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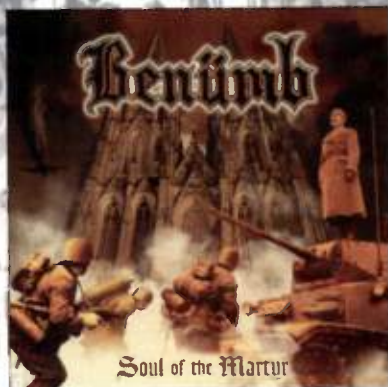
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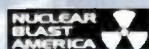
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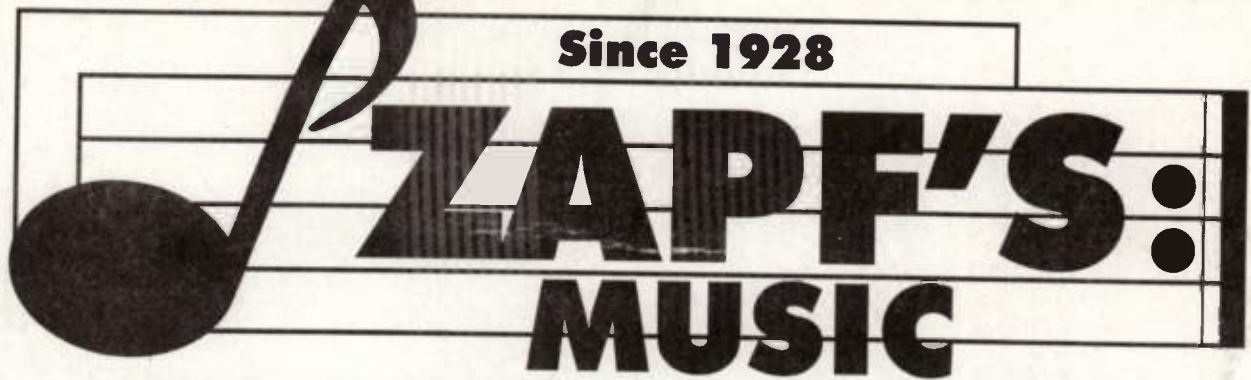
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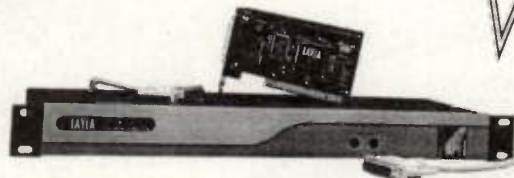


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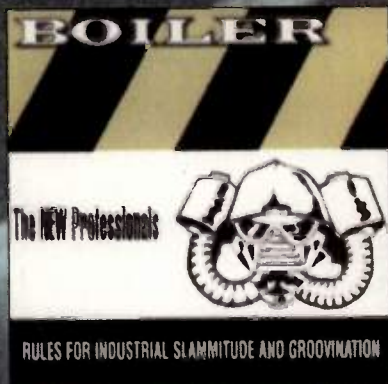
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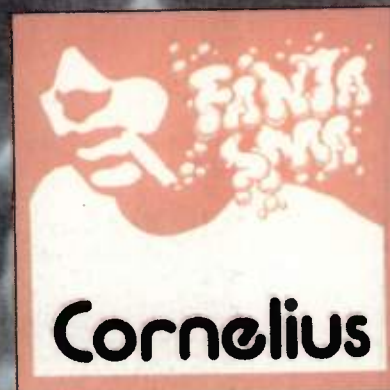
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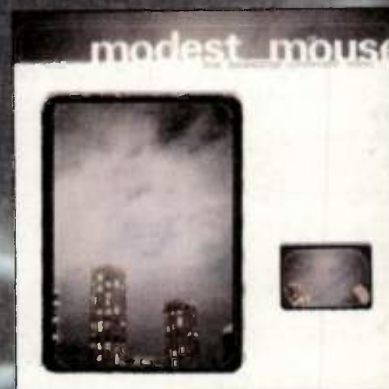
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inside

features

Six Going On Seven 8
Zeke 8
Smooths 9
Vision 10
Squash 10
Pere Ubu 14
Nashville Pussy 16
Rocket From The Crypt 26
H2O 28
FYP 31

departments

Gravel Pit 7
Straight From The Edge 12
Records 17
Unsigned 24
7" Reviews 26
Upcoming Releases 30
Clicks & Beeps 32
Caught Live 35
Just Be There 38
Uptalk 40
Demos 44
Classifieds 48
Clutter 50

THE GRAVEL PIT

ATTENTION ALL IGGY FANS!

Iggy Pop and Mudhoney will join the massive Pearl Jam tour this summer. This news surfaces straight from the lips of Pearl Jam's booking agency.

Allegedly, Iggy will perform at the two sold-out shows in Camden, N.J., at the Blockbuster Sony-Entertainment Center, Aug. 28 and 29. Mudhoney opened for the band on its Hawaii stint of the tour and is expected to play at one of these shows.

Other confirmed show openers include Cheap Trick and Goodness. Rumored artists are Chris Cornell, ex-vocalist for Soundgarden, and Epitaph band Zeke.

EX-SKINNY PUPPY FRONT-MAN FINDS SALVATION

Former Skinny Puppy vocalist Ogre has kept himself busy with his new project Ritlin, which recently released its debut, "Bedside Toxicology," on Chicago-based indie Invisible Records. Ogre is also working on a new project with producer Mark Walk under the name Welt. The two should head into the studio in July.

Welt actually has one album already completed, but it hasn't

seen the light of day since it became lost in an ownership squabble surrounding its prior label, American Recordings.

"At the time all this went down, we never talked directly to Rick Rubin," says Ogre. "I think what needs to be determined right now is who owns the rights to the songs."

One may speculate the artistic limbo might discharge musically. Yet the suitably titled Ritalin is a project of a more subdued nature, although it does possess some industrial crunch. Bedside Toxicology finds Ogre vocalizing without his notable distortion. Collaborator Martin Atkins also formulates some organic and electronic elements into the mix.

PHANTOMAS—FEATURING MELVINS, FAITH NO MORE MEMBERS—HITS THE ROAD

Phantomas—the project featuring Melvins singer/guitarist King Buzzo, former Faith No More vocalist Mike Patton, Slayer drummer Dave Lombardo and Mr. Bungle bassist Trevor Dunn—has announced its tour lineup.

The tour kicks off June 18 at Slim's in San Francisco. The band also plans to play two shows a night at the Knitting Factory in New York July 1 and 2.

"We're playing some small clubs to get a feel for this new lineup," says Buzzo. "Who knows how it'll go. We start rehearsing in the beginning of June. And the

Phantomas thing has never rehearsed. We've never even been in the same room together." Buzz also mentions the new Melvins song, "Can't Shake It," due out on a split seven-inch with Cosmic Psychos, was actually originally recorded by Australia's Angel City.

MONSTER MAGNET TEAMS WITH MARILYN MANSON'S GUITARIST FOR VIDEO

"Space Lord," Monster Magnet's latest video, will have audiences doing a double take. The New Jersey natives haven't only disguised themselves in a flashy hip-hop-esque video, they've recruited Twiggy Ramirez, Marilyn Manson guitarist, for a cameo. Ramirez can be watched cruising with singer Dave Wyndorf around Las Vegas (pimp style).

"That was pretty easy to hook up," says Wyndorf. "I've known those guys for a couple of years, and they've been Monster Magnet supporters. We were an hour away from L.A., so I called and said, 'Twiggy, want to come and do the devil sign in a Trans Am driving through Vegas?' He was like, 'Hell, yeah.'"

"Space Lord," the first single from Monster Magnet's album, *Powertrip*, will be released June 16.

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Six Going On Seven

(l-r) James Bransford, Will Bartlett, Josh English



"All of my favorite bands are songwriting bands," says bassist/vocalist/lyricist Josh English. "I was never into jammy bands. I always hated Yes and Rush. I appreciate them to the extent that I can acknowledge that they're good musicians, but everything that hit me in the gut was from the heart. It was less about what you could play and how you played it or how it was used."

Six Going On Seven's three-piece format is filled out by James Bransford on guitar and Will Bartlett on drums. Although the band gets its fair share of Police and Fugazi references, English says he and his bandmates make a concerted effort not to sound too much like anyone else.

"We're pretty conscious of sounding too much like another band," says English. "We toss out a lot of stuff because someone interjects, 'Nah, that's too much like this.' We're just trying to do our own thing. But at the same time, we're not trying to be so neurotic about it that we don't write what comes naturally. We're not changing the world, we just want to write good songs in three minutes or less."

English's mother, a music teacher, started him on violin at five, and he even performed with the local Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. English eventually abandoned the violin when he went off to college at Southern Oregon and gradually got into bass through the influence of his uncle, Mark Larue Todd, a professional bass player.

"He played in a band called Johnny and the Distractions, which was a band on A&M in the '80s," says English. "He played with Tom Petty for a while and Chuck Berry, too. Chuck Berry would assemble bands when he came through town, so my uncle would do the regional stuff with him, like Portland, Seattle, whatever, that sort of thing."

English actually played in a band with Bartlett in Oregon, and when the two moved to Boston, they met Bransford. Six Going On Seven was born. The band signed with Some Records and released its debut disc, *Self-Made Mess*, last October, recorded at a studio in New Jersey.

"Y'know Dave 'The Snake' Sabo from Skid Row? It's his house," says English. "In his basement he has that studio, and it was the suggested place for us to go from our label. Walter from Quicksand knew him through the industry somehow, and they all said he was a great guy. I thought it was kinda funny when we finally met him. He's a phenomenal guy, really funny, really humble. It was a great experience."

One of the positive aspects of the Boston scene, according to English, is the sheer size of the town, which, in turn, means opportunity.

"Our second show we ever played, we opened for Girls Against Boys," says English. "We've played with the Bosstones, Rocket From the Crypt. The option is there because acts are always touring through town. And they don't want the same act to open all the time. In Portland, Ore., you'd always have Hazel or Pond opening for every national act that came through. It was like the foldout table and the big table. You had to wait until the big bands broke up before you got a crack at it."

—Greg Roth

ZEKE

There's something ineffably rip-roarin' about combining high-velocity motor sports and full-tilt

punk rock, and Zeke has emerged as the embodiment of everything these entail. Consider the band's five-year tenure as one of the underground's most energetic live bands, combining precise, stripped-down drumming, throat-tearing vocals, a dual lead guitar attack and the speedy insanity of Slayer cross-pollinated with Ted Nugent. The band members are road-racing and custom-car culture enthusiasts, and their interest in fast, damn-near reckless machines comes across in the music. Zeke ain't fuckin' around.

However, guitarist/singer Blind Marky Felchtone claims although most of the imagery surrounding Zeke involves hot rods and street bikes, "Most of the songs have to do with drugs and sex."

To date, the band has produced three albums of consistently exceptional punk rock n' roll, most notably Zeke's first release on Epitaph, 1998's *Kicked in the Teeth*. Epitaph is giving the band a great deal of artistic latitude, control and support, nurturing a relationship Felchtone claims is working out very well. But why the name Zeke?

"I'm originally from Arkansas, I lived there until I was 16, and at this point I was fully into old shit. But this guy Zeke turned me on to punk, so I decided I needed to name the band after him," says Felchtone, who took the same evangelical spirit with him to Seattle, converting the rest of his bandmates to punk rock from their previous involvements in north Seattle's heavy-metal cover bands. Not, of course, that there is anything wrong with metal and classic rock.

"Hell, when I was nine years old, it was definitely Alice Cooper and Kiss, then later Cheap Trick. After that, I was fully a 'hesher' (a metal dude: tight acid-wash jeans, size medium black tour shirt, white high tops with the tongue hanging out, feathered hair). I went to all the Priest and Maiden concerts—Maiden concerts were bad-assed! Hell, I even like Venom," admits Felchtone. "Our audience is derelicts mostly. There is this one guy that comes to see us in Seattle, and he is the archetypical Zeke fan—about 28 years old with a mullet hair cut, drunk, pissed off and totally insane."

The band brings the same spirited, nothing-to-lose approach to its music, and injects humor for good measure. Hell, the members of Zeke each posed wearing floppy Easter Bunny ears (and have been known to play this way live) for the insert photos of *Flat Tracker*, as a nod to a favorite film.

"If you watch *On Any Sunday*, there's the race in the desert, and if you pay really close attention, halfway through the segment they show a side car, and in it, the guys are all dressed as bunnies, so that's why we did it," he points out.

—Patrick Kennedy



(l-r) Blind Marky Felchtone, "Sonny" Riggs III, Donny Paycheck, Mark Pierce

The Smooths

"I try not to believe anything until it happens. It's all happening so fast," says lead singer Tom Gilhuley. In only three years, The Smooths have catapulted from being just another regional act to performing with No Use For A Name, European tours and a spot on the Warped Tour. Now with two CDs, a mess of seven-inch records and compilations under its belt, the band is poised to take its place among the pantheon of ska giants. The secret? Solid, honestly written ska-influenced pop.

"That's our gimmick, we have no gimmick. There's too many cheesy ska gimmicks out there. It doesn't matter, man, whatever," says Gilhuley.

"We are taking it to the next level," pipes in Jeb Crandall, the band's keyboardist. "A cartoon show featuring the Smooths! We just can't decide on what network: Fox or WB. We want to go WB because that's more our crowd and they have Jamie Foxx. Can any other ska band top it? Maybe we'll have Smooths rashguards."

The band's new album, *No Brakes*, will feature a wide cross section of ska-influ-

enced pop, and Gilhuley promises it will show the evolution of the band and won't be a compromise on The Smooths old sound.

"The record has everything, it even almost had a body count. Jeb was real sick with food poisoning when he laid down his first track. So if you don't like it, Christ, he almost died!" says Gilhuley. "Luckily there were two people there who took him to a hospital, and they hooked him up with IVs and stuff."

One of the many things setting the Smooths apart from bretheren ska acts is its horn section's intricate lines. Doscher cites the influence of his classical music background while Jennifer Stillwagon says her early years of listening to Brit-pop and jazz influence her most. Both have a background in music theory learned in

high school and expanded upon by years of experience. Onstage, they hit their parts perfectly and never subtract from Gilhuley's spotlight, as the Smooths play song after song without much between-song chatter.

"The bottom line is that we got lucky. We don't have any special contacts or anything. It just happened," says Gilhuley. "We still can't believe that someone wants to put out our record, much less stick us on a nationwide tour."

—Kevin Wheeler

(l-r) Jeb K., Tom G., Tim H., Brodie, Ben, Doscher, Jenny Stillwagon, Curtis R.



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Vision

The didactic history of New Jersey's Vision is a suitable tale for the disenfranchised youth of today. Vision's story is one of perseverance through countless trials and tribulations, a Puritanical work ethic and a true belief in and love for hardcore music.

Vision has been an entity for more than 10 years, exemplifying the concept of unity preached about and relentlessly promoted in today's hardcore scene, despite the prevalence of sects, crews and scenester politics. The band, formed in 1986 under the moniker Neurotic Impulse, has never split, despite some revolving door members.

Throughout the past decade, turmoil has surrounded the band in terms of labels, distribution and pressings of its recordings. While Vision enjoyed a huge following of fans when playing shows, capturing the band's vitality on record was a problem.

"We released *In The Blink of An Eye* on Nemesis Records in late 1989, and we were going to move on to *In Effect*, a branch of Relativity, but the label folded. We lost money. We couldn't re-press. People thought we broke up because we were dormant,"

says singer Dave Franklin.

Vision remained bound by legal chains until 1996. The band kept playing and released a seven-inch entitled "One and the Same" on Corrupted Image and eventually got in touch with Cargo, which signed the band and released *The Kids Still Have A Lot To Say*. Franklin says the best thing about the current state of Vision is the band's relative financial security.

"We finally got signed to a decent deal where we don't have to pay for the recording," he exclaims.

Dave Franklin, Paul Famula, Sean Brazel, Matt Riga and Pete Talbot are still together after all these years because they happen to be good friends. Franklin says the band's sound remains tight through consistent work.

"We rehearsed at least once a week over the past decade. When playing, we go over something. If something sounds wrong, the song is stopped and we work it out, the time, melody and key."



Dave Franklin

The members of Vision have also noticed the scene change in their ten-year immersion.

"I remember when the only place to see shows was City Gardens, CB's and the old Ritz on 11th Street. Back then, all that was talked about was the difference between punks and skins. Now it's different," he says. "Kids are our future. They're gonna grow up, pick up guitars and drumsticks, and they're the people I am gonna listen to."

—Amy Sciarretto

Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava Lava

"For a long time it was really hard for us to develop a following in this area. There really wasn't a market or a venue for what we play," professes Squash frontman Rick Reardon from the overcast patio at Lancaster, Pa.'s, Historic Blue Star. "We brought Handsome down here to play with us at Ben's Underground on the campus of Franklin And Marshall College a while back. Honestly, there were 15 people there. I mean, Handsome includes guys from the Cro-Mags and Helmet, and no one really cared. We were so embarrassed, a big rock

Squash

would have been nice to crawl under. I think that night really typifies what we went through for a while around here."

By no means has the group, which also includes guitarist Dave Reimel, bassist Roger Fitzwater and newly added drummer Jim Bedorf, been complaining over the years. Venues from up and down the coast shine from the band's resume.

In addition, sharing the bill with acts such as The Deftones, Earth Crisis, Joan Jett And The Blackhearts and Monster Magnet hasn't hurt Squash's progress.

"We love playing the big markets, but now we can play here at home and have some of the same people come out," quips Fitzwater as he washes back his drink.

"Our friends would always ask us when we were playing Lancaster, since it was usually difficult for them to travel and see us. Now we can give

them several hard dates when they can catch us here at the Blue Star or the Chameleon or even the Courtyard in Harrisburg."

With two CDs—*Golden Annie* and *Misuser*—to its credit, the band is anxiously awaiting the summer to begin recording a new EP with engineer Mike Bones (Life of Agony, Fishbone).

With Bedorf, who replaced original drummer Oz Christ, Squash has been given a shot in its creative arm.

"I come from a different musical background. We all feel that it adds a certain freshness to the whole songwriting process," explains Bedorf as the other three members nod in agreement.

"Right now, we're really clicking as a group. I mean, everyone is finally on the same page, and some really quality shows are the result. We can't wait to get back into the studio and record some new material," injects Reardon.

"Yeah, by having the same people at our local shows, it's easier for them to point out the good and bad aspects of the music, and it allows us to develop greater consistency. It's really exciting for the band," says Bedorf. "Right now, we all just eat, breathe and shit Squash."

—Chris Johns



(l-r) Dave Reimel
Rick Reardon,
Roger Fitzwater,
Jim Bedorf

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STRAIGHT FROM THE EDGE

The loud rock community has its dreadlocked, tattooed, pierced and sometimes frightening sounding members. But it also has its humanitarians.

Soulfly singer **Max Cavalera** has started *The Iggy Diabetes Fund* to aid needy families of diabetics by paying the costs of insulin and medical supplies. This hits close to home for Cavalera, as his two-year-old son, Igor, was recently diagnosed with the disease.

Speaking of Cavalera, his former band, **Sepultura** (with whom he split less than amicably), has recruited Cleveland, Ohio, vocalist **Derrick Greene**, and the band has plans to release a new full-length album, *Against*, slated for Fall. Another humanitarian band, the legendary king of the WWF-like ring of militant veganism and straight-edge living, **Earth Crisis**, has officially announced its signing to **Roadrunner Records**, a ram-

pant rumour since last summer. The band's first **Roadrunner** release, and its sixth on a widely known level, is tentatively titled *Breed The Killers* and should be out by fall. The album is

being laid out by **Mike Ski**, vocalist of **Brother's Keeper**, who will be going on a full U.S. tour this summer with **Boy Sets Fire** and labelmates **78 Days**. **Joe D. Foster** has left **Speak 714**, the **Revelation Records** band for whom he was doubling as a gui-

tarist. **Rob Fusco**, the stage-pogoing, energetic frontman of upstate New York's **One King Down** has left the band. Rumor has it OKD didn't like the way Fusco laid down his vocals on the second album the band was working on, so he jetted. New York's **Tonystark**, featuring **Jon Scodotto** (of the infamous Scodotto clan and brother of **Shutdown**'s Mark and **Inhuman's** Mike), will be releasing a CD/EP on

Resurrection AD Records. The band is powered by rich, melodic vocals and guitars packing a heavy punch. The EP is titled *High Tech, Low Life*. San Diego's **Built To Last**, also on **Resurrection AD**, will be embarking on a summer tour. **Bloodline** will also release a CD/EP called *Be Afraid* on **Resurrection AD**.

In July of 1997, NYHC's legendary **Agnostic Front** will release *Something's Gotta Give* on **Epitaph Records**. This is the band's first album in seven years, so get ready! **Huntington Beach, Ca.**, is not only the home of **Revelation Records**, it's the home of **Straight Faced**, a hardcore band releasing an album on **Epitaph** in the near future. But rumors... Plenty of worthy bands have been getting inked to deals. **Relapse Records**, specializing in noisecore, has welcomed New Jersey's **Dillinger Escape Plan** and California's gore-metal, **Exhumed**, to its ear-blasting family. **Hardcore factory, Victory Records**, has recently added New York's metal-edged **All Out War** and New Jersey's punky **OS101** to its already intimidating roster. **DMS** will also be represented on **Victory**, with signing of **Skarhead**. **Victory** is also licensed to distribute the records of

New Jersey's tough-guy-core outfit, **Fury Of V**, in America, Japan and Canada. Sadly, **Strife**, the West Coast straight-edge band of stalwarts, has broken up after eight years. Also, **Strongarm** decided to part ways, due to many factors, including the singer's imminent marriage. The band's last show will be this summer. In other **Solid State/Tooth & Nail** news, **Zao** and **Training For Utopia** will be doing a split single due out in July. **Shutdown** is on tour, breaking hearts and kicking asses with its brand of punk-paced hardcore. **Snapcase** and **Hatebreed** will be gracing this year's *Warped Tour* with a handful of dates each. **VOD** is still a **Roadrunner** band, but plans to put out a seven-inch on **Crisis Records**. Summer looks to be a big release time for **Revelation** with *As Tradition Dies Slowly* hitting the streets June 30, and emo **Elliott's US Songs** following July 7. In July or August, amidst the blistering heat, **Trustkill Records' Harvest** will unleash a seven-inch and a CD. The band will also cover the classic "Angel Of Death" on an upcoming **Slayer** compilation, to be put out by Rhode Island's **Devil's Head Records**. **Converge** also graces the collection.

—Amy Sciaretto



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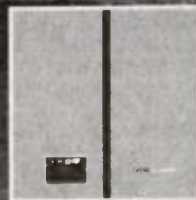


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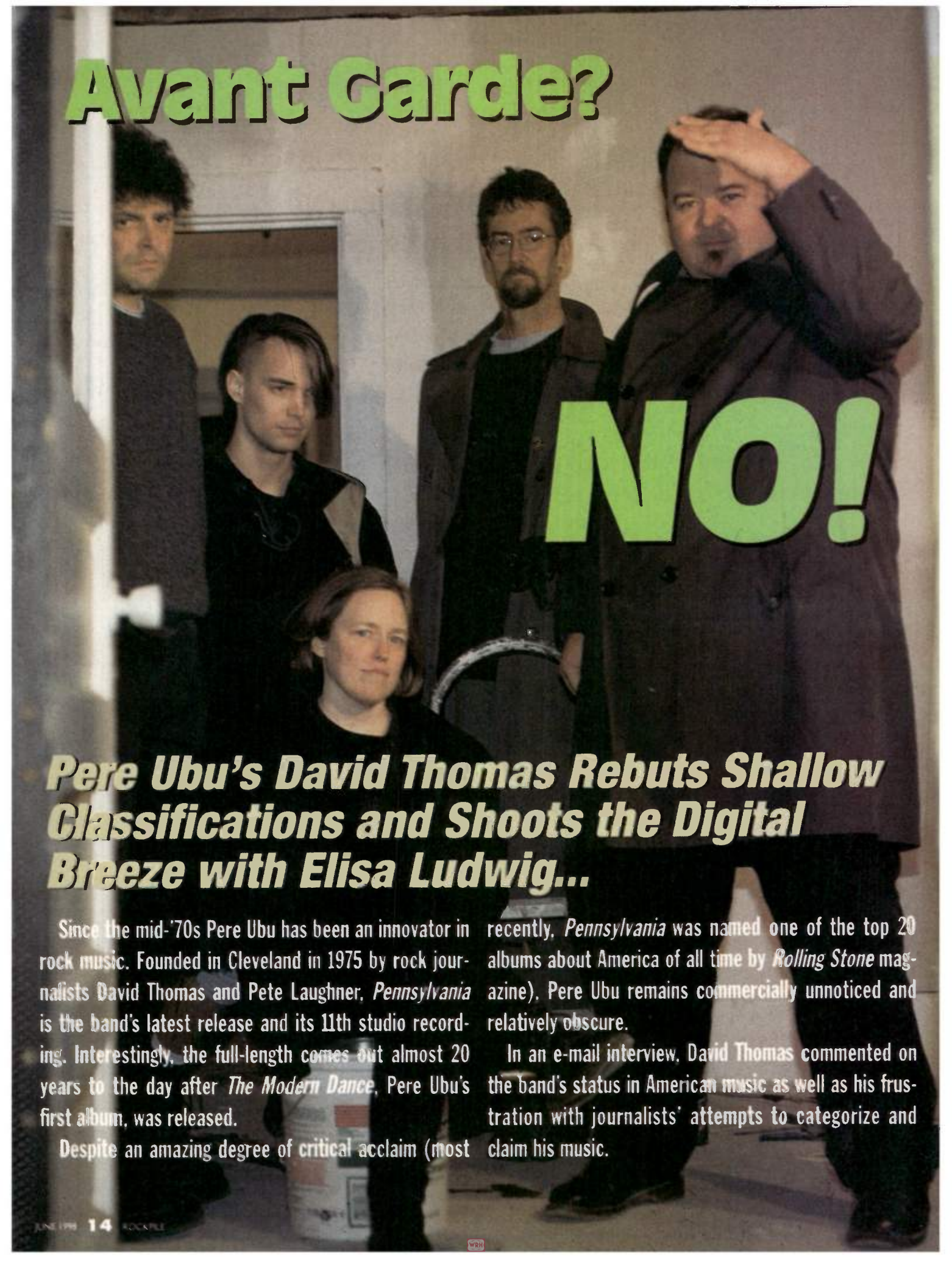
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Avant Garde?

NO!

Pere Ubu's David Thomas Rebuts Shallow Classifications and Shoots the Digital Breeze with Elisa Ludwig...

Since the mid-'70s Pere Ubu has been an innovator in rock music. Founded in Cleveland in 1975 by rock journalists David Thomas and Pete Laughner, *Pennsylvania* is the band's latest release and its 11th studio recording. Interestingly, the full-length comes out almost 20 years to the day after *The Modern Dance*, Pere Ubu's first album, was released.

Despite an amazing degree of critical acclaim (most

recently, *Pennsylvania* was named one of the top 20 albums about America of all time by *Rolling Stone* magazine), Pere Ubu remains commercially unnoticed and relatively obscure.

In an e-mail interview, David Thomas commented on the band's status in American music as well as his frustration with journalists' attempts to categorize and claim his music.

Pennsylvania has been called a "return to the future."

Not by me or anyone in the band. It's a phrase that has no meaning.

In what ways does this album mark for you an avant garde move in relation to, for example, *Ray Gun Suitcase*?

It doesn't. Again you are using phrases that have no meaning to me. "Avant-garde move" leaves me waiting blankly. There is real confusion in rock criticism that comes from an obsession with style in preference to meaning, the surface in preference to the substance. The reason is clear: one requires effort and thought and belief, and one is chewy and bite-sized.

My ideas haven't changed since I came to public attention in 1975. The way I make music and the reasons I make it haven't moved an iota since then. I therefore have a hard time seeing myself as "avant-garde" in any way. The medium is not the message. The message is the message. Revolutionary, huh?

How has the recording or process of the album been different?

I make use of space rather than studio gadgets and effects units. I hate touching EQ. I fear subtlety. When I want to hear a certain sound, I change the space in which the sound is generated until I hear the/a sound I understand. For various reasons that I won't go into, I wasn't able to attack the soundscape with quite the same abandon I enjoyed during *RGS*. And *RGS* was recorded without a drummer. Those are the only differences.

What has been the inspiration for these songs?

I make them up so I can make new songs so I can make new records. I love the process. The basic material for the process is the stuff I find at hand. The stuff I find at hand is life and life only.

I'm really interested in the line, "Geography is a language they can't screw up." To take it literally, what does this mean to you about America? Or now that you're in Europe, how do you see this manifested in that particular landscape?

I only understand the language of my native landscape, just as I only understand the nuances and subtleties of my native language. European geography means nothing to me. It is a "foreign" language. It's not a question about what America means. In the state of datapunk, America as an historical, cultural, political entity has ceased to exist. "America" only exists as a media tool. But the media can't get their hands on the Yellowstone River and how the moon reflects through the trees and across the faces of the women. The bosses say everybody must go. We roll on the ribbons of our dreams.

To take it figuratively, how do you feel your music has imprinted itself on cultural geography?

I don't know that it has or can. We are irrelevant.

Now, about your "niche." You've been described as New Wave, punk, "post hippie psychedelia" and "bargain basement surrealism." How do you describe your music?

We are the mainstream. We play rock music.

As each of these definitions are time-sensitive, do you feel as though it has changed to accommodate a different avant garde slot?

Pere Ubu is a rock band. We are the mainstream. We are the norm. We require no labels. Labels are only useful for music that's deviated from the mainstream; backwaters and dead-ends require labels. If you fail to recognize that Pere Ubu and bands of its kind are the mainstream, then everything you know is wrong. Study the history and meaning of rock music. When you arrive at 1975, it's quite clear that the manifest des-

There is real confusion in rock criticism that comes from an obsession with style in preference to meaning, the surface in preference to the substance. The reason is clear: one requires effort and thought and belief, and one is chewy and bite-sized.

tiny of it as an art form is defined by Pere Ubu and other groups with similar ambitions. Everything else falls away along an arc of deviation from the vector of the ideal. Plato will tell you that only the ideal is real. Depends, I suppose, on whether you rate Plato. So what do you say to journalists? Pere Ubu is an irrelevancy. We don't sell enough records to make any difference. We stubbornly continue along a path which has increasingly fewer points of contact with the rest of the industry and the rest of media-driven society. We can make records that make people cry, and we can make them remember what it was that they thought was so special about rock music in the first place. That and a buck gets you a cup of coffee in some states.

Now that electronic music has had a resurgence, where does Pere Ubu fit into the genre?

We don't fit into anything. We are a rock band.

How do you feel about commercial success?

Would love to have it.

Is that something the band strives toward?

Not in any successful way.

What does it mean to have been "indie" before "indie" came into vogue?

There is nothing alternative or indie about anything in music... if there ever was. There is only successful and unsuccessful. We are unsuccessful. We are no good at anything other than being good at being unsuccessful. We have made a career out of it. Because we come from professional middle-class families we have always known that we can do anything else in life more successfully than make music, so we've never had an incentive to do anything other than exactly what we want. We are spoiled. Or we have integrity. Depends on your point of view. Professional middle-class families traditionally stress intellectual/poetic pursuits over material gain. Pere Ubu is nothing if not traditional.

Tell me some things about your musical training, background and other art forms that have interested you.

I had no musical training. I played an instrument in the junior high orchestra because the only alternative was to take choir. I was no good at it. My background is irrelevant. I am not interested in any other art form. All other pursuits pale. Why waste time with penny-ante stuff? My talent is highly specialized.

What do you think about the Cleveland scene now?

What scene?

Are there any bands coming out of Ohio or anywhere else that you admire?

No.

On that tip, maybe you could tell me who your initial musical influences were.

The Kingston Trio and Ken Nordine.

NASHVILLE PUSSY



By Patrick Kennedy

Make no mistake, the unbridled fury and four barrel drive of kick ass rock n' roll is returning, and with a band like Nashville Pussy spearheading the revolution, the music world is getting the shot in the arm it needs to clear the sappiness and droopy-shouldered alterna-crap from the airwaves and record stores.

Life's been treating the Pussy pretty well lately, from lucrative major-label record deals and the fancy meals such courtships entail, to playing packed gigs across the states; hell, fire-breathing super-vixen bassist Corey Parks and blonde-locked lead guitarist Ruyter Suys (wife of band leader Blaine Cartwright) recently completed a photo shoot for the back pages of *Playboy*! For this two-year-old band from Athens, Ga., things are only getting better, with no apparent ceiling to stop it. In fact, having completed more than 200 shows in 1997, the band plans to eclipse the 250 mark this year. With an Australian tour in the works and 25,000 CDs sold in just a few months, Nashville Pussy seems every bit the rock n' roll juggernaut.

This is a feisty, balls-out brand of hopped-up dirt-rock; the kind of riffage and muscle exhibited by notorious rock combos like AC/DC and Aerosmith with the couldn't-give-a-fuck attitude and boot-in-the-mouth punch of Motorhead and Rose Tattoo.

"Blaine was telling me that when he was 13, a new Aerosmith album came out, and everyone rushed and bought it—everyone. He

and his buddies had to pool their change together, but they got a copy and rode home on their bikes with it. It's attitude.

There are no rock stars anymore. There are no more guys singing about, 'Squeeze my lemon 'til the juice runs down my leg,' or 'I'm the lord of the thighs.' It's all guys crying about not getting laid or being junkies. All this sensitive bullshit. So kids abandon the rock format and go listen to rap, 'cause those guys are singing about kicking ass, fucking lots of women and riding around in their cars. Where else are these kids gonna turn to hear that?" asks Parks.

Let Them Eat Pussy, the band's debut release on Amphetamine Reptile, provides a raw and meaty answer to her question. With songs about precisely those issues—sex, the outlaw lifestyle, fast cars and ass-whippin'—this long-awaited disc takes no prisoners with its subject matter. It's direct, concise, loud and unforgiving. Call it a *Back In Black* for the '90s.

As for the revolution in rock?

"Well, guitar has always been the definitive instrument, and rock always springs back after periods of synthesizer music: Cheesy '70s pop into metal; disco into punk; and we just came out of this techno/electronica phase, so, yeah, its time for the rock revolution," exclaims Parks, whose signature act is spitting monstrous flames over the heads of the audience during the set.

"One show, they said the fire marshals were going to fine us \$1,000, so I wasn't allowed to do it (the fire breathing). So when it came time to blow fire, I jumped off the stage, ran through the crowd out the door, jumped on top of a dumpster and did it. I lit up the Rochester sky that night. I've done that at every show so far," she says.

"People are so fucking dumb that they're starting to grab my fire torch. A girl in Memphis grabbed it, and Blaine picked her up by her hair onto the stage, and Ruyter starting punching her in the face... They need to realize they can't do that. We don't like 'em on our stage. It's a fucking rock n' roll show—you don't get on our stage!" Take that as a warning not to play with fire, 'cause with Nashville Pussy, one may very well get burned. But pyrotechnics and fully bared breasts aside, this band isn't image-driven; its not about flash, but the desire to consistently deliver 50 sweat-soaked minutes of live music to folks who need it as much as the band.

"We come to kill you with rock n' roll. I'm ready, aren't you? Aren't you ready to be killed by rock n' roll?" Parks concludes as a statement of purpose. "Hell, what else are we gonna do? I love playing music, and I get the opportunity to do it every day. Hell yes!



(l-r) Jeremy Thompson, Ruyter Suys, Corey Parks, Blaine Cartwright

AC/DC

Bonfire Boxed Set [East West]

Goddamn! Unimpeachably bad-assed. Four CDs of '70s Australian boogie, combining live concert tracks and previously unreleased demos of songs appearing on *Highway to Hell*. This collection belongs in every rock n' roll primer kit for young lads and lassies. Don't even think about touching a guitar again until giving this a listen.

The sonic genius of Malcom and Angus Young shine through, and yes, so too do the blueprints for Beavis and Butthead. Christ, it even contains a newly remastered version of "Back in Black" plus an AC/DC key chain and temporary tattoo! But where are the Bon Scott shot glasses? Buy this even if it means eviction.

—Patrick Kennedy

ACID KING/ALTAMONT

Split LP [Man's Ruin]

Consider this the Melvins' wedding album. Side One features a band fronted by Melvins' drummer Dale Crover's wife, while hubby plays guitar and sings on Side Two. Both bands utilize the same rhythm section. Acid King alternately drips and grooves from the speakers in extended four- to 10-minute musical excursions. Songs like "Teen Dusthead" ooze Blue Cheer fuzzed-out stoner sludge with Joan Jett-as-satanic-witch vocals. Altamont, the male Crover's band, takes long strides down the Lynyrd Skynyrd highway, with some serious Southern-fried chooglin'. There's some Foghat and Alice Cooper in here, too, and of course, the low tuning and out-of-nowhere moments of strangeness that are Melvins signatures. Solid.

—Patrick Kennedy

TORI AMOS

From the Choirgirl Hotel [Atlantic]

Tori Amos' fourth full-length album re-establishes her place at the forefront of contemporary piano. As always, her classical piano is present, tempered with electronic rhythms, which she hadn't quite mastered on *Under the Pink*. Here, the balance is organic and sublime. Cruel matches sensual, lilting vocals with layers of beats and synth counter melodies. Though "Jackie's Strength" teeters on the sugary, there are plenty of pleasing, bittersweet tracks acting as antidote to its saccharine melodrama. "Black Dove," "Northern Lad" and "Hotel" are especially exquisite. While "Raspberry Swirl" and "Liquid Diamonds" throw a harder rock element into the mix. If there were any doubt about Amos' future, *From the Choirgirl Hotel* makes it plain she continues to innovate and rock like no other mommy can.

—Elisa Ludwig

NATACHA ATLAS

Halim [Beggars Banquet]

Although *Halim's* soft-focus cover may portray Natacha Atlas as a pop diva, this walking culture clash delivers a magical journey, wrapping Arabic instrumentation around dance rhythms and multilingual chants. Atlas has been leaving her mark on the dance world and garnering big-name fans, including Peter Gabriel, since her days as lead singer for the beat-collective Trans-Global.

On *Halim*, her second solo release, the Belgium native continues to spread her wings creating an aural soundscape both beautiful and haunting. Although some of the music is restricted to repetitive, droning chords, Atlas' voice dances effortless pirouettes around blissful numbers like "Kidda" and "Marinaash." *Halim* is a near-perfect release, offering new surprises with each listen.

—Ed Yashinsky

BACKSTREET LAW

Hockey Helmet [Riviere]

Hard is the word. Groovy is the feel. Backstreet Law sometimes sounds much like Rage Against The Machine, with rapping vocals over a hip-hop/metal beat, while at others, the band moves toward more of a Korn sound. Either way, the band shows a remarkable ability to bang out hard-hitting tracks of crushing modern music.

—Stuart Pitt

BIM SKALA BIM

Universal [BIB]

Universal is a toss-up. Bim Skala Bim is one of the best ska bands currently touring. With a lineup of killer musicians, is it possible for this band to top last year's release, *Eyes And Ears*? The record starts off right, with trombonist Mark Paquin showing the world why he has appeared with the Suicide Machines and toured with the Toasters. But for all the band's talent, the whole effort falls short of *Eyes And Ears*. After only a few songs the record becomes, well, average. Musicians looking for "influential" songs should check out "Pete Needs A Friend" and the intro on "Johnny O'Reilly."

—Kevin Wheeler

BLOODLET

The Seraphim Fall [Victory]

Angels should beware. Bloodlet descends, delivering its brutally yet beautifully crafted evil-core emissions. The album is somewhat theatrical and dark in concept, with laboriously sludgy chords and deep, voice box-shredding grunts bound to provoke seizures. But this is a good thing. Bloodlet is able to change tempos, making for seeds of unpredictability.

—Amy Sciarretto

RECORDS

BERNARD BUTLER

People Move On [Columbia]

Guitarist Bernard Butler's dynamic, atmospheric songs benefit from excellent production on *People Move On*. The combination of Butler's soft, hypnotic vocals, subtle guitar tones, hook-filled choruses and orchestral enhancements allow the listener to sit back, relax and enjoy all Butler's material has to offer. A worthwhile recommendation.

—Domenic DiSpaldo

JERRY CANTRELL

Boggy Depot [Columbia]

One listen to "Cut You In," the first single from *Boggy Depot*, with its contrasting acoustic and electric tones, vocal harmonies and hard rock chorus, and it's apparent how much influence guitarist Jerry Cantrell has on the Alice In Chains sound. Thankfully, though, not all of Cantrell's songs are suffocated by the dark, gloomy atmosphere one would expect from AIC.

But AIC fans will still appreciate *Boggy Depot* for the obvious similarities between Cantrell's solo material and his main band.

—Domenic DiSpaldo

CIRCLE OF DUST

Disengage [Flying Tart]

While it has become almost de rigueur in the '90s to fuse elements of industrial music with rock, Circle of Dust has done so since its beginning several years ago. The mastermind of Klay Scott, *Disengage* is more industrialized than its predecessor, *Angeldust*, and one could go even further by saying it is pure industrial, albeit incorporating ferocious, speed metal rhythms and even rap-like vocals. "Babylon" is an ethereal instrumental interlude, illustrating the diversity of this band. Harboring a certain underground, seedy quality, Circle of Dust is an acquired taste.

—Lorraine Gennaro

CONVERGE

Petitioning the Empty Sky [Equal Vision]

Straight-up metal riffage peppered with lightning-quick guitar solos and a few break-downs mix with screaming, demented vocals on *Petitioning The Empty Sky*. There is nothing comfortable about Converge, a dream for those who enjoy complete and utter dissonance and sonic discord. This riotous offering

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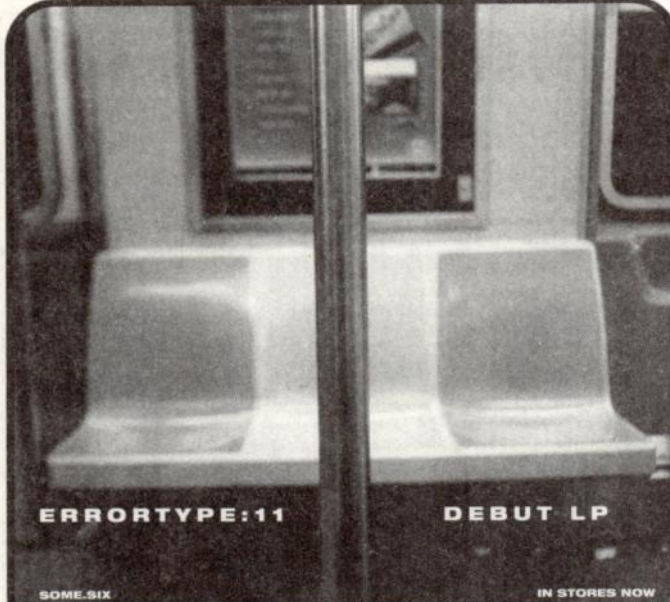
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makes for an ironic dose of controlled chaos. Fans of noise-metal in the vein of Coalesce, Kiss It Goodbye, Deadguy and Brother's Keeper will find themselves feasting like vultures on Converge. Interestingly, the sound is spine-chilling, but the visceral lyrics are more painful, making for a complete package and moshing experience.

—Amy Sciarretto

COVENANT

Nexus Polaris

[Nuclear Blast America]

Something of a black metal supergroup featuring members of Dimmu Borgir, Emperor and Cradle Of Filth, Covenant seeks to obliterate narrow minded visions within the genre and ultimately loosen the constraints on the aforementioned bands. Although the vocals are of the typical gruff-throated variety, the accompaniment includes prodigious piano and synthesizer scores atop a winding guitar attack and the female aria of Sarah Jezebel Deva. Lyrically, Covenant avoids the hallmarks of the field, opting for paeans to outer space and the search for extraterrestrial life. A confident, melodious look to the future, not the stagnant, rehashed offerings served up by far too many bands.

—Mark Gromen

COWS

Sorry in Pig Minor

[Amphetamine Reptile]

Lord, where to begin with this one... From far beyond left field, The Cows emerge with perhaps its most peculiar release in a prolific career with far more than its share of curiosities. Produced, aided and abetted by King Buzzo of the Melvins, *Sorry in Pig Minor* resides primarily in experimentalism, less a rock album than an exercise in delightful wizardry and eeriness of a band who has already done it all and continues to forge a jazzy concoction of punk, noise and melody. Vocalist/kook Shannon Selberg adds a campy Latin touch on the flamenco-lounge stylings of "El Shiksa," while screaming through creepy gems like "Death in the Tall Weeds." There's synthesizer to be found here, lots of oddball instrumentation and recording techniques, and the inimitable Cows low-end. This album goes beyond obtuse to goddamn genius, but it's an acquired genius.

—Patrick Kennedy

CUBIC FEET

Inside Rail [Meteor]

A more catchy and upbeat version of the Lemonheads, all this

foursome needs is a hit single, and Cubic Feet will be well on its way to the world of mainstream music's one hit wonders. "Natasha" starts things off energetically, but there is a definite decline in the listening enjoyment from the "Corrupt You," where Mark Davison duplicates The Verve Pipe's lead singer, Brian Vander Ark, in the days of *I've Suffered a Head Injury*.

Afterwards, the drums slow down, and the bassist is playing a few boring notes until the end, leaving listeners wondering what happened to all the promise *Inside Rail* had in its first three minutes.

—Erin O'Neal

CURVE

Come Clean [Universal]

Curve revisits sonic territory first explored by My Bloody Valentine—the faultless marriage of super-fuzzed guitars and breathy female vocals—but adds a new wrinkle by tossing in modern industrial and hip-hop rhythms. Opener "Chinese Burn" teeters on the verge of cacophony, yet the record's more restrained moments are its highlights. Singer Toni Halliday provides a pop edge to techno-dance tracks like "Killer Baby" and "Alligators Getting Up," the latter sporting a dreamy trip-hop loop punctuated by the James Bond theme guitar riff. Though Halliday's vocals are at times nearly buried by several layers of drum and guitar sludge, her memorable sighs still inflect distinct personality into the tunes. The mighty noise behind Halliday is created by versatile Dean Garcia, who handles keyboards, bass, drums and guitars. Not many artists attempt to straddle the line between industrial noise and dreamy pop, but Curve pulls it off expertly.

—Gregg McQueen

DOG FASHION DISCO

Erotic Massage [Random Act]

Jazz/metal/ska/punk/funk/rock.

The only way to listen to this is very loudly through some great speakers or driving about 75 miles per hour down the road with the convertible top down. The disc opens with metallic, heavy guitars and funky ass-kicking rhythms one would expect to hear from more popular metal bands, but sax and trumpet kick in, and images of ska and sugarplums dance through one's head. As each song progresses, the listener is invited into Dog Fashion Disco's eclectic world: a trip through every influential style of the '70s, '80s and '90s. Snippets of everything are here, even humor.

The anger is there for death metal, the happiness is there for pop, the beats and lyrical timing are there for rap/punk, and it even includes a jazzy-swing influence. Something for everyone on this CD.

—Mark Flatt

CLAYTON ELLERS

A Flame in the Cold [Encrypted]

Not too many songwriters will try to copy Clayton Ellers. He writes epics, not songs. Take the first track, "The Icons Are All Crying." There are 56 lines with no repeated chorus, preaching about the ills of today's political system: "The IRS is waiting like the wolf outside the door/Public Servants trusts you and leave you writhing on the floor... No one leads, as the nation bleeds, upon its cross of screams/The last one out, turn out the lights, on our founding fathers dreams."

A Flame In The Cold unequivocally questions the morals of the federal government like Crosby, Stills and Nash's "Ohio." However, Ellers does not rely on a repetitive theme or chorus; he recites a narrative to convey his John Prine political folk rock. A political Charlie Daniels sound, "Ballad of the Devil's Arm," conjures images of the Wild West, complete with mandolin and violin accompaniment. Don't expect to hear any Clayton Ellers covers, the average singer could never memorize the lyrics.

—Judd Handler

FOUR LETTER WORD

A Nasty Piece Of Work [BYO]

It's nice to hear a punk band these days not singing about its love life. Four Letter Word, a Welsh band, is less than pleased about the world. Pissed, loud and yelling, the lead singer goes after everyone from world leaders in "Sleight of Hand" to the upper class in "Rich White Ghetto." Even members of the band's audience are not spared from the attack in "Can You Hear The Words?" and "Do You Feel Lucky Punk?" Although musically, the band tends to rehash the same licks and style, Four Letter Word is saved by its lyrical prowess and sheer energy. *A Nasty Piece Of Work* is definitely for those more inclined to punk's roots instead of the more poppy contemporary offerings.

—Gary Lighthall

BILL FOX

Transit Byzantium [SpinArt]

A simple steady rhythm matched with two basic chords, harmonica and a low, raspy voice. Bill Fox perfects these songwriting tools as his idol Bob Dylan mas-

tered them. From the first track, "From a Dark Night," the comparisons immediately emanate. Fox's songs lack the political muster of Dylan, but he would be a great invite to any campfire sing-a-long. In addition, *Transit Byzantium* contains traces of other classic songwriters. "I'll Give it Away" combines intelligent Beatle-esque vocals with Animals guitar arpeggios. Fox even attempts Rod Stewart sexiness on "Lay You Down,": "I'm gonna make you sigh and quiver/I'm gonna lay you down/Right here on the side of the river."

—Judd Handler

FULL ON THE MOUTH

Collide [Pioneer Music Group]

By combining pop sensibilities and snappy, electronic infusions, Full On The Mouth debuts with a middle-of-the-road sound—neither too safe nor too strident—leaving the listener uninspired and definitely unsatisfied.

In all fairness, a few tracks do stand out—the hypnotic, intoxicating "My Infection," and the hopeful, sincere "Waiting." The muddy mix and machinery used on *Collide* tend to make more of a mess, causing the songs to sound just plain noisy and hard to get through. Sorely lacking unity and direction, the album sounds as if a song were taken from here and another one from there (case in point, "Uncle Dick"). More focus and less distraction next time around, guys.

—Lorraine Gennaro

GONE HAZEL

The Kids Are Bored [RepByPop]

Amidst the guts and glory of rock n' roll, there lies a seedy undertow which, if fledgling bands are not careful, will suck them down and swallow them whole. If avid music fans are lucky, this will happen to Gone Hazel, and soon. *The Kids Are Bored* would have been more aptly titled *The Kids Are Boring*. Whiny vocals meet limp guitars and sleepy drums to form a threesome in need of a laundry list of improvements, like energy, drive, desire and, most likely, an audience.

—Cynthia Gentile

BUDDY GUY

Heavy Love [Silvertone]

In 1957 at age 21, Louisiana-native Buddy Guy was receiving praise from the likes of Muddy Waters and Otis Rush. He went on to be one of Jimi Hendrix's greatest influences, and Eric Clapton has called him the best blues guitarist ever. So what else does this Chicago blues God have to prove?



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With *Heavy Love*, Guy jams with blues' young lions—Johnny Lang and Kenny Wayne Shepherd—as well as heavy hitters Steve Cropper, Richie Hayward and Reese Wynans. Pure blues fans will be in seventh heaven with songs like "Midnight Train" (with Lang) and "Saturday Night Fish Fry." At 62, Guy continues to be a moving force among Chicago blues players.

—Ed Yashinsky

ARNOLD HILLSIDE

Arnold Hillside [Columbia]

To compare this band to any other would be impossible. The influences are widely diverse. Just when the disc starts to take on a certain feel, another distinction arrives, leaving one breathless. Honest and poignant lyrics separate Arnold Hillside from its peers, becoming reminiscent of the Beatles with full British flair.

—Amy Freeman

GARY HOEY

Hocus Pocus Live [Surfdog]

With the exception of the legendary Dick Dale, Gary Hoey is music's preeminent modern surf guitarist, and he displays his frenetic-fingered compositions outside of the recording studio on this live collection. Recorded at The Belly Up in San Diego, Calif., on May 28, 1997, the final night of his 65-city tour, *Hocus Pocus Live* proves Hoey's musical merit. Songs range from the moody feel of "The Deep" to the lively pace of "Drive," but all evidence the precision of Hoey's technique. However, Hoey's is not the only talent showcased on this album. His supporting cast of bassist Ray Riendeau and drummer Glen Sobel present ability not solely reinforcing Hoey's guitar, but complementing it, with all three musicians contributing equally to the music's whole. *Hocus Pocus Live* provides evidence Hoey and his band are as proficient when performing live as when creating in the studio.

—Frank Valish

THE HUMPER

Euphoria, Confusion, Anger and Remorse [Epitaph]

Here it is. Rock and roll with lots of booze on its breath and more buzzsaw riffing than a Motorhead convention. Armed with a humorous punk sensibility akin to The Dickies, this California outfit drinks, drives, lives and dies. The title represents the supposed four stages of drinking. Gems abound throughout, from the lazy, sleazy swagger of "Fucking Secretaries" to the frenzied-but-graceful fury of "No You Don't."

Lifted above the usual punk sound on several tracks with the help of horns and some barroom piano, the album runs smooth and greasy from start to finish. Reeking of conviction, when Scott "Deluxe" Drake sings "I Wanne dance/In the devil's magic pants/I want to swing/By my blue suede tail," it's hard not to believe him. All in all, *Euphoria, Confusion, Anger And Remorse* is a damn fine rock n' roll album. Pray the members never take up a 12-step program.

—Gary Lighthall

IODINE

Baby Grand [Sol 3]

While these three guys have come up with some intoxicatingly interesting numbers, Jay Joyce's verses leave much to be desired. "Sayonara" is crammed with early-'90s Seattle grunge scene sounds, as are "Uninvited" and "Swan Dive," but the songs are ruined by horrible lyrics. These vibrations have also been cluttered with some sad attempts to incorporate effects like echo and delay, resulting in "Dark Star" and "Monkey Disease."

—Erin O'Neal

DANKO JONES

Danko Jones [Sonic Unyon]

Though this five-song EP clocks in at only 10 minutes 17 seconds, it leaves a strong impression. Danko Jones incorporates bluesy bass riffs with fast rock and roll beats, sounding something like a faster, more versatile George Thorogood. The disc opens with "Sugar Chocolate," putting a blues beat in double-time and energizing the listener. "Big Bed" is another highlight, drawing comparisons to the Stray Cats. If these songs are any indication of the band's talent, a full-length release will be a highly anticipated treat.

—Amanda Feingold

DAN KIBLER

Capsule [Big Deal]

Stutter much? For those who failed to hear him the first time, Kibler makes sure he repeats practically every line of the lyrics in his mediocre voice, accompanied by amateur guitar riffs. Aside from trying to imitate a country twang in "What'll it Be," Kibler could be easily mistaken for the long lost member of The Rembrants. His songs blend so well into each other, "To Be Loved" may just be an extension of "So Wendy Says." The only song truly worth hearing is the three-minute instrumental title track, "Capsule." As for the rest, don't bother.

—Erin O'Neal

KILGORE SMUDGE

A Search for Reason [Revolution]

Prepare to be beaten into submission. With its sophomore release, *A Search for Reason*, Kilgore Smudge showcases its musical melting pot of hardcore, metal and grunge stylings with a sound packing quite a punch.

On "Avowal," vocalist Jay Berndt raps like an angrier Mike Patton of Faith No More, and on "TK-421," his vocals consist of rhythmic speech, reminiscent of Henry Rollins. In addition, many of the songs on this album are punctuated with anguished screams, reminding one of the days when Pantera was king. However, despite the readily apparent heaviness of Kilgore's sound, a subtle undercurrent of pop sensibility moves through each of this album's tracks, evident most clearly in the tuneful choruses contained therein. While one might easily presuppose the influences here would render the tunes painfully anachronistic, *A Search for Reason* is an album shattering any boundaries presented by these influences, taking the listener on a journey which, at the same time, hearkens the past and screams for the future.

—Frank Valish

THE LOUD FAMILY

Days for Days [Alias]

With a stuttering and skipping start, this CD leaves one puzzled as to what message the artist is trying to convey. Every other track is titled, and keeping things straight becomes difficult. But once the CD starts, it remains steady. The vocals blend well over the heavy bass and overdriven guitar. With the flavor of a good summertime release, each song shows strong songwriting, and the energy is there for an underground hit. Stand-out tracks: "Dee-Pression" and "Mozart Sonatas."

—Mark Platt

MADBALL

Look My Way [Roadrunner]

The legendary Madball returns to the New York hardcore scene with its latest full-length, replete with trademark raw breakdowns. The lyrical theme of empowerment, taking care of oneself and maintaining a positive outlook is tightly woven here. On *Look My Way*, Madball keeps its patented sound intact, but this is not to say the band hasn't grown. Ugly Freddie has changed his vocal style slightly; he doesn't sound as throaty and gruff as he does on *Set It Off*. The title track, "Moment of Truth" and "Waste of Time" are tracks sure to

become stomp pit classics, due to the inviting, chant nature of the choruses. This record is sure to be added to the arsenal of NYHC kids everywhere, showing hardcore universality on "Our Family," with vocals sung entirely in Spanish.

—Amy Sciarretto

MILKBOY'S PUPU PLATTER

Pu-Pu Platter [MilkBoy]

Pu-Pu Platter is the third compilation produced by Milkboy Records featuring mainly unsigned bands from the East Coast. This 16-track release runs the gamut of musical stylings, catering to a rock fan-base.

Cottonmouth and Bungi Orange provide the harder, more intense grooves, while AIF's joint, "Smoked Diamonds," is, unfortunately, the only hip-hop contribution, but one of the more influential songs on the release. Haywood Trout Festival offers a tight rock track with "Sub Terra Firma." Smoke Rings adds an eclectic sample, "Soul Sauce," combining pop with Latino melodies. The Why-Os' "King of the Moon" is a lounge-based jam definitely worthy of attention. Gary Gyll offers some food for thought with "Farm Animals," a comical ditty about sodomizing cows, and Rev. Leroy Nobles and the Original Singing Sons close the compilation with the gospel song, "Jesus Is the Answer."

—Colleen Ehrle

MONTE MONTGOMERY

1st and Repair [Heart]

Yawn. This one's for the good ol' boys. The same old tired country-rock guitar sound is ever-present, along with the cheesiest lyrics this side of the Mason-Dixon. Song titles like, "Sorry Doesn't Cut It" and "Love Come Knockin'" pigeonhole this album within 10 seconds.

—Amy Freeman

MORCHEEBA

Big Calm [China]

The liner notes to *Big Calm* read: "Standing before you is an album of such incredible beauty and versatility that it defies logic." A gutsy proclamation, to be sure, but this ingenious British quartet backs up the boast. Willing to try anything, the group dabbles in an astounding array of musical styles. "The Sea" mixes keyboard tones with sharp drums and mild orchestration. "Shoulder Holster" flaunts sitar solos and Middle-Eastern percussion, while "Bullet Proof" uses rap turntable scratches, psychedelic guitar and jazz piano. Each track sounds decidedly different than the



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next and manages to set its own unique mood. Lush arrangements and crisp production accentuate the talents of the band and impressive frontwoman Skye Edwards. *Big Calm* may not prove to be one of this year's best releases, but it's certainly the most innovative so far.

—Gregg McQueen

MORTA SKULD

Surface [Pavement]

Never more than a third division act, loosely clinging to the fringe of a once vibrant scene, longevity and the complete dearth of U.S. talent has afforded Morta Skuld to finally get "proper" distribution. Eight thankfully short hymns of praise to the Morbid Angel altar of madness. A Drano-unstuck sink could replace the gurgling vocals, while the drums clickety-clack to a few nimble fret runs, as on "The Killing Machines." An embarrassment for the entire genre.

—Mark Gromen

NEUROTICA

Seed [NMG Entertainment]

Off the bat, the most notable thing about *Seed*'s Brian Johnson's (of AC/DC) production credit. While this may hold overwhelming appeal to many rock radio programming directors, it has little merit anywhere else, especially after a couple of listens. The production quality is unimpressive at best, and when coupled with the compositions and performances, this album becomes an exercise in exposing Neurotica's limitations. Grinding out a polished-but-uninspired set of hard rock tunes, Neurotica is sometimes tight and impressive, but wallows in mediocre guitar solos and vocals (including a ridiculous cameo by Johnson singing harmonies on the opening track). Neurotica is no more than a bar band with an independent CD.

—André Calilhanna

NINE VOLT

Nine Volt [Mercury]

Nine Volt displays energy and tight instrumentals on its self-titled debut. Nine Volt sounds like a local band with a decent following but just won't go far beyond its hometown. Partly, this is due to an overall lack of imagination. The elements here sound fine; driving guitar laced with vocal harmonies and snare-heavy drumming. Though the songs are heavy, they are also undeniably radio friendly. Tracks like "Lotus" are self-indulgent, perfect for adolescent listeners, but unsatisfying for those over 18. Nine

Volt is not, however, talentless, only a bit too dependent on the rock n' roll cliché.

—Elisa Ludwig

OBITUARY

Dead [Roadrunner]

This title is unknowingly accurate, as the Florida-based outfit, while a major influence in launching the death metal boom at the beginning of the decade, has been merely a bit player over the last few years. The tracks encompass the band's entire career: the raw, lyricless days of "Chopped In Half" to the electronics-influenced era. Sonically, it's hard to fault *Dead*, as the production is crystal clear, accenting bombastic drums and spirited, if not technically proficient, guitar work.

—Mark Gromen

THE ORANGE COUNTY SUPERTONES

Strike Back [BEC]

From the checkers on the cover to the band's three-piece suits, these guys sure look ska, and it seems like they don't want anyone to forget this while thumbing through the insert. On this CD, one finds clichéd ska so derivative of the Mighty Mighty Bosstones it's very easy to write The Orange County Supertones off as one of the millions of cheesy third-wave ska bands populating the world.

—Kevin Wheeler

THE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Pure Frosting [Columbia]

Even the band knows there isn't a whole lot of meat on this album. Comprising some live tracks (including a cover of "Video Killed The Radio Star"), b-sides and outtakes, *Pure Frosting* is the last rumbling from this '90s pop-rock unit. It's not difficult to understand why POTUSA made it so big—with catchy, kitschy tunes and videos to match. It's not difficult to imagine why POTUSA has disbanded, either. A group of talented songwriters and accomplished musicians, it appears the antics fueling the band's four-year ride have gone as far as possible. This album is the obligatory nail in the coffin, as Columbia milks the band for the last of its worth. An enhanced CD, *Pure Frosting* includes videos for "Lump," "Peaches," "Dune Buggy" and "Mach 5," making it a little more interesting, but probably not worthwhile for anyone but the

devotee who must have all POTUSA's releases for their collection.

—André Calilhanna

REACH AROUND RODEO CLOWNS

Whip It Out! [LList]

Band philosophies aren't always pretty. The title of this album provides some insight into the collective mind-set of this band's members. This group of weird merchants would wear its philosophy on its sleeve, if any of the members' shirts had sleeves. Lead singer Wendell Jones, with his Elvis-like crooning voice, is a perfect tour guide through the psychobilly cartoon jungle of devils, tattoos, sex and hot-rod Lincolns. Tempo changes abound, and the band effectively ventures all over the map: from the straight-on rockabilly of "Bad News Story" and "Psychobilly Band" to the strange combo of surf-meets-spaghetti western in "Bad Dudes-A-Surfing." Further philosophical deconstruction has under-age love affairs ("Mexico") and serial killing as great hobbies ("Bodies In My Basement"). The muscle-car/oral sex homage of "She Sure Sucks A Lot" is just short of brilliant. The feel-good album of the year for fun loving lunatics everywhere.

—Gary Lighthall

LOU REED

Perfect Night Live In London [Reprise]

This is light years away from Lou Reed's last live album from the '70s, *Rock N' Roll Animal*. Here we have a kinder, gentler Lou in a predominantly acoustic setting. Being Lou Reed, the songs are usually strong, but this album eschews the harder moments of his catalogue like "Heroin," "White Light/White Heat" and "Sweet Jane" for some of the more quiet fare. Reed does a quiet devotional take on "I'll Be Your Mirror," a sweetly rapturous performance of "Perfect Day" and the pointed social commentary of "Dirty Blvd." There are three new songs, all culled from Reed's new unproduced musical version of H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (also pretty laid back), with only the Velvetish "Into The Divine" working up any froth at all. *Perfect Night...* could just as well be called *A Rock N' Roll Animal Grows Up*.

—Jay S. Jacobs

ROYAL CROWN REVUE

Caught in the Act [Surfdog Records]

In these days of me-too-ism within every A&R department in the music industry, it's difficult to sell quality swing without bumping into a forest of boorish imitators. But after the current martini-induced groundswell subsides, the hard-and-heavy swing of Los

Angeles' Royal Crown Revue will still sound fresh. Although signed to Warner Bros. since 1996, *Caught in the Act* (released by tiny Surfdog Records), catches the RCR on one incredible night at Hollywood's intimate Mint Club. Divided evenly between original numbers and standards, *Caught in the Act* provides a textbook example of what has constituted great swing for 50 years—a solid rhythm section backed by driving horns that propel every song. Whether dishing up a cha-cha ("Honey Child"), smoky lounge swing ("The Mooch") or a hyper-kinetic original ("Park's Place"), RCR purrs along like a well-oiled engine and makes it impossible to sit still.

—Ed Yashinsky

PICTURESQUE

Shine In Eyes [Trustkill]

The rich pleasures of emo-core—lush, melodic and impassioned vocals coupled with slow yet heavy guitar riffs—reside on this snippet from Picturesque. Oh, only if it were longer instead of a four-song EP teaser. Every song is a powerhouse, feeling like an emotional outpouring taking place. The lyrics house poetic phrases such as "Embrace the clouds/It's what you are."

Picturesque, especially in the vocals, manages to be aesthetically pleasing

and raw, without sounding stilted, phony or too harsh. The result is an honest-sounding record.

—Amy Sciarretto

PRECIOUS

Precious [Smokey]

Although Lars Tetens is a talented musician and songwriter, his vocals lack the punch this project so desperately tries to bring across. This CD comes off sounding like a mix between Primus and The Smashing Pumpkins, but never quite finds a real direction. Although it can claim strong beats and some great riffs, as a whole, the work seems raw and unfinished. Certain songs seem happy while others are extremely dark and dreary. The vocal change-ups are distracting at times, yet are right on the money at others. A good effort, but wait for the next one.

—Mark Flatt

THE SHINING PATH

The Shining Path [Which]

The Shining Path fuses punk's past with hip hop's future in a jumble of backbeat rhythms and rhymes. Not a solitary dull moment on this gem. These songs will be forever imbedded into the rhythm cavities.

—Amy Freeman
continued on page 32

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UNSIGNED

BURN WITCH BURN

The Burning Times

If the name Burn Witch Burn conjures images of some thrashing heavy metal band flailing and screaming about death, think again. *The Burning Times* begins with mandolins, acoustic guitars and bass, like music from a Renaissance Fair coupled with a subtle vocal irreverence courtesy of former Dead Milkman Rodney Anonymous. Incorporating fiddles and a Jethro Tull-like storytelling/songwriting style, Burn Witch Burn is definitely carving out its own niche. There's something charming about the intentions of Burn Witch Burn, and there is a certain musical acuity to the compositions and performances. It isn't too difficult to imagine hearing this on alternative college radio, though the production could stand improving.

—Kim Crawford

ECCENTRIC CIRCLES

Unity Through Divinity

Eccentric Circles tries to attain a high, and the band almost gets it right. But unfortunately, almost hardly, if ever, counts. These guys can't seem to decide if they want to be Bauhaus or Stone Temple Pilots. Much of the time the music is hypnotic and trance-like, thanks to tribal-esque percussion rhythms. The vocals, though, sound a little weak and could use either some effects enhancement or beefing up. *Unity Through Divinity* sounds like a first-time effort, and this band certainly has some growing to do. The potential, at least, appears to be there.

—Lorraine Gennaro

ERIN HALEY

Erin Haley

In an era of what seems like thousands of female singer/songwriters, it's difficult to distance oneself from the throngs. This works against Erin Haley. While her songs are well-penned and the production is top-quality, neither are so good as to really set her apart from the masses. The second tune on this three-song offering, "Just A Little Bit," stands out, showcasing Haley's sweet voice and lyrical styling at their best. The acoustic slide guitar work on this track, performed by co-writer and guitarist/bassist Allan Craig Wallace, is very tasty; and Andy

Kravitz's production is crystal clear. The other two tracks on the CD are a bit more repetitive, and though the parts are well-done, they do not stand up to the challenge. An easy listen, Haley is not far off the mark at all.

—Kim Crawford

JOHNNY

Vent

Metal with a '90s sound and an occasional rap influence infiltrates the songs on Johnny's 13-track CD, *Vent*. Lots of heavy riffs, medium tempos and the sweet sound of warm distortion, without the abrasiveness of more extreme metal bands. Johnny takes a tasteful approach to its songs and ends up with a pretty decent album in the process.

—Domenic DiSpaldo

JAKE LAUFER

A Viking Named jCalientel

For an album apparently recorded on a four-track recorder, *A Viking Named jCalientel* is a very raw serving. This shouldn't have made it to CD. This is more of a demo compilation of everything Laufer has written. It's a pad full of sketches, and while it's not all bad, it's not nearly ready for public consumption and exposes all of Laufer's weak points. Melodies get hung up on themselves, the songs are long, and the vocals are sometimes embarrassing. Musically, the parts are nothing special, and the leads are in need of some serious fine tuning. The elements working here are all pretty amateur, and while everyone has to start somewhere, a 15-song CD release is not the way.

—Kim Crawford

MACHINERY

Reconstruction

Machinery is still living in the '80s and apparently it's working OK for this Connecticut-based, four-piece metal outfit. But, here's a news flash: long hair, black T-shirts and blue jeans will date a band quicker than a pack of groupies. Even Metallica succumbed to eyeliner and a modern sense of style. Sounding like a cross between Slayer and Iron Maiden, Machinery is not completely devoid of musical skill or some signs of intelligent life, despite a brain-numbing delivery.

—Lorraine Gennaro

7-Inch Reviews

By Eric Wareheim

VEDA HILLE

[The Bottom Line]

Who says Canadians have no soul? Celine Dion isn't the only one belting out hot tunes from up there. These northerners combine bits of rhythm and sleek sexy whispers to create a perfect mood piece. The vocals come off powerfully, like a PJ Harvey/Portishead hybrid. Cool percussion and smart bass grooves filter in and out like a naughty evening in the sack. There's no faking it with Veda Hille. David Lynch should have used this gang's sounds for the *Lost Highway* soundtrack.

INSPECTOR 7/ THE SKOIDATS

[Radical]

This is a nice compilation of two experienced Ska/Oil buddies. *Inspector 7* maintains the classic Madness sound with horn solos and lower-class banter. The Skoidats start with a pleasant number entitled "Skinhead Hop." There's nothing like the romantic vision of a couple of skinheads producing some quality songs.

Both groups have surpassed the traditional expectations of their dying world.

NERVE GENERATOR

Nerve Generator is the most underrated pop band on the East Coast. Hot axe leads and flaming Moog sweeps keep anyone begging for more. These Generators only record their tunes in the bedroom, and they want to keep it that way. DIY never sounded healthier. Rock on, boys.

THE PUDDLE JUMPERS LTD.

[Reverse Curve]

Indie/emo rock is in again. No doubt about it. Although it probably should have ended with Captain Jazz. These jumpers add some spicy flavor into the repetitive mix. Some nicely recorded sounds follow Promise Ring-like singing. Put these guys on a bill with Jimmy Eat World and Sunny Day Real Estate, and it would be a wonderful night of crying pop and cute black-haired girls.

THUMBNAIL

[Cargo/Headhunter]

When a genre is established, it is a band's job to embrace the qualities of the particular style and expand or originate something new from it. Thumbnail boasts futuristic sounds and recording techniques, but all one really gets is the same regurgitated slop with some slick production and a weird keyboard/feedback sound. Trendy and terrible. This band must be holding on to something. Perhaps the year 1985, when sweat-filled shows at churches and flood pants meant something. On a more sensitive note, the band's energy-filled feedback photo will make any loud-amped veteran teary. Or maybe it's just the music.

THE WEAKLINGS

[Junk]

The only thing better than a huge six-string axe is a tall frosty mug of brew and some fine tail. The Weaklings stomp, shake and motor-vate the entire hick watering hole. Greaser rock is back and better than ever. Anthemic emotions run through the spine while alcohol sets in. Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! Put down the top of the '57 Chevy and chug down another cold one. The Weaklings are here to stay. Dischord, eat your heart out. Here's some real rock.

ZEKE

[Junk]

"They'll kick yer ass and fuck your sister. Loved by hookers, junkies, and transsexuals." This is Zeke's slogan. The harsh description is right on the money. Childhood bullies and jail rape come to mind after a dose of this record. Lightning-fast biker rock with a couple of socially acceptable lyrical themes run through the heroin-filled veins of these boys. With tunes like "Slut" and "Overkill," how could anyone go wrong? "Mystery Train?" Hopefully, this tune is an acknowledgment of the Jim Jarmush classic film, but probably has more to do with stomping skulls and the blue-collar lifestyle.

ZONIC SHOCKUM

[Stain]

This gang is simply embarrassing. Imagine a "Battle of the Bands" at the local high school. All the punks and skaters are there. All the preps and hotties are all around. The crowd is a bit buzzed from some suburban doobie, and Zonic Shockum takes the stage. Everyone is immediately put into a sour mood. Shriill female operatic vocals accompany weird grunge-rock jams. Man, we thought we were going to mosh at this function.

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The advertisement features a black and white photograph of a band of four people (three men and one woman) in a recording studio. One man is sitting on a couch playing a guitar, another man is standing and playing a guitar, a woman is standing and playing a guitar, and a man is sitting in the foreground, possibly mixing. Various BASF digital media products are displayed in the foreground, including CD-Rs, DATs, and ADATs. The BASF logo is prominently displayed in the bottom right corner.



CYNTHIA GENTILE
GETS INTO IT WITH

ROCKET
FROM THE CRYPT

Emerging from the over-crowded streets of contemporary punk and ska, San Diego's Rocket From the Crypt is anything but just another band with a horn section. With a "live fast and die young" attitude, these gentlemen swingers play from a mindset of reckless abandon. If this fun-all-the-time attitude weren't coupled with drive, desire and, most of all, talent, these six surfer boys would be nowhere.

"It's not just about talent, it's about urgency. I don't believe in wasting time," says John "Speedo" Reis, the band's frontman. "Time has always fascinated me, because we really don't have much of it, and none of it is ours anyway. I guess I play music to deal with my own mortality."

In Rocket From the Crypt's early days, San Diego was set to be the next Seattle, but don't ask Reis about it.

"It was all fucking media-induced hype, and no band I know bought into it. All we wanted to do was play music and travel around like a pack of wild bohemians," he says.

Starting out as any typical band, the members of RFTC took on their now-trademark nicknames for very practical reasons.

"In the beginning, it was for the sake of anonymity; we were all kinda hiding from someone or running from something, but now it is really just a residue of a golden era," explains Reis, who takes his nickname from a Cadillac song.

After a brief stint in a band called Pitchfork, Reis, then an employee of the small, independent label Cargo Records, was determined to put together a band devoted to music and, "get the hell out of Dodge." From its first incarnation in 1989, RFTC has been viewed as an example of all things working class.

"People see some guys with horns and an electric guitar, and they want to romanticize it. They think of us as an example when all we really are is escapists. I hate work, I would never want to work, and I would never call this band work. Yeah, I put a lot more into this than the average job, but I get a lot more out of it. In the end, we are firmly rooted in a strong sense of fun," he says.

Rocket From the Crypt's newest album, aptly titled *R.F.T.C.*, is an amalgam of Americana. Combining moments of rockabilly, ska and punk, Reis and his gang take on the challenge of originality without pretentiousness, and intelligence without being didactic.

"I know there are a lot of types of music which are not given the attention they deserve in the contemporary scene. But we are not here to be teachers or martyrs. We are the band we want to be," explains Reis.

But where does a group of Southern California's finest look for inspiration?



"The older you get, the more you tend to seek the sources. If you follow it back from your favorite band to their favorite and so on down the line, you could really keep going forever," he says.

For the follow-up to 1996's critically acclaimed *Scream Dracula Scream!*, Rocket from the Crypt went into the studio with a renewed sense of direction.

"After two years of touring and seeing the world, we all had an overwhelming feeling of positivism, like we really do have a reason to be here—to make music," says Reis.

The guys had a strained and disheartening experience while making *Scream*, and vowed not to make the same mistakes twice.

"We just took on more than we should last time," explains Reis. "We wanted everything to be perfect, and we wanted to make it that way all by ourselves."

Although he says he's happy with the end result, Reis wanted to make this recording experience different in every way.

Writing from a subconsciously live mindset, Reis took care to think like a band, using "we" instead of "I" whenever possible.

"After being together constantly, absolutely all that time, we really felt like a family. Instead of being a hot-bed for tension, the practice space became an oasis for us. We would come in with an idea and leave with a song. It was really awesome," he says.

This time around, RFTC enlisted the help of some highly respected musicians, specifically, Holly Golightly of British band The Headcoates and legendary producer Jim

Dickinson, who guest-starred on the organ.

"I have known Holly for a long time, and I've always been a big fan. We wanted to do something with her, so while we were recording in a studio just outside of London, we invited her up. We recorded seven tracks with her that day, one of which is on the album," he says.

That track, a doo-wop number entitled "Eye On You," is a stellar example of the collage of styles Reis seeks to build. Edgy guitars back vintage girl-group harmonies to form a catchy rift in time.

"We go into the whole thing with an idea of how to fuck things up," he laughs. "We are not a finesse band. We have very blunt fingers and it shows in our final product."

Because Rocket From the Crypt connects with so many different types of music from so many different eras, the band often gets lumped in with the wrong pop scenes. Take for instance the band's stint on the ska-core and punk festival, the Warped Tour last summer.

"We had a lot of problems relating," says Reis. "The problem with the current punk and ska scenes is that the main players are just too damn young. Rock n' roll has been around for a long, long time, and you can't just look at everything post-Led Zeppelin as the be-all-end-all of music. But that's also where a lot of the hope for the scene lies. If these kids get off their asses and go look for real styles, there will be a whole new scene to contend with."

Anyone keeping up with the hardcore scene should be well aware of H2O. The New York City quintet has taken the hardcore and punk scenes by storm in its three years of existence. With the release of H2O's sophomore effort, *Thicker Than Water*, the band has finally gotten the push it needed to make its takeover a hostile one. There is a good reason H2O was invited to be the first East Coast hardcore band on Epitaph, a label typically known for releases from California punk bands. This band successfully blends together different styles of hardcore punk to create a wholly individual sound. Mainly from Washington, D.C., the band borrows from the likes of Dag Nasty, Marginal Man and, of course, from the thriving New York hardcore scene of the '80s.

Singer Toby Morse was the first member of the band to move to the Big Apple, and he quickly found himself working as a roadie for Sick Of It All. After five years of watching his friends play onstage, he decided to give it a try. Recruited were guitarist Rusty Pistachio, bassist Eric Rice (who has since been replaced by Adam Blake), Todd Morse and drummer Todd Friend.

Immediately, the band was receiving rave reviews, and every-

one was waiting for a record. Blackout Records delivered one, which sold briskly, and the band remained on tour almost constantly, opening up for the likes of The Misfits, Social Distortion and the Mighty Mighty Bosstones.

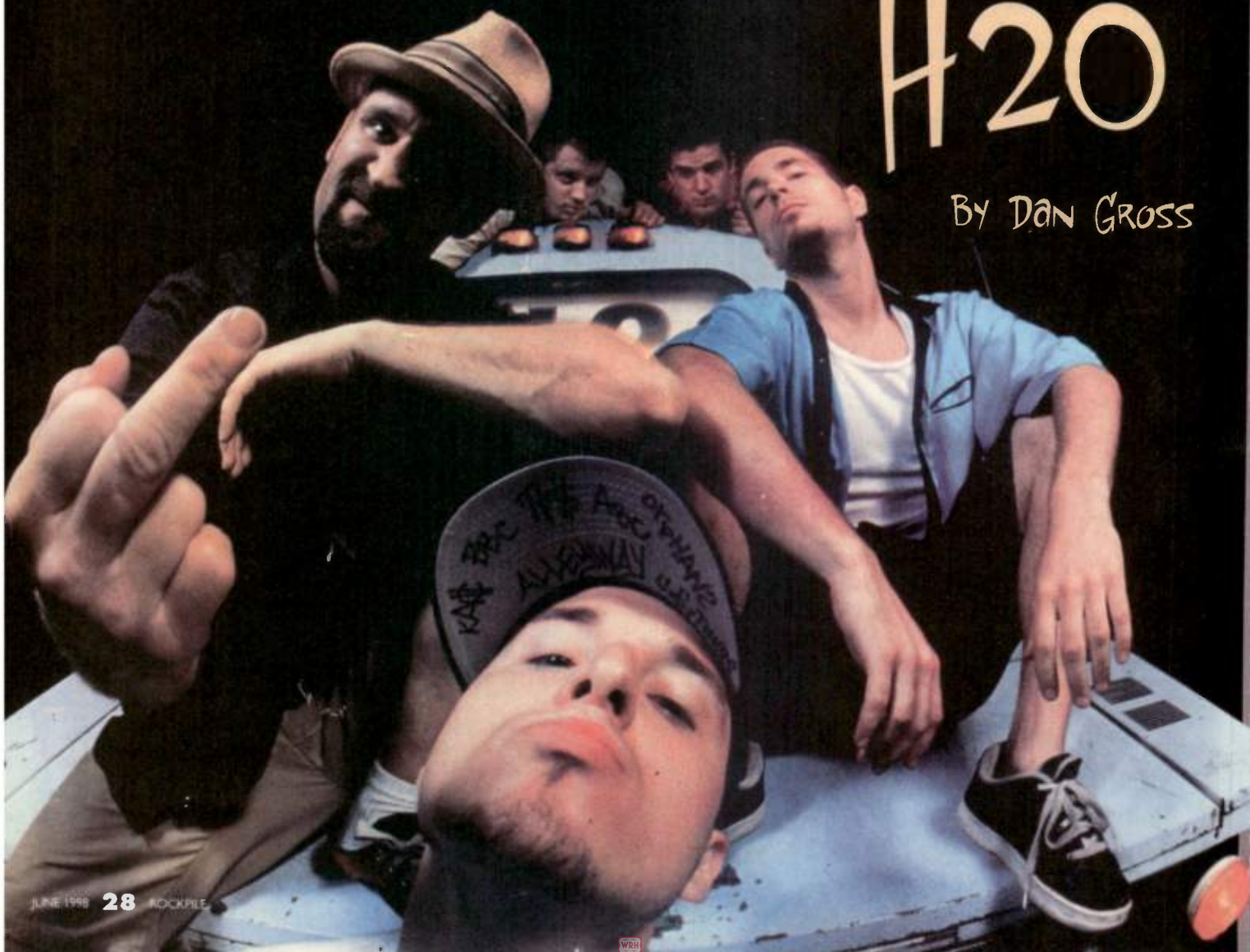
Now the band has hit it big, or at least that's what gossip scenesters would have one believe. After all, the band is on Epitaph and has a video on MTV.

"Everready," the first single from *Thicker Than Water*, debuted on *120 Minutes* in April. The next morning kids across the country were talking shit about a hard-working band trying to make ends meet, calling the band millionaires and sellouts. Todd Morse doesn't take offense.

"I kinda understand that these kids don't understand it. They aren't in the music business and we are. This is what we deal with every day, and what we go through. They only see it from the outside." He adds, "The fact that we don't have jobs, and they see all these people coming to our shows and all these people buying our shit, they think, 'Hey, these guys must be rich.' Maybe at some point in our lives we thought that way, but it don't work that way."

H2O

By DAN GROSS



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| The Bomboras | Head Shrinkin' Fun | Zombie-A-Go-Go |
| Chemical Brothers | Chemical Reaction | Blackheart |
| Chopper One | Chopper One | Restless |
| CIV | Thirteen Day Getaway | Lava/Atlantic |
| Cold | Cold | Flip/A&M |
| The Corrs | Talk on Corners | 143/Lava/Atlantic |
| Cosmic Shop Shop | Da Family | MCA |
| Creedence | | |
| Clearwater Revisited | Recollection | Fuel 2000 |
| Christopher Cross | Walking in Avalon | CMC Int'l |
| Deep Purple | Abandoned | CMC Int'l |
| Duke | Duke | Radio Universe |
| Era | Era | Mercury France |
| Gloria Estefan | glorial | Epic |
| Eva Trout | Eva Trout | Trauma |
| From Good Homes | From Good Homes | RCA |
| Getaway Cruiser | Getaway Cruiser | 550 Music |
| The Ghostly Ones | A Haunting We Will | Go Zombie-A-Go-Go |
| Girls Against Boys | Freak*on*ica | DGC |
| Angel Grant | Album | Flyte-Tyme |
| Home Grown | Act Your Age | Outpost/Geffen |
| Praga Khan | Pragmatic | Antler Subway |
| Lionrock | City Delirious | Timebomb/Arista |
| Liquid Gang | Fantastic Pirate Satellite | Gotham |
| Lunasec | A Million Words | Virgin |
| | A Million Dollars | No Limit/Priority |
| Master P | The Last Dawn | Radar/Sire |
| Midget | Jukebox | WORK Group |
| Heather Nova | Siren | RAL/Mercury |
| Onyx | Shut 'Em Down | |
| Outcry | This Side Of | Eureka/London |
| | Anywhere | |
| Rocket From | | |
| The Crypt | RFTC | Interscope |
| Roy Rogers | Pleasure & Pain | Virgin |

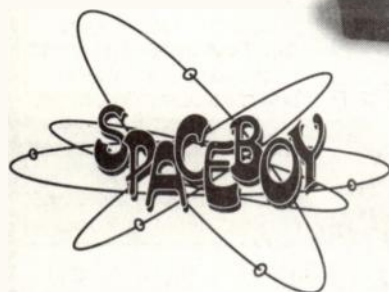
| ARTIST | TITLE | LABEL |
|--|--|------------------|
| Smashing Pumpkins | Adore | Virgin |
| Solid Harmonic | Solid Harmonic | Jive |
| Michael Stanley | Live in Tangiers | Razor & Tie |
| Rod Stewart | When We Were The New Boys | Warner Bros. |
| Lord Tariq & Peter Gunz | Deja Vu | Columbia |
| Tricky | Angels With Dirty Faces | Island |
| Unwritten Law | Unwritten Law | Interscope |
| Ana Voog | anavoog.com | Radioactive/MCA |
| Papa Wemba | Molokai | Real World |
| JUNE 9 | | |
| Regina Belle | Believe in Me | MCA |
| Eric Bogosian | Pounding Nails In the Floor With My Forehead | Blackbird/Sire |
| Bonfire Madigan | From the Burn Pile | Kill Rock Stars |
| Brandy | Never Say Never | Atlantic |
| Johnny Cash & Willie Nelson | VH1 Storytellers | American |
| Deepak Chopra | The Gift if Love | Tommy Boy |
| Joe Cormier | Informal Sessions | Rounder |
| Daze | Super Heroes | Columbia |
| Geno Delafosse & French Rockin' Boogie | La Chanson Perdue | Rounder |
| Don Caballero | What Burns Never Returns | Touch & Go |
| Drugstore | White Magic For Lovers | Roadrunner |
| John Fogerty | Premonition | Reprise |
| Fury of Five | At War With The World | Victory |
| Alastair Galbraith | Mirror Work | Emperor Jones |
| Grant Lee Buffalo | Jubilee | Slash/WB |
| Gravity Kills | Perversion | TVT |
| Hard Boyz | P.M.S. | Power/Roadrunner |
| Hi Fi Killers | Possession | Loosegroove |

| ARTIST | TITLE | LABEL |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Tim Hodgkinson | Pragma | PeR/Cuneiform |
| Jesus & Mary Chain | Munki | Sub Pop |
| K'sChoice | Cocoon Crash | 550 Music |
| Jennifer Kimball | Veering From The Wave | Imaginary Road |
| Komeda | What Makes It Go? | Minty Fresh |
| Madball | Look My Way | Roadrunner |
| Istvan Martha | The Wind Rises | ReR/Cuneiform |
| Mercyful Fate | Dead Again | Metal Blade |
| No Means No | Dance Of The Headless Bourgeoisie | Alternative Tentacles |
| | CinnamonCinder | DCC |
| The Pastel Six | Espina | Zero Hour |
| Psychotica | Emotional Rollercoaster | A&M |
| Ridel High | | |
| Steve Riley & The Mamou Playboys | Bayou Ruler | Rounder |
| Jon Rose | The Fence | ReR/Cuneiform |
| Debbie Schwartz | Wrongs of Passage | Mercury |
| Slayer | Violent by Design | American |
| Sonia Dada | My Secret Life | Capricorn/Mercury |
| Strangulated Bestoffs | Strangulated Bestoffs | Skin Graft |
| Throneberry | Squinting Before The Dazzle | Alias |
| Jimmie Vaughan | Out There | Epic |
| Voivod | Phobos | Slipdisc/Mercury |
| Voltaire | Voltaire | Projekt |
| JUNE 16 | | |
| Dave Alvin | Blackjack David | HighTone/Rhino |
| Black Tape For A Blue Girl | Black Tape For A Blue Girl | Projekt |
| Boom Shaka | Rebel-ion | Shanachie |
| Drain S.T.H. | Horror Wrestling | Enclave/Mercury |
| Emmet Swimming | Big Night Without You | Epic |
| Neil Finn | Try Whistling This | WORK Group |
| Five Easy Pieces | Five Easy Pieces | MCA |
| Front 242 | Live Code | Play It Again Sam |
| Imogen Heap | I Megaphone | Almo Sounds |
| Ricky Jones | Ricky Jones | Cherry/Universal |
| Kai | Kai | Geffen |
| The Marshall Tucker Band | Face Down In The Blues | Era/K-tel |
| Molly Hatchet | Silent Reign Of Heroes | CMC Int'l |
| Monster Magnet | Powertrip | A&M |
| MxPx | Slowly Going The Way of the Buffalo | A&M |
| Myron | Destiny | Island Black Music |
| Pierce Pettis | Everything Matters | Compass |
| Pure Sugar | Pure Sugar | Geffen |
| Brian Setzer Orchestra | The Dirty Boogie | Interscope |
| Sissy Bar | Statutory Grape | Sugar Fix |
| Ringo Starr | Vertical Man | Mercury |
| Storyville | Dog Years | Atlantic |
| Supafuzz | Pretty Blank Page | Gotham |
| JUNE 23 | | |
| Barry Adamson | As Above, So Below | Mute |
| Anthrax | Volume VIII | Ignition |
| Arab Strap | The Week Never Starts Round Here | Matador |
| Baby Fox | Dum Dum Baby | Roadrunner |
| Billy Bragg & Wilco | Mermaid Avenue | Elektra |
| Brian Jonestown Massacre | | |
| CPR | Strung Out in Heaven | TVT |
| Crimpsnore | CPR | Samson |
| Dark Funeral | Sound of a New World Being Born | Lookout |
| John Forte | Vobiscum Satanus | Metal Blade |
| Jeffrey Gains | Poly-Sci | Refugee Camp |
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The genesis of the San Pedro punk band FYP is a twisted tale of drugstores, dog biscuits and dementia. As told by lyricist and frontman Todd Congelliere, it begins when he met a recently discharged mental patient named Jed.

"In 1991," Congelliere explains, "this dude that just got out of a mental ward, Jed, got an assigned job at Drug Emporium. I was there one day, and he tried to get me to steal some Gaines Burgers. I don't know why. He was the one who worked there, it would have been easier for him to do it. Anyway, to make a long story short, he freaked out and told the manager what was up, I got busted and thus, FYP—the band—was born. Soon after that I found out he never even had a dog. He's no longer in the band."

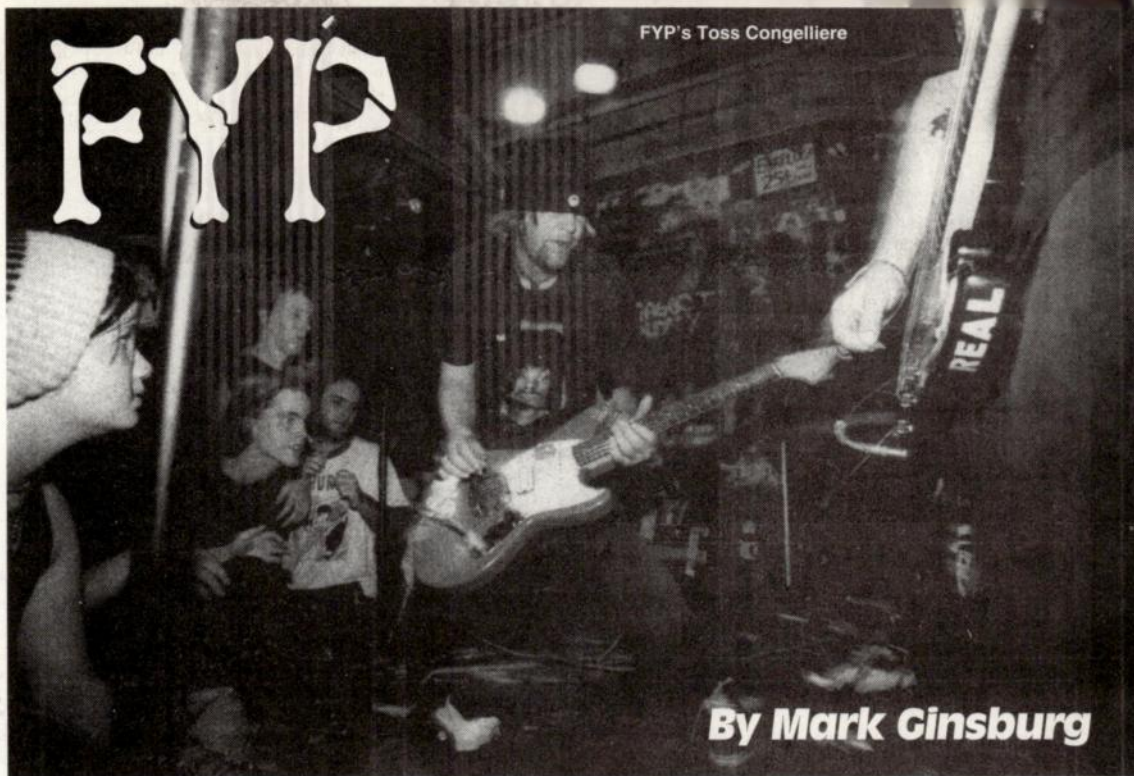
Locked up in this story is the very attitude, sound and flavor of FYP. Congelliere's snotty, off-key vocals and ripping guitar lines, combined with the manic drumming of Sean Cole and the thrumming bass of Joe Ciauri come together on FYP's latest release, *My Man Grumpy*, to produce one of the most unique punk records of the year. Keeping the tracks short, tight and weird, these boys are masters at making their point in a little over a minute.

When asked about the band's short song approach, Congelliere's reply is typically blasé.

"I've never thought about it, really," he says. "The Quincy Punx mega hit 'Die' ranks in at a total of one second, while the Melvins song 'Boris' is about 12 minutes, give or take five. I freaking named my cat 'Boris' 'cause of that. And although I like the Quincy Punx song equally, I would never name my cat 'Die.'"

Congelliere's stream of consciousness replies to questions play a lot like his lyrics. In songs such as "Undumb," "I'm Not an Elephant, I'm a Buffoon" and "Slitwrists," ideas chase each other around until one of them breaks free of the pack and finishes the thought. If there is any kind of unifying theme to the 18 tracks on *My Man Grumpy*, it is one of contempt for academia, for people who hold power not because they are deserving, but because they have a degree.

"Well, the first umpteen releases had a super annoying 'I Hate School' concept," he says, dismissing the notion that *Grumpy* has any real theme. "The first demo tape I made was basically just to throw in my teachers' desks. What I was trying to accomplish no one knows."



FYP's Toss Congelliere

By Mark Ginsburg

Congelliere has much more definite feelings about the sad state of the music scene, both in his local area and nationally.

"This whole frat-boy ska shit should just do what's inevitable right now and die," he grumbles. "I know it's like, six months early, but fuck."

He doesn't let it get to him, however. No

matter what anyone else is doing, Congelliere makes it clear FYP will go on making its unique brand of punk noise.

"I don't want to change anything," he says. "All the punks can go and live in their romper room for all I care. But just remember," he adds slyly, "when you call us sell-outs, we actually like it."



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RECORDS

continued from page 23

SHUTDOWN

Against All Odds [Victory]

Fast, punk-influenced hardcore reigns supreme on Shutdown's Victory debut. This Brooklyn-based breed is young, but its talent makes the band seem like a group of seasoned veterans. The band's four-year history also adds to its chemistry and sound. Produced by the one-and-only party animal, Jimmy Gestapo (of Murphy's Law fame), and featuring notables like Craig Settari (Sick Of It All) and Mike Scondotto (Inhuman) as backing vocal choirboys in the Shutdown Crew, the album represents the new breed of hardcore fostered by the old school. Robust sing-alongs abound, and the band's youth is manifested in the overall energy of its sound. The stellar, incessant rhythmic percussion and the clear, high vocals on "Decide," "Wraparound," "United" and the Raybeez tribute, "We Won't Forget," stand out as reminiscent of classic hardcore injected with youth and skill.

—Amy Sciarretto

SPRUNG MONKEY

Mr. Funny Face [Hollywood]

"Get 'Em Outta Here," the opening track on *Mr. Funny Face*, is the perfect introduction to this band, and is unquestionably the first single. The beauty here is this isn't the only really good tune on the album. Teetering atop the dangerous rope of rock and rap, Sprung Monkey combines styles well and plays them to its advantage. Good production and a super-tight band help drive the disc, and the creative writing style keeps the album fresh through tedious territory for others in this genre. With a tendency toward Faith No More and Fishbone, Sprung Monkey is a lush jungle of ideas and production value, blended with heavy guitar and punchy drums. The vocals are full of melody, keeping the album floating way above water. There are a handful of tracks deserving of radio play, but Sprung Monkey stays far clear of the cookie-cutter mentality often accompanying such an accomplishment. This isn't the next *Exile On Mainstreet*, but it's damn good.

—André Calilhanna

SUBARACHNOID SPACE

Almost Invisible [Relapse]

It's always a bit difficult to really define this sort of ambient, experimental type of recording. Strange noises—in this case created by squeals and feedback from guitar over bass and drums—create moods rather than express emotions. *Almost Invisible* is a bit different. This ethereal landscape is

created by a mostly traditional arrangement of instruments. Otherwise, it's hard to classify the compositions as "songs." There are solos, in the traditional sense of the word, there are definitive parts to the songs and the tones are created and woven together in interesting ways. But six lengthy compositions are a little more than necessary, and it's hard to imagine anyone listening to this to the exclusion of everything else. In a club on ecstasy, with pulsing lights and sweaty bodies, maybe. At home folding laundry? Probably not.

—André Calilhanna

SCOTT THOMAS BAND

California [Elektra]

California reincarnates the sound of '70s West Coast rock, similar to the Eagles. Twangy guitar hooks and Tom Petty-style lyrics make for good college radio ingredients. Scott Thomas is aided in the production of *California* by some notable friends. Dave Campbell, who worked on several Eagles' albums, lends Thomas a hand with a 16-piece string section on "Sad Girl." Benmont Trench of Tom Petty's Heartbreakers sits in on piano, the Wallflowers' Rami Jaffe contributes on a Hammond B3 organ and Chris Stills (son of Stephen) chimes in on harmony vocals and guitar. The Scott Thomas Band expands beyond laid-back folk arrangements with a chaotic pace and a coherent delivery. Although not as catchy as the Eagles' "One of these Nights," the Scott Thomas Band paints a fresh picture of West Coast rock.

—Judd Handler

SCRAGGLY JANE

The Effects Of Mary Jane
[Box O' Rox]

At some point (it must have been around 1990) everyone forgot something about rock n' roll. It's not really supposed to be serious and depressing, it's supposed to be fun, shocking and a little bit dangerous. Scraggly Jane embodies this ideal in rock. Nothing here gets too deep, and it's just fine. Depth is a necessity in swimming pools, not music. The basic sound? Jeez, pick any of those good old rockin' bands, like .38 Special, Whitesnake or Cinderella. Oh sure, everyone's laughing now, but who will be laughing when this stuff gets popular again? Scraggly Jane, that's who.

—Stuart Pitt

THE URGE

Master Of Styles [Immortal/Epic]

Unashamedly blending hip-hop, hard rock, ska, and reggae, The Urge spends most of *Master Of Styles* trying to establish itself. Rock band with ska elements? Hip hop band with hard rock? Pop reggae with horns?

Sometimes the fusion of styles is potent, and The Urge seems capable of dancing between genres at will. At others, The Urge struggles to make the songs work through the chosen style. Displaying the rare ability to sing and rap well, Steve Ewing is the easy target when things are either going well or badly, but the real problem is the schizophrenic writing. The band generally manages to change gears easily, and on the opening tunes, "If I Were You" and "Straight To Hell," all cylinders are firing. But the next two songs lead into shaky territory, and the rest of the disc is a roller coaster between coherent material and strained delivery.

—André Calilhanna

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Live At Raji's Vol. 1 [T.O.N.]

Live music, baby. Oh yeah. Feedback, microphone squeals and the sweaty intensity of bands doing what they do best: performing in front of an audience. *Live At Raji's* was recorded totally live between 1987 and 1990 at the famous Hollywood club without a single overdub. Everything is here, from Bulldozer's opening semi-rockabilly track, "One More Drop," to Thelonicus Monster's funk-in' "Try." This is real, raw music, asking no quarter and giving none.

—Erik Caplan

VARIOUS ARTISTS

We Will Fall [Royalty]

Anyone who can write lyrics like, "I'm a streetwalkin' cheetah with a hide full of napalm," deserves a tribute album. Yes, it's the Iggy Pop tribute album, and it's got all the favorites. Joey Ramone does "1969," The Misfits bash the crap out of "I Got A Right" and Nada Surf surprises with a truly righteous version of "Sick Of You." Iggy basically rules, and it would have been really simple for this album to have been made with just about any bands. This notwithstanding, the bands here make the whole thing happen with style and intensity.

—Erik Caplan

VITREOUS HUMOR

Posthumous [Crunk!]

Opening *Posthumous* with the instrumental, meandering "My Midget" probably wasn't the best thing Vitreous Humor could have done, but as early as the second tune, the real band arrives. Combining equal parts R.E.M., Smashing Pumpkins, Urge Overkill and Nirvana, Vitreous Humor is something of an alternative rock retrospective on one CD. None of it is as good as the artists this band aspires toward, but something is definitely happening here. The noisy parts begin to lose focus as the album progresses,

though, and the limited vocal ideas don't carry the album. But in the scheme of things, *Posthumous* exhibits a personality defining the band, despite its obvious origins.

—André Calilhanna

PETE WEISS AND THE ROCK BAND

Pete Weiss and the Rock Band
[Reverse Curve]

Pete Weiss and the Rock Band borrows from '80s pop, surf, funk, '70s rock and most heavily from the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion on this extensive self-titled recording. With song titles like "What Key is this Ridiculous Song In?" "Sea of Putrid Humanity," "Give Me Love (So I Can Kill)" and "Breakfast in a Shallow Grave," Weiss asks his listeners not to take him or his Rock Band too seriously. Despite an obvious dexterity amid various genres, the band never seems to be much more than derivative.

While a few songs (most notably "Mary Baker Eddy") have an earnest quality, mostly everything here sounds like an extended inside joke. Even the post-modern, self-conscious pastiche gets old after awhile, and humor needs more to ride on than imitation.

—Elisa Ludwig

WESTON

Music From the Soundtrack Matinee
[Go-Kart]

Packed tightly with power-pop riffs and catchy lyrics, Weston's latest release is an unassuming romp poking fun at movies, heartbreaks and, most of all, indie rock conventions. This gang of four uses every trick in the book to lull listeners into head-bopping and toe-tapping fits of fun and games. Harmonies abound on this 11-track effort, dangling next to edgy guitars enveloped in powerful drumming. If there is hope for indie rock at all, it lies within the cute yet talented chords of young and energetic bands like Weston.

—Cynthia Gentile

O.Z. WILLIS

No More Anything [Riviere]

A hard rock debut with pungent industrial overtones, O.Z. Willis speaks fluent Nine Inch Nails, particularly on tracks, "I Love To Hate You" and "Whose Turn." The former is not a song about a jilted girlfriend, instead a collective wake-up call illustrating how desensitized society have become to everything around it. The vocals scream angst at every turn while the music keeps up accordingly. Drastic time changes throughout serve as conduits rather than showy interruptions to song bridges. Littered with mild to abrasive profanity, O.Z. Willis has a lot to say.

—Lorraine Gennaro

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CAUGHT LIVE

STARSEED SPEED/ ZERO FREQUENCY/ DOG FASHION DISCO

The 8 x 10 Club, Baltimore,
May 9

By Mark Flatt

The show started with local favorites Dog Fashion Disco. Featuring six members, the band tolerated the cramped conditions of the 8 x 10's miniature stage by putting on an ear-ringing, chest-pounding show. As people slowly made their way into the room, lead vocalist Todd Smith demonstrated his diversity by singing every style from punk to pop. The added feature of a scantily clad dancer, whose wardrobe became more revealing as the band progressed through its set, kept the mostly male audience's attention very well. The sheer intensity of Smith's vocal style, coupled with guitarist Greg Combs' heavy riffs, didn't turn anyone away, either. The brass section looked bored during some of the heavier metal-oriented songs, but trumpet player Kristen Ensminger could be seen lip-synching every word. The crowd cheered as Dog Fashion Disco finished its set as strong as it began.

Although the following act lacked the diversity of DFD, Zero Frequency showed it was no stranger to turning an almost empty room into a panic-zone. Ray Dobson showed he has what it takes to deliver to a much larger crowd. There were more than a few banging their heads during this band's set. Angry and heavy enough to make one's back hurt, guitarist Jeff Martin gave the crowd enough riffs and licks to guarantee a few more fans for its next show.

As Starseed Speed began its funk, metal and hip-hop influenced set there was one thing missing. The sampler and the guy who ran it. The band didn't suffer from this setback, but it seemed more focused on playing live music. Infectious grooves were provided by bassist Cord Neal and guitarist P.D., while vocalist Anthony Carerra belted out some of the band's more popular tunes like "Filter" and "Sun." Carerra invited people to come up to the stage and rap during the break-beat of a song. After five entries were heard by the crowd, the winner was chosen, and the band finished the rest of the song. Former Child's Play drummer John Allen kicked his pots and pans all night long with unmatched intensity.

BJORK

The Capital Ballroom,
Washington, D.C., May 16

By Cynthia Gentle

Like an angel fallen to earth, Icelandic muse Bjork took the stage at the Capital Ballroom to a sold-out crowd of adoring fans. Playing only a handful of shows in the states, Bjork was flanked by DJ Mark

Bell on one side and an eight-piece string orchestra on the other. This type of odd juxtaposition is quite normal for the ice princess.

Touring in support of her latest release, *Homogenic*, Bjork played a set chock-full of abrasive jungle-esque beats butted against gentle lullabies. The five-foot-tall vixen proved time and again her soaring and angular voice is not a studio effect. Opening the show with "Headphones," she flustered the crowd with her passion and grace. Jumping from a pounding rendition of her second single from *Homogenic*, "Joga," to an Icelandic version of Post's "You've Been Flirting Again," she was able to capture each nuance of style without sacrificing a hint of spontaneity. The set

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also included updated versions of "Venus as a Boy," "Come To Me" and "Human Behavior" from 1993's Debut, as well as the disturbing "Hyperballad" and "Isobel." Seeing Bjork live immediately illuminates the inventive and engaging nature of electronica, as well as aspects of the style invariably distancing avid music lovers. Although her voice is a spectacle, it is easy to lose behind layers of drum n' bass or drowning overdubs. However, Bjork's recent set proved this balance can be successfully found and exploited.

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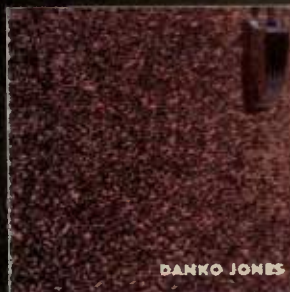
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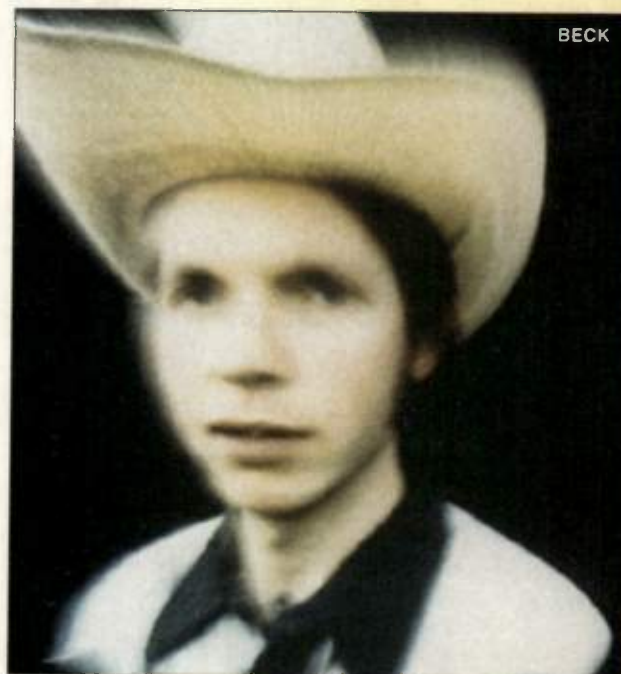
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JUST BE THERE



BECK

BECK

Beck has been receiving mad hype for his experimental fusion of musical styles since he broke on the scene in '94. His ever-catchy single, "Loser," caught on to radio without any promotion. The song subsequently made *Mellow Gold* a huge success. Beck also released two indie releases, "Stereopathic Soulmanure," an anthology of his early recordings, on the Flipside label and "One Foot in the Grave" on K Records, both in '94. In '96 he captivated an even broader fan base with his highly acclaimed *Odelay*, produced by the Dust Brothers. This record dropped huge commercial appeal with tracks like "Where It's At," "Devil's Haircut" and "New Pollution." Beck returns to the states this summer in the following cities:

June 1, Blossom Music Center, Cuyahoga Falls, OH
June 2, Pine Knob Music Theatre, Clarkston, MI
June 5, Foxboro Stadium, Foxboro, MA
June 6, Performing Arts Center, Saratoga Springs, NY



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June 7, Giants Stadium, East Rutherford, NJ
 June 9, Darien Lake P.A.C., Darien Center, NY
 June 10, Star Lake Amphitheatre, Burgettstown, PA
 June 11, Jones Beach Amphitheatre, Wantagh, NY
 June 13, RFK Stadium, Washington, DC



LIMP BIZKIT

Hailing from Jacksonville, Fla., Limp Bizkit definitely is one of the main attractions at this summer's Ozzfest. The band's debut, *Three Dollar Bill, Y'all*, has created a huge circle of fans in only a brief amount of time. It probably didn't hurt the band's career when lead vocalist, Fred Durst, became good friends with Korn's bassist, Fieldy, and guitarist, Head, early on in it's career. This release combines aggressive attitude, intense lyrics and grooves to ultimately redefine the whole hardcore meets and hip-hop genre.

Limp Bizkit dates:

June 16, Five Points Music Hall, Birmingham, AL
 June 17, Malibu Beach Club, Shreveport, LA
 June 19, House of Blues, New Orleans, LA
 June 20, New Daisy Theatre, Memphis, TN
 June 21, Brewery, Louisville, KY
 June 22, Exhibition Hall, Toledo, OH
 June 26, Riverside Park, Springfield, MA
 June 27, State Theatre, Portland, ME
 June 28, Lost Horizon, Syracuse, NY
 July 3, P.N.C. Bank Arts Center, Holmdel, NJ
 July 5, P.N.C. Bank Arts Center, Holmdel, NJ
 July 7, Great Woods Center, Mansfield, MA
 July 11, Blockbuster - Sony E Center, Camden, NJ
 July 12, Star Lake Amphitheatre, Burgettstown, PA
 July 14, Rubber Bowl, Akron, OH
 July 16, Deer Creek Music Center, Noblesville, IN
 July 18, Float Rite Park Amphitheatre, Somerset, WI
 July 19, Alpine Valley Music Theater, East Troy, WI
 July 21, Polaris Amphitheater, Columbus, OH
 July 23, Pine Knob Music Theatre, Clarkston, MI
 July 25, Riverport Amphitheatre, Maryland Hgts., MO
 July 26, Sandstone Amphitheatre, Bonner Springs, KS

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uptalk



with Bridget & Fontaine

Bridget and Fontaine had the pleasure last month of visiting Frank Black and the Catholics at the Trocadero in Philadelphia. Black is the former frontman of The Pixies, the preeminent alternative

rock band of the late '80s. Lots of older, evidently Pixies-era fans were present, while a few nubile teenage boys tried to mosh in the mostly open space of the floor.

B: I have two words for Frank Black: Kim Deal.

F: I'd have to agree. He's too much man. He needs a feminine touch.

B: Yeah, Jenny Craig's feminine touch.

F: I kind of like that he has an unconventional body type for rock n' roll. My problem is the polyester suits. Not flattering.

B: He is kinda cute in that huggable kind of way.

F: He's more than cute, he's a powerhouse. He's got a big sound.

B: His set was nothing if not energetic. He really shocked me by playing "Wave of Mutilation" and "The Holiday Song."

F: He broke the unspoken pretentious rule where solo artists won't stoop to play their old band's stuff.

B: Which is kind of unfortunate, considering the original band's stuff is usually a lot better than solo efforts.

F: Case in point: Frank Black. Those Catholics better start praying for him.

B: It had the makings of a real rock n' roll show with energy and all that. It just didn't measure up.

F: He did have some licks, the likes of which I haven't seen since I went to see Metallica in ninth grade.

B: First of all, I saw Metallica last year. Don't be dissing Metallica. But second of all, even if there were some memorable moments, they were flanked by mediocrity.

F: Nice alliteration.

B: Thank you. Thank you very much.

F: In any event, he seems like a nice guy, just a little misguided.

B: To me it's simple. It's just not the Pixies. Considering they were a band who kept alternative alternative, his move into the mainstream makes it even more disappointing.

F: There's some polluted waters in that there main stream. Good thing his suit is wash and wear.

B&F Review Frank Black

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12th-Tommys
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13th-Reading Riverfest
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14th-Lancaster Intoto Arts Fest
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27th-Y-102 Rockin' Summer '98
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DEMOS

By Alan Pinkerton

BROKEN JONES

Somebody needs to inform Bob Mould of Broken Jones. Then maybe he'd get off his ass and start making good albums again. Broken Jones picks up the thread Mr. Mould dropped after the first Sugar album and improves upon it. Serious power pop with hooky melodies and choruses. It's kind of a melancholic sound, but catchy enough to keep from being depressing.
(610) 918-2591

CRASH

The opening noisy chords of this demo bely its harmonized vocals and hypnotic grooves. This tape really suffers from a bad mix; the aforementioned vocals are tough to discern over the guitar and drums. All told, this dredges up memories of a slowed-down Smitherens. Nice energy without the snottiness of punk or the hyper-drama of rock.
(732) 514-0979

MARTIN HIGGINS

Hooray for little Marty Higgins and his four-track recorder. He's doing a good job all by himself. While he certainly deserves some respect for doing this himself, he could probably use some outside help with his songwriting. The whole thing comes off like the lighter side of Poison, y'know, "Every Rose Has It's Thorn." Not a cheery memory for anyone, and certainly not worth a reshoot.
(215) 661-8677

HOIST

Oh, what a tough guy. Guess what, hero? You gotta sing in tune to pull this shit off convincingly. No matter how hard-assed Hoist wants to sound, there's no getting around the strained, phony angered vocals. James Hetfield is laughing at this guy.
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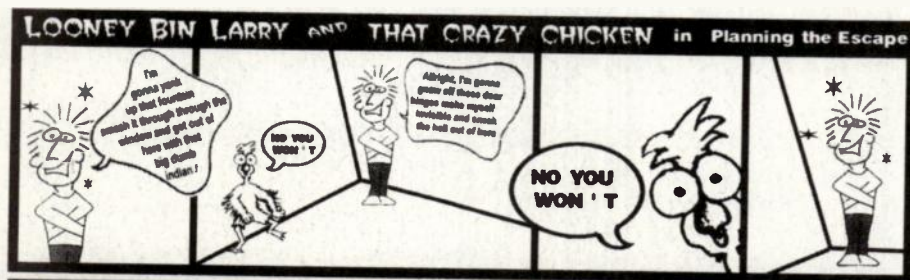
PINK

OK, first things first. There is no need to put 25 songs on a demo tape. Secondly, about 20 of these songs could be scrapped, as they sound like only parts of musical ideas crammed together without much of a thought as to how the whole thing might sound. It's sort of a mess, to say the least. The good news for Pink is, with this level of output, the band could easily afford to start over with a blank slate.

SLACKS

If some psychedelic dope rock band went country, the result would be Slacks. Very nicely done, boys. Quite odd combinations happening here; banjos duel with saxaphones and guitars in an instrumentally melodic frenzy. The funny part is it all works, and nothing sounds forced or steps on anything else.

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SQUARE DEAL

It hurts to do this, but here goes. This sucks. Really badly. It's sort of Ska, but not quite. It's not really anything fully describable. The sad part is this band sounds young and seems to be having fun, but nothing here works well at all. The Drums lose time all over the place, the horns go sour constantly and the vocals are just awful. This band was not ready to record when it did this, and it shows.

(609) 702-1987

SUPERMARKET

Wow, Morrissey sounds humble and unpretentious compared to this guy. The vocalist has a rich, fruity voice, but frankly, sounds funny. It's hard to listen past the goofy vocals, but whenever this is possible, one is confronted by truly cheesy sampled horns and the like. Overdramatic and silly. If The Clash got lost in this Supermarket, the band would have done show tunes instead of punk rock. Yeeesh.

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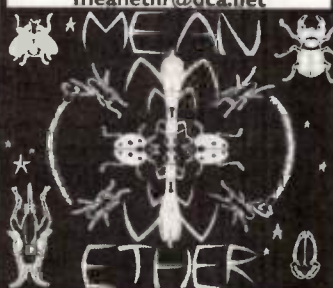
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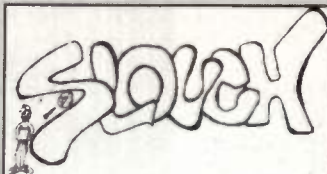
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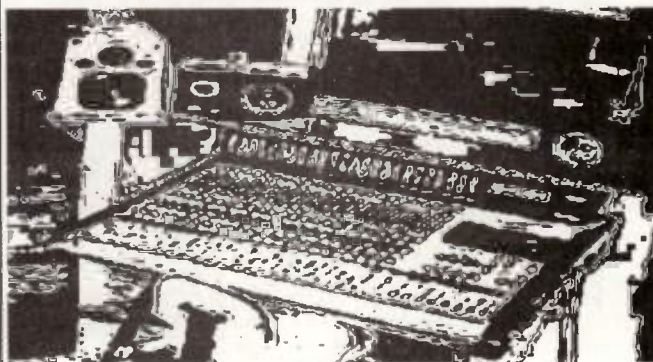
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Musicians Wanted

Drummer seeks something crazy: Infl.: Faith No More, Crisis, Spazz, Frank Zappa, Servotron, Devo, U2, GWAR. (215) 772-1232

Bassist seeks band. Infl.: Brit Invasion, Rockabilly, '70s glam, NY/Detroit punk. No top 40. Rob, (609) 858-4877

Drummer/bassist needed to help form a noise-pop outfit. Under 25. Male or Female. Infl.: Flaming Lips, Half-Japanese, Luna, Sonic Youth. Geoff, (609) 795-4786

Lead guitarist seeks original rock band. Infl.: Tonic, Arc Angels, Black Crowns. Must be serious and career minded. Paul, (215) 361-2044

Futuristic Philly-based cyberpunk band seeks guitarist/keyboardsist/sampler. Transportation and equipment required. Steve Stevens look a plus. (888) 672-7047

In Mourning seeks keyboardist and violinist (M or F) to complete heavy/gothic band. Infl.: My Dying Bride, Type O Negative, Anathema, Sisters Of Mercy. (610) 789-4575

Bassist needed for established band. Transportation and equipment a must. Infl.: Kiss, Ozzy, Metallica, Megadeth. Pager, (215) 265-3507

Guitarist/singer/songwriter/percussionist seeking musicians in Valley Forge/West Chester area to jam and gig. Monty, (610) 644-5902

Dynamo seeks drummer to start playing live. Infl.: Beatles, Radiohead, Motown. Dave, (610) 454-0987

Guitarist seeks bassist, vocalist and drummer for prog punk/surf/garage/popabilly project. Have reh. space and gigs. Nick, (609) 332-0210

Drummer seeks band. Infl.: Apples In Stereo, Sebadoh, Pavement, Bettie Serveert, Sunny Day Real Estate. Have stage experience. Victor, (215) 334-6673

Original band seeks qualified musicians to play jamaican and R&B influenced traditional ska, rock steady and reggae. Harmony vocals a plus. Regular, paying gigs. (215) 482-2817

All-original, groove oriented, melodic, hard edged band. Serious only. Mike, (215) 633-8347

Singer needed. Female or Male for creative original band. Diverse influences, very unique. (215) 836-1936

Programmer/keyboardsist needed for signed band with national label deal. Some summer gigs, release and tour in fall. Must know and have current technology. (610) 594-8429

Bassist needed for Philly-based, original band. Great project w/CD. Tim, (215) 233-1952

Drummer seeks established working band. Infl.: Primus, old Chilli Peppers, Meters, Old Dirty Bastard. Serious only. Dan, (215) 468-4087

Musicians needed. Lead guitarist, male and female vocalist, keyboardist, bassist. Infl.: alternative, punk, new wave. Open to new ideas. John, (215) 384-3454

Female vocalist seeks band or piano player with material. Infl.: Ella Fitzgerald, Aretha Franklin, gospel and classical music. Joy, (215) 923-1661

Guitarist seeks heavy original band. Infl.: Tool, Deftones, Kings X. Brian, (215) 885-7161

Guitarist seeks drummer and bass player for

ska/punk band. Serious only with own transportation. Kevin, (609) 663-6022

Free guitar lessons or guitarist wanted for enthusiastic woman with hard rock and punk background for gigs. Pager, (215) 524-6295

Drummer needed for old school punk band. Infl.: Misfits, Ramones, Damned, GBH, etc. Bob, (215) 925-2310

Top 40 band seeks female vocalist and drummer for new collaboration. Paul, (215) 750-7188

Manager/booking agent needed for established punk rock band. Serious only. Tom, (610) 544-6031

Singer needed for hardcore/punk band. Must be serious and willing to tour. Dan, (610) 259-6410

Rhythm guitarist seeks original punk band. Infl.: Face to Face, MXPX, Blink 182. Serious only. Steve, (215) 698-2725

Female vocalist seeks original band. Infl.: Wallflowers, Sarah Mac Laughlin, Kimberly, (215) 969-6263

Drummer needed for established original alternative/hard rock band. Experienced, skilled and serious only. (215) 425-2730

Singer/bassist seeking thrash/death metal band to record and play out. Infl.: Sacred Reich, Exhorder, Slayer, Morbid Angel. Ed, (609) 310-0666

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Clutter

JK: So, what was the best day of your life, ever?

EC: The best day of my life ever... (sarcastically) The day I came to work for *Rockpile* magazine. Why, what was yours?

JK: The day Journey broke up. And the second was the day they stopped playing Billy Squier music on the radio.

EC: Dude, it looks as though your good days are coming to an end, because they're starting to play those things again.

JK: Yeah, you're right. They've been playing some really awful Billy Squier music on the radio lately, and I have no idea why.

EC: Stroke's the word.

JK: If there are two of the most unsavory bands ever in the history of music, it would be Billy Squier and Journey. Yeah, No. 1 would be Billy, because Journey had that guitar player, Neil Shon. He played with Santana.

EC: Oh yeah, Neil Shon.

JK: Yeah, he was good though, a quality professional.

EC: Journey actually came from the Santana band, and they just got Steve Perry. So you got to give them the musical thing, but it's just cheesy.

JK: A friend of mine was in California, and she was eating in

some restaurant, minding her own business, when she saw Steve Perry. He's there with like a couple of friends. So she politely says, "Hi." I don't think she even wanted to say, "Hi." And he basically forced his autograph on her. She didn't even want it. He's like, "Here ya go, here's my autograph." She's trying to be nice by taking it. But, who the hell wants that? I would've just paid for my food and left if I was sitting in the same restaurant with him.

EC: I think there's something deeper to this hatred of Journey than you're letting on.

JK: Nah.

EC: I mean what do you just think they suck or...

JK: They basically tried to destroy rock and roll.

EC: They came pretty close. But, at the same time, there are a lot of people who really liked Journey. Otherwise, they wouldn't have went anywhere. We're talking about world tours. I mean,

"Don't Stop Believing." There had to be something about them. They just didn't turn you on.

JK: Well, did you like Journey?

EC: No.

JK: Why didn't you like Journey?

EC: I just thought they were really lousy. I thought Steve Perry's voice was stupid. I hate synthesizers.

JK: I saw them open for the Stones and it was just awful. They sounded just like their records. They shoulda just mic'd up a turntable, or something.

EC: So, it was just nose and lips on that tour.



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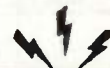
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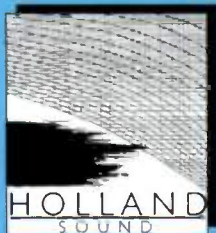
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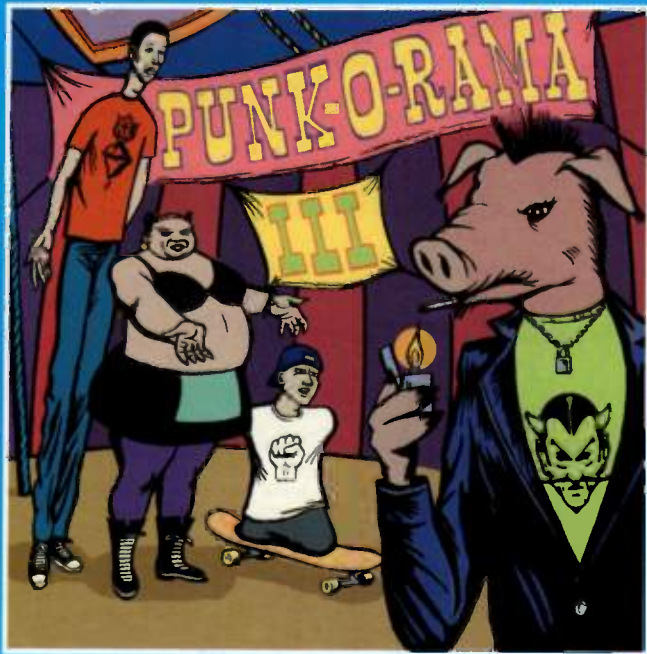
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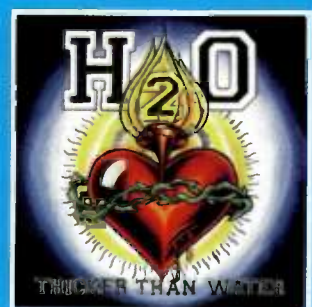
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