

THOMAS DOLBY ON (THIN) ICE • CYNDI LAUPER ON A (HOT) ROLL

MAY 1984 VOL.3 NO.7

# RECORD



\$1.50 U.K. 80p.

**ROBERT  
FRIPP**

THE RECORD  
INTERVIEW

**JOHN  
& YOKO**

ONCE MORE,  
FROM THE  
HEART



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# PRETENDERS

LIFE AND  
LIFE ONLY





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Lone Justice's latent hillbilly tendencies; the LeRoi Brothers teen-trance trashabilly; Don Felder, Eagle flying too close to the ground; Simon Townshend on sibling rivalry; Re-Flux hires a machine because it don't talk back; Howard Jones can't go for that image thang.

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PHOTO: BARRY MANNING

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As King Crimson embarks on another tour, we get the Fripperspective on such topics as the English music press, punks and dinosaurs, the magical year of 1969, Eno and Bowie, frustration and satisfaction in the current band, and the rewards and rigors of discipline. And as a special treat, some exclusive and soul-savaging samples of Crimson "humor."

# RECORD

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## PRETENDERS: LIFE AND LIFE ONLY

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PHOTO: ANASTASIA PANDORA/ALAMY/CONCEPT

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PHOTO: LARA LUVINE

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# TOP 100 ALBUMS

- 1 LEARNING TO CRAWL  
The Pretenders *Sire*
- 2 COLOUR BY NUMBERS  
Culture Club *Epic*
- 3 MILK AND HONEY  
John Lennon/Yoko *Polygram*
- 4 SYNCHRONICITY  
The Police *A&M*
- 5 THRILLER  
Michael Jackson *Epic*
- 6 1984  
Van Halen *Warner Bros.*
- 7 TOUCH  
Eurythmics *BMG*
- 8 SPORTS  
Huey Lewis & the News  
*Chrysalis*
- 9 CAN'T SLOW DOWN  
Lionel Richie *Motown*
- 10 90125  
Yes *Atco*
- 11 AN INNOCENT MAN  
Billy Joel *Columbia*
- 12 WINDOWS AND WALLS  
Dan Fogelberg *Fall Moon/Epic*
- 13 UH-HUH  
John Cougar *Mellencamp/Riva*
- 14 WHAT'S NEW  
Linda Ronstadt *A&M*
- 15 ELIMINATOR  
ZZ Top *Warner Bros.*
- 16 GENESIS  
Genesis *Atlantic*
- 17 BIG CHILL  
Soundtrack *Motown*
- 18 SEVEN AND THE RAGGED TIGER  
Duran Duran *Capitol*
- 19 SHE'S SO UNUSUAL  
Cyndi Lauper *Parrain/CBS*
- 20 UNDER A BLOOD RED SKY  
U2 *Island*
- 21 ROCK 'N SOUL, PT. 1  
Hall and Oates *RCR*

- 22 DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH  
Judas Priest *Columbia*
- 23 CHRISTINE MCVIE  
Christine McVie *Warner Bros.*
- 24 SHOUT AT THE DEVIL  
Mötley Crüe *Fine*
- 25 REBEL YELL  
Billy Idol *Chrysalis*
- 26 UNDERCOVER  
Rolling Stones *Rolling Stones*
- 27 FLASHDANCE  
Soundtrack *Casablanca*
- 28 MADONNA  
Madonna *Sire*
- 29 TOO LOW FOR ZERO  
Elton John *Geffen*
- 30 METAL HEALTH  
Quiet Riot *Funk/CBS*
- 31 LABOUR OF LOVE  
UB40 *Virgin/A&M*
- 32 IN HEAT  
The Romantics *Nonesuch*
- 33 THE FLAT EARTH  
Thomas Dolby *Capitol*
- 34 INFIDELS  
Bob Dylan *Columbia*
- 35 THE CROSSING  
Big Country *Polygram*
- 36 SPARKLE IN THE RAIN  
Simple Minds *A&M*
- 37 WHAT IS BEAT  
English Beat *IRS*
- 38 YENTL  
Soundtrack *Columbia*
- 39 PIPES OF PEACE  
Paul McCartney *Columbia*
- 40 SPEAKING IN TONGUES  
Talking Heads *Sire*
- 41 DECLARATION  
The Alarm *IRS*
- 42 BARK AT THE MOON  
Ozzy Osbourne *J&R/CBS*
- 43 LET'S DANCE  
David Bowie *EMI*
- 44 BUSY BODY  
Luther Vandross *Epic*
- 45 TRUE  
Spandau Ballet *Chrysalis*
- 46 MORE FUN IN THE NEW WORLD  
X *Epic*
- 47 LIVE FROM EARTH  
Pat Benatar *Chrysalis*
- 48 HEARTS AND BONES  
Paul Simon *Warner Bros.*

- 49 BEAUTY STAB  
ABC *Mercury*
- 50 ERROR IN THE SYSTEM  
Peter Schilling *Fine*
- 51 STRIP  
Adam Ant *Fine*
- 52 WAR  
U2 *Island*
- 53 MISTER HEARTBREAK  
Laurie Anderson *Warner Bros.*
- 54 PYROMANIA  
Def Leppard *Mercury*
- 55 1999  
Prince *Warner Bros.*
- 56 PUNCH THE CLOCK  
Elvis Costello *Columbia*
- 57 REACH THE BEACH  
The Fixx *MCA*
- 58 MURMUR  
R.E.M. *IRS*
- 59 ALIVE, SHE CRIED  
The Doors *Fine*
- 60 THE WILD HEART  
Stevie Nicks *Atlantic*
- 61 PRINCIPLE OF MOMENTS  
Robert Plant *Atlantic*
- 62 FOOTLOOSE  
Soundtrack *Columbia*
- 63 DURAN DURAN  
Duran Duran *Capitol*
- 64 PLAYS LIVE  
Peter Gabriel *Geffen*
- 65 STATE OF CONFUSION  
The Kinks *Atco*
- 66 THE PRESENT  
The Moody Blues *Threshold*
- 67 FLICK OF THE SWITCH  
AC/DC *Atlantic*
- 68 LITTLE ROBBERS  
The Motels *Capitol*
- 69 FASCINATION  
Human League *A&M*
- 70 THE REAL MACAW  
Graham Parker *Atco*
- 71 KISSING TO BE CLEVER  
Culture Club *Epic*
- 72 RANT 'N' RAVE  
Stray Cats *EMI*
- 73 KEEP IT UP  
Loverboy *Columbia*
- 74 JUNGLE  
Dwight Twilley *EMI*
- 75 LAWYERS IN LOVE  
Jackson Browne *Fine*
- 76 MADNESS  
Madness *Geffen*

- 77 BORN AGAIN  
Black Sabbath *Warner Bros.*
- 78 COLD BLOODED  
Rick James *Gordy*
- 79 FRONTIERS  
Journey *Columbia*
- 80 CARGO  
Men At Work *Columbia*
- 81 LISTEN  
A Flock of Seagulls *Jive/Atco*
- 82 ALPHA  
Asia *Geffen*
- 83 NAKED EYES  
Naked Eyes *EMI*
- 84 WHAMMY  
B-52's *Warner Bros.*
- 85 SWEET DREAMS ARE MADE OF THIS  
Eurythmics *MCA*
- 86 PLEASURE VICTIM  
Berlin *Geffen*
- 87 NO FRILLS  
Betty Midler *Atlantic*
- 88 THE HURTING  
Tears for Fears *Mercury*
- 89 JARREAU  
Al Jarreau *Warner Bros.*
- 90 GET IT RIGHT  
Aretha Franklin *Atco*
- 91 NEW GOLD DREAMS  
Simple Dreams *A&M*
- 92 TRAVELS  
Pat Metheny *ECM*
- 93 TWANG BAR KING  
Adrian Belew *Island*
- 94 GIRL AT HER VOLCANO  
Rickie Lee Jones *Warner Bros.*
- 95 PIECE OF MIND  
Iron Maiden *Capitol*
- 96 BUSINESS AS USUAL  
Men At Work *Columbia*
- 97 WHITE FEATHERS  
Kajagoogoo *EMI*
- 98 OUTSIDE INSIDE  
The Tubes *Capitol*
- 99 MIKE'S MURDER  
Joe Jackson *A&M*
- 100 ALBUM  
Joan Jett & The Blackhearts *MCA*

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## TELL US ABOUT IT

WHEN I SAW THE ARTICLE about the making of Billy Joel's video "Tell Her About It" ("Bodyguards, Limos—And 600 Extras," February RECORD), I couldn't wait to read it because I was one of the lucky extras who was in the filming of Billy's video. I was terribly let down by the article, though, because Howard Polskin portrayed Joel as cold, distant and just there to get the job done. That couldn't be further from the truth. Billy was very nice and funny. He joked and talked with the extras and signed autographs. I left with a very good impression of him and I'm not going to let Polskin's article spoil that. I hope no one else will either.

JENNIFER HILL  
Florence, SC

## BOWIE BOOSTER

AS A FAN OF DAVID Bowie's who is neither a cult to lower "dating back to the days of Ziggy" or a teenybopper who thinks that Bowie is "cute," I must take issue with the comments regarding Bowie and his 1983 world tour made by Gina Arnold in your magazine's February Guest Pass ("Cheating The Fans"). While I sympathize with Arnold in her attempt at analysis of the recent music video revolution and its relationship to the importance of the artist's live and recorded music, her exemplary use of David Bowie to support her premise that the excellent recording artist is not

necessarily the best performer and vice versa could not have been more inappropriate.

First of all, Arnold admits to having "stayed home" from the Bowie 1983 concert tour. Like thousands of others all over the world, I did not. Frankly and simply, the author knows not of what she speaks. David Bowie's live performances this year proved once again that he is a consummate and rare musician who enjoys great success as an eminently gifted recording, as well as performing, artist. To begrudge Bowie the media attention this phenomenon deserves—because it is certainly overdue and is admittedly "safer" now that Bowie has chosen a less controversial persona—is a disservice to Bowie, who has earned the commercial success he is now enjoying and will without a doubt continue to turn out the most innovative music in all of rock instead of resting on his laurels.

Finally, Arnold's criticism of Bowie's latest album, which she praises solely as "accessible and polished" and representative of Bowie's talent as an employer, and of his 1983 concert tour, evinces her complete lack of knowledge regarding David Bowie's artistry over the years, as well as a failure to appreciate his development. One only hopes that the musical events of 1983 are indicative of what's to come from Bowie in the future.

Whatever Gina Arnold was attempting to say about the future of rock 'n' roll lost all of its credibility when she attempted to use David Bowie as

a negative example when he is, and hopefully will continue to be for a long time to come, the very best of rock 'n' roll's future.

LESLIE SCOTT SHEFFIELD  
Ocean Springs, MS

## PAUL IS DEAD

HA! FINALLY SOMEBODY who agrees with me on Paul McCartney. Craig Zeller hit the nail on the head with his review of *Pipes of Peace* in the February issue. I thought I was alone in my contempt for Paul's continuing battle with Billy Joel to see who can get a job working a cocktail lounge, but now at least *somebody* with some sort of authority in the world of showbiz criticism has decided not to follow the norm and just blindly go along with whatever this ex-Beatle (and ex-rocker) does simply because his past is such a major part of all of our childhoods. Now if I could only find somebody who didn't think Michael Jackson was Jesus.

JIMMY NEIBAUR  
Racine, WI

## SEZ WHO?

IT'S A SHAME RECORD printed such unqualified statements as those made by Craig Zeller in his review of Paul McCartney's *Pipes of Peace* album. Zeller claims the only good McCartney album is *Wings Greatest Hits*, ignoring *Band on the Run*, *Venus and Mars*, *Wings Over America* and *Tug of War*, to name a few.

Zeller's appraisal will change nothing: Paul McCartney remains one of our greatest living musicians, a great composer and great artist.

RAINER ADAM  
Wuerzburg, West Germany

I COULD NOT BELIEVE Craig Zeller's review of Paul McCartney's *Pipes of Peace*. Admittedly the album isn't one of Paul's strongest efforts, but to go on and call *Band on the Run* and *Tug of War* "hodgepodge efforts" boggles the mind. What's really funny is that this hypocrite seems to like some of Paul's stuff ("Jet," "Keep Under Cover," "Take It Away") while at the same time slagging his work as "mediocre" and "garbage." At the end of his review Zeller quotes Groucho Marx, a very wise man. My favorite line of his is "Opinions are like noses—everybody's got one." I suspect Craig Zeller has one pretty warped hooter!

DANIEL LOPEZ  
Westminster, CA

I WAS OUTRAGED BY Craig Zeller's review of McCartney's *Pipes of Peace*. Most of us love Paul's entertaining melodies and, yes, *love songs*! I don't know why Zeller has a chip on his shoulder or what he has against McCartney, but the next time he gets the urge to spout off and write such garbage about a superstar who has proven himself over and over for 20 years, he'd best keep it to himself. He was way off base on this one.

SUSAN PETRUCCI  
Moundsville, WV

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## FOR PETE'S SAKE, SIMON

*What to do when your big brother casts a giant shadow*

NEW YORK—Chris Jagger, Tom Fogerty...

"When people would ask me, 'Are you Pete Townshend's brother?' I'd say, No—I'm in this band. Now, I just say, Look, I'm Simon Townshend, and you can have it—if you don't like it, lump it."

Livingston Taylor, David Knopfler...

"I must be mad, if I was gonna worry about it, to have Pete produce the record—it would be like ruining my life. I guess people think he made the record for me—put it together for me—and it's crazy."

Mike McGear, Donnie and Johnny Van Zant...

"All he did was sit there reading a magazine half the time going, 'Don't like that—that sounds alright—that sounds horrible,' for three months. He did take the producer's role, but what bothers me is the way a lot of people feel he contributed to the record much more than he did. You might think it's him singing background on 'I'm The Answer,' but it's not."

Erma and Carolyn Franklin, Lucy Simon...

If anyone might beat the rap of being constantly in the shadow of a famous sibling, it could be Simon Townshend. He's been playing for 16 years; he's got a stable family life (wife Janie was the title subject of his Warner Bros. single back in 1975); his credentials

include fronting a band, On The Air, with Big Country's rhythm section, Tony Butler and Mark Brzezicki; his debut Polydor solo album *Sweet Sounds* shows he has some pleasant if hardly earth-shaking ideas and maybe the chops to back them up; and he seems pleased with the band he assembled after the album,

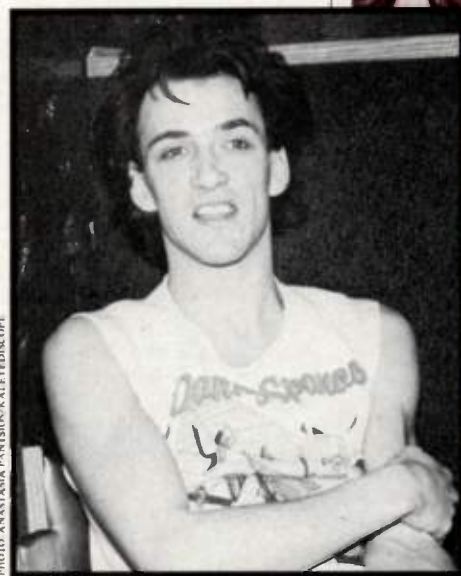
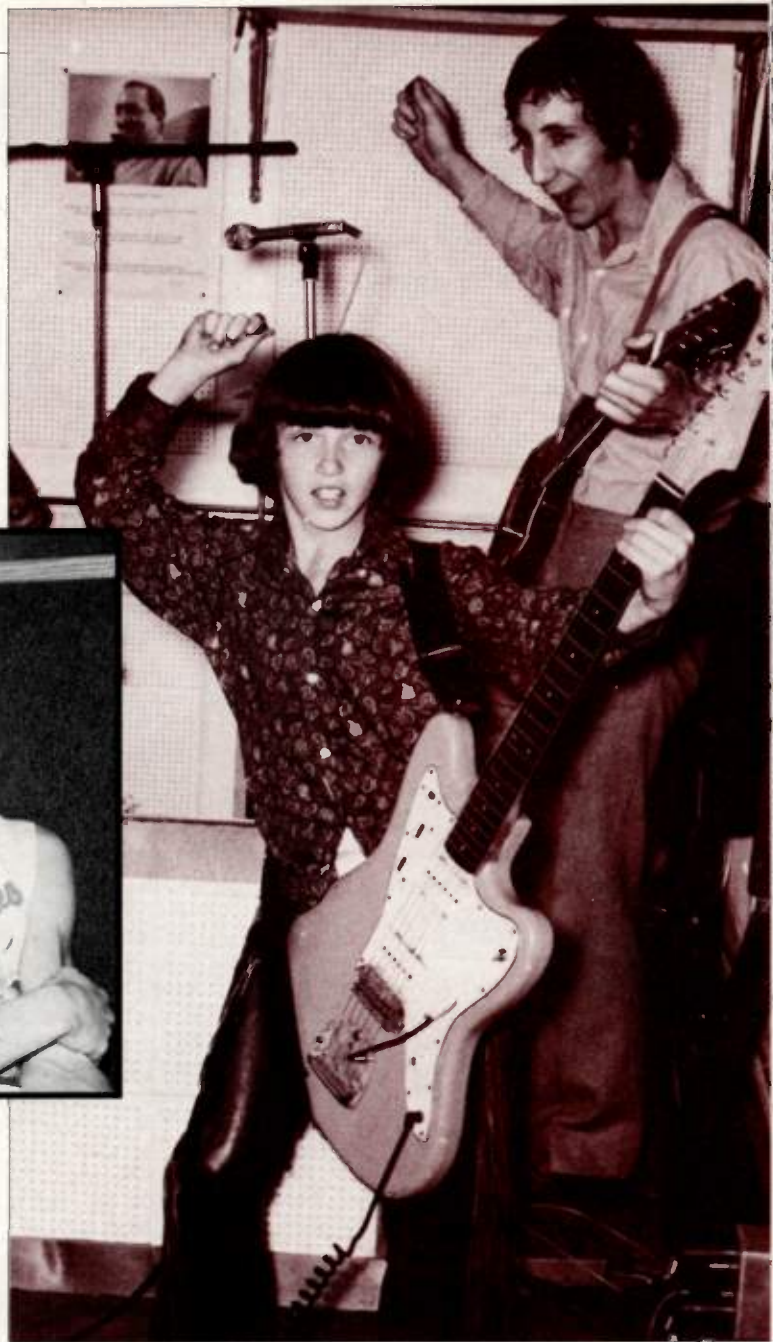


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which just completed a month long American tour. Still...

"I think for the band's sake we've got to do (the next album) separately. Pete's got stuff he wants to do himself this year; during my record, he was getting itchy to play. But I haven't actually talked to him about it."

"It's an awkward situation."  
—Wayne King



**Simon at age nine with brother Pete and (inset) today: 'I must be mad...'**

## MAKING HIS OWN BREAKS

*Howard Jones demonstrates the power of positive thinking*

LOS ANGELES—If Howard Jones really believes luck is something one must create, then the 28-year-old Southampton, England native ought to be giving himself high marks in the good fortune department. Not only did this

one-man synthesizer band manage to hook up with Duran Duran producer Colin Thurston his first time out, but the product of their labor, a single called "New Song," reached the top of the British charts, as did a followup, "What Is Love." Now Jones has an American label, Elektra; "New Song" is climbing the charts here; and he's put together a band for a spring tour of the States in support of his debut LP, the Rupert Hine-produced *New Song*.

"People say I've been so lucky, but I know why it happened," opines Jones. "I

wouldn't allow it not to happen. I was rejected by every single record company under the sun loads of times. I couldn't get gigs. I suffered all kinds of humiliations and failures, but I just kept on doing what I wanted to do."

A classically-trained pianist, Jones retreated to synthesizer after dropping out of a music school in Manchester. Disillusioned with academia's approach to the art, Jones was certain he would be better off answering only to himself. Always, though, the desire was to communicate. To this end, lyrics remain a prime concern. Of

the issues he addresses (conditioning, realism versus romantic love, image) Jones comments: "There's so much one can offer people through saying a few things in songs, because people can really identify. I abhor the whole image concept. Rupert and I have worked with synths so much that we know all the natty, horrible little sounds that turn people right off; we've gone for interest and feel. The song is the most important thing to me. If the song isn't right, no matter how you do it, it will never be any good."

—Robyn Flans



# PUTTING UP A GOOD FRONT

*Lone Justice disavows the 'underground' trip*

LOS ANGELES—Starting out as an acoustic rockabilly duo a year-and-a-half ago, guitarist Ryan Hedgecock, now 22, and 19-year-old singing wunder-kind Maria McKee steeped themselves in American musical arcana as if they were cramming for finals. They emerged with a knowledge of and passion for roots music as unlikely as it is convincing. Teaming with fellow Angelenos Marvin Etzioni on bass and Don Heffington (an

alumnus of Emmylou Harris' Hot Band) on drums, Hedgecock and McKee formed Lone Justice, moving from pure country to a country-rooted eclecticism as they developed. In an all-but-unprecedented move for a major label in this era, Geffen Records signed Lone Justice while the band was still in its infancy, banking on its potential and McKee's remarkable impersonation of a sweet-singing thrush from deep in the Southern hills.

"It's my latent hillbilly tendency," McKee says with a coquettish laugh. "It's my soul singing, but it's a character I portray. I love the look—the Dust Bowl trip, the Carter Family, the whole mountain thing. But there's another part of me that really wants to be Joan Jett."

As a teenage vinyl junkie bored with what he was hearing on the radio, Hedgecock spent every spare penny on roots records, and discovered the chestnuts that now comprise



**Lone Justice: Latent hillbillies 'fess up**

the non-original portion of the Lone Justice repertoire, like Merle Haggard's "Working Man's Blues" and the Bailey Brothers' "Rattlesnake Daddy." Recently, the band has tapped more urban sources like the Talking Heads ("Heaven") and the Velvet Underground

("Head Held High").

As for their intentions as a band, McKee states, "We're not into this 'underground' trip. We want to be commercial. We play this music because we love it, but we want to appeal to people—lots of people."

—Bud Scoppa

# TEEN-TRANCE TRASHABILLY

*Getting a handle on the LeRoi Brothers' exotic rock*

AUSTIN—For journalists, club owners and anyone else who needs a handle on the LeRoi Brothers' savage musical concoction, singer/rhythm guitarist Steve Doerr points to the band's press kit. "It says right here, you fool," he chortles good-naturedly, "it's Southern-fried teen-trance trashabilly! It's the next big thing!"

Though purists may be offended by the Austin-based quartet's coarse-grind blend of rockabilly, R&B, surf and country blues, those with an ear for audaciously raunchy rock 'n' roll will have no trouble adhering to the advice imparted by the title of the band's new mini-LP (its first major label release, on Columbia), *Forget About The Danger. Think Of The Fun*. Lead guitarist and singer Don Leady has a simple explanation for the LeRoi's outrageous stylistic collisions. "I listen to everything," he notes with an "aw shucks" tone. "I remember the stuff that I like and try to forget what I heard that I didn't like."



**The LeRoi Brothers: Audaciously raunchy rock 'n' roll**

Leady and Doerr left their hometown of St. Louis in 1969 for sojourns in Nashville, Macon, San Francisco and "everywhere there was any kind of chance for notoriety" before stopping in Austin. There the duo met up with drummer Mike Buck, who had just left the Fabulous Thunderbirds. The threesome were rechristened

the LeRoi Brothers in 1981, though the relations between them were strictly musical until the addition of Doerr's younger brother Joe—a gyrating singer-songwriter with a knack for pelvic thrusts who "pushes it as far as it can go and then some" by his brother's admission.

If *Forget About the Danger*

and songs like "D.W.I." (with its "drinking wine, wine, wine" refrain) leave any doubt that the LeRois are in the music business to have a good time, the album's jacket should get the message across immediately: It pictures the band at a carnival standing in front of a ride called "TheYo-Yo."

—Jody Denberg



## AN EAGLE GOES AIRBORNE

*Don Felder, without a parachute*

ATLANTA—"Career-wise, I don't need the money, you know? And I didn't want to make a solo record under the intense pressure the Eagles had recorded with," ex-Eagle Don Felder explains about his first solo LP, *Airborne*. "I really wanted to go in and have fun making a record."

After the Eagles' break-up, Felder installed a 24-track studio in his Malibu home and noodled with the sizable backlog of songs he'd accumulated over the years. But the guitarist needed to cool out before the fun could truly begin.

"I was in no particular emo-



PHOTO: PAUL NATAIN/PHOTO RESERVE

Felder: 'I'm just a guitar player that got lucky ...'

tional situation after that break-up; it was really shattering for everybody involved," Felder admits. "The last thing anybody wanted to do is run out and make a solo record. Except Glenn Frey. He called up and said, 'Kiss off, guys, I'm gonna make a solo record.' A few months later Henley said, 'Well, me too!' And Walsh said, 'Me, too!' And then I said, 'Uh, me too!'"

Since that tentative start, Felder has found that he can fly like an Eagle on his own power. After a six-week major market tour, he hopes to start in on another LP. "I'm just a guitar player that got lucky and wound up in a band that became very successful," Felder reflects. "The main thing I learned is that trying new avenues of creativity shouldn't be short-sold. Because you don't know. Nobody really knows."

—Anthony DeCurtis

## IF MACHINES COULD TALK

*There wouldn't be one in Re-Flex*

NEW YORK—One thing to be said for a computer—it knows when to keep its mouth shut.

Baxter (asked to reveal his full/real name, he replies, "Just 'Baxter,' man"), the lead singer/guitarist of Re-Flex, says it was this very quality that led the London-based band to go with a machine as its fifth member.

"The four of us (Paul Fishman, Nigel Ross-Scott and Roland Vaughan Kerridge being the others) are reasonably good friends, but each is very prone to explode when there's a disagreement over an arrangement or something," Baxter explains. "If it ends up two-two, we flip a coin. The band is a delicate balance; to add an extra percussionist or keyboard player, which we needed, would have thrown the whole thing out of whack. I'm not sure we would have survived it. At least you can't argue with a computer."

Still, the fifth member had to be anthropomorphized to maintain a certain immediacy. Hence, the members of Re-Flex have taken to calling their

digital sequencers and other hardware "the boys."

With their self-titled debut LP having spawned a hit single and video ("The Politics of Dancing"), this man/machine

combo has recently been out on tour with the Police, prior to which Re-Flex had played but three live gigs. It's hardly surprising that they found the brave new world of arena rock a little baffling. At their first show, for example, the monitors weren't set up properly." Nevertheless, Baxter sees such problems as part of the "com-

munication process," and insists most pop music today is a "slab of noise" with rhythm first and melody a distant second.

"We're not here to jam," he proclaims. "If it's not a song, it's nothing."

Baxter is sure the "boys" would agree.

—Mark Mehler



PHOTO: PAUL NATAIN/PHOTO RESERVE

Re-Flex: Can't argue with a computer



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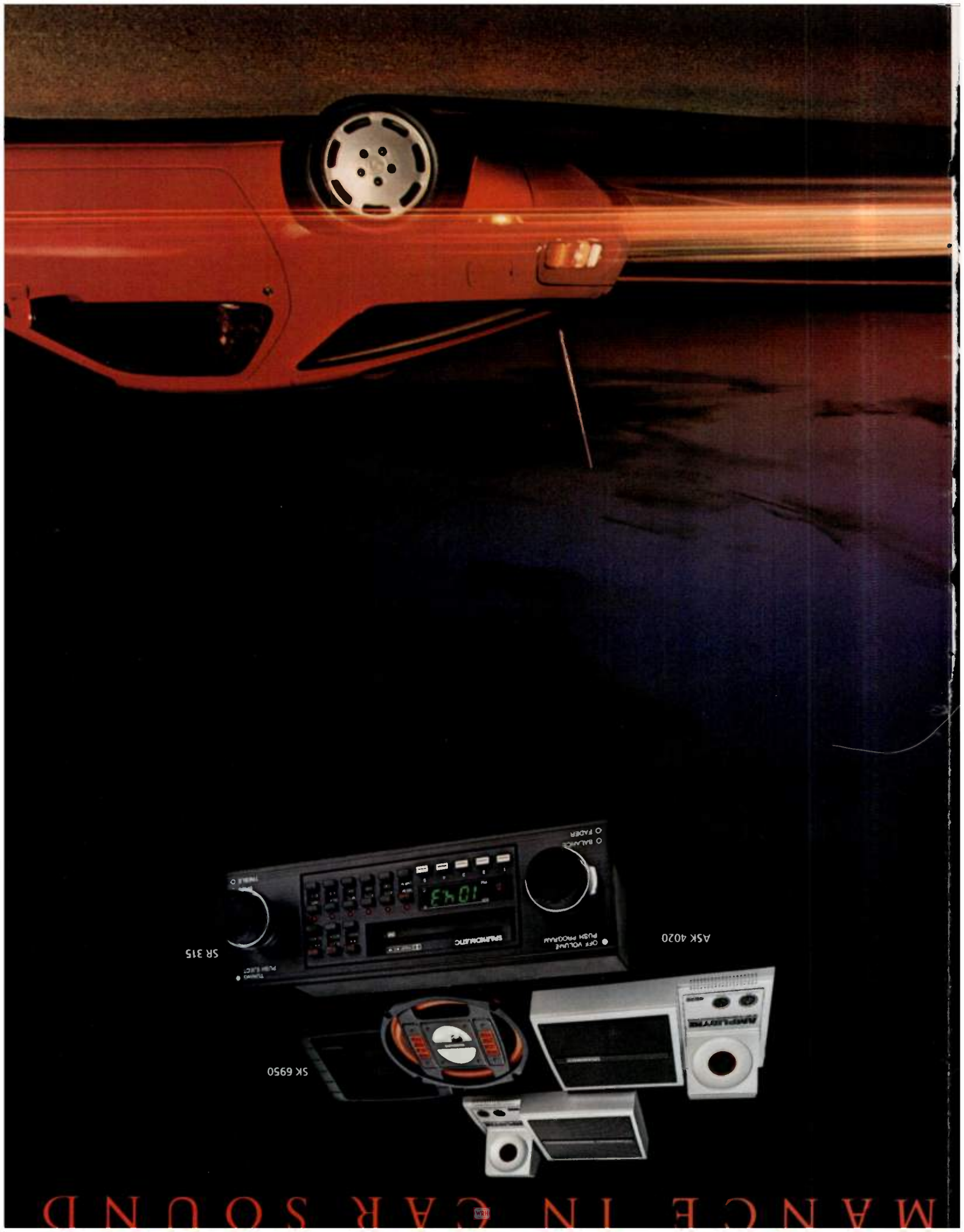
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STEVE BLOOM

# GOLD ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH

After some lean years  
Kool and the Gang are  
thinking platinum again

**R**obert Bell and James Taylor are exhausted. It's been one of those typical music business days—crowded with interviews, photo sessions and meetings. While Bell (aka “Kool”) sits at a table rubbing his eyes, Taylor (aka “J.T.”) is stealing a late-afternoon catnap. Such is life, one surmises, for the two most prominent members of Kool & the Gang.

On this day, “Joanna,” the group's first single off of its latest album *In the Heart*, has bolted 15 spots on the Top 100 to 59 with a bullet. Even though Kool & the Gang has long strayed from its “Jungle Boogie” roots, people have been wincing when they hear the song. “That’s Kool & the Gang?” a musically-informed friend asked. “Are you sure?” “Joanna” is one of those singles that immediately grows on you—if you can get past the nursery-rhyme lyrics.

Who’s Joanna? “Nobody,” Taylor laughs, suddenly awake. “We just tried a name. Maybe it was because Toto had ‘Rosanna.’” “Actually, it was originally called ‘Dear Mom,’” Kool explains. “Charles (Smith, lead guitarist) thought of it because there really hasn’t been a song dedicated to mothers in awhile.”

OK. Next topic: The less-than-favorable reviews the group has been receiving lately. Here’s what the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* had to say about a recent Gang concert: “Canned sentiments and soporific funk clichés... hackneyed, melodramatic love songs... overworked anachronisms delivered with Vegas-style dance steps... they just didn’t leave the crowd begging for more.”

“What’re you gonna do?” J.T. says coolly. “There may be times when we’re going through the motions. But any part of the show that’s stagnant we know about. We just haven’t changed it yet.”

To Kool & the Gang, stagnation is sales of less than 800,000 units, as was the case with the band’s 1982 release, *As One*. “That’s not too shabby,” Taylor admits, though he insists the album “didn’t do it.”



Kool And The Gang: Back to the drawing board

Everybody in the record business should have such problems. After three straight platinum albums, gold is not good enough for the Gang that once called Jersey City home. Six of the original seven Gang members are still with the group. Robert “Spike” Mickens (trumpet), Dennis “D.T.” Thomas (alto sax), George Brown (drums), Charles Smith, Kool (bass) and his brother Ronald (tenor sax) joined forces during the early-’60s and by 1965 decided to form a band called the Jazziaacs. The Jazziaacs gradually evolved into the quintessential urban funk band of the early ’70s. Kool & the Gang—the group’s handle from 1969 on—matched James Brown’s sexy Southern sound with a raunchy East Coast party music that would be imitated (most recently by the rappers) for years to come. Whistle-blowing, group chanting and jazzy horn arrangements were the Gang’s trademarks; “Jungle Boogie” and “Hollywood Swinging” its most memorable hits.

But disco was not kind to funk, and so by 1978 Kool & the Gang, like numerous other bands (the Ohio Players to name just one), had virtually disappeared from sight. “It was a rough time,” Kool recalls. “I guess you could call it a searching period for us. We certainly weren’t selling a lot of albums.” The search included looking for an outside producer and finding a lead vocalist who could “deliver the ballads we had been writing all along.”

Eumir Deodato, whose recordings in the early-’70s were among the most commercially successful jazz albums ever, was enlisted to oversee the *Ladies’ Night* album, and James Taylor was brought in to handle the singing duties. Taylor—not to be confused with Sweet Baby James—was hardly a household name. In fact, at the time, he was “in a desperate situation when they called,” J.T. says. “I had lost my day job teaching and my band had just broken up.” Kool & the Gang was J.T.’s salvation; in turn, he and his velvety voice gave the group something it had never had—middle-of-the-road potential.

Four albums later, Taylor is still with the Gang, but Deodato has been dismissed. Was he to blame for the group’s recent slide? “I don’t want to be putting the weight on him,” J.T. responds ever so tactfully, “but ‘Deo’ has his way of doing things. We felt that we couldn’t really stretch out because of his methods. He taught us an awful lot, but we felt that we had learned enough and that it was time now for us to fly.”

To the contrary, *In the Heart* barely gets off the ground. “It’s a safe album,” Kool concedes. “We wanted to come back with a strong commercial record to regain our position, so that on the next album we can begin opening up again. Maybe out of nine cuts, two will be different.”

And maybe one will sound like “Hollywood Swinging.”



# THE GIRL CAN'T HELP IT

BY DAN HEDGES

## CYNDI LAUPER



### “LAUPER...IT'S LAW-PER.”

Cyndi Lauper, heading with her band toward Manhattan in a rented tour bus after a small college gig in New Jersey, holds her hands over both ears as she addresses the on-board TV set again—meaning the local video jock who's just mangled her name for the third time in 10 minutes without even missing a beat.

Lauper sighs, then shrugs it off. “That’s okay,” she reminds herself quietly. Not long ago, having her name mentioned anywhere at all (mispronounced or otherwise) was cause for celebration. And having an album and two singles perched at the winner’s end of the charts? Dream stuff, right? Fantasy Land, for sure.

The previous eight months have changed all that. Her debut LP for Portrait Records, *She’s So Unusual*, has topped prime window space in record stores across the land. The ebullient “Girls Just Want To Have Fun” and its wistful followup, “Time After Time,” are playlist and MTV staples. Success, for Lauper, has meant more media exposure (including being a Grammy Award presenter) and hectic scheduling than one woman should have to bear, though after coming this far, she’s not about to let it go.

Up close, Rock’s Most Vibrant New Discovery is paler and more fragile-looking than you’d expect; and her off-stage speaking voice isn’t as ripe as the squeaky, Bingo hall Brooklynese that’s become her playful, on-stage trademark. Still, it’s thick enough to cut with a knife—evocative of six-packs of Yoo Hoo, canned spaghetti and Hostess Twinkies; of dead-end Tuesday nights spent around dreary kitchen tables in Ozone Park and Williamsburg (where Lauper grew up) with *The Phil Silvers Show* seeping through the plaster from the apartment next door. Every laundromat from Greenpoint to Flatbush to Coney Island is filled with ladies who talk like Cyndi Lauper. Her roots, as they say, clearly show.

Musically, Lauper’s origins are trickier to pin down. The rockabilly-pop of her former band, Blue Angel, just happened to be what she was into at the time. While one reviewer recently dubbed her “the greatest female junk-rock vocalist” of the last 20 years, the tag (though meant as a compliment) is a shade too flippant and limiting. She cites influences ranging from Ronnie Spector to Billie Holiday to

Mario Lanza to Ethel Merman (“I really loved her. That woman had something really special.”). And as anyone who’s seen her perform live can verify, *She’s So Unusual*, in the technical sense, barely scratches the surface of what she can do. Her light, happy side has been attracting most of the media attention, but even the album hints that there’s more to Lauper than meets the eye. It’s there in her plaintive, haunting reading of “Time After Time” (which Lauper co-wrote with Rob Hyman) and Jules Shear’s “All Through The Night”; in the gruff, angry snarl that’s her version of the Brains’ “Money Changes Everything”; in her sly-yet-distressed rendering of Prince’s “When You Were Mine.”

“On the record I tried to cover all human emotions,” Lauper says, crediting Portrait Records with giving her free reign. “It was a chance to take, and I wanted to take it, because music without courage is not worth doing. I became a musician so that I could be happy and do what I love to do in life: write and sing. You can take a stab at doing something totally different and get killed for it. But at least it’s *real*. And people feel all different ways: People feel happy, people feel sad.”

While there are those who still have a hard time seeing past the artist’s exterior trappings—her playful ditziness; her philosophical references to freedom, new women, and “my personal advisor, Captain Lou Albano” (a former professional wrestler who, in addition to making cameo appearances in Lauper’s videos, now manages the Wild Samoans and Magnificent Morocco and is infamous for having referred to an upcoming opponent as a “skinny, stringbean pencil neck”); her free-form interpretation of the rules of proper attire; her screwy, Lucille Ball-meets-the-Whirling Dervishes approach to rock performance (she spends as much time running barefoot up and down the aisles and climbing on the PA cabinet as she does on stage)—these attributes tend to underscore a fundamental fact about Cyndi Lauper: she’s not out to depress her audience. “I meet so many other artists who say, ‘Whoa, you *gotta* suffer.’ Bullshit! They’re just so busy beating themselves after being beaten down someplace else in life. The world is very traumatized. And if people have been traumatized throughout life and have had all bad things happen to them, what do *they* do? They expect *more* bad things to happen, and even set themselves up.”

Lauper’s talking from personal experience. At five, she saw her par-

# JUST WANTS TO HAVE FUN



# LAUPER: POSITIVE, HUMOROUS, UPWARDLY MOBILE IN A GOOD WAY

PHOTO JOHN BELLISIMO



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**With 'spiritual advisor' Lou Albano in the 'Girls Just Want To Have Fun' video: 'I can feel things with people I love'**

ents' marriage go down the chute, then felt an early anger rise from watching her mother half-kill herself working 13-hour days at one back-breaking job or another in an effort to keep the family together and fed. School was a total write-off, and Lauper's self-sabotaging flair for rebellion didn't endear her to the world-at-large. By age 12 she was sporting garishly dyed hair as well as outlandish clothes and makeup in a desperate attempt to become somebody else. *Anybody* else.

She doesn't volunteer any gory details, but hints that life, at various points, got fairly dark. "I was always out of place," she says. "Out of place and out of time. Out of step with everyone else. It drove me crazy. I didn't know what was wrong with me or why I was so different. Nobody loved me. Nobody liked me. And I'm so *weird*. And I'm a *geek*. And *why* am I so weird?"

From that low ebb of self-esteem, Lauper has arrived at a point where she has a hard time believing there is no future. "I'm not a pessimist. I come from someplace where I honestly thought there was no hope," she says, reflecting on life in the old neighborhood. "I thought I would be dead in a year, and it doesn't matter what happens to me, and I'm no good, and how will I *live* in this world? What will I *do*?"

Salvation, she found, comes with luck and the passing of time, "when you find your own step, your own pacing. I found out more about myself. I began to like myself more. And then I started singing because I love to sing. I found something I could do, and that's what I went for."

Fronting a succession of local cover bands during the early '70s, however, she found her voice neither paid the rent nor brought the instant acceptance she craved. "I cried my eyes out every night. I liked to

play in front of the people and sing to them, but a lot of the time they didn't know what the hell I was doing up there. Or even care. I got fired from gigs because I drew people away from the bar. And I was 'too small.' And 'only women with big tits can sing'—oh, *that* was one that killed me. The bad thing about those clubs is the managers and owners. They play with your head so that you don't know whether you're coming or going. I guess I still have anger toward those people."

She might have stayed on that treadmill to this day, going nowhere, "but fortunately, God threw a couple of zingers in my path and totally threw me off track for awhile. I got sick. And then I started to think about what I really wanted. In those bands, I started to listen to my voice and say, 'I don't like it. It needs something. I don't feel gratified.'"

The answer—strange for someone who was a misfit all though school—was formal voice coaching. Over the past six years, she's studied with Katie Agresta, a Manhattan vocal teacher. "I don't read music, except for my exercises," Lauper explains. "Vocal exercises. The Garcia Book. I don't want anybody to think that I didn't work at it, or that I just get up and sing the way I sing without warming up or warming down. My voice is my most precious gift. It's hard to explain—it's almost like it's got a persona of its own, and I cherish it very much."

As well she should. *She's So Unusual*, with Lauper set against a sonic backdrop created by keyboardist Rob Hyman, guitarist Eric Bazilian (both from the Philly-based outfit, Baby Grand), and assorted session players and friends like Ellie Greenwich, is unusual—even remarkable—in the extraordinary range and distinctive character Lauper's voice has taken

on during the few years since Blue Angel's demise. "I grew," she says with a shrug, when asked about the leap. "I'm not a stupid woman. I learn quick."

And in more ways than one. Business pressures and management hassles did in Blue Angel shortly after the release of the band's only LP, in 1980 on Polydor. These days, a considerably sharper (and, yes, more successful) Cyndi Lauper deals from strength. "I can call the shots," she proclaims. "I can go on TV or I can say, No, I'm not doing that. I can refuse to have dancers bumping and grinding behind me. I turn down things that take my work and make it say something I don't believe in. Things that make me look like what I'm not. 'Girls Just Want To Have Fun' *doesn't* mean 'Girls Just Want To Fuck'—excuse me—or 'Girls Just Want To Have Sex.' When people try to use my music that way, and

make it all tits and ass, it infuriates me because that is *not* what I'm all about."

Exhibits A and B: the videos. While her record company's marketing department may point to Lauper's offbeat beauty and spirited camera sense as key ingredients in her success, the artist herself maintains it's because she "can feel things with people I love. My mother was in this new video ('Time After Time'). She cried. And I cried. My brother was in it, my band, and Captain Lou. People I knew and loved. 'Girls' showed two women—the oppressed woman and a new woman, totally free. The 'Time After Time' video showed this new person who doesn't fit, right? She's out of step, and she's haunted by the image of her mother, this oppressed woman buried in this house."

Lauper leans in close. "But y'know why it was so easy for my mother and me to cry?" After a long, meaningful pause, her voice takes on new solemnity. "We were overwhelmed by the people of Wharton, New Jersey."

As Casey Stengel said, You could look it up. I did. Wharton, New Jersey?

She nods reverently. "They were standing in the streets—I don't know how many people, but tons of people—and they were watching *me*. They watched us during the porch scene—they were *all* there—and all I had to say to my mother was, 'Well, Ma, I'm on my way.'"

"She started crying. Then I started crying because *she* was crying. We can thank the people of Wharton, New Jersey for that. They helped make it a great performance."

Cyndi Lauper rests her head against the van window. "See, my mom and me, we're not actors. We're real, y'know what I mean?"



A high-contrast, black and white photograph of Joe Jackson. He is wearing a dark beanie and looking upwards and to the left. He is holding a trumpet vertically, with his mouth on the mouthpiece and a lit cigarette in his right hand. The trumpet's bell is at the bottom of the frame, glowing with light. The background is solid black.

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# R o b e r t FRIPP

"AND, OF COURSE, WHAT IS the use of the interview if it's meant for entertainment?" asks the owlish, natty English guitar master Robert Fripp, minutes after the tape begins to roll. What, indeed. Having set our meeting for the distinctly unrock-star-ish hour of 11:30 on a Sunday morning, the ever-inscrutable Fripp has apparently also decided that being a reporter is too good a gig to pass up. So he's been popping all the questions.

A polite and rather academic opening gambit ("What is your interest in me, Anthony?") kicked off a series of increasingly philosophical queries from Fripp ("Do you think musicians lack the objectivity from their work to see it separately from themselves?") that threatened to obscure some basic issues.

Like the fact that Fripp and his mates in King Crimson—guitarist Adrian Belew, stick man/bassist Tony Levin and drummer Bill Bruford—have released a new album, *Three of a Perfect Pair*, along with a new single and video, "Sleepless." And that the most stable Crimson lineup in recorded history is also launching an extensive tour.

But first, Fripp must know if and why I "enjoy doing interviews." Fortunately, I was able to execute a deft reverse on this question, just in time to get the Fripperspective on such topics as the English music press, punks and dinosaurs, the magical year of 1969, Eno and Bowie, frustration and satisfaction in the current Crimson, and the rewards and rigors of discipline. And, as a special treat, some exclusive, soul-savaging samples of Crimson "humor."

**Do you enjoy doing interviews?**

I would have to say, which interview did you have in mind? Do I feel a personal

## Lord Of Discipline

need to do interviews? Not at the moment. There have been times when it's been an opportunity with a penetrating critic to find insights into the work I do, to discover things I knew, but wasn't aware of. I haven't really done interviews for three or four years, so I have at the moment no interview chops.

When I was doing interviews in great number I looked upon them as being in some senses more important than the music I was playing. This was the Frippertronics tour of 1979, which went on for four months, two months in Europe and two months in America. In America everyday I was travelling, doing four hours of interviews and one or two improvised shows. A lot of the interviews I did were with very nice, well-meaning guys from college who were appallingly bad interviewers. And that was a remarkable strain, remarkably hard work. It was staggering how many were a waste of energy.

**Is it different with the English music press?**

In England interviews are generally loathed. In America it's not even a question that one is innocent until proved guilty. One's innocence is assumed. The feeling I have from the English music press, or the "comics" as they're called in the business, is that one is guilty until proven guilty.

**So the interview is just self-incrimination?**

That's right. I don't know any professional

musician who has a good word to say for the English music press. Other than myself, funnily enough. I liked the acrid, biting wit which cut through performers' pretensions in about 1975. I'm by and large embarrassed to be a member of the musical generation I was part of. It's a movement which went tragically off course. The "life-style" of musicians I knew I found to be just insultingly egotistical.

**What were the components of that life-style?**

Cocaine was one of them. Big cars, pretensions. So when punk came along, there was a dialogue with the audience, even if expressed only by gobbing (*Ed. note: For the uninitiated, "gobbing," or spitting, has been described by RECORD contributor John Mendelsohn as "punk's most notorious audience participation ploy"*). The spirit moved, and I became very excited. One could detect the same spirit stirring in the music press, too. The fact that they would refer to successful rock musicians as "boring old farts."

**Or, using one of your own favorite terms, as "dinosaurs."**

I was very happy to see the ruling elite of musicianhood being chewed at. But that biting wit became cynical and nasty. And, finally, wholly negative and, guilty until proved guilty, it was a verdict on all artists.

The other characteristic of the English music press is it reflects an English preoccupation with the rhythms of fashion. In England, if one assumes that to be a performer you have to learn the codes of music, it's really a mistake. Learning how to dress, how to express yourself in a fashion

By Anthony DeCurtis







# "The challenge is not to rush out and look for music, but to hear the music that's already there"

code, is infinitely more important. To be able to sense the prevailing mode of haircut.

**Between your work with King Crimson, your solo efforts, and your collaborations with people like Brian Eno and Andy Summers, you've covered an extremely broad musical spectrum. Is there an "essential Fripp" who feels the need to keep his musical context shifting?**

I think, as a quick answer, it's a way of dealing with expectation. Expectation is a prison. I have a distance from most of the things "Fripp" does. I see "Robert Fripp" as a creature that I inhabit. The very best work I do has nothing to do with me. Gary Snyder put this very nicely in talking about when a "poem springs out unaided."

**It also seems that many of your projects define a specific, explicitly-stated goal. But along with this you talk about the importance of letting unanticipated developments take you in new directions. Is this a source of tension in our work?**

It's giving credence to hazard. You create a situation in which something can happen. Now, if you can guarantee the outcome, well, it may or may not be worth doing, but it's not likely to be a very creative situation. For example, knowing what you're going to do in a solo down to the last note, as in Western art music, isn't very exciting. But improvisation is something entirely different. Improvisation is where you introduce a mobility into the structure of music, so that there's room for the entry of the spirit.

Now in terms of what I do, whether it's Frippertronics, King Crimson or whatever, you create a situation where you have givens. You have four members in the band, you have a tour plan, your write a repertoire. Then it depends how much you're going to pin down the mobility of all the givens. So, yes, there's a level of definition and a level of hazard, and the relationship between the two varies. But you do need the two. Security is death.

**Do you feel people don't pay enough attention to your sense of humor?**

Do I find it limiting to be viewed as a really, really serious person? Yes, but I have fun with it as well. I mean, humor and be-

ing serious are kind of the left and right foot of walking.

One of the little manifestations of humor within the band, which comes largely from Bill, is to rename the albums. Bill's accepted classic is for *Starless and Bible Black*, which came out *Braless and Slightly Slack*. There's been a number of suggestions for *Three of a Perfect Pair*. We were thinking of getting tour sponsorship from a fruit and vegetables firm, so we thought of calling it *Tree of a Perfect Pear*.

**Uh, great stuff. Looking back on your career, can you identify specific creative high points?**

Yes! (hearty laughter) Yes, with relative ease! 1969 was a remarkable year. Incredibly unpleasant and uncomfortable, an awful year on the personal level. On the creative level it was remarkable for as long as the members of King Crimson had a commitment to the same aim: the group. Then two of the guys fell in love, and that was all over.

After that it was a question of: magic has just flown by, how does one find conditions in which magic flies by? I'd experienced it—I knew it was real. So where had it gone, how could one entice it back? That's been the process from then till now.

**Can you describe that magic?**

It was as if music leaned over and took the band into its confidence, and simply chose for that year to play King Crimson. Without going into more details, it was quite remarkable to be a member of that band at that time. It was not a normal year. You knew something was going on. We had no idea why it was going on or how it was going on. It was, however, going on. Of that there is no doubt. The band had a "good faerie" and nothing we could do could go wrong. But it began to go wrong.

**How did you hook up with Brian Eno?**

He was a member of Roxy Music. Roxy Music had been taken to E.G. Records by Brian Ferry at my recommendation when I turned him down for an audition for King Crimson (laughs). *No Pussyfooting* with Eno I enjoyed magnificently. In working with Eno, I went and plugged in and played. I didn't have to think about what I was doing. In fact, the two-tape sys-

tem Eno introduced me to gave me an opportunity to play in a way that I'd been looking for for a long time: How can I as one single guitar player sound like a string quartet?

**You left the music industry for a time after the dissolution of King Crimson in 1974. Eno had left Roxy Music in 1973. Were the two of you feeling similar dissatisfactions around that time?**

At that point Eno was getting heavily stuck into the music industry as I was getting heavily stuck out of it. My return to it was really around the time of *Heroes*.

I was in New York and I got a phone call one Saturday night: "Hello, it's Brian. I'm here in Berlin with David. Hold on, I'll hand you over." So Mr. B. came on the line and said, "We tried playing guitars ourselves; it's not working. Do you think you can come in and play some burning rock 'n' roll guitar?" I said, "Well, I haven't really played guitar for three years . . . but I'll have a go!"

So the following Tuesday I flew over, got off the plane, went to the hotel, threw my cases down, collapsed feebly, and got up to go into the studio too exhausted to think straight. I said, "Would you like to play me what you've been doing?" and they said, "Well, we'll just plug you in!" So they put it up and played it, and I played and just responded to it. The very first time it was "Beauty and the Beast" (sings guitar riff). That was a creative high spot. I had an opportunity to be what I was with a guitar. I was given no ground rules.

**How does power work in the current configuration of King Crimson?**

I formed the band, but everyone has equal power. In the real world on a day-to-day level, that provides you with problems.

**What sort of problems?**

The members of Crimson, by and large, aren't awfully prepared to leave space for other people. When you reach a point where you're not prepared to put up with that any more, you shout. It may not be a question of anyone in the band being right or wrong, but simply that one member has put up with a certain aspect of the other guys quite enough. On *Beat* we tried to get someone from the outside to organize it: Rhett Davies, the producer. I think it failed, because instead of having at least one of four widely divergent views within the band leading the day, you had one widely divergent view outside the band leading the day. Which is not a judgment on Rhett. I would rather have the wrong judgment of a member of the band than the right judgment of someone outside the band. That has its own validity to me.

**How comfortable are you with the current arrangement?**

I feel I've created a field in which other people can discover themselves. I'm disap-





PHOTO: LINT ROBERTS

### Fripp: Perfecting the disciplines of the hand, head and heart

pointed that they don't create the room for me to discover myself. That is the dynamic of what happens: I get squeezed out. You have three guys who are very excited about someone providing them with room. And there's me saying, "Great, guys. The three of you are doing wonderful things. Can I come in, please? Is there a space?" So all my best guitar playing is done outside Crimson. I like space—if there's an awful lot going on, I tend not to play.

**So where do you get to discover yourself?**

In live performance, when the members of the band play as a team. When we write a piece of music together, where everyone involved is simply being themselves and it comes together. For me, that happened more often on *Discipline* than any of the others. "The Sheltering Sky" from *Discipline* wrote itself. We were simply trying to discover who we were for each other. We were in a 14th century hunting lodge in Dorset and we just played. It was a group composition. It came simply out of the air, while everyone was looking the other way. And it kind of played itself.

**Are you working on any solo projects now?**

Yes, I've done a digital remix of my personal catalogue. It'll be re-released this au-

tumn in quite a different form. And I've just begun work with Andy Summers on a second album.

**Given the upheavals of the early Crimson, does it gratify you that this band seems as if it will meet the three-year commitment it made when it formed in 1981?**

In a sense, yes. I suppose I could ask you about your marriage: Are there times when you'd rather be single? Crimson made a commitment to stick together despite the easy or the bad times. There is a satisfaction in simply fulfilling a decision.

There's also something possible in continuing relationships which isn't possible in short-term relationships. They have advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage springs mainly from beginning to believe you know what's going on. How can you find your innocence in the moment? For me, art is the capacity to re-experience one's innocence. So how can I go along and work with the Crimson as if I'd never worked with them?

**Touring took a heavy toll on the early Crimson. Is it any easier now?**

I don't like being a member of King Crimson, because it's not at all comfortable, or a nice, easy thing to do, or even professional-

ly a challenge. It is very, very painful, because we're trying to do things "right." So when you turn up to see Crimson at a gig, you can go there relatively confident that the guys are trying.

I say this quite seriously: I wouldn't be a member of King Crimson to earn a living. There's something more there. In '81 when Crimson was out, I felt that it was the best performing live rock band in the world. My feeling is that Crimson is primarily a live band and has not yet found a way of putting it on record.

**Where do you get your inspiration?**

In '81 something happened which changed my way of working with music. I woke up on a friend's sofa in New York and simply understood something I'd known for a while: that music was always present, completely with a life of its own, as a friend. The challenge is not to rush out and look for music, but to be quiet enough to hear the music that's already there.

My approach to being a professional musician changed. Now I work at perfecting the instruments of the professional musician: the disciplines of the hand, the head, and the heart. Which puts one in the position where one is better able to be played by music. ○







# AND THEN YOU WALK BY

WAYNE  
KING

Soap Operas, Chain Gangs  
and The Message of Love;

## A Pretenders Psychohistory

CHRISSIE HYNDE IS A MOTHER! I can't recall ever seeing that phrase on the wall of any bathroom facility since Chrissie, the great Pretender, gave birth to a daughter in January of last year, but there could scarcely be many better examples of rock graffiti left unwritten. Because anyone who's come into contact with Chrissie Hynde, whether close up or simply by following the flow of her tempestuous career, has known for a long time that she was the biggest mother of them all (which is not exactly the same as being the mother to us all, you see). Yet, in a basic twist of fate well known to lovers of soap opera, or rock 'n' roll fanatics—and face it, these days there is very little difference between the two types of pop culture devourers—that same blessed event has helped blunt the hard edges of the oft-brutal character, both public and private, known as Chrissie Hynde. The arrival of Natalie, her first child, has catalyzed Hynde's transformation from the fists-first, hard-drinking one-of-the-boys rock 'n' roll momma to a—well, I suppose a *pussycat* would be stretching it a bit—but at least to a much more responsible and, some might say, *likable* person. Yes, Chrissie Hynde is a mother and, to paraphrase Al Green, look what it's done to her.

That, and hooking up with one of her pop idols, Ray Davies.

And becoming pregnant by him.

And sacking the band's heroin-addicted bass player, who (just) happened to be the co-founder of the group with her, and who (just) happened to be a former lover.

And having the guitar player for that band, who was more than one-fourth of their sound and attitude, die of cocaine abuse two days later.

And being named correspondent in Ray Davies' divorce proceedings.

And re-assembling the group in order to finish up what was left to be done after the first four years of the Pretenders' existence.

And proving the value of the decision to carry on, first with a great single, "Back on the Chain Gang," and then with an album, *Learning To Crawl*, which tackled head-on most of the issues left for her to deal with: physical and spiritual dissipation; the numbing effects of distance and physical separation; the problems caused by continuing alienation, both real and imagined; the possibilities of birth and rebirth; the inevitable and absolutely necessary idea of exchanging and receiving love.

That Chrissie Hynde herself sees the events of the last two years as being less traumatic than the plight of a single girl, twenty-five-years old and still living with her parents out in suburbia, is all too typical of the off-handed vision of herself as a "real Joe Normal." That we see it as being more is the cumulative effect her life and art have given us of one who *demands* to be seen as special and precious. But, of course, Chrissie Hynde is a walking, talking personification of so many glorious contradictions inherent in the rock myth she's lived by for so many years; one can scarcely see the forest for the trees in the map of her psychic landscape.

Maybe the problem here is the nature of the human animal. Because each one of us has an inborn duality that governs the amount of progress we (sometimes) make, but often holds us back at the same time. Artists apparently have reached a more advanced stage in dealing with this dynamic; i.e., their sense of observation is more keenly developed than John Q. Public's, and they also have a better intuitive understanding of their roles in this eternal folly. Translation: they're both more knowing and more screwed up than the rest of us.

This schism is one of the more powerful contradictions in Chrissie Hynde's work. She's always watching things, checking them out, and simultaneously out there, *doing* them. In this context her backhand attitude towards the press ("You can't write about rock 'n' roll if you can't play





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(chords)? Of course, this is no more puzzling than hiding the most personal of rock visions behind a group name; she might need those three other musicians, but is there anyone who doubts it's her show? The concept of the guitar-based rock 'n' roll quartet as the most logical and progressive of aesthetic vehicles is unfashionable at the moment—fashion accounting for so much at the moment—but there's still a lot of mileage left in that particular myth (see U2 by way of recent example). For Chrissie Hynde, the power of what Lester Bangs once described as "a bizarre world version of the nuclear family" never lost its appeal. Her only goal, from the second she was touched by the magic of the Stones, the Kinks, and the other British Invasion era beat groups when their sounds first floated out over the airwaves as part of radio station WHLO's British Countdown in her native Akron, Ohio, was to be in a band. Not only was this a strange aspiration for an insecure 13-year-old girl, but consider the temper of the times: in the mid-'60s, rock history was still pretty much a story of males singing of male concerns—like, you know, chicks—and the notion of a woman actually leading a band, much less even being in one, was about as far-fetched as the possibility of the New York Mets winning the pennant.

Once she moved to England in hopes of attaining her rock dream, she became even more vulnerable by virtue of being impoverished and almost completely out of step. She felt the only way to fit in was to be as tough as the men—hell, tougher—but this left her looking deeper into the abyss. Men sit around saying they'd like nothing better than an aggressive woman, but as soon as one shows up, forget it, they grab for the little woman they can readily dominate. So Chrissie's lyrics almost schizophrenically alternated between complete contempt for the male of the species—"Not me, baby/I'm too precious/Fuck off"—and the most insistent and blunt pleading you'd ever want to hear—"Gonna use my arms/Gonna use my legs ...Gonna use my imagination/'Cause I gotta make you see/There's nobody else here, no one like me/I'm special, so special."

That her artistry was continually ignored by the British music industry only intensified her ongoing personal dilemma. While absolute no-talents like the Damned were making successes (and asses) of themselves in punk's first wave—they, like so many groups in the class of '76, had counted Chrissie as a member early on—Hynde's frustration was palpable to all who knew her. But it meant that when the Pretenders' version of "Stop Your Sobbing" came out in January of '79—a full year after the Sex Pistols had disintegrated in San Francisco—she and they were ready. Still, a feeling of inadequacy settled in, even as rave reviews piled up for "Sobbing" and its followup, "Kid," and as "Brass In Pocket" went to Number One on



**"I found a picture of you . . .": Farndon, Hynde, Chambers and Honeyman-Scott in soap opera days**

the British charts and the long-playing debut, *Pretenders*, entered at the top spot. Wasn't she exactly the same person, the same *artiste*, she had been before the intruding spotlight shown in the Pretenders' direction? Her position grew more exalted, but her self-worth plummeted, leading to a lot of self-deprecation: "What I do isn't important, it isn't exceptional. I'm just playing in a rock 'n' roll band...What I do does not substantiate (this) attention. I'm not important enough, I've got nothing to say." All this not-so-false modesty coming from a person who had spent her previous twenty years idolizing rock stars, defining her life—even life itself—by the intensity of feeling she got from those people doing *nothing else but playing rock 'n' roll*. (She recently claimed, "One of the hard things to get over for a lot of people is learning to appreciate their own strong points...The thing to do is to just accept what you're best at." When asked if she now appreciated her own positive qualities, her response was—predictably—negative.)

All of the putdowns directed equally between the outer world and inner self had another purpose: they shifted the onus of responsibility. The protopunk cynicism towards the commercial machine rock had become, expressed as early on as her *New Musical Express* scribbles, was deflected by the quintessential Seventies' "it's all shit" attitude. "Pop culture is so main-

stream, it's much more popular than Twinkies. There's no underground—I mean, my mom and dad were *thrilled* that I'm in the Pretenders and that I'm a success. I hate that," she told RECORD's Stan Mises during the band's fall 1981 U.S. tour. "I'd say there's not even a fissure in (our) culture—it's a real collapse. It's all finished...I look at other bands on the scene now, there's nothing that stimulates me." Such an *a priori* acceptance of things as they are eventually lead to such bogus decisions as playing Heatwave, the 1980 Toronto festival referred to as the "punk Woodstock." The ideals punk tried to resurrect in rock were fast falling by the wayside, as easy cynicism and big paydays replaced earlier goals of honesty and commitment. Hynde's typical assessment (read: cop-out) of the Pretenders' situation: "I'm not particularly proud of (what we do), or think it's that exciting."

Continuing her downbeat discussion with Mises, she lamented, "Everyone says, 'This is the time of your life. You've worked eight to ten years in bands that haven't made it, and now you've arrived.' But where is that? Success hasn't changed me; I'm still uncomfortable and unhappy...I don't know how to live in this world." Clearly, something would have to change, and it began the very day that grim interview concluded. Drummer Martin

*Continued on page 52*



# TALKIN' TO THE NEW KIDS IN TOWN

SO YOU'RE A ROCK MUSICIAN who's had some marginal success and suddenly you're part of a band embarking on one of the most publicized and anticipated tours of the year. And in going from the outhouse to the penthouse, you find yourself answering to one of the profession's legendary tough-nuts-to-crack. Say hey, rookie Pretenders Malcolm Foster and Robbie McIntosh—does working with Chrissie Hynde make you long for simpler times?

"Chrissie's probably a lot nicer now than she used to be, but I didn't know her before I joined the band" is McIntosh's diplomatic answer. Then he adds: "I know she can give people a hard time."

Nevertheless, both McIntosh and Foster fit in nicely in the revamped Pretenders. In contrast to deceased band members James Honeyman-Scott and Pete Farndon, guitarist McIntosh and bassist Foster tend to blend into the background; but then Hynde appears to be more willing to exert control than she did in the past (see concert review page 53). Not that either musician feels left out. Says McIntosh: "It's the Pretenders rather than Chrissie Hynde and the Pretenders; it does get treated like Chrissie Hynde and the Pretenders obviously, because she's the songwriter, singer and sex symbol, I suppose, even though she plays that down."

While the new Pretenders may be little known to the general public, their lives have been linked professionally for several years, and both were friends of Honeyman-Scott, who brought them into the band shortly after Farndon had been sacked.

The 28-year-old Foster, a Portsmouth, England native, boasts of being "brought up on rock 'n' roll—the real rock 'n' roll." He started playing bass because his older brother, Graham, got into the six-string guitar first. "None of the people we were playing with were into the bass, so I bought one and started messing around with it." In 1976



PHOTOS: ANN SUMMA

**McIntosh and Foster: From the outhouse to the penthouse**

Malcolm and Graham Foster started the Foster Brothers with schoolmate Robbie McIntosh on guitar and a drummer who has long since faded into memory.

"We were actually a really good boogie and blues band," says McIntosh. His first guitar hero was George Harrison, but the Stones and Eric Clapton opened him to the blues, and slide greats Duane Allman and Ry Cooder influenced his playing as well as that of his friend and contemporary, James Honeyman-Scott.

The Foster Brothers signed with Elton John's Rocket Records, and the impact was underwhelming. "One album and a couple of singles did nothing—in fact, they put us in bad favor with a lot of people," Foster jokes. The band broke up after a year, with Foster moving to Mud, a '50s revival band that did fairly good business in England by playing period pieces perfectly. "It was fun, but boring," he says. "You couldn't invent anything. I did that for nine months, then joined up with Robbie again in Chris Thompson's band."

McIntosh had been driving a truck for a builder's supply company—"didn't do my hands much good" he notes wryly—before taking a gig with Thompson, now Manfred Mann's vocalist, in a band called Night. "Six weeks after I joined, we were in Los Angeles recording with Richard Perry for Planet Records." Night had a Top Twenty hit with "Hot Summer Nights" and toured in

support of the Doobie Brothers before returning to London, recording another album, and, finally, disbanding.

Thompson kept McIntosh and recruited several Londoners—including Malcolm Foster—for Chris Thompson and the Islands. A year of gigs around town produced no label offers, and it was tap city for the Islands as well. McIntosh and Foster were playing sessions here and there when Honeyman-Scott (who'd jammed with the Islands a few times and been impressed with McIntosh's and Foster's abilities) called from Australia with offers to join the Pretenders.

"Jimmy called and said, 'When we come back Pete will be sacked,' and he asked me if I'd like to come and play," Foster recalls. "When the Pretenders came back to England we tried to organize some rehearsal time—and then Jimmy died, which was a real pisser. I spoke to him one evening, and he died the next morning."

Neither Foster nor McIntosh attempted to contact the Pretenders after learning of Honeyman-Scott's death in June of 1982. "I thought it would have been in bad taste," says McIntosh. "Eventually I got a call from Dave Hill, the manager, and went down and auditioned—which, as it turned out, was a bit of a formality because they wanted me to join anyway."

Although the Pretenders clearly exist as a vehicle for Chrissie

Hynde's songwriting, McIntosh insists the band is a democracy. Nevertheless, he's also recognized a fundamental fact of life: when you deal with a force of nature—perhaps the most apt description of Chrissie Hynde—you must recognize certain limits. "You couldn't really write a song for her. Her whole lyric approach is so personal that I'll probably never write much for the band. Perhaps on the next album I'll come up with a riff she likes. Jimmy was co-credited with writing 'Brass in Pocket' because he came up with the riff."

So you're a rock musician who's been summoned from obscurity to join a band of limitless potential that's been rocked by the deaths of two key members, its future seemingly uncertain. In the wake of the tragedy, what impresses you about your cohorts' emotional makeup? McIntosh recalls a conversation with drummer Martin Chambers, who told the guitarist, "Me and Pete and Jim started this band and I'm gonna finish it."

Observes Foster: "I didn't know Martin or Chrissie at all before joining the band. Having been around them for awhile, I can see why they wanted to carry on. The mentality they have about playing, about wanting to play, is so strong that they would never have pulled it up. It wasn't in the plan; they really wanted to carry on."

"Chrissie needs to," he adds. "Writing songs is her life."

—David Gans



# PRETENDERS ALMANAC

**FALL 1973** Chrissie Hynde, an Akron, Ohio, native, arrives in London with ten years' worth of rock dreams, \$500 and a couple of Lou Reed and Iggy Pop albums. She expects to see Marc Bolan walking down the street, or at least some sign of the Swingin' London she's dreamt about for so long.

**JANUARY 1974** Getting a job as a writer through new boyfriend, Nick Kent, the progenitor of the punk journalism style which was soon to flourish, Chrissie Hynde's first piece (a scathing review of Neil Diamond's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* soundtrack) appears in *New Musical Express*.



PHOTO: LYNN GOLDSMITH

**SPRING 1974** Chrissie begins work at Sex, the boutique run by Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren. The shop becomes the center for most of the political, musical and fashion ideas from which punk would spring.

**SUMMER-FALL 1974** Chrissie travels to Paris, hangs out in the City of Lights pre-punk rock 'n' roll scene, but returns to Akron and a spot in a band called Jack Rabbit. A few months later, it's back to Paris and a stint as singer with a group called the Frenchies.

**1975-1976** Chrissie plays various roles in almost every one of Malcolm McLaren's numerous pre-Pistols projects, including the provocatively titled *Masters of the Backside*, *Love Boys* and *Big Girls' Underwear*. She is right in the middle of the punk scene which will explode in late '76-early '77, but never breaks through. Her connections to the Damned, one of the first punk acts to record, will prove important later on; their first producer, former Brinsley Schwarz bassist Nick Lowe, will later listen to some of Chrissie's tapes and decide to produce her.

**1977** Chrissie sings background vocals on guitarist Chris Spedding's solo album, *Hurt*, but comes no closer to entering a recording studio with her own material.

**SPRING 1978** Dave Hill, A&R man for the brand new Real Records label (and eventual Pretenders' manager), runs across Chrissie and, sensing her talent, pays for some rehearsal time for her. In the revolving door flow of musicians who work on her material comes one Pete Farndon, bassist. He gets his fellow Hereford native, James Honeyman-Scott, to join up as guitarist.

**JULY 1978** The Pete Best of the story, drummer Gerry Mackleduff, is added to demo sessions that include a cover of the Kinks' "Stop Your Sobbing." Nick Lowe hears the song and steals some time away from the *Armed Forces* LP he is producing for Elvis Costello to record it and a Chrissie Hynde original composition called "The Wait."

**DECEMBER 1978** Martin Chambers, an old partner of Honeyman-Scott and Farndon's in various failed bands, is added as drummer.

**JANUARY 1979** The Pretenders' first single, "Stop Your Sobbing"/"The Wait," is released on the Real Records label in England, which is now distributed by the powerful WEA (Warners/Elektra/Atlantic) combine. Only one day before the sleeve for the 45 is printed does the group come up with the name Pretenders.

**JUNE 1979** The group's second single, "Kid"/"Tattooed Love Boys," is released in England. Chris Thomas (Sex Pistols, Pete Townshend) sits behind the board, a position he's held as the "fifth Pretender" ever since.

**OCTOBER 1979** The Pretenders' third 45 is released. "Brass in Pocket," backed with the non-LP tunes "Swinging London" and "Nervous But Shy," reaches the Number One spot in Britain in January; it cracks the U.S. Top Ten early in 1980.

**JANUARY 1980** *Pretenders* is released and enters the British

charts at Number One (WEA is later accused of hyping this and other records into inflated chart positions). Its unexpected success, though, is in America, where it races up the charts.

**MARCH 1980** "Talk of the Town"/"Cuban Slide" comes out in England.

**SPRING-SUMMER 1980** The Pretenders tour the States twice, playing the club circuit the first time around and graduating to bigger halls from there. Their lack of live experience shows, however; new friend Nils Lofgren plays guitar onstage with them occasionally to fill out the sound, and their sixty-minute set sometimes includes as an encore a song already played during the evening.

**MARCH 1981** The first record from the band in a year, "Message of Love"/"Porcelain," comes out in England. The U.S. gets an EP, *Extended Play*, featuring both sides of the "Talk of the Town" and "Message of Love" 45s, plus a live version of "Precious" recorded in New York's Central Park the year before.

**JULY 1981** "Day After Day"/"In The Sticks" is released a month before the quartet's second LP; while the A-side, "Day," make it to the long-player, "In The Sticks" continues the band's tradition of non-LP flips.

**AUGUST 1981** *Pretenders II* is released to lesser critical acclaim and milder sales than its predecessor.

**OCTOBER 1981** Drummer Martin Chambers badly slices his hand on a vase in his Philadelphia hotel room, and the band's U.S. tour is temporarily derailed.

**JUNE 1982** Pete Farndon is tossed out of the band for reasons of declining musicianship and ascendant rock 'n' roll ego. Two days later, James Honeyman-Scott dies when his body collapses following years of drug usage.

**SEPTEMBER 1982** The band's first effort since the upheavals in June, "Back on the Chain Gang"/"My City Was Gone," is released in England (it is a few months before it comes out on 45 in America, where "Chain Gang" also appears on the *King of Comedy* soundtrack). Ex-Rockpile guitarist Billy Bremner and future Big Country bassist Tony Butler handle the parts left by Honeyman-Scott's passing and Farndon's dismissal.

**FALL 1982** New Pretenders Robbie McIntosh and Malcolm Foster are recruited. Guitarist McIntosh had been Honeyman-Scott's suggestion as a fifth member to beef up the sound on onstage; bassist Foster had been in some bands with McIntosh years previous (see accompanying story).



PHOTO: JEAN PAUL LENO

**JANUARY 1983** A daughter, Natalie, is born to Chrissie Hynde and Ray Davies.

**MAY 1983** The new line-up makes its debut at the second US Festival in Devore, California.

**NOVEMBER 1983** "2000 Miles" comes out as a Yuletide single in England; its flip, "Middle of the Road," becomes the A-side upon its U.S. release a month later.

**JANUARY 1984** *Learning To Crawl*, the Pretenders' third LP, appears to substantially better reviews, and goes Top Ten in America in weeks. The band goes on a two week tour of England, the first extended trip on the road for the new line-up.

**FEBRUARY 1984** The Pretenders begin a three month tour of the U.S. with a show in Hawaii; the tour is scheduled to end in New York after a three night stand at Radio City Music Hall in May. Summer-time shows in the U.S. are rumored to be on the agenda.

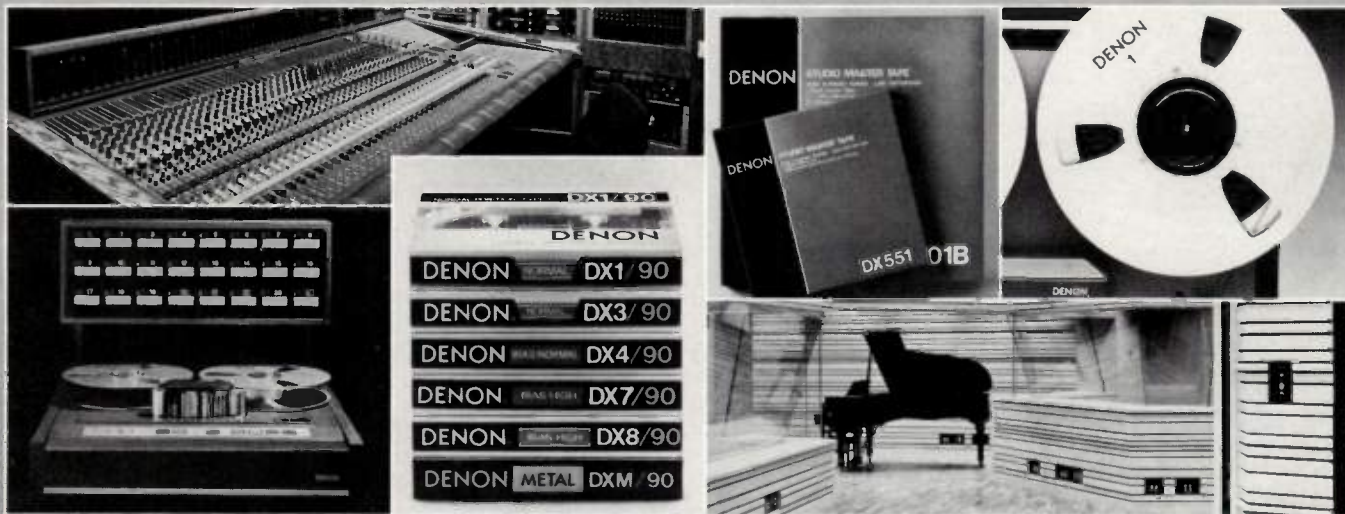


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MARK MEHLER

# WHERE HAVE YOU GONE, NORMAN BATES?

Thomas Dolby would like to have a word with you

**F**ear, as Alfred Hitchcock said, comes not out of haunted mansions, creaky floorboards and clanking chains, but out of a nest of sparrows, a deserted prairie, and the flotsam and jetsam of the human mind. And so it was on this unseasonably warm February day, over a quiet cup of coffee with bespectacled Thomas Dolby, police sirens wailing in the distance down Manhattan's Sixth Avenue, I began to feel my spine shimmy a little.

"There is madness lurking under the surface," Dolby says, flashing the same grin Anthony Perkins wore while Janet Leigh signed the motel register. "And every now and then it comes out, and it frightens me terribly because I know in my heart that all it took, absolutely all it took, to bring on that madness was a tiny catalyst, like a funny little cigarette, or a fragrance, or the end of a relationship. But what's *really* terrifying to me is the knowledge that if a certain set of catalysts occurs simultaneously, I could become that way *permanently*. Right now I feel I'm skating on thin ice."

The question arises: If 25-year-old overachiever Dolby, acclaimed for his work in music, flat art, video and electronics, is this close to the abyss, then where does that leave the rest of us?

"All of us are skating on thin ice," he states unequivocally.

Glad I asked.

All this talk of the roots of fear is prompted by the release of Dolby's second album, *The Flat Earth*. If the point of his first LP, *The Golden Age of Wireless*, was the pure joy of artistic exploration, then the new record is precisely the opposite. When one is not out exploring, he's spe-

lunking through the cavities of his own imagination—and going nuts. We have the fear of success, the fear of failure, the fear of repression, the fear of freedom.

In covering Dan Hicks' oft-recorded "I Scare Myself," for example, Dolby is the first to approach it as an experiment in terror. "On the surface, it's a straightforward love song, right? When she's away, I go to

pieces; when she's back, I feel better. Nothing to it, actually. Except I couldn't help getting the feeling the writer was talking about *himself*, not about any girl. Whatever is happening is because of what's going on inside a man's mind ("I scare myself and I don't mean lightly/I scare myself, it can get frightening"). I thought that was what I wanted to stress more than the con-



**Dolby: Spelunking through the cavities of his own imagination**

PHOTO LAURALEVINE



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PHOTO: GUIDO MARABUCCI

**Dolby: 'My biggest fear is making something that doesn't astound me'**

ventional side." In fact, Dolby continues, he was drawn to the song by a scene from his own life, on which he would rather not elaborate.

With "Hyperactive," the first single and video, Dolby examines the self-destructive means by which humans combat the aforementioned state. "I think my own biggest fear is making something that doesn't astound me. 'Hyperactive' was written in the studio, during a period of complete hysteria, as I'm rushing around, all kinds of thoughts and feelings hitting me, I want to wipe out all I've done and replace it with something completely different. That's just a reaction to being afraid."

Nevertheless, though the theme of fear is pervasive on *Flat Earth*, Dolby insists that as an artist, at least, he's found his self-confidence. "The hyperactive thing, actually, was even more pronounced on the first record. There I had a tendency to flex every musical muscle; I knew I could do everything because of the lack of roots in my background, and I couldn't wait to show the world how well I did it, and how much fun it all was. Play keyboards, produce, sing, design record covers, direct videos, write great melodies. And it's a very dangerous thing, too, because when it

didn't work, it was just muscle flexing, like a session man or something. But I had to get all that out of my system. Having done it once, I could sit back and say, 'What am I really here for and what is the most valuable thing I do?' There aren't any conclusions, but I'm looking for the answers."

*Flat Earth* offers Dolby a broad showcase for his emerging skills as writer and arranger. He describes the basic process as beginning with the flash of a mental picture, and a filling in of the instrumental pieces, like a jigsaw puzzle.

"I'm getting better at following my instincts, at following clues on an emotional level in laying down the atmosphere for a song. If I sat down and played 'Mulu the Rain Forest' (from the new LP) for you right now, with the piano, bass and drums, it would be another pop song and nothing more. But starting with a loop of crickets where the hi-hat would be and the sound of trees falling in the distance where the snare would be, the atmosphere that's been laid down with instruments can't fail."

Dolby says he can still visualize clearly the image that triggered every song he has ever written, from the New York street with "steam pouring out of every hole, huge hunks of concrete falling off the

buildings, gunshots and people screaming at each other," to the quietude of the tropical rain forest.

He wishes he could now discover the mystery of the melody or "the reason Paul McCartney has written 500 times more unforgettable pop songs than I have." And he wishes there was someone around now and then to tuck him in bed, so to speak.

"When I get into those heavy adrenalin periods in the studio," says Dolby, "there's never any time to just talk to someone. A producer would probably say, 'Okay, Thomas, go to bed.' And it would be good advice."

**THOMAS DOLBY, BORN IN CAIRO, Egypt, the youngest of six children of Charles Robertson, a peripatetic classical archaeologist, has always had to tuck himself in at night.**

"I had a lot of love," he explains, "but there was that rootless quality. I was the youngest, and all the other kids were teen-aged when I was born, so by the time I came my parents had certainly given up all aspirations of pointing me in any direction. They were too self-conscious; they had a teenage daughter thinking about having her own children already, so they pretty much left me free to get on with it."

As a child, Dolby would "go into the cupboard and pull out a toy and turn it into something different and then say 'Uggghh,' and go off to explore the garden or something. In a literary sense, there were books and television and movies, and because we travelled all over the world, there were people and places—and I mastered the art of self-entertainment."

Arriving in Venice as a youngster, Dolby found the one spot that perfectly suited his rootless psyche—protected from assimilation by geography, yet cosmopolitan; entirely individual and timeless in its beauty. "Venice," he recalls, "was a refuge for the loner against society." It should be noted that Dolby's own record label is called Venice In Peril (VIP) Records.

Before the age of 10, Dolby had attended a series of "cheap" European boarding schools, where he first took up music as the alto in a school choir. Later it was electronics and elementary ham radio. Then film projection and meteorology. At age 16, he became an avid non-matriculator, exiting academia to play "bad jazz" in Paris subways and bars. He fooled around with synthesizers at home and began writing his first songs.

While still a teenager, he was designing and building sound systems for established UK bands, and doing fairly sophisticated work with computer-generated music and mixed media. He also toured, wrote a hit single for Lene Lovich ("New Toy") and pretty well succeeded in inspiring himself, if not the record industry.

In 1981, however, his "Urges"/"Leipzig" single, on the independent Armageddon label, began attracting attention, and



soon he was besieged by offers to do session work and to produce other artists. When his first Venice In Peril single, "Europa and the Pirate Twins," hit the UK charts in mid-'81, Dolby became a solo artist in his own right. Regarding his present status as a budding pop star, Dolby again harkens back to his vision of "Death in Venice without the little boys."

"Getting in and out of Venice is so difficult, it becomes a *quaint curiosity*, which is what I think I am for most of the people who buy my records. When I grew up, my idea was to lay out an invitation to the public to come in and enjoy it, too. And the public took a voyeuristic attitude toward what I do. It was, 'Who is this guy? Why is he doing this? He's living in his own little world that nobody can stop, and we can't affect what he does, we just have to listen to it.' And that's the way it is with me and the listeners. But I look around and it's not that way with other artists, who are the product of people's wildest imaginations, like Bowie and Michael Jackson. Tremendously talented people who live and breathe, but are also projections of people's hopes. And they are very successful. Artists like me, on the other hand, have to be careful that our odd images don't alienate people. I don't like the place that 'art' has in a pop culture that people like to relax in. Being an 'artist' is going to attract the kind of extra admirers I'm not interested in."

In his bid to become a little more of a fantasy object and little less of an oddball, Dolby has turned to the music video as a means of cultivating a pop image. "I want a strong picture that is going to reach out and grab people. That's why I like the bare acidity of video. One of the reasons I work with (co-director) Danny Kleinman is he's a graphic artist with a very upfront two-dimension view. There's no romance of film over video like you see with most three-dimensionally-inclined directors. Video is kinetic, hyperactive, not for people looking for depth."

In the "Hyperactive" video, Dolby portrays a young man undergoing a rigorous, and presumably painful, series of psychoanalytic sessions. While a faintly-menacing shrink dangles a watch, and at other times looks quite fatherly ("Certainly he's a father-figure for me," says Dolby), Dolby frantically peels off different faces from the giant cube covering his head (à la Bowie, with a nod to Dali).

It's a riveting and frightening video and entirely in keeping with the desperate, grasping, frenetic quality of the song itself. In addition, the depiction of analysis appears quite natural, possibly because, by sheer coincidence, the actor playing the psychiatrist was actually an analyst himself at one time.

Meanwhile, as a songwriter, Dolby has become committed—more so than ever—to the pop ideal. "Like a lot of artists, I try never to repeat the same formula by using a process, say in the way Eno does to jar his

creativity. My format is the pop song, but even there you ask yourself after a couple of decades of chorus, several choruses toward the end, vocal, backing vocal, nice instrumental intro—how, after 20 years, can *anyone* do anything creative with that? We don't know how they can, but they do. There were great sonnets after Shakespeare, and year after year someone comes along to do great things in pop music."

And finally, to further heighten his pop accessibility this year, Dolby is embarking on his first world tour, backed by a band of veterans who number Lene Lovich, Joan Armatrading and the Thompson Twins among their credits. The itinerary encompasses four continents, ending in Australia in mid-July. The U.S. portion of

the tour runs from from mid-April to mid-June.

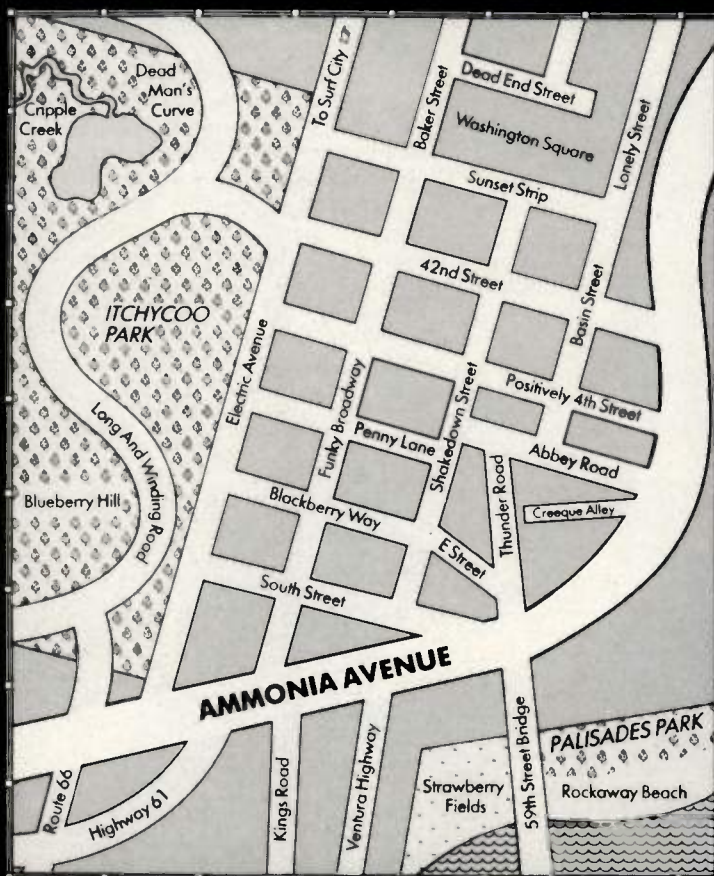
Despite all this purposeful activity, however, Dolby says he will remain forever a product of a direction-less childhood, jumping from challenge to challenge, until he finally runs out of ways to astound, or at least content, himself.

Does he wish now that as a youngster he had been slotted into something a little less exasperating and scary?

"I admit," he confesses, "it would have been easier to get my laundry done and brush my teeth every day. But I like being hyperactive. My father, for example, may not know the context I'm working in, but even he loves the confusion."

Maybe that ice isn't so thin after all. ○

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By Stuart Cohn

# SON OF ROCK VIDEO (OR, HOW DO YOU SPELL RELIEF?)

Are sequel clips a cure for 'rotation burnout'?

**I**T GOES LIKE THIS IN Hollywood: You make a hit movie and it earns maybe \$50-\$60 million and you want to make another one. So you see your investors and the local studio head and they all tell you the same thing: "Try to make this one just like the one you did before." You know—that's why they made *Rocky II* and *Jaws 3-D* and *Abbott and Costello Meet Attila the Hun at the Potala in Tibet*, all those delightful and wonderful and wretched variants and sequels to movies you may or may not have liked in the first place.

But that's an old story because that's old Hollywood. The new Hollywood, of course, is rock video and it's creating traditions

which parody and mirror the old ones. We've met the auteurs from Mulcahy to Barron to Giraldi and we've seen all the genres from "vid noir" to "West Side Story." So, naturally, now is the time for the sequel.

Clips-with-sequels do have their advantages, both commercial and artistic. They allow directors and writers a creative stretch. Using the longer form, video makers can slow the pace a bit, take a longer time to tell a story, perhaps with humorous variations. It's a form ingrained in the American viewer from years of self-referential TV series with recurring characters and situations. Clips-with-sequels also provide a hedge against "rota-

tion burnout"—overplay of one clip or song on a cable-TV music service.

Recurring characters were first seen last year in clips by the Kinks, Aldo Nova and, best of all, ZZ Top, whose "Give Me All Your Lovin'" and "Sharp Dressed Man" clips feature a trio of scantily-dressed ladies who cruise the countryside in an antique car looking for callow young men in need of sex education.

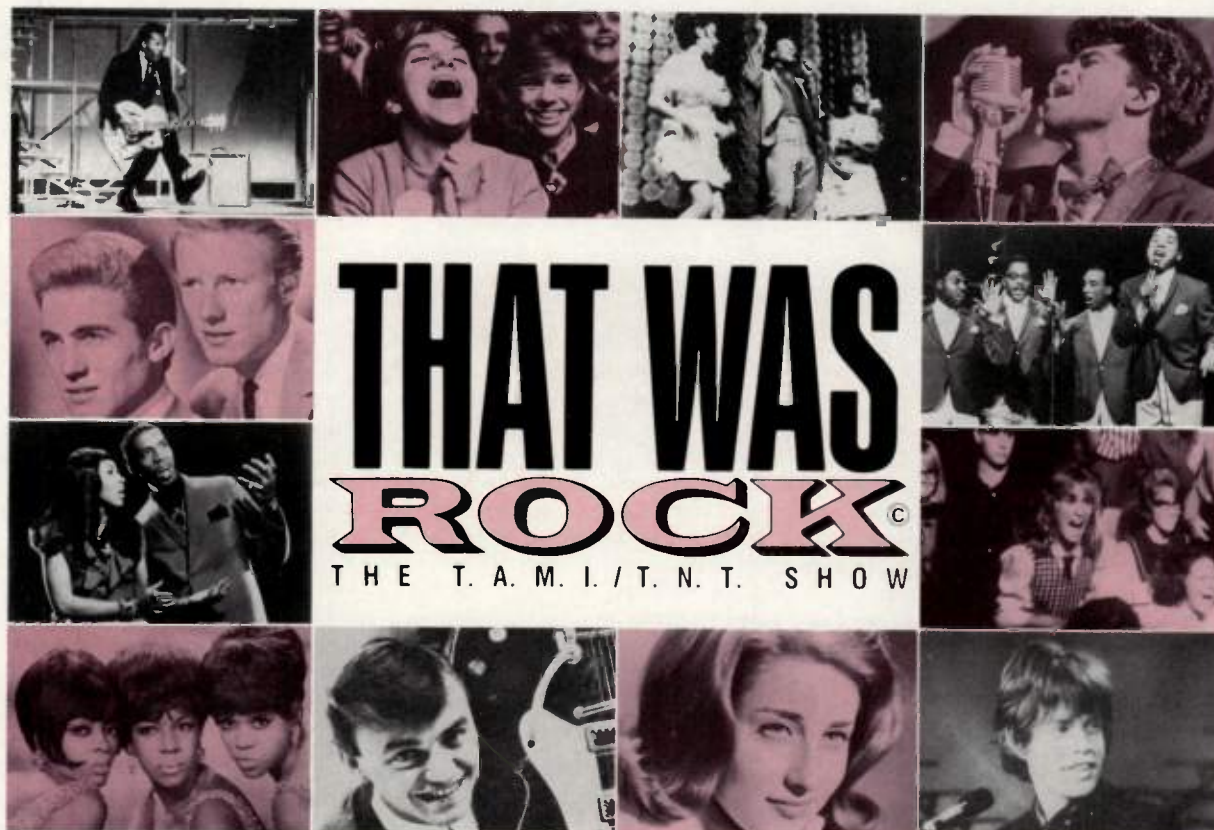
Tim Newman was the director of both ZZ clips and the mastermind behind their conceptual relationship. Newman works primarily in TV commercials (clips-with-sequels *do* resemble ad campaigns) but he's also done vid-

**Sequel staples: ZZ Top, comic and spectral . . .**





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PHOTO LISA LEAVITT

### ... and their three earthly female familiars

eos for cousin Randy Newman ("I Love L.A.") and former Eagle Don Felder ("Bad Girls").

"Give Me All Your Lovin'" was such a dumb idea that it worked," Newman says. "Everybody liked the car, the keychain, and those girls. So, after a little unscientific research, the record company asked me to do another one. We thought the sequel idea would be really funny. We could tell the same story over and over without repeating ourselves."

"Sharp Dressed Man," in fact, calls attention to itself as a sequel right away. Motifs from the earlier clips are re-introduced within the first few seconds: red car, desert highway, line of telephone poles, the comic/spectral presence of the band and their three earthly female familiars. This time, though, the girls crash a funky-but-swanky party in L.A. The surrounding imagery changes from desert orange to grainy neon, but the story is basically the same.

Sally Piper, operations manager of Warner Brothers' video department, says the clips had a lot to do with reviving ZZ Top's career and establishing a new image for the band. Indeed, Newman has been hired to direct "Legs," the third ZZ Top clip with the same cast of characters. This time, though, it starts off in a hamburger joint where a girl, not a guy, gets the ZZ Top makeover. Newman envisions stringing three or four episodes together into a video cassette, perhaps including footage that would be a little too risqué for cable or broadcast TV.

The British reggae group UB40 is taking the clip-with-sequel idea and expanding it into just such a long form project. The group shot four videos from its *Labour of Love* album, added dialogue and background music and sequenced them into a 45-minute *Labour of Love* movie.

"Red Red Wine," the first clip to be shot, tells the story of a working class guy,

played by lead singer Ali Campbell, who goes to a pub one night, gets his pocket picked, sees his girlfriend (Bernadette McNamara) walk in with another man (UB guitarist Robin Campbell) and, drowning his sorrow, gets so drunk that he's kicked out of the bar.

Directed by Bernard Rose this first-rate clip has the grimy look of realistic '60s British films like *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*. The acting is unstudied and emotionally vivid, mostly because the story is set and shot in the Birmingham neighborhood where most of the band grew up.

The sequel, "Please Don't Make Me Cry," is UB40's version of *Raging Bull*. Ali is beaten by Robin in a boxing match and Bernadette, who's seen it all on TV, rushes in to comfort him...and is rejected.

"Labour of Love," shot for \$200,000 and financed by the band, comes complete with subplots: petty crime and violence on the job, police chases, drinking and hanging out in pubs. "We're bored with the video medium as it is with dancing and lip-synch," says sax player and scenarist Brian Travers, echoing the need for a creative stretch, "and we wanted to do something that would have some personal meaning for us, something we could do with pride and conviction."

But doing it their way has caused UB40 some problems. "Red Red Wine" was banned from *Top of the Pops* and other British rock TV shows even though it was a number one song. "It was because we showed pickpocketing and drinking," laughs drummer Jim Brown, "and pop record buyers aren't supposed to go in for that sort of thing."

"Please Don't Make Me Cry" was also banned—too violent—so UB40 is seeking a new arena for the film. Travers says he wants to show it as a short in British theaters and eventually release it as a videocassette.

But not all multi-part videos are being made with the home video market in mind. Was (Not Was) shot five separate versions of "Knocked Down, Made Small" with director Dominic Orlando, (who used repeating images in his two Kansas clips, "Fight Fire with Fire" and "Everybody's My Friend.") These clips are not in any particular sequence. They each tell the same surreal story of what Orlando called "the weirdest family on the block." There's a mean 6'8" dad who chases after his daughter while his wife plays around with any guy she can find. He also abuses the pre-adolescent "Was Brothers," who rebel by hooking him up to an electrode. Jeff Ayeroff, director of creative marketing for Warner Brothers, likens the Was (Not Was) clips to album covers such as *Synchronicity*, which came in 36 different color and photo combinations.

Sequel clips are also a way of countering the rotation system at MTV, where the same version of videos are shown as often as four times a day. "With the Was (Not Was) clips," Ayeroff, says, "we wanted to play with the concept of rotation burnout. Viewers might never get sick of the clip because they'd never be sure which version they'd see when it comes on the air."

So far, there are no plans to market "Knocked Down, Made Small" as a video cassette. For now, the clips show that the same song can be successfully interpreted in more than one way. As rock video grows, a hit song will need differing interpretations to keep the medium visually fresh; perhaps that will spawn the rise of video cover versions.

While sequels may be artistically embarrassing to the old Hollywood, they do offer creative and profitable options to the new generation of video makers. Ray Davies has parlayed his "Come Dancing"/"Don't Forget to Dance" character into a movie role (*Absolute Beginners*), and Bob Giraldo has compressed at least half a dozen sequels into one clip—"Say Say Say" with Paul McCartney and Michael Jackson. And Gary Weis's new .38 Special clip, "Back Where You Belong," ends with the words "To Be Continued" flashing across the screen.

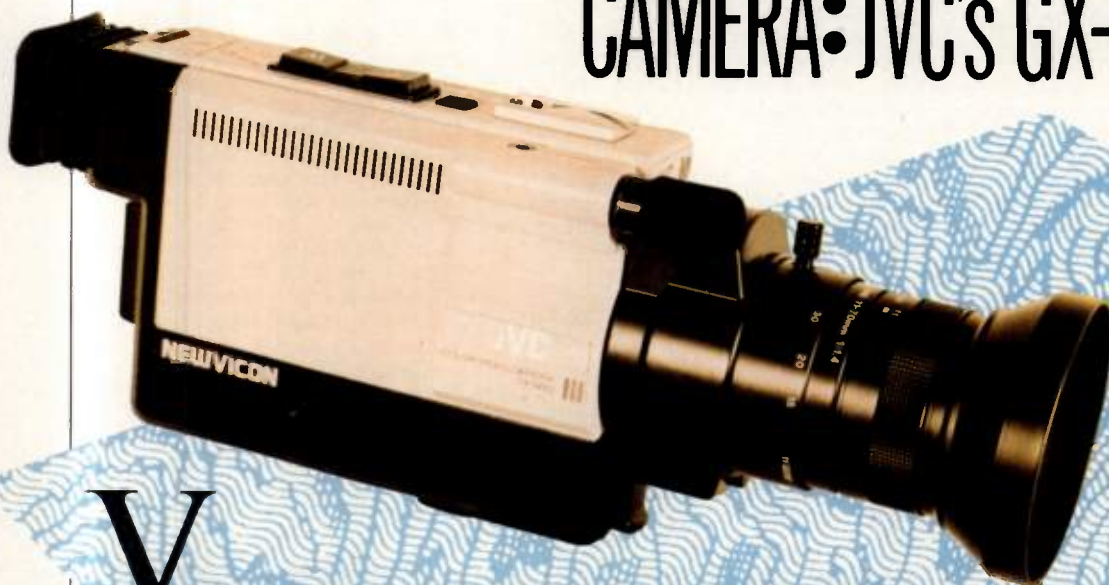
An offbeat, entertaining concept like ZZ Top's could conceivably take years to wear thin. But wait. If sequel clips are the current big thing, can spinoffs of clips be far behind? Don't touch that dial. ○





# A HIGHLY-SOPHISTICATED, FULLY-LOADED COLOR VIDEO CAMERA: JVC's GX-N5V

By John and  
Joellen Tierney



ing that the batteries are low, or to signal the end of tape on the HR-C3 portable VCR.)

Normally, the six buttons are used to control the VCR's transport functions, including play, rewind, record, pause and stop. It should be noted, however, that these controls will only operate when using the camera with a JVC HR-C3, HR-2650 or HR-7650 video cassette recorder. A VCR compatibility switch is provided, but allows only the start/stop trigger to

work with some Panasonic and Sony VCRs.

Eight pages of titles can be accessed by selecting the "Title" function. Choosing characters to be displayed is a little like entering your initials on some video arcade games. By pressing the various multi-function buttons you cycle the display through the alphabet. This awkward process is slow, but you can pre-set all eight pages and display them when needed during shooting. The date can be superimposed over the lower right corner of the picture by selecting "DATE" on the mode switch.

A microphone is supplied with the camera and can be plugged in above the zoom lens. Unfortunately, some noise from the zoom motor is picked up by the mic. A stereo microphone jack is provided on the top of the camera case.

No doubt written with the first-time camera user in mind, the instruction manual is well-illustrated and elementary. Every feature of the camera is clearly marked and explained in detail. There are two pages devoted to the use of the ND filter and the color temperature conversion filter with examples of lighting situations and the accompanying color temperatures. The extensive step-by-step instructions should provide any novice with a good working knowledge of the camera. ○

## JVC's GX-N5U color video camera: Feature-packed and a winner in low light conditions

will require the use of an ND (neutral density) filter to reduce the amount of light reaching the tube. This important filter, built right into the camera along with a color temperature conversion filter, provides proper color balance for shooting in either daylight or artificial light. It's clearly marked with a sunburst and lightbulb to make it almost foolproof. An std (standard) button works in conjunction with the color temperature conversion switch and gives satisfactory results without adjusting the white balance each time the light situation changes. There's also an auto iris with manual override.

A 6x power zoom lens, provided with the camera, has two speeds (pressed lightly for slow, pressed fully for fast) for zooming in or out. A fade button allows for a five-second fade in or fade out, a nice feature which enhances editing in the camera. Another enhancement is the lens' macro position, which allows focussing on objects just a fraction of an inch away from the lens. A 1.5 inch black and white CRT displays what is being shot or played back.

The camera's hand grip houses a start/stop trigger, six multi-function buttons and a mode select switch. The start/stop button activates the videocassette recorder and a red "R" in the viewfinder indicates recording. (The "R" will flash as a warn-

**V**IDEO MAY HAVE KILLED the radio star, but it's given birth to a generation of video addicts. And it's spawned a million dollar industry in home video equipment from VCRs to video cameras.

JVC's latest—the GX-N5U Color Video Camera (\$995)—is a welcome addition to the growing camera market. Not only is it highly sophisticated and fully-loaded, but it performs extremely well in low light. Gone are the days of the hot, blinding floodlights which produced more pictures of hands over faces and tightly shut eyes than any home cinematographer would like to recall. Normal room light is sufficient to produce clear, color balanced pictures with the GX-N5U. The Newvicon, a relatively new type of camera pick-up tube, is responsible for the increased light sensitivity. Its minimum light rating of 10 lux (one footcandle) is a considerable improvement over the vidicon tubes which required 40 lux or more, and its tube, coupled with the fast f/1.4 lens, can produce usable pictures using only street lights at night.

Overall picture quality is very good, and color rendition is fairly accurate when white balance is properly adjusted. The camera produces very clean pictures with some noise visible only in very low light situations.

Because of the Newvicon tube's extraordinary light sensitivity, normal sunny days



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# ON THE BEAT

## VINYL

When **Bananarama** flew into New York about a year ago to promote their first London LP, **Deep Sea Skiving**, the Statue of Liberty, U.N., Empire State Building, and local club CBGB didn't even come close to copping the top spot on their list of things to see. Apparently Siobhan, Keren, and Sarah were interested in one thing: visiting a certain Manhattan bistro frequented by noted actor/Italian-American Robert DeNiro. Bobby wasn't there that day, but the ladies were so taken by his lingering presence that they headed back to London and fashioned a song that's just now seeing the light of day on their new album. The tune? "Speaking Italian"... Cincinnati's **Midnight Star**, who put albums out last year that reached platinum status, has been broadening its scope lately, producing new singles for the Whispers and Carrie Lucas... In an era when most major record companies continue to narrow their focus, it's getting impossible for many musicians and composers even to make it past the reception desk—especially if the unusual and/or experimental music they make has, as Frank Zappa would say, "no commercial potential." Some, like Brian Eno, have enough music biz leverage to grease their way around the problem one way or another. To sidestep big label indifference, however, many lesser-known artists have taken to recording and pressing their own albums in modest quantities and selling them wherever possible—often from the trunk of a car after a gig. One alternative, the New York-based New Music Distribution Service, is celebrating its 12th Anniversary. A non-profit arm of the Jazz Composer's Orchestra Association, the service is the largest of its kind and provides a route for musicians, vocalists, composers, performance artists, and poets to distribute their recorded work to a wider audience through NMDS' mail order catalog. Covering an amazing range of material—jazz, electronic, "space music", and music that defies categorization—NMDS' current stock encompasses over 1800 records on 340 different labels. Many highly listenable "unknowns" are represented (such as Daniel Lentz and Steve Tibbets) alongside small label items by well-known names such as Carla Bley, Harold Budd, William Burroughs, John Cage, Laurie Anderson, Jack DeJohnette, the Residents, the Fall, Fred Frith, Throbbing Gristle, Joy Division, Philip Glass, and Meredith Monk. The 1984 catalog is free. Write New Music Distribution Service, JCOA, 500 Broadway, New York, NY 10012...Recent

multi-selection video 45 releases include the Kinks ("Come Dancing"/"Don't Forget to Dance"/"Predictable"/"State of Confusion"), Kajagoogoo ("Too Shy"/"Ohh to be Ah"/"Hang On Now"), Kim Carnes ("Bette Davis Eyes"/"Draw of the Cards"/"Voyeur"/"Say You Don't Know Me"), Ashford and Simpson ("Street Opera Melody"), and the J. Geils Band ("Centerfold"/"Freeze Frame"/"Angel in Blue"). ■

## MISCELLANEOUS

At a recent Friday night dance hosted by the seventh grade class of a certain New York private school, chaperone deluxe **Mick Jagger** (who'd brought daughter Jade) was observed periodically to cease supporting the auditorium wall and shake a quick leg. As it turned out, the record that got the biggest

squeal of approval from the assembled throng was also the one that Mick did his rooster strut to most intensely: Cyndi Lauper's "Girls Just Want to Have Fun"...

**The First Airborne Rock & Roll Division** (in reality Robin Zander, Rick Nielson, and Bun E. Carlos of Cheap Trick; Phil Ehart, Rich Williams and John Elefante of Kansas; and members of Survivor, Pablo Cruise, and Le Roux) joined forces last month for the first USO rock tour—one that took them overseas to Hawaii, South Korea, and spots throughout the South Pacific and Indian Oceans. The project took shape when Kansas drummer Ehart approached the USO with the idea, reasoning the most enlisted men and women are under 25, and probably tired of the watered-down, bar band rock & roll you'd be likely to find in, say, downtown Manila. As the first rock artists of any note to undertake such a trek, the band members found themselves bedding



If Sting and Olivia Newton-John can do it, why not **Billy Idol**? That, at least, was the line of thought when Idol (owner of the most effective sneer in the business) was approached by director Tobe "Texas Chainsaw Massacre/Poltergeist" Hooper to star in the upcoming flick, *Space Vampires*. The duo had originally worked together last year on the apocalyptic video for "Dancing With Myself," and though Idol at first accepted the role in the \$25 million film, he was quickly forced to bow out. His *Rebel Yell* album is doing too well right now for him to start moonlighting on the side. Touring comes first.





Doing brisk chart business in Europe and Australia (where "Love is a Battlefield" went to #1), Pat Benatar is back behind a glass window again, working on her first studio LP since *Get Nervous*. Husband/guitarist Neal Giraldo (who's just finished working with Steve Forbert) is in the producer's chair. Under the aegis of Giorgio Moroder, Benatar recently recorded a new song especially for the soundtrack of *Metropolis*, Fritz Lang's classic (and recently refurbished) sci-fi epic, due for re-launching any moment now.



Mick Rock

There's no word whether this entitles them to issue "speeding" tickets, but Joan Jett and the Blackhearts realized a dream they didn't even know they had when Sheriff Fate Thomas of Davidson County, Tennessee (where more bands were hassled during the 60s for looking weird than anywhere else in the hemisphere) made them Official Deputies. The investiture took place during a stopover in Nashville. Presented with a nifty gold badge, Jett seemed thrilled. Obviously, times have changed in Tennessee...

down in barracks, chowing down in mess halls, visiting military hospitals, and playing encores in front of thousands in recreation centers, airplane hangars, and on the flight decks of aircraft carriers in an effort to, as Ehart pointed out, "meet as many servicemen and women as we can." He hopes to interest other musicians in making future trips. By all accounts, most of the enlistees for whom the band played hope that he succeeds. When you're under 25, it's got to be better than Bob Hope and his World War II revue.

## TRANSITIONS

Presumably, it was an up-market move when Ian Copeland's Frontier Booking International (they handle the Police, Joan Jett, the Go Go's, et al.) launched its new Film, Theater and Television Division recently. Almost as weird as Copeland's expansive vision was the office party FBI hosted for the occasion—one with a guest list that pitted Sting & Co., Carolee Carter, the Rockats, and members of the Fixx against the likes of Francis Ford Coppola, *Saturday Night Live*'s Mary Gross, Robin Duke, Gary Kroeger, and Brad Hall, and *All My Children*'s Laurence Lau (Greg Nelson) and Mark LaMura (Mark Dalton). The mix prompted actress Dorothy Stanley (on Broadway in *42nd Street*) to dub the assembled music folk "outlandish. I feel like Donna Reed." Later, actress Donna Murphy (from Broadway's *Human Comedy*) talked Mid-East politics with Stewart Copeland, then whispered to Kim Ulrich (*As The World Turns*' Diana McColl), "What does he do again?" At least one person looks as if he might get some work out of all this. Sting, it's reported, is fielding offers from Broadway. Guess it's all just Show Business after all.

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by FTC method.



By Alan Hecht

**S** EEN ANY HOME MOVIES lately? Your fifth birthday? Your brother's fifth birthday? Band practice? The new puppy? With the introduction of Kodak's 8-millimeter video system, the means by which you record the visual record of your personal or family history has become the focal point of the new video battleground.

To satisfy home movie buffs (whom Jay Sato, manager of video merchandising for Sony, characterizes as "the third wave of video users") manufacturers are miniaturizing video components for easier operation and portability. Sony, for example, has introduced the "camcorder," a portable camera and video recorder combined into one unit—this on the heels of strong sales for the company's Betamovie, a 6.5 pound camcorder with 3½ hours of recording time on a regular Beta tape.

In the VHS camp, RCA's offering the CKC020 "Small Wonder," a 2.2 pound camera that measures 8½ inches long and 5½ inches wide (\$995). JVC and Zenith have marketed the Videomovie, a 6 pound camcorder with 20 minutes of recording time on VHS-compatible tape. And Konica has entered the fray with the smallest camera of all, the CV-301 (\$599). "Fist size" and weighing only 1.6 pounds, the 301's compactness necessitated the elimination of certain features: playback, for example, is possible only through an external screen, rather than a viewfinder.

By far the most controversial new entry in the amateur video photography market, though, is Kodak's incompatible 8-millimeter format Kodavision components. Approximately the size of either a Super 8 film camera or a 35-millimeter still camera with a zoom lens and a TV viewfinder, the eight-millimeter camcorder uses a ⅓ inch Newicon tube to capture images (compared with the half-inch tubes on most portable cameras). Model 2200's (\$1599) two-head conventional helical-scan recorder allows visual search and still-frame effects. Model 2400 (\$1899) has an autofocus feature with a three-head deck that improves the quality of special effects. Both can be played back directly through a TV set, although the Model 2020 Cradle unit (\$199) makes playback more convenient. The Cradle provides a shell for the camcorder that operates and looks like a traditional VCR with a wired remote. Recording time is 90 minutes.

# A FLY IN THE OINTMENT

The sudden impact of eight-millimeter video



## Kodak's series 2000 cradle and compact 8mm camcorder

Kodak's Ted McGrath, manager, consumer division, feels 8-millimeter is consistent with the Kodak tradition of utilizing the leading edge of technology. "We came out with disc photography, pocket photography, copiers," says McGrath. "8-millimeter follows in those steps. We want to start out with something that's state of the art tomorrow."

McGrath's response merely suggests more questions, as do the specs and marketing of the system. Is 8-millimeter really state of the art? From observations at consumer shows and press conferences, picture sharpness appears good but not exceptional, and the product remains untested. Even proponents of 8-millimeter seem unconvinced of its ultimate value. Though Fisher Electronics has displayed a prototype 8-millimeter system, the company's vice president of video, David La Bendar, states flatly: "I don't care who tells you it's as good as half-inch. I'd be from Missouri and have them show me."

Indeed. Recording time, especially, is a problem area: the Kodak system allows for 90 minutes while the RCA system offers two hours. A history lesson: Beta came first but VHS, with longer playing and re-

cording time, knocked Beta on its tail. Attempting to recover, Beta phased out its first generation machines; as thousands of videophiles learned, though, first generation tapes were incompatible with second generation Beta machines designed to give longer playing time. Despite Kodak's assurances that this scenario won't be repeated, does a smart shopper gamble \$2000 on a system barely out of its developmental stage?

As for music video applications, 8-millimeter is a tease. Though the system is capable of carrying sound three ways—on the linear track (like most recorders), on the FM track (like Beta and VHS Hi-Fi) and digitally (like Compact Discs)—it will only carry mono sound on *one* of the FM tracks. After all these years of waiting for sonic audio on VCRs, after the advent of Beta and VHS Hi-Fi's, 8-millimeter takes us back to those thrilling days of low-tech sound. A little travelling music, please.

Given these technological gaffes, it's hardly suprising to find few companies rushing to support the format. Matsushita, manufacturer of the Kodak and General Electric models, isn't marketing the sys-

*Continued on page 47*



**"YOU HAVE TO LISTEN...  
YOU CAN'T GO BY TALK.  
THAT'S THE WAY PEOPLE SELL THINGS." —MILES DAVIS**



6-60351

## **STEPS AHEAD / MODERN TIMES**

Steps Ahead is building a reputation as one of the true "super bands" in jazz for the 80's. Having placed at #2 in the Downbeat Critics Poll as Best Acoustic Band of 1983, the group has produced a more widely accessible second album that features both acoustic and electronic music. With Mike Mainieri on vibes, Mike Brecker—tenor, Eddie Gomez—bass, Warren Bernhardt—piano and Peter Erskine—drums, this group has a totally distinctive ensemble sound and five master soloists.



1-60349

## **BILL EVANS / LIVING IN THE CREST OF A WAVE**

The debut solo album by one of the brightest new saxophonists in Jazz. Bill has gained acclaim for his work with Miles Davis over the past three years and will next be featured with the re-formed Mahavishnu Orchestra. His exciting debut album features Bill on Tenor and Soprano sax in a program of all Evans originals. Supporting players include Mitch Forman, Adam Nussbaum, Mark Egan and Manulo Budrena.



1-60298

## **IN PERFORMANCE AT THE PLAYBOY JAZZ FESTIVAL**

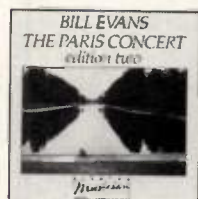
A specially priced 2 record set featuring the most exciting moments of the 1982 Festival at The Hollywood Bowl. Grover Washington, Jr., Pieces Of A Dream, Weather Report, Dexter Gordon and Woody Shaw. The Great Quartet with McCoy Tyner, Freddie Hubbard, Ron Carter and Elvin Jones. Nancy Wilson and The Art Farmer, Benny Golson Quintet. Special feature is Weather Report and The Manhattan Transfer together for the first time on 'Birdland.'



1-60350

## **McCOY TYNER / DIMENSIONS**

The extraordinary pianist composer joins Musician for a powerful debut album by his new Quintet featuring Gary Bartz—alto, John Blake—violin, John Lee—bass and Wilby Fletcher on drums. Compositions include "Understanding," "Just in Time," "Uncle Bubba" and a stunning Tyner solo performance of "Prelude To A Kiss."



1-60311

## **BILL EVANS / THE PARIS CONCERT, VOL. II**

More brilliant performances from Bill's historic 1979 Paris Concert. Our first edition was heralded as one of his finest recorded concert performances and was awarded an 'Oscar' as Best Jazz Album of 1983 by The Association of French Jazz Critics. Edition 2 features "Nardis," "Joanna," "Re: Person I Knew" and more. Joe LaBarbara is on drums and Mark Johnson is on bass.



1-60310

## **LEE RITENOUR / ON THE LINE**

The wizard of the contemporary guitar in an all all-star audiophile recording that's pure electricity. Lee's brilliant guitar work is featured in a set of hip and funky originals including "The Rit Variations," "Tush," "California Roll" and more. Featured players include Dave Grusin, Harvey Mason, Greg Mathieson, Ernie Watts and Anthony Jackson.

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## MUSICVIDEO● Reviews

### READY, STEADY, GO

Director: Michael Lindsay-Hogg. Picture Music International. 60 min./\$29.95

The myth of the mid-'60s British TV series *Ready Steady Go!* is so powerful that it has rarely faded from the English pop consciousness (Billy Idol wrote a tribute to the show in his Generation X days, and Paul Weller still rhapsodizes over its impact on himself as a would-be Mod). In an America that never got to see it, the program has assumed even further status as legend. So it's not just nostalgia which makes Tottenham Sound kingpin-turned-entrepreneur Dave Clark's packaging of

screams greeting Gerry and the Pacemakers, prove that the English were scarcely infallible in their worship, and in fact had a ravenous taste for MOR which continues to this day.

It's difficult, though, to focus on such negative realizations when the likes of Them, the Beatles, the Animals, the Stones and the Who are sculpting the shape of rock right in front of us. The majority of clips shown are lip-synch efforts, but the impact of the young Van Morrison revving up on "Baby, Please Don't Go" or the Animals ripping through "Baby, Let Me Take You Home" remains enough to start an



PHOTO: LISA LEVITT

### The Rolling Stones: Sculpting the shape of rock

the series' best moments onto videocassette exciting, but the prospect of judging for ourselves if the version of rock past being recalled and served up by its present is an accurate one, or one built upon a myth with little relationship to the reality of the time (a possible distortion crucial to our understanding of the so-called second British Invasion and its rewriting of current history).

The overall effect of the tape, masterfully edited to resemble one single program while consisting of clips spread over a three year period, is skewed by an all-British lineup assembled for the home country's market (the Dave Clark Five segment being added for the U.S. version). Too much time is devoted to Cilla Black, Billy Fury, Georgie Fame, Sandy Shaw, and the completely inappropriate Peter Cook and Dudley Moore, all performers who never made the grade on our side of the Atlantic, and who herein demonstrate precisely why. Still, these artists were on the charts over there consistently, and, along with the

R&B revival all over again. And the Stones and Who, with their fab gear and flash stance, launch assaults—extended renditions of "Under My Thumb" and "Paint It Black" and "Anyway, Anyhow, Anywhere" recorded specially for television—that fill the screen and then some.

Judging by this first package of clips, answers to the questions surrounding *RSG!* as Hit or Myth will have to wait until further volumes in the reissue series come out. It's possible that *RSG!* can never live up to the legend, since its greatest appeal was that it was *now*, which in 1984 translates to *then*; the show's importance for those Brits weaned on it was that it was there, every week, keeping everyone clued in on the latest goings-on. But all that may be needed to establish a vital context for the modern viewer is a keener selection process; imagine a tape that bounces the Stones and Animals' best performances off a healthy dose of the all-James Brown show from 1966. That would make us glad all over.

—Wayne King



### ABC: MANTRAP

Director: Julien Temple. Polygram Musicvideo. Time: 60 minutes. \$29.95

Heavy on atmosphere and blessed with some driving music, *Mantrap* finds ABC re-teaming with top-notch musicvideo director Julien Temple (with whom they created their "Poison Arrow" clip) in a unique one-hour attempt to expand the art of musicvideo to long form. Instead of employing the standard unrelated concept footage, *Mantrap* experiments with plot as an accompaniment to concert performance. However, its premise works only on an absurdist level.

While on a European tour, a rock band (played by ABC), their manager and Samantha the mystery lady (Lisa Vanderpump) conspire to replace their new lead singer (Martin Fry) with a "double" from behind the Iron Curtain. Fry becomes increasingly paranoid and eventually "mantrapped."

ABC's popsonic sound and stylish concert performances of "Look of Love," "Many Happy Returns" and "Show Me" (*Mantrap* is fashioned entirely from music on the band's *The Lexicon Of Love* LP) pump energy into the piece and keep it moving at a steady clip. Unfortunately, the financial limitations of the new form force Temple into concessions that hurt the work's credibility (e.g., concert scenes all shot in the same hall).

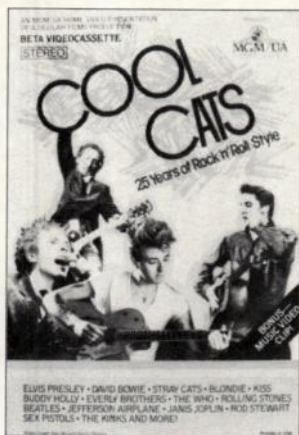
Yet Temple, who's directed some outstanding pieces with the Kinks, Stray Cats and Dexys Midnight Runners, imbues the video with a special ambience reminiscent of the cult TV series *The Prisoner*. He, fellow writer Richard Burridge and ABC know how to make music work with plot in abstract musicvideo fashion where lyrics match mood more than action.

But the script is short on characterization, and the performances by Fry and Vanderpump are, to put it mildly, underwhelming. Though the former has the look and attitude to pull off his role, he's always a beat behind.

*Mantrap* doesn't deliver the James Bond feel its spy thriller plot promises, but it's at least an effort at something more ambitious in a rapidly developing field.

—Alan Hecht





## COOL CATS

Director: Terence Dixon. MGM/UA Homevideo.  
76 minutes. \$59.95.

I used to think that the "rockumentary" style of a feature like *The Kids Are All Right* was, shall we say, a mite disjointed, but next to *Cool Cats*, *Kids* comes off as a masterpiece of conception and arrangement. This production, based on the book of the same name by Tony Stewart that traces the changes in rock fashion and style

since 1954, makes its statement by making no statement at all. It offers an endless display of images and by inundating the viewer with the sheer number of differing rock and roll looks, pretends that some point is made about Style. Too bad, then, that no picture stays with us for more than a minute, i.e., the maximum length of time one idea appears on the screen before another intrudes. What sense can be made of clips which run from Judas Priest to Blondie to Kiss to Winston Churchill (?), and then to an interview segment with Vidal Sassoon(!!!)?

By the time one can figure any of this out, it's too late: enter Malcolm McLaren, talking about rock and roll being born "before Jesus Christ was on this planet," and the picture cuts to the Bobby Fuller Four, Jimi Hendrix, Tina Turner and Buddy Holly. Even if the producers assume a quick cut method is capable of holding the attention span (what attention span?) of the "TV babies" who are this videocassette's most likely audience, is it really asking too much that some sense of narrative be maintained?

—Wayne King



## DANSPAK

Directors: Merrill Aldighieri and Joe Tripician.  
Time: 20 min. Sony Video 45. \$16.95

Why does art have to be so heavy? Most of the imagery in this video 45 starring five underground bands is so ponderous it sits on top of you like the school bully. Directed by video artists Merrill Aldighieri and Joe Tripician, *Danspak* is adventurous without reason.

The Aldighieri/Tripician style is quite distinct. They've fine-tuned a funky animation technique called pixillation in which video action looks like moving portraits; they've mastered hi-speed motion cut to the beat and can paint, or "solarize," a picture at will—and unfortunately they do, on virtually every clip.

Man Parrish's slapstick "Hip Hop Be Bop (Don't Stop)" leads off the compilation and trips on the starting line. The band is seen playing patty cake upside down, turning orange and moving around like computerized lights on a disco floor. Actually this isn't a bad approach when you consider that Man Parrish are a dismal bunch of performers.

Low-budget science fiction can be fun, but Richard Bone barely packs a giggle in "Alien Girl." The music comes direct from Casio city and, on top of that, Bone can't sing. The comic bubbles coming from his ear are clever, but when the star of your video is a five and dime toy, you're in trouble.

In "Boat People," the group Living runs around a Central Park lake dressed in togas and singing the title song. Is this supposed to be a political statement? Let's dance.

Shox Lumania is seen, in "Pointy Headgear," in manic motion backstage, donning makeup, costumes and attitude in a series of rapid-fire cuts that get the feet and body moving. They also star in one other clip here, the stillborn "Falling," a film school exercise at best.

Sony's attempt to bring street video to the public is admirable, but there's a lot better talent out there than is featured in this package—and, at that, talent which doesn't take itself too seriously. Anything called *Danspak* should be more plain fun.

—Alan Hecht

## MUSICVIDEO TOP TEN

- 1 MAKING MICHAEL JACKSON'S THRILLER**  
MICHAEL JACKSON  
Vestron Video
- 2 DURAN DURAN**  
DURAN DURAN  
Thorn-EMI Home Video
- 3 THE WALL**  
PINK FLOYD  
MGM/UA Home Video
- 4 BILLY JOEL LIVE ON LONG ISLAND\***  
BILLY JOEL  
CBS/Fox Home Video
- 5 A HARD DAY'S NIGHT**  
THE BEATLES  
MPI Video
- 6 HALL AND OATES  
ROCK 'N' SOUL LIVE\***  
HALL AND OATES  
RCA/Columbia Home Video
- 7 THE COMPLETE BEATLES**  
THE BEATLES  
MGM/UA Home Video
- 8 POLICE AROUND THE WORLD**  
POLICE  
I.R.S. Video
- 9 TWIST OF FATE\***  
OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN  
MCA Home Video
- 10 OLIVIA IN CONCERT**  
OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN  
MCA Home Video

\*Denotes new entry  
The MusicVideo Top Ten indicates the fastest-moving sales and rentals titles in music product as reported by the country's leading video retail outlets.

## VIDEO CLIP TOP TEN

- 1 TALKING IN YOUR SLEEP**  
THE ROMANTICS  
(Nemperor) D: Bob Dyke
- 2 OWNER OF A LONELY HEART**  
YES  
(Atco) D: Storm Thorgenson
- 3 PARTY TRAIN**  
GAP BAND  
(Mercury) D: Don Letts
- 4 STAY WITH ME TONIGHT**  
JEFFREY OSBORNE  
(A&M) D: Tracy Ward
- 5 ALL NIGHT LONG**  
LIONEL RICHIE  
(Motown) D: Bob Rafelson
- 6 SOMEBODY'S WATCHING ME**  
ROCKWELL  
(Motown) D: Francis Delia
- 7 99 LUFTBALLOONS**  
NENA  
(Epic) D: Burt Van Der Veer
- 8 REBEL YELL**  
BILLY IDOL  
(Chrysalis) D: Jeff Stein
- 9 I WANNA NEW DRUG**  
HUEY LEWIS & THE NEWS  
(Chrysalis) D: Devendra Rethod
- 10 POLITICS OF DANCING**  
RE-FLEX  
(Capitol) D: Chipper Field & Arnell

Compiled by RockAmerica (27 E. 21st Street, N.Y., N.Y. 10003), the Video Clip Top Ten indicates the most popular rock video clips being played in over 250 clubs, colleges and record stores. In addition to title, artist and label, each entry contains the name of the clip's director. These charts reflect video play for the month of January.



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## MUSICVIDEO

# VIDEO NEW PRODUCTS

### SIX PACK VIDEO

JVC's MAGNETIC TAPE DIVISION offers consumers a variety of purchasing choices with Sampler Kits for the company's T-120 videocassettes, as well as a six pack of Dynarec T-120 tapes. The Sampler Kits contain three Dynarec T-120 video tapes, one each from JVC's three formats (Standard, High Grade, Super High Grade). Suggested retail price for the Sampler is \$44.95, for the six pack \$59.95.

Kodak is entering the video tape market with its own brand for amateur use and the

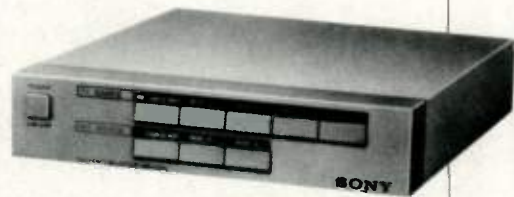


### A six-pack to go from JVC

Eastman brand for professional and broadcast needs. Kodak's standard VHS tapes range in price from \$14.89 for the T-30 standard to \$25.49 for the T-160, while the extra high grade (HGX) T-30 lists for \$18.69 and the HGX T-160 lists for \$31.89. In Beta the standard tape price ranges from \$12.29 for L-250 to \$16.29 for L-750; HGX Beta tapes are priced between \$15.29 for L-250 and \$27.49 for L-830.

### ACCESSORIES

SONY HAS INTRODUCED TWO new video accessories, the SB-V5W and the SB-V10W, that make it possible to permanently interconnect video equipment into one control center and eliminate wiring confusion. The unit's video and audio line switcher allows hookup of up to five line input sources. For each source, connections are provided for composite video and left and right line audio. The one-touch video/audio switcher features three sets of output connectors which can supply input signals to other VCRs for editing or to component TV monitors or TV receivers with built-in video and audio line inputs for display. The SB-V5W also has a



### Sony's SB-V10W line switcher

tape-to-tape editing feature Suggested retail price is \$250.

Sony's SB-V10W, a TV/VCR RF switcher, simplifies connecting and controlling a video system. Since most TVs are equipped with only one antenna input, it's necessary to disconnect and reconnect every time the user wants to view another signal source. With the SB-V10W, up to five RF input sources, including a TV antenna, can be permanently connected. In addition, there are three RF outputs for feeding RF signals from a selected source to two television sets and a VCR. Suggested retail price is \$150. (Sony Consumer Products Company, Sony Drive, Park Ridge, NJ 07656; tel. 201-930-6432)

### COOL CAMERA

RCA HAS INTRODUCED A PALM-size color video camera, model CKC020, that is the first solid-state model to be optionally priced below \$1000. Dubbed the "Small Wonder," the CKC020 employs a solid-state sensor rather than a photoconductive tube to provide a highly-featured, high-tech camera that weighs only 2.2 pounds (the lightest camera yet introduced to the consumer market) and measures only 5½ inches high and 8½ inches long. It features a solid state MOS imager, constant auto white balance, 6:1 power zoom lens and a one-inch electronic viewfinder which doubles as an "instant replay" monitor for on-the-spot scene review. Suggested retail price is \$995. (RCA, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020; tel. 212-621-6000) ○

### Palm-size video from Kodak





## KODAK 8MM

*Continued from page 42*

tem under its own Panasonic or Quasar brand lines. TDK, Kodak's blank tape supplier, isn't marketing its own brand of tape, nor will Fuji, 3M, BASF or Maxell. Pre-recorded software? There is none at the moment. To say that the attitude is "wait and see" is clearly an understatement.

In fact, many in the industry are upset with Kodak for pushing the 8-millimeter system. "Kodak needed a hook to get into video," says an exasperated John Dale, vice president and general manager of Fuji tape. "But why would anyone want to go into a whole new format and only get the ability to take home movies?"

Kodak's McGrath argues that the 90-minute recording time is "long enough to record the normal movie." However, to record off-air you need Kodak's model 2022 tuner timer (another \$300). And what network movie runs from 9-10:30 P.M.? Even Judy Ziegler, manager of marketing communication for General Electric (due to bow an 8-millimeter system this summer) concedes that "8-millimeter's really not practical for someone who wants to play pre-recorded movies or record soap operas and football games."

G.E.'s entry into 8-millimeter raises an even more troublesome question. Will different 8-millimeter brands be compatible? There's a good chance they won't be, at least right away. Though a committee of Japanese manufacturers supposedly agreed on a set of standards, no one is absolutely certain that competing 8-millimeter systems will be user friendly.

"There was some talk about compatibility but no agreement," explains G.E.'s Ziegler. "There are two different types of tape (metal evaporated and metal particle). We won't know until we see Kodak's or RCA's units whether ours will be compatible or whether a Kodak tape will play on our unit or vice versa."

If there is conventional wisdom emerging from all this it's that the smart money is on those companies currently developing the untapped potential of half-inch video. To this end JVC, RCA and Jensen have recently introduced VHS Hi-Fi, which approaches the digital sound of the Compact Disc. And both JVC and Hitachi have developed Super VHS, a higher resolution VHS recording system compatible with present players. These innovations mirror real consumer desires: higher fidelity video and audio and continuing miniaturization within existing formats.

And there are still other areas to be addressed. Who's working on the magical VHS/Beta adaptor? The converter VCR that would unite the video formats? Apparently not Kodak and its compatriots, busy as all of them are diddling with a technology that's certainly premature, if not altogether stillborn. ○

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ble and home video music programming has many viewers already hooking their video into their hi-fi anyway.

The proposed standard allows for stereo TV broadcasts that will be of better audio quality than most existing FM stations and a separate audio program (SAP) for bilingual broadcasts. It is expected that applications of the SAP will precede true stereo broadcasts—although television manufacturers

## IT TAKES TWO

BEFORE YOU KNOW IT your video ears will be hearing double.

If television manufacturers and their lobbying arm, the Electronics Industries Association (EIA), have their way, stereo TV broadcasts will be a reality by the end of the year.

In the final weeks of 1983, a special committee of the EIA wound up a five-year investigation of television audio with a proposal for a stereo television standard. The committee's report, which is now pending FCC approval, suggests the adoption of a Zenith dual channel sound and dbx noise reduction system as required gear on all future stereo-equipped televisions.

There's a lot riding on this proposal for both the consumer electronics industry and the con-

**Jensen's ATZ line of car stereos features 4K computer memory, FM automatic program control, seek and scan function, six AM/FM pre-set buttons, automatic engine noise cancellation, normal and metal tape bias and LCD clock display. Model ATZ 300, shown here, offers 20 watts of total system power and adds Dolby Noise Reduction to its feature list (approx. \$420)**

**Blaupunkt's Aspen, the first under-\$300 electronically-tuned car stereo from the BMW of auto sound makers, features six station presets, auto reverse, dynamic noise reduction, continuous tone and balance controls and 7.5 watts per channel (approx. \$280)**



sumer. The hardware makers have noticed a leveling-off of TV sales, now that the entire country is geared toward color, and needs another feature boost to get product moving. It's not just selfish marketing, though, since the rise of ca-

like Toshiba are reportedly getting high-end stereo TV receivers ready for the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Chicago in June. If all goes well, it's possible that the first stereo television sets will appear in stores next fall.





However, in terms of federal communications standards very little goes well these days. There were some grumbings of displeasure among the competition when the EIA committee's decision was announced, but that isn't the source of industry concern. The stereo TV boondoggle won't come from the industry as much as it may come from the FCC itself.

It's no secret that deregulatory pollutants are in the air along with the scent of cherry blossoms in Washington these days—particularly at the FCC. A recent precedent for what may happen to stereo TV is the regulatory body's failure to adopt a standard for an AM stereo format (see February RECORD), choosing instead to let the marketplace determine the standard itself. The result has been mass confusion.

It was this fact that rallied television manufacturers behind the EIA's recent standardization request, which urged the FCC to make up its mind, preferably by late spring.

"It's pretty hard to compete with the guy down the road if he's transmitting a different format," says committee chairman Thomas Keller. "We're moving the market back to the place where it's traditionally been—where the people who build the hardware argue about who's got the best hardware, not who's got the best standard."

Stereo television traces its roots to the first stereo TV simulcasts at Boston's public access station, WGBH, in the early '60s. TV and local radio simulcast have since become a broadcast industry standard—still the only way to put stereo punch in a music program these days. The system has been vastly improved, to the extent that today's PBS simulcasts are high-grade, satellite-transmitted digital audio. Still, the system is inconvenient, leaving stereo TV as the only viable option for a viewer/listener who likes his boob tube hi-fi.

The EIA committee studied many types of television sound—not just stereo transmissions—which in the future will improve the audio of television broadcasts in general. It found the proposed stereo format superior to all others, including those that have made stereo TV a reality in Ger-

many and Japan. Unlike the others, the EIA-proposed format allows stereo to be broadcast simultaneous with bilingual programming (as opposed to either/or).

"No one has a more sophisticated system than this," Keller says.

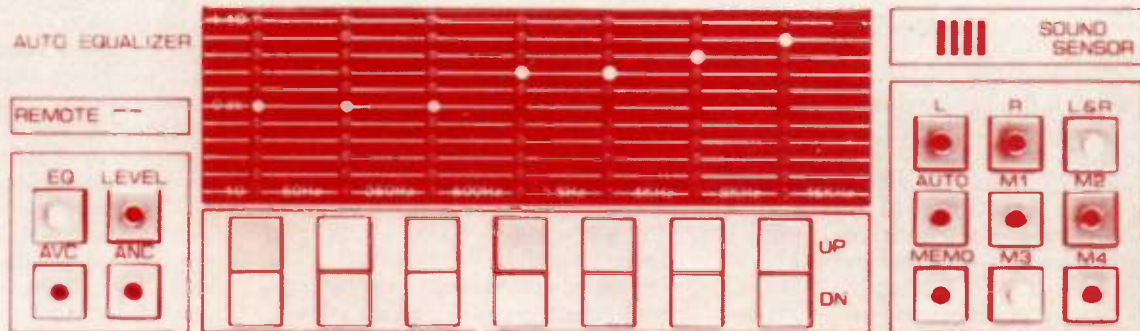
He hopes the FCC agrees.

## SERIOUS CAR-TUNES

YOUR JALOPY MAY NOT BE A living room on wheels, but that doesn't mean it can't tool down the highway to high fidelity. Or so it appears from a recent rush of home loudspeaker manufacturers into the auto sound field, with a new generation of car speakers aimed at improving your car-tunes.

AM/FM cassette products can handle the high performance task that these new auto speakers demand.

The computer age hits the highway with Jensen's five-model ATX line of computer-controlled AM/FM/cassette car stereos. Priced from \$320 (for the basic ATZ100) to \$520 (for the top-of-the-line ATZ500), each unit includes standard features such as 4K computer memory, FM automatic program control, seek and scan functions, six AM/FM pre-set buttons, automatic engine noise cancellation, normal and metal tape bias, and LCD clock display. Model ATZ300 (about \$420) offers 20 watts of total system power and adds Dolby Noise Reduction to its feature list. The top-of-the-line ATZ500 boasts 40



**Panasonic's Automatic Car Stereo Equalizer operates with a wired microphone that picks up sound at any location in the car, reads it back to a microprocessor inside the equalizer, then automatically adjusts to compensate for any change in the car environment. Available this Spring (no price as of press time)**

JBL's new ER/G line of graphite-constructed automotive loudspeakers features a new dual-element configuration. In this unique design, the tweeter is directly attached to the woofer, resulting in flat frequency response and extremely low distortion. Models ER/G 690 and ER/G 410 (approx. \$160 and \$140 per pair respectively) each have a power handling capacity of 80 watts per channel. Model ER/G 6.5 (approx. \$100 per pair) has a power capacity of 60 watts. The company has also debuted the ER/G 4.5 (approx. \$70 per pair), a dual-cone model with power handling of up to 60 watts, designed especially for shallow mounting spaces.

Teledyne/Acoustic Research (AR) has joined the on-the-road set with new auto-sound speakers of its own. The AR1CSi is an improved version of the company's original automotive speaker, the 1CS, and has a 5-1/4-inch woofer, a 3/4 inch dome tweeter and 12 dB/octave crossover. It's designed to fit all standard 6- X 9-inch cutouts, and can be adapted to fit 4- X 10-inch cutouts as well. The new AR2CS employs a 4-1/2-inch woofer and 3/4-inch tweeter in a high temperature plastic housing with black steel grille (both models approx. \$200 per pair).

No set of tires is worth the investment without a good engine to drive them and so it goes in auto sound. Several new

watts, adds Dolby C to its noise reduction scheme, as well as tuner advance which causes an alert tone when a signal strength has dropped, and advances the selector to the next acceptable pre-set station.

Blaupunkt, the BMW of auto sound makers, has just introduced a car stereo for the Toyota crowd, its first under-\$300 electronically tuned car stereo, the Aspen (approx. \$280). By eliminating a few of the features found on the more expensive models, Blaupunkt was able to maintain its usual level of quality in the Aspen's construction. Features include: six station presets, auto reverse, dynamic noise reduction, continuous tone and balance controls, and 7.5 watts per channel.

For audio perfection, the automobile is a horrendous environment. Car noise and foam seating combine to wreak havoc on even the most perfect car stereo specs. Dashboard equipment can make the difference. Panasonic's Automatic Car Stereo Equalizer operates with a wired microphone that picks up sound at any location in the car and then reads it back to a microprocessor inside the equalizer. The sound is then automatically adjusted to compensate for any change in the car environment—which can be anything from an open window to a change of speed. The product will be available by the second quarter of the year; a price has yet to be announced. ○



CRAIG ANDERTON

# KEEPING PACE WITH TECHNOLOGY

Retrofitted instruments designed to forestall obsolescence

**Y**ou know the problem: you want to buy a home computer, or VCR, or cassette deck, but you also know that within a few months, some new technological advance will probably make your purchase obsolete. This is not "planned obsolescence" in the general sense of that phrase; rather, technology is simply moving too fast for most manufacturers—or consumers—to keep pace.

Yet at least in the musician's world, relief from this high-tech malaise is on the way. And paradoxically, the same computer technology responsible for quickening the pace of obsolescence is also responsible for creating a new generation of instruments designed to forestall obsolescence to a remarkable degree. The secret lies in software—the set of instructions that tell a computer, or a computer-based musical instrument, how to handle the data it receives.

Computers have traditionally been designed as general-purpose machines, with

software giving that machine a specific "identity" or set of functions. Load in accounting software, and the computer massages numbers; load in word processing software, and the computer massages words instead of numbers; load in game software, and you can blast Klingons to the other side of the universe. Thus, as new software becomes available, it can be loaded into older model computers—sort of like teaching an old computer new tricks. Computer-based musical instruments also use software; for example, with keyboard synthesizers, software tells the computer how to process notes being played from the keyboard (play it straight, arpeggiate it, add portamento, and so on). If an instrument is designed so that its functions are mostly determined by software, then new functions can theoretically be added at any time by upgrading or altering the software.

Most medium-priced instruments code the software into integrated circuit "chips," so upgrading simply involves plugging in a new chip. In higher-priced

instruments (Synclavier et al.), software is generally stored on floppy disks, just like a computer. Loading in a different disk therefore gives the instruments a whole new "personality" and set of functions. Whichever way an instrument stores its software, though, the bottom line is that it's certainly easier—and far less painful financially—to upgrade the software than to replace the instrument.

One of the companies with a commitment to upgradable products is **Oberheim Electronics**. The Oberheim System, consisting of the **OB-8 polyphonic synthesizer**, **DSX sequencer**, and **DMS or DX drum**

machine, has already gone through several software revisions. Owners of the first generation of OB-8s can plug in a new chip to obtain three new portamento (glide) options as well as five other new functions. Oberheim also recently introduced software updates for the **DMX** and **DSX**; with the **DMX**, installing one extra board adds 45 new functions and increases the overall memory capacity as well. In my opinion, these updates essentially turn the **DMX** into a whole new machine—yet there are no messy hardware modifications, or even front panel changes.

In many cases, software upgrades complement hardware upgrades. For example, the **DMX** drum sound circuits are contained on individual plug-in cards (circuit boards). Thus, you can choose from a library of standard (and not-so-standard) sounds by plugging in different cards. As new drum sounds become popular, new cards are developed so you don't have to be stuck with "this year's drums sounds" when the fashion changes. **MXR's Drum Computer** also offers an extensive library of drum-sounds-on-a-chip. Present additions include roto toms, congas, and percussion sounds (guero, cabassa, etc.); planned additions include timbali, ride cymbal, and country snare. Also, **E-mu** has augmented its **Drumulator** drum machine with an Apple computer interface, and a pad programmer so that drummers can program the unit by playing on practice pads rather than pushing buttons. **E-mu** also revised its software to allow new **Drumulators** to store 64 songs, rather than the eight songs available previously.

In addition to commercially available updates, musicians often modify their equipment for new sounds. In fact, many musicians have become just as comfortable trading schematics of "mods" (hardware modifications) as trading musical licks, and several magazines carry modification articles written with musicians in mind. One of the most popular modifications involves the **Casio M-10** (which uses the same chips as some of Casio's more complex instruments, but does not implement all of the chip's functions). For the price of a switch, a couple of parts, and an hour of work, you can quadruple the number of sounds available from an M-10.

Progress marches on in the musical world. But thanks to software updates, hardware updates, mods, and the intelligent application of technology, the price of progress need not be obsolescence. ○

**The Oberheim System: Upgrading high-tech**





MIKE SHEA ●

# INSTRUCTIONAL KEYBOARDS, PART II: YAMAHA'S MP-1

**W**hile Yamaha does manufacture a keyboard (the PC-100, which plays complete songs for you) somewhat similar to the Casio PT-50 discussed in last month's Hands On, your own head-to-head comparison between the two would be more beneficial than any instruction you might get here. For purposes of this column, Yamaha's MP-1 seems more to the point. Though more expensive than the PT-50 at \$795, the MP-1 is unique in that it actually gives the player a printout, in musical notation, of what he or she is playing, thus making the instrument a compositional training tool for both amateur and professional musicians. It can be powered by an AC adaptor, batteries (six 1.5V) or even your car's cigarette lighter. The sounds of the MP-1's 10 built-in instruments—organ, piccolo, trumpet, violin, clarinet, oboe, piano, harpsichord, guitar and vibraphone—are quite realistic; and its 10 automatically-played rhythms plus separate volume control, four-bar variation (which breaks up that all-too-common machine-like consistency) and tempo variation knob facilitate an almost endless assortment of rhythmic feels.

The MP-1 also sports internal memory, making it possible to record and play back melody and chord sequences on two separate tracks. Recording is done in real time (while you're playing), yet this unit allows for later edit and correction. So to put it all into perspective, you can first record your chord sequence, lay down your melody line while listening to your chords being played back, then receive a printout of your musical score.

The real breakthrough, though, is the aforementioned compact music printer. Utilizing a miniature ball point pen and inexpensive non-thermal print paper (2 1/4" wide rolls), the MP-1 makes clear prints of the melody line being played in a wide vari-



ety of keys (up to three sharps or flats), gives the key signature as well as time signature, staff, rhythm, chord names, bar numbers, et cetera. To the company's credit, Yamaha has made this printer extremely easy to use: By simply pressing a button, you activate the "easy print" print mode, which yields a printout. An internal computer takes care of everything else, including automatically compensating for your playing mistakes in terms of note length. It actually rounds off your timing irregularities, producing a note-perfect printout.

Now you can get your compositions into written form without having to continually stop and draw notes. You can listen back to melodies and chords you've recorded and make any necessary changes, then get

a complete printout. The amount of time this feature saves is virtually immeasurable. At this point you've just begun to tap the potential of the MP-1. While your chords and melodies are being played back you can solo on top of them, play one-finger bass chords (with variation) under them, add in four-bar drum fills, arpeggiate, transpose and even harmonize. In the "duet" mode the MP-1 automatically harmonizes each melody note that you've played. There's even an expression (sustain) pedal, if you need one.

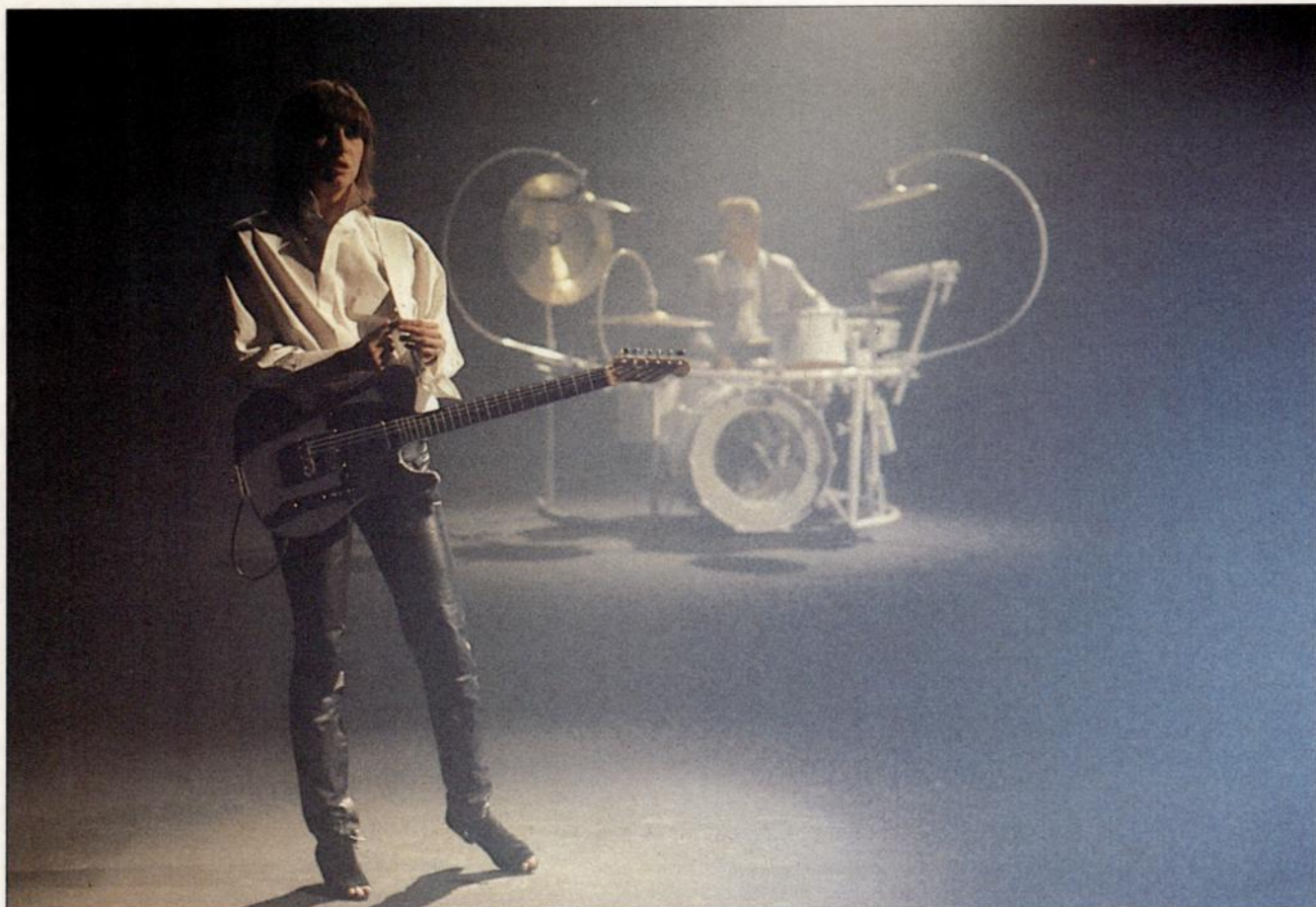
Since each section (rhythm, bass and keyboard) has its own volume control, you can mix the three and, via an auxiliary output, perform through a system or record on a tape deck. For personal enjoyment this unit has a built-in 1.4 watt amplifier and a three-inch speaker, but if you're shy you can make use of the headphone output jack and keep it to yourself. Yamaha provides a hard carrying case for the MP-1, as well as extra pens and paper rolls. On balance, it appears that no matter how advanced a musician you become, the MP-1 will always be a useful instrument to have around. ○

**Yamaha's Mini-Printer MP-1 combines a compact, electronic keyboard with a computerized music printout system (above: printout paper with musical notation)**



Readers are invited to submit questions concerning audio, video, music or computers to: Mike Shea/Hands On, RECORD, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10151. Include your phone number if you want a personal reply from the author.





At work: The ongoing tension between fresh ideas and old styles, new demands and eternal passions

## PRETENDERS

*Continued from page 27*

Chambers sliced open his hand on a vase in his Philadelphia hotel room and, 30 stitches later, the tour was over. Although the rest of the American dates were later completed, the Pretenders' soap opera days had begun.

*I think I'm going back/To the days when I  
was young enough to know the truth/  
I think I'm gonna return to/The things I  
learned so well in my youth*  
"Going Back," Gerry Goffin/Carole King

WHEN IN DOUBT, ROCK, LIKE ALL creatures, returns to what it knows best. The punk movement in the mid-Seventies on both sides of the Atlantic was at least as much a desire for something old as it was for something new; even a group as revolutionary as the Sex Pistols displayed a regard for, if not exactly reverence towards, the days of pure teen wildness exemplified in songs like the Who's "Substitute" or the Monkees' "Stepping Stone." And the music which Chrissie Hynde and her band made was, at its best, a marvelous example of the ongoing tension between fresh ideas and old styles, new demands and eternal passions, characteristic of the most powerful music rock that offered in its third decade.

So it's no real surprise that the Pretenders remained a quartet, or that they kept the group name intact, because there is an appealing, familial comfort within the framework of the rock 'n' roll band, even when the "family" has two new members. However, this figurative returning to the womb from where most rock dreams are conceived has elements of beginning a second childhood, and the title *Learning To Crawl* does indeed smack of a starting over which perhaps cannot be.

There are obvious drawbacks to maintaining the status quo: an unwillingness to respond to new ideas and attitudes; a desire to keep the corporation of the group functioning smoothly, even when its human components do not, or cannot; all in all, a creeping conservatism contrary to the goals of rock 'n' roll freedom that invariably motivated the performer in the first place. Consider the decision to keep the band name intact despite a fifty percent turnover in personnel (a similar judgment cost the Who, for instance, nearly all the good will they had built up in the preceding fifteen years). Consider the decision to accept MTV sponsorship for the U.S. tour, thus de-emphasizing aesthetic considerations in favor of the cold conceits of marketing strategies proven nearly infallible when practiced by a monopolistic-minded organization. It's natural, perhaps, but still disturbing, to see the once broader perspective of an inquisitive and refreshingly

cynical artist reduced to concerns over matters of art only. This unwillingness to examine the questions of freedom and power and responsibility from all angles happens to be the same fatal flaw of the isolated Seventies' supergroups whose bloated music and egos prompted the punk revolt, and paved the way for the Pretenders' success in the first place.

But, of course, Chrissie Hynde's outlook was the most traditionally-based among all the great British bands in the late Seventies. And while it's impossible to dismiss her years in London—it was a unique breeding ground for the most outlandish of ideas, even the one about a girl leading a rock 'n' roll band—hers was also an older, more American vision than that of her English contemporaries. She was never going to be advocating theories of perpetual class and teen rebellion like those puppet Marxists the Pistols and Clash; no, not a woman whose first single would be a cover of a Kinks song from 1964. And in the Brave New World of pop that is the punks' truest legacy, a world of perpetual, fashioned-based change, Chrissie and her Pretenders look pretty tame stacked up against the psychedelic revivalists, pretty boy clotheshorses and brooding angry young men and women currently on the scene. This freedom from being hip and of the moment has opened up new avenues for exploring the past. And on *Learning To Crawl* it manifests it-



self as a coming to grips with much of that past, most of the present and—tentatively—all of the future.

"Middle of the Road" is an appropriate choice for an opener, since it best delineates the ongoing changes inside her. The title itself, and lines like "Can't you tell I'm going home...I'm not the cat I used to be/I got a kid, I'm 33" pose the question of creeping conservatism most blatantly. Even the music seems to indicate which way her choices are leading: it is the song most redolent of the old Pretenders, and at best a rather sluggish, if still moving, example of that style. "Back On The Chain Gang" again veers near the edge of numbing nostalgia with its evocation of a lost friend or lover—"I found a picture of you/Those were the happiest days of my life"—but Hynde, knowing life must go on, vows that the powers that be will "fall to ruin one day/For making us part...Now we're back on the train/Back on the chain gang." If the message that You Can't Go Home Again isn't clear enough there, it is in "My City Was Gone" (not coincidentally the flipside to "Chain Gang" when it appeared as a single in 1982) when the singer returns to Ohio to find family and countryside gone, torn down, replaced by highways and shopping malls filled with Muzak; the realization that change, that time itself, is a new enemy is continued in "Time The Avenger." Only by confronting death and decay has rock been able to sober up from its endless partying. *Learning To Crawl's* morning after leaves Chrissie Hynde with her relationship with a man (a desire constant throughout her work and made most explicit in *Pretenders II's* superb "Message of Love") and her love for her daughter.

"And in the end the love you take is equal to the love you make" is how the Beatles put it in the coda to the last song on the last album they recorded together. The search for self that rock set in process in Chrissie Hynde's alienated soul twenty years ago has led to the wisdom of "Show Me," *Learning To Crawl's* best song: "Show me the meaning of the word/Cause I've heard so much about it/Don't make me live without it/Oh, I want love/I want love." She sings it once, twice, until a relentlessly uplifting guitar solo sweeps in and carries her away, and anyone else who still feels the need to love and be loved. In the end, she has nowhere to run, nowhere to hide, and for the first time the prospect doesn't seem to phase her. While the new songs leave many questions unanswered, the confluence of outer events and inner growth, the process of maturity that's given rise to more traditional concerns—deep, not ephemeral; timeless, not trendy—will help sustain a career, to be sure. More important, though, is the hope of sustaining life itself. That's the message of love, the option Chrissie Hynde has embraced in the past two tumultuous years. But first you must learn to crawl. . . ○

## ON STAGE: SINGING A DIFFERENT STORY



The champ front and center: No more rope-a-dope

PHOTO: DAVID GANS

SAN FRANCISCO, Ca.—Chrissie Hynde seemed poised on the verge of a revelation. Whether or not she is ready to admit it, Hynde is the Pretenders; and, through 20 powerfully rendered songs at the Civic Auditorium here, she commanded the attention of the thunderously ecstatic sold-out house with such authority that she could have been fronting a band of anonymous hired hands. Her performance resonated with the tension between Hynde's increasingly self-confident stage demeanor and her lingering reluctance to be more than just one of the boys.

On the surface, the Pretenders (who filed onstage to the strains of Frank Sinatra's "That's Life") delivered an exemplary show of punky hard-rock and glistening folk-rock, complete with dramatic lighting, shockingly clean sound (the nearly-10,000-seat Civic being noteworthy for its leaden acoustics) and minimal stage antics from drummer Martin Chambers—drumsticks flying toward the ceiling, water spraying in geysers from his mouth and his kit.

Sporting tight leather pants and calf-high boots, with a dark suit jacket over a striped vest and white shirt, Hynde manipulated the tough-and-tender sexual personae—scolding mistress, romantic in punk's clothing, sassy temptress with a heart of gold—that make her one of rock's most intriguing figures. And, in contrast to her San Francisco performance of over two years ago, Hynde asserted herself with the assuredness and guile of a well-conditioned prize-fighter. No rope-a-dope here: whether cocking a pick-wielding hand overhead or lifting a knee to accentuate a lyric, she moved in such a way as to command the spotlight, to keep the focus where it belongs: on her performance and on the songs. That's why the lady is a champ.

Even more riveting were the vocals, expanding like smoke from the terse but forceful "Hunh!" kickoff to the set's opener, "The Wait." Her machine-gun delivery, spitting with bitterness, gave way to the sensual taffy-pull of syllables on "Message of Love" and "Show Me." On the dreamy "Thin Line Between Love and Hate," the gently rocking "Stop Your Sobbing," and the foreboding calm of "Private Life," Hynde's voice wafted into the songs' velvety textures, occasionally puncturing the reverie with a disdainful grunt.

The revamped Pretenders—including a keyboardist along for the tour—played with consummate versatility and professionalism. They pounded hard rhythms, jangled folky melodies, turned neat corners on Hynde's tricky time signatures and generally provided the appropriate complement to Chrissie's unique moods. And while they sounded fine, if a bit leaner in comparison to their predecessors, Hynde didn't seem altogether happy with her new musical family. She dodged the crowd's roaring ovation with self-deprecating remarks. "As audiences go," she said prior to the first set of encores ("Thumbelina" and "Brass In Pocket" followed by "Watching the Clothes" and "Tattooed Love Boys"), "you deserve more applause than we do."

Rock 'n' roll has never been conducive to easy, harmonious family life and Hynde was barely chummy with the other musicians onstage. But she unleashed her passions on the new songs that best illustrate how offstage family concerns (i.e., self-exile from the States, having a one-year-old daughter to raise) have expanded her musical and emotional terrain. "My City Was Gone," "Show Me" and "Thumbelina" revealed, in eloquent, heartfelt (but still hard-nosed) terms, "what's important in this life" for a mature woman rocker. Perhaps being in a rock band is indeed "what's important" to Chrissie Hynde in 1984; perhaps she needs that to fully realize her music. But in her songs she was singing a different story.

—Derk Richardson





PHOTO: ALLAN TANNENBAUM

## WHEN HEARTS ARE TRUMPS

**MILK AND HONEY**  
John Lennon and Yoko Ono

Polydor

By  
Jody  
Denberg

**T**he rapturous portrayal of domesticity displayed on *Double Fantasy* unfolds gracefully on *Milk and Honey*, and for one last time John Lennon and Yoko Ono stand naked before the world, not as two virgins but as two lovers. The sequel, like its predecessor, is subtitled "A Heart Play," but perhaps "Diary of a Mad



Househusband and Wife" would have been more appropriate, because alongside odes to the liberating qualities of love, Lennon and Ono have also included compositions that deal with the darker side of their monogamy—insomnia, agoraphobia, paranoia—and by doing so *they* write the final chapter in their long-running audio-verite autobiography, not the vipers and hangers-on who have milked their memories for a quick, easy buck.

Like the Lennons' earliest chronicles of their escapades together, *Milk and Honey* is also "unfinished music." Though Ono has put the finishing touches on her songs, Lennon's tracks appear as he left them on December 8, 1980—replete with directions to the assembled studio musicians and ad-libbed introduc-

tions and codas that are almost as revelatory as his lyrics. As a result, *Milk and Honey* often has the insouciant quality of a bootleg recording; a raw, jocular, endearing spontaneity common to the best of Lennon's work.

In the absence of direct dialogue between the two artists' songs, conceptual sequencing provides continuity here. At the outset, Lennon advises the listener that it's the tale of a man who's "been washing the dishes and screwing around and watching *Sesame Street* 'til he goes crazy!" before launching into the sprightly boogie of "I'm Stepping Out." While he's painting the town, she deals with a "Sleepless Night"; the guitars, piano and synthesizer toss and turn restlessly amidst scattershot percussion while Ono's heavily-echoed vocals beg for



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## IT'S WORTH IT.

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"three-minute love."

On "I Don't Wanna Face It," his ballsiest rocker in over a decade, Lennon comes to terms with his five-year retreat from the public eye. With brutal phrasing and inspired intonations, he turns his acerbic wit inwards to prove that the irony of the world's greatest exhibitionist becoming the world's greatest recluse didn't escape him. "You're looking for oblivion with one eye on the hall of fame," he taunts, then summarizes in one line the toll that stardom took on his self-sufficiency: "I can sing for my supper, but I just can't make it."

Unfortunately, Ono's attempt at reassurance, "Don't Be Scared," is a lackadaisical retort. With a meandering dub backing and the vocal chorale she used on her previous solo album, Ono takes a full song to impart the wisdom she phrased far more eloquently and succinctly on *Double Fantasy*'s "Beautiful Boys"—i.e., "Don't be afraid to be afraid." However, her "You're The One," a haunting dance tune that closes out the album, is a compelling summation of her feelings for John, an epiphany as stunning as her masterful "Walking On Thin Ice."

At its best, the single "Nobody Told Me" is a bouncy, lighthearted number brimming with non-sequiturs, a polite bit of paranoia with a McCartney-esque roller-coaster bass riff propelling the jangling guitars. Still, obtuse references to Nazis, idols and UFOs are disquieting, and this song, like Ono's "O' Sanity," which follows, is chock full of aphorisms that would be more at home on a greeting card.

On the inner sleeve, Ono notes that she and Lennon thought they might have been the incarnation of poets Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Well, give 'em credit: Never let it be said that Lennon and Ono thought small. Both "Let Me Count The Ways" and "Grow Old With Me," romantic ballads inspired by the Brownings, seem worthy of such presumptuousness, but history will be the judge of which poets' pantheon the Lennons belong in.

Since almost all of the working tapes of Lennon's "Grow Old With Me" were stolen from Yoko's archives, the songs appear on *Milk and Honey* undoctored from original cassettes, with a piano and rhythm box serving as the sole accompaniment. Their simplicity is stunning. Ono's singing is as pure and tranquil as her best work on *Season of Glass*, when she dropped her unlikely chanteuse pose in favor of a more straightforward vocal style, while Lennon's achingly beautiful pitch as he reaches for the high notes is breathtaking, of a piece with "In My Life" and the Plastic Ono Band's "Love."

Like the Lennon-Ono relationship, *Milk and Honey* is a cathartic expression of emotion, a joyful celebration of the folly of life and love. The thought that Lennon is not around to breathe the air he helped clear is distressing—always will be, one supposes—but the unpredictability of fate

is a reality he acknowledged. Remember, John Lennon didn't believe in yesterday; he was well aware that tomorrow never knows.

By  
Christopher  
Hill

Certain elements in its music have suggested a different kind of band inside Van Halen, maybe even a *great* band, but one that sorely needs a kick in the rear to get it together and make a *great* record. Kicks are hard to feel through all that platinum, of course, and 1984 isn't that record. But it is the most effective, least indulgent display of the band's strengths so far.

Most cuts here are models of economy, built for maximum effect with functional, pared-down moves. Only two—"House of Pain" and "Drop Dead Legs"—are simple riff showcases, several minutes apiece of feckless, knuckledragging metal retreats that never coalesce into anything like a song. But "Jump" shows the band turning on all its charm (and hooks), and it's surely potent when they care to do it. Sunny synthesizer bursts pull you in, Alex Van Halen's staggered drumming and Michael Anthony's heartbeat bass line keep a bubbling pulse, and David Lee Roth is content for once to lean back good-naturedly against the record machine and let some sexy vibes just roll. "I'll Wait" continues in this vein, as it sets up sort of a brontosaurus dance beat while the boyish yearning in David Lee's singing evokes desire a lot more credibly than any number of grunts and squeals. "Panama" is a rambunctious cruising song, full of propulsion and boating a rousing chorus.

Some old problems appear again, though. For all that Van Halen work at slaving frenzy, their sound remains as cool, sanitized and desexed as a Silicon Valley research lab. This is largely due to the even brightness of Warner house producer Ted Templeman's vacuum-pack production. But part of the problem is Eddie Van Halen himself. He can be a great stylist, but he's got almost no instinct for the gut lunge, the *coup de grace* lick. Instead, he tends to simply shoot scores of rapid-fire notes promiscuously into the air, dissipating tension where he should be resolving it. Check the breaks in "House of Pain" and "Top Jimmy" for good examples.

Still, 1984 delivers on a lot of promises made in earlier Van Halen albums. With justice, it should confound the sneers of the

## 1984 Van Halen

Warner Bros.



knee-jerk anti-metal crowd, and rebuke the paternalism of those who use Van Halen as a banner to advertise their open-mindedness. For if nothing else, 1984 stands on its own as a reminder of hard rock's enduring virtues.

## CHRISTINE MCVIE Christine McVie

Warner Bros.

By  
Craig  
Zeller



One look at the solo ventures of Fleetwood Mac's membership and you can see that it's clearly a case of united we stand, divided we fall. Take Mick Fleetwood, who's been kind enough to favor us with two prime candidates for the next vinyl melt-down sweepstakes. Or look at Lindsey Buckingham, who contentedly putters around the flakier fringes of pure pop but seems to have forgotten all about the oomph factor. And let us not forget the princess, Stevie Nicks, who apparently has no qualms whatsoever about reincarnating herself as Glinda the Good Witch and who occasionally wraps her pipes around a hell of a hook (as in "Stand Back"). John McVie? He looks smart for going sailing.

Now Christine McVie, the special sauce in the Mac Attack from the day they opted for sexual integration, has finally taken the plunge and come forth with her long-awaited second solo album (*Christine Perfect* was her undistinguished first back in 1970). Imagine, a whole record packed with heart-over-heels songs the calibre of "Over My Head," "You Make Loving Fun," and "Only Over You."

Guess I'll keep dreaming for now, because *Christine McVie* isn't quite what I had in mind when I was working myself into such an anticipatory state. Don't get me wrong; it's a good record, it's easily the finest solo effort by any Mac member to date, and I'm pleased to have it on my turntable. But the fact that it's risk-free is undeniably a drawback, as is the infrequency of first-rate material.

Of the ten songs presented here, only one is solely credited to McVie; the others are collaborations. Three of them McVie had no part in writing at all. That's not exactly prolific on her part. But I must admit every cut here sounds like it could've sprung from her mind alone; she's put her stamp on them. I'll go with "The Challenge," "I'm So Excited" and "I'm The One" as the most obvious contenders for AM/FM acceptance. "Got A Hold On Me" had no problems in that area, and deservedly so—it's the closest McVie comes



to her old Mac magic.

I wish her band had turned on the juice a little more. I wish she'd traded off with Dwight Twilley or Paul Weller on "One In A Million" instead of Steve Winwood. I wish she'd held out for songs that would've been wonderful choices for future gold rather than the evocative past blast types she settled for. I wish I loved this record unabashedly instead of liking it with reservations. But I'm glad this review is over so I can go surrender to the grip of "Got A Hold On Me" one more time.

99 LUFTBALLONS

Nena

Epic

By  
Wayne  
King

**T**he year is 1999, and on the television screen is

*Heroes of Rock and Roll, Pt. 14*. Sean Penn, alias Jeff Spicoli, the newly-elected Governor of California, is introducing the German Invasion of the mid-'80s with a film clip of jackbooted Nazi troops goose-stepping into Poland: "The rise of the German rock revival had its origins in the country's past..."

Who'da thunk that—

—A German language song could attain the Number One position in the age of *Thriller* on the strength of its novelty, its simplistic synth and Farfisa-propelled catchiness, its "anti-nuke" stance (tell me how many record buyers understood a word of "99 Luftballons" before the English version became available?), and a video prominently featuring the hottest potential *Creem Dream* since Joan Jett?

—That the preeminent position of tough but tender girl-next-door almost assuredly locked up by Kim Wilde by dint of her "Kids in America" video and its constant MTV airplay would be so totally usurped by a German lass who, in the alternate video of "Luftballons," actually shows off the first pair of unshaven female underarms I can recall seeing in rock since Patti Smith on the cover of *Easter*?

—That the singing on the English language side of this album would be at least as assured as that on the German side, and in fact beats anything the phonetically phony ABBA ever coughed up (if'n you ask me)?

—That a song described in the accompanying press release as the "enigmatically titled '??'" could actually be hot, and in fact, the entire album stands up to most internationally marketable Europop it's been my (dis)pleasure to hear?

—That Capitol Records, especially in



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this, the twentieth anniversary year of the Beatles' American success, wouldn't be riding the crest of the alleged Teutonic wave by whipping out "Sie Liebt Dich" and "Komm, Gib Mir Deine Hand" as singles?

—That the prospect of further product from Nena would not be such a reprehensible idea at all?

Nena is a group.

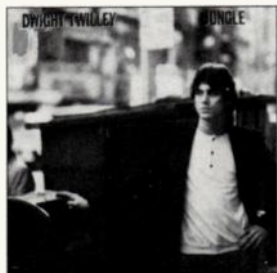
## JUNGLE Dwight Twilley

EMI America

By  
Bud  
Scoppa

**S**ince 1975, when he first blew in from Tulsa with "I'm On Fire," Dwight Twilley, a defiantly purposeful rock artist with an unmistakable sound, has been plagued by hard luck, bad timing, and uncooperative record labels, leaving him unable to advance his audience beyond a loyal cult. *Jungle*, though, is the work of a talented artist in full resurgence and, at that, perhaps Twilley's best shot ever at the big time. His trademarks are all here—soaring crescendoes, surging guitars, swirling chorales and unabashed sentiment—but he's added scope and drama by introducing some new elements, namely symphonic synthesizers, sharply-defined lead vocals (he's finally ended his exile in the echo chamber) and a thoroughly exhilarating air of affirmation.

Nowhere is this new-found oomph more evident than on the opener, "Little Bit of Love." A pensive piano intro gives way to a fat, bleeping synth, which is then joined by a crashing rhythm section and turbo-charged power chords. The layering of parts continues and the track builds to a point reminiscent in its explosive grandeur of Elton John's unforgettable "Funeral for a Friend/Love Lies Bleeding." Into this aural inferno jumps the new-improved Twilley, singing with edge and abandon. It's a moment of pure release—he's practically swaggering as he sheds the tortured persona of his recent work. The side continues in a seamless sweep of blazing beauty; throughout, Twilley displays his considerable gifts for melody, dynamics, structure and expressing torment. But the melancholy themes of "Why You Wanna Break My Heart" and "Cry Baby" can't disguise or contain the heart-pumping joy that animates them. The more playful side two is distinguished by the propulsive "Don't You Love Her," the airy, syncopated title track, and a howl of a closer in "Max Dog," about a sorry-but-game



mutt who's "...got no legs/He can't rock but he sure can roll."

It's easy to see Twilley as the cover photographs picture him: at a distance, isolated, preoccupied, a bit hazy and out-of-focus. But like the deceptive title of "Little Bit of Love," these photos are a set-up, making the music within that much more unexpected. Using a blend of old standbys (co-producer Noah Shark and guitarist Bill Pitcock IV) and new associates (co-producers Mark Smith and John Hug, keyboardists Alan Pasqua and Michael Boddiker), Twilley has fashioned a captivating rock tapestry; it's the album he's been threatening to make since his first, the classic *Sincerely*, eight long years ago.

## ZIGGY STARDUST: THE MOTION PICTURE David Bowie

RCA

By  
Scott  
Isler

**S**ometimes you have to distance yourself to appreciate so-called fads. Consider a knee-high vinyl boot on a three-inch platform, for example. Consider David Bowie wearing a pair of same as Ziggy Stardust. Consider *Ziggy Stardust: The Motion Picture*, the soundtrack to D.A. Pennebaker's film of the "last" Bowie/Ziggy concert.

Better yet, don't. The music on this two-record set may be acceptable background noise for a concert movie, but hardly withstands critical listening. This *Ziggy* lacks studio tightness while failing to convey any live excitement—an impressive if not admirable feat. Even after the ministrations of three remixers (including the Mainman himself), the album sounds miserable. Echoey, tinny vocals are shoved so far in front that the accompanying Spiders From Mars are eviscerated; guitarist Mick Ronson virtually disappears when not soloing.

Ignoring the sound quality (if that's possible), the performance is no prize winner, either. Bowie sounds shortwinded on the title cut, later a concert *tour de force*. Woody Woodmansey's heavyhanded drums wreck the delicate atmosphere of "Space Oddity." "Changes" and the Rolling Stones' "Let's Spend The Night Together" receive cold, android readings. Bowie's idea of a change of pace from the uptempo rockers is unbearably "artistic" stuff like "Wild Eyed Boy From Freecloud" and his mock-Brel "Time" ("My Death," which is genuine Brel, comes off better).

Still, all is not tedium: "Cracked Actor"



is a nice pick-me-up, and "Width of a Circle" brings an hysterical edge to the sludgy sound. Bowie even shows some emotion on "Rock 'n' Roll Suicide," the concluding track. But are you glad you could stick around?

Of course, RCA has packaged the album with all the lavishness you'd expect from a label that has just lost a prestigious but uncommercial signing to another company, for whom he goes and records a million-seller. This concert recording lists neither date (July 3, 1973) nor location (London's Hammersmith Odeon). There are no liner notes. There is one crummy black-and-white photo used for cover art. Thanks, Nipper.

If you want to hear what all the buzz on Ziggy and the Spiders was about, dig up the *Live At Santa Monica Civic* bootleg. For RCA, spite means never having to say you're sorry.

## IN BLACK AND WHITE Jenny Burton

Atlantic

By  
Brian  
Chin

**I**f there is a new wave in black pop music arising, I sincerely hope it sounds more like *In Black And White* than Shalamar's gutless and overrated "Dead Giveaway." Unlike the connect-the-dots combinations of rock and soul that produced hits like Shalamar's—or Donna Summer's "Hot Stuff"—the new fusions of electronics and street rap culture have resulted in transformations that are better conceptualized in terms of quantum jumps and mathematical orders of magnitude. Not merely by coincidence, the microprocessor and computer program loom large over the hip-hop end of black music. But hip-hop can't be cornered by the same mentality which labeled Eurodisco as cold; its rhythms are truly roomy, with a living, breathing pump that's often described with words like "jazzy" or "be-bop."

There are two principal characters on *In Black And White*: Jenny Burton, who was the vibrant lead voice on the 1983 dance hit, "One More Shot," and producer John Robie, whose multitudinous keyboards have been heard on numerous electronic street records, from the U.S. version of Yaz' "Situation" to Soul Sonic Force's "Planet Rock." Robie's all-keyboard production (excepting drums on one ballad) not only illustrates the paradox between funk and perfect-beat flawlessness in hip-hop, but opens with a flourish the inner logic of the machinery. With its fleet edits





# TIMELESS JAZZ



**BLUESIN' AROUND**  
Kenny Burrell

**HEARD 'ROUND THE WORLD**  
Miles Davis

**STRUTTIN' AND SHOUTIN'**  
Al Grey

**TOKYO CONCERTS**  
Thelonious Monk

**ALMOST FORGOTTEN**  
Various Artists

**SINGIN' TILL THE GIRLS COME HOME**  
Various Artists

Columbia Contemporary Masters Series

By Derk Richardson

It was only a few years ago that contemporary jazz musicians from Arthur Blythe, Chico Freeman and Wynton Marsalis to Henry Threadgill and Lester Bowie were recognized as playing "in the tradition." If that seems a little bizarre given that jazz has been played for most of the 20th Century, remember that only in the last 15 years has the existence of a jazz "tradition" been widely acknowledged. The six most recent releases in the Columbia Contemporary Masters Series fill one major and several minor gaps in the story of modern jazz. As a group they may not be as significant to either faithful fans or curious initiates as the ambitious Fantasy reissue program of original recordings from Riverside, Prestige, Jazzland *et al.* But since all the sides were previously "unreleased" (in the U.S. at least), they are of guaranteed interest to collectors. And since they contain generally exemplary performances, they offer new listeners a provocative introduction

to a variety of "mainstream" styles that pre-date (or parallel) the experimental sounds of the late 1960s and the '70s and '80s.

*Singin' Till The Girls Come Home* has perhaps the most balanced appeal, presenting unissued tracks from jazz vocalists Tony Bennett, Carmen McRae with Louis Armstrong, Mose Allison, Jon Hendricks, Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, and the Gordons. Ten songs, dating from 1954 to 1964, provide a delightful survey of stylings from an art whose history is dominated by Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday and Sarah Vaughan. The McRae and Armstrong duets are notable for their carefree lilt and lively interplay and for collectors will complete *The Real Ambassadors* material recorded in 1961. The two contributions from Lambert, Hendricks & Ross (the title tune and a devilishly boppish "A Night In Tunisia") hail from that group's final months and will put new listeners on the hunt for more. The real revelation is on the opening three songs by Tony Bennett, recorded with the unlikely quartet of Stan Getz, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Elvin Jones. These intimate treatments reveal Bennett's interpretive talents in a light seldom seen since he left his you-know-what you-know-where.

The other anthology, *Almost Forgotten*, focuses on instrumentalists who, in the late '50s and early '60s, were overshadowed by more popular or more innovative artists. Trumpeter Clark Terry turns in fine performances with hard-bop tenor player Junior Cook and trombonist Curtis Fuller ("Brownie Speaks"), little-known tenor saxist Tubby Hayes ("A Simple Waltz") and a weakened Coleman Hawkins ("Ain't Misbehavin'"). Trombonist J.J. Johnson leads a sterling quintet through the classic "Bags' Groove"; a young Wes Montgomery plays "Love for Sale" with his brothers Monk and Buddy; and altoist Pony Poindexter assembles an all-star nonet featuring Eric Dolphy, Jimmy Heath and Clifford Jordan.

Kenny Burrell's *Bluesin' Around* and Al Grey's *Struttin' and Shoutin'* are new portraits of two instrumentalists who mastered two of jazz's less revered lead axes. Only a handful of artists are in Kenny Burrell's class as a jazz guitarist; this LP culls tracks from four 1961-62 sessions that confirm his mastery of swing (with tenor man Illinois Jacquet), modern (with trombonist Eddie Bert) and organ trio (with Jack McDuff) jazz idioms. Grey was a big band trombonist, having served with Lionel Hampton, Benny Carter and Count Basie. Here he fronts his

know what to expect from this two-LP set; if you haven't, you don't know what you're missing.

Both concerts on Miles Davis' *Heard 'Round The World* feature the rhythm section of Ron Carter, bass; Herbie Hancock, piano; and Tony Williams, drums. And both are rife with the wistful abstraction, the melancholy lyricism, the austere, sketchy melodic themes and the swinging, skittering pulse that add up to the inimitable "feel." Here are the links between Davis' 1963-64 live recordings with tenor player George Coleman and his seminal 1965 studio date,



**Heard 'Round the World: Essential Miles**

own growling, blasting 1976 big band date, which should satisfy fans of "the bone" but should be nobody's first big band album.

It is testimony to Thelonious Monk's consistency that his 1963 *Tokyo Concerts* could yield as much pleasure to someone unfamiliar with his genius as it does to an aficionado. The Tokyo concerts, recorded just as Monk was finally gaining international acclaim, capture a classic quartet (Butch Warren, bass; Frankie Dunlop, drums; and ever-compatible Charlie Rouse, tenor sax) bouncing, careening and moodily ruminating through 11 timeless tunes, including "Epistrophy" and "Blue Monk." If you've felt the magic of Monk, you

*E.S.P.*, which introduced the classic Davis '60s quintet with Wayne Shorter. The *Miles In Tokyo* disc boasts Sam Rivers' sharp, abrasive tenor contrasting with Davis' more darkly romantic trumpet, while the *Miles In Berlin* set presents Wayne Shorter breaking out of the Art Blakey hard-bop mold and tussling to find his own, albeit Coltrane-influenced, voice. Although the repertoire is standard—"Milestones," "So What," "Walkin'," "Autumn Leaves"—you can hear the genesis of that singular collective sound indelibly associated with Miles Davis. I shudder to think that there is jazz of this calibre being played today that we won't hear until 2004. But given the jazz tradition, I know it's true.



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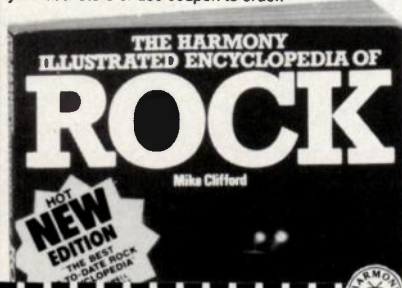
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and repeated figures, the listener travels through the music *Fantastic Voyage*-like, as if being zipped around on the printed circuit board. Robie puts our minds in the land of random access, all to the heartbeat of a 16/16 bass drum, with the added human edge of scratch.

Inevitably, this leads to a certain push/pull between producer and artist, which is not to say that Burton's buried or overrun, even when vocals are fragmented crazily for effect. Her gutsy singing gives an extremely hard edge to the girl-group sound that's survived with amazing prominence in today's indie-label street hits. At one moment naive, the next explicit ("You put your tight pants on/And pretend to have some power"), Burton delivers Robie's words in compact, sharp style that finds its own way through the hectic surroundings.

.....

### MUMMER XTC

Geffen

By  
Jonathan  
Gregg



**N**ot since the Beatles has a pop group successfully absorbed so many musical styles and forcefully molded them to its own vision. Informed by tradition but wholly original, *Mummer* recalls *Revolver* or *Sgt. Pepper*, not only for its similarly inspired eclecticism, but also for the conspicuous influence of Lennon and McCartney in the songwriting of Andy Partridge and Colin Moulding.

Continuing the move away from electric guitar-dominated music that distinguished 1982's modern troubadour classic *English Settlement* from the hard pop of 1980's *Black Sea*, *Mummer* finds XTC discarding their strong ska/rock undercurrent (along with ace drummer Terry Chambers) and reaching for a new deck which includes a variety of acoustic instruments, string and choral effects and a generally more fluid musical sensibility.

Though less physical than other XTC albums, *Mummer* is more varied, from the skillful assimilation of Indian music on "Beating of Hearts," to the Gregorian invocation of "Preserve Us From The Elements," through the folksy bounce of "Love on a Farmboy's Wages." As usual, guitarist/vocalist Andy Partridge dominates the proceedings, and his enduring preoccupations (the duality of man and nature, immolation, myth and social corruption) are limned with petulant eloquence. "Great Fire," "Ladybird," and "Human Alchemy" have a depth of imagery that

again pretty well clears the field of everyone except Elvis Costello, while "Funk Pop a Roll" is a scathing indictment of the music industry and its brainwashed consumers. Whereas both this and "Great Fire" bear the classic XTC imprimatur, several songs stand out as departures from that sound, notably the lovely, jazz-inflected "Ladybird," and Colin Moulding's two tributes to Paul McCartney, "Wonderland" and "In Loving Memory of a Name."

Still, it is Partridge's bitter words on "Funk Pop a Roll" that end the album, and fittingly so. To date, bad luck and worse promotion in the U.S. have amounted to nothing but a raw deal for this fine band, which has enjoyed cult status in the U.K. for years. Perhaps their new arrangement with Geffen will give them the exposure they've deserved for so long. Check them out—they just don't get any better than this.

.....

### THE BEST OF THE OHIO EXPRESS AND OTHER BUBBLEGUM SMASHES (VOLUME 1) Various Artists

Rhino

### THE BEST OF THE 1910 FRUITGUM COMPANY AND OTHER BUBBLEGUM SMASHES (VOLUME 2) Various Artists

Rhino

By  
Craig  
Zeller

**H**i!  
Here's 20  
True Teen  
Fax about  
these deathless works of art for you to  
commit to memory. Dig in, fans!



1. Pete Townshend was an early supporter of "Yummy, Yummy, Yummy" by the Ohio Express!

2. The Royal Guardsmen's "Snoopy vs. The Red Baron" and the Rare Breed's "Beg, Borrow & Steal" sport terrific riffs from (respectively) "Hang On Sloopy" and "Louie Louie!"

3. The Talking Heads used to cover the 1910 Fruitgum Company's "1-2-3 Red Light" at CBGB's!

4. The J. Geils Band made a big mistake by not covering Crazy Elephant's "Gimme Gimme Good Lovin'!"

5. That song, along with the Music Explosion's "Little Bit of Soul" and the Syndicate of Sound's "Little Girl," belongs on *Great Moments in Garage Rock!*



6. The Sweet put their testicles in a vise every time they sang the chorus of "Little Willy"!

7. "The Rapper," by the Jaggerz (a hit which made Donnie Iris a household name in his grandmother's home), originally ended cold—but here it fades out!

8. The Lemon Pipers' ("Green Tambourine") lead singer was color blind!

9. Wilson Pickett's version of "Sugar Sugar" is vastly inferior to the Archies' original (no kidding)!

10. So positive is "Little Bit of Soul" that anyone who hears it walks away feeling temporarily optimistic!

11. 1910 Fruitgum Company's "Simon Says" features one of the definitive utilizations of the phrase "ba ba ba ba"!

12. Chintzy organs were the secret weapons on most bubblegum hits!

13. "1-2-3 Red Light" is one of the only bubblegum songs in existence to deal with unhappy feelings, i.e., frustration!

14. "Do Something To Me" by the British Road Runners is a buried treasure soaked in urgency that refuses to vacate my turntable!

15. A hipster is anyone who rides around town singing along to "Sugar Sugar"—when there's other people in the car!

16. Not having the Monkees represented on either volume is a real shocker!

17. "I Think I Love You" by the Partridge Family has every right to be here—but the DeFranco Family's "Heartbeat" also cries out for inclusion, as does the Cowbills' foray into psychedelic bubblegum, "The Rain, The Park, and Other Things"!

18. It's hard to remember all the words to "Yummy Yummy Yummy" or "Chewy Chewy"!

19. The Shadows of Knight's "Shake" has nothing to do with Sam Cooke, Otis Redding or posterity!

20. The instrumental break in "I Think I Love You" is one of the great moments in classical music!

Bonus fact: "... the whole idea behind bubblegum was not to establish careers, but to create a caseful of catchy, danceable, melodic, fun records that are just as silly and just as fun to listen to today as they were back then." (From the liner notes!)

.....

### IN A CHAMBER Wire Train

415/Columbia

By  
Nick  
Burton

**F**ormerly the Renegades, San Francisco-based Wire Train present the kind of



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jangly, aggressive pop-with-psychedelic-overtones that R.E.M. have brought into vogue. Kevin Hunter and Kurt Herr's songs indeed bear a resemblance to R.E.M.'s, but they seem less concerned with well-defined writing and more interested in establishing an atmosphere of artsy moodiness. Though the more up-tempo tunes such as "Chamber Of Hellos" and "Love Against Me" seem structurally challenging, the bulk of *In A Chamber* suffers from deficient melodic invention (this style of pop demands strong melody), and a dead-serious stance that may be trendy and stylish, but ultimately comes across as forced and deliberate.

Produced by David Kahne (who has done fine work with Rank and File, Red Rockers and Translator), *In A Chamber* only hints at Wire Train's uniqueness, primarily in Hunter and Herr's evocatively spacey guitar work and Federico Gil-Sola's rock-steady drumming. More emphasis on writing and less on posing would seem to be the recipe for helping this band achieve its potential.

## BUILDING BEAUTY Endgames MCA

By  
Laura  
Fissinger

Yes, this Scottish band lifted its name from playwright Samuel Beckett, but erudition has nothing to do with their debut. *Building Beauty* is one more platter serving up *nouveau* dance-rock body music, retro-soul/R&B division, the genre represented by Spandau Ballet, Wham U.K., *et al.* Endgames isn't more (or less) original in their reworkings of soul legacies, but they are vastly different in spirit. From the record's shiningest hour ("Miracle In My Heart") to its dullest ("Waiting For Another Chance"), there's a generosity and intense joy that makes the listener experience the old chestnuts in their hearts more than in their memories.

Endgames *does* sound too much like Spandau Ballet, actually—the vocal riffs and piano techniques of a song like "Universe" could easily find a home on *True*. But the feel is right under the surface, waiting for one more listen to plead Endgames' case. Like some of soul's lesser ancestors (e.g., Earth, Wind and Fire), Endgames can do all the high drama without any distancing emotional high gloss that separates listener and artist from each other. The melody lines and phrase-architecture of "Searching For Love" and "Miracle," the middle eight bars of "Ecstasy"—here's a

rare, undeniable immediacy and lack of calculated gesture. Several of the new soul bands favor emotion-as-concept, but Endgames doesn't, and so comes closer than the competition to the essential legacy of American soul greats.

.....

## AFFORDABLE ART Steve Goodman Red Pajamas

By  
David  
Gans



The big record companies can't be bothered with some of our more literate songwriters—among them John Prine, Warren Zevon and Steve Goodman—but that doesn't mean there isn't any audience for their work. Goodman, for one, proves this every time he steps on stage; *Affordable Art*, the artist's second LP for his own Red Pajamas label, further emphasizes the point.

Many of Goodman's songs come under the heading of "contemporary folk," describing and commenting on the events and people of the day, but his musical and lyrical interest extends beyond the bounds of topicality. *Affordable Art* includes such gems of timely humor as "Vegematic," about a guy who falls asleep and dreams he's ordered everything advertised on the all-night movies, and "Watchin' Joey Glow," a chillingly funny number about a "post-nuclear nuclear family." But Goodman's equally adept at sweet sentimentality ("Old Smoothies" and the wide-eyed "Grand Canyon Song"), and he sure can pick, as evidenced by his swinging duets with Jethro Burns (on "Take Me Out To The Ballgame") and woodwind wizard Jim Rothermel ("If Jethro Were Here"). *Affordable Art* also includes a bit of ahead-of-its-time rap called "Talk Backwards," rescued from Goodman's 1980 major label swan song, *Hot Spot*; a portrait of the world's most patient sports fans ("A Dying Cub Fan's Last Request"); and the best hangover song ever written, "How Much Tequila (Did I Drink Last Night?)." A beautiful duet with John Prine on Prine's "Souvenirs" is alone worth the price of admission.

*Affordable Art* is a pleasant and accessible album combining live and studio, solo and ensemble performances of new songs, demonstrating unequivocally that, although the record industry has cast him aside, Steve Goodman's career is far from over. Or as Goodman himself says to his concert audiences these days, "No one's dying around here." (*Affordable Art* is available by mail for \$8 postpaid from Red Pajamas Records, P.O. Box 233, Seal Beach, CA 90740.)

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DAVE MARSH

## ANGLOPHOBIA

**A**ccording to *Newsweek*, the pop press, TV and other pundits, rock is in the midst of a British Invasion. Depending upon the accuracy and honesty of the pundit, it's either the second or fourth of the past 20 years, but in any event, the phenomenon is undeniable. At least, it's undeniable as long as what's meant by "invasion" is that British acts are taking up a disproportionate share of the American charts.

If, however, the British invasion is supposed to indicate that we're experiencing a Revolution in American pop music taste, there's only one appropriate response:

HOOEY!

For while invasions are launched for many reasons, they're successful only if they succeed in establishing something more than a beachhead—substantial and lasting

the success of musicians and promoters who are punk's radical antithesis. Consider: If the punk premise that rock has died of internal corruption is true, but if punk itself can't either purify the music scene or establish any sort of livable alternative, then what's left except hustle, exploitation and jive?

That's a central reason why the present British Invasion partakes of so much Spandau Ballet, ABC and Human League, a new brand of shallow soft-rock MOR, and why it has been more successful in dragging the worst kinds of old fart art-rockers (Yes, Genesis) back to the Top Ten than in establishing such groups as U2 or even Elvis Costello as major stars. If this British invasion has succeeded in the narrowest commercial sense, it's also failed in the broadest artistic and cultural terms. Consider these statistics: In the February 25

*Billboard* chart, five of the top 10 and 10 of the top 20 albums are by British acts. But in order to arrive at these statistics, one has to include those old farts of the worst order (Yes and Genesis), as well as such partially English acts as John Lennon and Yoko Ono (recorded in America, with U.S. musicians), the Police (the Copeland connection) and the Pretenders ("How can I miss America when I am

you want to make a case against the heavy metal status of ZZ Top, that's OK with me, as long as you don't mind my asking why calling Culture Club's recycled Smokey Robinson and country harmonica New isn't as inane as terming 44-year-old Phil Niekro a rookie because he's never pitched in the American League before. (And that doesn't mean I don't love *Colour By Numbers*, any more than I hate knuckleballs. As it happens, I love both but the former much more than the latter.)

The British Invasion isn't an illusion, of course. There are more British hits in the States lately than there have been in the recent past. But all the talk of Invasion is hype, by which I mean that writers as intelligent as *Newsweek*'s Jim Miller wouldn't argue so strongly for the importance of a phenomenon that operates closer to the level of Herman's Hermits than the Kinks (let alone the Beatles or Stones) unless that characterization of what's happening lent credence to a more important set of values.

For the Anglophile, the importance of British rock stems from its trend-mongering and fashion-pandering, its celebration of the trivial and trivializing and, most of all, its emphasis upon the evanescence of not only success but meaning too. That is, the Brits have developed a pop culture that knows its place and never insists upon equal rights with Serious Art. For snobs and conservatives, this is always reassuring.

At present, rock writing is dominated by Anglophilia in this sense, which is one reason the American rock press comes more and more to resemble Britain's. And in England, the number one rock publication is *Smash Hits*, which is nothing less than 16 without a visionary editor. Discussions of rock are thus reduced to pure market judgments: a record as brilliant as the Pretenders' *Learning To Crawl* is discussed almost entirely in terms of how many of its tracks have already been released as singles!

Albums like *Learning To Crawl* are judged by such nonsensical standards because dealing with their contents would constitute an immediate refutation of the basis for Anglophilia. For what the Pretenders, through Chrissie Hynde, are all about on this record is establishing a means of growing up and continuing to rock. *Learning To Crawl* is a refusal and a denial of the trivialization and trend-mongering the British Invasion theorists believe is the essence of the matter. That is why this group and their album will be around long after the current British Invasion has become just another tempest in a tea bag. ○



From Noone to Fry: Tempest in a tea bag

changes in the hearts and minds of the population are also essential. By these lights, the British Invasion of 1964-65 was highly successful, in the same sense as the Allied Invasion of Normandy. But the punk incursion of 1976-1978 was as great a debacle as the Bay of Pigs.

Not only did the punks, with the sole (and somewhat dubious) exception of the Clash, fail to establish themselves or the alternative they represented in the U.S., the terms of their failure opened the door for

America?" quoth Chrissie Hynde).

There are five "new music" acts in the top 20: Culture Club, Duran Duran, the Police, Pretenders and Eurythmics. There are also five heavy guitar groups—ZZ Top, Van Halen, Judas Priest, Motley Crue, Quiet Riot—but you don't see *Time*, *Newsweek* or *Rolling Stone* writing cover stories about a heavy metal invasion (no one shouts about heavy metal because its listeners and its practitioners are too uncouth, beneath the pundits' gaze). And if





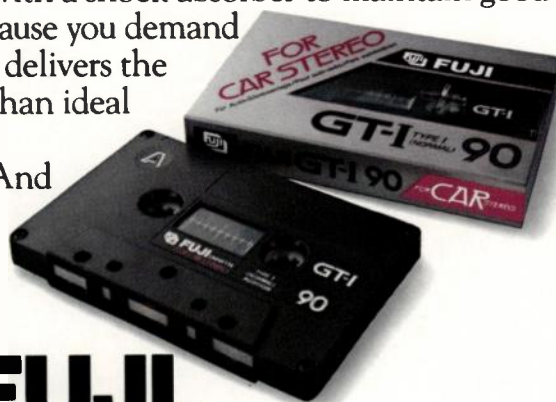
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