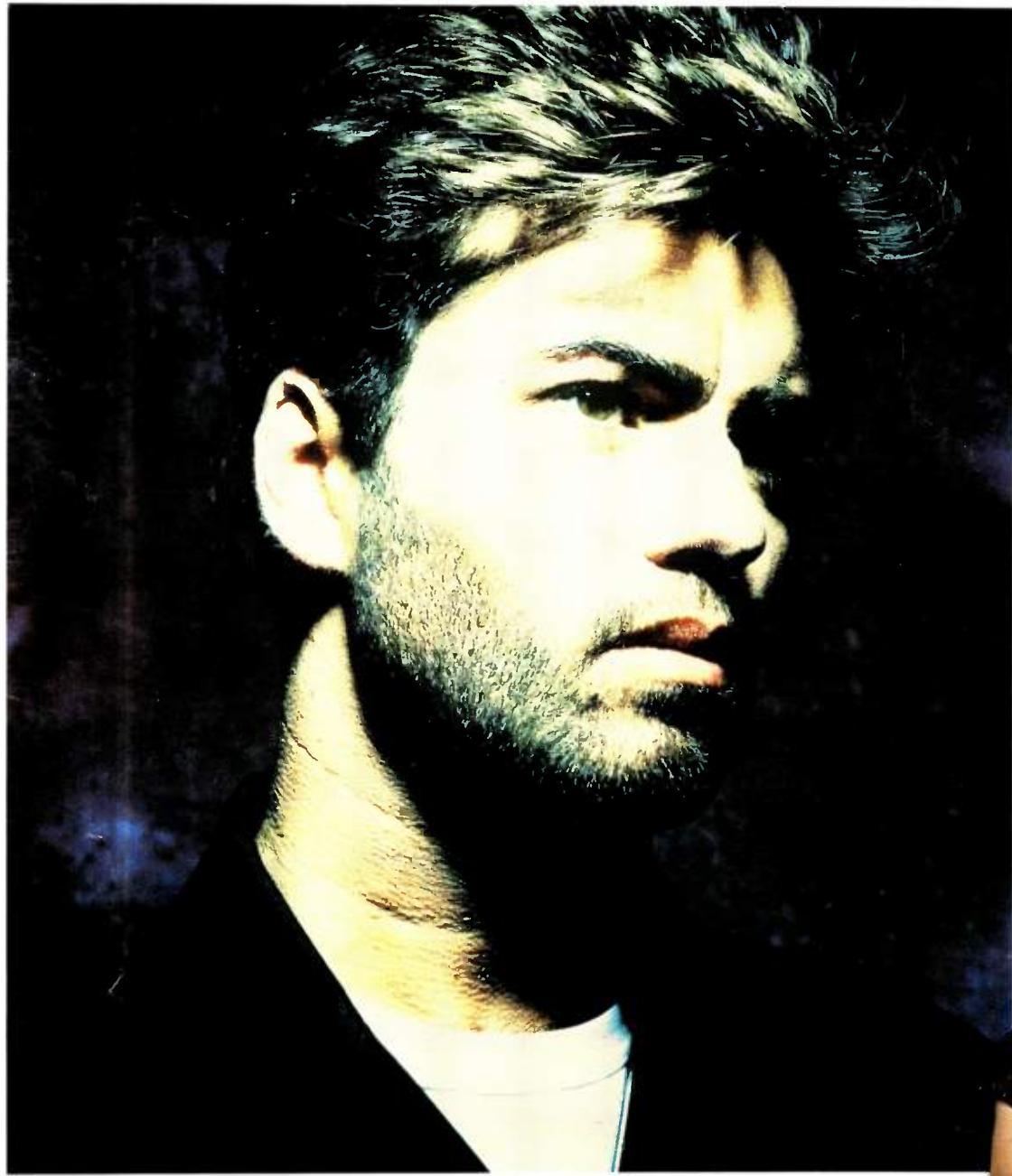


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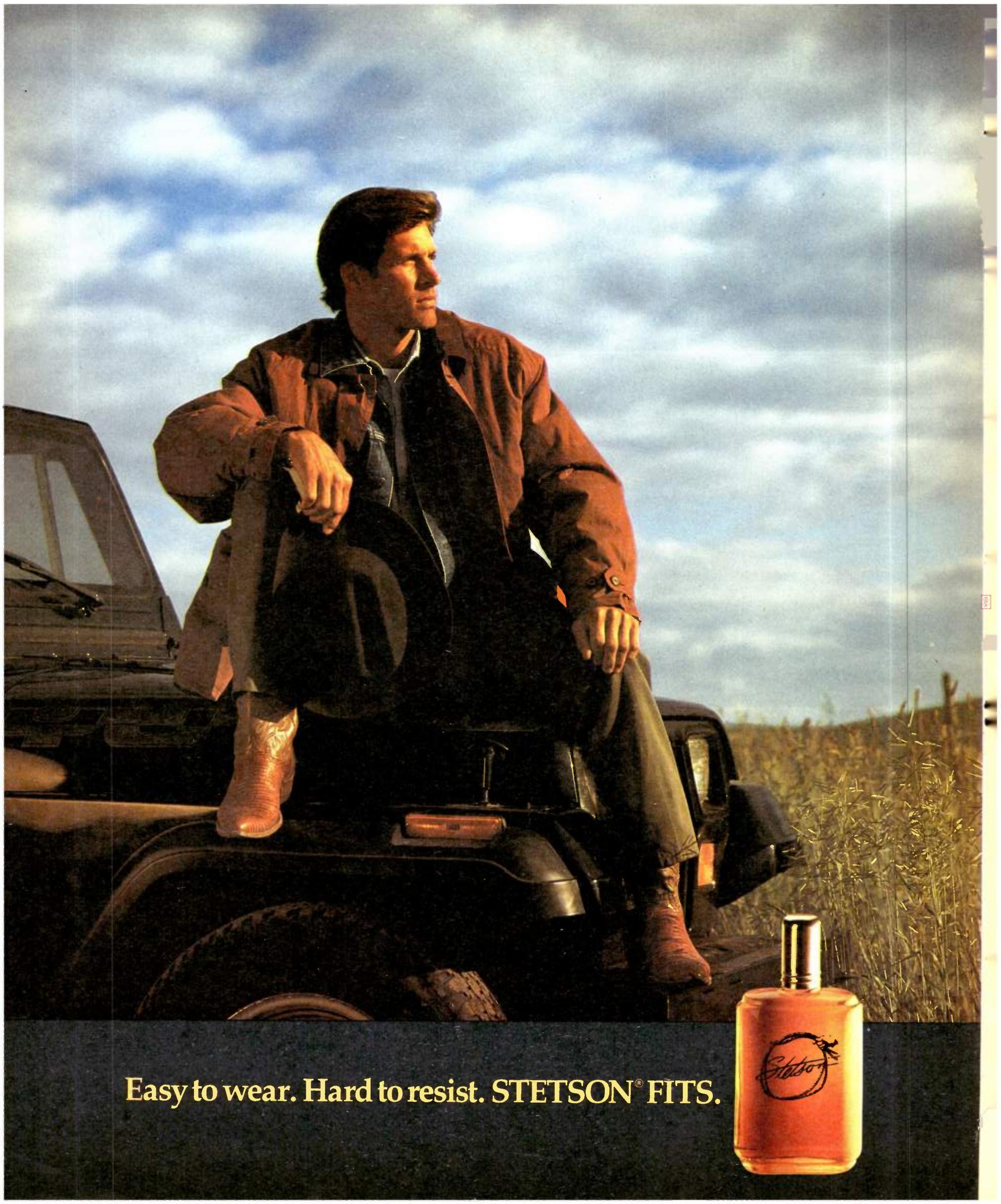
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ALICE ARNOLD, AC/DC BY TERRY O'NEILL,
THE REPLACEMENTS BY RON WOLFSON

Erasurehead

As I was reading your July issue recently (M.E. 149), I came across some information I found very interesting. In the "Look Hear" column by Kerry Doole I read about Erasure's video *Live Wild*. I'm a great fan of theirs, and attended their concert. The stage show was excellent, not to mention the music.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could tell me how I can get ahold of this video.

Megan Morrison
Cedar Valley, ON

Editor's note: As mentioned in the column, the video was released on Warner/Reprise video, and should be available at your local record store or, failing that, through Warner Music Canada.

Ghouls And Grave-robbers

The tragic death of Stevie Ray Vaughan, sad as it was, provided me with the opportunity to express something that has been on my mind for quite some time. First of all, it is sad when anybody dies, and I feel that the deaths of the other four men in the helicopter — the pilot and three members of Eric Clapton's staff — are no less tragic, even though they were not "stars" and were strangers to the public eye. I thus entreat everyone to not forget them or downplay their significance as human beings.

But the saddest thing to me is that we must now be forced to undergo the usual pattern that has been shown time and time again when things like this have happened. First, the ghouls and graverobbers at record companies and merchandising corporations, in an attempt to capitalize on Vaughan's untimely demise, will release or rerelease every scrap of music that was even remotely connected with him, and plaster his name and likeness on everything they can think of. Plus, a million jerks out there who had never heard of

him are now buying his records by the crate load — just because he's dead. That will make him richer and more famous than he ever was when he was alive.

Matthew M. Yenkala
Phoenix, AZ

The Shame!

Thank heaven for small mercies. I was delighted to learn in M.E. 152 that Poison have pledged never to write songs about society and politics. "I don't know how they work, so it would be hypocritical of me to sing about them," said Bret Michaels.

Given the mind-boggling banality of such Poison songs as "Unskinny Bop" and "Talk Dirty To Me," we should be grateful that we're spared their insights into the Gulf crisis or the destruction of the rain forests.

And imagine being really proud of "Every Rose Has Its Thorn." If, as Michaels claims, its success opened the door for all those sappy, wimpy acoustic rock ballads, he should be feeling shame, not pride.

R. Sennick
Houston, TX

Elvis Is Dead

I've got something to say about Kerry Doole's review of

Living Colour's *Time's Up*. I'll admit that "Elvis Is Dead" is mean-spirited, but the anger is aimed at all those fanatics and Elvis worshipers out there. I'm talking about those who claim to have seen Elvis pumping gas or shopping at their local mall. There are some people who are in desperate need of a swift kick in the butt, and this song might help them back to reality.

As for how Living Colour would react to a white band slagging one of their black heroes, I'll say this: Freedom of speech is in the First Amendment; and no one is screaming about seeing Jimi Hendrix riding roller skates in Central Park. It's not a black and white issue, anyway.

Hey, Elvis was great, and all musicians today owe him a great deal, but let's face it — Elvis is dead. So, like Little Richard said, "Be my guest and let him rest."

Chuck Brown
Lubbock, TX

Angelic Appeal

On behalf of everyone at the Angel Appeal, thank you very much for the advertising support your magazine so generously donated to the *Nobody's Child* album at the request of

Warner Records. As you know, the profits from the album will enable us to continue our work renovating orphanages in Romania, providing medical supplies and also in the battle against the spread of AIDS and other infectious diseases. These children need help, and they need it now.

It is not everyone who responds so quickly and positively, and we thank you sincerely.

Olivia and George Harrison
Los Angeles, CA

Editor's note: Those wishing to contribute to the Romanian Angel Appeal can send their cheques to 7400 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90036.

Glorious George

I just wanted to thank you for your review of George Jones' latest record in M.E. 152. It's not often that mainstream music magazines pay any attention to him, but it's my opinion that he possesses one of the finest singing voices on the planet, whether you like country or not. So I'm glad to know the new record is as strong as some of the old ones, and that that voice is still amazing after all these years.

Ruby Henson
Richmond, VA



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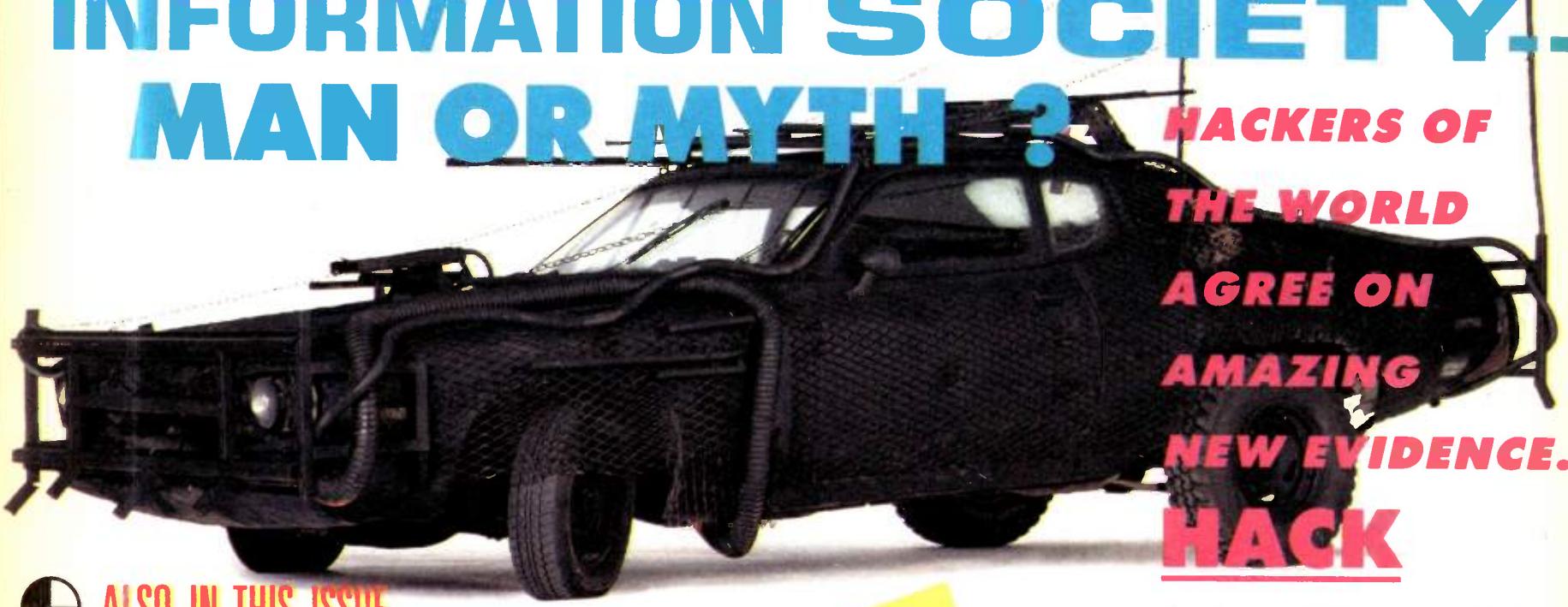
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THE RE GOES A REGULAR



Talk about the best-laid plans going astray. After successfully scouting out a Minneapolis bistro with a drool-inducing wine list as the ideal locale to loosen the lips of Replacements mainman Paul Westerberg, the visiting scribe is shocked to hear that Paul's been hitched to the wagon for a full month.

"Magazines always send us their drunks, their fuck-ups — people they think can relate to us!" Westerberg says. "You wouldn't believe the number of journalists we've had to carry out from Replacements interviews, and then their articles are always half full of descriptions of their hangovers!"

Westerberg playfully teases the drinking scribe while toying with his sixth bottle of non-alcoholic beer, seemingly enjoying the flight of the curveball

he's thrown with the revelation of his sobriety.

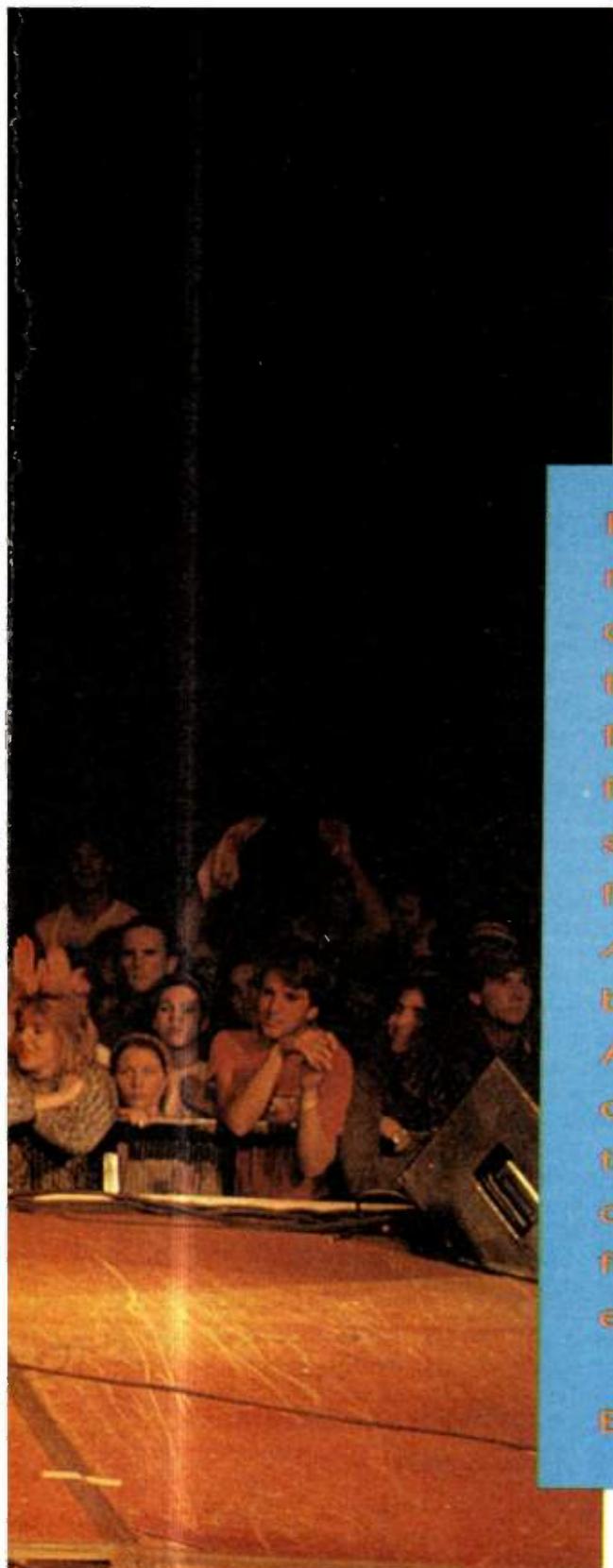
Normally, another rock 'n' roll star drying out is no major news, but The Replacements, along with The Pogues, have written the book on drunken rock 'n' roll revelry. The smell of booze soaks through their now lengthy catalogue — eight albums over their 11-year existence — and much of The Replacements' legendary live reputation is based on the sloppy, drunken spontaneity of their shows.

You could even make a case for analyzing Paul Westerberg's lyrics and music strictly in terms of the effects of excess grape and hops consumption on his muse. Various loud, obnoxious, sentimental, funny, melancholy and emotional, his songs mirror the moods of the heavy drinker, but they stem from the pen of a writer with an open heart, a sharp in-

tellect and a genuine flair for melody. Quite how sobriety will affect Westerberg's work remains a mystery, but it certainly hasn't diminished his conversational skills or his generous personality. Over the course of four hours split between a couple of his favorite haunts and a downtown stroll, he reflected candidly on, well, just about everything.

The key topic, of course, is *All Shook Down*, the new album from The Replacements that isn't, we discover, strictly a Replacements record.

"I made the record with a group of musicians, The Replacements among them," explains Paul. "There were only one or two songs on which all four Replacements played. I didn't want to call it 'The Replacements,' but you can't do that if the record company has 'The Replacements' on the contract."



years, I talked myself into being one-fourth of a unit, but, frankly, that got stifling," he says. "The other guys had songs they wanted to do, but in my estimation they weren't as good as mine. In a true democracy, I'd allow them to do some and put mine on hold, but then I thought 'Damn it. I'd rather just make my own music.' True democracy never works in a band."

Whether it's seen as a Paul Westerberg record or a Replacements record, *All Shook Down* is his best work yet; a superbly written collection of songs played by some stellar musicians. His supporting

Paul Westerberg's newfound sobriety and disinclination to tour in the near future have faithful Replacements fans shaking in their sneakers, but never fear: solo album or not, *All Shook Down* may be his finest work yet. And anyway, the current uncertainty in the Replacements camp is something he finds "dangerously exciting."

By Kerry Doole

cast includes saxophonist Steve Berlin (Los Lobos), drummer Charlie Drayton (Keith Richards), John Cale on viola, Heartbreaker Benmont Tench on keyboards, and Concrete Blonde's Johnette Napolitano on vocals on "My Little Problem," the raunchiest Replacements-style cut on the album.

Fervent Replacements fans who were disappointed in last year's overly produced outing, *Don't Tell A Soul*, may have anticipated or hoped for a return to the loud, raw guitar anthems that propelled the band to rock hero status through the '80s. But Paul wasn't about to cater to their craving. He does, however, agree with criticisms of *Don't Tell A Soul*.

"I think there was pressure on [co-producer] Matt Wallace from the label to glossify things," he explains, "then Chris Lord-Alge, the engineer, put this sheen on everything. He put the mustache on the Mona Lisa for us. It got us a Top 50 hit, but it crucified the effect of having one song that felt like this, one like that."

"I wanted the music to come first. To hell with the name. We're just four guys who play music. I hear songs that may sound differently than they can play. I'm not going to settle for their playing if I don't think it's fair to the song. Yes, it was difficult for the others [bassist Tommy Stinson, drummer Chris Mars, guitarist Slim Dunlap] to take. I told them first that I wanted to do it all alone, and that didn't fly, but I think they've come to grips with it now. I'm saying, 'The Replacements isn't a sacred cow. It's a name we use to play live, but let's break away from that.'"

Rather than signalling the inevitable death of the band, Westerberg's stance can be viewed as him flexing his muscles as leader, reminding his comrades that it is, in essence, his show. "Over the

As for this time around, Paul, who co-produced with Scott Litt, pledged to "strip it down and make it sound like the demos. You hear the songs and the voice; all that stuff in the background is the accompaniment, rather than featuring big, loud, hooky, instruments. This record is a reaction to being on tour and playing extremely loud for six months. The last thing I wanted to do was pick up an electric guitar and make some loud music. That's partially the reason it is more acoustic-based. I wrote more instinctively this time; spending days writing pages of things. Then I'd come up with a song title, melody and chord structure. I'd flip through pages of my prose and choose lines from here and there. Lyrically, four or five songs are literally on two pages in different orders."

Spare, haunting songs like "Sadly Beautiful," "All Shook Down" and "Bent Out Of Shape" (which sports the affecting lines, "I smell your hair on the clothes I wear, I miss your face") possess a melancholy, almost bleak ambience.

"What you hear there is a guy having a breakdown," confesses Paul. "Part of that is directly linked to why I'm not ready to tour just yet. In the past, I tended to live the songs out and feel I had to feel them as intensely as the day I wrote them. The idea of going out to perform this album is not a happy one. I have to find a way to distance myself from it; to convey the feeling without going back to the hotel room and slitting my wrists. But I'm better now than then!"

This soul-baring honesty is something Paul claims he's "always found necessary. My art comes first in my life, but it's hard to balance that with how I relate to my family, friends and band. I don't want to lose any of them, but I want to be true to my songs. I've made that decision, and it's scary!"

"I'd love to write a happy song. That's my goal in life right now. I've always told myself before that I couldn't be creative when I'm happy, but that's something I should change. I could be a fairly happy, charming person, but it's never reflected in the songs!"

The current uncertainty in The Replacements camp is something Paul finds exciting. "I thrive on the unknown; I'm addicted to danger," he says. "There'll probably be a Replacements tour, but maybe not. The record company hates it [the uncertainty]," he chuckles mischievously. "But now I'm going to tell the truth, which is that things are dangerously exciting again. I've lied for 30 years. I've stopped drinking now and hopefully I am changing a few things in my personal life, so I'm in no position to lie again."

"We've always been a band for rumors. 'Is Paul dying of cancer?' 'Is he crazy?' No. Paul is just tired of doing what he's done, but if you think I'm not going to tour, you're crazy. In a perfect world, we'd have enough money to go out and do whatever we wanted creatively, then come back and be a band. But what's unfortunate is that financially the other members of the group can't support themselves through the band unless we tour."

"I still don't know if I have the desire or courage to play a solo tour, but I'd like the option of playing with either The Replacements or more soulful players."

These are ominous words for the legions of die-hard 'Mats fans who really believe they are "the only band that matters." "Each record, there's a

new thing for the old fans to get mad about, but if I just listened to them, I'd never create anything," Paul says. "A few of the band members concern themselves too much with the old fans, but to me, The Replacements always represented daring risk-taking. It may be commercial suicide, but in a way it's heaven-sent that we've never really been commercially successful. It's not like I'm the goose killing the golden egg. Maybe the clay egg!"

Westerberg openly admits that critical raves and

who read, rather than just like a big noise," he says. "Four years ago, the typical Replacements fan was a guy in college who drank too much and didn't have a girlfriend. We get more female fans now, but I could get into trouble talking about that! I'm willing to show a more female side, whereas most rockers who come on as macho seem false. All the women I've ever known are attracted to men who are man enough to be gentle. Hey, where's that waitress bitch?"

responsible" for influencing fans to get under the influence.

"I've seen horror shows at our gigs where we tended to attract a crowd that would use us as examples for their own problems — 'If he can get as far as he is being so fucked up, there's hope for me.' Anyone thinking that is in for a depressing, ugly, scary lesson."

Westerberg remains suspicious of celebs using their status to preach. "If they want to do good in their minds, OK, but to me it's laughable. Fine, if you're politically oriented, but I'd rather hear you write a catchier song. Make up your mind, buddy!"

To Paul, a catchy song is one of life's lasting joys. "I love melody and the feeling words convey. I don't like rhythm and groove-oriented music, and that seems to be the music of the day."

The Replacements still see themselves as mavericks in the music biz. "We've never really been part of anything," he says. "We were too young to be punks and way too young to be in a classic rock band, and now we're too old to be the Pixies. We have a mixture of classic things, but with an attitude that wouldn't have survived in the '60s. We'd have been the garage band that played the dance shut down by the police! We were seen as a punk band because basically we drank too much, had a good time and were a bit obnoxious. We're dreamers who lucked out and somehow got a little skill along the way. Now, we'll never be the young new hope, and we're glad we're past that. Paranoia sets in when you're the critics' next big thing."

"The Replacements could have been very successful if we'd been a little smarter or a little dumber, but we were always in the middle. We'd never want anyone to tell us what to do, but we didn't know what to do on our own. The door has been open, but we've been climbing up the building to get through the window because we don't trust who is waiting behind the door!"

The Replacements have definitely been one of the most influential bands of the '80s, inspiring a whole generation of guitar-bashing rockers. "Snot-nosed garage bands will go out of their way to write songs about us, or me in particular," Paul maintains. "They cop our attitude, they've got the drinking, they do silly covers, they switch instruments, but they don't have the songs."

Not that Westerberg considers helping out younger bands to be beneath him, though. He gets positively animated when discussing The Leatherwoods, a Minneapolis group he's begun producing. "They have great elements they just need to bring together," he says.

In turn, Paul remains a fan of some of his early rock 'n' role models. "We played a gig in New York with Keith Richards on our last tour," he recalls. "They didn't want us hanging around backstage, but I snuck in and got a polaroid of me and Keith. Course he's looking at me like I'm the guy who sweeps up! Hey, we've always worshipped the dinosaurs we were supposed to hate. We loved Rod Stewart, The Stones, Led Zeppelin!"

And just as those rockers keep rolling on, so will Paul Westerberg. "I really don't know what's in the near future for The Replacements, but I can see us with snow white hair, our guts hanging over our trousers, playing 'Bastards Of Young' in a lounge somewhere in 2006."

Can we buy tickets now? **me**

"The Replacements could have been very successful if we'd been a little smarter or a little dumber, but we were always in the middle."

obsessive fans haven't exactly had his band threatening to go platinum. Spying Jon Bon Jovi on the cover of *M.E.*, he queries, "How many critical raves has he had? Yeah, I might trade bank accounts, but I wouldn't want those pants!"

A wee feud seems to be simmering between the Jersey poodle and the Midwest rocker. "I saw The Replacements on the cover of *Musician* magazine with the headline 'The Last Great Band Of The '80s.' Yeah, right. I never heard of these guys," sneered Jon Bon Jovi, the embodiment of the "phony rock 'n' roll" The Replacements slagged on "Seen Your Video."

Paul Westerberg attracts a different kind of admirer, that's for sure. "I hate to say it, but we're getting more sensitive types now; people who are smart,



The Replacements' reputation for drunken debauchery persists, however. "Some women have this image of the guy who swings from chandeliers. One journalist came to interview us just after covering a convention of 350,000 Hell's Angels. All her girlfriends phoned to see if she was all right, but they were more worried about us. I couldn't believe it. What the f*** have we created here?"

His chandelier-swinging days are over now, Paul hopes. "I've been drinking since I was 13," he states. "It became my life; I could only function under the influence of alcohol or chemicals. I've been a victim of the biggest rock 'n' roll cliche. You create this monster and have to live up to it. Finally, it was 'Paul, you're not happy doing this. Who cares about rock 'n' roll? Stop drinking, or you'll die.' Once you do that, you realize you still have rock 'n' roll. So write some, play some! I've done everything not sober for so long that each time I do something sober, it's like 'Hey, I can do that!'"

"I'd like to see it as a lifestyle change. Of course, it'll come out that these cause cancer," he says, eyeing his fake beer suspiciously. Paul confesses he's reticent to commit to a Replacements tour "until I have a few more months under my belt. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't afraid of the pressure touring entails."

He's not about to get moralistic, though, and he's tolerant of continuing drinkers. "If Tommy asks if he can have a drink, I'll say 'If you don't, I'll punch you out. Get shitfaced so I can see what it looks like!'" But Paul does acknowledge feeling "slightly

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Rock notes

Music From Purple Villa

Deep Purple's history reads like a genealogy of metal-edged hard rock. The group has spawned an alarming number of imitators and splinter groups — notably Rainbow and Whitesnake — since its start in 1968.

"We always said we're going to get a small villa, about 3,000 rooms, to use as an old-age home for all the ex-members of Rainbow and Purple," laughs Purple's newest member, ex-Rainbow vocalist **Joe Lynn Turner**.

Even Turner admits that Purple was a major influence long before he became part of its extended family. "When I was starting out, I emulated that band in a band I was in called Ezra," Turner says. "We did Deep Purple covers and originals like them."

Although he aided in the band's 1984 reformation, it wasn't until after they had auditioned 200 singers to find a replacement for **Ian Gillan** that Turner was chosen for the position.

"I got called in to do a jam with them as an eleventh-hour production," he recalls. "I walked in and **Ritchie [Blackmore]** started playing 'Hey Joe.' How appropriate! We started jamming, and everyone looked around and knew it was magic. It was alchemy."

The result of that chemistry can be heard on the band's current album, *Slaves And Masters*. "We're a live band, and it's real music for real people," Turner points out. "It's our heartbeats."



SOUL TO SOUL



Even if they didn't create the category of blue-eyed soul, **Hall & Oates** were certainly among the first artists to make it popular. In a career that spans more than 20 years and 19 albums — including the recently released *Change of Season* — the duo has continued to delight audiences with its R&B-inspired sound.

But if Hall & Oates are the godfathers of blue-eyed soul, who are their heirs?

"I think **New Kids On The Block** are carrying on the tradition," **Daryl Hall** says. "They're the real deal. Those guys are doing what I was doing when I was 17 years old. They come from a mixed, integrated environment, like we did, and they're coming from their hearts, from what they grew up with. They're street kids, and they're doing something that has been associated with black music."

"Some people just scrape the surface of it," he adds. "They're like white guys trying to be black. That's the part of blue-eyed soul I'm turned off by. One's real soul and one's fake soul, and there's nothing worse than fake soul. I'm not discussing the extent of their talent; I'm talking about the tradition they come from."

"I'd rather see **New Kids On The Block** than **Lisa Stansfield**, who I think has no soul at all!"



YOU CAN'T DANCE...

Working in **Madonna**'s shadow creates some strange obstacles. Consider **Patrick Leonard**, who's best known for his role as co-writer and producer of Madonna's "Like A Prayer," "Oh Father" and "Live To Tell," to name a few of their hit collaborations. Among his other, less recognized achievements was co-writing and producing **Bryan Ferry**'s breathtaking album *Bete Noire*.

Leonard recently got together with fellow songwriter **Kevin Gilbert** and formed **Toy Matinee**, a band he says, "is trying to achieve a vibe more than anything else. We wanted to make a record that sounded like it was recorded 15 years ago, but is about today. It's music that's meant to evoke a response in an emotional sense."

So far, despite the fact that **Toy Matinee**'s debut album is true to Leonard's promise, offering well-written modern songs with pithy lyrics set to music reminiscent at times of **Steely Dan**, **The Beatles** and **Roxy Music**, the group continues to battle the menacing Madonna connection.

"We were going to open the record with **Bill Bottrell** (who produced the album) saying, 'You can't dance to any of this stuff,'" Gilbert recalls with a laugh.

But Leonard is more realistic. "People love to put you in categories," he admits. "I do the ballads and the Spanish stuff with Madonna. **Stephen Bray** co-writes most of the dance songs, but people are so sure **Toy Matinee** is a dance record. I'm about as much of a dance guy as **Cecil B. DeMille** is a character on *Sesame Street*."



"I'm not too much interested in greatest hits records," explains **John Lydon**, on the eve of the release of **P.I.L.**'s *Greatest Hits, So Far*. "But a lot of this stuff people haven't heard over here, so it's kind of informational in that respect. And if you don't like it, you don't have to have it," he adds, laughing.

In the pantheon of rock's outspoken voices, Lydon is surely among the most controversial. In the late '70s, as **Johnny Rotten**, Lydon was **The Sex Pistols**' pirate leader. When that unit exploded in 1978, he formed **Public**

Image Ltd., an outfit that, as evidenced on *Greatest Hits, So Far*, explored more musical styles in the last decade than the media could find names for. Alternately savage, melodic, abrasive, charming and hypnotic, **P.I.L.** is a captivating psychotic chameleon.

"Records can actually frighten you, if you can't connect them to the laws of this, that or the other thing," Lydon admits knowingly. "The more puzzling a record is, the more interesting it is, and ultimately the more self-satisfying. The only people I have respect for are people who are individuals, people who break the rules constantly."

Lydon is currently working on **P.I.L.**'s 11th album, which is expected to be released early next year.

Psychotic Chameleon



PSYCHEDELIC ROOTS

If you've ever wondered about the origins of psychedelic music, you need look no further than Austin, Texas, circa 1965, according to **Bill Bentley**, producer of *Where The Pyramid Meets The Eye*, one of the most refreshing compilation albums to appear in the sea of musical tributes released this year.

The album, which includes performances by an unusually disparate collection of artists, including **ZZ Top**, **The Butthole Surfers**, **The Jesus And Mary Chain**, **R.E.M.**, **Thin White Rope** and **John Wesley Harding**, among many others, is a pulverizing testament to the artistry of Austin-based blues/rock pioneer **Roky Erickson** and his band **The Thirteenth Floor Elevators**.

In three short years during the mid-'60s, Erickson's music reverberated and glowed, mesmerizing all who listened. But, like **Syd Barrett**, the enigmatic founder of **Pink Floyd**, Erickson soon disappeared from the limelight because of personal and legal problems. He attempted to make a comeback in the '70s, and recorded several albums for independent foreign labels during the '80s, but his life continued to fall apart. In September Erickson was released from the State Mental Facility in Austin. In order to help him, Bentley says, publishing proceeds from the album will be held in a trust fund set up for Erickson's continued care.

While he may not be able to perform, Erickson's music lives on. "He's one of the few artists who transcended the time, from the hippie era to punk rock," says the Surfers' **Gibby Haynes**. "He's still so modern. I wish he was still able to play music."

COMPILED BY TINA CLARKE

Left: Taylor King ; Middle: Casey Monahan*



Good on your ears!

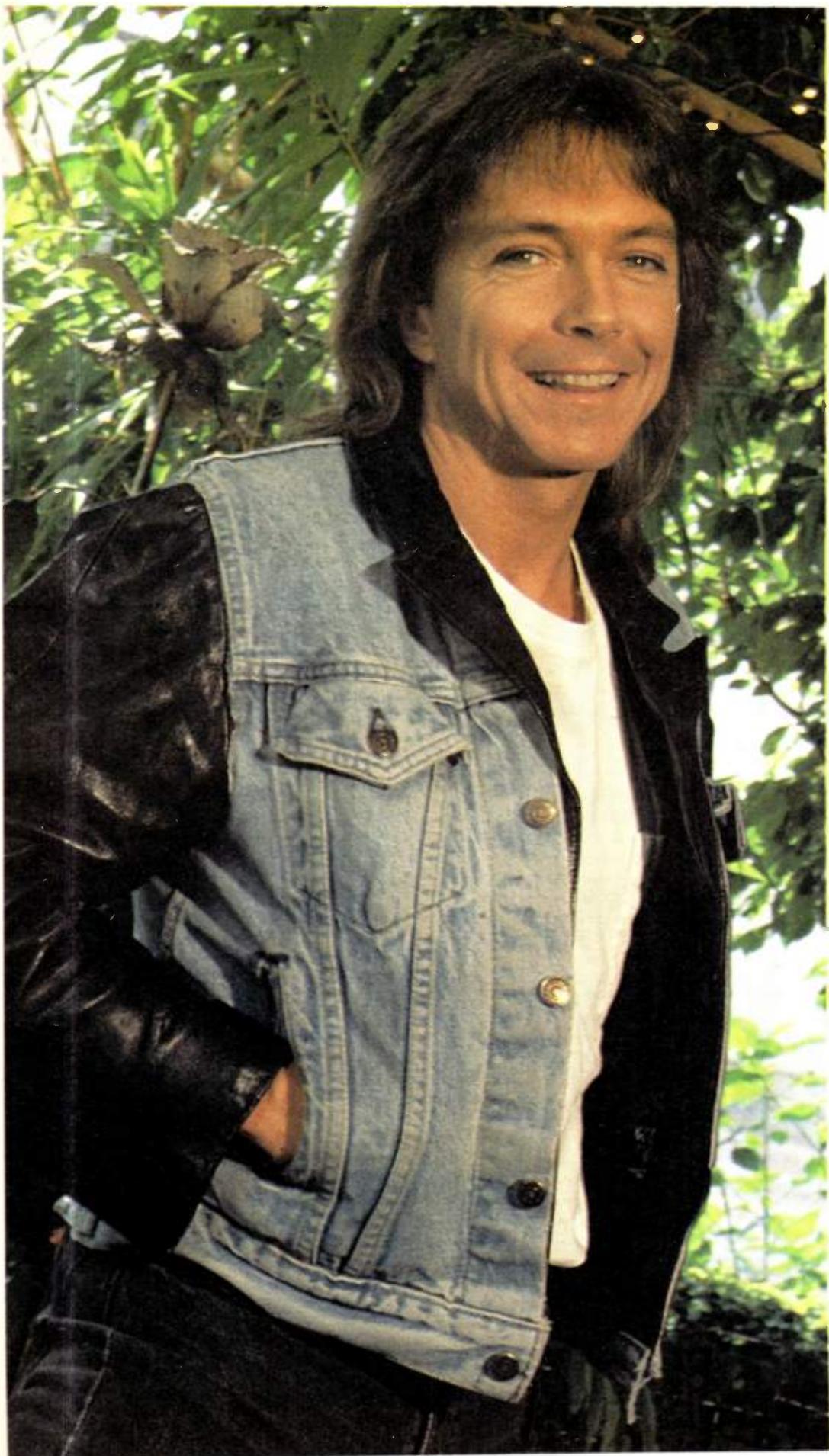
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SOUND CHECK



DAVID CASSIDY

Beyond The Valley Of The Love Boat

by Mary Dickie

David Cassidy is something of a strange phenomenon. In 1990, almost two decades after the peak of his fame in *The Partridge Family*, people are still coming up to him on the street and whispering as he walks by in restaurants, and at a record company-sponsored party to celebrate the launch of his new album, *David Cassidy*, the supposedly cool audience *mobbed* him as he came in. Sure, he was a superstar, and he looks uncannily well-preserved for 40, but there has to be some explanation for the extraordinary longevity of his appeal.

Whatever that might be, though, David himself seems to be doing quite well at using his fame to draw attention to his new record without letting it swamp him. "I make no apologies about it, because I really dig it," he says about the response he's getting. "I think it's because I left it and it didn't leave me. I don't feel bitter about it; I haven't had a tragic life playing dives all over, you know? I left when I was playing stadiums, which is the right way to do it. I look back on it all now, and I think positively about the experience, and the effect it had on people's lives. I'm really quite proud of what I accomplished as a young guy."

David has been writing songs all along, between acting stints, but his latest record came about when he was invited onto a morning radio show in L.A. "These guys were fans of mine, and they asked me to bring down some of my songs," he recalls. "They played some of them, the phones lit up, and by the end of the show I had three separate record deals!"

The result, *David Cassidy*, is an album of mainstream rock songs, a far cry from the poppy sound of the Partridges. But David says that was never close to his heart. "I didn't have much to do with that music," he says. "I was into a very different style of music — British blues stuff, and progressive rock. Creatively and artistically it was very frustrating for me at the time. Yet it was also rewarding, because so many people loved it. So there was a tradeoff. I was an actor playing a guy who sang those kinds of songs, and people would come out to see me do those songs, and I'd sing them and think, 'One day I'm going to sing some other songs.' Ultimately, the time is now."

Do people expect his new album to sound like the old stuff? "I think people expected me to be kind of glossy and cute and shallow," he says. "And I can be cute and shallow; it's really easy to do. It's really dull, though. With this record I have a chance to talk to people and let them see a little bit inside of me. If you listen to the record, there's a lot of me in it."

David co-wrote all the songs except two, with various L.A.-based writers. "I always feel a lot more secure when I write with somebody else," he says. "I usually know if the idea's good, but there are so many different ways you can approach a song, and it's great to have someone to bounce ideas off. Ultimately you write better songs that way, I think."

The album is on Enigma Records, a label that's more used to slightly less marketable acts — although, come to think of it, the return of David Cassidy is almost as wacky as the latest *Mojo Nixon* album. "That's why I'm on this label," he laughs, "it's such an interesting mix. I think people are a lot more curious about David Cassidy on Enigma than David Cassidy on one of the big labels."

In the end, you have to credit David with a fairly healthy attitude about fame and fortune. As he admits, "Times change, and you have to be prepared to look at the situation and say, 'Well, I don't want to end up doing guest spots on *The Love Boat*.' I don't want my career to end in a bunch of schlocky TV work, which it could have. So I decided that even if I couldn't make the same kind of money, I would at least be doing something I feel good about. And when you do that something good will come of it. It may not be the way you pictured it, but you can wake up in the morning and feel good about going to work."



SOUND CHECK

SOHO

Too White,
Too Pop?
by Perry Stern

If variety is the spice of life, then Soho wants to be the Thai food of contemporary pop. From the hyper-groovy British hit "Hippychick" through the Bacharach and David-like "Out Of My Mind" to the Hi-NRG romp of "Freaky" and the rub-a-dub style of "Shake Your Thing," Soho defies categorization.

The way the striking vocals of twin sisters Jackie and Pauline Cuff adapt, chameleonlike, to each song, Soho's album, *Goddes*, could easily be considered a compendium of girl group vocal styles, from "Nuthin' On My Mind"'s tip to Ronnie Spector to the B-52's-ish "Girl On A Motorbike." But then one must consider the fact that co-founder Tim Brinkhurst writes all the words, as well as the music.

"If the lyrics are a bit dubious, I say to Tim, 'You can't have this; you can't have that,'" says Jackie. "But he's got good insight, 'cause he's worked with us for about 10 years."

"The characters in our songs are nearly always strong women," Brinkhurst declares. "In 'Out Of My Mind' you get a woman who has a bloke who basically can't satisfy her. He thinks he's a great macho man, but in fact he can't do anything for her. And with 'Hippychick' you get a woman who's arrested at a demon-



stration, and the policeman who arrests her turns out to be her boyfriend. The woman is saying, 'I'm not a hippychick — it's not like the '60s, where we'll sleep with

you to change your mind. We don't put flowers in your guns.' The original title was 'No Hippychick.' It wasn't concise enough, but it's probably truer."



MANGO GROOVE

Eclectic,
Organic & Messy
by Mary Dickie

Mango Groove is something of an anomaly in its native South Africa: a group of 11 musicians that spans racial, cultural and sexual barriers to create music that, not surprisingly, is its own unique variety of hybrid. The group has achieved major star status at home, and is now heading out to conquer the rest of the world. But according to band spokesman John Leyden, on the phone from London, they're not at all interested in being labelled as some sort of

cultural commodity.

"I think the key to us is that we're not at all a fabricated thing," he says. "We didn't sit down and come up with a multi-racial lineup to appeal to international markets. The way Mango Groove developed has been very organic and messy and kind of patchy."

On their self-titled debut album, Mango Groove reflects that attitude, cheerfully mixing Western pop and big band sounds with South African ones — particularly marabi, an eclectic blend of '40s big band sounds with calypso and Zulu rural rhythms, and kwela, melodic music made with traditional pennywhistles. Explains Leyden: "I grew up listening to South Af-

rican music, and I've always nurtured the idea that I'd like to incorporate that style of music into other sounds — not revive it, but do justice to it by integrating it with other contemporary sounds.

"We believe in cultural anarchy in a way — any music form can draw off any other music form. There's a lot of bastardizing, but positive bastardizing. We're not cultural purists — that's a dangerous notion, I think."

The band originated five years ago at a Johannesburg musicians' hangout called Loafer's Corner, where Leyden met a pennywhistle player called Big Voice Jack. "It started as a pennywhistle, a guitarist, me and a drum machine, and just grew from there," Leyden says. "We just built the lineup up — and up and up — and people left and came back and brought their friends along. The existing lineup is about two years old, and it's pretty stable.

"It's a funny mixture of all sorts of different people," he continues. "A lot of us have had very different experiences, and we've obviously been through some tough times. We used to rehearse in Soweto, and there would be problems with roadblocks and things. I don't know what we'll be going back to, because things have been very bad in Johannesburg — they've had some shootings quite near the studios. There have been problems, but what has

The group was once the core of a trendy dance band called Groovalax that broke down barriers by storming the notoriously disco-oriented London club scene with their outrageous live shows.

"We've gone through all kinds of permutations," Brinkhurst brags. "We hire and fire people at an alarming rate, mainly because we move forward musically. The problem in Britain is that people tend to ask, 'What's happening this week?' and then write that kind of song. We're completely non-tribal. I abhor that kind of thinking, where you have to appeal to one kind of audience. When you see our audience, you see mohicans, you see skinheads, you see mop-tops, you see hippy-chicks, you see afro perms. The whole lot is there. The people who belong to tribes are a dying breed."

Ironically, as a result of their quest to defy stereotypes, the Cuffs have been accused of sounding "too white."

"It's reverse racism, really," opines Jackie. "They see that you're black and they automatically assume that you're gonna rap and do a Paula Abdul routine, and that you'll have an American accent when you do open your gob. When they see you don't, they start banging their heads and go, 'Two black girls with English accents who do pop songs! This is not normal!'"

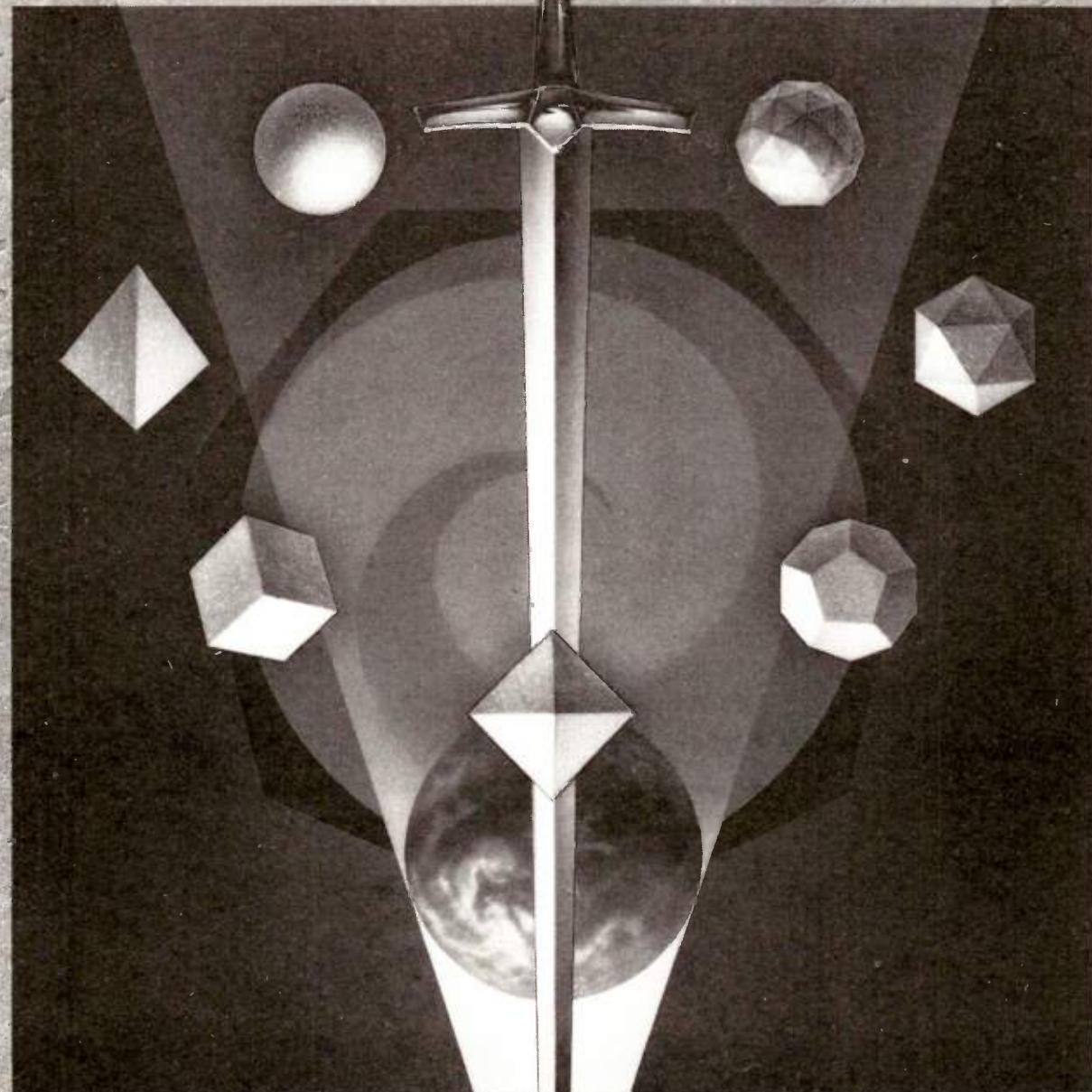
"We decided we should just be ourselves," Brinkhurst concurs, "and people will just like it or not like it — and it's tough if they don't."

united us is a sort of shared vision in a way, and a love of the music."

Though the group, through its very lineup, represents a statement against apartheid, Leyden says that they have experienced little official government harassment. "We're not particularly harassed," he says. "We're very popular there, and we've always been upfront about what we're doing. I think our lineup and everything about the band projects a very positive post-apartheid vision of South Africa. It's a very celebratory band, and people seem to respond, even if they disagree with us."

And the across-the-board popularity Mango Groove has enjoyed in South Africa has been an encouraging sign. "The South African music industry and markets have always been polarized, ethnically divided by 40 years of apartheid," says Leyden. "But we're selling to all South Africans, and charting on the white and the black radio stations. That's terribly gratifying, and really more important to us that any international success. And we're also pleased that the attitude of our American record label [Atco] is not that we're a cute oddity but that we're accessible pop music. I think that's very positive; we're anti the cultural commodity thing — we think we're saying something more universal than that."

TOTO



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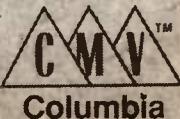
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JOE HENRY Mom, Malcolm And Bob by Tina Clarke

Articulate and profound, Joe Henry stands out among today's crop of singer-songwriters. On his third album, *Shuffletown*, he offers a transparent emotional portrait of modern life, set against a musical backdrop of simply arranged acoustic melodies. Henry's songs reveal the dark secrets lurking beneath the surface of commonplace events, in evocative vignettes about human relationships on the backroads and sidestreets of rural America. "I didn't set out to make an acoustic

album for any reasons of purity or anything," Henry explains. "I think if you pay attention, songs tell you what they need. Certainly a record has its own direction and character. You have to listen to that, or else you wind up with an environment that's inappropriate. But just because it's quiet doesn't mean it's gentle."

His ear for musical detail is astute, but ask Henry about the songwriting process itself and he'll tell you it's like unravelling a mystery. "Writing for me has nothing to do with self-expression, but everything to do with self-discovery," he says. "The process of writing is the process of finding something out. It's not that I have this idea that was already intact, and that's so important to me, I must tell other people

about it."

Henry began writing songs as a teenager while living in Rochester, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. His father worked for Chevy and his family moved around a lot, living for several years in North Carolina (where he was born), Georgia and Ohio. It wasn't until he was an adult, though (he's 30 now), that he discovered the enormous impact of those formative years spent in the South.

"I moved away from the South when I was about 10, and I kind of ignored the earlier part of my life as being inconsequential," he admits. "But in the last few years I've realized how relevant it is, especially in the things I read and hear, that this rural thing is becoming more and more a part of

what I do."

Given his penchant for literate yet plain-spoken lyrics, coupled with uncluttered acoustic instrumentation, it's no wonder that Henry counts Woody Guthrie, Van Morrison and Bob Dylan among his influences.

"Even if you hated him, if you're a songwriter, Dylan's influence is inescapable; so is Hank Williams," he notes. "I started out playing Dylan songs just like everybody else; just like he started out playing Woody Guthrie songs. It's like if you're a carpenter you have to study with somebody. It's not like you wake up one day and can build anything because God chose you. You learn your craft somewhere and then hopefully when you're good enough, you depart from it and just go about your work. But it's foolish to talk about musicians as your only influences. My mother was a bigger influence on me than Bob Dylan. I was as influenced by *The Dick Van Dyke Show* as I was by Van Morrison."

Henry was also inspired by the writings of futurist architect Buckminster Fuller and by civil rights activist Malcolm X. "When I read Malcolm X's biography 10 years ago, it turned me around in a certain way," he explains. "It was the same way I felt when I first read the writings of John Cage. It was like getting a third eye."

Although his music may seem somehow out of sync with these dance-crazed, electronically overdubbed times, Henry is unfazed. "There's stuff that's timeless and stuff that is contemporary," he says. "Contemporary is a Nehru jacket; it's a fleeting moment. If you aspire to be timeless, the only way you can do that is by opening yourself up, instead of boxing yourself in."

Henry's own music affirms this elusive aspiration, leaving plenty of room for the listener to discover more about each song with every listen.

"If you leave enough space, then people have to listen," he says. "Most pop music goes by in such a blur on the radio. There has to be an element of mystery. If you listen to it and you think you've got it, then that record is going to be useless to you. There's a reason there are those movies that you keep watching over and over again. If you thought you had it, you would have moved on."

AN EMOTIONAL FISH

From The Depths Of
The Liffey

by Helena Mulkerns

An Emotional Fish's unusual yin-yang name reflects with a certain accuracy the turbulent blend of brooding passion and childlike luminescence that characterizes the band's music. With hit singles in Britain, a debut album that's been setting the critics raving and the establishment of a substantial following in just over two years, the band has taken off in Europe and plans to do the same in North America now with their eponymously titled debut album.

Originating from Ireland, the country where U2 and The Hothouse Flowers have become polarized points of reference, An Emotional Fish are happily reminiscent of neither. "Often it's just laziness, the way people constantly refer to the most obvious Irish bands," explains vocalist Gerard Whelan. "The band itself is made up of four different individuals, and is a mixture of four different inputs. We don't even think of 'direction;' each song is its own entity, and if we feel right about it we stick to it."

But the idea of the right feel indicates at the same time that An Emotional Fish are continuing the Irish tradition of instinctual soul, and are approaching it from a fresh angle — unlike the current English techno-dance craze. Frenzied in live performance, An Emotional Fish boast a solid rock base that gets heavy without going metal, and trips lightly without becoming insubstantial.

Dave Frew proves himself to be a mean condenser on guitar, backed up soundly by Enda Wyatt on bass and Martin Murphy on drums. With Whelan's vocals running from gutsy snarl to heartfelt clarity, there have been comparisons to both Van Morrison and The Doors, and the band certainly knows how to get a crowd going. "I love the live situation, where anything can happen," Whelan admits. "It brings out the worst in me, playing live — and the best in me." Whelan tends to keep things spontaneous, moving constantly, breaking into monologues or, if the crowd seems particularly unresponsive, he heckles them.

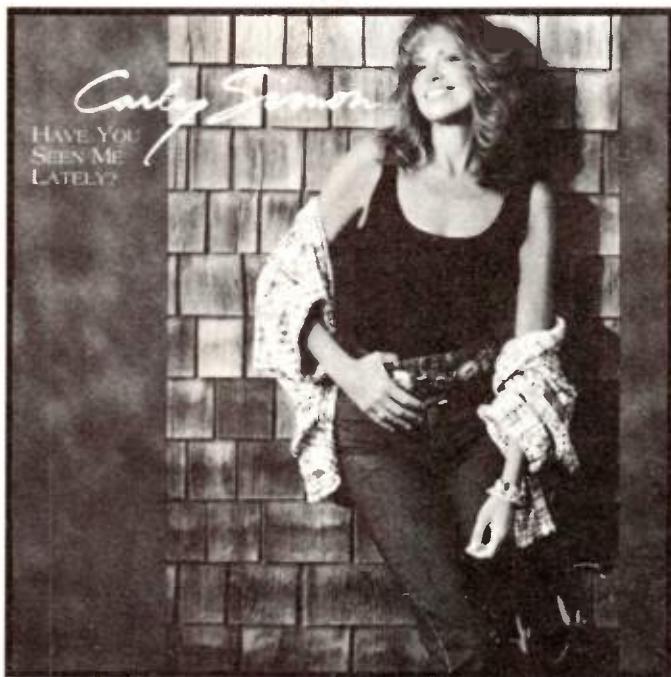
The band was thrust into the fore on the basis of no more than a first-run demo, but the major labels were courting right away. "We wanted to approach the business end only when we were ready," offers Whelan. "When we made the demo we didn't even get past the mixing stage when record companies were calling us up, but we had to take a breath and figure things out. When Mother Records offered us a one-off single deal, it was great, because that gave us time to grow a little. In the end we wound up with Bugs Bunny [Warner]."

The story goes that the band's name originated after an incident in which Whelan had thrown himself into Dublin's River Liffey to prove his affections to a girlfriend who'd just thrown him out. When he emerged from the depths, she called him "an emotional fish."

"There's no truth in that at all," he protests. "I just went for a swim one night..." However, as anyone acquainted with the murky River Liffey will tell you, someone who "just goes for a swim" in it has to be either half fish or half mad. Or, at the very least, a force to be reckoned with.



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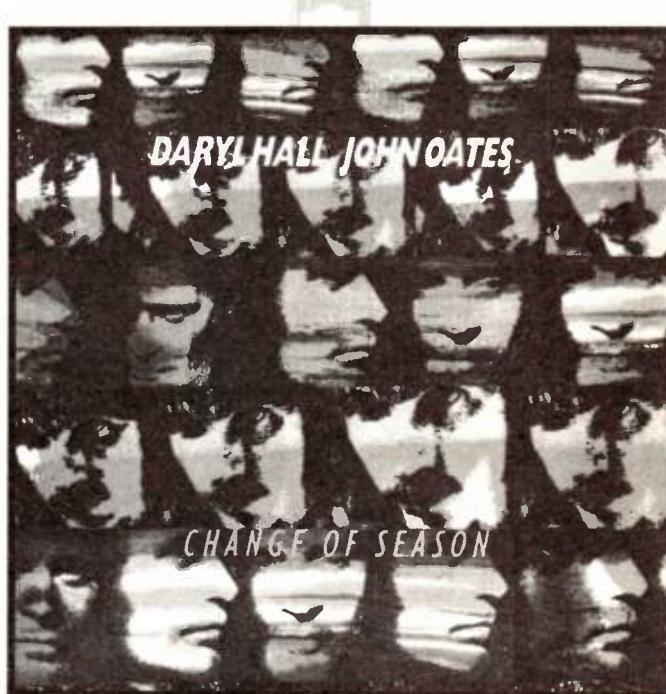
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SOUND CHECK

TRIXTER

Not Just For Kids
by David Sprague



1927

Frost Free by Perry Stern

If most Australian bands can be accused of coming out of the same mold, then 1927 can be described as one down-under combo to break that mold. Eschewing the traditional years-long pub crawling gestation period, the band members wrote their first album in the studio and didn't make their live debut until the LP, *...ish*, was released. And although a band usually has up to half-a-dozen albums out before a modicum of fame comes its way, *...ish* nevertheless became the biggest selling debut release in Aussie history and one of the country's best selling homegrown albums ever. Then, shrugging off the fact that the group he assembled had become one of the most popular around, founder/songwriter/lead guitarist Garry Frost quit 1927 only weeks before their followup album, *The Other Side*, was completed.

The latter event might have dealt a critical blow to 1927, considering that Frost as an ex-member of Moving Pictures had the most experience and the highest profile in the band, but, as drummer James Barton told the others when they reeled with the news, "Hang on, Garry Frost is important, but this is a band!" Remaining in the group (they'll hire a lead guitarist for their performances) are Barton, singer Peter Loren and bassist P.J. Farley have lived since passing the age of consent has been spent honing Trixter's ass-kicking abilities.

Heavy metal, as the theory goes, is music for "the kids." So why should fresh-faced, innocent youth music be the domain of jaded, birth certificate-altering riff merchants who attempt to hide their receding hairlines and advancing paunches to roll over their CDs? Well, populism probably wasn't the foremost reason four headbanging teens from the great state of New Jersey first got together to trade licks, but, consciously or not, Trixter have struck a blow for their generation.

"We're young guys as far as age goes," shrugs 19-year-old guitarist Steve Brown, "but in terms of experience, we're not. I've been playing guitar for 12 years. It kind of bothers me when that's all people notice, but hey, we can't hide it — we are young."

"Yeah," sighs drummer Mark Scott. "It has its downside. I've heard people say that live, we don't even play; that we just sample the whole show and play to track. I can't believe some of that shit — they think we're like a New Kids with long hair, some kind of contrived thing. We're just four kids who went to high school together and want to kick some ass!"

That's exactly what comes across in the grooves of the band's self-titled MCA/Mechanic debut. There's nothing fancy, nothing too far removed from the Jovi/Leopard axis, but the funny thing is how closely those grooves mirror the very essence of their creators. In fact, a well-bribed source divulged their deepest secrets, and you know what? There's not a thing worth divulging; not even one fib about age. Pretty much every waking moment, Scott, Brown, singer Peter Loren and bassist P.J. Farley have lived since passing the age of consent has been spent honing Trixter's ass-kicking abilities.

"We all lived basically on the same street,"

Brown recalls. "We got together in early '84 to play parties and backyards. It was all covers at that point — we were a garage band, the guys

next door. But by late '85, we decided that Trixter was what we really wanted to do. That's when the covers went and the band really started."

Though their "touring" mostly consisted of van rides from their base of Paramus (the town with America's largest concentration of shopping malls) to Newark's solitary metal club, Trixter's reputation for rambunctious live shows quickly spread through Gotham's metal scene. The live act, which might surprise those who've only experienced the subtler strains of their single, "Give It To Me Good," has left a few jaws hanging open — including a few unsuspecting family types who caught a Trixter gig at Disney World.

"We're the most energetic band you'll ever see," enthuses Brown. "We're not the kind of band that goes up there, plays a few songs, checks their watches and leaves. We bring a whole party along with us."

"All the years that we were playing, we concentrated on our live show," adds Scott. "Sometimes we overlooked other stuff — saying, 'Ah, don't worry if the songs aren't good; we jump around a lot and we're heavy.' But we've developed the songs. I still think we're heavier live; it's the energy. You can't really capture that on tape."

Not that there's an overload of studio trickery on *Trixter*. Though anthems like "On And On" and "You're Only Young Once" inspire more fist-pumping in a sweaty club than within the pristine confines of a CD player, Loren and Brown's melodic bent, spotlit more effectively in the studio, might just vault Trixter out of the metal ghetto by the time they're legal. They've already got their new genre staked out.





THE LEMONHEADS

Different Drummers by Perry Stern

The time is ripe for the tart, unpredictable rock of The Lemonheads — all Evan Dando has to do is try to keep his group together for more than 15 minutes. A self-described "high school band," formed by Dando, Ben Diley and Jesse Peretz while attending Boston's Commonwealth School in 1986, The Lemonheads make the kind of anarchic power pop that has risen above the American indie scene and onto the rosters of the major record companies.

In keeping with the mind-boggling

mood swings of their fourth album, *Lovey* — from the thrashing cacophony of "Ballarat," which opens with a chanting cheer-leading squad, through the jangly folkiness of "Half The Time" — The Lemonheads have had a different lineup, apart from guitarist/vocalist/songwriter Dando, for all their releases. The personnel that appears on the current tour didn't make the album, but that's OK — the previous touring group didn't record the album they supported, either. It's getting to be a habit.

Dando's personal vision, and what might be considered a singular lack of diplomacy, seems to be at the root of the turmoil that he admits thriving on. Dissatisfied with the results after recording *Lovey*,

he explains, "I felt like I wanted to get it the way I wanted it, so I played the drums on some songs and the bass on some songs, and that kind of damaged the other people in the band — they thought I didn't like their playing. This increased over the tour [in Europe this past summer]. And they thought I looked at them funny on stage!"

The understandably bruised egos of founding member Peretz and then drummer David Ryan caused them to call it a day in Rome. Replacing them are drummer Ben Daughtry (by Dando's estimate the ninth skin-thumper in the group's history) and Daughtry's bassist pal Byron Hoagland.

It would be a mistake, however, to blame rampant egomania for Dando's self-

centred vision of the band. Over the years it's been The Lemonheads' eccentric reworkings of other people's songs that have brought them much of their current popularity. The first instance was the thrashy cover of Suzanne Vega's "Luka" that appeared on the *Lick* LP in 1989. Then, on an EP released earlier this year in Europe, they redid "Different Drum," a hit for Linda Ronstadt's first group, the Stone Poneys.

Explains Dando: "I always find myself saying this, but it's true: the fun aspect of being in a band is having a good time with something someone else wrote. People seem to like my own songs enough that it doesn't seem to be a problem." Unless you're another Lemonhead, that is.





THE REMBRANDTS

The Eveready Brothers
by Mary Dickie

The Rembrandts are two young California-based singer-songwriters who play the kind of melodic pop that hasn't been heard much since the '60s, apart from expert English song crafters like Squeeze. But with the success of bands like Crowded House and Michael Penn, it seems as though The Rembrandts' particular sound is on the charts once again.

The group originated more than a decade ago when Maine-born Danny Wilde and Minnesota-born Phil Solem met in Los Angeles and started playing together. They eventually formed a band called Great Buildings, which has been lumped in with other late-'70s post-punk bands like The Knack and The Motels. Says Phil: "We weren't really punk; we were uncategorizable, but people called it power pop."

"We were kind of like Steeleye Span meets The Motors," adds Danny. "We had one album, which failed miserably. I think we sold 4,000 copies. We stuck together for a year or two after that, and then went our separate ways."

But after a stint in Minneapolis fronting his own group, Phil found himself wandering back to L.A., where Danny had also had his own band. Before they knew it, they were writing together, and they found their individual talents still blended pretty well. Says Phil: "It's like building blocks — 'Your color block looks like it'll fit in that part there, let's try that.'"

"I think most of the songs just came together with us sitting together with guitars and working on them from scratch," Danny adds. "I'd say that neither of us is stronger on any particular aspect — although Phil's forte is lead guitar. But when it comes to songwriting, we have a certain tradeoff thing that starts

happening." Agrees Phil: "It's like we have this energy — this electric energy."

In any case, Phil and Danny recorded the 13 songs on *The Rembrandts* in Danny's garage this past spring, relying for the most part on the duo's well-matched harmonies and acoustic guitars to bring the songs into focus. As Danny explains, "I think you have a backlash going on now. On one end of the spectrum there's metal, and on the other end there's dance. Both rely on a lot of fancy production. We're going back to the song, and not letting it be overwhelmed by the production."

But with such strong echoes of both Squeeze and Crowded House appearing in the album's grooves, can The Rembrandts be accused of being copycats?

"Well, that has been brought up," allows Phil. "But I think it's really that we all listened to the same kind of music — those guys obviously had the same influences that we had, like The Beatles, Elvis, Roy Orbison and The Everly Brothers. I frankly can't say I'm influenced by any of that more current variety of music, because I really didn't listen that carefully to anybody's record. After I was a teenager, I just sort of had all these influences under my belt, and I just went out and dished them out."

Danny adds, "Apart from the fact that I was a huge Grand Funk fan and Phil wasn't, our influences are parallel. But I think now we've sort of come full circle in music. Back when Great Buildings was playing, in between shows we'd pick up guitars and play Everly Brothers songs and joke that we'd have a tribute band called Phil And Dan: The Eveready Brothers. Little did we know that one day we would be kind of doing that for real!"

DREAMS SO REAL

A Lack Of Perfection

by Perry Stern

Barry Marler credits his southern heritage for the philosophical introspection that permeates Dreams So Real's second Arista release, *Gloryline*. But he says that it's a coincidence that the album's running order neatly divides the songs between the first half's spiritual musings and the second's more earthbound concerns.

Speaking from his hometown of Athens, Georgia, songwriter Marler concedes, "My tendency is to speak of spiritual matters, and I think I was trying on some songs to be more down to earth. And it just happened that it got divided into part A and part B. I didn't realize it until after the fact."

The first half's songs, like the title track, which reassures that "There is meaning here Rest easy, there's nothing to fear," and "The Knife Edge," which opens with the lines, "So this is our reality/Alone in a crowded sea/Drunk and drinking history," make for a startling contrast to the second half's more temporal offerings (including a cover of Badfinger's "Day After Day" and the ecstatic love song "The Fine Line"). Says Marler: "The things I write about are the things I think about and talk about, and I've always been that way. But it was only when I started writing songs that were out there for people to analyze that I started to think about why I was that way. I think it does have a lot to do with the fact that I was brought up in a part of the world that is very religious. I'm not a religious person, but I am interested in and enamored with the spiritual side of life."

Formed in Athens six years ago by guitarist/vocalist Marler, bassist Trent Allen and drummer Drew Worsham, Dreams So Real marry a gritty southern rock attitude with a propensity for pretty pop melodies. Marler credits producer Joe Hardy for the more immediate sound that "wasn't as slick and produced and squashed and compressed-sounding as the last one [*Rough Night In Jericho*].

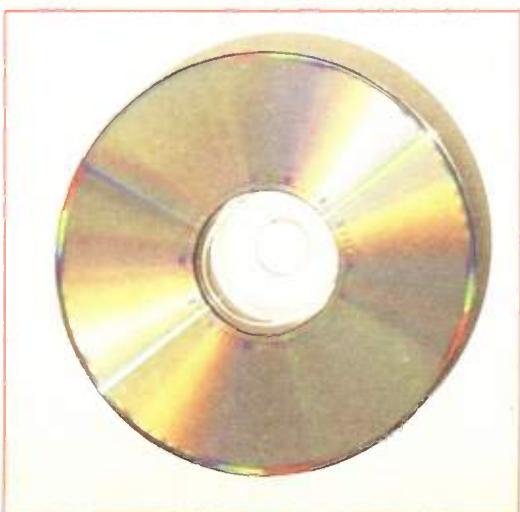
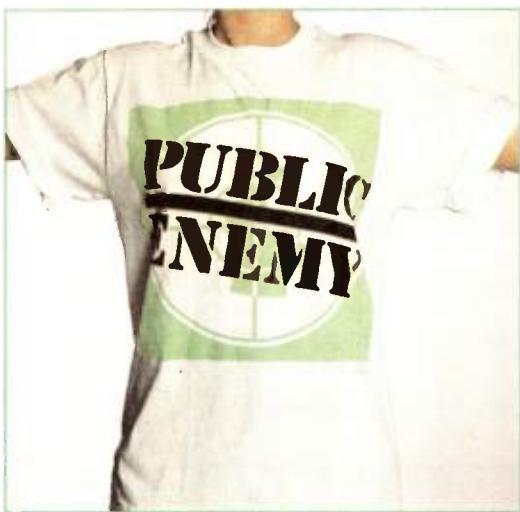
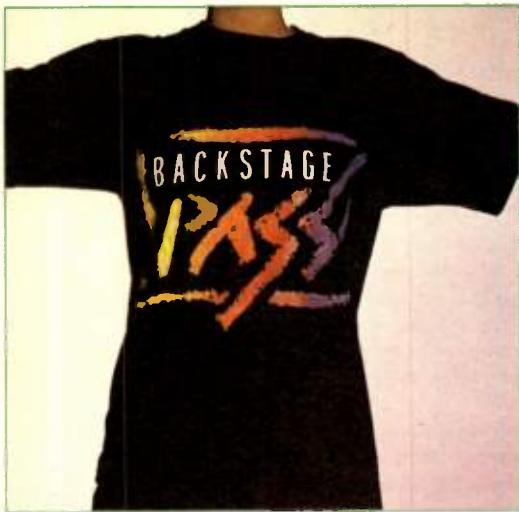
"We chose Joe Hardy [who had worked with Steve Earle, the Georgia Satellites and ZZ Top] because I love guitar rock. I love old Aerosmith — I even like them now — and Led Zeppelin and stuff like that. But I also like The Beatles and Herman's Hermits, the pop side. I don't think *Rough Night* was overproduced, but it was a bit confining. So on this one we went for emotion and performance over absolute perfection."

It's the lack of perfection that puts the glory in *Gloryline*, but unlike the chaotic music that currently dominates the American alternative scene, it's not imperfection for art's sake.

"I like to think that we approach the music traditionally," says Marler, "but with a nontraditional lyrical content. That to me is another kind of alternative to the mainstream. It's also an alternative to purely avant garde, purely trash, thrash, noise."



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Paddy McAloon believes in God. He believes in Elvis. So about the only thing he's got in common with John Lennon is the ability to write a song that can rip through the scar tissue that you thought you'd built up around the most vulnerable parts of your heart. And unlike lesser tunesmiths, he's not afraid to risk looking foolish in doing so. Paddy's band, Prefab Sprout, has never failed to make a great album, and with *Jordan: The Comeback*, their winning streak stands at five.

Jordan: The Comeback is a fascinating collection; sort of a melange of the jazzy narrative of Steely Dan and the subtle craft of Broadway stalwarts such as Stephen Sondheim, all woven into a series of mini-suites about God, about ABBA's Agnetha Faltskog (more or less), and, most shiningly, about Elvis. McAloon's obsession with the King peeked through on 1988's *From Langley Park To Memphis*, but these songs serve as a better tribute than anything you're likely to hear down Graceland way.

"I do have a thing about the idea of com-

ing back — of having your time again," McAloon says dreamily. "It's a very romantic idea. Elvis, in a sense, is irrelevant to the whole enterprise. The basic idea is that everyone has regrets. I'm a regretful sort of writer."

Not surprisingly, then, McAloon doesn't write songs about cars (he doesn't drive). He doesn't write about girls either (he's got one, Sprout's icily beautiful co-lead vocalist, Wendy Smith). But, believe it or not, that leaves vast unspoiled acres of pop iconography for Prefab Sprout to explore. Any resemblance to rock 'n' roll, though, is purely coincidental. Does that mean McAloon eschews the stuff?

"There are things I like about rock 'n' roll," he demurs. "Maybe I'm jaded, but I'm 33, not 19, and I'm a sucker for melodies. Melodies are much more mysterious than attitude. They're much more elusive."

Elusive is the perfect description for the

PREFAB SPROUT

Mysterious Melodies
by David Sprague

it's virtually impossible (even for Paddy, as he freely admits) to tell when you're being deluged by an orchestra and when there's but one lush track (as on "All Boys Believe Anything"). There's also a sensuality simmering beneath the surface of songs like "Looking For Atlantis" and "Doowop In Harlem."

"When I was younger, I thought overtly sexual music was really corny and a bit neanderthal," McAloon explains. "I couldn't perform that way anyway, since I don't look like Jim Morrison, but I'm glad a few people have been picking up on the sensual side; often, people don't get it unless you're singing. 'I'm gonna do it to you, baby.' They don't understand sex as being something more mysterious."

McAloon's equation of sex with mystery might have developed during his stint in

best songs on *Jordan*. Thanks in part to the arrangements of Thomas Dolby,

seminary as a teen. He does admit that he's retained the fascination with things godly that called him there. There's ample evidence to that on *Jordan's* other suite of songs, anchored by the stunning "One Of The Broken."

"I still go to church, but sometimes I believe in God and sometimes I don't," he says. "If you write a song about God, though, he has to be a proposition. It can't be, 'I believe and you don't, you won't get anything.' I could never listen to anything so didactic. 'One Of The Broken' is a bit like country music. It's an allegory, and when God appears, he says, 'Don't worship me, look out for one another.'"

By now it should be clear that Prefab Sprout are either onto something bigger than all of us, or the biggest bunch of blowhards you've ever had the displeasure of encountering. And that suits Paddy just fine. "I love that," he says. "We might not be cool, but my attitude is to sod cool. There's nothing cooler than a good thing — I'd much rather be good than be cool."

Just what are the East Germans who flock across the crumbled Berlin Wall spending their money on? While champagne and fresh fruit were once hot items, recorded music is becoming the purchase of choice. The top sellers: AC/DC and the *Dirty Dancing* soundtrack — *Newsweek*

You don't need to visit Berlin or read *Newsweek* to know that heavy metal is the planet's number one musical choice. The charts will tell you in a flash, but hard facts, like the way East Berliners express their first taste of freedom, speak volumes — at least as loud as AC/DC themselves, Australia's lean, primal rock 'n' roll blast.

The band's success story speaks volumes, too. They've outsold every other Australian band (including *Midnight Oil* and even *INXS*), have been internationally lauded since 1977's American debut, *High Voltage*, and rewarded by multiplatinum sales for albums like 1979's *Highway To Hell*, 1980's *Back In Black* and 1981's *For Those About To Rock (We Salute You)*. More recently, they've been the recipients of heavy praise and flattering imitation courtesy of Rick Rubin, The Beastie Boys and The Cult, while their 11th album, 1988's *Blow Up Your Video*, was acknowledged as a return to form after a few lean years.

Now, Angus Young, the band's physical and spiritual focus, the one who dresses in a school uniform on stage, is beaming away, happy to chat about AC/DC's new album, *The Razor's Edge*. What could be wrong?

Well, Young wants to point out that the title of the album has a serious meaning rather than being just another statement of rock 'n' roll bravado, and he's fed up with the bad reputation metal has had for a while now.

"We wanted a title that sounded tough, to cut the bullshit," the diminutive lead guitarist admits, "because that's what we are, but in our music, not as people. We aren't Mike Tysers! But the music we're playing can come in for a lot of fire. It's never been the media's favorite music."

Didn't *Newsweek*'s reportage reflect metal's massive popularity?

"I know that, but there are a lot of people out there who don't!" Young retorts. "In some European countries a few years ago, they were arresting people in denim jackets and long hair who were walking into clubs, wanting to hear this music."

"When we first toured America in 1977, there were four radio stations in the whole country playing rock music, and that's the land that invented it! OK, it seems to be bearing fruit again, as you're getting more and more younger bands getting out there and playing. But these people are not a bunch of murderers and thieves!"

Young says that he's always regarded his audience, not the media, as his real critics, so it's hard to work out why he's so aggrieved. Maybe it's because AC/DC's version of having a good time — being raw, loud and lewd — has been attacked and misinterpreted. For 13 years, they've taken the brunt of media antagonism — as Young remembers, "When we first toured in the West, they called us 'chunder from down under'" — and perhaps Young's complaint is that of a rebel who's tired of being misunderstood.

Metal is rebel music, however much it sells, and AC/DC have long enjoyed high rebel status, from Young's popular on-stage habit of mooning to that first English tour which caught the interest of the

give them



vice squad, "because they claimed I was obscene." Constant claims that AC/DC have been mad, bad and dangerous to your health, as well as sexist oiks, have been laughed out of court.

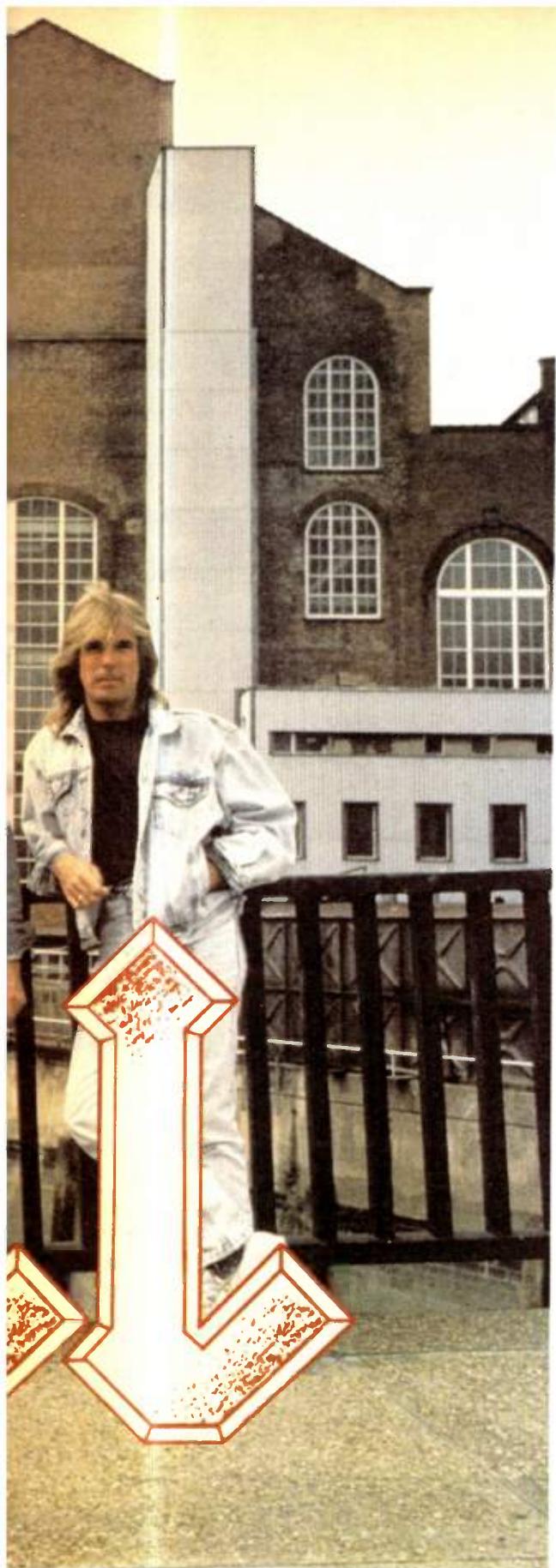
Still, calling one new song "Mistress For Christmas" and singing about "three in a bed" is hardly helping society with its moral codes, is it?

"I'd like three in a bed, I can tell you!" Young grins. "That's no moral issue! Nah, we're not there to preach about morals, or dictate how someone wants to live. For us, a song like that is good fun,

and meant to be taken that way.

"I've never worried about being called sexist. They'll think that anyhow. A lot of people read other meanings into our songs, like the sheriff in Los Angeles who said we were directly involved in a murder because some guy on a radio station said our lyrics inspired some maniac to go out and carve up people." A bewildered look crosses his face.

In any case, *The Razor's Edge* continues in the AC/DC tradition: it crackles and stomps with a manic, bluesy, take-no-prisoners atmosphere; vocalist



Brian Johnson still screams more than sings; and Young still flips out the purest, more insistent riffs this side of Jimmy Page. "Everyone's the same — we still take our vitamins, we're keeping our peckers up and getting laid at the end of the day — if we're lucky!" Young says before dissolving into heaps of laughter. It seems only his respectably shorn locks have changed.

"No deep questions — I've only got the education of a 14-year-old," he had said before we'd even finished shaking hands, and in truth, a 14-year-old

could have written these schoolyard stories, gut-level metaphors and battle cries. He admits that "Fire Your Guns" is just another sexual metaphor to match previous ones like "Sink The Pink," "Give The Dog A Boner" and "Let's Get It Up," "but in a little way, y'know, nothing too deep, just fire your guns and have a good time."

So there's nothing referring to the fact that American troops tried to blast Panama's dictator General Noriega out of his fortress with AC/DC music? "No, but I once heard of a general who, many moons ago, tortured someone with our music. They held him captive and put a headset on him and played it very loud so that he wouldn't know where he was."

The band has no such problem, despite being flung across all four corners of the globe. Angus and his brother Malcolm (rhythm guitar), who between them write the band's songs, still live in Sydney; singer Brian Johnson lives in Florida; bassist Cliff Williams lives in Hawaii and new drummer Chris Slade (best known for Manfred Mann's Earth Band) hasn't had time to think of shifting base from England yet. After the usual claustrophobia caused by touring (they're about to begin nine months of it), AC/DC's different locations give them "a bit of space and fresh air." Young reckons it hasn't harmed their relationships; in fact, he says the band members pushed themselves harder than ever for *The Razor's Edge*.

Once he joked that the band released the same album every year with a different sleeve, but now Young says, "This time we tried doing a few new things, because you should go forward, not backward. Instead of being riff-makers all the time and thinking we could make tunes out of them, we started from the other end of the scale and concentrated on coming up with full songs."

Angus' favorites include the new single, "Thunderstruck," the title track, "which lets me do a little bit of fiddly Spanish guitar at the beginning," and "If You Dare." "Hell, I like them all!" he concludes.

According to both fans and journalists, AC/DC lost direction in the mid-'80s when albums like *Flick Of The Switch* and *Fly On The Wall* didn't sound — or sell — like prime AC/DC.

After completing *Who Made Who* (the soundtrack to Stephen King's film *Maximum Overdrive*), however, they returned to their roots with *Blow Up Your Video* by enlisting older brother George Young and partner Harry Vanda, who produced all their early classics. "It was the best thing we'd done for a while," Angus admits. "We just ignored record

company and producer's influences."

Young denies that he was hurt by the fans' apparent criticism. "The Americans turned down *Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap* because it didn't sound American, and years later they asked us for the album, and we refused," he laughs. "Ten years after an album, someone says, 'I like that!'"

This time around, the band worked with Canadian producer Bruce Fairbairn. "We'd heard he was interested, but when we sat down with him I wasn't sure, because when I sit on that side of the world, I always think they're going to be high-powered, you know, more business than pleasure," he explains.

"But they were really good. I was shocked in a way, because the guy said, 'I want you to sound like AC/DC when you were 17.'"

When he's asked if "Goodbye & Good Riddance To Bad Luck" was inspired by their own ups and downs, Young says he thinks they've had their share; he's recently lost both his parents, while no one could forget the premature death of original vocalist Bon Scott in 1979.

"That was a big tragedy for us," he says. "I've always believed that when you play in a rock band, there comes a point when you don't want to become a casualty. I don't like to see someone, uhh, get out there. What you do is fun; you have your guitar, you walk on stage and plug it in and be a loony for a couple of hours, but at the end of the day, I wouldn't like to see myself as a basket case in an old people's home, so that's a good thing to keep at the back of your head. It keeps you away from a lot of the extremes that go on."

As for the band's last drummer, Simon Wright, he got "itchy feet," Angus explains, with no trace of ill feeling. "He felt he wanted to be doing more. Brian had seen Chris Slade play, and thought he was a good drummer, so we asked him down."

What about Angus himself?

After admitting to a 14-year-old mentality, he starts talking about his schooldays, which makes sense, considering the errant schoolboy in shorts image Angus chose in order to make people notice the band. "I left just after I turned 15, by mutual agreement, because school's school and I was a bit of a truant," he says, remembering crowded classrooms and teachers who'd "cane you on the hand if you genuinely didn't know the answers. Art and history were OK, but all the other stuff... aah, you didn't need it."

Well, he's been proven right at last, hasn't he? "I don't know — maybe I should have stayed there," he says. "There's a lot I missed, especially if you've

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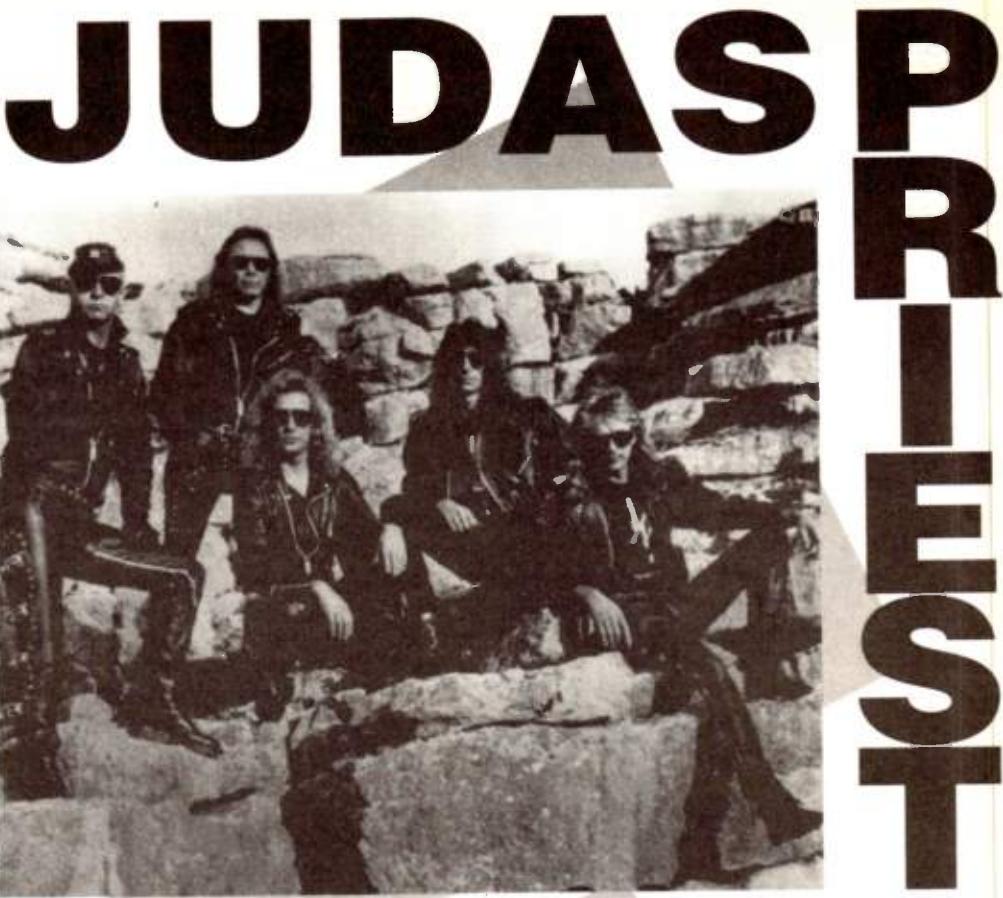


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been playing in a band. If I fly into England, I don't see much other than a hotel.

"Don't get me wrong, I enjoy it, but sometimes you feel a bit hemmed in, because you think, 'Jeez, I'd like to nick out and go down the road and spend a couple of hours reading a book,' or nicking off down to the art gallery or something."

Somehow that doesn't go with the image. Has Young ever tried writing lyrics about such feelings? "Oh, no," he replies. "I think people get bored with others going on, especially when it comes to music. You get a lot of people singing about politics and green issues, things that are happening in the world, but I genuinely think people don't care, because it's distant."

"What we're singing about is mainly rebellious, but we aren't anarchists," he continues. "We're not out there to wipe out things. For us, it's mainly a good time, lots of women, like male studs! That would be a bold effort, though, me being only five foot two and underdeveloped!"

Has rock 'n' roll been like a valve, a way to let off steam? "Yeah, for us it's a form of aggression," he says. "I know a lot of psychiatrists get on that kick, but it has its aggressive form. It can make you very... hard."

Is that why he has always played hard 'n' heavy? "When I was young, the records I bought were the ones that made me jump out of my seat," he explains. "Like The Who's 'Won't Get Fooled Again.' I was probably a bit cuckoo, because if I heard one of them in a club or a pub, my arms would be going crazy."

Indeed, it seems that the majority of Australian rock, from AC/DC and Midnight Oil to the country's thriving hardcore/punk scene, is stripped down to its hard, raucous essentials. That ties in with the fact that live music down under has always depended on pubs — in other words, music to drink, not think, to.

"It had to be hard," Angus agrees. "When we first used to play, to get that guy in the audience to put down his drink and look you had to give him something. The thing was, they never liked it subtle." And music would relieve the tension of rowdy drinking. "We might have been booked to go on at eight o'clock, but told to get on quickly at 7:30 because there were half a dozen people about to start fighting. So we'd diffuse the tension and get the aggression out through the music."

And that leads back to rock's aggressive reputation. "The music makes me jump up and down," Young argues, "but I don't expect the person who's buying it to go out and kill their next-door neighbor.



**"When it comes to rock music, I think
a lot of people may delve too deep.
I'm not here to give my religious views;
I'm here strictly to make music."**

have to get wasted.' You don't have to kill yourself to like a rock song, to have a good time. I don't think anyone wants that. For a start, there would be a lot fewer record buyers in the world!"

Hasn't the hard-living image of bands like Guns N'Roses tended to romanticize life on the razor's edge? When the subject of Axl Rose's now infamous lyric that sneers at "immigrants and faggots" is mentioned, the gulf between America's heavy metal rebels and Australia's hard rock renegades becomes

apparent. "Maybe those lyrics help them feel they're getting noticed, by getting them in the paper," Young says. "You know, one member of Guns N'Roses has got a black mother. That's a double standard, isn't it?"

But has AC/DC suffered because of the Guns N'Roses of the world? "You have to look at where they come from," he explains. "I'm not defending anything, but when it comes to rock music, I think a lot of people may delve too deep. You know, we could have shocked people, like when the British vice squad tailed us — not for mooning, but for someone having said I was masturbating on stage. But I was having a joke. I could have cashed in by getting locked up for the night and been in the papers the next day. But a lot of that takes away from rock music. I'm not here to give my politics or my religious views; I'm here strictly to make music."

Angus won't talk politics, but music gets him going. Rap leaves him cold, because of the drum machines. "I can't even tap my foot to a lot of stuff that comes out, whereas when I listen to old stuff like Muddy Waters, I'm still amazed and tapping straight away," he says. He's flattered that The Beastie Boys and The Cult have "borrowed" his demon riffs, but he dislikes the way Americans "like to make rock 'n' roll a bit flashy. It's not true rock 'n' roll to me."

"I get more off a young band, four kids just out of high school banging away, because in their own little way they may be doing something new, and a bit raw. And they're not afraid to play like that. When you see modern day bands, they tend to barrage people with visual things, and the music is secondary."

Big, bad rock — it's always having to defend itself; Judas Priest, for instance, have just escaped being held responsible for two suicides. AC/DC have never shared the metal fraternity's taste for satanism; the sleeve of *Highway To Hell*, on which Angus sprouts two little horns, "came from someone asking us what we'd call one of our tours, and I replied, 'A highway to hell!' It was a joke again!"

"When we arrived in America, I didn't know what a fundamentalist was, and I didn't really care. All that satanic stuff is more a PR ploy. But if someone talked to me about heaven, I wouldn't enjoy a place like that. I mean, what's going on there? I couldn't hack it!"

"A couple of angels, a lot of peace and love — it doesn't sound like much fun, or that there'd be any rock music there, for a start! If the other place has got rock music and a few miniskirts, then I'm the first member!" **THE**

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TRACIE SPENCER ▶

In her self-penned press biography, Tracie Spencer jokes that it is a little unusual to write her first autobiography before she has a driver's license, but that's what happens when you become a recording star at 13. Tracie's self-titled 1988 debut showcased a young singer of surprising depth and range. "That showed what I can do with my voice, but my new album, *Make The Difference*, shows what I like to do — ballads, hot R&B, dance numbers, even some rap."

At 15, Tracie has been singing in public for five years now, ever since she won a talent contest at the Iowa State Fair. Her family background has definitely helped her career; her father was a singer and drummer with the likes of Jackie Wilson, while brother Marty — aka Sir Spence — co-writes much of her material. A seasoned veteran now, Tracie no longer wants to be called cute. "I'm bad now!" she insists. The difference a couple of teenage years make!



◀ **SOUL ASYLUM** Minneapolis quartet Soul Asylum have emerged from the early shadows of Husker Du (Bob Mould produced their 1986 debut, *Made To Be Broken*) to become a highly lauded fixture on the alternative American rock 'n' roll scene. Third album, *Soul Asylum And The Horse They Rode In On*, is a more melodic work than their major-label debut, 1988's *Hang Time*.

"We started off as a punk band because that's all we could play," confesses guitarist Dan Murphy. "Now that we've learned to play our instruments, we're out to challenge ourselves." Not that Soul Asylum have turned wimpy, though. Rumor has it they were thrown out of one L.A. studio for being too loud, and singer Dave Pirner's voice still takes no prisoners. Look for them riding into your town real soon.

BOB MOULD Ten years as guitarist for crucial American punk trio Husker Du made Bob Mould a heroic figure in alternative rock circles. After the controversial split of that band, Bob signed to Virgin Records, and his 1989 solo debut, *Workbook*, confirmed his bright future as a singer/songwriter.

The future is now, and new album *Black Sheets Of Rain* is winning critical accolades everywhere. It places Bob Mould back in the middle of a power trio, with new comrades being bassist Tony Maimone (Pere Ubu) and drummer Anton Fier (Golden Palominos). The acoustic tinges of *Workbook* are replaced by sheets of fiery guitar, but Mould's often bleak introspection remains intact. He even equates environmental disasters to his own torments, but sighs, "I guess a little pain never killed anyone." Hip, uneasy listening at its best.

MATRACA BERG New album *Lying To The Moon* is Matraca Berg's first, but the 26-year-old Nashville singer/songwriter is no stranger to success. As a songwriter, she's penned country hits for the likes of Reba McEntire ("The Last One To Know"), Highway 101 and Patty Loveless, but she's now stepping confidently into the solo spotlight.

Lying To The Moon has already spawned two well-received singles, "Baby, Walk On" and "The Things You Left Undone," and it proves Berg has the voice to match the eloquent hurtin' songs she specializes in. "Everybody has their personal pain," she says. "You draw from that and put it in a three minute song." Matraca is optimistic that the time is right for her brand of "exotic hillbilly" music. "The singer/songwriter is becoming real strong, and that is good news."

COCTEAU TWINS Few British bands can boast the sustained critical adulation enjoyed by the Cocteau Twins through the '80s. Over the course of, at last count, seven albums and six EPs, they have kept a dedicated cult following with their hauntingly atmospheric brand of mood music.

Singer/lyricist Liz Fraser and guitarist/producer Robin Guthrie united forces in Scotland in 1980, with current bassist Simon Raymonde joining in 1983. The Twins became regular occupants of the top slots on the British independent charts, while a side project, *This Mortal Coil*, scored a hit with "Song To The Siren." Famous fans of the Cocteau twins include Prince, and the group has been credited with influencing such new sensations as The Sundays. New album *Heaven Or Las Vegas* finds them in fine fettle, and Fraser's penchant for colorful song titles is displayed on the likes of "Iceblink Luck" (the first single), "Cherry-Coloured Funk," and, best of all, "Frou-Frou Foxes In Midsummer Fires."



CHI Contemporary jazz duo Chi take their name from the Chinese word for energy, and it was energy of a geological type that sparked the partnership of Tom Chase and Steve Rucker. Back in 1983, the two successful Californian session musicians met by chance on the island of Maui, Hawaii, and immediately clicked. "We went to the top of a volcano to watch a sunrise, and that's when we decided to pool our resources," explains Steve.

The duo's 1989 debut *Pacific Rim* won converts to their textured, melodic sound, and now its follow-up, *Jet Stream* (on Sonic Atmospheres), is flying high. Rucker plays keyboards, Chase guitars, with guest players adding percussion, sax and vocals. Even if you've yet to sample the aural delights of Chi, chances are you've already heard some of Rucker and Chase's compositions, for their film and TV credits include *And God Created Woman*, *Greatest American Hero*, and *Hill Street Blues*.



SOUP DRAGONS

With their third album, *Lovegod*, Scotland's Soup Dragons have made the transition from indie guitar band to serious pop contenders. Their sound has expanded from Buzzcocks-like chainsaw riffing and now incorporates dance, psychedelic, and reggae grooves, as exemplified on the recent single "I'm Free," a Top 10 hit in Britain. Here, they use a toast from reggae star Junior Reid and a gospel choir to funkify an old Rolling Stones classic.

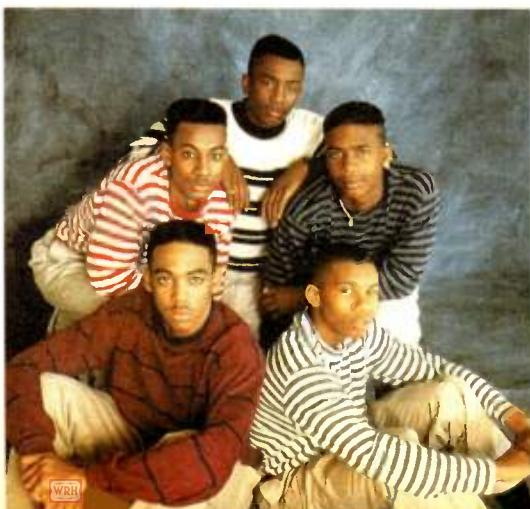
Soup Dragons first started breathing musical fire in Glasgow in 1985 and have determinedly followed their own musical path ever since. "Because we love Jimi Hendrix and James Brown, we've been accused of being rock dinosaurs, but we've always just done exactly what we wanted to do," claims singer Sean Dickson.



▲ DEEE-LITE

Cosmopolitan trio Deee-Lite is one of the freshest new acts to step onto the world dance floor in quite some time. They comprise two soundmeisters, Russian emigre Super DJ Dmitry and Japanese computer whiz Jungle DJ Towa Towa, and one divine disco diva, Lady Miss Kier.

Dmitry tags their uplifting sound "Holographic House Groove — it combines elements of house and slower groove tempos, disco and soul." After winning friends in New York clubland over the last three years, Deee-Lite signed to Elektra, and debut LP *World Clique* is now scaling the charts, propelled by international smash hit "Groove Is In The Heart." Their synthesis of cool sound, wacky fashion and "peace, love & unity" messages is, well, simply Deee-Liteful.



URBAN DANCE SQUAD

Cool hip-hop sounds from the land of tulips and windmills? It seems unlikely, but Holland's Urban Dance Squad are shattering stereotypes of that country's music scene. Their debut Arista album, *Mental Floss For The Globe*, is enjoying an extended run on the charts. And it introduces a band with a sound every bit as eclectic and exciting as that of the likes of Fishbone and The Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Like those groups, the Squad mix up funk, R&B, rock and rap (as demonstrated on single "Deeper Shade Of Soul"), and they are becoming notorious for a wildly energetic stage show led by frontman Rude Boy Remington. It was their fiery live performance at 1989's New Music Seminar in New York that brought the band to the attention of the American labels, and now the whole globe is getting a taste of this Dutch treat.

JOE DIFFIE

Contemporary country music is virtually bursting at the seams with talented new male singers, but room will surely be made for young singer-songwriter Joe Diffie. With the release of his Epic debut, *A Thousand Winding Roads*, the rest of us can discover what Nashville industry insiders have been whispering for the last few years. "When you hear him sing, you think you're hearing the best country singer since George Jones," gushes producer Paul Worley.

As a songwriter, Joe has already had songs cut by the likes of Hank Thompson and Holly Dunn, but he's best known as one of Music City's most in-demand demo singers. These are the vocalists hired by songwriters to help pitch their tunes to major artists, but it was Diffie's voice that soon caught the ear of industry execs. Joe is a native of Duncan, Oklahoma, where he worked in a foundry for nine long years before hitting the winding road to Nashville with his voice and songs. "When I was doing those day jobs, I dreamed and fantasized about making it in country music," he says. The fantasy is about to become reality.

TOY MATINEE

No matter how rich or successful they become, hit songwriter/producers seem compelled to make their own records. Given that he has co-written and produced some of Madonna's most successful work, including "Live To Tell" and "Like A Prayer," Patrick Leonard must have some hefty royalty cheques rolling in, but he's taken time away from Ms. Ciccone and his other production clients (Julian Lennon, Bryan Ferry) to begin a new project, Toy Matinee.

This sees Leonard team with singer/instrumentalist Kevin Gilbert for a self-titled debut album on Reprise. This is a sophisticated, adventurous work, and songs like "There Was A Little Boy," "Remember My Name" (dedicated to Czech premier Vaclav Havel), and "Turn It On Salvador" (an ode to Dali) possess imaginative, thought-provoking lyrics. Interestingly enough, Leonard chose not to produce (Bill Bottrell is used), while the only famous friend helping out musically is Julian Lennon.

COMPILED BY KERRY DOOLE

 **SOUND CHECK**

SUPER STAR'S

BO KNOWS SUPERSTARS



SO DO:

COLIN JAMES
THE B-52'S
SAM KINISON
ZIGGY MARLEY
JEFF HEALEY
ALANNAH MYLES
LEE GREENWOOD
RICKY SKAGGS
CANDI

GLASS TIGER
BILLY BRAGG
JERRY SEINFELD
THE PROCLAIMERS
M.C. HAMMER
KID CREOLE &
THE COCONUTS
YOUNG MC
STEVIE B

SEDUCTION
KARYN WHITE
LATOYA JACKSON
WAYLON JENNINGS
UB40
KOOL & THE GANG
JOHN LEE HOOKER
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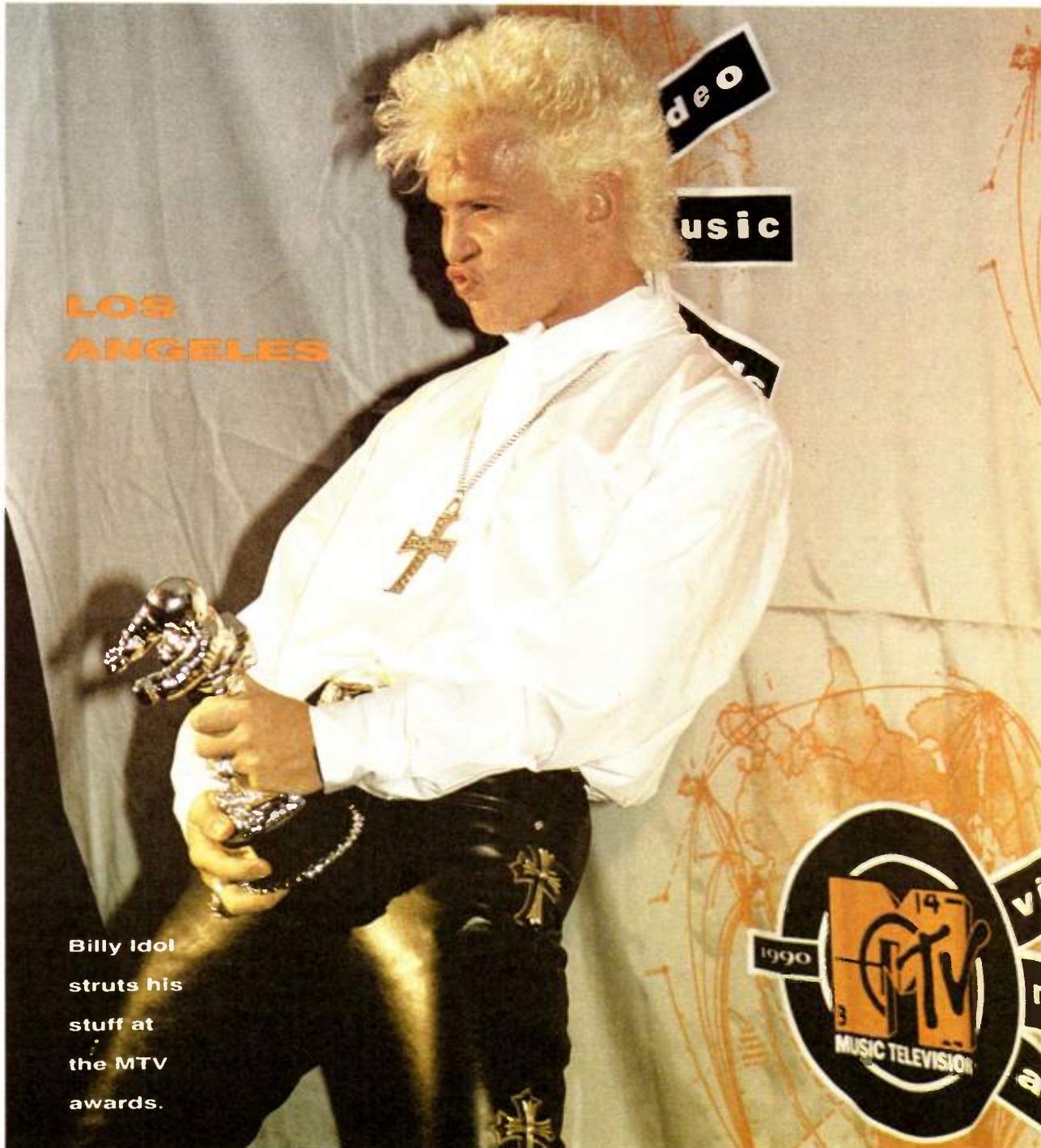
exposed

REGIONAL REPORTS

Judas Priest were in L.A. shooting a pair of videos for their new *Painkiller* LP when the "not guilty" verdict was handed down in the controversial subliminal message trial in Reno, Nevada. Band members Rob Halford and Glenn Tipton took some time out to discuss the case. Lead vocalist Halford admitted he often writes about people caught with their backs up against the wall. "For the most part, though, I believe we've tried to convey some kind of hope," he says. "Even when you're struggling, you have to stand up for your rights, speak out and fight back. We don't say there's no light at the end of the tunnel, and we certainly don't advocate suicide as a solution. But the fact remains, life is very cruel and it brings people a great deal of pain. I think the great communication factor between the band and our audience is that we can relate in that respect." Guitarist Tipton was a bit more succinct. "There are country and western bands that sing about far worse things than Judas Priest does." The band's new album contains at least one track, "Between The Hammer And The Anvil," which deals with the experience, according to Halford, who gave the keynote address at the Foundations Forum '90 heavy metal confab.

The MTV Video Music Awards proved to be a star-studded evening at the Universal Amphitheater. Highlights included Sinéad O'Connor turning boos to cheers with her "Best Video" nod, Aerosmith bringing the house down with a scintillating version of The Beatles' "I'm Down" during a commercial break and Madonna's ultra-erotic "Vogue" turn as Marie Antoinette, supposedly wearing the same dress that Michelle Pfeiffer wore in *Dangerous Liaisons*. Other winners included M.C. Hammer, The B-52's and Billy Idol.

Duran Duran were in town for the awards show as well as to do a little promo for their new *Liberty* LP. While the band is still trailed by a small, if faithful, band of Duranies, much of the hoopla that once surrounded them has been transferred to the likes of New Kids On The Block, in L.A. themselves to headline at Dodger Stadium. Duran's Nick Rhodes, looking very much like his own idol, the late Andy Warhol, in dyed-blond hair and eyeliner, acknowledged the band's difficulty in overcoming their image as the quintessential MTV teen idols. "It's not tough for us, but it's obviously tough for the media and the general public, who still think of us in that time warp of the mid-'80s," he says. "I never realized what powerful images we must have generated to stick in people's



brains for that long. They'll just have to buy our back catalogue to hear what they've been missing since then."

That Mojo Nixon-Don Henley feud heated up when a certain well-known top-level record exec threatened legal action on behalf of the ex-Eagle, forcing Nixon's label, Enigma, to cease using a sticker that featured Henley's picture with a cross covering it and the legend, "Please don't play 'Don Henley Must Die.' It might upset him." The feisty indie company agreed to deep-six the marketing campaign and sub-

stitute a new label, which quoted Henley's comments about Nixon in the *L.A. Times*: "I think the boy just needs a good laxative." Enigma then turned its attention to the next single from Mojo's *Otis* LP, titled, appropriately enough, "Destroy All Lawyers."

Legendary Cream drummer Ginger Baker has joined bluesbusters Masters Of Reality. And Bruce Springsteen is rumored to have contributed almost a quarter of a million bucks to the proposed John Hammond Theater, to be built at the

Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., along with an accompanying exhibit of pop music artifacts. He also gave \$10,000 to R&B singer Mary Wells to help her ongoing battle with cancer.

The original lineup of Procol Harum is shopping new demos around town, and several labels are very interested. MTV is planning to build a giant retail operation to be called Rockplex, which will house studios, offices and record and clothing stores, on the hill behind Universal City.

Roy Trakin

NEW YORK

The '60s-styled Blues Traveler is definitely a live phenomenon.



Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story, a musical biography of the legendary rocker, opens this month on Broadway. The production, which is structured something like the all-music *Beatlemania*, has been a hit in London since its debut there last fall. **Paul McCartney**, who owns the publishing rights to Holly's songs, threw a private party at the Lone Star Roadhouse recently for the cast to commemorate what would have been Holly's 54th birthday.

The bash drew an all-star crowd of Holly fans. Among them were **Steve Forbert**, who performed a folkie version of "Well...All Right," **Joe Ely**, who offered a rendition of "Not Fade Away," and **The Smithereens' Pat DiNizio**, who sang his

own song, "Maria Elena," a tribute to Holly's widow, who was also present. Holly's original backing band, **The Crickets**, made a brief appearance, before the evening ended with an all-star jam featuring McCartney and **Dave Edmunds** on Little Richard's "Lucille."

Island Records hosted a night of sophisticated bohemian music at Tramps featuring ex-Lounge Lizard **Evan Lurie**, beat poet **Allen Ginsberg** and everyone's favorite sideman, guitarist **Marc Ribot**, and his band **The Rootless Cosmopolitans**. Celebrating releases by each — and one by author **William S. Burroughs**, who was represented by a riveting video of his poem "Thanksgiving Prayer" — the event, sub-

titled "F**k Dance, This Is Art," attracted a wide cross section of New York's downtown musical intelligentsia, including **John Cale** and **Arto Lindsay**.

Pianist Lurie led his band through a beautiful set of tangos and other evocatively styled instrumental compositions, while Ginsberg opened his performance by telling the noisy audience, "If you talk, I'll talk louder." And he did, with such crowd-stopping poems as his classic "Pull My Daisy," which is rife with vivid sexual references. Ribot, who performed with both Lurie and Ginsberg, ended the evening with his own artful brand of noisy pop jazz.

In recent months, **Blues Traveler**, a sort of revivalist '60s-styled blues band featuring **John Popper**, a particularly talented harmonica player, has become the most popular live draw in New York, often playing to packed houses several nights a week. They've just released a self-titled debut on A&M Records, but, much like **The Grateful Dead**, whose audience they seem to share, the group is definitely a live phenomenon. Their hardcore fans, "the Travelers," follow them from city to city, communing at each concert like an ad hoc family.

Meanwhile, the Dead just finished their annual week-long residence at the newly refurbished Madison Square Garden. Still recovering from the loss of keyboardist **Brent Mydland**, the band showcased its newest member, ex-Tube **Vince Welnick**,

during the Garden shows. Friend-of-the-band **Bruce Hornsby** also sat in on a few of the shows.

The Dead's New York engagement not only coincided with the release of their live album, *Without A Net*, but also heralded the release of drummer **Mickey Hart's** latest solo effort, *At The Edge*, his 14th world music-inspired recording in as many years.

At a release party held at 46 Cannes, a new restaurant owned by former Mudd Club impresario **Steve Mass**, Hart noted that his interest in world music began at a very tender age. "There were always Folkways Records around my parents' house when I was growing up," he said. "I thought that everyone knew about that music!"

A lifelong slave to the rhythm, Hart translated his childhood curiosity in world music into a passionate hobby, going out and making his own field recordings of everything from Tibetan monks to Egyptian folk music during breaks from The Dead.

For *At The Edge*, Hart combines environmental sounds with primitive percussion instruments to create a gorgeous, moving soundscape. It's everything new age music is supposed to be, and almost always isn't. As a companion to the album, Hart also published a book titled *Drumming At The Edge Of Music*, a lively, loving historical survey of the drum's heritage since the beginning of time.

Tina Clarke

CANADA

Colleagues still shocked by the tragic death of Eye Eye drummer **Mark Caporaso** quickly rallied around and organized a memorial tribute at Toronto's Diamond Club. Performers included **The Jeff Healey Band**, **Look People**, **Kenny MacLean**, **Lee Aaron**, members of **Honeymoon Suite** and **Frozen Ghost**, and, naturally, Eye Eye. The evening raised over \$6,000 for Mark's favorite charity, The World Wildlife Fund.

Performing rights society **SOCAN** (Society Of Composers, Artists and Music Publishers of Canada) recently held its inaugural awards dinner in Toronto. The most-played Canadian songs of 1989 were honored; their composers included the likes of **Ian Thomas** (who served as an irreverent MC), **Bruce Cockburn**, **Jim Cuddy & Greg Keelor** (**Blue Rodeo**) and **Frozen Ghost's Arnold Lanni**, who landed two songs in the Top 10. The prestigious **Wm. Harold Moon Award** was presented to **Gordon Lightfoot** in recognition of his international achievements.

Things are going swimmingly for three "street-credible" bands now signed to Capitol Records. **The Leslie Spit Treeo's** debut, *Don't Cry Too Hard*, is now out, and one fine platter it be. Look for them in spit-

ting distance from you soon. Word is there's very strong U.S. label interest in the record. After pre-production at Neil Young's ranch, **13 Engines** are now recording their Capitol debut in L.A. with Neil's producer, **David Briggs**. Also in the City of Angels are **One Free Fall**, working on a debut EP. Look for new year releases from both groups.

Same time period should see the first WEA Canada release for popular singer/songwriter/guitarist **Jack de Keyzer**. It's been a while since we've heard from **Alfie Zappacosta**, but he's back in action with **Quick...! Don't Ask Any Questions**. Produced by U.S. ace **Davitt Sigerson**, it's out on the A-Z label, distributed by Capitol.

Indie Notes: A couple of worthy new releases are making waves on the Canadian country charts. Singer-songwriter **Tim Taylor** has enjoyed past success in a duo with wife **Anita Perris**, and he's now issued his debut solo cassette, *Farewell Ave.*, on Tailspin Music. **Errol Ranville** is best known as the lead singer of popular '80s country-rock band **C-Weed**. His debut solo outing, *I Want To Fly*, is attracting good reviews, with the single of the same name now charting. *I Want To Fly* is the first re-

lease for dynamic new Winnipeg label, **Thunder Records**.

Two promising new Toronto bands with impressive pedigrees sport slightly confusing monikers. **Loud Factory** was formed earlier this year when bassist **Johnny Sinclair** and singer **Leslie Stanwyck** left **The Pursuit Of Happiness**. **Happy Factory** include **Teknakuller Raincoats** alumni **Shaun Bowring** and **Gary Stinson** and former **Sturm Group** guitarist **Daryl Flynn**. They're recording material for an EP. Popular garage rockers **The Ten Commandments** are now driving around with a brand new rhythm section, but their cool beat remains much the same.

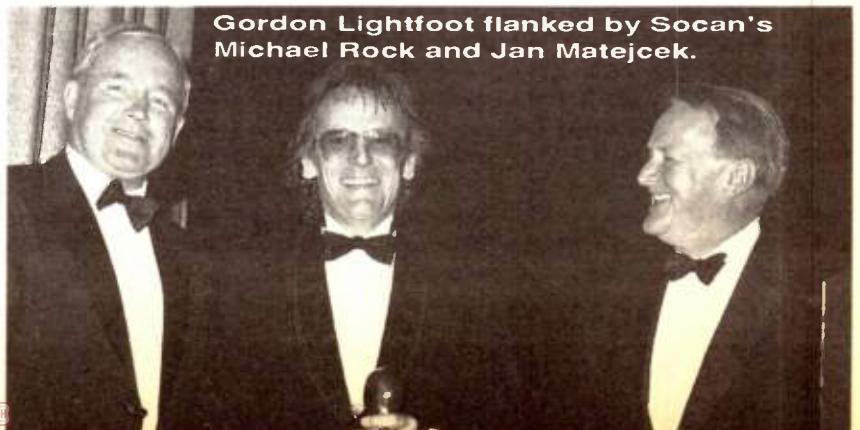
Acclaimed London noisemakers **Suffer Machine** are now recording with **John**

Switzer (**Jane Siberry**) and **Michael Phillip Wojewoda**. Young Montreal singer-songwriter **Daniel Weaver** has just released an impressively melodic first album, *Good Day Messiah*, on Stream Records. Daniel co-produced with **Jeremie Arrobas**.

Some of the best unsigned bands from across the country faced off in the finals of the Molson Canadian Rocks Showdown '90 at The Diamond. An ecstatic ovation greeted the announcement of crowd favorites **The Thomas Trio** and **Red Albino** as winners. The Newfoundland funkmeisters won the right to represent Canada at the international Yamaha Band Explosion '90 World Finals in Tokyo, and are contending with intense major label attention.

Kerry Doole

Gordon Lightfoot flanked by Socan's Michael Rock and Jan Matejcek.





Ride's feverish

pop noise is

winning them fans

— and daffodils.

Beats International — the group formed by former **Housemartins** bassist **Norman Cook** — took part in the launch of London's new black radio station, **KISS FM**, last month. But after performing their recent No. 1 single, "Dub Be Good To Me," a reworking of the **S.O.S. Band** classic, they were forced to leave the stage when vocalists **Lindy Layton** and **Lester Noel** were pelted with a barrage of cans. "I think it happened because we were the only band there who were pop," said Cook later, adding ominously, "and the only one including white people." He stressed that he felt it was only a tiny minority of the crowd involved, and said, "We weren't angry about it. We just thought we were in the wrong place."

Remember Cat Stevens? The former singer/songwriter whose albums *Tea For The Tillerman* and *Teaser And The Firecat* were classics of the '70s era has adopted the Muslim faith and changed his name to **Yusuf Islam**. As a spiritual leader he has often courted controversy, condemning the "blasphemous" author **Salman Rushdie** and, just last month, visiting Iraqi President **Saddam Hussein** to give the invader

of Kuwait "some good advice." The visit brought howls of anguish from politicians, including a call for the execution of the peace-loving ex-hippie. "It's a pretty poor show when a British citizen expresses views like these," said Conservative MP **Ivor Stanbrook**. "If Britain becomes engaged in war and he continues, it would be treason, and he could be arrested and executed as a traitor." And don't forget that one of Stevens' earliest hits was called "I'm Gonna Get Me A Gun"!

Following their headlining show to celebrate the **Town & Country Club**'s fifth anniversary, **The Stranglers** suddenly found themselves a trio, after the shock departure of guitarist/singer/founding member **Hugh Cornwell**. The band has decided to soldier on and there are rumors that they are considering two rivals from their punk days — **ex-Damned** vocalist **Dave Vanian** and former **Clash** main man **Joe Strummer**. Meanwhile, Cornwell is planning a solo career.

Deee-Lite, the New York psychedelic dance trio, have been denied a U.K. No. 1 single by a combination of a **Levis jeans** campaign and the rules of the British record industry. In late September the

band's single "Groove Is In The Heart" was the joint top-selling 45, but the coveted top slot was awarded to the re-released **Steve Miller** oldie "The Joker," because it had registered a bigger increase in sales from the previous week. Thus **Deee-Lite** were shown as being No. 2 in the published chart, bringing an angry response from their label boss, **Rob Dickens**. "We have no problem sharing No. 1 with a classic record like 'The Joker,'" he explained, "but if statisticians can wreak havoc with a group's career, we will seriously have to rethink our commitment to this chart." Incidentally, "The Joker" was a dismal flop when it was first released in Britain, but was recently used as the soundtrack to a sexy TV ad for jeans and seems to have reached an eager new audience. A **Steve Miller** "greatest hits" album is now planned for next month.

Two benefit shows by a re-formed **Ian Dury And The Blockheads** — arranged to raise money for original drummer **Charlie Charles**, who was suffering from cancer — took place last month, even though Charles had passed away several weeks earlier. One of Charles' most telling contri-

butions was his work on Dury's solo album *New Boots And Panties*, which contained the classic anthem "Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll." He was 45.

The Waterboys continue to create controversy on their travels. After much adverse press following the sacking of two band members, the band's new album, *Room To Roam*, has received almost universal critical dismissal. The current U.K. tour has seen bandleader **Mike Scott** and his slimmed-down group playing much more basic sets that owe a lot to mid-'60s electric period **Bob Dylan**. Scott may be a wayward genius, but at present he seems to have lost his bearings...

Of the newer British bands worth checking out, the best of the recent crop is **Ride**, who on their forthcoming LP, *Nowhere*, capture elements of **The House Of Love** and **The Jesus And Mary Chain** in their feverish pop noise. Vocalist **Mark Gardener** has fast become a teen pin-up, and the band seems bound to inherit **The Smiths'** long-vacant throne. At a recent **Ride** show, hundreds of fans turned up carrying bouquets of daffodils.

Johnny Waller/S.I.N.



Is there a new Cure album coming out?
Is Robert Smith getting married?
Is this a greatest hits collection?
Is the Cure breaking up?
Have these songs been re-recorded?
Have these songs been re-mixed?
Confused?
No, just



Cure Classics RE-BORN
featuring the new single
"Never Enough"

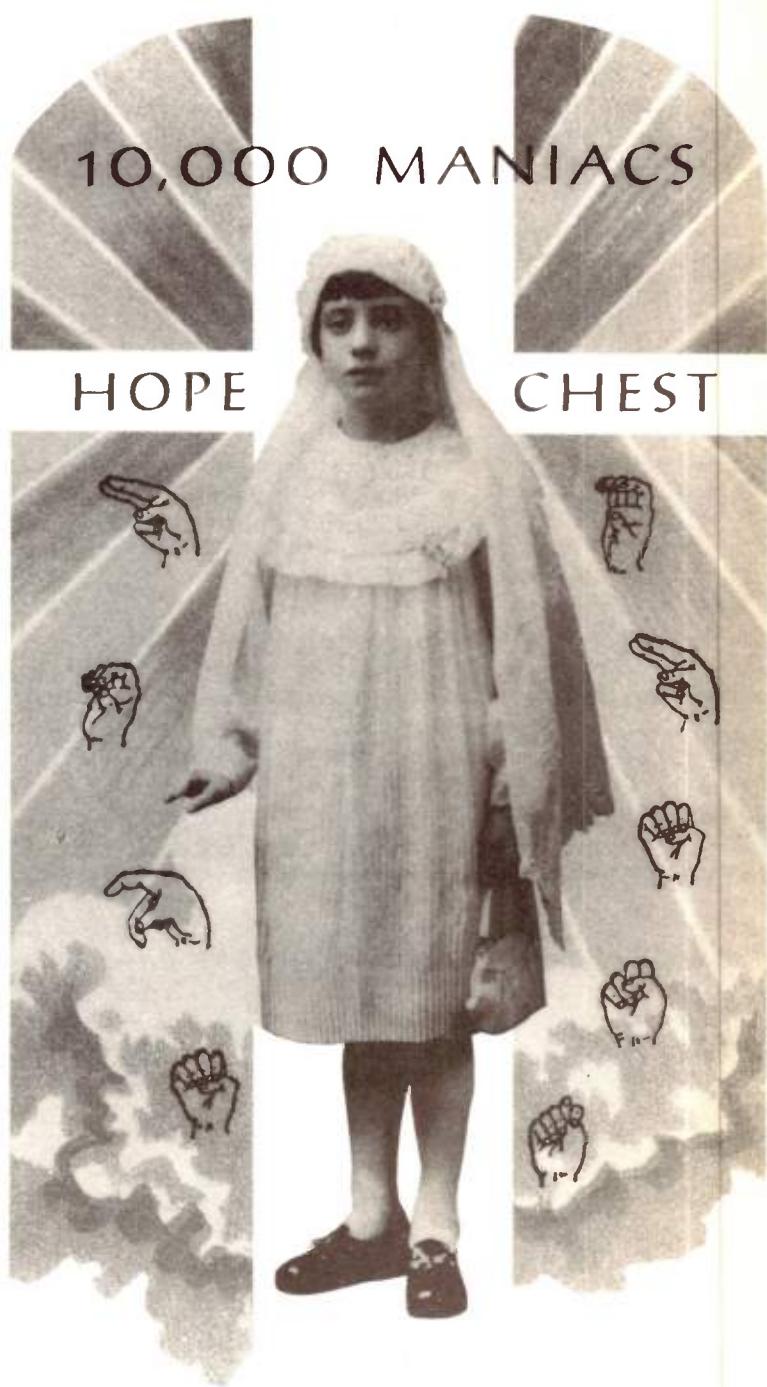
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CONCERT GUIDE



ANITA BAKER
NOV.13-14 ST.LOUIS • FOX THEATRE
15,17 ATLANTA • FOX THEATRE
19-20 CHARLESTON • KING ST. PALACE
27-28,30-31 MERRIVILLE • STAR PLAZA THEATRE

DREAD ZEPPELIN
NOV.2 FT.WORTH • WEST SIDE STORIES
3 SHREVEPORT • 6:30 COMMERCE CLUB
7 LAWRENCE • THE BOTTLENECK
8 WICHITA • THE FLICKER
9 ST.LOUIS • 1227 CLUB
10 COLUMBIA • THE BLUE NOTE
11 OMAHA • NICK & ERIC'S
15 MILWAUKEE • UNIV. OF MILWAUKEE
16 CHICAGO • CABARET'S METRO

ANITA BAKER

FLEETWOOD MAC
NOV.1 NEW YORK • MADISON SQUARE GARDEN



FLEETWOOD MAC

2 PHILADELPHIA • THE SPECTRUM
3 WEST POINT • EISENHOWER HALL THEATRE
6 ROCHESTER • WAR MEMORIAL ARENA
7 LANDOVER • CAPITOL CENTER
9 HARTFORD • HARTFORD CIVIC CENTER
11 PORTLAND • CIVIC CENTER ARENA

13 BOSTON • BOSTON GARDEN
14 PROVIDENCE • PROVIDENCE CIVIC CENTER
15 ATLANTIC CITY • TRUMP
TAJ MAHAL
17 ALBANY • KNICKERBOCKER ARENA
19 PITTSBURGH • CIVIC ARENA
20 RICHFIELD • RICHFIELD COLISEUM
23 CINCINNATI • RIVERFRONT COLISEUM
24 INDIANAPOLIS • MARKET SQUARE ARENA
27 WINNIPEG • WINNIPEG ARENA
29 SASKATOON • SASKATOON PLACE
30 CALGARY • OLYMPIC SADDLEDOME

BASIA
NOV.1 PITTSBURGH • HEINZ HALL
2 ATLANTIC CITY • TRUMP

TAJ MAHAL
3 BOSTON • ORPHEUM THEATRE
5 DETROIT • FOX THEATRE
6 CHICAGO • CHICAGO THEATRE
7 CINCINNATI • TATI MUSIC HALL
9 ST.LOUIS • AMERICAN THEATRE

10 KANSAS CITY • MEMORIAL HALL
12 SAN ANTONIO • MAJESTIC THEATRE
13 AUSTIN • OPERA HOUSE
15-16 PHOENIX • CELEBRITY THEATRE
17 COSTA MESA • PACIFIC AMPH.
19 SAN DIEGO • CIVIC CENTER
20 LOS ANGELES • DOROTHY CHANDLER PAV.

CONCRETE BLONDE
/GENE LOVES JEZEBEL

NOV.2 DALLAS • BRONEE BOWL
3 SAN ANTONIO • MAJESTIC THEATRE
4 AUSTIN • OPERA HOUSE
5 ALBUQUERQUE • UNIV. OF MEXICO
7 DENVER • PARAMOUNT THEATRE
8 SALT LAKE CITY • ASSEMBLY HALL
10 VANCOUVER • ORPHEUM THEATRE
11 SEATTLE • PARAMOUNT THEATRE
12 EUGENE • HUIT CENTER
13 PORTLAND • CIVIC AUDITORIUM
15 UNIVERSAL CITY • UNI-BASIA



Left: Neil Preston* ; middle: Paul Cox/LFI



VERSAL AMPH.
16 SAN DIEGO • STARLIGHT BOWL
18 SAN FRANCISCO • THE WARFIELD
19 SANTA BARBARA • ARLINGTON THEATRE
20 MESA • MESA AMPH.

LOS LOBOS

NOV.1 SPRINGFIELD • PERF. ARTS CENTER
2 NEW YORK • BEACON THEATRE
4 NEW HAVEN • TOAD'S PLACE
6 BOSTON • ORPHEUM THEATRE
7 PHILADELPHIA • CHESTNUT CABARET
9 WASHINGTON • LISNER AUDITORIUM
10 NORFOLK • THE BOATHOUSE
11 CHARLOTTESVILLE • TRAX
13 CHARLOTTE • SPIRIT SQUARE
14 ATHENS • GEORGIA THEATRE
15 ATLANTA • CENTER STAGE
16 NASHVILLE • 328 PERF. HALL
17 CINCINNATI • BOGART'S
19 COLUMBIA • NEWPORT MUSIC HALL
20 LAKWOOD • PHANTASY THEATRE

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

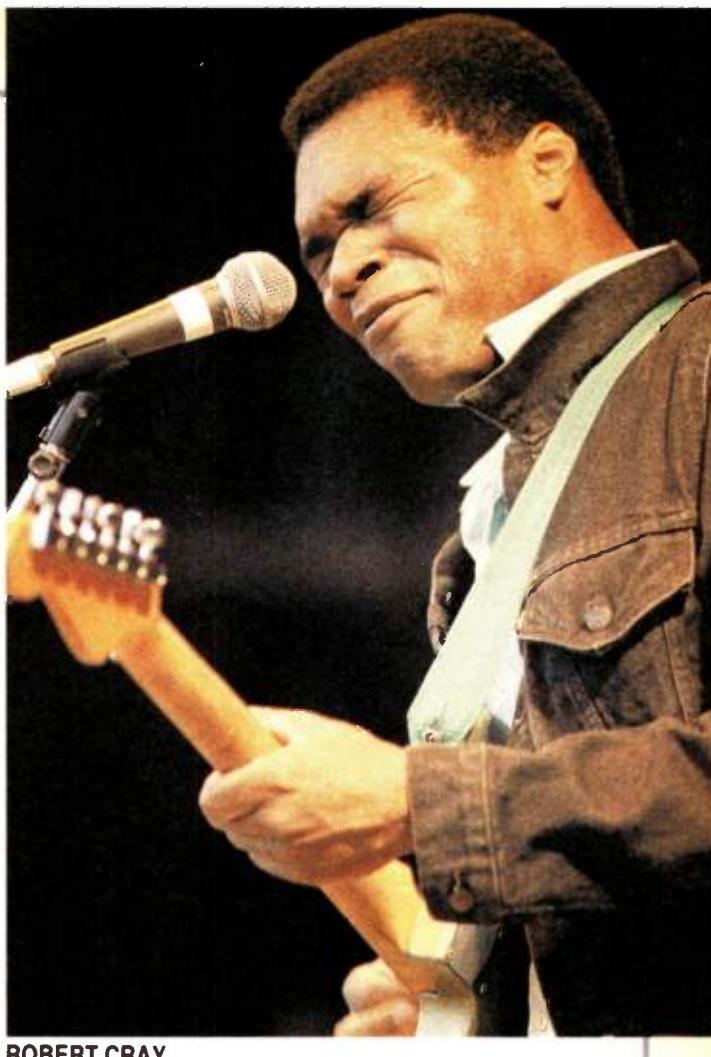
NOV.1 EDMONTON • NORTHLANDS COLISEUM
2 REGINA • AGRIDOME
3 SASKATOON • SASKATCHEWAN PLACE

4 WINNIPEG • WINNIPEG ARENA
7 INDIANAPOLIS • MARKET SQUARE ARENA
8 CHAMPAIGN • ASSEMBLY HALL
9 AMES • HILTON COLISEUM
10 MINNEAPOLIS • TARGET CENTER
11 MILWAUKEE • BRADLEY CENTER
14 ROSEMOUNT • ROSEMOUNT HORIZON
15-16 DETROIT • JOE LOUIS ARENA
20-21 UNIONDALE • NASSAU COLISEUM
23 PITTSBURGH • CIVIC ARENA
24 SYRACUSE • CARRIER DOME
25-26 RICHFIELD • RICHFIELD COLISEUM
29 ATLANTA • THE OMNI
30 KNOXVILLE • THOMPSON BOLING ARENA

THE ROBERT CRAY BAND

NOV.1 SPRINGFIELD • PERF. ARTS CENTER
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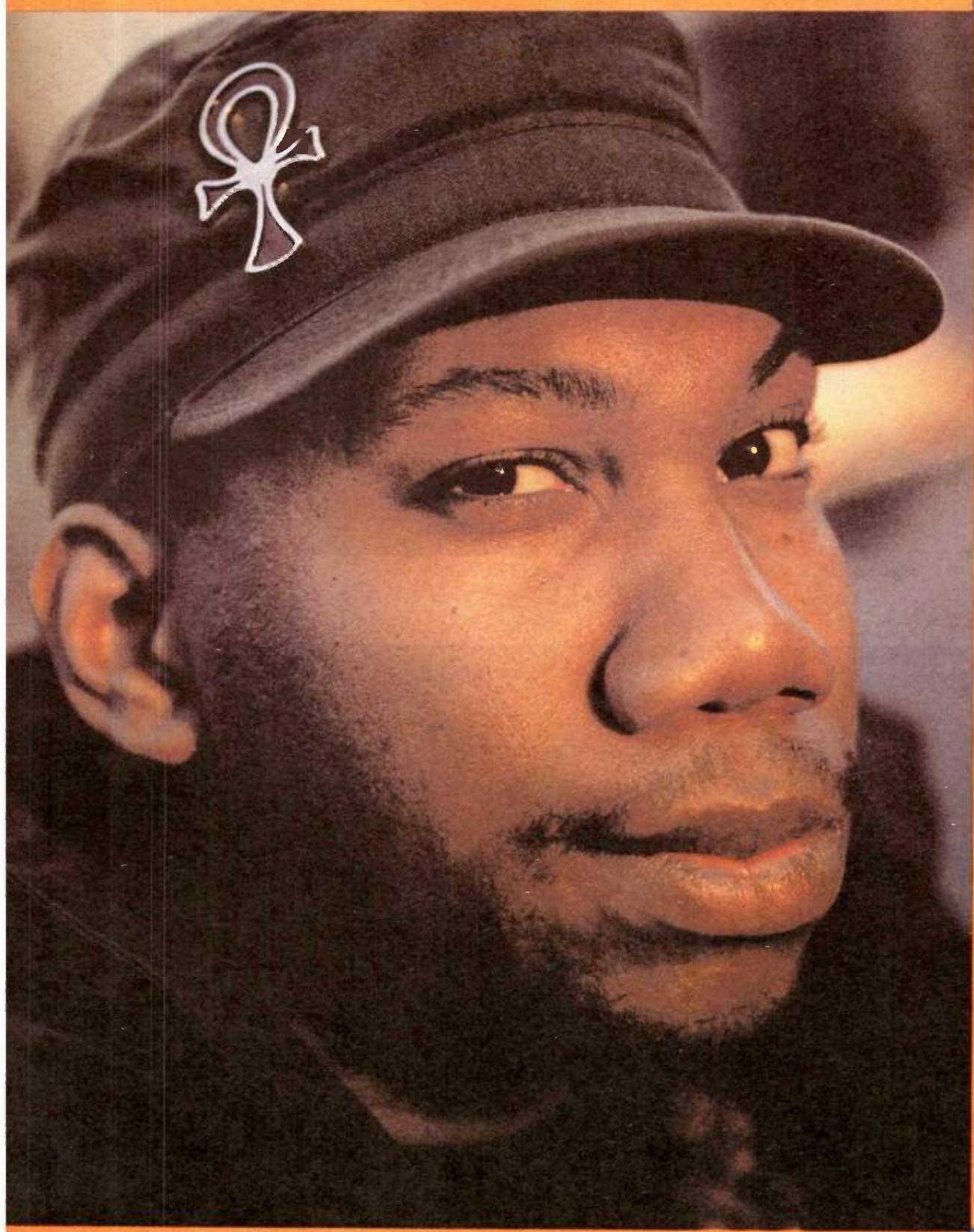
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Boogie Down Productions' aim is to make people think while they're tapping their toes to the beat, and with the group's



fourth album, *Edutainment*, out, rapper KRS-One wants to share his personal blueprint for social change — a kind of utopian vision of an ego-free society...

Rappins



**By
Mary Dickie**

Kris Parker, otherwise known as KRS-One, does not fit neatly into the usual rap stereotypes. In fact, he's made it his life's work to use the music made by his group, Boogie Down Productions, to blast those stereotypes. KRS-One is out to change the world by making people think about history, culture, homelessness and the evils of violence and drugs, even while they're tapping their feet to his hard-rocking beats.

Over four albums, KRS-One has skilfully managed to retain his street credibility while attacking bigoted attitudes, trying to convince kids to educate themselves and stay off drugs and preaching a message of peace and cultural pride. That's no mean feat these days, when in many neighborhoods the dealer is still the only guy who can afford the car and the fancy clothes. As KRS-One says in "Love's Gonna Get'cha (Material Love)," a song about a boy's descent into dealing as a way of putting food on his family's table — and one of the most powerful songs on BDP's new album, *Edutainment* — "What the fuck am I supposed to do?"

Kris grew up in the Bronx, running away from home at 13 and dividing his time between the subway, the library and a homeless shelter, where he met Scott LaRock, a social worker who moonlighted as a club DJ. Together they formed Boogie Down Productions as a way of warning street kids about drugs and violence. LaRock was shot and killed just as their first album, *Criminal Minded*, was getting successful, but Kris decided to continue, putting out *By All Means Necessary* and *Ghetto Music: The Blueprint Of Hip-Hop*, which received critical praise and brought his name to a wide audience.

Now, with the release of *Edutainment*, a compendium of BDP's particular philosophy — a kind of utopian quasi-buddhist/capitalist/socialist positivism — KRS-One has become the acceptable face of angry rap, the guy who'll compare George Bush with Satan but nonetheless preaches tolerance, not race war — and not war between the sexes, either. *Edutainment's* raps are about racism, history and ignorance, and how to effect change through intelligence. Over the phone line from Milwaukee, Kris earnestly and good-humoredly explains why he calls himself "the metaphysical rapper."

"My life is based on metaphysical philosophy," he says. "I know the laws of the universe, and I know what happens to the people who try to lift humanity, versus what happens to those who try to destroy humanity. So when it was time for me to do music, with everybody saying things like, 'I'm just a black nigger and I got a car and a gold chain,' I had to come out and say something relevant to people's culture and history."

According to Kris, although his facts may not always be dead-on, at least he's getting people to think about what he says, and to abandon what they learned in school in favor of their own self-realization and enlightenment. As he explains in "Ya Know The Rules," "Education doesn't come from obeying the curriculum."

"We're basing our lives on knowledge, which means to know, and not on intelligence, which means the ability to know," he says. "If you have just a little ability to know, you're gonna be a servant to the ones that taught you. And most people are walking around in a daze. Everyone wants to live a rich life, but no one goes out to do what they want to do — they don't even think about it."

So how does Boogie Down Productions tackle a

problem so large? "By simply giving them another way of life," Kris states confidently. "If you give kids the perception to open their minds and see other ways of doing things, they can rise up out of the situation they're in. What if people knew that 80 per cent of American business was created by illegal money — slave money, prostitution money, drug money? If a kid knew that, when he became the drug dealer on the corner he might do it for a month and then get out of it, and start a supermarket, a police department, a hospital. The solution is to change the perceptions of people, so they can change their environment."

And the way to do that, Kris says, is to use history. "You have to discover world history, everyone's history," he explains. "The problem is that we've been separated by race and culture. Most people are tricked into believing that all white people are responsible for the slave trade, and for why black people are in the situation they're in. But in fact, the nature of the system implies that everyone is a slave. In capitalism you're either a pimp or a whore. Most are whores, being pimped by the government.

"We're not acting as human beings; we're acting as white men and women, black men and women. If we acted in terms of our humanity and not our occupation, religion or color, then history could be taught correctly, and everybody would get their due.

"But we're not doing that. We're living the laws of death, instead of life — even by our eating habits. We're eating dead foods, going into dead minds for dead bodies. We have to wake up and live."

Kris' song "Beef" addresses that problem directly, with lines like "How many cows must be pumped up fatter/how many rats gotta fall in the batter/how many chickens that eat shit do you eat/how much high blood pressure you get from pigs' feet?" A vegetarian himself, Kris maintains that beef, not cocaine, is the number one street drug in America. "There are 21 different drugs in every bite of beef, can you imagine that? And you've got to be crazy to think that your body doesn't absorb all those things, those hormones, not to mention the stress and fear the animal felt before it was killed."

Kris' ideas may be a little too abstract for some, a little on the idealistic side. Does he really think that the world can live in unity when even among rappers there's always competition, some of it nasty? "Throughout African history, competition has always been in our genes," he says. "It's sort of like sport. Sometimes it's our downfall, though. When it's organized it becomes games; when it's disorganized it becomes wars."

More vicious dissing and women-bashing gets Kris annoyed, especially when people use the First Amendment to protect themselves from criticism. "There are people in this industry — Africans, whites, Asians, Indians — that like to hide behind the First Amendment," he begins, "but I personally don't agree that any man has the right to say anything about anyone. Especially when you don't point out the responsibilities of that privilege."

"If you're in communications and you have kids looking up to you, what you say is very important," he continues. "No one has looked into the psychological effects of having a role model who says that women have to be barefoot and pregnant. What effect does that have on the millions of people who buy your record and agree with you? You strengthen that belief. Someone like Ice Cube will sell two million records, and what's worse is that at his concerts there's nothing but women! You know, they pay their money to sit there and be called a bitch and a tramp and a whore. That's sick! They have to say 'This is not acceptable.' In a way, though, I can't criticize those guys too much, because it's not their fault. They could be forced to change if people didn't like what they were saying. But people love what they're saying. You cannot come down on an artist who's giving the people what they want."

"I think again it falls back on the school system. Because if the system could teach people how to live as human beings, when somebody came out to downgrade another human, people would reject them. In a backwards system you agree with them, because that's what you're all about. People who don't have the responsibility to speak to the people shouldn't have the right to speak to the people."

But if only some people have freedom of speech, it will be abused, won't it? "Not if we're living in the fantasy that I'm thinking of," Kris says, laughing. "Most of the problems start out as ego and power. And if people in the government weren't trying to control everyone, they wouldn't be involved — it would be a collective vote."

On *Edutainment* Kris makes a point of sarcastically thanking radio stations for only playing "air-headed" rap. "It's a vicious circle of money and power," he explains, "a system of advertisers wanting an audience and the audience being dictated to. I have no qualms with MC Hammer; the only thing I have qualms with is that that's all they play."

"I'm getting some radio play now, for the first time. When I added some more cursing to my record, I got a lot more radio play! Last year, when I put out 'Why Is That,' I got no radio. I put out 'You Must Learn,' I got no radio. This year I put out 'Tell Me What The Fuck Am I Supposed To Do,' and I got a whole lot of radio. And video!"

Kris has done a fair amount of production work, for people like the Neville Brothers and Ziggy Marley, and he says that's where the money is. "You gotta own companies, own studios. That's when you get paid. In this business the recording artist is the last one on the totem pole — the last to get paid, the last to eat. But he's the first to be called upon to write, record, do the press things, do this, do that. So the answer is, you have to own things."

On *Edutainment*, BDP has been criticized for sacrificing the beats in favor of the lecture. With all his emphasis on education, isn't Kris afraid that the music will be lost in the process? "That's what other rappers are here for, like Eazy-E and Hammer," he says. "Not one of us should ever be what's called rap music. But at the same time, we all of us, collectively, should be what rap music's all about." **me**

**"If we acted
in terms of our
humanity and not
our religion or
color, then
everybody would
get their due."**

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Quincy Jones



Top: Warner Bros.; Bottom: Orion Pictures

That as the Christmas season approaches all too rapidly, the studios generally reserve their big guns for December release, but there are plenty of attractive-sounding new offerings just around the corner. Getting a jump on the Christmas comedies is the ever-popular writer/director/producer **John Hughes**. Via hits like *Planes, Trains & Automobiles* and the *National Lampoon's Vacation* series, he's made something of a specialty of holiday-themed laugh fests. In *Home Alone*, a youngster is accidentally left at home when his family races off to Paris for Xmas. When he's confronted by a pair of bumbling burglars, fun and games ensue. Stars **Joe Pesci**, **Daniel Stern**, **John Heard**, **Catherine O'Hara** and newcomer **Macaulay Culkin**. **?** *Run* is a thriller starring **Patrick Dempsey** as a young law student wrongly accused of murder by a corrupt police force. Helping him on the run is a young casino employee, played by **Kelly Preston**. **?** Every month seems to have a sequel out. This time up, we get *Predator 2*, the successor to the 1987 blockbuster. Original screenwriters **Jim & John Thomas** return, but they've shifted the locale to an urban, not tropical jungle — Los Angeles. **Danny Glover** plays **Mike Harrigan**, the detective out for revenge on *The Predator*. Also stars **Gary Busey**, **Ruben Blades**, and **Maria Conchita Alonso**. **?** Director **Carl Reiner**'s new movie is *Sibling Rivalry*, described as a hilarious look at family love. The cast is heavy on TV stars — **Kirstie Alley**, **Scott Bakula** and **Ed O'Neill**. **Sam Elliott**, **Carrie Fisher** and **Bill Pullman** are also featured. **?** An even more impressive cast appears in *Alice*, the latest creation of the fertile brain of **Woody Allen**. This contemporary comedy features **William Hurt**, **Cybill Shepherd**, **Judy Davis**, **Mia Farrow**, **Alec Baldwin**, **Bernadette Peters** and **Judith Ivey**. **?** Judging from the lineup of film premieres at the recent Toronto Festival Of Festivals, there's a major new interest in the film noir genre, and that's good news for we fans of twisted murder plots, femme fatales and hard-boiled dialogue. Novelist **Jim Thompson**'s work has spawned two such films, the recent *After Dark, My Sweet* and the upcoming *The Grifters*. The latter film marks the American debut of talented Anglo director **Stephen Frears** (*My Beautiful Laundrette*). It stars **Anjelica Huston** and **John Cusack**, and won critical raves at the Festival. **?** *Dances With Wolves* sees the directorial debut of popular actor **Kevin Costner**. This Western epic is set in the 1860s, and Costner stars as a frontiersman trapped between the white and Native American cultures. **?** *Cher* fans can look forward to the Christmas release of the already much-delayed *Mermaids*. This "feel-good" movie sees *Cher* play the free-spirited mother of two daughters (**Winona Ryder** and **Christina Ricci**). Also starring **Bob Hoskins**. **?** Musical documentaries traditionally have a

short life in theatrical release, so hurry if you want to see *Listen Up: The Lives Of Quincy Jones* on the big screen. This portrait of the influential composer/producer features cameo performances and footage from a galaxy of contemporary stars. **?** Along with film noir, the trendy cinematic theme of the day seems to be gangster movies; current examples including *Miller's Crossing*, *Goodfellas*, and *The Godfather III*. An impressive British entry to these ranks is *The Krays*, based on the real story of London's worst modern criminals. Intriguingly, the terrible twins, The Krays, are played by **Gary and Martin Kemp**, formerly of new romantic band *Spandau Ballet*. **?** *Saturday Night Live* alumni **Chevy Chase** and **Dan Aykroyd** are teaming up in comic-adventure *Valkenvania*. Chase and **Demi Moore** are Wall Street yuppies stranded in a rural nightmare world populated by the likes of **John Candy** and **Aykroyd**, who also directs.

Kerry Doole

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Al Pacino, Sofia Coppola and
Andy Garcia in *The Godfather Part III*.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

By Kerry Doole

To Sofia Coppola, appearing in films directed by her father may be just a normal family experience. But, her father being Francis Ford Coppola, these are some home movies!

Francis Ford Coppola is possibly the most celebrated of all contemporary American directors, having won five Academy Awards and helmed such films as *Apocalypse Now*, *Rumblefish*, *Peggy Sue Got Married*, *Tucker: The Man And His Dream*, and *The Cotton Club*. But his most successful films, both critically and commercially, remain *The Godfather* and *The Godfather Part II*, and his imminent *The Godfather Part III* marks an appropriate closing of the circle for his 18-year-old daughter, Sofia.

You see, Sofia made her screen debut back in 1972 in *The Godfather*, playing an infant who appears in the christening scene in Old St. Patrick's Cathedral, and now *The Godfather Part III* marks her first major starring role. Intriguingly, she returned to that same church for a scene in the new epic.

"Yes, it is like bookends," she reflects. "And it's funny to see yourself as a baby on-screen. It's like having a beautiful home movie that will always be there!"

Stepping up to the starring saddle in a film with as much money, anticipation, and accumulated baggage riding on it as *The Godfather Part III* has would have been scary enough in itself, but the circumstances under which Sofia got the part would have reduced any less composed teenager to a quivering nervous wreck.

"I had wanted to do the part [of Mary Corleone, daughter of Kay and Michael, the Diane Keaton and Al Pacino characters] from the beginning, because this is such a great movie to be part of," she explains. "All writers take from their own lives, so I'm sure when my dad was writing the script [along with original novelist Mario Puzo], the part of the daughter was perhaps partially based on how he saw me. I had sat in on a reading, but some people felt I wasn't experienced enough and that it'd be a bit overwhelming."

Such stars as Julia Roberts and Madonna had been mentioned as being up for the key role of Mary, but the nod was finally given to Winona Ryder. With shooting on the mega-budget production all set to begin in Rome, however, Ryder was found to be in a state of nervous exhaustion, and the panic buttons were pressed. In one of those twists of fate that seem directed by a higher hand, Sofia happened to be in Rome already. "I was on a Christmas vacation from school, and I was getting ready to go back," she says. "I got a call to come in to the set right away, and that was it!"

According to a controversial *Vanity Fair* article (one Sofia dismisses as "complete trash"), the decision to cast Sofia as Mary caused serious dissension on the set and sparked friction between her father and Paramount executives. The final verdict on the wisdom of the casting must wait until the film is released, but Sofia's courage in completing the shoot cannot be questioned.

"You're so busy trying to get into it, you don't have time to worry," she ex-

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plains with a soft smile. "It didn't hit me until I was in L.A., walking into a movie theater, and I saw a huge cut-out, taller than me, proclaiming 'The Godfather Part III - Coming this Christmas.' Then it hit me — 'Oh, you mean people are going to see this?!" My dad said, 'What do you think you've been doing for the past six months?' You're so into the work, you don't realize that, and I think that's how you get through without being too nervous. Plus it was that it was in a foreign place. It wasn't 'Oh my god, there's Francis Ford Coppola's daughter.' I wasn't so intimidated."

And it didn't hurt that Sofia had grown up around film sets and that she'd known most of the crew "since I was born!" Besides her father, Sofia's aunt Talia Shire stars in the film, and grandfather Carmine Coppola again contributed the score. The family that films together stays together!

The career of Francis Ford Coppola has been a turbulent one, with blockbuster hits like *The Godfather* being followed by commercial flops like *One From The Heart* and corresponding serious financial problems for his own production company, Zoetrope. Sounds like it might have been a roller-coaster ride for the whole family.

"My father always warned us that filmmaking was definitely hard work, but he never worried us about the difficulties he was having," Sofia says. "There are things you come up against, but you always find ways of overcoming them. I just thought it was very exciting. And my dad is just so brilliant, inspiring, creative and supportive."

Unlike so many children of showbiz families, Sofia Coppola comes across as refreshingly unpretentious and, yes, normal. "I'm glad I didn't grow up in Hollywood," she states. "I grew up in the country [the Coppola family estate is in California's Napa Valley]. My mother is really down to earth, so I didn't turn out too freaky. I have very cool parents, and I really appreciate having been able to see so much of the world and having these experiences."

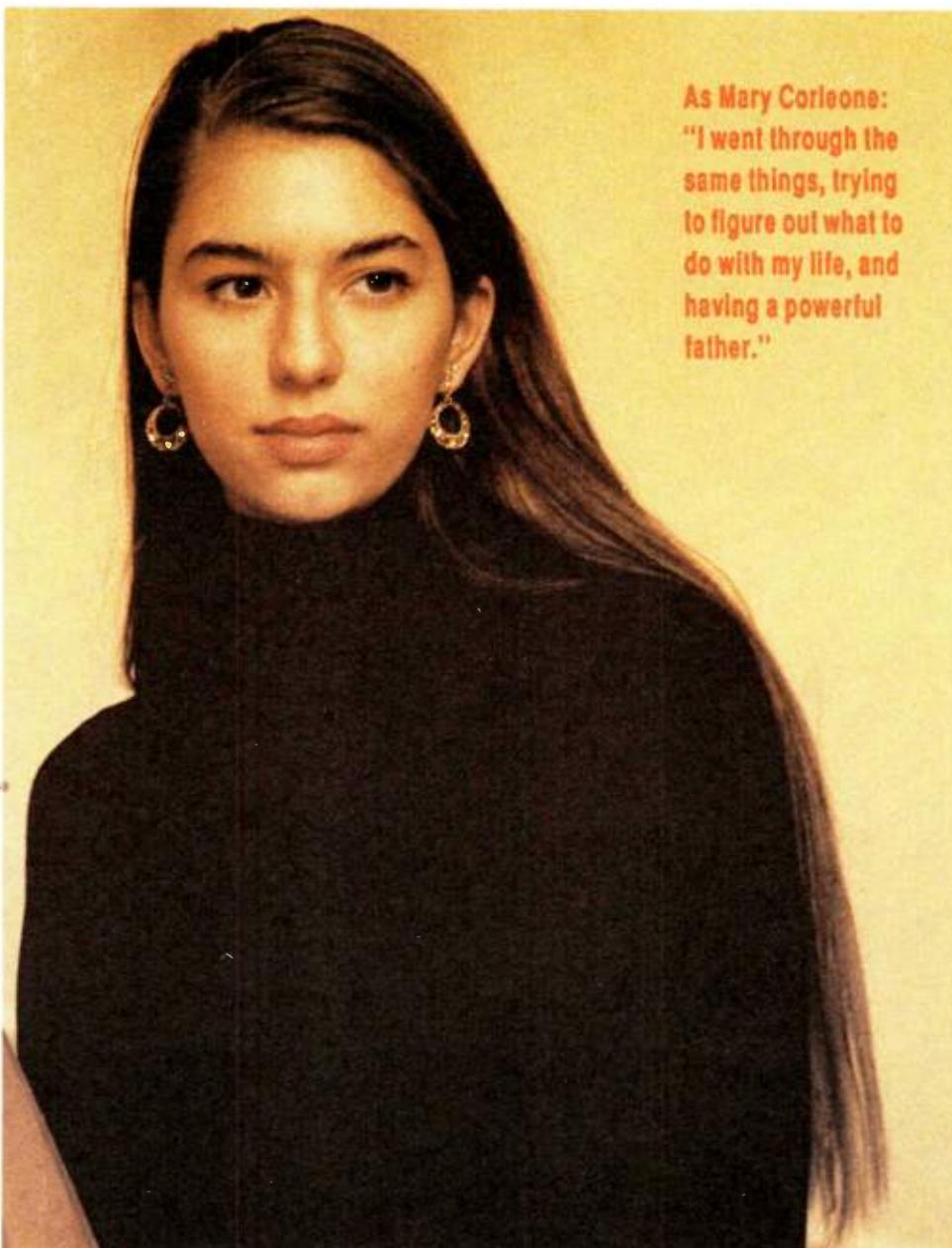
Although her role as Mary Corleone is far and away the biggest of her career, Sofia has previously taken cameos in other Coppola films. After a small part in *The Outsiders*, she played her first speaking role in *Rumblefish*, followed by the part of Nancy Kelcher, Peggy Sue's little sister in *Peggy Sue Got Married*.

Her favorite previous characterization was as a neighborhood brat in *Frankenweenie*, a short film made for Disney by Tim (Beetlejuice) Burton. "It sounds like a porno movie, doesn't it?" she giggles. "I was only 12 then, but I got to wear a platinum blond wig, put on black eyebrows and wear a pink frilly dress. With this wig and dress, I'd act like such a brat, even during lunch break!"

More recently, Sofia co-wrote and designed costumes for *Life Without Zoe*, her father's contribution to the *New York Stories* trilogy, and again designed costumes for the independent feature *Spirit Of '76*.

That latter film was produced by Sofia's older brother Gian-Carlo, tragically killed in a boating accident four years ago. Part of his legacy for his sister was his musical taste. "He'd drive me to school in the early '80s, playing Elvis Costello," she says. "I still like some older stuff, plus bands like Celebrity Skin and my friends Redd Kross."

Sofia explains that she was able to find relevant parallels to Mary Corleone in her own life. "I went



As Mary Corleone:
"I went through the
same things, trying
to figure out what to
do with my life, and
having a powerful
father."

through the same things, trying to figure out what to do with my life, and there's the whole thing about having a powerful father.

"In the film, Mary is just coming of age. She's trying to find out about her father and his background, as she's grown up hearing that he's killed people. She meets her illegitimate cousin Vincent [played by Andy Garcia], and they're both outsiders, she being a girl in this male-dominated world. They become like partners in crime. No, not literally!" she laughs. "Mary is not the suppressed Italian daughter cooking pasta in the kitchen; she's out working in the boardroom, supervising the charitable contributions made by father Michael."

"Mary is much more elegant than I am in real life. She wears suits and is very proper, whereas I'm much more of a slob," confesses the casually attired actress.

Sofia is optimistic about the fate of *The Godfather Part III*, which is scarcely surprising, given that both earlier films won Best Picture Academy

Awards and together grossed over \$800 million internationally. "The whole movie is just beautiful visually, if nothing else, but I think it's a good story too," she says. "I think everybody wants to see what happens to the Corleones. It's like the next instalment of a soap opera."

Regardless of the response to her work in the film, Sofia intends to remain "a woman working on movies. If I do end up directing, the best thing I can do is learn about other fields, be it acting, designing costumes, whatever. Right now, I'm acting and I love it. I've only just realized how creative it can be; I never took it that seriously before. Next up, I want to play someone totally evil, or show a completely different side of me."

As her career evolves, Sofia Coppola is going to have to become accustomed to the still novel exercise of the interview ritual.

"I feel a bit redundant and boring talking about myself all the time, but it's not bad," she says. "It's better than cooking hamburgers at McDonald's!"

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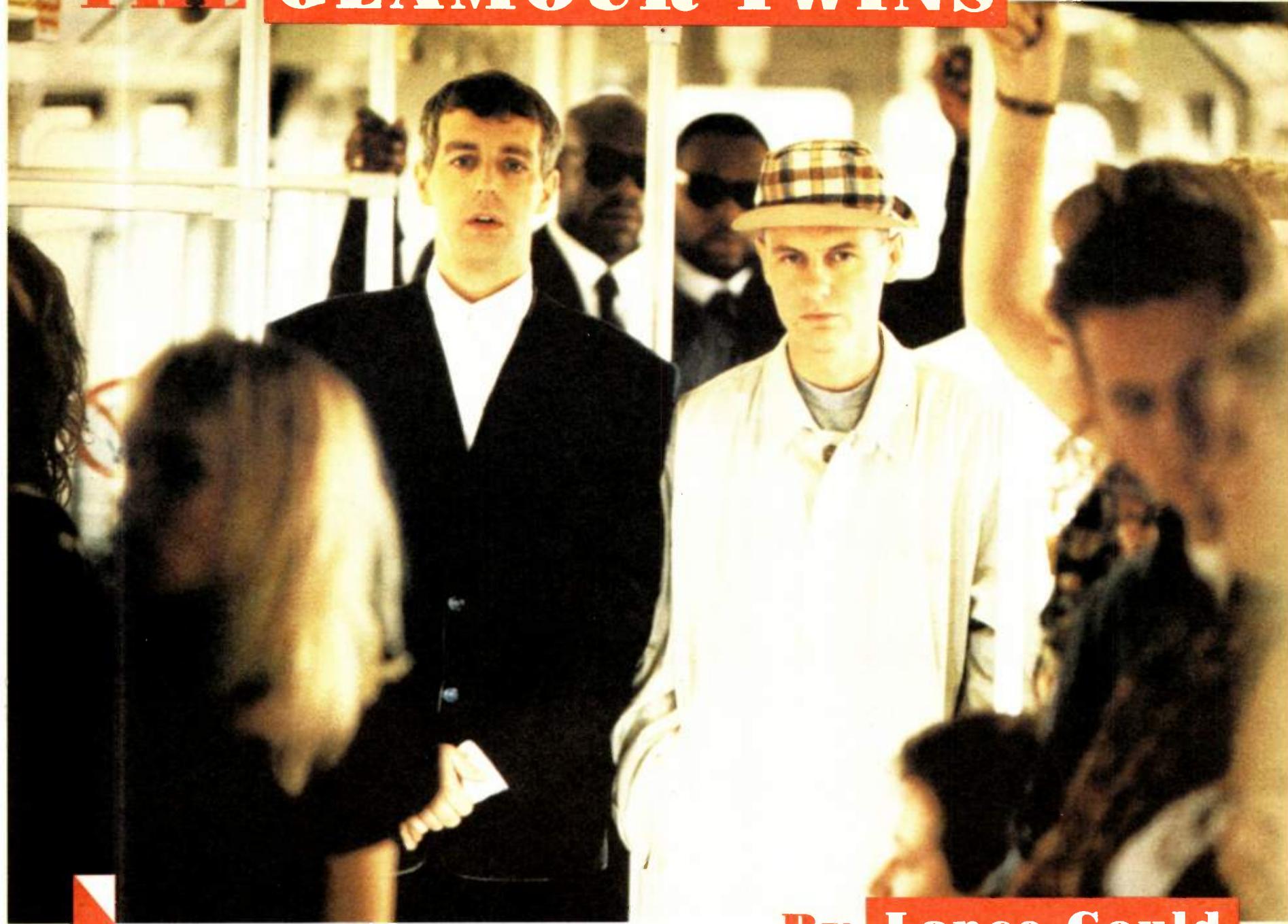
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THE GLAMOUR TWINS



By Lance Gould

Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe, those poker-faced Pet Shop Boys, don't smile and don't dance, like Broadway musicals and claim that boredom is fascinating. With their new album, *Behavior*, just out, it's time to analyze their formula for success.

"I never dreamt that I would get to be/The creature that I always meant to be" — Neil Tennant, "Being Boring"

What Neil always meant to be was an international pop music superstar, and how The Pet Shop Boys have achieved their overwhelming success is still a bit of a mystery. At least it's possible to understand the basic appeal of New Kids On The Block (five nonthreatening white kids executing easy pre-choreographed dance numbers and wearing just the

slightest bit of makeup), or even Wham! (two overtly cheery Adonises wearing just the slightest bit of makeup). But these two British guys are an enigma. They don't smile, and they don't dance. They like Broadway musicals (they *raved* about Tyne Daly in *Gypsy*). Neil Tennant, a former rock critic, bathes to Ethel Merman records. Chris Lowe's favorite European vacation spot is in his own home. When they actually play live on this continent for the first time,

in 1991, they will be accompanied by an opera singer and a string quartet. They are the Smothers Brothers of pop, as far removed from rock as they can be, *As Boring As They Wanna Be*.

Yet, of Western acts, it seems that only Madonna is more popular in Hong Kong. They are EMI's biggest-selling act ever in Brazil (yes, bigger than The Beatles). Since their debut single, "West End Girls," they've been an unqualified dance club sensation. And they've sold 15 million albums worldwide. Go figure.

Perhaps the key to The Pet Shop Boys' success is their innate sense of true glamour. The first song on their new album, *Behavior*, "Being Boring," was inspired by a Zelda Fitzgerald quote. The glamour formula? Hobnobbing with Judy Garland's daughter, refusing to perform live for most of the eight years they've been together and releasing a minimum amount of product — it all adds up to just the right amount of austerity, jet-set haughtiness and good-

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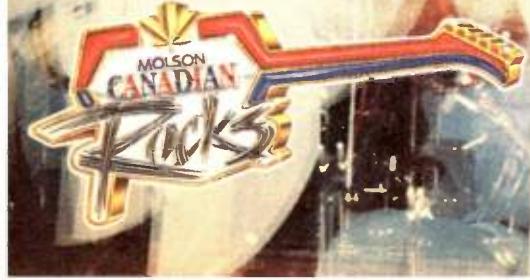
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natured approachability to give them the superstar status that the New Kids can only dream about.

Behavior is their first album in almost three years, and only their fourth in all. Recorded in Munich, amid beer and bratwurst binges ("We got fat," Neil admits sheepishly), *Behavior* should restake their claim to the top of the pops. It features such Pet Shop signatures as Tennant's smug but charming vocals, Lowe's tasteful keyboard flourishes, extremely danceable backing tracks and wistful if arcane lyrics. And, of course, it's glamourous as well. In a recent pit stop in New York, Neil and Chris sat down to discuss it.

Behavior has a very human sound, which is surprising since it was recorded in Germany, and one usually thinks of German synth-pop as robotic droning. What made you decide to use Harold Faltermeyer as producer?

Chris: We actually set out to make something that was completely electro-techno, cold, and all that kind of thing. Typically, we ended up with something very warm. We wanted to use the old first-generation synthesizers, and Harold sprang to mind because he'd worked with Giorgio Moroder. We thought he'd be good at twirling the knobs, which he was.

Why have there been such lengthy delays between your full-length albums?

Neil: We regard *Introspective* as a full-length album — we could have recorded 10 songs rather than six, but we wanted to record the songs as extended mixes to start with. Since *Introspective* we did a tour of the Far East and Britain; we did an album with Liza Minnelli; half an album with Dusty Springfield; a few tracks with Electronic. We've actually worked nonstop. At the same time, I think it's good to have breaks. It keeps you fresher; plus you get bored.

Boring is a word that always seems to be associated with The Pet Shop Boys, whether tongue in cheek or not. One track from the new LP is called 'Being Boring,' and Neil is even yawning on the cover of actually. Why is that?

Neil: I think that came about because people used to say that our videos are boring because we don't smile and stuff like that. We never thought they were boring, personally. And TV directors used to complain because we always have this list of things we won't do or can't do — they think that's so boring. And photographers always want us to jump up and down when we have our photographs taken for magazines, and when we don't, they think we're boring.

Is it dangerous to cultivate the public perception of The Pet Shop Boys as self-involved, introverted yuppies?

Neil: It hasn't harmed George Michael! He's quite self-obsessed. Being boring is a confrontation. We are what we are, really. We tend to do what we want to, regardless of what people think or what musical fashions are. We've always confronted the idea of boring. Being boring is kind of exciting. Boredom is fascinating. Popular culture's all about boredom. Teenagers rebel against boredom. Punk was all about boredom. It's an interesting area, really — there's quite a lot to explore.

Chris: There are a lot of things that are perceived as not boring that are dead boring. Like rock groups that jump out on stage, and do back somersaults and things. Well, that is the most boring thing you could ever see, because you've seen it a million times before. It's not innovative; it's not challenging; it doesn't make you think. If we were to stand

totally motionless for a whole video, that wouldn't be boring, because it's different.

Neil, have you had any contact with any artists whose work you panned as a critic?

Neil: I reviewed Culture Club before they were famous, and I didn't think they were very good. I kind of slagged them off; I ran into them the night that the article came out, and they were annoyed with me.

Chris: They threatened to punch you out, didn't they?

Neil: I think they said it to themselves. They didn't punch me. But Boy George has a long memory. In 1987, we won the award for single of the year, and he was there to present it. He got up on the podium and said, live on television, 'Five years ago, the person who won this award slagged me, and I had to punch him in the face.' So I went up there and said, 'He didn't punch me, actually.' Then this year he and Chris were in a nightclub in Barcelona, and he came up to him and started talking about it, eight years later! It's sort of haunted our career, really.

And before you were a critic you were at Marvel Comics?

Neil: That was my first job when I left college with a history degree. In Britain they have weekly comics, so they chop up the stories. We had Spiderman, Fantastic Four, the X-Men, and all we had to do was add 'Continued next week.' And we used to Anglicize the spellings. I also interviewed pop stars. I interviewed Marc Bolan, because he was a big comics fan, and I was trying to do one with the Bay City Rollers also.

Speaking of superheroes, what was it like working with Dusty Springfield and Liza Minnelli?

Chris: It was great working with Dusty; she's got such a good voice. When you've written a song and Dusty comes in and sings it, it's really quite something — the way she makes it her own song, it's kind of spine-tingling. Liza was great, too. Love kind of oozes out of her.

Did you approach working with Liza with the remotest sense of campy humor?

Neil: No, I think people assume it was a campy idea, but we just made a Pet Shop Boys record and Liza sang it. Liza has a different kind of voice — it's not a pop voice, it's more theatrical. In America I



"Being boring is kind of exciting. Popular culture is all about boredom. It's an interesting area; there's a lot to explore."

think people regard her as just Las Vegas, but in Europe she is regarded as an Edith Piaf, an artist of interpretive songs.

What do you think of rap?

Neil: My favorite rap record is still 'The Message' by Grandmaster Flash. When we wrote 'West End Girls' it was an attempt to make a record that sounded like 'The Message.'

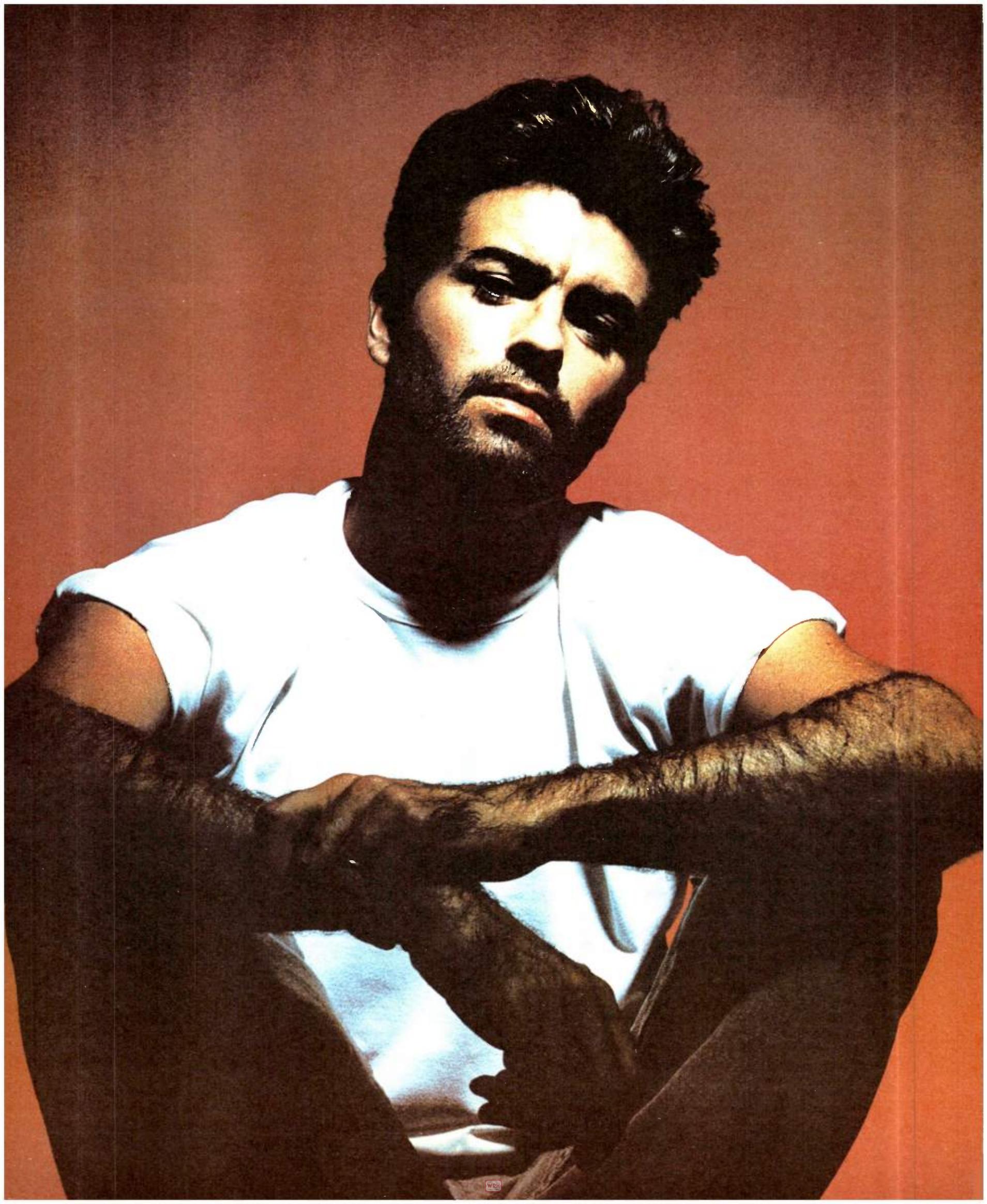
Why have you resisted performing live until now?

Chris: We've never been a live band. Some groups start playing live, and move into the studio. We're the other way around. The show will be as far removed from a rock show as is possible. The music will all be programmed. I think a mistake a lot of synthesizer groups make when they go on the road is to chuck out the way they make records and get a band in. But we'll have sequencers and synthesizers and the basis of a backup band — a guitarist, a string quartet and an opera singer.

Neil: It will be like a theatrical show, like one of Madonna's shows, or like a Broadway musical.

Chris: But darker. It's not gonna be a lot of flashing lights.

Neil: Quite boring, probably. me



MAJOR over

In his continuing quest to be perceived as a serious musical force, George Michael takes a further step away from Wham! with *Listen Without Prejudice*, which emphasizes lyrical sentiments rather than poppy tunes. George wants to be known as a songwriter rather than a pop star, and he wants his songs to be open to interpretation. As he explains, that's why he won't be appearing in videos anymore...

With the release of his second solo album, *Listen Without Prejudice Volume One*, it appears that George Michael has once again taken something of a left turn musically. After the enormous success of Wham!'s lightweight pop songs, he left the group and put out *Faith*, which won him critical acclaim, as well as a slew of awards and multiplatinum sales. Now, George wants to let his lyrics shine this time, and the new album favors stripped-down arrangements, as well as some jazz and acoustic sounds. He's also made the undoubtedly risky decision not to appear in videos anymore. In a recent interview George discussed his reasons, as well as the inspiration for his new songs and his feelings about music in general.

It seems that your timing has been pretty good with both Listen Without Prejudice and Faith, in terms of musical and lyrical direction.

I've really been lucky; I've always seemed to parallel what's going on around me. It has nothing to do with looking at trends and saying, 'Right, now I should do this.' That would ultimately make writing very boring. It's got more to do with the fact that I listen to so much of what's going on around me, so I'm swept along the same way everyone else is. I still buy loads of records, I still listen to the radio all the time. I'm probably more aware of what other artists are doing than they are of what I or other artists are doing. But I didn't have to force it; this is completely the album I wanted to make. This is my taste in music at the moment.

A lot of artists, especially successful ones, tend to get so involved in what they're doing that they become very insular. There's a temptation to believe that what you're doing is what's really important, and the world around you will

wait for whatever you're going to do next. If you do work that way, eventually you're not going to have anything to say to people, and the music you're making is going to be completely irrelevant to them. To me it's the natural thing to do to always be listening to what's going on.

How long did Listen Without Prejudice take to complete?

It's about a year's work, although the writing started two years ago, at the end of the *Faith* tour. This is the first album I've enjoyed making, actually, the first I've taken my time on. Originally, it was going to come out at the end of last year, and I just decided that I had to relax and take things as they came. This time I was really enjoying myself, whereas with the other albums I've been completely exhausted by the end of them, and really glad they were over.

Were you clear about what you wanted to accomplish with this project?

My main goal was to make an album that was completely my own. Until now, there's always been some compromise, because I've always felt that I wanted to move from one place to another. With *Faith*, I had to move away from the public perception of me with Andrew Ridgely in Wham! There's always a matter of timing involved in a musical career. I think people have to be ready for you, and now I think they are ready for this album. I was fairly confident that it was going to get a hearing whatever I did; therefore I could be relaxed and just make an album I would really like to listen to. I'm very pleased with it, and the reaction I've gotten so far is that it's a pleasant surprise; that the changes are

drastic in some ways, but also that people enjoy them.

*How did you enjoy taking your music on the road for the *Faith* tour?*

The tour was a nightmare! Actually, the American part wasn't a nightmare, because by the time I got to America I had sorted out the vocal problems I was having and had surgery and gone through the worst of it. But in general I don't like being on the road; I'm really kind of a home person. I think it has to be done once; you have to prove that you can take an album around the world and show everyone you can do it live. But I can honestly say it will never be done at that size again.

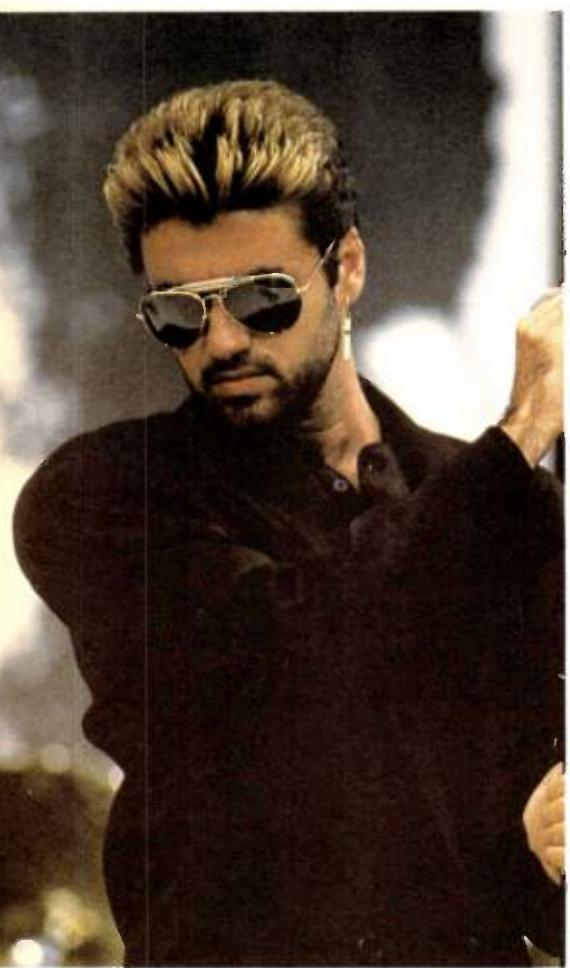
What inspired the title of Listen Without Prejudice? Did it have anything to do with the controversy that arose out of your American Music Award in the rhythm & blues category?

The controversy around my receiving those black awards had something to do with this album's title, definitely. I found it all a bit sad, and there's a lot of racism involved on both sides. I wasn't attempting to make records that fell on either side, white or black. I was just trying to make good music, and I was attacked for being recognized for making good music. I didn't feel in any way victimized, I just felt that it was worth commenting on. But what I was talking about was that the album should be listened to by all types and races with an open mind, because I think radio and video have veered into separate directions — one for white America and one for black America, and that's an unhealthy trend. In the mid-'80s crossover music was a hip thing to do, but now it seems that the line is drawn and you're supposed to know who you're aiming your music at, depending on your color. My point was that music shouldn't be used in that way.

BY DAVE SHOLIN

Did you have any concerns about people misinterpreting the single, 'Praying For Time'?

One of the beauties of writing is that the listener's interpretation can be completely off, but really mean something to them. That's one reason I felt that there shouldn't be any visual interpretation of



the song. More and more as video advances, peoples' way of listening to music becomes far less imaginative. Video has done a disservice, because the best music is always open to interpretation. You shouldn't have a storyboard running through your mind when you're listening to it. I read that people are taking the interpretation that the song refers to the Kuwaiti situation. That's completely unintentional, but if that's how strongly people feel, that's what they should be allowed to feel. That's the point of music.

What's your interpretation of the song?

When there's a subject you really feel strongly about, it's difficult to be eloquent about it, especially if it's a complex one. I think the lyric has more power than me trying to explain. All I can say is that I wrote it thinking in terms of the way people act — their lack of compassion for one another. There are lots of questions, and I think people just have to find their own conclusions.

Does all this mean we've seen the last of George Michael videos?

It doesn't necessarily mean that we're not going to see any more George Michael videos; it means that we're not going to see any more George Michael in them. There are all kinds of reasons that I don't want to go into now, because they're long and drawn out and would be too boring to listen to, but basically my days in video are kind of over. Occasionally, if there's a concept I think will work with

a song, or a song with a very direct and obvious interpretation, I will be making a video. But in general I don't like being in front of cameras anymore. I know people think it's strange, and it's a big risk, but I'm afraid it's a risk I have to take.

Your videos have such strong images, though. It's hard to imagine listening to 'I Want Your Sex' without seeing that storyboard come to life.

Frankly, there aren't that many interpretations of 'I Want Your Sex,' are there? The last album was more straightforward lyrically, and this one is a lot more complex. I wouldn't deny that I've made effective videos, but it's a bit like when you're at school and you're very good at something, so you presume that you should carry on doing it. When I was in school people said I should do art, because I was very good at art, but I didn't want to. It took me ages to work out that there was no reason for me to. And now I've realized that I wasn't put on this earth to be a video person. I think it would be a disservice to my songs, and to the people who are listening to them. So for the foreseeable future, I'm going to stop doing them. I'm not going to say I'll never make a video again; I'm not going to be Frank Sinatra and keep trumping out every 10 years and say I've changed my mind. I can only say what I think right now, and right now I feel I should stop doing them.

Is there an intentional overtone of John Lennon on 'Praying For Time'?

There's a lot less Lennon in there than people think. The thing I associate with him is the vocal sound, and there was this very close repeat echo that Lennon used a lot, especially in the Phil Spector sessions. In a sense it's a tribute when you make a direct reference like that. But I don't think it's an imitation. I felt passionate about what I was singing, and if anything I hope that's what people relate to Lennon's stuff. There's no way I'm stupid enough to compare it, but I hope that is the connection.

What triggered the idea for the song?

The first two lines in the chorus, 'It's hard to love, there's so much to hate,' just came into my head. Very often that's the way a song will start with me. It's almost like getting a message, then you have to work around that, think of a melody for the words. Once you've got that nucleus, you're inspired to write the rest of the song. I wrote it in two or three days. I've no idea why, it just came very strongly to me. But all the best things come to me that way.

What's your response to those who might suggest that someone like George Michael can't relate to the poor and hungry?

I really don't think this song relates more to the poor or rich or anybody. When I say, 'The rich declare themselves poor,' people think I'm just talking about me. And of course I'm rich. I'm very thankful for that, actually, but what I was trying to say is that

"Video has done a disservice, because the best music is open to interpretation. You shouldn't have a storyboard running through your mind when you're listening to it."

in the so-called civilized world there are obviously people who are poverty-stricken, but there are also a lot of people who consider themselves to be poor that are rich in comparison to people in the Third World. It really isn't a matter of rich and the poor; it's just a matter of compassion.

Is the song 'Freedom '90' intended as a personal statement?

'Freedom '90' is my confessional, I suppose, my way of putting the past behind me. I think it sounds more like a Wham! record in terms of its energy and spirit than anything on *Faith* did. And that's deliberate, because the first half of the song deals with those years. When I came into the business, I had no idea that I was going to be any kind of physical entity. I'd grown up with Andrew; I was a particularly unattractive adolescent, and he was always very handsome. I always assumed that the vast majority of physical attention would be on him. When I started to feel some of that attention, I got completely carried away. It was like a six-year-long distraction. I had to work out that the most important thing in the world is not to have people think you're gorgeous. 'Freedom '90' is about me moving away from selling myself as a physical persona and getting to what I'm best at, which is writing songs. The reference to MTV talks about the way I reinvented myself for MTV when Wham! finished. Obviously it was done very successfully. I worked as a strategist, really. Both of the images, the Wham! image — even though it is far more embarrassing to me now — and the *Faith* image, were fairly removed from me. The song deals with the fact that I'm not going to do that anymore.

So you're not dealing with personal relationships when you sing the line, 'I don't belong to you, you don't belong to me'?

There are parts that could be taken as a relationship type of lyric, and that is deliberate, because my relationship with the public has been almost like a personal relationship. That line means that I should be able to step back from certain things, i.e., the visual presentation, without recrimination. I don't believe I deserve loyal support without working for it, but at the same time, I think I should be able to make the decision that I don't want to be a 'video star' anymore without people thinking I'm just being off-hand, because it's a very important decision and I haven't made it flippantly.

What's your definition of soul?

In terms of music, something that comes from the heart and, as a singer, something that goes from the heart to the mouth and bypasses the head. I definitely never thought that I sounded black. When people ask why I have a black following, I think it's because I try to say what I feel and make that jump from the heart to the mouth, and pretend there's no thought process in between. I've still got a way to go, but that to me is soul singing. It has nothing to do with what color you are; it's really got to do with expressing yourself without any kind of blockage.

All the songs on Listen Without Prejudice are originals except for Stevie Wonder's 'They Won't Go When I Go.' Why did you choose that one?

Stevie Wonder is probably my favorite writer, and definitely one of my favorite singers. During one period in the '70s, he was writing masterpieces, one after another. No question, he was the most consistently brilliant writer. I've always thought 'They Won't Go' was a

beautiful song that had not been arranged to full effect. I would never try to emulate that kind of vocal. But at the time he had just discovered synthesizers, and there was so much synthesizer on it that it detracted from what he was doing as a singer. So I thought, I'll take this song and strip it down to just piano and vocals, and see how it goes.

Who's singing background vocals?

That's me. One of the things about doing your own backing vocals is that your timing is naturally going to be the same. If you're doing something like this, where you're trying to get that gospel feel, you have to try to make the voices sound like different people by changing the tone and timing of each one so they don't all move as one backup vocal. It worked because it doesn't occur to people that it's me singing backup.

'Something To Save' seems like a departure in sound for you.

That was the first thing I wrote for this album. I wrote it in Paris at the end of the *Faith* tour. I just had the feeling, after having promoted and sung that album for 10 months, that I wanted to strip down that huge electronic sound and write an acoustic song. Initially I was going to put drums on it, but the guitars sounded clear enough. People thought it wasn't finished because it's the kind of rhythm where you expect a rock drummer to come in on the second verse. I thought it had more emotion and clarity without drums, so I kept it to guitars and cellos.

Were you born with a given talent to write music?

I've come to realize that my only real conviction is with songwriting. I don't believe I am or was important as a pop star. I don't think pop stars are important these days in the way they used to be. I don't think I have anything really important to say, other than with my songs. I'd much rather concentrate my energies on songwriting, because that's definitely what I believe I'm here for. I see my career with Wham! and my solo career as a kind of apprenticeship, and I have a platform now from which I can write, and have these songs heard. Hopefully the loss of the visual image is not going to damage me too much. I understand that it's a risk, but I'd like people to believe that I'm not stepping back from video just because I think I'm big enough now and don't have to do it. I'm stepping back because I think that's the way to protect myself as a songwriter, and I want to keep giving people good songs for years.

Is the song 'Mother's Pride' equal time for 'Father Figure'?

'Mother's Pride' is really about women's role in war. War-mongering is always presumed to be male territory, and women stand back and blame it on 'the way men are.' Men's attitude toward aggression is partly instinctive, I think, but I think it's instinctive in women too; the pride they feel in their husbands or sons, and also the need to harden their sons. Although a lot of women would say that they want their sons to be caring and non-sexist, instinctively they want them to move away and become hunters. I think in order for men to change, women have to change in terms of their attitudes toward war.

What was the inspiration for 'Heal The Pain'?

It's my tribute to middle-period Beatles records. I think every generation at some point listens to The Beatles, and probably will continue to do so, because The Beatles, the

Stones and The Beach Boys were basically the first group of artists that wrote for themselves and represented their own generation. 'Heal The Pain' is the most derivative thing I've ever done in terms of sound, but it's such an obvious reference that I don't think anybody would take it as anything other than a tribute.

Would it be correct to say that music consumes you when you're performing?

I think on stage I never had to act. OK, I acted a bit cocky maybe, and I've played to the crowds, but when you sing ballads, you have to let the music consume you. If it's in you, when you sing something that's close to you or is recounting some sort of emotional experience, the best you can do is to completely wallow in it. You have to sing and not think. That to me is when you really sing.

Are you surprised by the remarkable success you've had during the past seven years?

As a child I wanted to be a pop star, there's no doubt about it. I had no realization of how large the picture was going to be. I had just left school, I got a record contract and before I knew it I was famous, and that was really strange. It's not something that happens suddenly, but I'm sure it would have shocked me tremendously if someone had shown me at 17 what I'd be doing today at 27. I feel like I should be some kind of elder statesman; I seem to have been around for long enough.

Would you agree that your view of life is generally positive?

I'm a very lucky man, I would never deny that. But I don't think I'm just lucky; I worked very hard, and I treated the people around me with respect. To some degree I've earned what I have now. I mean, yes, I get paid a ridiculous amount of money for what I do. But I would have followed this course if I was only earning \$100 a week. I'd probably still have been happy with my position now. I'm a lucky man and very positive, and the two things go hand in hand.

Do you write with the goal of presenting music that has some staying power?

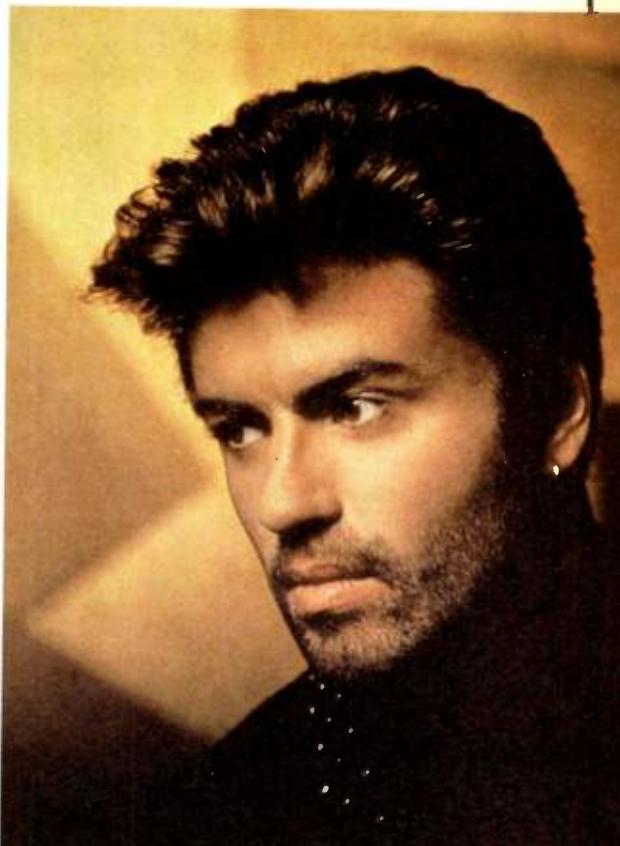
I've always written from a point of view of wanting things to be heard. However much people have put it down, 'Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go' was a very strong pop record. With the best of my material, even the earliest stuff, there's no doubt that when people from my generation hear it in 20 years, they're going to know it, and be nostalgic about it, because it made an impression. There will be people who hated 'Go-Go' when it came out that will love it in 20 years. I get satisfaction out of that. I think the same thing applies to 'Careless Whisper,' which is fairly lightweight. My feeling about a song is that it should be able to be taken out of context and still sound good. Even though lyrically I've said much less on previous albums, musically I still wanted to make an impression. But I think these current songs

"I don't believe I am or was important as a pop star. I don't think I have anything really important to say, other than with my songs."

may touch people a little deeper. I want the music to stand up for as long as possible. I want it to mean something in the future, but maybe I want it to mean something in the emotional sense now.

You emphasize lyrics on this album. Did they come first?

The inspiration came from the lyrics, then it was a matter of finding melodies to match the power of the lyrics. Before, my overall priority was with mel-



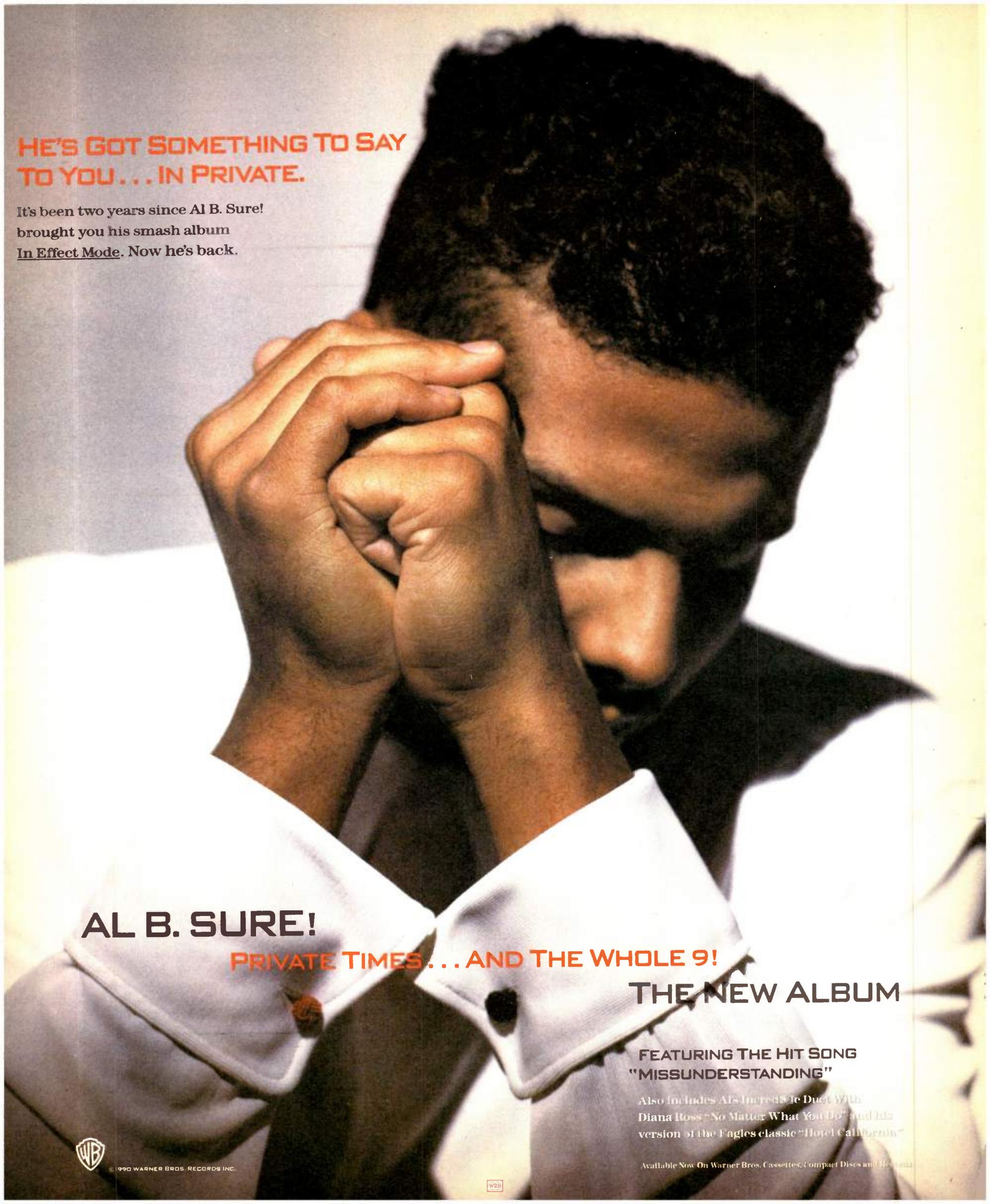
ody. I was a bit reluctant to tell the world what I felt. I think that comes from being English, because in England it's very frowned-upon for a pop star to take himself seriously. But as you get older, you form your opinions much more strongly and clearly, and this seemed to be the right time to start talking about something. Also there are only so many things you can say about your own life.

Was it a different George Michael who wrote those older hits?

Definitely the person who wrote for Wham! was a different individual, with different objectives and a different outlook on life. Most people change in their 20s, but I've had to make these changes publicly because everything that I do is documented. I'm not apologizing for what I've done before, I'm very proud of a lot of things I've done; it's just time to approach things from a different angle.

Songwriting has become a very emotional thing for me. I'm reaching further into myself, trying to

pull something a little deeper out each time, and that now is my driving ambition. Before it was to get up there with the best and prove that I could do it. That entailed lots of things that I didn't particularly enjoy doing, but I felt they were necessary. Now I've proved I could do that, and I don't see the point in doing it again. It's like the old line, 'Say something once, why say it again?' That wouldn't make me happy. What will make me happy is to feel I'm recognized for trying to push what I'm doing to another level. **me**



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NEWS AND REVIEWS OF MUSIC, FILM AND VIDEO

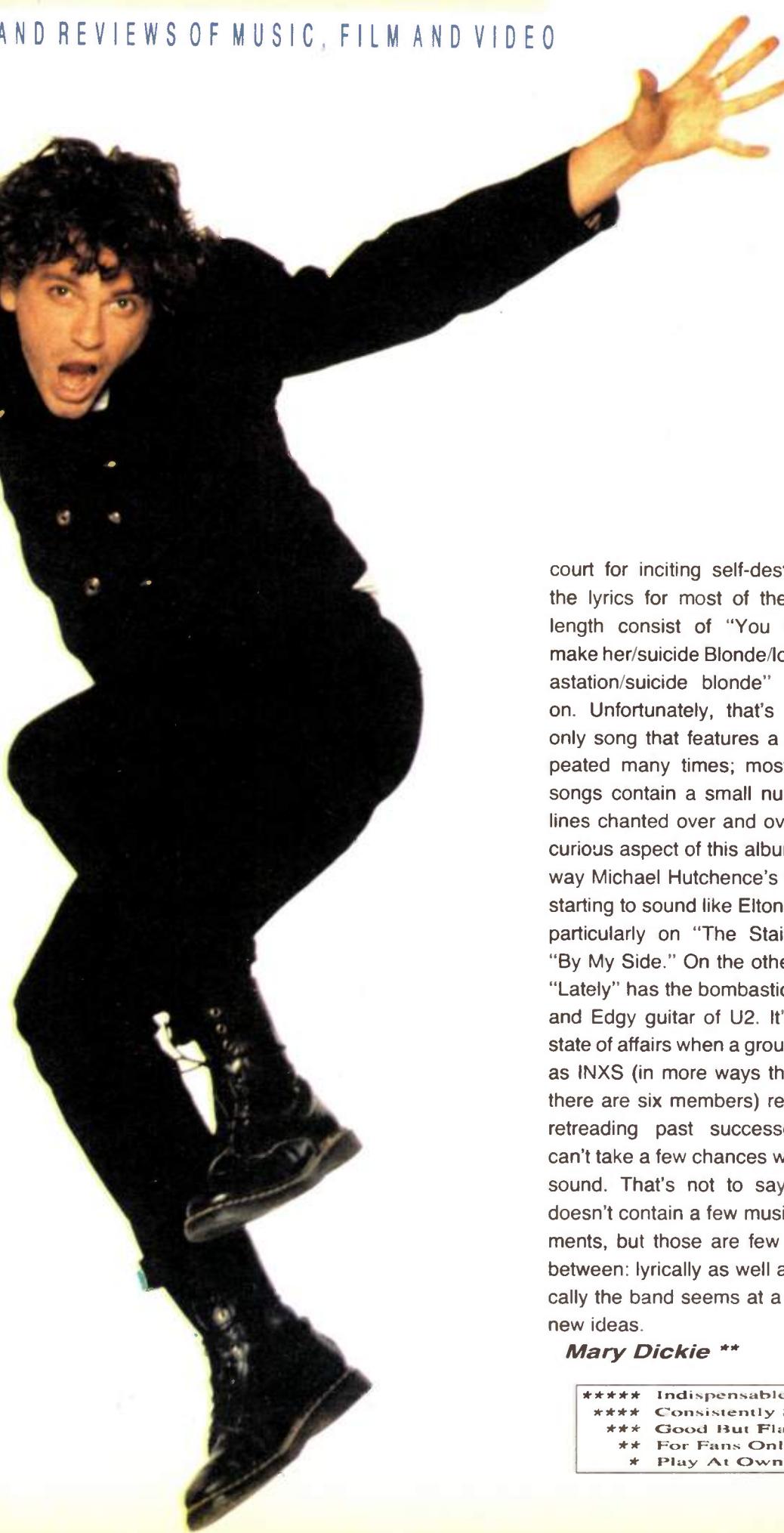
NEW RELEASES

INXS

X

Atlantic

If I had a dime for every time I heard a song from INXS' last album, *Kick*, on the radio, I'd probably be a millionaire by now. All over the world, for the last couple of years, it's been played and played to death—and let's not forget Michael Hutchence's command of the video screens as well. Even diehard fans must be approaching the saturation point by now. That makes it all the more curious that after an absence of two years, INXS would come up with an album of songs that are, in essence, the same as those on *Kick*. There's the same vaguely self-absorbed lyrics, the same vocal stylings and the same riffs of funky guitar, largely without a funky rhythm section—in fact, the drums of INXS tend to fade into the background in favor of the keyboards (the same person, Jon Farniss, plays both). The opening song and first single, "Suicide Blonde," is a perfect example of a *Kick* outtake, and by the way the suicide in the title refers to a hair dye, and will never get them to



court for inciting self-destruction: the lyrics for most of the song's length consist of "You want to make her/suicide Blonde/love devastation/suicide blonde" on and on. Unfortunately, that's not the only song that features a lyric repeated many times; most of the songs contain a small number of lines chanted over and over. One curious aspect of this album is the way Michael Hutchence's voice is starting to sound like Elton John's, particularly on "The Stairs" and "By My Side." On the other hand, "Lately" has the bombastic vocals and Edgy guitar of U2. It's a sad state of affairs when a group as big as INXS (in more ways than one; there are six members) resorts to retreading past successes and can't take a few chances with their sound. That's not to say that *X* doesn't contain a few musical moments, but those are few and far between: lyrically as well as musically the band seems at a loss for new ideas.

Mary Dickie **

*****	Indispensable
****	Consistently Strong
***	Good But Flawed
**	For Fans Only
*	Play At Own Risk

NEW RELEASES

MEGADETH

Rust In Peace

Capitol

Over the half-decade or so since Megadeth snarled its first snarl (with the often overlooked *Killing Is My Business...And Business Is Good*), it's become increasingly easy to make a career out of the kind of blind hate Dave Mustaine was perhaps the first to champion. So naturally Mustaine's belligerent streak (not to mention his violent aversion to creating a "career") would require him to abandon the whole shebang, right? Well, yes and no. *Rust In Peace* isn't exactly the testament of a man at, er, peace with the way things are. It is, however, heartingly focused. Instead of the diffuse spray of venom that used to just dampen Mustaine's chosen targets, he's now able to narrow the focus of his nozzle, with some downright scary results. Take "Holy Wars/The Punishment Due," a multi-part opus of sorts that reeks of prescience (lotsa Middle East references) and throbs with punishment/reward call and response

rhythms. "Five Magics" works equally martial ground, with riffs hoisted on the broad shoulders of new skinsman Nick Menza. The other new guy, guitarist Marty Friedman, does even more to help the band — by doing less. Y'see, previous incarnations of Megadeth (there were plenty) all too often found Mustaine in a control-freak battle with his second guitarist; here, aside from a few lapses into histrionic soloing, Mustaine's primed for action — with a stripped-down, punk rock style. The real killer, "Rust In Peace: Polaris," is pure punk for new misanthropes, only this time Mustaine is actually against the destruction of the human race. Love songs are probably a long way away, but with this positive attitude toward negativism, it's hard to imagine Megadeth ever being down again.

David Sprague ****

L.L. COOL J
Mama Said Knock You Out
 Def Jam/Columbia

L.L. Cool J kind of got caught between a rock and a hard place when, after the release of his third album, *Walking With A Panther*, his style of

braggadocio rapping made way for the Africentric political rapping of people like Boogie Down Productions and Public Enemy. Suddenly all that "I've got the biggest one" bragging sounded pretty lame, as well as placing L.L. right into the stereotype of the guy with the big car and the gold chains and nothing particularly interesting to say. But what was he to do — show up in African clothes and announce he'd found his true calling? There are fewer things less cool than being a conscious rapper-come-lately, and L.L. cares a lot about being cool. So what he did was wait a while and come out with an album that continues his Mr. Studly attitude, but mixes it with great musical accompaniment, thanks in large part to producer Marley Marl. The opening song, "The Boomin' System," a song about driving a car with the loudest sound system, has the same kind of ominous, funky roll as the brilliant "Going Back To Cali," from the *Less Than Zero* soundtrack. Marl and L.L. use R&B samples and old soul-style backing vocals on many songs, with the result that *Mama* is a great mix of R&B and rap tunes. "To Da Break Of Dawn" harkens back to the days of L.L.'s feud with Kool Moe Dee, except that now he seems to be fighting with

Ice-T, whose ponytail he would be happy to chop off. No, he's not subtle. He still compares himself to Muhammad Ali, a panther and a shark, but the mix of his voice with the musical background makes these rhymes infectious-fun.

M.D. ****

HALL & OATES

Change Of Season

Arista

It's taken a while for Philly's favorite duo to recapture their lost form. The 1988 comeback effort *Oh Yeah* for the most part fell on deaf ears, and a supporting North American tour was conspicuous by the copious amounts of empty seats. In retrospect, it was the pair's mechanics and not their music that was out of sync. They had been out of commission a little too long and had gotten a little rusty in the process. But with *Change Of Season*, Hall & Oates' smooth Philly soul has been restored to a high gloss. It's helped that they've called in some big-name production and writing support. The likes of Jon Bon Jovi, Danny Kortchmar and Eurythmics' Dave Stewart all make notable contributions to the sessions. The

end result is a smooth-as-silk production that's both sophisticated in direction and stripped down in style to produce the bare essence of vintage Hall & Oates. The gospelish "Starting All Over Again" hits a seductive groove that's reminiscent of prime Motown, while "Heavy Rain" is a moody, mid-tempo piece which swells majestically as the production builds. Balanced against those songs are a number of poignant ballads with Daryl Hall's vocals in top form. Particularly effective are the lead-off "So Close" (a song about faulty relationships, which is reprised as an acoustic number at the end of the set), the forceful "Sometimes A Mind Changes" and the title track, which echoes the album's optimistic theme. For a pair with a legacy of great compositions, Daryl Hall & John Oates may find the doors open again. Certainly, they've done nothing to discredit their impressive credentials. Maybe this is the comeback album they were looking for two years ago.

Keith Sharp ****



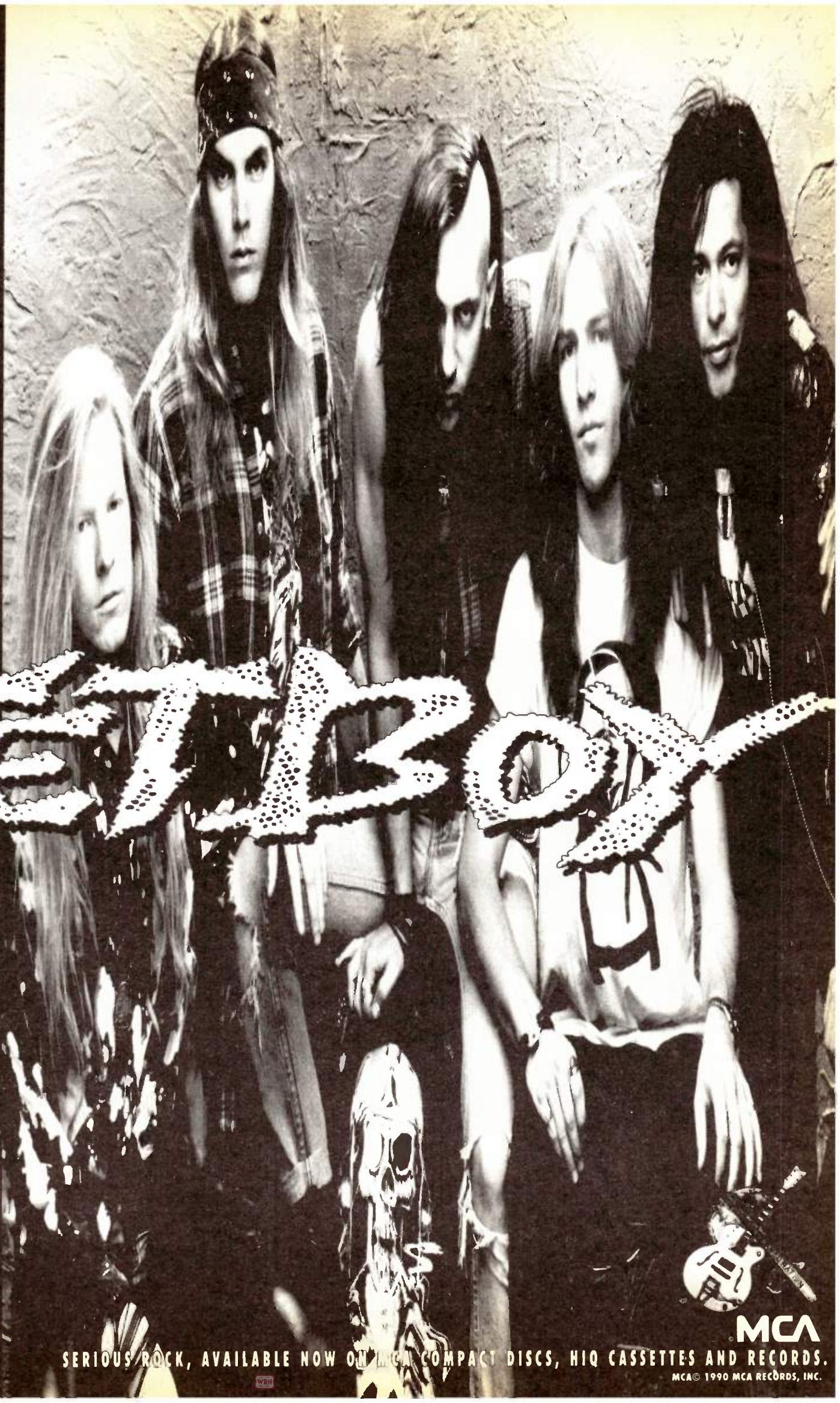
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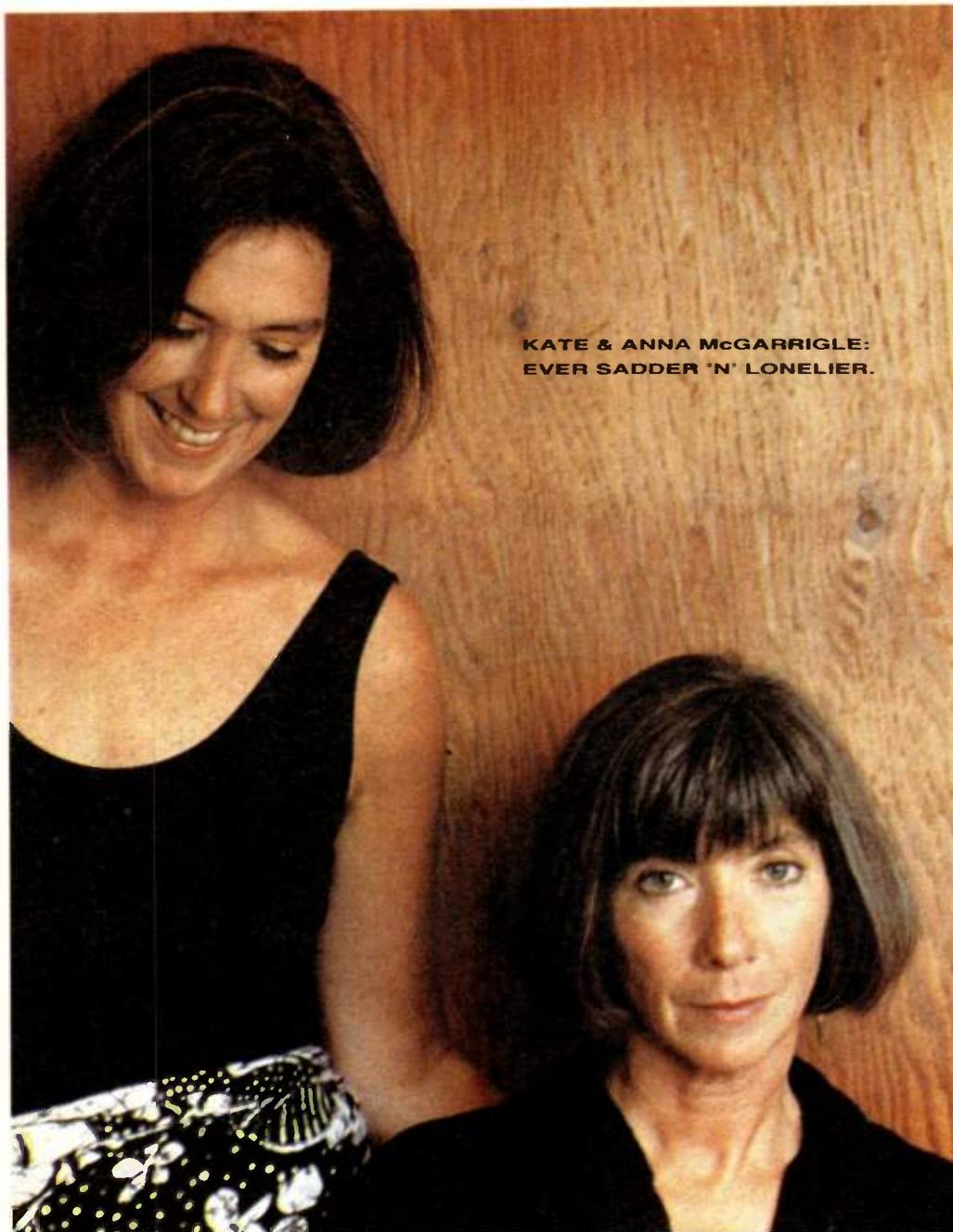
NEW RELEASES

IRON MAIDEN

No Prayer For The Dying

EMI

Unquestionably one of metal's great success stories, Maiden has a fan allegiance that's almost religious in nature. And that's a wry comparison when you consider the band's previous Satanic overtones were potent fuel for the



KATE & ANNA McGARRIGLE:
EVER SADDER 'N' LONELIER.

PMRC. But Maiden's last couple of albums had become almost comic caricatures of that earlier menace; no *Number Of The Beast* or *Run To The Hills*. Instead we got a lot of overblown movie titles and eight-minute epics about albatrosses and crumbling Roman Empires. Time off for a rethink, lose a guitarist (Adrian Smith), find another in Janick Gers and rediscover the salacious electricity that made them

and the latter takes a voyeuristic stance on personal relationships. In all *No Prayer For The Dying* is a go-for-the-jugular effort, with lead vocalist Bruce Dickinson screaming his tonsils out. Every song is produced as though the band were playing for 100,000 fans — loud, raucous and every bit as subtle as a stripper in a nudist camp. Maiden fans will love it.

K.S. ****

the the premier '80s metal force. To this degree, they've almost succeeded. Gers adds a whole new dimension to Maiden's instrumental prowess and combines well with Dave Murray on some particularly fiery exchanges. "Tailgunner," "Holy Smoke" and "Bring Your Daughter To The Slaughter" all contain vintage Maiden histrionics. There's a new edge to Maiden's lyrics too, with "Holy Smoke" and "Hooks In You" sure to draw renewed ire from the censors. The former deals with the ideal fate for scandalous evangelists,

KATE & ANNA
McGARRIGLE

Heartbeats Accelerating

Private/BMG

The McGarrigle sisters have devoted most of the seven years since their last album (*Love Over and Over*) to raising their respective kids, but listening to this album you'd almost think they'd been watching them die. The only song on *Heartbeats Accelerating* that sounds halfway cheerful is the reggae-inflected title cut (and single), in which, Anna impatiently — and with a glimmer of optimism — wonders when and how love will appear in her life. After that (it's the first song) the going gets sadder 'n' lonelier, without much relief in sight. "I Eat Dinner" is about dining alone (although in the last verse Kate does get to chow down with her daughter, which seems to provide small comfort) and knowing you'll be going to bed alone, too. Not only that, the food's lousy. In "Rainbow Ride" redemption is sought in the ephemeral thrill of a fairground ride (much like Richard and Linda Thompson's "Wall of Death"). And "I'm Losing You" ... well, that one's pretty self-explanatory. Even songs that don't look forlorn on the lyric sheet (like "Love Is") sound sad. Folk foyeys among the McGarrigles' fans may object to producer Pierre Marchand's high-tech sonic washes and it is nice to hear nothing but Anna's piano and Kate's loneliness echoing accordion on "St. James Hospital" (not to be confused with the infirmary of the same name), but the starkness of mood is underscored rather than un-

dermined by Marchand's digital sensibility. In other words, *Heartbeats Accelerating* doesn't sound anything like a sellout, just like state-of-the-art melancholy. It's by no means unpleasant to listen to — this is a good record, after all — but it could have used an uplifting rollick along the lines of "Love Over and Over" to break up the mood.

Tim Powis ***

ROGER WATERS
& VARIOUS
ARTISTSThe Wall — Live In Berlin
Mercury

Call it the ultimate one-upmanship. Pink Floyd embarks on a massive world tour without its primary spokesman, so Waters responds with the ultimate extravaganza — a re-enactment of *The Wall*, played out before a live audience of 250,000 people in front of the remains of the Berlin Wall. Those who thought *The Wall* was Floyd's creative masterpiece may be alarmed at the thought of Cyndi Lauper singing "Another Brick In The Wall (part 2)" or German metallurgists The Scorpions hammering through "In The Flesh." Certainly, any subtle nuances go out the window when an odd assortment of musicians get to bite a piece out of the pie. Waters' saga of isolation and personal angst is stripped of any sentiment or emotion in exchange for this bombastic presentation. That aside, though, the trade-off is some excellent interpretations which add a whole new dimension to the project. To hear Siobhan O'Connor sing "Mother," accompanied on accordion by The Band's Garth Hudson, or Van Morrison shedding a whole new light on "Comfortably Numb," or even Bryan Adams grabbing "Young Lust" by the scruff of the neck, is to formulate a whole new appreciation of this sombre piece. In typical Waters fashion, the event itself may have overshadowed the music. But there's enough genuinely inspired performances here to steer the listener through the more turgid excesses. And it's for a good cause too (The Memorial Fund For Disaster Relief). It helps, though, to listen to this album while you're watching the official video. Then you'll appreciate what they're all cheering about.

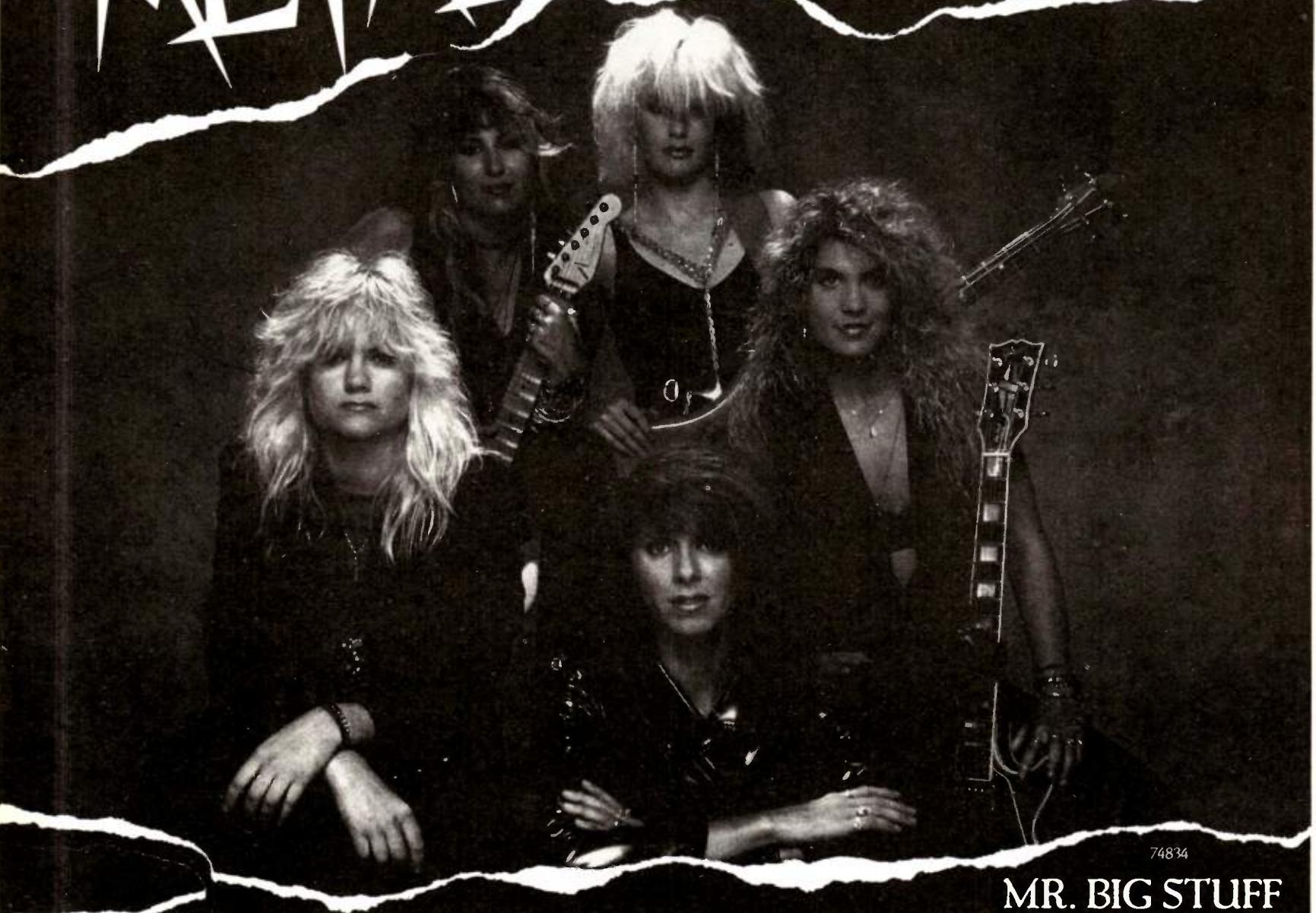
K.S. ***

SCENE FROM THE WALL:
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NEW RELEASES

DANIELLE DAX

Blast The Human Flower Sire

It's interesting that punk diva Danielle Dax is trying to nudge goth music into the '90s by employing the kind of synth fluff goth spat on in the '80s. The predictable lyrics conjure up the hoary old images of dark squalor and unholy alliances, while the music, with its overabundance of keyboards and airy-fairy artiness, undermines the funereal intent. (Unless it's meant to be satire, but I doubt it.) Perhaps it's the fault of producer Stephen Street. From "The Id Parade," with its "Jet Boy/Jet Girl" one-syllable-per-beat rhythm, to the electro-disco, anti-church "Jehova's Precious Stone," *Blast* consistently recalls old and not particularly missed subgenres, but at least it does so respectfully. All the songs, except for a plausible cover of The Beatles' "Tomorrow Never Knows" have something grim to say about war, poverty, religion and government. Even the pretty



DANIELLE DAX:
THE SYNTH FLUFF UNDERMINES THE FUNERALE INTENT.

ballad "Daisy" is about a murder. There's obviously still something black and horrifying lurking under Dax's new wave lace.

P.S. ***

THE VAUGHAN BROTHERS

Family Style

Epic

Just part of the tragedy of a premature death like Stevie Ray Vaughan's, and Roy Orbison's before it, is that their posthumously released work suddenly attains a significance their creators never anticipated. This is the album that both Vaughans had wanted to make for a long time, perhaps more for reasons of kinship than to make a definitive "state of the blues" statement. It is certainly not the latter, and die-hard blues fans may be disappointed in the album. With the Fabulous Thunderbirds (from whom he has recently split), Jimmie Vaughan has long mined soul and R&B veins along with blues-rock, and, under the influence of producer Nile Rodgers, these styles are very well-represented here. "Tick Tock," for

instance, is a gentle soul groover that pleads for universal love in highly convincing fashion, yet it is sandwiched between two patented SRV blues work-outs, "Long Way from Home" and "Telephone Song." The fluency of Stevie Ray's searing solos brings a lump to the throat, but *Family Style* never lapses into the "duelling guitars" stuff you might have feared. The closest they come to that is on the closing cut, "Brothers," featuring the Vaughans swapping leads on the same Stratocaster. In his first real outing as a singer, Jimmie Vaughan does just fine, and his guitar work is typically understated and effective. A couple of instrumentals, "DFW" and "Hillbillies From Outerspace," mix the pace up nicely, while "White Boots" and "Good Texan" are slyly sexy romps. *Family Style* will not go down as a musical masterpiece, but it's an entertaining, engaging work that will help disperse the sad clouds surrounding its release.

K.D. ****

THE CALL

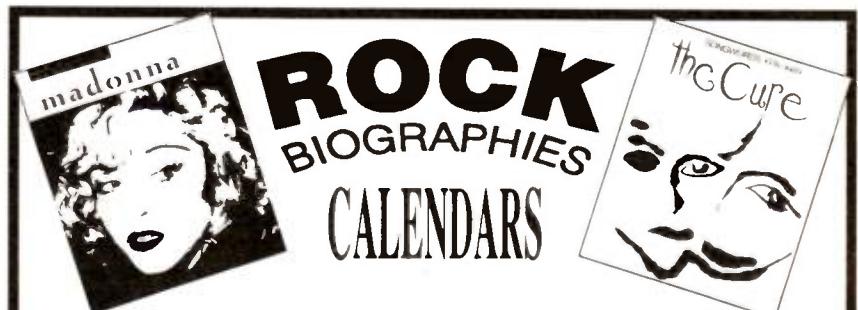
Red Moon

MCA

The Call's lead singer/songwriter/producer/multi-instrumentalist, Micael Been, says that the band denied them-

selves every studio trick available to make *Red Moon*, as though that was a good idea. What we end up with is a two-dimensional rehashing of the same second-division anthemic muck that The Call has been doling out for years. Sure, they've been able to toss out one or two songs that somehow capture the preppy angst of the collegiate set, but for the most part, The Call trails after U2 like an abandoned puppy. It's a case of adding insult to injury when we discover that the unoriginal homage to Van Morrison, "What's Happened To You," includes backing vocals by Bono. The rest of the album, with one exception, trudges along predictably, with no relief from Been's overblown vocals and a paucity of interesting solos from guitarist Tom Ferrier. "You Were There" is a sophomore look at the underbelly of society that concludes with a pathetic comparison between the tragedy of the sick and homeless and the emptiness of the rich and famous. And "This Is Your Life" pogos back to the early '80s with its punkish rhythms and formulaic guitars. Only "A Swim In The Ocean" offers something different, with Been's unrestrained vocals sounding almost human and layers of grungy guitars giving the song what the rest of the album lacks — some guts.

P.S. **



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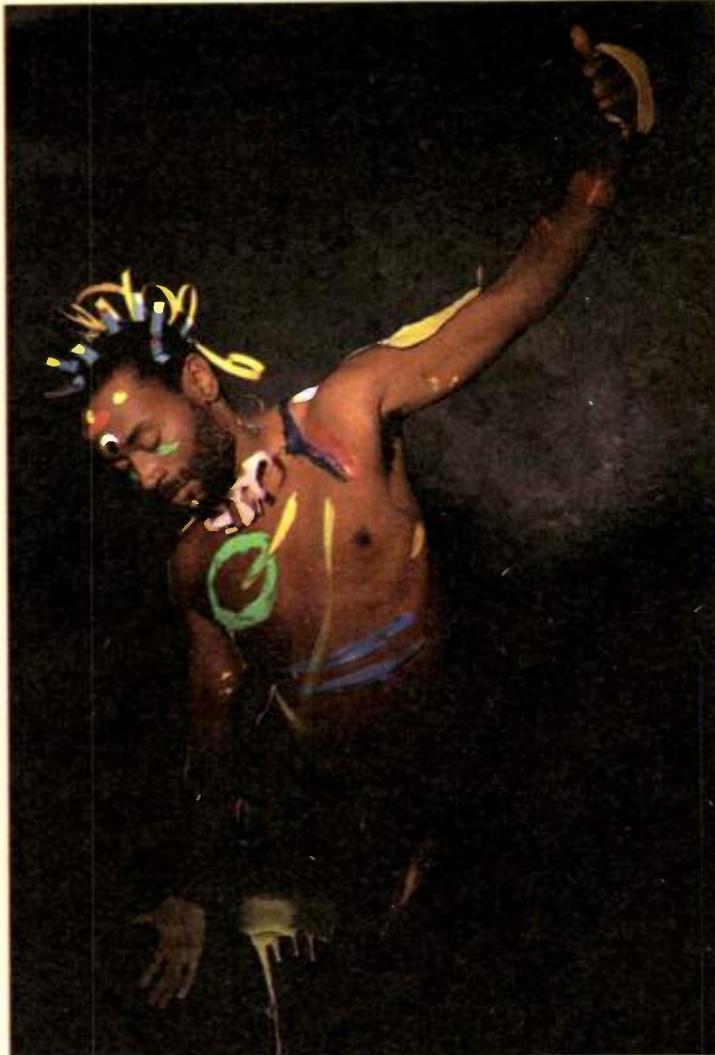
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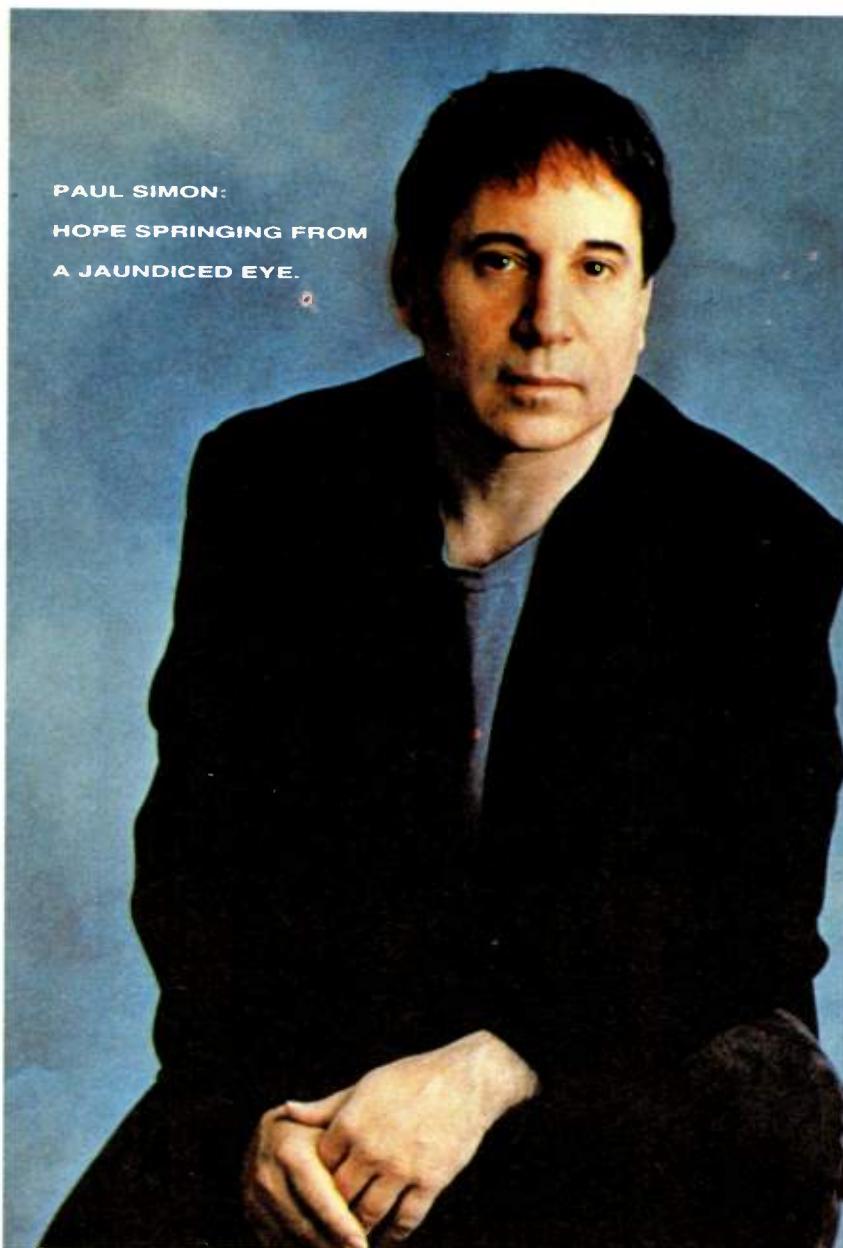
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NEW
RELEASES

PAUL SIMON

The Rhythm Of The Saints
Warner Bros.

Hope is the theme that runs like a river through *The Rhythm Of The Saints*. It's not blind faith, though faith is romanticized as "an island in the setting sun" in "Proof," nor is it ungrounded optimism, which is a conceit Simon hasn't employed since his "Feelin' Groovy" days, but hope, springing eternally from what might have been considered the jaundiced eye of a world-weary traveler. Touted as the South American version of *Graceland*, *Rhythm* appears to be much less an anthropological study than its predecessor was. Percussion, particularly bongos and congas, still dominate Simon's soundscape, and African-esque background vocals (provided on several songs by Ladysmith Black Mambazo) create a poignant backdrop for the singer/songwriter's mournful voice. But waves of acoustic guitar and the sudden, insistent bleating of horns punctuate the lyrics in a way that reminds you that Simon has ventured onto another continent. While the novelty of grafting African musical themes onto melodies based on Western styling was enough to propel *Graceland* into the multi-million bracket, had Simon repeated the formula he would probably have fallen on his face. On this album, the lyrics seem to take centre stage. Though he is still able to delight and surprise the listener with unpredictable arrangements and instrumentation, Simon also brings a sense of old world wisdom and mysticism to the table and serves it up generously. Like wind and water, images that appear throughout the album, nothing here is stable. On "Cool, Cool River," Simon declares, "I believe in the future," and on songs like "Born At The



PAUL SIMON:
HOPE SPRINGING FROM
A JAUNDICED EYE.

Right Time," "Proof" and "Can't Run But" he portrays the positive pragmatism that must be adopted lest one be dragged down by the relentless pas-

sage of time. Simon has written philosophical songs in the past, but this is a marvelously philosophical album.

*Perry Stern *****



STYX:
NOT DEAD YET!

STYX

Edge Of The Century
A&M

It's only going to take 15 seconds of "Love Is A Ritual" to convince you that Styx is back, stronger and better than ever. No, Tommy Shaw hasn't abandoned his Damn Yankees; replacing him is veteran performer Glen Burtik. But the rest of the old Styx guard has been reassembled, and there's a sense of freshness and vitality in the tracks that should restore some of their lost credibility. "Love Is A Ritual" is a good opening tonic in that it's a power-driven rocker containing all the prime components of a monster radio hit. Co-lead vocalist Dennis DeYoung recaptures some of his lost lustre with a couple of great ballads in "Carrie Anne" and "Love At First Sight," while

also contributing a decent rocker with the tongue-in-cheek "Not Dead Yet." Supported by some zesty guitar work from J.Y. Young and a solid bottom end from the Panozzo brothers (John & Chuck), Styx break a seven-year silence with a rambunctious effort that belies some of their previous heavily produced efforts. It's energetic enough to win back old Styx fans, while at the same time fresh enough to win over new fans who will be sold on the quality of music alone.

*K.S. *****

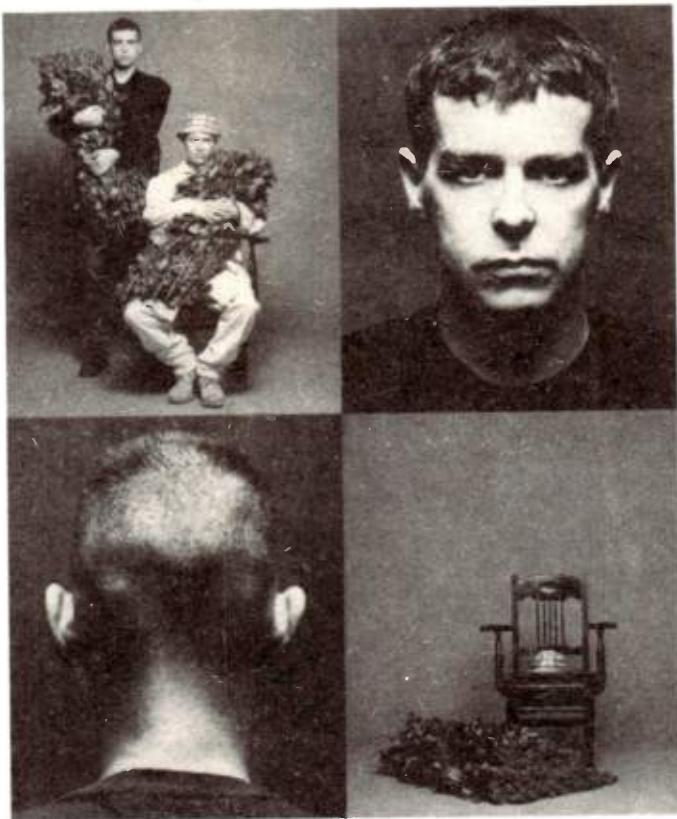
JOE ELY

Live At Liberty Lunch
MCA

Genuine honky-tonk heroes are mighty hard to find these days, so it's a pleasure to welcome back Texan roots rocker Joe Ely to the big leagues. He's never really been away, but last label Hightone wasn't able to give such cool recent albums as *Lord Of The Highway* and *Dig All Night* the exposure they deserved. Now, thanks to ever-discerning label exec/producer Tony Brown, Joe is back on MCA, the label he recorded six albums for between 1977 and 1984. To celebrate, MCA have released *Live At Liberty Lunch*, which sees Joe rockin' out in the best possible locale; a noisy club in his Austin hometown. As one who's been privy to that experience, this scribe can testify that rock 'n' roll can offer few better nights out than that, and this album provides further proof. Songs selected offer a good retrospective of Ely's career, although the truly rootsy (washboard, accordion) sound of some of his late '70s work can't be duplicated by his current strict guitars/bass/drums line-up. *Live* kicks off with the best outlaw song of the last decade, "Me And Billy The Kid," a hilarious portrait of a gunslinger who outfoxes the Kid — "I didn't like the way he cocked his hat and he wore his gun all wrong." That would have been a far better

Young Guns theme than Jon Bon Jovi's fake posturing. Ely's a helluva songwriter in his own write (8 of the 13 cuts here are originals), and having friends like fellow Texan songsmiths Butch Hancock and Jimmie Gilmore gives him access to more great material. Hancock adds guest vocals on his moving "If You Were A Bluebird," while Gilmore's "Dallas" is the best ode to a Texan city since "Galveston." Ely's gruffly appealing voice is bolstered by David Grissom's sizzling lead guitar work, and he mixes up the song tempos nicely. Only real quibble here is that the occasional extended endings (as on "Cool Rockin' Loretta") that work live don't translate as well on record. Best solution to that? Bring out the bourbon, invite some rowdy friends over to your basement, and let Joe turn it into your own private honky-tonk.

*Kerry Doole *****



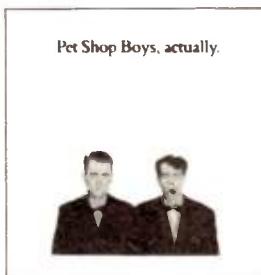
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FROM
EMI

OPEN SPACES

By Roman Mitz

Whether she's tackling a tongue-in-cheek subject or a heartfelt ballad, **Jodi Harms** has the kind of strong, assertive vocal style that says she knows what she's talking about. Joni co-wrote most of the songs on her debut album, *Hometown Girl*, working with some of Nashville's top writers. She teamed up with Dan Tyler ("Bobby Sue") for the infectious rhythm and humorous lyric of "I Need A Wife," and with Quentin Powers and Kendal Franches (Whoever's In New England") for the touching memories of the title track. Perhaps the most refreshing element about her is that Harms is a genuine country girl; not only is she a former Miss Northwest Rodeo, but she spends her personal time working on her ranch, raising Christmas trees and tending to her quarter horses.

While you probably won't find **Anne Murray** bailing hay during her off time, on record, Canada's sweetheart continues to balance down-home charm with uptown savvy. (Who could ever forget her early stage appearances in evening gown and bare feet?) On her latest release, *You Will*, Anne offers us a little calypso with "Bluebird," flat-out rock on the title track and a lot of emotion on "Wrong End Of The Rainbow." With Jerry Crutchfield's clean, crisp production acoustically showcasing both the singer and the songs, it's a sound bet that *You Will* will be a hit.

If there is a band that epitomizes the expression "having your cake and eating it too," it is surely **The Bama Band**. Not only do they turn out fine LPs that showcase their hard-driving cross of rock and R&B, but they also have a fairly good day job, backing Hank Williams Jr. on stage. The band cites influences as disparate as Chet Atkins, Eddie

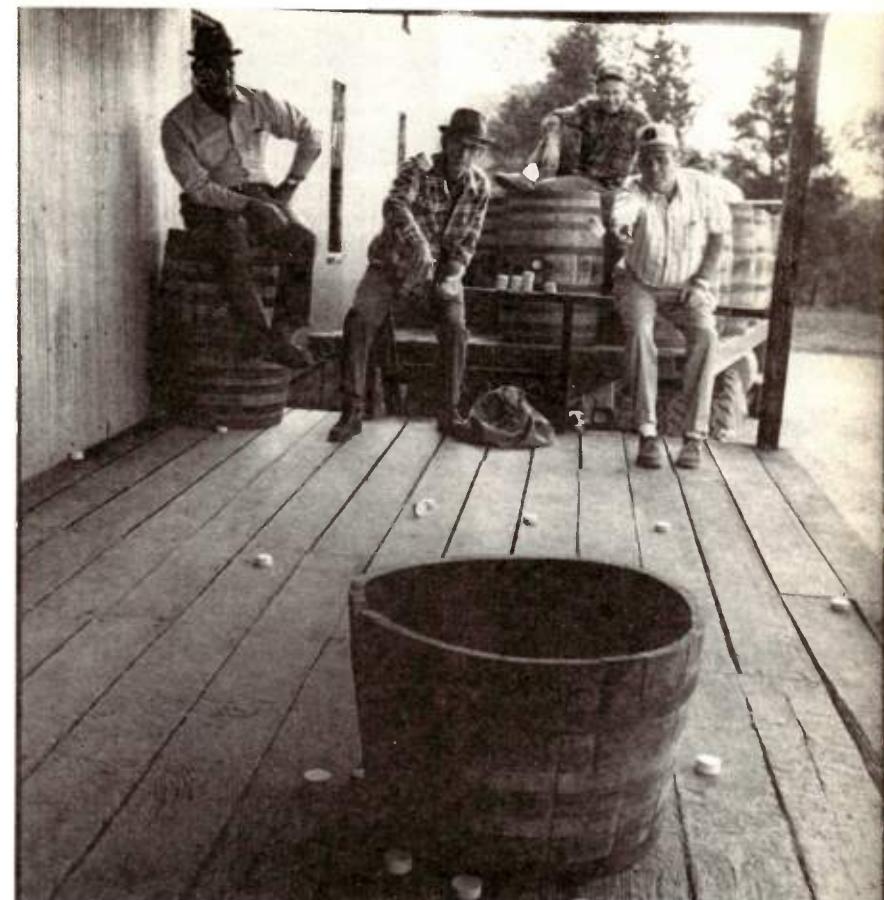
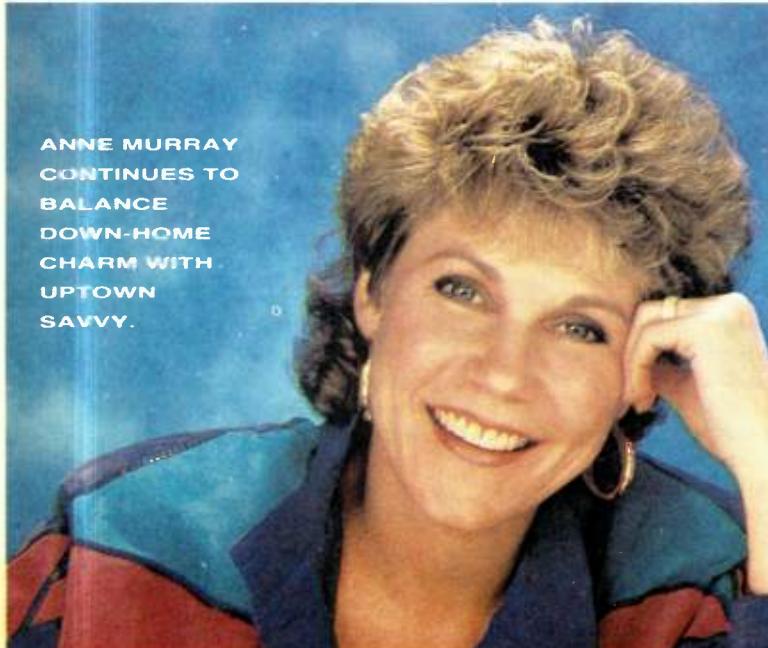
Van Halen and Earth, Wind And Fire, so it's not at all surprising that their latest release, *Takin' Off The Edge*, is something of a mixed bag.

It's nice to see the re-emergence of **Tony Joe White**. While most of us remember him as the man behind the swamp boogie hit "Polk Salad Annie," he also wrote several songs for Elvis Presley and penned the wonderful "Rainy Night In Georgia" for Brook Benton. White has been popping up on the Nashville Network with a couple of songs entitled "Love MD" and "Cool Town Woman," confirming that his rich baritone and funky guitar playing are still in order. Now if we could only have him back on the charts.

Another voice from the past who has recorded a new album is **Jody Miller**, singer of such hits as "She's So Fine," "Queen Of The House" and "Silver Threads And Golden Needles." The album is actually a duet with her daughter **Robin Brooks**, and it was produced by Glen Keener, who cut Reba McEntire's first sessions. Let's hope his golden touch will help Jody on her comeback bid.

Country Shortcuts: Gilley's, the giant nightclub that served as the centre of the urban cowboy movement, has been destroyed by an arsonist. The club had been closed for some time while legal battles raged over mismanagement. Be sure to hang on to any Gilley longnecks you might have... Not only do **Waylon Jennings** and **The Gatlin**s go head to head on the country music charts, now you can see them battling it out on supermarket shelves. That's right, they both have their own line of barbecue sauce, and each claims that theirs is the best... Of course one person not interested in either product is **k.d. lang**, who is still feeling the aftershock of her anti-beef campaign. Lang's newest song is a collaboration with gospel group **Take 6**, which you can find on the *Dick Tracy* soundtrack, but not on too many radio playlists.

ANNE MURRAY
CONTINUES TO
BALANCE
DOWN-HOME
CHARM WITH
UPTOWN
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CD HOTLINE

By Rick Clark

"We really only got serious about this reissue business in January," says Don DeVito, VP of CBS A&R. "Everything before that, I don't even want to associate with. No one was really pay-

department that would specifically develop box sets. He called me and asked if I wanted to be a consultant, and I agreed, because I wanted to make sure it came out well."

One of the biggest complaints about CBS' reissues concerned the sound quality and repackaging of The Byrds' discs. But with *The Byrds*, CBS has done an impressive job, getting tapes

weren't included. All I can say is that I was lucky to have Roger, David and Chris around to help with the selections."

The resulting focus is more collector/archival than a best-of set. The collection provides many surprises, among them Gram Parsons' original lead vocals on the *Sweetheart Of The Rodeo* sessions. Due to contractual problems

White, titled 'Fifteen Minute Jam.' We couldn't use all 15, so we cut it down to three. Roger renamed it 'White's Lightning,' which I thought was a cool title."

Some of the remixes used on *The Byrds* came from the Murray Hill *Never Before* release. One of those is "Mr. Tambourine Man," which unfortunately sacrifices some of its vocal power and instrumental density in the search for a wider-screened stereo image.

The B-side of "Eight Miles High" presented a different version of "Why," a song later produced and arranged by Gary Usher for the *Younger Than Yesterday* album. For the box set it has been remixed, losing some of its reckless energy along the way. "Just A Season," off *Untitled*, forfeits some of its dynamics when the original harmonies are removed, but the opposite is true when the same thing is done to the band's version of "Lay Lady Lay."

Gene Clark's excellent "Feel A Whole Lot Better" and a perfunctory reading of Lowell George's "Willin'" are also included. And though you can find "Set You Free This Time" or "I Knew I'd Want You" on other discs, it would have been nice to see them included here.

But besides the older songs, four new recordings done by McGuinn, Hillman and Crosby in Nashville last August have been included.

"CBS wanted some new stuff," says McGuinn. "They managed to co-ordinate all of our schedules so that we had three days when we could all

afford to be together. I had one song, 'Love That Never Dies,' that I had written for my upcoming solo album, but it sounded more like a Byrds song than a solo album song."

Among the other new tracks is Dylan's "Paths Of Victory" and a remake of "He Was A Friend Of Mine."

"They just felt they wanted to do that song," DeVito says, referring to "Friend." "They cut it the old way, with one microphone. Roger played 12-string and Hillman played bass. It's very sparse, with pure harmonies. Jeff Rosen from Dylan's office and I went over a bunch of unreleased tunes, and we presented them to The Byrds. They liked 'Paths Of Victory' and did a great job on it. Hillman wanted to do Julie Gold's 'From A Distance.' That was a song from a Nanci Griffith album."

It's apparent by the effort that CBS has put into the realization of this release that they are providing a dignified presentation of one of rock's most influential bands. This box set is one that any fan of The Byrds should find an essential addition to their collection.



THE BYRDS IN THEIR HEYDAY: LOST VOCALS AND RECKLESS ENERGY.

ing attention to the music."

DeVito's remark about the state of CBS CD reissues over the years is unfortunately accurate, but the company is trying to rectify the situation with some excellent reissue work. As well as recent collections of Robert Johnson and Poco material, the major showcase is a four-CD, 90-song self-titled box set from *The Byrds*.

The collection, which runs over four hours, contains 17 previously unissued recordings, including the legendary "lost" Gram Parsons *Sweetheart Of The Rodeo* vocals, studio outtakes and live performances in Sweden during the mid-'60s, and two songs recorded with Bob Dylan at the 1990 Roy Orbison tribute, "Turn Turn Turn" and "Mr. Tambourine Man." The box also provides a 62-page booklet with many rare photos, a lengthy historical essay and a family tree of the band.

"This set was an idea for a long time," says founding member Roger McGuinn. "I got a call about two years ago, but it didn't happen until Don DeVito got promoted to the head of a new

from as far away as Germany, England and Japan. McGuinn assisted in the remixes and song selections, and band members David Crosby and Chris Hillman were also brought in for consultation. "The only time we remixed was when there was a mono version of a song," McGuinn says.

And for the most part, the spirit of the original performances has been enhanced by the work of McGuinn, DeVito and co. Usually when older recordings are remixed by overly enthusiastic engineers with ears primarily attuned to modern sounds (particularly drums), they screw up the initial magic of the original record's sound. The recent remixes of "Layla" from the Eric Clapton box is a perfect example.

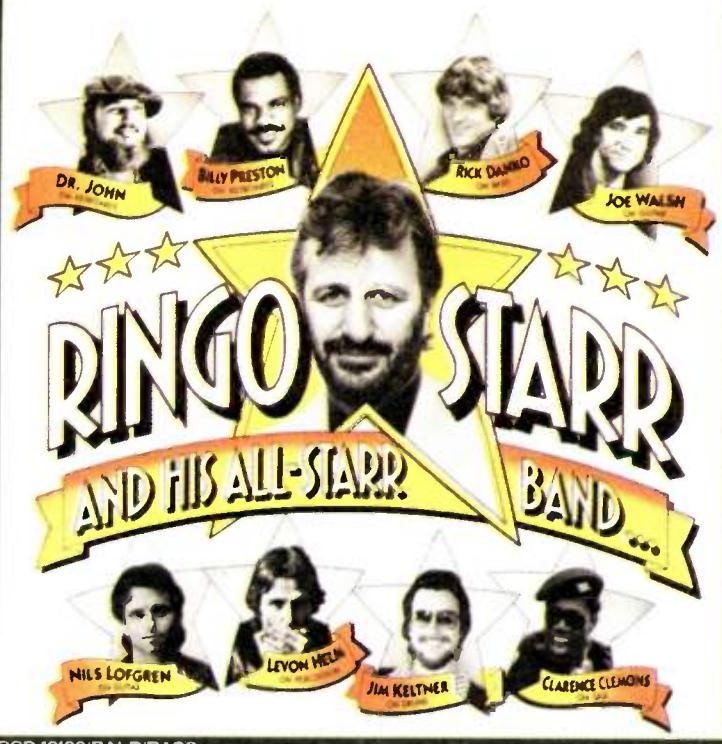
"We whittled them down to 105 tunes, from an original list of 130," says DeVito. "With Hillman and Crosby's help we ultimately got it down to 90 songs, which became pretty tough. Our criteria was that we'd drop things that were available in another context. There are those who are going to scream about why certain tracks

Parsons wasn't allowed to do the leads, so McGuinn's voice covered his parts for the album's commercial release.

"Those are the lost Gram vocals," says McGuinn. "It was my decision to put them on this set. People went around for years thinking that those vocals were erased. It's nice to find them and put them on the collection."

Other highlights include a wonderful version of "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue," a rush-released Jim Dickson production that was intended to maintain the band's chart momentum, established with "Mr. Tambourine Man." CBS chose not to put it out, however, opting instead for what would be their last No. 1 hit, "Turn, Turn, Turn." That song, which took 78 takes to record, is included in slightly longer form on this set. Also included is an obscure Jackson Browne song written for them, "Mae Jean Goes To Hollywood."

"Roger had forgotten about it," says DeVito. "He was blown away. That was done around 1969, when Jackson was just out of high school. There is a jam we discovered, featuring Clarence



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METALLION

By Elianne Halbersberg

Pepper And Salt

Scorpions guitarist Rudolf Schenker is justly proud of his group's new album, *Restless Nights*. Although he is much too modest to point out everything the band has done right, he will go as far as to say, "The material is great."

Restless Nights marks the band's first recorded effort without Dieter Dierks. Instead, they coproduced with Keith Olsen, one of many changes for Schenker, vocalist Klaus Meine, drummer Herman Rarebell, guitarist Matthias Jabs and bassist Francis Buchholz. "We changed record companies in Europe," Schenker explains. "We changed management, publishing companies and also the way we work. In the past I did most of the writing, but this time the whole band was involved. It was the first time we recorded outside of Germany. Before, we worked in Dieter Dierks' studio.

"We signed a contract with him 15 years ago, when we had no recording experience. In the end, he became a bit of a dictator. It started as a team; then he began to feel that he made the Scorpions' sound, especially on our last album. He wanted to control everything, make everything perfect. That is not our way of thinking what music is about. We are a live band, and we wanted to do things the easy way in the studio — just do what we do on stage, plug in and play. But he wanted to make everything perfect. It was not fun anymore for us. So any other person after that would have been better."

"We met with producers, and after doing pre-production at my house on my 24-track studio, Keith Olsen was our choice. His schedule allowed him to start immediately, and he had an available studio in Los Angeles. We recorded the basics, then went to Holland for guitar overdubs, vocals and mixing. Keith has experience and likes to work as part of a team. He is very good with vocals and guitars."

In what is probably the biggest surprise of all, they brought in an outside writer to assist with the songs — Jim Vallance. As Schenker explains, "When we recorded 'Can't Explain' with Bruce Fairbairn, he said, 'Since you are a German band, it would be a good idea to write with a North American songwriter and get some pepper and salt in your lyrics.' Herman and Klaus went to Vancouver to meet with Jim, and they liked him very much. Jim also worked with Matthias and Francis; he's involved in several songs on the record. Our philosophy is to always find the possibilities to change and get fresh blood in our system."

Schenker's guitar sound has certainly helped to define the band and set them apart from others. Distinct and melodic, The Scorpions are immediately recognizable on the radio, even before Meine's unique voice is heard. "I've been playing guitar for a long time now," Schenker notes. "When you find your style, it doesn't change much after that, except to get better. What is important is to be able to show and transmit your feelings through the guitar to the audience, even if you do it with only three notes. Some people play like hell

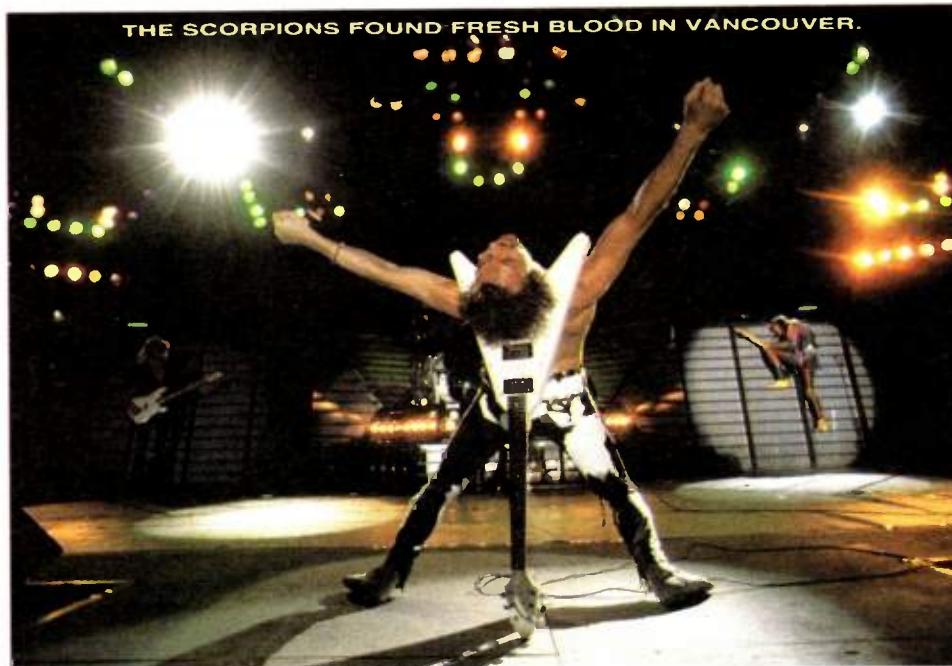
sically to the type of blue-collar, heartland sounds associated with John Mellencamp, Bon Jovi and Bruce Springsteen.

Fulkerson has been playing guitar since he was four years old, and by the age of eight he says he could play every song his idol, Elvis Presley, had put on record. He met Spears when they were both attending summer camp, and there they forged their dream of being in a band together. At 13 they had formed Blue Tears, and have since gone through the usual per-

And although they spent four pleasant months in Los Angeles, Blue Tears still have no desire to relocate. "Tennessee is small and slow-paced; the country is pretty and it's not all concrete," says Spears. "It's much more relaxed. We love to visit L.A., but couldn't live there. We know everyone in Henderson; we've been signing autographs here for a year and a half. When we play, we get 1,500 people in a town of 3,000!"

Metal Notes: Metal Blade Records has proudly announced their signing of rock 'n' roll veterans **Legs Diamond**. Their new album, *Town Bad Girl*, has just been released. Metal Blade has also just inked a deal with Texas-based rockers **Johnny Law**, whose debut is due in early 1991... **Mordred** are back in the studio with producer Andy Wallace, recording at Fantasy in Berkeley, California. Aaron Vaughn becomes the sixth member of Mordred, on keyboards and scratching. Vaughn is also known as D.J. Pause... **Tankard's The Meaning Of Life** is just out on the racks... **Killing Joke** has just joined the Noise Records roster. They are poised to release a new album, *Extremities*... Noise is also putting out the word on **Dave Sharman**, whose 1990 debut was just released. Completely self-taught, Sharman is a former guitar instructor who lists Eddie Van Halen and Alan Holdsworth as influences.

He's also described as the first guitarist to record a 25-second uninterrupted fretboard run... In still more Noise news, **Destruction** have just released their first studio album in over two years. Entitled *Cracked Brain*, it was recorded in Munich and produced by Guy Bidmead. The band has grown to five members, adding Chris Engler on bass and Andre Grieder on vocals, who was brought in as a sessionist. At any rate, he should have his name carved into metal history for the band's cover of The Knack's classic "My Sharona"... The always delicate **King Diamond** has completed his new album, *The Eye*, which should be out by the time you read this. The title supposedly refers to a necklace owned by King that apparently possesses certain mystical traits. While it's not a concept album, "the powers of the eye remain an underlying theme throughout"... RC Records is issuing *Schizophrenia*, the third effort from Brazil's **Sepultura**. The record was never officially released in the U.S. This pressing will contain a bonus track, "Troops Of Doom"... Meanwhile, the band is working on their new album... **Overkill** are in the writing mode for their next album, expected in March... **Mindfunk** are in Copenhagen recording with Jan Eliasson... **Dark Angel** are also recording *Time Does Not Heal* in Costa Mesa, California. Terry Date is producing.



and have nothing to say. They don't understand that when you play guitar, you have to talk through it.

"You must create something that makes other people happy. It is not about the Olympics of guitar playing. That has nothing to do with music."

Schenker firmly believes that success, something The Scorpions have been experiencing for years, has not changed him. "I can't really tell, because it's me," he admits. "But I was happy years ago, when I was driving the van to the gig and doing everything myself in my first bands. It was very important. And what I do now is very important. As long as you treat it as something very important, then you will do it right and do it well."

Heartland Rock

Chances are that you've never heard of Henderson, Tennessee, and it's probably the last place you would expect to see a rock band get signed, but that's exactly what happened to **Blue Tears**, a four-piece band that never even considered moving to Los Angeles or New York in pursuit of a record deal. Vocalist/guitarist/songwriter Gregg Fulkerson, bassist Michael Spears, guitarist Bryan Hall and drummer Charlie Lauderdale have emerged from this unlikely place with a brand of music that lends itself lyrically and mu-

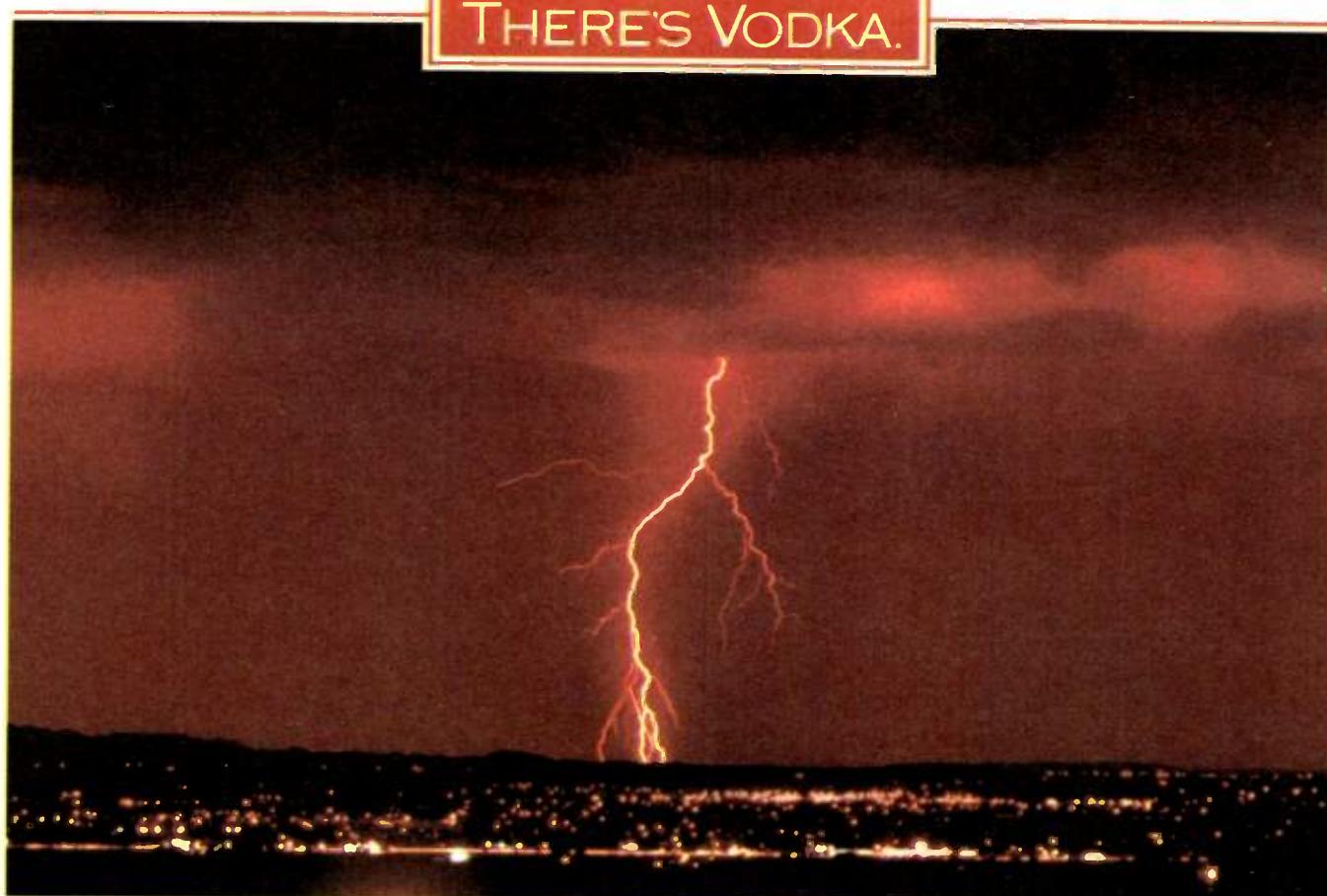
sonal changes. "It's a dream come true," the singer says of their present situation. "If I was doing it by myself, it would be great, but not half the triumph it is with these guys."

"We were totally against the ropes," Spears notes. "We were young and from a small town. We went to Nashville, up and down Music Row, trying to get signed. But everyone claimed we were too pop and not different enough." Undeterred, they continued writing and recording, until a demo of "Innocent Kiss" was forwarded to Almo Irving Publishing in Los Angeles by the manager of Jimmy Davis and Junction, who owned the studio where Blue Tears were recording.

That tape landed in the hands of Alan Kovac of Left Bank Management. He contacted Fulkerson, who at that time was playing lead guitar. "We had no vocalist; the guy we had left the band," he recalls. "Alan told me I would be the lead singer. We took a year to practise and write, played six or eight concerts, and I loved it."

Meanwhile, Kovac had taken the demos to MCA, which immediately signed the band. And another Left Bank artist, Tim Karr, cut a version of "Innocent Kiss" for his debut. Finally, the song once again belongs to Blue Tears and fits in with nine other potential singles on their album.

THERE'S VODKA.



SMIRNOFF

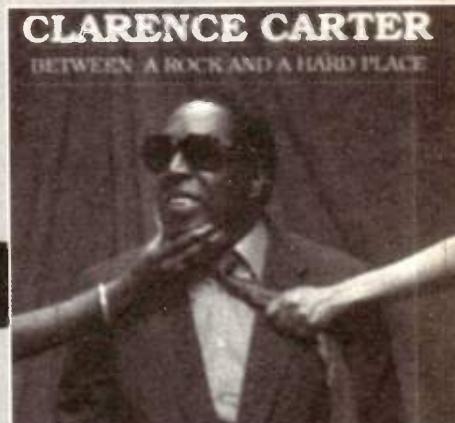
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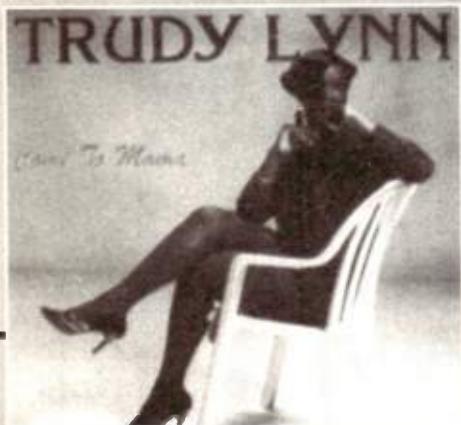
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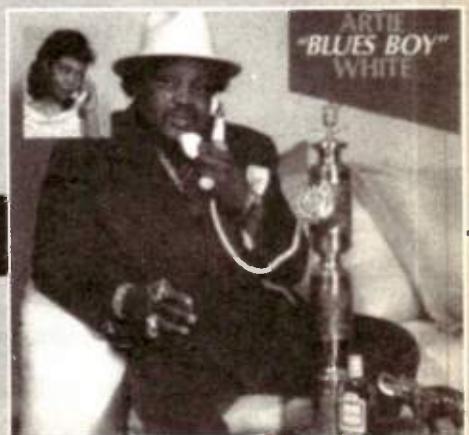
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SOUL FUNK-TION

By Otis Winthorpe

The Rude Boys are a slick band composed of some serious singers and players who do the harmony thing nice, and sound like they might have put in their share of church time. *Rude Awakening* (Atlantic) is very poorly mixed, in sort of a trebly early '60s Motown style, but superior songwriting, arrangements and musicianship make this collection of songs stand out in these days of increasing homogeneity. "Come On Let's Do This" is a great leadoff single from an exciting, talented and soulful group to watch.

Prince's *Graffiti Bridge* soundtrack has some brilliant moments, and is certainly less predictable than most pop music this year, but Prince does not shine on the songwriting side of things, as we have come to expect. There are decent jams — the ones by The Time in particular — but no songs stand out as classic Prince compositions. "We Can Funk," a duet with George Clinton, is an embarrassment, and the only real vocal science gets dropped by Morris Day, Mavis Staples and wunderkind Tevin Campbell. In his constant and admirable pursuit of innovation, Prince just doesn't come up with the goods. On the flip side, though, a mediocre album from Prince is better than a good album from most other artists.

There's not too much that's really exciting in hip-hop these days, but a few jams stand out. *Laquan's Now's The B-Turn* (4th & B'Way) is melodic and highly musical L.A. hip-hop with righteous rhyming; "Witness The Drift" features swirling layers of live instruments, including a soprano sax solo in an old-school-but-fresh jam. "The Pied Piper," by **Cheba** (Ruff House/Columbia) is a great update on the fable with

THE RUDE BOYS SOUND LIKE THEY MIGHT HAVE PUT IN SOME CHURCH TIME.



a stripped-down beat (especially heavy in the street mix) and Cheba rhyming in various voices, reminiscent of Digital Underground's Shock G's multiple personae. **Queen Latifah** (featuring De La Soul), produced with dense funk layers by Stetsasonic's brilliant Prince Paul, drops the dense "Mama Gave Birth To The Soul Children" (Tommy Boy); the De La kids as the Chipmunks and samples of Chuck D. make this jam complete and dangerous on the dancefloor. Speaking of dancing, **Deee-Lite**'s "Groove Is In The Heart" (Elektra) is a very funky, non-house but pure club track with raw sample slices mixed like a rap record. Homegirl's too-hip '60s British spy TV show singing, augmented by interjections from Bootsy Collins, Maceo Parker and Q-Tip (A Tribe Called Quest's mellow answer to Flavor Flav) is just pure fun, and the super psychedelic video redefines the genre.

The special "Irrelevant And Irritating But Commercially Deadly" award goes to **Homework**. The latest monster created by Dr. Frankenstein/Svengali Maurice Starr, *Homework* is sort of a black version of *New Kids On The Block* — lighter on the bubblegum and a little heavier on the R&B/new jack swing tip — whose mission is to suck ducats from the pockets of impressionable zombie youth. It's not evil, but it sure ain't taking pop music nowhere.

There are some interesting songs to be found on the soundtracks to *The Adventures Of Ford Fairlane* and *Marked For Death*. The *Fairlane* soundtrack features "Funky Attitude," the first jam in a while from **Shella E.**; a sweet **Teddy Pendergrass/Lisa Fisher** duet called "Glad To Be Alive"; and "Can't Get Enough," a dope groove from **Tone-Loc** in which he sings lower than ever.

The *Marked For Death* soundtrack drips with the low-down funky production of mastermind Matt Dike, and also

features a new Tone-Loc gangster blaxploitation-sounding groove called "I Joke But I Don't Play." **Kenyatta's** "I Wanna Do Something Freaky To You" is a gritty remake of the Leon Haywood groove; "Put The Funk Back In It" by **The Brand New Heavies** does just that; ace rapper **Young MC**'s "Pick Up The Pace" keeps his rep as a funny and deft wordman and features blues harp backdrop. This is some cool music. Peace.

JAZZ STREAMS

By Rob Reid

Michel Camilo, an engaging pianist with a passionate following, plays his best cards yet on *On The Other Hand*, his latest from Epic Records. Camilo is adept at fashioning an energizing musical alliance between the influences of his native Dominican Republic and environments and those of mainstream jazz. That means you can bounce to the calypso-flavored titled track, indulge in the funk and Latin grooves of "Journey" and "Suite Sandrine," and tap the straightahead via covers of John Coltrane's "Impressions" and Dizzy Gillespie's "Birk's Works" — without feeling that Camilo is merely dabbling in genres.

He's usually a more intimate kind of progressive guy, but for *Soft On The Inside* **Andy Sheppard** thinks big, augmenting his usual sextet into a 15-piece monster band. In this setting, traditional horn voicings puncture a musical canvas that may include synthesizer, aggressive cello, outraged trombone and just about everything else the leader/saxophonist can think of tossing in the mix. Modern, yet with firm ties to all that's gone before, this near-relentless 54-minute excursion on Antilles Records may leave you exhilarated and exhausted.

Also working on a grander scale these days, guitarist/singer **George Benson** joins forces with the Count Basie Orchestra for *Big Boss Band*. There's no ruffling of feathers on this Warner Bros. release, just a classy outing produced with panache for the dinner-date-at-eight cufflinks crowd. Warner hedges its bets by including two tracks with the Basie band in absentia: "Baby Workout," a funky R&B number, and "A Portrait Of Jennie," a ballad with orchestral strings attached.

The impact of Basie and his arrangers also figures in much of *Straight Ahead*, a glitzy, glam, big-band-in-lame affair from **Pete Petersen & The Collection Jazz Orchestra** on CMG Records. Beautifully recorded, this well-played set of standards makes no pretenses at breaking any new ground.

Reprise Records hopes that its Grammy-grabbing group **Take 6** breaks into the upper echelons of chartland with *So Much 2 Say*, the 6's 2nd for the label. Take 6's popularity stems from a public fascination with a cappella singing, and the hitching of that singing style to a repertoire of modern gospel and jazz, with stopoffs in funkytown. *So Much 2 Say* lays out vocal arrangements you'd swear were dehumidified, pasteurized and freeze-

dried. That's fine in small doses only, but otherwise *So Much To Say* is a vocal producer's paradise that stress-tests the market for high-tech a cappella.

Blue Moon recording group **Bebop & Beyond** is lending a welcome arranger's touch to material by jazz's most popular eccentric composer. On *Plays Thelonious Monk*, saxes, trumpet, flute



TAKE 6 TEST THE MARKET FOR HIGH-TECH A CAPPELLA.

and even Howard Johnson's tuba all have their say. Granted, the extreme quirkiness that marked Monk's own performances is toned down here, but the urgency of songs like "Brilliant Corners" and "Criss Cross" goes undiminished, and the exotic appeal of the rare Monk ballad, "Ugly Beauty," is enhanced by leader Mel Martin's flute work. Throughout, pianist George Cables is a formidable presence, without resorting to Monk's unique style. Also noteworthy is Randy Vincent, who adds a fresh '90s dimension to Monk by way of his tangy electric guitar.

Romance is not dead, not if the resurrected horn of **Nino Tempo** is any indication. *Tenor Saxophone*, on Atlantic Records, marks the return of a man who had a major smash hit with "Deep Purple," way back in '63. Tempo's playing reflects the deep, soulful sound that prevailed in those days, and, as his take on "Darn That Dream" proves, what's truly soulful is also timeless. Tempo includes standards as recent as Anita Baker's "Caught Up In The Rapture Of Love," and even has producer Roberta Flack pitching a few vocals.

Tom Coster, whose greatest day in the sun came as keyboardist in Santana's jazz-inflected band of the early '70s, offers his second solo outing for the Headfirst label. It's pleasant, but Coster, with *From Me To You*, has yet to reveal any distinctiveness as a writer and performer.

Rippingtons fans, meanwhile, will be pleased to know that the pop-jazz combo's fourth release, *Welcome To The St. James Club*, shows guitarist/leader/producer Russ Freeman at his most assured. His current blend of the familiar and the evocative can be heard on GRP Records.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT

Live Performance

CURTIS MAYFIELD TRIBUTE

The Palace
Los Angeles, CA

It would be hard to imagine an instance of bad timing more tragic than the mishap that paralyzed the legend

lens, which is pretty ridiculous when you consider that all most of them needed to perform was a working microphone and an adequate tape machine. It was only when the two bilingual acts, Kid Frost and Mellow Man Ace, took the stage that the evening started taking off. It was indicative of the concert's sorry state of affairs, however, that Frost, midway through the lineup, was the first to mention Mayfield. Next up were two acts that owed the greatest debts to the stricken superstar. Ice-T did a condensed version of his stage show, complete with taped

musicians should be applauded for their patience and their desire to stand up for Mayfield, but they might as well have left their instruments at home.

Perry Stern

BILLY IDOL

Meadowlands Arena
East Rutherford, NJ

This is more than just another Billy Idol tour — it's our hero's post-motorcycle-crash, heavy-leather resurrec-

gingerly up and down on the spot, raising his fist, pointing at the audience and (presumably) curling his lower lip into the trademark Idol sneer (couldn't really tell from my seat, but Bill did reassure the crowd, "I've still got me lip," to wild applause). Toward the end of the show, he talked about his role in the upcoming *Doors* flick, a preamble to his version of "L.A. Woman," (naughtily renamed "L.A. Fuckin' Woman" for this special occasion). Around the same time, an oversized, bluish-gray, woman-shaped balloon materialized onstage, lying prone and eliciting some suggestive repartee from Bill. Not a bad show really, but it felt like a Vegas revue for people who aren't old enough to gamble. A couple of times, some girls in the crowd even presented their Idol with flowers. Roll over Wayne Newton, and tell Tom Jones the news. At least women used to throw panties at him.

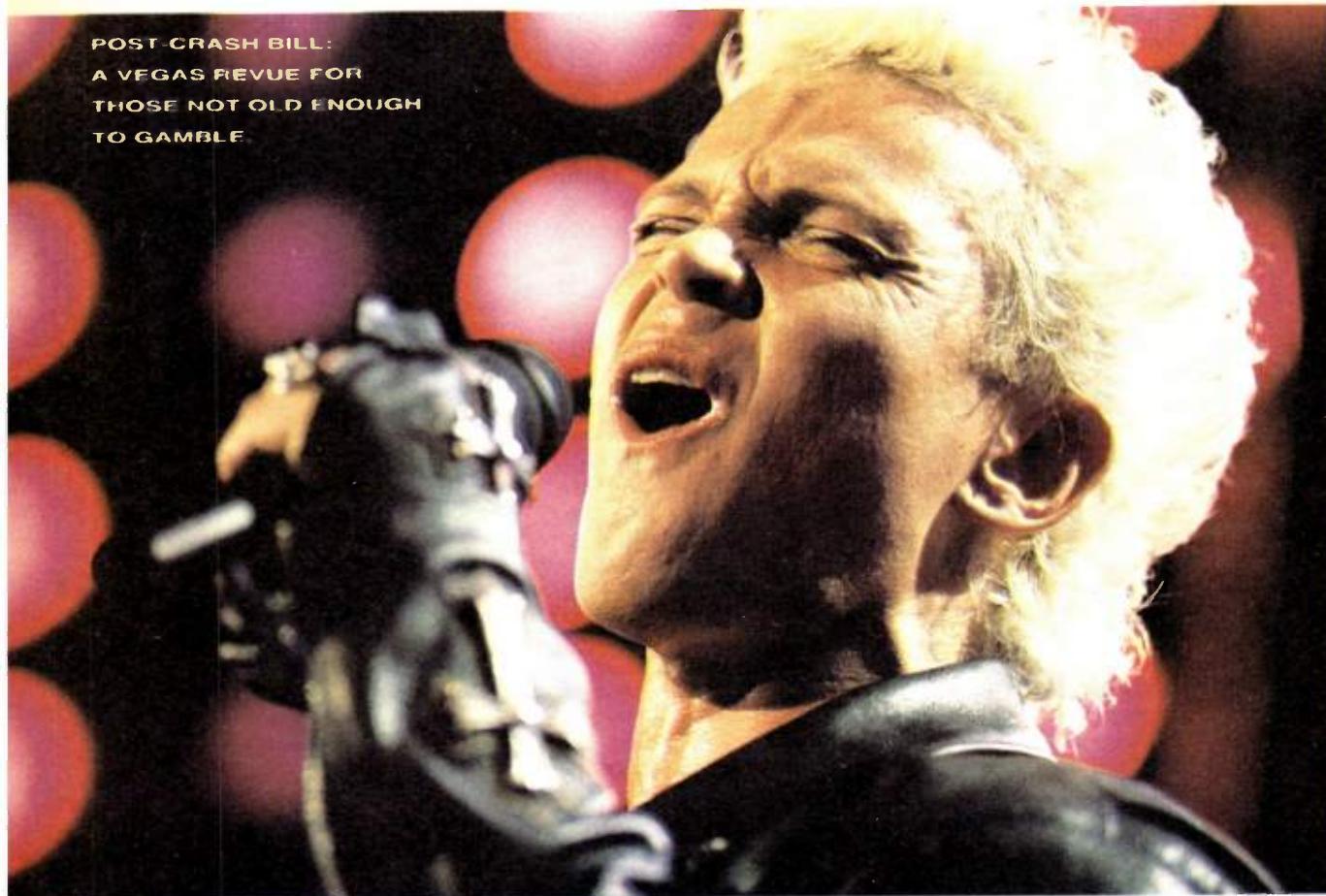
Tim Powis

THE NEVILLE BROTHERS/LINDA RONSTADT

Mud Island Amphitheatre
Memphis, TN

From the outset of their highly percussive opening, The Neville Brothers won the audience over with their rich harmonies and funky New Orleans grooves, in spite of the muddy sound mix and erratic stage lighting. The Nevilles focused on material from their latest album, *Brother's Keeper*, and among the highlights from it were "Jah Love" and "Fearless," a song that made the Brothers sound like the Crescent City's answer to The Band. The crowd, which was predisposed toward oldies, responded most warmly when Aaron Neville launched into a rendition of his 1966 hit "Tell It Like It Is." But while the Neville Brothers interacted with each other and with the crowd, during her set Linda Ronstadt displayed a stage presence that ranged from coy to perfunctory. No doubt about it, though, Ronstadt was in excellent voice, running effortlessly through about 20 songs, beginning with Buddy Holly's "It's So Easy" and ending with Sam & Dave's "When Something Is Wrong With My Baby," a duet with Aaron Neville. During the middle of the show, however, she launched into a five-song segment of overly dramatic Jimmy Webb compositions that bordered on serious overkill. Ronstadt's band, which was made up of many of the original session players on her records (Andrew Gold, Bob Glaub and Russ Kunkel) played each song with letter-perfect precision, but musicians of that calibre should have tried for fresher readings, rather than turning copies of their past performances.

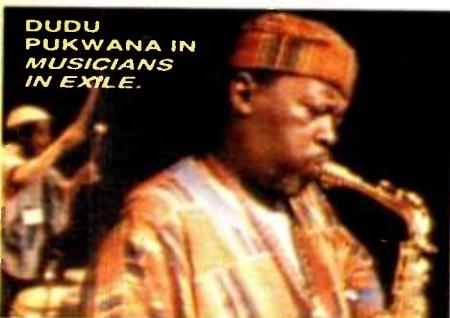
Rick Clark



rary Curtis Mayfield on August 13. Famous as the composer and singer of such R&B classics as "Freddie's Dead," "Superfly" and, as lead singer for The Impressions, "People Get Ready," Mayfield was about to make a major comeback when a scaffold fell at a concert, snapped his neck and rendered him a quadriplegic (it's still not known whether the condition is permanent). With the film and soundtrack to *The Return Of Superfly* just released, the news that many of the acts appearing on the soundtrack would do a benefit concert for him was more than welcome. But while the evening raised more than \$25,000 for Mayfield and his family, unfortunately the night didn't live up to musical expectations. Two of the supposed headline acts, Tone-Loc and Eazy-E, though present, did not perform, and the first five acts — including The Uzi Bros, CPO and King Tee — were plagued by sound prob-

intro and quickly shed tuxedo. After performing his rap version of Mayfield's "I'm Your Pusher," he asked for a moment of noise rather than silence, and was treated to the loudest ovation of the evening. Then Fishbone came out and debuted several new songs (much more rock than ska-oriented), but during their rendition of "Freddie's Dead" a scuffle in the audience pretty well cleared the floor. Finally, 2 1/2 hours behind schedule, just after two a.m., with only a handful of people remaining, the so-called "All-Star Jam" began. Consisting of members of the bands of Santana, Bonnie Raitt, Bruce Hornsby and Bruce Springsteen, the almost two dozen musicians who took the stage were remarkable if only because they were the first white people to do so, and it immediately became apparent that their rock 'n' roll presence was a miscalculation, because the remainder of the audience departed. The

tion shuffle tour. ("For five minutes it looked like they'd have to amputate me leg," Bill told the sympathetic Meadowlanders.) After a brief build-up by his workmanlike four-piece band (plus two wiggly back-up chanteuses), Idol swaggered triumphantly onto the stage, atop which a larger-than-life (larger-than-death?) skull glowered at the capacity audience. Brandishing a black walking stick and clad in a black leather jacket, exceedingly tight black pants (what was that mystery fabric?) and a baggy white shirt, Idol kicked off the show with a rousing rendition of his recent chartbuster, "Cradle of Love." His voice was in good form for most of the performance — a cavalcade of hits that included "White Wedding," "Eyes Without A Face," "Flesh For Fantasy," "Mony Mony" and (the set-closer) "Rebel Yell" — but his post-crash inventory of moves is limited and awkward; basically it consists of hopping



LOOK HEAR

By Kerry Doole

The most anticipated new music homevideo release is surely **Roger Waters' The Wall — Live In Berlin**. This tape captures the theatrically extravagant concert Waters and famous friends gave on July 21, 1990, in the notorious "no-man's-land" between East and West Berlin. The concert is based on **Pink Floyd's The Wall** album and film, and those contributing include **Joni Mitchell, Bryan Adams, Van Morrison and Sinéad O'Connor**.

Look for the climactic finale in which a specially constructed styrofoam 60 by 600 foot wall comes crashing down. Pomp rock doesn't get any more overblown than this. Out on PolyGram Music Video for \$19.95 U.S.

Also now out on PMV are new releases of compilation videos from **L.A. Guns** and country sweetheart **Kathy Mattea**. Popular Canadian progressive rockers **Rush** are issuing **Chronicles**, a collection of clips and songs that span their long, lucrative career. \$19.95 U.S.

Southern rock fans should check out a couple of new boogie treats. VMI have released **Gregg Allman — One Way Out**, which features **The Gregg Allman Band** rockin' out in a Nashville club. The hour-long film includes such Allman faves as "I'm No Angel," "Statesboro Blues" and "One Way Out." \$19.95 list.

Redneck country rocker **Charlie Daniels** is represented by **Homefolks And Highways**, a 90-minute documentary that incorporates concert footage and a behind-the-scenes profile. Daniels' hits "The Devil Went Down To Georgia," "Long Haired Country Boy" and "Simple Man" are included. Out via Cabin Fever Entertainment for \$19.95 list.

Sure to be a major seller is **Aerosmith: The Making Of Pump**. As the title indicates, this 110-minute tape is based around the Boston 'bad boys' last mega-selling (five million copies worldwide) album, **Pump**. You get personal interviews with the band, exclusive musical jams, spontaneous arguments, and hot, uncensored versions of clips for "The Other Side" and "What It Takes." Just released by CBS Music Video for \$19.98 U.S. list.

That slickly professional pop-making machine called **Toto** has always been a rather faceless entity. That may

change with their greatest hits compilation, **Past To Present 1977-1990**. Includes "Hold The Line," "Africa," and "I'll Be Over You." On CMV.

Far more socially and musically worthy is **Black Rain Falls**, the very first homevideo from activist Aussie rockers **Midnight Oil**. Here they literally take their message to the streets, playing to a New York lunchtime crowd from a flatbed truck parked in front of the Exxon building to protest the Alaskan oil spill. The six songs performed all spotlight environmental abuses, and include "Dreamworld," "River Runs Red," "Blue Sky Mine" and a never-recorded version of **John Lennon's "Instant Karma."** The 45-minute CMV tape is rounded out by interview and documentary footage.

The recent **Festival Of Festivals** in Toronto premiered a couple of thought-provoking music documentaries. **Musicians In Exile** focuses on artists forced, for political reasons, to continue their work outside their country of origin. Those filmed discussing the effects of exile on their lives and art include great South African trumpet player **Hugh Masekela**, Chilean troupe **Quillapayun** and Cuban jazzmen **Paquito D'Rivera** and **Daniel Ponce**. The 75-minute feature is now available in Canada via the National Film Board with U.S. distribution imminent.

Listen Up: The Lives Of Quincy Jones received its world premiere there, and its subject, producer/composer **Quincy Jones**, was in town to charm the international media. Among those paying tribute to his talent are **Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis**, and, of course, **Michael Jackson**. The film's "stream of consciousness" style occasionally irritates, but there's plenty of fascinating footage here. Its recent theatrical release on Warner Brothers should be followed by availability on homevideo shortly.

The magazine format for music homevideos has worked so well that BMG Video recently introduced two new contenders. The debut issue of **Country Music** features interviews with **Clint Black, Alan Jackson, k.d. lang, and Chris Hillman of The Desert Rose Band** as well as concert performances. **Dance International** is a video magazine that brings the sound of the street and the dance clubs to the screen. The first issue spotlights Euro-sensations **Snap, Black Box, Guru Josh** and **808 State** and goes behind-the-scenes with **Lisa Stansfield**. Musical and fashion trends are also traced.

Metalhead magazine is now on its second volume, after a highly successful (75,000 copies sold) launch in May. Hard rock titans interviewed and filmed in concert include **Whitesnake, Aerosmith, Poison, Skid Row, Slaughter** and **Great White**. All three of these video mags have a running time of 60 minutes and a suggested list of \$12.98

U.S..

MCA Music Video have inaugurated their own bi-monthly country video magazine. The first issue of **Inside Country Music** has the impressive line-up of **Randy Travis, The Oak Ridge Boys, Roy Clark and Tammy Wynette**, with the next to feature current heartthrobs **Ricky Van Shelton** and **Clint Black**.

Finally, the present (Volume 9) issue of the popular **Hard 'N' Heavy Video Magazine** has new material on **Lita Ford, Anthrax, Robert Plant** and **Winger**. Bang those heads!

MONITOR

By Perry Stern

Unless you keep your nose buried in the pages of the British music press, it's easy to get confused over who did what first, and who's ripping off whom. Currently there seems to be a bit of a stew brewing over which band was first off the mark with what is commonly known as the "Manchester Sound."

But with the domestic release of the debut of **The Charlatans** (known as The Charlatans U.K. stateside due to the prior existence of a '60s band of the same name), observers are contending that the band is blatantly profiting from the ground-breaking work done by Happy Mondays and The Stone Roses (whose second album is being delayed by an injunction slapped on them by their U.K. label, Silvertone). While there is a modicum of similarity between the groups' sounds (particularly in the ethereal vocals, pseudo-martial drum patterns and psychedelic guitar swirls), The Charlatans' vocalist, Tim Burgess, is quick to point out that all three bands sprouted in the Manchester area at about the same time — about three years ago.

With typical Northern bluster, Tim adds that his band "is the best." He does, however, mention also that "It's just an opinion, and I'm not going around shouting about it."

Burgess speaks with the conviction of a true fan, because up until about a year and a half ago, that was the only relationship he had with the group. Originally comprising singer/guitarist Baz Kettley, drummer Jon Brooks, bassist Martin Blunt and keyboardist Rob Collins, The Charlatans were busy making a name for themselves in the North along with The Stone Roses, while the Mondays were making the first forays into the rest of England. Less inter-

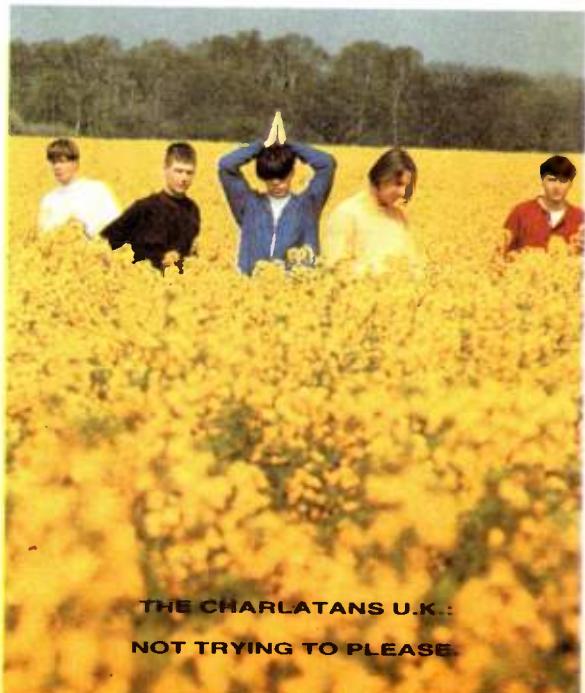
ested in the '60s pop sound that the former group was making than the unruly party rock of the latter, it came to pass that Kettley grew dissatisfied with the new, more Hammond organ-dominated direction the group was taking.

Plucked from the relative obscurity of the Electric Crayons, Burgess was brought into the fold, along with guitarist John Biker.

Burgess claims that what he considers the Manchester sound owes a major debt to hip-hop and dance music. "But none of us was ever afraid to say we liked pop music," he says, "unlike a lot of bands that turned their noses up to it." Indeed, unlike the Mondays, he says, The Charlatans won't be relying on the ministrations of superstar remixers to alter the group's sound to fit the fickle tastes of the dance scene. "We just want to be what we are," he simply states, "rather than trying to be something we're not. If we ever started trying really hard to please people, that's when we'd start to displease."

As for the addition of U.K. to the name, Burgess says, "It's not a problem; it's just one of those things. It saved us a lot of money." After a moment's pause he adds, laughing, "I guess the bloke who does the art will have to do two sets."

New Music News: After hearing about a particularly raucous performance at the Numbers Club in Houston, a British member of parliament is trying to ban **The Revolting Cocks** from ever appearing on that sceptered isle. Fronted by **Ministry** mainman **Al Jourgenson**, Revco, as they are wont to be called, apparently employed several heads of cattle to make the show's title, "The Beers, Steers and Queers Tour," seem less like false advertising. Fire engines were called to the scene after Jourgenson allegedly set part of the stage ablaze... An album of material recorded by the late **Velvet Underground** vocalist **Nico** in 1982 and 1988, called **Hanging Garden**, is now out on import. Included in the set is a version of "I'm Waiting For My Man."



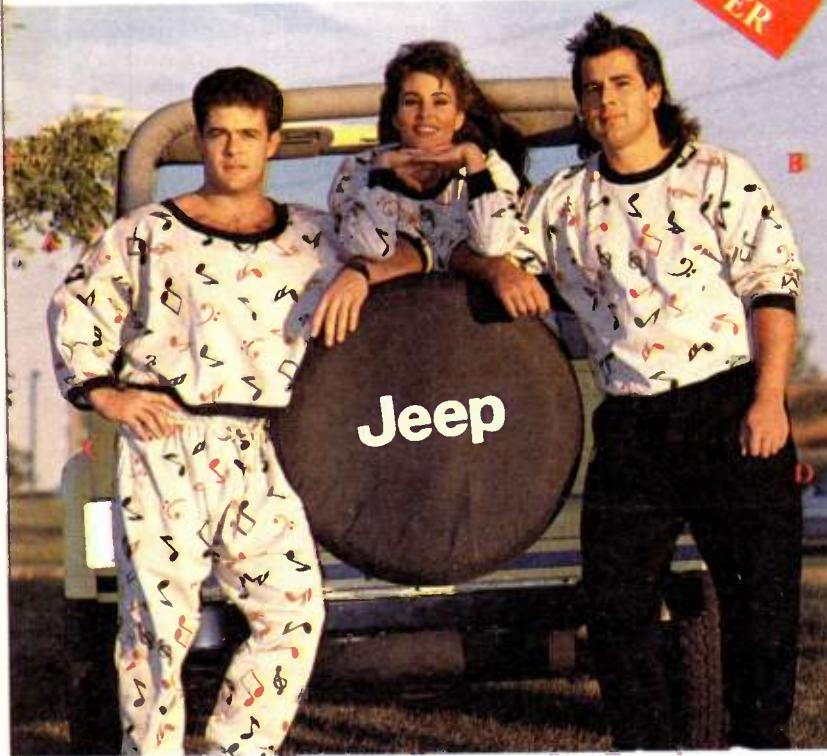
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