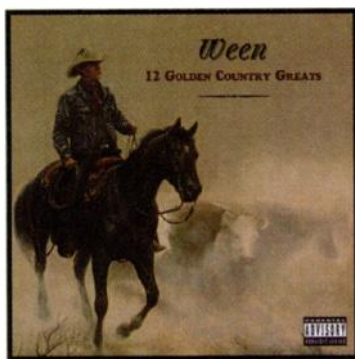
Incredible Force Of Junior pitch in on "Then Again, Maybe I Don't," and a cover of the Judys' "Mental Obsession." Towards the end of *Old Traditions, New Standards*, the strummy guitar gets a little more distorted, reminding you of the members' punk rock roots—most notably,

bassist/vocalist Sean is a Crayon alum. Tullycraft would certainly be the belle of any 1966 high school ball. If you stare really hard into the speaker when the record is playing, you can see Gidget swoon. **NEIL GLADSTONE**

DATALOG: Released Jun. 25.

FILE UNDER: Cheeky bubblegum pop.

R.I.Y.L.: Papas Fritas, Josie Cotton, Josie and the Pussycats.



WEEN / 12 Golden Country Greats / Elektra

Continuing Ween's mission to puzzle and alienate fans and outrage record industry brass, the band's fifth record is, as the title implies, full-tilt country & western; nary a rock 'n' roll song to be found. We haven't witnessed career self-destruction like this since MacLean Stevenson quit *M*A*S*H* to do *Hello Larry*. But such is the beauty of Ween: Just for the sake of doing it, they've made a better record than any of the Randy Johnson-coiffed arena-country beau hunks will ever make, and one that's more listenable than anything going on within so-called "alternative country" circles. How did two degenerates from New Hope, Pennsylvania, do it? Well, Dean and Gene Ween are fantastic songwriters, and being the punks they are, songs are free of the reverence that ruins most rock bands' attempts at country. The main reason, though, is that the 10 songs on *12 Golden Country Greats* were recorded with the sharpest session players from Nashville's heyday—including vocal group the Jordanares and guys who played with Willie Nelson, Lefty Frizzell, Patsy Cline, and

Elvis Presley—and they sound absolutely beautiful. Ween fans need not worry, though. *Country Greats* still sounds like a Ween record, with Gene and Dean's scatological wisecracks, bruised misogyny, and studied potty-mouth stupidity still fully intact and likely to offend. **STEVE MCGUIRL**

DATALOG: Released Jul. 23.

FILE UNDER: Detention-hall Country & Western.

R.I.Y.L.: Willie Nelson, later Byrds, Merle Haggard, pro wrestling.



STEVE WYNN / Melting In The Dark / Zero Hour ●

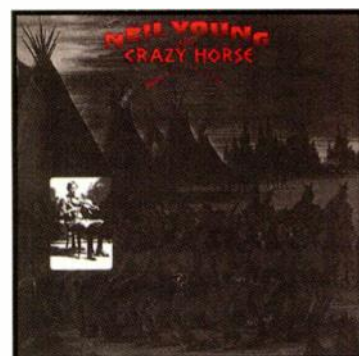
After an early peak with the Dream Syndicate, Steve Wynn has tried to reinvent himself as a staid folk-rocker and as part of the has-been-supergroup Gutterball. His latest move, in this collaboration with Boston's Come, is to try to reconjure the old two-guitar psych/punk *frisson* with musicians half a generation younger. This calculated risk pays off in a couple of ways: Come gets to play fast and loose, while Wynn has had the good fortune to drop into a live-sounding, working band (as opposed to the usual-suspects session sheen of earlier solo efforts). Wynn's vocal delivery has always been a touch lispy for the sinister persona he tries to project, which mars the otherwise effective stomp of "The Way You Punish Me" with lamely delivered lines like "In another life, I must have been real... bad." Even on standouts like "Epilogue," the lyrics serve as harmless nonsense, unobtrusive guideposts for Thalia Zedek and Chris Brokaw's interlocking guitars to steer by. The title track, with its slow-burning backdrop of

feedback, is the only song to specifically evoke Wynn's past glories, but when Come pours some juice into the uptempo numbers, Wynn's fairly quotidian take on "I'm-a-survivor" rock takes on more life than he or anyone else had any right to expect this far into the game. **FRANKLIN BRUNO**

DATALOG: Released Jul. 30.

FILE UNDER: Revived psych-punk.

R.I.Y.L.: Eleventh Dream Day, Green On Red, Dream Syndicate.



NEIL YOUNG WITH CRAZY HORSE / Broken Arrow / Reprise

After the white-hot streak of his last half-dozen or so albums, if Neil Young wants to kick back and take it easy for moment, that's all right. *Broken Arrow* doesn't have the conceptual sprawl of *Sleeps With Angels* or the gentle, laconic balladry of *Harvest Moon* or the full-on ragged fury of *Mirror Ball*. It's just a really good Neil Young And Crazy Horse album. The good moments are, dare we say, classic Neil Young—"Loose Change" starts out like a normal four-minute song until the ending, where the band continues to jam, oblivious to the clock and rolling tape, for about four more minutes after you expect it to fade out. On "Slip Away," Neil and Horse guitarist Poncho wrench majestic, gnarly, pinched-out sounds from their instruments that remind us that guitars are indeed made out of nothing but wood and wire. You may find yourself skipping over the rest of the songs after a while, but if it happens that you can't find the remote in time, you won't mind hearing them again, really. Maybe *Broken Arrow* is

named for Neil's California ranch, which suggests placidity, lack of turbulence, and being able to turn your guitars up to 10 anytime you like. If the last year has been less traumatic for Neil, well, good for him. **JAMES LIEN**

DATALOG: Released Jul. 2. Vinyl edition contains an extra song.

FILE UNDER: Forever Young.

R.I.Y.L.: Neil Young, all the bands that sound like him.

flashback

IN THE BINS



CHEAP TRICK

Sex, America, Cheap Trick

Sony Legacy

Kurt Cobain once said that he wanted Nirvana to sound like Cheap Trick with more distortion on the guitars. There's little doubt that Billy Corgan grew up in suburban Chicago with a picture of the band in its Dream Police uniforms pinned to his wall. As a band beloved by the older brothers and sisters of Generation X-ers, even though it peaked when most of today's music heroes were not even teenagers, Cheap Trick occupies a place of honor in the history of alternative music. Coming at the indulgent end of the '70s, everything about them was a breath of fresh air, sending up pop stardom even as they reveled in it. The two pinups/two oddballs lineup toured hard and worked hard; ironically, their breakthrough album was originally not slated for release in America at all—*Live At Budokan* first saw light as a promo-only EP intended for radio airplay. *Sex, America, Cheap Trick* celebrates the band's schtick-rock in high style. It's all here: the checkerboard amp stacks, the Bun E. Carlos signature drum kits, the fawning liner notes full of fan minutiae. And in a brilliant masterstroke of box-set planning, most of the hits (and there are a lot of them) are the shorter, "single" versions, the ones you would have heard on the radio.

Mercury-Chronicles has just released a whole slew of anthologies by various '60s girl-groups, such as the **Angels** and the **Shangri-Las**. The real prize is the two-disc compilation *Growin' Up Too Fast*, a well-chosen mix of hits you know already and the work of more obscure girls such as Sadina, the Secrets, the Whyte Boots and a curious mid-'60s band named the Pixies Three. The Shangri-Las collection features "Leader Of The Pack," the only chart-topping single ever to feature the sounds of a horrific motorcycle crash in its middle instead of the traditional guitar, sax or piano solo.

In the late '60s, the South must have been literally crawling with Soul Men, immaculately dressed soul singers walking down dusty roads, dropping to one knee in front of their baby's house, at every bus stop mopping their brows with handkerchiefs. Oftentimes, the Southern "sweet soul" (Stax/Volt ballads and such) is overlooked by fans looking for greasy funk grooves. *Soul Classics* on AVI has plenty of both. Many of these are unbelievable soul sides—you may have never heard of people like Stacy Lane before, but you won't forget them once you hear them. Other hip recent titles for fans of sweet soul include *Sweet Soul From Muscle Shoals* and *The Calla Records Story* (also on AVI).



The Japanese label DIW (distributed in the U.S. by Sphere) has just released the legendary *Tales Of Captain Black* album by jazz guitarist **James "Blood" Ulmer**, featuring Jamaldeen Tacuma on bass and none other than saxophonist Ornette Coleman in a rare appearance as a sideman. Originally recorded in New York in 1978, it shows Ulmer to be the African-American equivalent of Thurston Moore. Ulmer's conception of the guitar—jagged licks and sweeping, juicy funk-derived chords—sounds fresh even today.



Yet another **MC5** live title has recently surfaced out of the netherworld of bootlegs into above-ground legitimate release. *Teen Age Lust* (Bomp!) is from a board tape in the possession of the band's former manager/White Panther political theorist/jam-kicker John Sinclair. It's pretty low-fi, a little grainy in quality, but it rocks hard once you get into it.

Also making the transition from illegit to legit release is *Revenge!*, a positively wonderful two-CD live recording of **Charles Mingus** from Paris in spring of 1964, featuring Eric Dolphy and Clifford Jordan stretching out on long, relaxed versions of some of Mingus' most famous tunes ("Goodbye Pork Pie Hat" is almost a half-hour long, but you won't notice until it's almost over). *Revenge!* is also the first release on a new Mingus boutique label called *Revenge Records*. Mingus' widow has fought long and hard to combat the widespread pirating and bootlegging of her late husband's work, and now, in a move reminiscent of Frank Zappa's *Beat The Boots* series of live CDs, she's set up a label to re-press pirated "bootleg" CDs of Mingus concerts with better artwork, liner notes and unpublished photographs—in short, to undercut the pirates' market, outdo them at their own game and put them out of business. It's a wonderful move, especially when one considers that jazz musicians and their heirs suffer much more from the economic loss to CD piracy than their mega-millionaire counterparts in the rock world.

RIFFS

Prepare to be crushed! The much-anticipated Slayer tribute album, *Satanic Slaughter II*, is scheduled for a September release and features brutally devastating performances by **Cradle Of Filth**, **Dark Funeral**, **Liers In Wait**, **Malevolent Creation**, **Sinister**, **Vader**, **Unanimated** and others to be announced... Speaking of metal tribute albums, make sure you check out *Tribute To Judas Priest—Legends Of Metal Volume I*, which features **Fates Warning** ("Saints In Hell"), **U.D.O.** ("Metal Gods"), **Helloween** ("The Hellion/Electric Eye"), **Rage** ("Jawbreaker"), **Testament** ("Rapid Fire"), **Saxon** ("You've Got Another Thing Comin'"), **Gamma Ray** ("Victim Of Changes"), **Mercyful Fate** ("The Ripper"), **Radakka** ("Nightcrawler"), **Devin Townsend** ("Sinner"), **Lion's Share** ("Touch Of Evil") and a supergroup called **Doom Squad**, featuring Anthrax vocalist John Bush and guitarist Scott Ian, ex-Armored Saint bassist Joey Vera and drummer Gonzo (now in Life After Death), Ugly Kid Joe singer Whitfield Crane and ex-Accept guitarist Jorg Fischer. At press time, the line-up for *Volume II*, which is scheduled to immediately follow the first compilation, wasn't available... Hopefully, all of you true metal fans didn't waste your hard-earned money on the new, wimpy-whiny "Altallica" record, but if you did, at least it wasn't completely for naught.



The coolest thing about the new **Metallica** album, *Load* (definitely an appropriate title), is the CD cover art. It's a picture entitled "Semen and Blood III" that was created in 1990 by Andres Serrano when he mingled his own semen with the blood of a bull, then squashed it between two pieces of Plexiglas. That's definitely the most "metal" thing about *Load*!

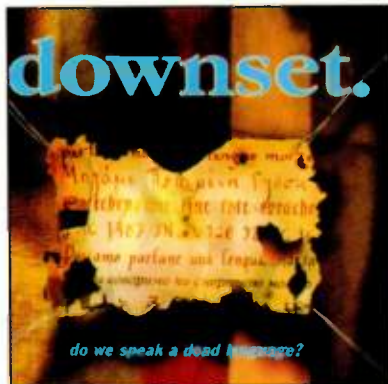
Rumor has it that MTV may be bringing back a

Headbanger's Ball-type loud music show to its programming line-up. Call 'em up or write and let them know you "WANT YOUR MTV!" And, of course, let it be known that the "M" stands for "Metal!" Help get metal music back into the limelight! Rock on.

METAL TOP 25

- 1 **PRONG** *Rude Awakening* **Epic**
- 2 **SLAYER** *Undisputed Attitude* **American**
- 3 **PANTERA** *The Great Southern Trendkill* **EastWest-EEG**
- 4 **SEPULTURA** *Roots* **Roadrunner**
- 5 **CANNIBAL CORPSE** *Vile* **Metal Blade**
- 6 **PRO-PAIN** *Contents Under Pressure* **Energy**
- 7 **RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE** *Evil Empire* **Epic**
- 8 **KMFDM** *Xtort* **Wax Trax!-TVT**
- 9 **PITCH SHIFTER** *Infotainment?* **Earache**
- 10 **AMORPHIS** *Elegy* **Relapse**
- 11 **BILE** *Teknowhere* **Energy**
- 12 **CARCASS** *Swansong* **Earache**
- 13 **FAR** *Tin Cans With Strings To You* **Immortal-Epic**
- 14 **SOUNDGARDEN** *Down On The Upside* **A&M**
- 15 **METALLICA** *Load* **Elektra-EEG**
- 16 **CORE** *Revival* **Atlantic**
- 17 **GRAVE** *Hating Life* **Century Media**
- 18 **NEUROSIS** *Through Silver In Blood* **Relapse**
- 19 **MADBALL** *Demonstrating My Style* **Roadrunner**
- 20 **MALEVOLENT CREATION** *Joe Black* **Pavement**
- 21 **MY DYING BRIDE** *The Angel And The Dark River* **Fierce-FLG**
- 22 **SUICIDE MACHINES** *Destruction By Definition* **Hollywood**
- 23 **EXPLOITED** *Beat The Bastards* **Triple X**
- 24 **MANHOLE** *All Is Not Well* **Noise**
- 25 **BY THE GRACE OF GOD** *For The Love Of Indie Rock* **Victory**

Compiled from the CMJ New Music Report's weekly Local Rock chart, selected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio repertoires.



DOWNSET.

do we speak a dead language?

Mercury

Exploding with stomping riffs and gritty, throaty howls, *downset.* churns out a massive sound powerful enough to leave the big dogs running with their tails between their legs. The crushing *do we speak a dead language?* is much heavier and more metallic than the band's 1994 self-titled debut. Although rougher screams and huge, shuddering chords take precedence here, the band's trademark hip-hop-inflected groove still shines through the album's dark exterior. Most importantly, *downset.*'s underlying message of positivity and hope is still firmly intact within each seething lyrical verse, hardcore-encrusted stomp and violent, rhythmic surge. *downset.*'s passion for the music is obvious from the first bellowing riff of "Empower" through to the last molten crunch of "Ashes In Hand," a powerful song about the dangers of unsafe sex. With an array of songs written straight from the heart and based on personal experience, *downset.* reaches directly into the minds and souls of its listeners, hoping to stir their emotions and touch their lives. Coming from L.A. 'hoods where violence, poverty, drug abuse, disease and frustration are a way of life, *downset.* speaks from the experience that its harsh, volatile music reflects.



PEST 5000

"Cold Feet"

Derivative

"Cold Feet" is the fourth single by the awesome Canadian quintet Pest 5000, and sort of a preview of the band's forthcoming debut album—but only sort of. It's one of the best, most clear-eyed songs ever written about getting married, and the idea that it involves promises that are completely unrealistic but are probably worth making anyway: "I never wanted to die for anyone before/I still don't," bassist Patti sings. But that's only half the story. A "normal-sounding" version of "Cold Feet" will appear on Pest's album this fall; the single mix is a weird, fucked-up, dirty-sounding version that brings extraneous noise to the fore, buries the vocals deep down, and plays up the echoes and attacks of notes more than the notes themselves. It's not quite dub—it's just using the mixing board as a tool to turn this straightforward song inside out and see what interesting stuff lurks within it. The other side, "Where The Moon Is," is an experiment of a different sort, with the band using an old, overmodulating Casio and a marimba more than its normal instruments, and trying a songwriting approach explicitly inspired by Daniel Johnston. Watch for Pest 5000 on tour right now, too.

The *Pet Sounds* anniversary boxed set mentioned in these pages a few months ago has been delayed until some unspecified date, but if you want a taste of unreleased **Beach Boys**, it's shown up from an unexpected source. Sub Pop has released a 7" single with the new stereo mix of "I Just Wasn't Made For These Times" (which also appeared on our June CD), plus an instrumental backing track to "Here Today" and a gorgeous vocals-only version of "Wouldn't It Be Nice." If you can get past the cognitive dissonance of the Sub Pop logo about an inch above Mike Love's head, it's a great thing.

Last year, Port Chester, New York's **The Tower Recordings** self-released a superb album of home-recorded songs and fragments, *Rehearsals For Roseland*. Their second record, a 7" EP called *The Tower Recordings Present The Transfiguration Of The Nice Price, No Deal And Other Jerk Off Stories* (Spirit Of Orr), has six more pieces that sound like they sprang directly from the band's half-aware consciousness. They sing a little, and play whatever instruments are at hand, softly but cacophonously. What comes out is less like songs with noise added to make them more interesting than like a random scattering of sound that has magically arranged itself into some kind of order, like the Madonna's face appearing in tea-leaves.

The fourth and final single from the whacked-out Boston duo **Trollin Withdrawal**, *Emil Eye* (Erroneous), is also its best and most fully realized. "Pretty Ugly" is the standard T.R. wild-eyed rap-rant with simple guitar-and-drums backing, like Beck with a 75-cent recording budget, but then they go off on some tangents. The sidelong title track is a small-scale epic, starting out pretty normally, but then mutating by turns into a very long list of names, a drum trio and a few minutes of ensemble *a cappella* blues. Beautiful, bizarre stuff.



Oddity-seekers should hunt down the British import CD single of **Metallica's** "Until It Sleeps." Besides a 10-minute medley of songs from the band's pre-glam era, it's got the weirdest collaboration of the month: a remix of "Until It Sleeps" by Moby, which gives it the speed-metal oomph that so much of the band's new stuff is lacking.

Blek Ink is the alter ego of Paul Lydon, a young man living in Reykjavik, Iceland, who recorded the five songs (four in English, one in Icelandic) on his self-titled 7" EP (*Nano*) with a little guitar, a little synthesizer and what sounds like a bit of flute and accordion. They slip gracefully from dissonance to euphony and back, usually circling around a note or two, with Lydon singing as unobtrusively as he can. The best track is "Morning," built on a single-note drone and a couple of dignified guitar flourishes. Little here stays in the memory after it's ended, but while it's playing, it makes everything around it a bit more serene.

When you're as cute as **Bunnygrunt**, you have to work pretty hard to keep people from thinking you're *only* cute. Bunnygrunt is working overtime—its new single is three songs about violent death. The first is an adorable cover of Shelley Fabares' "Johnny Angel"—as the liner notes point out, "how did Johnny become an angel after all?" Then there's "Boy Meets Wall," the band's adorable contribution to the drag-racing-tragedy genre (think of "Leader Of The Pack"), and the adorable, self-explanatory quickie "I Dated A Zombie." As a bonus, the single is the first release on bassist Jen's label Septophilia—write to them and get their catalog of 7" singles, and send an extra two bucks for Jen's amazing zine *Panophobia*.

DRUM AND BASSICS

Photek is the pseudonym of British producer Rupert Parkes, whose music can turn corners on a dime, delivering both shock and balm for the mind and body. The ambitious *Hidden Camera* EP (Astralwerks-Caroline) is Photek's most solid, complex work to date, moving on from the spectacular, hammering (and exhausting) "U.F.O." single, which pushed drum-and-bass deep into uncharted territory. That track's stop-and-start drums make it one of the most arresting and compelling moments in drum-and-bass this year. *Hidden Camera*'s sonic density moves it out of the realm of drum-and-bass into that twilight world we know as experimental electronic music. The title track is an indecisive, juddering affair with a smoky bass line running rampant beneath the gray synth sweeps and breakneck percussion. "Hybrid" is a sleeper, with a roiling bass line and quick-cut percussive chops. This is one of the most contemplative, disturbing electronic records in a long time... Surprisingly, there seems to be no shortage of superb breakbeat science compilations in the domestic bins these days. You can add to that list



Artcore 2 and *Quango Sport*, respectively put together by the folks at the React and Quango labels, which have recently been releasing superb compilations for non-turntable jockeys interested in progressive dance music and its infinite permutations. Both compilations feature the dizzying "Circles" by **Adam F**, lifted from the much-talked about Section 5 label. *Quango Sport* then veers into the jazz-inflected

drum-and-bass movement, acquiring such deep cuts as **Alex Reece**'s staccato interpretation of Tricky's "Brand New You're Retro" and Reece's own blissful "Feel The Sunshine." The second *Artcore* compilation, on the other hand, turns its attention to the Detroit-inspired drum-and-bass initiative, including the trance-immersed "Find Me" by **Skanna**, as well as **Optical's** "Sleepless." As if Alex Reece weren't represented sufficiently elsewhere, his rendering of **Cool Breeze's** post-acid-jazz track "Can't Deal With This" finds its way onto *Artcore 2*.

DANCE TOP 25

- 1 **ORBITAL** In Sides *ffrr-London*
- 2 **UNDERWORLD** Second Toughest In The Infants *Wax Trax!-TVT*
- 3 **DJ SPOOKY** Songs Of A Dead Dreamer *Asphodel*
- 4 **VARIOUS ARTISTS** Trip Hop Test Part 3 *Moonshine*
- 5 **KMFDM** Xtort *Wax Trax!-TVT*
- 6 **MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO** Subliminal Sandwich *Nothing-Interscope*
- 7 **BATTERY** Distance *COP International*
- 8 **VARIOUS ARTISTS** Industrial F**king Strength *Industrial Strength-Earache*
- 9 **SPICELAB** "Spy Vs. Spice" (12") *Undercover*
- 10 **VARIOUS ARTISTS** Artcore 2: The Art Of Drum & Bass *React*
- 11 **VARIOUS ARTISTS** Synthetic Pleasures Volume One *Moonshine*
- 12 **HIGHER INTELLIGENCE AGENCY** Freefloater *Waveform*
- 13 **KEVORKIAN DEATH CYCLE** Collection For Injection *Ras DVA*
- 14 **PLANET JAZZ** Flying New World *Harthouse-Eye Q*
- 15 **VARIOUS ARTISTS** The Third Barramundi Sampler: The Spirit Of Wandjina *Logic*
- 16 **VARIOUS ARTISTS** Sm:je Mix Session 1: By DJ Scott Henry *Sm:je*
- 17 **LOOP GURU** Amrita...All These And The Japanese Soup Warriors *World Domination*
- 18 **SOUL ODDITY** Tone Capsule *Astralwerks-Caroline*
- 19 **SKINNY PUPPY** Brap *Nettwerk*
- 20 **AUTECHRE** Tri Repetæ *Warp/Wax Trax!-TVT*
- 21 **VARIOUS ARTISTS** Dope On Plastic 3 *React*
- 22 **DOWNLOAD** The Eyes Of Stanley Pain *Nettwerk*
- 23 **NIGHTMARES ON WAX** Smoker's Delight *Warp-TVT*
- 24 **ARMAND VAN HELDEN** "Cha Cha" (12") *Logic*
- 25 **DJ KRUSH** Meiso *Mo Wax/ffrr-I.L.S.*

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



DUB SPECIALISTS

Dub To Dub, Beat To Beat

Crispy Music-Crosstalk

Of all the artists to have emerged from dub's new wave, Britain's Dub Specialists are perhaps the most exciting—last year's *Dub To Dub*, *Break To Break* established the duo of Dougie Wardrop and Chris Petter (also of Zion Train) as dub pioneers of the digital age. By drawing influences from hip-hop, techno, roots reggae and classic '70s dub, they've brought dub to the attention of those who may have previously considered it an outdated, marginal form only of interest to reggae obscurantists. "Heavy Dub" borrows the legendary, oft-sampled drum break from Lyn Collins' "Think (About It)," rotating it through a field of slivered, ringing piano chords and vocal samples from an Ijahman track. "Hold The Wah" incorporates a walloping wah-wah guitar lick suspended across the skeletal percussion and obese bass line. "Run, Run, Dub" features a reggae toaster singing the praises of the artists themselves, though it's all done in the best possible taste. And it's followed by the one of the best vocal roots dub tracks of last year, "History." Like the Dub Specialists' first album, *Dub To Dub*, *Beat To Beat* is a miracle.



A TRIBE CALLED QUEST

Beats, Rhymes And Life

Jive

A Tribe Called Quest is representing the future on its fourth, bottom-heavy release, *Beats, Rhymes And Life*. At a time when rap is plagued with studio gangsters, drugs, guns and predictable aural stimulants, ATCQ promotes responsibility, individuality and the need for rappers to break out of tired, self-defeating habits. Over its career, ATCQ has smartly exempted itself from the pitfalls of the rap business, and on *Beats*, it offers the knowledge it's gathered in a smart, powerful package that is motivating, inspiring and even compassionate ("Stressed Out"). As demonstrated on "Ince Again" and "What Really Goes On?," the trio has nearly perfected its amalgam of sublime, jazzy samples and the kind of bass-and-beat bombs that made *The Low End Theory* so alluring. Combine that with the group's cerebral poetics ("Phony Rappers" and "The Pressure"), and you have one of the most focused and potentially important records in recent memory. At a time when most rappers shun the role model title, the members of ATCQ assume it for themselves and attempt to lead hip-hop down the righteous path of rhythm, while not forgetting to shake their butts along the way.

Two of the biggest releases this summer have been the debut album by Jay-Z, entitled *Reasonable Doubt* (Roc-A-Fella/Freeze-Priority), and Nas' long-awaited *It Was Written* (Columbia-CRG). If you only have enough for one CD, spend it on Jay-Z and go grab a burrito with the change. We're not dissing Nas, but, compared to *Illmatic*, this one—especially the production—seems lazy and uninspired. Even the collaboration with Dr. Dre on "Nas Is Coming" isn't enough. Jay-Z's album is just the opposite: an elaborate mixture of backing tracks and fat bass lines that sound fresher and more lively. We still can't get enough of "Ain't No Nigga" (a twist on the Four Tops' "Ain't No Woman (Like The One I Got)")... Super-producer and certified weirdo Prince Paul has been involved in some of the best and worst in rap: Stetsasonic and De La Soul were his zeniths, while Resident Alien and Gravediggaz were, to be nice, misunderstood. He has finally put together a record all by himself called *Psychoanalysis [What Is It?]* (WordSound), an experimental work that may be both the funniest and strangest hip-hop record you'll ever hear. Few producers are as clever or as audacious as Paul, who is a master at patching samples, sounds and beats (even if he's lifting Schoolly D's "Saturday Night (P.S.K.)" on "J.O.B.—Das What Dey Is!") for a complex, multi-dimensional result... In the wake of the deaths of Eazy-E and XClan's Sugarshaft, the hip-hop community has taken a more active role in spreading awareness on AIDS. In 1994, hip-hop and jazz artists came together on *Stolen Moments: Red Hot + Cool*, and now the street rises up on *America Is Dying Slowly* (EastWest-EEG), the Red Hot Organization's latest project, featuring Pete Rock & The Lost Boyz, Wu-Tang Clan ("America"), Organized Konfusion, De La Soul and Coolio, among others. Word out.



HIP-HOP TOP 25

- 1 HELTAH SKELTAH Nocturnal *Duck Down*-Priority
- 2 DE LA SOUL "Stakes Is High" (12") Tommy Boy
- 3 ROOTS "Clones"/"Section" (12") DGC
- 4 SOUNDTRACK America Is Dying Slowly *Red Hot/EastWest-EEG*
- 5 BUSTA RHYMES The Coming *Elektra-EEG*
- 6 SOUNDTRACK The Nutty Professor *Def Jam/RAL-Mercury*
- 7 A TRIBE CALLED QUEST "Ince Again" (12") Jive
- 8 DE LA SOUL "The Bizness" (12") Tommy Boy
- 9 BLAHZAY BLAHZAY "Pain I Feel" (12") Fader-I.L.S.
- 10 FUGEES (REFUGEE CAMP) The Score *Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG*
- 11 SADAT X "Hang 'Em High"/"Stages And Lights" (12") Loud-RCA
- 12 NAS "If I Ruled The World" (12") Columbia-CRG
- 13 ARTIFACTS "Art Of Facts" (12") Big Beat-Atlantic
- 14 OUTKAST "Elevators" (12") LaFace-Arista
- 15 XZIBIT "Paparazzi" (12") Loud-RCA
- 16 VARIOUS ARTISTS Insomnia: The Erick Sermon Compilation *Bandit-Interscope*
- 17 AL TARIQ "Do Yo' Thang"/"Spectacular" (12") Correct
- 18 2PAC All Eyez On Me *Death Row-Interscope*
- 19 INI "Fakin' Jax" (12") Soul Brother/*Elektra-EEG*
- 20 RAS KASS "Anything Goes"/"On Earth As It Is..." (12") Patchwerk-Priority
- 21 BAHAMADIA Kollage *Chrysalis-EMI*
- 22 AKAFELLA "Put It In Your Mouth"/"The World" (12") Flip Squad-Stress
- 23 SMOOTHE DA HUSTLER Once Upon A Time In America *Profile*
- 24 DELINQUENT HABITS Delinquent Habits *PMP/Loud-RCA*
- 25 CHINO XL Here To Save You All *American*

Compiled from the CMJ New Music Report's weekly Beat list charts, collected from CMJ's panel of progressive radio listeners.

READS

PLEASE KILL ME: THE UNCENSORED ORAL HISTORY OF PUNK

by Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain (Faber and Faber)

Starting up *Punk* magazine and programming the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church, Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain were on hand for the birth of punk in the bowels of New York City's East Village. Here, they've recontacted their old cohorts including Jim Carroll, Debbie Harry, Richard Hell, Iggy Pop, Joey Ramone, Lou Reed, Patti Smith and Tom Verlaine to trace American punk's roots. The book starts off in Andy Warhol's Factory, describing the scene there and the beginnings of the Velvet Underground. Then the narrative leads to other incidents, such as Patti Smith's realization during a Rolling Stones concert that poetry and rock 'n' roll are necessarily separate forms. There's lots of sex and drugs in this rock tome, with all the famous groupies and overdoses, and lots of '70s-style ethics. It all seems kinda comical now—junkies lined up around the block waiting for the man, or a hotel lobby full of groupies waiting for the New York Dolls. Eventually, though all the trappings went away, and only the music was left to influence another generation. That leads to the '90s punk stories that close the book, scenes like Czech leader Vaclav Havel visiting Velvet Underground drummer Maureen Tucker backstage at a Prague show. **TOM ROE**

PLEASE KILL ME

the UNCENSORED ORAL
HISTORY of PUNK

by Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain

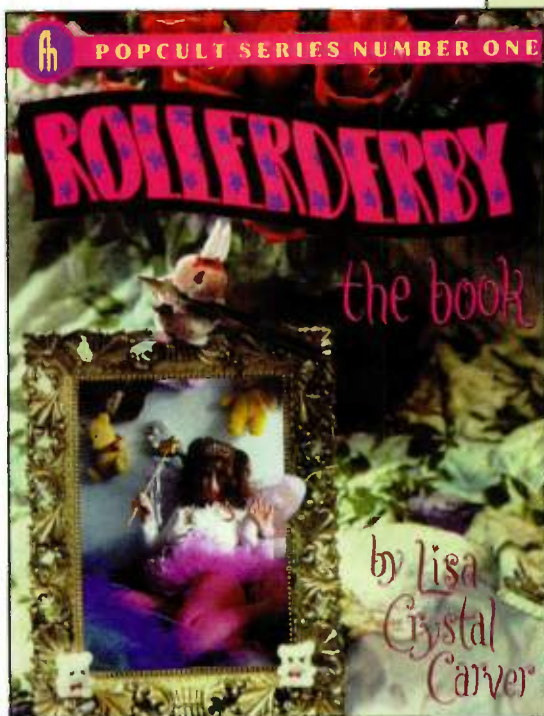


READS

ROLLERDERBY—THE BOOK

by Lisa Carver (Feral House)

Lisa Crystal Carver, a.k.a. Lisa Suckdog, used to be known for getting naked on stage with her band, Suckdog, and screeching out "operas" in drunken wails. Her fanzine, *Rollerderby*, is a much more intriguing affair. Preoccupied with makeup, relationships and gossip, it includes features such as "Linda Evangelista Looks Awful In Her New Yellow Bowlcut" and "How Do You Keep Your Pussy?" alongside interviews with Yamatsuka Eye (of the Boredoms), Royal Trux and Boss Hog's Cristina Martinez. "Most rock music is boring and uninspiring," explains Carver. That's why she's more concerned with impressive personalities who also play rock music. Get the skinny on Carver's lousy lay with King Kong member Ethan Buckler. There's also a chat with Courtney Love that gets interrupted by Kurt Cobain. Cobain chides Love for downplaying her drug addiction, and the Riot Queen snaps at her husband: "Well, I'm a feminist trying to fucking help other feminists and I'm sorry if that offends you and I'm not going to talk to her about my fucking drug problem. We're talking about beauty and skin." This compilation features the best parts of issues 1-16, and also includes contributions from cartoonist Dame Darcy, Vicky Wheeler and Cindy Dall. **NEIL GLADSTONE**





CYBERELLA

by Howard Chaykin and Don Cameron (Helix)

Howard Chaykin's *American Flagg!* was one of the funniest, most biting comics of the '80s—a series about the particular ways that commerce was making the world go to hell at the time, and where American culture might consequently end up. Chaykin's predictions are already starting to look pretty dead-on, except that he didn't figure on the explosive growth of cyberculture. That's where his new series *Cyberella* (drawn by Don Cameron, very much in Chaykin's style) comes in. It's also set in the mid-21st century, when everybody's living in tiny, packed environments, spending almost all their time in a "Virtual Everything" run by a huge entertainment corporation; our heroine is a "level one blue nanostacker" who has figured out that, well, it's not real. Everything has some kind of corporate sponsorship—there are wicked parodies of well-known logos all over (like a naked man crouched submissively in front of a TV set, captioned "His Master's Image") and a running joke involving the evolution of cartoon characters as licensed properties. *Cyberella* is so information-dense that it's hard to pick up on most of what's happening on a first reading, or a second, but give it time—Chaykin prefers not to reveal everything he's doing right away. **DOUGLAS WOLK**

SMALL FACES

(October Films)

Movie-makers love to retell the stories of their childhood glory days, and few eras have been chronicled more often than '60s British youth culture. The mods only make a casual appearance in *Small Faces*, while toughneck rockers dominate a story about three brothers growing up in post-Beatles Glasgow. Director Gillies MacKinnon (who filmed 1992's *The Playboys* with Albert Finney) knows how to tell a small story, rich with detail. The brothers MacLean—13-year-old Lex, artist Alan, and dumb older brother Bobby—are painted lushly, with Alan's drawing talents serving as a metaphor for the director's greater ambitions. The formula is familiar: MacKinnon begins with anecdotes of the boys' exploits, spying on a naked model and generally getting into trouble. But just as Lex and Alan begin to seem lovable, they're drawn into Bobby's darker world of poverty-plagued gangs. Eventually, they're breaking into museums, and adding their leader's face to portraits hanging there. Finally, as the brothers' crimes turn violent, the story becomes riveting, and more than just entertaining. **TOM ROE**

FLICKS



COMETBUS

COMETBUS

(\$2.50 from BBT, P.O. Box 4279, Berkeley, CA 94704)

The long-running 'zine *Cometbus* doesn't come out very often, but when it does, it's a treat—something you actually have to sit down and read cover to cover. It's entirely the work of one guy, Aaron, an itinerant punk who's an expert at living cheaply and well. Every issue is a few months' worth of his memoirs, lovingly handwritten, like an incredibly long letter from a friend on the road. The new #36 is an 85-page chronicle of his recent trip to Europe; he bicycles through Holland, hitchhikes across France, sleeps under a schoolhouse in Lyon, dumpster-dives for food every so often (which doesn't bother him), is forced to get coffee at McDonald's once (which does), manages to continue his tradition of doing something special for Halloween, and hooks up with some street jugglers who accompany him through Switzerland and Germany. It's consistently vivid and funny—Aaron has surprising perspective on everything that happens to him—and hey, the guy's got great penmanship too. **DOUGLAS WOLK**

'ZINES

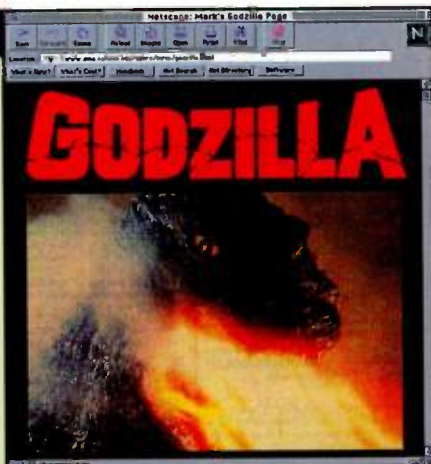


MARK'S GODZILLA PAGE

(<http://www.ama.caltech.edu/users/mrm/godzilla.html>)

Anyone who's ever thrilled to over-cranked scenes of a guy in a rubber monster suit destroying a scale model of Tokyo will love this loud and scary page. Godzilla is only the best known of a whole world of "kaiju," as they are known in Japanese. Junior *otaku*s will learn all they ever wanted to know about not only the Big G, but the other Toho superstars: Rodan! Giderah (a k a Monster Zero)! Mothra! In addition to a filmography, the page includes complete statistics (fight fans, so far Godzilla is 24-5-7) and pictures of more obscure city-stompers like Angillas, the Smog Monster, and Mecha-Godzilla. There's even a picture of Minya, the revolting Baby Godzilla of the '60s. But the best part is the multimedia section, which is crammed with pictures, sounds and movies. The pictures are all top notch, and the sound selection includes everything from five different takes of Godzilla's roar to a sample of Giderah's theme. Super bonus: a section on kaiju biology, including a diagram of Rodan's liver! **HEIDI MACDONALD**

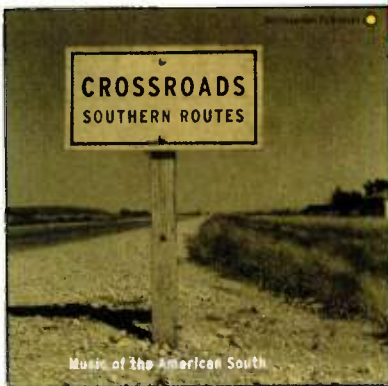
ONLINE



CROSSROADS, SOUTHERN ROUTES: Music Of The American South (Smithsonian/Folkways)

CD-ROM

As an introduction to vernacular Southern music, you can't do better than this—a 16-track CD, with CD-ROM stuff included, surveying the musical styles that originated in the South. It's not just limited to the folk music Folkways specializes in: Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry's "Rising Sun" is next to the Allman Brothers Band's "Statesboro Blues," and Carl Perkins, Tammy Wynette and Native American story-singer Betty Mae Jumper all show up later on the disc. The really neat parts, though, are the CD-ROM enhancements: every song is linked to biographies, discographies, photographs, sound clips of the artists talking about their music and how it developed, and a handful of video clips (watch Doc Watson's fingers fly!). There are also links to sound clips of music that influenced the songs on the disc, maps, and a glossary. The disc makes concrete the conceptual links between all the forms of music it samples, and demonstrates nicely how the musical traditions of the South inform each other. **DOUGLAS WOLK**



ONLINE

STIM

(<http://www.stim.com>)

Most web sites are supposed to do something in particular, but there are some free-form sites that are just kind of there to attract web-surfers by whatever means are necessary—the idea being that when they get lots of advertisers, there will be people there to look at the ads. STIM is one such confusing beast: a whole bunch of cool features stuck together at one site for no obvious reason. There are live chat rooms, avatar-based interaction, discussion forums, articles on whatever topics seemed like a good idea at the time, archives of Web tools, and a section of "Toyz"—things that just look nifty on the screen. It's also very HTML-enhancement-heavy—it seems like there's some kind of little animation or morph or frame-thing happening on every page, and if you're not very careful, it can crash all but the hardest computers. But the content actually is worthwhile, if you can deal with the overenthusiastic graphics and overly-hip names for everything—the essays are mostly well-written and about unusual subjects, and the moderators of the discussion forums guide them with a firm, smart hand. **DOUGLAS WOLK**



	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	BECK	Odelay	DGC
2	SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS	Hot	Mammoth
3	BUTTHOLE SURFERS	Electric Larryland	Capitol
4	JAWBOX	Jawbox	TAG
5	KMFDM	Xtort	Wax Trax!-TVT
6	REVEREND HORTON HEAT	It's Martini Time	Interscope
7	BIKINI KILL	Reject All American	Kill Rock Stars
8	NADA SURF	High/Low	Elektra-EEG
9	MAGNAPOP	Rubbing Doesn't Help	Play It Again Sam-Priority
10	LAND OF THE LOOPS	Bundle Of Joy	Up
11	PORNO FOR PYROS	Good God's Urge	Warner Bros.
12	ANI DI FRANCO	Dilate	Righteous Babe
13	MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO	Subliminal Sandwich	Nothing-Interscope
14	DICK DALE	Calling Up Spirits	Beggars Banquet
15	THE CURE	Wild Mood Swings	Fiction/Elektra-EEG
16	JAMES TAYLOR QUARTET	The Money Spyder	Acid Jazz-Hollywood
17	DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM	Boot Party	K
18	ELVIS COSTELLO & THE ATTRACTIONS	All This Useless Beauty	Warner Bros.
19	RED FIVE	Flash	Interscope
20	COCTEAU TWINS	Milk & Kisses	Capitol
21	JALE	So Wound	Sub Pop
22	MOOG COOKBOOK	Moog Cookbook	Restless
23	BOB MOULD	Bob Mould	Rykodisc
24	GASTR DEL SOL	Upgrade & Afterlife	Drag City
25	POIVO	Exploded Drawing	Touch And Go
26	KOSTARS	Klassics With A "K"	Grand Royal
27	UNWOUND	Repetition	Kill Rock Stars
28	STEREOLAB	Emperor Tomato Ketchup	Elektra-EEG
29	PATTI SMITH	Gone Again	Arista
30	MAN OR ASTRO-MAN?	Experiment Zero	Touch And Go
31	ASH	1977	Reprise
32	AVAIL	4AM Friday	Lookout!
33	TEXAS IS THE REASON	Do You Know Who You Are?	Revelation
34	SOUNDGARDEN	Down On The Upside	A&M
35	SUICIDE MACHINES	Destruction By Definition	Hollywood
36	RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE	Evil Empire	Epic
37	IMPERIAL TEEN	Seasick	Slash-London
38	WALLFLOWERS	Bringing Down The Horse	Interscope
39	CUL DE SAC	China Gate	Thirsty Ear
40	MAKE-UP	Destination: Love: Live! At Cold Rice	Dischord
41	ME'SHELL NDEGEOCELLO	Peace Beyond Passion	Maverick-Reprise
42	TUSCADERO	The Pink Album	Elektra-EEG
43	FIGGS	Banda Macho	Capitol
44	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Trip Hop Test Part 3	Moonshine
45	FASTBACKS	New Mansions In Sound	Sub Pop
46	GRANT LEE BUFFALO	Copperopolis	Slash-Reprise
47	PAUL WESTERBERG	Eventually	Reprise
48	SENSE FIELD	Building	Revelation
49	PROPAGANDHI	Less Talk, More Rock	Fat Wreck Chords
50	RAINCOATS	Looking In The Shadows	DGC
51	SINCOLA	Crash Landing In Teen Heaven	Caroline
52	MELT-BANANA	Scratch Or Stitch	Skin Graft
53	WESTON	Got Beat Up	Go Kart
54	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Lounge Ax: Defense & Relocation CD	Touch And Go
55	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Eyesore: A Stab At The Residents	Vaccination
56	PALACE MUSIC	Arise Therefore	Drag City
57	CRACKER	The Golden Age	Virgin
58	EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL	Walking Wounded	Atlantic
59	GROOVIE GHOU LIES	World Contact Day	Lookout!
60	PRONG	Rude Awakening	Epic
61	LOVE NUT	Bastards Of Melody	Interscope
62	COME	Near Life Experience	Matador
63	DAVE MATTHEWS BAND	Crash	RCA
64	CHIXDIGGIT!	Chixdiggit!	Sub Pop
65	BABE THE BLUE OX	People	RCA
66	SUPER DELUXE	Famous	Tim/Kerr/Revolution-WB
67	FISHBONE	Chim Chim's Bad Ass Revenge	Rowdy-Arista
68	ORBITAL	In Sides	ffrr-London
69	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Cowabunga!: The Surf Box	Rhino
70	POSIES	Amazing Disgrace	DGC
71	STRUNG OUT	Suburban Teenage Wasteland Blues	Fat Wreck Chords
72	YUM YUM	Dan Loves Patti	TAG
73	FLUFFER	Ask Me What It Feels Like	Link
74	STONE TEMPLE PILOTS	Tiny Music...	Atlantic
75	SOUNDTRACK	I Shot Andy Warhol	TAG

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

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What can we do to make the magazine and CD better?

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RATING FOR EACH TRACK

5 - Borderline genius 4 - I'd buy it 3 - Decent 2 - So-so 1 - Trash it
CHECK THE BOX TO THE LEFT IF THIS CD INTRODUCED YOU TO THIS ARTIST

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. FIONA APPLE	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. FREUTE	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. HOLLY PALMER	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. IGGY POP (<i>from Trainspotting</i>)	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. PSYCHOTICA	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. SKOLD	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. SUPER JUNKY MONKEY	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. PLUTO	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. COWBOY MOUTH	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	10. REEL BIG FISH	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	11. CRITTERS BUGGIN'	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	12. ORBITAL	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	13. SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	14. STEVE WYNN	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	15. FIRESIDE	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	16. THE PUGS	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	17. LOW AND SWEET ORCHESTRA	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	18. DISAPPEAR FEAR	5	4	3	2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	19. OLIVIA TREMOR CONTROL	5	4	3	2	1

1. Are you...?

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. How old are you?

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

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☐ record store ☐ bookstore
☐ other _____

4. How many CDs do you buy per month?

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☐ 3-5 ☐ more than 10

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COVER STORY

Liz Phair
Throwing Muses
Veruca Salt/Elastica
Belly
Faith No More
Juliana Hatfield
Chris Isaak
Soul Asylum
Primus
Urge Overkill
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4. With feet about shoulder width apart, bend over slowly at the waist until you feel a pull in the backs of the legs. Hold that position without locking your knees; repeat.



FIRESIDE



THE PUGS



OLIVIA TREMOR CONTROL

15 "I think we were maybe looking for a name that sounded heavy metal or something," says **FIRESIDE** guitarist and singer Kristofer Astrom about the inspiration for the Swedish quartet's moniker. And even though the name doesn't quite sound heavy metal, that's okay, since neither does the band. The young rockers were discovered by American Recordings A&R guy Johan Kugelberg on a visit to his native Sweden. "**Kiloton**" is from the band's debut, *Do Not Tailgate*, which was originally released on a small Swedish indie.

16 Our second Japanese guests on this month's CD are **PUGS**, on whose self-titled debut (Chibari-Tone Casualties) "**Mari In Love**" appears. Their label notes that "upon seeing their wild, raw and sexy stage antics you won't know whether to dance, laugh, or have sex right on the spot." That aside, the band's seven members (including two bassists and two drummers) have an impeccable pedigree of interesting Japanese bands, and they kick up a hell of a fun ruckus. (See review, pg. 43.)

17 The **LOW AND SWEET ORCHESTRA** began when founder Zander Schloss (ex-Circle Jerks) realized, after breaking up a nascent Low And Sweet after its first show, that he had committed to another booking. So he called up old pals and acquaintances like Mike Martt (ex-Tex And The Horseheads), with whom he played in Thelonious Monster, James Fearnley (ex-Pogues), brothers Keiran and Dermott Mulroney, and drummer Tom Barta to play the gig, and "everyone in the band now was in the room the following day." "**Sometimes The Truth Is All You Get**" comes from the band's debut, *Goodbye To All That* (Interscope). (See Best New Music, pg. 13.)

18 **DISAPPEAR FEAR** is finally beginning to harvest the fruits of its years of hard work. Over the past few years—filled with non-stop touring and three self-released records—the band's staunch D.I.Y.-ness has earned it a sizeable following at colleges across the country. "**Skin**" is the first single from Disappear Fear's fifth record, *Seed In The Sahara* (the band's second Philo release) and is a showcase for Sonia Rutstein's alluring voice.

19 Athens, GA's **OLIVIA TREMOR CONTROL** is part of the Elephant 6 Recording Company, a collective of home-recording pop wizards that has also spawned the Apples In Stereo, Neutral Milk Hotel, Secret Square and others. In the last year, the band has released a handful of singles and EPs, as well as the debut album *Music From The Unrealized Film Script 'Dusk At Cubist Castle'* (Flydaddy), which opens with "**The Opera House**." According to the band, there are already a few hundred more songs where this came from. (See Best New Music, pg. 12.)

CMJ
NEW MUSIC

VOLUME 37 • SEPTEMBER 1996

1 Here's the deal: **FIONA APPLE** is 18, got signed before ever playing a show when a tape fell into a producer's hands by blind luck, and has made a record a lot of people think will be a big hit, thereby creating, in the parlance of the music business, a huge buzz. But enough of the showbiz stuff! What really matters is that her debut, *Tidal* (WORK), and its first single, "**Shadowboxer**," are absolutely compelling. (See cover story, pg. 26.)

2 "The exclamation mark didn't mean anything, and the title... didn't actually mean anything either—last time 'round, everybody would focus on that, and ignore the things that actually meant something," says **FRENTE** guitarist Simon Austin. And even though the Australian quartet has lost the exclamation point that previously punctuated its name, it hasn't lost any of the charm that propelled its debut record *Marvin: The Album* to the top of the charts. *Shape* (Mammoth-Atlantic) is the follow-up, and includes the single "**Sit On My Hands**." (See review, pg. 38.)

3 **HOLLY PALMER**'s shoulder has been tightly pressed to the grindstone for several years now, her dream of making records dominating her every move. The young Santa Monica, California, native, a graduate of the Berklee School Of Music, spent nearly two years working on the songs for her self-titled debut and then moved to New York in 1994. After a series of shows around the city, Palmer was signed to Reprise and immediately began recording the songs she had labored over for so many months. "**Scandinavian Ladies**" is the album's first single. (See review, pg. 43.)

4 The film *Trainspotting*, based on the cult novel by Scottish writer Irvine Welsh, is already the second-highest grossing British film ever (behind *Four Weddings And A Funeral*) and, considering all the hype that precedes it, promises to be an art theater mainstay for months to come here in the States. Its soundtrack (Capitol) includes tracks by British artists like Sleeper, Pulp, Leftfield, Blur's Damon Albarn and Elastica. **IGGY POP**, idolized by one of the film's main characters, is featured here with his classic "**Lust For Life**." (See Various Artists, pg. 37.)



FRENTE



IGGY POP



PSYCHOTICA

5 Another artist that landed a record deal before playing a single show? **PSYCHOTICA** makes two on this disc. This band even ups the ante: The unknown (outside of New York club circles) group is also featured in the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame and opening the main stage on Lollapalooza this year. Kids, this too can happen to you when you endeavor to, as singer Patrick Briggs puts it, "bring back the fabulousness to rock 'n' roll." "Ice Planet Hell" comes from Psychotica's self-titled debut (American). (See story in August issue, pg. 21.)



SKOLD

6 "All songs are based upon personal experiences and feelings, with 'based' being the operative word," says Swedish-born, Los Angeles-based artist **SKOLD** of the songs on his self-titled debut (RCA). The album, on which "Nevermind" appears, combines industrial and rock and is the artist's attempt to extract the most positive aspects of the two genres. "Rock music tends to be well intended, but many times the production sucks. Factory presets and operating manuals can only take you so far, and I feel the same about guitars and traditional drum kits."

7 Japan's funk-rock goddesses **SUPER JUNKY MONKEY** first came to CMJ's attention in 1993, when they won a national Battle Of The Bands sponsored by our sister publication *CMJ Japan* and wowed us in an NYC performance. The three women (and one man) of SJM have just released their third album, *Parasitic People* (TriStar). "If," from that record, features Lou and Pete from Sick Of It All as guests. Don't miss them when they tour the States this fall. (See Best New Music, pg. 13.)



SUPER JUNKY MONKEY

8 "I guess we're just not that angst-ridden," says **PLUTO** bassist/vocalist John Ounpuu. "For us, music isn't about wallowing in the negative." The Canadian quartet has been powered by an inextinguishable spark of enthusiasm ever since it began in 1993: It wrote two songs during its first practice session and recorded them as a 7" only 20 days later! Several singles and an indie full-length later, the band prepares for the release of its self-titled major-label debut (Virgin), which includes "When She Was Happy."

9 **COWBOY MOUTH** takes its name from a play by Sam Shepard and Patti Smith that includes the line "You're a performer, man. You gotta be like a rock-and-roll Jesus with a cowboy mouth." The New Orleans quartet has turned this bit of advice into its *modus operandi* and, as a result, the country-ish rock songs on its fourth long-player have a certain tent-revival flavor. "Jenny Says" is the first single from the band's major-label debut, *Are You With Me?* (MCA).

10 "It's from that famous line at the end of *Casablanca*," jokes **REEL BIG FISH** singer and guitarist Aaron Barrett about the origins of the band's name. "You know, 'The problems of seven small people don't add up to a hill of beans in this reel big fish.'" But seriously, "Everything Sucks" is the first single from the ska septet's second album, *Turn The Radio Off* (Mojo-Universal), which, according to Barrett, is "about being in a band that doesn't go anywhere." We'll bet these guys think the cup's half empty.

11 "The good shit happens when you aren't thinking about what rules apply to what you're playing," say **CRITTERS BUGGIN'** of the improvisational method that guides their songwriting. The trio's thoroughly bizarre second record draws its energy from this sort of experimentation, and its live shows are said to include not only costumes and choreography but light shows and visual art screenings. "Bill Gates" is the first single to emerge from *Host* (Loosegroove/550-CRG).

12 **ORBITAL**'s Phil and Paul Hartnoll returned to America this summer—the first time since their performance at Woodstock and following their work remixing Madonna's *Bedtime Stories*—to tour in support of their new record, *In Sides* (fir-London). The band's dynamism as live performers (their performance at the 1994 Glastonbury Festival was voted "Live Event Of The Year" by *NME*) is equally apparent on its fourth long-player, "The Box," which appears in a much longer, four-part version on the album, is a homage to '60s film soundtracks. (See review in August issue, pg. 42.)

13 Shortly after the formation of North Carolina's **SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS**, a strange phenomenon is said to have occurred: "Salon society... exploded. The virtues of dancing cheek to cheek, knees rubbing, were rediscovered. Love affairs broke out like housefires and finger snapping came back into vogue... Evening gowns and dinner jackets became scarce in area thrift stores." Right on. "Put A Lid On It" is from the band's second long-player, *Hot* (Mammoth). (See This Month's Model, pg. 18.)

14 **STEVE WYNN** is best known for having been a member of Dream Syndicate, but his latest solo record (his fourth) stands strongly on legs of its own. Backed by Thalia Zedek and Chris Brokaw of Boston's Come, Wynn's *Melting In The Dark* (Zero Hour) catches fire from its songs' ragged hookiness and Wynn's voice-of-experience rasp. "Shelley's Blues, Pt. 2," featuring Zedek's bright backing vocals, is the album's first single. (See review, pg. 46.)



PLUTO



COWBOY MOUTH



STEVE WYNN

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AUGUST 13

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GIGOLO AUNTS *RCA*
LOW When The Curtain Hits The Cast *Vernon Yard-Caroline*
BETTER THAN EZRA Friction, Baby *Elektra*
ROBYN HITCHCOCK Moss Elixir *Warner Bros.*
FAILURE Fantastic Planet *Warner Bros.*
RAGING SLAB Sing Monkey Sing *American*
WILD COLONIALS This Can't Be Life *Geffen*
COUNTING CROWS Recovering The Satellites *Geffen*
WHITE ZOMBIE Supersexy Swingin' Sounds *Geffen*
GO SAILOR Go Sailor *Lookout!*

AUGUST 20

CRABS Brainwashed *K*
LOIS Snapshot Radio (EP) *K*
SEBADOH Pharmacy *Sub Pop*
OVERWHELMING COLOREAST Moonlight & Castanets *Headhunter-Cargo*
SCORN Loggih Barroghi *Earache*
PENNY DREADFULS Penny Dreadfuls *Restless*
GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI Introducing Gorky's Zygotic MynCI *Mercury*
BEAU JOCQUE & THE ZYDECO HI-ROLLERS
 Gonna Take You Downtown *Rounder*
ALLOY ORCHESTRA New Music For Silent Films *Accurate-Rounder*
PETER ROWAN Bluegrass Boy *Sugar Hill*
BOREDOMS Super Roots 6 *Reprise*
NEW BOMB TURKS Scared Straight *Epitaph*
KITTYWINDER Livre Des Monstres *Zero Hour*

AUGUST 27

CONGO NORVELL The Dope, The Lies, The Vaseline *Priority*
NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN/MICHAEL BROOK
 Night Song Remixes *RealWorld-Caroline*
SCRAWL Travel On, Rider *Elektra*
MC IYTE Bad As I Wanna Be *Eastwest-EEG*
MAIDS OF GRAVITY First-Second *Vernon Yard-Caroline*
METAL MOLLY Surgery For Zebra *Silverstone*
QUEERS Down Back Down *Lookout!*
PERE UBU Datapanik In The Year Zero *Geffen*
60 FT DOLLS The Big Three *Geffen*

SEPTEMBER 3

JIM LAUDERDALE Persimmons *Upstart*
VARIOUS ARTISTS
 Rig Rock Deluxe: A Tribute To The American Truckdriver *Upstart*
VARIOUS ARTISTS Operation Beatbox *Reconstruction-Cargo*
TEN FOOT POLE *Epitaph*

SEPTEMBER 10

R.E.M. *Warner Bros.*
IRIS DEMENT *Warner Bros.*
JIMMY SCOTT *Warner Bros.*
LISA GERMANO 4AD-Warner Bros.
KILLAH PRIEST *Geffen*
WEEZER *Geffen*
SUGARTOOTH The Sounds Of Solid *Geffen*
ROOTS Illadelph/alllife Vol. 3 *Geffen*
DUB NARCOTIC *K*
LORI CARSON Everything I Touch Runs Wild *Restless*
SIGNS OV CHAOS Frankenscience *Earache*
ADRIAN BELEW On *Passenger-Caroline*
IRON LUNG CORPORATION Big Shiny Spears C *Reconstruction-Cargo*
GRACE If I Could Fly *Reprise*
SPECTRUM EP *Reprise*
WILCO *Reprise*
BODEANS Blends *Reprise*
SNFU FYU LABA *Epitaph*
SPEEDBALL BABY Cinema *MCA*

550/Columbia/Epic/WORK *MCA*
 350 Madison Ave.
 New York, NY 10022
 70 Universal City Plaza
 Universal City, CA 91608
A&M *Mercury*
 1416 N. La Brea Ave.
 Hollywood, CA 90028
 825 Eighth Ave.
 New York, NY 10019
American *Nano*
 3500 W. Olive Ave. #1550
 Burbank, CA 91505
 121 Reykjavik, Iceland
Atlantic *PCP*
 75 Rockefeller Plaza
 New York, NY 10019
 P.O. Box 1689
 Grand Central Station
 New York, NY 10009
Atomic Sound *Philo/Rounder/Heartbeat*
 P.O. Box 2112
 Denton, TX 76202
 1 Camp St.
 Cambridge, MA 02140
AVI *Priority*
 10390 Santa Monica Blvd.
 Ste. 210
 Los Angeles, CA 90025
 6430 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 900
 Hollywood, CA 90028
Bomp! *RCA*
 P.O. Box 7112
 Burbank, CA 91505
 Bertelmann Bldg.
 1540 Broadway
 New York, NY 10036
Capitol *React*
 1750 N. Vine St.
 Hollywood, CA 90028
 9157 Sunset Blvd. #210
 Hollywood, CA 90069
Capricorn *Revolver*
 2205 State St.
 Nashville, TN 37203
 290-C Napoleon St.
 San Francisco, CA 94124
Caroline *Septophilia*
 114 W. 26th St., 11th Fl.
 New York, NY 10001
 P.O. Box 3461
 Maplewood, MO 63143
Crosstalk *Shanachie*
 1557 Honore
 Chicago, IL 60622
 16 Laight St., 6th Fl.
 New York, NY 10013
Dedicated *Spirit Of Orr*
 580 Broadway, Ste. 1002
 New York, NY 10012
 186 Lincoln St., 2nd Fl.
 Boston, MA 02111
Derivative *Sub Pop*
 P.O. Box 42031
 Montreal, QUE H2W 2T3
 Canada
 1932 First Ave.
 Seattle, WA 98101
DIW (Japan) *TAG*
 410 Sphere
 Cargo Bldg. 80, Rm 2A, JFK A
 Jamaica, NY 11430
 14 E. 80th St., 8th Fl.
 New York, NY 10022
Drag City *Tone Casualties*
 P.O. Box 476867
 Chicago, IL 60647
 1258 N. Highland Ave.
 Hollywood, CA 90038
EEG/Elektra/Sire *Trance Syndicate*
 75 Rockefeller Plaza
 New York, NY 10019
 P.O. Box 49771
 Austin, TX 78765
Epitaph *Tri-Star*
 6201 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 111
 Hollywood, CA 90028
 79 Fifth Ave.
 New York, NY 10003
Erroneous *TVT*
 P.O. Box 390393
 Cambridge, MA 02139
 23 E. 4th St.
 New York, NY 10003
Floodaddy *Universal*
 P.O. Box 4618
 Seattle, WA 98104
 1325 Ave. Of The Americas
 5th Fl.
 New York, NY 10019
Go-Kart *Up*
 P.O. Box 20
 Prince St. Station
 New York, NY 10012
 P.O. Box 21328
 Seattle, WA 98111-3328
Harriet *Virgin*
 P.O. Box 649
 Cambridge, MA 02238
 338 N. Foothill Rd.
 Beverly Hills, CA 90210
Hollywood *Warner Bros./Reprise*
 500 S. Buena Vista St.
 Burbank, CA 91521
 3300 Warner Blvd.
 Burbank, CA 91505
Interscope *World Domination*
 10900 Wilshire Blvd.
 Ste. 1230
 Los Angeles, CA 90024
 3575 Cahuenga Blvd. W.
 Ste. 450
 Los Angeles, CA 90068
Island/London/Quango/Gee St. *Yellow Eye*
 825 Eighth Ave.
 New York, NY 10019
 P.O. Box 6173
 Dunedin North
 New Zealand
Jive *Zero Hour*
 137-139 W. 25th St.
 New York, NY 10019
 14 West 23rd St., 4th Fl.
 New York, NY 10010
K *Zoo*
 Box 7154
 Olympia, WA 98507
 6363 Sunset Blvd.
 Hollywood, CA 90028
Mammoth
 Carr Mill, 2nd Floor
 Carrboro, NC 27510



► CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

[by Scott Giampino]

Chicago. The city whose new cop slogan for the '96 Democratic Convention is "we beat your dad, now it's your turn." The city that riots and loots when its sports teams win championships. The Second City, now actually the third. A place where once a cow tipped over a lantern and the whole city fried. You get the picture? Okay, here's one: the city reversed the flow of the Chicago River! There was too much pollution going into Lake Michigan, so now it just goes to the Gulf Of Mexico.

Despite all its rage, Chicago is a city of bountiful positives. You can't swing a Steve Albini lookalike without hitting a corner bar here. You'll be walking down a residential street, and out of the blue will pop up an illuminated Old Style sign. Take, for instance, **Ola's Bar** (949 N. Damen). Located in scenic Ukrainian Village, just south of Wicker Park, they have dollar-fifty top-shelf drinks, a blazin' rock 'n' roll jukebox, beautiful Polish women and ugly Polish men who speak nary a lick of English, and Old Style on tap for 75 cents!

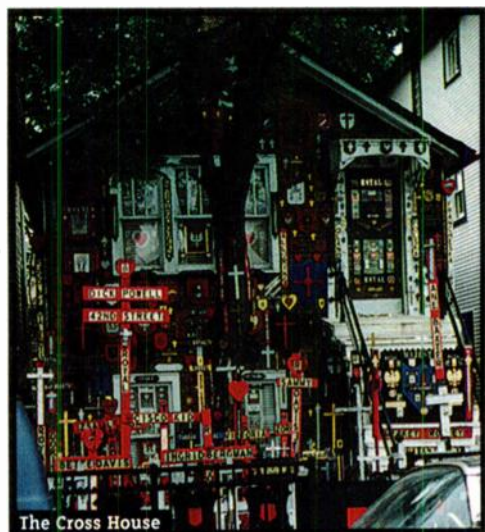
You wanna hear some rock? How about "post-rock"? Or even that one band on that one cool label from that one city? The best two places in town are **Empty Bottle** (1035 N. Western) and **Lounge Ax** (2438 N. Lincoln). Empty Bottle generally has national and local bands Wednesdays through Saturday, and a dub night on Sunday. Don't be surprised by the two resident cats; they're friendly enough, unless of course you actually want to pet them. Lounge Ax has bands every night but Monday. The location is surrounded by chucklehead bars and the accompanying chuckleheads, and is plagued by fist-to-head car traffic outside. A move is on the Ax's '96 docket, though.

Kind of a trek to get to but well worth the



effort is **Hala Kahiki** (2834 River Road) in River Grove. Time has indeed stood still, but the Earth has moved just enough to turn the land into a lush, tropical paradise where Hawaiian women serve you drinks poured into volcano cups (with actual smoke!), hand bowls the size of a minivan, and bikini-decorated snifters. Not inviting enough? How about drinks named "Dr. Funk Of Tahiti" or "Run And Skip Naked"? After a few of those, muu-muus are coming off and Buddha's belly is not the only thing you'll be rubbing. After the sugar drunk has worn thin, head downtown to the second tallest building in Chicago, the Hancock. Get in the elevator up to the **96th Floor** (Michigan & Chicago). Nothing beats that view over the lake or the view of Big Shoulder Architecture. Spend the money and get the "Skyscraper"—it's "served tall."

By now, it's probably pretty late. Bars generally close at 2 a.m. (3 on Saturday). But you want a couple of nightcaps. Hop in a cab or take the El: there's a few choice places that stay open until 4 a.m. (5 on Saturday). The non-descript **German American Restaurant** (642 N. Clark) is open late and rarely crowded. Its no-frills outside seems to keep away the riff-raff. Off-duty cops and on-duty evening ladies frequent the place. **Marie's Riptide** (1751 W. Armitage) is open late and has all the Elvis, Bobby Vinton and Dean Martin you'll need on the juke. See if you can get in on the electronic skeet game on the wall, which makes Atari seem like being on the Space Shuttle. Down the street is **Blue Note** (1901 W. Armitage), also open late. It's got a great jazz and R&B juke accompanied by a blue-neon-lit submarine bar. The best late night spot is the **Old Town Ale House** (219 W. North). All kinds frequent this place: old artbags, jazzbos, grungers, sportheads, you name it. A strange but beautiful mural of former and current patrons graces the wall of the bar. The Dirty Three took some publicity shots when they were here.



Since this is the home of Vienna Beef, hot dogs are always in the on-deck-circle with us flatlanders. A few of the best are **Fast Tracks** (629 W. Lake) and **Murphy's Red Hots** (1211 W. Belmont), both of which have the "Char-Dog" option. The former has a running, scaled-down El train inside; the latter has foot-longs and has opened branches in Japan! Also honorable are **Byron's Hot Dog Haus** (1017 W. Irving), **Park's** (Harlem in Oak Park), and the ultimate **Fat Johnny's Red Hots** (7242 S. Western), reputed by many to be the best available.

Pizza is available everywhere as well. My two favorites are **Lou Malnati's** (439 N. Wells) and **Bacino's** (2204 N. Lincoln). Lou's has the butter crust you'll die for. Bacino's has stuffed pizza—spinach is highly recommended. There's plenty of different kinds of pizza, and arguments commence on the mere mention of the "best."

But there are other kinds of food here. **Bite** (1039 N. Western) serves the hipsters excellent food that's kind of different, but definitely cheap—and it's directly next to the Empty Bottle. **Jimmy Wong's Cantonese Restaurant** (426 S. Wabash) is from the time when Frank Sinatra and his people ruled the earth, and it has pictures of famous people with the owner, who is still there and is about 100 years old. Men, keep an eye on your dates! **Tecalitlan** (1814 W. Chicago) is the best Mexican place in the city, and if you want the best burrito ever, **El Forel** (on Archer in Summit) is open 365 days a year and 24 hours a day. Also open late is **River Kwai** (1650 W. Belmont)—small, hot and Thai. Ultimate Chicago dining is available down around Maxwell Street, which used to have sidewalk sales of all sorts before The Man moved in. Step up to the windows at **Maxwell Street Express** (1316 S. Halsted) or **Jim's Original** (1320 S. Halsted) for the gut-bustin' Polish or pork chop sandwich. Don't be bashful, or they'll just make fun of you.

Chicago is also the land of great thrift stores. The motherlode of all is **Value Village** (2032 N. Milwaukee). It's the size of a huge grocery store, and cheap too. Go early and go often—it gets picked over quickly. **Shangri-La** (1960 W. Roscoe), while more of a resale shop than a thrift store, has excellent clothes, books, shoes and records.

Speaking of records, we've got record stores. Of course, there's **Reckless** (3157 N. Broadway or 2055 W. North), with all the new stuff plus a swell used bin. Most of the used stuff is marked "good condition," "bad," etc, which can be helpful. Plus,



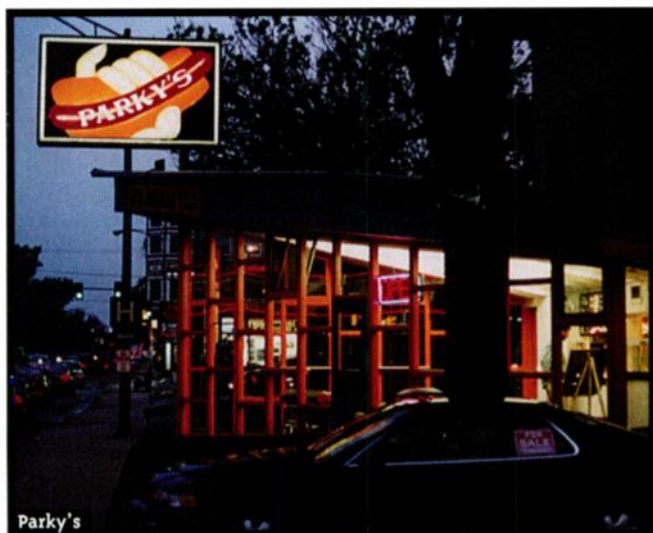
Hala Kahiki

if you're lucky, the employees will treat you like you don't know anything! Another cool spot is **Ajax Records** (1450 W. Chicago), which you savvy *CMJ* readers may recognize from its mail-order business. They have quite a selection of new and hard-to-find releases. **Blackout** (3729 N. Southport) is pretty damn swell, too. Down in Hyde Park, there are a couple of great used stores: **B-Side** (1360 E. 53rd), **Dr. Wax** (5210 S. Harper) and **2nd Hand Tunes** (1377 E. 53rd). The most amazing place I've found for used records (mostly soul) is **Out Of The Past Records** (4407 W. Madison). They have so much stuff crammed in there, it's overwhelming. I mean, a *whole bin* of Tavares?!?! It's in no particular order, so it may take you some time to find that Floaters album. Outside the store, they have two huge PA speakers blasting **Dusty Radio**, the hands-down best station on the planet. You can dance all day and night to '60s and '70s soul and R&B—while you're driving around, tune it in at 1390 on your AM dial. If that music doesn't flip your wig, try **WNUR** (89.3 FM), which is the Northwestern University station. They play the stuff that's in this magazine and go even further out.

Like any big city, there's plenty of sightseeing stuff to do, but here are three highlights: **Garfield Park Conservatory** (Lake & Central Park) is a world-class greenhouse. Built around the turn of the century, it has many rooms to view the green things that come out of the ground. And since it's in a "shady" neighborhood, it's never crowded. Something of a curiosity is the **Cross House** (1546 W. Chestnut)—an actual residence on the average street festooned with crosses with (in)famous names painted on them. It's a head-scratcher. Last is the **Lincoln Park Zoo**, which is free and open year-round.

There's plenty to do and see—these are just the iceberg's tip. So, when you're in town, be prepared to stay up late and do a bit too much smiling. If it's in the summer, I hope you stay somewhere with air conditioning. And if it's winter, well, the phrase "poor planning" comes to mind...

Scott Giampino is a publicist at Chicago's Touch And Go Records and also plays drums in both Cash Money and the Late Great Danes.



Park's



"POWER, MONEY, HOLYROADS,
INFORMATION OVERLOAD,
LEAVE ME IN THE BITTERCOLD TO DIE."

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