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SEPT./OCTOBER 1993

# NETWORK

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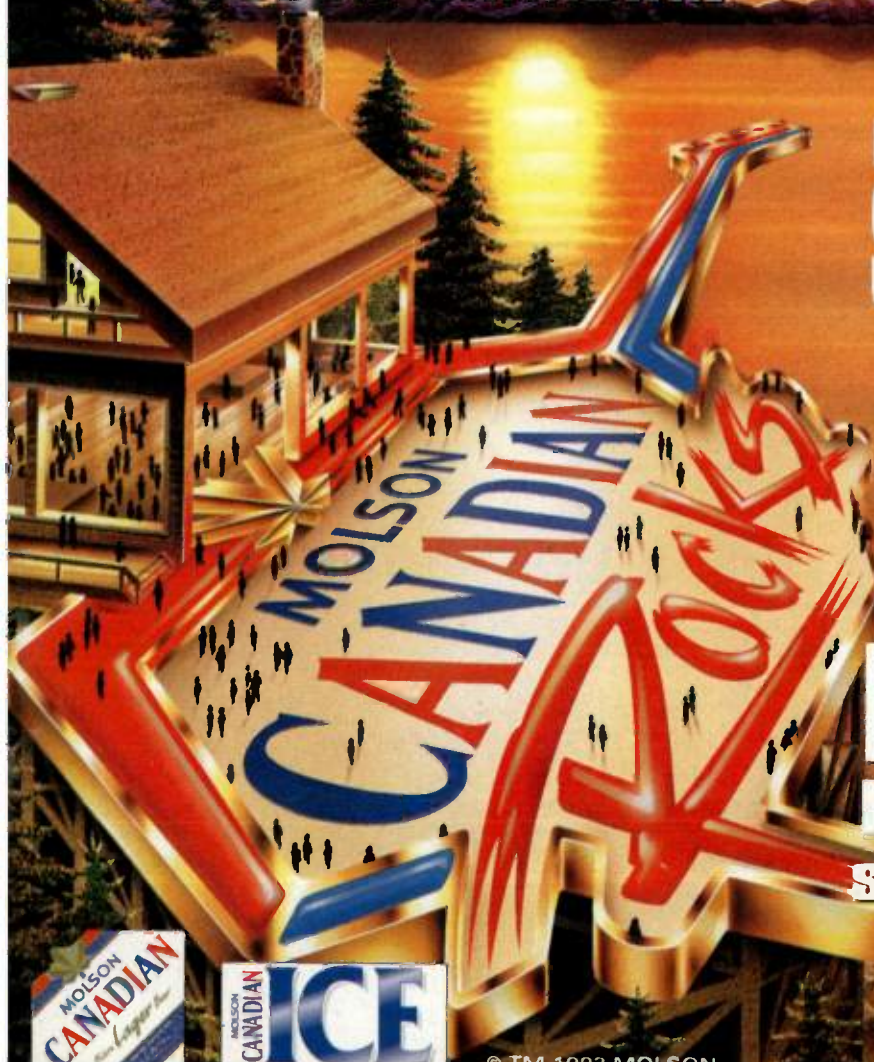
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SEPTEMBER  
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# lines

front

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*Shania Twain*

NETWORK

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MICHAEL REPPA (THE BARRA MACNEILS.)  
ILLUSTRATION: SUSAN LEOPOLD

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Is there a band, artist or musical style that can't be unplugged? Pearl Jam, MTV's *Uptown* rap/dance compilation, Bruce Springsteen, not to mention Eric Clapton and Rod Stewart. Argh! This arbitrary plugging and unplugging of artists has gotten out of hand. When Pearl Jam performed on MTV, the drums were full out and Eddie Vedder did his usual wailing. Stools and sparse lighting seem to be the only common denominators in this concept.

And after Clapton's phenomenal 50-week stay at the top of the *Billboard* album chart with *Unplugged*, it seems every other artist wants to jump on the bandwagon. Not only is multi-platinum success glittering in their eyes, for some artists there may be a tad of laziness involved. Rod Stewart, in the September issue of *Musician*, admitted that he didn't write any new material for his new *Unplugged...And Seated* album because, "I'm not a great lover of writing songs, really. It's a huge income for me. But still, it's hard work."

What does all this unplugging tell us? That there's a demand for acoustic, warm, gentle music. Unfortunately, trotting out old hits, stripping down the production and whipping out the Martin guitar doesn't automatically mean masterworks will emerge. I know there are many who won't agree with me, but I think Clapton's unplugged version of "Layla" is one of the lamest things I've ever heard. Compared to the original, his new "Layla" is bloodless and spineless — absolutely devoid of sincerity or passion.

One good aspect of all this powering down is that bands that are intrinsically acoustic are gaining exposure. The two bands on our cover this issue, The Rankin Family and The Barra MacNeils, play a haunting blend of Celtic, traditional and folk music that is woven together with modern arrangements and, in some cases, topical lyrics. These groups have stolen the hearts of thousands of Canadians because they offer a joyous, sometimes sorrowful, always touching music that many find soothing, uplifting and therapeutic.

It seems there is a groundswell of support happening for a number of artists who generally don't fall into the plugged market demographics (see "Shaking the Roots of the Folk Tree" story in this issue). Loreena McKennitt, who has a new album due out in October, sells out shows whenever she pulls out her harp and unravels her bewitching medieval tales. In fact, after opening a few concerts for Mike Oldfield earlier this year, she was asked to complete the European tour with him.

Sarah McLachlan, Stephen Fearing, Skydiggers and Spirit of the West are just a few of the artists who integrate acoustic, traditional sounds into their music. And people love it. Looking at parallel trends in society, it's similar to the clothing industry's embracing of natural fibres, the food and beverage industry's development of no-preservative, natural-ingredient products, the cosmetic industry's move towards marketing "the natural look" and the rejection of animal testing.

A back-to-basics attitude is prevailing in many sectors of the marketplace and it's fueled by consumer demand. The attraction to simplicity and no-frills can be attributed to a flagging economy, but it can also be credited to a society saturated with technical complexity, looking for relief. The marketing hype of inferior, unplugged-style product is merely an annoying side effect. The real story can be found in the musical sanctuary that artists such as The Rankin Family have always provided.

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DENISE GRANT

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# Notable



A rumblin' man.

## RUMBLE IN THE DANCE HALL

If you want the real thing, you've got to go to the source. That's what Toronto-based, reggae-rapper **RUMBLE** says about recording his self-titled debut album in Jamaica.

"Jamaica is the mecca for reggae. These guys eat, sleep and live it. It's all they know."

Reggae dynamo **JUNIOR REID** was in on Rumble's debut, released on London, England-based Gee Street Records (**P.M. DAWN**, **QUEEN LATIFAH**). With cameos from **TIGER** and **MC CINDERELLA**, as well as Canadian rappers **SNOW** and **DREAM WARRIORS**, it all adds up to a forceful hybrid of hip-hop and Jamaican inspiration. It's a sound that Rumble says might become known as Canada's unique contribution to the hip-hop scene — multi-cultural rap.

The reggae groove came easily in Jamaica, says the obviously captivated rapper, who was born in London, England, but briefly lived on the island as a boy before coming to Canada. "We had the sun and pure, calm blue water. You wake up every morning and you feel inspired," he explains. "You just feel Jamaican vibes and it comes out in the music." — *Cindy McGlynn*

## IT'S GRIFFITH TIME

"Well, it's always time for a folk revival. It's like Miller Time," jokes **NANCY GRIFFITH**, a Texan who is blessed with one of folk music's most delicately soulful voices.

*Other Voices, Other Rooms* is Griffith's 10th album and on it she puts aside her pen to pay tribute to the music of her youth. The idea was born last year when she and **EMMYLOU HARRIS** mourned the loss of new voices singing the old songs.

The guest list on the resulting record reads like a folkie *Who's Who*. **BOB DYLAN**, **ARLO GUTHRIE**, **JOHN PRINE**, **GUY CLARK** and the **INDIGO GIRLS** all contribute to songs by artists such as **PETE SEEGER** and **GORDON LIGHTFOOT**.

Recording *Other Voices* was magical, says the Austin, Tex., native. Her love of the genre is especially apparent on "Tecumseh Valley," a duet she sings with Guthrie.

"Arlo and I finally gave up trying to do retakes because we just continued to cry. It's in there, the times when both of us swayed from pitch because we were so involved in that character. It was the most emotional experience of the entire recording."

— *C. M.*

Nancy Griffith



## A SWEET BEAST

"Enlightening" is how **FLEETWOOD MAC** producer **RICHARD DASHUT** described co-producing with college radio darling, **MATTHEW SWEET**.

Sweet likes things to be spontaneous and says sometimes it's the mistakes that give songs on his new album, *Altered Beast*, their uniqueness.

"I would find if I listened to something 30 times, it would start to be the mistake that was the part I loved or would anticipate in a song," says the 28-year-old Nebraska native, now living in L.A.

"I just realized if you treat those kind of things with respect, they can become real," says Sweet, who changed the vocal delivery at the end of one song, "Do It Again," because he liked an out-of-key guitar gaffe so much.

After releasing two albums on other labels, Sweet found a home at Zoo Entertainment/BMG. His first record with the company, 1991's *Girlfriend*, sold 400,000 copies.

With intelligent, moody songs, laced with wispy harmonies and gravely vocals reminiscent of CSNY and **NEIL YOUNG**, *Altered Beast* is, in fact, a beauty. — *C. M.*

## On the Beat

**SARAH McLACHLAN**'s follow-up to *Solace* will be out in October, again with producer **PIERRE MARCHAND** at the helm. Meanwhile, a live version of *Solace* track "Shelter" is slated for an animal-rights fundraising disc titled *In Defence of Animals* • • • Producer du jour **RICK RUBIN** is in the studio with **TOM PETTY** cutting material that will appear on Petty's second solo album and a Petty/**HEARTBREAKERS** greatest hits package • • • **STEPHEN FEARING**'s sophomore album *The Assassin's Apprentice* features a guest turn from his folk-circuit pal **RICHARD THOMPSON** • • • **BURTON CUMMINGS**, who hasn't





## JOHNNY CLEGG: CULTURAL WARRIOR

Talking to **JOHNNY CLEGG** is humbling. The South-African musical dynamo is a passionate "cultural warrior" against apartheid. And his razor-sharp mind is equally at ease discussing political upheaval as analyzing the importance of music in social change.

With his band **SAVUKA**, Clegg has released his fourth album, *Heat, Dust and Dreams*. The white South-African who speaks Zulu and plays Zulu guitar, says it's his most personal and accessible statement yet. The sound is a mix of traditional Zulu and Celtic rhythms with rock, and the songs address personal and political change, but remain subtle and intimate.

"I'm just sort of saying 'Here we are, living in this crazy, mixed-up mess. A bunch of things have happened to me and, well, I demand to see the manager,'" says Clegg with a laugh.

He does not underestimate the ability music has to empower people. "I know for a fact that my first band **JULUKA** changed ideas about culture and race in my country. We were celebrating African and Western culture in the same breath. It wasn't a heady political diatribe, it was actually fun and people felt uplifted and positive." — C. M.

worked in a band context since the **GUESS WHO** folded in 1978, is cutting tracks in L.A. with ex-**KNACK** drummer **BRUCE GARY**, former **ROD STEWART** bassist **PHIL CHEN** and guitarist/keyboardist **FRED MANDEL** from **ELTON JOHN**'s touring band • • • • *Just Over This Mountain*, the third album from Toronto's **SKYDIGGERS**, is due out this fall and features a guest appearance from **ANDREW CASH** (brother of Skydigger guitarist **PETE**) • • • • Powerhouse Vancouver trio **SALVADOR DREAM**, described as a hybrid of **JOHN COLTRANE**, **BLACK SABBATH** and **HELMET**, has signed to Warner Music Canada • • • • Ex-**POGUE** **SHANE MACGOWAN** has a solo debut due this fall • • • • Canadian artists **KASHTIN** and

**VERN CHEECHOO** are among the first nations performers short-listed to work with **ROBBIE ROBERTSON** on the soundtrack for a **TED TURNER**-produced TV history of native Americans. The series airs next spring, after which Robertson plans to record with **ERIC CLAPTON** • • • • **GINO VANNELLI**, who last year relocated from L.A. with his family to a rural home in Oregon, is recording his next PolyGram album in Portland. Guests include Quebec chanteuse **MARTINE ST. CLAIR** • • • • Johnny Jet Records, home of the **WEST END GIRLS** and **BANNED IN THE U. K.**, hopes to shake its light 'n' frothy reputation with new signing **THE BEATNIKS**, a rock act from Seattle.

## HEADSTONES PUT NEW LIFE INTO DEATH

**THE HEADSTONES**, a new hard-rock quartet from Toronto, may have gotten a couple of lucky breaks, but singer **HUGH DILLON** still isn't taking anything for granted. "We've got a record deal, but still, our record could be doing well and we could be driving to Winnipeg and the van could flip over and we could all be done."

If Dillon sounds a little morbid, that's what comes from working in a Toronto hospital for four years. "When you see people die all the time, it's hard to escape," he explains. Death is a recurring theme on *Picture of Health*, the Headstones' brand-new debut for MCA, and Dillon also admits to an obsession with "the fact that things happen for no apparent reason. There's no way to really protect yourself from fate."

Nonetheless, so far fate has been kind to The Headstones. The band's demo attracted the attention of **LESLIE SPIT** manager **JOE BAMFORD**, who now handles the group. Then a series of Toronto showcase gigs got MCA interested. **BRUCE MACDONALD**, the celebrated Canadian filmmaker (*Highway 61*), directed the first Headstones video ("It's All Over"), and the band even snagged a coveted slot at the Another Roadside Attraction show (featuring the **TRAGICALLY HIP**) in July.

*Picture of Health* shows that The Headstones deserves its early success. The album combines the raw power of early **STOOGES** with an earthy, roots-rock sensibility, unified by Dillon's delightfully gloomy lyrics. "Three Angels" ably showcases the group's mellower side, but most of the album is a bracing blast of tuneful noise. — *Derek Weiler*



**Hugh Dillon**  
(front L): A  
charismatic fatalist.

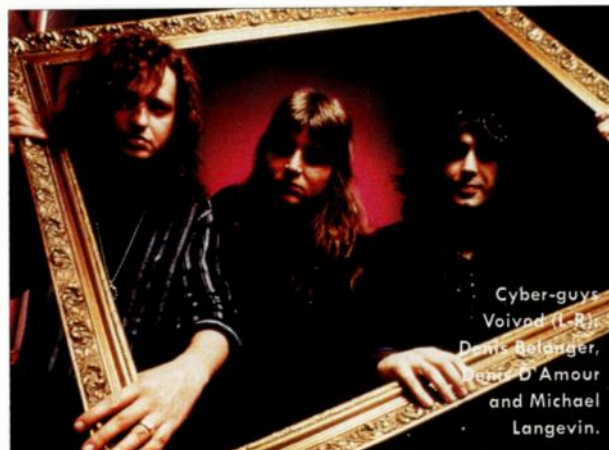
"It's like a bunch of sci-fi folk tales, really," explains **VOIVOD** drummer and songwriter, **MICHEL LANGEVIN**. "We always try to express our point of view with folk tales, but in a cyber-punk context."

After steeping themselves in '30s and '40s sci-fi memorabilia and Mondo 2000-style technological ideas, the Quebecois trio (including vocalist **DENIS BELANGER** and guitarist **DENIS D'AMOUR**) hopes the rest of the world is ready for its eighth album, *The Outer Limits*.

The MCA Records debut manages to be retro and futuristic at the same time. Obtaining his creative inspiration from dreams, the Montreal-based Langevin painted the cover art and gave it a 1950s-style 3-D treatment. The CD comes complete with 3-D glasses. "Jack Luminous," is the focal song on the album, a 17-minute futuristic epic about a sinister, digitally-created politician who is impossible to destroy.

"We wanted to do a cheesy space opera," laughs Langevin, adding that they took the idea very seriously, structuring it almost like movements in a symphony and finely tuning the sound and narrative to keep things flowing. — C.M.

## VOIVOD: SCI-FI FOLK



Cyber-guys  
Voivod (l. R.):  
Denis Belanger,  
Denis D'Amour  
and Michael  
Langevin.



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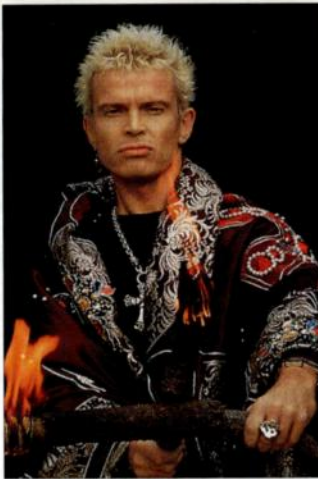
# IDOL TRADES DRUGS FOR TECHNOLOGY

William Broad, a.k.a. Billy Idol, may have lost his pout and boyish looks, but he's still a rebel. With his sixth and latest album, *Cyberpunk*, the British punk brat counters today's thumping techno-pop age with an emotive, futuristic, cyber-cranked dance music.

With its industrial base, the result is definitely a rock album, but it spans a wide spectrum of blips, grooves and grinds — from the mechanical rave "Shock The System" and mad-cap rocker "Power Junkie" to the meditative "Adam In Chains" and oriental "Shangri-la."

A collaborative effort between Idol, producer Robin Hancock and guitarist Mark Younger-Smith, who all switched roles from song to song, the team heeded to cyber protocol and recorded the album through an Apple Macintosh computer.

"It's a 'virtual' studio, a studio inside a computer," explains the L.A.-based Idol. "It's a little box that you can carry anywhere and that's an



Idol: Cyberpunk or Kung Fu Fighter?

exciting prospect. It doesn't replace human emotion; it's just another way of focusing your music and getting a fresh perspective, rather like climbing a mountain from a different side."

Since fronting seminal punk band Generation X in the '70s, Idol says he "always looked for ways to shake things up, especially in rock 'n' roll." But, around the time of 1990's *Charmed Life*, he left behind his drug-addled self after experiencing the joys of fatherhood and a sobering motorcycle accident.

Now, through this new-found interest in cybernetics and virtual reality, the terminal iconoclast has a new lease on life. "I have to look for other places, other vistas in my imagination," says Idol. "I can't stay on one level in my life. It's like you have to open yourself up to lots of different ideas to broaden your horizons." — Karen Bliss

# TASMIN ARCHER TAKES AIM

"You know, I'm only just having a conversation with people," says one of Britain's brightest stars, **TASMIN ARCHER**, when asked about her penetrating song lyrics. "I'm talking to people about things. I'm trying to understand."

A little understanding has gone a long way for Archer, who is charming audiences with her modesty and stunning vocal prowess. Her debut album, *Great Expectations*, co-written with bandmates **JOHN HUGHES** and **JOHN BECK**, is loaded with gentle, killer pop tracks, including the first single, "Satellite Dancer," which skyrocketed to No. 1 in Britain.

The 29-year-old Bradford, England, native with the voice that makes lovers sigh and mothers weep, is a reluctant star who says being distinct wasn't what she was after.

"I didn't think 'Oh wow, I've got such a different voice, aren't I special,'" says the petite chanteuse. "I thought quite the opposite. I thought 'Oh my God, where am I going to fit in? What's going to happen to me?'"

After five years of shopping demo-tapes and playing small clubs, what happened was success. To cope with the attention, the singer says she just laughs and tries not to get ahead of herself. "Forget about having a 10-year-plan," she chuckles. "We don't even have a 10-hour plan." — C. M.



Archer, England's brightest new star.

# DANCE DIVA WORKS HER HARMONY VIBE

**LISA LOUGHEED** won't give up her music men. The Toronto dance chanteuse is pictured here in the studio, taking time out from recording her latest album *Peace & Harmony*, with songwriter/producers **JELLYBEAN BENETIZ (R)** and **MIKE "THE HITMAN" WILSON** (who wrote and produced the album's first single, "I Won't Give Up My Music").



What do maniacal comics and hockey superstars have in common? A penchant for partying — displayed during this summer's People's Comedy Festival which coincided with the opening of Toronto's new Hockey Hall Of Fame. One Festival night — in a private suite at the Royal York Hotel serving as late-night/early morning hi-jinks headquarters — one inebriated hockey go-getter tried to score with a flamboyantly dressed beauty in the crowd. Word is, a teammate, surveying the scene, cross-checked the jock before he could make any headway, thus saving him the embarrassment of a very close call with a cross-dresser • • • Rumors are rampant that mega U.S.

entertainment channel MTV is planning to muscle in on the turf served by our nation's music station, MuchMusic. A highly-placed source reports that an MTV exec, posing as a curious consumer, called the CRTC and reached a most helpful staffer. The staffer, guided by ingeniously deliberate questions from the exec, verbally walked the competitor step-by-step through the guidelines that enabled MuchMusic to successfully obtain its license • • • An eagle-eyed disco-goer at Hong Kong's hip Manhattan club reports that when **BOBBY BROWN**'s tour landed in that city, all attention was on Brown and wife **WHITNEY HOUSTON**, who chose the hot spot as a hangout for four nights with their entourage. We can only reiterate, verbatim, what was said by our source: "Bobby and Whitney were both looking to pick up girls."



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## GRAPES, BLUES, SPOOFS AND CHILD STARS

From the actor who is getting more and more a-Depp-t at playing bizarre characters (*Benny & Joon*, *Edward Scissorhands*) comes the starring performance in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* **JOHNNY DEPP** plays Gilbert Grape, who lives in the small town of Endora, Iowa, where he takes care of his reclusive, 600-pound mother (newcomer **DARLENE CATES**) and slow-witted brother (**LEONARDO DICAPRIO**). Grape is a grocery stock boy who is having an affair with Mrs. Betty Carver (**MARY STEENBURGEN**), but his world is turned upside down with the arrival of a young world traveller named Becky (**JULIETTE LEWIS**).

Another actress who has been known to turn leading men upside down, **KATHLEEN TURNER**, is back in *Undercover Blues*. An action comedy, the film also stars **DENNIS QU Aid** and he and Turner play Jeff and Jane Blue, a '90s spy duo.

Comedy is the premise behind *Fatal Instinct*, a spoof of psychological thrillers such as *Basic Instinct*, *Fatal Attraction* and *Double Indemnity*. **ARMAND ASSANTE** (*The Mambo Kings*) is Ned Ravine, a cop/lawyer/detective/idiot who has been around the block a few times, yet still manages to get lost. **SHERILYN FENN** (*Twin Peaks*), **KATE NELLIGAN** (*The Prince of Tides*) and **SEAN YOUNG** (is this typecasting?) star as the three femme fatales who, for Ned, provide basic distraction.

Making a switch from light laughs is **MACAULAY CULKIN** who is the principal actor in suspense thriller *The Good Son*. As a 12-year-old boy who goes to live with relatives after his mother's death, Culkin must fend off his malevolent cousin.

More kid stuff comes in the form of *Life With Mikey*. **MICHAEL J. FOX** stars as Michael Chapman, a has-been child star who now scratches out a living as co-chairman of a third-rate child actor agency. He and his partner/brother Ed (**NATHAN LANE**) must find the perfect little cherub to star in a cookie commercial. Precocious little con artist Angie (**CHRISTINA VIDAL**) fills the bill.

Headlining at Toronto's Festival of Festival's this year is *M. Butterfly*, directed by **DAVID CRONENBERG** and starring **JEREMY IRONS** and **JOHN LONE**. The story is that of a French diplomat serving in China during the 1960s who develops an obsession with a mysterious diva from the Beijing Opera. He abandons his bourgeois life for a passionate love affair with her, but later discovers that he has been deceived in a deadly game of political intrigue.

Juliette Lewis and the latest incarnation of Johnny Depp, in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?*



MOVIES



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# THE CELTIC CONNECT

A MARITIME ROOTS MUSIC REVIVAL

**C**ape Breton. It's the rugged land that lays claim to the Cabot Trail, winding bewitchingly above the Atlantic ocean, the French fortress at Louisbourg and the travel-brochure serenity of the Inverness highlands. Every couple of years, it also sends forth an artist so esteemed, so significant, that it now finds itself at the heart of a traditional music revival, this little island nestled on Nova Scotia's eastern coast.

First Rita MacNeil from Big Pond, then The Rankin Family from tiny, placid Mabou and now The Barra MacNeils, from the island enclave of Sydney Mines. This fall The Rankins and

MIKE DEPPA



The Rankin Family





# ON OLUTION



The Barra MacNeils



The Barras, family bands from opposite sides of the island, go head-to-head with major-label debuts aimed at bringing the Celtic music of Cape Breton, not just to the rest of Canada, but to the rest of the world.

Welcome to the New Traditionalism. Ten years ago, either of these groups would have been confined to the folk festival circuit. Today, they're being held up as the two great Canadian pop hopes for 1994. What does that tell you about the '90s?

"People want music that will last," says Ossie Branscombe, for 17 years the owner of Toronto's Country Music Store, specializing in Maritime Celtic Music. "Some of these traditional songs have endured over 1,000 years — back when there was no radio play, no promotion and no payola. The old songs continue to be popular because they're that good." And despite the name of his store, Branscombe proudly points out that The Rankin Family's *Fare Thee Well Love* album coolly outsells Billy Ray Cyrus two-to-one.

Perhaps the best way to get a handle on the national appeal of Cape Breton music is to ask Cam Mitchell, an assistant buyer for Roblan Distributors, the purchasing arm of Sam the Record Man. "Until Janet Jackson's album (*Janet.*) came out, The Rankin Family's *Fare Thee Well Love* was our No. 1 seller," he says. "The Rankins and The Barras are definitely what we call 'A' bands."

Beneath the sales figures, however, lies a deeper truth: For a generation that's grown up with hardcore, hip-hop and techno, songs driven by the bodhran (a traditional drum) and written about tall ships, mist-covered mountains and Atlantic skies can be as refreshing as a blast of sea air.

"It's important to have something solid like traditional music to lean on," says The Barras' Stewart MacNeil. "These days, people want to dig their heels in and know they're standing on solid ground. Roots music is something tangible."

If The Rankin Family is the ruler of Cape Breton music, many see The Barra MacNeils as the heir apparent. East Coast favorites for the last eight years, Stewart, Kyle, Sheumas and Lucy MacNeil recorded three successful albums of Celtic music independently before being signed by PolyGram Records in February. Their fourth, (untitled at presstime), draws from Scottish, Irish and French Acadian music, a multicolored mix of traditional vocals, fiddle and accordion.

"For people familiar with elements of the first three albums, it stretches the parameters of what we're about," says MacNeil. "Our music is simply a natural evolution that includes part of our past and part of our future. I don't think we've made a conscious effort to expand our audience with this album."

Still, the pressure will be on the new album, to fare well against The Rankin Family's latest, *North Country*, as industry insiders wait breathlessly to see if Canadian record-buyers are willing to support two vastly similar

## NEWFOUNDLAND'S NEWEST CELTIC CONTENDERS

**F**rom Newfoundland, the country's farthest-flung province, The Irish Descendants take top position in the Atlantic Canada superstar sweepstakes. Together only three years, The Descendants have released two independent albums of traditional Irish music and the group's rigorous touring throughout the Maritimes has paid off with a recent signing to Warner Music Canada. "Rollin' Of The Sea," a sweeping fiddle tune from The Descendants latest release, *Look To The Sea*, was used in a television commercial to attract tourists to the island.

"The more bands interested in this style of music the better," says guitarist Con O'Brien, a native of Bay Bulls, on Newfoundland's rugged South Shore. "More people will be exposed to it and keep an ear cocked for it." And, says O'Brien, there are other markets

BY DAN HUGHES



acts pushed on them by major record companies at precisely the same time. Remember *Last Action Hero* versus *Jurassic Park*? One family or the other may come out the loser.

"I don't see it as any kind of rivalry," MacNeil says. "We're proud that The Rankins have enjoyed the success they have and if there is a rivalry it's only in the eye of the media and not us. To me, what's good for one group has got to be good for another."

Jimmy Rankin agrees: "The Barra MacNeils are just like us, trying to make a go of it and we say all the best to them. I'm just glad to see they're finally getting the recogni-

tion they deserve because they're great."

These are hectic days for The Rankins. How else to explain the dizzying turn of events that led up to our interview? An initial meeting on the set of the "Rise Again" video (the new album's first single) was scrapped without word, as was a scheduled telephone interview. Finally Jimmy Rankin called — two days late and caught up in the whirlwind of promotion aimed at pushing *North Country* past the 250,000 sales mark of *Fare Thee Well Love*, the second of two albums the group released independently

outside Canada: 25 million Irish in the United States alone, not to mention those in Australia.

Yet, according to fiddle player, D'Arcy Broderick, there are at least a dozen traditional Irish groups playing music full-time in Newfoundland. "A lot of young people are getting into the Celtic music," he says. "In St. John's there's about 20 pubs within walking distance and they've all got Irish bands playing every night."

Although O'Brien grew up hearing his father play Irish ballads on the accordion, he didn't become enamored by traditional music until his early '20s. "When I was 17 I didn't have time for my dad's accordion — I was too busy trying to figure out Led Zeppelin licks. I just didn't have the mindset."

Burly and bearded, Broderick remembers his father's devotion to the Gaelic music of Bay de Verde, on the northern tip of Newfoundland's Conception Bay. "My dad would walk 10 miles to a dance at the parish hall, play the fiddle all night, then walk 10 miles home. Back then, I knew I'd rather do this than work in the fishery." — D. H.

before signing with EMI Music Canada (formerly Capital Canada) last year. It's a far cry from the days when Jimmy, sisters Raylene, Cookie and Heather, and brother John Morris flogged cassettes around Cape Breton from their mother's hatchback. "That's always your goal, to get a larger audience," he explains, "while at the same time putting out good music."

But where did the music spring from so suddenly? "I think Rita MacNeil helped pave a path and The Rankins have paved another," says Maynard Morrison, a veteran

with Cape Breton's popular Summertime Revue, which has, over the years, featured both Rita MacNeil and The Rankins. "And I think it has something to do with being on an island — you're a bit isolated and you focus your attention on the arts, whether it's music or comedy."

But with isolation comes impoverishment and there's a melancholy side to the Cape Breton sound that you can hear in The Rankins' "Orangedale Whistle" and The

Barras' "Didn't Hear The Train," both laments mourning the loss of train service on the island. In fact, many define Cape Breton in terms of the past ("Sydney Mines used to be an important town," is a familiar refrain). The region is rife with sorrowful song subject matter; dwindling cod stocks, soaring unemployment causing a mass exodus to Quebec and Ontario, and heart-wrenching mining disasters.

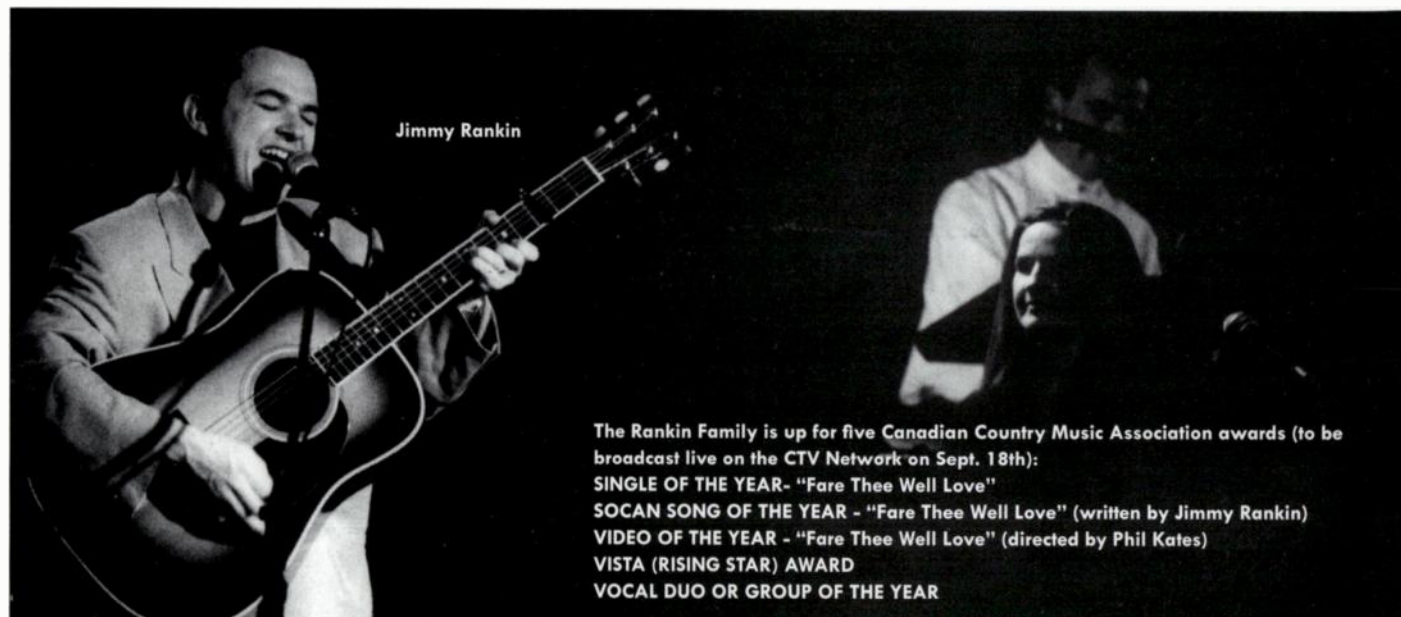
"In many ways Cape Breton is like Ireland," Stewart MacNeil says. "There's a similar [depressed] economic climate and a similar [fertile] artistic climate. People tend to get into the music. In our parents' house, they encouraged a lot of Irish music."

"Here, you don't have to play music to stay in touch with your roots because there's an innate sense to do that anyway," agrees Jimmy Rankin.

"Being from [Cape Breton] means being proud of who you are," MacNeil says. "It's hard to put a finger on what makes Cape Breton what it is, but I think it has something to do with realizing the importance of friends and family and always, no matter what, making the best of the day." ■



The Irish Descendants: On top of The Rock's Celtic wave.



Jimmy Rankin

The Rankin Family is up for five Canadian Country Music Association awards (to be broadcast live on the CTV Network on Sept. 18th):  
SINGLE OF THE YEAR - "Fare Thee Well Love"  
SOCAN SONG OF THE YEAR - "Fare Thee Well Love" (written by Jimmy Rankin)  
VIDEO OF THE YEAR - "Fare Thee Well Love" (directed by Phil Kates)  
VISTA (RISING STAR) AWARD  
VOCAL DUO OR GROUP OF THE YEAR





# COUNTRY'S BRIGHT NEW LIGHTS

Not since the movie *Urban Cowboy*, more than a decade ago, has country music enjoyed such popularity — complete with western wear, country dancing and crossover chart success. Just look at Garth Brooks, Billy Ray Cyrus and Wynonna Judd. In Canada, a hot new breed of talent is making people sit up and take notice.

Leading the pack is Shania Twain. Christened Eileen Twain, this Timmins, Ont., native serves up a blend of traditional country with blues and rock influences on her recently released, self-titled debut album for Mercury Records, Nashville.

A former tree-planter and lounge singer, this 28-year-old beauty put all her energy into her career following the 1987 death of her parents in a car crash. Unlike most Canadian artists who make it in their homeland first, then branch out internationally (Michelle Wright and Lisa Brokop, for example),

Twain is simultaneously being introduced to all of North America.

"I'm so proud of this," says Twain, whose second video "Dance With The One That Brought You" was directed by actor Sean Penn. "When I decided to become a recording artist, I decided to do it internationally and it worked."

Sticking closer to home is Newfoundland singer/songwriter Ron Hynes, whose fantasy is to headline a sold-out show at Toronto's Massey Hall. He says he draws much of his inspiration from Canada's picturesque landscape, especially the Maritimes. Such songs from his new, and first recording, *Cryer's Paradise*, on EMI Canada, extract as much from folk and pop as they do country.

Collaborating with his songwriter/photographer wife Connie, Hynes (who's also a Genie award-winner for Best Song, "The Final Breath," from the film, *A Secret Nation* in which he starred) could easily be described as the Dan Hill of country music since he has an unabashed knack for baring his soul. As a poetic storyteller, Hynes says he's happiest making music at home on The Rock. "I can't see myself leaving Newfoundland and moving to Canada," he says, laughing. "Believe me, I've tried a number of times and it never works out. I always end up back here. I'm like some kind of salmon or something."

Hailing from the self-proclaimed Country Music Capital of Canada — Hamilton, Ont. — singer/songwriter Jim Witter recorded his debut album in Nashville with former Torontonian producer Johnny Douglas.

Citing Pink Floyd and Grateful Dead among his influences, Witter's collection of pop-flavored songs and his GQ good looks have made him a radio and video favorite. Witter, who's married and has an infant son, notes that Canada needs a country music network similar to America's CMT and TNN to help expose new artists.

"In order to make somebody a star, they not only have to be heard, they have to be seen," says the 28-year-old performer. "I'm proud of being Canadian and I'm excited about where the Canadian country music scene is going. The talent we have is pretty overwhelming."

Juno-winning Cassandra Vasik, celebrating the success of her sophomore album *Feels Like Home*, is one of the most unique talents in our country. With one foot planted in folk music and the other in pop/rock, the Blenheim, Ont., farmer's daughter has forged an unequalled sound, placing her in the forefront of contemporary country.

Besides her eclectic music, Vasik isn't afraid to take risks with her image. "The way I dress is a deliberate distraction. It's not what most country people would expect," asserts the thirtysomething songstress. "When [people] look down and see the Doc Martens, it's like 'Wow, what is this girl all about and what kind of music is she involved with?'"

BMG recording artist Charlie Major, who penned the hit song "Backroads"

for American country superstar Ricky Van Shelton, is an introspective singer/songwriter who puts image last on his list of priorities. Having recently released *The Other Side*, featuring the hit video/single "I'm Gonna Drive You Out Of My Mind," he notes, "If I need a gimmick to make it in this business, then I don't want to make it because I don't want to have to set myself on fire onstage to sell tickets."

The 38-year-old Ottawa Valley native creates uptempo country tales by marrying southern rock with good ol' rock 'n' roll. Sounding like a cross between John Hiatt and Hal Ketchum, Major collaborated with Barry Brown (from Family Brown) and Randall Prescott (from Tracey Prescott & Lonesome Daddy) on his debut recording.

Bright, talented and uniquely individual, each of these upcoming stars adds to the eclectic richness of Canada's country scene. With artists such as these, country music's popularity is bound to expand even more. — Brenda Whitehall



Jim Witter

**"I don't want to have to set myself on fire onstage to sell tickets."**

— CHARLIE MAJOR

PAT PAYNE

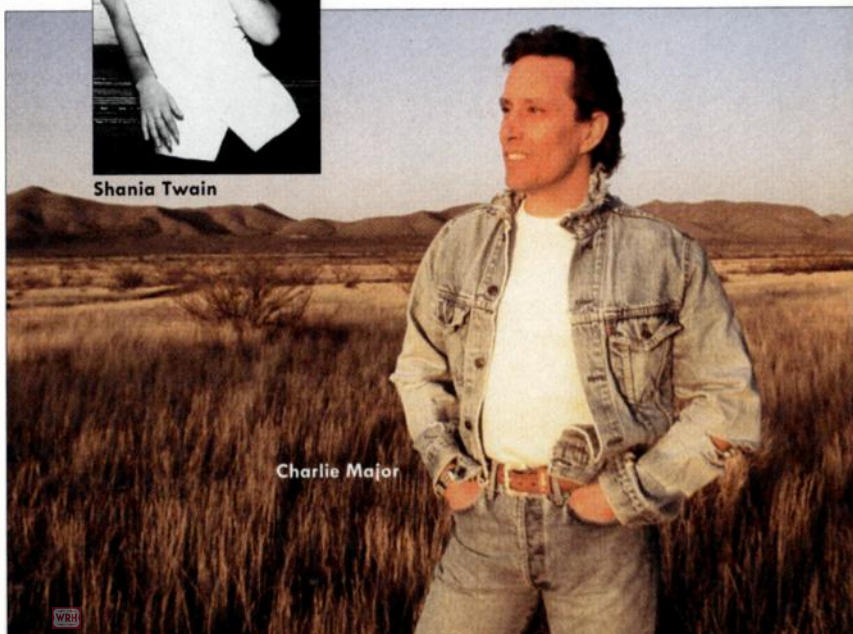
DENISE GRANT



Ron Hynes



Shania Twain



Charlie Major



# SHAKING THE ROOTS OF THE FOLK TREE



Mad Love

Lenny Gallant, who started in a traditional folk band,

but whose latest album, *Believing in Better*, owes as much to that famous American roots revivalist John Mellencamp, as it does to Canada's godfather of environmental folk, Gordon Lightfoot.

Toronto's Mad Love is another band that has married past and present. Its album, *Knockin' The Myth* blends guitar, mandolin and

banjo to create a compelling mix of Celtic/pop/country music.

Aside from the CBC and the odd alternative or campus radio station, many of these artists get little exposure, yet they've achieved enough in either record sales or industry buzz to win the recognition of their peers. The success of Maritimers The Rankin Family and the Barra MacNeils is proof positive that modern traditional music is alive in the hearts of many Canadians.

The music of the early settlers is prevalent among East Coast towns and villages, where it still rings at ceilidhs, otherwise known as the community jams. The devotion of young musicians such as Newfoundlanders Jim Payne and Figgy Duff, who are catalogueing the ancient songs, has helped to keep the area's songs and stories alive.

This is not only an East Coast tradition. People who scooped up Loreena McKennitt's last two albums, *Parallel Dreams* and *The Visit*, probably didn't care that they were buying work that is based in centuries-old folk forms. Yet McKennitt, whose next album is due in October, has brought the Celtic music into the contemporary world. Her music touches something primeaval and yet is relevant to today. One of her contemporaries is Calgary singer songwriter James Keelaghan, who says that McKennitt is "truly the best representative of the bardic tradition in Celtic folk music."

**Loreena McKennitt :**  
making tradition contemporary.



Bourne and MacLeod

In the early '70s, Neil Young put out a record called *Harvest*. It was simple, straightforward and acoustic: a folk record. Flash forward to 1992. Young, known to a different generation through a collection of garage-rock records, puts out *Harvest Moon*, a simple, straightforward, acoustic album. In the musical context of the '90s, can this still be considered folk?

Folk music has given a lot to popular music. That's a fact, but not one that garners the form any respect. With its granola and Birkenstock shoes image, the term is a marketing nightmare.

"Don't call it folk," pleads one of its hardest working advocates, Toronto publicist/writer Richard Flohil. "They'll stop buying it."

Yet, in the past few years increasing numbers of artists who draw on folk styles have been crossing over into the mainstream. Artists such as Loreena McKennitt, Stephen Fearing, the Barenaked Ladies, Spirit of the West, Sarah McLachlan, Rita MacNeil, The Crash Test Dummies, Skydiggers, Michelle Wright, k.d. lang, Blue Rodeo and Cowboy Junkies all, to various degrees, are influenced by folk music.

With a list like that, it's hard to imagine why the negative stereotypes persist.

Canada has a remarkably vibrant folk or "roots" scene, as it's more fashionably called in the marketing conscious '90s. These artists run the gamut from those who stick faithfully to the traditional structures to those who use the old forms to create new music.

Take Alberta's Bourne and MacLeod for instance, who won a Juno in '92 in the roots category for their album *Dance and Celebrate* (*Moonlight Dancers* is the most recent release). The duo's music is a wonderful, quirky fusion of folk, blues, reggae, country, Cajun and more. Or there's Prince Edward Island's

Keelaghan, who is one credit shy of a history degree, is one of the few artists in Canada who likes being called a folk artist, specifically because of its implied link to the troubadours and bards. His albums *Timelines* and *Small Rebellion*, released on his own Tranquilla label, and his newest release, *My Skies*, on Green Linnet, feature story songs set in Canadian history. "Jenny Bryce," a traditional story song with a gentle feminist bent, is considered by some to be a contemporary classic. It's a song that has been covered by several musicians, including Garnett Rogers and Vancouver's Stephen Fearing.

A powerful and charismatic live performer, Fearing is viewed by many in the folk community as one of its leading lights. Ironically, Fearing doesn't identify with the folk label.

Fearing, who went to school in Ireland and was exposed to the traditional revival in that country, thinks of himself as a singer/songwriter from the music world that includes tin pan alley and jazz. However, with his rich voice, acoustic guitar and lyri-



ANNE CUTTING





**Stephen Fearing: a leading light.**

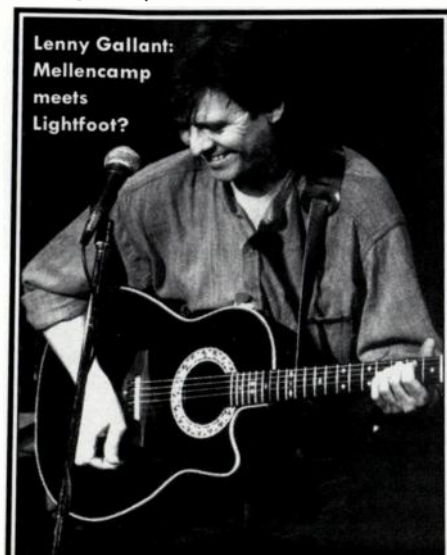
cally intense songs, he is perceived as a very good folk singer. His *Blue Line* album covered such topics as ecology, incest, feminism, tenderness and friendship and his upcoming recording, *The Assassin's Apprentice*, produced by Steve Berlin of Los Lobos, delves into "physical and emotional motion and

change." Wrapping up the recording at press time, Fearing explains that in *Apprentice* the "theme of travel comes up a lot. It's fictional and autobiographical, all about myself and people I know."

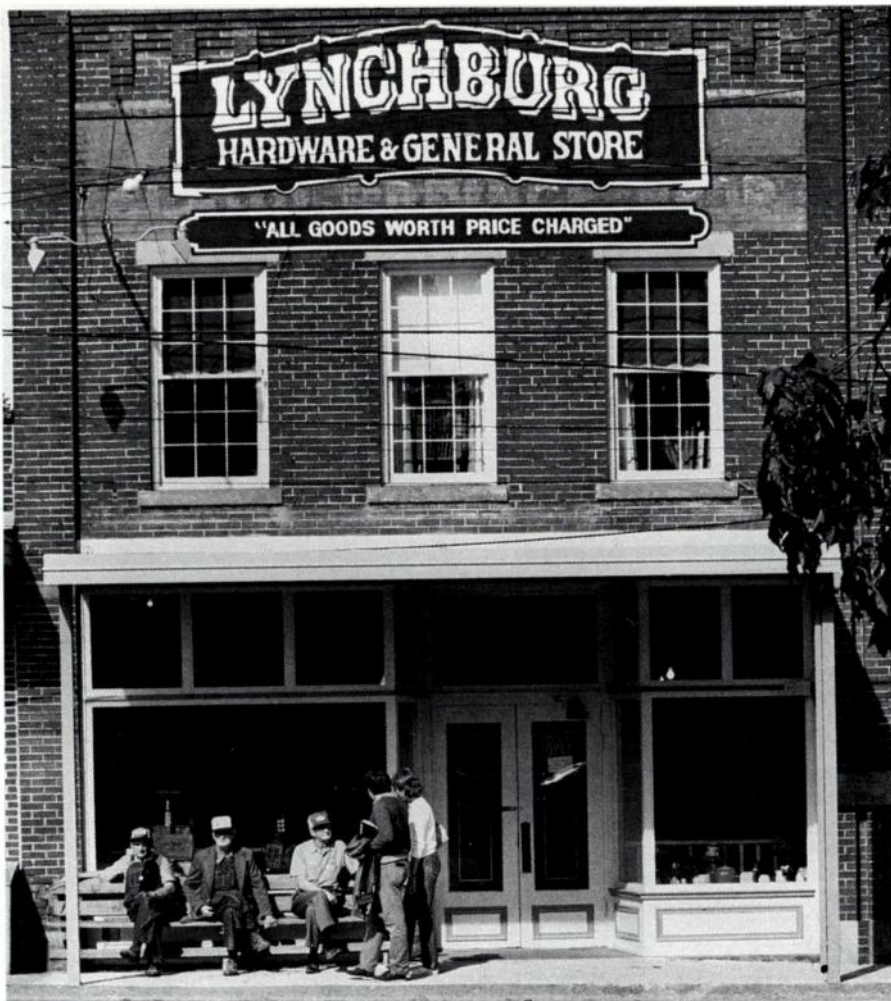
Richard Flohil also has a long history in the folk/roots community. He resigned last fall after five years as artistic director of the Mariposa Festival, partly due to frustration and exhaustion at the difficulty in breaking through the outdated folkie stereotype. But five years of low attendance and bad weather haven't dampened his commitment to the music itself. "It's stuff that touches the heart and the head," he explains, and acknowledges that part of the appeal is the music's "specific relationship to the past."

Summer folk festivals are the biggest means of support for many artists in Canada. Pierre Guerin, formerly of Quebec folk group Barde, and a record producer who is now getting ready for his second year as the artistic director of the Winnipeg Folk Festival (one of the most popular in the country), keeps his eye on artists, trends and the spirit that defines folk music.

"Folk music, the traditional music that we know, was written in people's kitchens and living rooms and in very simple circumstances. It got passed on and, through some kind of miracle, survived without mass, commercial distribution," says Guerin. "It still manages to make a dent in the market — in minds that are hopelessly saturated." **N**



**Lenny Gallant: Mellencamp meets Lightfoot?**



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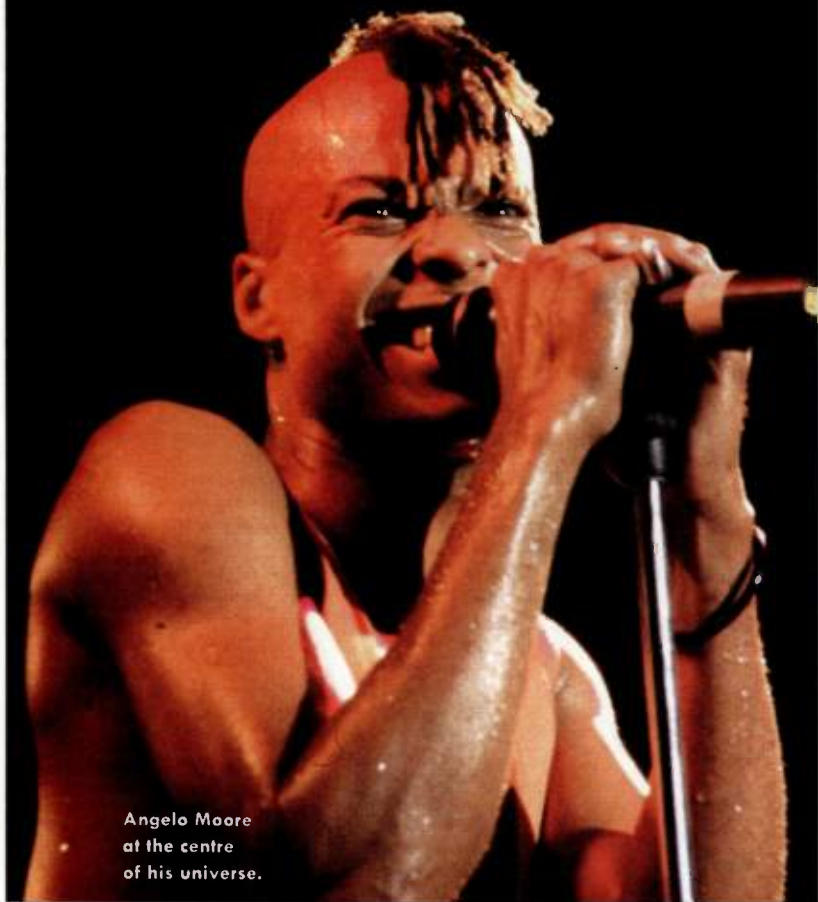
**JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY**





# Music

## FISHBONE'S MACROCEPHELOUS CONCOCTION



Angelo Moore  
at the centre  
of his universe.

GRAHAM KENNEDY

**G**ive A Monkey a Brain and He'll Swear He's the Center of the Universe is being touted as Fishbone's big commercial breakthrough. Rest assured, though, the band's fourth release ain't no sell-out.

Musically, Fishbone remains impossible to categorize, embracing everything from metal, to ska, to funk to thrashy jazz. Bassist-songwriter Norwood Fisher explains why the album's so diverse.

"It's just the damn sporadic way we do it. We wrote 32 songs for this and then we just raised our hands for the ones we liked the most."

Produced by Terry Date (who's also worked with Soundgarden), *Give a Monkey* features some heavy tracks. Is Fishbone jumping on the hard rock alternative bandwagon? In fact, the group has been doing similar stuff for years. Norwood admits guitarists John Bigham and Kendall Jones have a particular fondness for this sound.

"For them, it's kind of a guitar-dick connection. For me, it's fun to do. I mean I listened to KISS and shit on *Don Kirshner* and the *Midnight Special*. We wanted to lay some funk on it, in a different way, without that slap-happy bass."

Lyrically and politically, Fishbone is as tough-minded as ever. Though *Give a Monkey* offers a grim perspective, it's not without optimism. "Black Flowers" concludes with singer Angelo Moore defiantly announcing "I'll love till my very last breath."

"It's basically the spirit of people," explains Fisher. "Just deciding that the guy next to you is alright, that he's not much unlike you. It's the hope that tomorrow things might get better."

In "Nutt Megalomaniac," Fishbone describes its music as a "macrocephelous concoction." Fisher laughs. "We gave 'em [the critics] a name for it." He considers the song's title a multi-layered pun. "It's got the sexual innuendo; there's the mega-nut everyone's looking for. And there's the insanity — just goin' nuts." That's easily the best definition for what this band does. — *Steve Gravestock*

## UNDERSTANDING ANTHRAX

**M**any a self-commiserating mosher will identify with *Sound of White Noise* and its cryptic I-am-the-victim-and-you-are-the-cause-of-my-suffering lyrical stance. The average listener, however, may be confused by the record's intense hostility, which seems to exist in a vacuum. Against a backdrop of thrashing heavy metal/hardcore guitars and drums, practically every line of every song contains the words "I" and "you," and variations thereof, with each song an enraged sequel to the preceding one.

Most of the songs are aggravatingly obtuse. Former Armored Saint lead singer John Bush, who joined the band just prior to the making of this record, explains: "I try to write in general terms so people can come up with their own ideas of what the song is about. To me, it's music and it paints ideas in your head. There's no right or wrong way to interpret the lyrics. Sometimes I'm more intrigued by what people

might think a song is about.

"Sodium Pentathol" was inspired by organized religion. [Co-writer / rhythm guitarist] Scott Ian and I feel virtually the same. It's just our opinion, right or wrong, that it's destructive. It contributes more pain and problems than anything else."

Karma is addressed in "Room For One More," which is directed at criminals who think that with remorse comes redemption. "Sorry doesn't cut it," Bush shouts into the telephone receiver. "It's too late."

Much of the rampant fury on *Sound of White Noise* is directed inward. Explains Bush, "'1000 Points Of Hate,' which is probably the angriest song on the record, is a conversation by a person within himself. This person is angered by his own jealousy. The rational side of him hates the side that is envious."



With these explanations, the question remains: Is the indecipherable quality of these songs due to the listener's incapacity to understand, or the writer's inability to get his message across? Confesses Bush, "Maybe we just didn't clarify things as good as they could have been." — *David Henman*



## FRESH DOUGHBOYS

**T**he last two fan letters we got," says Doughboys drummer Paul Newman, "asked 'Are you guys broken up?'" The reply to this question came in August with the release of the Montreal quartet's major label debut, *Crush*, a 12-song collection of powerful punk rock grooves. On a roll after the smashing *When Up Turns to Down* EP, Doughboys signed to A&M and then — nothing. John Deslauriers left the band to rejoin Pigfarm and Newman, guitarist Jonathan Cummins and vocalist/guitarist/founder John Kastner "took six months off to find a new bass player." Explains Newman, "we wanted a new member not just a journeyman." So important was the compatibility issue that new bassist Peter Arsenault was chosen even though he had been a guitarist in his previous incarnation with Halifax group Jellyfishbabies. And while change (and Kastner) may seem like the only Doughboys constant, Newman, for one, is not afraid of it.



"The band always grows with each new member," he says. (Newman was a new recruit in 1989 when the band was already three years old.) Arsenault's approach to bass has helped fill out the rhythm section on *Crush*, making it the Doughboys' heaviest, most controlled record to date. Check out the new line-up this fall as the band tours Canada, or on MuchMusic when the "Shine" video airs. — Rhonda Riche

ANDREW MACNAUGHTAN

## PAUL WESTERBERG'S SHY MUSE

**I**'m not above being called silly," says Paul Westerberg. The former Replacements front-man is commenting on the humor in some of the songs on his new solo album, *14 Songs*. "It's easier to capture humor when you write quickly. 'World Class Fad' was recorded in one take and written in 10 minutes. Five or six of the songs were done that way."

Westerberg has stretched out on this recording. His songs embrace not only humor, but the raw groove of Keith Richards ("Silver Naked Ladies"), the bitter-sweet balladry of John Lennon ("First Glimmer") and the adrenaline-pumped thrash of the Sex Pistols ("Down Love"). "I do wear my influences fairly openly," he says. "I don't think I sound like any of those guys, but I like punk rock and the Rolling Stones and the Beatles. My sister told me, 'You finally made a record of music you actually listen to.'"

One song, "Knocking On Mine," has a distinctly Canadian flavor. "I was leaving a show in Vancouver," the raspy-voiced singer says, "it was raining out, and I was walking



back to the hotel. This woman came up to me, and I thought, 'jeeze, somebody finally recognizes me.' She said she was a school teacher and wanted me to write something for her students. I scribbled something down and I've been trying to figure out what it was ever since. I was reading some Zen book at the time and I think it pertained to the fact that the more information you cram into your head, the stupider you become. It's a sign of wisdom if you forget the things you don't need to know and leave room for your own thoughts. Hence the line about 'letting wisdom slide.'"

Westerberg often integrates literature into his work. In fact, he named this album after J.D. Salinger's *Nine Stories*. "I had more than nine songs, though," he explains. "I re-read the book when I made the album. I find incredible parallels with Salinger's struggle with fame. I'm always drawn to people like that — Greta Garbo is another. I like someone who has talent and wants it to be known, but doesn't want to be known as a celebrity." — M.L.

**S**ongwriting is an art and a science for Sheree Jeacocke. Fifteen years as a session singer taught the Toronto songstress the finer points of arrangement, lyric and melody, and she displays her craft on her second

BMG release, *Miss My Love*.

For Jeacocke, songwriting is a 24-hour-a-day job. "I think about writing songs all the time. The number of naps I've taken from restaurants..." She laughs. "I'll be in the middle of a conversation and quite enjoying myself, but I'll say 'I have to go,' and I'm scooting off to the bathroom to write down an idea."

Recorded in

Toronto and L.A., *Miss My Love* was three years in the making. Jeacocke says it took time to strengthen her lyrics and

## SHEREE JEACOCKE'S TORCHY LOVE

beef up arrangements to reflect her passion for gospel and R&B music. She co-wrote with the likes of Michael Bolton-producer Michael Omartian, whose savvy and skill, she says, "blows me away." Jeacocke herself can belt it out with the best, and lovers of torchy ballads will find *Miss My Love* hits the mark. — C.M.







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FESTIVAL

**JAZZ CITY**  
Edmonton

SASKATCHEWAN  
**JAZZ**  
FESTIVAL

DOWNTOWN  
**JAZZ**  
Toronto

FESTIVAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
DE  
**JAZZ**  
DE MONTREAL

atlantic  
**JAZZ**



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WRN



# JAZZ WRAP-UP

**T**emperatures are cooling and bathing suits are tucked away until next year, but sounds of the summer jazz festivals are still burning in people's memories. Here's a wrap-up of what happened at the du Maurier Ltd. jazz festivals across the country.

Vancouver's du Maurier Ltd. International Jazz festival was "the strongest program we have ever put together," says the festival's John Orysik, director of marketing and promotions. All the performances ran very smoothly and highlights were: The Mike Stern Trio's magical, sold-out concert, the Steve Lacy Vespers (a Canadian exclusive performance), Betty Carter's sweeping performance at the Commodore and the free outdoor concerts. The many sold-out concerts included Tuck & Patti, Sonny Rollins, Terence Blanchard and Lacy/Tapscott. "We try to stay away from the mundane and predicable," explains Orysik, "We like to present the adventurous side of music."

In Edmonton, the du Maurier Ltd. Jazz City festival doubled the number of performance venues from last year — six main stages, three free stages and 31 clubs, restaurants and hotel lounges. Societe Radio Canada's *jazz sur le vif* and CBC Radio's *Jazz Beat* recorded performances, CKUA broadcast live across Alberta from Jazz Street, the free outdoor venue at Sir Winston Churchill Square and pianist Marian McPartland recorded a number of episodes of her Peabody Award-winning radio series, *Piano Jazz* which has been running for 22 years on National Public Radio in the U.S. Of the festival's 256 performances, some of

the most outstanding were by Boukman Eksperyans, Dr. John and his New Orleans Extravaganza, the Zion Harmonizers, P.J. Perry and his Quintet, the John Scofield Quartet, Abdullah Ibrahim and Randy Weston, and Trio Clusone.

The du Maurier Ltd. Saskatchewan Jazz festival, in Saskatoon, featured a record number of sell-out shows including the three Main Series concerts (The Zion Harmonizers, John Scofield Quartet and Betty Carter), four of the six Bassment (Canadian) Series including P.J. Perry Quintet, Velvet Glove, Lorraine Desmarais Quartet and Alex Dean Quintet, two Morning Gospel concerts with the Total Experience Gospel Choir and Cloud Nine and a brunch concert with Solstice, Saskatoon's own vibrant vocal jazz group. Favorite performances were by Barry Elmes Quintet and John & Jeff Clayton with Hugh Fraser & Keith

Copeland. Despite weather setbacks throughout the nine-day event, enthusiastic crowds enjoyed daily concerts in Kiwanis Park on the riverbank, on Jazz Street, Jazznic in the Park and at the Bessborough Gardens.

In Toronto, the du Maurier Downtown Jazz festival boasted crowds of more than 500,000 and fantastic weather. P.J. Perry, a 1993 Juno Award winner, and Bobby Watson, blew everyone's socks off at the Citytv stage, Raneé Lee and Cheb Khaled garnered three standing ovations each at Molson Place, Harbourfront Centre, Ahmad Jamal at Jackson's Piano Showroom performed with pure genius, Nat Adderley, Grover Washington Jr., Keith Jarrett, Joe Henderson and Sonny Rollins were all superb. For the after-hours crowd, the Holiday Inn on King featured jams with the Bobby Fenton trio and the stars of the festival. Other highlights were shows by Kenny Wheeler and his orchestra featuring Norma Winstone, African Jazz Pioneers, Danny D'Imperio, the Boss Brass, Charles Lloyd, Roy Hargrove, Vanessa Rubin, Michel Cusson and the Wild Unit, Boukman Eksperyans and Kenny Garrett. To wrap it all up, a gospel performance at Nathan Phillips Square by Faith Chorale and the Tri City Singers uplifted thousands of people.

Canada's East Coast also swung to a groove of its own this summer. The du Maurier Ltd. Atlantic Jazz festival in Halifax boasted record audiences and a superb lineup that presented a variety of jazz styles and brought home two great Canadian players, Kenny Wheeler and Peter Leitch. Trevor Watts' Moire Music Drum Orchestra filled the dancefloor of the Commonwealth Ballroom at the Halifax Hilton, local new music ensemble Upstream performed with Montreal guests Jean Derome on reeds and electric bassist Pierre Cartier, The Barry Elmes Quintet with Ed Bickert on guitar and hometown favorite Mike Murley on sax took the Hilton by storm, Jerry Granelli's New Works concert with Kenny Wheeler, Julian Priester, Anthony Cox and David Friedman was a crowd-pleasing hit, Barrence Whitfield and the Savages did up the festival's blues night and the Late Night stage featured the P.J. Perry Quintet, Montreal trio Evidence and Chelsea Bridge. This year was one of the most accessible and successful for the festival.

Anthony Cox in Halifax.

LARRY SVIRCHEV



Betty Carter in Vancouver.



Dr. John in Saskatoon.



Gospel at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto.



CLAS LARRSON

du Maurier Ltd.





# ROBERT PLANT'S AFFAIRS OF THE HEART AND SOUL



KEVIN WESTENBERG

**"I'd like to think that even though I've been around a long time, I haven't joined that throng of tired old farts who bathe in old glory," muses Robert Plant, the 45-year-old, lion-maned, ex-Led Zeppelin vocalist. He pauses. "That really is the ruination of North American radio."**

Plant's latest solo album, *Fate of Nations*, features his trademark North African-styled wails, but it also delivers fresh, crisp playing by guitarists Kevin Scott MacMichael (a Halifax boy, formerly in Cutting Crew) and Francis Dunnery, bassist Charlie Jones, drummers Pete Thompson and Michael Lee, and keyboardist Phil Johnstone. The topical, environmentally-aware lyrics also place the project firmly in the '90s.

"There are all sorts of comments to make without becoming heavy, like some sort of dull, aging folkie," explains Plant. "For instance, the color of the sky. You get on an airplane and at 30,000 feet it's still grey. When I was a kid travelling to America it was always blue. I think there's a mood set with people like R.E.M., Dylan and Peter Gabriel commenting on the condition of our planet. I don't know whether [my stuff] is any good, but it's better than talking about your masculinity on every track."

Don't worry, age hasn't slowed the libido of rock's reigning cock-of-the-walk. Instead of becoming blase, 25 years of having lust and love served up to him on a silver platter have made Plant surprisingly coy when speaking about his relationships. Is he romantically involved? "Oh yeah, all over the place," he says. Pause. "Well, not all over the place, but almost. I feel very comfortable with my being. I'm not chasing anything right now. I'm not focused, but I feel cool. And there are people who help me to feel cool and are gentle and kind and yet have a sense of humor and know I am primarily a funny guy. There's a kind of ridiculous zone in me that is very light. So there are people who encourage me and they are not from my generation, so they don't have a build-up of anxiety." (The grapevine says he's seeing a friend of his 23-year-old daughter Carmen's.)

What of the rumor that he and Canadian singer Alannah Myles had an entanglement? "We did tour together,"

he says, a note of surprise in his voice. "We're good friends. I think the world of her. She's a great, powerful lady. She has one of the finest voices of the idiom. She was always very kind to me, very warm-hearted. But the road is the road."

Is that a cryptic 'yes' to the question? "Forget about all the rumors," he says, then quickly adds, "Everything's true and untrue."

Putting two and two together, it seems the song "29 Palms," on the new album, could be about the sultry, raven-haired vocalist: "It comes kinda hard when I hear your voice on the radio/ Taking me back down the road that leads back to you." Confirms Plant, "'29 Palms' was written on tour, the last time we were in California." Plant won't be pinned down, however.

The subject changes to his peers and their latest albums. "Mick Jagger is singing and writing better than he has in years," he comments about the lead Stones' latest solo effort, *Wandering Spirit*. "Personally, if I were him, I think you can gain 10 years out of life and your career if you take something right the way down the line from your own angle. It would have been great if he had bitten the bullet and gone solo and meant it to the degree that he would stay with it for while. I don't go back to Zeppelin.

"Just as importantly, Keith Richards' last album was really great. I saw him playing with Steve Jordan in London and I've never seen him look so happy, play so good and the groove was so cool."

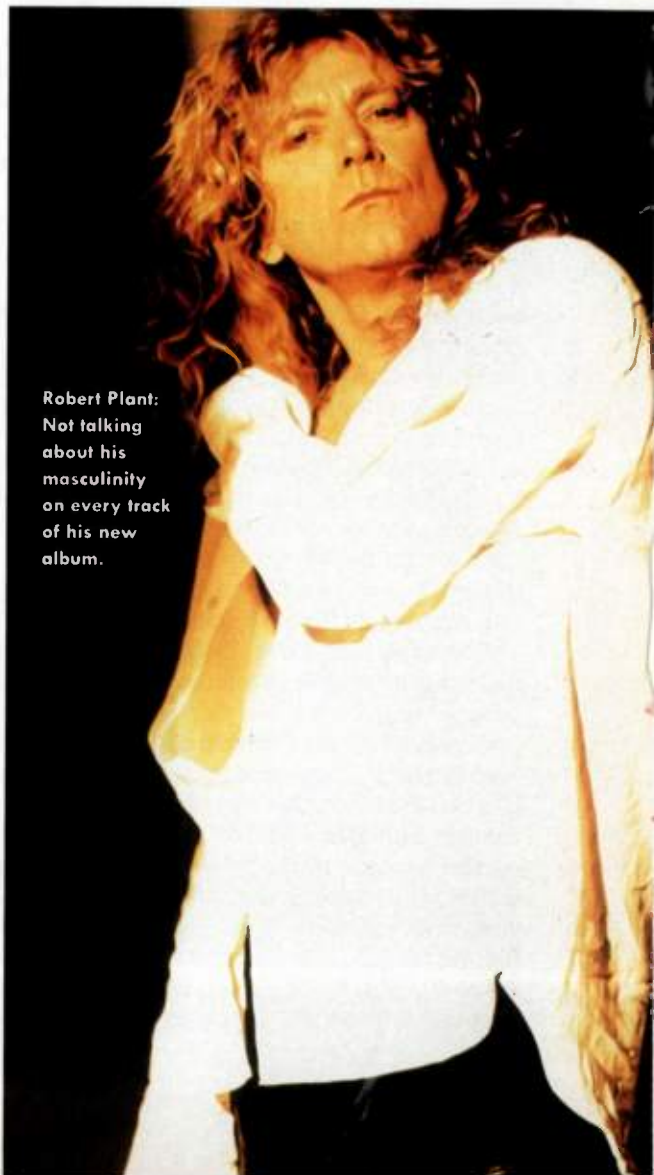
Has he heard the Coverdale/Page album? "Yeah, I have," he says flatly. A few years ago, in *Musician* magazine, Plant voiced his lack of respect for David Coverdale, due to a mim-

icry of Plant's style. He refuses to be drawn into a similar conversation today. "I haven't heard it enough to comment tactfully," he says with an uncomfortable laugh.

Are there any younger performers he is championing these days? "Julian Cope's *Jehova Kill* I really love. 'Soul Desert,' the opening track is great. The inspiration behind the album is all the sacred sites, especially in the British Isles. I know about those places, you see. That's what 'Stairway to Heaven' was about."

More insights into Plant's inspiration will be presented in a documentary that's currently in production. "I'm doing some filming at the national festival of folklore in Morocco," he says excitedly. "There'll be hordes of Arab warriors careering across a stage, banging drums and going [he lets out a high-pitched howl] 'Hey Allah.'"

Has he been to this festival before? "I went in '73 with Jimmy. That's when we wrote Kashmir." He laughs. "It all makes sense." **N**



Robert Plant:  
Not talking  
about his  
masculinity  
on every track  
of his new  
album.

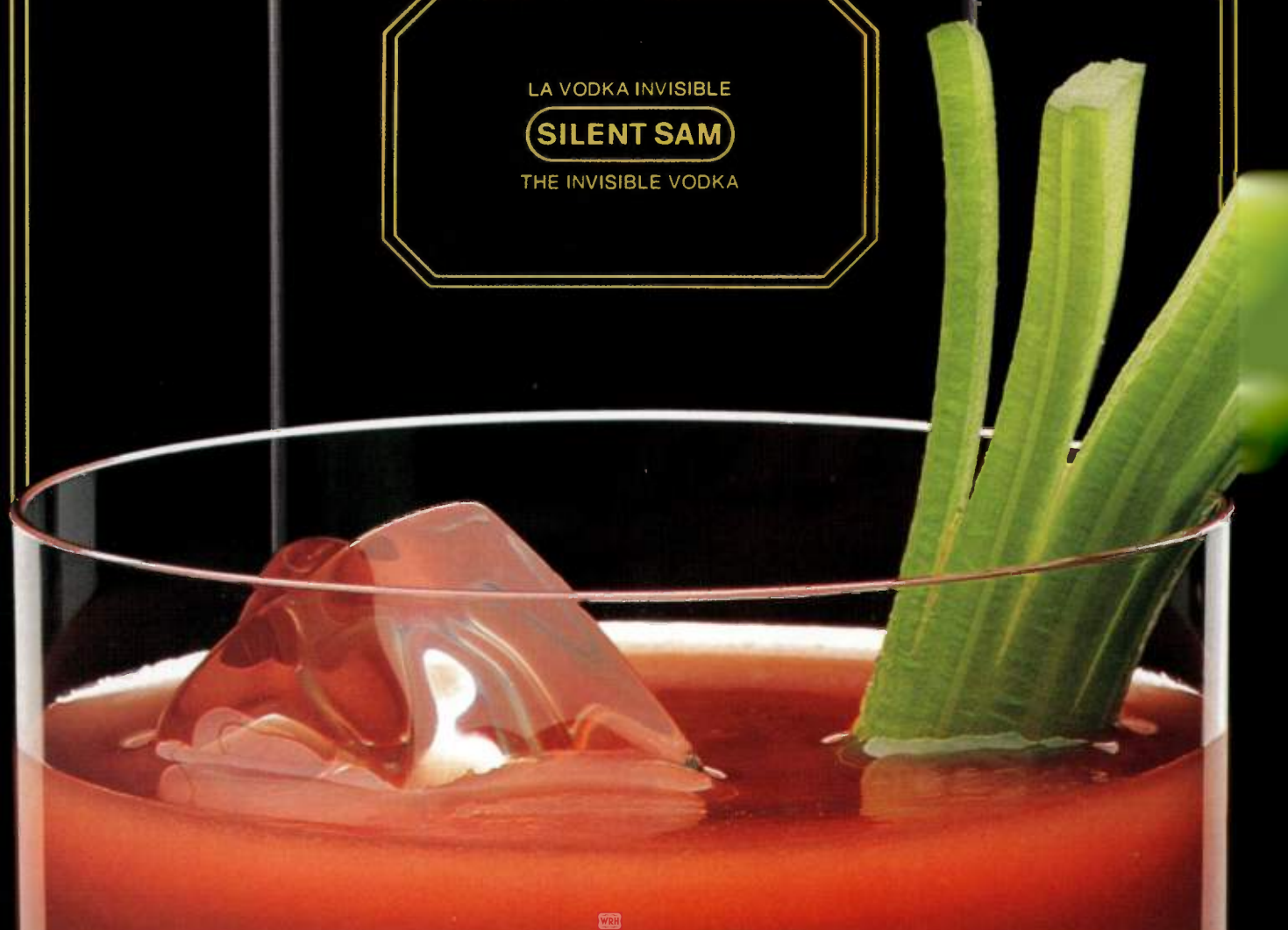


# The silent partner

LA VODKA INVISIBLE

**SILENT SAM**

THE INVISIBLE VODKA



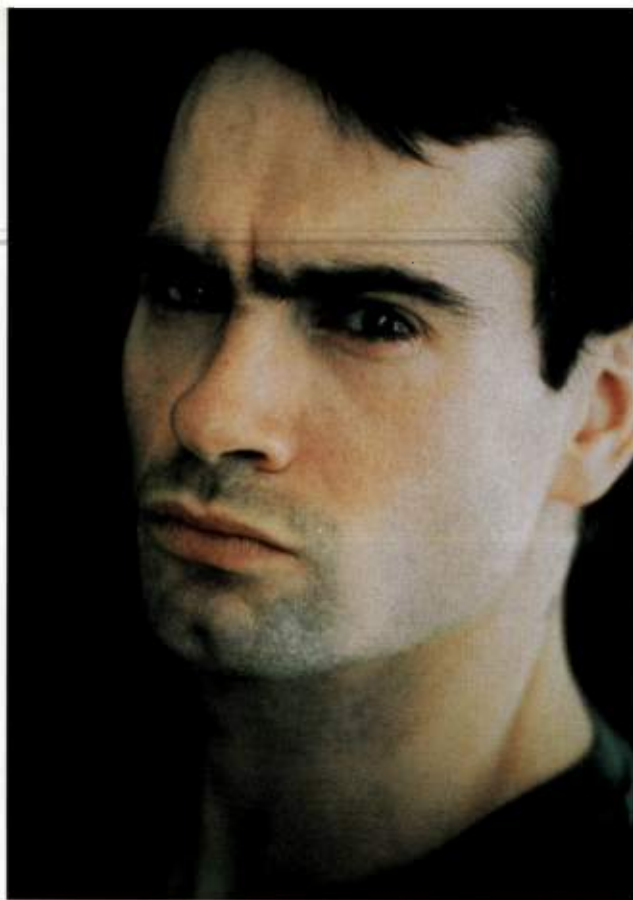


# HENRY ROLLINS: STORY-TELLER

**I**f I sat here in front of you right now and tried to crack you up, I would fail miserably," states Henry Rollins, explaining over the phone from Norfolk, Va., that he is not a comedian. "I tell stories, and it ends up being funny; I can't help it."

Rollins is in the midst of a tour, performing material from his recently-released live CD (*The Boxed Life*) and video (*Talking From The Box*). How did he go from The Rollins Band to these unique, spoken-word performances? It all began 10 years ago. He explains, "I started doing these 20-minute sets opening for some big poet, reading a few things, and I really got bored with the paper element. I had all these things I wanted to say, so I just started telling stories instead."

One of the biggest targets of Rollins' caustic attacks is U2, which leads one to wonder, would he give a damn about the group if it was unknown? "I just hate what they stand for," explains Rollins. "They're



destroying music. They're a one-band-defoliation-unit let loose in the rain forest. They stand beside music; they'll never play it. I hate

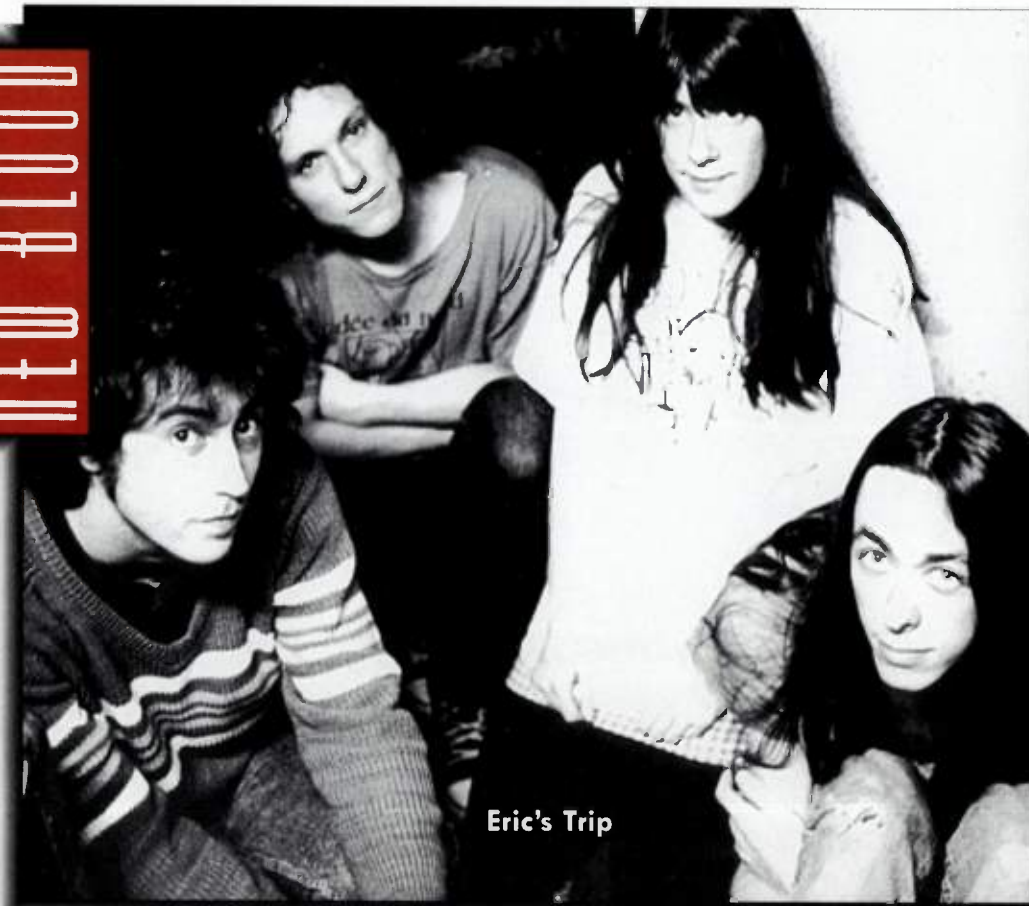
A one-man, U2-bashing, band.

anyone that pompous. I think they're trying to take over the world. They're like McDonalds. It's not music; it's this weird political freak show. It's about power. That's honestly scary to me."

Who does Rollins find funny? "The guy from *Blackadder*, the short guy with the incredibly stretchable face...he does his own solo stuff. I saw his one-hour special in Australia, and it was just devastating; that guy is lethal. I think Robin Williams is pretty amazing, when he gets going. I really like Sinbad, because he reminds me of early Bill Cosby, who is a master. (Sinbad's) humor is clean, and that's a real skill." Which raises the question, why then is Rollins' own routine laced so heavily with profanity? "Both my parents cursed, and that's how I was raised. But you know, I say 'naughty' words, but I never get vile. My intent is not to shock. I'm

not talking about sodomizing 10-year-old boys. I don't have any of that in me." — David Henman

00078 MTH



Eric's Trip

**W**hat would you do if you'd just signed a deal with America's hottest indie label and you were getting ready to record your next record? Well, if you are Moncton, N.B.'s Eric's Trip, who just inked a deal with Sub Pop, you'd go to your basement and fire up the four-track. "We feel a bit uncomfortable in the studio because we're always rushed," says guitarist Chris Thompson. "We like working in our basements. It gives us more time and makes it much more personal."

Titled *Peter*, the new seven-song E.P. — an unpolished polyglot of sonic guitar noise, haunting melodies and talk-back interference — was recorded by the group's guitarist and vocalist Rick White. "We actually recorded it in the studio once," admits Thompson, "but it didn't turn out right. It was the attitude and the way we played — it wasn't what we wanted."

Rising on the Sloan-induced wave of Maritime mania, the band (whose name is from a song on a Sonic Youth album) has finally relented to the pressures of big budget recording. "We just bought an eight-track while we were in Toronto," boasts Thompson. "We're starting to learn how to use that now because we're going to record our first album for Sub Pop on it."

It's safe to say this is one band that's not letting success spoil them. — Ian Menzies



What's with all the rumors we've been hearing about the latest Nirvana recording *In Utero*? Britain's *Select* magazine and U.S. *Newsweek* are only a few of publications that claimed Nirvana was in trouble: according to these sources, Geffen had refused to release the new album and forced the band to re-record the whole thing.

# THE SKINNY ON NIRVANA

KRIST NOVOSELIC TELLS ALL

Bass player Krist Novoselic is leaning back in his chair, sitting on the balcony of a room in Seattle's Edgewater Inn. "So you want the skinny, do you?" he says affably. "The full-page story in *Newsweek*, I call it an ad, said the record was unreleaseable, but

We thought the rest of the record sounded fine.

"Somewhere in the process, people who hadn't heard the record, these weird phantoms from another dimension, these sources close to the band materialized and whispered things," Novoselic sighs. "Our band is a real magnet for publicity and speculation."

Nirvana has been doing more than fending off sharks during its between-album hiatus.

The band has been appearing at a number of benefit concerts, including one in Seattle for a local musician who was murdered (the money going to Crime Stoppers) and a

show in San Francisco for Bosnia rape survivors. "The money went to all victims of all backgrounds, there was no nationalistic pretenses," says Novoselic.

Rape is something Nirvana is not afraid to take a stand on. On the new album there's a song called "Rape Me" that stirs up images of the brutal, degrading action that happens by the minute in North America. "Rape is a violent, terrible thing," says Novoselic. "People have a sheltered existence. They only deal with violence when they want to, you know, 'Hey, let's go see the new Arnold Schwarzenegger film.' Meanwhile rape is happening all over the country every day. Women can empower themselves, but until men come to the conclusion that women are their mothers, sisters, wives and friends — people they can respect — until then, nobody's going to get anywhere, nothing's going to change."

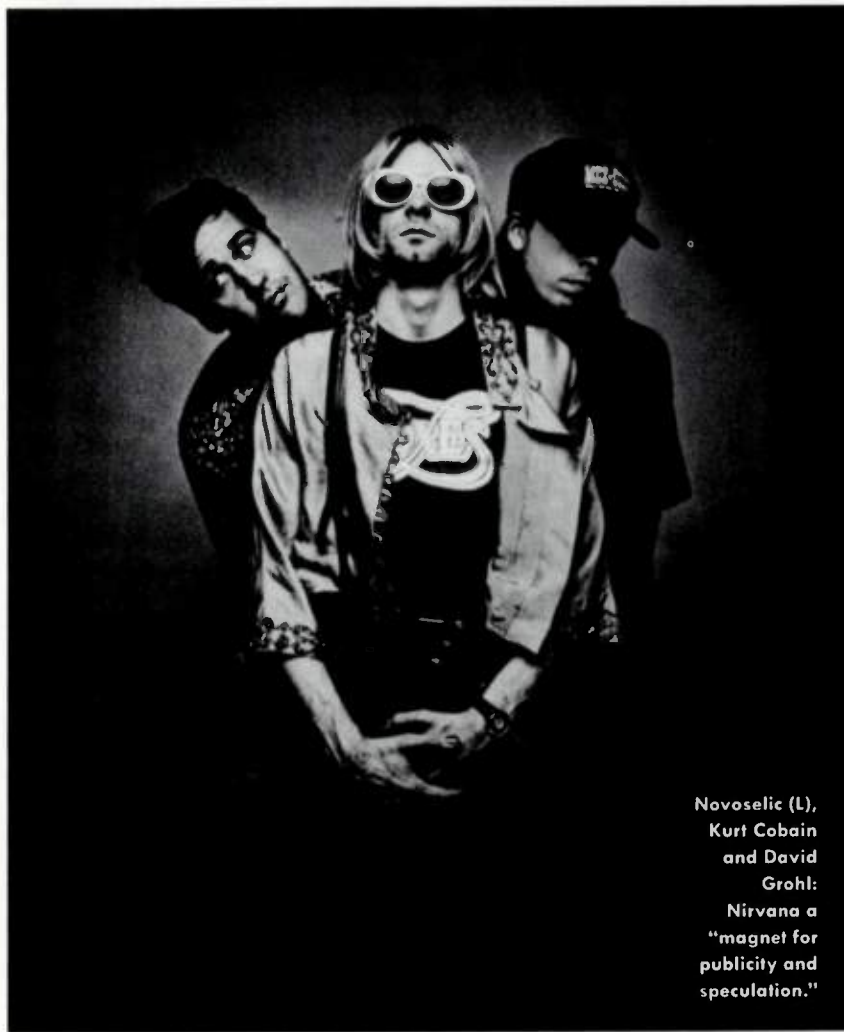
Word is that when the band appeared on the MTV Awards earlier this year, the organizers banned them from doing "Rape Me." "We weren't so much banned as they wanted us to play 'Smells Like Teen Spirit.' We are sick of that song and wanted to do something neat and new, but they weren't into that," explains the bassist.

At the end of the band's performance on the show, Novoselic tossed his bass into the air, only to have it land on his head. Ouch! Was he badly hurt? "I just got a bloody head," he says. "They had the paramedics come and gave me an ice-pack and I had to sign a release form."

Touted as the leader of the grunge movement, Nirvana has experienced a huge leap of popularity since the release of *Nevermind*. How has life changed for Novoselic? "People always walk up to me and give me demo tapes," he says. "I listen to them, its common courtesy and I'm not that much of a snort, but most of them aren't very good." Does he get recognized a lot? "Yeah. Once I was in this bar, there was this campy lounge singer lady who had a good act, her dialogue was really funny. She looked at me and said, 'You're Nirvana, aren't you?' I said 'I'm one of them.' Then she said 'You'll like this song' and she started singing 'Lithium.' There were about 10 other people there and,

oh man, it was surreal."

Doing something he loves is not taken for granted by the 28-year-old musician. "I used to be an industrial painter, I painted machinery and walls and it was really hard work. I'd be around all these crazy toxic materials like epoxy and resins and sometimes I'd work 10-hour days. Now I have a lot of free time and I really appreciate every second." ■



Novoselic (L), Kurt Cobain and David Grohl: Nirvana a "magnet for publicity and speculation."

by whose standards? It doesn't sound like it was recorded on a boombox." What happened, says Novoselic, was that after the record was made in February, the group decided to remix two songs, the single "Heart-Shaped Box" and "All Apologies." "We thought the bass was a little quiet and the vocals not as loud as we wanted them," he explains. "We are big fans of Scott Lid, so we put him on a plane and brought him in to monkey around with the tracks.



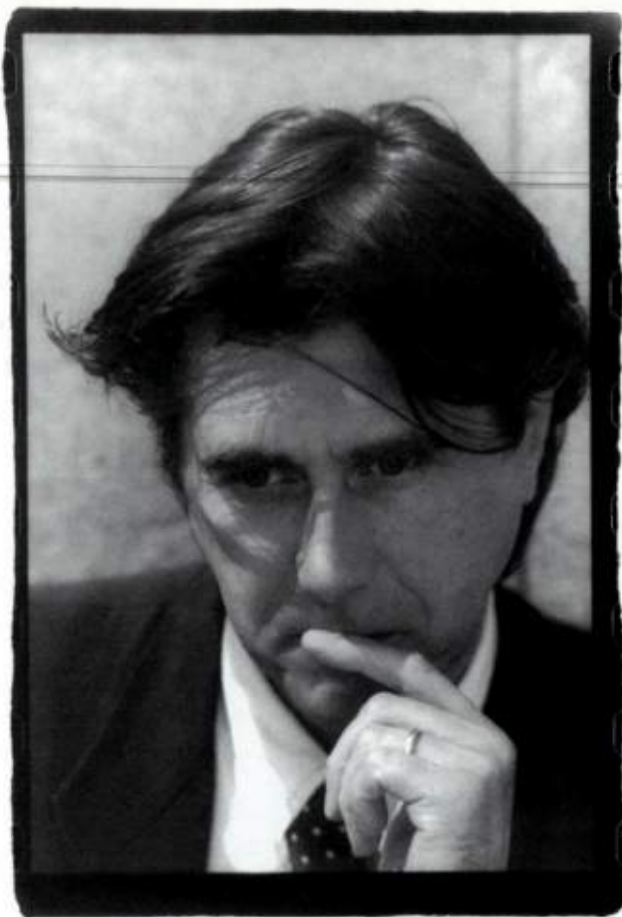
# BRIAN FERRY'S TAXI-RIDE TO SANITY

There's something very F. Scott Fitzgerald about Brian Ferry. Perhaps it's the air of tragedy and romance that envelopes him. Sitting in a suite in Toronto's Four Seasons hotel, he is the picture of sophisticated composure, the only man alive who can make white socks and black loafers look chic. His erratically tapping foot is the sole giveaway that all is not what it appears.

He's here to discuss his latest album of smoky cover tunes, *Taxi*. "The only vaguely contemporary song is the title track. It was written in the mid-'80s although it's from a bygone era. Maybe that's what appealed to me. I like songs from the music world of Memphis. The writer, Homer Banks, was one of the Stax singers from the '60s."

The 48-year-old father of four boys is in a mood to wax nostalgic. "When I was doing *Horoscope* [the album in progress that he's been wrestling with for the last three years], it felt like *For Your Pleasure* and *Taxi* felt like *Foolish Things* — both done in 1973. Today feels very much like that time."

Ferry's disquiet may be residue from a management fallout he experienced in the '80s. "I had four or five years of business turbulence, litigation. It was terrible," he admits (he's now back with his first manager). His confidence was also shaken by technology.



"I got lost in it. With *Horoscope*, I was working with too big a format. *Avalon* was the last 24-track album we did, then it was doubled up to 48 tracks, so with twice the possibilities to record, and being a sucker for experimenting, I kept looking for new blends. I had no management, no producer. I was lonely in the studio, like a mad artist in his garret. I had a great team of young guys but they were so young that I was placed with too much responsibility. Robin [Trower, who produced *Taxi* and plays guitar on *Horoscope*] was great to connect with, he was somebody my age, with more experience. On *Taxi* we went back to simpler way of working."

There was one positive occurrence in the

'80s for Ferry. "I love movies. I was brought up with them. They made me into a cigarette smoker because I loved the way they looked. But I haven't smoked for five years now and I feel much better." — M. L.

ED YEE

In the late '50s some dismissed **SUN RA** as a flake because he said he was from another planet, but **PERRY COMO** was considered a serious musician. In the '70s **KISS** was written off as kitsch because the members wore makeup onstage, while the likes of **JAMES TAYLOR** and **CARLY SIMON** were praised for their earnest approach. Sun Ra was a great innovator and **KISS**, well **KISS** rocked, but it still had to fight the perception of being a novelty act. Vancouver's **RYMES**



**WITH ORANGE** is serious about being outrageous. Says guitarist **ROB KULIC** of the group's frenetic stage show, "We are usually right in the audience." After a summer spent touring the country promoting its CD *Peel*, and the recent release of its second single, a cover of the **SMALL FACES'** "Itchycoo Park," Rymes With Orange kicks with some pretty heavy grooves, but it doesn't do attitude poses. The band's motto? "We're just here to entertain."

In Toronto, **THE SATANATRAS** have to fight the misconceptions that it is either an agent of the devil or a joke band. In the words of manager David

Shiller, "Some people don't get the joke, some people just get too much of the joke." To set the record straight, the group has one of the fattest sounds around and the members sometimes wear **KISS** makeup onstage. The debut recording, *777*, and the single, "Powerful Wonderful," are hits on campus radio and after a summer of travelling the Trans-Canada, the band is getting ready for its sophomore release.

Perhaps the best-known of all the bands that walk the thin edge between novelty and fierceness is the **BUTTHOLE SURFERS**. The creators of such memorable lines as "midget lesbian boy who stood eight foot tall with a knife," the Austin, Tex., combo recently released its major label debut *Independent Worm Saloon* (BMG), an album produced by **JOHN PAUL JONES**. Drummer **KING COFFEY** says that the bassist of ultra-serious superstar band Led Zeppelin was actually really cool to work with. Does Coffey have any skinny on what really happened with the '70s supergroup? "Sometimes Jones would talk about Led Zeppelin, but we told him to shut up." Speaking of

celebrities, Butthole's vocalist **GIBBY HAYES** formed a group with the swoony Johnny Depp. Many people have been quite impressed with the Butthole's brushes with greatness says Coffey. "When it first got around town that Jones was working with us, this kid came up to Gibby and said, 'I hear you're working with John Paul,' and Gibby said 'Yeah, he was in Zeppelin,' and the kid said, 'I thought you were working with the pope.'"

Bits 'n' bites: Newish releases of note include *68 Comeback Special* (Epidemic), by Toronto's **SING ALONG WITH TONTO**, *From Beer To Paternity* (Cargo) by Hamilton, Ont.'s, **WET SPOTS**, the *Mood Ring E.P.* (Murderecords) from St. John's, Nfld. group **HARDSHIP POST** (these kids really rock live), *Childman* (Nettwerk), a project featuring **CONSOLIDATED'S** **ADAM SHERBOURNE** and the **STEVE ALBINI**-produced *Grafted To An Elbow* (Cargo) by Montreal quartet **BLISS**. — Rhonda Riche

Rymes With Orange: "just here to entertain."







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# THE GRAND AARON

**T**he Grand Tour of the different styles of Aaron Neville," is how Aaron Neville likes to describe his latest recording, a diverse collection of country, soul, pop and spiritual songs. The gentle giant with the vocal range of a Vienna choirboy speaks softly over the phone from his home in New Orleans, La., his words slipping together like bare feet in Mississippi mud.

"We did 20 songs and these ones were the cream of the crop," Neville explains shyly. Linda Ronstadt once again plies her magic with him on one track, Leonard Cohen's "Song of Bernadette." "It was pretty and spiritual and I think the world needs more songs like this. Linda was the first one who came to mind when the producer suggested doing it as a duet," says Neville. Another outstanding tune is "My Brother, My Brother," written by Phil Roy. "It has a Marvin Gaye feel and that's the first thing that struck me about it since he's one of my favorite singers. It's a song of one brother to another, but also the brotherhood of man, 'cause we better look after one another. There ain't but one planet."

He's quick to add, "It means sister too, the brother and sisterhood of man and woman." Brothers Cyril, Art and Charles Neville contribute to the song but unfortunately we don't hear from sister Altheigra, who used to sing with the Dixie Cups "while they were



Aaron Neville  
works more magic  
with Linda Ronstadt.

**MUSIC**

in school together, before they were the Dixie Cups."

Other family members in the music business include his son Ivan, who plays keyboards in Keith Richards' band The Expensive Winos, sons Jason and Aaron Jr. who perform in a New Orleans outfit called Def Generation, niece Sharmain who plays jazz piano and a four-year-old grandson who has been pounding the skins since he was born. "His mother was pregnant with him, she's an African dancer in a dance and drum troupe, and he heard the drums in her stomach," explains Neville, adding "He's played at two or three Louisiana Jazz and Heritage festivals."

Like the Marsalis', another prominent musical New Orleans family, the Nevilles are fiercely proud of their birthplace. "It's a unique city, so many cultures together, like gumbo," says Neville. "I go to many beautiful places but the most beautiful thing is to fly into New Orleans and look down and see the swamp." — M.L.

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# THOM SPARLING SAYS OH YAH!

UNDERCOVER

Intimate with Winnipeg's happening music turf since 1983, Thom Sparling is signing some of the region's best indie bands to his upstart label, Oh Yah! Records.

With the credo "fun, music and global domination," Sparling launched Oh Yah! in June of '91 and has built up a promising roster which includes post-hippies Acoustically Inclined and alternative popsters Zen Bungalow — both of which are making nationwide noise. His resume includes a two-year stint as Crash Test Dummies' first manager, through the group's 1990 BMG smash *The Ghosts That Haunt Me* (on which he served as executive producer). In addition to Oh Yah!, Sparling publishes a quarterly fanzine called *Bark!* which he sends to industry, record and book stores across the country.

The 30-year-old bachelor has used legendary '70s British label Stiff Records as the model for his foray into Canada's explosive

independent market. And with 11 acts, 70 record store accounts across the country, a beer sponsor (Big Rock), and a new Edmonton branch office, he finds the label is "growing in leaps and bounds."

During the past decade Sparling has watched the vibrant and tight-knit Winnipeg music community evolve into a Canadian hot spot. "There's no real Winnipeg sound," he explains. "It's all really diverse and eclectic."

Sparling has had an active hand in the scene's development. Through six years of zoology studies at University of Manitoba and three and a half years as manager of Winnipeg's West End Cultural Centre, he helped stage some 1,000 concerts and nurtured several young bands (including the Dummies) at the grassroots recording level.

Sparling says that running a low-budget indie label allows the luxury of "signing tons of bands and bringing them along slowly, whereas a major label just couldn't do that."

His interest in promoting bands dates

back to Grade 12 when a guy in his home room put out his own 45. "It was really derivative — one song sounded like Lou Reed and the other like Iggy Pop," he says, laughing. "But the idea you could go out and make your own record, that was really cool."

Oh Yah!'s most recent signing is a local



Winnipeg's Thom Sparling:  
A serious player in the independent market.

female folk trio called the The Wyrd Sisters, whose March debut, *Leave A Little Light* is already into its third pressing (on cassette). — Mike Beggs

# SON OF JIM: A. J. CROCE

To find a copy of A. J. Croce's self-titled, debut CD, released by Private Music, you have to look under 'jazz' at your favorite record store. Fifty years ago, says the 21-year-old superstar-in waiting, the same record would have been filed under 'pop.'

"What I do is sort of a mix of a lot of American styles," explains the soft-spoken Croce, calling from a Holiday Inn in Akron, Ohio. "I love writing country songs, blues, anything that is challenging."

A singer, songwriter and piano player, Croce is the son of the late, much-revered singer/songwriter Jim Croce. He began playing at age six, and was performing at age 12 at Croce's Top Hat Bar & Grille, a restaurant in San Diego's 'Gaslamp Quarter' founded by his mother, Ingrid.

At a media reception in Toronto earlier this year, Croce showcased his trend-transcending music and his remarkable vocal style, which brings to mind singers like Tom Waits, Ray Charles and Dr. John. Although it sounds like the result of too much whiskey and tobacco and too little sleep, this type of singing comes from the blues 'shouters' of Kansas City in the late 30s, who had to project their voices over drums, pianos and big bands. Croce found himself resorting to this technique at age 15 when, during an extended engagement, he had to work without a microphone. "Early on I wanted to sing like James Brown," says Croce, "but I ended up losing my voice a couple of times, trying to scream out those high notes." — David Henman



Croce knows  
how to shout  
out the blues.

# SPARKING HOPE

Canadian country songwriters have pooled their talents to help a young Calgary boy, BRENT

BEREZAY, who was the victim of a rodeo accident and is now quadriplegic. "A Song For Brent" was written at a workshop during last year's Country Music Week and was recorded by singer/songwriter CINDY CHURCH and released through PolyGram this past July.

"Where there's life, there's hope," says JOHN BEREZAY, Brent's father. "Maybe one day he'll hear the song on the radio. Maybe it'll turn a light switch on."

Calgary radio station CKRY Country 105, PolyGram Records, Warner/Chappell Music Canada Ltd. and the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN) have agreed to fund, release, promote, publish and administer royalties for the recording, with all profits donated to A Song For Brent Society, organized to benefit brain injured quadriplegics who sustained injuries in childhood. — M. L.



# ACID TEST

ACID TEST have already taken their native Toronto by storm with their intense mixture of techno-savvy grooves, psychedelic guitar and Lucy Di Santo's swirling vocals. ACID TEST is POP MUSIC with an added kick, offering delightful depths at each repeated listening. It's adventure, invention and discovery.



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MUSIC

## TAP DANCING WITH TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY

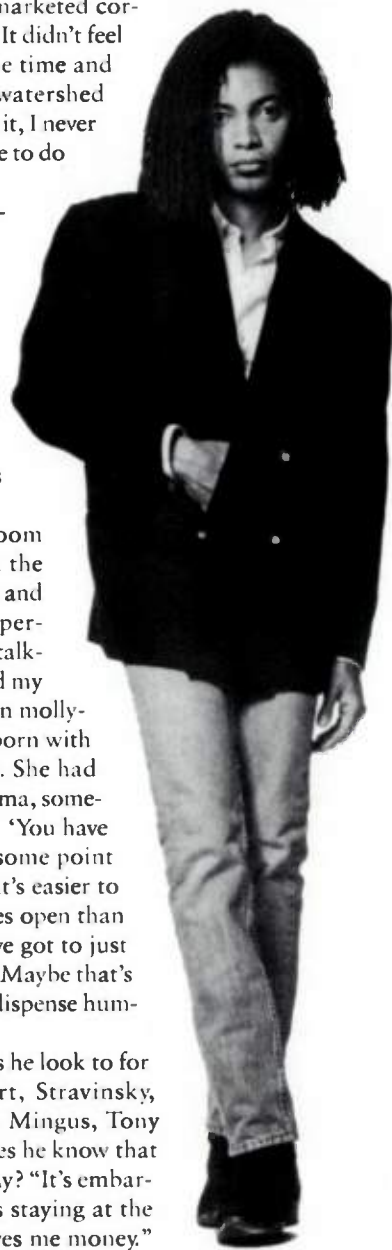
**T**erence Trent D'Arby can't sit still. When asked if it was difficult to remain objective as a producer, singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist during the recording of his new album, *Symphony Or Damn*, he straddles a footstool in his Toronto hotel room and answers, "I don't know. I just do it." Next question. After the relative fizzle of *Fish Nor Flesh* (1.5 million copies sold versus the 8 million of debut *Introducing the Hardline According to Terence Trent D'Arby*) did he feel any outside pressure to come up with the goods this time? "I truly don't know," he responds with a shrug, gazing out the window.

OK, no more Ms. Nice Gal. How did it feel to come off the monumental success of *The Hard Line* and fall flat on his face? "*Fish Nor Flesh* didn't do well not just because it was so different from *Hard Line*, but because it wasn't marketed correctly," says D'Arby, adding, "It didn't feel good. However, I knew at the time and can see now that it was a watershed album for me. Without doing it, I never would have had the confidence to do *Symphony Or Damn*."

The new album has elements of the previous two. It's got a solid soul foundation, takes risks and yet is very accessible. One song, "Turn The Page," is especially notable as it seems to expose the vulnerability that D'Arby must have felt when enduring critical barbs aimed at his last album.

Wrong. He crosses the room and settles on the couch, all the while chewing his gum loudly and slowly. "The song tells my perspective," he explains. "I was talking to a female friend, around my age, whom I imagine has been mollycoddled all her life. She was born with a silver spoon in her mouth. She had gone through some little trauma, something to do with a guy. I said 'You have to get on with your life, at some point you have to open your eyes, it's easier to go through life with your eyes open than with them closed. And you've got to just turn the page.'" He pauses. "Maybe that's the function of the artist, to dispense humble advice."

Humm. What artists does he look to for advice? "I listen to Mozart, Stravinsky, Thelonious Monk, Charles Mingus, Tony Bennett, Led Zeppelin." Does he know that Tony Bennett is in town today? "It's embarrassing," says D'Arby. "He's staying at the same hotel as me and he owes me money." — M. L.





# world beat

**K**lezmer, rag-tag sounding Yiddish pop music made up of Eastern European influences such as Hungarian and Gypsy music, and jazz, has been

snatched back from obscurity by a new generation of musicians such as Toronto's **FLYING BULGAR KLEZMER BAND**. On the group's second album **AGADA**, which means legend, founder **DAVID BUCHBINDER** says the band aimed to "relax" into

## YIDDISH POP, WEST AFRICAN SOUL AND SENEGALESE SATISFACTION

tional stuff with a bit of a groove — a bit more pelvis!" That may sound like an odd goal for

the music. "Because it's so fast, with lots of notes, and is such a rhythmically complex music, it tends to get frantic. We wanted to be able to play some of the tradi-

*The sky's the limit for Toronto's Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band.*

music that, at its centre, has a strong link to the turn-of-the-century Yiddish culture, but the music itself is remarkably adaptable and emotive. "It has an inef-fable Yiddish quality," explains Buchbinder. "It simultaneously has humor, energy, sorrow and pain." That, he says, gives the music a spiritual dimension "allowing for exploration of ecstasy and the unknown — both for the band and the audience."

The ecstatic experience is also inherent in the music of a different group of revivalists. **FATALA** specializes in the percussively driven traditional music of Guinea, West Africa. There's a soul-satisfying woody sound that drives the songs on *Gongoma Times*.

On the other end of the scale is Senegal's **BAABA MAAL**'s third album **YAM TORO**. Well played, subtle, complex and emotionally satisfying, it is one of the best pop albums so far this year.

The ever popular **KANDA BONGO MAN** and his band make a joyful noise with their percolating soukous on the live record *Soukous In Central Park*. A more silky happiness can be heard on San Diego, Calif., group **BIG MOUNTAIN**'s new album *Wake Up*. Performing an uplifting style of reggae, the band integrates English and Spanish lyrics ("Spanglish") on tunes such as "Reggae Inna Summertime" and the first single, "Touch My Light." Infectious and easy on the nerves. — Karen Gordon



## SKYDIGGERS REACH NEW HEIGHTS

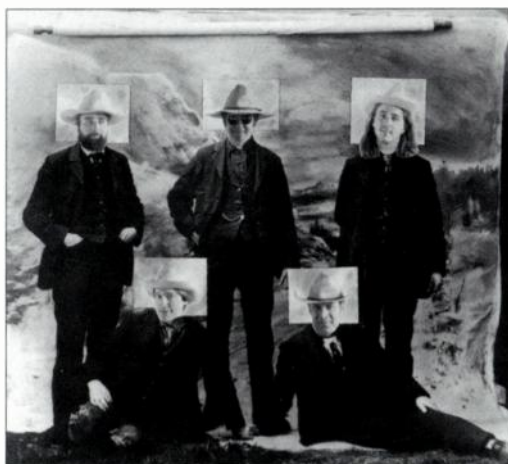
"**M**aybe it's just my cartoon way of looking at things," explains Skydiggers' bassist Ronnie Von Johnnie, "But producing this album was full of subtle manoeuvring, like lots of things in life."

"I had to use protocol and diplomacy as much as creativity, to get my own way. You think of a delicate way of presenting an idea so it will be accepted. You know, kiss babies and shake a few hands."

*Just Over This Mountain*, the third and latest release from the Skydiggers, was self-produced, which is no small order with five sets of ears trying to capture five unique versions of quintessential Skydiggers' sound. But Von Johnnie says it was a homecoming for the guys in the band, who feel they've finally captured their sound on tape.

"I perceive it as sounding the way Skydiggers should have sounded from the very beginning," Von Johnnie says.

*Just Over This Mountain* is the Skydiggers at its best. The gentle opening track, "Pull Me Down" — a provocative love song with singer Andy Maize's almost spoken-word vocals haunting the air — is indicative of the group's coming of age.



Guys with their heads on straight (L-R): Josh Finlayson, Joel Anderson, Andy Maize, Ronnie Von Johnnie and Peter Cash.

If anything has become known as Skydiggers' sound, it's what Von Johnnie calls an "acoustic, shuffle, train-wreck" — a punchy drum patter filled out with acoustic guitar rhythms and overlaid with wailing vocals. This unmistakable signature marks songs such as "Just Over This Mountain," which, with its call and response vocals inspired by blues shouters, is a spirited display of Skydiggers' penchant for breathing new life into forgotten traditions.

The band laid bed tracks for the album with Canadian production wonder-boy Michael Philip Wojewoda (Rheostatics, Barenaked Ladies) who Von Johnnie calls a "bloody genius."

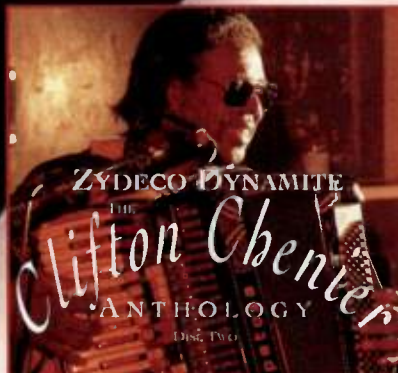
The band will tour the East Coast in the fall, taking October off since guitarist Josh Finlayson and his wife are expecting their second child then. The rest of Canada will be covered after Christmas when snow is deepest and

wind-chill warnings daunt the weak at heart — proving the band's paramount faith in the heat of the new album.

Together since 1988 with only one line-up change — drummer Joel Anderson replacing Wayne Stokes — Skydiggers has grown into a steady force. Solid, strong and with the new album, Von Johnnie says, "more like ourselves than ever." — Cindy McGlynn



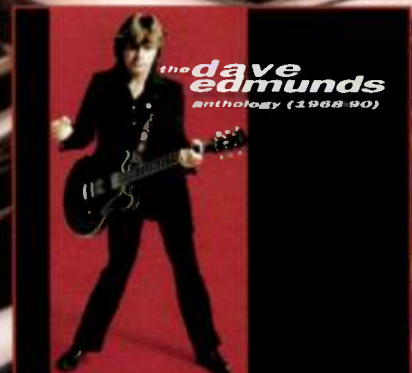
# RHINO INCREDIBLE COLLECTIONS



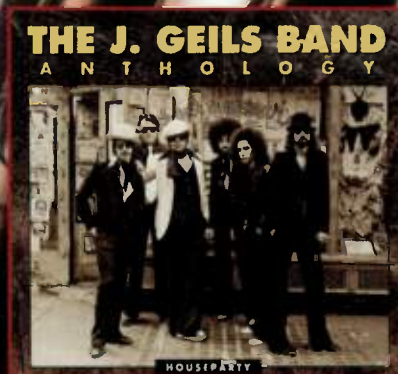
**Clifton Chenier**  
Zydeco Dynamite  
The Clifton Chenier  
Anthology  
2 CD Set



**Lightnin' Hopkins**  
Mojo Hand  
The Lightnin' Hopkins  
Anthology  
2 CD Set



**Dave Edmunds**  
The Dave Edmunds  
Anthology  
(1968-1990)  
2 CD Set



**J. Geils Band**  
Anthology:  
Houseparty  
2 CD Set



**John Coltrane**  
The Last Giant  
The John Coltrane  
Anthology 2 CD Set



**Ben E. King**  
Anthology  
2 CD Set

in-'cred-i-ble (adj.): too extraordinary and improbable to be believed

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WARNER MUSIC  
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**M**idnight Oil's new album, *Earth and Sun and Moon*, melds hard-driving melodies with lyrics concerning the environment and aboriginal rights. Not all angry doom and gloom, the recording also features some swirling '60s soundscapes. Songwriter/drummer Rob Hirst outlines the band's prime directives.

**YOUR PERFORMANCE IN FRONT OF THE EXXON OFFICES IN NEW YORK GARNERED WORLDWIDE ATTENTION. HOW DID YOU PULL IT OFF?**

We had permission to shoot a documentary. I don't think anybody realized that it involved a performance outside the Exxon office. News of the Valdez spill was petering out and this short-term memory is what Exxon was relying on around the world.

It was done like a guerilla campaign. We rehearsed in an old warehouse on top of a flatbed truck. Then we just wheeled it out to 6th Avenue and left it. By the time we got down there the traffic was at a standstill. We had to walk our equipment down the block. The cops told us we had eight minutes, but once we started playing they said, "It's OK. We're into this, do a couple more tunes."

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO:



Midnight Oil

**WHAT WAS THE RESPONSE FROM EXXON?**

They shut the window. We could see them in their suits, behind the smoky glass, and they were not amused.

Exxon's profit and loss sheet didn't show any dints in it after this enormous ecological disaster, the ramifications of which will be felt for generations. The captain was prosecuted and found guilty and they paid up. But it's not much when you consider the damage done. We were part of the group that expressed its outrage.

**OUTRAGE AND HUMAN DIGNITY ARE FEATURED IN "TRUGANNINI," ON YOUR NEW ALBUM. WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH ABORIGINAL RIGHTS IN AUSTRALIA?**

Up until now, European Australians have never felt they needed to sign a treaty with the aboriginal people, because it was said we invaded an unoccupied country. A 40,000-year-old civilization was not recognized. There is this treaty up now to provide a reconciliation. You have mining companies on one side trying to tie up large blocks of Australia and they're terrified because unless there is an existing title, the aboriginals can grab it and tie it away forever. And what would happen to Australia's mineral future? — M. L.

## THE Rankin FAMILY



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We are all one people  
With different faces  
From different places  
But we are all one people



Something to remember.

## ARTISTS AGAINST RACISM

Artists Against Racism is a national poster campaign organized by journalist Lisa Cherniak and artist Mendelson Joe. The campaign is a response to youth recruitment by the white supremacist movement in Canada, and the posters will not only be hung in schools across the nation, but will also be displayed in and distributed by Sam the Record Man stores across Canada.

Cherniak and Joe have collected funds for their project from such artists as Raffi, Bob Wiseman, Neil Peart and Angela Dohrmann whose names appear on the poster.

Add your name to the poster: the pair is still accepting artists support at

1712 Avenue Rd., Box 54511, Toronto, Ont. M5M 3Y6



# CRAVEN "A" LTD. Today's Country

## RADIO THAT BRINGS YOU THE BRIGHTEST AND THE BEST

**T**oday's Country is a new, weekly syndicated live country radio show that can be heard across the nation courtesy of Craven "A" Ltd. Featuring both Canadian and international artists, in-depth interviews, live performances, profiles and music reports, *Today's Country* is recorded live, on stage, every Saturday night and broadcast nationally on the Satellite Radio Network. The show has a lot to offer country fans. In particular, don't miss the special on the Canadian Country Music Awards, Sept. 18, with Awards host George Fox.

Here's a spotlight on a few of the performers you can hear on *Today's Country* in the weeks to come.



### A REGULAR FOX

**G**eorge Fox, once an unknown rancher from Cochrane, Alta., is now a popular visitor in hundreds of thousands Canadian homes. On September 18th he hosts, for the third year running, the Canadian Country Music Awards, broadcast nationally on the CTV Network. Not only is he a TV natural — funny, quick on his feet, relaxed — he's an outstanding singer/songwriter.

Earlier this year Fox released his fourth album, *Mustang Heart*, which will undoubtedly bring him another step closer to becoming a Canadian institution along the lines of Anne Murray, with whom he shares management.

In spite of his almost fairy-tale success, Fox is well known for being a regular guy. "I go about my music the way I go about my life, pretty sensible and pretty disciplined," he explains. He is aware of his image. "What springs to mind is that closing scene from *The Walton's*," he says. "It's very

corny, but it does people good to know that somewhere, someone actually lives like that."

It is often said the higher up the success ladder you go, the nicer the people you meet. "The most creative people, the ones with the talent and ability, always seem to be well grounded," agrees Fox. "They don't take anything too seriously. Randy Travis is a real genuine person, and that's why everyone loves him. Nice guys can finish first."

### ONE HORSE BLUE

**S**igned to Savannah Music Inc., also the home of Michelle Wright, One Horse Blue hails from Vancouver. The group, named after a Poco song, has recently released one of the most brilliant records heard from country performers this year. The self-titled album features a hybrid of rock and country with superb musicianship from Rocko Vaugeois (drums and vocals), Michael Shellard (acoustic guitar, vocals), Gord Maxwell (bass, vocals) and Larry Pink (keyboards). "Starting All Over Again" is the lead track and first single and showcases the band's unique, three-lead vocalist approach. "The band has always focused on three-part harmonies and multiple singers," explains Vaugeois. "We've found there's something magical about the voices when they're heard together."



### VISTA (RISING STAR) ALERT

**O**ne of the most exciting events at the Canadian Country Music Awards is the presentation of the Vista (Rising Star) Award, which goes to an outstanding upcoming artist or act. This year the nominees are Coda The West, Don Neilson, The Rankin Family, Shania Twain and Jim Witter. *Today's Country* host Greg Shannon will be presenting the award. Watch for it September 18th!



**HELENA  
KAMEKA  
OF CODA  
THE  
WEST**

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Today's  
Country





Continued from page 45

## BLUE SHADOWS

Also from Vancouver, The Blue Shadows is a band that forges the honest emotion of stone-cold country with the passion and energy of rock and roll. Founded by Billy Cowsill (remember the Cowsills?) the band also boasts singer/songwriter/guitarist Jeff

Hatcher, standup bassist Elmar Spanier and drummer Jay Johnson. The group calls its sound "Hank goes to the Cavern Club" — Hank being Hank Williams and the Cavern Club being the Liverpool nightspot where the Beatles began their musical revolution. Sweet, sad harmonies, big guitar twang and swinging beats are all part of the Blue Shadows' music. It's music that makes

strong men weep and even stronger women want to get up and dance.

Blue Shadows has a self-titled debut album out on Sony Records and the band can be heard doing a live performance on *Today's Country*, September 25th.



## CARLENE CARTER

As the granddaughter of Mother Maybelle Carter (of the original Carter Family), daughter of June Carter Cash and Carl Smith, and step-daughter of Johnny Cash, Carlene Carter has country music in her blood. Labeled a progressive country rocker during her stay in England (and marriage to Nick Lowe), Carter was dubbed one of the queens of the post-rock-a-billy age in 1980. In 1990 she released her first solo country album, *I Fell In Love*, which garnered her a 1991 Grammy nomination for Country Female Performance and an Academy of Country Music nomination for Best New Female Vocalist.

Her latest album, *Little Love Letters*, continues her tradition of playing infectious country rock and the songs are alternately upbeat and heart-wrenching. "The Rain," co-written with Bernie Taupin, "Every Little Thing," co-written with NRBQ's Al Anderson and "Unbreakable Heart," written by Benmount Tench (from Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers) are just a few of the recording's show-stopping tunes that prove Carter's a talent to be reckoned with.

Listen for an exclusive interview with Carter on *Today's Country* on September 25th.



## TODAY'S COUNTRY LINEUP

### SEPT. 18

A Special on the Canadian Country Music Awards with guest George Fox.

### SEPT. 25

Exclusive Interview Feature  
Live Performance

Carlene Carter  
The Blue Shadows,  
Underground  
Outlaws,  
Alan Rhody  
(master Nashville  
songwriter)  
Los Angeles  
Steve Wariner

Country Music Report  
Today's Country Close-up

### OCT.

Interview features with many celebrated artists and live performances from Willie P. Bennett, Terry Kelly, Jeff Knight and more.

\*Schedule subject to change.

## TODAY'S COUNTRY STATIONS

Today's Country is distributed by Country Music Radio as part of the Satellite Radio Network and can be heard across Canada every weekend on the following stations:

### YUKON:

Whitehorse CKRW 610AM  
**BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
Vancouver CKWX 1130AM  
Clearwater CFJC 102.9FM  
Elkford CJEV 1340AM  
Fort Nelson CFNL 590AM  
Fort St. John CKNL 560AM  
Kamloops CFJC 550AM  
Kelowna CKIQ 1150AM  
Merritt CFJC 99.5FM  
Nanaimo CKEG 1350AM  
Prince George C101 101.3FM  
Terrace CJPW 103.1FM

### ALBERTA

Blainmore CJPR 1490AM  
Fort McMurray CJOK 1230AM  
Grande Prairie CJXX 840AM  
Lethbridge CJOC 1220AM  
Medicine Hat CHAT 1270AM  
**SASKATCHEWAN**  
Saskatoon CJWW 750AM

Estevan CJSL 1280AM  
Meadow Lake CJNS 1240AM  
Melfort CJVR 1420AM  
North Battleford CJNB 1050AM  
Weyburn CFSL 1190AM  
**MANITOBA**  
Winnipeg CKRC 630AM  
Brandon CKLQ 880AM  
**ONTARIO**  
Toronto CISS 92.5FM  
London CJBX 92.7FM  
Kingston CFMK 96.3FM  
Kitchener CKGL 570AM  
Leamington CHYR 710AM  
Midland CKMP 1230AM  
North Bay CKAT 101FM  
Orillia CFOR 1570AM  
Sault Ste. Marie CJQM 104.3FM  
Sudbury CIGM 790AM  
Thunder Bay CILB 1230AM  
Timmins CKGB 750AM  
Wingham CKNX 920AM  
**QUEBEC**  
Montreal CIGQ 600AM  
**NOVA SCOTIA**  
Halifax CHFX 101.9FM  
Truro CKCL 600AM

### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown CHLQ 93.1AM

### NEW BRUNSWICK

Fredericton CKHJ 93.1FM  
Moncton CFQM 103.9FM

### NEWFOUNDLAND

Cornbrook CKXX 1340AM  
Gander CKXD 1010AM  
Grand Falls CKXG 680AM  
St. John's CKIX 99.1FM

\*Station list accurate as of August 1, 1993.

\*In most markets Today's Country can be heard on Saturdays at 8 p.m., check your station for local time.

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Today's  
Country





A man and a woman are dancing together in a country setting. The man is wearing a white t-shirt and a dark vest, and the woman is wearing a colorful patterned top and jeans. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting a stage or a night scene.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW MACNAUGHTAN



"The element of surprise is what keeps us as a group, and the audience I think, interested. The mistakes we've made in concert, taking chances, have led to some of our most creative arrangements."

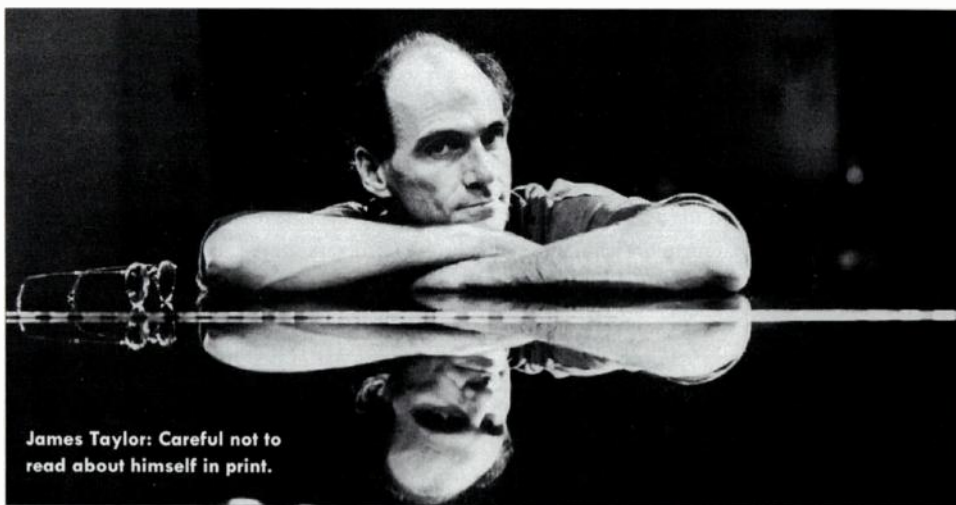
— Holly Cole, reflecting on the creative process. The Holly Cole Trio's latest disc is *Don't Smoke In Bed*.

## QUIT PICKING ON SWEET BABY JAMES

Why don't people lay off James Taylor? An astute chronicler of '70s angst, he's come up with a litany of commanding little songs about ordinary folks — the millworker, the truck driver, the psychiatric patient — each sung in his familiar, pearly voice. Yet Taylor is regarded (wrongly) as a bit of a joke — a sensitive, wimpy male in wire-framed glasses. *Bloom County* called him "terminally mellow" and Robert Christgau, writing in the *Village Voice*, once referred to him as "repulsive." All of which begs the question — what do people want from the guy?

"I don't know what they want," Taylor says on the long-distance wire from Santa Fe, N.M. "And to be honest, I'm not aware of that stuff. I'm careful not to read about myself in print because I take it far more seriously than I should. So I just try to concern myself with my work."

His latest effort, for those who've given up keeping tabs on James Taylor over the



ANDREW BRUCKER

past 20 years, is *James Taylor (Live)* a double-album recorded on the East Coast leg of his 1992 tour. In all, 30 songs were chosen from his back catalogue, an embarrassment of riches that includes "Sweet Baby James," "Fire And Rain" and "Carolina In My Mind."

The live album is, he jokes, "all the James Taylor anyone could possibly stand," although he never was noted for his great sense of humor. Now 45 years old, and with the slightly rumpled look of a New England academic, he is committed to raising

money for the National Resources Defense Council, an environmental action group comprised of lawyers and scientists. "They get things done," he says. "They're well-versed in the political process — making things happen in Washington."

And he's serious about fitness, having exchanged the hazardous heroin habit of his 20s with daily doses of aerobics, cycling and hiking near his home on Martha's Vineyard. "I've traded all my bad habits for good ones," he says. Now you can't knock that, can you? — Dan Hughes



# ON THE PRODUCTION LINE

## Three in-demand music producers

When it comes to Canadian music producers, there's a middle ground somewhere between massive chart success and underground cult presence. Here stands a group of sonic craftsmen who've been working diligently for about a decade, each with a rare taste of high-profile success and the occasional threat of poverty, working with good ears and greater vision, whether anybody's looking or not.

They're the Generation X of Canadian producers. Eclectic music lovers, they can flow from one project into the next for as long as a year — or spend several months waiting for the telephone to ring. They cut deals and corners to give favored bands their best shot at recording. They've all worked on worthwhile projects that were later scrapped by record companies. They'd rather work with music they love than the stuff that pays the most — though they'd like it both ways.

Michael Phillip Wojewoda, for instance, had it both ways in 1992: he produced Change of Heart's *Smile*, Rheostatics' *Whale Music*, and Barenaked Ladies' *Gordon* (that's 53 tracks, including mixing) in four months. Change of Heart took five days and probably cost less than \$5,000; Barenaked Ladies took five weeks and cost about \$70,000. But the 30-year-old Wojewoda says the pressures remain the same.

"You've still got to get it done," he explains. "You know what you're up against and you've got to make it work. When the budget is huge, and you spend three years making a record, you realize that you can't do that. Then you have to come up with artificial parameters just to get it done."

"With the Ladies, the budget got larger and the facilities more sophisticated, but the recording pace was not casual. We put in 12- and 14-hour-days and by the time we really got into it, they were saying 'No, no, one more time, I can do it better than that.'"

Wojewoda recently produced the Doughboys' first major-label demos and Spirit of the West's upcoming album. He also engineered Jane Siberry's new album *When I Was A Boy* and moonlights as the drummer for Toronto-based rock group Pigfarm. Although he established

himself as the alternative producer of choice in Toronto in the '80s, Wojewoda's work with Barenaked Ladies has proven that he's able to swim in the mainstream. In fact he won a CASBY award for Producer of the Year in 1992.



Peter Moore

Peter Moore understands that kind of transition, having earned a reputation on one of the unluckiest hit albums ever made. Moore recorded Cowboy Junkies' quiet, haunting *Trinity Session* for \$300 in one day in 1986 with one microphone in a Toronto church. It has since sold 1.2 million units worldwide.

"What makes a hit record [like that] is striking the right chord at the right moment," says the 36-year-old Toronto producer. "You can't predict that, so all you can do is good work. Because, if the wheel of fortune turns to you and you're not ready, then you're screwed. And at most, when you die, you'll know that you've done your best and be proud of it."

Last year Moore-produced projects included Lucinda Williams' *Sweet Old World*, Jr. Gone Wild's *Pull the Goalie* and the Pallbearers' *Phantom Pain*. This year he was tremendously excited about his work on the latest Willie P. Bennett album, *Take My Own Advice*. Other bands that have felt his touch recently are Wild Strawberries, Gord's *Ramble and Swamp Baby*.

Chris Wardman's production is more tightly focused on rock than Moore's. Since 1990 he has written songs with guitar whizkid David Gogo, produced dinosaur axeman Randy Bachman's *Any Road* album and the last two discs each by Leslie Spit Treeo, Sons of Freedom and Art Bergmann.



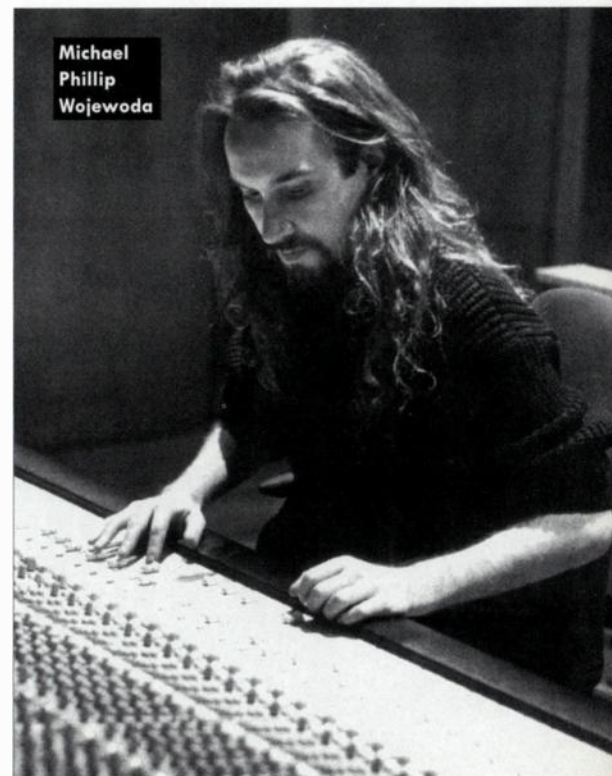
Chris Wardman

Recently, he completed producing albums for veteran rocker Andy Curran (his band is now called Soho 69) and One Free Fall. Actually, Wardman likes to work with young-

bloods. "I'm at my best with young bands because I can offer them some experience and an overview of the industry," says the 33-year-old Torontonians. "A lot of producing is like managing the band or being a big brother. Not so much musically as telling them what to expect, explaining how managers and record companies are."

The only thing that seems to hinder these producers is the Canadian tendency to mistrust success. The flipside of Wojewoda's hit with Barenaked Ladies is the degree of alienation it has earned him from Toronto's alternative music community. Similarly, Chris Wardman says he didn't work for a year after the first Chalk Circle album (that he produced) went gold.

"People think you're not in the big American leagues yet, but you're too big for the hometown," he says. Wardman adds what could be the unofficial Generation X producer's credo, "We'll answer anyone's phone call." — Howard Druckman



Michael Phillip Wojewoda

BRUCE LAM

ALISON WARDMAN



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# TECHNO

## INTERACTIVE MEDIA

In case you've been away, we are in the midst of the digital revolution. This remarkable phenomenon is based on the electronic storage, retrieval and manipulation of information in the form of binary codes (zeroes and ones). It has reduced the size of our computers from a roomful of electronic monstrosities (remember those old sci-fi movies?) to desktop, then laptop and now hand-held versions, and has led to the invention, for example, of compact discs and laser discs for music and movies.

The biggest newsmaker to come out of this ongoing technological upheaval is interactive media. Interactive media means that the user has a degree of control and can interact with the medium. (In this sense, video games could be considered an interactive medium.)

In the context of the arts, it's something like being handed

the Mona Lisa and a paintbrush: "Here kid, do it your way." For example, Todd Rundgren has released *No World Order* simultaneously on a conventional music CD and an interactive CD (CD-I). Rundgren's CD-I will enable users to "manipulate" the music. There are also plans underway to produce movies and television shows that the viewer can control so that one could, for example, devise one's own plot.

Interactive television will let viewers shop, do their banking, play along with game show contestants, choose which commercials (if any) to watch or call up a

player's stats while watching football. Ultimately, say the experts, you will be talking to your set instead of searching under the sofa for the remote.

One fascinating spin-off of interactive media is Virtual Reality, an artificial, computer-generated world in which users can simulate and interact with just about every human (and non-human) activity, using a computer, goggles and gloves. The movie *The Lawnmower Man* offers a frightening glimpse into the future of this contemporary sorcery.

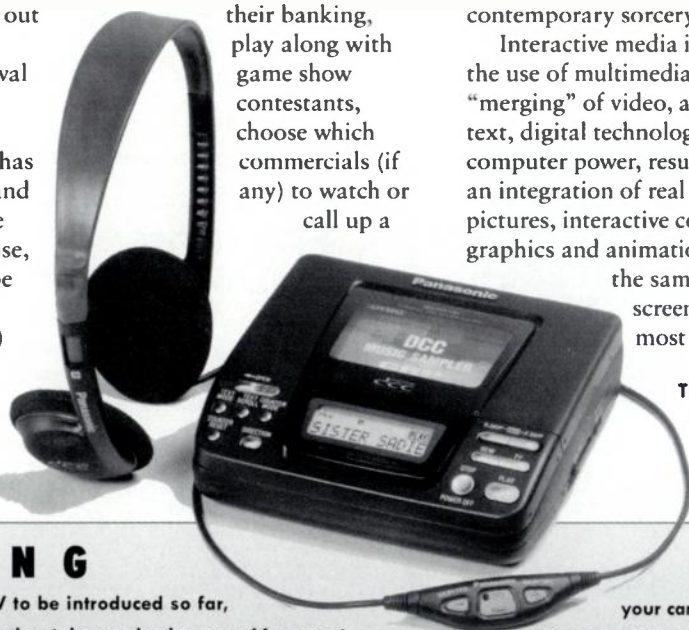
Interactive media involves the use of multimedia, the "merging" of video, audio, text, digital technology and computer power, resulting in an integration of real pictures, interactive computer graphics and animation on

the same screen. The most popular

multimedia format at the moment is CD-ROM (Compact Disc - Read Only Memory,

i.e. it can't be re-recorded), which is similar to a compact disc except that it holds video and text in addition to music and/or sound.

There are many pieces of hardware already available that employ interactive technology. Philips' CD-I players, used in conjunction with a TV set and remote control, will play audio CDs, CD-I programs and photo CDs (a CD-ROM developed by Kodak that stores your photographs in digital form and shows them on your TV screen). Sega Genesis has introduced The Activator, which controls on-screen action through body movements. And 3DO interactive multiplayers are capable of playing music CDs, photo CDs and video CDs, and creating realistic three-dimensional graphics. ■



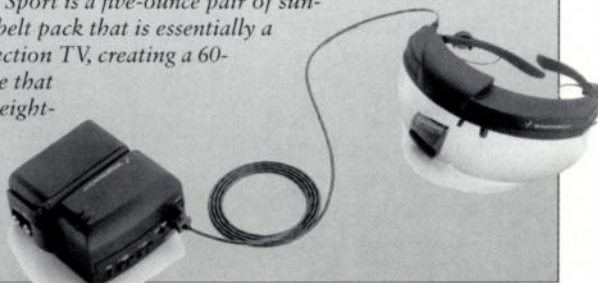
The RQ-DP7, a DCC personal portable from Panasonic, plays both DCC and analog cassettes and has a "Text" button that displays artist, album and track information.

## TRACKING

■ The largest direct-view TV to be introduced so far, the Mitsubishi CS-42FX1C 42-inch set, has a viewing area 66 per cent larger than a 33-inch set. ■ Described as an Electronic Book Player, Sony's Data Discman is a self-contained hand-held device for storing and retrieving information from compact optical discs. ■ A "Personal Digital Assistant," the IQ-9000 (\$895.95 list) electronic organizer from Sharp allows information access and control via either the touch-sensitive screen or pen input stylus. The scrapbook function lets you write or draw on the screen and save the image. ■ The CX-950 boom box features a retractable Acoustic Super Woofer (ASW), "a special type of resonance chamber...that allows deep, solid bass from a small speaker," explains Francois Gagné, product manager for audio and video at Hitachi. ■ A portable CD player with an electronic Anti-Skip System and remote control, the CDP-7 is a personal portable from Sayno that can be connected to

your car stereo. Another Sayno personal portable, the SPT-1500 Sportable AM/FM cassette receiver, has a built-in calorie counter (it predicts the wearer's energy consumption based on an impact sensor), a pedometer and a stopwatch.

*Virtual Vision Sport is a five-ounce pair of sunglasses and a belt pack that is essentially a personal projection TV, creating a 60-inch TV image that appears to be eight-to-15 feet in front of the wearer.*





# Screen Play

If fast cuts and blurred close-ups of overly made-up, tightly clothed people pouting and screaming is what you want in your music video collection, you won't be interested in the new line of visual stimulants from Seattle-based Miramar Productions (distributed by BMG Canada).

Rather than going the traditional music video route of taking finished music and then shooting flashy, accompanying scenarios, the Miramar line presents an expressionistic partnership between video and audio artists.

Composer Jan Hammer (known for his *Miami Vice* scores) and

ambient masters Tangerine Dream are a few of the musicians on the Miramar roster who create scores after being inspired by the work of video directors such

as Michael Boydston and Jan Nickman.

The lush, captivating visuals run the gamut from computer ani-

mation to scenes of natural wonders (aurora borealis, Grand Canyon) and include time-lapse and Steadicam photography techniques.

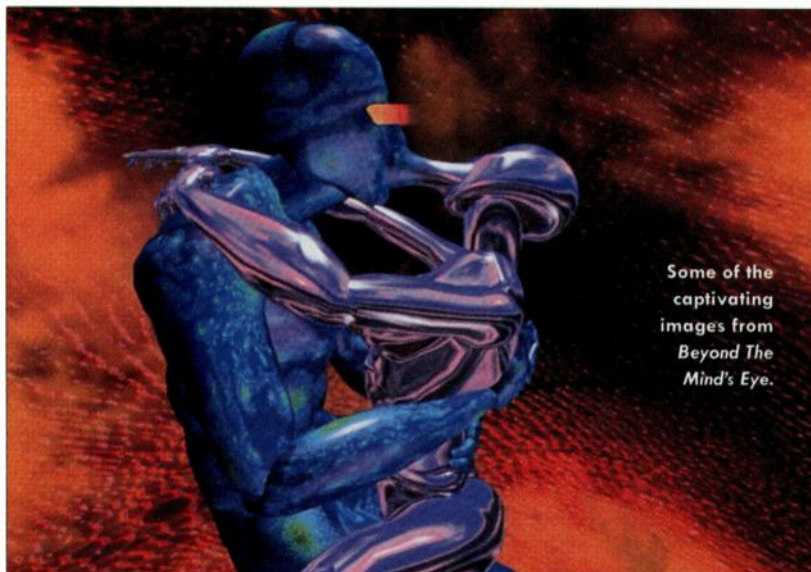
## VIDEO THAT HEIGHTENS THE SENSES

If this sounds as if it's too heady and artistic to be popular, look at the release of the Jan Hammer/Michael Boydston collaboration *Beyond The Mind's Eye*. With more than a million copies sold in the U.S., it has outdone videos for *Home Alone*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and Eric Clapton's *Unplugged*.

The collection of 11 computer-animated vignettes, married to an original soundtrack, is in Hammer's words, "magical." He explains, "I got influenced by the flow of the visual, then the music sort of grew from it. It made for a much more interesting result."

He disagrees loudly and strongly with some popular moviemakers' beliefs that good film soundtracks are ones that are not noticed. Hammer's position is that "music heightens your emotional experience; and later that melody will help you re-live the feelings, emotions and experiences the film left you with," — an appropriate way of describing his current allied achievement.

Further releases from Miramar include *A Festival of Animation* and an as-yet-untitled follow-up that goes beyond *Beyond The Mind's Eye*. — Ted Loviscek



Some of the captivating images from *Beyond The Mind's Eye*.

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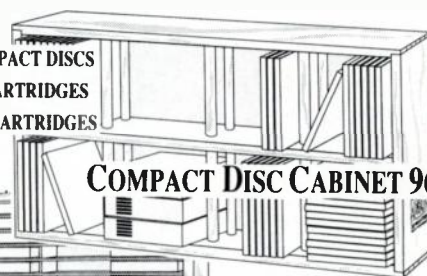


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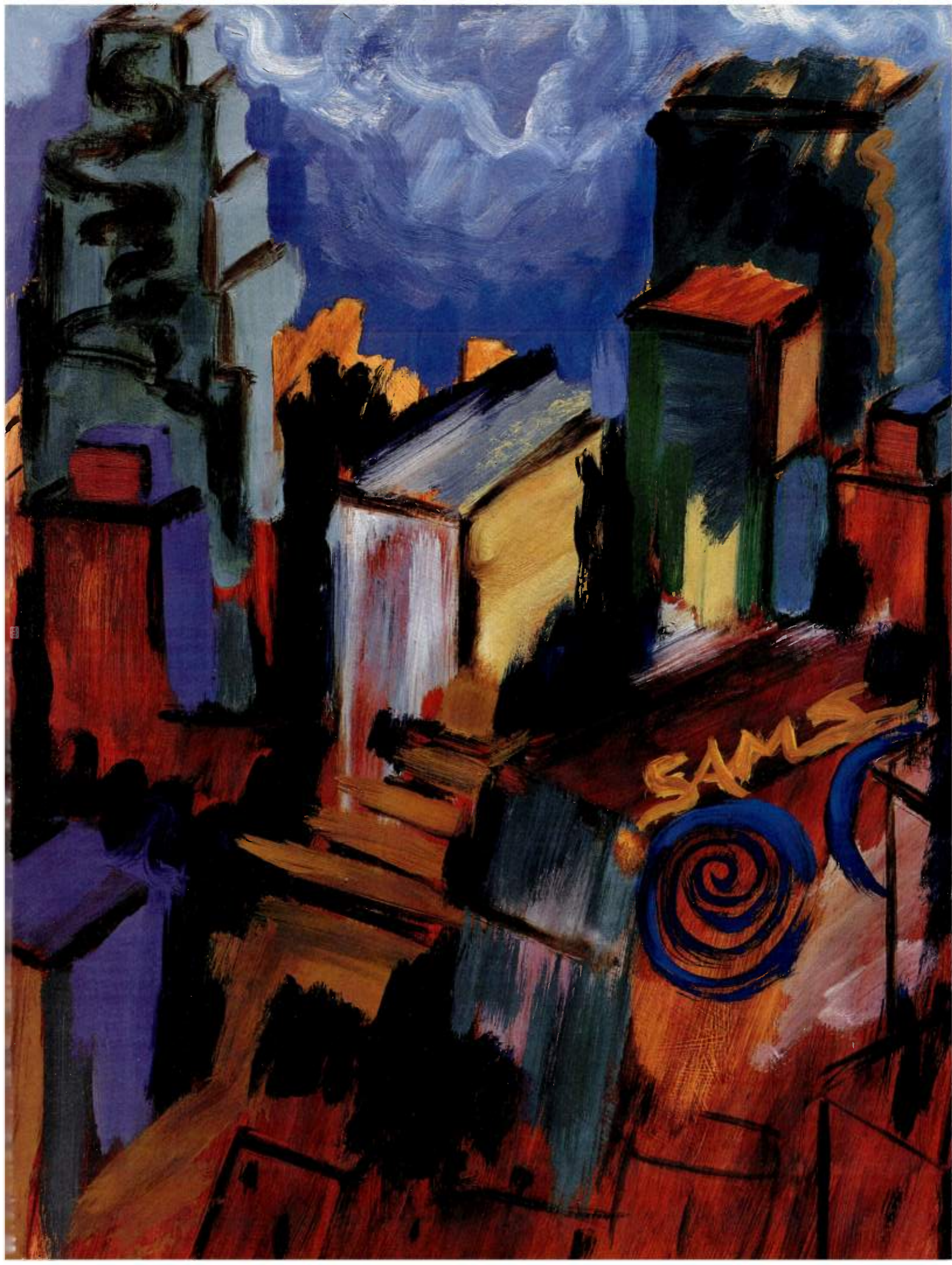
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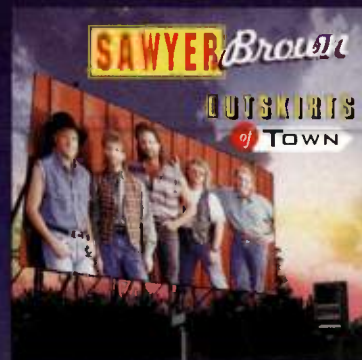
# SAM'S IS COUNTRY



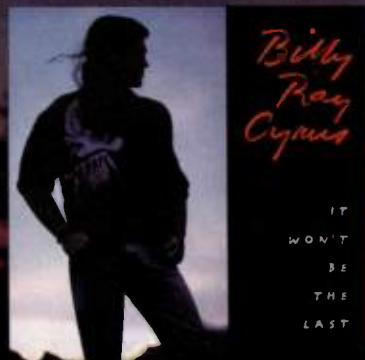
**THE BLUE SHADOWS**  
ON THE FLOOR OF HEAVEN



**PATTY LOVELESS**  
ONLY WHAT I FEEL



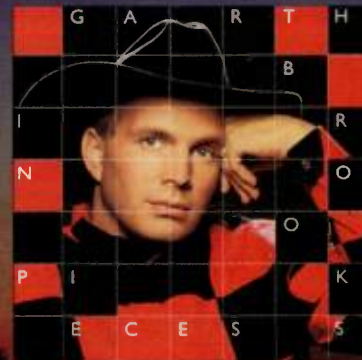
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**BILLY RAY CYRUS**  
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**CONWAY TWITTY**  
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**DON PEASE**  
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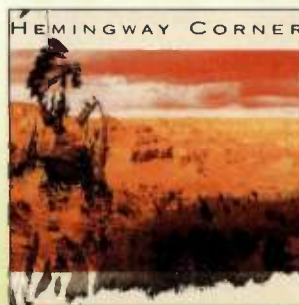
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## NEW FRONTIERS



**HEADSTONES**  
PICTURE OF HEALTH  
The members of the Headstones have injected a street realism into their songs. From the narcotic "Heart of Darkness" to the other-worldly blues ballad "Three Angels," one song's positivity off-sets another's negativity. Watch for them coming soon to a town or city near you..



**HEMINGWAY CORNER**  
MAN ON A MISSION  
Hemingway Corner's Johnny Douglas and David Martin have been beating the musical path most of their lives. Their harmonies, as well as their songwriting, are integral elements and their music makes you remember what guitars really sound like.

### JOHN CODY

**ZELIG BELMONDO**  
Listening to his music is like hearing from a long lost friend. Cody's music has an immediate familiarity to it that makes you want to sing along almost from the first time you hear it.



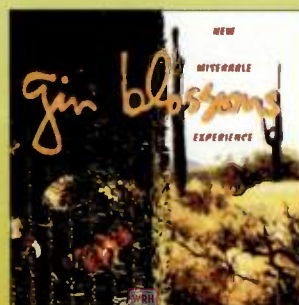
### DOUGHBOYS

**CRUSH**  
Since forming in Montreal in 1987, the Doughboys have developed a large fan base in North America as well as the U.K. and Europe. The group's latest album, *Crush*, contains 12 new songs that maintains its punk-pop sound, while expanding into newer, guitar-driven territory.



### GIN BLOSSOMS

**NEW MISERABLE EXPERIENCE**  
When the members of Tempe, Ariz.,'s Gin Blossoms are hard pressed to describe their sound, which has been hailed as everything from "a cross between The Byrds and Husker Du" to "sons of Petty and R.E.M.," lead vocalist Robin Wilson offers up his own comedic analogy: "It's like a big slice of American cheese."



### THE CRANBERRIES

**EVERYBODY ELSE IS...**  
This band's plaintive, moving, guitar-based songs have been compared to the Cocteau Twins and The Sundays and frontperson Delores O'Riordan's voice has been compared to such singers as Natalie Merchant and Sinead O'Connor.



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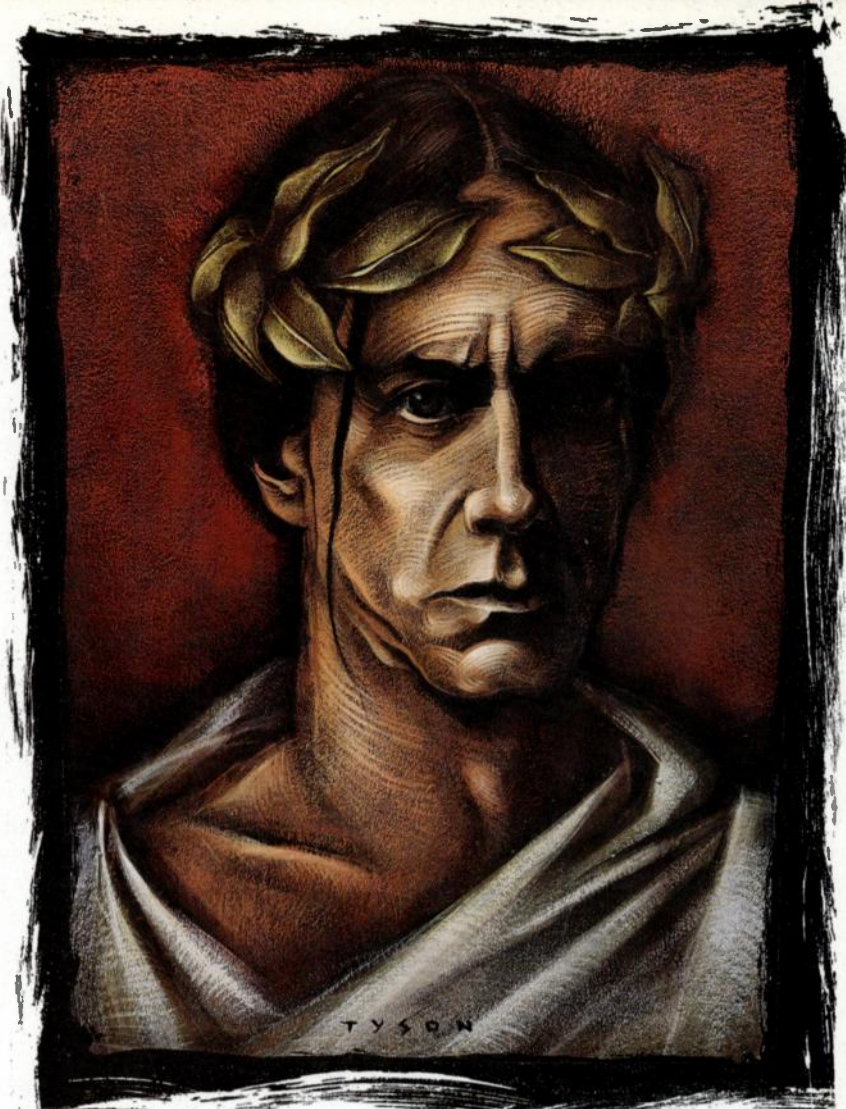
## AMERICAN CAESAR, Virgin IGGY POP

Michigan's most famous hell-raiser (MC5 and Ted Nugent excepted), Iggy Pop has ignored soothsayers' Ides of March warnings of impending career doom for years and delivered blunt, raw, raging great records. His muse is alive and well and kicking critical butt on

# HAIL CAESAR!

*American Caesar*. The two key tracks, "Wild America" (the

single) and "Caesar" poke razor-sharp thorns into the side of U.S. values. "Boogie Boys" rocks with the fever felt when David Bowie championed him in 1973 and the rude humor Pop's famous for can be heard on "Social Life," ("That goddamn social life, it's torture dressed as fun"). There's no real follow-up to his hit "Candy" from *Brick By Brick*, but "It's Our Love" is an expansive declaration and also in the lovey-dovey vein is "Beside You," which features Lisa Germano's baby-doll background vocals. The secret to Pop's longevity is balance. He says he "wants to live in peace," but he also thrives on "noise and aggravation." Forever in your face, hail America's Pop Caesar.



SARA JANE TYSON

## POP/ROCK PART LAND, PART WATER, Kinetic THE PARTLAND BROTHERS

*Part Land, Part Water* is a collection of melodic roots rock offering radio-friendly harmonies and sugary sentiments. Upbeat tales of love and hope abound, wrapped in arrangements so sweet that diabetics should listen with caution. Although not high in the excitement quotient, *Part Land, Part Water* is loaded with hooks, and is full of pure pop for adult listeners.

## JUST OVER THIS MOUNTAIN, the SKYDIGGERS

In a country rife with singer-songwriters and some of the

best acoustic bands on the globe, Skydiggers reign supreme. On *Just Over This Mountain*, the Toronto group's third release, the band solidifies its lofty position with another album of brooding ballads and jaunty country-rock, featuring, as always, its patented multi-layered harmonies. More acoustic, and generally more satisfying than its predecessor (*Restless*), *Just Over This Mountain* shows a band at the peak of its songwriting abilities.

## HUMAN WHEELS, Mercury JOHN MELLENCAMP

Small lives and dark events characterize Mellencamp's latest effort. It is one of his best. The album is populated with characters found in newspapers, slouching on small-town streets

or drifting in hazy memories. All are brought to life by Mellencamp's signature dusky vocals, acoustic instrumentation and straightforward arrangements. A tough lyrical stance in Janis Ian's "All Roads to the River" and "What If I Came Knocking" suggests he is coming to grip with personal demons. Excellent.

## PERFECTLY GOOD GUITAR, A&M JOHN HIATT

This is more than a perfectly good recording. It's great. The title track, which laments stars smashing "perfectly good guitars," is filled with Hiatt's bittersweet humor and lanky energy. Folky rootsy moments are followed with electrified riffs and throughout the album his impassioned, blocked nasal-

passage vocals take the listener on mini-journeys that feature a skewed, but good-natured, world view. A stand-out track is "Something Wild."

## MARBLES, Raw Energy KING APPARATUS

*Marbles* features more of the infectious sounds that have made this Toronto band favorites on the Canadian club circuit. Although often described as a ska band, the truth is, King Apparatus plays a rock/pop/ska hybrid that purists may not like, but audiences love. A number of songs have dark, pointed lyrics and unusual musical twists that indicate a growing maturity.

## HEMINGWAY CORNER, Epic

The debut effort by this "unplugged" Canadian duo is a refreshing example of songcraft married with vocal harmony and acoustic guitar. Crisp pro-



# Sound Effects

duction frames structured ballads which in turn evoke memories of '70s country rock.

## **RISE,** Epic **BAD BRAINS**

Bad Brains has always had a strong cult following, but this collection of full-on rock mixed with dub reggae should finally find the band the same crossover success accorded to Soundgarden and Pearl Jam. *Rise* also marks the first full-length release of Bad Brains material since the departure of vocalist H.R., but Israel Joseph I has filled those Ronald McDonald-sized shoes with confidence.

## **RAGES ON,** BMG **DEEP PURPLE**

Deep Purple must have served as a blueprint for Spinal Tap's career, yet on *Battle* the band even out-parodies the Tap with its over-the-top arrangements and vague, anthemic and, yes, somewhat ridiculous lyrics.

And when it manages to lighten up, the group ends up sounding like a G N' R tribute band. Back to *Jurassic Park* with these dinosaurs.

## **CHROME,** PolyGram **CATHERINE WHEEL**

*Crome* shows more depth and life than Catherine Wheel's previous efforts. Trading dreamy pop for an edge was right up there with the Jay's deal with Ricky Henderson. An impressive effort.

## **VIDA,** A&M **KON KAN**

On *Vida*, Kon Kan has expanded past synth pop, experimenting with buoyant dance and pop music to create a joyous sound indeed. A welcome break from the dreary cyber silliness that has been flooding the dance clubs.

## **ONE TRACK MIND,** Ibsa **TOO BAD TO BE TRUE**

Talk about new jack swing,

these kids have bounded out of their jolly jumpers straight onto the dance floor. While it may be a disconcerting to hear pre-pubescent boys talking about S-E-X, "One Track Mind" is a good song and TBTBT have lots of talent (and can dance, too).

## **THE BATTLE EVOLUTION,** PolyGram **OLETA ADAMS**

Oleta Adams' pure, rich voice is best known from Tears For Fears' *The Seeds Of Love* album, but on *Evolution* she shows her mastery of jazzy ballads and steamy torch songs as well as pop. A mature work, *Evolution* is lush in orchestration but clean and simple in production values.

## **THE FIRST DAY,** Virgin **DAVID SYLVIAN/ROBERT FRIPP**

This is the sort of music you would expect of Sylvian and Fripp, but better — and infinitely more danceable. Fripp's

guitar work is formidable. Those who take the opportunity to listen closely will discover an aural sculpture that will satisfy over and over.

## **DIG,** EMI **I MOTHER EARTH**

Trippy psychedelia for the '90s. These guys make Lenny Kravitz look like a punter. Produced by Mike Clink, the sound may be a little too polished for aficionados of the mono, early-'70s recordings Mother Earth is trying to emulate, but the band rocks, wails and generally blows the socks off anybody else attempting to revive the genre.

## **SOUL DANCING,** Arista **TAYLOR DANE**

Dayne's third album has hit written all over it with a lead-off cover of Barry White's "Can't Get Enough" that does ample justice to the original while allowing the singer to leave enough of her own identity

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intact to blend with the other songs. She makes her writing debut on this one and has big-gun producers to back-up the material — Narada Michael Walden and Shep Pettibone.

**HI,** MCA

#### ANDREW CASH

Andrew Cash isn't fooling anybody. Although he and co-producer Bob "Prince" Wiseman have invested this work with the de rigueur neo-alternative elements of Neil Young-cum-Seattle-grunge guitar sounds and a brazen anti-melodic sense, *Hi* is a thoroughly satisfying journey through a stimulating set of songs.

**BOMBAZINE,** Warner

#### MERYN CADELL

Cadell tackles all the issues of everyday life — dumping boyfriends, gay teenagers and the trials of wearing pantyhose. Funny, honest and very tuneful, Cadell has branched out musically. The songs contain shreds of '50s arrangements, soulful pop melodies, a cappella vocals and much hilarious spoken word. Cadell is a mega-comedic/-musical talent with the voice of an angel and the wit of a demon.

COUNTRY

#### ON THE FLOOR OF HEAVEN, Columbia THE BLUE SHADOWS

Fascinating retro effort from a Vancouver group that features Billy Cowsill (remember "Hair"? ) and Jeffrey Hatcher, late of Jeffrey Hatcher & The Big Beat. The special charm this recording radiates more than compensates for some so-so songwriting. This is '50s Hank Williams rockabilly meets '60s British invasion pop.

#### COWGIRL'S

**PRAYER,** Asylum

#### EMMYLOU HARRIS

Some may find this a little too subdued, even for Harris. On the second or third listen, however, those same listeners will be caught off guard and swept away. Harris' uncanny rework-

ing of a classic, the '50s ballad, "You Don't Know Me," is up to her well-established standards. Most interesting is her take on faith-healing religious cons in "Jerusalem Tomorrow."

JAZZ

#### I LOVE BEING HERE WITH YOU, Telarc JEANIE BRYSON

Bryson's debut is simple and straightforward. As a vocalist, she has the gift of subtlety — deft phrasing, relaxed rhythm and quiet sympathy for the words. Her choice of tunes spans the well-known ("Cheek To Cheek") and the not-so-well-known ("I Feel So Smoochie").

#### HOW BEAUTIFUL IS NIGHT, Telarc GEORGE SHEARING/ THE ROBERT FARNON ORCHESTRA

This is no mere 'jazz piano with strings' recording. Shearing's jazz virtuosity and classical experience combined with Farnon's artful arrangements make magic. The music has a lyrical, rhapsodic feel as Shearing does gentle, delicate work on ballads such as "Heather On The Hill" and "How Beautiful Is Night." Jack Kerouac called Shearing "the old god" and Andre Previn called Farnon "the greatest living string writer." They were both right.


CLASSICAL

#### STRING QUARTETS 1 & 2, Nonesuch HENRYK GORECKI, THE KRONOS QUARTET

After last year's best-selling *Symphony No. 3*, one may wonder whether Goreckimania will continue with this follow-up. In a word — no. One third of this music echoes its predecessors lamentful qualities, the remainder is harsh monotony.

David Henman, Stephen Hubbard, Thom McKercher, Brian Rabey, Rhonda Riche, C. J. Wren

# NIRVANA



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## MOVIE MUSIC MYSTERY SOLVED

I recently watched a late night movie by the name of *Code of Vengeance*. The movie was pretty good, but the music was great! The credits at the end read: Music by Don Peake.

I was able to record some of the lyrics of the song at the beginning and end of the movie: "See, here I am, on the road again/There I am, upon the stage/Here I go, playing the star again/There I go, turn the page."

Peter Tjeerdsma

*While it is not our policy to trace song lyrics, your letter rang a bell with us! The song you are looking for is "Turn the*

*Page," by Bob Seger and is available on the Live Bullet album (Capitol C2-46085 for CD, C4-46085 for cassette). Seger had yet to break through with Night Moves when he recorded the double Live Bullet album and a lot of his earlier material remains unavailable. There is no known studio version available of this song.*

*Incidentally, we would like to remind you that you must enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope when using Sam's Search System if you expect to get a reply.*

## IF THE SPIRIT MOVES YOU

I am looking for Spirit of the West's self-titled tape. I talked to their manager, Janet Forsythe, and she said the artwork

was deleted so they stopped making it. I'm going insane, I've been looking for about two years.

Lisa Fehr

*The independent cassette Spirit of the West is no longer available in its original form, however the material contained on that cassette is available on the compilation Old Material: on WEA/Stony Plain SP5-1141 (cassette) SPCD 1141 (CD).*

## RAMONES OMISSION

I'm a huge Ramones fan. I've got all their CDs but one. I can't seem to find *Subterranean Jungle*. Is it available anywhere in the world? I'm also trying to locate the sound track for the movie *Legend*. There are two different versions, one by Jerry Goldsmith, the other by Tangerine Dream featuring songs by Bryan Ferry and Jon Anderson.

*Japan has issued every Ramones CD EXCEPT Subterranean Jungle. It is the only Ramones record that has yet to make it to CD. The Legend soundtrack is not available on CD. It is listed as being available as a U.S. import cassette (MCA MCAC 6165).*

### WHAT TO ASK FOR

Recorded music and videos can be traced based on current files. Maximum is two requests per letter. Please be patient, you will receive a reply.

Requests must be legible and provide as much information as possible — i.e. — title, artist, label and format (LP, cassette or CD). Along with your request, you must include a self-addressed,

stamped (43¢) envelope **OR YOU WILL NOT GET A RESPONSE.**

Song lyrics cannot be traced, nor can 45s. Also unavailable is information on fan clubs, upcoming releases, merchandise (posters, T-shirts, etc.) and artists' lifestyles.

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#### MZ-2P PORTABLE PLAYER

Playback options include Repeat, Shuffle and random programmability. Shuttle Ring allows instant access to selections. One-touch cue and review operation. Bass boost circuitry. Back-lit LCD display for disc and track titles. Operates on three power sources and comes complete with headphones, AC adaptor, carrying case, patch cords and rechargeable battery.



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2. ROD STEWART  
*Unplugged...And Seated* Warner
3. U2  
*Zooropa* A&M
4. SOUNDTRACK  
*Sleepless In Seattle* Sony
5. MARIAH CAREY  
*Music Box* Sony
6. DANCE MIX '93  
Quality
7. AEROSMITH  
*Get A Grip* MCA
8. ERIC CLAPTON  
*Unplugged* Warner
9. NIRVANA  
*In Utero* MCA
10. MEATLOAF  
*Bat Out Of Hell: II* MCA
11. LENNY KRAVITZ  
*Are You Gonna Go My Way* Virgin
12. BOB DYLAN  
*30th Anniversary Concert Celebration* Sony
13. BILLY JOEL  
*River of Dreams* Sony
14. KATE BUSH  
*Red Shoes* EMI
15. ANNE MURRAY  
*Croonin'* EMI
16. ELTON JOHN  
*Duets* MCA
17. VIOLENT FEMMES  
*Add It Up ('81-'93)* Warner
18. JOHN MELLENCAMP  
*Human Wheels* PolyGram
19. BARBRA STREISAND  
*Back To Broadway* Sony
20. SMASHING PUMPKINS  
*Siamese Dream* EMI

## NEW & UPCOMING

- PEARL JAM Sony
- U2 A&M  
*Remix Album*
- LED ZEPPELIN Warner  
*Box Set*
- METALLICA Warner  
*Live*

## COUNTRY

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*In Pieces* EMI
2. ALABAMA  
*For Our Fans* BMG
3. ANNE MURRAY  
*Croonin'* EMI
4. CLINT BLACK  
*No Time To Kill* BMG
5. CONWAY TWITTY  
*Final Touches* MCA
6. RICKY VAN SHELTON  
*A Bridge I Don't Burn* Sony
7. ALAN JACKSON  
*A Lot About Livin'* BMG
8. THE RANKIN FAMILY  
*North Country* EMI
9. SAWYER BROWN  
*Outskirts Of Town* EMI

10. AARON TIPPIN  
*Call Of The Wild* BMG
- ### NEW & UPCOMING
- VINCED GILL MCA
- REBA MCENTIRE MCA

## DANCE

1. DANCE MIX '93  
*Various Artists* Quality
2. JANET JACKSON  
*Janet.* Virgin
3. KRISS KROSS  
*Da Bomb* Sony
4. SHAGGY  
*Pure Pleasure* EMI
5. ROBIN S  
*Show Me Love* Warner
6. BUJU BANTON  
*Voice Of Jamaica* PolyGram
7. MOBY  
*Move* Warner
8. DANCE TO THE UNDERGROUND  
*Various* Denon
9. TONI BRAXTON  
*Chapter One* BMG
10. SWV  
*It's About Time* BMG

## NEW & UPCOMING

- 95 SOUTH  
*Quad City Knock* A&M
- BABYFACE  
*For The Cool In You* Sony
- DE LA SOUL  
*Buhloone Mind State* PolyGram

## INDIES

1. SALVADOR DREAM  
*SIT* Page
2. RHEOSTATICS  
*Greatest Hits* Green Sprout
3. STAN ROGERS  
*Home In Halifax* Fog Cove
4. CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE  
*Various* Second Wave
5. SUSAN AGLUKARK  
*Arctic Rose* Aglukark Entertainment
6. CORKY & THE JUICE PIGS  
*Corky & The Juice Pigs* Independent
7. ONE  
*A Matter Of Truth* Page
8. SADDLE TRAMPS  
*Well Gone Bad* Independent
9. RAWLINS CROSS  
*Crossing The Border* RCPI
10. MOIST  
*M1*

## ALTERNATIVE

1. SOUNDTRACK  
*Judgement Day* Sony
2. SMASHING PUMPKINS  
*Siamese Dream* EMI
3. I MOTHER EARTH  
*Dig* EMI
4. NIRVANA  
*In Utero* MCA

5. TOOL  
*Undertow* Zoo
6. SUEDE  
*Suede* Sony
7. SOUL ASYLUM  
*Grave Dancers Union* Sony
8. BJORK  
*Debut* Warner
9. CYPRESS HILL  
*Black Sunday* Sony
10. RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE  
*Rage Against The Machine* Epic

## NEW & UPCOMING

- LEMONHEADS Warner
- PANTERA Warner

## JAZZ

1. NATALIE COLE  
*Take A Look* Warner
2. KENNY G.  
*Breathless* BMG
3. PAT METHENY  
*The Road To You* MCA
4. GEORGE HOWARD  
*When Summer Comes* MCA
5. HORACE SILVER  
*He's Got To Be Funky* Sony
6. DAVE GRUSIN  
*Homage To Duke* MCA
7. BRANFORD MARSALIS  
*Bloomington* Sony

8. DIANE SCHUUR  
*Love Songs* MCA
9. JOE HENDERSON  
*So Near, So Far* PolyGram
10. JOEY DEFRANCESCO  
*Live At The Five Spot* Sony

## NEW & UPCOMING

- DON PULLEN  
*Ode To Life*
- TANIA MARIA  
*Outrageous* A&M

## MOVIE RENTALS

1. *Home Alone 2 - Lost In New York* CBS/Fox
2. *Last of the Mohicans* CBS/Fox
3. *Far and Away* MCA
4. *Alien 3* CBS/Fox
5. *Sneakers* MCA
6. *Death Becomes Her* MCA
7. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* CBS/Fox
8. *House of Dracula* MCA
9. *Island of Lost Souls* MCA
10. *The Creature Walks Among Us* MCA

*SamTheRecordMan*



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