

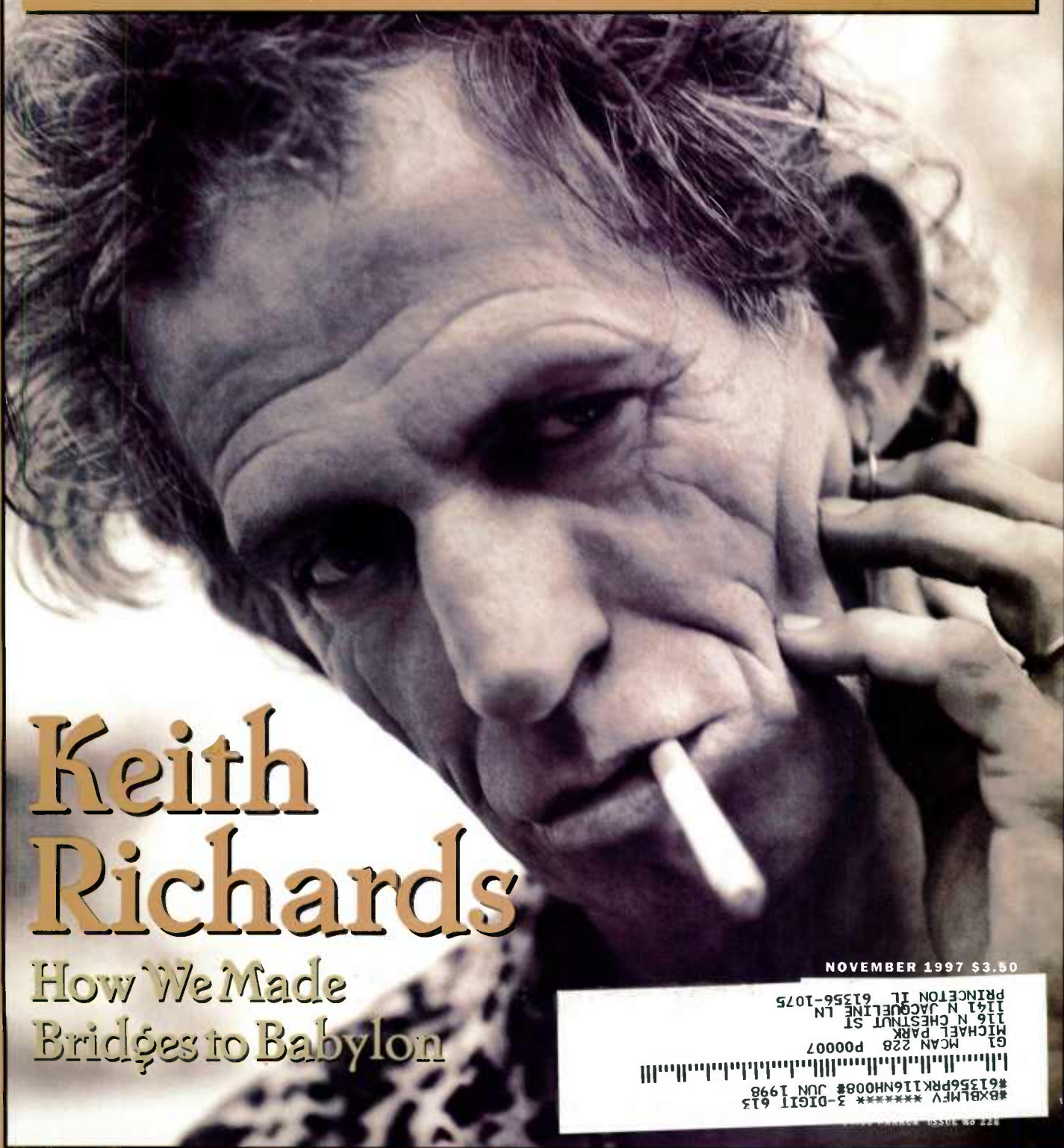
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ARE A&R REPS IGNORING THE BEST NEW BANDS? • FOO FIGHTERS' DAVE GROHL

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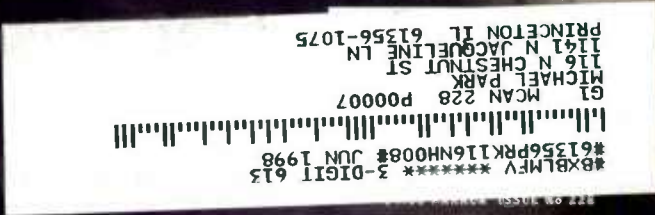
THE ART, BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY OF MAKING MUSIC



Keith Richards

How We Made Bridges to Babylon

NOVEMBER 1997 \$3.50



JOHN FOGERTY SONGWRITING CLINIC • EDITOR'S PICK: GENELEC MONITORS

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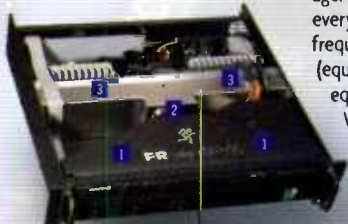
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Pro Audio Review
Lorin Alldrin, Sept/96

Electronic Musician
Brian Knave, July/96

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where's the money?

If my father were to write an article about the music business, it would come out, possibly word for word, like Roy Trakin's "Where's the Money? Why Musicians Are Broke and Who's To Blame" (Sept. '97). Yes, the industry screws nearly all artists, and yes, it's possibly the worst profession of all to get into if your motivations are purely monetary. But despite all the writing on the wall, my band, No Good Oil, is still having a damn good time.

christian donlon
TIAN323@aol.com

The music industry is no different than many (most?) industries. Michael Jordan and the CEO of Nike make millions, while the people who actually make the sneakers get pennies a day. The Kroc family are multi-millionaires while the people flipping their burgers are at minimum wage with few, if any, benefits. If Wayne Kramer is earning around \$50,000, then he's well above the average in the U.S. And burger flippers and sneaker makers put in their full days without the payoff of a couple hours onstage—the rush of which, I'd wager, isn't experienced by your average secretary.

alfred masciocchi
cakm@ameritech.net

3-chord wonders

This is in response to J. A. Maymon's statement that "you don't have to know music, just three chords, ... to get a record deal" (Letters, Sept. '97). The fact is, it takes talent to write a simple song that a lot of people enjoy. There are guitar players who've only been playing a short time that I would still rather work with than some schooled musicians. Maybe it's time J. A. faced the music. I suggest that three-chord song "You Can't Always Get What You Want" by ... what was the name of that group again?

b.r.
philadelphia, PA

label bashing

Like most musicians, David Biddy (Letters, Sept. '97) has no idea what he's talking about when it comes to the mechanics of the record biz. Where on earth would he get a figure like fifty cents as an album's "production costs"? Manufacturing costs for the label I've been running for four years are about \$1.75, and that's without shipping. Granted, big labels get big discounts, and even bigger labels own their own plants. But what about all the other costs involved in selling a record, like mechanical royalties, artist royalties, cover art, postage, printing, advertising? Our cost per unit is closer to five bucks; with a \$6.99 wholesale price, that doesn't

leave a huge margin. Out of that we also have to pay rent, phone bills, staff, outside help, payola (oops, I mean promotion), and so forth.

By the way, I'm a musician myself. Running my own label has been a rude awakening. Some of you crybabies out there should put your money where your mouth is and try it yourselves.

michael r. fitzgerald
rimshot records
RimshotRec@aol.com

live music lives!

Regarding Mark Dery's article on the "Death of Live Music" (Aug. '97): I'm getting really annoyed by these cyber-pundits who push the novelties of the Internet into a mass human transformation. Since live performance survived the advent and proliferation of TV, I'm sure it'll

outlive Dery's catatonic cocoons.

gabe scoonover
milwaukee, WI

Anyone who has seen a decent band up close in a live environment will continue to go see concerts. But the back of a large arena is not very appealing. This could account for the decline in concert attendance in recent years. Will this be the death of live music? No. Live music is still more intense and vibrant than CDs, tapes, computer soundbites, or any other commodity. It is worth the extra trouble to see—just not from the back of the arena.

rick fisher
rfishjr@erols.com

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editors@musicianmag.com

Years ago a concerned friend phoned the famous conductor Leopold Stokowski with some bad news. "Maestro," the caller said, "the reviews of your latest concert are out, and they're all pretty critical." "So what?" Stokowski replied. "I don't care if they rip me to shreds. Only one thing matters to me in a review." "What's that?" "Was it long?"

For artists like Stokowski—think of him as the David Lee Roth of classical music—the only purpose served by a review is publicity. But for us here at *Musician*, we've always hoped that our record reviews serve a nobler purpose. The idea is that we scout through the pile of releases we receive each day and review the ones we feel are especially important for musicians to hear.

Frankly, this isn't good enough anymore. That's why we began tweaking our reviews in last month's issue. Three of them—Stevie Ray Vaughan, Eric Matthews, and Knights of the Blues Table—followed the format we officially launch this month. In these longer reviews, we go beyond the traditional approach. Rather than say "Eddie Van Halen's guitar sound on this cut is killer," we're asking our reviewers to find out why it rocks—or doesn't. Find out what effects he used. Talk to the engi-

neer. Talk to Eddie himself. If a solo is great, don't just say it's great; get the artist to describe how he or she played it. Get into the process as well as the results. This can only bring you, the player and reader, deeper into the music, and give you more to use for your own. You won't find this kind of analysis anywhere else, which is why the best album reviews in the business are now better than ever.

There's more new stuff this month as well. We've revived a respected title launched by this magazine years ago, "Working Musician," and applied it to a new monthly feature dedicated to clueing you in on how the pros tackle everyday problems of making music. I've asked our newest addition to the *Musician* staff, Senior Editor Michael Gelfand, to take charge of this section. As a bassist with long experience on the road and in the studio, as well as a top-notch journalist whose byline has appeared in this and other music magazines, he's more than qualified for this assignment.

It's all part of our plan to be the only magazine that all musicians need. This is your book, so keep in touch. See you next month.—**Robert L. Doerschuk**



From the Editor

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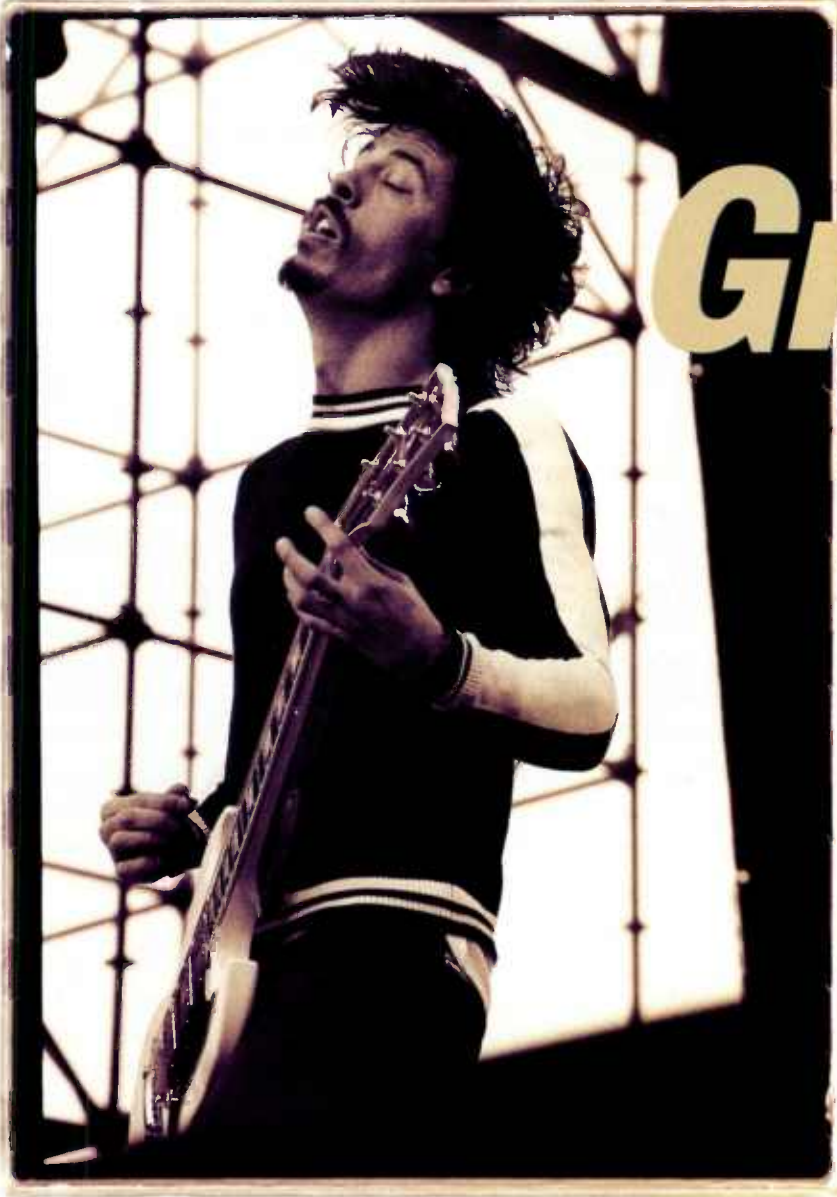


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whirlwind

Dave Grohl



“I’ve never considered myself a lyricist—I can’t even write letters.”

How are you doing? You sound a little hoarse.

I’m losing my voice.

Are you doing anything to combat that?

Just going out and screaming my fuckin’ ass off every night.

Obviously you can’t be too concerned, because you keep doing it.

You know, it’s strange—once you get to the point where your voice is totally worked, the screams get better. It’s just the singing part that suffers. And I kind of prefer the screaming part anyway [*laughs*]. I hate singing, but I love to scream my brains out.

That’s funny, because your “straight” singing has a

more personal style on *The Colour and the Shape* than on the first *Foo Fighters* album.

That might have a lot to do with the fact that we toured for about a year and a half. Before the first *Foo Fighters* record, I had never sung anything but backups for Nirvana. When I was writing the songs for the first album, I really had no idea what my voice sounded like. I’d hum along the vocal line as I was writing, but once I stepped into the vocal booth, who knew what was going to happen? After touring for a year and a half, I got a little more comfortable with it and eventually realized what my limitations were—what was my range, where I should stay away from, stuff like that.

Did the producer, Gil Norton, give you any advice about the vocals?

You know what Gil’s big thing was? “You have to enunciate, David.” I didn’t understand why, but now I think I do, because when we play shows, the audience really sings along. I know there’s a lyric sheet on the album—*duh!*—but I guess Gil’s enunciation tip paid off. He’d always say, “Come on, enunciate!” and I’d say, “Why?” He’d say, “Because I want them to understand what you’re saying.” I’d say, “I don’t.”

Enunciating made you feel silly?

I have this insane fear of pretension, and why on earth would I want to burden anyone with anything that I have to say? I’ve never considered myself a lyricist either. I’m intimidated by words. I can’t even write letters. I’ll do two or three drafts of a letter, and then just throw it away because it’s a piece of shit. So lyrics are a chore for me. That’s why, when it came to mixing, I wanted to bury the vocals. But Gil helped me overcome my insecurities about my writing and my hatred of my own voice. He made a huge difference.

Your old drummer, William Goldsmith, left during the sessions; he’s since been replaced by Taylor Hawkins. Is the band lineup stable now?

Oh yeah. Taylor is awesome. And he’s a songwriter too—he plays piano, bass, and guitar, and he’s got a great voice. For the next album, who knows? I’d love to play drums on half of it and have someone else do the vocals. It’d be great. —**Mac Randall**

side man

Mindy Jostyn

resume

Billy Joel
Joe Jackson
John Mellencamp
Donald Fagen
Cory Schem
Cyndi Lauper

You play a wide variety of instruments. Did you use that fact as a lever to gain visibility in the session world?

Not in the slightest. In fact, I never tried to present myself as a sideman. That happened completely by accident. Somebody hired me for a Dolly Parton skit on *Saturday Night Live*: Whoever was doing the casting got my name from the Local 802 book, I think because I was the only female listed

under "harmonica players." Dolly was a grocery clerk, and there was this line of frustrated customers, so one of the customers decided to cheer everybody up by pulling out a harmonica.

And that was you.

Yep [laughs]. Anyway, G. E. Smith [from the *SNL* band] knew that Billy Joel would be coming onto the show, and he needed a fiddle player for "Downeaster Alexa," this song from his new record, *Storm Front*. I got hired to play that solo, and that led to offering me the whole *Storm Front* tour. Suddenly I was a sideman, with no planning about it. Sometimes I wish I could have made a more gradual climb into it, with a band that wasn't quite so high-profile. There was so much to learn about behavior and language, and I was so outside of that.

What do you mean by behavior and language?

It's hard to articulate, but it was like being in high school again. There was an in crowd, and I wasn't in it. Some of the people in the band felt that the lineup was already complete and they didn't need another person. Billy needed that violin solo, and there was some confusion, even from him, about what to do with me on the other songs. So I ended up getting relegated to electric guitar, which I didn't even play. I could execute the parts, but as anyone who plays electric guitar knows, it's much more than that, in terms of the sounds, the settings, the pickups, and all that. That's one thing I loved about working with Joe Jackson: He really utilized me. Some people don't put much thought into what they might do with a harmonica, a violin, or a mandolin, but Joe did, and that made it really fun. John Mellencamp did the same thing. He scrutinizes everything; he's really in your face, although he tends to want to do everything like the record, while Joe likes to turn things upside down, like "Let's do 'Steppin' Out' with just harmonica and vocals."

How does working on the road differ from studio work?

It's a lot weirder, because you never go home. The studio is just a job, like a day gig, whereas with touring there's a tremendous need for interpersonal skills. Road work has as much, if not more, to do with how you fit in socially as with how well you play. I've had greater or lesser degrees of success with that. Two factors play into it, first of all being a woman with a lot of men; it's still a man's world on the road. And second, I'm not a drinker or a partyer. That can put you very much on the outside on tours, because there's a lot of that going on.

You've just released your second solo album, Cedar Lane, on Palmetto. So are you ready to put for-hire work behind you?

At this point I do see the sideman career taking more of a backseat. That seems to be a natural evolution. But I have to say that even now I really enjoy sideman work. Compared with doing my own music, which is a lot more self-involved, with a lot of hard work and anxiety, playing for someone else is almost like a vacation.—Robert L. Doerschuk

"Being with Billy Joel was like being in high school: There was an in crowd, and I wasn't in it."

I will play music

Nothing but music

*Way back then it was cool
to play the blues*

*When hip-hop was be-bop
you know, straight ahead.*

*When a young musician
had visions of Oscar an' McCoy
settin' it out so smoothly-
kind of like Jordan taking flight,
but in the key of B flat.*

*Dreaming of being a student
in the Miles Davis
"turn my back to you"
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Star Tech

Ever wonder what it would take to find a qualified guitar tech? Gauging from *Matchbox 20*'s lengthy history with incompetent poseurs, it's as simple as asking one to tune a guitar. "We'd ask them to detune all the guitars a half-step, and they'd say, 'I'm not really sure how to do that, but if you show me once, I'll get it,'" says guitarist Adam Gaynor. "Seriously, if you can't tune a guitar, don't ask for the gig. We've said that six times in a row, but now we have the greatest guitar tech. Crash (a.k.a. Greg Hearn) is a road guru. He worked with Soundgarden, the Lemonheads, Slayer, and I'd kill for him."

According to Rich Koerner, who's tuned his share of guitars while serv-



Matchbox 20

ing as a tech on the H.O.R.D.E. tour, a good way to find the right guitar tech is to pick up *his* guitar and see how it plays. "If it's in good playing condition, that'll tell you a lot," says Koerner.

Aside from standard duties like stretching new strings, double-checking intonation, trouble-shooting amps, and keeping an eye on the stage at all times, your tech should have spent some years learning the intimate details of the guitar and must have the instincts needed to communicate with the artists he (or she)'s supporting, says Koerner. "Lots of artists speak in non-technical terms, so you have to be very connected to them."

—Michael Gelfand



Dean and Gene Ween

Tales of The Tape

So you say you don't feel like being bothered with recording your band's rehearsals? Well, if you haven't figured it out by now, the benefits of recording a typical practice far outweigh the minor inconveniences; some of the best musical ideas can appear out of nowhere, but they're likely to be lost unless you deal with them as they're happening. All that's required is a simple means for recording them and the willingness to take the steps to get those magical moments down on tape.

For the cult-favorite experimentalist duo *Ween*, practice means convening in their home studio and being ready to record whatever they come up with, whether it's good or bad. "When we practice, we start with the title of a song or a concept," says Dean Ween. "The title dictates the music, and lyrics come last. Some of our best songs are realized in ten minutes and recorded in half an hour. I think a lot of bands sacrifice the initial vibe of a song for studio slickness. They'll take, like, a year or two to write fifteen songs, spending most of their time in pre-production or making demos. You've gotta keep it raw—you can't just remember on call the emotions you had when you first played that song."

Even bands that are more renowned for their studio polish benefit from recording their formative meanderings. Veteran progsters *Rush* broke with band tradition for their 1996 release, *Test for Echo* (Atlantic), and took their practice regimen in a different direction. "In the early days, we used to record our soundcheck jams to catalog potential riffs and choruses," recalls guitarist Alex Lifeson. "But for

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Echo, [bassist/vocalist] Geddy [Lee] and I spent a week in a rural studio practicing together to feel each other out. Some days, we'd get together with coffee in hand, look at each other, and go, 'How about we start with something in D?' We didn't concentrate on individual songs so much as we worked on five or six different ideas at a time. When we felt we had something ready, we could present it to [drummer] Neil [Peart] so he could add his drum parts and write the lyrics."

In most cases, bands who religiously record their rehearsals stand to gain the most. The **Tragically Hip** strongly advocate keeping the tape running at all times because they routinely harvest great song ideas from their practices. "We learned to tape everything early on, right about the time we were making [1991's] *Road Apples* (MCA)," says Hip bassist Gord Sinclair. "From a musical standpoint, having access to every nuance—from accents to strumming patterns—can make or break a song." The worst feeling in the world, he says, is not having a reference for the tempo or feel of a song at its inception. "We've got mountains of practice jam tapes—95 percent of which are garbage, but the other five percent are beautiful." The lesson to be learned here? There's nothing wrong with picking through garbage if you find some gems in the heap.

—Mike Mettler

Under Cover

If you scorn musicians who play cover songs at weddings and in malls, you might want to reconsider. Sure, hearing another bastardized bar mitzvah-lounge version of "Louie Louie" could make anyone want to pour molten lead in their ear canals, but aside from the fact that people get paid to play that dreadful stuff, the fact is that countless successful musicians have cut their teeth by paying respect to their favorite songs. Playing and recording covers affords musicians an opportunity to stretch their creative boundaries and learn about songwriting from a timeless and endlessly diverse pool of resources.

Commonly regarded as one of the world's great party bands, The **Fleshtones** began mixing cover tunes into their set back when they started performing at New York's CBGB in 1976, and they're still playing them today. "When we first started, we didn't think we were good enough to play anybody else's songs, so we played originals," recalls singer Peter Zarella, "but by the time we first played out, we had learned one or two covers." Since then, the Fleshtones have continued to interpret obscure songs, most recently having released an album of covers on the appropriately named *Favorites* (Fleshtone Records). "We started doing covers because of our love of the music," says Zarella. "We thought, 'Wouldn't it be great if we could play that song,' and then it became more of, 'What can we do with this song to make it our own?'"

On their upcoming release for Ichiban Records, tentatively titled *More Than Skin Deep*, they tackled "Laugh it Off," which was a hit for Sixties R&B vocal group the Tams. "A friend gave us a tape and it focused into my mind, 'What if it was done by the Stones, circa



Managing Without A Manager

What the hell does a manager do?" asks Parker Valentine. His question is one that has puzzled bands ever since the first reluctant, clammy handshake took place at the mythical crossroads. In the case of the *Valentine Six*, for whom Valentine sings, plays saxophone, and acts as de facto manager, the question was mainly rhetorical. "Management may seem like the last piece missing from our

puzzle," he says, "but this band's been so hands-on building itself that frankly, I don't know what a manager would do for us."

"It'd be nice to have somebody who'd push and push for us, helping to shop us and press the markets," says Valentine. "You know, somebody to look at the overview, because you often find yourself bogged down in the moment, which can make you lose track of the big picture."

After spending years out on the road, *Thin Lizard Dawn* had managed to lay down a solid foundation for themselves but had yet to receive any serious overtures from record labels. "We

December's Children? So we gave it a shot, but when you do that, it never really sounds like the Stones circa ...*Children*, but something else.

"Right now, what we're trying to do, as part of the garage/white soul/R&B thing, is avoid the songs that those types of groups would bring to mind," says Zaremba. "There's no need for us to cover bands like the Wailers, the Sonics, or ? and the Mysterians, although I wouldn't mind taking a crack at 'Hanging on a String,' which was written by one of the bubblegum kings."

Singer/songwriter **Dar Williams** had more emotional reasons guiding her decision to cover the Kinks' "Better Things" on her most recent album, *End of the Summer* (Razor & Tie). "It was something I heard as a teenager, a very redeeming song that helped me through my suburban woes," she says. "As much as I wanted to do a song by a friend who might have needed more exposure, this was really what I wanted to sing."

Even with Williams' deep ties to the original, she didn't want to undermine her own sound by being too reverential. "We wanted to make it our own, so we listened to it before we recorded it and we stuck with the basic chord structure," she says. "But it's not straightforward; there are undercurrents and grit in it."

All things considered, doing justice to a cover can be a daunting task. While imitation may be the greatest form of flattery, a literal interpretation can do a disservice to you and the song you're covering. "Listen to the music, learn something from it, digest it, and find your own voice," says Williams. Zaremba agrees: "There's nothing worse than trying to do a faithful rendition because the original will always do better—unless you're picking a lame song and trying to supercharge it. We're trying to play songs that we really like and that won't be expected by the people who come to hear us play. You shouldn't be afraid to play them," he adds, "because you'll come to understand just what it is about these songs that makes them so good."—**Michael Gelfand**



Jody Olson

were always looking for a good manager; we went through three or four," recalls guitarist Howie Statland. "One wanted to get involved creatively, which we weren't into. Another was a flake and wasn't getting anything done." After finally securing a management deal with All Access Entertainment in New York, though, their career path took an upswing.

"We didn't have any solidified deals offered to us until we finally decided to approach All Access, who helped us translate our hard work into the form of a deal," says Statland. And while some bands may be reluctant to turn over the reins to a management team, Statland says it can work. "It's very hard to find the perfect relationship with management, and I don't even

know if it exists, but you can get close to it."

Photek, a.k.a. Rupert Parkes, signed his publishing deal with MCA without the benefit of a manager, but having an experienced manager in his corner made a huge difference as his career began to take off. "There are ins and outs in the various aspects in the business that you can't have any idea about, and you shouldn't get too wrapped up in that stuff or it'll distract you from your music," he says. "[Manager] Robert [Linney] was on the case from day one, running everything smoothly, keeping things out of my way, which is ideal." As Photek puts it, good management means being out and about. "It's a full-time thing that you can't do when you're trying to make music."—**Michael Gelfand**



Mague

Building your own pedalboard

There's nothing worse for a guitarist than tripping over a mess of cables protruding from a disorganized collection of stompbox effects. Bill Thomson, my fellow guitar technician with *Counting Crows*, designed a two-tier pedalboard that comfortably accommodates six to eight effect units for guitarists Dan Vickrey and Dave Bryson; it speeds up set changes, prevents breakdowns, and enhances their sound. Here's how to build one:

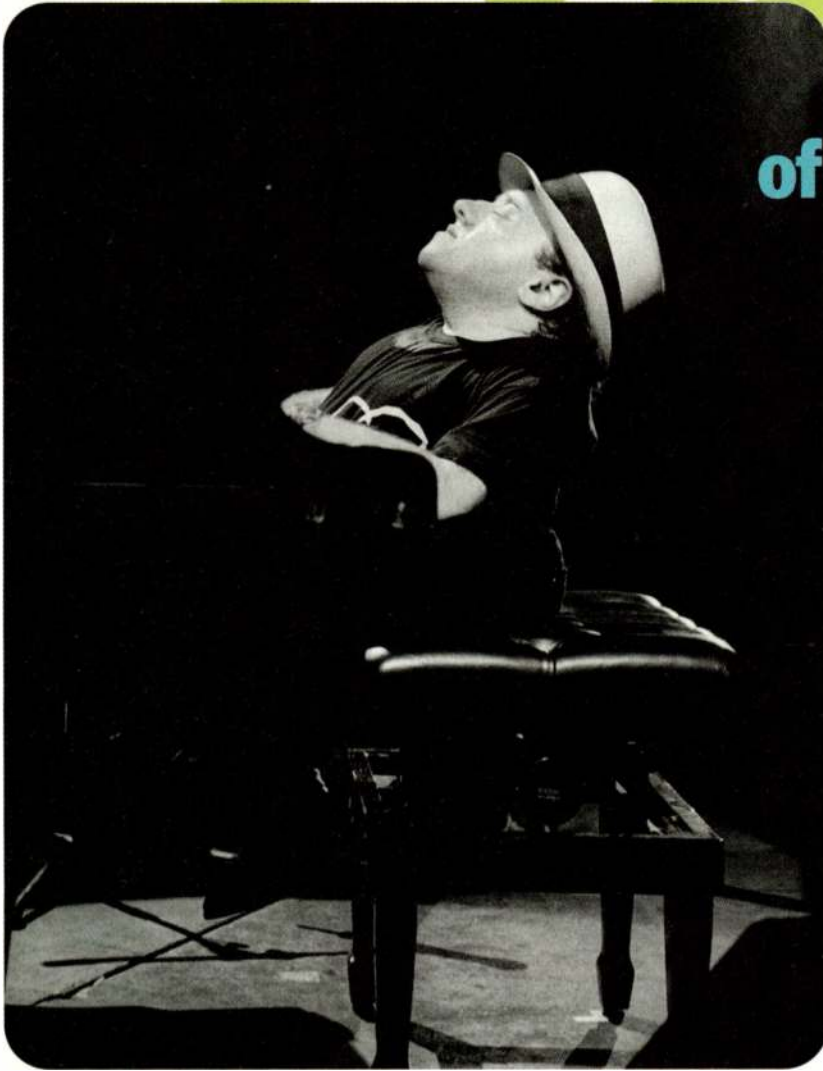
Starting with a 2' x 4' of 3/4" oak plywood, cut a 24" x 12" piece to be used as the base. For the upper tier, cut a 24" x 6" section. To provide the board with a slight upward tilt, cut a 24" x 2" "foot." Using medium grade sandpaper, smooth the rough edges of the wood. With a countersink, create three equidistant screw holes along what will become the base. Next, place the upper tier on top of the base, turn the two pieces over, and drill three holes through the base until the drill bit enters the bottom of the upper tier. Turn it over and spread carpenter's wood glue on the underside of the upper tier; press it together with the base. Insert three 1-1/4" Phillips head screws from the bottom through the upper tier. Repeat this procedure to connect the foot. To secure the pedals in place, cut Velcro adhesive strips to fit onto the bottom of each pedal and on the base. Once you've figured out the best way to arrange your effects, you should be ready to go.—**Doug Redler**

by robert i. doerschuk

Michel Petrucciani

Probes

The Power of Standards



and breathtakingly ambitious. But where Jarrett's presumption of total freedom sometimes stalls him in cycles of clueless repetition, Petrucciani finds plenty of room for expression by using songs as touchstones on his explorations. Jarrett undeniably connects with the spirit he seeks in his marathons, but he gets there without a road map and thus hits his share of dead ends on the way. Petrucciani, on the other hand, knows where he's going, and while it takes a while to reach his destination, every step is an epiphany.

Standards were the topic *du jour* as we met Petrucciani one rainy afternoon at Birdland in New York.

What makes for a good standard tune?

Tonality has something to do with it. And structure: Most of the time it's 32 bars in A-B-A form, which is sixteen, eight, and another eight. You need a very distinctive bridge; most of the time the bridge changes the tonality.

And often you've got a cycle of ii-V-I chord movement.

Almost all the songs are ii-V-I. [Petrucciani plays a few bars of "Autumn Leaves."] On the other hand, when I write songs, the melodies are very standard but the chord changes are not.

Because ii-V-I movement can confine your improvisations?

Not at all. I love to play on A minor, D7, and G, for instance. I'll go anywhere, bitonal or atonal, although I try to stay away from bebop phrases. The rhythm patterns are the same,

For forty minutes on the opening cut of his recent solo album, *Au Théâtre des Champs-Élysées* (Dreyfus Jazz), the astonishing pianist Michel Petrucciani reflects on the paradox of form and freedom. This massive improvisation, a stream of meditations on various familiar jazz titles, uses form not to inhibit but to stimulate a torrent of ideas: "In a Sentimental Mood," "On Green Dolphin Street," "Maiden Voyage," "Autumn Leaves," and other tunes stream past, in and out of tempo, with left hand striding, then comping, then playing counterpoint beneath luxuriant solo lines.

Like Keith Jarrett's solo exertions, this "Medley of My Favorite Songs" is Olympian in scale

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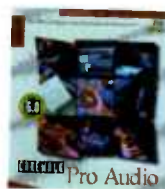


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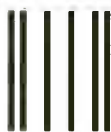
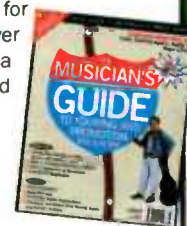
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but the notes are different. The idea is to balance; improvisation is about knowing when to stop doing either this or that. So now we can play bebop lines with rock & roll grooves.

Since you often construct complex harmonies, how can you integrate the relative simplicity of rock into those kinds of settings?

It's easy, if you have a very simple melody. I just wrote a song called "Aldo's Wonder." It's very simple, almost like an old Ennio Morricone theme on harmonica, but the chord changes are a little more complicated [Ex. 1].

That's harmonically simpler than usual for you.

Right, especially at the beginning, because it gives you a moment to relax. But then I bring in a bridge, which I wrote in seven bars rather than eight.

Why?

Because it's rock & roll. Rock isn't always square, because they want to rhyme the lyrics: You have a bar missing, or a bar extra. Also, the bridge is all on a G root, like the rest of the song, so you can do anything you want. [Ex. 2; played freely, bridge can be notated as written in five bars.]

How should rock musicians learn to go beyond fundamental voicings and develop their harmonic capabilities?

I would say, read the *Real Book*, listen to all players, do the scales, like C minor over Eb. Basically, jazz is about playing chromatically. But it's also important to develop taste. You may not like certain foods at first, because they're foreign to you. But if you're open-minded and you try it again, you might start to like it. If you like something, that's already a good way of understanding it. It's like learning a language. When I came here from France in 1982, I didn't speak a word of English—not one word. But I listened and listened, and I ended up speaking the language I was hearing all day long. So first is to listen. I listened to so much blues, so much Miles, so much Coltrane, that I developed the jazz language. You just have to love it to understand why things work or don't work. We all have our problems in life, but any handicap can become a quality. Always take advantage of that. I can speak about this, because I have physical problems. But these problems complement the qualities I have that maybe some people don't have as much or don't rely on as much, because they don't worry about that. When you're handicapped somehow, that could be an opportunity for doing something else. That's very important to remember: We're all capable of doing something artistic, as long as we love it.

Ex. 1 D/G Gadd9 Am7 Gadd9 D^bdim7

Ex. 2 E^b/G G F[#]dim7 F

"Aldo's Wonder" by Michel Petrucciani. (c) 1997 Dreyfus Music. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Music transcription: Dave Whitehill

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John Fogerty

Takes

by paul zollo

His Time

In the mind of John Fogerty there exists a sacred place where only his greatest songs earn admission. He calls it his "A room," and it's there that he stores his insights into the many classics he has written over the years, from "Proud Mary" and "Born on the Bayou" in the Creedence Clearwater Revival catalog through "Centerfield," the title song of his 1985 solo album.

So when it's time to record a new project, he'd rather wait until he can complete a dozen "A room" songs than hack out inferior material, even if it means letting more than a decade pass. "I never write a song just to fit the slot between track one and track three," he says. "I write them to be great." That's why *Centerfield* took ten years to complete, and his current release, *Blue Moon Swamp*, took ten more.



songwriting

But what he comes up with is timeless.

Dressed in two shades of blue with black boots, and accompanied by his wife Julie, for whom he wrote "Joy of My Life," one of the only love songs in his oeuvre, Fogerty explained what it takes for a song to make his "A room" list.

When you write a song, where do you start?

I'll sit with a guitar, and I'll be noodling, doing riffs, chord changes, whatever, to get a good rhythm or a good *something*. Since I'm such a rock & roll guy, I try to connect the song with a riff, and therefore an arrangement, because I know I'm going to ultimately make a record.

I used to describe a great record as being four things, in this order: title, the sound, the words, and then the last thing, which all great rock & roll records have: a really great guitar riff. So it might sound like I start backwards by coming up with a riff first, but that's what gets me started.

What makes a title good?

It should just sound cool. Then, if it's an image of something as well, that's great, but it doesn't have to be. "Blue Moon Nights" is a good title because it's evocative; it creates a specific mood. "Southern Streamline" works a little less efficiently. "110 in the Shade" says what it is and brings you right into that feeling. I had that title for almost twenty years before I finally wrote the right song to it.

You've shown many times that you can be more creative with just a few chords than some songwriters are with many. But you'll also put a lot of changes into your verses to contrast with a chorus that has

no changes, as on "Walking in a Hurricane."

Right. You're hitting on the fact that rock & roll is about rhythm and sound, so that one-chord approach certainly isn't unique to me. It's an old form. And in rock, form is much more important than substance. The sound of it and the

Michael Johnson

feel is much more important than what you're singing about or what chords you're playing. Bruce Springsteen came up to me at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, and he said, "Any guy who can take an E7 chord and get 'Green River' out of it is all right with me [laughs]."

"Proud Mary" is another one where the main part of the chorus hangs onto one chord. Did that song take a long time for you to complete?

Probably a month. It didn't happen in five minutes. "Proud Mary" was the first title in my book of titles that I told you about. I just wrote it down because I thought it sounded good. I didn't even know what it meant. I actually thought it might be someone who is a housekeeper or a maid. On that same page are "Bad Moon Rising" and "Lodi," and on the other side is "Green River."

Can you recall writing "Born on the

Bayou"?

With that one, the feeling and everything was there first. We were on the stage at soundcheck at the Avalon Ballroom in San Francisco. I just started going into the lick, and I told Tom [Fogerty, his brother] to just keep hitting the E over and over. And I just started screaming syllables, which I do a lot when I write, just screaming sounds without any words. I worked out the whole song without lyrics right there.

How long did it take to finish that one?

A couple of weeks. I was writing many songs at once then, in 1968, for the *Bayou Country* album. I was writing these at night, and I remember that Bobby Kennedy got killed during this time. I saw that late at night live, and all night, because I had the TV on, they kept showing it over and over. "Bayou" and "Proud Mary" and "Chooching" were all kind of cooking at that time. I'd say that that was when the whole swamp bayou myth was born—right there in a little apartment in El Cerrito.

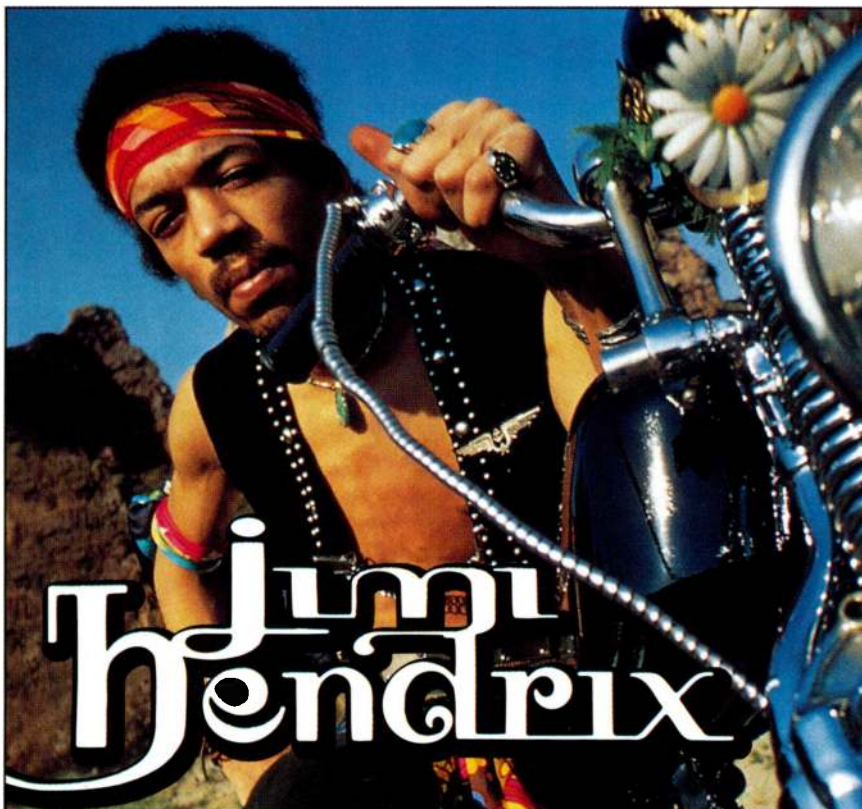
Why the bayou?

I don't know. It was late at night, and I was probably delirious from lack of sleep. I remember that I thought it would be cool if these songs cross-referenced each other. Once I was doing that I realized that I was kind of working on a mythical place.

It's surprising to me how few people know that you wrote "Proud Mary." Maybe that's because it seems like that song has been around forever. So many of the songs on your new album have that timeless quality too.

That's what I go for in writing a song. I feel that when you write a song, it should all work. There shouldn't be a part of it that's awkward, that makes you wonder why did he go there. It should all go logically. I try to make it be something that stands up by itself, and I don't rest until it's done. I don't feel like I can say that it's a completed work until that little buzzing stops, until the bell stops ringing and going, "Come on! Attention! Do something!" At that point, when I feel it's all right, that seems to be when it starts sounding timeless. That sense of rightness, that's what I search for. That's why I can work for years on one song. That's what it's all about.

Contributors: Paul Zollo is a singer, songwriter, and author. His next book, *Songwriters on Songwriting: Expanded Edition*, will be published by *Da Capo* in October.



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home studio

by paul tingen

I was a pretty late developer with regards to having my own home studio," says Steve Howe as he explains the ins and outs of his equipment and working methods at Langley Studios. It's his private recording space, located in a wing of his country home in Devon, the green heart of southwest England. The perennial Yes guitarist's studio is not only a compact and modest eight-track affair, but also a "computer-free zone. Not many people can imagine that anymore. But it's right for me. My way of working is really hands-on. I play virtually everything that I do. I don't see computers and MIDI and other hi-tech stuff as my connection with music. My studio has everything that I need for my purposes. And sometimes when listening to my pieces, I find it quite hard to imagine how I got it all on eight tracks."

Howe built his studio around 1983. One room was converted into a control room, and an enormous room adjacent to it was split in two. The smaller section houses much of his current 85-piece guitar collection (considerably scaled down from the 150 he owned in 1993, immortalized by the book *The Steve Howe Guitar Collection*), including the pictured 1963 **Gibson Super 400-CES** ①. The larger part functions as a live room, used for recording drums and/or bands. But since Langley Studios is only used for projects that Howe is directly involved in, and because he's a fan of the overdubbing method, most recording takes place in the control room.

The equipment that Howe works with is in part still the same as in the early Eighties. He still has the same **Alice 12-48** console ②, which is "an English desk that's still being made. It's very basic, but I like it a lot."

He also still has his tape recorders from previous

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Steve Howe

MUSICIAN

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decades, like the **TEAC 80-8** eight-track ● and **Revox B 77** ●, which are now only used for playback of old tapes. But his regular workhorse is a single eight-track **Alesis ADAT** ●. "I'm really happy with it," he says. "I've had a few little hitches, like it's frozen in record two or three times when I was confusing it, and it crunched a little bit of a tape once, before I'd made a habit of winding them back before I take them out. Eight tracks is sufficient for me

to work with, although I am considering getting more ADATs to be able to do extra vocal tracks and so on. But I'll never do final drums or keyboards here. The way I work is usually by putting down a click, then rhythm guitar, and once that's in time I'll manually play in guide drums from a keyboard, using sounds from the **Roland TR-909** ● or **U-110** ● or the **Korg M1R** ●. I may record the drums on various tracks, but they'll always be mixed down to one

single track. I may also put down some guide keyboards, and often all the guitars, apart from the guitar solo, before I take it to a larger studio."

The ADAT is locked in a flightcase together with two items from Howe's live guitar rack—a **Korg A3** multi-effects processor ● and a **Roland SDE-3000** digital delay ●—when Howe needs a "portable mini-studio" to take to other studios. The rest of that rack consists of, from top to bottom: a **Boss Pro MX-10** half-rack mixer ●; an **Applied Acoustics** acoustic guitar preamp ●; a **Lexicon LXP-1** ● reverb; a **Korg DT-1 Pro** tuner ●; a **Lexicon Jam Man** ● and **Vortex** ●; an **ART DST 4** processor ●; a **Tech 21 SansAmp PSA-1** ●, and a **Roland GP-8** processor ●. Howe: "The whole rack is designed to be DI'd straight into my desk here, or live straight into the P.A. I hardly ever use amps in the control room—I DI, or I use a mic, or I go through effects."

Langley Studios' outboard gear includes two **Urei LA-4** compressor/limiters ●; a **Trident Audio C-89066** compressor ●, two **Roland SDE-2000** digital delays ●, two **Yamaha SPX90** multi-effects units ●, an **Eventide H948 Harmonizer** ●; an **ART Effects Network** ●, two **ART SC2** compressor/limiter/gates ●, a **Yamaha SPX1000** ●; a **Roland SRV-2000** reverb ●; another **Korg A3** ●; a rackmount **Scholz Rockman** ● and **Tech 21 SansAmp I** ●, another **Roland SDE-3000** ●, a **Statk SA-20** spring reverb ●, and a **BEL** flanger ●. His speakers are **KEF 104 Minors** and **Fifties Wharfedales**, and his microphones include two **Shure SM57s**, two **AKG C414s**, a **Sennheiser MD120**, and two **Electro-Voice RE20s**. Howe mixes down with the help of an **Alwa pro DAT** ●, a **Sony TC-K8** cassette deck ●, and a **Revox A 78** stereo amplifier ●.

Besides the U-110 and the M1R, Howe's keyboard rack features a couple of **Roland Super Jupiter MKS-80** modules ●, a **Yamaha TX81Z** ●, a **Q Systems MIDIlink 448** MIDI router ●, a vintage **Electro-Harmonix Guitar Synthesizer** ●, and an **Ibanez IMC1** guitar controller ●. Still, Howe confesses to using his keyboards less and less, and never taking refuge in the **Yamaha QX7** sequencer that's gathering dust in a drawer ●. He repeats that he's a "hands-on player" with no time for computer-driven gizmos. His studio therefore has a decided Seventies feel. As he puts it, "I'm generating things that are real here." ●

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INTERVIEW
BY ROBERT DOESCHUK

KEITH RICHARDS

Burnin' on Bridges to Babylon

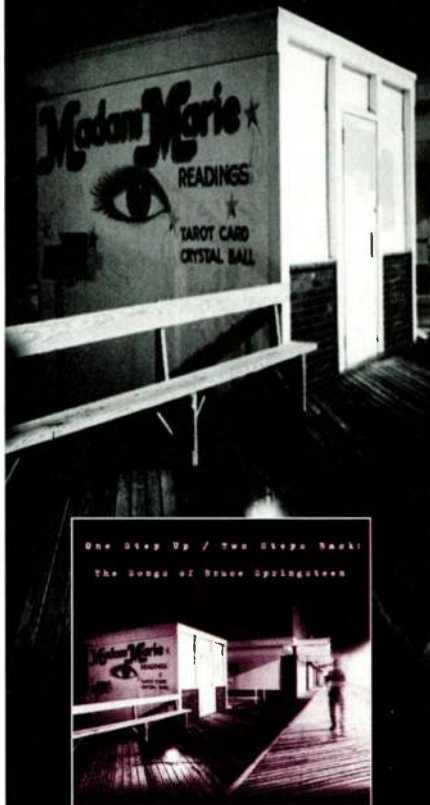
There was a time when each new Rolling Stones album was an event—not quite as epochal as something from the Beatles or Dylan, perhaps, but a milestone nonetheless. Those days are past, and it's probably a good thing too. All that silliness about posing in drag and pissing on walls, while it didn't distract from the music, wouldn't do much to enhance our appreciation of these guys today. For the Stones are no longer flag-carriers for ersatz revolution or disco chic. As the years have passed, they've shed skin layer after layer, lightening their load and finally freeing themselves to become what once they were: a group of friends who argue, butt heads, mouth off, and somehow get it together to play gigs and cut some tracks. In other words, a rock & roll band. Or, at this stage, the rock & roll band, the true prototype. They predated everyone in the era of self-contained bands except the Beatles, and so they came from the trenches, just like the rest of us, drawn into a life of grime and glory. But where everyone else

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from that era eventually got lost, or broke down, or gave up the game, the Stones stayed with it. Age, jail, even death, didn't stop them.

Now, with the release of (depending on how you count it) their thirtieth album, *Bridges to Babylon*, they deliver what's got to be their strongest disc since *Tattoo You*. If they are in fact sliding downhill, they're picking up momentum on the way: Based on the eight cuts we heard just before our interview, they're still finding the killer hook but they're also writing deeper songs than they've done in quite a while.

And they're doing us a service by addressing an issue we may confront ourselves someday: Can we keep playing the music we love when we're as old as, say, our dads? Or our *grandparents*? If the Stones can do it, that gives us hope, as once rock & roll did, not so long ago.

One rainy afternoon late in July, I waited for Keith Richards, who was tied up in traffic somewhere north of New York. By the time he arrived, looking...well, exactly like Keith Richards, *Babylon* was burned into my brain, somewhere near that imprint of other Stones songs that never seems to fade. He and the band have done their job; it's up to us to learn a few things from them once more.

In the best sense of the word, Bridges to Babylon seems like a bold stride backward.

[Laughs.] Exactly. That's what I felt. Once again I have to say that when it comes to the energy on the record, it's Charlie Watts. As a musician Charlie keeps getting better and better. He's such a joy. To me especially, the drummer is all-important. It's the drummer who lets me play with the beat, carve it up. Of course, Charlie and I have had a lot of practice together, but even so, drummers like that are very few and far between. There's Steve Jordan and a few other cats who aren't so well-known, drummers where you don't have to keep time and you can play around the beat with total confidence. Most drummers either are metronomes or they think the drums are a solo instrument; the good ones are feel players.

How do you deal with drummers who don't meet your standards?

I just beat 'em up and walk out [laughs].
Charlie has done some albums of his

own since Stripped, the last Stones album. How has that affected him?

Up until Charlie started to make his own records—and it's been five or six years now—he never appeared in the control room. He'd do his thing, and you'd get the best of it you could. But this year he's in the control room: "More hi-hat. Give it a swish on here." I guess it comes from having to make your own records and be the kind of guy Charlie always avoided being: the guy where the buck stops.

Also, since he's playing a lot with his own big band, he may be paying more attention to timbre.

Exactly. He's learned a lot and become more confident in himself. He'd always felt that the knobs and the faders had nothing to do with him. He played his stuff, it sounded good on tape, and he left you to do whatever you want with it while he faded into the shadows. But on the new album we've put the skin back on the front of the bass drum, which he hasn't done in a long time. I've realized that it's the room that counts. If you want a bass drum sound, you don't shove a microphone inside the drum and put cushions around it; all you'll get is a dull thud. The reason you have two skins on the bass drum is so you can capture the sound somewhere up in a corner of the room. So we were playing a lot with ambient recording on these tracks.

Charlie's bass drum always sounded pretty big to me.

Yeah, but on this one we didn't have to fuck around afterwards. We got the sound right before we started. There's a lot of successful engineers and producers now who've never recorded a drum kit in their life. You just can't get a real drum sound by pushing a key with your finger [*i.e.*, a sequenced drum part]. You can get a good sketch, but it don't have air behind it. It doesn't have muscle or fuel, and it'll just repeat itself. If you're really clever, you'll get it to change, but music isn't about cleverness. It's about feel. It's the joy of playing together. It's not a matter of sitting in a bunker, pushing buttons and saying, "I've made a record." That's not making music; that's being a tape doctor.

How did the new material get written?

Mick and I got started at Dangerous Music, this great little demo room in Greenwich Village, early last November.

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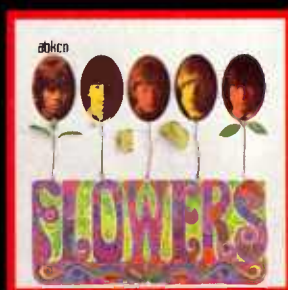
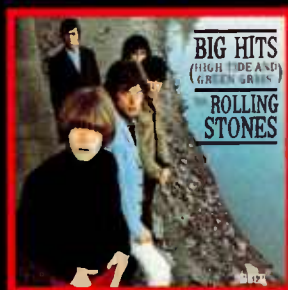
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Then we went to London, and we used tiny demo studios there too. There's an amazing number of them around. Sometimes you find yourself in a big studio with all this high-tech shit, and you can't get it to sound right. It's an indefinable thing, not necessarily equipment, that makes a studio good.

After all these years, is it getting harder to find fresh ideas?

It's easier. I don't force them now. I used to, but I realized a long time ago that you

don't write songs, you receive them. I'll start off by sitting down and playing anything. I'll attempt a bit of Mozart at the piano, or I'll play a bit of Otis Redding or some Buddy Holly stuff. Within twenty minutes or half an hour, there's something else coming, and I'm following that, playing around with it. Some days it don't come, so I'll just carry on with the Otis Redding songbook [laughs]. It's a matter of recognition: [ducks imaginary hand grenade] "Incoming!" All you've got to do

is formulate it a little and transmit it. People are too serious about writing. The writer's block theory is crap: That's only because you think you write your own songs in the first place. You think you're God and you create this masterpiece. No, you just receive and transmit. That way, you don't get into this idea of "What am I gonna write?" A lot of it is accidents: You hit a chord and you can think either "that's wrong" or "that's interesting."

Was the first chord of "Lowdown" kind of an accident?

By now it's an accident I'm used to. It's very much like "Start Me Up." A lot of these riffs are . . . closely related [laughs]. Look at Jimmy Reed: For 25 years he did the same song, and every one is different.

There's a similar crunchy guitar opening to "Too Tight" on the new album.

Yeah, that five-string, open G tuning. I cut that track with just Charlie and me to start with.

Beyond how you and Charlie mesh is the question of how you and Ron Wood manage to stay out of each other's way.

It's what's called the ancient art of weaving. I mean, sometimes it's [mimes vicious struggle, complete with strangleholds and menacing snarls], but it's really a sympathetic relationship. People should get rid of these ideas of lead guitar and rhythm guitar; these are kindergarten terms. You're a guitar player. You may favor playing chords on the rhythm end; that might be your bag. But never think of it in terms of splitting it like, "You're this, I'm that." A good band tries to fox people, so without anybody knowing it the rhythm end will take over the lead end and the other guy will automatically drop what he's doing and pick up the other part. You're not stuck with, "I play chords, he plays fiddly bits." That's the fun of it.

But how do you and Ron work out parts so they complement each other?

Usually we start with everybody playing what they want to play. After two or three takes, it's like, "We've got the moves down, but we don't need that move there. We're all playing too bloody much. I'll lay out here. What about if we play that part on an acoustic?" The amazing thing is that an acoustic instrument can add so much air to a track and suddenly connect with the cymbals. Where everything else is electric,

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there's a concise dryness about a track when you put one acoustic instrument on; it just spreads the sound. A couple of notes from a real piano or an acoustic guitar will open up a track, just like a flower.

So once everybody learns the framework of the song, then you get to the point of saying, "Alright, we know it. It's sounding pretty good. Now what about . . . dynamics?" [*Explosive laughter.*] Then you strip it back down and bring in what you can. Sometimes you leave it for a few days, you take it back to the hotel room and listen to it on cassette, and you figure out what's missing or what's too much, or you hear where an instrument can go: "We need some tremolo guitar here, or maybe a little

sax." A lot of that goes on in these records, where a guitar plays maybe three chords in a whole song, or just goes *whang* before the bridge.

That happens on "Out of Control," on the new album, where you bring in a Wurlitzer electric piano to hit precisely two single notes on the first beats of two bars.

Blondie Chaplin came up with that. We were taking five and listening to a playback in the studio, and he was sort of playing along with it. Then [*snaps finger*], "That's the note we need there!" That's what it takes: You're not thinking about anything, everybody is sitting around listening. . .but they're also listening to what's going on *while* they're listening. That's why, when

people say, "That's an accident," I say, "That's not an accident, that's innovation." There's two ways of looking at it: "I made a mistake," or "No, you just went somewhere else."

You worked with a number of producers on Babylon: Don Was, the Dust Brothers. . .

Actually, I just worked with Don on the stuff that I wrote. Danny Saber did some stuff with Mick; he's on "Anybody Seen My Baby?" Mick did work with the Dust Brothers on one track, "Juiced." That was a culture clash there, not a happy marriage at all. I don't want to knock the Dust Brothers, but it was really the wrong choice. Mick and I cut the first go on that song, he gave it to the Dust Brothers . . . and it just got worse and worse. It was the first track cut, and it still ain't finished. Luckily I saved the original take.

You also worked with Babyface, but none of that stuff turned up on the album.

Babyface did a nice job on "Already Over Me," although Mick remixed that because he didn't get along with Babyface. Somewhere down the line there was some sort of schism between them. So I spoke with Don, who was the overseer of what went down, and I said, "Let's see what's the difference between what I've gotten together and what Mick's got together." Mick sits over the synthesizer with headphones on, which I consider a prison. This is like, "Are you wearing those things because you don't want to be interfered with? Or are you just jerking off?" See, the synthesizer worries me. Nobody should have ever let 'em out. It should be in the back room for guys to write arrangements and songs on . . . and *never* make a record with. They sound so plastic and inarticulate and superficial—no dynamics, no air, no breath. It's an imitation of an instrument.

There is some synth on this album.

Well, I'm not against using it as a taste here and there, but to construct things around a synthesizer is the antithesis of what the Stones are all about.

Considering all the history your band has made, can you avoid competing with stuff you've done in the past?

I'm not competing with anything; I'm enhancing or adding to it. Sometimes I'll hear "Ruby Tuesday" or something on the radio, and it still hangs cool for me. You realize as you go along that you've got to

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Michael McDonald, Don Henley, Richard Marx, Bill Champlin, Paulette Brown & David Pack on vocals, backed by Joe Sample, David Garfield, Steve Ferrone, Steve Lukather, Benmont Tench, Nathan East & Michael Landau on Al Green's

LET'S STAY TOGETHER

Betcha Always Wanted To Hear Eddie Van Halen Play Some Hendrix! With Simon Phillips, Michael Landau & Will Lee

IF 6 WAS 9

Boz Scaggs on vocals, backed by Little Feat, with Eddie Van Halen on Guitar on Bob Dylan's *IT TAKES A LOT TO LAUGH, IT TAKES A TRAIN TO CRY*

OWN THIS...



DAVID GARFIELD & FRIENDS FEATURING 74 GUEST STARS INCLUDING:

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we'd need much more room to mention!

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be careful what you listen to, because what goes into a musician's ear will come out of his fingers, and if you listen to a lot of crap just to hear what other people are buying, you might wind up with a piece of crap. I listen to what I want to listen to. I don't listen to music from a business point of view. I know there are loads of good young musicians out there, and I figure they're at the same state we were in when we started, which was "how the hell do you break in here?" Nobody gets a fair shake. The market has such a stranglehold. Everybody's like [*grabs issue of Billboard and starts flipping through pages*], "That chart, that chart,

that chart, that chart." It used to be that you'd share the shit out, and if you liked it, you got it. Now you've got to angle it, all to please these people. It's sickening to try and put music into a pigeonhole. Probably every musician is trying to get *out* of a pigeonhole, but you find yourself in a business where people who know nothing try to put it into a bag: "That's AOR, that's something else." The only way you're gonna get this thing played is on *this* or *that* kind of radio station. But where would radio stations be without music? I don't understand. They rule the fuckin' roost; that's what sickens me. "You like *that* kind

TUNE ME UP

For his famous five-string open G tuning, **KEITH RICHARDS** uses a number of butter-scotch Fender Telecasters with maple necks and black pickguards, dating from 1952 to 1954, each with its own name (Malcolm, Micawber, Gloria, and so on). His Stratocaster collection features a '58 with an ash body, maple neck, and "Mary Kaye" finish (blonde body, gold hardware), and an early Sixties model with alder body and rosewood neck; according to Keith, the former sounds like Buddy Holly, the latter like Curtis Mayfield. Other favorite electrics include a '57 Les Paul Junior with one P-90 and a '59 ES 175. Among his acoustics are several Martins—a 1930 000-45 (used principally for fingerpicking), a '31 OM-28, a Forties D-18, and a '62 00-21—plus a couple of Gibson J-45s and a Collings that's similar to a Martin OM. Although Keith has been known to use D'Addarios, his strings are normally Ernie Ball: .011-gauge for the six-strings, custom gauges for the five-strings, 80/20s for fundamental acoustic tracks, and Oscar Browns if he wants a brighter acoustic sound. Generally he eschews stompboxes, preferring to go straight into the amp, but he does own a Vox wah-wah. **RON WOOD**'s main guitar for slide playing is a black custom Zemaitis with three pickups tuned to open E. He also favors a '52 Tele, a '55 maple-neck hard-tail Strat, a '63 Gibson Firebird V, and a new Fender B-Bender Tele. For acoustic stylings, he chooses a Gibson J-200 and a Fifties Martin 000-18; he's also got a couple of lap steels, an Emmons and an early-Fifties Fender. His strings are .010-gauge Ernie Balls. For recording, Ron and Keith chose from a collection of about 45 amps, including vintage Vox AC30s, Mesa/Boogies, old tweed Fender Deluxes, an Orange County Rocket 88, and some custom models by New York amp guru Matt Wells. **MICK JAGGER** plays Strats built for him by Jay Black at Fender's Custom Shop. He also blows into a Lee Oskar harmonica; for recording, it goes through a Shure Green Bullet mic and from there into the mixing board, then back out again to a tweed Fender Champ, then back to the board again. **CHARLIE WATTS** hits a Fifties natural-finish Gretsch kit, with a 16x22 bass drum, 9x12 rack tom, and 16x16 floor tom; his snare is a Lang Billy Gladstone model. Heads are Remo Black Dots; the one on the bass drum has never been changed as long as he's had it. Charlie's cymbals are an 18-inch UFIP flat ride, an 18-inch UFIP China turned upside down and used as a crash, a Zildjian K 17-inch crash, and Zildjian 14-inch hi-hats. (The sizzle you hear on the new album's "Juiced" is a customized UFIP crash with rivets added to it.) A Ludwig Speed King kick drum pedal, Rogers hi-hat stand, old Ludwig seat, and Charlie's own model of Vic Firth wood-tip sticks, along with Vic Firth mallets and brushes, round out the kit. The bass setup in the studio for the *Babylon* sessions was a 1960 ash-body Fender Jazz Bass and two '59 P-Basses through an Ampeg B-15 amp and a Nat Priest tube D.I. box. The keyboards used during the sessions included a Hammond B-3 with a Leslie cabinet, a Steinway piano, a Hohner Clavinet, a Kurzweil K2500, and several other digital synths, all heavily modified with analog filtering systems and several racks full of modules.

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ON THE ROAD TO *BABYLON*

Tech Talk with the Dust Brothers and Other Sound Wizards on the New Stones Album

In last month's *Records* section we offered an inside glimpse of the new Stones album as it was being cut in Room One at Hollywood's Ocean Way Studios—the site of many classic sessions by legends like Frank Sinatra, Quincy Jones, and Phil Spector. Our correspondent was Harvey Kubernik, an outstanding producer in his own right, perhaps best known for his spoken-word albums with Buddy Collette, Ray Manzarek, Charles Bukowski, and other diverse subjects. As a friend of executive producer Don Was, Harvey was able to witness much of *Bridges to Babylon* coming together. This gave him a unique perspective on the album, and made him the logical candidate to speak with four of the most important technical contributors to the project: engineers Dan Bosworth and Ed Cherney, and Mike Simpson and John King of the Dust Brothers. Here's what they had to say about the latest chapter in the Stones saga.

First, what was your general approach to starting this project?

Simpson: The way we recorded this project was very unusual. We ended up doing the overdubs first with Mick and then going in and doing rhythm tracks afterwards with Charlie and Keith. The song kept transforming, and we replaced the drums. Then we had Billy Preston come in and play parts, and we'd have different bass players trying things. Unfortunately, the way scheduling worked out, we got in with Keith early on in the progression of the songs, so they weren't really well formed and we couldn't give

him much direction.

Bosworth: I've always preferred recording bands live. When you do an overdub, you can't watch the drummer. It's just the feel you get from that.

How did you mic the players and instruments?

Cherney: On Charlie I used [AKG] C12As, with [Audio-Technica] ATM-25s on his toms and B&K 4011s on his hi-hat and snare. I used a [Neumann] U87 as a distant kick microphone and a Sennheiser 421 for a close bass drum mic, with a couple of [Neumann] M50s for room and ambient mics. I also used some compres-

sion on the room mics—an old Fairchild compressor that Phil Spector used to use and the Rolling Stones probably used when they made *Exile on Main Street*.

What kind of mics did Mick use?

Bosworth: Usually a Shure SM58, but we used big tube mics on a lot of the ballads. I bought a pair of B&K mics, thinking I was gonna use them on a couple of things like acoustic guitar, but they didn't work out; I ended up putting the [Neumann] U47 on the acoustic guitar. I didn't expect that to happen because they're supposed to be flat all the way around.

I heard about the stunts you pulled down on Gravier Street
Maurice been sittin' here sweatin' since you called
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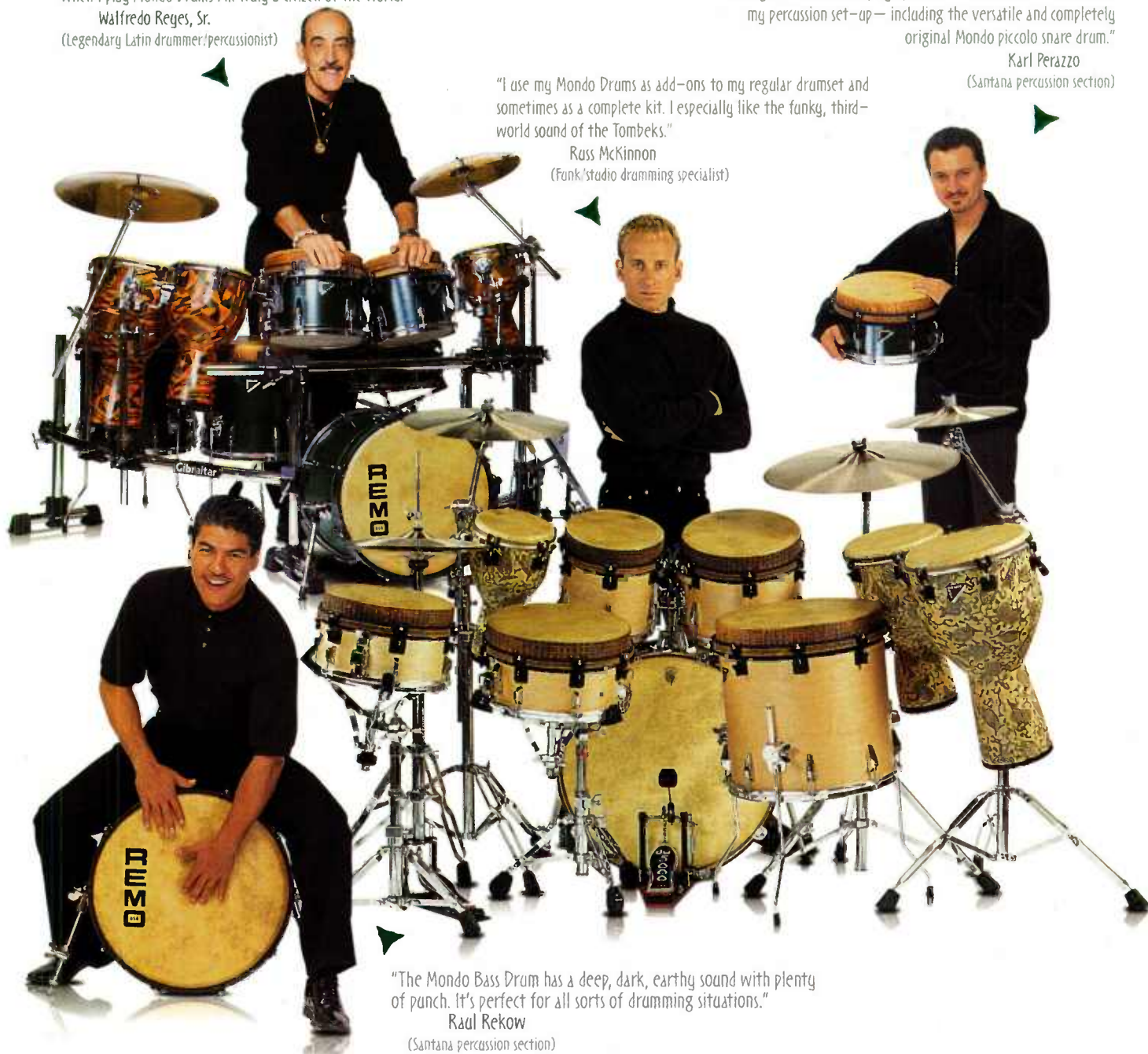
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Did you pad Mick's vocal mic?

Bosworth: We put a windscreen in front of the SM58; a couple of pops were just too much.

Cherney: We would typically have a pop filter or a foam thing on there. But you can hear him no matter what's going on. Always into the red zone. It's okay if his voice distorts the tape a little bit. It's rock & roll. During recording and mixing we might use a little ambience around him, or a slap-back or an eighth-note delay à la Buddy Holly, if the

music calls for it. But typically it's fairly dry and unaffected.

Is he pretty hands-on at the console when reviewing tapes?

Bosworth: Mick's not afraid to get a mix-out tape so he can hear what the song sounds like, because sometimes they put a lot of parts on and he doesn't necessarily want to hear them all. I've seen Keith up at the board doing rides. The way he touches the board is like a musician, like he's playing the console.

Cherney: Mick will come by with a piece of

paper and make some notes for you: "Turn this up," or "Brighten that up." Then Keith will take a listen, and it'll be the same kind of thing. Charlie will put his comments in, and you try to accommodate everyone.

King: When Mick would do his vocals, it was like a performance. When we were in Ocean Way doing vocals with him, he was really getting down on the mic. All his moves were there. He's very theatrical and expressive, with a lot of personality in his vocals. A lot of bands today don't get as emotional in terms of stretching the performance, but he's the master of it.

Did you use any digital workstations?

Cherney: Absolutely. We used [Digidesign] Pro Tools to put some things together. The biggest part of the Dust Brothers' arsenal is Pro Tools.

Simpson: We have a Pro Tools core system at the Dust House running [Opcode] Studio Vision as the main software.

What do you like about Pro Tools?

Simpson: It gives you a lot of flexibility in terms of recording live performances. They don't have to play it exactly right, in exactly the right place. They can improvise and groove with the track for twenty minutes, and we can extract the very best pieces. Mick was completely familiar with our equipment. He said, "We've been doing this stuff for years."

Cherney: We spent some time making loops for Charlie, having him play in different things and putting different rhythms together at the computer for the other guys to play to. All through the album there's a combination of Charlie's computer-driven things that may have been cut and pasted together along with live playing.

Was there any one track that stands out as your favorite in terms of how it developed?

Bosworth: "Lowdown," which is a classic Keith riff song, is one of my favorites. When they say you have to be ready at all times, this is a great example: You're watching them from out of the control room, and you see Keith pick up a guitar, and you gotta go and record right away, because that's the way this one starts, on guitar. Charlie's not even there. If you miss that, you're screwed.

Was the multiple producer format uncomfortable for anyone?

Cherney: It didn't matter who was coming in to produce what: It was still the Rolling Fuckin' Stones, no matter what.

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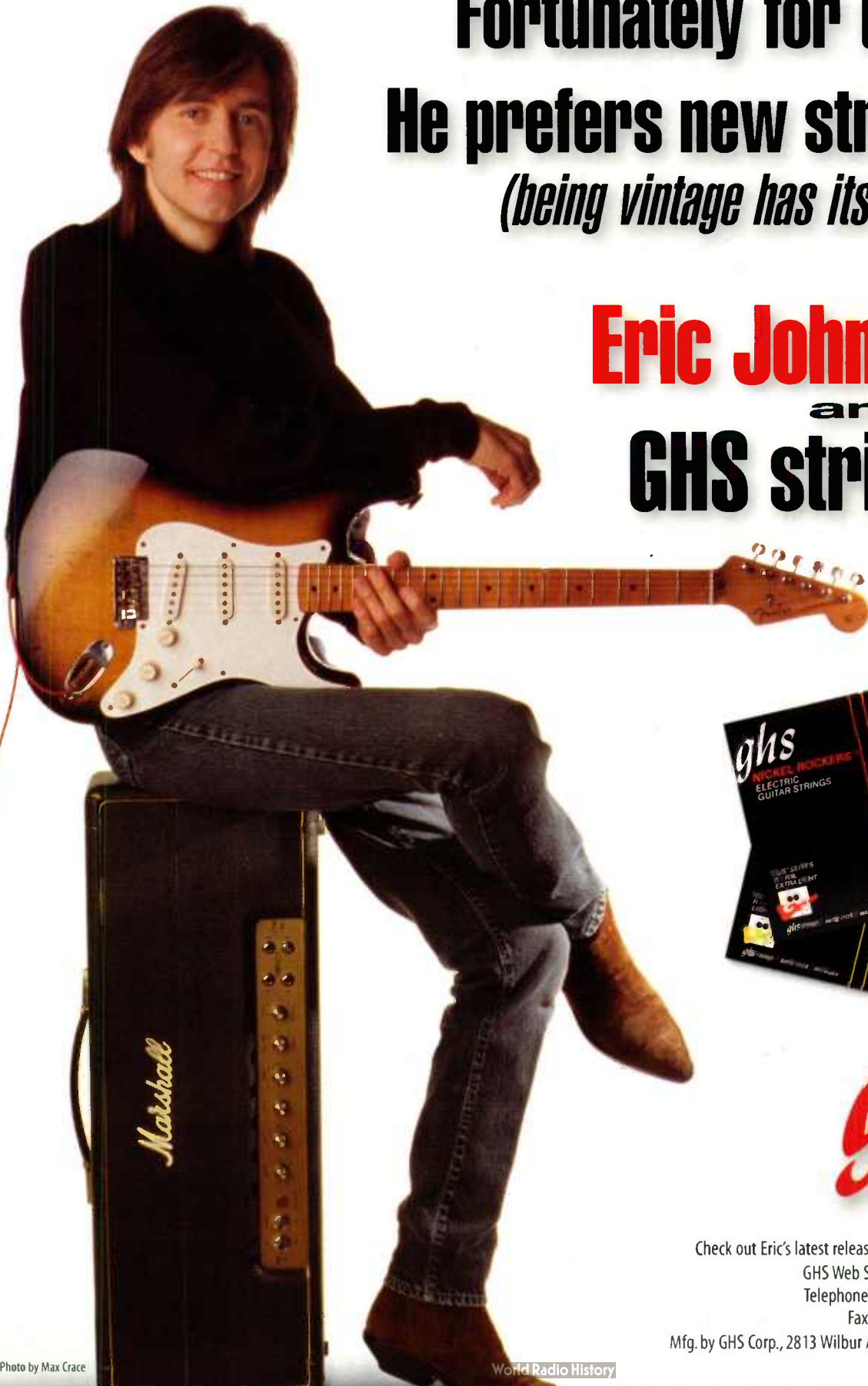
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BUSINESS

LIVING WITH THE

Times have changed in the music business. Players are more savvy than they were back when I was cutting tracks and working in the clubs. This was in the late Seventies, and as a teenage guitarist with a band and a record deal, I remember being intimidated by lawyers who I could only think of as “suits.”

Nowadays, it's common knowledge that you can't build a music career without a lawyer on your team to make sure all the fine print on your contracts checks out. This is good news, especially since I've changed costumes and gone to **HOW TO KNOW WHEN YOU DO—AND DON'T—NEED A MUSIC ATTORNEY**

work on the other side of the desk as a music attorney. • But there's even better news:

You might not need somebody like me as much as you think. Time and again musicians have come into my office and asked me for legal help that they don't really need. It's gotten to the point where, if I hear them even begin requesting this kind of assistance, I'll hold up my hand, give them a flyer I've written up, and advise them to read it. • What's in this flyer? Information that will help players become more self-reliant and not toss away their hard-earned in

BY WALLACE COLLINS

ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT PIERSANTI

come on representation they don't need. That information, in an expanded form, is what I'm about to share with you in this article. Here, then, is my list of concerns that the self-sufficient, empowered musician can handle on his or her own, without a "suit" in sight.

Copyright

Copyright is, most simply, the right to make and sell copies of your work. Under the U.S. Copyright Law, a copyright automatically vests in the creator of a work the moment the expression of an idea is "fixed in a tangible medium." In other words, the moment you write an original song on paper or record it on tape, it's protected by law.

With respect to music, there are really two copyrights: one in the musical composition, owned by the songwriter, and another in the sound recording, which is owned by the recording artist but is usually transferred to the record label when

a deal is signed. The U.S. Copyright Law requires that all transfers of copyright be in writing, so be wary of anything you are asked to sign regarding your work.

It's a good idea to place a notice of your copyright on all copies of any original works that you distribute. This consists of the symbol © or the word "copyright," the author's name, and the year in which the work was created or completed—for example, "© John Doe 1997."

You can obtain additional protection for your songs by registering their copyright with the Registrar of Copyrights; this establishes a record of the existence of your copyright and gives you the legal presumption of validity in the event of a lawsuit. Registration is also a prerequisite for a copyright infringement lawsuit to commence in federal court and, under federal law, allows an award of attorneys' fees to the prevailing party provided the form is filed within ninety days of when the work is first offered for sale or before the infringement occurs.

Does this mean you need a lawyer to cut through a pile of red tape? Not at all. Just order the forms or find the answers to any questions you have about copyright registration from the Copyright Office at (202) 707-9100. The filing fee is only \$20. The SR Form is the one most used by musicians because it lets you submit a song or multiple songs on tape.

Publishing

The term "publishing," as defined by the U.S. Copyright Law, has several meanings: It is the "distribution of copies of a work to the public by sale or other transfer of ownership, or by rental, lease, or lending." A work can also be considered published if there has been an "offering to distribute copies of a work to a group of persons for purposes of further distributions, public performance, or public display." This means that if someone offers to distribute copies of something you wrote, it's published.

Many artists send recordings of their songs to publishing companies in hopes of getting a publishing deal. If a publisher hears something he or she likes, he or she may approach you with an offer to become your publisher. What this *really* means is that the publisher will invest in

you by buying a portion of the rights in your copyright. All you need to make this contact is diligence and talent.

As a practical matter, music publishing consists mainly of all administrative duties, exploitation of copyrights, and collection of money generated from the exploitation of those copyrights. If a publisher takes on these responsibilities, he or she "administers" the compositions. This means anything from filing all the necessary registrations (*i.e.*, copyright forms) to answering questions about your songs. One of the most important functions shared by artists and music publishers involves exploiting—or, in real-world language, plugging—your work. This involves looking for different ways in which your music can be used. One way publishers do this is by preparing quality demos and sending them to artists and producers. They'll also be sent to television, film, and advertising contacts for use in those media.

Getting people to use your works is half of the publisher's responsibility; the other half involves making sure that you and they get paid for them. Music publishers derive income from two primary sources: record sales (*i.e.*, mechanical royalties) and revenues that come from broadcast performances (*i.e.*, performance royalties). Mechanical royalties are collected directly from the record companies and paid to the publisher. Performance royalties are collected by performing rights organizations—ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC—and then distributed proportionately to the publisher and the songwriter.

But music publishing isn't all number-shuffling; there's a creative side to it, too. Since producing hit songs is in the best interest of both the publisher and the writer, some music publishers have whole departments devoted to helping writers grow and develop. The creative staff finds and signs new writers, works with them to improve their product, pairs them up with potentially compatible co-writers, and crosses its fingers in hopes that the results of their nurturing will involve profits for all concerned.

Although a writer can be his or her own publisher, the larger publishing companies in the music business usually

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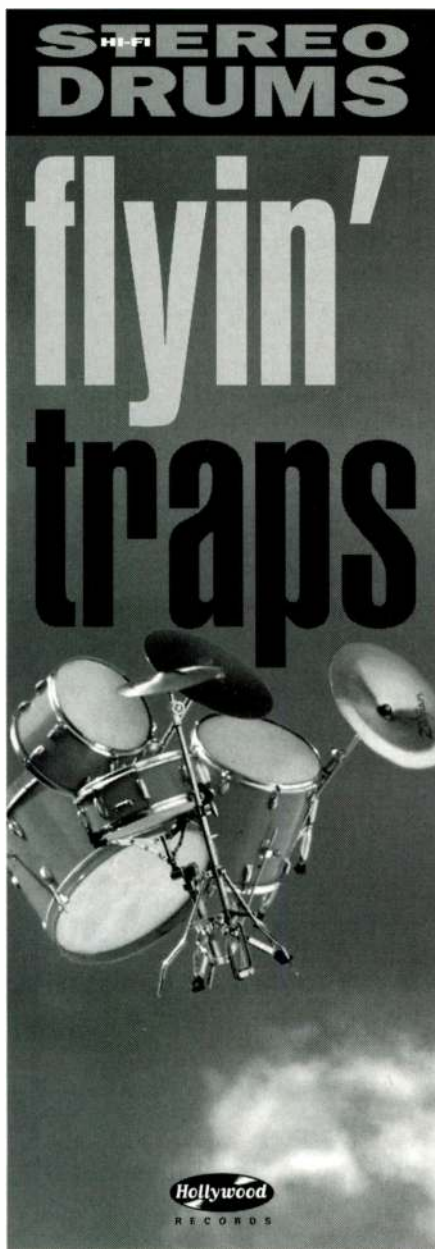
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Trademark Protection

Trademark rights are rights in a name, phrase, slogan, or logo that indicate source or quality. Such rights are based on "use" of the mark; once you use it in connection with your goods or services, it's yours, whether you're a solo act, part of a band, or a DJ.

The more distinctive your name is, the easier it is to trademark it. The highest level of protection is granted to "unique" or "arbitrary" names, which means words that were invented (Nike, Rolex, Microsoft) or existing words that are arbitrarily attached to a product or service ("Smashing Pumpkins"). A high level of protection is also granted to "suggestive" marks, which means a word or slogan that hints at what something is but doesn't describe it, like "Meow Mix" for pet food or "Miracle Gro" for plant food. Terms that are too descriptive or generic may not be eligible for much, if any, trademark protection.

Again, you can protect yourself without legal assistance in the trademark game. Just file a federal trademark registration application, since registration will give you a presumption of priority or ownership of the name nationwide. But before you invest too much in your prospective trademark, it's a good idea to order a trademark search to make sure that no one else has been using the same name or one that's confusingly similar. You may be able to do a trademark search on the Internet, through the computer services of certain public libraries, or by contacting a searching service; you *can* use a lawyer for this service. The least expensive searching service I know of is Government Liaisons at (800) 642-6564.

One caveat: If you're interested in trademarking your band name or your own name as a performer, a search of current federal trademark registrations may be insufficient. It's best to order a full statewide search as well as a search of the copyright office records in order to find any songs that may be copyrighted in a

band's name. This is important because trademark rights are based on use, so even if a band doesn't file for federal trademark registration, that band will retain certain rights under state law when they start using their name. For example, on the eve of releasing your record worldwide you might find that a band has already been using your band's name in, say, Illinois. If they were using the name before you, then state law says that this band could prevent you from releasing your record in that state. The usual solution to this problem is to buy out that local band's rights, but this can cost you a bundle.

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Once you've determined that no one else is using your name, you can file an application for trademark registration in the Patent and Trademark Office. (The current fee is \$245 per category.) Registration gives you nationwide protection as well as the presumption of validity for lawsuit purposes, as well as legal fees and additional damages for the prevailing party in an infringement action.

To order forms or to obtain additional information on trademark registration, call the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office at (703) 557-4636.

Incorporation

Sooner or later you may want to incorporate. The reason for this is to limit your personal liability: If properly used, a corporate entity can protect you like a shield. In most cases it isn't necessary to incorporate at the start of a career. Most states do require that if you use a professional name that's different from your actual name, you should file a business certificate (or DBA) in the county where you live or work under that name. You'll need a DBA if you want to open a bank account in your professional pseudonym or group or company name. The DBA form is available in stationery stores or at the county clerk's

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office.

Also, as a business matter, the members of a group or company may want to work out a partnership agreement among themselves in order to spell out their rights in areas like songwriting and ownership of a name's trademark rights. Otherwise, under the laws of most states, any group of two or more persons operating a business for profit is considered a partnership, meaning that all members of the group share evenly in profits and

losses, including all assets of the business.

So I Don't Need a Lawyer?

Sure, you do! (You didn't think I'd put myself totally out of business, did you?) Whenever you're called upon to sign any contract, you'll need a knowledgeable entertainment lawyer there to review it first. Don't rely on anyone else (or anyone else's lawyer) to tell you what your contract says. And never let anyone rush or

pressure you into signing any agreement. There is really no such thing as a standard "form" contract. Every contract is drafted by some party's attorney to protect that party's interests. Your lawyer can explain the deal's terms to you, and then help negotiate more favorable terms for you.

In fact, if you have an agreement with someone, it's likely in your best interest to "get it in writing." This is especially true in collaborative situations. Otherwise, you run the risk of pitting your word against someone else's in a disagreement over terms of the oral agreement. This isn't to say that an oral agreement is not a binding contract. It's just that a contract is easier to prove if the terms are written down. A simple contract may not require extensive involvement by lawyers; a contract can be as basic as a letter that describes the details of an arrangement and is signed by both parties to the agreement.

Still, you can't do it all yourself. At some point or another as you pursue a career in music, you will need to get a lawyer. Too many musicians invest a lot of their money on gear and demo recordings, only to risk it all by skimping on legal advice.

A good lawyer will steer you safely through the minefield that is the entertainment industry. It's not that everyone is trying to rip you off, but this *is* a business, and there are no rules governing what is fair in a music business deal. Record contracts, publishing agreements, and licensing agreements can be complicated. Proper negotiating and drafting requires legal skills as well as a knowledge of the entertainment business and intellectual property practice.

Don't be afraid to interview a few lawyers before deciding on who should represent you. Check around, ask friends for suggestions, or call your local bar association for a referral. Although your first contact may be on the phone, most likely you will have an initial interview for which, if you ask in advance, there may be little or no charge. Remember, your lawyer's time is money, so be ready and be on time for your appointment.

The attorney you choose doesn't have to like or even understand your music.

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Remember that a lawyer with big-name clients isn't necessarily the best lawyer for you. If it comes to taking your calls or those of some superstar, who do you think will get preferred treatment?

You're probably wondering how much all this will cost. Well, first of all, since the odds of success in music are seldom favorable, very few lawyers are willing to defer your payment until you're hauling in royalties. A lawyer specializing in the entertainment field usually charges an hourly fee or a percentage of the money value of your deal. Hourly rates generally run from \$200 up, and percentages are based on the "reasonable value of services rendered," which generally means around five to ten percent of the deal. A few lawyers charge a set fee, such as \$1,000 or \$1,500, to review and negotiate certain documents. Check around to see if the fee you're being quoted is competitive.

As a rule, I advise my clients to consult with me any time they're asked to sign anything other than an autograph. Too many aspiring artists want a record deal so badly that they'll sign almost anything that promises them a chance to get one. But even successful music careers usually have a relatively short lifespan, so make sure your contracts give you maximum returns in the good years without ripping off your publishing or other valuable income in the long run.

The truly empowered musician is one who knows when to consult with the right people and knows how to take control of his or her life where appropriate.

Contributors: Wallace Collins is a New York lawyer associated with the law firm Stein and Stein. Collins specializes in entertainment law; clients include Dru Hill, Craig Mack, Eddy Grant, and producers John Siket (Phish, Sonic Youth) and Mark Plati (David Bowie). Before attending Fordham's law school, he recorded on Epic with his band, the Dynamites.

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Where Have All The

A&R

DOES THE RISE OF THE
BOTTOM LINE MARK
THE END OF AN ERA WHEN
TALENT COUNTED AT LABELS?

BY SAM CANNON

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN HUGGINS



Gone?



Heroes

Behind every successful band stands a strong A&R person—or so the old story went. Even in the jaded circles of the music industry, the names of legends from the past still inspire awe. There was John Hammond Sr., whose list of discoveries stretched from Billie Holiday to Aretha to Dylan to Springsteen to Stevie Ray Vaughan. There's Seymour Stein, whose Sire Records launched the careers of Madonna, Talking Heads, the Pretenders, and the Smiths (and, more recently, Barenaked Ladies and Spacehog). And how about Bob Biggs, who started Slash Records to expose the world—or at least

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the East Coast—to X, the Germs, and Los Lobos? “Ah,” goes the refrain, “they don’t make ‘em like that anymore.” But why not? These days, A&R departments are accused of shying away from adventurous signings and even running away from artists they’ve brought in from the cold. More records are being released than ever before by major labels, but fewer than ever contain anything resembling a surprise, and those records which are on the fringe are often last in line when it comes to doling out cash for promotion and marketing, even though they’re usually the ones who need it the most. Bob Biggs, who is still going strong at Slash (in the past few years he’s signed Soul Coughing and Grant Lee Buffalo), points to a familiar culprit: Big Money.

“You may think it took courage for me to sign X or Violent Femmes or Los Lobos,” he says of that late Seventies heyday. “In reality, it took no courage. There was no competition for those bands back then. We were making records for \$4000 instead of \$400,000.

“We made millions of dollars on our first few records, so I was allowed to do whatever I wanted,” he goes on. “If you don’t have that luxury, you have to be careful, which makes it harder to do your job. It’s much easier to say no. You get judged on your successes, not your failures.”

These days, stakes *are* high. Indie bands with a bit of street cred, a following, and often no more than 100,000 records sold are getting snatched up by the majors as if they were the last musicians on Earth. The “feeding frenzy” mentality inflates the asking price for artists who will likely never pay off for the label and thus creates immediate, unrealistic expectations.

Ask the Melvins. Singer King Buzzo remembers their courtship by Atlantic Records: “They were offering us money that would finally allow us to make the records we wanted to make. I didn’t think they were going to make us amazing superstars or anything. Then again, I didn’t think it *couldn’t* happen.”

As Buzzo recounts it, his band’s problems arose when the Melvins, known for making what they describe as a “metal racket,” put out what they considered to

be three of their most commercial records to lukewarm corporate reception. “They gave up too easily,” Buzzo complains. “They couldn’t plug it into the same outlets they plugged Stone Temple Pilots into, so they decided they didn’t like the record.”

Moreover, the A&R person who had shown the band initial interest and support moved to a higher position in the company and became “unavailable.” “I had heart-to-heart talks with the guy, and now I bet I couldn’t get him on the phone with me,” Buzzo says. “He’s told me we’ll never be able to sign to a major again.”

Yet if they had to do it all over again—and, of course, they do—the Melvins would return to a major. “There’s nothing bad about major labels,” Buzzo insists. “They’ve got resources and they pay their bills. I just want an A&R person who will stick with us, even when the rest of the company doesn’t want to work our record.”

The problem for bands is that the

A&R reps just aren’t as loyal as they used to be. That’s because the old-school A&R rep (stands for artist *and* repertoire, remember) often produced the albums of the artists they signed. As a result, they were more likely to be loyal to that artist’s vision. These days, high-investment bands are often linked with proven, high-salaried producers, confining A&R to the role of talent scouts. For the A&R rep, that role inevitably translates into more loyalty to the company’s bottom line and a greater likelihood to cut bait on an act that’s not getting support elsewhere.

As one consequence of this shift, many of the older A&R/producer types have bailed out of the business. “A&R means something entirely different now,” observes Al Kooper, the renowned songwriter, producer, and session player. “When I was first hired into A&R in 1968 by CBS, my job description was to go out and find bands that I thought could be successful for the label and produce them. When I took an A&R position at Polygram in 1984, my job description had

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become 'have lunch with managers and agents.' I quit after a year and a half; I couldn't even eat in the presence of these people."

Kooper's experience illustrates a major shift in A&R. "I would look for bands that had the potential but were missing what I could offer in the studio," he says. But in the Nineties radio has returned to singles-oriented formats. Stations once dedicated to the everlasting *bands* of music history now glorify the everlasting *bits*. The industry goal was no longer to find so-called "career" bands but to score instant gratification on the charts.

"Today's signings are based on observation," Kooper says. "You go to a club, hear a band play, see a zillion people there reacting emotionally, and you go back to the office and say, 'There's this great band ...' That's an observation that anyone with eyes, ears, and half a brain could make. The question is, where will they be in 25 years?"

With such little regard for history, the music industry seems more prone to repeat its mistakes. "I'm in a business that has no respect for seniority," Kooper says. "In 1995, I had dinner with Bill Szymczyk, a friend of mine who had also dropped out of producing. We were reminiscing about 1975, when he was producing the Eagles' *Hotel California* and I was doing *Second Helping* with Lynyrd Skynyrd in the studio next door. In 1993, country music was based largely on those two records, yet we couldn't go into a studio with a band now without having some A&R kid telling me they didn't like the mix. That's insulting."

Although the A&R producer is a dying breed, Dust Brother Mike Simpson is a notable exception. One-half of the dynamic duo responsible for producing such watershed albums as the Beastie Boys' *Paul's Boutique* and Beck's *Odelay*, Simpson was hired to wear both hats at his A&R position at Dreamworks, where he has recently signed and produced albums by Eels, Morphine, and Spain. "The people who hired me, Lenny Waronker (longtime staff producer at Warner Bros. turned president) in particular, were from that old-school mentality that the people bringing in the band should be the same people who produce

them," Simpson explains.

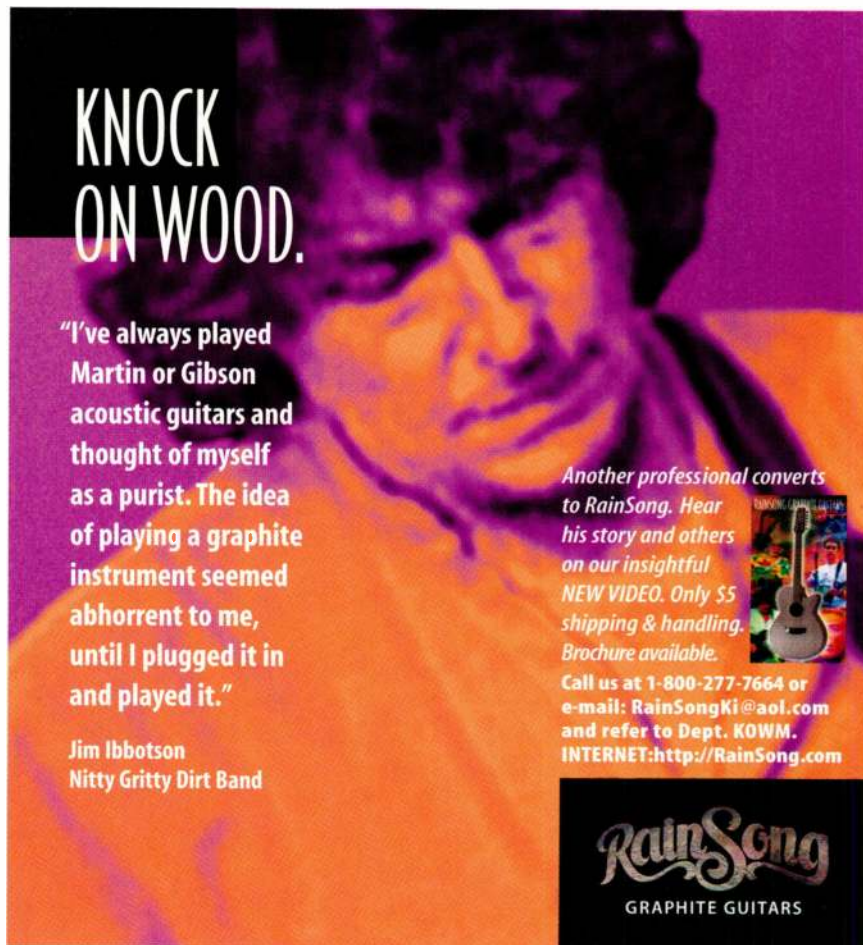
It's not always an easy task. "It's actually very difficult to be both an A&R person and a producer in the studio," Simpson suggests. "You have to communicate openly with the bands as a producer. But you have to know when to keep your mouth shut and let them do their thing as an A&R guy. It's like being a player/coach."

Does it help when signing a band? "Definitely, that's the benefit. I can watch a band play live and figure out what I would do with them in the studio. For the most part, though, I look for non-music cues. They should have songwriting ability, not just a couple of fluke singles. Tied into that has to be a strong vision or point of view. That comes from working with bands for so long before this job."

In turn, bands should expect the same from their A&R reps. Dave Gibbs, singer and guitarist for the Boston-based Gigolo Aunts, came to this conclusion the hard way. "When we signed with RCA, Bennett Kaufman was our A&R guy," he

says. "We got along with him really well. But RCA fired him and the person who was assigned to us after that didn't have a firm vision. He didn't give us good input. Our original support structure—the video people, the press people—was completely gone; everyone there was new. We had a bunch of material and some internal problems, we could have gone in any direction. No one stepped out to make suggestions." (RCA declined our invitation to comment.)

Gigolo Aunts, like the Melvins, would have no problem returning to a major label, but their criteria are strict. "Our A&R guy has got to learn to kill for us," he says. "When they're having their marketing meeting, they have to bring up the positive points when everyone else is pointing at sales and budget. They have to be dead loyal, to love our band, not just our single. They have their own vision for our band. They should come in and be able to tell us exactly what they like about us, where they can see us going and how, which single they like and why. And



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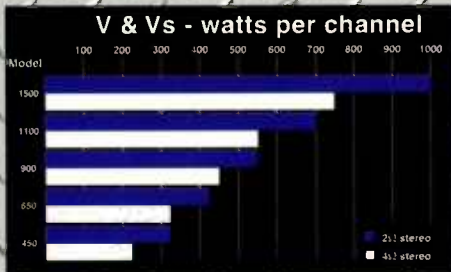
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we've got to have the president, or the head of A&R, liking us as well in case our A&R guy leaves."

There is a silver lining here. Lacking a sure direction or formula for success, A&R departments are becoming more likely to take risks out of sheer desperation. "Things are different than they were even five years ago," Simpson explains. "Radio is in this state of flux where everyone's wondering what's next. People are looking for the next big thing. Labels are betting big on electronica. They're in a position where they *have* to take some risks. You can't just sign an alternative band anymore and expect results."

Todd C. Roberts, who edited *URB* magazine for over seven years and now acts as director of artist and label development for the San Francisco-based Domestic label, experienced the scramble first-hand. About a year ago, he found himself getting lunch invitations from major label execs. "They wanted to pick my brain about the 'electronica craze,'" he recalls. "I was flattered at first, but it soon became obvious that they weren't interested in doing it right—*i.e.*, putting a seed in the ground and waiting for it to grow. If I had a label, I could have sold it right there."

Roberts' roots in club culture made him a prime candidate for an A&R position. Majors and independents alike were eager to exploit his expertise. The offers were appealing, but one thought nagged. "I began to worry about the artists blaming me for their short-term careers," he says. "I knew as soon as their records didn't sell, the labels would close up shop, leaving the artists out in the cold. The music is more important to me than a job."

But when longtime friends and colleagues Stephanie Smiley and Wade Hampton suggested launching Domestic together, Roberts' fears lifted. "We have the same vision," he says. "We're trying to develop every aspect of the package. Electronic music introduces a whole new paradigm. It's not like rock; it takes and borrows from other things. That's never been marketed to the mainstream before. It has to be reconceptualized. Bigger labels don't have the patience to see that through. In order to move into people's

homes, it may have to take on a different form; staged concerts and radio might not work.

"The same thing goes on in rock," he declares. "Artists across the board are starting to experiment more, and they should be allowed to. You shouldn't base your decisions on what has happened, but what *could* happen. If you're short-term in your thinking, the label becomes short-term."

Kooper follows a different path to the same conclusion. "It has always come back to rock & roll," he explains. "There have been aberrations—glam rock, prog rock, rap, alternative, electronica—but when the fads fade, good, basic rock & roll will always sell. All A&R needs to do is trust history."

But can a band trust A&R? Simpson suggests that bands take matters into their own hands by restructuring their financial priorities. "One of the toughest parts of A&R these days is you have to overpay for these young, new bands, which does a disservice to both the label and the band,"

he elaborates. "The label gets nervous when they don't see a lot of action right away, and all of a sudden it becomes a financial issue: How much more money can we lose to break this band?"

"The bands need to bet on themselves, to forgo a huge advance and negotiate a bigger royalty in the long run. This says, 'We're willing to let you spend the money on promoting us.'"

The Melvins insisted on "one hundred percent creative control" in their contract with Atlantic. According to Buzzo, that was their saving grace. "I've never met a band who sold out who wasn't ready to do it in the first place," he states. "They'll try to get you to become what they want to promote. We kept believing that we may be the next big thing. Now, we have three great albums to show for our three years with the label."

Or as Dave Gibbs puts it, "I don't want to record the 'Convoy' of the Nineties. I want a career." ❧

Contributors: Sam Cannon edits Grid magazine in Salt Lake City.

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Back in January, Gibson issued a limited edition of signature Ace Frehley Les Paul Customs. Now they've gone the whole hog, putting out a production model of the Kiss axeman's chosen instrument (retailing for just \$5099). The three DiMarzio humbuckers make this the only current tri-pickup Paul, while the figured maple top (with mahogany back) is definitely a visual treat. But what you'll probably notice first are the distinctive lightning bolt inlays in the ebony fingerboard, along with a familiar face set into the headstock. ▶ **Gibson USA, 641 Massman Dr., Nashville, TN 37210; voice (615) 871-4500**

2 Victoria Double Deluxe

They're probably best known for making Buddy Guy's amplifiers, but Victoria's latest creation, the Double Deluxe (\$1500), was produced in collaboration with another guitarist, Jimmy Rip, who's worked with artists ranging from Patti Smith to Mick Jagger. Powered by four 6V6 tubes and packing two 12" Celestion speakers, the Double Deluxe is obviously modeled after Fender's classic tweed Deluxes, but with the extra power that makes it useful for live applications. Like all Victoria amps, it's handwired using "period correct" components.

▶ **Victoria Amplifier Co., 1504 Newman Ct., Naperville, IL 60564-4132; voice (708) 369-3527**

3 Yamaha Anton Fig snare

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4 Shure PSM600 Personal Monitor System

Had enough of not hearing yourself? Then check out Shure's PSM600 personal stereo monitor system, available in both UHF wireless (shown, \$1590) and hard-wired (\$840) versions. The PSM600 delivers audio through a set of earpieces, and its body-pack functions give performers direct control over volume and balance. A feature called MixMode lets you send and receive two mono mixes rather than a single stereo mix, which means you can adjust your volume relative to the rest of the band without blowing them away—fun as that might be. ▶ **Shure Brothers, 222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, IL 60202; voice (847) 866-2200.**



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5 E.W. Bridge Musician's Pocket Memo

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6 Sonic Foundry CD Architect

If you've ever wanted to make your own CD, Sonic Foundry's new CD Architect software (\$395) can help. First, the program allows you to import audio from a CD, record from digital tape, or digitize through any Windows-compatible sound card. If necessary, you can then edit the music with a wide range of processing tools. Finally, compile a playlist (allowing pause time between tracks or even running them together if you like), run a test mode to monitor the recording source, and burn away. The only thing CD Architect can't provide is the music, but hey, you've got to have something left to do. ▶ **Sonic Foundry, 100 S. Baldwin St., Ste. 204, Madison, WI 53703; voice (608) 256-7133**

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You wouldn't expect White Zombie's J. to share a stage with Lee Ritenour, or even the same page in a magazine, for that matter. J's make-your-ears-bleed style of metal and Captain Fingers' jazz finesse never meant to inhabit the same worlds.

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by howard massey

Speakers—you've heard two, you've heard 'em all. Actually, only the most cloth-eared amongst us would subscribe to that statement. Truth is, there are lots of different kinds of speakers and there are often enormous differences not only between these designs but between the various models within each category. Consumer stereo speakers are designed to color the sound in a subjective way, making it more "pleasing" to what the marketing department considers the average customer. Computer speakers are built with the primary goals of compact size and magnetic shielding, with sound quality usually coming in a poor second. Then there are so-called "reference monitors," built to be used in studios during tracking and mixing. In theory, these are supposed to deliver "true" sound without any coloration.

So if reference monitors are meant to add nothing to the signal, why do they sound so different from one another? Part of the answer lies in the physical design of the speaker (*i.e.*, the quality and dimensions of the woofer/tweeter and crossover components, the amount and type of internal baffling and acoustic porting, etc.) and part lies in the amplifier and the cabling that sends signal to the speaker. Choose the wrong type of amp—one with inadequate headroom or unacceptable harmonic distortion specs—or use poorly shielded, thin-gauge cabling, and even the best speaker system can sound awful. This is why many manufacturers now offer self-powered "active" monitors, which contain matched amplifiers (with extremely short internal cable runs) designed to drive their speakers with maximum efficiency and accuracy. Most active monitors—even those designed for up-close "nearfield" use—are in fact bi-amped, containing two onboard amps, one for the woofer and one for the tweeter.

Until fairly recently, bi-amped active reference monitors have been prohibitively expensive. For example, the Meyer HD-1 system, introduced in 1989 and a staple in many pro studios, has a list price of over \$5000 a pair. But today's project studio revolution has given rise to a number of lower-cost models, all designed to provide the accuracy of a professional reference monitor but at a fraction of the cost of the big boys. Most of these list for around \$1000 a pair—a hefty price compared to passive monitors or even high-end con-



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We recently rounded up a number of these systems (as well as a pair of venerable Yamaha NS-10Ms being driven by Yamaha's recommended H3000 amplifier—the "standard" nearfield monitor system found in practically every studio in the world) and conducted blind listening tests in my acoustically-tuned home studio. The results were fascinating.

First, a word about the tests themselves. Our panelists (a mix of *Musician* editors, hi-fi enthusiasts, and both recording and technical engineers) were invited to bring in a number of CDs they were familiar with and asked to switch freely among the speaker systems at will, though they were not told which system was which. At the end of the listening period, they rated the systems both in terms of personal preference, stereo imaging, transient response (that is, how well the speakers reacted to peak sounds such as cymbal crashes), and frequency response. They were then asked to guess which system was which. Interestingly, only about half the panelists got them all right.

During the first fifteen or twenty minutes of listening, most of the panelists indicated a leaning toward the Event Electronics 20/20-bas (list price: \$999/pair), which consistently delivered a clean, crisp signal with an unusual smooth low end. This excellent speaker system is well worthy of your consideration when choosing an active monitor.

But the remarkable thing was that the more our panelists listened, the more they tended to change their opinion and gravitate toward the Genelec 1029A system (list price: \$1070/pair), being used, for testing purposes, without their optional 1901A companion subwoofer. Why did this occur? The answer probably lies in Genelec's proprietary Directivity Control Waveguide ("DCW") technology, which gives the system incredible transient response—in plain English, these speakers respond faster to peak signals than any others I've ever heard. The design of the 1029As is so different from other monitors that they actually sound kind of strange at first. But after a short period of acclimation, the ear gets used to the phenomenally clean signal they are delivering and the brain starts to say, "Hey, guys, this is really good stuff—gimme more!" Comments from our panelists about the Genelecs included: "most neutral and most balanced," "very transparent," and "amazing

high end."

Even more surprising was the Genelecs' bass response. Despite being far and away the smallest of all the monitors we tested (the bass driver—you could hardly call it a "woofer"—is a petite 5", and the tweeter is a minuscule 3/4" metal dome), it delivered the biggest, roundest bass of the lot, even though, again, no subwoofer was being used. In fact, some panelists felt that, in the "flat," factory preset condition, the 1029As delivered too much bass; this is easily rectified by using the rear panel "Bass Tilt" dip switches to roll off some of the low end. Though rappers and hip-hopsters will love the extra bottom, Genelec recognizes the possibility of too much bass being reproduced if the 1029As are placed directly on the console top, and recommends that the speakers instead be mounted on microphone stands—the way we used them for these tests—or on wall brackets. These are the only nearfield monitors I've ever encountered that have this kind of caveat; usually, manufacturers encourage placement on the console to acoustically boost an anemic bass response.

Once the blind evaluations were completed and our panelists were told which systems were which, everyone had an opportunity to hear the 1029As with the optional companion 1091A subwoofer (list price: \$680). This extends the bass response of the system from 68Hz down to 38Hz, essentially adding the lowest octave that only large woofers in main monitor systems can deliver. Pretty much everyone agreed that this not only added more bass, it added better bass, since the 5" drivers in the 1029As were now freed from the responsibility of delivering thuds and whoomphs. (A "Bass Roll-Off" dip switch on the rear panel shifts the low cutoff frequency upward to 85Hz.) In fact, with the 1091A engaged, the Genelec system compared quite favorably with the big, bulky UREI 890B main monitors in my studio.

The true test of any monitoring system, of course, lies not in listening to finished CDs but in tracking and mixing. I put the Genelecs through their paces in a number of recording sessions and they came through big time. They consistently reproduced live acoustic signals with a clarity and detail that far surpassed that of the other systems tested (as well as my own 809Bs and Yamaha NS-10Ms), and the mixes I did on the Genelecs reproduced accurately on various boom boxes, car speakers, and home stereo systems. True, they don't force you to

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work as hard as the NS-10Ms in gaining a balanced, full-range mix, but their sheer lack of coloration makes using them a joy.

My only complaints about the Genelec system are of a minor nature. First, even though each 1029A has a discrete input sensitivity control to allow for interfacing with a wide variety of consoles, there is no calibration or detent that enables them to be quickly set for optimum reception of -10 or +4 signal, nor is there any such procedure described in the slim owner's manual; this, like all other settings, has to be done by ear. Second, the 40-watt power amplifiers provided in the 1029As don't offer as much headroom as some other active monitors in this price class. (The 1091A has a beefier 70-watt amplifier.) This means that you can't play the Genelecs as loud as some of the other systems—nor, indeed, as loudly as passive monitors such as the Yamaha NS-10Ms—without inducing clipping distortion caused by full cone excursion. In fairness, they are designed to be used as

nearfields, so with up-close listening, how loud are you gonna crank 'em? Hey, if you really want to be like the Maxell man, with your hair blowing from the force of the sound, you'll need mega-speakers with large woofers—but they probably won't have anywhere near the accuracy of the Genelec system.

A word about the amenities provided by the Genelecs: All components have driver overload protection circuitry, so it's damn near impossible to blow them out, and the 1029As also are magnetically-shielded, so they can be used near computer monitors or video equipment without distorting the video images. The cabinet is of painted cast-aluminum, so it won't chip or scratch like wood, and no trees have been sacrificed for its construction. There's a 3/8" UNC threaded hole on the rear for mic stand mounting (you'll need to buy an inexpensive adapter for this purpose, since standard mic stands have a 5/8" diameter), and Genelec even throws in a bag of friction pads for use if the speakers

are placed on a flat shelf or bracket. Line-level signal can be input to the 1029As via either balanced XLR or balanced or unbalanced 1/4" jacks. If you're using a 1091A, however, you'll have to use the XLR inputs since the 1/4" jacks double as outputs to the subwoofer. The 1091A also comes with connecting cables—a good thing, since for some reason the left input uses an XLR jack while the right input uses a 1/4" jack. Standard IEC cables (provided) are used for power input, and the owner's manual gives a reasonable amount of guidance as to speaker placement and dip switch settings.

This is one case where first impressions aren't necessarily accurate. Give the Genelec 1029As (and optional 1091A) the benefit of a little extended listening—you'll be amazed at what they deliver.

Special thanks to Will Eggleston and Robbie Clyne at Genelec, to Michael Marans at Event Electronics, and to Cory Davidson and Chip Weinberg of Davidson Electronics.

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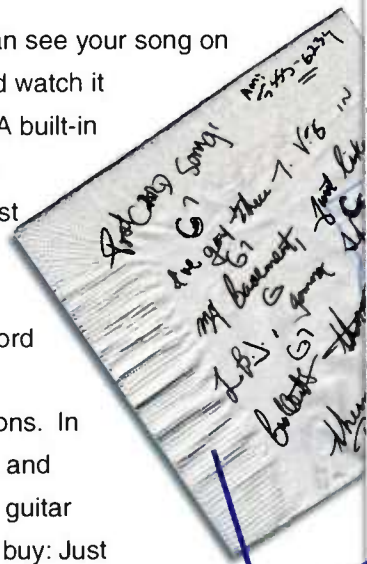
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If you build it, it'll break." Okay, that's not exactly how the saying goes, but the fact remains that anything which has moving parts eventually fails to work properly. ADATs are no exception.

To a trained service technician, a malfunctioning Alesis ADAT is a temporary annoyance. But what does the average Joe do when a sophisticated piece of digital equipment decides to squeal instead of sing, and an exhilarating recording session comes to a screeching halt?

In many cases, your only recourse is to send the unit to an authorized service center for repair. But there's nothing more frustrating than shipping your Modular Digital Multitrack [MDM] off, only to have it return two to four weeks later with a message attached: "Heads were dirty. Cleaned heads."

Some of the ADAT's potential problems are easily fixed, if you can only wade through the often confusing symptoms and know the simple procedures needed to correct them. In this two-part series, we'll teach you how to recognize your ADAT's cry for help and bring it back from the

mounted in a revolving drum. Two of these are read heads, the other two are write heads, analogous to playback and record heads on an analog recorder. On each revolution of the spinning drum, the heads make dual helical scans across your recording tape in the process of reading and writing digital data on the tape.

The ADAT uses a "read before write" system. Simply put, it always reads a section of tape before writing new data to it, as a safety precaution against overwriting/eras-

Each dual helical scan also contains formatting data that was recorded when you first formatted the tape. The formatting data tells the ADAT where to store new data for each track. Think of it as a "floorplan" for interleaving data on the tape.

Error 7 and 8. Error 7 and Error 8 messages occur when the ADAT can't read the formatting on the tape. That is, it doesn't know where on the tape the rotary heads are currently located. When this happens during playback, you get an Error 7 message; during record, you get an Error 8. An ADAT will always drop out of record mode when an Error 8 occurs in order to avoid erasing tracks by mistake; since it can't read the "floorplan" for placing new data onto the tape, it runs the risk of putting that data somewhere where wanted data already exists—so it stops recording instead.

Error 7 and 8 messages can be caused by dirty heads, poor tape formatting, defective tape, transport troubles, or sync problems. The first two problems are often related, so let's take a closer look at them first.

WE'RE TALKING HEADS



by michael cooper



brink. Part 1 will focus primarily on troubleshooting your ADAT and testing the condition of its heads. Part 2 will offer some simple maintenance procedures to help restore your MDM's health. But to fix your ADAT, you must first understand how it works.

The ADAT has four tiny heads

An idiot's guide to ADAT troubleshooting & maintenance

ing any important data that you meant to keep. This is necessary because, unlike an analog recorder, which divides tape into separate linear tracks that run like stripes down the length of the tape, the ADAT "interleaves" or combines data for all eight audio tracks within each dual helical scan.

The Two R's: Reading & 'riting. Obviously, if your ADAT's write heads are dirty when you format a tape, they won't format the tape properly. Similarly, if the tape was formatted properly but the read heads are dirty, the ADAT won't be able to read the good formatting during recording and will shut your ses-

Charlie Clouse

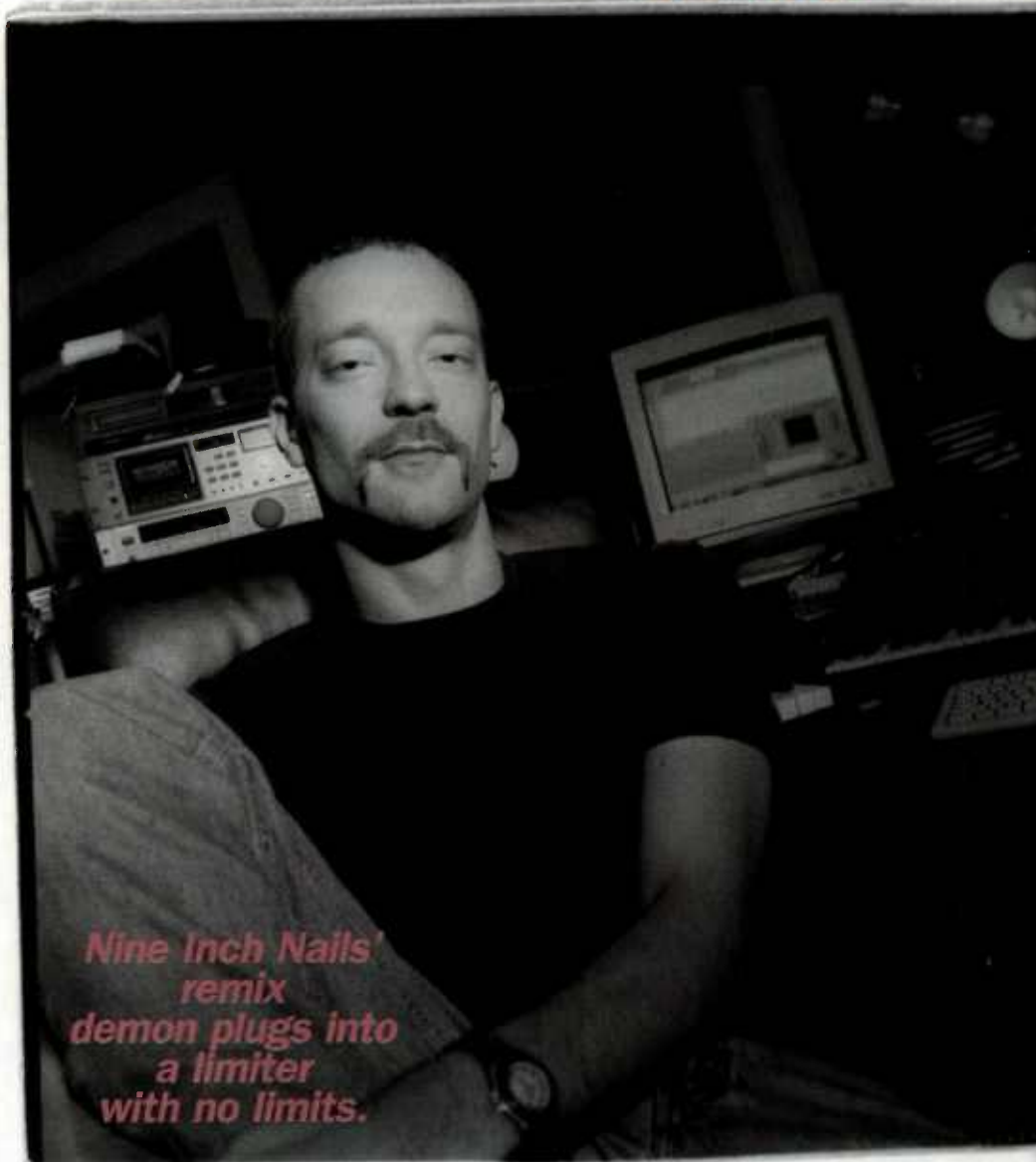
Rides the Waves

by greg sandow

How do you make music for an outlaw like Marilyn Manson? Anyone who believes the anti-Manson hype probably thinks you slaughter small animals. But Charlie Clouse—who produced Manson remixes and is keyboard player and programmer for Nine Inch Nails—uses WAVES, a DSP software suite he runs on the Mac as a plug-in on top of Pro Tools and Studio Vision Pro.

He likes WAVES first, he says, for its “crazy” digital limiter, though it also offers a compressor/gate, a reverb, plus a ten-band parametric EQ. (PC users take note: It’s available for Windows, too.) With the limiter, Clouse says, you can do monstrous limiting: “You can completely squash things so that the waveform winds up looking completely square. It’s easy to create an unnatural sound.”

He gives details, explaining how he jacked up the bass on “Great American Nightmare,” the Rob Zombie song he produced for the Howard Stern movie *Private Parts*. “I wanted a balls-out, killer bass. But I could only hear some of the notes.” Enter the radical WAVES limiter. Now, with all notes pounding at the same volume, he could “improve the aggressiveness of the performance, making little nuances like string scrapes and finger noises much louder. Now it was really in your face.”



Nine Inch Nails' remix demon plugs into a limiter with no limits.

But why can't anyone with hardware compressors in their racks do exactly the same thing? Because, Clouse says, hardware takes an instant or two to react, and a peak might sneak through before it gets squished. WAVES, however, works with audio stored on your hard drive and can look ahead to see what's coming; it's prepared in advance, so nothing slips past it.

Of course, other plug-ins do this too, Clouse admits, and even new hardware limiters can peek

r forward in time by delaying their work long enough to scrutinize the waveform. But WAVES offers other advantages. For instance, it can run multiple copies of the same module, so if you've got six vocal tracks that need to be compressed separately, you run six WAVES compressors, all for the price of one.

It's true that WAVES lets you display just one module at a time on your computer screen. But, Clouser points out, "if they let six compressor windows stay open, your screen would be a mess." On the other hand, you don't get the kind of overview that you get with hardware, where you can just glance at your rack and see in an instant where all the dials are set. Nor, Clouser adds, do you have "tactile response." You get used to the feel of your hardware, he notes. "There's lots to be said for reaching out and twiddling a knob."

Enough nostalgia, already. Clouser loves WAVES because it has "more parameters, more features, more super-hardcore stuff." He compares it to another software DSP suite, which, he laughs, is "red, sexy, nice-looking, but gives you just three knobs on the screen—no depth of control."

Besides, Clouser says, WAVES "scored a touchdown with presets that give you a great starting point." The de-esser, he swears, gave him ninety percent of what he wanted, right out of the box. He was remixing a Type O Negative cover of Neil Young's, "Cinnamon Girl," and he'd gotten the vocal "EQed up the way I wanted it to sound, so loud it would have blown your tweeters."

Now, though, the sibilants were too wild even for him. "The security I felt about the strength and completeness of the WAVES environment just let me go with it. I looked for the [WAVES de-esser] preset, loaded it up, moved three sliders an eighth of an inch on the screen, and *done!* It took one minute. The preset was so good that it turned mindless groping into a learning experience."

S2/Paul Summers

NEXT MONTH IN MUSICIAN

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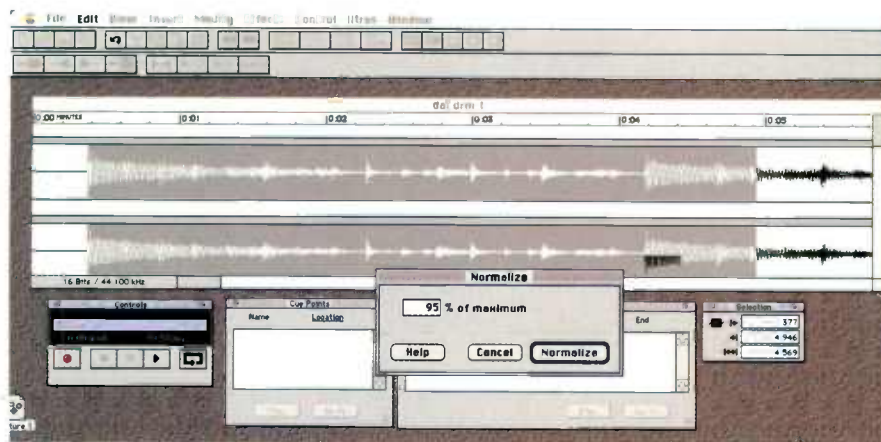


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Macromedia's SoundEdit 16 Version II

Before you dive in, you must first decide why you're posting your audio: Do you want to sell your music digitally via the Web, or do you want to give people an opportunity to hear a sample of your music? Knowing this at the start will help you make critical choices about the types of files you'll need to create.

If you want to post samples and then sell CDs by mail order, things are going to be a lot simpler than if you're planning to sell digital versions of your songs online. If you're intent on selling online, though, you'll probably want to check out Liquid Audio (www.liquidaudio.com) and music sites like IUMA (www.iuma.com) that can help you deal with the transactions and other bookkeeping and hosting details. (Both Liquid Audio and IUMA are discussed in detail in "Internet Update: New Vistas in Music Distribution," September 1997, *Musician*.)

Once you've formulated your approach, you'll need a music production software program. In my experience, Macromedia's SoundEdit 16 version II (Mac) is an indispensable program for Internet music production; it's easy to use, provides very powerful editing and basic compression, and offers a variety of features and effects including fade-in/out, semi-parametric equalization, and reverb. It can also downsample your music (which I'll touch on later in this article) and save files in an assortment of sound formats. (For Windows '95 users, Sonic Foundry's Sound Forge [our May '97 Editor's Pick] is highly recom-

Assorted file formats

Nothing But Net

by Robert Raines

Up until a few short years ago, the ability to distribute music on a worldwide scale was limited to musicians who had the muscle of a major label contract behind them. But thanks to the burgeoning world of computer technology, it's become entirely possible for virtually any musician to make their musical efforts available to people around the globe via the Internet.

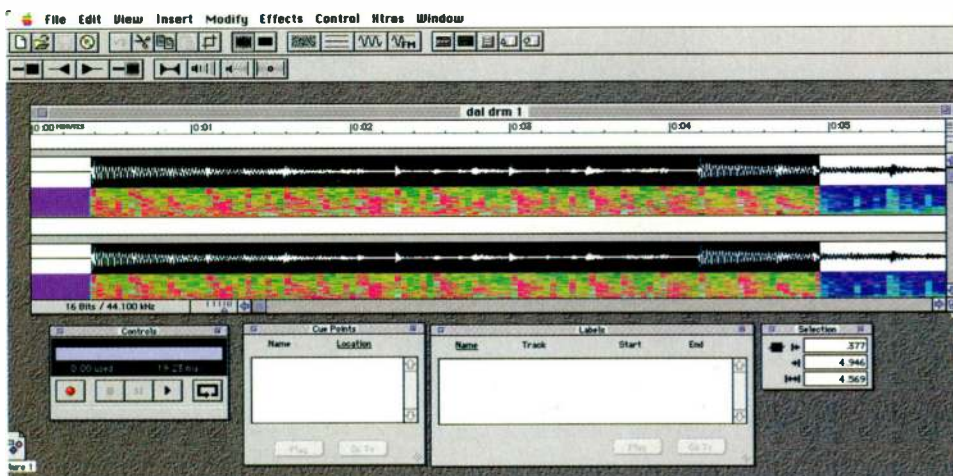
How to get your music playing on the Internet

As Internet audio technology continues to improve, more and more musicians are posting their music on the Internet, and if you haven't tried it yourself, now might be the time to gear up. It's relatively easy to post sound clips or even entire songs on this massive bulletin board, and in fact, those of us equipped with a home studio and a modem have as much firepower as the big record labels when it comes to putting music on the Web. So, exactly how do you go about doing it?

Getting Started

You'll need three basic things to get started: a basic understanding of Hypertext markup language (HTML) programming, access to a Web site where you can post your music, and the ability to upload files from your computer to your Web site. (If you're unsure about HTML, there are a number of good books for beginners, such as *HTML for Dummies* [IDG Books] or *HTML Source Book* [Wiley], that can help you get started. Similarly, companies that can host your site and advise you on how to upload files—with programs like Adobe Fetch—advertise on TV, local newspapers, and the Yellow pages.)





◀ SoundEdit's down-sampling options

type of files you plan to use.)

Providing a downloadable file for playback is therefore the most direct way to reach the widest possible audience, but there's a problem here as well: A CD-quality stereo music file will eat up 10 megabytes for every minute of sound. That's where downsampling comes into play.

In order to speed up a potential end-user's time spent downloading your full-fidelity file, it makes more

sense to decrease your file size. Unfortunately, this may mean you'll have to settle for a loss in sound quality. In a perfect world, standard CD quality would be preferable, but you'll likely find that an 8-bit, mono clip of your music sampled at 11 kHz sounds fine. Remember, you're not locked into one version—I recommend that you create the highest-quality version of the music possible and work down from there.

You may already be thinking of downsampling as a necessary evil that can't be avoided, but there are ways to make the best it. Once you've opened your file in SoundEdit, lower the pitch of the entire file by an octave. Now copy the music to a new file, reducing the bit rate from 16 to 8 bits, and the sampling rate from 44 kHz to 22 kHz—or preferably 11 kHz if you can stand it. Then raise the pitch of the new file up an octave back to its original pitch, and save it in the proper format.

The downsampling process is well worth the time involved because if you reduce the bit and sampling rates without going through this pitch-shifting process, you may end up with audible hiss and noisy artifacts. Before downsampling, it's a good idea to experiment with EQ and normalizing (gain optimizing) your file. I've found a normalization setting of about 90-95 percent adds additional headroom) Once you've completed this procedure, your file is ready to be posted for downloading or to be further processed for various streaming formats. We'll discuss this part and the more complex process of creating streaming files in the Feb. '98 issue.

Contributors: Robert Raines (www.roberrcreative.com) is a musician and Web site designer.

mended.)

For my most recent posting, I began by copying a five-minute cut from a CD of my own music with SoundEdit, but before I compressed the mix, I made sure that it sounded as good as possible on both my computer's built-in speakers and my monitors. (It's best

to assume that many listeners will be hearing your opus through the most pitiful computer speaker imaginable, so I strongly advise that you perform the same degree of quality control on your music.)

Once I was satisfied with the sound quality of the mix, I saved a 50-megabyte, digital stereo sound file (at the CD audio standard of 44.1 kHz, 16 bits) to my hard drive, and then I saved the file in Audio Interchange File Format (AIFF) format for computer manipulation. Manipulating files and saving various versions requires more drive space than you might think, so it'll really help to have a fast external hard drive on hand.

Downloading vs. Streaming

Once you've saved your file, you'll need to decide what delivery method to employ. Currently, the two avenues to consider are downloading and streaming. Downloading simply consists of providing a file that can be downloaded and then played by the user offline at a later time, while streaming is designed to start playing as soon as the user selects it.

It might seem that streaming is the obvious way to go, but there's a catch: To use a streamed file, listeners must have up-to-date Web browsers and the appropriate plugins (an addition to your browser that enables your computer to handle third-party software) installed on their computer in order to hear the file. On top of this, your Internet Service Provider (ISP) must have a server that's properly configured in order to deliver your files to the user. (Call your ISP to confirm that they can handle the

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productindex

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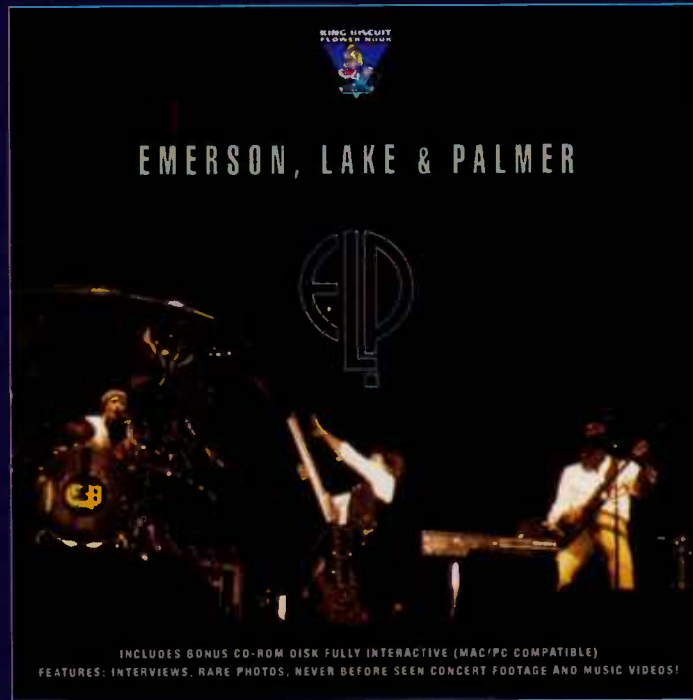
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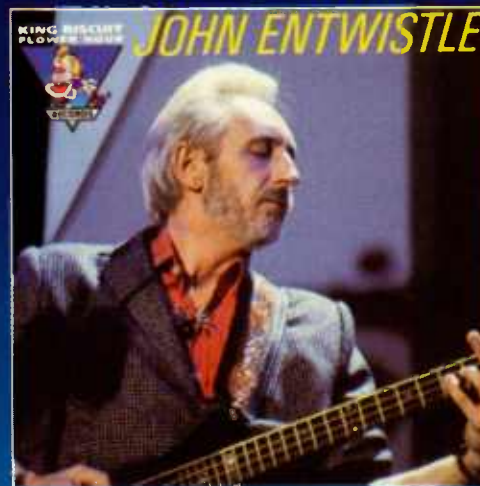
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records

Joe Jackson has never much cared for the world of pop music. Sure, he's shown a knack for penning catchy tunes, but pop fans haven't been especially indulgent in return, rejecting his stylistic diversification as an all-too-quick route to the cutout bin.

So it's not too surprising that his new album is being released on Sony Classical. Jackson has written soundtracks for several films, and he's previously released an orchestral album (*Will Power*, in 1987), so why not jump to a label that welcomes his experimentation?

Based on the concept of the seven deadly sins, the highly ambitious *Heaven and Hell* merges pop, rock, jazz, classical, and electronica into a daunting but largely compelling package. To flesh out his scheme, Jackson engaged the services of a diverse collection of singers—Jane Siberry, Suzanne Vega, longtime colleague Joy Askew, the Crash Test Dummies' Brad Roberts, and operatic soprano Dawn Upshaw—as well as violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg.

"I had to be sort of a casting director," says Jackson, "and then pick the right people to play those characters." Mostly he does: Choosing Roberts' drawly baritone for the voice of sloth in "A Bud and a Slice" was inspired, and Vega's droll performance as the seductress in "Angel (Lust)" is nearly as memorable.

Compositionally, Jackson challenged himself to create musical settings that would bring each fatal transgression to life. He began by using Opcode Vision to sequence keyboard parts and samples, and then added live piano, strings, percussion, and vocals. Most effective is the agitated

"Fugue 1," which uses subtle syncopation to establish the air of ravenous excess necessary to introduce the witty "More is More (Gluttony)": This song features a cleverly patterned melody that descends inexorably over a constantly modulating series of chords.

Jackson gets closest to his old rock & roll self on "Right (Anger)," where drummers Kenny Aronoff and Dan Hickey provide aggressive support for the keyboardist's vocal and instrumental tirade, one from the left speaker, the other from the right. The two drummers laid down their parts simultaneously: "I wanted them to compete with each other," Jackson says, "in order to get as much energy as possible."

For that song's contrastingly hazy midsection, he recorded Broadway singer Jared Crawford banging on plastic buckets in the middle of Times Square, and then added gauzy string parts. To capture the Big Apple experience, car horns and all, Jackson used a portable DAT recorder and brought along an electronic metronome to make sure Crawford stayed with the beat.

Throughout the CD Jackson refrains from passing judgment on his sinners, simply characterizing each fault and then letting listeners decide for themselves. But that approach inevitably creates a sense of emotional detachment for which even an overheated closing number, "Song of Daedalus (Pride)," can't compensate. Still, this is Jackson's most involving album in years, and it should revive interest in his work, proving that classical crossover is indeed a viable career option. Roll over, Costello, and tell McCartney the news!—**Bob Remstein**

Joe Jackson & Friends

Heaven and Hell (Sony Classical)



Classical Joe

Richard Davies

Finds the Right Players



CHRIS PETERSON

I've taken a more crafted, more studied approach to recording this time," Richard Davies explains, walking along a dusty path that winds around Bearsville Studios. "But I don't think I'll ever become obsessed with the specifics of the studio process."

Davies, formerly of Sydney's acclaimed pop rockers the Moles and one half of the baroque Cardinal duo with Eric Matthews, is at the upstate New York studio complex recording an as yet unnamed follow-up to his first solo release, *There's Never Been a Crowd Like This*. (Tentatively due in February 1998, the album will be preceded by an EP in October.) Surrounded by the sounds of summer birds and thickets of evergreens, he seems relaxed, content, happy to be nearing completion of the record.

"I'm finally using what experience I've gained to know what approaches to leave out and what approaches to use," he says. "The absolute technical side of things I'm not huge on. I just kind of sit there after the fact and go, 'Hmmm.'"

Currently, Davies is at work in the so-called "Barn" at Bearsville with mixer Tony Lash, the same guy who mixed the Cardinal record to perfection. As Lash twiddles some knobs on the Barn's renowned API desk in a warmly backlit room, we listen to the gentle guitar/piano arpeggios that open "Crystal Clear." "The classic rock side of Richard Davies," he smiles.

Classic indeed, the song is bathed in crystalline harmony and crackling sound, with a near-flawless mix. In Davies' opinion, though, it's not the post-recording process that's important, it's lining up the right musicians to do the recording. "Once the configuration of musicians is right on a certain song, you're almost completely there," he says. Drawing from a pool of players including guitarist Ronald Jones from the Flaming Lips, local pianist Joe McGinty, and guitarist Brendan O'Brien, Davies brought together the kind of professionals he felt comfortable along-

side in the studio. One of the benefits in working with known musicians is that Davies could predict what people were and weren't going to do. "It's a new thing for me," he admits. "For a long time I've prided myself on doing the opposite for many of my past projects, not knowing what to expect and going from there."

Because of his relative comfort in the studio, he decided to hire himself as producer. "If for no other reason than because I've been here for the whole time," he laughs. "We had discussions about working with producers and all kinds of mixers and engineers. But this experience has taught me that, for better or worse, there are certain things I do like to hear and some I absolutely don't like to hear. If a producer came in with his own baggage, all of which, or some of which, or even one note of which was kind of like this"—he puts his hands over his ears and winces—"I don't think I could stand it, and neither could the band."

Because Davies shies away from the technical aspects of recording, he follows his considerable "instinct"—coincidentally the name of the Moles' final album—in working up his songs. "I'm still the same guy who made *Instinct* in a week and a half," he says. "The ghost of that guy is still here among us in the studio. I wouldn't have sacrificed the spontaneous, loopy part of those records for anything. Today, it's just a matter of expressing the same things but in different, savvier ways."

Perhaps it's due to having himself settled in the peaceful, reflective confines of Woodstock with his wife and dog, but Davies is keen on musing about the art of writing pop songs, a pastime with which he has substantial experience. "As an artist, I'm convinced that the best thing you can do is express a few things better than others. I couldn't tell you what those things are, and I couldn't tell you how I'd pull them off in the studio, but on the next record I'm certain I'll be expressing those same few things."—**Bob Gulla**

Helium

The Magic City (Matador)

So what's the main difference between *The Magic City* and Helium's previous work? It's not the songwriting; that's still as drony and quirky as ever. It's not the singing; Mary Timony's voice is just as winning—husky yet strangely innocent—as it was last time. And it's not the playing; the trio's enviable idiot-savant style is still firmly in place. No, what makes the difference on Helium's latest is the absence of fuzzbox. "Our music used to be about distortion," Timony explains. "We'd distort everything, and then distort what we'd already distorted. But this album is about what you can do without distortion."

One thing you can do better without distortion is hear. Aware of this, Helium has added all manner of deft sonic touches to these fourteen tracks, from the graceful electric harpsichord on "Blue Rain Soda" to the violin asides on "Lullaby of the Moths" and the clarion trumpet on "Devil's Tear." "We've had those kinds of parts in our songs before," Timony says. "It's just that the instruments that are playing them this time are different."

Some of these innovations can be credited to producer Mitch Easter, who recorded the band in his North Carolina home studio, and whose collection of vintage instruments inspired many of the band's choices. The electric harpsichord is his, as are the Coral electric sitar on the suitably Indian-sounding "Queen of the Fire," and the Chamberlin (a tape-based keyboard instrument similar to the Mellotron), which provides flute, cello, French horn, and other orchestral sounds on nearly every song. The trumpet and violin were real, courtesy of two music students at a nearby college.

At its best, this album is intoxicating; at its worst, it's merely interesting. The album's highlight, "Revolution of Hearts, Pts. 1 and 2," starts off with all the prog-rock fury its title suggests, with a demonic repeated guitar riff and spaced-out vocals. Over time, a supple groove vaguely resembling Can or Hawkwind develops, with angular guitar and fuzz bass lines pitted against one another to achieve to-

tal harmonic disarray. Eventually, the whooshes and wheezes of an old Korg analog synth join the fray, adding to the ambience of organic electronica. The track clocks in at eight minutes yet never ceases to be absorbing. It's an excellent reminder, as is all of *The Magic City*, of what can be achieved when you don't automatically step on the overdrive.

—Mac Randall

Duran Duran *Medazzaland (Capitol)* *Love Spit Love*

Trysome Eatone (Maverick)

Hearing the voices of Simon Le Bon and Richard Butler may trigger Eighties flashbacks in some listeners. One hopes these victims can make it through the hazy memories of early MTV and John Hughes movies, because both Duran Duran, the longtime vehicle for Le Bon's crooning, and *Love Spit Love*, the current project of ex-Psychedelic Furs frontman Butler, have come up with some surprisingly engaging new music. Although neither album can be called a major opus, they hold up well when compared to the work DD and the Furs did in their early-Eighties prime, while at the same time breaking new (for these guys, at least) stylistic ground.

Of the two, *Medazzaland* is more sonically interesting, awash in samples, sequences, and assorted noise. Anthony J. Resta and Bob St. John, DD's mixing team, have done a fantastic job, making every track a stunningly detailed aural adventure. But not all the sounds are as high-tech as they seem. Keyboardist Nick Rhodes, the last remaining survivor (along with Le Bon) from the band's "classic" period, relied heavily on his stable of analog synthesizers, many of which he used back in Duran's early days, to the point where there's hardly a trace of digital synthesis on this album. The arsenal included a Roland System 100, a Sequential Prophet V, and an old EMS AKS Synthi.

Many synthlike sounds aren't even synths. The haywire pitch-shifting central riff on "Big Bang Generation" and the huge chordal bursts on "Electric

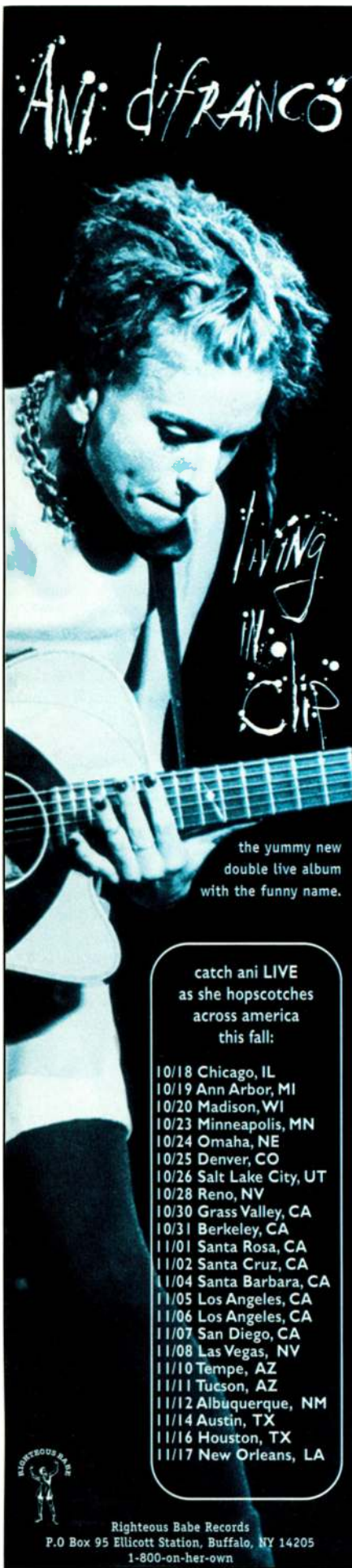
Barbarella," among others, are the work of guitarist Warren Cuccurullo and an effects chain the size of a small factory, including three Lexicon Jam Mans. Cuccurullo is also responsible for most of the album's distinctively fluid bass lines; DD bass vet John Taylor played on four tracks, recorded over a year ago, then bowed out to pursue an ill-advised solo career. Engineer Resta doubled on drums and percussion, and in a rather unorthodox way: According to Rhodes, one of the components in the colossal drum sound on "So Long Suicide" was a Radio Shack PZM mic taped to Resta's chest.

All told, it's the more adventurous numbers, like the gurgling inner travelogue of the title track (born from a live-to-DAT techno jam and featuring Rhodes' vocal debut) or the moody "Buried in the Sand" (which sports a sampled violin solo from an Ustad Sultan Khan record), that work best. This being a Duran Duran album, there's a certain amount of silliness to deal with; the egocentric lyrics of "Who Do You Think You Are" are particularly moronic. But Le Bon's performance helps overcome the worst moments. No longer belting or whining, he makes a genuine effort to sing with some subtlety, and that gentler approach suits him and the music.

When it comes to voices, Richard Butler's sticks out a mile. For *Trysome Eatone's* first fifteen minutes or so, that trademark combination of snaky rasp and suave huskiness carries the music more than the solid but generic compositions do. But come track five, "Fall On Tears," and the band stumbles on a winner, an elementary yet elegant Furs-worthy melody that taunts you to sing along. "Little Fist" follows with a series of disorienting time changes (seven beats to eight and back again) and abrasive guitar chords. "It Hurts When I Laugh" is a goth's anthem, and a catchy one at that. The band carries on in this vein for the rest of the album, closing with the oddly jazzy "November 5."

Call me old-fashioned, but I'm reassured by this music. It's comforting to know that at least some of the musicians who helped define a decade's sound are still stretching, and succeeding, in the next one.—Mac Randall





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Doktor Kosmos

Cocktail (Minty Fresh)

While the electronic minimalism of Kraftwerk has influenced such disparate entities as the Orb and Afrika Bambaataa, those Seventies krautrock savants have also inspired a legion of boy wonders who use toy keyboards for mischievous ends. Doktor Kosmos, keyboardist for Swedish pop sophisticates Komeda and the Starlight Orchestra, is such a musician, his single, arm-length Yamaha Portasound PSS11 keyboard providing an army of plastic sounds—chicken-scratch guitar, chiming doorbells, brittle drum loops—and percolating scenarios.

Cocktail is a frothy, whimsical affair, with the tracks "Elevator Bossa," "Funk Off," and "Technomania" alluding to Kosmos' grab bag of stylistic frivolity. Like a comedic Gary Numan, or an airport lounge musician fascinated with the many wondrous sounds his keyboard can conjure, Doktor Kosmos veers between pop genres, but always with a signature goofy approach. On "Streets of Bronx," a robotic shuffle dancing through a street carnival, he punches up the "vibraphone" preset and doodles a quirky solo worthy of a childlike Professor Longhair. "Dance Dance Dance" is all nerdy breakbeats and corny Clavinets simulations." On "Legalize It Now" reggae rhythms underpin a stoner's chant, only to be whisked away in a roaring spool of tape malfunction. "Funk Off" shows off Kosmos' talent most convincingly, with a crippled two-finger solo over a brisk Latin beat.

Kosmos completed *Cocktail's* basic tracks in one week. He recorded to DAT in the bedroom of his home in Gavle, Sweden, then took the cassette to recording facilities maintained by the Swedish National Broadcasting System, where he works as a drive-time radio DJ. There, he ping-ponged tracks between two Studer B67 reel-to-reel tape machines, adding sound effects (including foreign language dialog, whistling birds, and a literal ping-pong game) and his wryly stilted vocals.

"When I bought the synthesizer about five years ago I discovered this amazing world of sounds," says Kosmos. "This was not meant to be a record initially, but all the sounds inspired me. I don't know who made this record, really. Maybe God made it." —Ken Micallef

Dwight Yoakam

Under the Covers (Reprise)

Ray Charles singing "Eleanor Rigby"—now, that's a cover. Or Al Green's seductive simmer on "Oh, Pretty Woman," Wilson Pickett's gospelized "Hey Jude," even Jerry Lee Lewis' piano-pumping take on "Me and Bobby McGee." These true stylists can take a well-known tune and give it their own stamp. The goal is to make listeners hear it in a way they hadn't previously—and, of course, have the rendition stand on its own, irrespective of the original. Country renegade Dwight Yoakam reaches that level only once on this iffy concept gone awry, and one-for-twelve isn't a good bat-

ting average in any league.

Dwight may be the one guy with young enough ears but old enough roots to pull off a bluegrass arrangement of the Clash's "Train in Vain" with integrity, as well as the banjo and vocal harmonies of Ralph Stanley—"the Muddy Waters of bluegrass," according to producer/arranger/guitarist Pete Anderson. But other attempts are either no stretch at all (fairly stock arrangements of the Everlys' "Claudette" and Wynn Stewart's "Playboy" or show little imagination, as in the case of three British Invasion covers (the Beatles' "Things We Said Today," Them's "Here Comes the Night," the Stones' "The Last Time").

Now, the notion of Yoakam doing "Wichita Lineman" has potential. Forget Glen Campbell's candy-ass pop production: The right reading could really bring out Jimmy Webb's haunting melody and spooky lyrics—pared down, maybe slowed down, reduced to its barest bones. And Yoakam does have an amazing instrument, his voice. But he doesn't seem to get inside the lyric to make it his own. And while the B-3 punches don't bury the vocal, they do detract from it.

"We've pulled off some covers in the past," Anderson ponders, "but with 'Wichita Lineman' we were really up against it. The original arrangement is genius. And when you do a cover one-off for a given album—'Little Sister,' 'Suspicious Minds,' 'Truckin'—you've got enough time to come up with a twist, do something different. But doing, like, twelve songs? It's hard to come up with a brilliant arrangement to redo every song in that space of



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time. And Dwight is someone who sings so well that you can have him sing the phone book and go, 'That sounds good, now that sounds good'—all of a sudden you're doing 'Proud Mary.' We don't want to be that redundant."

Anderson, however, seems to find new solo approaches, this time with a minimalist whammy break. In fact, the only place the guitarist's Fender twang is miscast is on the big-band arrangement of the Kinks' "Tired of Waiting for You," though it doesn't sink to the level of Dwight's stiff, unswinging vocal. Indeed, it's hard to tell if he's doing a parody of a lounge lizard or making a serious attempt—which means he didn't succeed at either.

"He's really trying to do it," confirms Anderson. "You've got to sing behind the beat, but Dwight is a country/bluegrass singer who sings on the beat, if not ahead of the beat so we're going up against some heavy shit here. I don't know a new guy who's out there, especially in country music, who could even come close to singing it. From that respect, it's cool. But it certainly isn't Tony Bennett or Frank Sinatra." You could throw in Steve Lawrence and Buddy Greco, and Yoakam would still be in over his Stetson.—**Dan Forte**

Tanya Donelly

Lovesongs for Underdogs (Reprise)



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Once you've outgrown alienation, obscurity, and other evasive tactics that often amount to rote posturing, it may be time for something more heartfelt. In Tanya Donelly's case, the timing couldn't be better: Having added Belly to her list of former bands (along with Throwing Muses and the Breeders), she's begun flying solo on a most auspicious note, taking a newly direct approach that makes her previous efforts seem like the work of a timid soul.

Donelly exclaims "Everything I ever learned is wrong" in "Pretty Deep," the opening track of the unironically titled *Lovesongs for Underdogs*. She's not completely off the mark. Her career to date has been the story of the alternative scene in microcosm, combining a knack for songcraft with a fear of exposure. Such pleasant yet emotionally stunted entertainment wasn't so different from the corrupt mainstream junk it was supposed to supplant.

This time, while Donelly still specializes in tuneful, bent rockers, there's real passion in the best tracks, and even the middling material boasts a bracing edge. If she hasn't fully gotten the hang of baring her feelings yet, it's fascinating and often exhilarating to watch her make the effort. The change is most apparent in her singing. "I've always had a problem listening to my voice, because I sounded bored in the past," she confesses. "There's something attractive about detachment—up to a point—but I don't want to do it forever. I don't like a lack of emotion, especially in emotional songs."

So it's no surprise to learn that Donelly's been studying voice. "I took lessons to improve my breathing and help me hold notes," she says. The impressive results can be heard in the spooky "Acrobat," a somber study of alienation that finds her imitating a crow and plunging into a theatrical display worthy of Kate Bush. Elsewhere, she belts out the driving "Landspeed Song" with a fervor befitting this expression of frustrated desire, and purrs ominously, "Do I look like a crybaby?" in "Pretty Deep," turning a buoyant anthem into something more complex.

On the other hand, Donelly still enjoys cool noise for its own sake. Powered by fat, buzzing guitars and a soaring chorus, the vibrant "Lantern" recalls T. Rex, a comparison that delights her. "That's what I wanted!" she agrees. "In the studio I kept saying, 'That's not T. Rex enough.'"

The dizzy "Bum" hits wonderfully loopy heights, with layered voices and breathless tempos attaining a kind of neon grandeur. Utterly synthetic yet radiating the electricity associated with live performance, this exotic track was the hardest to get right, admits Donelly. "The harmonies are really complicated because I wanted them to sound tense. There's this friction, like opposing magnets, but my throat wouldn't stay where I wanted it to stay."

Sincerity has its pitfalls: Railing against the corrupt "tinkertoy world," the dour "Mysteries of the Unexplained" wears thin fast, like an undergraduate poetry exercise. Mostly, though, Donelly is negotiating adulthood with grace and eloquence. *Lovesongs for Underdogs* may be the prelude to something truly swell.—**Jon Young**

Bozzio, Levin, Stevens

Black Light Syndrome (Magna Carta)

Make no mistake about *Black Light Syndrome*: It's not an album to have playing while the vicar's over for tea, and it's not meant to enhance anyone's latest acid trip. For that matter, it's not background music in any way—it's up front and brash as you get. But that's to be expected of players like Tony Levin, Terry Bozzio and Steve Stevens.

Although the bulk of the ideas for this album were sketched out in advance, most of the writing took place in the studio, in only four days. And even though the recording approach was decidedly basic—aside from a Dunlop Uni-Vibe on the guitar solo in "Dark Corners," the only processing was done during the mix, namely some reverb and delay courtesy of the Lexicon PCM 70—the results do not reflect it. The first track, "The Sun Road," starts with a slow, haunting guitar melody by Stevens and evolves gradually as Levin, first on Chapman Stick, then on NS electric upright bass, adds power to the sound.

Gears shift; now Stevens is choking notes from his axe, Levin turns on the fuzzbox, and Bozzio mashes metal out front. Then Stevens introduces an acoustic flamenco theme, which is in turn blotted out by the massive return of the main melody.

From there the going gets more intense. "Dark Corners" begins with Stevens flipping the toggle switch on his Les Paul Special for a Morse code effect, and from then on is led by Levin's heavily distorted Music Man Stingray in a vintage King Crimson-sounding tritonal riff. "Duante," a spontaneous nylon-string guitar piece, offers a breather. A Ramirez acoustic miked with an AKG C414 gives the song a crisp, clear edge that sends a chill up the spine; anybody who ever doubted Stevens could stretch will drop jaw in awe. "Book Of Hours," the most accessible piece here, laid-back and almost balladic, features Stevens on acoustic again, along with some memorable work by Levin on the tiny Guild Ashbory bass. The closing "Chaos/Control" is a duality between two styles says Stevens. "Because there's no other melodic instrument laying down chord changes, I had to take this neo-jazz approach where I'm soloing and throwing in chords to comp against my solo; some real magic moments were happening that were totally off the cuff—you can almost hear me shitting myself, asking, 'Where am I going?' But if you play well, it's going to translate."

Like all musicians in an improvisational setting, Bozzio, Levin, and Stevens draw freely from what they've played in the past. It just so happens that these three fellows have played with the likes of Crimson, Zappa, and Billy Idol, all of whose styles get referred to here. When summing up this type of recording, it's a good idea to look back at albums that had something inherently special about them that lasted from the moment you played the opening bar of the first song through to the final fadeout, albums that in themselves expressed the joy of making music. That's the most honest appraisal you can make of this album as well.—**Brian Rabey**

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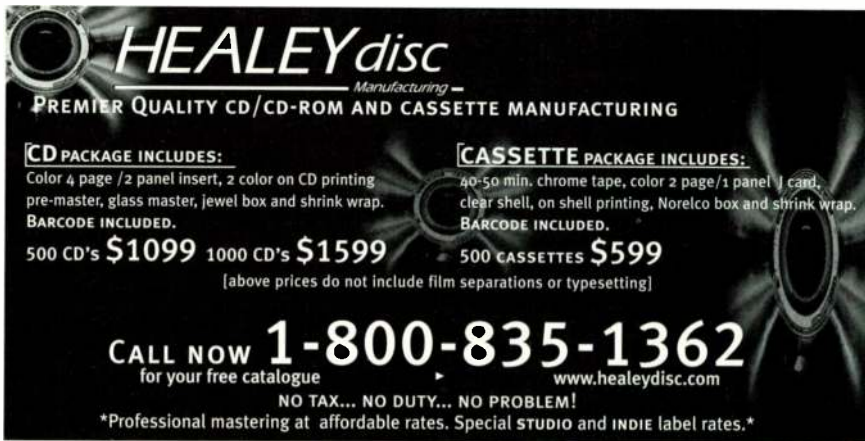


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Ladies, gentlemen, guests, and members. It is my distinct honor and privilege to pay tribute tonight to the great Mr. Martin W. Shafer, the first accountant to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

Some of you might think it's strange for a rockin' and rollin' institution like the Hall of Fame to be honoring a guy who always described himself as "just a bean counter." But Marty really stands for the thousands of unknown, underappreciated, and indispensable "suits" who have helped make popular music the profitable business it is today—at least off the books.

I first met Marty back in 1950, shortly after I became partners with Art Gonder and Jack Ifill at Gon-If Records. Marty was an unassuming, prematurely bald kid with thick glasses who we had just hired to handle our accounting. One evening, Art and I were discussing how we had to wire a little cash to cover the tour expenses for one of our R&B acts. Without looking up from his adding machine, young Marty uttered words that would echo throughout popular music history: "Tell him it's recoupable against future earnings."

When this new thing called rock & roll really took off later in the Fifties, Marty proved to be a godsend. As some of you old-timers may recall, at the time an excessive percentage of songwriting royalties was going to songwriters. What about the label executive who pays to have the record made, the deejay who plays it, the manager who helps create the conditions in which it could be written? Marty Shafer showed that by simply adding the names of those unsung creative partners to the songwriting credits, we could redirect this fiscally unsound cash flow. By the way, this should answer the question a lot of you were probably asking yourself when Marty's induction was announced: "Where have I seen that name before?"

In the Sixties, the new generation of rockers wasn't quite as willing

to share credit, but Marty rose to the challenge. I can still picture him sitting down with some long-haired hippie artist and carefully explaining how if the artist turned his publishing rights over to the label, he would actually save hundreds or even thousands of dollars in administrative costs.

Though Marty was a no-nonsense businessman, few people know of his unselfish behind-the-scenes work as an accountant for such nonprofit events as the Monterey Pop Festival, the Concert for Bangladesh, and even the early Rock & Roll Hall of Fame dinners. Sure, Marty's insistence that suppliers, caterers, agents, managers, promoters, and label executives get their legitimate expenses covered may have reduced or delayed payments to those events' supposed beneficiaries, but let's face it, who even remembers what Monterey Pop was a benefit for? The Hall of Fame opened eventually. And the last time I checked, people were still starving in Bangladesh. What's the hurry?

Regrettably, Marty couldn't be here tonight. He did, however, send us a letter from his home in the Cayman Islands. (By the way, nobody who knows Marty will be surprised to hear that the letter arrived postage due.) Anyway, he writes that he thanks the

Hall of Fame, he's very honored, blah-blah-blah.

Of course, he didn't talk about the *reason* he couldn't be here. Like many accountants, Marty maybe doesn't have the greatest sense of humor, and he's taken a little too seriously a few off-hand comments made by many performers and songwriters, including some members of the Hall of Fame who are here tonight. I know that you guys wouldn't really "punch him out if he dared to show his face." Besides, you're supposed to be creative people. How can you object to creative accounting?

The fact is, creative people—songwriters, producers, musicians—come and go. But as long as there's a music business, there will be people like Marty Shafer.—Tom Conroy

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