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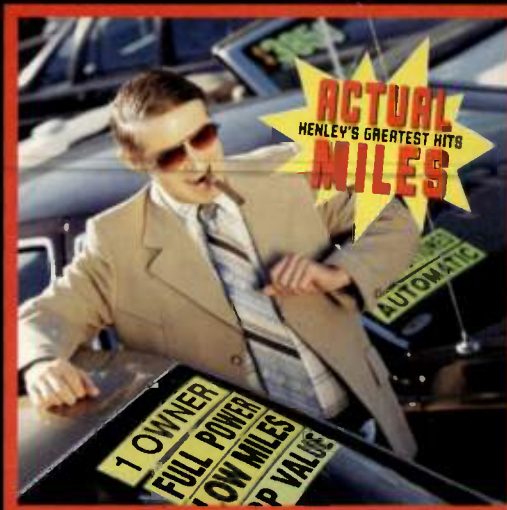
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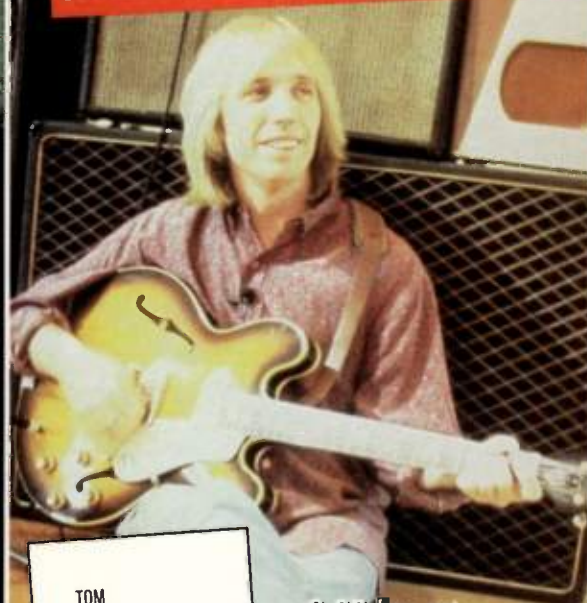
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Managing Editor
STEPHEN HUBBARD
network@astral.magic.ca

Art Director
ALAN COULSON

Contributing Writers
SYLVAIN COMEAU, NATHALIE-ROZE FISCHER, DAVID HENMAN,
DAIBHID JAMES, ROCH PARISIEN, TERRY PASIEKA, C.W. SMETS,
PERRY STERN, CHRIS SULLIVAN

Contributing Photographers
PAT PAYNE, CHICO TAESCHEL, TODD

Production Manager
JENNIFER CARSTENS
National Account Supervisors
AARON RICHMAN

Promotion and Distribution Manager
DAVID HENMAN

Publisher
HARVEY WOLFE

A Canadian Controlled Media
Communications Publication

President
KIM LOCKE

Vice President/Director of Publications
HARVEY WOLFE

Production Manager
JENNIFER CARSTENS

Publication Co-ordinator
JEFF LOCKE

Sales Administrator
NANCY MATTHEWS

Comptroller
RUTH HOWEY

Accountants
ROSE AYRES, CAROLINE WAGNER

Office Manager
DEBBY DUNCAN

Administrative Assistant
TINA SCHMIDT

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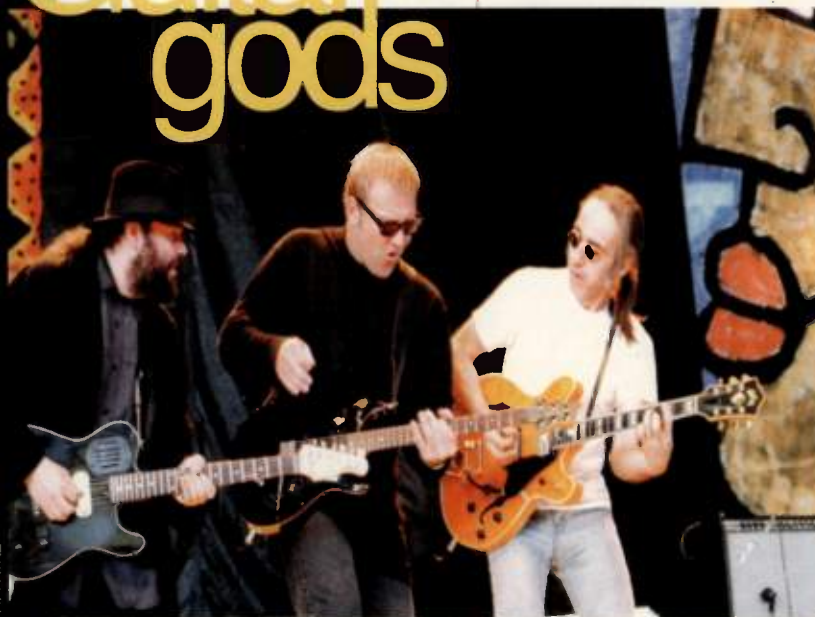
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VOLUME 9 NO.5

COVER

Tom Cochrane photo by Chico Taeschel
Landscape photo by Peter Griffith/Masterfile
Makeup by Jenni Clark

Guitar gods



PAT PAYNE

KUMBAYA '95, THE LATE-SUMMER
MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA ORGANIZED
BY MOLLY JOHNSON TO RAISE MONEY
TO FIGHT AIDS, WAS ANOTHER
ROUSING SUCCESS, WITH SOME \$250,
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TORONTO, ONT., M4Y 2L8.

Etc. 6 k.d. lang, Charlene Smith, Bowie hype
and other stuff from the silly world of pop.

Movies 11 *Casino*, Demi Moore's millions, the
return of *Ace Ventura*, *Nick Of Time*, *The American
President*, *Home For The Holidays*, *A Day To
Remember* and more from the balcony.

Cover story 14

Tom Cochrane's
new album, *Ragged
Ass Road*, deals
with the reality that
if "Life Is A
Highway," you're
bound to end up
in the ditch now
and then.

Urge Overkill

18 Call them
kitsch rockers if you
want, but Urge's

new album, *Exit The Dragon*, kills.

Colin James 23 Vancouver's favourite blues-
rocker is back, but this time he's working in a
funkier, more groove-oriented vein.

Bass Is Base 26 One of last year's left field
success stories, Toronto's Bass Is Base arrive
with their major label debut and the urge to funk
up our lives.

Jane Siberry 30 She's as eclectic as ever —
this time mining jazz for inspiration — but
Canada's "celestial diva" has her life and art
together like never before.

CD-ROM 32 Some of the winners and losers
of the current crop of CD-ROM music titles.

Grooves 34 The latest in CD reviews,
including: Suzanne Little, Growl, Squirrel,
Motorhead and more.

Charts 38



this is garbage?

"There's a little bit of a Blue Velvet-y vibe on this record," says Garbage drummer Butch Vig, of his band's eponymous debut, but not before reeling off a string of lyrical obsessions that would definitely make David Lynch's shopping list: "Voyeurism, sexism, hedonism, the art of self-destruction, faith and the lack of it, perversion" And as in Lynch's small town America, where well-kept lawns conceal squirming insects, beneath Garbage's bright pop sheen (think Bristol triphop and late-'70s Roxy Music drowning in a wash of guitars) boil passions dark and deep.

"In the beginning," admits, bass and keyboardist Duke Erikson, "we didn't really have any idea what we were gonna do. It was just Steve (Marker, guitars, bass and samples), Butch and I in Steve's basement bashing around on guitars and trying a lot of different ideas." Their most successful idea turned out to be enlisting the considerable vocal talents of Shirley Manson from Scotland's Angelfish. "The common ground that the four of us found was a fascination with dark pop songs," says Vig.

No surprise here. Before going on to produce albums with titles like *Nevermind* and *Siamese Dream*, Vig was raised in Wisconsin in a small Norwegian farming community where, he recalls, "I was kinda forced to listen to Top 40 radio. I grew up waiting to see what the countdown would be every week, to see who was in the top of the chart." Erikson, who lived in a small Nebraskan town, has stranger, scarier memories. "It's different than when you grow up in a huge city because you're surrounded by crime and murders you never really know those people. But in a small town like that, there's one guy who maybe murders somebody and everybody knows him. You had coffee with him or something the day before," he says. He dimly remembers the murderous rampage of one of Nebraska's most famous former citizens, a young teenager named Charles Starkweather. "I remember photos of him in the newspaper," says Erikson. "Very scary. One of the few times people in my home town actually locked their doors."

The antidote to all this grim stuff is "Only Happy When It Rains," a sprightly little number filled with tongue-in-cheek one-liners ("I only smile in the dark/ My only comfort is the night gone black") that only a Cure fan could take seriously. Erikson agrees. "It kinda is a poke at ourselves really, and a poke at people who seem to only enjoy life when they're feeling bad." "Also," adds Vig, "the idea came from when Shirley walked in one morning and had been listening to some bummers song and said, 'I think I really only like sad songs.' And we're like, 'Fucking A — we're into those too, Shirley.'" — C.W. Smets

The steady rainfall seems annoyingly appropriate as k.d.lang phones from Vancouver to discuss her new album, *All You Can Eat*. Despite the warmth of lang's words and her genuine delight with what is undoubtedly the most emotionally intense album of her career, the conversation has a melancholy edge to it. Her phone call comes a couple hours after the announcement of the verdict in the Paul Bernardo murder trial, and somehow the horror of those crimes informs everything we talk about.

"And you're thinking, 'with all this going on I've got to talk to k.d. lang about music,' right?" she asks.

Well, yeah.

"I know, Stephen, I feel the same way I think 'what the fuck is wrong with the world?' Believe me, I know what you mean."

Perhaps that's why *All You Can Eat* is such an appealing album — its bubbling over with pure, raw emotions like love, lust and longing. In short, it's life-affirming.

"That's exactly what 'Acquiesce' is about; it's about the O.J. trial, it's about the Oklahoma bombing, it's about Bernardo, and it's about how there are no anchors in life anymore, there's no one you can turn to for moral support and for truth, except inside and your instincts and who you believe really loves you," she says.

k.d. lang's sensual smorgasbord



NEW DIVA ON THE BLOCK

There's a hint of nostalgia in the upbeat, effervescent music of leggy Canadian R&B diva Charlene Smith, and that suits the singer to a "T." The 26-year-old Toronto-native is an ebullient, outgoing throwback of sorts in a musical world populated by the petulant posing of Mary J. Bilge and gangsta-bitchiness of TLC. Smith, whose cool, melody-(rather than groove-)oriented songs are steeped more in the dance classics of the '70s than the mean streets of the '90s, feels strongly that her music will one day overtake hip hop as the pre-eminent sound of Black Canadian music. The street-wise, tough-talking rap of urban America doesn't have the same resonance north of the border, she proclaims. "We don't have ghettos and hoods in this country."

But she's wrong. There are ghettos in Canada, it's just that they are in the minds of record company executives who resist diversity in the musical community. If a Black artist in Canada wants to sell records here it had better be in the stereotypical style of the moment or forget it — you might as well leave (just ask frustrated and underappreciated rocker Molly Johnson). And that's just what Smith did. "I was naive enough to think that good music, no matter who did it, no matter where it came from, ruled at the end of the day," she says ruefully. "I was wrong. I believed in the songs on the album, but I got many a rejection letter from Canadian record companies."

CHARLENE
SMITH

Following the long-standing tradition of Canadian expatriates, last year Smith moved to England and, after several hit singles, most particularly the song that would become the title track of her debut album *Feel The Goodtimes*, she found the audience she knew was out there. Now the challenge is to translate that success into a domestic triumph.

"I think I'm going to be looked at as some sort of pioneer," Smith declares matter-of-factly. Citing Michael Jackson's milestone recording *Off The Wall* as the precedent ("He didn't create a whole category, he bridged a gap between commercial pop and typical R&B/soul music."), she thinks *Feel The Goodtimes* will have the same impact. "I'm proud to say today that I've bridged that gap once again with this album. And albums that bridge gaps stay with you the longest." — Perry Stern

Given what lang has gone through during the past few years (namely her revelation that she is a lesbian and all the publicity that went with it), coming to terms with her celebrity status and what's really important has been a personal quest for her.

"Oh yeah, I've finally gotten there and it took the last couple of years to get there. It took the success of *Ingenue* (her last album), and getting into Hollywood and the celebrity of it. It was my first taste of the whole drug of living in L.A., being invited here and there, and it was interesting and I guess I had to try it out but for me now it's about re-evaluating my life; basically I believe life is a smorgasbord and you decide whether or not you're going to make yourself sick."

The up side of all the changes in her life is that she has never felt more free to explore her own state of being — the emotions, the doubts, the desires. And it shows on languid, sensual, groove-oriented tracks like "I Want It All," "Sexuality," "Get Some" and "World Of Love."

"Every album is as personal as the others, but hopefully what's happening is I'm evolving as a writer, and I'm maturing as a woman and these emotions are more accessible and my vulnerability is easier to give up and as a singer I'm more able to deliver an emotional take," says lang.

Indeed. —s.h.

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that matter

Sick of benefit CDs? Well, us too — usually. But some cause-driven albums actually make sense, and offer a cool selection of music, too. Two of the best recent examples are *In Between Dances*, in aid of Canadian breast cancer research and *Lit From Within*, in aid of Canadian rape crisis centres.

Both compilations feature music made exclusively by Canadian women, and both were put together to

help the fight against two of the most pervasive enemies Canadian women face: the ravages of breast cancer and sexual assault.

In Between Dances — which features tracks by Jann Arden, Sara Craig, k.d.lang, Sarah McLachlan, Jane Siberry, Susan Aglukark, Holly Cole, the Rankin Family,

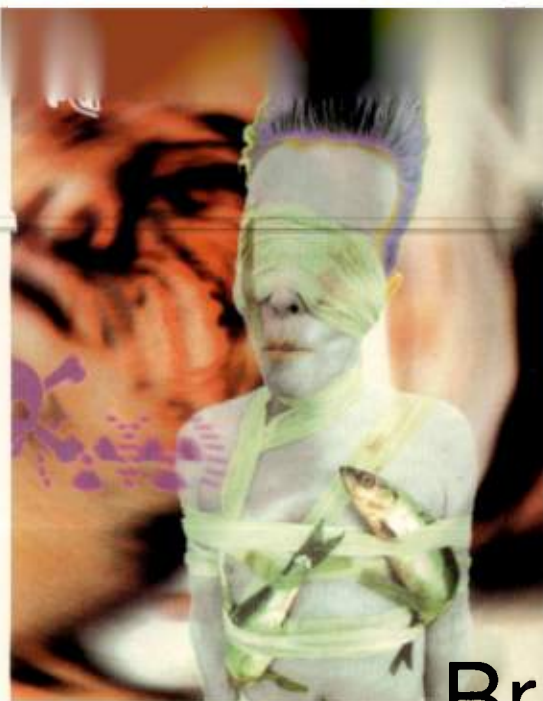
and Alannah Myles, among others — was conceived by Jacki Ralph Richardson, a three-time cancer survivor and former lead singer with the '70s pop band The Bells.

Recent statistics by the National Cancer Institute of Canada estimate that by the end of 1995, there will be 17,700 new cases of breast cancer in Canada, with 5,400 women dying as a result of the disease, yet

research funding remains remarkably sparse.

Lit From Within, compiled by Tonni Maryuama, was inspired by an encounter with a women who had been raped and traumatized, and features music and poetry by the likes of Crash Vegas, Mae Moore, Sarah McLachlan, Meryn Cadell, Taste Of Joy, Suzanne Little, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, and Evelyn Lau, and is intended to help fund rape crisis centres across the country — many of which are threatened by recent government cutbacks.

These two projects — undertaken by Attic (*Dances*) and Nettwerk (*Lit*) Records, respectively — come at a time when the air is still rank with the stench of the O.J. Simpson trial and serve as a reminder that these are issues that have to be dealt with by the entire community, not just government. So, give a shit and check out these new discs.



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How big a deal is David Bowie's new album? Well, bet you can't swing a cat without hitting some promo material for *Outside*, his long-awaited reunion effort with studio whiz Brian Eno.

The most innovative spin on things involves the installation of special interactive kiosks in various Sam The Record Man stores across Canada. A joint project between Bowie's record label (Virgin) and Apple Canada, the machines offer fans the chance to read the original story that Bowie's album is based on (*The Diary of Nathan Adler*), check out all the album graphics, see the video for "The Heart's Filthy Lesson," hear sound bites from the various characters that inhabit *Outside's* world, read the album's lyric sheet as well get more information about other Bowie titles.

inging Bowie's outside inside

The first two kiosks opened in Toronto, and since then others have opened up in stores in Vancouver, Edmonton, Montreal and Ottawa.

It may be shameless promotion but at least it's interesting, shameless promotion.

soulful country

In a musical genre that has come to be known for the accessibility of its stars, John Berry stands apart in the single-minded approach he brings to his craft, and the sincerity he brings to his performances. He speaks with purpose. He sings with fervor. His music is intense.

Life became a little too intense for a while in 1994. In just under three months — between March and May — Berry stole the show at Nashville's internationally-renowned Country Radio Seminar, his wife Robin gave birth to their first son, he had his first national No. 1 record, and he went under the knife to remove a benign yet life-threatening colloid cyst on the brain.

In follow-up examinations Berry has been given a clean bill of health and now, nearly a year after his latest brush with death (he was in a serious motorcycle accident in 1981), he struggles to understand the dramatic events of last year.

"You know, it was very hard just to maintain my composure when I was first recovering. Before the operation, I had been robbed of all my energy and emotion. After it was over, I don't know if I just had a lot of things stored up or I just needed time, but it was real hard for me to find a balance," he says.

The John Berry sound is like nothing in country music today: a shot of blues combined with a twinge of soul and a dash of 1970's pop. Growing up, Berry's musical influences were Harry Chapin, John Denver, Cat Stevens, and James Taylor — stylists everyone, not showmen. Listening to Philadelphia groups like the Stylistics helped in the development of the John Berry Voice ("that's where the soul came from," he says).

That sound has already generated some high recognition — his self-titled debut release is nearly platinum and his current album, *Standing On The Edge*, has recently gone gold in both the U.S. and Canada. — Terry Pasioka



COUNTRY HORIZONS



JEFF CARSON
Jeff Carson
EMI

Jeff's self-titled debut is full of smooth, evocative vocals that, when applied to great songs, deliver the emotion and meaning each was created to have.

"Yeah Buddy" was the first hit at radio from the album, and promptly rose to the top of the chart, introducing Jeff to Canadians. "The Car" is the follow up single and video, and is a wonderful, poignant reflection on the ongoing bonding of a father and son relationship.



PERFECT STRANGER
You Have The Right To Remain Silent
EMI

Perfect Stranger is a band from east Texas that formed in the '80s and spent the years since then honing their sound in honky tonks and clubs throughout the southwest U.S. This was the foundation for their tireless schedule of 220 dates a year, as well as an explanation for the immediate acceptance and incredible success of their debut album, *You Have The Right To Remain Silent*. It seemed people were just waiting for a traditional country sound with a little something to dance to. The title track was a top ten hit and the follow up single, "I'm A Stranger Here Myself," looks like it's destined for the same success.



SAWYER BROWN
This Thing Called Wantin' and Havin' It All
EMI

Sawyer Brown's new album, *This Thing Called Wantin' And Havin' It All*, contains all the fun, energy and musical integrity that the band has come to be known for. The title track has become a big hit, with the video topping the chart at NCN.

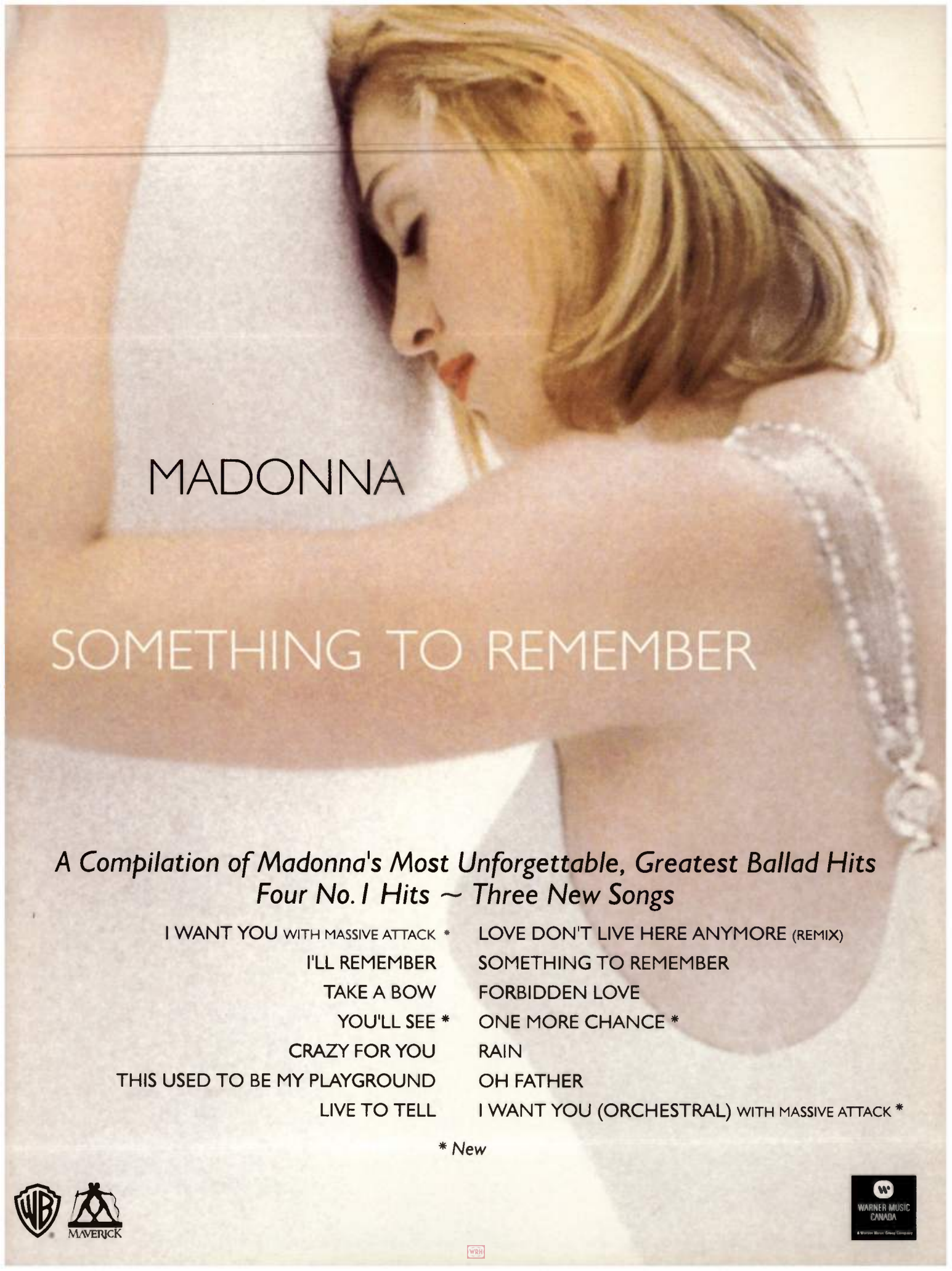
Each cut of this album delivers the powerful vocals, musicianship and lyrical message that have made Sawyer Brown one of the most successful bands in country music today.



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THIS USED TO BE MY PLAYGROUND	OH FATHER
LIVE TO TELL	I WANT YOU (ORCHESTRAL) WITH MASSIVE ATTACK *

* New





CASINO

NOW PLAYING:

The envelope, please Oscar always seems to have the Christmas spirit, smiling on many November/December releases and snubbing most movies released the rest of the year (with notable exceptions like *Forrest Gump*, which came out in August). At least, that's the game plan as Hollywood releases high minded dramas and "important" films of all kinds at this time of the year for Academy consideration.

This year, the smart money to rake in the statuettes is on *Casino*, **Martin Scorsese's** high stakes drama about Vegas in the 1970s. **Robert DeNiro** (Oscar winner for *The Godfather: Part Two*, in 1974 and *Raging Bull*, in 1980) plays pro gambler Ace Rothstein, who gives up gambling to run a casino; **Joe Pesci** (Oscar winner for *Goodfellas*, in 1991) is a mob enforcer. **Sharon Stone** also stars as Rothstein's boozehound wife. Call your bookie to make reservations for the premiere.

Michael Douglas (Oscar winner in 1988, for *Wall Street*), has the starring role in *The American President*, **Rob Reiner's** romantic comedy about a widowed President who falls in love with a lobbyist (**Annette Bening**). **Michael J. Fox**, **Martin Sheen** and **Richard Dreyfus** round out an all-star cast.

Two-time Oscar Winner (for *The Accused*, 1988, and *The Silence of The Lambs*, 1991) **Jodie Foster**, who directed *Little Man Tate* in 1991, is following up that effort with *Home For The Holidays*, a talky drama about

family relationships and Thanksgiving dinners. **Holly Hunter**, **Robert Downey Jr.** and **Anne Bancroft** star.

Al Pacino, a winner for *Scent Of A Woman*, in 1993, gets the heavy makeup treatment for *A Day To Remember*, a depression-era drama in which he plays a grandfather who spends the last day of his life with his grandson in the backyard.

Finally, three November releases may compete with the summer blockbusters in the best visual effects category. *Goldeneye*, the first Bond movie starring **Pierce Brosnan**, should boast plenty of eye popping chases, crashes and stunts. Disney's *Toy Story* is the first entirely computer generated feature film. And in *Jumanji*, a fantasy about a boy who gets caught in a jungle board game and when he emerges 26 years later (in the person of **Robin Williams**), an entire menagerie of computer generated and animatronic animals runs wild in a small town.

Another film that might attract some attention (but probably won't be taken too seriously because of the Academy's bias against action flicks) for its performances is *Nick Of Time*, a Hitchcockian thriller starring **Johnny Depp** and **Christopher Walken**.

And in the Oscar who? category, **Jim Carrey** brings his inspired but Oscar-free physical comedy to the jungles of Africa in *Ace Ventura II: When Nature Calls*.

IN DIM LIGHT

BY SYLVAIN COMEAU

WAGE HIKES:

Hollywood seems to be falling prey to the professional sports syndrome of endlessly escalating free agent salaries. After new comedy whiz **Jim Carrey** pulled down a \$20 million payday to star in *Cable Guy*, and **Stallone** copped \$17.5 million for next summer's *Daylight*, they're starting to

drag everyone else further up the Hollywood food chain. Thus, **Mel Gibson** snatches \$20 million to do a remake of the **John Ford** thriller *Ransom*, and

Bruce Willis, hot on the heels of the hits *Pulp Fiction* and *Die Hard: With A Vegeance*, snaps up \$16.5 million for *Walter Hill's* *Gundown*.

Lower down in the ecosystem, **Kurt Russell** gets \$10 million to don the eyepatch as Snake Plissken in *Escape From L.A.*, **John**

Carpenter's *Escape From New York* sequel. After the bomb *Mary Shelley's*

Frankenstein, no one knows why **Kenneth Branagh** is worth \$11 million for a new version of *Othello* (what's Bill Shakespeare's cut?).

The new queen of Hollywood must be **Demi**

Moore, who grabbed \$12.5 million for *Strip Tease*; following close behind is **Julia Roberts**, who's been offered \$12 million to do *The Women*. If you're not getting eight figures, call your agent.



DEMI MOORE

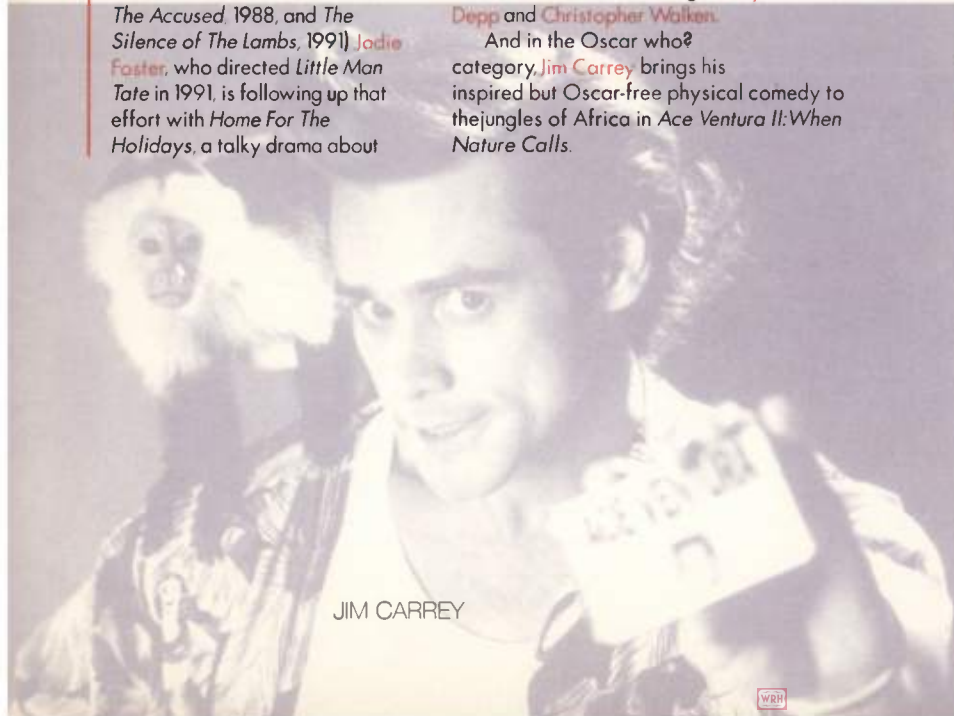
CRYSTAL GAZING:

If **George Lucas** can do it, why not everyone else? The Crystal Ball argues that the upcoming *Star Wars* prequels (movies that predate the events of already released films) will start a trend, and besides, fewer sequels are making big bucks these days.

Novelist **Richard Condon** has written two bestselling *Prizzi's Honor* prequels, *Prizzi's Money* and *Prizzi's Glory*. Expect a younger Charley Partanna doing the *Prizzi's* dirty work — **Christian Slater** does a good **Jack Nicholson**.

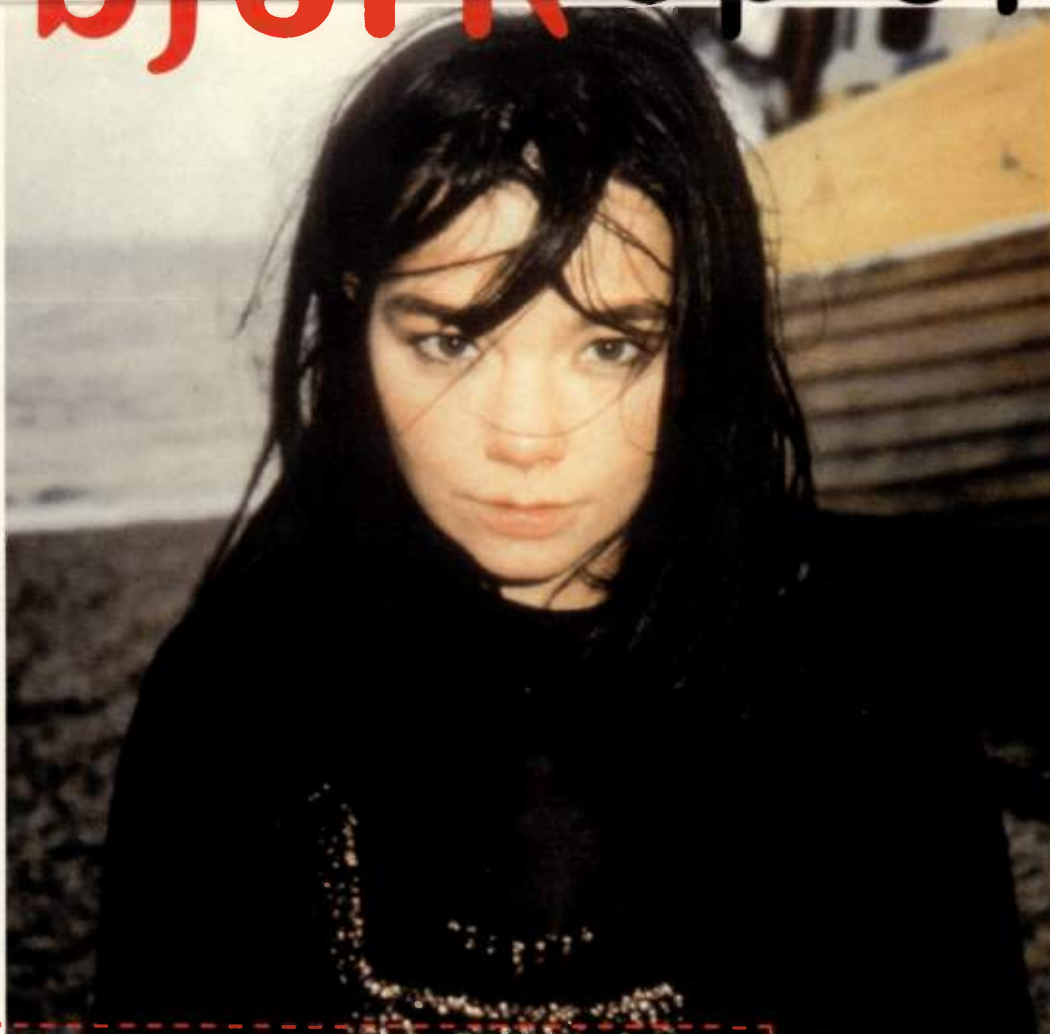
Dirty Harry's early years on the streets of San Francisco and Rambo's early years in the jungles of 'Nam will star new, up and coming action heroes (the crystal ball could name them, but they're unknowns now, so why bother?).

Finally, the prequel to con man classic *The Sting* will show us what those tricksters had up their sleeves in the early early days.



JIM CARREY

björk Up Close



It's not every alternative artist who becomes immortalized as a puppet in the satirical British TV show, *Spitting Image*. The fact that Björk was is a testament to her current impact on the international music scene.

Björk first emerged from Reykjavik, Iceland in 1986 as the lead singer of the Sugarcubes. Dedicated to "mischievous fun," the Sugarcubes soon became the darlings of the UK indie press and were hounded by offers from major labels which the band refused on the grounds of not selling out.

Despite the group's success, Björk felt the urge to express her own songs, and in 1992 the Sugarcubes dissolved, leaving her free to pursue a solo career.

Her first international solo album, *Debut*, was released in 1993 and has since sold two-and-a-half million copies worldwide. Now, with the release of her second album, *Post*, Björk proves that *Debut*'s success was far from being a fluke. Indeed, her enigmatic and powerful voice and musical charm are as strong as ever.

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WDR

Can someone be sombre and optimistic at the same time? If so, that's the fragile balance Tom Cochrane's trying to achieve on his latest release, *Ragged Ass Road*. In fact, dark, murky, ambivalent sludge coats almost every song on the new release; there's a rough-hewn, world-weary tone to *Ragged Ass Road* that stands in stark contrast to much of Cochrane's multi-million-selling 1991 album, *Mad, Mad World*. Fans of "Life Is A Highway" beware: the chipper, let's-drive-til-the-sun-goes-down mood of that song is virtually nonexistent on this album. Cochrane's got more on his mind than



tooling around in a '57 Chevy; he's confronting some of the toxic fallout from his rapid ascent to stardom.

Well, I think what happens after having the kind of success I had with "Life Is A Highway" is that you go through a tremendous amount of change and coming out of that is like coming out of a hurricane, like coming out of a maelstrom, at that point your life goes through a lot

of stress, there's a lot of stress on your relationship and your family life and a lot of this album is talking about that," he says, adding, in a weary tone, "and the thing is I can't really avoid writing about these things — to me music is a form of expression and I have to do it honestly, that's the only way I can write." And he's smart enough to know that he wouldn't be the person he is today if it weren't for those experiences. "There's a tough side to success as well as an up side, but I wouldn't trade anything I went through, and believe me I know I've been pretty lucky."

While *Ragged Ass Road* spits out bile in generous quantities, at its heart is bleary-eyed defiance; a kind of pissed-off optimism that makes it more than a one-dimensional statement. "I like to think it's optimistic, maybe a bit existentialist in that acceptance is part of learning and growing and part of dealing with change, but again there is that dichotomy; that desire in all of us to have that sense of community. If you look at a lot of societies in the world, some of the most detached, that don't have all the disenfranchising elements of our Western civilization there's no depression. There's no stress. You find the largest amount of depression and stress in areas of our society that are very urbanized, where there's lots of people around but there's not as much, perhaps, emotional and spiritual connection with your neighbours."

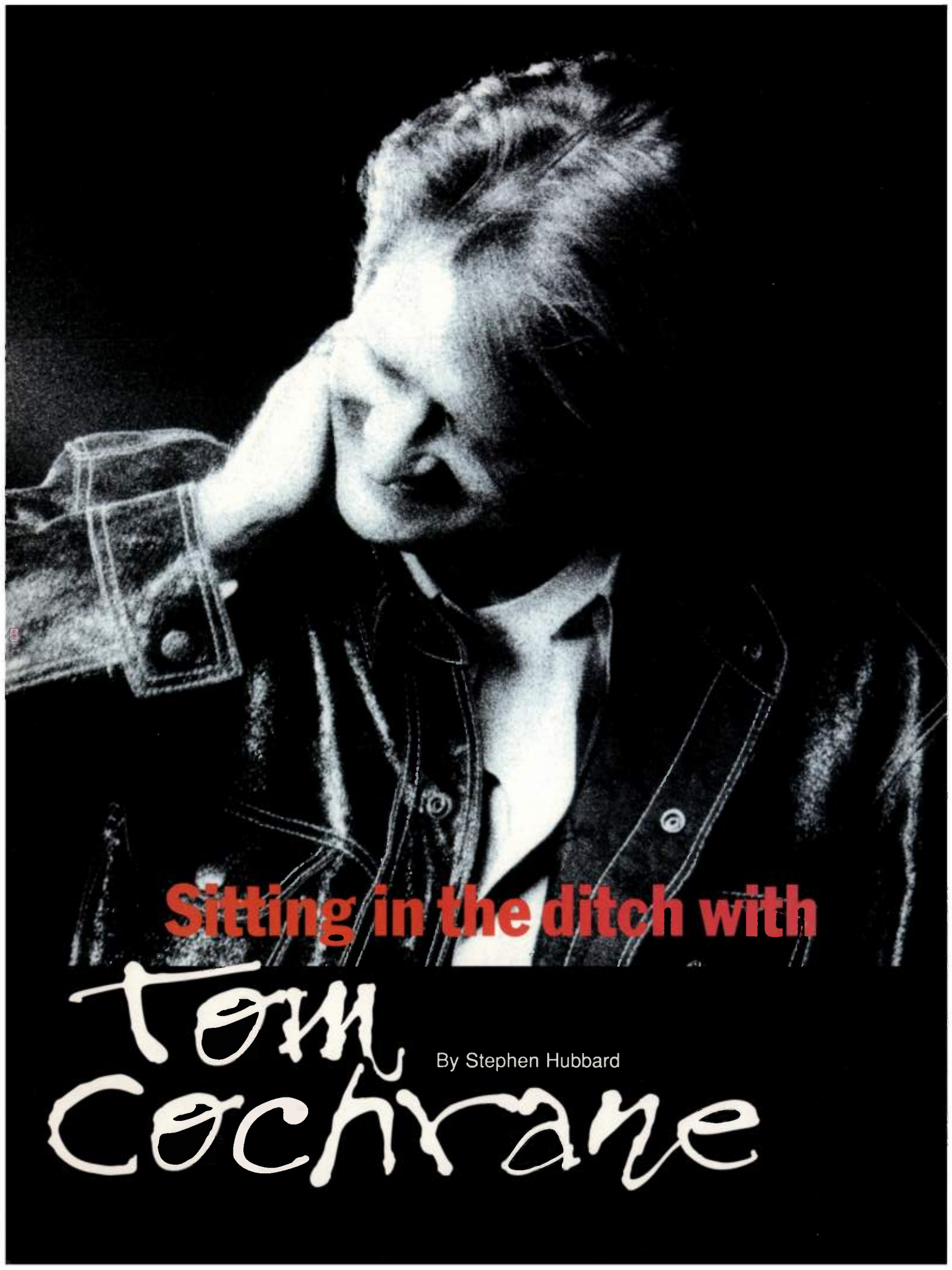
Yes, it was *that* kind of conversation. Not much light banter. Although friendly, warm and in possession of a healthy sense of humour, Cochrane is quietly intense in conversation, his prolonged answers to questions only broken up by the steady stream of cigarettes he lights up. Our discussion took place in the back room corner of a restaurant in Cochrane's Toronto hotel, over a leisurely lunch. Not very far into the interview a few things became obvious.

Despite the accuracy of his nice guy image, Cochrane has a strong presence about him. His verbal tangents — that often veer off into the socio-political realm — were frequent and difficult to control. It was sometimes hard trying to get him to focus on the question at hand, and perhaps, pointless his asides say more about him than any bullshit rehearsed responses every could. It is not that he is *difficult* to talk to, but rather, a *genuine challenge*.

Despite the somewhat rambling nature of our conversation, a number of themes pop up over and over, and, as he speaks of the marital difficulties he experienced during the last few years, a guarded weariness colours all of his words. And while he doesn't believe that *Ragged Ass Road* is a dark record (at least not completely) he does admit it's about confronting the darkness around him, trying to deal with it, and moving forward.

"I guess it's about change, it's about growth, and there's probably something reflective about the title, more than just the fact that there is a place called *Ragged Ass Road* (in Yellowknife, N.W.T.), it's more of a metaphor for a place where you can be independent as well as find a sense of community, and I think that's what everybody craves in this day and age, so I think there is a universal thread there but I like to think that good books and good movies and good records comment on specific

page 16



Sitting in the ditch with

Tom
Cochrane

By Stephen Hubbard



things you're going through that can be related to on a universal level. It is talking about passages and changes and dealing with those changes."

While he has successfully weathered the storm (for the record he and his wife Kathy are still together in their Oakville, Ont. home) it's obvious from some of the album's pointed lyrics that getting there wasn't an easy journey. "I Wish You Well," the album's first track and single, immediately sets the tone: "I'm gonna check my scars at home/ gonna cash my chips and roam/ gonna walk before you fade to black. I'm gonna write you off the page." And on songs like "Just Scream" ("I'm so tired of all this crap/ that falls from you like rain/ do you think I'm that naive/ or have you gone insane") and "Song Before I Leave" ("Did he come to comfort you?/ when you were feeling down/ and was he there to listen/ I listened but then I drowned in it/ behind your silent seal/ where nothing gets revealed/ and maybe your eyes can't fake/ what your heart no longer feels") it's clear just how much there was for Cochrane to deal with.

The best way for him to articulate these intense feelings has always been through his songs, and while Cochrane (via his '80s band Red Rider) has always shared a special bond with his audience, his last few albums have become increasingly more earthy and far more rooted in the stripped down music that he played long before his Red Rider days. Though certainly not computerphobic, he's gradually come to realize the importance of the human equation in his music, and the folly of relying too heavily on modern machinery.

"You can use these tools that are at our disposal but the main thing is that the human element, vibe, has to be at the forefront of the music," he says. "I was like a lot of musicians when computers first came in, I thought they were going to

we wanted it to be about the music, but I had a pig-headed manager (Allen) who I think is an anachronism in this society, but now I'm with the greatest management in the world (Gold Mountain) who manages bands like Sonic Youth, Beck, Tracy Chapman, the Breeders, and others, and the one thing that Bruce Allen never understood, and never will understand, is that these artists make music with integrity, and as such are treated as people, not commodities," he explains.

If talking about his old management provokes a sharp response from Cochrane, he is even more passionate when discussing his love of Canadian music. "I always had a strong sense of being Canadian and it wasn't a jingoistic national pride thing where I feel we're better than everybody else, that doesn't enter into it I just have a love for the diversity of the country, the spirit of the people across the country, a love of the land and culturally I think we have a lot to offer," he says. And despite the somewhat polarizing nature of the recent debate over issues like Canadian content, Cochrane is a defiant supporter — and always has been — of Canadian culture. "I'm not like a certain, very successful Canadian artist who carries a British passport, and I don't take money out of this country to pay my taxes somewhere else or avoid them altogether, I just find it laughable," he says, his voice rising in anger. "And then when it suits you, in Amsterdam or someplace, and people are waving Canadian flags, you say 'oh yeah, I'm Canadian.'"

His strong stance in favour of Canadian culture notwithstanding, Cochrane's sometimes mistakenly lumped in with other artists from the '70s and '80s who kowtowed to American interests by writing generic songs that had no sense of time and place. "A guy from a band, I think it was Zen Bungalow,

change my life and for a while there technology took over and when that happens I think it's dangerous."

Part of what drives Cochrane to reach out to his audience is his firm belief in the power of art, and its innate ability to touch people — something he feels computers are slowly whittling away. "I'm a romantic and I guess I rail against that, but I guess that's what the computer age is leading to, just like Bill Gates saying that computers are going to become something like our hydro and like our electricity; just a part of our life we don't even think about ... that's a kind of an ambiguous, scary statement isn't it?"

Cochrane shakes his head, shifts in his chair, takes another sip from his coffee and momentarily looks agitated. Reflecting on his years in Red Rider (spanning most of the 1980s) has once again summoned the ghost of former manager Bruce Allen (Bryan Adams), with whom Cochrane had a terrible relationship. "For a long time in the early '80s with Red Rider I was playing in this whole atmosphere of corporate rock, and a lot of my stances were the same as a lot of the bands over the last couple of years — I was doing the music for music's sake, and we fought against the image thing,

said to me at a festival we were both playing, 'Go back to America, they like you there,' and I was blown away because obviously he didn't know where I'd come from and what I'd gone through because I've always fought against the idea of Canadians trying to pass themselves off as British or American," he says. In fact, Cochrane's interest in the current state of Canadian music was another recurring theme during our time together, both at lunch, and at a photo shoot later the same day. Between references to films or books that had influenced him, he was constantly tossing out questions about everything from what Bruce Cockburn's up to these days to who my favourite new local artists were.

With *Ragged Ass Road* well on its way to being another solid success for Cochrane, his place in Canadian rock history seems secure, but, in many ways, it seems like he's just begun — despite rumours to the contrary. "Yeah, there was a rumour on the radio that this was my last record, and that's something that I never thought about; it could be, but hopefully not. I intend to do this for as long as there is an audience out there. That rumour might have gotten started because I said in a couple of recent interviews that I'd like to start a small record label that would cater to singer-songwriters, and not focus on their image, not focus on how much sex appeal they might have with the public, but simply on the quality of their work," he explains.

And, as he continues, he admits to having another dream. "My fantasy is to be a virtuoso on an instrument so I don't have to write words, because words are man made and no matter how good you are at it you never quite express yourself completely the way you think you should, but Charlie Parker, for instance, always nailed it because his music was a direct line to his soul." ■



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Since Hollywood seems to be having a tough time finding a suave young actor to fill the shoes of cool '60s superspy *The Saint* for its big budget remake (Brad Pitt and Ralph Fiennes both turned down the role), may we suggest the sharp-dressed men of Urge Overkill in a bit of character casting? "And we could all collectively be a three-headed Simon Templar," laughs Urge guitarist and singer Nash Kato. "I dunno how we'd all fit in that little Volvo P-1800, though."

On Urge's latest opus, *Exit The Dragon*, pop culture litters the songscape like so many crumpled Bazooka Joe wrappers. From the title's inversion of the Bruce Lee chop-socky flick to its Sly Stone quotes, Japanese pornos, games of Monopoly and the grand finale, an epic tribute to slain Latin pop princess Selena, the band plays with kitsch the way Hendrix played guitar. If Urge Overkill didn't exist Quentin Tarantino would have had to invent them. Instead, he just stuck them on one of his soundtracks.

Rock writers the world over have long given in to temptation and painted Urge as medallion-toting superheroes first and musicians second, or as purveyors of image who luckily enough have the musical goods to back it up.

"Our image reflects who we are as people," asserts Kato. "We've always tried to maintain, both on and off stage, a certain fashion sense that's maybe a bit untimely in this day and age of downplaying the whole, y'know" — his voice drops — "rock star thing." He continues. "With regard to music journalism, it certainly is a lot easier to write about what a band looks like than what they sound like. But I think that's all changed with



Of pop trash, dragon's bowels & URGE OVERKILL

BY C. W. SMETS

this record — no one seems to give a shit if we show up in a barrel with a couple of leather straps."


Dragon (and, by extension, Urge) sucks its considerable forebears — T-Rex, Neil Young, The Clash, Cheap Trick, ZZ Top — into a swirling, grooving maelstrom one can imagine popping with static in '77 or spitting out of a car radio in '69 with equal relevance. It's really only ever a baby step from honesty to ironic distance, and another back over to just being the Black Crowes, and while Urge stumbles through first impressions, they stand unbelievably tall on repeat spins.

In the hands of, say, Mudhoney, Neil Diamond's "Girl, You'll Be A Woman Soon," could have been revived as a one-listen joke. Instead, Urge Overkill gave it dignity and fucked-up beauty, and Uma Thurman made it her drug of choice (next to German heroin) in *Pulp Fiction*'s slaphappy overdose scene. The song originally appeared in 1992, on the band's *Stull E.P.* "Yeah," says Kato, "and at the time, none of our peers could believe it. Everyone — even our record label — everyone was confused by it."

They thought, 'is this a joke?' No, it's a great three-chord song.

Y'know, bands do covers, this is our cover. And I don't think people were quite with us for a while on that one, but I suppose it was all vindicated by its usage in *Pulp Fiction* all of a sudden everyone thought, 'brilliant! Brilliant!' But that's not there either; it *wasn't* brilliant, it was just a simple cover we did, years ago," he explains.

All Urge Overkill need now is a hit song of their own. They had some success with the anthemic "Sister Havana," off *Saturation*, their last LP, and *Dragon* has the new wave rave-up "Need Some Air" (complete with flubbed opening power chords) to keep the hope alive. But the new record's most sad and wonderful discovery is "Digital Black/Epilogue," that aforementioned ode to Selena. A duet clocking in at over eight minutes and dripping with strings and *White Album* flourishes, its potential for overblown failure is subdued by a quiet, powerful dynamism.

"That was the last thing we did," recalls Kato. "We had this big afterbash going on to celebrate finishing the record. I remember just finishing this mix, this last one, and then jumping in the car and flying over there with all these people waiting for us to show up. We played it at the party. *No one* was expecting that one. Whether you liked it or not, you've entered this dragon, and you're deep in its bowels and all of a sudden it shits you out and you're like, 'wow, I entered the dragon.'" He sounds amazed. "No one could believe they were actually gonna enter *and* exit the dragon." 



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You just can't pin down

Colin James

By David Henman

With a new record label, a new album (*Bad Habits*) and a new sound, Colin James once again avoids delivering the long-awaited sequel to the hard-rocking *Sudden Stop*. Welcome the new Colin James, multifarious roots, influences and styles melded into a voodoo stew of sultry vocals, feverish guitar solos and spooky rhythm 'n' blues compositions.

"The Capitol/EMI takeover of Virgin America was the foreshadowing of things to come," explains James, speaking on the phone from his home north of Vancouver, where he is still obviously preoccupied with the recent birth of his daughter. "The people that were there when I signed were getting the boot. I found myself sitting there with only a couple of people I recognized," he says, suggesting he felt he was in danger of getting lost in the shuffle. This despite the fact that his tribute to the swing band era, *Colin James And The Little Big Band*, sold nearly as well as his first two "commercial" albums, at least in Canada. "I think it could have done a lot better in the States, had it been promoted properly," says James. On the other hand, he had no inkling that he would wind up "opening for the Stones with a swing band."

Warner Music is his new Canadian label, while he was signed in the US to Elektra by Nancy Jeffries, the woman who, ironically, originally signed him to Virgin America. "They didn't hear one demo," James emphasizes, illustrating Warner and

Elektra's commitment and faith in his ability to make great music without someone looking over his shoulder.

The big band album, which clearly established James as an artist with a commitment to his art rather than to demands of fulfilling a corporate identity and commercial expectations, set the stage for *Bad Habits*.

"I made a conscious effort to record more mid-tempo stuff," he reveals. "In the past it's been slow songs or fast, four-on-the-floor songs. This album, which was pretty much recorded live off the floor, is funkier and more groove-oriented. I really wanted to make an album with continuity. With the Little Big Band, it was so nice have a record with one kind of vibe running through the whole thing. I got addicted to that," he adds.

Is James at all concerned that his "chameleon-like" nature will alienate the fans who don't like their expectations tampered with, the people who were waiting patiently for *Sudden Stop II*?

"I think you have to re-invent yourself. You can't just plod along. I find that really tedious. Anytime I feel like I'm 'Colin James, rockin' blues guy' and that's the end of the story, I get uptight. People have to let you grow. You grow regardless, and you can't lie on tape. It doesn't work, and you're not going to be happy. My criteria of what I think is good has changed, and I've got to change with it."

Of the many guest appearances on *Bad Habits*, the standout for James was Mavis Staples singing with him on "Freedom". "Her and Bonnie Raitt are simply the best. Working with Mavis was killer. Lenny Kravitz is playing the clav on 'Saviour.' Sarah Dash from Keith Richards' band sings on several

tracks, along with Bobby King and Terry Evans, who sang with me on that Molson drinking and driving commercial years ago," he says.

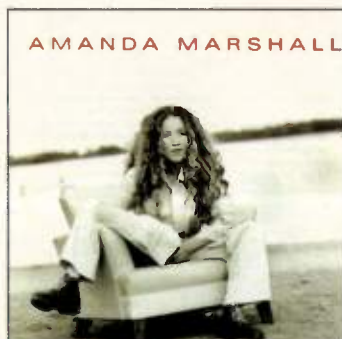
James has hung out with Keith Richards on several occasions, and even jammed with him once. "Keith is a music guy. He's always approachable and friendly, one of the guys, you know? He's nice; he remembers you. We jammed once, a

long time ago, right before a Stones show. I ended up in a room with him playing drums and Ron Wood playing bass. We all had a gulp of rum and we were just fooling around." Yeah, sure...

In addition to reading Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* ("I read constantly. I cannot survive without a book at night."), James has been listening to Cheryl Crow and the REM *Monster* album, "the first REM record I've liked, I'm afraid to say." James is a self-confessed "Van Morrison nut. Nobody sings English Soul like he does. I'm also a big fan of Tom Wilson and Junkhouse, from Hamilton. He co-wrote 'Freedom' on this album."

"I think you have to re-invent yourself. You can't just plod along. I find that really tedious."

SAM'S IS



AMANDA MARSHALL
Amanda Marshall
Sony

With her awesome vocal intensity and power, exceeded only by her willingness to test the limits, 23-year-old Amanda Marshall displays the confident assurance of a seasoned veteran on her self-titled debut album. Amanda wraps her incredible voice around undeniably great songs, including the first single, "Let It Rain," which has become a radio hit at all formats.



ASHLEY MACISAAC
Hi™ How Are You?
PGS

The influences on *Hi™ How Are You Today?*, the much anticipated debut from Ashley MacIsaac, the 20-year-old step dancing fiddle player from Creignish, Cape Breton, range from punk ("The Devil In The Kitchen") to pure traditionalism ("Spoonboy") to rhythmic dance beats with Gaelic vocals ("Sleepy Maggie"). Check this out — there is not a more unique story in Canadian music today.



THE BARRA MACNEILS
The Question
PGS

Following their Gold-plus album, "Closer To Paradise," the pride of Cape Breton delivers their third Mercury/Polydor release, *The Question*. Recorded in Cape Breton over the summer with producer Nick Griffiths (Richard & Linda Thompson, Squeeze, Roger Waters), *The Question* includes a rollicking version of Bruce Cockburn's "Going Down The Road," featuring Cockburn on vocals and guitar, and a stirring rendition of Marianne Faithful's *The Ballad Of Lucy Jordan*.



QUARTETTE
Work Of The Heart
Denon

So many of you have asked when the second album was coming out, and here it is at last. *Work Of The Heart* has been exactly that. We hope it gives you as much pleasure listening to it as it did us in recording it. — *Quartette: Callin, Cindy, Colleen & Sylvia*.



BEN HEPPNER
Great Tenor Arias
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Canada's Great Tenor is The Voice Next Door! "Mr. Heppner simply has no peers at the moment." — *The New York Times*, Oct. '95. A voice no one can live without!



JIMMY GEORGE
Hotel Motel
Cargo/MCA

Jimmy George (a band, not a person) is often described as Ottawa's favourite (and only) eight-piece pop/rock/Celtic/punk/whatever band. Produced by Marty Jones (ex-Furnaceface), *Hotel Motel* harnesses the band's legendary frenetic stage energy for an unforgettable 15-song ride.



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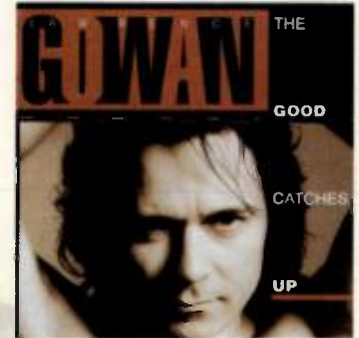
BASS IS BASE
Memories Of The Soulshack Survivors
PGS

Toronto's Bass Is Base, 1994 Juno Award winners in the Best R & B/Soul Recording category, are back with their major label debut, *Memories Of A Soulshack Survivor*. Produced by Mike Mangini and Shane Faber (Digable Planets, De La Soul), the album features the first single "Diamond Dreams," along with other key tracks, "I Cry," "Floating," "Funkmobile" and "Why."



DEBORAH COX
Deborah Cox
BMG

The release of her self-titled debut album, featuring "Sentimental" has given Toronto-bred songstress Deborah Cox a taste of success. Collaborations with the cream of the R & B world, including Babyface, will see Deborah ranked among Canadian superstars.



LAWRENCE GOWAN
The Good Catches Up
Select

A signature voice in Canadian music, Lawrence Gowan combines touching ballads and some of his heaviest songs ever, including the hit "Guns And God," on this new album add it to your Gowan collection.



k.d. lang
All You Can Eat
Warner

After the huge success of 1992's *Ingenue* album, k.d. lang is back with her most direct, intense album ever. The angelic vocals are still here, but couched in funky, sensual, pop arrangements that showcase her evolution as a songwriter. Key tracks include, "If I Were You," "Sexuality," "This" and "Get Some."



GREAT BIG SEA
Up
Warner

Starting in a kitchen in the fishing village of Petty Harbour, Newfoundland, Great Big Sea have evolved into one of the most energetic live bands in the country. On *Up*, their major label debut, the band captures the high energy and spirit delivered on stage, with a rollicking combination of traditional Maritime music and rock 'n roll.



SPOOKEY RUBEN
Modes Of Transportation Vol. 1
MCA

Sometimes compared to acts like Beck and Ween, 22-year-old Spooky Ruben is a true individual. Born in Ottawa, raised in Virginia, the Netherlands and Germany, and now a resident of Toronto he describes his music as "massive wobbly sound." We simply describe it as good. Check it out.



WILD STRAWBERRIES
Heroine
Nettwerk/Sony

"Heroine is pure shimmering pop that possesses a beautiful and haunting quality. Sophisticated with a good measure of street savvy, the Wild Strawberries can, on occasion, sound like a pumped up Portishead (and to these ears, that's a good thing)." — *Xtra West*

Chillin' with Bass Is Base at the 'Soul Shack'

BY PERRY STERN

MOST BANDS DO THEIR GROWING UP — IN TERMS OF DEFINING THEIR SOUND, LEARNING ABOUT EACH OTHER, FINDING AN AUDIENCE — WITH THE LUXURY OF ABSOLUTE ANONYMITY CONCEALING WHATEVER MISSTEPS AND BUM NOTES THAT ACCRUE DURING THE FORMATIVE PHASE.

Toronto's Bass Is Base (Chin Injeti, Ivana Santilli and MC Mystic) had been together less than a year when their precociously infective indie debut LP *First Impressions For The Bottom Jigglers* circumvented that tradition by creating a sound and finding an audience first. They could learn about each other a little later...

What they found out after a year in the national spotlight can be heard on *Memories Of The Soul Shack Survivors*, the group's first album on a major label (A & M). Partly a recapitulation of *...Bottom Jigglers* (several previously released tracks, including the hit "Funkmobile," have been re-recorded for the new album) and partly a preview of the new music they are already working on for their next release, *Memories...* has a warm, inviting, familial sound that defies definition.

"Acid Jazz" is the tag most often applied to the band but chief songwriter Chin argues against the label. "We're not acid jazz," he says, "that would be a disservice to jazz musicians. Everyone tried to put us into the same mode as Jamiriquois, Brand New Heavies and Galliano but we



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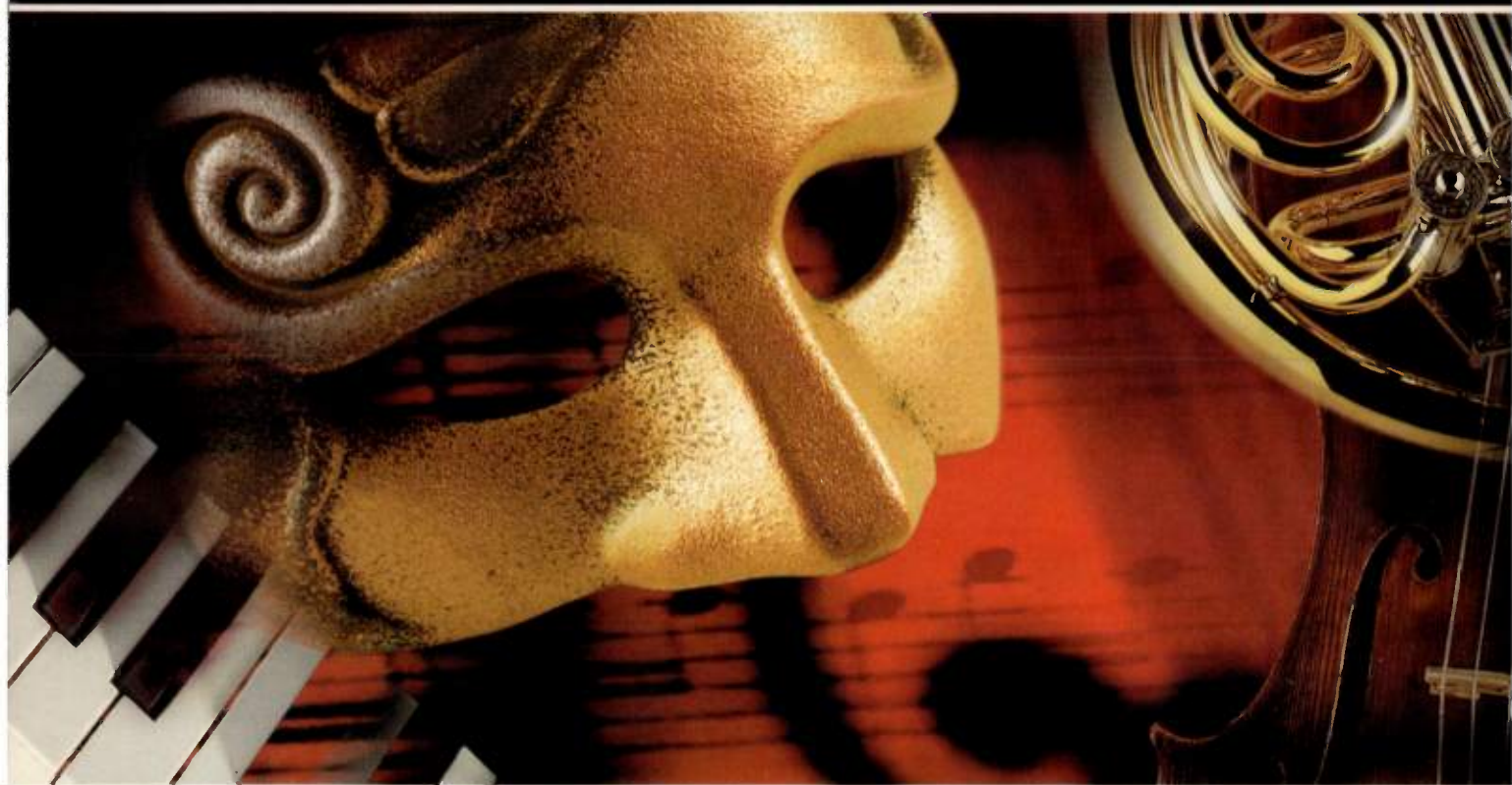
stayed out of it consciously. We knew there was more to us."

Taking cues from their families' cultural backgrounds — Chin is Indian, Ivana is French/Italian and Mystic hails from Trinidad (via Edmonton and the rap group The Maximum Definitive) — most songs are, to some extent, an amalgamation of traditional instruments as a backdrop for lyrics comprising personal observations and contemporary issues. From one song to the next, and sometimes in the spaces in between, you'll hear, as Ivana points out, "a tabla and sitar mixed in with an electric guitar, drums, bass, and then you'll hear a live string section, a big vocal arrangement, eastern Asian instruments, wooden flute, accordion and mandolin. Everything comes back to the three of us."

"All three of us are essential to the music," Chin expands. "People might try to single us out as 'Leader' Chin Injeti or 'Head Rapper' Mystic or whatever they're going to say about Ivana..." (At which point she interjects the most common observation made about her — "I'm female," she redundantly declares to laughter all around) "... but the fact of the matter is that we know it's a collective."

The youthful enthusiasm that the threesome display as they sit at the back of a Toronto cafe sipping warm water and lemon can be heard throughout *Memories...* (the title refers to the songs that were retooled from the original LP that the band released on their own Soul Shack label), but when an observer points out that the music is more soft and cuddly than innovative and challenging Mystic turns uncharacteristically serious and pugnacious. "You may say this album doesn't advance the course of musical history or anything like that," he reiterates, "but I would disagree. We're taking genres of music from a lot of different places and introducing them to a market that's not usually accessible to different types of music. And we're doing it in a way that hasn't been done before."

Ivana, too, defends the band against charges of being a tad too Osmond for the down-and-dirty '90s. "Maybe sometime in the next year some tragedy or some issue will effect us and we'll be moved to speak of it," she proposes, "but right now this is where we're at. We're still figuring things out, asking questions..."



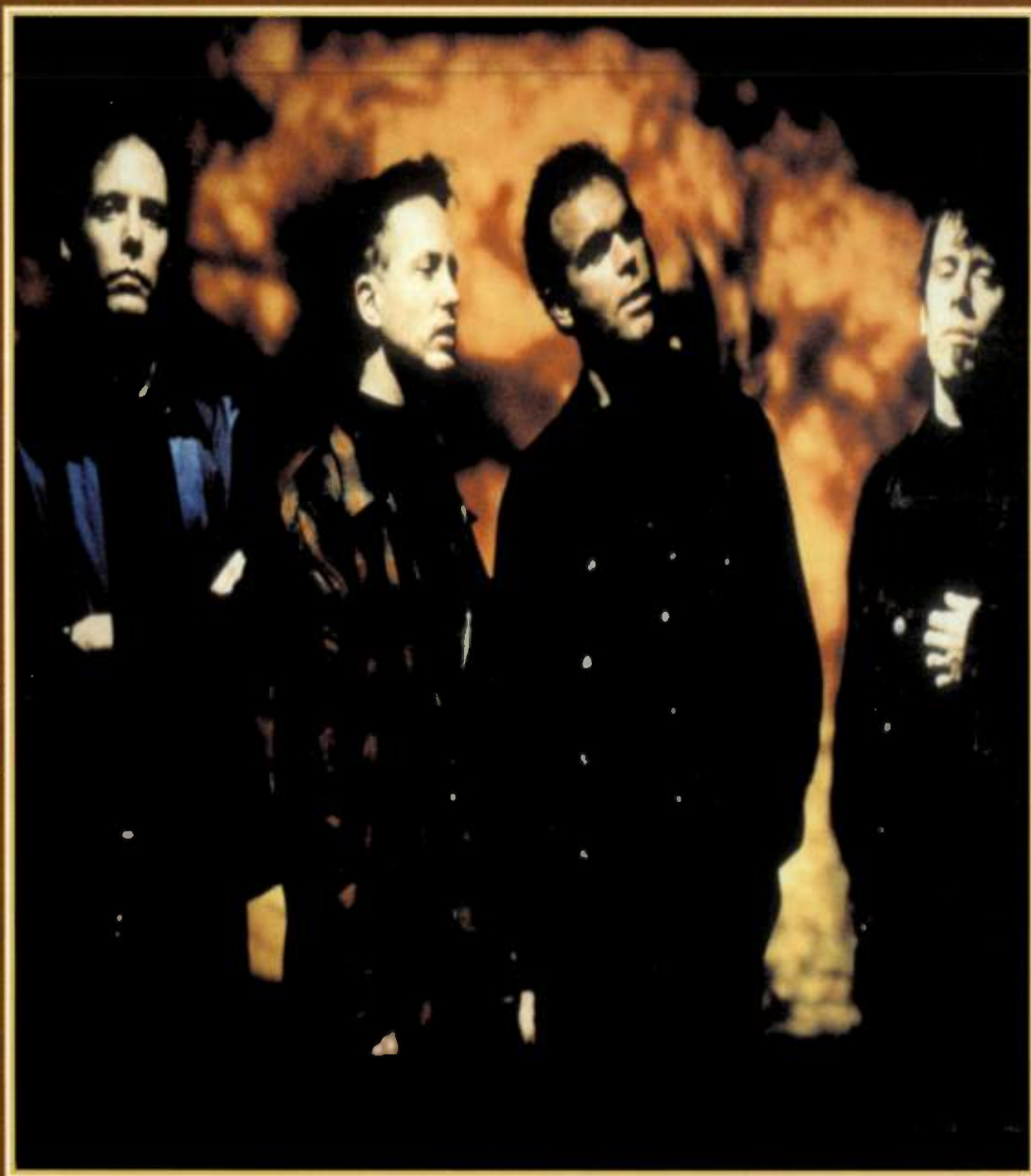
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P R O F I L E



ODDS

Vancouver's Odds are not hip, trendy or image-conscious in any obvious way and yet have become one of the most popular bands in Canada, particularly since the release of their pop masterpiece, *Good Weird Feeling*, earlier this year. Since then, the airwaves and the video networks have been clogged with a number of classic Odds singles, including "The Truth Untold" and "Eat My Brain."

Odds stormed onto the scene in 1991, with their enticng debut, *Neapolitan*, and solidified their reputation with 1993's *Bedbugs*, before recording *Good Weird Feeling*. The band is fronted by singer-guitarists Steven Drake and Craig Northey, and features a rhythm section consisting of bassist Doug Elliot and drummer Pat Steward, all of whom seem to have a psychic connection when they're playing together on stage.

Musical relatives of Matthew Sweet and the Gin Blossoms, Odds are masters of manipulation: taking what appear to be simple pop songs and proceeding to twist, tear, and distress them into something unique and challenging.

KAHLOIA
rocks

How do you put more ooo in your doo
and aah in your wah?

DO A KAHLÚA

& Milk

Doo-wah, doo-wah

1 part Kahlúa,

4 parts milk, rocks.

Aah, luscious licks.

Music for your mouth™



In the fall of 1993 Jane Siberry presented her sixth album *When I Was A Boy* to the world. It was a brilliant ordeal of a project that took nearly three years to complete and, like the season of its release, symbolized both a closure and a new beginning. Siberry had finally chosen to reject the pressure of outside influence, choosing instead to let herself be guided by her own personal compass. Embracing her instinct resulted in an album that simultaneously boasted the most integrity and commercial success the emotive songstress had ever enjoyed.

Maria, Siberry's latest offering, underlines this transition from creative compromise to artistry in the absolute. Though perhaps not as widely accessible as its predecessor, this work is a collection that confirms the validity of intuition and marks Siberry's continued multi-layered evolution. Highly



experimental, but never translating as unfocused, the album flirts subtly with jazz, while maintaining the signature vocal acrobatics of Canada's celestial diva. Produced in only 33 days, *Maria* is an uncensored and intimate self-portrait of a mature Jane Siberry.

"This album is a reflection of my freedom being integrated. It's not a conscious thing anymore. *When I Was A Boy* was a process, but now I'm trusting myself in a very natural way," explains Siberry.

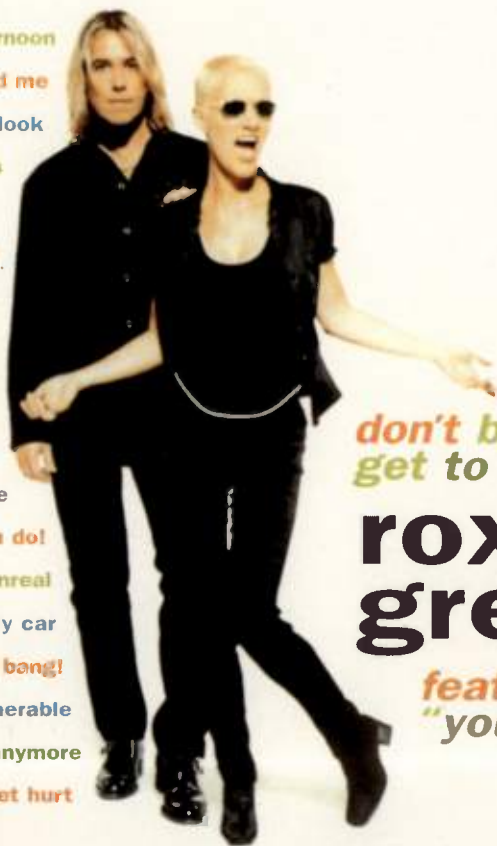
"*Maria* is an expansion of that idea, one that's opened the door for me to an improvisatory approach. It's a very for the moment thing. This feels like the closest to what I hear in my head, which is very satisfying."

Siberry's voluntary metamorphosis was confusing and difficult, but proved ultimately empowering for her both personally and creatively. "Trusting myself became a priority for me a few years ago. To do that, you have to know who you are. I spent a lot of time figuring it out. Now, it's trusting that." Siberry pauses — not because she's contriving a clever quote, but rather to try to be

Jane

By
**Nathalie-Roze
Fischer**

June afternoon
you don't understand me
the look
dressed for success
listen to your heart
dangerous
it must have been love
joyride
fading like a flower
(every time you leave)
the big L.
spending my time
how do you do!
almost unreal
sleeping in my car
crash! boom! bang!
vulnerable
she doesn't live here anymore
I don't want to get hurt



- 2 good friends
- 36 million albums
- 14 worldwide hits
- 4 brand new ones

don't bore us -
get to the chorus!

roxette's greatest hits

featuring
"you don't understand me"



Siberry's intuitive journey

exact. "Truth is something very important to me, the real truth you can feel in your gut. You see, if you don't care what other people think, what do you really want to do? It's hard to let go of the restraint sometimes, but then you have choice and greater trust."

Viewing her historical self as reasonably unenlightened, Siberry can easily grocery list the variables that held her back on numerous levels. "There was a lot of lying to myself and I was never really grounded or present," she

points out. "In the last five years, I've realized how full of fear I was. It's interesting, because I talk about it more now, but I feel more fearless than I ever have." And, listening to the calm in her voice, it's easy to believe that Jane Siberry is quite present and aware.

Giving up drinking was the catalyst to the fundamental shift in Siberry's outlook. The absence of a pacifying haze has made paramount her double objective of honesty and consciousness in the present

tense. "My main goal is to be 100% present every second of my life, until I die. I don't want to be mentally in the future or in the past. I did that for years," she sighs. "I think this realization comes from moving through periods of great happiness recently.

And, it's all I want, to be as direct as possible and in the present moment. Everything else will flow from that."

Though generally happier and stronger, Siberry maintains that she is not in a state of perpetual, cross-eyed bliss. "I feel like a more positive person now, but at the same time I go through darker periods than before. What frightens me most is when my inner-strength leaves me and I go into a funk, a terrible depression where you're so inside it you can't see out." Qualifying her

last statement, Siberry adds, "But I see these periods as positive, that there's a purpose to them. They end eventually and they're part of a movement forward."

"Oh My My," Maria's final 20 minute track, was intended as a hopeful candle for those resisting the downward pull inherent in self-evaluation. "With that song I'm trying to say that there's something at the end of the tunnel. Really peeling away at yourself takes a lot of courage and strength — partly not to commit suicide, especially when initiating it yourself without the guidance of organized religion. The people that come through it may be a different breed than ever before: stronger, beautiful beings."

Siberry pauses and then articulates a visualization of her theory, "I think some of us are going through a lot of shit right now, wading in it, but eventually we'll come out as butterflies — yellow ones." **E+**

NEW FRONTIERS

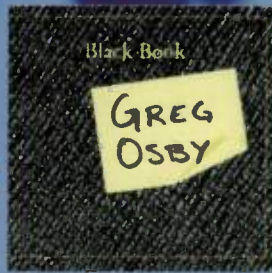


k.d. lang
All You Can Eat
Warner

Ambient and centred, ethereal and direct — a fitting combination of duettes to explain k.d. lang's latest release, *All You Can Eat*. Funky, warm, sensual, but still anchored by lang's pure vocals, *All You Can Eat* is a taste treat for the ears.



GREG OSBY
Black Book
EMI
Poetry and saxophone stem together on this back-jacking, mind-stabbing new musicscape by Greg Osby. *Black Book* is a heady mix that blends rhyme, poetry and the hard-edged saxophone that made him such a force among the M-base scene of the late-'80s.



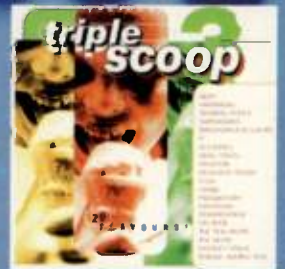
STRANGE ADVANCE
Worlds Away And Back
EMI

This album offers a taste of the first new music ("Dr. What You Want") and a remixed "Worlds Away" produced by this very successful Canadian band in almost 7 years, as well as reprising some of their greatest hits including "We Run," "When Love Becomes Electric," "She Controls Me" and the original "Worlds Away."



SEVEN MARY THREE
American Standard
Atlantic

"Cumbarsome" is a hit — an amazing song from this Florida four-some's debut album *American Standard*: an album full of great songs. Check out Seven Mary Three and "Cumbarsome," found on *American Standard* — seen becoming an international standard.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
Triple Scoop
EMI
Check out 20 bands on Triple Scoop, a 20 song compilation that features Blur, Radiohead, 13 Engines, Raggadeath and Blind Melon. Best of all, the CD has a suggested list price of \$9.98!



If we are temporarily out of stock, the above recordings (OR ANY in this magazine!) can be ordered through our special request service. Or call TOLL FREE 1-800-365-SAMS (7267), to order by mail, in Toronto, 416-977-6277.

DOES WINDOWS '95 MEAN

Even if you don't own a personal computer, it's been impossible to escape the waves of hype surrounding the recently launched Microsoft operating system, Windows '95.

What tends to get lost in the barrage is that an operating system is not an end unto itself, but basically an efficient environment from which you run those programs that actually "do" something for you, that allow you to produce work or entertainment. Assertions that Win95 may also cure cancer and ensure world peace to the contrary, support for multimedia (sound and video) is vastly improved, which is good news for music fans. The big payoff won't be evident for some months yet, when multimedia music titles become widely available that take full advantage of new standards and Win95 features (like Autorun — no need to run setup or install, music CDs and CD-ROMs will play automatically on insertion). But Win95 still makes even the current generation of CD-ROMs and enhanced-CDs 'sing' more seamlessly than ever before.

Tune In, turn on,

dropout: In one of those bizarre timings that you swear must involve more than mere coincidence, *Haight-Ashbury In The Sixties* (Rockument/Compton's New Media) arrived in the mail the very day following the death of Jerry Garcia. The "special offer" for Grateful Dead merchandise, bannered across the package (which converts to a "collectible stash box") was a little too "cosmic" for comfort.

Billing itself as a "rockumentary," the two-disc ROM offers a history of San Francisco counterculture as covered by scene "bible" *The SF Oracle* and narrated by founding member/editor Allen Cohen. The narrative, accompanied by hundreds of vintage photo stills, takes the viewer from Haight-Ashbury as a working class neighbourhood that first drew students for the cheap rents, to its culturally pivotal role as a "Summer Of Love" beacon to musicians and freedom seekers everywhere and its inevitable decline into media hype and political repression. Despite the myriad glib "we changed the world" hippie-isms, Cohen evocatively makes a case for his conclusion that "if we had somehow gone from the grey-flannel Eisenhower/McCarthy-ite '50s through to the three-piece-suit Reagan '80s, and into the fundamentalist '90s, the result of such a time-warp might have been a direct line to fascism or even holocaust."

The software uses graphics, photos, and posters effectively to impart a true flavour of the era. Navigation is theme-appropriate and reasonably intuitive. A reference section provides access, beyond the extensive narrative, to video, interview and (meagre) music clips, as well as to text and art



from *The Oracle* itself. Disc 2 features an electronic board/card game that only the most dedicated, dyed-in-the-wool er tie-dye types could tolerate for more than 15 minutes.

It's hard not to come away with bummed out karma from two major flaws. First, because the entire "history" is keyed to *The Oracle's* 12 issues (published between Sept., 1966 and Feb. 1968), it suffers from a smug, self congratulatory tone and a clear case of tunnel vision. Second, it's inconceivable that a disc covering a cultural period where music was so much more than mere soundtrack, but woven inexorably through the fabric of every event, could be released so lacking in the catalytic music itself. A few Grateful Dead tracks and Big Brother and the Holding Company and that's it.

Marketing Tesh: With his lucrative sideline as *Entertainment Tonight* host covering the bills, John Tesh seems to crank out albums of new age/pop-classical instrumental noodlings in the time it takes most of us to sit down to a good dinner. While *Backstage With John Tesh* (Digital Entertainment) is recommended for Tesh's loyal legion of elevator theme music fans only, others can grudgingly appreciate the elegant execution of this CD-ROM product.

The interface metaphor leaves you at the controls of either

a CD player, video player, or television camera for most of the modules. The TV camera lens frames a mock interview where you can ask Tesh a series of stock questions on everything ranging from his career moves and favourite family vacation to wait for it romantic advice. You can select performance and backstage videos for the virtual VCR, and choose among John Tesh's *Greatest Hits* for the CD player, which can be left playing in the background as you turn your attention to databasing your recipes or whatever.

Sugarcube flashbacks:

Headcandy (Ion) brings us back full circle to the trippy light

shows of the psychedelic '60s. Featuring a 30 minute dose of pleasing ambient/techno instrumentation (accessible via audio CD player or CD-ROM) courtesy of Brian Eno, the visual effects are multiplied throughout a darkened room by the refractive glasses included with the disc, similar to those cheapie cardboard 3-D movie throw-aways. Unless you must own everything that the prolific Mr. Eno has ever recorded, *Headcandy* is an interesting one-time curiosity piece only, about as enduring as black light art. However, this might be practical software for those kind of parties where everyone is equipped with the requisite eyewear and fueled with the mind-altering substances referenced at great length in *Haight-Ashbury In The Sixties*.



janet jackson

14 classic hits and 2 new tracks

Runaway
When I Think Of You
Escapade
Miss You Much
Love Will Never Do (Without You)
Black Cat
That's The Way Love Goes
What Have You Done For Me Lately
Nasty
Alright
Control
The Pleasure Principle
Rhythm Nation
Come Back To Me
Let's Wait Awhile
Twenty Foreplay

The non-stop jam of the decade

Design of a decade 1986/1996



Executive Producer: Janet Jackson
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Sam the Record Man
CANADA'S LARGEST AND BEST KNOWN RECORD STORE

REVIEWS BY

Stephen Hubbard
Nathalie-Rozé Fischer
Daibhid James
C.W. Smets

grooves

Punk 101

Part Of The Noise

POINTED STICKS

Zulu

No Escape

YOUNG CANADIANS

Zulu

Get It Straight

MODERNETTES

Zulu

The saddest part of the original punk era (circa '76-'81) was how certain bands got lost in the shuffle, and often burned out without having the chance to leave behind much recorded work. And many of the great albums by bands who came and went in an orgasmic spurt have been impossible to find for many years, leaving huge gaps in the history of punk, particularly in Canada.

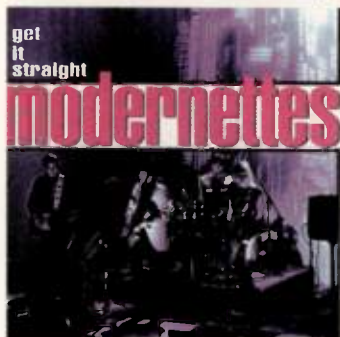
These excellent compilations shine a light on three of the best bands to emerge out of the burgeoning late-'70s Vancouver music scene.

The Pointed Sticks were the first band during the spiky days of 1978 to publicly embrace the pop end of the punk spectrum and for three years turned out a wonderful, quirky brand of rock that was melodic without sacrificing energy.

The Modernettes, who emerged in 1980, also embraced what had become known as power pop or new wave, playing aggressive ditties at a furious pace that stuck in your head like a glorious hangover and pushed your ass onto the dance floor.

Although still possessing hooks, the Young Canadians, who began their life as The K-Tels (until the company of the same name threatened to sue them), had more in common with other aggressive Vancouver bands like D.O.A. and The Subhumans than they did with the new wave crowd. Formed in 1979 by Art Bergmann, this classic trio instantly became known for its dangerously intense live shows.

Anyone truly interested in the history of punk in this country should check out these great collections they go a long way toward filling in the blanks of the origins of some of the most energetic, important music of the past two decades. — s.h.



Weirdstone WEIRDSTONE Indie

There are lots of different bands that get put in the category of psychedelic, some of which actually deserve it, but the label covers so many musical approaches that it's hard to keep track.

There's the Grateful Dead types who jam out for ever; there's the Syd Barrett types, all artsy, spacey and eccentric and God help us, there's the twee, lighter than air, flower power types.

The really valuable ones are those who can still rock out with actual songs and half-decent riffs and basslines. Toronto's Weirdstone is one of these. Having been around for a while, the central unit of Jay McBride (vocals, guitar) and Ron Gossling (bass) have tightened up rather than jammed out their material, to the benefit of all concerned.

McBride's vaguely new age lyrics and oddly far away vocals are kept in check by his more down-to-earth guitar work and Gossling's fine jazz-funk basslines, resulting in some fine songs with only one jam-out at the end, where it belongs.

Overall, a good-sounding collection of solid songs which flow together nicely. — d.j.

Niagara SQUIRREL Denon

One of the most exciting aspects of the emergence of the new generation of Canadian bands— especially on the indie side of things — is their discovery of the power of dynamics. Pure volume has always been a fairly effective, if predictable, way to convey energy and anger, but by turning down

the amps occasionally, just long enough to expose cracks in their sonic walls, a lot of bands are discovering a far more interesting, truly visceral way to make music.

A case in point is Squirrel, a four-piece, Toronto-based band whose jarring, bone-crunching debut, *Niagara*, offers enough dissonant



guitar to piss off anybody's neighbours (unless you happen to live next door to Thurston Moore), while retaining a measure of subtlety and a ragged pop sensibility.

Shifting rhythms, ultra-fuzzy guitar and lyrics that demand careful attention make *Niagara* an album that is worthy of repeated listens. — s.h.

Sacrifice MOTORHEAD MCA

Lord A 'mighty! This is no band, this is a force of nature! The grizzled warlord guardians of True Rock 'n' Roll are back from Mordor, warts and all, pummeling their way through ugly spurts of molten lava with tell-all titles like "War For War" and "All Gone To Hell," and that's the good news. The better news is that Lemmy's coffee-and-asphalt growl still makes Al "Scary Guy" Jourgensen sound like Sade.

Shame about the Ramones, but at least we've got these guys. — c.w.s.

Be Here Now SUZANNE LITTLE Nettwerk

Once upon a time wispy, yet soulful, female singer-songwriters had an easier job of it, all they had

to do was strap on an acoustic guitar and go to work or dig up some low key folk or cocktail jazz band for company. Times change, though, and now if you want to stand out you have to add some flourishes and so Suzanne Little, formerly half of Lava Hay, now gone solo, adds in such touches as mellotron,



dobro, steel guitar, violin and cello. The first single and video "Tragic Flaw" even uses, gasp, a drum machine (but it's the only song on the album to do so).

Having dumped the vocal harmonizing with minimal folk-inspired backing of her old band, Little is obviously

hoping to move to territory closer to that occupied by fellow Nettwerk Records chanteuse, Sarah McLachlan. Little lacks the rich vocals of McLachlan, of course, or even Mae Moore — she's still a wispy folkie at heart — but basically she pulls it off.

This sort of mood music works fine in measured doses, but alas, over the space of a whole album it becomes a little redundant. Still, the dreamy, coffee house crowd that likes McLachlan and Moore should applaud this album quietly, of course. — d.j.

Waste A Day
GROWL
Indie

Beguiling Toronto four-piece Grownl has just released an unusually impressive and sincere debut. Produced by Andrew Cash, one of Canada's foremost pioneers of creatively-channeled angst, *Waste A Day* is a

collection of emotionally articulate offerings agreeably coupled with a texturally rich soundscape.

Having collectively experienced several previous incarnations (notably Bone Decent, Touchstones and Daddys of Eden), the band alternates between shaded subtlety and chaos with



instinctive ease and conviction. Successfully interweaving Celtic, punk, folk, pop and even Latin influences, Grownl's sonic collage is simultaneously magnetic and worryingly indescribable.

The band functions primarily as a unit, but

guttural vocalist Tony Evans who pens the profoundly personal lyrics is clearly Grownl's nucleus. He invites the listener into his intimacy through achingly poignant confessionals, and reveals his uncooked emotions with a vulnerability that bleeds. However, Evans' weighty lyrics are balanced with the more aggressive contributions of his bandmates. Bassist Derrick Brady provides the essential libido-driven moan, while sharing backing vocal duties with deft guitar wizard Peter Kesper. Serving as Grownl's able anchor is twin brother Mark Kesper.

The eclectic quartet boasts both solid musicianship and a shared commitment to innovation that never flirts with self-indulgence. Admirably, this first effort translates on permanent record as Grownl's triple ethic of skill, integrity and impassioned performance. — n.r.f.

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RANT ON

DEAR NETWORK:

Having picked the mag for most of the past year, I couldn't help notice how many references there were to some old rocker named Robbie Rox. Is this a joke or do you really like the guy that much? If so, can you tell me a bit more about him. For instance, is he still playing live shows?

JOHN BALL

North York, Ont.

Hey, thanks for the note John. First of all, our coverage of Robbie Rox is no joke — he's one of our favourite local artists and a guy with a wonderfully twisted take on modern life. He's also a great musician (as are the members of The Rude Band, with whom he plays and records) and a very funny live performer. He recently wrapped up a series of gigs at the Black Swan in Toronto and you can expect to see him playing around T.O. sometime soon. He's also rumored to be recording a new album due out next spring. Stay tuned.

YO, NETWORK:

As I write this letter, the Quebec referendum is still up in the air. And even though I have lots of friends who are considering voting "Oui," I haven't given up my faith in Canada. I sure don't like everything about your mag — wish you could run longer stories — but I'm glad you cover so many great Canadian bands. Keep up the good work.

Peace,

JODI LEDUC

Montréal, Quebec

Thanks for the encouragement, Jodi, we'll do our best.

NETWORK welcomes all letters but reserves the right to edit for space or clarity. Snail mail to "Rant On," 287 MacPherson Ave., Toronto, Ontario M4V 1A4 or e-mail us at network@astral.magic.ca. Please include a daytime phone number.

DEAR SAM

DEAR SAM:

On several occasions I've read about Green Day's earliest release. It was their first EP and was released in 1989, on the indie rock label Lookout, based in San Francisco. The EP is a seven-inch (I'd prefer it on CD if at all possible) and contains four songs, its title is *1000 Hours* and may be under the band's old name, Sweet Children. Please help me out, my curiosity is killing me and you're my only hope.

ALISON ALBOVIAS

Mississauga, Ont.

Green Day's 1000 Hours EP is still available on vinyl as a special import (Cargo/Lookout 17), but is collected with a number of other tracks on 1039/Smoothed Out Slappy Hours (Cargo/Lookout 22CD).

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.

Send your request to:

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287 MacPherson Ave. Toronto, Ontario M4V 1A4

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suzanne little
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suzanne little be here now



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CHARTS

POP

1	VARIOUS		7	VARIOUS	
	<i>Dance Mix '95</i>	Quality		<i>Dead Presidents</i>	Quality
2	VARIOUS		8	LUCIANO	
	<i>Dangerous Minds S/T</i>	MCA		<i>Where There's Life</i>	PGS
3	MARIAH CAREY		9	T.L.C	
	<i>Daydream</i>	Sony		<i>CrazySexyCool</i>	BMG
4	ALANIS MORISSETTE		10	MICHAEL JACKSON	
	<i>Jagged Little Pill</i>	Warner		<i>History</i>	Sony
5	GREEN DAY		JAZZ		
	<i>Insomniac</i>	Warner	1	VARIOUS	
6	SHANIA TWAIN			<i>Mercury Songbook</i>	Verve/PGS
	<i>The Woman In Me</i>	PGS	2	CHARLIE HADEN & HANK JONES	
7	TOM COCHRANE			<i>Steal Away</i>	Verve/PGS
	<i>Ragged Ass Road</i>	EMI	3	HARGROVE/McBRIDE/SCOTT	
8	JANET JACKSON			<i>Parker's Mood</i>	Verve/PGS
	<i>Design Of A Decade</i>	PGS	4	STANLEY CLARKE	
9	LENNY KRAVITZ			<i>/AL DI MEOLA/ J.L. PONTY</i>	
	<i>Circus</i>	Virgin		<i>The Right Of Strings</i>	EMI
10	RANKIN FAMILY		5	FREDDY COLE	
	<i>Endless Seasons</i>	EMI		<i>Always</i>	Fantasy/PGS
11	BLUE RODEO		6	McCOY TYNER	
	<i>Nowhere To Here</i>	Warner		<i>Infinity</i>	Impulse/MCA
12	AC/DC		7	CHARLES MINGUS	
	<i>Ballbreaker</i>	Warner		<i>Mingus Mingus Mingus</i>	Impulse/MCA
13	SMASHING PUMPKINS		8	DAVE YOUNG	
	<i>Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness</i>	Virgin		<i>Piano Bass Duets</i>	Justin Time/Fusion
14	RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS		9	MILES DAVIS	
	<i>One Hot Minute</i>	Warner		<i>Live At The</i>	
15	TAKE THAT			<i>Plugged Nickel, 1965</i>	Columbia/Sony
	<i>Nobody Else</i>	BMG	10	JANE BUNNETT	
16	k.d. lang			<i>Rendez-Vous Brazil</i>	Justin Time/Fusion
	<i>All You Can Eat</i>	Warner	ALTERNATIVE		
17	MICHAEL BOLTON		1	FOO FIGHTERS	
	<i>Greatest Hits</i>	Sony		<i>Foo Fighters</i>	EMI
18	MADONNA		2	SONIC YOUTH	
	<i>Something To Remember</i>	Warner		<i>Washing Machine</i>	MCA
19	LIVE		3	SILVERCHAIR	
	<i>Throwing Copper</i>	MCA		<i>Frogstomp</i>	Sony
20	HOOTIE & THE BLOWFISH		4	NINE INCH NAILS	
	<i>Cracked Rear View</i>	Warner		<i>Downward Spiral</i>	Warner

COUNTRY

1	SHANIA TWAIN		5	FILTER	
	<i>The Woman In Me</i>	PGS		<i>Short Bus</i>	Warner
2	ALAN JACKSON		6	URGE OVERKILL	
	<i>Greatest Hits</i>	BMG		<i>Exit The Dragon</i>	MCA
3	DWIGHT YOAKAM		7	EVERCLEAR	
	<i>Gone</i>	Warner		<i>Sparkle & Fade</i>	EMI
4	REBA McENTYRE		8	GARBAGE	
	<i>Starting Over</i>	MCA		<i>Garbage</i>	MCA
5	MAVERICKS		9	SEAWEEED	
	<i>Music For All Occasions</i>	MCA		<i>Spanaway</i>	PGS
6	GARTH BROOKS		10	TREBLE CHARGER	
	<i>Greatest Hits</i>	EMI		<i>Self=Title</i>	Sonic Unyon
7	ALISON KRAUSS		INDIE		
	<i>Now That I've Found You</i>	Rounder	1	HAYDEN	
8	CHARLIE MAJOR			<i>Everything I Long For</i>	Sonic Unyon
	<i>Lucky Man</i>	BMG	2	TREBLE CHARGER	
9	MARTINA McBRIDE			<i>Self=Title</i>	Sonic Unyon
	<i>Wild Angels</i>	BMG	3	VARIOUS	
10	LORRIE MORGAN			<i>All Skanadian Club</i>	Stomp
	<i>Greatest Hits</i>	BMG	4	GLUELEG	
				<i>Heroic Doses</i>	Page

R&B/DANCE

1	MARIAH CAREY		5	SIANSPHERIC	
	<i>Daydream</i>	Sony		<i>Somnium</i>	Sonic Unyon
2	JANET JACKSON		6	CAPTAIN TRACTOR	
	<i>Design Of A Decade</i>	PGS		<i>East Of Eden</i>	Indie
3	VARIOUS		7	SPARKMARKER	
	<i>Dance Mix '95</i>	Quality		<i>Products And Accessories</i>	Indie
4	VARIOUS		8	CUB	
	<i>Energy Rush III</i>	Quality		<i>Come Out, Come Out</i>	Mint
5	FAITH EVANS		9	WYRD SISTERS	
	<i>Faith</i>	BMG		<i>Inside The Dream</i>	Indie
6	ARTIST FORMERLY KNOWN AS PRINCE		10	CLAUDIA'S CAGE	
	<i>The Gold Experience</i>	Warner		<i>Gidrush</i>	Room Recordings

MOVIE SALES

1	Star Wars Trilogy	Fox
2	James Bond Collection	MGM
3	Batman Forever	Warner
4	Taxi Driver	Columbia
5	That's Entertainment 3	MGM
6	Interview With The Vampire	Warner
7	Dumb & Dumber	MCA
8	Little Women ('94)	Columbia
9	Free Willy 2	Warner
10	Might Morphin Power Rangers Movie	Fox

SAM THE INTERACTIVE MAN'S TOP 10

1	NHL '96	DOS/CD
2	NHL '96	Genesis
3	Command & Conquer	MPC
4	Maximum Carnage	Genesis
5	Mortal Kombat 2	SNES
6	Mortal Kombat 2	Genesis
7	NHL '96	SNES
8	Virtua Racing	Genesis
9	Maximum Carnage	SNES
10	NHL '95	SNES

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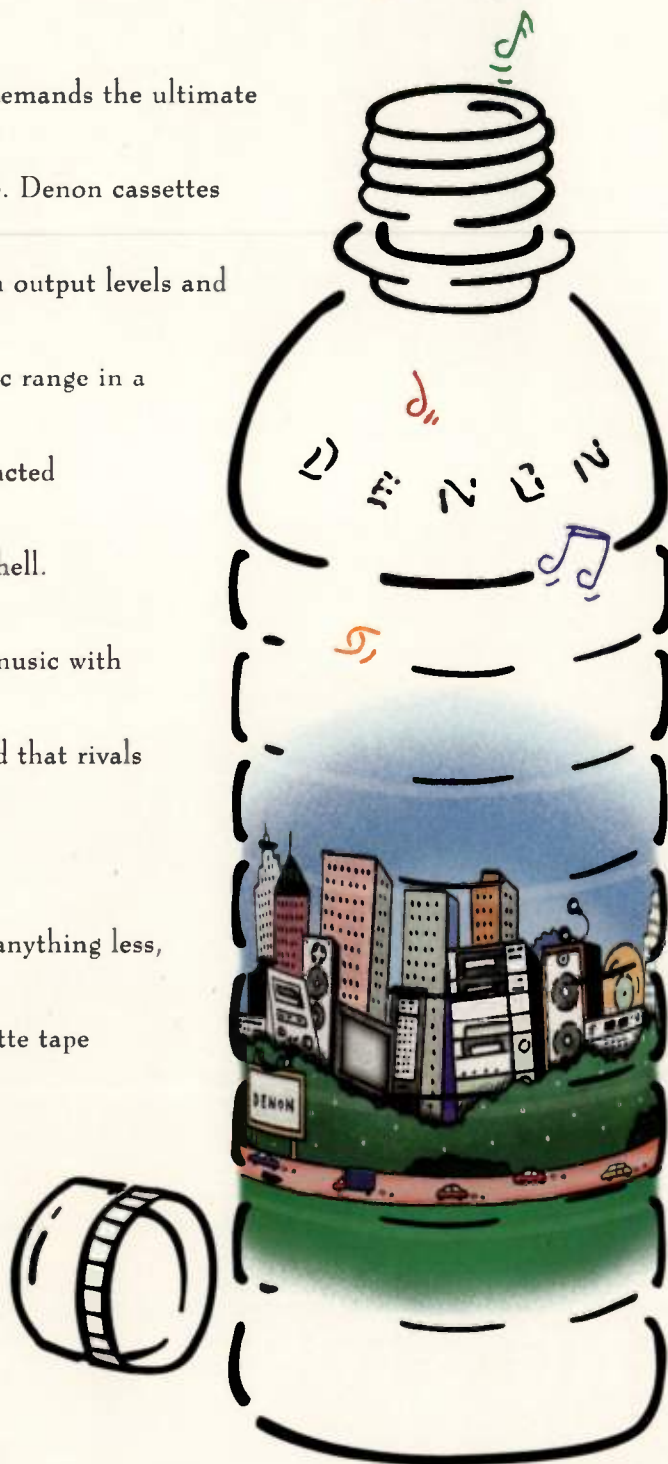
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