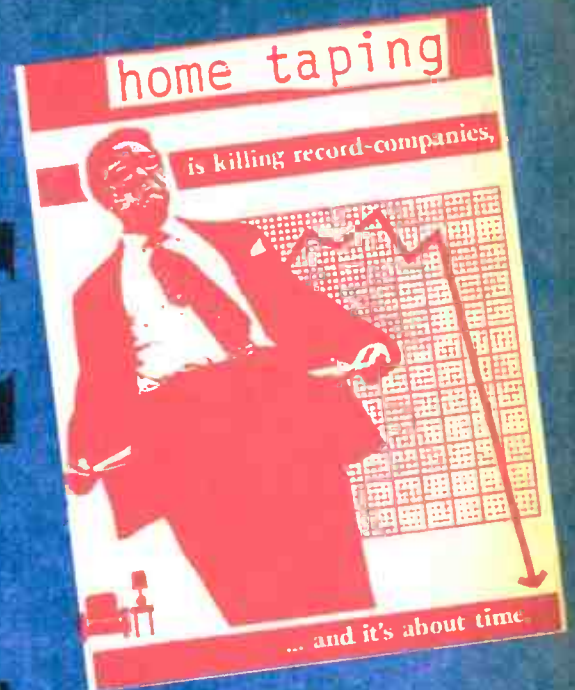


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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INDEPENDENT MUSIC
ISSUE NO. 6 JAN/FEB 1987

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7			CLEAN	1	0
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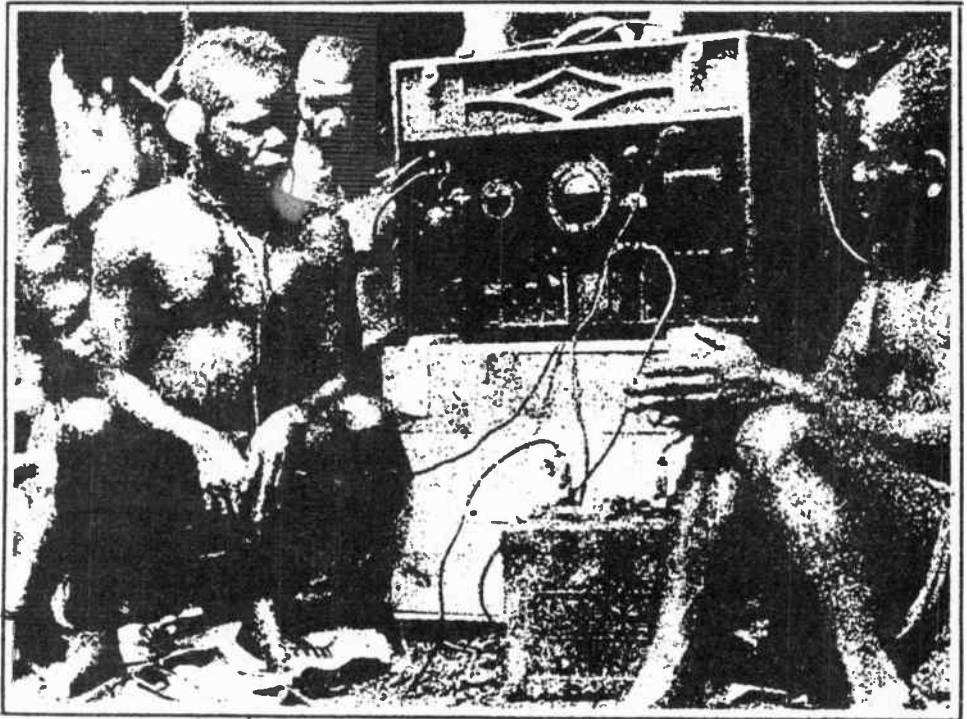
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SPECIAL THANKS to those contributors and reviewers who make **SOUND CHOICE** and the Audio Evolution Network happen.



Yusef Allan/The Associated Press

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CREEPIN CHARLIE

AND

WEED B. GONE

WE LEFT OUR HEROES DESCENDED FROM HELIOS CREED WITH THEIR MAGICAL DISCS...

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HA! LOOKIT OL DUNGHEAP! HES DISSOLVIN! ACK! MY OOGA'S MUSTA ATTRACTED DESE FLIPPERS! DEY'RE CIRCLIN!



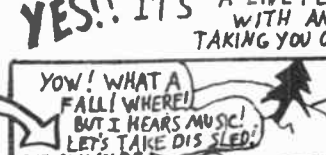
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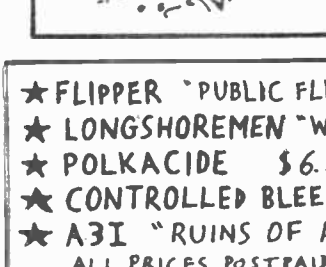
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State of the Network



STREET SCENE--San Luis Obispo, California

The Audio Evolution Network continues to grow and the production of Sound Choice magazine, the network's most visible project, has been fine tuned for maximum efficiency. Under the excellent guidance of Jeff, who we are paying a very modest "consulting fee", we have finally been able to implement the system improvements the staff has been designing in their minds after being subjected to two years of chronic disorganization. We knew better, we just didn't have time to start this thing up and work on the physicalities and mechanics of our operation at the same time.

Hence, during the past couple months the staff has spent weeks building shelves and cubbyholes, purging files, collecting bad debts, researching computer systems and doing whatever else we can to unbury ourselves from the tremendous amount of information that has been hurled upon us since we first solicited for subscribers back in 1984. Our system is in the process of being streamlined to high efficiency that will allow us to continue serving AEN members in a very personal, amiable, and down-to-earth manner.

Gratitude and sincere appreciation swell through my heart everytime an address label goes through my hands with the name of one of our adventurous and trusting charter subscribers. It is the subscribers that are at the heart of this magazine, forming the base for which everything else will grow out of. Everyday since we began Sound Choice has taught me, through letters, phone calls, records and tapes, that Sound Choice has one of the most astounding group of subscribers of any music oriented publication I know of.

I am continually astounded by the knowledge, concern and most of all, the

active participatory role that Sound Choice subscribers contribute to important evolutionary tasks, both within and beyond the music scene. Our subscribers perfectly demonstrate the truth of the adage, "Quality is more important than quantity." Everyday, because of my involvement with the Audio Evolution Network, I learn things that either blow my mind, give me a smile, or confirm provocative speculations.

I think I learn a lot because I am heavily involved with A.E.N. How much any of us learn from A.E.N. will be determined by how much one actively gets involved in sharing and absorbing information and inspiration

with others who wield musical instruments, recording and playback equipment, microprocessors, sticks, stones, sweat and blood, hoping to make the world a little better.

The world seems to want and need Sound Choice and A.E.N. The recent half page recommendation in the most recent Whole Earth Catalog, reconfirmed what I wanted to believe: that Sound Choice is an important and one-of-a-kind magazine worthy of international support. I have described

(Continued on Page 77)



LIVE SKULL

A NYC institution that's tired of not getting invited to parties

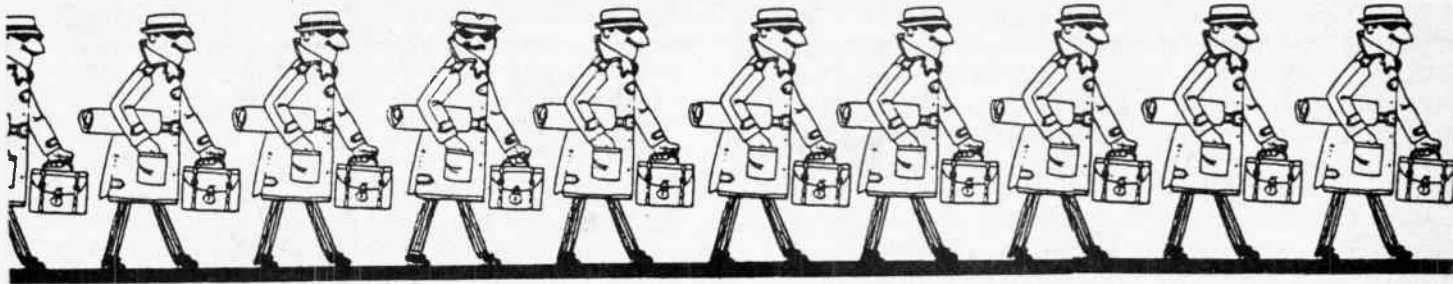
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Correspondence

Sound Choice is unprincipled

Dear Sound Choice,

I opened the new Sound Choice with some shock on the reprint of our commissioned article on U.K. rock press by Josef Vlcek. Do you normally behave in this unprincipled way? It's plain piracy and bad manners to boot--we're supposed to be on the same team! First, you should have asked us (we hold the copyright) as a courtesy, at least. Second, you should PAY Josef V. (In E. Europe dollars are worth ten times their weight in gold.)

Mainly I'm sorry you just didn't ask us at least--I went to some trouble to translate and work on that article with J.V. Although the plug for the quarterly is useful, the cost is a bit morally high. Anyway, I propose you: 1) send a copy to Josef (or us to forward); 2) offer to pay him dammit, for his work. I think we owe you \$60, or so. I suggest we give it to Josef instead of you, how about that.

Otherwise, I still enjoy your paper and of course we try and get people to buy it. But next time, do ask.

Chris Cutler, Recommended/Re Rec

Editor defends himself

Dear Chris:

I'm shocked that I "shocked" you by reprinting the article written by Josef Vlcek. I thought you would be thanking me instead. I had no idea you or Josef wanted to retain sole ownership rights to the piece. I didn't see anything in your fine publication that talked about permission to reprint. I figured we were "on the same team" and just like at Sound Choice, where we employ no copyright on the magazine, reprinting was welcome. I would have preferred to mention to you that we were going to reprint it, but because of the time element involved with writing you and the cost of overseas phone calls, I was not able to and still get the piece typeset in time.

That you suggest I am "unprincipled" for doing this indicates that we hold DIFFERENT principles. Reprint anything you wish from Sound Choice. I am glad to share the information with anyone, even if I won't be earning quick cash for it. It is true that the information in Sound Choice is valuable, but I don't wish to OWN it. If someone else wants to take the headache of printing up the info and distributing it, they may, with my blessing.

When I reprinted from the *RE Quarterly* I did not harm you or your business. You will not sell less of your records because of this. In fact, I bet you will sell more because of it. If you feel the reprinting did cause you harm, I welcome you to explain how. What is this "morally high" price you had to pay because we reprinted the article? What do you mean?

And what about Josef? Has he asked you to represent him on this matter? What does he think? I certainly don't approve of your principles if you believe it is right to use Josef's name

to justify not paying the debt YOU owe Sound Choice--a debt you agreed to take on. If Josef feels I should pay him, let him contact me. Perhaps I can pay you to translate any letter he may wish to send me. But please understand that nobody has ever been paid to write for Sound Choice. (We would if we could.) That you should arbitrarily decide that I owe Josef \$60 is interesting. How much did you pay him to write it? Do you know of anyone else who is willing to pay to reprint it and if so, how much will they pay?

I think you should ask Josef what he thinks and whether he would have refused to share his thoughts with the thousands of people who read Sound Choice.

Certainly, I did not wish to create such a conflict. I honestly thought you would be glad that I reprinted the article and was very careful to credit the sources in a very complimentary manner and include a contact address.

To prevent further problems like this I think you should lay your cards on the table and print somewhere in your magazine that people must buy or otherwise negotiate permission to pass on the information you print (or else suffer the wrath of your pointed pen and risk being "Not recommended by Recommended.") I personally think it would be better for all of us on this "team" to not make such demands whenever possible. In the situation we are talking about, such ownership demands inhibits the free flow of information at a time when we should be doing everything we can to open up the channels of communication.

These days more and more progressive, independent publications are seeing the wisdom to "anti-copyright" the material they print in an effort to "get the word out" to as many people as possible. When a publication such as yours, which makes no mention of the desire to own or otherwise try to control their information, it seems implied that reprinting is allowed. Other than your recent letter, is there anything you have done to suggest otherwise?

In any case, I think that taking "hostage" of the money you owe us is not appropriate in this situation. It is clearly not legal, though for our purposes that is a moot point. More importantly, it is certainly not something I would do and it is not something I think you would want people to do to you.

Part of the reason I admired the *Recommended Quarterly* was because I thought you chose to not OWN the rights. Now I learn otherwise. I think this is very significant. I am not saying you are wrong. I am not in your shoes. I do not know what your strategy and goals are. I do not hold you morally wrong and I will continue to tell people about the fine work being done at Recommended and point people your way. But now I will do so with a better understanding of what kind of business you are and what kind you are not. I am glad to have this clarified. (Perhaps the Ron Sakolsky interview with you will further clarify things.)

I do hope that this unfortunate situation can be transformed into something useful. I think this brings up a very interesting

point that deserves more discussion among independent artists, publications, etc. I think that if certain forces are going to come together and truly work as a team to pull this world out of the muck it has sunk into, then these kind of things should be worked out. We do wish to compensate fine thinkers like Josef so that they can continue to find a niche in this world to think and pass on their thoughts. I will do what I can for Josef, but at this time money is one of my most limited resources. Apparently you are in a position where you can pay your writers. Thank the world for your blessings. I am in a position where I can only amplify the voice of those writers. If people wish to be paid for their writing, I will point them to you.

Please understand, I do not wish that this letter increases the conflict that has arisen. I sincerely hope we come to a consensus because that is the way we can work most effectively as a "team." I think it is time that all these various altruistic fringe organizations develop unity and understanding and eliminate all the infighting that so often distracts us from the more vital work.

Send me Josef's address and I will contact him about this matter.

I look forward to continued communication and understanding, and I will maintain an open mind on this subject.

Sincerely,
David Ciaffardini,
editor/publisher/janitor

In commonality, I trust

Dear Sound Choice,

Good Heavens! I didn't expect such a long and impassioned reply. Could you please send a copy of my letter to you. I need to put the two together to see if I was intemperate or stated my case too warmly. Then I'll try and reply in full to your letter. In the short term I'll forward to Josef. I'm sure he's too humble to make demands. For him, to be published is enough—but that is East Europe. I think we should not exploit that.

Also, you say (quel irony) that we are lucky to be able to afford to pay our contributors. Let me refer you (to) my first editorial (Re 0101)...it's not luck it's principle. We pay writers/musicians in the same way we pay printers and pressing plants. It is a COST. We raise the price of the records to do it. The public WILL pay a bit extra so that the workers are paid. It is odd to pay capitalistic worker (print, promotion, etc.) and not your own—that's OUR philosophy. It is not luck or high sales but principle: we add payment to cost before calculating cover cost. Still, you raise important issues I think, about copyright and ownership of intellectual property, as well as about payment for work, which I think could well be taken much further.

Please send that copy and you'll hear again from me. In basic commonality I trust,
Chris Cutler, Recommended Records

Radical Electronic Music

Dear David,

I would like to respond to some points raised by David Myers in his letter published in SC #5. As a composer who still wields a soldering iron from time to time, I feel that Mr. Myers misses the point on why one should bother to build for one's self and offer information to others. I agree with Myers that there isn't much point to try to duplicate the products of the well amortized electronic musical instrument industry, to build a MIDI thru box or a general purpose DDL. Unless one has a keen interest in the learning process of "reverse engineering," I concur that time is much better spent thinking about music than laying out a printed circuit board.

However, I feel that his statement that a Commodore 64 and a Casio

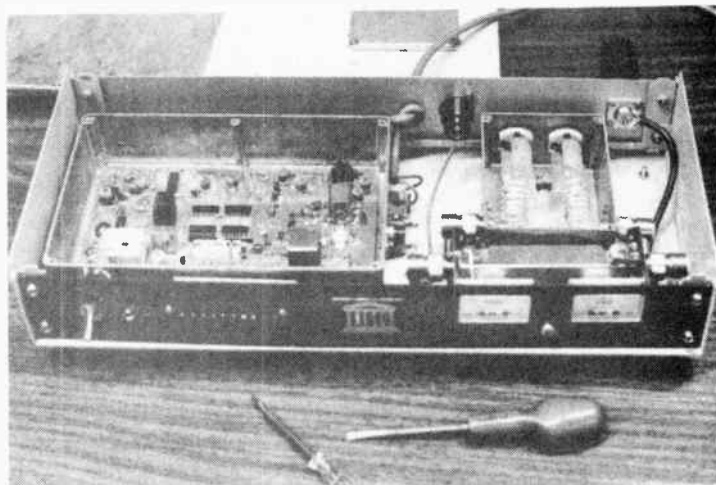
CZ-101 can be "every bit as weird" as home-made circuits is misleading. The intangible quality of "weirdness" aside, no CZ-101 or DX-7 will ever sound as rich and unique as a table full of David Tudor's circuits, or David Behrman's "home-made synthesizer," or Ron Kuivila's ultrasound systems, or Ralph Jones' "Star Networks"—to name but a few composers who have used electronic to push the concept of a musical instrument to its limits.

MIDI may be "where it's all going," as Myers asserts, but I can't agree that it's all that "great," or a reason to stop looking at alternatives. A DX7 is instantly recognizable in any recording, whether the voice is a factory preset or meticulously crafted by the creative underbelly—it's the nature of the instrument. Any commercially produced electronic instrument has its own characteristic blandness. They are aesthetically neutral, they contain no "compositional suggestions" of the sort that spring from home-made circuits.

Mr. Myers also glosses over the question of learning basic electronics for the purpose of modifying commercially available equipment. I think this skill is critical for anyone interested in using electronic instruments creatively. I do not believe that there's a single piece of gear in my collection, from a \$20 rock box to a \$2500 digital reverb that I haven't "hot wired" to improve specs, add extra functions or controls, or give it more character. Knowing enough electronics to do simple but significant modifications is essential to tweaking the industry's electronic voices.

Myers' comments were especially ironic in light of the issue they followed (SC #4) and the letter they were printed under (Alan Arkevein's "Remote Turn-on for Pirate Broadcasters"). When are Casio or Commodore going to provide us with an affordable clandestine radio transmitter? I bet you won't see it at the next NAMM show. Zeke Teflon's "Pirate Radio Manual" is the most radical, valuable document I have seen printed in any of the so-called "alternative" music publications. If this information were readily available and more people had the skills and interest to build and run pirate stations you wouldn't have to devote as much column space to ranting against the wishy-washy programming of presumably "independent" stations. I think radio itself could become, even in the heart of the video era, the most radical "musical instrument" of our time, but don't expect to buy it on 48th street.

Nicholas Collins, 17 Bleeker St., #2E, New York, NY 10012



David Ciaffardini photo

This is an FM radio transmitter that is available (though not easily available) in kit form for about \$500. It is about the size of a brief case, weighs six pounds, can be operated from a car battery and will broadcast 40 miles in any direction and meets F.C.C. requirements. I came across this during an international conference on Community Radio that was held in Vancouver last Summer. I'll be writing more about this very important conference and the radio kit in an upcoming issue. Stay tuned...David

Jello isn't God

Dear Dave:

I think you should stop making a god out of Jello Biafra. He's a nice guy fighting a worthy cause, but he can't sing or play, and he certainly can't write poetry!
Sincerely, Richard Singer

He's a conventional liberal

Dear Dave: I feel obliged to supplement the brief comment I made regarding Jello Biafra. Sure, there are good performers—especially in punk—who can't sing, play or write poetry, but Biafra lacks any other qualities what would make him exceptional. He does not have stage presence, wit or radical inclinations of say, Johnny Lydon/Rotten. In fact, Biafra's main tactic is to blandly scream out snippets of a very conventional liberal philosophy. It's a philosophy with which I agree in many respects, but I wouldn't call Biafra a great rock 'n' roll artist for that reason alone. As of his habit of diving into the crowd, do you really think that's unique? I'd say one out of every three punk performers has done that at one time or another. I first saw it happen at Philly's Hot Club in 1978, when Lux Interior of the then-thrilling Cramps threw himself head-first into a dense, extremely rowdy crowd. I don't know if he got as many bruises as Biafra probably gets, but he was man-handled enough, and he nearly drowned in beer spray.

Anyway, I do hope that Biafra wins this case and gets a lot of publicity out of it, too. As I've said, he's a nice guy, and his court case is crucial. But as for buying his new album.... Well, I've got better things to do with my unemployment check.

Sincerely,

Richard Singer, 489 16th St., Brooklyn, NY 11215, USA



David Clumpecki photo

Iggy vs. Jello

Well David,

Here's another letter to the editor, plus documentation (you've GOT to read the Lester Bangs article.) I'm surprised that you didn't know the Stooges' history better and that you speak your ignorance in such authoritative tones. If Jello had truly taken the Iggy routine a step further, he (Jello) would be dead. You seem to be replacing the lie of a manageable Armageddon with the lie of a socially constructive Armageddon. I've only heard the DKs on other people's record players. I haven't heard the new one yet (I promise I will), but I know when I'm bored. The DK lyrics you printed didn't say anything to ME that I didn't already know. Jello hides his poetics behind vague politics. Iggy's lyrics were about me. They were about himself. The Jello lyrics you printed and the shows you describe aren't about me--or you--or Jello. They are directed at "them"--that is, members of the audience. The show (or your interpretation of it) has a didactic purpose. Which is OK, but it's never going to mean anything to me (unless your description is wrong.) The one Stooges show I saw was disturbing. As my friend said when we left, "That was more self-destructive than if he'd actually rolled around on broken glass." We were expecting a powerful stage persona; instead we got Iggy lolling around, playing a fool, undercutting himself, etc. (The one "Iggy Pop" show I saw years later was a bore.)

I hope the mag keeps going (are you in trouble? One of your letter responses had a vague possible suggestion of that). You've got soul. Frank Kogan

P.S. I'm writing a book! "RAW POWER: The Story of Punk Rock and It's Roots In Everyday Life." It's not trying to be all-inclusive--it's more like a bunch of suggestions/questions/ideas. If you've got the time, would you send me a list of five or ten bands in the '80s that really matter to you. (And "punk" is anything you want it to be.)

And here is Frank's "official" letter to the editor:

Dear David,

You're wrong about the Stooges. Iggy REGULARLY threw himself into the audience; no bouncers protected him. I've enclosed eyewitness accounts to prove it. Anyway, I know because I saw it (Academy of Music, New York, December 31, 1973). I saw him dive off a high stage. People did not catch him. They jumped out of the way, and he bashed himself. He dove into the photographers' pit. The photographers jumped out of the way. The Stooges were an opening act so the bulk of the audience were not fans. Nor were they prepared. Nor were they happy. When Iggy climbed into the seats the guy behind me kept yelling "Come back here Iggy and I'll kill you." Accounts of other shows have Iggy being beaten by bikers, Iggy dragging audience members unwillingly onto stage, etc.

When the Stooges existed, Iggy's act was unprecedented. There was no set response; the audience did not know how to act; they did not protect the performer or cushion his fall. So Iggy wrote the book on human uncertainty.

This letter is off the point of your Dead Kennedys article. I just want people to get the history right. Must you deny the past to appreciate the present?

Frank Kogan

Marguerite Duras and the Art of Suffering



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Questions ethics, legality

Dear Sound Choice,

I just heard through a reliable source that the music director for our local radio station, WCVT, Towson, MD., also works as an "intern" for I.R.S./M.C.A. He also gets jobs DJ-ing at local clubs and uses the station to advertise his gigs. Is this wrong?

Jerry Hermann

Playlists don't mean shhhhhh....

Dear Dave,

A number of DJ's and staff here at our radio station have been following the debate on the "commercialization" of college radio. We've posted both your articles and Ann Clark's recent commentary in ROCKPOOL (29AUG86) in a listening room to stimulate discussion. After all, shouldn't DJ's be aware of the possibility that your station's Music Director or Program Director is selling the station down the river? And for a few copies of the new Smiths album, no less!

Somehow it didn't ring true for a lot of people at our station because the MD or PD are always encouraging people to play more alternative labels, to listen and seek out more artists, and to avoid playing the same records every week. Yet, when the monthly playlists came out, there it was, a "major label" artist sitting at El Numero Uno. Well, clearly sensing a grand conspiracy, I "borrowed" the tabulation book for the monthly playlist. What I discovered was fascinating. It showed that our radio station played over 500 "Current" albums/singles/tapes each month (making up 31% of our airplay). Over 300 "rock" currents were played with many more accessible to the DJ's...and REM were only played about once per day even at their peak! And our MD listed them at number one!

A "smoking gun"? Sorry, but the MD was being honest. For a station that plays lots of new material it only requires about one airplay per day to be el Numero Uno. It seems that too much weight is put on playlists if you can be listed as heavy rotation (a misnomer, since rotation implies programming schedule--which doesn't exist here) after four plays per week. Those who feel that playlists indicate an "airsound" of a station should look deeper at the raw data. And those who look at a station's "rock" playlist may not realize that a station puts out separate Jazz, Reggae/Dub, International, Folk/Bluegrass or Heavy Metal lists. If an Industry Rep gets a caress of the gluteal for having their band "number one" on the College Playlist then let them wallow in self-deception. All it means is seven DJ's per College station (out of, let's say, 100) liked them. It hardly portends the decline of college radio.

Others who attended the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System Conference and went to the "Retail - College Radio Session" got a completely different message than the one you arrived at. True, the promoters were weasels, but many of the program and music directors were concerned about getting their DJ's to play non-Top 40 material. Hence the discussion about "programming schemes". And many of the people there were honestly concerned with expanding access to non-major "alternative" labels and independent artists. Getting local records stores to order and provide access to non-majors keeps these artists alive. And making an argument to a retailer that a college station has an impact that Top 40 doesn't can get them to serve a previously unserved population. Apparently 80% or more of the stuff that Tower Records sells is never aired on commercial radio. Record stores need to go beyond Top 40 or they will become irrelevant. Their role could be filled by a record rack at a supermarket.

A big point that was made in our discussions was about ethics and the law. Programmers and staff are not supposed to play material that will benefit them (either directly or indirectly) unless they disclose that fact. For a record company promoter to offer a MD, PD or DJ a gift or promise a job in exchange for "pushing" a record constitutes "plugola" or "payola". It's illegal. I note SOUND CHOICE's offer of free advertising credit to DJ's that refuse to promote major labels. You are walking a fine line, as well. And to all those PD's that introduce "programming schemes", they better not receive any promotional albums of the labels they put into their "special" mandatory stack. In 1983-84 our radio station was threatened with conversion to a Top 100 format (they were being generous, weren't they) by young Neo-Conservatives on the Student Council (led by the way by Lazlo Gsorba III, now Director of Accuracy in Academia). The management appointed at that time had

no experience in radio and instituted the programming rules discussed at I.B.S. (though oriented towards Top 40.) Former staff were evicted from the station. Finally the volunteer staff recognized that they had power. They "removed" their volunteer work that benefitted the station (a sort of slow-down strike), although this was really the result of poor morale. Finally, they organized across musical genres and a complete walkout was threatened. The results of the Top-40 experiment were lost sponsors, operational chaos, and engineering snafus that put the license at risk. Finally the student government and University administrators admitted defeat.

Throughout the debate over College Radio the focus seems to be on what is played rather than upon how the station is governed. The assumption seems to be at most stations that a "rule" must be imposed to guide DJ's to play certain types of music (either alternative or more commercial). Our station has moved away from the dictatorial policies of 1983-84 to allow DJ's control over their shows. Only one rule exists--that you play 20% "Current" material (broadly defined as any material new to the station library). Programmers are determined by tenure and amount of work for the station. The quality of our station has improved in every department. We have more sponsors and have built a mobile "club" DJ unit. These have helped the station move toward financial independence. The volunteer staff know they have power (an estimated 150 staff put in 3+ hours in per week in addition to their own program-related time.) A well organized volunteer staff can take this away if they aren't given the opportunity to decide their own programming. I believe that the longer that DJ's are free of the context of commercial radio the more they will program alternative artists. A "community" environment with lots of social contact at the station quickens this process, as does a few listening rooms (probably the best investment a station can make). Our programming model can allow us to accept anyone to the station that is willing to do the work. It works wonders in driving away Neo-Conservative proslytizers and those who want to program Top-40. The latter, especially, become converts if they stick it out.

I'm not all that certain that it's best for alternative artists, independent labels or the survival of the stations themselves to foreclose on major labels completely. It's important that we attract new people to those (indie) artists and labels and the only successful way to do that is to provide some "bridge" from the commercial sound. I think that bridge is made by our newer DJ's generally--while our older staff have shows for the specialized listenership or "converted" audience.

Sincerely,

Jerry Drawhorn, a DJ at YOUR former station (which should perhaps remain unknown since we want to continue receiving records even though we play almost nothing more than six times a week), 813 Second St., Davis, CA 95616 (*The preceding letter was edited slightly for length.*)

Pissed off at Major labels

To Whom This May Concern,

This is an open letter to all those involved in the major label recording industry. The choice to write this was made at what you could call the last straw situation. As a twenty year veteran in the consumption of recording industry products, I have seen things go from bad to pathetic. My collection numbers in the thousands and until recently, grew at the rate of about 15-20 albums per month (a major purchase for one without money). But my growing distaste for your practices, emphasized by three recent acts in particular has prompted me to make public my disapproval and urge others to do the same.

The first complaint comes with your choice to increase list price on certain popular musics to \$9.98. Nothing you can say justifies this move. Recent BILLBOARD articles (6SEP86) cite little consumer resistance (most are powerless to fight), and increased production costs (does this mean more expensive and boring videos?) I would be more inclined to see it as more greed that seems to run rampant in this industry. You wonder why record sales decreased and the plight of home taping exists. The answer is simple, they can't afford to buy what you sell, and that is largely your fault. The second area of my interests lies in your continued insistence on the taxation of blank tapes and recording equipment. Your inference that you lose major revenues directly proportional to the sales of blank tape is ludicrous. Returning to myself as a representational example, I have hundreds of tapes in my collection

and I can safely say that no more than five are tapes of albums, and those that are, are records in my collection that I would rather play. Much of my tape collection consists of recordings of my own music. This is music that most of you will never hear, and in no way threatens to compete with yours in the marketplace. As such, I resent your efforts to take money from me by taxing the tools of my art, an art that has no hope or desire to benefit from your system. And for you to counter this with the argument for the provision of exemptions and refunds is a ridiculous as anyone that thinks that they can provide such a system that would be equitable and painless for all those affected. To extend this to the American Recording Industries fear of the new DAT technology is logical as yet another way to provide increased quality to the consumer that is finding a resistance for the sake of the industry's increased revenues. The final issue that I wish to address is in reference to your recent decision to take action to eliminate the importation of any product (parallel imports) that is comparable to the same product manufactured in the US by your companies. By doing so, you unfairly, and in my opinion, illegally restrict free trade and my rights as a consumer. In many cases, when faced with the choice, I often prefer the import copy. The reason is again simple, "QUALITY", or lack thereof. The inferiority of US pressings, when pitted against Japanese, German, or British pressings of the same release, is shockingly obvious. On a lesser note, the difference in the packaging and collectability of the foreign pressing also increase their desirability. The point is, I have a right to that choice, and if the competition is a problem, you should make the necessary increase in your own quality instead of eliminating the need to.

In the end, I can say that these are only but a few of the many problems inherent of this industry. The main reason for this, is in my opinion, blind ignorance. The recording industry exists no longer to satisfy the consumer in their quest for intelligent and entertaining music, but instead seems to thrive only on its own greed, and the production of mediocre, overproduced crap.
Nathan Griffith, Eugene, OR

WEA flak says Majors aren't so bad

Editor:

I have enjoyed your magazine for some time now, but I find some of your attitudes expressed in your editorials to be rather narrow-minded. First of all, let me say that I work for WEA (Warner Brothers) in advertising; and that I have a shift on KUSE, University of San Francisco. Before this, I was involved with my University station, WEGU, Auburn University, for 6 years. I am not out to defend major labels at all but your ambivalent attitude towards majors seems somewhat illogical to me, if as you seem to believe, that independents put out consistently more interesting releases than majors, simply because they are indies. I disagree--looking at the reviews of albums in your latest issue, many of the releases are interesting and unique to independent labels, but many are also mainstream type pop music--no better or worse than major label releases. These artists and labels are just as concerned with selling records as are the majors, as all labels SHOULD BE, otherwise they will not be around for long. I wish that people would judge artists and records by the musical content, not by which label it happens to be on. The average consumer has little identification with any label, they buy music, not the company.

You criticize majors for releasing lots of commercial music to sell to the masses. So what? People want it, so why shouldn't it be around? The majors also release many fine alternatives to mainstream pop music: Classical works, fine jazz and experimental works, and classic blues and archival recordings unavailable anywhere else. These are just a few examples. Majors do need to be criticized for putting out lots of crap, without much regard for originality, but indies do not always release stellar works.

About distribution, which is probably the key to success for a label, indies may claim that majors have distribution deals all wrapped up, leaving no room for them. Well, they have been at it a lot longer, and not too long ago, many majors had a guy to drive around, selling records out of his trunk, to small stores. The chain store and large warehouses for records are a relatively new creation for many major labels. It will take time, but I believe that many indies will continue to

grow and expand distribution, to the point where they will strongly influence the marketplace more than they already do. I really hope they succeed--it will be good for everybody.

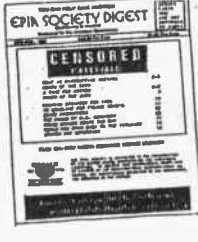
College radio is another area where your editorial content seems to be narrow-minded. You rightly complain that some college stations are becoming too much like commercial stations, in that they both have formats and track certain records, and that their playlist are too narrow. For commercial stations, this can be explained simply by the fact that they want to be narrow, especially in a major market, to attract a specific group of listeners for their advertisers. College radio may not be as open as we may like, probably for several different reasons: The staff want jobs after graduation, at a major label or radio station, or probably more likely that the staff just does not have the wide range of musical knowledge required to have a more open format. They are probably learning much, but it takes time, and it takes getting the records to the stations. Stations would love to play new records, only if they knew they were out there. This is one area where your publication is a great help. Perhaps you could send a copy to some of the stations you think need improving, so that they will know where to get more records.

Pirate radio is a great alternative to mass formatted radio; it's fun to set up and operate but there is a little difficulty in measuring its effectiveness--you can't exactly ask you listeners to call or write you. Still, its an exciting medium that could be used very well to introduce new audiences to alternative music. It's also a lot cheaper than buying a station, or building a commercial station. I had a 50 watt transmitter in my living room, in college. It was built for me by an engineering student, and cost next to nothing. It was pretty sophisticated--I could change frequencies by simply twisting a dial, not having to go through the usually lengthy process of retuning output stages and antennas. It was also small as a cigar box, and portable, which is important, to keep away from the boxes of the FCC. I never had a schematic made up, but I will try to track down the engineer and get one to you.

To sum up, music is a vital and changing artform, even at major labels and most college station. Please be more open-minded about majors. True, they put out crap, but so do the indies. Both camps have plusses and minuses to them, and both have recordings of value to offer. As far as college radio goes, again, there is room for improvement, but I really do not feel that it is as bad as you would make it, once you understand and take into account the special problems of college radio: inexperienced staff, and poor service. I hope that you do not write off these comments, simply because I work for WEA. I am writing as a fan of all types of music, and I buy records regardless of the label the recording is on. All I am asking is for people to close their eyes and open their ears, and minds. Comments welcome! Regards,
Chris Carey, 3723 Divisadero, San Francisco, CA 94123

Chris:

Consumers and artists who avoid dealing with major labels usually have important reasons for doing so. And no matter what their reason, they are in fact flowing with the tide. Technological changes alone portend the continued decentralization of music production. More and more artists will be "going independent." We'll write more about the independent vs. major label controversy in an upcoming issue. (We'll find out to what extent Husker Du, Dream Syndicate and The Replacements did "sell-out" when they bit into the major label hook.) As far as your comment about Pirate Radio being "a great alternative" to commercial radio, I'll have to disagree. Pirate radio is the *only* alternative in many cases, but it can hardly be accomplished under "great" conditions since being found out would leave one subject to fines, jail time (though rare) and equipment confiscation--hardly a "great" alternative, but one that a community may prefer over stations run by the major corporations such as WEA. And sorry, I won't be "closing my eyes and opening my ears." I prefer to keep *all* my senses aware when evaluating music or anything else. Thanks for your input!--DC



Unusual Publications

Yes, the mailing ran out with publications as usual. Check 'em out. You won't find this stuff on your local newsstands. There used to be underground newspapers that were hawked on street corners. Now we have "zines" delivered via the postal services of the world. Here are some loose definitions so you'll have an idea of what we're talking about below: "Zine"—usually a homegrown, for the love, not the money (because there isn't any) publication, usually photocopy printing; "tabloid"—usually refers to something close to newspaper style, at least larger in format than a typical magazine, usually folded rather than bound. If a name is listed in the address you should make checks or money orders out to that name rather than the publication name. If you publish books or magazines, etc., send us a copy and we'll probably mention it in an upcoming issue. If you sent us something that hasn't been mentioned yet, give us time. And if it has already been too long, send us something new as a reminder. Unless noted otherwise, the following reviews were written by David Ciuffardini. Across the Great Divide (c/o Pete, 81 High St., Prestwood, Great Missenden, Bucks. HP16 9EF, England) Youthful, homegrown punk zine from the U.K. This issue features a bunch of stuff on Australia where the editor spent four months recently.

Airlight (c/o CJSR-FM, Room 224, Student's Union Bldg., Univ of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2J7; ph. 403-432-5244) Monthly radio station program guide/magazine with interviews, reviews, ads, etc. with a lot of emphasis on rock, but not exclusively. **All-Planet Fannies** (c/o Chris Bors/Dne Man Studios, 121 Texas Ln., Ithaca, NY 14850; 50 cents) Min-comik based on themes derived from the alphabet. Also lists artists addresses in true networking fashion.—John E

Alternative Ink (c/o See Hear, 59 E. 7th St., NY, NY 10003, USA) "Newsletter of the Alternative Press and Radio Council for Greater New York." Punks and fanzine types, etc. join together to promote themselves, put on shows and pass along useful information including fanzine, band and radio directories which are available for a SASE (37 cents).

American Forum (POB 261, Staten Island, NY 10302, USA; \$1) Weekly newsletter for the anti-taxpaying and libertarian minded. Could use a little more meat in its pages for my taste.

American Living (c/o Angela Mark, POB 901, Allston, MA 02134, USA; \$2) A quarterly collection of photocopy and mailart type stuff on a 8 1/2 X 11 pages that you can pull out and tack to your wall for decorating.

Antimessia (c/o Zeno, 824 Haggatt GR-10, Seattle, WA 98195, USA; \$1 or trade) Zeno is a vegetarian peacenik/punk who reprints clippings from the mainstream press and adds his own comments. Issue #10 included a lengthy, useful collection of material on the draft and conscientious objector status.

Artiplice (3131 First Ave. So., Mpls., MN 55408, USA; sub. \$15 or trade) Summer 1986 issue features drawings and comix of an anarchist/dadaist nature.

A Very Small Magazine (c/o Beth Blevins, POB 24, Boone, NC 28607, USA; 72 cents) Some funny little stories, satire and stuff like "Diary of an Anonymous, Divorced, Middleaged Woman with Gray Hair." We liked this a lot. **Austin Chronicle** (POB 49066, Austin, TX 78765, USA; 512-473-8995) This is the hot giveaway "alternative" newspaper for Austin. Bi-weekly with lots of pages and plenty of music coverage. **Babushkin's Digest** (POB 128, Rosendale, NY 12472, USA) Little humor magazine "Dedicated to the defeat of the counterrevolution." Amiable. **Balmagan** (American Gamelan Institute, Box 9911, Mills College Station, Oakland, CA 94613, USA; \$5) If you are an active gamelan aficionado and want to study the instrument and music in depth this academic periodical is a must.

Bang! (77 Newbern Ave., Medford, MA 02155, USA; 617-391-5542; \$1.50) Neatly laid-out, gushing zine focusing on the new wavey/dreams-of-staroom side of U.S. underground rock.

Beastless News (stamps; 3107 S. Mt. Carmel, Wichita, KS 67217, USA) Punk fanzine covering the local So. Kansas scene via reviews, articles, interviews, with lots of photographs and some art. Computer generated, photocopy.—John E

Beasties From Space (Neither/Nor Press, Box 8043, Ann Arbor, MI 48107, USA; \$3) Art, essays, poetry, odds and ends put together with fine printing, typesetting, and high quality paper. The title gives a fair idea of where they're coming from. Periodical. 50 pages.

Beef (659 Haight, San Francisco, CA 94117, USA; 415-626-3817) Gowd looking, well-meaning, alternative-culture tabloid with world-healing, consciousness-raising slant. Several pages of independent recording and publication reviews. Free in the Bay area.

Be-Boy And Beyond (Creative Music Collective, POB 54337 Terminal Annex, Los Angeles, CA 90054; USA; 213-202-7222; \$2) A classy but down-to-earth, bi-monthly journal focusing on "Black Jazz". Put together with the spirit of true jazz lovers, without, thankfully, a lot of commercial jive. **Biblical Errancy** (3158 Sherwood Park Dr., Springfield, 45505, USA; free sample) Periodical "focusing on Biblical errors, contradictions, and geographical info, while providing a hearing for apologists." Monthly. **Binary Land Lifter** (c/o Patrick Rael 805 Dryden St., Silver Spring, MD 20901-1822; \$1.50) Alternative photocopy music zine with the usual (record and zine reviews, and comix) plus a detailed report on a Senate Judiciary Confirmation Hearing and philosophical writings on recent history.

Blacklisted News: Secret Histories from Chicago '68 to 1984 (c/o Dana/Overthrow, POB 392 Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10012, USA; \$12.95) At 734 big pages thick, this fascinating book has got to be the biggest bargain of the revolution. This is published by the Yippies, those pot smoking, pie throwing revolutionaries who are alive and well in the 1980s. Sometimes sensationalistic, sometimes hilarious, sometimes frightening, this book is divided into five parts: The Secret History of the '70s; The Dreaded Yippie Curse/Campaigns, Conventions, Confrontations, and other Madness; New Yippie Manifestos; and Practical How To Revolt Handbook. Find out all sorts of stuff about the CIA, FBI, the police, various politicians and what they've been doing to mess people up and what the Yippies have been doing to try to counteract this stuff. You don't have to read beyond page two to find out dirt about Polling Stone Magazine, said in these pages to have sold out their editorial integrity (acquiescing to corporate demands about what they should and should not write about—youth rebellion being a no-no) in 1979 to Xerox Corporation and Warner Brothers for some big bucks. More fun facts and allegations on every page. Makes rebellion sound fun again.

Black Star (POB 3506, Tucson, AZ 85722, USA; \$1.25) "Quarterly magazine of arts and anarchist opinion." 8 tabloid pages.

The Diether (233 Woodbine Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M4L 3P3 Canada) A handsome, friendly, accessible literary quarterly. No. 4 was the "Death" issue, No. 5 the "Mostly Poetry Issue." 24 pages.

Blow It Off (POB 2271, Bloomington, IN 47402, USA; 50 cents) Small HC oriented zine with the usual. Put out by Scott Coburn of Gravelvoice Records. He's also a diehard Black Flag fan/collector.

The Bob (151 First Ave., Ste. F, New York 10003, USA; 215-592-0718; \$1.50) Alternative rock tabloid with a clean, friendly, generally optimistic tone.

Box Of Water (135 Cole St., San Francisco, CA 94117; \$3) A handsome, very well printed periodical compiling mail art reproductions from around the world. Contact addresses, cassette and zine reviews too.

Brave Ear (POB 3877, Berkeley, CA 94703, USA; 415-658-9601; \$2) Underground rock and assorted related topics. Reviews, etc. Handsome, intelligent, with an ideological edge. 54 pages.

Breakfast Without Meat (1827 Haight St., Room 188, San Francisco, CA 94117, USA; \$1.25) Sincere irreverence makes this zine stand out. Live reviews of Tom Jones and Pia Zadora for instance. Don't expect record reviews—except maybe tongue-in-cheek variety—but do expect silly questions asked to underground rock bands. 16 pages.

BVI—Pacifica (POB 1548, Goleta CA 93116-1548; ph. 805-963-2847; \$1.50) Edited by Yael Dragwyla, distant relative of the original Count Dracula, this is a zine of essays, art, poetry, slack and irreverence. Welcomes contributions though you probably will stand a better chance of appreciating or being appreciated if you know something about the Church of Subgenius.

Buzz (POB 3111, Albany, NY 12203, USA; \$1) This monthly giveaway is the place to check to tie into the rock and party and club scene in the upper New York area.

Cell (2? IRC's; Ryosuke Cohen, 1-6 Hiyoshicho, Moriguchi City, Osaka 570 Japan) Ongoing mail-art project orchestrated by prolific mail-artist R. Cohen, Cell consists of one large sheet of colored logos and personal seals collected from all over the world. The effect is striking and beautiful and worthy of framing. Send him YOUR logo and become an international collaborator.—John E

Chemical Imbalance (c/o Mike McGonigal, 601 Ave. Conde, Miami, FL 33156, USA; \$1.50) An alternative music magazine that's come a long way in just two issues to include LOTS of reviews, band profiles, art and comix, poetry and creative writing. CI #2 also includes an interview with Allen Ginsberg, an overview of the films of George Kuchar, and a review of a video of Lydia "Deep Throat" Lunch.—John E

CLEM—Contact List For Electronic Musicians (c/o Alex Douglas, POB 86010, North Vancouver, B.C. Canada, V7L 4J5; \$6) A monumental compendium of detailed contact and source information of interest to a wide variety of people into music networking. The last issue ran about 90 pages and was published in Fall of 1984 but has been supplemented with updates. A completely new issue is due out sometime near the end of 1986.

The Closest Penguins (c/o Denise Dee, 2544 Oak St., San Francisco, CA 94102, USA; \$1) This #12 issue is the last of The Closest Penguins which is/was a zine for alienated but friendly story writers. But the legacy will continue in a new form when Denise brings out a new magazine called Union D'opposites expected out soon. Denise's addresses seem to change with the weather, but she hopes this one will be current for a while. News Flash: There's a new Best of Closest Penguins that has just been published.

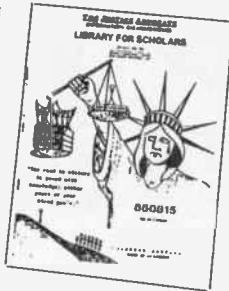
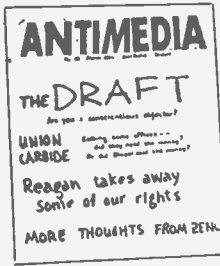
Collage of Mutations (Martyr Music, 716 S. Linden Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15208, USA) A refreshing collection of essays and reviews on rock and assorted cultural phenomena. Some verse, too. All written by the cynical and unpredictable Adam Eisenstat who will on occasion munch acid, go to a concert and write about it, etc. He hates the political rantings of bands like (and especially) the Dead Kennedys. Send a buck or two. 40 pages.

Comix in a Capsule (The Young and The Frustrated, 424 So. 45th St., Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA; \$2) Underground ball-busting comix artist Lana Ticks stuffs eleven inch comix strips into a gelatin capsules and sells them four per package. Partially inspired by the Tylenol capsule poisonings. **Country Sounds** (700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990, USA; 715-445-2214; \$2) A new publication from the people who put out Goldmine. For the down-to-earth country music collector and fan. Includes info about crossover stuff like Rank and File and The Cruzados as well.

Crowl Or Die (POB 981, Rockville, MD 20851, USA; SASE?) A couple different zines come from this address, some th'n, some thick, but they usually have music, politics and comix. **Energetic**. C.T.I. **Bulletin** (BM CTI, London WC1 3XX England; addressed envelope and 2 IRCs) C.T.I. is the umbrella name for the audio and video work of Chris and Cosey. This bulletin (#5) gives updates on activities and future plans, philosophies, and biographical info. **Decentralist** (Box 106, 632 Cloverdale, Los Angeles, CA 90038, USA; 213-931-9239; \$1) Newsletter focusing on "non-violent Radical Decentralist Strategy" In other words, let's stop paying attention to the rules and strictures put down by the national and state governments and start creating political and legal systems that are community based. Some interesting ideas here. **Demo #1** (c/o Mary Fleener, 309 Oceanview, Encinitas, CA 92024, USA; \$1.50) A digest-sized comix composed mostly of strips by Mary Fleener, Dennis Worden, Bob "X", and others. Demo is a good first attempt anthology. It works mainly due to the efforts of Fleener, and especially Worden, cartoon veteran par excellence!—John E

Directory of Libertarian Periodicals (c/o Jim Stumm, Box 29, Hiller Branch, Buffalo, NY 14223, USA; \$2) Just what the title implies. Eight pages. About 150 listings. **The Duplex Planet** (POB 1230, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866, USA; \$1.25) David Greenberger ventures into the Duplex Nursing Home and other places where old folks hang out, asks the oldesters innocent questions and records their humorous and touching responses for this monthly periodical.

Earth's First Journal (POB 5871, Tucson, AZ 85703, USA; \$2) For and by radical, deep-ecologists, promoting direct action such as pulling up survey stakes, spiking trees, destroying bulldozers and doing whatever else it takes to save the quickly disappearing flora and fauna.



El Septimo Sello (c/o Ruben Valenzuela Loiza, Apartado Postal 244, Veracruz, Ver. 91700, Mexico) This is the first Mexican music fanzine to come across this desk and if you read Spanish you'll probably find this a cross-cultural treat. Its got articles on rock, jazz, drugs and more. This premier issue has 24 typeset and photocopy pages. And though I can't read much of it, the contributors seem to be tapped into what's happening: I see mention of Eurock, Wayside, Recommended, Insane Music as well as Mexican independent music entrepreneurs. Several references to LSD. One U.S. dollar or a trade should get you started.

Electronic Musician (5615 W Cermak Rd., Cicero, IL 60650, USA; \$3) Focuses on the hardware and software for the electronic musician. Thick and slick, yet retains a friendly, informal and informative tone under the fine guidance of editor and musician Craig Anderton.

The Emperor Wears No Clothes (Queen of Clubs Publishing, POB 8698, Portland, OR 97207, USA; \$7) This is an interesting, researched book all about Marijuana. The underlying message is that marijuana is a plant of miraculous proportions and aside from helping people get high, it has specific and very important medical, industrial and agricultural uses that could make the world a better place. This is filled with hundreds of interesting facts suggesting that the prohibition against marijuana growing and the strict regulations and red tape and stigma stifling marijuana research is a major tragedy for modern society. One interesting article extracted from a 1938 issue of *Popular Mechanics* describes the invention of a new machine used to process marijuana plants into paper products. This new process utilizes a fraction of the chemicals and land needed to make paper from wood pulp. In other words for every four acres of trees that need to be cut down for paper making, only one acre of marijuana need be harvested. It is suggested that this new technology threatened established industries (including Dupont and the emerging plastics industry) and caused marijuana to be made illegal around the same time. Another item in the book: marijuana seed is the second most complete vegetable protein source on our planet, can be grown practically anywhere for 10-20 percent of the cost of growing soybeans, and in the 19th century communities in Australia and other countries survived two prolonged famines using nothing but marijuana seeds for protein and marijuana leaves for roughage. And even in 1986 "millions of people every day are using hemp seed in the Orient as food." (Such information makes me wonder about the U.S. Government's motivation for going into Central and South American countries and destroying their marijuana fields.) Another fact from the book: "Eighty percent of all mankind's textiles and fabrics for clothes, tents, linens, rugs, drapes, quilts, bedsheets, towels, diapers, etc., for 2,000-plus years, including our flag, "Old Glory" were made principally from cannabis fibers until the 1820s in America and until the 20th century in most of the rest of the world." The book also goes on to explain the fallacies in government studies about the health hazards of pot smoking. This book was written by Jack Herer and published by backers of the Oregon Marijuana Initiative which will come before Oregon voters on the Nov. 1986 ballot and if passed (it didn't) would have allowed Oregon residents to grow an unlimited number of marijuana plants in their own homes. One fact the book doesn't dwell on is that the current price for a pound of high quality smoking marijuana sells for no less than \$2,000 and a single plant can grow several pounds of the stuff. I think if more Oregon non-smokers realized this, there would have been a much greater chance of the initiative passing. And don't forget about all those mid-west farmers who are going out of business. Perhaps it's time for a new kind of Farm Aid? **EPIA (End Poverty In America) Society Digest** (POB 6163, San Bernardino, CA 92412, USA; \$2 cash or postal money orders only) Libertarian stuff. Published by people who believe Federal income tax is unconstitutional. Some conomy conspiracy stuff too. (They believe that income tax and big corporations are commie plots.) In any case, some very worthwhile info challenging and helping people to challenge heavy-handed and unpopular laws that U.S. citizens must bow to under threat of severe punishment. Anyone who is actively seeking more personal freedom will find useful information and contacts here.

Eurock (POB 13718, Portland, OR 97213, USA; 503-281-0247; \$2) Progressive-minded Archie Patterson edits this combination zine/catalog focusing on electronic music with roots in the Western European "floating/synthesizer" school. Patterson adds thoughtful insights both musically and politically as he shares his many years of experience and enthusiasm through editorials, interviews and reviews of some of his favorite musicians. Quarterly. About 16 pages. **Ever Onward Here We Go #1, 2, 3** (Bruce N. Duncan Publications, c/o B.E.F.P., 2425 College Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704, USA) Ever Onward represents a collection of essays, articles and reviews by Bruce Duncan, an underground writer/artist/cartoonist living on the fringe of society in a broken-down hotel in Berkeley, California. Subjects include life on the street and the struggle for survival and basic human dignity in extreme situations, descriptions of actual street people Duncan is friendly with, cartoonists R. Crumb, Elzie Segar, and Al Capp, writers Aldous Huxley and George Orwell, artists Pablo Picasso, Henry Moore, and Charles R. Knight, buddy Ace Backwards' publication "Twisted Image" and various topics Duncan feels strongly about such as death, nature, and male-female relationships. Duncan's forte is analysis through observation, whether he is looking at people, art, or literature. As a writer he seems to feel the need to understand the world around him in order to feel a part of it, to reconcile man and nature, to unite apparent opposites through love, brotherhood, self-respect, sex, humor, art, and thoughtfulness toward all living things. Ever Onward is peppered with cartoons, drawings, photos of people, sculpture, and naked women. Entertaining, insightful, and definitely coming from a unique perspective. Here We Go continues the ongoing coverage of Berkeley's marginal Telegraph Ave. scene originating in 30 issues of Duncan's *Tele Times* magazine. Written by and about street people and other down and out characters, it showcases their artwork, poetry, publications, and various plights. Sprinkled generously throughout are Duncan's (and others') cartoons, articles, photographs, profiles and interviews. No. 3 is primarily letters and it is interesting to see how "outsiders" react to this indigenous publication. —John E

FactSheet Five (c/o Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave., Penseelaer, NY 12144, USA; \$2) This is a quarterly zine featuring hundreds of publication reviews (imagine the publications section of *Sound Choice* expanded to several times its current size). Gunderloy writes most of the reviews and he sticks to the underground/obscure/grassroots type stuff. In addition to the publication reviews, there are columns and several pages of indie recording reviews. Dependable and in the networking/mailart spirit. Kind of like *Sound Choice*, an issue of *FactSheet Five* is a chain of keys to worlds you didn't even know existed.

Fag Shirts From Uranus (c/o Scott Stevens, 2208 Parkside #117, Mesquite, TX 75150; 50 cents) Well executed mini-comix with an incredibly bent and at times cruel sense of humor. Scott is also responsible for the

popular (among the finest punk rags) and incessantly sadistic strip "Mr. Fix". **Famous Harbors of Punkland** (c/o Craig Hill, POB 26684, San Jose, CA 95159, USA; \$1) This third issue continues to capture the party-hearty, sloppy male energy side of hardcore music. Editor Hill's slogan sums up his light-hearted but consistent approach: "Hardcore: Definitely; Politics: Yeah, O.K...; Preaching: Never!; Fast and Loud: Always!" 48 pages.

Fable Times (c/o Tina "Vampyress" Chaves, 95 Ferris Pl., Ossining, NY 10562, USA) Adolescent music zine, mostly handwritten.

Fifth Estate (POB 02548, Detroit, MI 48202, USA; 313-831-6800; \$1) Quarterly anarchist tabloid. Includes some independent music coverage occasionally. **Flipside Fanzine** (POB 363, Whittier, CA 90608, USA; \$2) Big glossy covered fanzine of punk and related rock type music. Lots of photos, interviews, letters, and \$1 unclassified ads. Has a Southern California slant but of relevance to fans everywhere. A voice in the youth music subculture. **Forced Exposure** (POB 1611, Waltham, MA 02254, USA; \$2.50) Thick zine with interviews and hundreds of reviews delving into underground rock culture and its fringes. Jimmy and Byron write most of the reviews, padding them with sexual innuendos and affected slang; the effect being similar to the way a scrawny adolescent armors himself with a leather jacket, chains, and a weird haircut in order to look tough and cover up signs of weakness and ineffectualness. I wouldn't mind the slang if it was real, if it was what people were speaking, but it's not. It's just a joke. It is literary posing that serves as a fill-in for a generation that has yet to develop its own voice, its own hip vernacular, its own style, its purpose for existence. The editors and main contributors to *Forced Exposure* are, just like the people they write for, a fairly aware group of individuals. As contributor Steve Albini wrote in FE #10, "Music, art, street-level culture of all kinds is at it's all time low..." Yes, the folks at FE do have an inkling of where we're at, and *Forced Exposure* serves as a signpost reminding us that where we're at is not where we would like to be. Unfortunately FE offers few arrows to new destinations, or even to new roads leading to destinations unknown. The snide, unconstructive criticism and smug tone throughout *Forced Exposure* harken back to the selfish "Me Generation" attitudes that late '70s punk attempted to shatter. The "Who-Needs-You?" attitude in *Forced Exposure* tends to reinforce petty infighting, and seems to drain energy from more worthwhile journalistic pursuits. As things are now, if something really great, important, and revolutionary in music or art does come along, Byron and Jimmy will probably recognize it once it has happened, but I doubt very much that they will have had any hand in planting the seeds or nurturing the phenomena in its infancy. They just don't seem to have the foresight or faith. *Forced Exposure* is a formidable but disheartening reflection of a youthful subculture in a mess. To top it off, despite its loudmouth tendencies, FE is curiously silent about the questionable practices and philosophies of music magazines like *Spin* and subjects like radio and new music seminars. Actually, the silence isn't all that surprising considering that Byron is on the *Spin* payroll and works as a moderator for CMJ New Music Seminars. In other words, despite the radical-hip tone in FE, Byron and Jimmy are an integral, supportive part of the corporate music business that their own friends and supporters can't stand. As *Forced Exposure* cover girl Lydia Lunch told *Sound Choice* recently, "It's the corporate assholes that run everything. It's always the liars, thieves and idiots that do the talking, the choosing, the picking and the sorting out." Such strident, anti-music business sentiments were not included in the FE interview of Lunch and we weren't surprised. The FE motto seems to be, "Don't bite the hand the feeds you, but be as nasty as you want to anyone who is weaker or threatens the system that keeps our bellies full and our turntables spinning with free records." Nevertheless, FE maintains a sense of humor and they still trade zines (two good signs.) Maybe they can channel their talent and anti-bullshit instincts more constructively. Maybe they can wise-up instead of suck-up. Their next two issues should provide clear indications of which direction they're heading. I'll cross my fingers but I won't hold my breath.

Fudgey Fannies (c/o J.P. Morgan, 185 Seabreeze Ave., #4, East Keansburg, NJ 07734, USA; 50 cents) Quality mini-comix with a "Farside" sense of humor. **Galactic Crossroads** (POB 2352, Clarksburg, WV 26301, USA; \$2) Tabloid periodical (five per year) of bluegrass and blues musics with a special emphasis on mandolin playing. 16 pages.

Gargoyle (POB 3567, Washington, DC 20007, USA; 202-333-1544; \$6) This is a semi-annual literary periodical full of interviews, reviews, poetry, fiction, drawings and photographs. (Some editions are on cassette.) Edited/published by Richard Peabody. This issue is more than 250 pages long and has the appearance of a high quality trade paperback. **Glitch News** (POB 4429, Austin, TX 78765, USA; 512-453-8575; 2 stamps) From Glitch Records, this will give you leads into the Austin guitar rock scene. Monthly. 6 pages and growing.

Goin' Under (c/o Scott Sendra, 4746 Northgate, Ann Arbor, MI 48103, USA; 426-2427; 75 cents) Young persons zine with essays on love, shopping malls, psychology; some record reviews, more. **The Gray Matter Gutter** (c/o Jamie Lee Rake, 201 Howard St., Waupun, WI 53963, USA) If you can scratch your way through Jamie's painful, tiny handwriting (somebody please give him a typewriter or penmanship coaching) you'll discover (in GMG #4) some of the most original, sincere and flipped music zine writing in the world. Read his insights about polka, Christian rock, rap music, radical Catholicism, screwed up college radio, Black Gospel, Spike Jones, reggae, pornography, U.S. Foreign policy, his girlfriend and much more all crammed into four dense pages that will strain your eyes and stretch your mind in a friendly way. Send him at least a dollar or some good stuff in trade so he can publish more than his usual twice a year.

Hide Or Seek: Zine (1363 Deeridge Lane, Coquitlam, B.C. V3E 1Y7, Canada; \$1) Subtitled: "A Look Beyond With A Positive Approach To Youth Subculture." Great printing, great paper, great layout, great subtitle, but other than that we're not offered much more than a few letters and zine reviews, a poem and some good looking ads. Provide some more content to match the form and we'd have something exceptional. 16 pages.

High Performance (240 South Broadway, Fifth Fl., Los Angeles, CA 90012, USA; 213-687-7362; \$5) Performance art quarterly. Professional quality. Wide ranging coverage that stretches to include some musical performances and recordings. **High School Comix** (c/o Bobby Pfeiffer, POB 912, Gilbert, MN 55741) A wide variety of self-published comix by Bobby and Randy Paske, whose character "Dough Boy" has become a cult hero among the under-underground. Their "MISC" mini is an anthology series of some of the best artists who still work for free. **The Hip Hop Hit List** (108 Grand Ave., Suite 1L, Newark, NJ 07106, USA; \$1) Hip-hop and rap type stuff in this bi-weekly tabloid. 12 pages.

Hi-Tech Terror (c/o Craig Ledbetter, 1 Yorkshire Ct., Richardson, TX 75081, USA; \$2.50/12 issues) Horror and sci-fi video zine. 6 pages.

How To Do A How To Do (Light Living Library, POB 190, Philomath, OR 97370, USA; \$1) Four pages of insightful thoughts for those contemplating publishing a homegrown newsletter or zine type publication.

Incredibly Strange Films (Re/Search, 20 Romolo #B, San Francisco, CA 94133, USA; \$15) Everything about this book is incredibly well done. Read about all sorts of strange movies and the people who created them. It's got essays, interviews, fantastic photos, and all sorts of articles describing the various "strange film" genres including "Biker Films", "LSD Films", "Mondo Films", "Educational Films", "Beach Party Films", "Women in Prison Films", and much more. Includes index and bibliography. Large trade-paperback format and extremely handsome layout combined with entertaining and informative writing make this a coffee-table book that is bound to stir up conversation and yet has enough meat to make it a satisfying bedside reader.

Ink Disease (4563 Marmion Way, Los Angeles, CA 90065, USA; \$2) Consistently meaty and nicely laid-out punk and hardcore zine. 44 pages.

Industrial Waste (c/o John Sills, 1649 North Mountain, Tucson, AZ 85719, USA; 75 cents) Skate punk-cut, paste and shred. 16 pages. **Inside Job: A Newsletter of Comedy and Creativity** (c/o Elaine Wechsler, P.O.B. 1609, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159, USA; \$1) One of the best humor zines with a large, energetic coral of contributors. Coming out every other month, it is always at least 20 photocopy pages filled with clean but not completely innocent humor and satire created by a cast of writers and cartoonists from all corners of this crazy subterranean network.

Jazziz (P.O.B. 8309, Gainesville, FL 32605, USA; 904-332-7067; \$2) Slick bi-monthly covering mostly mainstream jazz sounds and artists. **Jag Lag** (8419 Halls Ferry Rd., St. Louis, MO 63147-1806, USA; 382-3633; \$1) Consistent monthly rock zine, almost professional but with that homegrown, fan enthusiasm. Non-rock reviews also.

Just Another Eight Page Wonder (c/o Rogers Books Press, POB 605, Blairstown, NJ 07825; 50 cents plus stamp) Regularly features publisher-artist Walt Rodger's fine art and idiosyncratic worldview in a polished mini-comik format. This series is a fine introduction to the Rodgers Books Press catalog of extremely well produced comix.--John E

The Justice Advocat Information Clearing House/Library For Scholars (POB 3125, Denver, CO 80201, USA; \$5) A 16 page catalog for obtaining case histories, court documents, tapes and other information that will help people understand the realities of being taken to court by the Feds and precedents and strategies that could be used to make the most of the outcome stand in your favor. Attempts to uphold personal freedoms and inalienable rights. **Kick It Over** (POB 5811, Station A, Toronto, Ont. Canada M5W 1P2; \$1.50) Anarchist quarterly tabloid. This features thoughtful, mature analysis and news of the anarchist movement and related topics.

Kids Lit News (c/o Baraka Family, POB 92, Williams, OR 97544, USA; SASE) Haven't actually seen a copy, but sounds interesting.

K.P. Inc. (3457 Fremont Ave. North, Minneapolis, MN 55412, USA; SASE) A few pages of photocopy hand-writing about records and concerts and zines the young editor has experienced. Expected to be bi-monthly.

LCD (c/o WFMU, Upsala College, East Orange, NJ 07019, USA; 201-266-7900) This is one of those combination non-commercial radio station program guide/magazines and is one of the most original, thought provoking, and visually stimulating of its genre. **Life in a Real World** (POB 1321, Hattiesburg, MS 39401, USA; 89 cents) Drawings, scribbles, gibberish, rantings and other rabid odds and ends. 18 pages. **Lively Arts** (POB 4906, San Diego, CA 92104, USA) Rock zine. Lots of photos and interviews with bands like The Damned and Pandoras.

Living Blues (Center for the Study of Southern Culture, Univ. of Mississippi, University, MS 38677, USA; 601-232-5993; \$3) One of the best blues periodicals around. Thick and slick but true to the blues spirit, both contemporary and historical.

Living Free: A Personal Journal of Self Liberation (c/o Jim Stumm, Box 29, Hiler Branch, Buffalo, NY 14223, USA; \$1.50) If you've ever wanted to live "free" or as near as possible, via camping or other methods, this newsletter will help you with useful tactical info and the shared experiences and opinions of people who are doing it.

Lopes-lod (Kongstraat 35, 9000 Gent, Belgium; tel. 091-238089) If you are into avant-garde music, especially improvisation, and you want to connect with the scene in Belgium, this is the periodical to get, although it is mostly written in non-English (Belgian?) The editors do understand English, so don't hesitate to write. **Laolout** (POB 1000, Laytonville, CA 95454, USA; \$1) Politics, punks, more politics (local and national) and a sprinkle of satire edited by a singer in a punk band (Lawrence Livermore of The Lookouts) who hangs out in San Francisco a lot and writes and thinks with enough precision to have his comments excerpted in The Nation magazine. Monthly. 10 pages.

Los Angeles Reader (8471 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069, USA; weekly, \$10/year) Giveaway alternative tabloid with extensive entertainment listings, feature articles and yuppie advertisements. With numerous personal changes in the last couple years, it is not as good as it used to be. Still, if you want to know the names and addresses of clubs and art spaces in L.A. and what's happening there, you can find it here. **Lawfile** (c/o G. Thrasher, 1095 Blue Ridge Ave. #2, Atlanta, GA 30306, USA; \$1.50) Consistently interesting and provocative homegrown zine hoping to uncover innovation and experimental sounds and spirits among this so-called underground. Editor Thrasher has an affection for the obscure and obnoxious.

Mailfile (c/o BS Propaganda, POB 1393, Tempe, AZ 85281, USA; \$1.97) Photocopy art and writing. Semi-annual.

Marijuana (TLC International, POB 261, Staten Island, NY 10302, USA; \$1) Monthly newsletter of "Marijuana-The Social Club". The club's \$6.66 a year membership includes invitation to weekly socials. (Must be 21 or over to attend.) **The Marijuana Report** (Oregon Marijuana Initiative, POB 8698, Portland, OR 97207, USA; 503-239-5134) Periodical tabloid with information aimed at supporting ballot measures aimed at legalizing the personal use and cultivation of marijuana. After reading this stuff, even I was convinced. **Maximum Rock N Roll** (POB 288, Berkeley, CA 94701, USA; \$1.50) The most well known punk fanzine in the world. Monthly 64 pages.

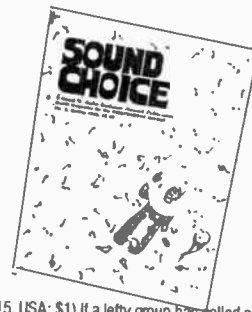
Metal Forces (17 Livingstone Link, Chells, Stevenage, Herts SG2 0EP, England) Glossy heavy metal music fanzine with the policy of giving "the best of all that's new and major."

The Merry Report (Box 488, Nassau, NY 11223, USA; 518-766-2871) Humor and satire in a newspaper type format. Trouble is, with the way the real newspapers are these days, its hard to tell the satire from the real thing. Worth a few laughs anyway. 8 pages. Monthly. **The Monthly Independent Tribune Times Journal Post Gazette News Chronicle Bulletin** (2510 Bancroft Way, #207, Berkeley, CA 94704, USA; two .22 stamps) Funny satire, funny cartoons. Not many pages but often quite brilliant. Really gets people to laugh out loud. The work of T.S. Child (an editor with enough guts to get himself thrown in jail to make a point/joke), Denver Tucson and others. Monthly (like it says.) Denver Tucson's cartoons ("The Bone Family" and many others) are great.

Most Things Suck (c/o David Schmetterling, 11907 Enid Dr., Rockville, MD 20854, USA; \$1) Highschoolers writing their butts off to unite a punk scene among their peers. Unfortunately they've been so demoralized that their "Punks Unite!" editorial encourages kids to give up on anarchy, go to college, and get "a job with power...like the singer in Midnight Oil" (a lawyer.) "Do you really expect the common society to listen to a bunch of poor working class people?" these middle class boys write. They apparently believe the myths that say that anyone, rich or poor can grow up to be rich and powerful if they work for it. In other words they are saying "forget trying to be united with the working class who will always be a bunch of losers, and strive for money which is the real power." In their youthful, sheltered naivete they figure they can become rich, unite with other rich people and if poor people can't step up the ladder to success it is just their own fault. The icing on the cake is the editor's note at the end of the zine that says he will probably have to stop writing for the zine because his parents have told him to, claiming the zine work was "non-productive" and "negative."

Perhaps if they write an editorial next time encouraging their peers to become greedy, oppressive capitalist fascist, imperialists, the parents will grant him a reprieve. **Murder Can Be Fun** (c/o Johnny Marr, POB 64011, San Francisco, CA 94109, USA; 50 cents or stamps) Homegrown fanzine about interesting murders, and related books and films. 16 pages.

Musicworks: The Canadian Journal of Sound Exploration (Music Gallery, 1087 Queen St. West, Toronto, Canada M6J 1H3; 416-533-0192; \$2.50, \$6.50 with cassette) The subtitle pretty much tells the story of this tabloid available with a tape supplement. Each issue has a different theme and corresponding cassette. A handsome, quarterly tabloid.



The National Boycott Newsletter (6506 28th Ave., N.E., Seattle, WA 98115, USA; \$1) If a lefty group has called a national boycott on the products or services of some company, it will probably be listed here along with the who's and why's of the situation. Related articles and replies from boycotted companies are also included. Quarterly.

N D (POB 4144, Austin, TX 78765, USA; \$2) An always welcome, high-quality art and sound zine with strong ties to the mail art network and other avant-gardes. Issue #6 has lengthy interview with Nicolas Collins. **The News** (880a Queen St. West, Toronto, Ont., Canada M6J 1G3; 416-535-4295; \$1) Giveaway entertainment tabloid concentrating on alternative rock music that makes its way to Canada. Tap into the Toronto scene with this. **New Pages: Access to Alternatives in Print** (POB 438, Grand Blanc, MI 48439, USA; 313-743-8055; \$2) A tri-annual tabloid with short reviews and prices and addresses of independently published books (primarily) and periodicals. Issues also include news, interviews and opinion pieces pertaining to independent publishing. Geared toward progressive-minded bookstores and libraries.

The New Settler Interview (POB 730, Willits, CA 95490, USA; 707-937-5703; \$1) This is an excellent publication for and from back-to-the-land and community-oriented people in Northern California, but much of the contents can be of relevance and interest to people anywhere. Basically each bi-monthly issue is 50 or 60 pages of interviews of interesting people who have acute perceptions, opinions and useful information to share. Progressive, eclectic and open-minded. **Next Generation** (2460 E. 23 Ave., Vancouver, B.C., Canada; 432-9524; \$1) Newspaper for "young people of all ages" who are concerned with "social change and liberation." **Nirvana** (POB 2184, Castro Valley, CA 94546, USA; stamps or change) Essays, poems and odds and ends, including meatless recipes. Issue #3 focused on animal rights concerns. 38 pages.

Non-Stop Barter (c/o Debbie Novak, 16700 S. 94th Ave., Orland Park, IL 60462, USA; \$1) A clean, straight, consistent collegiate rock zine. Interesting, to me anyway, is the fanzine editor capsule interviews which have been a regular feature. Bi-monthly. 28 pages.

News (POB 152, Honolulu, HI 96810, USA; 808-544-4499; \$1.50) This is THE music zine of Hawaii, a state which for various reasons doesn't attract or spawn many "alternative" musicians. But when it does happen, these guys will likely have it covered or perhaps be the instigators. This is clean, consistent and pretty mainstream, but the staff is enthusiastic, open-minded and welcomes independent recordings for review. Bi-monthly.

Offset (c/o CFUV Radio, POB 1700, Victoria, B.C., V8W 2Y2) Monthly program guide with articles and recording reviews published by a non-commercial radio station. 16 pages.

The Offense Newsletter (POB 12614, Columbus, OH 43212, USA) A rock fanzine that is truly a FANzine. It usually goes something like this: Rock fans from around the country send in letters and "best of" lists attempting to convince other readers and contributors why their favorite alternative rock bands and scenes are better than anyone else's favorite alternative rock bands and scenes. Everyone has the opportunity to call other readers' opinions a bunch of crap, and everyone has a chance to make his or her opinions mirror those of the editor for which they will be treated with respect, or, on the other hand they can express distaste for the editor's favorites in which case they will be mildly insulted. The editor, a guy named Tim, puts all this together along with his comments and mails them out every once in a while. All in all a bunch of infighting, elbow rubbing and circle jerking, which can be fun to watch or be a part of, or, in this case, comment on (for which I will risk being dragged through the splatterings in a future edition.) More than 65 issues so far. I'm not sure of the cost, but send a dollar or trade and that should get things going. Don't tell 'em I sent you. **Open Road** (Box 6135, Station G, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6R 4G5; \$1) Quarterly tabloid of Anarchist news and reviews. Some leanings toward direct action and militancy and urban guerilla tactics. The uncritical promotion of urban guerilla tactics of past issues has been tempered a bit since the round up and maximum penalty sentencing of the Vancouver Five, some of who injured innocent individuals, accidentally, during a past "action".

Option (Box 491034, LA, CA 90049, USA; \$2.50) Ya gotta survive right? A worthwhile music mag at this point, but... The danger signs are there. Major labels are taking hold of the covers (corporate artist on the front, corporate ad on the back). Then, of course, there is the often discussed Yuppie-ism of Option management. One Option policy, established before they even published their first issue, sheds great light on the attitude of Option management. Their policy, as has been made crystal clear during their two years of publishing, is like this: "Never, never mention Sound Choice in the pages of Option. Never, never in any way exchange magazines, share information, or cooperate in any way with Sound Choice. Delete their name from letters to the editor, delete their name from every and all mailing lists. Unless anyone asks you specific questions, PRETEND SOUND CHOICE DOES NOT EXIST or if need be, suggest that Sound Choice has folded." So much for friendly rivalry. So much for cooperating and helping strengthen the independent network. Okay, so Mr. Publisher has a competitive streak and is chasing after the Yuppie dream. So what? That's his own problem right? His own pact with the Devil and his own debt he'll have to pay with his bankrupt soul. I forgive him, for that. But there are two things that especially bug me: first some Option staffers have tried hard to lead people to assume that the staff at Option are the same people who published the late, great OP magazine. (Going so far as to capitalize the first two letters of their OPion logo in the first five issues and never attempting to explain their true relationship to OP when misconceptions arose). It's true that the independent network created by OP did spawn both Option and Sound Choice and both publications tried to glean from OP's success, but what made OP so important and influential was that it had a soul, it had a cause, it had a "reason for living." In its own unique understated way OP was a very rebellious magazine. It ran counter to dishonest and deceptive practices of other music magazines and record companies. And more importantly it offered an alternative to working through the old, corrupt corporate music business to get new sounds exposed. This is quite opposite of the direction Option has proceeded. The soul of Option languishes in conformity. Rather than pointing the way toward severing the ties with the old intellectual systems and procedures for distributing and creating innovative, invigorating, and EVOLUTIONARY sounds, with each new issue Option seems to be pointing back to those old establishment ways. That Option should take this direction, one that is so divergent from the goals of OP, and yet try to associate itself so closely with the OP legacy, is a classic form of co-Option which unfortunately taints the reputation of OP. I'm not saying Option's publisher is evil, he's more like the receptive, neutrality of agar in a petri dish. Innocuous by itself, but if a few corporate mad scientists have a chance to introduce a few germs and they take hold--watch out. Is there still hope? I hope so. I'd hate to see the rug pulled out from under the many good, well-meaning people who have contributed to Option in the past. For the sake of everyone I'd love to be proved wrong. Make up your own minds. But, don't say I didn't warn you.

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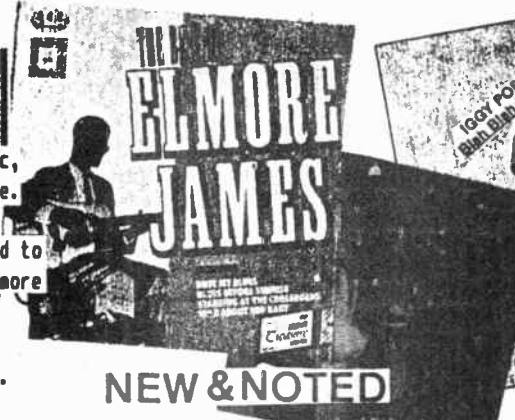
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Overthrow (POB 392, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013, USA; 212-533-5026; \$1) Published by the Yippies (Youth International Party Information Service) this tabloid provides all sorts of information about repressive, scandalous and illegal government and big business activities and suggests ways to counteract such. Attempts to make overturning the capitalist system sound fun and adventurous. Good Abbie Hoffman (Yippie! founder) interview and lengthy international contact lists in Vol. 8, No. 2.

Om The Whole World (812 Stadelman Ave., Akron, OH 44320, USA) Homegrown rock zine from Bob Forward. Recent issue concentrated on bands associated with the Homestead label. **Pandemonium** (c/o Jack Stevenson, POB 483, Elmira, NY 14902-0483, USA; \$7) This is the book to get if you are interested in the opinions, insights and perversities of any of the following personalities: Charles Manson, William Burroughs, Al Goldstein, Charles Bukowski and John Waters. It seems that Jack Stevenson has had long-running letter exchanges with most of them. He prints some of those letters (including photocopies of Bukowski's original, typo-filled letters) and adds some interviews to round it all out. Published in a magazine format. 62 pages.

Parler's Bark (POB 02480, Portland, OR 97202, USA) Young person's music zine that welcomes contributions.

Party Fears (c/o David Gerard, 17 Simper St., Wembley 6014, W. Australia; \$2) Homegrown rock music zine that will give you a taste of the sounds of Australia.

Peace Magazine (Box 490, Adelaide St. Station, Toronto, Canada, M5C 2J6; 416-789-2294; \$2) World peace news and issues. Kinda tame and self-assuring and seemingly linked to the old "peace movement" of the early 1960s.

Popfolk (Polyfidelious Educational Productions, POB 3912, Eugene, OR 97403, USA) Newsletter for those interested in polyfidelity ("Group" marriage as opposed to "open" marriage.) **Pollution Control Newsletter** (1725 E. 115 St., Cleveland, OH 44106, USA; 216-791-7286; \$1) Pollution Control is an organization that for a reasonable fee distributes independent recordings to indie-oriented radio stations. The newsletter is filled with related contact and source addresses, letters and articles, including the always informative and well-thought-out regular feature "Trouble-shooting Little Radio." Past issues have been strong on BMI and ASCAP royalty issues as they pertain to independents, and strong editorials against proposed Home Taping tax laws. Pennie Stasik and Mark Edwards are the driving force behind this project and their intelligence, hardwork, sincerity and altruism make them excellent contacts for anyone interested in making the radio airwaves more interesting.

Popular Reality (POB 3402, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, USA; 50 cents) For "Social Nihilists" this tabloid presents an interesting mish mash of anarchist and related thought and news clippings and humor.

Processed World (55 Sutter St. #829, San Francisco, CA 94104, USA; \$3) A very professional looking quarterly magazine for harassed office workers and corporate slaves who secretly wish to shit on their bosses and tear down the whole fuck'n system. Lots of provocative articles and some humor, too.

Puke On The World (3133 Harriet Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55408, USA) Four pages of puke-on-the-world humor.

Puncture (1674 Filbert #3, San Francisco, CA 94123, USA; 415-771-5127; \$2) I think they stopped sending us this sharp looking music zine after we visited the editor's house and exposed her secrets (she's well-educated, a socialist and uses lots of pseudonyms). So I had to buy it at a record store which I didn't mind much because it always contains some very good writing (analysis even) by people who still think that punk or rock or whatever-ya-call-it can be used to save this god-forsaken world. All this plus good grammar and nary a typo or crooked column to be found. (Somebody's not taking enough mind-altering drugs?) 47 pages.

Pyrotechnics (c/o Gail and Jamie Hanrahan, POB 261687, San Diego, CA 92126-0998, USA; \$1) Just like a homegrown music zine, only this is about Science Fiction and includes all the usual: reviews, letters, drawings, essays, addresses, odds and ends and pleas for contributions (though they seem to be doing pretty well at 56 pages.)

The Quimby Quarterly (POB 281, Astor Station, Boston, MA 02123, USA; \$3?) A compendium of work from "the Boston arts community" this is a really fine looking compilation of photography, drawings, comix, and brief pieces of writing. It's underground and homegrown but approaches the polish and sharpness of high-brow art journals. 42 bright-white cardstock photocopy pages with high-resolution black printing.

Re@D (POB 867, Morro Bay, CA 93442, USA; \$1) Punk zine very concerned with liberty and human rights. Covers local punk issues also.

Random Thought (POB 5341, Station B, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8R 6S8; \$1) Local, handsome "alternative" tabloid of culture, art and music.

Rear Garden (c/o CRSG Radio Sir George, 1455 de Maisonneuve, room H647, Canada H3G 1M8; \$1) Music tabloid and radio program guide. Mostly rock coverage but they're not afraid to cover the more extreme versions. One of the best of the genre. 24 pages.

Reasons For Living (c/o Jim DeFogatis, 74 Beach St., Jersey City, NJ 07307, USA; \$1) This issue (No. 2) was refreshing. Editor Jim asked a bunch of his rock fan acquaintances (many whose names appear as bylines in various fanzines) to write brief essays about things (music mostly) that provide them "Reasons For Living." It's got that pure, nothing fancy, "for the love of it", small-circle-of-friends, fanzine feel with no ads, and hardly any of the trendy, cynical "I'm cool and you're a wimp" attitude of some music zines. As if everyone let their guard down and dashed off something quick and from the heart, figurinn hardly anyone would see it anyway and having no preconceived notion of trying to fit in with a particular zine's "attitude." 28 pages.

The Reggae and African Beat (Bongo Productions, POB 29820, Los Angeles, CA 90029, USA; \$2) A very together, glossy covered magazine for reggae and African music fans. News, reviews, interviews and insights into the reggae culture and politics (though much of it is filtered through the minds and writing of North American anglos.) This magazine is out to PROMOTE reggae and African music (some of the regular contributors have commercial ties to the music they praise) so don't expect many disparaging words in these pages, even when they might be called for. Nonetheless, each issue is a welcome and important addition to our music publication library.

Rhika (Box 94, Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA; \$2.50) Glossy covered professional type fanzine mostly about the Grateful Dead and other offshoots of the '60s San Francisco sound. **Riding The Bimble** (c/o Richard Lopez, 1424 N. Concord Ave., Santa Maria, CA 93454, USA; 50 cents) Ten pages of mostly recording reviews. Mostly rock, but other stuff as well. Worthy of support.

The Rictus (2322 2nd. Ave., Seattle, WA 98121, USA; 206-728-7625; \$1) Free monthly local entertainment tabloid, big on rock, with some affection for independent musicians. A place to start to find out what's happening in the Northwest. **Rickie Rickette** (c/o Libby Gast, Route 3, Box 414, Trinity, NC 27370, USA; 919-434-2024; 50 cents) First issue. Twelve pages with four schedules of North Carolina rock bands and some more N.C. stuff.

Roger's Gallery (POB 480892, Los Angeles, CA 90048, USA; \$1) Newsletter "dedicated to the preservation and modernization of British Isles Folk music." Has its heart and typewriter in a good place. 9 pages.

The Rubber Fanzine (POB 2432, Bellingham, WA 98227-2432, USA; \$1.50) If you are creating art with rubber stamps, editor Rudi Rubberoid, will likely be interested, just as you will be interested in this here zine.

Subverting The Dissident Press (Center for Investigative Reporting, 54 Mint St., 4th floor, San Francisco, CA 94103, USA; 415-543-1200; \$2) Articles in professional reporter style that document what we already know: that the C.I.A. and F.B.I. won't stop at any dirty tricks and illegal activity to harass or shut down U.S.

newspapers and magazines that print opinions and information that they don't want people to hear. Learn how they cover their tracks. And their power keeps growing as new laws give them even more power to harass well-meaning citizens. Not that the law means much to them anyway. Explains the horrific weaknesses in the Freedom of Information Act and Reagan's efforts to eliminate the F.O.I. completely. 30 pages. **Schiam** (c/o Janet Janet, 135 Cole St., San Francisco, CA 94117, USA; stamps?) Mini-mail art zine. 12 small pages.

SFTG (POB 2516, Cypress, CA 90630-1615, USA; \$2) Youthful rock and punk type zine with high quality paper and printing (color too), lots of photos, a friendly attitude and all the usuals: rec and pub and show reviews, interviews, etc. 28 pages. **Stranded Slime** (1646 Yakona Rd., Baltimore, MD 21204, USA; two .39 stamps) Within the cutting pasting and handwriting, this homegrown punky rock stuff photocopy zine has a slimey voice of its own and is better than most of its ilk. **Sick Teen** (POB 918, Green Bay, WI 54305, USA; stamps) A bunch of rock reviews, wrestling pictures, magazine clippings, live reviews all packed into a trashy but lively layout. The very small print throughout makes it very difficult to extract the meat of the matter. 16 pages. **Sipapu** (c/o Neal Peattie, Rt. 1, Box 216, Winters, CA 95694, USA; \$4) "A newsletter for librarians, collectors, and others interested in the alternative press..." This is excellent. Reviews and interviews by very perceptive and open minded Noel Peattie. 48 pages. **Steazoid Express** (POB 799, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009, USA) This issue is a long, detailed, behind the scenes story of a man working the porno, sleaze theatres on New York's 42nd Street. **Smile** (84b Whitechapel High St., London E1) Recent issue was an avant-garde philosophical tract outlining one person's opinion of the succession of avant-garde art movements since the 1800s.

Social Anarchism (Atlantic Center for Research and Education, 2743 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218, USA; \$3) If you think that Anarchism is just a lot of cliches and sloganeering and calls for disorder and mayhem, you would do well to read this periodical of essays and reviews that add a very mature, rational voice to the anarchist movement. **Storm Warning** (c/o Steve Willis, 385 1/2 Irving, Pullman, WA 99163; \$2.50) The latest comix offering from the "Man who won't sell-out" (rumour has it, on good authority, that Willis has been courted by Esquire, National Lampoon, and other mags, but stubbornly maintains an "underground" status). Storm Warnings is a savage attack on modern religion, metaphysical, and born-again thinking and lifestyle rendered in a variety of cartooning styles coupled with mature, thoughtful storytelling. Creative nihilism from the great northwest.—John E

Suburban Muckraker (8814 Appleseed Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45249, USA; \$1) Scrappy rock zine with the usual reviews, interviews and "semi-qualified, semi-sensible rantings." **Susstimes** (POB 6425, Minneapolis, MN 55406, USA; stamps) First issue. "Devoted to covering the new music scene in the Twin Cities." Rock. 8 pages. Promising start.

The Sweet Ride (T.B.S. Publications, 2431 N. High St., #25, Columbus, OH 43202, USA; 3 stamps or trade or \$) Another rock n' roll zine premier. Photocopy, tiny print, interview with The Bad Crabs and more. Definitely has its own style and I like it. And yes, Dag Nabbit, there are others who feel just the way you do.

Time Warm (Zip-a-di-do-da Publishing, 37 E. Hudson, Dayton, OH 45405, USA; \$1 or trade) The center piece of this cut and paste, photocopy zine is an historical/philosophical tract on diners, including notes on the contemporary diner scene. Plus some poems and other odds and ends. I think a more serious attention to layout would have helped a bit. 20 pages. Hey, wait, the new issue arrived and the layout is much improved. (And thanks for the kind words about Sound Choice's place in the universe.) **Troubled Times** (POB 1539, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, USA; \$1) Feisty alternative zine offering a taste of anarchy to challenge the knee-jerk, cliched liberalism of the locals. Some indie record reviews, too. **Twist!** (2381 Capital S. W., Battle Creek, MI 49015, USA; \$1?) A mish-mash of press and advertising clippings, plus commentary make this a homegrown, photocopy zine satirizing modern culture. 8 pages. **\$200 Billion Zine** (c/o Bill DeLeo, 8 Beech, Merrimack, NH 03054, USA; 25 cents) Young straight-edge skateboarder steps into the lower end of the zine scene with 16 pages.

Uncle Fester (c/o Jake Wisely, 2235 France Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55416, USA; 612-922-3161; \$2) Homegrown alternative rock zine, heavy on Minneapolis sounds. Clean production.

The University-Military Connection (Vacant Lots Press, 2743 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218, USA; \$1.50) Pamphlet offering confirmation of what you probably already guessed or experienced: U.S. universities work hand in hand with the military to create the weapons, soldiers and strategies of war and world domination. Topics covered: The Faculty Connection; indirect and direct forms of military control; and Military Training and Recruitment on Campus. 20 pages. (A similar pamphlet is needed regarding the Highschool—military connection.)

U2/USA Magazine (c/o Fred Mills, 2907-D Violet Dr., Charlotte, NC 28205, USA; \$4) Lots of gushing news, reviews and other thoughts about the band U2. Very optimistic group of contributors and if you love U2 you're invited to contribute too. (Especially if you too feel that the U2 message can help save the world.) A true fanciufel feel. Well done. 54 neat and clean pages.

Vertical Upr (802 Colusa Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707, USA; \$1 or trade) Homegrown photocopy skateboarding zine, with a little music coverage. Lots of grainy photos of outrageous skating maneuvers. Well done.

Victory Music Review (POB 7515, Bonney Lake, WA 98390, USA; 863-6617) Acoustic music society newsletter. Reviews and calendar of events for Northwest region of U.S.

Video Guide (Satellite Video Exchange Society, 261 Powell St., Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6A 1G3; \$2) High quality tabloid for those interested in what kinds of "alternative" things artists are doing with video cameras. **W.D.C. Patriot** (Chow Chow Productions, POB 43311, Washington D.C., 20010-9-311, USA; \$1.50) Among the top of punk and rock type fanzines. Big and thick and almost a professional approach but with the youth and funk of the finest homegrown, photocopy fanzines. Lots of comix.

What Goes On (c/o Velvet Underground Appreciation Society, 5721 S.E. Laguna Ave., Stuart, FL 33497, USA; 305-283-6195) 56 quality pages for the devoted Velvet Underground fan and collector.

Writing Dept. (POB 5599, San Francisco, CA 94101, USA; \$2.50) This issue (#2) is a handsome tabloid format zine that continues to explore/promote the San Francisco underground rock-type music scene but also covers out-of-towners. **The Warrior Poet** (c/o Michael R. Hill, 327 Pacific St., Franklin, PA 16323, USA) Poetry and Comix. A nice mix. 24 pages. **XEX Graphics Newsletter** (POB 240611, Memphis, TN 38124, USA; stamps) Favorite pen 'n' ink primitive Bob "X" provides a bunch of comix news with plenty of contact addresses of comix artists, and related zines of interest. Tape reviews, too. A good contact.



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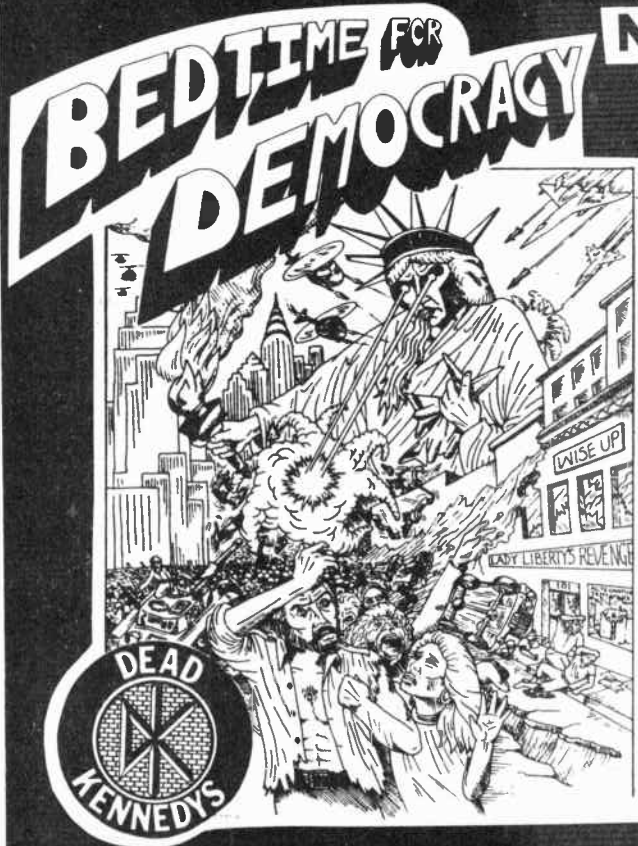
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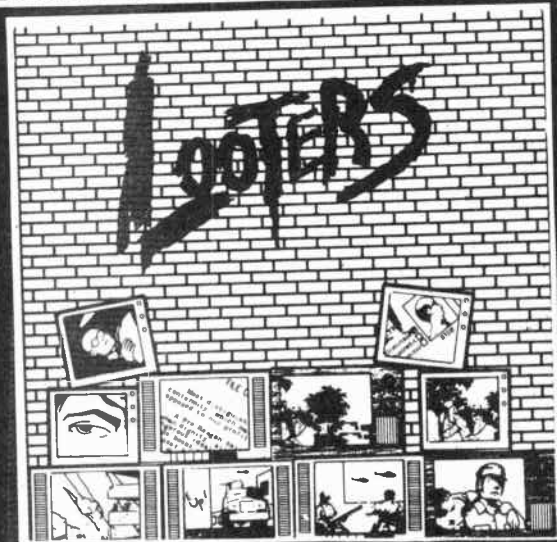
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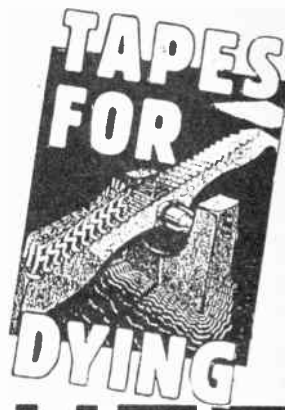
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THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE can't be found in chain stores. In fact very few stores in this world carry the kind of recordings and publications we at Sound Choice are especially interested in. But thank goodness there are mail order opportunities to explore. Below is a list of catalogs we have received that carry loads of that fringe stuff that rarely makes its way into the shelves at your local shopping mall. If you are in doubt about any information, send a SASE (Self-addressed, stamped envelope) to the address with your info request. And tell them where you heard about them. **MAIL NOW!**



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Amok (POB 875112, Los Angeles, CA 90087, USA)

Lots of unusual, sensational, self-help books, and manuals that would never be allowed to be catalogued in a high school library. **Art Tape/ Red West** (POB 275, CH-8037 Zurich, Switzerland) Long list of cassettes available of live shows of a variety rock music. Joy Division, Cramps, Black Flag, Violent Femmes, Patti Smith, much more. Many compilation cassettes available too.

Calypso Now (Postfach 12, CH 2500 Biel 3, Switzerland; tel. 032-220-897) International collection of avant-garde and underground rock cassettes. **Canadian River Music** (4106 Tyler St., Amarillo, TX 79110, USA) You'll find recordings of Texan and Canadian folk recordings described here. Some other stuff too.

Canadisc (c/o Paul E. Comeau, POB 142, Saulnierville, Nova Scotia, Canada, B0W 2Z0; tel. 902-769-3288) A very comprehensive, high quality, descriptive catalog of Canadian independent label recordings of all genres.

Carthage Records (POB 667, Rocky Hill, NJ 08553, USA) A good collection of rereleases of English folk-rock (Fairport Convention, Sandy Denny, Nick Drake, others) plus a few African records, children's records, and assorted odds and ends. A professional company with an honest, down-home tone. **Cause And Effect** (POB 30383, Indianapolis, IN 46230, USA; tel. 317-259-0912) Experimental and electronic music cassettes from a variety of dedicated sound artists are available through this small but descriptive catalog of on-the-edge releases by the Cause And Effect and the Ladyl-Frith labels.

Citizens for a Non-Linear Future (POB 2026, Madison Sq. Sta., New York, NY 10159) Small catalog of recordings of experimental and improvisational musics.

Clem/Clas (POB 86010, N. Vancouver, BC Canada, V7L 4J5) A variety of independent label electronic music recordings are listed and described. Many items will be hard to find anywhere else. **Daybreak Express Records** (POB 250, Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn, NY 11215, USA; tel. 718-499-0487) Jazz mail order company with a very long list (no descriptions) of records that are available.

Decay Int. (POB 240, 2300 AE Leiden, The Netherlands; tel. 09-31(0)104767471) Small collection of cassettes and booklets of an experimental, avant-garde nature.

De Fabriek (c/o Richard Van Dellen, Molenvweg 90, 8012 Zwolle, Netherlands) Small catalog of experimental music from various artists.

Down Home Music (10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530, USA; ph. 415-525-1494) This is a great bi-monthly newsletter/catalog featuring reviews and ordering info for recordings of the following genres: blues and gospel, bluegrass, country, American folk, vintage jazz, ethnic music, British, Irish and European folk and vintage rock and roll. High quality and high integrity outfit.

Elderly Instruments (1100 N. Washington, POB 14210-S12, Lansing, MI 48901, USA; tel. 517-372-7890) Over 8,000 Lps and cassettes. Bluegrass, folk, blues, jazz, old time country, and more, listed by category of music and by artist. **Emmalene** (222 Hillbury Road, Warlingham, Surrey CR3 9TF, England) List of about 100 recordings available through this address. Euro-industrial and some other stuff. **Eurock** (POB 13718, Portland, OR 97213, USA) European progressive rock is at the roots of this organization, but that doesn't mean you won't read about music from other continents as well. Knowledgeable descriptions of the available recordings will give you an idea of where the "progressive school" of music has lead us to. A solid source. **Face the Music** (POB 163142, Sacramento, CA 95816, USA; tel. 916-428-8050) This is an extremely extensive and eclectic mail order catalog of THOUSANDS of interesting and/or hard to get and rare records (new and used). Some comix too. The items included are selected by true music fans (especially rock) who are the same people who owned and operated, before the fire, the late-great Rather Ripped Records of Berkeley. The prices are reasonable and credit cards are accepted. Looking through the pages of this is as enjoyable as looking through the stacks at a really great record store.

Floating World/Media Wave (804 North Cherokee, Hollywood, CA 90038, USA) Catalog and flyers listing underground cassettes and records and publications from all over. These people have an unusual distribution policy as stated in Media Wave: "People send us five copies of their work, which we sell at the price they ask for. NO MARGIN! When all five are sold, we send them a check and ask for five more. We are always looking for new material..." They also sell mailing lists.

Gravelvoice Records (POB 2271, Bloomington, IN 47402) Punk and hardcore releases from this tiny midwest label.

Hearts of Space (POB 31321, San Francisco, CA 94131, USA; ph. 415-495-0537) A place to track down "new age" and "spacemusic" recordings. **Insane Music Contact** (c/o Alain Nette, 2 Grand Rue, B-6190 Trazegnies, Belgium) Belgian underground cassette label with a lot of international compilations of experimental and home-made music.

Intercollegiate Broadcasting System Program Catalog (Box 592, Vails Gate, NY 12584, USA) Public Affairs programs packaged to sell to college radio stations. If you've created a program suitable for nation-wide college airplay, they may want to syndicate it, though it's not clear if they pay for such work.

Jazz Archives (333 W. 52 st., New York, NY 10019, USA) Unusual and rare recordings of early jazz legends: Bechet, Charlie Christian, The Count, Mezz Mezzro, Bunny Berigan, others.

K Newsletter (Box 7154, Olympia, WA 98507, USA) Small, homev catalog of some unusual recordings, not easily pigeon-holed, but the catalog definitely has a voice and style all its own. Includes works by Beat Happening, Steve Fisk, John Foster Jandek, The Jave, Shonen Knife, more. **Kicking Mule** (POB 158, Alderpoint, CA 95411, USA; tel. 707-926-5312) Great catalog of records, cassettes, music books, and teaching tapes for acoustic guitar, banjo, dulcimer, fiddle, harp, autoharp, harmonica and computer. **Ladyslipper** (POB 3130 Durham, NC 27705, USA) "The world's most comprehensive catalog and resource guide of records and tapes by women...from New Wave to New Age..." Lives up to it's billing. Includes descriptions of every recording.

Lark In The Morning (Box 1176, Mendocino, CA 95460, USA; ph. 707-964-5569) Unusual acoustic instruments and books.

Loompanics Unlimited (POB 1197, Port Townsend, WA 98368, USA) More than 150 pages, describing unusual books Weapons, tax evasion, paralegal skills, drugs, life extension, surveillance, investigative reporting are some of the many subjects. A real mind-blower of a catalog.

Micraft Group (PB 11, B-9880 Aalter, Belgium) Electronic and experimental cassette releases from a variety of artists are listed here. **Midnight Records** (POB 390, Dept. O, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10011, USA; ph. 212-675-2768) Midnight produces and distributes underground rock records, which as of late means garage rock, sixties punk revival, and other interesting odds and ends from the rock fringes.

Mr. Stu (1716 Ocean Ave., Suite 9-L, San Francisco, CA 94112, USA) Small catalog of hard to find jazz books and discographical information.

Musicade (POB 880292, San Diego, CA 92108) These folks will sell you, for \$10 each, old backstage passes for past concerts by most of the million-seller rock groups. Keychains, posters and patches too. **Notable Women Records and Tapes** (Box 3294, Str. P. Thunder Bay, Ont. Canada N1E 2Z8) Recordings with "social consciousness" from Canadian women are available here.

Planetarium (5, Quai Turckheim, 67000 Strasbourg, France; tel. 88 221807) You need to know how to read French to get through this small catalog of underground and avant-garde music.

Progressive Music International (POB 93404, Milwaukee, WI 53203, USA) Long list (no description:) of mostly European records of the "progressive" school, i.e. stuff ranging from Eno, Tangerine Dream, Can, Hawkwind, Gong and much, much more.

Progressive Records (POB 846, Livermore, CA 94550, USA; tel. 415-447-3248) About 75 "progressive" music releases listed, no descriptions.

Radium (Sodra Allegatan 3, 413 01 Gothenburg, Sweden; tel. 031-130039) About 20 records by Swedish rock and avant-garde artists. **Ralph Records/Buy Or Die** (105 Minna #331, San Francisco, CA 94105, USA) Ralph, the avant-garde record label that brought us The Residents, has a lot of unusual records, T-shirts, buttons, etc. to sell you. Some have set prices, some you make an offer on.

Raunch (375 W. 400 S. Salt Lake City, UT 84101, USA) Comprehensive catalog of punk, hardcore and "wave-industrial" recordings, T-shirts and stickers. **Recommended Records** (3E7 Wandsworth Road, London, SW 8; tel. 01-622-8834) A pioneering avant-garde record label continues to expand its catalog as always with unique, interesting, high quality recording projects not easily pigeon-holed into a single style or genre but always hovering in the realm of what has become known as "Recommended-type stuff". **Red Beans** (2240 N. Magnolia, Chicago, IL 60614, USA; te. 472-4787) Fed Beans is a small record label issuing recordings of unique Chicago Blues artists.

Red Table Prints (330-A West Uintah #224, Colorado Springs, CO 80905, USA) T-shirts and buttons with radical and leftist political statements and symbols. **Relix** (POB 94, Brooklyn, NY



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March-April	7	1/16	2/2	2/13
May-June	8	3/17	3/30	4/1
July-Aug	9	5/18	6/1	6/12
Sept-Oct	10	7/13	7/27	8/7
Nov-Dec	11	9/14	9/28	10/9
Jan-Feb	12	11/9	11/23	12/4

11229, USA) Records, posters, and assorted items for Grateful Dead fans. Relix Records releases out-of-print Dead records, and new releases from related artists and bands such as Robert Hunter, Kingfish, New Riders, others.

Rhythm and News/Jazz Record Mart (11 W Grand Ave., Chicago, IL 60610, USA; ph. 312-222-1474) Recordings of many jazz styles are available from this combination record store/mail order outfit. **ROIR** (611 Broadway, Suite 725, New York, NY 10012, USA; tel. 212-477-0563) Live and unusual cassette-only releases of recordings by influential alternative (mostly rock based) bands and artists. Includes Television, Flipper, Germs, Lounge Lizards, J. Thunders, Bush Tetras, many more. **RRRecords** (151 Paige St., Lowell, MA 01852, USA) Selective catalog of "electronic, avant-garde and experimental soundworks." This is the place to find stuff that will be very difficult to find anywhere else. **Subelectrick Institute** (475 21st Ave., San Francisco, CA 94121, USA) About a dozen twisted folk, rock and experimental releases from this new and growing label.

Shenachie's Reggae Review (1 Hollywood Ave., HoHoKus, NJ 07423) The mighty Shenachie record label offers a great newsletter/catalog with enthusiastic but objective descriptions of tons of reggae and African recordings available through their mailorder. **Sound of Pig** (c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023, USA) This is one of the most prolific underground cassette labels. More than 40 Sound of Pig cassettes that include music and sounds like you've never heard before from sound artists from around the world. Rock bottom prices (\$2-\$3) and trading is okay too!

Square Deal Record Company (50 Prado Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-1002, USA; ph. 805-543-3636) This company is geared to selling stuff to record stores. They sell rock and roll buttons (world's largest collection), key chains, books, and budget and out of print records from various genres, and lots of other accessories to keep a record store stocked with plenty of things to sell.

The **Starkman Concern** (POB 875257, Los Angeles, CA 90087, USA) An interesting collection of recordings from the L.A. avant-rock community and beyond. **Happy Squid**, Independent Project, the **Solid Eye** and other labels. **Stride Cassettes** (80 Lord St., Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 7DL, England) Experimental rock, jazz, and pop recordings and publications from a variety of artists. **Suomi Sounds** (221A South Lamar, Austin, TX 78704, USA; ph. 512-479-0367) If you are looking for recordings from Finland, this is the catalog to get and these are the people to talk to. **Swinging Axe Productions** (POB 3741, Northridge, CA 91323, USA) A simple concise catalog featuring some very unusual and interesting cassettes ranging from high quality industrial/power electronics to field recordings of tribal music from the Amazon, New Guinea and South American jungles. **Tapes For Dying** (POB 390, 1970 AJ, IJmuiden, Holland) This is an interesting, provocative and fantastically designed cassette catalog. A variety of tapes, from a variety of sound artists, including Willem DeRidder and Cora, are offered. Simply reading about these cassettes is bound to inspire other would-be sound artists. The accompanying artwork is masterful. **Target Videocassette Catalog** (678 S. Van Ness, San Francisco, CA 94110) These music video pioneers offer an unprecedented, mouth-watering collection of historic footage from the hard edges of rock culture and beyond. Available videos include Avengers, Bauhaus, Black Flag, Cramps, MDC, Paul Dresher, Diamanda Galas, Mark Pauline, Throbbing Gristle, Tuxedomoon, Zev and more. In the underground spirit.

Time Based Arts (Bloemgracht 121, 1016 KK, Amsterdam, Holland; tel. 229764) A long, comprehensive and impressive list of avant-garde recordings from around the world. A lot of "New Music." **Trax** (Vittore Baroni, Via Raffaelli 2, 55042 Forte Del Marmi, Italy; tel. 0584/89445) Small catalog of unusual recordings and various art projects.

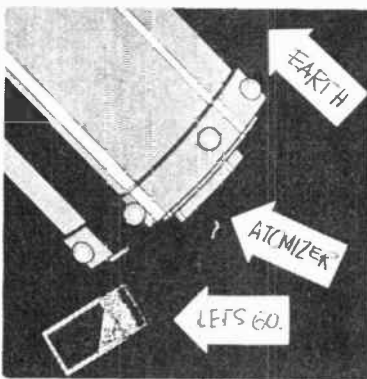
Warpt West Music (POB 8045, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-8045) Small cassette-label with some challenging, quality experimental and underground music recordings. **Wayside Music** (POB 6517, Wheaton, MD 20906-0517, USA) A high-integrity, descriptive catalog of a wide-variety of avant-garde music. From jazz to noise to space and beyond. A solid source. Simply reading this catalog is like getting a college course on modern music.

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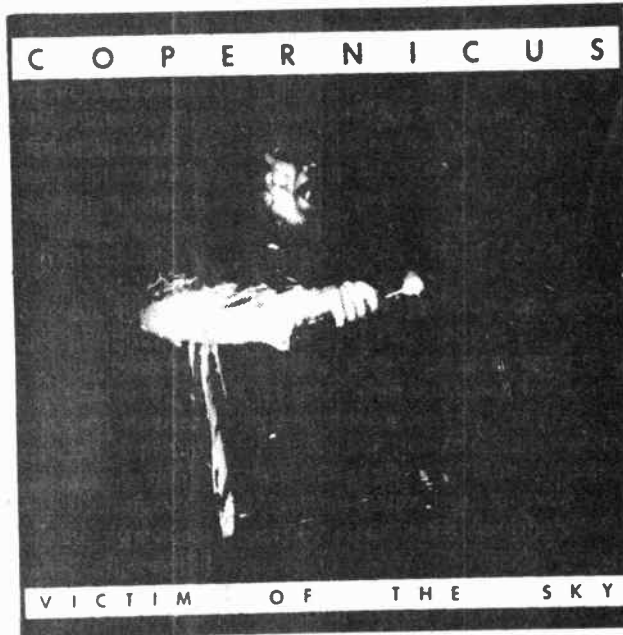
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MUSIC OF THE BAYAKA PYGMIES

"Sound exists only when it is going out of existence." Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*


By William Levy

My friend Stefan is pretty weird himself. If he's not dragging me off to hatch conspiracies with Stolichnaya drinking Soviet officials in a northern European capital, then it's gate-crashing an International Fascist Festival (the so-called *Iron Pilgrimage*) or meeting Laurie Anderson backstage after her sell-out performance. So I wasn't overly surprised when he epiphanized in my house recently with one Louis Sarno, a quiet olive-skinned American from New Jersey in his early thirties, shyly dressed in 'Born in the USA' gear, a clean white T-shirt, jeans and jogging shoes without socks.

Louis had just returned from wintering in Central Africa--"practically in the Congo and a few miles from the Cameroons," he says,--where he had been living with the Bayaka pygmies, recording their music and their storytelling.

Aficionados of the bizarre travel story will remember *Keep The River On Your Right* by Tobian Schneebaum (Grove Press, 1969). In that book the author describes going deep into the Peruvian jungle on a Fulbright scholarship and in the process becoming a gay cannibal. Louis Sarno, too, is an investigator who is less interested in returning with an anthropological account, then with a record of his own becoming. Some people are born in the wrong gender, or wrong time. Louis is clearly someone who has found his spiritual kin among singing black midgets.

This is his story:



"It would have been impossible using a reel-to-reel machine. I did 24 hours of recording, using a Sony DCT 5M cassette machine and two Sennheiser mics. About 15 hours are very good," he tells me. "These are social documents, unlike other recordings there is no beginning or end. I recorded the Ceremony Preceding the Hunt, songs to celebrate the reappearance of the moon, virtuoso performances as well as typical candid conversations; they frequently laugh. My big mistake was not taking more cassettes. I could have used up what I brought in one day. I wasn't prepared for the musical experience."

Louis is man with a deep audio obsession. He gave away his collection of classical records when he left the States seven years ago. Stopped listening to music. That is, until he heard traditional African sounds on a Belgian pirate radio station. "That set me off," he says "Pygmy music impressed me most of all. And I always wanted to go to a rainforest, so that was there too."

Like many an adventurer before him, he failed trying to raise interest for his quest from a museum. But he did receive encouragement from Colin Turnbull, an English anthropologist, who offered to send a cassette with his voice on it as a kind of audio "letter-of-introduction" to the pygmies he knew in Zaire. Louis decided to do it all on his own, however.

He wanted to go to a more remote place and raised the money himself by doing construction work for a whore house in Amsterdam's Red Light district. Then he set off. His first plan was to go overland from Tunisia. "But they were superparanoid," he remembers. "I was arrested as a spy twice because of carrying around a tape recorder." Then back to Paris where he found a travel agent who would sell him a cheap \$400 one-way ticket to Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic.

"When I made it clear in Bangui that I wasn't interested in air-conditioning, a shower or electricity, I got invitations everywhere. I stayed with a family who gave me their 17-year-old daughter to sleep with, and she taught me Sango,

the national language." Louis continues, with laconic intensity.

"After three weeks I got permission to go visit an area in the rainforest. But only after bribing the secretary of the Minister of Information. I gave him a watch. And also I had to promise the national museum to donate copies of all the tapes I would make.

"Of course, traveling in Africa is not like Europe or the States. In order to go southwest I first had to head northwest, paying trucks to take me from village to village. Once I was on a bus that had room for 31 passengers. We came across a similar bus that had broken down in the middle of a deserted savannah. The passengers had been stranded there for 36 hours. So we stopped and picked them up. It took over an hour just to squeeze everyone in. Then as soon as we started a fierce and violent fight broke out, using knives. Finally I got to Nola, a village in a forest on a river, consisting of huts made of leaves."

Louis shrugs and goes on with his tale. In Nola I hung out with the village schoolteacher. He hadn't been paid in six months so made his living making palm wine. Most of which we drank ourselves. One day Claude took me to a pygmy camp about half an hour walk away. They were having some ceremony. A funeral, I think. That evening I felt the power of invisible language for the first time. It was something I was to experience often with pygmy music!

"About 4 a.m. I woke to a wooo, wooo, wooo sound," he says. "Sound was flying through the forest. I recognized it as what Colin Turnbull called the "sacred voice" in his book *The Forest People*. Suddenly the sound came closer and started banging on my door."

"You mean the pygmies were banging on your door?" I ask skeptically.

"No, not the pygmies. The sound itself. After that I decided I wanted to be even more among these people than ever and went further south to Bayanga, the heart of the pygmy country. After all, the central African rainforest is about half the size of all Europe, with

the Ubangi River dividing the western from the eastern part."

Louis acknowledges that save for knowing he spent about two months in a pygmy camp, the experience was a kaleidoscope of impressions making it impossible to tell the rest of his story in any chronological order. He does remember two incidents that helped him make real contact with these people.


Sitting around the campfire one day, Louis noticed one of the pygmies smoking grass. He asked for a toke. "That made a big difference in my relationship with them. You know, when you smoke with someone things become more relaxed."

The other event was a kind of trial period.

"I was completely at their mercy for food," he says. "At first they half starved me. They all file their teeth into points and were eating meat. Monkey. Gazelle. Tortoise and porcupine. They gave me manioc, a vegetable called cocc they pick in the forest and a sort of catfish cooked with all its innards. Well, not really a fish, something the women picked out of the mud along the river bank. This lasted for about ten days. I never complained. Then one of the old men came to me and asked if I liked the food. I answered him enthusiastically, 'Yes, it was very good.' He laughed. Then they started to feed me well. And about the same time I was given meat they let me see the real ceremonies."

Louis reaches into a plastic sack and takes out a cassette. "Here is the first of the series I plan to produce commercially," he tells me, then puts the cassette in the tape machine and hands me the printed wrap-around.

The Bayaka pygmies, it seems, are a nomadic people who live in the dense forest watered by the upper Sanha and its tributaries. They spend about half the year--the rainy season--deep in the forest hunting and gathering. The other half--the dry season--they camp near the edge of the forest, where they supplement part-time hunting and gathering with chores for the villagers in exchange for manioc and iron, as well as money, with which they buy tobacco, salt, sugar and mbakou (corn



spirits). They hunt with nets, spears and crossbows (whose origin is obscure.)

Life at a Bayaka camp, though not without conflict, is characterized by an underlying serenity. Nowhere is this more evident than in their music.

The first track on the A side is called "Balonyona on Geeda." The geeda is a small hand-held harp with eight strings (or less) and a gourd sound box at the bottom; it is often played while walking. And Balonyona, Louis claims, is the most talented geeda player in the camp. Indeed, his finger pickin' is as fast as that of Earl Scruggs. Balonyona accompanies himself with a vocalized refrain and chant.


The second track is a "Song to Celebrate the Reappearance of the Moon." Sung mostly by women, this is one of the many pygmy songs reserved for this mystical, menstrual, monthly chronometer. Rapid drum beats are followed by antiphonal vocal responses. Haunting ancient music.

"Mokonjo," the third track, consists of joking music among the hunters, late at night around the fire. A typical example of the living oral tradition. After a harp overture one hears a metallic percussion sound, which persists throughout the laughing, singing, whistling, heavy breathing, shouting and instrumental interludes.

Louis explains: "The whole community is into music, everyone participates, there are no real spectators. And they are always trying things out for sound. That metallic sound you hear? Well, we were walking in the village together and saw a piece of iron." He grins. "I helped them steal it!"

More than 200 pygmies from three different camps participate in the "Ceremony at Mosapola"--the fourth and last track on Side A. Drums and incantations are used to call forth a *zengi* (forest spirit). Remembering the feeling, Louis is clearly moved by the memory of this event. Leaning forward, placing bare elbows on his dungaree knees, he describes what was going on:

"I never heard melodies like that, so I ran over with my tape recorder and saw a ten year-old girl whirling about and



dancing in the center of a circle. The adults were shouting encouragement. A mysterious figure draped in raffia fibres seemed to be dancing with her. As hard as I tried I couldn't see its face, if it had any. It kept coming in and out of the circle, at times lunging at the pursuing dancer, then disappearing back into the forest."

Side B begins with a "Sung Story" about a forest animal. It reminds me of the apophthegm of the chairman of my department at graduate school. His *ars rhetorica* was condensed into the oft repeated motto: "A good speech should be like rhythmical conversation." In this communal effort a man sings the story accompanied by the ubiquitous "colored girls singing" a sort of do-bedo-be-do, over and over again in the form of a rhyming couplet.

The next track is truly amazing. To pass the hot winter afternoons the Bayaka built a palm shelter extension to Louis's hut, hence the title "An Afternoon Under the Palm Shelter." These gatherings often turned into little concerts. In the selection presented here, Zaloge is persuaded to sing his new song accompanied on the geeda by his friend Akete while others tap out rhythms and interrupt with comments. Homer must have sounded like this, voicing the *Odyssey* to his mates.

Sometimes, Louis tells me, the pygmies danced all night, all the next day, all the next night--and then went hunting. About half of side B is given over to a recording of such an occasion. "Ceremony Preceding the Hunt" is divided into three parts. In the first, the Bayaka evoke certain forest spirits. Four such *zengi* appear in this ceremony, each manifesting itself as a giant leaf.

"The leaves were dancing," Louis says. He then points. "And each leaf was as big as your desk!" The second excerpt features a dialogue between one of these *zengi* and the Bayaka. Their strange falsetto voices and modulated cries can be heard in this recording. Here we become totally conscious of the different levels of concerns in pygmy music. They recognize that the voice is unique, because like other instruments it is rooted in the body and streams out



of the body to other mediums.

The last excerpt is a song to help, to aid and comfort, the withdrawal of the turbulent spirit back into the depths of the forest....

When the tape ends Louis confesses there was one ceremony he was absolutely unable to record. "It was full moon. They said: 'You will have trouble with your tape recorder.' I assured them that I never had problems before. As usual there was dancing and singing. The men in grass shirts and women in leaves. Yet, for some inexplicable reason my tape recorder didn't work this time. The tape kept jumping. The mics squeaked. When the pygmies saw this, they laughed at me.

Needless to say, Louis Sarno is a great fan of pygmies. They live a life without slack--they can break down their camp and disappear into the forest in just a few minutes. They are completely honest. They have an anarchist society, i.e., without rulers.

Louis also confesses that everything wasn't completely pleasant in Central Africa. The camp was crawling with lice, monster malarial insects which lay their eggs in your toes and grow into large worms. Nevertheless, he is now planning to return and go into the forest together with the pygmies during the next rainy season.

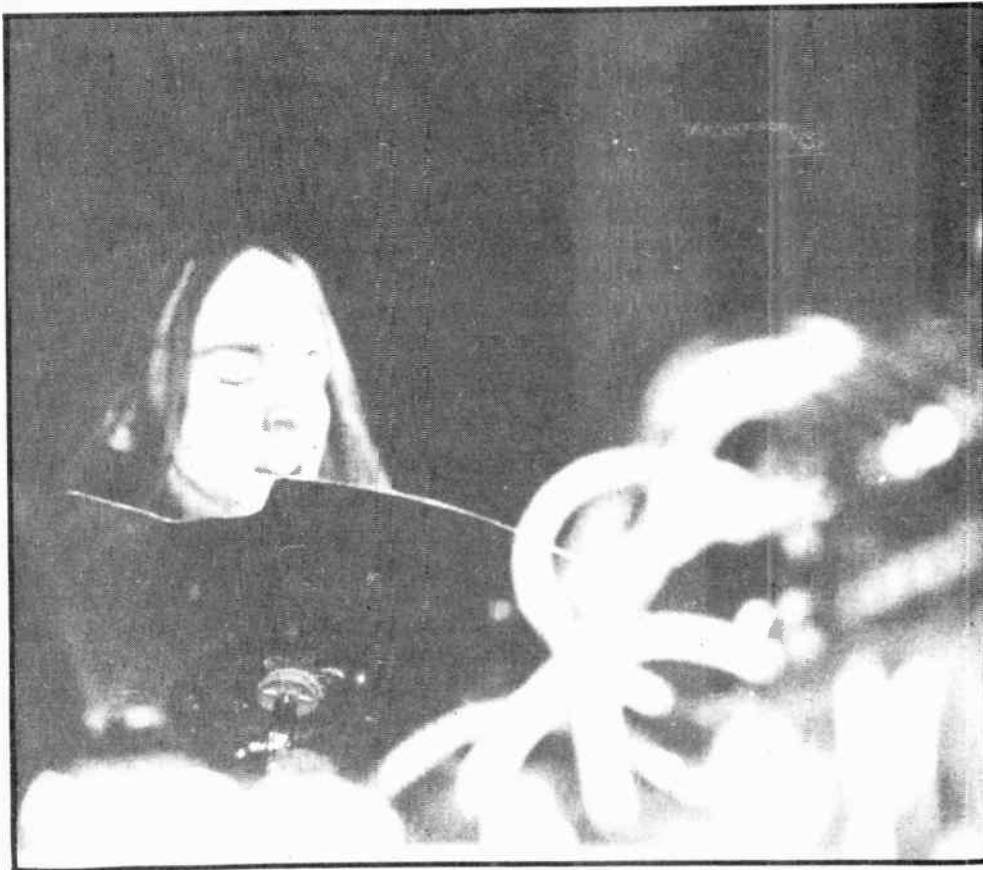
"While bathing," he says, "the women play tunes on the water with the palms of their hands and sing melodic counterpoint to these rhythms. It can be heard a mile away." His eyes gleam. "That's what I want to record next time."

MUSIC OF THE BAYAKA PYGMIES. Recorded by Louis Sarno, Jan.-Feb. 1986 in the Central African Rainforest. C90. Gondwana Music, 41 rue Vilain XIV, 1050 Brussels, Belgium.

William Levy is European correspondent for *High Times* magazine. His stories come flying through our transom at most appropriate times. See "The New Orality"; *Sound Choice* #3.

CHRIS CUTLER INTERVIEW: MUSIC AND POLITICS

Chris Cutler is a drummer (Henry Cow, Art Bears and currently: Cassiber, News From Babel, Duck & Cover, Lindsay Cooper's Film Music Orchestra, David Thomas & the Pedestrians/Wooden Birds & Les Quatre Guitarists de L'apocalypso Bar), author (most recently *File Under Popular: Theoretical & Critical Writings on Music*; November Books) record company proprietor (Recommended and Re Records, and editor/publisher of the *Re Records Quarterly* (a combination record and magazine package.)



This interview was conducted at Chris' house in London on August 3, 1986 by Ron Sakolsky.

Ron: As someone concerned with raising political consciousness, how does your form of musical expression attempt to reach this goal?

Chris: It's a very difficult thing to make an affective process conscious, and I have to admit I can't see that you can ever write out of the equation a mysterious element. Collaborative music is based on affective language: It has an emotional content that cannot be translated or reduced to words. It's the same with texts. If you want to make a political statement, you don't write song texts. That's not what song texts do--at the risk of being overly simplistic as Sam Goldwyn said: "If you want to get out some messages, hire Western Union".

Ron: You mentioned to me earlier that *Rock and Roll Confidential* was the only music magazine that you subscribed to from the states. To me, *Rock and Roll Confidential* does not seem at all concerned with the 'mysterious' road to political consciousness, and its format is certainly very different than your magazine, *Re Records Quarterly*. What then is the attraction for you?

Chris: Well, they have a radical approach, though their radicalism is largely confined to investigative journalism in relation to music. Their musical taste is certainly very American--classic rock and roll, mainstream, high profile. And, of course, the industry is capable of producing, or acting as a conduit for things, which are

radical, which change other people's lives. I think that was what Phil Ochs was getting at when he dressed as Elvis Presley at that famous concert, his life was changed by Elvis Presley. Now, anyone can say anything they like about Elvis--Colonel Tom Parker--the record industry--and all the rest of it, nevertheless, that's the channel the stuff came down. I think it's the affective spirit, and the spirit especially of black music and its importance, which inspired people like Dave Marsh (*RRC's* editor).

Rock and Roll Confidential is also radical in that it is absolutely committed to taking a political line, to making it quite clear that everything has a political dimension and it's not just a matter of 'taste', what you 'like' and 'don't like'. It's not okay if you want to go out and play Sun City. At the time of the Live Aid circus, *RRC* were the only people who actually bothered to find out whether all the black acts had been asked as the organizer claimed, and found they hadn't. Investigative journalism applied to the pop music industry. . . Who else does it? Not anybody. We've got three weekly papers in this country all of which are dedicated to the movement of fashion and product and none of which, with all the opportunity they have, ever stir up the slightest bit of trouble.

Ron: Delving further on this issue, in your book (*File Under Popular*), you make a point of wanting to personally avoid the trap of fusing political ideals and current pop trends in music. You say that form and content must advance simultaneously. The editors of *Rock and Roll Confidential* greatly admire someone like Bruce Springsteen, who is not much of a formal experimentalist. So you see a connection between what he's trying to do and the work of someone like Phil Ochs who you mentioned earlier? Where would Robert Wyatt and Billy Bragg fit in this regard, especially in terms of form and content?

Chris: It says in the Bible (laughter), "By their fruits, shall ye know them." I think the only continuum you can advance that will actually carry *all* those names would be one based on *effectiveness*: Do they change anything? Elvis Presley didn't change *my* life, but I'm absolutely convinced that he did change the lives of thousands of people. To people like Phil Ochs, for whom the change took the form of wanting to work in a particular way and crystallizing a certain ideal, which was actually a political ideal, Presley was very important. Ochs said, "Elvis Presley must become Che Guevara, or it's the end of America." He says exactly how he puts those things together.

I don't know how *Rock and Roll Confidential* puts Bruce Springsteen together, but I accept that they're able to do it, and, on that level, if it affects people, it must be effective. In an analytical way, I think it's much more difficult to be clear about the claims people make for what they're doing and their use of conventional pop music forms to carry political messages. I think what's interesting about people like Springsteen is that why ever *Rock and Roll Confidential* likes him it's *not* because he's deliberately trying to get some message across on the back of popular fashion music--it's because of *what he is*, what he represents. In other words, it's the way people are able to act as a kind of litmus test for a certain part of their own culture, and speak for a generation, that makes them important.

I certainly don't think that political action *has to be* conscious. Indeed, it's typically unconscious. Someone becomes a voice which expresses things a lot of other people feel but nobody's quite clear about. An effective voice, a voice of emotions. Not like giving a political speech and laying down a message, but bringing things together in a way that makes people feel something different--though it's drawn from their daily lives and experiences.

That's why Dylan was so important in his time. He *was* such a conduit, and Ochs continued to be one. I think the difference between Ochs and Dylan is that Ochs developed a conscious style which he then pursued in a conscious way and Dylan never did. Dylan moved on to new ground, followed his feelings, and ended up in a log cabin in the mountains catching rainbow trout, and not much use to anybody, as did nearly all the people who were the mentors of our generation.



Poetic language is a special language in and of itself. It has a long tradition. If you use poetic language, you have to *know* about its tradition. It speaks to parts of your understanding that are part of everyday normal life, but simultaneously exist in a dimension which is separate. (This is one of the reasons people can *believe* one thing and *do* another, and not really see the contradiction.)

Creating a consciousness is like putting a magnet near something; you set up a field so that you're grappling with the poetic and musical form--making aesthetic decisions, trying to *express*, all that--is done inescapably within, often against, this field. You set up a contradiction between the consciously shaped field on the one hand and the way you deal with specific problems of form, expression, interpretation and so forth on the other. And this field, which guides formation, also guides *interpretation* and *meaning*--the invisible and only arena where producer and consumer meet--and which, though made ultimately of the *meeting itself* is thus made under conditions of the maker's choosing. The question is whether the maker chooses consciously or unconsciously. Also, by imposing these limitations the music's producers give themselves matter to work with, problems to solve and--this is vital if you want to make something really *new*--work must be in large part an empirical process where, in the end, you *recognize a result* rather than set out to achieve something and then achieve it. If you set out with a goal and you achieve that goal, you achieve nothing since the goal was already achieved when you *thought* of it. You brought it into *being* which is OK, but big deal. What one is actually trying to do is transcend what it's impossible to imagine and arrive somewhere else that you couldn't have imagined: the unique result of the actual struggle with the material to get there. That's always a mysterious process. Edgar Allan Poe talks about the art of poetry being the art of finding precisely the right word, but how do you find it, and how do you recognize it when you find it?

--Chris Cutler

Zappa signed off musically a long time ago. He hasn't done anything very interesting, certainly nothing important, in years. What I think is so tragic about Zappa, is that he is conscious and he does know what he's doing. Yet he has chosen to do the things which he has done--80% of which are soft-porn garbage, musical garbage, well done with a high level of technical sophistication and musical excellence, but really with nothing new to say. It's just that what he's doing isn't really musically very experimental. Yet the evidence is he's still conscious, for instance, his role in the censorship debate--and good for him! He got actively engaged, and that's great. You can't condemn somebody for one thing they do and throw them away. People are much more complicated than that. There's little enough of the good not to nurture it wherever it is.

Yet generally when you compare what Zappa's done, say after *Hot Rats*, to the extraordinary effect of the things he did before, which were very radical, full of new ideas, even if they were *Reuben and the Jets's*, his subsequent recordings have been disappointing. I just listened to the old *Reuben* and the newer one *sounds* much better. There's a lot of 'better' playing on it, and he's been able to use a string bass; jolly good, but it just doesn't make it. When you listen to the old one, which has 'bad' sounding drums and all, it's still really 'there'. He broke up the Mothers. That's where he went wrong.

It's always a mistake when you're in a group, however important you are, to think that you *are* the group and can get rid of all the others and do it yourself. Frank Zappa might have been the Svengali of the Mothers but the Mothers made Frank Zappa. When they finish one thing, the Zappa's of this world seldom have the time, the energy, or the humility to become part of another group.

Ron: Yes, I see. So, when Henry Cow broke up, everybody went their own direction--there was no star in that band, no single leader.

Chris: Yes, I think that's quite true, although Fred (Frith), of course, was the most well known to the public.

Ron: I think that's still true.

Chris: Probably still, yes. But the Cow was a very 'bolshic' group. We were always fighting amongst ourselves, in a productive way, generally. While we all did go on to different things, we still often work together amongst ourselves.

Ron: Getting back to the mysterious again, how did Henry Cow, and how do you presently, use the realm of imagination as a way of getting at critical consciousness? Taking it back to where we started, someone like Springsteen, for example, can be politically conscious and have as his goal to do a song like "My Hometown" about the shutdown of industry and the resulting unemployment in his hometown as a way of making a public statement on that issue from a personal point of view. Yet it sounds like you are interested in approaching those kinds of political problems in a different way. Is that right?

Chris: Yes, it's a different goal, and you go a different road. There obviously isn't one kind of music or one approach you can take. It's the same in every field. There are great detective novels, and there are awful ones. There is great literature and also literature that fails as art. It's a question of what *level* you are operating at--that's the level you have to be judged on. You don't compare a detective novel to a piece of romantic fiction in the same way you don't, or shouldn't, compare a banana with an orange. They're different fruits, but, you can say, that there is a good orange and a bad orange. So, when somebody like Springsteen sets out with a goal to do a piece of propaganda work he *can* succeed in giving it artistic and emotional content that a speech or an article wouldn't have.

In fact, songs become like anthems at certain times and acquire extraordinary

power. "We Shall Overcome" is just a song, but it got used in a way that made it very important in people's lives and gave it real meaning. To write such a song may be a goal one can set oneself and succeed, a goal that is concrete and specific. Propagandistic. But it's also possible to talk about political work when what you're doing is not specific, not tied to a single issue or a single problem but trying to make certain connections in people's lives, or trying to make certain alignments in the way they see the world and the way they experience it.

This kind of politics involves trying subtly to change the way people *feel* about something, because a lot of people don't so much think about things, (except things they know they have to think about) as *feel* about them. Racism is usually not a product of intelligent thought. Rascists don't usually examine the issue and decide that black people are inferior. There is such a dimension in a Nazi state, which will publish political books on the subject, but generally people just *feel* that way about it, and never stop to ask why. You *don't ask* such questions. When you '*know*' something is so, it is so. Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." Yet most of us, most of the time, lead unexamined lives.

Ron: So then do you see your music as offering listeners an opportunity to question some commonsensical notions about music and about the world? Are you desirous of people making a connection with your music in a way that challenges the hegemony of a certain way of



Chris Cutler's Recommended Records shop on 387 Walsworth Road in London (SW8). If you drop by, knock and they'll usually let you in. Oh yes, bring a bottle of your favorite wine.

being, a certain notion of what is right and wrong and what is assumed?

Chris: I hope so. I mean, that's the idea. I don't care much for the way people behave toward one another or the way people deal with the social and material world we live in. Some of the few skills that I have, accidentally, are that I play music, write words, run Recommended Records, and publish *Re Records Quarterly*. And so, because that's what I know how to do, I have to try and make it fit the need for subversive information. Yes, it's true, I'm after a basic critique.

Ron: In terms of *Re Records Quarterly*, how do you choose the recorded music? How do you determine which Polish band will be included? Who do you determine whether or not a particular type of music will fit with whatever else you envision as being on the record?

Chris: The idea of the *Quarterly* was simply to make a record like a magazine. One aspect of this is to have commissioned pieces and not stuff that is already available on records. It's not a sampler, not examples of what certain groups do. Rather the *Quarterly* consists of music asked for or sent in which is in some way interesting for itself which or, by virtue of being a live concert performance for instance, carries some special information.

I also try to have regular features. For instance, there is always at least one group from Eastern Europe, because I think that, as people, we're all engaged in the same work. There's far too little exchange between the East and the West, and such as there is always clouded by a lot of ideological nonsense. 'We' are always saying how terrible things are there, or that they're having a really horrible time (as if it were paradise here!). We're making political commentary instead of treating them as being part of the same basic culture as us. After all, we listen to the same music. We all share a European culture, in part a global culture, since all of us can get records one way or the other and listen to the *radio*.

So the criteria for judging which Polish group to choose, are the same for any other music we choose--limited by what we can get to hear, or who we know.

Ron: So, is it possible that while on tour in Eastern Europe, you might have run into a particular band whose material

you use, let's say Hungary since you just returned from there. Perhaps you might get in touch with some people there and get a chance to actually listen to their music first hand. Is that how it works?

Chris: Yes. We meet people and, as we go to concerts, we hear them play. Sometimes people just write to us. We are now a recognized address, and anyone who is interested in 'our' sort of thing thinks naturally that we will be interested in them, and we are. I receive a lot of tapes, and I want always to include people who *haven't* made records, who other people haven't heard of, not only to encourage them, but also because there's an incredible amount going on and not everyone can afford to make a record. Also, not everyone has enough material to make a record. Similarly, there are also parts of live concerts that would never otherwise get on record that are not only musically interesting, but special in another way. Sometimes just to hear how a thing is done at a concert (which is different than the way it's done on record) can be significant, since many people will never get to hear any of the groups in concert.

As it is, the end result, the form of the magazine, is fairly diffuse. I try to organize it so things fit; so there's a kind of logic about it that makes it slightly more than its parts. I hope that as it carries on, it will be possible to have far more special projects, commissions, topical issues and so on.

The magazine serves another special function. As I have said in the editorial to issue number 3, we do not seek to be like most music magazines that deal mainly with news, reviews and interviews, but rather, beyond that, to try to make public a lot of the background skills, information and theory that goes into this business of making music. There is, for instance, in every copy of the magazine at least one article by a group talking about the recording studio as a composing instrument--how it's actually done. This is because I think in order to appreciate or to get involved in any kind of musical activity, it's necessary not only for producers to know the nuts and bolts but for consumers to know them as well.

If you don't understand anything about film, you can't go and see a film like "Rope" and really understand the full dimension of the accomplishment. But when you know that Hitchcock did the whole thing in *one shot--and what that*

implies--the solving of a thousand logistical problems, working in 20 minute Real Time blocks, props and scenery on wheels and hinges, 'impossible' sequences, what it means to make 180 degree pan--then you see the whole film differently and with far more appreciation. You are engaged on two levels, distinct but simultaneous; as content (the story) and as form (the technique). Inevitably, since the content is realized through the form and the form locked to the content.

It's a sad development in the last 200 years that the kind of expertise that was common before has been lost. Then, if you submitted a badly carved chair, people would *know* it was badly carved. The level at which work can operate when people are ignorant is much lower. Today the number of people, for instance, who do understand compositional or poetic language, who are willing actually to *engage* with it, is small and inevitably grows elitist.

It's a good idea, I think, to try publically to discuss the aesthetics of what we're doing. Maybe it's *not* such a fragile thing that as soon as we talk about it, it will start to vaporize. A lot of musicians say, 'I don't want to talk about it.' It's a kind of mysticism--you mustn't look straight at the face of the thing, or the charm will vanish and you'll be just like anybody else, unable to produce anything. I think that's nonsense.

Musicians must, in fact, think about what they do in order to be able to define themselves and carry on doing it. The reason why, let's say, many idols from the sixties have fallen is because they were only spokesmen for *their time*. They were in the mainstream of history when everything was running their way, and they just got left behind because they never quite grasped what it was they were doing or why they were important. They just stand there, beached, and thrash about looking for a thing to do and nothing happens anymore. The charisma has been taken away from them. They no longer are in the center. They are on the edge.

Ron: So you're saying it's because they failed to communicate to people what they were doing or to give them that insight. . .

Chris: Because they didn't have it themselves.

Ron: Yeah, and so as a result there are a number of other people who looked up to them who are high and dry as well, who just got left behind.

Chris: Yeah.

Ron: So, is *Re Records Quarterly* then about giving people the tools to have an understanding of the process and the context so that somebody who is a listener and somebody who is a musician can see the commonalities between themselves?

Chris: Um hmm.

Ron: So, you're transcending the commodified relationship between passive consumer and active artist which is something those idols never did.

Chris: Well, trying to--but yes, I think that's the core of it. Lets talk about consumer culture, it implies you simply consume what you like. There's a lot of goods put before you on a tray, and you choose one. The important act is your choosing. This is a way of pleasing yourself--getting some kind of immediate personal satisfaction from a product which you can then discard. We have a 'culture' where there exists producers and consumers as two separate bodies wanting, to a certain extent, to keep each other at a distance, because a consumer doesn't want to get engaged with a producer, and producers fundamentally only want to find out what they can *sell* to consumers. It's not a very good basis for a culture.

An alternative to this is perhaps to try to create a shared culture, a culture of shared interests and knowledge where the present producer-consumer separation is partially eroded. The public can influence the performers, and the performer is not trying to 'get away' with something. What typically happens in rock and roll bands is everybody's trying to 'get away' with something. It shouldn't be that way.

Ron: What you're describing seems to be the antithesis of the star system, and it seems to me that system was partly responsible for the predicament of those fallen idols--it blinded them and trapped them in its assumptions.

Chris: Many of them simply did not know what was happening to them. When you think of somebody like Captain Beefheart--I mean one of the most important producers of new music that America has come up with in the last 30 years--and yet he was treated as some sort of freak and made into a charismatic figure and used to sell things and then abandoned, or he was treated as some sort of god by a tiny number of

people who appreciated what he was doing but appreciated it far too much and in a narrow way. Neither the people who exploited Beefheart nor the people who looked up to him as some sort of deity actually gave him any meaningful support and didn't have any effect on what happened to him when he was cast aside

Ron: So what would be a more supportive relationship for someone like Beefheart?

Chris: It's a little bit difficult to know how to build such a thing when there aren't any channels. Typically, concerts are big affairs with enormous banks of technology standing between the group and the public, and their meeting is very temporary. I don't know what the solution is.

Ron: Well, when I saw you play the other week at the London Musicians Collective, that space and set-up seemed to have been chosen for aesthetic reasons, as well as practical reasons relating to the number of people you might expect to attract. The choice of that venue made for a more intimate relationship between performer and audience.

Chris: Well, we're not unfamous, but it is possible to have a more direct relationship with people. Still, whatever you can achieve is against the grain. The fact of the matter is that there isn't any kind of collective structure, not really. While there are some people who fight toward making some kind of connection between performer and public, they are really fighting an uphill battle.

Even something like Recommended, which is obviously very small and specialized, has really very minimal contact with its public. You know, we get supportive letters from people who go out of their way to be nice, but the percentage is small. Most people treat us like any other mail order outfit and business. One can't really complain about that, because that's really how things are in our society, and whatever we do at Recommended we are not going to bring about any change in all that. Changes are going to be brought, if they are brought at all, through major social turmoil. All we can do is try to set up some emergency organizations to keep the lamp lit so that it doesn't actually go out. It's really our function to do that, and to make it possible for some things to exist at all. At least we make it possible for *some* music to be

distributed outside the immediate terrain of production. Otherwise it wouldn't happen.

When we began with all those groups in mainland Europe, you could not find a single one of their records in this country, except maybe some German music which was fashionable for awhile. Lots of tiny companies and groups are enabled by the existence of an institution like Recommended records. So, in some ways it's very important, a 'sine qua non', but in other ways it's so tiny it doesn't really even dent the great iron shield

Ron: Yet you can never gauge what seminal influence you have. I mean, the music gets out, and who knows where it goes and what kind of influence it has.

Chris: Right, Sun Ra spent 20 years being ignored, and yet it's clear now how many people have been strongly influenced by Sun Ra. Often the only way things come about is when another generation has been influenced and informed by some of an artist's work and carries it forward. The history of all culture is, after all, the history of a tiny thread often being invisible in its own era, becoming discernible over time. The books that were number one best sellers in the Thirties and Forties are forgotten now, but the books that weren't read by anybody, like *Ulysses*, are now considered to be part of our history. Mainly that's because producers in the next generations have climbed on the shoulders of those previous producers. You can't take those previous producers away, because all the rungs in the ladder have got to be there. You do have to take the past into account. You can't just cross out history and start over again. If you try to do so, then you'll be writing jibberish. The only languages we understand are the languages we've *learned*, though they might *seem* to be 'natural' to us.

(To Be Continued)



In Sound Choice 7 Chris Cutler explodes with more thought provoking opinions on subjects as diverse as Mnemonist Music, 'Pop as Commodity', Hendrix, Frith & Hodgkinson, the strange position of Henry Cow, Rock In Opposition, Free Jazz, Galileo, Marxism, class struggle, Rough Trade and the Beach Boys.

Russian Jazz In U. S. of A.



Ganelin Trio Tours America

Members of Ganelin Trio & Rova Sax Quartet

By Norman Weinstein

The Ganelin Trio, the Soviet Union's most advanced jazz group, toured the U.S. for the first time this past June and July, and their San Francisco appearance marked the first time ever that Soviet jazz artists played with American musicians on these shores. The Americans? Berkeley's Rova Saxophone Quartet who made history themselves in 1983 by being the first American avant-garde musicians to play in the U.S.S.R.

Tickets for the event at the Veterans building in downtown San Francisco went swiftly, an extra show was added. Eight hundred attended the two shows, my wife and I catching the 10:30 set on June 27. We had come from Idaho for this event.

The audience was a very mixed aggregate of aging Russian emigres from Russian Hill, punks from Telegraph and the Mission, and lots of media people (a full film crew and sound team were recording every sound.)

The show opened with Rova doing three quarters of an hour of very super-sonically charged pieces. For anyone who knows the sound of the band only on recordings it is a treat to take in the pure sensuous waves of sound emanating from the group. Only their last album *Saxophone Diplomacy* on Hat Art begins to capture the band's excitement.

All very precise and elegant stylists. And with roots in a different tradition than World Saxophone Quartet. Rova is strongly tied to a new music tradition containing Stockhausen--not that Rova can't have its moments of funk.

There was a brief intermission, then the Ganelin Trio shyly took their places in stage center. Worthwhile to note that the trio and Rova are members of the same generation (late thirties, early forties). So much hoopla was made through this tour about Ganelin's Russian identity that some of the commonalities these musicians share with American comrades was neglected.

The Ganelin Trio consists of Vyacheslav Ganelin on keyboards (acoustic and Casiotone), Vladimir Chekasin on saxophone, clarinet, flute and Vladimir Tarasov on percussion. All have rigorous classical backgrounds, have worked in a number of different musical groups, and have played together for more than 15 years. They've toured England, Italy, Cuba, Eastern Europe and their motherland (where they've been voted most popular jazz group year after year in magazine polls.) In addition to a number of albums on the official (and crappily pressed) Melodya label, they have a number of releases on the Leo, Hat Art, and East Wind labels.

Repeated listenings to their many albums over the last five years gave me some sense of what to expect. The Ganelin Trio is often aptly compared by

American critics to the Art Ensemble of Chicago. The sense of that comparison is readily perceived since both groups are radically polystylistic, moving within long compositions through bop, swing, folk motifs, work songs, etc. Both groups alternate improvised passages with composed. Each musician in both units plays a multitude of instruments (particularly handheld percussion instruments) and these groups are strongly involved with extra-musical theatrics.

But the differences between the Ganelin Trio and the Art Ensemble are equally (if not more) striking. The Ganelin Trio is Russian in more than a superficial manner. The grand orchestral gestures in their long compositions, the melodic and rhythmic underpinnings in their music are unmistakably Russian.

The trio's opening 35 minute piece crystalized those Russian qualities. The process began with Tarasov kicking the group into activity with a thunderously complicated polyrhythmic volley on his drum set. This massive thunderstorm of percussion cut through Ganelin's chiming from his toy Casiotone. The music was immediately atmospheric, moody, emotionally soaring, on the verge of breaking out of any predetermined pattern. Chekasin, back half turned toward the audience, the seemingly shy and reserved one of the trio, tooted away dryly like a desolate foghorn on his bass clarinet.

Then the unexpected began to happen.

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Option, July/August 1986

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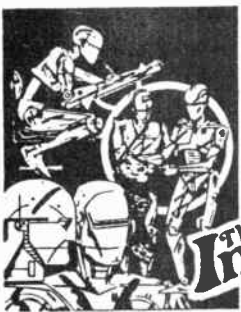
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Ganelin was suddenly a blur of movement, one hand playing throbbing bass lines on the synthesizer, the other hand simultaneously executing long fluid Cecil Taylor-like lines on acoustic keyboard. Every once in a while he would reach inside his Baldwin piano and strike a cymbal nesting on top of its strings. Chekasin replaced his clarinet with two tenor saxophones, blew strikingly into both at once creating a stereophonic siren's scream. Tarasov came out from behind his drum kit, reached into the strings of Ganelin's piano and scraped the strings making the piano sound like a demented Aeolian harp.

Chekasin, all apparent shyness now dropped, took a tin drinking cup that appeared properly dented from years of use, and started pounding on the cup with a drumstick, then smashed the cup against one of the columns of the auditorium. Then he beat the cup across the concert floor, all the while keeping perfect time.

However vaudevillian and manically goofy this might sound on the surface, the result was seriously mesmerizing due to the careful layering of instrumental textures, and the compositional coherence this playing consistently demonstrated.

Two short pieces followed this opening tour de force, one showcasing Chekasin's scat singing in growling bass and falsetto alternately, a dadaist dialogue which was funny, erotic and cathartic.

Rova joined the Trio for 15 minutes of forcefully sustained improvisations. Tarasov opened the piece with some morse code from an African talking drum. Rova did its four part magic and Chekasin danced in and out of Rova's labyrinthine four part inventions. Ganelin played lovely linking passages on piano.

Members of the Ganelin Trio and Rova were all smiles when the music ended, hugs warmly exchanged on stage were met with a long standing ovation from the crowd. The two groups had no rehearsal time, the final piece was constructed through faith, attention, craft. Suddenly it became apparent that this was the first summit in history between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. that worked, succeeding on all levels.

I now listen to my Ganelin records feeling that my life, and perhaps all life, depends upon it.

Mozart and the Occult

by Michael Baran

The circumstances surrounding the death of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in December 1791 were highly unusual and have always intrigued historians. His grave was left unmarked. Other details are shrouded in controversy, but one account has it that his casket disappeared during a violent rainstorm that arose on the way to the grave (the mourners being forced to seek shelter and being unable to locate it on their return.)

Most scholars assume the coffin was picked up by the graveyard sexton and interred in a common pauper's grave, but no factual corroboration of this exists. Mozart's wife Constanze was too overwrought to accompany the cortege, and when she attempted to locate the gravesite years later, the sexton had passed away.

The possibility Mozart was poisoned has long been debated, and the theoretical possibility exists that his body was abducted to prevent later exhumation and analysis, but this seems relatively unlikely. Most scholars are convinced Mozart's death was natural.

Mozart was an Austrian and since childhood he had been competing musically with Italian composers accustomed to having the field to themselves, particularly the lucrative field of opera. Mozart's confrontation here with one Italian composer in particular, Antonio Salieri, was particularly ascerbic, but the two seem to have genuinely reconciled their differences towards the end of Mozart's life.

This article will not enter the debate over the question of whether Salieri poisoned Mozart, which is no longer seriously entertained. Rather, it will review the unusual events surrounding the death of Mozart and to make some new correlations with occult-metaphysical themes. It is probably not possible to uncover new facts about those events at this distance, but it might be rewarding to cast them in a different kind of light than has been employed heretofore.

Mozart appears to have had a fascination, or at least a preoccupation, with the subject of death. To illustrate, we have a letter Wolfgang wrote from Vienna April 4, 1787, to his father Leopold in Salzburg on learning the latter had suddenly taken gravely ill. After the standard expressions of concern, Mozart makes several remarks that at first appear cryptic: "Death ...is the true goal...I have formed during the last few years such...relations with this friend of making. And I thank my God for graciously granting me the opportunity (you know what I mean) of learning that death is the key which unlocks the door to true happiness."

Why did Wolfgang assume his father would know what he meant by death being an "opportunity?" It hints of inside knowledge of spiritual matters and life-after-death. It is almost certain that the answer to Wolfgang's parenthetical crypticism lies in the fact that he and Leopold (like most intellectuals of the time) were both Masons. Wolfgang had been initiated into the Order of Freemasonry in 1784, and his father the following year. It is now that from that time on, Mozart's ethical and ritual values were largely those of the Order, values that stress the brotherhood of man, benevolence and ritualism.

Wolfgang's preoccupation with death is further illustrated by a remark in a letter written at the time of his mother's death: "You know that I had never seen anyone die, although I had often wished to. How cruel that my first experience should be the death of my mother!"

To illustrate the occult connotations death had

acquired for Mozart, Haldane has cited the words of the high priest Sarastro in the Mozart opera "The Magic Flute."

When asked what would be the fate of the young Prince Tamino if he should die as the result of the ordeal required for initiation to Sarastro's Order, Sarastro says: "He will be in the hands of Osiris and Isis, and will know the joys of the gods sooner than we ourselves."

Mozart's constant financial distress was the major focus of the last several years of his life. As a former child prodigy, Mozart seems to have lacked the hard practical streak that makes for worldly success. His misfortunes became even worse after the death of Leopold in 1787. His father had constantly counselled Wolfgang in financial matters and criticized his impractical tendencies.

Beginning in June 1788, Mozart took repeated loans from a wealthy brother-Mason, Michael Puchberg, which he needed to keep his household intact. Mozart's health gradually broke down under the strain of overwork and worry. His state of mind in his last year can be inferred from a remark in a letter he wrote to his wife Constanze in October 1790. He says that if people could see into his heart, they would find it "cold, cold as ice."

In July 1791, Wolfgang had a strange visitation which impressed him profoundly, one he could not fathom. A man unknown to him, dressed in dark clothing, knocked at his door in the night presented him with an unsigned letter inviting him to compose a requiem mass at any fee he chose. Mozart was unable to coax any further information from the stranger, who requested only ayes or no. Mozart was in no position to refuse any commission, and accepted the fee which was given under the condition it remain a dead secret.

Musicologists have not read any more into this episode than coincidence (Mozart's health was extremely poor at this point in time.) After Mozart's death, the incident was given a rational explanation when an Austrian aristocrat named Count Franz von Walsegg came forward with the confession that he had secretly commissioned the requiem through a friend (the "stranger"), Anton von Leitgeb, as part of an ongoing deception in which he secretly purchased the works of professional composers and passed them off as his own creations.

Von Walsegg said the reason for requesting a requiem was as a memorial tribute for his deceased wife. Yet the scenario does not quite ring true. Mozart's desperate circumstances well were known in Vienna, and were even then considered by many disgraceful.

Would a Viennese nobleman have intruded himself in this particular fashion, and requested a requiem, of all things under those circumstances? This episode takes on more significant aspects when it is correlated with the highly unusual circumstances surrounding the burial (or, we might now suggest, perhaps the putative burial) of Mozart.

The individual Mozart referred to as the "mysterious stranger" reappeared one more time, a few weeks before Mozart died. As Mozart was boarding a carriage, the stranger suddenly "appeared as from nowhere," tapped Mozart on shoulder and reminded him of to write the requiem. Mozart himself regarded this person with the greatest awe, and following the second meeting was haunted by feelings of depression and icy premonition.

Mozart died 6 December 1791, his unfinished Requiem near his side. His funeral was arranged

by a friend, Baron von Swieten, who ordered the cheapest services possible to save the family expenses they could not afford.

There was a brief open-air service at the church, after which the body was placed in a decrepit hearse for its journey to the graveyard some distance away. A few of Mozart's acquaintances (presumably including von Swieten) followed the hearse on foot.

It is uncertain who the other members of the cortege were, for no personal statements on the subject exist. Mozart's wife was too distraught attend the funeral. Thus the events that followed are shrouded in confusion to this day.

One story is that the mourners all departed the hearse at the city gate in accordance with customs at the time, so that Mozart's body was delivered to the grave digger without a single witness or instructions. In any case, the fact is undeniable that Mozart's grave is unknown. Again, something about this version, which has become the accepted one, does not quite ring true. One needs only to read surviving correspondences connected with Mozart (such as the famous letter his sister-in-law Sophie wrote describing his last hours) to realize his personal ties were close and sincerely felt. That his resting place would have gone totally unnoticed seems unlikely.

In 1851 a story appeared in a Viennese paper in which someone claiming to have been a member of the Mozart cortege related that the party defected as the result of a sudden, extremely violent storm that forced them to take refuge in an inn. When they returned, the coffin was gone. This version was apparently discredited when, in 1960, the musicologist Nicolas Slonimsky inquired to the Vienna Zentralstalt fur Meteorologie concerning the weather in Vienna on 6 December 1791, and determined that the records showed no storm of any kind on that date.

However, the absence of a general rainstorm does not necessarily rule out an occult, or "supernatural," occurrence in the form of a local circumscribed cloudburst. The occult literature contains many references to unusual meteorological phenomena affecting a very small area. One example is a tiny parcel of land in Nebraska where (perhaps due to peculiar geological features and/or anomalous earth energies) the sun never shines.

This writer would like to suggest that the bizarre overtones surrounding Mozart's death could have an explanation based in the occult. Such an explanation may not be as far-fetched as it seems at first glance. The question specifically is whether Mozart may have been resurrected, or at least his body abducted by individuals having an occult affiliation with that objective in mind.

The theme of revivification occurs in the Bible, examples being the stories of Lazarus and the resurrection and in occult lore, one example being the witch doctor, zombie theme. The usual reaction to the revivification theme in such sources is to gloss over it, under the assumption that if a revivifying force existed, science would have surely found some clue to it. Yet this assumption is not necessarily valid. If biologic life began under the stimulation of an ambient factor not present in our earth surface sphere, and if the missing factor were somehow reinvoked, theoretically it could produce unheard of salutary effects, including revivification.

My book, *Twilight of the Gods*, published in 1984, makes correlations of occult ancient themes with current scholarly information and focuses on the

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two major controversies, lost oceanic lands and the question of world scale cataclysms in the memory of modern man.

The book views human prehistory as a fabulous age, a time when secret technology groups with roots in cosmic antiquity were using ocean borne lands to tape a beneficial form of energy, undermining the lands in the process. The energy is viewed as an "aural" (mass emitted) force related to the extreme density of atoms in deep strata, this energy becoming relatively attenuated at the surface, a subtle, pervasive natural energy that acts as a universal "energy zero setting" and is not detected by science.

The energy is viewed as corresponding to what science has been calling gravitation and metaphysicians have been calling aural energy. Whether or not the book's overview is correct, it does present an interesting theory in connection with the revivification theme. It is that a certain powerful ambient energy stimulated the very beginning of biologic life, an energy not existing under earth-surface conditions, at least not in the same way. The very first life-forms logically must have been one-directional. Having just been propelled into life by some force or forces, they initially should have been purely dynamic and free from reverse-gear degenerative processes like aging and death.



If in fact cosmically-ancient technology cultures ("UFO cultures") exist and if they are capable of accessing the force that stimulated life's beginnings and should its members want to intrude on the human scene and occasionally provide privileged individuals with its benefits, then the religious occult bio-miracle theme has a scientific rationale: returning a human to the optimal biologic state by exposing him to a form of energy that duplicates life initiation dynamics.

A bio-miraculous force could manifest in any of three ways: pan-therapeutically (disease could be cured regardless of the type of disease), rejuvenationally (Methuselan longevity could become attainable), or it could be applied, probably in a concentrated form, to revivify the recently-deceased. The famous image imprinted on the Shroud of Turin is of interest in connection with this idea. Burial shrouds were common in biblical times, but images have not been found on other shrouds. Thus there are two enigmatic themes associated with the Shroud of Turin: revivication of

a photo-type image of the deceased. Expert opinion is agreed that the image was made by an energy field, but the experts are at a loss to account for it. Was it an externally-applied revivifying field?

Most parapsychologists believe our existing energy-theory has a major gap, or gaps, as do many physicists. No direct information exists concerning deep-earth (volcanic) energy systems. Energy-related biophenomena like telepathy and spontaneous human combustion are no longer disputed by science yet remain unexplained. Many open minded scholars are looking to the occult legerdemain for leads to more inclusive theories. It is not at all far fetched to suggest that the Mozart story contains a genuine occult aspect. Serious open-minded study of this and other existing mysteries may lead to untold vistas for mankind.

Michael Baran is the author of *Twilight of the Gods and other books and articles on unexplained and occult phenomena*. His address is 479 North Cary St., Brockton, MA 02402, USA

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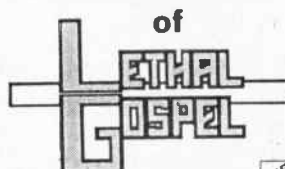
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W O M A D

WORLD OF MUSIC AND DANCE

By Ron Sakolsky

The history of the W.O.M.A.D. (World of Music and Dance) Festival provides new hope that music can break down cultural and racial barriers. The late Albert Ayler said, "Music is the healing force of the universe." The W.O.M.A.D. Festival appears to have embraced this notion, and perhaps reflecting the cultural diversity of England, has created an event allowing a healthy crossfertilization of cultures through the magic of music.

The 1986 W.O.M.A.D. Festival, held in Clevedon (near Bristol), offered a heady mixture of Europop, Third World pop and traditional music and dance from the five continents presented day and night on three stages for three consecutive days. Prior to the first festival in 1982, W.O.M.A.D. organizer Thomas Brooman made his goals clear: "This is not going to be a rock festival. W.O.M.A.D. will quite simply act as a stage for some of the best music and dance in the world. If someone turns up to see The Beat, we still hope they will watch watch other performers just out of curiosity. They'll have a chance to see and hear music that's never been in this country before."

The musical values of the festival organizers can be best understood by someone from the United States by referring to the bands that were selected to represent the USA: Flaco Jimenez and the San Antonio Tex-Mex Band; Vermenton Plage, a Louisiana Cajun band; San Francisco's Dan Del Santo and the Professors of Pleasure with their "world beat" rhythms, and black poet Gil Scott-Heron with his searching political "rapsongs." This is the music our culture should be most proud of, representing diverse cultures of our country.

This year at W.O.M.A.D. the range of artists covered 27 countries and included well known English rock acts like Siouxi and the Banshees and lesser knowns like 23 Skidoo, Blurt, and the Shop Assistants. But it is the array of non-western musicians and dancers who play that make W.O.M.A.D. unique. This year's festival featured rare opportunities to see such diverse Senegambian artists as Youssou N. Dour Et Les Super Etoiles De Dakar and the Gambia National Troupe.

"To be honest," Brooman said of the '86 Festival, "most of the tickets are being sold because the Banshees are playing, but there is a specific W.O.M.A.D. audience growing."

This 'W.O.M.A.D. audience' is one which appreciates world music, and fortunately for them the '86 Festival offered the highest proportion of



accomplish or else we would see such festivals more often. The situation could easily deteriorate from musical magic to Barnum and Baily exoticism. Since most of the musicians and dancers featured are from various parts of the former British Empire, a festival showcasing such artists could be judged a colonialistic showcase of the Empire's trophies of past glories. Fortunately, for the most part W.O.M.A.D. has succeeded in maintaining a level of cultural integrity rather than falling for exotic hucksterism.

Sometimes the magic falters; as when the women of the Gambia National Troupe seemed more intent on succeeding on the audience's terms

non-European bookings yet. And the influence of W.O.M.A.D.'s adventurous programming shouldn't be underestimated. While in 1982 the Burundi drummers were a financial loss for W.O.M.A.D. some say that appearance kindled interest in England that helped the same musicians sell out three shows in England in 1986.

The magic of W.O.M.A.D. is its ability to introduce festival goers to unknown musicians and new and exciting musical experiences from other countries without having to actually go to those countries.

And it is the unexpected that the "W.O.M.A.D. audience" expects to hear. Of course this is not easy to

and not their own, choosing to wear flouncy, satin embellished costumes rather than their native garb when recreating one of their traditional dances.

Happily the opportunities for the audience to find themselves exhilarated in the spirit and customs of a foreign culture were plentiful. For me, a highlight was when performers from the tiny 12 square mile island Carriacou shared their Big Drum Dance by



Graphic: Steven*

jumping off the stage and soon had the audience participating in the ceremonial dance.

The scene reminded us all of the barriers between performer and audience that have become accepted as a part of western musical professionalism. As the lead singer and oral historian of the group put it, "We take great pride in being primitive." Granted, this still was not the same as being in Carriacou for the ceremony, but it allowed people a chance to feel the culture by participating in it rather than merely being spectators.

Similarly, the various workshops put on by musicians and dancers at the Festival sought to encourage people to be active cultural participants. These workshops included: costume-making, Afro-Caribbean drumming, Sri Lankan dance, Senegalese instrument making, and the playing of Indonesian gamelan music and Gambian kora, xylophone, guitar and talking drums.

The very vibrant children's tent (this is a family event) included workshops on percussion, dance, kite-making,

loggerrhythm playing and instrument-making.

There was a special area for the under twelves and a creche for children under five, and the two carnival processions that weaved their way through the Festival at key moments both originated at the Children's area.

So, you get the idea; this is not your average rockfest. For that, you have to be one of the 30,000 spectators at Glastonbury. W.O.M.A.D. never seems to draw more than 10,000 people. While the audience is still predominantly white, the flavor of the Festival is one of interracial and intergenerational harmony. Young "punks" and aging "hippies" (fathers and sons?) can be seen playfully cavorting together in the sun along with little kids dancing in the arms of smiling parents. Anarchy in the UK? If all this sounds utopian, well, maybe the Rasta emphasis on "positiveness" can best explain the vibe at W.O.M.A.D..

An interesting question, one that was put to me several times during my visit to Clevedon, is why there isn't an equivalent festival in the United States. No music festival in the U.S. to my knowledge seems to be fired with as much political consciousness as W.O.M.A.D.. Not even the recent Farm Aid festival and other telethons approach the political flavor of W.O.M.A.D.

I counted booths at the Festival for the Greens, Friends of the Earth, CND, and even a makeshift stall under the auspices of London's anarchist bookstore and publishing company, Freedom Bookshop. Officially the Festival lends its support to the following charities: Oxfam, the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Botswana International School of Music.

In terms of the politics of food, unlike the junk food diet offered at most festivals, there were numerous vegetarian and other food stalls as well as a smorgasboard of international cuisine and arts and crafts that rival the multi-cultural musical feast on stage.

So why doesn't this kind of event happen in the good ol' U.S. of A.? It's not just Raygun--after all, England has Margaret Thatcher. Yet, they also have more of a politicized musical culture

than in the States.

In 1976, six years before the first W.O.M.A.D. Festival, Rock Against Racism (RAR) was formed to counter the jingoistic chauvinism of the National Front, a fascist organization which specialized in denigrating immigrant groups and their influence on English culture. More recently, political artists such as Billy Bragg have formed Red Wedge to promote socialism and the Labour Party. The Socialist Workers party (SWP) had been very actively involved in Rock Against Racism, and one of its members, David Widgery, has just written an excellent book on the politics of rock music in England entitled *Beating Time: Riot 'n Race 'n Rock 'n Roll* (Chatto and Windus, London).

There has been a traditional left presence in the English music scene that has never really blossomed in the States, just as the organized left has generally been absent from cultural discourse here, except for the arts activism associated with such organizations as the Alliance for Cultural Democracy

Individual artists have also lent their



Jimmy Galvin of British funk/soul group Mumbo Jumbo played the 1986 WOMAD Festival.



'King of the Accordeon', Flaco Jimenez's appearance at WOMAD 1986 represents the growing international popularity of Tex-Mex music.

support to W.O.M.A.D. over the years. The best known is Peter Gabriel. The first year's festival (1982) was an admirable artistic success and a huge financial loss at the box office. Most people predicted there would be no more W.O.M.A.D.'s in the future. To the rescue came "father figure" Gabriel who persuaded his old band, Genesis, to reform for a one night benefit concert which managed to bail out the fledgling festival with more than \$100,000 of ticket sales.

Moreover, Gabriel's agent, Marty Machat, had previously gotten them a record contract with WEA International for the pre-Festival benefit album *Rhythm and Dance* (PVC 201) which included not only non-western musicians, but in addition to Gabriel, such supportive western rock stars as Pete Townsend and David Byrne. The album came complete with the less Eurocentric and therefore more politically correct, Peters Projection map of the world. Since 1982, W.O.M.A.D. has never been in the red.

The support of recognized artists and the left cultural presence in England then had the spin-off effect of legitimizing W.O.M.A.D. and over the years it has obtained the support of the Capital Music Festival, The Bristol city government and the Arts Council of Britain, South West Arts, and the Visiting Arts Unit of Britain.

Part of the reason that W.O.M.A.D. has managed to get subsidized is that the Festival is only one arts activity of the organization. W.O.M.A.D. has also created the Talking Books Series

which presently consists of three separate LP records which come with their own 20-page magazines. Each is meant to complement the other with the magazine supplying detailed and accessible background information about the tracks on the album, providing them with a cultural context.

Volume #1 is entitled *An Introduction* and features a range of musicians from England's own Simon Jeffes and his eclectic Penguin Cafe Orchestra to a rare track by Remmy Ongala's Orchestra Super Matimila from Tanzania. In the magazine part of the album are interviews with musicians, instruction on how to make instruments, and explanations of the diverse musical styles and cultural roots which comprise the album.

Volume #2, *Africa*, is in the same vein but focuses exclusively on African music and includes musicians from Burundi, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Soweto, the Nile, Zaire, Ghana, Nigerian and Katanga.

Talking Book #3, *Europe*, contains a fascinating range of both traditional and contemporary music of Europe from the new folk rock of the Pogues to the political songs of Selda from Turkey who sings in the traditional "turku" style and accompanies herself on the "saz", a long-necked string instrument.

Among the other multi-cultural resources available from W.O.M.A.D. is the ten pamphlet Teaching Pack. Six of these educational pamphlets provide introductions to musical styles of the Caribbean, India, Latin America, Indonesia, Africa, and Britain. The pamphlets include specimen scores, orchestration details, cultural context, bibliography, and discography. The other four pamphlets discuss associated themes: Caribbean Culture, Masks, Musical Instrument Making, and the Western Musical Approach. This year these Teaching Packs were sent out free to schools in the area of the Festival.

W.O.M.A.D. also had at the time of the Festival hoped to introduce a regular series of community workshops by the beginning of the '86-'87 school year in Bristol and Bath with four tutors in music and dance who would work in developing children's and young adults'

artistic understandings and abilities.

Both the Talking Books and the Teaching Packs are available from W.O.M.A.D. Foundation, 3rd Floor, 85 Park St., Bristol, BS15JN, England. The Talking Book records are available in the States through Original Music, RD 1, Box 190, Lasher Road, Tivoli, NY 12583, USA.

In order to set the record straight, W.O.M.A.D. literature emphasizes that the Festival organizers are not a bunch of stuffy academics and that W.O.M.A.D.'s appreciation and understanding of world music and dance has evolved over the last five years from a state of virtual ignorance. As Brooman put it, "We're not ethno-musicologists, we're fans. Every time we read a review in the music press, they make us out to be highbrow, but we don't know everything, we just respond to what we hear." But what they hear and then present to Festival goers, is quite amazing.



WOMAD directors Bob Horton and Thos Brooman.

For more information on WOMAD Festivals, the Talking Book series, multi-cultural resources Teaching Packs, and WOMAD tee shirts contact WOMAD Foundation, 3rd Floor, 85 Park Street, Bristol BS1 5JN England.

Rimur can be generally described as sung-poetry distantly related to the epic singing traditions of ancient Europe. In its (more or less) musical characteristics it was not affected by what later became the conventions of European vocal music.

Although Rimur has been dismissed in the past by Nordic intelligensia as being "the primitive groans of farmers", recent studies using voice-grams, transcriptions and careful listening reveal that Rimur contains personalized patterns of sonic ornamentation.

When one listens closely to the recordings of Rimur made earlier this century it is easy to appreciate that these are strangely beautiful middle eastern chants. Yet the tonalities remain unique from Semitic-Arabic musics in that they do not reflect any concept (or traditions) of scale. Instead the performers vocalize in a free flowing wave of sound.

This obscure musical relic, that defies microtonal analysis, has the added significance of playing a central social role in Icelandic culture. For over 500 years, and into the present century, a considerable portion of artistic energy and attention was funneled into this sophisticated vocal and poetic art. Rimur was a central conduit of creativity. During Iceland's long epoch of isolation, Icelanders had few other musical or visual materials for artistic expression.

As a communication medium Rimur has aspects in common with television and radio. After dinner in the evening while people were sewing, knitting, carving, etc., one

person would perform (usually from a text) these epic songs. Some of the works could take ten hours or more to perform, so they were often broken into a series format.

Rimur was entertainment that could be enjoyed while working. Yet it had an ambient visual aspect in that the Rimur singer's face was illuminated by the best (if not the only) lamp in the house.

The importance of poetry runs deep in the psyche of the pre-industrial age Icelanders. It is a cultural remnant left over from pagan times when Odin was ascribed as the inventor of the alphabet and poetry. During the middle ages this trait provided them with a viable export when Icelandic poets sang throughout Northern Europe gaining wealth and prestige from royal audiences.

Although the value of sung poetry in the north has diminished considerably, it has captured the serious attention of a few contemporary Icelandic scholars. Among these is Hreinn Steingrímsson, who has recorded several of the last generation of Rimur singers. He is also working on what will be the first book to take a wholistic look at the subject.

Here are some notes from my recent discussion with Steingrímsson:

D.L.: What are some of the problems in transposing Rimur to staff notation?

Hreinn: There are no fixed scales but constantly varying intervals. And even though the intervals vary within narrow limits it

Selected Bibliography
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Stability in Musical Improvisation; Svend Nielsen (Forlaget Kragaaen Press,

Birkatinget 6, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2300S) Nielsen's ideas about the element of improvisation in Rimur are illustrated by interviews, transcriptions, and voice-grams.
The Romantic Poetry of Iceland, William Craigie, University of Glasgow Press. Discusses the multi-faceted literary content of Rimur.

"Print is the sarcophagus of a poem, the voice is it's soul" --Harry Partch

AND

is still very problematic to notate (Rimur) to staff notation. It is impossible to notate Rimur exactly.

D.L.: What are the other musical characteristics of Rimur?

Hreinn: The melody contour is usually stable, the main outline is stable while the intervals are variable. And the voice is characteristic in that it is very stable and constant. The volume is not very loud or soft and the tempo is also very stable. Within very strict limits also the length of the syllables can vary. And so, there is variation but only within very strict limits. In such a way that the length of stanza is almost always the same. And so it is only a fluxuation, never a rubatto or anything like it. The pitch is also steady. You see they usually end each stanza on the same pitch. And I think that it is quite clear that ending the stanzas like this is something they are concentrating to do and not something secondary.

While they are performing they are not aware of anything except the text, they certainly don't think about the music. They have very few words to describe it (the musical process), and they usually only talk about "voice" as if voice is the smallest musical unit. This idea of "voice" also contains what we usually think of as melody.

The current performers and sustainers of Rimur singing are sincere in their carrying on of the tradition. Most of them insist that they are singing Rimur the way they "heard" it sung earlier in their life. Regardless, the dynamic is gone, conspicuous by the

absence of improvisation and an addition of more rigid and measured tonality.

Despite the fact that few musical risks are being taken there is a curious development involving Iceland's most visible modern Rimur performer. In the early 1970s Sveinbjorn Beinteinsson (who is a poet-farmer as well as priest) formed the Asatruarsofnuthur (believers of the gods.) This organization, which claims some of the pre-Christian pagan beliefs, is now recognized as an official religion by the Icelandic government.

Sveinbjorn has collaborated with the English rock-art group Psychic T.V., in allowing portions of a chanted pagan marriage ceremony to be a thematic element of an electronic piece entitled "Attraction Romantic."

Although occasionally Sveinbjorn's behavior has stirred reactionary comments from some of the Icelandic public, his performances on the state broad casting services, at punk-rock concerts, and during religious feasts etc., is drawing fresh attention to a vanishing art.

In the future, as the demand for samples of the world's many musics continues, recordings of Rimur made earlier in this century are likely to be released. Many of these were sung by isolated persons living in remote areas reflecting a rich musical and poetic past.

The author is interested in corresponding with anyone currently researching solo voice or epic song traditions. Contact Darrell Jonsson, Hagamelur 16, 3rd floor, Reykjavik, Iceland 107

FOR

AUR

Discography

Sveinbjorn Beinteinsson: *Eddukvaethi* (Gramm Records, Laugavegur 17, Reykjavik, Iceland 101). Iceland's most controversial Rimur singer-chanter performs such ancient texts as "The Prophecy of the Seeress", "The Sayings of Har", etc. Comes with corresponding translations from the "Poetic

Edda", and thorough documenta ton.

Kvaethamannafelagith Lithunn: Hundread Kvaethlog (Falkinn Records, Sutherlandsbraut 8, Reykjavik, Iceland). A variety of current sustainers of the Rimur traditions, perform examples of ancient Icelandic song.

Psychic T. V.: Those Who Do Not (Gramm Records, Laugavegur 17, Reykjavik, Iceland.



.... IN WHICH CRASS VOLUNTARILY 'BLOW THEIR OWN'.

When, in 1976, 'punk first spewed itself across the nation's headlines with the message 'do it yourself', we, who in various ways and for many years had been doing just that, naively believed that Messrs. Rotten, Strummer etc. etc. meant it. At last we weren't alone.

The idea of becoming a band had never seriously occurred to us, it simply happened. Basically anyone was free to join in and rehearsals were rowdy affairs that invariably degraded into little more than drunken parties. Steve and Penny had been writing and playing together since early 77, but it wasn't until Summer of that year that we had begged, borrowed and stolen enough equipment to actually call ourselves a band. ... CRASS.

Having finally managed to rehearse five songs, we set out on the road to fame and fortune armed with our instruments and huge amounts of booze to help us see it through. We did gigs and benefits, chaotic demonstrations of inadequacy and independence. We got turned off here, turned down there and banned from the now legendary Roxy Club. 'They said they only wanted well behaved boys, do they think guitars and microphones are just fucking toys?'

By now we had realised that our fellow punks, The Pistols, The Pistols, The Clash and all the other muso-puppets weren't doing it at all. They may like to think that they ripped off the majors, but it was Joe Public who'd been ripped. They helped no one but themselves, started another facile fashion, brought a new lease of life to London's trendy Kings Road and claimed they'd started a revolution. Same old story. We were on our own again.

Through the alcoholic haze we determined to make it our mission to create a real alternative to music-biz exploitation, we wanted to offer something that gave rather than took and, above all, we wanted to make it survive. Too many promises have been made from stages only to be forgotten on the streets.

Throughout the long, lonely winter of 77/78 we played regular gigs at The White Lion, Putney with the UK Subs. The audience consisted mostly of us when the Subs played and the Subs when we played. Sometimes it was disheartening, but usually it was fun. Charley Harper's indefatigable enthusiasm was always an inspiration when times got bleak, his absolute belief in punk as a peoples' music had more to do with revolution than McClaren and his cronies could ever have dreamt of. Through sheer tenacity we were exposing the punk charlatans for what they really were, a music-biz hype.

Our gigs remained wild and disorderly, we were still too scared to play without a belly full of booze and invariably we were in such a state that we'd realise half way through a song that each of us was playing a different one. For all the chaos it was immense fun, no one bitched about leather boots or moaned about milk in tea, no one wanted to know how anarchy and peace could be reconciled, no one bored our arses off with protracted monologues on Bakunin, who at that time we probably would have thought was a brand of vodka. Ideas were open, we were creating our own lives together. These were the glorious years before the free alternatives that we were creating became just another set of bigoted rules, before what we were defining as real punk became yet another squalid ghetto. We even played a Rock Against Racism gig, the only gig that we'd ever been paid for. When we told the man to keep the money for the cause, he informed us that 'this was the cause'. We never played for RAR again.

As the charlatans increasingly headed Stateside, to get a sniff of that which refreshed them best, we became hardened by the isolation. We determined to stop fucking about with booze and to start taking ourselves that much more seriously. We adopted black clothing as a protest against the narcissistic peacockery of fashion punks. We started incorporating film and video into our set. We went into production of handout sheets to explain our ideas and a newspaper, *International Anthem*. We designed the banner that hung behind us to the end, and we committed ourselves to see it through at least until the end of the then mythical 1984.

Later in the Summer of 78, Pete Stennet, owner of the much missed Small Wonder Records, heard one of our demo tapes and loved it. He wanted to put out a single but couldn't decide on which track, so we recorded all the songs we'd written and made the first ever multi-tracked 45. We named the album *The Feeding Of The Five Thousand* because 5000 was the minimum number that we could get pressed and some 4900 more than we thought we'd sell. *Feeding* is now only a few hundred short of going golden, though I don't suppose we'll hear too much about that in the music press.

So, with our entire stage set on record, wrapped in what was then highly innovative black and white, the music press were able to commence on the barrage of attack that has followed us throughout the years. They hated it and us and their loathing positively overflowed. It is not grandiose to claim that we have been one of the most influential bands in the history of British rock, true we have not greatly influenced music itself, but our effect on broader social issues has been enormous. From the start the media has attempted to ignore us and only when its hand has been forced by circumstances has it grudgingly given us credence. It's all fairly simple, if you don't play their game, that is commercial exploitation, they won't play yours. The music biz doesn't just buy its groups, it pays for the music press as well. The charlatans were spread thicker and deeper than we could ever have imagined.

Nonetheless, realising that we were a threat to its control, the first offers started coming in from the enemy. Mr. Big tried to buy us with cheap wine and an offer of £50000 if we'd join 'Purseys' Package'. He also informed us that he could 'market revolution' and that we'd never succeed without his help. It was the first of many offers that we refused, we never looked back and, incidentally, we didn't hear too much more of Jimmy Pursey.

When *Feeding* came out in the Spring of 79, the first track had been silent and named *The Sound Of Free Speech*. The pressing plant had decided that the track that had been there, *Asylum*, was too blasphemous for their, and your, tastes. Such is the true face of censorship in the 'Free World'

Eventually we found a pressing plant willing to deal with *Asylum*, so we re-recorded it along with *Shaved Women*, printed the covers at home, sold it for 45p, and totally broke ourselves.

On its release, the *Reality Asylum* single ran into immediate troubles. Complaints from the 'general public' led to police raids on shops throughout the country and a visit to us from Scotland Yard's vice-squad. After a pleasant afternoon sharing tea with our guardians of public morality, we were left with the threat of prosecution that hung over us for the next year. Eventually we received a note informing us that we were free, but that we'd better not try it again. The nature of our 'freedom' made doing it again inevitable and so the endless round-about of police harassment set itself in motion; it has continued to this day.

It was around this time that we did our one and only radio session for John Peel. From then on our growing reputation as foul mouthed yobs precluded us from being given airplay, although we did appear on several chat-shows which led to us being temporarily blacklisted by the BBC. Apparently, expressing dissident views on the Falklands is not acceptable to the listening public who jammed the BBC switchboard with complaints.

To offset claims in the press that we were nothing but leftist/rightist thugs, they never could quite make us out, we started to hang an anarchist banner alongside our own. At that time the circled A was rarely seen outside the confines of established and generally tedious, small-time anarchist literature. Within months the symbol was to be seen decorating leather jackets, badges and walls throughout the country, within a few years it spread worldwide. Rotten may have proclaimed himself an anarchist, but it was us who almost single-handedly created anarchy as a popular movement for millions of people.

At the same time, having discovered that CND did actually still exist, albeit in a downtrodden, self-effacing manner, we decided to promote its cause, something that at the time CND seemed to be incapable of doing for itself. From then on, despite screams of derision in the music press, we also displayed the peace symbol at gigs.

Our efforts on the road slowly brought CND back to life. We

introduced it to the thousands of people who would become the backbone of its revival. A new and hitherto uninformed sector of society was being exposed to a form of radical thought that culminated in the great rallies, demos and actions that continue today.

The true effect of our work is not to be found within the confines of rock'n'roll, but in the radicalised minds of thousands of people throughout the world. From the Gates of Greenham to the Berlin Wall, from the Stop The City actions to underground gigs in Poland, our particular brand of anarcho-pacifism, now almost synonymous with punk, has made itself known.

Since early 77 we had been involved in maintaining a graffiti war throughout Central London. Our stencilled messages, anything from 'Fight War Not Wars' to 'Stuff Your Sexist Shit', were the first of their kind to appear in the UK and inspired a whole movement that, sadly, has now been eclipsed by hip-hop artists who have done little but confirm the insidious nature of American culture.

To celebrate our success with the spraycan, we decided to call our next album *Stations Of The Crass*, the cover of which was a photo of some of our work on one of London Underground's stations. *Stations* featured the first ever six-fold wrapper and came complete with a sew on patch that we printed at home.

By now, Pete of Small Wonder was beginning to tire of the kind of police attention that we were drawing to his shop, so we borrowed the money to release *Stations* ourselves. It sold so well that after only a very short time we were able to pay back the loan and get the covers folded by machine rather than doing them at home by hand.

Stations continued to sell and soon we were able to consider releasing material by other bands. Crass Records was created and we kicked off with a single from Zounds, the first of well over one hundred bands that we have introduced to the unsuspecting public.

In the Spring of 1980, having played several benefit gigs for the defence fund of the jailed anarchists, known paradoxically as 'Persons Unknown', we were asked by them on their release if we could contribute to the creation of an Anarchist Centre. We recorded *Bloody Revolutions*, with Poison Girls' *Persons Unknown* on the reverse side, and the centre was opened on the proceeds. For over a year an unhappy liason existed between the old school anarchists of Persons Unknown and the anarcho-punks. Eventually the ideological pressure got too great and the centre closed.

The relative ease with which we were able to raise money for the center demonstrated to us the enormous power that we had to generate not only ideas, but the wherewithal to make them possible. By now we were drawing large crowds to our gigs so we decided that the best use to which we could put the situation was to play nothing but benefits. Over the years we were able to create funds for a wide variety of different causes.

It now seemed time to launch a feminist attack. For some time we had been aware that we were being labelled as a bother band and that the feminist element within our work was largely ignored. We released *Penis Envy* and the music press, missing the point entirely, heralded it as having been made by 'the only feminists physically attractive enough to make you sure they're singing out of choice rather than revenge'. What do you do with these guys? The reaction from many Crass 'fans' expressed similar prejudices, but from an entirely different angle. They wanted to know why we'd only got 'birds singing'. The devil or the deep blue sea?

The final track on *Penis Envy* entitled *Our Wedding*, a satire on slush MOR romantic bullshit, was offered by 'Creative Recording And Sound Services' to Loving, a magazine specialising in the exploitation of teenage loneliness. Loving proudly offered it to their readers as 'a must for that happy day'. When the hoax was exposed Fleet Street rocked, while heads at Loving rolled.

The release of *Penis Envy* confirmed a suspicion that we had had for some time. After one week in the shops it entered the national charts at number fifteen, next week it wasn't to be found anywhere in the top one hundred. The same fate had befallen *Nagasaki Nightmare*, we knew that it just wasn't possible to be that high in the charts one week and nowhere to be found the next. It seemed obvious to us that if the major labels paid to get their records 'in' the charts, they'd pay to get ours 'out'. We knew that we were disliked by EMI, they'd sent out a circular to their A&R departments forbidding any contact with 'Crass personnel' and their HMV shops have not touched any of our material since they took exception to the poster on *Bloody Revolutions*. What other devious tricks were going on behind our backs?

For some time now we had been touring far and wide throughout the UK, bravely treading where no band had trod before. Village halls, scout huts, community centers, anywhere that was neither the rip-off clubs or the pampered university circuit. Hundreds of people would travel to join us in unlikely spots to celebrate our mutual sense of

freedom. We shared our music, films, literature, conversation, food and tea. Wherever we went we were met by smiling faces, ready and willing to create an alternative to the drab greyness all around.

It was not always easy, there were always those who wanted to destroy what we had created. We tried to play the Stonehenge Festival but got beaten up by the bikers; we had gigs smashed up by the National Front and the SWP; we played host to the RUC in Belfast, sent the British Movement packing in Reading and got thrashed by the Red Brigade in London. There was a lot of trouble, but it never outweighed the joy.

Throughout 1981 we were recording *Christ The Album* which by the Summer of 82 was ready to release. This time, however, the trouble did outweigh the joy. 'Great Britain' had gone to war.

Insignificant events on an island called South Georgia, which no one had ever heard of, led to significant events on an island called the Falklands which no one had ever heard of. The first pin-prick had been placed in the anarcho-pacifist bubble, a pin-prick that would in the space of a few months tear the bubble to shreds. As young men died by the hundred, our songs, protests and marches, our leaflets, words and ideas suddenly seemed to be worthless. In reality we knew that what we had to offer had value, that what we believed in was worthwhile, but for the moment it all seemed futile.

Thatcher wanted war to boost her party's flagging pre-election image. If she wanted war, she'd have it, along with anything else that took her fancy. Cruise, Pershing, PWR's, Unions, Dennis.

At risk of being seen as the 'traitors' that we are, through devious routes we rushed out an anti-Falklands War flexi and were instantly labelled 'traitors' by the music press. We also received a severe warning from the House of Commons to 'watch our step'. Protest against the War seemed to be virtually non-existent and criticism in the press was being suppressed. When the issues had been abstract, the Peace Movement had been all too happy to shout 'No more war', now there was a war to shout about, the silence was painful.

However it wasn't until the war had ended and we released *How Does It Feel To Be The Mother Of A Thousand Dead* that the shit really hit the fan. After Thatcher had been asked in the House of Commons whether she had listened to the record, it was inevitable that she and her party would want to punish us. Tory MP Tim Eggar had the hapless task of fronting prosecution proceedings and right from the start couldn't put a foot right. The case crumbled completely when Eggar was exposed by us on live radio as a complete fool. The Tories



backed down immediately after his miserable performance and even went to the trouble of circulating a note in which members of the Party were ordered to ignore all provocation from our quarter. Suddenly we started receiving letters of support from members of the 'Opposition'. Maybe we weren't on our own. Fall guys or what?

We found ourselves in a strange and frightening arena. We had wanted to make our views public, had wanted to share them with like minded people, but now those views were being analysed by those dark shadows who inhabited the corridors of power. Eggar had created a great deal of publicity for our cause and the press had lapped it up, especially those who, literally at gun point, had been prevented from gaining any real information on the war. It was as if we'd hooked a whale while fishing for minnows. We didn't know whether to let go of the rod, or keep pulling until we exhausted ourselves, which we knew, inevitably, we would.

The speed with which the Falklands War was played out and the devastation that Thatcher was creating both at home and abroad, forced us to respond far faster than we had ever needed to before. *Christ The Album* had taken so long to produce that some of the songs in it, songs that warned of the imminence of riots and war, had become almost redundant. Toxteth, Bristol, Brixton and the Falklands were ablaze by the time that we released. We felt embarrassed by our slowness, humbled by our inadequacy.

At the end of 82, aware that the 'movement' needed a morale booster, we organised the first squat gig for decades at the now defunct Zig Zag Club in London. Along with free food and copious supplies of ripped-off booze, we celebrated our independence once again, this time joined by twenty other bands, the cream of what could truly be called 'real punk'. Together we supplied a twenty-four hour blast of energy which inspired similar actions throughout the world. We'd learnt the lesson. 'Do it yourself' has never seemed so real as it did that day at the Zig Zag.

In many respects the Zig Zag consolidated our thinking, the job was by no means over. So, deciding that we should hang onto the rod and fight the whale, we launched an all out attack on Thatcher and her allies. The run up to the 83 Elections had started, the 'Opposition' had all but collapsed. Labour had made the inevitable, revolting turn-about on its anti-nuclear stance and the Peace Movement was in tatters, muted by its own fears.

The album *Yes Sir I Will* was our first 'tactical response', it was an impassioned scream directed towards the wielders of power and those who passively accept them as an authority. The message in *Yes Sir* was loud and clear, 'There is no authority but yourself'.

As our political position became increasingly polarised, we felt it necessary to define our motives in a clearer fashion than perhaps we had done before. The what, where and why of our anger needed explaining, as did our idea of 'self'. We had often been accused of sloganeering, now was the time to come out into the open. Several members of the band produced *Acts Of Love*, fifty poems in lyrical settings, in an attempt to demonstrate that the source of our anger was love rather than hate and that our idea of self was not that of an egocentric social bigot, but of an internal sense of one's own being. The ambiguity of our attitudes was beginning to disturb us. Was it really possible to have a bloodless revolution? Were we being truly realistic? Were we being destroyed by our own paradoxes?

It was at this time that we sent the now infamous 'ThatcherGate Tapes' to the world's press. The highly edited tape, which took the form of a telephone conversation between Reagan and Thatcher, had her admitting responsibility for the sinking of the *Belgrano*, an issue which at that time she had not been confronted with, and implying knowledge of the *Invincible's* decision to 'guinea-pig' the *Sheffield*, a fact that still has not come to light. So as to leave no stone unturned, we caused Reagan to threaten to 'nuke' Europe in defence of American heritage, a hypothesis which is probably not as wild as it seems.

The tape lay dormant for almost a year before surfacing in the State Department in Washington DC. The categorical denials that were issued in relationship to the tape and its contents acted as a clear indication that the methods that we had employed to discredit Thatcher and Reagan were in no way dissimilar to those of The State Department. Why else would they have taken our somewhat amateurish efforts at tape forgery so seriously? Inevitably, they waved the accusatory finger in the direction of the Kremlin. Shortly after that, several papers in America, and *The Sunday Times* in Britain, ran the story as proof of KGB 'foul-play'. It was the first time that the press had run any story that, albeit in a roundabout fashion, questioned Thatcher's integrity concerning the *Belgrano*. We were overcome with a mixture of fear and elation, should we or should we not expose the hoax?

Our indecision was resolved when a journalist from *The Observer* contacted us in relation to 'a certain tape'. At first we denied knowledge, but eventually decided to admit responsibility. We had been meticulously careful in the production and distribution of the tape to ensure that no one knew about our involvement. How *The Observer* got hold of information that led to us is a complete mystery.

It acted as a substantial warning, if walls did indeed have ears, how much more was known of our activities?

Since the graffiti days of 77 we had been involved in various forms of action, from spraying to wire cutting, sabotage and subterfuge. We had been concerned that if we went public on the tape all manner of other 'offences' might bubble to the surface. Now we had exposed ourselves to that risk and the telephone started to ring.

The world's media pounced on the story, thrilled that a 'bunch of punks' had made such idiots of The State Department, and 'by the way, what else had we done?' Throughout the years as a band we had never attracted such attention, the telephone rang incessantly, we travelled here and there to do interviews, all of a sudden we were 'media stars'. We were interviewed by the Russian press as American TV cameras recorded the event, we were live on American breakfast TV, we talked to radio stations from Essex to Tokyo, always giving the anarchist angle on every question. We had gained a form of political power, found a voice, were being treated with a slightly awed respect, but was that really what we wanted? Was that what we had set out to achieve all those years ago?

After seven years on the road we had become the very thing that we were attacking. We had found a platform for our ideas, but somewhere along the line had lost our insight. Where once we had been generous and outgoing, we had now become cynical and inward. Our activities had always been coloured with a lightness and humour, now we saw that we had been increasingly drawn towards darkness and an often ill-conceived militancy. We had become bitter where once we had been joyful, pessimistic where once optimism had been our cause. Throughout those seven years we had attracted almost constant direct and indirect State harassment, now, inevitably, they struck again.

1984 had arrived, rather worse than Orwell had predicted. Unemployment, homelessness, poverty, hunger. The police state had become a reality, as the miners were going to discover. 'Accidental' death from Thatcher's private army of boys in blue had become an acceptable norm. The balance of a whole society was hanging on the apron strings of a vicious and uncaring despot. Far less important by far was our own fate. We were hauled into the courts to face an obscenity charge that almost broke us. 'We have ways of making you not talk'.

That Summer we played what was to be our last gig together, a riotous benefit for the South Wales miners. From the stage we vowed to continue working for the cause of freedom, yet, as we drove home, we all knew that the particular path that we had been taking had been exhausted. We needed new ways in which to approach our objectives and, a few weeks after the gig, Hari Nana left the band to seek his.

We felt no compulsion to continue gigging. We were no longer convinced that by simply providing what had broadly become entertainment we were having any real effect. We'd made our point and if after seven years people hadn't taken it, it surely wasn't because we hadn't tried hard enough.

'There is no authority but yourself', we said that, but we'd lost ourselves and become CRASS. We are still involved in the often painful process of refinding that self, of seeing each other again, of healing ourselves from the self-inflicted wounds of 'public life'. In Lennon's words, 'the dream is over'.

The 'movement', from Class War to Christians For Peace, needs to regain the dignity that it has lost in the process of attempting to confront problems that appear to be created by others. We have all been guilty of defining the enemy, and indeed there are those who would obstruct the course of liberty, yet ultimately the enemy is to be found within. There is no them and us, there is only you and me.

We need to consolidate, reassess, reject what patently does not work and be prepared to adopt ideas and attitudes that might. We need to find the 'self' that can truly be the authority that it is. We need to look beyond the barbed-wire and the ranks of police for a vision of life which is of our choosing, not that which is dictated by cynics and despots. The exponent of Karate does not aim at the brick when wishing to break it, but at the space beyond. We would do well to learn from that example.

We have spent too much of our time, energy and spirit attempting to dispell the shadow of evil cast over us by the violence and terror of the nuclear age. That shadow has become a stain on our hearts. It is time to wash away that stain and to step out of the shadow into the light. We have become trapped in fear outside metaphorical Greenham Gates. 'Knock and ye shall enter... the kingdom of heaven is within you.'

We know enough of the sickness of the world, we should be careful not to add to it through our own physical and mental exhaustion and ill health. If we are ever to achieve our shared objectives we must each of us be strong enough to do so. We have all failed and we have all succeeded. This is no tail between the leg ending, but a proud, albeit painful and confused, beginning.

Love, peace and freedom,

what was CRASS, but now knows better.

REVIEWS

The Audio Evolution Network reviews all genres of independent recordings that are available to the public. By independent we mean those recordings not produced or distributed by the six major record labels (CBS, RCA/A&M, WEA, EMI, MCA and Polygram.) Send us at least one copy of the recording (a second or third copy, is appreciated though and may be played on the AEN Radio Show). When we receive the recording someone on the staff listens to it at least briefly, and then the staff sends the recording to an A.E.N. reviewer who gets to keep the recording in exchange for turning in a review. When we get the review we send a postcard letting the band or artists know what issue their recording will be reviewed in. We attempt to review all that we receive, however, a small percentage (about 5%) of recordings never get reviewed for one reason or another (lost in the mail, reviewer flakes out, etc.) If you send us something and it never gets reviewed (give us a couple months) it may mean that it was lost or else you didn't include your address on the recording. An address should be attached to all recordings. A name should be on both cassettes and their covers. We will not review recordings for which we have no contact address. A.E.N. members (Sound Choice subscribers) who would like to review recordings should send us a note telling us of your interests. We'll get back to you.



SEGUN ADEWALE: Ojo Jo (Pounder Records, I Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140) On Adewale's newest album he continues the fusion of traditional juju and American soul sounds that he calls "yo-pop" music. For him fusion is no boring mix of the worst of both worlds. While usually such combinations risk a weakening of the African sound, here rhythm guitars play funk or jazz riffs that add the best in American soul to the lead guitars that play around the beat in bluesy solos. But don't worry, in the interplay of voices, pickers and drums you find pure juju that's sophisticated but never homogenized. Segun never goes all American like some soca stars from the Caribbean, who leave virtually all of their tradition behind for the disco beat. Adewale may be the best of both worlds, but until record companies and listeners get over their fear of other languages he'll remain a well kept secret like other African stars. Be grateful that this label is still sticking with juju.--James Hopkins

AKSAK MABOUL: Onze Danses pour Combattre Migraine (LP; Crammed Discs) This incarnation of Marc Hollander's Aksak Maboul plays an eclectic conglomeration of numerous musical styles that at once recalls such disparate sounds as those of the Fibonaccis, Steely Dan, Terry Riley, Soft Machine (in their prime), or any number of others which cannot be enumerated here. One finds elements of cabaret music, pop; Minimal music; third world music (especially in the percussion instruments which includes the dumbeg, a hand drum); jazz, including an arrangement of Ellington's "The Mooche" that recalls Steely Dan's version of another Ellington number, "East St. Louis Toodle-oo," only much better; classical chamber music by virtue of instruments such as the clarinet, bass clarinet, violin, and cello, in addition to the guitars, keyboards and saxes; and even some simple tape music. Very different from the album UN PEU DE L'AME DES BANDITS (recorded under the moniker Aqsak Maboul, with Frith, Cutler, and others), this is more structured and euphonious. However, it is a varied set and full of terrific music.--Dean Suzuki

ALTAR BOYS: Get Level Music (LP; Frontline Records, POB 28450, Santa Ana, CA 92799-08450, US) The third album by this trio of punks for Christ find their frame of mind expressly evangelical. There's no condemnation, but sincere pleading, in "You Are Loved" and "G.L.M.". "I'm Not Talking About Religion" makes the brave debunking of church attendance. Vocalist Mike Stand has absorbed Joey Ramone, Iggy Pop and Stiv Bators among others in vocal presence and nuance. These guys crank like Ramones cum Stooges cum Alarm in their balance between edginess and lightness. Surprises are a cover of Donna Summer and Musical Youth's "Unconditional Love" which pounds like crazy and a cowpunk "There is a Love." Not all are going to want to hear their messages but you can't deny their energy and sparkle.--Jamie Rake.

GEOFF X. ALEXANDER AND THE ALL STARS; Canodroma (C-46; Lonely Whistle Music, Box 23952, San Jose, CA 95153) A tour through the amazing talents of one guy, from acappella overdub doo-wop to delicate instrumentals to a muckin' Sonata, a tribute to the Farfisa organ, done on flute and tabula, then synth. Fanny liner notes, little whimsical stories about each song.--Robin James

AMOK: Return to Hamelin (C-45; Multimedia Productions, 182

16100 Genova, Centro Italy) An electronic event, all kinds of strange synth landscaping, full-bodied wails like air-raid sirens, probing beams from oscillators, lots of looped side ventures, it doesn't stop, it goes around and then quiets a bit, then something else takes over. Funny and hypnotic strange entertainment.--Robin James

AMOR FATI: Will to Live (6 song EP; Flesh Records, POB 5040, N. Bergen, NJ 07047) Pounding headache feedback guitar on metal screaming. And it keeps pounding you awake. Insists that you listen before it's too late. Before you're one of THEM. Before you also become shit to the spirit. "Will to Live" represents the efforts of a soul band in the strictest sense. Guitar, bass, drums, metal, and everybody plays percussion. The vocals/thoughts/experiences wail and make you hopefully think and listen. In case that doesn't work, the package comes with informative, disturbing, philosophical writings backed up by traditional sources. Experience this, and realize your own potential.--John E.

ISABELLE ANTENA: En Cavale (LP) Isabelle has a pleasant enough voice but a good voice isn't enough to save this recording. The musicians remain anonymous and probably for good reason. Everything here sounds the same. Isabelle composed most of these forgettable tunes. This just ain't jazz, but with its disco beat it would be fine stuff for an aerobics class.--Betty Huck

ANTI-SEEN: Drastic (7" EP; 7602-10 Antlers Lane, Charlotte, NC 28210) At times racing along with the best hardcore and at others slowed down to pounding guitar chords, Anti-Seen rocks out in a blaze of glory. These fragments never lose their sense of the hook and it would have been great if "She is Part of the Scene" had been expanded into a full song but let's just be grateful for what we got.--Lana Thompson

THE AVIATORS: Dead to a Ranch (EP; Lost Arts Records, POB 85338, Los Angeles, CA 90072, USA) This quartet from Denver, CO plays a tough, smooth groove. It's hard rock, bringing to mind Bad Company, if it had been fronted by Joe Walsh. The songs are well crafted for this genre and the performances are very credible. The first side is in the studio, the second is live and the worse for it. The singer, Shepherd Stevenson, has a warm and gutsy voice that compares favorably with say, John Cougar Mellencamp. Drummer Nate Winger keeps things swinging and pushing, keeping this away from the sludge rock that most hard rock regressed into during the '70s.--Scott Jackson

THE BABY ASTRONAUTS: Strawberry Enema (1 side of a C-90; Dead Weight Tapes, POB 141021, Minneapolis, MN 55414-6021, USA) The BA's second tape find them with more on their minds than their laugh-riot debut, A IS FOR ANARCHY, but still maintaining a sense of humor about life. In punky guitar pop, they sing of sex, 7-11s, vacations, environmentalism, schizophrenia and s.f. horror themes, not to mention a tribute to that great, defunct Mini-Apple band, Otto's Chemical Lounge. All this they do with tinges of heavy metal, psychedelia, blues, etc. with teeny bop acumen. Dig it deep.--Jamie Rake

THE BAGS (5-song C; 60 N. Margin St. #8, Boston, MA 02113) A second tape EP from this crackling band finds them slowing down the attack and moving into more traditional rock n roll territory. They

have many of the traditional virtues (rough edges, guitar hooks) as well, making for good times indeed.--Lana Thompson

B.A.N.G.: Bay Area New Gamelan (C; American Gamelan Institute, Box 9911, Oakland, CA 94613) Three Bay area composers create original music for gamelan with varying degrees of success. However close Berkeley may be in spirit to Indonesia where the gamelan finds its origin, Indonesia is not particularly close to Appalachia. This is a roundabout way of saying that Jody Diamond's "In That Bright World" is a mismatch of styles with a delicate sounding female folksinger trying to hold her own with a bytaring Stranger in the face of a gamelan orchestra carrying resonances of the melody. The gamelan simply overwhelms her from the start. A worthy experiment though. Far more successful are "Ghosts" by Daniel Schmidt and "Woodstone" by Ingram Marshall. Nothing radical here in terms of using the gamelan as an instrument for American music. Listen to Lou Harrison if you're seeking that. This is delicate music that could appeal to fans of Steve Reich or Terry Riley.--Norman Weinstein

THE BARKING BOYS AND THE YES GIRLS: My Wild Romance (10-song C; \$7, 500A Eglinton Ave., W. Toronto, Ont. Canada M5N 1A5) New wave white folks turning out new wave-cum-funk tunes that are as boring to dance to as they are to listen to.--Madeline Finch

MATT BARRETT: Is This It?/Nothing At All To Write Home About (7&S; Ruse, 101 Lindsay St., Carboro, NC 27510) Instantly memorable! Barrett, along with assorted NC superstars, effortlessly come up with a plethora of vocal/guitar melodic hooks that make commercial radio sound lame by comparison. With a voice reminiscent of Pete Townshend's sweetest tones and a knack for catchy, classic chord progressions, Barrett is certainly the archetypal "undiscovered local talent" that major labels hunger for, ala Tommy Keene. A side pulses sneakily into your mental list of summer tunes; B side rocks like Chilton on an inspired evening, neat slide guitar in there, solid drumming. Essential listening. Produced by Wes Lachot.--Fred Mills

JEFFREY BARTONE: Sound Views Sources (C-90; c/o Olympia Media Exchange, 218 1/2 W 4th Street, Olympia, WA 98501) Almost complete sampler of contemporary sound arts, concentrating on sound sculptures and environments. This is taken from Bartone's radio series, a well researched approach, lots of telephone talk from the artists themselves between the tapes and phonograph recordings on sound sculptures and environments. This is taken from Bartone's radio series, a well researched approach, lots of telephone talk from the artists themselves between the tapes and phonograph recordings of the sounds. Great packaging too. Vital in the exploration of physical sound arts and artist: Bertoia, Fontana, Annea Lockwood, Hildegard Westerkamp, Scarf, Lehman, Pomeroy, Hollis, Behrman, Snapshot Radio, Monahan, Palestine, Tony Schwartz.--Robin James

BATANG FRISCO: Batang Frisco (LP; Sonic Arts Corp., 5285 Diamond Heights Blvd., Suite 114-1, San Francisco, CA 94131) Batang Frisco are a two man band playing guitars, keyboards, voice and programmed percussion. One refreshing aspect of their use of the latter is that they don't use it as a gimmick by trying to sound futuristic or alien. When they aren't using the percussion the music takes on a flowing, reflective, dreamy and sometimes majestic quality. There's a touch of psychedelia here but music and production both sound very modern and in no way seem to be trying to recreate the '60s. This seems to be a synthesizer dominated group but when Eric Jensen's lead guitar does break through, his sustained, fuzzbox solos show a slight influence from the Steve Hackett progressive/art rock school. As a matter of fact, if you told me that these guys used to like Genesis-before-they-turned-to-shit I wouldn't be surprised at all.--Bryan Sale

BEL-FIRES: Fall for the Sky (EP; Birdcage Records, POB 784, Sierra Madre, CA 91024-0784) Safe, sleepy, guitar-oriented pop. All five tunes are sung by a competent female vocalist who nonetheless lacks the cutting edge necessary to make the REM-ish guitars really stand out. Unoriginal and uninspiring.--Madeline Finch

JOHN M. BENNETT: The Splitter (C; Luna Biscote Prods., 137 Leland Ave., Columbus, OH 43214, USA) Straight poetry here. No music, no sound effects, no fooling around. Bennett recites his surreal, stream-of-consciousness poetry in an even-toned, yet energized voice. His use of repetition at the beginning of each line gives the poems a chant-like cadence. "I was spitting on a statue/ I was spitting on the steps/ I was spitting on an accountant eating lunch in the park". Bennett's diction is precise, and his voice is pleasant to listen to. The poetry in general is lively, certainly more interesting than a lot of poems you see in magazines. A certain monotony sets in, though, after a while. Perhaps venturing into forms other than your basic LIST would help. But then, Walt Whitman didn't do too bad for himself in the form--or Allen Ginsberg.--WR. Borneman

ERIK BERGLUND: Beauty (LP, C; Sona Gaia Prods., 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee, WI, 53202, 414-272-6700 or in Europe, Narada Prods., Postbus 6037 2001 HA, Haarlem, Holland, (23)28016). The only thing Irish about this record of Irish harp solos written and performed by Erik Berglund, is the harp. Berglund writes a bit like late Romantic composers such as Debussy. "Angel Wings" is the pick of the litter, with a nice melody and a Gregorian chant-flavored center section. Some songs suffered from reverb levels well past 'cathedral ambience,' but that may be a selling point for a relaxation and meditation album. His style suits the contemplative mood emotional pauses before harmonically important chords, and lots of

rubato, especially in left hand (bass) work. "Beauty" sounds warm and calm, which will attract fans of New Age music, and just maybe, a crossover audience of fans of light classical.—Mark Manning.

BERTRAMI: Dreams Are Real (LP; Milestone Records, 10th & Parker, Berkeley, CA 94710). This record sounds a lot like many other recent releases on Milestone (i.e. a little on the sweet/slick side production-wise.) Bertrami is a Brazilian keyboard player with a good deal of ability and is accompanied here by other Brazilian musicians including singer Flora Purim. Side one of this disc doesn't do much for me at all. Funk/disco instrumentals for the most part which lack depth. If you're a yuppie however, "Like I'm sure that it would just sound really bitchin' on that super duper stereo you just got, or that the high end would be maxin' on the tapedeck in your new BMW" It sounds like wallpaper for people who listen to frequencies rather than music. Thankfully side two is another story. A touch more Latin flavoring here. The music on this side is well arranged and played fusion. This along with the more South American feeling reminds me of the stuff people like Bertrami's fellow countrymen Airtio or pianist/arranger Hermeto used to do in the early 70s and has a stronger sense of authenticity. A whole album of this would have been nice.—Bryan Sale

BIFF BANG POW!: Love's Going out of Fashion (4-track 12" EP; Creation, 83 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1, England) Four varied tracks from the manager of J&M Chain, his band that is, and about as far removed from those noisemakers as possible. Produced by Joseph Foster, too. "Love's Going Out of Fashion" is poppy-wimpy and forgettable. "Inside the Mushroom," however, is stunning—a spy theme bassline rumbling beneath a trebly pair of "8 Miles High"-type guitar figures and a moaning, Plasticandish vocal to complete the lysergic connection. "It Happens All the Time" is a casual breathy ballad with a lonely harmonica tooting along in the background. "In the Afternoon" sounds moody, tom drums tribal as flecks of echoey guitars and echoey vocals space in and out. Of the two styles on the disc, I prefer the denser psychedelic stuff.—Fred Mills

BIG BOY HENRY: Mr President/Cherry Red (7" 45; Audio Arts, Rt. 1 Box 59, Hwy 43N, Greenville, NC 27834) Richard "Big Boy" Henry sends message to White House: "It's bad out here, man...tell ya what, come live with me, I'll give you some pinto beans and show you how a po' man lives..." Fine 12-bar blues with solid backup and cool harp blowing; Big Boy's a true NC item and has a rich singing voice. The flip is sparser with only the voice, hollow-body electric guitar and muted tambourine on the downbeat. Exemplary. Produced by Lightning Wells.—Fred Mills

THE BIG DIPPERS: Toys Are Us (12" single; POB 3117, Austin, TX 78764, USA) Here comes a three piece band called The Big Dippers with the original notion that militaristic toys are not good Christmas gifts for children. Real profound! Frank Zappa said the same thing much better 20 years ago with "Uncle Bernie's Farm." Musically, the title song has a little bit of Sting in it. The flip side is a tight, intriguing guitar-bass dance thang called "That Way."—Bill Neill

KARL BISCUIT: Fatal Reverie (LP; Crammed discs, 1 Clarence House, Rushcroft Rd., London SW2) This is not a fun album, although parts of it sound like they might come from a comedy soundtrack. Possibly even a commercial for a toy store, the mechanized synthetic beat and cutesy percussion/keyboard sounds in perfect synch with little cars and toy soldiers jerking back and forth via stop-action photography. Actually, I may be unnecessarily cruel, for there were moments I liked. "The Salvo of the Cannons" reminded me of Ultravox and other Teutonic synth rock; Karl's vocal is a bit pompous but this is tempered by a clever recurring chant. The piano is ornate yet warmly reassuring amidst a gothic backing. Closing track "Final", an instrumental, was unsettling, a synth drone flecked by the gloomy bleating of horns and a weird choirlike effect moaning from far away. Overall not a bad disc; fans of neo-classical electronic rock may like it, although there is no new territory staked out.—Fred Mills

BIG BLACK: Atomizer (LP; Homestead, POB 570, Rockville Centre, NY 11570) The thick, distorted psychotic vocals threaten to spew phlegm and fillings-chunks at you as dense, treated guitars blast out from behind wads of oily cheesecloth stuffed down between chords. A drum machine keeps unerring time like some prehistoric beast battering away its life against the chromium vault doors of the ages. If one were to take the most intense parts of the loudest records in memory, be they metal or hardcore or even Killing Joke-style doom, and sequence them together on an endless loop tape, the effect would still be trifling compared to the experience of the new Big Black LP. Somehow along the way Big Black has gotten mixed up with the so-called "offensive" persona of leader Steve Albini; his Forced Exposure and Matter pieces tend to polarize just about everyone. (Personally I have come around and consider him to be a pretty honest guy—check his new F.E. diary and the recent Jet Lag interview.) And Big Black's lyrics aren't pretty sights, no sirree. They throw blatant images of violence, frenzy, madness and degradation at ya with the force of a steel plate hat. It's up to you to catch it or duck. But the thing is: the sheer impact, the sonic force,

the brutal physicality...I could go on...of the music is so overwhelming that it becomes a thing of awesome beauty. Check the moment in "Kerosene" when the line "set me on fire" comes and listen for the guitars screaming in flames of agony just before they explode in a burst of apocalyptic chaos. Or the riff-heavy "Bazooka Joe" that pleads, "Hang with me, Joel!" amidst a frightening Stoooges ory. Throughout the disc there are such moments that make you gape dumbly, wondering how anyone could listen to it frequently and not go mad as the sun outside gets hotter and hotter and the arm stretches out for the replay button, keeps reaching out, fingers trembling...—Fred Mills

PAUL BLACK AND THE FLIP KINGS: How-How! (LP; Paradise Records, POB 3321, Madison, WI 53704, USA) White guy blues that smokes damn well. B.B. King and Robert Cray are easily-noted influences but it's deeper and more personal than that. Lots of way cool originals and a couple of covers (can't tell you where they are originally from) make for balance of song lengths and love song orientation. Rumor has it that Black whopped Stevie Ray Vaughn when the Flip Kings opened for him. This proves why. Hot!—Jamie Rake

BLACKHOUSE: Five Minutes After I Die (C-40; Cause and Effect, POB 30383, Indianapolis, IN 46230, USA) Their third tape finds God's favorite noisy dudes on an eclectic mood. This is more conceptually-unified than the two previous Blackhouse tapes and the unifier sounds to be a sermon cassette from Texan preacher Robert Tilton. Throughout the seven cuts (the grand opus title cut on side one and six shorter, connected pieces on the flip) Tilton is interspersed going on about how wicked thoughts can poison you to death. Over and between this, Ivo and Sterling make rhythms that sometimes could pass for electro-metal, warp and echo their vocals (often to the point of non-recognition), and make grating but beautiful mood paintings. All this while you might be asking yourself what this Holy Trinity stuff is all about, which is likely the point. Now I'm waiting for Blackhouse to do a conceptual piece with the Christian stripper Kelly Everett!—Jamie Rake

BLACKHOUSE: Hope (LP; RRRecords, 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA 01852) You've heard of Christian rock, now it's time to feast your ears to...Christian industrial music?! Blackhouse works in the same style as Whitehouse—white hot feedback, distorted vocals, but with very different lyrics. Take these from "The 2 Classes of People," for example: "The Bible makes it clear that there are 2 classes of people/believers and unbelievers/do you know which class you're in?" Make a joyful noise unto the Lord as they say! This record was made in an edition of 500 copies, each with a handmade cover. And to make things complete, there is a lock groove at the end of one side. The recording and pressing quality is superb. I'm sure rightwing Christians won't like it, but it you are a fan of industrial music, you will find this record very rewarding.—Douglas Breger

BLACK UHURU: Brutal (LP; Ras, POB 42517, Washington, D.C. 20015) I was expecting this band to collapse after the departure of lead singer Michael Rose who brought chops and a jivey vocal tone to this band which always needed an ace producer to sound full in the studio. My expectations were foiled utterly. Black Uhuru has never sounded more alive thanks to new lead singer Junior Reid who puts more speeding energy into this trio than I thought possible. He adrenalinizes Puma Jones and Truck Simpson into sounding urgent and dramatic on cuts like "Fit You Haffe Fit" and "Let Us Pray." Sly and Robbie do the usual alchemy in the studio to produce a very commercial album with lots of rootsy touches. Just possibly the most songful and beautifully arranged Black Uhuru album since RED.—Norman Weinstein

THE BLANK STAIRS (C-60, \$4.50, POB 10863, Greensboro, NC 27404) Greensboro duo, Ronald Tucker and Lee Spencer, who play all the instruments on all the 15 tracks except a handful; Mitch Easter produced four tunes and the rest are home demos. Bright, optimistic pop with more than a nod to Liverpool, although Big Star and the Windbreakers come to mind as well. Some lovely harmonies and plenty of jangly strumming, but place your references more toward late 70s power pop than Southern folk rock. "Beating on my Brain" rocks hard like D. Twilley at his breathless best; "In Your Shoes" features tight, intricate chord changes, natural summer radio stuff. Lots more to savor here—even the demos that are basically a vocal and a guitar demonstrate a flair for catchy melodies and easy going rhythms. A permanent band is definitely in order—listen to the clever welding of country twang guitar to Beatlesque harmonies in "Up in the Air."—Fred Mills

BLOODGOOD: Bloodgood (LP; Frontline Records, POB 28450, Santa Ana, CA 92799-8450, USA) Fire and brimstone heavy metal evangelism that takes its holy ferocity seriously. These four, young Christian men have cool song titles (especially effective: "Demon on the Run," "Anguish and Pain," "What Follows the Grave," "Killing the Beast"), super gruesome lyrics about crushing demons' heads, the blood of Christ dripping on the heads of the damned and soul wrenching in general and the tight as an angel's butt musicianship needed for the headbanging, animal-sacrificing teenage boys to listen to them. Their faster material is around the speed of the highest energy material on the first Motley Crue album but on the

lip's finale, Black Snake, they crank like the most adrenalinized Metallica. Singer Les Carlsen has assimilated well from Judas Priest (there's irony), Twisted Sister and Iron Maiden. Don't know about the soul saving power of this stuff but this fury will do ya some good either way!—Jamie Rake

BLUES BUSTERS: Busted (LP; High Water Recording Co. c/o Dr. David Evans, Music Dept. Memphis State University, Memphis TN 38152) These Blues Busters are not to be confused with the group the Blues Busters. The Blues Busters are the black musicians from Memphis as opposed to the other group of white blues rockers. High Water is the project of David Evans, respected blues scholar, and Memphis State. It has released both blues and gospel records by Memphis artists. Busted is the Blues Busters' first record and suffers from a uniform lack of energy. On a few cuts everything comes together such as the instrumental "Blue's Boogie," and "A Woman is Made to be Loved." But for the most part, we get flat uninspired versions of Willie Cobb's "You Don't Love Me," and an insipid cover of "Jailhouse Rock". Busted, as with all previous High Water releases includes informative liner notes, giving all the pertinent information lacking on most blues albums. In this case the liner notes provide the highlight of the album.—Dale Knuth

BLUE MOVIE: Hearts in Clubs (LP; Good Foot Records, 34 Liberty St. #4, San Francisco, CA 9410) Wow! These guys really have it together. Musicianship and songwriting are strong in the extreme. This is a San Francisco based band consisting of Rich Ferguson (drums), David Brian (guitar, banjo and harp), and Jim Hoadley (bass). All three members contribute vocals. My own favorites are "Reading D.C." ("being with you is like..."), "Hearts in Clubs" (which is about searching for just that), and a good timey banjo stomper called "Mary and Riley" who are a couple who "can't stand each other's guts/but they're such a perfect pair." The emphasis of the album is on the songs, although the group has a distinctive sound as well. I've filed this one under "heavy rotation."—Tom Burris

EVO BLUESTEIN: Evo's Autoharp (LP; Greenhays Recordings, POB 361, Port Washington, NY 11050, marketed by Flying Fish, 1304 W. Schubert, Chicago, IL 60614. Artist's address: 4414 E. Alamos, Fresno, CA 93726) The Bluestein family specializes in oldtime and other pre-bluegrass Appalachian music. The sound is so authentic, their music makes me look around for moonshine and the cool evening mist. Evo's autoharp and voice anchor the album, on which he's joined by his brother Jimmy and sister Frayda, as well as Mike Seeger (Pete's brother) and mandolinist Kenny Hall (who's famous for putting his mano upright on his lap like a little cello, then picking it with bare fingers). The material includes Grayson and Whitter (cool!) and Carter family numbers, everything clearly recorded. One song has neither Evo nor traditional Appalachian music: "These are My Blues," a hair raising performance by Evo's father Gene on blues autoharp, which sounds (as Gene says) like a barrelhouse piano.—Mark Manning

THE BLUE WISP BIG BAND: Rollin' with Von Ohlen (LP; MoPro Inc., 2959 Kling Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45211, USA) Cincinnati has never been known as a hotbed of jazz activity but, unknown to many of us, it is the home of one of the top straight-ahead jazz orchestras currently in existence. The Blue Wisp Big Band is a top-notch '50s/'60s style unit that unashamedly swings hard while totally ignoring fusion and the avant-garde. On two standards, four originals and Al Cohn's "Tain't No Use", this 16-piece orchestra plays with spirit and taste with the highpoints including the roaring title cut, a superb Larry Dickson arrangement of "Manteca" and the many fine soloists in general, particularly trumpeter Tim Hagans. One question: Can Cincinnati give this band the support it deserves?—Scott Yanow

THE BLURBS: Rest in Peas (C-60, Private Studios, POB 531, Wyandotte, MI 48192) Comes in a nifty 7" tape reel box with (maybe you can guess) dried peas rattling around. A variety of "less than love" songs ranging from parody to didacticism. Tight and well arranged music. Fast paced guitar/bass/drums with vocals and processing. Rocks all the way. Smooth. Wild. Came with a cassette called "Industry" in the same box with the peas and a pack of matches from Dooleys in Detroit.—Robin James

THE BLURBS: Industry (C-60; Private Studios, POB 531, Wyandotte, MI 48192). Rock. Maybe Steely Dan, James Joyce and Thomas Edison meet Etron Fou and jam. Well maybe not exactly. Sometimes its faster. Tight and well arranged music: vocals, guitar/bass/drums, real drums. Some titles: Trip to Museum, Washington's Wake, I Can't Dance. Fourteen songs which truly force a juxtaposition of styles in a deconstructive format.—Robin James

JOE BONNER QUARTET: Suite For Chocolate (LP; Sleepchase, 3943 West Lawrence Ave., Chicago, IL 60625, USA) Pianist Joe Bonner, who was originally heavily influenced by McCoy Tyner, covers a bit of ground in his set of six originals, ranging from the modal vamps of Chocolate and the romantic ballad "Where Did You Go?" to the light commercial melody (a la Ramsey Lewis) of "Peace, Carmella" and the driving "Blues for Chocolate". Khan Jamal's vibes recall Bobby Hutcherson now and then but overall this date, although not strikingly original, is quite creative and enjoyable.—Scott Yanow

BON TON SOCIETY (4 song 12" Nocturnal Records, 4856 North 41st St., Milwaukee, WI 53209, USA) Musically, these five fellas fall

somewhere between the metallic grandeur of Joy Division and the pop/dance of Duran Duran, not a bad place to be, really. The songs are about spiritual burdens, quests and exorcisms-nothing too threatening but not lightweight by a long shot. Only the vocals, something approaching a dairyland Simon LeBon in Doug Nagy's slightly nasal quality, bug me but not so much as to disregard this. The Milwaukee music explosion is fermenting and the Bon Tons will be a part of it.--Jamie Rake

DAVID BORDEN AND THE NEW MOTHER MALLARD BAND: Anantidae (LP; Cuneiform Records, POB 6517, Wheaton, MD 20906, USA) With Glass and Reich becoming increasingly romantic and opulent, and Riley and Young working with just intonation and manifesting strong Eastern influence, it has been the province of other composers to bear the torch and write in a more traditional and rigorous minimal vein. Like the Mike! Rouse Broken Consort, Soft Verdict, and other such minimal bands, Borden's resurrected Mother Mallard Band is often quite rock oriented, especially with the inclusion of drums (in the more than capable hands of David van Tieghem) and guitar, in addition to the synthesizers, pianos, woodwinds and voice. Several of the band members are familiar names, including Nurit Tilles, Edmund Niemann, Rebecca Armstrong, David Torn and the aforementioned van Tieghem, musicians who have been associated with Steve Reich and musicians, Peter Gordon and the Love of Life Orchestra, Laurie Anderson, Jan Garbarek and others. Included are three parts of Borden's magnum opus, THE CONTINUING STORY OF COUNTERPOINT, a huge, magnificent work in 12 parts, comparable in scope to Glass's MUSIC IN TWELVE PARTS. The three short pieces from the ANTIDAE series are ethereal, rather like some of ECM's releases by Rydal and Torn. With top notch musicians and wonderful music, you can't lose.--Dean Suzuki

BORED YOUNG MEN: sittin around decomposin (C30; Bovine Productions, 1012 E. Carson #3, Pittsburgh, PA 15203-1110, USA) Quirky (there's that word again), modern day parlor music steeped in cheap keyboards, odd vocals and four track cassette production. The prolific Ken Clinger teams up with pal B. Srahka, who handles the majority of the spoken/sung vocals that are playful and poetic. Conceptually poking fun at death rock, the major work is, "King The Sad Boy", the pathetic life story of a birth defect victim destined to be a performance artist. This is the ultimate in dirge humor but without the high tech gloss that might make it pretentious. Classic.--Donald Campau

BORED YOUNG MEN WITH SLIME ON THEIR HANDS (C, Bovine Prods., see address above; \$3/trade) Not much going on here. Cheap electronic keyboard; quiet, almost whispered vocals, and some electronics. Repetitive melodies that are sometimes singable. On side two, an analog synthesizer is added, making things a bit more interesting. The recording quality is clean, but a little too softly recorded, and there is not much high end. I suggest that they invest in better recording equipment and more instruments before they record again. I like their group name.--Douglas Bregger

JOEY BRADLEY: Never Let Go (6-song 12"; Full Circle, 80 E. San Francisco St., Santa Fe, NM 87501, USA) Bradley brings the vocal mannerisms of R&B and gospel to a painstakingly clear presentation of an American reggae. This is a stunning musical achievement of the highest order since the ghosts of the R&B masters lurked just beneath the surfaces of reggae's greatest singers like Jacob Miller and Bob Marley. This means that Bradley sings forthrightly in the groove--yet also plays at the edges of the reggae groove. The opening cut of "Stand By Me" is a cover that transfigures the original into a spiritually soaring plea worthy of a revival church AND a night out at the Apollo. The title track evokes the slave diaspora more chillingly than anything since Marley's "Redemption Song." Bradley is backed by Jamaica's famous Roots Radix throughout who put down the one drop with an inspiringly full sound. With this EP Bradley joins the ranks of Barbara Paige and Oiane Marshall as the sole Americans who have added to the traditions of Jamaican reggae. Repeated listening to this sweet sounding and dimensional vocalist is crucial to understanding how reggae can grow in this decade on transplanted soil.--Norman Weinstein

PATTY BRARD: Red Light (12" EP; Allegiance Records Ltd., 7525 Fountain Ave., Hollywood, CA 90046, USA) Nobody, absolutely nobody needs this kind of music, pop lacking any sustenance. Disco it is; irrelevant even more so. "Mystery Theme" is a lame ripoff of Kenny Loggins' "Footloose", a song I never wanted to hear again anyway. The rest of RED LIGHT sounds like Patty wants to be the next Madonna. Madonna's new album cover is better, though.--Kim Knowles

BRING HOME THE LOBSTERS (7-song C; Dinkle Fritz Records, 1610 Drummond St., Eau Claire, WI 54701, USA) Snide hardcore from northwest Wisconsin. It gives me the feeling that maybe they ingested M.D.C. and just have a better sense of humor than to be so didactic. Topics covered in the enigmatic "Northern Colony", include hypocrisy, bigotry, poseurs and mind control. About the only thing that failed to grab me was the surlyly metallic instrumental "Desert Song." Though not really melodic most of the rest have hooks. Like hardcore ought to be, this is good fun with points to make.--Jamie Rake

ROY BUCHANAN: Dancing On The Edge (LP, Alligator) Throughout his 10-album career Buchanan has garnered the kind of critical (and peer) acclaim that other guitarists only dream about. His commercial success has never quite matched that acclaim, however, and it's okay for him to invite singer Delbert McClinton in to sweeten up the pot in hopes of a radio hit. Fine. What I dig is his pure sound, free from excessive studio effects. Whether it be a trademark 12-bar workout, harmonic a-poppin' licks in "Pedal To The Metal", or a softly ripping overlay of melodies in the lovely Matthew Rust Buchanan to play it deftly and honestly, no pretensions or apologies. The prettiest guitar sound in the East; so if he wants to shoot for a hit with a "souful" moron like McClinton, let him go for it. The man certainly deserves one.--Fred Mills

BUNJI JUMPERS: A to Z (4 song 12"; Banana Records, POB 16621, Cleveland, OH 44116, USA) I wonder if these two met in art school? The Bunji Jumpers are Eva Diluce on synth and vocals and Jimmy Lee on guitars and drums. The high point of these four songs is the way Diluce's vocals and Lee's guitar lines blend together, especially on side one. "Be Brave" and "These Oays" flow very nicely not to mention that they're both great songs. At times they reminded me of Young Marble Giants or early stuff by The Passions--sort of a moody art rock sound but with a nice edge to it. Enjoyable to listen to, which is more than I can say for most records these days.--Brian S. Curley

ELLEN BURMEISTER: Ellen Burmeister Plays Vincent Persichetti (LP; Owl Recording, POB 4536, Boulder, CO 80306, USA) These three works by Vincent Persichetti (b. 1915) showcase the dense, complex piano literature of this prolific keyboard composer. Included here are the Tenth Piano Sonata (Op. 67), Serenade #7 (Op. 55), and the Eleventh Piano Sonata (Op. 101). All three contain rich sonorities, stark contrasts, and demanding athletics for the player. Serenade is a collection of so-called teaching pieces (ala Bartok's Mikrokosmos. Difficult but rewarding.--Mark Dickson

RICHARD BURMER: Mosaic: Electronic Vignettes (LP; Fortuna Records, Box 1116, Novato, CA 94948, USA) Burmer's electronic music is in the popular style that is derived from repetitive pattern music and the likes of Tangerine Dream and Klaus Schulze. Unlike so much of his competition (the field is becoming glutted with so much dross), he is rather successful. Burmer's works are short character pieces of varied style and type with the requisite poetic titles. Some of these little works are almost purely textual. These tend to be the more delicate, ethereal ones. Others are more melody oriented. Perhaps the finest piece is "Ave Padaelio" which is characterized by synthesized marimbas that recall Reich, with irregular interruptions by a timpani-like sonority and occasional fills that are reminiscent of King Crimson.--Dean Suzuki

CALVINGRAD: 1,2,3,4 Salopard sur Ton Char Leopard (C35; Calypso Now, Box 12, Ch-2500 Biel 3, Switzerland; \$6) Odd mix of simplistic protest lyrics, rough-edged post punk, bar-brand funk and good natured fun from Geneva, this was recorded at the last of a dozen performances over the group's entire lifespan of two months. At one point here they almost sound like they have something but then all is lost. Most of this is embarrassingly bad despite the best intentions. A curiosity from a curious scene, Calvingrad will not likely be remembered by many.--Glen Thrasher

DONALD CAMPAU: Paralyzed by the Very Thought (C60; \$6 or trade; Lonely Whistle Music, POB 23952, San Jose, CA 95153, USA) Campau's latest kicks off with "Another Stupid Video." Dcn's advice: "Add some breasts, jack up the guitar." He does the latter. Guitars over beat box, '60s style intertwining, big jams, clumsy rock, even soft acoustic with harmonica, while Campau's oddball voice sings about invisibility, turning over a new leaf, and the end of the line. A Mexican song with cute squeals and keyboard arpeggios asks, "How much are those tomatoes?" Lots of stuff here, but none of the really wild sound constructions heard on some of his other tapes.--Connie

KEVIN CAMPION AND THREE VISION-AIRES: Hobbies (C50; Kevin Campion, POB 4425, Whittier, CA 90607) Let's cut up some tapes of fundamentalist preachers recorded off the radio and TV! This is not a particularly new idea in 1986. And the less well it is actually done, and older and staler it sounds. And as "musicians" they positively try my patience.--W R. Borneman

JACK CARROLL: The Good News b/w John Three Sixteen (7"; Marcello, 361 J. Readington Rd., Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889, USA) Could you call gospel tunes harkening back to the days of vintage Sinatra "contemporary" Christian music? No matter--these gems swing tight as rat's...it wouldn't be very nice to say THAT, I s'pose. Still, I'm hoping Jack here is no one-off novelty act. My idea is that he is trying to evangelize to codgers who were but foolish young things in the original big band era and he's hopin' to win 'em over to the Holy Trinity. If he has more songs this boppin', more power to him. Heck, the man even SDUNDS like Ol' Blue Eyes! Religious or not, y' gotta admit this is waycool.--Jamie Rake

NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS: The Singer (3 track 12"; Homestead, POB 570, Rockville Centre, NY 11571-0570, USA) Reminiscent of the cover version of "In The Ghetto", "The Singer"

(penned by Johnny Cash) is slow and melancholy, an air of resignation in Cave's voice as the backing strings sweetly underscore. "Running Scared" demonstrates the full breadth of his emotive skill, a true open-throated masterpiece of Elvis/Sinatra stylings on the Orbison classic. And Leadbelly's "Black Betty" is given the slave-worksong treatment, acapella chanting augmented only with natural percussion as the voice experiments with varying distances from the microphone. Quite a change from The Birthday Party, a natural extension of the blues songs on his previous album. Good stuff.--Fred Mills

EUGENE CHADBOURNE: Calgary Exile (c90; Parachute, 2306 Sherwood, Greensboro, NC 27403, USA) Recorded in Canada, rare old creaky noises recorded while Eugene was living there as a U.S. draft dodger. Mostly acoustic guitar sounds with some strange kinds of rattling and scratching. Usually rather quiet, with annoying scraping and happy little plinking or something, nothing resembling music, more like a prison break sound-track, all restrained and suspenseful. Some funny titles: "The Floyd Dan Radio Show," "What is Pointed in One Direction But Headed In Another?," "You've Got To Draw The Line Somewhere," "Mau Tse Tung Did Not Have To Have To Deal With People Watching Seven Hours of Television Every Day." Two songs on the other side too.--Robin James

EUGENE CHADBOURNE: Corpses Of Foreign Wars (LP; Fundamental Records, POB 2309, Covington, GA 30209, USA) Oh my God! A solo album by Eugene C. that sounds sick! What's going on here? Great production, tight backing band, wonderful arrangements. Hell, the songs are even all grooved separately on the vinyl! And these are fucking great songs, too, bub (you wouldn't expect anything less from Chadbourne); mostly original tunes enhanced by a few sixties covers by Phil Ochs, Country Joe McDonald, and forays into weirdness from other generations like "Der Fuehrer's Face" by Oliver Wallace and a couple by Charles Mingus, Pharoah Sanders, and others. The tunes almost all have the same theme in common, that of "protest", a genre not exploited fully as of late except by E.C. in a folk vein reminiscent of great sixties protest folksies in songs like "10 Most Wanted List" and others. In the same way Shockabilly assimilated psychedelia into an 'eighties' context, so does Mr. Chadbourne brilliantly bring the "protest song" back into our consciousness using present day issues, governments, and politicians as deserving targets for his outrage. This also fits his sense of absurdist audio-political cartoonist satirizing Reagan, George Bush, Ed Meese, etc., as so many Huey, Dewey, and Louie's. The musicianship is exceptional, joining Eugene on the LP are Brian Ritchie and Victor De Lorenzo from The Violent Femmes and Peter Balestren from The Horns of Dilemma. Beautiful anti-war cover art rendered in crayola by E.C.'s daughter Jenny makes this a wonderful "concept" album.--John E

EUGENE CHADBOURNE: Muppet On-the-Way (C60; Parachute, 2306 Sherwood, Greensboro, NC 27403, USA) Strait ahead singing and playing guitar, lots of songs: Fried Chicken for Richard Speck (twice), Vermin of the blues, Iran and Iraq, C'mon Everybody (Israel version), Zappa medley (parts 1 & 2), Strange Fruit, Psychotic Reaction (acoustic version), Better Comin' Out Than Goin' In, Chopping Down Weeds. He can get some great sounds out of old guitars that don't even stay in tune, it's amazing, and that voice. Geeze. This tape is a good sampler of Eugene's protest songs and wildman charm.--Robin James

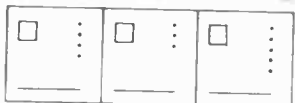
EUGENE CHADBOURNE: Rake vs. Plunger Megadeath (C90; Parachute, see address above) Some people take this stuff really seriously, they even try to humiliate the rake. The rake has feelings. The radio interview is priceless, everybody there wants to convert their lawn equipment to musical instruments. Rake and roll. The Plunger has tremendous possibilities, capable of moments of lyricism. Available to play for weddings.--Robin James

EUGENE CHADBOURNE AND JOHN ROSE (C60; Parachute, see address above) Live in Chicago, April 19, 1986-6-6-6. Jon plays the violin and Chad does the rest, a wildly free-flowing performance of violin/rake improvisations and wide-blown country-rock protest songs, like Purple Haze and Jesus Protects Mexico. Amazing guitar breaks and abrupt vocal imitations of cut up tape collages, this is a great performance.--Robin James

EUGENE CHADBOURNE: San Francisco Holiday (C60; Parachute; see address above) Recorded in 1977 with Henry Kaiser, John Zorn, Bruce Ackley, Polly Bradfield, includes material from the Sabbath LP acoustic music, pretty quiet, strange noises composed and arranged, also made up right on the spot. Ghost stories perhaps, with no words. Sort of appropriate for haunted house music, in a refined and abstract way. Squeek, growl, slide guitar, typewriter. Lots of gripping acoustic jazzy guitar numbers.--Robin James

EUGENE CHADBOURNE: 3rd World Summit Meeting (C60, Parachute; see address above) According to the program there are two songs, side one is Aqualung and side two is Blues for Ernie. With a lot of musicians: Dr. Lars Kesvavlek, violin; Cynthia Snersk; banjo; Saboo (Arabic looking fellow) plays Gypsy Finger Cymbal; Rick Nelson (not the singer, the harmonica player); Cindy Vespaci, mandlin; General George Polodex, sitar; Ernie Hoover (wears a med beret), bass; Theodore Bundy (yes) Haitian Vodoo drums; Kye

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Nostros (I'm not sure what she plays); Millie Overt, snare drum; Mike Johnston, Hawaiian Batailia; Mike Gilmore, Indo-China Cymbals; Eugene Chadbourne, guitar; Missy Prissy, 12-string; Jack Prissy, harmonica; Gary Burnout, vibes; St. George, Dub; #5, songs; J. Doe, Autoharp. It's horrible.--Robin James

EUGENE CHADBOURNE: F-ck Ch-ck (C60; Parachute; see address above) Live performance tape. Lots of odd electric guitar and Eugene "We-came-in-here-and-found-all-this-equipment-so-we're-heisting-it-and-now-you're-stuck" Chadbourne's unique and charming style of musical entertainment. Bug's Lament, Nutty, BB King Medley, Summertime Blues, John Lee Hooker Medley, Donna Lee, Hello Dolly. Accompanying him on these remarkable numbers are Ut Gret (Joe Conroy and David Stilley) and whoever Chuck is. Also cameo appearances of Ravi Shaker, Loretta Lynn, David Nikias, Murray Pears, Moxie Campbell III. This is extended strange instrumental noises from live performances, and a percussion break done while Ut Gret packed the car.--Robin James

EUGENE CHADBOURNE: Hank Gonzales Big CT (C90; Parachute; see address above) Tape collage carnival mixed with a television ride, live performances and whatever wandered near the mill--speeded up records, stuff from the radio, backwards, its a party of interruptions. There are some actual songs on side one: Invitation to a Jam Session, Cash in the Philippines, Wild Horses, Midnight Special, with special guest Eddie Van Halen/Walter Mondale Duo. Charles Mingus wrote some of the liner notes too.--Robin James

EUGENE CHADBOURNE: 198888 (5 song 7"; Ralph Records, 109 Minna #391, San Francisco, CA 94105, USA) Eugene's first for Ralph is a continuation of his adventures in twisted country classics. One side is originals including a reworked "America Stands Tall" (Libya Version) with references to the bombing, tourism, and "Dirty Harry". L. Ron Hubbard introduces "Jesus Protects Mexico," a ballad about all the good things J.C. has done for the country: loans, etc. A great cut has weird voices coming from the radio. Oh no, it's the devil! The other side has a couple covers including Roger Miller's "Can't Rollerskate in a Buffalo Herd." "You can't build a shield in outer space," among other things. Vocal craziness, spazz guitar, a bit of harmonica and Jon Rose playing a mean 19 string cello (and violin).--CDinA2

CHANGE RINGING ON HANDBELLS (LP; Saydisc, dist. by Qualiton, 39-28 Crescent St., Long Island City, NY 11101, USA) This is the recording that I hoped existed, but was unaware of until recently. Change ringing is an English genre of bell ringing, using either handbells or tower bells, that dates back the early seventeenth century. Starting with a descending scale or scale fragment, the ringers, which number around ten, play the scale passing it through their ranks in rapid succession, and taking it through a systematic set of permutations that change gradually, but continually over time. The performances require virtuosic ensemble work and intense concentration. This is certainly a precursor to the type or systematic musical processes used by Riech and Glass, and the music is equally arresting and beautiful. Hearing a live performance is an exhilarating experience. Unfortunately, change ringing performances are very rare, so this record is the next best thing. Aside from presenting some rare and wonderful music, this record puts to rest the notion that handbell music is confined to banal arrangements of poorly written hymns and lousy popular tunes. Make sure the music director at your local church hears this.--Dean Suzuki

ALEX CHILTON: No Sex b/w Underclass & September Girls b/w I'm Gonna Make You Mine (double 7"; New Rose, 7 rue Pierre-Sarrazin 75006, Paris, France) Rocks harder than anything since "Bangkok", wild 'n' rude. Flip for a raunchy/trashy shuffle. Open the gatefold sleeve then spin the deuce of oldies, neither of which will make ya swoon but both of which will remind ya that the man can relive past glories and reinterpret others' as well. Live and raw, and I gotta admit, I got it bad for a certain autumn lady of my own. Welcome home, L-X.--Fred Mills

CHIMERA DEPOT: Wahbi-Ka-Noesh (7 song C; 10548 West Cortez Cr. # 25, Franklin, WI 53132, USA) REM must be mighty popular in these parts. CD sound note-for-note like them, save the fact Depot's singer has a customarily slurred Midwestern "r" and they aren't so apt as the prides of Athens, GA to plunder a groove for all it's worth. Oh yes, you can understand what they're saying. That isn't to say that you can understand what they're singing about, as it is still from the rustic/mystic vein--just like Michael Stipe--from which they mine. All of this isn't to say they lack talent; the musicianship is top-notch. I only wish they'd develop their own style now.--Jamie Rake

C.J.A.: Synnerbob (LP; Incas Records, 272 Benham Ave., Bridgeport, CT 06604, USA) Nearly all the lyrics on this album's 15 tracks are indecipherable. All I could make out was an occasional shouted song title. Generic hardcore? Chord sequences and rhythms are very similar throughout the disc, with the notable exception of three tracks. The album is cleanly recorded.--Brent Godfrey

KEN CLINGER: KC 12 (C30; Bovine Productions, 1012 E. Carson #3, Pittsburgh, PA 15203-1110) If I had to choose the home taper with the most identifiable style, I'd pick Ken Clinger. It baffles me how a guy can come up with so many tiny dramas accompanied by simple yet poignant keyboard miniatures. Musically, Clinger's repeating keyboard phrases range from droning to bouncy setting the mood

for his well-articulated, mostly spoken vignettes. When he breaks into his singing voice fans of early Syd Barrett may notice a common link. Although this may sound similar from tape to tape a closer listen will reveal a fervid imagination at work. Dig for example, "Animal Sports (Sammy Sealion)", the story of a poor soul of a seal addicted to the joy of high diving. Or the tale of "Mattilda Mouse", another bumbling mammal that stumbles on to good luck at tennis. All of Clinger's cassettes are interesting, this may be his best.--Donald Campau

COLOURBOX: The Official Colourbox World Cup Theme (LP; 4AD, 17-19 Alma Rd., London SW13, England) This has the best new Philip Glass piece out in quite some time. And it isn't by Glass. "Philip Glass" is the title of one of the tracks on this record and it has that unmistakable Glass sound, plus something else. It is the best Glass parody since Carla Bley's "It was a Mineralist" from Nick Mason's FICTITIOUS SPORTS, but it comes much closer to the mark and it adds something new to boot. I can't put my finger on it, but whatever Colourbox has done to augment the style, it is very nice. The title track (in two versions), is far less remarkable. However, "Philip Glass" makes this worth having.--Dean Suzuki

COMPANY OF STATE: Crawling From The Graves (12" EP; Soundwork Records, Rue Van AA, 95, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium) The first thing that grabs you is Paul Taes rolling his R's as he sings about "going down de riverrr," "swamp feverrr," and "rrrestless hearts." This is a Belgian band doing the swamp/voodoo number pioneered by the Gun Club and The Cramps. The style's not new, but there are times when the band's ten-ton guitars and bashing drums dig a groove that feels like a 200-horsepower Ditch Witch going through five feet of swamp muck. They ain't faking; they really like playing this rockin' sludge and that just might win them a few listeners outside Belgium.--Bill Neill

LINDSAY COOPER: Music For Other Occasions (LP; Sync Pulse Records, 387 Wandsworth Rd., London SW8, England) An unusual album of songs and incidental music from television, theater and dance productions featuring Cooper on keyboards and winds, vocalists Sally Potter, Dagmar Krause, Maggie Nicols, and Kate Westbrook, Georgie Born on guitar and bass, Chris Cutler on drums, and several other musicians. The music is tuneful in a kind of post-Kurt Weill vein, with surprising harmonic turns and a variety of instrumental combinations on each track, including harp, cello, bassoon, and musical saw, keeping the sound fresh. The lyrics are both poetic and political at the same time. This record is an unaffected and original collection of new chamber music and songs.--Chris Brown

COSTES CASSETTE: L'Art C'est La Guerre (C90; \$6; 13 Rue De La Pierre Levee, 75011, Paris, France) Harsh spoken political tape collage, in French, very fast paced. Guitar, vocals, piano, synth, drums, mostly the up-front vocals that shout the message, wild editing. Can be tiring to listen to as music, but this is a wild new way of telling stories using sound effects and tape manipulation. There are things here rarely attempted or utilized that tape recorders do very easily, thick with clicks from the pause button and vocals often sung acappella which then explode into long wordy songs. There are 23 songs with lots of segue tricks and events. Much like Psychodrama (Bret Kirby) with technical innovations and melodramatic emotional effects. One song is translated "Wash the Lettuce" and is about the way the radiation release was recently felt in France.--Robin James

JAMES COTTON AND HIS BIG BAND: Live From Chicago (LP; Alligator Records, POB 60234, Chicago, IL 60660, USA) It is very difficult to keep a band together long enough to produce that special tightness that comes only with time. James Cotton, "Mr. Superharp himself" has been able to keep his big band together for over three years now and it shows on his latest release, a live recording done at Bidly Mulligans, Chicago's premier northern Blues bar. Cotton's singing and harp work is outstanding, but what makes this album a cut above the usual live records is the fantastic horn section led by sax player Douglas Fagan. These guys add that something extra that makes this album soar. Another plus about this album is that the material for the most part is new and has never appeared on a Cotton record before. "Part Time Love" and "When it Rains It Pours" are two of the highlights, but the best song on the album is "Here I Am", a song by Chicago Blues artist John Watkins. The Big Band really does it justice. Having seen this band four times in the past two years, and then listening to the record it is hard to tell the difference. The people at Alligator have done an excellent job of capturing one of the best bands now in operation and if there isn't a Douglas Fagan fan club, then I want to start one.--Dale Knuth

COUCH FLAMEAU: We're Not So Smart b/w Mississippi Queen (7C3419 Olympia Dr., Glendale, WI 53129, USA) Wisconsin smart-assed, meta-tinged punksters offer up some wry advice and social satire in a grungy dirge about everything from buying clothes to take up time and money to expecting yer fave bands to be your personal saviors. Jay Tiller has one of the few voices that can nearly always put a giggle to my lips and with these trash-all-pretensions lyrics, you won't help but snicker, too. With this approach in mind imagine the cartoon horniness they inject into the Mountain classic on the flip. Both are perfect antidotes/anecdotes to an hour or so of politpunk.--Jamie Rake

COUSIN JOE: Relaxin' in New Orleans (LP; Great Southern Record Co., POB 13977, New Orleans, LA 70185, USA) It must be a real treat to live in New Orleans and be able to enjoy the piano and vocal talents that have graced the clubs over the decades. Add Cousin Joe to the list of greats such as Tuts Washington, James Booker, Professor Longhair and Al Broussard. There isn't anything fancy here, just Joe and his piano, but for me that is more than enough. Nine of the numbers on the record are originals and two favorites are "Brown Skinned Woman", and "Hard Times", but the highlight of the album is the humorous "What A Tragedy". Cousin Joe's tongue is firmly planted in his cheek in this number. Joe tells the story of the Titanic's sinking, and ends the song with the lines, "when I jumped into the water, everybody said look at that fool. But when the Titanic hit the bottom, I was in Harlem, shooting pool." You Gotta Love It.--Dale Knuth

COWTOWN: Before The Dawn (C46; \$6; c/o Peter Tonks, POB 9485, Denver, CO 80209, USA) Peter Tonks intones indignant, vaguely apocalyptic lyrics while the band does a fabulous job of setting the mood. Cowtown create a smarting avant-rock texture highlighted by some stellar guitar work. The problem is Tonks' often excessively wordy and overwhelmingly abstract lyrics; his cluttered images come to fatigue more than provoke. With a little more restraint he would've allowed some of his very fine images more room to sink in. I honestly do not know what three quarters of these songs are about. I do know he's convinced that Lennon's death was engineered by the CIA, and that I find his version of "These Boots Are Made For Walkin'" works with its countrified techno-pop arrangement. Now surprise, surprise: indirectly, the lyrics must be communicating, because I find this tape's total effect to be weirdly irresistible. This would be a real ass kicker if only Tonks would endeavor to trim and focus his work better.--Oleh Hodowanec

CRAWLING W TARTS: PVI IYK DUGI (C; Sound of Pig Music, c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Ln., Great Neck, NY 11023, USA) Some interesting variations on making music full of noise, electronics, and voices. Hard to classify, the occasionally too repetitive background noises bring to mind a variety of post-industrial music. The tape is set apart, though, by a wealth of ideas that replace the usual pounding single-mindedness. "Cleopatra" for example, is one of several wide, minimal numbers; but a plaintive ancient horn, calling across time and wide water, gives it a uniquely Egyptian feeling. "Veronica and the Iroquois" (great titles throughout), with a name that might promise a similar treatment, is instead a wandering punk torch song. Too many to mention here, the changes have a slow, smooth flow, somewhere between sad and scary, and are continuously engaging. I found this made perfect lying-on-the-beach music.--W Mueller

PEE WEE CRAYTON: Rocking Down On Central Avenue (LP; Kent Records, 23 Music Square East, Suite 101, Nashville, TN 37203, USA) This is the second volume of Crayton's work issued by the Kent Treasure Series, cataloguing both well-known and unreleased masters from the Modern label during 1948-51. The LP features Crayton singing and playing guitar with a number of bands; styles range from Chicago jump to barrelhouse to clean, B.B. King-styled blues. A great aspect that other compilers of older material might follow is the alternating of vocal and instrumental tracks throughout both sides. This gives us a clear, well-balanced look at Crayton's versatility, and the variation of styles makes the LP a lot of fun to listen to. There's nothing dry and academic about this one at all. Overall I prefer the instrumentals that show off both slashing power chords and clean, sharp picking to Crayton's vocals which sound (to me) somewhat colorless. Noteworthy tracks of each type are "When A Man Has The Blues," in which his best vocal performance oozes in and around some great sax playing and a crazed "Pee Wee's Wild" featuring a guitar and brass showdown in a howling, jumping session. (Ed. note: Check out Pee Wee's guitar playing to find where Chuck Berry picked up his classic "Chuck Berry Sound" guitar lick).--Justin Kaminski

HELIOS CREED: X-Rated Fairy Tales (LP; Chrome Records, 577 Valencia, San Francisco, CA 94110) A long awaited solo release from the other half of Chrome. This is Creed's first release and makes for interesting listening when compared to his old partner, Damon Edge. Edge has pumped out a number of solo albums since Chrome's demise in '83. X-RATED FAIRY TALES is chock full of processed guitars, impregnable vocals and synths in the grandest Chrome tradition yet it is missing some of that Chrome bite that Edge was apparently responsible for. However, Edge's albums aren't nearly as exciting as when the duo was working together, either. There is an eerie sci-fi ambience to this album that is best demonstrated in "The Descent", "Mystery Room", and "Sex Voodoo Venus". The title track is a surprising fold number given the Creed treatment, yet "Blood Red" and "Showdown" are excellent rock songs except for the studio processing. There is some great synth work by John Carlan and strong, understated bass by Mark Duran. Overall, this is a solid album with good songs and a reasonable amount of depth that makes X-RATED FAIRY TALES worth listening to more than once or twice.--Shawn A. Splane

MARILYN CRISPELL/DOUG JAMES: And Your Ivory Voice Sings (LP; Leo Records, 17 Clare Ct., Judd St., London WC1 England) Pianist Crispell has often been compared to Cecil Taylor since her atonal improvising is quite spontaneous and sometimes violent but Marilyn has a slightly lighter touch, shows a sense of humor during "Dn and Off the Beaten Track" and is a creator rather than an imitator. The free drumming of Doug James does a near-miraculous job of echoing Crispell's moods and complex rhythmic patterns on the often turbulent music. This album rewards repeated listenings by those with open ears and adventurous minds.--Scott Yanow

CRUMBACHER: Escape From The Fallen Planet (LP; Frontline, POB 28450, Santa Ana, CA 92799-08450, USA) Really, I wanted to like this! Crumbacher's first 12" EP, INCANDESCENT, annoyed the beepers out of me at first but their kitschy church-organ, evangelical synth-disco found a soft spot in my heart. This is the kind of crud that could cause hip young'uns to stay way away from Christianity, cultural or otherwise. Their electro attack now resembles the airhead strains of Linda McCartney with tidbits of every fashionable microchip dance band of this decade (Depeche Mode, Ministry, Human League, Blancmaje, Heaven 17, ad nauseum). Lyrically, they cite Psalms and New Testament books in unpoetic metaphors concerning space travel, high school and popularity...as if a concept album is lost somewhere in here. Like I said, they can be likable; trust me. Calling Adrian Sherwood, Arthur Baker, someone, anyone SAVE ME from this.--Jamie Rake

DADA FIDDLER: Show N' Tell (C40; c/o Andrea, 511 Carroll St., Brooklyn, NY 11215, USA) A Sandinista newscast, Mr Spock and a host of other found voices punctuate these playful cuts of electropop, big rock jams, guitar spazz, drum beat and fuzz, a plodding march, stamping machine, blues guitar interrupted by crashes of electronics, and radio interference. Dan Andrea plays guitar, percussion, sings and leads this wild bunch.--CDinA2

THE DAVE: Pool! (C46; \$5; 336 E. Torrance Rd., Columbus, OH 43214, USA) The Dave are a male and female duo who strike up cozy moods via quirky acoustic numbers. Bright, busy percussive sounds (composer Harry Partch is an acknowledged influence) weave in and out of a caterwaul of groaning cello and scratchy violin. Depending upon your tastes, the female Dave is either a charmingly or irritatingly flat vocalist. I tend to lean toward the former. The lyrics are decidedly naive, and regard such humble subject matter as elbows, shoe laces, braids, and peas. If you crossed David Thomas or Jad Fair with the Penguin Cafe Orchestra, you'd get the idea here. Good warm and whimsical stuff to listen to when you're too much the brainiac.--Dieh Hodowanec **Second Opinion:** The latest from everyone's favorite art couple. Marimba and cello vignettes. Mariachi steam trains. A casio dirge in the middle of the street. A typewriter going for a walk. Pinky plink, plunkly plunk. And that's only side one! Cats meow, and kids play in between. A treasure.--Frank G.

JAY-GLO ABORTIONS: Feed U.S. A Fetus, America (LP; \$6; Toxic Shock, POB 342, Pomona, CA 91769, USA) Any hardcore album dedicated to Tipper Gore (co-chairman of the Parent's Music Resource Center and big Mentor's fan) is bound to be an exercise in calculated offensiveness. These Canadian rockers probably figure if they can scare off the wankers, they might reach some true believers because buried in what seems mostly to be a juvenile metalcore goulash are a few hot peppers covered with a generous dose of chopped tongue-in-cheek. The decidedly tighter side two, comprised of two previous 7 releases from a 1981 session, is where the few gems lie. "1967" is a well-aimed attack on hippies turned yuppies from the point of view of one of their spoiled children. "I am my own God" is perhaps the closest hardcore has gotten to defining their own religion and "Used to be in Love" is perhaps a testament as to why. Also check out "Black Sabbath" for the final word on that venerated band. Unfortunately Side one is a muddy and more metallic grind of their newest material and doesn't indicate any real progression with the possible exception of their vocalist who sounds like he's quit cigarettes. The playing is best described as a cross between latter day Circle Jerks and older G.B.H. And even though each song will be offensive to the P.M.R.C., it's hard to get excited over such unintelligent and mediocre material.--Jim Hoffman

DC-3: The Good Hex (LP; SST Records, POB 1, Lawndale, CA 90260) The last weak gasp of punk (Black Flag's hardcore) mixed with the last weak gasp of nippiedom ('70s metal). If there were something else--say, a bit of wit, sparkle or innovation--this blend might be palatable. As it is, the spacey guitar jams and arty melodic vocals merely clash with the atonal shouting, rough beats and strict hardcore economy, and the sum is duller than its parts. Thankfully, there's an out-of-place blues cover here, John Lee Hooker's "Bang Bang Bang." Now that song does rock.--Richard Singer

DEBUTANT (3 song C; c/o Eric N. Danielson; ph. 1-206-523-4877) A sampling of melody-metal pop from Vancouver B.C. Songs about suicide, personality crisis; the usual. They got a synthesizer. They have a good producer. Got a standout cover of "Saturday Night" by the Bay City Rollers. (Wheeha!) Altogether nothing too special.--Frank G.

THE DECISIONS (C; 30 Holly Court, Napa, CA 94558, USA) There's something special about this country-tinged rock. Perhaps it's because The Decisions belong to nobody's genre. Imagine Lou Reed kicking back with a six-pack somewhere in lower Alabama, or the early Stones high on sunshine.--Jordan Oakes

THE DEL-PHAROAHS: The Anzephaltol Beat (C46; Novak Records, POB 1416, 4600 Diten, Switzerland) This is pretty silly. Campy versions of the Dave Clark Five's "Do You Love Me", Jonathan Richman's "Abdul Cleopatra" and The Leave's "Hey Joe" are the best things here. Fronted by American-born Mark Novak, who sings a lot like J. Richman, the Del-Pharaohs' sound is an odd mixture of rock, reggae and surf styles. Also included are a few originals and spoken word skits about masturbation and an obscene phone call; all with tongue firmly planted in cheek. Proceeds from this tape will be donated to Greenpeace/Switzerland.--Brad Bradberry

THE DICKIES: We Aren't The World (C60; ROIR, Suite 725, 611 Broadway, New York, NY 10012, USA) Yeow! Twenty-five tunes in 60 minutes, real buzz per bucks, yessir. And what better way to celebrate than with a time warp back to when punk rock meant cuttin' up, dressin' up, sometimes even throwin' up. The Dickies always got treated like one-liners, good for a yuk the first couple times ya heard 'em but nothing to dwell on over and over again. Well, the Pistols are dead, the Clash are petrified, and The Damned have gone progressive; leave it to The Dickies to keep the flags of '77 waving high. Four tracks here date from their first demo a decade ago and the rest are live versions of all their hits including "Sounds of Silence", "Gigantor", "Nights In White Satin", "Manny, Moe, and Jack" and "Banana Splits." Worth the piece of admission for "If Stewart Could Talk", an ode to the singer's penis which segues into the oh-so-appropos Whooton, "See Me, Feel Me", geddit? As with most ROIR releases the sound quality varies but is never poor--most of side B is FM stuff--and as with most, the performances are historically essential. And purists take note: "Absolutely none of the proceeds...will go to Ethiopia." Cool.--Fred Mills

WALT DICKERSON AND RICHARD DAVIS: Tenderness (LP; Steeplechase, 3943 W. Lawrence Ave., Chicago, IL 60625, USA) This is the second album of vibes and bass duets to be released from a single session recorded in 1977. The first, called DIVINE GEMINI, has been on my top ten list since its release in 1978. This belated release indicates what a magic session it was. Dickerson is an impressionist, lingering on each idea. The emphasis is on tonality and timbre rather than pyrotechnics, and Dickerson seems to be able to draw the emotional power of his music from the vibes per se, rather than just using them as a tool for exploring ideas. Davis gets liberal solo time, and is as always intelligent. Like the first release, this set is atmospheric and highly meditative. For Dickerson fans, this record contains a second take of "Divine Gemini." Steeplechase should get Dickerson on vinyl more often.--John Baxter

DIMTHINGS: Going Back to the Insane (2LP; Thingsflux, 7829 Miramar Pkwy, Miramar, FL 33023, USA) It was bound to happen. Dimthings uses a compact disc player as an instrument. This record has me eyeing my Sony D-5. Two records worth of Dimthings with various guest artists, playing more than just CD players: Chapman Stick, cellos, pianos, violins, saxophones, tape manipulation, etc. There are so many different influences and elements at work on this record, fusion, metal guitar solos, and at times just overwhelming improvisation and layers upon layers of noise, found sounds, percussion--you name it. There seems to be no limit to Dimthings' quest for new combinations of sound, and this record is never, ever dull. A definite antidote to the bland 1980s.--John Baxter **Second Opinion:** This is Dim's most playful album (and his second two record set), and it's a great one! He plays his usual arsenal of instruments and he plays them expertly. He is aided by his usual supporting cast of Taggart Reid and the awesome bassist Jean Chaine. And he plays on a song written and featuring a new unknown who calls himself Gimbus 555 ("Think Twice"), who shows definite promise. The styles range from weird compact disc experiments, free jazz, and hot jazz-rock. The centerpiece of the record is "Knots", a 21-minute masterpiece by Ulterior Lux. Dim's "Power rock" trio. On this, his drumming and Jean's bass playing back up FANTASTIC guitar work by Taggart Reid. The result is something like Jimi Hendrix's Experience playing fusion music! The only clinker is "Strength for the Mourn", in which he sings (in a mausoleum!) in a high-pitched, whiney voice that quickly gets unbearable. Production work is a definite improvement over his earlier releases. And for the first time, there is a REAL record cover, rather than a blank cover with a sheet pasted onto it!--Douglas Bregger

PETER DODGE: The Human Element (C; Earshot Recordings, 324 S. Titus Avenue, Ithaca, N. Y. 14850) Peter Dodge's brand of delicately timed technoppo (with the occasional trumpet and

metallophone) is so catchy that it's almost impossible to lose sight of the slightly surreal and quirky meditations on political surveillance (Carry The Mail), aesthetics and control (If This Were Art), mortality (When I Leave This Earth), dislocation (Underground), and nuclear destruction (Nowhere To Run) on the cassette. It's a very adult territory in the lyrics, strewn with whimsy and humor. You'll probably find yourself just humming along and suddenly realize that the singer is singing about death without time for goodbye or something equally serious. In other hands, this would smack of terminal hippiedom or the kind of slightly self-conscious quirkiness that Jane Siberry puts out. Peter manages to make something that's so idiosyncratically consistent that you can believe the whole thing, and dance to it as well.--Greg Taylor

PETER DODGE: The Temple Circuit (C; Earshot Recordings, 324 S. Titus Avenue, Ithaca, N. Y. 14850) Departing from the playful technoppo of his first solo cassette release, synthesist/songwriter Peter Dodge has taken and expanded his instrumental contribution to RANGE AND DOMAIN: RECENT MUSIC FROM ITHACA, NY along with expanded remixes of the instrumentals from his first solo cassette THE HUMAN ELEMENT and filled the rest of the cassette with a series of dense, atmospheric meditative keyboard pieces. Interestingly, while the method for each composition remains quite similar (a permuted mix of simple arpeggiated sequence overlaid with layers of slow chording and some heavily echoed and delayed melody line), the tonal quality and mood of the pieces on this cassette are widely varied. The whole cassette seems to be a search for intelligent alternatives to the usual consonant stuff that New Age aficionados force you to sit through.--Greg Taylor

DG AS MASTER: Organized Accident (C-60; \$3; Sound of Pig Music c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, N.Y. 11023) One side is a DasM soundscape in two parts, voices over keyboard cycles speak of compulsive handwashing. Weird loopy electronics usher in the title phrase, repeated and very distorted. Bits of a song about the Titanic are followed by a discourse on the concept of "coming out," as well as "rooms and doors." Part two is a big electric buzz with overtones and rhythms of crackling current. Side two is five tracks begun by If, Bwana and finished by DasM. Pulsing electronics, fuzzy layers, treated vocals, a trumpet motif, clumsy romantic piano, even a clarinet doing arabic space ala Zoviet France.--CDinA2

DQE: Pictures of Cliffs (c-60; 89 cents for this tape; (404) 872-4986) DQE, Georgia's #1 teenage avant-garde band, might deny this title but I hereby expose them for what they are. There is enough garage innovation here to demand repeated listening from the open minded and young at heart. Apparent haphazard construction produces some really complex structures once the low-fi technology is accepted. Grace's lyrics can be shockingly good, although I don't think her best songs are included here. Christopher's uncommon song style is very funny. A unique group, DQE will not change the course of history but they might just make some lucky callers very happy.--Glen Thrasher

DR. GONZO: The King of Comedy Rock (LP; Dublab Records, 1537-A 4th Street, Suite 107, San Rafael, CA 94901) Dr. Gonzo is a hot new comedian who has toured and opened for such well-known names as Starship and Huey Lewis and the News. His material on this LP is half "comedy music" and half live stand-up routine. The musical side, although adapting several styles, reminds me of the comic silliness of Sparks. The stand-up routine is dominated with musical references, "memorable drunk" stories, and the Tune FUNNY BUTT. Frequently dippy, but just as often fresh and clever.--Mark Dickson

S. H. DRAUMUR: Bensin Skrimslid Skrhdur (10 inch EP; Verdunumusic, Alfholsvegur 30A, 200 Kopovogur, Iceland) From the land of longevity and alcoholism we get this thrashy grinding four song EP. The sound is nothing new, your basic electric guitar, bass, drums and vocals set up with dark flavoring. Joy Division and The Gun Club come to mind, especially with the latter's guitar orientation. Still, this is above average stuff here; tight, thoughtful music plus real good vocals. As to the lyrics, well my Icelandic is nil, but I'd really like to know.--Tom Shannon

THE DRAMATICS: Somewhere In Time (LP; Fantasy Records, Tenth and Parker, Berkeley, CA 94710) The Dramatics are probably best known for two of the better Top 10 hits of the early '70s, "Watcha See Is Watcha Get" and the ballad "In The Rain" (reprise here in a ballad melody which also features some of their lesser known hits). This album represents a reunion (of the early 70's edition of the group) and a comeback. The sound has been updated with synths and more contemporary rhythms, but the R & B roots are still evident in the gritty vocals of William Howard and Ron Banks' falsetto. Practically any of the up tempo tracks could be hits if they got enough airplay. It would be nice to hear The Dramatics coming out of the car radio again.--R. Iannapolo

DUB SYNDICATE: Tunes From The Missing Channel (LP; On-U Sound, distributed by Rough Trade, 326 Sixth Street, SF, CA 94103) Another cool disc from Brit dub master Adrian Sherwood. Start with the tough drums of Style Scott all the way through. Add solid contributions from Jah Wobble, Martin Frederix, Nick Phtas, and the usual crop of

On-U Sound musicians. (Check out bonjo l's tasty hand drums.) Let producer Sherwood mix it all up right, and you know Fats is right when he sings, in "The Show Is Coming," "Something nice is gonna happen to your ears!"--Stuart Kremsky

ARIN EGISSON: Fascinating Voyage (LP; Arnaeus Music, Gettland 10, 108 Reykjavik, Iceland or 2158 Rockledge Road, Los Angeles, CA 90068 USA) Egilsson, a native of Iceland who is now based in LA, has had a dual career in symphonic and jazz music. This is his second jazz LP, and it features Egilsson's major influence, the great Ray Brown, on pizzicato bass in a rhythm section that is completed by Pete Jolly (piano) and Jimmie Smith (drums). To avoid too much similarity in sound, Egilsson sticks to arco (bowed) bass here, exploiting the woody emotive powers of the instrument in a way relatively few jazz players have. In fact, he sounds almost like a tenor sax in places. The groove is bebop-flavored mainstream, and the tunes are seven standards, a blues, and arrangements of two Icelandic melodies. I found the LP enjoyable both as a vehicle for Egilsson's swinging arco work and as quality jazz in general, since all the players perform at the same high level.--Bart Grooms

THE ELEMENTS: Honest Enough (LP; Green Monkey Records, POB 31983, Seattle, WA 98103) This is a fun record. From the opening chords you know these three young men from the University of Washington are enjoying themselves. They use acoustic guitar, bass and a simple trap set with occasional harmonica in very upbeat songs about silly topics such as "Laundry (Why don't you clothes get up and wash yourselves?)" and "Leasers (I wear my leasers without sax, it makes them easier to take off)." The occasional slow song, like the beautiful "Somewhere In Time", sound like The Byrds with these harmonies and that tambourine. The faster songs remind one of another popular Seattle combo, The Young Fresh Fellows, on their lighter songs. Also hint of early Violent Femmes can be heard at times, without the nasal vocals but with the simple arrangements and similar tempos.--Jonathan Ferren

DUKE ELLINGTON: The 1953 Pasadena Concert (LP; GNP Crescendo, 8400 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90069 USA) 1953 was supposed to be one of Ellington's few off-years due to the absence of altoist Johnny Hodges and a drop in popularity, but judging by this record, Duke was never close to being in a decline. A definitive version of his "Tattooed Bride" (with some brilliant Jimmy Hamilton clarinet), a colorful version of "The Hawk Talks" and a guest appearance by Oscar Pettiford on cello for "Perdido" are the highpoints along with "Jam With Sam" (featuring many short solos), Ellington's quite humorous "Monologue" (subtitled "Pretty and the Wolf") and an early version of "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue" are also worth hearing. There are a few throwaway tracks such as a slapdash medley of Duke's hits and 3 overly dramatic Jimmy Grissom vocals but this album would be highly recommended even if all it had to offer was Cat Anderson's stratospheric trumpet. Why did it take 33 years for this high-quality session to be released?--Scott Yanow

ENSTRUCTION: Instruction for Children (C60; \$3; Sound of Pig Music c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023) A collection of pieces recorded '79-'86. The early pieces ('79-'81) have a more regular beat and vocals by H. G. Wells. Jim Banner is the other permanent member on synth, guitar and vocals. "Field Recording" ('83) features thick pulsing electrorhythms. 1984 is represented by scratchy versions of "Mares Eat Oats" and a weird Slim Whitman tribute, a loopy "Hermaphrodite" repeating "I'm So Hot", and the sidelong fuzzy droning of a live "Event With No Name."

"New Age Music" has pulses and "Wheel of Fortune" tapes, and the most recent cut features a little girl on piano and vocals.--CDinA2
ROKY ERICKSON: Don't Slander Me (LP; Pink Dust/Enigma, 1750 East Holly Ave. POB 2428, El Segundo, CA 90245 USA) Well, it's personal vendetta time with this one kids!!! First the case history: This album was recorded and was to be released in 1982-3 on CBS Records overseas. Shortly after this record was recorded I began playing bass with Roky Erickson & The Ween, and most of the time they wouldn't even return Roky's phone calls. So almost four years later they have finally sold the record to Pink Dust/Enigma. What we get is a record that the artist has never been satisfied with, it contains several songs that have been previously released (better versions also in my opinion). Despite the fact that he is backed by some very good musicians, this record suffers from an incompetent attempt at slick production, and loses the hard edged sound that Roky has live. The only thing that saves this record is the pure, soulful sound of Roky's voice. If you buy this record write to the address on the back for Orb Management and ask why Roky hasn't received any advances or royalty payments for this album. It's a strange business and Roky's been there before. Maybe someday he will finally get what he deserves. Don't slander me!!! Indeed!!--Brian S. Curley

ETRON FOU LELOUBLIAN: Face Aux Elements Dechaines (LP; Rec Rec dist., Genossenschaft Magnusstrass 5 8004, Zurich, Switzerland) This is the 6th record in 12 years from the band *Mad Shit The White Wolf* (direct translation). Relative to what else I've heard by this band, this record has a cleaner sound and less wild playing. The current musicians are Guigou Chenoveir (batarai, sax, chant), Ferdinand Richard (bass, chant) and Jo Thirion (orgue, piano, chant). The lyrics usually have to do with thoughts caused by frustrating situations. The emotional tone is usually angry or in the calm eye of a storm of

anger. There's a lot of ridiculous, straight from the 10 imagery it's quite fun just reading the translations (included), although they sing/chant kind of fast and it's hard to keep up. The music fits in very well, in its own way. They seem to have evolved their sound out of each musician's playing style. They trade and combine lead and rhythmic musical roles, consistently without a hitch. Despite all I've said, the only useful description is, they are very French. Fred Frith is producer/side-man.--Joel

EXILES: The Only Care (C40;\$7; Esforma, POB 4692, St. Louis, MO 63108) Greg Mills (piano, mallets, drums, percussion) and Jay Zelenka (alto sax, flutes, drums, percussion) were formerly in St. Louis' Human Arts Ensemble, a 1970's avant-garde group, and from the evidence here, they are still dedicated to expanding the boundaries of jazz and related improvised music. Almost nothing here is done in a straight rhythm or conventional tonality, and while it's not quite as extreme as, say, Cecil Taylor, the music will appeal mostly to those who appreciate late period Coltrane, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Air, Anthony Braxton and such. What is distinctive about Zelenka and Mills' approach, aside from their strong commitment to the music itself, is the variety--the duets vary from flute/piano to alto/drums to percussion/electronics to dual kalimbas, and each piece is stylistically distinct from the others as well. Thus an almost meditative piece for temple bowls, gong and bamboo flutes is followed by an alto/piano duet strongly reminiscent of Albert Ayler. Very well recorded; dubbed in real time on Dolby Chrome as well.--Bart Grooms

THE FALL-OUTS (C30; Green Monkey Records, POB 31983, Seattle, WA 98103) Mod trio with everything you need for rocking, like the Animals, fast paced 60's pop psychedelia, the stuff you dance to. "A Fine Young Man," "I'm Crying," "I Tell Myself," "Bury My Body," "The Other One," "From Up There," "Bright Lights," "Big City," "House In The Country"--Robin James

MICHAEL FANKHAUSER: Doctor Fankhauser (LP; D-Town Records, Hollywood, CA 90093-0205) A cult figure in the truest sense thanks to extremely limited-pressing releases and an, uh, ECLECTIC musical vision (he crossed paths with Capt. Beefheart on several occasions), Fankhauser makes a genuine bid for commercial acceptance. The "Wake Up" side is a pleasant mix of melodic folk and slippery southern rock a la Little Feat; "Who Can You Call" and "Don't Give Up The Rock" both feature some catchy slide guitar. "Buddy, Elvis and John" is poignant with Mary Lee's sweet fiddle lines. The "Relax" side kicks off with a hot boogie take of "That's Alright Mama" highlighted by John Cippolina's lead guitar and Tim Carr's harmonica. "Blues Medley" is a natural party song and again features Cippolina. "Time Of The Day" resurrects the wah guitar; as a matter of fact, throughout the disc Fankhauser relies on little steals and cliches from the '60s without regressing into a specific genre (psych, garage, funk, etc.) and demonstrates his skills as stylist, satirist and synthesist. With a big-name producer a radio hit could be in the cards, for the songs are there. But then that would take all the fun out of *discovering* the man, wouldn't it?--Fred Mills

FAT BOYS: Big & Beautiful (LP; Sutra Records, 1790 Broadway, NYC, NY 10019, USA) Now that they can no longer work too many more jokes from their girls, they either now do more implicit funniness working on their obesity or avoid it altogether. Best of the former cases here are their reworking of James Brown's *Edz Machine* (in which they build their romantic prowess from the usual image guys of their size have) and "Double-O Fat Boys", an utterly contrived CIA and Russian spy saga covered by the FB's gawdward Rosie impersonating and mention of a "pizza bomb." As for the circumventing of the ONE BIG PUN, "Breakdown" has a groove Adrian Sherwood would be proud to adopt. "Rapp Symphony" is a brave-if flawed experiment and "In The House" puts the humor on their rap rather than their headlines. Really could do without the overemphasis on Darren "Human Beat Box" Robinson's effing and Kurtis Blow was still their best producer. Otherwise this is a fun companion piece to the other rap albums of summer (from DC, UTRF, Doug E. Fresh).--Jamie Rahn

THE FALL-OUTS (C/EP; Green Monkey Records, POB 31983, Seattle, WA 98103 USA) The fifteenth, or is it the sixteenth, garage revolution continues unabated. The Fall-Outs jump right into the fray with covers of "I'm Crying," "Bury My Body" and "House In The Country" that have the gummy, feedback fury of early sixties Britain, down in the marquee. It all sounds tiny and hollow, as though it is floating down a long, long time tunnel. This is a basic trio of guitar, bass and drums, led by guitarist/composer/vocalist David Holmes. Holmes and his band have a very British feel and sound. "From Up There" shows Holmes has a gift for songcraft.--Scott Jackson

JOHN FAULKNER: Kind Providence (12LP; Green Lionet Records, Inc., 70 Warner Hill Road, New Canaan, CT 06840) Much of this music rocks as gently as the sea of which it sings. Like the best of folk music this is haunting, melancholy and most important--yearning. Poets usually do not sing because they are happy; unless of course they are in love, though with a title like this you know the course will not be too rough. Faulkner sings with a rich sweetness that harkens any twist engaged upon it. These are traditional songs, most of which Faulkner has heard others sing and subsequently embellished with his own virtuosity; and as far as I can tell with traditional arrangements. A few reels are thrown in for fun.--Kim Knowles

FEAR & TENSION CORPORATION: The Odor of Dead Gods (C60; 210 Neches, Austin, TX 78701) The entire second side is one continuous unchanging drone. Talk about tension! The first side is more spacious and a little less constrained. The drones are still there but they are accompanied by scattered rhythms and other sounds, mixed with other drones or slowly throbbing by themselves. Not very fear-invoking to be sure but there is still an edge to some of this work that can crawl under your skin.--Lang Thompson

DOUG E. FRESH AND THE GET FRESH CREW: All The Way To Heaven/Nothing (12" single; Reality Records, 592 Communipaw Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07304 USA; dist. by Fantasy) News is that Ricky Dee--the black teenaged Howard Cossell sound-alike--has left for a solo deal on Def Jam. Doug and the GFC are none the worse, though, as against a softshoe rhythm similar to that of "The Show", Mr. Fresh raps on the theological perspective he puts forth in his SPIN interview. "Nuthin'" is semi-acappella funniness about, you guessed, nothing in particular. At this rate the album will be an instant classic.--Jamie Rahn

FIRST LIGHT: Musical Uprising (12" 45, 3 songs; Thin Ice, 4308 E 173rd, Cleve., OH 44128) This domestic reggae effort could be used more "bottom" and less busy percussion. The songs are quite good but generally the production does not drive them enough and thus the sound is a little too light. Someone named "Chopper" plays great guitar leads and there's an exciting crescendo on the song "Movin' On." The group shows promise but didn't get it right this time in the studio. When reviewing records I always wonder if the band is happy with the record and if any of the shortcomings have to do with a lack of cash.--Drew Robertson

PETER FROHMADER: Ritual (LP; Multimoods Records, dist. by Wayside Music, POB 6517, Wheaton, MD 20906) German bassist, synthesist and composer Frohmader is an absolutely remarkable musician. He is certainly one of the most exciting discoveries that this writer has made in quite some time. Every record that I have heard is outstanding. *RITUAL* is not quite at the same level as his *CULTES DES GOULES*, but then that was a masterpiece. Rest assured, *RITUAL* is excellent. Frohmader creates compelling, vibrant soundscapes that are never spacey or mindless. The tone is definitely dark and foreboding, yet full of color and vitality. He also has a special rhythmic sense, using distinctive synthesized percussion with an unquenchable, almost frenzied drive that invokes "Mars, the Bringer of War" from Holst's *THE PLANETS*. His style is difficult to peg, but it recalls Art Zoyd's more recent efforts, Bill Laswell's *BASELINES* without the taped voices, though much more full-bodied in texture, and it makes me think that Terje Ryge had might sound similar if he would cut loose and get things a little dirty. Actually, Frohmader is quite unique and special. Any attempt to describe his work through comparisons to others pales in light of the actual music. This is essential listening!--Dean Suzuki

FORTUNATE SONS: "Sometimes You Win"/"Me & My Uncle" (7" 45; Bam Caruso, 9 Ridgeman Road, St. Albans, Herts., England) Robin Wills' post Barracuda project strifes paydirt. Uptempo and irresistible with a pubrock feel highlighted by careful organ backing precise 12- and 6-string interplay; Wills has a warm, resonant vocal style that'll take him far. The non-LP flip isn't as polished but as a well-chosen cover it can't be beat--stellar guitar break at the end.--Fred Mills
THE FUNERAL PARTY: Brighter Than 1,000 Suns (C; Smart Studios, POB 3321, Madison, WI 53704, USA) Trance 'n' dance gloom rock overkill, to the point of intense shock value, hilarity or both. Musically, put them somewhere between mid-period Velvet Underground and early Sisters of Mercy. Cool enough. Lyrically, the monotone inflected young man sings of comparing his romance to Vietnam, martyrdom, scraping his face against the floor and other such self-inflicted funnies. Side two lags when they drag a couple of riffs over their logical points of exhaustion and it ends with a hopeful, "The Gift" (not the VU number). The guitars grind mercilessly in waiting abandon for the all-black and death parlor crowd. Fun for those who appreciate sunlight too, though.--Jamie Rahn

TOM FURGAS AND MARK HANLEY: Toward No End (C60; \$5; 1840 Paisley Rd., #3, Youngstown, OH 44511, USA) Side one of this tape features rock-based instrumentals with found and processed vocals layered overtop, with guest appearances by Senator Sam Ervin, Kurt Schwitters, a hypnotist, etc. Unfortunately, the most musically interesting pieces are the most obscured by the voice-over fragments. The one piece that really seems to function as a whole is entitled "Kurt Schwitters" and features his voice, pseudo-Frippetronics, martial drums and bass. Side two fares better, as it consists of a side-long composition that, due to the expanded format, has room to breathe and develop. Additionally, the found voices are relegated to supporting roles, and as such function very well within the piece. This tape is but one of the 20+ tapes available from Tom Furgas and his various collaborators.--K. Crothers

THE GERMS: Rock n' Rule (LP; XES Records, POB 2521, Hollywood, CA 90028 USA) "Waitress! We're the Germs and we want beer!" With this outcry, Darby Crash opens side one of *Rock n' Rule*, recorded live at the Whisky A-Go-Go in Los Angeles in December 1979. You can hardly understand a single word of what he's singing, let alone an entire phrase. Still, his growl is pretty impressive and even likeable. The recording, made by Geza X on a four-track tape deck, is probably good enough for this kind of music. Guitarist Pat Smear

The photos on this page are from a Caroliner Rainbow/Eugene Chadbourne free admission performance in an abandoned business district suite deep in the San Francisco underground.

"Caroliner Rainbow make the Butthole Surfers sound like R.E.M.", Chadbourne says. Despite not getting paid, (though he sold a lot

of cassettes), Chadbourne called it his favorite gig during a recent Pacific Rim tour. Grux, (the guy with the big mouth) sent me a brief two

song cassette, but I tell you, this is one group you have to see live to fully appreciate. No two shows alike and as of last summer they were

willing to play anywhere for the price of gas. They play lots of free shows, mostly word of mouth. Anyone who can properly capture

the Caroliner experience on record or tape, gets my vote for producer of the month.

and drummer Don Bolles hold things together by hammering out an even, steady rhythm while Darby's all over the place. This disc holds moments of menace and drive that will help you remember what you liked about punk rock seven or eight years ago, even if you don't care to listen to that music anymore.--Bill Neill

GIRLS ON FIRE: In My Blood (C; Leslie Singer, 869 Capp St., CA 94110) She's back! Noise queen Leslie Singer with her sweet shillelagh-style rhythm guitar and passionate mouth. You can't be both crazy and stupid, talkin blues like a passing ghost, loud and free. She's a beautiful poet and eel girl, the kind some dreams are made of. Wild, wild, wild. I had a cow. The almighty beat keeps me turning the tape over but everyone leaves after a few times. So I turned it up louder.--Robin James

GLASS EYE: Huge (LP; Wrestler Records, 6520 Selma, Los Angeles, CA 90028) The sparse production is what makes this album. If you listen carefully, you can hear the room acoustics in the bottom-heavy drumming. Hey, it's a local production, but it's crisp and clear. The simple guitar chops of K. McCarty will trade off with the bass or the vocals, so you hardly ever get hit with everything. The keyboard effects are mainly used for the occasional punctuation, but they are always perfectly timed and sound just right. Everything taken by itself seems pretty choppy, but they come together to form some tasty rock songs. Nothing too kick-ass mind you, but I'm sure they get them dancing down in Austin, TX. All of the cuts have a musical or lyrical hook, some have both. The good thing is that no big-wig producer has turned it into mush.--Leigh Hobart

BRENT GODFREY AND THE HEATHENS: Dancer in the Ruins (C60; \$5 or trade; Flying Squirrel Tapes, 701 E. Oliver, Owosso, MI 48867 USA) This first effort by Mr. Godfrey and friends is nothing to do cartwheels over. Quality is typical X-15 home recording. Guitars, keyboards and rhythm machine playing droning folk rock style arrangements which are completely played but seem to be lacking in energy. Then there's the lyrics. Boy, oh, boy!!! Seems to me this bubba takes himself very seriously, likes to wear his heart on his sleeve so to speak (sample..."I wonder how your life turned out after I left. I wonder if you miss me still or did it turn out for the best, and now that it's over I remember all the good times we spent laughing and the time we cried. I wonder if you're happy. I wonder if you're sad, but most of all I wonder what we might of had."!!!!!!!!!!!!) Give me a break, somebody hand me my pistol out in the desert. We shoot the lame, and injured. Come on, bud, lighten up on yourself a little. Better luck next time!! (Note to Mr. Godfrey: Take it from someone who has gotten loads of bad, nasty, even violent reviews, don't let this bother you. Give any opinionated jerk a pen, paper and an outlet to spout off and these things are bound to happen!!!!!!)--Brian S. Curley



David Ciuffardini photo

Seventeen songs altogether. Sort of makes me think of Nico (of The Velvet Underground) with sustain and cold distant phrasing in the vocals. A very interesting combination of an analytical perspective in critical thought with some good rocking tunes.--Robin James
CLAIRE HAMILL: Voices (LP; Coda Records, dist. by Jam Records, South Plainfield, NJ 07080 USA) Preliminary signs, such as the pastoral album cover and the nature-oriented song titles ("Tides", "Moss", "Stars" etc.) create expectations of gentle wordless vocals. The first piece on the album, "Awaken...Larkrise", reinforces the expectations. It's very choral, very pure. But what follows? Muffled electronic percussion. Heavily processed vocals, used as rhythm tracks. Bay-oh-bay-oh-bay-oh. Scat singing. Moans. Passion as well as purity. Claire Hamill is a first-rate vocalist who is not afraid to take chances. She's given first-rate, innovative production; and her album is not only mellow (a little), but also funny, soulful, ethereal, strange, gutsy and probably some other things as well. Hamill draws upon a vast body of vocal music and styles, and combines various forms in ways that are fresh and original. Imagine, if you can, a collaboration between Laurie Anderson, the Cocteau Twins and the Swing Singers--with the Beach Boys as special guests. That would be VOICES.--Bill Tilland

BRET HART: True Meaning of Frankenstein (C; Kamsa Tapes, 13001 Mistletoe Spring Rd. (916), Laurel, MD 20708) Excellent guitarwork and song forms, there is a new way to make songs with four track equipment that includes great interesting layerings of instruments by one person. Five great and complex songs including "She Is Sleeping In The Other Room," "The Distance Threw," "Bombs Bursting In Air," all with guitar, real and fake percussion, distress; TV, isomorphism noises, also saxophone and easily obtained things that can be struck.--Robin James

HARLAN MARK WALE: Krambones At Rogue (C90; Krambones, 6249 Swayne St. NE, Olympia, WA 98506) Keyboards layered and processed, very beautiful. Very sensitive and delicate colors to the tones. Some wild moments too. Layers and burst of quiet new air. Massive fancy lab: Akai AZ-80, AX-60, Sampler, Harmonizer, clean and sparkly production. Some titles: "Rasputin's Hallway," "Mavoumeen," "Lupercalia," "Translucent Suite," "Shock Helicopter," "11 Bell Seasoned So Long," "Run To The Forest," "HebeJeba," "Boof God Almighty".--Robin James

THE HATERS: Future Cheers (C60;\$4; Sound of Pig Music c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023) This latest Haters release continues along the path of "destroyed music" that G. X. Jupiter-Larsen paved in '79. Transformation through destruction is the key in these two sidelong pieces. Breaking objects and synth blips merge with electronic pulses and build, rumbling and squealing, with glass punctuation and big booms. A sliding electronics loop moves into a great industrial beat at the end of Volume One. Volume Two is slabs of thick sound, cutting in and out of different channels. Big chunks of sound and vast holes of silence.--CDinA2

HELPLESS DANCER: "When You Dance"/"Picture" (7" 45; November, POB 354, Paw Creek, NC 28130) North Carolina group with a stunning slice of itchy, danceable pop that combines the modern-wave smarts of, say, The Cars with Beatleish vocal smiling. A natural summer radio hit; try and resist those chorus vocals. B side is a bit tougher and is pure Raspberries, crunchy guitars n' big drums n' teen-nasal vocals. This band has a lot going for them: painfully good looks, excellent production courtesy of Spongetone Jamie Hoover, maybe even a deeper lyric message for those who care to investigate certain scriptural passages.--Fred Mills

WOODY HERMAN BIG BAND: 50th Anniversary (LP; Concord Records, POB 845, Concord, CA 94522 USA) In 1986 Woody Herman, who along with Lionel Hampton is the last top swing player to still be actively leading a big band, is celebrating his 50th year at the helm of an orchestra. Unlike most other swing leaders, Woody has never indulged his music with nostalgia, in fact his bands have usually been composed of promising players in their 20's and 30's. Herman's current Herd is no exception and his latest album, balancing swinging charts like "It Don't Mean A Thing" and "Fried Buzzard" with ballads (including a fine arrangement of Coltrane's "Central Park West") is uniformly excellent and highly enjoyable.--Scott Yanow



BENNY GOODMAN/TOMMY DORSEY: So Rare (LP; Jazz Archives Inc., 333 West 52nd Street, New York, NY 10019 USA) This recent reissue is split between a Benny Goodman radio broadcast from 1936 and several shorter Tommy Dorsey tracks, none of previously unreleased. BG's band is in fine form on their session with hot solos from trumpeter Ziggy Elman and Vido Musso's tenor in appearance by the Benny Goodman Quartet (on "Sweet Sue") and two vocals from Goodman's best singer Helen Ward. Dorsey's performances are streakier since two cuts fade out prematurely and Eydine Wright's pair of vocals are only average. Best is a fine "Malady in F," a remake of their hit "Marie" and a spirited "Deep River." Despite a few weak points, this Jazz Archives release is recommended to swing fans.--Scott Yanow

J. GREINKE: Cities In Fog (LP; Intrepid, 612 1/2 North 43rd, Seattle WA 98103) Greinke's music will recognize Jeff's name from his string of ambient solo cassette releases. His debut on vinyl is not so much a departure from the former as a refinement of his previous recordings: a brooding set of dark ambient performances that fall into the limbo between Eno's ON LAND and the territory staked out by industrial music. At their best, they just barely skirt the edge of melody-overlaid drones, and are accompanied by the rumble of distant trains and machinery and unintelligible fragments of the voice. Surprisingly, Jeff gets a lot of subtle shadings out of a pretty small set of source materials. Perhaps it is best to call this "Post-Industrial Music," since it really seems to be taking place after the machines have finally ground to a halt almost everywhere, and

the eerie silence sets in.--Greg Taylor **GRUNG GRONG** (LP; Alternative Tentacles, POB 11438, San Francisco, CA 94101) In Australia GRUNG GRONG is on the Aberrant label, which typically releases the loudest of the loud and the meanest of the mean. GG is loud. They are mean. Play this slab of punk splatter vinyl (some copies are on a grotesque shade of purple) and your stereo will never be the same. The recordings date from '83; one side is studio, one live. Comparisons have been made to such Oz outfits as The Scientists and Birthday Party, as well as statesiders The Butthole Surfers. The vocals are suitably Cave-like, snarled/spit/rasped. A dissonant sax squawks crazily, gibbering around the lurching rhythm section while the guitar screeches out a spate of noxious, gasping chords. Gothic blues for some, cannibalism and bodily fire for others. Lyrics are horrific and madening, the images of seared flesh, garbage dumps and bad acid trips permeating the songs. The studio stuff is pretty good, although the live tracks sound raw even to these diseased ears. The version of MC5's "Looking At You" cranks mightily, though, and The Melvins' "Hills Have Eyes" is a true trash/trash/feedback-drenched classic. Horrible stuff, really--I loved it all.--Fred Mills

GUANA BATZ: Held Down To Vinyl At Last (LP; I D , 1-2 Munro Terrace, London SW10 0BL, England) Not sure if it was worth the wait. Passable rockabilly undoubtedly inspired by The Stray Cats a while back. (As opposed to the "psychobilly" of The Cramps, with whom the Batz have no clear ties regardless of how wild they supposedly get onstage.) Sure, there's some "red hot" twangs and some nimble plucking on the upright bass, and them vocals are real gone, man. Sure, the Batz have a love of the music and do their best to keep it alive. Sure, they can rip up a dancehall after only a couple numbers, and they probably can make the walls sweat. So why did I put this on tape and trade in after only two listens?--Fred Mills **THE GUILD: Mario Scherrer** (C90; Calypso Now!, POB 12, CH-2500 Biel 3, Switzerland) Mario Scherrer work for the Tapes Anzieger from Zurich, one of the biggest papers in Switzerland. This is the first in a series of tapes from rock music critics who make music, for the possible analysis of why certain attitudes prevail in the writing of reviews, why some hard judgements have been metered. Seems like a very complex idea, candy for the critical thinkers, clues about what Mario Scherrer means when he says the things he says. It's in German so heck, I've never even read any of his stuff. The music is moody, electronic (bass, electro percussion, keyboards, I think there are four musicians because of the photo) and mostly sung in English. "An Old Familiar Cry," "Is David on the Floor?" "You and I," "Kabbala," "Schurftung," "Crimino," "Litumica," "Fashion Firm"



David Curfradin photo

JAMES HILL: Restoration of Momology (C, TCAB Studio, POB 884763 San Francisco, CA 94188, USA) Hill's tape comes signed, but has no other info about instruments, players, titles, etc. It contains suspenseful, spacy electronics, electric piano noodling, jazzy trumpet, and more. One cut with pulse electronics and trumpet sounds like something Weather Report wrote for Tangerine Dream with Manfred Schoof on flugelhorn. A science fiction synth and drum machine with rap sounds like Laurie Anderson's son screwing around in Mom's studio. An interesting cut features a rhythm track by two African postal workers whistling in harmony, hand drumming and cancelling stamps.--CDinA2

HI SHERIFFS OF BLUE: 1980 Now, Pentagon b/w War Between The States, 12 Gates (12" EP; Jimbo Records, POB 203, Ansonia Station, NYC, NY 10023) Hot Dog! I ain't heard this much ass-kickin' since Jason and The Scorchers dropped "Nashville" from their name. Of course, these guys sound remarkably like Jason & the boys at times, especially the affected "Twang" in the voice and guitar. In fact, the only time these guys don't sound like just another country-punk outfit is when they sound like just another Tejas beer/bar/brawl/blues outfit.--Allen Green

HISTORY OF UNHEARD MUSIC: Drop It (C60; Harmonic Runch NYC, 59 Franklin, NYC, NY 10013, (212) 966-3141) Best shiny well-produced tape I've ever heard, not just really strange sounds, but strong singing and arrangements too. Squid Dunct, on side one has a nice lazy rhythm beat, funny voices, sort of a Javanese cowby-punk (kuku) sound. Very playful baroque, but first conventional



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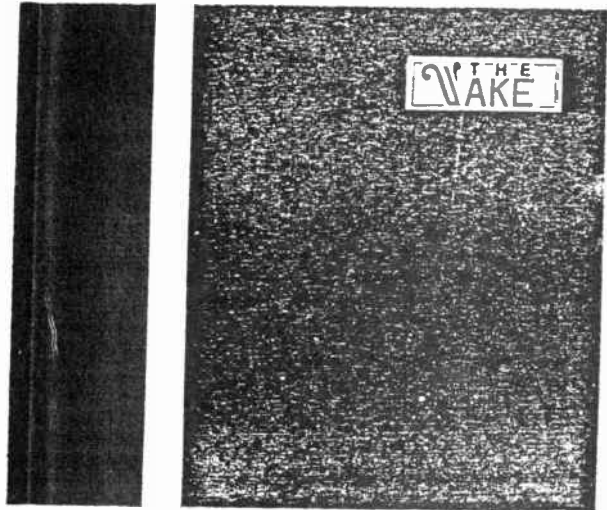
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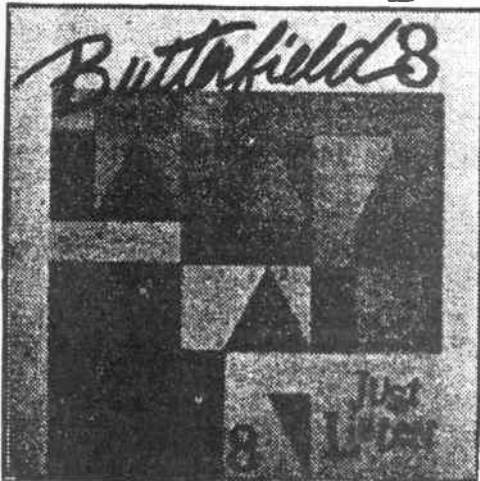
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music but neatly arranged in songs leaning toward that pol-ethnic sound I was telling you about. Two vocalists, percussion, sax, amplified string, PPG Wave 2.2, Fairlight CMI, Alpha Syntrauri CMI, DX-7, Digital Loops-Samples, treated tapes, guitars, clarinet. Besides Square Dance there is the lively No, No, No, No, No, No, No, Music From A Barber's Radio, The Lawn Rangers, Even The Ugliest Thing. A little on the theatrical side, like Orchestra Luna. --Robin James

ANNA HOMLER: Broadwoman (C; High Performance Audio, 240 S. Broadway, 5th Fl., Los Angeles, CA 90012, USA) For her songs on this tape, performance artist Anna Homler has invented a language which she describes as "both mysterious and familiar." Homler's voice is untrained, but has a charming naivete. The language is fraught with a Middle Eastern mysticism which is complemented by the music score, composed by Steve Moshier, a founding member of the Cartesian Reunion Memorial Orchestra. No story is told, but she certainly takes the listener on a curious and engaging aural voyage. --Dean Suzuki

HOMO LIBER: Untitled (LP; Leo Records, 7 Clare Court, Judd St., London WC. 1, England) This second release by Siberian avant-garde musicians showcases Yuri Yukechev on keyboards and Vladimir Tolkahev on reeds in duets that sound, well, Siberian. Assume this means modal, stark, violent, serene, the weathers of the locale translated into a music that seems to drink from the sources of Joseph Jarmen and Stockhausen simultaneously. The empathy of the two players and their obvious sense of open-ended form is apparent immediately. Homo Liber's first album on Leo was in a quartet format and the compositions on that equally worthwhile release were a bit more restrained than this. Lyrical passages here alternate often with grating staccato interludes creating a dramatic wrestling match between reeds and piano. Another very important release (the ends of the earth redefining the further reaches of nascent jazz forms. --Norman Weinstein

HORROR PLANET: Cow Pies From Outer Space (6-song 7"; 136 Tulip Ave., Floral Park, NY 11001, USA) On clear vinyl packaged in a silkscreened green burlap sleeve; lyrics/photos xerox included as is a tiny "National Incredible" booklet ("Zombie Madness", "I Hate My Balls", "I Died And Went To Hell", etc.) put together by this NY band. The music? Raw, skewed and metallic. "My Pizzeria" is straight thrash with a kazoo solo thrown in, if that gives you a clue. The playing's wild ad rowdy, probably abrasive to many, but heck, I just dig those outta control guitars and phlegm'd vocals and lyrics about "Paramecium" and "Grandma's Blood". --Fred Mills

MICHAEL HORWOOD: Motility, 1988 Version (C90; 8 Groveteer Place, Bramalea, Ontario Canada L6S 1S8) A highly polished and refined composition of harpsichord and percussion, representing the movement of an amoeba through water. It's all there, 90 minutes of rushing cymbals and whirling bits of harpsichord, backwards and forwards for a stereo simulation or late night mystery sound. Quite a noteworthy achievement, performed once in 1968-9 in Buffalo, NY and more recently in Toronto. Motility can be heard as an extension of those musics involving drones. It combines static background with active foreground, and evolves slowly into a huge double climax, meant to be listened to with a moderately loud playback level. --Robin James

HOT CANARY: Partysville (C; Atomic Records, 1813 E. Locust, Milwaukee, WI 53208, USA) Sincerely-played rockabilly/r'n'r/calypto group with male and female singers. This is dandy twang but the vocals, especially by the male singer, wear on a mite. Maybe it's just me. Either way, I'm looking forward to vinyl. --Jamie Rake

BOBBY HUTCHERSON: Color Scheme (LP; Landmark/Fantasy) Hutcherson is one of the three greatest mallet artists in jazz (the others being Milt Jackson and Gary Burton). "Mallet" rather than "vibes" being the operative word for Hutcherson, since he devoted about half this LP to the marimba as well, and again demonstrates his powers as a master of coherent, flowing improvisation on both instruments. In Mulgrew Miller he has found a pianist who is well on his way to performing at that same high level, and John Heard (bass) and the ubiquitous Billy Higgins (drums) give the most empathic support possible. Percussionist Airo adds his characteristic colors on about half the tunes. Not as extroverted as some of Hutcherson's work (perhaps due to absence of horns), but there is still lots of subtlety and emotional variety here, and the digital recording captures every nuance. Finally, the leader has chosen numbers that highlight the interpretive gifts of the group and wear well upon rehearing (e.g. Joe Henderson's "Recorda-Me", Benny Golson's "Whisper Not", Monk's "Bimsha Swing"). This LP and Hutcherson's last, GOOD BAIT, are perhaps his best so far. --Bart Grooms

HUMAN FOLLY: Reactivation (C; Mad Dog Studio, 1715 Lincoln Blvd., Venice, CA 90291, USA) Superb! Human Folly is actually Alan Porzio, and he plays music for synthesizers (digital?) and sound effect collages. Highlights include "Opening Steps," which has sounds of someone walking; "The Dawn of Rush Hour," for car sounds and synth; "Wu's Warning," with what sounds like a scientist giving a message to us all, and "Tranquility (vocal)," a

wonderful synth-rock song. Production is A-1 superior. Comparisons are useless; he has a sound all his own. I want to hear more from this guy! --Douglas Bregger

HYAA! (6 track 12"); Fountain of Youth, 5710 Durbin Road, Bethesda, MD, 20817, USA) Described by Mitch Easter (who's producing their next) as "a kind of art-rock band with absolutely no commercial potential", D.C. area trio Hyaal combines elements of the postpunk British cold wave outfits with folksy female vox and itchy dance-floor rhythms to create an interesting, if not completely arresting, brand of progressive pop. The guitar bristles with all sorts of sounds, from shimmering space/psyche arpeggios to clipped staccato chords to slow strummed pulses that fall just short of "jangly." "Love Generation" is one of the stronger tracks featuring overlapping and entwining vocals that achieve a slow hypnotic rhythm in counterpoint to the alternate one provided by moody chording and gentle percussion. Contrary to the above description, Hyaal could easily break through public awareness given the right push; Alice Depard's singing is languidly erotic and her guitar skills are versatile. With a bit more care in fleshing out the sound--assuming that the band wants commercial success, for I actually prefer their minimalist approach--Hyaal could become a surprise hit. --Fred Mills

ICE CREAM BLISTERS: You Can Never Step in the Same River Twice (C; GGE Records and Tapes, 89 Jewett St., Apt. 8, Akron, OH 44305, USA) This is a grab bag of garage, hardcore and noise. There is an underproduced, homey personal touch to all of this. It probably goes over real big with their friends, but most of the songs/performances here are simply not distinctive enough. "For Your Lunch", the Syndicate of Sounds's "Hey Little Girl" and others have a laid-back garage feel (as inconsistent as that sounds), with the irreverence of The Fugs, but without their commitment and verve. "Big Red Button" is the standout track, sounding freshly delivered from 1968, via Country Joe and The Fish. Overall, this low-rent affair is fun at times, and dumb at times, but not worth repeated exposure. --Scott Jackson

THE ICONS: Live! (C60; Green Monkey Records, POB 31983, Seattle, WA 98103, USA) Good bar band rock and roll caught live in the act at The Hall of Fame. Nineteen songs, with tons of reverb and room echo, it's like being there. Sounds pretty good, guitars especially. They sing about Tarzan, The Hunger, X-Ray, Get Modern, Howling At The Moon, You're The One. Classic stuff for the Bob-Shop and a rockin' Nightspot. --Robin James

THE ICONS: The Masters of Disaster (C30, Green Monkey Records, see address above) Nine good rockin' songs, Double-O-Zero, Work Ethic Rock, Give Me All Your Love, The Hunger, Girl, We're So Bad. Tom Dyer, guitar, vocals keyboards; Steve Tretlevick, guitar, vocal, keyboards; Rick Yust, bass vocals; Tim Nelson, drums, vocals. All recorded in the studio. --Robin James

IDIOY SAVANT: Live 88'd (C; Rad Productions, Box 84662, San Diego, CA 92138, USA) More idiot than savant and more eighty-sixed than live. This is mostly a tape of a bunch of people fooling around, presumably in their garage. There was apparently no attempt to do anything here but turn on a tape machine and record whatever happened. Nothing did. --Sam Mental

THE IDLE STRAND: Blackberry Way (LP; Blackberry Way Records, 606 13th Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414, USA) A blend of pop, folk, and good ole rock 'n' roll that spawns mixed results. My favorite tunes have been guitar and harmonizing ("In My Own Room", "I'm Travelin' (Ma'am)"), but others are less original offerings that are repetitive and lacking bite ("Girl", "Whitehouse"). "Fight" is both politically and musically correct. What I like best about these guys is their sincerity. --Madeline Finch

TH' INBRED: A Family Affair (LP; Toxic Shock Records, POB 242, Pomona, CA 91769) Aw c'mon, you expect me to believe that this band is really a family who fuck each other and live in a little shack complete with satellite dish up in the mountains of West Virginia??? Whether or not, these guys are simply amazing! Fast, incredibly tight, together playing that's excellently produced. The tunes for the most part are about how so often people, instead of fighting a system they think is wrong or trying to change it, simply give up, give in and become part of it. They're pretty pissed off about this and I think they have every right to be. Don't you? The lyrics are intelligent and insightful. One result of the fine production work is that you can hear the words without having to glue your eyes to the lyric sheet. People selling out to the system makes great fodder to fuel a hardcore band and these guys just rip out some fantastic thrashing that's anything but generic. Th' Inbred are just loaded with ideas. There's all kinds of inventive, intricate arrangements and odd time signatures. All you folks out there who like "progressive" music could very well be turned around by these people. I just can't rave on enough about this band. Really, they're THAT good!!! --Bryan Sale

THE INDIAN FEAST: Portrait of A Sister (LP; Helvete Underground Records, c/o Sounds, 6 Ecole De Medicine, 1205 Geneva, Switzerland) Six songs, all in English (at least primarily). Gloomy, arty dance music heavy on the synth and pretense. Left me cold. --Tom Shannon

INVISIBLECHAINS (LP; New Alliance, POB 21, San Pedro, CA 90733, USA) Guess I'll call this jazz-flavored music with kinda beat-poetry singing/chanting. Too bad it's so self-consciously cute, because there is some talent and innovative playing present. But, to quote another reviewer: "Rather lackluster tunes full of uninspired jazz funk doodles and dits that just kind of lay there." Yep, lots of electronic farting around. Yep, slaphappy, funky bass playing and plenty of sax-trumpet glad handing. Some tribalistic mouthing off from the chorus, some embarrassing lead vox by Josef 8-Halzman (who's mainly responsible for this mess). Honest, I tried to find some stuff here I liked. The eerie instrumental "An End To Neglected Tomails" showed potential as a soundtrack theme; the vocal duet on the folksy "Dreamdate" was okay, too. But overall I found myself listening to bits and digging specific instruments then picking the needle up and trying elsewhere before the total song got on my nerves too much. Not the best way to appreciate a record, huh? --Fred Mills

THE INVISIBLE PARTY: Live (C40; Jargon Records and Tapes, POB 90594, Rochester, NY 14609, USA) Good bar band rock and roll, psychedelic with the guitar sound and lyrics. Eleven songs taken from two gigs, Scorpies and 288 Lark. Some great covers include "Ghost Riders in the Sky", "Kizza Me"; lots of originals: "Over and Over", "Waking World", "Before My Time", "Big Man's Daughter", "A Hundred". Hard-edged country rock. --Robin James

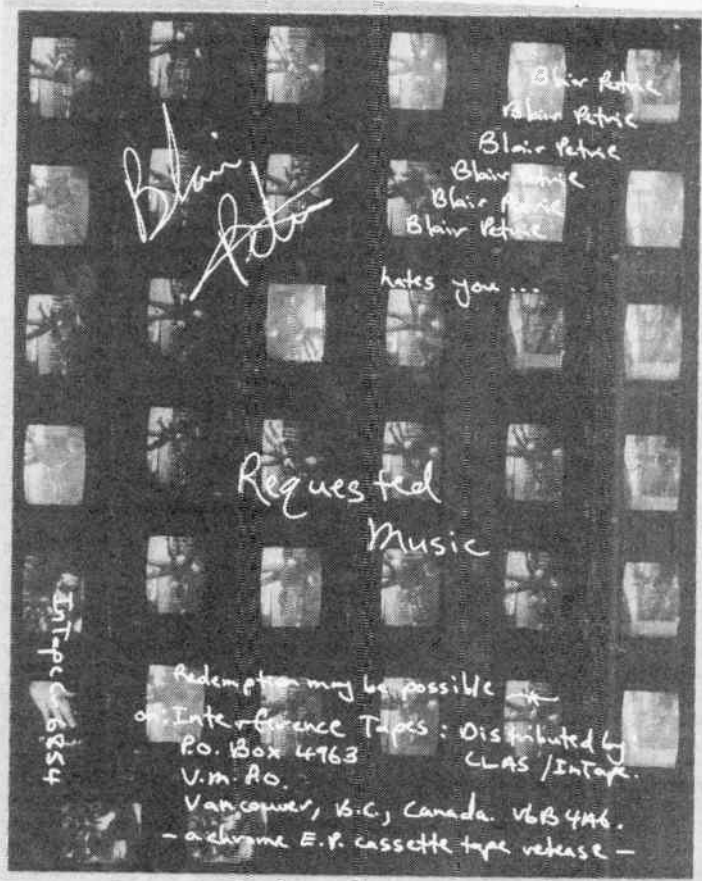
IVORY LIBRARY (5 song 12"; Smart Studios, POB 3321, Madison, WI 53704, USA) Heavily REM inspired quartet only with lyrics that make a trifle more sense (still impressionistic as all get-out) and a little harsher approach. It sounds as if a style of their own is developing but now they would sound perfect back-to-back with Chronic Town. This isn't an insult so much as a sign that they need to grow. Potential is there. --Jamie Rake

JACKDAWS (5 song C; 4822 North Idlewild, Whitefish Bay, WI 53217, USA) It's fair to wager that this is the case of some suburban kids taking their Echo and the Bunnymen, Cure and 4AD collections too seriously and deciding "Hey! Let's start a really depressing dance band!" What do they, with a street address in a rich Milwaukee suburb, have to be so all-consumingly glum about? When you think they're going to lighten up in "Can't See Far Away", it's just irony. The rifting dredges up early Cure, Banshees and maybe Southern Death Cult and singer Andy Buck sounds like a pubescent Joe Jackson. Still, this depression kick sounds forced. Maybe they aren't teenyboppers but if they want to get really bummed out, all they have to do is get their noses out of Sarte and N.M.E. and into inner city Milwaukee. --Jamie Rake

ELMORE JAMES: The King of the Slide Guitar (LP; Kent Records, Kamp Associates, Inc. 23 Music Square East, Suite 101, Nashville, TN 37203, USA) Fourteen Elmore James sides rescued by a fellow named Ray Topping from the vaults of Modern Records. Good thing, too: there's some fine music here, originally issued on labels like Checker, Flair and Modern. Many of the cuts feature Ike Turner and the collection includes two sides from a Flair single issued under Little Johnny Jones name but which feature Elmore James and his band. There's a tremendous amount of variety on this record, both slow blues and uptempo scorchers, many with horns. The sound quality varies, but overall is quite good, considering the quality and vintage of the tapes (early to mid-1950s). It's also a revelation to hear James in so many different settings. Especially for those who know him only through his (almost) patented "Dust My Broom" side intro. This is simply great blues, and of interest to more than just James collectors. --John Baxter

GREGOR JAMROSKI: Sight Wounded (C; Sound of Pig Music, c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane., Great Neck, NY 11023, USA) A sound track to a low budget, late Flitties sci-fi movie comes to mind when listening to the first, second and fourth pieces of music on this cassette, but this is a compliment rather than an insult. Reverberating, echoing electronics and screeching clarinet ably achieve this sound. The third piece is more rhythmic and percussive, sounding like a death march. It begins slowly, plodding along, and ends in a climactic thrash of ride tom and bed frame. Sincere, do-it-yourself music played with conviction that, if it had to, could be lumped into the experimental/industrial genre. Gregor mixes traditional instruments (clarinet, peasant flute, Brazilian pan pipes, ride tom) with modern electronics (sequencer, MXR digital delay, Roland TR-808), and also tosses in a bed frame to help round out this cacophony. Only one gripe about this live recording: it's too short, filling only one side of a 60 minute cassette. --Rich Crist

Gregor Jamroski (C; Sound of Pig Music c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023, USA) An exceedingly personal, eclectic, and thoughtful collection of works packs this cassette with almost 90 minutes of music. Jamroski's sense of variety is to be applauded. Diverse materials span solo horn works recorded in concert, electronic synth/drum narratives, multitrack productions, and playful excursions into timbral exploration. At times shy, pensive, and withdrawn rhythmic textures create a non-developmental musical atmosphere. An extroverted, abrasive



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side comes out as well, using distorted synths, tortured voice, and reeds. Jamroski does not include any liner notes or information on his cassette, which is unfortunate. As such, I can only guess that reeds are his main instruments, that he is very interested in improvised music, and that he has a taste for squeezing what he finds appropriate from low tech electronics. My main criticism is that some problematic areas are unearthed when unresponsive, automatic machines are used as a basis for an added improvised part. This can yield static pieces which stubbornly refuse to respond to the input of a live player. Jamroski has a good sense of something that is all too often missing from recording projects, and that is the sense of the project as a whole. How the pieces flow into each other, and how they are juxtaposed solidifies the recording's overall shape. It is gratifying to hear two sides of music performed on a variety of instruments and played in various settings, which still retain a coordinated form.--Nick Didkovsky

JANDEK: Telegraph Melts (LP; Corwood Industries, POB 15375, Houston, TX 77020, USA) It sounds like this: a drummer, a guitarist and two singers, none of whom have played or sung before but have a clear idea of what they want to do, are in someone's garage banging and moaning and screeching away. It's sloppy, pretentious, and it works, though I can't figure out why. I get the impression part of Jandek's purpose is to confuse people. The album is absolutely ridiculous but I can't stop listening to it...and not because it's funny (it isn't). Part of its success may be due to the recording--the muddy, distorted sound quality draws the listener into Jandek's very strange world and MAKES him/her try to understand. TELEGRAPH MELTS is unique, challenging, and worthwhile listening.--Brook Hinton

BOBBY JIMMY AND THE CRITTERS: Roaches (12" single; Marcola Records, 6209 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90038, USA) Bobby (aka Russ Parr) is perhaps the only guy in the U.S. doing soul/funk/rap parody. This continues his near-faultless streak of stööpidity with a rip-off of the Timex Social Club's "Rumors." He charges his roaches rent (they don't work), fumigates them to turn them from homosexuality (it doesn't work) and gets p.o.'ed when they invade his closets and start rapping. There's even a cut swiped from Lakeside's "Raid" for obvious reasons. Catchy on the first listen and memorable to boot.--Jamie Rake

EVAN JOHNS AND THE H-BOMBS (LP; Jungle Records, POB 3034, Austin, Texas 78764) This album comes on the heels of TRASH, TWANG, AND THUNDER, the Jungle release that Mr. Johns contributed to, and is in the same vein; a full assault of guitar rock. The H-Bombs are a first-class rocking band, Johns' guitar playing is an aural treat, and yet this album isn't one I can recommend because the vocals by Mr. Johns are grating to the ear. If it is at all possible I would hope that a vocalist is hired to sing with the band because it is the missing link that keeps this record from getting much airplay. The songs that strike me as winners are, "Day Go By," with Danny Federici of the E Street Band on accordion, and the cajun flavored "Moonshine Runner." Musically satisfying, and vocally lacking describes Evan Johns and the H-Bombs.--Dale Knuth

BUNK JOHNSON AND HIS NEW ORLEANS JAZZ BAND (LP; Arhoolie Records, 10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530) Bunk Johnson was a trumpet player during the heyday of New Orleans jazz, circa 1910-1930. He was rediscovered in the forties and led the worldwide revival for this music. The key to this recording is stated in the liner notes by Chris Strachwitz, "Bunk Johnson apparently was never very happy with the George Lewis Band..." (the Lewis band is backing him up on this disc). I can hear why, Bunk. While Johnson's tone and playing in the ensemble and limited solo space he is allotted is strong, raspy and generally stands out, the rest of the band simply doesn't swing. George Lewis' clarinet playing is mediocre, uninspired, and given far too much time. The only other "name" on these sides is Baby Dodds, the drummer, who is poorly recorded (very surprising, since the sound is excellent, given the state of the art in the late 1940's). Those wishing to hear Johnson in a better context are recommended to pick up his recordings on the Good Time and Storyville labels from the same time period.--Brian White

JONATHAN X AND BLACK HEAT: Venus Needs Men (C30; \$4; POB 27253, Central Station, Washington, D.C. 20005; (202) 686-0634) "This tape was made with fun in the heart and mix, art is fun, so boogie while you think." That's what JX tells on the insert to this tape of political songs and there is some fun to be had. On first hearing the low fidelity of the tape interferes with the enjoyment of the music, improved production values are needed. It was recorded in a home 4-track studio and is very heavy on the drum machine and bass. Occasionally I was reminded of Jimi Hendrix, other times of Ornette Coleman. The words are hard to make out because of the mix but they are sung in a chant style.--Bruce Christensen

JR AND THE Z-MAN: Several Times A Day (EP; Madman, POB 3167, Hollywood, CA 90078) Competent bar band pop with semi-political lyrics, the most interesting aspect being the tandem sung vocals. Strong '70s influence. They show some promise for writing AOR, nothing to recommend this time out.--AO

JUBIRT SISTERS: Ladies Sing The Blues (12" LP; High Water Recording Company, c/o Dr. David Evans, Music Dept., Memphis State University, Memphis, TN 38152) A female vocal trio that puts one (a little) in mind of the Pointer Sisters. The women sing well if unimaginatively and the musicians on the date (an assortment of guitars, keyboards, horns, etc.) play creditably; yet the performances never ignite. The LP lacks grit and soul and just doesn't move the listener the way a blues recording should. In addition, the song selections and their arrangements seem conservative and trite. Do we really need another rendition of "Proud Mary" (copped from Tina Turner's less-than-thrilling version), "Satisfaction", "See See Rider" and "When The Saints Go Marching In"? Not quite up to the enthusiasm of the liner notes.--G. Spoca

KALIMA: Whispered Words w/ Sugar and Spice + In Time (12" 45; Factory Records, 88 Palatine Road, Manchester, UK) "Whispered Words" sounds a bit like Sergio Mendes/Brasil '68... "Sugar and Spice" adds to that sound a jazzy saxophone solo. "In Time" is very fast-paced and African sounding. Overall, this was very enjoyable, except for the female vocalist who consistently missed all the sustained notes. As a matter of fact, her voice reminded me of Patti Smith.--Sally Idasswey

KATHARSIS: Triangor (C; 1411 Divisadero #29, San Francisco, CA 94115) Impressive graphics and a cool lyric book led me to expect more from this tape. The music is dark, heavy-handed, murky and repetitious, consisting mainly of fuzzed-out synth squawks and quasi-rhythmic pulses and throbs. The vocals, primarily of the narrative variety, are all but buried in a sea of echo. This is unfortunate, because the real strength of Katharsis is their vividly impressionistic, dark poetry, dealing with subjects such as alienation and sexual deviation in a disturbingly direct manner.--Allen Green

JORMA KAUKONEN: Too Hot To Handle (LP; Felix Records, POB 92, Brooklyn, NY 11229 USA) Former Jefferson Airplane guitarist Jorma K. still has those old acoustic-guitar blues. Technical accuracy is sacrificed in favor of feeling, and Jorma's voice and guitar rise and fall as he plays. He rambles through the old standards "Death Don't Have No Mercy" and Robert Johnson's "Walking Blues". Sometimes the songs go on too long. The recording is marred by scratching noises when it reaches high levels.--Bill Neill

E. KOESTYARA & GROUP GAPURA: Sangkala (LP; Icon) Group Gapura performs music of Sunda, which is similar to that of the Javanese or Balinese gamelan. The ensemble here is referred to as a degung and is comprised of only seven performers: a flute or suling player, a drummer or kendang player (who occasionally strikes what sounds like a low pitched, resonant tuned drum with a marvelous tone), and five others on tuned metallophones. Musically, it is quite similar to other Indonesian music, with great charm and beguiling qualities. The rhythmic structures carried by the drummer are more complex and interesting than in other types of Indonesian music. What makes this music special are the unique textures and sonorities which are quite delicate, discreet and delicate. The flute is light and airy, and the small number of mallet instruments keeps the music from being heavy, weighed down. If you have never cared for or even listened to Indonesian music, this charming album should win you over. If you already enjoy gamelan music, this will be a revelation.--Dean Suzuki

CHARLIE KOHLHASE: Saxophone Quartet (C40; \$8; Essence, 197 Green St., Cambridge, MA 02139 USA (617) 354-1337) This cassette is a feast of modern to avant-garde jazz symphony. Composer Kohlhase (alto/baritone) is joined by Matt Langley (tenor), Stan Strickland (tenor/soprano) and Steve Adams (baritone/alto), all of whom are strong, self-assuredly fluid soloists. This is important here, for while Kohlhase has written engaging, sometimes fingerpopping ensembles, most of the playing time is given over to solo (i.e., no accompaniment) improvisation. An exception is the lovely "Hymn for T. S. Monk", which recalls Monk's ballads "Crepescul with Nellie" and "Mönk's Mood", and in which the textures of the group sound are used to their fullest potential. There are three other quartet numbers, and two duets which are similar in conception (tight ensemble followed by solo improv). Kohlhase essays Ellington's "Solitude" as a solo piece all the way through, and does a fine job of creating a continuous melody line, using arpeggios in the swing/bop tradition, a contrast to the "outside" blowing on several of the other tracks.--Bart Grooms

JAROSLAV KRCEK: Raab (LP; Recommended, 387 Wandsworth Rd., London SW8, England) This opera, or "psychodramatic representation of an Old Testament theme" as the composer refers to it, was realized in a Prague electronic studio in 1970-71. Originally recorded in quad--the first in the CSSR--this stereo pressing is of superior quality, sounding almost digital. The work is based on Joshua 6. Each of the 3 sections are introduced in Czech with an artificial language making up the duration. The phonetic vocals, interpreted in part from a graphic score, sound at times like Kurt Schwitters' dada pieces. Percussive electronics and acoustic instruments

complement the vocals. The enclosed libretto translates the introductions and blue-prints the invented language sections. The record stands on its own, however, by providing interesting vocal sounds in an operatic arena instead of imposing inferiority complexes on us for not knowing the language.--Tom Morr

TOURE KUNDA: Toure Kunda (3-song 12"; Celluloid) This very popular Senegal rooted band sounds very urbane and lively on the title cut but not so remarkable. Headed by three Toure brothers this combo is large with guitars, a slick horn section and layers of percussion. I question Celluloid's judgement in including an edited version of the five minute "Toure Kunda" cut that is just a minute and 15 seconds shorter on the other side. They should have given the consumer a break and gave us a completely different song. The other cut "Natalia" seems oriented in melody and rhythm towards North Africa and is very nicely put together with cool saxophone and keyboard parts. There's good singing with a sort of belly dancing rhythm. It's well worth hearing.--Drew Robertson



Interested in a whole lot of acid scribbblings and indulgent electric guitar jams by someone who very well may worship the ghost of Jimi Hendrix? Meet Troy Kimber. He is no rock star idol, he's just another energetic member of the Audio Evolution Network. Send something

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FELA KUTI WITH AFRIKA 70: Shuffling And Smiling and Zombie (LPs, Celluloid Records) These are a couple of great records from Fela and Celluloid. Fela and this ensemble play powerful music with great horns, great grooves and big messages. The music is something like a politicized James Brown in a heavy

West African style. Over the grooves, horns and keyboards mix it up and then lay back as Fela sings his mind with a chorus of a handful of his wives occasionally helping out. The words on these records is focused mostly on the dangerous mediocrity that Nigeria and so much of the rest of the world has accepted. Both records are recommended but "Zombie" more so because it has three distinct selections and "Shuffling" has the one song and on the other side an instrumental version of it.--Drew Robertson

KWASHIORKOR: Reliving The Past (C90; 3016 N. 4th St., Harrisburg, PA 17110 USA) Archive material occasionally lost. One of the most remarkable aspects of this tape is the open mic mix technique, several inputs are mixed by playing them and recording the combined sound with a microphone. It's a little noisy but that is part of the general plan, and you can talk on top of it too. This is Minnie. This is one of my favorite tapes, nostalgic and oddly musical, complex, mysterious, puzzling and simple to make.--Robin James

FRED LANE & RON PATE'S DEBONAIRS: From The One That Cut You (LP; Day-Bew Records, 527 1/2 13th Ave. Apr. #6, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401/Fred Lane: POB 248, Tuscaloosa, AL 35402) Vulgar romantic crooner Fred Lane received a threatening note from mysterious underground figure Fueay. This mysterious message is the basis for the musical "From The One That Cut You", featuring both Fueay and Rev. Lane. The songs from that musical are featured on this LP, on which Rev. Lane's vocal are given swinging, over-modulated accompaniment by Ron Pate's Debonairs. The lyrics are as silly and safely outrageous as the titles ("Fun in the Fundus", "I Talk To My Haircut", etc.), while the music pokes fun at the big band era in a subtle way. There's nothing new or shocking about it, but it's amusing nevertheless. Nothing on the LP, however, stands up to the hilarious album jacket and insert.--Brook Hinton



T. LAVITZ: Storytime (LP; Jem) Lavitz, keyboardist, once of the Dixie Dregs is joined by Steve Morse, guitar; Steve Smith, drums; Jeff Berlin, bass; and others. A collection of compositions by Lavitz, this is okay jazz/rock fusion. Lavitz is a fine player which is most evident on side two as we finally get to hear some excellent acoustic piano.--Betty Huck

ALAN LEATHERWOOD: Blue Suede Heart (LP; Moon Records, 906 Wagar Rd., Cleveland, Ohio 44116) Rockabilly fans take heart! There is an artist around who is writing original rockabilly tunes that retain the original flavor of the genre, and yet are able to do it in a fresh method. Alan Leatherwood has a likeable voice and is backed by a solid group of musicians, but it is Leatherwood's songwriting ability that stands out. The title cut may be one of the best rockabilly songs written in many a moon. If your musical tastes lean toward Orbison, the Crickets and Holly, then BLUE SUEDE HEART is an album you will want to add to your collection. It is one I have added to mine.--Dale Knuth

D.Z. ELECTRIC: Russo-American Songs (C30; Sound of Pig c/o AI Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023 USA) French electric keyboards and vocals. Thoughtful and moody, some English lyrics (even a version of Fever), but mostly in French. Actually mostly in electric. Le Chemin de Croix, (La Fonction de) L'Orgasme, Chason Pour Les P4, Le Moine, N.Y. By Night, Remember When You Ate All Those Trips, Villa Triste.--Robin James

PETE LEINONEN BAND: Lemminkainen's Adventures (C48; Pete Leinonen, 71 Columbia, Suite 215, Seattle, WA 98104) Story telling with music: baritone, tenor and soprano sax. "ute, trumpet, flugelhorn, drums, bass. It swings, it's new age: Rama and the Grizzly Bear, The Deer and the Lion, Dance of Gemini, Tangier Love Song (El Liberacion de la Leona).--Robin James

LES LARMES: Live (LP; Lost Art Records, POB 85338, Los Angeles,

CA 90072) With a song title like "Dresden Black" and a stark cover of white and (mostly) black, you could probably guess what kind of sounds will emanate from the disc. Les Larmes favors minor-key melodies and downbeat subject matter but they certainly succeed far more than they have a right to. Most of the blame undoubtedly goes to the solid piano playing and a vocalist who, while attempting Richard Butler imitations, can produce a suitable alienated wail. Just perfect for bringing out the Gothic excesses of "Ode To Billy Joe".--Lang Thompson

LETHAL GOSPEL: Martian Whores (LP; Salmon Eye, POB 410099, San Francisco, CA 94141-0099) Lethal Gospel is the brainchild of Mattx Bergren, who is also involved in an anti-overpopulation campaign (free contraceptive info, 10% of profits going toward purchase of contraceptives, etc.). Admirable. His lyrics, not surprisingly then, have a sexual theme running through them which is both mock-sleazy and blackly humorous as assorted hookers, fetishists, religious obsessives and outright aliens (as in the title track: "Be a vegetable and multiply/Spread our message with your thighs") populate the songs. Taken as a whole I'd say this is sort of a concept album; fortunately the music is sufficiently engaging to offset the pretentious nature of the pseudo-mystical/quasi-religious/death-of-psyche lyrics. There's doomy metal ("Calendar", "Teach Me To Scream"), steamy nifing funk w/catchy sax and harmonica bits ("Twisted Steel"), flat-out locomotive rocking ("Heart and Eyes", "Isador"), a hazy freeform collage (U.T.A.), even a rowdy, clanging version of the Beatles' "Why Don't We Do It In The Road" which must be heard to be believed. A little bit of everything, and not a bad effort. Bergren is a stylist of sorts with a real knack for songwriting and arranging; he plunders other stylists such as Bowie without ever resorting to pure theft. As such, I suspect there is a real star in the making.--Fred Mills

BENJAMIN LEW & STEVEN BROWN: Propos d'un Paysage (LP; Crammed Discs, 43 rue General Patton, 1050 Brussels, Belgium) Lew and Brown's stunning second collaboration has a texture and tone similar to their first, TWELFTH DAY, which was also dark, exotic and in a minimalist vein. Again, there are musical references to

world music, but not quite as prominently displayed as on the first album. It is at the same time markedly different owing to the contributions of Aksak Maboul's Marc Hollander and Durutti Column's Vini Reilly, and others. Reilly's guitar lends a lyrical quality to the music, but he is balanced by the darker qualities exhibited by the other musicians. Like much European alternative music that has a classical influence, whether it is Art Zoyd or Minimal Compact, this music has a somber, sober and haunting quality to it. At times, the effect is heavy, but never heavy-handed. The various compositions range from a duet for piano and electronics, that comes off much like Budd and Eno's collaboration, THE PLATEAU OF MIRROR, to ensemble pieces replete with polyrhythmic percussion, musique concrete techniques, electronics, and Brown's understated woodwind lines. Here you will find music that is evocative and ravishing.--Dean Suzuki

LIQUID PINK: Arena of Ridicule:Live (7-song C; Atomic Records, 1813 East Locust St., Milwaukee, WI 53208 USA) Moody (ranging from wistful to manic) gothic, classicist guitar pop in songs of love, hate, indifference and jealousy. If the Velvet Underground had formed in this decade, as a trio, they might have sounded like this. Only wish they would have included the cello they sometimes use onstage. Otherwise, this is killer stuff.--Lamia Rake

LITTLE GENTLEMEN: Broken Toys (LP; i.e. Records, POB 724, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004) "No more heros, hippies or deadbeat punks in 1985" begins the refrain in "1985", the opening song on BROKEN TOYS. "That sounds dated," screams my wife from the back bedroom. Sure does. With a couple notable exceptions, including the title track, this whole LP is classic slowed down post-punk ala the ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE. Vocals right on top of Animal-is this his new band? Technically proficient playing throughout, the guitars by Chris Orzechowski are particularly noteworthy. This is a Pennsylvania band who've learned all their chops via English pre-punk (the only cover tune on the LP is a nearly note-perfect "The Wild, the Beautiful, and the Damned" by ULTRAVOX and English post-punk (aforementioned ANWL) but guess what? It works.--John E

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Greg Ginn blazes new paths with his instrumental power trio, Gone. Ginn's guitar playing is awkward, pained and INTENSE. His face convulses with twisted battle-scarred emotion, and sweat drips from his knuckles as he tries to set an example of what he calls "Living every note." These were shot in October 1986 at Rockpile Records in Santa Barbara, CA. Gregg got a haircut a couple weeks later.

Bob Wills and Hank Williams. Lonesome Stranger is made up by Jeff Rymes, Randy Weeks, Nino Del Pesco and Mike McLean. They are helped by Joe Nanini who played drums on all tracks, Chris Hillman on mandolin, Al Perkins on dobro and banjo and Ed Black on the pedal steel guitar. Most songs are written by Rymes and Weeks, with their harmonies eliciting graphic images of lonesome small town fellas just trying to get a little love and fairness in this world. If you like songs about bad men, shame, lonesomeness and unrequited love, you'll feel right at home with this LP.--L. Cochran

THE LOVE AMBASSADEUX: Black Mischief (12" EP; Rumbo Records, 3-7 Hazelwood Road, Northampton NN1 11a, England; Tel: 0604 26742) Produced by The Jazz Butcher. That should set the tone for you. Three tunes ("Black Mischief", "Driftwood", and "Oyster Syndrome") Guitar, bass, drums, percussion, voice. Occasional keyboard textures. Bright, funky, guitar-playing makes for hot rhythms that make you want to dance. Bruce Marcus sings in a lounge-lizard, amelodic croon that trivializes rather than illuminates the songs' lyrics. The grooves end up being monotonous or hypnotic, depending on your perspective. This record was meant to be a lot more fun than it is.--G. Speca

LOWLIFE: Rain (6-track 12"; Nightshift/Fast Forward, 21A Alva St., Edinburgh, Scotland) First release from Scottish group which includes Will Heggie (original bassist for Cocteau). Dense, brooding cold wave postpunk not unlike certain 4AD bands. Ultravox comes to mind as well, especially on "Sense of Fondness" with its rhythmic



bombast, dark vocals, epic bursts of guitars and panoramic keyboard arrangement. In places Lowlife falls victim to the excessive seriousness and sense of grandeur that marred U-vox's later albums, but the sound does have a depth and emotion that can't be ignored, especially when the singer drops his Jim Morrison pretensions. A keen sense of melody is what makes this music work, as on the Banshee-like "Again and Again" in which a battery of guitars set on stun slice through the huge basslines and a series of resonances echo across dimensions, jet blasts of drums toppling warp barriers in cascading domino fashion. "Sometime: Something" was also quite moving and anthemic, bringing a highland dignity to the fore amidst the soaring six stringed melody.--Fred Mills

THE LUMPKINS: Praise The Lord! (1 side of C45; Morning Star Music, 108 State, St. Charles, IL 60174 USA) Rhythm machine-and-bass guitar gospel rapping from a black dad and his two teenage sons. Production is akin to old Sugarhill material, only more minimalistic; the bass player gets some fancy licks in. Themes include evangelizing the goodness of Christ, the evil of the devil (one of the sons calls him "the bogey man") and practicing what you preach. They even do a human beat box! As with most Sugarhill albums, there's also a ballad here, "Let Jesus in Your Life." Unlike most ballads by rappers, however, this isn't schmaltzy and, in fact, reminded me of early '70s Philly soul. Bust this good!--Jamie Rake

MIAN FRIDAY: Love Honey, Love Heartache (CDJ Records, 52 Carmine St., New York, NY 10014, USA) Earnestly put forth, but lacking in any real catchy beats or rhythms, this release is a pale imitation of dance music at best. The music is standard disco-

dance-new oriented, and the vocals are light and unemotional. Final report: B for effort, D for energy, with plenty of room for improvement. --Carol Schutzbank

CHARLES MANSON: Lies (C45; Inner-X, POB 1060, Allston, MA 02134, USA; \$5.99) Yep, this is THE C. Manson, captured in all his folkie glory. Despite the novelty value, these performances, from love songs to existential anguish, are catchy and very much of their time. Who knows? Cleaned up and better recorded (not surprisingly, these are very lo-fi), they might have been hits. Stranger things have happened.--Lang Thompson

MASTER/SLAVE RELATIONSHIP: Throwing It To The Wind (C45; Cause and Effect, POB 30383, Indianapolis, IN 46230, USA) Sexy dead tongues talk in loops of nightmarish imagery. Vocalist/instrumentalist Debbie Jaffe of Viscera takes on all the tasks in Master/Slave Relationship, her ongoing solo project. This installment may be her most adventurous yet. The intense loops of multi-layered vocals and electronics set up an eerie psycho-sexual atmosphere that invoke the succubus/incubus subconscious in the listener. Listen to this before bedtime and enjoy some wild dreams. --John E

ARNOLD MATHEs: Stranger From The Depths (C; 2750 Homecrest Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11235, USA) Another menagerie of electronic mayhem from a true genius madman with knobs. Unlike Matthes' previous cassette "Monitoring," this one has a coherent theme that extends from beginning to the end, and you can even understand these concepts as the music moves on. As it does, we are told the story of a stranger in a strange land (a metaphor to be sure, perhaps for Arnold himself), and this stranger finding himself in unfavorable conditions, spends the duration of the experience attempting to understand and finally escape them. Matthes' musical style seems here less reminiscent of definable influence and more, his own brand of crazy, yet musically coherent sound vignettes. It is often driving and percussively rhythmic, and his choice of timbre combinations has little in common with the smooth and flowing electronics so prevalent today. In that respect certain connections can be made to people such as Chris and Cozey, or Severed Heads, but their brand of sinister tone is replaced with an eclectic, upbeat mood, as well as the addition of some of the best found vocals around (too much educational TV I would suspect). Overall, another trip to Arnold's world finds us educated and alone, but happy just the same. --Nathan Griffith

ARNOLD MATHEs: Coam (C; see address above) Improvisational, industrial space music would be the best way to describe this 90 minute tape. Matthes plays synthesizers, electric guitars, fx, tapes, drum machine, and digital sampler, and is joined by other musicians playing similar instruments. Each selection has him playing with one or two others. The problem with this tape is that it is too improvisational; one wishes for real melodies, and tighter playing. One piece, "The Return of the Rattlesnakes" is in fact a series of false starts, studio talk, and other such extraneous sounds. Ironically, the best song on the tape is the longest one, "Marching" which clocks in at 45:44. It featured a driving relentless drum machine taken over later by a synth line, and wonderful "melting" guitar. They ought to remix this for better sound and reissue it. In short, I foresee better days ahead for Arnold, as long as he organizes his music better.--Douglas Bregger



David Claffard photo

THE MAZELTONES: Seattle, Romania (C; Global Village Music, Box 2051, Cathedral Sta., New York, NY 10025, USA; Artists' address: 2015 3rd Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98109, USA) You never had it so good: This klezmer (a.k.a. Jewish jazz) jumps out of the cassette at you! Highlights: "Freyt Aykh," a Natuli Brandwine clarinet showcase which Mary Kantor sets off like a book of matches; the title cut that brings the old Yiddish Theater hit to the Pacific Coast; "Oy S'iz Git," that leans on the jazz side of klezmer; and the best version--and best translation--of "Makhete-naste Mayne," a song about two mothers-in-law, I've ever heard. Some of the tape was recorded live, the rest at a commandeered synagogue room, and yet the sound is cleaner than most major studio recordings of ethnic and folk music.--Mark Manning

ALEX MCFEE: Moon On A Cloud: Solo Piano (C; No Categories, POB 4243, San Luis Obispo, CA 93403, USA) McFee performs in the melodic but meandering style of the fantasy. Partially improvisational, the pieces are reserved, pondering, melancholy and introspective.--Mark Dickson

MEAT PUPPETS: Out My Way (12" EP; POB 110, Tempe, AZ 85281, USA) I very much like the Meat Puppets. Especially their earlier material, with all its ragged intensity. I also like the album art by Curt Kirkwood. It is easy for me to see the clashing influences as depicted on the front and back of this album cover. The mix of Hopi, Navajo and Oriental naturalism, European and American Indian impressionistic coloration, and the display of classic composition all blend beautifully. Perhaps this artistic erudition is what bothers me about the music. New Wave Country, rollicking rock and roll and facile ballad-like compositions blend to bland. The title cut is a good example: the music itself is punchy, but the guitar licks float on top of the drums and bass as though it were grease and the rhythm section water. It may be that the clashing influences of the painters' world don't translate well into that of the musicians.--Larda Bix

MECCA NORMAL: Mecca Normal (LP; Smarten Up Records, 304-2230 Wall Street, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V5L 1B6) Jean Smith (vocal) and David Lester (guitar) have produced an excellent album of minimalist rock and roll. The affected vocal style of Smith, the compositions, and in some tunes improvisation, are discordantly melodic. The lyrics are psycho-social commentary without tortured prose or convoluted symbolism. Perhaps without intention, Mecca Normal is bridging the spaces between art rock, industrial noise (naturalistic) and electro-funk. Compared to the posturing, pretense, and performance trappings of many rock outfits, it is satisfying to find a duet such as Mecca Normal who combine all the elements of

rock and roll (rhythm, guitar, psycho-social lyrics and experimentation) so simply. A successful first album--Larda Bix

THE MIGHTY MOFOS: The Mighty EP (5 track 12"; Midnight International Records, POB 390, Old Chelsea Station, NY 10011, USA) Somewhere deep in the same swamp the Gun Club slithered out of sits a dilapidated old garage that the Flestones used to practice in; now it's inhabited by assorted Animals and Yarbbirds mutants--Minneapolis' Mighty Mofos (whose first incarnation was a The Hypstrz.) This is one cool drinkin' 'n' stompin' kinda disc, stuffed full of fat, sassy guitar licks and spilling over with grease wah-wah/ververb/slide soundz. Heck, I was burping and farting with joy halfway through "Untouchable," such a four-course beer-and-burrito sonic dinner it was. And the mysterious psych-cum-surf licks in "Stranded" had me reaching for my old Silvertone and chordbook. That's the thing--nothing here you haven't heard before, but the Mofos do it with such effortless aplomb and such a plethora of hooks that you can't help but play the disc over and over again.--Fred Mills

MIND BODY SPLIT (C46; Pedestrian Tapes, POB 213, Pyrmont, 2009 Sydney, Australia) Performance ensemble with vocals, tape manipulations, synthesizers, flute, sax, acoustic bass, taped voices. The sound is disjointed with vocals that are often not words. There are surprises that pop in from John Oswald and J. Lewis. Bold and off-beat, always moving.--Robin James **Second opinion:** Rik Rue and friends do realtime audio collages with tapes, percussion, electronics, acoustic bass, and the vocals of Sherre Delys. She talks back in "I Don't Want To Tell You Again", bursts out during "FU!!!+FH@L%\$", hiccups and stutters through the rest of these random, but directed pieces. Each cut has some boundaries, and players react well to the many sounds bouncing around. Water, sheep, auctioneers and Frenchmen mix with loops, pulses, cheesy music, sax, flute, and slide guitar. "Bleeps" features guest tapes by Mystery Tapes collage artist John Oswald.--CDinA2

MINISTRY: Cold Life (EP; Wax Trax Records, 2445 North Lincoln Ave., Chicago, IL 60614, USA) Heavy duty funk with a murky, almost primitive feel to it. Shadowy vocals over top of hard hitting bass lines and catchy, popping, rhythms, make this a release you'll want to dance to over and over and over again.--Carol Schutzbank

MINOY: Second Thoughts (C90; Minoys, 923 W 232 St., Torrance, CA 90502, USA; \$7) Title cut is a wash upon wash of electric frequency juxtaposed on somebody's bad day. Nasty, brooding, humming sounds. Composed madness on an industrial synthesizer. Wind, sirens, engines. Ominous and ambient. Short wave radio from

who knows where. A human screech, here and there. Forty-five minutes worth. "Mr. Spazmodi" is more electric nightmare. Someone in the background chants "Karate Karate." No, that's "Spazmodi." Grewrrrew synth sounds, helicopters. Scary, but not too.--Frank G.

MINOY: Ivory Flash of Ambiguous Limbs (C; \$6; Minoys, see address above) Side two of this tape is a collage of electronic chirps and twitters. It sounds a bit like a very crowded garden of silicon birds, crickets and mutated lizards. It is a fascinating collection of sounds, but it's also unrelenting and sometimes static. It does have a slow organic flow and could be used for some very strange meditations. Side one is very different. It is less electronic, not as dense and features a lot of echo. There is an occasional metallic clang, muted ambient vocals, strangled guitar (?), anguished saurians. This is music of rituals and nightmares, maybe something out of H.P. Lovecraft.--Shell Runar

MINOY/ZANNOY: The Insistance of Persistently Insistant Memory (C; Zan Hoffman, 132 Council, Louisville, KY 40207, USA) Imagine Xenakis, early Cabaret Vitaire and Robert Rauschenburg working on the soundtrack to "Aliens." Now imagine that even noisier. That should give you some idea of where the collaboration between these two mail/sound artists is heading or at least where it's been. Drones, gringing, high-pitched wailing and so forth all flow in and out, run up and down, slide left and right. Tough I have no doubt that both auteurs have heard their share of "noise compositions" this sounds like they had just decided to invent it. I could listen to this all day.--Lang Thompson

MIRACLE LEGION: The Backyard b/w Until She Talks (7"; Making Waves, 6/8 Alie St., London E1 8DE, England) British only 45 with the hot title track from their hot mini-LP; the B-side is unavailable elsewhere and worth the price of admission. Tense and metallic, almost Zeppelinish, with fiery tongues of lead guitar lapping menacingly at your feet while a claustrophobic cloud of feedback tightens nooselike around your neck. This song is so damn tough it's downright scary.--Fred Mills

MISSION: When Thunder Comes (LP; Frantic Records, 2105 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218, USA) This trio specializes in melodic, post-punk protest songs. The lyrics, often indirect yet intense, are complemented by driving, forceful arrangements evocative of bands like U2 and The Red Rockers. Though coming off less anthemic, and consequently less compelling, than the aforementioned, most of the songs here are successful on their own terms.--Brad Bradberry

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MOD FUN: Dorothy's Dream (LP; Cryptovision Records, POB 1812, NYC, NY 10009, USA) The Mod Fun are exactly what they seem to be—but that's not bad. Mod Fun have a power-pop approach to psychedelic sounds. Loads of 12 string pretty spirals of jangling chords and competent musicianship make Mod Fun worthy of notice. Unlike psychedelic interpretations by New York counterparts The Fuzztones, Mod Fun take a lighter more innocent approach. —Mark G.E.

MONOCHROME BLEU: What Is A Linz? (C; \$6; c/o Ladd-Frith, POB 967, Eureka, CA 95502, USA) From Austria; a new kind of funky. While a good share of this couldn't be called dance music, the bass is always looking for a groove. Sometimes it gets it and works on it; sometimes it takes it and lies back, cool. If the varied percussion is sympathetic, the rhythm section can swirl to ominous peaks and crashes. However, the percussion may well be breaking glass, boxes sliding across the floor, clicks, clacks, or industrial pounds. The rhythms develop and expand in the large spaces afforded each number—too large, too moody to call this jazz, or funk in any standard sense. On top, a saxophone wanks and squawks near desperation, then coalesces into a jagged solo, or a melody awash in synthesizers. I don't know what to call all this, but it sounds real good to me. —W. Mueller

MO RHYTHM: Never Woke Up (C; 107 8th St. N #4, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, USA) A duo realizes four tape compositions with bass, guitar, voice, percussion, drum machine, and as co-producer Steve credits himself: "annoying feedback." Although I generally prefer to make up my own mind about what is and isn't annoying, Steve has a point. The drum/bass grooves are almost completely obscured by the consistently overmixed wash of grinding feedback. I strained to hear rhythms which I suspect were compelling at their inception. Words are lost as well. Song subtitles such as "People killing each other is something I will never understand" suggest that Steve and Axel's use of voice was intended to convey concrete meaning. Poor production and incoherent mixing stripped their intentions down to a shadowy abstract, which I found neither convincing nor intriguing. This cassette ought to have been a sketch for a final realization. —Nick Didkovsky

CHRISTY MOORE: The Time Has Come (LP; Green Linnet Records, Inc., 70 Turner Hill Rd., New Canaan, CT 06840, USA) The former member of Planxty and Moving Hearts continues to prove that all he needs is his guitar and vocals to demonstrate his talent. Christy Moore is a rebel who relies more on wit than on loudness, seducing the listener with pretty or jaunty melodies before he slips in the satiric blow. He's a subtle but tough-minded storyteller that maintains the strengths of Irish traditional music while adapting them to very contemporary folk styles and concerns. His quietly rough and intense voice explores the nuances and rhythms of the songs with the professional ease of a well-trained actor, giving even a subject like "Sacco and Vanzetti" a sense of humanity. Donal Lunny's keyboards and Mandy Murphy's harmonies add unobtrusive but effective support, never upstaging Moore. Whether whispering the anger of "Section 31" or looking back to the old eloquence of "Lakes of Pontchartrain" Christy Moore demonstrates again that he's a powerful and skillful rebel songster for the times. —James Hopkins

CHRISTY MOORE: Ride On (LP; Green Linnet, 70 Turner Hill Rd., New Canaan, CT 06840, USA) Whenever electric instruments are used on a folk album, the result usually ends up more rock than folk. Not in this case! Christy Moore is an Irish folksinger with a deep, but soft voice that has a pronounced Gaelic accent. He sings and plays guitars and is backed by musicians playing prophet V synthesizer, acoustic and electric bouzoukis, acoustic and electric guitars, and other instruments. The result is NOT folk-rock, but true folk balladry. (The lack of drums, except bodhran, helps a lot.) All of the songs were composed either by him, or others; there are no traditional tunes. Subjects range from historic incidents, to anti-war, to anti-fascist, and even a humorous song ("Lisdoonvarna," about a music festival.) Good vocal harmonies, and most of the songs are quite singable. Standouts include "The City of Chicago," "Ride On," and "Back Home in Derry." All in all, a very good album of modern folk songs. Gorgeous cover art. —Douglas Bregger

Jeffrey Morgan: Ancestral Dances (C60; Sound of Pig Music c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023, USA) Improvisation, all live except for one in the studio, solo and one with Pete Leinonen on double bass. Conch, bells, dulcimer, sheng, alto sax, piano, toy organ wood flute, voice, casio, chair, bamboo flute, autoharp through flanger. Some titles: Shaman Wind, Kansas City Cloud, Pagan Agent, Harry Krishna, Tractor Man (whoa—a surprising vocal solo), Free Bora. Recorded in Seattle, WA, Sarasota, FL, and Belchertown, MA. A flowing palate of sounds, a little chaotic sometimes, but with a developed sense of arrangement. —Robin James

ERIC MUHS: Ring of Tape (C90; Sound of Pig c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023, USA) Began with experiments in Frppertronics (regenerative tape loops) and led to this masterpiece in instrumental environmentalism. Gorgeous like a series of paintings, very strange. Except for animal sounds in Pet Tricks all sounds are done live. Electric guitar, casio, tennis racket guitar, Humanatone

Nose Flute, finger cymbals, toy flute, Roland SH-101, sound effects tapes, oil funnel, voice, Mexican Jaw harp, Eric's stomach. —Robin James

MARIA MULDAUR: Translucency (LP; Uptown Records, POB 186, Harrington Park, NJ 07640, USA) Way back in the '70s Muldaur had sung jazz with Benny Carter, but it's on this album that she really gets it right. Although the familiar country twang is still here her voice has deepened and widened into a more expressive instrument. She knows what she's singing about and has a better sense of how to tell a story with her voice. Old ballads like "Lazy Afternoon" or belt-'em-out numbers like "Massachusetts" are not soullessly recreated but instead are relived in her own style. There's more of a sense of risk here than in Linda Ronstadt's recent forays into older song arrangements, and the charts of Don Sicker add to this. His ability to work with her and not around her, plus the sax of Frank Wess and the rhythm of Ben Riley and Mike Moore, prove that crossover is not a dirty word. Special mention goes to Kenny Barron, who does a lovely duet with Muldaur on "Where." —James Hopkins

MUTE BEAT: Japanese Dub (C60; ROIR, 611 Broadway, Suite 725, NYC, NY 10012, USA) Exceptional horn-based reggae with potent jazz influence. Much of this has a sweet kind of melancholy, standouts being "Metro" and "Downtown." A cover of Dave Brubeck's "Take Five" works well, as does "Schoolyard Dub (Jenka)" which I'm guessing is based on a Japanese folk melody. Only on the two vocal pieces, "Dee Jay Style" and "Mix Up" can one gather that people without dreadlocks (can Japanese grow dreadlocks?) are behind the music. As dub production goes, this isn't the most echoey or avant-garde but the bitterness of the trombone and trumpet make that a moot point. Irie indeed. —Jamie Rake

MYSTERY HEARSAY: Tributary (C; POB 240131, Memphis, TN 38124, USA) The overwhelming nature of this tape takes form in apprehension, and its main function seems to be the exploration and extended invitation, to us the listeners, into this world. In fact, the musical structure within not only exposes this world, but successfully walks us through this aural interpretation of an ominous landscape. The sound ingredients include for the most part, synthesizers. You can also run up against an occasional found sound or non-electronic instrument, all of which are heavily processed as to facilitate their smooth integration into this primarily electronic format. The opening piece "Fluid Cork" is rather austere, but traditionally structured composition which begins the ominous journey. Where it goes from there is largely an arhythmic conglomeration of synthesized sound, which moves us slowly through this sinister, but nonetheless intriguing space. The success of this tape lies in the composer's ability to keep these compositions from lapsing into a meaningless jumble of noise that is often the case in works such as these. Instead, a successful effort has been made to keep the tape moving and all sounds within, sonically interesting. —Nathan Griffith

MY THREE SUNZ: Unclassified (six song C; Atomic Records, 1813 East Locust St., Milwaukee, WI 53208, USA) Skate 'n' surf punks with poppy and trad, but fairly refreshing, rifting. You can't tell from the lyrics insert but they have an I-word (yes, THAT I-word) fixation. Where does one go surfing in Milwaukee? —Jamie Rake

NAKED RAYGUN: All Rise (LP; Homestead, POB 570, Rockville Ctr, NY 11571, USA; or Naked Raygun, POB 148593, Chicago, IL 60614, USA) An interesting combination of late '70s-style British punk (Wire, Buzzcocks) and '80s mutated hardcore/pop American-style (Husker Du, Wipers). These guys smoke; crashing drums, throbbing bass and razor guitars run through 11 numbers in just under 20 minutes. Though mostly loud, fast and musically economical in their arrangements, the songs rarely sound as focused as their immediate influences. Fortunately, Naked Raygun delivers these with verve and vitality. —Brad Bradberry

THE NEIGHBORHOODS: The High Hard One (LP; Restless/Enigma, POB 2428, El Segundo, CA 90245, USA) This is the second LP from one of Boston's best kept secrets. A guitar/bass/drum trio with the hooks and harmonies of pop and the attitude of punk, The 'Hoods combine strong writing with deft musicianship. The production is clean, with the drums mixed up front for a rocking punchy sound. W.U.S.A. is the "hit", although commercial radio will ignore this LP, of course. The Neighborhoods don't break any new ground here, but there is certainly enough energy and variety to sustain interest throughout the album. The closing two tracks were recorded live at The Livingroom in Providence and prove that The Neighborhoods are just as tight live as in the studio. —Jonathan Ferren

THE NIRVANA DEVILS: Twisted Tales (EP; Exile Records, Linstruper Str. 39, 1000 Berlin 49, West Germany; ph. 30-7423706) This is an impressive EP from a Berlin(?) group that's been around since 1984. Like many European groups, Nirvana Devils wear their American influences on their collective sleeve, but do it with such imagination and confidence their sound never seems derivative, but gives a good foundation for Justice Hahn and Mark Richards' masterful guitar work. The EP consists of three songs and a 90-second finale, "Eternally," that's little more than a moody afterthought. Arrangement of the classic "Hellbound Train" typifies Nirvana Devils' approach.

They deliver a garage pop sound with a vaguely country feel, Cramps-style guitar vibrato mixed in with straight power chording, and throw in Spaghetti Western whistling to boot. The lead singer, heartthrob Stephanie Long, with her clipped enunciation and wispy voice, manages to sound earthy and ethereal at the same time. "Firing Squad" shows nicely-layered guitar with piercing slide guitar background. But the highlight of the EP is a cover of Chris Spedding's "Silver Bullet," murky Western tale on which group leader Hahn sings lead. Manic imagination on guitars as Hahn and Richards slice up various American styles and piece them back together. Ringing chords and twanging with flat picking thrown in, they sound like Johnny Cash meets Duane Eddy and Billy Zoom. Terrific. —John Grooms

NEW ART ORCHESTRA: Melodies (C; Paul Hoskin, POB 14359, Seattle, WA 98144, USA) This 22-member free jazz ensemble's music isn't very melodic compared to a typical big band chart, so I'm not sure if the title is a joke. But compared to most large group improvisations, this is restrained and, well, melodic. The five pieces were each written by a different orchestra member, and although there's considerable improvisational freedom, each piece has distinct identity. The focus is on group interplay and shifting textures rather than solos, and the occasional loud passages never descend into noise. A remarkable example of sensitivity in a large group setting. —Mark Sullivan

A NOISE AGENCY: Mom's in the Kitchen (LP; Gnatbreath, POB 494, Lomita, CA 90717) The message, "It's in your attitude" is scribed into this disc, and is the basic theme of A Noise Agency's debut. Stop worrying about life and enjoy it before it's too late. "Just think how long you're going to be dead so go ahead and play today." Love your children, parents and, lover: "One day they'll be gone you'll be the only one left carrying on." The delivery of a number of tunes on side one strongly reminded me of Steppenwolf especially "Hang That Monkey," a song about drug addiction. This garage pop album has a lot to say. My favorite song was "She told me" a story about man's confusion of love with sex. Also included is a love song about a mayonnaise jar, of all things. The subject of "Machine" is losing your job to robots. I like this album better with each listen. The line-up is vocals, guitar, bass and drums. All in all a very healthy attitude. —Brent Godfrey

OHAMA: Midway (3 song 12"); Ohama, Box 90, Rainer, Alberta Canada T0J 2M0) Musically, this disc reminded me of Yellow Magic Orchestra, but unlike that group, Ohama's music is full of deep human emotion. "Midway" is a chilling reminiscence about Dick Molokado's 1942 internment to a relocation camp. Setting such a subject (in Japanese and English) against a background of throbbing drums and synthesizers (in the manner of a "dance" single) further underscores the frightening reality of the experience. —Sally Idasswey

ON THE ROCKS: On the Rocks (C-cassette demo; Penetration Presents, c/o Eric N. Danielson, POB 45518, Seattle, WA 98145; Tel. 206-523-4877) Got a real headbanger here. ON THE ROCKS features a driving rhythm section and some nasty grunge guitar; its energy is brash and compelling. The vocalist, however, emotes in a moan/howl that is rarely in tune with anything else (musically speaking, that is), and, as a result, the whole experience feels oddly out of sync. Damned if I can figure out what the songs are about. And why these guys chose to include inferior sounding live cuts ("Soldier" sounds like a cymbal and voice duet) baffles me. This recording is not consistent enough to distinguish it from other hard-driving bands. —G. Speca

ORISON (C40, POB 7523, Santa Cruz, CA 95062, USA) Primarily instrumental, Orison performs originals and traditional folk music (Celtic, French, Shaker) as well as works by modern classical composers Holst and Debussy. Combining harp, acoustic guitar, woodwinds and cello, they convey a mystically serene, crystalline sound. The arrangements and musicianship are impeccable, conveying passion yet demonstrating restraint. The two vocals are done by a choral quartet (ensemble and solo) and were recorded in a chapel for ambience. Guitarist William Coulter also performs two original compositions. In a similar style to Windham Hill's Michael O'Donnahill, his stunning "Bob's Room" and "Morning Rain" are impressive works that rate right up there with Fahey, Renbourn and Kotke. —Brad Bradberry

JOHNNY OTIS: Fonkitup b/w Willie And The Hand Jive (12" single; Red Hot, 1100 Glenbon Ave., Suite 2116, Los Angeles, CA 90024, USA) Seminal R&B/rock figure Otis has released an EP of two danceable tracks from his LP OTISOLOGY \$\$\$Fonkitup" is a slice of mid-70s James Brown-ish horn riffing with solos by Otis' son Shuggie on guitar, a saxophonist named Frank and a vibes solo by Otis. The B side is a reprise of one of his most famous tunes with a Bo Diddley rhythm and another good guitar solo by Shuggie. Both sides are guaranteed to get any party hopping. —R. Iannapolo

THE OUTNUMBERED: Holding The Grenade Too Long (LP; Homestead, Box 570, Rockville Ctr, NYC 11571, USA; or The Outnumbered, POB 2082, Sta. A, Champaign, IL 61820, USA) Still a guitar-dominated (rhythm/lead) pop-rock/garage outfit, on this, their second LP, the overall sound jangles a little less and rocks a little harder than last time out. With 15 tracks, this record of all originals (ten by Gnioli) covers a lot of ground. Social commentary makes its way into at least half the songs here. From the pro-

VIDEO DRONE



depression on the rocker "Why Are All The Good People Going Crazy" (also the title of their first LP) to the melodic folk-rock of "I Want To Tell You". Women's rights/liberation are the subject matter on both "Equal Time" and "Passive Voice". Now that's out of the ordinary coming from a 4-piece, male rock group from the Mid-west (Illinois)! What these guys may lack in musical prowess, they make up for lyrically. I guess you could say they're a garage band with a conscience --Rard Bragherrv

AUGUSTUS PABLO: Rising Sun (LP; Shanachie Records, Dalebrook Park, Dept. R, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ 07423) Dub, reggae's hypnotic instrumental form, has always seemed to work best in moderation, so entire albums of the stuff can be a little much. Still, Pablo is one of dub's leading practitioners and while he doesn't overcome the problem at least you won't worry about it too much. The loping bass lines and swaying keyboards eventually start to create the proper atmosphere and the mix, more straightforward than much dub, eliminates any distractions. In the music for meditation sweepstakes, I'll take Pablo and dub over New Ane anvdav.--Lang Thompson

PAINTED WILLIE: Mind Bowling (LP; SST, POB 1, Lawndale, CA 90260, USA) Pretty ordinary hardcore from this three piece unit, leaning towards the slower tempos pioneered by Black Flag. No surprise, as Greg Ginn produced this disc. He gets a real gone kind of guitar sound out of Vic Makauskas, and the record has a crisp, driving sound. Lyrics are mostly insipid, but the band plays with style and energy. If only the songs weren't so derivative. You'll swear you've heard it all before.--Scott Siegal

SAKIS PAPADIMITRIOU: First Move (LP; Leo Records) On the A side of this record, recorded live in Belgium in 1983, solo pianist Papadimitriou gets some very strange sounds out of his instrument. He plucks and scrapes and rubs and bends and bangs the strings. Every so often, he actually plays a note at the keyboard. Some of these sounds are interesting and some are not. There is no title for this piece, nor for the one on the B side, just a timing. Side B finds us in France, April 1985. The performance begins by subjecting some banal melodic material to slowly shifting tonal variations, played at the keyboard. Then we're back inside the piano for more manipulations. Papadimitriou manages to create some extraordinarily dense and noisy textures late in the piece, welcome departures from what is usually a sparse and restrained mood. I suspect this is more engaging music in performance. Maybe a video would be more appropriate.--Stuart Kremsky

PEACE CORPSE: Terror of History (12" EP; \$5; Toxic Shock mail order, Box 242R, Pomona, CA 91769, USA) This posthumous release is a successful combination of hard rock, rough pop, and a touch of death rock, all strengthened by solid playing and good, clean production. William Sassenberger's strong midrange vocals are pushed up in the mix, and BOY do those harmonies sound NICE over Julianna's grunge/phase guitar and ringing piano. Lyrically, they are introspective and at times sarcastic, especially during "Artless Damage" when they criticize the motives and temperaments of so many artistic types: "I know I am creative/ I will display my skills/ I call myself an artist/ I need some inspiration/...I want to

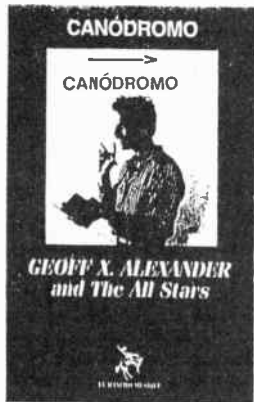
sculpt a figure, then blow it up to pieces." Neat cover art as well.--C. Carstens

RAY PEARSON AND THE INSIDERS (C20; 1000 Clover Dr., Six Falls, SD 57103, USA) Fast and lively rhythm and blues-based psychedelic rock hot vocals guitar organ with the movin' bass and drums. Check it out: "I Am What I Am," "Subtitles," "Love Can't Quit," "East Side Girls," "Trouble At Home," "Desert Walks."--Robin James **Second Opinion:** Wow, check out that wah-wah guitar and that cool Hammond organ! Is this 1972 or what? No cold-sounding digital keyboards on this baby--just those classic ARP, Moog, and Hammond sounds. The songwriting harkens back to another era as well, particularly on the instrumentals "Subtitles" and "Desert Walks." The five other songs are pop-rock oriented and also well-performed. The labeling is, however, a little confusing--side one is listed as the "Studio" side, but includes audience applause, while Side two ("live") also has crowd noise. The recording quality is generally good (and, as the label proudly notes, "In Stereo") though the bass drum sticks out. Nicely packaged, as well.--K. Crothers

PERFECT STRANGERS: Protected in America (LP; N-Beat Records, POB 13505, Jackson, MS 39236, USA) This is the debut album from the Perfect Strangers and a fine one it is. The group is led by Scott Coopwood and Kris Wilkinson and plays music in the REM/Velvets tradition. (That's meant as a complement.) "The Storm" features tasteful keyboards by Coopwood and the arrangement is truly original. Much of this record is rich and beautiful thanks to production by Coopwood and Randy Everett. "I Live For You" is another winner featuring Wilkinson's Nicosesque vocals done in an echo-chamber style reminiscent of the early Laura Nyro albums. With a debut this strong, I'll be anxiously awaiting the next one.--Tom Burris

MICHAEL PERILSTEIN: Godzilla Vs. Your Mother (LP; Ralph Records, 109 Minna #391, San Francisco, CA 94105, USA) A disappointing venture into the world of soundtracks, this one without a movie to back it up. Nothing new here: scary muzak, spacy synths, fast paced chase music, boring electropop, and as always, orchestral rackets of main themes with a disco beat. At best, Perilstein sounds like Tornita and "Works" era ELP. What has this to do with Godzilla? Each side has a sound effect of a monster at the very end.--CDinA2

BLAIR PETRIE: Requested Music (C30; CLAS/In Tape, POB 4963, VM.P.O., Vancouver BC, Canada V6B 4A6) Rock with mumbling vocals, slow and powerful, darkish and creepy. Synth is where it's at, includes percussion and a lot of layers. Rather jagged hissing




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BLISTER MY PAINT

and caroline

ynth sounds good. Two songs on side 1/2. La Femme (Mehani) compilation with Fracim studio in France, and "Fucking Dead Babies" which is part of the "Censorship and Propaganda" Free Forward Radio Programme in Canada. Side "white" has Security I, II from the same series. Harsh --Robin James **Second Opinion:** The side ("Security Parts I-II") is highly distorted electronics, guitar and bass, plus vocals and percussion, with very factored and angular rhythms and melodies. Far from being self-consciously zany, this piece is well structured and consistently interesting. The other side ("La Femme" and "Fucking Dead Babies") is just processed voice and more conventional keyboard synth sounds, like the first side, the musical ideas are not strong enough to sustain the length of the pieces. Lyrics are your basic armpit/sexism, like simple sex perhaps, but redeemed by the slightly loquacious peak delivery (what you mean he's not wearing?). Bob Hammer

RE: The Flickering of Sewing Time (LP, PRRrecords, 151 Page Street, Lowell, MA 01852, USA) The second LP from PRR (first both a change in cast and too, of basic approach. It is not a drastic break, but rather a natural progression of style, in which the main ambience of SILENCE becomes aggressive, though minimalist aural landscape. Their approach to the recorded medium is not meant to provide musical entertainment, but instead the background for our unrequited personal fantasy. The piece combines types of traditional and synthetic instrumentation, as well as voice, into sound collages that must be thought of as texture rather than structure. (This their generated lines are related to the past of combining abstract sound, one comparable as to their success. Then, there are many segments throughout in which still and especially incongruous sound elements are combined, clearly evoking an visualization as opposing tensions. And through the listening sensation of these qualities as well as explanatory of purpose divided, these process pieces use these vague notions and sonic textures to inspire the music in our heads. --Robin James) **Second Opinion:** A haunting, intelligently realized exploration of the postcard's sound plays in our lives. The first piece is on the surface a lament done, later closely thought, and the messages of this CD come apparent, instead of contributing to an exercise in structuralism. These sources work with in the overall atmosphere, shifting with and against it, so that the listener perceives a different atmosphere with each hearing. The second track gives a juxtaposition between vocal manipulations and pure organic tones. Once again, the pieces work with each other. The three tracks on side two are more eclectic and less melodic, but still exhibit a remarkable simplicity in tonal and spiritual relationships between sounds. This is an abundance of so-called "noise" music, which prides itself on the same nature in its sound, as a result calling attention to the roughness of its sonic composition at the expense of its overall effect. GR's attention to the components of sonic structures results in a haunting and genuinely beautiful work which is, as a result, far more substantive than most recorded material in this field. --Erik Hinton

ENDOMENOSSEMBLE: Phenomenonville (CD, Underworld, PDB 262, Adelaide St. Station, Toronto, Ont. M5C 2A4, Canada) A very polished and well-recorded collection of minimalist and vocal improvisations. The ensemble does an excellent job of the vocals of Kathy Snowman, whose style suggests a soul-influenced Joan Baez. She is capable of sustaining very clear, high tones, interrupting them with low guttural sounds without seeming forced or breaking the overall flow of the pieces. Some of the cuts feature beautiful tape manipulations, in contrast to the rural acoustic feel of the rest of the work. There's nothing particularly original going on here, but the performers are so good and so competent, making this type a worthwhile addition to the repertoire. --Brook Hinton

ANTHONY PHILLIPS: Ivory Moon (LP, PVC/Jazz) This is the eighth volume in a series of works Phillips is releasing. Each volume highlights a particular style or instrumentation. This album contains no piano work. Phillips, you may remember, was the guitarist for Miles in the first years. He was replaced by Sam Hickey, who eventually left and in town with GR. It's much sadder news to Phillips, this LP he has written and performed pieces that range in style from Legrand to Sam. Always sensitive and melodic, Phillips is big everyone a factor by systematically releasing these works. **AMBLE CACKETT: Row 33** (LP, Rain Tree, 445 Dover Ave., South Main, 55135, USA, or Open Records, 34 NW 18th St., Miami, FL 33169, USA, ph. 305-940-6700) I'm all tired as anyone of all these liveau shifuckers coming on like good guys that really live this of country and just gets kept music with in without their man down that two-lane of life. Was called more, in this, the air of the Lady of Liberty. You'd have reason then to be suspicious. **Chariot** (LP, Cassini) I'm tired by his first, outstanding experimental work. See over the years, Chariot's takes a lot from the funk, he's put a whole lot more back in. This is a guy who sings about being the count have been America on a horseback. **BEATLES: THE 33** -referring to the highway that passes through Memphis, this, Chariot's template was recorded separately with a couple of ex-Eggs and a few members of Tom's track's unofficial

Barry Louis Polisar--Get him a gig at your local elementary school and the kids and teachers will love ya.

BARRY L. POLISAR: My Brother Thinks He's a Banana (C46 or LP; \$7.95; Rainbow Morning Music, 2121 Fairland Rd., Silver Springs, MD 20904, USA) Fun songs for and about mischievous, if not down-right bratty kids. Acoustic guitarist and big brat, Barry Polisar takes a sympathetic view of their hyperactive hijinx, and why not--wouldst thou dare condemn Dennis the Menace? These eccentric children's songs reflect the overheated, earthy intensity of childhood. While the subjects may be overly familiar (pets, babysitters as victims, annoying sisters, etc) Polisar's wit manages to infuse them with odd personality. I think a 9-11 year old would dig 'em. After all, who can you go wrong with something called "My Brother Threw Up on My Stuffed Bunny?" The child in me would love to hear a song about the joys of melting little plastic army men. Maybe next time, Barry?--Oleh Hodowanec

BARRY LEWIS POLISAR: Songs For Well-Behaved Children To Sing (C60, Rainbow Morning Music, see address above.) Whiney loud friendly voice, ample guitar talent, entertaining personality. Fun stuff. Some titles: I Wanna Be A Dog, The Bumble Bee Song, We Don't Have To Share, I'm Bored, I Don't Want To Go To School, The AlfaBet Song (A is for Armpit), The Warning, It's My Mother and My Father and My Sister and the Dog and My Two Little Brothers and Me.--Robin James **BARRY LEWIS POLISAR: Stanley Stole My Shoelace and Rubbed It In His Armpit and Other Songs My Parent's Won't Let Me Sing** (C60; Rainbow Morning Music, see address above.) More rowdy than the first one. I Lost My Pants, Mom Said No, I Said Why, I'm Late, Don't Eat Your Your Food That Is Sitting On Your Plate, I'm Standing Naked on the Kitchen Table (Trying To get Your Attention), Wet Again. It's pretty funny, I guess it's for kids --Robin James

house band. It's an LP of warm, lazy, generic rock and country roll. Growly, grungy electric guitars reminiscent of the Stones circa 1972 sit nice and comfy next to pretty, countrified aires and swampy ballads. Amid all this is an instrumental that could have slipped off the third Velvet Underground LP, and just to bring it all back home features Maureen Tucker on those toms and kick bass. Pickett's his own man, so much so that I have no trouble picturing him fending off cut status from the seat of his backhoe.--Justin Kaminski

A PICTURE MADE: God Loves A Hell Of A Man (7"); Beam, RR5, Box 49, Pittsburg, KS 66762, USA) Lovely Byrdian pop that chimes its way into your synapses, in fact, the Byrds version of "Bells Of Rhymney" is recalled via the vocal harmonies and the droning chord pattern. Midtempo, gently memorable--but not a trace of wintiness. One question. Why the same tune on each side? I wanna hear more!--Fred Mills

BARRY E. PILCHER: Keeping Up The Sky (C60; Audio Editon Aug. sehn-AEA D 2913 Augusteuh II, West Germany) This soothing tape represents saxophonist Pilcher's first release under his own name, and contains three extended compositions influenced by what is referred to as "The German school of electronics." Repeated short melodic fragments are the essential components propelling the music. The improvisational nature of these pieces make them sound like out-takes at times. Pilcher is assisted by plenty of spacy cascading echo effects, as well as synthesist Clive Kingsley, and on one track, cellist Evet Pilcher. A strong effort by a developing artist I look forward to hearing more from in the future.--AO

JUDITH PINTAR: Secrets From The Stone (LP; Sona Gata Productions, 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202, USA, ph. 414-272-6700) This is an truly exceptional production. Judith Pinter plays the Celtic harp, not in a strictly traditional way, but with a highly original style that is as close to "new age" music as it is to the ancient origins of the instrument. The compositions are all her own originals and are accompanied by a lavish storybook "To Be Read Aloud" which explains each piece in a beautiful, elegant, haunting tale. Judith Pinter is a storyteller of the highest order, and an equally fine musician and composer. I was drawn into the stories and the music much as Mary Poppins and her charges jumped into the chaff pictures on the sidewalk. Some titles: "Bedd Talesin", "In Defense of Givernev", "Dialogue Between The Sun And The Moon." Beautiful cover and audiophile pressing.--Sally Idassway



ROBERT POSS: Sometimes (CD, Trace Elements, 172 E. 4th St., Suite 11d, New York, NY 10019, Ph. 212-260-7470) I don't know the fact that this sounds fairly slick and polished. Sometimes, such as the breaks creativity of Mr. Poss' sound of strings, the lyrics are dark, dreamy, and dull and most are plain spoken. This doesn't hang out much. She's planning for the future. What's the future? What she's thinking of leaving it all. She'll be a star. She'll be a star. We have the same U2-style pounding 4/4 drum effect. The guitar sound like Lou Reed, the guitar playing sounds somewhat like Greg Brando's time. This could be played on any "radio" station and you would notice.--Sally Idassway

PRAY FOR RAIN (3-song cassette EP, Pentagram Records, PGR 451d, Seattle, WA 98141) Interesting lyrics, excellent music. Sweden was used in Seattle. Conventional pop, minimalist, very guitars, great harmonic form, my little sister would love it. I don't know if she includes having opened us for "Dead On Arrival" (she don't have talents, didn't mind playing the piano, the more). --Frank G

PRESENT: Le Poisson Qui Rend Fou (LP, Capricorn Records, 103 6517, Wheaton, MD 20906, dist. in Europe by Musicland, 1017 Harmpackersteeg, 1012 LR Amsterdam, Holland) This has inspired fore-runners for Present, as with other Herbie and Reggae music such as Art Zoyd and's Unvers Zero, are for (Sally) 211 1991. Cow with the standard harmonies and an unusual style of the bass and the oblique alternative rock sensibility of the music. It's a challenging and thoroughly orotoking music. The music is dark and virtually always in a minor key or mode. The music is complex, melodies and rhythms are complex and intricate, and the music is simply busy. The instrumental parts are very well composed by musicians, which include Roger Thujaux and Daniel Lemaire, former members of Unvers Zero, are all superb. They're making a unique unison passage work to complicated parts, with a lot of syncopation, they never indulge in historicity. This is the kind of music that jazz and art rock should have been.--Dean Spector

PRETTY RICKY AND BOO-SKI: No title (LP, Rain Tree, 445 Dover Ave., 55135, USA, or Open Records, 175 Fifth Ave., New York NY 10011, 212-677-1111) I don't know if today's storytellers and these two rank right up there with the best of them. The introspective Pretty Ricky and the more direct Boo-Ski (if we are to believe their liner notes) are equally forthright and reciprocal mentors--combining British and American influences.

OH MY GOD!

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with their literate sound. They are still fresh--only on the verge of being truly original, though the indications that they will achieve some uniqueness are here. **Dreams** showcases some thoughtful arrangements with an appropriate sparseness that other rappers should heed. "Dreams" also smartly invokes MLK and apartheid--and the underlying theme that imminent action is what we all must partake of. Give these men an evening with Reagan; he won't be the same--Kim Knowles

PRIMARY COLOURS (5-track 12" EP; After Hours, 300 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115) Mixed feelings at first on this one. In theory I gave up on electropop about the time when (my then-faves) Depeche Mode/Ultravox/B-Movie/et al were getting popular; I am also wary whenever a synth duo includes a "single edit" and "extended mix" of a tune on a disc. And I frequently champion the "all guitars/no synths" rock/riff style. So how could I fall for this one? Could it be that there are irresistible melodies and sneaky hooks to be found in the two versions of "Paint Love Blues"? Maybe it's Jeanette's lush, breathy vocals that seduced me. Possibly the "beauty through simplicity" ethic that Jim and Jeanette have adopted won me over; the arrangements, while far from spartan, are devoid of the multiple layer overkill that smotherers other groups' efforts. Self-produced, Primary Colours seems to have good instincts about when to add sounds (such as the pleasant surprise of a beefy guitar riff in the otherwise airy "There Is No One") and when to leave spaces. With such obvious intelligence and a keen ear for pleasant sounds, plus the part-child/part-bed charmer singing by Jeanette, Primary Colours have commercial success at their fingertips.--Fred Mills

PETER PRINCIPLE: Sedimental Journey, Made To Measure, Vol. 4 (LP; Crammed Discs) Peter Principle, art rocker with Tuxedo Moon, has created a stunning series of soundscapes with the assistance of producer and recording engineer Gilles Martin. Using bass, guitars, electric keyboards and musique concrete techniques, these opulently textured vignettes are colorful, evocative and absolutely captivating. At times, seeming incompatible sound materials are juxtaposed, resulting in natural and logical progressions. The contrasts of color, texture and harmony are quite ingenious. There is a dark moodiness that characterizes much European progressive rock, but Principle never invokes anything like Present or Art Zoyd. However, there are similarities to recent Bill Nelson as well as Eno and Byrne's MY LIFE IN THE BUSH OF GHOSTS, but Principle injects more variety in any given piece. Crammed Discs' artful "Made To Measure" series continues to impress me with its ingenuity and dedication to alternative, though certainly beautiful music.--Dean Suzuki **THE PROLETARIAT: Marketplace/Death Of A Hedon** (7"; Homestead, POB 570, Rockville Centre, NY 11571-0570) Exemplary hard pop gone metalpunk via the grittiest guitars in the East and angry vocals railing against "the lifestyle/Of decadence and wealth". As a single this makes great sense; my interest wanes over the course of an LP when the decibels, crunch and vitrol start to blur from track to track. But for now, Boston's Proletariat sound just swell and get my vote for best punk 45 since the Husker's "8 Miles High".--Fred Mills

PROOF OF UTAH: The Belly's Virginal Polylyps (C60, Smiley Turtle Records, 228 Clough St, Bowling Green, OH 43402) The Proof of Utah Story, in its way. A collaged collection of songs, parts of songs, conversations, and miscellaneous noise that apparently spans 15 years of Proof of Utah's recording career. (What form they took in 1971, I can't guess.) The format fits their nature, with musical styles shifting across every segue. Garage grunge cuts into moody synthesizers and leads into some snappy, funky driving music. A typical number has the band trying hardcore, with speed-yelled lyrics and chants, which disintegrates into a meandering '60s guitar solo. Noisy, scratchy percussion, Hendrix guitar, and honkin' saxophones leave you guessing whether any particular snippet was recorded in the studio or on a hand-held cassette recorder. There's something to be said for pan-musical appreciation, but this nears the schizophrenic.--W. Mueller

PSYCLONES: Live '85 (C60; \$6.50 pp; Ladd-Frith, POB 967, Eureka, CA 95502) As the title suggests, this is a live tape. It has some of the benefits of live recording: energy, variety of music, audience participation. Unfortunately it has some of the problems as well--muted sound, feedback, distortion and uneven mixes. This is a problem primarily on side one; side two is much better. The music is mostly of the industrial punk variety. It is slower than punk often is and it's more song oriented than industrial but if you like either style you will probably enjoy this tape. There are a couple of hypnotic dirges very much like the Swans and a couple of noise collages as well. The instruments are: drum machine, guitar and bass with some tapes and a bit of electronics in the background. The vocals are usually spoken or yelled. Brian Ladd's guitar work is especially prominent. It is slashing, grinding, sometimes slow and ominous, but always noisy. Julie's bass and vocals are almost lost on side one due to a poor mix, but they stand out on side two. Both Brian and Julie are talented musicians/songwriters. This tape also features Gregg adding vocals and t. p. and Schlafengarten playing a variety of instruments on side one. All in all the tape holds up well, but if you haven't heard the Psyclones before you might want to hear a studio tape, or the album first.--Shell Runer

PSYCLONES/SCHLAFENGARTEN: Ein Geist Ungesehen (C60; POB 967, Eureka, CA 95502 USA) Three sound collages. The longest, "The Bells of Purgatory I & II", which occupies all of side two, has a good opening and closing (nice watery bells, ominous drones, etc.), but gets bogged down mid-way with taped fragments of radio broadcasts, which go on for much too long and don't seem to advance anything. The longer piece on side one, **A Ghost Unseen**, is more successful, even though it's a live radio broadcast. Creativity seems to be running high, and there's an effectively atmospheric mix of drones, phase-shift horns, reverb vocal phrases, etc.--all evolving slowly, but fast enough (and with enough variety) to sustain interest. The next piece, "Dream Insane", is similar, but with a stronger vocal element. Tension (and humor?) is created when sepulchral voices issue conflicting commands like "begin", "back", "go", "again" and "stop", to the accompaniment of various eerie drones. This is definitely the strongest track on the tape.--Bill Tilland **PUSSY GALORE: Groovy Hate Fuck** (EP; Shove Records, 3044 'O' St. NW, Washington, DC 20007) This DC band must be heard to be believed. In this reporter's humble opinion they surpass the Cramps at their own game, going so far beyond anything those geeks have ever accomplished. This is raw garage fury that also owes something to the Seeds, the Sonics and the Stooges. Nothing since Iggy's "LA Blues" has conjured up such a nightmare as the untitled instrumental at the end of Side two. Despite all the offensive song titles ("You look like a Jew", "Cunt Tease", etc), this EP is fun listening.--Glen Thrasher

JOHNNY QUEST (3-track 7" EP; Poindexter, 1916 Perry St. Durham, NC 27705) Even though bassist Jack "Race" Campbell is on furlough from the Pressure Boys, Durham's Johnny Quest is an ongoing, enduring and endearing NC institution. With their brassy white boy rap ("Irresponsibility") they funk ya; with their AC Motely Priest crucharama ("Johnny Quest") they chill ya (Sat. morn'll never be the same); with their riff-rocket anthem roar ("Front Copier Hangup") they send ya screaming to the nurses for additional medication. Live, the band is a frenetic combo deluxe with multi-genre fixin's; on disc the sound is controlled looniness with more than its fair share of local talent.--Fred Mills

CHRIS RAE: Goodbye Music (7 song C20; Fang Records, 804 Dryden St., Silver Springs, MD 20901-1822) Very professional recording and mix of standard instrumentation plus found sounds, speeches and natural sounds: water, wind and the unidentifiable. The intelligence of the lyrics is complimented by the excellent vocals by Chris Rael, who also plays all the instruments (drums, guitar, bass, some keys/synths). The lush arrangements and layers of sound wash over you while catchy (and appropriate) bits and loops of things like Rev. Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech fade in and out. Chris Rael effectively fuses Pop gloss with the more interesting elements usually found in more obscure or "difficult" anti-musical genres, staking out refreshing new territory. So say goodbye to any music you're used to, and hello to Chris Rael.--John E

RAGE TO LIVE: Rage To Live (LP; Bar/None Records, POB 1704, Main Post Office, Hoboken, NJ 07030) Rage to Live has a clean guitar sound reminiscent of True West with some Elvis Costello vocals. Tight catchy riffs overlaid onto a great rhythm section that plays off each other creating always exciting twists. Glen Mollows vocals have a refreshing quality which is recognizable but changes in every song. My girl friend says they're like Tom Petty--I'd also throw in John Cougar Mellencamp. Overall, a catchy LP with some memorable moods.--Mark G.E.

RAKE (2-song C; Artweather Communications, POB 92181, Milwaukee, WI 53202 USA) More rumblings from the Boy Dirt Car dudes, this being an offshoot project. The usual BDC sonic industrial overkill is modified into monophonic drones and clanks as Eric T. delivers litanies on the tortured, bereft state of his soul and the world about him. If you have ever seen BDC live, the ferocity with which they bash at their craft may leave you wondering about their mental health. This won't dispel any of those notions but you'll have a dandy hellish time figuring what it's all about.--Jamie Rake

RABBITS WEDDING: Rideout/Someone As (Distant Violins, POB 142, Nth Carlton 3054, Victoria, Australia) Decent but unexceptional folk-rock. Kind of like the Church without the pulpit, or the Byrds without wings. Doesn't go anywhere.--Jordan Oakes

DOUG RANEY TRIO: Guitar Guitar Guitar (LP; Steeplechase Productions, 3943 W. Lawrence Ave., Chicago, IL 60625) Great jazz. The rich sounds of acoustic instruments to standards like "I Thought About Her", "Laura" and "My Old Flame" with quiet laid-back competence characterize this disk. Doug Raney on amplified acoustic guitar leads well with tasteful solos and block chord backgrounds. Mads Vending, the acoustic bassist, supports Doug well with walking lines and quiet, listenable solos. Rounding it out, drummer Billy Hart, ties the trio into a nice, neat package.--John Kaplan

RED MATH (12" EP; Triboo Records, POB 19492, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219) This six song EP by the Cincinnati band Red Math just sort of sits on my turntable and doesn't want to do anything. It's your basic white boy dance beat with nothing to say. This stuff might of been interesting a couple of years ago, but today this record sounds

like the band is trying to catch the ear of a major label without caring about the independent record buyer. Well-produced but no soul.—John Krinow

THE RESIDENTS: Live In Japan (LP; Ralph Records, 109 Minna Street, Box 391, San Francisco, CA 94103) I think this is "The Eyeball Show" album that's been recently released. The copy I got was a pre-release and had no jacket and no tune titles so I can't tell much about the record other than the music. I had some trouble deciding what I thought about this record because it is so uneven. The band would get into some intense and exciting grooves and then follow up with a little ditty of utmost triviality. They perform well all through the record but their material occasionally let them down. I also got tired of their gasping vocalist. These are not the poetries of their earlier albums.—Bruce Christensen

CHARLIE ROBY (C45; 27 Winera Ave. Toronto, Canada M4E 2T1) A fine songwriter, Roby explores a wide range of rock styles in both the music and lyrics. He also plays a large assortment of instruments and has a richly expressive voice (at times deep and brooding a la Jim Morrison, at other times playful, soulful, harsh, or whatever the mood requires). The recording and mixing are outstanding, and he manages to sound like a band, not a solo multitracker.—Tom Furgas

RODD BROTHERS: Prisoners Of Dreams (LP; Train O' Thought, POB 883951, San Francisco, CA 94188-3951) Call this progressive folk-rock in that it often uses odd (jazz) metres coupled with three-part harmonies. Acoustic guitars are the backbone of their sound which often recalls DEJA VU period CSN & Y or an artier Seals and Crofts (they occasionally use mandolin). Also in evidence on this LP are cello, saxophones, piano and harmonica, all used with superb taste and restraint. A strong rhythm section (bass/drums) supports with precision throughout. My personal favorite is "The Setting Sun", perhaps the best John Lennon tribute on record and the ultra-progressive, jazz-influenced title track. Superb production.—Brad Bradberry

PETTER RONNEBERG: Andromeda (C; Sophisticated Artworks, dist. in Canada by Linn Grinstead, try Open Space, 510 Fort St., Victoria, BC) Petter is Norwegian and does mid-'70s Klaus Schulze style electronics. These two 24 minute pieces are like the slow part at the beginning of a typical German synth record before the pounding sequences kick in. Here, however, they never kick in, nor does anything else occur after the basic ideas are laid out. The melodies and timbres are not complex or evocative enough to sustain this lack of compositional direction and, as a whole, I'd characterize this tape as sterile even by New Age standards.—Bob Bannister

JON ROSE: devils and angels (LP; Fringe Benefit Records, c/o Jon Rose, Kunsterhaus Bethanien, Mariamplatz 2, D-1000 Berlin 36 West Germany) Five pieces of experimental, electronically amplified string music. The first side contains a 25 minute-plus piece entitled "The Trampoline Effect" written for five string amplified violin "with revolving speaker." Is this improved? It's tough to say, as it sounds like one long movement of dissonance, ostinato, pizzicato and random effects generated from his instrument. Perhaps the amplification adds something but I can't hear it. I tried listening to this as a conscious listening experience and for ambience. It worked better for me as the latter but it's so complex that such an impression is quick to change. The works on side two, four of them, range from under four to over twelve minutes and consist of the same effects on the first side plus more instrument-body tapping, only this time on a 19-string, amplified cello. The amazing thing here is how Rose can illicit so many multiple sounds from his instrument, as if to make it sound like overdubbing. Much of this many an Andreas Vollenwieder fan would not call musical. Buy it for one and watch her/him squirm!—Jamie Rake

BJORN & DIETER ROTH: Autofahrt No. 1 (LP; Erfurterstr. 1, D7000, Stuttgart 50, W. Germany) Okay gang, ready for this? This is a recording of a one-hour car journey—nothing more, nothing less. Bjorn and Dieter Roth are Icelandic artists/musicians. They release albums of improvisational music in very limited editions (this one was limited to 300 copies). For this project, they apparently decided to take a tape recorder with them on a car trip. So you get interior car sound, radio, and conversation between the two of them. Art is whatever you can get away with, as the saying goes! Actually I found this record to be quite enjoyable, and it's a great thing to fall asleep by. The pressing is typically German, and therefore superb. Why not buy this record, make a tape of it and play the tape on your car stereo!—Douglas Bregger

RUDE BUDDHA: Blister My Paint (12" EP; Green Triangle Records, POB 768, Bowling Green Station, New York, NY 10072) The second outing for this four piece band from Virginia takes the form of this six song EP. The disc is split up with Jerry Wade taking the vocals on two tracks, Brian Daley on two others, they share one and there is one instrumental. Brian's voice is competent but doesn't stand out. But then there's Jerry whose voice you can't help but pay attention to. She credits her dog Snoopy with influencing her singing and it shows. On "So Long Darling" her duet with Brian, almost every line she sings ends with the last word degenerating into a howl. Rude Buddha calls their music "primitive art." But Wade admits, "I always say things without knowing what I mean."—John Krinow

RIK RUE: Other Voices (C60; \$7; Pedestrian Tapes, POB 213, Pyrmont 2009, Sydney, Australia) This tape's best track features ritual voices and percussion, but that only gives a general idea of what's going on. Loopy bits of found vocals (human and animal), music and sounds are orchestrated by Rue into strange and funny dialogues in the realm of new language. Excited cut-up voices babble, yodel, laugh, snorts with snores, chickens and hyenas. Whip crack, horn loop, organ, electronics; moo moo, coo, puff, dum de dum, dooing.—CDinA2

YVONNE RUEBE/DICK FALL (C60; 179 Hyppa Rd. South, Rochester, VA 98579) Strong and honest songs, Yvonne on guitar and longtime friend Dick Fall on piano. "Preacher and the Bear" is a favorite, so is the more sad "Blue Eyes." The honky-tonk piano is refreshing. These songs are precious, all personality and life, they have played music at the Church, for weddings and funerals, The Tenino Old Time Music Festival, over 200 copies of this tape have been passed around, mostly to friends and kin, what few that were sold the money went to the Church. Good old time music, folk music, gospel style songs and many originals.—Robin James

LARRY RÜHL: 9 Views (C; 128 Alcott Drive, Windsor, CT 06095 USA) Atmospheric collection of salon pieces that veer from Satiesque multitracked Casio reminiscent of Cluster and ZNR to gamely sloppy keyboard-guitar-synth drum jaunts a la Zamlra or Heldon sans Strat. I can't decide whether the lo-fi home brew production limits or enhances it; imagine THE SUNKEN CATHEDRAL MEETS ORANGE BLOSSOM SPECIAL on an acid-casualty shopping-mall organ and you might have it.—Bayard Brewin

RUNNING STREAM (EP; Tut Records, Ton Um Ton, Indeng. 32, 1070 Vienna, Austria 0222/93 82 36) Warning: this review is handicapped by a badly warped reviewer's copy, making two tracks unlistenable. This is basic garage music complete with vox organ and covers of Them among others. The covers are color-by-the-note bland. The originals, especially "Wrong Life", have a sweet, minimalist quality. They exhibit a subtle touch uncommon to most neo-garage/psych bands. It's an odd mix of garage and pop that's played from a folk/blues perspective, slightly similar to the Stone's BETWEEN THE BUTTONS period music. Well, it's not THAT good. And, note, the cover's dominate.—Scott Jackson

SOMEI SATOH: Margaret Long Tan Plays Somei Satoh: LITANIA (New Albion, 584 Castro #463, San Francisco, CA 94114) At long last, someone is releasing the music of some of Japan's fine contemporary music. Satoh has a gentle spirit—certainly part of the Zen tradition—that has been influenced by the gentler side of Minimalism. This is not to say that Satoh cannot write after the expressionist manner. In most cases, Satoh's piano writing is characterized by tremolo and rapidly repeated chords. His LITANIA has some aggressive, cathartic passages of intense sound and dissonance. This work, along with "Incantation II", a more restrained, euphonious and elegant piece, are written for piano(s) and tape delay system, with full, almost orchestral textures, recalling Lentz's wonderful POINT CONCEPTION. "Birds In Warped Time II" is a lovely piece for violin and piano that will carry you away with the sliding violin glissandi and tremulous piano accompaniment. "The Heavenly Spheres Are Illuminated By Lights" rounds out the album featuring the vocalise of soprano Lise Messier, set to the Tan's piano and exotic percussion (pitched mallet instruments, bowed cymbals, steel drums, etc.) magnificently played by Michael Pugliese. New Albion's Foster Plead is to be commended for reaching across the Pacific and exposing us to one of Japan's finest composers.—Dean Suzuki

SCHLAFENGARTEN: Spring Cleaning (C30; Sound of Pig c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023 USA) "When You Sleep" is an especially interesting noise song, talking like frogs, synth horns and drums, dark and cool, vocals from beyond the grave, hiss percussion cymbals. A nightmare of sound, come to rest on sleeping shores, come play with us. Grim and interesting.—Robin James

SCHLAFENGARTEN: World Without Corners (C30; Cause and Effect, POB 30383, Indianapolis, IN 46230) Schlafengarten's latest has a few adventurous surprises. A delay unit hard pulse of chopped up musics forms the foundation for slow regal keyboard fines and scrambled Ubu burlings. A remix of a cassette single adds extra layers and treatments for depth. It ends with spoken "slaughter" loop. Another is like Dimthing's scrambled electronic waveforms, and found vocals on masturbation and dieting death. Synths whoosh in a European tradition, semi-ethnic Arabic filigree, disjunct funk, space soundtracks and an illustrated book of drawings.—CDinA2

THE SCIENTISTS (LP; Easter, 36 Pier St., Perth W. Australia 6000) Before The Scientists there were...The Scientists. The current trash-thrash outfit so beloved by yours truly was once a poppier/punkier band that finally split in the wake of total public indifference. So get this reissue of the early album, and chart their progress through assorted Dolls/Modern Lovers/Velvets stylings and watch nascent genius budding. Kim Salmon's guitar playing was and is innovative, his songwriting tuned into rock's regenerative powers.—Fred Mills

SECOND CHILDHOOD: Figure Skating (LP; Boat Records, POB 3362, Madison, WI 53704 USA) Man alive, but I could swear to bearing some of this folksy/psychie/punky riffing for the last six

months on my college radio station, but Second Childhood do the stuff well, like maybe the mellowness of REM scatted bred with the sorrow of Joy Division. Better yet are their songs, scattered, warped images of scattered, warped relationships and romances. If SC can project a little more of themselves into the vocals and tune-age, they've got good things coming to them.—Jamie Rake

SEDUCE: Seduce (LP; Psycho-Mania Records, POB 23063, Detroit, MI 48223) Somehow it's hard to take a band with a name like Seduce seriously. Especially when they purport to play tough-guy heavy metal, but look like tender-toe-tapping rock and rollers. The band is tight—there's no denying that. And their music is carefully crafted; it's in the cheesy traditional style of so many prog-rock lightly metallic bands that have come before them. But they lack that madness that takes a real headbanger over the edge into heavyduty/heavymetal/heaven.—Carol Schutzbank

SEPTIC ARTIFACTS: Leave the Seat Up (C60; Karl Artifact, 220 N. 167th St., Brookfield, WI 53005 USA) Amateurish industrial droning and cymbal-like percussion with pseudo-evil rantings about everything from homicide to liquid Tide. Terminal boredom, sorry to report.—Jamie Rake



Mike Watt vents his frustration last October in Santa Barbara, during one of the first FIREHOSE gigs.

David Claffardini photo

THE SERVICE: America's Newest Hitmakers (LP; Pravda Records, POB 268043, Chicago, IL 60626) Now this is what I call an "American Band." Diverse influences: R & B, garage, R n' R, folk, blues. Yet the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Some great songwriting here, supported by a great band, with colorful harmonica playing by lead singer David Briggs (who also pens two songs here). Guitarist/songwriter Rick Mosher weaves folksy acoustic, as well as powerful electric, guitar into the tasteful mix of keyboards/bass/drums and occasional sax. Fiddle and tuba also make brief appearances. Particularly wonderful are "October House" and "10 Miles."—Brad Bradberry

SEVERED HEAD IN A BAG (C90; Goodall Tapes, 5110 1/2 Colfax Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91601) Noise ambrosia. It crawls around growling while the tape player convulses helplessly on the other side of the room. And you thought it was a bowling ball. Rock with Hard/Heavy/Acid Noise influences, just get sweaty, close your eyes, and primal out, screaming and flopping around. Music to kill to. Music to eat twinkies to. 24 songs like The Man With The Exploding Head, The White Ladies Are Dancing, Swimmification System, Chunk of Bleeding Mass, The Hungry.—R. James

THE SHY STRANGERS: Indian Name (LP; Pravda Records, POB 268043, Chicago III 60626) Pretty standard, straight-arrow, three-chord rock with an enormous debt owed to REM. From the mumbled vocals to the rural-surrealist sleeve, you can tell what's been on these guy's tumtables recently. Doug Robertson's voice does have a bit more bluesy growl to it than Stipe's however, the guitar is a bit grittier and the drums a bit more hectic but aside from that, file this under C for Clone.—Allen Green



SIR MIX-A-LOT: I Just Love My Beats/Square Dance Rap/Let's G (Watch Out!)/Mix-a-let's Theme (12" EP; Nasty Mix Records, 3161 Elliot Avenue, Suite 302, Seattle, WA 98121) Mix-a-let's something like a hornier, leather-sounding Egyptian lover. The home-recorded side of "Beats" and "Square Dance" is a little more playfully horny and less cum-soaked, so to speak. The former contains the first instance of backward-played (and identifiably so) scratch I've heard. The latter is hilariously hick-oid slap n' tickle m.c.ing, like Newcleus gone HEE HAW. The studio recorded side splatters with felt numbing, hypnotizing licentiousness. "G"ing is fucking and in his theme, while his guard does his duty, Mix will be grubbing some booty. It's to his credit that both home and studio sides sound equally professional and if he could get his head out of the gutter (his catalog number is 6969, heh heh), he could likely write as classically as he mixes. The guy's worth watching.--Jamie Rake

SILVER LEAF: Ballad of a Thin Man Parts 1 & 2/Sea Cruise and Well, Well, Well (7" EP; Lee, POB 11485, Cincinnati, OH 45211 USA) Great remake of a Dylan tune sung by a pretty blasé female voice backed by an eclectic kind of grooving, punk, jazzy dance pop. The flip sees the same treatment given to the Frankie Ford kitsch classic (and coming off strangely like Joni Mitchell--not an insult, just an observation) and a sad, wispy original ballad. No, the ballad isn't danceable like the others but in a way, more affecting. If this kind of originality can be maintained over an album, they definitely have a future.--Jamie Rake

ALLAN SIMON: Rainsplash (LP; Cadence Records, Cadence Building, Redwood, New York, NY 13679) Simon's unit features four promising young players. Ralph Lalama's dry tenor tone is influenced by both Coltrane and Wayne Shorter and he's particularly strong on an obscure Shorter tune ("Scourin"), showing individuality on his feature Ellington's "Daydream." Pianist Simon at times recalls such players as early Herbie Hancock, Wynton Kelly and Bill Evans; his medley of Debussy's "Reflets Dans L'Eau" and Strayhorn's "Lush Life" is ingenious. Bassist John Goldsby and drummer Tim Pleasant are excellent in support during this modern mainstream session that also includes Hancock's "Speak Like A Child" and a pair of compositions from the leader. This album is a sleeper that should not be overlooked.--Scott Yanow

THE SKATALITES: Stretching Out (C: ROIR, 611 Broadway, NYC, NY 10012) This tape captures the Skatalites sans their legendary trombonist Don Drummond in two informal jam sessions in 1983. The sound quality is unusually poor with Lloyd Knibbs' drums sounding like grenades exploding underwater. Nevertheless, the tape delivers a very generous helping of ska at its most sophisticated. The instrumental excitement is largely generated by the urgent tenor saxophones of Tommy McCook and Roland Alphonso. The nine piece band really takes off on "Confucius" and "Guns of Navarone." Only the flatly crafted "Big Trombone", intended as a tribute to the late Drummond, totally fails to ignite any sparks. Don't these guys realize that they shouldn't declaim their musical Achilles heel? The Skatalites never reached the musical heights that that they achieved while Drummond was on board--but this is a very respectable incarnation of the group. And no recording so squarely connects ska to jazz, a link most ska recordings conceal by not allowing sufficient space for soloists to soar.--Norman Weinstein

SKINBEAT (C; 489 South 500 E. #2, Provo, Utah 84601) Skinbeat is Mitch Call, who plays guitar, bass, synth, drum machines and percussion. His music is very much in the vein of twisted pop. Many of the songs are quite hummable and singable, and the song lyrics are incredibly intelligent. Standouts include "Task", "Fateland", "Blues Go Home" and "Dance For Willy". The sound quality is incredibly good. The only problem is that he sings all his songs through a phase shifter--a good effect, if used occasionally, but tiring when used all the time. The lyrics are included in a little hand-made, hand-written booklet, and the song titles are also hand-written on a laminated cover. I suspect that the tapes were

also dubbed individually. All in all, a very rewarding tape. I'd like to hear more from this guy.--Douglas Bregger

SLAP: Downtime (LP; Duotone Records, POB 1168, Miami, FLA 33243, USA) Dark, rhythmic synth music with an edge. Some pieces border on industrial while others have a hi-tech dance feel. Nice sax work on "From The Wrist" and tasteful use of the "Mirage" factory samples throughout (as a Mirage user myself, I couldn't help but pick up on this). One observation, however; these pieces lack any real cohesiveness, seeming to function as scores for unseen danceworks or video art pieces rather than as songs in themselves. This is not to say they're not good. Sometimes the soul needs some gutsy dark background music instead of a new-age lullaby.--Allen Green

SLEEPLESS: Thurst (4-track 12"); Sleepless, Wolfhead Grmrt., POB 844, Los Angeles, CA 90026) Not to make a gratuitous comparison, but Sleepless sounds like Siouxsie fronting Joy Division. THRUST has that kind of swaying, waltzlike rhythm so characteristic of early Banshee's records, vocalist Claudia matching it with a throaty singsong that soars n' swoops and occasionally slips into a sustained croon. "She" actually borrows from J.D.'s "Shadowplay" both rhythmically and the chords; the drummer is fond of his toms, and the guitarist lets loose with a solo that resembles the sound of melodic, an instrument which popped up in New Order songs. Still, the disc is engaging and not so derivative as to be annoying. Her voice is tunefully erotic, the band skillful and innovative. Check the neo-classical piano stylings of "Die Schlaflosen" and how her operatic vocal is juxtaposed with a wah-wahhed guitar bit. And the late night smoky blues of "Fear Is Your Friend" show a side of Sleepless that eschews the dark gothicism, indicating a welcome versatility. Great voice, talented playing.--Fred Mills

SLOVENLY: Plus (7" EP; New Alliance, POB 21, San Pedro CA 90733) This is the third vinyl release by this neglected and misnamed band. Concise bass is underpinned by clean guitar and synthesizer with subtle shades of missing chairs. Sometimes but never here they sound really intense not messy. "Now" and "TFIF" are more satisfying than the title cut which goes nowhere badly. Poetic imagery abounds. Nightmares pass quickly past. This is not an original but not a generic cliché either.--Glen Thrasher

SLOW: Against The Glass (EP; Zulu Records, 1869 W 4th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6J 1M4) Happy guitar opens side one, sounding like a hen clucking on top of a rusty corrugated metal roof. "I have not been the same," growls singer Ziggy Sigmund Christian. This song has the goods. It's a hot, nasty blast from Vancouver, B.C. Unfortunately, nothing else on the record matches it.--Bill Neill



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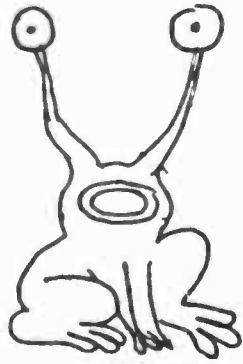
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SNUBCULTURE: I Hear A Scream (LP; Fartblossom, POB 818, Pomona, CA 91709) Winston-Salem group blasts through preconceptions that N.C. is all folk-popsters. This is not music for the timid. This is music for those weaned on Stooges, Sabbath, Kennedys and Black Flag. Some thrash, some metal, plenty of decibels and tortured vocals that cut through the cortex in a straight line for the viscera. The production is a bit one-dimensional, and I'd love to hear those BOC guitars more clearly, haven't had 'em bleed lately. But the energy comes thru, and at the speed these guys are travelling it'd take an armored phalanx of pro wrestlers to cramp their style. Young, but already ranking up there with Ugly Americans and Corrosion Of Conformity.--Fred Mills

SONIC YOUTH: EVOL (LP; SST Records, POB 1, Lawndale, CA 90260) THE guitar band of the 1980's took their dissonant guitars, thumping, thunderous bass and pounding drums into Martin Bisi's studio this past March and created EVOL. From the opening dreaminess of "Tom Violence" through to the never ending "Expressway to Yr Skull", S.Y. works through nine love songs that are different from their past work but not entirely removed from it. Sonic Youth assumes that there are no limitations to the sounds a guitar and amp combo can make. In this album they explore many possibilities and permutation and, yet maintain a cohesiveness throughout the whole album. This isn't experimental noodling, but well crafted songs and sounds that are accessible and unpredictable at the same time. No formula chord changes, no obligatory guitar solos. Check out the exploration of harmonics in "Shadow Of A Doubt", as well as the pop song "Starpower", and the haunting "Marilyn Moore." Unlike some of their previous albums that had some filler, this one is all meat, and it only hints at what they'll do with/to the "White Album."--Shawn A. Splane

SON OF SAM: Fuck It To Oath (13 song C; \$3; Lacy, 5121 Trumbull, Detroit, MI 48208) Hardcore/thrash that has its heart in the right place (decent lyrics about narrow-minded people and nuclear war, etc), but musically offers nothing original and suffers from poor sound quality. Some cool xerox art accompanies the tape, tho.--Madeline Finch

SOUL ASYLUM: Made To Be Broken (LP; Twin Tone Records, 445 Oliver Ave South, Minneapolis, MN 55405) The title of this record suggests the best use for it. Soul Asylum believes that songs must be framed in a roar of noise, with lots of uncouth shouting. Little snips of sharp guitar work peek through the mess, but this record is hard to listen to. It's raw all right; raw as in half-baked. The band members ought to go sneer in the mirror for awhile and get it out of their system. From the sound, you won't be surprised to learn that this artifact was produced by Bob Mould of Husker Du.--Bill Neill

THE SOULS: Shoot For The Moon (EP; The Just Agency, 46 Waltham St. Suite 305A, Boston, MA 02118) The Souls put out this 4 song EP of 4/4 American Rock n' Roll. It's got yer basic guitar leads, in all the right places so as not to scare anyone, lots of cymbals and familiar drum beats. I've heard it all 10000 times, so it must be great.--Mark G.E.

THE SOURCE: Building Bridges (EP; Picture Window Records, 708 4th St NE, Massillon, OH 44646) Lightweight, dreamy funk and mellow rock sounds created by some guys in Ohio, who probably spent months at it. Included is a spineless cover of "Gimme Shelter." The whole record is about as exciting as changing the strings on your guitar. This band can play, but not to any real purpose. Their material needs work.--Bill Neill

SPACE SHOT ORCHESTRA: Chili Out/Get The Bone (12" EP; 1986 Romance Records & Tapes, 8033 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90046) I don't know; maybe someone thought this was unique. Sounds like Darth Vader dubbed over a disco retreat, warning us about an uptight Earth. May sound unique in description; sounds inane in the groove. They warn us "they" will be back; I hope I'm not around. And they can take the Michael Jackson inflatable dolls they request with them. The drummer is good and more than adequate and should find a better band. As for this disco band..well, I CAN wait for their forthcoming album REQUIEM FOR A YUPPIE.--Kim Knowles

STABAT STABLE: Inscriptions/Descriptions (C; 3AP, B.P. NO. 299, 75525 Paris, France) This cassette contains a lot of recognizable elements that I'll bet you've heard before; the analog drumbox synthesizer sounds that tend to favor either tweety organs or the recognizable top-40 filter sweep/sample and hold sound, and lots of musings about mortality, death and the usual by a singer of modest abilities whose English isn't all that great. I keep thinking that one's language is usually best to sing in unless your language skills are really hot, and this cassette suggests that maybe the idea isn't all bad. Who says that English HAS to be sung by everyone who wants to make recordings? I spent so much time being frustrated by lots of hokey lyrics from someone who probably has something very serious to say that I never got much of a chance to like the cassette. There are some nice moments when there's a kind of technological remake of the late '60s cheesy organ type of pop, though. There just aren't enough of them to salvage the whole cassette.--Greg Taylor

STEVE STAIN: The Brain Feels No Pain (LP; New Alliance Records, POB 21, San Pedro, CA 90733) Steve plays guitar, bass,

synth, sings and makes noise with friends. He was brought up on a diet of early Pere Ubu and it shows. Vocals in the David Thomas vein, widely expressive and often unintelligible, are Stain's main instrument in this raw and wild rock. Understandable lyrics are about street directions ("Took A Left") and poor misunderstanding Lucretia Borgia's many pets. Everything goes down the drain in "Vice Grip Heiress." Metal percussion and casio cycles, along with sax honks and breaking glass (reminiscent of Ubu's "Sentimental Journey") ends with "tub sucking." Bubbles and tribal drumbeats follow, weird guitars and a real noise hit called "Piece Got Teeth." The drum pulse and manipulated vocals bring to mind cats in meat grinders or the wartime screams of pilots going down. Not for the timid.--CoiA2

Second Opinion: Grating, rhythmically based obsessions from drummer/vocalist Stain and various associates. The vocals are heavily processed and unintelligible. The moods range from industrialized hardcore to pseudo-tribal dirges. Whether or not Stain is serious is difficult to determine, as is the purpose behind his wall-of-noise compositions. At times a genuine atmosphere starts to develop, only to be broken by cliches. Even the vocals, through which some personality does come through, are affected to the point that one wonders if this is just an homage to PIL. Stain does have an ear for song structure, though, and on repeated listenings the album grows on you.--Brook Hinton

CAL STEWART: Uncle Josh On Lambert 1900-1905 (C60; \$9; John A. Petty, route 1, Box 54-A, Catawba, NC 28609) Cal Stewart was one of the most prolific recording artists around the turn of the century. He recorded for all the major labels of the day (Victor, Columbia, etc.) as well as for many independents (Standard, Busy Bee, Silvertone). He was an early pioneer of the style Garrison Keillor has become so famous for...namely, the telling of tales about just plain folks who live in the mythical town of Pun'kin Center. When the story called for it, Mr. Stewart sang, played a harmonica, did various dialects (mostly the drawl of Uncle Josh, the central character whom Mr. Stewart portrayed most often), but mostly laughed...in his big hearty laugh. These recordings are electrical transcriptions of rare cylinder records made by Cal Stewart for the Lambert Company of Chicago, which flourished between the years 1900-1905. There is some spoken commentary on the tape by collector John Petty, which is as entertaining as it is informative. The sound of the old cylinders is scratchy and sometimes hard to understand, but for those who seek a doorway to small town life some eighty years ago, this is it!--Sally Idasswey

PETER STAMPFEL AND THE BOTTLECAPS (LP; Rounder, 1 Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140) Stampfel, a Holy Modal Rounders founder and ex-Fug, is convinced that this is his best album and while I might not go that far this is certainly an amazing, and damned funny, record. Listen to "Impossible Groove" which starts in a rap-funk groove then shifts to a country hoedown! Or "Surfer Angel" which mixes surf music and Sixties teen death songs into a musical-quote-studded sidesplitter. Don't think that this is simply a musical comedy album, however. Pieces like "Everything Must Go" or the gospel "Trials, Troubles, Tribulations" are concise, clear statements of the vision that permeates and binds the entire album.

It's a vision of morals but not cut-and-dried morality and of playfulness but not irresponsibility. In short, these guys aren't going to let their search for the perfect laugh blind them to life's difficulties. The best comedians have always worked off that dialectic, in the process creating work that's often more penetrating than many "serious" artists. Catch this album now for the Bottlecaps are certain to be a highlight of the late Eighties.--Lang Thompson

STRANGE NURSERY: Zen/Life Guard (C45; 115 Campbell Ave., Toronto Ont., Canada M6P 3V1) ZEN/LIFE GUARD is an immature effort. Marred by poor recording and mixing, songs are generally not memorable either in form or execution. There are several jazz inspired numbers, the which range in quality from passable ("Sept. 16, 945") to poor ("Acute Psychotic Episode", an attempted jazz-rock rave up). Some of the songs are more experimental but feature generally unpleasant processed vocals and insipid lyrics. There are some nicer moments however. "Tranca", a quiet melodic piece for bass and acoustic guitar, and "Q2456?", a more progressive piece that features bass and keyboard are well conceived efforts.--Robert F. Dot

STRATIS: Musica da Ballo (C;\$5; Temporary Music, Kuckucksweg 46, 5000 Koln 30, West Germany) Synthesist Antonios Stratias has the all too rare ability to take the old synthpop format and breathe a little life into it. He does it by loading his recording with little start/stop pseudohorn charts and hooks galore, keeping a close watch on moving only slightly away from the tried and true punctuated eighth-note pulse that keeps the dancefloor full, and using one of the largest collection of different synthesizer timbres that I've heard on one of these recordings in some time. The singing (in Italian and German) tends toward the Teutonic declamation favored by a lot of European bands (Ultravox's "Vienna" being a good example) and may not be your cup of tea, but the production values are first class.--Greg Taylor

BARY STRAUSS: Strange Device (C30; Spotlight Records, 2565 Braeburn Circle, Ann Arbor, MI 48104) Rockin' box with Elvis

Costello vocals, keyboard with percussion. Pop sounding compositions: "Living On The Land", "Time Goes On Forever", "Get Ready For Love", "Addicted To You". Weirdest cover art, it conveys a strange idea about what is going on inside.--Robin James

MORTON SUBOTNICK: Return (LP; New Albion, 534 Castro #463, San Francisco, CA 94114) An aural journey and history of Halley's Comet, RETURN: A TRIUMPH OF REASON is Subotnick's first purely electronic work in eight years. Also, it is easily his most accessible work to date and with good reason. Subotnick knew that this work would be played at planetaria and observatories throughout the country, thus heard by audiences that knew little or nothing of contemporary music. Rather than try to teach them, and in all likelihood alienating them in the process, he chose to include them in his musical trek. For the most part, he does not condescend or patronize his listeners and the music has its integrity intact. The first section of RETURN is the most successful, with its appropriately spacy sonorities and sense of grandeur. The moments of weakness lie in the almost familiar sounding fanfares and the musical quotation of Scarlatti which sound a little kitschy. Otherwise there is some enjoyable listening to be had.--Dean Suzuki

L. SUBRAMANIAM: Mami & Co. (LP; Milestone Records, 10th & Parker, Berkeley, CA 94710) I'm not a jazz violin fan, but with Subramaniam's top sidemen of Maynard Ferguson and Bud Shank, and a modern big band sound with an East Indian flair, this album is fun to listen to. In addition to playing violin, Subramaniam wrote all of the compositions, produced the album and uses well the talents of all of his musicians.--John Kaplan

SUN CITY GIRLS: Midnight Cowboys From Ipanema (C60; \$6; Breakfast Without Meat Tapes, 1827 Haight Room 188, San Francisco, CA 94117) Hilarious rancid originals and stinky covers of bizarre classics played by animated and reasonably talented guys. Funny, varied, all played enthusiastically, tight enough, noisy, bug eyed and corny.--Robin James

SUN CITY GIRLS: Grotto Of Miracles (LP; POB 23316, Phoenix, AZ 85063) They say it's something in Arizona's heat and wide, empty spaces that creates such weirdness. On their second album, for instance, Sun City Girls use Arabic music as a spice for their stream-of-consciousness rock. Many of the pieces are instrumental or at least aspire, due to lyrics' often disposable nature, to the state of being instrumentals. Nice enough and when you think about it not all that weird either.--Lang Thompson

SUPREME FORCE: We Come Out Fresh/Handling Things (12" single; NIA Records, 790 Riverside Dr., NYC, NY 10032 USA) Sure, the title of the A side sounds like a line for talking clothes in a Downy ad but it's right solid word-slinging against a harsh sequence of string crashes. "Handling" doesn't quite cut muster because the music sounds like a weaker blend of Latino disco and Chicago house beat. Nevertheless, this debut jams heavily.--Jamie Rake

SWANS: Greed (LP; Jem, 3619 Kennedy Rd., South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080) Fans of the infamous Swans will take delight in their latest release. The move to a larger, but still respectable label has only facilitated an expansion of their sonic abilities, and not, heaven forbid, resulted in the addition of pleasantries for the sake of commercial viability. And though compromise is non-existent, there is indeed change. In the continuous process of growth, we find, no more the din of the wall of sound, whose slow percussive movement drove each song to the inevitable state of angst, holding one by the face, as Gira crammed his screaming vocals down one's throat. We find instead, the culmination of a trend, in which the band is thinking much more in musical terms. Most of the songs are fashioned as slow dirges, driven still by that powerful drumming. They begin strong and continue as such with the repetition of instrumental patterns again and again, in the effort to emphasize the emotional consequence of each song and the general theme of the album. Change is done slowly and often subtly, through vocalization and the sparse addition of tape loop samples at shift within each piece at a slight, but irregular rate. As usual, the theme and emotional content deal with the harsh reality of an isolated and depressed state of mind, which on this release, verge on self-flagellation. The music is sparser and consciously more comprehensible than ever, and as such, cuts deeper than ever before.--Nathan Griffith

SWING SET: Life Speeds Up (LP; Blackberry Way Records, 606 13th Ave SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414) Swing Set has a moody psychedelic AOR sound combined with chimy, yet gritty, guitars overlaid with melodies of texture which play it safe and, at times, had me more interested in watching a PBS special on 18th century furniture restoration.--Mark G.E.

TANGERINE DREAM: Pergamon (LP; Caroline Records, 5 Crosby St., New York, NY 10013) This is the performance in East Berlin at the "Palast Der Republik" recorded January 31st, 1980. It was the first time a "rock" band from the West were allowed to perform there. This comes from around the time that TANGRAM was recorded and shares some of the same musical material. It also marks the first appearance of Johannes Schmoelling with the band. But this time Tangerine Dream had lost the exploratory edge that made albums



like RUBYJUN and PHAEDRA such exciting records. Their style has lapsed into simplistic chord changes and uninteresting rhythms. I hate to say it but, I think that their commercial success has made them dull.—Bruce Christensen

A TASTE OF STOOL (C; #8, 705 Westminster Ave, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3G 1A3) They seem to have aspirations as the next "Big Thing", except the drummer really couldn't afford a drum kit so he got some boxes and pans at the supermarket and they somehow don't lend themselves to a lockstep 4/4 time. The bassist fails a little better, except he seems to always be a few pages behind or ahead of everyone else. The guitarist, bless his soul, is trying hard just to keep up. So these guys bash around for awhile until the singer comes in from eating lunch and spouts off some unintelligible phrases into the Radio Shack tape recorder he got for Christmas and then abruptly turns it off, waiting for the next creative urge to surge forward. All in all, it's a pretty good tape.—AMK

TENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE & THE BOOED MUSICIANS: 8 Fingers Crossed Country T. Ora/Tour (C; \$6; Widemouth Tapes, P O Box 382, Baltimore, MD 21203) Neoist, SubGenius, arrestee—TENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE (that's right) is a publisher, filmmaker, noisemaker and animate art object. Some artists want to make people happy. TENT, who disclaims art, just wants to make things happen. This cassette contains the aural aspect of his 1986 "Mad Scientist Didaction" tour which occasioned unease in such stops as Baltimore, Boston and Ann Arbor. Of course it's not the same without the films and the human canvas which TENT habitually makes of his own body, but there's still enough here of what Revo in No. 5 called "destroyed sound" to empty a room. TENT makes Flipper or Throbbing Gristle sound like the Beach Boys. And doesn't that tell us something we didn't know before?—Bob Black

TERMS OF PEACE: Thunder Cracks (LP; Patmos Records, POB 16387, Jackson, MS 39266 USA) Here is a Christian rock band who dare NOT be religiously explicit and are all the better for it. The poetry of their lyrics can easily be related either to God or a girlfriend. Well, "Valley of Souls" is a wee too strange a title for anyone to ever think it's a boy-meets-girl number and you would be right to think it's not. As might be expected from their name, they do care about the state of earthly affairs, too, as on "Every Day" where they may think of this life as a bad dream, even with their faith. You aren't likely to find any Amy Grant talking so tough. The music is folksy/AOR/funk kind of fusion, not far removed from Aztec Camera,

Prefab Spout or pre-success Simple Minds, though still trying to forge their own sound. Terms of Peace may not be so brashly original as Steve Taylor or subtly coaxing as Charlie Peacock but Terms Of Peace offer the same kind of musical-cum-spiritual solace that could lead them all to crossover success beyond their "target audience".—Jamie Rake

THESSALONIANS: Thessalonians (C60; Production Group Resources, 540 Alabama #310, San Francisco, Ca 94110) Self-described as an experiment in electronic improvisation, these pieces feature a strange array of home-made stringed instruments and found percussion. Very concentrated, very methodical in each instant, the spaces unfold in large, mysterious directions. Never harsh, it's easy to lie back the eyes closed and listen. It all feels like a tired, painfully slow walk through endless abandoned subway tunnels—dark, dripping, the rails humming. Each footstep echoes back altered from a hundred distances, a good rainy day companion.—W Mueller

37 PINK & PS BINGO: Billy Watson's Beef Trust (C; Greyscale, POB 55502, Tucson, AZ 85703-5502) If you could run about dozen musical sources through a food processor you might end up with something like this. No particular sound lasts for very long, some for a couple of minutes, others for just seconds. Any sense of development is destroyed, forcing the listener to focus on the moment, on specific sounds. Not as entrancing as some of 37 Pink's solo tapes but for those of us with slightly warped minds, it'll do.—Lang Thompson

THIS: Don't That Bring Joy (EP; Ordnance Records, POB 4422, Carlsbad, CA 92008) This EP combines the heavyhanded new wave approach of the Dickies, and that of the less esoteric of the psychedelic '60s sound. The guitar sounds like Jimi Hendrix on a bad day, and the lyrics are an inane attempt at poetic intercourse that end instead in meaningless gibberish. The only obvious theme that permeates the record (though not in a coherent fashion), is one of destruction and depression (a worn out theme to be sure). The only exception to this trend can be found in the only non-original composition, "Tale of Brave Ulysses", which stands as a powerless imitation of what was once a great tune. And finally, if that weren't enough, the overproduction makes a murky soup of the whole project.—Nathan Griffith

CHRIS THOMAS: The Beginning (LP; Arhoolie Records, 10341 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito, CA 94530) Arhoolie Records, seeing the success Alligator has had with "new" blues artists, has evidently decided to sign up some of the overlooked regional players such as Chris Thomas, a young New Orleans-based guitarist-songwriter. Although from Louisiana, Chris sounds more like a Chicago bluesman

with a liberal dose of diverse influences like Jimi Hendrix. The tunes are all written by Chris and show clever use of melody within the genre, while the lyrics are generally pedestrian blues fare (you know, "my baby left me this morning" etc). Chris is a solid guitarist and fills well within the trio format I get the feeling from this disc that he must put on one hell of a live show. All in all, a promising debut from a new voice who should improve if given the opportunity to record more.—Brian White

DAVID THOMAS: Monster Walks The Wooden Lake (Twin Tone, 445 Oliver Ave S., Minneapolis, MN 55405) David Thomas and some other former Pere Ubu members are now the Wooden Birds. Thomas and the Birds wrote all the material on this record, although most of the songs are Thomas' alone. By any standards he should be considered a significant songwriter. Instruments are used sparingly, giving the record the feel of a winter landscape; Thomas sometimes singing, sometimes chanting the lyrics. The instrumentation includes bass, synthesizers, violin, percussion and Thomas plays the accordion on quite a few of the tracks, sounding like some sort of maniac cabaret. And the song lyrics share a common theme: monster, dreams, the sea. I can imagine Samuel Beckett listening to this record, and liking it. Innovative music.—John Baxter

TEX THOMAS AND THE DANGLING RANGERS: Dare To Dangle (LP; H.T.Y. Route 3, Box 91A, Liberty Hill Texas) Country-tainted R&B mixed with the mellowest rock. Some of this recalls softer Van Morrison without the man's inspiring vocals; most of it reminds me of hired bands at late night comedy/variety shows. The musicianship is pleasant enough, but I'd hardly recommend this LP to people who crave excitement.—Richard Singer

THOSE DARN TOUCHY FEELY GUYS (LP; We Got Records, S. 224 Howard, Spokane, WA 99204) This is stupid and (supposedly) funny eclectic pop/experimental music from two guys named Bill Jarboe and Keyvn J. Miller. It features synthesizer cliches, rhythm box rhythms and gonzo lyrics. The sleeve promises more We Got Records soon, claiming that "if you hate this you might just hate those too." I can't wait. This is really awful. Really.—Glen Thrasher

THREE O'CLOCK TRAIN: Wig Wam Beach (6-song EP; Pipeline Records, POB 245, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 2N8: 514-272-4824) These four Canadian cowpunk rockers lean more towards the hard blues of the mainstream than their American counterparts. Leader and songwriter Mack MacKenzie, together with brother Stu on guitar and the rhythm of Dave Hill and Pierre Perron, makes music where the country has been transformed into a rough '60s bluesy guitar sound. With the eagerness of bands testing themselves in tiny bars and drawing on all the loud raunch bar audiences crave, the Train show a mix of mainstream, hillbilly

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twang, and darker punk emotions. MacKenzie deals sarcastically with the closeness of love of violence to some effect, although on songs like "Stupid Little Angel" he slips into cavernous macho threats that belong with heavy metal more than country. In this melting pot the Train still need to develop a sound of their own, but the conviction they bring to a number like "Fake Honeymoon" shows they can play with tough honesty.—James Hopkins

BILL THULL ORCHESTRA: 50th Anniversary (LP; 2537 Highway 11, Elkhart, WI 53040 USA) Well-recorded, good old-fashioned German polkas and old time music, the kind that caught on as an alternative to the big band sounds of the '30s and '40s. This has a little more accordian than Fomy Gosz or the Red Barons and Thull has a real singing voice, not one of those nasal groans that give polka some of its popular denigration; his is a woody and pleasant baritone. The band is tight for such loose music and it's a credit to Bill that he's been at it for half a century (and been featured in a 1977 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC article and the Silver Burdett Science book along the way).—Jamie Rake

TIMEX SOCIAL CLUB: Ramers/Vicious Ramers (12" single, Jay c/o Macola, 6902 Santa Monica Blvd, Hollywood, CA 90038 USA) This quartet overcomes a horrendous picture sleeve and silly name to make arguably the best non-rap West Coast electro-soul single thus far. A minimal, tough beat with just the right blips and washes of synth combined with a male impassioned vocal about an ever-timely topic add up to greatness. It may not sink in at first but just you wait. If they can grow and innovate, an album's worth of TSC will be most welcomed in a stagnating black pop scene.—Jamie Rake

TIMESHIFT: Paranoid Fears In A Concrete World (5-song 12" EP; Tut Um Tom, Lindengasse 32, 1070 Vienna, Austria) The album cover proclaims these guys to be "The Mods Of Vienna" and that's basically what you get; light, '60s style pop-psychellia, sung in thick Austrian accents (perhaps phonetically). The musicianship is competent enough and occasionally inspired, but, except for "Religious Warrior" (which nicely recalls mid-period Yardbirds), the songs are mediocre. Great title, though. These guys might sound better as punks.—Brad Bradberry

TINNITUS: Spukhafte Fernwirkungen (2C's; Fort Da Productions, 522 Harold Ave, Atlanta, Georgia 30307) After listening to three sides of what was supposed to be four, one could conclude that Tinnitus is quite an apt name for this ensemble. Beginning with a relentlessly excessive improvisation on the Beatles' classic, "Why Don't We Do It", it moves from harsh to extreme with what could be called "difficult music" (truly an understatement). The instrumental format is jazz based, with all members sporting reeds, as well as the typical guitar, bass and drums. The compositions within consist mostly of free improvisation, sometimes arrhythmic, atonal, sonic blasts, whereas others become simple elaborations on underlying repetitive rhythm structures. The music is often aggravating and incomprehensible, bordering on mindless excess. There are however, precious moments throughout that find the quartet in the hands of a great riff, which is taken to an exciting plateau, notably with the help of some ample guitar work. To add insult to injury, the recording quality is an abomination, that doesn't even successfully document the incident.—Nathan Griffith

TINNITUS: Spukhafte Fernwirkungen (2-C60's; \$7; 522 Harold Ave, Atlanta, GA 30307) For six years Tinnitus has played unusual and innovative music in Atlanta. Unhappily they have seldom gone far outside that city which is an unhealthy environment for this kind of music. This double cassette is their fourth. It is a richly varied documentation of just how good this group is. The tape features mainstays Robert Cheatum, Richard Gess and Mark Vigoritto plus a few others. Sounds include wailing free jazz, industrial drone, weird chants and a surprising homage to the Beatles. Usually harsher than pretty, Tinnitus' latest cassette is a diverse package of good noise.—Glen Thrasher

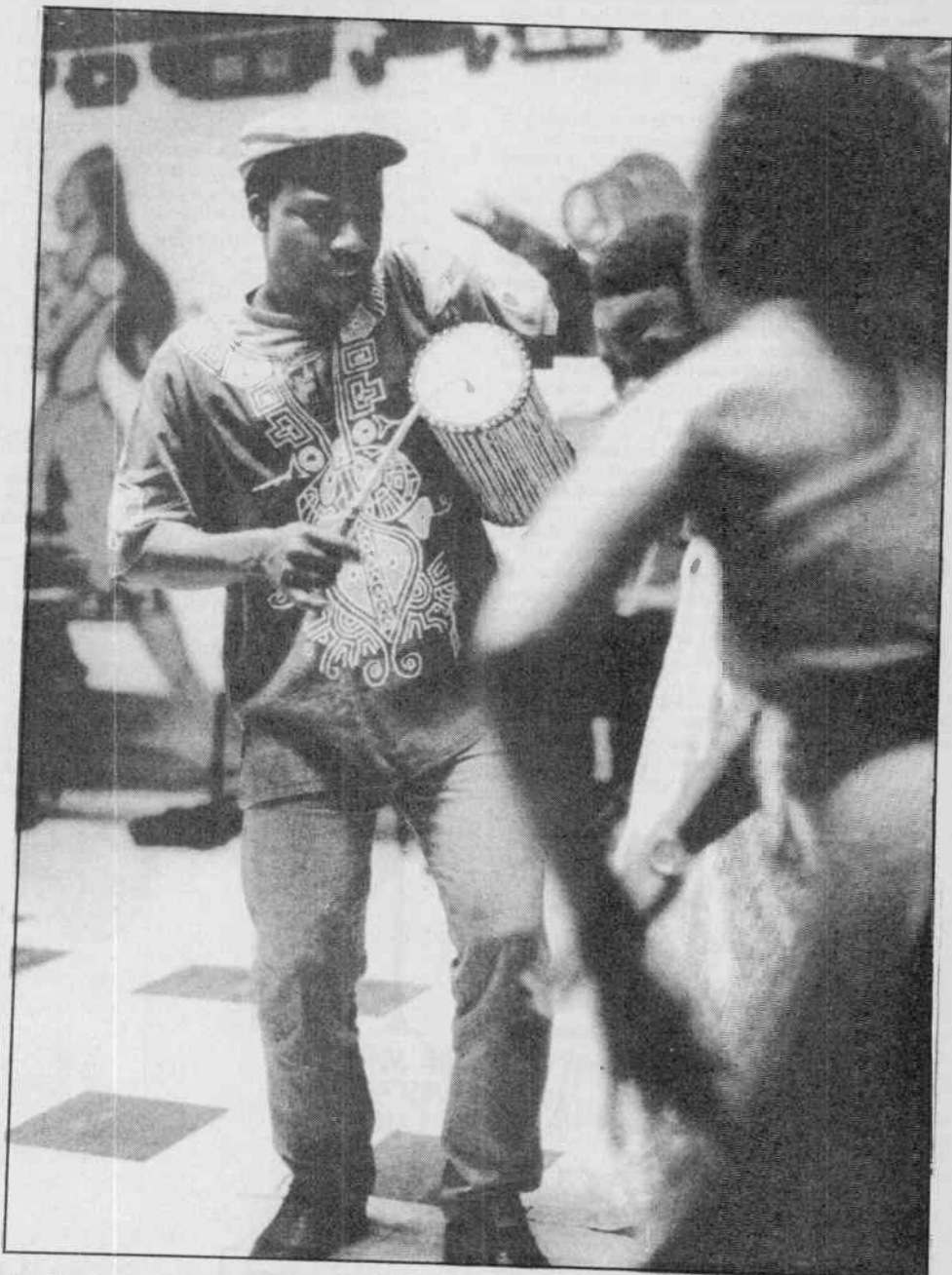
TINNITUS: Telepathic Women: Elements of Propriety (C90; Cheatum, 522 Harold, Atlanta, GA 30307) Live recordings of 8 different free improvisation sessions by multi-instrumentalists Robert Cheatum, Mark Vigoritto and Richard Gess who are joined on a few tracks by five other musicians. Three of these were recorded from live radio broadcasts on Atlanta's WREK and one long cut "When We Dead Awaken" was recorded at the Destroy All Music Festival. For those who like it raw, this music achieves a kind of churning stability in which all the voices meld into a single, slowly mutating organism. The recording quality is fairly low, which might frustrate continued listening.—Chris Brown

TRANQUIL EYES: Walks (C45; \$6 pp.; Ladd-Frith, POB 967, Eureka, CA 95502) The music on WALKS is well executed technopop. Electronic percussion is prominent and I hear a moderately strong disco influence driving many of the songs. The lyrics are generally delivered in a somewhat dispassionate fashion in a style that reminds me of Tuxedomoon. Another point-of-reference would be The Human League. Several songs are standouts. "Walks", for example, successfully blends sitar, African finger drums and synthesizer and "The Average Indian Reservation Song" (my favorite) features a strong melody that is nicely embellished by electronic keyboard. My strongest criticism is that the synthesized percussion is too invariant

and, at times, somewhat overbearing. Overall, this is a solid effort that breaks little new ground but should please fans of this genre.—Robert F. Oot

THE TREES: Locomotion Vs. Hittin' The Brake (6-song 12" EP; Pool Records, 4608 Duval, Austin TX 78751; The Trees, 3217 Eita, Dalla TX 75227) This starts off with two songs steadfastly in the Long Hiders country-rock vein. They are as well done as anything currently in this genre, the second being attention-getting for its unusual use of sitar. These are followed by a garage cover of the

patterns are being worked out, it seems completely arbitrary as to which ideas he wishes to develop, and which ones not. This results in some pieces being short (and for the most part effective) and some overlong. For example, "Prologue To The Uncharted" moves to a point and levitates for ten minutes without any change. But Truhlar is still successful at creating and sustaining different moods. "Fragments of a Dream" is frightening, jarring and "Europe After The Rain" is clearly the most inagistically lovely track on the tape.—C. Carstens



Band leader O.J. Ekemode doesn't need a stage to get people dancing. The barriers lay broken as he cavorts with enthusiastic participants at a Rhythm Workshop at Santa Barbara, Calif.'s La Casa de la Rasa. This great event and lots of others are sponsored by the Society for Jazz and World Music, an organization that may be the closest thing the U.S. has that is comparable to W.O.M.A.D.

David Cliffordini photo

Monkees' "Pleasant Valley Sunday." Side two finds two very original pop-rockers and an intriguing soul-pop-reggae "Symptom." As for the band name, this is the third group I've heard of) called The Trees.—Brad Bradberry

RICHARD TRUHLAR: Europe After The Rain (C60; \$9.25 pp; Underwhich Editions, POB 262, Adelaide Street Station, Toronto, Ontario Canada M5C 2J4) Interesting synthesizer compositions from Truhlar, a Canadian sound poet. With each piece a pattern is introduced and then enhanced by an eventual build-up of similar patterns and sounds (simulated voices, plops of water, sawing sounds). Sometimes the sounds are gradually interwoven into the pattern, and sometimes they are abruptly thrown on top. As the

THE TWO FELPES: Not Off The Grill (C; Flaming Cow Productions, 5732 North Shoreland Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53217 USA) No-wavy, punky silliness. Sax-drenched, fake pop ditties 'bout a breakfast that came alive, Robin leaving Batman, cottage vacationing, what to do with old folks, etc. In the same Beerburg tradition as early Couch Flambeau and the Oil Tasters, only with even less social merit. Vocals sometime recall Mykel Board in Artless and Jay Tiller of Flambeau. The Mexican-inspired cover drawing and liner notes are laff riots, too.—Jamie Rake

UNCLE JAMM'S ARMY AND THE CALIFORNIA CAT CREW: The Roach Is On The Wall (12" single; Freak Beat, distributed by Macoia) The lyrics are "The roach, the roach, the roach is on the



wail. We don't need no Raid. Let the silly suckers crawl. Crawl, silly sucker, crawl." After that you hear a news announcer-sounding fella repeating the title against the backdrop of some of the most damned annoying (good!) electrobeat. After what seems like an eternity, the bunch comes in with the full rap again. You'll either wind up wanting to break it in pieces tiny enough to flush or laughing.--Jamie Rake

THE UNTONES: Ernie (C20; \$1.50; GGE Records, 89 Jewett St. Apt. 9, Akron, OH 44305) The muffled sound of wild electrorock n' roll. The story of ERNIE, a spastic who is shot and dies. A keyboard and drum machine intro jumps into harder edged rock and "I Hate Granola People" rant. Fuzz guitar makes the brain "Like Jelly".--CDinA2
UNKNOWNMIX: Loops (LP: Recommended, Magnusstrasse 5, 8004 Zurich, Switzerland) LOOPS means sounds and recycled musical elements in the form of loops. This Swiss trio (augmented in concert by the slide show of a typographer) takes electronic sounds and percussive rhythms, treats them with synths and sequencers and comes up with an intriguing--if sometimes overly repetitive--blend of dance music. The erotic vocals of Magda Vogel, part accented English and part foreign, are what binds the "tunes" together; the African thumping of "Django", for example, would have bored me early on had it not been for her voice that alternated between husky temptress and sing-song wail. Similarly, "Kiss Forever" lifts a heavy metal riff, tosses in some electrosquonks and contents itself to repeat ad infinitum while Vogel blurts out a punkish tale of failed love. As a vocalist she is chameleonlike, one minute playing the smoky chanteuse (as in the ominous, gloomy "Bonanza"), the next minute a screeching, hysterical Nina Hagen (check the jarring, raucous "The Beast"). The group, taken as a whole, is innovative and witty; titles like "Japanese Funk Machine" will raise an eyebrow, and the political indictments in "Ronnie Boy" welded to odd bits of "found" sound bring to mind a tectonic variation of street scratchers/rappers. Overall, a decent disc, not without its tedious moments, but certainly different from anything else out these days.--Fred Mills

THE UPBEATS: Pop Songs (LP; Laser Records, 1304 Fletcher Road, Tifton, GA 31794) Atlanta-based conglomeration with shifting personnel and musical outlook. They play lots of different styles without really synthesizing a coherent sound of their own. There's some Dregs-like fusion, some "new wave" pop, and some spacy

psychedelia. Not much rings true, or sticks in your head. The fusion stuff is well played and produced, and makes for pleasant listening. Otherwise the rest is derivative and uninspired.--Scott Siegal

THE URBATIONS: The Urbations (6-song 12"; Wild Child Discs, Metro-America, POB 37044, Detroit, MI 48237; ph. 313-582-0227) This is a band with a sense of humor that, while not taking itself lightly, doesn't get bogged down in seriousness either. With three horn players, keyboards, guitar, bass, drums and vocals they have a full, very poppy and danceable sound. I hear influences of swing, funk, ska, Chicago (at least in the horns) and straight rock n' roll. Very clean production. A nice sounding EP that, unfortunately, doesn't tempt me to reach for it often. I think that this band was meant for bars and parties.--Doug Hagen

URGE OVERKILL: Strange, L. (5-track 12" EP; Ruthless, POB 1458, Evanston, IL 60204) Heck, the PR sez it pretty good: "A mutant beast of pounding, skittish complexity sprints itself open in front of you. Prostrate and simultaneously adoring you and plotting your assassination." Dig it, all you fans of Husker Du, Sonic Youth, Scratch Acid, Butthole Surfers, Birthday Party, Stooges and Blue Oyster Cult, this is a mind-numbing assault. Not quite metal, and definitely not thrash, but plenty of elements from both. I listened to the "Homo Side" first; especially liked the careening, full-throttle "Art Of Man", a killer four-chord descending riff and a doomy, hoarse vocal proclaiming glandular agony for the species. Over on the "hetero side" (are these guys nutty, or what!) the "Snakemobile" takes off like some bastard "Train Kept A-Rollin'", although with decidedly dissonant intent. A weird quiet interlude closes the cut, then a harsh, clanging/clattering "systems" lumbers up, almost gothic in places but saved from the black pit by a sudden injection of stun guitar and a subsequent lunge towards dense psychedelic awareness.--Fred Mills

RONNIE URINI AND THE LAST POETS: Child Of The Sunrise, Creature Of The Moon (LP; Coma Records, No. 000, Vienna, Austria; Tel. 35-70-783) Ronnie Urini is a man with a past. Drawing on the influences of Jim Morrison, Erik Satie, H.P. Lovecraft and Nemesis, Urini and the Last Poets have produced an excellent album of club-band rock and roll. If you are old enough to remember the first time the Electric Prunes hit the airwaves with "I Had Too Much To Dream Last Night" you also understand Urini's history. As an original member of the Electric Prunes, Urini wrote most of their songs. His latest group has toured with him in Europe for the past 10 years. "A Thousand and One Arabian Nights," "Child of Sunrise," "Creature of the Moon," "Insects in Amber," "Alice in Wonderland," "2010--The Frozen Seas of 10" and the new version of "I Had Too Much To Dream Last Night" are mixed-tempo, guitar-based compositions that reflect Urini's interest in the present, past, future and netherworld. By using every instrument typical of rock and roll

as well as a harpsichord and a "magic flute" (played by Helium Alien), The Last Poets create crazed musical spaces and sounds which seem familiar but are not identifiable. I am happy to have this LP in my collection now. The Electric Prunes "I Had Too Much To Dream Last Night" was the second record I purchased so many years ago. This LP enables me to fill in the gap between then and now.--Larda Bix

UTFO: Skeezer Pleazer (LP; Select Records, 175 Fifth Ave., NYC, NY 10010 USA) There are at least two things to wonder about the Untouchable Forces Organization here. Firstly, will they ever recapture the phenomenal success of "Roxanne, Roxanne"? Secondly, where did the Educated Rapper go and why did he leave? While you ponder those, groove on this. With just the rapping of Kangol Kid and Doctor Ice, along with the turntable wizardry of the Mixmaster, things are getting tighter and looser. Tighter meaning that the rapping is getting more articulate and less pretentious than on the first album. Looser in that they are singing, this time tough n' tender Full Force-styled funk and none of the rancid balladry that marred the first album. Minor complaints are Kangol talking about his Uzi (which we don't need in this dangerous age of gangster rocking being taken seriously) and not knowing whether "Split Personality" was meant to be racist (ping not, now that Latino acts such as TKA are finally making inroads into hip-hop). Other standouts include the reggae-fied "Pick Up The Pace", "Kangol & Doc" and "Bad Luck Barry", not to mention the sure-to-shock-Tipper Gore backmasked message at the end of the record.--Jamie Rake

USWARD MUSIC: Nature And The Electronic Age (C; Creamer House, 711 Ellerdale Road, Chesterfield, IN 46017) I'm really impressed with the meticulously hand-colored cassette case insert these people put together. It is a cute drawing and it is done BY HAND! And there is a full lyric sheet included with more HAND-COLORING. I like the spirit of these people. Unfortunately, I'd much rather look at this cassette than listen to it. They seem to have an anti-technology bias, but there is a lot of lame synthesizer work here. There are a few stringed instruments, a thumb piano, a grandfather clock, etc. All played with minimal proficiency. These people love nature the way the hippies did in the sixties. They're in something of a time-warp, in fact. Rural Indiana, the land that time forgot. At least it's not John Cougar What's-his-name.--W R Bomeman
VAN COVER (C; 7522 Crawford Dr., Delta B. C. Canada V4C 6X6) Good muddy echo-billy. These are basically cover-tunes partially covered-up. Sly Cramped-up guitar moves dominate as does a sense of reckless fun. They've got their tongues in the roofs of their mouths. A musical crossword puzzle disguised as rock n' roll.--Jordan Oakes

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PETER VAN RIPER: Whomp Whip Music (C; Peter van Riper, 73 Calyer St., Brooklyn, NY 11222) WHOMP WHIP MUSIC is made by suspending aluminum baseball bats (Whomp Whip Bats, hence the title), cut to allow for different pitches, and struck with mallets of various composition, yielding varied bell-like timbres. The sounds can range anywhere from that of a glorified, more resonant toy piano, to that approaching church bells, all of them marvelous. One side consists of what appears to be short studio tracks, while the other is taken from a live performance in Holland. Within the self-imposed limitations Van Riper has placed himself, he opens up a whole world of beautiful and captivating sounds.--Dean Suzuki

VARIOUS ARTISTS: ART TEST TAPES: Cat Scan -- An International Cassette Compilation (C; \$6 ppd., Art Test Tapes, Box 95916, Seattle, WA 98145-2916) Ambience, synth-pop, spoken word, experimental, tape montage...it's all here. This is a very well produced, eclectic music compilation containing 13 songs and one poem by artists and bands from the US, Canada and Belgium. Brooding, foreboding melodies set the tone for Art Test Tapes' second cassette-only release and many of the songs are reminiscent of late '70s doom pop, sounding like Joy Division or Section 25, with heavy bass lines and marching drums. Some of the more outstanding songs aren't in this vein though. Kate Dresen's "Jane Doe" is a Laurie Anderson type piece with treated vocals, tape manipulation, flute and sax. "Asbestos" is Ed Zincavage's artsy sound montage, manufactured with treated vocals, rhythm box and various synths. And there is an accessible, danceable tune in The Color Twigs' "Somewhere." Overall, this is a very provocative tape, and the artists are recorded in such an order as to provide an easy transition from one artistic discipline to the next.--Rich Crist

VARIOUS ARTISTS: BOY DIRT CAR--F/i (split LP, RRRecords, 151 Paige, Lowell, MA 08152, USA) Boy Dirt Car may be the most infamous band to come from Milwaukee. Ask them for their press kit with articles from Wall Street Journal and Ann Landers, among others. The music? Ingratingly exorcistic, thick shards of feedback and planned industrial fidgeting with very few vocals. The most notable "song" is "He Tore His Eyes Out", an example of the primal cathartic quality of that which has become known as "industrial." Through all the grimness, however, ultimately you can tell (thankfully) BDC aren't just dour doom prophets but are having fun with all their commotion. F/i (Surlin' Fuhrers incognito, 'cause leader Rich Franekci got sick of Nazi accusations) are of more traditional musical leaning and employ electric guitar (!) with their electron cs, coming off like a higher-tech Jesus and Mary Chain. That's excepting the times they still sound like someone left a shortwave on too high a frequency and mic'd it too high. Those pieces are more meditative, less rockin'. F/i aren't pedantic or too self-conscious either. In a state where industry appears dying, the music inspired by it thrives.--Jamie Rake

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Broken Playgrounds (C90; Mystery Hearsay, POB 240131, Memphis TN 38124) An international compilation. This tape has its fair share of the usual industrial noise collages from artists such as Haters (Canada), Solomonoff & Vonn Hoffmannstahl (USA) and The Clinic (Belgium). Some low-tech-no-pop from Dave Jones (Wales) and some third world flavors from Audio Letters (USA) and Vox Populi (France) help make this a well-rounded collection of audio art. One noteworthy cut by Architects Office (USA) features a quirky synth and percussion sounds with children's voice tape loops.--Allen Green

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Czech: TiH Now You Were Alone (LP; Old Europa Cafe, Via del Maglio 8/C, 33170 Pordenone, Italy) The ability to expose Western ears to such a wide variety of Eastern Block music is in itself a remarkable task. But as important as this is, it is even better to know that projects like this succeed twice with the presentation of enjoyable music. There are, however, problems, first of the potential of this being judged in comparison to what we already know. The music sometimes sounds outdated in both style and technique. But one must remember that the assimilation of Western trends takes time, and that what may sound like influence may actually be a rethinking an original concept, new to them, but already familiar to us. In addition, the lack of technically proficient recording is very apparent. For this reason, obvious financial and equipment constraints must be taken into account, as well as the real need for the one take live recording that constitutes most of the methods of almost all within. Nevertheless, we do find here a wide array of talented bands and musical styles. Those who are partial to Gong or the Italian style of Area, will be favorable to the esoterica of Marno Union, or the jazzed up sound of Nukleus, while those who like the DK's or Henry Cow, will find their synthesis in The Extempore Band. But the real pleasure comes not from comparison, but rather from listening. There is within, a significant variety of music, from cowboy punk to manipulated electronics, to new wave mambas, and though they resemble what we think we know in the West, they are distinctly of a quality and culture all their own.--Nathan Griffith

VARIOUS ARTISTS: dada For Now (LP; Ark Dove 4, POB 45, Liverpool L69 2LE England) Colin Fallows compiled this pocket-sized pressing of Futurist and dada "sound works." Vinyl flaws aside, most of the pieces are very listenable for contemporary ears.

Antonio Russolo leads off with a 1921 performance (recorded on 78 or wire spools?) of "Corale and Serenata", a chamber work with recurrent toilet flushing. Next are 6 Hugo Ball pieces for voices and resonating metal objects from 1916. Density, timbre and pacing vary nicely among the works. Kurt Schwitters' onomatopoeic hits from 1919-1946 (if bodily functions could only speak...) are precursors to Furious Pig and kung fu movie action overdubs. In addition, Raoul Hausmann contributes the Schwitters-esque "Scoundrel", the Giacomo Balla pieces feature percussive vocal sounds, and Luigi Russolo plays his acoustic constructed noise instruments with primitively industrial results. Essential for dada fans, although it might be hard to find.--Tom Morr

VARIOUS ARTISTS: De Appel 3/84 (C; Time Based Arts, Bloemgracht 121, 1016 KK Amsterdam, Holland) Collected on this tape are the efforts of visual and sound artists, and composers. It is an excellent sampler, one of the finest of its kind, featuring such well known artists as Peter Gordon, who does a very unusual and

representative of several different approaches to playing instruments and making unique statements. Is it music? Sometimes. Is it entertainment? Always. Side One begins with three-plus minutes of film dialogue that sequences nicely into a musically inept but engaging set of songs, mostly by fem-groups postulating humorously on...what else? Our zany, silly sexuality. A.S.F. dominate this side with four tracks, though The Curse, The Bettys and this reviewer's favorite, Word Of Mouth who do a hilarious send-up of "Do You Know The Way To San Jose?" also feature prominently. Side Two features bands that can actually play such as Mydolls and Really Red while still retaining the ragged edge of side one with heavy doses of noise-trash via Ragged Bags and New Mr. Orts, the latter of which turns in the magnum opus of the side with "Mr. Brink" that runs over seven minutes. The most consistently entertaining track though, is the delightful "Polka Theme" by the Polkaholix, only 58 seconds long, the name says it all, folks. Punk rock? Maybe. Non-stop laff riot? Yeah, oh yeah.--John E



Carlos Guitarras, a virtual fixture around the late night Los Angeles underground rock clubs. Robin Meyers told me that Van Halen offered Carlos thousands of dollars for the rights to one of his songs, but were turned down. It's a story I'd like to believe. If you're in L.A. and Carlos is doing a gig, bring him some good beer, some fine smoke and you're sure to be treated with some good rock and roll and blues, more real than just about anything else in that town. David Claffardini photo

uncharacteristic piece that used the sound of a braying donkey, and Terry Fox, with one of his always fine sound pieces using piano wire that is stretched and hammered, as well as the lesser known, but imaginative and innovative artists, including Rely Tarlo, Remko Scha and Michael Brewster. Tarlo is a marvelous sound artist who works with various pipes and tubes which produce some incredible sounds. Here, he "plays" the tubes with boxing gloves, creating deep, reverberant tones of great beauty. Using some of Zev's found percussion instruments, Scha, with the aid of an electric drill, makes more of his "machine music"; baroque rhythms for the modern world. One can also find other interesting text and sound pieces which capture the crackling of melting ice, the sounds and applause of a large audience, and a continual crescendo of a single chord on a piano. A fascinating compilation.--Dean Suzuki

VARIOUS ARTISTS: DEEP SIX: (LP; C/Z Records, 1407 E. Madison, Seattle, Washington 98122) This compilation album features six new bands from the Seattle scene, all of whom deliver old-fashioned hardcore with some stylistic variations. While groups like the Melvins and Malfunkshun put plenty of trash and chaos into their guitars, they also slow the pace and let their licks build into ominous metal repetitions that sound like old-fashioned Black Sabbath. Although all these bands stuff plenty of despairing anarchy into their lyrics they owe as much to the hard rock doom of Seventies heavy sounds. No garage organs or new wave protest for these Seattle punks. At this point in time their only problem is how alike they sound, even down to the growling screams that seem to start most of the tunes. But their ferocious dedication makes you interested in Seattle rock, and that's the point of any compilation LP. Standouts are Soundgarden's "Heretic" and Malfunkshun's "Stars-n-Vu".--James Hopkins

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Demowit 5 (C60; Hide, 363 Queen St. East, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5A 1T2) This is a noisy diverse tape

VARIOUS ARTISTS: DEUS EX MACHINA: The Crime Not Yet Committed/MASKED MEN: Mediated Relations (C90; \$7 pp; DeMaris, 20 Intervale #2, Burlington, VT 05401) Deus Ex Machina is actually David DeMaris playing trumpet, piano, synthesizer, drum machine and guitar. The mood is mostly contemplative but unfocused, though DeMaris is a good keyboardist and trumpeter. The piano solos would have worked better on acoustic piano. Livelier is The Masked Men side, with Ed Blomquist joining DeMaris. Though Blomquist's instruments are not specifically listed, I assume he's responsible for the greater emphasis on guitar, more conventional rhythms and better vocals. The pieces are generally more structured, and loops and treatments are effectively employed.--Mark Sullivan

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Found Objects (LP; Atmosphere c/o Mark Wheaton, POB 291071, L.A., CA 90029) The liner notes state that this compilation is "surprisingly pop" but "fresh and adventurous" compared to Top 40 material. Given the artists on this mostly-Mark Wheaton produced LP, it is indeed surprisingly pop, but it's not particularly adventurous. Wheaton's solo piece, "The Box", is an exception, due to its interesting instrumentation (a full cello section, Johanna Went on vocals, guitar, piano and percussion) and effective use of repetition. The remainder of the LP (including Went's solo piece) is impeccably recorded, though the material is the kind of avant-jazz-rock you'd expect to hear in exclusive art clubs with door policies. Each group incorporates a genre in their sound, be it punk, jazz or be-bop, as though they were exploring something new about it. Unfortunately, none of the music rises out of the genre it emulates.--Brook Hinton

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Fragment 2 (C; Eksakt Records, Poststaat 5, 5038 DG Tilburg, Holland) Quite often, the compilation cassette winds up like an evening of watching religious television, stupefying endless versions of pretty much the same thing, fit for consumption only by the converted. This cassette blew into my mailbox like a

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breath of fresh air. It puts street music from India and Sri Lanka next to a number of "fourth world" electronics. That all slots in comfortably with a political/folk song by an Indonesian singer, and is followed by Niko Langenhuyzen's exquisite jazz bass cover of Charlie Haden's "Song For Che". Langenhuyzen is the only one on this tape who turns up on both sides, contributing an equally tasty acoustic piano performance on side two. It's the most consistently pluralistic and interesting compilation that's hit my walkman in the past year. After listening to performances by artists Kiem, the French General Inconnu, Toon Dresser and Jacques Van Erven, you'll probably be talked into picking up a bunch more of their stuff. This is what compilations are SUPPOSED to do: entertain the daylight hours of you and get you to hunt for more of everyone's music.--Greg Taylor

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Fresh Sounds From Middle America #3

(LP; Fresh Sounds, Box 36, Lawrence, KS 66044 USA) These 16 tracks were collected by Lawrence radio station KJHK and Redline Productions from the regional scene surrounding the University of Kansas. The album is split roughly between a garage/pop side and a hardcore/punk side. The hardcore side is "fresh out of ideas" Near Death Experience and Short Notice are boring excursions down well travelled thrash routes. The Miconroz' cover of Iggy Pop's "Gimme Some Skin" is a solid, rev'd-up performance, marred by a borish, tough-guy vocal. Two exceptions to an otherwise dismal listening experience are the tracks by Bum Kon and Pedal Jets. The former packs high-energy and no frills, while the former succeeds over poor recording quality with a relentless melody. On the garage/pop side things improve slightly. Psychic Archie leads things off with the record's best track, a cover of the Starfires' "Didn't Love Her". The verses are spoke-sung over a "Peter Gun" beat, while the chorus harmony oddly enough sounds like the Del Fuegos, in its deliberate high and lonesome roughness. In fact, several of the tracks on this side bring to mind the Del Fuegos, along with other guitar oriented "roots" bands such as Jeff Waryan's Figures. In this vein, Homestead Grays are passably pleasing, with their Southern twang rock.

Whereas, the innocent, minimalist approach of both Thumbs and Lions and Dogs is more endearing. Both of these bands present songs with strong melodies. The vocal performance on "jericho" by Thumbs' vocalist Steve Wilson has a lazy, warm feel with hints of humor. As for sound recording quality, be aware that it varies greatly from track to track, from poor to good. Overall, this is a weak collection lacking enough truly "fresh" sounds.--Scott Jackson

VARIOUS ARTISTS: GLITCH SAMPLER: Ten Austin Groups in Black and White

(LP; Glitch Records, POB 4429, Austin, TX 78765) I like electric guitars and I like this record. It's full of spunky songs from first-time groups with dopey names like The Windows, The Seiders and The Appels. These are no mere sixties retreat bands, though. The energy and solid playing remind me of Boston's rock scene of 1980. There are several three-piece groups made up of just guitar/bass/drums. Back to basics, Austin!--Rill Neil

VARIOUS ARTISTS: God Bless America (LP; RRRecords, 151

Paige St, Lowell, MA 01852) My goodness! Three records of American experimentalists in a hand-decorated box with assorted goodies and the entire thing wrapped in an American flag totebag. The way GBA borders on excess seems almost peculiarly American. Due to the nature of the scene that spawned these musicians, a comprehensive overview is impossible and the fact that this seems to be as close as we'll get is probably incidental. What GBA does offer is an exciting look at the diversity (except perhaps for the overuse of rhythm boxes) of the experimental underground. Most of the tracks seem in some way related to the theme of America, from liberal to conservative and much unclassifiable. Walls of Genius' "Letter To Dan Fogelberg" turns a cliched idea into a stunning exploration of how and why an audience relates to a star. Tom Recchion makes jazz-tinged deviance, Blackhouse sets traps of gripping noise and rhythms, Eugene Chadbourne rants about Spiro, Data-Bank-A and Viscera produce almost-pop electronics, Controlled Bleeding moves from sedate to aggressive introspection, and so on. As with any compilation there are a few mediocre entries but for the most part GBA is an embarrassment of riches.--Lang Thompson

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Hidden Agendas (C60; Studio Modus, 504

West 24th St. #119, Austin, TX 78705) Four bands from Austin, each with a distinct flair for middleweight rock. Some fine playing but there are occasional awkward turns of phrase in the lyrics. Seth Ivan Bovey plays tuneful synth-based songs, good clean textures, well-placed effects and sounds skillfully blended. Steven Harding/CTD is good techno-rock but the lyrics are a bit overworked, and the fake rap of "Everything's Normal" is really dumb. YU presents a sharp, clear and eccentric rock style done with precision and skill; intelligent art rock sans pretension. Overall, a very well done tape, and Studio Modus looks like a team worth watching for their documentation of current music being done in Austin, if this tape is any indication.--Tom Furgas

VARIOUS ARTISTS: I'm Buck Naked!!! (C60, \$4; B.C.T. PO

16205, San Diego, CA 92116 USA) Poor sound quality seems to be fairly standard on these hardcore compilations. There are 13 bands represented here, eleven of which are from the US with Aku

innleggelse from Norway and Italy's Raw Power. "Elevator To Hell by Love Canal shreds it up despite the muddiness of the sound. My favorite band here, though, are The Accelerators whose four songs all blaze with pure passion. My pick hit being "Get Her Off My Mind" which has a hard pop edge reminiscent of early punk bands such as the Buzzcocks. My seven month old daughter really seems to get off on singing along with The Accelerators, which must be a good sign. Keep it up, guys! The now defunct Eat The Rich clock in with the longest song with "Electric Funeral" at 2:38. Delatentons lyrics are good for a laugh, fun stuff! Overall a bunch of noise! Music to set your hair on fire!--Brian S. Curley

VARIOUS ARTISTS: King of Kings, Volumes I, II, III (LP; B's

Records, 1285 Fulton St., Brooklyn, NY 11216) These three albums are the finest documentation of calypso in concert I've ever heard. All of the superstars of the genre are here: Sparrow, Black Stalin, Mighty Chalkdust. Fidelity is clear enough in this on-site recording of an annual calypso contest that the lyrics are nearly entirely understandable on the first hearing. And the lyrics put most politically conscious songs from the US to shame. Number like "Martin Luther King" by Black Stalin and "Identity" by the Mighty Chalkdust explore the anger and pride felt by numerous Afro-Americans as they explore the agonies of blackness in a white controlled world. "Trust Your Wife" by Duke is a didactic sermon delivered with reserved charm and sly wisdom. But the real killer message here is delivered by the Mighty Chalkdust on "The Pope" in which he raises questions about the Vatican's show of gross wealth not approached so lyrically by anyone since Leny Bruce. No finer introduction to the messages and musical shapes of calypso exists. All three records are essential in illuminating a style that has shamefully suffered neglect in America due often to lackluster recordings.--Norman Weinstein

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Kollage 4-Verzamelcassette (C; Red Rat

Recordings, van Alphenstraat 29, 3581 JA Utrecht, The Netherlands) One of the peculiar features of the compilation cassette is that often the cuts you remember are those ones that seem somehow out of place. When you sit down to write the review, everything else is in danger of blurring together. This cassette went a little easier by virtue of having only three basic types of things on it: There are two sets of singers: A pretty normal Dutch garage band (Saint Vitus) who sing in English, and Rene Mulder, whose songs (sung in Dutch) about working for peace and trying to write music were some of the nicest stuff here. We also get some gestural acoustic piano improvising that scurries around but never touches down, and a large slab of that 'Gothic/industrial/tape collage mafia. Magthea treats us to a solemnly intoned German ode ("ZZZZZZ") and Merzbow (Masaru Akita) gives us the heavily collaged tape works we've come to expect. The programming of the cassette sets you up with some more or less normal music, hits you with the noise, and then hands you back to the musicians again. This sort of dizzying dislocation must be the equivalent of Bethold Brecht's "Epic Theatre" on tape.--Greg Taylor

VARIOUS ARTISTS: The Long March (C90; Sound Of Pig Music

c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023) Something of interest to everyone on this sampler tape. All styles are covered from Tape Manipulation (Croiners) to Experimental Pop (Dennis Carlton), then from Art Damage (Algebra Suicide) to German Electronics (Pascal Massum). That's just the first side, and I've even left out a few. This kind of jumping around could get awfully confusing, but in the capable hands of Al Margolis, transitions are made with utmost finesse. The production is clean and commendable. He seems to be someone who really cares about the music he is presenting. He even includes contributor's addresses enabling the listener to make contact. The B side is the harsher of the two, containing pieces by Human Flesh, Theatre of Ice, Absolute Body Control and others. There is more diverse music here than I care to describe, but suffice it to say that all groups contribute good material. An excellent overview of the independent music scene; blending the familiar with some real ear openers.--AO

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Loopy But Chic (Harsh Blend) and (Soft Blend) (2-C60's; Insane Music, 2 Grand Rue, B6190 Trazegnies,

Belgium) Collecting work from artists in eight countries, these two tapes offer a stunning look at the use of tape loops and in the process manage to make an over-used technique seem fresh. As the titles reveal, one tape has abrasive, disjointed loops from Le Syndicat, Maybe Mental, Vivenza, The Horse He's Sick and If, Bwana. The other tape presents smooth, flowing sounds from Architect's Office, Vox Populi, Bene Gesserit, Psyclones and Falx Cerebri. Many artists appear on both tapes. Despite the potentially limiting theme, these compilations aren't at all one-dimensional and offer plenty of ideas for musicians who want to go loop de loop.--Lang Thompson

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Monkey Business (Green Monkey Records,

POB 31983, Seattle, WA 98103, USA) Producer Tom Dyer puts together this 14 artist compilation highlighting music from Green Monkey Records. Overall, the songs come from a clean pop frame of reference. Crisp, spare production make these artists a pleasure to

the ears. Green Pajamas are a psychedelic flavored band whose swirling rhythms and chimy guitars give a light and sunny feeling with "Peppermint Stick". Pip McCastlin's "Americans like that" is a funny little tune which is filled with hooks and odd bridges. The Walkabouts "1+1" is an interesting country-type tune which hosts moody yet pretty harmonies, lazy harmonica, and great spaghetti western guitar. Arms Akimbo bring home a great Latin cut complete with horns and harmonies. Other great songs are by The Queen Annes, and Prudence Dredge.--Mark G.E

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Musica Indigena de los Altos de Chiapas

(LP; Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia, Mexico City, Mexico) To judge from this Chipas Highlands LP, the INAH is doing for Mexican regional music what the Library of Congress has done for US folk music: Preserved it forever through field recording. And what excellent sound quality from cassettes made in remote villages! The Chiapas Highlands, on the Guatemalan border, are home to three Mayan tribes, as well as Spanish-speaking Mesizos. Music from each culture appears on the album: A Mayan violin and voice piece that resembles the bluesy Nigerian juju of the 1930's, carnival flute and drum processions, Mestizo marimba pieces. One Mayan piece for flute and drum suddenly breaks into a maniacal cornet solo (What the fuck was that? Beefheart?)--Mark Manning

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Musica Venenae (C60; \$6.99; Inner-X, POB

1060, Allston, MA 02134) An uneven compilation of self-styled industrial though most of the pieces favor more familiar electronics over noise assaults. On the minus side is a tedious piece from Jon Briley and mediocre ones from Nozoclot and P16.D4. On the plus are intriguing textual explorations from Controlled Bleeding and Merzbow as well as electrothrob from Fi. Comes with yet another booklet of explicit medical and sexual graphics.--Lang Thompson

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Musicworks--There Is No Reason To Believe That Music Exists (C60; 1087 Queen Street West, Toronto, Canada M6J 1H3) A sampler of some great sound art by John Oswald, Davey Williams, Bill Smith, James Tenney, Jerry Simpson, bits from many more. "Porky's Garden" is a collage of old cartoon music, "WX" is an incredible world folk music sound collage. There is a fine prepared noise guitar episode, lots of outstanding editing.--Robin James

VARIOUS ARTISTS: The Origins Of Grapefruit (C60; Chris

Xefos, 15 Ash Place, Huntington, NY 11743) Ignore the dumb name.

This here's a compilation of wild sixties inspired far-out go-crazy jams from that scene to end all scenes, Huntington, New York. Yeah, you remember the sixties, don't you? I don't mean Thirteenth Floor Elevators, either. We're talking Animals, Stones, Stooges. Recorded on a 4-track in (where else?) somebody's basement. Eight bands, 18 songs, and everyone plays on everyone else's tune, you get the idea. "Support Local Music", the liner notes say. Yes, indeed!--Frank G

VARIOUS ARTISTS: PAST EROTICISM: Canadian Sound Poetry

in the 1960's: Volume I (C; Underwhich Editions, POB 262, Adelaide Station, Toronto, Canada M5R 2J4) This kind of Sound Poetry began with the dadists in the thirties: Hugo Ball, Kurt Schwitters and Tristan Tzara in particular. I'm not sure the Canadians in the sixties took the idea much further than the originators. They had access to tape recorders, to be sure, but that may have hurt them more than helped them. Their use of the medium is not particularly interesting. In short, this stuff is for the most part dated, and of purely academic interest. But then, that's why we have archives. Bill Bissett and by Nichol, who both appear on this tape, are today major Canadian poets. This tape could well provide fodder for some English major's Masters thesis at the University of Montreal.--W.R. Borneman

VARIOUS ARTISTS: R.A.F. Gier and Channel Rats (Split LP;

\$7.50; Ladd-Frith, POB 967, Eureka, CA 95502) R.A.F.-Gier serve up a straight-ahead speed-speech-speedcore full of standard punk themes (Destroy your past, throw off authoritative control and anti-war sloganeering). Some lyrics in English and some in easily translatable German. The somewhat flat mix emphasizes a male vocalist who uses an occasional Texacala Jones-style yodel to accentuate his choruses. The last song ("JUNG Genug") features an uncharacteristic introduction a la Rush which suggests R.A.F.-Gier were heading into new territory. Alas, according to information from Ladd-Frith, they've broken up. Actually, this is a 100% post-humous release as the Channel Rats have parted ways also. Their sound isn't as easy to classify as their vinyl mates, however. From a Wall of Woodoo-ish "Wild Island" to a rocker ("East End Party") that would feel at home on any skate-punk compilation to a couple stripped down Om-pah songs built back into fun-punkers ("Mickey Maus"--a sardonic jab at the inanity of American culture and "Auf See"), the Channel Rat's sound shows quite a variety. My only negative observation is that the band seems a bit restrained in their execution. But please remember, I'm judging this from an American point of view and I realize that German music on the whole always seems a bit more stoic. Nevertheless, it's now history.--Jim Hoffman

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Re Records Quarterly Vol. 1 #1 (LP/mag;

Recommended Records, 387 Wandsworth Rd., London SW8 England)

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Art, writing and music from Chris Cutler and friends ("historic" he says). The music is all different. Side 1 has a soundscape thing by Steve Moore, Lars Holmer's beautiful "Experiment", a sizzling, upbeat, (but mediocre for them) song by Lindsay Cooper and Chris Cutler, odd lyrics) greatness by the Suu's, Joseph Rachele, The Lowest Note (both very European) and poet Adrian Mitchell. Side 2 begins with a computer piece by S. Africa's Kalahari Surfers, then Mission Impossible (Sweden) giving heavy rock with tapes and nice non-meter stop, start breaks, A. Mitchell, Stefano Delu fooling with his odd guitar, forlorn pounding and Sun Ra by Czech Mikolas Chadima, and Adrian Mitchell ("I don't like to listen cause he says its too real"). The writing and art is worth the price alone. The only thing about the mag part is Peter Blegvad spends a lot of time saying nothing. I think all this has something to do with "Rock In Opposition".--JoeM

VARIOUS ARTISTS: RE Records Quarterly: Vol. 1 No. 2 (C; Recommended, 387 Wandsworth Rd., London SW8, England) This package is a sampler of Re artists Duck and Cover, John Oswald, Conrad Bauer, Reportaz, and Adrian Mitchell plus a 43-page Chris Cutler edited magazine. The 'zine has Cutler's obligatory Marxist slant, containing Soviet pop lyrics, an article on music in South Africa and information about the record. Side 1 of the disc is a live recording of a Duck and Cover 1983 East Berlin performance. The personnel is a combination of Skeleton Crew and Cassibar plus Dagmar Krause. This improv is tastefully grounded with fragments of members' earlier tonal tunes. The Bley-ish rendition of the Art Bears' "The Song of Investment Capital Overseas" is a highlight, Alfred Harth being a dead-ringer for Gary Windo. Canadian saxist/dancer John Oswald opens side two with a mosaic of transitionless tapes. Next, Conrad Bauer, presumably the East German prince of progressive trombone, steals the side. His solo,

Here, Blegvad reads poetry over acoustic keyboards, ICI LA Bas presents Smurfish soundtrack material, Faust reprises a bit from their third party, and R. Stevie Moore defies intense guitar harmonics with an electronic rhythm track on "What Are You Looking At?" but redeems himself with the pensive ballad "Flowers Sleep Into The Night". The Art Bears return for "Collapse/Rats & Monkeys", a Ralph leftover. The A side sounds like witches surrounding a bubbling cauldron, and Dagmar Krause's aggressive vocals battle with neurotically noisy instruments on the flipside. "The Song of the Shirt", by bassoon virtuoso Lindsay Cooper, is eight short chamber trios influenced by 19th century British folk tunes. News From Babel's "Contraries", a tune by harpist Zeena Parkins, includes Cooper, Dagmar and Chris Cutler, and sounds like early acoustic Art Bears. "Limoges" is a lo-fi recording of a 1979 Cutler/Frith performance. The A side demonstrates Frith's "guitar on the table" approach resulting in a facsimile of alpine indigestion. David Thomas & The Pedestrians' "Didn't Have A Very Good Time" is an entertaining Thomas vocal improv backed by Cutler on percussion and Alan Ravestine on electronics. Cassiber's improv from 1984 features Alfred Harth's tasty bass clarinet multiphonics. The Mnemonist Orchestra employs interesting instrumentation on "Nailed/Tic", including bagpipe, sitar and metronome. "Tic", an unforgettable piece for processed metronome and piano, sounds like a herd of hogs trashing a Waterloo crystal showroom. Finally, Vogel's "Guten Morgen/Arschloch" features Ivor Cutler on the flipside. He laughs and cusses auf Deutsch over a Thereminish synth. Overall, a varied and impressive package. The \$55 retail price, however, will repel all but connoisseurs from these 700 limited edition sets.--Tom Morr

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Riposte (C46; Broken Flag, 59 Chapel View, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 7LJ, England) The replies to Broken Flag's excellent compilation, MORALITY. The artist's on RIPOSTE

person-chorus approach has hardly been tapped at all, and I'd like to hear more. The record closes with Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G Major", as rendered electronically by Tim Cross. It has a much softer musical texture than Wendy Carlos's recording, although to my ears, Cross shoots through the piece way too fast. This is a sampler, intended to interest the listener in other recordings on the Coda label, and I must admit, it worked.--Sally Idasswey

VARIOUS ARTISTS: The Strait Tapes Volume II (C; STRAIT, 11 Uxbridge Road, London, England) STRAIT is perhaps the best Christian newspaper written in English; not afraid to acclaim the Jesus and Mary Chain and slag Petra. One could well expect an adventurous compilation from such folks and they deliver. Twenty cuts cover everything from crappy AOR to electronic instrumental and white R&B. Side one highlights include salsa rock protesting the death of El Salvadoran bishop Oscar Romero by STRAIT co-publisher Garth Hewitt, solid mainstream pop by Americans Mark Heard and Steve Scott, a rather subdued number from hippie granddaddy of Godpop Larry Norman, a completely non-faith R&B jam from the Fat Band and Paul Field's sharp and subtle electronics. Turning the tape over yields fewer rewards: a remix from the ever-swell Charlie Peacock (unique jazz-dance-new wave fusion), OMD-cuts from Phil and John, tough voiced femme fatale pop-rocker Leslie Philips and OK metal from First Strike. Good acts showing with less than stellar selections include Randy Stonehill, Passion Polka (who have since changed their name to Beat This!) and Sheila Walsh. It would be mistaken to think this unworthy for those not Christian for there's barely a word of Godpeak here (Norman, Walsh and US weird-wavers Daniel Ames are guilty but mostly tasteful in approach). This tape may be had by subscribing to STRAIT or sending money. A third volume should be cut soon, if not already.--Jamie Rake



Local drummers waiting to jam with O.J. Ekemode and his band. David Claffard photo

un-overdubbed performance includes almost the whole bag of extended techniques: circular breathing a la Dempster and Globokar and Mangelsdorffian singing while playing. Low-budget progressive Polish trio Reportaz and Adrian Mitchell's rhythmical poetry are also included. Definitely worthwhile, even if only for Duck and Cover and Bauer.--Tom Morr

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Re & Recommended 7th Anniversary Commemorative Issue (\$55; Recommended, 387 Wandsworth Rd., London SW8, England) In addition to 16-7" singles ("Dance Party Smash Hits"), this box set comes with "silk screened, luminous and engraved discs; lurid covers, souvenir booklet and hand-printed cocktail cloth." The singles, many containing one side of music and one of art, were originally special items and bonuses for Re/Recommended subscribers. Included are the label's heavyweights. "Extracts from 'Faust Party 3'" are four sides of early outtakes from the clandestine Germans. The approaches vary among sides and include arpeggiated electronic trance music, out-of-sync pop, concrete voice manipulation and a psychedelic guitar solo. Peter Blegvad's "Alcohol", originally included in Slapp Happy/Henry Cow's DESPERATE STRAIGHTS LP, rivals any Hugo Wolf tone poem. Lyrically, Pope-style couplets abound: "A rainmaker licks his moustache/the dry ice he handles has given him a rash" is one of the less perverse. The engraved grapes on the flipside secure "Alcohol"'s place as a party favorite. Univers Zero's "Triomphe des Mouches" finds the Belgians sounding like conservative flunkies, the soundtrack music suggesting programmatic qualities unfulfilled by the silk-screened flies on the flipside. "Manege", from Art Zoyd, is a romantically operatic chamber piece featuring fine fiddling. Joseph Rachele's "6 Petit Chansons" are simple songs suitable for a first-year French class. Some lyrics might be bizarre, however--"We are animals" is the extent of my translational proficiency. The Art Bears' "Coda to 'Man & Boy'" features the industrial strength Frith guitar. The RECOMMENDED SAMPLER ep is a 7" one-sided compilation--the flipside is screened with luminous powder ("NOT radioactive!")/

include some of the bigger names in powerful electronic music--Le Syndicat, Toll, AMK/ab, The Grey Wolves and Denier Du Culte. While all these artists provide a very intense barrage of sounds and textures, what makes this cassette worthwhile is John Duncan's collaboration with Pacific 231. The voice of an obviously young prostitute sums up morality as, "50 to put it in, 50 to take it out."--AMK

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Schut/du--Der Sampler--Nummer 1 (C90; \$6 US-pp; Calypso Now, Box 12, CH-2500 Biel 3, Switzerland) Hardcore-thrash, straight punk, auto-chord rhythm machine lounge vocalizing, post-punk, aimless noodlings, pseudo-country/rockabilly, drum machines and de-tuned bass instruments, even acoustic folk duos--all this and more can be found on this 90-minute compilation of garage bands "based in Berlin or with a strong link to this special Berlin scene". Recording quality ranges from apparently recorded live in a trash dumpster to pretty good, with the average being closer to the pretty good side. A few of the bands sing in English, but most of the songs are in German (as are, alas, the extensive liner notes) which prevents comprehension on the slower songs (if you don't speak German) but matters not a whit on the hardcore thrashers--the rush of guttural consonants compliments the power of the thrash well. This tape is an interesting document of what appears to be a thriving music scene.--K. Crothers

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Standing stones/A New Age Compilation (LP; Coda Records, 17/19 Alma Road, London SW 18; or JEM Records, 3619 Kennedy Road, South Plainfield, NY 07080) This disc was full of surprises. Rick Wakeman as a "new age" artist? Yep. He contributes a solo piano piece called "Waterfalls". Other artists represented include John Thernis ("Emily" a smooth jazzy Villenwieder-sch cut), Dashiell Rae ("The River"), Tom Newman ("Fur Traders Descending The Missouri"), Stephen Caudel ("Wine Dark Sea"). The standout track here was "Spring: Awaken...Lark Rise" by Claire Hamill. It's a beautiful haunting melody sung a cappella by a dozen Claire Hamill's overdubbed. She's no Todd Rundgren, but the one-

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Subgenius Media Barrage #10 (C90; \$8.50; Foundation, POB 140306, Dallas, TX 75214) Quit your job and SLACK OFF. I had to hear it again and again. The first twenty minutes are priceless, and the parrot/parakeet training tape is a very funny episode. The training for the cult and all the basic teachings of Bob are somehow mentioned or inferred. There are many incredible people there, heard on this tape are Devo, Ken Kesey, David Ossman (Firesign Theater), Robert Crumb, Jan Lynch, lots of people, probably a few aliens too. Lots of fire and brimstone preaching, childish gratuitous obscenities and a very strange gleam in their eyes. A collage message for your subconscious mind. The pinks and the conspiracy are discussed, as well as this "original slack" stuff. Superior Mutants Quit Your Job, Repent! Do you think you are strange? Then you are probably BETTER than most people. YOUR KIND SHALL TRIUMPH!! It just goes on and on.--Robin James

VARIOUS ARTISTS: TELLUS: Special Double Audio Visual Issue Nos. 5 & 6 (C; Harvestworks, 16 W. 22nd St. #902, NYC, NY 10010) This issue of TELLUS, subtitled "Audio Video Issue", consists of a single tape with an accompanying booklet in a boxed set that includes one or two visual artworks that go with each of the 16 audio artworks. The connections are sometimes arcane and enigmatic, as there are no descriptive texts explaining how the pieces go together. Obviously, this is by design. As with most compilations, this has some very fine moments along with some very weak pieces. Paul McMahon and Nancy Chun's two pieces were absolutely inane, visually and aurally, and Ericka Beckman's "Subdivision Song" is just plain dumb. On the other hand, the dark almost sinister sounds of works by Perry Hoberman, Raimund Kummer and Wojnarowicz and Bressler worked very well. The mixture of visceral power and an enigmatic quality in the work by Barbara Ess and Bang was most effective. Rhys Chatham's tattoo for brass and military drum is downright bizarre and totally unlike his compositions for electric guitar. Generally speaking the good parts were very good and the bad parts were very bad.--Dean Suzuki

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VARIOUS ARTISTS: TELLUS: The Word I No. 7 (C; Harvestworks, 16 W 22nd St. #902, NYC, NY 10010) The latest issue of TELLUS moves in yet another direction. This issue is dedicated to sound text pieces. There are some well-known artists such as Richard Kostelanetz, Jean-Paul Curtay and Michael Peppe, but most of the 28 names were not familiar. One might compare this anthology to those of the Giorno Poetry System label, yet I've not heard a GPS album quite like this. For the most part, it is a very excellent tape. There are a few pieces of dross, such as Michael Gir's perverted "Raping A Slave", another sexual diatribe and scene of depravity that, by now, carries little impact other than to offend. It's been done before and doesn't need to be repeated. Paul Bob Town's "No Home" is very much like a Laurie Anderson piece, both textually and musically, and is quite attractive. A Synclavier is used by Nicolas Nowack to cast voices into a musical setting using permutations of the word "Auto". A simple palindrome (reversal) of the text and by playing a tape backwards is the basis for Gregory Whitehead's clever "Eva Can I Stab Bats In A Cave". Peppe's parody of commercials is in the Fressign Theater/Eric Bogosian vein of humor. All of these pieces have an immediate, perhaps comfortable aural appeal. There are also works that challenge the listener more, such as Kostelanetz' work or Wisla Radkiewicz' "Visage de Sable" and "Le Reveil" which works with simple taped samples of texts which are produced by a computer. What emerges is an entirely different realm of sound and sonority. Curtay's collage of sounds is at once disturbing and fascinating. TELLUS continues to grow and cover a wider and wider spectrum of aural arts.—Dean Suzuki

VARIOUS ARTISTS: TELLUS #9: Music With Memory (C; Harvestworks, see address above) Nicolas Collins, John Driscoll, Brenda Hutchinson, Ron Kuivila and Paul DeMarinis are the composers featured in this edition of TELLUS which focuses on artists who use microcomputers to create their music. Using two simple digital sampling devices, Collins loops and layers his materials taken from radio broadcasts, with abrupt cuts which yield some wonderful textures and rhythms. He even works with muzak and "easy listening" music and manages to come up with engaging, even compelling results. DeMarinis' "Eenie Meenie Chillee Beenie", like its title, has a whimsical, cartoon-like quality with its synthesized voice, inexpensive Casio, and overall musical textures. Kuivila's "Canon Y For C.N." begins with a nice chromatic chord progression on a Memory Moog, and through a continual accelerando, ends up sounding like one of Conlon Nancarrow's more frenzied Player Piano Studies. The ambient and electronic sounds of "Stall" by Driscoll move through space through the use of a rotating speaker system which is reproduced here by panning the sounds from left to right. Perhaps it works better as the museum installation it originally was, than it does here on tape.—Dean Suzuki

VARIOUS ARTISTS: TELLUS #13: Power Electronics (Harvestworks, see address above.) Noise is the word and the word is first class. The best of the best in mail-art noise, there is an incredible new aesthetic of audio entertainment, a cult of strange sound listeners and makers. Listening to it is impossible at first, then (years or some moments later) it becomes more interesting or seems to make more of a difference. Heard here are savage noisy quasi-rock songs and quasi-freakout (mostly freakout) episodes from around the world: Maybe Mental, Merzbow, Amor Fati, if, Bwana, Rhys Chatham, Psyclones, Blackhouse, Joseph Nechvatil, Master/Slave Relationship, Architects Office, Controlled Bleeding, Mojo, Coup De Grace, Le Syndicat, Mitch Corber, F/i. TELLUS is a vital source of sound arts, offered by subscription or by individual issues.—Robin James

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Terror Vision (LP; Restless Records/Enigma) The soundtrack to the comedy/horror film "Terror Vision" features one side by Italy's Fibonacci and the other by soundtrack composer Richard Band ("Ghoulies"). If anything ever fell under the phrase "something for everybody" would be the Fibonacci's side. Starting off with a B-52's like number and continuing with a little Nino Rota, a little hardcore, some cowboy music and then finishing up with an overly cute lounge singer parody. Richard Band on the other hand is a bit more consistent. He relies on a basic '50s horror film score with a few '80s sound effects thrown in. They could have done without the inane dialogue from the film.—John Krinov

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Them Boners Be Poppin' (LP; Boner Records, POB 2081, Berkeley, CA 94702) High voltage, high energy punk rock from a sampling of California bands: San Francisco's Verbal Abuse, Sacramento's Tales of Terror, Santa Cruz's Blast, and Berkeley's Fang, Special Forces and The Boneless Ones. Bold, at times almost brassy in its appeal, THEM BONERS is a noisy foray into what bands are doing these days by way of hardcore.—Carol Schutzbank

VARIOUS ARTISTS: 3 Vitro Pulpoetry #1 (72; \$20-3 issues \$40-6 issue series; Enzo Minarelli, Editor, Via Cremonino 14, 44042 Cento, Italia) The first of this sound text composition magazine/record series contains works by Henri Chopin, perhaps the pre-eminent sound poet, and Arrigo Totino. Totino's work is a layered piece for several voice and miscellaneous sound assembled via multi-tracking. The first voice reads a text quite expressively, accompanied by rolled tongues, whistles and the like. Though subdued, it is quite engaging. Chopin's piece, "Cher-cher", is similar to his recent work in which

vocal and mouth sounds are processed electronically and by tape manipulation. The array of sounds created at times loses all relationship to naturally occurring sounds and is always fascinating. The liner notes, translated into English, include examples from the "scores", descriptions of the works and a history and discussion of sound text composition by Totino. This is a wonderful series.—Dean Suzuki

VARIOUS ARTISTS: We Can Do Whatever We Want (LP; \$5; BCT, POB 16205, San Diego, CA 92116) Selections from BCT's first 12 tapes, now available on one pounding, aggressive LP. Highlights include the appropriately named Raw Power, I Refuse It's keyboard-tongued hardcore, Eat The Rich screaming about boredom and so many others: Shockin' TV, Wretched, CCM, Detention. Their names tell the story. By definition, hardcore is supposed to be good for sandblasting your house but that doesn't mean every compilation is

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Woodshock 85 (2-LP; El Jefe Records, 225 Congress Suite 203, Austin TX 78701) Uneven live compilation of mostly Austin based bands. Recorded in June 1985 at the festival of the same name, this set runs along the garage band/hardcore axis, along with other assorted oddities. As you might expect from Texas music, the blues sneaks in there somewhere. Twenty-two bands, one song each, so there's got to be something you like, and something you don't. Standouts include The Dharma Burns, Doctor's Mob and Daniel Johnson. There's also a tune by Zeitgeist, who've sounded better elsewhere.—Scott Siegal

VARIOUS ARTISTS: WVRU 91 Rock Compilation: City Without A Subway (12" LP; Box 9100 Station B, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37235; Tel. 615-322-3691) Graced with a fine cover painting by Rev. Howard Finster, Summerville, Georgia's native artist, this compilation attempts to display the virility of the Nashville



The boys from Gerechtigkeits Liga (meaning Justice League in German) visit America, bringing with them tribal rhythms, urban noises, and an incredible impressionistic film as a backdrop.

worthy of your peeling paint. This one certainly is.—Lang Thompson

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Welcome To Dreamland/Another Japan (LP; Celluloid Records, 330 Hudson St, NYC NY 10013) This is just what I'd expect Fred Frith to come back with from his last trip to Japan: a great tape of all sorts of weird Japanese bands. Most every band or performer on this record deserves an album of their own. There are many different genres of music represented on this compilation; twisted pop tunes, chamber music, native ethnic music, avant-garde/industrial noise, Slapp Happy influences, and a good dose of Brecht/Weill here and there. I'm somewhat embarrassed and feel deprived at being a typically mono-lingual American. As a result I can't make head nor tail of the lyrics. The music however is by and large so inventive that at least this time not understanding the words is no barrier at all to enjoying the music. To some people none of these groups will sound quite right, but then again imagination does tend to cause that a lot of the time. On that level this record is just perfect.—Bryan Sale

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Wer Mit Wem (2 C60 & poster, etc.; \$10; Calypso Now, Box 12 CH2500, Biel 3, Switzerland) This is an international compilation of improvised music comprised of two tapes, "WEM/?" and "WER/MIT" packaged ingeniously in a milk bag with attendant information and poster. "WEM/?" is mostly free-jazz improvisations, beginning with a showcased sax piece that builds on successive numbers that utilize guitar (factory and homemade versions), violin, viola, and drums. Groups and individuals involved include Davey Williams, Jack Wright, Henry Kaiser, John Dswald, Ladonna Smith, Gunter Muller, Wittwulf Malik, Wally Shoup, Hahr Rowe and Ted Bowen. "WER/MIT" contains improvisations of a more harsh or industrial nature, some of which employ the more traditional instrumentation listed above, on "WEM/?" while other segments use exotic devices such as the "electrozeug", the "schlagzeugmaschine", plus: zither, cello, and noise generators that remain unidentified. Some familiar names of contributors include: Andres Bosshard, Paul Lemos, and Gunter Muller, among many others. What can one say about improvisations? Some work very well, while others do not. In general, the participants who can actually play their respective instruments well stand out, while some meandering soloing, "jamming", etc. grows tedious.—John E

rock n' roll scene. Not too surprisingly, the most engaging artists are the descendants of country music. Will Rambeaux and his zydeco do a funky Presley phrasing ditty; Webb Wilder emerges from this "hillbilly gothic landscape" with his delicious deep voice and another fun country rocker. The rest of the bands here are pure pop, mostly fringe Top 40 with a few interesting samplers from In Pursuit, Shadow 15 and the Boilers. This is not as exciting of a regional sampler as say North Carolina's MORE MONDO, but it is worthy of a few good listens.—Kim Knowles

PHYLLYP VERNACULAR: Cognitive Dissonance (C; Eugene Electronic Music Collective, POB 3219, Eugene, OR 97403) Some of us collect cassettes as objects themselves, they show up in the mail wrapped in gauze or covered with sandpaper or scratch-and-sniff pitches which smell like industrial waste products. All very clever, but lately I've realized that I usually automatically assume that the cleverly packaged ones often don't sound as interesting as they look. Up until I sat down with Phyllip Vernacular's COGNITIVE DISSONANCE, that is. My suspicions went up the moment I opened the package: this baby comes wrapped in a little black velvet pouch secured with wing nuts. But fear not: the cassette (the first in a projected trilogy) is a veritable textbook of acoustic treatment techniques for recorded sound that manages to use all the normal hackneyed tools (varispeed recordings, delayed boings, snatches of radio broadcast, altered voices) without making any of them seem particularly trite, out of place or thrown in just to fill the silence. Since the emphasis is largely on the techniques of treatment used, it's an oversimplification to lump this squarely in the "Industrial" camp: they're sprawling landscapes of quite a different sort.—Greg Taylor

VIVENZA: Unite Objective (2-track C; Ladd-Frith, POB 967, Eureka, CA 95502 USA) Hypnotic French industrial. "Introduction Metallurgique" is the heavier of the two, more rhythmic and an assemblage of shifting, pulsing, gritty, grey machinations spewing a thick stream of sludge. The title cut is of more high end/treble quality and the spasms of mechanics come in yet more mesmerizing "rhythms" with more variation. Both have the effect of African clapping stumber songs, which may sound wild at first but have an ultimately lulling response. Worthy.—Jamie Rake

VOX POPULI: Mysticismes (LP; Vox Man Records, 191 Avenue du Maine, 75014 Paris, France) Vox Populi certainly don't live up to their Latin name "the voice of the people", and we're better off for it. This is a dark and spare album of Near Eastern-flavored electronics in the tradition of Benjamin Lew and Steven Brown. While it's sometimes easy to identify the instruments and treatments used on this predominantly instrumental album (the vocals are prominent, but they seem to function more as a wordless instrument than as something that tells you there's a person in the mix)—analog delays, synthesizers, woodwinds, guitars—the net effect of it all is distinctly non-electronic. Only two cuts really use anything of the by now standard "play the drone, fade in the sequencer and hack around for a while" technique, and they're pretty short. A part of the "otherness" of the record comes from the use of decidedly non-technological instruments like the zither, skin drums and the Persian Santour (a hammered dulcimer). Perhaps we should think of coming up with another interpretive category for this kind of music; it has all the sense of eerie dread and surface that we associate with industrial music, yet it does the same thing without setting out to be explicitly abrasive. Very intriguing stuff!—Greg Taylor

WANN: Disabled Soldier C; Sophisticated Artwork, POB 1618, Vardafjell, 5501 HGSD)) The music within takes form as an isolated thought whose attempt to communicate itself is manifest as an extended Expressionist tableau. Its theme (title), and liner note reference to war and especially the plight of the soldier is wonderfully realized within this tableau in a somber and emotionally evocative manner. Sound creation results from synthesizers and passages of spoken word, which is often electronically altered it seems so as to mesh unquestionably into the electronic mix. The musical substance is that of a dark and moody (though not extensively depressing), ethereal drone, with a slowly moving sequential base. More upbeat sections do exist through the application of moderate driving percussion. But even through these passages, the general musical construct still remains, as does the emotional sensibility. In fact, this sensibility establishes the credibility of the music as an initiator of the aural expression of a state of mind that fears, tries to understand, and finally, in the end, is frustrated with the concept of war.—Nathan Griffith

BUNNY WAILER: Marketplace (LP; Shanachie Records, Dalebrook Park, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ 07423) Lots of very snazzy production. Lots of Sly and Robbie rolling the riddims. Lots of enthusiastic Bunny Wailer vocals. Lots of songs about virtually nothing. Lots of lyrics boosting reggae and dancing and jumping to the beat in a dance hall. Lots of disappointment for anyone who remembers the Bunny Wailer of BLACKHEART MAN. Lots of reasons why Bunny Wailer should stop putting out this pap and actually say something in his songs that needs saying. Lots of reasons to remember his roots in the Wailers. Listen to the vocoderized-Eddy Grant-Pablo Moses sounding "Electric City" cut on this and know Bunny Wailer has no where to go in his career but up. "Stay With The Reggae" is the opening cut. Give me a reason, Rastaman, to do so and I'll follow you back to the Africa in your skull. But this album makes slick funk sound moral.—Norman Weinstein

THE WAKE (12" EP; Stoneground Records, 12436 Marvin Ave, Granada Hills, CA 91344; Tel. (818) 360-4331; For info write: Handley House, POB 372, Whittier, CA 90608) The album photo shows these pop band members shyly staring at their instruments (lead singer with his eyes closed); when the Wake emerge from this kind of solipsism and are ready to acknowledge their audience they will be a fine band. They are already truly alluring. The dark, foreboding lyrics floating around here need not be refined, need to make some commitments or draw some conclusions rather than present image after image, particularly if the Wake want to keep the interest of the subtle audience they seem to be aiming at. Nonetheless, "Lion's Heart" is stunningly beautiful—vaguely Smith sounding—a propelling country rocking song with spare yet resonant lyrics about wind whistling through ears—simply lovely. "Forever Fair" is equally engaging. The Wake are refreshingly honest and deserve to be listened to.—Kirt Knowles

WALLMEN: Eel Vibes From The Voodoo Kitchen (C60; 7711 Lisa Lane, N. Syracuse, NY 13212) Return of the cosmic Wallmen, talking rap blues, rhythm box, guitar, picture of Bob Dobbs (get the idea?) las muscaines: Jethro Delux, Omar, Lazlo Vegas. Has a Rock Opera included on side one, "New Milford", gruff male vocals and lyrics of raw language. Silly songs like "Soap Made Me Do It", "Slackless Torment", "Armageddon Groceries", "Soap Of The Devil", "Drag That Karma".—Robin James

WALLMEN: Better Hair and Nails (C60; 7711 Lisa Lane, N. Syracuse, NY 13212) Attack of the weirdmen. Strange voices and melodies, like a broken hologram of a vulgar rock n' roll carnival. Rhythm bandit terrorists breathing hard against you in an elevator, too close for comfort. One seems to hate his mom. An uranium storm. A bunch of choppy distorted little songs and voices, a picture of Bob Warier. These guys are professionals. It's sure swell. The bass parts give me chills and prickly heat.—Robin James

WARM SUN: Cracking On The Surface (C60; Earth Patrol 656 Young Grad. H. S., West Lafayette, IN 47906) Inventive noise, great cover art, seems to be three people but with all the racket its hard to tell what is going on. Electro percussion, wailing screaming things, rotating and crackling things that shiver, all to pulsing explosions. Then come the beams of destruction and everything turns to crackling burning sounds. Next song has a nice sequencer sound, sort of like a mechanical timeclock whip. Some titles: "Druids of Concrete", "Drug Problem", "M.E.S.T.F. Day 16". Power noise. You like it hot.—Robin James

WE THE LIVING: Renaissance Man (C25; Subversive Records, POB 552, FL Lauderdale, FLA 33302) Rock sampler of these guys live with an interview and warm narrative flow guiding us along the tape. Art is cotton. It rocks. Guitar, bass, drums, synth, processed vocals; some of that angst stuff, some nice spacy instrumentals, some awesome chunky funky heavy metal, and punk sometimes too. Quite a lot of approaches to the rock format, the interview caps it off nicely, making it different than the other demo tapes.—Robin James

CARL WEINGARTEN/WALTER WHITNEY: Dreaming in Colors (LP; Multiphase Records, POB 15176, St. Louis, MO 63110) Klaus Schultz plays a session with Fripp and Eno—at least that's what this record sounds like. Carl Weingarten plays guitars and Walter Whitney plays keyboards, and both of them provide electronic effects and processing on this varied set of eight tunes. Fripp-style guitars combine with sequencer bass lines with nice electronic effects on top. Nothing groundbreaking, but a nice record, and a definite improvement over their earlier work. Best songs include "Pipe Winds", "Ritual", and "Obsession". Very well recorded.—Douglas Brenner

H. G. WELLS: Before The Abyss. This/Pop Hits (Sound of Pig Music c/o Al Margolis, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023) H. G. Wells, a member of Enstruction, re-releases a 1984 tape and adds a side of new material. The old stuff has spoken interludes by a survivor of Hitler's bunker and big industrial power electronic pulse patterns, scratches, crashes and distortion vocals. A great cut has whispering voice, electronics, and sounds of war, ending in laughter. Another a spoken manifesto on manipulation of media. POP HITS from '85/'86 is nowhere near as interesting, as it is synth patterns and sinister electronics, some overlong. One examines the conflict: a voice says, "I like this, very nice", the other, "everyone hates it." Some good cuts feature cut up radio broadcasts. We hear, "These Dreams" and their other pop hits.—C.D.A.2

THE WILD ONES: Crossroads (LP; Soundwork, SW 12011 95, rue Van AA-1050 Brussels, Belgium) The heavy acoustic bass (billed as "bull fiddle") and occasional background honky tonk noises are, I imagine, meant to convey a rootsy, Southern feeling. But the grinding guitar and tuneless, force-driven vocals clearly spell out "Cramps!" It's not nearly as wild as the Cramps (or should I say, as the Cramps once were?) but it's listenable and danceable. And it is about time someone did a new cover of "Cat Squirrel". (P.S. Nice Kerouac quote on the sleeve.)—Richard Singer

WILD BLUE YONDER: Wild Blue Yonder (LP; Frontline Records, POB 28450, Santa Ana, CA 92799-8450 USA) Upon hearing a smidgen of this album's demo cassette, I thought, "Yeah, just what the world needs—a Cyndi Lauper sound-alike fronting a roots/American band with Christian lyrics." Upon hearing the whole thing though, they're to be appreciated more. Crystal Lewis doesn't so much mimic Lauper as she's the logical successor to Annie Golden (ex-of the Shirts) and the band has elements you won't find in many other riders of the Americana bandwagon, like Brin Building girl group sound, Southern gospel, swing and calypso. The mostly praise-oriented lyrics could be a tad sharper (it'll come in time) but many could double as boy-girl lovesongs, giving the group that much of an edge out of strictly Christian gigs and radio. Terry Taylor of Daniel Amos lends the same kind of frenzied gloss production of DA's VOX HUMANA LP. There's a future in Wild Blue Yonder!—Jamie Rake

THE WOOFING COOKIES: In The City/VS Side (Midnight Records, POB 390, Old Chelsea Station, NYC, NY 10011) The A-side is raw punk-pop without the posturing. Catchy and slightly downbeat. The flip is whiney poetic soft-core. Produced by Peter Buck.—Jordan Dales

XYL: Nuclear Winter (C, Charles van Zyl, 322 Margate Rd. Upper Darby, PA 19082) An all "too short" release from a rather new-to-the-scene electronic composer, one of a few of the second generation Americans, whose roots stem from the German schools of composing ala Tangerine Dream or Ash Ra Tempel. But one thing that distinguishes him from the others is his minimal reliance on the sequential base riff for his compositional structure. His approach explores instead, the use of orchestrated melody and countermelody ("Faston") and simple, yet effective improvisational, arhythmic structures ("Nuclear Winter"), in addition to the typical sequential approach. But it is with Nuclear Winter, and its following piece that the success of the tape lies, through their conveyance of the mood of fear and apprehension that is central to the theme of the tape. Their tonal qualities are well selected and intelligently combined and more than any other

element within set the mood of each composition, as ominous but not altogether unapproachable. And finally, to make a good thing better, the recording quality and production is excellent, and excessively listenable.—Nathan Griffith

YELLOWMAN: Baling Baling Balon (LP; Greensleeves Records c/o Shanachie, Dalebrook Park, Dept. R, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ 07423 USA) This man can gab, gab, gab...and does a decent job of it. As everyone's fave corn-rowed, black albino loses his Lone Ranger (another Reggae toaster, not the cowboy) affectation, he puts the emphasis on his patter vocalizing about everything from Michael Jackson and reggae Grammy awards to the state of the world and sex (including a number comparing getting blown and blowing a sax). Sly and Robbie with Black Roots provide understated but tight and inventive backing that doesn't intrude on the Yellow One. Nothing new here but nothing crappy, either.—Jamie Rake

THE YESTERDAY'S SHOWERS (C35; \$5; Calypso Now, Box 12, CH-2500 Biel 3, Switzerland) A Swiss regional band heavily influenced by the Postcard label sound. This is a collection of foggy, wistful numbers ala Aztec Camera, Joseph K and the like. Yesterday's Showers seem to pay a little too much attention to form and not enough to substance; it's pleasant stuff alright—it just doesn't stick.—Oleh Hodowanec

YOBBS: The Wild Hunt (LP; Positive Force Records, POB 9184, Reno, NV 89507) Safe "anti-establishment" soft-punk with vocals that sound like Tom Verlaine on speed. The lyrics deal with toxic waste, authority figures as false prophets and revolution. This "revolution" is, according to the Yobbs, here, but they never explain just what their revolution is, as though simply stating the things they reject is a revolution in itself. As well-intentioned as the Yobbs may be, their pseudo-anarchist vision is the kind MTV and major labels love; it causes no trouble because it presents no arguments, substituting posture and attitude (marketable commodities) for substance. On the musical side, the guitar-bass-drums backing is tightly played. The songs are chock-full of hooks, making the nasal, scratchy vocals seem strangely out of place. There is definitely a place for a Commercial Group promoting these ideas, but the Yobbs approach to revolution and social criticism is too narrow to inspire anything more than the spiking of hair or a new wardrobe.—Brook Hinton

YO LA TENGO: Ride The Tiger LP; Coyote, POB 112, Hoboken, NJ 07030) A fine album, quite possibly the best one to come out of Hoboken since the first couple Bongos platters. Traces of country and folk collide head-on with more aggressive styling—can't pin 'em down to just "psych" or "garage" or "punk", but you get the idea—and the result is an irresistible blend of hook-laden tunes that compel you to replay over and over, a near-dozen batch of rhythmically compelling toe-tappers that make you dance like mad one minute and lean back smiling the next. Yup, this is one of those classic "feel good" albums. Produced by ex-M.O. Burma man Clint Conley, RIDE THE TIGER brings to mind several bands and/or albums: Green On Red, Let's Active, HIGHWAY 61 REVISITED, GARCIA, The dB's LIKE THIS, BURRITO DELUXE, Television...A real plethora of influences, as the saying goes, but wholly unique and skillfully woven together to form an aural tapestry of pure seamless pop. I better shut up before I get accused of being paid by the band to do promo work.—Fred Mills

BETH YORK: Transformations (LP; Ladyslipper Records, POB 3142, Durham, NC 27705) Light jazz on New Age? No matter. Pianist York offers a selection of seven tracks with an ensemble that includes flute, oboe, sax and occasional harp and English horn. She works in styles that range from folk-flavored tunes to classical etudes of the Satie school. York has a talent for delicately arranged melodies, thoughtfully balanced. She understands the power of restraint. Paul Winter and the Bolling/Rampal duets might be reference points.—Mark Dickson

THE YOUNG BOYS (12" EP; Wax Trax! Records, 2445 North Lincoln Ave, Chicago, IL 60614 USA) Swiss industrial disco without the accoutrements of "industrial". That is to say, the beats don't quite sound so brick-smashing but the vocals still sound like orgasmic exorcisms while the guitars and keyboards warp like barbed wire around the whole thing. Could be a little too MOR for Einsturzen de Neubauten and Coil fans but the irregular rhythms and foreign vocals should make this another dance-floor-in-purgatory fave for a really consistent level when it comes to kicking out the scare jams. Album soon?—Jamie Rake

NECTOR ZAZOU: Geographics (LP; Crammed Discs, 43 rue General Patton, 1050 Brussels, Belgium) The closest thing that comes to mind as a comparison for this recording of chamber music by Zazou is Art Zoyd, though this comparison falls woefully short of the truth. Like the Zoyds, Zazou uses traditional orchestral instruments plus guitars, synthesizers and saxophones. His approach also mixes the classical tradition with rock and pop orientations. However, whereas Art Zoyd's music might be likened to that of Stravinsky, Zazou's is closer to Satie, as well as Debussy. It can be beautiful, some of it even relinquishing all vestiges of rock or pop influences. The first side contains the more assertive pieces: some are even tough. The second side the more lyrical. The whole album is unusual, intriguing and filled with fine music.—Dean Suzuki

FROM PAGE 5 (for AEN members)

Sound Choice before as "a sort of Whole Earth Catalog" about independent music so it was reassuring to have that kind of boasting backed up by the real thing.

One of the things we share in common with the original Whole Earth Catalog is an interest in disclosing information about how and why we do what we do. We have very few secrets around here. If an A.E.N. member wants to know how we did what we did, or how much money we made or lost or any other practical information, we will try to give them the information. (We hope to publish a breakdown of our costs vs. income sometime in 1987, as soon as we get our accounting system computerized.)

Speaking of computers, we just made our largest purchase ever, investing in an Apple Macintosh Plus computer system, a tool that will save us much money and time in the future. It dawned on us that the Macintosh computer was introduced in 1984, the same year we began Sound Choice and A.E.N. Apparently we are riding on the first wave of the desktop publishing revolution that the Macintosh is designed for. We welcome any input about innovative ways we can use this new tool for the benefit of A.E.N. as a whole.

So what else is happening around A.E.N. headquarters? Well, the A.E. N. Radio Show continues to chart new territories each week over the airwaves of KCSB FM on the University of California, Santa Barbara campus. The broadcast range is extensive and we have the potential of reaching a half million listeners. We haven't had the time to be as creative and evolutionary as we would like on the radio, but as things continue to smooth out with the magazine, we hope to put more energy into the radio program as well. Again we welcome active participation in the program.

In the planning stages right now is the designing of an A.E.N. mobile amplification and broadcasting system for creating and publicising outdoor audio events.

The AEN Independent Recording Library continues to grow, making it clear that we will one day have to relocate from our cramped live in/work in environment to more spacious surroundings. (Can't afford it now, though.)

Also in the works is an annual A.E.N. member conference and independent music festival. Mostly just talk now, we hope to see some fruition of the plans around Spring break time in 1988. We may be able to get something smaller happening along these lines sometime in 1987.

Oh yeah, and it looks like we will be

publishing every other month from now on. Jeff says the energy is there. The pulse is beating faster. 1987 looks to be an exciting, important year. See you there! And as always, we wholeheartedly thank you for supporting this project. Spread the word.--DC

Thanks to Rob Challice of "ALL THE MADMEN", UK distributor, for directing me, SC networker, to the first Independent Labels Seminar organized by the indie association UMBRELLA in London this fall. I received a warm welcome from organizer Geoff and enthusiasm over SOUND CHOICE

was high. I will be charting the progress of this organizational approach to promoting indie label music and building a power voice for indie artists.--Eileen Sterling

Three hours before printing deadline we still hadn't decided on a cover photo when we spied this computer image sent to us via Brit video artists Turnpike Cruisers (P O Box 30, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs.) who finally decided to revert to vinyl! Dave came up with the caption and home taping poster is from Home Recordings, P O Box 4071, Bloomington, IL 61702, USA. An Audio Evolution Network THANKS.

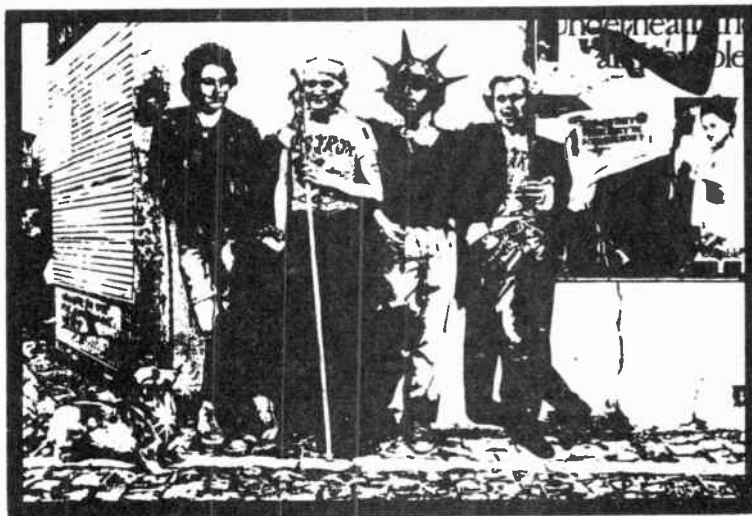
CRASS R.I.P.

Footnotes

Although we no longer intend to tour as CRASS, we are continuing to work in the same fields whilst at the same time expanding into other areas. Since late Summer 84 we were involved in the recording of *10 Notes On A Summer's Day*, our last 'formal' release. We may well choose to continue recording as Crass should we consider that it makes sense to do so. Each of us is now involved in developing our own skills, from record production to landscape painting, film-making to healing. We will continue to release material by other bands on Crass Records and intend to become seriously involved in book publishing. As long as there is a job to do, we will attempt to do it. If at first... etc. etc.

Also over the last year Mick has been continuing to work in the field of film and video, and compiled all the work that he showed at our gigs in the video compilation *Christ the Movie*.

We would like to thank those many people, both individuals and groups, who shared our years on the road, especially Annie Anxiety, Poison Girls, Oirt and Flux Of Pink Indians with whom we toured extensively and Paul, Ian and the rest of the roadcrew from Tandy's Sound Systems. Our thanks also to Steve Herman for his contribution to the formation of the band. For those who are awaiting replies to letters, we lost. We realise that we will never be able to write back to the thousands of letters that have accumulated, if yours was one of them, we're truly sorry.



INTELLIGENCE NEEDED

SOUND CHOICE has an open mind toward ALL STYLES AND GENRES of independent artistic expression. We encourage ACTIVE involvement of our readers. Think of **SOUND CHOICE** as a clearing house for information, art and photography produced by a world wide network of "INTELLIGENCE AGENTS". If you have information, be it in the form of an interview, review, essay, an important address or phone number, art work, photograph or whatever please submit it to **SOUND CHOICE**. With the assistance of computers, typesetters, a printing press, bulk mailing permit and grunt labor, we will attempt to package that information and multiply and redistribute that information to thousands of other sympathetic, interested and free-thinking human persons.

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Unclassified ads: 40 words or less are \$15 for non-subscribers, \$10 for subscribers. Additional words are 25 cents each. The first two words will be printed in bold and/or all capitals at no extra cost if desired. Add 25 cents for each additional word in boldface and/or all capitals.

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ANTI-REAGAN newsletter. Stay informed about what our evil president does in Central America and what you can do to stop him. Also includes Sandinista poetry. Sample issue \$1.25 annual subscription \$5. The Reading Room, POB 308, Stockton, NJ 08559.

TIME WORM The magazine for misfits (Sean Wolf Hill, zip a di do dada publishers, 37 E. Hudson, Dayton OH 45405) wants submissions. Positive, reflective, dreamy, imperfect, non professional poetry, stories, drawings, cartoons...all accepted. skeptical stance on technology...American transcendentalism reworked for the modern times...diner reviews and stories...no music...fleeting emotions, half-baked ideas wanted. issues gladly traded. (or 1.50 bought). Also ZA3D Catalog available (send stamp). back issues 1-7 for \$2. Mid-summer early-fall issue #8 \$1.50. no real themes...free floating.

RARE OP BACK-ISSUES AVAILABLE: Learn more Op magazine, a legendary "lost music" publication that printed its last issue in Nov. 1984. This is a valuable and still timely reference for all those interested in the history of independent recordings, publications and networking. Hundreds of reviews in every issue, plus features, etc. Of the 26 original editions (sequenced alphabetically) the following are still available: A,I,O,P,Q,R,T,U,V,W,Y and Z. \$2.50 each, ppd. **Special offer!** \$15 for the whole set, while it lasts. Prices are for North America customers. Other countries add \$1 per issue. Checks must be in U.S. funds, or send International Money Order (I.M.O) Sound Choice, POB 121, Ojai, CA 93023, USA. **RETURN FOIR MONEY BACK GUARANTEE IF NOT COMPLETELY SATISFIED.**

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BRAD BRADBERRY, freelance "alternative music" reviewer invites artists/producers of all genres to send their records/tapes for review. Everyone will get a reply. I specialize in rock (punk, psychedelia, jangle) and folk (traditional, modern, celtic) but I am open to anything. 13392 Highway 9, Boulder CK, CA 95006 USA (408) 338-7103

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SOUND CHOICE BACK-ISSUES: Yes, a complete set is essential and will someday be a very rare treasure. Presently, all past issues are available for \$2.50 each. Order from Sound Choice.

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NAR/BANGUTOT is a cassette label that specializes in strange/experimental/noise music. We would like to correspond with other artists who are interested in the same. Write to Bill McCandless, 515 Hermitagewood Dr., Huntsville, AL 35806-1818.

REGGAE TAPES records magazines books local stuff. Send for list. Will trade tapes, especially sound system tapes. Write to: Dubwise/SC, POB 50252, Tucson, AZ 85703.

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DANIEL JOHNSTON'S C30 entitled "Hi, How Are You" is now available. Distributors include Systematic, Important and Kaleidoscope/Int. Record Exchange. Or just send \$3.50 to Stress Records, 4716 Depew, Austin, TX 78751 USA.

RADIO SHOW IN CINCINNATI. "Out to Lunch" on WAIF-FM seeks new labels to add to our playlist of great "underground"/"alternative" rock & roll. Have cassette capability. Get yourself heard in Cincy! Also looking for people to trade live tapes with (esp. obscure '77 punk) Tommy Pott c/o WAIF, 8814 Applesseed Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45249.

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RICHIE GESSER. Long Island contact Paul Krauss. 1175 Opal St. San Diego, CA 92109.

AUDIO EVOLUTION RADIO SHOW currently broadcast on KCSB. Santa Barbara, CA home of the Western Whitehouse. Please send us records and cassettes that will either enlighten or jolt the heck out of our poor President. All genres and styles of music and audio art are eligible for airplay on this weekly program. Send recordings to Sound Choice POB 1251, Ojai, CA 93023 USA. A copy of each recording will become part of the AEN non-profit public access independent recording library.

GRANTS/SHANSHIP. The Audio Evolution Network is in need of a volunteer to establish grant proposals to upgrade and house the growing Audio Evolution Network non-profit, public access independent recording library. Any positive input on this project, currently in its infancy, will be greatly appreciated. Call or write, Sound Choice.

OBJEKT RADIO Ladd-Frith, POB 967 Eureka, CA 95502 USA Objekt Radio is an alternative radio program devoted to the exposition of independent music, records and cassettes of all categories and definitions. Groups, please send music. Stations, send blank cassettes.

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