

MUSICIAN

PLAYER & LISTENER

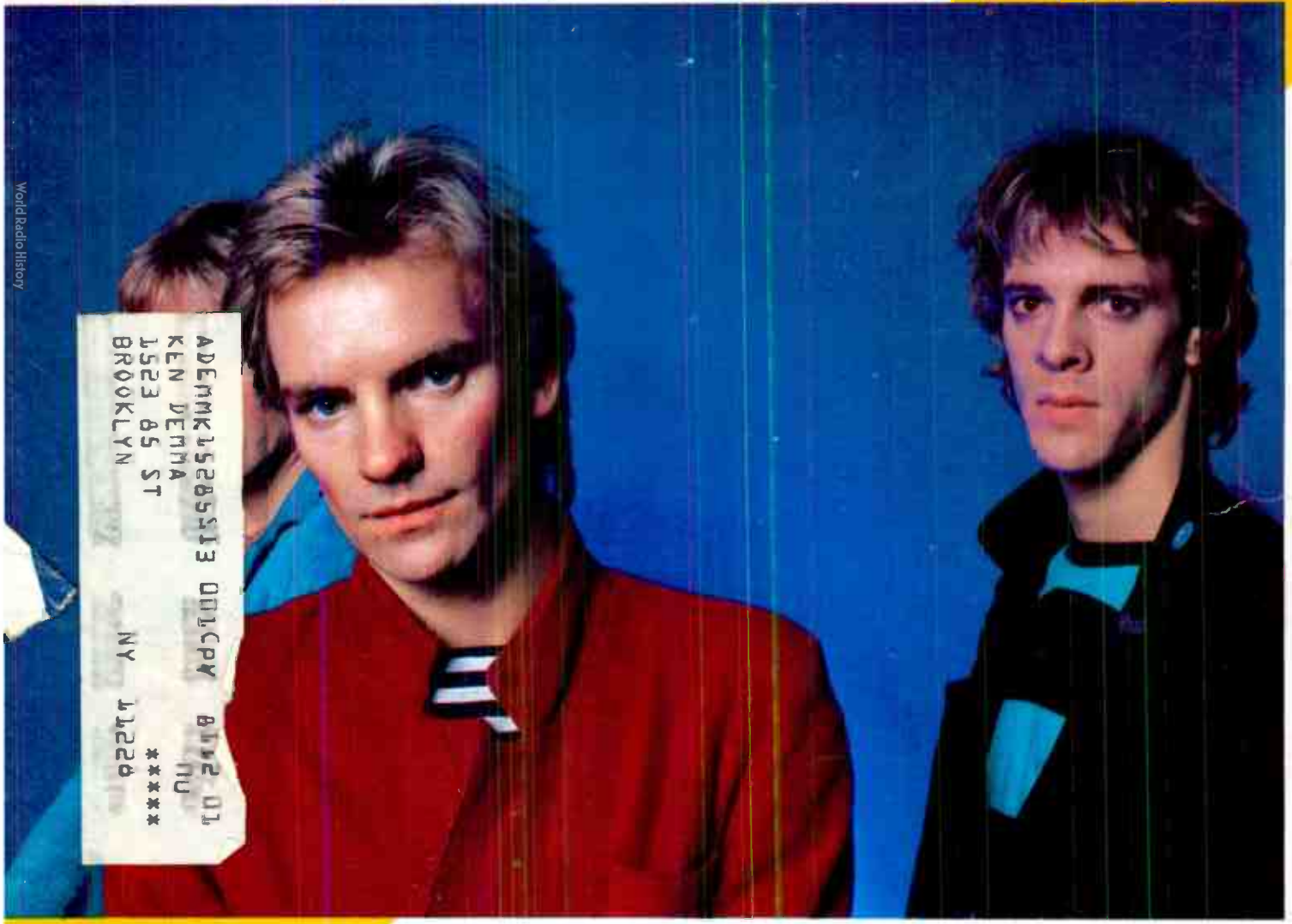


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World Radio History

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World Radio History

MUSICIAN & LISTENER PLAYERS

NO.38, DECEMBER, 1981

The Pretenders have been trying to break the dreaded sophomore album jinx and to get used to their new found status as "rock n' roll heroes." Jon Pareles finds that Jim Honeyman-Scott and Martin Chambers are adjusting well but that Chrissie Hynde is far from comfortable in the media spotlight.



The Police weave solid musicianship into a deceptive simplicity making them one of the few commercial bands with substance and punch. A look at the three supercops, their crimestopping musical methods and their private investigations.



The Bassist that quiet, unstung, ever-reliable craftsman who binds the whole group together and stakes out the harmony, melody and the rhythm, all on those four telephone wire strings, is finally called back for a solo encore. Chris Doering presents nuts and bolts interviews with some of the top of the crop.



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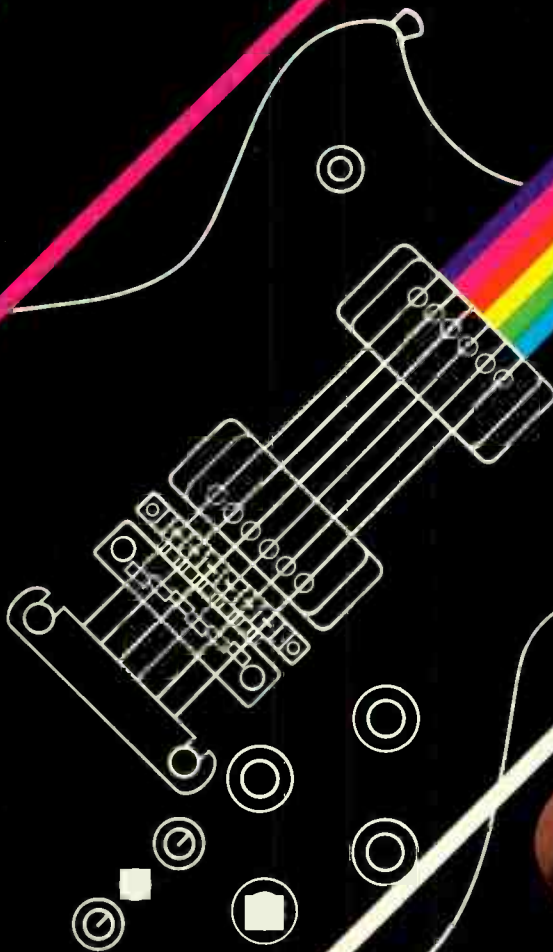
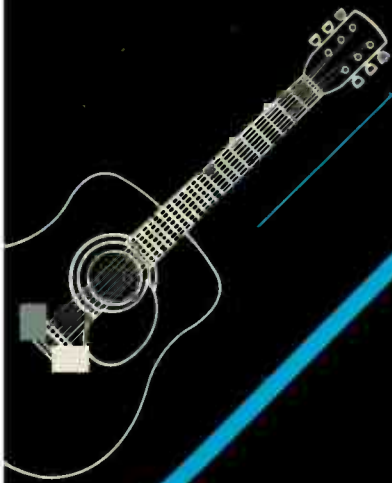
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Subject: The Next
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LETTERS

MOVE OVER MARSH

Thank you and move over Dave Marsh, you've got company. Time and again I've listened incredulously to dozens of so-called "experts" as they attempt to downplay rock music and its rightful niche in American history. Invariably, these detractors are a) classical buffs or b) jazz snobs who are convinced that if the music's not a or b, it's not good music. There is good and bad rock, the same as there's good and bad within the other genres. If people like Sidney Zion had their way, musical "originators" would be faced with creating within pre-established guidelines under the pretext that anything else would be a waste of time. Would this be true creativity?

Drew Eaton
Miami, FL

RIGHTEOUS REVENGE

dear dave: i thought you had fallen off the 59th street bridge or an avenging musician who had been routed by your pen got you, but i see that in the latest issue of *musician* you're still in top form. i'm of course referring to your rebuttal of sidney zion's piece that the *new york times* saw fit to print. i had railed at my roommate the sunday that zion's article appeared and waited hopefully for righteous indignation to strike someone — i did not think it would take this long. however i did appreciate your article and wanted to let you know that i enjoy your writing a lot.

mary kay feely
n.y., ny

HEGEMONIC CONSPIRACY

I find it inexpressibly amusing to discover Dave Marsh "uncovering" conspiracies against rock 'n' roll when it is obvious to any sentient outsider that he has been at the forefront of rock-related hegemonic and conspiratorial activities for more than a decade. A careful reading of Marsh's biography of Bruce Springsteen will reveal an all-too-real "conspiracy": the battle for control over the canons of taste in popular culture. Springsteen has been Marsh's Great Lever, his weapon in a struggle to mold a vision of rock in accordance with his fairy-tale desires.

It is also comical to witness Marsh accuse Sidney Zion of attempting to bury rock 'n' roll, when Marsh himself has been so diligent in a series of attempts to mummify it in its past, in worn-out, dogmatic imagery. His reactionary dismissal of new wave and "art-rock" are glaring symptoms: the disease that he correctly diagnoses for Sidney Zion is simply a more fatuous version of his own.

As far as the discussion of *The Day*

The Music Died is concerned, it is a waste of the readers' time. Surely Marsh's knee-jerk defensiveness concerning rock 'n' roll has not become so chronic that he must bludgeon a book that even reviewers *indifferent* to rock music have labelled as absolute tripe.

Finally, in reference to Marsh's assault on alleged Mafia control of rock 'n' roll: there are multiple Mafias in our modern world, and the print media is no exception. Perhaps if Marsh recognized his own position in this continuum he would become a valuable — and viable — critic once again.

Don Malcolm
N.Y., NY

VINTAGE REALITY

Larry DiMarzio's article on vintage guitars is a crock. Those guitars are radically overpriced, often look like they've been through WWII, Korea, 'Nam and the '79 Who concert in Cincinnati, sound no better (sometimes a lot worse) than new ones, and are not likely to continue rising in value.

If those cherry sunburst Les Pauls are so fantastic, why doesn't Les himself play one? He says the old ones weren't any better. And I think my new "The Strat" — stock except for graphics, a phase switch and a Scruggs peg, is a heck of a lot better guitar than my girlfriend's '55 Strat, so much so that she sold it, bought a new one like mine and made herself enough cash to pay off her Harley. If it sounds like I hate old guitars, you're wrong. Some of them are damn nice instruments, but the so-called "classics" are ridiculously overpriced. I'm not signing this letter because I have no desire to get fired from my sales job at a local music store, which does quite a bit of business in vintage guitars.

Name Withheld Upon Request

LEVENE REHABILITATED

What is this? An article, a primer, as it were, on post-punk guitarists and not one mention of Keith Levene. If I'm not mistaken, U-2's guitarist has learned an awful lot from Mr. Levene: just listen to "I Will Follow" by U-2 back to back with "First Issue" by Public Image. Without a doubt, Keith Levene is singlehandedly the most important "post-punk" guitarist. I regard this as a gross error on your part which I hope will be corrected in future issues.

Jeremy Sidatan
N.Y., NY

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

To put Journey in the same category as Styx, REO and Starship is absurd. Mr. Considine, have you listened to an entire Journey album, not just the hit singles (I agree their hits are sometimes a bit sappy)? Come on, how could anyone say Santana's "Winning" sounds Journey-ish. Santana produces a boring

soft rock that my mother would listen to. Carlos *would* put down the performance of Journey live, as he is not a performer.

Journey possesses a soul and a feeling in their work. The others previously mentioned are more sterile and contrived...and shallow. I find it hard to believe, given your attitude towards "hard pop," that you listened to a great deal of the material you based your article on (I know I couldn't stomach it). To generalize and get opinions and comments from soon-to-be has-beens is Mickey Mouse reporting.

BUT, BUT...

I will never plunk down another dime for your rag, for I cannot tolerate the sarcastic way in which your writers insult those who do not agree with their personal taste. I can't imagine accusing Styx, Journey, Boston or Starship of "capitalizing on the rock fans who only need the sonic and theatrical cues to salivate happily." I'm afraid you've got it all mixed up with new wave and punk. True musicians don't write their music to impress other musicians, they write it to express themselves and hopefully to make others feel good. As for the self-appointed connoisseurs who have the gall to knock that, I can only quote Paul Kantor: "F---k you, we do what we want!"

Mark Patterson
Portage, IN

ATTACK OF THE BEATLE PEOPLE

I object to Mark Mehler's record review of George Harrison's *Somewhere In England*. Actually, it wasn't a review at all; it was more like a senseless putdown. His comments on the record were as twisted as his own mind with his stupid insults on a truly great artist and musician. With this guy doing this sort of weirdness, it's not doing the magazine any good. He wasn't the right person for the article and yes, it upsets me [hand-writing becoming disoriented — Ed.] and I'm sure plenty of others also, seeing how you put him in there and printed all that trash. You ought to be responsible enough to let someone who knows what he is doing write a new article. This is the real truth.

David Schlosser
Newport, MI

STARSTRUCK

In your article, "Hard Pop," you really gave it to the Jefferson Starship, especially Paul Kantnor. I think it's great that He and They tell the critics to shove it. If they don't like J.S., they shouldn't say so. Who else on Our generation's music stands up for the fans. Many times Kantnor leaps into the audience at Their greatest time of need and goes out of His way to make the show something uniquely satisfying.

Amherst
Santa Monica, CA

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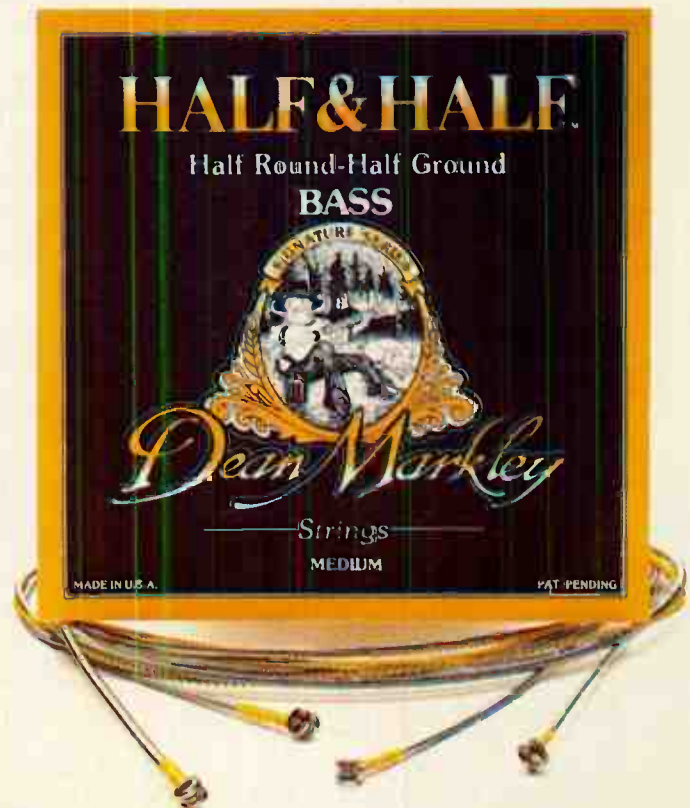
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The Rolling Stones have completely conquered America once again, but insiders say their victory on the charts and in the concert halls was not a foregone conclusion. Dismayed by the lukewarm reception accorded *Sucking In The Seventies* last spring (the album peaked at number 15 and was off the charts in only twelve weeks), the Stones shopped around for a corporate guardian angel to help subsidize the tour. Sure enough, enter the Jovan Corp., makers of musk oil and other wonderful products to make America smell nice. They got their name on the tickets and with five dollars worth of musk oil, a lucky buyer could purchase a poster of a tongue flying through the air. Such a deal.

Word has it that the Stones asked the Rossington-Collins band, remnants of Lynyrd Skynyrd, to open for them in Florida. "Forget that," said **Allen Collins**. "We own Florida, let the Stones open for us." Mick politely declined. Other Stones openers included some shows with the **Go-Go's** and some closers included some fireworks for the folks in Philly. They love fireworks in Philly...

While the Stones ran around the country scaring the local constabulary, the usual sitdown concert business has been steadily declining. After all, how many times does your average kid want to see REO? Regional promoters may become an endangered species, said New Jersey promoter John Scher, warning of a future dominated by large, national promoters like Concerts West. Then all the kids will be able to see will be the twenty-five acts deemed safe for consumption by radio consultants.

A number of record companies are leaning more heavily on the cassette format. Reach Out International actually sells no records at all, only cassettes, including titles by Lydia Lunch, James Chance, Suicide and the Dictators. **Malcolm McLaren**, ex-Sex Pistol Svengali mentioned elsewhere in this issue, is totally sold on cassettes, using them to push Bow Wow Wow. With such song titles as "C-60" and "C-30," and a giant "Your Cassette Pal" logo, McLaren is making sleeping giant RCA take another look at its cassette policy.

Over in Britain, Island is still marketing a blank tape on one side of their prerecorded "One Plus One" cassettes. Despite opposition from rival labels and record stores, and a refusal by U.S. distributor Warner Bros. to go along, Island has added a new wrinkle — the same album recorded on both sides. Now they can't say we're selling blank tape, huh?

Studio 54 reopened in N.Y., with great fanfare and lines outside, proving that disco is by no means down for the count. Disco record sales are coming back, too. The good news is that disco operators are starting to realize that they can't keep playing the same monorhythmic music forever. New disco formats include doses of R&B, funk, new wave dance rock and such new romantics as Duran Duran and Spandau Ballet. Even live shows are becoming okay. Studio 54 is presenting a "Modern Classix" series beginning with **Lene Lovich**.

Rock 'n' roll rip-offs abound. **Rick Derringer** lost a hundred grand worth of equipment, only to be the benefit of

a Palladium concert by some friends. Then **Tom Verlaine's** van, which included equipment borrowed from **Willie Nile's** band, was filched from Second Avenue. The **Psychedelic Furs** had similar problems recently.

While many say the future lies with independent labels, they are still dependent on the majors for pressing of records. In addition to its own releases, CBS manufactured, until recently, product from at least forty other labels. Now that number is down to a dozen, and CBS has decided to close its Santa Maria, California manufacturing plant. Insiders suggest CBS doesn't want all the midgets getting all the glory.

All is not cheery at CBS headquarters, either. In a new round of bloodletting at Black Rock, a few of the top marketing honchos were "restructured" right out into the street. Now paranoia stalks the hallways, especially since many staffers owe their jobs to **Bruce Lundvall**, who left his post as CBS Records Division head to start a new label for Electra Asylum.

Here's the all-time biggest rock book ever: *The Compleat Beatles* (Delilah Books and ATV Music). This 1,024-page, two-volume set includes interviews with the principals, comment and opinion by noted rock writers, and the words and music to all 211 Beatle tunes. Arranger Milt Okun found "in virtually every case, the commercially available arrangements were wrong, the bass lines, the melodies, the words... It's almost criminal that the most important popular music of the century was treated as if it didn't matter." Okun acknowledges his charts may have a few bugs; for only forty bucks, a few bugs'll be fine.

Gary Numan, travelling around the world, developed engine trouble in his small Cessna and had to put down in a militarily sensitive area in India. Numan, thought by the Indians to be a spy, was put under house arrest and interrogated for ten hours. That's what you get for walking around looking like that.

An insider reports that "Say Good-bye To Hollywood" on **Billy Joel's** *Songs In The Attic* was *not* in fact recorded at the live shows; it was done in the studio and "enhanced" with crowd noises. Thus we may assume that the "spontaneous applause" in the middle of the song must be one of Billy's favorite parts.

Chart Action

For the past few weeks, the Stones' *Tattoo You* has been flaunting the top



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album spot. Jockeying just below for position and flip-flopping week by week are Foreigner's 4, the-Queen-of-California Stevie Nicks' *Bella Donna* and homogenized corporate rockers Journey with *Escape*. Atlantic seems the real big winner here, having the top three movers under their employ. Down in the on-deck circle, also changing places a lot, are Bob Seger's live album, *Nine Tonight* (basically a rehash only a Seger disciple will need), Dan Fogelberg (struggling to get through puberty) with *The Innocent Age* and Rickie Lee Jones' *Pirates*. Plastique Pat Benatar can't seem to break the heavy seven with *Precious Time*. Hey, we can't help it if we're cynical.

We know you're expecting us to be laying Al Jareau's *Breakin' Away* on you and making all sorts of inflated claims about the "first jazz vocalist" ever to make the top ten, and we probably should, since Al live reveals something his records don't: the guy is great. But instead we'll move right along to the biggest surges and collapses — Billy Joel's *Songs in the Attic* entered last week at 22 and is now at 10. There is muttering at the top of the charts about this, which ended the merriment when *Endless Love* and *Pretenders II* suddenly dropped like stones. Right behind Joel in the "big action" sweepstakes is Daryl Hall and John Oates' new

Private Eyes. Those poor guys must get so tired seeing their names in print as an example of "white singers," but they'll just spend a little of their money and feel better.

Other LP action has Kinks, ZZ Top, the Go-Go's and the soundtrack from *Heavy Metal* (which isn't really heavy metal) heading up, and E.L.O. (surprisingly), Billy Squier, Rick Springfield and Blue Oyster Cult (whew) nosing gently down. Those extremely jealous of media superstars will cackle that Bob Dylan's *Shot Of Love* ran out of grace and Debbie Harry's *KooKoo* was poopoo'd. Look fellas, you want to make the money, check out Christopher Cross: 87 weeks and still 33 (last week it went up).

Over in the singles tournament, what is most astonishing is the utter collapse of "No Gettin Over Me" by renegade law student Ronnie Milsap and dismal performances by "Slowhand" (Pointer Sisters), "Lady You Bring Me Up" (Commodores) and "Queen Of Hearts" (Juice Newton). Since these were particularly overexposed summer tunes, it seems as if they were more than ready to wither and fall. For many, of course, the "biggest" story on the charts is "Endless Love," and I know you'll be exuberant to know that the song is all the way up to ninth on the all-time list for weeks at the top. If it goes

one more week...the record will be tied. Zowie! You can't say Diana Ross isn't leaving Motown in style.

Other singles you probably know and love are Chris Cross' "Arthur's Theme," "Stop Draggin' My Heart Around" by Stevie and Tommy, Journey's "Who's Cryin' Now," and Eddie Rabbitt's "Step By Step" (Yep, he did write it). The Stones' "Start Me Up" has been working up to #7, finding the single action no pushover. Catchy "We're In This Love Together" by Al Jareau is at 20, the Police are at 36 and the Afternoon Delights' soap-rap epic, "General Hospi-tale" is at 33. Am *can* be fun.

Ah, but over on the soul charts is the shape of things to come. "Endless Love" did eight weeks at the top and then was rudely bounced down to #4. Some people know when enough's enough. The Four Tops' "When She Was My Girl" leapfrogged over Carl Carlton's "She's A Bad Mama Jama" and Rick James' "Super Freak." And as for chart records, hell, you talkin' records, talk Rick James with *eighteen* weeks of the number one soul album. Only Stevie's *Songs in the Key of Life* did more (20).

Al Jarreau has the #2 soul album (did he squeeze in Al Again?!) and Aretha is #4 with *Love Hurt All The Way*. Lest anyone accuse black listeners of provincialism, Kraftwerk's *Computer World* is at #41 and rising.



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1981 CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO ROCK BOOKS

Dave Marsh, who has published his own book and survived the predictable slings and arrows, now feels ready to forgive and forget, and to throw a few of his own at fellow rock critics' literary efforts.

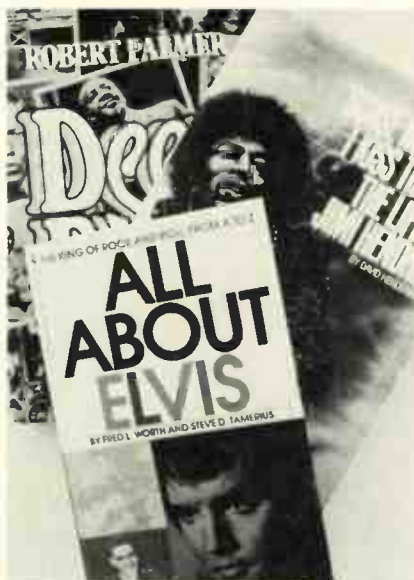
By Dave Marsh

With apologies due and undue, let the games begin.

Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On, by Robert Cain (biography; Dial Press). This putative life of Jerry Lee Lewis is about as bad a book as one could imagine — if only it were malicious as well, Cain's work would be more repulsive than Albert Goldman's. Unfortunately, it isn't: just sappy, padded, uninsightful and generally insipid. (An interview with Steve Allen is the centerpiece of the volume!) At \$9.95, this is an old-fashioned rip-off. Hold on for Robert Palmer and Nick Tosches' recountings of the Jerry Lee Legend. D minus.

Twisted Kicks, by Tom Carson (novel; Entwistle Books). As a rock critic, Carson strikes me as too voguish, excessively solemn and virtually a-historical. But this is a terrific novel about the kind of jaded kids that Carson's preferred post-punk nihilism appeals to, refers to and is (I guess) usually created by. *Twisted Kicks* creates a scary world in the affluent, sub-C.I.A., bureaucratic suburbs of Virginia, amongst kids on the rough edges of maturity — the kind for whom Richard Hell's boho postures aren't just a choice but a seeming necessity. I found them pretty loathsome, wasn't sure how Carson felt but he's created them so vividly, it really doesn't matter — they genuinely speak for themselves. His real accomplishment is to present a world that lurks just outside the realm of everyday vision, and to make that world matter intensely. A.

Christgau's Record Guide, by Robert Christgau (Ticknor & Fields). The format of this column tells you what you need to know about Christgau's influence in his genre. And he's here in all his glory, perplexing as it may be: concise, contentious, condescending, provocative and pedagogic. This makes Christgau rock's most tough-minded critic, but it also makes me wonder (given his egotism and often-narrow ideology) whether he's the best. His judgments are almost always astute, but his commentary ranges from gratuitously irrelevant to stiletto insightful. I doubt that this is a sufficiently broad basis on which to create a guide book — especially since he doesn't indicate clearly which judg-



As rock books by critics flood the nation's bookstores, the need for a definitive consumer's guide becomes paramount.

ments are the product of hindsight (and thus, possibly voguish) and which have survived ten years, give or take a few. Also, what does it mean that the most influential rock critic has never written a book that *wasn't* an anthology? B plus.

Fast Times at Ridgmont High, by Cameron Crowe (Simon & Schuster). As the youngest rock writer in history (he started at fourteen), it's appropriate that Crowe fashions his first book from the experience of returning to high school at twenty-one, in order to find out what the proverbial "kids" are up to. The result doesn't have anything to do with music (hardly) but it is very rock 'n' roll — also hilarious, compassionate and exceedingly well put together, about ten times as slick as most of Crowe's musician profiles. B plus.

Your Cheatin' Heart: A Biography of Hank Williams, by Chet Flippo (Simon & Schuster). A no-holds-barred view of Hank and the development of the honky tonk hero, from his *spina bifida* to Miss Audrey's screwing around, with an especially insightful grasp of the music and the audience. Flippo is a better writer than most of his *Rolling Stone* profiles let him show, but I have some trouble with his new journalese. I mean, which dialogue and insight attributed to Hank

is based on Flippo's imagination and insight and which is based on what we fuddy-duddies used to call "fact and research"? Oh well, if you love Hank and hate the sanctimonious nonsense with which Nashville has always surrounded him, you'll love this. If not, get the records, or new ears. B plus.

Elvis, by Albert Goldman ("biography"; McGraw-Hill). The really scandalous revelation here isn't that Colonel Parker is a Dutchman or that he took Elvis to the cleaners on a regular basis for twenty years. Nor is it that Elvis was a junkie, a twisted pervert and a mark. All of this has long since been surmised. The real scandal is that any American publisher could be so easily conned by Goldman's straight-faced garbage and flatulent prose, much less by his principal source, Lamar Fike, a Presley sidekick referred to in at least one other insider Elvis bio as the Memphis Mafia's "village idiot." Well, Goldman got through the writing without discovering what year Hank Williams died, and he has now written two books about drug addicts without discovering the difference in effect between skinpopping and mainlining. But that's okay — if you trust a word of this, nothing I can say will stop you. You're just as much of a jerk as the people who created it. F.

Dirty Washing, by Vivien Goldman (12" 45; 99 Records). Goldman is the best reggae critic since Carl Gayle stopped writing (or at least, since Gayle stopped writing in places where I could read him), and on the basis of her deeply felt observations of Bob Marley's funeral alone, she earns the dub pretensions of the two songs here (this is a record) "Launderette" and "Private Armies / P.A. Dub." Of them, "Launderette," a post-Johnson rap, is the best — not as funny as the Dolls' japes at this cleanliness institution, but a good deal more trenchant. The density of the music owes something to collaborators Levene and Lydon of PiL but its high spirits are Goldman's alone. B.

Nighthawk Blues, by Peter Guralnick (novel; Seaview Books). Guralnick is the best profile writer around — not even just in music journalism. This is his first novel and while its plot tends to be sche-

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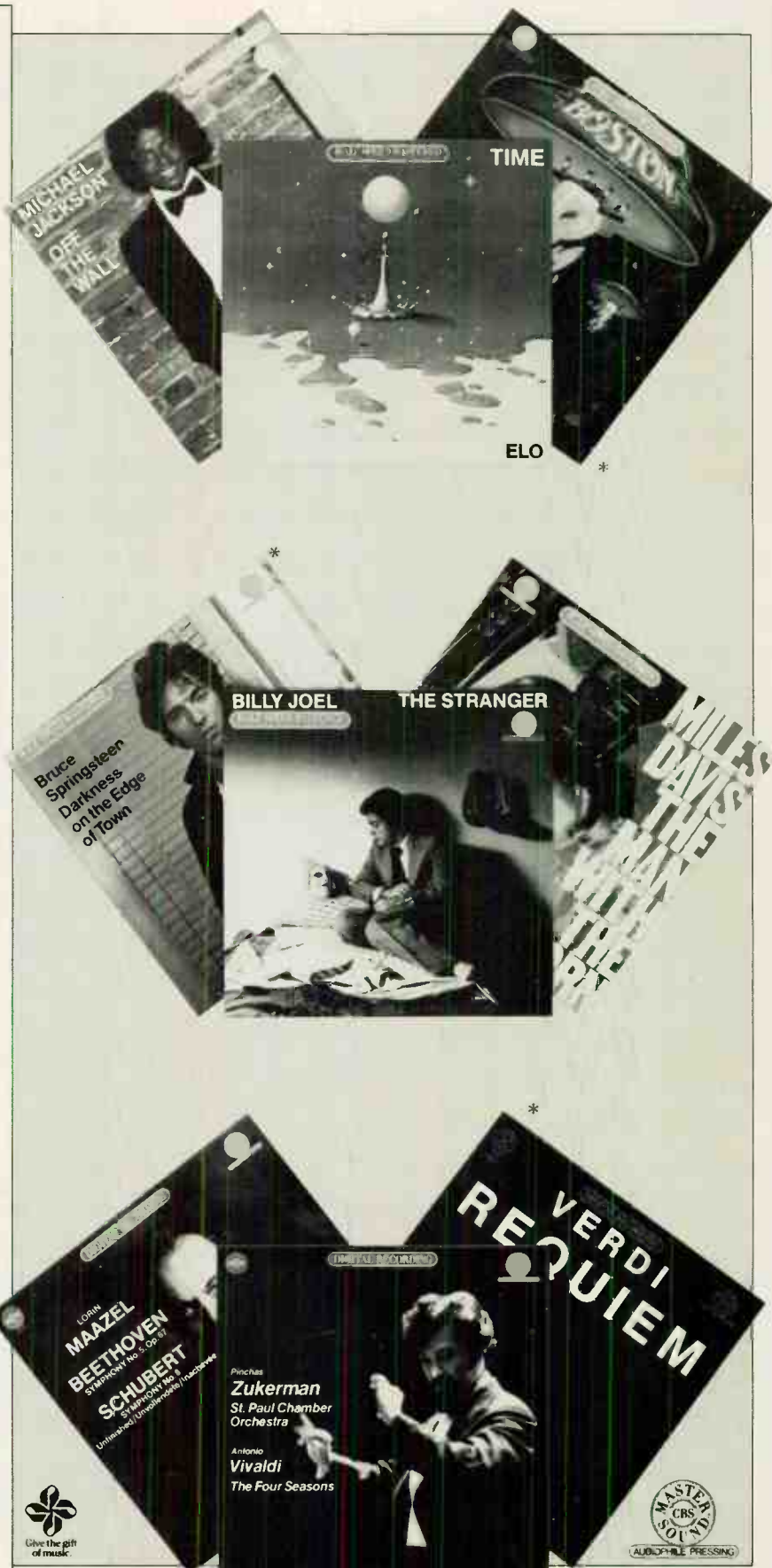
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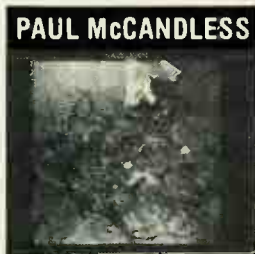


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matic, its characterizations are wonderfully drawn. Guralnick writes with tremendous feeling for the rough and tumble dignity of Screaming Nighthawk, the old bluesman (based on Howlin' Wolf) who is one of his protagonists, and he sees through the neuroses of Nighthawk's grasping, concerned, sexually muddled white manager with surprising perception and compassion. Anyhow, the schematic plot has its purpose — this story moves right along. B plus.

'Scuse Me While I Kiss the Sky: The Life of Jimi Hendrix, by David Henderson (Bantam). I've raved so much about this book under its original title (*Voodoo Child of the Aquarian Age*), that further accolades seem superfluous. But Henderson accomplishes the difficult task of establishing Hendrix as a cosmic artist without making him seem a space cadet even more effortlessly in this drastically revised and edited version than in the first edition. The cuts are generally wise ones, eliminating the full-length transcripts of interviews for well-chosen excerpts, for instance, and the additions, such as the discography, are always useful. This is the book Jimi really deserves: doesn't solve the mysteries but doesn't deny them or add to them either. A plus.

Woody Guthrie: A Life, by Joe Klein (Knopf). Klein's not a rock critic, and as a result, this biography is the most dispassionate account ever written about Guthrie's life. In the end, that's an advantage, because Klein's the best researcher who has ever tackled the subject, not to mention the best writer. It's also the most revealing, stripping away whole layers of socialist sainthood and replacing it with flesh and fallibility, a story that's far more moving than anyone has ever imagined. Klein gives us back a Woody Guthrie who is a real man and a remarkable one — even heroic, but a human being in the beginning and the end. Like Hank Williams, Woody Guthrie may not be a performer whom you know — but he ought to be. Get the records first but when you care (as you will), read this. A plus.

Deep Blues, by Robert Palmer (Viking). Like any daily newspaper critic, Palmer can be exasperating as well as incisive. But he's one of the few who can do something with the opportunity to stretch out, as this finely researched critical history of the blues demonstrates. Palmer simply traces the music and its offshoots from Africa in the pre-slavery days to Chicago today — simply, but with deceptive relish and acumen. He stumbles a bit on the contemporary, if only because contemporary blues is such a diffuse matter. A minus.

Elvis: Images and Fancies, edited by Jac L. Tharpe (University Press of Mis-
continued on page 118

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Corder & Sons Music, Huntsville
- ARIZONA**
Chicago Store, Tucson
- CALIFORNIA**
Charles Music Ctr., Glendale
Coast Music, Costa Mesa
Coast Music, Fountain Valley
Coast Music, Mission Viejo
Downey Music, Downey
Drum World, San Francisco
Guitar Center, Hollywood
Guitar Center, San Diego
Guitar Center, San Francisco
Guitar Center, San Jose
Guitar Center, Santa Ana
K&K Music, San Jose
La Habra Music Center, La Habra
Liers Music, San Bernardino
Miracle Music, Stockton
Music City, San Francisco
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Ontario Music, Ontario
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Whittier Music Co., Whittier
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GUILTY PLEASURES OF GO-GO'S AND WAITRESSES

The door is kicked in, a floodlight blinds us; we are caught shamelessly enjoying two great "grade B" girl groups with a future.

By Fred Schruers

Moviegoers sometimes like to talk about their "guilty pleasures". These movies are usually genre exercises, slices of competently pure trash like the *Texas Chain Saw Massacre*. Two interviews I did recently — with the blatantly fun/pop Go-Go's and with the thoughtful, committed Chris Butler of the Waitresses — have got me wondering if rock 'n' roll in 1981 has its own equivalent "guilty pleasures". To be specific: are the Go-Go's, whom I certainly do find pleasurable, perpetrating a new order of escapism on a culture whose rock 'n' roll has been anti-authoritarian, anti-military, anti-nuke and generally drawn much of its vitality from feisty and sloganeering political stances?

Can their naivete be as deep as canny rhythm guitarist Jane Weidlin makes it seem? Asked at a New York press conference why the Specials recruited them to open the shows on a sixty-date tour of the U.K. last year, she said, "Well, we were both dance bands, and bands that wanted to give the audience good fun entertainment." Well, ha cha! Lawrence Welk, jump back. She continued with disarming, big-eyed innocence: "And their audience was so rowdy they booed most opening acts off stage with bottles and stuff. They probably figured people are gonna be a little reluctant to throw bottles at girls."

You have to give her a point right there. The half-wits who booed Grandmaster Flash off the stage on the Clash's opening night at Bond's demonstrated with some finality that new wave audiences were not ripening ideologues but a typically scabrous, drug-guzzling breed none too different from Journey fans or lab rats when packed together in a dark room. The Go-Go's have staggered out of the ashes of L.A.'s delayed-reaction punk scene ("We kinda started out being a punk band, I guess") to emerge spruced-up, peppy, and ready to meet our craving to slide through the eighties without getting hit by any bottles or bothersome realities. Jane recalls that she used to drive her parents nuts staying out all night. "I looked really wild and stuff. And then, once I found this band and started turning this wild hedonism into something creative and constructive, I started getting their approval back." Not exactly the Sex Pistols' "I'm a lazy sod", huh? They should chisel her



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Gidget goes gonzo: the Go-Go's created a permanent pajama party of rock 'n' roll.

phrase in granite over Hollywood High.

I'm not saying that post-punk bands have to indulge in the kind of sappy, gadfly politicking that somebody like Graham Nash uses to keep his name alive. Nor do they need the deadly seriousness of the Gang of Four. But I wonder if a clearly worthwhile benefit came along, something like the concerts for Kampuchea or one of the Vietnam Veterans' fundraisers that Bruce Springsteen promoted, whether the Go-Go's would take part or steer well clear.

It's instructive to know the band's genesis. They were on the L.A. scene, bored, early-eighties post-teenagers. They saw their friends forming bands, and, based on the clear perception that getting signed to a major label in the deflated U.S. record industry would require a gimmick, they established the newest permanently floating pajama party in American rock 'n' roll.

In fact, the Go-Go's can be a delight. While their incessant high-harmonizing and choppy, widgeting guitar sound begins to give me a headache after a whole album side, there is a busy-bee integrity to it. "The arrangements are done by the whole band," says Jane, "we spend weeks on a song, pounding it, taking it apart, and making sure everybody's happy with each others' part." The effect is busy but not scattered. "Our Lips Are Sealed," perhaps the

most appealing cut on the *Beauty and The Beat* debut, is built on a simple Buddy Holly-style strum. It also contains their response to their old punk followers (and new critics) who come armed with righteousness: "There's a weapon / We must use / In our defense / Silence."

They are a band best appreciated in live performance, as I saw them recently at Manhattan's Dr. Pepper Festival. Drummer Gina Shock and bassist Kathy Valentine are sure and even cocky. Guitarist Charlotte Caffey makes a virtue of staying inside the ensemble sound, and singer Belinda Carlisle struts the stage with beaming nonchalance, enunciating effortlessly with a twanging edge borrowed from her favorite singer, Patsy Cline.

They are cheery in the extreme. Some rudie yells "Los Angeles stinks!" during Belinda's intro, and they smile past it. Someone flings a wadded cup at Weidlin's tutu, and it hits right in between her great legs and drops between her bare feet. She smiles and taps it away. They do a happy, white-bread version of "Cool Jerk" as the first encore, then the hit that broke a path for them here and in England, "We Got the Beat." Like a B-52's dance number, it alternates busily plucked guitars with so-what? harmonies. Finally, sounding like their other stylistic/conceptual cousins, the Ramones, they do a tune called "Surfing



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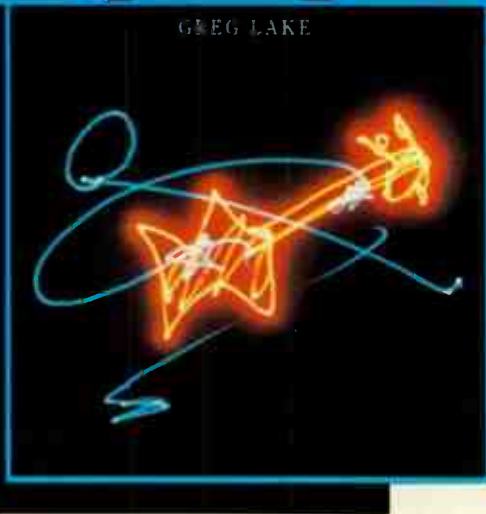
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August 8	Fort Pearce FL	August 28-29	San Francisco CA	September 16	Houston TX	October 2	Bridgeport CT
August 10	Miami FL	August 30	Santa Barbara CA	September 17	New Orleans LA	October 3	Ithaca NY
August 11	St. Petersburg FL	August 31	Los Angeles CA	September 18	Memphis TN	October 5-9	New York NY
August 12	Orlando FL	September 1	San Diego CA	September 20	Kansas City MO	October 10	Boston MA
August 14-15	Atlanta GA	September 6	Tucson AZ	September 21	St. Louis MO	October 12	Montreal
August 16	Nashville TN	September 7	Denver CO	September 22	Indianapolis IN	October 13	Toronto
August 18-19	Royal Oak MI	September 9	Albuquerque NM	September 23	Columbus OH	October 17	Calgary
August 20	Cleveland OH	September 11	Oklahoma City OK	September 24	Pittsburgh PA	October 18	Edmonton
August 22	Chicago IL	September 14	Dallas TX	September 25	Washington DC	October 20	Vancouver
August 23	Milwaukee WI	September 15	Austin TX	September 27	Norfolk VA	October 21	Seattle WA
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Produced by Greg Lake

and Spying." If only some cretin hadn't flipped a beer bottle at Tina, who stopped off at stagefront to double-pump him the bird. Still, they won the pier crowd over, and were headed to Philly to open for the Police before 25,000 people. "We're independent career women on the go" is how they laughingly put it at their press conference. The Go-Go's are not going to change the course of civilization — but they're in there somewhere with canned beer and color TV.

A more intriguing window into the female psyche, not to sound too clinical, is offered in the debut LP by the Waitresses. A six-piece New York-based band founded by former Tin Huey guitarist Chris Butler, the Waitresses include ex-Television drummer Billy Ficca and gangly ("beguiling", Butler calls her) lead singer Patti Donahue.

Butler has lived in New York for two years now, since moving from Ohio where he palled and played around with most of the luminaries on the Cleveland-Akron rock orbit. The band's *Wasn't Tomorrow Wonderful*, produced under Ze Records' aegis, was finished in late April but didn't find a major label distributor (Phonogram) until late summer. Butler flogged the LP's "I Know What Boys Like" into a cult hit by pressing it upon deejays in Manhattan clubs. That song is not quite typical of Butler's rather unusual mission, which has been to "write songs for and about women from a woman's standpoint."

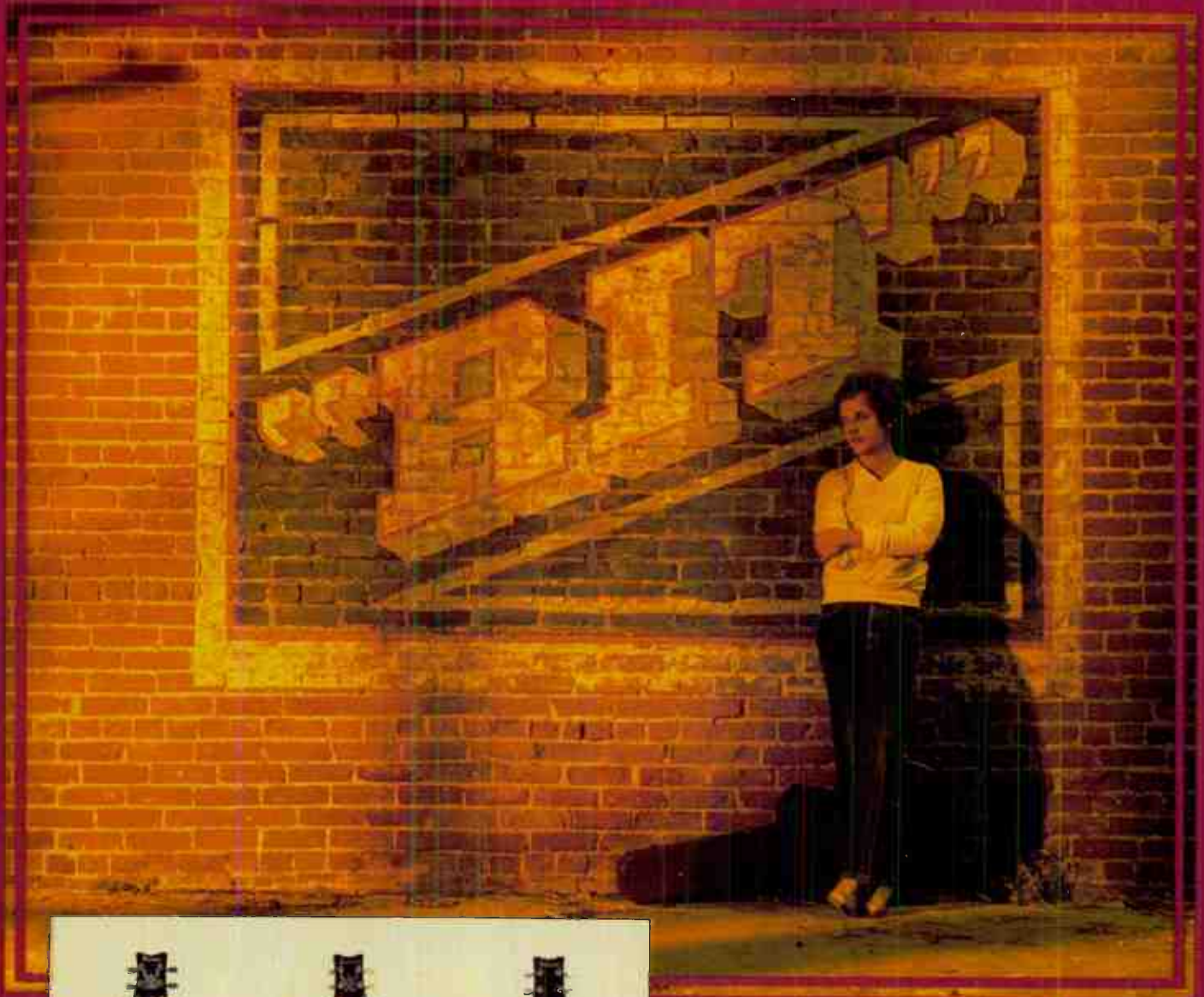
"I thought it was real fertile ground," says Butler, intending no pun. "Pop music's subject matter hasn't really changed much from 'cars, girls, party-party' over the years." Butler rather sheepishly admits to having a sociology degree (as does Donahue) but the result of his immersion in the female mind — based on assiduous quizzing of his women friends and a lot of imagination — is a collection of witty, warmhearted songs like "Go On": "I didn't kiss him / 'Cause if he wants me he must not be good enough."

It's easy to take your medicine with the Waitresses — Butler has encapsulated his urban Anywoman's thoughts into phrases that could be thought balloons in a Peanuts cartoon strip. Like the Roches, the message is not polemic or proselytizing, but a real-life narrative from which you take what you will. The young woman in "No Guilt" half-enjoys learning to live without her departed lover: "Getting by on less sleep than I used to / I had no trouble in setting up a desk / I learned the reason for a three-pronged outlet / I got 100 on my driver's test..."

As with the Go-Go's, the singing is direct, almost conversational, with few stylistic references to the hot rock mama tradition of say, Heart or Patti Smith. Loopy sax and brittle guitar skate over a rhythm section that owes its thump to

continued on page 118

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FRED ANDERSON'S GREAT HOPE

Though he's been blowing at the fringe with Chicago's best for twenty years, family man Fred has only just started to do it for a living, making him the year's most seasoned rookie.

By Howard Mandel

Music is a new business for me," Fred Anderson sighs, wistfully. "I've never really made any money from music. I bought and paid for a house without music, basically. So this is my second career."

Gently, cautiously, Fred Anderson floats a hope that's vulnerable as a soap bubble approaching the jetstream. Can the mature, soft-spoken, still-curious 52-year-old tenor man make the mid-life shift, parlaying his 35-year preoccupation and Chicago underground reputation into a self-supporting vocation? Patiently and with a quiet willingness to face the risks, Anderson insists on trying.

"I'm at a point now where playin' and makin' some money at it is all I want to do, all I got to do," the tenorist says with conviction, "because I don't have a whole lot of responsibilities — in fact, I don't have *any* responsibilities, other than to myself, and keepin' my car goin'."

Though his music has coursed freely since the mid-50s, long before he helped found the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), Anderson's life hasn't always been so unencumbered. His past dedication to his family responsibilities challenges the footloose stereotype of the jazz improviser, even as it has restrained him from taking his music far beyond the City of the Cultural Shrug.

"When I got married," Fred explains, "I wanted to start having kids. I bought a house, and that tied me up." He didn't stop playing, nor did he work at it so that he could give up his day job. During the mid-60s, Anderson would turn up occasionally playing at a coffee house or for a community-sponsored concert; he was one of the first free improvisers to try opening the ears of Chicago's hippie youth, through a sparsely attended but passionately performed booking at our North Side hangout, Alice's Revisited.

Steve McCall was the drummer, fascinating in his ability to suspend rhythm until the last dramatic moment, when he'd casually splinter a beat into even parts. Billy Brimfield, Anderson's sidekick, was there on trumpet, of course; I forget the bassist. Anderson was given to rigorous workouts that seemed to last for swirling hours. He would determinedly hunch his back to his task, then bend at the knees, his horn bell scraping



Fred would scrape the bell of his horn to the floor and cannonball a bearish roar directly into the front rows.

the floor and cannonballing a roar directly into the first rows from the stage. He would fight on, digging into himself relentlessly, his sound sometimes harsh but seldom impenetrable. He ran down the modes for us all to hear if we could follow, and sweating, heaving, rocking to and fro, took us where we'd never dared to go. He was then our neighborhood Coltrane, and most of us didn't know what to think.

"I wanted to have my own style," recalls Fred. "I knew *that* from a long time ago, when I first started playing. I wanted to have my own style, and make a contribution, you know. I knew it wasn't going to happen overnight, it was going

to be a lot of work, and I was going to be out here *alone*. When you're an individual, most of the time you're going to be alone, because people are always lookin' to hear something they heard somebody else play. When you're doin' something a little different, trying to be yourself, it's gonna take awhile, unless you're fortunate enough to be around..."

Around the right people, at the right time, in the right place? Anderson doesn't finish articulating his thought, but he's been around the same environs and stimuli as Anthony Braxton, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, and Muhal Richard Abrams, among more famous others, since *their* beginnings, without

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being offered, or taking advantage of, the same breaks.

"I've always had my own band," he modestly relates, "except for that period when I was playing with Joseph Jarman. And that started out as my group, but we were all contributing compositions, and Joseph was doing most of the legwork, so..." Again it goes unsaid, but this explains why the second recording issued by AACM members, 1967's *Song For* featuring Anderson, his longtime trumpet partner Billy Brimfield, altoist/poet Jarman, drummers Thurman Barker and Steve McCall, and now deceased musicians Charles Clark on bass and Christopher Gaddy, piano, was released by Delmark Records under Jarman's name.

"We played the very first AACM concert, using some of Joseph's tunes and some of my tunes, because the AACM had just formed, and we were the only ones who had any kind of thing together that could be presented. A guy named Arthur Reed played drums — this was before Thurman Parker joined the band; Charles Clark played bass, Billy Brimfield played trumpet. This was 1964, and I was in my thirties. There's about ten years difference between me and those other guys."

Anderson had already been playing more than fifteen years, but he was mainly a self-taught loner. He had come upon Charlie Parker's solos on Jay McShann 78s lying around his parents' place (originally from Monroe, Louisiana, they'd moved to Chicago when Fred was nine); then he discovered the tenor players of the late 40s and early 50s, especially Lester Young, Chu Berry, Don Ryan and Gene Ammons. But he didn't learn to play changes too well, and never felt very comfortable with hard bop. In the late 50s he heard Ornette Coleman, and felt that some of his own directions had been confirmed.

He was already pairing up with Billy Brimfield. "When we play together, we don't count off 'one-two-three-four' like you see some musicians do. We just face each other, and try to feel it, like Ornette and Don Cherry used to do. And it works pretty good." Brimfield is still a nervous-eyed man, always shrugging in his suit, with a chip seemingly on his shoulder that he tries to explain through his playing, which is crisp, angry and to the point. Anderson, by the early 60s, was already of bearish stature; the spells he cast were demanding, but most of all on himself. His tenor bore an air current tough as a rubber hose, spiraling out in a rapid flow. Anderson would address sober, somber themes, repeated twice or three times in rough unison with his bandmates, then would plunge on after his streaming notes, as though he was trying to catch up and capture them at their other end.

"I started playing like that — big sound, long choruses — because I used to practice by myself, in the basement of my house," he says. "I practiced long

tones, for one thing — that's a must. A saxophonist has got to practice long tones, all the time, to fill up that horn and get that *feeling*, and to try to keep that sound. I'd make up exercises for myself, so I'd have something to work with: not for my conscious mind, but for my unconscious so that when I'm playing it will just come out, and I'll already have it under my control.

"But you've got to have that feeling filling the horn, and you've got to know your horn, so you can express yourself. As for playing a long time, I think guys do that because, at least for me, the longer I play the better it gets. You focus on what you're doing, get better ideas... I think everybody's like that."

By the late 60s, hordes and critics were still not breaking down doors to see Fred's dates; he went ten years without doing another recording. "You know how it is in Chicago," he reminds me: "Oh, I can always hear that guy another night." The fledgling Art Ensemble of Chicago had fled to Europe — "Joseph and them decided to go; we'd been playing together, but I'd just bought my house, and I wasn't fixin' to leave then. All right, I knew I had that responsibility; at the time, my kids were very young." Braxton, Leroy Jenkins, Lee Smith and drummer McCall had split, too. "I'd played with all those guys," Anderson mentions.

But he wasn't completely abandoned. The AACM school had done well, and graduated several young, risk-enthralled players into Anderson's band as their first field test. Fred Hopkins and Steve Colson passed through; reedist Douglas Ewart, trombonist George Lewis, drummer Hank Drake and bassist Felix Blackmon stayed longer. Crowds didn't exactly flock to their midnight-to-4 A.M. regular sessions held in the touristy Old Town area, deep in the basement of a church, but fervent fans sought it out.

In '77, Austrian pianist/musicologist/conductor Pieter Glawischnig and West German critic Ekkhard Jost stumbled upon Fred and company. Impressed, they invited Anderson and Brimfield to Europe, where the two toured for a month, playing with Glawischnig's trio Neighbors as a rhythm section.

"Our concepts are a little different, because they're coming from — sort of — not totally — the classical world; but we're playing music, and I just try to put colors around them," Anderson attests. "They have their music, I have my music, and we have different approaches; I appreciated after playing with them that I was doing a polyrhythmic thing. I've always done that, but didn't realize it so much before. The Austrians do that, too, but in a more rigid way. When I interject my sound, it makes it say something else.

Anderson returned to Chicago refreshed and encouraged, but with nowhere to play. Acknowledging, "I've always done everything for myself," he

continued on pg. 33

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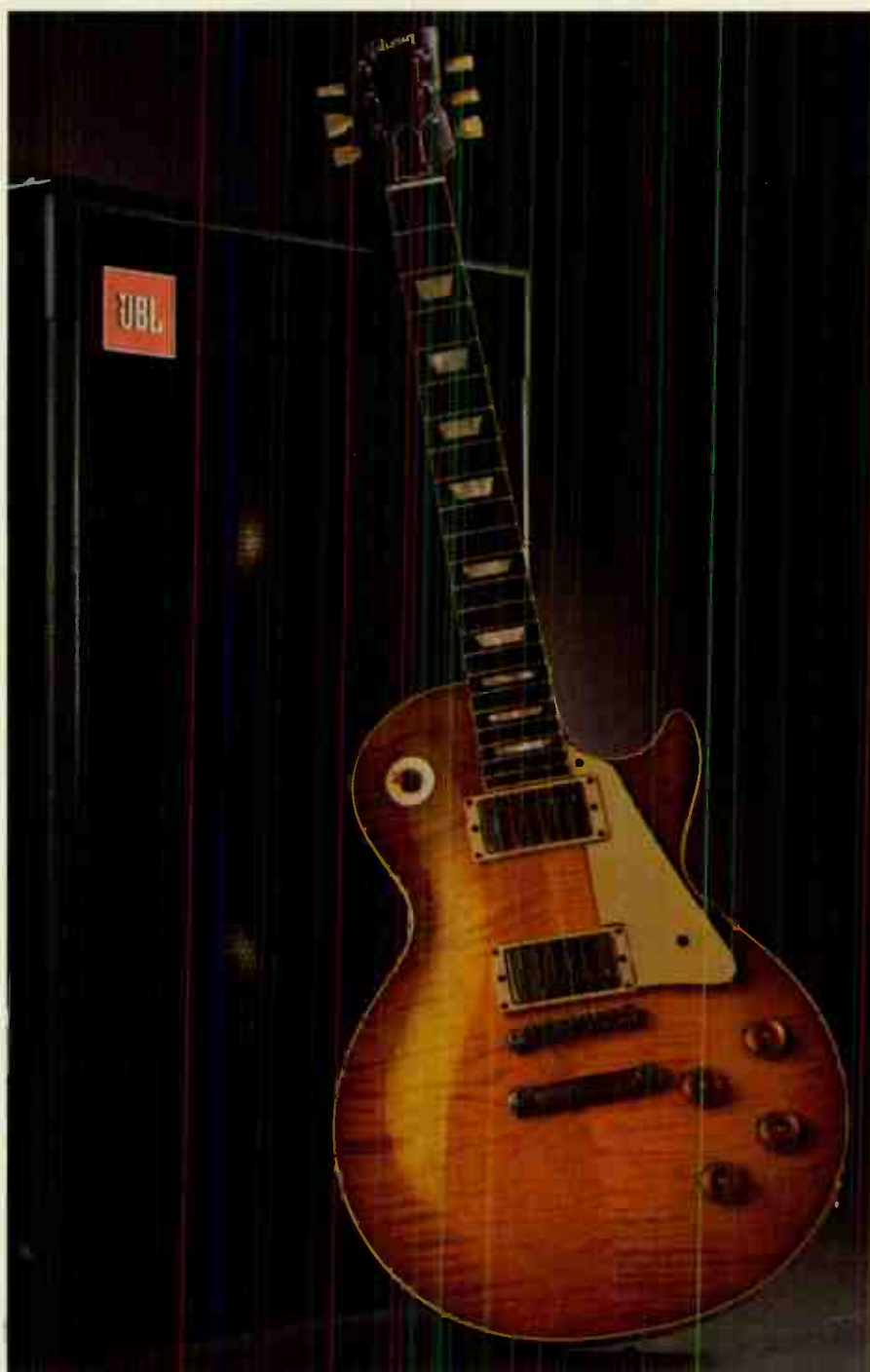


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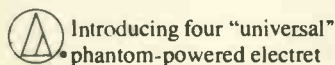
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opened the Birdhouse, a storefront music studio, along a German-settled commercial street. Though the Birdhouse schedule was irregular and the traffic attracted was slight, local cops and aldermen cracked down on petty building violations, forcing Fred to close up after little more than a year.

By then, Anderson's European trip was paying small dividends. Burkhard Hennen brought Fred's quintet with Brimfield, Lewis, Drake and bassist Brian Smith to the 7th Moers New Jazz Festival, eventually releasing an album *Another Place*, from the date. *Accents*, recorded with the Austrian Neighbors trio, was issued, as well as *Dark Days*, taped at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art during a week-long AACM festival partially sponsored by the Jazz Institute of Chicago. None of these LPs had U.S. distribution, but somewhere they could be found. The stodgy journal of U.S. jazz discovered Fred Anderson, as did the International Jazz Federation's magazine, *Jazz Forum*. "Over in Europe, man, they know," Fred smiles.

But now, he'd like to have some albums out, or do some U.S. touring, or just "make some positive moves."

"Chico Freeman asked me the other day, 'When you coming to New York?'" Fred, twice Chico's age, reports. "I told him I'd come to New York, cool, if I can be there doin' some playin'. I'll go, I'll play, even if I'm not going to be makin' much money, but so far, I haven't been asked. I don't want to do nothing where I'm gonna lose. You've got to look at it as a business. How many people can you afford to carry with you, how you gonna get around, how you gonna come out, moneywise? You can always break even, but you'd like to have a little extra when you come back.

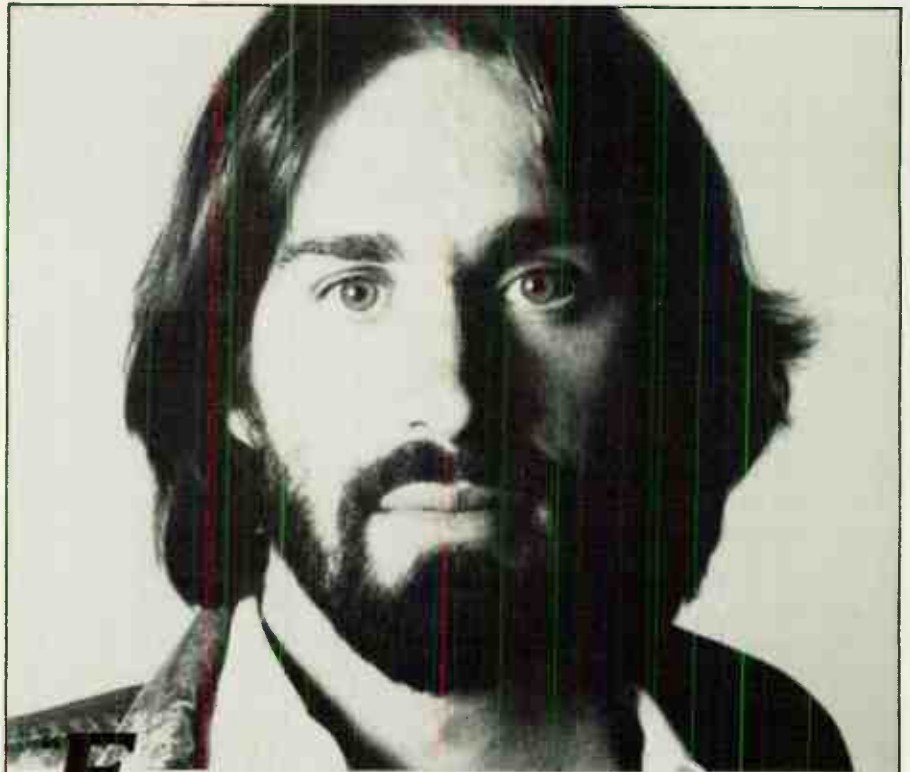
"I'm really into music full-time now, and I'd like to work just as much as I can. I'd like to be in a position to take a band out, so me and Billy can work, so he don't have to go around and play this gig or that, under all those weird conditions, which is what he does. I've got all the freedom I want — I can do anything I want to do, but now I'm trying to control it.

"Maybe I'm not as radical as I used to be. I'm thinking more traditional; I don't know why. As I play, I listen, and I think back, and I think of the players of the late 40s and the things they do. They were dealing with the chords, and scales and everything, but they utilized them.

"I'm thinking more now about what I'd like to do, and what I missed. I listen for the sound, and how I can improve my sound, get that control, make it come out a little better all the time, to the point where it just comes naturally — because I don't like to think about what I'm doin', I just like to feel it. There's a search, when I play, my search to keep ideas goin' at all times, and to know where I am at all times."

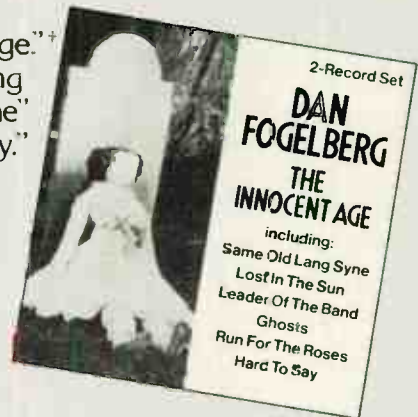
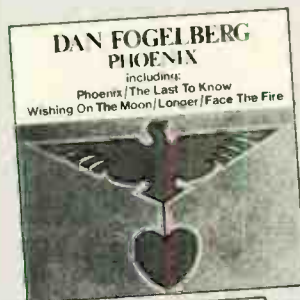
If Fred Anderson is exerting more control, it's an internal process that affects the logic and articulation of his

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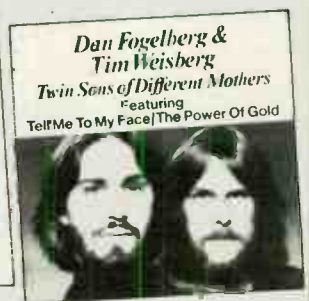


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AFRICA

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By Brian Cullman

Rhythm is the most perceptible and the least material thing.

— John Miller Chernoff
African Rhythm and African Sensibility

It's not that we have exhausted melody so much as melody has exhausted us. Having followed that road so long, we now seem to be turning back to rhythms, to chant and repetition, and back to the rhythms of Africa where we first got the beat behind blues and R&B and the beginnings of jazz. Some of it is intuition, the choice a pure musician makes when he or she re-explores blues and primal rhythms: African-born percussionist Rocki Dzidzornu, who used to jam with Jimi Hendrix in the late sixties, used to tell him that the beat he fell into naturally (especially on much of the *Electric Ladyland* album) was the exact beat he remembered from voodoo and cult ceremonies during his childhood; Ornette Coleman's use of a double band and the entire feel of his *Dancing in Your Head* come straight from the Islamic music of Tchad; Bo Diddley's famous beat ("chunk / chunk / chunk / KA-chunk") comes from ritual drumming in Ghana; and James Brown — probably the best-loved and most imitated American musician in Africa — uses rhythm and horn arrangements that seem to come straight out of Highlife music.

Igor Stravinsky, in response to an interviewer's question concerning his favorite composers, once replied, "The three Bs — Beethoven, Bach and James Brown." Stravinsky reportedly went on to say that he considered James Brown one of the greatest composers of all time, writing true American music and portraying the American heritage — i.e., Africa. A few years ago that might have been considered a joke; now it has to be at least considered.

If the influence of Africa in the past has been based on chance and intuition, to people's hands guiding them back to older beats, that can no longer be claimed as the case. The overt imitation of African style is all through our pop and experimental music: in the Burundi-style double drumming of Adam & the Ants; in the rhythms of the Police and Liquid Liquid; in Steve Reich's "Drumming"; and most overtly in Talking Heads' *Remain in Light*, Byrne & Eric's *Bush of Ghosts* (whose title comes directly from a novel by West African writer Amos Tutola), and in David Byrne's music for choreo-



AHMED YACOUBI

grapher Twyla Tharp's *The Catherine Wheel* in which he was aided by percussionist and musicologist John Miller Chernoff, author of *African Rhythm and African Sensibility*.

In Western Music...rhythm is most definitely secondary in emphasis and complexity to harmony and melody. It is the progression of sound through a series of chords or tones that we recognize as beautiful. In African music this sensibility is almost reversed. African melodies are clear enough, even if African conceptions of tonal relationships are sometimes strange to us, but more important is the fact that in African music there are always at least two rhythms going on.

While in Western music, certain kinds of musical themes may suggest images or feelings, the astounding thing is that in traditional African music, the rhythms themselves are a specific text. When the earliest Euro-

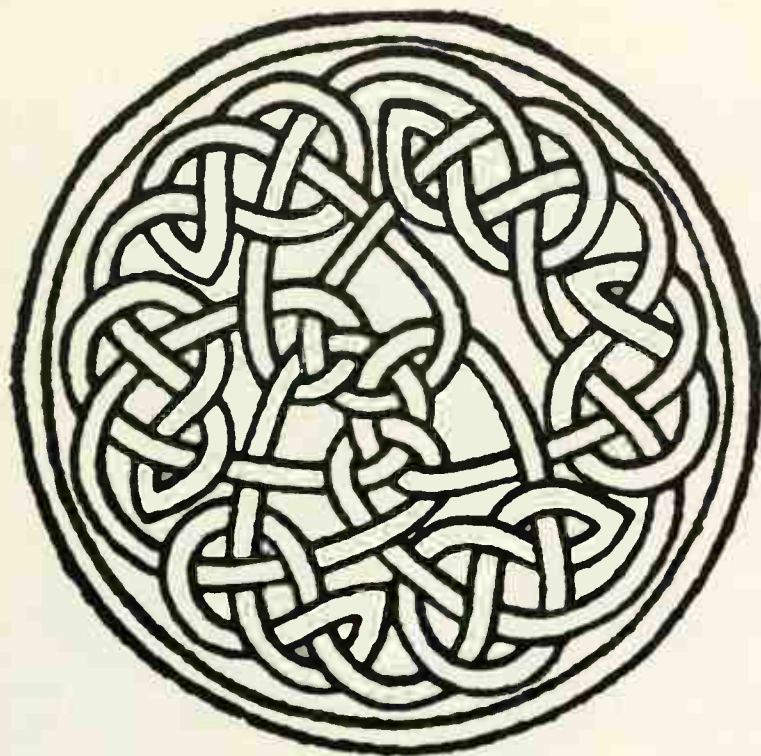
pean travelers described drum-signalling between villages, they assumed that the beating was a kind of code. In reality, the drums actually speak the language of the tribe.

— John Miller Chernoff

Chernoff goes on to describe his first day of practicing with a master drummer. He was following the basic rhythm fairly well until the master suddenly performed a complicated series of rhythms and then resumed the basic rhythm he'd been showing. A few minutes later, a man walked up with two cold bottles of beer for them. So much for drum code.

Armed with Chernoff's book, Francis Bebey's *African Music: A People's Art*, novels by Amos Tutola and Chinua Achebe, a painting by Ahmed Yacoubi from North Africa, and the promise of a meal at Mama Desta's (the best Ethiopian restaurant in Washington, D.C.), I

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Tony Levin
Bill Bruford

Produced by King Crimson & Rhett Davies

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October 24-25 Montreal	November 13 Atlanta GA
October 27 Quebec City	November 15 Houston TX
October 29 Boston MA	November 16 Dallas TX
October 30 Philadelphia PA	November 17 Austin TX
October 31 Pittsburgh PA	November 22 San Diego CA
November 1 Cleveland OH	November 23-24 Los Angeles CA
November 4 Owings Mill MD	November 25 Pasadena CA
November 5-7 New York NY	November 27-28 San Francisco CA
November 9 Detroit MI	November 30 Seattle WA
November 10 Chicago IL	December 1 Vancouver



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began sorting through several dozen African albums I've collected over the years. Some were no longer in print and couldn't be considered since I only wanted to write about music that was available for anyone to buy and hear. Some that I'd remembered liking now seemed too scholarly and bombastic, recorded by ethno-musicologists who seemed so intent on proving particular points about the music that they limited each track to 45 seconds or so, never letting the music breathe. To get a larger sense of things, I went up to the African Record Centres in Brooklyn and Harlem and listened to new releases of pop albums from Nigeria and Ghana. Following Chernoff's instructions, I was careful not to tap my foot. As Chernoff wrote: "Russell Hartenberger, an American percussionist, told me that one night he was in a bar in the north of Ghana... he was tapping his foot to some music, and people in the bar started pointing at his toe and laughing. Eventually someone came up to him and said, 'Oh, so you are trying to dance. Fine!'"

The listing of albums here is small and neglects such brilliant artists as Haruna Ishola, E.K. Nyame and Sunny Ade only because their albums are almost impossible to find. All of the records I've listed are technically "available," though some are more available than others (albums on the Makossa and Ashiko labels can be obtained through African Record Centre Distributors, 1194 Nosstrand Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 10019).

In re-listening to these albums, I found my perceptions about them changing. After a week of listening to nothing but African records, I was slowly losing my "Western" ears and hearing more and more in the rhythms; repetition became its own reward, and I was getting as excited by hearing a master drummer hit just the right beat over and over as I ordinarily would in hearing a great lead guitarist hit a blue note in a solo. I started to hear the spaces between the beats and feel them as an integral part of the music, in fact THE integral part of the music. What seemed overly simple or simply cacophonous began to open itself to me to show me how much I was mis-hearing and how rhythmically rich and varied the music is in ways I'm only beginning to notice.

We have to grasp the fact that if from childhood you are brought up to regard beating three against two as being just as normal as beating in synchrony, then you develop a two-dimensional attitude to rhythm which we in the West do not share.

— A.M. Jones
Studies In African Music

I began to hear more than one "time" in the music, and "time" stopped feeling like the shortest distance (or the only distance) between two points. Einstein would have loved African music and probably could have been a master

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drummer.

Fela — *Kalakuta Show* (Makossa Records 2320), *Black President* (Arista/U.K. 1167). In Africa, Fela Kuti has the reputation of James Brown, Bruce Springsteen and Che Guevara combined: a political rebel and refugee who set up his own republic in defiance of the state ("Kalakuta Show" is about the police raid on his compound back in 1974), he is a musician of superstar status in Africa and much of Europe. Rumors about him abound: he is an absolute potentate, traveling with seventy wives or so, paying his followers with bags of gold. Rumors or no rumors, all that's available here is his music, and that's not as easy to find as it should be. Fela is a star and a visionary in a class with Bob Marley and Stevie Wonder, and he deserves to be heard. A first rate sax and keyboard player and a powerful vocalist and bandleader, Fela (like Marley, et al) will startle the uninitiated with his maturity and fire.

First heard over here as an occasional member of Ginger Baker's Air Force (not his fault — how was he to know Baker was a crazy speed freak?), Fela has released a score of albums in Nigeria, some of which have turned up here on the tiny Makossa label. They're remarkably consistent (I have yet to hear a bad Fela album): long extended rants of punchy, overtly political music played by a group (Africa 70) as tight as

the best of James Brown's legendary show bands, sung with rare fervor and urgency. I admire his courage and vision as much as his musicianship, and with Marley gone and Dylan long lost inside his own salvation, Fela could easily emerge as a world figure, as the lion and the angel.

Burundi — *Musiques Traditionelles* (Ocora Records 558551). When I first heard this album (bought by chance, by instinct one day last spring), I immediately felt vindicated for all those terrible albums I've bought out of curiosity over the years, those records of camels falling down in fields and people rubbing stones together. This was the payoff! It remains the best album of field recordings I've ever heard and ranks with my favorite albums by Louis Armstrong, Van Morrison and Bela Bartok.

One man whisper-sings into his inaga (an eight-string trough of an instrument with the feel of an upright bass), sounding like the devil himself, his low whisper crossing into the tones of the resonating strings; two little girls interplay whole tones against each other, creating a third "voice" in their criss-cross; a woman alternates between her head and chest voice in the most delicate and natural of yodels; twenty-five drummers play a call-and-response that sounds like the ultimate football cheer.

Aside from the fact that it sounds better produced than most pop albums on

the market, it has the distinction of being the first album of field recordings I've listened to where I didn't feel like a voyeur — something I hadn't realized or even thought of until I heard this album. On most albums of this sort, the performers are not unwilling but unsure participants ("Now you boys pay no attention to me, keep right on playing, and I'll just put this little microphone right over here, okay?"). The focus on those albums is always somewhere else — the microphone is capturing the sounds, but the musicians are playing to and for each other, directing their energy into the ceremony of the music itself.

Here, for what feels like the first time, the musicians have been introduced to the microphones and to the tape machines, and they are singing and playing directly to and for the microphone, confronting it directly. If that changes the essential qualities of "primitive" music, so be it; the experience is hard won and preferable to the innocence of secrets that can't be shared. And the difference is staggering, like someone suddenly looking you straight in the eye.

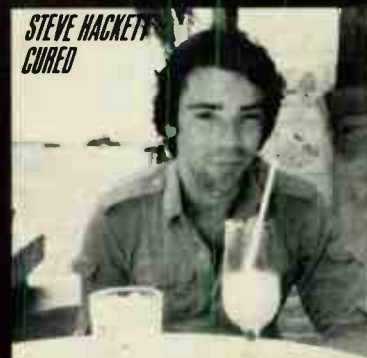
Other Ocora albums I've heard (of Central African and Pygmy music) are also excellent, but this is in a class by itself.

Francisco M. Ndlovu — *Maria Wa Mina* (Beat City 1003/dist. by WEA International). A seriously limited, *continued on page 118*

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FACES

BONNIE RAITT

Bonnie Raitt's bright, wavy red hair was so long it fell halfway down her back. She tossed it out of her way, juted her hips out, pointed her finger at the crowd and in her best "bad girl" voice told them: "In case you were worried I was going to get slicker and slicker, you can put that idea somewhere you don't want to feel it." With that, she planted her electric guitar on her hip and banged out the very funky rhythm & blues chords to a new song called "Talk to Me."

Bonnie Raitt began her fall tour in Columbia, Maryland with a new band, a new album of songs and the old bluesy sound. She has abandoned her brief fling at slick L.A. pop that resulted in the 1979 album, *The Glow*, produced by Peter Asher and played by Hollywood session musicians. Instead of the stardom that move was supposed to bring, it only produced disgruntlement among her old fans.

Those intensely loyal fans have turned Raitt into a most unusual success story. She was the only headliner all summer at the Merriweather Post Pavilion who has never had a hit record. And she filled the large outdoor hillside as well as Tom Petty and Joe Walsh did.

In response to persistent shouts from the crowd, Raitt explained: "Freebo's in L.A. with his own band. In case you miss him too much, we've brought along his hair." Sure enough, there on

BONNIE RAITT



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

the bass amp was a styrofoam head with a frizzy black wig and bushy black moustache. Actually playing the bass was Veyler Hildebrand, who wrote "The Glow" and formerly played with Danny O'Keefe.

Drummer Dennis Whitted is the only holdover from Raitt's great mid-70s bands. Newcomers include Hildebrand, Boston reed player David Woodford, Rick Danko's former keyboardist Walt Richmond and Roger McGuinn's former guitarist/songwriter Rick Vito. Raitt held her own with this group of strong soloists as she took slashing slide guitar solos on her own "Give It Up" and "Standin' By the Same Old Love." Together the sextet pulled off the Little Feat-styled boogie that Raitt now favors.

Funky R&B was the dominant flavor of the evening as the band relentlessly attacked old songs by Sam & Dave, Delbert McClinton, Aretha Franklin, Del Shannon and Elvis Presley. Raitt didn't sing a single Jackson Browne song. The only time she touched an acoustic guitar was for Oscar Blandamer's country chestnut, "Darlin'," from the *Urban Cowboy* soundtrack. "This is a song that Tom Jones slaughtered," she cracked, "so I thought I'd show you how it should go." She did.

"NRBQ is a great band that's been around for years," she said later. "I'm doing a couple of their tunes on my new album. They are the original weird people on the planet. They make Little Feat look like the Beach Boys." When she sang NRBQ's classic cruising song, "Me and the Boys," the song changed character and became a tomboy's gleeful gloat that she can drive, drink and rock 'n' roll as well as any male. As Raitt shimmied around the stage slamming out chunky rhythm guitar chords, there was no doubting her claim. — *Geoffrey Himes*

SIMON AND GARFUNKEL

Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel are not the blast-from-the-past relics of the 60s that all the pre- and post-Central Park reunion hype would indicate. Pursuing a more aggressive synthesis of rock-oriented rhythms and urban folk strains than he did in the 60s, Simon's first three solo studio



SIMON AND GARFUNKEL.

EBET ROBERTS

albums contained pop masterpieces aplenty — "Me and Julio Down by the Schoolyard," "Kodachrome," "Still Crazy After All These Years," the brilliant "American Tune," and so on. If *One-Trick Pony* lacked the clarion cutting edge of his best work, it is nonetheless an interesting, honest, and above all, intelligent (as an intellectual popster, Simon has few equals) attempt to depict the travails of a journeyman rocker. And the album's one hit — "Late in the Evening" was a joyous, successful integration of salsa rhythms, instrumental flavoring and a light pop point of view.

Art Garfunkel, on the other hand, has been the unfortunate victim of mislabeling. While most critics and much of the public have passed him over as an adult contemporary — read bland pop — singer, Garfunkel, influenced and abetted by Jimmy Webb (as producer and/or composer), has developed a singular musical stance to show off his ever-beautiful, angelic tenor. His current album, *Scissors Cut*, exquisitely illuminates the confluence of S&G's vulnerable folk wistfulness and the lush, formal orchestral underpinnings that Webb has used in the past to great effect working with such diverse singers as Thelma Houston, the Supremes, Cher, Glen Campbell.

And yet the concert in Central Park (a benefit for the park) was an anticipatory delight. Various points of reference merged in 500,000 people's shared interest as fans from the 60s, followers of Simon's and Garfunkel's solo work, children of fans, devotees of mass events — all witnessed a ninety-minute concert that reaffirmed that, in the end, Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel work best in tandem. As their one duo recording since their breakup over a decade ago, the chilling "My Little Town" (oddly they skipped it in concert) reveals Garfunkel's pure voice and harmonic embellishments are the perfect counterpoint to Simon's often detached, sometimes defiant, sometimes brazenly ingenious-seeming, observations. Backed by an excellent, driving band made up of members of the *One-Trick Pony* session group and others, or using Simon's evocative guitar as a solo backdrop, the duo ran through a 23-

song set that included most of S&G's best-loved songs, several of Simon's solo hits, a couple of indie moldies — "Wake Up, Little Suzie" and "Stagger Lee" Garfunkel's current solo turn, "A Heart in New York," and a new Simon number, "The Late Great Johnny Ace." The last was the show's only real clinker. It chronicles Simon's responses to the deaths of musical idols from the eponymous rhythm and blues star to John Lennon. Not only is the lyric obvious and overly sentimental, but the melody is boring.

Yet even though one might have hoped for some less obvious choices — "A Hazy Shade of Winter," "Fakin' It," "The Only Living Boy in New York," "Richard Cory," "The Dangling Conversation" — there were still moments of transcendence: "The Boxer," Garfunkel's solo, "Old Friends/Bookends Theme," "Bridge Over Troubled Waters," "April Come She Will," and "The Sounds of Silence" all elicited overwhelming applause that was well deserved. — *Jim Feldman*

RICKY FORD

The next Sonny Rollins! The heir apparent to the tenor sax throne! The best player to emerge from the 70s! The revenge of the creature from the hard-bop lagoon! Yes, I'd heard good things about the young saxophonist from Boston. But frankly, I was a tad skeptical. Sure his records were solid, driving sessions with a potent talent at the helm, but what I'd heard still didn't quite coincide with the reputation he was building. You know how people get when they think they've found the NEXT M-A-J-O-R TENOR.

Then I witnessed for myself his rare New York appearance at the intimate Carnegie Recital Hall. I heard enough smoldering tenor work to make saxophonists twice his age want to retire. Yes Ford has arrived. He plays with conviction and a satisfying balance between deeply felt emotion, natural wit and imposing technical facility. And the Carnegie performance came off without a kink. His rhythm section of Albert Dailey, Jimmy Cobb and Rufus Reid fit him like an asbestos glove. The compositions, most of them originals, were well programmed and

paced, and Ford delivered one of the freshest straight ahead performances I've heard in years.

The group cooked at full blast on the very first tune (Ellington's "Take the Coltrane"), included hot Latin moods ("Esso Nosso Amor," "Hour Samba" and "Orb"), up tempo harmonic tapestries ("Flying Colors" and "Dexter") and brisk, bouncy strolls ("Jordanian Walk" and "Arcadian Eclipse"). Ford blows some gorgeous ballad tenor that recalled both Webster and Hodges on "Portrait of Love" and "Chelsea Bridge." When he topped the evening off with the ingenious "Saxacious Serenade" and the dancing "Olympic Glaze," pulling out all the stops, I wondered where the hell I'd been while a dynamo like Ford got past me in the first place.

RICKY FORD



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

With a mixture of Rollins, Coltrane and Dexter cleanly assimilated into his distinctive conception, with his sound fully fleshed out (something I hadn't heard on record), with a swing and rhythmic sense that vividly conjures Rollins, Ford is now one of the tallest trees in today's tenor forest. No straight ahead player of his generation even comes close. I've often wondered how far hard-bop could be taken if placed in the hands of a hot young player with real imagination. Now I know. — Cliff Tinder

RAYBEATS

"Test, one-two...testing..."

Those words, the perennial prelude for the vocalist at a rock concert, may soon be a relic of the past if the Raybeats have anything to do with it.

Billing themselves as America's Most Popular Combo, the Raybeats' sound harkens back to the guitar-oriented instrumental groups of the early sixties with touches of new wave and avant-garde thrown in, not for spice, but as an integral element of the quartet's identifiable sound. It's as though a garage band had actually stayed together for twenty years and managed to keep up with musical trends without sacrificing its own personality.

Perhaps most remarkable about the

'Beats is their originality and their lack of nostalgia — despite their matching western suits or white Levi's and red V-neck sweaters. Snatches vaguely reminiscent of earlier songs and groups pop up, but the resultant sound is unlike any past or present.

The all important *beat* of the Raybeats is provided by drummer Don Christensen. Guitarist Jody Harris is somewhat of a surf equivalent to Jimi Hendrix in that he is a master of the Stratocaster whammy bar and the Echoplex. The most dynamic and versatile member of the band is Pat Irwin, who handles alto sax, Acetone organ (like a Farfisa but even smaller), and occasionally guitar and bass. The group's newest member is bassist Danny Amis, also an excellent guitarist. All of the original members of the band have served time with New York's new wave scene (Harris and Christensen with the Contortions, Irwin with Eight-Eyed Spy featuring Lydia Lunch, and the late George Scott, their original bassist, with John Cale and the Contortions). Amis, who at 22 is the band's youngest member, previously led a Minneapolis-based instrumental unit called the Overtones.

In spite of their claim to mass popularity, the 'Beats have thus far released only one 12" EP and one LP, both on the English label, Don't Fall Off the Mountain, a branch of Beggar's Banquet. *Roping Wild Bears*, the EP, features the hook-filled "Searching" and a cover of the Shadows' "Rise and Fall of Flingel Bunt." The LP, *Guitar Beat*, relies entirely on group originals, which is both their strongest suit and their downfall. "Tight Turn" and "Tone Zone" represent the band's darker, moodier side, and both are well crafted and adventurous. But the group is at its best when they evoke a glimmer of familiarity with the past, as on "Holiday Inn Spain" and Amis' catchy "Calhoun Surf" (which ought to be covered by the Ventures). With a few of the band's personalized rearrangements thrown in on their next album (of Jan & Dean's "B-Gas Rickshaw," the MGs' "Jelly Bread," or even the dB's' "PH Factor") the Raybeats may yet become America's Most Popular Combo. — Dan Forte

THE JACKSONS

The Jacksons may not have as potent an influence on popular black music as Stevie Wonder, Maurice White, Ashford & Simpson, or George Clinton. Nonetheless, the zealous, all-inclusive enthusiasm that fuels their ever-increasing critical and popular (i.e., commercial) acclaim is unparalleled, and has been so ever since their emergence in 1970 as the last glorious exponents of the "Motown Sound." Since leaving Motown some years ago (brother Jermaine stayed with the label, and kid brother Randy took his place in the group), the Jacksons have developed into perhaps the finest, and certainly the most consistent act in black music today. Their first two post-Motown albums were good enough, but they bore the unmistakable mark

LAURA LEVINE



RAYBEATS

of the Philadelphia soul of the Gamble and Huff stable of writers and producers. The group then took control, writing and producing their last two albums, *Destiny* and *Triumph*. These records and Michael's mega-successful solo album, *Off the Wall*, provided a singular redefinition of dance music in an era of disco drone and funk excess. Michael Jackson's voice has evolved into a fluid tenor that yet reveals unexpected sharp edges; his control is such that he matches the swirling, frothy arrangements change for change. And the youthful yearning that worked so well on the early ballads has been replaced by an easy, confident crooning style.

In their first appearance at Madison Square Garden in several years, the Jacksons fortified their current musical stance with a 90-minute show that was flawed by an overly loud, abrasive sound system, some theatrical misjudgments, and the group's unwillingness to do more than give a passing nod to their years at Motown. Flashy shows have become commonplace, and for the most part, the theatrical elements of the Jacksons' show were amusing, rather than pretentious. The trippy introduction film and the *Close Encounters*-ish elevation of the lighting was fun, and a couple of explosions were okay too. But the group needs to refine and cut down on the visual effects, simply because, unlike, say, Styx, the Jacksons don't need any distractions from their music. Mostly singing their hits from *Destiny*, *Triumph* and *Off the Wall*, the group was

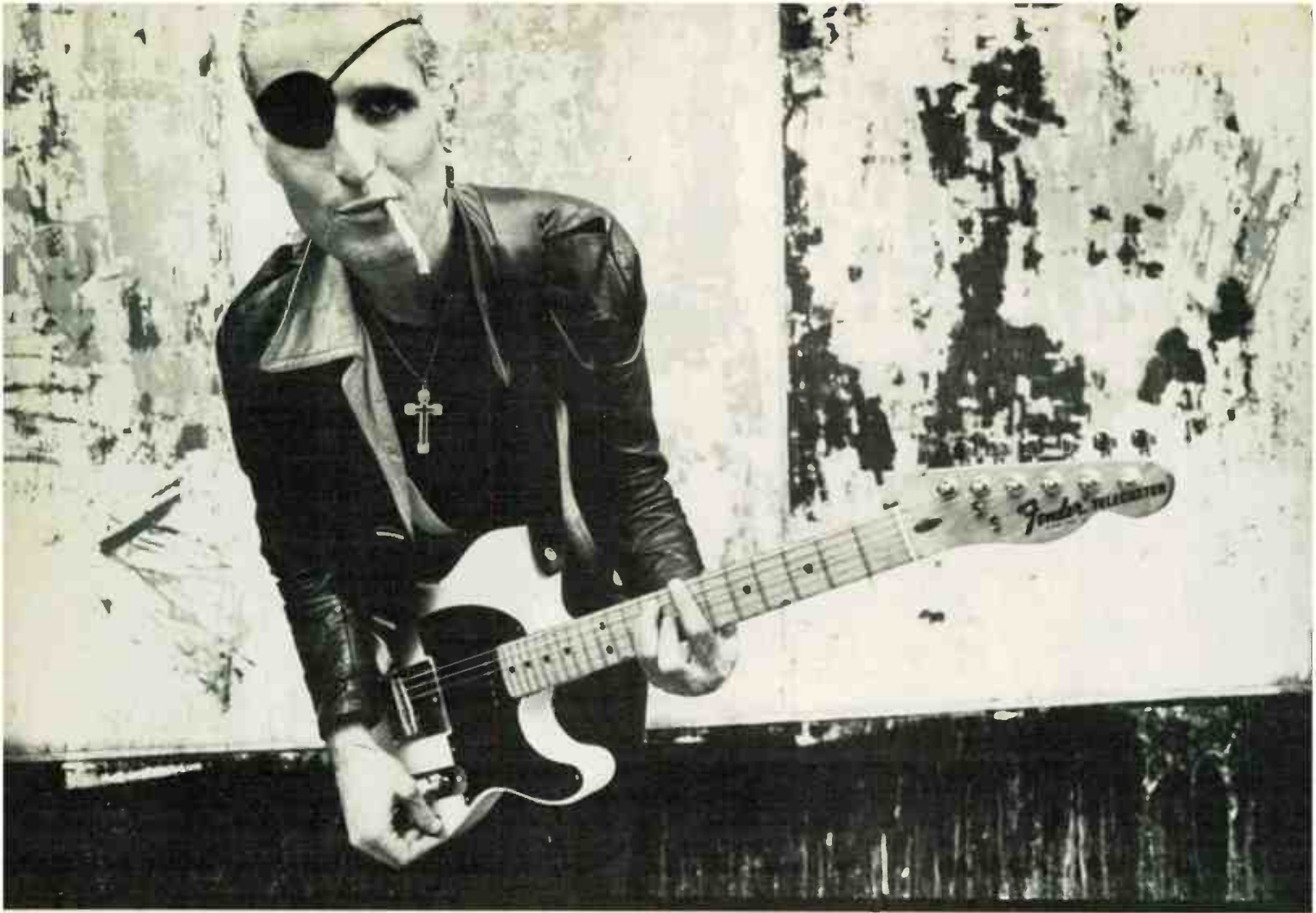
resplendent in dazzling, colorful costumes — a fanzine dream. Except on a few ballads, the brothers showed off a dance technique that was hip, gymnastic, and Vegas-y. Michael, of course, was the star of the evening, and he handled the huge, adoring throng with great aplomb, intelligence, and conviction. He didn't have to do anything but stand there, and the crowd still would have gone nuts, but he gave a performance that was as direct and unforced as is possible in such an overwhelming situation. He was most impressive, in fact, when he sang the tender oldie, "Ben." With natural grace, he worked the audience, bringing to mind films of the young Frank Sinatra breaking many hearts on stage. (I doubt, however, that Sinatra ever sang a love song about a rat.)

About halfway through the evening, a brief clip was shown of the very young Jackson 5 singing a medley of their hits on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. Then, on stage, the group mock-argued about singing the oldies, after which they did a much-too-short medley of "I Want You Back," "ABC," and "The Love You Save," followed by "I'll Be There." It's understandable that a currently successful act wouldn't want to dwell on its past, but it's also understandable why the audience wanted more old hits. Since the Jacksons don't need to use their concerts to sell their current records, and their past contains so many gems, it would be a distinct service for the group to keep those classics around. — Jim Feldman

THE JACKSONS



EBET ROBERTS



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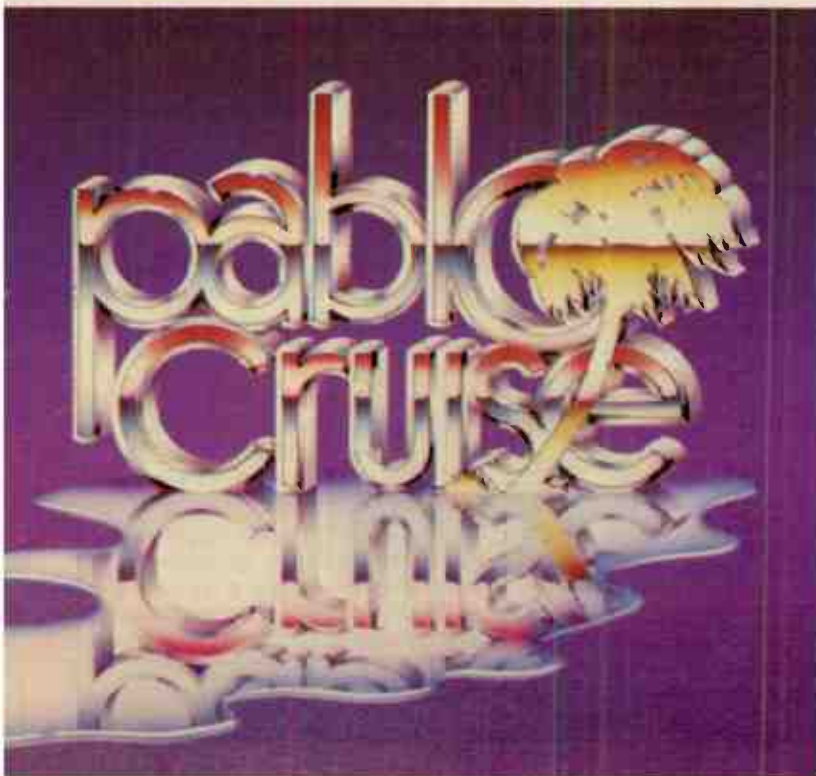
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PEAVEY PROFILE: Cory Lerios of Pablo Cruise



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Cory uses a mono three-way stage amplification system for his versatile five-keyboard setup.

All keyboards are routed through a Peavey Mark III™ mixing console and a Peavey 10-band Stereo Graphic™ to provide mixing and equalization functions.

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Monday, April 13th, World HQ. This is the end of the second day's full rehearsals with the four of us. And some amazing ideas sprayed out of the two "Jungles" and "Second Line of Discipline." Bill and I had our first falling out, over some dramatic cymbal punctuation. His new drums/percussion blend gives me a lift, but the regular drumming is entirely the opposite of what I have in mind. So we laid down some ground rules: 1. The full band never phrase together; two players together is enough, and in exceptional cases three; 2. It's okay to repeat yourself. This emerged before, but now it's formalized. It came up originally because Bill changed his part around on "Jungle 1" so that he wouldn't repeat himself. And our best tune died.

Tony is mostly playing the Stick instead of the bass guitar, and with its attack it provides a tuned-percussion effect doubling BB's boo-bams. A beautiful sustained low end Tony found "killed him." Bill is working on finding alternatives to cymbals, an entirely wretched instrument which covers all the high frequencies of use to guitarists. Adrian hasn't sung yet but he's beginning to say what he wants, the backing he needs to solo, and so on. For me, I gave up pushing and let myself listen and wait, to be pulled along by everyone else's ideas.

There's a dedication in Stafford Beer's *The Brain of the Firm*, which I've just begun reading; Absolutum, Obsoletum: if it works, it's out of date. Told this to Adrian who misunderstood my Dorset twang. He heard: "If it works, it's out of doubt."

'Phoned Paddy to let off steam. He says BB and I should talk it out.

April 14th, World HQ. Bill is really getting to me, so I'm trying to understand how he works.

1. He's a very busy player, and doesn't enjoy playing sparsely;
2. His parts have lots of fills and major changes of texture;
3. His fills are dramatic; i.e., they shock.

So I've been drawing up suggestions:

1. Any existing solution to a problem is the wrong one: absolutum, obsoletum;
2. If you have an idea, don't play it;
3. When a change in the music needs emphasis, don't play it: the change in the music is emphasis enough;
4. Don't phrase with any other member of the band unless it's in the part;
5. Phrasing in the part should include no more than two people;
6. If the tension in the music needs emphasizing, don't. The tension is there because of what you're playing, not what you're about to play;
7. If you really have to change your part to build tension, don't add — leave out;
8. The maximum tension you can add is by stopping completely;
9. If there is space for a fill which is demanded by the music, don't play it: there are three other people who would like to use the opportunity;
10. If the part you're playing is boring, stop listening with your head;
11. If this still bores you, listen to the interaction between all the parts;
12. If this still bores you, stop playing and wait until you are no longer bored;
13. Do not be dramatic;
14. Do not be afraid to repeat yourself;
15. Do not be afraid to take your time.

Boy, what a negative list. Let's be positive about this.

1. Repeat yourself;
2. Take your time;
3. Leave room;
4. Listen to everyone else;
5. Develop a new set of cliches;
6. Develop a new vocabulary of drum sounds;
7. Listen to the *sound* of what you play;

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8. Accept responsibility for what you play; e.g., if you fill space, you deprive the band of space, or other musicians the opportunity for filling space;
9. Abandon fills;
10. Abandon drama;
11. Abandon dynamics;
12. Conceal yourself.

This evening Steve Smith of the Martian Schoolgirls came round and we did an interview for *Coaster*, a new local magazine.

Wednesday, April 15th, World HQ; 9:15. Remain depressed. King Crimson gave me six years of this kind of concern. What keeps us going at a time like this is the hope that a gig will take off, remembering what it was like to fly and trusting it'll happen again. But of course if you don't believe it, there's no way anyone would put up with the nonsense. The turning point for me was in Italy, on the nights of November the 12th and 13th, 1973, when King Crimson were playing sports arenas in Turin and Rome. In my memory the two gigs have fused into one. At Turin two hundred Maoists walked through a glass wall because music is free and for the people. Well, I have some sympathies for that viewpoint, and on one level it's quite right. Meanwhile King Crimson had road managers to pay, hotels, travelling, equipment and so on. Still, since the group were getting a percentage of the gate and the show was sold out, they wouldn't miss much, would they? But, strangely enough, the attendance percentages we were getting paid were rather low. And this is what took place in Rome.

We were playing at the Palais de Sports, and I was driven there in the afternoon for a soundcheck by the promoter and one of his partners. Promoting rock shows in Italy is entirely unique and required political connections of a fairly substantial, and often family, nature. Our promoter's connection was with an uncle highly placed in the Milan police force. I was spending the drive to the Palais apologising to the promoter's

partner for the incident the night before at the restaurant in Turin. The restaurant may have been the best in town; it may have been the most expensive. We were taken there by the promoter for dinner after the gig, but he didn't tell us that we were paying for it. He simply deducted it from our fee. But the meal was simply exquisite, especially since we thought it was free, and David Cross, our violinist, and Bill got rather drunk. David began throwing bottles of wine down the length of a long, full table — the promoter brought his full entourage along — and Dik Fraser, tour manager, plucked them from the air. Dik was not enjoying this but David was testing our mettle to see if we would crack. The bottles had been opened. Meanwhile, Bill was sitting by the promoter's partner, the one who later shared the ride to the Palais. He was around forty-five, very vain and had recently come to accept his homosexuality, and to flourish it. His teenage son was a little further down the table, a keen Crimson fan, and enjoying his meal. This man's conceit wasn't at all diminished by his large pot belly, the one Bill reached out and drew attention to by tapping it while making a remark which I can't recall but had the sense of: "Hey, what's a nice narcissistic poof like you doing with a belly like this?" John Wetton, Crimson's bass player, and I were sitting next to each other opposite the protuberant one, wincing as bottles flew and anticipating concrete Wellingtons and a ride to the seaside. This was the incident being discussed, and generously forgiven, in the car on the way to the Palais.

The Palais was sold out; I think it held about 15,000. Anyway, it was a full house and Crimson's percentage of the gate was better than a poke in the eye with a pointed stick. Our manager, Sam Alder of EG, was out front with the promoter, viewing the crowd. "A good crowd tonight," said Big P. "Nine thousand people." Sam replied: "King Crimson are not playing tonight." "Errr, perhaps there are twelve thousand?" said Big P. "King Crimson will not play tonight." "Fourteen thousand?" "Fifteen thousand," said Sam. Now, how the scam worked was like this:

continued on page 114

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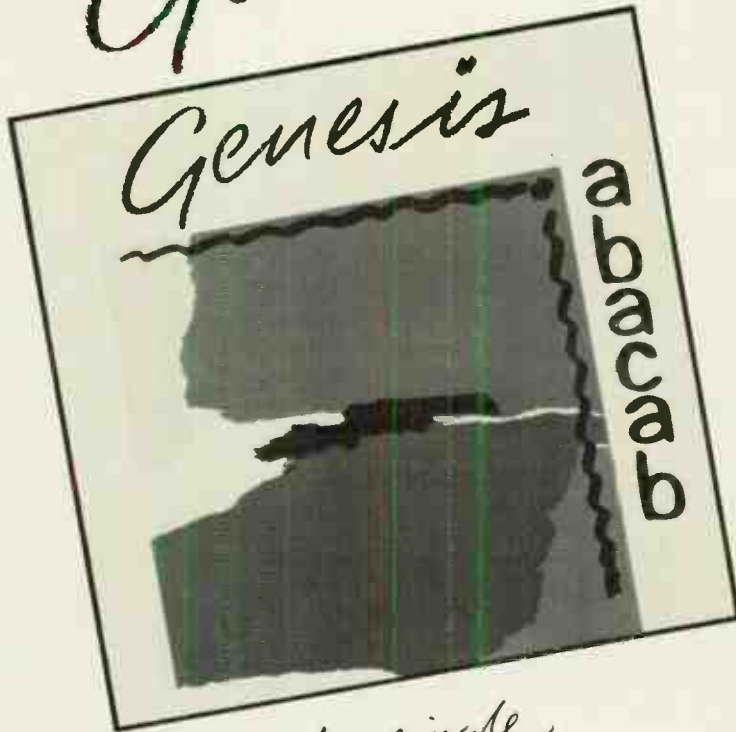


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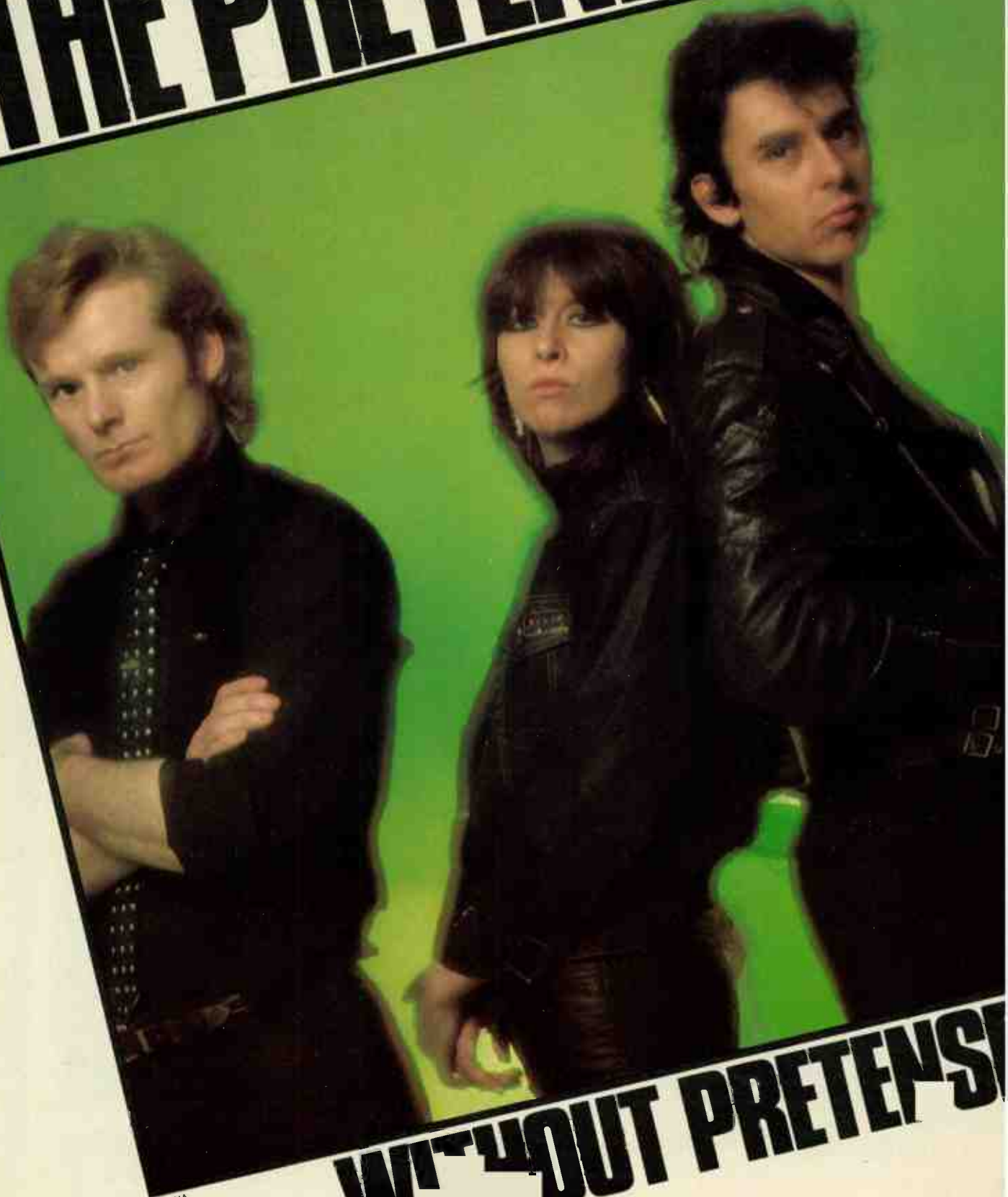
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THE PRETENDERS



WITHOUT PRETENSE

RETNA



While the Pretenders' first album rolled across the charts in 1979 with freshness and kick, the critical dust is still settling on their second release. Our correspondent gamely strikes up some cheerful shop talk with two Pretenders and is then verbally assaulted and left for irrelevant by the anti-heroine of rock, Chrissie Hynde.

By Jon Pareles

I got all excited when I first heard *Pretenders* in 1980. At the time, new wave was getting to be an old joke: Elvis (Costello) impersonations, used Cars, Beatles-made-easy, bar bands trying to be the Ramones. The Pretenders were not only different, they were good. More important than the fact that they were led by a woman—not just fronted, but led; Chrissie Hynde was credited on almost every song—was that they seemed to have easy control of a sound they'd just invented. The rhythms were more expansive, less clicky-clack, than the rest of the new wave, yet more lively than anything in heavy metal; *Pretenders* even included a 15/4 Balkan-esque stomp, "Tattooed Love Boys." Hynde sang like Cher with a brain, or Patti Smith with a sense of humor, and in her lyrics she came across as hard-headed, clever, sensible and not so much tough as resilient — she knew the difference between strength and macho. And the band's choice of an obscure Kinks song as their obligatory cover suggested to me that they were willing, like the Kinks, to be a cult band with a smart, under-dogged following. What took a little longer to sink in was that the Pretenders had a unique modus operandi for songwriting. Pretenders songs were two-in-one specials: if you started on the one, you got clean guitar hooks, while if you waited for the three, you'd get the vocal lines. The songs seesawed back and forth, the best package deal in pop. Still, I was surprised at how fast the Pretenders caught on. They'd been top of the pops in England already, but sometimes all that takes is a *Melody Maker* mention and sending all the band's dependents to the record shops at one time. In America's radio market, it turned out that the Pretenders fit right into both old and new-fangled formats — not too harsh, not too wimpy — and that the overlapping hooks of "Brass in Pocket" were obvious even to AM listeners. By the time their U.S. tour reached New York City, it was summer of 1980 and the Pretenders easily sold out the Palladium (and later, Wollman Rink at Central Park). They were sloppier but more exuberant live than on the album, a fair trade; drummer Martin Chambers hurled sticks through the air, bassist Pete Farndon plunked away like any self-effacing British bassist, James Honeyman-Scott played his guitar solos as if he expected teenage girls to toss roses. Hynde, her eyes shrouded under long bangs, was unabashedly gawky, and addressed the audience as "girls" (something she still does). She clinched every good impression I'd gotten from *Pretenders* when, halfway through the set, she unceremoniously doffed her leather jacket in the heat.

Some juvenile yelled, "Take it off!"; she stopped, gazed coolly in his direction, and said, "Take it off? Grow up."

As the Pretenders' popularity grew, their history became well known. How Hynde, an Akron, Ohio native who'd been writing songs since she was sixteen, decided to get the hell out of Ohio and flew to London in 1973 with money she'd saved from waitressing; freelanced for the *New Musical Express*; tried to start up a band in Paris, then one in Cleveland, then another in Paris, then a few in London with the likes of Mick Jones (later of the Clash) and the Damned. How she'd had to turn down Nick Lowe's offer to back him as guitarist and singer on the first Stiff's tour. How an early demo of "The Phone Call" landed her the support of Real Records' Dave Hill, who became her manager and hooked her up with Farndon and then the two other Hereford lads who became the Pretenders. How Nick Lowe produced that Kinks cover, "Stop Your Sobbing," in a one-day session, and how it landed the Pretenders on the British charts early in 1979, where it was shortly followed by "Kid" and "Brass in Pocket" from the Chris Thomas-produced, in-the-making debut LP, which entered the British charts at number one. How it didn't take the band much longer than that to catch on in the U.S.

Then, while the band toured America, came the rock-star clichés: drinking, drugging, collapsing on the road. Hynde made a few drunken public appearances in the grand manner, and even got herself booked for a bar brawl. Still, their new songs — "Talk of the Town," "Message of Love," "Cuban Slide" — were more than promising. When *Musician* was looking for big-time rock bands that were worth talking to, I brought up the Pretenders, and when *Pretenders II* was imminent, logistics were arranged so that I'd catch up with the band in San Francisco while their world tour was getting into gear. The live material on *The Concert for Kampuchea* and their own *Extended Play* reminded me how tight they could be on a good night, and I was looking forward to asking what made their music tick.

Until I heard *Pretenders II*, on which every fear of follow-up albums comes true. It sounded like Hynde's tough-gal image had hardened into unambiguous kiss-offs with "Pack It Up," "Jealous Dogs" and "Bad Boys Get Spanked," while at the same time she'd gone off into the sentimental mush of "Birds of Paradise." Vocal lines that sounded idiosyncratic on *Pretenders* sounded tired the second time around, and even the two-in-one style couldn't perk up songs in which everything sounded second-hand. Combing the album for something to like, I was finally caught by "Day After Day" and the quasi-reggae "Waste Not Want Not," both of whose lyrics are non-personal, ambiguous, and at least intriguing — could they be political? Still, a last-minute check at the *Musician* offices turned up no volunteers willing to go to San Francisco in my place. With a heavy heart and a tiny tape recorder, I clambered onto an American DC-10 (arrgh!) to do my sworn duty.

The show I saw at the Fox-Warfield Theater that night didn't help my spirits. The Pretenders aren't yet slick enough to be a merely competent outfit, and when the sound system decided to imitate the San Francisco earthquake halfway through the second tune, the show snapped, and the band simply slogged through until it was over, like any heavy metal band on an off night. The crowd dutifully rushed the stage for the encores, while I wondered whether this was the same band that had been so incendiary in New York. A little bit of jet lag and the road-manager-runaround ("Come to the stage door afterwards and meet the band" — no-show, of course) completed the mood.

But the next day dawned with all the mindless ecstasy of California at its best, and Dave Hill was on the case: I was set to interview Honeyman-Scott and Chambers on the music, then Hynde on the gestalt. Carrying transcribed lyrics as mnemonic aids, I met Hill in the lobby of the Miyako Hotel; when he saw what I was carrying, he blanched visibly. "Don't let Chrissie see that you have those," he muttered darkly. Honeyman-Scott soon joined us, and perused the lyrics with what appeared to be extreme curiosity.

MUSICIAN: You don't get to see the lyrics?

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: No, I don't, because I never listen to lyrics — just the music, that's all I'm interested in. Well, certain lyrics: I love John Lennon's lyrics, on *Walls and Bridges*, and there's a lot of Neil Young I love. But of ours, I never get the time to notice lyrics or pay attention to them. I completely leave them to Chrissie.

MUSICIAN: Pretenders always seem to have two things working simultaneously, back and forth — a guitar line and a vocal line. You could tune out either one and you'd still have a complete song.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: I like to think that the songs are melodic without the lyrics. She'll bash them out on a guitar to me, and I'll have to interpret what she means, because sometimes she'll do it as the idea is in her head, and I can't understand it. Sometimes I can't even get the timing. Sometimes she rushes — she can hear the beat, and we end up trying to count it. We always get together, Chrissie and I, before the whole song comes to the band. I interpret her ideas to the others, and suggest what I think should go into it. The great thing about it is that we always agree on how it should go — always.

MUSICIAN: Back when you first hooked up with Chrissie, how did you know her songs were going to be any good? It's hard for me to imagine those songs without a band in them.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: The one song that I joined the group for was "Stop Your Sobbing," 'cause these other songs were kind of raunchy and too rocky for me. I was a very mellow chap. And I thought I could put my nice big jangly guitars on it — that was the only reason. Then I kind of started to dig the other songs. What she was hiding from people was that she could do melodic songs. And I know she was scared to put this forward, because in England it was the end of the punk era and there was still a lot of this aggressive punk attitude. So she was a bit wary. But she kind of confided in us: melodic songs, man, that's what we need — and that's what's made the Pretenders successful. The fact is that they are good melodic songs, songs I was proud to be able to play. If I hadn't joined the group, and somebody else had, it would have been a raunchier outfit. We still do a lot of raunchy stuff, but still, you always end up humming the melody of a song. That's why it's a shame, with so many of these new groups that have good songwriters, that they forget there's got to be something that sticks in your head. There are people who are afraid or ashamed to do that, to show a melodic side of themselves. They think it's old-fashioned or something — that's bullshit.

MUSICIAN: What was most difficult about *Pretenders II*?

CHAMBERS: The hardest thing for me is "Bad Boys Get Spanked," that tempo...

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: I guess the slow numbers are the hardest to record. If you have a sparse, slow number, the timing has got to be dead on. You're only going to hear the drums, and acoustic guitar, and bass, and that has got to be scientifically in time.

CHAMBERS: You can fool around in fast numbers, because there's a wall of sound coming at you, but in slow numbers each beat and each note has to be full value. Thomas got me to play to a click track in several songs, which isn't the best thing to do; I can play to a click track all right, but I tend to lose feel — there's no soul on it. So I usually make sure I go out of time somewhere. The snare drum on "I Go to Sleep," if you listen to it, is very late after the word "sleep" — it's right behind the beat, trying to put a little bit of feel on it.

MUSICIAN: So the Pretenders are sort of California-English?

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: Yeah, yeah, that's how I think of it, anyway. Chrissie'd hate that — she's not a fan of California — but that's exactly how I'd like to think of it.

MUSICIAN: But you don't seem to go for the 12-string.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: I do have two Rickenbackers, and we have used them — "Talk of the Town," wasn't it? — but if you use a 6-string through a Leslie, it doesn't sound as cluttered as a 12-string does, because the notes are more precise, you're hitting one single note and having it doubled by the effect you're using, like a Clone Theory. You get a 12-string



Chrissie Hynde and guitarist Jim Honeyman-Scott: Jim prefers the demos cut in his home studio to the big production albums.

"You've got to have melody. Many of these new wave bands have got all the chords and the aggressive image, but have no melody whatsoever. It's terrible to hear a band droning on in a monotone."

sound, only cleaner. I love playing the guitars themselves, but when I want big single notes, I prefer to use the effects. You've got more control. You can't really bend notes on a 12-string, either, because it sounds all Indian — the strings won't bend exactly the same. Oh, but I did use one on "I Go to Sleep."

MUSICIAN: A lot of the California sound seems to come out of folk-rock, where the song is written on acoustic guitar and the electric instruments are just filled in afterwards.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: We're not like that at all. Maybe Chrissie will bash it out for me on an electric guitar that isn't plugged in, but she's never just come in with a cassette. It's always very much worked out between the four guys in the band, it's not like, "This is my song..." We always start with the drums, for one thing. "English Roses" — she played it really light, but she brought it to us and we said, "You can't play it light, you can't, you can't." And then Martin had this tom-tom bit from the Faces, "You Can Make Me Dance, Sing, or Anything..."

CHAMBERS: And I was chugging away on that...

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: And I remember Dave, our manager, coming into the studio when we were working on that and taking me aside, "Jim, I want a word with you." "What, Dave, what?" with a big grin on my face. He says, "You can't do that. It's just like the Faces." And then he took the demo with him on the plane to America, and listened to it, and when he got here he said, "More songs like 'English Roses,' that's great!" 'Cause

it was raunchy, and it was up, and we hadn't tried that before. **HONEYMAN-SCOTT:** English drummers really know how to keep it: Simon Kirke, John Bonham, solid rock drumming.

MUSICIAN: Do you want your music to be dance music?

CHAMBERS: Chrissie worries about that. When I put my rhythms down, there are a lot of times I could change my patterns more than I do. But you've got to have something consistent — she's very conscious of people bopping to the music. You've got to be, to a point. Chrissie's very aware of it being dance stuff; I don't know what is and what isn't. People dance to almost anything.

MUSICIAN: How about "Tattooed Love Boys"? You've got that odd time signature going...

CHAMBERS: Right, there's that 7/4 bar and that 4/4 bar.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: How many to the bar? All to the bleedin' bar! I had to put a little guitar tune in there, so I'd know where I was. Otherwise I couldn't keep time.

CHAMBERS: To make an odd time flow is the most difficult thing to do. It's also fatal to make a mistake, because you can't get back into it. On the first American tour, at the Palladium...

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: We screwed up royally. It was just a mess, and we were hitting anything and hoping something was going to catch on somewhere in the timing. It was embarrassing — three thousand people witnessing this appalling noise on stage. The next day the New York Times said, "The timing on 'Tattooed Love Boys' was tight and perfect, just like the record." It makes you wonder, doesn't it?

MUSICIAN: *Pretenders II* doesn't seem to have any weird time signatures.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: It doesn't, does it?

CHAMBERS: If in doubt, leave it out, right?

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: We have lots of terms like that...

CHAMBERS: Like "hit it!" — That's another one. One that I

frequently use on stage now is "WAAAAAAHHHHH!" It helps a lot. Also "mind your back!"

MUSICIAN: How many times have you lads been hit by flying drumsticks?

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: I caught one on the head beautifully the other night. Vertically. And Pete had to go to a hospital in L.A. to get stitches in the side of his head where he caught one. But that's life. Maybe I should wear a helmet.

MUSICIAN: The concerts don't sound much like your records.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: We're a bit wilder on stage. To maintain an interest in the same songs every night, you have to do new things, even the smallest things: little guitar licks, little tricks...

CHAMBERS: On stage I'll sometimes try something I know I can't do — I'll never be able to play this lick, and I don't! No harm to it.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: You did some beauties last night, in "Private Life," some real "ABC Guide to Drumming" stuff...

CHAMBERS: "How to Play the Drum and Cymbal"... I think my legs are all right. What happens up above, I don't know. It's good fun, you know. You shouldn't go out there thinking, "I'm going to do that and that and that..."

MUSICIAN: Live you may take a few chances but your recordings seem really crafted. Each of the songs seems to be built around a different guitar tone.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: Chris Thomas and I spend a lot of time getting the right guitar sound for the right track. I'm fortunate in having a lot of guitars and amplifiers, but in the studio, the only amplifiers I end up using are a Marshall and a Fender; with guitars, it's either a Les Paul or a Strat. You can get any combination out of those four items, you can cover the whole spectrum. Plus I've got a lot of effects...

CHAMBERS: It's amazing how all this expensive equipment can be made to sound so cheap sometimes.

When the manager saw the transcribed lyric sheets the author was carrying, he blanched visibly. Don't let Chrissie see you have those, he muttered darkly.



MUSICIAN: As your recording budget gets bigger, though, you have more options, more choices to make.

CHAMBERS: It depends on the kind of person you are. If you drive into a parking lot and there's a hundred spaces, you could sit there for hours trying to decide where to park. But if you know what you want to do, whether you've got a thousand choices or just one, you're going to do it. If you need a certain sound, you go out and get it.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: I can give you a perfect example: on "Big Boys Get Spanked" we tried to get a whip sound. For the demo, in my home studio, we had Martin whipping a stone pillar with a length of guitar cord. It's got that "whoosh" at the beginning. But it wasn't powerful enough, so we slowed it down a little and it was frightening. So we have this sound on the demo and Chris Thomas loves it, and we go into the studio to record it properly. We spent a whole day trying to get that sound and got nowhere near it. We had it going through all these effects and things and we said, "No, man, you just hit a stone wall with a guitar cord and slow it down!" and nobody listens. That can be very frustrating and depressing.

If I played you some of our demos, it'd knock your socks off. They're the best tapes, they're always the best, they're better than some of the finished products.

CHAMBERS: You get that spontaneity on a \$2.50 demo. And they're so different — different tempos, different arrangements, different sounds...

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: A different bloody tune, nearly! (laughs) It's almost upsetting, really, because you do it so quick as a demo, you catch it so fresh. And I maintain that we always get a better sound on the bass on the demos — even Chris Thomas has said that.

CHAMBERS: We can finish four or five demo tracks a day.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: And then we'll spend a week trying to do one of them in the studio with a producer.

MUSICIAN: But aren't the studio versions a lot more elaborate?

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: Sure, but when you're making demos you have a free hand. Usually, me and Martin do them. Pete will come in and do a bass track, and we'll have Chrissie come in at a certain time, but me and Martin end up doing 'em because you can do exactly what you want. I go over the top on demos, putting on all these lovely guitars.

CHAMBERS: And yet it sounds simple. Sometimes I'll use tom-toms slowed down so they'll sound like tympani drums. Can't do that on the real thing though, must use tympanis. But it's a different thing.

MUSICIAN: Some people think demos are too raw for radio.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: Not me. In fact, I'd like to hear 'em.

MUSICIAN: The songs on *Pretenders II* seem slower overall.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: The band is probably getting a little more melodic. I like to think so. You ain't going to get the milkman whistling the tempo or rhythm guitar...

CHAMBERS: He ain't going to whistle "Bad Boys Get Spanked;" he'll whistle "I Go to Sleep" or "Birds of Paradise."

MUSICIAN: You're not mellowing out with middle age...?

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: I'm 24 years old, are you kidding? I still stay up all night druggin'.

CHAMBERS: The best thing is to do a bit of variety, which is what we've always been able to do.

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: I went to see this band the other night, the Psychedelic Furs — and yes, they were very good and all that, but there was no melody to any of their songs. Not one. And that stinks; it's terrible to hear a band droning on a monotone. David Bowie's fantastic at melodies, very melodic — you've gotta have it, you know? So many of these new wave bands have just got all the chords and the aggressive image and everything, but they have *not* got any melody, none whatsoever.

CHAMBERS: On the other hand, you get somebody like McCartney who can write the most incredible melodies, but it's too nice.

MUSICIAN: As a final word, do you have any advice for the young musicians of America?

HONEYMAN-SCOTT: Keep on playing.

CHAMBERS: Give up.

Well, I thought, there go a couple of likable gents. Shortly afterwards, I saw a diminutive, black-haired, leather-jacketed woman walk in, and I wandered over to her. "Chrissie," I said. She ignored me. "Chrissie," I said again. She continued to ignore me. "We're supposed to do an interview," I said to her back. She half-relaxed, turned around, and explained that she'd been getting crank calls, despite the fact that she was registered under an assumed name, and half-apologized for thinking that I was more of the same. We wandered down to the Miyako's coffee shop, as I tried to loosen things up with a few comments about the ultra-clean-cut San Francisco audience ("Yeah," she said, "they all look like they're having a nice day") and tried to curb my amazement at her pale-brown eyes, a shade that photographs don't show. Over tea with milk, English-style, she began to unbend.

MUSICIAN: The songs you write for the Pretenders are unusual; they seem to start at two different places in the measure...

HYNDE: Look, I don't even know what the names of the chords are, so that's why I just blow out front. I mean, I know what a C is and an A is and all that, but I'm just not technical. And I wouldn't know where anything starts in a measure, and there is no formula we write songs on, or if there is I don't even want to think about it. I don't want to be conscious of a certain format, because it's very restrictive even to think about it. And I don't know what my guitar settings are or anything, I just listen to it, if it sounds weedy or whatever. I can't really talk much about the musical part of it.

MUSICIAN: Well, okay, I guess I could ask you what "Day After Day" means.

HYNDE: What does that have to do with it?

MUSICIAN: Mostly that I'm curious.

HYNDE: It doesn't mean anything. I never discuss that sort of thing anyway. I mean, if I spend two weeks or six months writing a song, that is taking it as far as I can, and that's it — I've got nothing more to say about it. That's why we don't ever print lyrics or anything. What you hear in a song is what we want you to hear. And whatever your interpretation is, fine. There's no point in talking about it in an interview because it's all in the grooves, it's all on vinyl.

MUSICIAN: Unless you want the song to raise a question. There are no lyric sheets...

HYNDE: No. I don't think any of them are profound enough to raise a question. I don't have lyric sheets because I don't think lyrics to songs stand on their own. They need music or else they'd be poems — I'm not a poet. The music and the lyric are written at the same time, so why just print the lyric? So that people can just sit there and scrutinize what you've said? I'm not saying anything, I'm just trying to complement the music. The song doesn't mean anything, it's not supposed to change anyone's life or point of view or way of looking at something. I'm not trying to instruct people. They're just pop songs, you know, it's so lightweight and simple. Maybe I'm not very successful at what I'm doing if it seems so esoteric.

MUSICIAN: Can't be that esoteric; *Pretenders* went platinum.

HYNDE: It did?

MUSICIAN: Yes. And the amazing thing is that you can reach that many people and be as eccentric as you are without being esoteric.

HYNDE: I'm eccentric? I don't think I'm eccentric at all, I'm pretty ordinary.

MUSICIAN: Still, quality and popularity can go together sometimes. You could think of yourself as a Picasso...

HYNDE: Van Gogh never sold anything. I don't think he had very much commercial success in his lifetime; he was one of my favorites. But if you look in the top ten albums in your *Billboard* chart, probably 99% of the time there's nothing there I'd listen to, or that I'm interested in, or maybe that I'd ever heard before. To sum up just about everything I feel on that issue: I went into a record store at someone's suggestion, someone said, "You ought to get a Bessie Smith album." I said, "Oh yeah, I'd like to listen to Bessie Smith." So I went into



MARTIN BENJAMIN

"If you want to get up and dance, pal, you get up and dance. This isn't the military, I don't have to say 'everybody up!' But they want you to be some sort of chief who tells them what to do. It's pathetic."

this record store that sells jazz LPs and old musicals and things like that, and I asked the bloke, "Do you have a Bessie Smith section?" He said, "All the Bessie Smiths over there, but it's all been deleted now and that's all we'll get, because it's not a pop album." And I walked out of that shop, and I felt sort of ashamed that I was in a business where I was just about to sell another 100,000 pop LPs, the quality of which you probably can't compare. But that's the name of the game. Most of the innovators aren't credited, it's the watered-down version that the public can swallow that they go for usually.

I don't mean to deride what we do, I guess it's probably pretty good. I'm just no big deal — that Robert Crumb character, Bo Bo Belinsky, "he's no big deal" — that's how I feel.

People are always going to misinterpret everything. They try to make me out to look like some hard, "don't mess with me" type — they'd like that. So I'll just have to try to ignore all that and not take it all seriously. I don't want to keep walking around for the rest of my life saying, "Well, I'm not like that."

MUSICIAN: *Pretenders II* fights that by having quieter songs.

HYNDE: Well, every album's going to be different, you can't expect a band to repeat song for song.

MUSICIAN: Thank goodness.

HYNDE: But I don't think we've made a departure in any way from our first LP, musically. I don't think we've done anything particularly that goes down a completely different avenue. We just do these songs, they're just individual songs, they're not particularly related to each other. There's no particular theme. Maybe there is if somebody sat down and studied every song

and said, "Ah, she's feeling like this!" That's for wankers — who wants to do that?

MUSICIAN: (uncomfortably) I meant the music, really. Jim talked a lot about the role of melody...

HYNDE: We still take the basic thing in our songs by melody. Jim certainly adds melodic hook lines — I don't add any lyrical hook lines, usually, he adds the hook lines with melodic guitar. I think that's probably one of the essences of the sound. We usually take each song individually and do what we think that song needs. I don't see that we've approached it any differently — maybe the band's a little more used to it, a little more experienced. There really isn't much point in comparing one LP from one artist to another LP that they do. It's like comparing someone's haircut to the one they had last year. Does that mean they can't ever change it, you can't ever wear your hair a different way?

MUSICIAN: Do you have new songs written?

HYNDE: I always have a few ideas, but because of what we are doing at the moment I am not upstairs trying to work out anything. And I never am. It gets to the point where it's not particularly fun anymore, I can't do what I love doing and that's just writing, you know. People keep asking me to explain what I am doing, and what I am doing is sort of personal. It's like I don't really want to explain how I get ready to go out in the morning. I don't expect people to want to come in and watch me get my clothes on and take a shower and everything. But they would if they could.

MUSICIAN: Yeah, I was just going to not say that.

HYNDE: And that's exactly what they are asking, when they ask how you arrive at a song, and what you do to get the song on tape or whatever. I'm making it available to the public, what more could I do? I'm not a spokesman for a generation or anything like that, I am not saying anything new and I am not doing anything musically innovative or anything so why the fuss? Because I play guitar? I'm not a brilliant guitar player, I'm not an ambitious guitar player. I know I can hold my own, or else the other guys wouldn't play with me. They'd get someone else, because they're too good.

At the beginning of this tour, I was playing the guitar real sloppy because I couldn't hear myself properly; I was not even playing half of the time. Jim came off stage one night and he went wild, he was furious because they hear everything, and if I play sloppy and don't hold my own or play well, they don't want to play with me. Those guys are good musicians, they can go out and play with anybody they want. Why should they want to play with someone who's playing lousy? So I'm ade-

"I hate the whole 'rock 'n' roll' mythology. It used to be cool when it was the music of the renegade, the music of the misfit. Now it's very bourgeois and very safe and very white — not even white, it's assimilated."

quate as a rhythm player; in fact, I keep a pretty raw edge in the sound. But I don't play with technical skill.

MUSICIAN: Martin mentioned that you were one of the band members who wanted the music to be danceable...

HYNDE: I don't care what people do to the music. If you want to get up and dance, pal, you get up and dance. These American audiences are so used to being baited by the same old thing three times a week; they go to see their show, and it's always the same "Get up and rock 'n' roll," "Hey San Francisco are you ready?" And they always go for it, *every single time*. They never feel condescended to by it. It's the easiest thing in the world to walk to the edge of the stage and say, "Everybody up!" But this isn't the military, you know, I don't have to tell people that. That's what they want you to be, some sort of a chief that tells you what to do and all. I think it's pathetic.

If I'm in the audience, I find it very insulting for the guy to say "Alright everybody up, everyone clap!" If I want to clap, I'll clap. If I want to dance, I'll dance. That was the whole idea of rock 'n'

roll in the first place, wasn't it? Don't do what someone *tells* you to do, do what *you* want to do. Now everyone wants to be told what to do all the time. We did a show one night, and no one stood up, everyone sat there the whole time, and I felt like the band's not very good tonight, maybe the sound's bad, maybe we're not playing very well. Towards the very end of the show, I said, "All right, you can stand up now." And the whole place was up! I said, "I guess some people always have to be told." You know, what a bunch of *dullards*.

MUSICIAN: Do you feel pressure from the public?

HYNDE: No, I just try to stay away from them as much as I can. Last night some girl kept calling me up in my hotel room, she'd ask for this name and that name and I kept saying "Look, what can I possibly talk to you on the phone about?" It's like getting an obscene phone call. "Oh hi, I've seen the show..." All right, so you went and saw the concert, fine. I never met you before in my whole life. You've got no business calling me over and over, no business being anywhere near my hotel room. They ask for too much, you know? It takes a hell of a lot of gall for someone to ask me to entertain them for the rest of my life. It's because of that that people like me get insomnia. You can never quite get to sleep, you're always being prodded awake again. They don't know, they don't care. They think they own you because they bought the LP, they think they've bought shares in you.

Some nights I just don't want anyone to look at me. Even if I'm at home and I want to go out for a meal, I won't go out in public. Even if I wasn't, you know, "famous," I wouldn't get on a bus or something. It's really difficult sometimes when you get on stage. You can take it real personally — "Why are you looking at me?" Obviously they paid their money to get in. A lot of times I just don't know what to say to the audience in between songs, I just can't talk. And other times, if someone in the audience does something funny or does something human or stands up to dance, then I can start talking to them. But if they're all sitting down and staring, I don't know what to say to them. They make me feel like I'm on the spot.

MUSICIAN: Do you feel that crowds get more passive as the Pretenders get more famous?

HYNDE: No. Some of the audiences go wild, and others just sit there. At a lot of venues the security's really tight and people try to light up a cigarette and they have to put it out and they can't stand up... We're onstage and we just think, well, nobody's enjoying the show. At the beginning of the show in Detroit, this girl was sitting right up front, she had her feet up on the stage and she was just sitting there looking at me like she was absolutely bored. It was really off-putting for me. I was trying to play, and dance... So finally I walked away from the microphone and over to the edge of the stage and I said, "Are you bored?" She went, "No, it's great!" She had a big smile on her face and waved — that's just what she was used to. I can't tell if they're having a good time, so I assume they're having a good time and get on with it. Otherwise, I could be so put off that I'd say, "Well, f— you!" and walk off. I've had people come back and say, "You were really pissed off tonight." Maybe I'm pissed off because of the sound, but the audience just thinks I'm generally pissed off. Who wants to go see someone who's pissed off?

MUSICIAN: Well, there's that image stuff, perpetually pissed-off Chrissie Hynde, a little S&M in the bigtime rock 'n' roll.

HYNDE: That's one thing that puts me off it altogether; I hate the whole "rock 'n' roll" mythology, I find it really obnoxious. The "lifestyle of rock 'n' roll" and all that, *P.U.* It used to be cool when it was the music of the renegade, the music of the one kid on the block who was a little more misfit than the rest of the kids. But not anymore. Now it's very bourgeois and very safe and white — not even white, it's assimilated. There's not the renegade quality which was attractive to me and probably to you when you first started listening. Now it's dissipated. That rock-star thing is all horseshit. Remember those big black seven-inch records we all used to have, with the big holes in the middle? That's the priority, that's what matters — the rest is horseshit. **M**

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THE POLICE



BARRE JUNGLOUZ/REXNA

Between the pleasant song hooks and facile photogenia of the Police there lies a sophistication and urgency that has justly brought Andy Summers, Sting and Stewart Copeland to the top of everyone's pops.

By J.D. Considine

August in the Canadian woods sure beats the hell out of August in the sweaty East Coast city where I spend most of my time, so I can easily appreciate why the Police had chosen Le Studio in the tiny village of Morin Heights, Quebec, to mix their upcoming live album. With clear skies above and cool, clean air all around, the group displayed its outdoorsy side as we talked: Stewart Copeland repeatedly slammed a baseball into his mitt, confessing that "I haven't got a *clue* of what to do with it," while Sting decided to undergo his interview while paddling across the small lake behind the studio.

Still, business is business, and the business at hand was trying to understand just what it is that makes the Police more than the sum of its parts. It's not an easy question to take on, either. Just four years ago, the Police were slugging it out with all the other bright new bands in the cramped and dirty confines of London's premier punk club, the Roxy. But rather than follow the usual path of critical favor, a cult following, a few unrepresentative records and eventual dissolution, the Police parlayed an independent single into a major-label deal, and proceeded to turn out a series of hits that has made them one of the most widely-listened-to bands of the last five years.

"Playing pop music is very hard to do," shrugged Stewart Copeland, "and we just happen to be good at it. In this instance, the people who are good at it also happen to be quite able musicians, but being technically proficient is really secondary. Completely irrelevant to the readers of your magazine but very important to a large majority of our following is the fact that we're three photogenic guys." He looked up from his baseball mitt to smile apologetically, as if it weren't *his* idea to be so cute, and added, "That's important to me only in that we've built a group that has everything right."

That's not a bad way to look at the Police: The Group That Got Everything Right. Because from the teen idol good looks of

Sting to the sophisticated chops of Andy Summers, the Police manage to meet all the requirements for class-A pop stars while at the same time producing music that is provocative, inventive and arrestingly direct. Not only can the Police come up with the sort of hit singles guaranteed to get you humming along with the radio, but they do so without insulting your intelligence or compromising your aesthetics.

But try to get them to explain how they do it, and you're left holding a lot of loose threads. "We go for melodies," Copeland said of the group's pop sensibilities, "and the best melodies are the ones that are most easily understood. We don't have anything on the records that sounds difficult to play; if it sounds difficult, we'll get rid of it."

Let's you jump to the conclusion that the Police are crass commercialists, apply that maxim to the first single off the new Police album, "Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic." On the surface, it's a simple, pleasantly melodic love song that ties conventionally mushy lyrics to a sprightly Latin chorus. Sit down and analyze it, though, and you'll find a surprisingly sophisticated use of relative keys supporting that melody, and an intricate series of countermelodies and rhythms fleshing it out. There's hardly a moment in the song given over to flash; everything that glitters is actually gold.

"It's only the real *sophisto musos* who are amazed at our ability," Copeland observed. "All the little girls who like our stuff, it never occurs to them that we're incredible musicians. As far as they're concerned, they love the sound of it, they can sing along, and they think we look nice."

Well, that's one way of looking at it. Sting, however, offered a different slant on the group's musicianship. "There's nothing worse than an instrumentalist who feels he's so good that he has to fill every frequency at all times. It's athletic, not musical. My theory is that if you're a good musician, you refine what you do down to almost nothing. Miles Davis refined his art down to

one riff per eight bars — *that* is a great musician, that is a thinking man. It's not someone who can blow thirty-four demisemiquavers every second."

Andy Summers isn't a jazz guitarist who plays rock, any more than he is a rock guitarist who plays jazz. He's the Police guitarist, and it's that role that makes it as easy for him to play the jazzy rhythm figures that adorn "Secret Journey" as it is to pump out the screaming rock 'n' roll leads that pepper "Demolition Man" on the recently released *Ghosts In the Machine*. Both styles are familiar to him, and reflect a background that includes a fondness for jazz and a stint with the Animals. But you can't explain Summers' easy style away by pointing at his past, because the biggest factor in what he plays is what the rest of the group plays.

"We play with a lot of space," he said, "so the guitar comes out very clearly. Obviously, I have to consider the bass and the vocals in what I play, but as we've gotten more and more into our style, I've been able to play farther-out things around the vocal than maybe I would have at the beginning. I have to keep the song in mind, but Sting's a very flexible vocalist. He has a good ear, and if I change the chord somewhat, he can pick up on it. And, depending on the thing we're doing, if we're jamming, he can go with it."

Summers keeps his playing flexible by keeping his rhythm work spare. "The way I approach chord progressions and



harmonies," he explained, "I like to fragment them, break them down a lot. I like to play small chords rather than large chords, which is a thing I've always done in this group. Instead of playing A7 as a bar chord, I would only play C# and G, which suggests the whole chord, really." The reason it suggests the whole chord isn't just because Summers' background in chord theory directs him to the right notes, either; it's because Summers knows that the A will be in the bass line, so he won't have to play it.

It's almost impossible to follow any sort of logic in the way Sting's past relates to his playing style. Before joining the Police, he was "an aspiring *muso*. I was into reading dots and arrangements and all that." While working as a schoolteacher in his hometown of Newcastle, England, the man then known as Gordon Sumner was spending his nights playing mostly jazz. "I played Dixieland, mainstream, bebop, free-form, I played in a big band, I also played as a backing musician for various cabaret artists. It was a very rich education which was totally outside of rock 'n' roll. I wasn't interested in rock 'n' roll. The halcyon days for me to be interested in rock music were the early 70s. I found the rock music of the time abhorrent. It was Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple — music I just hated."

What turned things around for Sting was that old dependable, the chance meeting. "Stewart and I met. I was playing in a group based on the Chick Corea-type music, like Return to Forever, which was one of the groups that had the bridge. Stewart saw me play and sing with this group, was impressed, we got talking, and met later on in London and formed a group.

"Where we arrived," Sting continued, "wasn't in the rock vein, which Stewart had been in, or the jazz vein, but someplace totally different, which was punk.

"Which actually appealed to me greatly, because it was energy. And it wasn't so far removed from Ornette Coleman. Although serious musical people thought it was terrible, it did have what good music should have, which is excitement. Whereas all this heavy rock stuff had got so turgid, so pompous and *arrogant*, it didn't have any life left in it at all.

"So that's where we arrived, and we developed from there. I did have reservations about the lack of melody and the lack of poetry in the whole thing, but I saw it as a springboard. And slowly but surely, I subversively brought my own sense of melody into it, largely by the use of reggae. By playing a reggae rhythm you could seductively bring along melody, too."

When the band first burst on the scene with "Roxanne," it was the reggae beat that garnered the most press, even if it

"I think you can get across a political message better with humor and subtlety than all this shouting. I think that just turns people off, it comes across as very heavy-handed."

— Andy Summers

was the mournful, desirous melody that actually snared radio listeners. In effect, what the Police had done for reggae was the same thing the British Invasion bands of the 60s had done for the blues — taken the basics of a specific ethnic music and built a hybrid pop style around it. As Stewart Copeland admitted, there's nothing particularly unusual about the method; "Most music," he said, "is a hybrid of one kind or another.

"It's when you choose ingredients that are less used-up that you get more interesting results. Like, who cares about crossing country and blues anymore? Or crossing jazz with funk, or rock with classical? A lot of West Indian rhythms are not used-up; there are still plenty of fresh ideas there. *And* the rhythms are better rhythms *anyway*. Much better than the blues backbeat or any of the jazz things. The rhythms that are coming out of the Caribbean and Latin America are just *better*, more infectious rhythms that get your foot tapping. And they're

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much less exploited."

Although Sting quickly saw the advantage of a reggae infusion, he wasn't responsible for introducing it to the Police style. In fact, he really isn't much of a reggae fan. "I've always loved black music," he said, "I've been in love with black music from day one. I'd seen James Brown, various people. Bob Marley I'd heard, but it didn't have a great effect on me at first. In retrospect, I do like him very much now, and I think my singing was greatly influenced by him early on. But no, I didn't listen to much reggae then, I don't now. A lot of it is pretty samey."

Stewart Copeland, on the other hand, had been toying with reggae while drumming with his first band, an indulgent, classical-rock group called Curved Air. "We did a lot of jamming with reggae in Curved Air," he said, "but it just didn't fit in with the group's identity, so it never became part of the sound."

"It wasn't until the Police, until we were looking for something else to try that hadn't been tried that this kinda crept up on us. Not only did we find ourselves playing it, but we found that it came naturally to us."

Still, it's as hard to say why the reggae infusion came naturally in Copeland's case as it is in Sting's. "The first music I listened to was actually big band jazz — Buddy Rich, Woody Herman, that kind of stuff. Which, looking back at it now, seems kind of corny to me. I would hate to identify with that stuff, really, but it went in at an early age, so I tend to swing instead of rock."

"I was really trained very heavily as a brat. My father, who was an old jazz trumpeter, figured that if I showed any talent, I had to be taught how to do it right and everything. So I was taught how to read, how to hold my sticks right, how to do paradiddles and flamadiddles."

Copeland played in a lot of school bands — "for years I played nothing but Jimi Hendrix" — but what kept his from being a typical American childhood was the fact that his father, Miles Jr., was in charge of Middle Eastern operations of the CIA. "I was born in Virginia, but left when I was six months old," Copeland said. He spent his youth among other Americans in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon. "The first time I came back was when I was 19. I'd been in American schools and English schools, and I'd always grown up as an American — had an American passport, an American accent — but when I actually saw the place I was supposed to be from and realized I didn't know *anything* about it, I realized that I'm not from any place at all." He paused for a moment, then added, "Except for maybe Beirut, and Beirut's blasted to bits, so I guess I'm not from *there* anymore."

"There's nothing worse than an instrumentalist who always has to fill every frequency. It's athletic, not musical. If you're a good musician, you refine what you do to almost nothing."

— Sting

After completing college at U.C. Berkeley, Copeland went back to England, went through Curved Air, and formed the Police with Sting and guitarist Henry Padovani. That incarnation cut one single, "Nothing Achieving," b/w "Fall Out," and even then, Padovani's input was minimal. "Actually," said Copeland, "I played the guitar on that. When we first got into the studio, Henry was nervous and couldn't get it together. He put it down anyway, but the guitar track wasn't happening, so I just said screw it, and played it. I'd spent hours teaching him the song anyway, so I just played it."

With Andy Summers in and Padovani out, the Police were able to move further away from punk and more in the direction of reggae and pop. Sting began to write most of the band's material, and it wasn't long before the Police had completed an album, *Outlandos d'Amour*, and hit the road.

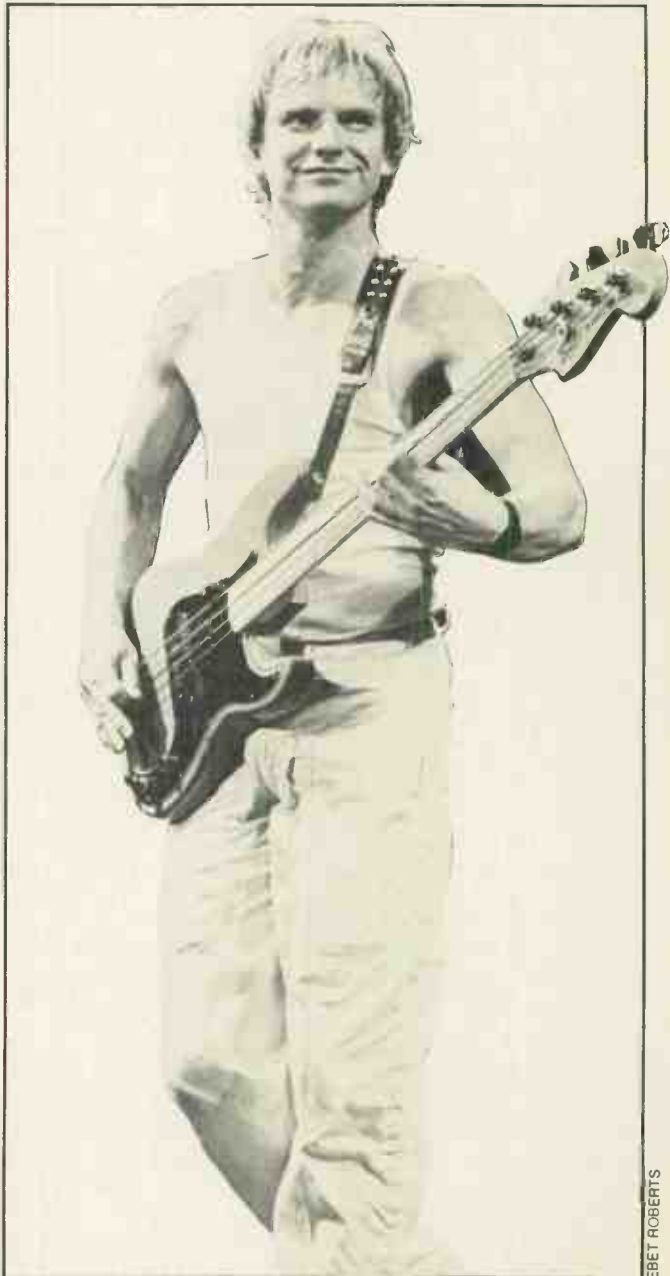
The Police came to America for the first time without so

much as a single available domestically. Economically, that wasn't a problem; the band rented a station wagon, borrowed equipment and generally kept costs down. Plus, midway through the tour, A&M released *Outlandos*.

Even with the album out, the band had one problem. "We never had enough songs, really," recalled Andy Summers. "We only had about eight songs, so we'd have to stretch it out so we could fulfill the correct amount of time and get paid at the end of the evening."

Like any band short of material, the Police stretched their set as best they could by jamming. "It was very good for us as a band," said Summers. "We probably got together a lot quicker than if we'd had a lot of songs."

In fact, the band even managed to expand its repertoire as a direct result of those jams. "When we first came to the States," said Summers, "we used to do 'Can't Stand Losing You,' and we had to stretch it out a bit. So we started to do a bit of jamming in the middle of the song, sort of droning away on a D. Then it gradually expanded. It gradually became a whole other piece of material which we knew was coming up every night. Eventually, it turned into 'Reggatta de Blanc,' which went on the second album, a very unique piece. In fact, for that actual track, we won a Grammy." Ironically enough, the Grammy was for Best Instrumental Arrangement.



EBET ROBERTS

Ghosts In the Machine continues that tradition with "One World (Not Three)." "That was just one take," reported Summers. "We came in after dinner in the evening and we recorded that in five minutes flat, the backing track. And, of course, if you can manage to do that right off, it's always the best. Because the feeling's good."

"If you've got a very strong riff, if a riff comes out when you play, things *happen*. If the channels are open, a riff will come out which will be much greater than if you sit down with your tape recorder and desperately try to think up a riff."

Better for Andy Summers, anyway. For Sting, "Composing is a very private thing. I don't get many of my songs from jamming. I just sit at home with a drum box. 'Voices Inside My Head' came through a drum box. I had a Latin rhythm on the drum box, and started playing the guitar riff. Then I added a bass part. A lot of my compositions come from guitar parts. 'Message In a Bottle,' that was a guitar riff."

"The way I write, I don't have a melody first and then fit words to it. Actually, what happens is that I write them both together. There's this magical moment where you have this series of chords, this progression, and suddenly the words and the music actually come together at the same time. There's no sort of welding one onto the other. There is no other melody for the chorus to 'Message In a Bottle.' It just happened at the same time, so in a sense, I see the two as equal."

Rounding out invention and inspiration is that old favorite, accident. Stewart Copeland told of how bad wiring contributed to his song, "Does Everyone Stare," on *Reggatta de Blanc*. "I recorded the demo for that at home. I had a little home studio at the time with wires going everywhere — I think I was running the guitar through the toaster, that sort of thing — and I was playing the piano part while I sang the song, or at least what was supposed to be the lyrics of the song. And just as I finished singing, all the wires in the room acted like a radio and picked up a signal of this opera. It was perfectly in time and perfectly in tune, even the mood and sentiment of the thing were absolutely perfect. So it went straight on tape, exactly in the place that it should have gone. It had to be a message from above that this was the way the song had to go. So we actually used that, my home demo, at the beginning of the studio recording."

Demos play a large part in the way material is developed for each album. "The way we do it is this," explained Sting. "Before we come together for an album, each of us goes into a studio of our own. I wrote ten songs for this album, and with a drum box, piano, bass and guitar put down the arrangements as I saw them, as best I could. If they were satisfactory to the group, that's what we played. If they could be bettered..."

"I'm proud to say that in a lot of cases, the arrangements I came up with at the demo stage arrived on record. 'Don't Stand So Close to Me' is virtually the same as the demo, and 'De Do Do Do;' on the new album, 'Invisible Sun' and 'Spirits in the Material World.'"

"We don't rehearse before we go into the studio," Stewart Copeland elaborated. "We each have our songs, and we get down to it: 'Okay, who's turn is it? My turn? Okay, here's the chords, it's verse/chorus, verse/chorus, middle eight, verse/chorus and out on the chorus. Okay? Right. Try that.' Two hours later, we have a backing track, and then we spend the rest of the day putting the guitars over it and stuff like that."

Ghosts In the Machine was recorded at George Martin's A.I.R. Studio in Montserrat. Like most of the albums recorded there, the sound is rich and substantial, full of presence and detail. To a certain degree, this is due to the magnificent board at the studio, but a fair amount of the credit belongs as well with the way the Police set up for the sessions. "What happened was, we got the band to Montserrat," explained Summers, "and we looked around, because we wanted to get a big, live drum sound. There was the house, where we'd hang out in the day or whatever, and then there was the studio next to the house. The house had a huge room with people wandering in and out, but we took the room and put the drums in it because it was a big open room with a wooden floor. The

sound of the drums was great in there, instead of the studio which is a bit more dead.

"Then Sting recorded in the control room, and I virtually had the whole studio to myself all the time. I like ambience, I like the mic away from the amp and I like a bit of room sound. I had all my amps along the wall and I could play as loud as I wanted."

"I think all those things contributed, because in terms of overdubs, we really hadn't done any more. We went about it more or less in the same way."

One thing which was definitely new about "Spirits" was the addition of saxophone, which was played by Sting. "I used to play saxophone as a teenager," he said, "although not very seriously. The fingering has always stayed with me, and I can read music, so getting back into it was fairly simple. I bought a Yamaha alto and tenor in January and spend about two hours a day, the fruits of which you can hear on the album."

"It's section work, really. I'm no Charlie Parker, but it's very satisfying getting a simple riff together, then dubbing it and putting harmony on it. The skills involved are fairly similar to the ones you use in singing; you know, breathing, pitch, a sense of harmony."

Dubbing the few extraneous instruments the Police use is not always a matter of dexterity or prowess. Stewart Copeland reports that, with the exception of the piano on "Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic," he played all the keyboards on *Ghosts*. "Not really playing, just kind of one finger here, one finger there, and occasionally a rhythm pattern. It's just because I can hit the notes. In fact, for the different chords, I draw little letters — I write 'A' on all the keys that belong with the first chord, then for the second chord I write 'B,' and so on."

(Actually, both Sting and Andy Summers are able to play piano with relative facility. In between interviews, Summers pounded out "Danses des Adolescentes" from Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*; earlier, Sting had been playing Satie's "Gymnopedie No. 3.")

Even though making each new album different from the last is something of a tradition with the Police, *Ghosts In the Machine* still comes as a surprise. It's a major leap forward on all levels for the band, and one that comes at a time when one would almost expect them to be playing it safe. Part of that is strategy; the Police haven't quite conquered the pop world yet, and rather than shore up their holdings, the band is clearly going for new territory. "This is the fourth album," admitted Summers. "By the time you get to this point, most people usually start softening up. For us, it was very important to bring out a very strong, punchy album."

It's the album's political stance that is the most surprising. *Zenyatta Mondatta* toyed with the big ideas, but often as not left them at a cartoon level, as with Stewart Copeland's "Bombs Away." Sting's "Driven to Tears" was an apt portrait of the despair a moral man must feel when looking at the world's problems.

"Spirits In the Material World" proceeds from there, but in an unexpected direction. After playing Calcutta, India last year, Sting remarked that, "Western values are very materialistic. We think poverty equals despair. It doesn't necessarily mean that in India. People are dying in the street, living in cardboard boxes, but you don't see the kind of hopeless despair you'd see in any British city or a lot of American cities." Directly reflecting that observation, "Spirits" argues that although "there is no political solution," there doesn't necessarily need to be, because the important things in life are spiritual, not political.

That sort of hope pervades the album. "Invisible Sun," which Sting told the audience at the Police's Philadelphia concert in August was originally written about Belfast "but applies to any British city now," opens with the protagonist, a working class youth, stating "I don't ever want to play the part / Of a statistic on a government chart." Yet rather than take a defiant, overtly political stance and end up sounding like a down-tempo Clash tune, the Police song opts for hope. "There has to be an invisible sun / That keeps us warm when the whole day's done." You could call it naive or politically



LYNN GOLDSMITH

Unlike most superpop groups, the Police's live concerts have a ferocity barely hinted at on their records.

deluded, and no doubt some will. But the Police aren't interested in trying to solve the world's problems, only in learning to live with them.

Andy Summers put it best. Offered the obvious comparison of the Clash, Summers felt "the Clash are always taking much more of a political stance. Very intentional and very militant. I just don't think that's our stance as individuals. To me, that lacks subtlety and comes off very heavy-handed. I think you can get a political message across better with humor and subtlety than all this shouting. I think that just turns people off."

Musically, *Ghosts In the Machine* consolidates a lot of the rhythmic ideas that ran through its predecessors. The reggae influences, for example, are more implied than stated, and clearly indicate how completely digested this aspect of the Police's style has become. Stewart Copeland explained, "Reggae is a dramatic new departure in rhythm, because it doesn't have a backbeat, and the downbeat is on three. So instead of boom whap a-boom whap, it's more like chung-a thunk-a pock-a thung-a. That's a completely different thing — it turns the drum set completely upside down."

"There's a lot of switching back and forth from rock 'n' roll to reggae and Latin, and on the new album, the switches are less noticeable, by which I mean they've come closer together. Even when I play rock 'n' roll now, I still imagine the three-beat there; even if the backbeat is there, I can still feel the reggae thing happening at the same time."

In the Police's musical scheme, Sting's vocals and bass provide the melodic focus and basic rhythmic direction; Copeland's drumming provides rhythmic continuity and some of the

textural details. Everything else — the color, the harmonic direction and the bulk of the texture — comes from Andy Summers' guitars. It's an awesome responsibility, considering how much he has to do and how easy it would be to spoil a record by overplaying, and ironically enough, it's usually the *last* thing you notice about a Police record.

Summers' principal tool is the guitar synthesizer, which is responsible for some of *Ghost's* richest and most intriguing sounds. "I use a Roland guitar synthesizer, the GR-300, which is the latest one they make. I've also got the GR-101, which is the electronic guitar. It's just an additional color to the guitar synthesizer, really. What I've started doing now is using two guitar synthesizers together, which is really spectacular."

"It's like a little panel you have on the floor," he said of the unit, "and you operate it with your feet. The synthesis comes from the guitar itself — there's a hexaphonic pick-up on the back of the second pick-up of the guitar — so it is a pure synthesizer. One of the features of this one is a duet switch, where you play your original note and it will add any interval to it. Second, minor second, major third, minor fifth or sixth, whatever. So you get two notes together, and if you've got it tuned to fifths, say, and you start to play strange chords, it really sounds incredible. The sound gets so fat, really big. It has an envelope and an inverted envelope, too. It also has something called rise and fall time, where there are dual switches on it. A and B, and you can move from one to the other. Like you tune A to fifths, then you can tune B to fourths or thirds, so you can go from playing a line in fifths to playing a line in fourths or thirds. It's great! And when you get to playing it

through a chorus, then it *really* sounds good."

Among the recorded samples of Summers' guitar synthesizer are "Don't Stand So Close to Me" from *Zenyatta Mondatta*, and "Secret Journey" from *Ghosts In the Machine*. "You have to pick your moments on it," Summers added. "One of the best things about it is that you can change from straight guitar right into guitar synthesizer in the middle of a song. Like 'Don't Stand So Close,' the verse and chorus are played with just straight guitar, then the synthesizer comes in just by turning a rotary switch from one to ten. So when it comes to the solo part, I just whip it around and then I'm into the solo with the guitar synthesizer."

As much as Summers makes use of technology, he cautioned against excessive gimmickry. "You have to learn to use these things and make them sound good," he said, "not just turn them on for the sake of it. It's the way they're integrated, really, so they become a natural extension of the music. We are in the 80s, and that stuff is all available to be used, so..."

"It's funny. In England there's Hallmark Records that they sell in Woolworth's — they're like K-Tel, they do all the hits. Three or four of our big hits have been covered by them, and they sound *terrible!* You should hear the one of 'Message In a Bottle,' it's so funny. They're laughable, really. I don't know why they can't get those sounds. Those effects are available to anybody, and they work when we use them. But when you hear some of these covers, they can't get anywhere near."

If the fine musicians at Hallmark have trouble getting an approximation of the Police sound in the studio, you can imagine how difficult it must be to recreate the myriad effects

live. Which is precisely why the Police don't attempt to do that; instead, the band looks at the studio versions as one thing that exists only on tape, and the concert arrangements as something else altogether.

Sting explained it this way: "We never think of it as the same thing. We go into the studio and we feel no shame, no guilt about using overdubs. We *like* overdubs. For example, I overdub all the vocals, just 'cause I have from the start. It's not that Andy and Stewart can't sing, it just seems to be the sound.

"Onstage I can't do that. On our records, we'll have six or seven vocal lines; onstage, we can only have three at the most. We have to adapt there. Andy's the same with guitar parts. He might put several guitar parts down in the studio, whereas onstage we only have one. So when we finish an album, we have to seriously rationalize what we've done.

"Now, the easy way would be just to create an album with three instruments, like *Outlandos d'Amour* was. I think that's interesting up to a point, then it starts to get very samey. So we got rid of that idea, and said, 'We're going to make the best possible album that we can, and use all the studio techniques that we know of.' What we have to do is rationalize the parts so we can get the same effect with just three instruments. That's where things we have like the Moog pedals and various synthesizer things come into effect."

If you listen to the studio-versus-live sounds of other rock trios, what generally happens is the studio detail is exchanged for sonic bulk. The guitar is turned up, the bass fattened, and the drummer hits everything in sight. That's been true of almost everybody from Cream to Z. Z. Top to Rush. But not, oddly enough, of the Police. Instead, the sound remains as lean as it seems on the albums, and nearly as subtle. The principal difference is that the edges are far more apparent. In the band's only American appearance this year, a shabby new wave "festival" staged at Philadelphia's Liberty Bell Park, songs such as "Death Wish" and "Message In a Bottle" took on a ferocity barely hinted at by the album versions. More impressive, though, were some of the devices substituted for the studio wizardry. Stewart Copeland's high-hats were given swirling, chimerical textures when he added echo to "Bring On the Night," and Andy Summers' guitar work was wrapped in a warm, shimmering envelope of synthesized sound. Not all the additions were technological, either; the finale of "Bed's Too Big Without You" took on extra heat when Summers started supplementing the beat with jazzy substitute chords.

No wonder the band was so excited about its next project, a live album due to be released late next spring.

"It's definitely going to be our best record," bubbled Stewart Copeland, "because it's got all the elements that make us a teen-idol pop group. It's got the easily identifiable melodies and all the primal strokes, but at the same time it's got actually finger-twiddling ability Weather Report would be proud of."

The only question the band faces is deciding when to stop. "At the moment, we've got 84 minutes of material," Sting said. "I'd like to put that out as a double album — there isn't room for any more. So we probably won't be including live versions of songs from the new album."

As if finishing the new Police album and readying a live album weren't enough, Summers also had arranged to record an album of duets with guitarist Robert Fripp. "I've known him for many years," Summers explained, "and I instigated this particular venture. About a year ago, I wrote to him, and he got back... Basically, I wanted to do something outside the group. I didn't want to go off and make *The Solo Album*, because it's too early in the group's career. It's a bit of a cliché, anyway.

"What I've been particularly interested in doing is working with another guitar player. I know Robert Fripp, I like what he does, and I thought that we could make a very interesting record together. From listening to the way he plays, I believe that there are a lot of areas that are common to both of us. So between his tape recorded stuff and the guitar synthesizer that we both play, I think between us we're going to make a very modern guitar duo record. In some ways, I see it as being the 1980s version of Eddie Lang and Carl Kress."

"Playing pop music is very hard to do. It never occurs to all the little girls that we're incredible musicians. They love the sound of it, they can sing along, and they think we look nice."

— Stewart Copeland



EBET ROBERTS

Summers isn't the only member of the Police who records on his own. Since the group's inception, Stewart Copeland has been turning out occasional records under the pseudonym "Klark Kent."

Lately, though, Kent has been strangely silent. What happened? "I don't know," replied Copeland. "I pray daily, I conduct all the prescribed rituals, I've followed the Book of Kent quite closely, trying to figure out when he'll appear again, but I really can't say."

What prompted his initial appearance?

"God knows...the state of the world. I mean, *look* at the world. If there was ever a need for the light to go up, for the Bat-phone to ring or something, the time is now."

Could it be that Klark's been put off by all the attention given to *Superman*, the movie?

"All the attention that Warner Brothers has given might have scared him away," Copeland laughed. "You're getting warm."

Copeland may worry about major film companies quashing his outside activities, but not Sting. In fact, after his appearance in Franc Roddam's film *Quadrophenia*, as well as roles in a British film called *Radio On* and a BBC production in which he plays an angel, Sting has been getting quite a reputation as an actor.

"I get very claustrophobic, very frustrated in one scene," he said of his need to expand his horizons. "My head can cope with more than one thing, and *needs* to, so I'm keen to get away from stereotypes and people's conceptions of what I am. I like people to be puzzled by what I'm doing next. Some people think I'm a bass player, or a singer or a songwriter; some people think I'm an actor. I'll say I'm none of these and all of them. I'm interested in enlarging myself."

Among the horizons Sting would like to explore is writing. "I've written since I was a teenager, and I write about 200 words a day, because it's a muscle you need to exercise. You just can't suddenly decide to write a book.

"I do write, sometimes badly, sometimes well. It's all related to production; pop songwriting is related in a sense. I just keep the muscle exercised. Someday I'll find something I want to write about, and that'll be the mode of expression I'll use."

So there you have it. Three bright, talented and, as Stewart Copeland pointed out, photogenic guys who happened to come together to form one of the most popular, musically satisfying bands of our time.

But we're still stuck with the question we started with: what is it that makes the Police more than a sum of its parts?

This is Andy Summers' answer, which covers part of it: "It's three guys, and we all have different musical backgrounds, and it's all those different things. We've all synthesized our musical backgrounds into a playing style for each one of us, and when the three of us come together you get a lot of different music coming together as one new sort of sound."

This is Stewart Copeland's answer, which gets another part of it: "When we started out, our objective was just to make music that was special. We didn't care how many people got turned on to it, just as long as they got turned on to it a *lot*. In other words, the *depth* of response is what we're after."

And this is Sting's answer, which covers the rest of it: "One of the things I'm interested in, frankly, is selling music to a large number of people who aren't necessarily compromising themselves. I think it's been done in the past, by the Beatles and by the Rolling Stones, and not successfully since. Because you've got charlatans in the business going for the formula, who say, 'Okay, the worst possible record we could make will sell millions.' And it's been true.

"But there was a golden age when the popular music was the best music. I think we've attempted to do the same thing, by playing what we consider to be good music. Not going back over old territory, which is what a lot of Beatle sound-alike groups do. They think the Beatles are the greatest group ever, so they copy their music. We are inspired by the spirit of that era, not by the music. I mean, our music has screw-all to do with the 60s. I'm frankly not interested in that. I'm more interested in the 80s." M

Police Weaponry

Considering how much equipment each member of the Police now has on hand, it's hard to believe that the band did its first American tour out of a station wagon. Nowadays, it would be hard to get one player's equipment into a station wagon, much less the entire set-up.

Of course, not all of what each member uses goes out on the road. To record *Ghosts In the Machine*, Andy Summers used several guitars, among them a Stratocaster, a Les Paul and a '58 black-inlaid Gibson ES 335 of which he's very proud, along with the Roland guitar synthesizers mentioned earlier. But his principal guitars, the ones he uses on the road and in the studio, are a customized '53 Telecaster — "it has a Gibson pick-up on the front, it has a little pre-amp in the back, and a phase switch" — and several Hamer guitars. "I told them I wanted a Custom neck and a Sunburst body, and they did one of those for me," he said of his favorite. "They put two '58 Gibson PAF pick-ups on it for me, and that's a beautiful guitar.

"They also gave me a great guitar on the last big tour we did of the States, where they put one pick-up back at the bridge, and it's like three pick-ups in one, and that has been very effective." Summers also owns a Hamer fretless guitar, which he said "only works on the bottom four strings anyway." He doesn't use that onstage, but hopes to employ it on his duet album with Robert Fripp.

For amps, he uses two 100-watt Marshalls onstage, which he reported are "slightly souped-up." In the studio, he has been using the Roland Bolt amps quite a lot. His effects board was wired by Pete Cornish, and includes a phaser, a flange, analog delay, fuzz, Mutron and a compressor. "I tend to use the MXR," Summers added. All the effects go out to a Roland Space Echo before coming back into the board, and the board itself has an overall power switch so Summers can turn the board off while he's playing, cue the effects he needs, and bring them all in at once simply by hitting one switch.

Sting, perhaps the best-known fretless bassist this side of Jaco Pastorius, reported that lately he's gotten back into using frets. "The big problem I have onstage is that I sing, I play Moog pedals *and* I play bass, so I've got to do three things at once. So I've gotten back into using frets, because it's one thing less I've got to do." At the moment, he's using a standard Fender Precision bass, which is on loan from Andy Summers. The fretless basses he most commonly uses are by Fender and Ibanez. The band records with Oberheim OB-Xa's.

His favorite instrument, though, is a custom-built doublebass that has been fitted with a pick-up just between the bridge and the body. Since it's essentially an amplified instrument, the body has been removed. "It still has a streamlined body, but it doesn't have this great, huge woman-shape that's so cumbersome." Nonetheless, its rather unorthodox appearance can be puzzling, so Sting introduced the instrument at the Liberty Bell Park concert. "A lot of people ask me what this is called," he said. "It's called Brian."

As for his amplifiers, all Sting could say was, "It's like a P.A. system. It's big and extremely loud." Danny Quatrochi, the band's guitar roadie, was able to expand on that, though. The speakers are two 12" folded horns in cabinets for the low midrange; six 12" speakers front-loaded for the high midrange; two Gauss HF4000 drivers in Gauss diffracted horns for the highs. Driving all that are Crown amps. There's a PSA II for the low bass and low midrange, a DC300 mono amp for the high midrange, and a D75 mono amp for the highs.

Sting's effects rack consists of an Ashley single-input preamp for Brian-the-doublebass; an Ashley four-input preamp, two Klark Technic equalizers; a one-third octave mono and an octave stereo; two dbx 160 compressor/limiters; and a Roland Space echo. He also uses harmonizers and echo to thicken his vocals onstage.

Stewart Copeland's main gadget is the Roland Space echo. "I put the drums selectively through a delay unit," he explained, "the high-hat usually, the snare drum and the bass drum sometimes. I've got a footswitch on my high-hat pedal, next to it, so I can just click it on and off. It's like onstage dub. I do quite a lot of it, and it makes it sound like two people falling down the stairs instead of just one."

Copeland has myriad other devices, among them a repeat/hold switch "that goes into a repeat pattern and holds it, so I can get up and walk around the drums, and the drums are playing themselves. I can play with the speed, and slow it down, sort of cornball onstage." There are several digital timing devices, and a Syndrum set-up that includes one for deep, electronic enhancement of the bass drum.

His drums themselves are by Tama, with octabands and two heads. Copeland prefers small drums to large ones, and the same goes for his cymbals. "I use high-hat cymbals that are small and easy to control, so that when you shut 'em it goes *tch!* and you have absolute control. I can't *stand* sound edges." The rest of his cymbals are a mini-splash, splash and splash cymbals, an ice-bell, and "apart from that, your average ride cymbal and crashes."

Since its introduction Synclavier II has outsold a lot

Synclavier II creates sounds never before possible from any synthesizer.

In April of this year New England Digital Corporation introduced a stereo LP demo record to illustrate some of Synclavier II's incredible sounds. After hearing this record, many people called to say they couldn't believe all the sounds on the demo could possibly have been created by any synthesizer. However, after seeing and hearing Synclavier II for themselves, they were amazed at more than just the absolute realism of its instrumental sounds. They were awed by the infinite variety of tonal colors, unique sounds, and special effects so easily created by this incredible instrument. We might add, many of these people now own a Synclavier II.

Synclavier II not only produces sounds no other synthesizer can produce, it also offers more live performance control than any other synthesizer.

Synclavier II gives you an extraordinary ability to change sounds as you play them. Using Synclavier II's real-time controllers you can accurately recreate many of the subtle changes real instruments make during a live performance.

Here are some of the real-time controls that have made Synclavier II famous: Attacks can be individually altered both in length and brightness for each note. Vibratos can be brought in at different times. Vibrato depths can be changed at will. Individual notes and entire chords can be made to crescendo and decrescendo smoothly and naturally. Final decays of percussive sounds can be made to ring out longer for low notes than for high notes. In strummed chords, some notes can ring out longer than others to compensate for the differences between open strings and stopped strings. Individual notes and entire chords can be pitch bent up or down. The overtone content of any sound can be completely varied from one note to the next. Up to four different rates of portamento can be performed on the keyboard at one time. Some of the harmonics of a sound can remain stationary while other harmonics of the same sound slide against them. And the list goes on.

The possibilities for programming new sounds with Synclavier II are limitless.

Although Synclavier II comes preprogrammed with over 128 preset sounds, it does not lock you into these preset sounds. All of these presets can be modified any way you wish. The possibilities for creating sounds from scratch are limited only by your own skill and imagination.

Synclavier II can store an unlimited number of sounds.

Any sound created on Synclavier II can be permanently stored on a floppy disc with



just the touch of a button. From 64 to 256 separate sounds can be stored on a single mini-diskette. The number of mini-diskettes you can use with Synclavier II is unlimited.

All of this is just a glimpse of Synclavier II's enormous potential. The real potential of Synclavier II can be more completely understood by taking a close look at Synclavier II's super advanced hardware and software. The capabilities of Synclavier II's hardware and software extend far beyond any demands currently being made on them.

Synclavier II is controlled by the most powerful computer available in any synthesizer made today.

New England Digital Corporation leads the field in the development and use of hardware applications for music synthesis.

New England Digital uses a powerful 16 bit computer that addresses up to 128k bytes of memory. Other digital manufacturers design their systems around microcomputers. Microcomputers are simply not powerful enough to control large numbers of voices on the keyboard at one time. Most current digital systems are limited to 8 usable voices. When these systems try to control more than 8 voices at once, the speed at which these voices can be played on the keyboard slows down considerably. So, for musical applications, more than 8 voices can not be played on the keyboard at one time.

These microcomputers are also not fast enough to permit extensive real-time control of a sound while it is being played on the keyboard. A few real-time features are available while other important features are deleted because of speed limitations of the microcomputers.

New England Digital Corporation designs and builds its own 16 bit computer, as well as the Synclavier II synthesizer.

New England Digital's 16 bit computer and Synclavier II synthesizer are so unique, New England Digital has been awarded three basic patents on their design, and has several others pending.

The speed of Synclavier II's computer is unmatched by any other digital synthesizer system on the market today. Synclavier II's computer can easily control up to 32 voices on the keyboard at one time without slowing down. No other digital system in the world comes close to this kind of control.

While some synthesizer manufacturers consider a "voice" to be one separately controlled sine wave, one voice of a Synclavier II synthesizer consists of the following: (1) 24 sine waves, (2) a volume envelope generator, (3) a harmonic envelope generator, (4) very sophisticated digital FM controls, (5) an extensive vibrato control, featuring up to 10 different low frequency wave forms, (6) a portamento control that can be either logarithmic or linear, (7) a decay adjust feature, permitting lower notes to have longer decays than higher notes.

In just one year ago, the digital systems combined.



Synclavier II's 16 track digital memory recorder is more sophisticated and has more features than any other synthesizer recorder or sequencer in the world.

Synclavier II's digital memory recorder has enormous capabilities because its computer is fast enough to perform the millions of math computations necessary to make all these features operational at one time.

For example, Synclavier II's digital memory recorder enables you to set independent loop points for each of its 16 tracks. So, you could have 8 notes repeating on track #1, with 64 notes repeating on track #3, and 2 notes repeating on track #7, and so on. All 16 tracks can be looping independently at the same time but still be in perfect sync.

In addition, you can transpose each separate track individually. Track #6 could be transposed up a 4th, while track #8 was transposed down a 5th, and so on.

Other recording features made possible by Synclavier II's ultra fast computer.

Sounds can be bounced from one track to another. You can overdub on just one track, without losing the material already recorded on that track. You can change the volume of individual tracks. You can change the speed of the recorder without changing the pitch. You can punch in and out instan-

taneously. You can fast forward or rewind just as you would on a 16 track tape machine. You can instantly erase any number of tracks in the recorder.

You can change the scale of a piece of music already recorded in the recorder. For example, if you had a piece recorded in the key of C, you could change it to the key of B flat minor without rerecording a single note in the recorder. Or you could change a piece of music already recorded in the recorder from a tempered scale to a microtonal scale, without recording a single note over again.

You could keep the notes of an instrument that was recorded on one of the tracks in the recorder, and assign a new instrument to play the previous instrument's notes. For example, if a flute were playing on track #5, you could assign a guitar to track #5 and have it play the flute's notes automatically.

Synclavier II's computer is not only the fastest and most powerful computer available on any synthesizer today, it's also enormously expandable, with A to D converters, D to A converters, real time clocks, printers, modems, and alphanumeric and graphic CRT's.

The New England Digital Computer has had 5 years of proven production and successful sales to scientific end users for real-time applications. This history of steadfast reliability has been a major part of Synclavier II's unparalleled success in a market place choked with new products.

Synclavier II has the fastest and most accessible software available in any synthesizer today.

Synclavier II uses an extremely high level structured language called XPL. XPL has proven to be an extremely fast language which has continually provided the means to add new features to Synclavier II on a regular basis.

Other synthesizers are still using languages too limited for our purposes. Assembler is a good example. It is by far a much slower and more difficult programming process to use than XPL. Software improvements made by Assembler language could take months. But with XPL we've been able to add totally new features to Synclavier II in a few days.

New England Digital can add new features to your Synclavier II synthesizer through the mail.

During the 10 months since the introduction of Synclavier II, New England Digital has issued four software updates to the owners of Synclavier II synthesizers. Those updates were mailed out to Synclavier II owners automatically. They included new software that customers had asked for. The updates also included new features and improvements that New England Digital felt were a strong enhancement to the operation of Synclavier II.

Software updates ensure the Synclavier II customer that his system will always be state-of-the-art.

When you buy a Synclavier II, you will automatically be sent new features as they are developed this year, next year, and for years to come.

The Synclavier II synthesizer is not a temporary answer in a technological world moving at warp speed. It is the answer. When you buy a Synclavier II, the instrument improves as fast as our technology improves. Since we're already leading the field of digital synthesis, we feel you are comfortably safe in assuming Synclavier II will be your companion for a long time to come.

When you own Synclavier II, you will never need to sell your "old" system in order to buy a better one. Your Synclavier II system becomes better automatically.

For further information and a copy of Synclavier II's stereo LP demo record send your address plus \$2.50 (outside USA \$6.00) to either of the following:

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Main St., Norwich, Vermont 05055
(802) 649-5183
Denny Jaeger, Western U.S.
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6120 Valley View Rd.,
Oakland, CA 94611
(415) 339-2111



DAVID MURRAY

Tired of hearing old labels like "child prodigy," "energy school" and "neo-Ayler," David Murray is busy creating some new ones.

By Don Palmer



MING

Standing in the middle of a room overlooking New York's Seventh Avenue, tenor saxophonist David Murray works on an unnamed composition with bassist Wilbur Morris. They banter back and forth, "Approach the bridge again." "Now play what you just played over." As they settle into the tune once more, a subway rumbles by, obliterating whatever sound the bass was producing through the jerry-rigged amplifier. But, what I am unable to hear, they apparently feel, because Murray and Morris finish the song and compli-

ment each other on their progress.

Since his arrival in New York in 1975 at the age of 20, Murray has recorded 18 albums under his own name while having appeared on 34 albums. This prodigious output certainly makes Murray somewhat of a sensation, but he has been on enough recordings of importance — Jack DeJohnette's *Special Edition*, the World Saxophone Quartet's *Steppin'* and *WSQ*, Sunny Murray's *Live at Moers*, and his own *Ming* and *3D Family* — to garner him a position as a vital tenor voice in this generation of

musicians. Murray moves easily from Maceo Parker-like squeals to a lush and drooling Websterian vibrato. In between he'll mutter, strut, swagger, and swing with the brashness of Sonny Rollins or the "dark brooding under the note approach" of Paul Gonsalves.

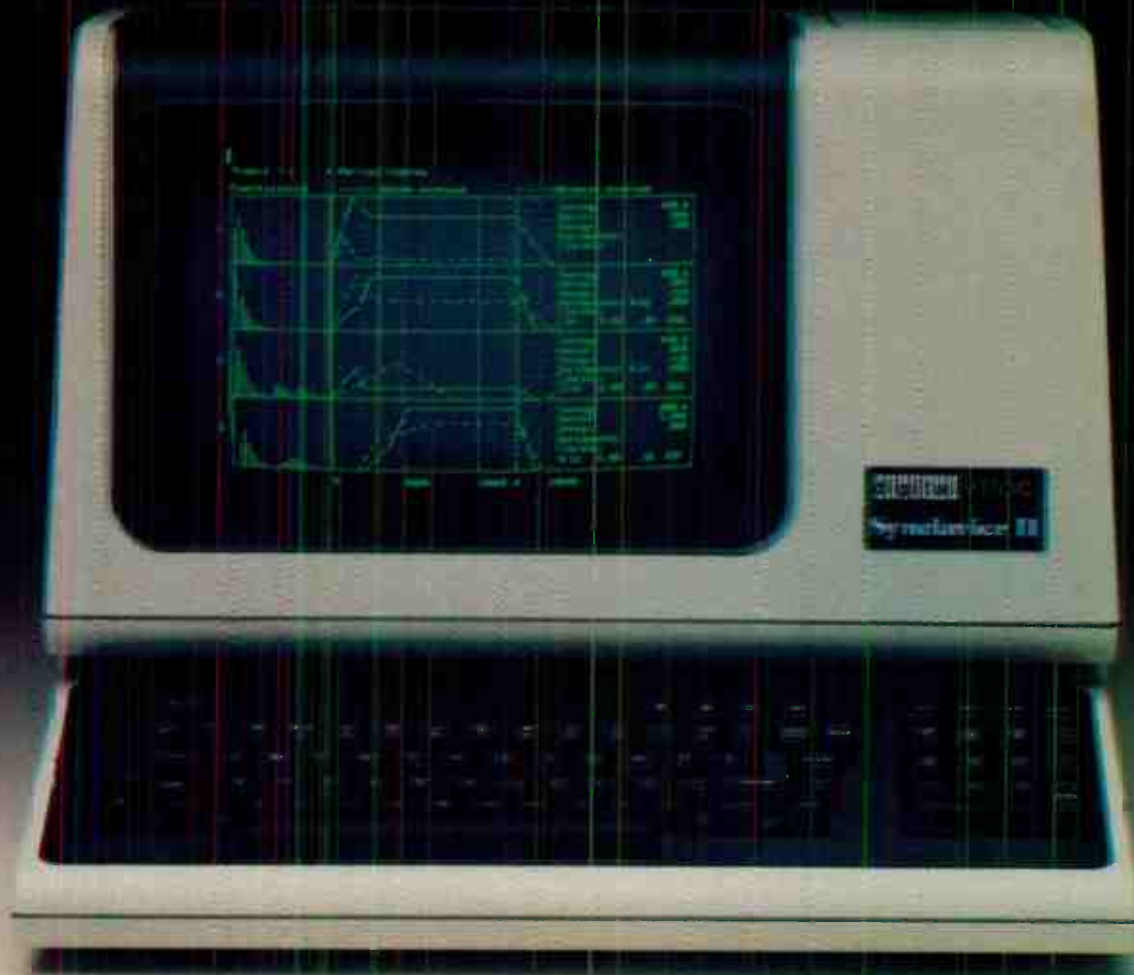
As Murray sits down for the first of two interviews (the second took place over a dinner of ham hocks and greens, cognac and football), he says, "That song is for my next octet record. Wilbur, I like that little Latin thing you did with the bass line. After we get this worked out, I'll have a lot of songs ready for that album."

But even while pondering the follow-up album to his highly acclaimed octet recording — *Ming* — Murray's enthusiasm dissolves into a mild complaint about being stuck in a child prodigy groove. "I'm glad it is starting to be erased now because it's not something I want to portray the rest of my future as. Actually it's a drag. They tend not to compare you with your contemporaries. I think I should be compared to all my contemporaries at this moment. It only happened because I came to New York and started playing and making records when I was very young. That's natural for people to do that, but I feel I've proven certain things to the public that would allow me to throw off those kind of labelings and be noted on my own merit and what I can do."

Murray's first involvement with music was when he started playing piano at six or seven. He received an alto at nine. "Even in elementary school I would do arrangements for this horn section. Dumb stuff like 'Downtown,' but I'd have the whole section stand up and we'd play it." By seventh grade Murray was working with a trio at Shakey's Pizza Parlors in the San Francisco area, playing "lofty sounding type of songs with jazz changes. We didn't know we were doing that, but that's what we were doing." Murray switched to tenor at twelve and proceeded to forge a reputation in the Bay Area with the Notations of Soul and a collaboration with pianist Rodney Franklin called the In One Piece Band. Although Murray wasn't entirely satisfied with the music he was producing, it wasn't until he attended Pomona College in the fall of 1973 that he began playing jazz in earnest.

By the end of the year Murray had worked with Arthur Blythe, Bobby Brad-

Introducing Synclavier II's Terminal Support Package.



The Terminal Support Package provides a completely new method to access Synclavier II's computer. The Terminal Support Package consists of three items: (1) Graphics, (2) Script, a music language, (3) Max, a programming language.

GRAPHICS

The Graphics Package allows the user of Synclavier II to have a readout of numerical data printed out on a computer terminal screen. With the depression of the return character on the terminal, the numerical data is changed into a graphic display. A clear depiction of the volume and harmonic envelopes are drawn out on the screen. The relative volumes of each sine wave, comprising the sound whose envelopes are currently on the screen, is also displayed.

The graphics display provides an extremely valuable visual tool for programming new sounds and for thoroughly analyzing sounds which have already been programmed for Synclavier II.

SCRIPT

Script is a music language. It can be used as a composing tool to write musical performances into Synclavier II's computer without playing anything on the keyboard.

Precise polyrhythmic melodies can be developed which would be difficult or even impossible to play on a keyboard. Composing with Script gives you up to 16 tracks to record on.

All the real-time changes available with Synclavier II's digital memory recorder can also be programmed through a terminal with Script. This includes dynamics and other musical accents.

Any composition created with Script can be stored on a disk, and then loaded into Synclavier II's digital memory recorder. All compositions created with Script can be made to play back in perfect sync with a multi-track recorder.

Another feature which is extremely helpful for musicians is the editing feature of Script. This allows you to edit existing compositions through the terminal. You can cut apart, reassemble, or tailor in any manner a composition without ever risking a loss of any of the original elements.

MAX

Max is a complete music applications development system. It allows you to control all of New England Digital's special purpose hardware, i.e., the computer, analog-to-digital converters, digital-to-analog con-

verters, and other devices like a scientific timer which can be programmed to be SMPTE compatible.

Max comes complete with documentation for the Synclavier II hardware interfaces to enable a programmer to design his own software program. This language is for people who possess a much more sophisticated knowledge of programming computers. Basically it is a superset of XPL, the software language New England Digital uses to program Synclavier II's computer.

Max is designed to permit the owner of Synclavier II to take greater advantage of New England Digital's powerful 16 bit computer. Up to now, all software had to be written by New England Digital. The Terminal Support Package with the Max language gives you the opportunity to explore new ground on your own. The ways in which Synclavier II's hardware can be used by Max is virtually limitless.

All of us at New England Digital feel we've only begun to explore and tap the awesome potential of the Synclavier II digital synthesizer. The Terminal Support Package is just one more step in an exciting journey toward this realization.



ford, Stanley Crouch, John Carter and Mark Dresser and all within the confines of the Pomona College campus. As a student there at the time, I saw Murray playing "Blue and Boogie" on the dining hall steps and stumbling through Ornette-ish turnarounds on dormitory lawns. He was often overshadowed by Blythe's supple lines, but Murray always returned and he was better each time.

He attributes his ability to catch on so quickly to his mother. "She was the pianist at the Missionary Church of God and Christ. I was the sax player and we had a family band. We had it pretty much covered and if somebody wanted to come in there and play music, they had to come through us.

In early 1975 Murray realized that he had learned all the music theory he needed for understanding and writing compositions, and left school for New York. "It was hard to get into the circle, but once they heard me play and I started to get around it was no problem."

One such meeting was recalled by trumpeter Olu Dara, because both Frank Lowe and Hamiet Bluiett consulted with him as to whether or not Murray's performance was good. Olu laughingly said, "I told them 'You know he was good.'"

Murray elaborated, "I sat in with the Ted Daniels Energy Band at, I think, the Sunrise Studio. The Energy Band was set up where there would only be a few people at rehearsal and when the gig came there was like three times as

many people. So I didn't meet a lot of people until the gig. I blew. Frank Lowe blew and I blew. I guess it was like an energy thing with me and Lowe. His mouth started bleeding and I still was blowing. Everybody just went and sat down and just listened.

"That was like the tail end of the energy school. It had been prevalent in the sixties and this was like the mid-seventies and it was just puckering out. When I came here that's the way people were playing so I played like that in order to play with them so I could be heard. They had compositional structures and written lines but the emphasis in that particular band was energy — blowing hard and loud and fast."

Even though Murray has been closely associated with the post-Ayler, post-Coltrane, post-Rollins school of tenor playing, he adamantly asserts, "I was just passing through the energy thing because that's where I had a chance to play. A lot of people I met when I first got to New York were not as astute musically as I had thought they would be. So I found myself giving all I could and not getting anything back.

"People like Ayler played energy music as well as it could be played, but they couldn't do other things as well as people now because the music has evolved. And Ayler had a limited capacity for what he was doing. The one thing I regretted about the *Flowers for Albert* album was that people tended to relate

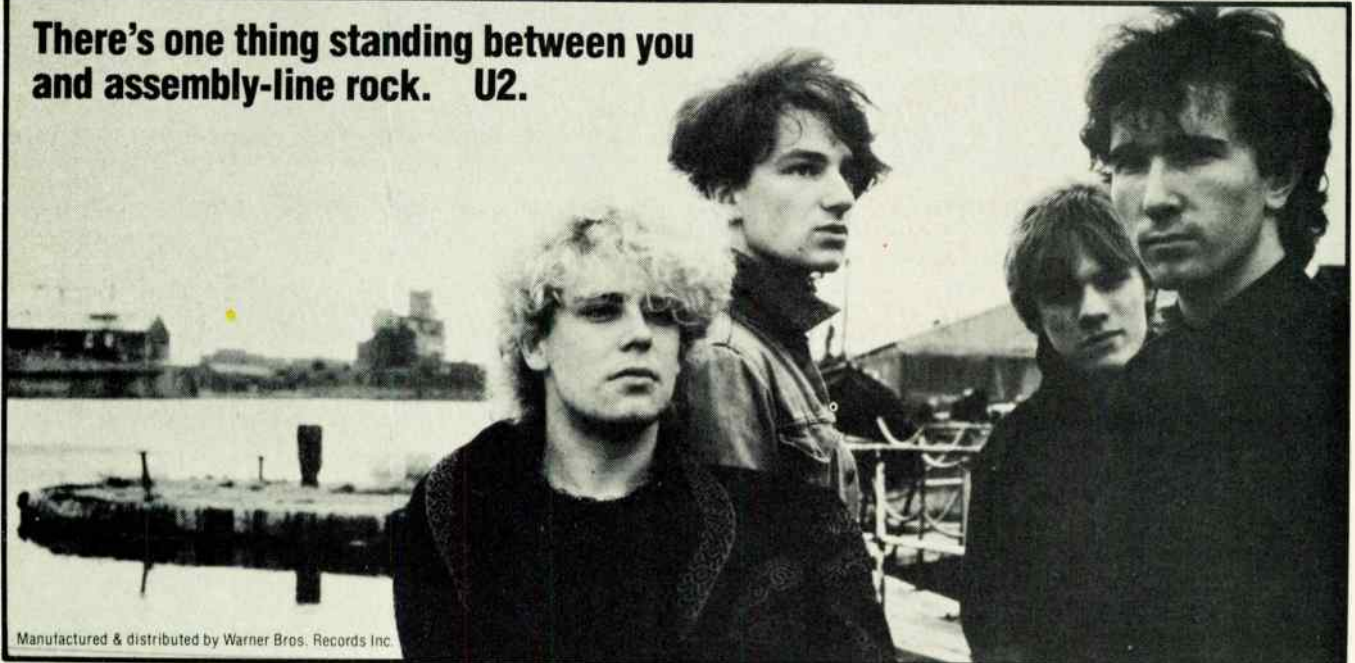
me with Albert Ayler from then on. I mean I just wrote a song for the guy. I've written songs for other people like "Dewey's Circle" — Dewey Redman. People are funny how they catch on to things and never let go."

They are also funny in how they define things based upon absence, the historical junctures, the ebbs in the flow, or even the void. Murray preened elements from the energy school — primarily the level of intensity along with taking risks in exploring the depths of human expression. His sometimes abstract bucket-of-blood screams come from a man who would saunter into hell on a dare.

Thus Murray maintained an allegiance to the song form and melodic inventions because they "emote a certain kind of feeling. A lot of people from California have more of a melodic sense of hearing things than people on the East Coast. People like Charlie Mingus, Eric Dolphy and Ornette Coleman — he's not from California but everybody from Texas is from California really." The blues is important too because "of the feeling of the blues rather than the actual notation. My idea is if you can register an actual emotion just playing one note then you're achieving the essence of the blues. If you don't feel the blues then you can't emote a note like that. I'm just figuring out in this day and time how can I emote the blues with

continued on page 120

There's one thing standing between you and assembly-line rock. U2.



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U2. Featuring the Green Tornado, Bono, on vocals.

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U2 OCTOBER

Produced by Steve Lillywhite.
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You've blown it if you miss this tour:		November 17	Providence RI	November 28	Los Angeles CA	December 11	Washington DC
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November 14	Boston MA	November 20-22	New York NY	December 7	Detroit MI	Watch for additional dates	
November 15	New Haven CN	November 24	Asbury NJ	December 8	Cleveland OH	to be announced!	

The world's most advanced digital music system has just become the world's most advanced sampling and printing system.

Introducing the Synclavier II music sampling and printing options.

Synclavier II's Digital Analysis/Synthesis Option (Sample-to-Disc)

Synclavier II's sample-to-disc option is the superior approach to music sampling. Its audio fidelity and its length of sample times far surpass anything on the market today.

Synclavier II's sample-to-disc option can be added to any size Synclavier II music system. It offers 14 or 16 bit resolution and a sample rate of 50K. You can select a range of sampling times from a minimum of up to 100 seconds to a maximum of 24 minutes. (The longest you can currently sample a sound with existing sampling synthesizers is under 10 seconds.)

Synclavier II's sample-to-disc option lets you have either one long continuous sample or any number of shorter samples you wish. This provides maximum flexibility for sampling sounds.

Here are just a few of the things you can do with Synclavier II's sample-to-disc option. You can record real instrumental sounds and sound effects into Synclavier II and then play them on the keyboard. After you've sampled a sound, you can use Synclavier II's terminal to do digital filtering and exhaustive analysis and modification of sampled sounds. In addition, you can mix the attack of a real instrument with a synthesized sustain to create one composite sound. For example, you could take just the attack of a real trumpet and use it to replace the attack of a synthesized trumpet.

Synclavier II's sample-to-disc option is so advanced, all of its capabilities are not yet fully understood. But one thing is sure, it's destined to permanently change the world of music synthesis.

Synclavier II's Music Printing Option

Synclavier II's music printing option is an extremely sophisticated computerized printing system, capable of printing entire musical compositions with tremendous accuracy. The rhythmic resolution of the printer is adjustable from 64th notes to any greater rhythmic value.

With this printer option, you can play any combination of notes on Synclavier II's keyboard, then automatically transfer those notes to Synclavier II's terminal. You can then edit the notes, modify the notes, transpose the notes, correct the meter, and even add

crescendos and decrescendos. When you type "print," everything prints out in traditional music notation.

Synclavier II's music printer option can be added to any existing size Synclavier II. It can be used to print out lead sheets (complete with lyrics), music scores, and individual instrumental parts.

This amazing new development frees you from the drudgery of translating your musical ideas to paper. Now you can concentrate on your creativity and let Synclavier II take care of the paper work.

It's not by chance that Synclavier II is the number one selling digital system by a wide margin. New England Digital's technology is simply the most advanced in the world.

Synclavier II's 16 bit mini-computer is 10 times faster and more powerful than any microprocessor currently being used in other digital systems. Synclavier II's high level real-time language, XPL, gives Synclavier II the fastest and most flexible software available today. And here's what's going to keep Synclavier II number one. Synclavier II is the only system that has completely modular hardware and software. This unique combination gives New England Digital an extraordinary capability to quickly adapt new advancements and options to Synclavier II's existing programs.

The sample-to-disc option and the music printing option are an example of this, yet they are only a next step in the continuing evolution of the world's most advanced digital instrument.

When you buy a Synclavier II today, you won't be stuck with today's technology tomorrow. Synclavier II has the ability to be upgraded and enhanced year after year to remain state-of-the-art indefinitely.

Synclavier II digital music systems start at \$13,750.00.

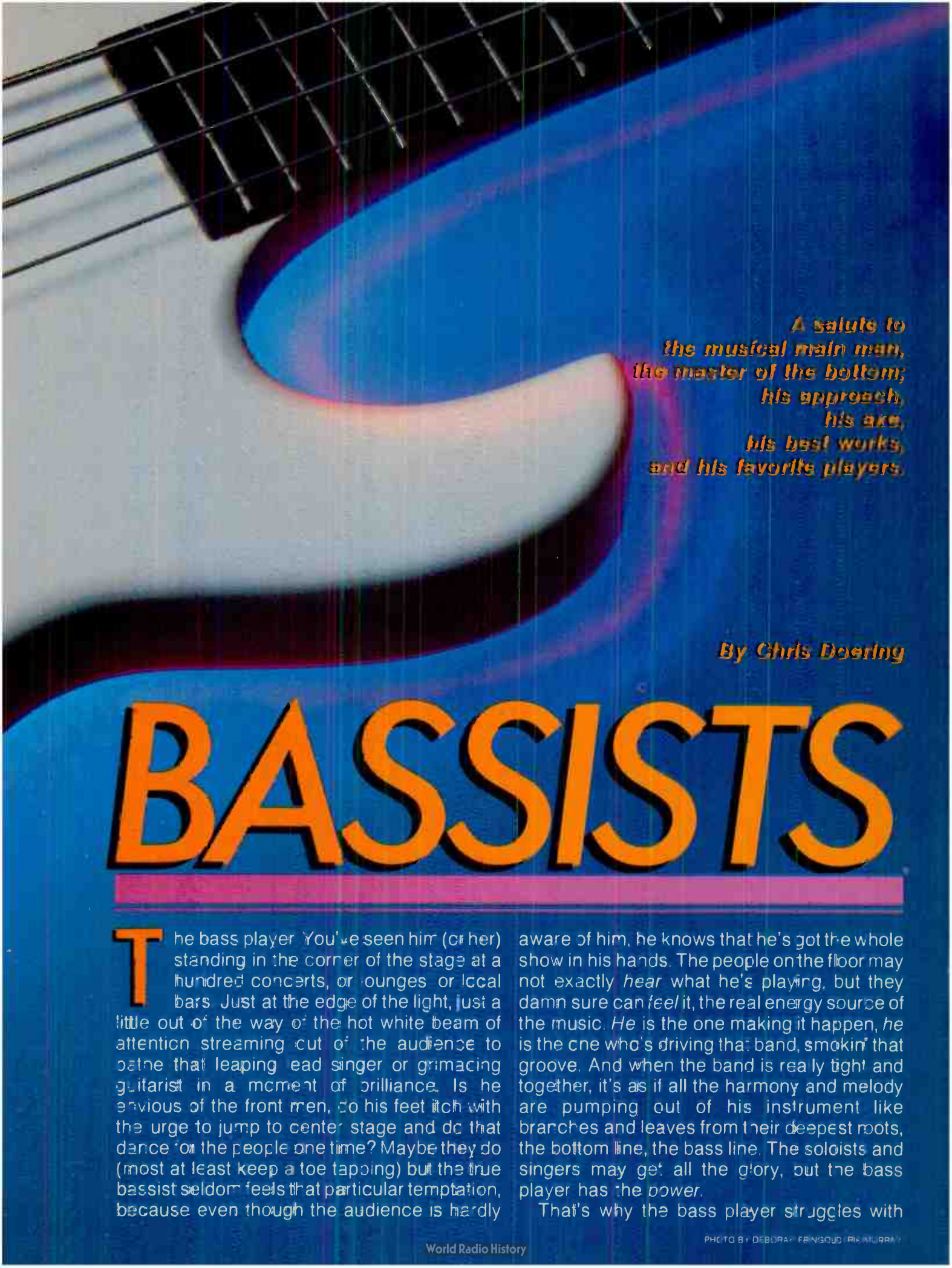
For further information and for a personal appointment to see Synclavier II, call or write:

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Attention: Brad Naples
(802) 649-5183

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Oakland, California 94611
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*A salute to
the musical main man,
the master of the bottom;
his approach,
his axe,
his best works,
and his favorite players.*

By Chris Doering

BASSISTS

The bass player. You've seen him (or her) standing in the corner of the stage at a hundred concerts, or lounges or local bars. Just at the edge of the light, just a little out of the way of the hot white beam of attention streaming out of the audience to bathe that leaping lead singer or grimacing guitarist in a moment of brilliance. Is he envious of the front men, do his feet itch with the urge to jump to center stage and do that dance for the people one time? Maybe they do (most at least keep a toe tapping) but the true bassist seldom feels that particular temptation, because even though the audience is hardly

aware of him, he knows that he's got the whole show in his hands. The people on the floor may not exactly *hear* what he's playing, but they damn sure can *feel* it, the real energy source of the music. *He* is the one making it happen, *he* is the one who's driving that band, smokin' that groove. And when the band is really tight and together, it's as if all the harmony and melody are pumping out of his instrument like branches and leaves from their deepest roots, the bottom line, the bass line. The soloists and singers may get all the glory, but the bass player has the *power*.

That's why the bass player struggles with

strings that are so thick he may need two fingers to press them down onto the fingerboard, a scale that's so long that three notes may be all his hand can reach. The bass player puts in long hours overcoming the physical difficulties of the instrument, then lugs around the bulky bass viol or the behemoth amp which you still can't hear, because he understands that music, like other structures, is built from the bottom up. Music theory names chords by the lowest note, the "root" or "fundamental." A good bass line can define the harmony of a jazz or pop tune so completely that soloists from Lester Young to Clapton and Hendrix have often needed no other support for their improvisations.

Of course, there have always been bassists who heard in the large resonant cavity of the acoustic bass viol or the thunder of the electric bass guitar a uniquely satisfying solo voice. I own quite a few records featuring Steve Swallow, Charlie Haden and Don Thompson which have stayed in my collection only because of the bass solos. And ever since Slam Stewart began using the bow and unison scat-singing to get his solos out over the band, players have been searching for ways to bring the bass to the front of the music. The problem is that, no matter how definitive and important the bass line may be, or how rich its solo voice, the instrument is very hard to hear. In the 50s, two gentlemen named Fletcher and Munson measured the response of the human ear to tones of equal sound pressure and varying pitch. The graphs they came up with (known as the Fletcher-Munson curves, oddly enough) show that a bass note may need ten times the sound pressure of a voice or saxophone for our ears to hear it as equal in loudness. That's why bassists in the big bands of the 30s and 40s were felt but not heard, even though they were thumping away at those four-to-the-bar walking lines as hard as they could. Today microphones, pickups and amplifiers allow upright players to use the left-hand legato techniques and horn-derived phrasing which Charles Mingus and Red Mitchell, among other innovators, added to the bass vocabulary. But that large resonant cavity puts severe restrictions on the level to which the acoustic bass can be amplified, and the bass player's solo is really *so/lo* — everyone on the stand either stops or plays pianissimo.

The electric bass guitar knows no such restrictions, but neither does the rest of the average rock band, which is why early rock and R&B players were anonymous background presences until multi-track recording and the monster bass amps of the 60s gave the bass player enough muscle to shove the other instruments out of the spotlight occasionally. Some of the players who started flexing that muscle were 'accidental' bassists like Paul McCartney (who took on the instrument when Stu Sutcliffe, the Beatles' original bassist, died of a cerebral hemorrhage), but it's hard to claim all upfront bassists are switchovers; for every McCartney there's a Noel Redding, who traded his guitar for a bass when the early auditions for the Jimi Hendrix Experience failed to produce any acceptable players, and who stayed very much in the background behind Hendrix' guitar and Mitch Mitchell's drums. Nor are natural bassists inherently spotlight spurners; for every John Entwistle or Bill Wyman, nearly invisible on stage but who make sure that everyone can hear what they're playing, there's a Jack Bruce, who commanded attention and awe in Cream with his melodic bass riffing, distinctive vocals and psychedelic lyrics. It is a fact, though, that the 'upfront' players have contributed most of the musical and technical innovations of the past twenty years, from Larry Graham's thumb-slap and string-pop, to Stanley Clarke's bi-amped stage system to Jaco Pastorius' melodic and sonic improvisations. And as new instruments like the Steinberger carbon-graphite bass combine with hi-fi technology to make the bass increasingly audible, players like Jamaaladeen Tacuma will continue to expand and develop the role of the instrument. The bass revolution is still in progress, so the following condensed interviews present, in the words of some of its players, a portrait of an instrument in transition.



EBET ROBERTS

Stanley Clarke — Founder of 'fusion' with Return to Forever.

Approach — I use the bass as a vehicle to communicate my music to my audience. It happens to be the bass because I enjoy performing on the bass. Anything that creates communication between people is good, and that's what I try to do with my music.

Bass — Mainly Alembics. I also play a Ken Smith Flying V-shaped bass, and I used a Music Man Sabre on my recent recording with Paul McCartney.

Strings — Rotosound regular and extra-light gauges.

Amp — My stage rack holds two English-made HH U-800 power amps, Alembic input modules, an Orban Parametric EQ, a Roland SRE-555 digital echo, and a Trident limiter/compressor. I use a mixture of 1 X 15" and 2 X 15" Electrovoice cabinets, slightly modified with additional tweeters for my piccolo bass.

Best Live Performance — That was when I was one year old, and I was performing naked in front of all my relatives.

Favorite Concert — Ray Charles singing "The Star Spangled Banner" at the last Leonard/Duran fight.

Favorite Bassists — Paul McCartney, Anthony Jackson, Jaco Pastorius, Jack Bruce, Charles Fanbrough, Paul Chambers, Abraham Laboriel. I like everyone who has brought new sounds to the vocabulary of the bass.

Own Best Record — *School Days*.

Favorite Records — I don't listen to records.

Favorite Drummer — Lenny White.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — I've worked with everyone already.

Bernard Edwards



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Bernard Edwards — Chic's funky butt.

Approach — The bass is the foundation of the music. Now and then I play melody parts, but I like a bass player to stay on the bottom and carry the groove of the tune. If you're not doing that you're really not playing the bass.

Bass — Music Man in the studio, B.C. Rich live.

Strings — Dean Markley medium flatwound.

Amp — Ampeg in the studio, Sunn Coliseum live.

Effects — None. I've always liked the natural sound of the bass.

Own Best Live Performance — Hammersmith Odeon, London, U.K.,

1978 Kool Jazz Festival at San Diego Stadium (both with Chic).
Favorite Concert — Earth, Wind & Fire's "All 'n All" tour, in California.
Own Best Record — "Good Times."
Favorite Records — I have too many favorites to pick just one.
Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Most drummers either play too much or too little for what I like to do.

Steve Swallow — Jazz player & composer.

Approach — Because I played acoustic bass for several years my approach to the bass function is derived from the bebop tradition. I use the pick to achieve greater clarity and to phrase in a manner I associate with bebop.

Bass — Fender Precision, with Schaller tuners, Badass bridge and Bartolini pickups.

Strings — La Bella medium gauge roundwound.

Amp — Mesa Boogie 170 watt head, Cerwin-Vega 2 X 12" cabinet.

Effects — None.

Own Best Live Performance — Duet with Gary Burton at the 1978 Newport / New York festival, in Carnegie Hall. But I'm leaving out a lot of killers.

Favorite Concert — A pickup chamber group, featuring Richard Stolzman from Tashi on clarinet, playing Olivier Messaien's *Quartet for the End of Time* at the Chestnut Hill Concerts in Madison, CT.

Favorite Bassists — Percy Heath, Ron Carter, Eddie Gomez, Jaco Pastorius, Bootsy Collins, Larry Graham.

Own Best Record — *Home*, ECM 1-1160.

Favorite Records — Lately I've been listening to the Savoy Bird reissues, The Busch Quartet's EMI record of the *Complete Beethoven Late Quartets* and *James Brown Live and Low Down at the Apollo* on Solid Smoke.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Elvin Jones, Max Roach.

Favorite Drummers — Pete LaRoca, Roy Haynes, Bob Moses, and I'm leaving out a lot of killers.

Favorite Employers — Gary Burton, John Scofield, Carla Bley.



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Busta Jones — Punk/funk rocker for Talking Heads, Gang of Four and The Trio.

Approach — I really feel I'm breaking new ground on the bass, taking it out of just being a bottom instrument. Not by trying to play it like a guitar, but by hitting it harder, and simplifying the lines so they cut through more.

Bass — Fender Precision, with DiMarzio pickups (P-bass and J-bass) and a Badass bridge.

Strings — La Bella. I use half-rounds live and flatwounds in the studio.

Amp — I prefer Sunn Coliseums or Ampeg SVTs live. In the studio I use both direct and amp sounds, but I often wind up recording over the amp track when I need more space on the tape.

Effects — I don't like to use them. It works better for me without effects, because I have to work a little harder to get the sound out of my fingers and the instrument.

Own Best Live Performance — With the Gang of Four in San Francisco this summer. The interaction among the band on the Talking Heads tour was really great. I also like my own trio, because it gives me a lot of room to stretch out.

Favorite Concerts — Mountain, and Jimi Hendrix in Memphis, Tennessee in the late 60s. Bob Marley at the Beacon Theater in New York. The only recent thing that's interested me was Kraftwerk at the Ritz.

Favorite Bassists — Myself.

Own Best Record — "Dancer" by Gino Soccio (12" RSC single), and my second solo album, *Bustin' Loose* on Spring/Polydor.

Favorite Albums — I just tape songs onto cassettes, so I can listen to them on my ghetto blaster (it's calibrated so it doesn't play fast like most of them). I like Joy Division, and some of the dub things.

Favorite Drummers — Yogi Horton really has the beat — he stomps. David van Tieghem is very versatile.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Billy Cobham.

Favorite Employer — David Byrne, or myself. I don't like to do sessions unless I'm involved in the writing or producing aspects.

Busta Jones



ET ROBERTS

John Entwistle — The Who's not-so-silent one.

Approach — I never tried to base my style on anyone. I saw a draft transcription of the bass part on "The Real Me" once and it freaked me out completely, semidemiquavers all over the place and that kind of stuff. That only comes when you're really playing freely, when you're not worried about what chord's coming up next, you know exactly where you're going, and you decide to play something completely different. If it works, it works, if it doesn't, it doesn't. You take the risk.

Bass — Custom-made, Explorer-shaped Alembic with Flying V headstock.

Strings — Rotosound, of course.

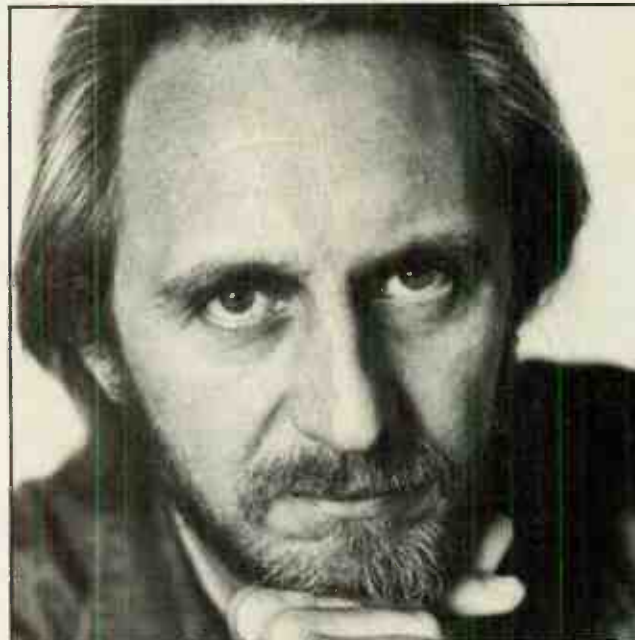
Amp — Two Stramp stereo pre-amps, Sunn Coliseum power amps, driving three Sunn 18" cabinets and three 4 X 12" cabinets. This set-up is still a bit too loud, so I'm thinking of switching to two Mesa Boogie stacks instead. In the studio I use a Music Man HD-130 head and a 2 X 12" cabinet for the clean sound, and a Mesa Boogie with an extension cabinet for the distortion and the treble.

Effects — Occasionally I'll use a Boss Chorus.

Best Live Performance — All you can actually remember about a good live show is coming off stage and not arguing. The last American tour we did with Keith we were playing amazingly well, and we did some gigs in Paris right after Kenny Jones joined the band that I

continued on next page

John Entwistle



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

thought were incredible.

Favorite Concert — Joe Walsh's recent tour, at the Forum in L.A.

Favorite Bassists — I haven't got any. I think all of the obvious ones are technically good.

Own Best Record — *Too Late the Hero*, my latest solo album, "The Real Me" from *Quadrophenia*.

Favorite Records — Joe Walsh, Eagles, Gerry Rafferty.

Favorite Drummer — I'm proud of the fact that I'm probably the only bass player that could have played with Keith Moon. Kenny Jones is much more disciplined and gives me a lot more freedom. Joe Vitale is very good at leaving spaces.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Drummers make great drinking partners, but I can't think of any I'm dying to work with.

Robbie Shakespeare — Reggae rhythm master.

Approach — The bass is the most important instrument in all kinds of music. That's what drew me to it, and that's why I play it. I re!

Bass — Fender, Alembic, Guild B-302, Hofner "Beatle."

Strings — Fender medium flatwound.

Amp — Direct in studio, various live.

Effects — None.

Own Best Live Performance — It's yet to come.

Favorite Concert — The Rolling Stones.

Favorite Bassists — Larry Graham, Jaco Pastorius, Stanley Clarke, Family Man Barrett, Val Douglas, Louis Johnson.

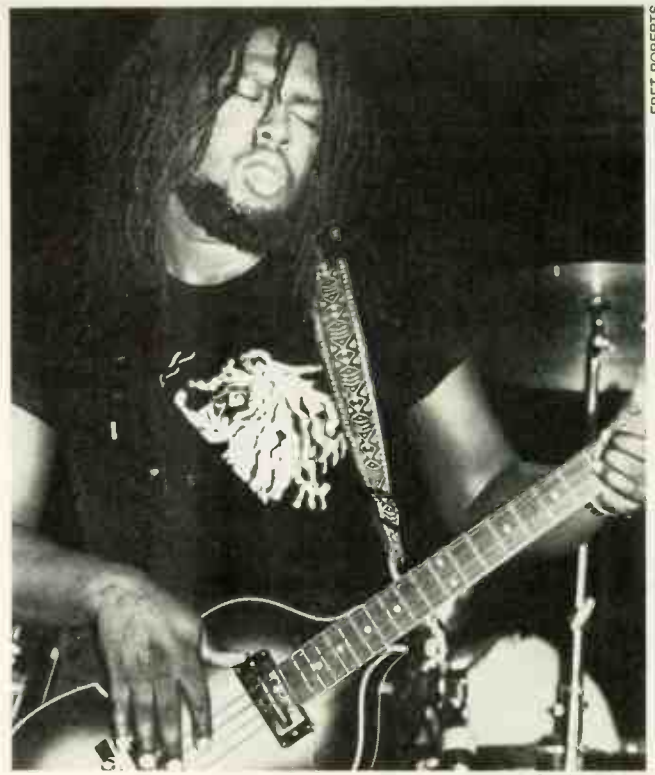
Own Best Record — there are too many to pick one.

Favorite Records — Ditto.

Favorite Drummer — Sly Dunbar

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Billy Cobham, Steve Gadd.

Favorite Employer — Chris Blackwell, Island/Mango Records



Robbie Shakespeare

EBET ROBERTS

Paul McCartney



Paul McCartney — Who?

Approach — I've always liked those little lines that work as support, yet have their own identity instead of staying in the background.

Bass — Rickenbacker, Yamaha.

Strings — I honestly couldn't tell you, they come out of a little bag.

Amp & Effects — To me these things are just vehicles. They're beautiful and I love them, but I don't want to find out too much about them. It's just the way my mind is; I'd prefer to be non-technical.

Favorite Concert — Fela Anikulaputi Kuti, Lagos, Nigeria, 1977. We saw him one night at his own club and I was crying.

Favorite Bassists — The Motown and Stax players, Brian Wilson.

Own Best Record — *White Album*, *Abbey Road*, the Beatles; *Band on the Run*, Wings. There's a great trick about records, it has to leap off the plastic and if it does, it's magic.

Favorite Records — *Pet Sounds*, the Beach Boys. My musical tastes range from Fred Astaire to the Sex Pistols (especially "Pretty Vacant") and everything in between: Pink Floyd, Stevie Wonder, the Stones, etc., etc. I'm like a lot of people — when I get in my car and turn on the radio I want to hear some good sounds.

Carol Colman

Carol Colman — Coconut (as in Kid Creole and the), New York session player.

Approach — The bass is the heartbeat, the pulse of a band. I play the bass as a percussion instrument with infinite harmonic possibilities.

Bass — Fender Jazz.

Strings — La Bella half-rouds.

Amp — I like Acoustic for live. I go direct in the studio.

Effects — I have them, but I'm usually called for a pure bass sound.

Own Best Live Performance — All of them are the best that I can do.

Favorite Concerts — Herbie Hancock Sextet (the *Mwandishi* band) with Buster Williams, Boston, 1970; The Brothers Johnson at Carnegie Hall, 1978.

Favorite Bassists — Major Holley, Ray Brown and George Mraz are some of my favorite upright players. I'm paying a lot of attention to bassist/composer David Romani, from Italy (Change). August Darnell (Kid Creole) is a brilliant bass player and I'm thrilled with the opportunity to work under his direction.

Own Best Record — *Fresh Fruits in Foreign Places* with Kid Creole and the Coconuts, Coati Mundi's *Que Pasa / Me No Pop I* and August Darnell's new solo album, *Wise Guy*.

Favorite Album — The Rias Symphony Orchestra under Karl Rucht, playing Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* (Paris Records).

Favorite Drummer — Winston Grennan, Yogi Horton.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Play With — There are a lot of fine drummers that I haven't had the opportunity to work with yet, but I know they're out there somewhere.

Favorite Employer — August Darnell and Andy Hernandez.



RICHARD LAIRD

Larry Graham—*The poppa of popping, now a pop singer.*

Approach — I started the thumping and plucking to make up for not having a drummer when I accompanied my mother's piano playing. I'd been doing it for five or six years by the time I went with Sly. I use the thumping and plucking technique on most of my uptempo tunes. If it's a ballad I try to caress the bass and use a finger vibrato.

Bass — Fender Jazz, G&L.

Strings — GHS Boomers.

Amp — Live I use a Crown-powered, three-way system with a total of 52 speakers. I go direct in the studio.

Effects — I used a Juggernaut fuzz on "I Just Can't Stop Dancin'," and a phaser on "Sunshine Lovin' Music."

Best Live Performance — Woodstock, with Sly and the Family Stone.

Favorite Concerts — Woodstock, Hendrix at the Isle of Wight, The Who in Germany.

Favorite Bassists — Stanley Clarke, Louis Johnson, Kenny Burke.

Own Best Record — *One In A Million, Just Be My Lady.*

Favorite Albums — I listen to all kinds of music, depending on how I feel.

Favorite Drummer — Greg Errico and Andy Newmark from Sly and the Family Stone, Gaylord Birch from Graham Central Station, Noel Klausen.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — None.



Larry Graham

Jamaaladeen Tacuma—*Free jazz virtuoso.*

Approach — The back-up role for the bass is now obsolete. The bassist has to have his own idea, has to add something to the music. Jazz players have done this for a long time, but today you can even hear this kind of playing on the radio. I think that a new form, a new concept of playing and improvising, is coming very shortly, which will bring even greater changes in the role of the bass.

Bass — Rickenbacker 4001, Steinberger.

Strings — La Bella roundwounds.

Amp — Acoustic.

Effects — None.

Best Live Performance — The *Saturday Night Live* gig with Ornette Coleman's Prime Time.

Favorite Concert — Diana Ross at Resorts International Casino, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Favorite Bassists — Anthony Jackson, Ron Carter.

Own Best Record — Ornette's & Prime Time's unreleased digital album, *Tales of Captain Black* with James "Blood" Ulmer (on Artists House).

Favorite Records — John Coltrane *Live at the Village Vanguard*, *Dynasty and Shalamar*.

Favorite Drummer — Michael Carvin & Denardo Coleman.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Steve Gadd.

Jamaaladeen Tacuma



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Percy Heath



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Percy Heath—*Bassist and composer with the Modern Jazz Quartet and the Heath Bros.*

Approach — I've always considered the bass as part of the rhythm section. In the MJQ we made it more contrapuntal, more like four equal voices. The bass should give the pulse and the harmonic implications for the instruments to improvise on. I like the bottom of the bass, the true bass or contra-bass register. If you play up the neck all the time, you might as well get a cello. I never put in too much time as a soloist. I'm a bass player, so my whole concept is pretty "basic," with more emphasis on the bottom structure of the chords than on the upper extensions a horn player would use. I like melodic playing.

Bass — My bass was made either by or in the school of Giovanni Batista Ruggieri (d. 1730) at Cremona, Italy.

Strings — Tomastic metal flatwound, Perastro.

Amp — I use Polytone and Underwood pickups, also a Goldstein prototype pickup, and a Polytone amp. I'm still trying to get an acceptable amplified sound.

Effects — We once used Echoplexes for a few bars of a MJQ piece that John Lewis composed for an unreleased film score.

Best Live Performance — In 1957 Joachim Berendt recorded a Sunday morning concert that the MJQ gave at the Donaueislingen Festival in Germany. The liner notes to that record state that they didn't have jazz there for ten years after that concert, so I guess it had quite an impact. I'd also mention the final concert of the MJQ at Avery Fisher Hall in New York, and every time I played with Charlie Parker.

Favorite Concert — I went to a cante that the Count Basie Orchestra played in Philadelphia when I was a teenager, and the whole building was in rhythm with the band. Duke Ellington's music has always thrilled me also.

Favorite Bassists — Oscar Pettiford, Jimmy Blanton, Ray Brown, Charles Mingus, Milt Hinton, Pops Foster, Red Mitchell, Al McKibbin, Rufus Reid. I love them all if they're serious.

Own Best Record — I've never been completely pleased with any of the 180 plus records I've played on, but I'm proud of the session I did with Max Roach, Al Haig and Charlie Parker for Norman Granz. We waited for Bird to show up, then did one take each of "Now's the Time," "Confirmation," "Chi Chi" and "I'll Remember You."

Heath from previous page

Favorite Albums — Anything by Duke Ellington with Jimmy Blanton, and anything of Charlie Parker's.

Favorite Drummers — Kenny Clarke, Albert Heath.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — I've worked with all the good ones.

Major Holley — *Jazzman, known for his arco & scat solos.*

Approach — The bass is the basis of the time-keeping and the foundation of the harmony. I try to be as loose and as flexible as possible, to maintain the feeling of the music, whether it's written or improvised. I like to stay in the bass range, not the cello or viola range. When I'm supporting other players in the rhythm section, I give it all I've got. So when it's my "time in the barrel," give me my time to solo, and support what I'm playing.

Bass — I have French, German and Czech basses, and two Kays.

Strings — Tomastic.

Amp — I use a lot of different brands. I think the choice depends on the instrument and the player.

Effects — None.

Best Live Performance — The gigs I did with Art Tatum were among the most interesting.

Favorite Bassists — Me. I'm my own favorite bass player.

Own Best Record — It hasn't happened yet.

Favorite Albums — My own records on the Black & Blue label — *Major Holley "Mule,"* B&B 33074; *Two Big Mice* with Slam Stewart & Major Holley, B&B 33124; *Excuse Me, Ludwig,* B&B 33156 (the title refers to my performance on the theme from the "Pathétique" Sonata). I'm also on Bob James' *Changing Times* album.

Favorite Drummers — Papa Jo Jones, Oliver Jackson, Mel Lewis, Elvin Jones, Eddie Locke, Jackie Williams, Connie Kay, Bobbie Durham, and lots of others.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Max Roach (I've played with Max, but it was some time ago). I think McCoy Tyner's and B.B. King's drummers are excellent.

Major Holley



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Jeff Berlin — *Fusion fireball.*

Approach — I feel every musician is entitled to express his inner voice, regardless of what instrument he plays. I like to interweave my instrument along with the others so that it's not only a root instrument, but a melodic and contrapuntal instrument.

Bass — '67 Fender Precision and '62 Fender Jazz, both with Badass bridges and pickups custom-made by Glen Quan.

Strings — Carl Thompson light gauge roundwounds.

Amp — Live I use Alembic pre-amps and Crown power amps driving seven cabinets. I go direct in the studio.

Effects — I use them as little as I can.

Own Best Live Performance — About four months ago I did some gigs at Donte's in L.A., with Mick Goodrick and Icarus Johnson on guitar, and Vince Calaiati on drums. We were really pumping!

Favorite Concert — Tower of Power at the Calderone Concert Hall on Long Island in 1975, Bill Evans with Eddie Gomez at the Village Vanguard in '77 or '78.

Favorite Bassists — Steve Swallow, Bobby Vega, who's a funk player from San Francisco, and Francis Rocco Prestia.

Own Best Record — *Gradually Going Tornado* by Bill Bruford.

Favorite Records — *Crystal Silence,* Gary Burton and Chick Corea; *Drums So Real,* Gary Burton; *The Tony Bennett/Bill Evans Album;* *Back to Oakland,* Tower of Power; *Portraits in Jazz,* Bill Evans; *Sex Machine,* James Brown; Beethoven's 3rd Symphony; Schubert lieder, especially "Ave Maria."

Favorite Drummers — Mike Clark, Peter Erskine, Vince Calaiati, Andre Ceccarelli, Tony Williams (in his Lifetime period), Bill Bruford.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Billy Hart, Jack DeJohnette, Dave Garibaldi, Marty Morell.

Favorite Employers — Ray Barretto, Toots Thieleman, Bill Bruford.



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Bill Laswell — *Punk-jazz explorer.*

Approach — I approach the bass from an instinctual and rhythmic concept. I'm trying to incorporate listening to the other players and improvisation with an attempt to take up as much space as possible in terms of sound and tone. What really works for me is when the bass and the drums are improvising the rhythm together.

Bass — Fender Precision fretless, Fender 6-string, Ibanez 8-string.

Strings — Half-rounds, no particular brand.

Amp — Acoustic 150, Ampeg SVT.

Effects — Boss Distortion, Morley Fuzz-wah, MXR Flanger, Mutron III, Volume Pedal.

Best Live Performance — The gigs I did in New York with Fred Frith and Material.

Favorite Concert — I haven't seen a group worth mentioning in quite some time.

Favorite Bassists — Jamaaladeen Tacuma, early Jack Bruce, earlier Jaco Pastorius, early Larry Graham, Janick Top.

Own Best Record — Material's *Memory Serves,* and *Massacre* on the Celluloid label.

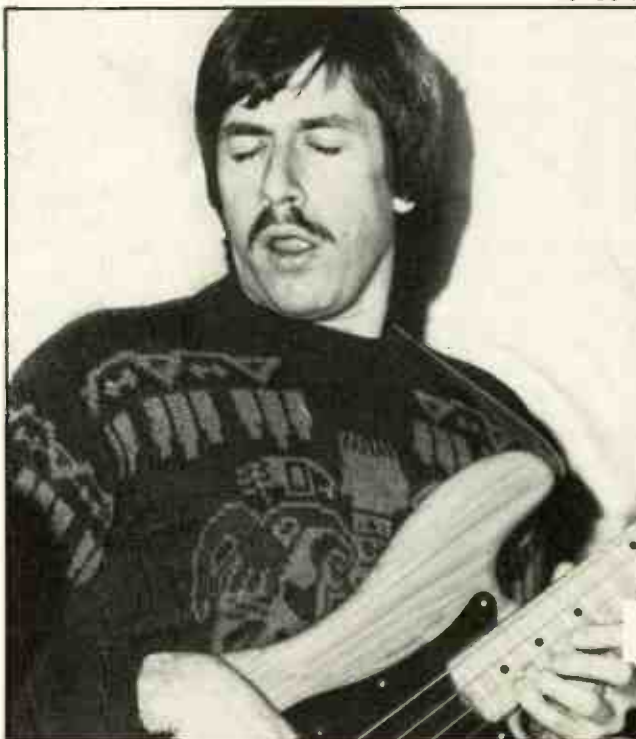
Favorite Records — *Dancing in Your Head,* Ornette Coleman; *Music of the Ituri Forest* and *Eskimos of Hudson Bay and Alaska* on Folkways; *Plastic Ono Band; Guitar Solos,* Fred Frith; *Hymnen,* Karlheinz Stockhausen; *Trout Mask Replica, Shiny Beast, Bat Chain Puller* and *Doc at the Radar Station,* Capt. Beefheart.

Favorite Drummers — Stu Martin, Denardo Coleman, percussionists David Moss, Charles Noyes and Mark Miller.

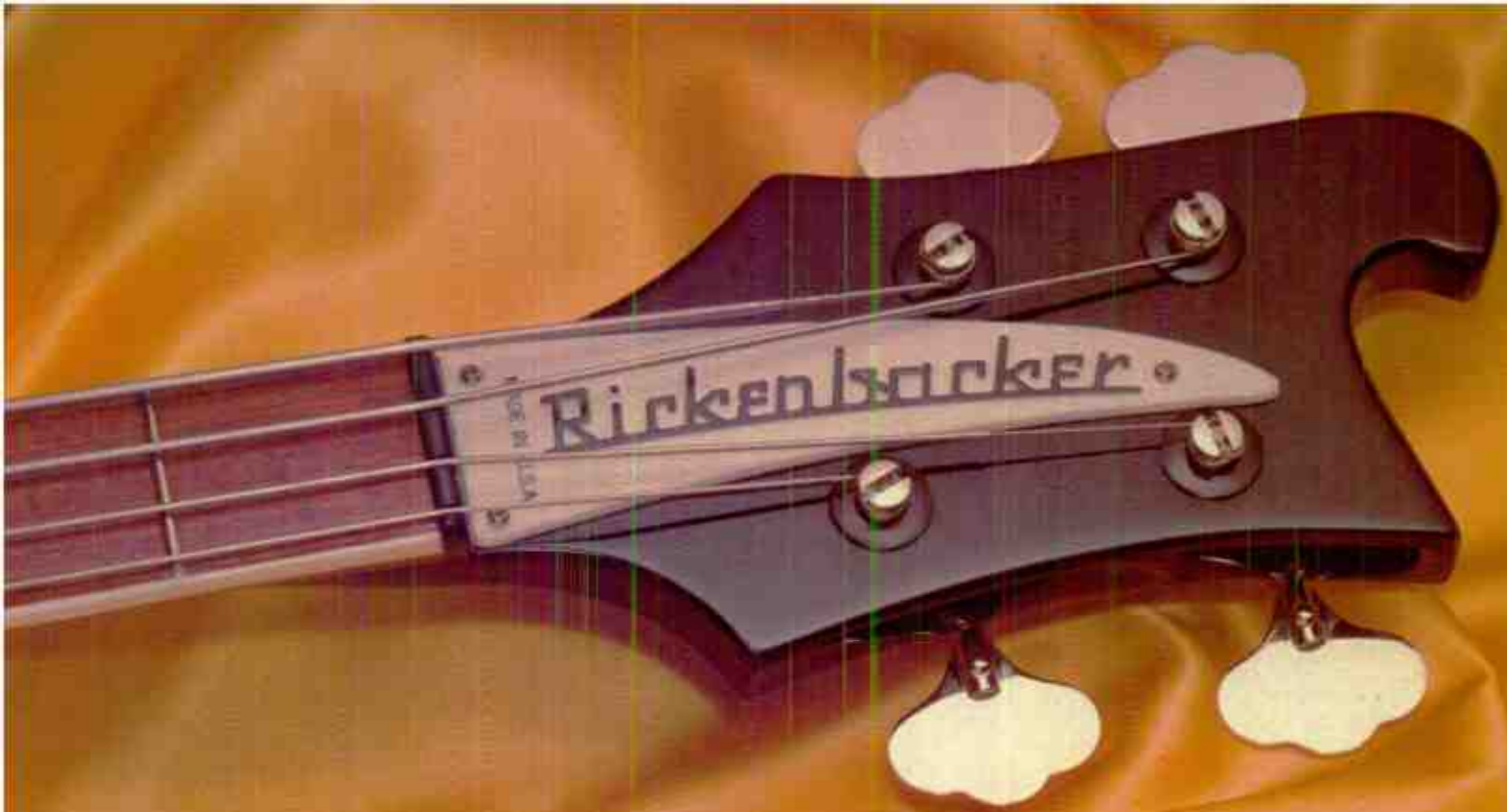
Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Ginger Baker, Christian Vander, Ren Shannon Jackson.

Favorite Employer — Brian Eno and Fred Frith, because of the freedom they give me.

Jeff Berlin



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Charlie Haden

Charlie Haden — Ornette's ex, *Liberation Music*, duets.

Approach — I want to make the bass sound beautiful. I try to play beautiful chords, harmonies, intervals, melodies and rhythms. I am in awe of the majesty of music, and I try to respect it with honesty. So I approach it with great care and try to listen to my own voice and hearing, and *take time* to make everything beautiful.

Bass — I have a French instrument that was made by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume in Paris around 1840. Until a month ago I had an instrument made by Pullman with a lion's-head scroll and beautifully flamed spruce and maple wood, but I found I wasn't playing on it much.

Strings — On the high strings, G and D, I use Golden Spiral strings, made by Kaplan String Company in South Norwalk, Connecticut. They're gut strings with a nylon winding. I use a thin gauge. For the A and E strings I use Tomastic Spirochore.

Amp — I use a Barcus-Berry pickup on my bridge and I go into a Barcus-Berry Studio Preamp with a cannon jack on the back of it, so I can go direct to the board.

Effects — The volume level of music keeps going up and as a result I've damaged my hearing. To protect my ears I use a fiber called Quietdown made by Flint.

Favorite Bassists — First, the bass players that were with Bird, Tommy Potter and Curly Russell, then Oscar Pettiford but especially Wilbur Ware. Then there's Paul Chambers; the lines he played behind soloists were unlike any lines you ever heard. They were in chromatics. He made the notes sound like they were crying, an intonation that wasn't quite sharp, but was close enough to create a kind of sadness. He was just a beautiful player. Also Scott LaFaro, Henry Grimes, Israel Crosby and Albert Stinson, who's dead now.

Own Best Record — I like the records under my own name, the first one being *The Liberation Music Orchestra*, which I think is a really important record and I'm very sad to see it's been deleted from the catalog. *Closeness*, *The Golden Number*, *Science Fiction*, and the duets with Hampton Hawes, *As Long As There's Music*, mostly for his playing because he plays so great. *This Is Our Music* with Ornette.

Favorite Records — I think the duets of Duke Ellington and Jimmy Blanton are some of the most important pieces of music that were ever recorded. Some of the recordings of Wellman Braud and Walter Page with Count Basie. Also, Paul Chambers on Miles Davis' *Collector's Items*, Ware on *Monk's Music*.

Favorite Drummers — The best drummers that I've played with are the only drummers I've played with for any length of time: Billy Higgins, Edward Blackwell, Paul Motian and now Jack DeJohnette. I've played some with Roy Haynes, Beaver Harris. I got to play once with Kenny Clarke. Connie Kay, Max Roach — boy, there's a great drummer.

Drummers I'd Most Like To Play With — I would've liked to play with Shadow Wilson, Denzil Best and Sid Catlett. More with Kenny Clarke. Also a drummer in Chicago that someone told me about, Ike Day.

Andy West



Tony Levin — *Crimson's Man on the Stick*.

Approach — I'm not impressed by a lot of notes, but by what notes are there and how well they are played. I try to play what I think will fit best with the music I'm accompanying. I'm constantly trying to come up with new ideas, and the Stick has helped me a lot in this regard because it's tuned differently than the standard bass.

Bass — Music Man Sting Ray, Steinberger Fretless, Chapman Stick.

Strings — Music Man Half Rounds.

Amp — Ampeg SVT.

Effects — Analog delay, volume pedal, octave divider.

Own Best Live Concert — Any of the Peter Gabriel tours, Luciano Pavarotti — *Tosca*, Oregon in Wookstock.

Favorite Bassists — I've heard a lot of stuff that impressed me, but I don't have any favorites.

Own Best Record — *One Trick Pony*, Paul Simon; *Resolution*, Andy Pratt; *Manhattan Update*, Warren Bernhardt.

Favorite Records — Earth, Wind & Fire, *All 'n All*.

Favorite Drummer — I don't have one.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — All the good ones.

Tony Levin



Andy West — *The Dregs driving bassist*.

Approach — The way I play in the Dregs includes a lot of intricate melodic parts that are part of the sound of the band, so I've had to develop a lot of chops in that area. We try to have solos for everyone, so Rod and I work on developing grooves that are interesting without distracting any attention from the soloist. I think it's important to practice as much as possible. I try to pick up things from new styles of music to see where they will take me.

Bass — Steinberger. Alembic (fretless and fretted), Washburn 8-string, Fender Precision.

Strings — GHS Super Steels roundwounds, and Brite Flats.

Amp — Fender pre-amp, Crown stereo power amp driving a Fender 2 X 12" cabinet with EV speakers and a Cerwin-Vega 18" folded-horn cabinet. I think the bi-amping is much more important than the speakers, though. I go direct in the studio unless I want a really bad sound.

Effects — Flanger/Doubler.

Best Live Performance — Whenever we play L.A., San Francisco, New York or Atlanta, but every gig we do is satisfying.

Favorite Concerts — Mahavishnu's One Truth Band, Pat Metheny Group, Kansas, Yes. I think anyone who can attract people is worth going to see.

Favorite Bassists — Stanley Clarke, Jaco Pastorius, Jack Bruce, Jeff Berlin, Eberhard Weber, Eddie Gomez, Anthony Jackson, Abraham Laboriel, Percy Jones I could name a lot more.

Own Best Record — My best playing with the Dregs is on the tunes "What If?" "Take It Off the Top," "Night of the Living Dregs," "Twigs Approved," "I'm Freaking Out," "Cat Food," "Divided We Stand," and "Day 444."

Favorite Albums — *Inner Mounting Flame*, Mahavishnu Orchestra, anything by Stanley Clarke and Jaco Pastorius.

Favorite Drummer — Rod Morgenstern.

Drummer I'd Most Like To Work With — Tony Williams, Billy Cobham, Simon Phillips, George Fretton, Phil Collins.

LA BELLA'S MUSICIAN of NOTE

JAMAALADEEN TACUMA

Born: June 11, 1956 in Long Island, N.Y.
Home: Philadelphia, Pa. U.S.A.

Profession: Electric Bass Guitarist with
"Ornette Coleman" and the "Prime Time Band."

Earliest Musical Experience: Studied theory and
Harmony in high school, then studied Electric
Bass with former bassist with Grover Washing-
ton Jr. Tyrone Brown and Acoustic Bass with
former member of the Philadelphia Orchestra,
Eligio Rossi. Studied composition at the annual
West Chester Summer Music Camp.

Major Influences: Anthony Jackson, Ron
Carter, Paul McCartney, Quincy Jones, Billie
Holiday and Carlos Santana.

Latest Musical Accomplishment: Received the
highest number of votes for an Electric Bassist of
new talent deserving wider recognition in the
Down Beat 1981 International Jazz Critics Poll.

Keynotes: Played and recorded with various
established Jazz, Rhythm and Blues and Classi-
cal Artists like James "Blood" Ulmer, Ornette
Coleman, Charles Earland, Julius Hemphill,
Walt Dickerson, Michael Carvin, Norman
Connors, the Philadelphia Orchestra and Stevie
Wonder.

Today's Music: Communication is without a
doubt the key to enhance the many relation-
ships that a musician and a non-musician often
encounter. Today's music (in its many forms) is
exciting and informative. It's a vehicle in which
this communication can be fully experienced and
enjoyed. About every ten years a change
takes place with the ideas and concepts of
musical expression. So much is being said
through all of the music of today and because of
each artist personal experience and external in-
fluences it would be of great benefit to every
musician to familiarize themselves with the
total musical language that is being spoken all
over the world.

On Strings: LA BELLA strings have always pro-
ven to me to be the top of the line in quality
long-lasting bass guitar strings. When I'm recor-
ding I love to hear my instrument come through
crystal clear as a bell and when I'm performing
live, LA BELLA strings have always given me
the stage presence that is much needed by any
live performing bass guitarist (and bassists you
know exactly what I'm talking about). I use
roundwound strings on my Rickenbacker
Stereo 4001 and the custom made roundwound
Double Ball end strings on my Steinberger Bass.
There is definitely a difference between playing
and *Playing*. I use LA BELLA strings and for
some time now it has been said that I can really
play the bass. I know for a fact that LA BELLA
strings has had a lot to do with this recognition.
Long live LA BELLA!



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BASS TECHNOLOGY

A machinist's first attempt at designing a bass results in timeless principles of great instrument construction: a stiff neck, a resonant body, and punchy pickups.

By J.C. Costa

The electric bass was born in 1950 at the young but dynamically expanding Fender Musical Instrument Co. of Fullerton, California. Leo Fender, a gifted machinist with an ear for country & western and an unwitting vision of the real future for electric guitars, had already spun industry traditionalists out of orbit with the iconoclastic Fender Broadcaster solid body. Historical trivialists will rightfully argue that Adolph Rickenbacker actually got the jump on Fender with his ungainly "frying pan" guitar, but they're missing the point. Leo was the first one to intuitively comprehend the market potential of the solid body electric and go after it with a vengeance.

Problems come thick and fast for pioneers and Fender had to quickly change the name of his guitar because Gretsch had already appropriated Broadcaster for its drum line. Turns out Leo liked his new name a lot better anyway. The Telecaster, inextricably linked to the advent of television and its subsequent impact on our culture, sounded more like Tommorrow. Enough progressive country and pop guitarists overcame traditional hollow body leanings for the clean, crisp, penetrating tones of the Tele to nudge Fender in the direction of another first — the electric solid body bass guitar.

Originally assuming the shape of the Telecaster guitar, the Fender Precision bass was designed to go either way. Electric guitarists could benefit from its reduced size and portability to "double" on bass and bass fiddle players who were tired of being pinned down to their stationary behemoths had enough familiar features (like traditional finger rest) to ease their transition into electricity. The Precision body, soon to evolve into a more futuristic, contoured shape for increased playing comfort and a distinctive identity of its own, was made of alder. A massive bolted-on maple neck culminated in the classic Fender headstock with hefty tuning machines arrayed four-on-a-side like the guitar that preceded it. A patented "split coil" pickup produced a fat, midrangey sound with unheard-of punch and presence for this type of instrument. The miraculous combination of a dense and surprisingly resonant body wood — for years, wood snobs have looked down on alder as a low-grade "prole" hardwood fit only for construction — a long-scale (34") neck made of exceedingly stiff hard rock maple and a clean, high-output electronic pickup elevated the Fender Precision to its preeminent status as *the* electric bass guitar, past and present.

Later on, Fender developed the Jazz bass which offered a slimmer neck and two pickups with individual controls. The sound had more treble and high-end definition with an even response better suited to the exacting standards of the recording studio. And although the Telecaster bass was also re-introduced during this period, the Fender Precision and Jazz basses — often referred to simply as the P-bass and the J-bass — easily led the way in this area to become icons of the music industry. Much like Kleenex and Frigidaire, "Fender Bass" has become a generic term and you can find plenty of evidence to support this on countless album credits of the sixties and seventies. Vintage editions of these instruments in good condition are still sought after with specific models like the 1959 "concentric" Jazz bass bringing up to \$2500.

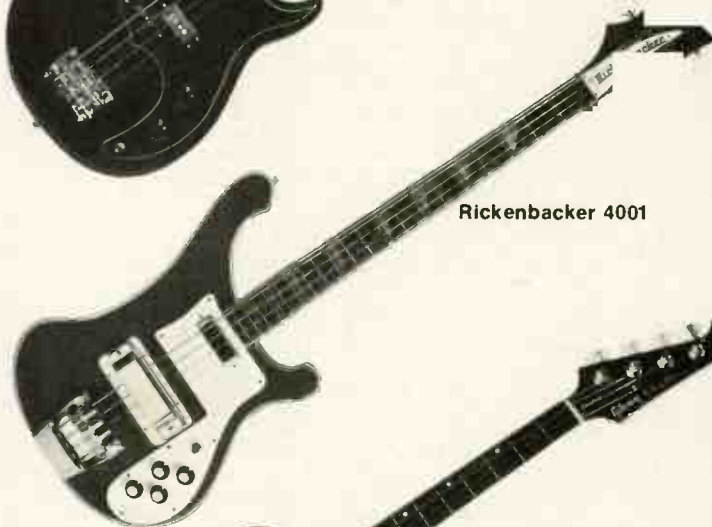
Recently, Fender reintroduced a souped-up version of the original Precision — which by now had become one of the most copied instruments in history — as the Fender Precision "Special." This guitar features active electronics (± 15 dB bass



Fender Jazz Bass



Yamaha BB-800



Rickenbacker 4001



Gibson Victory Standard



Steinberger

Get your hands on the new Victory Bass, by Gibson. Success has never felt so good. Or so comfortable. From narrower high frets to the deep cutaway body design. An adjustable neck pitch and new neck shape give you even more fast action and playability. And the feel is so balanced, you'll swear it's a part of you.

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in the studio. Hold it back for light, smooth jazz. Or rip it wide open to heavy rock. No matter how you play Victory, you'll look great doing it. Because new molded black pickups and a reshaped pickguard add extra class to the sleek Victory Standard or deluxe Artist model.

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and treble controls), re-designed brass hardware and a return to the "classic" 1961 B-neck. Leo Fender, who sold out to CBS more than a decade ago, has made a comfortable, and well-deserved, living by coming up with intelligent re-thinks of his solid bodies for companies like Music Man and G & L Sales.

Over in Kalamazoo, Gibson — the other heavyweight contender in the electric guitar sweepstakes — was slowly warming to the idea of an electric bass guitar. By the middle fifties, this traditionalist concern which had reluctantly accepted the Les Paul solid body guitar after focusing on more conventional hollow and semi-hollow body electric instruments, was producing its own version of the solid body bass. The early EB-0 and EB-1 "violin" basses had mahogany bodies and necks and featured an Alnico magnet pickup with a "brown Royalite cover." Unfortunately, the short scale length (30½") and a pickup that produced sounds that were too deep to be accurately reproduced by existing amplifiers did not add up to an instant classic of the genre. Double cutaway, semi-hollow body guitars like the Gibson EB-2 bass looked good on paper but feedback problems and the shorter scale limited their potential at the outset. Gibson finally broke through a few years later with the legendary Gibson Thunderbird bass, a long-scale instrument with a more articulated sound. More competitive with Fender on a head to head basis, the Thunderbird capitalized on the superior resonance, accuracy of intonation and playability of the longer scale and its own, slightly oddball future-think shape. The Gibson EB-3 bass, shaped like the Gibson SG guitar with a humbucking pickup and varitone switch, was undoubtedly powerful and in the hands of someone like Jack Bruce (during Cream's salad days) could produce thick slabs of dirty bottom-end sound, but it was players like John Entwistle of the Who using a Thunderbird in conjunction with Rotowound (roundwound) strings who was subliminally announcing the new age of the electric bass guitar.

In the fifties and throughout a lot of the sixties, the electric bass guitar was either used percussively or to create a fat cushion of sound to push the beat along. The sound of the electric or Fender bass was more distinct on records, especially when played by masters like James Jamerson of Motown session fame or Donald "Duck" Dunn of Booker T & the MG's. At the peon amateur level, poor amplification equipment, flatwound strings and sloppy playing techniques made for impenetrable bass thump-a-thumpa music wherein individual notes were indistinguishable and you could hardly tell (or care, for that matter) if the instrument was in tune.

In the late sixties and early seventies,

Brit-rock and one of its immediate antecedents, art-rock, brought the bass more to the forefront in terms of high-end definition. Geezers like Entwistle, McCartney and Chris Squire were playing a much more highlighted and melodic bass style that was set further forward in the final mix. A lot of this had to do with the development of roundwound bass strings by the British company, Rotosound. Harder on the hands and the frets, roundwound strings added a measurable amount of ringing, metallic clarity to the sound of the electric bass guitar.

McCartney had started on the curious Hofner hollow body bass (feedback, a very thin neck and a decidedly bizarre sound), had moved through a variety of Fender guitars and, just about the time of "Magical Mystery Tour," settled on the Rickenbacker solid body bass that eventually became known as the Rickenbacker 4001. He and other players like Squire were drawn to the Rickenbacker's super-fast playability, unconventional shape and high output pickups which made for a very hot, clean sound. This particular instrument has gone through several modifications (especially the pickups) since the original played by McCartney, but it is still very popular because of its association with the new thinking about the role of the electric bass, not to mention its mono/stereo outputs and typically Californian "colorglo" finishes.

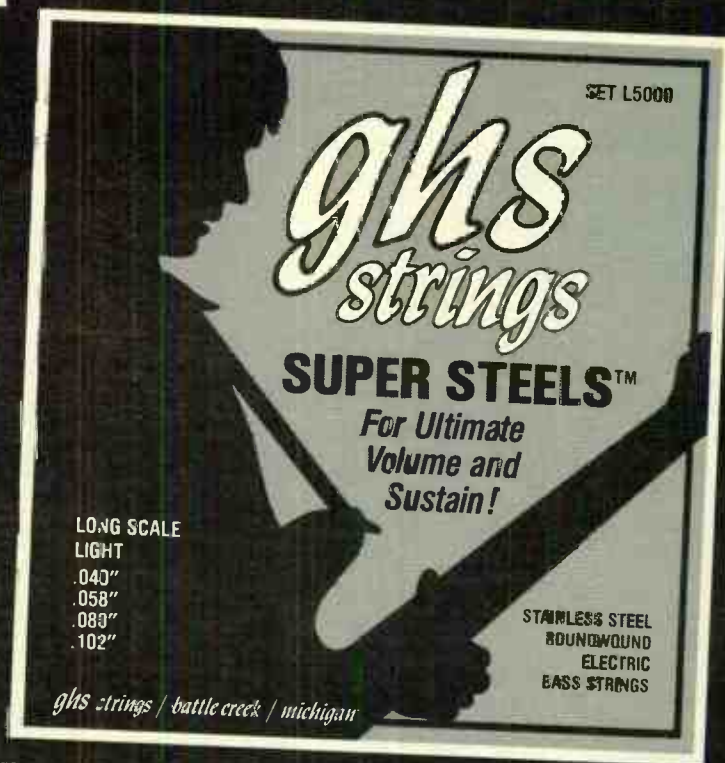
Throughout this whole period of transition and development, several bass oddities wafted through the marketplace to make their small but significant mark on the history of electronic instruments. The aforementioned Hofner and the Hagstron bass from Europe, the Ampeg bass with its scroll peghead and curious sound (they made a fairly popular fretless model), the Danelectro "Longhorn" bass which provided excellent sound for the low price, and an assortment of semi-hollow and solid body models from Guild and Gretsch which never quite matched their original counterparts from Fender and Gibson.

Of course, the big noise in the seventies and eighties has been the increasing popularity of active electronics in both guitars and basses. Active tone and (to a lesser extent for basses) volume controls mean that the player can literally boost the volume or boost and cut tonal parameters with a special battery-powered preamp. The Alembic bass, which further refined the concept of a personalized lead bass with exotic hardwoods, massive brass hardware and fittings and a neck that runs through the length of the body, was the first to promote the extensive use of more sophisticated active systems. Used by high-profile players like Stanley Clarke and Phil Lesh, the Alembic came to define the expensive, "customized"

continued on page 121

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RECORD REVIEWS

The Police

Ghost In the Machine (A&M)



Ghost In the Machine confirms something I'd suspected all along; that the Police never set out to be white-reggae popsters. It was just that reggae and pop (the AM kind that goes hook-hook-hook-hook...) offered the easiest, most format-digestible camouflage for the Police's real obsessions: repetition and syncopation, preferably both at once. On last year's *Zenyatta Mondatta*, the band started to break away from its self-imposed sound, and *Ghost In the Machine* (which even dispenses with the pig-European title shtick) makes its ambitions overt. The songs are all recognizable Police-iers — with Sting's characteristic vocal lines and four-bar units; Stewart Copeland's swinging, accents-on-two-and-four drumming; and Andy Summers' ultra-float textural, non-linear guitars — yet only "One World (Not Three)" openly recalls reggae. For the rest, the beat varies from JB's to light metal, but the basic strategy doesn't. If you listen to the album through transistor-radio-size speakers, you'll hear the main, midrange riff of each song again and again; on a better system, you'll notice the band's experiments with new arrangements (like horns, keyboards, tape effects) and a bunch of inventively repetitive inner parts. This time, the Police are seriously minimal; "Invisible Sun" even tips its hat to Philip Glass with a count-off that's just like the ones in *Einstein on the Beach*.

The Police's ambitions extend to their lyrics, with more mixed results. Now that they've seen starvation and poverty firsthand (on their India tour), they seem impatient with boy-girl stuff. Unfortunately, their political statements come across just as poppy — as superficial — as the rest of their repertoire; i.e., when they can come up with a catchy refrain like "Too much information / driving me insane," it works fine, but when, in "Re-humanize Themselves," they sink to

rhyming "national front" with "cunts" — used as an insult! — I wonder how deep their humanism goes. And when they wax mystical on "Invisible Sun" and "Darkness," well, they're right up there as revelation-bearers with George Harrison.

But *Ghost In the Machine* shouldn't have to stand on its text any more than Pharoah Sanders' "The Creator Has a Master Plan." If the album is about anything, its subject is the way Andy Summers is drawing together Hendrix (in "Demolition"), Zawinul (he's found the guitar equivalent of "Milky Way" for "Darkness") and Steve Cropper; or the way Copeland knocks around his cymbals, or the counterpoint Sting insists on writing — or the way the whole band propels songs without harmonic motion. The Police have proven themselves, not only as musicians, but as popular musicians, doing that rare, graceful balancing act between vox populi (x hooks per minute and catchy choruses) and their own agenda — Einstein on the top 40. If they can hang onto their sense of humor, so much the better. — *Jon Pareles*

Iggy Pop

Party (Arista)



In his first post-Stooges, Bowieized incarnation, Iggy Pop was dubbed "the Idiot." Even prior knowledge of this appellation is no preparation for a forthrightly idiotic record like *Party*. This album is so stupid it makes *Funhouse* sound like a doctoral thesis.

Stupidity has always been Iggy's strong suit — that's what gave songs like "I Wanna Be Your Dog" and "TV Eye" their, hm, charm. On *Party*, dumbness overwhelms all. How is one to respond to lyrical couplets like "I'm going out for a beer / but I will return, my dear" or "She's my only blood / we do it down in the mud"? Sheesh. And these are the more *intelligent* passages!

Party's songs, which dwell on sex,

drink, and pleasure, sound like stream-of-consciousness afterthoughts tossed together in the studio. The uncommitted playing of a band led by Ivan Kral of the Patti Smith Group, wishy-washy production by Tommy Boyce (yes, really) and Tom Panunzio, and a pair of thrown-off covers (of "Sea of Love" and "Time Won't Let Me") do nothing to alleviate an atmosphere of fatigue and Contractual Obligation.

So one is left with Iggy, yammering his dopey heart out, singing lines like "I'm gonna squeeze ya / just like a toe-may-toe" with Morrisonian ferocity. It's impossible to hate Iggy, or this album, just as it's impossible to hate a three-year-old who eats dirt. With *Party*, Iggy Pop's title as the Sinatra of Stupid remains unchallenged. — *Chris Morris*

Jaco Pastorius

Word Of Mouth (Warner Bros.)



The album sleeve tells at least part of the story. Sitting at a piano with pencil in mouth is Jaco, deep in thought, eyes zeroed in on

the piano ivories. Not quite the popular image of the "Florida Flash," the dancing, prancing, hot chops Weather Report phenom. This is the other side of Pastorius, the side that aches to be recognized as a "legitimate" composer. Accordingly, this collection relies almost entirely on the bassist's compositions and arrangements. Unfortunately, too often the work of the pencil clutters this somewhat spotty though adventurous attempt.

"Three Views of a Secret" highlights the contrasts between Pastorius' impeccable sense of nuance and his indulgences as a composer. On one hand, he has John Clark on French horn echoing a simple, suggestive counterline opposite Toots Thielmann's harmonica. The idea is great, the execution perfect, everything works. But by tune's end he's banging the listener over the head with screaming Ferguson-like horns and top of the mountain, vibrato-

drenched vocals. Part of the problem is that Pastorius is simply trying too hard. He's forcing compositional techniques and, in the process, sacrificing solo space. One of my favorite spots occurs when the ensemble, possibly edited out in the mix, makes room for Herbie Hancock to solo around a syncopated ostinato line at the end of "Liberty City." Hancock's against-the-beat phrasing, ascending scalar lines and tone clusters loosen the feel and get a rise out of the supporting cast, especially Jack DeJohnette. Certainly, Jaco is full of surprises. His adaptation of Bach's "Chromatic Fantasy" is too insensitive to be classified as interpretation, serving only as a vehicle for the "Flash" to bust out his chops. But "Crisis," a steamrolling up-tempo free-for-all with Wayne Shorter and Mike Brecker blowing tenor madness while Pastorius and DeJohnette thunder the pulse underneath, fares well without the inhibiting structures Jaco tangles his material in. Exemplary string writing is heard in the middle section of "John and Mary" where Copeland-esque voicings provide a cushion for Jaco's gently wailing bass.

If inconsistency mars this record, let it be noted that, to his credit, Pastorius is willing to take risks. Jaco might do well to lighten up a bit, put down the pencil and take a cue from the Miles Davis school of structures and sketches: "Edit." — Peter Giron

Bob Dylan *Shot of Love* (Columbia)



Even before "Like A Rolling Stone," Bob Dylan's work has been laced with apocalypse, so *Shot of Love's* black comic ruminations should come as no surprise, despite being tainted by Bobby Zee's born-again zeal. The initial shock of *Slow Train Coming's* conversion has still not worn off for most critics, who are vituperative in lambasting Dylan's apparently brainwashed banality. What's overlooked in all the fury about Bob's religious beliefs, though, is the steady improvement in his recorded output, with the possible exception of last year's throwaway, *Saved*. From *Street Legal* to the present, Dylan has been up against a lot of stiff competition as his many imitators — from Willie Nile and Mink DeVille to Mark Knopfler, Graham Parker and Bruce Springsteen — employ his own techniques to overshadow him.

But Dylan has subtly altered the sound quality of his records, and *Shot of Love* resonates with the always-distinctive, throaty Dylan delivery, often mocked, rarely duplicated. The title

continued on next page



Bow Wow Wow

By Michael Shore

See Jungle! See Jungle! Go Join Your Gang Yeah! City All Over, Go Ape Crazy! (RCA)

There's a real back-to-the-roots movement happening in England these days — *all the way back to the roots*, as post-punk outfits searching for the Next Big Wrinkle discover the throbbing exotica of Afro-polyrhythms. A hunky Anglo fop named Stuart Goddard heard an ethnic record of Burundi tribesmen getting down before a big battle; inspiration flashed and he became Adam Ant, with a highly percussive, tom-tom driven backup band. Since then, Adam changed bands; the band he left behind was somehow found by noted Svengali Malcolm McLaren, that "Anarchy" man, the bloke who conceptualized the Sex Pistols. Then Malcolm found a precocious, cute fourteen-year-old Burmese immigrant girl (in a laundromat!) claiming to be distantly related to U Thant — Annabella Lwin. With a diabolical gleam in his eye (I'll bet) Malcolm flashed on The Concept: work's an obsolete mythology! The cities are gonna crumble — let's run through the jungle with a sexy little kid leading the way and some borrowed Burundi back-beat keeping everybody happy! Thus was born Bow Wow Wow. In classic McLaren fashion, a sensationally subversive first single was released: the galvanic "C-30, C-60, C-90 Go!," an ode to home-taping of records. The followup was "W.O.F.K.," another happy meeting of tribal polyrhythms and garage rave-up with the inspiration verse, "Demolition of the work ethic takes us to the age of the primitive!"

Ouch! Such transparently manipulative sloganeering! You could practically see Malcolm whispering those words into Little Annabella's ear. But *whoa!* Whatever objections you may have to a puppeteer using a kid — no matter how innocent and/or precocious — as his marionette, hear this band out! Bow Wow Wow is so much more refreshing and uplifting than Adam and the Ants (not to mention a lot of other bands): where the latter are heavily macho and

plodding in their treatment of the Afro-infusion, the Wow are positively effervescent — they romp, stomp and jump. They're all under twenty, and their sound is indeed convincingly youthful, pubescent even: flighty, feisty, impulsive, cute, sexy, gawky, sloppy, ingenuous, falling-into-place rather than fully-formed. Guitarist Matthew Ashman, like the Ants' Marco Pironi, is heavily into a Duane Eddy/Sergio Leone-soundtrack twang thang, but he's equally adept at anything from Flamenco strums to Calypsonian mutant-funk plucking to punky wall-o-sound chording. Leroy Gorman is an astonishingly capable bassist out of the Stanley Clarke/Bootsy Collins thumb-thwack elasto-funk school. There's one pastoral moment at the beginning of "King Kong" on this album where, I swear to God, he sounds exactly like Eberhard Weber! And Dave Barbarossa is a revolutionary "rock" drummer: no snare, no hi-hat, no ride cymbal; only the incessant tribal pounding of the tomtoms and timbales and bass drum, with an occasional cymbal crash for punctuation. Obviously, the timbale lends proceedings as much Latin as African flavor, but no matter — the primitive percussive exotica, the Noble Savage as musical influence, is The Thing.

And then there's Annabella. She may be mouthing Malcolm's platitudes (he does get nearly all the lyric-writing credit), but this is *not* Brooke Shields starring in the post-punk *Tazan* concept LP. She has all the untutored, off-key amateurishness of, say, early Debbie Harry (I never thought Debs could sing, but then I'm one of those people who never thought Dylan could sing, either), and in fact the timbre of her voice is remarkably similar to La Harry's. But Annabella's got 100 times more verve and gusto than Debbie ever had. That little Burma Shave's got projection and personality. Sure, she sounds forced part of the time, and disarming part of the

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continued from previous page

time, but all of the time she sounds alive and kicking and unselfconsciously into it, and that gets across. Though I'll refrain from saying she generates heat, I will readily admit that when, in "Jungle Boy," Annabella lissomely coos "When the cities fall to rubble...go jungle! Let your body do the talking," I've got my pith helmet on, ready to go. Even if I do crack up when she yelps "I understand King Kong...he's outrageous!" or when she camps it up to the hilt as Queen of the Jungle in "Hello Hello Daddy (I'll Sacrifice You)."

All of this holds up surprisingly well over the course of an album, though only on "Chihuahua" (Big Mystery choirs chant over the inexorable jungle boogie; are those the Easter Island statues sashaying over the hills?) and "Go Wild in the Country" (which revs up till it sounds like psychedelized bouzouki-band plate-smashing music) do the Wow equal the pinnacles of "C-30, C-60, C-90 Go!," "W.O.R.K.," "Sexy Eiffel Tower" and "Louis Quatorze" from the *Your Cassette Pet* tape. Just beware of the snakes in the trees, bwana.

continued from previous page

track opens up with some lovely a cappella gospel singing and launches into one of Dylan's patented post-Christian litanies, as he eschews worldly pleasures for the Great Spiritual Beyond. But there's something amiss here. The spiritual arrogance his naysayers accuse him of is perversely self-parodied. Dylan is hoisting himself on his own petard, acknowledging excruciating need. The very first lyrics on the album, "Don't need a shot of heroin to cure my disease," imply he needs another high along the same lines. What no one has suggested, aside from perhaps the inexhaustible Dylanologist A.J. Weberman, is that Dylan may be both a junkie and a born-again Christian. After all, he does martyr Lenny Bruce, doesn't he?

This makes *Shot of Love* a lot more structurally complex than most people give it credit for. As a fan of much of Dylan's 70s work, I think Bobby's just setting us up for his big comeback — the renunciation LP, *Time For Jesus' Boot-Heels to Be Wandering*.

Certainly Dylan's humor hasn't deserted him, either. "Lenny Bruce," taken to task by some for its utter lyrical puerility, resembles similar odes to Hurricane Carter, Joey Gallo and John Wesley Harding, a bitterly sarcastic stab that is certainly no homage to its subject, but a double-edged critique of society and the individual. "Property of Jesus" roasts Dylan's foes with "Positively Fourth Street" whining bitchiness, a sneering Bob barely able to control audible smirking.

The pity about Bob Dylan in 1981, though, is that a once-influential spokesman has shrivelled into a sort of

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whining, mean-spirited gadfly in the public consciousness, his message heartlessly ridiculed and widely misunderstood. Which sounds, ironically enough, just like the way he started, twenty years ago. — Roy Trakin

Bob Seger & the Silver Bullet Band *Nine Tonight* (Capitol)



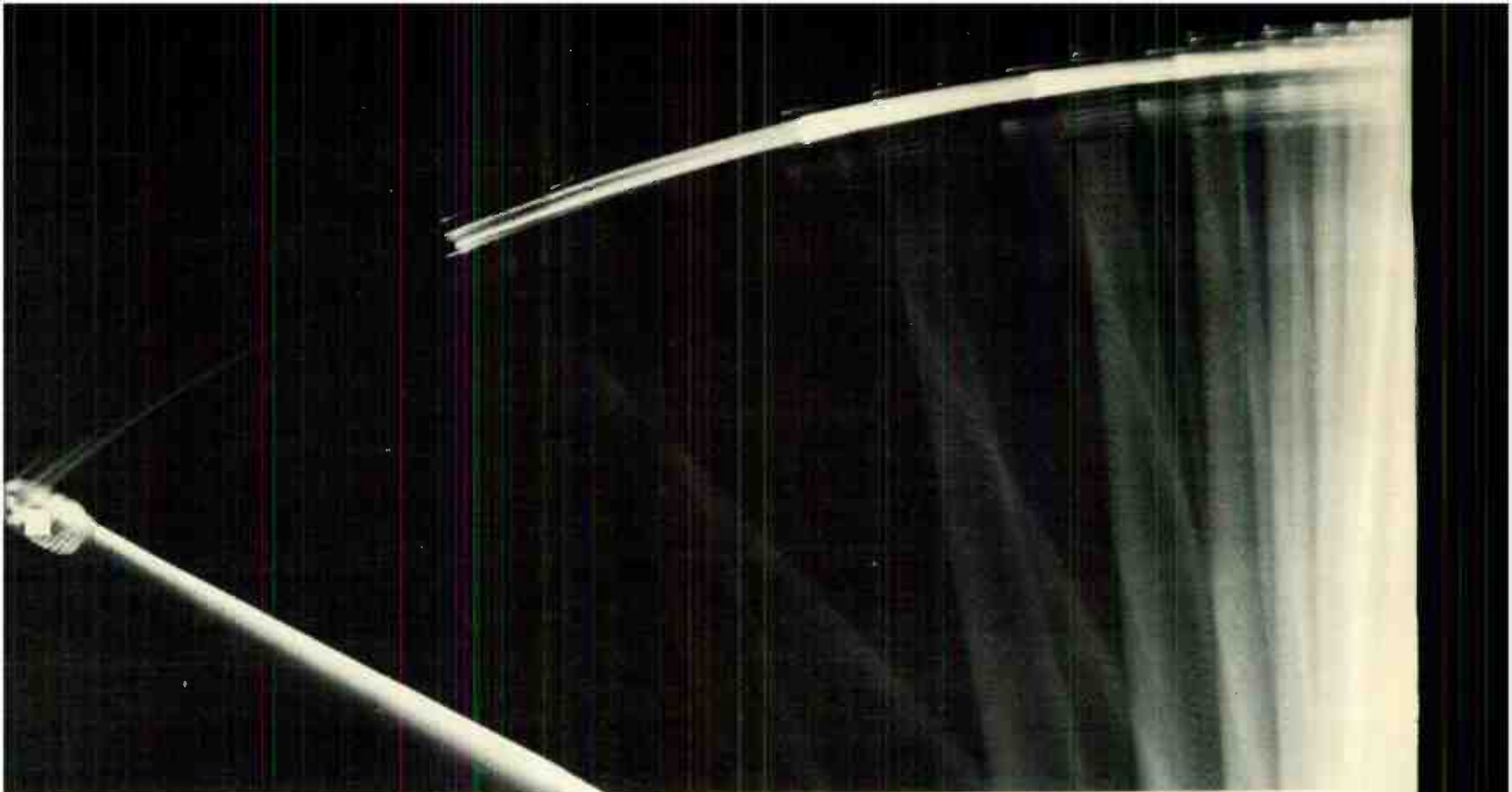
After 11 years of underpaid overtime work in the rock 'n' roll salt mines of the Midwest, Bob Seger & the Silver Bullet Band finally broke into super-

stardom in 1976 with a double live album, *Live Bullet*, recorded on their home turf of Detroit's Cobo Hall. That was the first of four consecutive double platinum albums that yielded seven top-20 singles. Now Seger has returned to Cobo Hall (with some help from the Boston Garden) to get live versions of the songs written since *Live Bullet* for a new double album *Nine Tonight*.

The live versions fall somewhat short of the inspired studio versions on the 1976 *Night Moves*. They juice up the originals from the 1980 *Against the Wind* and improve considerably on the disappointing studio work of the 1978 *Stranger in Town*. The tunes that Seger originally recorded with the Muscle Shoals studio band (about half of each album) sound less precise and more exciting recorded live with the Silver Bullet Band. With three nights in Boston and six nights in Detroit to choose from, the consistency is unusually high for a live album. The record introduces the Silver Bullet Band's new keyboardist Craig Frost, who once played with another Michigan hard rock band, Grand Funk Railroad.

The album pretty much follows the set order on the 1980 tour, leaving out the pre-1976 songs. It opens with the blazing rocker, "Nine Tonight," which previously only appeared on the *Urban Cowboy* soundtrack. The only new song is Eugene Williams' old Memphis soul hit, "Tryin' to Live My Life Without You." Side four is given over to Seger's spectacular encore numbers, "Night Moves," "Rock 'n' Roll Never Forgets" and an oldies medley of Chuck Berry's "Let It Rock," Otis Redding's "Shake" and Berry's "Little Queenie." All in all, *Nine Tonight* is a welcome if unsurprising live document from one of America's very best rock 'n' roll bands.

I still can't understand why the rock media pays so much more attention to Bruce Springsteen than to Bob Seger. Both are hard-nosed working class men who write about the daytime drudgery, weekend wildness and elusive dreams of their friends through soaring, R&B-based rock 'n' roll. Springsteen may



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write better lyrics, but Seger writes better melodies and dance riffs. Springsteen may be a more charismatic stage performer, but Seger is a better singer. I still believe that *Night Moves* is better than any Springsteen album but *The River*. As the new live album proves, "Rock 'n' Roll Never Forgets" is as effective a show-closing rock anthem as "Rosalita" and Seger's Chuck Berry medley is as exciting as Springsteen's Mitch Ryder medley. Moreover, the Silver Bullet Band plays the rock 'n' roll verities with the same authority as the E Street Band.

I suspect that many critics prefer Springsteen the writer to Seger the singer because lyrics are easier to quote than melodies. I don't mean to knock Springsteen, who's obviously brilliant; I just think Seger is unrecognized as a pivotal figure in rock 'n' roll. Seger's gutsy, down-to-earth songs have penetrated the typing pools and shop floors to battle the escapist fluff of Styx and REO Speedwagon. There are few better examples of how to combine quality and integrity with mass appeal than *Nine Tonight*. — Geoffrey Himes

The Mighty Flyers

Radioactive Material (Right Hemisphere)



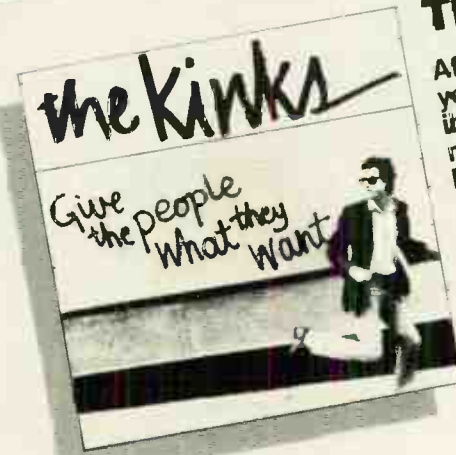
The Fabulous Thunderbirds may be the hottest blues band in the country today, but the Mighty Flyers know the meaning of cool. The

Nighthawks of Washington, D.C. can rock, but the Flyers from California *swing*. On their second album as a group (originally known as the Chicago Flying Saucer Band), the quintet exhibits a degree of confidence equaled only by the T-Birds, and a reserve approached by no one.

Having long ago mastered every one of Little Walter's phrases (both vocally and instrumentally), leader Rod Piazza has matured to the point where he is now the standard by which other harp players are judged. The unpredictable Michael "Junior" Watson on guitar is more than conversant in the Jimmy Rogers/Louis Meyers Chicago school as well as the more sophisticated single-string styles of Tiny Grimes and Oscar Moore. The rhythm section of pianist Debbie "Honey" Alexander, Bill Stuve on upright bass, and drummer Willy Swartz (imagine Gene Krupa jamming with Little Walter) is supportive with a capital "S" (which in this case does not stand for "secondary").

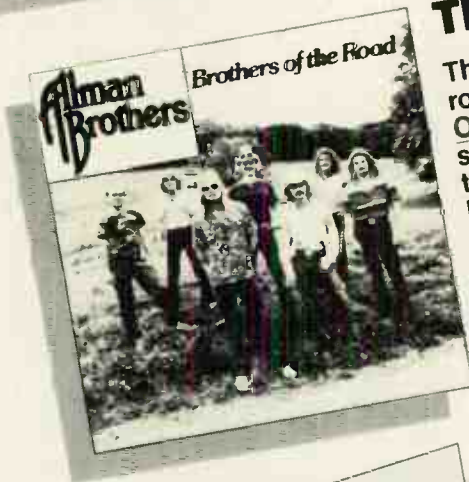
The band's ensemble playing (their strongest suit) is shown to the best advantage on Jimmy McCracklin's "Talk to Your Daughter" and the minor-key "Shot from the Saddle" (by way of

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Delbert McClinton).

The Mighty Flyers' brand of blues is anything but academic, but this one should be required listening for all would-be R&B bands. As with most LPs by young bands of this ilk, *Radioactive Material* is on a small independent label, but the sound and production are as top-notch as the playing. Check it out. (Right Hemisphere Enterprises, 1626 N. Wilcox Ave., Hollywood, CA 90028.) — Dan Forte

Sly and the Family Stone

Anthology (Epic)

Funkadelic

The Electric Spanking of War Babies (Warner Bros.)



One of the progenitors of funk has returned to sing for one of his students. Sly Stone, the Riot Master himself, appears on the latest release

of funkmeister George Clinton, joining such P-Funk free agents as Bootsy Collins, Junie Morrison and Phillippe "Soul" Wynne.

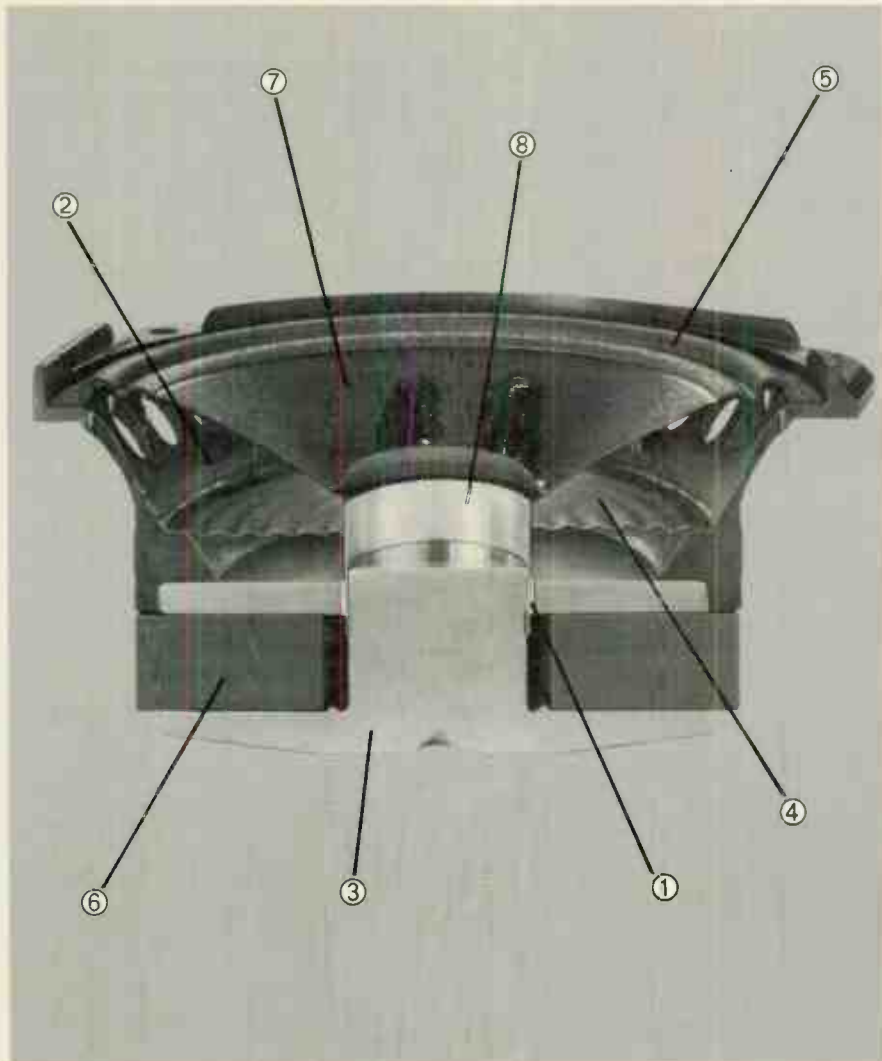
In another time, in another situation, it would be a stone gas to hear Sylvester Stewart chant, "Everything I do from now is gonna be fun-kay." But not this one. Sly's performance on *Electric Spanking*, unfortunately, conjures up his performance on 1979's rambling, burnt-out *Back on the Right Track*, not his charismatic leadership of one of the greatest American bands. That era is offered for comparison on this year's spectacular *Anthology*, which arranges twenty of his best songs chronologically in a double-LP set, all the way from "Dance to the Music" to "Que Sera Sera."

Sly must be having fun with the funk mob, but what a comedown. *Electric Spanking* is campy, canny, sassy, but completely devoid of any of Sly's former humanistic spirit. George Clinton owes so much to Sly's music; the anything-can-happen clutter of Funkadelic may even be what Sly had in mind after *There's a Riot Going On*, give or take a few years. But only when Sly himself sings it does the difference in outlook seem so noticeable.

Sly blew apart the 60s soul-song form with his chaotic arrangements: gospel keyboards, acid rock guitar, Stax-Volt horns in mind-bending combinations. His band was a polyglot of races and sexes playing outside their traditional roles; the all-white male rock group has seemed parochial ever since. For Sly, "the funk" was a way inside. The questions he answers in "Stand," "Everyday People," "Everybody Is a Star," and the questions he asks in "Thank You for Talkin' to Me, Africa" all concern identity

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— a struggle to find, hard to keep, terrifying to lose. Sly sang about real life.

Funkadelic, on the other hand, has become one of the great escapist bands. Starting from a socially-conscious Detroit heavy metal soul music, Clinton seemed to begin to take the heavy metal cult ethos a bit too seriously; nowadays, most of Funkadelic's lyrics are not about real life, but about being Funkadelic.

This is not to say *Electric Spanking* is all that bad. I'd stack "Electro-Cuties" up against most disco songs; it moves like a runaway subway, warning, "You can't short circuit when the kilowatts sock it to you." "Icka Prick" juxtaposes the eyebrow-raising complaint, "You can't get no decent dick in Detroit" against a lovely guitar arabesque.

Still, Clinton's efforts pale before Sly's contribution ten years before. P-Funk could have continued that innovation, could've continued refining Sly's vision. Instead they let it slip from them, to be picked up by the Clash, the Specials and other purveyors of the real world, not some sequin-coated bride of Dr. Funkenstein.

Perhaps it would be best if we thought of *Anthology* as a brand new album that would send shock waves through today's limpid industry. Then we could start the whole thing, or better yet, some new thing, rolling all over again. — *Stuart Cohn*

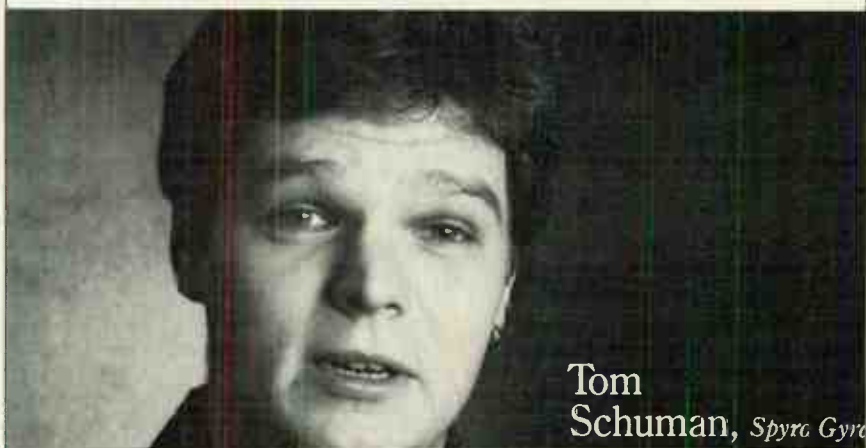
Johnny Hartman *Once in Every Life* (Bee Hive)



Although Johnny Hartman delivers fairly straight readings of tunes — doesn't scat, seldom varies the melody — he has never lost the ability to thrill the most demanding jazz listeners. It has less to do with the echo of his having recorded with Coltrane than with the unmodulated honesty with which he reveals himself through his material: more than with most singers, when you hear the song you touch the man. He does this by presenting himself with honesty and dignity rather than by using the usual round of self-dramatizing devices. Of course, we might all do so well if we had That Voice. Hartman's almost preternaturally resonant baritone must be very comforting to stand behind. He has always been linked to Billy Eckstine and the tradition of "masculine" ballad singing, but although the vocal equipment may be similar, Hartman's noble reserve could not be further from Eckstine's heavily pomaded *seductio ad absurdum*, which in any case belongs to another age.

Hartman doesn't make bad records. On *Once in Every Life* the ballads pre-

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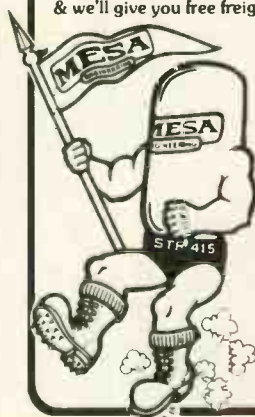
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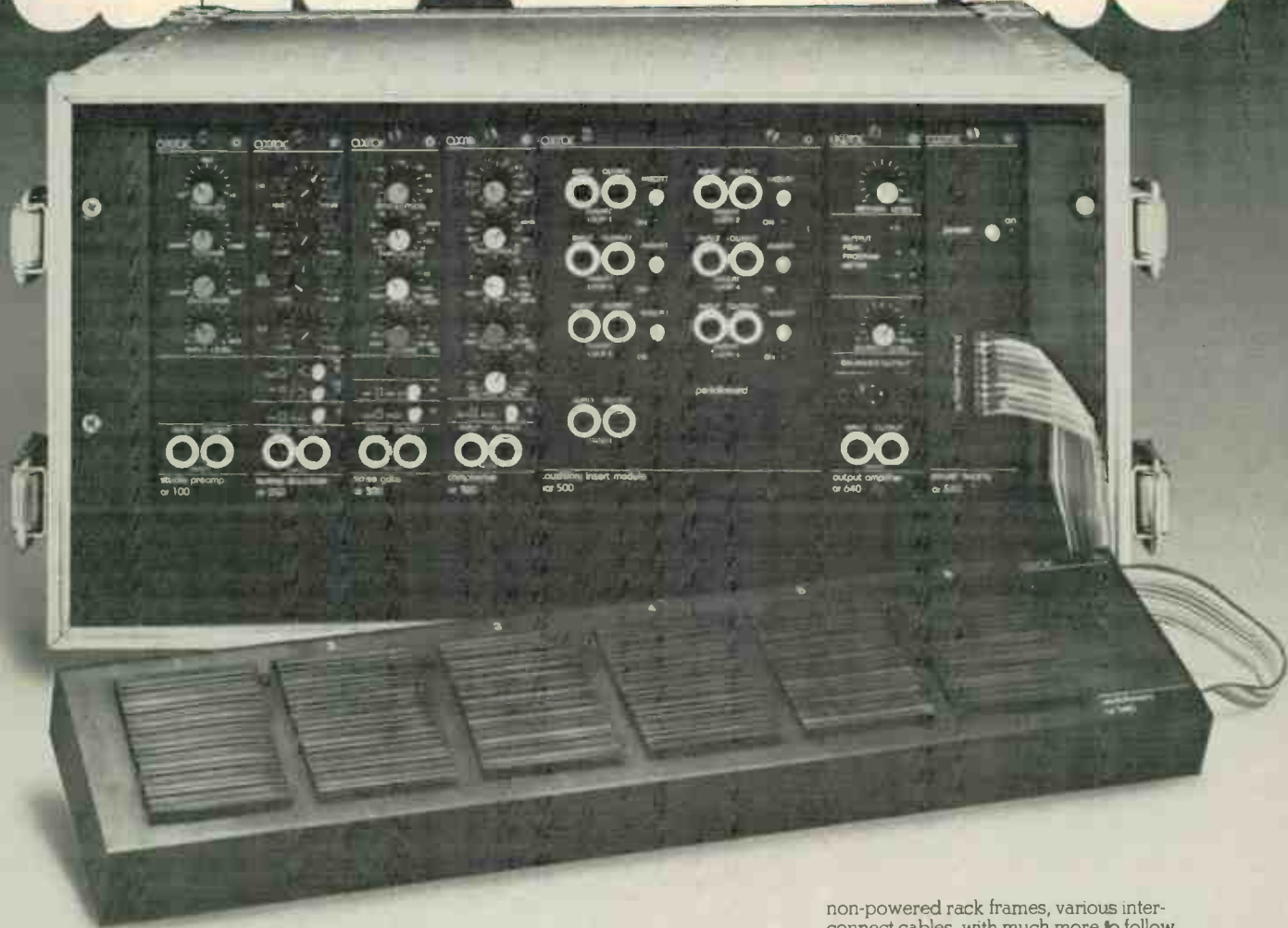
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dominate, as you'd expect — even Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Wave" is taken at a lugubrious tempo — but there are changes of pace to keep you from napping, and the backup band is superlative. The rhythm section of Billy Taylor, Victor Gaskin, Al Gafa and Keith Copeland is sympathetic and assured. For obligatos and the occasional solo there are Joe Wilder and especially Frank Wess, whose tenor playing in particular seems to have taken on greater emotional resonance with age. The repertoire is made up of quality standards and two less expected numbers, "It Was Almost Like a Song" and "Nobody Home," both played with Gafa alone. Against some stiff competition, it's probably the best vocal album anyone has released in months. — *Rati Zabor*

Genesis

Abacab (Atlantic)



It has taken Genesis 12 years and as many albums to make their latest release, *Abacab*. On this collection of nine songs, presumably the

best of what was originally slated to be a double-album, Genesis sounds like a group for the first time.

On *Abacab*, Genesis rallies around a multitude of styles with great enthusiasm. Such open-mindedness was sorely lacking on *Duke*, their last LP; its return is aided by the band's slimmed-down yet still-subtle sound.

Duke showed a band severely splintered; its successor was bound to be either a fresh readjustment or a desperate failure. Fortunately and untypically, it was the former. Never before has Genesis achieved such a continuity of sound between their songs, never before have they displayed the balance of individual contribution that is evident on each of *Abacab*'s tracks; nor has their power ever been captured as crisply and accurately as by producer Hugh Padgham.

The name "Abacab," which is also the title of the album's opening cut, is derived from the melodic pattern AB-AC-AB, a sequence common among standard rock songs. On the album, "abacab" is used as a password for the rock star persona; autobiographical implications can be assumed.

Abacab is not, however, a concept album in the grand tradition of the term. The rock star theme is only obvious on the album's opening and closing tracks, between which are placed a solo composition by each of the band's three members and four group-composed gems. Though many would disagree, Genesis has shown it is not an idea whose time has come and gone. — *David Stanton*

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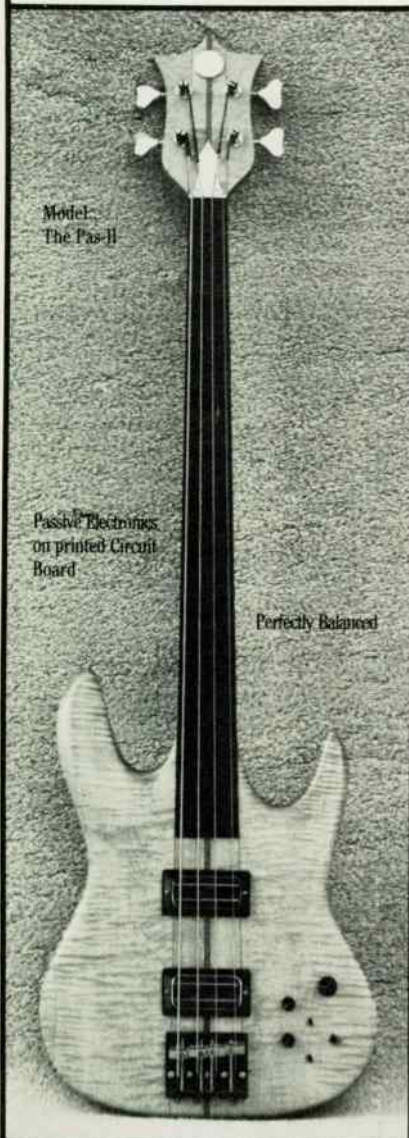
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The Kinks

Give The People What They Want (Arista)



First, you note the sound: hard, mean, direct, punkish in spots. *Give The People What They Want* has the spirit of primordial Kinks,

the early days of terse, straight-shooting meanings ("You Really Got Me Now") and Dave Davies' guitar recklessness, alternately delivering and denying familiar, danceable rock rhythms.

This younger, deterministic quality is crucial to *Give The People's* crisis tone; a long, feverish night of questions and soul-searching lie ahead, outdistancing even Ray Davies' atypically autobiographical note of despair on *Misfits'* "Rock and Roll Fantasy." This time, however, there's no lush, reassuring synthesizer wash — instead it's huge slabs of Dave Davies' metalloïd power chords that dominate the mix. This time, Ray is in no mood to flesh out his usual, delicate balances of satire and compassion in vignettes about submissive, inert time-frittering wretches. Why? I don't know. I do know that compassion is ultimately found for the pedophiles, killers, and despairing lovers inhabiting this album.

But compassion, like reassurance, returns only as the fever ebbs.

Give The People demonstrates that the Kinks have much to gain by grounding their sophistication and wit in sheer toughness again. Against the slogging, harsh playing, coloration becomes particularly poignant instead of a given. A harp in "Killer Eyes," radio noise in "Around the Dial," the joyful, rocking piano burst that begins the album's consoling closer, "Better Things" — these raise the emotion pitch of Davies' songs through inter-arrangement tensions.

Give The People begins with stark displacement ("Around the Dial"), takes an accusatory posture ("Give them lots of violence/plenty to hate!"), carefully begins balancing sympathy and outrage toward Davies' stock, alienated characters at their most obscene point of despair ("Killer Eyes"), and ends with a renewed, acerbic Ray eschewing simplistic, black and white perceptions of a domestic dilemma ("A Little Bit of Abuse").

"Destroyer" and "Yo-Yo" actually invert Davies' standard vignette form, so that we hear characters' thoughts and try to make sense, moral or otherwise, of their behavior. "Destroyer" is "Lola" retold via the imploding guilt of Lola's pickup, and "Yo-Yo" alternates its "Sweet Jane"-like chorus among no less than four individuals who fail or

PICK HITS

Pick Hits is a monthly survey of what our learned staff feels to be the cream of the current crop of album releases and concerts. Each critic is allowed up to five "Hot" votes (one of which can be an "oldie" that they've been listening to), and one "Cold" vote — plus one "Live Pick" concert vote. A guest musician's choices will also be included each month.

JON PARELES: Hot: **Tom Verlaine** — *Dreamtime* (Warners) **Was Not Was** — (Ze) **Joan Armatrading** — *Walk Under Ladders* (A&M) **Blurt** — *In Berlin* (Slash) **Method Actors** — *Dancing Underneath* (DB)

Cold: **Pretenders** — *Pretenders II* — (Sire)

Live Picks: Bonnie Raitt / NRBC — The Pier, New York City.

VIC GARBARINI: Hot: **Black Uhuru** — *Red* (Island) **King Crimson** — *Discipline* (Warners)

Blurt — *In Berlin* (Slash) **The Grateful Dead** — *Dead Set* (Arista) **The Rolling Stones** — *Tattoo You* (Rolling Stones)

Cold: **Meat Loaf** — *Dead Ringer* (Epic)

Live Picks: The Roches — The Bottom Line, NYC.

DAVE MARSH: Hot: **The Au Pairs** — *Playing With A Different Sex* (Human/Import) **Elvis Presley** — *This Is Elvis* (RCA) **Bob Dylan** — *Shot Of Love* (Columbia) **The Go-Go's** — *Beauty And The Beat* (I.R.S.) **The Specials** — *Ghost Town* (Chrysalis EP)

Cold: **The Rolling Stones** — *Tattoo You* (Rolling Stones)

Live Picks: I can't stay up that late anymore.

J. D. CONSIDINE: Hot: **The Police** — *Ghosts In The Machine* (A&M) **Tom Verlaine** — *Dreamtime* (Warners) *Phases of The Moon* (Traditional Chinese music) (CBS Masterworks) **Adam and The Ants** — *Stand And Deliver* (Epic EP) **Jr. Walker & The All Stars** — *Shotgun* (Soul)

Cold: **The Rolling Stones** — *Tattoo You* (Rolling Stones)

Live Picks: Mink DeVille — Painters Mill, Baltimore

IAN HUNTER: Hot: **The Go-Go's** — *Beauty And The Beat* (I.R.S.) **The Rolling Stones** — *Tattoo You* (Rolling Stones) **Bob Dylan** — *Shot Of Love* (Columbia) **Michael Jackson** — *Off The Wall* (Epic) **James Brown** — *James Brown's Greatest Hits Vol. II* (Solid Smoke)

Cold: **Spandau Ballet** — (Chrysalis)

Live Picks: Frank Sinatra — Carnegie Hall, NYC.

RAFI ZABOR: Hot: **Archie Shepp/Horace Parlan** — *Trouble in Mind* (Steeplechase) **Shannon Jackson & the Decoding Society** — *Nasty* (Moers Music) **McCoy Tyner** — *La Leyenda de la Hora* (Columbia) **James "Blood" Ulmer** — *Freelancing* (Columbia) **Swamp Dogg** — *I'm Not Selling Out, I'm Buying In* (Takoma)

Live Picks: Anthony Braxton — Woodstock Jazz Festival

BRIAN CULLMAN: Hot: **Augustus Pablo** — *East Of The River Nile* (Message) **T-Bone Burnette** — *Truth Decay* (Takoma) **James Brown** — *Can Your Heart Stand It?* (Solid Smoke) **Mink DeVille** — *Coup-de-Grace* (Atlantic) **Meredith Monk** — *Dolman Music* (ECM)

refuse to communicate with their lovers.

In the end, the lovely "Better Things," one of Davies' hard-earned epiphanies, closes *Give The People's* personal ordeal with a toast. The sun is up, and unsure as I still am about why all that pain had to happen, I'm glad — proud — to have been there. — *Tam Keogh*

McCoy Tyner

La Leyenda De La Hora (The Legend of the Hour) (Columbia)



Though it's too soon to tell, this release may well mark a transition period in the distinguished career of McCoy Tyner. He has ended his ten

year association with Milestone Records and now records for Columbia, where they allow him to produce his own material. The change must agree with him, because the results here are exceptional. Tyner has not only incorporated traditional Latin elements, but has also ingeniously fused Latin improvisational elements onto his established modes of expression.

The listener gets the impression that Tyner knew exactly what he wanted before this project ever reached the studio. There are five tracks in this package and no single piece outclasses another: they are *all* gems. The opener, "La Vida Feliz" (The Happy Life), begins with a familiar unaccompanied Tyner vamp which bursts into full ensemble, paving the way for short, meticulously constructed solo ventures by Bobby Hutcherson, tenorist Chico Freeman and Tyner. With both Hutcherson on vibes and Tyner on keyboards playing harmonic instruments, you would imagine that they might step on each other's toes occasionally. However, these two players have worked together before, and it shows throughout the album. Traditional Latin stylings are most apparent on "Jacara" (A Serenade). The melody is started by Tyner in octaves, repeated by the string section and the rest is Tyner playing at his lyrical, impassioned best. "Walk Spirit, Talk Spirit," a twelve-bar minor blues built around a repeating vamp comes closest to capturing the raw power of Tyner's live performances. Since it's the longest cut on the record the soloists get a chance to stretch out, and they make the most of it. Motor City stalwart Marcus Belgrave on trumpet, Freeman (he just gets better and better) and bassist Avery Sharpe all follow Tyner's lead and blow steam heat into this blues, while Ignacio Berroa powers the band from behind the traps and Daniel Ponce's percussion (which throughout the ensemble sections mostly lays back in the mix) rests in the groove and offers gracious support.

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The recording quality, though expertly engineered by Rudy Van Gelder, is slightly reminiscent of past Columbia jail albums like Freddie Hubbard's "Super Blue" and Cedar Walton's "Animation." The bass drum seems high in the mix, and on the first cut the string bass sounds like an electric bass. But let's not nit-pick. With this record, Tyler should silence the criticism he's taken in the recent past. This is one of the year's best. — Peter Giron

Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis and Johnny Griffin

Live at Minton's (Prestige)

Willie Jackson and Von Freeman
Live Lockin' Horns (Muse)



Two mock tenor battles are presented here, a 1961 evening at Minton's Playhouse in Harlem with the robust, elegant Davis-Griffin

team and a more raucous, gutsy 1978 outing with Jackson and Freeman. The latter two have paid their dues with many years in organ-guitar combos on the chitlins circuit while the former pair have been fortunate to have had classier assignments with the likes of Basie and Monk, and the influence of those respective backgrounds comes roaring through in the playing. Jackson and Freeman are conceptually more simplistic than Davis and Griffin, relying on emotional outbursts rather than creative line design to thrill an audience, while their counterparts excite both the mind, with subtle melodic brilliance, and the emotions, with hard-charging swing. In each setting, the hornmen play lengthy solos, fully exploring a variety of material and tempo. Jackson and Freeman get their fingers tangled and tongues twisted when the tempos get heated, but Davis and Griffin have no such problems with pace.

"Light and Love y" is representative of the quality performances that constitute *Minton's*. This archetypal medium blues is an optimum cruising device for 'Lockjaw,' who glides without revealing effort, purring out round-toned arpeggios, dispatching intricate statements tagged with twirling triplets, emitting ecstatic upper register brays. Also a marvel is Davis' superb breath control, which is the basis of his magnificent, multi-hued tone. Griffin, like his partner, cites Ben Webster as a primary source of inspiration, and he, too, has a buoyant sound, albeit a brighter one, especially at the top of the horn. Here on "Light" he prances, issuing delicate double-times offset by long, wailing cries. Pianist Junior Mance climaxes his choruses with some perfectly placed, ten-fingered rol-

ling filigree. The rest of the session, with such standards as "Straight No Chaser," "Woody'n' You," and "Robbin's Nest," but no ballads, is equally first class. Highly recommended 60s blowing jazz.

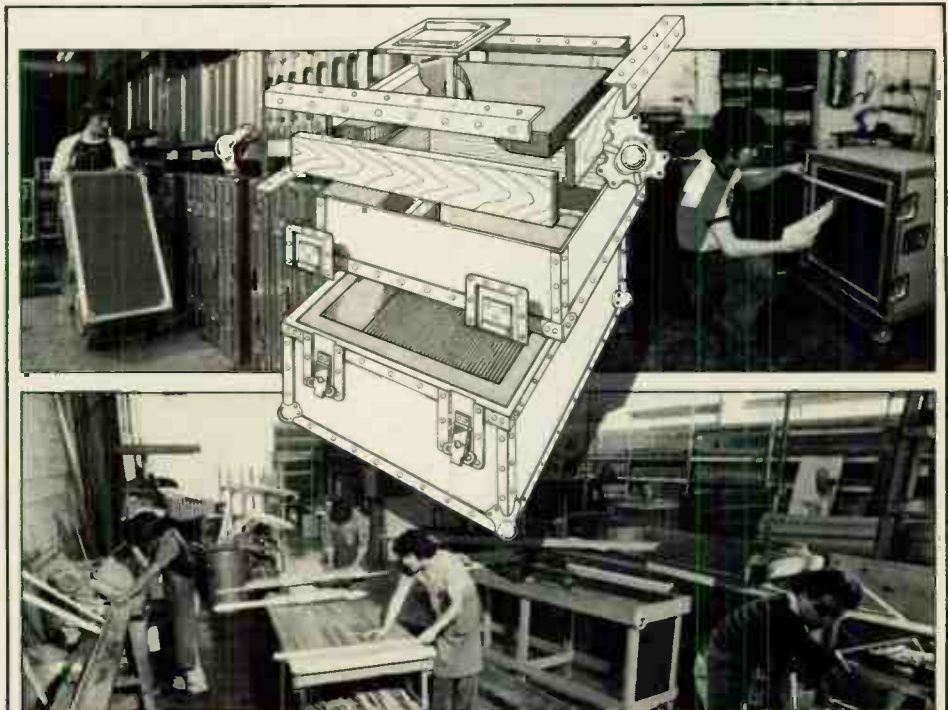
Lockin' is a ballads and blues party, highlighting Jackson's direct, throaty tone and Freeman's sometimes breathy yet centered, sometimes wispy and wavering sound, backed by organist Carl Wilson, guitarist Joe Jones and drummer Yusef Ali. The blues are best when played medium — the leaders and Jones lay out some succulent phrases — but the ballads are inconsistent, Freeman preaching passionately on "Shadow of Your Smile" while Jackson turns "The Man I Love" into a circus of preposterously corny excesses. Both leaders have fared better. — Zan Stewart

Ramones
Pleasant Dreams (Sire)



The Ramones have always occupied a delicate position in relation to time — raiders of rock's past to reinvigorate the music's

present, reintegrating the two in their own image as the self-claimed future of rock. But on their sixth album, *Pleasant Dreams*, the band's temporal sense is way off. When they brought on Phil Spector as producer on their last record, the purpose was not to recapture the past but to update it. With their new record, though, the band's backward-



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L. Shankar
Who's To Know (ECM)



When confronted with a record of music from a tradition thousands of years old, which is exquisite in its approach to rhythm and im-

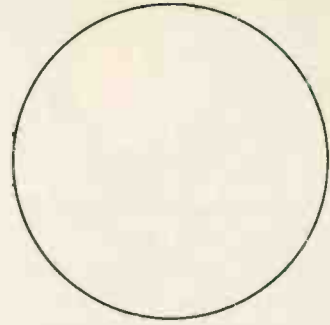
provisation, and which makes extraordinary demands on its players as well as on its listeners, one cannot help but feel like Marco Polo arriving for the first time in the glittering court of Kublai Khan, that is to say, like a barbarian. Be that as it may...

The violin, in the form of the sarangi, has been used in Indian music for hundreds of years. The violin Shankar uses on the record has two necks, to increase the range, and sympathetic strings, which give it a pronounced echo-y effect. Although it is billed as a record of Indian classical music, traditional Indian music seems to me to be only its jumping-off place. This is a record by a pioneer. Side one begins traditionally enough by exploring the raga *Hemavathi*, but ends in uncharacteristic blue notes, vaguely Western bowing patterns, and harmonies that seem to be a further development of the traditional Indian approach. Shankar builds up a layered, orchestral sound, almost as if the sound of a single violin itself was not enough for him, which is perhaps why the instrument Shankar invented, and uses throughout the album, is a strange combination of Western technology and Indian tradition.

Shankar's playing, as usual, is technically superb. His intonation is perfect. Yet, there is something unsatisfying about the album emotionally. He seems to play in a world of his own. The scintillating interplay between tabla players and soloist is almost entirely missing. As brilliant as the improvisational investigations of the raga are, there is no warmth. Part of the problem may be the recording. The tablas sound awful, as if all their sound has been processed through a compressor. This could account in part for the coldness of Shankar's sound, but in the final analysis, the responsibility is Shankar's.

Despite the faultless technique and the truly innovative harmonic and rhythmic approach, the record left me with my heart unmoved. It is obvious that Shankar has mastered the instrument, perhaps better than anyone else ever has. Now all that is needed is for the player to mature and ripen, so that the music that comes through is worth listening to. — Jason A. Shulman

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ROCK

By David Fricke

SHORT TAKES

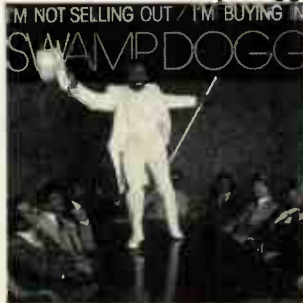
Icehouse



Jo Jo Zep & the Falcons



Swamp Dogg



John Entwistle



Icehouse (Chrysalis) Too easily dismissed as the Aussie Ultravox, Icehouse (formerly Flowers) are in fact closer to our very own Cars in their deft execution of post-punk pop moves with rock muscle and transistorized clarity. And if songs like the sunny "We Can Be Together" and the Euro-melodrama of "Sons" are skeletal song ideas in cold wave clothing, note the haunting chiller of a title track and the magnum force of "Can't Help Myself" and remember these are the first ten songs guitarist/singer Iva Davies ever wrote. And speaking of things cold, you should hear their live rendition of "Cold Turkey."

Jo Jo Zep & the Falcons — *Step Lively* (Columbia) The best little dance band Down Under wins Round Two in the States with this slightly altered version of their last Aussie LP. The spirited K.C.-produced covers of "But It's Alright" and "Gimme Little Sign" are obvious singles gambits and the originals don't yet have the classic ring of "So Young" or "Shape I'm In" from last year's *Screaming Targets*. But if you have to think about the *Twilight Zone* — Michael Jackson funk of "Sweet Honey Sweet" and the randy ska hop of "Puppet on a String," do it with your feet.

Swamp Dogg — *I'm Not Selling Out/I'm Buying In* (Takoma) The mad rappin', hot rockin' funny man of R&B returns after too long an absence with a good time platter with more smiles and soul per groove than George Clinton's recent bad acid-funk trips. So nice, too, to hear Dogg and soul queen Esther Phillips lock vocal cords on "The Love We Got Ain't Worth Two Dead Flies." Songtitle of the month: "California Is Drowning and I Live by the River."

John Entwistle — *Too Late the Hero* (Atco) As befits a bassist, the Who's

Quiet One plays this one real heavy, certainly much heavier than *Face Dances*, and guests Joe Walsh and Joe Vitale oblige with both muscle and supportive finesse. Although short on the novelty horror numbers a la "Boris the Spider," the album sports Entwistle's best solo writing in many moons and his dark wit scores a direct hit with the disco parody "Dancing Master," complete with overdubbed Chipmunk-Bee Gee harmonies. And one-quarter Who is always better than none at all.

Poco — *Blue and Gray* (MCA) Not unlike the Eagles' *Desperado* in its daguerreotype Civil War motif and brisk backwoods rock production Poco's latest shows — their recent AM fodder withstanding — there's life in the old band yet. Poco purists note: Rusty Young's specialty, electric steel guitar, is almost nowhere to be heard.

Novo Combo (Polydor) Above-average modern pop with a real Sting to it. One-time Santana rhythm ace Michael Shrieve keeps expert, imaginative time and the mesh of ringing guitars and Utopian harmonies is alluring indeed. The only problem with imitations, even a good Police one, is that it's still an imitation.

Karla DeVito — *Is This a Cool World or What?* (Epic) Is this a fun album or what? Ex-Orchestra Luna, ex-Meat Loaf, and currently the love interest in the B'way *Pirates of Penzance* spectacle, DeVito belts out the twelve songs here — some her own work — like all three Shangri-Las rolled into one against a bright neo-Loaf backdrop minus the Great Fatsby's overblown theatrics. The covers of the Grass Roots' "Midnight Confessions" and Randy Newman's "Just One Smile" are a pleasant surprise, but a moratorium is hereby called on John

Fogerty's "Almost Saturday Night."

Nils Lofgren — *Night Fades Away* (Backstreet/MCA) Not so much a Nils Lofgren album as producer Jeff Baxter's idea of what a Nils Lofgren album should sound like if it's going to sell. Which means heavy on the homogenized session back-up and light on Nils' own flick-knife guitar, with the guest of honor singing like a fish out of water. "Night Fades Away," "Ancient History" and the raucous "Dirty Money" are hardly the worst songs he's ever written, but you'd never know it from the sound of this.

Human Sexual Response — *In a Roman Mood* (Passport) With a four-piece vocal section that wails like the Jefferson Airplane after the holocaust and a guitar-bass-drums backfield kicking like Gang of Zeppelin, HSR play for keeps on their second LP. More adventurous, less cutesy material ("Andy Fell" — dark Banshees-like pop, the PiL-headbanger "Public Alley 909") and the gritty production of Mike Thorne (Shirts, Wire, Cale) make all the difference. Besides, how can you resist their resurrection of the Balloon Farm's "A Question of Temperature?"

Billy Squier — *Don't Say No* (Capitol) Competent, oft-tuneful, but generally unremarkable hard-rock descended from the House of Zeppelin. Small wonder it's all over AOR radio.

Sheena and the Rokkets (A & M) From the land of the rising Plastics comes this latest Japanese import, an '81 top 40 compact with new wave lines. Unfortunately, it runs like an Edsel. Sheena sings like she's got some terminal flu, the songs are strictly Archiesville, the Rokkets play like tinker toys. Sayonara.

Ronnie Wood — *1234* (Columbia) Or "Dylan gets Stoned." It's not enough that

continued on page 116

FRANK BEARD - TOP'S BOTTOM



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be equal. Other pieces are post-Braxtonian or vamp-based and modal. It's good, but, knowing what Clayton can do, I had higher expectations.

Steve Lacy is one of the few (only?) musicians to make European expatriation more than a mere holding pattern. Lacy's Paris band, with his wife Irene Aebi on cello and voice, altoist Steve Potts and a fine rhythm section, is one of the best of his career. Got two Lacy albums here, first being **Steve Lacy/Brion Gysin Songs** (hat ART 1985/86). Gysin is Wm. Burroughs's fellow cutup and has written some post-hip doggerel ("Oh I'm a baboon, I'm a blue baboon, I'm a true baboon, I'm one helluva hulla-baloo baboon") to which Lacy has set music. It's a pretty funny record and like most of Lacy's music it sounds as if it had been beaten up and been sleeping in the street. Good Lacy, good Potts, some eye-opening piano from Bobby

Few, and although it's become some people's favorite Lacy album I find myself preferring **Steve Lacy/Steve Potts Tips** (hat Hut 1R20), featuring only Lacy's soprano, Potts' alto, and Irene Aebi singing the notebook maxims of cubist painter Georges Braque. Great project. The maxims are fine for any artist or human, and Lacy's band has always turned on the contrast between his own obliquity and Potts' passion. Here, that's all there is and it works like a charm.

There's another unusual vocal setting on **Robert Ashley's Perfect Lives (Private Parts): The Bar** (Lovely Music 4904), but the voice talks rather than sings. It's a long, funny, mostly conversational poem written over minimal bar-room piano, Ashley's voice is droll and dry; I like the poem and the piano but have not yet felt like listening to the whole thing through in one sitting. Still

it's kind of fun. Roscoe Mitchell has been the most important experimentalist in jazz for the last dozen years, and I generally perk up when one of his albums comes along. **Tom Buckner/Gerald Oshita/Roscoe Mitchell, New Music for Woodwinds and Voice** (1750 Arch 1785) features one side of Oshita compositions, one of Mitchell's. I think Oshita's pieces come off better and it's because of the prominence Mitchell has given here to Tom Buckner's voice. He sings long notes in a clear, pure tone and sounds totally artificial; listening to him has clarified for me how very difficult it is to write effective new music for voice. The voice has so many customary uses that when you want it to do something odd, your music had better have some pretty compelling internal reasons for doing so, or you will sound silly faster than you will on an instrument. Sounds good, might even be true. Now, if we only had an album from Jeanne Lee, the Sarah Vaughan of the avant-garde...

Following in the non-tradition of Mitchell is reedman **Ned Rothenberg**, whose solo *Trials of the Argo* (Lumina 001) actually introduces a range of saxophone sounds Mitchell and Braxton haven't gotten to yet. "Trials" is a long piece that uses overdubs and is filled with sounds you would not think could come from a reed instrument: percussion in a rain forest, a chorus of tiny whales, a didjeridoo. The piece seems a lesser version of George Lewis' "Imaginary Suite," and at first I thought it was more of a technical than a musical achievement. A listen to "Continuo After the Inuit," the solo alto piece that makes up the rest of the album, changed my mind. Rothenberg is an exceptionally gifted young musician working on the extreme fringe, destined for no great popularity probably, but likely to keep some of us awake nights.

And now for something completely different: *Nangape* by **Yaya Diallo** (on Zou 001), a lovely album whose point I managed to miss completely last month. Diallo is an obviously fine African balafonist and drummer who is joined on the album only by a young flutist named Sylvain Leroux. At first I was bothered by the rigor of the overdubs — Diallo plays a number of parts on each cut, layering drums and balafon to approximate a group — because the time didn't seem to have the give and take of an ensemble. Must have my ears fixed someday. Diallo is from Mali, and since the album has much of the sound magic of Chico Freeman's "Kings of Mali," I can only assume that Chico was really listening. Available, like most things, from NMDS. **Erratum:** Among the typos in last month's column, the following sentence was omitted from the Jarrett review: "'The Moth and the Flame' is one of Jarrett's most unalloyed successes for solo piano." It makes more sense that way and credit where credit is due. **M**

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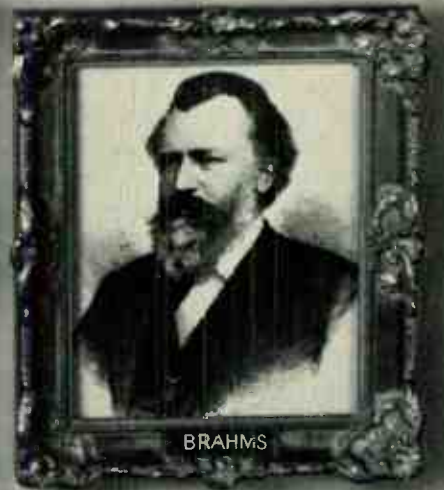
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Anderson from pg. 33
unpredictably winding solos, which reel out, drop below one's consciously reacting surface, then are pulled taut, hook and hold.

"I've thought about that word, radical," he reconsiders. "It can be reinterpreted in too many different ways. At this late stage in my life, I'm still just as enthusiastic about my music as I ever was. But I'm looking at things now in a somewhat different way."

Fripp from pg. 48

the staff collecting tickets from the concert-goers put a proportion of the tickets in their back pocket, which were shared out between the promoter and them. And then the promoter could quite justifiably say that ticket receipts were low. But any promoter in Italy, even with good political connections, accepted

liability for damage at venues. If King Crimson didn't play that night in Rome, it was a reasonable guess that 15,000 rock fans would rearrange the architecture. Remember that Big P had forked out for the glass wall the night before and that this was a time of changing political sensibilities in the youth culture of Europe. So he had no alternative but to tell the ticket takers that the fiddle was off, and this he did in a dressing room which inadvertently John Wetton walked into. John told us that he realised something was going on when a lot of shouting froze into embarrassed silence as he walked in. So he turned round and walked straight out.

The performance itself went quite well. I can remember it: we battered the crowd with sound for forty minutes to make enough room for ten minutes of experimenting. Then as attention wan-


dered we built up another level of pounding for twenty or thirty minutes, so a pulped crowd would feel it had its money's value and go home happy. And then come back next time. Like football. We even got a standing ovation for a second encore. This took us by surprise, as we were changing. We only learnt about it because the small contingent of police, who we recognised because they were the only ones behind the stage with machine guns, sent a message to us pleading with us to play a second encore. They had the job of keeping the peace, and, outnumbered by maybe six hundred to one, peaceful remonstrance wouldn't have worked and machine gunning a token number of the audience might not have worked either. (A proportion of whom were pulling out the power cables as a prelude to architectural rearrangement.) The promoter seemed relaxed at the prospect of the damage bill: he had been screwing a 13-year-old teeny bimbi on our dressing room table while we were on stage. Naturally, we were very happy to do a second encore. We decided to play "Cat Food."

As we walked on stage the angry crowd became very happy and they cheered. Meanwhile, as I walked on stage a young man followed me into an area closed to the public. He was friendly, his movements slow, and a strange smile balanced on his mouth; he was seeing vistas beyond the normal. Since this was a restricted zone the promoter's muscular, sharply dressed right-hand man, the one who carried a gun, hit the happy hippy, whose blood reached the stage before he did. The happy crowd of 15,000 became very angry at the sight of one of them being roughly treated and our only hope was to play, trusting the power of music to bring order. Bill gave us a rapid count of four, but the only sound to emerge from King Crimson in the Palais at that moment was Bill hitting his kit, acoustically: the crowd had pulled out the power cables. We had no amplification and no P.A. So we stopped and stood in front of 15,000 angry people, a bleeding hippy, nervous police with machine guns, distressed ticket takers, a furious but mellow Big P and a 13-year-old teeny bimbi who I never met to ask her reaction to events. And we stood. This was the moment that I lost hope. Of course, the road team managed to run down the cables and eventually the power came on and we played "Cat Food." It even went down well, and we got paid our full percentage. Except, at that time, Italy had stringent currency restrictions and it was quite impossible, and illegal, to take lira of any amount out of the country. And a group of King Crimson's prestige and standing would never fly out of Italy with the entire proceeds of an Italian tour in their shoes. In high denomination bills.

A few months later King Crimson "ceased to exist" and I began to talk a lot about small, mobile and intelligent units.

.....to be continued.

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Rock Shorts from pg. 108

the Rolling Stones have just given us their best album in years. Now Keef-a-like Ron Wood goes and makes the best Dylan album in years, a shot of gin-soaked British rock 'n' blues played by famous friends and topped by Woody's remarkably familiar nasally whine. Yes, Bob, they do make albums like you used to. It's as easy as 1234.

Blue Oyster Cult — *Fire of Unknown Origin* (Columbia) Where once their heavy metal left you black and blue, recent records find the Cult lacing more commercial tunes with melodramatic dread and an overdose of Dr. Shock keyboards. As compromises go, this is a much better bet than their next-to-last album *Mirrors*, and with "Burnin' For You" Buck Dharma has finally come up with a worthy successor to "(Don't Fear) the Reaper."

Arthur Lee (Rhino) No love lost here. "I Do Wonder" captures some of that old *Da Capo* magic, "Happy You" is upbeat Hendrixana, and the HM overhaul of "7 & 7 Is" — though no patch on the original — certainly beats Alice Cooper's recent interpretation. But most of the album sounds like incomplete demos and his reading of Jimmy Cliff's "Many Rivers to Cross" is a disaster.

Rodney Crowell (Warner Bros.) Has this ol' Hot Band boy made a bad album yet? Ace tunes, crack rock 'n' roll with a Confederate twang, and just enough Nashville schmaltz to sweeten the pot.

The John Hall Band — *All of the Above* (Capitol) What's wrong with this album? It's got slick AM production, eminently sellable material, soaring Eagles harmonies, and just enough guitar solos to keep the axe freaks happy. What's wrong? All of the above. It just sounds like Orleans gone Hollywood.

Meat Loaf — *Dead Ringer* (Cleveland International) Absence has not made this heart grow fonder. The Round Mound of Sound is back in full bull elephant voice, but Jim Steinman is capable of writing only one kind of song — and he does it over and over and over again — while the epic scope of Todd Rundgren's production on *Bat Out of Hell* has been reduced here to almost monaural monotony. Warning: Mr. Loaf's duet with Cher on the Mitch Ryder cop "Dead Ringer for Love" could be bad for your health. You may die laughing. P.S. The fact that this album is actually selling is strictly a Pavlovian response.

The Raincoats — *Odyshape* (Rough Trade) Charming, confounding, challenging chamber punk from one of Britain's most underacclaimed bands. The all-female Raincoats (assisted on occasion here by Robert Wyatt and ex-PiL percussionist Richard Dudanski) share the Slits' affinity for tribal earthbeats but use them atmospherically to underscore the fragile oblique melodicism of their songs and exotic application of cello and rhythm instruments. The odyshape of things to come. **M**

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Books from pg. 21
Mississippi). A group of critical essays about the king of rock 'n' roll, etc. Sometimes the authors' fixation on Presley as a Southerner, to the exclusion of more widespread views, can be maddening. But Linda Ray Pratt's "Elvis, or the Ironies of a Southern Identity" more than makes up for that, and the two essays which zero in on Elvis as a musical entity (Charles Wolfe's "Presley and the Gospel Tradition" and Richard Middleton's "All Shook Up? Innovation and Continuity in Elvis Presley's Vocal Style") cover long neglected and utterly fundamental aspects of his style. A little academic, of course, but what isn't? B plus.

Beginning to See the Light, by Ellen Willis (Knopf). Willis has the capacity to convince you that Christgau isn't an absolutist ideologue and I've never trusted her unreconstructed hippie utopianism. Her concerns here are more wide ranging than rock, which occupies less than a quarter of the text. But while I may think that her demonizing of marriage and monogamy is stupid, I know that what Willis has to say about Dylan, Presley and Creedence (if not the Who) is important, and not because she's the "only important female rock critic," but just because she's an important rock critic. The fact that she is the best feminist rock critic — or maybe just the best feminist critic of anything — is exemplified by her writing on Janis Joplin, ordinarily not my cup of tea. This is strong stuff, even though much of it made more sense as *ad hoc* journalism. B.

All About Elvis, by Fred L. Worth and Steve D. Tamerius (Bantam). This is so far superior to every other Elvis trivia volume that it's easy to forget that it was compiled by trivialists. That is, while I love having a listing of every song Elvis recorded, with its composers and recording history by the King and others, I would love it a lot more if the composers were indexed, too. And while I liked knowing the date and place where Elvis bought his first guitar, I wish the information were listed under "first guitar" instead of the name of the shopkeeper who sold it, so I could find the fact again when I need it. C plus. M

Go-Go's from pg. 24

Butler's affection for Stax-Volt R&B. The songs are sooner talky than melodic — "I decided it'd be best to spew the words as opposed to cramming them into the melody" — but the record is as accessible as the sing-song-y "I Know What Boys Like" would lead you to expect.

Butler says David Byrne's work was part of his inspiration in turning to challenging themes. "He's amazing — he makes the songs so great and fresh by being so simple." He knows he's in risky terrain: "It'd be really awful to imply I

know everything about women. I'm trying to solve these mysteries." But he doesn't plan to change course in writing for the next album. "It's 1981, and things are tough. The response we see a lot, in films and music, is escapism. I'm not real hopeful that there's going to be much soul-searching. This new romantic thing sounds to me like a revival of five-year-old disco with a new wave veneer. I'm afraid that music that's non-fantasy, non-escapist and confrontational is gonna be minority music."

So he takes his inspiration from moments like seeing the Au Pairs play a Communist festival in Copenhagen. Meanwhile, however, he does want as much of an audience as he can muster. "Hey, it's still just a rock 'n' roll band. We get up there and slam it out. You can't forget that it's entertainment, whatever the message. The Waitresses have tried like hell to walk that line." M

Africa from pg. 39

seriously wonderful record. What the Sir Douglas Quintet would sound like if they were South African: loose, bluesy vocals; rolling organ; chunky guitar.

Bob Ohiri & His Uhuru Sounds (Ashiko Records 001). A Nigerian band, now living and recording in London, Ohiri & His Uhurus sound like a cross between the Beat and the best reggae band in the world. It's not really reggae, but it has that natural dance to it: the staggered bass and drum pattern; the lunatic guitars, darting in and around the beat like small flying creatures, never quite landing; the saxophone riding behind the cymbals; the chanting voices, natural as breath.

Kakraba Lobi Xylophone Player from Ghana (Tangent 130). Lobi, supported by master drummer Mustapha Tettey Addy (who has two fine albums of his own available), comes off as the Slim Harpo of xylophonists — sly, punchy and immaculately soulful.

Alhaji Bai Konte — *Kora Melodies from the Republic of the Gambia, West Africa* (Rounder 5001). A lilting album of voice and kora (a twenty-one stringed gourd-shaped instrument, somewhat like an oud), Konte is a delicate player with a light but sure touch, reminiscent of both Hamza El Din's oud playing and Paco De Lucia's flamenco guitar style. This is a casual, attractive album; the playing is occasionally overly busy, but there is a warmth and a sense of spirit and place that come through regardless. "Alhaji," by the way, is a title given to anyone who has made a pilgrimage to Mecca, putting Bai Konte's name firmly in the grand tradition of Philly Joe Jones and Miami Steve.

Edikanfo — *The Pace Setters* (Editions E.G. 112). After reading about Brian Eno's interest in African music, Edikanfo's manager, Faisal Helwani, invited Eno to come to Ghana and help produce his band. The result is a record that is

beautiful-sounding, pristinely produced and more than a little puzzling. Edikanfo is a tight eight piece unit that, with their emphasis on horns and percussion, sounds like a good, if somewhat faceless, Afro-Cuban-American dance band, the kind of group you might expect to hear playing at a Holiday Inn in Accra. The record is riddled with a sense of discipline and work, a need to get things right. I miss the playfulness that seems part and parcel of most African pop.

Burundi — *Music From The Heart of Africa* (Nonesuch 72057) **The Soul Of Mbira** — *Traditions of the Shona People of Rhodesia* (Nonesuch 72054) *Shona Mbira Music* — (Nonesuch 72077). These are among the best of the many Nonesuch albums of African music. The Burundi album is beautifully recorded and has a strange, wistful quality about it — less martial and assertive than most of the field recordings I've heard. In the interplay between flutes and drums and voices, the music sounds almost Japanese, filled with the constant sense of both remembering and forgetting.

The mbira (sometimes called a kalimba) is a thumb piano with a raspy sound, rich in overtones, often creating the same impression as a gamelan orchestra. The mbira albums, featuring mbira solos and duets with occasional vocal and percussion accompaniment, feature some of the most delicate and meditative African music on record.

Assalam Aleikoum Africa: Volume I — *Progressive & Popular Music of West Africa* (Antilles 7032) **Volume II** — *Traditional & Modern Folk Music of West Africa* (Antilles 7033). An amazingly successful sampling of music from the Ivory Coast, taken from the singles catalog of the Societé Ivorienne du Disque. It's incredible to hear the overt influence of Jimi Hendrix, Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Stevie Wonder on the musicians of Volume I. Francis Kingsley, whose "Assalam Aleikoum Africa," and "Live in Peace" are standouts, lists Tom Waits as one of his main influences, and Martial Droubly's "You Dji N'indje" ("The Suffering Child") could easily fit onto an African edition of *Blonde on Blonde*. There is a strange psychedelic feeling in much of this music, a sense of spirit and adventure that overcomes the limitations of some of the musicians: the horns go sour, the bass players are frequently leaden, and it doesn't matter.

The album of more "traditional" music (which nonetheless embraces electric guitars, sax, etc. — is less startling, but much of it actually swings more and lets loose with more raw power, and what they call "traditional" sounds like poly-rhythmic James Brown to me (for my money, Moussa Doubia's "Yeye Mouso") is the best James Brown single since "I Got You"). Then again, traditional American music may be Doc Watson, but traditional African music is closer to Bo Diddley. M

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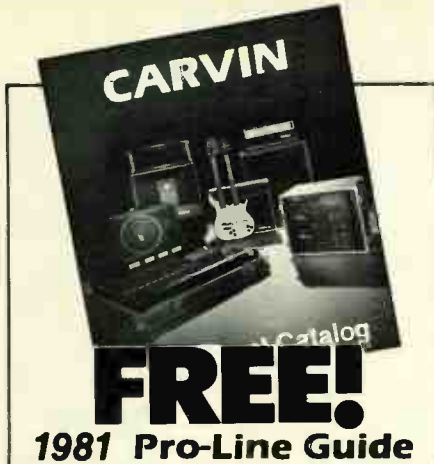


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Murray from pg. 70
 more of my personality in it.

"It has happened in the past — just thinking about Charlie Parker. It was almost a miracle but it happened because Parker's music was so strong and his personality was really coming through — and Bud Powell. But there's no Charlie Parker here. The music has sustained itself because it has become more clear in terms of what people want to do. There are bands like the Art Ensemble and my octet that have a variety of things that are defined very clearly, and whatever feelings that anybody may have in the audience they'll be touched by the music. Although there are no Charlie Parkers, there are bands that have taken that intensity.

"The music has to start swinging again. It's not the time to go see a bass player playing for an hour and a half with a dancer or a saxophone player playing a solo concert or playing all ballads for an hour and a half. People don't want to hear esoteric musics. Like Baraka has a poem called 'Class Struggle In Music' where he deals with European influence in black classical music. There is no time for that now. The times need some music that can make people happy and whoever is not falling into that bag is going to be very affected by it. As the world goes so goes the jazz musician. Just them expressing what they feel helps people understand another human's condition."

Ironically two of Murray's most recent records — *Solo Live Volume 1* and *Solo Live Volume 2* — are solo outings, although their impact on the public will be severely limited by the Cecma label's distribution network. Holding the albums in his hand Murray just shrugs saying, "I'm not doing anymore solo concerts. They just take too much energy." It seems his energy and interests are directed, these days, towards the World Saxophone Quartet, his octet and a potential big band.

The World Sax Quartet originated in New Orleans as the Real New York Saxophone Quartet. Ed Jordan — a New Orleans reed player and instructor at Southern University — invited Murray, Julius Hemphill, Oliver Lake and Hamiet Bluiett down for a concert. He arranged for them to play with a local rhythm section. The four sax players liked the date so well that they decided to keep the group alive. But, "economics told us to play without a rhythm section."

Their first album — *Point of No Return* — was a screeching mess "that was symbolic of the inter-struggle going on in the group at the time. Just learning each others' personality at first was difficult. So we tended to over-react to everything, which resulted in a music that was not closely connected. Plus, in Europe musicians seem to play more free. The audience seems to be waiting

on some freedom. They're waiting on something that is 'avant-garde' or 'out.' In America you have to be slick because there are a bunch of bumpkins in the audience."

Since the first recording, the WSQ has matured. They have learned to play "slow songs slower and fast songs faster", while functioning as a hard swinging jump band without a rhythm section. The music has "more of an emphasis on the accents, especially in the background. The background has to be snappy too. A lot of the songs we use are like Blueitt's snappy kind of vamps that sustain the rhythm, and we can play anything on top of that. Bluiett in particular is the bottom. My role as the tenor is more like a guitar or piano or something that is very percussive and melodic at the same time. The two altos play the top, of course, and do the improvising over Bluiett and me. We'll change roles at any point in the song."

The big band that Murray speaks of is one of those celebrated half-myths of the jazz world. It was a collaboration between Murray and Butch Morris in the summer of 1978. The band played twice in New York — in the first week of July — and once more in Washington D.C. for Howard University's Homecoming. It included fifteen black musicians from the avant-garde, a poet, and a dancer. Morris described it as one of the greatest experiences of his life, particularly because he loved the challenge of directing fifteen accomplished black musicians.

Murray explained, "We talked about the band back and forth from Europe. I began to do these arrangements and when Butch came in I had arrangements from here to the end of the house. He said, 'Damn, you wrote all this shit,' and I replied, 'Yeah, and you gotta conduct it.' It was no problem because Butch has that rare skill of being able to understand not only his own compositions but those of others. Usually they pay guys like Leonard Bernstein a lot of money for that ability.

"I need to take that band on tour. I know it will happen again and hopefully within the next year that band will be recorded. It's also important for a big band to be on the road. I'm convinced there's no other big bands that were on the musical level of that band or that exist right now on the so-called new music circuit. I heard Arthur Blythe smoke the Akioishi-Tabackin band with a quartet. Most of the big bands sound like a version of something that already happened."

However, it is the octet that enralls Murray most. Like the World Saxophone Quartet's music, the octet creates new emotional boundaries for the already rich tradition of black American ensemble music. The music is driving and breezy and laced with furious instrumental exchanges. It expresses the joy


and wobble of a New Orleans brass band and the balanced din of the derby-fanning orchestras of the Southwest.

Murray envisions the octet as "an extension of a quartet — piano, bass, drums and me — and a truncation of the big band. An octet is a standing version of a big band. The only problem of a big band is most of the time the people are sitting down, and the music sounds like people sitting down. There's more improvisation in the octet. There's a section that's totally improvised in "Dewey's Circle" where the horns come in to support George Lewis. He was playing something way out on the trombone and when the horns came in with those riffs he came back into where it was. Those sorts of things happen with the spontaneous nature of a shouting horn section.

"I may be approaching the same problem and possibly in the same fashion as Mingus, but I listen to Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, Louis and even King Oliver. That's who Mingus listened to. I'm trying to get to their expression."

David Murray has studied his lessons well, because when asked what his favorite record was, he replied, in a typically Ellingtonian manner. "The one I'm writing right now for the octet."

David Murray's Instruments

As far as instruments go, Murray appears to be as much trader as player. "My tenor is the same Selmer Mark VI I've had since I was 12. It felt good then and it feels good now. I use a Rico Royal #4 reed, but I don't want to give up the number on my mouthpiece yet, because I won't have anything to tell the next interviewer. I started playing bass clarinet three years ago. Archie Shepp and Pepper Adams heard me in Paris and told me to never stop. I may not play runs that are so hip but I've got the sound. I used to just get one and sell it and get another. Now I've got a Le Blanc. I'll sell anything — my clarinet, my records, my tenor. I used to have a soprano that I got from Butch Morris and I sold that after I recorded 'Bechet's Bounce.' Sold my alto then, too. You know these things are worth money. The only things I wouldn't sell are my piano and flute that I got from James, because I compose them." 

Bass from pg. 84

bass designed to set the musician far apart from the rest of the crowd.

Curiously enough, Japanese companies like Aria (Aria Pro II), Ibanez and Vantage have made some excellent replications and original basses with all of the sound and playability features modern players have come to expect, but they haven't quite made the major dent in sales created by their six-string counterparts. The Yamaha BB-1000,


also known as the "Broad Bass," stands alone as one of the very few Japanese electric basses to have a significant impact on the development of the instrument.

Gibson premiered their interesting new Victory bass at a recent trade show. Its shape and peghead design harken back to original Fender models but several new design features, including novel pickup configurations, active electronics, a 34" scale, special truss rod, reinforcement design and higher, thinner frets, make it a serious contender.

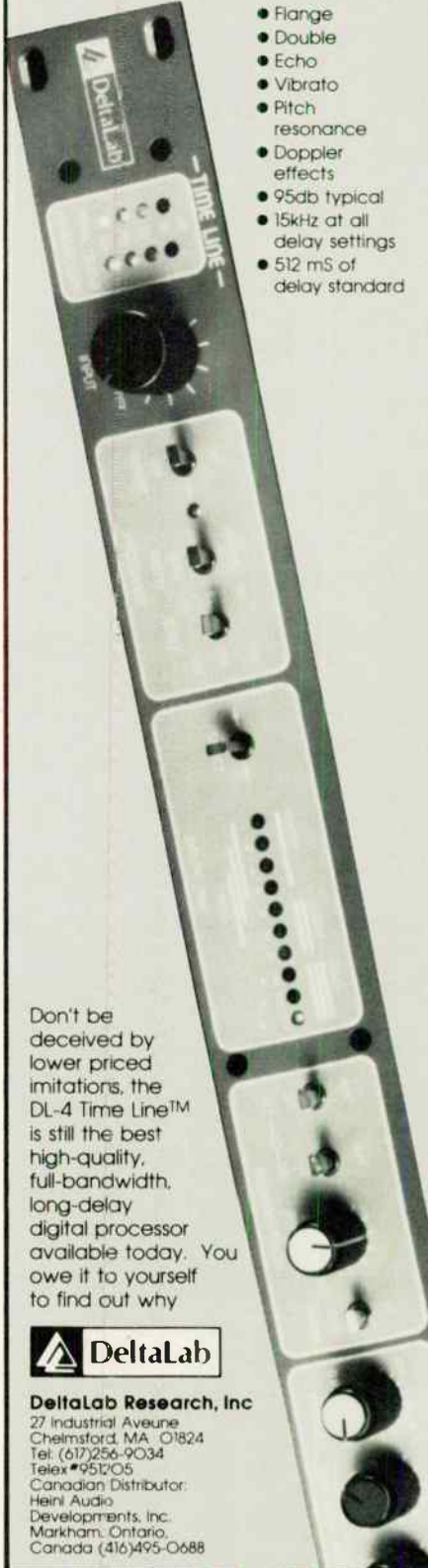
The development of space age materials, especially carbon graphite, brought further exploration into the role of neck stiffness. Geoff Gould took the first step with his Modulus Graphite bass, a hybrid with a wood body and rigid plastic neck. Since sustain and resonance are directly related to the neck, Gould's bass, using the stiffest possible material, produced a sound that was "neck-heavy" in impact, getting little from the wood body. Ned Steinberger added a fiberglass body, but also felt the neck was all-important; his Steinberger bass has a tone that does not attempt to duplicate its predecessors; it is far more clarified, more even, with its own kind of warmth. These two basses render sound from the midrange up rather than down (the bottom can be added by an equalizer) and while untuned ears may not hear the difference, they are in a sonic category of their own.

Much of the newest thinking about electric bass has reaffirmed Leo Fender's first designs. Progressive luthiers like Steve Friedman and company (Guitarman / Stuyvesant) are building wooden basses that take the three most important ingredients of the Precision — a stiff neck, a dense and resonant body and clean, high-output pickups — and then are fine-tuned to the individual player's wildest desires and needs. A wide choice of woods is offered, different active/passive electronic systems are available, with sexy body types, custom carved, but Leo's three basics are left untouched. Friedman's basses are finding their way into the studios, as seasoned veterans who have hitherto found no adequate replacement for their thirty-year-old instruments are now picking up on them.

It seems the farther we go, the less able we are to transcend these three requirements.


So we return to our beginning, to Leo Fender's unwitting vision. It seems nothing short of miraculous that the very first design of the electric bass should incorporate every known essential of the instrument with virtually no omissions: stiffness of the neck, dense body wood, and punchy, present pickups. No look into the future can ignore or avoid this monumental event in our past. 

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STUDIO FUTURE SHOCK

Two technologies which have come of age together, digital and video, will be the ultimate architects of the studio of the future. Tape, mixing boards and even records themselves will become a thing of the past. With digital, engineers will be able to work out of living room environments using a computer keyboard to produce, adjust and memorize all sound levels and mixing functions utilizing an unlimited number of tracks.

By Jim McCullaugh

Change is an inevitable element in the modern industrial experience, as we have all numbly come to accept. Change itself, however, has begun to change: technological acceleration has brought an exciting and even frightening pace to every area of applied science, especially to the professional recording community. For the last twenty years, the industry has been perfecting the art of recording information on magnetic tape, known as analog recording. Now suddenly, a radically different and demonstrably superior method of recording, the conversion of sound to *computer language* for perfect storing and reproduction, has burst upon the scene. This system is called digital. Between the conversion to digital and the confluence of video, the next ten years will make even the most hardened veterans of future shock blink.

The sleeping giant of digital was first taken into present studios as a merial, a mere mixing tool. Solid-state memory systems could store any mix including equalization, panning, filters, compression, limiting and noise gates. Hours of busywork were cut by the perfect recall of a "floppy disc," a soft plastic disc that could store every trivial setting a nit-picking bassist or boozed-out heavy metal singer could demand. This was a role that digital didn't mind helping with, but it had other intentions: to eliminate all the other electronics in the control room, especially the tape recorder.

For that floppy little disc had a 45-sized big brother who was happy to replace all those clumsy reels and miles of thick tape. He also brought along a cousin, the word-processor screen, who would work cheap. For many producers in the major N.Y. and L.A. studios, the change seemed minimal; the mixing console was the same, only the sound was more exact, with a certain hard steeliness.

Digital recording machines did not, of course, drop from the sky all at once, but it did in fact drop from the sky; much of its early research was done by NASA in the 60s. Trying to transmit data and communications from the earth to vehicles in space with the least possible interference, NASA engineers devised a



"Captain, I'm getting a curious reading on my scanners. The limiters on the drums are falling and secondary compression on the vocalist is dangerously high." "Set phasers on band bass, Mr. Sulu, and increase screen range."

system that had virtually *no loss* in signal. Having myself heard "A-B" comparisons of analog and digital recordings of the same material, I can say that the *presence* of the digital, the lack of minute inefficiency, is immediately apparent. The sound is *right there*. The attack time of the digital recordings is perceptibly lower and the clarity more distinct. There is also a broader dynamic range, which is leading speaker companies to develop monitors that will do justice to it.

The immediate effect of the digital invasion may have seemed minimal, but its implications were anything but: the console, effects, equalization, limiting, and other familiar furniture of the control room were in fact dinosaurs, much like the DC-3, the Model T and, yes, the traditional analog plastic record album. Once the digital process had started, it would head toward only one logical conclusion: all that is ultimately needed to control a complete digital system is a keyboard and a screen.

Chris Stone, founder/owner of the L.A. Record Plant describes the stripped-down essentials of the future

control room as "a living room with a typewriter." He waxes enthusiastic about his future ability to control the precise nuance of each musician's sound as more and more solid-state memory circuits, "bubble memories," are programmed into the computer: "In essence, a producer will be sitting there giving a computer commands; he'll be operating with an unlimited number of recording tracks and an unlimited variety of sounds. He will be able to call up the exact echo of Carnegie Hall, for example, or the L.A. Forum."

Since there is so little loss in a digital system, there emerges the possibility of an audience making direct contact with the performer, an unbroken chain from a singer to a digital mic through a digital board onto a digital disc copied onto a digital videodisc or broadcast over a digital satellite network to digital audiovisual receivers in millions of living rooms. Chris Stone says, "The equipment has got to go in the digital direction, right down to a digital microphone. *Everything* will be in a computer. Records will be distributed by satellite. The physical characteristics of record-



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ing are what will change the most because of satellites, computers and bubble memory."

Giorgio Moroder, Donna Summers' producer and owner of Musicland, views the digital revolution with optimism: "The engineer will probably have less to do. All the mixdowns will be digital and automated. Studios for audio only won't be that large since so much will be done with overdubs. Right now, it can take quite a bit of time to do digital editing, but later on it will take less. Since so many instruments like bass and synthesizer go directly into the console, studio control rooms won't require acoustics." Indeed, plastics have already shattered the conventional rules about using only wood and rock for acoustic clarity.

Into all the visionary prophecy steps a familiar demon: techno-confusion. No

matter how miraculous a technology is in isolation, it must enter the world, and such factors as simple economics and complex human superstitions come into play. Consider first the price of a digital machine: \$180,000, more than triple the price of a good analog multi-track unit. Most of the digital studios now rent their equipment from one or two companies. The only manufacturers are in Japan: Sony, Mitsubishi and 3M. There are standardization problems between the three different models; why should a business buy a machine now when they can wait a little while for the smoke to clear and one version to become standard? Echoes of the quadraphonic debacle permeate the industry; no one wants to be left out on a limb. Moreover, the new equipment is cranky; breakdowns, expensive and potentially lethal to a

session's energy, continue to plague digital recording.

Of equal complication is the humanist backlash. One of the darkest suspicions many technophobes have is groundless: no amount of computer technology can replace the actual musician (therefore insuring a certain amount of inherent chaos in the studio of the future). Digital companies are now very nervous about musicians' fears of becoming obsolete, especially drum machine manufacturers. More effective arguments have been leveled against digital. If the options and effects become too flexible, if there are too many choices, the whole point of the music can become lost. Some feel that slides and pan controls offer a human element that punching instructions on a keyboard could never replace. Others say the sound is "cold, heartless." Since the cost is so high, anti-digitalists argue, control can only be in the hands of large corporations, further stifling creativity. Pioneer direct-disc producer Doug Sax, owner of Sheffield Labs, has led the opposition, founding Musicians Against Digital, or M.A.D. Clearly these factors will slow the onrush of innovation, making the complete transition to digital a non-immediate proposition.

Alvin Toffler, author of *Future Shock* and *The Third Wave*, sees these problems as merely transitional: "I think it's only a matter of time, no matter what the economic problems look like at the moment, before digitally recorded discs have a deep impact as a business and education tool; it's interactive and you'll be able to build your own system. Now everybody in the industry will say that is not likely because it's expensive. But someone will find a backdoor way of doing it. My hunch, longterm, is that the disc, hooked to a computer, will be used for a million things we never thought of.

"What happens is that you get a new technology and everybody gets excited and then nothing happens for ten or twenty years. People think it's gone away or never going to work. But then some newer technological breakthrough occurs and the two converge. Then, bang, it's there."

If there is a second technology that will join with digital to transform the recording studio, it is clearly video. Egged on partly by the wide open cable and videodisc possibilities, many studios are joining the process at the outset. Future recording studios will be large soundstages, capable of videotaping live performances and offering every sound variation imaginable.

Chris Stone says, "Audio will adapt to visual, visual will not adapt to audio. A studio will become more like a post-production house in that the sound will be done on location and fixed afterwards. You'll see a recording studio size that is larger than normal because it

continued on next page



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Studio from previous page makes good sense to do the audio and the video in the same place.

"That bodes well for the mobile recording industry, because if you're going to do a production on a big soundstage, there will be a need for mobile recording. The question will become, 'Do we want to do it on a set or do we want to go on location?' The artist and producer now will not only have to learn about computers, but they will have to learn how to make movies. Of course, it will be a rather expensive transition. All the visual arts are totally union, and all audio employees will become union. It's a question of when, not if."

Kent Duncan, helmsman of Kendun Recording and Sierra Audio, a studio designing/building firm, sees different requirements for future studios: "Today in video you might have as many as five operators, including client and producer, whereas two are sufficient for audio. Proper design for both dictates a larger room with a longer monitor throw and a brighter decay time. The video client wants a living room atmosphere at the back of the room where he can simulate the typical home viewing environment. We are starting to see a trade-off from a design point of view."

"One of the things I'm looking forward to," says Murray Allen, president of Universal Recording in Chicago, "is the dig-

ital film in the theatre that is equipped for digital sound. That's going to blow everyone out of the box." He sees the ownership and purpose of new studios changing further away from simply musical concerns: "The people who own recording studios will not be independents; they will be blue chip companies, such as entertainment conglomerates. There's going to be a great deal of use for studios besides recording and entertainment work. A lot of educational and industrial work will go on. There will still be music, but not quite in the same direction."

Alvin Toffler thinks that the larger questions are of far more interest than the impressive special effects. "The trick is that the storing of images has now been learned, it's just not going to be a big deal anymore. My hunch is a shift to smaller live concerts and maybe combinations of live and non-live events. You might use a videodisc, for example, to project the rest of the group. A five-member group can perform in five different places with four canned members and one live one. Let's take it one step further into the home. Let's say I am watching a Rolling Stones concert. They are singing a particular song. But there's another group that sings the same song. Now maybe I'd like to hear *their* lead singer with the Stones, not Mick Jagger. I am going to be able to

select Jagger out and create my own group, my own concoction.

"Our homes will all have earth dish antennae the size of grapefruits. But when everyone and everything seemingly is plugged into everyone and everything else, then some questions are raised. What is it doing to the air, for example, how many frequencies are we using up and how many belong to the rest of the human race? What'll happen when we get all those satellites parked up there? You have these fascinating problems of computer data flow. Money is electronic, it's not paper any more. What does that do to national economies?"

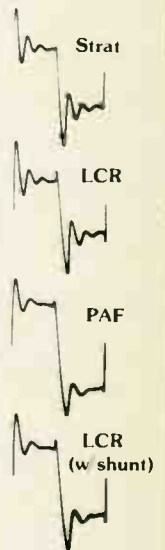
"The biggest question I have is whether the existing sources of programming, minds who have been formed by the second wave, are the people who can successfully produce for the third wave. If I look at cable now, frenetically trying to duplicate the networks of years ago in their choice of programming and operation, then I am not sure those are the people who are going to be able to read the culture successfully."

No matter how all these questions are resolved, the sleeping giant of digital technology is among us and is sleeping no longer. With digital's marriage to video, the recording studio as we know it will surely change forever, if not necessarily for better. **M**

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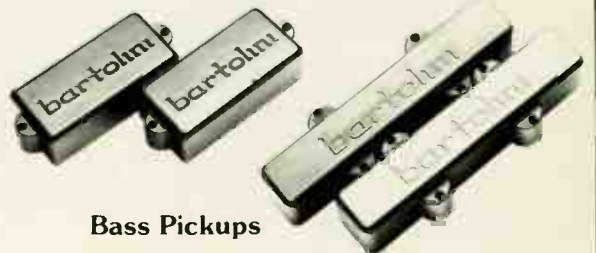
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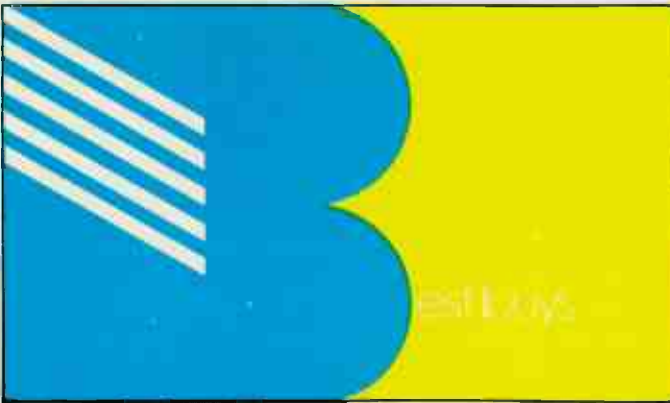
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Ibanez is pleased to introduce the UE405 Multi-Effects unit, a rack mount unit complete with remote switching and the exclusive Insta-Patch system. The UE405 contains 4 studio quality effects: Compressor/Limiter, Stereo Chorus, Parametric EQ and Analog Delay; plus an external effects loop which is treated as a 5th effect. The patching sequence of the effects can instantly be changed with the 5-position Insta-Patch selector switches. Remote FET switching controls individual effects and the master in/out. LEDs indicate the status of the UE405. The unit is AC powered and all effects operate from a regulated DC supply. Ibanez, Box 469, Bensalem, PA 19020.



The **Roland CR-8000** updates Roland's CR78 CompuRhythm, a live performance oriented rhythm unit with 24 preset rhythms which can be altered or customized as desired. The CR-8000 allows for independent Level Mixing, Accenting and features an Intro/Fill-In section that allows any of 8 different fills to be inserted manually, by remote pedal or automatically by multiple measure. Also, there is a user-programmable section with 8 rhythms and 4 fills which can be cross-mixed with preset rhythms for even more creative combinations. Quiet applause for Roland, as they upgraded the product and left the same price tag. Roland, 2401 Saybrook Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90040.



C.F. Martin has introduced a new grand auditorium size guitar, the MC-28 cutaway. Previewed at the 1981 NAMM Expo in Chicago, the MC-28 is the newest member of the famous "28" style of Martin instruments. The MC-28 features rosewood back and sides, ebony fingerboard and bridge, and a solid spruce top. An oval soundhole accommodates the top bracing pattern presently found on Martin grand auditorium size instruments. With a Venetian cutaway 20 of the 22 frets are readily accessible. The C.F. Martin Organisation, 510 Sycamore Street, Nazareth, PA 18064.



GHS Strings has added Super Steels electric guitar and bass strings to its product line. Super Steels are made of a special kind of stainless steel which provides "The Ultimate in volume and sustain." Super Steels guitar strings are available in three colorfully packaged sets of rock gauges: Ultra Light (008-038), Extra Light (009-042), and Light (010-046). Super Steels bass strings are available in three sets: Light (040-102) balanced tension; Medium Light (044-102) traditional gauging; and Regular (044-106) balanced tension. The bass strings have a unique "naked" look because the silk has been intentionally left off the bridge end to improve sustain. GHS Strings, 2813 Wilbur Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49015.

Sequential Circuits introduces the Model 500 PRO-FX, designed to consolidate all signal processing and mixing effects into one package, and give instant control over sound changes while playing. All operating modes of the PRO-FX are directed by the system controller. The desired program is entered on eight Program Select switches and appears on the LED display. The mode switches initiate record or preset, and the memory switches load the non-volatile program memory to or from a tape deck (cassette or reel-to-reel). The allocation controls are used to configure the program memory to the system's current module arrangement. The first 500 series modules available will include several of the most popular effects devices, such as the 510 Phase Shifter, the 512 Distortion Sustainer, the 514 Mixer, the 516 Parametric Equalizer and the 518 Reverb. Sequential Circuits Inc. 3051 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95134.



Aria has introduced a new CS series 6-string electric guitar and a CSB series bass guitar priced from under \$300. The CS250, which is a 6-string basic standard model, features Ash body, Maple neck, Rosewood fingerboard, Chrome-plated machine heads, Aria TS bridge, 2 Aria Protomatic-IV pick-ups, 2 Volume and 2 Tone controls, 1 Coil-tap switch, 1 Phase-reversal switch and 3 position pick-up selector. Aria Music, 1201 John Reed Ct. City of Industry, CA 91745.



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