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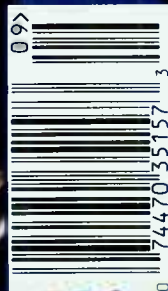
M O N T H L Y

DE LA SOUL daisies duke

EVERCLEAR

"My mom told me quite young,
'Son, you have a face that makes
some people really love you,
and some people want to
just punch you.'"

SEPTEMBER 2000
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PAUL OAKENFOLD

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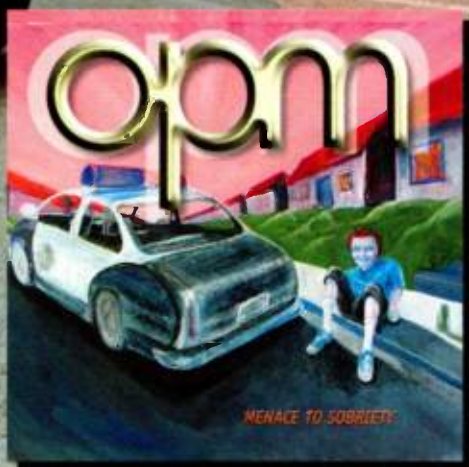
débonair. look it up.

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MONTHLY

ON THE COVER: EVERCLEAR PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHAPMAN BAEHLER. GREG EKLUND WEARS A SUIT BY RICHARD TYLER. CRAIG MONTOYA AND ART ALEXAKIS ARE WORKIN' THE ARMANI. HERE: RAVER ALLI GROMAN AT NEW YORK'S 6TH ELEMENT PARTY. PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATT ELLER.

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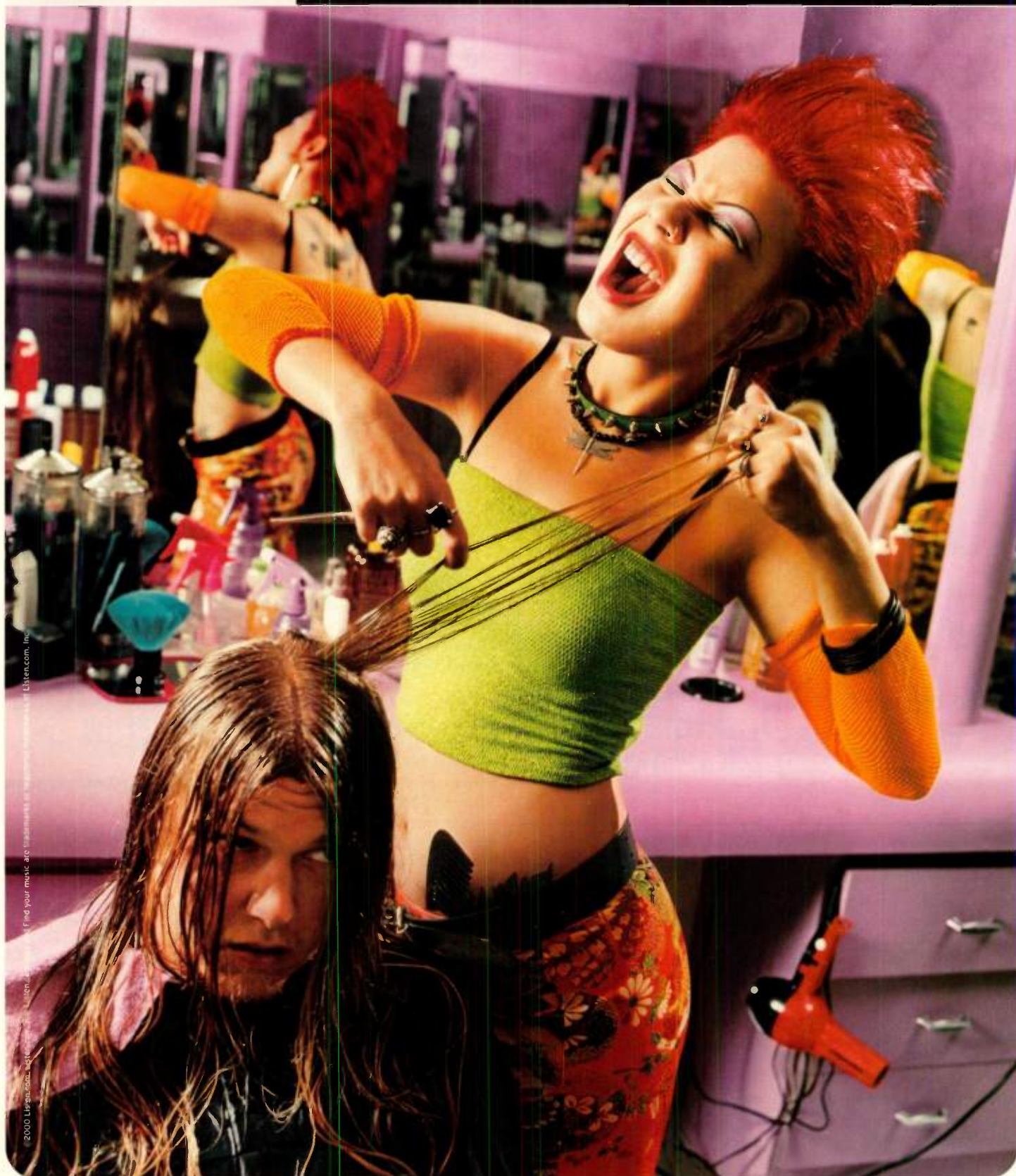


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15 June 2000
Dear Scott and CMJ staff, 

I've been a subscriber for about six years now, and I just want to thank you for helping feed my appetite for new music all these years....

 you're all a bunch of sweet, hard-working poopie-snuggles, and I LOVE YOU!! (ALL of you!) 

XOXOX
OXOXO
XOXO
XOXO

Most Sincerely,

jenn platt 

P.S. enclosed is my 1st response to your music survey...
sorry to be such a slacker!

PUMPKIN PATCH

Hello. I would like to request the Smashing Pumpkins.

Erin [VirginMaryAxe@aol.com]

Okay. Here you go. —ed.

THE MEANING OF IT ALL

This is yet another desperate attempt to sway the tone-deaf ears who listen to simulated reverberations. Look beyond the sour notes that leave acidity ringing in your ears to the sweet

sounds of The Smashing Pumpkins. With their music, you can consume every honey-dipped syllable of truth. Run away from the standard, everyday conventional frequency of the sad radio to a pitch above. You will find music much like a truth serum. Fall away from the masses. Break the chain. Join the accumulation of the bored and restless where you can see the sky with all its stars without the rose-colored hue.

To sit and listen, not predict or judge, that's when you can truly value music at it's best. Forget the easy beats and catch phrases and once again remember the demure truth of rhyme and riddle. For what's popular at the moment isn't always the one to pull you through those hard times and chant with you in the glorifying moments of life. Take the road less traveled. Venture out and you may find a diamond in the rough. You may discover the death rock boy kissing you to sleep with his whispered lullabies. So finally when you've thrown aside your absurd irrational thoughts of melody, you'll be able to savor the remarkable portrayal of yourself through the music and lyrics of The Smashing Pumpkins. Drenched in dreams and towed by reality, you will find yourself anew, reborn in their immaculate sounds.

To fill the void, to complete the incomplete, to find your reasons, buy the The Smashing Pumpkins albums in which you'll find your lost soul amongst the sincere lyrics.

Thru the eyes of Amanda Corbitt and Stephanie Bryan.
[the_synthetic_army_of_glass@yahoo.com]


Or, like Billy Corgan—upset that bands like 'N Sync are currently the ones making the little girls swoon—you can take your ball-shaped head and go home. —ed.

THE OTHER MEANING OF IT ALL

I have a friend who reads your magazine and I just read your article on P.O.D. As a Christian I have to compliment you on the reporting. I believe P.O.D. has a mission from God and your magazine played a huge part in that. Thank you for your objectivity and intelligence on this particular subject.

Leigh Allen [thecomiccabe@aol.com]

Note that she didn't say "And the Lord convinced me to cough up \$39.95 for a subscription [just \$29.95 if you subscribe online at www.cmj.com] to your heathen publication." —ed.

CORRECTION: The Sonic Youth comic in Issue 84 (August '00) was colored by Bad@\$\$.


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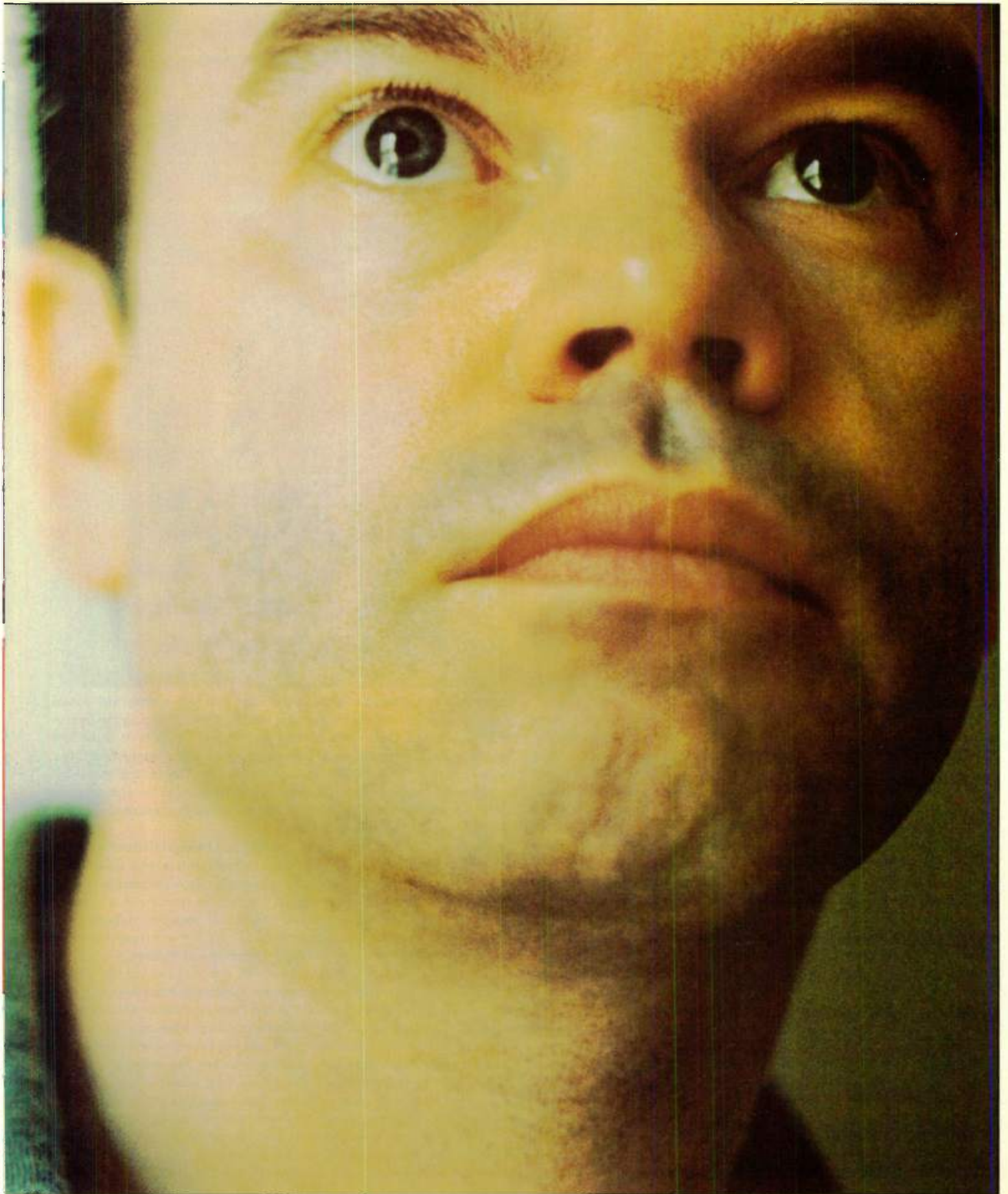
Can **Paul Oakenfold**, the *Guinness Book*'s "Most Successful Club DJ" in the world, break through in America?

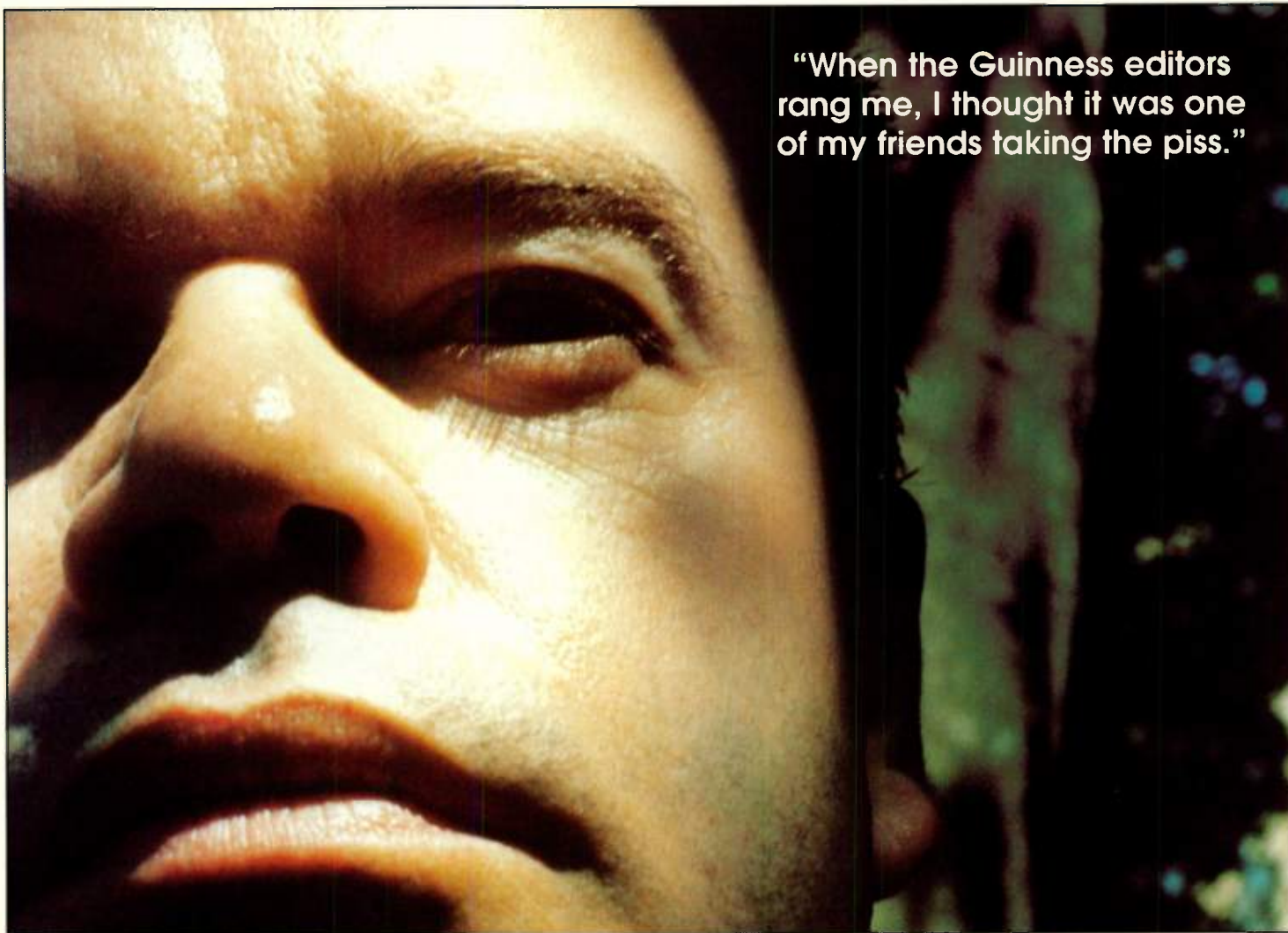
STORY: **ADRIENNE DAY** PHOTOS: **ELIZABETH YOUNG**

For the past five years or so, techno has played the role of fickle mistress to American mainstream culture. On one hand, beats now set the score for everything from car commercials to video games. On the other hand, a brief flirtation with Moby and Fatboy Slim is the only sign of an electronic music subculture on the pop charts. So it's not exactly a jaw-dropper that Paul Oakenfold, the British trance/progressive house DJ/producer who's remixed everyone from Snoop Dogg to the Rolling Stones, isn't quite dominating the racks at Wal-Mart. But don't be surprised if the tide shifts in the next year, especially with the pending release of his domestic double-disc set, *Perfecto Presents Another World* (London-Sire).

"The priority was to make this album for America," explains Oakenfold in a soft, languid drawl that underscores his humble Cockney roots as a North Londoner. "I've been working hard on the scene over here," he notes, sitting in New York's Tompkins Square Park. His slate-blue eyes—which amusingly enough match his entire outfit—twinkle in anticipation. "The timing's very important and I think maybe the next generation of clubbers will want to move out of the hip-hop, R&B vibe—they'll want something a bit more, and dance music gives them that."

(continued on p. 12)





"When the Guinness editors rang me, I thought it was one of my friends taking the piss."

(continued from page 10)

Listening to the man who built Perfecto into one of the most successful dance labels in the UK, it's hard not to buy into his theory that hip-hop fans will soon trade OutKast for Oakie (as his fans refer to him). And as evinced by the recent proliferation of musical genres and sub-genres, the lines between different types of music are indeed blurring. Oakenfold reiterates: "Here, in places like Dallas, you get two to three thousand people a night, and that's healthy—you don't get that in London on a Sunday night. And I think, in the States, it's just going to get bigger."

Another World is engineered to function as more than just a party vehicle while still catering to the masses. Alongside some of his new compositions are bpm-fueled remixes of classics like Led Zeppelin's "Babe I'm Gonna Leave You," Dead Can Dance's "Sanvean" and even tracks from the movies *Blade Runner* and *The Insider*. It seems Oakie's aiming for the hearts of ravers, thirtysomethings and cineastes alike. Still, no one can question Oakenfold's longstanding commitment to the dance scene, which can be traced to his teenage days playing soul and rare-groove records in a Covent Garden basement bar. When his big break in the UK music industry proved elusive, he journeyed to New York in the '70s to ply his trade Stateside. As luck would have it, he got a job at Arista Records, and it was in Manhattan that he first found the sound he was looking for—at Larry Levan's seminal Paradise Garage club. Taking his newfound knowledge back to England in the early '80s, he worked at hip-hop labels like Def Jam and Profile, acting as the British agent for the Beastie Boys and signing acts like Salt 'N' Pepa.

"I signed a lot of house stuff, and acts as diverse as Jack Master Funk and Will Smith," he explains. But it was a trip to the island of Ibiza

that changed his world forever, introducing him to the "Balearic" sound (a mix of soul, house, alternative and Italian disco). Bringing the hybrid back to England, Oakenfold hooked up resident DJ spots at clubs like Spectrum and Heaven, and helped produce the Happy Mondays' groundbreaking *Pills 'N' Thrills And Bellyaches*. The record cemented Oakenfold as one of the most respected producers in the industry; he soon founded his Perfecto label and began running nights at uber-clubs like Ministry Of Sound and Cream.

Perhaps it was his gig opening for U2 that brought Oakenfold to the attention of the *Guinness Book Of World Records* editors, who named him "Most Successful Club DJ." Not bad for a man who plays records for a living. "When [the Guinness editors] rang me, I thought it was one of my friends taking the piss," Oakenfold laughs. "But it's all based on achievement, really. I was the first DJ to play main festivals, the first to support bands on tour and take dance music to places like Bombay and Vietnam."

So it's almost ironic that Oakenfold's Achilles heel is the United States, where he first heard the sound of the future more than 20 years ago. In 1998 he released the first CD of a *Tranceport* series in America, and it sold upwards of 130,000 copies according to Soundscan—pretty damn impressive for a trance record, but not yet representative of the "big sound of America" (as he claims it to be). Armed with his new album, he's optimistic about the future and about expanding the Oakenfold empire to these shores. Oakie defends his imperialistic strategy: "The bigger you get, the more people are going to criticize you, and I'm not above being criticized," he says. "But the whole point of the scene is to share and give something back. If my music appeals to a wider audience, what's wrong with that?"

NMM

HELLO MALI

Tips For Aspiring Griots



CMJ New Music Monthly contributing writer Banning Eyre recounts his seven-month apprenticeship under one of Africa's greatest guitarists, Djelimady Tounkara, in his new book *In Griot Time: An American Guitarist in Mali* (Temple University Press). Guitar in hand, Eyre uncovers both the familiar and exotic in one of Africa's most amiable and musical cities, Bamako. The companion CD, *In Griot Time: String Music From Mali* (Stern's Africa), samples music by the artists in the book, including sounds Eyre recorded in the clubs and courtyards of Bamako, as well as studio work by Malian stars like Salif Keita, Toumani Diabate and Ali Farka Toure. Here, the author shares what you should keep in mind if you travel to Bamako, Mali.

Finding music is both easy and hard. Performances aren't listed in any newspaper and few people speak English. Go anywhere you hear live music, such as a hotel, and ask the musicians for suggestions. If they are keyed into the scene they'll be able to prove it quickly.

Your first day in Bamako, wander the streets until you find a wedding party. Walk right in and when, inevitably, a fabulously dressed female griot sings your praises in a voice like a hurricane—if you're white, you'll know she means you when you hear the word "toubab"—be sure to reward her, in cash.

Bring a portable radio and play it constantly. Bamako has more and better music on the radio than virtually any city in Africa. Also, watch TV in the early evening. Even if you don't learn a word of Bambara, the music and dance programming make up in soul what they lack in production finesse.

If all else fails, play your guitar, harmonica, horn, or any instrument you can and parade it prominently through Bamako. You may not know a soul when you set out from the hotel, but you soon will.

In five days, if you have not reached musical nirvana, hit the tourist road for Timbuktu. But when you're sweltering, queasy, hungry and breathing dust in the back of a jam-packed bus with no shocks, don't be surprised if you find yourself thinking, "I should have given money to that griot."

E-BAY-WATCH Thrifting for dollars in cyberspace.

Struggling to make ends meet in the less-than-lucrative world of indie rock? For those willing to invest the time and energy, online auction site eBay can bring in some serious cash. Matt Suggs, former leader of fluttery pop favorites Butterglory and architect of the recent solo album *Golden Days Before They End* (Merge), regularly buys sought-after items at thrift shops and resells them online. "I'm not making a fortune, but I'm paying my bills," says Suggs. "I've always worked lousy, low-paying jobs. I just figured, if I'm going to have a lousy, low-paying job, I might as well have it on my own hours."

John Ross, of Chicago pop act Autoliner, recently supported himself for three months on eBay dollars, while Bill Kuehn of Rainer Maria uses his profits

from selling vintage furniture to, well, buy more furniture. "Often I'd find something I wanted, like a chair, and the person would have a whole group of them," he says. "So I thought, 'Why not buy them all and sell the ones I don't want, and that will pay for my furniture addiction?'"

But becoming a freelance auctioneer isn't as easy as quitting your job and hitting the Salvation Army; you need to learn what's hot. Howard W. Hamilton III, mastermind of electro-collage project The Busy Signals and a frequent eBay seller, tipped us off that glittery motorcycle helmets are like gold right now. "People in Japan wear them to raves," he notes, "so they'll pay \$150 for a helmet that cost \$2." **—Lisa Gidley**

NAME	Howard W. Hamilton III of The Busy Signals	Bill Kuehn of Rainer Maria	John Ross of Autoliner	Matt Suggs
EBAY ID	thebusysignals	rmaria	picnic-boy	He's keeping it a secret
AVERAGE HOURS SPENT ON EBAY EACH WEEK	7-14	10	10	30
ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF WEEKLY INCOME FROM EBAY	almost 50%	15%	30-40%	almost 100%
TYPICAL SALES ITEMS	Polaroid cameras, recording equipment, fanzines, hanging '70s lamps	Vintage furniture	Music, memorabilia	Music, clothes, toys
BEST RECENT SALE	Stanton Quad headphones from the '70s: bought for \$8, sold for \$187	Eames chair from the '50s: bought for \$80, sold for \$250	David Cassidy concert program: bought for 25¢, sold for \$170	Novelty statue of a cop from the '40s: bought for \$20, sold for \$580
NUMBER OF \$3.99 INDIE-ROCK SINGLE SALES TO EQUAL THE PROFIT	44.9	42.6	42.5	140.4



After a couple of years of "Hell," ex-Zipper **Tom Maxwell** looks eastward for enlightenment.



This is the year of the dragon—it's a very auspicious time not only to have a child, but to start a new business," says expectant father and new solo artist Tom Maxwell. At one time, the former member of Squirrel Nut Zippers was known as an exporter of eccentric Americana and '20s jazz, but these days he's importing influence from the Far East. On *Samsara*, Maxwell's self-released solo debut, the North Carolinian embraces concepts that, in contrast to the fire and brimstone of his Zippers hit "Hell," suit a more moderate philosophical embrace.

"The great thing about Buddhism is you're not reliant upon an external savior—you have to be self-reliant," Maxwell says, a year after quitting the Zippers, Mammoth Records and the label's corporate parent, Disney. "It's perhaps exotic in the sense of geography, but it's universally true. The concept of *samsara*, this treadmill of constant unfulfilled desire, is a fundamental human

condition. So that's a pretty good thing to address in art."

More than just the product of a new perspective, *Samsara* revels in musical freedom. While tracks like "Sixes And Sevens To Me" and "If I Had You" largely toe the Zippers' line, the record also features a George Jones cover, vintage-style R&B quartet vocals and pipe organ dirges, as well as Chinese horns and opera. Maxwell says Mammoth—which turned down its option to release the record—found it too varied. "I thought it was the best thing I'd ever done, and they said, 'Too many styles.' I had no intention of underestimating people's ability to enjoy diversity."

Rather than signing to a new label, Maxwell opted to release the album through his company, Samsara Ltd., and www.tommaxwell.com. "I didn't want to be a sharecropper anymore," he says. "I unconsciously made this record a test to see whether I could step outside a band and pull it off, and I did." **»»Roni Sarig**

U GOT THE HOOKS

When **Prince** has a sample sale, everyone's buying.

In another maneuver that will have rock historians scratching their heads, The Artist Formerly Known As The Artist Formerly Known As Prince has announced that he's releasing a seven-CD box set of samples from his vast library of songs, available to all takers at the low, low price of \$700. Though this announcement may be a blessing to closet tapeheads, it will also affect the future of the music industry in ways Napster can only dream of. **»»Dave Itzkoff**



June 25: Decrepit blues musician John Lee Hooker samples "Jack U Off," just to prove to everyone that he's still alive.

November 8: Sampled by quirky cut 'n' paste savant Moby for his new album, *Vegan Superman Are Our Superiors*. The record is hailed as "genius" by 347 different critics, 12 of whom have actually listened to it.

December 1: Portions of *Vegan* are "sampled" by such advertisers as Ford, Heineken, Vicks NyQuil, 2000 Flushes and the Yalta Tourism Board, earning literally zillions of dollars in residuals for its composer as the album goes on to sell 38 copies. Prince paints the word "Sucka" on his face.



July 25: B-movie king Roger Corman samples "Gett Off" for sound effects in his direct-to-video release *Booby Knockers From Beyond The Sun*.

August 14: Sampled by funkmeister George Clinton. "I just liked the kitsch value," says Clinton, displaying a surprising understanding of Yiddish and great knowledge of the Kaballah.

November 8: Sampled by an unsuspecting Prince, in an ironic twist. Comments the Purple One, "They just felt familiar 2 me."



July 12: Temperamental R&B legend Rick James samples "Do Me, Baby," claiming, "That boy ripped it off from 'Give It To Me Baby' in the first place."

September 6: Sampled by faded rapper MC Hammer on an old Casio keyboard, during one of his many sessions doing absolutely nothing.

January 8: Sampled by Beck, who acquires the keyboard and its sound clips of mysterious origin on a visit to the Salvation Army. They can be heard for .6 seconds among 31 other layers of production in his next single, to be released once he and Geffen Iron out all the "details."

September 20: New Jack Swing icons Boyz II Men sample "The Most Beautiful Girl In The World" on their hit single, "Girl Where The Hell Have We Been (All These Years)?" In a *Vibe* cover story, they accuse 'N Sync, The Backstreet Boys and Britney of stealing their moves.

September 21: Sampled by teen-pop icons The Backstreet Boys for their hit single "Girl U Know U R D I 4 Me." In a cover story in *Rolling Stone*, they assure us that they play all their own instruments.

September 25: Sampled by teen-pop icons 'N Sync in their hit single "Girl I Want 2 B With U 4 Ever N 4 Ever." In a cover story in *CosmoGIRL!*, they confess that all their song titles are inspired by license plates.

IN MY ROOM

KARL BUECHNER
of Earth Crisis



For almost a decade, the members of Earth Crisis have been transmitting their vegan/straightedge belief system through a brutal brand of hardcore. On the band's heavy-on-the-metal fourth album, *Slither* (Victory), soft-spoken frontman Karl Buechner explains that the basic tenets of Earth Crisis values are still in effect, but placed in a 21st century context: "We describe how genetic engineering, cloning and robotics are going to change society. Only a small percentage of the wealthy elite will prosper from these changes." The band sets this militant message to music in its practice room, located in hometown Syracuse, New York. **»»Amy Sciarretto**

Wall Décor There's a giant *Taxi Driver* poster where Travis Bickle is coming down the hall with a handgun. We've got a *Scarface* poster where he's got the M-16 with the grenade launcher at the end. (Laughs.) There's blood-splattered vigilantes hanging on the walls! We've got old Earth Crisis promo posters and pictures of us from South America and cool places we've been when we went on tour, like Europe and Japan.

"Vintage" furniture We've got the old chair from the minivan, the (van) we did our first couple tours in. It unhinges. We sold that van. We made the seat into a couch. It's reddish maroon, made of cloth and pleather.

Propaganda We've got some boxes of PETA literature that we bring on tour and distribute. None of us are members of PETA. We support them but we're not political dudes at all. We're about things we're interested in and we sing about things that happen politically, but we're not left-core or right wing. We don't want to get tangled up in someone else's agenda, which can happen if you join up in certain organizations.

Instrument graveyard There's also a lot of broken equipment. We're going to get it fixed. It broke on tours. Stuff gets old and burns out—not from smashing it on stage or anything.

Inspiration I'm listening to The Misfits' *Famous Monsters*, Bolt Thrower's *Mercenary*, Machine Head's *Burning Red*, and Faith No More's *Angel Dust*. And a Prince box set.

POWER PLAYLIST

Face To Face asked online fans to pick songs for their new album and gave new meaning to people power.



Chapman Beechler

In one of the first big controversial wars of the Internet Age—the ongoing free music download debate—Trevor Keith has picked up his dusty musket and chosen a side. The frontman for Cali punkers Face To Face has listened carefully to all of the arguments, particularly the anti-Napster platform mounted by Metallica, who claim that they pen music for themselves, not their following, and that their art is not something for kids to trade like bubblegum cards, sans royalties. “I’m diametrically opposed to that thinking,” harrumphs Keith, a Napster user who’s been Web-savvy for years. “The only thing that takes a band out of the garage are fans. You can make music for yourself all you like, if all you’re content doing is making demo tapes. Ultimately, you want to please yourself with your music. But if you create an institution and fans are willing to participate in that because they like what you’ve created, then you owe a bit of responsibility to that audience.”

Keith fired a telling shot with F2F’s latest riff-fest, *Reactionary*, released on the band’s own BMG-distributed Lady Luck Records. Through a joint audio-streaming venture with MP3.com, the band allowed fans to choose their 12 favorites from 16 completed studio tracks, thereby determining the record’s final rundown. No one was prepared for the

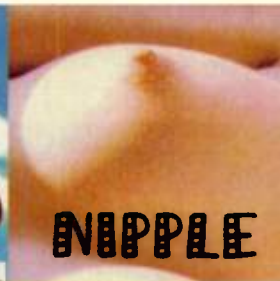
overwhelming response: 1.8 million votes were cast during a six-week period this spring. “I know of other bands who’ve had their audience choose artwork for them, and David Bowie even had someone write lyrics for one of his songs over the Internet,” Keith assesses. “But actual voting on songs? To my knowledge, this is the first time a group’s done this. Especially a punk group.” So wake up to the future, folks: “Sure, Napster and its ilk are copyright infringement. But this is what the public wants. The recording industry is only one system—we accept it simply because it’s in place. But it’s not necessarily the only way that the music or entertainment industry can be run, and it’s not necessarily the right way.”

Which invites one question: Does he think letting your fans get so close to the recording process invests them with a bit too much power? Keith coughs, clears his throat—he’s been asked this over and over of late. “Well, I do and I don’t. I probably wouldn’t do this again for another record. But for us, the time was so right.” After shaking up their power chord formula for the arena-rawk of ‘99’s *Ignorance Is Bliss*, “We wanted to get the word out early about what type of record this was and what it sounded like—more back to basics. But I kinda draw the line at getting audience opinion. You could take this whole thing way too far.” **—Tom Lanham**

WEIRD RECORD

Triple Nipple Extravaganza

A sinister force is sweeping through the underbelly of the music industry—an unstoppable nipple uprising. What else could compel three separate artists to name their records after those ever-lurking nubbins? None of these records actually has anything to do with nipples, yet each act seems to have been powerless to resist their call. Cartoon Boyfriend's *Nipples* (Drool)—a jumbled mess of glam, country, hip-hop, breakbeats and plain old rawk—gives nips nary a mention, but there are enough pictures of them in the artwork to make even Bob Guccione shudder. Proving that great minds think alike, the noisy almost-punk trio Nipple reaches for mammary



NIPPLES



THE PETER BRÖTZMANN SEXTET / QUARTET

greatness by slapping a big booby on the cover, the disc and the inlay card of their self-titled, self-released debut. For those who like their nipples more stoic and severe, try The Peter Brötzmann Sextet/Quartet's 1969 jazz freakout *Nipples*, recently reissued by Atavistic's Unheard Music Series. As nipple consciousness reaches critical mass, look for bigger artists to jump on the bandwagon—rumor has it Billy Corgan's *Nipular Reflections* drops in 2001. **»»Tom Mallon**



SEBASTIAN BACH

LABEL PROFILE: Spitfire Records

If you've spent the last decade searching in vain for the Enuff Z'nuff back catalogue or you've hoped and prayed to find replacements for your worn-out Dio records, help has arrived. New York's Spitfire Records was formed in 1999 to, according to A&R/national promotions director Rob Gill, target the "aggro" music market, and give a home to wayward "marquee value" acts (artists that may have once sold millions of records in their careers but now sell merely tens to hundreds of thousands). Amidst releases from baby aggro bands like Sixty Watt Shaman, Dog Fashion Disco and King Prawn, Spitfire is churning out new records from rockers like Alice Cooper and Sebastian Bach, and reissues from hair metal gods like Twisted Sister, Helloween, Krokus and Grim Reaper. And as if that wasn't enough to bring out the horn-hands, Spitfire's newest signee is none other than the Nuge—his newest will be released early next year. To put to rest any lingering doubts about their badass-ness though, we gave Spitfire the ultimate test: Who's the best metal band? "The obvious answer is Black Sabbath!" says Gill. Case closed. **»»Nicole Keiper**

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MIND OVER PLATTER

A Guy Called Gerald distills man and machine into *Essence*.



“It’s the most complex machine that we know of,” Gerald Simpson—*a.k.a.* A Guy Called Gerald, The Man From Manchester, techno’s original “Voodoo” child—isn’t speaking about the latest mixing board, sampler or computer effect, he’s raving about the human brain. “Even if you were inside the world’s greatest computer, you’d still be like 10 billion times as advanced as that,” he says with awe. “To have the knowledge to control it, to know how the world’s most advanced computer works, you’d have to also have that in your consciousness.”

This line of questioning and need to think everything through is characteristic of Simpson. It’s probably one of the reasons it has taken nearly five years to release *Essence* (Stud!o K7), his first full-length recording since ‘95’s classic *Black Secret Technology*.

Simpson cites record label changes and “repositioning” himself between New York and London as reasons for the delay. But with a listen to the new album, it’s clear that A Guy Called Gerald was also

evolving. “There’s always progression and change,” he says. “The mission is to build an LP which is an advancement on the last LP.”

Simpson wanted to use something other than the latest technology on *Essence*. “The music I’d been doing was mechanical and sample-based,” he explains. “There’s never been a human element before, not on a full LP.” The sensual delivery of Lady Miss Kier, the warm singing of Lamb’s Louise Rhodes and the jazzy stylings of Wendy Page all breathe the human element into *Essence*. Although Simpson has stripped down his arrangements, longtime fans will recognize the signature drum ‘n’ bass patterns, rhythmic wizardry, and the studio shamanism that characterize his work.

As for his sonic evolution, A Guy Called Gerald only hopes fans will follow. “Hopefully they’re not going to expect really hardcore techno—not at this stage!” he laughs. “You can get hardcore techno as a preset on a drum machine now!” **»»Steve Gdula**

IN MY ROOM TODD TRAINER

of Shellac



SYMMETRY IN MOTION

"Everything in my home is organized symmetrically," explains Shellac drummer Todd Trainer in a gravelly whisper. "I've been obsessed with symmetry for as long as I can remember. When I was a kid, I was 100 percent sure that for the first car I was going to buy, I was going to pay a little extra to have them put the steering wheel in the middle." A fastidious desire for order also echoes in Trainer's hypnotic, hermetically sealed drum patterns, heard most recently on *1000 Hurts* (Touch And Go), the new album by the Chicago post-punk band (which also features the steel-scraping-steel guitars and scrubbed-raw vocals of belligerent indie genius Steve Albini). **—Lorne Behrman**

METICULOUSLY POSITIONED BED I must stress the importance of placing the bed in the center of the room. It doesn't have to be the middle, but the center—when I say center, I mean to say it could be either all the way against one wall, the headboard could be against the wall, but it would have to be in the center of the room.

BLACK AND GRAY THICK-SOLED "CREEPER" SHOES I bought them 20 years ago—they're so fuckin' great I have yet to actually wear them. I keep them just because they look good.

PAVONI ESPRESSO MACHINE I'm extremely proud of that. It's a sexy espresso machine, it's chrome. If you've ever seen a Pavoni, I'm sure you'd understand.

CUSTOM-BUILT STEREO WITH UNLABELED DIALS A year ago I had a hi-fi amp custom-made for me. All the knobs are completely symmetrical and I had them make an entirely blank faceplate. That is to say it doesn't say "power," it doesn't say "on/off," it doesn't say "balance," it doesn't say "treble," it doesn't say "CD player." Fortunately the manual came with a layout of the specifics, the functions of the buttons.

UNCENTERED BATHTUB I have an amazing bathtub, it's four feet wide and six feet long. It's not symmetrical within the room, but there are symmetrical things about it to be enjoyed. The faucet and all the knobs, all the flashy silver things, are all in the right place.

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?&A: SINEAD O'CONNOR

Like a good magician, Sinéad O'Connor always keeps her audience guessing. Shortly after the Irish upstart won a US following for her operatic 1990 album *I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got*, she shocked that faithful flock by ripping up a photo of the pope during a *Saturday Night Live* appearance. She projected a punky, shaven-headed confidence, but was secretly battling a depression that pushed her to the brink of suicide. And now, six years after her last full-length, O'Connor returns with *Faith And Courage* (Atlantic), which not only deals with her conflicted sexuality (the tellingly titled "No Man's Woman"), but yet another remarkable career twist: She was recently ordained a minister by the Catholic-fringe Latin Tridentine Church. »»Tom Lanham

You've actually been ordained a priest? That came out of left field.

If we talk about my album, I'm not going to talk about the priesthood in connection with it. I'm not going to talk about it all in the context of promoting my record, no way. I didn't get ordained for publicity reasons, and if I talk about it, it suggests that I did. So I think it's important that I just shut up.

But religion, spirituality, plays such a crucial role in the record, thematically.

Well, you can at least say that I've been ordained and that's had an obvious effect on the music and on the soul of the person making the music. But that's as far as I'm going to go. Except to say that my singing is very much a part of my priesthood. And that's all I'm going to say about that.

It's interesting to note that one of the strongest images people associate with you is the shot of you, on national TV, tearing up that picture of the pope.

I think I was coming from the future. I think that was an act of coming from the future, and I was an artist who was very much coming from the future. I think that's what was so shocking about Sinéad O'Connor—she was the future.

Ever feel like you've lived before? Or had a past life regression?

Oh, God yeah. I definitely believe in past lives. And I've come up with a number of past lives in which one pattern is always present—including this one—where it's very difficult to tell whether I'm a girl or a boy for huge sections of the life. For a part of the lives, it's been necessary for survival's sake to dress as a boy or...well, there's one I went back to where I was actually a Native American Indian, and I was dragging my brother's body from a village, and it seemed very important that my brother's body be buried for some reason. Something had happened and everyone had been killed. But the only way I could survive was to dress as a boy, so in this regression I could

see myself dressed as a boy Indian warrior, dragging my brother off to be buried. And then in another one, I saw myself as a slave, again in America, being brought to the market to be sold. I totally believe that we all lead many lives.

That philosophy practically spits in the face of conventional Catholic dogma.

Exactly, yeah. But I see myself as a bridge—and this is as much as I'll talk about the priesthood—between the past and the future in a lot of ways. I can hold hands with the old traditional Church, present myself as a friend to them, as someone who can help them into the future, help them release some old ways of thinking, and as someone who can help the future and young people to have an attitude of forgiveness toward the Church. I'm someone who can lay myself down as a bridge between...well, them and us, if you like.



5 things you should know about VICTORIA WILLIAMS



1. Victoria digs Pet Sounds (all kinds).

Williams made the new record *Water To Drink* (Atlantic) at her home in Joshua Tree, California surrounded by her dogs, burros, reptiles and chickens. "We recorded our trumpet player standing in the desert; brought the vibraphone out onto the porch. I think there's a real relaxed feeling 'cause of that." Longtime Brian Wilson cohort Van Dyke Parks arranges strings for Victoria. "He was the first person who made demos with me when I was playing Venice Beach in the '80s. He introduced me to Richard Thompson and Richard Greene, who played on that demo. We shopped it to EMI, and they said, 'We already have a Kate Bush type.'"

2. Former Jayhawk Mark Olson offered to carry Victoria's amps after a show—and ended up marrying her.

"The song 'Joy of Love' [on *Water To Drink*], that's him," she giggles. "He's got his project, The Original Harmony Ridge Creekdippers, which I play in as well."

3. She's the patron saint of Sweet Relief.

When Victoria was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in the mid-'90s, she had no insurance to cover her medical bills. Famous pals Pearl Jam, Evan Dando and Lou Reed recorded covers of Williams's material on the benefit record *Sweet Relief* to help with costs. The Sweet Relief Musician's Fund (www.sweetrelief.org) continues to support other musicians. "The drummer from Rufus was in a serious accident and we got him a van with a lift in it. We help people on drugs get into treatment centers. Or just older musicians who need money to live on. I think for the next Sweet Relief record we may cover Tim and Jeff Buckley songs."

4. Victoria does a shot of Copaxone a day.

"I was doing some homeopathic methods and acupuncture. I think I was doing too many different things, I didn't know what worked. My neurologist said, 'Victoria, you gotta stop with all this natural stuff and get serious.' I still do Tai Chi and Yoga. I watch my diet. No fried food, only clean food. I think a lot of foods on the shelves should be illegal, like Coca-Cola."

5. Pavarotti rules.

"I'd love to do faux opera. I've been singing faux opera ever since I was a little girl. And listen to this: The last venue I played at, I had the same dressing room that Pavarotti had the night before. There were still hangers with his name taped to them. That was so cool." >>>Margit Detweiler

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All Time High
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Waiting For Superman
(Live)
Belle & Sebastian
The Wrong Girl
Perry Blake
Genevieve
Hefner
Christian Girls
Velvet Underground
Sweet Jane
Mercury Rev
Opus 40
Elvis Costello
From Head To Toe
Suede
Europe Is Our
Playground

SIDE 2

Nick Cave & The Bad
Seeds
(Are You) The One That
I've Been Waiting For
Elliott Smith
Baby Britain
Gus Gus
Bambi
Gay Dad
Oh Jim
The Pixies
Here Comes Your Man
Snow Patrol
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LA LEY

When you think of Chile, images of oppressive dictatorship might come to mind. But La Ley (translation: The Law) isn't about to start complaining about its country's political landscape. "We're feeling pretty thankful for having made it as musicians," says trilingual singer Beto Cuevas, leader of the post-new romantic Chilean trio. "Why are we going to be critical or making protest music?" In surviving the tumultuous Latin rock market, a key bandmember's death and another's defection since forming 11 years ago, La Ley has adhered to one law: being heard. Touring constantly around the globe—in North America throughout the fall backing its latest release, *Uno* (WEA Latina)—La Ley is Chile's biggest alternative-rock export, topping the charts in nearly every Spanish-language market. Influenced by American and British new wave, the trio's melodic synth-pop arrangements with arena-rock overtures and universal lyrical themes contrast with the often grinding, Latin-tinged fusion and politically charged offerings of its contemporaries. "We're in a position where we can transmit a positive vibe as an alternative to the darkness and anger that rock thrives on so much," says Cuevas, who with guitarist Pedro Frugone and drummer Mauricio Clavería comprises La Ley. "We know we aren't going to change the world. But we are going make a good album." >>>Enrique Lavin



Sonja Pacheco

MEPHISTO ODYSSEY

"I guess we kind of have ADD or something," says Mikael Johnston of Bay Area dance band Mephisto Odyssey. "We just can't concentrate on one style of music for too long. But the beauty of dance music is that you can put any influence into it and get away with it." Johnston and cohorts translated that beauty into *The Deep Red Connection* (Primal-Warner Bros.), the quartet's eclectic major-label debut which follows a '97 album of jazzy breakbeats and a succession of rave-ready singles. Along with band co-founder Orpheus Dejournette, Johnston's time toiling in the rock 'n' roll trenches in the early '90s made the Odyssey the perfect act to finagle all the mixes for Jane's Addiction's 1999 comeback EP, *So What*. This time out, however, the crew expands beyond tech-rock, calling a slew of guests, including ragga toaster Mad Lion, hip-hop MC Bigg Sauce, ex-Gus Gus chanteuse Hafdis Huld and alt-metal band Static-X to authenticate the album's diversity. "We were a little bit scared to get really diverse on this album," says Johnston, "but hearing the recent albums by Leftfield and The Chemical Brothers just gave us the courage to go, 'Fuck yeah. Let's try that.' Maybe next time we can get a string quartet to come in. Who knows?" >>>M. Tye Comer



PADDY CASEY

Don't believe the rags-to-riches success story circulating about Paddy Casey, a boyish 24-year-old troubadour who's been serenading Ireland's pedestrians since age 12. "It's all lies," jokes the curly-locked Casey, who wasn't signed off the streets of the Emerald Isle but busked days while playing gigs by night. He's not embarrassed by his pedestrian roots, but it's just one part of his career, so a Cinderella story isn't exactly in order. Still, busking taught Casey to project his voice over bustling crowds and confirmed the importance of a quick wit: "I'd just strum some chords and make up some lyrics about people going by." A contract with Norway's S2

Records drew other offers, including one from U2's Principle Management, his current counsel. Listening to Casey's Dylan-esque strummy guitar folk songs about love, kids, whiskey and war spliced with beats and samples reminiscent of Beck, you might think he's wearing his influences all over his Columbia debut, *Amen (So Be It)*. Yet Casey says he'd never heard Dylan until a few years ago and was only recently introduced to Beck's music. His biggest musical influence: Prince. It starts to explain why the Irish folkie hopes to incorporate even more beats on the next record. "Hopefully it'll be something people could dance to." >>> Brian Howard



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GLUECIFER

Tender Is The Savage Sub Pop

OUT:

August 8

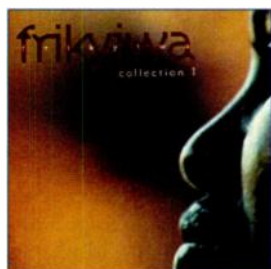
FILE UNDER:

The hard stuff

R.I.Y.L.:

Hellacopters, Zodiac Mindwarp & The Love Reaction, Minor Threat

Oslo's Gluecifer seems aware of the left-brain (metal/hard rock) vs. right-brain (punk/hardcore) schism that's plagued American rock for two decades—a break that guaranteed neither hard rock nor punk in the late '80s and '90s would ever feel quite whole. The lesson of Gluecifer's import-only 1997 album *Ridin' The Tiger* (White Jazz), was not just that they dug Minor Threat and Zodiac Mindwarp & The Love Reaction, but that they figured those two bands could complete one another. The fact that Gluecifer took MC5, The Heartbreakers, The Stooges and The Ramones for second-rate hard rock bands appears to have made all the difference. So depending on your subcultural affiliation, *Savage* is either a cock-rock album stripped of bullshit poses and extraneous fills, or a drunk 'n' pompous punk album not even a KISS fan could hate. The opening, "I Got A War," crosses Fear's "Let's Have A War" with The Stooges' "I Got A Right" as fronted by Robert Plant pretending to be MC5's Rob Tyner; it's high energy drawn into sharp focus, and Daniel Rey's production makes it detonate like a Norwegian *Never Mind The Bollocks*. Later on there's a song that sounds a bit like that *Slave To The Grind* album Skid Row made after they started listening to the Cro-Mags, but other than that bit of tenderness, *Savage* is the perfect album everyone expected their Swedish brethren the Hellacopters would beat 'em to. >>>Carly Carioli



VARIOUS ARTISTS

Frikiyiwa: Collection 1 Six Degrees

OUT:

July 20

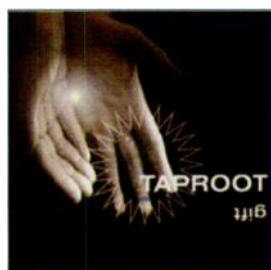
FILE UNDER:

Flogging Mali

R.I.Y.L.:

Frédéric Galliano, Moby's Play, Bill Laswell

For *Frikiyiwa*, French producer Frédéric Galliano aims to reinvent African music as electrified club pop, choosing a varied cast of DJs and electronic musicians from the UK, France and Japan to refashion music from the villages of the West African nation of Mali. In some cases, the original rhythms and textures are so compelling that few modifications are required, as in Jeff Sharel's reworking of a piece by balafon (wooden xylophone) artist Neba Solo, or Chari Chari's high-energy take on Bambara bluesman Lobi Traore's rowdy "Korodugu." Elsewhere, only the vocals are retained and the rest of the tune is rebuilt from the ground up. An extreme case is a pair of dub-based reconfigurations by Natty Bass Sound System of a song by one of Mali's rootsiest recording artists, Djigui. All that remains of the original's bolon (bass harp) and voice is a sample of a single, squawked vocal melody, which repeats periodically. But Dombia's tangy call-and-response vocals flow perfectly into his racing drum 'n' bass accompaniment. Ibrahim Hamma Dicko's moody folk songs from northern Mali might seem odd seed material for the dance floor, but he contributes the source songs for two club-worthy creations. The resulting pair of dancefloor tracks have deep, deep spiritual roots, which is an apt description of *Frikiyiwa* in general. >>>Banning Eyre



TAPROOT

Gift Velvet Hammer-Atlantic

OUT:

June 27

FILE UNDER:

Neo-industrial rap-rock

R.I.Y.L.:

Incubus, Rage Against The Machine, System Of A Down

Pity the poor fledgling metal band. You can't just spit out power chords with machine-gun crudeness and speed any more, like Tony Iommi, or stretch a word like "love" or "cry" into a seven-syllable yowl, like Robert Plant or Axl Rose. Bands like Taproot have raised the bar. This rapcore quartet impeccably crafts intimidating, towering structures, built upon the foundation of tricky start-stop rhythms from drummer Jarrod Montague and bassist Philip Lipscomb, carefully sculpted blocks of sonic granite from guitarist Michael DeWolf, and a dense filigree of free-associative lyrics from singer Stephen Richards. Yeah, it's still the old metal plaint of alienation, distrust and self-doubt, but in a blizzard of words that's as solid and impenetrable as every other facet of the band's music. The result is an edifice that's imposing, immense, polished, blunt—in short, impressive to behold, but not a place you'd want to live. Hey guys, this is your major label debut, you already have a huge, Web-driven fanbase, and you've endured a major rite of passage by pissing off Fred Durst (who became incensed when Taproot blew off his too-little-too-late offer to sign and produce the band). So you can afford to lighten up. >>>Gary Susman





SIXTEEN DELUXE

Vision Take Me, Make Me, Never Forsake Me Sugar Fix

Few bands have the knack for making an air-raid assault of overdriven guitars sound, well, pretty. It's something Sonic Youth regularly pulls off, and it's a talent that this Austin, Texas-based foursome also possesses. Indeed, *Vision Take Me, Make Me, Never Forsake Me* is something of a refreshing throwback to the good old days of psych-pop noisemongers like My Bloody Valentine, who went crazy with effects pedals and made listeners' ears bleed blissfully. Back in the indie trenches after releasing a strong, mostly ignored disc on Warner Bros. (*Emits Showers Of Sparks*), Sixteen Deluxe delivers yet another consistently solid and confident collection of densely melodic songs that revel in euphoric sonic excess. The band isn't afraid to take chances, which seems to reflect a determined group of players stepping back to take stock of its renewed strengths and then pushing on ahead without hesitation. The gorgeous, Dusty Springfield-meets-Dot Allison electro-country of "Custom Cuts And Signature Sounds" and the iridescent psychedelia of "The Falling Last Season" find singer/guitarist Carrie Clark's often buried-alive vocals rising out and over the labyrinthine swirl of Chris Smith's fretboard excursions. It's nice to hear her comely voice framed by a relatively cleaner mix, but it still comes swathed in beautiful, opium-den clouds of echo and distortion. >>>Jonathan Perry

OUT:

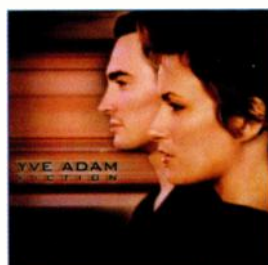
June 13

FILE UNDER:

Psych-pop noisemongers

R.I.Y.L.:

Medicine, Madder Rose, The Jesus & Mary Chain, My Bloody Valentine



YVE ADAM

Fiction 143-Atlantic

Most contemporary dance-pop sucks. It's got a hole for a soul: meaningless lyrics, generic beats and a plain vanilla veneer. But Vancouver's girl-boy duo Yve Adam—Yve sings and Adam handles the rest—may be the smartest outfit to till these fields since The Eurythmics. They're not going to get an award for imaginative drums and programming, yet their debut is full of natty sonic filigrees like braying psychedelic guitars, rippling trumpet lines, synthy baubles and sprays of phase shifter. At the same time, the album is shamelessly tuneful in the way only the work of the most ambitious pop songwriters can be. Every number has a fat, obvious sing-along hook. And Yve can't open her mouth without a gorgeous melody tumbling out. Nonetheless, tunes like "Scars," with its minor-key reflections on life's travails, are too dour for the likes of Celine Dion or Mariah Carey. Slow that one down and suck some of the sweetness out of Yve's radio-perfect voice and it's ready for Marianne Faithfull. Likewise, the title track is both too retro and too psychedelic for the current regime of nickel-a-dozen divas, with Fender Rhodes and fuzz guitars vibing right back to the '60s. For every glance backwards there's a modernist counterpart—a trip-hop beat, a dizzy sample. It's all a matter of balance. And this Adam and Yve are superbly poised. >>>Ted Drozdowski

OUT:

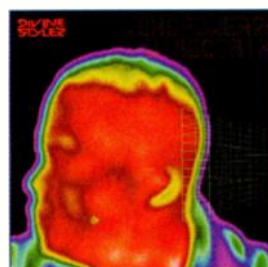
July 18

FILE UNDER:

Tuneful, trippy dance pop

R.I.Y.L.:

Eurythmics, Danielle Dax, Book Of Love



DIVINE STYLER

Word Power 2: Directrix Mo' Wax-Beggars Banquet

It's been 11 years since the first *Word Power* hit the streets and Divine Styler is still an enigma in the hip-hop game. In fact, he remains an elusive personality with a strong underground fan base (there's even a Canadian magazine named after him) despite his having virtually disappeared for five years. That's just proof of the enormous impact his music had on those who heard it back at the dawn of the '90s—but it's not like Divine Styler's a household name among today's basic b-boys. Thanks to Mo' Wax's re-release of *Word Power 2*, that may change. The 1998 album has been revived with minor changes—two tracks added and two removed—that augment its futuristic outlook. On "Before Mecca" and "Hajji," Divine drops some spiritual science without sounding too preachy. Elsewhere, sonic experimentation becomes a crucial focus: "Directrix" is dominated by the kind of synth vamps you'd expect to find in a techno recording; "The Grand Design" sets Cockni O Dire's ragga vocals against an ominously textured backdrop rounded out by a skeletal, syncopated beat. But what's truly divine about Divine Styler is his vocals, and that's his biggest asset on *Word Power 2*, a disc packed with dense and speedy barrages of words as powerful as they are cryptic. >>>Kuri Kondrak

OUT:

August 22

FILE UNDER:

Hooked on hip-hop phonics

R.I.Y.L.:

Mike Ladd, Anti-Pop Consortium, Scaramanga





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unc the p



Parisian Xavier Boyer spent his teen years soaking up everything British and American he could get his hands on, from music (The Kinks, Donovan, The Beach Boys) to fashion (check out the Superfly T-shirt) to language. He decided to major in English soon after his older brothers introduced him to the early-'90s Madchester scene—the budding guitarist wanted to better understand those lyrics. Studying at the University of Rouen, Boyer met Pedro Resende, who later helped form Tahiti 80 based on a mutual appreciation for upbeat '60s hits. So it surprises Boyer that his band's lounge-y, Anglicized guitar pop brings one adjective to mind: French.

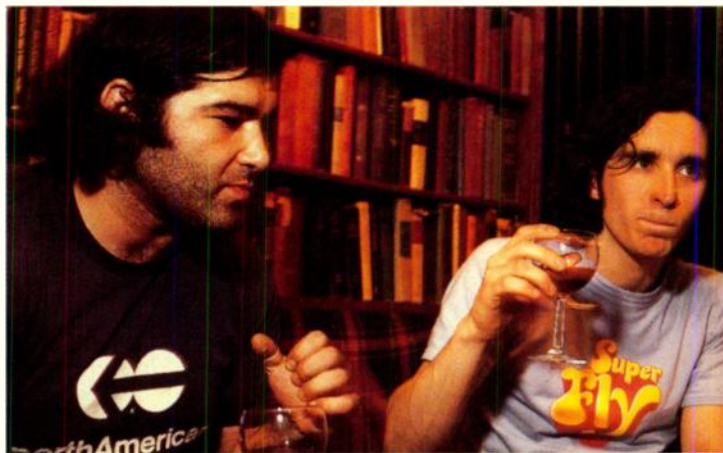
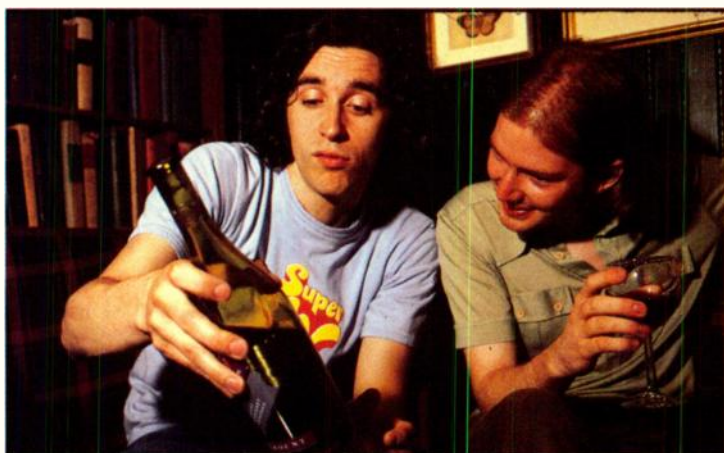
No amount of cribbing from jangly-boy rock or production work from New Yorker Andy Chase (of the group Ivy) on their album *Puzzle* (Minty Fresh) could extract the French from Boyer, Resende, Mederic Gontier and Sylvain Marchand. Even the Japanese, connoisseurs of all things French, love Tahiti 80's cool, shimmering guitar hooks, ostentatious Esquivel-esque arrangements, and chunky electronic beats, iced with Boyer's coy English vocals.

Should the members of Tahiti 80 realistically have hoped to sound made-in-the-USA? After all, these are guys whose mothers, in Boyer's words, "put wine in the... how do you say? Baby bottle." Chilling at the downtown New York boîte Bar & Books, Tahiti 80 agreed to sample seven under-\$10 wines and share their seasoned expertise. All of the members say they took their first steps above wine cellars (apparently a common French affectation); Resende worked picking Champagne grapes one summer; Boyer's family buys casks of wine and bottles it themselves at home.

ork
pp

France's Tahiti 80 imports Anglo-American flavors to create a light, yet complex varietal.

STORY: DYLAN SIEGLER PHOTOS: BRENDAN MORAN



Although they claim to have been weaned on the stuff, it doesn't show in Tahiti 80's alcohol tolerance. After several sips (spit it out after tasting? P-shaw!), the shy quartet—only Boyer speaks above a muffled French murmur—got as goofy as their muppetish stage demeanor, joking with each other (probably at our expense) in French. Fair-haired drummer Marchand's cheeks flushed as he reminded Boyer of the French version of "Beer then liquor, never sicker"—a warning about red and white wine, which will give you a headache if consumed in the wrong order. Boyer launched into an unprovoked announcement of all of their national heritages; when he proclaimed Gontier "Belgian," the straight-faced multi-instrumentalist took issue (in French of course).

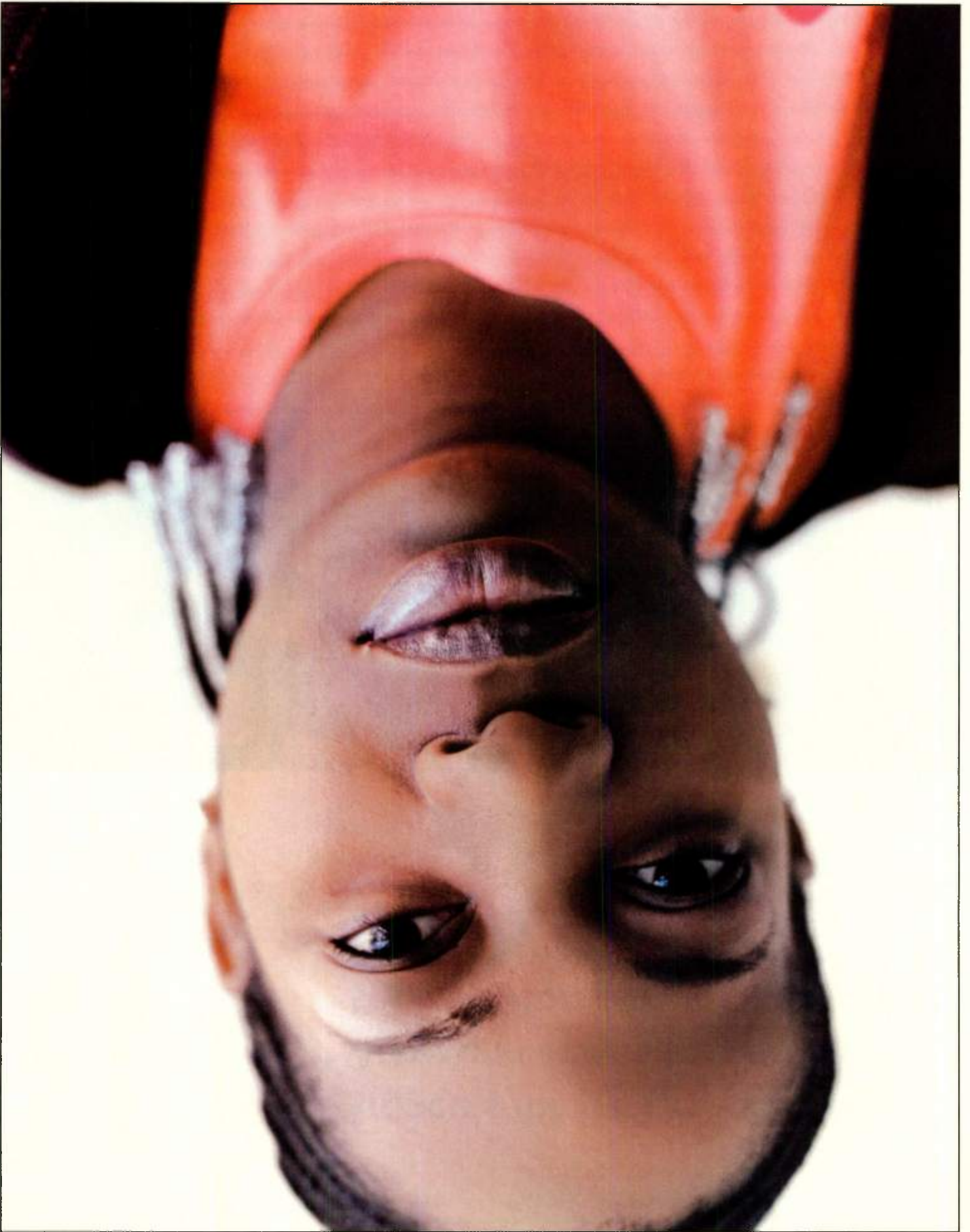
Do they drink wine for inspiration when they write their infectious pop songs? "Yes, and I usually carry a baguette and wear a beret, as well," replies Boyer, dry as a Sauvignon Blanc.


Not surprisingly, out of the four reds and three whites, only the French varietals earned full endorsement—regardless of quality. The 1999 Seigneurs de Bergerac Sauvignon-Semillon-Muscadelle (\$3.99), a sweet, weak, apple-juicy affair, was "Just OK," according to Boyer, "but I give it an A, because it's French." The other French offering, a bitter 1998 Recolte Pouilly-Fuisse (\$9.99), earned comparisons to sparkling lemonade. "But I like this, and I don't like white wine," commented Resende. "And it's French. We give it an A."

Of the remaining Australian, Chilean, Italian and Spanish choices, the Spanish were panned—"I'd rather drink this Chateau New York," quipped Boyer, sipping from his glass of tap water—but the

dense, astringent wines of the Chileans and Italians were embraced and kissed on each cheek. The 1998 Santa Cristina Sangiovese Merlot would have taken the tournament if it had been French, even at what Tahiti 80 considered the highway-robbery price of \$9. "In France you can get a wine better than this for \$3!" scoffed Boyer. But if it were French, would it taste better? Replies the timid Marchand: "Is this a joke?" **NMM**







royal rumble

Bahamadia, the first lady of hip-hop, takes aim with *BB Queen*.

STORY: AMANDA NOWINSKI PHOTO: ANGIE WYANT

On the continuum of cool, Bahamadia eases in somewhere between Eartha Kitt and Esther Rolle. She doesn't exactly rap so much as growl and purr through a laid-back, buttery flow, but don't let the delivery fool you: This mother of two is no doe-eyed, come-hither kitten. The Philly native's street-wise feminist approach revs through much of her work, most recently on the anti-materialist, around-the-way manifesto "Commonwealth (Cheap Chicks)," from her new EP *BB Queen* (Atomic Pop-Good Vibe). "This goes out to all the ordinary females around the way, to all the so-called corn balls/ To all the broke broads who ain't frontin'."

Bahamadia, the oft-called "First Lady Of Hip-Hop," has been a local star of the Philly hip-hop scene since the early '80s, when she made a name for herself as a DJ. A longtime protégé of Gang Starr's Guru, her first major label release, *Kollage* (Chrysalis), finally came a decade or so after she established herself on the underground circuit. Two singles from that album, "Uknowhowwedo" and "I Confess," made some noise, but not enough to allow her to quit her day job as host of "Bahamadia's B-Sides," a Philly radio program focused on breaking local and international underground acts. In the meantime, she solidified her rep as an artist's artist, making guest appearances with everyone from The Roots to Sweetback.

She moves beyond the R&B and easy funk of *Kollage* for her new release, the seven-track *BB Queen* (the "B" is for both black and beautiful).

But Bahamadia doesn't see the disc's electronic and drum 'n' bass tracks, reminiscent of her work with Roni Size, as a stretch. "Drum 'n' bass is hip-hop, and I've always seen it that way," she says. "It could be the era I came out of, the original old school—there, the 122 bpm, more uptempo beats were just considered to be street music. I think it's all the same."

"Hip-hop had become stagnant," she says, "and I'm very open-minded. I don't consider myself to be a hip-hop artist. But I am a b-girl."

The EP swings with her tightly written, hyper-conscious lyrics, which range from political freestyles to spiritual introspection. Label mates Slum Village chat away on "One-4-Teen (Funky For You)," while Planet Asia, Rasco, DJ Revolution and Chops from the Mountain Brothers combine skills on "Special Forces." The production side receives a loving beat-down from Chops and Detroit producers Dwele and EQ, but as any proper queen would have it, Bahamadia put her own stamp on the production. "I didn't manually program the music and beats on the album, but I had much more say in this project than on my previous album," she says.

Integrating sped-up breaks into her mostly mid-tempo style proved a bit of a test, though. "With drum 'n' bass, it maybe takes a little longer to get into the flow than with hip-hop tracks," she says. "You have to freestyle to get into it, and you have to find a loop with the beats. It's cool when I get challenged with different compositions. I never get intimidated."

NMM



the low road

Jets To Brazil offers
up a souvenir of
rough emotional travels.

STORY: RICHARD A. MARTIN PHOTO: TIM OWEN

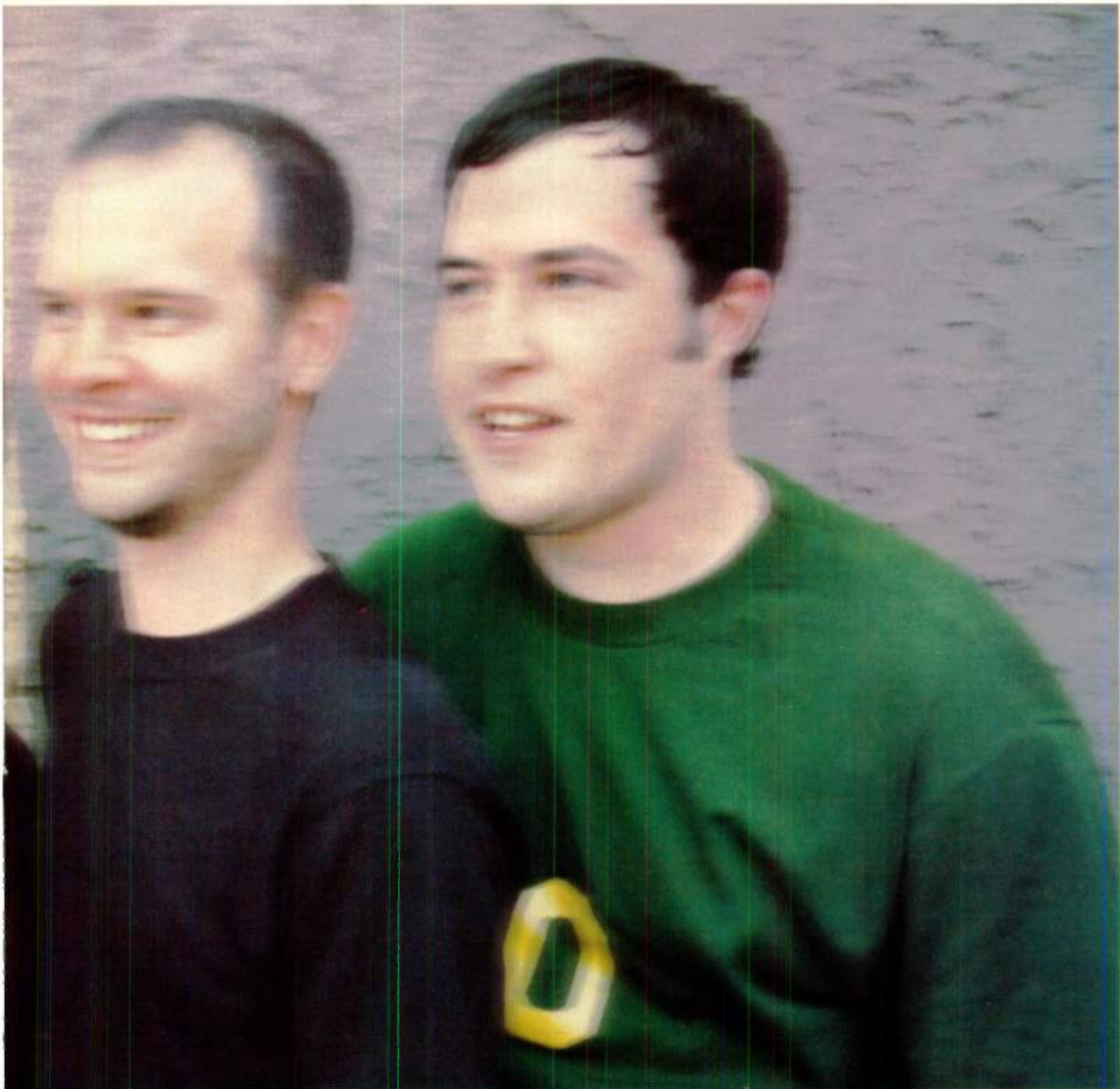
Blake Schwarzenbach needed to unwind from the duress. He'd revisited the rocky emotional terrain of a long breakup writing the songs for Jets To Brazil's second album, *Four Cornered Night* (Jade Tree). So, the singer and guitarist hopped a flight south for a summer retreat. But rather than hit the beaches of Rio, he met up with his uncle in Mexico and sped off on a 900-mile boat ride to California.

Hazardous travel has become a theme in Schwarzenbach's life. As a member of Jawbreaker, he toured constantly. After Jawbreaker's demise, he considered giving up the lifestyle; "You play one hour out of the day," he groans, "and 23 hours you're preparing to play." But he soon hooked up with some fellow ex-band refugees—drummer Chris Daly

(Texas Is The Reason), bassist Jeremy Chatelain (Handsome) and guitarist Bryan Maryansky (The Van Pelt)—and took to the road again. Jets To Brazil's 1998 debut, *Orange Rhyming Dictionary*, proved such a hit that the band was in demand across America and Europe.

Yet Schwarzenbach's journeys didn't get him away from his romantic travails. To help get over the breakup he channeled his energy into creativity. "I'm not fighting my experience so much as trying to have a frank discussion about it," he explains. The band responded; while all four of the men, ages 24 to 33, played more aggressively in the past, they've sculpted a batch of pretty pop songs that even feature band elder Schwarzenbach's piano on four tracks.

This may spawn more hard times on the road. By following their own pop instincts, Jets To Brazil challenges its devotees.



Schwarzenbach first saw reason for concern about this after releasing the more contoured (and less punk) *Orange Rhyming Dictionary*.

"I'm a scared person," he says, sounding more John Denver than Johnny Rotten. "So I assume that there are people who are disappointed."

Distortion is almost completely absent from *Four Cornered Night*. Songs like "You're Having The Time Of My Life" and "Pale New Dawn" tackle failed relationships, but the Jets sound more playful than morose or angry. Rhythms jerk, fuzz guitars riff on singsong melodies, and the punch comes from Schwarzenbach's passionate voice rather than a barrage of instrumentation. Even the heavier tracks are models of restraint. "I'm all for that," Schwarzenbach acknowledges. "Well-stated rage."

It's a formula he toyed with on the debut, but really nails on the piano-led dirge "In The Summer's When You Really Know." And in

"Air Traffic Control," which approaches Fountains Of Wayne-style poppiness, he revisits the troubled travel motif with a ditty about, well, fear of flying. This from a band called Jets To Brazil?

For all Schwarzenbach's sensitive leanings (just don't call him "emo"), he's adamant that *Four Cornered Night* is where he and his bandmates are at musically. "It's the first full Jets To Brazil record, whereas the last one was more songs that I had written and then we made them into band songs," he explains.

Will Jawbreaker's many hangers-on come along for the ride? "I can understand the diehard Jawbreaker fans who wrote the Jets off because they felt it was too different," he offers. "But anyone who came as far as *Orange Rhyming Dictionary* would be a fool not to go the next length."

NMM

Will the
daisy chain
remain
un-



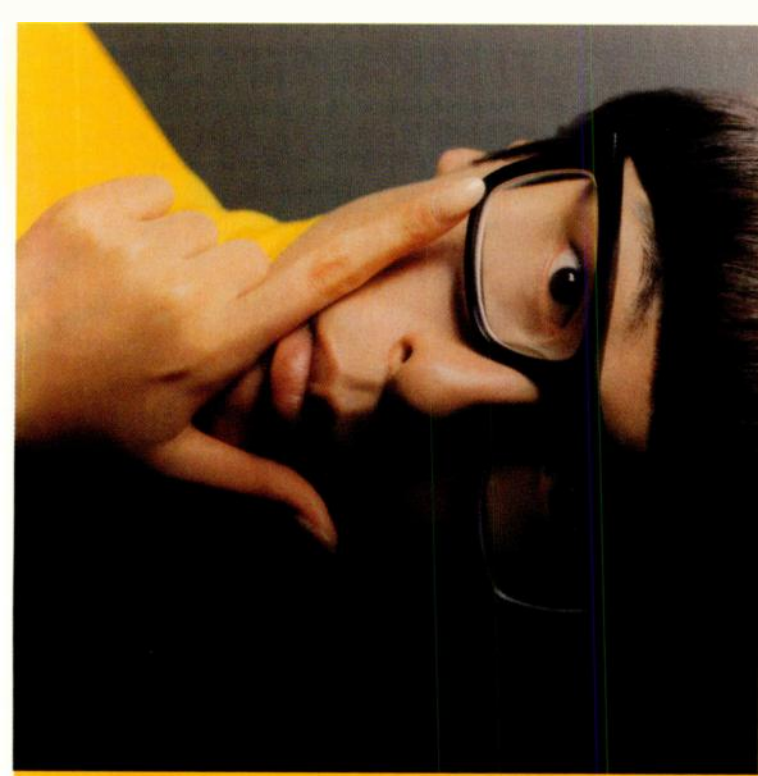
broken?

De La Soul isn't quite dead yet.

STORY: ALIYA S. KING PHOTOS: KELLEY MEYERS

When I was a high school senior in 1990, my locker was a holy mess. I was scared to open it in between classes 'cause it was just too hard to close. When I cleaned it out on graduation day, the last thing to be tossed into the industrial-strength garbage can I'd swiped from the boys' locker room was a brown paper bag that smelled positively rank. Inside were the nauseating brown remains of dozens of dead daisies.

At Clifford Scott High School in East Orange, New Jersey, if you were a semi-popular girl worth half your weight in cool points, every Friday you had to wear a daisy, perched Billie Holiday-style, behind your ear. This semi-secret ritual meant you were going into The City that weekend to see the bohemian rap group De La Soul, the group that proved hip-hop could be psychedelic, brilliant, hilarious and a huge crossover success with their 1989 platinum album *3 Feet High And Rising*. Little did I know, half the time these chicks came to school rocking plants behind their ears, they had no intention of seeing a rap group at some ungodly hour at a club none of us were old enough to get into. (And looking back, ain't no way in hell De La was performing every weekend in NYC for an entire school year!) Still, I bought daisies every week and hid them in my locker on the off chance that someone would ask me to come along



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on a Friday night to throw daisy petals at De La.

That never happened. But many afternoons in Mrs. Gist's English IV class, I daydreamed about what it would be like if I, a geek girl, met Maseo, Trugoy The Dove and Posdnuos on a weekend jaunt into The City.

Ten years, five boyfriends and one-and-a-half college degrees later, I'm a rap journalist, speaking to 40 fresh-scrubbed inner-city school kids about my job.

Is DMX really tall? one asks. Is Drag-On a nice guy? Who are your favorite rappers? My replies: No; I don't know; and De La Soul. Hands shoot up and more questions are asked. Erikah wants to know if Foxy Brown has a weave. I'm tickled—then I call on Sophia:

How the hell can the hippie-ish, high-minded De La Soul pick-up where they left off those many years ago and win new fans with their new album?

"I have a question about your favorite rapper," says the high-school senior. "Who's De La Soul?"

When did the members of De La Soul become unknown?

My heroes—the triple-threat trio from Long Island, who seemed to maintain their street cred and witty edge in a fickle industry for more than 10 years, who could have been our generation's Sly & The Family Stone—have become relics?

Cue the horror music. The camera opens on a post-apocalyptic esthetic wasteland in which all the radio plays is tired gangsta rap and hip-pop pap. After abandoning their old producer Prince Paul, the onetime ambassadors of consciousness-raising hip-hop wander aimlessly, leaving a mess of dead daisies in their wake.

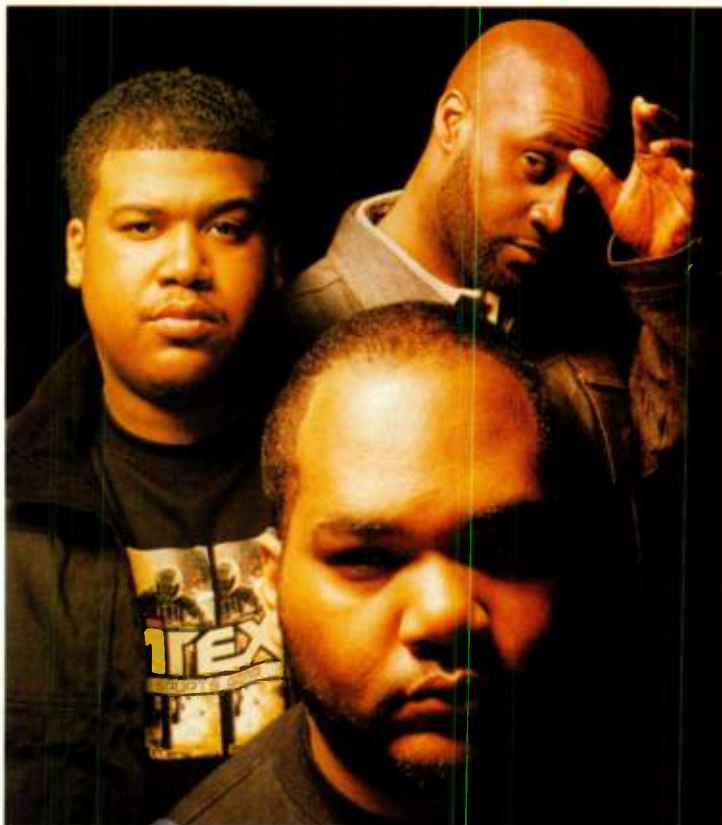
On the albums *De La Soul Is Dead* (1991), *Buhloone Mindstate* (1993) and *Stakes Is High* (1996), the group got a little more serious, letting bebop's influence take over where the goofy Schoolhouse Rock and Steely Dan samples had once been. (*De La Soul Is Dead* still went gold; as rap became a mainstream commodity, *Buhloone* and *Stakes* resonated more with critics, never breaking the 500,000 mark.) Other new-school rappers who survived becoming old-school in the '90s changed with the times, usually by being grittier and more violent. How the hell can the hippie-ish, high-minded De La Soul pick-up where they left off those many years ago, win new fans—and frankly, consumers—with their fifth album, *Art Official Intelligence* (*Mosaic Thump*)?

Listening to the new tracks at the offices of Tommy Boy Records, it's apparent that the more things change, the more they sound the same. And that, as Martha Stewart says, is a good thing (at least for longtime fans). The raucous energy, courtesy of guest rapper Redman, on the first single, "Oooh," shows a group that was influenced, at least a little, by mainstream rap during their four-year hiatus. There's a goofy ongoing gag about stolen cookies and melodic references like that old, breezy feelgood hit "Summer In The City." Yet the beats hit harder and the floppy synth bass is big enough to shake a Jeep.

Dave (formerly known as Trugoy The Dove) admits that it's inevitable that they would be at least slightly affected by what climbs the charts and rocks the clubs. The guest appearances on the album certainly speak to that: The Beastie Boys, Busta Rhymes, Chaka Khan, The Licks, Xzibit (to name a few). Yet, when Dave exits the room to look for Posdnuos, Maseo counters: "Well, I don't really listen to the radio. But, even when I do, I don't get influenced by it 'cause I'm really not feeling the shit I hear."

When the members of De La Soul are together, it is as if they are one person, albeit a schizophrenic one. They never speak on top of each other, they don't make eye contact and they almost purposefully contradict each other's thoughts on everything from musical influences to childrearing.

The most meaningful dialogue with De La's members happens when the others aren't around: Maseo's quiet while Dave's talking, even when questions are posed to both of them. If you want Maseo to address



a question Dave just answered, you have to look at him directly and repeat the question. It kind of seems like Dave's the big brother and barometer for the group; directly or indirectly, he obviously had a lot to do with the crew's four-year hiatus.

"Yes, we took a break—we've been touring and raising our families," says Dave defiantly. "We all built studios in our homes and continued to work, but our priorities were changing. It's part of becoming an adult."

When Maseo, the group's producer/DJ, hears my tale of school kids who've never heard their hit, "Me, Myself And I," he replies, "Oh well, that's cool, we'll catch 'em on this record for sure. We've got some headbangers for 'em." Besides, he has other children to worry about: his own.

Unless you are a tried-and-true backpacker for life, De La's purist take on the current state of the music industry—albeit admirable—can be a little wearisome. It's obvious that their concerns extend beyond the group. Maseo is getting a record label off the ground. Dave has moved from Strong Island to Baltimore.

The more time I spend with the members, the more their differences become glaring. Last year, this album was slated to be a three-disc collection, and then three separate discs released in increments throughout the fall. Now, it seems to be a struggle for De La Soul to stick to a release date for just the first disc.

The playfulness that dominated their public persona is long gone. They are serious musicians now, whether they want to be or not. Being a father and a husband will do that. Are these elder statesmen planning to bow out graciously at some point? In front of the Tommy Boy offices, the trio waits for the car service to take them downtown. Pos sighs, leans on a street lamp and says, "We realize that De La Soul can't happen with any of the links missing. There's a special vibe and magic that comes out when we get together to create music or get on stage to perform it. Maybe that's the high. Maybe that's how we keep on going. It won't happen with anyone else."

Even though they're not smiling or anything, they still look a little like they did in my daydreams about meeting them back in high school. They communicate without speaking; I can just look at them and tell they're thinking about the future and silently laughing at their own inside jokes. The smell of fresh flowers is in the air, but they're not daisies.

NMM

Bass: the final frontier.



ROB WASSERMAN SPACE ISLAND

his Atlantic debut

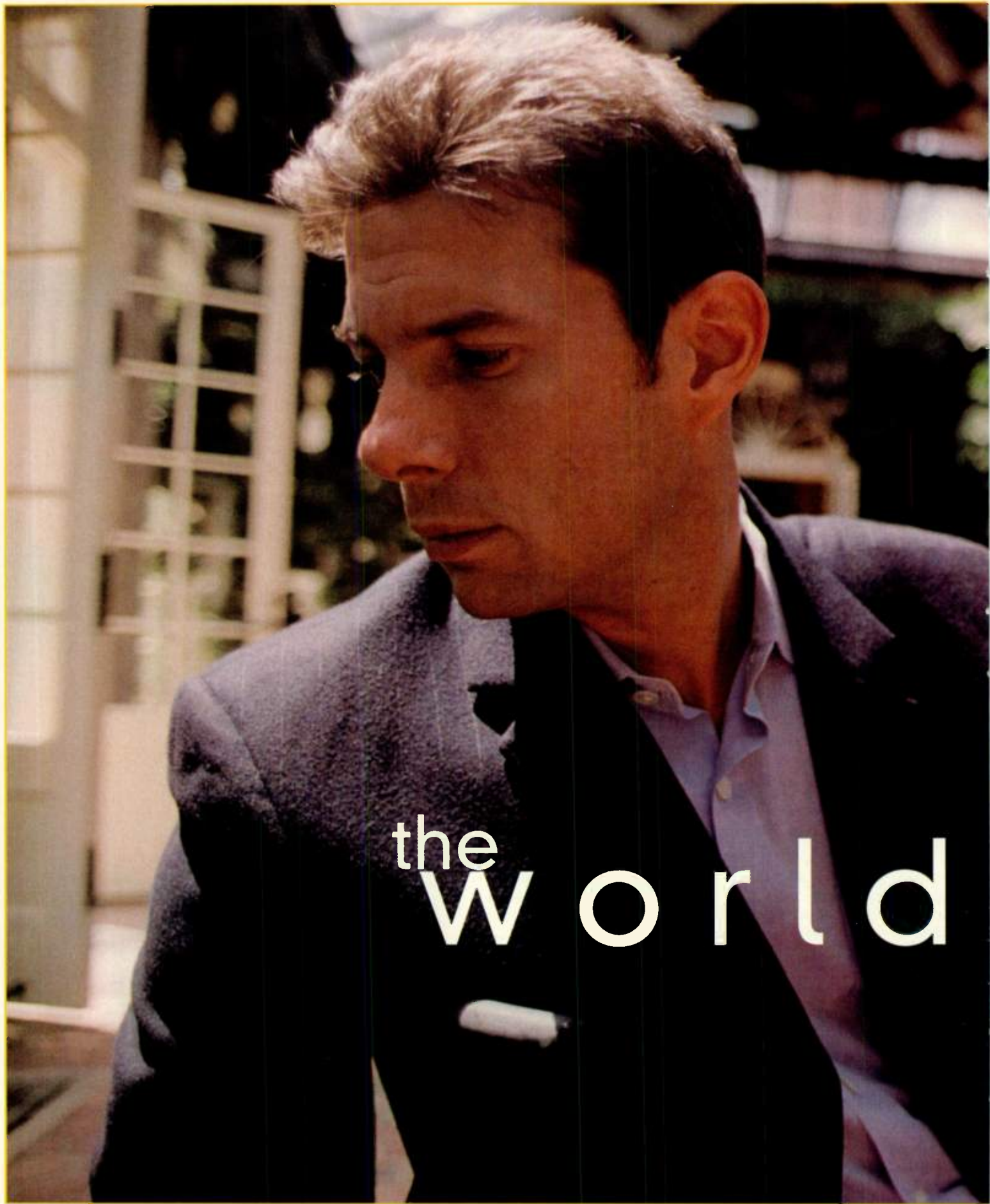
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the
world



is not enough

Our man in D.C. infiltrates the multinational **Thievery Corporation**.

STORY: **BILL WERDE** PHOTO: **BRIAN LIU**

It's a summer Friday night in D.C., and I don't know where the hell I am.

I've tracked down Dragonfly, the chi-chi sushi joint owned, in part, by Eric Hilton of Thievery Corporation. The Eighteenth Street Lounge, a swank club also partly owned by Hilton, is supposed to be across the street. Media and business operatives will be welcomed Saturday night when the Lounge hosts a soiree to celebrate the completion of Thievery Corporation's *The Mirror Conspiracy* (ESL Music). The globetrotting duo of Hilton and Rob Garza is renowned for the digital smuggling of sounds and styles, and this sophomore effort does nothing to sully its reputation for exquisite taste. In this pop moment of the recycled cliché, *The Mirror Conspiracy* creates world music for the electronica set; Brazilian singers float wistful arias atop bossa nova beats, Eastern influences mingle with Italian film scores.

The Thievery dossier details the pair as part of a larger renegade movement of electronic musical agents who are trafficking in similar international influences, such as Austria's Kruder & Dorfmeister, Germany's Jazzanova and England's Fila Brazillia. These coolly exotic hybrids are much more subtle than the gauche cut-and-paste globalism of ethno-techno.

But tonight, Friday night, there is no red carpet, and as far as I can tell, no club. The Dragonfly hostess smiles knowingly when I ask. "Do you see that neon flower?" she asks, pointing across four lanes of traffic. "Now do you see the door next to that?" There is an unusually tall, unmarked door. "Go there. Someone will come down and let you in."

The Eighteenth Street Lounge—both the club, owned by Hilton and some partners, and the record label of the same name, owned by Hilton and Garza—are nestled amidst the simmering cosmopolitanism of downtown D.C., a gem for those in the know, an enigma for the rest. It's hard not to feel privileged as the large doorman swings open the door from the inside.

"In America, music is viewed as a commodity, like television. And once one thing works? It's like a bad joke. They just keep reworking the same stuff over again."

Up the long, dark stairs, I'm whisked away from the neon and bustle of the street below into a cloud of murky, samba-laced trip-hop. The first floor walls are Aston Martin-red, with framed album covers from around the world. Candlelight bathes dark wood tables, plush couches and beautiful people. Soft, glittering reflections dance from cocktail glasses and the sequins adorning slender backs. Up a flight, and now the walls are a cool blue. The house band plays jazz numbers, lent some heavy bottom by the bongo player. D.C. is a suit town, and the Eighteenth Street Lounge is where young suits come to play.

Hilton is behind the bar. He takes me to the ESL offices and studio, through a back door on the first floor. On a wall above the office computer are four identical clocks, one each for London, Tokyo, L.A. and D.C. Garza sits with his back to me, and as we enter the office, he swivels in his chair, revealing his sharp, navy suit.

So is it all as it appears? Hilton and Garza cruise D.C. in their Range Rover and Mercedes, respectively. When it's time to dress up, their suits are Mister Eddie's, a renowned tailor on Berwick St. in London, who also creates the threads for James Bond films. Are the pair extravagant jetsetters, whiling away their hours drinking fine wines in elite ski resorts, affecting Thurston Howell-like voices?

Hilton blows his cover. "I actually hate that type of culture," he says. "I don't like it at all. People stick us in a lot of these super-fancy hotels. After awhile it gets kind of annoying paying \$50 for french fries. I appreciate art. But in terms of art, I appreciate music a lot more than any other form of art." Garza agrees. "In America, music is viewed as a commodity, like television. It's a form of recreation, rather than something people really appreciate. And once one thing works? It's like a bad joke. They just keep reworking the same stuff over again." We chat, but they soon excuse themselves to talk business with some European associates. I take the opportunity to case the joint.

Saturday night goes off as planned, a packed house getting its groove on as the evening progresses from chilled-out beats to hip-hop to house. It takes discipline and concentration—and eight or nine

vanilla Stolis with ginger ale—but I maintain my cover as a reveler. Everyone is beautiful, everyone is dancing. Infiltrating the Thievery Corporation is hard work.

My scheduled Sunday morning (okay, one in the afternoon) rendezvous finally rolls around, and I am determined to gather more information on the pair's growing global operation. Hilton, 33, looks pretty snappy in his tailored blue shirt and slacks, considering he wore them last night. Garza, 30, the younger bachelor with more of a party reputation, slumps into the ESL office a few minutes later, also in a familiar suit, needing coffee, badly.

Hilton and Garza share roots in the punk scene, appreciating bands like D.C.'s Minor Threat, The Sex Pistols and Sham 69. "When you grew up listening to Fleetwood Mac and The Eagles on the radio, punk was a godsend," says Garza. "But punk has been so influential in rock for the last 15 years, it's almost becoming The Eagles, now, with bands like Green Day."

When a mutual friend introduced Hilton and Garza at the Lounge in 1995, they were approaching music from seemingly opposite ends of the spectrum. Hilton was heavily into the acid-jazz scene, while Garza was listening to experimental techno groups like My Life With The Thrill Kill Kult and Meat Beat Manifesto.

Their middle ground was world music. Garza hung out at the Kilimanjaro, a now-defunct D.C. world music club. And Hilton got into bossa nova and Jamaican dub through artists who co-opted those approaches. "I always liked bands that were derivative of older styles," says Hilton. "I just started checking out their root sources. For instance, with Two Tone, I got into the Skatalites, and then I started checking out old ska groups. Same thing with Everything But The Girl. Nothing against their first record, because I think it's great. Then I listened to Brazilian music from the early '60s, bossa nova and stuff like that."

The other manifestation of their punk origins is a D.I.Y. ethic. "We don't have to sell a lot of records for things to be lucrative for us," says Garza of running their own label. The autonomy allows them to experiment with sounds and styles in ways a major label might not be comfortable with; after all, there haven't been a great number of bossa nova tracks on the top 40 charts lately. Several songs on *The Mirror Conspiracy* are sung in tongues other than English, and it only adds to the intrigue of the mix. "Once you can understand something," says Garza, "it's not so profound."

It's not that Thievery Corporation doesn't want to achieve commercial success. It's just that they are comfortable and independent enough to wait until it happens on their terms. "A radio hit might not be the worst thing in the world," acknowledges Hilton. "We wouldn't want to jam something down people's throats, which is usually how a radio hit happens."

In the meantime, they are amassing legions of fans, many of them down with THC. Much like the music of Kruder & Dorfmeister or Jazzanova, Thievery Corporation's intricate musical textures and layers of dub have attracted the short attentions of legions of stoners. Garza acknowledges that they get the "drug question" a lot. "I think we go for trippy elements," he says. "When you're [high] you can really pick up on it." Hilton appreciates the irony. "We very rarely smoke pot," he says. "So it's kind of funny that people associate our music with weed. When you're feeling the drug experience just from listening to it, that's good music."

As our time wanes, Hilton and Garza finally reveal their mission: "We are creating our own sound," says Hilton. "But we don't hide the fact that we have very strong influences. We try to bring our influences to life. *Easy Tempo* and *Jet Society* [two recent compilation releases from ESL]? That's all Italian music. It's like, 'Here's some amazing music that we like and we listen to, that we want other people to go check out.'"

"We're trying to follow in a tradition of music of people that we really love, but we're doing it electronically," says Garza. "I'd like to be seen as an open door. You're welcome to walk in if you'd like."

As long as you can find it.

MMM



Art For Art's Sake





CRAIG MONTVOA AND ART ALEXAKIS: TOPS BY DKNY, ART'S BLACK PANTS BY DICKIES.

*Is **Everclean's** Art Alexakis thinking too much about his music career—or not enough?*

STORY: **LORNE BEHRMAN** PHOTOS: **CHAPMAN BAEHLER**
STYLING: **DANIEL CAUDILL** for **CÉLESTINE LA** MAKEUP: **LAUREN** for **PROFILE**



ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD

WOL

"Do you know why you're here?" Everclear bassist Craig Montoya asks with the type of detached confidence usually reserved for cops, principals or mafia dons. I do. A few days earlier an interview between Everclear singer/guitarist Art Alexakis and another *CMJ New Music Monthly* writer culminated in a terse exchange when the journalist inquired about an Everclear interview he'd heard about that ended with the reporter leaving in tears. Art felt the past situation was referenced out of context. And when the writer produced an unpublished transcript of the four-year-old interview, the frontman decided he'd been set up. Fearing he'd be treated unfairly, he demanded another writer be assigned to the story.

It's 10:00 a.m., the bottom of a no-let-up Los Angeles summer day. Montoya and drummer Greg Eklund are sitting opposite me outside, in the concrete oven that doubles as the patio section of Art's favorite Greek joint in Hollywood. Art is running late, and there's a mighty rumble in my stomach as we wait. Other writers who've interviewed Alexakis warned me that Everclear's frontman can be "intractable," "confrontational." And yet, looking over what's been written about him, it's understandable that he's defensive with members of the press. His

"I think from the way people write they think I have this big plan in my head because they call me 'Everclear mastermind, Art Alexakis,' and I'm just like, 'I'm just writing songs man, there's no plan.'"

1991 migration from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon was deemed imperialistic and predatory, as if he were scratching his palms to cash in on Portland's New Seattle possibilities. To complicate matters, in 1993 he was jailed overnight after a fight with his then-girlfriend (and now ex-wife), Jenny Dodson, got violent. Sentenced to probation and a 24-week anger-management course, Art admitted regret and openly chided himself for the incident; seven years have passed with no reported abuse cases. Many journalists still mention his temper, but perhaps Alexakis's biggest crime is having made a platinum and double-platinum record. After all, when you've sold millions of albums, people are going to dog you about everything they can.

Former Capitol head Gary Gersh observes, "Art's had a single-minded vision for what he was trying to accomplish and he's kept his head down and tried to make that happen. When you first go out there in the world, and you're meeting radio guys and retail people, you don't necessarily have a take on what's going on. Once Art found out what is going on out there, he was able to really learn from it, and really figure out how to take his ability to talk to people and work with people and make videos and make records. All those things have grown to make him a better businessman and a better recording artist."

Art arrives at the restaurant in a charismatic whirlwind, igniting three conversations in a single breath. He graciously thanks me for flying in on such short notice, chats with his two bandmates about a recent trip to Alaska to visit his soon-to-be in-laws, and engages in some witty rapport with the two publicists stationed a few tables away. Before I can even press "record" on my tape player, Art eagerly shares a backhanded compliment he just received from his detractors over at the *Willamette Week*, Portland, Oregon's alternative newsweekly. It's another bit of evidence from the Art Alexakis vs. Portland Hipsters hometown credibility suit that's been publicly airing in the paper since 1996. The case opened with the headline, "Not So Everclear: Art Alexakis Is The Hottest Rocker In Portland—And The Most Unpopular." In a moment of good old-fashioned punk rock irony, Art responded by taping "Most Unpopular" onto his sports jacket when Everclear played *The Late Show With David Letterman* days later. Alexakis is currently revved up about a *Willamette Week* article titled, "So Much For The Afterglow" (name-checking Everclear's multi-platinum third release), which published the terms of Art's amicable divorce with Dodson, the mother of his eight-year-old daughter, Annabella Rose. He's on a roll

about the piece; it questions his stance as a pro-welfare-mother/anti-deadbeat-dad activist (he has testified before Congress in support of HR 4071, the "deadbeat dad" bill, which would make child-support payment collection an IRS responsibility).

"It lists our whole settlement word for word, verbatim," Art declares in a tone that's half excited, half dismayed. Every detail is in there, from who got the 1967 Mustang to who got the 1965 Corvette. "Basically, it makes me look great because I did right by her, more than right by her. But then they threw in a couple of jabs like, 'Well too bad little Anna gets shuttle-cocked between them every week.' I don't know what a shuttlecock is, I don't know why they had to put the word cock in there. Maybe it just makes it more sexy," he laughs good-naturedly. "Don't talk about my daughter and cock in the same sentence. I was going to write them back, but they have no sense of humor." He trails off ruefully, "So that, that was kind of shitty."

At 38, Art is a rugged eight years older than his soft-fleshed bandmates. He's bespectacled and bestubbed; his hair seems dry, as if it's fraying from too much peroxide. Art has never made his past a secret: He was a junkie from ages 13 to 23. He's been in two failed

marriages and numerous failed bands. He had a tumultuous childhood, in which his father abandoned his family early on and his brother George O.D.'d when Art was 12. Although he's been outspoken about his business savvy in the press, Art's rarely been specific about exactly what he's done in the music industry. You can surmise, piecemeal, that he's interned at record companies, roadied, run a D.I.Y. label (he currently he has his own Artemis-distributed imprint, Popularity Records), promoted clubs and worked as a record store clerk. If you doubt any of this, you only have to look to the creases on his face for proof of experience; Art Alexakis has been around. He speaks with a slight twang, which is often exaggerated on record as a side-of-the-mouth drawl. Baby-faced and blond, drummer Greg Eklund is like the likeable, wiseass younger brother from an '80s sitcom; between squirming restlessly and fidgeting with his mesh baseball cap, he busts out playful one-liners. A skunk-streaked stoner mane frames bassist Craig Montoya's chiseled, olive features. When he breaks his stoney silence, which is rarely, he speaks with blunt honesty.

However, the ever-gregarious Alexakis is of the chomp 'n' chat variety, tossing off another frank remark with every bite of his omelette. Immediately at ease, I toss off my first question: Why is Art Alexakis often labeled a careerist?

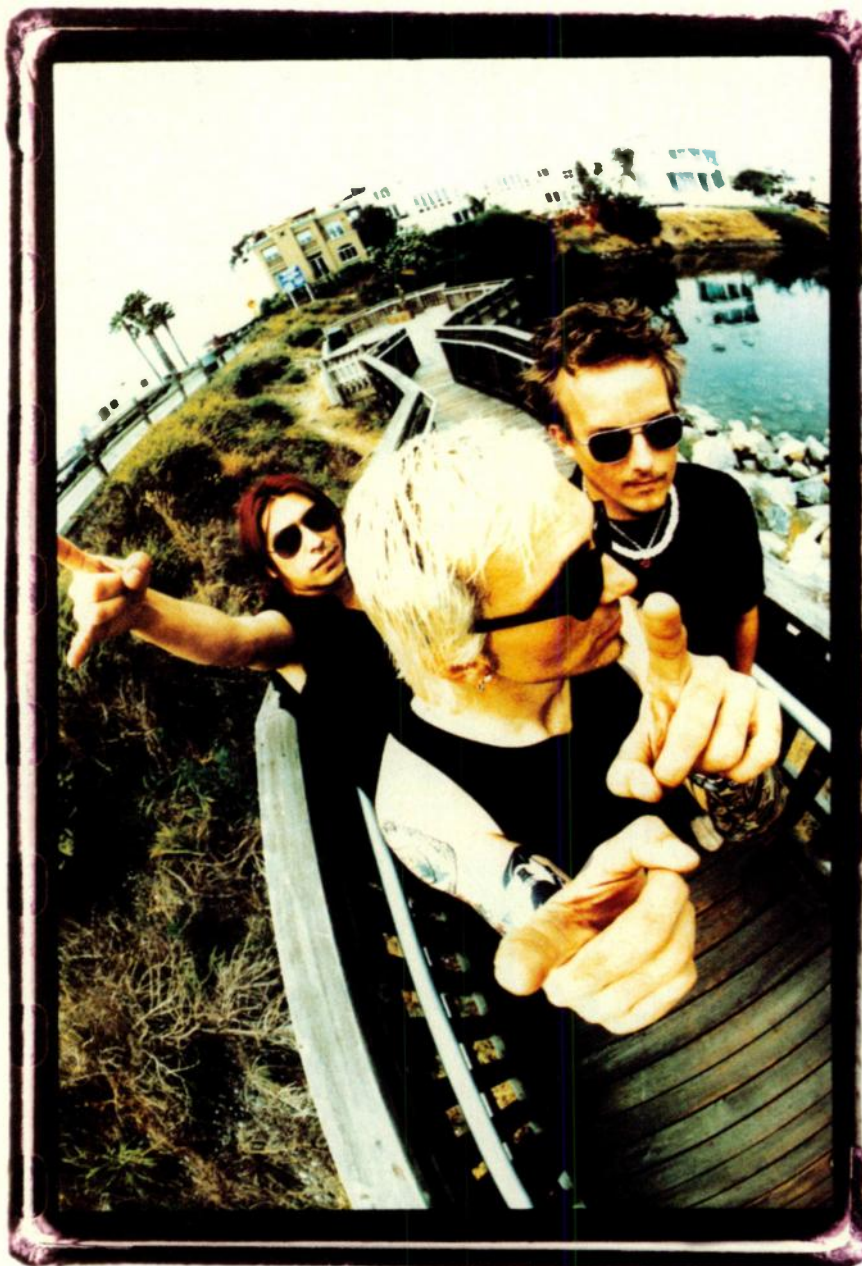
"What's that mean?" he retorts, recoiling in disgust. Stuttering, I define it as a cutthroat person who puts music second to music business.

"That's one of the things we get slammed about, the fact that we know better, we have the audacity not to get screwed. 'Who do they think they are?'" he says, mimicking his opponents. "The only reason I'm business savvy is because I have been on the D.I.Y. tip for so fuckin' long. It's not like I want to make a career out of music—if I wanted to make a career out of music I'd be an A&R guy and I'd work my way up. There was a chance of that, at one time I would have done that because I love music."

He reminisces about The Ramones in their gabba-gabba-heyday as if he's a veteran from the punk rock VFW hall who's just taken me under his wing. "I'm not saying I'm cool 'cause I was there," he pauses, realizing the sentimentality of his speech, "but finally there was this music that made me excited, whereas Foghat and all the other shit that was on the radio..." he trails off singing "Slow Ride" in wavering falsetto. Craig, who has moved over to the next table for a solitary smoke, returns with a straight-faced, "What's wrong with Foghat?" Art fires back with a sly, fraternal grin, "You need an ashtray? You look

ALL CLOTHING VINTAGE EXCEPT ART'S DICKIES (UH, THE SHORTS).





"After I got clean and sober I got really driven, with the 12-step. You know, just take the world by the balls and start swinging."

good over there."

The mosh down memory lane takes a turn onto a personal sidestreet as he tosses off chestnuts about self-financed demo tapes, big dreams in a small van, Xeroxing flyers at Kinko's, and D.I.Y. handshake business deals gone bad. It's the same speech that most platinum punks around his age give, but unlike most who favor the doe-eyed, "I don't know how this happened to me" approach to explain success, Art is candid about his drive. "When I had a baby born, I knew was going to do one more band—that was going to be it. I was going to commit myself to it, and just throw my whole heart and soul into it," he finishes.

So how do writers miss the difference between "drive" and "careerism"?

"Writers can be very monochromatic about what they see and what they like, and that's cool. I've never wanted to be a critic's band. I don't presume, and I don't think any of us do, to have that eclectic taste," Art maintains.

The new *Songs From An American Movie, Vol. 1: Learning How To Smile* (Capitol) is the first Everclear release to match Art's mythic a-day-late-a-dollar-short tales with classic Americana. But it isn't as outlaw-romantic as past Everclear records. "There's a line in the song, 'Learning How To Smile,' that says 'I can handle all the hell that happens every day/ But when you touch my face you make problems go away.' I feel that with my new girlfriend. All the hell I went through last year with the divorce was hard on me.... I watched my daughter go through it. It's just hard; breakups are hard."

Overall, it's a humble record with a sweet, back-porch charm, somewhere between John Cougar-era Mellencamp and pre-Woody Guthrie-obsessed Wilco. In the time since '97's *So Much For The Afterglow*, the rumors that circulated about an Everclear breakup were false, but those about an Art Alexakis solo effort were dead on.

"I just wanted to do something different musically, I wanted to do something more melodic, something with a lot of different textures than what we've done in the past," Art explains. After recording the album as a solo effort with a backing band, he decided it should be an Everclear record. "I went back and listened to it, 'You know? Yeah, there's horns on this, and keyboards and strings stuff like that, but except for like two or three songs, it doesn't sound that far away from Everclear, albeit a little bit more mellow. And listening to it," he pauses, "it didn't have the juice and the spunk the of three of us playing on something would have. I played them for the guys and they agreed, they really liked the songs, and said, 'I'd do this differently, I'd do this differently.' So I said, 'Well, let's do it differently.'"

Learning How To Smile's companion, *Songs From An American Movie, Vol. 2: A Good Time For A Bad Attitude*, is currently under construction. From Art's description—"It sounds like Everclear listening to a lot of Zeppelin"—you can glean that it's a return-to-form follow-up. Though since it's still on the studio surgery table, he's cagey about details: "I don't talk about songs 'til they're done. I never have," he explains, slapping my knee with gruff sensitivity. "Nothing personal."

"One more thing," the veteran says. "Going back to your question about the media, I think from the way people write they think I have this big plan in my head because they call me 'Everclear mastermind, Art Alexakis,' and I'm just like, 'I'm just writing songs man, there's no plan.'"

Then why does everyone fixate on you as if you do?

He tilts his head back, squints and returns warily, "Brother, I don't know, ask them."

John Chandler, Oregon editor for the Northwest music newspaper *The Rocket*, remembers, "Long before I even

heard a note by Everclear, I was told by a lot of old-school Portlanders that he was bad news. I've never had any cause to speak ill of him, in regards to finding him a double-dealer or duplicitous or anything like that. The beef I had heard from some bands is that he showed up in their camp and made promises about helping them out with their careers and then didn't do so."

Local musician Sean Croghan, formerly of the bands Junior High and Crackerbash, and now a solo artist, adds, "Portland is a pretty small town so there's going to be a kind of weird family attitude like, 'Oh you're an outsider.' But there's lots of people who moved here and did just fine and totally made themselves part of the music community. He always talks about how no one gave him a chance, how he had to claw, scratch and fight his way to the top, which is a lot of crap because

there were lots of bands in Portland that helped him get shows."

Chandler saw Art in a different light after interviewing him. "Hanging out wasn't an unpleasant experience at all. He didn't try to evade questions. In fact, he was pretty straight-up about looking me in the eye and saying, 'Okay, here's what I bet you want to know about.' I would say that Art is a guy who has probably a lot of layers to him, and you're going to have to do some decent work to get to the Art of the matter, I guess. I think he's worked for a long time on his public persona—he could very well go into politics. He's definitely a smooth talker."

Oddly enough, at the conclusion of our interview, Art stands up, shakes my hand and says, "Vote for me in November."

I was told before the interview that if things went well, Art would be open to having me down to the studio. After the interview, my request for extra time was granted. I could only assume Art felt good about it too.

Gold and platinum hangs on the lounge walls at the Sunset Sound studios. The Doors recorded five records here, Zeppelin recorded two, and the Rolling Stones recorded one. Everclear would be finishing up *Songs From An American Movie, Vol. 2*, if this were a typical day, but today it's a balancing act, recording tambourine tracks while trying to fulfill online media obligations.

There are about a dozen people milling around, including management, publicity people, the studio engineer, representatives from the various Web-based publications and of course, the band. Art is seated on the couch opposite the door. He looks 10 years younger than yesterday, tanner, his face tight and leathery. He spots me and deadpans, "I thought you left." I thought he knew, after all, that I was permitted the bonus, fly-on-the-wall-in-the-studio experience. I explain the situation anyway and he looks down at a magazine someone just plopped in his lap and immerses himself in a recent *Spin* Everclear piece. Art comments seriously on the Eminem cover: "I can't get away from this guy; he stole my look."

When someone asks if the piece is positive, Art hesitates, looks at me, and suspiciously says, "Yeah..." (as if I know the writer) and his nose goes back into the magazine. A four-person camera crew sets up inside the recording nook. I take a place behind them; the band is seated in front. Capitol is filming a video for overseas internal promotion and then an online reporter will conduct an interview. Someone hands Art a script, he glances at it, and then wings it, concluding with, "Thank you all for working our record, we look forward to working with you." Done. "One-take Charlie," someone shouts. "That's what they call me," Art grins. Earlier this year, Alexakis debuted as an actor in *Committed*, alongside Heather Graham and Casey Affleck.

During the second interview, for the online publication, Art decides to improvise and include me. The interviewer asks him, "What are you spinning in your stereo?" "Aerosmith's first album—it's older than my girlfriend, it's older than him," he says, singling me out in the small crowd. Favorite movie? "Sleepless in Seattle. I know that's not cool, but I like it. The *CMJ* writer is writing that one down," he comments, making sure I know he knows I'm there. I miss the next interview because it's moved into a different room; a band affiliate apologizes and passes along the location of the third. While hanging out in front with Craig and a publicist I feel like the extra who walked onto the wrong set. Art comes over and whispers something in the publicist's ear, and the two go off to chat. Art returns ahead of the publicist, shakes my hand and then tosses off, "Well it was nice working with you. You should learn to smile," before walking into the interview room. The publicist looks at me sheepishly and says we've been asked to leave, with little explanation. The most telling thing Art said the day before comes to mind: "My mom told me quite young, 'Son, you have a face that makes some people really love you, and some people want to just punch you,'" Art said wryly. "I don't have a kind, gentle, benign, face. I just piss people off. And my personality is a little aggressive too. After I got clean and sober I got really driven, with the 12-step. You know, just take the world by the balls and start swinging. I didn't do things badly, I didn't rip people off, I didn't lie or misrepresent myself, but I was focused. I think that makes people uneasy sometimes."

NMM

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12 RODS

Separation Anxieties

V2

Minneapolis's 12 Rods were touted as America's answer to Radiohead after their first two releases, 1996's *gay?* EP and the 1998 full-length *Split Personalities*. But *Separation Anxieties* should have people humming a different tune. On the new disc, the once sober and artsy band pumps up the energy level up a couple of notches, sharpens the power-pop hooks, and even gets a little bit playful. One song, "Marionette," for example, is outfitted with a toy piano; the glossy and mellow "Radioaction" and "Everybody" flirt with new-wave soul reminiscent of latter-day Tears For Fears; and the disc opens with

the appropriately titled rocker "Kaboom." Some of the credit for the brighter *vibe* of *Separation Anxieties* is certainly due to producer Todd Rundgren. But while Rundgren and the band keep the tracks anchored in catchy songcraft, it's not all hooks and bliss for singer/songwriter/guitarist Ryan Olcott. True to its name, *Separation Anxieties* is full of reflective lyrics that touch on loneliness and romantic insecurities. The result isn't quite hard and abrasive enough to fit contemporary definitions of "rock," and it's too weighty and substantial for the straight pop bins, which is to say that like Radiohead, 12 Rods remains determined to stake out its own stylistic plot in the realm of modern rock and pop. >>>Ronit Sarig

OUT:

June 20

FILE UNDER:

Between a rock and a pop place

R.I.Y.L.:

Radiohead, later Tears For Fears, Todd Rundgren



AVAIL

One Wrench

Fat Wreck Chords

With its lyric-book photos of Zapatista miners and Mumia (on a member's T-shirt), not to mention its alleged tour-van love of Woody Guthrie, it's surprising that only two songs on Avail's fifth studio full-length deliver on the packaging's agit-punk promise: the redundantly titled "Fast One," which rails against suburban sprawl in the band's home-base of Reston, Virginia, and "N30," which supplies the album's title and pithiest bit of analysis—"One wrench can break the machine." Unfortunately, Avail is not that wrench. This is tightly performed, smoothly orchestrated punk at its most dynamically

challenged, dense with pickslides, power chords and road-tested double-time drumming. Avail's intensity isn't purely by rote: The crushing ensemble figures of "Rest" don't fall out of the sky every day. But too many anthemic choruses land squarely in Mellencamp/Mike Ness territory, and singer Tim Barry's enraged delivery makes Henry Rollins sound versatile. Barry's "personal" songs, which make up the bulk of the album, are woefully short on specifics and long on self-righteous abstraction: "I've fought so many off/ I'm still surrounded." Avail's attempts to get down to political brass tacks are admirable by comparison, but their predictable sonic setting blunts their effectiveness. If Avail won't change, why should the world? >>>Franklin Bruno

OUT:

June 20

FILE UNDER:

Punk by numbers

R.I.Y.L.:

Social Distortion, Minor Threat, Poison Idea



16 HORSEPOWER

Secret South

Razor & Tie

OUT:

September 12

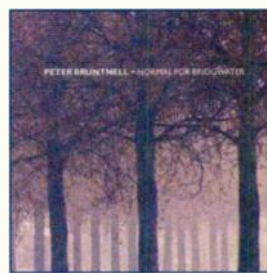
FILE UNDER:

American Gothic

R.I.Y.L.:

Gun Club, The Anthology Of American Folk Music, Nick Cave

American Folk Music. Blessed with a spooky vibrato, Edwards can bellow with a backwoods preacher's fervor or quietly conjure haunting images from his dreams. His stark, often abstract visions draw on old-time rural folklore and fundamentalist Christian spirituality. And as retro as all of this may sound, 16 Horsepower's music maintains a contemporary edge, with a propulsive rhythm section and electric guitars that echo Edwards's mournful cries. Indeed, *Secret South* is more modern-sounding than its predecessors, with less banjo, fiddle and bandoneon. And that's really too bad, because this band is at its best when Edwards's tableaux of religious terror ("Heard the voice of my master calling me/ From deep in the hollow," from "Poor Mouth") are rendered with the sounds of the American frontier. >>>Meredith Ochs



PETER BRUNTNELL

Normal For Bridgwater

Slow River

OUT:

July 11

FILE UNDER:

Musical comfort food

R.I.Y.L.:

John Wesley Harding, The Gin Blossoms, Paul Westerberg

which go in for the catchy licks and insidious harmonies that constituted big hits for The Gin Blossoms. The aforementioned are bands from the United States of America, but no one would put them on the cover of alt-country mag *No Depression*. If he were any sexier, Peter Bruntnell would be Chris Isaak, and if his songs had a bit more swagger, he'd be Paul Westerberg. But if all one can say about a record is how much it's almost like something else, that isn't a good sign. Similar to the way that comfort foods like macaroni and cheese and tomato soup sound good to eat even though they are not particularly distinguished edibles, Peter Bruntnell can add some tranquil pleasures to a day with his nice melodies and his pleasing, slightly scratchy tenor. >>>Lois Maffeo



CAR 44
Platinum Holes

Thirsty Ear

Produced by ex-Rollins Band guitarist Chris Haskett and mixed by Hank's former sound engineer, Theo Van Rock, this Virginia Beach outfit's debut slams through the bitter edges of romance and psychological conflict. Singer Dahna Rowe carries these 13 songs with her warm, clear contralto. Her singing's often overwrought, but that's fitting for the edgy desperation of Car 44's best tunes, like the churning, cynical "Rock Star" (with an appealing Sonic Youth guitar turnaround in its chorus) and the driving, vaguely Middle Eastern chant of obsession, "Lock, Stock & Barrel." Even when her lyrics dally with the

sophomoric, as they do in the suicide ode "Take Care Trevor," the band's got Rowe's back, galloping to the rescue with powerhouse drumming or the wash of guitars that pervade this album like sandy pearls. Co-songwriter John Conkle's guitar playing respects the pop rulebook, yet it's consistently interesting as it serves these tunes. He employs sheets of sound to illuminate Rowe's alternately brittle and bitter moods, and turns clever tricks like spinning a Mississippi John Hurt-style blues line into the backbone of "Pedestal" without sounding idiomatic. Still, it's up to Rowe's ability as an actress to put Car 44's mix of hard 'n' pretty across. And she's consistently believable, delivering both ballads and venomous rockers as if they were pages from her diary. >>> Ted Drozdowski

OUT:

June 20

FILE UNDER:

Hard and arty

R.I.Y.L.:

Johanne Napolitano, The Poster Children, Veruca Salt



VIC CHESNUTT AND MR. AND MRS. KENEIPP

Merriment

Backburner

Being the loveable eccentric that he is, Vic Chesnutt has chosen to follow-up his most consistently inventive and strongest release to date, '98's *The Salesman & Bernadette*, with this lo-fi extended EP (33:40, including some instrumental filler) intended to help pals Kelly and Nikki Keneipp draw attention to their record label. With the Keneipp's writing all and playing most of the music and Chesnutt supplying the lyrics and vocals, this has the engaging if somewhat precious air of clever folk amusing each other in their spare time. Sometimes the casualness

gets out of hand, as when Chesnutt stuffs "Preponderance" with egregiously terrible rhymes or when yet another song is led along by a lugubrious piano. But there are a few gems here as well, namely "Mighty Monkey," a song so determinedly dire that it's funny, "Deeper Current," with its suggestion that we're all going to come to some unspeakably bad end, and "DNA," which muses over our chemically predetermined fates. "Sunny Pasture" is pretty good too, a song whose attempt to be upbeat is dogged by the singer's nagging memories of the out-of-control past. These songs show Chesnutt at his best—droll and dark, genuinely pained and persevering—making all the surrounding low-budget whimsy worth sighing through. >>> Richard C. Walls

OUT:

July 18

FILE UNDER:

Lo-fi cotton gin

R.I.Y.L.:

Palace Brothers, Jack Logan, Smog, Arlo Guthrie

GIFT
The debut album
featuring
"Again & Again"

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COUCH

Fantasy

Matador

The German quartet Couch approximates the orderly, mechanical textures and progressions of instrumental electronic music via old-fashioned guitar, bass, drums and keyboards. It's not quite John Henry versus the steam engine, but on this third album (the first to be released in the US), Couch does seem interested in what human players can do better than machines, which leads them toward some of the habits of old-fashioned progressive rock, especially odd time signatures. They have a weakness for 7/4 or 7/8 time, which tends to be easier to play than to program, and the raggedness of Thomas Geltinger's

cymbal sound offsets the clinical efficiency of his drumming nicely. These songs are essentially rhythmic constructions, progressing by introducing and removing regular patterns, which means there's not much in the way of melody going on, just shifts in chords and texture. Couch is deliberately unfunky—it's as if they don't want to be distracted by their hips—and, though the natural warmth of strings and skins is never less than a curiosity and sometimes a thrill in this context, their austere accuracy can be off-putting. The band's at its best when Jürgen Soder's guitar drops its robotic mask and gets a little rough or tender. When "Linie Gegen Strich" heats up, it almost seems like they've taken their eyes off the command line. »»Douglas Wolk



¡CUBANISMO!

Mardi Gras Mambo

Hannibal

On paper, the meeting of Afro-Cuban jazz ensemble ¡Cubanismo! with New Orleans pop reads as preordained: After all, New Orleans has long been a port-of-call for all of Caribbean culture. Afro-Cuban rhythms, one could argue, are an essential ingredient in the New Orleans roud. But here's the thing: Although ¡Cubanismo! retains its sharp jazz horn charts, classic montuno vamps, and syncro-mesh clave rhythms, *Mardi Gras Mambo* often unhappily falls between two stools in a way that their previous albums for Hannibal have not. The simplicity and flow of Louisiana swamp pop sounds

overblown by the intricacy of the ¡Cubanismo! arrangements. Likewise, its riff-based dance pieces are mucked up by R&B tunes. The swamp-pop staple "Mother In Law" comes off stilted. "Marie Levaux" has its musical moments, but the lyrics—a tribute to the original New Orleans voodoo queen—sound more silly than evocative (Dr. John's campy "Walk On Gilded Splinters" has more atmosphere). And the "Shallow Water Suite," with its Mardi Gras Indian tribute, is overblown. Plenty of seasoned New Orleans hands (vocalist John Boutte, saxophonists Donald Harrison and Tony Dagradi, drummer Herlin Riley) join Jesús Alemañy and ¡Cubanismo! for these sessions, and the album has its moments. But it's best to look for these crews on their own turf. »»Jon Garelick

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DA LATA
Songs From The Tin

Palm

Latin music's recent crescendo of trendiness—from Buena Vista Social Club to Ricky Martin—has had little or no bearing on Da Lata's take on the Brazilian sound. In fact, the idea for the group came to London DJ Patrick Forge and musician Chris Franckmain, Da Lata's two principal members, more than five years ago, it just took them a while to get it off the ground. Recent compilations like Wave's *Bossa Mundo* and Caipirinha's *Caipirissima* have, with mixed results, attempted to give an overview of Brazilian culture's influence on the global dance scene. Da Lata makes no claim to be representing traditional

OUT:

August 1

FILE UNDER:

Carnival bliss

R.I.Y.L.:

Bebel Gilberto, Suba, Jazzanova,
Smoke City

Brazilian music or culture, but they certainly succeed at honoring the music's roots without completely dismantling them. Da Lata's credibility isn't hurt by the addition of native Brazilian singer Liliana Chacian and Portuguese percussionist Oli Albergaria Savill. For all its respect for tradition, however, *Songs From The Tin* never relies on the clichéd reproductions of moments past. Instead, the focus is on original songs inspired by Brazil both rhythmically and melodically. Chacian's mellifluous voice shines on "Rain Song," and in "Pra Manha," her Portuguese lyrics blend gracefully with the percolating rhythms. And even when Da Lata go acoustic, pairing Chacian with guitar and strings on "Borboleta," they reach a surprising depth. Ultimately, it's the warm melodies and strong arrangements that make *Songs From The Tin* such a rewarding listen. >>>Kuri Kondrak



DATACH'I
We Are Always Well Thank You
Caipirinha

After premiering with the harshly dissonant *10110101 = (rec+play)*, Datach'i is showing some restraint. *We Are Always Well Thank You* is remarkably soothing in comparison as Datach'i forms his songs into a schizoid musical mayhem that apes Britain's drill 'n' bass artists, but with an influx of endearing melodies that beget a fresh perspective. The title track begins with children's laughter before conjuring up a bassline evil enough to make darkside junglists tremble. On "Free In A Box," he shifts the pitch up and down, creating a swarm of attacking high hats

OUT:

August 22

FILE UNDER:

Melodic glitches

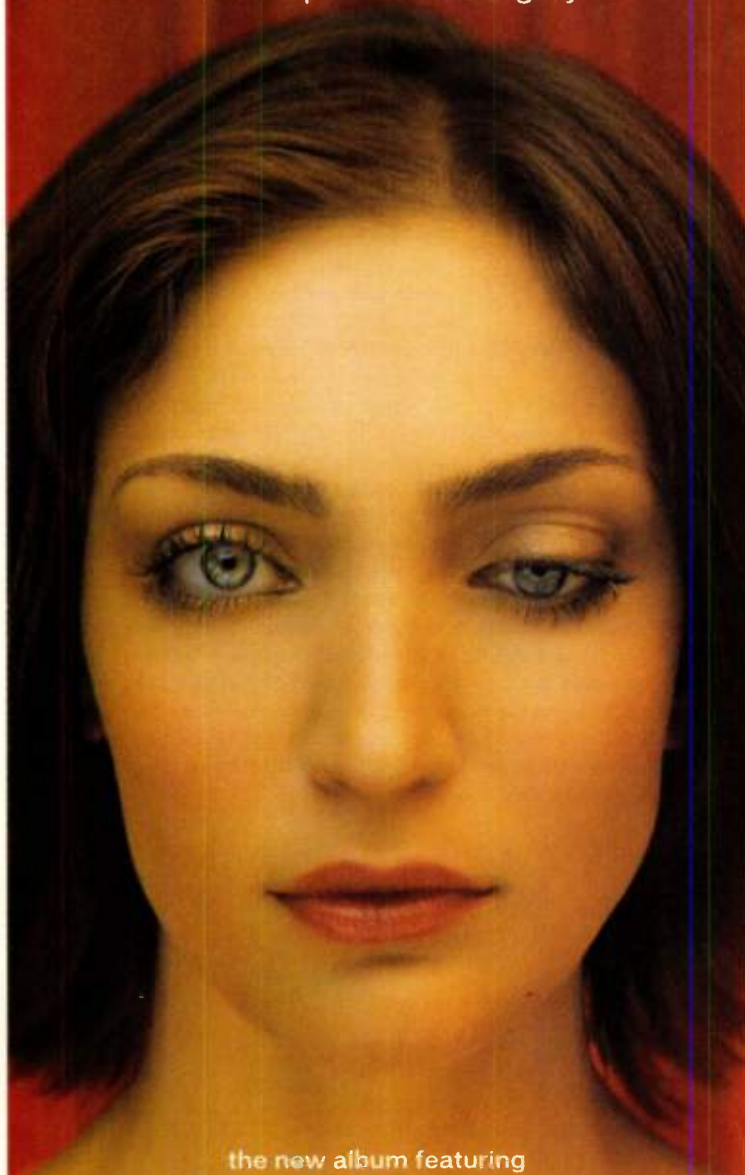
R.I.Y.L.:

µ-ziq, Bogdan Raczynski, Aphex Twin

and gristly synth notes one moment and isolating the scratchy remains of a groove the next. Meanwhile, "Welcome To The Jackolope" opens with a cartoonish rhythm that could be a Ren & Stimpy sing-a-long, only to be overtaken by swirling, distorted drums and a nearly baroque keyboard line. While this sophomore disc isn't a major stylistic departure from Datach'i's previous rhythmic snarls, the steady contrast of charming melodies and discordant rhythms keeps *We Are Always* bordering between playfulness and purposeful chaos. It comes as a surprise when Datach'i shows a tender side, ending the disc with a somber piano version—one of four variations—of "What It Is." >>>Kuri Kondrak

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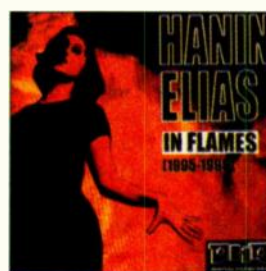
DIRTY BEATNIKS

Feedback

Wall Of Sound

"Singing is a trick to get people to listen to music longer than they would ordinarily," David Byrne once said. That seems to be the role of new Dirty Beatniks vocalist Mau on their first American release (following a couple of Europe-only discs without him). He doesn't quite sing, actually, or rap, exactly, but he spiels and chants across the entirety of *Feedback* in a breathy tone of voice that'll be familiar to anyone who is really into the big beat scene, strung out on effects and other things that start with E. Neil Beatnik is the guy responsible for the group's musical side, and his tracks are

simple but canny pastiches of the last 10 years' worth of club grooves, from Todd Terry (the steady chipping treble and slightly off-key tone-bursts of "Let Me Be Your Ashtray") to the Chemical Brothers (the rockish lead guitar that offsets the whumping drum cut-ups of "Bullet Proof"). The formula throughout is the same: Set up a beat that evokes somebody else's hit, drop in three or four samples for texture's sake, give Mau the cue to start, and let it roll for about five minutes. *Feedback* is fine as functional music—for cleaning the house or working out or maybe even dancing. But Mau's voice is ultimately a distraction: It makes you pay attention to its context just long enough to realize that nothing much is actually going on. >>>Douglas Wolk



HANIN ELIAS

In Flames

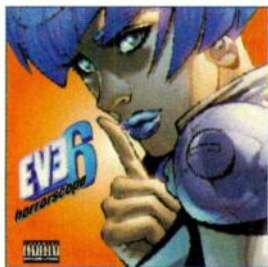
Fatal-DHR

Her bandmate Alec Empire mouths off to the press more, but Hanin Elias is one of the co-founders of Atari Teenage Riot. *In Flames* is her first solo album (with some mixing assistance from Empire), on a sub-imprint of Digital Hardcore Recordings she's started to concentrate on music by women. The basic elements of its sound will be familiar to anyone who's heard ATR—distorted breakbeats, distorted electronics, Elias screaming distorted slogans—but in place of her band's punk-riff assault, she pastes together messy, uncentered montages. The result approximates *The Many Moods Of Hanin*

Elias: playful yet furious ("Under Pressure," a Miami-bass beat armored with spikes), wistful yet furious ("Onetwo," a mangled bit of orchestral music whose lyric consists of its title shredding Elias's larynx a few times), sultry yet furious ("You Will Never Get Me," her approximation of a torch song, with a groove that sounds like an out-of-control industrial extruder accompanied by purloined strings). The album's most effective moments are the ones where she ditches DHR doctrine, like the subtle instrumental menace of "Outback" and the found tapes of music-box garble near the end. But Elias's free-floating rage rarely lets her music find any kind of focus, and the raw crudeness of the beats has lost its power to shock. >>>Douglas Wolk

THE COMP PILE (Our guide to compilation CDs)

TITLE: Jesus' Son Soundtrack (Mammoth)	Traveler '00 (Six Degrees)	Metroschifter Encapsulated (Doghouse)	Loud Rocks (Loud)	Bolero All Stars: 18 Romantic Classics (K-tel)
CONCEPT: A mopey mix of '60s country and pop hits forms the soundtrack to a Fuckhead's redemption.	A compilation of songs by world music masters, remixed by master DJs and producers.	Post-hardcore band Metroschifter writes the songs, and the whole hardcore/emo/indie world sings 'em.	Rap metal is big, so hip-hop label gets all Reese's on your ass and hooks its artists up with metal bands.	The Bolero is the "Latin music of romance," and this is almost a full hour of it.
TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC: You're alt enough for Wilco, but still dig the piano stylings of Floyd Cramer.	Going to a rave felt like the Peace Corps (or vice versa).	You'll do a spinkick into someone's face, but you'll have a good cry about it later.	Frat-boys tryin' to get jiggy; anyone basking in the cultural significance of teaming Wu-Tang with Ozzy.	You're having a little trouble in the <i>dormitorio</i> .
NAMES TO DROP: Joe Tex, Raiders, Sgt. Barry Sandler	Bebel Gilberto remixed by Arling & Cameron, Baaba Maal remixed by Thievery Corporation	The Get Up Kids, Refused, The Promise Ring	System Of A Down with Wu-Tang, Static X with Dead Prez	Lorenzo Barcelata, Pedro Junco, Ernesto Lecuona
SUMS IT UP: "Sweet Pea" (Tommy Roe)	"African Drug (Coldcut Mix)" (Bob Holroyd)	"Dear Hilary" (Burning Airlines)	"Still Not A Player" (Incubus/Big Pun)	"Obsesión" (Pedro Flores)
VERDICT: This soundtrack's meant more for swingin' on the back porch than anything you'd think a character named Fuckhead might get into, but to each smack-addict his own.	A killer blend of worldly voices, global grooves and smart samples and beats.	It's sort of like a tribute album, only you've probably never heard the songs before, and none of them get butchered. A must-have for the backpack-clad.	Wu-Tang Clan ain't nothin' to fuck with! (It's loud. It rocks. It rocks loudly.)	Lucy! I'm home! And I want to get freaky with you!



EVE 6

Horrorscope

RCA

OUT:

July 25

FILE UNDER:

Modern arena rock

R.I.Y.L.:

Fuel, Third Eye Blind, Duran Duran

with an insipid refrain that starts "Your heinous highness broke her hymen" and gets even worse from there. Collins also likes to swear a lot in his songs, which might earn him punk points but detracts from the innocent charm of the band's music. Although Eve 6 will never be Blink-182, the band does have an engaging pop-punk side, best heard on the post-breakup blues of "Amphetamines." The group also tries its hand at string-laden balladry ("Here's To The Night") and guitar-heavy sleaze ("Sunset Strip Bitch"). None of it is as successful as the new wave anthems that open the album. Still, *Horrorscope* is a coming-of-age party worth attending. >>>Sean Richardson



BELA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES

Outbound

Columbia

OUT:

July 25

FILE UNDER:

Crueling Banjos world tour

R.I.Y.L.:

Dixie Dregs, Jean-Luc Ponty, New Grass Revival

a tune in 27/8 time and several impossibly synchronized fusion passages. Guests, including vocalists Shawn Colvin and Yes's Jon Anderson, guitarist Adrian Belew, keyboard player John Medeski, steel-drum master Andy Narell and oboist Paul McCandless, make cameos. Tracks like the klezmer-esque "Lover's Leap" and the futuristic funk number "Scratch & Sniff" are impressive, even mesmerizing at times. But overall the disc has that sterile, synthetic feel that has always plagued fusion. Every track is played with exacting precision—with peaks and valleys as sure and predictable as those on a Stairmaster display. It's hard not to come away from the journey feeling Fleck would have been better off keeping things a bit more ragged, even if it would have meant risking a misstep from time to time. >>>Bill Kisluk



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GOAT

Goat

Engine Group

On the postmodernist's radio, where every song is a kitschy cover tune or a jokey stab at reanimating some unlikely combination of discarded genres, there are only two kinds of artists entirely devoid of irony. One is the boy bands, selling puppy love to schoolchildren. The other is Goat, a guy who's been head-butted by life—from his mother's suicide when he was a kid to sleeping on the streets of New York to being hit by a car to not having his first hit song (1998's "Great Life") until he was about twice the age of your average 'N Sync member—and managed to keep his spirit miraculously intact. He's so

unapologetically sincere that the white-boy hip-hop slow-groove acoustic-funk drawl that sounds like a tongue-in-cheek joke coming from everyone else (thanks to the standards set by Beck and G. Love) sounds like hard-earned wisdom coming from the throat of Goat. More affirmative than Stuart Smalley, better for chillin' at the barbecue than LFO, Goat is what sweet, stoner troubadours like Harry Nilsson or John Sebastian would sound like if they'd had the misfortune to come along 30 years later, in our more skeptical, Darwinian soundscape. >>>Gary Susman

OUT:

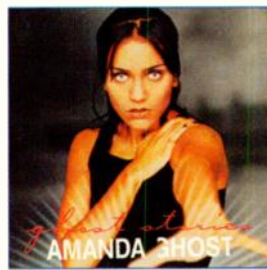
September 19

FILE UNDER:

Pomo without the irony

R.I.Y.L.:

Beck, Everlast, Elwood



AMANDA GHOST

Ghost Stories

Warner Bros.

OUT:

August 22

FILE UNDER:

Bland ambition

R.I.Y.L.:

Alanis Morissette, Natalie Imbruglia, Meredith Brooks

It's not that British singer/songwriter Amanda Ghost is unoriginal. Even though her voice evokes any number of singers from recent years—including Alanis Morissette, Natalie Imbruglia, Meredith Brooks, Polly Jean Harvey, Ginger Spice, Tracey Thorn from Everything But The Girl, Beth Gibbons from Portishead—she doesn't sound like any of them in particular. Even though her songwriting is often derivative (don't be surprised if Neil Young sues her for "Cellophane," a blatant filch of his "Old Man"), she does write her own material and is willing and restless enough to explore a rather broad

variety of genres. And even though she's a protégé of Boy George, she's clearly her own woman. She certainly takes charge, whether it's the evil electronic dance thump of "Filthy Mind," the soaring balladry of "A Child Believes," or the galloping anthemic pop of "Idol." She's like Tom Cruise—gorgeous, vigorous, straining every clenched muscle to show us just how hard she's working—or Britney Spears, a creature of pure, guiltless, fearsome ambition. "I have this thought in my head/ And it's about being noticed," she growls candidly on one typically overproduced track. No doubt she'll be noticed. And maybe she'll even be huge. Either way, be afraid—be very afraid. >>>Gary Susman

POST-PUNK POTPOURRI

Do you just hate everything? The Backstreet Boys, Britney Spears, your paper route, rap-metal, Elliott "I'll get laid if I seem sensitive" Smith, Disney movies? If you're feeling like you JUST...CAN'T...TAKE IT...ANYMORE, then it's time to fight back. For 23 years now punk has provided the defiant with a confrontational lifestyle that challenges the status quo aurally, visually and aromatically. From the Sex Pistols' belligerent, fuck-all swagger to Blink 182's un-PC, towel-snapping T&A-isms, punk has managed to keep its middle finger on the pulse of the day. But all that sneers ain't Sid Vicious. Here's a guide to the perfect soundtracks for exorcising those pent-up, Travis Bickle-like emotions. >>>Lorne Behrman



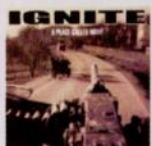
Shorthanded *Forever Yours* (Tooth & Nail): They sound like The Gin Blossoms with bigger guitars and shorter attention spans. This won't ruin your life, and unfortunately, it won't help you ruin someone else's.



Dillinger Four *Versus God* (Hopeless): As you might realize from the title, Dillinger Four have that outlaw hero, your-right-is-their-wrong thing going on. They're Robin Hoods, just like The Clash once were, and they share the Four Horsemen's knack for derailing power pop-worthy hooks with trainwreck rhythms.



MxPx *The Ever Passing Moment* (A&M-Interscope): Don't call them Christian punk, you punk—they're Christians who play puppy love-themed, sticky-sweet Elvis Costello-influenced punk.



Ignite *A Place Called Home* (TVT): Punch-the-air choruses, a singer with a rock operatic voice...they probably play Maiden's "Run To The Hills" at rehearsal.




Sparechange00 . . .at first sight (Cargo) There's a beautiful back-against-the-wall urgency here with verge-of-tears vocals and cracked-mirror guitars, and glistening lead melodies set against sharp-edged rhythm guitar grinds.





Slick Shoes *Wake Up Screaming* (Tooth & Nail): You've got to give it up for these God-loving punks. They're probably as well-versed in the blissful blur of new-school punk—syrupy backup vocals, rubber band-snap rhythms, neck-prickling melodies—as they are in the Good Book.

KEY:

 Lyrics are puerile; the singer prefers to write from the perspective of a nasal gold-mining, hands-on self-lover, or a jilted seventh grader.

 These dudes/dudettes are closet metalheads.

 Punk that even mom would approve of: Either they attend church regularly or it's likely they wouldn't fart at the dinner table.

 Members of this band are old school purists: They're either stuck in 1977 or 1982, thinking they're the Sex Pistols, The Exploited, Minor Threat, or some combination of the three.

GOUDIE

Peep Show

Elektra

Covering all the alt-rock bases, the major-label debut by Austin, Texas's Goudie seems designed to appeal to everybody. Singer/namesake Johnny Goudie's voice strongly echoes Radiohead's Thom Yorke, and the group's intermittently spacey rock makes that resemblance more than cosmetic. Then again, the piledriving rock of "Valentine" could be the work of Billy Corgan's next band. "Made" sounds like an undiscovered Marilyn Manson or NIN track—complete with explicit come-on—while "Buy Me" pumps and preens like post-Bowie glam rock. This diversity makes *Peep Show* a tough album to get

into; lurching from style to style, Goudie sounds like a band that's still trying to figure out what it wants to be when it grows up. But the playing on the record is so tight, and the individual songs so eerily well-produced, that one would be remiss to give up on the band too soon. "Drag City," for example, sports hooks and lyrics made for the car radio, and other tracks are just a cut or two below. Goudie probably has a great album in them if they pick just one or two of their favorite sounds. Even better would be finding the perfect amalgam—a stew of the droney, ethereal sound the band seems to gravitate toward with the punchy rock of which it ultimately proves capable. >>>Chris Molanphy

HER SPACE HOLIDAY

Home Is Where You Hang Yourself

Tiger Style

Not so long ago, a fellow like Marc Bianchi (d.b.a. Her Space Holiday) might have been found pouring his fragile heart out into a Tascam four-track, with rhythm tracks, if any, supplied by a cheap Casio. But that was last millennium: On this two-disc set, Bianchi eschews tape deck for desktop, with all the bells and whistles attendant to newly affordable recording technologies. The reverb-clouded guitar strums, boyish vocals, and lovelorn lyrical content ("I know you're home, and you're not alone") of disc one are familiar ground, but the sophisticated loops backing "Sugar Water"

and "Famous To Me" are a new wrinkle, at least in this post-Sarah Records indie-pop context. Other tracks aren't so well-integrated: "Snakecharmer" merely repeats its title over two chords and a few jungle-y fusillades. But "Homecoming," a sincere-sounding ode to "sweet baby Jesus" is satisfyingly lush, while "The Doctor And The DJ," a concise, Elliott Smith-styled waltz, succeeds on songwriting merit alone. Disc two, which remixes two of HSH's own songs and six by other bands, is pleasant but less substantial. The already ethereal Duster and the little-known Mahogany respond well to Bianchification, but the retooling of loquacious Bright Eyes singer Conor Oberst as a house diva is one experiment that need not be repeated. >>>Franklin Bruno

tsar



"a
Technicolor
explosion
of giddy
rock 'n'
roll."

CMJ

DEBUT ALBUM
FEATURES
"I DON'T WANNA
BREAK-UP"

(HEAR IT ON THIS ISSUE'S SAMPLER)

IN STORES NOW

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JETS TO BRAZIL

Four Corned Night

Jade Tree

A favorite subject of former Jawbreaker leader Blake Schwarzenbach is the dysfunctional relationship between singer and song, the impossible claims that each one makes on the other. "Kid, you were wrong/ It wasn't me/ In that song," he tells an admirer after a show on "One Summer Last Fall," further confessing, "You write the lie/ You'd like to be/ When your life looks like/ A book you wouldn't read." It's a pop song about a singer of pop songs who is not sure he is the singer—and who is pretty sure that whoever it is singing his songs is someone he doesn't like. A few minutes

later, on "Pale New Dawn," he's admitting to being "scared that the voices I hear may never be mine." There are plenty of new voices on *Four Corned Night*, from the AC/DC chords on "Milk & Apples" to the Steve Malkmus-style lyricism on "Mid Day Anonymous" to—my God, is that a Billy Joel lick on "Pale New Dawn"?—but most of those voices appear to belong to Schwarzenbach. *Night* drops the new wave-inflected sheen of JTB's debut in favor of more plaintive horizons, including a sheath of Lennon-esque piano balladry (with strings, no less) and the occasional bare acoustic strum. All of which make fine settings for Schwarzenbach's poetry of the wordless glances and loaded, motionless moments on which relationships hinge and implode. >>>Carly Carioli

OUT:

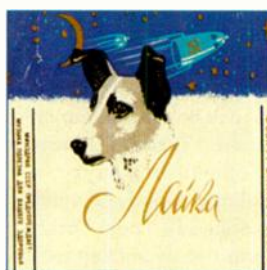
August 15

FILE UNDER:

Fearless emo balladry

R.I.Y.L.:

Hüsker Dü, The Promise Ring, Jawbreaker, Ben Folds Five



LAIKA

Good Looking Blues

Too Pure-Beggars Banquet

OUT:

August 22

FILE UNDER:

The post-rock blues

R.I.Y.L.:

Tricky, Tortoise, Broadcast, Massive Attack

Laika's take on post-rock has always been among the more subtle and oddly compelling. Formed in 1993, the act was one of the first to stretch the confines of rock instrumentation to accommodate a collection of samples, brass and dub-inspired rhythms, and *Good Looking Blues*, the band's third album, proves Laika to be an evolving project that's both progressive and palatable. As on previous efforts, the songs here share an aggressive rhythmic undertow that's equal parts dub and trip-hop. Live drums, rubbery bass lines and repeating loops provide a disconnected

backdrop for Margaret Fiedler's dreamy, half-whispered poems, which are peppered with warnings such as "Don't get caught in the grass" (from "Moccasin") and "Fate tells lies/ Maybe tonight maybe here" (in "Uneasy"). Meanwhile, "Widow's Weed" features the strange, voice-like moanings of a brass section, lending the track a jazzy feel that's echoed in the mellow tones of a Fender Rhodes piano. And on "T. Street," burbling electronic effects reminiscent of Oval form part of the rhythmic backdrop for a vaguely bluesy vocal by Fiedler, which may in part explain the disc's title. Obvious melodic hooks remain hard to come by in Laika's world, but the impressionistic techno-organic soundscapes on *Good Looking Blues* offer something far more unique—Grimm's fairytales for the Palm Pilot generation. >>>Lydia Vanderloo

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"...excellent songs, light of touch, often dark of lyric..." • Mojo



L'ALTRA

Music Of A Sinking Occasion

Aesthetics

OUT:

July 18

FILE UNDER:

Soothing sounds for thinkers

R.I.Y.L.:

American Analog Set, Low, Stereolab, Jim O'Rourke

When L'altra released its first record last year, the three songs only totaled 20 minutes, but the acoustic guitars and measured vocals and droning keyboards were executed with an intricacy not found on most 60-plus minute full-lengths. In fact, it seemed unlikely that this group of Chicago sound artists could sustain their dramatic, ice-cool musicality over the course of an entire album. But now along comes *Music Of A Sinking Occasion*, and it's a revelation. Songs don't really matter here; they're more like vessels containing poetic phrases delivered from male, female

or androgynous voices, and constructed from chiming synthesizers, horns, strings—whatever's needed to complete the picture. One track, "Lips Move On Top Of Quiet," wallows about in the shadow of Lindsay Anderson's singing, then zones off into a sort of space-age bridge before settling into a creeping compendium of piano, drums, cello and a pseudo-chorus that repeats the sinister line: "The answer is under the floorboards." Most compositions here aren't so bold, tiptoeing along a lonesome guitar figure or keyboard run and falling in line with the overall mood. A pair of instrumental title tracks sandwiches the 10-song album, veering off into improvisation that suggests a looseness at each end. Is this meant to counterbalance the structural (yet still flowing) music within? One gets the feeling that such analysis is what L'altra hopes to provoke. >>>Richard A. Martin



LEFTY

4-3-2-1

Interscope

OUT:

July 18

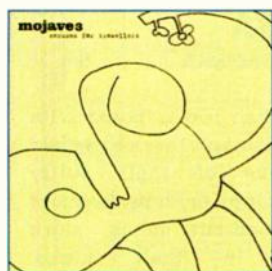
FILE UNDER:

SoCal punk-pop

R.I.Y.L.:

Foo Fighters, late-era Replacements, Everclear

Lefty's disaffected anthems and buoyant, shimmering guitar riffs still bring with them a pleasant, if bittersweet taste. Through tales of male bonding (4-3-2-1's first single, "Girls"), a friend's drug abuse ("Addiction"), self-doubt ("Wounded") and self-realization ("See Through Me"), Lefty makes the personal (slightly) political while delivering fist-pumping, visceral rock that calls to mind the Foo Fighters, thanks at least partly to co-producer Bradley Cook's studio experience with Dave Grohl and co. Lefty doesn't add anything new to the familiar modern-rock formula of layered guitars, earnest vocals and hammering rhythms, but there's honesty and dedication in the group's hard-hitting attack, hints of dynamicism in drummer Kenny Livingston's jazz-inflected fills, and a winning, if cynical, sneer all over 4-3-2-1. >>>Mark Woodlief



MOJAVE 3

Excuses For Travellers

4AD-Beggars Banquet

OUT:

September 5

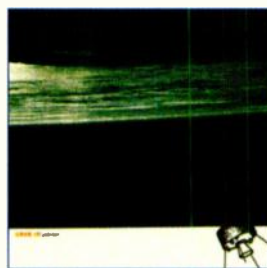
FILE UNDER:

Deceptively easy listening

R.I.Y.L.:

Red House Painters, Low, Nick Drake

Mojave 3 is a country band in more than one sense of the word, having merged the American musical idiom to the traditional styles of the English countryside. Songwriter Neil Halstead, a former member of Slowdive, has turned from the guitar-drenched instrumental intensity of that band to the more subtle art of the song. Sharing a passing friendship with Dylan-esque folk and slowcore, the songs on *Excuses For Travellers* go in a different direction than most reverential alt-country. Album opener "In Love With A View" employs the sparest of piano and pedal steel guitar to invest the lyrical details of the aching love song with a sonically sympathetic environment. As the narrator moves from his casual acceptance of a woman's beauty to his eventual emotional subjugation to her presence, so does the music expand to create an obsessional atmosphere with electric-guitar passages that swell in imitation of the passion that is skidding out of the narrator's control. Delicate acoustic guitar and banjo color "My Life In Art," a valentine to a stripper with big dreams and little possibility of achieving them. *Music For Travellers* is an album that takes it easy—but give it time to sink in and it will reward you with a slow burning ardor. >>>Lois Maffeo



CAVE IN

Jupiter

Hydrahead

STEVEN BRODSKY

Static Intellect

Hydrahead

OUT:

July 20

FILE UNDER:

Prismatic prog-popadelia

R.I.Y.L.:

Dillinger Escape Plan, My Bloody Valentine, Rush



OUT:

August 15

FILE UNDER:

Singer-songwriterly pop

R.I.Y.L.:

Big Star, Nick Drake, Elliott Smith

While still in high school, five teenagers calling themselves Cave In issued a crop of singles that sounded like Converge and Neurosis tag-teaming on a bunch of old Voivod covers. Underground hardcore kids were known to faint dead away in their presence. Not long after, the band pared down to a four-piece and made an album called *Until Your Heart Stops* and an EP called *Creative Eclipses* that had the same kids playing copies of *Reign In Blood* and *OK Computer* backwards for clues, though the band themselves wrote the whole fainting off as an attempt to play Sabbath as if it were Pink Floyd, only with Beach Boys harmonies. Still not old enough to drink, Cave In now thrust upon the world an album called *Jupiter*, which winds their vertigo-inducing space-metal into a prog-poperatic epic that just might be their *Operation: Mindcrime*, minus the Scientology. The two signature textures are a shrieking belch of fiery heavitude and a lush aquatic shimmer—spectral and menacing, kaleidoscopic and nuclear. Guitarist/singer Steven Brodsky has an impeccable tenor that can, on a dime, flit into an impossible glass-shattering falsetto or descend into a guttural death-metal growl. The title track begins with a furious two-chord intro; Brodsky gets his

shmoove on and cryptically croons, "The metronome is wrong again!" in an English accent (he's from Boston); there's an Arabesque scale, a power-pop chorus, and then the whole thing starts over again. On "Big Riff," the band roils along in a menacing mood until the sky opens up and the fingers of King Crimson flash through the heavens and the song suddenly turns into something Rush might have written, with the band somehow pulling off several thousand dollars' worth of keyboard parts with cheap guitar pedals. Seven minutes later they're still jockeying back and forth between the two, pausing to insert another coda that sounds like an outtake from Fleetwood Mac's *Rumours*, but which nonetheless can be sung over both the Rush and the Neurosis parts. "Requiem" finds 'em chasing doom-metal valkyries on the dark side of the moon; and the instrumental "Decay Of The Delay" compresses the Spacemen 3 and Painkiller catalogues into one heaving, volcanic shudder.

In his spare time, Brodsky maintains a concurrent singer/songwriter alter ego: a Jeckyl to Cave In's Hyde. Recorded with *Jupiter* producer Brian McTernan (at around the same time as Cave In's album was made), *Static Intellect*—Brodsky's second such outing, on the heels of *Expose Your Overdubs*, an equally superb disc of home recordings—is scarcely identifiable as the product of the same muse. The disc finds Brodsky handling guitar, bass, drums, vocals and keyboards himself on ebullient tunes that display an affection for the warm glow and layered multi-part harmonies of classic California pop, with lovelorn waltz-time minor-key ballads and lush Beatlesque melodies which both evoke and surpass in range and melancholy those of his evident hero, Elliott Smith. It's simply more evidence that this kid has ludicrous amounts of talent. >>>Carly Carlioli



VARIOUS ARTISTS

Rough Guide To Cuban Son

World Music Network

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Rough Guide To South African Jazz

World Music Network

OUT:

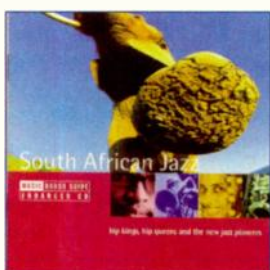
July 11

FILE UNDER:

Here comes the son

R.I.Y.L.:

¡Cubanismo!, Buena Vista Social Club, Beny More



OUT:

July 11

FILE UNDER:

Jazz in a hard place

R.I.Y.L.:

Abdullah Ibrahim, Miriam Makeba, The African Jazz Pioneers

his contribution, and who passed on shortly thereafter. The introduction of trumpet, violin and flute to son are well-documented here, notably in a freewheeling track by the Orquesta Melodias Del 40, and a classy charanga from Orquesta Aragon, who dominated the genre in the 1950s. We hear from Cuba's greatest pop singer, Beny More, and we get the original version of the moody masterpiece "Cham Cham," the song that made Ry Cooder's Buena Vista Social Club. Kings of today's Cuban pop, Los Van Van, offer a tepid nod to the past, but other revivalists fare better. Sierra Maestra and ¡Cubanismol!, both featuring trumpet genius Jesús Alemañy, deliver the old music with state of the art sound and astounding vigor.

South African jazz is a less defined category, ranging from venerable Jo'burg swing to the breezy, melodic Cape Town sound pioneered by Abdullah Ibrahim (a.k.a. Dollar Brand), to sassy pennywhistle and sax jive, to more pretentious modern jazz manifestations. But most of these 16 tracks are gems. The African Jazz Pioneers crank out a sound that is sweet, swinging, optimistic and supremely confident. Miriam Makeba's 1959 track with the Skylarks epitomizes the South African appropriation of vocal jazz from the US in the '40s, while Lemmy "Special" Mabaso's rolling pennywhistle and sax points the way to the township pop to come in Soweto in the '60s. Jazz artists who thrived in the '60s prove especially satisfying, like Chris McGregor, who pioneered an exile South African jazz scene in London, and the Jazz Epistles who kept the flame alive back in Johannesburg. Jazz is a part of South Africa's legendary love affair with American culture, but over and over, distinctly African sounds emerge, including Pops Mohamed's "Election Day Serenade," a traditional Zimbabwean mbira (hand piano) song with trombones. >>>Banning Eyre



OUT:

June 20

FILE UNDER:

The young and the restless

R.I.Y.L.:

Fiona Apple, Tori Amos, Ben Lee

Apple situation, with Pirner playing the Jon Brion musical mentor role and Towber baring her too-young-to-be-truly-soulful soul in what her tenth grade teacher no doubt considered precocious poetry, peeling back her psychic scars to reveal her romantic wounds, as in "Life hurts/ What's it worth?/ It's only free dirt" and "Happiness is the memories I can't have/ Love is the people I have lost." The bright and bouncy guitar pop of the opening track, "My Friend," is an awkward fit for the wounded Michal, and the disc's hardest rocking tune, "Juliet's Refrain," verges on Y Can't Michal Read. She's much more at home with melancholy folk-pop arrangements or working the piano like a promising young Tori Amos on bold, atmospheric rock tracks with cryptic lyrics. >>>Matt Ashare



OUT:

August 1

FILE UNDER:

Post-millennial happy-hop

R.I.Y.L.:

Brand New Heavies, Dubstar, Olive

trying to hard to please. And vocalist Skye Edwards, only marginally more exuberant than former Tricky sidekick Martine, would never have been able to bring off the joyous choruses without the aid of some soul sista backup. Still, there's enough radio-friendly funky stuff here to make it easier for us to go along with the lies. "Love Sweet Love" recasts "The Message" as a party jam (i.e. without a message). And the keeper is a two-minute shiny, happy calypso fantasia called "A Well Deserved Break." Nevertheless, it's clear that having to smile for 45 minutes took its toll on them—the last track has Edwards indulging in the mantra, "When the party's over, you got nowhere to go." Nowhere to go, that is, but back down. >>>Kevin John

MICHAL

Sky With Stars

RPM-Columbia

Her debut CD's plethora of covergirl headshots highlighting the highlights in her flowing bleach-blond locks gives singer/songwriter Michal Towber the air of a Christina Aguilera-in-training. But Michal is not your average teeny-popper. Rather than spending her formative years in the Mickey Mouse Club, she was a classical piano prodigy who was born in an Israeli kibbutz before moving to the heart of New York City. And oh, yeah, her senior prom date was Soul Asylum's Dave Pirner—which would be too cheap to mention if he hadn't co-produced half of *Sky With Stars*. The result is a Fiona

MORCHEEBA

Fragments Of Freedom

Sire

Now that this British trio is bored with being down in the dumps, they've excised almost all signs of their sultry depression—trip-hoppy rhythms, frequent halts into bummed-out stasis, stark instrumentation. In their place, Morcheeba delivers a sunny Britpop album full of the kind of pep-talk numbers M People record for each album in the hopes of escaping their clubland ghetto. But because Morcheeba are sourpusses at heart, the newfound cheer isn't convincing. The disco strings and Motown tambourines have an eerily crisp feel to them, which suggests the production is



THE JIMMY NATIONS COMBO

Tarheel Boogie

Rubric

This straight-up, old-school honky tonk music is so far-removed from the Nashville sound that in this day and age, singer and guitarist Jimmy Nations somehow finds himself relegated to the outskirts of alt-country. His combo borrows from several of the rich veins of C&W tradition: Marty Robbins's south-of-the-border horn blasts, Western Swing two-step rhythms and some hillbilly jazz à la guitar wizards Speedy West and Jimmy Bryant. But the main course is a big helping of hard-edged rockaboogie and thumping, straight-ahead country. Nations gets a tough, fat and fuzzy tone

from his Gibson hollow-body, though in the democratic tradition of the genre, he shares his brief solo turns with steel guitarist Skip Krevens and an occasional fiddler. In contrast, Nations's strong voice doesn't have that much rawhide in it. It's smooth and rounded, a good fit on Wynn Stewart's "Wishful Thinking," one of two covers, and many of Nations's own solid originals. But the New Yorker (by way of North Carolina) can still pull off badass lines about eating cold possum and acting like a "fist-slinging, stool-hanging drunk." Though Nations avoids the hokier excesses of Western swing and redneck music, *Tarheel Boogie* is a wide-ranging affair, from the jazzy instrumental stomp "Hayride To Hong Kong" to the witty backwards love song "Way Beyond That." »»»Bill Kisluk



OMINOUS SEAPODS

The Super Man Curse

Hydrophonics-Palm

Just as any good jam band should, Ominous Seapods have built a reputation on their live shows, more specifically on the long and winding improvised instrumental passages within those shows. Formed in '89 and led by guitarists/vocalists Dana Monteith-Roberts and Todd Pasternack, this New York-based five-piece have survived for over a decade on jamming. But on *The Super Man Curse*, the band tries what most jam bands eventually attempt to pull off when confronted with having to make a genuine studio album—they try to shift the focus away from jamming and onto more

conventional song structures. Unfortunately, undistinguished vocals and unremarkable lyrics are two indications that the necessities of verse/chorus/verse songwriting are a less than comfortable fit for Ominous Seapods. On the bright side, the band doesn't completely eschew the complex instrumental breaks that are its forté. And while there's little to recommend in the banal blue-collar stoner satire "Bong Hits And Porn," Ominous Seapods rise to the occasion via easy-going guitar boogie, whether it's in the form of the early Stones-style honky-tonkin' strum of "Imaginary Money" or succinctly encapsulated in the soaring guitar solo (à la Pink Floyd) of "Money To Burn." In other words, it's not mind-expanding psychedelic excursions that save the day on *The Super Man Curse*, it's classic rock guitar muscle. »»»Linda Laban

OUT:

August 15

FILE UNDER:

Big city C&W

R.I.Y.L.:

Big Sandy And His Fly-Rite Boys, Hank Thompson, Johnnie Lee Wills

OUT:

August 1

FILE UNDER:

Pick out the jams

R.I.Y.L.:

Phish, moe., The Black Crowes

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FUTURE FARMER



SISTER HAZEL

Fortress

Universal

Sister Hazel shares more with Matchbox Twenty than its home state of Florida. Like Rob Thomas and company, these modern rockers play a collegiate version of Southern rock that owes more to early R.E.M. than Skynyrd or the Allmans. Still, their music is classic rock in the sense that we've heard it all before. "All For You," Sister Hazel's big hit from a few years back, was a sunny update of Blues Traveler's "Run-Around"; the biggest hook on the band's sophomore disc, "Change Your Mind," comes from Crosby, Stills & Nash's "Southern Cross." Singer Ken Block won't win any originality

points doing the Adam Duritz white-soul thing, either. But there are a few clever moments on *Fortress*. Lead guitarist Ryan Newell brings grit to the band's sound throughout the disc, whipping up a storm of wah-wah licks on "Strange Cup Of Tea" and invigorating the smooth pop of "Elvis" with a cutting slide solo. Newell also takes the spotlight on the Stones-y honky-tonk of "Save Me," on which Sister Hazel finally gives in to the boogie. Ultimately, Sister Hazel's take on a style The Counting Crows have called their own for years is catchy enough for prime time. But *Fortress* only really takes off when the group adds a little Black Crowes grit to the mix. »»Sean Richardson

OUT:

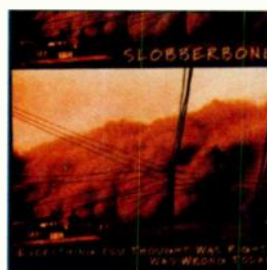
June 27

FILE UNDER:

Southern radio rock

R.I.Y.L.:

Tonic, Hanson, Gin Blossoms



SLOBBERBONE

Everything You Thought Was Right Was Wrong Today

New West

OUT:

July 25

FILE UNDER:

Roots punk

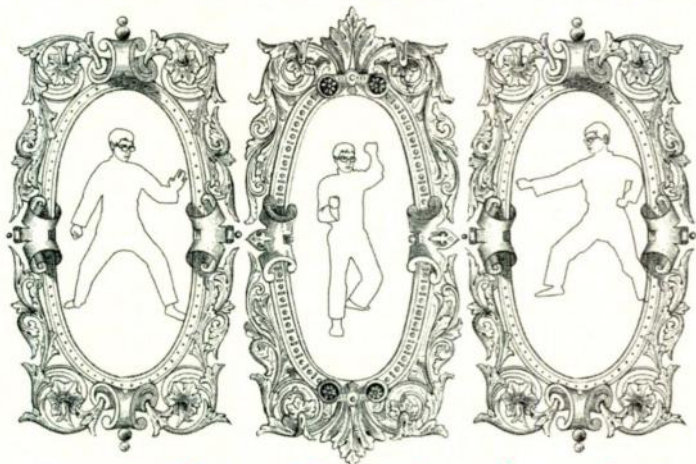
R.I.Y.L.:

Marah, Uncle Tupelo, Chris Mills

Slobberbone singer/guitarist Brent Best might be Denton, Texas's barroom philosopher king or its street-corner idiot savant; it's hard to tell which on his band's third release, *Everything You Thought Was Right Was Wrong Today*. One minute he's tossing off lines like "One day this world's gonna curl up and burst/ It's gonna choke on its own tongue and die of its own thirst"; the next, he's babbling, "Gimme Back My Dog" repeatedly. Forgive him the outburst, though—he's addressing an ex-lover, ironically telling her off over a "Be My Baby" beat, while multi-instrumentalist

Jess Barr picks out melodic lines on his banjo over a snarling electric guitar. It's these little surprises that make Slobberbone interesting. Best and company effortlessly shift gears within songs—country-rock balladry gives way to tough twang, and Southern rock gains punk vehemence. "That Is All" sounds like Steve Earle if he'd stayed in Texas instead of moving to Nashville, while "Placemat Blues" is what *Exile On Main Street* would have been if it had been recorded by a punk band, and the hard jangle of "Bright Eyes Darkened" echoes mid-'80s Minneapolis. Instruments such as pedal steel, accordion, tuba, saxophone, vibraslap, mandolin and piano (the last provided by famed Memphis producer Jim Dickinson) create a remarkably uncluttered atmosphere, but the central attraction remains Best's growling vocals and guitar. »»Meredith Ochs

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STARHUSTLER

Songs For Betty

Dirt

OUT:

September 19

FILE UNDER:

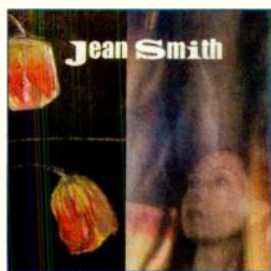
Indie, indie country-pop, indie, indie pop

R.I.Y.L.:

Pernice Brothers, Mark Eitzel, Wilco

Singer/songwriter Jason Hatfield has a famous sister and a colorful background, which includes a spell in the band that became Helium. But he comes into his own with his fourth StarHustler album, which mixes and matches charming, depressive country and charming, depressive pop. It sounds like an invitation to a wider audience, with fewer acoustic numbers than usual and more catchy choruses and 12-string jangle. "Dogs" plugs into Neil Young's *Crazy Horse* guitar sound, while "Downfall" is a close cousin to Tom Petty's "You Don't Know How It Feels," complete with a

slide-guitar solo. Once a hesitant singer, Hatfield's developed a voice that recalls Gram Parsons in its purity and vulnerability. Like Parsons, he blends especially well with female singers, and his duet partners here include ex-Swirlie Seana Carmody, both of Fuzzy's lead singers, and for the first time, sister Juliana Hatfield. As a lyricist, Hatfield shows a sharp eye for detail: When he takes on the voice of a death-row inmate writing his parents, he remembers to bum cigarettes. The most touching songs deal with a broken relationship; and you'll seldom hear a more self-deprecating line than "You're a stargazing lily/ I'm some kind of crop disease." But he shakes his depression on "Favorite Song," which is appealing enough to become yours. »»Brett Milano



JEAN SMITH

Jean Smith

Kill Rock Stars

As Mecca Normal's singer/lyricist and a published author, Jean Smith has built her career on words—smart, angry, sharp-witted words that she's sung and snarled through a stack of Mecca Normal and Two Foot Flame albums. So the first surprise about her solo debut is that there are almost no vocals on it. The second surprise is, well, everything else. Never really an instrumentalist in the past, she plays everything on this set of long, slow, droning pieces, meant to induce a state of meditative bliss. Unfortunately, one person's bliss is another's *Metal Machine Music*. And even

those who loved Mecca Normal's most abrasive moments are likely to find parts of this album tough going. Most of the instrumentals feature Smith on sax, an instrument she hasn't quite mastered. On others she gets the same skronking sound by bowing a guitar, seemingly at random. "Red Smooth Sapling Whips" seems an exercise in playing piano as slowly as possible; the eight-minute "A Little Black Dress" is built around four spoken sentences that are endlessly repeated, endlessly repeated. The two conventional songs work best: The deceptively pretty "Snippet From Hell" has a narrative that gets disturbing in a hurry, and "Halfway" builds from an overdubbed vocal duet to a kickass guitar solo. But most of this will mainly interest those whose favorite Beatle was Yoko. >>>Brett Milano

OUT:

June 20

FILE UNDER:

Detrimental meditation

R.I.Y.L.:

Yoko Ono, Mecca Normal, Hafler Trio



SUPER FURRY ANIMALS

Mwng

Flydaddy

Don't adjust your stereo: The Welsh band Super Furry Animals really are singing in their native tongue on *Mwng*, as suggested by the vowel-less title (which is Welsh for "Mane"). Welsh is as indecipherable to American ears as it looks. And yet, Gruff Rhys's sing-song delivery and the Super Furrys' embrace of rootsy psychedelia makes everything here flow more smoothly than much of the band's heavily orchestrated rock-in-English affairs. *Mwng* surges and ebbs, with acoustic guitars melting into horn arrangements while circular rhythms play tug-of-war with chiming bells.

OUT:

June 20

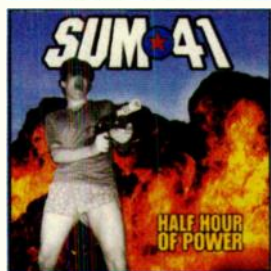
FILE UNDER:

The Welsh pop explosion

R.I.Y.L.:

Gorky's Zygotic Mynci, The Lÿs, Belle & Sebastian on vinyl played backwards.

Hiding the meaning of the lyrics to all but its Welsh-speaking fans allows the Super Furrys to both do their part to preserve the neglected language of their homeland and to highlight the band's deft melodic sensibilities. It's also something of a cruel joke—listeners may want to sing along, but that's rather tricky when the titles alone read like "Ysbeidiau Heulog" (lyrics and translations are available on the band's website, www.superfurry.com). As a bonus—or perhaps an apology—the American release of *Mwng* features a second compact disc with four unreleased songs and another that's been rerecorded, and it's a noisy nod to their previous albums. Except for one thing: It's also all in Welsh. >>>Richard A. Martin



SUM 41

Half Hour of Power

Big Rig-Island

Someone somewhere is a little overzealous about this Toronto, Canada-based skate-punk quartet. Setting aside the thorny punk-on-major-label debate (this is a joint venture between the Mighty Mighty Bosstones' Big Rig label and Island), Sum 41's official debut just isn't distinctive or remarkable enough to warrant big-buck backing. It's not that the eleven-song EP doesn't carry through on its promise: it's a grab bag of all the styles of "extreme music" you'd expect to hear at summer jock-punk festivals. There's deftly executed heavy-metal pastiches with call-to-arms guitar leads and steadfast

galloping rhythms ("Grab The Devil By The Horns And **** Him Up The ****" and "Ride The Chariot To The Devil," both of which bring to mind Iron Maiden's "Run To The Hills"). There's spiky-haired punk-pop steeped in enough new-school hardcore aeronautics to pass the band off as the latest addition to the melodic Fat Wreck Chords roster ("Machine Gun" and "T.H.T."). And there are passable hip-hop and ska breakdowns ("Dave's Possessed Hair/It's What We're All About" and "Second Chance For Max Headroom," respectively). All of which leaves Sum 41 open to the old truism jack of all trades, master of none. But it goes deeper than that: For Sum 41 it's more like jack of all trades, original and inspired at

non@. >>>Lorne Behrman

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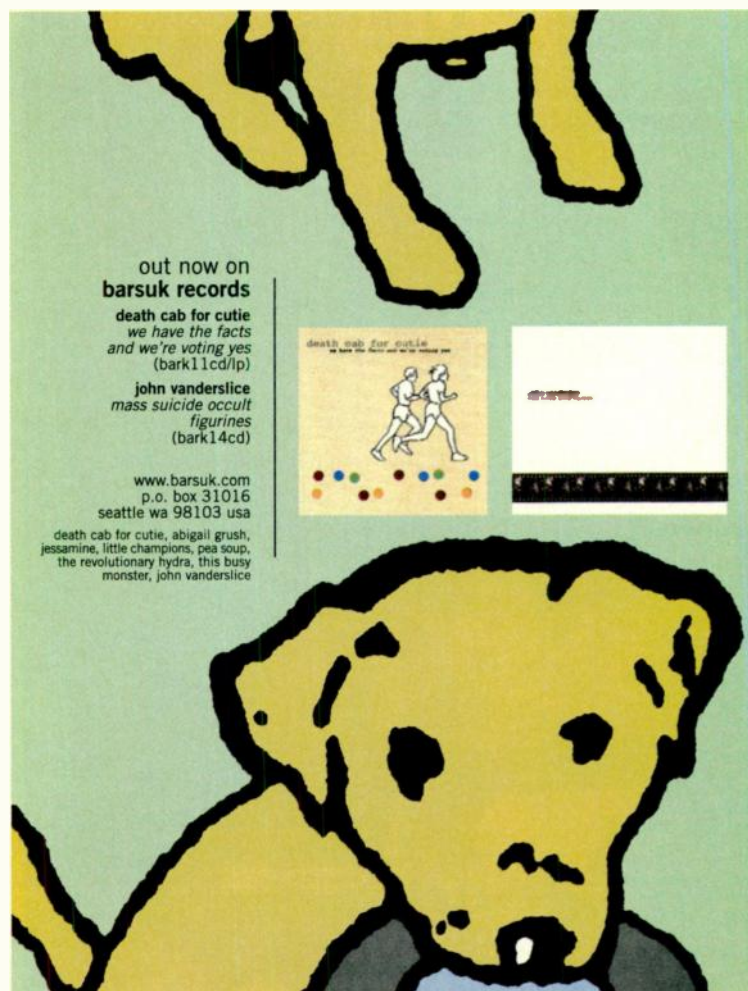
June 27

FILE UNDER:

Warped Tour punk

R.I.Y.L.:

Beastie Boys, NOFX, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones



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TWILIGHT SINGERS

Twilight As Played By The Twilight Singers

Columbia

With his career in post-Elektra label limbo, Afghan Whigs frontman Greg Dulli landed on his feet in New Orleans and, with a little help from singers Harold Chichester (Howlin' Maggie) and Shawn Smith (Satchel), got right to work. Although the Whigs were picked up by Columbia, the wheels of Twilight Singers had already been set in motion; Dulli followed up by bringing Steve Cobby and Dave McSherry of the British dance music outfit Fila Brazillia in on the action. The result feels a bit too much like leftover scraps and underdeveloped seeds of what might have

become Whigs tunes. Or, maybe the relatively hookless, bass-heavy, monotonous drum loop-dominated "Love" and "Clyde" are just Dulli-the-rock-dude's misguided notion of electronica. He's never been a less-is-more guy, and he seems lost without the ecstatic din of electric guitars framing his turbulent emotions. The haphazard use of the extra singers suggests that vocal arranging isn't one of his strong suits, either. The slow grooves and spare, electro-organic textures of "Verti — Marte" and "Twilight" evoke the sort of sexy/sinister atmospheres that might have been a powerful counterpoint to the Stones-y soul of the Whigs' '98 album 1965 (Columbia). But as the strongest tracks on *Twilight*, they're proof that sometimes the creative constraints inherent in forming part of a longstanding band are really a blessing in disguise. >>>Matt Ashare

OUT:

September 12

FILE UNDER:

Learning to play nicely with others

R.I.Y.L.:

The Afghan Whigs, Howlin' Maggie, Joseph Arthur



THE UNION UNDERGROUND

...An Education In Rebellion

Portrait-Columbia

San Antonio's Union Underground looks and sounds like a bionic new-metal death machine raised from the same scrap pile as recent hitmakers Static-X and Powerman 5000. On "Turn Me On 'Mr. Deadman,'" the band raises a demented racket that does megalomaniacal frontman Bryan Scott's Wayne Static hairdo proud. Though it's easily the most modern-sounding band on '80s-survivor John Kalodner's trad-metal revival label, Portrait, The Union Underground isn't afraid to let traces of glam and grunge into its aggro stew. Scott, who also

OUT:

July 18

FILE UNDER:

Post-industrial grunge

R.I.Y.L.:

Rob Zombie, Filter, Layne Staley

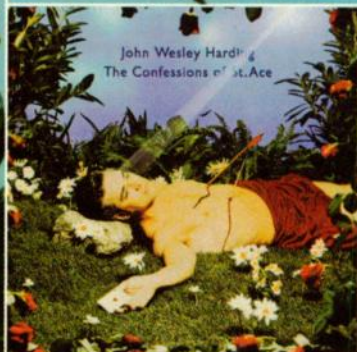
produced the album, is particularly enamored of the famously snarling Alice In Chains vocal sound. Guitarists Scott and Patrick Kennison mix melody with mayhem on "Trip Like Jesus," throwing in a few glimmering arpeggiated licks to go along with their outbursts of digitally pitch-shifted madness. Scott doesn't drown out his rhythm section with electronic beats like other techno-rockers do, but his claustrophobic production dulls the band's impact a little. That becomes especially clear when The Union Underground ditches the sonic trappings of industrial on *...An Education In Rebellion's* last track, "The Friend Song." As Scott screams bitterly over the tune's near-punk speed-boogie, the band's anger finally hits its mark. >>>Sean Richardson

John Wesley Harding

The Confessions of St. Ace

Featuring the first single "She's a Piece of Work."
Also includes "I'm Wrong About Everything,"
as heard in the movie "High Fidelity."

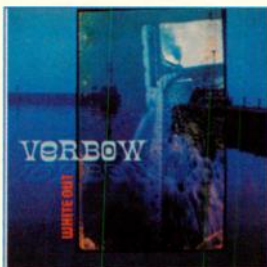
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VERBOW

White Out

Epic-550

OUT:

July 18

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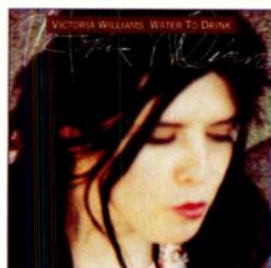
Alt-rock with strings attached

R.I.Y.L.:

Goo Goo Dolls, Cardinal, Sugar

In rock, the cello is mostly considered an instrument to be used judiciously for sweetening or for bringing a subtly somber shade to the tonal party. Think Nirvana. Think Eric Matthews. Even think Apocalyptica, the Finnish string quartet who reinterpreted Metallica with some nasty bowing. And now think Verbow, as the Chicago-based band issues a sophomore effort that sports plenty of cello, front and center, yet doesn't yield an inch of rock territory. The band continues to use strong, influential producers—it was Bob Mould who turned up the volume and hooks for 1997's *Chronicles*, and this

time it's Brad Wood (Liz Phair, Smashing Pumpkins) bringing out cellist Alison Chesley's percussive string attack and accentuating her natural feel for contrapuntal melodies. This helps support singer Jason Narducy's dark moods without sapping any of their pop energy. "Dying Sun," an obvious single, and "I'll Never Live My Father's Dream" both race out of the gate with SoCal power pop-melodies underlined by sudden bursts of threatening Midwestern thunder. The only potential downside is Narducy's too-comfortable pop idol voice, which occasionally tilts the sentimental moments ("Sweet Felicity," "Four Channel Town") toward the bland, faceless pop of Goo Goo Dolls and their Dawson's Creek-soundtrack ilk. >>>Rob O'Connor



VICTORIA WILLIAMS

Water To Drink

Atlantic

Victoria Williams may be her own worst enemy. Still perhaps best known as the singer/songwriter whose multiple sclerosis inspired the tribute (and ongoing musician's charity) *Sweet Relief*, Williams was previously—and continues to be—the author of quirky, country-touched blues and ballads that artists including Dave Pirner and R.E.M. cover so beautifully. On her own, however, that quavering Louisiana soprano, almost little girl-like in its frailty, can push her swampy honesty into parody, sounding at times as if early-'70s chanteuse Melanie had wandered onto the set of *The Last*

Waltz. Not that this disc lacks moments of beauty: All that strangeness works on such originals as "Grandma's Hat Pin" and the Robbie Robertson-like "Gladys And Lucy," transforming these homespun songs of love and loss into a charmingly ramshackle Southern gothic. And when Williams reins in her distinctive semi-drawl to cover the cool bossa nova of "Water To Drink," the effect is magic. But by the time the singer tries her hand at "Young At Heart," the last of the disc's three covers, her wobbling warble has begun to grate, with an annoying fingernails-on-the-blackboard quality that will serve to keep curious passersby from joining the cult. >>>Clea Simon

OUT:

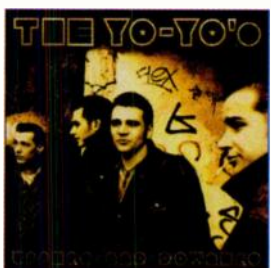
August 15

FILE UNDER:

New country-rural gothic

R.I.Y.L.:

Emmylou Harris, Mary Lou Lord, Michelle Shocked



THE YO-YO'S

Uppers And Downers

Sub Pop

Let's split hairs: pop-punk is not the same as punk-pop. There's something inherently more sinister in infecting sweet songs with base morality than, well, doing the same at double the speed. It's a subversive thing: It's easier, and much more fun, to sing along to drug meltdown via The New York Dolls' "Personality Crisis" than to do the same with Green Day's "Burnout." And, while The Yo-Yo's aren't as depraved as the Dolls, they do represent the classic black-sheep-of-the-family rock 'n' roll outlaw archetype (they all look like *Wild One*-era Marlon Brando), and they do it all without sounding

anything like Social Distortion. *Uppers And Downers* is a total sugar high—14 tracks, all with gummi-bear choruses, syrupy wow-wow do-do harmonies, and chewy, stick-to-the-roof-of-your-mouth beats. Though every track sounds alike—except for the Teenage Fanclub-flavored "Half Hour Heartache"—it never feels monotonous. In part, that's because The Yo-Yo's know the true meaning of the power chord—The Who-style powerchords, the kind of distorted chords that hum dangerously on the verge of feedback. And it's also partly because they know how to hold down the fort with big round basslines and semi-automatic machine gun drums. So you never feel overwhelmed by buzzsaw guitars: You feel just right. >>>Lorne Behrman

OUT:

July 18

FILE UNDER:

Garage punk perfection

R.I.Y.L.:

The Boys, The New York Dolls, Slade



THE WISDOM OF HARRY

House Of Binary

Matador

OUT:

August 29

FILE UNDER:

Moodiness for moderns

R.I.Y.L.:

Portishead, Olive, Optiganally Yours

Indie-pop buffs may recall Wisdom Of Harry auteur Peter Astor as the frontman of Creation Records' flagship act The Weather Prophets. You've been reminded; now, forget it. *House Of Binary*, which combines loop-based programming and London-by-night vignettes, couldn't be farther from the neo-classicism of Astor's '80s outfit. Not that he's smashed his guitar: "Coney Island Of The Mind" and "Caesar Boots" are Primal Scream sans recording budget, musing their quantized beats with Ron Wood-ish rhythm work. "I'm Going To Make My Life Right" strongly recalls Lloyd Cole, and the

cheesed-up hymn "The Wisdom" almost explains the mysterious band name: "I don't know anything except all I already know/ It's the wisdom of Harry." But the disc's telltale heart lies in tracks like "Boxed," a slinky slice of trip-hop narrated by the figure "currently living under your carpet." Several instrumentals breathe similarly dank air, but taken as a whole, the creepiness seems unearned; a few tracks seem to be auditioning for synchronization rights to an "edgy" car commercial. Astor's willingness to work at such a distance from his musical origins is admirable, but this *House* is under-decorated: Nearly every cut includes either an intriguing beat or an appealing melody, but few have both. >>>Franklin Bruno

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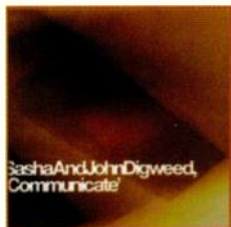
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mixed signals

Even those who still refuse to accept DJs as bona fide musicians give props to turntablists like New York City's **Roc Raida**. One of the founding members of the "turntable orchestra" and DJ-battle crew the X-ecutioners, the scratch master has been pioneering the genre for more than a decade, performing superhuman feats of vinyl acrobatics with his quick-fingered skills and audio ingenuity. He was even recently honored with the title of "Grand Master" by scene forefathers Kool Herc, Grand Wizard Theodore and DST. Since the turntablist scene swelled to widespread success in the late '90s, many of Raida's peers—Kid Koala, Mix Master Mike, Rob Swift—have released albums of original material that display their deck prowess,



but the turntablist mix CD remains an anomaly, thanks in part to difficulties licensing the wealth of obscure material often cut-and-pasted into live presentations. Raida's *Crossfaderz* (Moonshine), however, sidesteps the red tape to offer a jaw-dropping, 23-track mix of independent hip-hop grooves arranged in the innovator's distinct style. Presented as a broadcast from the fictional "WHAT-FM" pirate radio station, Raida and crew intersperse

humorous dialogue between spliced and diced versions of East Coast hip-hop gems by artists such as Showbiz & A.G. ("Drop It Heavy"), Common ("Bitch In Yoo"), The Beatnuts ("Find That") and the X-ecutioners themselves ("Raida's Theme," "One Man Band"). The funky beats and freestyle poetry of the incorporated cuts makes *Crossfaderz* easily accessible to fans of straight-up independent hip-hop, but it's Raida's aggressive turntable assault—lightning-quick scratches and beat-juggling (fading back and forth between out-of-synch copies of the same record)—that gives the set its unique flavor and real underground cred. Eat your heart out Funk Flex... After spending 1999 presenting themselves as individual artists through several solo CD mixes and original 12-inch productions, Britain's **Sasha And Digweed** team up once again for

Communicate (Kinetic), the pair's fourth team effort for the US bins. While the duo is known for the sweeping melodies of its symphonic DJ sets, this double-disc effort forgoes tender refrains and angelic vocals in favor of gritty progressive house and dark tech-trance club tracks, while maintaining the pair's signature wash of ambient atmospherics and cosmic chaos. Spankin' new stormers from Trancesetters ("Roaches"), Breeder ("Tyrannic"), P.F.N. ("Put Your Headphones On") and Digweed's own Bedrock ("Voices" appears in two highly distinguishable versions) fall into the deep and dense mixes—the first follows the throbbing pulse of progressive house while the second focuses on the faster, more aggressive grooves of techno and trance. Overall, *Communicate* may not be as bedroom-friendly as S&D's previous releases, but the effort does an excellent job of showcasing the thunderous sonic demeanor that distinguishes the pair from other English exports... Britain's **Mr. C** is best remembered on these shores as a member of long-defunct dance outfit the Shamen. On his home turf however, the artist has put the past behind him and been reborn as a respected club owner/promoter (of London's The End) and one of the world's premier tech-house/techno DJs, often performing side-by-side with superstar talents such as Carl Cox, Deep Dish and Laurent Garnier. *Subterrain 100% Unreleased* (Will-Engine) celebrates The End's "Subterrain" club night with a 16-track mix of exclusive and previously unreleased tracks by artists who have performed at the venue in its time: Dave Angel ("Sky"), Derrick Carter's Tone Theory ("My Tiger Is Ravenous") and club partners Layo & Bushwacka! ("Kipping"). Moving from moody lows to hair-pulling peaks throughout its expertly crafted course, *Subterrain* proves that Mr. C can still move any mountain, regardless of whether he's performing his magic behind the decks or in the studio, as demonstrated on "Elecroniche," his self-produced breakbeat-riddled standout from the set. >>>M. Tye Corner



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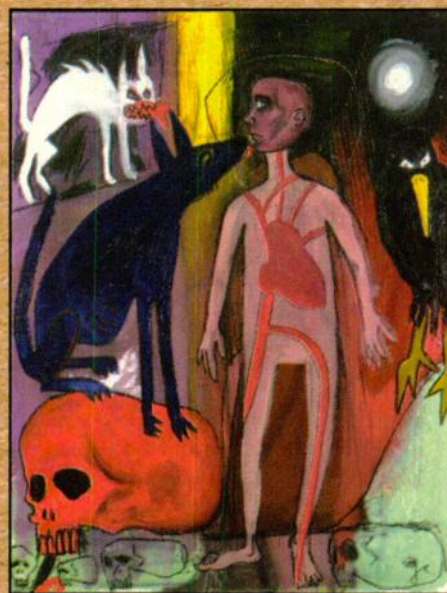
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 ELVIN BISHOP AND LITTLE SMOKEY SMOTHERS That's My Partner! *Alligator*.
 DANIEL CAGE Loud On Earth *MCA*.
 TORREY CARTER The Life I Live *Elektra*.
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 —New funk-rock band from Public Enemy leader Chuck D.
 GENE DEFCON Come Party With Me 2000 *K*.
 EVE 6 Horrorscope *RCA*.
 FINGER ELEVEN The Greyest Of Blue Skies *Wind-up*.
 TRILOK GURTU African Fantasy *Blue Thumb*.
 HEPCAT Push 'N' Shove *Helicat*.
 IN FLAMES Clayman *Nuclear Blast*.
 LL COOL J G.O.A.T. *Island-Def Jam*.
 LOOTPACK Weeded Remix/Loopdiggas *Stones Throw-Nu Gruv*.
 JAMES MICHAEL Inhale *Beyond*.
 (MINUS) Minus *Liquid-Industry*.
 MYKILL MYERS/DR.OOP Bring It On/Run This Twist Of Lime *Ground Control-Nu Gruv*.
 —12-inch.
 THE NO-NO'S Tinnitus *Animal World*.
 PISTOL WHIPPED Too Much Excitement *Beluga*.
 RACHEL Z TRIO On The Milkyway Express: A Tribute To Wayne Shorter *Tone Center*.
 SINERGY To Hell And Back *Nuclear Blast*.
 SOUNDTRACK Steal This Movie *E2-Artemis*.
 —Songs from the Abbie Hoffman biopic, with 12 tracks of protest rock by Ani DiFranco, Country Joe & The Fish and Edwin Starr, who is more man than you'll ever be.
 JIMMIE SPHEERIS Ports Of The Heart; The Dragon Is Dancing *Rain*.
 JIMI TENOR Out Of Nowhere *Matador-Warp*.
 DAVE THOMPSON Little Dave And Big Love *Fat Possum*.
 —Reissue.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS B96 Mixmaster Throwdown Vol. 5 *Mix Connection*.
 —DJ mixes from Julian "Jumpin" Perez, Tim "Spinnin" Schommer and more. Don't spoil your appetite though—the DJ set from Nicole "Puddin'" Keiper drops in October and it's da bomb diggity.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Chic-A-Go-Go: The Soundtrack CD *Beluga*.
 —Soundtrack from the Chicago public access show, with performances and interviews with artists from Motörhead to Pansy Division.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS First Impressions: A Mix Of Classic Drum & Bass To Chill Out To *Topaz Records*.
 —Mixed by DJ Carol C.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Hip Hop Party *K-tel*.
 —Two words, baby: "Rico Suave."
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Lookout! Freakout! Lookout! —Compilation featuring artists from the Lookout! and Panic Button labels.
 CAETANO VELOSO Prenda Minha *Blue Thumb*.
 —CD and DVD.
 THE WEAKERTHANS Left And Leaving *Sub City*.

AUGUST 1

JAI AGNISH Automata *Blue Bunny*.
 BARNYARD PLAYBOYS Dumbass On A Rampage *Rubric*.
 BILL & BONNIE HEARNE Back Porch.
 BORN BLIND One For All *Solid State*.
 BRIGHT Full Negative Or Breaks *Ba Da Bing!*
 THE DANDY WARHOLS Thirteen Tales From Urban Bohemia *Capitol*.
 DA LATA The Tin Within *Palm*.
 MILES DAVIS On The Corner; Get Up With It; Big Fun *Columbia Legacy*.
 —Reissues.
 GIPSY KINGS Nonesuch.
 GREAT PLAINS Length of Growth 1981-1989 *Old 3C-Nu Gruv*.
 BILL & BONNIE HEARNE Watching Life Through A Windshield *Back Porch*.
 KING BISCUIT TIME No Style *Astrawerks*.
 —EP from Beta Band lead singer Steve Mason.
 SY KLOPPS Berkeley Soul *Bullseye Blues & Jazz*.

MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA Birds Of Fire *Columbia Legacy*.
 —Remastered.
 JOE DEE MESSINA Burn Curb.
 MIKE E Master Plan *Capitol*.
 MOCK ORANGE The Record Play *Lobster*.
 JACO PASTORIOUS Epic-Legacy.
 —Remastered with bonus tracks.
 OMINOUS SEAPODS The Super Man Curse *Palm*.
 ONE WAY RIDE Straight Up *MCA*.
 YUJI ONIKI Orange *Future Farmer*.
 POP DA BROWN HORNET The Underground Emperor *MCA*.
 RANCID Helicat.
 REFLECTION ETERNAL Human Element/Inscience *Realized-Ground Control-Nu Gruv*.
 —12-inch.
 RELATIVE ASH Island.
 SCIENCE IN THE SHAPE OF BIRDS *ToYo-Nu Gruv*.
 —CD-EP.
 GREG STREET Atlantic.
 TELEK Serious Tam *Real World*.
 UBERZONE Astrawerks.

AUGUST 8

AC The Early Years *Ng*.
 AMERICAN NIGHTMARE Bridge Nine.
 —CD-EP and 7-inch.
 LOUIS ARMSTRONG The Complete Hot Five & Hot Seven Recordings *Columbia Legacy*.
 —Remastered four-CD set with bonus tracks.
 AZTEC TRIP Average Day *Iguana Records*.
 BIKERIDE Raspet EP *Hidden Agenda*.
 THE BOBBYTEENS Not So Sweet *Estrus*.
 BRIDE OF NO NO B.O.N.N. Appetit *Atavistic*.
 PAUL BURCH & THE WPA BALLCLUB Blue Notes *Merge*.
 ROBERT LEE CASTLEMAN Like Red On A Rose *Rounder*.
 CALIBRETTO 13 Enter The Danger Brigade *Tooth And Nail*.
 CAM'RON S.D.E. *Epic*.
 ERIC CLAPTON August; Behind The Sun; Money And Cigarettes *Warner Bros*.
 —Reissues.
 CLAYTON BROS. Siblingity *Qwest-Warner Bros*.
 COACH Package Deal *Doghouse*.
 —CD-EP and 10-inch.
 COLOR ME BADD The Best Of Color Me Badd *Giant*.
 —Aww yeah, girl.
 DE LA SOUL Art Official Intelligence (Mosaic Thump) *Tommy Boy*.
 DOLEFUL LIONS Song Cyclops Volume One *Parasol*.
 LEE FELDMAN The Man In The Jupiter Hat *Bonafide*.
 GEORGE DUKE *Warner Bros*.
 GLUECIFER Tender Is The Savage *Sub Pop*.
 ICE-T Greatest Hits: The Evidence *Coroner-Atomic Pop*.
 —A career retrospective from the man who brought you timeless chestnuts like "Girls Let's Get Butti Naked And Fuck."
 ISOTOPE 217 Who Stole The I Walkman? *Thrill Jockey*.
 THE IVORY COAST The Rush of Oncoming Traffic *Big Wheel Recreation*.
 JIMMY EAT WORLD Singles *Big Wheel Recreation*.
 —Collection of rare 7-inch and compilation tracks.
 BEAU JOQUE & THE ZYDECO HI-ROLLERS Give Him Cornbread: Live *Rounder*.
 LAZYCAINANO KNIFE *Big Wheel Recreation*.
 —Split 7-inch.
 MAJOR FIGGAS Figgas 4 Life *Ruffnation*.
 BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS Climb The Ladder *Heartbeat*.
 —Collection featuring rare tracks like "Lemon Tree" and the previously out-of-print "The Jerk."
 MEFISTO ODYSSEY The Deep Red Connection *Warner Bros*.
 CARRIE NEWCOMER The Age of Possibility *Philo*.
 RIVER CITY HIGH Forgets Their Manners *Big Wheel Recreation-Doghouse*.
 —CD-EP and 10-inch.
 THE SEWERGROOVES Seventh Floor *Estrus*.
 —7-inch.
 SHAGGY Hot Shot *MCA*.
 SHALINI We Want Jelly Donuts *Parasol*.
 SHARK QUEST Man On Stilts *Merge*.
 SHELLAC 1000 Hours *Touch & Go*.
 —Third LP from production master Steve Albini's band.
 SILKWORM Lifestyle *Touch & Go*.
 SINCLAIRE Sonic Urryn.
 —CD-EP.
 SOULDECISION *MCA*.

SPOOZYS Astral Astronauts *Jetset*.
 KEITH SWEAT *Elektra*.
 SWITCH TROUT Cuttlefish Boogie *Estrus*.
 —7-inch.
 IRMA THOMAS My Heart's In Memphis: The Songs Of Dan Penn *Rounder*.
 TOE Variant *Atavistic/Truckstop*.
 VANDERMARK 5 Burn The Incline *Atavistic*.
 VAN HALEN 1984; Diver Down; Fair Warning; Van Halen; Van Halen II; Women and Children First *Warner Bros*.
 —Six reissues to create the perfect soundtrack to a geezer wank party.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Encapsulated *Doghouse*.
 —Tribute to Metroschifter featuring tracks from The Get Up Kids, Promise Ring, Ink And Dagger, Elliot, Joan of Arc, The Shipping News and others.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Estrus 100% Apehit Rock Sampler CD *Estrus*.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Fortune Cookies *Fortune*.
 —16 tracks o' San Francisco goodness, including Jon Vanderslice's soon-to-be hit "Bill Gates Must Die."
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Just Another Taste Of Electronic *Watusi Boogaloo Electronic Watusi Boogaloo-Kindercore*.
 —This sampler features artists scheduled to release full-lengths on Sweden's Electronic Watusi Boogaloo, recently discovered and distributed by Kindercore.
 VIRGINWOOL Open Heart Surgery *Breaking-Atlantic*.
 VITESSE Chelsea 27099 *Hidden Agenda*.

AUGUST 15

ANALOGUE Rock Proper *Rubric*.
 BT Dreaming *Network*.
 —CD single.
 COUCH Fantasy *Matador*.
 CUBA LA Dos *Narada World*.
 DELIRIUM Silence *Network*.
 —12-inch and CD single.
 DJ HURRICANE Don't Sleep *TVT*.
 —The second solo effort from the former Beastie Boys DJ, with guest spots from The Flipmode Squad, Adrock, Kool G Rap and Scott Weiland.
 EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT Devil In The Woods.
 GOAT Engine Group.
 WARREN HILL The Chapel Studio Sessions *Narada Jazz*.
 FANMAIL Fanmail 2000 *Tooth And Nail*.
 IQU AND FRIENDS Teenage Dream *K*.
 —12-inch and CD-EP.
 JETS TO BRAZIL Four Corners Night *Jade Tree*.
 FREDDY KING The Very Best Of Freddy King *Rhino*.
 LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS The Very Best Of Lightnin' Hopkins *Rhino*.
 LIQUID GANG Sunshine *Lava-Atlantic*.
 LUISA Caliente-Atlantic.
 TAJ MAHAL Anthology *Columbia Legacy*.
 TAJ MAHAL Taj Mahal; The Natch'l Blues; The Real Thing *Columbia Legacy*.
 —Expanded reissues.
 DEBELAH MORGAN Dance With Me *Atlantic*.
 MUDWAYNE *Epic*.
 JIMMY NATIONS COMBO Tarheel Boogie *Rubric*.
 O.P.M. *Atlantic*.
 MATTHEW RYAN East Autumn Grin *A&M*.
 —Ryan's second album, with guest appearances by Josh Rouse, Soul Asylum's Dave Piner and former Concrete Blonde frontwoman Johnette Napolitano.
 GARNETT SILK *Atlantic*.
 SPACCANAPOLI Lost Souls *Real World*.
 SQUAD FIVE-0 Bombs Over Broadway *Tooth And Nail*.
 THE START 143-Atlantic.
 JIMMY STURR Touched By A Polka *Rounder*.
 —I was touched by a polka once. I don't want to talk about it.
 SUNNA One Minute Science *Melankolic-Astrawerks*.
 BALFA TOUJOURS Live At Whiskey River Landing *Rounder*.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Alan Lomax Collection: Italian Treasury *Rounder*.
 —Field recordings documenting the traditional music of Sicily in the 1950's.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Viva Flamenco *Narada World*.
 —Spice up your life with the flamenco stylings of Paco De Lucia, De Madera, Rafael Riqueni and more.
 ROB WASSERMAN Space Island *Atlantic*.

AUGUST 22

AMERICAN PEARL Wind-up.
 ...AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF DEAD *Merge*.

—CD-EP.
 BOILER ROOM Can't Breathe *Roadrunner*.
 BUJU BANTON Unchained Spirit *Anti*.
 CLEOPATRA Steppin' Up *Maverick*.
 GRAHAM COXON The Golden D *Transcopic-Astrawerks*.
 —The second solo album from Blur's guitarist.
 CUBANISMO Mardi Gras Mambo *Hannibal*.
 DATATCHI We Are Always Well Thank You *Caipirinha*.
 DYNAMIC SYNCOPATION Dedicated *Ninja Tune*.
 —12-inch.
 FOIL Never Got Hip *Mute*.
 FOURPLAY *Warner Bros*.
 THE GO NUTS Dunk And Cover *Lookout!*
 HEXSTATIC Rewind *Ninja Tune*.
 INNERCORSE *Maverick*.
 JAHEIM *Warner Bros*.
 ANDREAS JOHNSON Lieblich *Reprise*.
 JESS KLEIN Draw Them Near *Slow River*.
 CHRIS KNOX Beat *Thirsty Ear*.
 PAUL KRASSNER Campaign In The Ass *Artemis*.
 MIKE LEVY 4-track Mind *Parasol-Bus Stop*.
 LOLITA STORM Girls Fucking Shit Up *Digital Hardcore*.
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 MARIO PUI My Love (Techno Harmony) *Tommy Boy Silver Label*.
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 TQ The Second Coming *Epic*.
 UNION 13 Youth Betrayal And The Awakening *Epitaph*.
 GEORGE USHER Days of Plenty *Parasol*.
 VOOODOO GLOW SKULLS Symbolic *Epitaph*.
 DAR WILLIAMS The Green World *Razor and Tie*.
 XX Give It Up *Tommy Boy Silver Label*.
 —12-inch and CD single.

AUGUST 25

BLOOD OF ABRAHAM Eyedollartree *Atomic Pop*.
 DANIEL CAGE Loud On Earth *MCA*.
 SUAVE DRE Playuz Digest Vol 1-11 *MCA*.

AUGUST 28

A GUY CALLED GERALD Essence *Studio K7*.
 TRISTAN PSIONIC Mind The Gap *Sonic Union*.

AUGUST 29

DAVID ARKENSTONE Caravan Of Light *Narada*.
 LILA DOWNS Tree Of Life *Narada World*.
 DULCES PONTES *MCA*.
 WARREN HILL Love Life *Narada Jazz*.
 FLACO JIMENEZ Sleepytown *Back Porch*.
 JOHN WESLEY HARDING The Confessions Of St. Ace *Mammoth*.
 JULIANA THEORY Emotion Is Dead *Tooth And Nail*.
 LOVERBOY Live, Loud & Loose *Columbia Legacy*.
 —Four years of live Loverboy crammed onto one CD. Who could ask for anything more?
 OSCAR LOPEZ Armando's Fire *Narada World*.
 JOHN MCCUSKER Yella Hoose *Temple*.
 WILLIE NELSON Milk Cow Blues *Island*.
 THE PIERCES 550.
 PUSHDOWN *MCA*.
 SPACCANAPOLI Lost Souls *RealWorld*.
 THIRD ROOT A Sign Of Things To Come *Solid State*.
 TRAY *Liquid-Industry*.
 TWILIGHT SINGERS Twilight As Played By The Twilight Singers *Columbia*.
 —Side project of Afghan Whigs frontman Greg Dulli.
 UP, BUSTLE & OUT Los Locos Cubanos *Ninja Tune*.
 —12-inch.
 DJ VADIM Your Revolution/The Standard Bearers *Ninja Tune*.
 —12-inch and CD single.
 VARIOUS ARTISTS Unitone Sampler 1 Nine Sounds *Nice Noise Unitone*.
 —An overview of the new label from Madonna collaborator Patrick Leonard, showcasing classical, jazz and world music from artists like David Darling, Lisa Edwards and Leonard himself.
 WISDOM OF HARRY House Of Binary *Matador*.

IDM-inent

Intelligent dance music, Southern-style

STORY: TONY WARE

Southerners are regularly made out to be downright dumb (a byproduct of inbreeding, so they say). Perhaps ironically, three Southern cities—New Orleans, Atlanta and Miami—have become a hotbed for a subgenre known as intelligent dance music, or IDM.

If you can get past the initial impressions of gap-toothed, slobbering idiots twisting knobs and clapping in excitement as computers "squeal like a pig," you'll find that IDM—characterized by sonic collisions, fractured rhythms, manufactured sounds and occasional abrupt time changes—is aimed at the brain rather than the booty, and it flows from the South like bass-syrup in the back of a tricked-out Impala.

Originally not even a genre, just a loose category of "intelligent techno" artists (so named for Warp Records' defining *Artificial Intelligence* collections), IDM was first coined in '93 as the name of a mailing list to discuss Aphex Twin. The moniker grew to include any artist creating music combining the latest computer-based digital signal processing technology with techno's original tools—the 303 bassline synthesizer, 909 drum machine and analog synths—resulting in a mix of electronic textures and prog rock's indulgent twists and turns.

These days, IDM morphs hip-hop, funk, avant-garde jazz and drum 'n' bass into a form that, like classical music, requires time and attention to appreciate. Its visceral effects subvert house or trance music's four-on-the-floor rush of joy; perhaps the real intelligence of IDM lies with listeners who can follow its artists' esthetic bobbing and weaving.

Because IDM is a cross-pollination of often divergent electronic genres, it's appropriate that the new crop of incestuous IDM composers has roots in the fertile musical soil of the "inbred" South. New Orleans's Nicole Elmer (a.k.a. Neutral, Squab Teen and Searchwoundinfinitus) works within the Chromosome 57 collective, which also includes Telefon Tel Aviv, who is signed to Chicago's Hefty Records, which is also home to Atlanta's Scott Herren, a.k.a. Savath + Savalas. But wait, it gets more complex: Elmer, who likes playing instruments as opposed to

processing machines, gained inspiration from Herren's use of organic recordings as well as the technical prowess of Herren's occasional partner, Atlanta's Richard Devine. Devine is also one fourth of Miami's Schematic label with Josh Kay and Romulo Del Castillo, a.k.a. Soul Oddity and Phoenecia, friends and occasional labelmates with Edgar Farinas, a.k.a. Push Button Objects. Devine, like many others, really got into IDM after hearing Aphex Twin, and the influence came full circle when Devine remixed Aphex's "Come To Daddy" for Warp. This, in turn, also helped secure good relations for Schematic with Warp, giving the UK a taste of Southern grit.

As Southern artists develop their unique approaches, the real question being batted around in electronic circles is not "Who's your daddy?" but "What's this music called?" San Francisco's Matmos is just one of several acts who say "intelligent dance music" could be considered a derogatory term meant to boost the egos of IDM fans looking for collectable album-oriented material to stand the test of time.

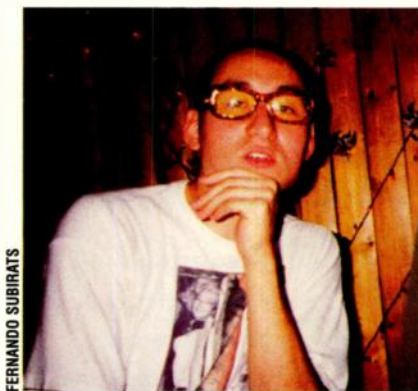
Sure, IDM is about mastering machines, not being a slave to the beat, but the term's connotations threaten to hold back those Southern artists who feel they should be open to simply making music they like. Is IDM a swipe at atmospheric, album-oriented artists, or an insult hurled at ravers by cooler-than-thou IDM collectors? Does IDM forego too much of the black/white/gay/straight warm openness of original Detroit and Chicago electronic music for a strictly cold, white European esthetic? Edgar Farinas of Push Button Objects doesn't like to be lumped in: "There is no such thing as IDM, but if people need a European dish to chew, let the feast commence. Me, I stick to what I'm feeling."

The humid climate of the South fosters a form of IDM that combines the bounce with the blips. Fairly removed from Cologne minimalism, Southern IDM prefers sitting on the front porch tapping a foot over the slow tocking of a solitary drum machine—besides, wearing all black couldn't last long in this heat.



Orlando, Florida's Edgar Farinas, or **PUSH BUTTON OBJECTS**, began working in Miami's music scene as a hip-hop/Latin freestyle DJ in the early '90s. But it wasn't until '97 that he started putting out records under the Push Button name. While a lot of experimental electronic music flows in lifeless fits, PBO tracks pull together influences suggest-

ing boom-blip electro nursery rhymes as well as ambient electronica with much less rhyme and reason. Tracks on his compilation, *Dirty Dozen* (Chocolate Industries), are meant more for headz than geeks with headphones. Farinas is pursuing collaborations with DMC World Champion DJ Craze as Ko-Wreck Technique, as well as putting out material under the name TPM on the Beta Bodega label. Farinas also has plans to release a full-length, *Ghetto Blaster*, and a collaboration with Del and Mr. Lif of Company Flow.



RICHARD COLEMAN DEVINE, 23, Atlanta, Georgia's master of digital signal processing wizardry, began learning classical piano at an early age, but was soon drawn to goth/industrial music. After hearing an Aphex Twin remix of Meat Beat Manifesto, he started purchasing equipment, eventually developing his own modular

synths and other instruments—preferring, he says, to be limited by his own mind rather than his gear. Devine's approach to music is not just the creation of sound, but of the environment in which the sound is made. At times that's as cold as marble floors in an empty mansion, though the occasional warm sine wave blows through. Devine acts as A&R for Schematic, and also collaborates with Atlanta's Scott Herren; both Devine and Herren will be releasing material on Schematic and Warp within the year.

Like Devine, **NICOLE ELMER**, 26, started playing classical piano at age nine, which helps explain why her debut full-length under the Neutral moniker, *Font Translation Errors* (Mad Monkey), has the symphonic sweep of a cold wind. But in between the skittering beats and strings are the dark baritone guitar of New Order and Naughty By Nature breakbeats bouncing around like ping-pong balls. Elmer's goal, outside of resisting the IDM label, is to find a way to aurally explore what art and spirituality evokes in her without being held down by stereotypes. "Unique' is a delicate word," she says. "Business execs try to sit on it all the time. They end up breaking it, with the weight of their cell phones...then they try to convince unsuspecting people that their lives are better for it when they pay hefty prices for those pieces of broken glass."

12 ESSENTIAL SOUTHERN IDM RECORDINGS

Neutral *Font Translation Errors*
(Mad Monkey)

Squab Teen *Dance America*
(Chromosome 57, available at
www.chromosome57.com)

Push Button Objects *Dirty Dozen*
(Chocolate Industries)

Various Artists *Ischemic Folks*
(Schematic) Includes Richard
Devine; Phoenecia and side-
project Metic; and Push Button
Objects

Various Artists *Lily Of The Valley*
(Schematic) Includes Devine;
Phoenecia; Herren alias
Delarosa + Asora; and
Phoenecia side-projects Takeshi
Muto and Jeswa

Various Artists *Slicker Remixes*
(Hefty) Includes Devine;
Delarosa + Asora; Savath +
Savalas; and a
Delarosa/Devine collaboration

Various Artists *Warp 10+3 Remixes*
(Warp) Includes remixes by
Devine and Push Button
Objects.

Various Artists *Beta Bodega*
Coalition: Psychological
Operations In Guerilla Warfare
(Rice & Beans)

Savath + Savalas *Folk Songs For*
Trains, Trees And Honey (Hefty)
An alias of Scott Herren.

Stewart Walker *Stabiles* (EFA)

Prefuse73 *Estrocaro E.P.*
(forthcoming from Warp)

Phoenecia *Brownout* (forthcoming
from Schematic)

1	SONIC YOUTH	NYC Ghosts & Flowers	Geffen-Interscope
2	PRIMAL SCREAM	XTRMNR	Creation-Astralwerks
3	SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE	The Rising Tide	Time Bomb
4	SLEATER-KINNEY	All Hands On The Bad One	Kill Rock Stars
5	BELLE & SEBASTIAN	Fold Your Hands Child	Jeepster-Matador
6	BILLY BRAGG & WILCO	Mermaid Avenue Vol. II	Elektra
7	GRANDDADDY	The Sophtware Slump	V2
8	BEDHEAD/MACHA	Bedhead Loved Macha	Jetset
9	STEREOLAB	The First Of The Microbe Hunters	Elektra
10	XTC	Wasp Star (Apple Venus Volume 2)	TVT
11	BAO RELIGION	The New America	Atlantic
12	A PERFECT CIRCLE	Mer De Noms	Virgin
13	ELLIOTT SMITH	Figure 8	DreamWorks
14	BLONDE REDHEAD	Melody Of Certain Damaged Lemons	Touch And Go
15	ARAB STRAP	Elephant Shoe	Jetset
16	JULIANA HATFIELD/JULIANA'S PONY	Beautiful Creature/...	Zoe-Rounder
17	CATHERINE WHEEL	Wishville	Columbia
18	MXPX	The Ever Passing Moment	A&M-Interscope
19	DELGADOS	The Great Eastern	Beggars Banquet
20	LOOPER	The Geometrid	Sub Pop
21	CALEXICO	Hot Rail	Touch And Go
22	BUILT TO SPILL	Live	Warner Bros.
23	APPLES IN STEREO	The Discovery Of A World Inside	spinART
24	JAYHAWKS	Smile	American-Columbia
25	BROADCAST	The Noise Made By People	Warp-Tommy Boy
26	VERUCA SALT	Resolver	Beyond
27	QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE	Rated R	Interscope
28	AISSLERS SET	The Last Match	Slumberland
29	MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES	Pay Attention	Island
30	NOFX	Pump Up The Valuum	Epitaph
31	WEEN	White Pepper	Elektra
32	AMAZING CROWNS	Royal	Time Bomb
33	BOY SETS FIRE	After The Eulogy	Victory
34	STEVE EARLE	Transcendental Blues	E-Squared-Artemis
35	MODEST MOUSE	The Moon & Antarctica	Epic
36	JEFF BUCKLEY	Mystery White Boy	Columbia
37	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Songs In The Key Of Z	Which?
38	AIMEE MANN	Bachelor No. 2	SuperEgo
39	NEIL YOUNG	Silver + Gold	Reprise
40	BANGS	Sweet Revenge	Kill Rock Stars
41	BRIGHT EYES	Fever And Mirrors	Saddle Creek
42	TAHITI 80	Puzzle	Minty Fresh
43	CHICAGO UNDERGROUND DUO	Synesthesia	Thrill Jockey
44	BT	Movement In Still Life	Netwerk
45	PROMISE RING	Electric Pink (EP)	Jade Tree
46	IAN BROWN	Golden Greats	Interscope
47	DUSTY TRAILS	Dusty Trails	Atlantic
48	MARC RIBOT Y LOS CUBANOS POSTIZOS	¡Muy Divertido! (Very Entertaining!)	Atlantic
49	SAINT ETIENNE	Sound Of Water	Sub Pop
50	MASTERS OF THE HEMISPHERE	I Am Not A Freemdom	Kindercore
51	DJ KRUSH	Code4109	Red Ink
52	DILATED PEOPLES	The Platform	Capitol
53	AMON TOBIN	Supermodified	Ninja Tune
54	NASHVILLE PUSSY	High As Hell	TVT
55	ALL	Problematic	Epitaph
56	DIANOGAH	Battle Champions	Southern
57	MARVIN PONTIAC	Greatest Hits	Strange & Beautiful
58	JURASSIC-5	Quality Control	Interscope
59	ELWOOD	Parlance Of Our Time	Palm Pictures
60	MURDER CITY DEVILS	In Name And Blood	Sub Pop
61	REGGIE AND THE FULL EFFECT	Promotional Copy	H&V-Vagrant
62	CLEM SNIDE	Your Favorite Music	Sire
63	DYNAMITE HACK	Superfast	Universal
64	DANDY WARHOLS	Tales From Slabtown (EP)	Capitol
65	KNIFE IN THE WATER	Red River	Overcoat
66	MENDOZA LINE	We're All In This Alone	Misra-Bar/None
67	SUPERGRASS	Supergrass	Island
68	DEFTONES	Change (In A House Of Flies)	Maverick
69	PHISH	Farmhouse	Elektra
70	DEATHRAY	Deathray	Capricorn
71	ULTIMATE FAKEBOOK	This Will Be Laughing Week	550-Epic
72	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Take Me Home: Tribute...John Denver	Badman
73	RICHARD DAVIES	Barbarians	Kindercore
74	DJ FOOD	Kaleidoscope	Ninja Tune
75	MEDESKI MARTIN AND WOOD	Tonic	Blue Note


#1
SONIC YOUTH
 NYC Ghosts & Flowers
 Geffen-Interscope

FIVE YEARS AGO

1. PRIMUS

TALES FROM THE PUNCHBOWL (INTERSCOPE)

2. YO LA TENGO

ELECTR PURA (MATADOR)

3. PAVEMENT

WOWEE ZOWEE (MATADOR)

4. MUFFS

BLONDER AND BLONDER (REPAIR)

5. CHRIS KNOX

SONGS OF YOU & ME (CAROLINE)

TEN YEARS AGO

1. THE SUNDAYS

READING, WRITING AND ARITHMETIC (DGC)

2. ADRIAN BELEW

YOUNG LIONS (ATLANTIC)

3. LOU REED/ JOHN CALE

SONGS FOR DRELLA (SIRE-WARNER BROS.)

4. DEPECHE MODE

VIOLATOR (SIRE-REMYSE)

5. WORLD PARTY

GOODBYE JUMBO (ENSIGN-CHRYSALIS)

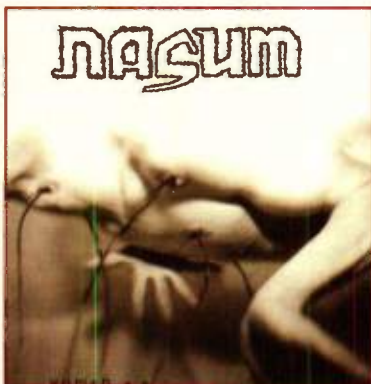


Chart data culled from CMJ New Music Report's week 1 Top 200 radio chart, based on combined airplay of approximately 500 college, non-commercial and commercial radio stations reporting their top 30 most played releases that week. Smoove P would like to dedicate Issue no. 85 to all the ladies.

TOP 25

- 1 IRON MAIDEN
Brave New World PORTRAIT-COLUMBIA
- 2 CEPHALIC CARNAGE
Exploiting Dysfunction RELAPSE
- 3 SHADOWS FALL
Of One Blood CENTURY MEDIA
- 4 VARIOUS ARTISTS
Nativity In Black II DIVINE-PRIORITY
- 5 MOTORHEAD
We Are Motörhead CMC INTERNATIONAL
- 6 BOY SETS FIRE
After The Eulogy VICTORY
- 7 KATAKLYSM
The Prophecy NUCLEAR BLAST AMERICA
- 8 A PERFECT CIRCLE
Mer De Noms VIRGIN
- 9 EARTH CRISIS
Slither VICTORY
- 10 RORSCHACH TEST
Peace Minus One E-MAGINE
- 11 GLASSJAW
Everything You Ever Wanted... ROADRUNNER
- 12 VADER
Litany METAL BLADE
- 13 ULTRASPANK
Progress EPIC
- 14 ALICE COOPER
Brutal Planet SPITFIRE
- 15 DESTRUCTION
All Hell Breaks Loose NUCLEAR BLAST AMERICA
- 16 INCANTATION
The Infernal Storm RELAPSE
- 17 PANTERA
Reinventing The Steel EASTWEST-ELEKTRA
- 18 E-TOWN CONCRETE
The Second Coming TRIPLE CROWN
- 19 IMMORTAL
Damned In Black OSMOSE
- 20 PROJECT 86
Drawing Black Lines BEC-TOOTH & NAIL/ATLANTIC
- 21 THE CROWN
Deathrace King METAL BLADE
- 22 VENOM
Resurrection STEAMHAMMER-SPV
- 23 DISTURBED
The Sickness/Summer Of...(EP) GIANT-REPRISE
- 24 MAYHEM
Grand Declaration Of War NECROPOLIS
- 25 BORKNAGAR
Quintessence CENTURY MEDIA

>>> If every extreme band this year was mimicking



PICK!

good dose of high-speed destruction is to close your eyes, put your head down, and dive bravely like Nasum does, toward something confusing and undetermined.

>>>My arms will likely be too tired to lift the "Welcome Home" banner by the time **Venom** rolls into town with *Resurrection* (Steamhammer-SPV). This is a band that torched its legendary first phase with a spate of no less than a dozen dodgy live releases, then proceeded to torture fans with 15 years of solo projects and further

Mayhem's pontificating *Grand Declaration Of War*, metal would be as much of a high-altitude headless corpse as free jazz. In between uplifting masterful designs, *War's* steady blasts forward are equally crucial, which is exactly where **Nasum's** *Human 2.0* (Relapse) fits into the manual on how to blow away everything on the planet. The Swedish grindcore trio's soiled, corrugated assault is a furious blur swiped from Napalm Death, Negative Approach, the punk half of Deicide and ultra-fast Japanese hardcore. The new Nasum (pronounced "gnaws 'em") delivers dedicated obliteration, utterly disordered to a perfect degree, and of way-above-average musicality. In a way, the splintery guitars of more metallic bands like Angel Corpse and Marduk hold too tightly to their structure.

Often what's needed for a



blasphemies against the franchise. Now if they expect a festive reception, the reunited Cronos and Abadon (and third-party guitarist) should offer more on this day of reckoning than groaning Satanic insults over a plowing bass groove. This is **Venom**, for the love of goat, and if they can never retrieve the tuneless cacophony of *Welcome To Hell*, *Black Metal* and *At War With Satan*, then they bloody well better have the London Symphony playing with them on the Moon before they show their faces around here again... **Destruction**, the German trio whose tight, shifty guitars would have defined speed metal if not for their American counterparts, Metallica, return after a 10-year recording hiatus with *All Hell Breaks Loose*, on Nuclear Blast (titled after a Venom song, wouldn't you know). Guitarist Mike and singer/bassist Schmier have perfected the crazed style introduced on 1985's *Infernal Overkill* and '86's *Eternal Devastation*. Those albums were enormously influential, especially on Bay Area thrash bands like Exodus and Testament. A lot's happened since then, though.

Destruction's return is like a reunion with an old friend who can finally play all the way through *Tempest* on one quarter—especially the victory lap remake of "Total Disaster 2000." Impressive, but I'm sure it helps if you're drunk.

NEWS



Although the train station may be cluttered with returning metal acts that have already made their mark, it's a pleasure to note the reappearance of a fast-trotting face in the crowd: L.A.'s original metalcore great **Hirax**. With a couple of mid-'80s Metal Blade releases to its name, Hirax was a ragtag underdog who flirted with the fusion of D.R.I.'s hardcore and Slayer's thrash metal. Lead singer Katon W. DePena, probably the only Cryptic Slaughter fan to cite Sam Cooke as an influence, reports that he and original members Gary Monardo (bass), John Tabares (drums) and Scott Owen (guitar) will be rehearsing and recording this fall, with hopes of capturing a more secure slice of immortality. It worked for Necrophagia, after all. And to get the ball rolling, DePena is offering metal-riffic new Hirax shirts through his own Black Devil Records (www.blackdevilrecords.com).



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

>>>Parisian **DJ Cam** became a hero to the chilled-out**PICK!**

(Studio K7) for the first time in the States. London UK didn't want to release this when S&M first handed it over in '89, and the group wound up in music industry purgatory, unwilling to change their sound to suit London's fancy, but contractually unable to release the music elsewhere. *Bass* boasts a more raw sound than *Big*; the smooth ragga and drum 'n' bass hybrids of the latter are broken down to their raw roots on the former... Next time you feel reflective, or perhaps have nine hours where you just can't sleep and you're hearing colors, you might want to check some recent ambient releases. **Pete Namlook** (prolific Frankfurt ambient producer) and **Richie Hawtin** originally released the three albums in the *From Within* (M-



nus) series in Germany, throughout the '90s on Namlook's label, Fax. Hitting Stateside shelves as staggered, individual releases right about now, the records boast murky, atmospheric synth swells and more than enough techno pulses to pull your mind along to interesting places. On the same tip, tech-house all-star **The Timewriter**, recording as JFC, slows it down for *Chrome De Lux* (UCMG). With its jazz influences (plenty of strings and high hat) cushioning beats that promise to ricochet throughout your consciousness, it sounds rather trip-hoppy at times... **Gilles Peterson**, the Talkin' Loud label head and longtime acid jazz DJ, has just dropped *Incredible Sounds Of Gilles Peterson* (Talkin' Loud-Epic). It's a Body & Soul-ish mix of congos, soul, hip-hop and house, including

>>>For those turned on to **Smith & Mighty's** '99 release, *Big World, Small World*, the group has just released *Bass Is Maternal*



SMITH & MIGHTY

some rare remixes. You've heard some of these tracks before, but Peterson has such perfect selection and precise timing as a DJ that the parts sound better—new, even—as a sum. He'll be touring the States throughout the end of the summer, and his DJ sets are not to be missed.

NEWS

BT

From the mouth of **BT: Re'verb'**, an album of downtempo, world-infused electronic music he's made with Sasha for Peter Gabriel's RealWorld label, is tentatively scheduled for a fall release. The two originally planned to collaborate on a track, but instead produced an album's worth of material in a week... Speaking of Sasha, NYC's Twilo is launching a CD series and magazine. The free dance rag (innovatively titled *Magazine*) launched June 30th in Manhattan and plans to spread to other cities. **Junior Vasquez** helms the first mix, a collection of house tracks due this fall... Speaking of fall, **Underworld** releases *Everything, Everything* (JBO-V2), a live greatest hits CD and DVD, in September and will play a few US dates. Darren Emerson, of course, has left the group, but we have it on good authority that Karl Hyde will still

dance like a goofy white boy... Speaking of goofy white boys, the rumor mill says that **Beck** is being tapped for an upcoming DJ Kicks (Studio K7) release. Insert "two turntables and a microphone" joke here.

TOP 25

- 1 **LJ BUKE**
Journey Inwards GOOD LOOKING-KINETIC
- 2 **AMON TOBIN**
Supermodified NINJA TUNE
- 3 **PRIMAL SCREAM**
XTRMNR CREATION-ASTRALWERKS
- 4 **DJ FOOD**
Kaleidoscope NINJA TUNE
- 5 **KEOKI**
DJMixed.com MOONSHINE
- 6 **VNV NATION**
Empires METROPOLIS
- 7 **GUS GUS VS. T-WORLD**
Gus Gus Vs. T-World 4AD-BEGGARS BANQUET
- 8 **ADAM FREELAND**
Tectonics ULTRA
- 9 **WALDECK**
Balance Of The Force E-MAGINE
- 10 **BT**
Movement In Still Life NETTWERK
- 11 **GREEN VELVET**
Green Velvet F-111-WB
- 12 **DJ KRUSH**
Code4109 RED INK
- 13 **CLEANER**
Solaris METROPOLIS
- 14 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Resist The Command DYSTOPIAN
- 15 **DIN FIV**
Escape To Reality METROPOLIS
- 16 **PTAAH**
Compressed Light UBIQUITY
- 17 **MOBY**
Play/ "Porcelain" (12-inch) v2
- 18 **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
Deep Concentration 3 OM
- 19 **WUMPSCUT**
Bloodchild METROPOLIS
- 20 **NYNEX**
Zero Zero OFFWORLD
- 21 **FUTURE LOOP FOUNDATION**
PHunkRoc LIQUID-ALLEGRO
- 22 **SVEN VATH**
Contact ULTRA
- 23 **MODERNIST**
Explosion MATADOR
- 24 **SAVAK**
444 Days POSSESSIVE BLINFOLD
- 25 **SABOTAGE**
Concrete INCEPTION



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

TOP 25

- 1 JURASSIC-5
"Quality Control" INTERSCOPE
- 2 COMMON
"The Light" MCA
- 3 DILATED PEOPLES
"The Platform" CAPITOL
- 4 EMINEM
"The Real Slim Shady" AFTERMATH-INTERSCOPE
- 5 BUSTA RHYMES
"Get Out" ELEKTRA
- 6 MR. LEN FEAT. MR. LIVE
"What The Fuck?" MATADOR
- 7 CYPRESS HILL
"Superstar" COLUMBIA
- 8 FATLIP
"What's Up Fatlip" DELICIOUS VINYL
- 9 CHOCLAIR
"Rubbin'" PRIORITY
- 10 RAH DIGGA
"Break Fool" ELEKTRA
- 11 DE LA SOUL FEAT. REDMAN
"OOOH!" TOMMY BOY
- 12 BLACKALICIOUS
"Deception" QUANNUM PROJECT
- 13 NATURE FEAT. NAS
"Ultimate High" COLUMBIA
- 14 SONIC SUM
Presents The Sanity Annex OZONE-NU GRUV ALLIANCE
- 15 JAY-Z FEAT. UGK
"Big Pimpin'" ROC-A-FELLA-DEF JAM
- 16 BIG L
"Flamboyant" RAWKUS
- 17 NECRO
"The Most Sadistic" PSYCHO-LOGICAL-LANDSPEED
- 18 MIXMASTER MIKE
Eye Of The Cyclops (EP) ASPHODEL
- 19 MUDDKIDS
"Echo System" SURF
- 20 ILLACON FEAT. BLACK ROB & LABBA
"By A Stranger" GAME
- 21 RASCALZ
"Can't Relate" FIGURE IV
- 22 ENCORE
"Sporadic" 75 ARK
- 23 BAHAMADIA FEAT. PLANET ASIA, RASCO...
"Special Forces" GOODVIBE-ATOMIC POP
- 24 STRANGE SANITY
Bronx Breadrens E.P. MARCION-LANDSPEED
- 25 CASSIDY & JUICE
"Fuckin' Wit My Team" B-SIDE



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

>>> It's been just about three years since Illadelph's



PICK!

by the day, and **The Allies** (Craze, A-Trak, Develop, J-Smoke, Infamous and Spictacular) are now officially on the docket, with their very impressive *D-Day* (Asphodel). You'd never know this crew was spread from Miami to Montreal by listening to group efforts like the superfresh tag-team throwdown "D-Day" and the spliced-together teasers "Live Session 1" and "Live Session 2." Each and every crew member shines just as much on his own: Infamous's heavily percussive scratches on "The Anarchist Movement," A-Trak's mind-bogglingly fast cutting on "All Hail To My Hands" and Craze's liquid, mature and evocative "Freedom Of Speech" show that the Skratch Piklz, Beat Junkies and X-Ecutioners have some competition... From the still-fertile New York underground comes **Scienz Of Life**, who show on *Coming Forth By Day: The*



Book Of The Dead (Intagalactic-Sub Verse) that despite the slickness of many current indie hip-hoppers, there is still a movement against the mainstream grain. The group (ID 4 Windz, Lil Scienz and Inspectah Willabe, with frequent producer Kane) is on a stylistic plane with Company Flow, Anti-Pop Consortium and the Arsonists, and their lyrics, though sometimes obscured by less-than-perfect production, stand out strong against experimental, space-tweaked backdrops, as heard on the jazzy "Divine Powerz," the interstellar "Live-N-Direct" and "Ancient Ritualz" and the calmer, anthemic "USA (Undaground Starvin Artists)." Definitely a great record... Back again is Crooklyn's WordSound freak massive with another collection of oddities: *Subterranean Hitz Vol. 3*. As the compilation's narrator, Ill Saint, states, this is "hip-hop straight from the bowels of the Earth." OK, Ill Saint, if you say so. WordSound stalwarts like the Hawd Gankstuh Rappuh MCs Wid Ghatz add another hilarious hit to their raunchy repertoire with the scatological and super-sexed "Simple Classic Elegance" and Sensational continues his blunted résumé with "Let's Hear It." Outer Space's calm, serious "Conspiracy Theory" and Ish's "I Gonna Sell" (with lyricist Jani-J) are both well-produced and damn solid.

NEWZ



WU-TANG

The world can expect another group effort from the **Wu-Tang Clan** on Loud Records this fall. The group was in the studio earlier this summer, unfortunately without Ol' Dirty Bastard, who was undergoing a 90-day evaluation at the California Institution for Men in Chino before probation sentencing... Stones Throw Records label head **Peanut Butter Wolf** has relocated from the Bay Area to the outskirts of Los Angeles. At present the label is planning on releasing a jazz album by Lootpack and Quasimoto producer Madlib, who has become addicted to the Rhodes electric piano... Props to all the amazing rap tours this summer, for both major-label and underground artists. It's a very hopeful trend for the future... And for God's sake don't sleep on wacko lyricist/producer **Thurstin Howl III**, who has released three of the dopest and most hilarious singles of the past couple years: "Spit Boxers," "Polorican" and "I Still Live With My Moms" (on Rawkus, Game and Fat Beats, respectively). We're hoping for a full-length soon.



SCIENZ OF LIFE

>>>The Magnetic Fields' Stephin

Merritt isn't short on side projects, and one of the most fun is **Future**

Bible Heroes, his new wave collaboration with Chris Ewen (once of Figures On A Beach) and his Fields partner Claudia Gonson. After a couple of years of silence, they've resurfaced with "I'm Lonely (And I Love It)" (Merge), a CD single that's apparently been in the can for a while. It's a classic Merritt cliché in version—the dumped-and-bummed song turned into a celebratory croon ("If that's how it feels to

PICK!

get your heart broken/ Break my heart again")—and the music is first-rate '80s-style bleach-blond Eurodisco, recalling the days when Book Of Love reigned supreme and house was just a Midwestern rumor. It's backed up with three lesser but cute toss-offs—the most Merritt-by-numbers is "Good Thing I Don't Have Any Feelings," and "Café Hong Kong"'s burlesque of honey-I'm-back-from-the-war weepies never quite finds its tone, but "My Blue Hawaii" gives Merritt a chance to find rhymes for "luau," "hula-hula," "Aloha 'Oe" and "grass skirts" (hint: the last of these is "cocktail glass shirts"). As a kicker, there's the remix of the ludicrously catchy "Hopeless" (sung by Gonson, rather than Merritt) that originally appeared on the *Red Hot & Bothered* compilation a few years ago.

Brooklyn electronic spazz **Datach'i** has calmed down a bit since his debut *10110101* = (rec + play), judging from his new 12-inch EP *We Are Always Well Thank You* (Caipirinha). The title track and "Animals Coming Home Are Excited" still have rhythms that flutter like insect wings, but he actually lets tunes build for a bit before he sends in the disruptor beams. The really fun part, though, comes in the three remixes on the flip side. Kid 606 is the closest in spirit to Datach'i's Power-Book/testosterone Molotov cocktail, and does a slice 'n' garble job on the source material that ends with a manipulated Valley Girl declaring "I'd jump his beaunes! I'd jump Datach'i's beaunes!" Bogdan Raczynski subordinates the original track's chunks and flutters to a drunken trumpet solo and a curiously smooth bit of harmonium, and Mogwai do their best U2-circa-"New Years Day" impression and let the caustic beats eat into their rock groove.

They Might Be Giants

appear to have given themselves over altogether to the digital world, in no small part because of its quick turnaround time: their *Working Undercover For The Man* EP reportedly became available for download on emusic.com less than a week after they finished it. It's not great value for your money—nine tracks in 12 minutes, including three tiny jingles for their "Radio They Might Be Giants" service, for eight bucks—but early orders get an

actual physical copy of the CD in the mail too. And, blessedly, they're toning down the bombast of recent years in favor of the dizzy first-

impulse throwaways they used to crank out all the time for their Dial-A-Song service. The highlight is the title track, a gleefully snarky twist on rocker-on-the-road archetypes, but "On The Drag," a garage-rock finger raised to a certain kind of scenester, has a wicked snap to it too.

The generations of independent rock keep turning over. The new big thing from Washington, D.C. is **Q And Not U**, whose spiffy debut 7-inch EP is *Hot And Informed* (Dischord-DeSoto). Everything about them screams D.C.—the post-Make-Up haircuts, the emo-boy glasses and facial expressions, the fact that the sleeve photos were taken on the D.C. subway system—but mostly the fact that they sound exactly like what you'd expect from a new Dischord-affiliated band, which is to say that they sound like they grew up listening to second- and third-generation D.C. bands like The Dismemberment Plan and Burning Airlines. Not that that's a bad thing: The scene breeds careful attention to force and atonality, and the whoops and rachets that give "Busy Lights Busy Carpet" its kick couldn't have come from anywhere else. But lyrics like "Twenty dollar bills floating on filmy soap/ These chairs don't dance nice" suggest that the stain of Rites Of Spring's tears may never come out.

The only thing that's certain about the next generation of rock, though, is that it's going to have a videogame-bred attention span. Enter **Lolita Storm**, the first band on DHR that's actually got hardcore song lengths—their single "Hot Lips, Wet Pants" clocks in at barely over a minute, and it's also the second single this month to make reference to beaunes-jumping. The band is three young women shrieking their heads off Bow Wow Wow-style, and a DJ who feeds them all the distorted amen breaks they can handle. And the B-side's called "I Luv Speed," which tells you everything else you need to know.

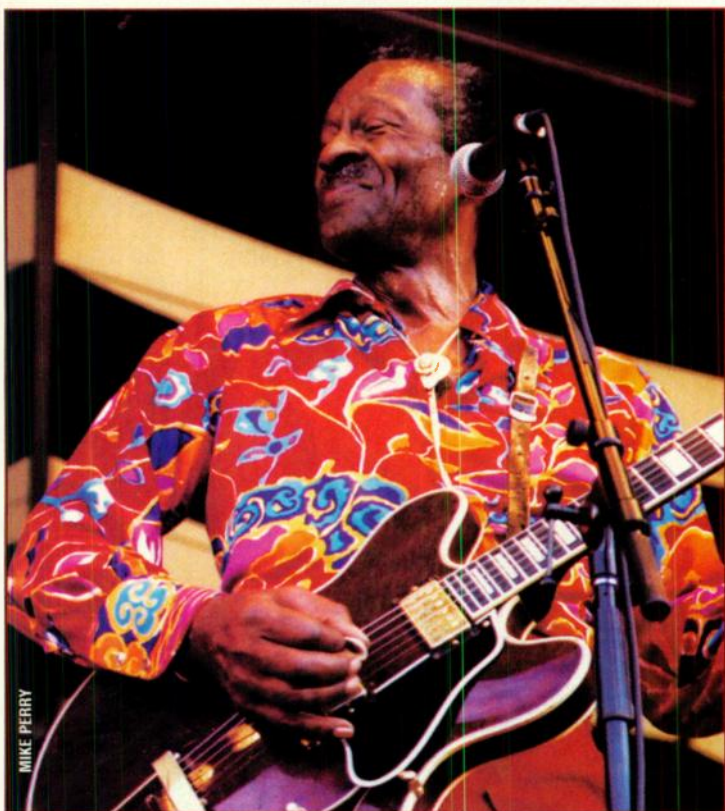
A FEW QUICK DROPS OF THE NEEDLE



Primal Scream's single "Kill All Hippies" (Creation) includes a couple of extras: a Massive Attack remix of "Exterminator" that strips the original track down around its bass snarl and Bobby Gillespie's menacing chant, and a rollicking bit of organ-driven instrumental early-'70s-British-cop-show chase scene music called "The Revenge Of The Hammond Connection"—love those

deep soul purrs of "Yeah yeah yeah"... **Modest Mouse** has released a sort of tail to *The Moon & Antarctica*: a 12-inch called *Night On The Sun* (Up) that includes four songs recorded at the same sessions (including a different version of the album's "I Came As A Rat"). These aren't the wound-up rockers of their earlier records, but slow, rambling explorations that echo like an open plain... Gimmick of the month award goes to **A-Set**, whose *The Blue Room* 7-inch (Southern) includes two songs on each side—concentrically, meaning that you get a different song depending on how you set the needle down. The songs themselves are listless, wandering emo-pop and a little under-recorded, but it's a cute idea.





MIKE PERRY

PICK!

>>>Like millions of others before me, I was mesmerized as a youngster by the boogieing pinky-finger bar chords of **Chuck Berry's** guitar. When I was older, I became impressed with the remarkable wordplay in his lyrics and how songs like "Brown Eyed Handsome Man" and "Too Much Monkey Business" touched on deeper issues of gender, class and race. Now I've grown to the point where my appreciation of Chuck Berry's music has transcended boundaries of time and space entirely. Listening to Berry's two-CD *Anthology* (Chess-MCA), I think of him not in terms of cars with fins or neon drive-ins but as another significant invention of his era—the satellite dish. Chuck absorbed influences and sonic frequencies from all over, and intercepted the invisible vibrations pulsing from teenage America like no other poet of his time. Unlike other artists who require the exhuming of rarities and examination of outtakes and various career tangents to make a worthwhile box set, this new *Anthology* is actually the perfect way to appreciate Berry—hit after hit after hit, collectively forming a little three-chord world that could only he could have created.

I had always wondered about the outrageously thunderous ovation that **Johnny Cash** received from his audience of prisoners when he

stepped on stage at the start of his landmark 1969 album *Live At San Quentin*. Well, it turns out that the applause actually came from the end of the concert and was spliced on by some zealous executive prior to the album's release. In an attempt to resolve that and other mysteries, Columbia has just put together a deluxe edition of Cash's *San Quentin* CD which goes back to the original tapes and restores the concert to its original length and

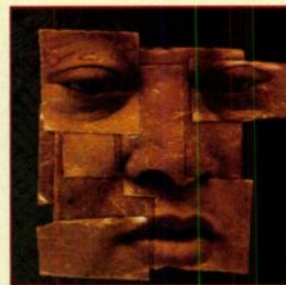
sequence, including Cash's endearing between-song banter. It's a must-have for outlaws and badmen everywhere.

In addition to holding such honorary appellations as Godfather Of Soul, Hardest Working Man In Show Business and Minister Of New New Heavy Funk, **James Brown** in his prime was also an ace musical entrepreneur and label executive, releasing a string of singles and albums from side projects, discoveries, backup artists and various members of his legendary traveling roadshow such as Lyn Collins, Marva Whitney and obscure acts like the Dapps. Polydor has just released the third volume of *James Brown's Funky People* series, three killer '70s funk and soul compilations culled from the vaults of JB's People records.

Woody Guthrie's *Dust Bowl Ballads* is a hugely important album, representing some of the finest vintage recordings of this American folk master. This material has been around in different forms through the years, and now it's finally been remastered and reissued by RCA's Buddha imprint with the proper respect it deserves. It's nice that fans who discovered Guthrie's legacy through Bob Dylan and Billy Bragg can now enjoy the originals, thus ensuring their survival.

All he ever wanted was to be free: the film *Easy Rider* remains an essential document of '60s attitudes in its story of two hippie bikers on a free-loving, wheelie-popping odyssey to Mardi Gras in New Orleans. The Columbia Records soundtrack has just been reissued, and the highlights are many: the haunting title track by Roger McGuinn (written with help from Bob Dylan), the awesome chopper-rock of Steppenwolf's "The Pusher" and the spastic eclecticism of the Holy Modal Rounders' "If You Want To Be A Bird." It's easy to follow the cultural threads at work, from colonial "Don't Tread On Me" flags and American frontier eccentricity to *On The Road* and the Beat set. A few points might be deducted for the new liner notes, which unfortunately show that Hopper (and Fonda) have succumbed to the most common ailment of the '60s generation: namely, a penchant for talking endlessly about things they did in a three-year period 30 years ago. But musically, it's strong stuff.

NEWS



It was a sad day in 1997 when I learned that legendary qawwali vocalist **Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan** had passed away and that all future releases would become the domain of this column. RealWorld has just released *Dust To Gold*, a collection of previously unreleased recordings by the late Pakistani singer and his group, Party... Look for Buddha to reissue three **Iggy Pop** albums from

the late '70s and early '80s: *Soldier*, *New Values* and *Party*. They're not quite essential Igg on the order of *Metallic K.O.* or *Fun House*, but they have their moments... **Suicide** was a cornerstone of the New York post-punk scene. There are few more decadent aural documents than *Half Alive*, the seminal 1981 cassette-only release by the duo, which has finally been reissued on CD by ROIR... Vanguard has released two CDs of early recordings by folk staples **Phil Ochs** (*The Early Years*) and **Tom Paxton** (*Best Of The Vanguard Years*)... Legendary jive comedian **Rudy Ray Moore** was celebrated in a recent reissue from Norton. It's incredibly funny stuff... Yazoo Records has released two fine little collections, *Dallas Alley Drag* and *Juke Joint Saturday Night*. The former spotlights the fierce intensity of legendary Texas piano players around Dallas's notorious Deep Ellum district, while the latter is pretty much self-explanatory, containing rowdy blues culled from scratchy old 78s by the likes of **Skip James**, **Louise Johnson**, **Little Brother Montgomery** and **Jabo Williams**.



PHOTOS: WYATT McSPADDEN

STYLING: BONNIE MARKEL

LOCATION COURTESY OF GRUENE HALL (GRUENE, TX)

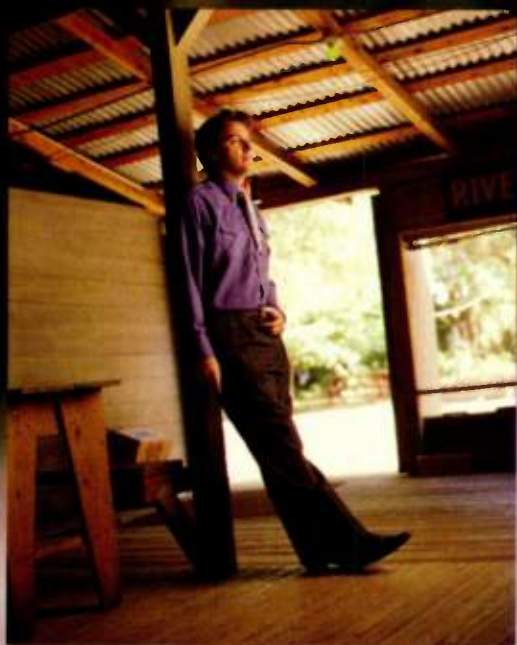
The Glitter and the Gaud

If you believe real cowboys and ranch hands wear jackets embroidered with roses, coyotes and cacti, think again. Hillbilly troubadours who migrated from the prairie to Hollywood in the early 1930s and made it big in the B-Westerns wanted a way to stand out, so they hired "rodeo" tailors such as Nudie Cohen to fashion Native American imagery (blooming roses, leather frills) onto suits made of cotton and gabardine. In the new picture book *Hillbilly Hollywood: The Origins Of Country & Western Style* (Rizzoli), Debby Bull collects album covers, promo shots and candid snaps of stars like Tex Ritter, Ernest Tubb, Spade Cooley and Gram Parsons, who established the over-the-top Americana elegance that continues to influence the likes of Beck and Lyle Lovett. For Roy Rogers, a suit covered in sequins, "smile" pockets and chevrons was practical—he wanted every kid in the stands to notice him when he rode into an arena. For everyone else, well, it just looks damn sharp. Who better to school us in gettin' our hillbilly on than a band that titled its most recent album *Full Western Dress* (Sire), Austin's Telecaster-twangy Derailers. For the shoot, we invited the bandmembers over to the historic Gruene Dance Hall, the oldest operating honky-tonk in the Lone Star State (built in 1869 on the banks of the Guadalupe River in Gruene, Texas) and they mixed elements of their own clothing with new pieces from designers they prefer.





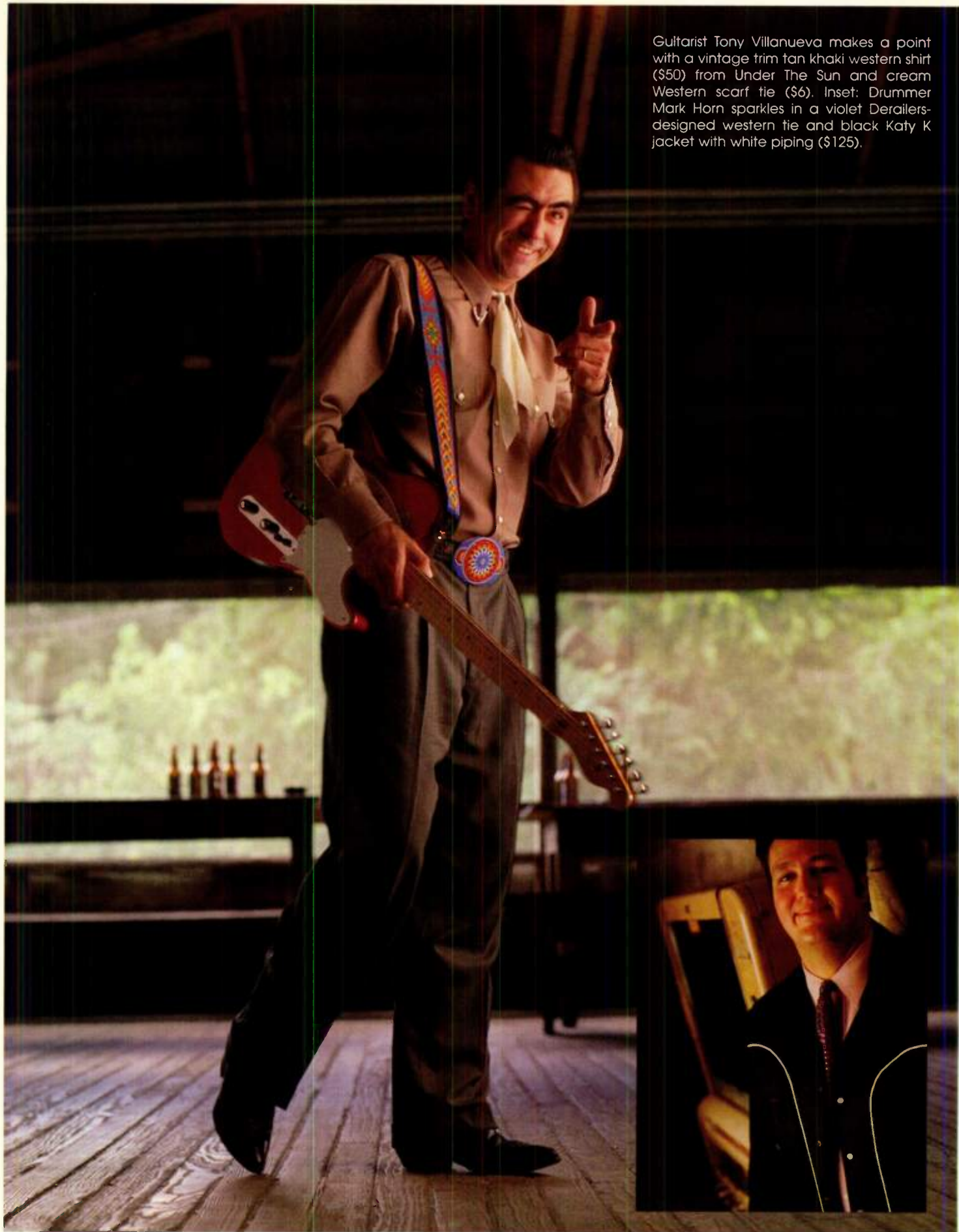
From right: Guitarist Tony Villanueva struts in a Texas Mesquite Vintage dark green suit (\$200) and an Under The Sun satin Western tie (\$15). Drummer Mark Horn sports a Cream Rockmount rayon shirt and bassist Ed Adkins wears a Derailers-designed western scarf tie (\$15).



Bassist Brian Hofeldt wears a Katy K black Rockmount shirt with white saddle stitching (\$65) and silver collar tips (\$5 each) and a cobalt scarf tie (\$6). Inset: Bassist Ed Adkins kicks back in a Western vintage belt from Under The Sun (\$45).



Guitarist Tony Villanueva makes a point with a vintage trim tan khaki western shirt (\$50) from Under The Sun and cream Western scarf tie (\$6). Inset: Drummer Mark Horn sparkles in a violet Derailers-designed western tie and black Katy K jacket with white piping (\$125).



Hillbilly Hookup: Katy K designs, 615-259-4163 or katyk@mindspring.com, Under The Sun 512-442-1308 and Derailers at www.deraillers.cc.

Perry Farrell, Sandra Collins, Afrika Bambaataa, Rabbit In The Moon, Aphrodite, Mixmaster Morris, Erick Morillo and Dave Ralph were just a few of the 35 performers who dropped beats at the 6th Element open-air festival that raved away New York's Randall's Island on June 10th. A crowd of 7500 undulated and swarmed for 10 hours as the riverside location was transformed into a dizzying six-stage carnival of electronic sound and psychedelic sights. >>>M. Tye Comer



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BOULEVARD OF SMOKIN' DREAMS

15 GREAT ROCK MOVIES YOU HAVEN'T SEEN



9 AND 10 PROVIDED BY NEAL PETERS COLLECTION. 12 AND 15 PROVIDED BY PHOTOEST

1. Half Japanese: The Band That Would Be King

A documentary about the idiot savant band Half Japanese, alternating interviews, performance footage and testaments to their greatness by the likes of Penn Jillette and Moe Tucker. Highlight: David Fair's explanation of how to play guitar ("when you move your hands closer together, it makes a high sound").

2. Cocksucker Blues

The Rolling Stones hired photographer Robert Frank to document their 1972 tour, warts and all, but weren't pleased with the warts on the final product: Keith totally fucked up rampant drug abuse, groupies getting abused, and utter boredom alternating with on-stage good times. It can only be officially shown once a year, with Frank present, but bootlegs are floating around.

3. The Decline Of Western Civilization

Although Penelope Spheeris made two sequels to it—on "the metal years" and late-'90s gutter-punks, respectively—this documentary on the nihilistic L.A. punk scene circa 1980 is still unmatched. The Germs, Fear, The Circle Jerks and Black Flag splatter themselves all over the stage. A few years after it was made, far too many of them were dead.

4. James Brown Live—1968

Never officially released, but not hard to find on bootleg video: a two-hour show broadcast live on Boston television the night after Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed, as a deterrent to potential street rioters. The Godfather is on fire, his band was never sharper, and his exercise in crowd control at the end is a stunner.

5. Ladies And Gentlemen, The Fabulous Stains

Vaguely based on the story of The Slits' tour with The Sex Pistols and The Clash, this punk drama starring Diane Lane was one of the progenitors of Riot Grrrl; Courtney Love is reportedly a fan. Members of The Sex Pistols, The Clash and The Tubes all appear (so does Laura Dern). Classic quote: "He was an old man in a young girl's world!"

6. Meeting People Is Easy

The least glamorous tour movie ever made. Radiohead's world tour for *OK Computer* is presented as a horrifying, dehumanizing fugue state: endless half-baffled interviews, hotel rooms, after-show debris, soundchecks, monitored images of themselves everywhere, and the occasional flash of desperate power in performance. Hard to take, but very powerful.

7. Message To Love

Not the joyful hippie epiphany of *Woodstock* or the hell of *Gimme Shelter*, but somewhere in between—the Isle Of Wight Festival, held in 1970 and half-drowned in bad vibes and bad business. The Doors are as insufferable as ever, but The Who (whose set can be seen on the band's own video, *Listening To You*), Jimi Hendrix and a furious Joni Mitchell all make compelling viewing.

8. Performance

Set in the psychological jungle of Swinging London, Nicolas Roeg's first movie stars Mick Jagger as an aging rock god—surprise, surprise—holed up with a criminal on the lam. Includes "Memo

From Turner," the best Stones single not actually credited to the Stones; the soundtrack also includes Randy Newman, Ry Cooder and the Last Poets.

9. The Rolling Stones' Rock & Roll Circus

Filed in 1968, this film was not released until recently, allegedly on the grounds that The Who, performing "A Quick One While He's Away," blew the Stones off the stage—which they did. But every performance is at least interesting, from Taj Mahal to Marianne Faithfull to Yoko Ono—even Jethro Tull, with guest guitarist Tony Iommi, is pretty hot.

10. The Rutles: All You Need Is Cash

The best Beatles parody ever, hilarious both in its own right and as a lampoon of the Fab Four's career. *Monty Python's* Eric Idle wrote the script, Neil Innes (originally of the Bonzo Dog Band, more recently a touring member of Yo La Tengo) wrote the songs, and George, Ringo, and most of the original cast of *Saturday Night Live* put in guest appearances.

11. Urgh! A Music War

No plot, no continuity, just a song apiece performed by several dozen punk and new-wave bands filmed live in 1980 (well, The Police get to do more than one), almost all of them hungry and fabulous. Highlights include Klaus Nomi's way over-the-top "Total Eclipse," Devo racheting through "Uncontrollable Urge," an impossibly young XTC, and the mysterious British band Invisible Sex.

12. Velvet Goldmine

A homoerotic fantasia very loosely inspired by the David Bowie/Iggy Pop story, it tends to inspire love or hate reactions, but no movie's ever captured the spirit of glam rock better. The fake Mott The Hoople songs supplied by Shudder To Think are pretty great; the credit sequence with Brian Eno's "Needles In The Camel's Eye" is even greater.

13. Wattstax

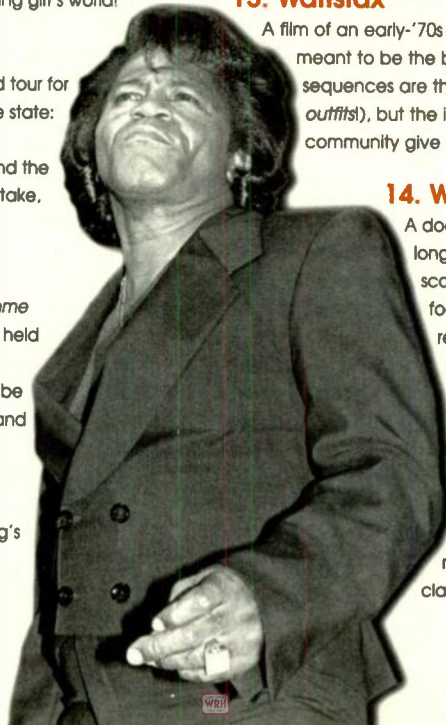
A film of an early-'70s one-day soul and gospel festival held in L.A. that was meant to be the black community's answer to Woodstock. The live sequences are the best, naturally (Rufus Thomas! Isaac Hayes! Those outfits!), but the interviews with concertgoers and members of the community give the joyful music a more serious context.

14. Westway To The World

A documentary on The Clash's career, put together by their longtime collaborator Don Letts (so don't be expecting any scandalous *Behind The Music* stuff). But the early performance footage of the band does at least suggest how they got their rep as a killer live band, and the interviews with all the former members are honest, deep and engaging.

15. Wild Style

Fast-forward past anything that looks like plot, and go to the meat of this 1982 quickie: ripping performances from the early New York hip-hop scene, complete with Grandmaster Flash on the wheels of steel, Busy Bee on the mic, breakdancers on rolled-out pieces of linoleum, and classic graffiti tags everywhere. >>>Douglas Wolk



BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG BEATS

SCREEN STARS WHO ACT LIKE MUSICIANS.

TINA YOTHERS



You probably thought Michael J. Fox was the only member of the *Family Ties* clan with a yearning to rock. (Those who didn't witness Fox jamming with Joan Jett in the '80s flick *Light Of Day* can hunt down that gem in a Blockbuster discount bin; a young Trent Reznor also appears as a member of Fox's rival band, The Problems.) Surprise! Rock runs in the Keaton family and Tina Yothers, the naïve Jennifer, has grown up to front the California funk-pop quartet Jaded. She's also traded in those wavy, Stevie-Nicks locks for a Joan Jett-sleek black bob (consider the eerie parallels). Who needs TV when you've opened for Motörhead and headlined Tempe's Big Fish Sports Pub?

Sample lyric: "I really thought you had my back/ You let me down you turned out wack/ And that's a sad fact."

Verdict: Speaking of sad facts, Yothers can almost sing. And though songs like "Feelgood" aren't exactly chart-toppers in the making, the Jaded album might tide you over until Skippy's solo venture, *Pardon Me, Mrs. Keaton*, is released. Get your hands on Jaded's self-released debut at www.jadedonline.com.

JEFF BRIDGES

Witnessing Jeff Bridges's role as a schmaltzy lounge musician in *The Fabulous Baker Boys* and listening to his schmaltzy blue-eyed soul album, *Be Here Soon* (Ramp), it's tough to tell whether he's method acting or typecast. For this record, Bridges wisely cast Doobie Brother Michael McDonald as his Fabulous Honky Brother.

Sample lyric: "She laid back and watched as a capricorn moon/ Fell from her blue velvet glove like a silver balloon/ She lay her whip down/ Ow."

Verdict: Doobie fans will appreciate McDonald's it-ain't-easy-being-AI-Green backup vocals. Bridges fans will be glad that two-bit brother Beau Bridges didn't weasel his way into this lame act as well. Ow.

Be Here Soon is available on www.ramprecords.com and www.jeffbridges.com.

RUSSELL CROWE

Tougher-than-leather Russell Crowe (of *Gladiator* fame) shows his sweet and sensitive side singing and playing guitar in the Australian folk-rock quartet Thirty Odd Foot Of Grunts.

Sample lyric: "You treat me like chocolate/ Something you shouldn't touch between meals."

Verdict: While Crowe's voice is more suited to his day job, his singing has that same cigarettes-and-whiskey quality. Either way, middle-aged women will certainly swoon.

The band's debut full-length, *Gaslight*, can only be ordered on the official Website, www.gruntland.com. The Grunts are currently recording a follow-up.



JASON SCHWARTZMAN

When you've played *Rushmore*'s Max Fischer—creator of a war drama with onstage explosives—your next role should undoubtedly be as a drummer. Ergo, Schwartzman's the man behind the kit in the L.A. pop-rock quintet Phantom Planet.

Sample lyric: "I'm lying in your bed unscrewing your head/ Trying to figure out what's wrong inside/ So you don't hate yourself tonight."

Verdict: Schwartzman knows how to drop beats like he drops bombs and lines, with the skills of a four-star general. The band's harmony-laden pop gems are as catchy and fun as the "O.R. they?" line in *Rushmore*. "What's the secret, Max?"

The band's debut, *Phantom Planet Is Missing* (Geffen) is available in stores.

COREY FELDMAN



Feldman's right to rock has been evident since his Michael Jackson impersonations first graced the big screen in *Rock 'N' Roll High School Forever*. If his work in *Friday The 13th: The Final Chapter* wasn't scary enough, his role as badass crooner for Truth Movement has given birth to two albums and the holiday jingle for the ages, "Sometimes Christmas Is A Bitch."

Sample lyric: "I'm feeling funky funky funky/ Uh huh funky funky/ Uh uh funky/

Oww dat oww da owww/ Funky funky funky yeah yeah uh huh/ Funky funky funky yeah yeah/ Hup bub dum dum dup/ Hup bub dum dum dup."

Verdict: Diehard Corey fans will wonder if where-is-he-now case Corey Haim fared any better in adulthood, or if all child actors are doomed to a life of (artistic) crime. Truth Movement's second album, *Still Searching For Soul*, is available through Vegas Records at www.vegasrecords.simplenet.com.

»Compiled by Nicole Keiper, with assistance from the CMJ New Music Monthly staff



COURTNEY LOVE IN *THE PEOPLE VS. LARRY FLYNT*



BJÖRK IN *DANCER IN THE DARK*



ICE CUBE IN *ANOTHER FRIDAY*



FLEA GETS VOCAL IN *THE WILD THORNBERRYS*



JOHN DÖE AND ADROCK WITH DAVID CARRADINE IN *ROADSIDE PROPHETS*

TROUBADOURS IN TINSELTOWN:

ROCKING THE BIG SCREEN

From Elvis's *Love Me Tender* to Eminem's rumored big-screen bio, musicians love trading the platinum disc for the silver screen. If you're still kicking yourself for missing Debbie Harry's criminally underrated turn in *Tales From The Darkside: The Movie*, here's a guide to help you keep on top of rock projects in the works in Tinseltown. **»»Tom Mallon**

Courtney Love

In *Ghost Of Mars* (Screen Gems), Courtney plays a corrections officer sent to Mars to transfer the ludicrously named Desolation Williams (Ice Cube). Not only must she contend with Cube's constant scowling, but she must also deal with decapitation-happy Martian ghosts and the vicious social ramifications of a subplot in which women rule and men are dogs.

The Lowdown: Courtney has already proved she can act like a ho in *The People Vs. Larry Flynt* and that she can scream her head off in *Hole*. Now she gets to do both in outer space.

Role We'd Like To See: Courtney plays a woman who makes the leap from sloppy punk to glamorous diva through relentless self-promotion. Oh, wait, whatever, never mind.

Ice Cube

In *Pimp* (Fine Line) Cube plays Robert "Iceberg Slim" Beck, real-life pimp and street hustler.

The Lowdown: The difference between a Cube and a Berg is quite a lot of ice. Luckily, Ice has been seen in a lot of top hats recently, and everyone knows hats = pimp.

Role We'd Like To See: After his turns as Iceberg Slim and as Desolation Williams in *Ghost Of Mars*, Cube reprises the line from "Steady Mobbin'"—"Went to mom's house and dropped a load in the bathroom/ Jumped back in the lowrider, comin' out feelin' about 10 pounds lighter"—as ornery action star Constipation Jones.

Flea

The Wild Thornberrys (Nickelodeon) is a feature-length cartoon chronicling the adventures of the wildlife documentary-producing family. Flea voices Donnie, an adopted wild jungle spaz.

The Lowdown: Is there anyone more fit to play a wild jungle spaz?

Role We'd Like To See: Flea leaves *The Wild Thornberrys* and takes Roy Orbison's spot in *The Traveling Wilburys*.

John Doe

In the indie release *Gypsy 83*, Doe is the dad of an overweight girl who travels with her gay goth friend to the Night Of 1000 Stevies (an actual Stevie Nicks look-alike competition). Life lessons are learned.

The Lowdown: As Amber Waves's ex-husband

in *Boogie Nights*, John resisted the evil influences of porn. In *Roadhouse*, he confronted the even more evil influence of Patrick Swayze. If anyone's man enough to face down the Night of 1000 Stevies, it's him.

Role We'd Like To See: After starring in *Get To The Heart: The Barbara Mandrell Story* with Maureen "Marcia-Marcia-Marcia" McCormick, we see him as a Bobby-gone-wrong in *A Very Brady Plea* Bargain: *The Mike Lookinland Story*.

Kid Rock

In *The Adventures Of Joe Dirt* (Columbia), an orphaned radio DJ (David Spade) tells the story of his lifelong search for his parents (Roseanne and Gary Busey). Kid plays Spade's arch-enemy.

The Lowdown: If Roseanne and Gary Busey were your parents, would you bother searching?

Role We'd Like To See: In a trailer park passing of the baton, Kid does a remake of the Joe Don Baker classic, *Mitchell*.

Björk

In *Dancer In The Dark* (Fine Line), Björk plays a Czech immigrant who escapes her dreary life in a fantasy world of Hollywood musicals.

The Lowdown: This role won her Best Actress at Cannes, but *NME* reported that relations were so strained between Björk and director Lars Von Trier that she once ripped up and ate a blouse that she refused to wear.

Role We'd Like To See: Whose cuisine reigns supreme? We'd pay to see the post-mod pixie judge an *Iron Chef* "Shirt Battle!"

Snoop Doggy Dogg

In *Bones* (New Line), Snoop is Jimmy Bones, a gangsta who comes back from the dead to kick ass and take names Doggystyle, bi-otch.

The Lowdown: I saw this bitchin' movie once called *The Crow*...

Role We'd Like To See: While Snoop's busy ripping off action franchises, he could try his paw at *The Green Lantern*...only his lantern burns a whole different type of green.

Brian Vander Ark of The Verve Pipe

In a plot that mirrors post-Rob Halford Judas Priest, the tentatively named *Metal God* (Warner Bros.) follows the lead singer of a cover band (Mark Wahlberg) who rockets to metal superstardom when he replaces the singer of the *real* band. Vander Ark flexes his metal muscles as one of Marky's Unfunky Bunch.

The Lowdown: For the mulleted masses, this'll be a trip down memory lane. For the rest of us, it's a trip to the heavy metal parking lot.

Role We'd Like To See: In an Oscar-winning performance, *The Verve Pipe's* singer plays the frontman of a band that actually matters.

5 ROCK MOVIES YOU SHOULD NEVER SEE



Give My Regards To Broad Street

Paul McCartney loses the master tape for his new album and decides to spend two hours mugging and remaking Beatles ballads. Wackiness fails to ensue.

Human Highway

Aside from Devo's inspired cover of "It Takes A Worried Man," Neil Young's first attempt at filmmaking didn't harvest much.

Renaldo And Clara

Based on Bob Dylan's legendary Rolling Thunder Revue, co-written by Sam Shepard, and drowned and dismembered by its own pretentiousness.

Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band

A disco musical without the Beatles, but with the Bee Gees and George Burns. Soundtrack responsible for the phrase "shipped gold, returned platinum."

Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars

A concert film that's not just muddy and ugly, but so dull it'll make you forget why anyone liked Bowie in the first place. **»»Douglas Wolk**

R.A. (RESIDENTIAL ADVISORY)

SWISS ARMY CYBERTOOL

The folks over at Swiss Army always have a blade up on the competition when it comes to cutlery, which is why you should trust their latest in a series of "Lifestyle Tools." The Cybertool includes 34 techcentric tools designed to access even the hardest to reach screws and bolts. It also includes the ubiquitous toothpick and bottle opener, which you'll need to open a cold one after attempting to reassemble your hard drive. (\$75, www.swissarmy.com)

SONY MINIDISC

Download all the Napster shite you've stored on your PC's hard drive to this bitchin' addition to the minidisc family (uh, but don't take that as endorsement of illicit behavior). Features include a remote control, a character input function for including titles while you record, a three-position Mega Bass Sound System, and a 40-second shock resistant memory. Available in silver or metallic blue (to match the '76 Trans Am with T-Top). (\$249.95, www.sony.com)

THE "H"-WATCH BY SEIKO

Watches aren't about just telling time anymore—they're your wrist's fashion statement. One look at this retro-inspired "H" watch, and you'll wax nostalgic for the simpler days of rubbery hot lunches and playground wedgies. The world time function displays the time in 38 cities (for all you jetsetters) as well as respective country codes for overseas telephone calls. In addition, there are five daily alarms and a stopwatch function. Comes in four colors: orange, aqua, black, and cream. What else do you need to know? (\$169, www.seiko.com or 877-276-8442)

DJ/COMPUTER BAG BY IDEALOGUE

Dig the music of the street? Then kick it ghetto-fabulous. This year make it a priority to quit carting around your vinyl in cardboard boxes and step it up a bit. In addition to having removable velcro dividers, Idealogue's DJ/computer bag has protective pouches to store a cell phone and computer hard drive while in transit. It's also water-resistant. But more importantly, when Barney Fife and crew show up to issue citations, you're not fumbling with milk crates—you're already moved on to the next party all stealth-like. (\$100, www.idealogue.com or 212-591-1129)

SAMSONITE TEMPERATURE JACKET

When it comes to form and function, Samsonite Blacklabel's got you covered. The Temperature Jacket was designed by Neil Barrett of Gucci and Prada fame, and you know you're stylin' when he's got your back. The exclusive lining was developed by NASA rocket scientists (but, har-har, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to wear it). It absorbs or releases body heat, adjusting the body's temperature. The lightweight fabric boasts a thermometer strip on the outside so you can monitor the temp of your bod. Did we mention that it's waterproof? Whether you're exiled to a deserted island or in the middle of a Chicago snow-squall, you can handle anything Mama Nature throws at you. (\$720, www.samsonite-europe.com)



BRAUN COFFEE MAKER

How the hell are you going to make it to that 8 a.m. lecture without a jump start? Instant tastes like hell and the lines at grease trucks are always too long—but you don't want to be irritable. Enter the FlavorSelect Cappuccino Coffeemaker. On top of the deluxe foamer, it comes with features such as pause and serve, auto-off and the infamous Flavor Selector, which allows you to adjust the strength of your brew—from mild to molasses. Good to the last brain cell pop. (\$109.99, www.braunusa.com)



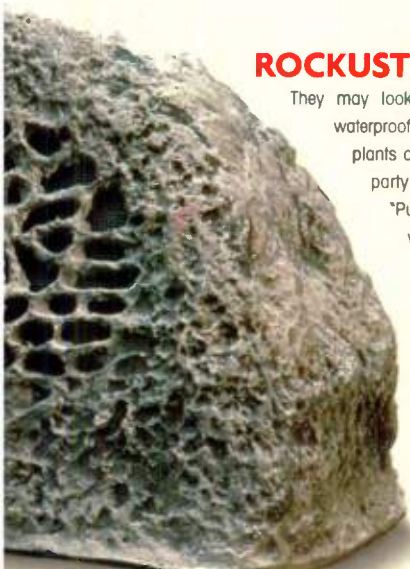
SHARP HALF-PINT MICROWAVE

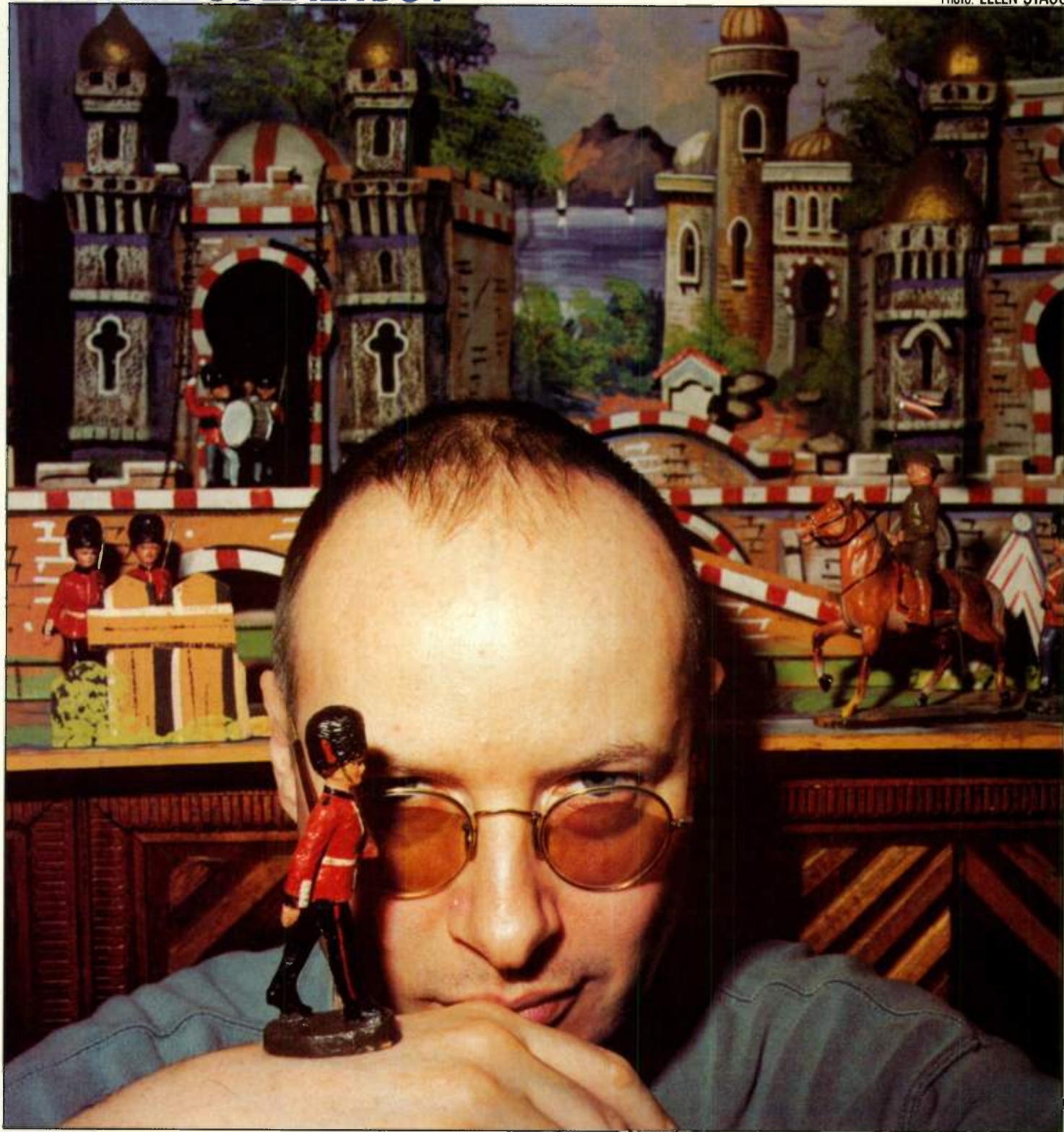
Small enough to fit in the most cramped dorm room (13" cube), yet roomy enough to heat up a few of those deliciously convenient 7-Eleven burritos you buy after a delirious night of drinking, the Sharp Half-Pint Microwave can be set with a single touch. And CompuCook features an entire menu of automatic settings to take the guesswork out of re-heating last week's pizza. With 600 watts of pure cooking power at your fingertips, life is once again worth living. Bonus points: you can color coordinate these with your iMac. (\$99, www.sharp-usa.com)



ROCKUSTICS SPEAKERS

They may look like rocks, but they're not. Get it? They're waterproof so you can keep them hidden outdoors behind plants or shrubbery (they're always a hit with inebriated party guests). This model, referred to as the "Punkrock", delivers the decibels, boasting 75 watts within the simulated stone. For enough power to drown out your neighbor's sexual conquests or the annoying Deadhead down the hall, look no further. Honestly, is there a more appropriate conduit with which to blast Black Flag's *Damaged*? Didn't think so. (\$380/pair, www.rockusticsinc.com)

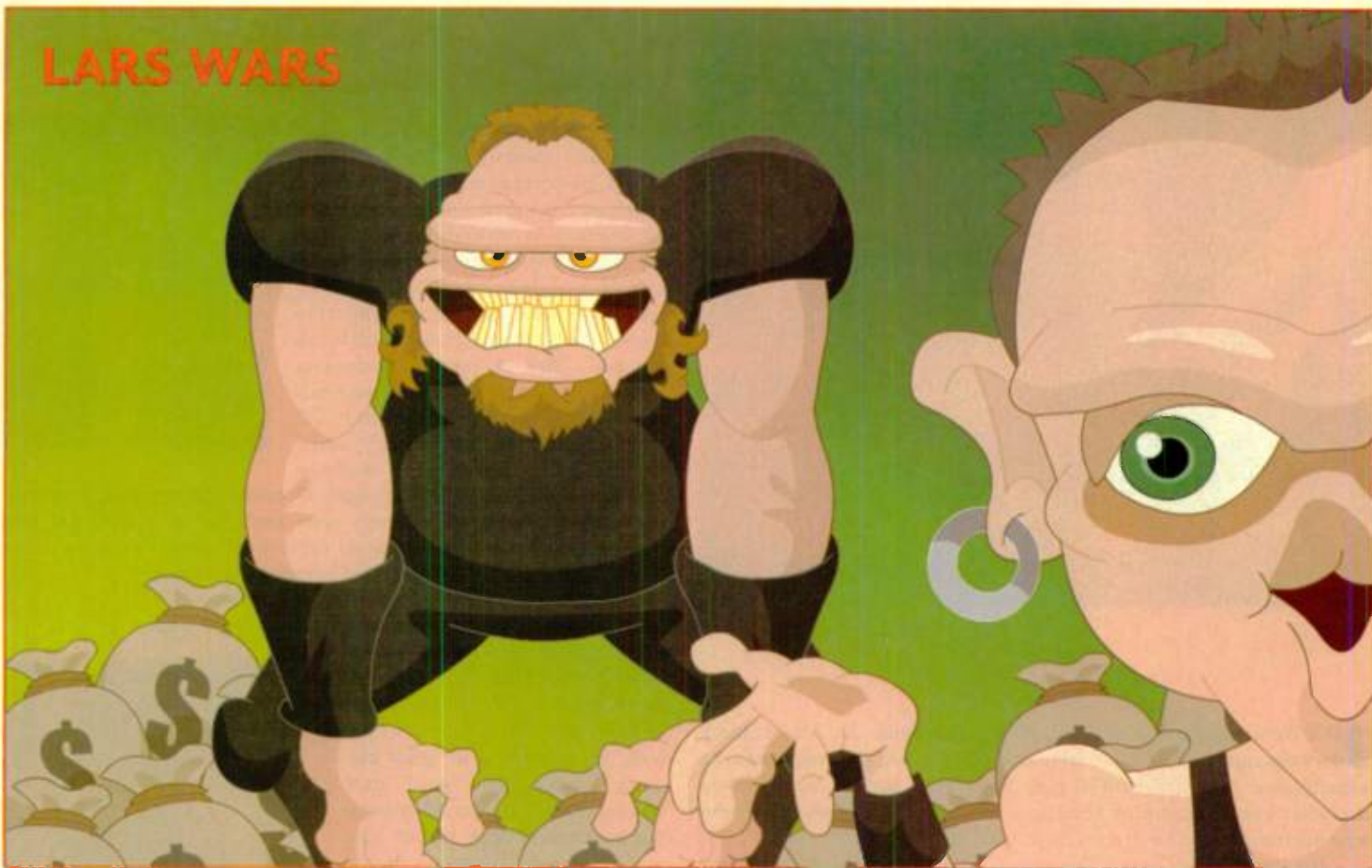




It's hard to believe that the author of a peacenik line like, "Generals and majors always seem so unhappy/ Unless they got a war" keeps a stockpile of 3,000-plus toy soldiers in his attic. Yet XTC's skittish songwriter Andy Partridge harbors a soft spot for cast iron generals and majors with a pint-sized appetite for destruction. For nostalgic reasons, the machismo-mocking pop troubadour prefers the mid-20th century mass-produced toy infantrymen he deployed as a child, as well as late-1800s German models with doll-like faces and lumpen features that cost about \$30 each. "It's still cheaper than a cocaine habit," reasons Partridge,

whose recently released *Wasp Star* (TVT) ripples with similar dry English wit. Since Partridge can't draft troops very quickly at \$30 a head, he also sculpts them out of epoxy and occasionally gets on his elbows and knees for carpet combat. The relatively innocent pastime keeps XTC's frontman in touch with the "big kid" inside him—it's not only a driving force behind his songwriting, but a defense mechanism. "The big kid protects me because I don't trust anyone and I think people are there to fuck you over. It's something my psychoanalyst is trying to unravel for me. I hope he doesn't kill the big kid off, though, he's been very useful." »Neil Gladstone

LARS WARS



The smoke has cleared from the first few skirmishes of the MP3 wars, and it looks like the big loser so far is Metallica, which has managed to piss off a lot of its fans. The best site for indulging in *schadenfreude* is www.paylars.com, set up by Mark Erickson to allow fans to make credit-card donations to a fund that means to reimburse Metallica for money they've lost due to digital file trading. (After two months, it has raised just over \$500.) Its highlight is the "Museum Of Links" to other Metalli-bashing sites; not just Camp Chaos's already legendary Flash animation with James Hetfield growling "Money...good! Napster...bad!" but Mötley Crüe's animated response, a call for a class-action lawsuit called [\\$uelar\\$.com](http://www.$uelar$.com), and many more. And it's got a link to Courtney Love's spirited attack on major label accounting, from salon.com (although that article itself bears a certain resemblance to Steve Albini's infamous 1994 essay "The Problem With Music," available at www.arancidamoeba.com/mrr/problemwithmusic.html).

For more Web *schadenfreude*, check out www.fuckedcompany.com—they ripped off their logo from feel-good New Economy magazine *Fast Company*, but that's the only thing they have in common. Fuckedcompany is a dot-com deadpool: Users can pick up to five companies a week, and you get points when one of your companies either goes belly-up or does something to signal that it's in danger (laying off employees, postponing or dropping an IPO, announcing some kind of desperation plan). That's the game part; the unexpected byproduct is that it's become the source of information (even if rudimentary and cruelly snickering) on Web companies in trouble, and its bulletin boards are full of vicious inside information and outside death wishes. It's caught on among digerati to the point where there are jokes about people sabotaging their own companies to score points.

The ultimate in laughing at other people's misfortune, though, is the annual Darwin Awards—presented to people who've done the

human race a service by removing themselves from the gene pool (i.e. who have killed themselves through massive stupidity). There are a number of Darwin Award sites, but the most comprehensive is the official one, at www.darwinawards.com. Besides full details on each year's verified winners (last year's champions were three Palestinian terrorists killed by car bombs whose timers they'd neglected to adjust for Daylight Savings Time), it's got honorable mentions (which aren't necessarily lesser acts of stupidity, but allow their perpetrators to survive), urban legends that aren't true but have been passed around as Darwin-fodder anyway (like the classic one about the dog who runs off to retrieve a thrown stick of dynamite), and people's personal accounts of their Darwinian near-misses. There's also a "slush pile" of award possibilities suggested by readers, with lively debates by the site's contributors as to their plausibility.

If, after all this, you'd rather cheer for somebody for a bit, have a look at **Open Letters** (www.openletters.net), a new and delightful Web magazine with a very small scope: Every day, it posts a single personal letter, written about a particular experience to a particular correspondent, but posted for public consumption with the writer's permission. (For those who'd rather not read long documents on their computer screens, it's also available as a weekly PDF file.) At press time, it's just begun, but its first few letters—like a woman writing to a friend about being hit on by a cute tattoo artist, and a man telling someone whose hotel room he's recently stayed in about reading a Tom Stoppard play and noticing coincidences everywhere afterwards—are nicely executed, and interesting for what they suggest about the writers' everyday lives and their relationships to their recipients as much as for the things they're ostensibly writing about. Not really reportage or diary-keeping in the usual sense, Open Letters is, in fact, exactly like getting a daily letter from a friend with an interesting life. Except that the contributors are probably not actually your friends.



WAR OF INDEPENDENCE IN *CECIL B. DEMENTED*, JOHN WATERS BATTLES HOLLYWOOD FROM WITHIN.

John Waters loves a good fight, albeit an artistic one. Almost three decades ago, he first used camp and bad taste to challenge esthetic sensibilities: fat transvestites, pink flamingos, and fat transvestites dressed as gaudily as pink flamingos eating dog excrement. Few who saw his films weren't outraged, or at least creeped out.

His latest work, *Cecil B. Demented* (Artisan), focuses on a different kind of artistic fight, one pointed at the mainstream film industry. The work chronicles a band of teenage terrorists who kidnap an aging Hollywood actress (Melanie Griffith) and force her to star in their guerilla film on the streets of Baltimore. (Best line: "I'm Raven, I'm a Satanist, and I'll be doing your makeup.") The kids are tattooed with the names of outlaw auteurs, from Fassbinder to Sam Fuller. The movie is obviously Waters's defense of the indie revolution he helped launch, right?

"I was trying to make a comedy," he defends. "I was trying to make movies political again, and to show a terrorist who I might not agree with, but who I might find interesting. I'd have been a sympathizer."

Cecil's humor and scope is crazily broad: The kids shout "Hey hey, MPAA, how many movies did you censor today?" and gun down the theater manager at a screening of *Patch Adams: The Directors' Cut*. It's an action movie, but with an eccentric twist: "I wanted to show all the movie theaters I grew up with, and show them at war with each other," explains Waters. An appearance by Patty Hearst, the one-time celebrity kidnapping victim and a Waters favorite, adds to *Cecil's* surreal tone.

Despite the violence, Waters has made his peace with Hollywood—mostly because the studios have woken up to small, oddball films. "When I started out, they wouldn't even look at those. The business has changed way for the better. For years, Hollywood co-opted every kind of exploitation film there was—horror, science fiction, and so on. Now, they've got movie stars in them, and they cost a lot more money. But they're still really exploitation films."

Cecil is not nearly as outrageous as Waters's early works. Its most disgusting scene shows be-suited swells slurping oysters with a grotesque abandon. "I love oysters," Waters swoons when charged with parody of his early work. But not all the scene's extras shared his affection for the squishy creatures, or knew they'd be consuming them raw. "One of them did puke," says the director, then adding disappointedly, "But he did it off camera...I don't know why." »»»Scott Timberg

THE ST. FRANCISVILLE EXPERIMENT (Trimark)

Here we go again. Filching from *The Blair Witch Project*, *The St. Francisville Experiment* sends four 20-somethings into a notorious haunted house in Louisiana. However, as we're told, this documentary is "entirely real!" Do with that information what you want. After meeting our ghost hosts in *Real World*-like testimonials and learning about the "legend" of St. Francisville, it's off to the mansion. Armed with camcorders (naturally), the four drop ominous comments like "nothing can hurt us" and "did you see *Blair Witch*?" while inspecting the dark, creepy confines. Things soon go bump in the night. Goosebumps abound thanks to plenty of spooky moments, made more terrifying with those swirling hand-held cameras. (Are tripods so expensive?) Sure, you've seen this before, but check your cynicism and have fun. »»»John Elsasser



PSYCHO BEACH PARTY (Strand Releasing)

What's not to love about *Psycho Beach Party*, Daddy-O? Its clever genre-bending of *Gidget* with *Scream*, its perfect circa-1962 duds, its exhuming of great old slang words like "pad" and "squaresville," its muted greens and pinks that make it look like an ad for a retro diner—at first it makes you smile and get on board. But unless you're crazy for pure camp, the romp gets old fast.

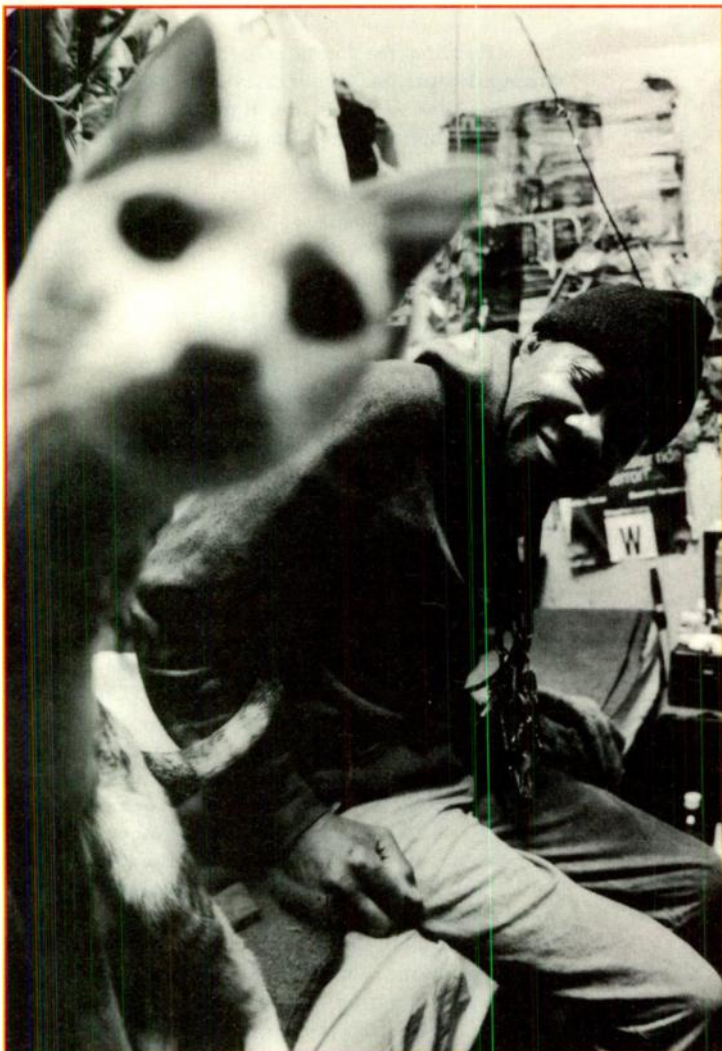
The story involves a pale, innocent redhead named Florence (Lauren Ambrose) who falls in with a band of (vaguely homoerotic) Malibu surfers just as locals begin to turn up dead. The film, written by theater cult figure Charles Busch (who appears here as an overbearing lady cop) is not a total loss: It's got its witty moments and a groovy surf-music score. But a real B-movie is a lot more fun and not nearly so arch. »»»Scott Timberg



WHIPPED (Destination Films)

You'll be appalled at the outset of the revenge comedy *Whipped*. And who could blame you? Every Sunday, three former college buddies convene at a Manhattan diner to discuss their latest female conquests. These smirky guys, now in their late 20s, are loathsome creatures who say things like, "I see two honeys all over my wood!" You can just hear those former Phi Tau brothers (now middle-management chuckleheads) whooping it up in the audience. Before your panties get in a bunch, realize that you're being set up. When the three lads hazardedly canoodle with sexpot Amanda Peet (who has a smile you can read by), the fun begins. However shallow, writer-director Peter M. Cohen's debut hums along nicely, with sparks of inspired nastiness thrown in to keep things gratifying. »»»John Elsasser





FLOPHOUSE: LIFE ON THE BOWERY

By David Isay and Stacy Abramson, photos by Harvey Wang
(Random House)

Profiling the dwellers of cheap-room-for-rent buildings in New York City's Bowery district, *Flophouse* focuses on folks like Ted Edwards, a college-educated, chess-playing, alcoholic dishwasher who drops Shakespeare quotes and Sartre references into his chit-chat. "There's nothing sublime about this place," unloads Edwards about the White House Hotel. "It's nothing. People waiting to die." David Isay and Stacy Abramson, known for their work on the NPR program *Sound Portraits*, pass no judgment on their subjects. Aside from brief introductory paragraphs, the talking is left to Harvey Wang's unsentimental photographs and floppers' quoted monologues. Wayne Smith—a cagey would-be writer who tells Isay what was wrong about their NPR piece

on a Bowery flophouse—pulls no punches on himself either. "If I have nothing to do, I drink. That's what takes up most of my time." This is certainly not the inspirational book you give to that recent high-school grad with high hopes...or maybe it is. There are lessons to be learned here in the book's odd marriage of desolation, dignity and dreams deferred. As Carl Albino puts it, "it's a roof over my head." »» Steve Ciabattini



CAN'T YOU HEAR ME CALLIN': THE LIFE OF BILL MONROE, FATHER OF BLUEGRASS

By Richard D. Smith (Little, Brown And Company)

Bill Monroe died just four years ago, but his legend resonates as much as any of music's most historically lauded figures. Credited as the man who single-handedly founded bluegrass, he gets a loving, warts-and-all treatment in this extensive biography. While strumming his mandolin and crooning his way to the top of the country circuit during the first half of the 20th century, Monroe evolved from awkward farm boy to cocky bandleader; he womanized, battled with his peers (in the most notorious episode, the guitar and banjo duo Flatt & Scruggs left his band and surpassed his fame) and did as much as anybody to define modern American music. His long, rich and turbulent life makes for a fascinating read, and Richard D. Smith's straightforward narrative glistens with detail. »»Richard A. Martin



AS SEEN ON TV: PROVOCATIONS

By Lucy Grealy (Bloomsbury)

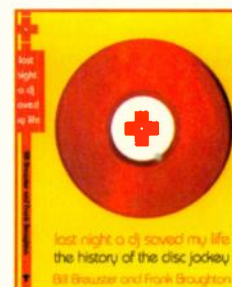
Lucy Grealy hit the best seller lists by storm in '95 with her memoir, *Autobiography Of A Face*, and made her facial bone cancer the hot topic of the talk-show circuit. Now, in a 180-degree turn away from the mirror, she's still writing about her world, but this time it's not chemotherapy but promiscuity, not going to the doctor but going on Oprah. Over the course of 16 essays, Grealy ruminates on her tango lessons, the New Testament, riding boots and her education in manipulative love. A virgin until age 21, she left the comfort of her New York City drag queen posse to go to Iowa and met Jude, a walking middle-aged crisis who taught her sexual secrets including the dramatic effect of a well-timed guttural hum. Not a cable TV subscriber, Grealy also has a love/hate affair with the television set—she hates the daily talk shows, but she still ends up as the secret guest on one. Already a star among the New York literati, Grealy writes like she's your best friend who happens to be incredibly hip, articulate and smart. Of course, real friends are so unreliable. Read Grealy's book instead. »»Kristin Keith

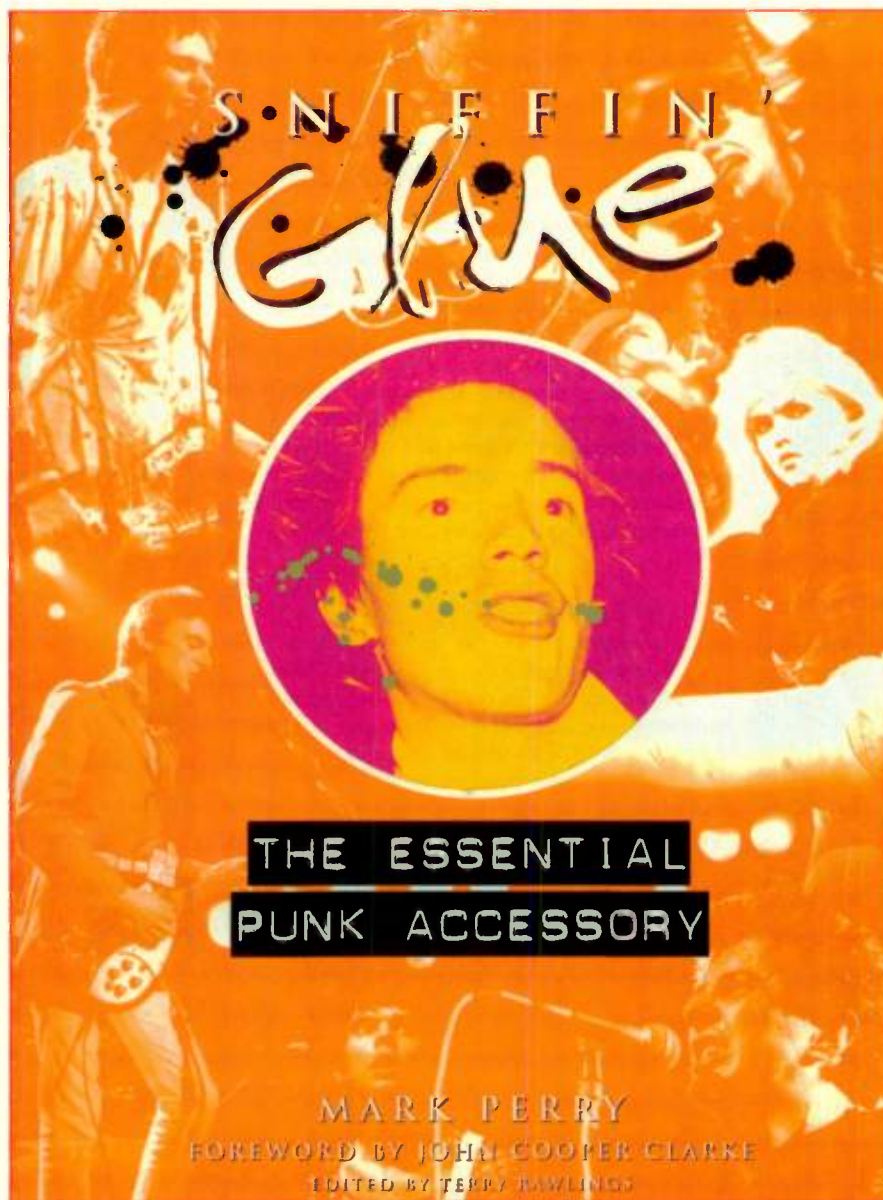


LAST NIGHT A DJ SAVED MY LIFE: THE HISTORY OF THE DISC JOCKEY

By Bill Brewster and Frank Broughton (Grove Press)

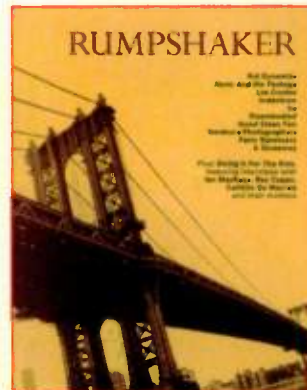
You know those annoying guys in baggy pants who cut into your dance floor boogie radius while they ogle the DJ's every move? Well, they finally have their very own bible, *Last Night A DJ Saved My Life*. In a mostly cleverly scribed testament to trainspotter and the men (the introduction includes the claim that "98 percent of DJs have a penis") who spin their vinyl-obsessed lives, UK music journalists Bill Brewster and Frank Broughton shed more light on the history of the DJ than most ravers would care to know. The book traces nascent DJ culture from early American radio hosts to Jamaican dance hall selectors, and from disco kings to hip-hop maestros and dance music impresarios. Although the tone is often overly effusive—i.e. "The shaman were his most resonant ancestors"—the book is incredibly detailed and well-researched, and includes some tasty quotes from DJ superstars like Paul Oakenfold and David Morales. An essential read for even the penis-lacking two percent. »»Amanda Nowinski





The first punk fanzine ever has returned after 23 years—sort of. Mark Perry started publishing **Sniffin' Glue** in July, 1976, as a mimeographed and stapled bunch of typewriting about his favorite punk bands (the first issue includes reviews of The Ramones, The Stranglers, Eddie & The Hot Rods, Television and the pre-Clash band The 101'ers; there literally wasn't anything else to write about yet). By the third issue, he'd seen the as-yet-unrecorded Sex Pistols and was raving about them; a few months later, Perry formed his still-semi-active band Alternative TV; and by the summer of 1977, **Sniffin' Glue**—which had become the essential guide for London punk scenesters—had burned out and shut down, leaving hundreds of other zines that looked and read the same way to follow its example. **Sniffin' Glue: The Essential Punk Accessory** (Sanctuary) collects all 15 original issues, along with a long essay by Perry about what was going on in the chaotic year of the zine's existence, illustrated with you-are-there punk photographs by Jill Furmanovsky and others. It's not that nobody else ever matched **Glue's** low-attention-span blur of enthusiasm, rage and occasional brute eloquence; it's that nearly every punk zine writer since then has been following its example, often more closely than they could guess.

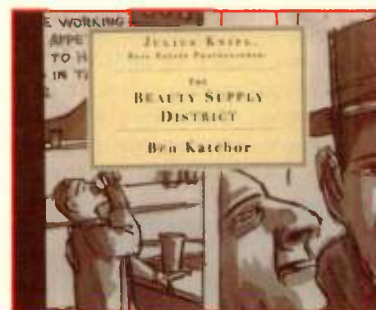
Reading the fourth issue of the hardcore zine **Rumpshaker** (\$4.00 from Eric Weiss, 72-38 65th Place, Glendale, NY 11385) in the light of **Sniffin' Glue** is pretty fascinating. Perry famously called for a flood of punk zines and records, and he got his wish; what **Rumpshaker** tries very hard to do (and usually succeeds) is to differ-entiate itself from the rest of the flood. It's several hundred pages long, about the length of the entire run of **Glue**, and consists almost entirely of interviews. Weiss's challenge to himself is to talk to some rather heavily

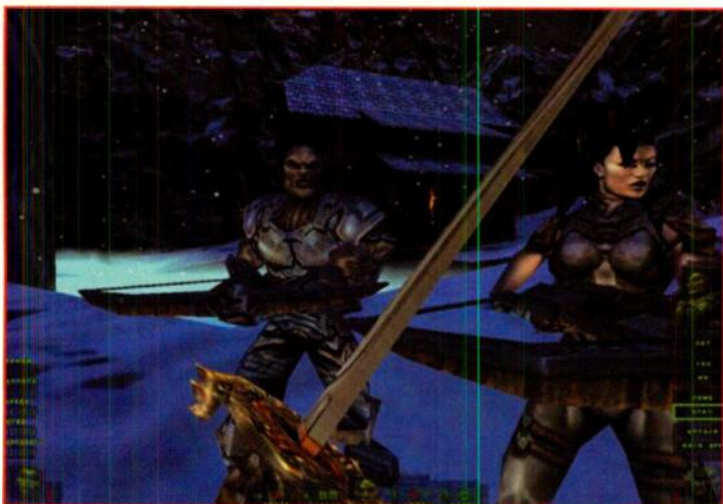


interviewed punks about things they haven't discussed in print before; the highlights of the issue are interviews with Fugazi's Ian MacKaye, Youth Of Today's Ray Cappo and Rainer Maria's Caithlin De Marrais—and their mothers. He also takes Disembodied to a tarot card reader, and provides a frighteningly dead-on target gallery of the moment's various strains of hardcore zine ("I sure can't wait to see Boy Sets Fire at this fest like the 17 others I've seen them at this summer"). The reviews are as obligatory and vague as most other zines, but **Glue** had that problem, too.

It's official: Ben Katchor is a genius of comics. He's one of the winners of this year's MacArthur Foundation "genius grants" of \$500,000, on the strength of both last year's graphic novel *The Jew of New York* and the new anthology *The Beauty Supply District* (Pantheon), a collection of his *Julius Knipl, Real Estate Photographer* comic strips. Katchor's been writing and drawing Knipl for well over a decade. During the brief period when no New York City newspaper was carrying the strip, Katchor made it available at hot dog stands. That's fitting: Katchor's work is devoted to a nearly-gone urban esthetic of

mid-20th-century convenience and ridiculous mercantile innovation, populated by perfumes with the smell of "basement laundromat at 2 a.m.," antique water-cooler bottles, and free-associative storefronts (like "corset salons that offer tropical fruit juice drinks and cantorial recordings"). He draws like he's trying to sketch distant memories before they disappear; faces and buildings are rendered with a few uneven strokes that recall the fine gradations of crumpled black-and-white photographs. The title story is a new 24-page piece that sustains the mood of Katchor's single-page strips, drifting surreally through an upper-middle-society concert, the life of an olive-jar designer and an out-of-business "symmetry shop."





DAIKATANA (Eidos Interactive) PC

After three years in development and countless boasts by legendary game designer John Romero, you wouldn't expect *Daikatana* to be one of the most drab, tedious and underwhelming games ever to occupy valuable MP3 space on your hard drive. Well, guess what—almost everything about *Daikatana* oozes mediocrity, with the occasional bits that are downright stink-o-rific. As Hiro Miyamoto, you're charged with chasing a time-traveling villain across four separate eras—25th century Kyoto, ancient Greece, medieval Norway and near-future San Francisco; each boasts a distinctive arsenal of weapons and a menagerie of foes. Along with the mystical sword known as the *Daikatana* at your disposal, you have two sidekicks, Superfly Johnson and Mikiko Ebihara, covering your backside. Sadly, what looks good on paper plays terribly on the screen, whether it's the uninspired graphics, silly weaponry, cliché plotline or the horribly monotonous (and at times out-and-out frustrating) level design. Passable by the standards of the late '90s, *Daikatana* fails to live up to today's action titles. This sword should stay sheathed. »»Steve Tilley



PERFECT DARK (Nintendo) N64

Hail Joanna Dark, heir to the James Bond/Goldeneye throne. It's high time the fashionably late, sexy British agent made an attempt to rescue Nintendo 64. Predictably, *Perfect Dark* is a first-person shooter with a hackneyed storyline full of grandiose schemes, mega-corporations and little green men. You're required to solve sticky missions using a mix of gunplay, ingenuity and high-tech gadgetry (roving cameras, night vision goggles, sniper sights). Stealth is rewarded, but why be brave when you've got a rocket launcher, silenced pistol or Dragon machine gun handy? Four reasons you can't



afford to pass it up: 40-plus weapons, programmable "Simulant" teammates/opponents, cooperative/counter-operative modes and unparalleled one to four player duels. Poor enemy Artificial Intelligence threatens to take a dump on Rare Ltd.'s *pièce de résistance*, but the sheer wealth of content on display overshadows minor gripes. Perfect? No, but not far from it. »»Scott Steinberg

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE (Activision) PC

Let's hear it for this bit of old-fashioned ultra-violence! In a sea of first-person shooters, *Soldier Of Fortune* may just be the most gratuitous use of blood-spurting, limb-blasting, skull-disintegrating mayhem ever seen in a video game. As mercenary John Mullins, it's your job to travel the globe in a bid to retrieve four stolen nukes and bring down the madman who wants to use them. Pretty standard stuff, except *SOF* makes use of a modified *Quake II* engine that allows for some gut-ripping special effects—literally. Weapons at your disposal include everything from your standard .45 pistol to a heavy machine gun that separates the men from the boys (and heads from necks, arms from shoulders and so on). Although it claims to be a tactical simulation, *Soldier Of Fortune* is far closer to the simplistic run-and-gun *Quake* family than it is to *Rogue Spear*. Still, there's something oddly refreshing about unleashing such visceral digital violence on legions of faceless baddies. It's not a fantastic game, but your droogs might like it. »»Steve Tilley



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER (Crave Entertainment)

DC/PSX/N64/Game Boy Color

Don't feel like busting a kneecap or shredding a forearm on the local concrete, eh? In *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*, you can have a go, risk-free, at any trick in the book within gorgeous, strikingly interactive environments. Assume the role of the legendary Hawk or any one of 10 skaters, including Chad Muska, Elissa Steamer and Kareem Campbell, while you're at it.

Performing tricks is a snap, but stringing together impressive combination

moves is an art form. Solo career mode, intense multiplayer romps and unlockable gear push the replay value to newfound heights. Try not to be floored by the hyper-realistic visuals when taking the crew through their paces. The silky smooth Dreamcast graphics engine keeps things chugging at top speeds. More than just a port, this disc easily clinches a nomination for wicked console game of the year. »»Scott Steinberg





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APARTMENT 26

15 "We used to have a little breakdancing crew," **KING BISCUIT TIME's** Steve Mason reminisced to the *London Times*, "and we tried a bit of graffiti, but...you used to get half way through and realize that you'd spell 'Bambaataa' wrong." While those hip-hop roots may show through the folk rockin' beats of The Beta Band—Mason's more well-known project—don't expect him to get old-school on your ass with King Biscuit's new *No Style* EP (Astralwerks). On melodic tracks like "I Walk The Earth," Mason opts for sparse, low-key, even romantic moments conjured with acoustic guitars and xylophones.

16 For his latest project, *Space Island* (Atlantic), Grateful Dead and Ratdog alumnus **ROB WASSERMAN** hooked up with an unlikely collaborator—Snoop Doggy Dogg/Tupac producer/engineer Dave Aron. "I...was exploring new musical paths. We got together and jammed; me on my bass, Dave on his drum machine," he says. "We hit it off musically and personally. I decided that this would be my next album—my melodies along with Dave's drum grooves." Hear the results on "Got To Rock."

17 In the past, **BÉLA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES** followed a self-imposed ban on guest musicians—all the instruments had to be played by full-time bandmembers. But when it came time to record *Outbound* (Columbia), they pulled out all the stops. "Our new rule...was to open the doors to guests who could flesh out and color the tunes," says Fleck. "We've never done a record like this before. We recorded as a quartet but then went hog wild bringing in our guests to put meat on the bare bones." Go hog wild yourself to the tune of "Zona Mona." (See Reviews p. 53.)

18 The five years since their self-titled debut have not exactly been kind to **ELASTICA**. Endless lineup changes, lawsuits and interband turmoil have dogged the band, preventing them from releasing a proper follow-up. Now that follow-up, *The Menace* (Atlantic)—featuring "Mad Dog"—is ready, and bandleader Justine Frischmann just wants to get things underway with the new group. "I'm really pleased with *The Menace* but I'm really looking forward to moving on and writing from scratch with the band as it is now," she says. "It's ironic that after all the delays, the LP was actually recorded really quickly—in six weeks."

19 Like its Ozzfest cohort Static-X, **APARTMENT 26** gives the heavy metal sound a shiny electronic makeover, combining crashing guitars with skittering breakbeats and sequences. As a result, says singer Biff Butler (son of Black Sabbath's Geezer), the band has amassed a rather eclectic fanbase. "At our shows," he says, "there are kids moshing and headbanging alongside kids who are dancing like they're at a rave. That's the kind of culture we're into." "Slicedbeats" appears on their Hollywood debut. *Hallucinating*.



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1 Tracks like "Now That It's Over" on Portland trio **EVERCLEAR's** new LP, *Songs From An American Movie Vol. 1: Learning How To Smile* (Capitol)—part of a two-volume set that's not yet completed—were originally conceived as songs for frontman Art Alexakis's solo project. Says the singer, "I knew I wanted to do something different from Everclear. The songs I wrote were very melodic, but when I started writing the lyrics, they sounded like Everclear, and I wasn't really happy with the way the music was turning out. When the band started working on it, it was obvious it should be an Everclear album." (See Cover Story p. 42.)

2 The first incarnations of the Los Angeles pop-rock quartet **TSAR** were concept-oriented party bands. The band's current manifestation takes things a bit more seriously: "Our songs are about liberation," says singer/guitarist Jeff Whalen. On tracks like "I Don't Wanna Break-Up," from their self-titled debut on Hollywood Records, the band still indulges in a little silliness, though. Bassist Jeff Solomon snickers, "We've tried to make an album where every song is the best song you've ever heard. And mommy says we've done it!"

3 The hard-rocking British quintet **SUNNA** took shape over the course of several varied experiences in singer Jon Harris's life; from heavy boozing during world travels to joining a kibbutz to several failed band experiments and working on a *Massive Attack* album. According to Harris, the hard living had a definite effect on his writing: "I think a lot of my songs are quite uplifting, but they are inspired by, shall we say, dark events. Anger is a great motivation for songwriting—come to think of it, drugs are pretty effective too." "Power Struggle" is from the band's Melankolic-Astralwerks debut, *One Minute Science*.

4 According to lead singer Stephen Richards, once **TAPROOT** "realized that rapcore was probably going to be just kind of a fad," the Michigan-based foursome shifted gears from drum machine-backed rap to what Richards likes to call "heavy alternative." "Again & Again," from the band's debut, *Gift*, takes cues from Deftones and Korn and leaves in its wake the venomous threats of Fred Durst, who reportedly promised infant mortality to the newborn band when they opted to sign with Velvet Hammer Atlantic instead of Durst's Interscope-distributed imprint. (See Best New Music p. 25.)



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A GUY CALLED GERALD



TOM MAXWELL



ERIC MINGUS

10 Acid house and drum 'n' bass founding father **A GUY CALLED GERALD** is finally releasing *Essence* (Studio K7), the follow-up to his 1995 release, *Black Secret Technology*. Gerald is Gerald Simpson, who now resides in New York City. He was born and raised in Manchester, England, however, and was a member of early house group 808 State before establishing his own moniker and career. "Humanity" features Lamb's Louise Rhodes. (See Quick Fix p. 18.)

11 Ex-Squirrel Nut Zippier **TOM MAXWELL** kicks off his solo career with *Samsara*, released on his new label of the same name. "Samsara is a Buddhist term essentially describing the endless cycle of desire and dissatisfaction," said Maxwell, during a speech addressing his departure from The Nut Zippers and Mammoth, a Disney-owned record label, given at CMJ's Atlanta Music Marathon. "I felt properly schooled in this unhappy condition, and I assure you there is no dearth of material on the subject." "Can't Sleep" is some of that material. (See Quick Fix p. 14.)

12 *Horrorscope* (RCA), the follow-up to **EVE 6**'s self-titled debut, launches another round of lyric-driven punk-pop, fusing the old with the new. "I actually wrote the first version of 'Promise,' or at least a rough draft of it, two and a half years ago," singer/bassist Max Collins explains. Though the lyrics still feature some good old teen angst, guitarist Jon Siebels says that the band has grown up musically: "Horrorscope definitely sounds like us, but its layering has taken a different route this time." (See Review p. 53.)

13 **VIRGINWOOL** hails from Orlando, but residing in the Sunshine State doesn't mean the bandmembers are disciples of the Backstreet ilk. Garnering a fanbase throughout the Southeast, the quartet has shared the stage with other "non-boy-band rock types," such as Matchbox Twenty, Creed, Seven Mary Three and Sister Hazel. "Nevermind Her Hips," off the band's Breaking-Atlantic debut, *Open Heart Surgery*, demonstrates the power pop sensibilities the group captured under the guidance of producer Brad Wood, who has steered the work of artists like Liz Phair and Smashing Pumpkins.

14 Jazz pioneer Charles Mingus was known as much for his fierceness as he was for his brilliance. So it's fitting that his son **ERIC MINGUS**—whose deep-and-smooth vocals and dynamic double-bass playing can be heard on "Romantic Fool," from his Some Records debut *Um...Er...Uh...*—projects a boldness all his own. The younger Mingus tells it like he sees it. "Just figure out what's important to you," he says. "Find the things that matter most to you. Wear what you like. Listen to what you want to hear. And try something outside the radar once in a while."



NEVE



LA LEY



SUNNA

5 "There's nothing worse than a writer with nothing to say," says Mitch Allan, whose writing and voice adorn the tracks on Baltimore quartet **SR-71**'s RCA debut, *Now You See Inside*. "I get scared to death of not conveying my point," Allan's point, which he layers over the band's power-popping rock 'n' effin' roll, is all about brutal honesty—whether or not people want to hear it. "People tip-toe around so often," he explains, "but you can't have any integrity without occasionally prying people off." Curious if he'll piss you off? Check out "Right Now (Remix)." **Right Now (Remix)**

6 **NEVE**—singer/guitarist John Stephens, guitarist/songwriter Michael Raphael, bassist Tommy Gruber and drummer Brian Bunwell—have just released their eponymous debut album (Columbia). "Michael and I come from two different worlds," says Stephens. "He was raised on the guitar rock of Aerosmith, while I grew up listening to stuff like New Order and Echo & The Bunnymen. Our songwriting reflects those disparate influences, blending aggressive guitars with a background of various layers and textures." Check that hybrid on the track "Digital On," an ode to media saturation. **Digital On**

7 **NELLY FURTADO**, raised in Victoria, British Columbia by Portuguese parents, experienced the thrills of girl-bonding long before she hopped on the Lilith Fair tour bus. "I went through my little girl-gang thing," she says. "But the worst thing we ever did was throw rocks at the windows of school buses parked in abandoned lots." "Turn Off the Light," from her genre-straddling debut album, *Whoa Nelly!* (DreamWorks), blends influences ranging from De La Soul to Jeff Buckley to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan into a hip-hop/rock/world mélange. **Turn Off the Light**

8 **LA LEY** has evolved quite a bit since the band was founded as a five-piece in Santiago, Chile in 1988. Currently living in Mexico, the now-three-piece (singer Beto Cuevas, drummer Mauricio Claveria and guitarist Pedro Frugone), has long been one of the top draws in Latin America. *Uno* (WEA Latina) promises to introduce them to more Anglos. "When something hits like Ricky Martin or the 'Macarena,' it gives the opportunity to many artists to present their material and become well-known." Check "Fuera De Mi" for a taste of their electronic-influenced sound. (See On The Verge p. 20.) **Fuera De Mi**

9 Former Deee-Lite DJ **TOWA TEI** kept himself busy both in-between the bouncy groove-pop group's records and after they called it quits. Besides remixing and producing tracks for the likes of Shonen Knife and Kahimi Karie, he's been steadily releasing smart solo outings that fuse bossa nova and jazz with dance music. Worried not though—he hasn't gotten all serious on us. "Disc jockeys have been researching how records work for people to dance," he says. "But there's a danger in the music being too functional. Before it's functional, music has to be fun." His new LP, *Last Century Modern* (Elektra), features "Congratulations!" **Congratulations!**

Due to a production error, the Blue Man Group song "Uine Live Wire" on the July CD was mistakenly identified as "Rods And Cones."

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STORY: ZAC CRAIN PHOTOS: BARRON LUDLUM



WHITE MINIVANS AT RECYCLED BOOKS AND RECORDS—MUST BE A DENTON THING.

Denton, Texas, located about 30 miles north of Dallas, doesn't seem like anything special: Not much to look at, only a little more to do, and a population consisting of college students and those trying to bilk them out of their parents' money. The local government resembles the town meeting scenes from *Hoosiers*, and going to a movie means a road trip. Sure, it's not quite as bad as the desolate vistas pictured in *Boys Don't Cry* (much of which was shot on the outskirts of the city), but it's got a similar feel.

Yet somehow, in these less-than-optimal conditions, a creative, do-it-yourself-and-fuck-all-the-rest community has flourished in Denton. It all began in 1979, when Brave Combo (featured in David Byrne's film *True Stories*) hit the Denton scene, paving the way for two decades of bizarre Denton musicality. While bands in the Dallas/Forth Worth area seem content to do everything by the books, Denton natives like Budapest One and Corn Mo wrote their own, then threw that out as well.

Of course, even though much of Denton's creative community is part of a rebel alliance, it still revolves around its love/hate relationship with the University of North Texas. Many musicians come to town for the school's vaunted jazz program (and subsequently quit), and many visual artists align with the **Good/Bad Art Collective** (120 Exposition, 591-1725), a splinter faction of innovative artists with roots at the University. (In Denton, however, it's not enough to just be in a band or work as an artist—you have to be in two or three bands and spend your spare time writing plays and making found-object

sculptures.)

Much of the city's entertainment indirectly revolves around the UNT campus. The corridor of bars and restaurants located just off campus at the corner of Fry and West Hickory draws in all types of Denton residents, from khaki-sporting students to black-clad hipsters who are too cool for school, both literally and figuratively. Though not the hippest of night spots—the CD changer at **Cool Beans** (1210 W. Hickory, 382-7025) is stuck in the grunge years—the area is teeming with people in various states of inebriation on most nights of the week. You'll find some hanging outside, like the punk kids at **The Tomato** (1226 W. Hickory, 383-1111).

Just up the street is **Rick's Place** (125 Avenue A, 382-4141), a venue that generally caters to the frat/sorority crowd, but is capable of putting together some top-notch lineups on occasion, such as the two-night, simply titled "Indie Rock Fest" last March, featuring almost every one of Denton's worthwhile bands.

If you really want to see what a rock show (or anything else) in Denton is all about, your best bets are located farther from campus. In the shadow of the distinctive Morrison's Corn-Kits sign is **Rubber Gloves Rehearsal Studios** (411 E. Sycamore, 387-7781), originally set up as a BYOB joint without a parking lot after the demise of the beloved, ramshackle Argo a few years ago. Perhaps out of necessity, Rubber Gloves has become the area's best-booked venue; catch Quasi, Solex, The Delta 72, or Denton's own Centro-matic, Mandarin, Sub Oslo, Little Grizzly, Stumptone, The Falcon Project, The Cock Outs, recent

LOCAL LOGIC DENTON'S BEST

SELECTION OF OLD PLAYBOYS:

Treasure Aisles (1220 W. Hickory, 484-6161).

PLACE TO SEE SOMEONE DRESSED AS THE GHOST OF A REVOLUTIONARY WAR HERO:

Good/Bad Art Collective (120 Exposition).

SEMINAL NATIVE POLKA-NEW WAVE ROCK BAND:

Brave Combo.

SOMEWHAT SUGGESTIVELY NAMED NEIGHBORING CITY:

Flower Mound.

COLLECTION OF DRUNKEN FRAT BOYS:

Rick's Place (125 Avenue A).

COLLECTION OF DRUNKEN FORMER FRAT BOYS:

Lucky Lou's (1207 W. Hickory).

VENUE TO SEE A TOURING BAND:

Rubber Gloves Rehearsal Studios (411 E. Sycamore).

LOCAL MUSIC COMPILATION:

Band-kits: A Collection Of Music From Denton, TX Ca. 2000 (Quality Park, www.qualityparkrecs.com).

PLACE TO SEE A MOVIE:

Anywhere else.

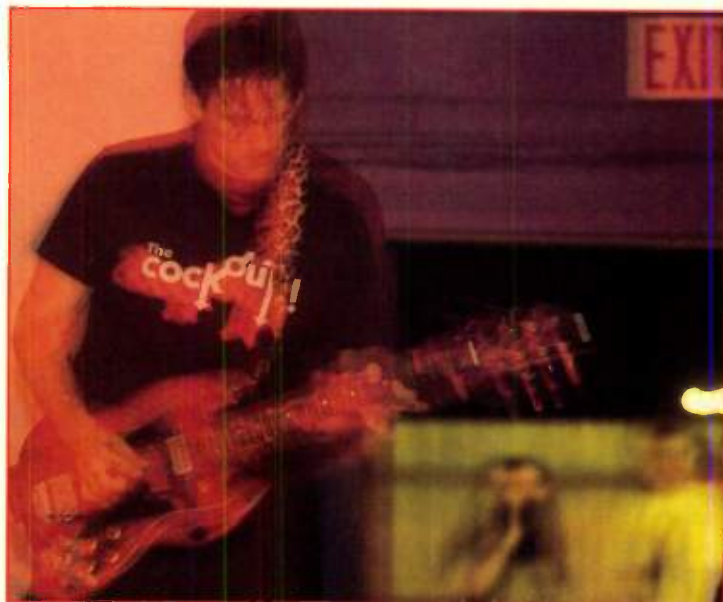
Bella Union signees Lift To Experience, and a small (but hopeful) collection of electronic musicians here. To the chagrin of a few playahating purists, it now boasts a bar and a parking lot.

Recycled Books And Records (200 N. Locust, 566-5688) is perhaps the best used book and record store in North Texas, with employees who know what they have, yet rarely charge you like they do. These are the kind of people who spend their days off in other record stores, hunting down German-import Bowie singles and no-wave rarities. More often than not, you can stop by the store twice in the same week and still find treasures you didn't know you needed.

Dan's Bar (119 S. Elm, 891-1549) is a primary haunt for Denton's best and brightest—and sometimes, drunkest. This is the place to catch ugly-beautiful, beer-fueled sets by Slobberbone, Union Camp and other local favorites. Along with Rubber Gloves, Dan's is a strong supporter of the Good/Bad Art Collective, hosting many of the group's monthly benefits. At one time or another, they've included: a staged space rock vs. roots rock battle that was taken so seriously, it was written up in the local paper; sign-up sheets allowing audience members to join a band on the instrument of their choice during a set; and performers forced to come up with impromptu melodies for lyrics written by the crowd and fed to them via teleprompters. The best of all is the yearly Rock Lottery, which randomly teams 20 or so musicians in makeshift bands during an a.m. drawing. By that evening, each new band has to come up with a 15-minute set of original material. It sounds like a train wreck, and sometimes it is, but it's never ceased to amaze.

All numbers listed are in the 940 area code.

Dallas Observer music editor Zac Crain is a notorious local hanger-on who's never lived in Denton.



THE COCK-OUTS ROCK AT RUBBER GLOVES.



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FRAT KIND AT LUCKY LOU'S.



WATCH OUT FOR THE ARTY TYPES AT DAN'S BAR.

DINING OUT: DENTON

One aspect of Denton that still lags behind is dining out—but you can forego packing a lunch if you know where to look:

- Grab a decent burger at **Denton County Burger Company** (113 W. Hickory, 383-1022), where they still make cheeseburgers with shredded cheese—damn straight.
- Eating Mexican food north of San Antonio is often pointless, but **Mazatlan Restaurant** (1928 N. Ruddell, 566-1718) and **El Matador** (720 W. University, 387-1137) offer interesting testimony for the defense. Both seem to be located in the land that time forgot (or at least the land that neglected to acknowledge 1960 through the present), with menus, décor and sometimes clientele that hasn't changed a bit since 1955.
- **Mr. Chopsticks** (1120 W. Hickory, 382-5437) has the finest Asian

cuisine in town. It's one of the few places in Denton where you can get kung pao chicken (cheap), and if you hang around long enough, you'll probably end up with a friend who works there—cheap is good, but free is even better.

- **Mr. Gatti's Pizza On The Square** (118 W. Oak, 383-0944) isn't just pizza: It was home to all-ages rock shows for years until the authorities realized that the pizza wasn't good enough to attract that many people to the joint's cramped, sweaty basement. After busting some underage drinkers and limiting the capacity to that of an average walk-in closet, The Man shut the shows down—but recently, the basement stage opened again, and it's back to being the best place to see stripped-down sets in a stripped-down setting.

DURAN DURAN

STORY: LORI MAJEWSKI
ILLUSTRATION: NICHOLAS MEOLA

It was 1985, the height of Duran Duran fever, and at age 14 I was seriously afflicted. Like other Duranies (the often misspelled term for the band's fans) my Weehawken, New Jersey friends and I proudly displayed our allegiance: Creative arrangements of pins bearing the likenesses of Simon, Nick, John, Roger and Andy adorned our acid-washed jean jackets, our bedroom walls were plastered with posters of them smiling or pouting in their "new-romantic" gear and expensive Antony Price suits, and our record collections featured every 12-inch Duran dance mix ever pressed on vinyl.

Unbeknownst to our parents, we cut school to catch Greyhound buses to concerts in cities hours away. We also bombarded local video channel U-68 with hundreds of calls daily, begging to profess our love for the Fab Five on air. Unbelievably, they let us: Each of us dressed in vintage cardigans with a button of our favorite member pinned to it, and we introduced our favorite video, "New Moon On Monday" (all the guys looked hot in it—even Andy).

To prove we were unquestionably their biggest fans, my girlfriends and I drank only Coca-Cola—the official sponsor of Duran's 1984 Tiger Tour. But no amount of cola-fueled obsessing could have prepared me for the first time I came face to face with my idols. While camping out for two nights to ensure prime seats at Duran's 1987 New York concert at the Beacon Theater, my girlfriends and I were informed by fellow fans where the guys would be staying in town—Le Parker Meridien. I dressed up in my all-black best (I figured they wouldn't take me seriously if I wore one of my D2 tees), moussed my hair to new heights, and loaded my camera.

Upon arrival, I was sorely disappointed: 50 girls were already packed into the posh, bustling hotel lobby, and word was that the love of my life, bassist John Taylor, wasn't even staying there. Well, getting to personally tell Simon LeBon that I coveted his black leather motorcycle jacket was still a thrill. As their limo pulled away, I burst into tears. (And that was just foreshadowing: A week later I encountered John Taylor himself outside a Manhattan recording studio. When his car pulled away, I promptly vomited on the sidewalk.)

From then on, I turned up at every New York-area hotel, awards show and television taping that boasted a visit from Duran, often standing outside for hours in sub-zero weather—all to see a bunch of guys who'd grace my presence for an average of five seconds.

As the '80s became the '90s, Duran mania waned. This was good (fewer fans meant more personal time with the guys) and bad (upsettingly, my friends were among those who lost interest).

But I soldiered on. When Duran's official fan club closed in 1990, I started my own. Being in the fan loop, I garnered names of Duranies around the world and formed a mailing list.

Ultimately, more than 500 Duranies subscribed to my quarterly, *Too Much Information: The Definitive Duranzine*. My interviews with the



An aspiring music journalist since age 11, I'd finally found a way to be on a first-name basis with Simon, John, Nick and Warren.

band were remarkably insightful—in 1996, John Taylor intimated to me that he was about to split, which he did, sadly, in January of 1997. But the zine was still a dream come true on so many levels: An aspiring music journalist since age 11, I'd finally found a way to be on a first-name basis with Simon, John, Nick Rhodes and Warren Cuccurullo.

I continued editing the zine after college. Some days I felt a little embarrassed about how attached I still was to my childhood obsession, but my experience landed me a job at the teen magazine *YM*, which led to my current position, entertainment director of *Teen People*. A job like this—interviewing and discovering the likes of Britney and 'N Sync—keeps you feeling young forever, which is exactly why you'll find me braving the unbearable New York summer heat to stand in line at the Virgin Megastore for Duran Duran to autograph my copy of *Pop Trash*, their twelfth album. While I do find it hard to watch them perform without my beloved JT, I still love their music.

Recently, after a couple of Backstreet Boys announced their plans to marry their girlfriends, *USA Today* asked me if I thought their sales would be affected. It won't majorly impact sales, I told them. The music is what really matters. The next day, as I read my quotes in the paper, I thought, Who am I kidding? When Simon said "I do" in December of 1985, I wore black to school for a week. And he wasn't even my favorite.

"Save A Prayer" for Lori Majewski, entertainment director at *Teen People*.

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