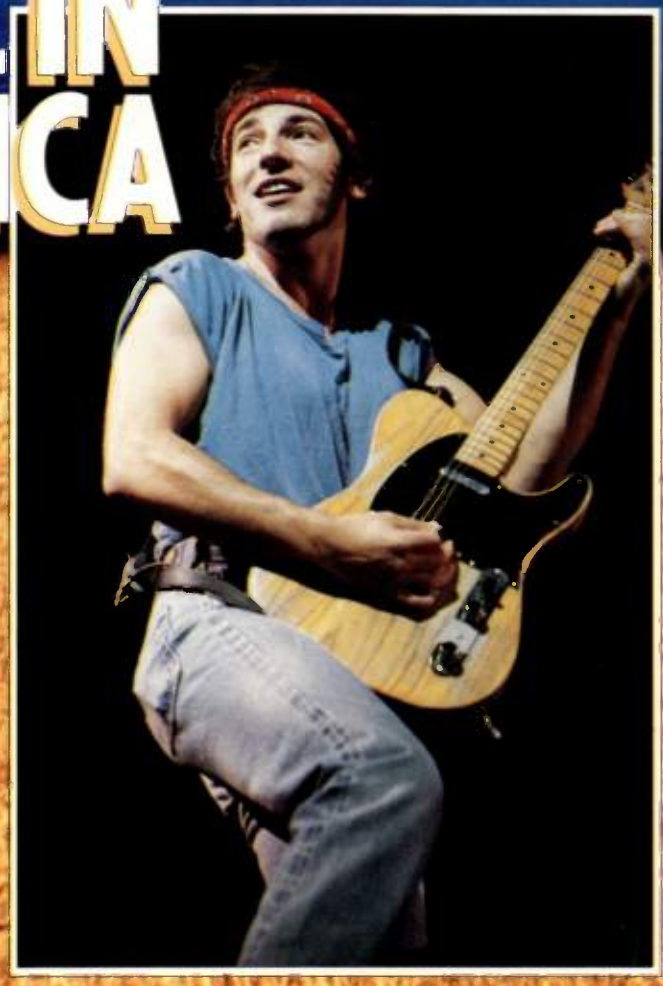
See our NEW LOOK!

Record

OCT 1985
$1.50 UK 90p

MUSIC IN AMERICA



REPORTS FROM AUSTIN LOS ANGELES MINNEAPOLIS NEW ORLEANS NEW YORK

PLUS:

VAN MORRISON

THOMPSON TWINS

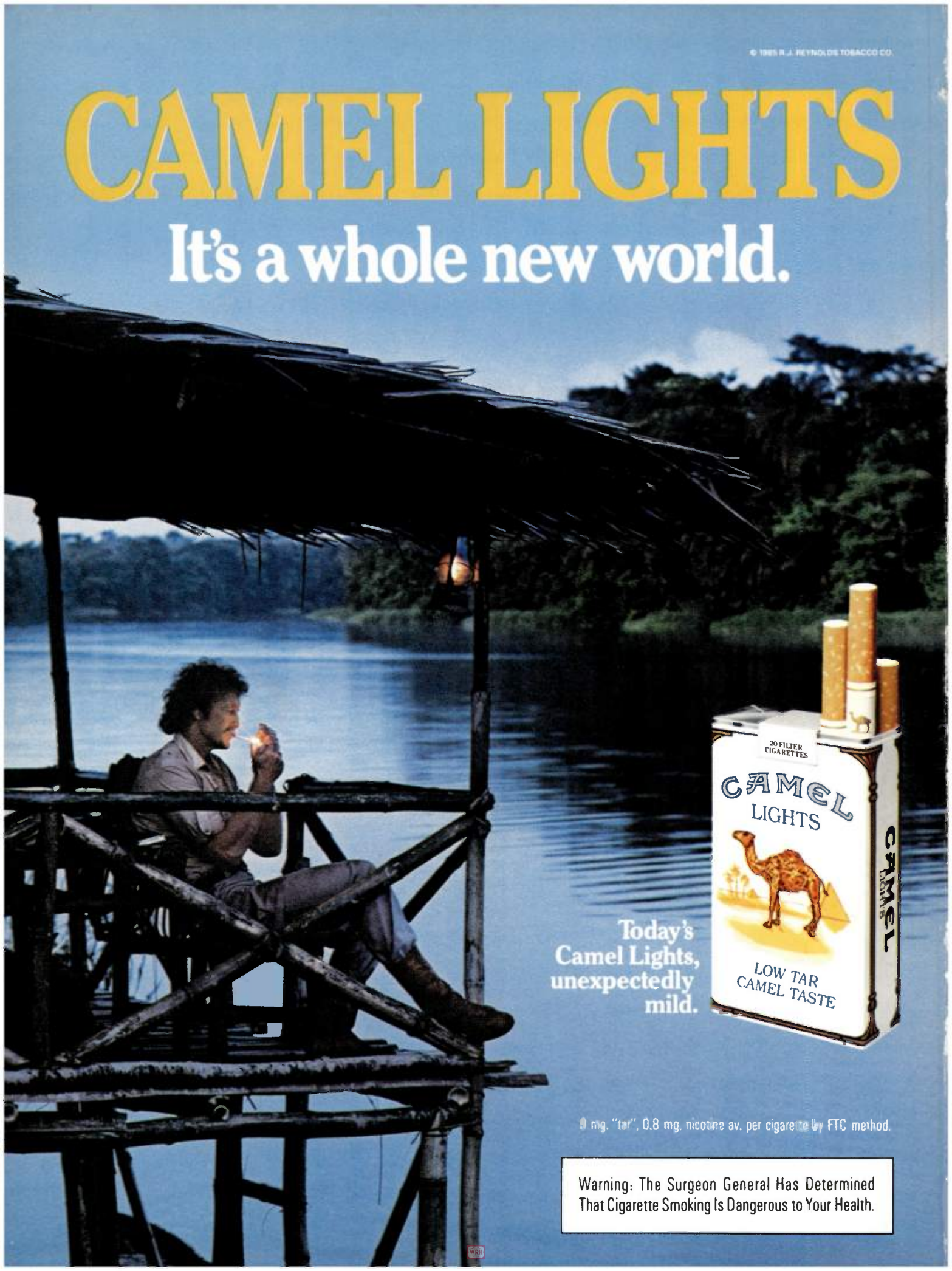
THE CD REVOLUTION

92503 *****5-DIGIT
301332 NUF 46571097 143M 0CT86
G29560629
JOHN NEUFELL 10*R7
4657 TOMLINSON AV
ARLINGTON CA 92503
0 34141 1

© 1985 R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.

CAMEL LIGHTS

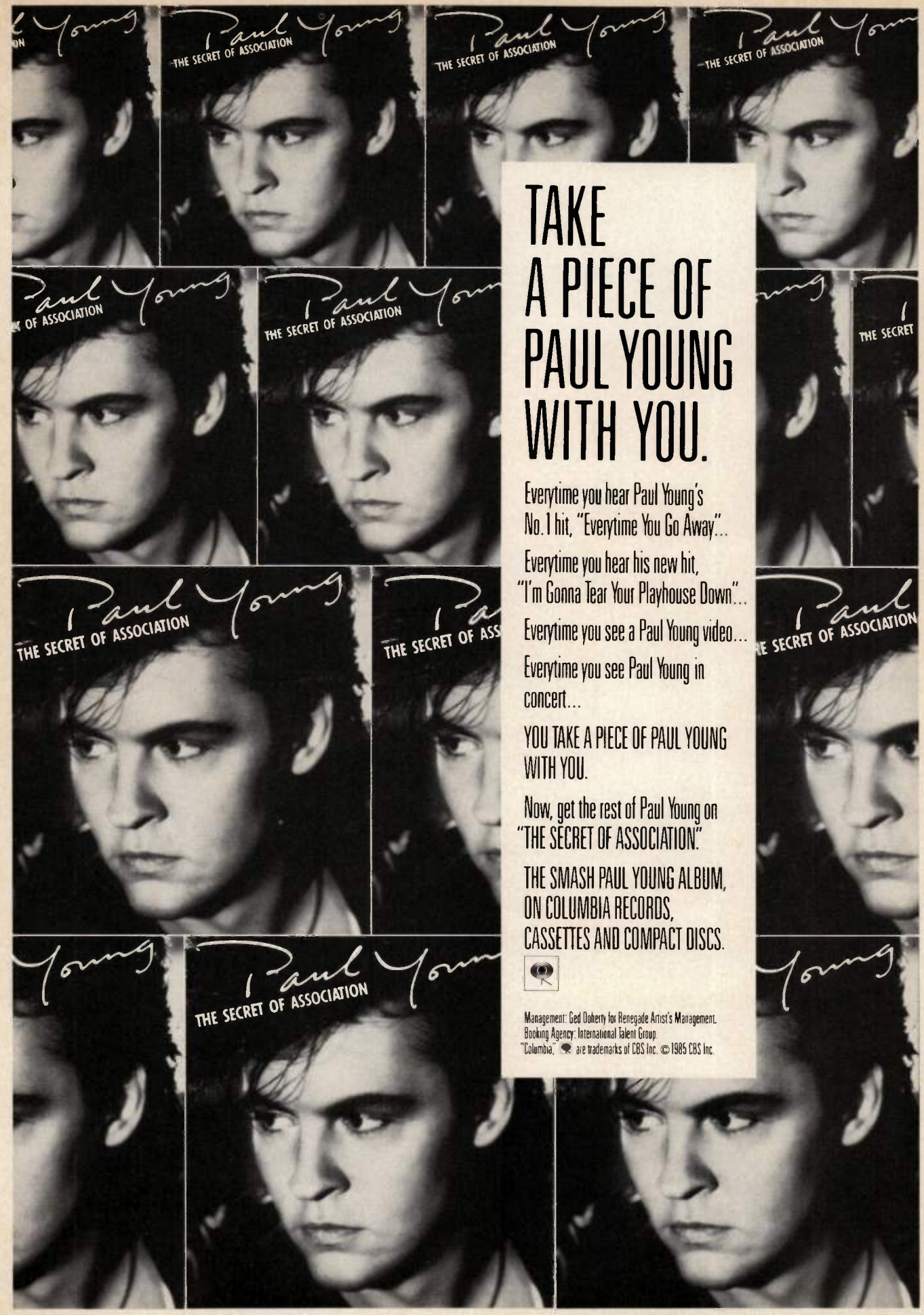
It's a whole new world.



Today's Camel Lights, unexpectedly mild.

9 mg. "tar", 0.8 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.



TAKE A PIECE OF PAUL YOUNG WITH YOU.

Everytime you hear Paul Young's No.1 hit, "Everytime You Go Away"...

Everytime you hear his new hit, "I'm Gonna Tear Your Playhouse Down"...

Everytime you see a Paul Young video...

Everytime you see Paul Young in concert...

YOU TAKE A PIECE OF PAUL YOUNG WITH YOU.

Now, get the rest of Paul Young on "THE SECRET OF ASSOCIATION."

THE SMASH PAUL YOUNG ALBUM, ON COLUMBIA RECORDS, CASSETTES AND COMPACT DISCS.

Management: Ged Doherty for Renegade Artist's Management.
Booking Agency: International Talent Group.
"Columbia," are trademarks of CBS Inc. © 1985 CBS Inc.

BEYOND CONVENTIONAL AMPLIFICATION

ONKYO'S NEW REAL PHASE TECHNOLOGY

Today's speakers, with their multiple driver construction and complex crossovers, differ electrically from the simple resistive load used by amplifier designers to simulate the loudspeaker load. The actual load that is "seen" by the amplifier causes severe phase shift between the voltage and current sent to the speakers. This causes an audible loss of sonic clarity and dynamics.

Onkyo's Real Phase Technology uses not one, but two power transformers to correct this problem. A large high capacity primary transformer together with a special In-Phase secondary transformer prevents this phase shift, providing increased power output into the loudspeaker load as the music demands it. The result is clean, dramatic dynamics; musical peaks are reproduced with stunning clarity.

Now, the dynamic range of the music can be fully realized. For complete information on the Onkyo Real Phase story, see your Onkyo dealer or write to Onkyo directly.

Shown is our new A-8067 Integra amplifier, with Real Phase Technology and our exclusive Dual Recording Selector.

Artistry in Sound

ONKYO®

200 Williams Drive, Ramsey, N.J. 07446

CONTENTS

OCTOBER 1985

Cover photos by Eric Meola and Larry Busacca *(inset)*

MARIA ROBLEDO; HOWARD ROSENBERG (TOP INSET); CARL WESLEY (BOTTOM)

An incredible saga containing 8 classic Weird Al videos, including "Eat It," "Like A Surgeon" and much more.

CATCH THE BUZZ!

"compleat"

The full length version of the most important home video event in the history of mankind is available now on videocassette and laser videodisc. 100 minutes that will give meaning to your boring miserable life for only $29.98.

PRINTED IN U.S.A. © 1985 CBS, Inc.

CBS FOX VIDEO MUSIC

LETTERS

YOU COULD LOOK IT UP

A FOOTNOTE TO J.D. CONSIDINE'S thoughts on etymology in his review of Eurythmics' *Be Yourself Tonight* in the July RECORD: the term 'eurythmics' was used at the turn of the century by the Viennese musician/theorist Emile Jacques-Dalcroze in his book *Eurythmics, Art and Education*. Jacques-Dalcroze was interested in the human body's physical responses to musical rhythms, a notion that seems to have found contemporary expression in the work of Mr. Stewart and Ms. Lennox.

MARK GREEN
Assistant Professor of Management
Simpson College
Indianola, Iowa

We stand corrected. Webster's New World Dictionary, as reader Dave Blewett pointed out in another letter, defines "eurythmic," an adjective, as "characterized by perfect proportion and harmony." "Eurythmics" is defined as "the art of performing various bodily movements in rhythm, usually to musical accompaniment." Another reader, identified only as Wordy Wordpicker, informed us that the "Eu" prefix comes not from the word "European," as Considine assumes in his review, but from the Latin word for "true" or "genuine." Watch this space for further developments in the Lexicon Wars.—Ed.

CLAPTON'S STILL GOD

AS MY HUSBAND AND I WERE DRIVing home along the New Jersey Turnpike after having experienced Eric Clapton's concert at the Meadowlands, we were running out of adjectives to describe his performance. My husband really summed it up: awesome. We've both admired Eric for the past 20 years, but this was the first time we were able to see him in person. What an extra special treat when we bought the July issue of RECORD and read Jeffrey Peisch's interview with Eric ("The Slowhand of God"). Peisch's questions were interesting and original and allowed us to see that Clapton is not only a gifted musician but also a warm, sincere and humble person. Thank you for bringing us closer to this special man.

JEAN AND CARL HESSEL
Neptune, NJ

RX FOR R.P.

I AM WRITING IN RESPONSE TO ROBert Plant's rather unwarranted comment on the supposed lack of depth in the music of the Smiths ("This Time I'm Going for It," August RECORD). In criticizing them as a band "who just warble on about not eating meat," Plant seems to take one of lyricist Morrissey's more personal convictions as representative of the band's entire repertoire. The Smiths' music may lack the drama of political sentiment inherent in the music of U2, but to bluntly label the content of their songs as shallow is to be unaware of their true intent. Morrissey's lyrics speak out to today's discontented youth through both personal and universal statements on the injustices of life—reality, in other words. The music doesn't need to be overdramatic to be deep; its depth lies in its ability to strike an emotional chord in the listener's heart. I am referring here not to the audience of mainstream rock, but to those of us whose musical tastes have transcended the influence of a built-in code of acceptability which continues to restrict the wide possibilities for innovation in popular music. Granted, more people respond to the unrealistic glamour and heroism of the material churned out by today's chart-topping artists than those who find solace in the more down-to-earth sensibilities of the Smiths and other bands of similar stature. My point is that there are many musicians out there of much greater popularity who are more deserving of Plant's passing accusation.

MARK AMBROSE
Alexandria, VA

RX FOR RJ

IT IS IRONIC (OR WAS IT INTENTIONal?) that the July RECORD featured both Anthony DeCurtis' satisfying interview with R.E.M. and RJ Smith's glib, none-too-funny "review" of their new album. If anything, Smith's diatribe exemplifies the backlash against the group that DeCurtis wisely predicted in his article. What album did RJ Smith listen to, and how closely and thoughtfully? What purpose do his tossed-off judgments about the band members serve? What's this business about Michael Stipe "as the 'Donovan' of the '80s," Pete Buck's tiredness as a guitar player and Joe Boyd's inadequacy as a producer? Not only are these accusations insubstantial, but they clutter an album review whose sole focus should be the music/message. Smith's snide comments and insincere parting praise of R.E.M.'s greatness and popularity cannot disguise a careless and insensitive review.

SHARON YESCHKE
Pittsburgh, PA

MAYBE RJ SMITH SHOULD FLIP back 40 pages from his R.E.M. review and read Anthony DeCurtis' fine article on the band. DeCurtis sees the problems a vastly

Record

EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Kurt Zahner

MANAGING EDITOR
David McGee

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Anthony DeCurtis

SENIOR EDITORS
David Gans, Mark Mehler

ART DIRECTOR
J.C. Woeltz Dizney

PICTURE EDITOR
John McAlley

DESIGN CONSULTANT
Ken Silvia Design Group

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Craig Anderton, J.D. Considine, Jody Denberg
Dan Forte, Deborah Frost, Jonathan Gross, Alan Hecht *(video)*, Christopher Hill, John Hutchinson, Doc Pomus
Martin Porter, Derk Richardson, Greg Tate

ADVERTISING
Adrianne Noroian
Marilyn Taerstein *(Classifieds)*

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION
Michele Schwartz

VICE PRESIDENT
Marty Ostrow

ADVERTISING PROMOTION
Valerie Green *(Dir.)*
Aija Lejins, Mary B. Glasser, Jane MacKenzie
Mary Neagoy *(Publicity)*

SALES DEVELOPMENT
Kathy Gordon, Rita Malatesta

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
John Skipper

NATIONAL MARKETING DIRECTOR
John Lowe

SUBSCRIPTIONS DIRECTOR
Kim Shorb

CIRCULATION MANAGERS
Ron Brennan, Bob Bruno, Bill Coad, Dana Howard
Ed Johnson, Jim Kennedy, Georgia Myer
Nicky Roe

MANAGER OF RETAIL SALES
James Jacobs

MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTION
Dan Sullivan *(Director)*
Patrick Pagano *(Editorial System Manager)*
Barbara Gray *(Print Manager)*
Michael Roseman *(Traffic Mgr.)*
May-may Chan *(Intern)*

RECORD is a special interest publication of Straight Arrow Publishers, Inc.:

Chairman:
Jann S. Wenner
Sr. Vice President:
Kent Brownridge

Main Office:
745 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10151
(212) 758-3800

Advertising Department
(212) 350-1298

The entire contents of RECORD (ISSN 0745-2594) are copyright© 1985 by Straight Arrow Publishers, Inc., and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without written permission from the publisher. All rights reserved. Publisher does not assume responsibility for any unsolicited materials and will return only those accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. RECORD is published monthly at the subscription price of $12.00 for one year by Straight Arrow Publishers, Inc., 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY, 10151. Microform editions of RECORD are available through UMI, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, (800) 521-0600, and through Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691, (800) 321-9881. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to RECORD, P.O. Box 12985, Boulder, CO 80302. This edition published August 24 for newsstand sales from September 17 through October 21.

RETAILERS

DON'T LET THESE PROFITS GET AWAY!
SELL ROLLING STONE AND RECORD.

Whether you sell records, musical instruments, home audio-video equipment, books or almost anything: Your customers read ROLLING STONE.

And now they are also reading RECORD, the fastest growing music monthly around.

Earn extra profits at no risk, by selling ROLLING STONE and RECORD in your store. We can supply you with the copies and help you display them with free customized counter racks.

Call us collect at 212/350-1203...Ask for Jim Jacobs...he'll give you the details and start your copies coming.

It's small until you turn it on.

This AM/FM stereo weighs only 2.1 ounces, but you won't take its sound lightly. Because it has the dynamic power output of much larger models. Yet it fits in your palm, your pocket or clips onto your belt. Even the headphones are tiny. So turn on the RP-33 or the even smaller, FM stereo only, RP-30. There's nothing small about the way they sound.

In Touch with Tomorrow
TOSHIBA
Toshiba America, Inc. 82 Totowa Road, Wayne, NJ 07470

talented cult band faces with that dirty word "success" ("The band that once could no wrong can suddenly be seen as doing nothing right"), and Smith provides the prime example for this. He condemns R.E.M. for being "predictable, stalled," but I can envision an identical opening line ("Jefferson, I think they're lost") if the album had completely diverged from what R.E.M. does best. Blaming anything on Michael Stipe is ridiculous, enough about the lyrics. *Murmur* gets labelled "indecipherable," but then *Reckoning* becomes "unmysterious." Smith's cynicism ("get that R.E.M. experience") is offending, and "they don't rock" is just plain silly criticism of this band; Smith probably likes only the "zipping" songs on *Murmur*, anyway. And as for the songs being about *anything*, what then was "Radio Free Europe" *about*?

TERRY FEWLIN
Philadelphia, PA

OBJECTIVELY SPEAKING

AS A RELATIVELY CONSERVATIVE thinker, I was predictably bothered by many of the statements made by Jackson Browne in discussing his interest in Sandinista musical artists with Derk Richardson in the August RECORD ("Jackson Browne and the Nicaraguan New Song Movement"). But I soon realized that the cause of my displeasure was in the *content* of Browne's statements, not in Richardson's manner of presentation. Confronted with this subject, I would have expected a sympathetic journalist to riddle the piece with cheap shots at those who disagreed; but if any cheap shots were taken, they didn't come from Derk Richardson. His objective detailing of a highly polarized issue was an achievement many journalists could never duplicate. You read the story and you know what was said. So the liberals can like the senility remarks about Reagan and the conservatives can appreciate the frank exposure of Browne's vintage "hippie" philosophy. I, incidentally, liked both.

PETE JAMISON
Radio Central—KTTX AM & KWHI FM
Brenham, TX

TOM TERRIFIC

THANKS FOR SHEDDING SOME light on what Tom Petty has been doing for the last two years (August RECORD). *Southern Accents* was worth the wait; it's grown on me much like Petty has. He's always doing something interesting musically, and I want to be there to listen.

STACY JACKSON
Albion, MI

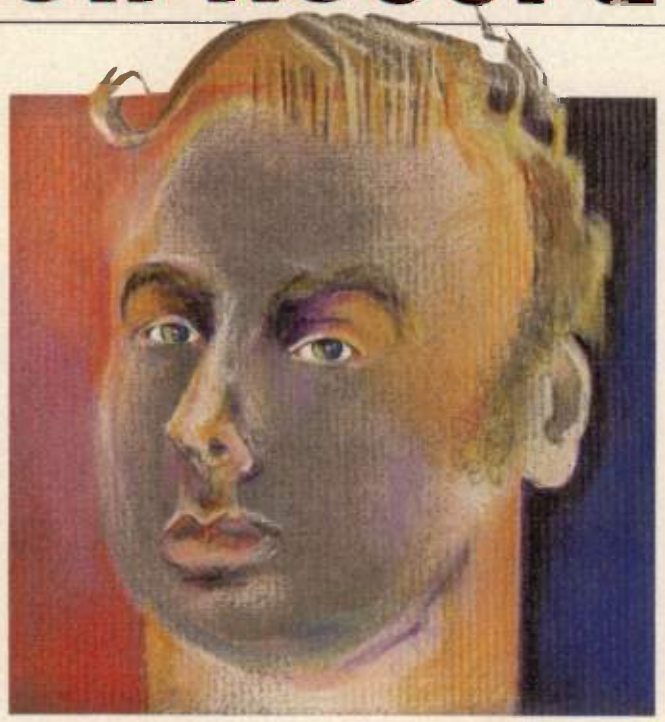
CORRECTION

DUE TO AN EDITING ERROR, STEVEN Schwartz's byline was omitted from an article in RECORD's May issue. "A Little Travelling Music, Please" was co-written by Schwartz and Martin Porter. □

On Record

CHATTING

Van Morrison



Van Morrison has been a powerful, enigmatic figure on the music scene for two decades. When he came to New York on his recent tour, he granted *Record* one of his rare interviews—and revealed in his manner, attitude and delivery why those interviews have been so rare. Sitting nervously in his hotel room, Van alternated between a rather startling candor and an equally startling defensiveness, a manifestation of Van's contradictory desires to discuss his work in depth while simultaneously keeping the process of his creativity shrouded in comfortable secrecy. This intense internal dynamic yielded some remarkable admissions about how Morrison was affected by critics of his work, his exalted sense of the literary merit of his lyrics, and his sobering estimation of life as a songwriting bard. For a trip into the mystic, and into the person, read on.

"Tore Down A La Rimbaud" on *A Sense of Wonder* is about the difficulties of inspiration. Is that something you experience a great deal, and does it worry you?

I suppose anyone who writes goes through this. I mean, it's basically what I do, so when I'm not doing it, what else am I doing (laughs)? Basically, I just try to ride it out, because "making it happen" makes it worse—it's like insomnia. I just have to wait until I hear something . . . Otherwise it's not the flow. It's being forced.

Were there any points at which you felt you were becoming too self-conscious about what you were doing and that that hurt you?

Oh yeah, yeah. Sure. You're just doing it naturally, like breathing, right? So you start writing songs, and it's just like everything else in life—it's just the way it's going. Then you have a couple of albums out and you get these reviews, and these people are saying, Well, this means this about that, and he was going through that when he wrote this. You read these things and you go, Who are they talking about? This sort of analyzation puts it all somewhere else. And then you run into other people and they say, I read this thing in such and such years ago where this guy said . . . is that right? And then you get involved in all that sort of analyzation about what it means, and the *projection*. So you get to the point where you're afraid to write *anything*, because you know somebody's gonna make something of it.

How does your own process of self-criticism operate?

Well, just knowing that it's right, not based on analyzation, but based more on the magic of the thing. If the magic's right, then it's right, even if somebody played a wrong note.

You set one of Yeats' "Crazy Jane" poems to music for *A Sense of Wonder*. Were you personally involved in the efforts to get the Yeats estate to let you put it on the album?

No, no.

Did it disappoint you that they refused to let you do it?

No, not at all.

You just felt that they were entitled to do what they want?

Well, I've recorded other people's songs before. I mean, my lyrics are better than Yeats' anyway, so I figure I was doing him a favor in the first place. I just didn't want to piss around, basically. I don't need that, so Thank you very much. Goodbye —you know, that was basically it. But it was sort of blown up in the press.

Mose Allison's "If You Only Knew" was the song you substituted for the Yeats poem. Was there any reason why you didn't use another of your own songs?

Well, no, you see there *was* no other original, for one thing. There wasn't an original that I wanted to put on the album that I had a take of that I liked. Number one. Number two is I felt that that song fit the situation perfectly. So I put on "If You Only Knew" because it just fell into my hat and I said, Of course, this is it, it says exactly what I want to say about this situation: "If you only knew/All the problems that a man like me has to face./If you only knew/ All the stupid things that keep a man from his place." It was perfect.

Obviously your lyrics are really important to you, but part of the way they communicate is the way that you sing them, your vocal style . . .

What? Tell me something, could you tell me something? I've been wondering about this for a while, I just realized maybe I should ask somebody. Why is it that people ask me these certain questions? I mean . . . it's just for me, personally. Journalists are always asking me different questions than they ask, I notice, other people in my profession. I mean, other people that would be, say, in a similar sort of marketplace, or whatever you want to call it—or peers. And I've been trying to figure this out for a while, and I figure I should just ask somebody and try to get it that way, because *I* don't know. But it seems like the interviews that I do, people ask me . . . I mean, you're asking me completely different questions than, say, you would ask Dylan, for instance.

I'm not sure I wouldn't ask Dylan this question.

Really? Because, you see, I'm very unanalytical about what I do, and that's why . . . but people seem to want to get in there and find out . . . and these are things I really don't even want to think about because it's taking away what that is. Do you know what I'm saying? But still that seems to be what people want to know, so I'm wondering why, me in

ILLUSTRATION BY JAN BOROWICZ

A slight improvement on perfection.

Technics compact disc players.

Technics compact disc players. And the digital compact disc. Together they've given you what no conventional audio system can: the perfection of musical reality.

So with Technics, what you hear is not just a reproduction of a performance, but a re-creation of it.

But occasionally even the musical perfection of a compact disc can be marred by fingerprints, dust or scratches. So the Technics SL-P2 compact disc player has improvements like an advanced error correction system, designed to compensate for those imperfections. To help ensure that the sound you hear is still completely flawless.

COMPACT disc DIGITAL AUDIO

You also get sophisticated, convenient controls. Such as 15-step random access programming so you can play any selection. In any order. And all of this can be controlled from across the room with Technics wireless remote control.

The digital revolution continues at Technics. Perfectly.

Technics
The science of sound

particular, or writers in particular, because I don't think about it that way at all. Because to me that's an indulgence, that's indulgent. That's not something I care to do.

Still, it often seems in your singing that you're trying to convey something that's beyond words.

It's also the way that the words are being said. It's never exactly what it is on a page. The oral tradition is the closest to what something actually is, because it's the way somebody is saying the thing. It's also the *way* it's being said. For instance, I'm saying things now, which in print are going to look completely different, because you don't see my facial expressions, you don't hear the tone, you know, all that kind of stuff. So, words on a page is as close as you can get to the thing, but it's not the real thing.

What advice would you give beginning songwriters, based on what your experience has taught you?

I would probably tell them what people told me and I didn't listen, which is that you need something else as well. You have to have something else. You can't just rely on that. Anything, another job, another hobby, another interest, another angle. I'm somebody that has made it, so-called, quote-unquote, in brackets. Well, this actual thing doesn't exist. To me, through my experience, "making it" does not exist. It's another word. It's like, when you're at school, they have words for things and they have classifications for different people. And also society has got terms for things, right? And "making it" is a term, but it's *just* a term—it doesn't mean anything. It's not a reality. So what I'm saying is, Look, I've gone through this process early on, the mill, what have you, I've gone through this and it's not something I think is *desirable*. That's basically what I'm saying. But that's just my personal thing. That's my opinion. Now whether that's going to influence people or not, I have no idea. But all I can do is talk about it. **—Anthony DeCurtis**

KILLER TRACKS

Jerry Lee's Lengthening Shadow

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE

Though he's been written off as a dead man more than once, Jerry Lee Lewis—friend of the Devil and of the Holy Ghost; card-carrying living legend—turns 50 this September. He hasn't made a record in quite some time, and he doesn't even have a deal at the moment. But, while he himself has almost vanished in the modish glare of the go-go sun, the long shadow of his past looms larger with every passing day.

First there was the 12-record import set on Charly, *Jerry Lee Lewis: The Sun Years*, the most lavish reissue in rock 'n' roll history. Now, as we speak, Bear Family Records in Germany is planning an even more ambitious Jerry Lee package, comprising everything he recorded during his prolific years (1963-1977) with Smash and Mercury. In the meantime, Rhino Records has

Your office could be crawling with Walkerschnappers.

On Record

released a two-record album called *Milestones*.

One nice thing about this set (which is, contrary to the little sticker on its cover, far from being "The Definitive Collection") is that it flows straight from the Sun into the Smash-Mercury years. Another, in a way even nicer, thing is the glossy, eight-page booklet within. Written by Los Angeles-based rock historian Art Fein, it contains some of the best Jerry Lee graphics available; and, as if that weren't enough, it also plugs one of my books.

Nothing will take the place of the Charly and forthcoming Bear Family boxes; but *Milestones* does as much justice to Jerry Lee's quarter century of brilliance and lunacy as any two records are likely to do. If only they had included "Meat Man." **—Nick Tosches**

GETTING BETTER

Rick James Cleans Up

RICK JAMES: CAN HE "REALLY LOVE"?

For much of his eight-album career, Rick James thought he was living better through chemistry. He had an unwavering routine. Joints to fire up his creativity. Alcohol to smooth out the day's rough edges. Cocaine to keep his lids open through long studio nights. Pills to put it all out of his mind so he could sleep.

At the time, he thought it helped him cope with the rigors of recording, touring, producing (in addition to himself, Teena Marie, the Temptations, Eddie Murphy, Val Young, Process and the Doo Rags, the Mary Jane Girls), creating new groups (the Mary Janes, Process) and carrying around that superbad Lothario image while trying to find a woman he could really love.

The mating game alone is exhausting enough. Atop that, James says, "the drinking and the drugging was taking its toll. It was killing me."

Stretched out on the sofa of a West Hollywood hotel, James is making himself heard above the laughter and screams of kids playing below the window. Earlier this year he checked into McLean Hospital, outside Boston, to get himself rehabilitated. "Since I got out of the hospital," he says, "my life has been real good. I'm relating to everything. I enjoy waking up at nine o'clock and hearing the birds sing and not wanting to shoot them."

Like other AA and Narcotics Anonymous initiates, James is going public with his sordid tale, his will fortified by the groups' 12-step program to battle drug-inflated paranoias. "Drugs personified things," he says, "left me vulnerable toward feelings that weren't even there."

The "didn't haves" hurt most. No wife. No kids. Fewer record sales and zero presence on MTV. Status lost when Prince swaggered along with an even more titillating funk 'n' roll repertoire and a film (something James has been trying to complete for years) to boot.

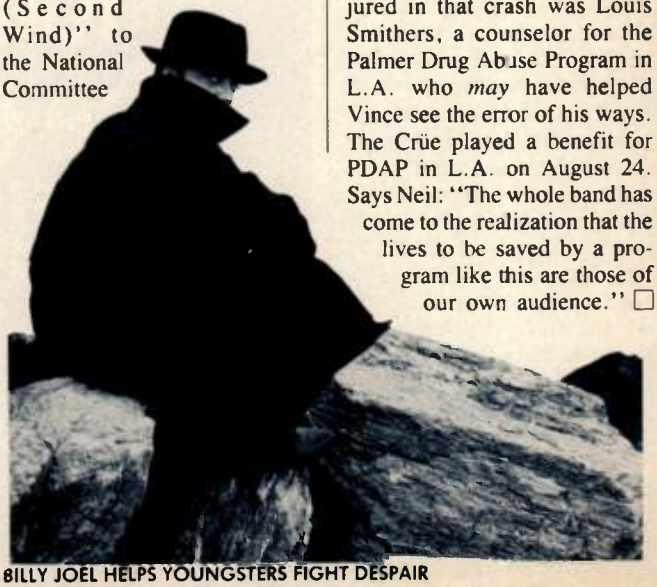
At his nadir, James conceived his latest album, *Glow*, as an aspiration. "I felt my light was pretty dim," he recalls. On the new LP he trades his synthetic synthesizer sound for lush arrangements, replacing the trademark come-ons with more wise and tender observations about women, goals and life. Next up are a fall tour and a starring film role. The story? "It'll be about my life," James announces. "Sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll. And," he emphasizes, "reality."

—Susanne Whatley

THUMBS UP

Billy Joel: Choose Life

To Billy Joel, for donating all the royalties from his hit single "You're Only Human (Second Wind)" to the National Committee for Youth Suicide Prevention. Joel says he was moved to do this good deed after the son of a close business associate committed suicide. And, not least of all, because Joel himself once considered suicide himself during a particularly frustrating time of his teenage years, and remembers what those feelings are all about. □



BILLY JOEL HELPS YOUNGSTERS FIGHT DESPAIR

THUMBS UP

Crüe Nixes Brew

Mötley Crüe—whoda thunk it?—include an advisory to their fans on the inner sleeve of their latest album, *Theatre of Pain*. Sez the Crue: "If and/or when you drink—Don't take the wheel. Live and learn—so we can all f***in' rock our asses off together for a long, long time to come." The Crüe—heretofore not known for social conscience—have done a worthy service to their fans by refusing to glamorize D&D (drinking & driving). Lead singer Vince Neil, of course, got an up close and personal lesson in this subject last December when he crashed while driving under the influence. Neil was fortunate to live and learn; his passenger, Hanoi Rocks drummer Razzle, died in the crash. One of the people injured in that crash was Louis Smithers, a counselor for the Palmer Drug Abuse Program in L.A. who *may* have helped Vince see the error of his ways. The Crüe played a benefit for PDAP in L.A. on August 24. Says Neil: "The whole band has come to the realization that the lives to be saved by a program like this are those of our own audience." □

LYNN GOLDSMITH / LGI (TOP); BARRY GOLDENBERG (BOTTOM)

NEW ARTISTS

UTFO: Bringing Hip Hop to the Masses

Doctor Ice can't be reached—he's momentarily entranced by his own image as he sees the cover of UTFO's debut album for the first time. The Educated Rapper is out of touch, too. Unaccustomed to the demands of a rigorous touring schedule, an exhausted "EMD" (Educated Most Definitely) lies unconscious for the duration of our interview. Fortunately, the Kangol Kid is all there. Punctuating his responses with convulsive laughter, the man with the name of a hat is a primed spokesman for Brooklyn's UnTouchable Force Organization.

"It's a dream come true!" he exclaims, reeling from the excitement of joining brethren Run-D.M.C. and Whodini as the first rap acts to crack the pop market. UTFO's password: "Roxanne" (RECORD, July '85). "We were in Virginia and there was a little white kid standing next to me. 'Roxanne' was playin' and he was singin' it all with me! That made me feel so good! That kid was gettin' down!"

Pursue the "Roxanne" phenomenon and you'll get Kangol's concise, if slightly less than comprehensive overview on rap's evolution. "First you had DJs and MCs talkin' about themselves—how much money they've got, limousines, maids and so on. Then it changed to the message raps—talkin' about 'Don't drink and drive,' 'Go to school,' poverty, crime. Then what we did was make somethin' different," he informs with the cool authority of an historian and pioneer, "a gossip rap, a Roxanne rap." But did UTFO know they were making something different? "No! We didn't!" he explodes with uncontrollable laughter, delighted by the equation of irony and fate—and, dare we forget, talent—that now make UTFO a very hot property . . . with a very hot LP.

Their self-titled debut album (on the independent Select label) offers evidence of a group determined to blow a permanent hole through the wall that separates Hip Hop from a mass market. With the invaluable contributions of Mix Master Ice and producers Full Force, UTFO have fashioned a melodically invigorating, lyrically deft cross-cultural fusion of inner-city esoterica (hard beats, street lingo) and pop conventions (melodies, choruses, hooks, bridges). In a perfect world, "Beats & Rhymes," this hybrid's most exhilarating by-product, would find a place in Casey Kasem's American Top 40. Can't you hear that familiar nasal warble: "The highest charting debut of the week belongs to three fresh fly-guys from Flatbush. Here's Doctor Ice, the Educated Rapper and the Kangol Kid with their def jam . . ."

Warned of the life-changing prospects of such popularity, Kangol's heretofore flowing rap jams up a bit as he considers the road ahead: "Damn . . . I don't know . . . Doc? . . . I'm a little scared . . . DAMN! If we *gotta* do it!" he resolves with the heartiest laugh of all.

—John McAlley

DIANE DANIELS

There may be Walkerschnappers right in your neighborhood.

On Record

GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALLS

In Atlanta, It's 688

HOMETOWN KIDS GUADALCANAL DIARY ROCK 688

688 Spring Street
Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta focuses its rock scene energies on a single club, 688. Pretenders to its eminence crop up periodically, but the downtown hangout has weathered half a decade of club wars. With its habitues sporting the town's few dangerous haircuts, 688's bombed-out ambience brings a needed bit of daring to Dixie's pleasant center.

Brave souls from the breadbasket suburbs will venture in, but the club's rent is paid by an amiable mix of the urban trendy, a growing new music hardcore, and undergrads from nearby Georgia Tech. A former soundman for Prince and Ray Parker, Jr., impresario Steve May has the trained ears to guarantee a party—his booking mix balances noisemasters (the Meat Puppets), legends (John Cale) and revivalists (the Blasters). Iggy Pop's six-night assault spun a few heads around, and hometown faves (the Swimming Pool Q's, Ring of Fire, the Nightporters) predictably draw well. Athens sends down its finest to keep the party hearty, whether true gods like R.E.M. or new blood like Dreams So Real.

Holding, at max, 500 boppers, 688 is small enough to coax bands to sweat intensity and spacious enough for power dancing. And while the club boasts big screens that justify serious video fun and has hosted events as unusual as a fiction reading by rock critic Tom Carson, the city's best sound system keeps the action centered on stage and dancefloor. A carnival for those who think cool, 688 remains Action Central for some hot nights in Georgia.

—Paul Evans

NEW ARTISTS

Hooters Follow that Dream

For the five guys from Philly now's a good time to bet the house. As the Hooters are finding out, when you're on a roll, your number comes up again and again . . . and again.

"We've been having a lot of fantasies come true lately," says singer-songwriter-keyboardist Rob Hyman, who along with fellow head-Hooter Eric Bazilian have combined everything from jazz to reggae to create an addictive brand of refreshing pop-rock.

From providing the instrumental thrust on 1984's hottest debut album, Cyndi Lauper's *She's So Unusual*, to opening the American end of Live Aid, it's been a year in which the quintet has done, Hyman notes, "what every musician hopes to do"—culminating in the Hooters' own debut album, *Nervous Night*, making the charts. And before all of this happened, Hyman achieved some personal notoriety as Lauper's co-writer on the chart-topping single, "Time After Time."

Like fellow Philadelphians Hall and Oates, the Hooters trace their eclectic sound to the various styles heard in their hometown. "You can find a lot of influences in what we do," he says, adding that open-minded audiences and club owners in Philly encouraged them to play original music.

Though the professional sheen of their LP (produced, like Lauper's, by Rick Chertoff) smacks of incipient professionalism—read "corporate rock"—Hyman insists the Hooters aren't "chart-watching." Rather, they're following a dream common to the best bands: "An endless pursuit of writing good music and making each gig better." And that's worth more than a hoot.

—Greg Clarkin

KEN KELLY *(TOP)*; ERIC ROSNER *(BOTTOM)*

On Record

NEW ARTISTS

Crazy 8s: A 'Think-and-Dance' Band

We're trying to write songs that mean something and take a political stand," asserts Todd Duncan, saxophonist, lead vocalist and principal songwriter for the Portland-based Crazy 8s. "But we're also a good-time band."

The octet's debut album, *Law and Order*, produced in Portland by Dazz Band guitarist Marlon McLain and released on the independent Red Rum label (P.O. Box 1084, Beaverton, OR 97075) has been holding steady on U.S. indie rock charts for nearly a year. Its cover drawing, by political cartoonist Jack Ohman (whose work is seen on *ABC News Nightline*), portrays a scowling, cowboy-hatted Ronald Reagan reaching for a pair of MX missiles in the holster around his waist.

Musically, the 8s offer a lyrically astute, provocative blend of ska, reggae, R&B and rock influences presented with disarming frat-rat insouciance: sort of like UB40 meets the Kingsmen on the set of *Animal House*. The band was formed in 1982 when a few student musicians in the Oregon State University jazz department and their friends began jamming at parties after school. Within a year, the eight-piece group had tightened up its act considerably and was packing them in at dance clubs up and down the "I-5 circuit" from southern Oregon to Vancouver, British Columbia.

Last year, the 8s received additional national exposure when they were selected to perform on *Star Search*. They won the first week, then fell to a bland lounge act reminiscent of Air Supply. Nevertheless, their experience became the subject of a feature article in *TV Guide*, in which Duncan was compared to Alfred E. Newman. "Reading it in *TV Guide*, who cares?" he remarks with a "What, me worry?" smile, then adds, "It was fun. You don't scoff at national exposure."

With *Law and Order* attracting major labels to the Pacific Northwest woods, the Crazy 8s are hard at work on a followup LP, due out this fall. They hope to follow that with their first East Coast tour. "I'm trying to get more of a funk groove in my writing," says Duncan. "Real dance-oriented. Think-and-dance, I call it."

—Rico Mitchell

THUMBS DOWN

Where the Action Ain't

Although it's history now, let us not forget one of network television's lowest moments, an ABC summer replacement show called *Rock and Roll Summer Action*. An update of the likably dumb mid-'60s teen show *Where The Action Is*, *Summer Action*, hosted

Your best friend may be a Walkerschnapper.

by a hyped-up Christopher Atkins, was mindless beyond belief. Kids aren't as stupid and rock music isn't as inconsequential as this Dick Clark production would have us believe. Too bad some good artists like Philip Bailey had to waste their time lip-synching through this balderdash. □

ON STAGE

'I Stand Here Alone'

NICK ELGAR / LGI

In these, her salad days, pretty much all Tina Turner has to do is show up and not trip on her spiked heels. All the world loves a soul survivor, and Turner's grueling professional and personal odyssey is well known to almost everyone. If that weren't enough, she's so endearing and wholesome in live performance that no audience would dream of *letting her down* by not participating fully in this celebration of her triumph. Hawking *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* with video clips and spoken asides might look tacky on another performer; on Tina Turner even hard-core commercialism looks good.

Her first-ever headlining show at Madison Square Garden—part of her first North American coliseum headlining tour—was not, strictly speaking, a seminal music event. Though she upped the energy level a little to fill the larger hall, it was your basic Tina Turner Show. Lots of show-biz acumen manifested in well-choreographed strutting, seamless costume changes, impeccable song selection (mostly from the *Private Dancer* LP), revved-up rhythm licks and a near-total absence of pandering. As always, she managed the neat trick of appearing to be everybody's Private Singer/Dancer, all the while doing it mainly for herself. If you didn't know or care about Ike and Mick and Rod, it was a good time. If you knew all of it, it was an inspirational good time.

Abetting the celebration was a superb touring band, which included Tina's long-time keyboardist Kenny Moore; saxophonist/keyboardist Tim Cappello, a Rambo without the body count; guitarist/vocalist James Ralston and drummer Jack Bruno. Moore did a nice job pinch-hitting for the star during costume breaks.

The male superstar foil didn't show and wasn't missed. "Tonight," Turner told the audience, who may have expected some Live Aid-type hijinks, "I stand here alone." After which she turned the Beatles' "Help" into a stunning ballad, through sheer force of raw talent and good will.

Alone, coupled, any way at all—it's all Tina and it's all just fine. **—Mark Mehler**

TOP 50 ALBUMS

1	SONGS FROM THE BIG CHAIR	Tears for Fears *(Mercury)*
2	NO JACKET REQUIRED	Phil Collins *(Atlantic)*
3	AROUND THE WORLD IN A DAY	Prince *(WB)*
4	BORN IN THE U.S.A.	Bruce Springsteen *(Col)*
5	RECKLESS	Bryan Adams *(A&M)*
6	THE DREAM OF THE BLUE TURTLES	Sting *(A&M)*
7	LIKE A VIRGIN	Madonna *(Sire)*
8	THEATRE OF PAIN	Motley Crue *(Elektra)*
9	INVASION OF YOUR PRIVACY	Ratt *(Atlantic)*
10	MAKE IT BIG	Wham! *(Col)*
11	33 1/3	Power Station *(Capitol)*
12	BROTHERS IN ARMS	Dire Straits *(WB)*
13	WHITNEY HOUSTON	Whitney Houston *(Arista)*
14	LITTLE CREATURES	Talking Heads *(WB)*
15	BE YOURSELF TONIGHT	Eurythmics *(RCA)*
16	BEVERLY HILLS COP	Soundtrack *(MCA)*
17	DREAM INTO ACTION	Howard Jones *(Elektra)*
18	7 WISHES	Night Ranger *(Camel/MCA)*
19	GREATEST HITS I & II	Billy Joel *(Col)*
20	VOICES CARRY	'til tuesday *(Epic)*
21	WORLD WIDE LIVE	Scorpions *(Mercury)*
22	VITAL SIGNS	Survivor *(Scotti Bros)*
23	ROCK ME TONITE	Freddie Jackson *(Capitol)*
24	FLASH	Jeff Beck *(Epic)*
25	EMPIRE BURLESQUE	Bob Dylan *(Col)*
26	HEART	Heart *(Capitol)*
27	DIAMOND LIFE	Sade *(Epic)*
28	THE NIGHT I FELL IN LOVE	Luther Vandross *(Epic)*
29	SUDDENLY	Billy Ocean *(Jive/Arista)*
30	SOUTHERN ACCENTS	Tom Petty *(MCA)*
31	FABLES OF THE RECONSTRUCTION	R.E.M. *(I.R.S.)*
32	AIR SUPPLY	Air Supply *(Arista)*
33	THE SECRET OF ASSOCIATION	Paul Young *(Col)*
34	EMERGENCY	Kool & the Gang *(De-Lite)*
35	SHAKEN 'N' STIRRED	Robert Plant *(Es Paranza)*
36	BOY IN THE BOX	Corey Hart *(EMI)*
37	CENTERFIELD	John Fogerty *(WB)*
38	FLY ON THE WALL	AC/DC *(Atlantic)*
39	BROTHER WHERE YOU BOUND	Supertramp *(A&M)*
40	WIDE AWAKE IN AMERICA	U2 *(Island)*
41	SOME GREAT REWARD	Depeche Mode *(WB)*
42	YOUTHQUAKE	Dead or Alive *(Epic)*
43	BOYS & GIRLS	Bryan Ferry *(WB)*
44	WHO'S ZOOMIN WHO	Aretha Franklin *(Arista)*
45	UTFO	UTFO *(Select)*
46	DARE TO BE STUPID	Weird Al Yankovic *(Rock 'n' Roll)*
47	ONLY FOUR YOU	Mary Jane Girls *(Gordy)*
48	PRIVATE DANCER	Tina Turner *(Capitol)*
49	BUILDING THE PERFECT BEAST	Don Henley *(Geffen)*
50	MAVERICK	George Thorogood *(EMI)*

Top 50 Album chart researched and compiled by Street Pulse Group

TOP 20 MUSIC VIDEO SALES

1	WHAM! THE VIDEO Wham! *(CBS-Fox Home Video)*
2	WE ARE THE WORLD Various Artists *(RCA-Columbia Home Video)*
3	PRIVATE DANCER Tina Turner *(Sony)*
4	RICK SPRINGFIELD: BEAT OF THE LIVE DRUM Rick Springfield *(RCA-Columbia Home Video)*
5	LIONEL RICHIE: ALL NIGHT LONG Lionel Richie *(RCA-Columbia Home Video)*
6	MADONNA Madonna *(Warner Home Video)*
7	ELTON JOHN'S NIGHTTIME CONCERT Elton John *(Vestron Video)*
8	AIN'T THAT AMERICA John Cougar Mellencamp *(RCA-Columbia Home Video)*
9	VISIONS OF DIANA ROSS Diana Ross *(RCA-Columbia Home Video)*
10	U2: UNDER A BLOOD RED SKY U2 *(MCA Home Video)*
11	DURAN DURAN SING BLUE SILVER Duran Duran *(Thorn-EMI)*
12	RATT: THE VIDEO Ratt *(Atlantic Home Video)*
13	RUSH: THROUGH THE CAMERA'S EYE Rush *(RCA-Columbia Home Video)*
14	THE RHYTHMATIST Stewart Copeland *(A&M Home Video)*
15	THE JAM: VIDEO SNAP The Jam *(Music Media)*
16	DIRE STRAITS: ALCHEMY Dire Straits *(Music Media)*
17	KISS ANIMALIZED Kiss *(RCA-Columbia Home Video)*
18	BEACH BOYS: AN AMERICAN BAND Beach Boys *(Vestron Video)*
19	TEARS FOR FEARS Tears for Fears *(Sony Video 45)*
20	PURPLE RAIN Prince *(Warner Home Video)*

**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.

You can be a Walkerschnapper too.

Just grab a glass of Hiram Walker Peppermint Schnapps and join the fun.

CIDER MILL APPLE · ORCHARD ORANGE · WILD STRAWBERRY
HAZELNUT · SNAPPY APRICOT · SPEARMINT · CINNAMON SCHNAPPS

HIRAM WALKER
Taste the difference.

48 & 60 Proof Liqueurs. Hiram Walker Incorporated, Farmington Hills, MI ©1985

IF YOU COULD HEAR THIS TAPE,

©1985 Memtek Products

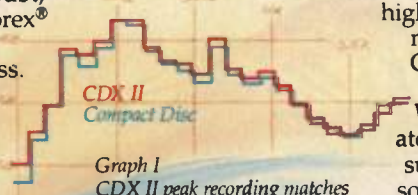
YOU'D BUY THIS AD.

Introducing The Memorex CDX II. You've Got To Hear It To Believe It.

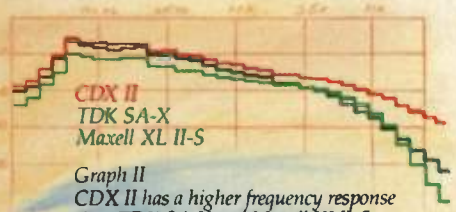
Without a doubt, the new Memorex® CDX II is in a very special class.

Consider these points:

- The CDX II is a metal tape that can be recorded and played at the high bias setting.
- The CDX II comes extremely close to matching (see Graph I) the capability of today's most challenging sound source—the Compact Disc.
- The CDX II outperforms leading high bias tapes hands down. Fact is, we compared (see Graph II) the CDX II to TDK SA-X and Maxell XLII-S. The result? When it comes to high energy recording, no one can match our levels. That's right. No one.



Graph I
*CDX II peak recording matches almost perfectly with the same music on a Compact Disc.**

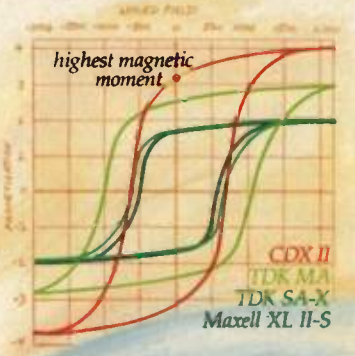


Graph II
CDX II has a higher frequency response than TDK SA-X and Maxell XLII-S.

What Makes The Memorex CDX II So Special?

A bona fide breakthrough in metal chemistry. The development of a super alloy. One which lets us turn iron, the most magnetic material there is, into a super-small particle only 12 millionths of an inch long.

This metal particle produces the highest magnetic moment of any tape we tested. Nearly twice as high as any conventional high bias tape—even higher than pure metal, until now the industry champ (see Graph III). To you, that translates into more head room. Which means you can accurately reproduce even the most sudden bursts of high energy sound that comes with the most demanding music sources.



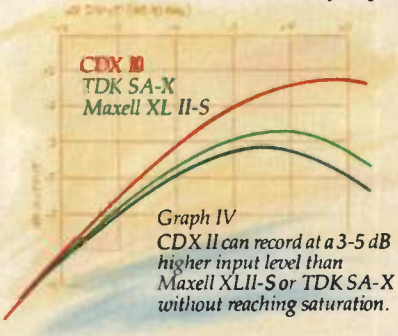
Graph III
CDX II has the highest magnetic moment.

A Tape This Good Demanded A Superior Cassette.

So, we spent two years designing our new five-screw cassette from the ground up. This precision-engineered system assures that the CDX II works as great as it sounds. In fact, we guarantee it for life.

It Unlimits Your Limitations.

The Memorex CDX II can record critically demanding music substantially better than the best conventional high bias tapes. At critical high frequencies, Memorex CDX II can faithfully reproduce music without saturating at a 3-5 dB higher input level (see Graph IV).



Graph IV
CDX II can record at a 3-5 dB higher input level than Maxell XLII-S or TDK SA-X without reaching saturation.

Now you can record at higher levels to minimize hiss, and still capture the loud passages, the peaks, the crescendos—without distortion or loss of high notes. In fact, you can almost capture the fantastic imaging digital discs have become famous for. But you can do it on tape. And do it with ease. Loud and clear. All at the high bias setting.

Compare The CDX II. You'll Find There's No Comparison.

We urge you to put loyalty aside and compare CDX II to the tape you're sold on now. Or, to any other tape you think can beat it. You'll never know what you're missing until you do.

Just send a dollar (to defray handling and shipping costs) to Memorex CDX II, P.O. Box 4261, Dept. K, Monticello, MN 55365, and we'll send you a new CDX II 90-minute cassette. Limit one per household. Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery (offer expires December 31, 1985).

**Comparison of CDX II performance versus Compact Disc containing high-energy electronic music. Data based on independent laboratory tests and examinations.*

IS IT LIVE OR IS IT MEMOREX

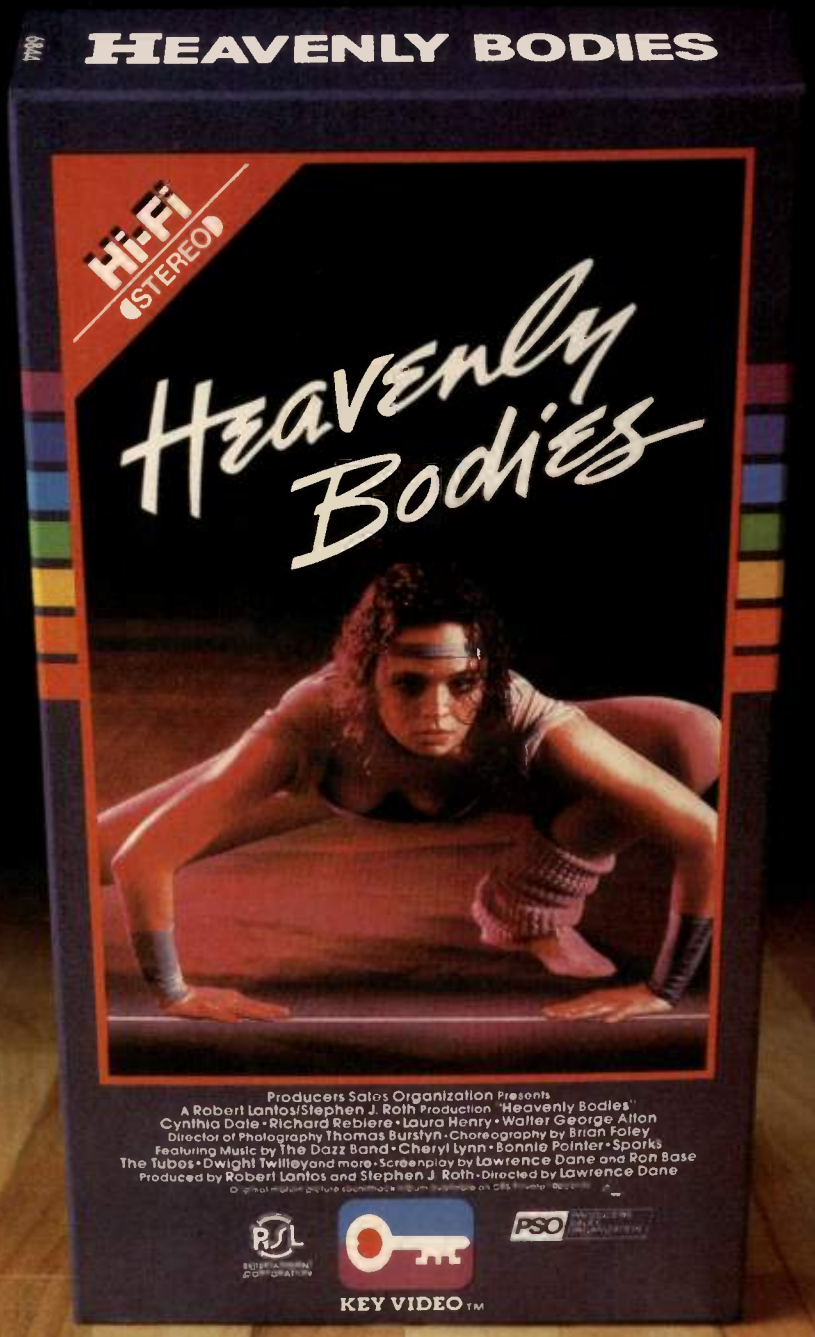
Enter the Heavenly Bodies Sweepstakes... and you could become a star!

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be in the movies? Well, here's your big chance. Just jog over to your nearest video shop and reach for an official entry blank for the Heavenly Bodies Sweepstakes. Follow the instructions and send it to us and you'll be in the running for the prize of a lifetime—a part in an on-location shooting of a new motion picture.

While you're in the store check out the newest release from Key Video—Heavenly Bodies. It's a great new movie with exciting music featuring hits by top performers like Bonnie Pointer, Cheryl Lynn, Gary Wright, and The Tubes.

Enter the Heavenly Bodies Sweepstakes and your greatest performances could go from your dreams to the big screen.

Available soon on VHS and Beta Hi-Fi Stereo Videocassette.



KEY VIDEO™

No purchase necessary. Entrants must be at least 18 years old. Sweepstakes ends November 15th. Void where prohibited by law.

Copyright © 1984 RSL Entertainment Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

© 1985 CBS/FOX Company. Key Video is a division of the CBS/Fox Company. All rights reserved. Except in Canada, CBS ® is a trademark of CBS Inc. used under license. In Canada, CBS ® is a trademark of CBS Records Canada Ltd. used under license. FOX ™ is a trademark of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation used under license.

THE LISTENING ROOM

Recording Audio from Video

Digital audio processors turn VCRs into state-of-the-art tape recorders

BY MARTIN PORTER

THANKS TO ANALOG PRESSINGS YOU CAN ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND THE LYRICS TO "SATISFACTION."

PHOTO BY MICHAEL PUTLAND / RETNA. COMPUTER REALIZATION BY FRANCK LEVY

PRETTY COOL MUSIC (PCM) ☐ At a time when rock music is looking well beyond its own narrowly defined parameters for new sources of inspiration, it seems logical for audio equipment manufacturers to figure out how to build their own sort of "global village" of hardware. Take the tape recorder, for instance.

First came the open reel machine, then 8-track, and finally the handy cassette we've all come to know and love. But there's yet another step in this evolution, and suddenly the tape recorder isn't a tape recorder at all: It's a VCR.

Surprised? It makes sense, once you understand the mechanics of the technology. Videotape is four times as wide as the standard 1/8-inch cassette; and as any engineer will tell you, the wider the tape, the better the sound quality. Hence the development of Hi-Fi VCRs capable of delivering near-digital specs.

But now, even owners of standard mono or stereo VCRs can turn their videomovie units into audio recording dynamos. And, at last, here's an across-the-board technological breakthrough, one made irrespective of the video format: in other words, it works whether your machine is Beta or VHS.

The necessary add-on is called a digital audio processor. This slimmed-down black box turns any VCR into a digital storage device rather than an analog record/playback box that makes its music by running waveforms across magnetic heads. Instead, the processor records music in the form of "ones and zeros" and plays it back in the form of dynamic rock 'n' roll (for another reference, check out Craig Anderton's Musical Electronics column in RECORD's July issue wherein he surveys this latest advance from the musician's point of view).

First, a word about digital recording.

Audio is just one of many areas undergoing rapid transformation in the computer age. With the emergence of the microprocessor in the recording studio, audio engineers realized that they could preserve and play back a wider range of audio frequencies by reducing a jam session down to "byte sized" morsels. Exactly how good this sounds depends on how quickly the recorder chops the music up into pieces and how well it puts it back together for your ears.

The digital audio processor handles this process and makes use of an ordinary VCR while it's at it, thus preserving in pristine condition albums and Compact Discs, while saving up to eight hours worth of music on a single VHS cassette. Moreover, you can set the VCR in any slow mode (i.e., Beta III, SP, EP) without fear of sound degradation.

Musicians, as Anderton noted, are now able to turn out home demos equal in sonic quality to Donald Fagen or Stevie Wonder's master tapes, simply by using a digital processor, a VCR and a good microphone. Try to accomplish this feat any other way—even with a professional reel-to-reel.

The exact method by which this is done is called PCM digital recording—not short for Pretty Cool Music, I'm afraid. Rather, the acronym stands for Pulse Code Modulation. Suffice it to say that the music is sampled by a computer chip and then translated into digital information which is then preserved on videotape. The advantage of all this maneuvering is to eliminate the drawbacks of analog recording—noise, distortion and wow and flutter.

On specs alone these VCR digital recordings don't stand up to the venerable Com-

pact Disc, but in a casual listening test among friends recently, few could tell the difference between the two. Several actually preferred the tape to the optical disc variety. They described the sound as "warmer."

Sansui's PC-X11 ($900) gives a good indication of how this technology comes together for the living room. Delivering a dynamic range of over 86 dB and a flat frequency range from 5 to 20,000 Hz, this unit is capable of delivering at home virtually any sound made in a recording session. Sansui claims its PCM chip is 100 times more accurate than its competitors', and the box will also act as a switcher between two VCRs and two TV monitors. In fact, with two VCRs attached, you can dub one videocassette to the other and there will be no difference between the original and the copy. The PC-X11 also comes with one microphone input.

If any company deserves credit for having created this new audio product category it is (naturally) Sony, which introduced the first consumer digital audio processor in 1977—the PCM-1. This was followed in 1981 by the PCM-F1, which applied the technology to portable recording. The F1 was so successful that professional recording studios were snapping them up as quickly as possible, using them in place of the digital processor the company had invented for straight professional applications. Their newest version, the PCM-501ES, brings the price down to $750, but keeps it at home for the necessary AC current and provides no microphone input.

Meanwhile, Aiwa's budget digital processor, the PCM-800 ($650), can be integrated into a standard MIDI rack and stacked above the Aiwa AV-70M Beta Hi-Fi VCR. The PCM-800 will work with any Beta or VHS recorder as well, and sports standard specs (86 dB, 5-20,000 Hz) for the product category. Although this model is especially slim (2-1/16 inches high), it's amply equipped for recording purposes with two microphone inputs (for left and right channels). And, since it weighs just over 7.5 pounds, it won't break your back if you want to drag it to a local gig.

AUDIOPHILIACS ☐ Now that you know digital audio recording exists for the home, what can you do with it? Apart from its live recording application, the best use of a digital processor (for the time being) is as a way of preserving vinyl LPs in immaculate condition. This is especially important for audiophile LP collectors who, despite the advent of the Compact Disc, are still very much in business.

Take, as an example, the Original Master Recording series from Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab. This company defines high-quality vinyl discs—at least of the pop music variety—and has released huge, glamorous box sets of the complete works of the Rolling Stones and the Beatles. If there is any testimony to the quality of these analog pressings, it's that you can actually understand the lyrics to "Satisfaction."

The record industry hasn't, shall we say, turned a deaf ear to the success of audiophile lines. On the other hand, the lack of a big market for fine-sounding vinyl hasn't produced any new mastering and pressing policies at the LP plants, either. But at least they've adopted quality strategies for some parts of their product line.

For instance, as part of its reintroduction of the classic Blue Note jazz catalogue, Capitol Records has gone to great pains to carve the most music into the vinyl. This line includes John Coltrane's *Blue Trane*, Herbie Hancock's *Maiden Voyage*, as well as collections by Miles Davis, Fats Navarro, Sonny Rollins and Bud Powell. Considering the fact that most of these LPs were recorded in the '50s and early '60s, these discs sound surprisingly good.

The reason is that Blue Note went to Europe to remaster the series, to Pathe Marconi in Chatou, France, which is noted for its excellent classical discs. There they use a unique direct-metal-mastering technique whereby the master (from which they press the discs) is cut directly into metal instead of into lacquer. It cuts out one step in the process and results in a much cleaner and crisper sound.

Buy a digital word processor and save this series on videotape no matter how weird they sound. You'll thank me someday-. . . say in 20 years or so. ☐

Cash Bonus!
Send payment with your order and we'll add an extra issue FREE to your subscription. That's 13 issues in all—still just $9.95!

Detach and mail today to: 8709

RECORD
P.O. Box 2985
Boulder, Colorado 80322

☐ YES! Send me a year of RECORD for just $9.95.
☐ Payment enclosed. I get 1 FREE issue! ☐ Bill me later.

Name

Address

City State Zip

SUBSCRIBE NOW AND SAVE
SUBSCRIBE NOW AND SAVE
SUBSCRIBE NOW AND SAVE

Subscribe to *Record* today and, for only $9.95, you'll get a full year (12 issues) of the best music coverage anywhere. This special rate saves you over $2 off the regular subscription price (or buying it at the newsstand) and guarantees that you won't miss a single issue in the next year.

THE AMATEUR MUSICIAN

Sequencers Step Up...

as MIDI gets into the act

BY CRAIG ANDERTON

MIDI : COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY LINKS THE MASTER TO THE SLAVE

In the early '70s, the sequencer—a device that produces a programmable sequence of notes—inspired a whole genre of synthesized music. Groups such as Tangerine Dream used sequencers to set up recurring rhythmic patterns over which they could improvise, and many a TV commercial also used sequencers to provide repetitive, hypnotic effects designed to catch the listener's ear.

However, there's often a thin line between the hypnotic and the boring; after their novelty wore off, simple analog sequencers became a much less important part of popular music. One of the main problems was that these early devices could sequence only a limited number of notes—often a maximum of eight or 16. Another problem involved programming the sequencers. Usually, the musician had to tediously adjust the slide pot (or similar control) to set the pitch of each note of the sequence.

Several years later, affordable *digital* sequencers started to appear. Sequential Circuits' Polysequencer, the Oberheim DSX, and Roland's MC-4 represented a radical change from what had come before. They stored more notes, and usually could be programmed by simply playing notes on a keyboard rather than twisting dials. In fact, Human League used an MC-4 to program most of their instruments on the *Dare* album, and DEVO used the MC-4 extensively on *Oh No It's DEVO*. The main drawback was that these improved sequencers were usually compatible with only a limited number of instruments, and were not truly "universal" devices.

Then MIDI came along. While Musical Electronics has kept on top of various aspects of MIDI's evolution, it seems every time you turn around someone devises a new application involving this synthesizer "language"—and MIDI sequencers are a hot topic these days.

In its simplest form, MIDI is a way to send digital information from one keyboard to another so that these devices can be easily slaved together. For example, if Keyboard A serves as a "master" and Keyboard B as a "slave," connecting A's MIDI out jack to B's MIDI in jack will transmit "status reports" from A to B, and B will follow whatever A is doing. If you press middle C on Keyboard A, then Keyboard B will simultaneously play middle C. In addition to transmitting note on/off data, MIDI will also send and receive data on dynamics, pitch bending and several other musically important parameters.

MIDI sequencers take advantage of computer technology to store note data (not the *sound* of the notes themselves, but MIDI data *representing* the notes) in computer memory. Programming a MIDI sequencer is simple: generally, you patch a keyboard's MIDI out jack into the sequencer's MIDI in jack, put the sequencer into record mode, and play along with the sequencer's built-in metronome. As you play, the computer stores the MIDI data generated by your performance, including timing and dynamic nuances (assuming, of course, that both the keyboard and sequencer are equipped to handle this information). On playback, the sequencer sends out this MIDI data to either the same keyboard or a slave keyboard. Furthermore, the computer memory is partitioned into tracks, just like a multitrack tape recorder. Therefore, you can "overdub" a number of individual melodic lines and play each line back into its own [*cont. on 46*]

ILLUSTRATION BY CARL WESLEY

Salem Spirit On the Beat

SCREENINGS

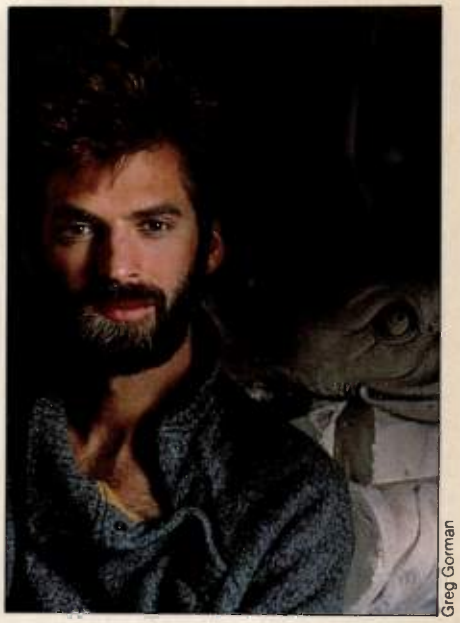
Strengthening their international reputation in the wake of their latest LP, *Southern Accents*, **Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers** were recently awarded the first Grand Prix for Best Video Clip at the Montreux Golden Rose Television Festival. The award, for "Don't Come Around Here No More," came in the form of a TV screen with a giant paper clip going through it. The jury singled out the quality of the video's storyboard, citing its inventive direction and imaginative use of subtle electronic effects. ■

Courtesy of Epic Records

Although he'd be the first to call himself a novelty act, "Weird Al" Yankovic already has had a longer run of fame and fortune than most. With the help of Tino Insana, the creator of "Eat It" and "I Lost On Jeopardy" has set down his innermost thoughts, hopes and dreams in *The Authorized Al: The Amazing and Somewhat Made-up Life Story of "Weird Al" Yankovic* (Contemporary Books, $7.95).

BOOKS

One of the most listened-to and influential black artists to have emerged during the Sixties, **Marvin Gaye** was at the peak of his craft right up to his untimely demise. David Ritz's book, *Divided Soul: The Life of Marvin Gaye*, chronicles the complex and often stormy trail that took the singer from the slums of Washington, DC, to Motown fame until his sad fate. With a price tag of $16.95, the book is published by McGraw Hill... As Ireland's most venerated musical export (and prime purveyor of Celtic Soul), **Van Morrison** has never found fame and fortune on a massive scale, yet much of the music he's created over the years continues to hold up against newcomers. *Van Morrison*, by Johnny Rogan, traces the man's rise from a Belfast childhood, through the mid-Sixties Top 40 stardom with Them, later vinyl milestones like *Astral Weeks*, and on up to the present day. Published by Proteus, it retails for $10.95... Trivia buffs, rock writers, and disc jockeys should find *The Billboard Book of Top Forty Hits* a valuable reference work. Compiled by Joel Whitburn, it lists (by artist and record) every record that's rolled its way onto the chart since 1955, along with a grab-bag of hit-related data. Published by Billboard Publications, it goes for $14.95 ...Through his work with the Yardbirds, John Mayall's Blues Breakers, Cream, Blind Faith and beyond, **Eric Clapton** has earned his reputation as one of the most influential guitarists in rock history. *Slowhand: the Story of Eric Clapton*, by Harry Shapiro (Proteus Books, $10.95) traces the artist's lengthy history from those early stints with forgotten bands like Casey Jones and the Engineers through to the current Clapton renaissance... During the final decade of his life, **John Lennon** was to all intents and purposes a media recluse, devoting himself to family and career and avoiding the media machine that had kept him living in a fish bowl throughout the Beatles era. Photographer Bob Gruen, among the few to gain the trust of the lens-shy musician during those Dakota years, was able to chronicle many of the changes in Lennon's triumphant and ultimately tragic final years. With a foreword by **Yoko Ono**, Gruen's book of black and white shots, *Listen to These Pictures: Photographs of John Lennon* looks back on those quiet days (Morrow, $14.95)... On the same theme, Ray Coleman's 640-page epic, *Lennon*, promises to help fill the few remaining gaps in what is already a well-traveled road. With his 31 years on the staff of Britain's best-known music weekly, *Melody Maker*, Coleman's perspective on Lennon stretches back to the beginning (he was the first journalist to be introduced to the Beatles by Brian Epstein). Possibly the lengthiest exploration of the man and the myth yet, the book is published at $19.95 by McGraw-Hill ...On a less extravagant scale than the Lennon book, *Paul McCartney: The Definitive Biography* explores the flip side of the Beatles coin. Written by Chris Welch (another *Melody Maker* alumnus), it'll set you back by $12.95. The publisher is Proteus Books ...Not content to sit in one place for long, **David Bowie** has gone from triumph to triumph in a business where artists and their careers are as disposable as the shrinkwrap of their records' packaging. In *David Bowie: A Rock 'n' Roll Odyssey*, Kate Lynch explores those high points (and some of the lows), and speculates why the Thin White Ziggy Stardust is still a viable force after so many of the competitive hacks have faded into oblivion. A Proteus book, it's tagged at $10.95... When it comes to British pop and rock photography, Harry Hammond and



Greg Gorman

Following the deadly cluster of tornadoes that tore a tragic swath through northwestern Pennsylvania this past summer, Kenny Loggins turned his previously-scheduled gig in Erie into a benefit to aid the local disaster victims. After performing at the Civic Center there, Loggins donated the net proceeds from the concert (roughly $30,000 including a donation from the tour sponsor Levi Strauss & Co.) to the American Red Cross Relief Fund.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

10 mg. "tar", 0.8 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

Gered Mankowitz, with several decades of high-speed lensmanship to their credit, are probably the closest you can get to photo royalty. Chosen from the massive exhibit that attracted thousands of Londoners recently, *Pop Shots* spans some forty years of extraordinary happenings—from the jazz age of the 40's, through the Fab Sixties, right up to today. The **Beatles** and **Stones** at the height of their glory, the **Yardbirds**, and even **Chad and Jeremy** are among the legions of faces—both famous and forgotten—immortalized in the tome, which sports a foreword by Police guitarist/weekend photographer **Andy Summers**. At $14.95, the collection is published by Colophone/Harper & Row... Gone but not forgotten (as evidenced by recent works by **Prince** and **Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers**), San Francisco's psychedelic era spanned a surprisingly short time. Within three years, after all, it was over. For those who didn't get to make the pilgrimage when the Bay Area was the Flower Power center of the universe, Gene Sculatti and David Seay have written *San Francisco Nights* (St. Martin's Press, $12.95). A survey of the key people, places, and events of the latter half of the 60's—Jefferson Airplane, Golden Gate Park, Bill Graham, the Family Dog, and the Acid Tests—the book features a cover designed by poster artist Rick Griffin. ■

MISCELLANIA

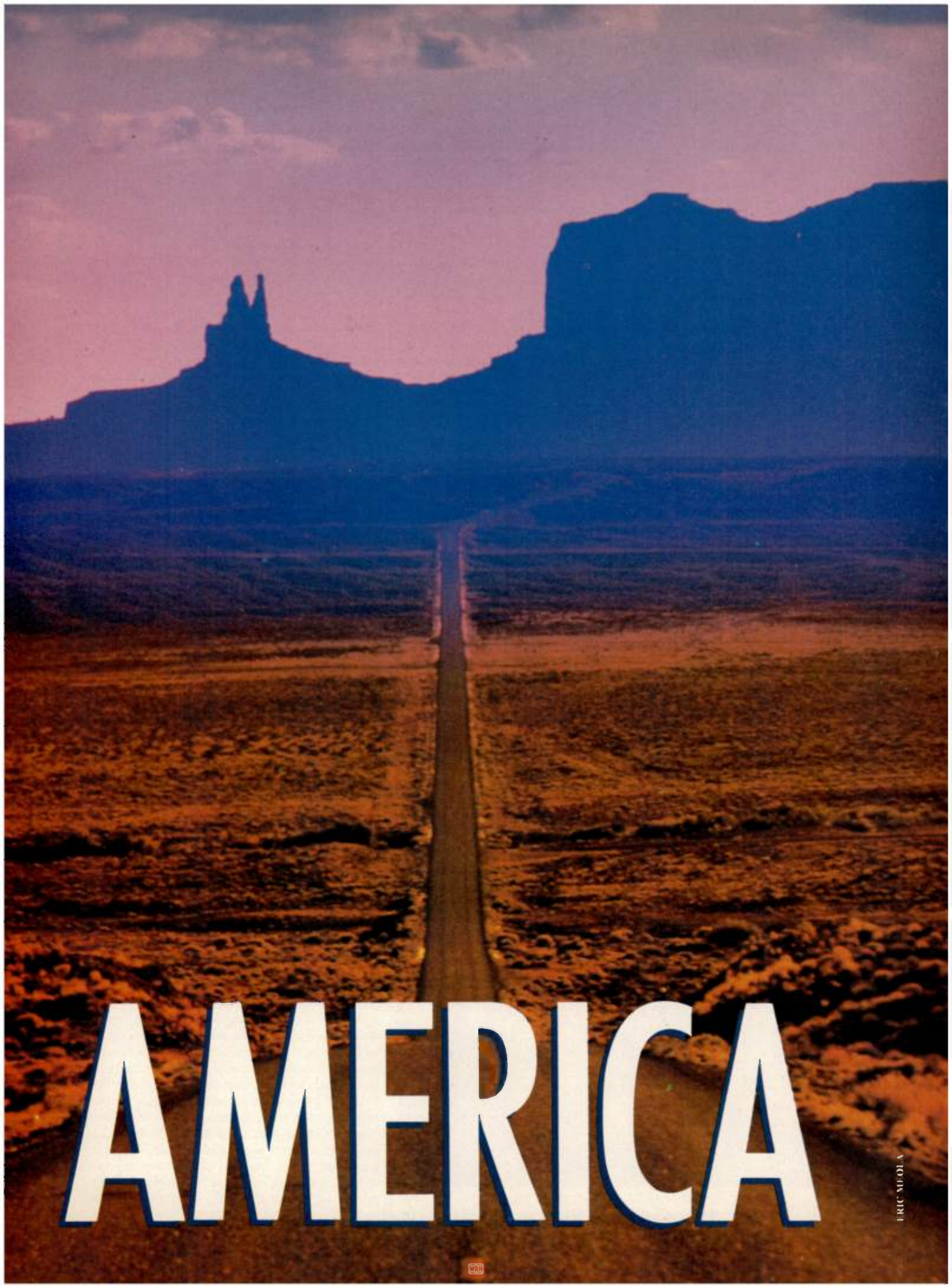
Billy Idol's guitarist, **Steve Stevens**, has been involved in yet another extracurricular activity. He's designed a new electric guitar for the Hamer Company of Chicago called the Steve Stevens model (or SS Prototype). In keeping with the guitarist's own flash playing style, the instrument comes equipped with imbedded LED lights that, tripped in sequence, appear to skitter up the neck. The finish, for those wishing to coordinate the axe with their wardrobe, is described as "cracked Day Glo"... When Ratt's **Stephen Pearcy** wandered into a New York club recently in search of a little harmless diversion, he unwittingly gatecrashed an in-progress birthday party. No uncomfortable scene ensued, however. The birthday girl (a card-carrying Ratt fan, as it turns out) said she'd had a dream about meeting the singer only the night before. Pleased as punch, Pearcy grandly whipped the ear cuff from his lobe and presented it to her as a gift. The birthday girl? Diminutive actress Drew "*E.T.*" Barrymore... This postscript from **Spandau Ballet**'s European sojourn. Before commencing their string of gigs in Italy, band drummer John Keeble ran an eye over the itinerary and was puzzled to see two sets of figures indicating the capacity of each arena in which the band was due to perform. The simple answer: one figure was the maximum set by the fire department. The other was the number of people the cops would try to accomodate if the non-ticket holding fans started busting up cars in the parking lot. Asked whether he found the gigs a tad too crowded for comfort, Keeble simply shrugged. "Well, I got onstage one night and discovered a fan sitting on my drum stool. I think they'd sold him the seat." ■

Brian Hagiwara

On the political front, Kool and the Gang have been designated official ambassadors for the International Conference of Mayors, a trans-global group that includes heads of urban governments from the United States, Europe, Africa, and Asia. According to conference president (and Mayor of Tuskeegee, Alabama) Johnny Ford, the organization is dedicated to cooperation between mayors, "who are the gatekeepers of our cities. These officials are working together to achieve a world that is peaceful, a world with a better quality of life. Kool and the Gang are perfect role models for the future of this planet. They believe in the importance of the family, hard work, and education, and they are instantly recognizable to people from Japan to Germany and the U.S."

In the movies, it's usually pretty easy to tell what country the action has shifted to, because music almost always sets the scene. For France, we get accordions and cafe music; for Italy, mandolins and Neapolitan tenors; for China, gongs and xylophones. The sounds rarely vary, because everyone knows what each country's music is supposed to sound like. But what does "American music" sound like? How could you fit it into a cliche? The visual cues are easy enough—flash a picture of the Statue of Liberty or the Golden Gate Bridge, and everyone knows that it's not sculpture or engineering being celebrated, but the U.S.A. America's music, though, is almost always celebrated for itself, in its own specificity. Slip some hoedown fiddles behind the scene, and viewers are not going to understand that as American music *per se*—they'll hear it as country music. The same goes for backing up the action with a walking bass and wailing sax, or with a screaming

MUSIC IN


AMERICA

L.A.'s a tough place in which to keep a dream alive. Still, this town feeds *dreams as surely as it* eats *them.*

guitar and pounding drums—people recognize American music as jazz or blues or rock or whatever. Nobody hears the totality of America in these sounds, because the particular music itself is so immediate and evocative that it seems to belong to everyone.

In a way, you could not ask for a greater compliment, because nothing better exemplifies the validity of an art form than its acceptance outside the culture that produced it. American popular music has that quality straight down the line. Consider, for a moment, what it means now that the stuttering guitar figure Chuck Berry used in "Roll Over Beethoven" is as universally recognized as the four-note theme from Beethoven's Fifth. It's hardly an exaggeration to call rock, blues, gospel and country the classical music of our time.

If that seems too much, though, try thinking in terms of Bruce Springsteen. At the moment, the music Springsteen plays is as rich a culmination of American sounds as has ever been heard. From the urban R&B of "Dancing in the Dark" to the Coplandesque theme of "Born in the U.S.A.," you won't find a wider-ranging set of influences packed into a single, cohesive style. It's American music all the way, but not in the way Ronald Reagan, George Will and other acolytes of "America First" would have it. It's American music because it awakens a sense of hope and compassion in every listener, elevating the spirit the way great art should.

Why else would millions of English, French, German and Japanese rock fans find nothing odd about proudly singing "Born in the U.S.A."? When you get down to it, every rock fan was to some extent born in the U.S.A., even if they've never left their own country.

All of which makes it kind of sad that so much American music goes unheard by much of its potential audience. Despite the homogeneity of radio and TV, there's still enough vitality in local and regional scenes—as the following pieces attest—to make diversity an on-going strength of American music. Cajun, country, rock and soul, hip-hop, boogie, Go-Go, laid-back, uptight — it's all-American and hard to lump under one easy label.

But this music isn't just going to show up at your front door; a lot of times, it's up to you to go out and make the effort to get to it.

So *get* to it. Go out there and *rock* it!

It's your right, your privilege, and your patriotic duty. **—J.D. Considine**

LOS ANGELES

Hanging in, Selling Out in the City of the Angles

BY BUD SCOPPA

FROM A DISTANCE, LOS ANGELES WOULD SEEM TO BE A ROCK 'N' ROLL CAMelot aswarm with bands of every stripe and hue, with electric oceans of fans to match. Images of players and clubgoers, all niftily outfitted in the latest gear from the gleaming boutiques of Melrose Avenue and the Beverly Center, converging nightly from neo-tribal revelry—all this is the stuff of high-concept headlines in far off media centers, in which L.A.'s Next Big Things are served up with the fervent frequency of the fare at Fatburger. Ah, the magic of Tinseltown, which seemingly reinvents itself continuously out of its own hallowed history—here we have the archetypal Scene, a real-life long-form rock video.

LUCKY LADY IN THE CITY OF LIGHT REASONS WITH THE BOUNCER AT CLUB LINGERIE

PHOTOS BY ANN SUMMA

Get closer, though, and this widescreen technicolor perception blurs, fragments and dissipates, like the mirage it is. The bands seem shoddier, less accomplished, the crowds are thinner, the clubs are drab and gritty; the buzz, it turns out, is nothing more than the squall of a bum P.A. Everything here is farther apart than you'd been led to believe, and there's a lot of smog and dead space between. True, there are indeed hundreds of bands peddling their wares in scores of clubs on any given night, but the only unifying aspect is a prevailing sense of isolation and ennui. What we have here is a classic case of the haves and have nots; the former inevitably lose touch with their context as soon as they receive the first gold record, while the latter muddle on or drop out.

L.A.'s a tough place in which to keep a dream alive. Still, this town *feeds* dreams as surely as it *eats* them. 'Cause every so often, Something Happens—a Los Lobos bursts out of the pack—and the town's magic crystallizes once again, renewing and uniting thousands of separate soldiers of fortune in their determination to "be discovered." Look at 'em all—the folk-rockers, the glitter kids, the skateboard punks, the rivet-heads—up there

on stages every night, playing as if their lives depended on it, like gamblers stuffing quarters into slot machines. Every time the bell goes off, they pull harder . . .

A fundamental truth lurks beneath all this lurid exposition, and this truth animates the Los Angeles rock scenario: Quite simply, the lure of a record deal is what makes L.A. run. The siren song of Fame and Fortune—loud, clear and unremitting—blares from the bastions of major-labeldom that dominate the landscape from Burbank to Century City, and it envelopes virtually every band and artist in its considerable sway. Bands and players come to this spread-out city for lots of reasons, but most are attracted by the likelihood of rubbing up against the massed tastemakers, movers and shakers. Simply *being* in L.A. is considered a career move by many aspirants. "Making it" is frequently thought of—quite mistakenly—as signing a contract with a big record company. Though few bands get even that far, there still remains a considerable distance to paydirt from the dotted line, as coulda-made-its like the Bus Boys and the Burning Sensations, in-the-toilets like Combonation and the prophetically named Nobodys, and stillborns like Elton Duck have discovered, to their enduring dismay. Here, where more bands "get a shot" than in any other city save London, bull's eyes occur about as frequently as blasts over the Diamond Vision screen in Dodger Stadium. For every Van Halen, Missing Persons, Berlin, Motley Crue and Ratt, there are surely a hundred Nobodys, and a thousand nobodies.

A pervasive desire—along with the attendant anguish, frustration and despair—permeates the dank atmospheres of the town's numerous "showcase" clubs, where guest lists are wishfully sprinkled with the names of A&R people, entertainment lawyers, publishing reps and booking agents (when they show up, they stand by the door for speedy getaways), and bands barely make enough money to cover their tabs. Cynicism is as much a part of L.A. as smog in September; it was in the air way back when the Byrds, Buffalo Springfield, the Doors and their contemporaries pointed out that there was somethin' happenin' here during the mid-'60s. That proclamation, for what it's worth, seamlessly connects with Tom Petty's more recent observation than even the losers get lucky sometimes.

Yup, this City of the Angles is a tough town in which to get a break while maintaining a modicum of dignity or credibility. In L.A., scenewatchers lust to ravage false idols as zealously as they hunger to venerate new heroes—maybe more so. Take the Unforgiven. This band from Riverside turned up in L.A. last year with a thoroughly worked-out "identity": a look adapted from the spaghetti Westerns of Sergio Leone, a musical approach that cleverly traded on a renewed interest in American "roots" rock, a *machismo*-informed self-assurance, and a hard-to-miss four-guitar lineup. This unprecedented self-packaging move (along with strong material, presumably) soon proved seductive to several major label A&R people, who began courting the band with all the competitive fervor of the suitors of Ulysses' ol' lady, resulting in a bidding war and an allegedly terrific deal with Elektra. Even more unusual, the band managed to develop a rather substantial local following along the way.

But it wasn't long before certain local notables thought they smelled a rat; journalists and A&R men who failed to buy what the Unforgiven was selling labeled the band a calculated hype and its mastermind, John Henry Jones (nee Steve Jones and, briefly, "Shane" Jones in earlier tentative attempts to get a record deal), a shrewd charlatan. Hence, the Unforgiven buzz exists simultaneously with the Unforgiven backlash. A first? Nope. The Knack

RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS (ABOVE), PLAYING AS IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDED ON IT; IF YOU'RE NOT ON 'THE LIST' (BELOW), YOU'RE A NOBODY IN CLUBLAND

RED-

THE·POWER·OF MUSIC™

The "4 x 4" is cool to the touch, but its four-speaker system and four-band graphic equalizer will sizzle your senses. And it's hot off the press from General Electric. What else is hot? This dual cassette mini-stereo, with a high-speed dubbing system, lets you make extra cassettes so fast you'll think you're seeing double. GE also has a new personal cassette

3-6210 Mini-Stereo with dual cassette system.

A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY

HOT.

3-5438/35435 AM/FM personal stereo cassettes.

player with a 3-band graphic equalizer to customize your sound. And just to back things up, there's the new GE auto-reverse personal stereo cassette player. Check out the GE Power of Music products at your GE dealer today.

No one lets you experience the power of music like General Electric.

If there is a 'scene' in Los Angeles, it's composed of people like these, genuine people making genuine music for the love of it and for the hell of it.

blazed a very similar trail back in '78. As the Knack found out, sometimes there's no failure like success. John Henry and his cohorts are not unaware of all this. Like I said, it's a tough town.

If cynicism is plentiful hereabouts, so too is a shocking *naivete*. Far too many bands are willing to mold themselves according to their own twisted perceptions of the style and image A&R execs (whose secret tastes tend to conform to those of rock critics) are "looking for," thereby ensuring that their music is passe as well as superfluous. No wonder the A&R guys hover by the door. The scenario plays like latterday feudalism, with the barons coming down from their castles while the beggars dance madly around them for coins and trinkets. One of the members of Fishbone, a band of young black Angelenos with an appealingly oddball EP out on Columbia, mused recently, "What's bad is when you sell out and they don't pick you up." Indeed.

Much less common and infinitely more fascinating are those dogged, tough-spirited toilers who persevere year after year in the face of overwhelming odds, true to their original intentions. Each learned the hard way that you don't give up your day job till the check clears. I have continuing admiration for the ones I know:

--Dean Chamberlain: After recording a batch of devastating demos, he fussed and finicked all the life out of his Code Blue LP on Warner Bros., firing the other bandmembers while he was at it. Now stabilized, he leads the band Skin (Code Blue's original moniker) and owns a rehearsal room.

--Sid Griffin: This neo-classicist took his passion for the Byrds and Gram Parsons seriously enough to found the Long Ryders (now signed to Island) and to write a book about Parsons.

--Peter Kingsbery: He formed Cock Robin because he was tired of being singled out for rejection as a singer/songwriter; he decided he'd rather be rejected as part of a group. Cock Robin may actually have a hit single on Columbia by the time you read this.

--Mike McFadden: His Elton Duck album for Arista was completed but never released—it's hard to explain that to your mom. He now leads a band called P.D.A. and works at Disney Studios in the daytime.

--Tim McGovern: This skilled guitarist/drummer went through the wringer three times—with the Pop, the Motels, and as leader of the Burning Sensations. But he's back once again with a new trio he calls Sado No.

--Earl Mankey: The former Sparks guitarist thoughtfully produces young bands in the garage studio of his home in the West Valley.

--Brian O'Neal: The head Bus Boy (a black rock 'n' roll band seemed a stirring idea in 1980—then Prince came along) is still trying to write that "breakthrough" song for his group.

--Kevin O'Neal: Brian's brother was labeled as "difficult to handle" by the Bus Boys' producers. He now lives with his folks, goes to college, and avoids sibling rivalry by leading his own band, the Navigators.

--Roger Prescott: His '70s band, the Pop, disintegrated after its Arista album was obliterated in the Knack backlash, which rendered any L.A. post-punk band on record "suspicious." He's writing, recording and playing in front of the Silver Tears, which contains two other ex-Popsters and a former Plimsoul.

--Mike Watt: The bass player/translator for the Minutemen has a ring-around-the-collar demeanor which alternately conceals and reveals a sharp, committed sensibility. To Watt, the band is a part-time job.

--Eric Williams and Joe Turano: Separately, these two (guitarist and singer, respectively) bounced journeyman-like from project to project for years before finding a viable home in Oingo Boingo-spinoff Zuma II.

These guys get my respect because they're good, they're earnest, and, above all, they (to quote Lowell George) are "still willin' ." If there is in fact a "scene" in this city, it's composed of people like these, genuine people making genuine music for the love of it and for the hell of it. They represent the same kind of nocturnal camaraderie novelist Frank Conroy evoked in a recent *Esquire* short story about a struggling writer and his hangout, "where on any given night he could be sure of meeting a few friends who, like himself, were unknown artists working on faith. . . . He valued fun. It was much more to him than a diversion." Exactly, Frank. □

Bud Scoppa was West Coast A&R director for Arista Records from 1978 through 1983. He now edits L.A.'s Music Connection *magazine.*

NEW ORLEANS

The Past Recaptured in the Fertile Crescent

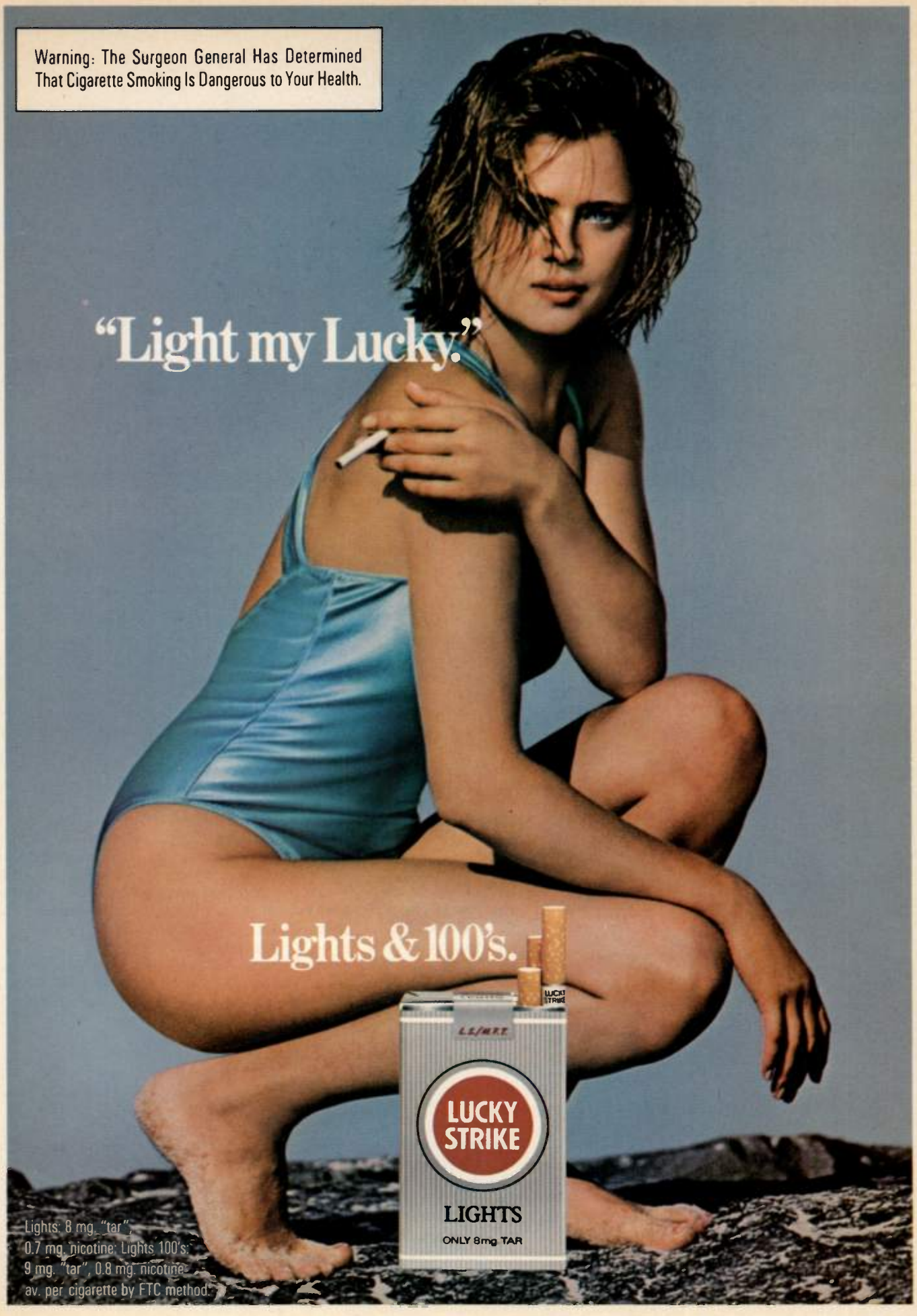
BY ALMOST SLIM

NEW ORLEANS, LONG CONSIDERED A CATALYST IN THE DEVELopment of popular music, is for better or worse a city shackled to its musical past. At this point it's unnecessary to replay *New Orleans' Greatest Hits*, but when the boisterous R&B singer Ernie K-Doe brags, "I'm not sure, but I'm almost positive, that all music came from New Orleans," he's not really that far from the truth. □ But considering the unique sound produced here, the scores of great New Orleans artists and the worldwide musical reputation the city enjoys, it's a curious fact that the music industry here is practically non-existent.

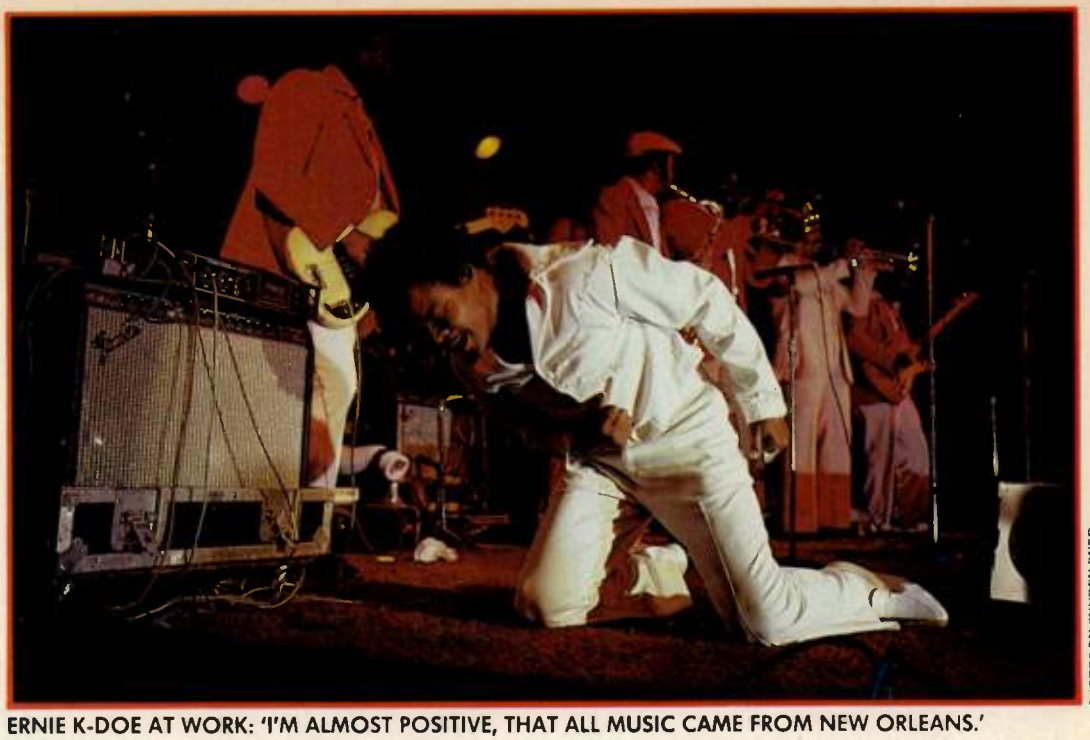
"New Orleans is a creature unto itself," comments a record executive, trying to explain the Crescent City's music business state of affairs. And so it is. There are no record labels of note here (the majors don't even bother having New Orleans branch offices), clubs that present live music open and close with great frequency, and the recording studios in town barely do enough business to keep their doors open. What's the problem?

"We just never took ourselves seriously," claims Co-

SYNDEY BYRD


Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.
"Light my Lucky."
Lights & 100's.
LUCKY STRIKE
LIGHTS
ONLY 8mg TAR
Lights: 8 mg. "tar", 0.7 mg. nicotine; Lights 100's: 9 mg. "tar", 0.8 mg. nicotine; av. per cigarette by FTC method.

Even though there's a lot of music around New Orleans, it gets taken for granted.



PHOTOS BY SYNDEY BYRD

ERNIE K-DOE AT WORK: 'I'M ALMOST POSITIVE, THAT ALL MUSIC CAME FROM NEW ORLEANS.'

simo Matassa, who opened the first successful New Orleans recording studio in 1946 and who is still active in the local music community. "It was just a lot of fun for us back in those days. We never looked out for the future. Hell, when we cut all those hits here in the early '50s, I was still trying to sell records and appliances in the shop in front of the studio to keep the place open. We let guys from New York and Los Angeles come in and make all the real money. Maybe they just intimidated us, but nobody thought to get into the manufacturing or the publishing business until it was too late. We certainly had a chance to be on a par with Nashville, as far as being a music center, but it slipped through our fingers."

IRMA THOMAS, NEW ORLEANS' 'QUEEN OF THE BLUES'

Many New Orleanians look at their music with an odd blend of pride and ambivalence. While they'll crow to no end to out-of-town friends about how great the music is here and even revel out at the Jazz Fest once a year, they also bitch about having to pay a cover charge for entertainment and laugh at the plight of their local musicians.

"I couldn't have made a career out of music if I'd stayed in New Orleans," says Mac Rebennack, a.k.a. Dr. John, widely regarded as New Orleans' quintessential musician, though he has lived elsewhere for 22 years. "There just isn't enough happening there. The opportunities that were there in the '50s are gone. Even though there's a lot of music around it gets taken for granted."

Rebennack is right about there still being a lot of music in New Orleans; and even if it *is* taken for granted here, it certainly isn't elsewhere. Perhaps the most intriguing development is the revolution going on among New Orleans' brass bands. Until recently considered a staid, traditional style of music played by weathered old men in natty uniforms at shopping mall openings and the occasional funeral, the music has blasted off in a new direction since being adopted by a younger generation of musicians. And it hasn't been done solely by replacing "When the Saints Go Marching In" with the likes of "Blue Monk" and "Shake Your Booty." By employing the tuba in the same way a funky electric bass is played, and by incorporating some contemporary ideas into the traditional brass band format, a new and exciting music style is being created.

The best examples of this emerging style can be found on recent albums by the Dirty Dozen Brass Band (*My Feet Can't Fail Me Now*, Concord Jazz) and the Rebirth Jazz Band (*Here To Stay*, Arhoolie). The Dozen have been gathering a considerable amount of notoriety, largely through the efforts of their patron, George Wein, who has booked them throughout Europe and at prestigious American venues. However, the Rebirth Jazz Band is even more fascinating. The energy these seven teenagers inject into their music is both fresh and exciting.

On the contemporary jazz front, there's been a tremendous revival of interest, largely centered on the new darling of modern jazz, Wynton Marsalis (who, interestingly enough, now resides in New York). For a broader view of New Orleans jazz today, though, check out Tony DiGradi's *Lunar Eclipse* and *Oasis* albums on Grammavision; Kent Jordan's *No Questions Asked* on CBS; Terrance Blanchard and Donald Harrison's *New York Second Line* on Concord Jazz; and Branford Marsalis' *Scenes in the City* on CBS.

Next to the Marsalis crew, the next most musically visible New Orleans clan is the Neville Brothers. Their most recent album, *Nevillization* (Black Top), recorded live at the now-defunct Tipitina's, caught them near the apex of their potential. After spending the past few months opening concerts for the likes of Huey Lewis, the Nevilles are rumored to be on the verge of signing a multi-record deal with Arista. But the Nevilles are a hard nut to crack. As A&M and Capitol found out, the Nevilles' sound doesn't always translate well to vinyl.

On the R&B front, most of the recording activity here has been undertaken by Massachusetts' Rounder Records, which has signed a number of local artists, including Johnny Adams, Red Tyler and Buckwheat (actually a zydeco artist from nearly Lafayette). Unfortunately, two of Rounder's best finds, Tuts Washington and James Booker, both New Orleans piano deities, recently passed away, but not before their albums (Washington's *Piano Professor* and Booker's *Classified*) were heaped with awards and praise on both sides of the Atlantic. Yes, and even in New Orleans.

Ultimately, it's one of Rounder's latest signings, Irma Thomas, whose career spans a quarter of a century, who most aptly summarizes the plight of many New Orleans artists who choose to stay put. "They say you can't live in the past," Thomas observes, "but that's basically what a lot of us have been doing for the past 10 years. The kind of music that comes out of New Orleans doesn't get played on the radio anymore. At this point in my career, I've come to the conclusion that I'll probably never have another hit."

That may well be true, given the demands of today's marketplace. But the more important point to be made is that artists like Irma Thomas, and some of the younger ones she's influenced, are finding support from small labels that are less concerned with the latest trends than with what's musically and historically significant. And what's true of dedicated musicians in every other part of the world counts double for those attempting to become part of this city's rich heritage: Wherever there's even one person willing to listen, there'll be someone singing or playing. Because New Orleans music, like a heaping helping of jambalaya, sticks with you for a *long* time. □

Almost Slim, a.k.a. Jeff Hannusch, is a contributing editor of the New Orleans music publication, Wavelength

The arts scene in Minnesota is as schizophrenic as the state's state of mind.

MINNEAPOLIS

The Art of the Heart of the Country

BY LAURA FISSINGER

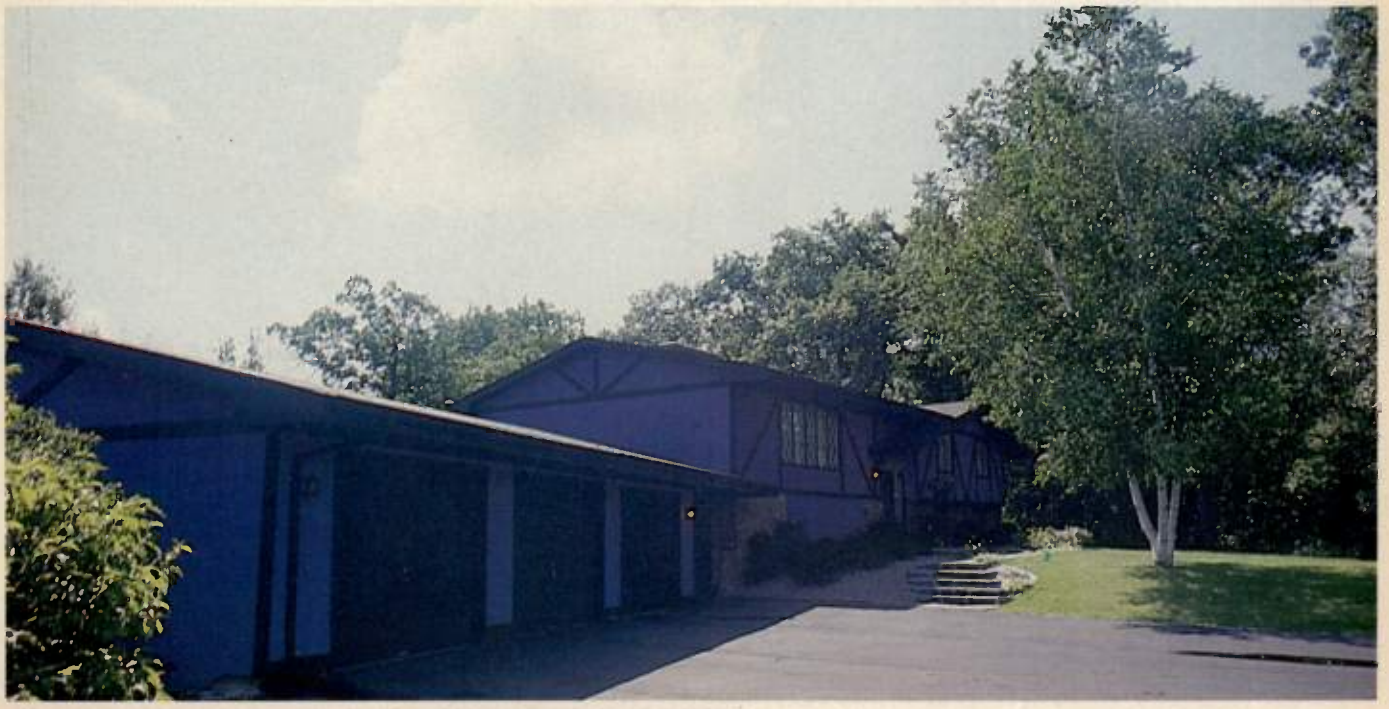
IF YOU BELIEVE MUSIC COMES FROM A STATE OF MIND RATHER THAN A state on the map, now's a good time for a look at the state in the state of Minnesota. Every once in awhile, those who decide these things decide that Minneapolis/St. Paul is capable of spawning (to use an appropriate word) rock 'n' roll worthy of being heard by people living closer to the oceans. Now is one of those times, largely because a guy named Prince has co-opted the charts. And he still lives in Minnesota. By choice. □ Prince wouldn't phrase it like this, but the Minnesota mind might be introduced to outsiders in the following fashion: Survival constitutes success, success is something to be survived, and being bizarre is perfectly okay—welcome, in fact—provided you don't embarrass people on fishing expeditions or in shopping malls.

Take the case of a less famous Minnesota musician, Ole (he went by two names until Prince came along). Here he is in January, ice fishing with his friend Sven.

"Ole, when are you going to write that hit song you keep saying you're gonna write?"

"Soon, Sven, soon," responds Ole, noticing how Sven's beard is turning into a hirsute ice sculpture. "But right now it's too damn cold."

[*Minneapolis continues on 45*]



MARK PETERSON

THE HOUSE THAT PRINCE BUILT: HE LIVES IN MINNEAPOLIS BY CHOICE

AUSTIN

Making It Beyond the City Limits

BY JODY DENBERG

LIKE MOST BUSTLING THOROUGHFARES, "THE DRAG"—A 10-BLOCK stretch of Austin's Guadalupe Street that serves as the western border of the University of Texas—is dotted during the daylight hours with food vendors hawking ethnic specialties. But alongside "The Drag"'s munching executives are sundry street musicians: usually there's a blind man playing a recorder, or a 12-string slide guitarist picking country blues, maybe even a fiddler playing a solitary jig. Passing students spring for an egg roll or fajita, then drop their change in the entertainers' hats or opened cases.

This trickle-down scenario exemplifies the most *logical* reason why music is such a prevalent force in Austin: there will always be students willing to spend a few bucks on live music, and there will always be musicians who need money. But the audience for music in the Texas Capital goes beyond collegians, and the motivation for most musicians transcends dollars and cents.

In fact, it is the rare individual who earns more than a subsistence wage from Austin's music. Performers and composers create so that their unique voices can be heard in a city where social security numbers are often more important than names. And those who don't play the music get involved in other ways—as soundmen, rock critics, booking agents, bartenders, nightclub and band managers. Everybody wants to get into the act because the music scene provides a glimmer of immortality—what an individual contributes will often be reflected back in years to come. Or at least remembered.

Austin first earned a national reputation as a music center by serving as the home base to mid-'70s progressive country artists like Asleep at the Wheel, Jerry Jeff Walker and, of course, the red-headed stranger, Willie Nelson. Even then the music spoke to the disparate attitudes of its audience, a mixture of aging hippies, fresh-faced students, legislators and their staffs. In 1985 Austin country artists still draw, but more often the plentiful nightclubs are packed for homegrown performers playing R&B, folk, heavy metal, Tex-Mex, hardcore, rock and every other arbitrarily monikered style of music. The audiences, like the categories, overlap. Established favorites like Joe "King" Carrasco and the Fabulous Thunderbirds, as well as relative newcomers like Zeitgeist and the Tailgators, soak in the diversity of musical offerings, yet maintain a strong sense of identity. This harmonious co-existence of differing musical factions mirrors the city's relatively peaceful character—and perhaps Austin's relaxed and progressive social climate is due in part to the music's ability tc leap racial,

[*Austin continues on 45*]

PHOTOS BY JAY GODWIN / AUSTIN AMERICAN STATESMAN

BUTCH HANCOCK (ABOVE): TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE MARKET FOR LONE STAR AUTHENTICITY; DINO LEE (INSET),THE KING OF WHITE TRASH: HE'S NOT A BIG FISH IN A LITTLE POND

DAVID GRAUBERT

The places where the trendiest hang out are two oversized pleasure emporiums-cum-discos: Area and the Palladium

NEW YORK

What's Not Happnin' in the Apple

BY GREG TATE

BEING A CURMUDGEON I TEND TO REFLECT UPON WHAT *ISN'T* HAPPENING on the New York City music scene more often than I do on what *is* going on. By this I refer to the absence of a loft jazz scene and the death of the punkfunk free-jazz movement that brought folks like James "Blood" Ulmer and Defunkt into prominence not so long ago. Given how much good music one can encounter in New York, this pessimistic perspective just goes to show how an embarrassment of riches can lead to a certain blase áttitude. One club, S.O.B.'s (nee Śounds of Brazil and Beyond), has probably done more to enliven this city's musical options of late than any new wave onslaught you'd care to name. In the past year their booking policy has brought us such energizing fare as Toure Kunda from Senegal, Judy Mowatt from Jamaica, Linton Kwesi Johnson from Britain, Gilberto Gil and Milton Nascimento from Brazil, as well as tastes of meringue ánd Haitian ra-ra music. Where else in the world, I wonder, can you beam in on the global scope of black popular music the way you can at S.O.B.'s?

I'm sure that when people think of a music scene here they think of hiphop, rapping, scratching and breaking; but hiphop has evolved into a concert music moreso than a club affair, what with the chart success of Run-D.M.C. and the Fat Boys. Hip New Yorkers, and I guess hip people everywhere, are aware that hiphop developed underground over a roughly 10-year span before it went straight-up commercial. Living in New York provided many of us with a jump on the rest of the country, and at this point the novelty has worn pretty thin. This by no means is to suggest hiphop has played out but to acknowledge that it's entered the American mainstream.

Certainly the local white club scene, with the exception of the avant art action on the Lower East Side, lacks the excitement of the early CBGB days that ushered in the New Wave revolution via Television, Talking Heads, et al. If there's a cutting edge out there I'm missing, tell me before it gets too dull to draw blood.

The places where the trendiest hang out these days are two oversized pleasure emporiums-cum-discos: Area and the Palladium. Designed to cash in on the current glamour of the Manhattan art world, these two theme parks acknowledge the fact that in New York today the style-setters aren't rock stars but visual artists like Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Kenny Scharf. Their appearance, or the hanging of their work even, at these venues contributes the chi-chi allure only rockers used to be able to bring to the city's night spots. This has nothing to do with music per se, but a lot to do with contemporary rock culture and the way its star-making machinery has infected the modern art scene.

New York has been the Mecca of jazz for so long that this indigenous American music is a permanent part of

[*New York continues on 46*]

THE RECORD REVIEW

BY CHRISTOPHER HILL

HOWARD ROSENBERG

X...and Why

I'm listening to John Doe sing "Burning House of Love," the opening cut on X's new album, *Ain't Love Grand*. What I hear are echoes of Elvis' heavy-breathing hunka-hunka songs, songs that he could occasionally rouse himself to perform in his career's sunset years. Songs like, well, "Burning Love," like "Tiger Man" or "Washed My Hands in Muddy Water." Doe will admit, perhaps, a certain affinity, at least "in the kind of intimacy that Elvis had vocally." □ For sure, Doe has never sung like this before—never with this wide-open, virile, vulnerable combination of muscle and need. Gone is that dry,

The theme of Ain't Love Grand *is that most common and emotionally entangled of human concerns, the sin of Adam: s-e-x.*

droning intonation, the ironically affectless style that was one of the last traces in X of the nihilism of L.A. punk. Now he's simply singing his heart out.

Lyrically, it's the same thing. X's atmospheric collage of L.A. impressionism has fallen dramatically into focus here. There's a house glimpsed from the freeway, its lights burning heedlessly through the night; a cigarette smoldering on a carpet; an unmade bed, a body lying across it on crumpled sheets.

Then there's the music. Music that flows and tenses sinuously; music that's mean and efficient, sure enough of its strength to throw off a graceful frill of acoustic notes as it rounds the corner of each chorus. Above all, from one of the New World's murkiest bands, there is clarity everywhere. Lord have mercy, "Burning House of Love" sounds like . . . a hit single!

But it's not just the singing or the sound or the hit factor that makes me think of Elvis. *Ain't Love Grand* is so manifestly crafted as an appeal to a broad audience that it unavoidably raises an Elvis kind of question: how far can an artist go to address common human concerns, in a form that common humans will like, without risking the distinct character that made him interesting in the first place? Michael Wagener, the German producer of *Ain't Love Grand*, dismisses the problem with German practicality: "X is a street band. They have a message and they want to get this message across to people. The way you heard it before, on their other albums, it sounded more negative than positive. Now they still have their message and their feeling, but the parts are all working together and it is easier to hear."

Wagener was an interesting choice for producer. You may never have heard his work, but any 16-year-old you know probably has, especially if they're into warrior gods of new metal music like Dokken and Great White. Wagener brought two characteristics of heavy metal to bear on this project. The first is the genre's passion for clarity and order—accidents don't happen on heavy metal records. The second is drama. Metal is the most theatrical form of rock, and a metal producer must also be a musical stage manager. Where punk "honesty" invited you to peek into the gears of the creative process as they ground, metal insists that you see and hear only finished products.

As John Doe recalls the recording sessions, "We wanted to sound like we were trying to make a *record*—not trying to put a live performance onto a record. We weren't afraid to build a song a piece at a time. We recorded fewer of the tracks with all of us together in the studio. We wanted to be sure we got a good bass track, a good harmony vocal, etc. So we worked on them separately. We wanted the pieces to fit together."

Wagener elaborates: "We practically discussed every drumbeat, every guitar fill. We did 24-track demos on most of the songs, so that by the time we got into the studio, we had a clear idea of what that song should sound like, how it should be played."

That kind of talk is liable to make long-standing X fans nervous. But for now, it seems to be just what the doctor ordered. On "What's Wrong With Me," you can hear X reveling in things like groove and dynamics. John and vocalist Exene Cervenka conduct a barbed repartee, like a pissed-off Porter and Dolly, while riding a pell-mell, rickety rhythm section that has learned the Stones' trick of sounding loose-jointed while staying instinctively uptight. Best of all is Billy Zoom, burning down the between-verse breaks with fills that get hotter each time, until it seems he could throw them out forever with nonchalant mastery.

If Billy sounds like a man set free throughout the record, that's just what Wagener thinks he is. "I think most of the reason he sounds so good is that I let him play what he likes to play," Wagener explains. "Billy is really a great classical rock 'n' roll guitar player. Even a bit like a country player because he does so much picking. Some of it is really very pretty." And pretty is just the word for a lot of Billy's playing here. There's a lyrical, British Invasion feeling to some of it—no acci-

'X always had this attitude like, We do a lot of work, so we'll ask you to do some work to enjoy us. Now we're doing more work for the audience, not asking them to suspend all their ideas just for us.'

dent, then, that they cover "All or Nothing," a vintage Small Faces cut from 1966.

But the best argument for X's new sound is that it provides the perfect setting for the most emotionally straightforward performances of the band's career. "We're trying to put more emotion into each song, each note," Doe says. "When Exene and I started doing the Knitters (their neo-traditionalist folk-country project, with members of the Blasters), we realized that simple songs, like something Leadbelly might have sung 50 years ago, are the ones that still make sense. The songs on this album were written to bring that emotional part to the fore. Before, we might have been telling stories, and some of the stories would have been pretty strange. Now it's more like 'this is what happened to me yesterday'—only we elevate the experience so it's not mundane."

The theme of *Ain't Love Grand* is that most common and emotionally entangled of human concerns, the sin of Adam: s-e-x. This is the most nitty-gritty rock 'n' roll confrontation with sex (the bad, dirty kind) since, oh, maybe *Get Your Wings* by Aerosmith. It takes a certain kind of bravery these days to talk about the way a woman is "built," as Doe does in "My Soul Calls Your Name." But it isn't Doe's intention to set himself apart from other men. "Name" is about lust as an obsession—you can hear it in the way he catalogs the woman's attractions. But it's also about how lust *can* seem like a cry from the soul, as the desperate, stormy chorus mingles fleshly desire with the heart's longing. In "Around My Heart," Billy Zoom strikes ringing, iron-hard lines off D.J. Bonebrake's stern marching pace, suggesting the personification of passion as a drill sergeant, forcing us into the "Devil's workshops" and "dirty dark no-places" Doe sings about. The chorus focuses the image of forced labor—"Why do you wanna throw another chain around my heart?" Doe and Exene ask, while sounding so lovely it makes you ache for the chains.

But what do the poor in spirit have after even the glamor of lust is taken away? Something like what John and Exene act out in "I'll Stand Up for You." "Honey, everybody says we're trash," John admits; Exene confesses that she chooses "exactly the wrong time to pick a fight with you." These are banal comments, not meant to mean a lot, as Billy Zoom's idling little melody tells us. But then he slams into the chorus, grinding out the only real heavy metal chords on the album. "I'll stand up for you, if you'll stand up for me . . . I'll stand up, I won't sit back." They say it again and again, as the chords pound. No apparent reason for it, it just sounds like sheer blind, dumb insistence. But kind of . . . *grand.*

And part of this grandness is X's new expansiveness. "We're trying to meet the audience maybe 75% of the way this time," Doe declares. "X always had this attitude like, We do a lot of work, so we'll ask you to do some work in order to enjoy us. Now we're doing more work for the audience, not asking them to suspend all their ideas just for us."

"When Ray Charles sings 'Georgia,' you know what that song's about," he concludes. "When Tammy Wynette sings 'In Apartment #9,' you know what that's about."

"Sure, we're more concerned with craftsmanship on this record, but in the end, it all boils down to spirit. If you've got the spirit, you can get away with anything." □

RICHARD PASLEY / LGI

© 1985 B&W TCo

Milds Kings, 10 mg. "tar", 0 .7 mg. nicotine, Filter Kings, 16 mg. "tar", 1 .0 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Feb. '85.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

THE COMPACT DISC

A Sound Solution

In 1948 a man named Peter Goldmark invented the long-playing Vinylite microgroove record. Harry Truman was about to defeat Thomas E. Dewey for the Presidency. The transistor was one year old. Man wouldn't walk on the moon for 21 years. John Lennon was eight.

The LP created the modern recording industry. The transistor appeared and made everything smaller and more powerful, and the record remained the same. The stereo revolution came, and the record remained the same. Cassette tapes came and took their position subordinate to the LP; other inventions like eight-track tape and quadrophonic sound came and went, and the record remained the same. Peter Goldmark's version of analog playback, spinning at a stately 33 1/3 revolutions per minute, remained the undisputed playback medium of choice.

Until 1983.

Late in that year, a device called the compact disc (CD) player hit the market. Unlike the analog system, which stored music in the form of irregularities in a groove on vinyl, the CD remembered sound in the form of computer information—a series of numerical values imprinted on a small disc of

ILLUSTRATION BY CARL WESLEY

acrylic plastic. The fidelity was stratospheric—the sound was incredible. And the players were expensive. CDs have had a couple of years now to impress music lovers with the quality of their sound. Hundreds of thousands have been sold, and the price is coming down. Still, stereo buyers are a cautious and canny breed, and some remain wary of the new technology. They've seen too many hyped-up developments in stereo go sour with age.

Spinning silently in its hidden drawer, diffracting light into a patternless rainbow, with a tiny, invisible laser moving along a surface of aluminum one molecule thick, the CD lends itself to mystery. It doesn't have the substance, the hands-on feel of a turntable. There's nothing to move, nothing to aim. *Music* comes from this?

The makers of CDs seem happy with the mystery—many of them enclose the systems in black casings that add to the atmosphere of high-tech witchcraft—but the technologies at the heart of compact systems aren't really hard to grasp. The compact disc uses two systems that evolved in tandem on opposite sides of the planet. The moving parts—the disc and laser tracking devices—came from the European Philips audio corporation and grew out of the firm's work in the 70s on optical laser discs. The brains of the operation, the electronic reading and control systems, were put together by the technical acrobats of Japan, Inc.

Like a computer, the CD player compresses a vast number of calculations into a very short period of time. Like an optical disc, it uses mathematical quantities as its internal language. In the CD process, sound waves are recorded by a sampling device which measures the height of the wave 88,000 times per second. This number of readings is so large that for practical purposes the height readings constitute a curve, which is the waveform. The numbers indicating wave height are coded as digital bytes: on or off, ones and zeroes in series, the binary language of computers. These on-off signals are engraved as raised or lowered points on the spiral of the compact disc—about five billion of them for each hour of playing time.

When the CD is turning in the player, a 7800-angstrom laser light (too long in wavelength for the human eye to see) tracks along the spiral, reflecting the raised and lowered points onto a photodetector. When the light strikes the photodetector strongly, it indicates a raised point and the detector gives a strong impulse of electricity to the player's reconstruction circuitry. This "brain" sees the signal as an "on" instant with a numerical value of one. When the laser reflects from a pit in the spiral, it strikes the photodetector weakly and this is read as "off" or zero. The player's brain then reconstructs the numerical values of the original music's waveforms and sends this information on to the analog portion of the stereo system—the amp and speakers. The entire process is something like translating a book from English into Chinese and then back into English. Simple, right?

Yes, but all the problems of translation remain. It's very hard to put five billion on-off signals on a disc in exactly the right order, to provide exactly the same meaning for each instant, when a single incorrect digit can throw everything off, when a speck of dust is house-size by comparison, and when a tiny scratch can wipe out a couple of thousand bits of information. Other problems also threaten the playback: Digits can be recorded or read wrongly; a slight warp of the disc or momentary movement of the mechanical servo unit holding the laser can throw the light off track. Since these problems can't be entirely eliminated—you can't keep people from scratching things—electronics engineers at Sony devised a complex series of error-correction systems.

Error correction—the shifting, subtle process of self-control and repair—is a crucial advantage of CD systems. The player doesn't just regurgitate music, it also monitors the information it gets from the disc. Several codes to detect information are added to the disc at manufacture. These trigger error correction. The digital data are also scrambled on the disc so that a scratch will only wipe out a fraction of the continuous waveform information. Thus, if scratched, the CD will only lose a miniscule portion of the sound. (Unlike analog needles, CDs don't speak the language of the scratch. All a gouge can do is eliminate information, not add noise of its own.) If an error is large enough to make a difference, the machine will disregard the inaccurate signals and create a transition from the last accurate reading to the next, actually filling in the gaps. These operations occur so fast that the ear can't detect them.

The mechanical parts of the CD are also continually monitored. The speed of the motor changes from about 500 rpm at the inside of the disc (the beginning of record) to about 200 rpm at the outside, and this is regulated so that the laser will move at a constant speed along the ever-larger spiral on the disc. Some of the laser light on the photodetector is used to check the relative position of the tracking arm so that the laser is always exactly where it should be. (Incidentally, the CD tracks from inside out because most discs wobble a little and this can distort the laser's reading. To minimize the effect, information is packed toward the center of the disc, where the wobble is smallest.)

Spinning silently in its hidden drawer, diffracting light into a patternless rainbow, with a tiny, invisible laser moving along a surface of aluminum one molecule thick, the CD lends itself to mystery

For all its impressive complexity, is the compact disc player really that superior to analog systems? John Dahl of the NAD Corporation, which manufactures both, reflects the opinion of most listeners when he says, "The advantages of digital for mid-fi (consumers) are absolutely profound. The compact disc is the answer to everyone's prayers sonically . . . In comparison to what your normal consumer is used to in music, the compact disc is light years ahead of what they're getting now."

Because the CD slices up music into such tiny parts, the fidelity when these parts are reassembled is very high, and the detail is greater than in an analog system. There is utterly no surface noise, since the only thing that touches the record is a beam of light. And, since the player reads loud and soft music with the same fidelity, the dynamic range of a CD is greater than an LP's. Most popular and rock music is recorded within a narrow dynamic range, [*Cont. on 54*]

BY DOUGLAS HARDY


T
B Y
PHOTO BY MARIA BOBLEDO

The Thompson Twins

aim for the fine line between art and commerce

Less than a week after they exuberantly rocked out John Lennon's "Revolution" at Live Aid in Philadelphia before more than a billion viewers worldwide, the Thompson Twins are looking anything but revolutionary. A mussed, makeup-less Alannah Currie intently chats business on the phone, while percussionist Joe Leeway sprawls on a couch, bored and listless after a day of interviews that's several hours from over. Only front man Tom Bailey can muster the focused professionalism that has been the hallmark of this careerist band since a string of early '80s dance hits first established their reputation on the New World side of the Atlantic. And even the flaming-red-haired Bailey is pushing his near-depleted inner resources to the limit to keep the sunny side up. □ But perhaps the Twins can be forgiven their momentary diffidence—by any measure this hasn't been an easy year for them. The powerhouse success of their 1984 LP, *Into the Gap*, and its spin-off singles like "Hold Me Now," placed the band in the position to solidify the international commercial success they had always claimed they wanted in no uncertain terms. But as they were recording the all-important follow-up in Paris last spring in preparation for an exten-

ANTHONY DeCURTIS

sive tour, calamity struck. Bailey, who was producing the record, collapsed from exhaustion ("My central nervous system shut down," he calmly recounts) and was ordered by his doctors to stop working for a stretch and to assume a more manageable schedule when he returned to action. The gossip mill began to grind: Had success, or pressure, or dissension in the band, or drugs or all of the above proven too much for the most visible Twin to handle? The album was delayed for months, the tour was postponed, and Nile Rodgers was brought in to handle the production chores, a decision that entailed further delays as the much-sought-after Chic-man completed projects to which he was previously committed. For a band that prides itself on its self-sufficiency and no-nonsense attitude about the business end of rock and roll, these were hard blows.

At the time of our meeting in mid July the album still wasn't completed. Fifteen or sixteen tracks had been recorded (all originals, except for "Revolution"), enough for nearly two albums. All the songs were being mixed, and the Twins were battling out which tunes would make the final cut. Characteristically, art was not the predominant criterion for these (somewhat reluctant) British pragmatists.

"I think the sick thing about it is that one of the main contingencies is radio play," Leeways admits, resignedly. "Rather than the album being about great songs, it's what's appropriate for AOR radio. That is a big weight in terms of what songs are chosen . . . It has to come into it, it has to. If you can't get any kind of radio play, then you're just not going to move very far. It's no good having some great songs and having a principle of, 'Oh, well, blah-blah-blah,' and then not get played."

Bailey, a likeable guy who, while he falls short of the lofty "blah-blah-blah" level of principled thought, has the enviable, dubious and very '80s knack of always being able to sharpen necessity with an idealistic edge, instantly chimes in. "In that respect, though, I think we have a reputation for being quite hard-nosed realists," he points out in his most reasonable tones. "We don't beat around the bush: we know we've got to come up with the hits, and cram the album with enough of them to make it worthwhile . . . In a sense, in America we're still seen as quite a new group, and yet we're having to pander to quite old tastes. We were *shocked* in Philadelphia over the weekend. Among the American artists, there were only two—Madonna and the Hooters—that were under 40!"

The subject of Live Aid led to a discussion of the effectiveness of rock music as a tool for social change. "I don't see music having much of a relationship to it," Currie offers, decisively. "The people that make music, obviously, are people like everybody else, and you're either political people or you're not. Music's never started any revolution and music will never . . ."

"To look at it from a non-individualistic point of view," Bailey interrupts in a characteristic fusion of high-mindedness and self-justification, "rock and roll has always had this history of being the wayward child, and what's happening now is that corporate industry is training it and making it behave. Now, if that's going to happen, one positive way of manipulating that is to get it solving the sorts of problems that really governments ought to be solving, but aren't. Which is what went on over the weekend, to some extent. So if rock and roll bands are going to live or die by how many Coke commercials they can do in a year, then they might as well get involved in all sorts of other central, big-money schemes as well."

Right now, however, the "big-money scheme" that's most on the minds of the Thompson Twins is their album, and what it took to finally get it as close to done as it currently is. Nile Rodgers was called in relieve the band of production pressures, but his presence provided a pressure of a somewhat more pleasant variety. Asked to cite Rodgers' most important contribution to their recording efforts, Currie answers unhesitantly, "Lots of parties."

"Strangely enough, the real reason that people wanted a producer in on this project—to take the weight off my shoulders—didn't really come to fruition," Bailey explains about the man he describes as a "party animal," "because Nile is like an infant prodigy, a child genius. While he's interested, he contributes the most amazing things, but he won't sit for a long time with something that doesn't interest him. He's bored, that's it. It's just a great signal to have. If you're doing something and he's bored by it, I suppose you're better off doing something else instead, because he gets into the most weird, off-beat things, so if it's so off-beat that he can't get into it, then it's pretty well worth leaving alone. To that extent, keeping him interested and amused was almost as hard as producing ourselves!"

That Rodgers fit so comfortably into the rumble-tumble personality mix of the Thompson Twins is no small accomplishment. Balancing their creative and personal claims on each other is an important part of the dynamic that keeps the Twins productive and together. "To look at it analytically, theoretically, it shouldn't work," states Bailey. "If you were a pop Svengali putting a band together, you wouldn't pick us three. You might, *separately*, but you would never put us together."

"He's got immense amounts of patience," says Currie, describing Bailey. "And he's a *plodder*, you know what you would have called at a school a plodder—you're consistent and you're patient and you work at things until they work out all right, really stable, onward moving . . ."

"Sounds pretty *boring* to me," Bailey dead-pans.

"Whereas I'm much more manic," Currie continues, "totally manic, I have no real patience with things . . ."

"Alannah has this romantic self-image as the 'tortured soul,' " Bailey asserts to laughter all around.

"And Joe has a bit of both, but he's more mad as well," Alannah says, as Joe rouses himself from the couch to hear her characterization. "But you have a bit more patience, you're getting more patience than you had before. And he sort of lives on another planet some other times." Leeway rolls his eyes impatiently. "You *do*, you speak in the most bizarre manner about weird stuff."

"None of us wants to be working with the same sort of people as ourselves," Bailey concludes. "We recognize it's a strain just as we realize we're constantly learning off each other. Maybe that's the reason we're still . . . damn it, when we were in Paris, recording what was going to be our third successful, worldwide album, we were sharing an apartment together! I can't think of another group that would be in that situation . . . Also, in a sense we're crass opportunists in the worst possible way: we know we've got something great here, and we ain't gonna blow it."

Not blowing it means routinely setting goals for the band to meet or exceed—art, once again, not being the predominant criterion. "Commercially we have targets," states Bailey, "We say to ourselves, Look, by later this year we'll have done this, that and the other. And those targets are always much bigger than the ones we had last year. Artistically there's only ever one goal: that's to be satisfied that you're expressing everything that you've tried to express."

Don't those goals ever exist in opposition to each other? What happens if artistic success doesn't translate into sales?

"But that's what the game's all about though, isn't it, combining the two?" Bailey sharply responds, with what is clearly, for him, a rhetorical question.

But suppose the two can't always be combined. What happens if commercial success greets a record that, artistically, isn't up to standard?

"We'd just have to rethink, I suppose," Currie allows. "If it all goes wrong and it doesn't happen, then we're obviously not doing it right, but there's no guarantees. This business is not about guarantees. And that's part of the whole fun of it."

"And, also, we don't want to be stupid," Bailey says. "In terms of the financial goals, we don't want to be naive. In ten years, I don't want to be, 'Oh wasn't he famous once, but look how the mighty have fallen'—you haven't got a penny to your name and nothing you own except a drug habit. That's the last thing I want to get into. If and when this band ceases to exist, we should all be in positions where the doors of opportunity are relatively open—the opportunity, basically, to do the *other* half of this: the self-expression."

With three twins splitting the two halves with no major problems so far, the doors down the road should be swinging wide open. □

MINNEAPOLIS [*continued from 33*]

Here's Ole and Sven, in June, still fishing.

"Ole, how's that song coming along?"

"Sorta slow," Ole answers, swatting at a mosquito the size of the Space Shuttle. "It's too damn nice out."

Several years later, Ole gets his song recorded by a big group. The song is so idiosyncratic that it has no right to sell, so Middle America can't help itself. A combination of traditional yet bizarre.

A few months after the song becomes a hit, Ole and Sven misplace the car that Ole purchased with his royalties. Seems they'd parked it somewhere in a two thousand acre shopping mall lot, in the middle of a major April blizzard.

"So when are you startin' up your next song, Ole?" shouts Sven.

"Oh, pretty soon," Ole replies, trying not to let the pancake-sized snowflakes flash-freeze his eyeballs. "But we oughta find the car first, doncha think?"

Ole is a good example of the Minnesota mind-set. Actually, Prince isn't a *bad* example—anyone who stays in Minnesota voluntarily and rarely gives interviews understands something about the relationship between survival and success. Obviously, Ole is a little more Minnesota than Prince: He understands that ambition is what leads to success and to all the survival problems therein. The Ole saga sums things up nicely: Have your success, sure. But find your car first.

Summing up a Minnesota sound is a more challenging task. There's been Bob Dylan, and also the Trashmen doing "The Bird Is The Word." There's been Bonnie Raitt (blues folk), Tony Glover (blues harp god), Michael Johnson ("Bluer Than Blue," remember?), Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion* radio show house band (bluegrass and folk for purists). There's also the Replacements (underaged, genius, degenerate), Hüsker Dü (heroes of hardcore), the Têtes Noires (all-female band doing folk, punk, rock). In the mainstream, deserving to go upstream, is Rue Nouveau, who have one of their original songs on the newest Nick Lowe LP.

Limited Warranty (synth-pop and shoulder pads) bagged 1985's $100,000 grand prize on *Star Search*. And, of course, the issue of Prince's loins, from Andre Cymone and Morris Day to Jesse Johnson and, farther down the family tree, new crooner Alexander O'Neal. If that partial list sounds like a Sound to you, then maybe the place whence it came will make sense, too.

The Twin Cities are located in the middle of a stunning amount of relatively empty space. So many people are of German or Scandinavian descent that tourists have been known to wonder if Minneapolis is a ghetto for blonde people. Many of these blondes grew up on the state's farms, which are struggling, and now work in high-tech industries, which are thriving. The arts scene is as schizophrenic as the state's state of mind. The theater is world class, the other fine arts flourish—and the summer months are choked with more bad arts-and-crafts fairs than one locale should be forced to endure. The liberal politics endure, even though Fritz Mondale has suffered more than one drubbing in his time. The late Hubert H. Humphrey got a stadium named after him.

Minnesota humor, especially about the weather, and much like the weather, tends to be extreme. Like this joke: "There's two seasons in Minnesota, winter and road construction."

Actually, there's a third season. It's a short one, from late May to early July, hallmarked by world-class tornadoes and thunderstorms that do impressive imitations of killer typhoons. When not being hauled to church picnics or water sports at one of the state's 10,000 lakes, Minnesota kids spend Season Three in their parents' basements, waiting for trees and power lines to stop falling. They get comfortable in basements, doing things like anticipating violent death and listening to rock 'n' roll. So what could be more natural than wanting to spend more time in that same life-saving space, recreating the music that soundtracked one's childhood brushes with the afterlife? Dark enclosed spaces become a natural habitat.

At First Avenue, the club in Purple Rain, *corsets are now required, but hip people have been pushed out by thrill-seeking suburbanites.*

When Minneapolis rock bands mull over coming out of said basements, a few questions usually come up: Is the band ready? And, in light of the weather and/or road construction, is the van ready? The answer: It depends—which road are they ripping up this year?

For those plucky bands, there's actually a good number of Twin Cities bars where they can cut their teeth. But bars are public places, and that's where the state's state draws the line. *Be bizarre—but keep it in the basement. Now put that leather corset away and get ready for the church picnic.* Sure, on any given night you can find the Tete Noires doing their a cappella version of Billy Idol's "White Wedding," or the Form doing "All The Young Dudes." But most club owners don't want to hear about corsets until whoever's wearing them is no longer a public embarrassment. At First Avenue, the club in *Purple Rain*, corsets are now required, but hip people have been pushed out by thrill-seeking suburbanites. Anyway, most local club owners these days ask their bands to *please keep those guitars turned down so the bartender can hear the waitresses' orders.*

So people like the superb and resoundingly undiscovered songwriter Jim Hall go into computer programming, and witty/weird rockers like Sussman Lawrence move away. Prince's success did not bring every A&R person on the planet out to plunder the tundra. *Well sure, there's Prince, but can these people make car radio music? What do they know about music that sells?*

Not always a whole lot, but they know from fishing, and its Zen lessons about patience and present-tense pleasure. So Jim Hall uses his days off to sit in his basement and write songs on computer and acoustic guitar.

By the way, Ole and Sven gave up on finding the car and stopped to warm up in the shopping mall's supper club lounge. The band was playing "Crazy for You," but when word came that the boss was snowed in at home, they switched to old jazz tunes and some original songs and Ole and Sven cheered them on. The Minnesota mind-set makes its point—when success and ambition are scaled down to size, plenty of room is left for things like the vagaries of fate and good rock 'n' roll.

That night in the lounge, the music *was* good, and everyone had a wonderful time.□

A former resident of Minneapolis, Laura Fissinger has never been ice fishing.

AUSTIN [*continued from 34*]

regional and intellectual barriers.

In a recent study of Austin's quality of life (by one Dr. Dowell Meyers at the University of Texas), over 80% of the respondents cited Austin's music scene as an important factor in the city's livability. Indeed, sometimes it seems that life in Austin revolves around music. After a day of studying or working, or a weekend spent enjoying crystalline lakes and smogless skies, revelers who don't head for the cozy anonymity of their home entertainment centers make a beeline for the bars. Or the parks.

Lately, outdoor performances in the public parks—by both local and national performers—have become commonplace. While some shows are sponsored by the local musicians union and admission is free, other high-dollar concerts are put on by promoters who cordon off the public park for their own profit. Some members of the Austin City Council are beginning to balk at the prospect of the public's parkland evolving into private concert venues, while the Chamber of Commerce appears to be favorably disposed to private shows on public property. This situation is one of many that exemplify the current state of the business of Austin music.

While hometown boosters often claim that the vitality of Austin's music scene is at least equal to that of the music communities in New York, Nashville or Los Angeles, they are quick to point out that the economic infrastructures are [*Cont. on 46*]

[*Cont. from 45*] startlingly different. No major record labels make their home in Austex. Music publishing firms and state-of-the-art recording studios are only now beginning to arrive. Financial institutions are oblivious to the needs of the music community, and thus the potential to capitalize on the bountiful talent often goes unrealized.

In 1981, Austin's Armadillo World Headquarters was demolished to make way for a high-rise office building, another symbolic but telling event. A one-time National Guard Armory transformed into a concert hall, the club became a focal point for musicians and spectators; yet it was never given the historic zoning from the City Council that could have saved it from the wrecking ball. The 'dillo's undeserved death, as well as the loss of several other prominent venues in the following years due to city growth and attendant escalating property rents and taxes, stirred the city's music community to become involved in preserving their spiritual and financial lifeblood. Concerned parties have persuaded the previously uninvolved Chamber of Commerce to promote Austin music; if the necessary components of the music industry do indeed take up residence here, perhaps its principals will be smart enough to encourage the lack of conformity that has given this scene its bristling, unpredictable quality.

The Chamber's first effort to bring Austin's music to a national audience was made by music journalist Ed Ward, and the result was spectacular. Ward, who serves on the organization's music committee, suggested to MTV's *Cutting Edge* producer Carl Grasso that he check out Austin's pop underground. The result: the August 25 edition of *The Cutting Edge* was devoted to more than a dozen Austin bands, who not only reached record executives on the Coast, but were reassured that their idiosyncratic styles, ranging from swamp rock to white trash to acid country, were relevant beyond their own locale.

The insularity once inherent in being an Austin musician—the "big fish in a little pond" syndrome—is coming to an end. Many hometown artists are foregoing major label affiliation (or rejection) and licensing their recordings to European distributors and labels. Audiences from Scandinavia to Paris are lapping up product branded with Lone Star authenticity, and as a result rootsier Austin acts such as Omar and the Howlers, the Leroi Brothers and Butch Hancock have been taking advantage of a lucrative, untapped touring market—and simultaneously attracting the interest of big league U.S. labels.

Ruminations about "untapped markets" and "capitalizing on potential" are relevant to the growth of the Austin music industry—which is important—but they do not reflect its heart and soul. Music in the capital of Texas is important for the same reason it is significant everywhere else: it gives people an outlet for emotions which often go beyond verbal communication, allowing them the chance to express those feelings, at least vicariously. And musicians want to be heard. So if the Chamber of Commerce wants to ensure that Austin's music is locally cost-effective, and that its artists maintain international reputations, one result is that their music will be heard.

But what will happen to the quality of Austin music in years to come? Will local artists lose the regional perspective that made them appealing in the first place? Will the local industry begin to churn out a dozen clones of every artist who becomes successful?

Maybe. But there will always be plenty of young rebels who want to sing their piece unfettered by notions of glamor and acquiescence to the status quo. And if they can't get a gig in 1995, they'll just play "The Drag." □

Contributing editor Jody Denberg, a native New Yorker transplanted to Austin, is a columnist for Texas Monthly.

New York [*continued from 35*]

the city's environment . . . almost. The opportunity for encountering the music's veritable giants on any given night of the week is so great it damn near unhinges the minds of jazz fans located farther away from the action.

There's not much happening to expand the boundaries of the form but what experimentation is evident deserves mention. First there's saxophonist David Murray's Big Bad, conducted by Butch Morris and featuring some of the music's best young talent performing some of the most adventurous writing jazz has heard since the death of Charles Mingus. More impressionistic is conductor Morris' own Crayon ensemble, which draws on music of China, Indonesia and the modern European classicism to arrive at buoyant explorations of sound, color and movement. Jemeel Moondoc's Jus Grew Orchestra is another aggregate of promising talent. I single these units out because they represent sustained commitment to opening up jazz frontiers.

From my perspective as a lifelong devotee of raw funk the most exciting prospect on the Gotham front is the burgeoning black band movement. Most of the heat is coming from four bands led by black guitarists: Vernon Reid's Living Colour, proponents of black psychedelia; Ronnie Drayton's Sirius, which fuses mainstream black pop with AOR and sports a vocalist of awesome soul-stirring gifts in Bernard Fowler; Kelvinator, a fusion aggregation led by Kelvin Bell; and I.Q., an updated soul revue organized by Tomas Donkcer. All these bands have had problems getting regular gigs in the city's narrow and narrow-minded club circuit, but when they've had a chance to be heard the reaction has been overwhelmingly positive.

On the whole, though, New York is pretty dormant. But what the hell, things are tough all around. Best music I've heard in months has been at home on my turntable. Could be I've just gotten too old to care about scene-making. Could be that, in the words of Jimi Hendrix, there just ain't no life nowhere. But I'm not feeling that depressed about the situation. This is how I make a *living*, remember? □

If you have a tone you can leave it after the message on contributing editor Greg Tate's answering machine.

Amateur Musician [*continued from 21*]

slave keyboard. This approach offers several advantages compared to conventional multitrack tape recording. First, you can forget about head cleaning, demagnetizing and so on. Second, tempi can be sped up or slowed down at will without causing the pitch changes inherent in using tape; thus, a particularly difficult part can be worked out at a slow tempo and sped up on playback. And if you like the notes you played on the track but not the sound, no problem—simply call up a different patch on an instrument being fed from that track.

Like drum machines, most sequencers can "round off" your timing to a particular note value (such as eighth notes, sixteenth notes, etc.), thus giving you perfect rhythmic chops. Editing capabilities are also extensive; these typically include punch-in and punch-out, as well as the ability to eliminate one specific note from one specific track.

MIDI sequencers are available in a number of different forms. Interfaces are available for most home computers (Commodore-64, Apple II, IBM PC, etc.) to let them function as MIDI sequencers. Some instruments, like the Linn 9000 drum machine, have MIDI sequencers built in that can be used to drive outboard MIDI slave instruments. Then there are stand-alone units, such as Roland's MSQ-700 and the Yamaha QX-1. The latter is a remarkably complete eight-track sequencer that brings us tantalizingly close to the "tapeless studio." It can sequence eight independent instruments, has an 80,000 note capacity, stores pitch bending, dynamics and several other MIDI parameters, and includes its own disk drive for mass storage so that you can build up a library of compositions on standard 5.25" diskettes. Conceptually the QX-1 is similar to a standard eight-track recorder, right down to the "rewind" and "fast forward" button that let you step rapidly from one part of a sequence to another.

MIDI has made it past the "hype" stage and is proving its worth as an invaluable musical tool; in fact, "MIDI studios" are springing up using MIDI sequencing techniques to supplement their conventional multitrack machines. But remember that the MIDI sequencer is only the latest in a series of fascinating MIDI-related developments. It will be interesting indeed to see what the geniuses in the musical electronics industry come up with next. □

Ever tell a traffic cop to go@#!$%?

It's not recommended.

But neither is driving without your glasses, and winding up on an airfield, tailgating a 747.

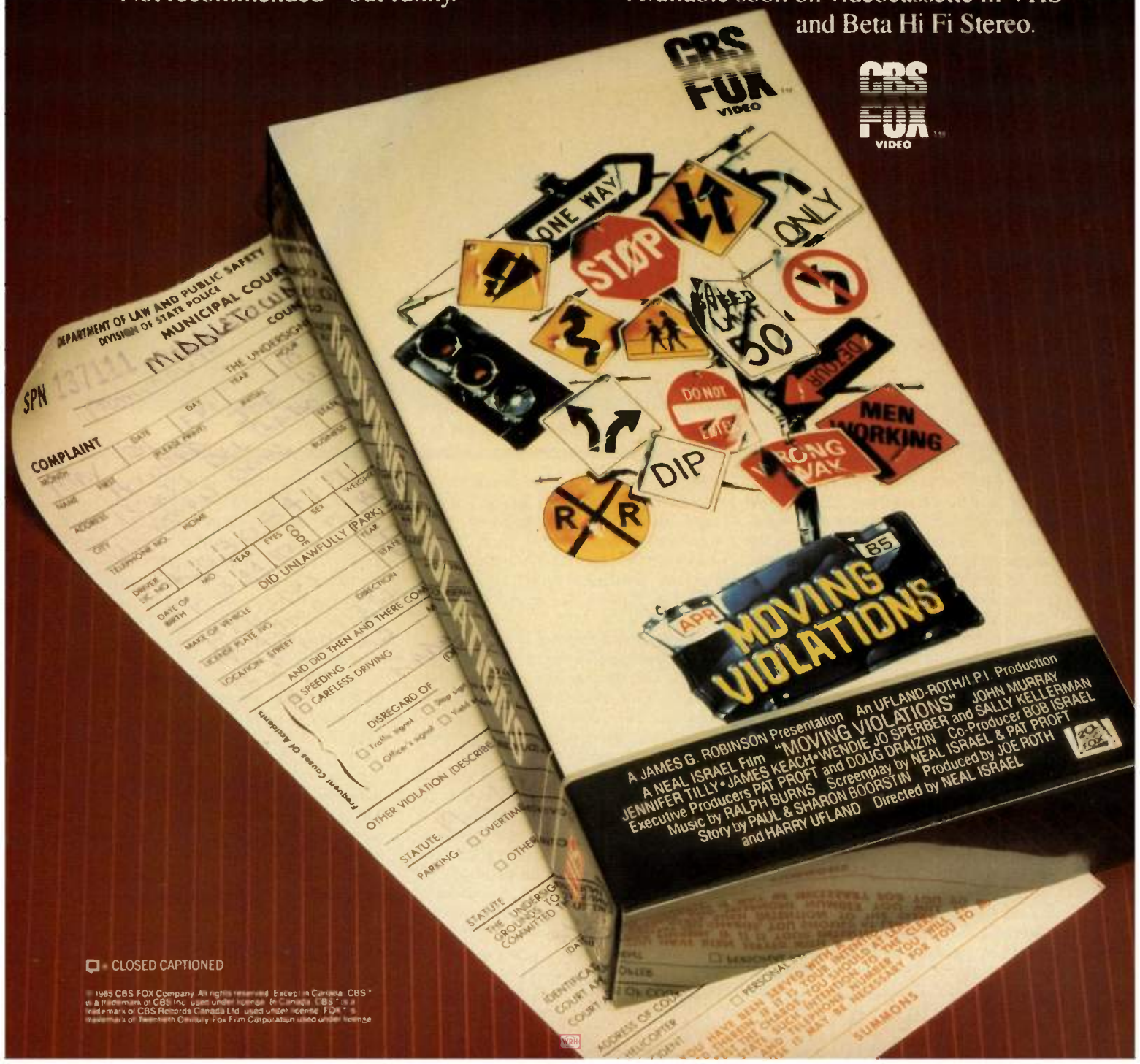
Or any of the other stunts drivers pull in *Moving Violations*.

Not recommended—but funny.

So if you've ever forced yourself to say "Thank you, officer" instead of what you were really thinking, you deserve a good laugh at the expense of your local traffic police.

And this movie is just the ticket.

Available soon on videocassette in VHS and Beta Hi Fi Stereo.



CLOSED CAPTIONED

© 1985 CBS FOX Company. All rights reserved. Except in Canada, CBS® is a trademark of CBS Inc. used under license. In Canada, CBS® is a trademark of CBS Records Canada Ltd. used under license. FOX® is a trademark of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation used under license.

Live Aid: Whose Benefit?

The events of July 13 did a lot . . . for Atlantic Records' catalog

BY STANLEY MIESES

LYNN GOLDSMITH / LGI

LIVE AID: MUSIC FOR A NEW/NOW GENERATION OF CONSUMERS?

Such was the nature and magnitude of the Live Aid show that commentators before, during and after the international rock 'n' roll relief effort scrambled to find the best appellation for a modern-day pop music legacy, and for the most part all they could come up with was "this generation's Woodstock." To be sure, Live Aid was neither the sole property of a new generation, nor was it a festival that focused the music and lifestyle of an emerging force in American popular culture: at its best, Live Aid was a monumentally successful telethon for a worthy cause. Woodstock already informed the world that rock 'n' roll was a powerful tool, a spiritual force. Live Aid, in that respect, was an echo. To call it "this generation's Woodstock" is beside the point.

There may be some who will argue that to equate Woodstock with Live Aid is a conscious put-down of Live Aid by those of the Woodstock generation who are now in controlling positions in the media, Woodstock being their only frame of reference to any pop culture event of that scale. There's some truth in that. But more importantly, the point should be made that Woodstock too occurred in a hostile media environment, and the nature and magnitude of what happened on Max Yasgur's farm transcended the anti-youth (and pro-Vietnam) sentiment of the times to become legendary. The stuff hopes and dreams were pinned on. Years from now, no one will really identify themselves as part of the "Live Aid generation," I'm sure. And the reason for that, purely and simply, is business. The record business, to be precise.

Watching and listening to Live Aid as I did on the various channels that carried it (MTV, Metromedia, ABC, two radio networks—all of which turned Live Aid into something more akin to Tape Delay Aid), I couldn't help but wonder about the selection of groups (I mean, Live Aid was supposed to raise consciousness and money about the starving and dying in Africa, but nowhere on the bill was an African musical group, of which there are several with enough profile to be recognized by the public); the selection of songs—most groups played their latest hits from their latest albums, as opposed to, say, playing songs that might have been more appropriate in this context (for example, was Duran Duran kidding when they played "A View to a Kill" or just hyping product?); the absence of certain personalities (Michael Jackson was too busy making a little movie for his personal shrine in Disneyland, Bruce Springsteen was too busy gearing up for his own earth- and bankbook-shattering tour, Prince sent a video stand-in, etc.); and finally, what made me wonder most about Live Aid was the great success of the Woodstock generation musical revivals, namely, the reunions of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, two of the original Temptations (joining Hall & Oates) and the likes of Eric Clapton (singing "Layla") and Bob Dylan (singing "Blowin' in the Wind"). And if you don't think they were the hit of the show, check this out: only weeks after Live Aid, *Led Zeppelin IV* was back on the charts, and Tower Records reported that all of its CS&N (and Y) records were out-of-stock, ditto Black Sabbath's *Paranoid* and Derek and the Dominoes' *Layla*. If you believe Live Aid was the best thing to happen to the victims of starvation in Ethiopia, you might be right, and time will tell whether the money and food will be distributed properly

and equitably (no one mentioned during the show, so I will now: the Marxist and self-infatuated ruler of Ethiopia is perfectly content to let the food rot on boats anchored at the country's port rather than feed his constituency). In the meantime, it is certainly true that Live Aid was the best thing to happen to the catalogue of Atlantic Records in years.

Before the impression is left that Live Aid was less than advertised—all they hoped for was to raise money for the starving, and that they did, and how—let me also say that Bob Geldof of the Boomtown Rats is a fine example of selflessness and ought to be seriously considered for the Nobel Peace Prize. It's not his fault that the extra-curricular upshot of Live Aid in America has been good for business and less-than-galvanizing for the conscience of American youth. But if, as Bob Dylan opined onstage in Philadelphia, we turn our concerns to the plight of farmers, the homeless, AIDS victims and so forth, through rock 'n' roll telethons like this on a regular basis, then rightfully this new generation can claim "we are the world."

Post-mortem on a song I used to like: When Randy Newman wrote "I Love L.A." I thought at long last, someone has the guts, the talent and the good humor to counter all the East Coast chauvinism that has emerged in popular music titles over the years. It was a clever song, and it turned into a beautifully conceived video, and moreover, it gave Southern California a musical identity equal to any New York state of mind. But then it turned up, re-edited, as an advertisement for Nike running shoes during the Summer Olympics—which seemed a mite too soon after its life on the airwaves, although it retained some identification with Los Angeles. Now, however, it's turned up again, only as the theme music for the ABC Network's fall promotional ads, with "You'll love it!" replacing the more personal "*We* love it" chorus, and frankly, Randy, ABC, dear readers, I don't. No more than when I hear the Pointer Sisters' "Jump" being used for some washing machine additive (Bounce) or Dr. John's crooning "Let The Good Times Roll" in support of toilet paper. (Isn't there something ironic about Dr. John's name here?) Pop music isn't sacred, and advertising isn't all shameful, but thanks in part to the advent of music video, the two are becoming less and less distinct all the time. I never thought I'd equate "roll all night long" with the shits, that's for sure.

I read recently where a group of well-known high-fashion designers, led by Valentino, were pooling their talents to come up with a Live Aid scarf, with the proceeds to benefit the hungry and homeless in Ethiopia. That's what I like about the world of fashion, their clear perspective. Who knows—if it's a success, maybe they'll come up with a Live Aid caftan next. □

DURAN DURAN : WERE THEY KIDDING OR JUST HYPING PRODUCT?

PAUL NATKIN / PHOTORESERVE

SPOTLIGHT

WHO'S ZOOMIN' WHO?

Aretha Franklin
Arista

ARETHA SINGS THE BLUES

Aretha Franklin
Columbia

THE ADS FOR ARETHA'S LATEST claim that the Queen of Soul has reclaimed her throne—but, then, they always do. Which could just steer you off the fact that *Who's Zoomin' Who?* is a rather special record. Ignoring the disappointing duets (with Eurythmics on the feminist anthem "Sisters Are Doin' It For Themselves" and Peter Wolf on "Push"), "Freeway of Love" is her radio-happiest single since "Jump to It" and the title track is a marvel of call-and-response interplay. Best of all is the assurance Aretha brings to the two tracks she produced herself in her native Detroit, the remade "Sweet Bitter Love" and the aptly named "Integrity."

Unfortunately, like most retrospective attempts to subclassify a great artist's legacy (the Beatles' *Love Songs*, Elvis' *Rocker*, last year's *Aretha's Jazz*), *Aretha Sings the Blues* doesn't make it. The polite, pre-Muscle Shoals settings here do nothing to bring out the singer's luminous power. If you want to check out her roots, you'd be advised to attend the joyous meetings recorded for *Amazing Grace*, the two-record live gospel set left miraculously unscathed after Atlantic's purging of this soul goddess' catalogue.

—Wayne King

RADIO M.U.S.C. MAN

Womack and Womack
Elektra

AIN'T NOTHIN' LIKE THE REAL thing, baby, and Womack and Womack's second vinyl outing offers just that to R&B fans who are up to their ears in mindless funk and cloying crooning. With *Radio M.U.S.C. Man*, this wedded duo pick up where their excellent 1984 debut, *Love Wars*, left off—performing their own brand of silken soul endowed with heavenly harmonies, eloquent original compositions, and immaculate instrumentation. None of this is surprising when you consider that Linda Womack is Sam Cooke's daughter, and Cecil is Bobby Womack's brother, but these two stand very much on their own merits. From the sunny summer single "Strange and Funny" to the steamy "Night Rider," if you like sweet soul music, you'll love *Radio M.U.S.C. Man*.

—Jody Denberg

POWER JAM '85

Various Artists
Tommy Boy

RAP STARS LIKE AFRIKA BAMBAAtaa and Run D.M.C. should fear not: it's unlikely that any of the nouveau rappers on this compilation of recent Tommy Boy singles will put anybody out of business. For the most part, this is a pretty half-baked roundup, full of tired beats, lame self-realization lyrics in the Grandmaster Flash/Melle Mel tradition, and by-the-grooves production. Distaff rappers The Golden Girls show some promise, and G.L.O.B.E. and Pow Wow turn in some nifty high-speed rapping, but the outstanding track here isn't rap at all. It's a shuddering slice of cut-up jazz, "Rap-o-matic Rap," by the Dumb Guys, a jam unit featuring keyboard whiz and ace producer Keith LeBlanc. Sadly, though, the majority of this disk does little more than demonstrate that last year's fresh is this year's flat.

—Chris Morris

PLAY THE GAME RIGHT

Melody Makers
EMI

THE MELODY MAKERS CONSIST OF the four offspring of Bob and Rita Marley: Sharon, 20; Cedella, 17; Ziggy, 16; Stevie, 12. Reportedly, EMI envisioned the group as another Musical Youth—presumably harmless reggae/pop with crossover appeal to the cartoon set. Praise Jah, those plans were scrapped. *Play the Game Right* was recorded with the Wailers at Marley's Tuff Gong studios in Kingston, and it is no more harmless than a small axe. Ziggy, who wrote or co-wrote nine of the 10 tracks, sounds eerily like his late father on the lead vocals. His sisters and younger brother harmonize with the sanctified precision of Rita's I-Threes. But it is the songs themselves that give the album its clear sense of *crucia-lity*. On tune after tune, Ziggy delivers the deep, righteous one-drop in the family tradition of "Natty Dread" and "Rastaman Vibration." (Roll over, Julian, and tell Hank Jr. the news . . .) If you've been waiting for an album to restore your faith in the international power and glory of reggae music, it's here.

—Rico Mitchell

RED SAILS IN THE SUNSET

Midnight Oil
Columbia

THE WORLD OF MIDNIGHT OIL IS THE same post-nuclear winterscape as U2's "A Sort of Homecoming." The difference between the two perspectives is that Australia

was obviously closer to where The Bomb hit (one look at alien presence/lead singer Peter Garrett will confirm this). The political vision of these shock-rocking Aussies is more cutting, more obsessed; their music starker and harsher. The cry for relief from arms race insanity is even shriller this time than on the apocalyptic *10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1*. Yet the power of this Down Under dreadnaught is irresistible, and *Red Sails In The Sunset* won't hurt Garrett's chances next time he runs for office, either. **—W.K.**

THE PLEASURE SEEKERS

The System
Mirage

MIC MURPHY AND DAVID FRANK have somehow become less than the sum of their parts. Murphy's expressive voice is still great for being romantic without being mushy. And synth whiz Frank, who's done some fine session work for Phil Collins and Scritti Politti, creates interesting, propulsive electronic landscapes for Murphy's voice to range. But the element of surprise is lacking throughout *The Pleasure Seekers*—there's little here that's musically distinguishable from the first System album, 1982's *Sweat*. Nice touches are obvious: the bassline tug of "I Don't Run From Danger"; the tropical flavor and witty arrangement of "My Radio Rocks"; and the sweet, well-crafted pop of "This Is for You" and "It Takes 2." But, possibly in response to those who found the band's last album, *X-periment*, too far out, the System's spark and cutting-edge mentality aren't as evident here—and that's an unfortunate falling off. **—Brian Chin**

ALWAYS ON MY MIND

Elvis Presley
RCA

HIP-HIP-HOORAY AND GIVE THE man a cigar if he can even put this record on his turntable after checking out the song selection. "My Boy"? "Hurt"? Come on. It's almost as if someone wanted to demonstrate how horrendous Presley's taste could be on occasion. What's worse, the version of "Always On My Mind" included here is a totally overblown production that should have remained forever sealed in a vault. Why include such sentimental bombast when the soundtrack of *This Is Elvis* contains a tougher take of the same song done with tasteful instrumentation, sensitive background support, and a measured, well-tempered vocal from the King? Better drop back 10 and punt on this, the only blemish in an otherwise exemplary Presley reissue campaign. **—David McGee**

IN PRAISE OF OLDER WOMEN AND OTHER CRIMES

Kid Creole and the Coconuts
Sire

TO CALL THE NEW KID CREOLE LP "a disappointment" is to criticize it for being merely a "very good" record compared to its three brilliant predecessors: *Fresh Fruit in Foreign Places*, *Wise Guy* and *Doppelganger*. At the risk of sounding oh so analytical, I'd say August Darnell's response to the failed commercial calculation of *Wise Guy*'s breezy hijinx was the wicked cynicism and brooding seriousness of its off-putting follow-up, *Doppelganger*. While *Older Women* marks a return to the buoyant pleasures of *Wise Guy*, there's a tentativeness that seems, at once, the result of Darnell's disillusionment with the pop crapshoot, and the after-effects of his immersion in *Doppelganger*'s soul-searching depths. Still, I'd be thrilled (but surprised) if the crafty "Endicott" turned out to be the hit these tropical gangsters have long deserved.

—John McAlley

TINA TURNER: LIVE PRIVATE DANCER

D: David Mallet
55 min./Sony/$29.95

HAVING COME BACK SO HARD AND ubiquitously that it now might be nice if she lay low a bit, rock's Queen of Steam extends her media blitz here to a concert video. For intimacy (and crotch appeal) we get to watch Tina slip into fishnets and heels backstage, but the performances themselves seem strangely remote—due more to the staginess and distance of David Mallet's direction than to Tina, who burns with customary brashness. David Bowie turns up for effective, if cloyingly adulatory duets on "Tonight" and "Let's Dance," and Bryan Adams rocks in some freshness with "It's Only Love." If you can't get enough of Tina's stuff, there's no reason to avoid this concert workout; but if her unrelieved heat is beginning to blow your circuits, save your attention for a more essential outing.

—Anthony DeCurtis

GO GO CRANKIN'

Various Artists
4th and Broadway

GO GO, AS THE MEDIA IS QUICKLY discovering, is a style of funk indigenous to the nation's capital, where thousands of young people gather in burned-out theaters and coliseums to scream "Say what?!" in unison and dance their buns off. For neophytes, *Go Go Crankin'* serves as the best introduction to the form; it includes most of Go Go's hits and many of its best songs. All of those songs display an old-fashioned attitude toward funk—they use real guitars, drums and horns in the service of music that recalls the parties of early Kool and the Gang; call-and-response singing that threatens to degenerate into a chaos in which everyone on stage is calling and responding at once. The rhythm is absolutely distinctive: a fast, soulful skiffle that commands you to dance, then sticks around to make sure you do. Chuck Brown is the grand old man of the movement, and his "We Need Some Money," included here, was Go Go's biggest national hit. Trouble Funk, Go Go's definitive practitioners, produced four of the tracks here, including their two contributions: "Say What?" and the classic "Drop the Bomb." The best jam on the album, though, is a hot, horny instrumental, "In the Mix," by Slim. And we ain't talking Whitman. **—Crispin Sartwell**

ELECTRONIC AND EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC

By Thomas B. Holmes
Charles Scribner's Sons/278 pgs. $12.95 (paper), $24.95 (cloth)

ATTENTION OLD ROCKERS: DOES techno-pop leave you cold? Feeling alienated by synthesizer washes? Can't get next to Howard Jones? Well, who'd want to? No, really, this book may be the perfect tonic for what ails you. Holmes, publisher of *Recordings of Experimental Music*, has fashioned a straightforward, informed history/survey of electronic and experimental music. Instead of narrative pull the book offers comprehensiveness: Holmes details the careers of virtually every major or minor figure in the genre's brief history, succinctly traces the evolution of electronic instruments, and closes out with a buyer's guide to essential recordings, periodicals, equipment suppliers and mail order sources for the music described herein. In the fable he penned for his *John Wesley Harding* liner notes, Bob Dylan has one character asking another, "How far do you want to go in?" The reply is, "Just far enough so's I can say I been there." Holmes takes you a silly millimeter farther than that, but not so far so's you'll feel trapped. A worthy effort. **—D.M.**

BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY

The Weather Girls
Columbia

"IT'S RAINING MEN," THE WEATHER Girls' debut single, was a delightful, off-

the-wall romp, the kind of song you'd put on when everyone at your party looked tired and bored. While *Big Girls Don't Cry* generally lacks the immediate tickle of that tune, it employs high-tech flash to flattering advantage. For example, Neil Sedaka's "Laughter in the Rain" is a lean, haunting masterpiece, studded with dreamy synths and drum accents that punctuate the tune's calm. And despite the modern settings, Martha Wash and Izora Armstead's mercurial swoops never get swept up into the electronics—every note their church-bred pipes pump out registers, and the songs convey unbridled passion. Two-ton girls may not cry, but on this LP their voices definitely soar. **—Havelock Nelson**

STAYING OUT LATE WITH BEAT RODEO

Beat Rodeo
I.R.S.

NEVER MIND THE COWPUNK NAME. At their most charming—namely, on the songs that kick off the respective sides of their first major label LP—New York's Beat Rodeo sound like one of the punchiest garage bands since the Romantics. The chiming chorus and jangly guitars of "Just Friends" show off leader Steve Almaas' pop smarts, while the grungier "Without You" has deep, rumbly guitar figures and vocal harmonies that recall Quicksilver Messenger Service's classic "Fresh Air." The rest of *Staying Out Late*, recorded two years ago with an earlier incarnation of the band, is more befitting of their moniker: routine "country punk" too coy to qualify for either genre. So cut the cowcrap, guys—just turn up the guitars. **—David Browne**

LED ZEPPELIN: THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME

D: Peter Clifton, Joe Massot
136 min./Warners Home Video/$39.98

AS THE LIVE AID REUNIONS DEMONstrated, the constitutions of some rock dinosaurs are sturdier than others. Led Zep's skeleton remains intact, and those hallowed bones encourage a renewed appreciation for the thunderous blues-informed rock 'n' roll the band hammered out in its prime. New York's Madison Square Garden was Zep's most sanctified stateside stomping ground, and the 1973 performances preserved here are the powerful centerpiece of this surprisingly satisfying, quasi-conceptual feature. A curious amalgam of *Koyaanisqatsi*, MTV and *Spinal Tap* (all of which it predates by at least five years), this film offers a provocative comment on the elasticity of pop culture and documents Zeppelin's undeniable greatness. Plant swaggers and screams in ecstatic sympathy while Page makes a breathtaking bid for immortality—his guitar prowess lies light years beyond technique in the dazed and confused blindness of pure inspiration. All this, and the greatest early hits, too. **—J.M.**

B-MOVIE MATINEE

Nile Rodgers
Warner

NILE RODGERS IS A RESOURCEFUL producer, a distinctive guitarist and a lousy singer. That last ought to limit him most, but here, he manages to have his hits and sing them too. Nile gets by with a lotta help from his friends— his vocals are rapped in a comfortable cloud of support singers, lending weight to the poppish "The Face in the Window" and body to "Groove Master." The album's best moments, however, churn up a swirl of sound that on "Let's Go Out Tonight" sucks you in like a maelstrom in a jacuzzi. Don't worry though—you'll go down smiling. **—J.D. Considine**

BOWIE

By Jerry Hopkins
MacMillan/320 pp./$17.95

JERRY HOPKINS' *BOWIE* IS NEITHER an in-depth critical analysis nor the book that cracks this chameleon actor open. It is a fairly complete compendium of the Bowie tales extant, rendered in a quick-paced, easy-to-read style. Hopkins provides more detail than has previously been available on key events in Bowie lore, such as the MainMan scandals, the Diamond Dogs tour, and the Berlin exile—but the book is low on sexy secrets and convincing insights. Hopkins' biggest problem lies in his simplistic treatment of the star's musical output. Still, *Bowie* is a good recap of the story so far, even if the text adheres a little too closely to the official line. **—Larry Frascella**

SINGLE LIFE

Cameo
Polygram

CAMEO IS UNDERGOING AN IDENTIty crisis. They can't decide whether they want to do avant-electronic rap ("Urban Warrior"), quirky dance-pop ("Attack Me With Your Love"), cocktail-lounge schlock ("I've Got Your Image"), or politically charged reggae ("Little Boy—Dangerous Toy"). The crisis blows over because they manage to pull off all these styles in this assured, flamboyant LP. The title song is the album's best; it combines all of the band's various approaches into a single vamp. In their long, successful recording career Cameo has never before shown even the potential for the originality they handily realize here. **—C.S.**

ON THE ROAD WITH THE ROLLING STONES

By Chet Flippo
Dolphin/Doubleday/178 pgs./$6.95

GOOD TIMES, BAD TIMES FROM MAY of 1975 through April of 1979, as witnessed and sometimes experienced firsthand by Chet Flippo, one of the very best of the veteran music reporters. Nails road life dead-on, and offers up some well-drawn encounters with the band members and their entourage. The book's final scene, of Flippo, Jagger and Jerry Hall together in a Toronto hotel room listening to tapes of the Stones' concert for the blind (fulfilling the "sentence" Keith Richards had received for being caught carrying drugs into the country), is, in its brevity (perhaps 300 words), one of the best portraits of Jagger ever published. **—D.M.**

MUSICAN

Ernie Watts
Qwest/Warner

ERNIE WATTS' MAJOR CLAIMS TO fame are his Grammy-winning cover of Vangelis' "Chariots of Fire Theme," his 1981 tour stint with the Stones, and a 15-year association with Doc Severinsen's *Tonight Show* band. He plays tenor and alto saxophones much in the same vein as David Sanborn, Michael Brecker, Grover Washington, Jr., and John Klemmer. Watts' second album under Quincy Jones' stewardship (although it is co-produced by Watts and Don Grusin), *Musican* is expertly crafted, but passionless. Watts handles his sax chores well enough and Grusin is a particularly adept keyboard colorist, but most of the songs are either flat or just plain dull. "Rock Camping," an upbeat tune fueled by Jerry Hey's explosive horn arrangement, is an exception, as are the vocal numbers that feature tenor Phil Perry. *Musican* is a harmless MOR-jazz album, best played while dining on a gourmet frozen meal—it has about as much substance as a portion of Lean Cuisine. **—Steve Bloom**

THE LOST WEEKEND

Danny and Dusty
A&M

IT'S L.A. UNDERGROUND JAM TIME, with Green on Red's Dan Stuart and Dream

Syndicate's Steve "Dusty" Wynn fronting an ad hoc ensemble of sit-ins from their two combos and the Long Ryders. Stuart and Wynn's original material varies from cow-punk ("The Word Is Out") to psychedelic dirges ("Down to the Bone"). While Danny and Dusty contribute some frenzied vocals, and Green on Red's Chris Cacavas adds some first-rate piano playing, little on this LP is more than momentarily amusing. As the title suggests, these tracks were recorded over the course of a weekend—apparently after one too many happy hours in L.A. bars—resulting in a stupor-session effort where the musicians had more fun making it than you'll have listening to it.

—Nick Burton

TAKE NO PRISONERS

Peabo Bryson
Elektra

BRYSON HAS BEEN CAST AS A crooner for so long that it comes almost as a surprise to find him releasing what is essentially a dance record. Not that he doesn't sound at home here—for from the suave studio gloss of the Billy Ocean-styled title track to the tough techo-funk of "There's Nothing Out There," Bryson's phrasing is always right in the pocket. More to the point, he understands exactly how to pull the pop content out of these elaborate electronic concoctions, and that keeps this album from turning into just another drab dance-floor workout.

—J.D.C.

RETURN TO WATERLOO

Ray Davies
Arista

RAY DAVIES IS A MASTER OF SOCIAL commentary in the three-minute pop song. Those who have been away from the Kinkdom will discover that although Davies' concerns are still the same, the tone on *Return to Waterloo*—the soundtrack for Davies' film of the same name—is more despairing and pessimistic. On "Not Far Away" Davies laments "the system that bred you and fed you can throw you away . . . and it's not far away"—and such bitterness colors the entire album, ranging from this public declaration to the more personal "Lonely Hearts" and "Going Solo." Though it lacks classics on the order of "Waterloo Sunset" or "Sunny Afternoon," *Return to Waterloo* is a fine set that fits well into the Kinks' lengthy discography. Consumer Alert: be aware that three songs here—"Going Solo," "Sold Me Out," and "Missing Persons"—also appear on the most recent Kinks album, *Word of Mouth*.

—Ken Roseman

SIDE TRACKS — BY GREG TATE

Cool Tunes, Dance Cuts and the Singles Life

From the meager pickings made available by late summer release scheduling, we arrive at this month's column. My pick of the month has actually been *out* for months, namely WHITNEY HOUSTON's "You Give Good Love," for all intents and purposes the ingenue song of the year, as well as the smash female vocal debut of same, Sade notwithstanding. Houston's voice is a silky treasure trove of pristine tonality and nuance. Her articulation and range would stun a Sarah Vaughn into submission. Not to mention her emotional sweep. Black love ballads may or not be your predilection, but give this one a whirl and see if Houston doesn't envelop you in her soul-stirring take on aching hearts and mushy sentiments.

Probably the toughest new ballad I've heard outside of Houston's isn't even a single yet, but hopefully it's destined to be: namely JIMMY G AND THE TACKHEADS' "All or Nothing," from the LP *The Federation of Tackheads*. This Clinton spin-off production sports a serpentine killer of a guitar solo and drifts from peak to peak like many P-Funk slow drag numbers of yore. If it doesn't come out as a single, go buy the album. I know this is bending the rules of this here column a bit, but what the hey, I never even said there *were* rules.

From JEAN KNIGHT by way of New Orleans zydeco man ROCKIN' SIDNEY comes the novelty rage of the moment "My Toot-Toot," an exercise in Southern Soul belting only matched for fun value by the title of the B side: "My Mind is Willing (And My Body Is Too)."

Moving North for a little upbeat urban contemporary action brings us to a new group with a fresh recycling of the very other groove pattern Quincy Jones and Michael Jackson laid down on *Thriller*. We refer here to teenbopper fashion-chasers FIVE POINT and "All Fall Down," a pneumatic throb of a disco whirlygig guaranteed to have you and your dance partner whooshing around the floor dizzy from hallucinations of auditioning for jobs as *Solid Gold* dancers. I love it.

Less inspiring is SHEILA E.'s latest, "Sister Fate," which besides being annoyingly insistent upon denying she's been going down with somebody like the newspapers say, is also a half-hearted reprise of the best Latin-fusion moves that made her debut so rhythmically insouciant. Moreover it's such a dumb retread I don't think Prince even had a hand in its production, for all the smarmy sexual come-on stuff it tries to play coy with.

Back on the positive side, I'd put on the scratch extravaganza of life, "King Kut," produced by DUKE BOOTEE and performed by Grandmaster Flash heir apparents WORD OF MOUTH featuring D.J. CHEESE. As scratch records go, this *has* to be the most obnoxious yet. No better way exists, in fact, to declare your membership in the hiphop generation. Spinning this record is no less a badge of identification than slitting a hole in your nose with a safety pin was back in the heyday of the punk movement. Put it on and watch ears beg for fingernails against a blackboard for relief, while you head and back spin and electric boogaloo to the beat, distracting your audience from the pain.

While you're at it, also pick up on STRAFE's "React," if only because this guy looks so cool on his album cover with his three-way Afro head job, insterstellar jump suit and guitar slung like an instrument reserved for the quiet bludgeoning of soft skulls. Or pick it up because you recognize a decent dance record when I tell you about it, even.

I have fewer rah-rahs for moving you to the cash register with a copy of TINA TURNER's theme song from her outing with Mad Max, "We Don't Need Another Hero (Thunderdome)." And that's only because it sounds like a lethargic reprise of any number of *Private Dancer* grooves and so why bother with a fake-out when you've already got Miss Thang really live and kickin'?

As for WEIRD AL YANKOVIC's "Like a Surgeon," it ain't "Eat It," buddy, and it almost makes Madonna seem less like a bad parody of her own egomania. We talking zero yuk-yuks here, y'all.

As for me, that's all he wrote for this month, peoples. Keep watching this space for more data on platter-matters. □

(cont. from 41) so it isn't hard to record these on a tape or record with pretty good fidelity, but once you move over to acoustic instruments, the CD shows its stuff. From guitars to symphonic and jazz orchestrations, the dynamic range of the CD means that the low-volume passages won't drop out. You can hear the full orchestra and then the single violin solo without running over to turn up the volume. (This fidelity may mean that CDs are, in fact, too good for certain listening areas where the background noise is high, such as automobiles and workplaces.) For the ear-damaged rock and roller, there's another advantage: since an analog system's needle can actually pick up vibration from the speakers at high volume, it can misbehave in the groove of the record, causing distortion. Again, since nothing's touching the CD but light, this doesn't happen. Finally, the irrelevance of vibration means the CD is less likely to skip when a bus goes by outside and the apartment shakes.

The CD is technically capable of picking up more overtones and undertones in the notes, and a higher and lower range within a single recording, than an analog system, but there's a controversy here. As John Dahl explains, "When you're using the very best analog recording techniques and the very best analog playback techniques, there's a *musicalness* there that compact discs still don't catch." In other words, it's possible for the truly dedicated audiophile with the very best equipment to create a setup that makes a sound greater than the sum of its parts. For the same reasons a Stradivarius sounds better than a nearly identical violin, an audio nut's individual setup can create a richness that enhances, not just reproduces, live sound. Most consumers don't want to spend the amount of time and money required for this effect, however, and for mid-fi consumers, a CD is a quick and easy way to improve their sound enormously.

Some turntable devotees also argue that recording techniques have evolved with analog equipment, and that these techniques aren't right for digital recording. There was some question about this in the first recordings: Were sound engineers in the studio doing justice to the CD's accuracy? Some thought not. The answer to this dispute is that the same people who make analog recordings are now working with digital, so pretty soon the techniques will catch up.

If your *Born to Run* LP has just turned over its one thousandth playing and sounds as if a sandblaster hit it, you'll appreciate the durability of the disc. With no physical contact between playing surface and playback system, compact discs simply don't wear out. With all the error-correction sorcery, it's pretty hard to make a scratch serious enough to detect. You shouldn't use one for a frisbee, but CDs are generally immune to children, pets, dirty tabletops, and People Who Drop Things. People Who Drop Things also appreciate some of the features that lend themselves well to CD players. Cueing is digital, so that instead of aiming a needle at the beginning of a song, the user simply punches out the desired place (like cueing a tape recorder by its running number) and lets it play. Most discs have both running time and numerical starting position printed on the cover, so you can cue up the point at which a song begins. If you're *really* dangerous around breakables or just don't feel like getting out of your chair, there are wireless remote-control models. A disc should be clean, but doesn't require surgical conditions to sound just fine.

If the CD is so superior to the analog system, why hasn't everyone run out and bought one? Sales are increasing dramatically, but wary consumers, mindful of how prices tumbled for other electronic marvels are wondering if now is a good time to consider buying a CD. There are several important considerations.

It's entirely possible that a $500 machine will cost $400 a year from now. As an item becomes more popular, manufacturers step up their production and prices drop. The prospective CD buyer now has to judge how fast the price will come down and whether it's worth paying extra to have the better sound now. If you have the $500 machine now, you'll get a year's worth of use for a hundred dollars. The price can't drop forever—there are standards of electronic components, hookups, drive systems, and other hardware that will keep it up, not to mention dealer overhead and shipping costs. Right now the absolute low-end players are selling for $250 or so, and most really solid machines, according to Dahl, are selling in the $400 to $700 range. Undoubtedly, more machines will be produced at a lower price, and it's up to the buyer and his trusted hi-fi dealer to decide what will happen to the price of particular players. CDs may well reach price parity with high-end turntables within 18 months.

"But don't all CDs sound alike?" The answer is yes, to the mid-fi consumer. But sound is only one factor in a purchase. You can go to the high end and find compact disc players for $1300 to $1500, and these are sophisticated even by digital standards. David Kent, an audio consultant in Cambridge, Massachusetts, comments that these machines really do have the features and construction to justify that price. Separate, dedicated electronics instead of integrated circuits may well improve the sound. Split-beam laser tracking makes for fewer tracking errors. Motors, servo systems, and other moving parts may be higher in quality. Certainly, the very expensive machines have superb error-correction systems and deal more smoothly with damaged discs than their cheaper cousins. Furthermore, they make fewer non-disc errors in the first place, so the correction systems come into play less often.

Expensive machines may access parts of the disc faster, have superior resistance to footfalls and other vibrations, and possess better filtering and oversampling to hone that edge of fidelity ever sharper. Ergonomics, the techniques of fitting the machine to big, clumsy human hands, is a strongly individual part of selecting a machine; the high-end players have been designed very carefully for ease of use. The audiophile or electronic perfectionist may feel the importance of having these features. If the sound differences between a $500 machine and a $1500 model seem insignificant to you, consider what you want in addition to great sound.

Of course, the finest CD player in the world isn't more than furniture without the tunes you want to play. For a number of marketing reasons, the first selection of discs to come out in 1983 were heavily classical. Jazz was also widely available because of the jazz lover's presumed mania for fidelity. By now, though, thousands of new and old recordings are being put into digital. Old analog masters are used to produce CDs of classics, and while the Beatles will never re-record *Sgt. Pepper's* a CD made from the original studio tape would give you the best recording available. If people want to buy them, record companies will make them, and the price (currently about $12-$14) will go down. It should be noted that the big record producers have committed to compact disc recording, and their consensus is that the disc will be the playback system of choice into the next century. These factors are broadening the selection daily.

The superior sound of a CD is there the moment you hook it up to your system. Does that mean you have to upgrade your entire system to do justice to the player? You *may* want to improve or replace your amp or speakers, but take your time and consider again how far you want to go toward achieving that 100% perfect sound. Buying a CD is a big investment, and if you think you're getting 95% perfect sound, no law says you have to shell out another thousand bucks for that last 5%. As you appreciate the greater dynamic range and fidelity of a CD, you may raise your standards to the point where you will want to upgrade, but remember that the compact disc player was designed to fit into your current system and doesn't need anything else to improve the sound. Perhaps the money would be better spent filling out your record collection with acrylic instead of vinyl.

As more players are sold, as more music lovers hear their friends' systems, the effect of compact disc technology may be to raise everyone's standards. Once CDs become common, the listening experience will have changed and the older analog system may be more an object of sentiment than of use. True audiophiles will have a new implement for their twilight-zone setups as they pursue that tantalizing and elusive 100%. Just plain music listeners will have acquired standards of fidelity and flexibility that none but the most sophisticated analog systems would be able to satisfy. It's probable that CDs will someday be superseded by systems that are more convenient, or cheaper, or more feature-laden, but for pure fidelity it's hard to think of anything coming along to match it. Thirty-seven years ago, Peter Goldmark's 12-inch Vinylite beauty spoiled us all with its convenience, durability, and unsurpassed quality of sound. We're about to be spoiled again. □

Douglas Hardy is a children's book editor for Alfred A. Knopf and Pantheon in New York City.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Looking To Advertise By Mail?
THEN PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED AD IN RECORD and reach 485,000 rock-hungry readers. Regular classified ads cost $2.10 per word, 15-word minimum. Illustrated classified space is $160 per column inch, one inch minimum. Frequency discounts available. Column inch width 2¼". RECORD, Classified, 745 Fifth Ave., NY, NY 10151. For further info., call Marilyn Taerstein at (212)350-1297.

Free Promotional Albums
CONCERT TICKETS, STEREOS, ETC. INFORmation. Barry Publications, 477 82nd St., Brooklyn, NY 11209.

BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

BACKSTREETS: THE ALL BRUCE SPRINGsteen magazine. Subscriptions: $10 year; current issue $3. Box 51225-P, Seattle, WA 98115.

FREE CATALOG. LOW COST BOOKS ON self-improvement, Occult, Hypnosis, Hobbies, Sports and many other topics. Larchwood, Box 447-R, Bensalem, PA 19020.

CLOTHING

T-SHIRTS FROM ENGLAND: U2, REM, POWER Station, T. Rex, Smiths, Sex Pistols, Paul Young, Judas Priest, Julian Lennon, Depeche Mode, New Order, Clapton, James Dean. 100's more! $10.00 PPD. (Catalog - $1.00 - Official Merchandise from England - buttons, posters, records). Burning Airlines, Box 7309, W. Trenton, NJ 08628.

COLLEGES

TERMPAPER ASSISTANCE. 15,278 PAPERS available! 306-page catalog-rush $1.00. Research, 11322 Idaho, #206SR, Los Angeles, CA 90025.

COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

BEATLES CATALOG-ORIGINAL MEMORAbilia, model, dolls. Yellow Submarine items, lots more! Send $1. Schreiber, Box 2704 (186 RD), Huntington Beach, CA 92649. I buy memorabilia!

ROCK/TEEN MAGAZINES (1955-1985). 300-page catalog $1.50. Henkel, 28 Orchard St., Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660.

NEW! MICHAEL JACKSON SCRAPBOOK. Jackson's success story, 1969 through Victory Tour. Over 100 photos, $11.45 postpaid. Glascoe, Box 261A, NYC 10021.

FAN CLUBS

ACTRESS AND MODEL ROXANN MARSTON has a free fan club! Write and get free photos and more! Box 1012, Bristol, PA 19007.

MUSICIANS

FREE SPACE IS PROVIDED TO RECORD SUBscribers who are musicians. If you need a gig, or additional band members, send us your ad (25 word maximum). All listings are subject to space availability. If you have something to buy or sell, you pay only $1.00 per word. Send your ad to: RECORD, Musicians' Classified, 745 Fifth Ave., N.Y., NY 10151. Attn: Marilyn Taerstein.

PLAY ANY SONG BY EAR INSTANTLY! Guaranteed!!! Guitar or keyboards. Free info! Bates Music-RCA, 5256 Beard Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55410.

ROLAND JX3P USERS TAKE NOTE, 256 Brand New Patches on Cassette, ready to load. Send $12.95 to 'Synth Sounds', 109 Allum St., Auckland 5, New Zealand.

ELECTRONIC EFFECTORS: FLOOR & RACK mount models; Discount & rebates on major brands. Banana Chord Computers. Free catalog. M.J.C. Music, Box 309, Bayside, NY 11361.

RECORDING ARTIST - WAGNER IS SEEKING a synthesizer player and female vocalist to complete band for concert and recording. If interested call (718) 793-2219.

LEAD GUITARIST/SINGER DANIEL KORN IS looking for other musicians interested in performing/touring. Also looking for prices on used P.A. Gear. Need A Band For A Gig? Write us and we'll do what we can. Write to: Daniel Korn, 416 South 10th St., Suite 326, Minneapolis, MN 55404.

OCCULT

WITCHCRAFT'S POWER SECRETS! GAVIN & Yvonne Frost, world's foremost witches, teach you. Details. Box 1502X, New Bern, NC 28560.

POSTERS & PHOTOS

POSTER GALLERY. ORIGINAL MOVIE POSTers, "30,000" star photos. Two volume catalog. 2,500 illustrations. $2 (refundable). Box 2745A, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Visa/Mastercard phone orders (313) 665-3151.

CONCERT PHOTOS! HUGE SELECTION, ILlustrated catalog/coupon $2. "Smile", Box 15293-RD, Chesapeake, VA 23320-0293.

SPECTACULAR COLORFUL 48-PAGE CATAlog. B. Jovi, U2, Springsteen + over 300 artists. $1 w/free sample. V'Kriengkai, Box 657-RC, Lenox Hill Station, NY, NY 10021.

CONCERT PHOTOS - BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN, Stevie Nicks, Police, Benatar, Seger, Neil Diamond, Olivia, Alabama, Emmylou Harris, Juice Newton. Send $1 for catalog/sample. Concert Photos, Box 15155-RC, Panama City, FL 32406.

COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS: U2 '85, H. OATES, Clapton, Heart, Springsteen, Prince '85, M. Work, B. Adams '85, Fleetwood M. Catalog/sample $2. Specify selection/alternates. POP SHOTS, Box 1247-R, Boston, MA 02117.

1985 "LIVE AID" COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS! Catalog & Sample Photo - $2.00, RRC, Box 564-RE, New Britain, CT 06050.

PSYCHICS

DAVID GUARDINO, PSYCHIC TO STARS, can help you to get love, money and health. Call (702) 386-0702, (702) 386-0827, (615) 970-3542, (717) 691-9362.

RECORDS & TAPES

New LP's, $2.50 Or Less
ALL TYPES, FREE INFORMATION: BARRY Publications, 477 82nd St., Brooklyn, NY 11209.

FREE CATALOG. RARE AND IMPORTED Records, Videos, Magazines. SPIN DIZZY, Dept. AK, Box 21723, Milwaukee, WI 53221.

1960'S ROCK LP'S/FILMS!!! MONKEES/HENdrix/Beatles/much more! 60-page catalog/$2. 1960's ROCK, Box 7161, Honolulu, Hawaii 96821.

RECORDS, CASSETTES, OLDIE 45'S, IMports, cutouts, picture disks, catalogs $2; Nert, Box 268-R, Lawrence, MA 01842.

100 DIFFERENT 45 RPM'S $39.95 + SHIPPING, 80's artists, REK, 6833-R Mildred, S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49508.

REMOVES VOCALS FROM RECORDS!
Now You can sing with the world's best bands! The **Thompson Vocal Eliminator** can remove most or virtually all of a lead vocal from a standard stereo record and leave the background!
Write or call for a free brochure and demo record.
LT Sound, Dept. RK, P.O. Box 338,
Stone Mountain, GA 30086 (404) 493-1258

Music business careers!
Learn the music business from the inside—prepare yourself for the marketing management or technical career you want. Top pro training in studio/concert/video production, artist representation/management, retail/wholesale, promotion/marketing, publishing, much more. Employment assistance and financial aid available.
Free brochure/career guide:
call toll-free 800-554-3346, or write
THE MUSIC BUSINESS INSTITUTE
Dept. R, 3376 Peachtree Rd., N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30326

CAMPUS SLUT
T-Shirts, S M L XL
Red on White
$10. Includes Postage
GALAS EXOTICARDS
2425 First Ave. Dept. RS
San Diego, CA 92101
Other T-shirts: CAMPUS STUD, LUST-DRIVEN LAWYER, WANTON WAITRESS, BOSS LADY

UNBELIEBABLE! FREE FAT CATALOG. **FREE** search service...I must say. Face The Music, Box 163142-R, Sacramento, CA 95816. (916) 428-8050. 10-6 Daily.

1,100 DIFFERENT PICTURE DISCS NOW IN stock, including hard to find UK shaped picture discs by Springsteen, Julian Lennon, U2, Madonna, Prince, McCartney and more. 8,000 picture sleeve singles, collectors LP's, 12" singles, promos from 19 different countries. Amazing selection of Springsteen, Costello, Dylan, Stones, Elton, Jett, Benatar, Bowie, Todd, Edmunds, Lowe, Police. Send $1 for complete 200-page catalog to: Records, Box 88, North Syracuse, NY 13212.

NEW EXPRESS MUSIC CATALOG. 20,000 LP's, Tapes, CD's, Videos, by phone. Rock, Jazz, Country, Classical. 7-10 delivery. Order catalog. Now only $9.95 (check or charge). Refund with purchase. Express Music, Dept. 709C2, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010. 1-800-852-5000.

BEATLES, SPRINGSTEEN, ZAPPA, ETC. RARities, Imports, Independents, Cutouts. 39¢ stamp. APPLELAND RECORDS, Box 2105, Longview, WA 98632.

FREE CATALOG. WELL UNKNOWN LOS ANgeles bands, available from Living Room Records, Box 313, Glendora, CA 91740.

20 COUPONS. GOOD FOR ANY ALBUM OR cassette. Any original artist/label. Brand new. Send $9.95 to D.Q. Distributors, Box 1381, Manchester, CT 06040.

SONGWRITERS

SONGWRITERS, WANT HELP? PUBLISHING, recording, contacts. Free information. Write: ISI Publications, Box 1586-R, Seaside, CA 93955.

SUCH GOINGS ON

CHICAGO has lost one of its key members with the departure of lead singer and bassist Peter Cetera, who's opted to go the solo route and also pursue an acting career (don't suppose he took those videos too seriously, do you? Could be a bad moon rising for ol' Pete if he did). Cetera's also writing a song for the film *Rocky IV* and is collaborating with his producer, David Foster, on a song for—who else?—Julio Iglesias. Next . . . **DWEEZIL ZAPPA**, son of Frank, will be making his motion picture debut co-starring opposite Molly Ringwald in the Howie Deutch-directed *Pretty In Pink*, now in production in Los Angeles. To date, Dweezil's major accomplishment has been his single, "My Mother Is a Space Cadet"

HALL & OATES the first act to headline a public performance at the refurbished Apollo Theater in New York, have preserved the event on video and vinyl. This fall both Cinemax and MTV will air the complete concert, and RCA will release a limited edition LP, *Daryl Hall and John Oates, Live At the Apollo With Special Guests Eddie Kendricks and David Ruffin*. A portion of the album sale proceeds will go to the United Negro College Fund . . . Queen's bass player, **JOHN DEACON**, has opened a recording studio in London. In partnership with engineer and former Kevin Ayres Band keyboardist Henry Crallan, Deacon's Milo Music has been specially designed and built to be hired out on a commercial basis, although Deacon says he'll be using the studio for his own projects as well. . . **RICK SPRINGFIELD** has followed up his Live Aid appearance by making a $50,000 contribution to the "USA for Africa" fund set up for hunger relief in the United States. The donation was made in the name of 500 radio listeners across the country who were chosen by local stations on July 15. $100 was donated in each listener's name . . . JEM Records has issued a series of vintage **ROBERT FRIPP** solo recordings, all remixed and repackaged. *Network*, *Exposure* and *God Save The King* feature material originally recorded for Polydor and now out-of-print. Fripp, along with Brad Davies, remixed the material at Marcus Studios in London on the Sony digital stereo system . . . **KARLA DEVITO**, whose first and only album was released in 1981, is back in the studio, working with producers Bob Ezrin and David Anderle on an LP for A&M Records. She's also returned to the Broadway stage in the lead female role in *Big River*, the Huckleberry Finn story set to music by Roger Miller. Though she's kept a fairly low profile in the years following her marriage to actor Robby Benson (and subsequent parenthood), DeVito's quietly been around: she's earned two gold records for her song "Nobody Makes Me Crazy Like You Do" on Diana Ross's *Swept Away* album and for her performance of "We Are Not Alone" on *The Breakfast Club* soundtrack **NRBQ** continues their assault on Cabbage Patch dolls. While performing on board the Port Welcome cruise ship in Baltimore, the band blindfolded one of the helpless waifs and made it walk the plank. And while driving from Seattle to Portland on their recent West Coast tour, those crazy guys from upstate New York had the brainstorm of their lives: they hired a helicopter to fly over Mount St. Helens and drop the last of their Cabbage Patch dolls into the volcano. Not to worry, though: they came up with a fresh batch of dolls in San Francisco for further escapades. However, the inside skinny has it that the band's going to cease and desist with its Cabbage Patch attacks now that Johnny Carson blew up one of the dolls on the *Tonight Show* . . . If it's not out already, get primed for a solo album from Blaster **PHIL ALVIN** soon on Slash. As might be expected, the record promises to offer an interesting blend of styles, as Alvin has been reported recording with New Orleans' famed Dirty Dozen Brass Band and with Sun Ra and his complete Arkestra . . . Anyone who was a disc jockey before 1960 (or who knows someone fitting this description) is invited to sign up with the Yesterday's Dee Jays Association in Houston. Formed by Chuck Thompson, a Houston real estate investor-broker who worked as a DJ from 1946 to 1961, the Association sends out a newsletter each month updating the activities and whereabouts of the old veterans in the field. Subscriptions to the newsletter are $10 a year. For info contact: Chuck Thompson, Yesterday's Dee Jays, P.O. Box 11652, Houston, Texas 77293 . . . Desperately in need of a tourist boom after Exxon Corp. closed its refinery there last March, the government of Aruba has taken a unique approach to the promotional travelogue. Hoping to attract young American travelers, Aruba financed a music video in which the Boston-based rock band **BALL AND PIVOT** is seen sampling the delights of this island paradise, to the tune of the band's single, "Down." Seems the Aruban tourist commissioner, Michael Kuiperi, picks up MTV on his satellite dish and recognized it as a legitimate marketing vehicle for his country. Why choose a virtually unknown band? Simple economics: "There are better groups," Kuiperi told *The Wall Street Journal*, "but it would cost a lot more to bring them down." Aruba's capital investment in the video was a piddling $15,000. □

NICK ELGAR · LGI (TOP); DEBORAH FEINGOLD (BOTTOM)

THE BIGGEST SOUND AROUND.

Get more music with less distortion.

While other audio cassettes make big noise—TDK makes big music. It delivers sound so pure, undistorted and incredibly true to life—it seems bigger than life.

That's because TDK's higher MOL, lower distortion and wider dynamic range give you more brilliance, and more musical pleasure than you've ever heard before—on any cassette deck.

Whether you choose TDK AD normal-bias or SA high-bias cassettes, you're in for a great new dimension of listening pleasure, backed by a full lifetime warranty.

TDK. For the biggest sound around, you've got to hear the difference.

TDK

WHERE GREAT ENTERTAINMENT BEGINS.

Tommy Shaw in concert. Jerry Kramer, Management. Photo by John Belissimo.

© 1985 TDK Electronics Corp.


10 mg. "tar", 0.8 mg. nicotine
av. per cigarette by FTC method.
© 1985 R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.
You've got what it takes.
Salem Spirit
Share the spirit.
Share the refreshment.
Menthol Fresh
Salem
LIGHTS
Salem
LIGHTS
100s
Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.