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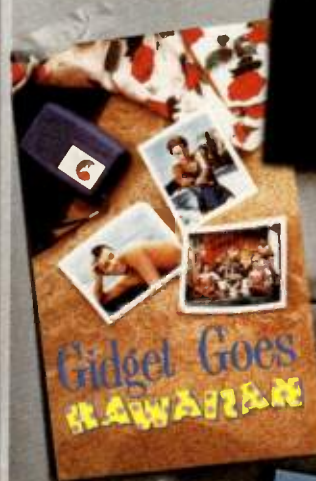
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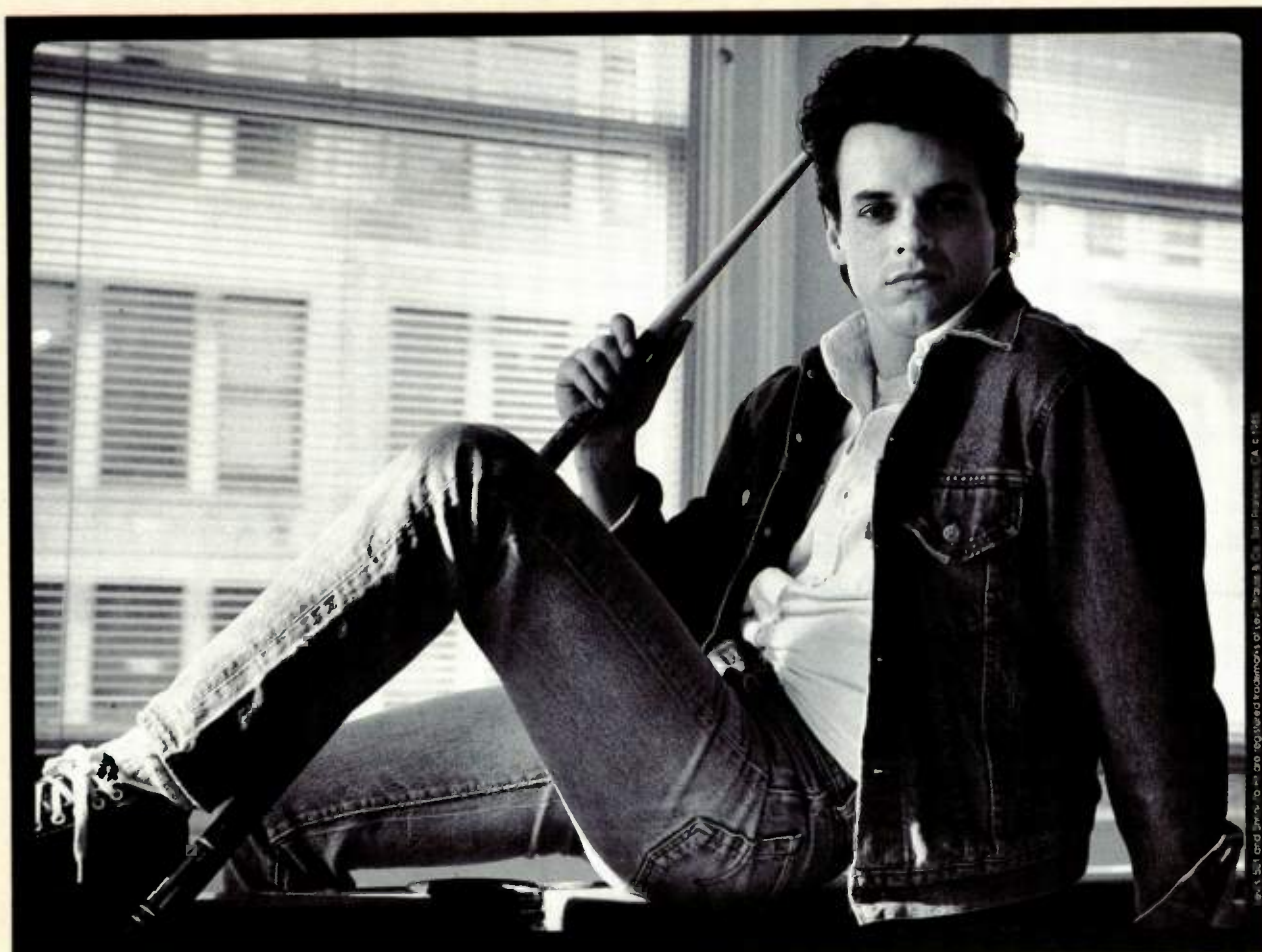
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Nearly four years after we made that pledge to you in our first issue, RECORD remains true to its original promise. We now redouble that commitment and step to an even higher plane of service and excellence. Familiar readers, take comfort! RECORD is first and always an all-music magazine, straight-up, with no distractions. But with this issue we introduce a new way to look at the music you love, as well as a new look.

In the coming months we will feature not only the regular contributors you know and respect, but also new writers with a different perspective on music journalism. This month, for instance, *New York Times* film critic Janet Maslin checks in with some insightful commentary on rock stars trying to become film actors, and Stanley Mises, a *New Yorker* magazine staff writer, unveils his eclectic view of the world in his new "Key-notes" column.

Also, we'll give worthy records the sort of in-depth treatment absent from other magazines' music review sections. "The Record Review" goes behind the scenes to look at the creative process of recording via interviews with producers, engineers and the artists themselves who respond to our critics' own assessments and insights.

Beyond this, RECORD stays ahead of the stereo and audio equipment game, always providing you with information that isn't overly simplistic or too complicated to understand. We take the fright out of the new technology and keep you from making expensive mistakes. Exhibit A: Our Fall Electronics Special beginning on page 32.

Want people? In this issue Sting ponders the price of fame and his nascent career as a solo recording artist; and Tears for Fears tells of growing up the hard way before their singles were topping the charts.

Now it's your turn. We've worked hard to keep pace with your demands, and we think you'll be pleased with RECORD's next era. So let the music play, read on, rock on, and let us know what you think—next month this space belongs to you again.

—THE EDITORS

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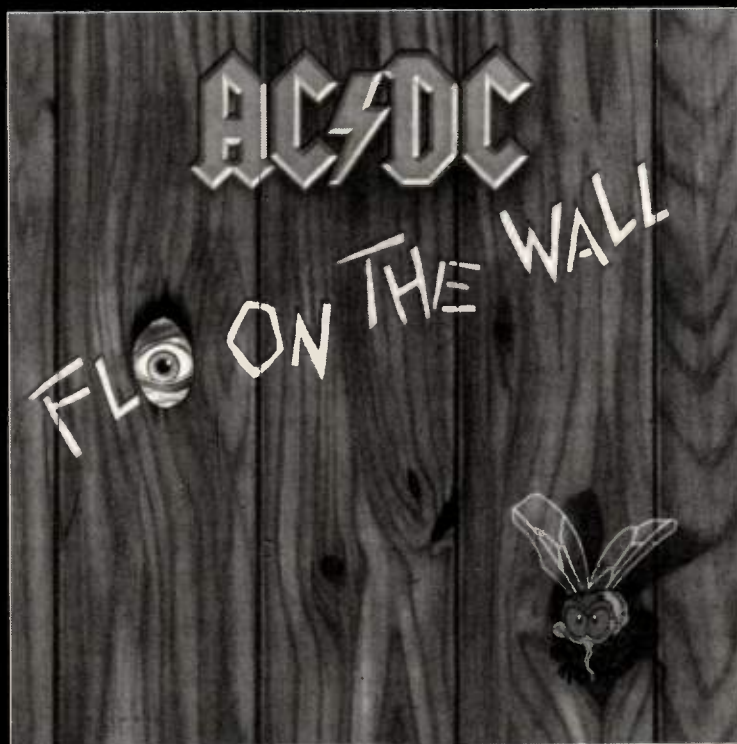
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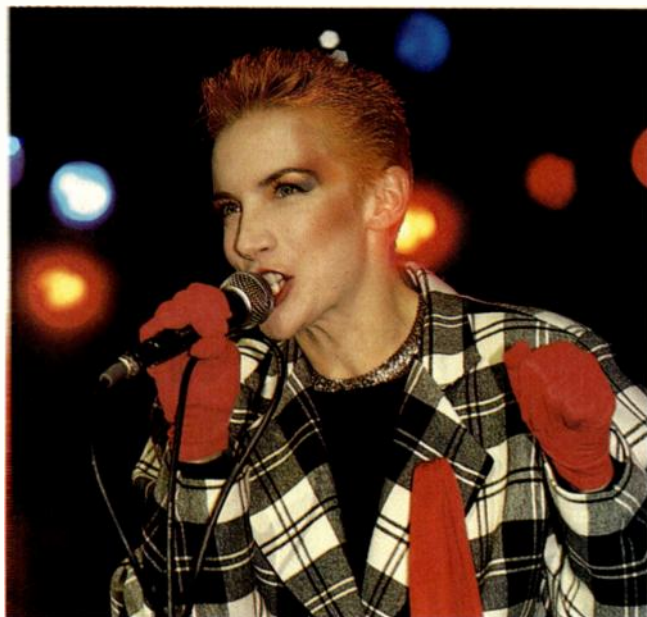


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On Record

CHATTING

Eurythmics



Although the past couple of years have been fairly quiet ones on the publicity front, Eurythmics Dave Stewart and Annie Lennox have been scurrying from one project to another, barely drawing attention to themselves (they've done few interviews since the release of the platinum *Touch* LP in 1983) but staying vitally involved in their own and other artists' music. In the past 20 months, Stewart notes, Eurythmics have played 173 concerts, and written and recorded a controversial soundtrack for the film *1984* (see March RECORD); Stewart himself wrote some songs for and helped produce Tom Petty's acclaimed *Southern Accents* album, produced the Ramones, and directed the videos for Eurythmics' latest album, *Be Yourself Tonight*.

"We've been working constantly," Lennox points out.

"Maybe that's why we weren't in the papers," rejoins Stewart. "All the other people who were going to the clubs had the time to do the photo ses-

sions, but we were too busy. In their case, it's all like icing, but nothing in the cake.

"Actually we did it on purpose," he continues. "While Culture Club and other similar bands tried to get as much press as they could, we tried to get as least as we could. We could see it killing us and less and less was about music and more and more about which club you went to and whom with. We didn't need that personality trip—it was the right way to lose track of your songwriting."

British reporter Sasha Stojanovic caught up with Lennox and Stewart in London shortly before the release of *Be Yourself Tonight* and filed the following interview.

***Be Yourself Tonight* is fairly removed, musically, from *Sweet Dreams* and *Touch*.**

Lennox: It shows a whole new attitude.

Stewart: I think what we do is very dangerous, in a commercial sense. We never intended to

make similar albums and end up on a cabaret circuit, as a parody of our popular selves. People coming to our concerts don't know what to expect. If you play "Julia" [a single from the 1984 soundtrack] back to back with [current single] "Would I Lie To You?" you wouldn't even think they were by the same band. "Julia" sounds like some Kraftwerk-electronic "classical" song, while the new one's a bit of Stax soul mixed with a bit of the Beatles. All these different sounds are in our subconscious and we just use different influences at different times to carve a new direction. We're not a band one can follow like a clique. That's why we called the album *Be Yourself Tonight*: we stand for a kind of individualism. We've made it for people who don't want to be part of the clique but individuals who seek good quality music, information, existence.

You've assembled some great players on this album: Stevie Wonder plays harmonica on "There Must Be An Angel (Playing With My Heart)," Aretha Franklin's on "Sisters Are Doin' It For Themselves" and Elvis Costello's singing on "Adrian." Does this make you more satisfied with the end result? Free you up to

play more guitar, and different types of guitar parts?

Stewart: I was restricting myself before because I was learning how to produce. Also, musically, we were in a different period. I knew that I could produce and could relax more now, play more; when Stevie Wonder came in I wasn't frightened, I knew I could produce him. If Stevie had walked in on our first album, I'd have blacked out.

Lennox: He came in 12 hours late. The song was written for him, Dave dedicated it to him and somebody suggested that he should be a guest harmonica player. He heard the tape and said he would do it.

Stewart: On one track, "I Like You Like A Ball And Chain," we used a thing called a Cyclone for the first time ever. It makes a sound that seems to be going around the room, and you can't imagine how it's being done. We played our album for Stevie, and he moves his head all the time in rhythm to the music. But when that section came on, he was frozen in motion and said, "I want that on my album."

Would you say your work is equal within the band?

Lennox: It's very different what



STEWART, LENNOX: 'WE STAND FOR A KIND OF INDIVIDUALISM'

we do. We work in different areas and Dave is much more motivated than me. He gets up and does things; I'm lazier, I tend to sit back.

Have you thought about why you work together so well?

Lennox: We have a relationship of a kind one never wants to lose. We also keep a distance to make it more objective.

Stewart: The funny thing with us is that we are the couple who split up at the point of success. It's usually the other way around, like Sonny and Cher, or Ike and Tina. With us it was different. We were planning to get married but then we split up and almost at the same time we became successful. It made us face things other people don't have to, really hurting things, like seeing your ex-wife every day while she's going out with other men. As much as our personal relationship suffered, our creative partnership flourished.

Annie, rumor has it you're getting into acting.

Lennox: Yes, it all started a year ago when an American agency approached me. I was interested and by the end of the year I had a meeting with Hugh Hudson, who directed *Chariots of Fire*. We liked each other, although he didn't have a part for me at the time. So he wrote one in, a very small part, in his film *Revolution*, and I'm acting with Al Pacino and Nastassia Kinski.

Stewart: From our life in Eurythmics we've both developed talents we probably would never have known about otherwise. I discovered I like writing story lines for and co-directing videos; Annie found out that she loves acting. All that makes us stronger, gives us more inspiration for the band—and doesn't make it look like we're splitting up when we do other projects.

Lennox: It's not like rungs on a ladder. Dave and I are excited about being musicians and performers. But we don't know when our talents are going to dry up and when we should change our profession.

Stewart: I disagree with that—

Lennox: Well, we also argue a lot.

—Sasha Stojanovic

THUMBS UP

Jeffrey Osborne's Summer Camp



Hailed by critic Greg Tate as "black pop's most distinctive male vocalist," Jeffrey Osborne has also been showing good form outside the studio recently. In an effort to get kids off the streets and into some productive open-air activity, the Big O's started his own summer camp program called "Summerscope," offering camps for sports, the arts and computers, all staffed by experts in the field. □

THE BIG O:
SHOWING GOOD FORM
OUTSIDE THE STUDIO

TRENDS

Hip Hop to Heavy Hop

Drum machines produce a huge, automated rhythm. Synths beep out bizarre noises. Black voices rap about sucker MC's. Then the computers and the voices disappear and a howling heavy metal guitar starts pounding out power chords.

Say what?

The sound is being masterminded by the Beastie Boys' Rick Rubin, while in the process of re-mixing Run-D.M.C.'s latest single. He's added his own hard rock guitar part to "Jam Master Jammin'," already a hard-edged rap, and is justifiably proud of the result: it's the most earth- and booty-shaking synthesis so far of rap and heavy metal. But then this is business as usual for the Beastie Boys, a New York City quartet that's been in the forefront of the freshest new street sound around, a combination of hip hop and heavy metal (heavy hop), heard to rousing effect on the Beastie's single, "Rock Hard/Party's Gettin' Rough"

on the Def Jam label. "I see AC/DC as a rap band," Rubin says in detailing the genesis of heavy hop. "They have a huge rhythm section and a guy out front saying words that rhyme."

Russ Parr, with his group

Bobby Jimmy and the Critters, has taken heavy hop west to his Rapsur label, home to a stable of California hip hop artists. Though he and Rubin are essentially in the same place, aesthetically speaking, Parr took a different route. "I grew up on Led Zep and Grand Funk," he explains. "When I heard Parliament-Funkadelic the first time, they sounded to me like a real good heavy metal band."

[Cont. on 11]



ILLUSTRATION BY TIM GABOR

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On Record

Cont. from 8]

Run-DMC., the duo that performed rap 'n' roll's only hits in "Rock Box" and "King of Rock," says: "When we started rapping, the disco wasn't hard enough for us, so we rapped over rock. We'd mix he guitar down a little and rap o Aerosmith's *Toys in the Attic*. That's the sound we're trying or now."

Herbie Hancock's "Rockit" and "Hard Rock," and Eddie van Halen's appearance on "Beat It" demonstrated the crossover potential of rock shops in black pop. Prince

waxed Hendrix-like on "Purple Rain." "The idea is to add melody and dynamics," says Russell Simmons, Run's brother and Run-DMC's producer. Case in point: guitar whiz Eddie Martinez, whose credits include Blondie and Mick Jagger in addition to his own solo work, played on one cut on Run's first LP, and is back for the second album. "Rap can get dull. We had to do nine songs for the last LP, and guitar was the only alternative to more synthesizers. The idea is to broaden the audience. We're not Twisted Sister, but maybe we want a few of

their fans."

A representative sampling of heavy hop 12" singles: "We're Gonna Rock America," Afrika Bambaataa (forthcoming on Tommy Boy Records); "Rock Hard/Party's Gettin' Rough," Beastie Boys (Def Jam); "We Like Ugly Women," "Knuckle Draggers," Bobby Jimmy and the Critters (Rapsur); "Funky Rap Party/Tearin' It Up," D4 (Spring); "Rock Box," "King of Rock," "Jam Master Jamin'," Run-DMC (Profile); "She's Wild," Biko and the Great Peso (Tommy Boy).

—Crispin Sartwell

ly someone bedecked in scarves hustles into the dressing room—Steve Van Zandt, as it turns out, back in the E Street Band for one day to reproduce his harmony vocal for the video. Nils Lofgren wanders in, snazzy in a black beret. Then it's a hoarse-voiced "Hey, how ya doin'?" and all eyes turn to spot Springsteen in the doorway, scrubbed and sinewy, in silver-toed black cowboy boots, a wedding band gleaming on his left hand.

"Glory Days" blasts from the back room—again and again it blasts from the back room (there's nothing like the set of a rock video to make even the best songs uncomfortably familiar) as the group lip-synchs the chorus, playfully bashing away at their instruments. It's supposed to be a late night at a neighborhood bar, and the crew puffs powder into the air and onto the extras to give the scene that certain *je ne sais quoi* of cigarette smoke. Bottles and half-filled glasses litter the tables, and Springsteen searches the piano top for something to drink. "This is the fake beer! Where's the *real* beer?" he wheezes good-naturedly.

Responding to Sayles' sarcastic command to "Pretend it's hot in here," the crowd—chock full of family and friends of the musicians, including Springsteen biographer Dave Marsh and one of the stars of *Brother*, actor Joe Morton—claps along to the song while the band mugs for the cameras. Before every take, the Boss sings aloud to stretch his vocal chords ("Bayybee") and does a little go-go dance to warm up. Clarence Clemons clangs a cow bell, and once again the E Streeters barrel into "Glory Days," with no perceptible loss of energy or enthusiasm. "More heat! More smoke! More takes!" jokes Springsteen.

During lunch, an anxious policeman hands over his hat as a gift and dumps a Budweiser all over Springsteen's lap. The star proceeds to tape the rest of the video in damp duds. Undaunted by an afternoon rainstorm, the crowd outside Maxwell's grows to over 200, all chanting "WE

MUSIC VIDEO

On the Set with Springsteen



SPRINGSTEEN REUNITES WITH LITTLE STEVEN FOR A CHORUS OF 'GLORY DAYS'

Police barricades block an unthreatening group of school-girls on their way to homeroom, a couple of moms with toddlers, and a gaggle of old men. Grips and gaffers unload lights, cameras, guitars, a drum set, and a rack of plaid workshirts from equipment trucks parked on a busy street in

Hoboken, New Jersey. Bruce Springsteen has come to town to shoot a video for his next single, "Glory Days."

Inside Maxwell's, a popular rock club, there's a line to sign away your name and face "forever," for the honor of appearing as an extra in the video. Maneuvering calmly through

this scene in a lavender muscle shirt is director John Sayles, whose films (*The Brother From Another Planet*, *The Return of the Secaucus Seven*, et. al) keep threatening to make this Jersey native son more than a cult figure, as does his recently bestowed "genius" grant from the McArthur Foundation. Sudden-

On Record

[Cont. from 11]

WANT BRUCE" to a television news crew from New York City's WCBS, whose cameraman is reduced to shooting through partially closed venetian blinds in a club window in order to catch a shot of Springsteen. The Mayor of Hoboken shows up and is unceremoniously shut out of the action. The proprietor of the club, Steve Fallon—accustomed to boisterous fans pounding on the doors trying to get into Hüsker Dü and Replacements shows—is unfazed by the tumult outside, but soon grows tired of reporters' endless questions concerning the whereabouts of Springsteen's new bride. Julianne Phillips Springsteen eventually turns up, clad in blue jeans and an Asbury Park sweatshirt,

prompting her husband to yelp, "What have we here?!" as they embrace and kiss. Desperate newsman corner the caterer: "Yes," he says, "Bruce loves steamed zucchini."

The video wraps early in the evening, and a plan of escape is drawn up while eyes peer through the plate glass windows in search of a famous face. Springsteen asks for an official escort, concerned about traffic and worried about his wife's safety. Two identical blue vans pull up, distracting the crowd as Bruce slips out the side door, hidden under a jacket and police hat. "Gee," muses E Street drummer Max Weinberg, left behind at the bar, "it's getting to be like *A Hard Day's Night* around here."

—Julia Panebianco

GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALLS Continental Club, Austin



ROBERT HUTCHINSON

DOIN' THE CONTINENTAL: THE PLACE FEELS LIKE HOME

The Continental Club, 1315 S. Congress, Austin, Texas

A dark room with the dimensions of a large shoebox, the Continental Club has done time as a swank dinner club, a sleazy topless joint and a pool-shootin' neighborhood bar during its 20 years of high life. The dive of choice among musical Austinites since 1979, the Club's reputation rests partly on the diversity of its bookings and

partly on its potent sound system; mostly, though, the damn place feels like home, as comfy as a well-worn pair of Levis.

When the Continental is packed beyond its official 300 person capacity—whether Jonathan Richman is performing unaccompanied or TSOL is presiding over a hardcore Sunday—the black walls sweat in empathy. When national tour- [Cont. on 14]

TOP 50 ALBUMS

- 1 NO JACKET REQUIRED
Phil Collins (Atlantic)
- 2 SONGS FROM THE BIG CHAIR
Tears for Fears (Mercury)
- 3 AROUND THE WORLD IN A DAY
Prince (WB)
- 4 BORN IN THE U.S.A.
Bruce Springsteen (Columbia)
- 5 LIKE A VIRGIN
Madonna (Sire)
- 6 MAKE IT BIG
Wham! (Columbia)
- 7 RECKLESS
Bryan Adams (A&M)
- 8 BEVERLY HILLS COP
Soundtrack (MCA)
- 9 33 1/3
Power Station (Capitol)
- 10 DREAM INTO ACTION
Howard Jones (Elektra)
- 11 BE YOURSELF TONIGHT
Eurythmics (RCA)
- 12 DIAMOND LIFE
Sade (Columbia)
- 13 INVASION OF YOUR PRIVACY
Ratt (Atlantic)
- 14 BROTHERS IN ARMS
Dire Straits (WB)
- 15 WHITNEY HOUSTON
Whitney Houston (Arista)
- 16 CENTERFIELD
John Fogerty (WB)
- 17 EMPIRE BURLESQUE
Bob Dylan (Columbia)
- 18 SOUTHERN ACCENTS
Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers (MCA)
- 19 VOICES CARRY
'til tuesday (Epic)
- 20 SUDDENLY
Billy Ocean (Arista)
- 21 SHAKEN 'N' STIRRED
Robert Plant (Es Paranza/Atlantic)
- 22 THE NIGHT I FELL IN LOVE
Luther Vandross (Epic)
- 23 LITTLE CREATURES
Talking Heads (WB)
- 24 7 WISHES
Night Ranger (MCA)
- 25 WIDE AWAKE IN AMERICA
U2 (Island)
- 26 WE ARE THE WORLD
USA for Africa (Columbia)
- 27 BROTHER WHERE YOU BOUND
Supertramp (A&M)
- 28 VITAL SIGNS
Survivor (Scotti Bros.)
- 29 EMERGENCY
Kool & the Gang (De-luxe)
- 30 CRAZY FROM THE HEAT
David Lee Roth (WB)
- 31 FABLES OF THE RECONSTRUCTION
R.E.M. (I.R.S.)
- 32 SECRET OF ASSOCIATION
Paul Young (Columbia)
- 33 KATRINA & THE WAVES
Katrina & the Waves (Capitol)
- 34 ONLY FOUR YOU
Mary Jane Girls (Gordy)
- 35 PRIVATE DANCER
Tina Turner (Capitol)
- 36 BUILDING THE PERFECT BEAST
Don Henley (Geffen)
- 37 DREAM OF A LIFETIME
Marvin Gaye (Columbia)
- 38 THE ALLNIGHTER
Glenn Frey (MCA)
- 39 TOUGH ALL OVER
John Cafferty & Beaver Brown (Scotti Bros.)
- 40 THE DREAM OF THE BLUE TURTLES
Sting (A&M)
- 41 RHYTHM OF THE NIGHT
DeBarge (Gordy)
- 42 UTFO
UTFO (Select)
- 43 BOYS AND GIRLS
Bryan Ferry (WB)
- 44 ROCK ME TONIGHT
Freddie Jackson (Capitol)
- 45 TWO HEARTS
Men at Work (Columbia)
- 46 HIGH COUNTRY SNOW
Dan Fogelberg (Full Moon)
- 47 THE BEACH BOYS
The Beach Boys (Caribou)
- 48 MAVERICK
George Thorogood (EMF-America)
- 49 THE CONFESSOR
Joe Walsh (Full Moon)
- 50 THE FIRM
The Firm (Atlantic)

Top 50 Album chart researched and compiled by Street Pulse Group

TOP 20 MUSIC VIDEO SALES

- 1 VISIONS OF DIANA ROSS
Diana Ross
(RCA/Columbia Home Video)
- 2 PURPLE RAIN
Prince
(Warner Home Video)
- 3 WE ARE THE WORLD
USA for Africa
(RCA/Columbia Home Video)
- 4 AMERICAN BAND
Beach Boys
(Vestron Home Video)
- 5 WHAM!
Wham!
(CBS/Fox Home Video)
- 6 MADONNA
Madonna (Warner Bros.)
- 7 AIN'T THAT AMERICA
John Cougar Mellencamp
(RCA/Columbia Home Video)
- 8 PRIVATE DANCER
Tina Turner (Sony Video)
- 9 RECKLESS
Bryan Adams
(A&M Home Video)
- 10 ALL NIGHT LONG
Lionel Richie
(RCA/Columbia Home Video)
- 11 DANCE ON FIRE
Doors
(MCA Home Video)
- 12 URGH! A MUSIC WAR
Various Artists
(CBS/Fox Home Video)
- 13 U2 LIVE AT REDROCKS
U2 (MCA Home Video)
- 14 ELVIS: ALOHA FROM HAWAII
Elvis Presley
(Media Music)
- 15 GO-GO'S
Go-Go's (RCA/Columbia Home Video)
- 16 JAZZIN' FOR BLUE JEAN
David Bowie (Sony Video)
- 17 DURAN DURAN
Duran Duran
(Thorn-EMI)
- 18 MAKING MICHAEL JACKSON'S THRILLER
Michael Jackson
(Vestron Video)
- 19 VIDEO REWIND
Rolling Stones
(Vestron Video)
- 20 DAVID BOWIE: SERIOUS MOONLIGHT
David Bowie
(Media Music)

*Denotes new entry.

The MusicVideo Top Twenty indicates the fastest-moving sales and rentals titles in music product as reported by the country's leading video retail outlets.

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On Record

ing acts play local auditoriums or coliseums, the stars wind up shining after the show at the Continental, resulting in monstrous jams. One memorable night found the Cars, Nick Lowe and George Thorogood crammed onto the club's miniscule stage with local notables like Joe Ely, Joe "King" Car-

rasco and members of the Fabulous Thunderbirds.

While the cream of the American underground has held forth at the CC, and jazzers like Larry Coryell and Ralph Towner have been showcased here as well, it's the hometown folks who truly rule the roost. Stevie Ray Vaughan's shows here are legendary, the LeRoi Brothers

raunch rolls the best at the Continental, and the list of musicians who love the joint runs as long as the average Friday night guest list.

The outrageous taxations on hard liquor mean that only beer and wine are sold here; otherwise it's BYOB. Even so, with high overhead the club barely breaks even in a good month,

and runs in the red otherwise. So why does booking agent/owner Mark Pratz keep the Continental afloat? He deems it a public service, a stepping stone to other promotions and a historical landmark. "You can feel it when you walk in," Pratz smiles. "The Continental's a rock 'n' roll room."

—Jody Denberg

MOVIE MUSIC

Goonies Rn't Good Enough



IT'S ENUF TO MAKE U SCREAM: WHERE R THE GOONIES' SONGS?

Ever come out of a movie humming the theme song? Or in the case of *Beverly Hills Cop* or *Flashdance*, much of the score? This summer's adventure extravaganza for kids, *The Goonies* (from a story by Steven Spielberg who also, it is reported, oversaw virtually every detail of the production) will not have that effect, a fact causing major frustration to Epic, the label that released the movie's soundtrack.

Even Epic vice president Lennie Petze, who oversaw the recording of *The Goonies'* pop soundtrack, was taken aback while viewing the movie in a local theater. Knowing precisely which songs to listen for, Petze found only the Cyndi Lauper

theme song, "Goonies 'r' Good Enough," was recognizable.

The \$200,000 album was conceived as a high-grade, all-star affair, precisely the sort that can become a singles machine during the run of a movie. Its highlights: a second Lauper cut, "What A Thrill"; Arthur Baker's "Eight Arms To Hold You," which has "Axel-F"-like catchiness; Luther Vandross' tough and tender "She's So Good To Me," and Teena Marie's "14K," another of her joyful expressions of young love on the street. Philip Bailey, the Bangles, Dave Grusin and Joe Williams also contributed. All the songs were recorded specifically for the movie.

Petze says Warner Bros., the

film's distributor, has promised him "a piece of paper telling me where the songs are." For example, REO Speedwagon's "Wherever You're Goin'" is used early in the film, but barely rises above the general noise level of an exceedingly noisy film.

That's a tough break, when movie musicals (*Purple Rain*, *Eddie and the Cruisers*) and even non-musicals are launching huge-selling pop hits—such as *Beverly Hills Cop*, a Number One soundtrack that has yielded five radio hits; *The Breakfast Club* (Simple Minds' chart-topping "Don't You Forget About Me"); and *Vision Quest* (Madonna's Number One single, "Crazy For You").

For its part, Warner Bros. Pictures asserts the album will be profitable for Epic anyway—and that the director (Richard Donner) "always" has final say in the treatment of music: "It's a function of the production process," explains a WB spokesperson.

"We knew it was not a *Flashdance* from the git-go," Petze allows, before adding that he expects the album to go platinum. But Epic must now "break the singles as they come." In contrast, prominent movie use alone helped "Into The Groove," the Madonna song in *Desperately Seeking Susan*, generate phenomenal pre-release requests at radio and retail.

But there's more to nuzzle Epic: Lauper's song, for example, wasn't heard in Warner's initial TV ads for the film, although Spielberg and the young cast of *The Goonies* appear in the first of two Warner-financed videos for "Good Enough." Both also contain movie footage. "We did all they wanted us to do," says Petze. "but I don't feel the same support. I don't think Cyndi will ever get involved in another film without control" over its use. Lauper herself called radio stations to explain the song's story line upon its release, a month before the movie opened—the timing demanded by Warners.

In the case of *The Goonies*, Petze says "the movie won't sell the music—it's not like *Beverly Hills Cop*. The next time around," he declares, Epic's negotiating strategy will be more aggressive, aiming for high-profile representation of its music. "Especially," he adds, "when there's a major artist involved." —Brian Chin

Beating Around the Bush

Police drummer Stewart Copeland's video journey to the heart of rhythms

BY STANLEY MIESES

COPELAND IN THE BUSH ☐ For the moment the Police have been suspended, as the group's various members go their separate ways. The story here is that drummer Stewart Copeland chose to temporarily relocate himself in deepest darkest Africa in order to distinguish his next move. The result of months of trekking through countries like Zaire, Tanzania, Gabon and the Congo is a videocassette called *The Rhythmist*, and as you might suspect, it stars pygmies, Bantus, Masai and this white guy. They're all great drummers, you see.

Back from the bush, Copeland was in New York not long ago to talk about the adventures surrounding his project. "This film is my first groping attempt to find something appropriate for the medium of videocassette," Copeland said, lunching on lobster cocktail. "Most videocassettes don't stand up to repeated viewing because they're bound by plot. This has non-stop imagery. We had a script but we lost it on the second day of shooting, which was fine, anyway, because Africa is just an incredibly visual place, and there was no time nor any point in setting up shots," he said. "Rather than employing a story, a narrative, we approached it like an LP. With an LP, you listen again because you like it and you hope to catch

more of what you like. *The Rhythmist* is like an LP for the eyes."

Conceiving the music and pictures simultaneously, Copeland and his party, headed by Belgian director J.P. Dutilleux, avoided the documentary or educational approach as well, though they were having the learning experience of a lifetime. Copeland described his itinerary: "In Kenya it was very comfortable because there's a great tourist population; Tanzania had great game reserves, but no gas and no food; Zaire had no tourists; the Congo had no people." He traveled by plane, train, Land Rover, canoe and donkey. Were the tribes hospitable? "If approached the right way," he said. If pygmies don't like you, he said, they disappear; if one of the warrior Masai tribes didn't like you, there was more concern that *you* would disappear.

The Rhythmist runs almost an hour and doesn't feel it, especially when used as an ambient element. Leave the room, and the Copeland-produced soundtrack—some of which was recorded on location and then edited and remixed, and some of which was

fed into a Fairlight and reprogrammed—makes for good dance-and-trance music. Or, sit down and let the pictures of other people, other places take you away. But career-wise, this may not have the impact of a solo album, a starring film role or even his other soundtracks for film and animation.

"Some people might think I'm a dilettante taking a sidestep in my career," he volunteered, "but I feel I had a responsibility, since in my position I have the opportunity to do something no one else has done."

"Besides, I savor the anonymity of it," he continued. "I like to do things behind the scenes. I used to be asked whether I minded standing in Sting's shade. I *need* shade. Please—where is he now that I need him?"

ROCK BOOSTERISM ☐ When song titles have the names of specific places in them, they're generally examples of geographical if not attitudinal chauvinism. Songs that say "this (fill [continued on 20])



TICKLING THE IVORIES TAKES ON A NEW DIMENSION FOR THESE TRIBESMEN

Salem Spirit

On the BEAT

BOOKS

As a rags-to-riches saga, the **Diana Ross** story is hard to beat: the poor Detroit childhood; the fateful high school friendship with Florence Ballard and Mary Wilson that blossomed into the Supremes; the hit records; the Oscar nomination for *Lady Sings the Blues*. Author J. Randy Taraborrelli chronicles it all in *Diana* (Doubleday/Dolphin, \$14.95)—the highs, lows, and in-betweens... For those who can't read enough about the lives and times of the **Beatles**, Timbre Books/Arbor House presents *Yesterday Came Suddenly* (\$10.95). Authors Bob Cepican and Waleed Ali detail the rise of the Fab Four from Liverpool, to Hamburg, to Shea Stadium, to *Let It Be's* London rooftop, and—finally—to the courtyard at the Dakota where the dream ended... Twenty-one years after the Rolling Stones were first heard on American radio, **Mick Jagger** remains an enigma, revealing just enough to keep the fans interested, but not enough to drive them away. His days as Jumping Jack Flash may be behind him, but rock's most famous dad continues to rank high among its most watched and most talked-about figures—a fact that hasn't escaped Carey Schofield, who's penned a book on the man. Titled *Jagger*, it's published by Beaufort Books at \$8.95, and follows the lead Stone's trail through all the trends and changes of his last two decades in the public eye... One of the most distinctive voices in rock, **Stevie Nicks** has come a long way since she first teamed with Lindsey Buckingham in San Francisco 15 years ago. *Stevie Nicks*, by Ethlie Ann Vare and Ed Ochs, details that rise from the struggling days as half of Buckingham Nicks, through multi-platinum success with Fleetwood Mac, to her more recent hits as a solo artist. Vare and Ochs have done their homework, rounding out their view of the public Nicks with observations from the singer's friends and associates (Ballantine \$2.95). ■

MISCELLANEA

To pay tribute to the legends of Black music who inspired them (as well as to benefit the United Negro College Fund), **Daryl Hall** and **John Oates** headlined the first big-name public performance at the newly-reopened Apollo Theater in Harlem. The special gig was a highlight of "Apollo Week," a celebration commemorating the Black music mecca's revitalization achieved via renewed community interest in the landmark and some \$10 million in renovations. For the Philly Duo, however, the encore took the cake. With John Oates later calling it



Gilles Larrain

If, as some feel, the Police are no longer a working entity, **Sting** certainly hasn't resigned himself to making that band his only contribution to the rock time capsule. He's just hired director Michael Apted (of *Coal Miner's Daughter* fame) to film a documentary on him and his new five-piece ensemble. Whether any of the footage will ever be seen remains uncertain, though plans are in the works for a public showing this month. Also expected for release in September: Sting's latest foray into acting, *The Bride*, the long-awaited remake of the horror classic, *The Bride of Frankenstein*.

"one of the greatest thrills I could ever have in life," the lads were joined onstage by original Temptations members **Eddie Kendrick** and **David Ruffin**. The Temptations were probably the prime musical influence on Hall and Oates back in their scuffling days in Pennsylvania, and during the closing half-hour set the four blended the voices on Temptations classics such as "Ain't Too Proud to Beg," "Get Ready," "My Girl," and "The Way You Do the Things You Do"—plus Hall and Oates' own "Everytime You Go Away." After the show (recorded for a live Hall and Oates album, due out any time now), the four, plus **Kool and the Gang's** Robert "Kool" Bell and James "JT" Taylor commandeered the back room of Mary Lou's Restaurant in Greenwich Village, where it was strictly a capella doo-wooo into the wee hours. Oates said, "It was like getting together with long-lost relatives." The night before the concert, the Apollo revived its traditional Amateur Night, which from the 30s to the 60s had seen the likes of then-unknowns such as Sarah Vaughan, James Brown and Michael Jackson take their first big steps into the limelight... Hall and Oates also recently had the satisfaction of seeing three albums—1982's *H2O*, 1984's *Rock 'N Soul Part 1*, and the current *Big Bam Boom*—all certified multi-platinum simultaneously... During a break in filming the video for **REO Speedwagon's** "One Lonely Night," band member Kevin Cronin went for a stroll around L.A.'s skid row (the film site) carrying a fake gun. Turning a corner with the weapon in hand, he neared a ragged street musician playing a sax. Spotting the gun, the hapless saxman dropped his instrument, threw his hands in the air, and flung himself onto the sidewalk screaming, "Don't shoot me, don't shoot me, I'm already dead!" When Cronin assured the terrified man that the gun was a fake, the panhandler scrambled to his feet brushed himself off, then said, "In that case give me a quarter"... Sometimes there's safety in numbers. If the Turtles, Spanky and Our Gang, and the Association can do it, why not **Culture Club**? For five of the six cities on their recent Japanese tour, Boy George and Co. were part of what their record label describes as an "all-British pop package" including Style Council, the Associates, and Go West... As leader of **Lords of the New Church**, Stiv Bators may have done a fair amount of California Dreaming

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Fans of rock trivia will enjoy *The Rock Video Book*. **Duran, Duran, Cyndi Lauper, Van Halen**—all your favorites are here. This treasure trove of info was written by Paulette Weiss and is published by Pocket Books at \$9.95.

when growing up in Ohio, but found the placid waters of Lake Erie unsuited for surfing. Recently on the road, the skeletal frontman seemed hell-bent on making up for lost time—albeit with a twist. After a promotional stop in Huntington Beach, California,

Stiv exited a record store by surfing atop a moving Econoline van. After a gig in New Orleans a few nights later, he took matters even further. Taking his turn behind the wheel as the band sped through the Louisiana darkness along Interstate 10, Stiv sud-

denly set the car's cruise control at 55 mph (as the band's record company, IRS stresses, "the Lords always obey national speed limits"), then slid out from the driver's window for a bit of rooftop surfing in the Bayou moonlight. Luckily, one of the other Lords was awake enough to grasp the situation and the steering wheel during the six-mile hang-ten. For those wishing visual proof, Stiv can be seen surfing his manager's limousine in the band's recent video, "Method To My Madness" . . . Strange company: British actor Terrence Stamp interviewing **Billy Idol** in the lounge of New York's JFK Airport for the East Coast avant garde magazine, *Details*. The pair discussed the follow-up to *Rebel Yell*. Among Idol's revelations, "the first two lines on the new album are 'Elvis Presley was always dying, Johnny Ray was always crying'." . . . L.A. rockers **Ratt** seem to be big in Japan lately—mob scenes, screaming girls, phony disguises and all. In Osaka, the band members found themselves confined to their rooms by something other than the now-standard hordes of frantic fans. Seems a local gang war had erupted just as Ratt was getting ready to go out and paint the town red. The result was mayhem and destruction in the surrounding streets. No fools, Ratt passed on the sightseeing, opting to stay in and catch up on their reading. ■

SCREENINGS

For those who've been marveling all summer over how strongly that tiny East End street urchin resembles **Mick Jagger** in the latter's video for "Lucky In Love," the resemblance is more than skin deep. The pint-sized, shrink-to-fit version of Young Mick was played by none other than the Principal Stone's nephew, John . . . Although critical reviews to head Kink **Ray Davies'** directorial debut, *Return to Waterloo*, have been mixed, at least one of filmland's biggest guns seems impressed. After seeing the film in New York, director Martin Scorsese hailed Ray's first effort as "really more poetry than prose. It's a very special thing. I've never seen a movie quite like it. It's not a rock video, it's not a documentary, it's not a dramatic feature. But it's very dramatic and very moving and very, very disturbing." ■

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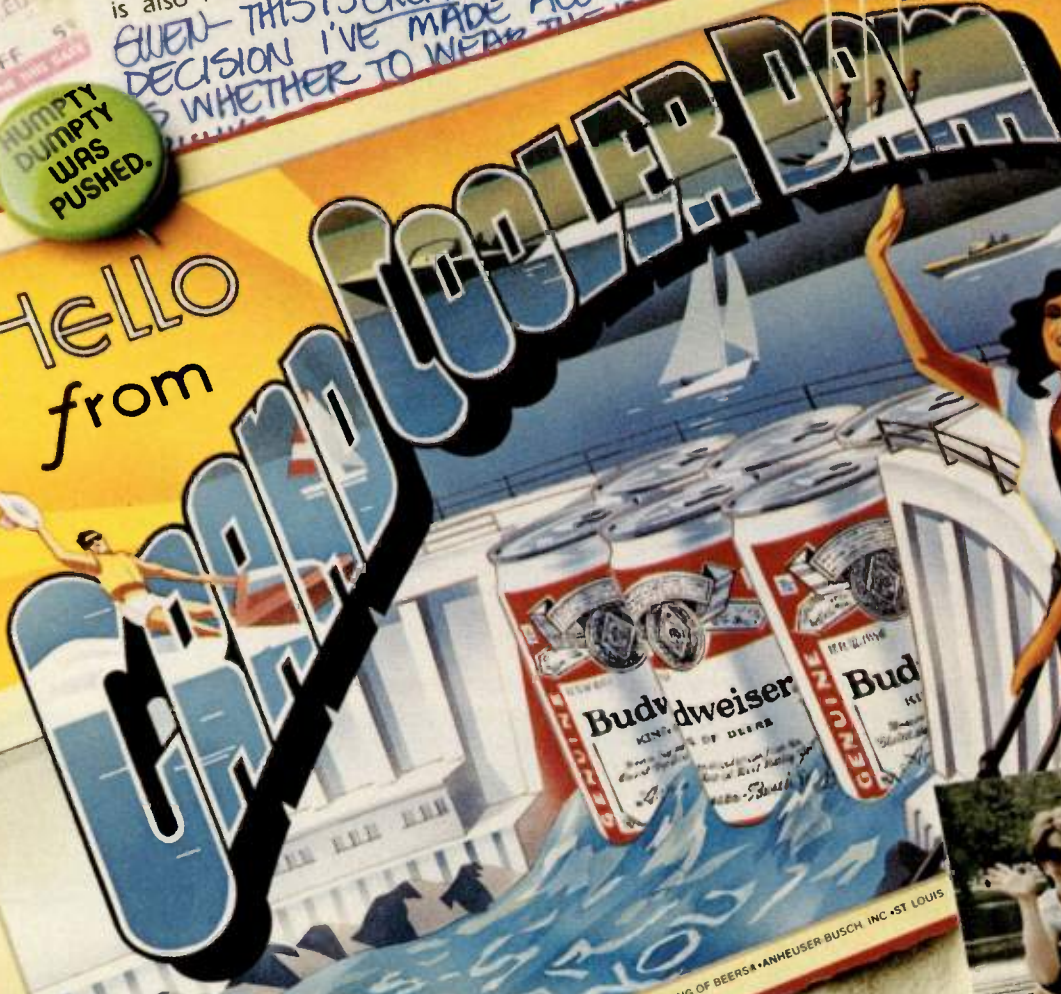
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Digital Audio and Digital Video

A system that plays CDs and laserdiscs, all under one roof

BY ALAN HECHT

The quest to be videocool is all-consuming. Imagine Max, a typical electronics junkie with a complete entertainment center comprised of videocassette, videodisc and Compact Disc players, videogame system, quality component stereo and a stereo-video receiver. All this, only to awaken one day to discover that technology's run a number on him. Imagine this poor soul's surprise when he stumbles upon the cutting edge in his local electronics emporium. There it is on the shelf in front of him, a CD player . . . a video player . . . a laserdisc system . . . a jet-black, front-loading "one size fits all" piece of ultra-modern technology that sent Max's mind reeling: To wit, **Pioneer's CLD 900**.

Marketed commercially this past January, the CLD 900 can play back either a 12-inch or eight-inch laserdisc, or a five-inch Compact Disc. And, amazingly enough, the unit's almost idiot-proof: hookup is a matter of connecting only four cords (AC cord for electricity; VCR coaxial cable; two audio FCA cords), and punching one of only two main controls on the front panel (Eject and Play).

But forget the technology. The CLD 900's picture brings to video the picture clarity of a Trinitron. It's like lifting a filter

off the screen and seeing a clearer image underneath; it's the difference between soft focus, when a camera is slightly blurred, and sharp focus. It's a new level of audio/video innovation.

I'd experienced this sensation once before, three years ago when I hooked up my first laserdisc player. A test was in order.

Synching a VHS recorder and the laserdisc to play Thomas Dolby's video 45 simultaneously confirmed that Laservision is indeed life after video, a redefinition of the music video experience. Still, note a couple of caveats here.

For one, mastering, laserdisc's perennial problem, may ultimately be its undoing. As with records, faulty mastering produces dropouts and noise that can ruin the aural/visual experience. Second, the old computer phrase "garbage in, garbage out" is applicable in this case. If the quality of the original video is poor, it won't look great on Laservision either. Also, all laserdiscs have yet to be encoded with digital sound, so don't expect to hear CD quality every time out.

True command of the CLD 900 comes from the remote control unit. Controls specific to Compact Disc playback are green, while laserdisc controls are in blue. Good idea, bad palette. The colors are too close in hue, and if the user happens to be color blind, forget it! In any event, while different discs have separate functions, the concepts remain the same. Scan will track through one side of a disc in fast forward (for CAV discs there's additional multi-speed, or three-times fast, controls); certain sections of a disc can be accessed using the chapter buttons for the laserdisc and the Track function for the CD. Chapters and tracks may also be subdivided into frame/time numbers for laserdiscs and index numbers for the CD, keyed to particular sections of a video or a specific musical passage. Want to hear the third track of a CD? Hit "Track," the number 3 and voila! you're there. Ditto for the laserdisc, but using the chapter function. Any section or side can be programmed for repeat play as well. If you get in trouble, Clear cleans the slate, so to speak.

It's also important to distinguish between



THINK OF THIS MACHINE AS A TURNTABLE THAT PLAYS 45s AND LPs, EXCEPT IT PLAYS CDs AND LASERDISCS

the two types of discs available. The Standard play disc (CAV, constant angular velocity) plays a maximum of 30 minutes a side and allows a user to employ all of the special effects features (i.e., multi-speed, etc.). The Extended play disc (CLV, constant linear velocity), on the other hand, has a maximum of 60 minutes per side, but fewer special effects. Nor will CLV match laserdisc's incredible freeze frame or super-slow motion (for analyzing sports or instructional material).

Compact Discs, of course, have very few special effects. Yet, what many consumers don't realize, however, is that the Compact Disc is a laserdisc. At present it's used only for audio, but software programmers are already exploring the CD's visual potential to, for example, provide video liner notes for the Disc. Punching up Display on the CLD's remote control will imprint onto the picture the program's track number, index number, minutes and seconds. It's only a matter of time when there's only one disc, or Disc, of a uniform size.

On to the tests. Much of the laserdisc's Superman reputation rests on its alleged indestructibility. So I chucked one against a sturdy plasterboard wall, then popped it right back into the CLD 900. A-plus: no chips, no scratches, no glitches, no problems. The Frisbee test (that is, sailing a disc across a room into a wall) nets the same results: masterful digital sound with nary a

skip or a jitter. Very impressive.

At \$1200 the CLD 900 is a big ticket purchase, to be sure. But by January of 1986, lower cost players will be on the shelves, and it's likely that a combo CD/laserdisc unit will go for as low as \$650. What would jack up the price, at least temporarily, is the introduction of a disc player that also records from other sources. Panasonic has introduced a recording industrial disc player, but its cost is prohibitive for the consumer market; still, the technological breakthrough necessary to bring down the cost of such a unit would seem to be just over the horizon. And then . . . goodbye Beta-VHS wars; goodbye videotape. Even home movies will be shot on a disc camera. Goodbye Camcorder, goodbye 8-millimeter video. The recording video disc may well become the most compatible piece of video software in the world.

But what can a poor boy do, till the world gets down to his level? Shell out for the CLD 900 and be videocool right away? Perhaps. Pioneer has the original, but there's also combo laserdisc/CD players being manufactured by Sansui, Denon, TEAC and other top-rank audio companies. But have faith, ye of limited budgets: prices will fall. Our time is coming. And Max, dear Max, will be there with us, videocool as ever. □

Alan Hecht, a music video director, is a regular contributor to this magazine.

[KEYNOTES continued from 15] in your favorite place stinks" are rarely hits. Boosterism is infectious, if injected properly, and this country experienced the positive effects of just such a booster shot when Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." reached fever pitch this year. Before you heard the "Star Spangled Banner" on the night the hostages were freed from their ordeal in Beirut, the crowd waiting at the Frankfurt airport struck up their adopted anthem, penned by that good citizen from New Jersey. But picture this: Daley Plaza in Chicago, on a sunny afternoon, with a crowd on hand to commemorate the Veterans of Foreign Wars. And to the side of the speaker's rostrum, an Army band, complete with electric guitar and bass, plowed into a Springsteen medley, topped off by a solemn "Born in the U.S.A." The song was followed by an equally sincere recruitment pitch.

DOES ANYONE ELSE FIND THIS FUNNY DEPT. □ The name "Sinatra" has been logged and registered as a trademark in the U.S. Patent Office. □

Stanley Mieses, a staff writer for the New Yorker and a Big Apple native, begins his regular "Keynotes" column with this issue of Record.

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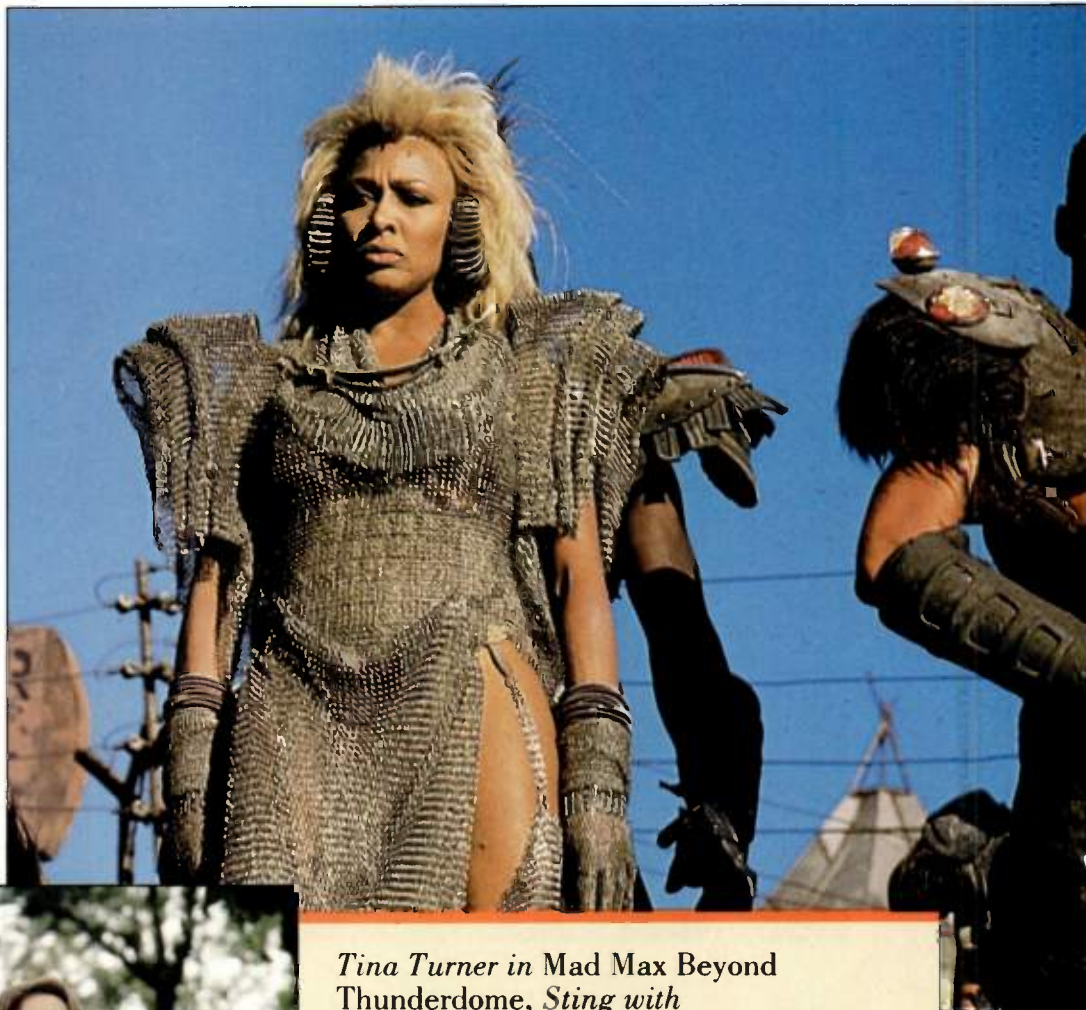


Making Movies

The long jump from MTV

The first rock and rollers to reach the movies here were as pioneering as the first men on the moon, and about as out of place. Pop stars had adapted to acting before, Frank Sinatra foremost among them, but this was a different and much more conspicuous animal. And Hollywood had so little notion of how to handle these newcomers that it adapted itself wholeheartedly to their presence: when Elvis picked up his guitar at the luau or malt shop, all other activity screeched to a halt. But that was long before rock evolved into the highly visual medium it is today. The stars who could once get by on the strength of good-looking album covers must now

BY JANET MASLIN



Tina Turner in Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome, Sting with Meryl Streep in Plenty: Scenic attractions or bonafide screen presences?

know, at the very least, how to lip-synch in a style that is reasonably pain-free. The really resourceful ones already understand the career-extending benefits of learning to act.

Even now, the rock star/actor is not yet entirely at home on the screen. For one thing, the talent for posing and image-making that led to rock stardom in the first place may be incompatible with the self-effacement on which credible screen acting (like Cher's amazingly subdued performance in *Silkwood*) depends. For another, tailor-made vehicles continue to look laughably anachronistic, even when they enjoy the commercial success of a *Purple Rain*. The cameo appearance, whether in feature films or on *Miami Vice*, seldom succeeds in bridging the gap from record to screen. And today's films, whatever their genre, call for more subdued acting styles than the chesty bravado that made Roger Daltrey a success in the Ken Russell films of a decade ago. On the other hand, expecting a rock

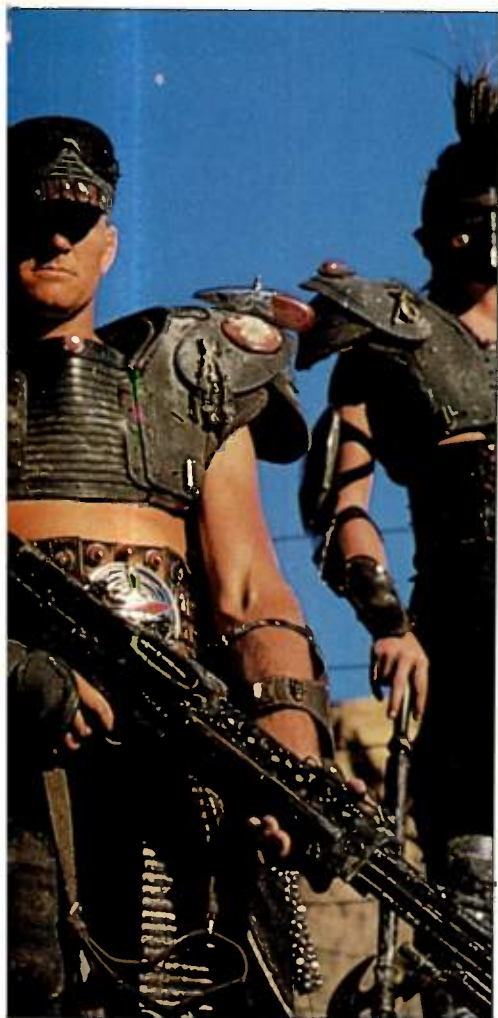
star to forsake all vestiges of personal glamour is expecting a loc. Realistically, the rock star most likely to spin off a screen career is one who combines a genuine aptitude for acting with some distinctly individual quality, something extra: a self-possession like Madonna's, a fierce elusiveness like David Bowie's, or a suave, subtle menace like Sting's.

All three are enjoying significant success in their film careers, at least in part because all have segued into movies with the humility needed to make the transition work. When Sting appeared in *Quadrophonia* and *Brimstone and Treacle*, he was neither seeking hand-tailored material nor expecting to occupy center stage. He clearly understood the strategic advantages of emerging as a stunning subsidiary presence rather than carrying an entire production on his own. Memorable enough in those films, Sting had reached the level of effortless show-stopping by the time of *Dune*. His five minutes worth of smoldering in that film will be the only part of it that anyone has reason to remember. Though *Plenty* has yet to demonstrate whether Sting can hold his own with an actress of Meryl Streep's caliber, and *The Bride* to test his stature as a leading man, he has worked up to this stage with the care and caution of a survivor.

Sting is also inordinately lucky: with the kind of brilliance that guarantees him musical longevity, he also has the commanding physiognomy of a born screen star. Madonna is a singer of much slighter talent and much less automatic magnetism, but her sense of style may take her a very long way. In *Desperately Seeking Susan*, Madonna too enjoyed a scene-stealing secondary position, from

[Cont. on 24]


J. GUICHARD/SYGMA (TOP), 20TH CENTURY FOX (BOTTOM)



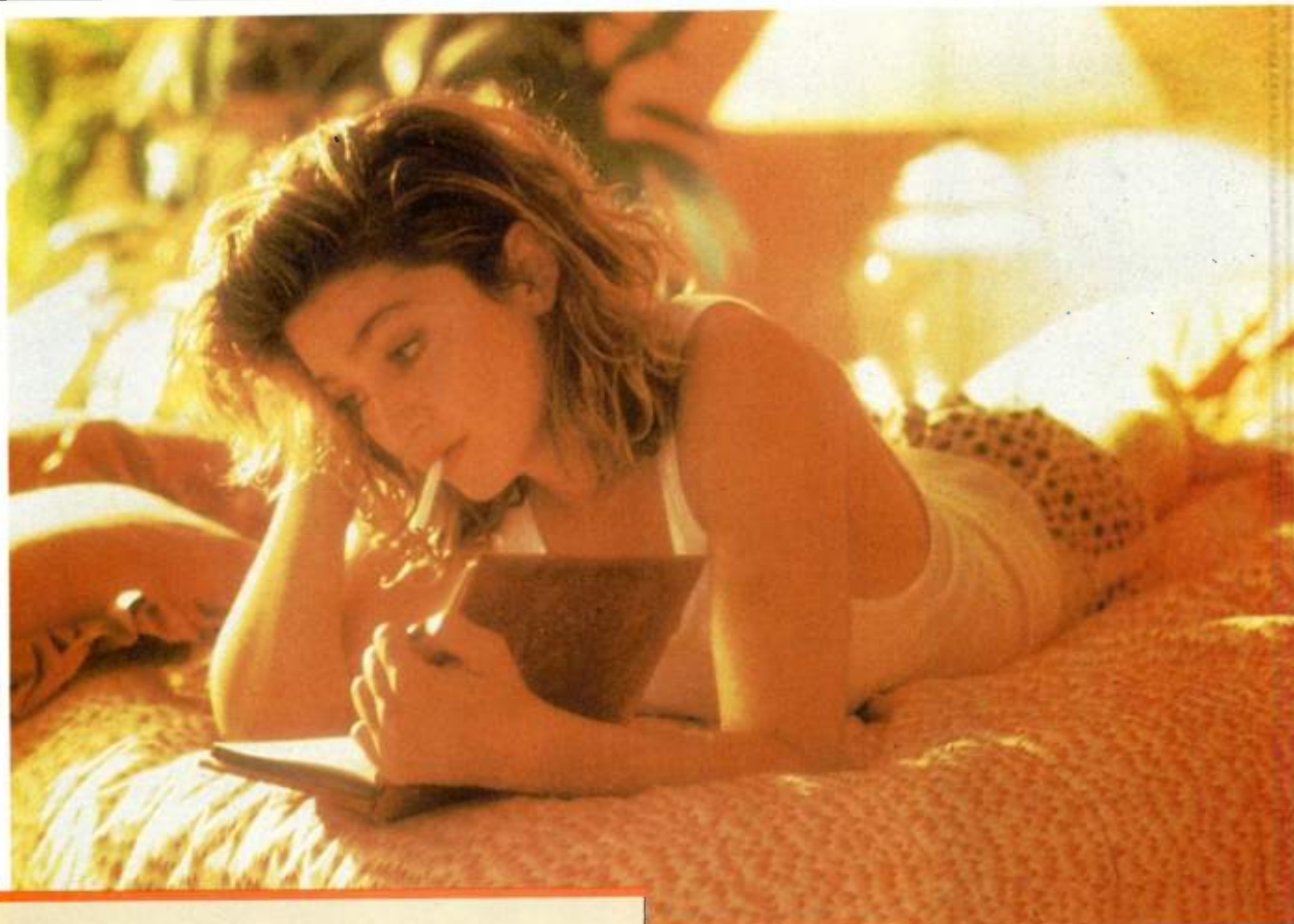
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production
can wind up
revealing more
about the
performer than
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***Madonna in Desperately Seeking Susan:*
A sense of style, rather than
wide-ranging ability, may be her greatest
strength as an actress**

which she managed to make herself the central presence in an already crowded panorama. Whether she is able to sustain an acting career will depend less on the range of her abilities than on the likelihood of her finding comparably personalized, trend-setting roles.

And David Bowie has turned acting, both on stage and on the screen, into a graceful extension of his music. He has also passed through the more experimental and changeable phase of his career into something a good deal more durable. *The Man Who Fell To Earth* was just the film for him to make in his most elusive, androgynous phase, but he has since moved towards a normalcy that allows him more leeway. In *Christiane F.*, a German film about teenage drug addicts, Bowie played the small role of the older pop star on whom the young heroine was fixated, and emerged as the virtual voice of reason. In *Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence*, he brought exceptional luminousness to what might have been an ordinary role. Bowie's seriousness and gravity, as demonstrated in his stage role as John Merrick in the Pulitzer Prize-winning play *The Elephant Man*, are offset by the capacity for witty self-parody that has surfaced in his video work; and the combination of those qualities leaves him apparently ready for any dramatic challenge. Furthermore Bowie, like Ray Davies, shows signs of wanting to work on the other side of the camera, and, like Davies, has conceived his music in the kinds of visual, descriptive terms that should make the transition smooth.

But for most rock performers, the path is less clear: if the musician isn't an instinctive, natural actor (or simply a prime scenic attraction, as Tina Turner is in *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*), then moving into film may mean devising some cinematic equivalent of the music itself, and then appearing in a central role. Conveniently,

rock video has been the crucible for stars seeking this kind of evolution, and the results have been variously promising and strained. Yes, the success of particular videos can owe as much to direction and to production values as to the musicians themselves, or even to the songs; if Bob Giraldo can make a star out of a soda can, then he can make one out of you. But it's also true that even the most skillful, slick production can wind up revealing more about the performer than may be intentional, or even wise. If the musician has a natural visual magnetism, it's unmistakable. If he or she is being put through a series of wholly disingenuous moves, then that shows too.

And if the star is used to working on entirely different scales—enormous for concert performances, close and intense in the recording studio—that can be problematic indeed. Mick Jagger remains the best example of a rock star whose oversized live-arena dynamism simply doesn't translate to the screen. Jagger's early forays into film were never comfortable. *Performance*, hip as it seemed at the time, has held up badly; *Ned Kelly*, more specifically designed around its star, showed he was in no way at home on the range.

Rock stars determined to stick to the proven assets that made them famous remain free to take their chances in a field where longevity is hardly the rule. But for those with the foresight to attempt the leap into dramatic roles, the transition may call for a real change of gear, and it may hold great possibilities for trouble. Those singers best able to act—or even to reach the movies with their original, outsized star personalities intact—are apt to be those with a paradoxical combination of talents. It's important, for the screen, that they be able to fit comfortably into larger dramatic frameworks, especially frameworks not centered on themselves. On the other hand, a rock star is a rock star, and even in another medium should remain one: someone who, when trying nominally to hide his or her light under a bushel, can still turn every head just by walking into a room. □

Janet Maslin is a film critic for the New York Times.

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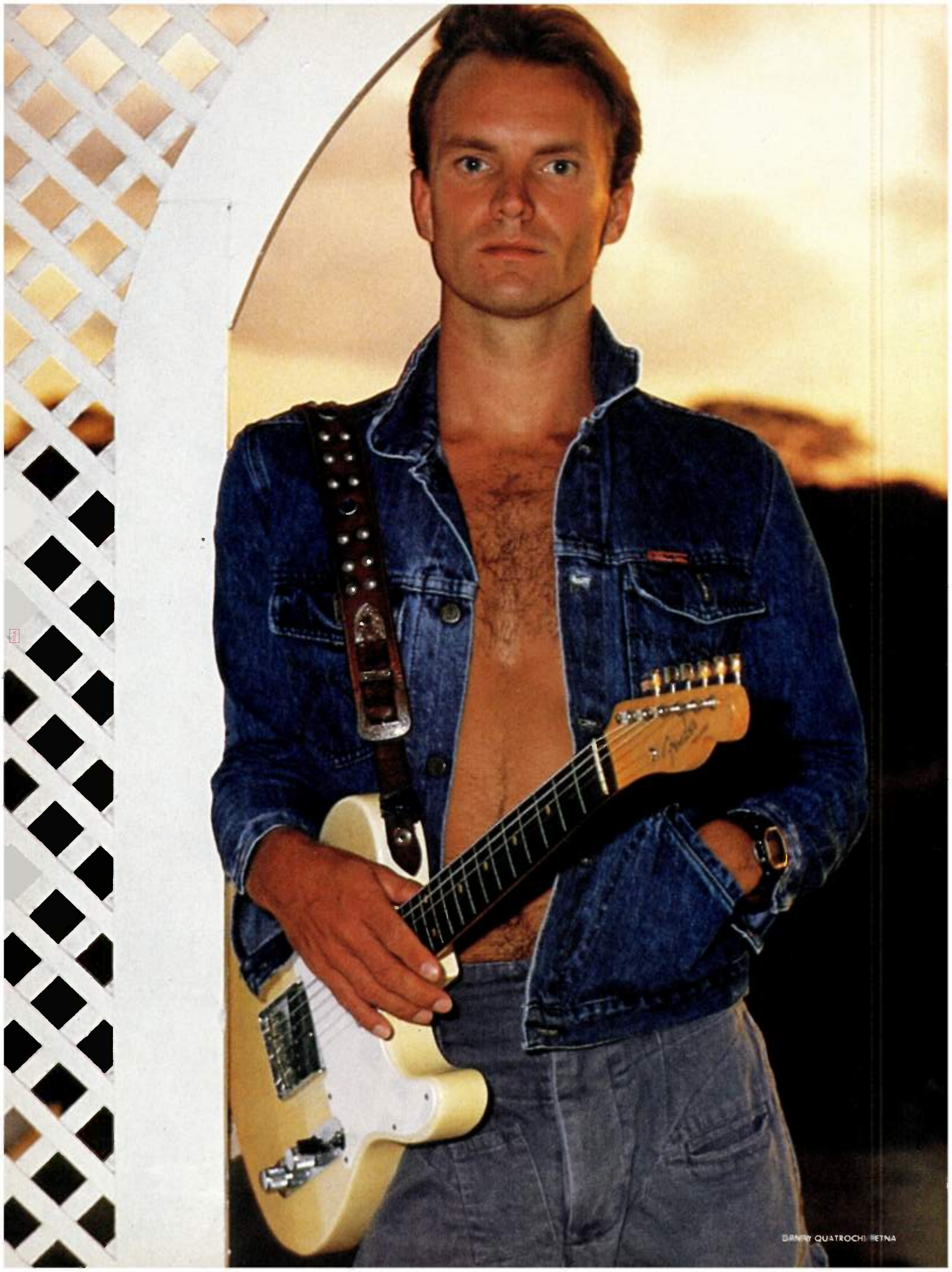
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A

mong contemporary musicians, only David Bowie exceeds Sting in his quest for movie stardom, and in the number of film roles to his credit. Still it could be argued that Sting has been more of what professional athletic scouts call "an impact player" than any of his other celebrated contemporaries who've attempted the rock-to-film crossover (the jury's still out on Madonna, who on the basis of one film seems to have the star quality that's eluded other rock artists on the silver screen). In addition to a chilling performance as the Jekyll-Hyde rapist character in *Brimstone and Treacle*, Sting's chalked up a major credit as one of the leads in *Dune*, will soon be seen starring opposite Meryl Streep in the romantic drama *Plenty*, and will portray the fatally ambitious Dr. Frankenstein in *The Bride*, a remake of *The Bride of Frankenstein*. □ These experiences have given the once and future Gordon Sumner a deep perspective on the sort of challenges film presents him with, as distinct from his continuing evolution as a musician in and, as it happens, apart from the Police. It's not stretching a point to state that the 33-year-old former schoolteacher is out to change the world with his first solo album, *The Dream of the Blue Turtles*, with its songs addressing the arms race, the perils of nuclear energy and the price of political strife. Of particular note is a disturbing

BY JEFFREY PEISCH

Sting

*Sting discusses what's past,
passing and to come*

POW



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rumination on superpower politics called "Russians," with its penultimate line, "I hope the Russians love their children too."

Sting wrote *The Dream of the Blue Turtles* last year, and began putting a band together in January. When the group (Omar Hakim, drums; Kenny Kirkland, keyboards; Branford Marsalis, saxophone; Darryl Jones, bass) started rehearsing, rumor had it that they were making a jazz album, a rumor that made perfect sense since the musicians in question have all done stints with the likes of Miles Davis and Weather Report. But the sound of *Blue Turtles* is not jazz—it sounds, in fact, more like a Police album than anything else. In May the band went to Paris to start rehearsing for a European tour; film director Michael Apted (*Coal Miner's Daughter*) was on board as well, shooting a documentary, which Sting discusses in the following interview.

While eager to ponder the day's political headlines, Sting's manner was personable, almost playful. Occupying an absent A&M Records executive's desk for the day, he toyed constantly with knick knacks he found there, first brandishing a letter opener, now moving on to fondle a cricket racquet with boyish enthusiasm. Still, he seemed like a politician with an agenda, places to go, things to do, goals to achieve. We took up the issue of Sting's film career as a starting point for a broad discussion of this rock 'n' roll Renaissance man's wandering muse.

Has it been a difficult adjustment to go from being a musician to being an actor? When you make records, you're usually in charge of all aspects of the production. For films, you're often part of someone else's vision.

You're right about that. In music, you write the song, you produce it, engineer it, you're involved in every part of the production, down to the way the sleeve looks. I find it very hard to be in a film, because you're just a cog in a wheel. You don't really have much control over what the end product is, and I find that a bit frightening. At the same time, I quite enjoy filmmaking. I enjoy the privilege of doing a new job and learning a new skill. I think it's important for someone successful not to become self-satisfied in just one world. It's important to learn new things. Working on films also helps my songwriting and music.

And the great thing about films is that you have to create strong and meaningful relationships quickly with a whole different set of people every few months. In music you work with the same people every day, year after year. It's a closed environment. In film you have a leading lady, leading man, a director and many other people you have to deal with, so it's a way of becoming—staying—human. Otherwise you live in this protected, rarified atmosphere of the pop star and then what do you write about? How hot the swimming pool is? Your tailor?

Do people in the film community like you?

I'm sure before people meet me they think, "Oh God, a damn rock star is gonna try to act and be a pain in the neck." I accept those preconceptions, and say, "I'm learning; help." The best actors are great to me and have helped a lot. Most people, actually, have been very kind, and have given me a great deal of help.

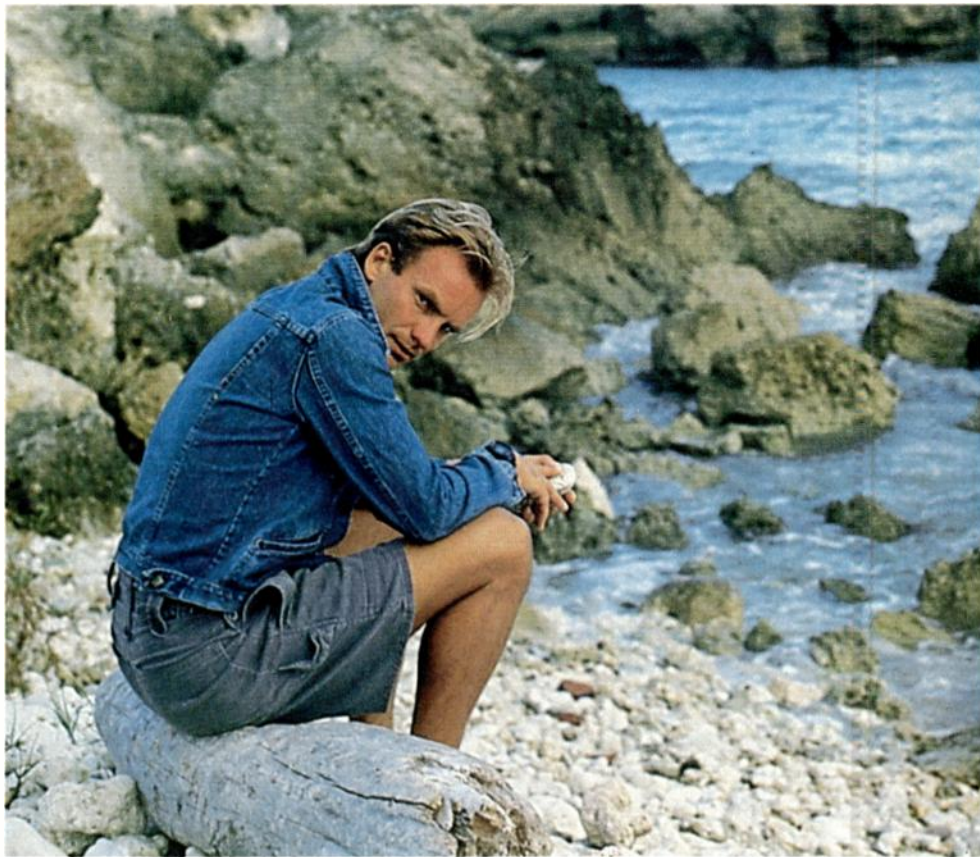
What have you learned from other actors?

That I've got loads and loads to learn. I've just started. I've made eight movies and I

bing and that's it. The cutting, editing and all this is left to the committee. I'd like to be involved more in that process. I think I could get into directing. I don't think I could do it tomorrow. I'd have to take an apprenticeship, and this (documentary directed by Michael Apted) is a part of that. It's about the life of a band in one week. I'm going to be very involved in the editing process of the film. I won't be just saying my lines.

Will there be a script for the film, or will it be more like the cameras following you and the band around for a week?

It's being shot as a feature movie, in environments that are meant to look like film



don't know shit yet. It's a challenge to have to hold your own with Meryl Streep, and I'm quite happy with the way things are going. But I don't think I'm a great actor. I don't know if I ever will be, but I'm enjoying the process of learning.

Ultimately you'd like to direct a film, wouldn't you?

If someone would say to me, "Sting, here's \$30 million, go direct a movie," I'd say, "You're crazy," because I know very little about it. It's presumptuous to think that just because you're successful as a rock star you think you can do anything else. People really do let you do anything—once! But I don't really like failing.

But if I were to continue in movies I would like to have more control over the final product. I find that a bit frustrating that you play your part and then you do the dub-

sets. So it's a real movie, but there's no script. The thing that's interesting about the movie is that most rock films are about bands after they make it big or when they finish. This is about a band at the beginning. It's quite exciting, fresh.

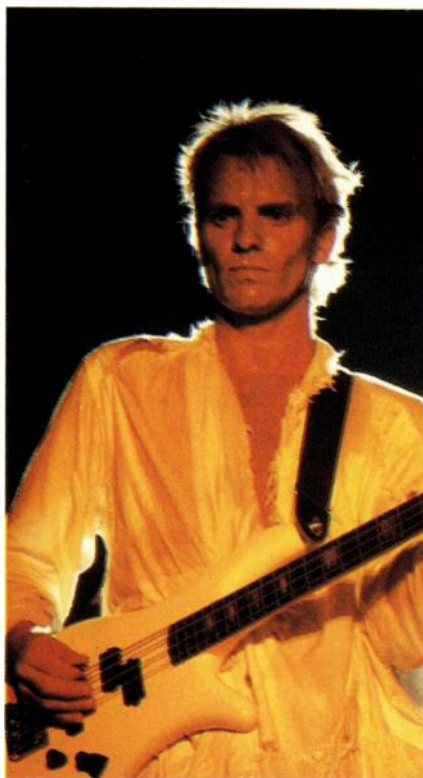
As far as career ambitions, do you find yourself thinking about achieving the same stature in the film world as you have in rock? What are the goals?

There's no grand design. I work very much from my instincts. My instincts tell me to do things from day to day. What I decided yesterday is probably different today. It's not my ambition to be the next Olivier or Clint Eastwood. I treat every experience I have as if it's the last one. I think of this as my last album and I recorded it as if it's the last one. I have a voracious appetite and I always eat as if it's my last meal. I treat every film as if

it's the last one. Success to me is doing things well enough so that someone will ask me to do it again. I don't have any long term ambitions. I would like to make another album; I'd like to have the privilege of making another film; I'd like to eat my next meal; I'd like to make love again. But I assume that I can go out on the street and be shot, or hit by a car, or die of a heart attack. This can happen.

In the past you've often referred to a dark side of your personality. You've said you relate to the characters you played in *Brimstone and Treacle*—a rapist—and *The Bride*—Dr. Frankenstein. What do

tain sides of my personality that might normally be buried. What do I mean by the dark side? The ability to admit that you can do things that are evil. My feeling is that to ad-



mit to that potential in yourself is to be able to control it. To deny that it exists is to be out of control.

What kind of evil things are we talking about here? Rape? Wife beating?

No, I don't beat my wife—I'm not married anymore. If you look at my songs you get an idea of what I'm talking about. There's a whole series of songs that are very dark and spiteful and violent. "Demolition Man" is a song about a destructive ego. A song on (the solo) album, "Consider Me Gone," is a real spiteful song. "Every Breath You Take" is a mean-spirited song too. It's just a side of my personality that comes out. I'm lucky I have this valve so I can expunge these things in songs. So that's what I mean by my dark side. But I'm also quite hopeful and fun-loving on the other side.

You mentioned "Every Breath You Take" as a mean-spirited song. Isn't that song about the lessons you learned during the breakup of your marriage?

I suppose the breakup was an influence on the song, an inspirational influence certainly. Then again it's about a lot of things. It's about how we are conditioned to feel about relationships. Once a relationship happens we think we ought to keep it forever; we want to control our partners. "Set Them Free" [from the solo album] is sort of an antidote to that, saying if you love someone, let them go.

How do you feel when you hear yourself referred to as a Renaissance man of rock?

It's certainly flattering but that's a function of being interested in a lot of stuff. I am well educated and to be well educated is to be interested in more than one thing. I like playing tennis, I like skin diving and moon surfing. But who wouldn't if you had the chance to do these things? I have the opportunity to act, write songs and perform. I am a very privileged human being. Most people don't have the opportunities that I have and I have a certain responsibility to do the best I can in all those fields.

There's some relief that in the world of privileges I'm in the top three percent. Not in terms of financial wealth and security, but in the fact that the ability to do a job that I enjoy is almost unique. I grew up doing jobs that I hated. I never expected for a minute that I'd do a job I like. I don't know what I'd do if I hadn't been successful. I'd be useless, a drain on society.

'Freedom is everything to me—I want to be able to change what I do . . .'

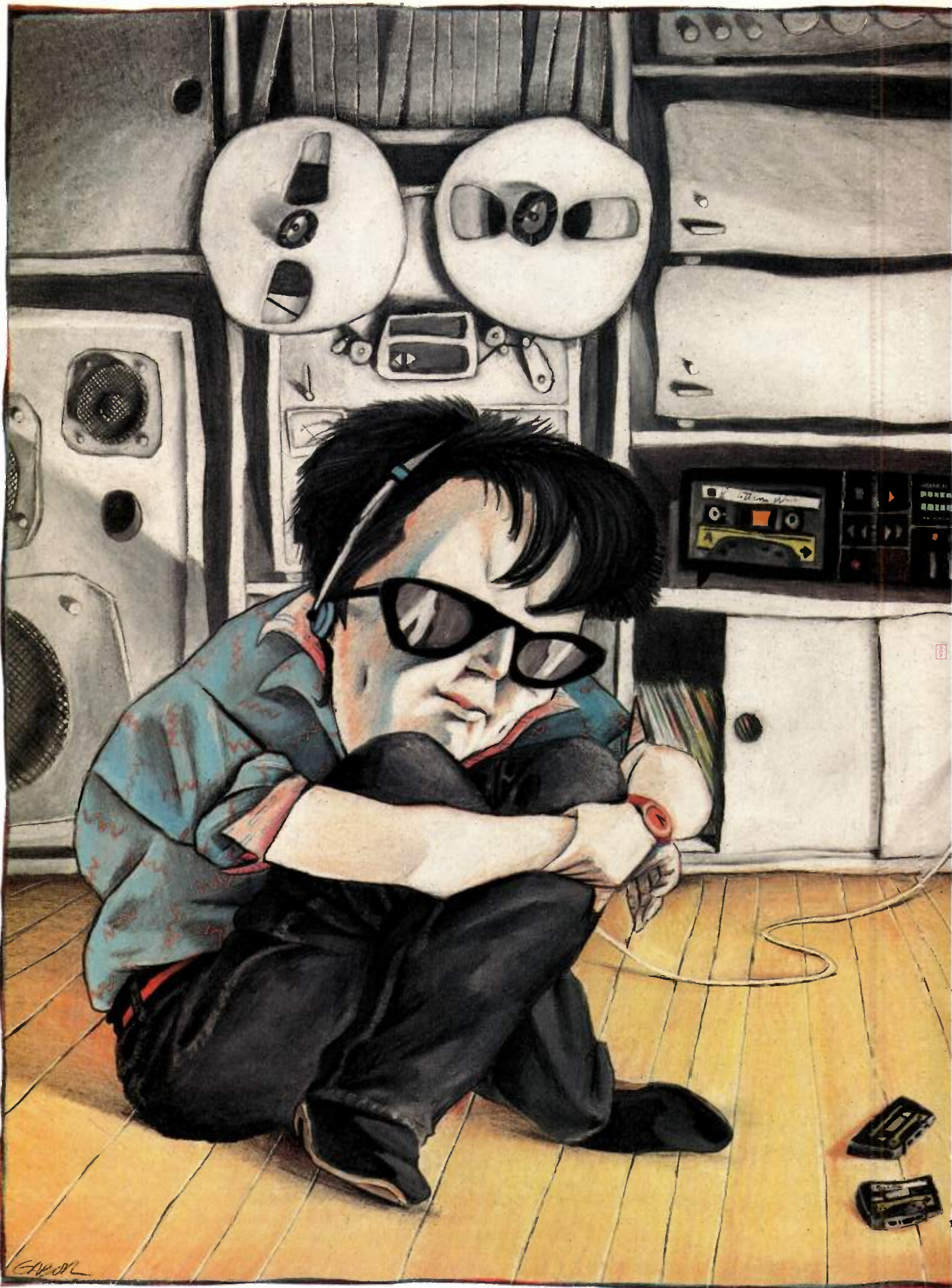
Certainly one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Police is how much space the group members afford each other for outside projects. Andy Summers has done two albums with Robert Fripp and published a book of photographs; Stewart Copeland has done a movie soundtrack and shot a documentary about Africa; and you, of course, have done several movies. Now you've released your first recording project outside the band. The political nature of that album, though, raises a question about why you chose to go the solo route. Did you feel you couldn't express the ideas on the album in the context of the Police?

It certainly would have been different with Andy and Stewart. You'd know exactly what to expect and how it would sound. Once you're in a successful group you become part of people's gestalt, and you're not allowed to escape from it. Freedom is everything to me—freedom to change my mind, freedom to be seen differently. The more people pigeonhole me the more my freedom is impaired. I want to be able to change what I do. I get bored very easily. My threshold for boredom is very, very low. People say to me, "You're a member of the Police and that's all you'll ever be." Well, that's like telling someone they'll spend the rest of their life in prison. Not to say that prison isn't comfortable, and it's safe and you get fed. But it's not really my intention in life to be safe and secure. [Cont. on 46]

you mean by the "dark side" of your personality?

If you look at my history in the press in England—which is slightly different than here—at first I was heralded as the golden boy—blonde hair, talented, handsome. Here was a chap who was a school teacher, who had a beautiful, talented wife, and a kid. I was athletic and I didn't take drugs. Then (the press) found out that I did screw people, and, yes, I had taken drugs. And then I started to play these evil characters and suddenly I became the bad boy in the English press. This was great for me because it meant I was free to do what I pleased. So the British press is now totally confused as to what I am, which suits me fine. Sometimes I'm a good boy and sometimes I'm bad. That's me.

My psychological makeup brings out cer-

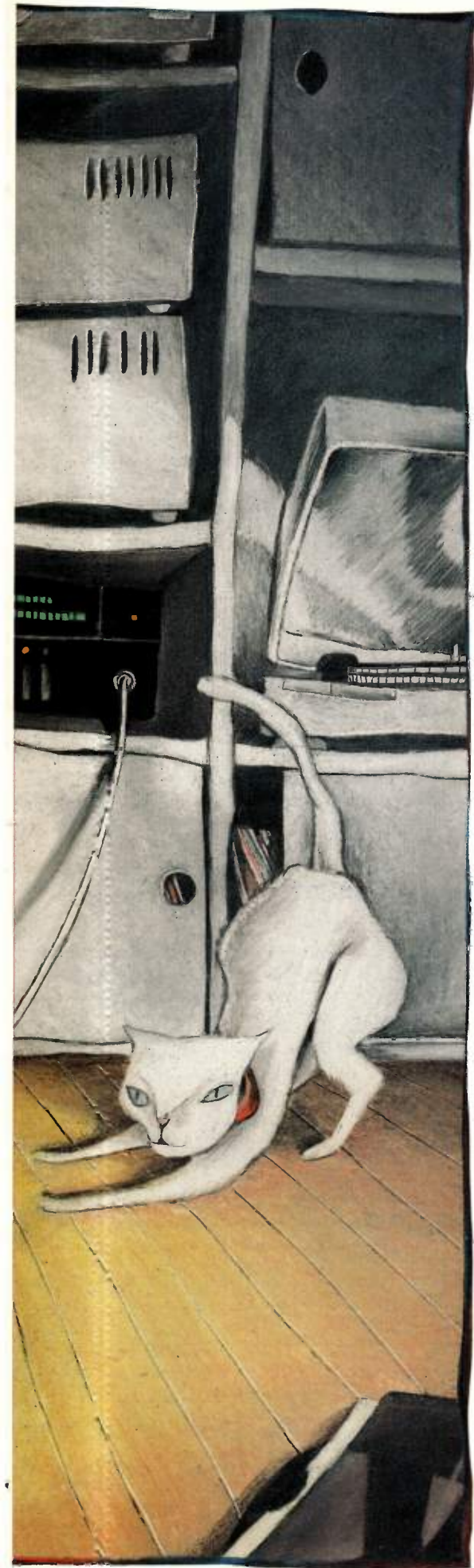


WHEN
YOUR
STEREO
HAS
LOST ITS
PIAZZZ

RETROFITTING

Your stereo is old. The knobs don't turn the way they used to; the speakers don't have the same punch they did when they were the biggest in the dorm. There's also an occasional squeak when the cassette deck's capstans start rolling. ☐ It's time to upgrade. ☐ But how can you discard a turntable that first turned you on to Duane Allman, a tuner that first tuned you into John Coltrane, or a pair of speakers that taught you your first Hendrix licks? ☐ Easily. When the music starts to sound lousy, you'd be surprised how quick things can change between even the best of friends. Besides, audio technology has gone through more changes recently than the Top 10. And there's a new music source out there these days—the Compact Disc—that's making stereo systems reproduce frequencies that once only dwelled in the audio Twilight Zone. ☐ So where do you begin? The speakers are a logical place. Most older stereos are still hooked to the same speakers they arrived with. This isn't so much a result of a consumer affinity for old boxes as it is that speakers—by and large—don't break down. You can overdrive them or send a swift kick through the grille, but otherwise, decently constructed loudspeakers never wear out. ☐ It's unfortunate, though. If any portion of your system *should* have changed with the times it is probably the loudspeakers. Drivers have become more efficient; crossovers are better designed. To put it bluntly, speakers sound much better today than they ever did in the past. Thus, buying new speakers may be a surefire way to upgrade your sound on a single credit card imprint. ☐ When you're looking for speakers you're basically looking for one thing: a speaker that sounds right to your ears. Therefore, it's wise to do some comparative listening with source material

BY MARTIN PORTER



CARTRIDGE

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SPEAKERS

of your own choice and similar equipment and listening conditions to what you'll find in your own home.

You may find a speaker you like that carries only two drivers—a woofer and a tweeter—known as a two-way speaker. However, you may find the sound difference you're after via a speaker loaded with three drivers—a woofer, a tweeter, and a midrange—known as a three-way speaker. The latter category usually sports a larger woofer (which should supply a steady low end), while the additional midrange driver may provide added clarity in the middle frequencies. But most of the recent technological changes have occurred in the tweeter end of the speaker cabinet, with new constructions able to hit higher high notes than is possible with older models.

Much of the change has come from new materials that are light enough to respond to musical changes but still strong enough to withstand additional amplification. JBL supplied this approach to a new series of bookshelf speakers, the "L" series that uses titanium metal for the high frequency drivers. This light and strong metal is formed in a dome by compressed nitrogen to create a high frequency driver that's smooth and neutral in sound. The "L" series ranges from the L20T, a two-way bookshelf system with a 6½-inch woofer (\$195 each) to the L100T, a three-way, 12-inch woofer system (\$495 each).

What's better, two-way or three-way speakers? Pick 'em. Three-way speakers split the frequency range between three different speakers and thus, it would seem, more accurately reproduce the sound frequencies than a system that splits them only two ways. However, the proof is in the listening, not in the number of parts a speaker cabinet contains—so listen first, then take a gander under the grille.

You may actually be able to save your old speakers from the trash heap by adding speakers specifically geared to carrying the low-end frequencies. So-called "sub-woofers" are especially good partners for smaller bookshelf speakers that often fall short on the bass notes. However, these dedicated woofer cabinets will require additional power from your amplifier, unless they're powered themselves—like the new HSW-100 "High Speed" Sub-Woofer system from Acoustic Design Group (approx. \$230). This self-powered sub-woofer should be able to provide an additional two octaves of bass to any speaker arrangement, all coming from a wood cabinet about the dimensions of an album jacket and only eight inches thick.

What if you're satisfied with your old speakers and feel that your stereo's woes reside elsewhere? Well, take a look at the phono cartridge. After wiggling through the grooves of all your LPs, this device has probably taken more of a beating than any other moving part of your audio collection. Besides such wear and tear, cartridges also deteriorate over time—even if you long ago gave up discs for cassettes. Once again, you may be surprised how much cartridge technology has changed over the years.

But be careful here. Cartridges may be small but they can be costly. Don't foolishly expect a \$300 cartridge to improve the sound you receive from a \$75 turntable. And certainly don't spend the big cartridge bucks on a low budget system.

However, there are big changes afoot among inexpensive cartridges—another marketplace reaction to the acceptance of the Compact Disc. For instance, moving coil cartridges, once considered the sole property of the high audio end, have come down-market. These offer superior sound quality to the standard moving magnet variety but—besides their usual price hike—they often require a special pre-amp and won't allow you to replace the stylus alone. The new moving coil DL-80 from Denon, though, costs around \$60 and allows users to change the stylus without having to replace the entire device; it's a good way to uncover some hidden groove notes on a moderately priced turntable. In any case, look for a cartridge that's made of light, rigid material and steer clear of anything with a suggested tracking weight above two grams.

One thing that hasn't changed since you purchased your first stereo system is the importance of a good amplifier in the audio chain. This is an important point to hang onto: in audio there is never enough power, and the more the better. The Compact Disc in particular is an especially unforgiving component when it comes to power restraints since its low noise and wide dynamic range often makes one want to crank up the amp to higher listening levels. Frankly though, you'll have to double your present power level before you'll hear an appreciable difference in sound. Also, keep an eye out on the spec sheets for a high dynamic headroom and a low total harmonic distortion (THD).

However, you'll find dozens of amplifiers with identical specifications and, frankly, you'll have a hard time hearing the difference between them. So, in this realm, keep an eye out for companies such as Carver, NAD and Yamaha, who have built a reputation on providing power.

An increase in power—in the case of a receiver, at least—may also bring with it a new tuner that offers improved circuitry to lock into your favorite (but fading) station. Yamaha's R-9 offers the optimum combination of high power and tuner features by providing 125 watts per channel with microprocessor tuning functions and remote control. Its power rates as pure as any separate, integrated amplifier while the onboard microchips eliminate guesswork while you're flying around the dial—with synthesized tuning, 16 station preset buttons, and even a memory feature that recalls the last

LOW-PRICED TURNTABLES

When it comes to buying a turntable these days, there are two trains of thought: (1) the LP is on its way out, so buy a cheap turntable; (2) the LP is not on its way out, so buy an expensive turntable.

Either way, the decision comes down to the state of one's bank account, rather than the desire to preserve vintage pressed vinyl. Besides, there's so much audio/video gear worth acquiring these days that it may pay off to spread the discretionary income around and see how far it can take you.

Consider option number one for the time being. What's hot on the budget aisles for under \$100?

Akai's model AP-X1 has all the disc-spinning essentials, minus fully automatic functions. Still, there are other features here that not so very long ago were restricted to big-ticket items only, including a low mass tonearm and P-mount cartridge

mount. The belt-driven unit comes with damped tonearm cueing and easy to use front panel controls.

For the same price, Sherwood delivers its belt-driven model, the ST-870, which also comes with a straight arm tonearm and front panel cueing. It's available in black or in finished chrome and comes with auto cut, auto return and auto shutoff features, and is also loaded with its own cartridge for the price.

Onkyo's budget model, the CP-1007, comes complete with a belt-driven platter that's powered by a four-pole synchronous motor. And check out Onkyo's "triple arm isolation," which simply means that both the platter and tonearm are suspended on a floating subchassis while the cabinet itself is constructed to minimize vibrations. The entire unit is also set on special vibration-absorbing feet. It carries an auto return mechanism when the record

station tuned into. The frontplate selectors also let you adjust the preamp for a moving magnet or moving coil cartridge and allow you to select between three sets of speakers.

TURNTABLE

And what about those other musical source components? You'll know it's time to shop for a new turntable when you start to hear a low frequency rumble mixed with your melodies. This often results from worn drive belts or bad acoustic isolation.

Just as the Compact Disc is threatening the LP with extinction, the CD player, too, is nipping at the heels of the vinyl disc spinner. As a result, you can find some sophisticated turntables these days for a fraction of what they once cost (see sidebar). Low mass tonearms, increased automation features and improved acoustic suspensions make the purchase of a turntable an easy and often effective upgrade move.

Even Acoustic Research has reached downmarket with its new EB-101 turntable, which is a straightforward disc spinner with AR's noted suspension, available for around \$325. It's long on specs and should help preserve your vinyl discs for years to come.

COMPACT DISC

A more noticeable sonic upgrade, however, would simply be to opt for a CD player instead. If any component really makes an appreciable difference in sound, it's this digital machine that's redefining hi-fi. It also makes a difference in terms [Cont. on 54]

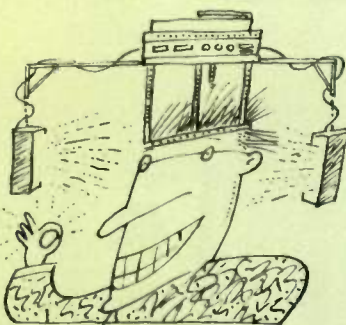
reaches its end, while all cueing, speed and reject/cut controls can be accessed from the front panel.

In this price league every little bit counts. For about \$90 Marantz delivers the model TT151 with P-mount cartridge connectors, a straight, low-mass tonearm and fully automatic shut off features. The belt-driven unit spins by a synchronous motor and comes with a die-cast aluminum platter.

One note of caution: all of these players need a cartridge, and the price of that little essential accessory could by itself be more than the price of the turntable. A fine match for either P-mount or regular mount tonearms is the Grado MTE+1 (PMTE+1 for the P-mount version), which lists for only \$18. This company has been making reliable, inexpensive cartridges for years and still can't be beat at its own game.

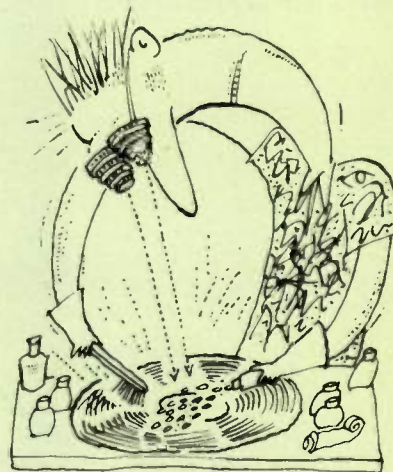
QUICK FIXES

Before you start shopping and swapping for the magic new component that will take your hi-fi to higher levels, try one of these quick and easy techniques to bring your system up to date without forcing you to lay out a lot of cash:



—Take the speakers off the floor, either by placing them on stands or hanging them on a shelf. The closer they are to ear level (when you're sitting) the better they'll sound. Try several different speaker positions and see which way you like it best. A floor rug never hurt a stereo one bit, either, especially when there are a lot of hard surfaces in the room, and it sure feels a lot cozier under foot than hard wood.

—Clean your records. Not with soap and water but with any of a range of products available from companies such as Discwasher and Allsop. And while you're into cleaning, swab down the heads of your cassette deck or reel-to-reel, and don't forget to roll off some of the gunk that's accumulated over the years on the rollers that tug your tape across the tape transport. A little compulsiveness here can make a big difference in sound quality.



—If you're still not satisfied with the wonders delivered by a bit of elbow grease and alcohol, try replacing the speaker cables. If your stereo is old, odds are that the cables are too. Most likely, they're twin pairs or "zip strips" that were designed to conduct electrical current rather than bonafide sound. In general, the fatter the cable, the better the hi-fi. It's the kind of minor change that can mean a lot—especially if you're stocking high-end gear on your shelf. But don't forget to clean off the connectors; they naturally corrode over the years.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAL MAYFORTH

WIRED!

A PRACTICAL
GUIDE
TO THE
AUDIO-VIDEO
CONNECTION

The lines of delineation between audio and video used to be very clear. But today you find hi-fi manufacturers making TVs, and TV manufacturers talking about stereo and noise reduction. Apparently, audio and video will forever be a pair—that is, once you figure out how to make the connection.

Where do you start? It's a bona fide electronic "chicken or the egg"-type dilemma, but there are several basic ingredients that you can't do without: a television set, a VCR, an amplifier, and speakers.



PHOTO BY STEVEN MARK NEEDHAM

BY STEVE SCHWARTZ

The basic idea is to amplify the audio signals coming either from broadcast TV or the audio track on your half-inch videocassette. Boosting the level and playing the sound through a pair of quality speakers will improve the sound quality considerably, regardless of the audio source.

Unfortunately, pairing any old TV with any VCR and amp doesn't guarantee electronic chemistry. As with everything else in life, the connections have to be just so—and much of the older equipment simply lacks the right stuff of audio-video (or *vaudio*) dreams.

The right stuff, in this case, is the plugs on the back of the unit, the audio/video inputs and outputs. That is, either the TV or the VCR must be equipped with a pair of audio jacks. Otherwise it's time to start shopping for something new that'll make the *vaudio* connection possible.

Caution: it's important to know the language before you start shopping in the *vaudio* fast lane. They talk a jumbled tongue down those alleys that differs much from what we've come to know as English.

Lesson #1: When buying a VCR don't say "stereo" if you mean "hi-fi."

Someone new to the wonderful world of *vaudio* may overlook or misunderstand the difference between the two; truth is, a "stereo" VCR sounds half as good as a "hi-fi" VCR. That's because stereo was the VHS family's first attempt to punch some pizzazz into the stale-sounding VCR. The result was only half-successful, since VHS stereo wasn't even as good as an audio cassette. It did, however, add stereo imaging to the TV screen for the first time—not to mention the necessary audio output plugs.

For truly decent VCR audio you'll have to head for the hi-fi shelves. This rhyme—in either the VHS or Beta varieties—delivers sound on a standard half-inch videotape about equal in quality to a Compact Disc. VHS lovers may opt for the new JVC HR-S200, which slides upscale hi-fi sound into a downscaled portable package, including 14-day/eight-event programming and 181-channel tuning. The Beta side will find similar sound quality in NEC's VC-N70EU Beta Hi-Fi recorder, which comes with three week/eight-event programming, wireless remote control, and four-head picture quality.

Lesson #2: When buying a television, know your "stereo ready" from your "stereo TV."

Broadcast stereo television had been bandied about for so many years that TV manufacturers prepared their sets for the *vaudio* age even before the federal government adopted a stereo TV standard last year. This simply involved making "stereo ready" TVs that carried the appropriate plug for a stereo decoder—when it became available.

That time is now. Panasonic, for instance, has introduced the TUG-3010S stereo TV adaptor, which fits six previously-introduced Panasonic TVs and comes equipped with hi-fi connectors and dbx noise reduction circuitry.

Bona fide "stereo TVs" with the necessary decoders already built in are also available. NAD, for example, which heretofore had limited its business to first-rate audio components, has packed its first television monitor, the MR20, with a multichannel stereo decoder; the 20-inch monitor also

that rose and crashed in the '70s, manufacturers are now suggesting that consumers add a second pair of speakers to their *vaudio* environment which, with the proper delay circuitry, can send the sound circling around the room. If you've listened to blockbuster films like *Star Wars* in a movie theatre you've got a good idea of the added dimension that quadrophonic *vaudio* can now deliver at home.

Obviously, this is a trend that speaker manufacturers aren't about to discourage—since suddenly two pair of speakers has be-

Audio-video connections have
to be just so —
and much of the older
equipment lacks the 'right stuff'

contains three sets of *vaudio* inputs and two sets of *vaudio* outputs. Meanwhile, other *vaudio* manufacturers are loading the necessary stereo decoders into hi-fi VCRs and even combination audio/video receivers.

Now that you've learned the resident verbiage, it's time to get down and make the audio-for-video connection for yourself. Unfortunately, there's no set way to take the plunge—though a good place to start is with the aforementioned receiver, which these days has become the heart and mind of the home entertainment complex.

Onkyo, for instance, offers a picture of how that new receiver should come together in the form of the moderately priced (approximately \$450) TX-47 Audio/Video Control Receiver. It provides the usual inputs for phonograph, two tape decks and one CD player, as well as a complement of inputs for two VCRs, one videodisk player, as well as a direct input for cable TV. The unit comes with its own simulated stereo circuitry that broadens the ordinary TV mono sound and it even offers a new feature—a delay line that lets you create theatre-like surround sensation with a second set of speakers.

Sansui has released a similar product that provides input and output terminals for three VCRs. With its special audio circuits, the AV-C10 even facilitates tape dubbing between the video sources. The device comes with its own 15-watt-per-channel amplifier and also provides a proprietary surround circuitry that adds four-channel dimension to the traditional two-channel stereo TV sound.

This surround effect is the latest news in *vaudio*. Much like the quadrophonic craze

come preferable to one—so they've figured out a way to benefit from the *vaudio* craze. In short, welcome to "video shielded" speakers, i.e., the drivers pumping out the tunes are properly protected against affecting the picture on the nearby screen. Respected audio companies such as Boston Acoustics, B&O and Polk all offer video shielded bookshelf speakers; Bose has come up with an interesting variation on the *vaudio* speaker with its RoomMate line. Bose packed each speaker box with its own power and volume control, shielded the driver and dubbed it a Video RoomMate especially for *vaudio* applications.

The speaker manufacturers' eagerness to join the *vaudio* chorus is an impressive show of high-tech awareness—until one examines the assumptions behind this new line of products. Speakers are supposed to be spread far apart for a maximum stereo imaging effect. However, it's assumed that most *vaudio*philes want to stack their speakers on either side of their video screen, which may look all prim and proper but does little to enhance the experience.

This sort of *vaudio* product confusion is why many consumers are frozen at the threshold of the audio-video connection. There's no defined and logical path to this new home entertainment Nirvana, nor is there a single more perfect approach to assembling the right gear. And here the manufacturers have stepped in yet another time with an idea that can appeal to anyone with at least \$3000 to spend in one fell hardware swoop.

Enter the Super System.

The idea was introduced last year by RCA, which heralded its re-entry into the

audio business with a massive vaudio ensemble dubbed Dimensia that gathered together every imaginable audio and video component onto the same equipment shelf. More importantly, they made the TV monitor the brains of the operation, daisy-chained the back panels with wiring, and made the entire system controllable by a single remote control. Besides showing off an entire product line in a single package, this system allows users to operate all the equipment with reduced button punching. In other words, you no longer have to flick on the amp, TV and VCR, and then the PLAY/RECORD combo to set the VCR capstans spin-

*The Super System is
a major step
toward the ultimate
integration
of vaudio products*

ning. By identifying VCR/RECORD you simplify the process tremendously.

It's the kind of product that made an impression on a range of vaudio manufacturers like Technics, Sanyo and NEC, which recently introduced super systems of their own. Sanyo's unit carries a 40-inch projection TV and Super Beta VCR, while the NEC version has tucked a pair of audiophile speakers beside its oak vaudio rack.

The Super System is a major step toward the ultimate integration of vaudio products. Still, there's one step beyond it. True vaudio will only occur when there is one playback medium for both audio and video and one form of tape that can accommodate them both.

The advent of combined videodisk/Compact Disc players is an inkling of things to come. Pioneer introduced this hybrid unit last year and their machine has since been joined by entries from a range of other companies including TEAC, Sansui and Luxman. These front-loading machines allow playback of 12-inch and eight-inch laserdiscs or 4.7-inch Compact Discs and may save the much-maligned but technically superior videodisk from extinction.

Because of its superior video and audio specs and its laser-read durability, the optical disc is being promoted as the logical replacement for the vinyl disc and even for magnetic tapes. However, there are new vaudio integrated products on the horizon that may keep consumers spinning tape for years to come.

Pioneer, Kodak and Sony have demonstrated prototype 8 millimeter VCR systems capable of recording four hours worth of video programming and, when used as an audio-only recorder, up to 12 hours worth of stereo recording. More importantly, the mini-VCR's sound provides digital quality specs, just short of [*cont. on 54*]

NEW SOUND FOR THE FALL

Some of the latest audio gems are so small that they could easily be overlooked by anyone with an eye only for size and splash. Take the example of the new **Super Walkman** from Sony. Like earlier models, the **WM-F65** is no larger than a cassette case, though here they've added an AM/FM tuner to the same size package and even record capability with a built-in stereo microphone. For about \$130 the unit also comes with Dolby noise reduction and switch settings for any tape formula.

Panasonic has also become obsessed with personal portable innovation, in the form of its **RX-HD10**, a stereo dual cassette recorder that lets users dub and record radio programs anywhere. Since the unit uses a single motor-drive, the tape speed of both the original and dubbing deck is the same. Deck 1 provides only playback, while Deck 2 offers both playback and recording. The stereo tuner pack slides neatly into Deck 1, while Deck 2 also sports auto-reverse for playback. The product will be available this fall for slightly less than \$200.

If you like to share your music with friends but don't like to hassle with wiring, **Nady Systems** has introduced a self-powered hi-fi speaker system that consists of a cordless amplified speaker with built-in FM receiver, a microphone, and a miniature stereo transmitter. The microphone can be used for any PA application while the transmitter can be plugged into any audio source. The amp powers 15 watts of juice per channel and the speaker is packed with one 6 1/2-inch woofer and a 1 1/4-inch tweeter. It's everything you need for a wireless party at under \$200.

Akai's latest portable cassette recorder, the model **PJ-W55**, is also party material. It carries all the playback essentials, including a double cassette deck with high speed dubbing and auto reverse functions, and comes complete with a four-band tuner (including two short-wave frequencies), a five-band equalizer, phonograph input and ten watts of power per channel. The system supplies two-way, removable speakers, and it can be plugged into the wall or run by eight D cell batteries. It retails for under \$300. For the budget-minded, the model **AJ-202** portable skimps on the fancy features but provides a single cassette deck, AM/FM tuner, and five-band equalizer, with mini two-way speakers, for under \$100.

If you prefer your portable tunes under your dashboard instead of under your arm, **Sanyo** has developed a safe and sound stereo source. The **Viper** (about \$350) is primarily a high-end car stereo with an 18-preset radio station memory, an auto reverse, auto seek and scan cassette deck, and

built-in power amp that generates enough power to drive a four-speaker system. Dolby B and C come standard but the audio engineers have packed the product with more than the audio essentials; they've provided enough fail-safe devices to make sure nobody rips it out of your dash. Whenever the ignition key is turned off and a special code is entered, the **Viper** is in full operation. If anyone tries to steal it from your dashboard, the car's horn will sound at one-second intervals for five minutes. I guess that makes the **Viper** the first autosound ghetto blaster.

Let's not go hog-wild on portability though. If this past summer's Consumer Electronics Show proved anything, it was that down and dirty hi-fidelity is here to stay and that one-brand rack systems are the real audio rage.

Moreover, these audio systems are being equipped with enough gadgets to attract anyone with an eye for innovation and, more important, the racks are being synchronized so that component button punching and wire juggling is stripped to a bare minimum.

At least that's the story from **Aiwa's V-1200ACD**, which includes a preamplifier with 7-band graphic equalizer, a 75-watt per channel power amp with its own AM/FM synthesized tuner, built-in clock, time and sleep functions, auto search, and 12 AM/FM presets. From these roots the stack begins to grow rapidly with an auto-reverse double cassette deck that lets you rack up five cassettes in a row, while preprogramming 15 different selections, for up to 7 1/2 hours of unrepeatable cassette play. Meanwhile, the turntable permits disc skipping for up to seven selections, and the **Compact Disc** player lets you program up to 18 tracks in any order. The neat trick with this equipment rack is that every component slides into prepositioned connector plugs in the back of your rack, while all functions can be controlled via wireless remote. It's a lot of stereo for about \$1800, though you'll still have to find a pair of speakers to match.

Aiwa isn't alone in its efforts to pack its racks with brains. At CES, **Sansui** announced the addition of a new 125-watt per channel "**Intelligent Super Compo System**" set to retail for under \$1000. Besides the system's powerhouse amp, the unit includes a 16-preset digital synthesized tuner, a linear tracking turntable, double cassette deck, 7-band graphic equalizer and two three-way speakers with 10-inch woofer and passive radiator. The system can be controlled with a hand-held remote unit. If you have an extra \$1000 to spare, you'll get the same 125-watt per channel power amp, but this time it's matched with a [*cont. on 54*]

THE RECORD REVIEW

BY
ANTHONY
DECURTIS

Talking Heads '85



With *Little Creatures*, Talking Heads trick everyone who thought they would carry the mass following they forged with *Stop Making Sense* straight to the bank. Not that the gang won't eventually get to the bank—*Little Creatures* hit the charts higher than any previous Heads disk and the "Road to Nowhere" single is close behind—it's just that the trip's going to involve some pleasant, and some curious, twists and turns. □ A more charming LP than anyone had a right to expect, *Little Creatures* returns Talking Heads to their mass-culture "roots": American radio pop music. Despite the later predominance of funk and R&B in their sound, the whiter-than-white Talking Heads initially mined this country's media-soaked collective consciousness of tuneful ditties like "1,2,3 Red Light," and *Little Creatures* restores this engaging element to their music. A new set of audience expectations created by *Stop Making Sense*, however, put a progressive spin on this ostensibly conservative move. □ Possibly the hottest concert movie ever made, *Stop Making Sense*



captured the fierceness and funk momentum that's driven the Heads' live show since their epochal 1980 LP, *Remain in Light*. With its visual and conceptual power and the unrelenting rhythmic force of its greatest-hits soundtrack, *Stop Making Sense* shot into the marketplace with the double-barreled impact of a first-rate album and a must-see tour. The totality of its artistic and commercial achievement, in fact, is the most important reason why the Heads needed to depart so radically from it on *Little Creatures*.

"We saw the film *Stop Making Sense* as a milestone for us," says drummer Chris Frantz. "It was time to reinvent whatever it

turned here to their core foursome. But *Little Creatures*, which Frantz describes a bit simplistically as a "happy and positive collection of songs," exudes a personal warmth and graciousness that was missing both from the frantic edginess of those early albums and the cerebral Afro-polyrhythms of the band's more recent work. As bassist Tina Weymouth puts it, on the new LP "The microphones picked up a real nice thing that was happening between us."

Frantz attributes this new-found ease, the conviction that the Heads don't have to be "on the cutting edge of the avant-garde," to the comfort the group has attained about their place in the world of pop music. "We've been playing together now for nearly ten years," the drummer explains, "and we didn't feel that we had a lot of points we had to prove about are we an original band, are our ideas important, are we creative. We don't have to prove that anymore."

But artistic security and a renewed "sense of humor"—most evident in the countryish "Creatures of Love" and the nutty "Stay Up Late," a twisted ditty about annoying an otherwise thoroughly contented infant—didn't mean creative relaxation. Working as what engineer Eric Thorngren calls a "beautiful committee," the Heads sequestered themselves in New York's Sigma Sound studio and cut two complete albums—the second one, tentatively scheduled for release in 1986, is a set of nine songs for David Byrne's upcoming film, *True Stories*—in a little under three months. In a departure from the four-piece, open-ended studio jams that birthed the grooves for *Remain in Light* and *Speaking in Tongues*, Byrne came to the Heads with a cassette of himself performing the songs for *Little Creatures* on acoustic guitar with beat-box accompaniment. The band worked out their individual parts over nearly a month of rehearsals and then recorded live in the studio, a process Weymouth describes as "old-fashioned as all get-out." "They work all at once," Thorngren says of the Heads, "which is to me a different way of doing it. I know it's the *original* way of doing things, but it hasn't been done like that in a long time, really . . . Everybody was playing in the same room. Actually the songs happened right on the basic tracks. Then it was just little touches, little cleanups or some overdubs, background parts." The sessions ran from 11:00 in the morning till 7:00 at night six days a week, a businesslike artistic efficiency that deviates hilariously from both the avant creed of unpredictable creative "inspiration" and the cokebinging midnight-to-dawn extravaganzas endemic to the music industry.

But for all its sonic clarity, easygoing feel, and apparent thematic lightness, *Little Creatures*' safe-as-milk palatability is ultimately somewhat deceptive. By any measure—even the tough standard of the Heads' own work—the album is far from an intellectual vacation. The irresistible first track,



is that we do and to get back into what it is that makes us want to play in the first place . . . That's our strategy, you see, at least at this point: to do something different from what people expect us to do. Besides, *Sting* is doing what people expect us to do!"

Barbs aside, this process of conscious reassessment, of getting back, generated a record that in its skewed naivete, clever borrowings from country music and bubblegum pop, and carefully structured arrangements hearkens back to the band's first two LPs, *Talking Heads 77* and *More Songs About Buildings and Food*. Having shed the added players that essentially transformed the post-*Remain in Light* band into a ten-piece funk collective, the Heads have re-

"And She Was"—which lifts its catchy opening guitar figure from the early Heads B-side, "Love Goes to a Building on Fire"—tells the tale of a woman who levitates herself out of the too-numb-to-be-desperate suburban world Byrne never tires of examining. The emotional emptiness and identity loss that lurk behind this character's search for transcendent satisfaction beyond the shopping mall find more direct expression in the chanting choruses of the next cut, the eerie "(Give Me Back My) Name": "Give me back my name / Something has been changed in my life / Something must be returned to us."

Even more unsettling, the sophisticated percussive pop intro to "The Lady Don't Mind" takes a strange turn when Byrne enters, crooning with a benign, almost cheerful blankness, "Last time she jumped out the window, well, she only turned and smiled." All that can be said as the lady shuffles off this mortal coil is "Who knows, who knows what she's thinking?" In the meantime, the hopelessly alienated tube-junkie of "Television Man" wonders "Do I like the way I feel?" while passively "watching everything" as "The world crashes in, into my living room." "Togetherness, ecstasy is what I need," Byrne snarls in the bluesy, "Swamp"-reprise opening verse of the jaunty "Walk It Down," before concluding the tune with what could be this LP's motto, an indictment of a materialist culture's effort to find meaning in things possessed: "What you see is what you get / But it sure ain't what we need."

And if that's not fun enough for you, *Little Creatures* wraps up with a march-time, accordion-propelled good vibes chorus, joyfully proclaiming, "We're on the road to nowhere." But, take heart, "nowhere" is indistinguishable here from a kind of non-Western zen "paradise," the "Perfect World" that closes the album's first side, the "Heaven" Byrne sang about on *Fear of Music* "where nothing ever happens," the "other worlds beyond the light of the sun" religious folk-artist Howard Finster writes about on the zany, vision-crowded cover he did for *Little Creatures*, and the destination of the floating woman in "And She Was" who's off to join "the world of missing persons." This tune's upbeat, quasi-spiritual conviction that "The future is certain / Give us time to work it out" lends weight to the positive pop feel of this LP, while at the same time mitigating the implied assertion of Byrne's lyrics throughout that though we may be "on the road to paradise," we certainly ain't there yet.

Though more complex than it may initially appear, *Little Creatures* is still a "transitional album" according to Weymouth. By blending the hook-filled pop accessibility of the early LPs with the rhythmic looseness and assurance of the band's funk forays, the record effectively bridges the two primary movements of the Talking Heads' career.

Simultaneously, in its simplicity and relative straightforwardness it finds a secure place within the band's body of work without prescribing any hard-and-fast direction for future efforts. In short, all debts to the past are paid, the present is fully accounted for, and the future is left wide open.

Which is just the way the Heads want it now. If the band had a fixed image of itself at this point, a tour with a current visual content to equal *Stop Making Sense* would have followed *Little Creatures*. As it is, the Heads have no plans to play out until Spring or Summer 1986, by which time they'll presumably have figured out how they want to present themselves. Besides, outside pro-



jects are about to begin absorbing the individual band members' time—Byrne has his movie; Weymouth and Frantz are planning a third Tom Tom Club album, itself a soundtrack; Jerry Harrison is doing a second solo LP and producing fellow Milwaukeeans, the Violent Femmes. Within the whirl of all these activities, *Little Creatures* sets the stage for America's most adventurous band to write the script of its future, a future that will most assuredly say a great deal about the course of popular music in the second half of this decade. □

Anthony DeCurtis is the Associate Editor of Record and has twice interviewed David Byrne for this magazine.



No More Fears

*Tears for Fears finds solace in
childhood sweethearts and #1 hits*

*Pooling talent
and friendship,
Roland Orzabal (above)
and Curt Smith
gently rule the world.*

JUDGE FREES BLIND RAPIST'' □ The screaming front-page headline in the *London Sun* is like mother's milk to homesick Briton Ian Stanley. Needing a quick sleaze fix, the Tears for Fears keyboard programmer had dispatched a messenger to one of Chicago's international newsstands seeking the lowdown on the latest scandals from home. Success in America and other parts of the civilized world bestows a certain amount of power on a band, and power is said to be the most potent of all aphrodisiacs (as in "Everybody Wants to Rule the World"). But Tears for Fears, land-locked in "the city of the big shoulders," find power clearly secondary to more personal concerns. It's been a long haul to the top. And we all know about the quality of life in that rarified atmosphere—even Mick Jagger had to admit to *that* empty feeling. □ So here in Chicago, that Toddlin' Town, nobody's toddlin'. Never mind that Tears' new album, *Songs from the Big Chair*, has gone platinum and given the group its first Number One U.S. single in the engaging "Everybody Wants To Rule The World." TFF is road weary, and showing it. □ Tonight's venue, the Aragon

B Y M A R K M E H L E R

Ballroom, might be expected to offer a sense of home and hearth, decked out as it is in the manner of a 16th Century Elizabethan theater. But it's Disneyland Shakespeare, Othello in paper-mache. The acoustics in the cavernous hall are flat, and Tears' guitarist/vocalist/writer Roland Orzabal is bemoaning the sound system ("Mark my words, we'll all be complaining about our monitors tonight"). Someone tried writing "Kilroy was Here" on a wall, and spelled it "Killroy." Meanwhile, a reporter is skulking around jotting down snippets of conversation, which yield disarming fragments of insight, such as keyboardist Nicky Holland's observation that Tuesday is the only other day of the week that's like Thursday.

And so it goes on the road with Tears for Fears.

Curt Smith, co-lead vocalist, bassist and band sex symbol, is dining on chilled caviar backstage, in celebration of his 24th birthday. He pauses to apologize for the subdued and slightly askew ambience surrounding the band. "We're all out of it today," he explains. "The wives just flew in from England and, frankly, all I want to do right now is be with Lynn. Our rhythm is all thrown off; it's one of those days."

One of those days when you have to suck it up and be professional, which is what Tears for Fears have become. Very controlled, hard-working, responsible. Very adult.

"When I was a kid," recalls Orzabal, "my dad used to say to me, 'You're too old.' I was never a kid, I guess."

Neither was Curt Smith, and perhaps that's why lost childhood is the reigning metaphor of the day.

Raised in the west England tourist town of Bath, Smith was the middle child of three in a less-than-idyllic working class family. "My dad was never at home, and when I was about 13 he split completely. It wasn't the best of worlds." As an adolescent, Smith picked up the nasty habit of breaking and entering others' homes and businesses, "just to get someone to notice me." At age 17, when his extracurricular activities nearly landed him in an adult penal institution, he finally came to his senses: "I said, Screw it all, I'm going to live my own life. I'm not going to be destroyed."

Orzabal, meanwhile, had moved with his mother from London to Bath following the parents' divorce. Nine years old at the time, Orzabal took to his room, reading and playing guitar, only occasionally coming out to play with friends. He was 13 when he met Smith.

"It sounds daft," says Orzabal, "but I had a friend who was a bass player in this kid's group. One day he told me a friend of his had been fighting with an Indian guy. I got confused, I thought the friend was the Indian guy. I wanted to meet him. It turned out to be Curt, who thought I was French, for some reason. But I really liked him."

"It was the kind of friendship you always hear about," Smith adds. "Finally there was someone who understood what I was about. I don't mean that Roland was like me. In fact, he was the opposite. He was very frightened about burgling houses and things like that."

The two found a common language in music. "You see, we were both middle sons," explains Orzabal earnestly, "and it's the middle ones who tend to be the creative ones, the rebels. The oldest usually fills the traditional role of the father, the youngest is spoiled. The middle is free to pursue his art."

Orzabal and Smith formed their first band at 13, and five years later they were playing professionally. Lynn (Mrs. Curt) Smith, then an 18-year-old assistant manager of a Bath restaurant, found in Curt (and Roland) a deep need for family love. "Believe me, I understood," she stresses. "I didn't enjoy my childhood very much either." Together, the Smiths have grown into a pair of homebodies. "There's tremendous pressure on the tour, and Curt is a home-loving person. I'm here to make him feel more at home. I wish we could have a little more time, though."

The first time she saw Smith and Orzabal perform, Lynn recalls, it was Curt who was shy and awkward before an audience. That group was called Graduate, and it was distinctly unsuccessful, not only because its leading lights hadn't yet discovered *presence*, but because the group's structure left the duo no room for self-expression.

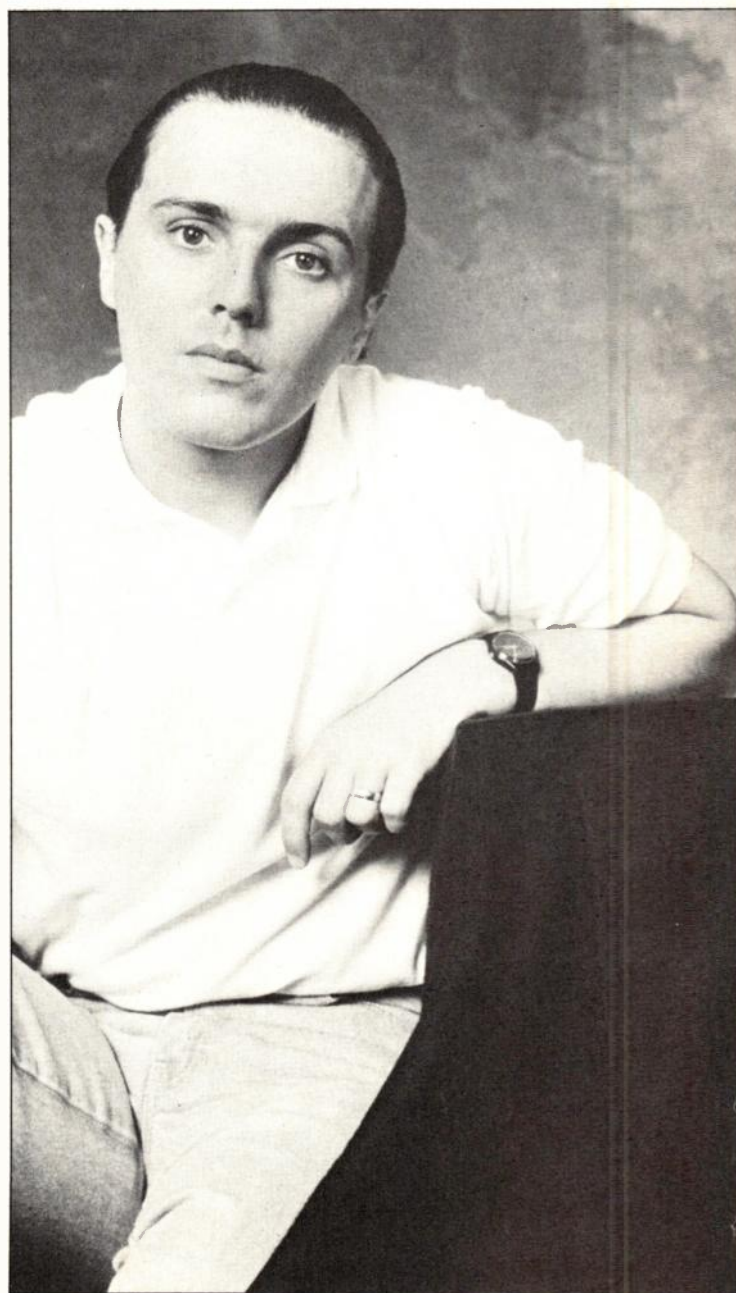
Four years ago, Ian Stanley, a Londoner escaping city life for the

"peacefulness" of Bath, joined Smith and Orzabal to form Tears for Fears. Manny Elias, a free-spirited drummer, was next in the fold. As co-founders and leaders of their own band, Smith and Orzabal made the record they had to make. *The Hurting*, released two years ago, resurrected the child in each of them ("Cos he knows in his heart you won't be home soon/He's an only child in an only room/And he's dependent on you"). "It was our big release," Smith says. "It was all the things building inside for many years. At the time, it was very important for us psychologically."

"Absolutely," agrees Orzabal. "But in the end, *The Hurting* catered itself. I know that many years from now, the songs from *Big Chair* will be close to me. But already, there's nothing between the heart and the vinyl on *The Hurting*. I go out at night and perform the songs, get up and do it, but it's just a job."

Despite its vision of pain, fear and primal expression (Orzabal is a devotee of primal scream therapy, hence the origin of the band's name), *The Hurting* yielded three Top Five singles in the U.K. and sold 700,000 copies worldwide, more than 100,000 in this country (oddly enough, over half those sales were in Los Angeles).

The British press, however, didn't take to the album's negativity, dubbing the Tears' main men royal pains in the arse. The duo don't



help matters any by following *The Hurting* with an ill-advised single. "The Way You Are," which deviated even further from the heart of rock 'n' roll without cracking the British Top 20. The public, like the press, appeared to be tiring of Tears' attempt to work out childhood traumas. "People saw us as a threat, they didn't want to hear about pain and suffering," notes Smith. Orzabal takes it a step beyond, suggesting the problem may lie in certain flaws in the pop music form itself that prevent the full expression of such an emotional climate. "There's nothing that works except the power of simplicity. Making music people can understand. Four on the floor, shak-shak . . . you can slip in a lyric to make them think for a moment, but complex rhythmic arrangements, heavy lyrics, just don't work."

Moreover, Orzabal confesses to having been fearful of working with tape. "With the first album, we were frightened to throw it all down, just get a groove and work it from there. We're more comfortable recording now, we're also better singers because our voices have gotten stronger in the past three years. And we're more balanced in terms of using all elements in a song, melody, rhythm, harmony. You can't ever forget that what you're doing is making music."



PATRICK HARRON/LGI

Adds Smith: "We're not mystical, or religious, we're normal and human and funny. And when we go into record now, we feel great."

"It's a nice thing to see them successful," observes Lynn Smith. "It didn't come overnight; they've reached this point gradually. I've watched both work very hard and progress as musicians and people. None of us liked ourselves very much back then, but we do now."

Before the Chicago show, the word is passed to the dressing room: no ventilation, a packed house, temperature 90 degrees-plus. "On a night like this," notes Ian Stanley, "all you can hope for is to make it through."

Smith, who looks like your 12-year-old brother impersonating Clark Gable, is dancing around the room, while Orzabal, your 12-year-old brother in mommy's earrings, strikes a pensive pose.

"Somebody get a camera, we've got a publicity shot!" exclaims Stanley.

Saxophonist William Gregory, who played on *Big Chair*, wonders what New York is really like. "This place called the Bronx, you can't visit there, can you?"

Onstage, the worst premonitions are borne out. The packed house—which in spirit includes five girls dancing to the music on the abutting subway platform—responds atavistically to material from both albums, but the heat and humidity take their toll. "We couldn't really try anything new out there, you just go through the motions when it's like that," Stanley says after the show. "You need a little reverb," Elias sighs. "Tonight it was dry. The vocals, the guitars sounded very small. You only get a tiny pop."

Still, Tears had made it through the night once again, and the fans' reaction along the tour trail continues to read like an ascending curve. Backstage, as the hall's being cleared, Smith reflects on the impact of the group's burgeoning notoriety. Financially, he says, a day without a concert is like a day without \$20,000. "That's what we lose for every day we don't play. So we need to play four nights out of five. We can't take off two nights in a row." Indeed, following the current leg of the U.S. tour, it's on to Japan and Australia, via Hawaii. This fall it's back to mainland America, Canada and Europe. Translation: there's little time for anything but playing, sound-checking, visiting radio and record stores, and doing interviews.

"We try taking each day as it comes," says Lynn Smith. "Curt and I will jump in a car and just go, and it doesn't matter if it's the kind of silly thing only a 16-year-old would do."

But the attempt to turn back the clock is a feeble one. When Lynn tells of wanting to buy her husband the book *Millionaire's Diet* for his birthday, we glimpse the soul of incipient rock 'n' roll yuppiehood. When she notes, "Curt and I won't start our own family until we're a hundred percent sure it's right. We're both too aware of the mistakes you can make," one hears the voice of adult responsibility.

For Curt, there remain gaps to be filled. The emotional security he's found in his wife, his band and his fans "can't make up for what I didn't feel long ago. Right now I'm completely shocked to be as old as I am. I don't feel I've grown up."

"Suddenly," adds Orzabal, "I was 21 years old with a wife and mortgage, and no way of getting away from it."

"But that's an adult choice," counters Lynn Smith.

"Exactly," Curt Smith chimes in. "We can relax and be ourselves now. We don't have to get hung up anymore. Nobody will accuse us of furthering the cause of pain."

Concludes Orzabal, seeking the perfect squelch after a long and exasperating day: "I just think about spending all of December in my nice house with the mortgage. No need to maintain a profile. Just make sure everything we've done is damn good."

Breaking big, working hard, its members trying to find tiny islands of sanity, Tears for Fears live the life. Dreams come true, but pleasure's deferred. The past ceases to inform the future. "Adult choices" mute a rock 'n' roll fantasy: Number one, with a bullet. Tuesday is like Thursday, yesterday's gone . . . and the road goes on forever. □

Mark Mehler is a Senior Editor of Record. His profile of Bryan Adams, "Reckless Disregard," appeared in the May 1985 issue.

[Cont. from 31] I want to be stimulated all the time.

How did you go about choosing the musicians to accompany you on your solo project?

They're probably the best young jazz musicians in the country, and I'm very privileged and honored that they agreed to come work with me. My intention was to use musicians who had the finesse of playing jazz, but to make music without that label. I think we got enough spontaneity on the record and yet enough discipline to have gone into areas that most pop records don't go. A lot of people will be surprised at how this album sounds, because it isn't jazz but nor is it a mainstream pop album. It will be interesting to see how radio adjusts to it. If they adjust at all.

That's true, because while some of your Police songs address social issues, the politics on this album seem more pointed.

I'm not sure if it's political so much as apolitical. It's largely about the redundancy of the political process, and it's something I feel very strongly about. If we're going to have world peace then it's going to be a function of each one of us contributing to that, rather than allowing the so-called experts to do it for us. I don't think they're getting anywhere, so I want to do something in my own small way.

For example, the original idea for the song "Russians" was to go and record it in Russia with a Russian orchestra. It's not a pro-Soviet song, it's pro-children. It's a very obvious statement to me but one that isn't being made. The wheels were set in motion but it's taken a very long time to do because of the politics of going through the Politburo and having them sanction it. My feeling is that you have to make contact with our potential enemies, people you might be expected to kill or be killed by.

When you sat down to write this album did you have certain issues in mind that you wanted to address?

Well, it's not a concept album. There's no consistent theme running throughout—but there's also no song on the record that doesn't have an issue. It's not just a riff of a guitar with nonsense lyrics. A lot of thought and energy went into it.

The songs are more didactic than they've ever been before. I have to be inspired before I write, but then when you're writing about issues like the miners' strike, the proliferation of nuclear power, and the arms race, then you have to have a certain responsibility to those issues. You have to think about them. I think time is running out. You can't really make records that are about nothing anymore.

Do you think the world is in that bad a shape?

Yes, I think we have to do something drastic. Well, I guess it depends on how you read the papers. Today I read the *New York Times* and it was disaster everywhere: Central America, Lebanon, and you know I'm not making this up. The world is in a terrible state. We can close ourselves off to it because we're sitting here in a comfortable environment—we all have cars, the waiter is coming, there are our pretty wives, pretty kids playing on the lawn—but the reality of most of the world is not this. This is an illusion. Now we can either contain that illusion, or we can come to terms with the reality of the world and try to change. And I know it's all very well for me to say that, but what can I do as a pop star?

But I'm trying. The Band-Aid project is a case in point. We did this song and raised eight million dollars for Ethiopia. So you can't discount pop music as a galvanizing force for change. Then again, you can't change the world overnight with a song, but it's the only forum I have so I would like to use it as best I can.

Following up on what you said about not wanting to be pigeonholed by the star-making machinery . . .

I don't mind the star-making scene. I've gotten advantage and privilege from it. But I don't want to be trapped by it, to become an Elvis Presley or Michael Jackson. People's perception is totally rigid, so I keep behaving in odd ways, to jog that perception.

Have you ever thought about using your real name [Gordon Sumner] and dropping Sting?

It's largely a defense mechanism. I've been lucky in that I've been able to create this persona that takes all the glory and all the flak and leaves me intact. I really feel like I have my head screwed on, basically. I don't live in an ivory tower. I'm not overprotected by bodyguards and yes men and the rest of the entourage, because I have this persona who does all that. Sting is a creation of the press and myself, and I'm protected from it. The people who know me real well, you can count on one hand.

Since Sting is merely a creation, then you're putting on a performance now.

Yes, right now, I'm performing. It's not in my interest to use this interview as a confessional. One, I don't think you'd find it particularly interesting. Two, you have a particular need and I'm willing to fashion myself for you. So you walk away satisfied and your readers will be intrigued. But it's not a confessional, so I have to balance out what I give you and what I shouldn't.

Why do interviews at all?

It's part of my responsibility. If I'm writing songs about issues I care about, and I'm asked questions about those issues, then I have to answer them. I've got this forum, I

might as well have a go at it. And I quite enjoy interviews. I'm enjoying myself now; I like the tension. It's a game I learn to play better and better. And I'm not completely putting a mask up; I'm obviously being quite candid now.

What does your eldest son, Joe [age 9], think of your life?

He was born in a trunk and by the age of three he had been to every continent with the Police. When he started to ask questions: he would ask why people wanted my name on a piece of paper. How does everyone know you? he'd ask. Why do all these people come to the concerts? He'd ask these questions and I'd try to explain to him in a way that I could. I've also had to involve him in the creative process. In a song like "The Russians," he was at the studio with me when we recorded it, and there's a line, "How can I save my little boy, from Oppenheimer's little toy?" It was obvious to him who the little boy was, so he asked me what Oppenheimer's little toy was. We had discussed the bomb before that. One day when he got home from school he asked me if it was true that there's a bomb that can blow up the world. So I had to give him some kind of answer. I said it was true, but what could someone gain from setting it off? It would be ridiculous. He seemed to get a certain amount of comfort from that.

What the kids have done for me is rooted in the future. I feel I have a responsibility for what happens in the world in ten years. The classic rock 'n' roll phrase is, live fast, die young, leave a beautiful corpse. Having kids doesn't make me sentimental or middle-aged. It makes me realize I have a responsibility. I can't just sit back and allow the world to become what it will become. Because I think the people in charge are assholes and I want to get rid of them.

One last question: the official line on the future of the Police seems to change every few weeks. What's the latest?

It's flattering to the group that people would worry about it. But then, it's kind of a sentimental thing. Why would three grown men want to be lumped together for the rest of their lives as this unit? We are not Siamese triplets. We are three thinking individuals. We are often at odds with each other in every sphere—musically, politically. We are not best buddies; we are colleagues. I'm intrigued by the amount of interest that the subject generates. It's odd. There are no plans for a next Police record. I don't think in five-year plans, either. I think, Will there be a career in five years? Will there be a world in ten years? Will there be a record market? The way things are going, maybe not. □

Jeffrey Peisch, author of RECORD's July cover story on Eric Clapton, is a New York-based correspondent for USA Today.

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THE AMATEUR MUSICIAN

In-the-pocket Practice Amps

*Very big sound
for very little
out-of-pocket
cost*

BY MIKE SHEA

This month, a refresher course on practice amps, and an evaluation of some of the best of the bunch. Before getting to particulars, remember two basic points about these compact commodities: while hardly comparable to a multi-speakered, mega-powered job, a practice amp should at least deliver a full sound, not one you might get from a toy (put another way, a practice amp ought to make a novice sound better than he is); secondly, so that the aspiring guitar hero doesn't lose self-esteem, family, friends or, God forbid, his life, the amp ought to have a jack for a headphone connection.

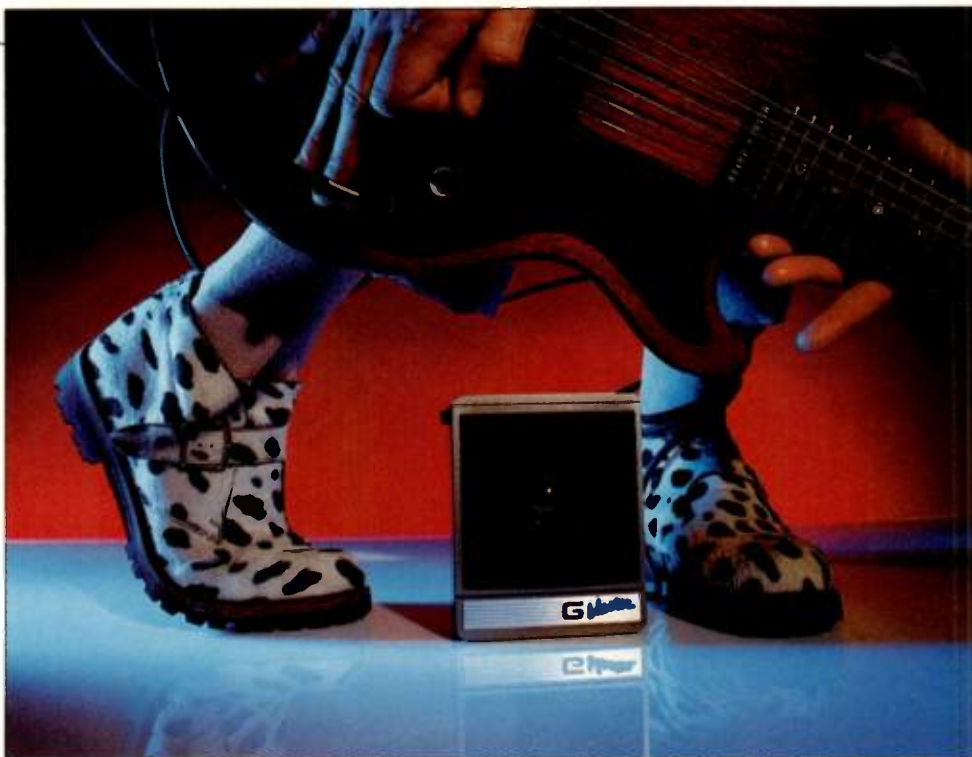
Figure then, that the four amps discussed this month meet the above requirements, and then some. As for price, all are relatively inexpensive as practice amps go. \$50, for instance, is the going rate for the **G-Blaster**, a 5x5x3" battery-powered (four C cells) plastic box sporting a 4" speaker, complete with shoulder strap and special adaptor cord. The G-Blaster's two-plus watts of output won't fill up an auditorium, but will, if you wish, get you in hot water with the neighbors—nice of G-Blaster to include a headphone output for, as the manual says, "late night blasting." While the distortion feature might have packed a little more oomph, overall the G-Blaster delivers a

clean, honest sound at low settings, and a strong overdrive when cranked up. Additional features include an LED indicator; a stereo-to-mono mini-plug cord adaptable to a personal portable cassette player or radio; and an AC adaptor connection.

What would you think of a dual 5" speaker amp that would allow two instruments or mics to be mixed together, along with a tape input, and then amplified? And costs only \$80? Say hello to the **PAIA Gemini**, the only way to go if group practice is your thing. But wait—there's more. One input allows for variable amounts of distortion; both instruments can be colored by a built-in three-band equalizer; and additional effects can be added via sophisticated send-and-receive patch jacks. Battery-powered, small (8x10x16") and extremely light, the Gemini is completely portable yet packs a punch of up to 14 watts (with a 4" headphone jack and a speaker on/off switch included for those who don't want to make enemies). But at \$80 there must be a catch, right? Right: the amp comes in a kit, to be assembled after purchase. Still, it's one of the simplest kits

around, thanks to the unusually lucid step-by-step description of the process of soldering, wiring and assembling the unit. Tight for time? An hour a day for a week ought to get the job done. And it's time well spent, because this amp's worth a lot more than its meager list price. Heavy metal players take note, however: the distortion may be a bit weak for true grunge merchants.

Moving up a notch in price and features brings us to **ARIA's** \$135-list **ME-20 Rock Trek II**. This small (roughly 6x6x1 1/2") metal box accepts one main (1/4" phone) and one auxiliary (mini-phone) input, and its three ranges of sound go from clean to very nasty (no, those aren't the descriptions on the amp itself—sorry) with the degree of distortion completely variable. Since it lacks a mixing control, this function has to be done at the instrument's output knob. The player can also switch in a digital delay that adds a slap-back rockabilly type echo or chorusing for a waterfall-of-notes thickening effect. The output is to two Walkman-type headphones with the level also infinitely variable. For use live, a special



SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL, CONVENIENT, AND VERY, VERY LOUD

adaptor cord (mini to 1/4" phone) and an amp are necessary. And let it be said that this one takes a licking and keeps on ticking: the construction is tough as hell, and ARIA's also included two rack-mount handles on either side of the face plate (heavy hitters might laugh at these, but in fact the handles protect the knobs and switches from accidental damage). So confident, in fact, is ARIA of the ME-20's durability that the company offers an unheard-of two-year warranty.

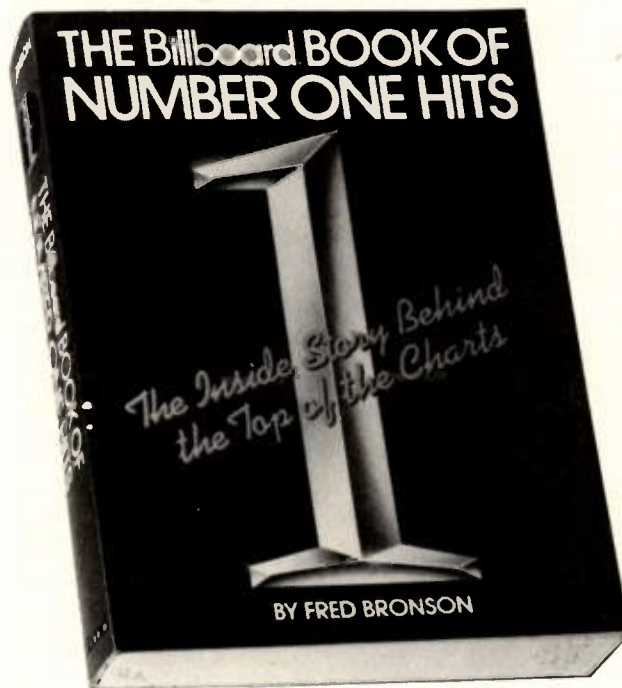
Finally we step up to the **Raino In-Line Effects MR-400** headphone amplifier from **The Music People**. This is almost exactly like the ESP Pocket Studio tested here (September '84 RECORD), except it's encased in metal instead of plastic and lists for only \$200, as opposed to the Pocket Studio's \$300 price tag. Two 1/4" inputs (again mix via instrument output knobs) can be amplified from clean to very nasty (when oh when are these manufacturers going to get hip and start indicating these options, in these terms, on their equipment?) over five range settings. While the distortion level is preset the output (to one Walkman-type headphone or two 1/4" phone jacks) is governed by a fader. Delay (reverb) and chorus can be selected separately, together with LED indications. There's a send-and-return patch for the addition of even more effects, plus an input for an optional AC wall adaptor. Beginners or tin ears take note: one of the MR400's most important features is its built-in A-440 tone for tuning your instrument. What do you mean you want it to cook for you, too?!

To help judge these four amps, I brought in two pros: Joe Manzella, a studio session guitarist, recording engineer and guitar repairman; and straight-ahead rocker Ellen Watkins. Berklee School of Music grad, studio session player and guitarist for the New York-based band Of A Mesh. After playing all of the amps, Manzella and Watkins both agreed that you get what you pay for, meaning that the more expensive the amp, the better sounding it is (Watkins, however, preferred the slap-back echo delay effect of the ARIA over the Raino's reverberation delay effect). Nevertheless, both also agreed that all four amps, depending upon a player's needs and budget, are good buys. Upshot: Check your wallet and choose your weapon.

For more information on this month's products contact the manufacturers directly: (G-Blaster) Peak Marketing, 75 Alhambra Drive, Oceanside, New York 11572 (phone 516-764-1979); (Gemini) PAIA Electronics, Inc., 1020 West Wilshire Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73116 (phone 405-843-9626); (Rock Trek II) ARIA Music U.S.A., Inc., 1201 John Reed Ct., City of Industry, CA 91745 (phone 818-968-8581); (Rainbo) The Music People Inc., P.O. Box 648, West Hartford, CT 06107 (phone 203-521-2248). □

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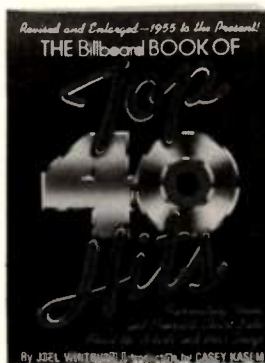
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SPOTLIGHT

WIDE AWAKE IN AMERICA

U2
Island

DURING THIS PAST "UNFORGETTABLE" year thousands woke up to U2's vibrant sound, but unfortunately the band took a songwriting snooze. Only diehards could relish the previously unreleased studio scribble ("Three Sunrises," "Love Comes Tumbling") on the second side of this tour/album momento EP, or the concert performance of "Bad" that stretches its murky reverie to seven minutes plus but omits the studio version's memorial to a boy who died of heroin abuse. Still, *Awake's* two concert cuts do recall singer Bono's wondrous on-stage charm, and the live, Tony Visconti-produced "A Sort of Homecoming"—blissfully uncluttered as compared to the Eno-produced studio original—opens up to reveal shafts of warm musical sunlight. Let's hope that the inspiration on U2's next full LP is a match for their consummate showmanship.

—Emily Flum

THE DREAM OF THE BLUE TURTLES

Sting
A&M

STING'S MUCH-AWAITED SOLO ALBUM WAS preceded by the warning that it would be a "jazz" record of sorts. A cast of black jazz musicians was assembled and the questions flew. Would Sting return to the fusiony jazz he played in the mid-'70's with the U.K. band, Last Exit? Would he unplug the wires and strike an acoustic chord—upright bass and all? Or would the LP just be a hip new vehicle for Sting's irresistible pop?

Well, *The Dream of the Blue Turtles* is not a jazz album by any stretch of the imagination, but then it's not really a rock record either. Omar Hakim (Weather Report) successfully fills Stewart Copeland's drum seat. Kenny Kirkland (Wynton Marsalis) adds texture on a variety of keyboards, and Sting gladly steps aside for the steady, seamless bass playing of Darryl Jones. The only solo instrument here is Branford Marsalis' saxophone (tenor and soprano), and though much of the time his doodlings are buried in the mix, Marsalis does rise to the occasion with several terse, lyrical solos. Unreplaced is Andy Summers' slashing guitar, and it is sorely missed.

Sting's guitar parts are hardly worth noting, but his singing, writing and production (with Pete Smith) are more than presentable. His voice is as edgy and enigmatic as ever, and the songs simultaneously ring familiar and fresh. And more than ever before, Sting's social conscience has invaded his

musical thoughts; the "One World (Not Three)" philosophy of *Ghost in the Machine*, ignored on *Synchronicity*, reappears with a vengeance on *Dream*. Messages in bottles float on the surface of nearly every song—from the simplistic humanism of "Russians" ("I hope the Russians love their children too") to the union flag-waving of "We Work the Black Seam" ("Our blood has stained the coal") to the anti-drug/anti-war preachings of "Childrer's Crusade" ("Poppies for young men, death's bitter trade").

How can we alter our world's disastrous course this albums asks. Protest about it—and while you're demonstrating outside the local nuke plant, realize that "There's a deeper world than this / That you don't understand / There's a deeper wave than this / Nothing will withstand." That deeper wave, according to Sting, is the "seventh wave"—the wave of love. With its springy reggae bounce, "Love Is the Seventh Wave" may just convince you that you can transcend our age's deathwish by cleansing yourself in the raging waters of love. Then, again, it may not, but it's an intriguing thought anyway.

I'm not quite sure what Sting's getting at in the single, "If You Love Somebody Set Them Free," but such questions are beside the point really. Musically the song's a blue-eyed soul tour de force, featuring Kirkland on organ, Marsalis' gritty tenor, backup singers chanting, "Free, free, set them free," a tambourine that galvanizes the beat, and Sting's most trenchant vocal workout on the record. Police diehards should respond to the funky-up act, but, if not, "Fortress Around Your Heart," a more typically constructed Police-type number, the rocking cover of Sting's own "Shadows in the Rain," and the "Every Breath" riff on "Seventh Wave" ("Every cake you bake / Every leg you break") should keep them from skeet-shooting the album.

The Dream of the Blue Turtles is not for every Police fan, but surely it has the breadth it takes to satisfy the majority while turning on new listeners who've yet to be stung by the Golden One. Appropriately, the enchanting song "Moon Over Bourbon Street" was inspired by Anne Rice's story, "Interview with a Vampire"—this is very much a pop album with a bite.

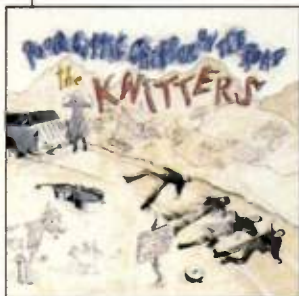
—Steve Bloom

FLASH

Jeff Beck
Epic

WITH ALL BUT TWO OF ITS NINE CUTS PRODUCED by Nile Rodgers or Arthur Baker, *Flash* is an assortment of pedestrian synthesized funk-rock songs enlivened by Jeff

U2 WIDE AWAKE IN AMERICA



Beck's consistently amazing, defy-death guitar playing. "Ambitious" and "Gets Us All in the End" stand out, and while ex-Wet Willie singer Jimmy Hall's vocals are for the most part solid but ordinary, Rod Stewart's performance on "People Get Ready" is right on the money. Although he wrote none of the songs and essentially functions as a genius-sideman on his own LP, Beck is one of the few gunners who can hope to carry an album on the strength of his playing alone. Whether he realizes that hope in your eyes will largely depend on the expectations you bring to the guitar-master's first solo LP in five years.

—Jonathan Gregg

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UTFO
Select

PERHAPS THE BEST WAY TO DESCRIBE UTFO'S debut album would be to tag it "The Roxanne Variations." In case you been out on the Bikini Atolls the last few months, the Roxanne saga is fast becoming hip-hop's version of Wagner's Ring Cycle—an epic that addresses the classic verities of love and def, and that's inspired at least three spinoff rap careers. The most original twists the *UTFO* LP wraps around this hip-hop may-pole are "Calling Her a Crab," where they talk about Roxanne's mama like she was a man, and "Lisa Lips," who puts in an appearance as the willing fantasy incarnate these cats have always longed for. The *UTFO* album belongs on every serious collector's shelf—it's got a beat and you can learn to play the dozens by it.

—Greg Tate

PROJECT: MERSH

The Minutemen
SST

PROJECT: MERSH PARES DOWN THE MINUTEMEN's jagged, wired funk into ostensibly commercial verse/chorus structures. Slice-and-dice venom, however, sneaks from the words of these seemingly innocent tunes, making the band's cut-the-jive stridency slam home harder. It's odd indeed to hear guitarist/singer D. Boon creep into the trumpet-punctuated cocktail jazz chorus of "The Cheerleaders" with hook lines like "Do you have to see the body bags before you make a stand?" The (com)mersh(alized) music here runs from loopy jazz figures to the straightforward grungy thunk of bassist Mike Watt's "Tour-Spiel," but it's always cut with no-nonsense lyrical challenges. *Project: Mersh* may be a joke of sorts, but it ain't no picnic at Redondo Beach.

—Chuck Reece

POOR LITTLE CRITTER ON THE ROAD

The Knitters
Slash

WHAT STARTED OUT AS AN ACOUSTIC FOLK-country fling for the "X-Blasters" (John Doe, Exene, D.J. Bonebrake, Dave Alvin, plus upright bassist Jonny Ray Bartel) has evolved into a full-fledged *band*, with spirited live shows and, now, a solid debut album. Purists—particularly those not

listening carefully—will probably accuse the Knitters of bastardizing country music. Wrong. Doe, in particular, is a long-time, passionate country fan, which comes through in his resonant and expressive vocals, in the new tunes he's co-written, and in his choice of covers, like Merle Haggard's "Silver Wings." Granted, nothing here will rearrange the country music landscape. But from the wired-hoedown reading of the title track to the band's own aching "Crying But My Tears Are Far Away," it's clear their aim is true.

—Duncan Strauss

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MODERN DRUMMER MAGAZINE

UNGUARDED

Amy Grant
A&M

IS THIS JUST A VERY SLICK AND SKILLFUL spoonful of sugar to make the old-time religion go down, or is Amy Grant a new kind of cultural ambassador? Her soul, funk and even girl-group chops are so naturally assimilated, the production is so post-Prince self-confident, the devotional sentiments so unselfconscious that, at best, she seems to provide pop with a new vocabulary, while giving a generous new spirit to fundamentalist religiosity. At worst, when she revives the old litany of caution and fear with warnings about "thinking right," her world can seem very guarded indeed.

—Christopher Hill

READY STEADY GO!, VOL. 2

55 min., b&w/Thorn EMI/\$29.95

PERHAPS BECAUSE IT'S SO UNEVEN, THIS clips collection from the British music show *Ready Steady Go!* constitutes a resonant mid-'60s period piece. Novelties like Freddie and the Dreamers and forgotten mediocres like the Fourmost elbow for time against the Beach Boys' rocking romps on "I Get Around" and "When I Grow Up" and Rufus Thomas' salty "Walkin' the Dog." The Beatles lip-sync "Twist and Shout" and "She Loves You" with mop-top charm, while the Stones high-camp their way through a hilarious mime of "I Got You Babe." From the vantage of '80s "sophistication" this pop playfulness may seem naive—you're advised to remember, however, that it changed the world.

—Anthony DeCurtis

RHYTHM AND ROMANCE

Rosanne Cash
ColumbiaCAN'T RUN AWAY
FROM YOUR HEARTLacy J. Dalton
Columbia

LET'S SAY ROSANNE CASH'S NEW ALBUM, *Rhythm and Romance*, is a pretty good record on a couple of fronts. Cash's voice is a marvelous instrument, all deep, dark and knowing, and her development as a songwriter (she composed six of the LP's 10 cuts, and co-wrote two others) is encouraging: the lady has a gift for subtlety and irony common to the most skilled of tunesmiths . . . even if she doesn't use it to good advantage on this outing. It's been three years

between albums for Cash, and this one simply fails to build on the foundation she'd established for herself with *Seven Year Ache* and *Somewhere in the Stars*—on repeated listenings these songs start to ring hollow; the gloss wears off to reveal that the words are only words, and the apparent levels of meaning disintegrate under scrutiny. Instead of fashioning a fresh, stimulating aural environment for Cash, new producer David Malloy has opted for a comfortable rock edge, a sleek interpretation of the invigorating nuevo wavo country feel sculpted by Cash's former producer Rodney Crowell (who co-produces one cut here with David Thoener). Working together, Cash and Crowell seemed on the verge of redefining the direction country would have to take if it were to appropriate any of contemporary rock's vitality: *Rhythm and Romance* is a step backwards for an extremely talented artist whose heart is beating somewhere in these tunes, but is so hard to find.

But Lacy J. Dalton's latest waxing, now there's another story. Like Cash, Dalton's been on sabbatical, but she's profited from two years of reassessment, having recovered the passion that was conspicuously absent from 1983's *Dream Baby* LP. Replacing mentor and long-time producer Billy Sherrill with Marshall Morgan and Paul Worley, who've worked with Ricky Skaggs among others, she's delivered one of the best country records of the year—make that one of the best records of the year. From the Wendy Waldman title cut through nine other originals, many of them penned by Dalton herself, the singer recounts the vagaries of love in a lived-in, whiskey-soaked voice that gets way down inside you, rummaging around for a tender spot, then massaging out the pain. *Can't Run Away From Your Heart* is an album with treadmarks on it—Dalton's got a line on the human comedy that puts most of her peers to shame. Check the ache in her reading of "Perfectly Crazy" and see if it don't nail your head to the wall and leave it hanging there like an empty paper bag. Serious. Jack.

—David McGee

THE BEST OF SPIKE JONES
VOL. 1: "THE CRAZIEST VIDEO
ON EARTH"

51 min./Available by mail order only from The Best of Spike Jones Video, 1040 S. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90019. \$39.95 plus \$2.50 postage and handling.

WHAT'S WONDROUS IS NOT THAT SPIKE Jones would be an anomaly on television even today, but that the godfather of musical mayhem even got on the tube at all. These clips, culled from kinescopes of shows Jones hosted in the early '50s, comprise a

representative sampling of the genius of his aural/visual *schtick*. Equivalent in many ways to some of Ernie Kovacs' more inspired moments—e.g., the Nairobi Trio—Jones and his Slickers found no tradition too sacred, no reputation too impeccable: everyone and everything was fair game for what would have been brutal skewering were it not done in such great good humor. Imagine "Farandole" punctuated by a shot from a .38 revolver and propelled by tuned cowbells and washboards—in comparison, Love Sculpture's 1969 baroque rendition of the same song is positively conventional. Or the City Slickers in drag for a sensitive version of "It's Tough To Be A Girl Musician." Or midget Billy Barty on toy piano in a fey impersonation of Liberace singing "I'm in the Mood for Love," with Sir Frederick Gas as brother George, playing a violin made of . . . tree branches. One of these clips on MTV ought to blow a few circuits. What more to say, except that Volumes 2, 3, 4 et al. can't come too soon. Long live Spike Jones!

—D.M.

MATERIAL THANGZ

The Deelee
Solar/Elektra

OF ALL THE PRINCELINGS OUT THERE, THE best—Morris Day and Jesse Johnson—learned their trade from the man himself. The Deelee, a Cincinnati quintet transplanted to L.A., is the best of the rest. Sadly, that's the nicest thing to be said for them—in every quoted riff and groan on this, their second and less inspired record, they insist they're imitators. Even on their best songs, such as the title cut (a modified hard beat and "Sweet November" (a pretty, synthetic ballad) they neither aspire to nor attain originality. It's like those guys toying around impersonating Elvis—except, unlike the King, Prince still speaks for himself.

—Crispin Sartwell

LANGUAGE BARRIER

Sly and Robbie
Island

IF A BOMB HAD FALLEN ON THE STUDIO where Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare were recording this LP, the dance machines among us would have been forced to learn waltz steps for '86. The funk mob was present and fully accounted for: Herbie Hancock, Afrika Bambaataa, Manu Dibango, Bernie Worrell, Eddie Martinez, Bill Laswell—even Bob Dylan. The mostly instrumental *Language Barrier* veers away from the riddim twins' futurist dub sound and into high-tech Africanized funk. Machines rule the sound, and the grooves are more popul-

sive than hypnotic—sounds like a lot of intense jamming and overdubbing, followed by even more intense mixing. *Language Barrier* hits some intoxicatingly funky grooves, but, as can be expected from a record that relies this heavily on atmosphere, it also occasionally gets caught with all eight cylinders pumping and no place to go.

—John Leland

PLAYING IN THE BAND: AN ORAL AND VISUAL PORTRAIT OF THE GRATEFUL DEAD

By David Gans, photographs by Peter Simon, foreword by Phil Lesh
St. Martin's Press/191 pgs./\$14.95

FOR BETTER OR WORSE, THE DEAD HAVE become something of a rock institution. Their story is long, oftentimes illustrious, oftentimes poignant, rarely less than interesting. RECORD senior editor David Gans, one of America's preeminent Deadheads, supplies the critical perspective and the tape recorder; the Dead themselves supply anecdotes, insight and tall tales, Peter Simon provides the visual chronicle of the band's evolution.

—D.M.

JOHN COUGAR MELLENCAMP: AIN'T THAT AMERICA

By Alan Hecht, Fred Seibert and Alan Goodman
58 min./Polygram Music Video

THIS CONSISTENTLY INTERESTING COMPILATION manages a wealth of worthy material with authority and ease—it pulls together eleven promo videos from various phases of Melencamp's career and informs them with insider footage from the *Uh-Huh* sessions and interviews with the Indiana flash himself, as well as family and friends. The result is a moving, unpretentious portrait of a man whose personal and artistic growth has been one of '80s most heartening music stories. Melencamp is just beginning to find his stride—*Ain't That America*, from its baby pix to its candid self-evaluations, shows all the steps and stumbles that have come before.

—A.D.

THE BEACH BOYS

The Beach Boys
Epic

THOSE HOPING THAT STEVE LEVINE would breathe fizzy Anglo-pop life into these ravaged New World innocents will be disappointed. Culture Club charisma remains vested in Boy George and not in the imposing brigade of electronic appliances Levine

has provided as the setting for this Southern California choral group. Still, perpetually eighteen-year-old gonads reside in these middle-aged bodies—the singing remains gorgeously adolescent. Most of Side One is more than acceptable modern pop, and Carl even rouses himself to slam home the chorus of "It's Gettin' Late" in a way that makes "You're So Good to Me" seem neither so long ago or far away.

—C.H.

HOT SAUCES LATIN AND CARIBBEAN POP

By Billy Bergman with Andy Schwartz, Isabelle Leymarie, Tony Sabournin and Rob Baker
Quill/144 pgs./\$7.95

AS MORE AND MORE CONTEMPORARY musicians discover that we are all part of the

global village, popular music comes to reflect an unusually diverse array of influences; more importantly, the music of the global village is rooted in a respect for the cultures of other worlds, while at the same time recognizing fundamental similarities in the human experience, regardless of a listener's hemisphere of origin. The truncated overview of various international musics (including New Orleans, described here as "a Caribbean island beached on the U.S. mainland") presented in *Hot Sauces* arrives right on time as a sort of global village Who's Who for music lovers seeking an outline of the musical and sociopolitical origins of soca, reggae, rara, salsa, et al., and the representative recordings of each genre. Of special note: Isabelle Leymarie's acute insights into salsa and Latin jazz, and Andy Schwartz's persuasive argument on behalf of New Orleans' impact on world music.

—D.M.



RETROFITTING [cont. from 35]

of music listening features, as evidenced by the CD entry from ADS, the CD3 (approx. \$900), which boasts a remote control that can access up to 99 tracks on a disc, as well as program 30 in any order. The unit also contains a digital interface connector for future use of data-bearing CDs with your home computer.

However, a CD player upgrade demands more than just a CD player. It demands a whole new collection of CDs. And while the investment may pay off in better sound, it will only be the beginning. You'll still have to build a digital collection as complete as the one full of analog LPs that you've pieced together for years. And you can be sure you'll never find that bootleg Stones' concert LP on an optical disc.

CASSETTE DECK

You may be better off buying a cassette machine or, at least, getting your old one cleaned and/or repaired. If you've noticed more background noise on your tapes and less peak at the high frequencies (not to mention an increase in the ever-popular wow and flutter department), it may be time to scrub down and demagnetize your deck's heads. If you're particularly fond of the machine, you can even have the heads replaced if they're worn.

Nostalgia notwithstanding, there are some features on new cassette machines that you shouldn't miss—particularly noise reduction and chrome and metal tape capability. Besides, if you haven't been in an audio shop in a good many years you'd be surprised at the user conveniences a microprocessor can deliver in some of the new machines. For instance, a new deck from Sansui (D-905R; approx. \$700) lets you choose between the noise reduction benefits of Dolby B and C, and offers the long program listening benefits of auto-reverse, which plays both sides of a cassette without interruption. You can automatically search both sides of the tape for 15 songs, as well as operate all functions with an optional remote control.

OTHER TOYS

While you're at the store you're bound to see a number of component tricks that your aging stereo couldn't dream of performing. You may opt for an equalizer that lets you adapt your stereo to what is inevitably an imperfect listening environment. These hardware components sport sliders instead of buttons and let you adjust and color the music to more adequately suit your ears and your living room—significantly more than what you can accomplish with treble, bass and balance controls. An equalizer lets you

adjust tones at more selective points throughout the frequency range than these three common dials.

For example, the EQ8 graphic equalizer from Harmon Kardon (approx. \$235) offers 10-band equalization for every channel. It can help eliminate feedback noise between your turntable and speakers, or simply let you contour the sound for every octave, from Thomas Dolby's lowest synthesizer notes to Jimmy Page's stinging electric guitar leads.

A graphic equalizer isn't exactly the place I'd start upgrading my hi-fi, but it's the kind of black box that can pump some life back into the veins of many a tired, old stereo set. Then again, once you start browsing the audio aisles you may choose to toss out the old and bring in the new. You may even select a preamplifier that sports input additions (such as a CD player or VCR) that didn't exist when your stereo rolled off the assembly line.

That's the neat thing about stereo upgrading—you never really stop. □

WIRED [cont. from 38]

the Compact Disc's. The advantage of the 8mm tape for video applications is for movie-making purposes, since the new range of 8mm camcorders are downsized considerably from the pack horse bags required by full half-inch videocassettes.

In addition to its versatility, the 8mm videocassette may prove to be the long-awaited digital audio cassette. If this is the case, these quarter-inch shells (approximately the size of an ordinary audio cassette) may ultimately serve all home entertainment purposes. You'll slip it in a Walkman or in a video camcorder, or if you prefer, play back a prerecorded video movie or record 12 hours of Compact Discs onto one tiny cassette.

The audio future is clearly in the direction of one-for-all products such as these. But in the meantime, there's plenty of new connections to keep your existing audio and video gear shuffling shelves for years—or at least until they figure out what to call this new home entertainment medium. □

C.E.S. [cont. from 38]

linear tracking turntable that can play both sides of a record without turnover, a remote control equalizer, programmable CD player, double cassette deck, and tower speakers that come with 12-inch woofers and 12-inch passive radiators.

Still, don't be misled. The biggest news in consumer electronics isn't what's floating in your ears. Video reigns supreme these days and the CES floor was packed with the watchful eyes of ever-growing television screens, spinning video tape players, and enough combinations of audio/video componentry to keep all eyes "Barney Goo-

gling" for days.

The biggest news in video tubes is big picture and bigger sound. Fisher, for instance, introduced a \$700 TV, the PC-205, that incorporates a stereo TV broadcast decoder and a 20-inch screen. The unit carries its own power as well as its own speakers, and outback it sports enough ports to plug in virtually any audio/video source. Meanwhile, Proton has installed a stereo TV decoder into its 25-inch screen, which also carries a bunch of vital specifications that probably don't mean as much on a page as they do on the screen. The price is a hefty \$1250, but the unit can double as a color computer monitor when you're bored with what's happening on TV.

What's happening on TV these days is much more than just sound, however. Judging from their presence all over the convention floor, TV screens are getting bigger than ever. We're not talking projection sets here, but rather big and bold CRTs that now stretch as wide as 37-inch diagonal. Maganvox's version is a combination receiver/monitor that'll handle a variety of inputs, carries a 10-watt stereo TV sound system, and offers programmable scan tuning with a 40 pushbutton remote control.

Meanwhile, TVs are embarking on a digital age of their own, much like what's happening in audio. But digital in this case doesn't reflect an improvement in screen definition, but rather a variety of screen-watching tricks. For instance, the Panasonic Model CTG-2085R is a 20-inch tube that lets you watch two different video pictures from different sources on screen at one time. You can watch your favorite MTV video in a corner of the screen while watching *Monday Night Football* at the same time (about \$1200).

Not satisfied with your selection of programming? Then it's time to join the rest of the world and buy a VCR. However, the old videotape spinners have grown in complexity and, meanwhile, they've stripped off some extraneous features to strip down the price as well. You can walk the full line of offerings by checking out the VCR supply from Quasar, which delivers everything from a \$1350 model that'll deliver near-digital hi-fi sound quality, to a \$400 model that will only play back tapes.

And what if you only have one VCR but a bunch of TVs all around the house? This is the kind of dilemma that the multiple-tube household encounters, and for this reason a nifty gadget called VCR Rabbit made quite a CES stir. The system begins with a transmitter unit which snuggles beside your VCR and a receiver unit to which it will ship the split VCR signal anywhere in the house. To expand the system further, you just add an additional receiver for every set you own. The basic price is \$100, with an additional \$50 for every receiver. □

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BRUUUUUCE! From the Springsteen desk: press release, Columbia Records, April 23: *Born in the U.S.A.* becomes Columbia's all-time best-selling record, with U.S. sales approaching 6.5 million; press release, Columbia Records, June 24: *Born in the U.S.A.* marks 52 weeks in the Top 5 of *Billboard's* Album Chart; *Muppet Magazine's* new rock "video" feature debuts with Kermit Greensteen, aka "The Moss," playing guitar in front of an American flag backdrop (Miss Piggy will appear in a forthcoming issue as Tina Turner) . . . **WHAM!** has some chart history of its own to trumpet. *Make It Big* is the first album of this decade to yield three consecutive Number One singles, the latest being "Everything She Wants," which entered, for Chrissakes, at Numero Uno. Last album to accomplish this feat: the Bee Gees' *Spirits Having Flown*, released in 1979, and *Saturday Night Fever*, with four hit singles during 1977-78 . . . **TOM PETTY and the HEARTBREAKERS** have been awarded a "Grand Prix" by the Montreux Golden Rose Television Festival for the video "Don't Come Around Here No More" from the *Southern Accents* album. It's the first time the Festival (which is to European television what Cannes is to the film industry) has honored a music video clip. In announcing the award, the Festival jury cited the quality of the video's storyboard, direction and use of electronic effects, as well as praising the performance by Petty and band . . . Can't get enough of **ROXANNE**? Then get all of Roxanne on *The Complete Story of Roxanne . . . The Album* by Dr. J.R. Kool & the Other Roxannes on Compleat Records, distributed by Polygram. The LP contains cover versions of the seven Roxanne records currently in the marketplace, plus one new Roxanne song, "Rap Your Own Roxanne," a sort of Music Minus One version providing you, the listener/would-be rapper, with a background over which to supply your own version of this beleaguered lady's woes . . .

DAVID BOWIE Look for David Bowie in a different sort of film role next summer, when Tri-Star Pictures releases the Henson Associates/Lucasfilm Ltd. production of *Labyrinth*, a creature-fantasy film with a part written especially for La Bowie. There'll be other humans in it, too, but there'll also be some weird creatures designed by Brian Froud, whose credits include *The Dark Crystal*. Jim Henson, of Muppets fame, will direct; George Lucas—need we say more?—will serve as executive producer . . . Aspiring guitar heroes are advised to check out the latest in instructional videos, the Star Licks Master Series, featuring nine rock guitarists demonstrating their techniques (guitar techniques, that is). It's a veritable potpourri of styles, too: participants

SUCH GOINGS ON



include **BRIAN MAY** of Queen, **CARLOS CAVAZZO** of Quiet Riot, **STEVE LUKATHER** of Toto and **TONY IOMMI** of Black Sabbath. Earth, Wind & Fire's **AL MCKAY** demonstrates rhythm guitar, **ALBERT LEE**, country guitar and Los Angeles studio musician **MIKE WOLF** narrates and demonstrates the Jimi Hendrix style, aided by footage of the master himself. And though May has also written a chapter on rock guitar for a *Guide for Guitar Teachers*, published this summer by Oxford University Press, he doesn't want anyone to think he's endorsing the idea of institutionalizing rock guitar. "I was a little worried that the fact it was being taught could destroy rock guitar," he says. "It's something people pick up as an escape from formalism, and escape from things that are written down. If rock guitar became something that had to be practiced for an hour each day, it would be dead in half a generation." So why write for guitar teachers? "A lot of people still think electric guitar is the same as the old guitar, but louder. You have to get beyond the block that a lot of the older generation have about it, and show it's an instrument that has its own sensitivity and its own voice in the same way that a violin does." . . .

PRINCE As long as guitars and guitarists are in the news, did anyone check out the 12-string, purple-stained cutaway acoustic guitar that Wendy's playing in the "Raspberry Beret" video? That bad axe was built especially for Prince by Taylor Guitars as the first salvo in the company's effort to rehabilitate the acoustic guitar's image. The Artist Series, as this line of acoustics is dubbed, also comes in six-string versions in black, blue and red . . . Best line in a press release for this month: "The **FAT BOYS** have been busy eating as well as working on their second album." Somehow that's not surprising. Look for the FB's this month in the film *Krush Groove*, playing themselves, alongside illustrious co-star **SHEILA E.**, **RUN-D.M.C.**, **NEW EDITION** and 13-year-old rapper **CHAD**. The trio's also been on the road as part of the 50-city New York City Fresh Festival tour, a rap fan's delight that pulled in sellout crowds last year. And a final note from the aforementioned press release: "Rumor has it that the Fat Boys' food bill may just have caused the movie to go slightly over budget." . . . In the You Do What You Can Dept., the **SCREAMIN' SIRENS** donated a pair of "screamin' pink" satin panties to a San Diego rock 'n' roll auction to raise money for starving people all the world over. A gentleman in the audience walked off with the booty after bidding \$45, only to be told by artist (and close Sirens' friend) Mark Rude: "You should've asked me. I could've gotten you a pair for free!" . . .



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