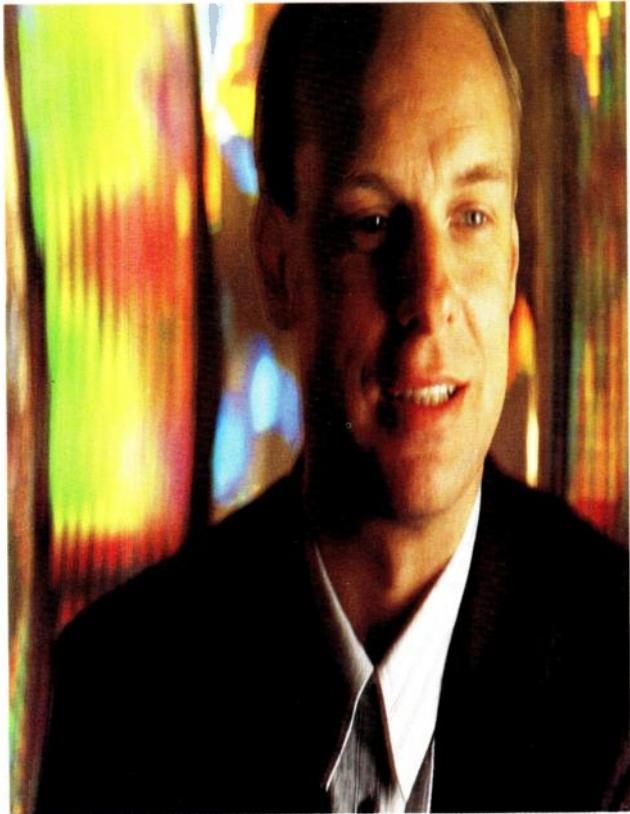


February 1991 / Volume 15 / Issue 156 / \$2.25



## Brian Eno

POST-  
AMBIENT  
POP

**Larger Than Life**

## DAVID LEE ROTH

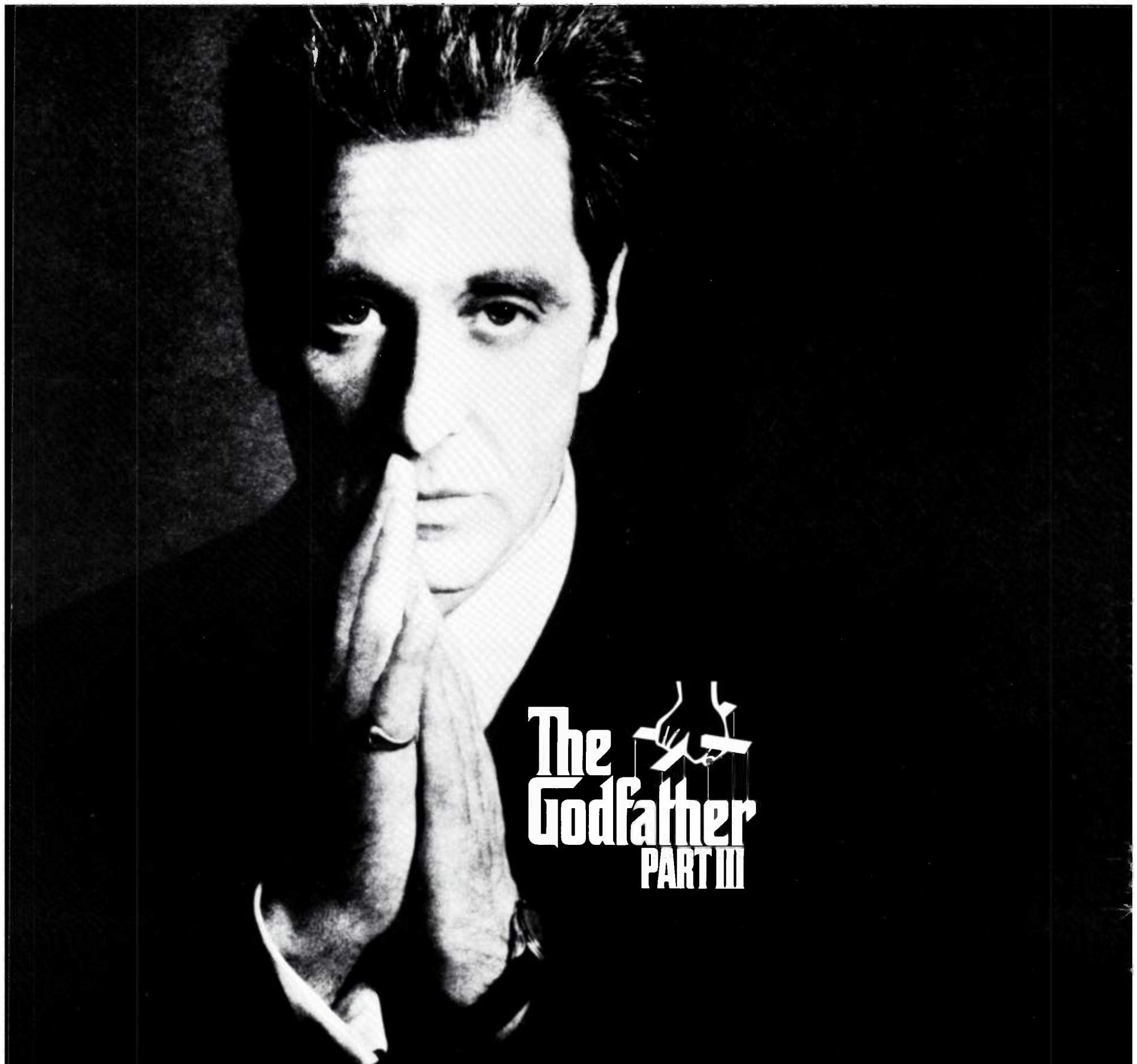


**The Video  
Devolution**  
End Of An Era?

COMPLIMENTS OF



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**MUSIC FROM THE ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK. ON COLUMBIA.**

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**COLUMBIA**

"...beautiful, haunting...The group has both broadened its range and established that it is more than just another MTV band with a cute singer." -*Rolling Stone*



# Edie Brickell & New Bohemians Ghost of A Dog

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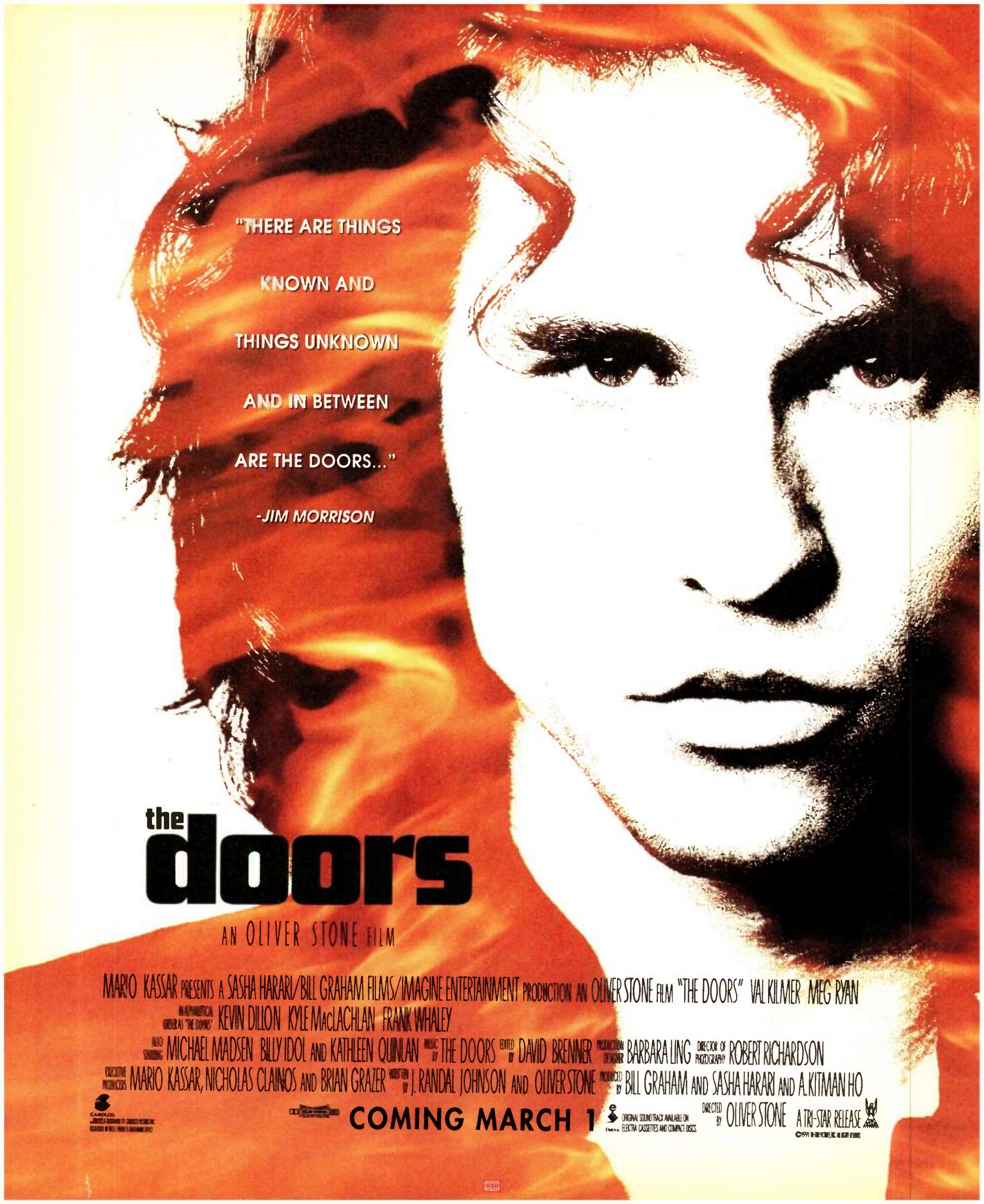
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THINGS UNKNOWN  
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-JIM MORRISON

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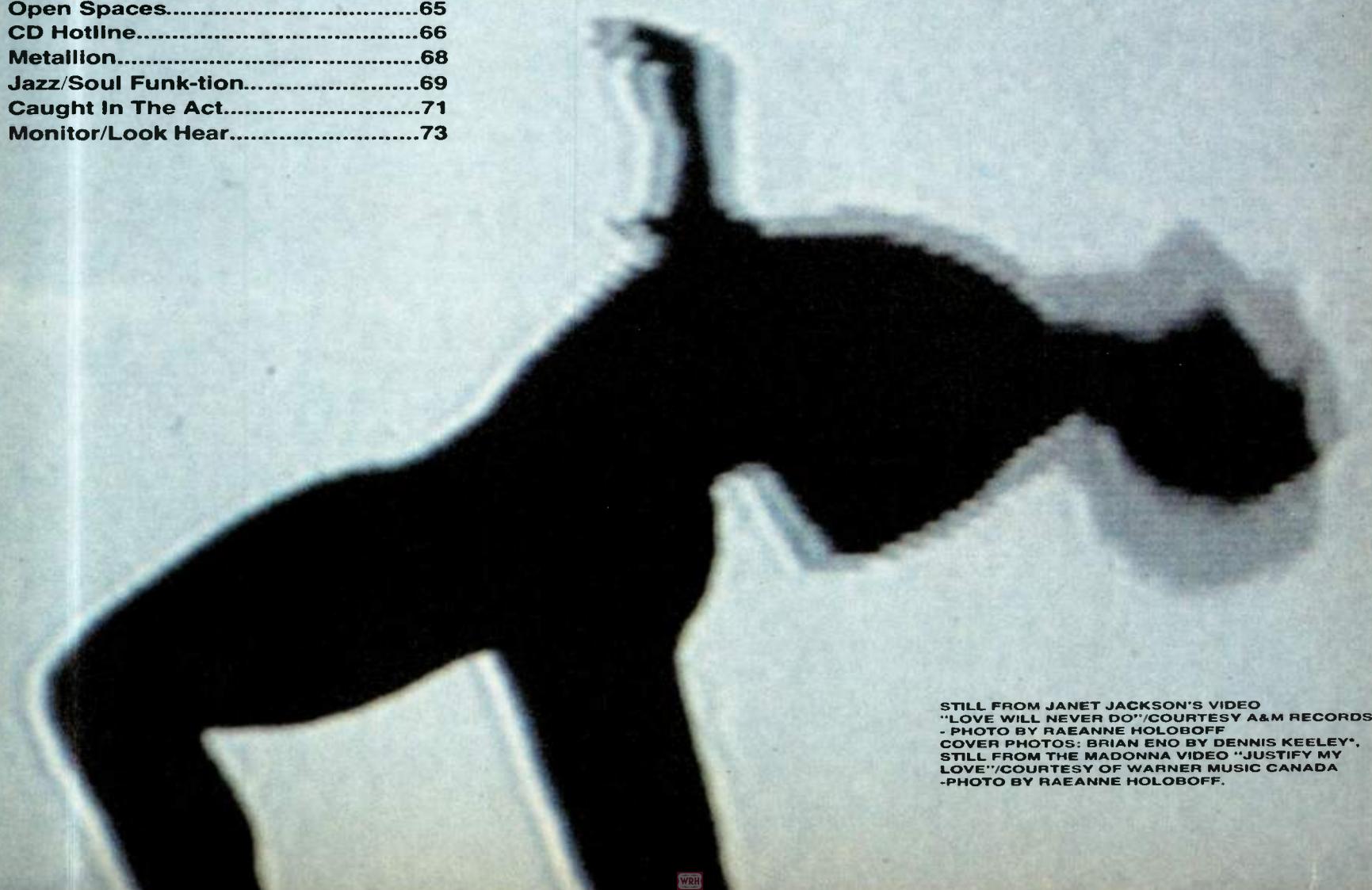
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LOVE"/COURTESY OF WARNER MUSIC CANADA  
-PHOTO BY RAEANNE HOLOBOFF.

# express delivery

## Begging To Differ

I would like to thank you for your honest review of INXS' latest release, *X*, but I'm afraid I have to differ.

I tend to think that the band (despite the unchanged image) has successfully changed their sound to some degree. I noticed, despite the presence of the catchy guitar riffs that gave *Kick* its success, they are leaning a little more towards the keyboards/percussion aspect of their music, which makes it good dance music.

I feel that INXS have created an appropriate successor to *Kick*, and at the same time they've integrated some of their earlier musical technique to make it reminiscent of *Listen Like Thieves*. And as for Michael Hutchence sounding like Elton John, listen to *Listen Like Thieves*, and any earlier album, and you'll find that his voice hasn't changed much, only become more recognized.

Mark Worsley  
Windsor, ON

## Red, Hot And Overlooked

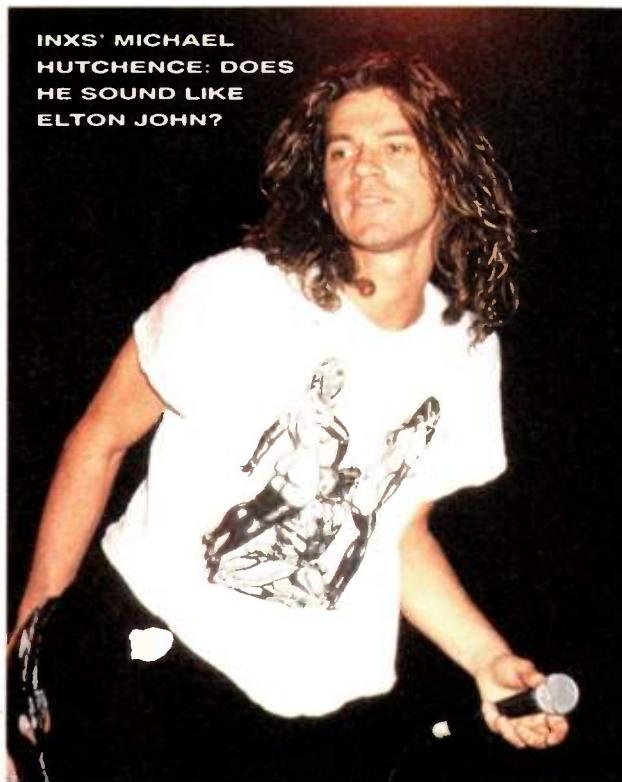
Cheers to Hank Bordowitz for his story on the *Red, Hot And Blue* project (M.E. 154). It's amazing and very disturbing to me that a record with so many famous people on it, that was done so professionally and cleverly, has received so little attention from radio and the mainstream media. Do people really still think that AIDS is a disease that only hits Hispanic junkies and gay prostitutes? And why was the TV show on with so little fanfare, at midnight? It was almost as though people were ashamed of it, which is not the message they should have been sending.

I gave *Red, Hot And Blue* to everyone I know for Christmas, and everyone liked it. The only problem I ran into was that several stores were out of stock just before Christmas. I suppose that's a sign that it was selling, but I'm haunted by the thought of how many more

lives could be changed if it was available everywhere, and everyone knew about it.

Donna Plante  
Montreal, QU

INXS' MICHAEL HUTCHENCE: DOES HE SOUND LIKE ELTON JOHN?



## Too Many Rambos

In his December Monitor column (M.E. 154) Perry Stern asks, "How many thrash rockers out there cite Rimbeau instead of Rambo as a major influence?" Without hesitation I would say none. If, however, this was an attempted reference to Arthur Rimbaud, the French symbolist poet, aging rockers like Bob Dylan and Tom Petty admit to being influenced.

Jennifer Burke  
Toronto, ON

*Editor's note:* Thank-you for pointing out that all-too-embarrassing gaffe. Undoubtedly Mr. Stern was thinking of Michael Snow's film *Rimbeau's Nephew*...

## No Antidote?

I recently read issue 153 of *Music Express*, and the letter written by R. Sennick, or should I say R. Cynic? It seems to me that this person, like

many others, has no real appreciation for the rock band Poison.

I am not only a loyal fan of Poison, but also a realistic one.

KRS-One are fulfilling the promise that rap music has of educating young people who have no use for school and hear little on the streets except for hate and violence. More power to 'em, I say.

William Roache  
Houston, TX

## The Problem With Whitney

Your story on Whitney Houston (M.E. 154) absolutely floored me. I had no idea that the woman was so arrogant, so full of herself. So there was "nobody who could take a song and put all the gut and soul in it until [she] came about"? What a pile of crap! There are tons of people out there who can sing rings around Whitney Houston, and it would be to her own benefit to get out a bit and hear some of them.

I'll admit that Whitney has a fine voice, but that doesn't make her a good singer: I think that a good singer takes chances, experiments, and has an openminded attitude. Whitney does none of these things, and that's why, although she may sell billions of records, she'll never go down in history as a great singer. Come on Whitney, take a page out of Aretha's book and let loose a little.

Alex Matheson  
Minneapolis, MN

## Positive Rap

I'd like to thank you for your story on the female rapper Harmony (M.E. 154). With all the press that violent, gangster-style rappers are constantly getting, it's good to read about someone who's got a bit more of a positive attitude (I also appreciated the Boogie Down Productions story for the same reason).

Rappers like Harmony and

## An ELP Cult?

I am thoroughly impressed with *Music Express*. It tells me about music without the excess baggage of other magazines. I'd like to see stories on ELP (a box set is due out soon, with previously unreleased tracks), Queen and the Roches? Although these groups aren't cutting edge, their recently obscure nature (in America) has made them somewhat like cult groups, even though the original ELP broke up 11 years ago!

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PUBLISHED BY:  
Rock Express Communications Inc.  
47 Jefferson Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6K 1Y3  
Tel: (416) 538-7500  
FAX: (416) 538-7503

MUSIC EXPRESS CO-FOUNDER  
Conny J. Kunz

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

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Yearly subscription rates: \$18.00 Cdn. (GST included)

\$20.00 US, \$22.50 other countries.

Backorders, when available, \$4 each.

Rock Express assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material. ISSN 0710-6076.

Second class postage paid in Scarborough, Ontario, Canada. N. 5347. Buffalo, NY, U.S.A.

Address all letters to: MUSIC EXPRESS, 47 Jefferson Ave. Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6K 1Y3

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**SOUND WAREHOUSE**



**M**usic video turns 10 years old this year, but with the apparent bankruptcy of new ideas from video makers, price-conscious record companies, uppity artists and jaded viewers, this anniversary may end up marking the beginning of the end of the omnipotence of music video rather than a triumphant celebration of an exciting art form.

People love to celebrate anniversaries. Thirty years of rock 'n' roll, 50 years of television, 100 years of brassieres. Huge tracts of timberland are felled for "special edition" magazines and hours of TV airtime are spent on the pseudo- "milestones" of various institutions. Several times a year we're reminded that, on this very date, five or 10 or 15 or 35 years ago, someone flicked a switch, pulled a lever or pressed a button on something that, somehow, still affects us today. So here's a prediction: If August 9, 1991, is a slow news day, it's a sure bet that you'll be reminded ad nauseam that the so-called "Video Age" has turned 10.

With the broadcasting of The Buggles' hit "Video Killed The Radio Star" on August 9, 1981, MTV, the world's first 24-hour music video station, was launched, and the music business hasn't been the same since. Ironically, if the truth of the song's title had been more fully understood back then, perhaps

there might have been a little less enthusiasm on the part of the record companies that stood to benefit from rock video's extraordinary promotional power. Initially the cable channel was merely an outlet for labels to display their wares through video clips that acted as commercials for albums. In no time at all, however, it became evident that a good video could increase sales wildly and a bad one could definitely affect a career. (Journey's Steve Perry almost scuttled his solo career after cavorting ridiculously in a ripped pink T-shirt a la *Flashdance* in one famous miscalculation.) And inevitably it came about that rock video began to see itself as an art form.

Suddenly there were "MTV bands" like Duran Duran who owed their success as much (if not more) to how photogenic they were as to how well they made music. As well, obscene amounts of money were spent on ever more elaborate clips and exotic locations in the theory that a hefty pricetag ensured heavy rotation. As one-upmanship got the better of

everyone, it became clear that something bigger than "radio with pictures" was happening. Broadcasters realized that a video show was ridiculously inexpensive to air, and new outlets blossomed like weeds in an unkempt field (in the U.S. there are more than 150 local and regional video programs supplement-

ing a handful of national network or cable outlets). And radio programmers found their omnipotence challenged by the burgeoning video format.

But now, with escalating costs, a flagging econo-

my and a price-conscious record industry — not to mention the inevitable video burnout suffered by viewers bored with video makers' limited imaginations — it's possible that this anniversary might be noteworthy not as the 10-year triumph of an exciting art form, but as the beginning of the end of music videos.

Looking back over 10 years, and looking forward to the next 10, it's hard to say whether music video is a good or bad thing in and of itself. As Frank Zappa once said, "People who think of videos as an art form are probably the same people who think Cabbage Patch Dolls are a revolutionary form of soft

# THE VIDEO DEVO

sculpture." But even if videos can rarely stand alone as works of art, at their all-too-infrequent best they can still provide an insight into a group's personality. As video director Julien Temple points out, "The best videos are extensions of what the artist has to say about himself and the song he's written."

If the primary reason for making videos is increased record sales, then, according to Bob Merlis, vice-president and director of publicity at Warner Bros. Records, it's impossible to determine their effectiveness. "There's no way to go back in time, and there's no way to undo a video," he remarks. "There's no way you can have a record with videos and have the same record without videos in order to compare them."

While videos can't be proven to be essential to a song's success (last October, for example, James Ingram's "I Don't Have The Heart" went to No. 1



without the benefit of video support), George Michael inadvertently made a strong case for them recently by trying to downplay their importance. Michael, who definitely owes a certain degree of his success to video, sent shock waves through the music industry when he asserted that he would no longer be appear in them, and the surprisingly poor showing of "Praying For Time," the first single off his *Listen Without Prejudice Volume One*, was widely attributed to the absence of a clip. At the last minute a video of just the lyrics scrolling up the screen was released, but to little avail (for the second single, "Freedom," a group of models mimed George's vocals). For director Temple, the exercise proved that "even a major artist has to make a video," but that doesn't mean that another artist won't come along and prove him wrong.

Temple, who's made films (*The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle*, *Absolute Beginners*, *Earth Girls Are Easy*) as well as innumerable videos for artists ranging from David Bowie and Neil Young to Whitney Houston and video queen Janet Jackson, emphasizes the pos-

videos are riddles. The ambiguity in a song should act like a time release cold capsule, so that it works over a period of viewing, because videos are repeated. That's another way the visual language has changed — it's totally based on repeatability, when it never was before. You'd see a movie and it spilled away into the darkness knowing that was the only time you'd see it.

"The best videos play an interesting game with the visual language," he adds. "If a video has an incredible amount of information in a small time, you don't necessarily have to take it all in at once. You see more the second time. And the third."

One possible effect the advent of videos has had can be seen in the current proliferation of action-based movies. Hit films like *Top Gun* and *Flashdance* cater to the video generation with its decreased attention span and seemingly insatiable desire for visually accompanied music.

**B**ut, sadly, in the world of video mediocrity is more often the rule than the exception. From the early days of simple performance videos, through the inspired vaudeville of people like David Lee Roth, the performance art-inspired videos of Talking Heads, the big-budget extravaganzas of Michael Jackson, the adolescent T&A approach of metal groups like Whitesnake and the low-tech triumphs of Tone-Loc and Sinéad O'Connor, video has experienced its high and low points. But for the most part videos still tend to be unoriginal, tedious and, ultimately, obnoxious (as Zappa said, "You can watch a video maybe six times before you want to puke over it").

Temple claims that one of the format's benefits is that constant exposure to videos has increased the average viewer's understanding of the intricacies and nuances of filmmaking. In other words, people have become more visually literate in the sense that they understand the subtleties of camera movements and angles. Eschewing literal lyrical interpretations in his own work, Temple argues, "The best

too many people still equate 'big budget' with 'This will get us played.' Thank God the grainy 8mm black and white videos are coming to an end, though," she sighs.

It's much easier, Newman adds, to spot video trends in the attitudes of their onetime strongest supporters, the record companies. "Because of escalating costs," she says, "more record companies are going to ask, 'Is this where this \$50,000 [the average cost of a music video] is going to be best spent? Is MTV going to play it? Is VH-1? Are a lot of locals? If not, maybe we should put the money into tour support.'"

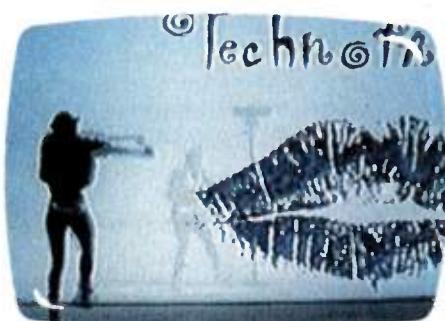
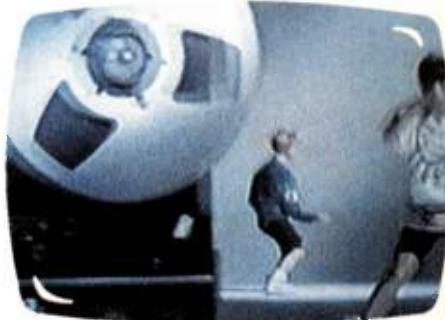
**A**n unexpected byproduct of the video age has been the threatened collapse of the traditional means of introducing a band to its audience: touring. At one time a national tour was essential to the launching of a career, as well as the only way fans could see their favorite groups. Not anymore. Fans are spoiled by the constant access to bands that

By Perry Stern

# ILLUSION

itive aspects of the video revolution. He argues that videos have had a major impact on "the way a whole generation of kids sees things. Videos have changed commercials and, to a large extent, popular movies as well." Of course, whether or not that's a good thing is debatable.

Temple claims that one of the format's benefits is



that constant exposure to videos has increased the average viewer's understanding of the intricacies and nuances of filmmaking. In other words, people have become more visually literate in the sense that they understand the subtleties of camera movements and angles. Eschewing literal lyrical interpretations in his own work, Temple argues, "The best

Predicting style trends in video-making is no simple feat, even for a close observer of the field like Melinda Newman, music video editor for *Billboard* magazine. "There will still be plenty of big budget videos," as the '90s progress, she claims, "because

video provides. As Temple points out, "If you can see Prince every day on MTV, it's not such a big deal when he comes to town. In many ways it's better to see Prince on MTV than it is to see an ant in a coliseum."

Nowadays the costs of touring are prohibitive, especially if a band's meager startup funds have to finance a video. "There is still some tour support," says Warner's Merlis, "but if you have X amount of money to spend, would you rather reach 10 million people or 5,000? The answer has to be 10 million. For the price of putting a band on the road to play three weeks of club dates where they'd reach maybe three or four thousand people, you can make a video. Now if it gets programmed, that's great — you've reached many more people. But if it doesn't, you threw the money away that should have been spent on tours. But there's no way of knowing that before you've made the video."

There was a time when the gaping maw of MTV was almost impossible to fill, and almost every video available was guaranteed an airing. But in the last several years the glut of video production has made the expenditure seem more and more like a

crap shoot. Where MTV once added 20 or so new artists' videos per month, that figure has now been whittled down to about six. And MTV-owned VH-1, which was originally dominated by new music, is now down to about 30 per cent new product.

**"People who think of videos as an art form are the same people who think Cabbage Patch Dolls are a revolutionary form of soft sculpture."**

"We used to play a lot of new things and we were all over the place," says MTV's director of talent/artist relations, Rick Krim. "What we do now is concentrate on maybe half a dozen at once, which is still a

lot more than any radio station is playing — as far as unfamiliar, never-seen-before acts are concerned. Rather than playing 20 videos a little, we play six a lot. But for the six we pick, there are 20 or 30 that people have pitched us on that don't get picked." That adds up to 20 or 30 uselessly made videos (at least as far as MTV is concerned), *per week!*

**A**s the notion of limiting "automatic" videos (for a brief time almost every new act was automatically given support for at least one clip) spread last year, it was commonly assumed that overall video production figures were lower in 1990 than in the previous years. But, according to Mitchell Rowen, publisher of the video trade paper *CVC Reports*, there were 1,238 clips produced between February 15 and November 1 of 1989, compared to 1,561 made during the same period last year.

Both Krim and Newman attribute the rise in numbers, despite the apparent decrease in videos submitted to MTV, to the predominance of rap and dance music. Newman contends that the vast majority of local and regional video outlets, as well as the national Video Jukebox Network, focus mainly on urban music, reflecting more accurately the buying trends of the nation. On the last *Billboard* Hot 100 Singles chart for 1990 there was only one rock act (*Damn Yankees*) in the Top 10. During the same week, only two of Video Jukebox's 28 "People Powered Heavies" were rock acts. MTV, on the other

hand, had six rock acts among the 12 clips in Heavy Rotation. Whether that is a leftover of MTV's traditional reluctance to play rap videos or just a sign of someone's personal preference remains to be seen.

**I**n any case, if competition for airtime is heating up, what does an artist have to do to get on the air? One way is to be controversial. "In light of 2 Live Crew, Judas Priest and Madonna," says MTV's Krim, "we've been joking that there's going to be a director of controversial marketing at all the labels to see what controversies they can think up to sell their records."

Certainly Madonna's "Justify My Love" video was a masterstroke of promotion. While many outlets picked up the steamy video immediately, the fact that MTV (and Canada's Much Music) rejected it gave the single all the notoriety it needed to reach No. 1, and it's now selling briskly in stores at the hefty price of \$10. Will others follow Madonna's lead and attempt to garner press with even more provocative videos that may not get airplay but might generate income through video singles sales?

That seems doubtful. Warner's Merlis, whose company distributes Madonna's records, shrugs and says, "Whatever goes for the bulk of artists, Madonna has a different set of rules and parameters." Indeed, Julien Temple can attest to that. His controversial clips for The Rolling Stones' "She's So Cold" and Mick Jagger's "Undercover Of The Night" never got airplay, and album sales suffered accordingly. On the other hand, his infamous clip for Neil Young's "This Note's For You," which attacked corporate sponsorship, not only revived Young's career (and his reputation as a rebel), but the video that never aired on the music station ironically won that year's Video Of The Year award.

MTV's Krim says he believes that Madonna genuinely wanted the "Justify My Love" clip to air, contrary to the popular idea that she always intended it to be released at retail. "Madonna has always been able to push the limits [of acceptable sexuality] further than we thought anyone could," he says. "We encourage [artists] to push the limits, but they have to realize that if they push what we feel is over the line then we have to bring them back a little closer to what we think is right."

**S**o where does that mean videos are heading in the future? More of the same, says Temple. "I think there have always been a lot of bad videos and just a few good ones," he concedes, and he sees no particular reason for that to change. Initially videos were intended as merely promotional tools, but now they've become an industry of their own, fed by ever-escalating costs, limited by overtaxed imaginations and yet still able to flourish due to constantly declining expectations. Luckily, every now and then something wonderful comes along and makes it all seem worthwhile.

If there ever was a case of a tail wagging the dog, this is it. Happy anniversary. **me**

Video clips courtesy of CBS/Sony Records (George Michael), A&M Records (Janet Jackson), SBK Records (Technotronic) and Warner Music Canada (Madonna).





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Rock  
notes

## Post-Park Bench



After 10 years and three record labels, Australia's **Divinyls** are still at it, making steamy, chugging rock 'n' roll. "We're back to basics on this album," says singer Christine Amplett about the group's eponymously titled new recording. "We're doing what we do best, which is very much rock 'n' roll with a pop edge — though I think this may be a more subtle record than our last one was."

On *Divinyls*, Amplett's breathless vocals heat up lyrics inspired by a sojourn to Paris last year with songwriting partner **Mark McEntee**. "I spent some time there when I was much younger, singing on street corners and living on park benches," she recalls. "It was romantic, and I suppose I fancied myself as a street vagabond. I get a lot of levels when I'm on stage performing. Sometimes I think they're from a past life or something — that I've been a courtesan and a street singer and a pickpocket and all kinds of things. Paris is a romantic place for me — besides, I wanted to sleep in a hotel there, because I'd slept on park benches for so long!"

Always a charismatic performer, Amplett admires others who also possess that elusive quality, like **Little Richard** and **Jerry Lee Lewis**. "Going to see Jerry Lee Lewis is like going to church hell," she explains. "I find him totally exciting to watch — it's like going to see the devil perform. He's so pure. He's never become a cabaret artist — he's the real thing."

Although she's serious about her roots, Amplett has evidently retired her trademark parochial school pinafore for now. "I whipped the school uniform out for the video for 'I Touch Myself,' but I don't always wear it, though I have a closet full of them at home," she says. "I had to grow up. I can't be a schoolgirl forever."

## ► Rhyming & Ringing

Although he's one of rock's most influential guitarists, **Roger McGuinn** may be among the genre's most modest. "I almost don't think about it," he says about his impact. "I think it's sort of overwhelming if you really dwell on it."

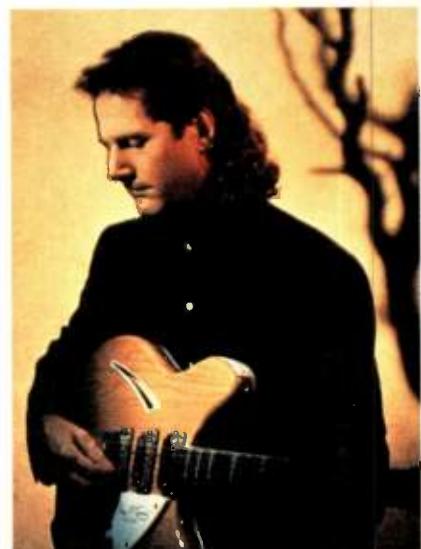
While McGuinn may not wish to consider it, his signature style — the rhyming, ringing sound he created on his 12-string guitar and which virtually defined **The Byrds** — can be heard today in the music of everyone from **Tom Petty** to **The Feelies**.

That sound can also be experienced in all its splendor on McGuinn's new album, *Back From Rio*, his first release in 10 years. "I went in trying to blend the '60s and the '90s," he explains, "to have that sound from the '60s with the urgency of today. And I think you can hear that in the beat, and the attitude."

Having been so influential has its rewards, as evidenced by the gallery of stars who lent their voices and instruments to the recording. "I was really happy that Tom [Petty] could be on the record, and **Elvis Costello** and **Michael Penn** and all those guys [including **Dave Stewart**, former **Eagle** **Timothy B. Schmidt** and Byrd buddies **David Crosby** and **Chris Hillman**]. It was really neat," he admits sheepishly.

The Byrds, who were inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame last month, an honor McGuinn says was "a real thrill," were the subject of one of the most lauded box retrospectives of 1990, a project McGuinn took very seriously. "Our rule was if it was something really commercial, people could go and buy it on another record, like *The Byrds' Greatest Hits*," he says. "So we tended to get into the more eclectic stuff, like the missing **Gram Parsons** vocals and some outtakes."

If the four-volume CD collection didn't satisfy your curiosity about the legendary band, McGuinn has another historical project in store. "I'm writing an autobiography," he reveals. "Its working title is *A Byrdseye View*. I got the idea from a teen magazine," he adds, laughing. "It should be out this year sometime. It's very anecdotal, with lots of good stories."





## Radical Acoustics



In the late '70s cutting edge rock 'n' roll and Los Angeles were hardly synonymous. X was one of the first bands to blast through the city's then laidback stereotype, their brash postpunk sound paving the way for the success of L.A. natives like Jane's Addiction and The Red Hot Chili Peppers.

But when X frontwoman Exene Cervenka went solo two years ago, she moved to Idaho, had a child and produced an album of countrified melodies titled *Old Wives' Tales*, leaving many hardcore X fans horrified. Recently she released a followup called *Running Sacred*. With its slightly more rocking melodies and its haunting, no-holds-barred lyrics, Cervenka thinks *Running Sacred* may be her most radical recording to date.

"For one thing, it's from a feminist perspective, which is about as radical as you can get these days, unfortunately," she notes. "While the music with X was really challenging, it was also really visceral. I think there were a lot of people who were totally into X just because it was loud and fast and you could just slam around. This music takes a little more thought. When you're standing on stage playing with a person who's playing an acoustic guitar and you're singing a really quiet song and the lyrics are really amazing, I think that can be very, very powerful."

Since making the album, Cervenka's been back in L.A. part-time, rehearsing with X, although the re-formed group has no long-term plans at the moment. "I had people ask me for so long, 'Is X going to get back together?' that when we decided to do some shows, I was so happy that I wouldn't have to hear that anymore," she laughs. "But now all I hear is, 'Does that mean you're going to make a record?' Of course that's the next step. It's possible."

## My Brilliant Guitar

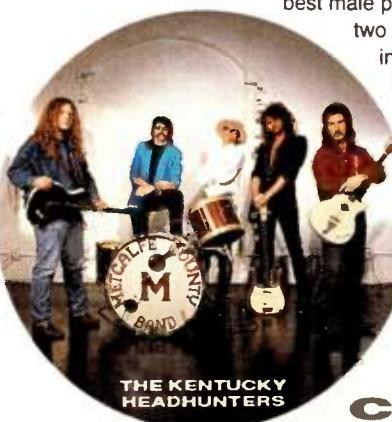
York Times, which noted her "strong technique, strong ideas and strong will." In the mid-'80s, impressed by a Judas Priest video on MTV, Kat put down her violin and picked up an electric guitar, and set out to change history.

**Despite** a threatening heavy metal stance, Kat's biggest influence is still classical: "Brilliant fuckin' powerful music like Beethoven, that's complex, that makes you feel like crying, makes you feel like ripping your hair out, makes you feel angry vicious," she screams. "No other band will force you into brilliance and genius like Beethoven did for Einstein, for Edison, for Van Gogh."

**Anyone** who challenges Kat's authority should beware. "These people are posers and liars," she shouts. "The difference between my brilliant music and their piece of shit music is that I start with classical music and I make it in a way that can be eatable and digestible and feasible to common morons. This music, I make it more powerful."

If uncompromising determination and utter self-confidence were a guarantee of rock 'n' roll success, heavy metal guitar virtuoso **The Great Kat** would be Queen of the Universe. Queried about her debut album, *Beethoven On Speed*, Kat's response goes as follows: "Answer my question first so that I know which way we're going in this interview. The way I do interviews is this: I give you the album, you listen to it, either you're brilliant enough to understand that the power and vision and excitement of my music is here for a reason — to make you powerful, make you excited, make you vicious, angry, kicking ass and get out there and become a successful motherf\*\*ker — or if you don't understand it then you're on a totally different wavelength and I'm not really interested in doing an interview with somebody who's too stupid to understand genius, and that's a simple fact."

Apart from being a self-proclaimed brilliant guitarist (she is, in fact, amazing), the former Katherine Thomas, a native of Long Island, New York, is also a graduate of the prestigious Juilliard School. Her 1982 debut at Carnegie Recital Hall as a classical violinist was reviewed by *The New*



## GRAMMY TIME

The Grammy Awards never seemed very exciting until last year's well-publicized gaffe involving the non-singing, all-dancing duo **Milli Vanilli**'s best new artist award. Even with the inclusion of metal and rap categories, few Grammys are ever given to ground-breaking talents: more often they go to acts with MOR tendencies. So it's no shock that **Phil Collins**, **Quincy Jones** and **Mariah Carey** grabbed the most nominations for the 33rd annual Grammy Awards, to be presented this month in New York.

Among the predictably cautious nominations: Collins received eight, including record and album of the year, as well as best male pop vocal and best pop instrumental performance; three-time winner **Bette Midler** received two nominations for her hit "From A Distance;" Jones, who has racked up a whopping 19 wins in his career, received five nominations for his album *Back On The Block*. **Sinead O'Connor**, **MC Hammer** and **Wilson Phillips** also received several nominations.

In the metal category, The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences seems to have finally figured out the genre — who could ever forget **Jethro Tull**'s bizarre 1988 win in that category? — with **Suicidal Tendencies**, **Judas Priest**, **Anthrax**, **Megadeth** and **Metallica** vying for this year's award. Meanwhile, **The Replacements**, **World Party**, **O'Connor**, **Kate Bush** and **Laurie Anderson** received nominations for best alternative music performance, and **Faith No More**, **Mötley Crüe**, **AC/DC**, **Jane's Addiction** and **Living Colour** were nominated in the hard rock category.

And in what has become the most controversial category — best new artist — **The Black Crowes**, **Carey**, **Lisa Stansfield**, **Wilson Phillips** and **The Kentucky Headhunters** (who won three Country Music Awards a few months back) were nominated.

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# SOUND CHECK



## 29 PALMS

Precision Or  
Passion?

by Bill Reynolds

"It's a rock 'n' roll band, not a pie-in-the-sky, arty-farty duo," says Simon Wilson of his group, 29 Palms. With their initial studio effort, *Fatal Joy*, the band has been shot into the limelight fast and furiously.

The main duo — lead vocalist Wilson and his cousin, guitarist Davy Simpson — quietly began working on material just over a year ago. Hailing from Faceby in North Yorkshire, a hamlet located about an hour's drive northeast of Leeds, Wilson and Simpson's love of Little Feat and especially Van Morrison drove them to attempt to write songs in the same vein. A chance meeting with Steve Phillips and Brendan Croker of the Notting Hillbillies (Dire

Straits leader Mark Knopfler's side project) led to their demo tape being deposited on the London desk of I.R.S. president Miles Copeland.

Although they hadn't finished the songs, Copeland was so excited that he immediately signed them, and shoved them into the studio. A capable session rhythm section was employed to round out their highly hummable, if lightweight, tunes. When the duo is asked if this story sounds

suaded that a Cult-like behemoth lurks within. Simpson does have some nifty Joe Cocker moves, though, perhaps picked up from a 15th viewing of *Woodstock*.

Both Simpson and Wilson are excited to be playing out the roles of budding pop stars, and seem genuinely surprised at the fuss. "We're just music fans who are fortunate enough to be in a band together," says Wilson. "If the record company picks up our option, our fairy tale continues."

a little too fairy-tale for comfort, they reply in unison. "It is!"

"We sent in our demo tape to one record label, and a week later we had a deal. Then we had to go into the studio right away, and because it was our first time, we may have sacrificed passion for precision."

Next time they would prefer to work more like their hero Morrison, who relies on spontaneity, usually cutting material live in the studio. Mick Glossop, Morrison's longtime producer, was called in by Copeland to remix a few tunes — which was fine by the band, because they enjoyed hearing gossip about Morrison. Simpson says, "Van doesn't really have the technical knowledge, even though he's credited on record as being the producer. After a 20-minute jam, he'll just look in the studio window and say, 'It's a take,' and Mick will go, 'What?'"

The song that was responsible for piquing Copeland's interest, "Ivan Hol!", is based on Van the Man's enduring legacy, although Simpson cautions that it's "not just a cheesy tribute." Aside from the bouncy charms of this homage, one suspects that 29 Palms' best tunes are the folk-based ones that possess eerie melodies, like "Ben Franklin Said," rather than the overly pop-oriented stabs at radio-friendly pop. Often songs like the first single, "Magic Man," are reminiscent of the '70s singer-songwriter sound.

Whether the group really rocks, though, is debatable. Tunes and arrangements driven by acoustic guitar do not a rock band make, but since being signed, 29 Palms have become a permanent five-piece unit. Then again, after witnessing their live performance, one is not per-

## TESLA

### Throwing Curves by David Sprague

These days, it seems like the honest-to-Aerosmith metal thing to do is to pay tribute (if not royalties) to your inspirations. Heck, folks are so immersed in trying to pick the "right" covers that even the 1910 Fruitgum Co. might soon experience a revival when Nelson come out of the bubble-gum closet. Even so, it's hard to fathom what an ostensibly bad-assed act like Tesla might have gleaned from the crypto-Christian Canadian strumming of the Five Man Electrical Band. But they're all over Tesla's new live LP, spinning off the title and lending what might be the best track, "Signs."

"I'm glad you think that's a little weird," chuckles Tesla's frontman, Jeff Keith, about the "Signs" cover. "We like to throw people curves. In this case, we each picked a cover to do, and that was mine. When I used to drive a truck, that was, like, my anthem. I've always wanted to do that song."

*Five Man Acoustical Jam* has given Keith that chance. Its fully packed hour of music also gives the Sacramento-based quintet a chance to do what it does best — stomp 'n' shuffle in a low-key, '70s-inspired way (a way that's light years away, as it were, from the technoid moniker they've given themselves, inspired by inventor Nikola Tesla).

The tendency to misnomer didn't really affect the sales of their previous two, de-

cidedly low-tech platters, *Mechanical Resonance* and *The Great Radio Controversy*, but this time the band decided to leave nothing to chance. The album was pieced together from tapes of Tesla's series of 1990 theatre shows, done mostly — there were a few electronic cheat sheets employed — in pure, round the campfire acoustic style. So was the LP a planned byproduct? Which came first — the chicken or the egg?

"I'd say the egg, but I'm not sure which that'd be," Keith shrugs. "We recorded the shows for ourselves, and Geffen caught wind of the idea and said, 'A live LP? Great idea!' We didn't plan it, but it seems to have worked out fine."

It has, in large part because Tesla are hardly newcomers to this "roots" thing. Both of the band's previous discs have had wide swaths of non-pedal-to-the-metal material, and nowhere do they employ a surfeit of studio onanism.

"In the studio we play live as much as we possibly can," Keith says. "We don't want to be totally clothed in there, and then feel stripped onstage. We'd just as soon be half-bareassed in both places!"

A similar no frills/no scarves attitude extends to Tesla's image. Hardly stylist-dependent, the mostly denim 'n' cowproduct-clad quintet obviously keeps more in touch with its small-town roots than its follicular ones, so when Keith grins his aw-shucks grin and claims to be "an Okie at heart," you know he's not just cribbing a Merle Haggard lyric. The singer hails from a town of about 900 in the Sierra Nevadas,



and for him the bright lights that colored his dreams of stardom came from the big city of Sacramento, whence bandmates Frank Hannon, Brian Wheat and Tommy Skeoch originate (Troy Luccketta fell in after an aborted gig with guitar demi-hero Eric Moore).

"I'm sure coming from where we do geographically probably dictates our lack of image," Keith reckons. "But then again,

we've gotta be the most popular no-image band around. That's OK with us — we're more interested in earning the respect we deserve as musicians.

"See, I don't consider Tesla to be a metal band," he says. "Metal to me is Metallica, but that's just my opinion. If someone wants to say we play metal, fine. If someone wants to say we play pop, that's cool too."

She was born in Yugoslavia and raised in New York, but it took relocation to "smoggy, seedy Hollywood" for singer/songwriter Laura B. to give her creative impulses free rein.

"That's probably because it is such a cultural wasteland here," she chuckles. "I really felt there was nothing to do here but become very creative; to put a band together and get my message out."

That band is They Eat Their Own, an edgy post-punk ensemble whose self-titled debut is currently whetting discerning appetites. "I basically created the band three years ago, and the current lineup has been together for about 15 months," Laura explains. "I wrote 95 per cent of the album, and although we've been collaborating more since then, I'm definitely still the principal writer and the control freak!"

Laura B. ("Here's a scoop: my real first name is Loredana, but the 'B' remains a secret") credits a wide range of musical and lyrical inspirations. "I couldn't pinpoint one specifically, but I guess we're a cross between Joni Mitchell and The Dead Kennedys," she says. "People grope for female comparisons, but I'd

sooner be compared to Patti Smith, Chrissie Hynde or Concrete Blonde than Lita Ford."

She finds the fact that TETO is getting a following in hard rock circles a "twisted irony. It'd be very funny to be a heavy

## THEY EAT THEIR OWN No Time For Subtlety by Kerry Doole

metal pin-up queen. The initial attraction might be physical or visual, but hopefully

the kids can delve a little deeper into the actual content of the music."

That content is a brutally direct howl of protest and rage, as indicated by song titles

like "Too Many Guns," "Cancer Food" and "No Right To Kill." Explains Laura: "I think the time is right to come out and be very blunt. The world is in such a mess, bluntness is in order. Time is too short for subtlety. At a show here the other night, I randomly pointed at people in the crowd and sang, 'You are the enemy.' I wondered if maybe I was alienating them, but it's directed at humanity in general, not them as individuals."

The group's name comes from their militant vegetarianism ("eating meat is essentially cannibalistic"), but it's liable to create a little confusion amidst the spate of 'Eat' monikers around, as Laura concedes.

"There's Pop Will Eat Itself, Eat, an L.A. band called Here Eat This, but the one I'm very upset about is [Anglo group] We Are Going To Eat You. There are some parallels there, as they're all vegetarians and the name stemmed from a similar inspiration. I hope they disappear! No, just kidding, I wish them well."

The abbreviation to TETO doesn't thrill Laura either. "It makes us sound like a salsa band!"



Guitarist  
Paul Livingston  
lives in fear of  
his first Ameri-  
can tour. It's

## THE TRASH CAN SINATRAS

### Boredom And Drink

by Hank Bordowitz

write their own  
songs, and  
they were  
awful as well.  
But you just

not the audiences he's scared of, though — the Scottish pop audiences he's used to are pretty tough indeed. Nor does he worry about how well the music his band, The Trash Can Sinatras, makes will travel. The song "Only Tongue Can Tell," from their debut album *Cake*, is already getting some attention at alternative rock stations, so people are listening. What has the 19-year-old Livingston spooked are these scary stories about having to prove you're 21 to drink in various establishments around the country.

"I just heard that I'm too young to get served in a bar!" the incredulous and somewhat leery young Scotsman burrs over the phone from a studio near the band's home in the greater Glasgow area. "Now I'm getting a bit worried. I'm not coming. Do I need ID? Maybe someone will buy me drinks. Or I'll just talk in a Scottish accent, and they'll automatically assume that I'm 40 years old."

If there had been similar considerations about drinking in Scotland, the Trash Can Sinatras might not even exist. Four years ago, as near as he can remember, Livingston met guitarist John Douglas and singer Frank Read at a pub called The Crown in Irvine, Scotland (George McDaid and Stephen Douglas joined later). "I think they were in a group before I joined," he recalls. "It was disbanding, and I joined for a laugh. It was a laugh, and godawful. They were really terrible. They were starting to

keep on going and you get better. It's really very boring, I'm afraid."

Boredom seems to be one of the Sinatras' great motivators, and perhaps even their reason for being. "There's nothing much to tell," Livingston maintains. "We just hang a bit, really. We don't do anything. I can't tell you anything — honest, I can't."

Indeed, it was boredom that set them up as songwriters. Formerly a cover band, they would play for drinks in the time-honored rock tradition. "We just got together and started to write our own songs," Livingston expounds. "We just got bored with the other stuff, so it was the natural thing to do."

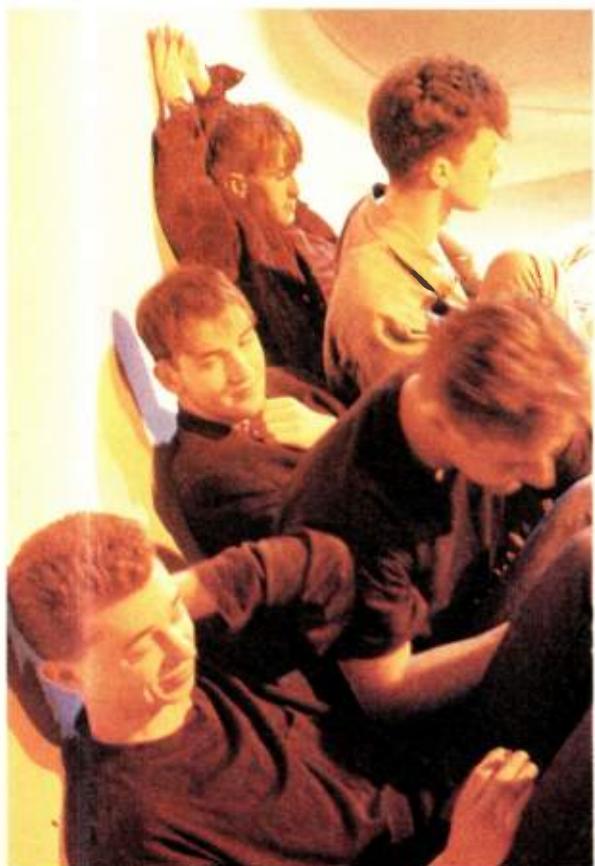
That's important, because The Trash Can Sinatras write mordant, witty songs, full of puns, parody, resonant images and guitars. "Aye, we just like to have a laugh with them," Livingston concurs.

As flippant as all this sounds, the songs on *Cake* show a lot of depth, and the group follows suit. For one thing, they control their means of production as the proud owners of Shabby Lane Studios, where *Cake* was recorded. "It's got a telly; it's not too bad," Livingston says. "We're going to get some games in one day, and a jacuzzi. And every time we record, we send it out to Go! Discs [the band's U.K. label] and they pay us, which is good. We're businessmen, aye. We have a studio manager, and he oversees everything. He's a real workaholic. I don't understand him."

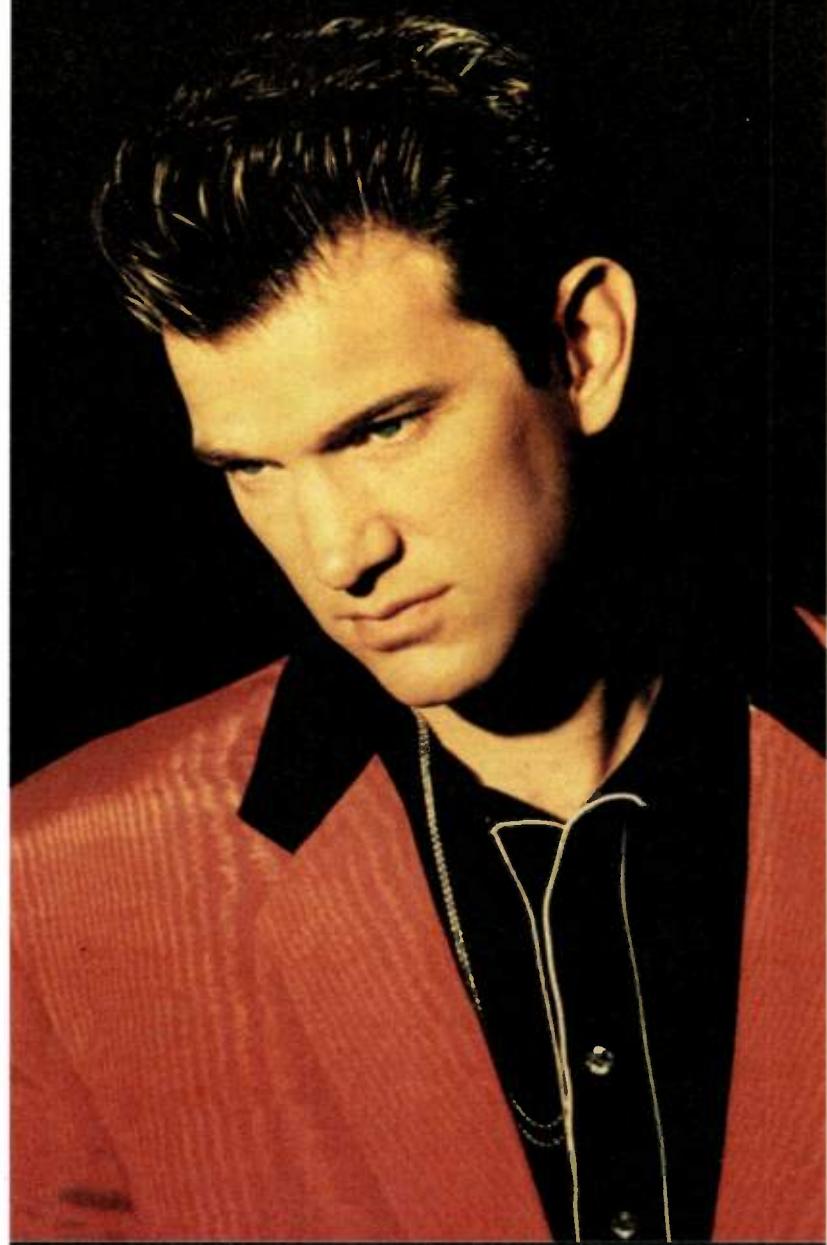
The Sinatras have been kicking around the U.K. for a couple of years now, playing support sets for acts like The Lilac Time. "The last band we supported was Prefab Sprout," Livingston offers, "and it was awful. It was the most boring thing I've ever done in my life."

Drink and boredom notwithstanding, the Sinatras are looking forward to their first major American jaunt. "These shows in America will be the first time I've ever been outside of Britain," Livingston notes. "They're just putting us in the clubs, wee clubs. That should be fun."

So be forewarned: the Sinatras are coming, and they are thirsty. "We don't have any money for beer," Livingston says, "so if we meet somebody they can buy us drinks. Especially me."



# Wicked



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## MATERIAL ISSUE

Girls In Songs  
by Perry Stern

While the perky optimism and youthful exuberance of Material Issue harken back to the pop heyday of the early '60s, songwriter Jim Ellison sees his group as a rock band in the tradition of other great Chicago outfits like Cheap Trick and The Shoes. Formed four years ago, the trio started gigging immediately, hoping to hone their

craft on stage and learning how to grab and hold an audience before they ever stepped into a studio.

Encouraged by the recent success of The Smithereens and Michael Penn, Ellison says, "It's nice to see people get away from production and more into songs. No matter what kind of music it is, for so many years there's been these pathetic songs that were so embellished by the technology that's available that the song wasn't the selling point. I think if you put a good song up against a bad song with good produc-

tion, the good song will win out. And I also think we need a little reality and flesh and blood in the music. People find that refreshing."

Ellison, 23, put the group together four years ago at the same time that he first picked up the guitar and started writing songs. "I auditioned for a lot of bands when I started playing, but I was pretty bad," he confesses. "When I was a teen a lot of my friends had bands, and I always saw them kicking someone out because they weren't this good or that good. I

thought that was the wrong way to go about it. I thought you'd just develop together as friends and at a certain point you'd begin to mesh. And that's what happened." Jim meshed with two 22-year-olds: bassist Ted Ansani, a school chum, and drummer Mike Zelenko, a heavy metal refugee who answered their ad in a local paper.

The three have been playing consistently since their inception, and the roadwork paid off with a slew of positive reviews hailing them as one of the best unsigned

bands on the indie scene. That distinction couldn't last for long, and after a signing frenzy in the major labels, their debut album, *International Pop Overthrow*, is out now on the PolyGram label. "Our live show is a lot more intense than our recordings, which I always thought was good," Ellison says. "I never like to see a band that sounds exactly like the record, 'cause that's like watching MTV."

Taking a hint from the collection of '50s and '60s records he inherited from his parents, Ellison injects some "flesh and blood" into his music by writing about the women in his life. There's "Little Christine" and "Renee Remains The Same" as well as the leadoff single, "Valerie Love Me."

"I always thought they were the coolest," Ellison says, recalling the songs of his parents' youth that incorporated a girl's name into the title, like "Dawn" and "Runaround Sue." "When I write a song I just pick a lyric and begin with that," he says. "Often it's a name, because some are so melodic. Sometimes it's just because [that person] deserves a song."

All the girls he sings about are real, Ellison declares, but none is aware of the compliment as of yet. "It's not for them to know, it's really just for me to be able to let out those feelings," he says. "If I wanted to tell them I just would, but it's much more sneaky to write a song."





Nothing Else

## STYX

### Kilroy Was There

by Keith Sharp

After seven years of frustration, Dennis DeYoung and his Styx cohorts are enjoying the last laugh at their critics' expense. In 1983 they recorded and performed a conceptual album, *Kilroy Was Here*, about a futuristic neo-fascist government which banned rock music and imprisoned anyone who performed, sold or promoted the artform. The release was supported by an ambitious long-form video, *Mr Roboto*, and a theatrical presentation in which Styx used the concert as a tool to act out their roles as rock renegades.

"We wanted to say something about censorship long before it was as pertinent an issue as it is now," says lead singer/keyboardist DeYoung, celebrating the band's reformation after seven years. "You'd think the press would have wanted to champion such a cause — but they wouldn't take us seriously. Shame on them! We were talking about censorship three years before there was a PMRC — before they got to the point of putting guys in jail for selling records."

Concert performances for *Kilroy Was Here* were groundbreaking affairs in that they were preceded by a video that set the scene for the presentation and featured the band assuming personalities other than their own.

"When the video screen went up we had no idea whether the crowd would be into it or would scream 'Fuck you — we want a Styx concert,'" DeYoung explains. "We had to make them believe that I was Kilroy and Tommy Shaw was Jonathan. The margin for error was immense. But it worked every time."

Unfortunately, Shaw left the band shortly afterwards to pursue a solo career, and DeYoung followed suit as internal conflicts dissolved their working relationship. "After 11 years and 11 tours, the negative side of things gets magnified," says guitarist J.Y. Young. "All the ego problems develop and you forget all the positive things."

A call from Shaw to DeYoung in late '87 sparked talk of a Styx reunion, but DeYoung was in the midst of recording a solo release for MCA and had to hold off on the idea. By the time he was ready, Shaw had met Ted Nugent and Jack Blades and committed himself to joining Damn Yankees.

"The good thing was that Tommy got me in a room with J.Y., John and Chuck [Panozzo] for the first time in six years, and when he backed out we felt good enough to go on by ourselves," says DeYoung. "It was like all the pressure had evaporated and we were back being friends again."

Replacing Shaw is Glen Burtnik, a guitarist and solo performer whom J.Y. knew from his days working with Jan Hammer. He supplied a couple of songs to the new release — including the title track, "Edge Of

The Century," and the debut single, "Love Is A Ritual."

DeYoung and Young acknowledge that they've never been the critics' choice, and that a new Styx album is bound to be addressed with an air of skepticism. Yet they feel there's a refreshing outlook to their sound, with Burtnik supplying some lead vocals and a rawer rock edge to the mix.

"We learned from *Kilroy* in that we didn't want to address any grandiose theme," says DeYoung. "We just wanted to write the best material we could and make it more song-



oriented. I don't believe in pushing some social theme just for the sake of it. I'm not someone like Paul Simon, who at this moment is probably consulting a Rand & McNally atlas trying to discover some poor Third World country with a drum."



The whole science about Movement Ex is to teach freedom, justice and equality to all the human families on the planet Earth." So says Lord Mustafa, the vocal half of the radical Los Angeles-based rap duo. Rather ambitious goals for someone who only recently graduated from high school, wouldn't you say? But Mustafa, 19, and DJ King Born, 17, seem quite capable of educating the masses.

"If I can teach a white person about my culture," continues Mustafa, "if he can better understand me, then that's better for everybody, because when they deal with another black person, they're gonna come with a little more education about where this person is coming from."

Movement Ex (the E stands for Equality, the X for the unknown) has taken the Public Enemy philosophy — that rap is the CNN of black people — to another level. Their self-titled debut album is like a multi-course textbook for black youth to use in everyday living. Courses include American history ("United Snakes of America"), social studies ("Freedom Got A Shotgun"), health ("KK Punani," "Get Up Off The Pipe") and logic ("I Deal With Mathematics"), among others.

A logical progression from the Afrocentric movement in rap, in which bands paid superficial lip service to self-awareness, Movement Ex is spearheading this latest movement, which stresses self-education and in-depth social analysis.

"The media still picks out who's gonna make it and who's not gonna make it, to a certain extent," Mustafa says. "I mean, now it's hip to be black, and the black culture Afrocentric trend is sellin', so they'll let some of that come out. But then

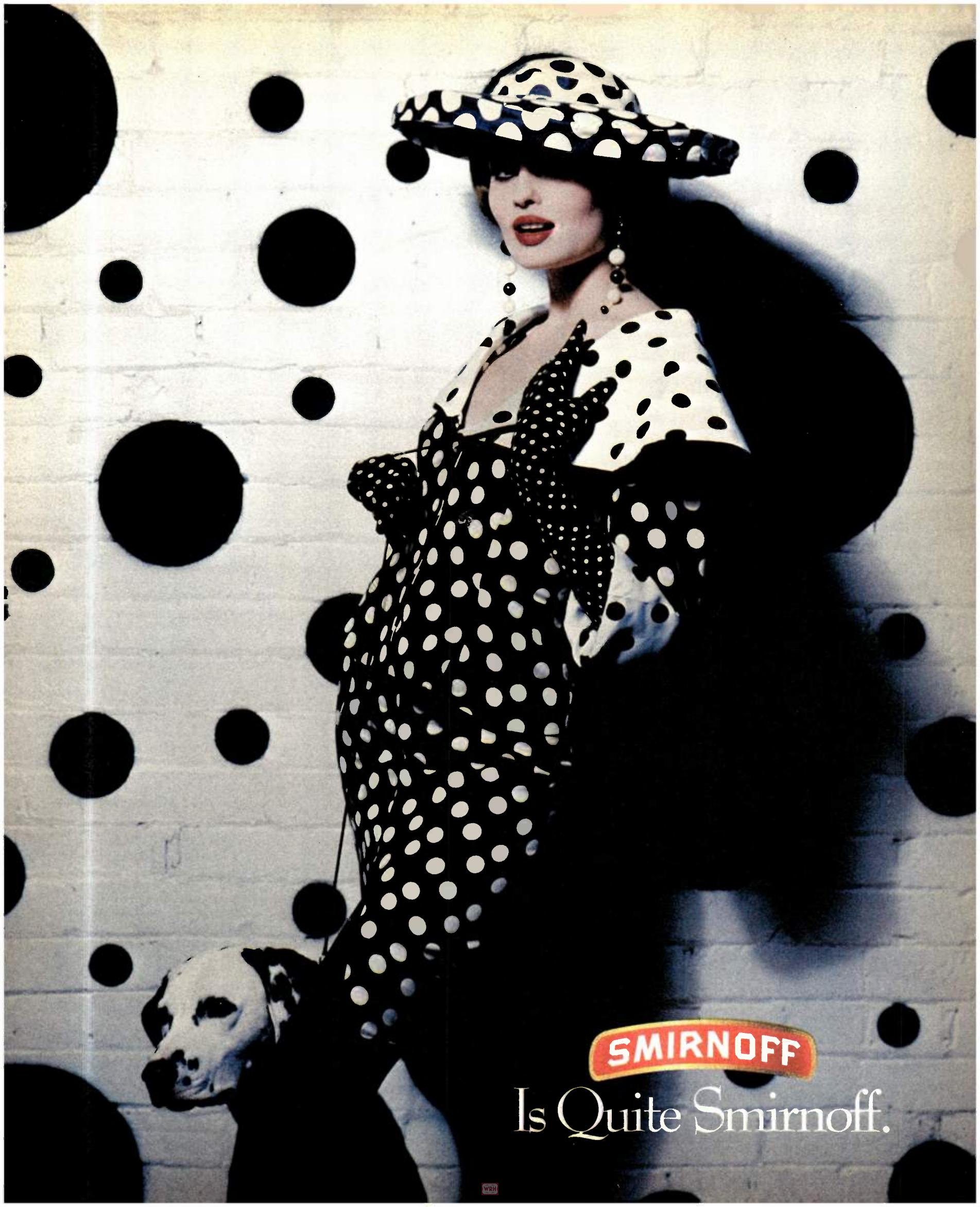
there's still some things they won't let be said or seen or done."

Lord Mustafa wasn't always this interested in teaching others. He started out as MC Kool of the Bedrock Crew in the seventh grade, and ended up writing "Are You Down" for — hold on to your khuffi — New Kids On The Block!

"Yeah, that was like when I just graduated from junior high school," he says. "It was really in the young stage of my career. It didn't really have any consciousness to it." But there was a lesson to be learned from that — getting paid. "Um, now I am getting paid," Mustafa says. "In the beginning I wasn't, but that was me being young and everything, and not really understanding how to go about doing all that stuff."

Musically, Movement Ex is schooling people too. Powerful enough to invoke the hallowed name of Terminator X and the Bomb Squad (Public Enemy's DJ and production team), King Born's full-frontal assault looms large on "Freedom Got A Shotgun" and the excellent instrumental "King Goes Solo." Born in Brooklyn's tough Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, King cuts like nobody else on the West Coast.

Not that they fall for that West Coast vs East Coast stuff, though. "The media has blown that out of proportion, because that's what they try to do," Mustafa opines. "They try to teach people that over here is different. They try to separate us to make us believe that we all are different. It seems minute, but that's where it begins — the separation of black people." So those trying to front on black culture beware — Movement Ex is going to send you back to school.



SMIRNOFF

Is Quite Smirnoff.



## PRECIOUS METAL

**Metalgum**  
by Karen Bliss

L.A. quintet Precious Metal doesn't mind taking things one step at a time. That way they grow as players, songwriters and friends. And unless there's a cruel twist of fate in store, that approach can only mean longevity for the band.

"We've been together for seven years," says guitarist Janet Robin. "We've been through the ego wars with one another. We've gone through changes and development in music, and worked with all different kinds of people. We've been through it all."

"We've got to the point where we've honed in on our sound," adds the more outspoken guitarist, Mara Fox. "Earlier on it could've been Cyndi Lauper. It could've been The Go-Gos. Now this is what Precious Metal sounds like, and I'm glad we had the time to mature."

As the band grew, so did its label, Chameleon. The very fact that they no longer need to sell their records and T-shirts out of the bus window can attest to that. For their eponymously titled third album (the second for Chameleon), they were given "a real budget" for recording, promotion and touring.

The all-gal band — rounded out by vocalist Leslie Knauer, drummer Carol M. Control and new bassist Julia Farey, the only new member in six years — describe their sound aptly as "metalgum." But it's not as fluffy as that sounds. Though it's steeped in Heart-like pop melodisms, it combines the grit and street-style of Joan Jett.

"People always said to us, 'Your records are OK, but you really kick ass live.' And we wanted to capture that on record," says Robin. To that end, they hooked up with producers Phil Kaffel and Dave Resnik, who helped capture the "truest" representation of the band possible.

The girls also wanted to commit their warped views to paper, to separate them from all the other melodic metal bands. "We hope people understand that when we write these lyrics, we laugh our butts off," says Fox. "You may not get our humor right away, but things like 'Nasty Habits' and 'Down Hill Dreamer' are private jokes with us."

Also included in the 12-song collection are two carefully chosen covers, Jean Knight's "Mr. Big Stuff" and Bruce Springsteen's "Two Hearts." Even on the tunes they co-wrote with such notables as Janna Allen (Hall and Oates), Nancy Wilson, Gene Black and L.A. buddy C.C. DeVille, they made sure that they maintained the Precious Metal party band perspective.

"It's a personal thing," says Fox. "You've got to communicate with an outside writer just as you would if they were in the band. You've got to go out drinking with them, hang out with them, go to clubs with them. That's the only way it stays Precious Metal."

"We're very tongue-in-cheek about the kinds of things we like to say. We're not blatantly sexual. We're not going to sit there going, 'Why don't you love me?' We go, 'Bud, if you don't love me take a hike.' That's the kind of people we are. Precious Metal does have a personality."



## RIDE

### Hitting Their Stride by Jonathan Wright

Sitting in a Paris hotel asking Mark and Lawrence of Ride where they played their first London gigs, a memory comes back of them supporting Toronto's Dave Howard in the tiny backroom of the Camden Falcon pub. Lawrence seems enthusiastic about this revelation, but Mark, who looks like Ian McCulloch with the added bonus of a chin, isn't going to be won over so easily. When I tell them I thought they were good but didn't know who the hell they were, though, they agree. "We weren't quite sure at that stage either," Lawrence admits.

Since then, of course, the band (Mark Gardener, guitars and vocals; Andrew Bell, guitars; Steve Queralt, bass; and Lawrence Colbert, drums) has become extremely popular in Britain, and an ever-growing audience has had the chance to find out all about Ride.

The band was formed at an Oxford art school, and released its debut EP, *Chelsea Girl*, on Creation Records in January, 1990, when it met with an instant response. Despite the fact that Ride themselves thought that Creation was being optimistic in pressing 5,000 copies of *Chelsea Girl*, it reached 75 on the national charts. Then its April followup, *Play*, fared even better, going Top 40. By October, the band was able to play two nights at London's Town and Country Club — one night is usually an indication that a band has officially arrived.

Ride's first album, *Nowhere*, more than confirms their early promise. Where the EPs consist of jangly, taut guitar tunes, *Nowhere* suggests a band that's approaching maturity. The songs are longer and more expansive, with the EPs' '60s influence replaced by a new, more definitive Ride sound. In part, that's because the band had more time in the studio (a month, as opposed to four or five days on earlier recording sessions), but it also stems from a determined approach.

"I guess we made an effort not to do what was expected of us for a first album," explains Mark. "I'd hate to become predictable, and it's important for us as a band to feel we're not repeating ourselves. We had cries of 'Where was 'Chelsea Girl'?' and 'Where was 'Drive Blind'?' [another track from the first EP], but it's important for us to move on and feel it's a progression."

One part of moving on is the need to build on British success by playing abroad, which explains why the only place I could meet up with the band was in Paris, where they're at the end of their first headlining tour in Europe. But so far, they're not impressed. An expedition to buy chocolate croissants — a staple food for the band while they're in France — means taking a trip down a street where every store front turns out to house a sex shop or a peep show. It's a depressing area, and it seems to have made Lawrence introspective. "We're reassured by people we know and trust," he says edgily. "When you're away from that, you maybe can't find the same sort of confidence as before."

Later, however, the purpose of the tour will all make sense. Somewhere into their fifth number at the shoebox-sized Espace Ornano club, Ride began to hit their stride, as it were. The effect is awesome, as searing guitars first deafen you and then carry you off with them. It seems as though it's going to be an exhilarating Ride.



Been wondering what the next trend in mechano-dance music might be? According to genre pioneers Tackhead, the future lies in the past: slashing blues guitars, soulful vocals, no tapes. But then, you always knew the revolution would start with one shot fired by Tackhead.

For nearly a decade and a half, just about every new wave of dance music has crested with some combination of Tackhead's core. Guitarist Skip McDonald and bassist Doug Wimbish were there at disco's apex with hits like "Push Push In The Bush," and went on — with self-proclaimed "studio rat" drummer Keith LeBlanc — to perfect rap's instrumental end as Sugarhill Records' late-'70s house band.

"I think rap was — is — the most experimental music there is," says LeBlanc. "Dance music in general has picked up the momentum, as far as breaking ground, that jazz lost in the '70s."

Propelled by the feverishly intricate production of Adrian Sherwood (who's a permanent member), Tackhead's early records quickly outstripped the competition in the industrial dance minefield. But the musicians (save sampler Gary Clail) were populists at heart, uncomfortable in the elitist bohemian drag they were swathed in.

"It was getting sterile, with samples essentially fronting the band," says LeBlanc. "I always hated singers — thought they were all prima donnas — but I've found out how much the human element was missing."

Considering the band's original, unwieldy moniker (Gary Clail's Tackhead Sound System), some saw a rudderless ship ready to run aground when the mummy-masked "singer" frontman was tossed overboard in favor of studio vet Bernard Fowler. But Fowler's aggress-

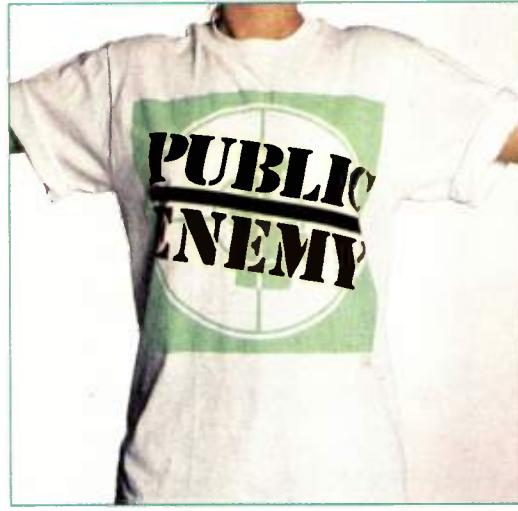
sively soulful singing and well-oiled clubland delivery have cleared new territory for Tackhead. He has, however, had some trouble winning over a certain contingent of naysayers.

"Coming into a band with as big a following as Tackhead has is not an easy job," sighs Fowler. "I've gotten a lot of shit, mostly accusations of singing in tune. I have to plead guilty to that."

"We can see that we might be losing a bit of the dress-in-black crowd," shrugs LeBlanc, "but we've gained the regular punters. I consider that a progression. We'd taken what we were doing five years ago as far as it could be taken. Now everyone and his brother are doing what we were doing then."

LeBlanc comes off as decidedly cocky, but in the words of Muhammad Ali, it ain't bragging if you can do it, and he can. His early-'80s project Malcolm X: No Sell Out might have been the first pop disc to use an all-sampled vocal barrage. However, the industrial age for Tackhead was relegated to the history books with the release of last year's somewhat unripe *Friendly As A Hand Grenade*. The new disc, *Strange Things*, is more user-friendly on the surface, but at its core is as surly and tightly wound as anything the band's done. If anything, the broader scope — everything from the hyper-blues of "Take A Stroll" to the drill-press whirr of "Positive Suggestion" to the languid tropicana of the title track — makes them seem more experimental than their "experimental" work could ever be.

"Everything 'new' has already been done," LeBlanc says. "What you've gotta do is mix it all up. Everyone in this band has different ideas about what we should be doing, and we don't discount any of them. May the best idea win."



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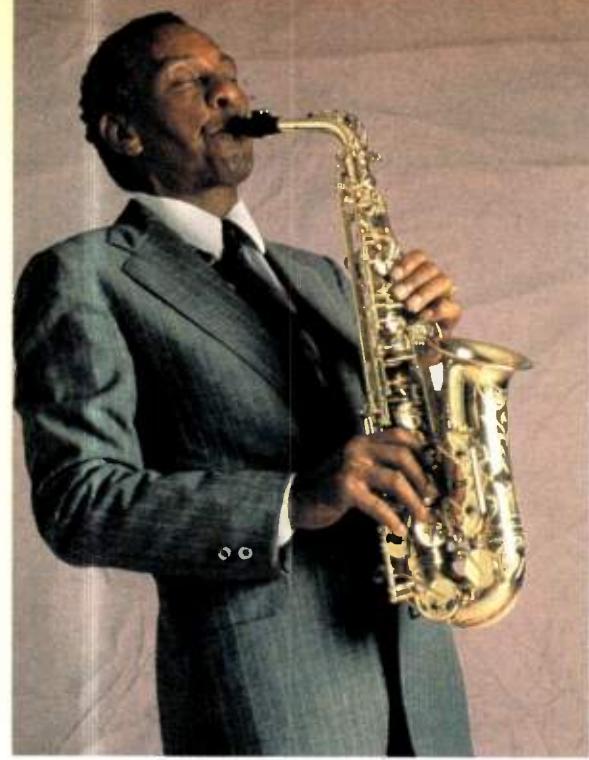
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## SOUND CHECK

### FRANK MORGAN

**Right-Hand Man**  
by Hank Bordowitz

"Sometimes," muses 59-year-old sax legend Frank Morgan, "I don't think I'm ever going to leave 17."

Many people are nostalgic for 17, but Frank Morgan might have more reason

than most. At 17, he was leading his high school big band and sitting in with Duke Ellington. "Johnny Hodges was leaving the band," he recalls. "I think this was his last performance before he went off to form his own group. That would have been 1948, '49. Duke wanted me to join the band immediately. My father said, 'But he hasn't graduated from high school!' Duke said, 'Well, I have several doctorates. I will tutor him!' And my father said, 'That's what I'm afraid of!'"

So Morgan didn't tour with the Duke, but Ellington always had a vacant seat ready for the young alto sax player when the big band came to town. Morgan developed a reputation as a hotshot horn player, and by the early '50s, he was being touted as the heir to the alto throne of Charlie Parker.

It was at the age of 17, however, that Morgan underwent what he regarded at the time as his baptism into bebop. He shot up, and went to tell Parker about it. Bird

was about to lay the lecture on him when Morgan brought out what heroin he had left, and suddenly it was party time.

By the time he was 20, Morgan had been featured on records by Milt Jackson, Kenny Clark and a host of others. At 21, he had his own record as a leader, *Introducing Frank Morgan*. By 22, though, his heroin habit, and the things he did to keep it up, landed him in San Quentin. It was the beginning of an on-again, off-again stay that was to last over three decades.

It's now been 41 years since he was 17, and nearly seven since he took control of his life again, kicking the heroin habit that had been easy to maintain as a star of the San Quentin warden's band. In that time he has cut 10 albums, a streak that would reek of just making up for lost time if they weren't so excellent, each better than the one before. His most recent release, *A Loversome Thing*, continues this trend, with the added fillip of being one of the prettiest jazz records ever made. Not in a cloying way, but with a profundity of passion, raw emotion filtered through a slice of bamboo and a couple of pounds of brass.

"That's what I want to do," Morgan grins. "I want to be in touch with my instrument just like I am with my right hand. If you're right-handed and you sit down to write, you are going to do it with your right

hand. It does what you tell it to do. If that's what I hear and feel, I want to be able to reproduce it with my horn, without any self-imposed limitation."

Morgan's records have frequently been as notable for his sidemen as for his own work. In prison, Morgan compiled a list of people he wanted to work with, and slowly he has been working his way through it. He pulled some true bop out of Wynton Marsalis on last year's *Mood Indigo*, and has also worked with the Cedar Walton trio and McCoy Tyner. He frequently collaborates with former Dexter Gordon associate George Cables. On *Loversome Thing* he features Abbey Lincoln on a version of "Ten Cents A Dance" that will make you forget that Michelle Pfeiffer can sing. He also struck yet another young trumpet turk from his list by working with Roy Harroge. And after all this, Morgan remains severely modest.

"God gave us the gift to do what we do, and I'm so blessed that I know what my assignment is," he beams beatifically. "And I'm trying to do it with all the humility in the world, because that's what it takes. To know that's your God-given talent, and it's just what you do. It doesn't make you any better than anyone else. You just do it from the bottom of your heart, and know that's your part in the universe."

They may have shed their jeans and hightops for designer togs and high heels, but MC JB, leader of the streetwise trio called J.J. Fad, emphatically declares, "We're definitely rappers. We don't want to go all the way and be a Cover Girls or anything like that!"

Two years ago, amid the flood of music that seemed to explode out of Compton all at once, J.J. Fad scored a Top 30 hit with their self-penned debut single, "Supersonic." Unprepared for the phenomenal response it got, the girls (JB is Juana Barnes, Baby D is Dania Birks and Sassy C is Michelle Franklin) huddled with their "Supersonic" producer Dr. Dre and his cohorts from NWA and recorded an album's worth of raps and beats within two short weeks. In the headlong rush to get the record out, the singers had minimal creative input on the end product, but, on the strength of the single and their dynamic live performances opening for acts from Public Enemy to New Kids On The Block (!), the LP almost reached the platinum plateau (1 million records sold).

"We didn't know anything about the business," JB recalls. "We thought this was the way it went back then: you do what they tell you to do. But as time went on we realized we could do our own stuff because we wrote 'Supersonic' anyway."

Not wanting to join the ranks of one-hit wonders, the group took their time working up tracks for their followup LP. After six months in the studio with NWA's DJ Yella at the helm and Eazy E executive pro-

ducing, the end result is a more diverse mix than *Supersonic*, and one that can live up to its boasting title, *Not Just A Fad*.

Between the two albums, "the difference is night and day," declares Juana. "Before we were bubblegum, hopping all

### J.J. FAD

**Gotta Dis**  
by Perry Stern

around. It's a little more professional this time. This is J.J. Fad, but they've grown up a bit."

Songs like the leadoff single, "We In The House," "Gold," "Work It" and "Ain't Nothin' Comin'" all have the streetwise, grinding rhythms that have

become the hallmark of the Compton sound. But the album also offers the pleasant surprise of an infusion of smooth vocals (provided by JB and Sassy C) on "Be Good Ta Me." And that's a direction Juana sees the group expanding into in the future. "We want to mix R&B into rap because it has a sound that we really want to go for," she says.

A former cheerleader for the USFL's L.A. Express and a onetime professional rollerskater, Juana says the group's early inexperience never translated into stage fright. "I've never been uneasy, actually," she says nonchalantly. "I think we're all natural performers, so that's never been a problem."

What could have been a problem, though, was the heavy influence of NWA on the album's lyrics. Juana says they wanted to sound more mature on *Not Just A Fad*, but they didn't want to be stuck with any "adult" labels. Laughing now, she recalls the NWA posse's attempts to infuse the album with their trademark street talk. "That's not tempting for us, but for them it was," she explains. "Cuss here, cuss there! Who cares? We said, 'No, that's you, not us.'"

There is one exception, though. On the tough talking "We Want It All" the girls get a chance to respond in kind to some of the criticisms leveled by some east coast "bitches with attitude."

"The dissing on that is us, not them," Juana declares with a chuckle, "because that's what we had to say."

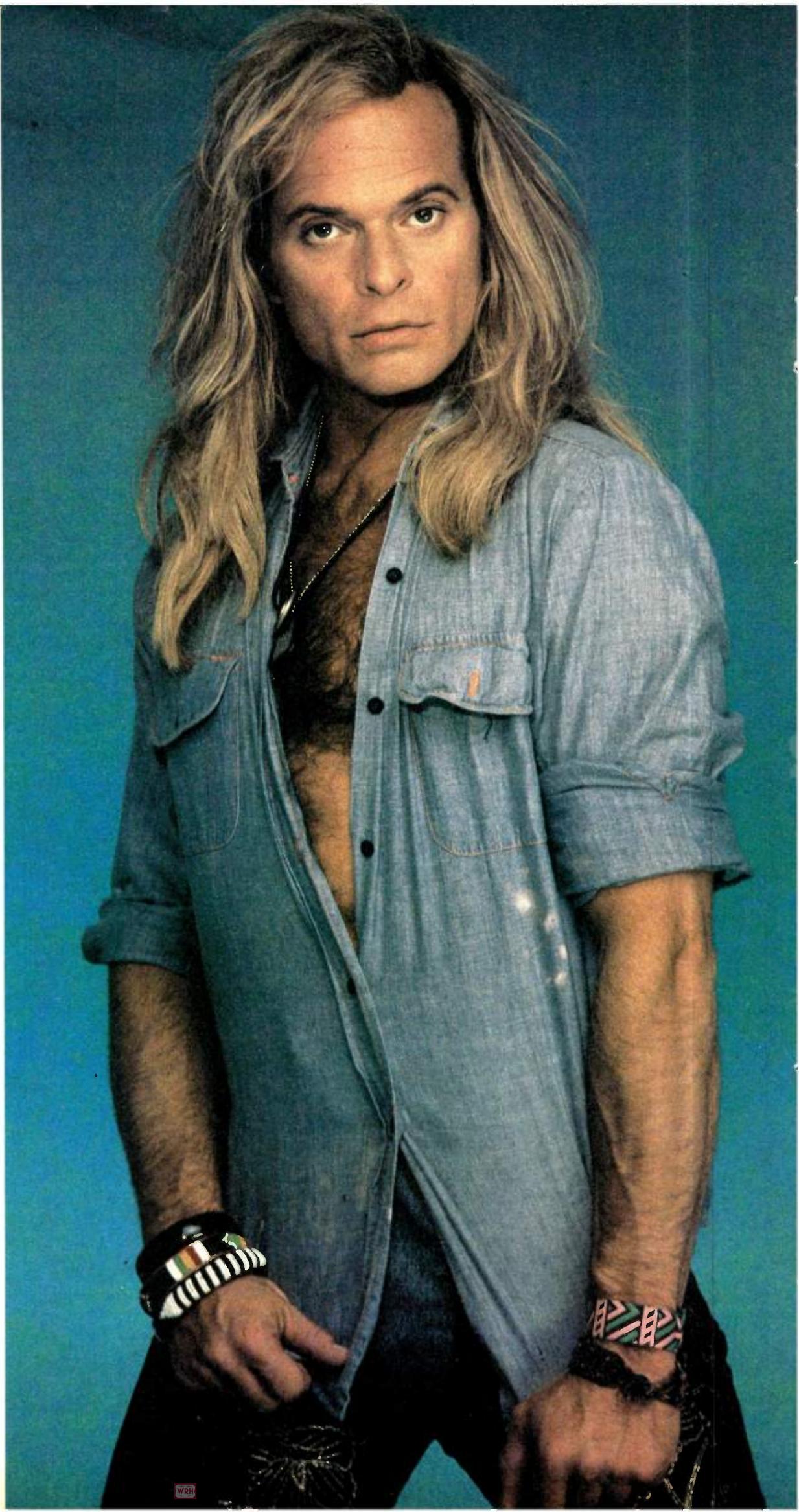


# THE BIG EASEL

David Lee Roth is a larger-than-life guy who paints his pictures with broad brush strokes. And in order to do that, and to bring out that hedonistic, theatrical aspect of his persona that people know and love, the preparation has to be there. That's why he takes so long to work on his albums. As he says, "It's not a matter of getting it right, it's a matter of getting it in your bones..."

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By Perry Stern



The no trespassing sign ("There's Nothing Here Worth Dying For") just inside David Lee Roth's wrought-iron gate is redundant. Anyone managing to get around, over, under or through the high stone walls surrounding the house would be ripped to shreds by the guard dogs before they could ever finish reading it. Luckily, invited visitors are welcomed through the gate, which swings silently, ominously open to reveal a long driveway leading to the huge garage. Halfway to the house, Dave himself is there, flashing his unforgettable toothy grin and offering a warm, "How ya doin'?" After a two-year absence from the rock 'n' roll scene, David Lee Roth is back in business.

A solicitous host, Roth offers refreshment as we wander through a hallway littered with hats ("I can never buy just one at a time," he says), past the huge kitchen, through an unfurnished, high-ceilinged dining room and out onto the terraced, manicured lawns that spread out behind the house, creating the illusion that the property goes on forever. It seems like an oddly restful place for the Clown Prince of American Rock.

Anyone who, after observing Roth's hyperactive antics over the last 13 years (the first Van Halen album was released in '78), is incapable of taking him seriously has certainly never sat opposite him in conversation. Articulate in the manner of someone well-read but self-taught, Roth relies on eye contact, volume and inflection as much as he does on the five dollar words he chooses to use. And when he's encouraged by his own hyperbole he leans back expansively, as though welcoming the world in a comradely embrace. And then there's the laugh. Rich and throaty, it punctuates almost every point he makes. Obviously pleased by some of the images he conjures up, and analogies he creates, David Lee Roth is his own best audience.

*A Little Ain't Enough* is the title of Roth's fourth release since he vacated the frontman spot in Van Halen six years ago, and that title perfectly encapsulates the hedonistic life the singer purportedly leads. But according to press releases, Diamond Dave and his band holed up in a \$15-a-night Vancouver flophouse while they were recording the album almost a year ago, apparently because Dave didn't want his band to lose that rough rock 'n' roll feel.

At this point, interviewers are still only allowed to hear four songs from the new album (and then only in the presence of Roth's publicist); the rest are still being mastered. The first two songs, the title track and "Shoot It," embody the layered, boisterous rock that Roth has churned out since his teenage years. But the next two, the ballsy "Hammerhead Shark" and the bluesy "Sensible Shoes," demonstrate a more creative, challenging Roth.

While most performers release records every 12 to 18 months, Roth labors longer over his efforts. The implication is that the songs are either being meticulously picked over and enhanced through the production process, or, in an effort to create a "live off the floor" feel, the band (or "ensemble," as Roth prefers to call it) is compelled to play the songs over and over again in search of one winning, "spontaneous" take. But Roth rejects both those theories.

"It's not a matter of getting it right," he considers, "it's a matter of getting it into your bones. People always say the first record of so-and-so was the best, and the reason for that was that so-and-so was playing those songs for months or years before they went in [to the studio], so the singer knew every word — he didn't have to think about it. He could read comic books and sing the words. For something like 'Hammerhead Shark' you have to know those words. They have a momentum, a percussive

"Ain't Enough" and "Shoot It" is "live from the studio," Roth predictably defends. What about the lush harmonies? "I have five vocalists in the band," he says. "Everybody who sings used to be a lead singer. I have two guitars, and the reason for that, this season, is so I can avoid the overdubs [in the past Roth has relied on a single virtuoso guitarist, such as Van Halen or Steve Vai]. It lets me avoid that technological temptation to start overdubbing and stacking the voices and guitars. Yes, it does sound impressive, but you start to lose that personal character."

And who, precisely, is playing on the album? At presstime this, too, is still a mystery. Vai is certainly gone, and so, too, apparently, is his replacement, Jason Becker. Scratching his chin, Roth repeats the question. "Who's on the album? Hmmm. Do you want me to list 30 people? The people I wrote with are different from the people I recorded with, who are different, except for two players, from who I'm playing with live. The reason for that is simple. I can give you a colorful picture. One of my players, not the drummer, sits down with his legs crossed, simply because he plays

best that way. You'd never guess, 'cause he sounds like he's airborne. But the way he absolutely communicates the best is when he's sitting back in the full relax position. Does that sound like a live DLR show to you? No. And this guy would be the first to admit it."

Since leaving Van Halen in '85, Roth has been compelled to search for guitarists that are strong enough to not suffer from comparisons to Eddie Van Halen. Roth sees the quest as an aspect of the evolution he's constantly going through. "It was part of my choice; it's part and parcel of the Van Halen breakup," he says. "I never expect to be the same person today that I was yesterday or will be tomorrow. So the music will change just like your sense of humor changes, your idea of what's sexy changes."

But Roth isn't about to divorce himself from the kind of music that made him famous. "There's a thread throughout the music when I'm playing blues rock," he explains. "You can't count 'Skyscraper' or 'Just A Gigolo,' but when it's time for the big rock sound there's a very definite thread tracing from the first Van Halen album right up to here. And it's not just the voice. It's the songwriting and the placement of those guitar licks, what the drums are doing. So there's my vision."

Somewhere in David Lee Roth's vision of himself there lies an Otis Redding trying to get out. Asked about his musical background, he quickly responds, "It's all black. I went to all-black schools from fourth grade all through high school." But listening to the raucous, goodtime rock that his bands have produced over the years, one would be hard put to attach an R&B label to any of it. What Roth likes to do — and it's something he did to excess on his "experimental" *Skyscraper* LP — is, as he explains, "Frankenstein together a lot of different musical ideas. There's a lot of tunes, and this goes back to Van Halen as well as the present, where I say to myself, 'I want to write an AC/DC song.' But instead of copying AC/DC I figure, 'What are their influenc-



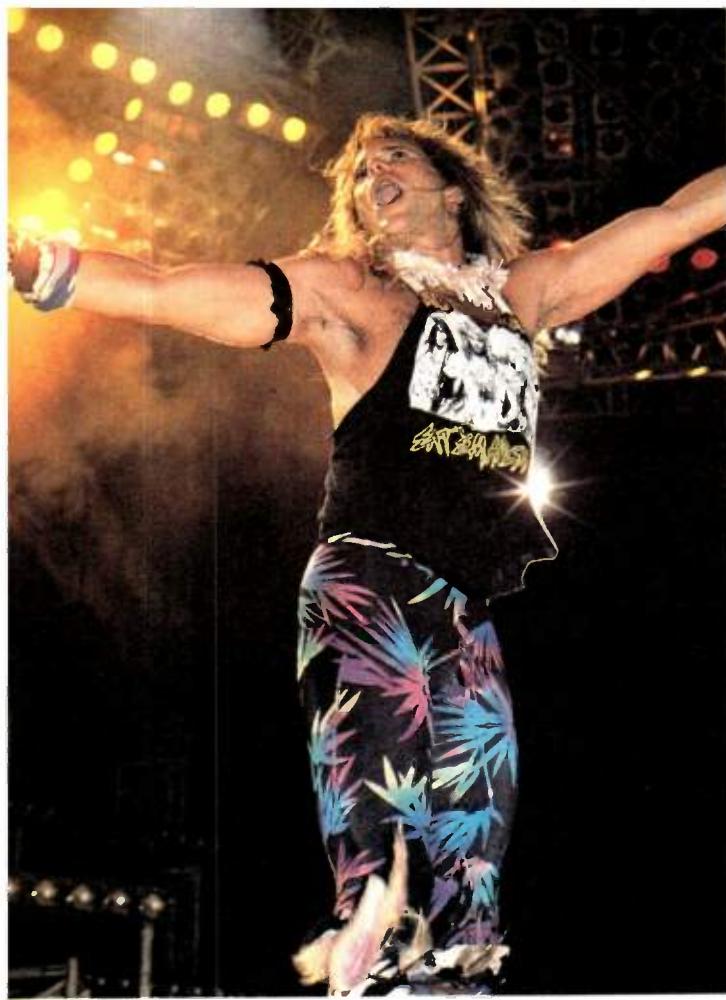
**"You have to take refuge from the music business, or you start writing about hotel rooms and groupies and how lonely it is on the Lear jet."**

value of their own, and they seem to roll in front of the beat. You can only do that if you know the words inside out. That only comes after you've done hundreds of hours in the basement.

"We take our time — it's the Stanley Kubrick approach," Roth laughs about the time that has passed since his last public utterances. But the cinematic analogy doesn't sit well, so he thinks up another. "When I'm gone, I'm truly gone — the ZZ Top approach," he says. "It's not so much the idea of staying away so that you have impact when you come back.... I paint with big easels, we take a lot of chances. If you're going to do that then the preparation has to be there. I don't go into the studio for eight months. Hell, five of the basic tracks for this record were done in one day. It's the old Viet Cong approach! They used to have a political officer with every cadre to tell you the 'Four Quicks And One Slow' — quick to the approach, quick to the attack, quick to reassess, quick to withdraw and long, s-l-o-w preparation." Inevitably, the lesson is followed by a long, hearty chuckle.

As a singer, Roth treads a tightrope of credibility. It is usually the guitarist that stars in the kind of music Roth writes; hence the famous ego-clashes between himself and his former collaborator, Eddie Van Halen. As a solo artist, though, Roth makes the point that he controls all aspects of the music that bears his name, even the parts that he doesn't physically play. "Who do you think structured all those songs and hummed half the solos?" he asks.

The big, heavily produced sound of "A Little



es? Where were they pulling from?

"Let's go to the root, not the fruit. That way ours won't look the same at all, but we know. I've always found that more satisfying than just mimicking. 'Just Like Paradise' was an effort to do a Beatles song," he adds, laughing and shaking his head to make his point. "I don't think it sounds anything like The Beatles! Do you?"

Dave likens the impact of his stitched-together genres to reading a car magazine. "You flip the page and go, 'What is this? The front looks like a Ferrari, but it turns into a Ford right around the door and the back is like a Mustang!'" he exclaims. "And you're still on that page five minutes later, participating with it. You're intrigued. That's art. And if you can do that in a song..."

Roth regularly brings art terminology into his conversation. A one-time gallery owner, his use of the terms "big easels," "broad brush strokes," "primary colors" and "large palates" emphasizes the larger than life, theatrical aspect of his performing persona. To David Lee Roth, "DLR" (which is how he refers to himself) is an ongoing production. "The ideas are hard to keep up with, as opposed to it being hard to come up with ideas," he explains. "Trying to get it all onto the canvas, just the way you pictured it — that's the challenge."

In his own estimation, DLR has risen to the challenge of his three previous releases (the EP *Crazy From The Heat* and the LPs *Eat 'Em And Smile* and *Skyscraper*) and emerged victorious. *Crazy*, a collection of covers including "Just A Gigolo" and The Beach Boys' "California Girls," was, according to Dave, "a left-hand turn. Doing big-band brass music was something completely out of the ordinary in the industry, much less for myself or any singer in a rock band. Not just to shock, that's an easy thing to do. I think what we did with that was open up a lot of people to that kind of music and the power inherent in it. And we made a difference,

a positive one, in the world of video. We gave viewers brighter glasses to see the potential [of video] with."

*Eat 'Em And Smile* was the aural equivalent of its cover shot, which featured Roth in warpaint and full jungle regalia. "The cover was a visual [depiction] of the music inside — 'Hey! Let's put some feathers in our hair and go raid the next village!'" he says. "Not very philosophical, rather primal."

*Skyscraper* was Roth's first attempt to produce himself after years spent in the hands of Ted Templeman. The album — his least successful to date, though at over 1.5 million sales in the U.S. it can hardly be considered a failure — was "an experiment [in] what it would be like to drive this plane, to really take the controls." Though he was satisfied with the end result, Roth no longer aspires to produce himself. Bob Rock (The Cult, AC/DC) took the helm for *A Little Ain't Enough*.

And what of the new album? "This one is a celebration," he says. "I'm really happy, and I'm not always happy. I brood a lot. I've been off the road for two years, and that's the longest time in a decade-and-a-half for me. When I come home the dogs don't even recognize me for the first three weeks."

Part of what he's celebrating is the lifestyle he's managed to create for himself. Unlike many artists, Roth doesn't fill up his spare time away from his own releases and tours by dabbling in other people's music. There are no collaborations, charity concerts, excursions into film or business ventures.

"What I do outside music is as extreme, in terms of time spent on preparation and so forth, as what I do professionally," he explains. "The ideas come quick. You pick up a magazine or read a book and say, 'Let's climb [a mountain]!' It took 10 seconds to think of that. But you don't just take 10 seconds and say, 'Okay, fine — we need 1400 pounds of food. What do you like, peanut butter?'" He spells out peanut butter on an imaginary notepad. "'How about jelly?' Eighteen months later you've got everything listed and, believe me, you don't want to forget one pair of socks. You don't want to run out of anything."

"And that's part of the game, part of the challenge. When you go, that's a severe commitment of time. You don't fly off to a fourth world nation and go 'I'll be back at exactly 10:05 on Friday.' You're looking at several months. Then you're looking at down time. You don't go straight into the studio, because it's gonna take another six weeks to get back to 100 per cent. That's the whole idea: to run yourself as hard as you can until you get a grand emotional reaction, 'til something cathartic happens to you."

Roth likens the risks he takes while hanging from the side of a mountain, trudging through a jungle or, as he did recently with his girlfriend, deep-sea paddling in the South Pacific, to those he's taken musically in the past. That's where he finds his inspiration. "You have to take refuge [from the music business]," he explains, "or you start writing very self-conscious lyrics. You start writing about hotel

rooms and groupies and how lonely it is on the Lear jet." But in his effort to detach himself from the musical mainstream, Roth seems to have missed the boat when it comes to some of its more positive developments.

Many artists with much smaller audiences to speak to take advantage of their time in the spotlight to promote political, social and cultural causes. Roth, in maintaining his larger-than-life, globetrotting adventurer image, has always seemed apolitical. But the singer begs to differ.

"I address the existence of those issues in my songs, but as opposed to titling them after a specific South African situation or titling a song 'Apartheid' or 'Homeless' or 'Poverty,' I would call it 'Hammerhead Shark,'" he says. "It's the exact same subject dealt with in a more colorful way." The song he mentions is a classic blues rock ramble rife with phallic imagery, and Roth dramatically recites one of the verses ("Woman went to court, entered her plea/Says keep my husband away from me"), and slaps the table in front of him as though he's proven his point.

"It's a lot more broad based than what happens in the bedroom," he justifies. "Beyond that the message I live and die by is much more important than helping the homeless or saving the whales. I support all those movements, but my message is *imagination*. My message is 'Paint with big easels... and lead with your face.' Without this message in your heart, you're useless to the Amnesty International program, you're useless to the people in Ethiopia. You won't have an idea big enough in your head to affect the situation."

"Somebody had to dream up those concerts, somebody had to use their imagination," he continues. "You don't wake up one day and go, 'Bing! I'm dreaming all these things!'

It's a muscle you have to develop. And you don't even realize it exists until you see someone else do it first, until you see someone with drive."

Finally, the rarely perceived serious side to Roth has been stirred. "I address

issues very directly," he says firmly. "But I don't wear reading glasses with gold rims and make those two lines between my eyes. We're taught that serious artistry has consumption. It coughs a lot, it lives in a loft, it doesn't have a sun tan. I clown around, but I'm not a clown. You've got to consider that *Bugs Bunny* was never made for children, and that's why it's still around all these years. *The Little Rascals* was never made for children. They were made by adults for other adults."

"A little item that we're taught is that as one matures one makes exchanges and substitutions as opposed to simple addition. To me, simple addition was the easiest route and the most scenic. I have a tuxedo. I have a nice Mercedes Benz — there's a briefcase in there, too," he offers in a somber tone. Then, leaning forward with a gleam in his eye, he adds, "And it's parked right next to my 1951 Mercury lowrider, and on a non-humid day you can slip a pack of Kool cigarettes between the back bumper and the pavement! I did it in addition. Why make the big exchange?" He explodes in laughter.

Why indeed? David Lee Roth seems to have it all. No wonder he's laughing. me



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# UPCOMING

► **KING'S X** As the first single ("It's Love") off King's X's third LP, *Faith Hope Love*, indicates, this three-piece band makes surprising, adventurous, unpredictable and uncategorizable rock 'n' roll for the '90s. Founded by bassist Doug Pinnick, guitarist Ty Tabor and drummer Jerry Gaskill some 10 years ago in Springfield, Missouri, King's X honed their craft on the bar circuit for eight years before releasing their first album, *Out Of This Silent Planet*, in 1988. *Gretchen Goes To Nebraska* followed the next year.

Often using a blistering guitar attack set against an elaborate rhythmic foundation, the music is regularly infused with lush three-part harmonies to create a distinctive pop/rock sound. With the confidence that can only be found in an experienced band, King's X are bound to make an indelible mark on the international music scene.



**RIK EMMETT** After more than a decade as lead guitarist with the Canadian power trio Triumph, Rik Emmett steps out on his own with his debut solo LP, *Absolutely*. Eschewing, for the most part, his hard rock foundation for a more radio-friendly pop rock sound, Emmett felt that moving away from one of the most successful touring acts in rock was essential to his growth as an artist. "This whole thing has been a real education for me," he says. "It's allowed me to make a major transition. Let's be realistic — I can't just cater to old Triumph fans, I've got to attract new kids who are buying Living Colour records. I also have to please myself, and that's not easy because there are times when I don't know what I'm doing."



## ◀ SARA HICKMAN

Sara Hickman, the 28-year-old singer/songwriter from Jacksonville, North Carolina, is widely regarded as one of the fastest rising artists on the contemporary scene. Within two years of graduating from North Texas State University in 1986 (with a BA in Painting) Sara had already released her first single and had a cable TV talk show for musicians and artists called *All About Dinosaurs*. The following year she released her first LP, the critically acclaimed *Equal Scary People*, and appeared on *The Tonight Show*.

Now she's up to bat with her second album, *Shortstop*. David Kershenbaum (Tracy Chapman) helmed eight of the 11 tracks, with Sara producing the remaining three. Among the latter is the soulful "Take It Like A Man," which was performed by an all-woman band. "I wanted to let women come in and strut their stuff," says Sara. "It's not often a woman gets to perform in the pop arena as a musician rather than a showpiece."

**TONY TERRY** Like many great soul singers, Tony Terry built the foundation of his musical career on the bedrock of gospel. At 18, the Washington, D.C.-raised vocalist was singing backup for Vanessa Bell Armstrong. After appearing in several hit New York musicals he soon moved into a more secular style of singing — including backing stints with Black Britain and Sweet Sensation. In 1987 he made his solo recording debut with *Forever Yours*, which spawned two Top 10 R&B hits ("Lovey Dovey" and "She's Fly"). Now Terry employs his rich soprano voice on a new, self-titled LP.

*Tony Terry* includes four cuts co-written by Terry, as well as a rocking version of the Mother's Finest classic, "Tongue Tied." Listen for references to the Pointer Sisters' "Yes We Can Can," George Clinton's "Atomic Dog" and Terry's own "Lovey Dovey" hidden amongst the tracks.

**BLUES TRAVELER** With influences ranging from Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix to David Bowie and The Clash, it's a mistake to assume that the four-piece, New York-based Blues Traveler is rigidly rooted in its namesake genre. Though blues is decidedly at the root of their eponymous debut LP, the rage of metal and the intellect of jazz make a strong showing as well. Harp playing singer/composer John Popper has played with David Sanborn; guitarist Chan Kinchla was a protege of Joseph Kerman and Bill Dicey; bassist Bobby Sheehan has accompanied the legendary Les Paul; and London-born drummer Brendan Hill cites John Bonham, Mitch Mitchell and Ginger Baker as his major inspirations.

Formed just two years ago, the band has received rave reviews for their live performances, including one that said that Blues Traveler "dive-bombs off a cliff of psychedelic hardcore, and — kaboom — collapses in unison with a couple hundred sweat-drenched dancers." The band also makes a cameo appearance in the upcoming Oliver Stone film, *The Doors*.

## ► DARDEN SMITH

Austin-based singer/songwriter Darden Smith takes great pains to detach himself from the traditional Nashville songwriting scene by writing crafty, pop- and rock-oriented songs while retaining the personal sense of emotion and drama often found in country music. In the year since his highly regarded collaboration with British popster Boo Hewerdine (*The Bible*), *Evidence*, Smith has incorporated a more universal pop sound into his music, and two new Smith/Hewerdine compositions can be found on his latest LP, *No More Trouble*.

As Smith says, "I look at my songs as fictional adaptations of the truth. A lot of me is in these songs, and a lot of my life and my thoughts and the people around me are in them as well. At the same time I create a lot of the characters in my head." Among them are "Frankie & Sue," "a true story about love and travel," and one song ("Johnny Was A Lucky One") written from the same perspective as Bobbie Ann Mason's book about Vietnam vets, *In Country*.

## RUDE BOYS

Though the mean age of the Rude Boys is 25, the Cleveland quartet have over 60 years of performing under their collective belts. Edward Lee (Buddy) Banks made his professional debut as a church organist at 14; Joe'l Little III formed a gospel group with Buddy and Melvin Sephus at 16; Melvin began singing in cabaret shows as a six-year-old; and Larry Marcus, whose cousin is B.B. King, started his career as guitarist with the Dazz Band. The band was discovered by producer/songwriters Gerald Levert and Marc Gordon (both of LeVert fame), who have launched several new acts' careers, including Troop. Says Levert: "It has always been a dream for us to create something for the world that's positive and that makes people smile. And with Rude Boys, we think we've accomplished that goal."



## ◀ PAUL OVERSTREET

With more than a score of Top 10 country singles to his name, as well as being the winner of the CMA songwriter of the year award for the last four years running, Paul Overstreet has influenced the once gritty, booze-fueled Nashville scene with his positive, uplifting lyrics.

As the composer of hits for the likes of George Jones, Tanya Tucker, Ronnie Milsap, Randy Travis (including "On The Other Hand" and the Grammy-winning "Forever And Ever, Amen") as well as five consecutive Top 10 singles from his debut LP *Sowin' Love*, Overstreet says that all his songs have a message. As he says, "It's important to me that the mes-

sage be encouraging." His latest release, *Heroes*, includes "Til The Mountains Disappear," a romantic ballad dedicated to his wife, and "Billy Can't Read," a touching and optimistic look at adult illiteracy.

## ► HAPPY MONDAYS

Few bands can legitimately stake claim to spawning a whole new musical scene, but the comedic chaos that calls itself Happy Mondays laid the foundation for what is now commonly called the Manchester Sound. With shuffling beats, garbled vocals and psychedelic guitars, not to mention a seemingly redundant member who does nothing more than wander around onstage waving a maraca or two, the Mondays have been disassembling their dance-rock masterpieces since 1981.

Their latest Elektra release, *Pills 'N' Thrills And Bellyaches*, takes the group into a new realm of rock-oriented tunes, molded, ironically, by producer Paul Oakenfold — the re-mixmaster who reformulated many of their earlier singles into dancefloor staples. The album debuted at No. 4 on the U.K. Top 40. Included in the set is last summer's rave-up "Step On," the alarmingly infectious "Kinky Afro" and the band's tribute to that wacky Hurdy Gurdy Man, "Donovan."

## ROGER McGUINN

Few artists can come back from a 10-year recording hiatus and expect to be received with open arms, but Roger McGuinn, a Rock 'N' Roll Hall of Fame inductee as a founding member of The Byrds, has the support of his friends to prove how welcome he is. Appearing on *Back From Rio*, besides former Byrds cohorts David Crosby and Chris Hillman, are Tom Petty, Elvis Costello, Dave Stewart, Michael Penn and Timothy B. Schmidt (among others).

McGuinn first ignited the Los Angeles music scene 25 years ago with his jangly 12-string Rickenbacker and his group's soaring harmonies, a sound Petty describes as "one of the handful of original sounds in all of rock 'n' roll." Ever the social documentalist, songs on *Back From Rio* include the cynical "Car Phone" and the rockin' environmental anthem "The Trees Are All Gone."

## JIM CHAPPELL

While pianist/composer/arranger Jim Chappell's earlier works were written for solo piano, *Saturday's Rhapsody*, his latest release on Music West Records, was arranged around 19 fellow musicians. The album is an effort to capture the feelings of freedom generally associated with the weekend. "The High Road," with its Celtic rhythms, evokes a sense of adventure, while the haunting French horn on "The Rain" creates a sense of melancholy and longing.

"Estár Contigo (To Be With You)" is Chappell's first song to incorporate vocals. Born in Michigan, Chappell has taken much of his inspiration from his travels through Tennessee, Washington, Oregon and the California coastline. Now settled in northern California, he is one of the most popular proponents of the ambient, textural music that embodies that region.



COMPILED BY PERRY STERN

 SOUND  
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PRESENTS

*Colin James*

ROCKIN' THE BLUES '91

★ TOUR DATES ★

February  
4 Summerside, PEI, Regent  
6 Halifax, NS, The Palace  
7 Sydney, NS, Sidney Centre  
8 Saint John, NB, Trade & Convention Centre  
9 Sackville, NB, Mt. Allison College  
10 Fredericton, NB, Univ. of NB  
12 London, ON, TBA  
13 Kitchener, ON, TBA  
14 Ottawa, ON, National Arts Centre  
15 Montreal, PQ, Spectrum  
16 Montreal, PQ, Spectrum  
17 Quebec City, PQ, Salle Albert  
19 Sudbury, ON, Grand Theatre  
20 Guelph, ON, TBA  
21 Windsor, ON, TBA  
22 Toronto, ON, Toronto Concert Hall  
24 Hamilton, ON, Hamilton Place  
March  
6 Winnipeg, MB, Walker Theatre  
7 Brandon, MB, Manitoba Room  
8 Regina, SK, Center of the Arts  
9 Saskatoon, SK, Centennial Aud.  
11 Lethbridge, AB, Lethbridge College  
12 Red Deer, AB, Red Deer College  
14 Ft. McMurray, AB, Keyano Theatre  
15 Edmonton, AB, University of Alberta  
16 Edmonton, AB, University of Alberta  
17 Calgary, AB, Jack Singer Hall  
20 Victoria, BC, Royal Theatre  
22 Vancouver, BC, Commodore  
23 Vancouver, BC, Commodore  
28 Nanaimo, BC, Civic Arena



# exposed

## REGIONAL REPORTS

### LONDON

The British tour is dead! At least for those artists who are household names and have the pulling power for the new method of arranging concerts — residencies. The most notable of these is Eric Clapton's by now annual residency at London's Royal Albert Hall, usually the site of classical and orchestral performances. Last month he surpassed even his own record by performing 24 consecutive nights, selling 84,000 tickets. Of course, he could have easily played to more paying customers simply by moving his whole show up the road to Hammersmith Odeon (where Level 42 played 15 nights in December), or to Wembley Arena, where stars such as Prince, Paul McCartney, Dire Straits and Cliff Richard can play for 12 or so nights in front of more than 100,000 fans. Of course, only a megastar like Michael Jackson can even contemplate a residency at Wembley, and he played to 450,000 fans there over four nights back in 1988.

So what's caused this phenomenon? Partly it's money: while tickets may average out at around \$40 — or just twice the price of a CD — these established (usually thirtysomething or older) artists have fans who hold down good salaries and can easily afford to travel to London from, say, Birmingham, Manchester or even Scotland. Also, it helps to reduce touring costs (no transportation, maybe even no accommodation bills), and the fans gain, because, as concert promoter Nick Blackburn explains, "A long run really gives you a chance to get your sound and show sorted out, so the fans get full value for the money."

Certainly residencies are here to stay: when in Britain Prince refuses to play anywhere apart from Wembley, and Clapton says he's fallen in love with the Royal Albert. And now that even newer bands like The Beautiful South and Happy Mondays are choosing to play arena shows at Wembley, the traditional British tour may well be dead.

Speaking of The Happy Mondays, the Manchester rave merchants have crashed straight into the album charts — currently dominated by greatest-hits packages from the likes of Elton John,

Madonna, The Bee Gees, Peter Gabriel and even The Righteous Brothers — with their *Pills 'N' Thrills And Bellyaches* LP. But lead singer **Shaun Ryder** hasn't had time to celebrate: he's been hidden away at a health clinic, being treated for heroin addiction. Friends of the band revealed that Ryder was not a habitual addict, but that impending fatherhood — his girlfriend is expecting their first baby in April — had made him decide that it was time to quit. Ryder discharged himself from the clinic in time for the band's recent British tour.

Proving that there is life after pop stardom, two new bands have sprung up fronted by ex-chart heroes. **Lol Tolhurst**, founding member of The Cure, has now re-emerged with his new four-piece outfit, **Presence**, while ex-House Of Love guitarist **Terry Bickers** has launched his new

group, **Levitation**, with a British tour (they still exist after all!).

Barely a month goes by without there being some trouble at a reggae show in town — but at a record signing at Tower Records in Picadilly? Jamaican star **Shabba Ranks** was greeted by over 2,000 fans at a recent in-store appearance to promote his album, *Just Reality*. Unbelievably, Tower Records had no idea of his popularity, and was totally unprepared.

After a mixup over his arrival time caused incredible lunch-time congestion both in the store and on the streets outside, Ranks appeared and appealed for calm over the PA. Later, though, disorder broke out and an estimated \$5,000 worth of stock was stolen. When the police were called, three vans of riot squads turned up and charged the crowd. Shabba Ranks later dis-

sociated himself from the violence. "A lot of people sing about violence; I have never glorified the gun," he said. "I preach peace, love and a little sex!"

Court in session: the latest legal wrangles to emerge from the colorful world of pop involve **Betty Boo**, the latest disco diva wannabe (as big as Madonna, to whose management she is about to sign), who's suing her old record label for reissuing a single by her previous group, **She-Rockers**, and **George Michael** and **Sinead O'Connor**, who are in dispute over a sample on "Freedom," Michael's recent hit single. The track features a violin riff which was sampled from the O'Connor track "I Am Stretched On Your Grave" (from her album *I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got*) without advance permission. Lawyers for Sinead and her fiddle player, **Steve Wickham**, ex of The Waterboys, are seeking an agreement on future royalty payments.

Hangovers galore at The Stranglers' Christmas party, organized to thank record company execs and fan club organizers for their help. The party marked the first public appearance of **Paul Smith**, the Stranglers' previously unknown new vocalist, along with new guitarist **Jon Ellis**, formerly of punk stalwarts The Vibrators. Smith, a good-looking 28-year-old blond, is currently resisting efforts by the rest of the band to dye his hair to fit in with their image.

Finally, a cautionary note to show that some people can take their music too seriously, with fatal consequences. I'm not talking about suicidal heavy metal fans looking for masked death messages, but simple family fights over music. "Turn that racket down!" yells your old man. "Call that music? Sounds like a cat being strangled!" Sound familiar? 18-year-old Thomas McStay of Southampton, England, had been through all the usual disagreements with his father Brendan, 57, and simply refused to turn the stereo down one day. Instead, he stabbed his father 50 times. He denied murder in court, but was found guilty of manslaughter, and is now serving life.

**Johnny Waller/S.I.N.**

Disco diva wannabe **Betty Boo** is getting it big.



## NEW YORK

Cashing in on his current wave of success, **Vanilla Ice** will publish his official autobiography this month. So many unsavory rumors about Ice's origins have been circulating — like he grew up in a middle-class suburb of Dallas, not in a Miami ghetto as he claimed — the 22-year-old rapping sensation thought he should seize the opportunity to tell his story, albeit a relatively brief one, his own way.

At a press conference announcing his Avon book deal, Ice remarked, "There are gonna be some other books that are gonna come out but they're not written by Vanilla Ice. *Ice By Ice* — it's gonna be the real deal right here."

Ice decided to write the book a couple of months ago, "when all the bad press started coming out about Vanilla Ice. When the record went No. 1 you always got a bad apple in the bunch," he added cryptically. The controversy about his background led him to "pull [his] pants down on TV," to display the scars from an adolescent knife fight.

Whatever the truth is about Vanilla Ice, he has a remarkably firm grasp of the business of music, pointing out that his sudden popularity is due in large part to his record company's aggressive efforts on his behalf. "I have the power of SBK, and they have serious power," he said. "A lot of people say it's because I'm a white rapper, and it looks that way to the media. But a black rapper could come up just as fast and sell just as many records — MC Hammer did. The main deal is being first-priority with

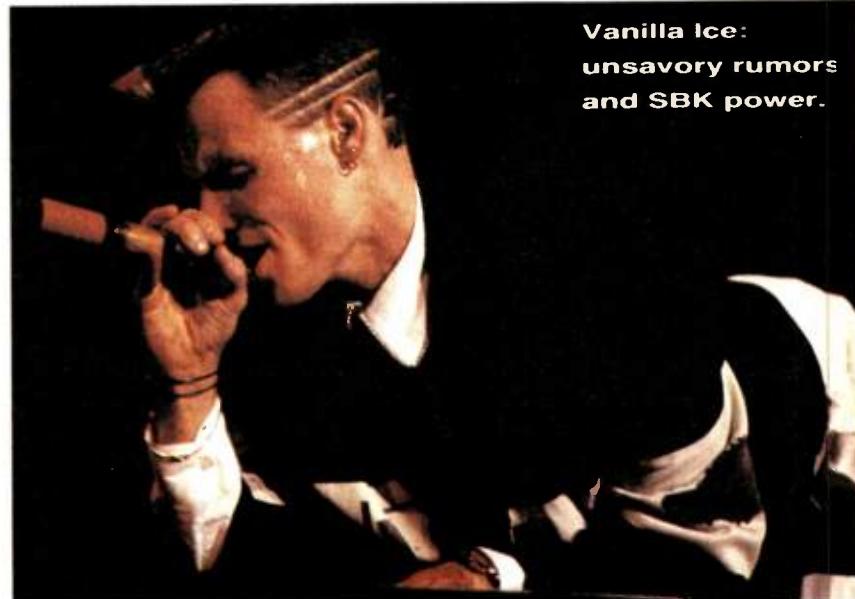
your record company, making them put you above the other artists and push you the hardest."

Ice, who was expected to begin a concert tour a couple of weeks ago, will release a live album this month, including a variation on the Rolling Stones' "Satisfaction." He also has a role in the upcoming *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* sequel.

Local legends **NRBQ** rocked Tramps to the wee hours of the morning recently, accompanied by their original guitarist, **Steve Ferguson**, who hasn't played with them since 1972. Ferguson's replacement and 18-year **NRBQ** veteran **Big Al Anderson** seemed to thoroughly enjoy the addition, with the group firing up old standards like "Me And The Boys" and Johnny Cash's rollicking "Get Rhythm."

Throughout their career, **NRBQ** has always been on the verge of making it big, and remains one of the few consistently good live ensembles around. Rhino just released a best-of package spanning the group's two decades, playfully titled *Peek-A-Boo*. It includes such **NRBQ** beauties as "Riding In My Car," "It Was A Accident" and "Wild Weekend." An album of new **NRBQ** material is also forthcoming from Virgin, the band's current label.

Up and comers **Drunken Boat** are expected to release a debut album this spring, possibly from demos produced by ex-Hugo Largo bassist Tim Sommer. The quintet has developed a reputation on the downtown alternative music circuit, playing frequently at CBGB's and the Knitting



**Vanilla Ice:**  
unsavory rumors  
and SBK power.

Factory during the past two years. Powered by a new rhythm section, **Drunken Boat**'s passionate, disquieting sound recalls New Order and Patti Smith. With **Todd Colby**'s Johnny Lydon-meets-William Burroughs vocal stylings added to the mix, **Drunken Boat** is hard to ignore.

One of New York's most promising new psychedelic bands, **Ultra Vivid Scene**, recently split up right in the middle of their last tour. Oh well.

During the '70s, New York-based **Tomato** Records was among the most eclectic of record labels. Offering recordings by a then fledgling **Phillip Glass**, as well as avant trumpet player **Jon Hassell**, **Albert King**, **Louis Armstrong**, **Sonny Terry**, a

very young **Robert Cray**, **Andrew Tosh** and **Townes Van Zandt**, to name a few, the scope and class of **Tomato**'s roster was unparalleled among small companies. In the '80s **Tomato** fell victim to the record industry shakeouts, which left no room for the fearlessly independent label. But due to the growing compact disc market, last year **Tomato** went back to business, reissuing many of its old gems, as well as new records by **John Cage**, **Fats Domino** and **Joao Carlos Martins**. A two-disc **Jerry Lee Lewis** set, recorded in 1988 live at the **Palomino Club** in Los Angeles, is among the **Tomato** releases anticipated this spring. Check it out.

**Tina Clarke**

## CANADA



**Big things are expected from Gregory Hoskins And The Stick People.**

Some of Canada's best rock 'n' rollers warmed their fans with "secret" club dates over the holiday season. The **Tragically Hip** had them queuing outside The Horsehoe for hours before two intense shows in late December, and **Blue Rodeo** checked in there for another surprise gig two weeks later.

Star-spotters in T.O. should investigate the Sunday matinees at **Ultrasound**. Guests joining the illustrious house band of **David Baxter** (ex **Sharks**), **Bazil Donovan** and **Cleave Anderson** (the original **Blue Rodeo** rhythm section) have included **Rodeos** **Jim Cuddy** and **Greg Keelor** (singing Christmas tunes with **Lori Yates**) and **Leslie Spit Tree's** **Laura Hubert**.

The same club recently featured promising Ottawa blues guitarist **Sue Foley**, currently making a splash down in Austin, Texas. As the song goes, if you can make it in that musical mecca, you can make it anywhere. Seen at her show was **Ellen McIlwaine**, no slouch with an axe herself.

Recessionary times are sure to increase the turnover of music clubs across the

country. In Toronto, **The Beehive**, the typically wacky product of **Look Person Jaymz Bee's** fevered imagination, will be run for the time being by extremely busy jazzcat **Tom Walsh**. It seems **The Look People's** '91 commitments in Europe will be too much of a conflict. Much further east on the Queen Street strip is **The Opera House**, a refurbished classic theatre expected to draw big names, **Cheap Trick** being the first. The venerable **Spadina Hotel** now hosts folk-oriented acts in **The Traditions Room**.

Canadian country hero **Ian Tyson** is currently writing for his next album, but American artists are increasingly discovering his fine material. **Michael Martin Murphy's** new album includes "Cowboy

Pride," while long-time fan **Jerry Jeff Walker** has released the **Tyson** hit "Navajo Rug" as a single (it's the title track of his new album). Look for Ian's *I Outgrew The Wagon* to go gold this year.

Also finding U.S. interest are Toronto rockers **Swamp Baby**, whose self-titled debut CD is expected to gain release there on a small label with major distribution.

The Canadian reggae scene recently mourned the loss of **Jackie Mittoo**, former keyboardist with Jamaican ska pioneers the **Skatalites**, and a source of inspiration for Toronto reggae bands. He died of cancer at age 42.

Respected label **True North** is kicking off '91 with the debut release from **Gregory Hoskins And The Stick People**. *Moon*

*Come Up* is out in February and label head **Bernie Finkelstein** is reportedly "beside himself" with excited anticipation. **Hoskins'** labelmate **Bruce Cockburn** is currently out on select solo dates, and is back in the studio in spring, recording for a late summer release.

Best independent release to cross this desk lately has been *When They Write His Memoirs*, the debut offering from Kitchener's **Gord's Ramble**. This country/folk band is headed by singer/songwriter **Gord Bolan**, and his moody sound is enhanced by the post-production of **Peter Moore**. Available from **gb records**, 45 Munroe St, Kitchener, ON N2C 1V8.

Toronto avant-garde/industrial label **DOVEntertainment** have just released their *Death Of Vinyl*, CD compilation of acts from those genres, including **John Oswald** and local "Elektro-Industrial Hell" trio **Digital Poodle**. Music to torture cockroaches by.

Most promising local act spotted of late: vigorous art-rockers **Bone Decent**.

**Kerry Doole**



**Garth Brooks**  
had people  
doin' the  
two-step in the  
aisles.

ments" — mainly the use of a black Satan in white-face as "a personification of the evil of white supremacy," according to their label, Elektra. Ironically, the clip was directed by **Fab Five Freddy**, who hosts the vid channel's popular *Yo! MTV Raps* show. The group's agreed to submit a re-edited version.

Don't get rid of your vinyl collection so fast. For those who thought CDs made LPs obsolete, consider this. Several pundits are advancing the paranoid record industry conspiracy theory that digital discs will oxidize over a set amount of time, effectively erasing all the music on them and leaving us with some worthless pieces of plastic and aluminum in a jewel box. Hey, by that time we'll all be re-buying our entire collection on DAT anyway.

**Too Much Joy** went on trial in Broward County Court in Florida on obscenity charges stemming from their **2 Live Crew** protest cover concert at the Club Futura last August. Prosecutors have offered band members a fine of \$250 each in exchange for a "no contest" plea, but the group opted for a court date instead.

College radio faves the **Pixies** and **Soul Asylum** blew through town for a gig at the Universal Amphitheatre that was a stunning triumph of power chord pop, delivered on a dime by the two obviously road-conditioned outfits. For someone who's been a little down on traditional white guitars and bass and drums rock 'n' roll and not a huge fan of either group, it was a revelation. Both bands are ready for prime time, and deserve to be playing in 20,000-seat arenas, rather than in a 2/3-full, 6,000-capacity hall. The

Boston-based **Pixies** were especially dynamic, evoking an **American Cure** with their updated psychedelic surf waves of emotion. I'm a believer.

Latest record label trend (most definitely not at *Music Express*, thank goodness): editors changing stuff without even consulting writers. **Fred Goodman** took his dispute with *Fame* magazine over the alleged softening of his piece on record biz lawyer **Allen Grubman** public in the tabloid *New York Post*, while **Danny Sugerman's** been kvetching about *Spin's* treatment of his **Axl Rose** profile. Look for Danny's upcoming book-length critical appreciation of **Guns N'Roses**, which brings us full circle this month.

**Roy Trakin**

## LOS ANGELES

**Guns N'Roses** are currently ensconced in a recording studio, laying down tracks for their new album. They've supposedly written more than 35 songs, and are choosing the best for the LP, now scheduled for late spring or early summer. The band's also added a keyboardist to the lineup.

Ex-Replacements drummer Chris Mars has been calling journalists around the country and telling them he's definitely out of the band, but jokes, "I'm considering forming a band with [fellow ex-Mat] **Bob Stinson** and calling it **The Replaced**."

Okie crossover country hopeful **Garth Brooks** brought out all the neobilly fans to his special concert at the Wilshire Theater, populated by industry types as well as winners of a local radio contest. The self-

effacing, hat-wearing Music City phenom proved that the hype was real with a swinging, traditionalist C&W set that literally had people doin' the two-step in the aisles as Capitol Nashville head Jimmy Bowen and label toastmaster Joe Smith beamed and admitted they hadn't experienced this kind of pure excitement since their days working with the Chairman of the Board himself, 75-year-old birthday boy **Frank Sinatra**.

Brooks even won over skeptical rockers by covering **George Jones'** "The Race Is On" (also a staple of The Grateful Dead's set) and an encore consisting of **Billy Joel's** "You May Be Right" and **The Georgia Satellites'** "Keep Your Hands To Yourself." A truly genre-busting evening.

Speaking of breaking out of idioms, **Jane's Addiction** blew some minds when they covered the Dead's "Ripple" during their set at the Henry Fonda Theater. The group will do the song on an album of Grateful Dead covers by various bands to help save the rain forests.

**KISS'** **Gene Simmons** and **Paul Stanley** showed up — sans makeup, naturally — at *Creem* magazine's Vertigo shindig, featuring a performance by U.K. popsters **The Darling Buds**.

Madonna's not the only one to run into trouble with the MTV censors lately. East Coast rappers **Brand Nubian** have had the video for their first single, "Wake Up," turned down by the network on ideological grounds because of allegedly "racist ele-

# The KNACK Rocket O' Love

the first track from the forthcoming  
album **Serious Fun**

Produced by

Don Was

Management:

Bud Prager

and

Mike Renault

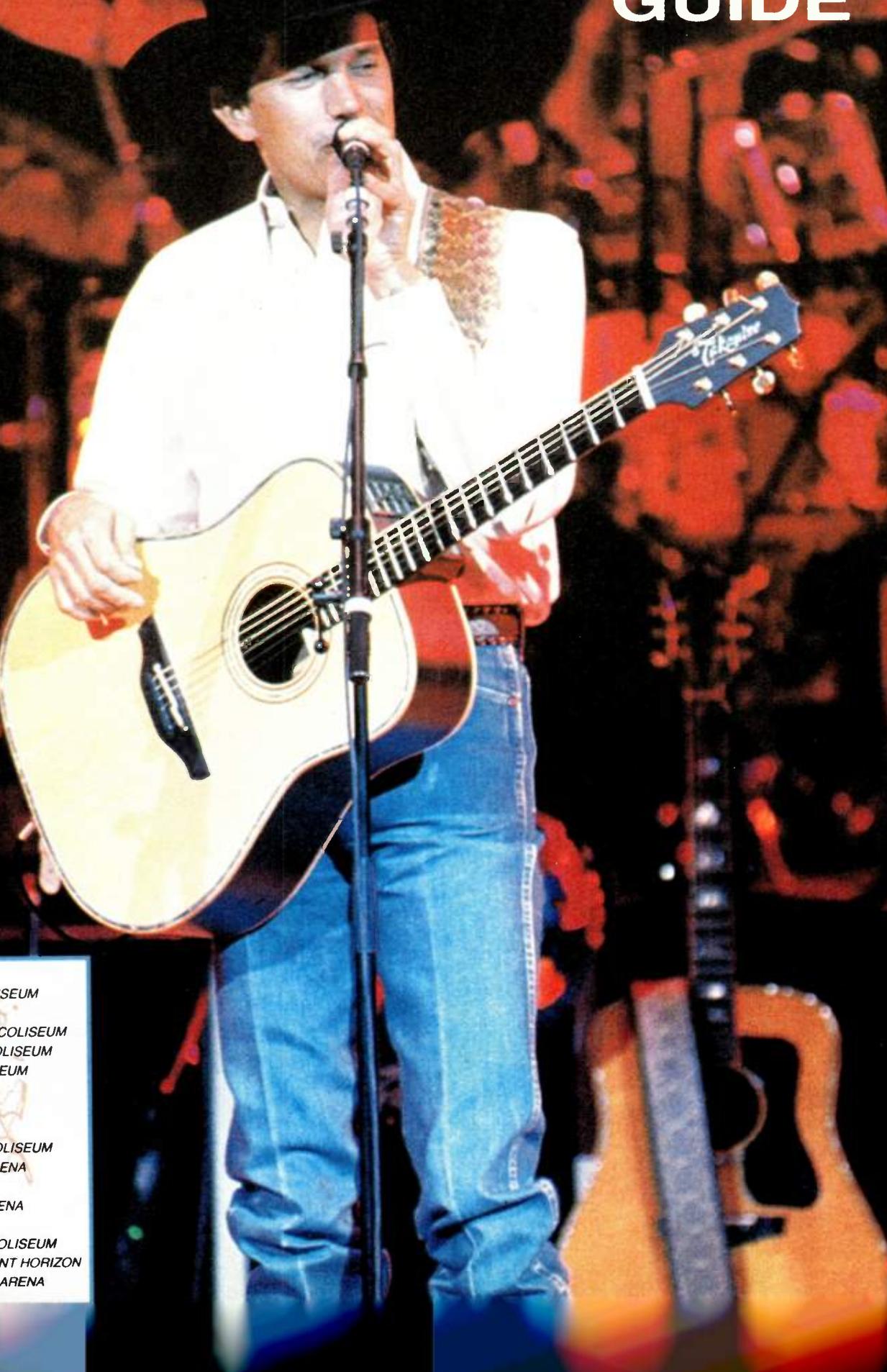
/ E.S.P. Management



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# MEMOREX<sup>®</sup>

## CONCERT GUIDE



### GEORGE STRAIT

FEB. 1 BILOXI • MISS. COST COLISEUM  
2 BEAUMONT • CIVIC CENTER  
3 CORPUS CHRISTI • MEMORIAL COLISEUM  
14 AMARILLO • CIVIC CENTER COLISEUM  
15 ABILENE • TAYLOR CO. COLISEUM  
16 MCALLEN • VILA REAL

### ZZ TOP

FEB. 1 BUFFALO • MEMORIAL COLISEUM  
5 ALBANY • KNICKERBOCKER ARENA  
6 PROVIDENCE • CIVIC CENTER  
7 HERSHEY • HERSHEY PARK ARENA  
9 SYRACUSE • CARRIER DOME  
11-12 RICHFIELD • RICHFIELD COLISEUM  
15-16 ROSEMOUNT • ROSEMOUNT HORIZON  
18 INDIANAPOLIS • MARKET SQ. ARENA

GEORGE  
STRAIT



**ANITA BAKER**

**ALLISON KRAUSS & UNION STATION**

**FEB.3 NASHVILLE • STATION INN**

**15 SPARTANBURG • TWICHELL CENTER**

**16 JOHNSON CITY • DOWN HOME**

**22 AUSTIN • CACTUS CAFE**

**23 IRVING • HIGH SCHOOL**

**ANITA BAKER**

**FEB.5-6 VANCOUVER • QUEEN ELIZ. THEATRE**

**8 PORTLAND • MEMORIAL COLISEUM**

**9 SEATTLE • SEATTLE CTR. ARENA**

**12-13 SAN CARLOS • CIRCLE STAR CENTER**

**15-16 SAN CARLOS • CIRCLE STAR CENTER**

**26-27 ANAHEIM • CELEBRITY THEATRE**

**BLUES TRAVELER**

**FEB.1 NASHVILLE • VANDERBILT UNIV.**

**2 MEMPHIS • THE 616**

**4 NEW ORLEANS • TIPITINA'S**

**12 AUSTIN • CANNIBAL CLUB**

**14 ALBUQUERQUE • UNIV. OF NEW MEXICO**

**15 TUCSON • UNIV. OF ARIZONA**

**21 SAN FRANCISCO • SLIM'S**

**22 ARCATA • HUMBOLT ST. UNIV.**

**23 EUGENE • UNIV. OF OREGON**

**27 SALT LAKE CITY • ZEPHYR CLUB**

**CHRISTOPHER HOLLYDAY**

**FEB.6 CLEVELAND • PEABODY'S**

**7 DETROIT • MICHIGAN THEATRE**

**9 CINCINNATI • HYATT REGENCY HOTEL**

**16 CHICAGO • CUBBY BEAR**

**18-19 ST.PAUL • DAKOTA BAR & GRILL**

**20 SPRINGFIELD • CARRINGTON HALL**

**21 KANSAS CITY • GRAND EMPORIUM**

**23-24 DENVER • JAZZ WORKS**

**26 SALT LAKE CITY • ZEPHYR CLUB**

**28 WALLA WALLA • CORDIENER HALL**

**TAIL GATORS**

**FEB.8 AUSTIN • CONTINENTAL CLUB**

**19 DAVENPORT • STICKMANS**

**20 OMAHA • HOWARD ST. TAVERN**

**21 LINCOLN • ZOO BAR**

**22 ST.LOUIS • CICERO'S**

**THE FLESHTONES**

**FEB.1 LEXINGTON • THE WROCKLEDGE**

**2 KNOXVILLE • ELLA GURU'S**

**6 ATHENS • GEORGIA THEATRE**

**7 ATLANTA • THE POINT**

**8 TUSCALOOSA • COLLEGE STATION**

**9 PENSACOLA • APPLE ANNIE'S**

**10 NEW ORLEANS • JIMMY'S**

**IRON MAIDEN (WITH ANTHRAX)**

**FEB.1 FAIRFAX • PATRIOT CENTER**

**2 RICHMOND • RICHMOND COLISEUM**

**3 CHARLOTTE • CHARLOTTE COLISEUM**

**5 JOHNSON CITY • FREEDOM HALL**

**6 ATLANTA • THE OMNI**

**8 MIAMI • MIAMI ARENA**

**9 ORLANDO • ORLANDO ARENA**

**10 TAMPA • THE SUNDOME**

**12 CHATTANOOGA • UTC ARENA**

**14 LOUISVILLE • LOUISVILLE GARDENS**

**15 AUBURN HILLS • PALACE OF AUBURN HILLS**

**17 TOLEDO • TOLEDO SPORTS ARENA**

**19 COLUMBUS • OHIO CENTER**

**20 CINCINNATI • CINCINNATI GARDENS**

**21 RICHFIELD • RICHFIELD COLISEUM**

**23 ST.LOUIS • KIEL AUDITORIUM**

**24 CHICAGO • U.I.C. PAVILLION**

**25 MINNEAPOLIS • TBA**

**27 KANSAS CITY • MUNICIPAL AUDI-**

**TORIUM**

**28 TULSA • EXPO SQUARE PAVIL-**

**LION**

**THE BLACK CROWES**

**FEB.1 BUFFALO • MEMORIAL COL-**

**ISEUM**

**5 ALBANY • KNICKERBOCKER**

**ARENA**

**6 PROVIDENCE • CIVIC CENTER**

**7 HERSHEY • HERSHEY PARK**

**ARENA**



Left: Jay Janini/Artist Publications ; Centre: Sabouret/APRF

**BON JONI**



9 SYRACUSE • CARRIER DOME  
 11-12 RICHFIELD • RICHFIELD COLISEUM  
 15-16 ROSEMOUNT • ROSEMOUNT HORIZON  
 18 INDIANAPOLIS • MARKET SQ. ARENA

**JOE "KING" CARRASCO**  
**FEB.1** HOUSTON • THE BON TON  
 2 GALVESTON • MARDI GRAS  
 3-4 MILWAUKEE • MILLER BAND NETWORK  
 6-7 TETON VILLAGE • MANGY MOOSE  
 8-9 PARK CITY • Z PLACE  
 12 ASPEN • TIPPLER'S  
 13 TELLURIDE • FLY ME TO THE MOON  
 14 SANTA FE • CLUB WEST  
 15 LUBBOCK • DEPOT WAREHOUSE  
 17 TAOS • HACIENDA INN  
 20 CRESTED BUTTE • ELDORADO CAFE  
 21 FT. COLLINS • LINDEN'S  
 22 BOULDER • THE OUTBACK  
 23 DENVER • HERMAN'S HIDEAWAY

**MAHLATHINI & MAHOTELLA QUEENS**  
**FEB.1** BILLINGS • ALBERTA BAIR THEATER  
 2 MISSOULA • UNIV. OF MONTANA  
 4 HELENA • MYRNA LOY CENTER  
 5 VANCOUVER • COMMODORE BALLROOM  
 6 VICTORIA • UNIVERSITY CENTER  
 7 SEATTLE • MAENY HALL  
 8 TACOMA • PANTAGES THEATRE  
 9 EUGENE • HULT CENTER  
 10 ARCATA • VAN DUZER THEATRE  
 11 ROHNERT PARK • PERF. ARTS CENTER  
 12 SAN FRANCISCO • SLIM'S  
 15 LOS ANGELES • WADSWORTH THEATRE  
 17 TUCSON • EL CASINO BALLROOM  
 18-19 LUBBOCK • ALLEN THEATRE

21 ROLLA • CENTENNIAL HALL  
 22 LOUISVILLE • BOMHARD THEATRE  
 25 PRINCETON • McCARTER THEATRE  
 26 GROTON • MIDDLE SCHOOL  
 27 NORTH HAMPTON • THE IRON HORSE  
 28 HARTFORD • CHARTER OAK TEMPLE

**MARCIABALL**  
**FEB.1** CARRBORO • ARTS CENTER  
 2 PINEHURST • PINEHURST HOTEL  
 9 NEW ORLEANS • STORYVILLE  
 10 NEW ORLEANS • MAPLELEAF  
 11 NEW ORLEANS • MUDDY WATERS  
 12 NEW ORLEANS • TIPIINA'S

**PAUL SIMON**  
**FEB.7** MIAMI • MIAMI ARENA  
 8 TAMPA • SUN DOME  
 10 CHAPEL HILL • DEAN SMITH ARENA  
 11 ATLANTA • THE OMNI  
 12 MEMPHIS • MID-SOUTH COLISEUM

**3 MUSTAPHAS 3**  
**FEB.2** SEATTLE • BACKSTAGE  
 3 VANCOUVER • TOWN PUMP  
 7 PHILADELPHIA • THE BARBARY  
 8 BALTIMORE • 8 X 10 CLUB  
 9 VIENNA • BARNS AT WOLF TRAP

**VANILLA ICE**  
**FEB.1** INDIANAPOLIS • MURAT THEATRE  
 2 MILWAUKEE • RIVERSIDE THEATRE  
 3 MINNEAPOLIS • ORPHEUM THEATRE  
 6 NEW YORK • BEACON THEATRE  
 7 PHILADELPHIA • TOWER THEATRE  
 8 HAMPTON • HAMPTON COLISEUM

9 CHARLESTON • KING STREET PALACE  
 10 COLUMBIA • TOWNSHIP HALL  
 12 NASHVILLE • TENN. PERF. ARTS CTR.  
 13 CHATTANOOGA • UTC ARENA  
 14 ATLANTA • CIVIC CENTER  
 15 BIRMINGHAM • BOUTEWELL AUDITORIUM  
 16 NEW ORLEANS • UNO LAKEFRONT ARENA



#### VANILLA ICE

17 LITTLE ROCK • ROBINSON CENTER  
 20 OKLAHOMA CITY • THE MYRIAD  
 21 SAN ANTONIO • MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM  
 22 LAKE CHARLES • CIVIC CENTER  
 23 HOUSTON • THE SUMMIT  
 24 AUSTIN • PALMER AUDITORIUM  
 28 TAMPA • THE SUN DOME

Right: Ken Settle



Was it live?



# Before And After Pop



**Brian Eno says he's not really a musician, and he doesn't like to perform. Nonetheless, his cool, cerebral approach has had a powerful influence on music, from his days with Roxy Music in the early '70s through producing Talking Heads and U2, his ambient musical landscapes and his latest work, which includes an actual "pop" record with John Cale and a project that will somehow unite West African rhythms, '70s fusion, dance and "space music."**

● **By Tim Powis**

Few artists working in the fragmented world of rock music are as downright contemplative as Brian Eno is. Name another musician who, in the press release for his new album, allows how he normally enjoys interviews but worries that the questions about this album could get too predictable — then solves that problem by answering the obvious queries ahead of time.

In this case, the new album is *Wrong Way Up*, a collaboration with Velvet Underground co-founder John Cale on Eno's Opal label. Eno hadn't worked with Cale for a long time (until 1989, when he produced the latter's *Words For The Dying*), so one obvious question was: "Why did you work with John Cale?" Another was: "How come you've gone back to writing songs again?" After all, it's been 12 years

since *Before And After Science*, Eno's last album of "pop" songs, came out.

Since then, Eno's own recordings (as well as his ventures with "Fourth World" trumpeter Jon Hassell and keyboardist Harold Budd) have fallen into a category he's dubbed Ambient Music — atmospheric soundscapes so subtle that they can, according to the artist, either be listened to or ignored. (He wasn't kidding when he called one album *Music For Airports*.) Meanwhile, he produced Talking Heads' milestone *Remain In Light*, and later (with Daniel Lanois) U2's *The Unforgettable Fire* and *The Joshua Tree*. He's also exhibited audio-visual installations in art galleries around the world, including the recent "Prismatic Audio Sculptures," one of which he describes thusly: "You walk into a dark room and there are several seductively beautiful objects which gradually go through very complicated color mutations. There's sound coming from lots of directions. And you stay in there for a long time."

Ever since he emerged on the pop scene in the early '70s, as a member of Roxy Music, Eno has maintained that he's not really a *musician*; although he has a knack for coaxing unusual sounds out of synthesizers, he sees himself as more as a musical conceptualist.

This interview was done on the phone to New

York City, where Eno had just lectured at the Museum of Modern Art. He was looking forward to returning home to England and resuming work on a pair of new recordings.

*What have you been lecturing about?*

I was lecturing at MOMA on high art and low art. I was talking in other cities, as well, just rambling on about music and art and how culture evolves.

*Do you see a distinction between high and low art? If so, would you like to get rid of it?*

Essentially, I think that low art is an *inclusive* type of art. It works by creating large audiences. It has to do with a lot of people feeling, on a sensual/emotional level, the same way about something. In general, high art is exclusionary and kind of hermetic. It's rather a private experience. What I think should be shattered is the social status that evolves around them — the snobbery that attaches to one and the contempt that attaches to the other.

Of course, they're not water-tight distinctions. There are lots of things in between that are blends of those — *my* work, for instance. Most of the people I work with are somewhere in between. High art /low art can almost be characterized as a mind/body split, and in the West we have a lot of respect for anything to do with intellect and no respect for anything to do with bodies. I think that's changing. We're evolving away from those old sort of Renaissance stereotypes of the brain being the organizing factor and the body being this lustful piece of baggage that we have to drag around.

*Maybe some of what you're talking about can be qualified in terms of the new record with John Cale. You mention in the press release that you have a 'shared concept of the social significance of pop music.' Could you explain that?*

I think we share a concept of where pop music sits in our culture, and where it *could* sit. We have an idea of pop music as a very powerful and under-exploited vehicle — not the sort of derivative, reiterative thing that high-art people always make it out to be.

*So you do see Wrong Way Up as a departure from your other work in the last decade?*

Oh, sure. It's not so much a meditation study. It has a certain kind of... "Hey, fuck it, let's get up and dance," as well. It engages the body a lot more. And because it has a voice, it has personality. One thing I was trying to avoid for a long time was the idea of personality in music. I wanted to make music that almost didn't sound like music, that sounded like landscape, that invited the listener in by not having a personality. There was nobody in there already, so you became the person in the piece.

But for the last couple of years, I've found myself enjoying singing again and coming back to pop music with a feeling that this is a great music that just doesn't run out of ideas. It has periods where it gets a little tedious, but it revives again.

*I know you've listened to a lot of gospel and Arabic music lately. Is there anything else you've heard that might have inspired the songs on the new album?*

I can't think of anything in particular, but I've been listening recently to this song called 'Soon' by My Bloody Valentine, which I find very, very intriguing. It really is a new frontier in pop music, I think. It's one of the vaguest things I've ever heard [laughs]. It's very ambient in a certain way, but very strong and aggressive. It's a lot to do with the way they mixed it. Things that other bands might have brought forward, they've buried in the background,

so the whole thing is a single wall of sound. The vocals are very repetitive and indistinct. You don't even know if they're singing words or not. It's the closest thing to a pure *texture* record I've heard for a long time.

*You've mentioned that one reason you overdubbed your voice into so many layers on Wrong Way Up was to eliminate a single vocal personality. But aren't you magnifying your personality by however many times you overdub your voice?*

That could be a problem [laughs]. It doesn't do that to me. To me, it seems to turn the 'I' into 'we.' And I like that. What I want to do is make texture with voices, make them more like musical instruments, take them away from the function they're always given by critics as word-producing machines. I have nothing against words, but I think writers always write about them a lot. I always think 'Why don't you write about music?' I don't mean, 'Oh God, the guitar's fuckin' great,' I mean about structure in music.

What does one type of structure mean rather than another? What does it mean if you mix bass and drums very loud as opposed to very quietly? These are the kinds of questions I ask myself, and it doesn't seem like people who write about it ever do.

*The structures on Wrong Way Up are actually quite simple; some songs are built on two chords. It's the way you embellish things that's complex.*

Yeah, I've always liked simple structures. I don't want an obstacle course; I want something that just has enough energy to keep itself moving structurally, and then to put in a whole snake pit of things above it. If you go and hear a blues band, they're playing the same song 20 times, the same chord sequence. That allows a lot of focus on how you interpolate the melody and what kind of texture you make with the instruments. The aspects of structure that interest other songwriters don't interest me so much.

*But doesn't it also allow people to focus on the words — and aren't you trying to get away from that?*

I'm not completely trying to get away from focus on the words. I don't hate lyrics or anything; I just like them to be a proper part of the whole experience rather than making the music a support system for this fucking poem that comes out.

*I guess that's a characteristic of rap music, in a way. But I tend to listen to what's going on underneath the rap.*

Sure, I do too. What they're saying is completely uninteresting to me, but the way it's put together is very engaging. Nearly all the rap records I've heard, they could have said almost any other words. But I've been listening for 25 years to pop records of other cultures where I don't understand the words anyway: Indian or West African or Chinese. I've never really cared what people are singing about. If they are singing in my language, I want it at least to be not stupid — not reducible to simple meanings. It's so depressing when you have a musical situation full of interesting tensions and ambiguities, and stuck on top of that is a stupid lyric

which kind of completely deadens the whole experience.

*In your press release you say it was an 'absolute nightmare' working with John Cale. Was it really?*

No, I'm exaggerating a bit. But it was pretty bad [laughs]. Even though I'm now quite an experienced artist, I still have this illusion of cozy, friendly working situations where people co-operate and have great visions together. That sometimes happens, but you're just as likely to get good results when people curse the shit out of each other and have totally different ways of working. This happened to be one of those types of things.

This record was a bit of a risk for me, because I haven't done anything like it for a long time. I knew it was possible that just as I had re-acquired faith in this way of working, I could suddenly wake up and say, 'What the fuck am I doing this for? This isn't the kind of music I should be doing.' I thought if I didn't do it quickly I would get to dislike it. So I was very pleased that we got it done quickly and it sounds fresh; it doesn't sound like it's been pissed about with and overcooked.

*You've also been working on a record where you have a small orchestra try to reproduce the sounds of music generated by your synthesizer. What's happening with that?*

I'd like to get it finished for release 'round about March. I'm working on two records together. The other one picks up on a number of threads that seem to have got lost a bit. One is this mid-'70s West African rhythm playing, what was called 'Afro-Beat' in its time. Another is early-'70s fusion: the Miles Davis stuff around then, Mahavishnu Orchestra, that kind of thing, which I always had a real feeling for but thought was being played by musicians who were too clever for their own good.

Another thread is dance music, so I've been working with some extremely high-powered funk drummers and bass players. And the last thread is space music. I don't mean outer space necessarily; I mean music creating a sense of spaces, different acoustic landscapes. So I'm trying to combine all these things. In my mind I call it 'Juju Space Jazz,' but I'll probably change that name [laughs].

*Are you doing any work as a producer?*

I might work with Annie Lennox, but I don't think it'll be exactly as a producer. A consultant, you might say. She's been writing some songs for a solo record.

*Do you have plans to perform live?*

None. I did a performance last year in Japan, but I really don't like it. It's a real waste of time for me. I'm not a skilled instrumentalist. I can sing, but most of the music I've ever recorded is unperformable, or at least didn't result from performances; it was sort of put together synthetically. And to perform it would probably require rethinking it, because performance has different terms and different strengths and limitations. I wish somebody else would do it for me [laughs]. I've never been that attracted to performance, to tell you the truth.

# DO YA LOVE ME?

Why are you always hanging around this place? Everytime I look at you  
you're looking my way. People talk. They tell me things they say I should know.

They say I should take you in my arms and run.

Truth is, I've been thinking about it. I've got a bike. I've got another jacket.

We could ride into the sunset. Just the two of us and my steel guitar.

No good-byes, just fly-by-night down the crazy road. I kinda like the idea.

It kinda grows on you. We could blow this town... but first there's one thing

I've gotta know...



FOR FRESH BREATH  
**BECAUSE YOU JUST NEVER KNOW.**

BECAUSE YOU JUST NEVER KNOW.

BECAUSE YOU JUST NEVER KNOW.

Dentyne

# DID YOU KNOW?

BECAUSE YOU JUST NEVER KNOW.

Dentyne



*The Grifters*

The post-holiday season traditionally sees the release of more serious, adult-oriented fare as an antidote to the big-budget Christmas comedies and thrillers, and this year is no exception. ? High hopes are held for *The Long Walk Home*, a drama that spotlights race relations in the South of the '50s. The premise brings to mind *Driving Mrs Daisy*, for it features Whoopi Goldberg as a servant to Sissy Spacek. ? Acclaimed writer/director Jim Sheridan (*My Left Foot*) stays in Ireland for his new feature. *The Field* is a powerful portrait of a farmer (Richard Harris) whose land is threatened by an American businessman (Tom Berenger). ? Former matinee idol Dirk Bogarde makes his screen comeback in *Daddy Nostalgia*, a touching story of a dying man reconciling with his daughter. ? One of the biggest new releases of the month is liable to be *The Silence Of The Lambs*, a psychological thriller based on the best-seller by Thomas Harris. It stars Jodie Foster (as an FBI agent), Anthony Hopkins and Scott Glenn, and is directed by Jonathan Demme. ? John Hughes' *Home Alone* was the box-office king of the Christmas season, and he's been shooting his new feature in his favorite locale of Chicago. *Curly Sue* is a romantic comedy starring Jim Belushi and Kelly Lynch, and Hughes writes, directs, produces, and makes the coffee. ? Another comedy that recently finished shooting is *The Butcher's Wife*, which boasts a strong cast headed by Demi Moore, Jeff Daniels and Mary Steenburgen. Moore plays a clairvoyant and Daniels a psychiatrist in this scheduled fall release. ? *If Looks Could Kill* is a romantic thriller starring Linda Hunt and Richard Grieco (*21 Jump Street*). ? Fresh from the triumph of *GoodFellas*, director Martin

Scorsese is remaking thriller *Cape Fear*. His superstar line-up includes Robert De Niro, Nick Nolte, Jessica Lange, and, in cameos, Robert Mitchum and Gregory Peck. ? Once Around is the long-awaited new feature from director Lasse Hallstrom (*My Life As A Dog*). This romantic comedy features Richard Dreyfuss and Holly Hunter as the key couple, with Danny Aiello, Gena Rowlands, and Laura San Giacomo rounding out a fine cast. ? Dreyfuss returns in quite different garb in *Rosencrantz And Guildenstern Are Dead*. Also stars Gary Oldman and Tim Roth; written and directed by Tom Stoppard. ? Fans of film noir can look forward to *The Grifters*, a low-life thriller featuring John Cusack and Anjelica Huston. ? It may seem premature to be thinking of the boys of summer, but priming us for the baseball season soon will be *Talent For The Game*, a romantic story set in the world of major league baseball scouts. Stars Edward James Olmos and Lorraine Bracco. Let's play ball!

— By Kerry Doole —



*Once Around*

Left: Cineplex Odeon Films ; Centre: Greg Gorman/Cineplex Odeon Films ; Bottom: Jim Bridges/Universal City Studios Inc.

Dentyne

BECAUSE YOU JUST NEVER KNOW.

Dentyne



Penny Marshall  
"I kept going out of fear."

# Awakenings

By Iain Blair

Penny Marshall should be feeling on top of the world right now. *Awakenings*, which she directed and which stars Robert De Niro and Robin Williams, is not only an early hit with both critics and the public, but it looks certain to win Marshall an Oscar nomination for best director.

If so, the 47-year-old comedian — who's still best known for her years with *Laverne & Shirley*, and whose only previous feature film credits are *Jumping Jack Flash* and *Big* — will become the first woman to be nominated for best director in the history of Hollywood.

Yes, she should be feeling ecstatic, but instead she's worried. *Awakenings* is only my third film, and it's the first drama I've done, so all this Oscar talk makes me very nervous," she frets. "In fact, I don't want to deal with that 'Oscar buzz' stuff at all. I just worry that people are going to see the film with all these big expectations and be disappointed."

And as if to underscore her fears, the woman who "finally and completely" quit smoking recently is furiously lighting up another cigarette as she talks about *Awakenings*' Oscar predictions and her unlikely emergence as Hollywood's most successful female director.

"I don't like all the pressure," she says in the patented Bronx whine that made her a star in *Laverne & Shirley*, and which she still uses in moments of stress. "I mean, I can't even decide what dress I should wear to the premiere. I'd honestly rather stay home, but I have to go."

Marshall frowns, takes another drag at her cigarette and adds slyly, "Hey, perhaps I will get nominated. I've dated enough people in this town — maybe even enough people to nominate me." She laughs hard, and then frowns again. "Or maybe I can't really direct — maybe I just got lucky."

Marshall shouldn't worry. With *Awakenings* she has crafted an inspired,

warm, intelligent and highly emotional film that successfully deals with the difficult and arcane subject of catatonia. Based on the book by distinguished British neurologist Oliver Sacks, *Awakenings* tells the story of a man named Leonard Lowe (played by De Niro) who has spent some 30 years in a catatonic state before he is almost miraculously brought back to life by neurologist Dr. Malcolm Sayer (Robin Williams), using a drug called L-DOPA.

"The film kind of fell into my lap," explains Marshall. "I read the script just after *Big*, and was completely fascinated with this world I didn't know. It moved me enormously and made me cry, and it stayed with me, although I didn't immediately think, 'I've got to do this.'"

In fact, to hear Marshall tell it, she took on the project almost out of a perverse sense of cowardice. "It's true; I wasn't really looking for a drama," she explains. "I was reading tons of scripts and there was one comedy that I really liked and almost thought of doing, but then I also thought, 'Then it'll have to be really funny and everyone will compare it to *Big* and say *Big* was funnier,' and I got scared. Then I thought, 'If I do a drama, they won't expect me to do it well.' I have backwards logic. Maybe I'll do a musical next time, or a western."

Once committed, however, Marshall pursued the project, which had been languishing at 20th Century Fox for several years, with tenacity. "I don't know why Fox didn't want to do it," she reports. "Perhaps they felt it was too depressing, who knows? But they said no in a very nice way, and then we took it to Columbia, which didn't feel that way at all. They were very enthusiastic from the start."

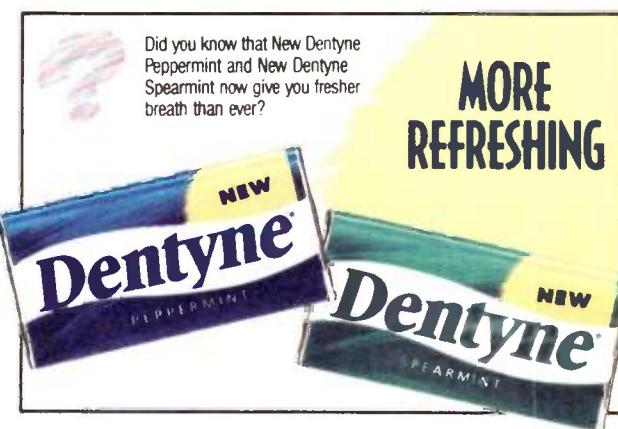
"Obviously, casting was particularly crucial in a film like this," adds Marshall, who breathed more easily when first De Niro and then Williams signed on. "I'd been looking for a project like this for quite a while, and I remember reading the script on a plane and starting to cry, I was so moved," recalls Williams. "The stewardess thought there was something wrong with me."

"At first, I wasn't quite sure which characters Bobby and Robin should play," continues Marshall, "so I considered reversing the roles and having Bobby play the doctor. He could have done either, and I did originally try to persuade him to play the doctor, because he is shy and withdrawn, so he was right for it. But he wanted to play the patient. And Robin could do the patients and imitate them wonderfully, but I don't know if that would have seemed too comedic. It was a tough decision, but I think it was the right one."

Marshall says that she had no difficulty keeping Williams' improvisational tendencies reined in. "I'm good at restraining comedy people," she laughs.

"In fact, he's a very well-trained actor, and I thought he did a wonderful, simple job in *Dead Poets' Society*. And thank God for his humor, because he was great in between takes and scenes, and he kept us entertained, because we were stuck in that hospital for many months, and it could have been really dreary. But he'd always snap right back into the role. Of course there were bits where he'd improvise more. There's a scene in a bathroom with a Swedish neuro-chemist, and Robin imitated his accent brilliantly. It was very funny, but it was wrong for the piece, so I cut it out, but I don't mind shooting it."

As for directing De Niro, Marshall says she was relatively unimimidated. "He's very sweet and polite, and I've known him for a while, so that really helps," she explains. Indeed, Marshall had originally cast De Niro in *Big*. "He couldn't do it in the end because of the deal," she says. "Anyway, when we first met about *Big*, I told him how honored I was that he'd accepted, and got



Columbia Pictures

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Dentyne

BECAUSE YOU JUST NEVER KNOW.

Dentyne



Williams in *Awakenings*: restraining his improvisational tendencies

a bit overwhelmed, and he said, 'Don't do that, it'll make me nervous. Just be straight with me, and honest. You can say anything and criticize whatever you want, but say it to me. Don't go off in the backroom and roll your eyes and complain to other people if something's wrong.' So I got all that out of my system.

"By the time we started this, it was, 'You want honesty, baby? You got it!'" she laughs. "Bobby's the one who started me off on researching actors. He told me to look at all his films, and said, 'If there's anything you want to see again, or never want to see, just tell me.' This was for *Big*, so I went through all his films and found it incredibly helpful. So now I do that with every actor I work with. I put all their films on cassette and watch them to see what habits they have — what you don't want to see, what they do when they're nervous, what they repeat."

To give the film as much grounding in reality as possible, Marshall decided to shoot on location at the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center in Brooklyn, a functioning psychiatric facility. The crew eventually spent the best part of three months holed up there.

"It was somewhat depressing," Marshall admits, "but no more so than anywhere else for me. I mean, I got depressed working all that time in the toy store for *Big*. So the hospital was like our second home, and almost like shooting on a soundstage. We'd walk past all the real patients on the first and second floors, and we became friendly after seeing them all every day. And of course the big advantage was that anytime anyone wasn't sure about their role, such as the nurses and orderlies, I could just send them downstairs and tell them to look."

The filmmakers also used a lot of the real patients in *Awakenings*, reports the director, "especially in the background and in the corridor scenes. And Waheedah, the hysterical woman, was a real patient. She's a schizophrenic outpatient. We started off by auditioning all these actors, but when they

had to suddenly start screaming, she was by far the most convincing. In fact, she was so good that I added another scene for her."

Eventually, Marshall ended up with over five hours of film, which had to be cut down to two. "We had to cut a lot of good stuff, including about 20 minutes at the end of the film," she says. "I shot this whole sequence where Sayer wakes Leonard again and sends him out on his own, and there's a lovely speech that Bobby gives at the end in voiceover.

"But when I saw it in context in the film, it was anti-climactic," she adds. "To have him wake up and go out on his own didn't really go anywhere dramatically. It seemed to me to be saying, 'If I can't live life perfectly, I don't want to live.' And that was against what I was saying in the rest of the film. It's tragic in a way that the drug only brought these people back temporarily, but there's also that message of hope. They experienced a miracle, and when we talked to Sacks and the staff who worked with them, they all felt the same way — you can never give up. You have to keep going, because you never know what lies ahead, what breakthrough you might make."

In a far less dramatic sense, the same might be said of Penny Marshall herself. She's come a

long way since her early TV appearance as Jack Klugman's secretary in *The Odd Couple*, a role that she owed to her producer/writer brother Garry (who, incidentally, directed one of last year's biggest hits, *Pretty Woman*).

"I think I just kept going out of fear," she says. "When I was on *The Odd Couple* I'd get so scared before saying even one line, I'd stand there and curse and then tell myself, 'I'm no good, so what difference does it make?' and then walk in and say, 'Mr. Madison, your car's parked on the wrong side of the street.' It was the same in *Laverne & Shirley*. And I'm still afraid as a director. You have a hundred people a day asking you questions — it's tough."

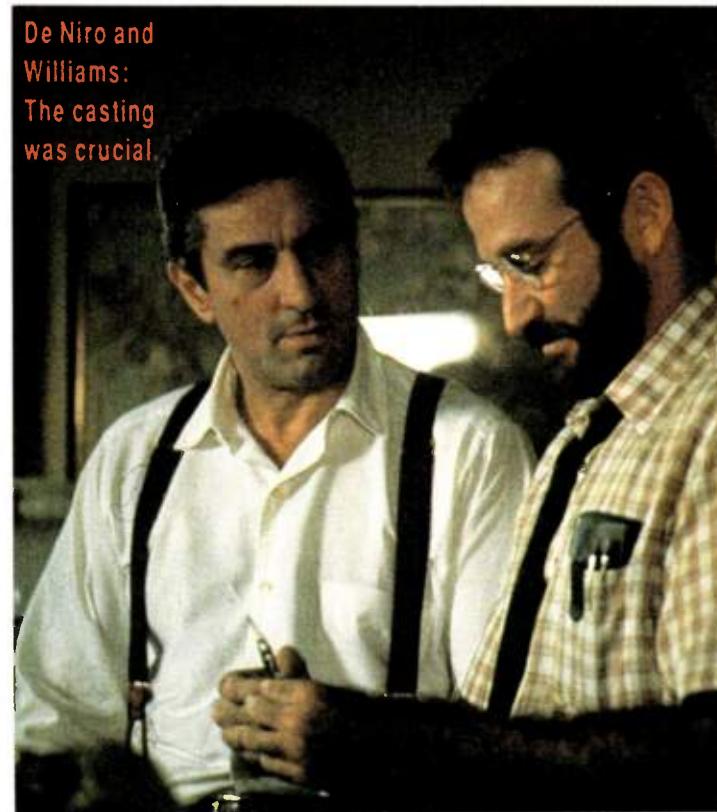
Marshall, who says she calls her brother for advice "every week," isn't shy about admitting that she finds directing less than enjoyable. "Garry calls me every week when I'm shooting to say, 'One more week down,' because at least half the job is just getting through it and staying on your feet under all that pressure," she remarks.

She also remains close to her ex-husband, Rob Reiner, to whom she was married for 10 years. "I called Rob after I saw *Misery* — I didn't realize I was that bad a wife!" she cracks. "I said, 'Are you still angry at me?' 'No, no, no, it's not you,' he said, 'it's just movies.'"

Marshall laughs hard, then grows pensive. "The big problem with movies is that they really do take over your life," she says. "I mean, I don't have a private life anymore."

Still, she doesn't seem that unhappy. "I miss acting sometimes, and I miss the *Laverne & Shirley* days because they were so much fun," she sums up. "But however much I whine — and I am a whiner — I like what I'm doing. I'm just constantly surprised at how it's all turned out."

De Niro and Williams:  
The casting was crucial.



Both photographs: Columbia Pictures

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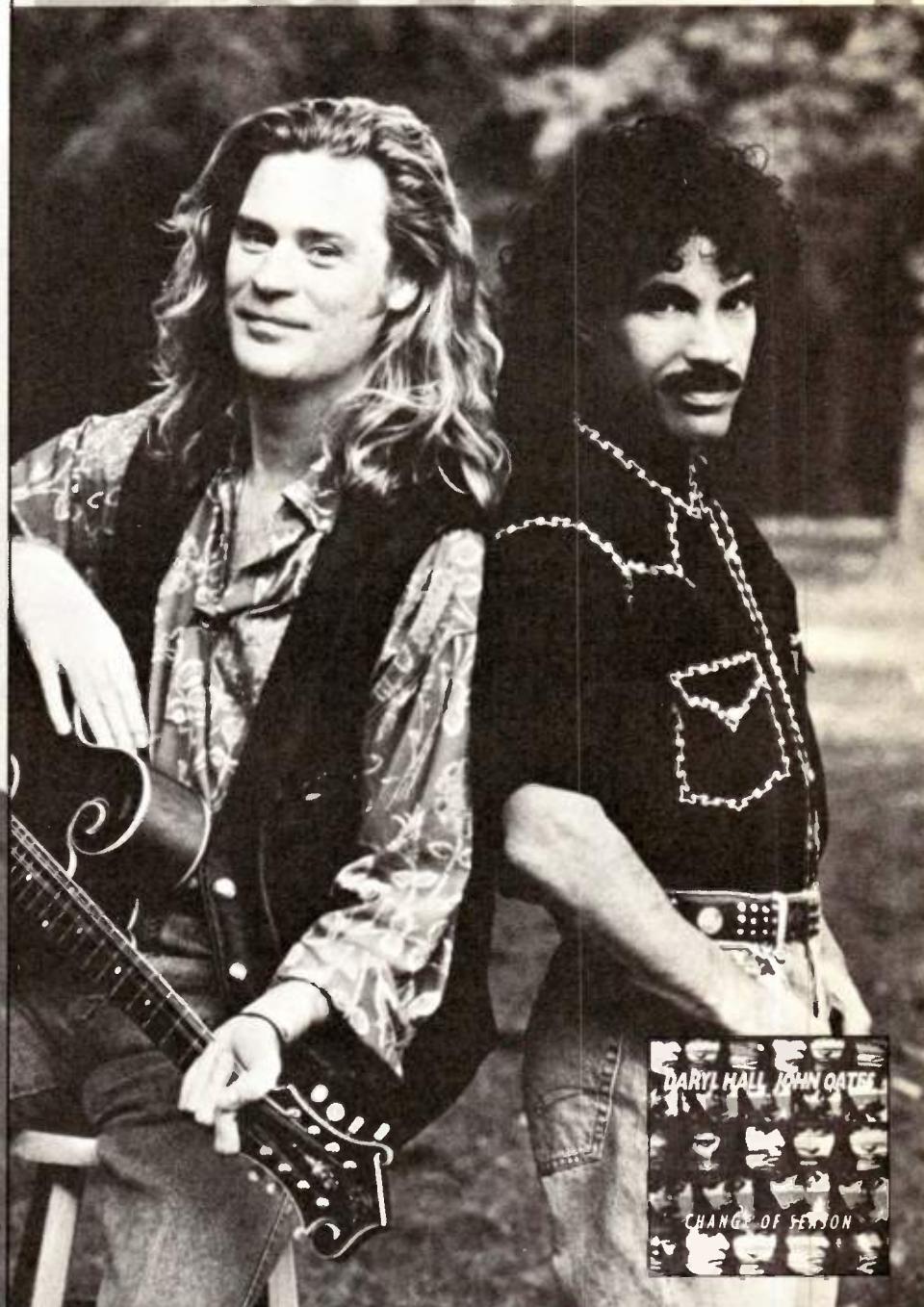
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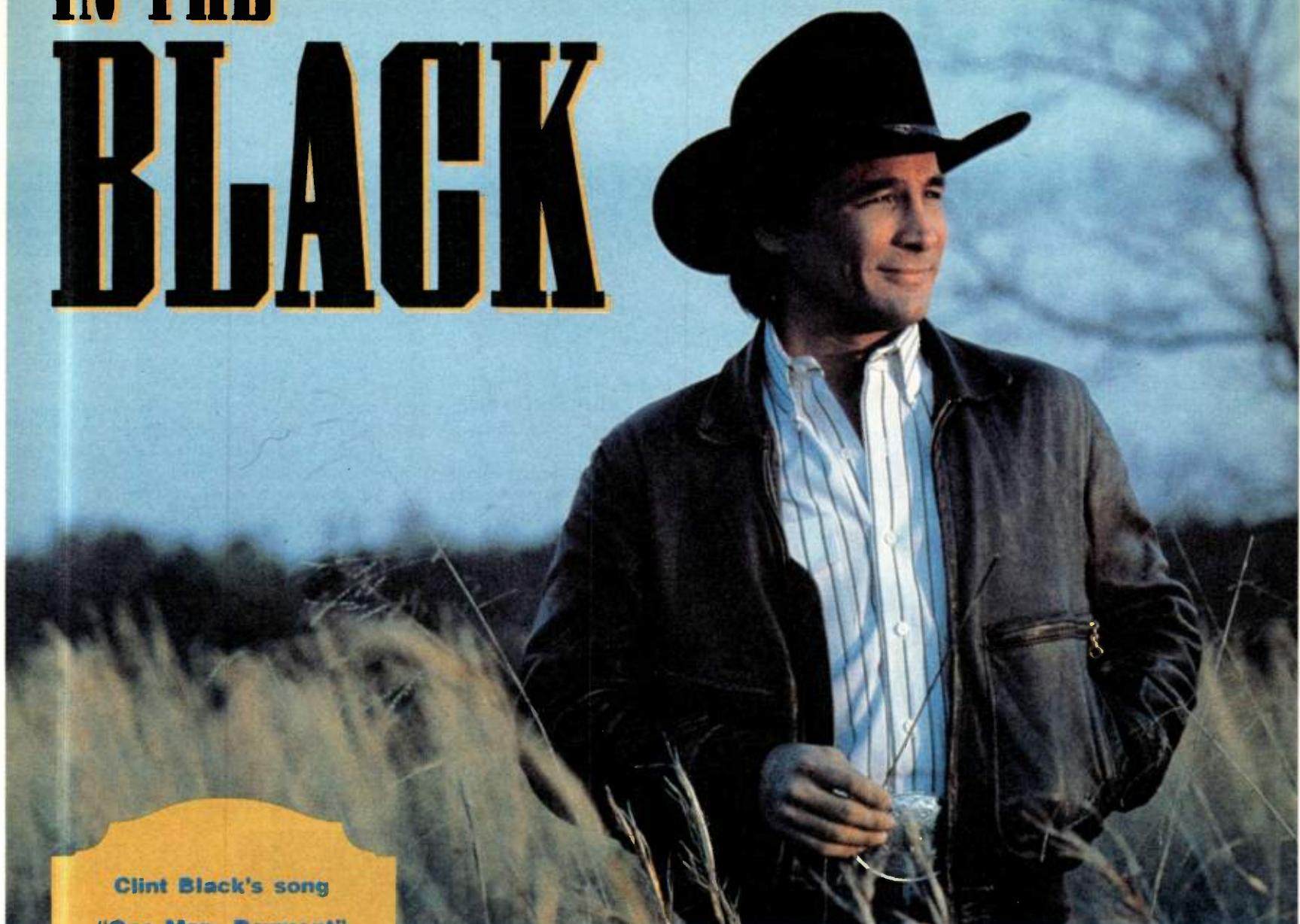
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*Their brilliant new album contains the powerful hits "Don't Hold Back Your Love" and "So Close."*

# IN THE BLACK



Clint Black's song

"One More Payment"

was written at a time  
when he was hard up for  
money, but now it's  
more likely to represent  
another influx of  
cash from this new  
country superstar's  
platinum album,

*Put Yourself In My Shoes.*

By Kerry Doole

**W**henever Clint Black launches into his song "One More Payment," he must chuckle inwardly at the irony of him delivering a line like "break my back to make those bank notes."

This is, after all, a young country singer/songwriter whose first two albums have probably sold in excess of four million copies by the time you read this. He's a recent graduate of the school of hard knocks, but now they're measuring his private vault in Fort Knox.

"You're right — I don't have any problems paying my truck notes now, y'know," he laughs amiably. "But when that song was written, I was really having to juggle some dollars around! I still have a pretty regular life," he adds. "I don't come home to a luxury high-rise condo or ride around in a limousine. The ups and downs of life, the problems and aggravations, are still there."

Which, strange as it may seem, is good news for Clint Black's audience. The strength of his songwriting is its insight into the frustrations, fears, dreams and joys of the people who buy his albums and attend his concerts — the lovelorn and the lonely, the pick-up drivers and the pick-up bar habituees.

At just 28, Clint Black is already writing songs with a maturity that makes him the envy of his elder peers. "It is most rewarding to me if I ask some important questions or make a point about something that no one has really considered," he says. "It's about looking at something in a different way."

"Maybe I will be killing time for an eternity; maybe death isn't the relief [that's the theme of his smash single "Killin' Time"]. When I can write on that, I feel it is a little more than a song. It's pondering something."

Clint's new album, *Put Yourself In My Shoes*, proves that this guy is for real, and it seems destined to duplicate the astounding double-platinum success of his 1989 debut, *Killin' Time*.

Although he says he doesn't want to push the line too far from traditional country music, the new record does exhibit a wider range of influences than his debut. "I'd agree with that," he says. "It probably is a little more Texan-sounding. There's the Western swing on 'Gulf Of Mexico,' the big-band swing thing on 'Put Yourself In My Shoes,' while songs like 'Where Are You Now' and 'Loving Blind' are more universal Nashville country."

Clint's pleasantly melodic voice proves capable of adapting to the various styles he explores, and the fact that he writes all his own material lends the album a credibility that's not always as evident in the work of vocal stylists like, for instance, Randy Travis, George Strait and Ricky Van Shelton.

"I really don't sing anything that isn't mine on record, although we do some cover tunes live," explains Clint. "It has always impressed me when someone who has created a song goes and records it. That always means more to me, but I don't know if the general public is aware of who writes what. This is a business oriented to the good song. People may love your voice to death, but if you release some terrible songs, they'll lose interest."

**C**lint deems himself "very fortunate" to be given a healthy dose of artistic freedom. "It is me dictating the direction of my music and the styles I put out. I wrote the songs, Hayden Nicholas [his guitarist and co-writer] and I demoed them in his garage, and we controlled and manipulated every bit of that until we got in with our producer James Stroud."

Such latitude is enviable for an artist who's still a youngster in country music terms, but Black is no mere novice. As he told *M.E.* in 1989, "I did about eight years work as a soloist [just acoustic guitar and harmonica] in clubs all over the Houston area."

Clint experienced his share of rejection over that period, but his career took off once he linked up with famed manager Bill Ham (Z.Z. Top). From that time on, the prospect of failure seemingly never crossed Clint's mind. "My whole attitude toward the business was, 'Let's go and do it,'" he explains. "I didn't realize that nobody had ever had their debut single go to No. 1 in 15 years [as he did with "A Better Man"]. I never even considered what the alternative was."

That naive enthusiasm has certainly been vindicated by Black's phenomenal success. The days of serenading the happy hour crowd in noisy bars must seem a long way away, but Clint believes that they were necessary. "If I hadn't gone through that, I wouldn't be here now," he says. "If a big break had come along when I was 18 or 22, it would have been wasted. I needed to learn my craft to the extent where I can sit down and write a song and be successful at it without having to be inspired by personal experience. It's a lot of work now, but it's nothing like singing to no one for four hours in a bar!"

Clint acknowledges that the demands that are now made on his time can be a distraction. "It does kind of get in the way of the fishing, writing, lots of things," he says. "I separate the year into three main activities — writing, recording, and touring. Whenever I'm touring, the writing will take the back seat, or go in the trunk!"

**I**n these boom times for country music, Clint Black's swift ascendancy to the top of the charts is being challenged by a rich crop of other young contenders — among them Garth Brooks, Alan Jackson, Doug Stone and Vince Gill. But Clint insists that any rivalry is definitely friendly. "Growing up as we do in this society, there's competitiveness, even in things like bowling and little league, but if you're lucky, it's friendly," he says. "We give each other a hard time; we joke about our blunders, rid-

icule each other strictly for fun [the 'Clint squint' is a fave industry target], but I don't see anybody out there who has taken it the wrong way."

Similarly, Clint is aware that his own popularity mirrors the increased acceptance of country music as a dynamic genre. "This is a great feeling," he admits. "People come up and say, 'I never listen to country music, but I listen to you.' I've had thrash rockers come up and say 'I don't like country, but

dropped it because he was probably going to sing it. After my set, he invited me up to sing it with him. When I sing along with records, I never sing along with the singer, so I have all these harmony lines to his songs that Jimmy's probably never heard. We did three songs together and I got a raised eyebrow from him a couple of times!"

Along with the platinum records and the industry trophies, Black is especially proud of the peer respect his work has generated. "That is real important to me, for these are people I've looked up to," he says. "Not just the artists, but musicians, engineers, radio people, etc. It's great that the fans love you and buy your records, but the people you work with are the faces you see."

Clint gives the impression of unflappability in the face of just about everything. "All the fame, the attention, the disruptions that come over being recognized at dinner; these things aren't really bothersome for me," he says. "Having people interested in my personal life doesn't really bother me. I'm a very open person anyway; I like to share things. I do have a line that I consider as far as I can go, and I'm real comfortable with that. I don't have any problems with somebody pushing all the way to that. I'd say the only downside of this is living in hotels and the small aggravations that come with travelling."

**S**peculation on the love life of this very eligible bachelor heats up with his revelation that the girl in "Put Yourself In My Shoes" is "the same one who inspired some of the songs on *Killin' Time*. She's off enjoying a life of her own, and so am I."

It seems that it is his career that is No. 1 in Clint's life at present. "Right now, all I can hope for is to keep on doing this to the point where I can go out on tour as a headliner, choose my dates, make records with these great musicians," he says. "If I can achieve that, great. Then maybe I can start a family and be the old man with kids some day!"

Clint's immediate plans include looking for a place to rent in his hometown of Houston, and area residents can probably look for him to flash by in his Porsche sports car. That beloved toy was actually a present from his producer, James Stroud, when *Killin' Time* struck gold, and it was recently the target of a televised prank on a Nashville Network show.

"I was in a Nashville restaurant when I saw a guy towing my car away, saying it was repossessed because the owner still owed thirty grand on it," he says. "I kind of knew it was a joke, but I didn't realize it was being filmed. That made it even more hilarious."

Any revenge stunt in the works? "I figured Stroud was probably the perpetrator, but if he's given me a Porsche, he's earned the right to play a joke on me with it. I'll leave him be!" **me**

**"This is a business oriented to the good song. People may love your voice, but if you release terrible songs, they'll lose interest."**

you're OK.' Inevitably, they're going to find Garth's OK, and Alan Jackson, Reba, and Lorrie Morgan. People just haven't been exposed, and we've had the opportunity to bring that out."

Clint doesn't even take exception to being lumped into that "men with hats" category for young traditional country singers. "There's this thing of comparing me to Roy Rogers," he admits. "Well, I used to say that Randy Travis was like Merle Haggard and George Jones put together. That's a natural thing, so it doesn't bother me."

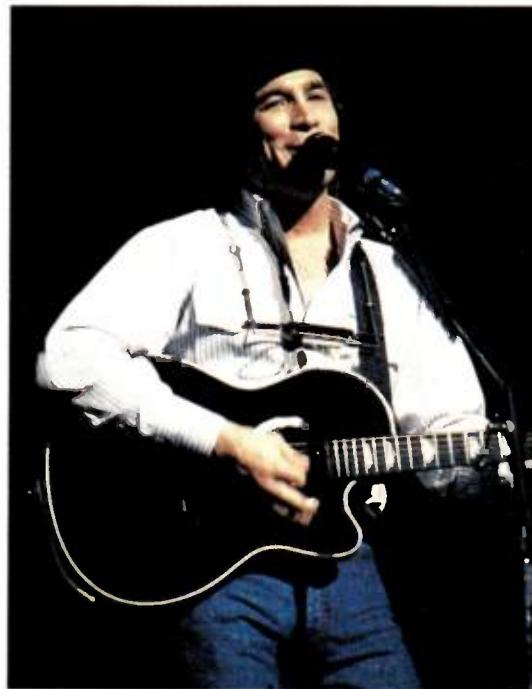
Clint's own all-time heroic musical figure remains Merle Haggard. "I haven't met him yet, but hopefully I'll be able to," he says. "I'd like to hear him sing 'You're Gonna Leave Me Again' [off *Killin' Time*]. I was putting all my Merle into that song; I was picturing his face when I wrote it. I grew up imitating the sounds of singers; you picture their face meshed with your own."

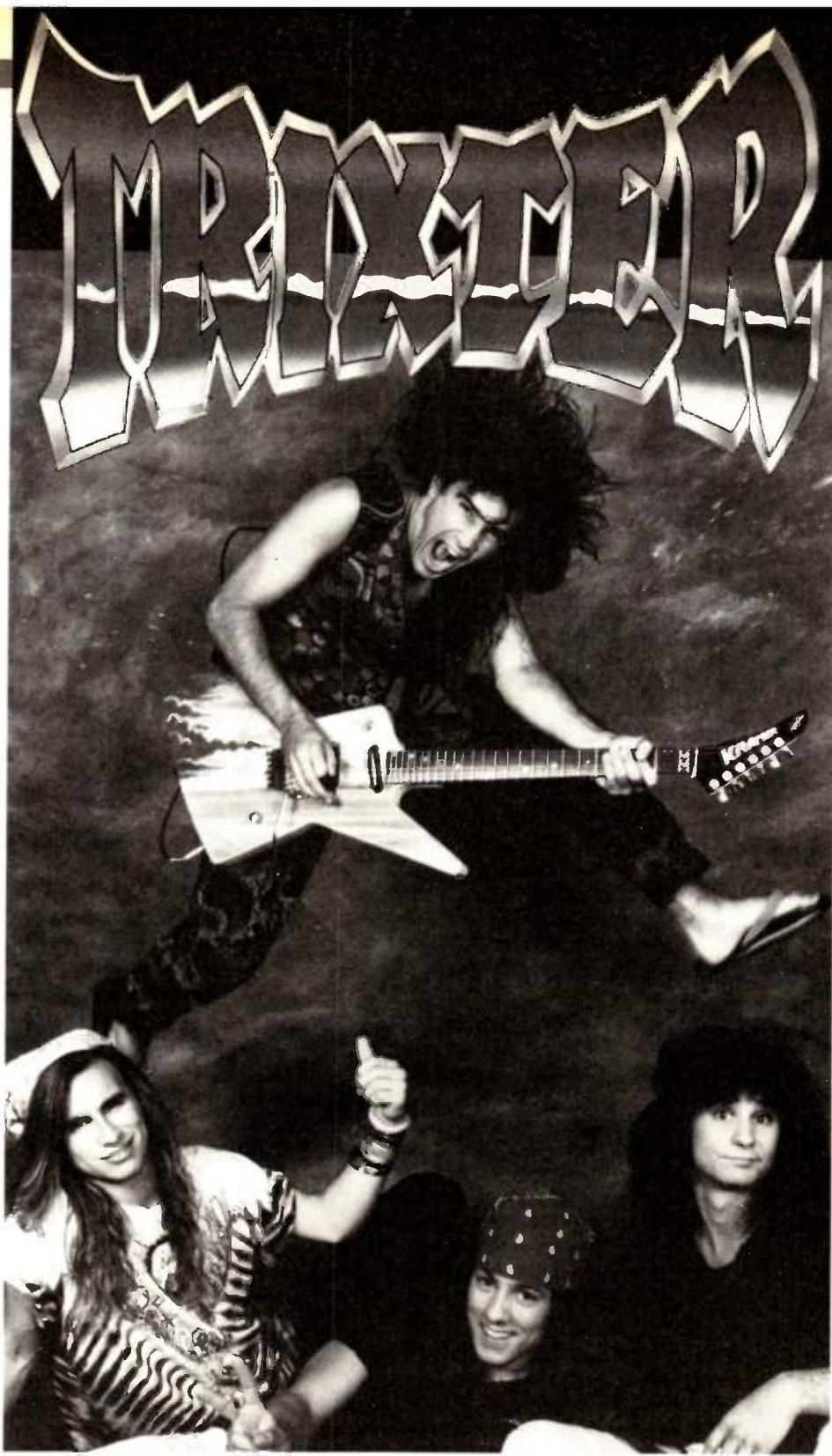
Interestingly, Clint's current listening is big on West Coast folk and rock — "Jimmy Buffett, James Taylor, Jackson Browne, Steely Dan, Little Feat, Eric Johnson, blues, The Vaughan Brothers."

The mention of that last name brings a pause. "That was such a tragedy with Stevie Ray," he says. "Three of my crew were on the road with him for several years. We were sitting in a Chicago airport when we got the news. These guys had to grieve without any privacy; it was real tough. It's an old cliche, but that makes you want to live every day."

Even though his albums currently outsell those by the likes of Alabama and Jimmy Buffett, Clint has been touring as an opening act for these artists, and he singles out a triple bill with Buffett and Little Feat as a career highlight to date.

"It was in Jimmy's hometown of Mobile, Alabama," he recalls. "Earlier in the year I'd been covering 'Son Of A Sailor' in my set, but told him I





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# Road Warriors

The lot of a thrash metal band like Annihilator is not an easy one: There's little radio or video support, gigs in low-life venues for die-hard fans only and a tour diary that reads a bit like the script of *Spinal Tap*...

By Keith Sharp



Jeff Waters huddles in a corner of his cramped dressing room and wrings a few rudimentary chords from the fretboard of his battered Hamer guitar before almost reluctantly heading downstairs to join the rest of his band for the night's performance.

The 24-year-old Ottawa native is the driving force behind Annihilator, a five-piece Vancouver-based outfit that's earned rave reviews in Europe but is almost unheard of in its native country. Three weeks ago, Annihilator was selling out venues like London's famous Marquee Club, and earning lavish praise for its live European shows and its second album, *Never Neverland*.

Tonight is a different story, however: the band is headlining a triple bill in the northwest L.A. wilderness of Reseda, and though the venue is cavernous, the turnout is scarce. But Annihilator co-manager Gary Taylor is nonplussed. He's lured a Columbia Records talent scout to check out his boys, and is happy to see the bigwig actually survive through the encore.

Playing in conditions like this is a situation that constantly faces bands like Annihilator. Branded by a sound that is neither commercial nor radio-friendly, nor accepted by the masses, thrash metal bands have few options when touring North America. Their goal is to be the next Metallica or Iron Maiden — renegades that never compromised in search of commercial acceptance. Yet there are few shortcuts to achieving such lofty aspirations. Their lot in life is enthusiastic but financially strapped independent record labels, low-budget tours through low-life venues and only diehard fans on hand to uplift their collective spirits.

If Rob Reiner had selected a young metal band to document in *Spinal Tap*, he couldn't have found better candidates than Annihilator on this tour. That's not a put-down, but simply a fact of life in an environment that's often far from glamorous. Luckily, Waters and co. are seasoned enough pros to give it their full shot under the most adverse circumstances, and they blast through their decibel-shattering repertoire this evening with enthusiasm, buoyed no doubt by the presence of the A&R scout.

Annihilator stands out among thrash metal acts because Waters is not a typical thrash metal guitarist. There's a touch of melody and finesse that comes from his being an accomplished player, and his material is full of intricate nuances and pattern changes. It helps also that Virginia-born lead singer Coburn Pharr and Vancouverites Dave Davis (guitar), Wayne Darley (bass) and Ray Hartmann (drums) lend an element of sophistication to the musicianship. Songs like their trademark "Alice In Hell," "The Fun Palace" and "Road To Ruin" are quite visionary in their lyrical scope.

But tonight it doesn't seem as though that's paying off. "That was a bit of a bummer," scowls Waters, towelling excess sweat from his long, black, stringy hair as he slides into a seat on the "metal monster" bus which is Annihilator's home for the next six weeks. "San Francisco wasn't very good either. It's definitely our weakest market, but we've got to play here to get the recognition. Still, things should get better as we go along."

Co-managers Gary Taylor and Peter Karroll make up one of the unlikeliest management partnerships you

could imagine. Taylor, a former drummer with the Vancouver Symphony, was the ex-owner of Vancouver's notorious Gary Taylor's Rock Room (hot bands upstairs, hot strippers downstairs) before leaving to manage British blues legend Long John Baldry. On a flight to the MIDEM music conference in the South of France to shop Baldry and country performer Rocky Swanson, Taylor met Carroll, on his way there to shop local metal act Assault. They decided to join forces, and while they were at the conference a representative from German independent label SPB tipped Carroll off about a demo tape he'd received from a kid in Ottawa. Carroll, a former metal guitarist in his own right (The Carroll Brothers), scooped up the tape, flew back to Vancouver, jumped into his car and slipped the demo into his deck.

"I think I'm a pretty good guitarist, but when I heard this kid play, I was so amazed I was literally stuck to my car seat," he says over breakfast the next morning. "He was everything a young guitarist could want to be. But he also had this sound that was a cross between punk and heavy metal that blew me away."

The groundwork for securing a label had already been laid by Waters, who'd sent demos to several. German-based Roadrunner made the best pitch, even though they knew Waters didn't have a band and had not yet performed his material live. Hartmann and Darley were quickly recruited from Vancouver bands; Davis was also contacted but rejected because, according to Waters, "He didn't seem too enthusiastic when I called him."

Former D.O.A. bassist Randy Rampage was hauled in as lead singer, and Taylor and Carroll finally convinced Waters to hire Davis, who was brought in for the release of their debut, *Alice In Hell*, with Roadrunner using its German-based contacts to immediately send the band on a European tour. "The band was pretty raw," remembers Taylor. "But the record got great reviews and everyone loved Randy as a frontman. He was pretty wild."

Buoyed by this initial success, Annihilator returned to the States to tour with Testament—which was an educational experience for the band. "I thought we were pretty good, but I remember watching Testament with my mouth wide open," says Waters. "It made me realize how much work we still had to do."

That tour ended prematurely when excessive drinking problems—with Rampage in particular—forced management to reassess personnel. "It was getting really messy," says Davis. "We never knew what shape he would be in for a particular gig." As a result, Rampage was dismissed and strict anti-drinking edicts were agreed upon. A replacement for Rampage was found in the form of Pharr, who not only provided the vocal and visual requirements, but also proved to be an accomplished writer, contributing lyrics to "The Fun Palace" and *Never Neverland's* title track.

A wildly successful second European tour proved that Pharr was a more than capable replacement for the popular Rampage, and glowing reviews cast a favorable light on the new LP. Yet as the metal monster rumbles southwards en route to the next gig in Tijuana, Mexico, the sobering reality of the current tour dims the lustre of past successes.

Judas Priest's *Painkiller* blasts out over the stereo as band members stare blankly out at the smog that blackens the air over San Diego. Boredom is coun-

tered by the playing of practical jokes—at one point animal cookies are slipped down the back of Waters' track pants as he bends over to find a new cassette. "I went to the bathroom and thought I'd had an accident," he laughs, "until I saw pieces of shit shaped like rhinos!"

Although the band's last visit to Tijuana was well received, Mexican customs is bad at the best of times, and a bus full of long-haired musicians is asking for trouble. Because of that, one of the support acts, Reverend, has decided to pass on this gig. An escort from the club, Iguana's, is reassuring, however, and he guides the bus through customs without any major delay.

Iguana's is located at the Pueblo Amigo Plaza, literally a stone's throw from the border. A large turnout was anticipated, but as the band's gear is hauled off the bus (knocking huge holes out of the interior woodwork, much to the driver's chagrin), it's apparent that the ranks are going to be thin. Across the plaza, Waters and Davis enjoy a brief dinner break, and Waters explains that he gave up playing in cover bands around Ottawa because no one he played with was committed to being a serious musician.

"All my musical friends were into thinking they were stars because they had a small local following," he says. "I thought, 'What if I just sat in my basement, did some demos and sent them out to underground metal fanzines?' I did that and got all sorts of reaction—I got a record deal without ever having to play live."

That original batch of demos provided the core for *Alice In Hell*, and with management, a worldwide record deal and a new group of musicians assembled, Waters figured he had defied the odds in putting his project together.

"When I first heard the demos I thought, 'This is a real challenge! It's a lot heavier than most music,'" says Davis. As well, unlike the death, blood and satanic overtones of much thrash lyrics, Waters has opted for more challenging subject matter. *Alice In Hell* dealt with psychological illness, which is a theme he pursues on "Never Neverland," "The Fun Palace" and "Phantasmagoria" on album No. 2.

Then there's "Stonewall," which deals with water pollution. "I took a walk to a nearby river," he explains. "It looked calm and peaceful, yet alive. A closer look and smell, though, changed my mood into a feeling of disgust. The water was full of raw sewage and chemicals. Although I'm not about to hold up protest slogans and join Greenpeace, 'Stonewall' is my way of bringing the subject up."

After the Iguana's gig, which proved to be a major non-event, a thick-necked customs official stands guard outside of the tour bus as a specially trained terrier sniffs out potential caches of drugs and other contraband. It even gives the bus septic tank a quick once over before romping away in search of other targets. "You'd be surprised," the official says. "We had one Mexican try to sneak through the border in a bus septic tank. Had a right time trying to arrest him—no cop wanted to pick him up."

As we head northward, the band members are cheered by the news that Sunday's concert at Jeze-

bels in Anaheim is sold out. Pharr, who was brought up in Memphis, is explaining that his musical preference leans more toward Southern rock, but says he gets off on the intensity of a metal audience. Meanwhile, bassist Darley is struggling with an upset stomach and there's genuine concern about his fitness for tonight's gig.

It becomes a moot point, however, when tour manager Andy Omilianowski announces there's been a slight miscalculation in the ticket count—only 20 have actually been sold. "Let's cancel," shouts Waters in disgust, and as the band members head disconsolately for their hotel rooms, Omilianowski directs the bus over to the venue to inform the promoters of the cancellation.

"It's back on again," Omilianowski reports shortly afterward, getting back on the bus. "The promoter's booked the PA, and it would get messy if we tried to pull out."

Dame Fortune would, however, end up smiling on Annihilator this evening. By 9 p.m. a sizable crowd is massing and by the time the headliners hit the stage, the club is full. Darley has recovered, and the band turns up the energy level in response to the first major crowd of the tour. The band exudes a seemingly natural charisma, the slamdancers are wreaking havoc on the dancefloor and everyone is drawn in by the magnetism of the music.

So the tour went for the next six weeks—up and down. But a major hitch took place in Orlando, Florida, when Davis inexplicably gathered his gear together, jumped off the bus and left the band. Internal conflicts and personal religious beliefs were cited as the reasons. The band elected to finish the tour as a four-piece, with Waters as the sole guitarist.

And their problems weren't over. In Toronto, Annihilator was supposed to open for Faith No More before 3,200 fans. However, Faith No More's management had them dropped from the bill, and Waters and co. were left to observe the event from the club's V.I.P. section.

But just like the conclusion of *Spinal Tap*, when the band finds out they have a hit record in Japan, great news did reach the Annihilator camp. They had been selected to open for Judas Priest in Europe,

**"I thought, 'What if I sat in my basement, did some demos and sent them out to underground fanzines?' I did, and I got a record deal without ever having to play live."**

meaning major venues and another chance to increase their popularity on the other side of the Atlantic.

"We're not yet in the same league as Priest or any of the big metal bands, but tours like this will get us there," remarks Waters. "We're kind of like a little drip in a big pond. But like a drip of water, we keep dripping away, writing better songs, making better albums and becoming more proficient as a live act. We've got a ways to go yet—but we are getting there."

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# BackBeat

NEWS AND REVIEWS OF MUSIC, FILM AND VIDEO



## NEW RELEASES

### C&C MUSIC FACTORY

*Gonna Make You Sweat*  
Sony

C&C are Clivilles and Cole, the smoking producers of dance/Top 40 smash *Seduction* as well as others; the Music Factory is augmented by rapper Freedom Williams and various wailing divas, who cook on top of slammin' gui-

tar-driven club grooves that smell suspiciously like they are also going to do some damage on the radio. With Top 40 sliding ever deeper into dance/R&B, C&C bring their bulletproof jams into house territory, but they often cover their tracks, as it were, with guitar samples that could spell crossover with a capital W, as in white audiences. Just as Tone-Loc snuck his pop/hip-hop into the backdoor of the mainstream with the subliminal seduction of *Van Halen* samples, C&C are making ear candy for the unadventurous — who might, however, find themselves unexpected-

ly grooving along with hardcore klub kids. There is nothing radical and revolutionary about the raps of Freedom Williams; he's merely an excellent rapper. By the time you read this, "Gonna Make You Sweat" will have been a No. 1 smash on at least some of the charts, and "Here We Go, Let's Rock 'N' Roll," "Things That Make You Go Hmm...," or practically any of the songs on this album will be following it to the top. "Oooh Baby" has the same slow groove thing that made *Seduction*'s "Heartbeat" work so well. The Klymaxx-sounding "What's This Word

Called Love?" and the new jack of "Givin' It To You" are more on the black radio tip. "Just A Touch Of Love" and "Live Happy" are a little too house for radio, but this is an uncannily well-constructed set of pop/dance/R&B/rap fodder that the producers were obviously not afraid to put their own names on.

**Peter Wetherbee \*\*\*\***

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

## NEW RELEASES

### BLUE RODEO

Casino

East/West/Warners

If rave reviews and peer respect were negotiable currency, Canadian rock 'n' rollers Blue Rodeo would now own the casino, rather than still be spinning the roulette wheel. With any justice and luck, however, their third album might hit the jackpot. *Casino* is a far more compact piece of work than 1989's intriguingly rambling *Diamond Mine*. It is still a musically dynamic, diverse album, but producer Pete Anderson (Dwight Yoakam) now makes them sound like one band, not four or five. Singer-songwriters Greg Keelor (the gruff voice) and Jim Cuddy (the smooth one) again alternate lead vocals, but it's their harmonies that really set Blue Rodeo apart from such hyped roots rock bands as The BoDeans. You can hear snatches of The Everly Brothers, The Byrds and The Beatles in their sound, but this is not just another retro outfit stuck in a '60s timewarp. Despite the uplifting feel boosted by Bobby Wiseman's keyboard and accordion flourishes, the lyrical tone of *Casino* mirrors the desolate, melancholy mood of the record's cover shot. The first single, "Til I Am Myself Again," is an ode to existential doubts ("the half-finished bottles of inspiration lie like ghosts in my room") that are then repeated in "Time." The only real lyrical lapse comes when Keelor (presumably) indulges in some Dylan-on-speed stylings ("You're a freaked out flathead hollow-eyed bad hallucination") on the acerbic "Two Tongues." The band's musical and vocal touch, however, never falters, and Anderson makes a welcome appearance on rockin' rave-up "You're Everywhere." In all, a record you can bank on.

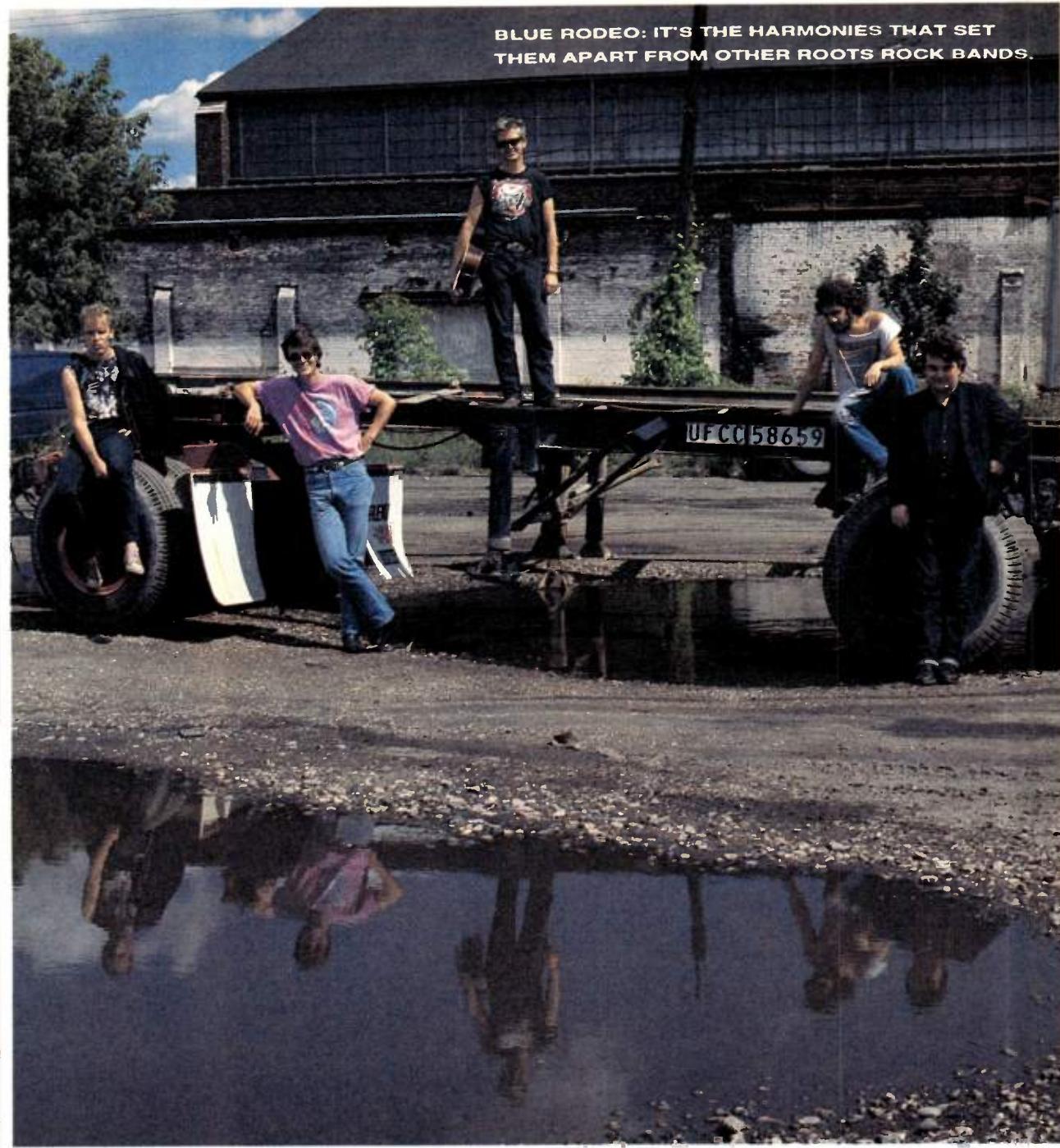
**Kerry Doole \*\*\*\***

### CINDERELLA

Heartbreak Station

Mercury

Of all the glam-rock bands that have rolled down the pike in recent years, Cinderella has maintained a level of credibility for sticking to the basics and not going overboard on glam imagery. This is mainly due to the leadership of vocalist/guitarist/songwriter Tom Keifer, whose perception and interpretation of rock's blues roots have kept the band honest. Originally targeted as a Bon Jovi clone, Cinderella has succeeded in forging its own identity by delivering a level of musicianship that reflects vintage rock basics. Like Aerosmith and, more recently, The Black Crowes, Cinderella acknowledges the subtleties and



BLUE RODEO: IT'S THE HARMONIES THAT SET THEM APART FROM OTHER ROOTS ROCK BANDS.

nuances of power rock. They know when to crank up the decibel count but also how to counterbalance with acoustic and slide guitar and — in the case of "One For Rock And Roll" — a countrified pedal steel sound. Keifer's crusty vocals provide a natural raw edge, the arrangements are varied and diverse in direction and the musicianship is uniformly excellent. Yes, there's the sheer rock energy of "The More Things Change" and "Shelter Me." But there's also the complexity of the title track, complete with string arrangements from Zeppelin's John Paul Jones, and the gritty blues guitarwork on "Dead Man's Road." As Cinderella's third album, *Heartbreak Station* exudes both confidence and maturity from a band that's rapidly shaping up as a rock 'n' roll heavyweight.

**Keith Sharp \*\*\*\***

### HARMONY

Let There Be Harmony

Virgin

This album has a lot going for it: a beautiful female performer who can rap, sing and dance, and production from none other than KRS-One, leader of Boogie Down Productions. Harmony got it all goin' on, with songs that are fun, rich with pride and intelligence (without the pompous, pseudo-fierce poseur bluster of, say, Isis or Queen Mother Rage), melodic and funky. Her singing is not exactly divine, but her vibe is together enough to carry the whole project. The spirituality of "Sing Unto God," for example, is sincere enough to make this a crucial groove, augmented by the reggae keyboard playing of Sidney Mills, who shares production credit with KRS-One. Mills'

influence is clearly in rendering more musical KRS-One's bare-boned beats, which provides some depth, along with Harmony's multi-faceted talents. While the music doesn't compare to the state-of-the-art production of most dance/R&B/Top 40 hits, it has a down-home, funky appeal — read independence of vision and lack of fear at being feminine — that transcends current trends. Like BDP's albums, "exhibits" of speeches on culture and society are interspersed with the songs, and poems directed at the black man as racial stereotype start and finish the album — first with compassion, and finally with bitterness that turns to a call for, well, harmony. "Poundcake" was a great first single and video, but the solid mid-tempo groove of "I Want To Thank You" is the song that could break Harmony to the masses.

**P. W. \*\*\*\***

# BURNING THROUGH



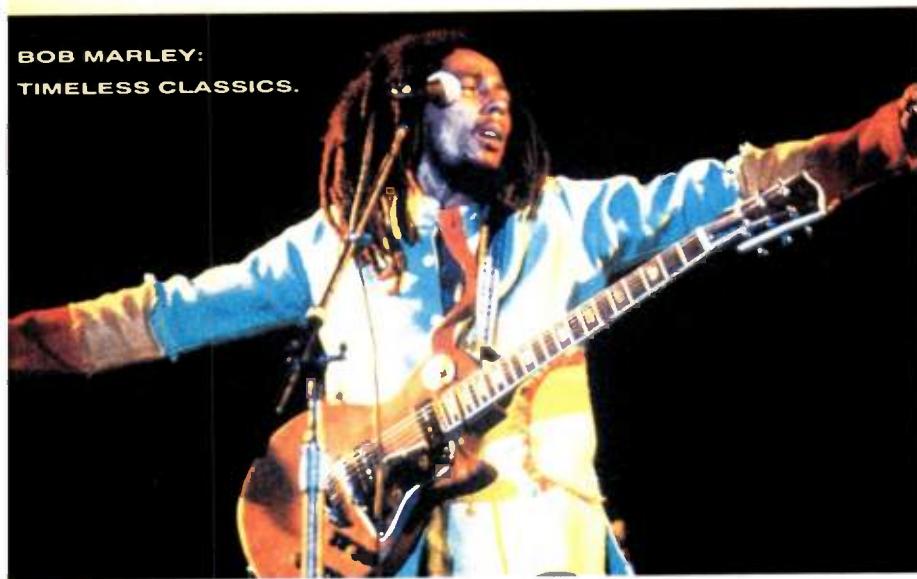
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BOB MARLEY:  
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## NEW RELEASES

### GRAHAM PARKER

*Struck By Lightning*  
RCA/BMG

Graham Parker has a furious voice: not virtuosic, not even skilful, really, just furious. His monotonic rage, employed whether the lyrics are interpreted in ballad form or folk-rock or even faux reggae, never lets up. That's the problem with the late-'80s, early-'90s version of Parker's work. Since he joined RCA's roster a couple of years ago as a blue-chip artist, he's been releasing records of thirty- something angst at a pace of one album per nine months or so. Now, I've got nothing against a guy rediscovering his creative stride, or finding that obscured peak he once eyed long ago, or catching his second wind, or whatever hoary cliche you wanna use, but when you sing as furiously as Parker does, you've got to have a rock band backing you up. I don't care if he wants to continue his lifelong fixation with Dylan-esque imagery on "They Murdered The Clown." He can continue to put down young people's likes and dislikes in musical taste (Whitesnake on the last album; Led Zep and Paula Abdul here), as long as he rocks out when he does it. But he doesn't here, which is the point. Parker, as well as other white fake-soul men like Peter Gabriel, has certain limitations built into the resonance of his voice. When there's a lack of excitement in the instrumentation, the music can become an endurance test. To wit, after four spins, I remember a few phrases and about five choruses. Because he's furious and his music is tame, monotony wins the day. That's not something you'd say about any of the six original Graham Parker and The Rumour albums: they rock, they roll, they swing. This doesn't. Back to schooldays, Graham.

**Bill Reynolds** **\*\*1/2**

### SUSANNA HOFFS

*When You're A Boy*  
Sony

There's no doubt that Susanna Hoffs was the driving force behind The Bangles. She wrote most of the material, possessed a distinctive voice and projected a seductive charm that turned many men into instant jello. Using these resources to forge a solo career may be a little more challenging for her, though. For one thing, although her voice and natural charm will create some headway, Hoffs isn't really distinctive enough to go against heavyweights like Janet Jackson, Sinead O'Connor and Whitney Houston. Furthermore, the material on this debut effort is passable enough for pop mainstream but doesn't project anything new or innovative, her one bold move being a lackluster cover of Bowie's "Boys Keep Swinging." The lead-off single, "My Side Of The Bed," and other tracks like "Unconditional Love" and "Something New" will no doubt glean their share of airplay attention. Yet Hoffs is going to need more than a pretty face and impressive past credentials to make her solo venture fly.

**K.S.** **\*\*1/2**

### BOB MARLEY

*Talkin' Blues*  
Tuff Gong/Island

May 11, 1991, will mark the 10th anniversary of the death of Bob Marley, and Island Records is planning major events to honor the legacy of this musical pioneer. Launching the Marley year is *Talkin' Blues*, an album compiling material recorded between 1973 and 1975 — a period many of us consider Marley's most creative. Seven of the 11 songs are taken from a 1973 "live in the studio" session in San Francisco (the sound quality is superb).

while two alternate versions of *Natty Dread* songs, "Talkin' Blues" and "Bend Down Low," a dynamic 1975 live recording of the classic "I Shot The Sheriff" and a previously unreleased, somewhat unfinished love song, "Am A Do," round out the tape. Original Wailer Peter Tosh makes his presence felt on the earlier material (he sings lead on "You Can't Blame The Youth"), while another fine reggae singer, Joe Higgs, deputizes for Bunny Wailer. The Bob Marley of this era stressed militance and solidarity rather than the mellower love songs he favored later, and the band's distinctive hard reggae groove and chanted backing vocals proved the ideal vehicle for the Marley message. The reggae beat has gradually been assimilated into the pop mainstream — unfortunately, often in a wimpy, watered-down form — but there's no denying the timeless power of this material. Interspersed with the songs are extracts taken from a 1975 Marley interview. The Rasta patois makes deciphering his comments a real challenge, but that is just another reason to give this excellent collection the attention it deserves.

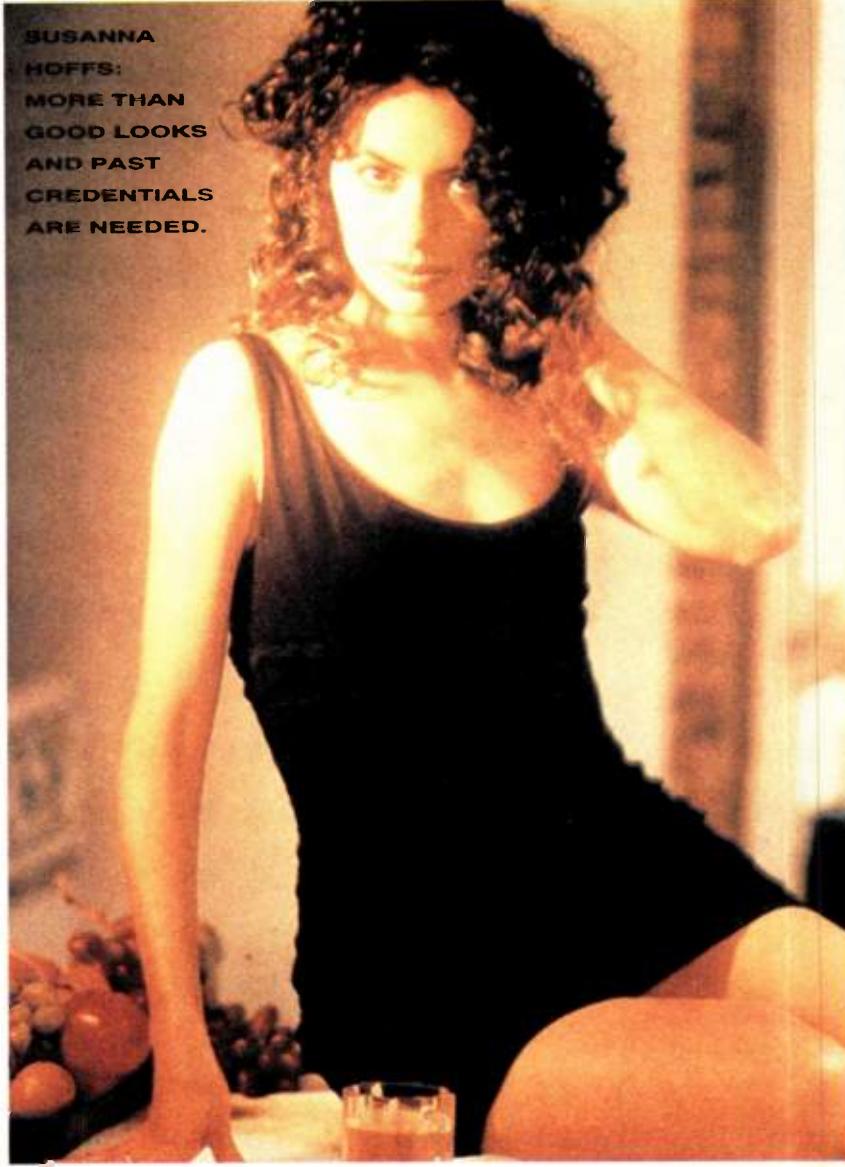
**K.D.** **\*\*\*\***

### JELLYBEAN

*Spillin' The Beans*  
Atlantic

Disco music is so formulaic that it's unfair to criticize someone for floundering in the mire, but mixmeister Jellybean Benitez should have been able to come up with an album with more than two and a half good tracks. Niki Harris is a great singer. But wouldn't everyone have been better served if the album's first single, "What's It Gonna Be?", didn't sound so much like "Vogue"? Isn't Jellybean sick of referring to his past? Two other vocalists contribute as well. One, Cindy Valentine, offers a flat rendition of "What's Up?" DeAnna Eve, on the other hand, serves up one of the good cuts — "Love Is A Contact Sport." On this song and "Absent Minded Lover," Benitez shifts from Hi-NRG to shuffle, to great effect, but the latter song loses marks because of the goofy "vocals" provided by Jellybean. The fabulously funky title track truly cooks. But Jellybean only really bounces when he remembers it's not 1983 anymore.

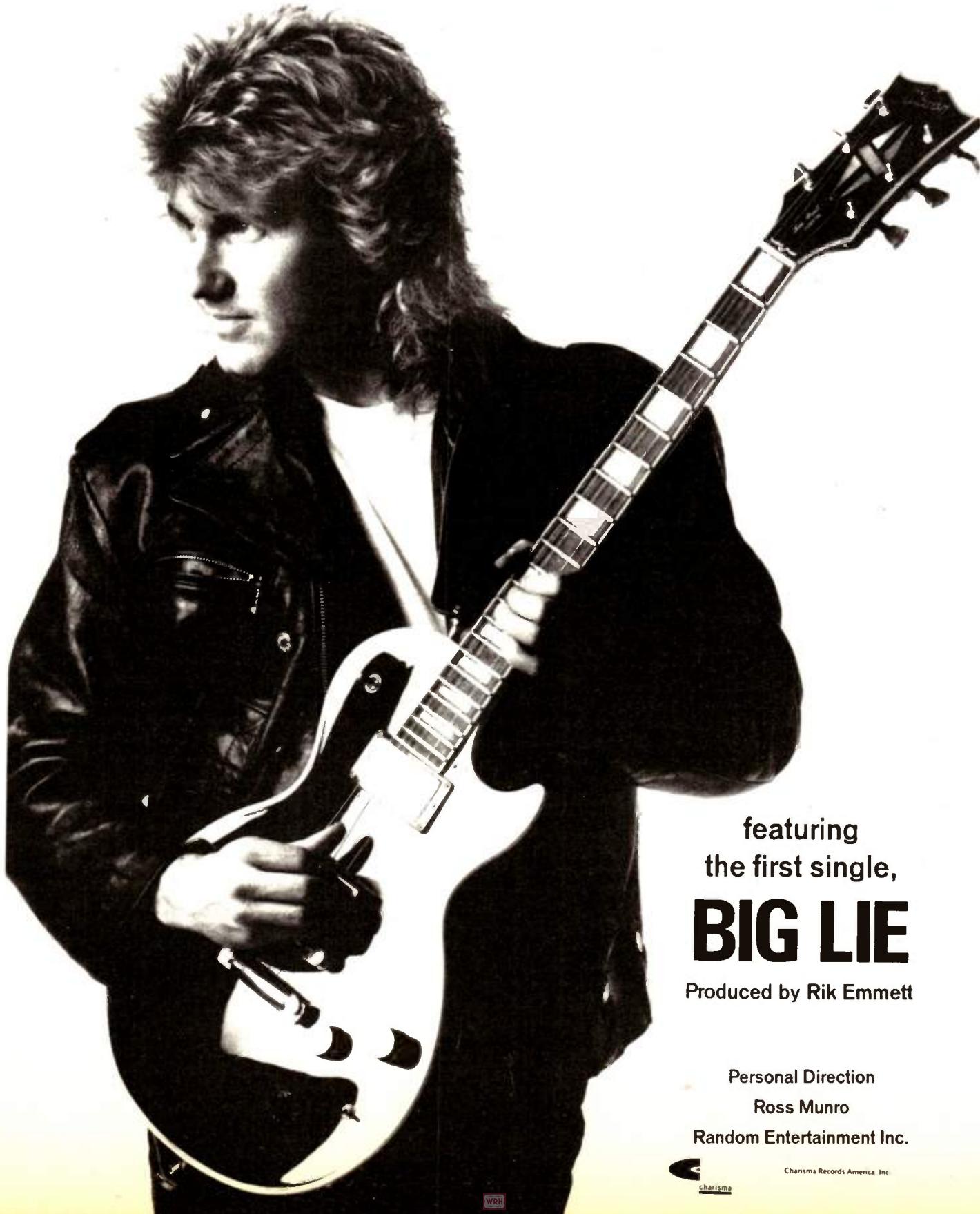
**Perry Stern** **\*\*1/2**



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## NEW RELEASES

## STING

*The Soul Cages*

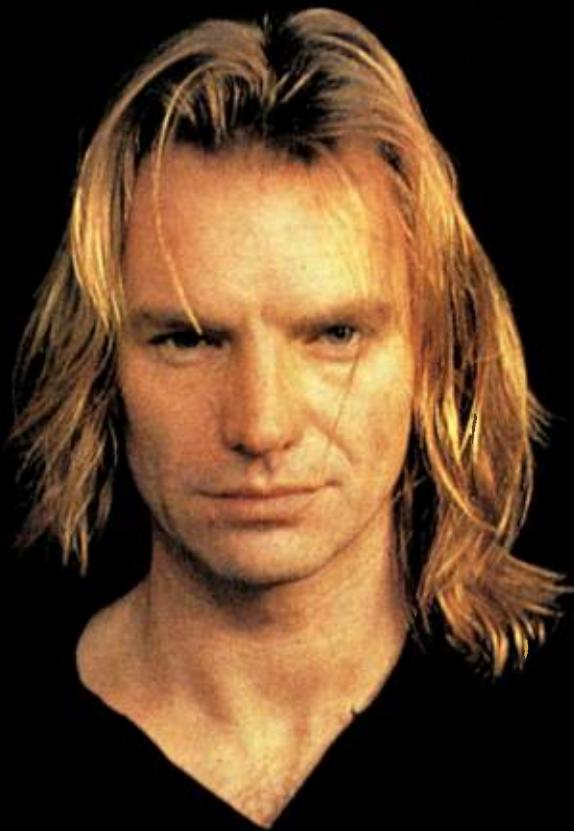
A&amp;M

*The Soul Cages* is Mr. Sting's first album since 1987's *Nothing Like The Sun* — a situation he blames on writer's block, although there was also his publicity tour to raise rain-forest consciousness and several guest projects to keep him busy. Since that last record's release, there's been a considerable amount of backlash against the kind of self-absorbed Third World dabbling that Sting and his ilk have indulged in, and it's a relief to report that, although there is a vein of pretentiousness that runs through *The Soul Cages*, it's nothing like what it used to be when he was

all too anxious to let us know that he had read Jung. Sting's father died while he was writing the songs for *The Soul Cages*, as did John Dexter, who directed him in the ill-fated Broadway version of *Threepenny Opera*, and transvestite performance artist Ethyl Eichelberger (the LP's dedicated to all three). And the overwhelming themes are loss, longing, death and despondence. Sting's father was a dockyard worker, and song after song conjures up images of ships, rivers and the sea, from "Island Of Souls'" clearly autobiographical tale of Billy and his dead shipyard-working father to "The Wild Wild Sea"'s dreamscape of being lost at sea — not to mention recurring themes of father-son alienation. But in spite of the frequently pompous lyrics ("Dark angels follow me/Over a godless sea/Mountains of endless falling/For all my days remaining"), it's clear that

there are real emotions coming through, and the music is an interesting range, from washes of synth sound (rather appropriate for the sea motif) to jazz, Celtic, mideastern and even African influences (in fact, on the album's most upbeat song, and first single, "All This Time," Sting sounds like Paul Simon as he half-speaks, half-sings his lyrics over a rhythmic background). Depressing as hell, but rather intriguing as well.

Mary Dickie \*\*\*



STING: STILL POMPOUS, BUT SHOWING SOME REAL EMOTION.

kieg lights, tuxes and gowns out for.

P.S. \*\*\*\*1/2

## NAKED RAYGUN

*Raygun...Naked Raygun*

Caroline

By many of the truly important gauges — collective height, ability to balance large, round objects atop niftily sloping crania; heck, all-around coif angularity — Naked Raygun are unquestionably the apex of indie testosterock. For the first time in a while, though, they're departing from their formulae. "Jazz Gone Bad" sports a niftily awry Pierre Kezdy bassline, but the ringer is "Holding You," in which Jeff Pezzatti's detached vocal bobs eerily 'twixt buoys of snaking sax in what might be the best approximation of endtime Buzzcocks ever. Even though they tend to telegraph their punches (halfway through any of the hooligan football chants, you'll learn to expect a slab of savvy Wire-like deconstructivism), Raygun still manage to harness enough punch to deliver the odd knockout blow. But if they ever unleash the power they're always hinting they've got stored up, women, children and white mice had best be kept well out of Naked Raygun's vicinity.

David Sprague \*\*\*\*

## LUSH

*Gala*

## 4AD/Reprise

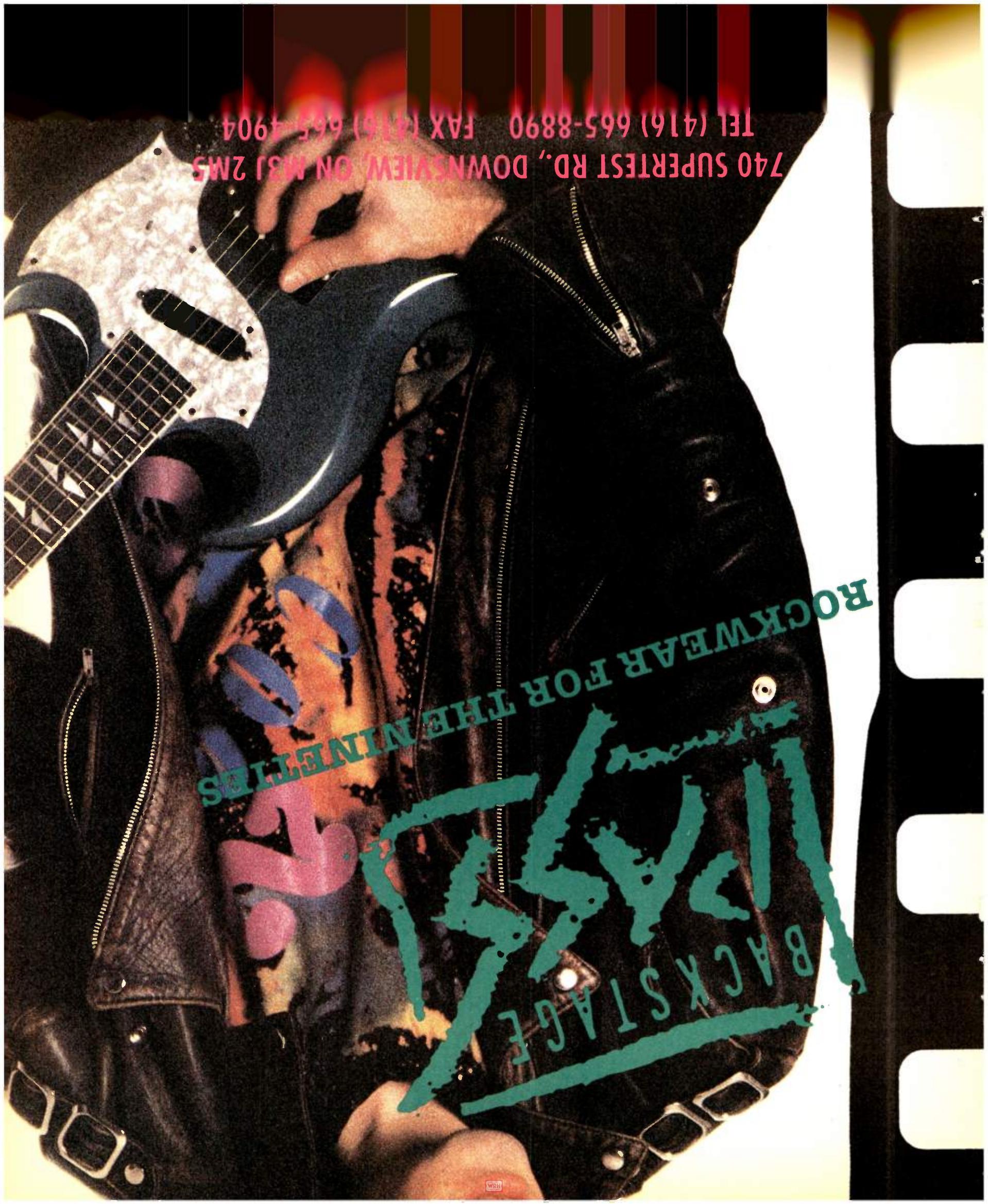
*Gala* is the kind of album that strikes one as really good on the first listen and then improves thereafter. The genuinely unpredictable songwriting provided by guitarist/backup vocalist Emma Anderson and lead vocalist/guitarist Miki Berenyi (alone and in tandem) makes for an interesting and compelling album as you could hope to find. The rhythm section of Chris Acland on drums and bassist Steve Rippon provides a rock-solid foundation — a true challenge on music so airy it seems tethered to a cloud. Berenyi's angelic vocals flutter over Anderson's often swirling, but sometimes convincingly jagged playing. All three of the EPs were recorded with different producers, including Cocteau Twin Robin Guthrie, and all three show off Lush's considerable skill at jumping from lullabies like "Sweetness And Light" and the second version of "Thoughtforms," to harder-edged cuts like "Leaves Me Cold" and "Scarlet." Berenyi's soft voice, especially when in harmony with Anderson, provides an eerie, chilling quality to the rockier tracks. A sense of humor is evident as well, with the inclusion of a very poppy ABBA cover, "Hey Hey Helen." *Gala* is the kind of debut you really ought to get the

## JESUS JONES

*Doubt*  
*SBK*

Because *Doubt's* opening track, "Trust Me," fits the same belligerent, aggressively percussive mold as most of the songs on Jesus Jones' rather brilliant debut, *Liquidizer*, a sense of trepidation undercuts its attack. But the rest of the album soon proves there's more to this group than a manic drum beat and a deft hand with the sampler. Vocalist/composer/guitarist Mike Edwards leads his four cohorts (Jerry De Borg, guitars, vocals; Barry D., keyboards, samples; Al Jaworski, bass, vocals; and the excellent tub thumper Gen) through a dozen cuts that show a diversity that has until now remained unrevealed. The funky groove on "International Bright Young Thing" mutates into a Beatlesque melody, on "Nothing To Hold Me" a sub-reggae rhythm gives way to ominous, whispered lyrics and the album's punchiest track, the apocalyptic "Stripped," with beats reminiscent of Public Enemy, devolves into a mutant Ministry attack. Of *Doubt's* softer songs, only "Right Here" truly shines. Though their first LP was a bright light in the alternative scene last year, Jesus Jones' second album leaves little doubt they'll be making a mainstream impression this year.

P.S. \*\*\*1/2



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THE OUTFIELD:  
HOOKS, BUT NO  
PERSONALITY.

## NEW RELEASES

### THE OUTFIELD

Diamond Days  
MCA

Now reduced to core members John Spinks and Tony Lewis, this British band continues to be caught in the dilemma of being faceless tunesmiths. Like Go West, the pair are capable of rattling off a steady stream of radio-friendly tracks packed with more hooks than your average quilt. Yet the recognition factor is almost zero. Maybe that's because their music is almost too perfect. Every vocal harmony, every riff is perfectly layered — but there's no roughage and no personality, save for a rather dodgy Beatlesque salute to John Lennon which is too flaccid to be credible. The end result is a collection of songs like "Take It All," "Eye To Eye" and "Magic Seed" which will no doubt attract plenty of radio airplay without expanding The Outfield's visibility. Perfection can be flawed after all.

K.S. \*\*\*

### CARCASS

Symphonies Of Sickness  
Earache/Combat/  
Relativity

Five new releases were sent to our office by the kind-hearted hellspawn at Earache Records, but the reason we picked Carcass over Napalm Death, Godflesh, Morbid Angel and Entombed was that none of these other necropolitans came up with song titles half as intriguing as "Reek Of Putrefaction," "Excoriating Abdominal Emanation," "Cadaveric Incubator Of Endoparasites" and (best of all) "Crepitating Bowel Erosion." Heck, those sound like the highlights of a coroner's report! And, sure enough, Carcass' drummer,

Ken Owen, is a former student of biology and anatomy, which lends this Liverpudlian quartet (at least three of whom don't eat meat) a certain degree of...how do you say?...crepitability. *Symphonies Of Sickness* grinds out a new challenge to thrashcore demons around the world: it's faster, harder, denser, more overwhelming and just plain uglier than anything else out there. In fact, *SOS* is so transcendentally ugly that it manages, if only by a hair, to rise above the current epidemic of Generic Thrash Tedium Syndrome, and it's loads more fun than any recent outpourings from Slayer or Metallica. Above the whiplash din, the Carcassoids barf up indecipherable lyrics in voices that eerily (or laughably) recall the deep-throated utterances Linda Blair made while she was in full Satanic effect in *The Exorcist*. If that ain't your idea of a real cool time...well, hey, when the Angel of Death comes a-knockin', you'd best be rockin'.

Tim Powis \*\*\*

### THE TRAGICALLY HIP

Road Apples  
MCA

Originating in Kingston, Ontario, The Tragically Hip have spent their career moving ever southward in search of musical inspiration. Their first full-length album, 1989's *Up To Here*, was recorded in Memphis, and for *Road Apples* they journeyed even deeper into the heart of American blues-rock 'n' roll, producing it in New Orleans with Don Smith, who also worked on *Up To Here*. Both times the choice of city has reflected the band's music well, since their forte is the kind of basic, earthy (after all, what could be more earthy than road apples?), bluesy rock 'n' roll that Southern bands like the Georgia Satellites specialize in. Luckily, though, *Road Apples* doesn't sound like a bunch of Canadian guys trying to imitate the music of the American south: the Hip's songs may not be revolutionary in form or approach, but their intensity makes them seem fresh anyway. They've made their name as a live band, and *Road Apples'* songs have a live-in-the-studio feel, rather than a slick, put-together-carefully one. They've also got other things going for them: Bobby Baker's and Paul Langlois' guitars, which complement each other well, Gord Downie's trademark voice and songs that plumb the depths of soul and R&B and end up in traditional rock 'n' roll territory. There are a lot of audible influences on *Road Apples*: the album opener, "Twist My Arm," recalls Captain Beefheart circa *Clear Spot*, while "Born In The Water" has a Stones feel and "Long Time Running" brings Otis Redding's "I've Been Loving You Too Long" to mind. "Little Bones" may or may not be about New

Orleans, but its sly substitution of high-ball and eyeball, year and ear is clever. And while the lyrical content can get a mite precious ("Thirsty as a cultured pearl," "Eating with my fingers and sucking hulls of ships"), in the end the Hip are only going to win more friends with this album.

M.D. \*\*\*1/2

### STEVE WINWOOD

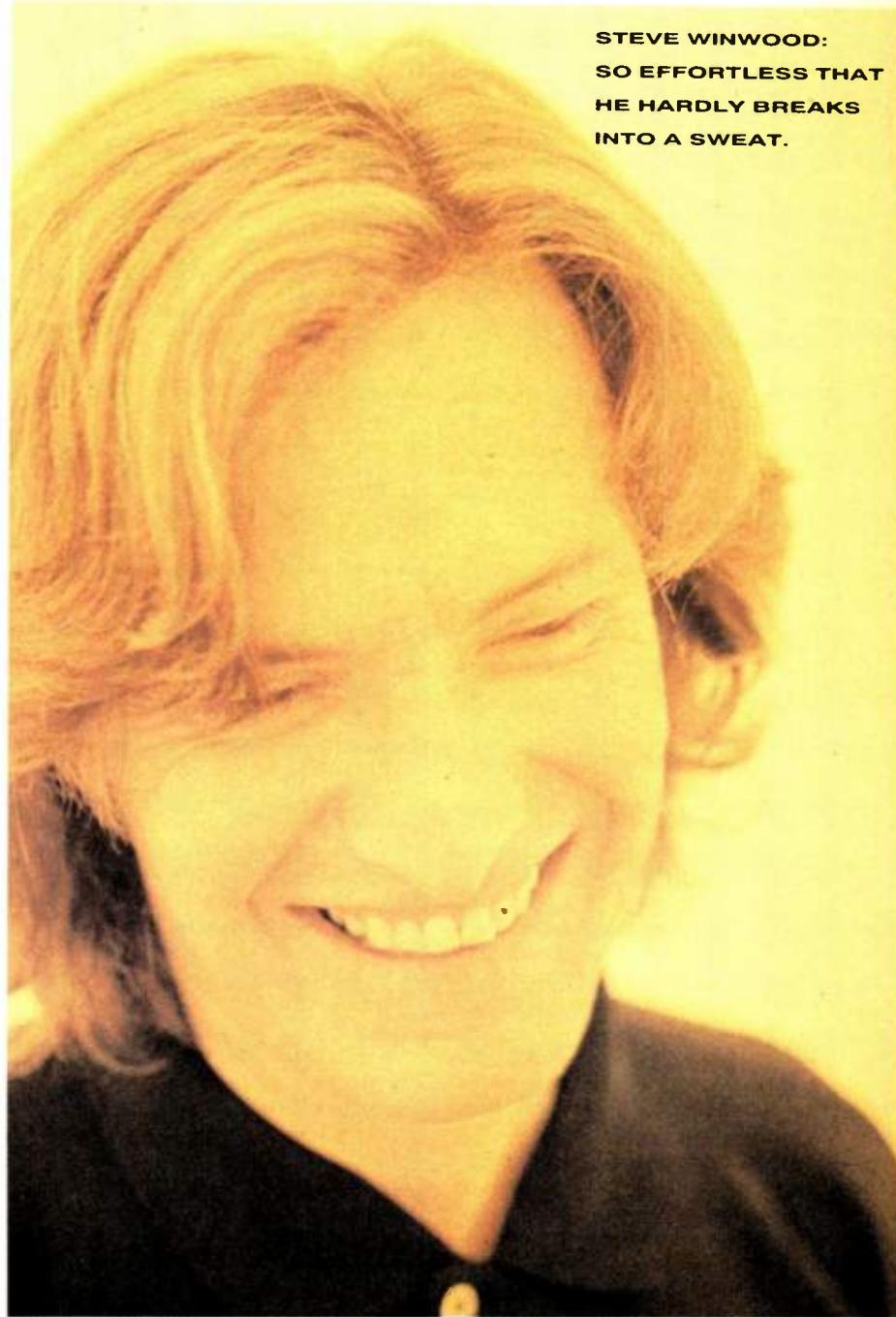
Refugees Of The Heart  
Virgin

Entering his fourth decade as a recording artist, Steve Winwood still gets taken for granted. Through a career that's encompassed The Spencer Davis Group, Traffic, Blind Faith and more recently a highly successful period as a solo artist, Winwood has con-

sistently delivered the goods without fear of controversy or hype. Now in his early 40s, Winwood is at peace with himself, and the maturity of his music has never been more evident. And *Refugees Of The Heart* reflects the positive aspects of life. Fidelity, virtue and spirituality are all prominent in the song lyrics, and the arrangements are delivered with a seemingly effortless polish. If there is a fault, it is that *Refugees Of The Heart* is almost too laidback. It's almost as though Winwood finds the recording process so easy that he hardly breaks into a sweat. Still, the funky Memphis Horns sound of "Come Out And Dance," the powerful drive of "One And Only Man" and the simple paean of "I Will Be Here" are vintage Winwood. A brilliant musician as well as a prolific songwriter, Winwood continues unabated, his track record unblemished.

K.S. \*\*\*1/2

STEVE WINWOOD:  
SO EFFORTLESS THAT  
HE HARDLY BREAKS  
INTO A SWEAT.



## NEW RELEASES

### HEX

#### Vast Halos

#### First Warning/Rykodisc

*Vast Halos* is the second offering from Hex, a duo project that unites Church singer/songwriter Steve Kilbey and Donnette Thayer, previously vocalist with Game Theory. 1989's self-titled debut won friends amongst the college radio set and fervent Church worshippers, but it is unlikely that *Vast Halos* will expand that audience greatly. Not that the Hex sound is inaccessible or artily avant-garde, but it is one that depends on mood rather than hooks and melody. Thayer has a pleasantly breathy voice, and Kilbey's evocative multi-instrumental accompaniment provides a perfect foil. Comparison points could be the Cocteau Twins and Mazzy Star, with Thayer's vocals being more decipherable than Twin Elizabeth Frazer's but a mite less haunting than Star Hope Sandoval's. Occasionally, in fact, her voice is reminiscent of '60s girl pop singers, and one can't help but sense that Hex would be capable of brewing up catchily commercial fare. As he's proven with The Church, however, Kilbey remains in love with lush psychedelic sounds and images, and such songs as "Orpheus Circuit," "Aquamarine," and "Centaur" sound just as you'd imagine. Lyrics like "nightsky exhales its moon-drug" are almost laughably over the top, but nobody writes this stuff quite like Kilbey, who also produced *Vast Halos*. Music to burn incense by.

K.D. \*\*\*\*

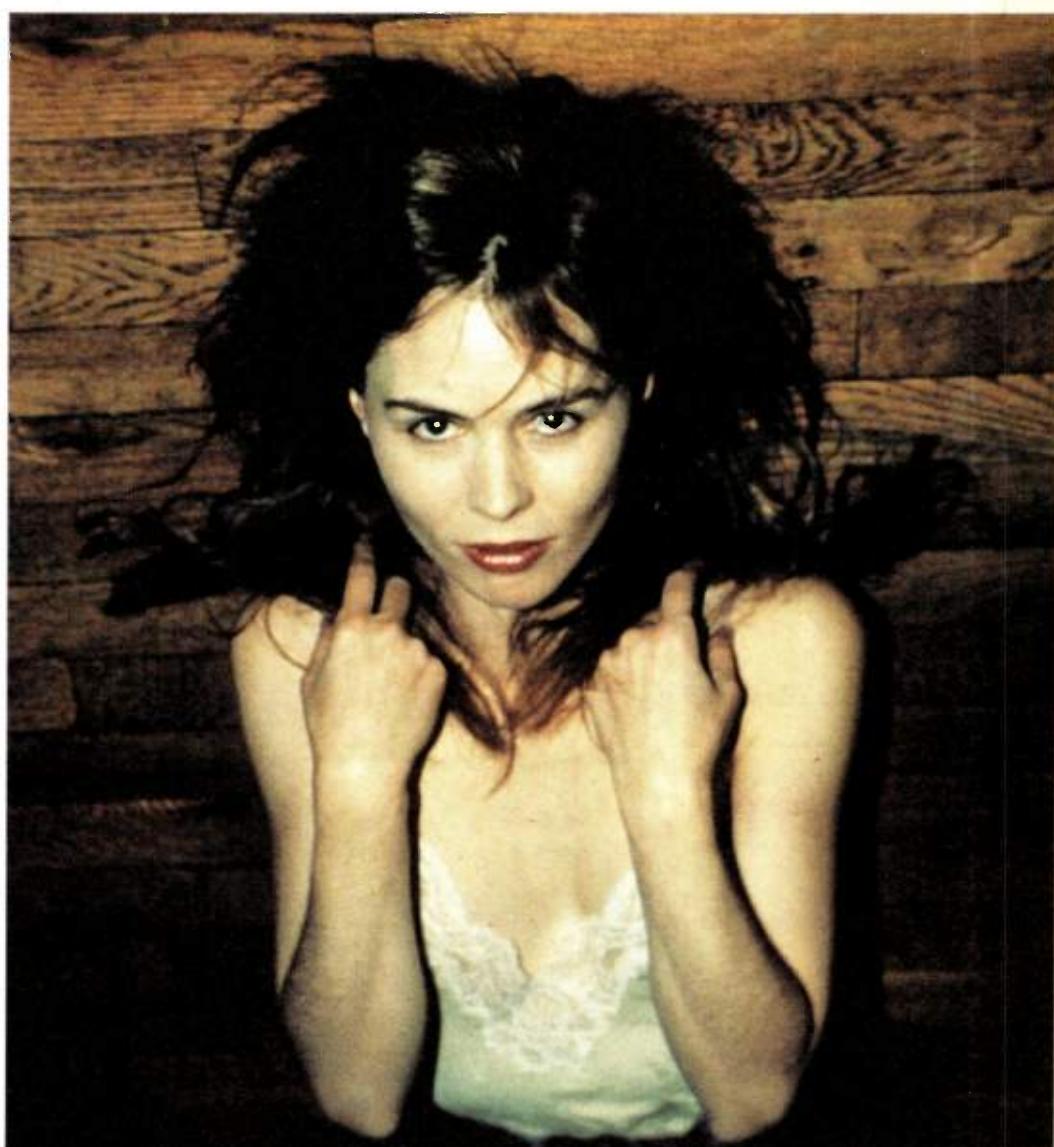
### RINGO STARR AND HIS ALL-STARR BAND

#### Ringo Starr And His All-Starr Band Rykodisc

Paul McCartney and John Lennon have their retrospective sets out and George Harrison is active with the Traveling Wilburys, so why shouldn't fourth Beatle Ringo Starr get in on the recording act? And he does, with a rather belated release of his 1989 travelling roadshow All-Starr Band. The surprising thing here is that the album works for all the wrong reasons. Starr never could sing, and he proves the point by butchering "It Don't Come Easy," "You're Sixteen" and "Photograph." But he was smart enough to recruit an all-star cast of support musicians and allow them enough latitude to salvage the recording on their own merits. With the likes of Dr. John, Billy Preston, Joe Walsh, Nils Lofgren, The Band's Levon Helm and Rick Danko,

Clarence Clemons and Jim Keltner it's pretty hard not to sound OK, and Starr uses their collective talents to good effect. Dr. John issues a spirited "Iko Iko," Preston romps through "Will It Go Round In Circles," Helm uses the troops to rearrange "The Weight" and Danko chips in with Buddy Holly's "Rainin' In My Heart." Throw in Walsh's version of "Life In The Fast Lane," Clemons' cover of Gary U.S. Bond's "Quarter To Three" and Lofgren's "Shine Silently," and you have a pretty spirited live session. They even make ole Ringo sound decent on "The No No Song" and "Honey Don't." This release won't trigger any fond Beatlemania memories, and it certainly won't enhance Starr's reputation as a solo artist. But as ringmaster, he put together a spirited ensemble, and their rapport makes for a fun recording.

K.S. \*\*\*



HEX'S SOUND DEPENDS ON MOOD RATHER THAN HOOKS OR MELODY.

### SLAYER

#### Seasons In The Abyss Def American

Slayer have apparently tired of being tagged as thug metal's most low-foreheaded, socially irresponsible brood, 'cause it seems like this time out, they've created a concern-laden, honest-to-Townshend concept album about the trials and tribulations of hemophilia. No fewer than nine out of *Seasons'* 10 tracks rail on about blood being spilled, dripped or absorbed into the carpet, the exception being "Skeletons of Society" — hey, even hemophiliac skeletons are bloodless. I wept. I mean there can't be too many geezers Slayer's side of 30 with a worldview limited to the means of claret spillage they entail here. Slayer's generic brand of "evil" is even more processed and individually wrapped than the episodes of the *Friday The 13th* series! They even boot the can't miss topic of serial killer Ed Gein on the dreadful "Dead Skin Mask" (the weakest link yet in psycho-rock's lengthy chain of Geinophilia, and a sorry sequel to their own *Josef*

Mengele

ditty "Angel Of Death"). Despite the fact that they have, in Dave Lombardo, one of heavy rock's premiere pounders, Slayer never manages to even approach "rhythm." They'll never change their spots. Yet again they promise you a window seat on a roadtrip across the river Styx, but yet again you've got to settle for a few cheesy souvenirs that might as well be embossed with "My covenant went to Hades and all I got was this lousy T-shirt." One day you'll figure out that the farthest south they really get is Tijuana, and Slayer's gig will be up.

D.S. \*

### BERNIE WORRELL

#### Funk Of Ages Gramavision

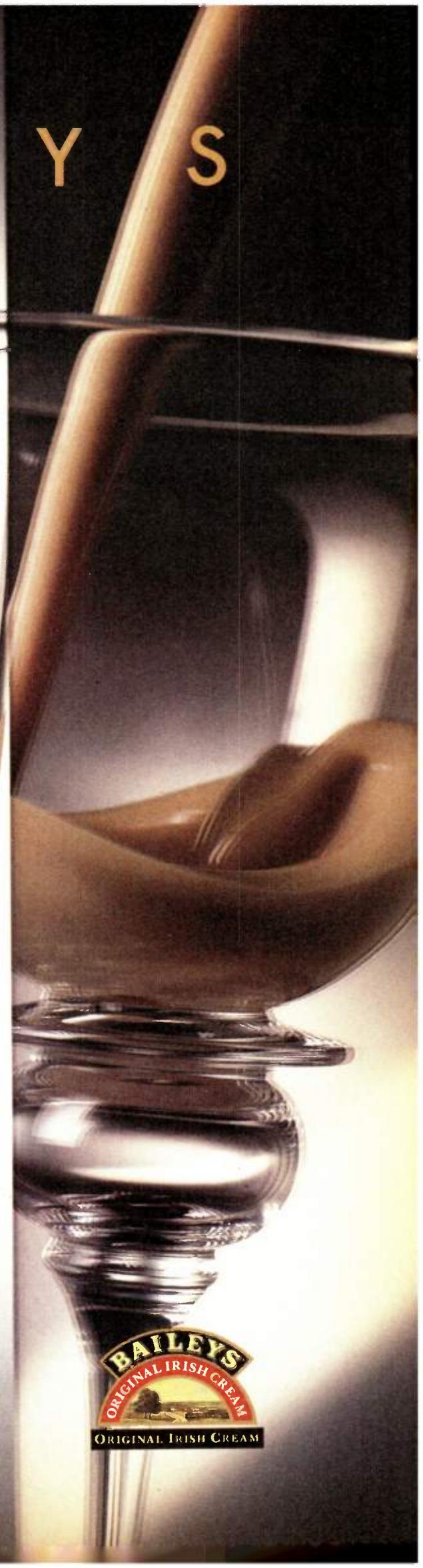
Say Funkadelic. Say Talking Heads' *Remain In Light* and *Speaking In Tongues*. Say Nona Hendryx. Say Celuloid. When you've said all that, you've said Bernie Worrell. In other words, the guy is practically a keyboard genius in the art-funk field, so let him do a solo

project. What the heck — it can't be any worse than David Byrne's Brazilian album, and sure enough, here is David, with a part-song credit and harmony vocal on "Sing," probably returning the favor after all this time. There's also Keef Richards raunching it up with Tom Verlaine's sidekick, Jimmy Ripp, on a couple of tracks. Sly and Robbie handle a bit of the rhythm chores, Vernon Reid chips in a solo, and Bootsy Collins slaps his bass here and there. Mostly, this warm, stellar jam is like The Sideman Cometh. It doesn't really matter that the good ship Solo Project is virtually rudderless. What matters is that they skank away on a good groove about half the time, have one great song and chorus (the Worrell-Jerry Harrison tune "Don't Piss Me Off"), and one insufferably coy takeoff on the old warhorse "Ain't She Sweet." It ain't a great album, but it's fun in an obtrusive, throbbing, bass-o-saurus kind of way. Pre-hip-hop and rap, but post-disco, *Funk Of Ages* would fit nicely into that narrow band between *Remain In Light* and "The Message," when arty-party funk ruled the roost. Sort of like James White without all the Catholic hangups.

B.R. \*\*1/2

# BAILEYS

**SMOOTH AS GLASS.**



## IN PRINT

By Bill Reynolds

Every year rock's triumvirate — The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan — however little influence they have on the events of the present, are well represented on book shelves.

The latest pair of Stones bios differ in conception, but offer a similar result. One is an autobiographical insider's

drew Oldham and Richards' old flame Anita Pallenberg, plus a host of lesser-knowns. When he's actually writing his own words, it's usually a paragraph or two to tie the interviews together.

Hotchner's *raison d'être* is the uncovering of the mystery surrounding Brian Jones' death in his own pool at his Cotchford Farm home on July 2, 1969. Jones becomes a metaphor for turbulent change in the '60s. The thesis is that the youth explosion that catapulted

cruelty got out of hand, they split, although it is believed that Jones' house was stripped clean of the expensive antiques he had been collecting.

If this is true, the zeitgeist of the '60s has little to do with it. Rather, Jones was murdered by a couple of two-bit thugs who saw profit in ripping him off. Hotchner's big-issue philosophizing is a hindrance, and not once in the book does he synthesize interviews into a compelling story. He prefers the lazy

foggy memory has him saying that he managed The Nice, Keith Emerson's first group, which began life as singer P.P. Arnold's backup group in 1967, before the Stones. And a boyhood snapshot of Charlie Watts is wrongly attributed to Jagger.

Hotchner's book is a spurious attempt to define the volatile '60s. The subtext accuses Jagger of money lust, rootlessness and amorality, implying that he is a powerful symbol of the decline of the indulgent era into conservatism. Yes, Jagger the evil influence who destroyed Jones and kicked him out of the band. Not Jones, the guy who beat up his girlfriends when his insecurities got the better of him, the guy so incapacitated from pharmaceuticals that Richards would have to overdub guitar parts for him in the studio, the guy whose group was stolen from under his nose, but who couldn't write a tune to save his soul.

There are funny moments in *Blown Away*. At one point, Faithfull blithely declares, "There are only three things I do well: ride, cook and fuck." I beg to differ — she can sing, too. And one-time tour manager Sally Arnold answers a longtime mystery. The reason why Keef 'n' Ronnie chainsmoke on stage is because at one time they were hooked on DCs. That is, Dirty Cigarettes, which consisted almost entirely of heroin.

As for Wyman, the pack rat, *Stone Alone: Diary Of A Rock 'N' Roll Band* (Viking) might as well reduce his life to an accounting ledger. He updates his bank account balance, cursing Allen Klein for withholding money. He tabulates his sexual conquests over teenage girls. There is no remorse, then or now, for his infidelities. He sleeps with hundreds of young women, but has nothing of significance to say, except that they're "pretty."

The book's dead zone is the unending, numbing account of the band's constant live gigging. If it really were this exciting, I'm sure Jagger would have stayed in school. While it's initially fascinating to see the era and its attendant mayhem reconstructed, Wyman offers little insight into the implications. The tidbits of reflection are repetitious, and only the occasional salty anecdote keeps the reader going. For example, Wyman developed his famous bass guitar stance because in the early days he reflected the stage lights back onto the girl of his choice in the front row. Once he had got her attention, he would mouth his hotel room number to her.

The Stones' story is nothing if not durable. Numerous bios have been written, yet nothing definitive has yet appeared. These two, although not terribly enticing, have a few moments that are sure to titillate Stones fans, of whom there are of course many. But it's too bad that they're just not very good books.

THE ROLLING STONES: REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ZEITGEIST OR REDUCED TO AN ACCOUNTING LEDGER?



account; the other is from the outside. One follows the group's day-to-day progress; the other generalizes about the pitfalls of sudden fame, drugs and money, utilizing a loose interview technique. Both begin at the beginning, and both end with free concerts, although journalist A.E. Hotchner extends his bad boys mythology five months beyond the Stones' July, 1969, Hyde Park show to the Hell's Angels' malevolence at Altamont speedway. And both books aren't very good.

Hotchner is proud that his book, *Blown Away: The Rolling Stones and The '60s* (Simon & Schuster) is unauthorized, yet he does not hesitate to quote Mick Jagger and Keith Richards from other sources, some 30 times each. He relies heavily on Jagger's old girlfriend, Marianne Faithfull, original pianist Ian Stewart, early publicist An-

Britain to the forefront of fashion, design, drug and music cultures crossed class lines and softened up a previously rigid system.

By the end of the '60s, though, it was apparent that the upstarts, from photographer David Bailey to designer Mary Quant to the Stones, had formed a new aristocracy that was every bit as aloof and superior as the old one had been. When Jones hired working-class joes to fix his mansion, his leisure time, beautiful girlfriends, bisexual clothing and fey mannerisms offended and incensed them. The night of Jones' death was the occasion of an impromptu party thrown by the workers for the workers. Hotchner alleges that a couple of them (he doesn't know which) tried to teach Jones a lesson for his snobbery by repeatedly dunking his head in the pool. When the drunken

journalist's method of letting the quotes stand, organizing them to conform with his thesis. He interviews Michael Prowdlock, an Eton-educated restaurateur, to prove the class barriers came tumbling down with the sudden changes in music and fashion. London's most famous groupie, Jenny Fabian, goes on for seven pages discussing in detail how much she adored Syd Barrett of Pink Floyd — I guess to show how sexual mores had changed. Steve Abrams' contribution is a conspiracy theory about how the CIA controlled the flow of LSD in the '60s. This book is about the Stones, remember.

Elsewhere, the research is shoddy. A woman named Suki Poitier is said to have gone out with Jones after Jimi Hendrix died — pretty difficult, considering that Hendrix died a year after Jones did. Andrew Oldham's own

## OPEN SPACES

By Roman Mitz

For some time, the five members of Wild Rose have suffered through an identity crisis. You see, for a while the name of the all-female band was Mis Behavin', and while the emphasis was Behavin', the play on words was lost on a few of the regulars found in country and western drinking establishments. Even worse, the implications of the misinterpreted name was not at all in keeping with the girls' strong Christian beliefs. They therefore changed their name to Wild Rose, and the title of their latest album, *Straight And Narrow*, definitely does a better job of reflecting what this group is all about.

"I hated the name Mis Behavin'," drummer **Nancy Given Prout** agrees. "We were touring in Canada and the name Wild Rose kept hitting us in Calgary, because it's their provincial flower and it's on all of the license plates. It suggests something exciting and feminine, so we thought it was perfect."

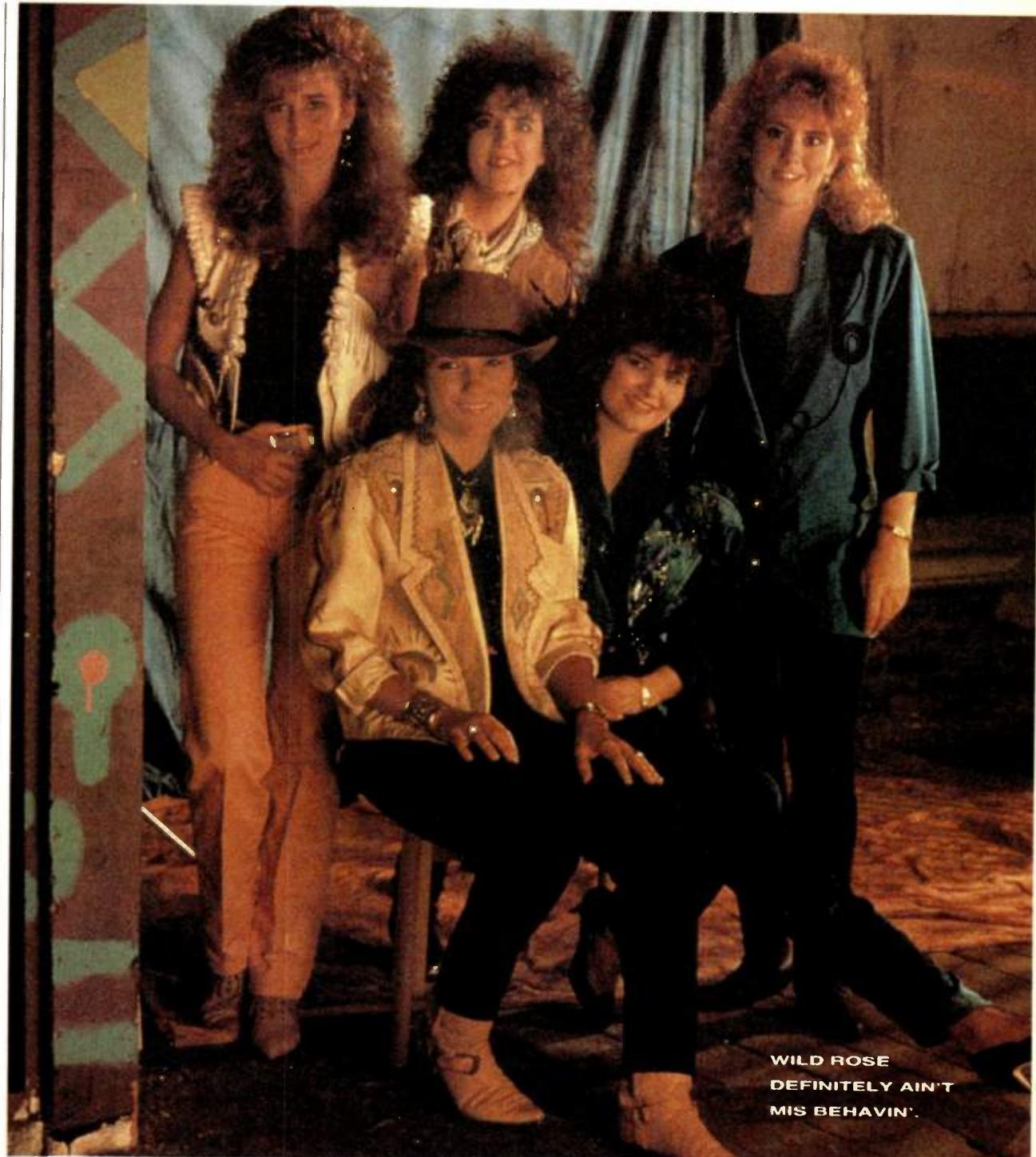
"As far as *Straight And Narrow* goes, personally there were a lot of things I shouldn't have done before I became a Christian," she says. "I had to grow up. While I'm not tempted by a lot of the excesses that go along with touring, it's hard to be on the road. It's difficult because your life is in an uproar and, with three of us being married, it's hard being gone so much."

An even more difficult task for Wild Rose is trying to convince people that they can really play. While they're currently the only all-female country band signed to a major label that plays its own instruments, it takes only a few seconds at one of their shows to dispel any doubts. **Wanda Vick** is a musical virtuoso on electric and steel guitar, dobro, fiddle and mandolin; she cut her teeth along with Prout in **Porter Waggoner's** backup band. Bassist **Kathy Mac** anchors the group, while vocalists **Pamela Gadd** and **Pam Perry** handle vocals and alternate on guitar, banjo and mandolin. The group just burns on the energetic bluegrass tune "Hit The Highway," then slows to delicate perfection on the spiritual "Everything He Touches Turns To Gold."

"Sometimes you walk into a place and people are already familiar with the fact that you play, from the videos," Prout says. "However, there are times when we still feel under the gun; people will just stand there and gawk, amazed at Wanda."

A problem that faces all bands, regardless of gender, is sacrificing individuality for the sake of the group. In Wild Rose's case, there's a blazing instrumentalist and two distinctive singers vying for the spotlight, and one wonders if this causes any friction.

"There's a lot of tug of war going on at times," Prout admits. "All of us have



**WILD ROSE**  
**DEFINITELY AIN'T**  
**MIS BEHAVIN'.**

to sacrifice things at different times. I'm sure both singers would like a single out with their vocal on it. I mean, you're happy for the other person when her song is chosen, but that little thing inside of you goes, 'I wish that was me singing.' There's always a possibility that someone will want to break off and go solo, but it doesn't scare me, personally. I think we're all committed to the band now, and I want to go into this for five years or so at the most, because I want to have children. I hope to write, produce and maybe do some kind of studio work or special shows, but I want to stay in town a lot more."

And what about Prout's own considerable vocal talents? "It's not something I'm dying to do," she laughs. "I can't even talk onstage; I panic. I'm just

happy to play drums and sing harmonies."

**Nashville Notes:** For a real high-flying video, check out the 20-minute movie trailer **The Gatlin Brothers** have done for Pan American airlines. To ensure that they haven't placed all of their eggs in one airline, however, the Gatlins also have an audio special airing on Eastern.

*In A Different Light*, the debut disc from song stylist **Linda Davis**, is an impressive effort that showcases the singer's ability to deliver a wide range of emotions, seemingly without effort. One of the many highlights is "If I Could Only Be Like You," a powerful song that was cowritten by **Reba McEntire**, whom Davis brings to mind more than a little throughout the album.

Talk about going for variety! **Ronnie Milsap's** upcoming release will feature tracks with **Mark Knopfler**, **John Hiatt**, **Patti LaBelle** and **The Harlem Boys Choir**. It looks as though the album has everything but the kitchen sink on it... If you want that as well, scour your entertainment section for a club performer named **Washboard Hank**, who actually plays (blows through) a kitchen sink onstage.

The hottest new performer of the year has to be **Aaron Tippin**, with his debut single, "You've Got To Stand For Something." Tippin is pure hillbilly, and the song is a hell-raising fiddler's delight. And it's nice to see that **Hank Thompson**, a pioneer of western swing, is recording a new album for Curb Records...

CD  
HOTLINE

By Rick Clark

Frank Sinatra has recently hit the three-quarter-century mark, and to celebrate that event Capitol, Reprise and Mobile Fidelity have all released excellent CDs that should have Sinatra's fans feeling happy.

*Frank Sinatra: The Capitol Years* is a three-CD, 75-track compilation span-

sides, it's hard to refute those arguments. Except for ever-so-slight signal distortion on a few of the older tracks, the sound quality on this collection is surprisingly immediate and devoid of tape hiss.

Meanwhile, Mobile Fidelity has released a gold version of *Songs For Swingin' Lovers*, one of Sinatra's finest Capitol efforts. An A/B comparison between the gold disc and the Capitol set revealed that the Mobile version possessed a noticeably warmer, fuller

sound.

John Lennon has finally been given the primo box set treatment with an imported four-CD, 73-cut collection, simply called *Lennon*. This set is so complete that there is essentially no need to go out and obtain any of his solo albums on disc. It runs chronologically, from The Plastic Ono Band's "Give Peace A Chance" to "Grow Old With

Quite impressive, but this live document of his world tour, containing not one but two booklets, features an appalling omission — no credits (or thanks) to any of his tour personnel. Go figure that one out. Maybe they weren't that important to the success of his tour?

Reprise has released a four-CD, 45-song Jimi Hendrix set called *Lifelines: The Jimi Hendrix Story*. The collection showcases many of Hendrix's finest musical moments, including his famous 1969 concert at The Forum in Los Angeles.

There is a drawback to this set, unless you're a big fan of Westwood One rock interview specials, because *Lifelines*, from beginning to end, is merely one of those radio shows put to disc. The sound is uniformly very good, and the quotes are generally interesting (if overly gushy at times), but this is a pass if all you want is the music.

Epic has put out a 20-track best-of collection on The Hollies called *Hollies Epic Anthology — From The Original Master Tapes*. Even though much of the group's best material was recorded during their time at Imperial Records, The Hollies landed most of their biggest chart hits while on the Epic label.

"The Air That I Breathe," "He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother," "Long Cool Woman (In A Black Dress)" and "Carrie-Anne" are all Hollies standards found on this set. It also includes their excursions into psychedelic Brit-pop, "King Midas In Reverse," "Dear Eloise" and "Try It," as well as their version of Bruce Springsteen's "Sandy."

Sonically, this is as good as The Hollies have ever sounded on CD. The set includes extremely detailed annotation and comments from lead singer Allan Clarke and producer Ron Richards. Fans of 1960s British Invasion will find this release to be a very nice addition to their collections.

Roy Orbison has been given the treatment with *The Legendary Roy Orbison*, a four-CD, 75-song set. While all of this could have easily fit on three discs, this compilation features all of the highlights, and then some.

As with *The Byrds* and *Robert Johnson* boxes, CBS is using a smaller packaging arrangement than the usual, LP-sized box which is much more practical and sensibly laid out, while not scrimping on anything. As well, Colin Escott's annotation is passionate and informative, and the booklet contains a wealth of great photos.

Those who may not care for such an extensive presentation of Orbison's music can have their appetites for his more popular hits well served with *For The Lonely: 18 Greatest Hits*, on Rhino. The CBS set is devoid of tape hiss, with a sound that overall is very respectable. The Rhino collection, if you can stand periodic tape noise, has a little more presence and life sonically.



FRANK SINATRA: THE VOICE IS IMPECCABLE, THE SONGS ARE ALL THERE, THE SOUND IS GREAT.

ning his 1953-62 tenure with that label. The set, which includes a couple of unreleased tracks and a highly informative 36-page booklet, comes in two versions: a linen-bound limited edition and a standard book-style release.

Sinatra's voice is impeccable as he runs through such standards as "I've Got The World On A String," "Witchcraft," "Chicago," "Come Fly With Me," "Nice 'N' Easy," "I've Got You Under My Skin," "Learnin' The Blues," "Love And Marriage," "All The Way" and too many more to list.

For many fans, Sinatra's years at Capitol comprised his greatest work. Judging from the evidence of these

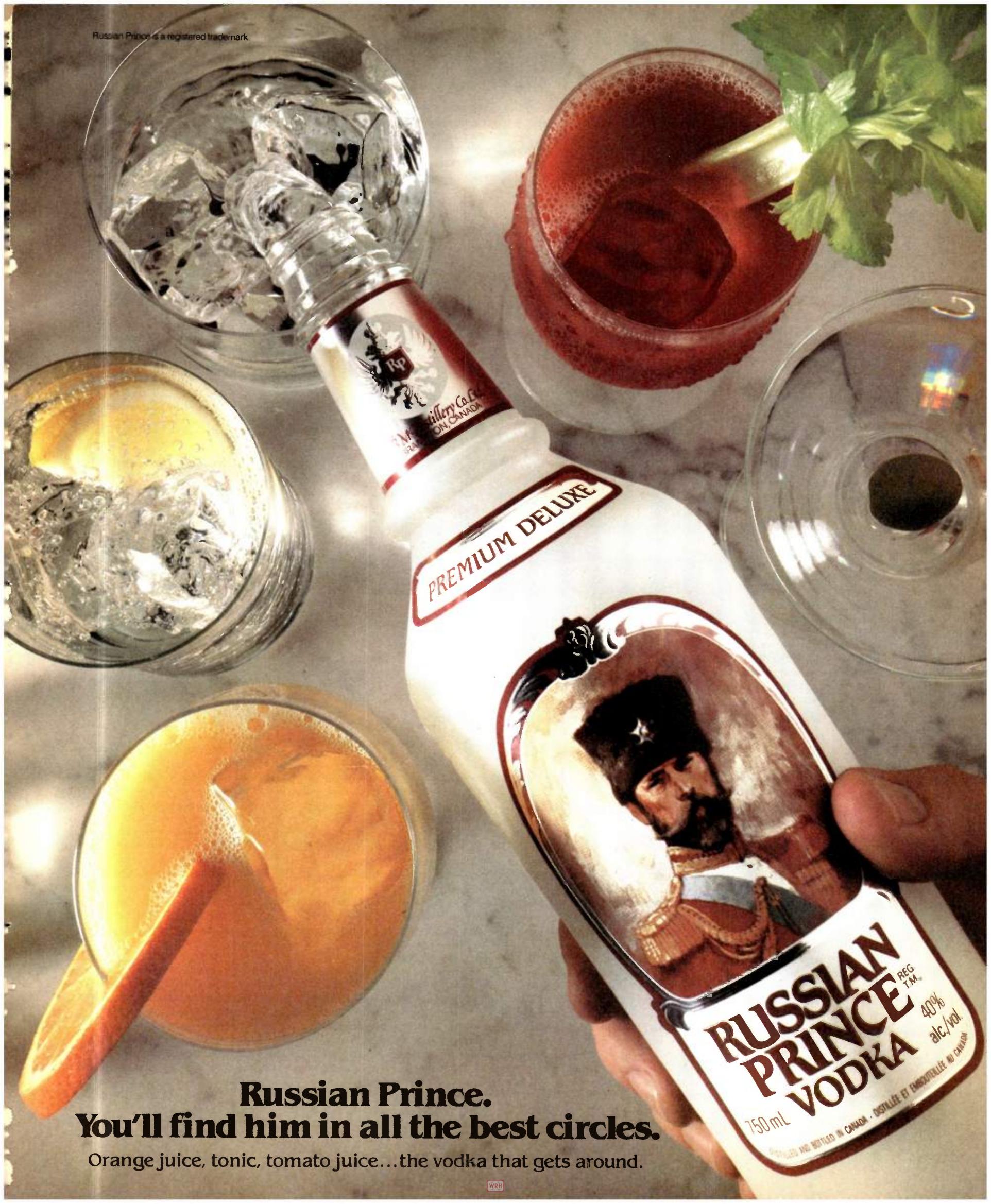
sound, with a more detailed depth to the soundstage. But, as I said earlier, the Capitol box sounds great.

*Frank Sinatra: The Reprise Collection*, like *The Capitol Years*, is an indispensable four-CD, 81-song collection of his work. Even though Sinatra's track record of chart success was greatest during his stretch with Capitol, *The Reprise Collection* demonstrates unequivocally that some of his most popular sides were cut during his Reprise years — for example, "Strangers In The Night," "Summer Wind," "My Way," "Theme From New York, New York," "It Was A Very Good Year," "That's Life" and "Something Stupid."

"Me," from 1984's *Milk And Honey*. All the best stuff from *Live Peace In Toronto* is here, as well as his live (with Elton John) versions of "I Saw Her Standing There" and "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds."

The booklet contains a generous batch of pictures and lyrics to all the songs, but the color-coded A-Z song index is overkill, in lieu of the fact that there isn't any track information detailing where and when the songs were cut, and who played on them. Nevertheless, this is the Lennon set to get, if you don't have any of his work on disc.

As a passing remark, Paul McCartney's *Tripping The Live Fantastic* is



**Russian Prince.  
You'll find him in all the best circles.**

Orange juice, tonic, tomato juice...the vodka that gets around.

## METALLION

By Elianne Halbersberg

## • Utmost Respect!

Dirty rotten filthy stinking sexist pigs? "No way," says **Warrant** guitarist Joey Allen. Currently, he and bandmates Jani Lane, Steven Sweet, Jerry Dixon and Erik Turner are setting U.S. stages afire on tour with Poison. Warrant is supporting its tasty release, *Cherry Pie*, and as usual, controversy is sure to follow.

Two versions of *Cherry Pie* have been pressed as a result of the original recording's "Ode To Tipper Gore," a send-up collection of live four-letter outtakes run together as one hilarious track. Explains Allen: "We voluntarily put an advisory sticker on there, so people would know there is strong language. But there is nothing on our album that relates to drugs, suicide, bestiality or anything like that. 'Ode To Tipper Gore' is our way of standing up for the First Amendment.

"We sold it as is and two major U.S. accounts responsible for one-third of record sales wouldn't carry it because of 'Ode' and the f-word at the beginning of [Blackfoot cover] 'Train, Train.' Our label said they were going to censor our record, and we said, 'Tell those people to fuck off!' But we lost that battle, and we're really upset. I want anyone who buys our record to get the uncensored one, because that's the one we made. Japan released it as is, but Europe edited 'Ode' because they thought people there wouldn't understand the point, since they don't know who Tipper Gore is. And they edited the f-word on 'Train, Train' here. The record companies waited too long to deal with the censorship situation, and now the best thing people can do is not buy the censored version."

Of course, convincing a few skeptics that Warrant even plays on its albums has been an issue in itself. Rumors that the group did not play guitars on their debut album surfaced just as "Heaven" hit the top of the charts. "I have no idea who started that," Allen states. "It doesn't bother me. I will put the story to rest by saying that we did play on our records, but it's funny to think it's gotten to a point where people say such things. Anyone who thinks we can't play — come to our shows and tell me who plays what! It's very obvious."

And that's not all. It seems that not everyone is amused by Warrant's sleeve art and videos. "We're very tongue-in-cheek," Allen says. "Nothing we do is that serious, except for our music. Even in the beginning, the ads we ran for our club shows were meant just to get attention; anything for attention. Besides the 'Ode,' which is there to make a point, songs like 'Love In Stereo' and the pictures on the album cover are hilarious. A lot of people miss out, take it wrong, and think we're a

sexist band. That's definitely a misconception. We have the utmost respect for women. I think most people understand what we're doing. There's nothing wrong with having fun and laughing. We just try to make people forget the 9-5, the b.s., at least for an hour. Either way, we get a reaction. It's good or bad; there's no in-between here. We like the two extremes."

Although every Great White album has contained at least one cover song, selected by the band as a live favorite meriting vinyl permanence, Russell says that's completely different from bringing in an outside writer. Interpretation is one thing, he says, co-writing another. "We're not going to write with Desmond Child and make it sound like Desmond Child, which sounds like Bon

Strum.

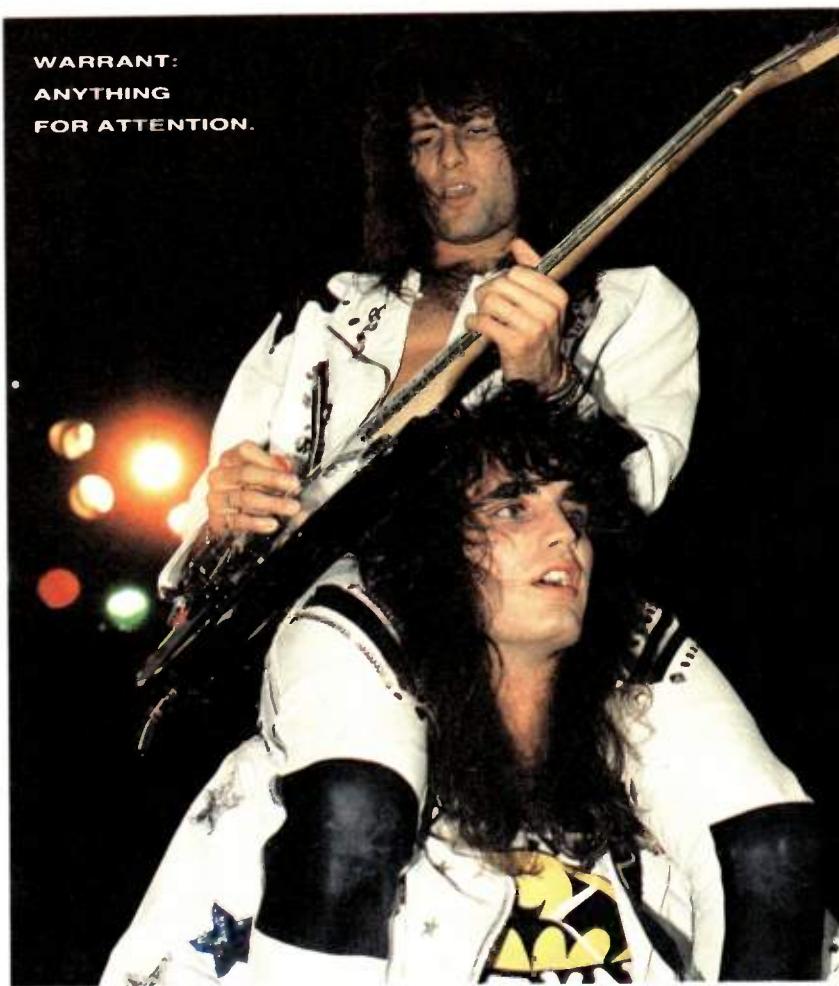
Merlino, who also played with Strum in Bad Axe, has all the goods that are commonly referred to as "star quality," despite this being B&T's debut. Attitude, drive, edge and self-belief are just a few of his personality traits, coupled with a strong blues-drenched voice.

"We refused to give out demos," he says, describing the band's approach. "We just played with the attitude of, 'Come see us — if you don't this time, eventually you will.' We created interest through playing. It's an unorthodox way of doing things, but that's our style."

Despite his reputation as one of the music industry's most in-demand singers, Merlino never considered going the solo route. "I leave that for the John Waites of the world," he laughs, "and even he went back to a band. I'm much better at collaborating, and what this band does is something that doesn't happen too often. I remember hearing bands playing in Los Angeles years ago, and thinking, 'I'll be damned if they ever do anything.' And they'd go on to sell five million records! What we do is not drastically different. It's just who we are, and there is something safe in that."

**Metal Notes:** In conjunction with their tour supporting *Act III, Death Angel* guitarist Rob Cavestany and drummer Andy Galeon have been visiting halfway houses around the U.S., talking with young people and giving away T-shirts and concert tickets. Response has been tremendous, and, says Cavestany, "It's been heartwarming that these kids have opened up to us as much as they have. It's really enlightened us as to what they go through."... Subsequent to the breakup of *Princess Pang*, bassist Ronnie Rose and guitarist Jay Lewis have formed **The Chiefs** with two former members of Johnny Thunders' *Heartbreakers*: guitarist Stevie and sax player Jamie Heath. Jeff West has been added on drums. The band is currently recording, as is former Pang vocalist Jeni Foster... Also recording are metal powerhouse **Armored Saint**, with producer Dave Jerden... **Mind Funk**'s self-titled debut should be out by the time you read this, and it's described as "a mind-shattering plethora of metal and psychedelia."... Look for **Anthrax** all over the U.S. with **Iron Maiden**. Their latest, *Persistence Of Time*, is hitting the platinum mark... Hats off to **Overkill**, who, along with a list of other hard rock bands, participated in The Earth Alliance's "Rock 'N' Roll 1990," a celebrity billiard tournament and jam session to benefit The Starlight Foundation of New York. The organization works with critically, chronically and terminally ill children. After a dozen rounds of pool, the champions were guitarists Andy Timmons of **Danger Danger** and Warren DeMartini of **Ratt**. Congratulations.

**WARRANT:**  
**ANYTHING**  
**FOR ATTENTION.**



## • Good, Bad Or Indifferent

Following the longstanding tradition of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it," **Great White** members Jack Russell, Tony Montana, Audie Desbrow, Mark Kendall and Michael Lardie returned to Total Access Studio in Redondo Beach to record and produce their new album, *Hooked*. While retaining the traditional GW sound of barroom boogie-based rock 'n' roll blues, *Hooked* is also different from anything Great White — or any other band in the past decade — has done. According to vocalist Russell, much of that has to do with the fact that the band remains a completely in-house operation.

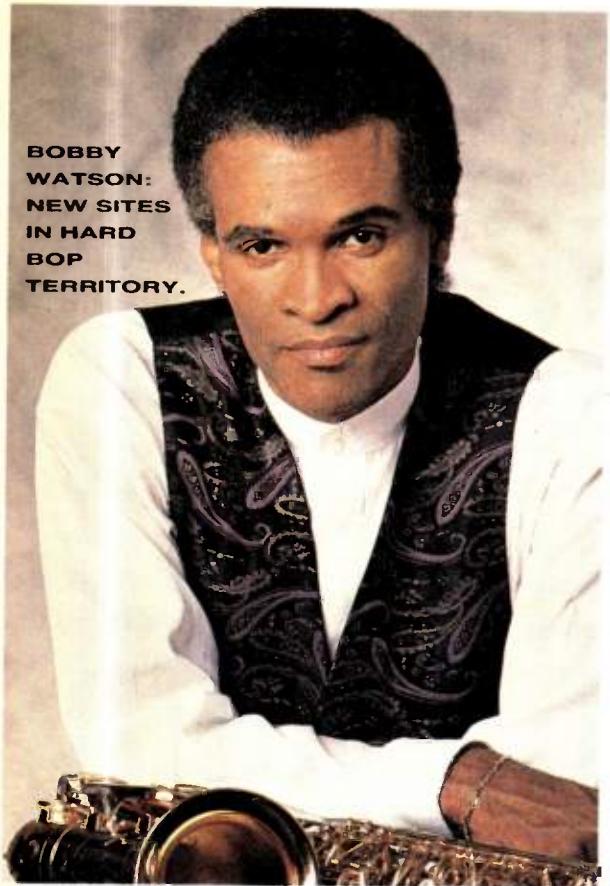
"People ask us why we don't get an outside producer," he notes. "What for? Why would we have some jerk come in off the street who doesn't know anything about Great White bring us some vision of what we should be, and completely disarrange our musical attitude? Who knows the story better than the author?"

Jovi, because they were one of the first to write with him. We sound like Great White, and that's the way we want to remain — good, bad or indifferent."

After selling 2.5 million copies of *Twice Shy*, the easy way out would have been to record part two and guarantee success. Fortunately, that's not Great White's style. "It's a heavier album, but more diverse," says Russell of *Hooked*. "We don't go after what's cool now or what you expect a rock 'n' roll band to do. We like to surprise people, do something a little different and obscure."

## • Safety In Identity

"Beggars And Thieves" is the first single from *Beggars And Thieves*, the self-titled album by **Beggars And Thieves** — vocalist Louie Merlino, guitarist Ronnie Mancuso, bassist Phil Soussan and drummer Bobby Berg. Founders Mancuso and Merlino go back to a 1982 outfit called *Modern Design*, which at one time also featured current Slaughter bassman Dana



BOBBY WATSON:  
NEW SITES  
IN HARD BOP  
TERRITORY.

## JAZZ STREAMS

By Rob Reid

Art Blakey's death last October was a real blow to the jazz world. With his group, the **Jazz Messengers**, Blakey carried on a vigorous hard bop tradition for over 35 years. The drummer had many an important message for his sidemen, who were often the equivalent of students in Blakey's curriculum of jazz. From **Wayne Shorter** to **Wynton Marsalis**, a long list of group members benefitted from his tutelage. Saxophonist **Bobby Watson** apprenticed with the drummer in the late '70s and early '80s, and now, on a major label, Blue Note, Watson is seeing his own star on the rise.

"Art always said, 'Somebody goofed and jazz was born,'" Watson recalls. "Whatever you play is not a mistake unless you treat it like one." Confident in his own powers, Watson steers clear of "playing by the book" with the result that risk-taking and a sense of spontaneity are the hallmark of any Watson performance. His latest release (and his 12th as a leader), *Post-Motown Bop*, points out new sites in hard bop territory. Besides the leader's agile and fluid maneuvering on alto and soprano saxophones, compounded by his skillful arranging, this rich and colorful 10-song set gets the benefit of performance by a group whose most recent member, **Carroll Dashiell**, has already been with the quintet for two years. At the core of this group's chemistry, how-

ever, is the leader's connection with his drummer, **Victor Lewis**.

"We both play from the heart," explains Watson. "We both see music as a dramatic event — high drama, high feeling. And Victor's very colorful, very unorthodox."

*Post-Motown Bop* actually has little to do with Motown, but plenty to do with multidimensional jazz. With the forward drive of hard bop as its cornerstone, Watson's group merges a variety of styles and genres in subtle and not-so-subtle ways. Pianist **Edward Simon**'s "Slippin' And Slidin,'" for one, brings about a confluence of straight-ahead and Latin streams, while Watson's own "The Punjab Of Java Po" sets up exotic colors and

rhythms that recall classic Messenger outings but with details such as the dovetailing of Watson's sax with **Melton Mustafa**'s velvety trumpet, in their deliberately slightly out of sync unison sections, to offer a fresh vantage point.

And Watson's arrangement of the standard "Falling In Love With Love" is an example of classic remodelling — sax and trumpet blithely bounce out a main line that echoes in your ears long after the disc is back on your shelf. Watson and company play *music*, not just "the book." Technicians, young and old, take note...

Alto saxophonist **Kenny Garrett**, also an alumnus of the Messengers, is back on track. His latest release for Atlantic Records, *African Exchange Student*, gives him a terrific showcase for his distinctively textural sound. Last year's *Prisoner Of Love* had Garrett in the role of Prisoner Of Trend, with its contemporary and R&B bent. Apparently Garrett is afflicted with the ability and potential to play up a storm on the adventurous side of the street. Drummer **Elvin Jones** and especially pianist **Mulgrew Miller** are invaluable allies for this 62-minute (if you buy the CD) excursion. The two bonus tracks, "Your Country-ness" and "Nostradamus," are worth investigating.

RCA Novus artist **Marcus Roberts** returns with his third project, this one a truly solo event titled *Alone With Three Giants*. Which three? Try **Jelly Roll Morton**, **Duke Ellington** and **Thelonious Monk**. Roberts once again confirms his special sensitivity to melody,

harmony and feeling, shining in the mid- to slower tempos and ballads. Still plaguing Roberts, however, is a stilted delivery on the more rhythmically demanding material.

After a somewhat disappointing tribute album to **Billie Holiday**, vocalist **Abbey Lincoln** comes on with a winner. From PolyGram, *The World Is Falling Down* has strong self-penned material (the title track is exceptional), along with cover material well suited to Lincoln's keen sense of interpretation. The paired presence of mainstream trumpeter **Clark Terry** and insider-outsider saxophonist **Jackie McLean** is an unexpected choice, but the gamble pays off. The results are fine indeed.

band's film debut with Dan Aykroyd, Chevy Chase and John Candy, stresses the fact that funk, like God, is the same thang everywhere, no matter what kind of ethnocentrism anyone tries to lay on ya.

A recent conversation with **Chopmaster J** of D.U. revealed that his own spinoff group, **The Force One Network**, will be unleashing their own brand of music, which has "kind of a Rufus sound with '90s technology, but with that mid-'70s funky feel to it." They're still looking for a deal, but hopefully by the time you read this their first single, "Love Shocker" — about the evil manipulations of phone sex! — will be doin' it to ya.

At a recent press conference in New York, **Ice Cube** fielded questions for about an hour with humor and aplomb, after unveiling the solid video for "Dead Homiez," from his new *Kill At Will* set. Although some of the science dropped on "Can't Fade Me" bugs me, I've come to respect Cube for the mother-plunker's damn depth. It's hard to believe that this kid is barely 21, and untouchable.

An advance preview of an upcoming **Material** album indicates historical science being dropped: how about the Last Poets, Shabba Ranks, Jungle Brothers, Bootsy and Sly & Robbie, to name just a few of the artists on one album? Or that it simmers with a subtle edge that will suck you into a vortex of Afrocentricity that is powered by the old school in some crucial grooves that you won't ever want to leave?

If you got the time, check out "A Virus

## SOUL FUNK-TION

By Otis Winthorpe

Otis has decided that **Digital Underground** is bearing the funk flag frontline in 1990-91. Recontextualizing retro-sampled loops in slick, ultra-modern, unabashedly electronic manifestations, D.U. bridges the gap that has been created through the loss of the stupid/smart vibes of mid-'70s funk in this often sterile world of hip-hop, R&B, new jack swing and soul.

Where foolish poseurs like X-Clan choose to desecrate the sacred funk texts with their bloated and shallow tomfoolery, Digital Underground augments the science with updates that



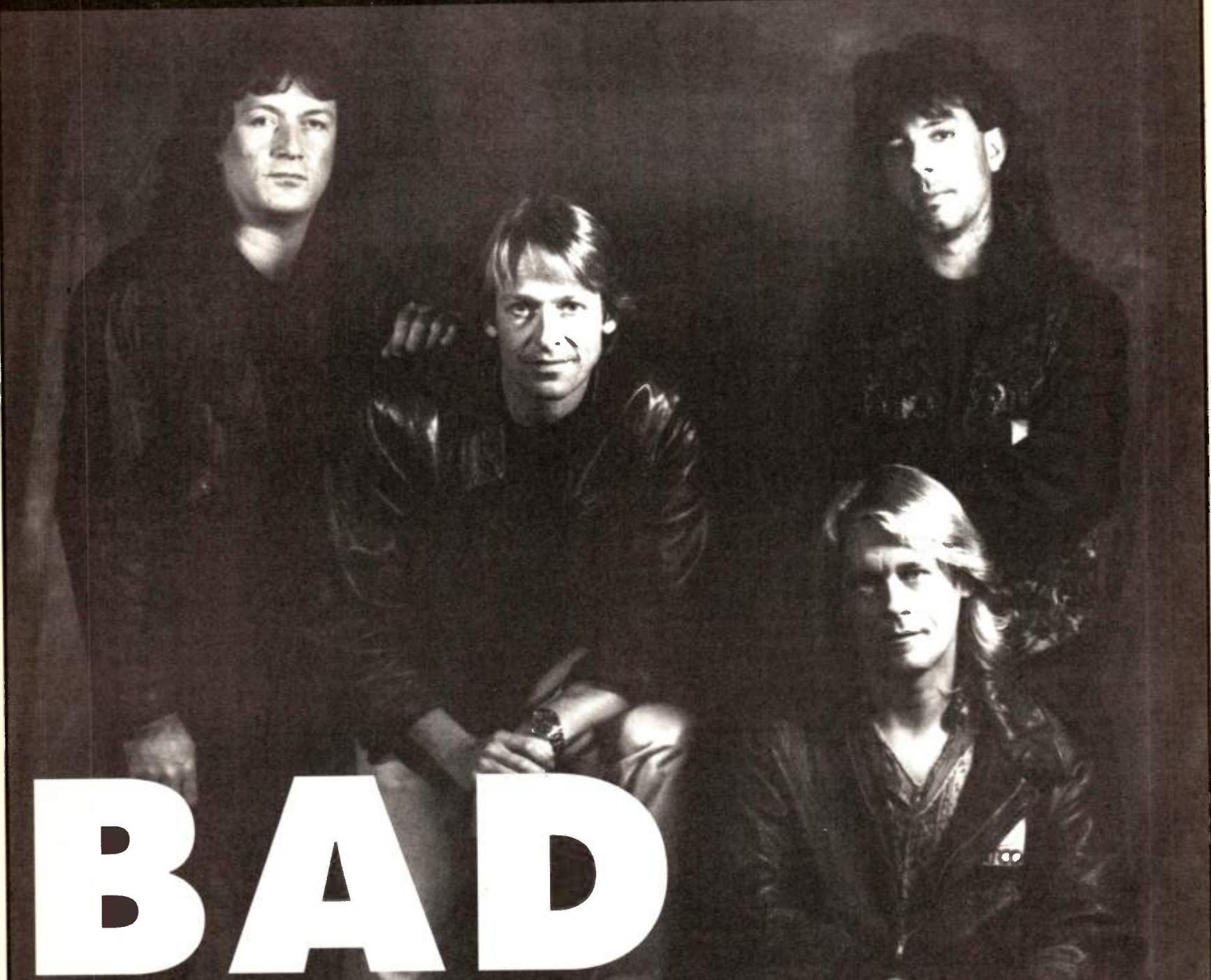
DIGITAL UNDERGROUND: BEARING THE FUNK FLAG FRONTLINE.

are sweet-nasty and stoopid enough to be heard with the originals, and continue to fight the placebo syndrome with their own original concepts and grooves.

The latest release from D.U., which has the confusing title of *This Is An EP Release*, keeps the funk alive and reminds us that universality and spirituality are what being One Nation is all about. "The Same Song," from the

Called The Blues" and the other tasty testimonials on **Charles Brown's** album *All My Life* (on Rounder's new Bullseye Blues label) for some serious schooling in Perspective 101. Most reminiscent of late '50s Ray Charles, this album has every note in place. Brown's piano playing is Basie meets R&B, and his voice is low-velocity, high-viscosity that gets highest praise from Otis and his old man. Peace to all.

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## CAUGHT IN THE ACT

Live Performance

## IRON MAIDEN

Hammersmith Odeon  
London

Iron Maiden acquired more than a new guitarist when they traded Adrian Smith for former White Spirit/Gillan fret ace Janick Gers — they also acquired a much-needed shot of adrenalin. At their old haunt, "the hammy," the Maidens conjured up memories of early barroom gigs with a stripped-down show that was as much sweat and blood as it was pyrotechnics and stage props. Yes, this was the lean and mean Maiden of old, with Gers careening around the stage like a drunk driver, providing the ideal counterpoint to Dave Murray, whose perpetual cherubic grin signalled that he had found an ideal guitar mate. The raw dual guitar fuel also stoked up lead vocalist Bruce Dickinson, bassist/team leader Steve Harris and drummer Nicko McBrain, who attacked new and old material with renewed commitment. To all intents and purposes, Maiden sounded like a new band. They blasted through "The Trooper," "Die With Your Boots On" and "Number Of The Beast," with Gers taking new liberties with the solos on "Heaven Can Wait" and "Two Minutes To Midnight." The new tracks from *No Prayer For The Dying* also sounded strong live, with "Tailgunner" and "Holy Smoking" earning instant recognition from the masses. Any thoughts of Maiden being over the hill were blown to smithereens: the prototype thrash metal band still rules supreme.

Keith Sharp

## MOJO NIXON, THE DEAD MILKMEN, THE CAVE DOGS

The Omni-New Daisy Theater  
Memphis, TN

Enigma's rag-tag alternative rock 'n' roll circus lumbered into Elvistown and put on a well-received show that had all of the spirit and disorganization of a frat gig. The Cavedogs kicked things off with an energetic set of ultra-melodic Anglo-style guitar rock. Featuring material from their excellent debut, *Joyrides For Shut-Ins*, The Cavedogs displayed fine harmonies and tight ensemble work. During much of the set guitarist Todd Spahr managed to play with the reckless energy and precision of Pete Townshend, an obvious influence. Towards the end of the set, they brought out members of The Dead Milkmen and Mojo's band to slog through an intentional aural abortion of Modern English's "I Melt With You."

The effect was funny, but it seemed to undermine the momentum. The Dead Milkmen then followed with a snotty set that commanded the attention of the more chaotic elements of the crowd. In spite of almost insurmountable sound problems (and barely intelligible lyrics when the sound worked), The Milkmen's frontman, Rodney Amadeus Anonymous, leaped about the stage dispensing such crowd pleasers as "Bitchin' Camaro" and the mutant James Brownish "R C's Mom." When lead guitarist Jasper Thread deadpanned the band's MTV hit from last year, "Punk Rock Girl," the crowd bounced around in Pavlovian recognition, while Rodney humored everyone with a singing hands mime. Finally, rock 'n' roll clown Mojo Nixon took the stage with a great band of journeyman players made up of Texas road warriors The Neptunes, augmented by the king of rude saxophone, Jim Spake. Nixon managed to command the audience's attention with his willingness to do anything to get it. He covered material from most of his records, including "Elvis Is Everywhere," "Debbie Gibson Is Pregnant (With My Two-Headed Love Child)," and his recent attack on self-important pop, "Don Henley Must Die." Mojo may think that rock 'n' roll should have the power to get people stirred up or outraged, which is fine, but antics like "punishing" the keyboard player by making him screw an inflatable sheep are pitifully dumb. If Mojo wants to expand his concept of rock, he should let his music do more of the talking, rather than reducing his fine band to a witless alternative retro-rock equivalent of a Holiday Inn show band. Nevertheless, each of these bands succeeded in putting more spirit into their shows than a lot of the processed cheese that passes for rock these days.

Rick Clark

## JANE'S ADDICTION

Concert Hall  
Toronto, ON

Jane's Addiction once again descended on Toronto to play the Concert Hall to a sold-out audience. But this time it wasn't so much a show as a love-in at the high church of Jane. Even the stage, which included everything from pasty white dolls to ceramic Uncle



MOJO NIXON AND HIS RAG-TAG ALTERNATIVE ROCK'N'ROLL CIRCUS.

Toms, was a shrine to the fallout of American suburban culture. And that's what Jane's lead singer, Perry Farrell, tried to present — an orgasmic look at America run amok. In other words, sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. But with every hook and snappy beginning to a song came drowning, muddy guitar and an energy level that dissipated before the second chorus. The show seemed unfocused — it was as though the band has been on the road too long, or that their lifestyles have finally caught up with them. Of course, there were highlights. The song "Ted, Just Admit It" brought everyone out thrashing early on. "Gimme Some," from their newest album, *Ritual de lo Habitual*, had an intensity greater than most of the rest of the show. "Summertime Rolls" also was entertaining, especially when Farrell pulled a groupie from the audience and necked with her in between verses. The lucky woman decided to stay on the stage and provide dancing entertainment the rest of the night. I have to wonder, though, about a show in which this kind of action sticks in the mind as a highlight. But controversy dogs Jane's Addiction, and as long as they have controversy they will sell out shows — at least in Toronto.

David Kelly

## INXS

Docklands Arena  
London

On the first stop of a U.K. tour, INXS proved that their patented brand of

hard funk remains the most potent fusion of dance and rock around. The one riff, half-song wonder "Suicide Blonde" opened the two-hour set with unexpected force. After 13 years of heavy touring without a personnel change, INXS know exactly how to scale down the clutter and speed of their songs to ensure that echo-laden arena acoustics do not make mush of their funk. Predictably enough, the set list drew heavily from *X*, the band's current offering. "Bitter Tears" and "Hear That Sound" were especially strong selections from an album whose songs seem more suited to concert than radio play. Comparatively less exciting but obligatory hits like "Need You Tonight" were played early on, allowing for a continuous build in momentum that climaxed with a red-hot, set-closing "Devil Inside." Michael Hutchence commanded the stage in classic Jaggersque style, and the quality of the ensemble musicianship would probably surprise most hearing INXS live for the first time. The rhythm section of Gary Beers and Jon Farriss is INXS' secret weapon; they can rock hard and swing with equal conviction, even while playing over prerecorded rhythm tracks. More than anyone else these days, INXS hints at the possibilities in combining the punch and groove of modern dance music with the power and crunch of rock. And while INXS aren't the world's greatest songwriters, they seem important, especially coming off the first year since the British Invasion with no *Billboard* No. 1 rock album.

David Hazan

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## MONITOR

By Perry Stern

Glasgow, 1984. A young **Bobby Gillespie**, alienated by the New Romantic /post punk music being made in Britain at the time, was looking to find members for a punk band he wanted to call **Primal Scream**. "I was into punk back then and there wasn't any," he says. "I listened to The Doors, but I listened to Sister Sledge and Chic as well."

Although he found a couple of guys to play with, Gillespie couldn't find anybody who could play the drums. A club-owner friend told him of a band that was in the same boat. "He sent me a tape, and I thought it was brilliant," Gillespie says. "There was this white noise synth and a drum machine, and I couldn't believe it when I learned it was a guitar." The band was the Jesus & Mary Chain.

Gillespie introduced the Chain's Reid brothers to Alan McGhee, head honcho at Creation records. "McGhee told them I could play drums, but I couldn't," he recalls. "I told them, 'I can only play floor tom and a snare like [The Velvet Underground's] Maureen Tucker. And they said, 'That's fine.'" He remembers that the first gig they played together in London (they couldn't get arrested in Glasgow) was October 12 (or 14), 1984. "They were a sensation, a real event. There hadn't been any punk in England since the Pistols and The Clash in '77."

"To me," he says wistfully, "rock 'n' roll was a secret teenage language that adults could never understand;

a real clandestine thing between you and your friends. The reason I liked The Sex Pistols and The Clash is I could identify with what they were saying. Not just what they were saying in their songs, but their look and their attitude."

For the next two years Gillespie toured Europe and the U.S. with the Mary Chain, though he managed to put out two Primal Scream singles as well: "All Fall Down" in 1985 and "Crystal Crescent" in '86. The following year he finally left the Reids ("It was time for them to get a real drummer, to move on"), and started recording the Primal's first LP, *Sonic Flower Groove*. The band's sound wasn't far from the cacophony of the Mary Chain, with its wailing, aggressive guitars, but they were set against lush harmonies. In '89 they released the second LP, *Primal Scream*.

Now comes the drug part. If you listen to the intro to the remix of "Loaded," you'll hear Peter Fonda in a scene from *The Wild Angels*, a camp Roger Corman biker flick from the '60s. Asked what he wants to do, Fonda answers, "We want to be free to do what we want to do. And we wanna get loaded and we wanna have a good time. And that's what we're gonna do!" It's not just a hip soundbite that Gillespie wanted to sample. That, in a nutshell, is Gillespie's philosophy of life.

Around '87 the warehouse/acid house scene started happening in London. "It wasn't a media manufactured trip like the New Romantics or disco," Gillespie claims, "it wasn't started by art school students. It was a real, post-

Thatcherite British working-class subculture." His first warehouse party was a rave-up with hundreds of happy, gyrating kids all in the throes of Ecstasy. "That's the way it should be," he thought. "People getting gone, getting right out of their skin." It was as a result of these Ecstatic experiences that Primal Scream moved away from its rockier punk roots to its present dance-oriented, super groovy sound.

"I don't glamorize drugs," Gillespie declares defiantly when challenged. But he refuses to deny that he takes them. "I believe each individual should be left up to his own devices. It's my right as a member of the human

race to take Ecstasy, morphine and amphetamines. It's my life and my body and I can do what I like."

By being a professed drug user Gillespie can still claim punk credibility as "an outsider." And by getting into the Madchester house groove he remains true to his early disco influences. Gillespie, it seems, has the best of both worlds.

**New Music News:** **Electronic**, with **New Order's** **Bernard Sumner** and the world's busiest guitarist **Johnny Marr**, should finally have its debut LP out in early March... **Michael Aston**, the twin that quit **Gene Loves Jezebel**, is working on his own album in Hollywood, with **Steve Earle**, of all people, helping out.

## LOOK HEAR

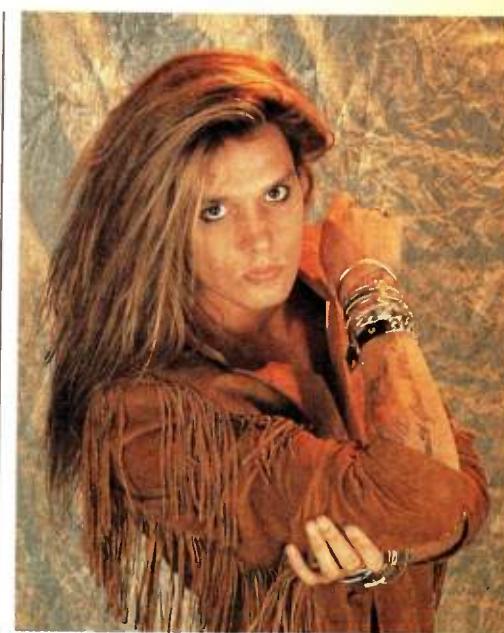
By Kerry Doole

Time to catch up on a wide range of new music homevideo releases. Already out and selling well is the first longform homevideo from hard rock sensations **Skid Row**. *Oh Say Can You Scream* was compiled by the group, and it includes live concert footage from their first world tour as well as the uncensored clips to such hits as "I Remember You," "Youth Gone Wild" and "18 & Life." The 100-minute collection is out on A\*Vision Entertainment.

**IXEN** are equally pretty rock 'n' rollers making their homevideo debut. *Revved Up* includes the clips for their self-titled platinum record as well as those from their most recent album, *Rev It Up*. Released by EMI, which has also issued a fine **Talk Talk** compilation. *A Natural History/The Videos* showcases the career of the English band known for some of the most innovative videos of the '80s. Classic songs like "It's My Life," "Such A Shame," and "Life's What You Make It" are included.

A couple of major price promotions will appeal to the budget-conscious collector. PolyGram Music Video (PMV) is re-releasing some of its best-selling titles at a reduced list price of \$19.95 U.S. Artists featured include **Bon Jovi**, **Roger Waters** (*The Wall Live*), **Janet Jackson**, **Rush** (*Chronicles*), **Bob Marley**, **The Moody Blues** and **Cinderella**. **Kiss** and **Sinead O'Connor** collections are priced even lower.

CBS/Fox have just released its "Video Hall Of Fame" collection to coincide with the 1991 Rock 'N' Roll Hall Of Fame induction ceremonies. In this series come in-concert films of **Jerry Lee Lewis** (*Live In London — 1983*), **Simon and Garfunkel** (the legendary Central Park concert), and **Bob Dylan** (*Hard To Handle* — featuring **Tom Petty** and **The Heartbreakers**). The **Paul McCartney** vehicle *Give My Regards To Broad Street* and **Mick Jagger's** *Running Out Of Luck* (a rarely



SKID ROW'S SEBASTIAN BACH.

seen feature-lengthy theatrical) are also included. All titles sport a \$19.98 U.S. list.

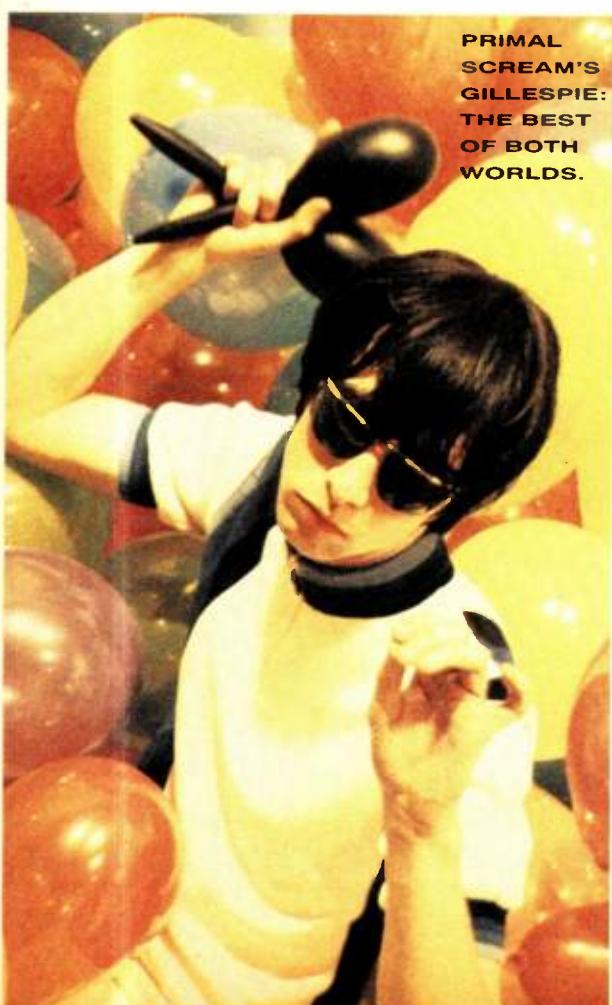
Prospective **Top Gunners** can get their kicks from *Thunderbirds Music Video*. This Cabin Fever title links the aerial acrobatics of the U.S. Air Force's F-16 pilots with a rockin' soundtrack that includes **Bon Jovi**, **Aerosmith**, **Journey**, **Heart**, and **Tina Turner**.

Far more peacefully tasteful is Rhino's *The Turtles: Happy Together*, a videography of the much-loved '60s pop-rockers. Hits like "Happy Together," "It Ain't Me Babe" and "Elenore" are featured alongside celebrity interviews with the likes of **Turtles Flo & Eddie**, **Graham Nash** and **Stephen Stills**. Also just out on Rhino is *Todd Rundgren — Live In Japan*, a long-form concert film featuring Todd at his best.

Virgin Music Video recently released two collections of interest to the more discerning modern music fan. **Ryuichi Sakamoto** is the Japanese keyboardist/composer who first came to prominence with **Yellow Magic Orchestra**, then went solo and excelled on film scores like *The Last Emperor*. **Beauty** is an hour-long concert film shot during his 1990 world tour in support of his solo album of that name.

**Roxy Music** were one of the most exciting and influential groups of the '70s, and their career is traced on the retrospective *Total Recall*. Classics like "Do The Strand" and "Love Is The Drug" are featured along with some of the later solo work of leader **Bryan Ferry**. The 90-minute tape is a must for Roxy devotees.

Finally, the folks at Video Music Inc. continue their eclectic policy with recent releases that run the gamut from concert films of **Warlock**, **Nazareth**, **Flesh For Lulu** and **Triumph** through to a **Joni Mitchell** collection, *Refuge Of The Roads*, that includes some video sequences shot by the songstress herself.



PRIMAL

SCREAM'S  
GILLESPIE:  
THE BEST  
OF BOTH  
WORLDS.

Thatcherite British working-class subculture." His first warehouse party was a rave-up with hundreds of happy, gyrating kids all in the throes of Ecstasy. "That's the way it should be," he thought. "People getting gone, getting right out of their skin." It was as a result of these Ecstatic experiences that Primal Scream moved away from its rockier punk roots to its present dance-oriented, super groovy sound.

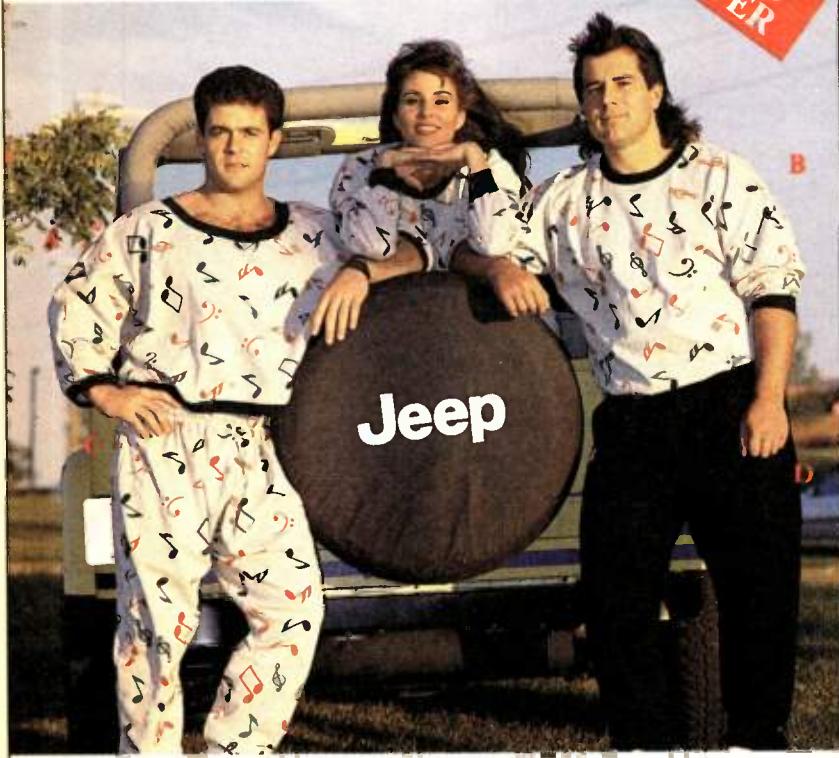
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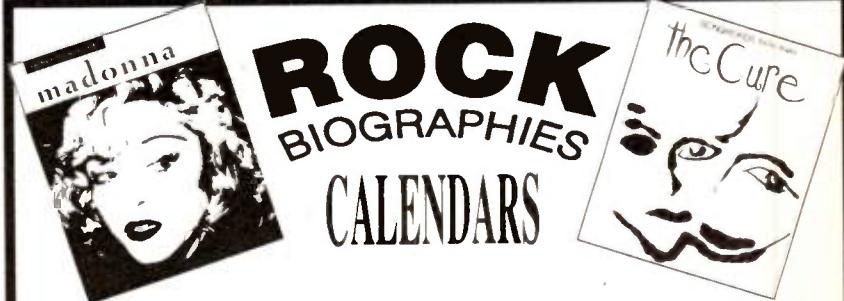
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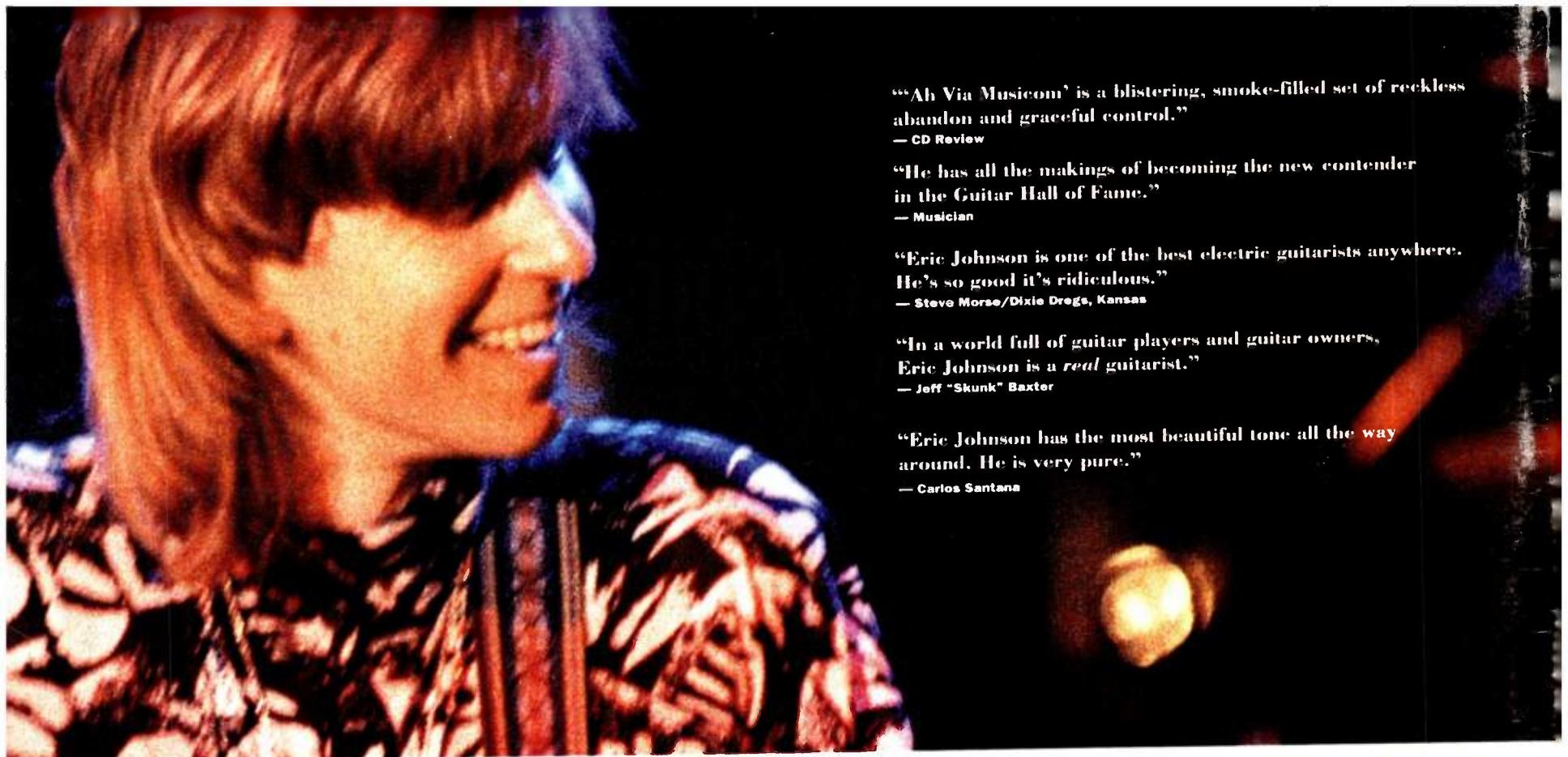
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